Early Cultural Writings

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 1
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2003
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
Downloaded from www.holybooks.com

Early Cultural Writings

Publisher's Note

Early Cultural Writings consists of essays and other prose writings on literature, education, art and other cultural subjects. Most of them were written between 1890 and 1910, a few between 1910 and 1920. The editors have arranged the material by topic in nine parts and two appendixes. Many of the pieces were published in journals or books during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. The others are reproduced from his manuscripts. The editors have checked all the texts against the relevant printed or manuscript versions. Simple editorial problems arising from incomplete revision, etc., are indicated by means of the system explained in the Guide to Editorial Notation on the next page. More complex problems are discussed in footnotes or in the Note on the Texts at the end of the volume.

Guide to Editorial Notation

About half the material in this volume was not prepared by Sri Aurobindo for publication. This material has been transcribed from manuscripts that present a variety of textual difficulties. As far as possible the editors have indicated these problems by means of the notation shown below.

Notation	**Textual Problem**
[word]	Word(s) omitted by the author or lost through damage to the manuscript that are required by grammar or sense, and that could be supplied by the editors
[ ]	Blank left by the author to be filled in later but left unfilled, which the editors were not able to fill
[*note*]	Situations requiring textual explication; all such information is printed in italics

CONTENTS

Part One
The Harmony of Virtue

The Sole Motive of Man's Existence 3
The Harmony of Virtue 9
Beauty in the Real 78
Stray Thoughts 84

Part Two
On Literature

Bankim Chandra Chatterji

His Youth and College Life 91
The Bengal He Lived In 94
His Official Career 99
His Versatility 103
His Literary History 107
What He Did for Bengal 112
Our Hope in the Future 116

On Poetry and Literature

Poetry 123
Characteristics of Augustan Poetry 125
Sketch of the Progress of Poetry from Thomson to Wordsworth 134
Appendix: Test Questions 142
Marginalia on Madhusudan Dutt's *Virangana Kavya* 144
Originality in National Literatures 146

The Poetry of Kalidasa

A Proposed Work on Kalidasa 151
The Malavas 152
The Age of Kalidasa 156
The Historical Method 168
The Seasons 175
Hindu Drama 187
Vikramorvasie: The Play 194
Vikramorvasie: The Characters 196
The Spirit of the Times 236
On Translating Kalidasa 239
Appendix: Alternative and Unused Passages and Fragments 264

On the Mahabharata

Notes on the Mahabharata 277
Notes on the Mahabharata [Detailed] 345

Part Three
On Education

Address at the Baroda College Social Gathering 353
Education 357
The Brain of India 363
A System of National Education
  The Human Mind 383
  The Powers of the Mind 386
  The Moral Nature 389
  Simultaneous and Successive Teaching 393
  The Training of the Senses 397
  Sense-Improvement by Practice 402
  The Training of the Mental Faculties 404
  The Training of the Logical Faculty 408
Message for National Education Week (1918) 411

National Education 414
A Preface on National Education 415

Part Four
On Art

The National Value of Art 431
Two Pictures 455
Indian Art and an Old Classic 460
The Revival of Indian Art 464
An Answer to a Critic 468

Part Five
Conversations of the Dead

Dinshah, Perizade 473
Turiu, Uriu 476
Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi 479
Shivaji, Jaysingh 483
Littleton, Percival 486

Part Six
The Chandernagore Manuscript

Passing Thoughts [1] 491
Passing Thoughts [2] 495
Passing Thoughts [3] 499
Hathayoga 503
Rajayoga 507
Historical Impressions: The French Revolution 512
Historical Impressions: Napoleon 518
In the Society's Chambers 523
At the Society's Chambers 527

Things Seen in Symbols [1] 532
Things Seen in Symbols [2] 534
The Real Difficulty 536
Art 538

Part Seven
Epistles / Letters From Abroad

Epistles from Abroad 545
Letters from Abroad 554

Part Eight
Reviews

"Suprabhat" 565
"Hymns to the Goddess" 569
"South Indian Bronzes" 576
"God, the Invisible King" 585
"Rupam" 590
About Astrology 595
"Sanskrit Research" 603
"The Feast of Youth" 614
"Shama'a" 623

Part Nine
Bankim — Tilak — Dayananda

Rishi Bankim Chandra 637
Bal Gangadhar Tilak 642
A Great Mind, a Great Will 658
Dayananda: The Man and His Work 661
Dayananda and the Veda 667
The Men that Pass 676

Appendix One
Baroda Speeches and Reports

Speeches Written for the Maharaja of Baroda 683
  Medical Department 685
  The Revival of Industry in India 694
Report on Trade in the Baroda State 723
Opinions Written as Acting Principal 743

Appendix Two
Premises of Astrology

Premises of Astrology 755

Note on the Texts 765

List of Illustrations

Following page 458

1. *Nadir Shah Ordering a General Massacre*, by Hakim Muhammad Khan
2. Engraving of *The Vision of the Knight*, by Raphael (original painting, generally known as *Allegory*, in The National Gallery, London)

Following page 584

3. Kalasamhara Shiva, Chola dynasty, c. 10th century (The Art Gallery, Thanjavur)
4. Sundaramurti, the Shaivite Saint, Chola dynasty, c. 11th century (Colombo Museum)

Following page 590

5. Princely Doorkeeper, Pallava dynasty, 7th–8th century (Arjuna's Ratha, Mahabalipuram)
6. Poseidon of Artemision, c. 450 B.C. (National Museum, Athens)

Following page 626

7. *Rose-Rhythm*, by John Duncan Fergusson (1874–1961)
8. *Raga*, artist unknown (20th century)

Plates 1 and 2 are reproduced from plates in *The Modern Review*, vol. 6, no. 1 (July 1909). Plates 3, 4 and 5 are reproduced from recent photographs taken directly from the sculptures. The framing and angles of vision of these photographs are similar to those of the plates seen by Sri Aurobindo in *South Indian Bronzes* (1915) and *Rupam*, vol. 1, no. 1 (January 1920). Plates 7 and 8 are reproduced from plates in *Shama'a*, vol. 1, no. 2 (July 1920), and volume 1, no. 1 (April 1920).

Sri Aurobindo in Baroda, 1906

Part One

The Harmony of Virtue

Sri Aurobindo wrote all the pieces in this part in England between 1890 and 1892. He did not publish any of them during his lifetime.

The Sole Motive of Man's Existence

The banquet was half over and the wine in lively progress round the table; yet the ladies did not retire. The presence of women over the wine was one of the cardinal articles of Julian's social creed.

The conversation turned on the Christian religion which finally emerged from the arena stripped of all its plumes and in a condition woefully besmirched and bedraggled. Julian, who had taken the lead in blasphemy, closed the subject by observing "The popular Gods should be denied but respected."

"Yet you couple women and wine in your banquet-room" said Erinna.

"Ah, my friend, I only observe Nature's ordinances: in social life sex does not exist. Besides conversation requires speech as well as reason."

"You insinuate?"

"Nature gave man reason, speech to woman."

The men laughed.

"I will quote you two sentences from my new catechism, Julian" said Helen Woodward. "To what end has man used reason? To make Truth incredible. To what purpose has woman employed speech? To say nothing."

Julian felt that the tone of talk was becoming too serious and he glided away from the subject. During the flow of the wine someone coupled the names of Aphrodite and Bacchus.

"Ah yes" said Julian "how is it that we have not honoured the goddess who presides over this feast?"

"Let Julian do it in his master's fashion" suggested Corydon.

"I cannot tread beaten ground, Lionel."

"Ah but Love is as bottomless as the sea."

"Yet Plato was an excellent diver and brought up the richest pearls."

“Scarcely in one dive, Julian” said Powell.

“In five, if I remember aright.”

“Yet Agathon’s pearl was not flawless.”

“Do you propose to amend it?”

“I should but spoil it; but I could dive for a pearl of my own finding perhaps.”

“You shall have a rich meed of praise.”

“But, my dear critic” said Erinna “what ground was untrod by Plato?”

“Agathon painted the loveliness of Love but not Love himself.”

“Describe him then you” said Julian and raised his hand for silence.

Powell lay back a moment with his dark Welsh eyes fixed upon the ceiling and then spoke.

“I am told to describe Love” began Powell “yet in order to describe I must first define. And how is that possible with a being intangible as the air and inconstant as the moon? For Love is as slippery and mutable as Proteus, chameleon-hued, multiform, amorphous, infinite; the transmigrations of a Hindu soul are not more various and elastic; the harmony of his outlines are not blurred by chaos or the weird; rather like poetry and summer he wraps himself in a cool soft robe of velvet air and his feet are kissed by the laughing sea. But the translucent air which promises to reveal is a cloak far thicker than the gathering dusk. Thus the Eros of Praxiteles is not Love himself but the soul of the sculptor in one of her phases. Yet though Love has no one form, the idea, the soul of Love, that strange essence which walks for ever in the peopled Shadow-land, he is shackled in a single and uniform shape. How then shall I paint the idea of Love? The Greeks have described a child with a warlike bow of horn and bitter arrows tipped with steel, and modern poets inspired by this rude conception have fabled of the smart which is the herald of Love’s shaft. But these ideas however happy in themselves are by no means suitable to Love; for they are without two of his most essential elements, the subtle and the impalpable. The Hindus are more felicitous when they sing of Kama — for poetry alone can express him — the divine and radiant youth mounted on [an] emerald parrot, and bearing in his right hand a bow of flowers; the arrows too must be of the same soft and voluptuous material — for a preference I would name the shefali, the only blossom which has a soul. For Love's arrow never pains while in the wound — it is too subtle and flower-like — if a lover is in pain, it is because he loves himself more than Love — and that is the fault of Nature, not of Eros. Again Love has been painted as blind; and in this too the poets of Europe have conceived a lyrical fiction; for they say that Love looses his shafts and knows not whom they strike, whereas indeed he knows too well. It is his delight to unite those who should never have so much as met and to blind them to their own misery until the shefali arrow has withered in their hearts; and this he does with eyes open and of deliberate purpose. So far poets have sinned; but it is a vulgar error to suppose Love garrulous, a bastard child of Momus and Aphrodite; whereas in truth he is the lawful son of Hephaistos; but he has swallowed his father down, and for that reason those lovely lips, the scarlet portals of Passion's treasury, do not yield up their store of pearls and rubies — nay dare not so much as open lest Hephaistos escape and in his anger blast the world.

"Thus then I paint Love."

A murmur of applause flew like a wild spirit from mouth to mouth.

"Record me a confirmed Pythagorean" said Julian "the soul of Agathon did not perish in Macedonia."

"Yet I dare say, Vernon" replied Erinna "you do not believe a word of what Agathon has been saying."

"Yet your belief is the bastard of Momus rather than the heir of Peitho" rejoined Helen Woodward.

"I confess, Powell" replied Julian "that the manner pleased me better than the matter."

"Your reason, Julian?"

"Your picture was too beautiful to be true."

"That is a recommendation" said Erinna.

"To the artist but not to the critic."

"How would you define Love, Julian?" asked Corydon.

"Give me a moment to think."

"You will be harshly criticised."

"Heine speed me! How will this do — the smile of a drunken God."

There was applause.

"Ah but it is perfect" exclaimed Dufresne between a laugh and a sigh.

"But Marc might give us a better" suggested Philip.

"In its own way" assented Marc "Love is spiritual champagne, the best of wines if the briefest."

The characteristic answer set the echoes rocking to Homeric mirth.

"A poisonous purple flower" said Helen "but its chalice collects the pure wine of heaven."

"It is the paean of the soul heavenward or its dithyramb hell-ward" subjoined Corydon.

O'Ruark dissented. "It is a strange mania which everyone is bound to catch, mostly at a certain age — in short the spiritual measles."

A burst of laughter greeted this Irish flight.

"Love is a runner in the race of life with the parsley wreath of joy for his prize" said Philip, formulating the sensations of the moment in an aphorism.

"Alas, to wear it for a day" said Pattison Ely "he is the bridegroom of Sin and the father of Satiety."

"Ah no, but the child of Sin" corrected Julian "beautiful child of a more beautiful mother."

"Is it not Sin itself" suggested Erinna "Sin, the true philosopher's stone which turns life from dull lead to gold."

"What is Sin?" asked Julian smiling.

"The invention of spiritual alchemists; it turns a leaden life to gold."

"A modern discovery, I think" said Powell.

"A modern revival" corrected Erinna "they lost the secret in the Dark Ages; that is why the history of the time is so dull. Sin was legalised and therefore gave no pleasure."

Julian laughed.

"You have given me what I have long been in search of."

"What is that, Julian?"

"A good reason for the existence of Laws."

Erinna smiled and went on. "They lost the secret of Love too and found in its place the gorgeous phantasm of chivalry. I maintain that Love is only a form of Sin."

"Yet they recognise marriage."

"They raise a monument over the corpse of Love."

"She who could best tell us what Love is, sits silent" said Helen Woodward, looking at Ella.

"It is the sole motive of man's existence" replied Ella. It was the first time she had opened her lips but the thought in her mind leaped out before she could bring it back.

There was tender laughter as of disillusioned September lenient to the emerald hopes of April; yet in the company no one save only Julian had passed the farther bourne of youth. In these days men live too fast to reckon their age by years.

But Helen Woodward looked at Ella with a world of compassion in her beautiful wild eyes.

Night flew on wingéd feet and the wine was in their speech.

At last the ladies rose and left the room; to the heart of Ella it seemed as [*incomplete*]

The Harmony of Virtue

Book One

Keshav Ganesh — Broome Wilson

Keshav — My dear Broome, how opportune is your arrival! You will save me from the malady of work, it may be, from the dangerous opium of solitude. How is it I have not seen you for the last fortnight?

Wilson — Surely, Keshav, you can understand the exigencies of the Tripos?

Keshav — Ah, you are a happy man. You can do what you are told. But put off your academical aspirations until tomorrow and we will talk. The cigarettes are on the mantelpiece — pardon my indolence! — and the lucifers are probably stowed on the fruit-shelf. And here is coffee and a choice between cake and biscuits. Are you perfectly happy?

Wilson — In Elysium. But do not let the cigarettes run dry; the alliance of a warm fire and luxurious cushions will be too strong for my vigilance. Do you mean to tell me you can work here?

Keshav — Life is too precious to be wasted in labour, & above all this especial moment of life, the hour after dinner, when we have only just enough energy to be idle. Why, it is only for this I tolerate the wearisome activity of the previous twelve hours.

Wilson — You are a living paradox. Is it not just like you to pervert indolence into the aim of life?

Keshav — Why, what other aim can there be?

Wilson — Duty, I presume.

Keshav — I cannot consent to cherish an opinion until I realise the meaning of duty.

Wilson — I suppose I have pledged myself to an evening of metaphysics. We do our duty when we do what we ought to do.

Keshav — A very lucid explanation; but how do we know that we are doing what we ought to do?

Wilson — Why, we must do what society requires of us.

Keshav — And must we do that, even when society requires something dissonant with our nature or repugnant to our convictions?

Wilson — I conceive so.

Keshav — And if society requires us to sacrifice our children or to compel a widow to burn herself we are bound to comply?

Wilson — No; we should only do what is just and good.

Keshav — Then the fiat of society is not valid; duty really depends on something quite different.

Wilson — It appears so.

Keshav — Then what is your idea of that something quite different on which duty depends?

Wilson — Would it be wrong to select morality?

Keshav — Let us inquire. But before that is possible, let me know what morality is or I shall not know my own meaning.

Wilson — Morality is the conduct our ethical principles require of us.

Keshav — Take me with you. This ethical principle is then personal, not universal?

Wilson — I think so. For different localities different ethics. I am not a bigot to claim infallibility for my own country.

Keshav — So we must act in harmony with the code of ethics received as ideal by the society we move in?

Wilson — I suppose it comes to that.

Keshav — But, my dear Broome, does not that bring us back to your previous theory that we should do what society requires of us?

Wilson — I am painfully afraid it does.

Keshav — And we are agreed that this is not an accurate plumbline?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — You see the consequence?

Wilson — I see I must change my ground and say that we must do what our personal sense of the right and just requires of us.

Keshav — For example if my personal sense of the right and just, tells me that to lie is meritorious, it is my duty to lie to the best of my ability.

Wilson — But no one could possibly think that.

Keshav — I think that the soul of Ithacan Ulysses has not yet completed the cycle of his transmigrations, nor would I wrong the author of the Hippias by ignoring his conclusions. Or why go to dead men for an example? The mould has not fallen on the musical lips of the Irish Plato nor is Dorian Gray forgotten on the hundred tongues of Rumour.

Wilson — If our sense of right is really so prone to error, we should not rely upon it.

Keshav — Then, to quote M^rs^ Mountstuart, you have just succeeded in telling me nothing. Duty is not based on our personal sense of the right and just.

Wilson — I allow it is not.

Keshav — But surely there is some species of touchstone by which we can discern between the false and the true?

Wilson — If there is I cannot discover it.

Keshav — Ah, but do try again. There is luck in odd numbers.

Wilson — The only other touchstone I can imagine is religion; and now I come to think of it, religion is an infallible touchstone.

Keshav — I am glad you think so; for all I know at present you are very probably right. But have you any reason for your conviction?

Wilson — A code of morality built upon religion has no commerce with the demands of society or our personal sense of the right and just, but is the very law of God.

Keshav — I will not at present deny the reality of a personal God endowed with passions & prejudices; that is not indispensable to our argument. But are there not many religions and have they not all their peculiar schemes of morality?

Wilson — No doubt, but some are more excellent than others.

Keshav — And do you cherish the opinion that your own peculiar creed — I believe it to be Christianity without Christ — is indubitably the most excellent of all religions?

Wilson — By far the most excellent.

Keshav — And your own ethical scheme, again the Christian without the emotional element, the best of all ethical schemes?

Wilson — I have no doubt of it.

Keshav — And they are many who dissent from you, are there not?

Wilson — Oh without doubt.

Keshav — And you would impose your ethical scheme on them?

Wilson — No; but I imagine it to be the goal whither all humanity is tending.

Keshav — That is a very different question. Do you think that when a man's life is in harmony with his own creed, but not with yours, he is therefore not virtuous, or in your own phrase, deviates from his duty?

Wilson — God forbid!

Keshav — Then you really do believe that a man does his duty when he lives in harmony with the ethical scheme patronised by his own religion, as a Mohammadan if he follows the injunctions of the Prophet, a Hindu if he obeys the Vedic Scriptures, a Christian, if his life is a long self-denial.

Wilson — That I admit.

Keshav — Then the ethical scheme of Islam is as much the very law of God, as the ethical scheme of Christianity, and the morals of Hinduism are not less divine than the morals of Islam.

Wilson — I hardly understand how you arrive at that conclusion.

Keshav — Did you not say, Broome, that religion is an infallible test of duty, because it is the very law of God?

Wilson — I still say so.

Keshav — And that everyone must adopt his own religion as the test of what he should do or not do?

Wilson — I cannot deny it.

Keshav — Then must you not either admit the reason to be invalid or that anyone's peculiar religion, to whatever species it may belong, is the very law of God?

Wilson — I prefer the second branch of the dilemma.

Keshav — But tho' every religion is the very law of God, nevertheless you will often find one enjoining a practice which to another is an abomination. And can God contradict himself?

Wilson — You mistake the point. Islam, Hinduism, indeed all Scriptural religions were given, because the peoples professing them were not capable of receiving a higher light.

Keshav — Is not God omnipotent?

Wilson — A limited God is not God at all.

Keshav — Then was it not within his omnipotent power to so guide the world, that there would be no necessity for different dealings with different peoples?

Wilson — It was within his power, but he did not choose.

Keshav — Exactly: he did not choose. He of set purpose preferred a method which he knew would bring him to falsehood and injustice.

Wilson — What words you use! The truth is merely that God set man to develop under certain conditions and suited his methods to those conditions.

Keshav — Oh, then God is practically a scientist making an experiment; and you demand for him reverence and obedience from the creature vivisected. Then I can only see one other explanation. Having created certain conditions he could not receive the homage of mankind without various and mutually dissentient revelations of his will.

Now imagine a physician with theosophical power who for purposes of gain so modified the climatic features of Judaea & Arabia that the same disease required two distinct methods of treatment in the one & the other. This he does wilfully and deliberately and with foreknowledge of the result. As soon as his end is assured, our physician goes to Judaea and gives the people a drug which, he tells them, is the sole remedy for their disease, but all others are the property of quacks and will eventually induce an increase of the malady. Five years later the same physician goes off to Arabia and here he gives them another drug of an accurately opposite nature about which he imparts the same instructions. Now if we remember that the climatic conditions which necessitated the deception, were the deliberate work of the deceiver, shall we not call that physician a liar and an impostor? Is God a liar? or an impostor?

Wilson — We must not measure the Almighty by our poor mortal standards.

Keshav — Pshaw, Broome, if the legislator overrides his own laws, how can you hope that others will observe them?

Wilson — But if God in his incomprehensible wisdom and goodness —

Keshav — Incomprehensible indeed! If there is any meaning in words, the God you have described, can neither be wise nor good. Will you show me the flaw in my position?

Wilson — I cannot discover it.

Keshav — Then your suspicion is born of your disgust at the conclusion to which I have forced you.

Wilson — I am afraid it is.

Keshav — Well, shall we go on with the discussion or should I stop here?

Wilson — Certainly let us go on. I need not shy at a truth however disagreeable.

Keshav — First let me give you a glass of this champagne. I do not keep any of those infernal concoctions of alcohol and perdition of which you in Europe are so enamoured. Now here is the conclusion I draw from all that we have been saying: There are two positions open to you. One is that of the fanatic. You may say that you and those who believe with you are the specially chosen of God to be the receptacles of his grace and that all who have heard and rejected his gospel together with those who have not so much as imagined its possibility must share a similar fate and go into the outer darkness where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. If that is the line you take up, my answer is that God is an unjust God and the wise will prefer the torments of the damned to any communion with him. The fanatic of course would be ready with his retort that the potter has a right to do what he will with his vessels. At that point I usually abandon the conversation; to tell him that a metaphor is no argument would be futile. Even if he saw it, he would reply that God's ways are incomprehensible and therefore we should accept them without a murmur. That is a position which I have not the patience to undermine, nor if I had it, have I sufficient self-control to preserve my gravity under the ordeal.

Wilson — I at least, Keshav, am not in danger of burdening your patience. I have no wish to evade you by such a back-door as that.

Keshav — Then is it not plain to you, that you must abandon the religious basis as unsound?

Wilson — Yes, for you have convinced me that I have been talking nonsense the whole evening.

Keshav — Not at all, Broome: only you like most men have not accustomed yourself to clear and rigorous thought.

Wilson — I am afraid, logic is not sufficiently studied.

Keshav — Is it not studied too much? Logic dwindles the river of thought into a mere canal. The logician thinks so accurately that he is seldom right. No, what we want is some more of that sense which it is a mockery to call common.

Wilson — But if we were to eliminate the divine element from the balance, would not religion be a possible basis?

Keshav — No, for religious ethics would then be a mere expression of will on the part of Society. And that is open to the criticism that the commands of Society may be revolting to the right and just or inconsistent with the harmony of life.

Wilson — But supposing everyone to interpret for himself the ethics approved by his own creed?

Keshav — The Inquisitors did that. Do you consider the result justified the method?

Wilson — The Inquisitors?

Keshav — They were a class of men than whom you will find none more scrupulous or in their private lives more gentle, chivalrous & honourable, or in their public conduct more obedient to their sense of duty. They tortured the bodies of a few, that the souls of thousands might live. They did murder in the sight of the Lord and looked upon their handiwork and saw that it was good.

Wilson — My dear Keshav, surely that is extravagant.

Keshav — Why, do you imagine that they were actuated by any other motive?

Wilson — Yes, by the desire to preserve the integrity of the Church.

Keshav — And is not that the first duty of every Christian?

Wilson — Only by the permissible method of persuasion.

Keshav — That is your opinion but was it theirs? Duty is a phantasm spawned in the green morass of human weakness & ignorance, but perpetuated by vague thought and vaguer sentiment. And so long as we are imperatively told to do our duty, without knowing why we should do it, the vagueness of private judgment, the cruelty of social coercion will be the sole arbiters and the saint will be a worse enemy of virtue than the sinner.

Will you have another cigarette?

Wilson — Thanks, I will.

But, Keshav, I am not disposed to leave the discussion with this purely negative result. Surely there is some guiding principle which should modify and harmonize our actions. Or are you favourable to an anarchy in morals?

Keshav — No, Broome. If culture and taste were universal, principle would then be a superfluous note in the world's composition. But so long as men are crude, without tact, formless, incapable of a balanced personality, so long the banner of the ideal must be waved obtrusively before the eyes of men, and education remain a necessity, so long must the hateful phrase, a higher morality, mean something more than empty jargon of sciolists. Yes, I think there is that guiding principle you speak of, or at least we may arrive at something like it, if we look long enough.

Wilson — Then do look for it, Keshav. I am sure you will find something original and beautiful. Come, I will be idle tonight and abandon the pursuit of knowledge to waste time in the pursuit of thought. Begin and I will follow my leader.

Keshav — Before I begin, let me remove one or two of those popular fallacies born of indolence which encumber the wings of the speculator. And first let me say, I will not talk of duty: it is a word I do not like, for it is always used in antagonism to pleasure, and brings back the noisome savour of the days when to do what I was told, was held out as my highest legitimate aspiration. I will use instead the word virtue, whose inherent meaning is manliness, in other words, the perfect evolution by the human being of the inborn qualities and powers native to his humanity.

Another thing I would like to avoid is the assumption that there is somewhere and somehow an ideal morality, which draws an absolute and a sharp distinction between good and evil. Thus it is easy to say that chastity is good, licence is evil. But what if someone were to protest that this is a mistake, that chastity is bad, licence is good. How are you going to refute him? If you appeal to authority, he will deny that your authority is valid; if you quote religion, he will remind you that your religion is one of a multitude; if you talk of natural perception, he will retort that natural perception cancels itself by arriving at opposite results. How will you unseat him from his position?

Wilson — Yes, you can show that good is profitable, while evil is hurtful.

Keshav — You mean the appeal to utility?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — That is without doubt an advance. Now can you show that good is profitable, that is to say, has good effects, while evil is hurtful, that is to say, has bad effects?

Wilson — Easily. Take your instance of chastity and licence. One is the ground-work of that confidence which is the basis of marriage and therefore the keystone of society; the other kills confidence and infects the community with a bad example.

Keshav — You fly too fast for me, Broome. You say chastity is the basis of marriage?

Wilson — Surely you will not deny it?

Keshav — And licence in one leads to prevalent unchastity?

Wilson — It has that tendency.

Keshav — And you think you have proved chastity to be profitable and licence hurtful?

Wilson — Why, yes. Do not you?

Keshav — No, my friend; for I have not convinced myself that marriage is a good effect and prevalent unchastity a bad effect.

Wilson — Only paradox can throw any doubt on that. Assuredly you will not deny that without marriage and public decency, society is unimaginable?

Keshav — I suppose you will allow that in Roman society under the Emperors marriage was extant? And yet will you tell me that in those ages chastity was the basis of marriage?

Wilson — I should say that marriage in the real sense of the word was not extant.

Keshav — Then what becomes of your postulate that without marriage and public decency society is unimaginable?

Wilson — Can you bestow the name on the world of Nero & Caracalla?

Keshav — Certainly, if I understand the significance of the word. Wherever the mutual dependence of men builds up a community cemented by a chain of rights and liabilities, that, I imagine, is a society.

Wilson — Certainly, that is a society.

Keshav — And will you then hesitate to concede the name to imperial Italy?

Wilson — Yes, but you will not deny that from the unreality of marriage and the impudent disregard of common decency, — at once its cause and effect — there grew up a prevalence of moral corruption, but for which the Roman world would not have succumbed with such nerveless ease to Scythia and its populous multitude.

Keshav — What then? I do not deny it.

Wilson — Was not that a bad effect?

Keshav — By bad, I presume you mean undesirable?

Wilson — That of course.

Keshav — Perhaps it was, but should we not say that Rome fell because barbarism was strong not because she was feeble?

Wilson — Rome uncorrupted was able to laugh at similar perils.

Keshav — Then to have Rome safe, you would have had her remain barbarous?

Wilson — Did I say so?

Keshav — You implied it. In Rome the triumphal chariot of Corruption was drawn by the winged horses, Culture and Art. And it is always so. From the evergreen foliage of the Periclean era there bloomed that gorgeous and overblown flower, Athens of the philosophers, a corrupt luxurious city, the easy vassal of Macedon, the easier slave of Rome. From the blending of Hellenic with Persian culture was derived that Oriental pomp and lavish magnificence which ruined the kingdoms of the East. And Rome, their conqueror, she too when the Roman in her died and the Italian lived, when the city of wolves became the abode of men, bartered her savage prosperity for a splendid decline. Yes, the fulness of the flower is the sure prelude of decay.

Look at the India of Vikramaditya. How gorgeous was her beauty! how Olympian the voices of her poets! how sensuous the pencil of her painters! how languidly voluptuous the outlines of her sculpture! In those days every man was marvellous to himself and many were marvellous to their fellows; but the mightiest marvel of all were the philosophers. What a Philosophy was that! For she scaled the empyrean on the wingèd sandals of meditation, soared above the wide fires of the sun and above the whirling stars, up where the flaming walls of the universe are guiltless of wind or cloud, and there in the burning core of existence saw the face of the most high God. She saw God and did not perish; rather fell back to earth, not blasted with excess of light, but with a mystic burden on her murmuring lips too large for human speech to utter or for the human brain to understand. Such was she then. Yet five rolling centuries had not passed when sleepless, all-beholding Surya saw the sons of Mahomet pour like locusts over the green fields of her glory and the wrecks of that mighty fabric whirling down the rapids of barbarism into the shores of night. They were barbarous, therefore mighty: we were civilized, therefore feeble.

Wilson — But was not your civilization premature? The building too hastily raised disintegrates and collapses, for it has the seeds of death in its origin. May not the utilitarian justly condemn it as evil?

Keshav — What the utilitarian may not justly do, it is beyond the limits of my intellect to discover. Had it not been for these premature civilizations, had it not been for the Athens of Plato, the Rome of the Caesars, the India of Vikramaditya, what would the world be now? It was premature, because barbarism was yet predominant in the world; and it is wholly due to our premature efflorescence that your utilitarians can mount the high stool of folly and defile the memory of the great. When I remember that, I do not think I can deny that we were premature. I trust and believe that the civilization of the future will not come too late rather than too early. No, the utilitarian with his sordid creed may exalt the barbarian and spit his livid contempt upon culture, but the great heart of the world will ever beat more responsive to the flame-wingèd words of the genius than to the musty musings of the moralists. It is better to be great and perish, than to be little and live. But where was I when the wind of tirade carried me out of my course?

Wilson — You were breaching the defences of utilitarian morality.

Keshav — Ah, I remember. What I mean is this; the utilitarian arrives at his results by an arbitrary application of the epithets "*good*" and "*bad*".[1] This mistake is of perpetual occurrence in Bentham and gives the basis for the most monstrous and shocking of his theories. For example the servitude of women is justified by the impossibility of marriage without it. Again he condemns theft by a starving man as a heinous offence because it is likely to disturb security. He quite forgets to convince us, as the author of a system professedly grounded on logic should have done, that the survival of marriage is a desirable effect or property more valuable than life.

---

[1] *The following passage was written at the top of the manuscript page. Its place of insertion was not marked:*

When we say a fruit is wholesome or unwholesome, we mean that it is harmless & nutritious food or that it tends to dysentery & colic, but when we say that anything is good or bad, we apply the epithets like tickets without inquiring what we mean by them; we have no moral touchstone that tells gold from spurious metal.

Wilson — I confess that Bentham on those two subjects is far too cavalier and offhand to please me, but the utilitarian system can stand on another basis than Bentham supplies.

Keshav — Yours is a curious position, Broome. You are one of those who would expunge the part of Hamlet from the play that bears his name. Your religion is Christianity without Christ, your morality Benthamism without Bentham. Nevertheless my guns are so pointed that they will breach any wall you choose to set up. For this is common to all utilitarians that they lose sight of a paramount consideration: the epithets "*good*" and "*bad*" are purely conventional and have no absolute sense, but their meaning may be shifted at the will of the speaker. Indeed they have been the root of so many revolting ideas and of so many and such monstrous social tyrannies, that I should not be sorry to see them expelled from the language, as unfit to be in the company of decent words. Why do you smile?

Wilson — The novelty of the idea amused me.

Keshav — Yes, I know that "*original*" and "*fool*" are synonymous in the world's vocabulary.

Wilson — That was a nasty one for me. However I am afraid I shall be compelled to agree with you.

Keshav — Do you admit that there is only one alternative, faith without reason or the recognition of morality as a conventional term without any absolute meaning?

Wilson — I should rather say that morality is the idea of what is just and right in vogue among a given number of people.

Keshav — You have exactly described it. Are you content to take this as your touchstone?

Wilson — Neither this, nor faith without reason.

Keshav — Two positions abandoned at a blow? That is more than I had the right to expect. Now, as the time is slipping by, let us set out on the discovery of some law, or should I not rather say, some indicating tendency by which we may arrive at a principle of life?

Wilson — I am anxious to hear it.

Keshav — Let us furnish ourselves with another glass of claret for the voyage. You will have some?

Wilson — Thanks.

Keshav — My first difficulty when I set out on a voyage of discovery is to select the most probable route. I look at my chart and I see one marked justice along which the trade winds blow; but whoever has weighed anchor on this path has arrived like Columbus at another than the intended destination, without making half so valuable a discovery. Another route is called "beauty" and along this no-one has yet sailed. An Irish navigator has indeed attempted it and made some remarkable discoveries, but he has clothed his account in such iridescent wit and humour, that our good serious English audience either grin foolishly at him from a vague idea that they ought to feel amused or else shake their heads and grumble that the fellow is corrupting the youth and ruining their good old Saxon gravity; why he actually makes people laugh at the beliefs they have been taught by their venerable and aged grandmothers. But as for believing his traveller's tales — they believe them not a whit. Possibly if we who do not possess this dangerous gift of humour, were to follow the path called beauty, we might hit the target of our desires: if not we might at least discover things wonderful and new to repay us for our labour. And so on with other possible routes. Now which shall we choose? for much hangs on our selection. Shall we say justice?

Wilson — Let me know first what justice is.

Keshav — I do not know, but I think no-one would hesitate to describe it as forbearance from interfering with the rights of others.

Wilson — That is a good description.

Keshav — Possibly, but so long as we do not know what are the rights of others, the description, however good, can have no meaning.

Wilson — Can we not discover, what are the rights of others?

Keshav — We have been trying for the last three-thousand years; with how much or how little success, I do not like to say.

Wilson — Then let us try another tack.

Keshav — Can you tell me which one we should choose? My own idea is that the word "*beauty*" is replete with hopeful possibilities.

Wilson — Is not that because it is used in a hundred different senses?

Keshav — I own that the word, as used today, is like so many others a relative term. But if we were to fix a permanent and absolute meaning on it, should we not say that beauty is that which fills us with a sense of satisfying pleasure and perfect fitness?

Wilson — Yes, I think beauty must certainly be judged by its effects.

Keshav — But are there not minds so moulded that they are dead to all beauty and find more charm in the showy and vulgar than in what is genuinely perfect and symmetrical?

Wilson — There can be no doubt of that.

Keshav — Then beauty still remains a relative term?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — That is unfortunate. Let us try and find some other test for it. And in order to arrive at this, should we not take something recognized by all to be beautiful and examine in what its beauty lies?

Wilson — That is distinctly our best course. Let us take the commonest type of beauty, a rose.

Keshav — Then in what lies the beauty of a rose if not in its symmetry? Why has the whole effect that satisfying completeness which subjugates the senses, if not because Nature has blended in harmonious proportion the three elements of beauty; colour, perfume, and form? Now beauty may exist separately in any two of these elements and where it does so, the accession of the third would probably mar the perfection of that species of beauty; as in sculpture where form in its separate existence finds a complete expression and is blended harmoniously with perfume — for character or emotion is the perfume of the human form; just as sound is the perfume of poetry and music — but if a sculptor tints his statue, the effect displeases us, because it seems gaudy or tinsel, or in plain words disproportionate.

In some cases beauty seems to have only one of these elements, for example frankincense and music which seem to possess perfume only, but in reality we shall find that they have each one or both of the other elements. For incense would not be half so beautiful, if we did not see the curling folds of smoke floating like loose drapery in the air, nor would music be music if not harmoniously blended with form and colour, or as we usually call them, technique and meaning. Again there are other cases in which beauty undoubtedly has one only of the three elements: and such are certain scents like myrrh, eucalyptus and others, which possess neither colour nor form, isolated hues such as the green and purple and violet painted on floor and walls by the afternoon sun and architectural designs which have no beauty but the isolated beauty of form.

The criticism of ages has shown a fit appreciation of these harmonies by adjudging the highest scale of beauty to those forms which blend the three elements and the lowest to those which boast only of one. Thus sculpture is a far nobler art than architecture, for while both may compass an equal perfection of form, sculpture alone possesses the larger harmony derived by the union of form and perfume. Similarly the human form is more divine than sculpture because it has the third element, colour; and the painting of figures is more beautiful than the portrayal of landscapes, because the latter is destitute of perfume, while figures of life have always that character or emotion which we have called the perfume of the living form.

Again if we take two forms of beauty otherwise exactly on the same level, we shall find that the more beautiful in which the three elements are more harmoniously blended. As for instance a perfect human form and a perfect poem; whichever we may admire, we shall find our reason, if we probe for it, to be that the whole is more perfectly blended and the result a more satisfying completeness.

If we think of all this, it will assuredly not be too rash to describe beauty by calling the general effect harmony and the ulterior cause proportion. What is your opinion, Broome?

Wilson — Your idea is certainly remarkable and novel, but the language you have selected is so intricate that I am in the dark as to whether it admits of invariable application.

Keshav — The usual effect of endeavouring to be too explicit is to mystify the hearer. I will try to dive into less abysmal depths. Can you tell me, why a curve is considered more beautiful than a straight line?

Wilson — No, except that the effect is more pleasing.

Keshav — Ah yes, but why should it be more pleasing?

Wilson — I cannot tell.

Keshav — I will tell you. It is because a curve possesses that variety which is the soul of proportion. It rises, swells and falls with an exact propriety — it is at once various and regular as rolling water; while the stiff monotony of a straight line disgusts the soul by its meaningless rigidity and want of proportion. On the other hand a system of similar curves, unless very delicately managed, cannot possibly suggest the idea of beauty: and that is because there is no proportion, for proportion, I would impress on you, consists in a regular variety. And thus a straight line, tho' in itself ugly, can be very beautiful if properly combined with curves. Here again the like principle applies.

Do you now understand?

Wilson — Yes, I admit that your theory is wonderfully complete and consistent.

Keshav — If you want a farther illustration, I will give you one. And just as before we selected the most commonly received type of beauty, I will now select the most perfect: and that, I think, is a perfect poem. Would you not agree with me?

Wilson — No, I should give the palm to a perfectly beautiful face.

Keshav — I think you are wrong.

Wilson — Have you any reason for thinking so?

Keshav — Yes, and to me a very satisfying reason. The three elements of beauty do not blend with absolutely perfect harmony in a human face. Have you not frequently noticed that those faces which express the most soul, the most genius, the most character, are not perfectly harmonious in their form?

Wilson — Yes, the exceptions are rare.

Keshav — And the reason is that to emphasize the character, the divine artist has found himself compelled to emphasize certain of the features above the others, for instance, the lips, the eyes, the forehead, the chin, and to give them an undue prominence which destroys that proportion without which there can be no perfect harmony. Do you perceive my meaning?

Wilson — Yes, and I do not think your conclusions can be disputed.

Keshav — In a perfectly beautiful face the emotion has to be modified and discouraged, so as not to disturb the harmony of form: but in a perfectly beautiful poem the maker has indeed to blend with exquisite nicety the three elements of beauty, but though the colour may be gorgeous, the emotion piercingly vivid, the form deliriously lovely, yet each of these has so just a share of the effect, that we should find it difficult to add to or to detract from any one of them without fatally injuring the perfection of the whole.

And so it is with every form of beauty that is not originally imperfect; to detract or add would be alike fatal; for alteration means abolition. Each syllable is a key-stone and being removed, the whole imposing structure crumbles in a moment to the ground.

Can we better describe this perfect blending of parts than by the word proportion? or is its entire effect anything but harmony?

Wilson — There are indeed no better words.

Keshav — And this harmony runs through the warp and woof of Nature. Look at the stars, the brain of heaven, as Meredith calls them. How they march tossing on high their golden censers to perfume night with the frankincense of beauty! They are a host of wingèd insects crawling on the blue papyrus of heaven, a swarm of golden gnats, a cloud of burning dust, a wonderful effect of sparkling atoms caught and perpetuated by the instantaneous pencil of Nature. And yet they are none of all these, but a vast and interdependent economy of worlds.

Those burning globes as they roll in silent orbits through the infinite inane, are separated by an eternity of space. They are individual and alone, but from each to each thrill influences unfathomed and unconscious, marvellous magnetisms, curious repulsions that check like adverse gales or propel like wind in bellying canvas, and bind these solitary splendours into one supernal harmony of worlds. The solar harmony we know. How gloriously perfect it is, how united in isolation, how individual in unity! How star answers to star and the seven wandering dynasts of destiny as they roll millions of leagues apart, drag with them the invisible magnetic cord which binds them for ever to the sun. We believe that those lights we call fixed are each a sun with a rhythmic harmony of planets dancing in immeasurable gyrations around one immovable, immortal star. More, is it extravagant to guess that what to us is fixed, is a planet to God? Perhaps to the inhabitants of the moon this tumbling earth of ours is a fixed and constant light, and perhaps the glorious ball of fire we worship as the Lord of Light, is the satrap of some majesty more luminous and more large. Thus we may conceive of the universe as a series of subordinate harmonies, each perfect in itself and helping to consummate the harmony which is one and universal.

Well may the poet give the stars that majestic synonym

> The army of unalterable law.

But the law that governs the perishable flower, the ephemeral moth, is not more changeful than the law that disciplines the movements of the eternal fires. The rose burns in her season; the moth lives in his hour: not even the wind bloweth where it listeth unless it preserve the boundaries prescribed by Nature. Each is a separate syllable in the grand poem of the universe: and it is all so inalterable because it is so perfect. Yes, Tennyson was right, tho' like most poets, he knew not what he said, when he wrote those lines on the flower in the crannies: if we know what the flower is, we know also what God is and what man.

Wilson — I begin to catch a glimpse of your drift. But is there no discordant element in this universal harmony?

Keshav — There is. As soon as we come to life, we find that God's imagination is no longer unerring; we almost think that he has reached a conception which it is beyond his power to execute. It is true that there are grand and beautiful lines in the vast epic of life, but others there are so unmusical and discordant that we can scarcely believe but that Chance was the author of existence. The beautiful lines are no doubt wonderful; among the insects the peacock-winged butterfly, the light spendthrift of unclouded hours; the angry wasp, that striped and perilous tiger of the air; the slow murmuring bee, an artist in honey and with the true artist's indolence outside his art: and then the birds — the tawny eagle shouting his clangorous aspiration against the sun; the cruel shrike, his talons painted in murder; the murmuring dove robed in the pure and delicate hue of constancy: the inspired skylark with his matin-song descending like a rain of fire from the blushing bosom of the dawn. Nay the beasts too are not without their fine individualities: the fire-eyed lion, the creeping panther, the shy fawn, the majestic elephant; each fill a line of the great poem and by contrast enhance harmony.

But what shall we say of the imaginations that inspire nothing but disgust, the grub, the jackal, the vulture? And when we come to man, we are half inclined to throw up our theory in despair. For we only see a hideous dissonance, a creaking melody, a ghastly failure. We see the philosopher wearing a crown of thorns and the fool robed in purple and fine linen: the artist drudging at a desk and the average driving his quill thro' reams of innocent paper: we see genius thrust aside into the hedges and stupidity driving her triumphal chariot on the beaten paths of social existence. Once we might have said that nature like a novice in art was rising through failures and imperfections into an artistic consummation and that when Evolution had exhausted her energies, her eyes would gaze on a perfect universe. But when we come to the human being, her most ambitious essay, the cynicism of frustrated hope steals slowly over us. I am reminded of some lines in a sonnet more remarkable for power than for felicitous expression.

> She crowned her wild work with one foulest wrong
> When first she lighted on a seeming goal
> And darkly blundered on man's suffering soul.

It is as if nature in admitting action into her universe were in the position of a poet who trusted blindly to inspiration without subjecting his work to the instincts of art or the admonitions of the critical faculty; but once dissatisfied with his work begins to pass his pen repeatedly thro' his after performances, until he seems at last to have lighted on a perfect inspiration. His greatest essay completed he suddenly discovers that one touch of realism running thro' the whole work has fatally injured its beauty. Similarly Nature in moulding man, made a mistake of the first importance. She gave him the faculty of reason and by the use of her gift he has stultified the beauty of her splendid imaginations.

Tennyson, by one of his felicitous blunders, has again hit upon the truth when he conceives the solemn wail of a heaven-born spirit in the agony of his disillusioning.

> I saw him in the shining of his stars,
> I marked him in the flowering of his fields,
> But in his ways with men I found him not.

How true is every syllable! God burns in the star, God blossoms in the rose: the cloud is the rushing dust of his chariot, the sea is the spuming mirror of his moods. His breath whistles in the wind, his passion reddens in the sunset, his anguish drops in the rain. The darkness is the soft fall of his eyelashes over the purple magnificence of his eyes: the sanguine dawn is his flushed and happy face as he leaves the flowery pillow of sleep; the moonlight is nothing but the slumberous glint of his burning tresses when thro' them glimmer the heaving breasts of Eternity. What to him are the petty imaginings of human aspiration; our puny frets, our pitiable furies, our melodramatic passions? If he deigns to think of us, it is as incompetent actors who have wholly misunderstood the bent of our powers. The comedian rants in the vein of Bombastes; the tragic artist plays the buffoon in the pauses of a pantomime, and the genius that might have limned the passion of a Romeo, moulds the lumpish ineptitude of a Cloten. God lifting his happy curls from the white bosom of Beauty, shoots the lightning of his glance upon our antics and we hear his mockery hooting at us in the thunder. Why should he squander a serious thought on a farce so absurd and extravagant?

Wilson — And are these the ultimate syllables of Philosophy?

Keshav — You are impatient, Broome. What I have arrived at is the discovery that human life is, if not the only, at any rate the principal note in Nature that jars with the grand idea underlying her harmony. Do you agree with me?

Wilson — He would be a hopeless optimist who did not.

Keshav — And are you of the opinion that it is the exercise by man of his will-power to which we owe the discord?

Wilson — No, I would throw the blame on Nature.

Keshav — After the example of Adam? "The woman tempted me and I did eat." I too am a son of Adam and would throw the blame on Nature. But once her fault is admitted, has not the human will been manifestly her accomplice?

Wilson — Her instrument rather.

Keshav — Very well, her instrument. You admit that?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — Then if the human will, prompted by Nature or her servant, False Reason, has marred the universal harmony, may not the human will, prompted by Right Reason who is also the servant of Nature, mend the harmony he has marred? Or if that puzzles you, let me put the question in another form. Does not a wilful choice of sensuality imply an alternative of purity?

Wilson — It does.

Keshav — And a wilful choice of unbelief an alternative of belief?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — Then on the same principle, if the human will chose to mar the harmony of nature, was it not within its power to choose the opposite course and fulfil the harmony?

Wilson — Certainly that follows.

Keshav — And through ignorance and the promptings of False Reason we preferred to spoil rather than to fulfil?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — And we can mend what we mar?

Wilson — Sometimes.

Keshav — Well then, can we not choose to mend the harmony we originally chose to mar?

Wilson — I do not think it probable.

Keshav — An admission that it is possible, is all I want to elicit from you.

Wilson — I do not know that.

Keshav — Have not some episodes of the great epic rung more in unison with the grand harmony than others?

Wilson — Yes; the old-world Greeks were more in tune with the Universe than we.

Keshav — The name of the episode does not signify. You admit a race or an epoch which has fallen into the harmony more than others?

Wilson — Freely.

Keshav — Then as you admit the more and the less, will you not admit that the more may become in its turn the less — that there may be the yet more? May we not attain to a more perfect harmony with the universe than those who have been most in harmony with it?

Wilson — It is possible.

Keshav — If it is possible, should we not go on and inquire how it is possible?

Wilson — That is the next step.

Keshav — And when we have found an answer to our inquiries, shall we not have solved this difficult question of a new basis for morality?

Wilson — Yes, we shall: for I see now that to be in harmony with beauty, or, in other words, to take the guiding principle of the universe as the guiding principle of human life, is the final and perfect aim of the human species.

Keshav — Broome, you have the scent of a sleuth-hound.

Wilson — I am afraid that is ironical. You must remember that we are not all philosophers yet. Still I should have liked to see how the idea came out in practice.

Keshav — If you can spare me another night or it may be two, we will pursue the idea through its evolutions. I am deeply interested, for to me as to you it is perfectly novel.

Wilson — Shall you be free on Thursday night?

Keshav — As free as the wind.

Wilson — Then I will come. Goodnight.

Keshav — Goodnight, and God reward you for giving me your company.

End of Book the First

Book Two

Keshav Ganesh [Desai] — Trevor — Broome Wilson

Keshav — Ah, Broome, so the magnetism of thought has broken the chains of duty? May I introduce you? Mr. Trevor of Kings, Mr. Broome Wilson of Jesus. Would you like wine or coffee?

Wilson — Perhaps for an evening of metaphysics wine is the most appropriate prelude.

Keshav — You agree then with the Scythians who made a point of deliberating when drunk? They were perhaps right; one is inclined to think that most men are wiser drunk than sober. I have been endeavouring to explain my line of argument to Trevor, I am afraid with indifferent success.

Wilson — Can I do anything to help you?

Keshav — I have no doubt you can. Would you mind stating your difficulty, Trevor? I think you allow that every other basis of morality is unsound but uphold the utilitarian model as perfectly logical and consistent.

Trevor — Yes, that is what I hold to, and I do not think, Desai, you have at all shaken its validity.

Keshav — You do not admit that the epithets "good" and "bad" have a purely conventional force.

Trevor — Yes, I admit that, but I add that we have fixed a definite meaning on the epithets and adhered to it all through our system.

Keshav — If so, you are fortunate. Can you tell me the definite meaning to which you refer?

Trevor — The basis of our system is this, that whatever is profitable, is good, whatever is the reverse, is evil. Is not that an unassailable basis?

Keshav — I do not think so; for two ambiguous words you have merely substituted two others only less ambiguous.

Trevor — I fail to see your reasoning.

Keshav — I will endeavour to show you what I mean. You will admit that one man's meat is another man's poison, will you not?

Trevor — Yes, and that is where our system works so beautifully; for we bring in our arithmetical solution of balancing the good and the evil of an action and if the scale of the evil rises, we stamp it as good, if the scale of the good rises, we brand it as evil. What do you say to that?

Keshav — Dear me! that does indeed sound simple and satisfying. I am afraid, Broome, we shall have to throw up our theory in favour of Bentham's. Your system is really so attractive and transparent, Trevor, that I should dearly like to learn more about it.

Trevor — Now you are indulging in irony, Desai; you know Bentham as well as I do.

Keshav — Not quite so well as all that; but I avow I have studied him very carefully. Yet from some cause I have not discovered, his arguments seldom seemed to me to have any force, while you on the other hand do really strike home to the judgment. And therefore I should like to see whether you are entirely at one with Bentham. For example I believe you prefer the good of the community to the good of the individual, do you not?

Trevor — Not at all: it is the individuals who are the community.

Keshav — It is gratifying to learn that: but if the interests of a few individuals conflict with the interests of the general body, you prefer the interests of the general body, do you not?

Trevor — As a matter of course.

Keshav — And, as a general rule, if you have to deal with a number of persons and the good of some is not reconcilable with the good of others, you prefer the good of the greater number?

Trevor — That again is obvious.

Keshav — So you accept the dogma "the greatest good of the greatest number", for if one interest of a given person or number of persons conflict with another interest, you prefer the greater?

Trevor — Without hesitation.

Keshav — And so the Athenians were right when they put Socrates to death.

Trevor — What makes you advance so absurd a paradox?

Keshav — Why, your arithmetical system of balancing the good and the evil. The injury to Socrates is not to be put in comparison with the profit to the State, for we prefer the good of the greater number, and the pleasure experienced by the youths he corrupted in his discourse and the enjoyment of their corruption is not to be so much considered as the pain they would experience from the effects of their corruption and the pain inflicted on the state by the rising generation growing up corrupt and dissolute, for among conflicting interests we prefer the greatest.

Trevor — But Socrates did not corrupt the youth of Athens.

Keshav — The Athenians thought he was corrupting their youth and they were bound to act on their opinion.

Trevor — They were not bound to act on their opinion, but on the facts.

Keshav — What is this you are telling me, Trevor? We are then only to act when we have a correct opinion, and, seeing that a definitely correct opinion can only be formed by posterity after we are dead, we are not to use your arithmetical balance or at least can only use it when we are dead? Then I do not see much utility in your arithmetical balance.

Trevor — Now I come to think of it, the Athenians were right in putting Socrates to death.

Keshav — And the Jews in crucifying Christ?

Trevor — Yes.

Keshav — I admire your fortitude, my dear Trevor. And if the English people had thought Bentham was corrupting their youth, they would have been right in hanging Bentham, would they not?

Trevor — What a fellow you are, Desai! Of course what I mean is that the Athenians & the Jews did not listen to their honest opinion but purely to the voice of malice.

Keshav — Then if these wicked people who put wise men to death not in honest folly but from malice, were to have said to you, “Come now, you who accuse us of pure malice, are you not actuated by pure benevolence? If our approval is founded on sentiment, your disapproval is founded on the same flimsy basis; you have no reasonable objection to the poisoning of Socrates or the crucifixion of Christ or the hanging of Bentham as the case may be” and you were to tell them that your arithmetical balance said it was not profitable, would they not be justified in asking whether your arithmetical balance was infallible and whether you had a satisfactory principle which guided your calculations?

Trevor — Yes, and I should tell them that I valued as profitable what conduces to happiness and as unprofitable what detracts from or does not add to happiness.

Keshav — I am afraid that would not satisfy them, for the nature of happiness is just as disputable as the nature of profit. You do not think so? Well, for example do not some think that happiness lies in material comfort, while others look for it in the province of the intellect?

Trevor — These distinctions are mere nonsense; both are alike essential.

Keshav — Indeed we have reason to thank heaven that there are still some of the sages left who are sufficiently impartial to condemn every opinion but their own. Yet under correction, I should like to venture on a question; if the good that conduces to material comfort is not reconcilable with the good that conduces to intellectual pleasure, how do you manage your arithmetical balance?

Trevor — Material comfort before all things! that is a necessity, intellect a luxury.

Keshav — You are a consistent change-artist, Trevor; yet may there not be diverse opinions on the point?

Trevor — I do not see how it is possible. The human race may be happy without intellectual pleasure, but never without material comfort.

Keshav — Have you any historical data to bear out your generalisation?

Trevor — I cannot say I have, but I appeal to common sense.

Keshav — Oh, if you appeal to Caesar, I am lost; but be sure that if you bring your case before the tribunal of common sense, I will appeal not to common, but to uncommon sense — and that will arbitrate in my favour.

Trevor — Well, we must agree to differ.

Keshav — At any rate we have arrived at this, that you assign material comfort as the most important element in happiness, while I assign the free play of the intellect.

Trevor — So it seems.

Keshav — And you maintain that I am wrong because I disagree with you?

Trevor — No, because you disagree with reason.

Keshav — That is, with reason as you see it.

Trevor — If you like.

Keshav — And you think I am unique in my opinion?

Trevor — No indeed! there are too many who agree with you.

Keshav — Now we have gone a step farther. Apparently the nature of happiness is a matter of opinion.

Trevor — Oh, of course, if you like to say so.

Keshav — And happiness is the basis of morality. You agree? Very well, the nature of the basis is a matter of opinion, and it seems to follow that morality itself is a matter of opinion. And so we have come to this, that after rejecting as a basis of morality our individual sense of what is just and right, we have accepted our individual sense of what conduces to happiness. Therefore it is moral for you to refrain from stealing and for me to steal.

Trevor — That is a comfortable conclusion at any rate.

Keshav — Yet I think it is borne out by our premisses. Do you not imagine the security of property to be essential to happiness and anything that disturbs it immoral?

Trevor — That goes without saying and I admit that it is immoral for me to steal.

Keshav — Now I on the other hand am indeed of the opinion that material comfort is essential to happiness, for without it the intellect cannot have free play, but believing as I do that the system of private property conduces to the comfort of the few, but its abolition will conduce to the comfort of the many, I, on the principle you have accepted, the greatest good of the greatest number, am opposed to the system of private property. And I believe that the prevalence of crimes against property will accelerate the day of abolition. I recognise indeed that the immediate effects will be evil, but put a greater value on the ultimate good than on the immediate evil. It follows that, if my reasoning be correct and we agreed that individual judgment must be the arbiter, it is perfectly moral for me to steal.

Trevor — There is no arguing with you, Desai. You wrest the meaning of words until one does not remember what one is talking about. The enormous length to which you carry your sophistries is appalling. If I had time, I would stop and refute you. As it is, I will leave you to pour your absurdities into more congenial ears.

Keshav — You are not going, Trevor?

Trevor — I am afraid I must. Goodnight.

Keshav — Goodnight.

That was rather brisker towards the close. I hope you were not bored, Broome.

Wilson — No, I was excellently amused. But do your arguments with him usually terminate in this abrupt fashion?

Keshav — Very often they do so terminate. Trevor is a good fellow — a fine intellect spoiled — but he cannot bear adversity with an equal mind. Now let us resume our inquiry.

I think we had gone so far as to discover that human life is the great element of discord in the Cosmos, and the best system of morality is that which really tends to restore the harmony of the universe, and we agreed that if we apply the principles governing the universe to human life, we shall discover the highest principle of conduct. That was the point where we broke off, was it not?

Wilson — Yes, we broke off just there.

Keshav — So we profess to have found a sense in which the theory advanced by philosophers of every age has become true, that life ought to be lived in accordance with nature and not in accordance with convention. The error we impute to them was that they failed to keep nature distinct from human nature and forgot that the latter was complicated by the presence of that fallible reason, of which conventions are the natural children. Thus men of genius like Rousseau reverted to the savage for a model and gave weight to the paradox that civilization is a mistake. Let us not forget that it is useless to look for unalloyed nature in the savage, so long as we cannot trace human development from its origin: to the original man the savage would seem nothing but a mass of conventions. We have nothing to learn from savages; but there is a vast deal to be learned from the errors of civilized peoples. Civilization is a failure, not a mistake.

Wilson — That is a subtle distinction.

Keshav — Not at all. Civilization was necessary, if the human race was to progress at all. The pity of it is that it has taken the wrong turn and fallen into the waters of convention. There lies the failure. When man at the very first step of his history used his reason to confound the all-pervading Cosmos or harmonious arrangement of Nature, conventions became necessary in order to allure him into less faulty modes of reasoning, by which alone he could learn to rectify his error. But after the torrent had rolled for a time along its natural course and two broad rivers of Thought, the Greek and the Hindu, were losing themselves in the grand harmony, there was a gradual but perceptible swerve, and the forces of convention which had guided, began to misguide, and the Sophists in Greece, in India the Brahmans availed themselves of these mighty forces to compass their own supremacy, and once at the helm of thought gave permanence to the power by which they stood, until two religions, the most hostile to Nature, in the east Buddhism, her step-child Christianity in the west, completed the evil their predecessors had begun.

Hear the legend of Purush, the son of Prithivi, and his journey to the land of Beulah, the land of blooming gardens and yellow-vested acres and wavering tree-tops, and two roads lead to it. One road is very simple, very brief, very direct, and this leads over the smiling summit of a double-headed peak, but the other through the gaping abysses of a lion-throated antre and it is very long, very painful, very circuitous. Now the wise and beautiful instructress of Purush had indeed warned him that all other wayfarers had chosen the ascent of the beautiful hill, but had not explicitly forbidden him to select the untried and perilous route. And the man was indolent and thought it more facile to journey smoothly through a tunnel than to breast with arduous effort the tardy and panting slope, yet plumed himself on a nobler nature than all who had gone before him, because they had obeyed their monitress, but he was guided by his reason and honourably preferred the unknown and perilous to the safe and familiar. From this tangle of motives he chose the cavernous lion-throat of the gaping antre, not the swelling breasts of the fruitful mother.

Very gaily he entered the cave singing wild ballads of the deeds his fathers wrought, of Krishna and Arjun and Ram and Ravan and their glory and their fall, but not so merrily did he journey in its entrails, but rather in hunger and thirst groped wearily with the unsleeping beak of the vulture Misery in his heart, and only now and then caught glimpses of an elusive light, yet did not realise his error but pursued with querulous reproaches the beautiful gods his happy imagination had moulded or bitterly reviled the double-dealing he imputed to his lovely and wise instructress — "for she it was" he complained "who told me of the route through the cavern". None the less he persévered until he was warmed by the genuine smiles of daylight and joy blossoming in his heart, made his step firmer and his body more erect.

And he strode on until he arrived where the antre split in two branches, the one seeming dark as Erebus to his eyes, though indeed it was white and glorious as a naked girl and suffused by the light of the upper heaven with seas of billowing splendour, had not his eyes, grown dim from holding communion with the night and blinded by the unaccustomed brilliance, believed that the light was darkness, through which if he had persévered, he had arrived in brief space among the blooming gardens and the wavering tree-tops and the acres in their glorious golden garb and all the imperishable beauty of Beulah. And the other branch he thought the avenue of the sunlight, because the glimmer was feeble enough to be visible, like a white arm through a sleeve of black lace. And down this branch he went, for ever allured by unreal glimpses of a dawning glory, until he has descended into the abysmal darkness and the throne of ancient night, where he walks blindly like a machine, carrying the white ashes of hope in the funeral urn of youth, and knows not whence to expect a rescue, seeing the only heaven above him is the terrible pillared roof, the only horizon around him the antre with its hateful unending columns and demogorgon veil of visible darkness, and the beautiful gods he imagined are dead and his heart is no longer sweetened with prayers, and his throat no longer bubbles with hymns of praise. His beautiful gods are dead and her who was his lovely guide and wise monitress, he no longer sees as the sweet and smiling friend of his boyhood, but as a fury slinging flame and a blind Cyclops hurling stones she knows not whither nor why and a ghastly skeleton only the more horrible for its hideous mimicry of life. He sends a wailing cry to heaven, but only jeering echoes fall from the impenetrable ceiling, for there is no heaven, and he sends a hoarse shriek for aid to hell, but only a gurgling horror rises from the impenetrable floor, for there is no hell, and he looks around for God, but his eyes cannot find him, and he gropes for God in the darkness, but his fingers cannot find him but only the clammy fingers of night, and goblin fancies are rioting in his brain, and hateful shapes pursue him with clutching fingers, and horrible figures go rustling past him half-discerned in the familiar gloom. He is weary of the dreadful vaulted ceiling, he is weary of the dreadful endless floor. And what shall he do but lie down and die, who if he goes on, will soon perish of weariness and famine and thirst? Yet did he but know it, he has only to turn back at a certain angle and he will see through a chink of the cavern a crocus moon with a triple zone of burning stars, which if he will follow, after not so very painful a journey, not so very long an elapse of hours, he will come into a land of perennial fountains, where he may quench his thirst, and glistening fruit-groves where he may fill his hunger, and sweet cool grass where he may solace his weariness, and so pursue his journey by the nearest way to the wavering tree-tops, and the blooming gardens and the acres in their yellow gaberdines for which his soul has long panted.

> This is the legend of Purush, the son of Prithivi and his journey to the land of Beulah.

Wilson — That is a fine apologue, Keshav; is it your own, may I ask?

Keshav — It is an allegory conceived by Vallabha Swami, the Indian Epicurus, and revealed to me by him in a vision.

Wilson — There we see the false economy of Nature; only they are privileged to see these beautiful visions, who can without any prompting conceive images not a whit less beautiful.

Keshav — The germ of the story was really a dream, but the form and application are my own. The myth means, as I dare say you have found out, that our present servitude to conventions which are the machinery of thought and action, is principally due to weaknesses forming a large element in human nature. Our lives ought not to be lived in accordance with human nature which can nowhere be found apart from the disturbing element of reason, but according to nature at large where we find the principle of harmony pure and undefiled.

Wilson — On that we are both at one; let us start directly from this base of operations. I am impatient to follow the crocus moon with her triple zone of burning stars into the Eden of murmuring brooks and golden groves and fields of asphodel.

Keshav — The basis of morality is then the application to human life of the principles governing the universe; and the great principle of the universe is beauty, is it not?

Wilson — So we have discovered.

Keshav — And we described beauty as harmony in effect and proportion in detail.

Wilson — That was our description.

Keshav — Then the aim of morality must be to make human life harmonious. Now the other types in the universe are harmonious not merely in relation to their internal parts, but in relation to each other and the sum of the universe, are they not?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — We mean, I suppose, that the star fills its place in the Cosmos and the rose fills her place, but man does not fill his.

Wilson — That is what we mean.

Keshav — Then the human race must not only be harmonious within itself, but must be harmonious in relation to the star and the rose and so fill its place as to perfect the harmony of the universe.

Wilson — Are we not repeating ourselves?

Keshav — No, but we are in danger of it. I am aiming at a clear and accurate wording of my position and that is not easy to acquire at a moment's notice. I think our best way would be to consider the harmony of man with the universe and leave the internal harmony of the race for subsequent inquiry.

Wilson — Perhaps it would be best.

Keshav — When we say that man should fill his place in the Cosmos, we mean that he should be in proportion with its other elements, just as the thorn is in proportion to the leaf and the leaf to the rose, for proportion is the ulterior cause of harmony. And we described proportion as a regular variety, or to use a more vivid phrase, a method in madness. If this is so, it is incumbent on man to be various in his development from the star, the rose and the other elements of the Cosmos, in a word to be original.

Wilson — That follows.

Keshav — But is it enough to be merely original? For instance if he were to hoist himself into the air by some mechanical contrivance and turn somersaults unto all eternity, that would be original, but he would not be helping much towards universal harmony, would he?

Wilson — Well, not altogether.

Keshav — Then if we want to describe the abstract idea of virtue, we want something more than originality. I think we said that proportion is not merely variety, but regular variety?

Wilson — Yes, that is obvious.

Keshav — Then man must be not merely original but regular in his originality.

Wilson — I cannot exactly see what you mean.

Keshav — I cannot at all see what I mean; yet, unless our whole theory is unsound, and that I am loth to believe, I must mean something. Let us try the plan we have already adopted with such success, when we discovered the nature of beauty. We will take some form of harmony and inquire how regularity enters into it; and it occurs to me that the art of calligraphy will be useful for the purpose, for a beautifully-written sentence has many letters just as the universe has many types and it seems that proportion is just as necessary to it.

Wilson — Yes, calligraphy will do very well.

Keshav — I recollect that we supposed beauty to have three elements, of which every type must possess at least one, better two, and as a counsel of perfection all three. If we inquire, we shall find that form is absolutely imperative, seeing that if the form of the letters is not beautiful or the arrangement of the lines not harmonious, then the sentence is not beautifully written. Colour too may be an element of calligraphy, for we all know what different effects we can produce by using inks of various colours. And if the art is to be perfect, I think that perfume will have to enter very largely into it. Let us write the word "beautiful". Here you see the letters are beautifully formed, their arrangement is beautiful, this bright green ink I am using harmonizes well with the word, and moreover the sight of this peculiar combination of letters written in this peculiar way brings to my mind a peculiar association of ideas, which I call the perfume of the written word.

Wilson — But is it not the combination, not of letters but of sounds, which lingers in your mind and calls up the idea?

Keshav — I do not think so, for I often find sentences that seem to me beautiful in writing or in print, but, once I utter them aloud, become harsh and unmusical; and sometimes the reverse happens, especially in Meredith, in whom I have often at first sight condemned a sentence as harsh and ugly, which, when I read it aloud, I was surprised to find apt and harmonious. From this I infer that if a writer's works appear beautiful in print or manuscript, but not beautiful when read aloud, he may be set down as a good artist in calligraphy, but a bad artist in literature, since suggestion to the eye is the perfume of the written, but suggestion to the ear the perfume of the spoken word.

In this however I seem to have been digressing to no purpose; for whatever else is uncertain, this much is certain, that form is essential to calligraphy, and this is really all that concerns us. Now if the form is to be beautiful it must be harmonious in effect, and to be harmonious in effect it must be proportionate in detail, and to be proportionate in detail, the words and letters of which it is made must exhibit a regular variety. We can easily see that the letters and words in a sentence are various, but how can they be said to be regular in their variety?

Wilson — I do not know at present, but I can see that the variety is regular.

Keshav — This we must find out without delay. Let us take the alphabet and see if the secret is patent there.

Wilson — That is indeed looking for Truth at the bottom of a well.

Keshav — Do you not see at a glance that the letters in the Latin alphabet are regular in this sense, that the dominant line is the curve and there is no written letter without it, for the straight lines are only used to prevent the monotony generated by an unrelieved system of curves? In the Bengali alphabet again, which is more elaborate, but less perfect than the Latin, there is a dominant combination of one or more straight lines with one or more curves and to obviate monotony letters purely composed of straight lines are set off by others purely composed of curves. In the Burmese and other dialects, I believe but from hearsay only, no line but the curve is admitted and I am told that the effect is undeniably pretty but a trifle monotonous. Here then we have a clue. If we consider, as we have previously considered, every type in the universe to be a word, then, if the sentence is to be beautifully written each word must not only be various from its near companions but must allow one dominant principle to determine the lines on which it must vary; and to avoid monotony there must be straight lines in the letters, that is to say each type must have individual types within it departing from the general type by acknowledging another dominant principle. I am afraid this is rather intricate. Would you like it to be made clearer?

Wilson — No, I perfectly understand; but I should like to guard myself against being misled by the analogy between a beautifully-written sentence and the beautifully-arranged universe. If this rule does not apply to every other form of beauty, we may not justly compare the universe to one in which it does happen to apply.

Keshav — I hope you will only require me to adduce examples of perfect beauty, for the aim of morality is to arrange a perfect, not an imperfect harmony.

Wilson — Oh certainly, that is all I am entitled to require.

Keshav — Then you will admit that the stars are various, yet built on a dominant principle?

Wilson — Without doubt.

Keshav — And in making the flowers so various, the divine artist did not fail to remember a dominant principle which prevails in the structure and character of his episode in flowers.

Wilson — But this is merely to take an unfair advantage of the method of species so largely indulged in by Nature.

Keshav — Well, if you prefer particulars to generals, we will inquire into the beauty of a Greek design, for the Greeks were the only painters who understood the value of design, and we will as usual take an example of perfect beauty. Do you know the Nereid and Sea-Horse?

Wilson — Very intimately.

Keshav — Then, if you have not forgotten how in that incomparable work of art to every mass there is another and answering mass and to the limbs floating forward limbs floating backwards and to every wisp of drapery an answering wisp of drapery, and in short how the whole design is built on the satisfying principle of balancing like by like, you will admit that here is a dominant idea regulating variety. And the principle of balancing like with like is not peculiar to Greek designing but prevalent in the designs of Nature, for example, the human face, where eye answers to luminous eye and both are luminous with one and the same brilliance, nor is one hazel while the other is azure, and the porches of hearing are two but similar in their curious workmanship, and the sweep of the brow to one ear does not vary from the sweep of the brow to the other and the divergence of the chin describes a similar curve on either face of the design, nor is one cheek pallid with the touch of fear while the other blushes with the flag of joy and health, but in everything the artist has remembered the principle of balancing like with like, both here and in the emerald leaf and swaying apple which if you tear along the fibrous spine or slice through the centre of the core, will leave in your hands two portions, diverse in entity but alike in material and workmanship. And yet the impertinent criticism of the moderns claims for themselves a keener appreciation of Nature, than those great pupils who learned her lessons so gloriously well. If you would like farther examples of the dominant principle regulating variety in a design, you need only look at a blowing rose, a wind-inspired frigate, an evergreen poem, and you will not be disappointed. With all this in your mind, you will surely admit that even if we compare the universe to a system of designs we shall not arrive at other results than when we compared it to God's episode in flowers and his marshalled pomp of stars and a sentence beautifully written.

Wilson — Yet I should like to ask one more question.

Keshav — My dear Broome, you are at liberty to ask a thousand, for I am always ready to answer.

Wilson — A single answer will satisfy me. Why do you compare the universe to a system of designs and not to a single design?

Keshav — The universe itself is a system of designs, first the harmony of worlds and within it the lands and seas and on that the life of flowers and trees & the life of birds and beasts and fishes and the life of human beings. Imagine the Greeks in search of a dominant idea to regulate the variety of their designs and hitting on the human figure as their model; would they not have been foolish, if they had gone away from their study of the human figure and drawn a system, balancing like design by like design?

Wilson — I suppose they would.

Keshav — Nor should we be less foolish to draw up an ideal universe or system of designs on the principle of a single design. Are you satisfied?

Wilson — Perfectly.

Keshav — And our conclusion is that we ought to regulate the variety of the types in the universe, not by balancing like with like, but by determining the lines of variance on one dominant principle.

Wilson — That is the indisputable conclusion.

Keshav — And so, now we have panted up to the ridge we once thought the crowning summit, we find that we have to climb another slope as arduous which was lying in wait for us behind. We have discovered the presence of a dominant idea in the variety of types, but we do not know what the idea may be.

Wilson — That is what we have to find.

Keshav — But if we find that all the diverging types observe a single requisite in divergence, shall we not infer that we have found the idea of which we are inquisitive?

Wilson — Obviously.

Keshav — And we shall find it most easily by comparing one type with another, shall we not?

Wilson — That is our first idea.

Keshav — But if we compare a rose to a star, we shall not find them agree in any respect except the brilliance of their hues and that is not likely to be the dominant idea.

Wilson — They are both beautiful.

Keshav — Exactly, but we wish to learn the elements of their beauty, and we agreed that these were variety, to begin with, and method in variety. Now we are inquiring what the method is they observe in their variety. We know that they are both beautiful; but we wish to know why they are both beautiful.

Wilson — And how are you going to do it?

Keshav — Well, since it will not do to compare a rose with a star, we will compare a star with a star; and here we find, that, however widely they differ, there is a large residuum of properties, such as brilliance and light, which are invariably present in one and the other, and they diverge not in the possession and absence of properties peculiar to a star, but in things accidental, in their size and the exactness of their shape and the measure of their brilliance and the character of the orbits they are describing. And if we compare flower with flower, we shall find a residuum of properties invariably present in one and the other but the divergence of flower from flower, just like the divergence of star from star, not in properties peculiar to a flower, but in accidents like size and peculiarities of shape and varying vividness of hues and time and length of efflorescence. Moreover we perceive that the star is content to pierce the darkness with its rays and to burn like a brilliant diamond in the bodice of heaven, and is not ambitious to shed sweet perfumes upon space or to burden the heart of the night with song, but develops the virtues of a star without aspiring to the virtues of a flower or a bird, and the rose content to be an empress in colour and perfume and a gorgeous harmony of petals and is not ambitious to give light in the darkness or to murmur a noontide song in response to the bee, but develops the virtues of a rose without aspiring to the virtue of a bee or a star. And so if we compare with the help of this new light the rose and the star, we see that they are both alike in developing their own virtues without aspiring to the virtues of one another. And this is the case with every natural form of beauty animate or inanimate, is it not?

Wilson — There can be no doubt of that.

Keshav — Then have we not found the dominant idea which governs the variety of types?

Wilson — I really believe we have.

Keshav — And man if he wishes to be in proportion with the other elements of the Cosmos, must be content to develop the virtues of a man without aspiring to the virtues of a rose or a star, or any other element of the Cosmos?

Wilson — So it seems.

Keshav — And when we talk of the virtues of a star, do we not mean the inborn qualities and powers which are native to its sidereal character, for example brilliance and light?

Wilson — Of course.

Keshav — And by the virtues of a flower the inborn qualities and powers which are native to its floral character, such as fragrance, colour, delicacy of texture?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — Then by the virtues of a man we shall have to mean the inborn qualities and powers which are native to his humanity, such as — what shall we say?

Wilson — That we can discover afterwards.

Keshav — Very well; but at any rate we can see already that some things are not inborn qualities and powers native to our humanity; and we know now why it is not an act of splendid virtue to turn somersaults in the air without any visible means of support; for if we did that, we should not be developing the virtues of a man, but we should be aspiring to the virtues of a kite; or, to use one of our phrases, we should be mad without method.

Wilson — That is evident.

Keshav — So a man's virtue lies not in turning somersaults without any visible means of support, but in the perfect evolution of the inborn qualities and powers which are native to his humanity.

Wilson — Yes, and I believe these are the very words in which you described virtue before we started on our voyage of discovery.

Keshav — That is indeed gratifying: and if we have shown any constancy and perseverance in following our clue through the labyrinth, I at least am amply rewarded, who feel convinced by the identity of the idea I have derived from the pedestrian processes of logical inference with the idea I once caught on the wings of thought and instinct, that as far as human eyes are allowed to gaze on the glorious visage of Truth unveiled, we shall be privileged to unveil her and embrace her spiritual presence, and are not following a will-o'-the-wisp of the imagination to perish at last in a quagmire.

We have then laid a firm hold on that clear and accurate wording, for which we were recently groping as blindly as Purush in his delusive cavern. And since the human brain is impatient of abstract ideas but easily fixed and taken by concrete images, let me embody our ideas in a simile. I have an accurate remembrance of climbing a very steep and ragged rock on the Yorkshire beaches, where my only foothold was a ladder carved in the rock with the rungs so wide apart that I had to grasp tightly the juts and jags and so haul myself up as slowly as a lizard, if I did not prefer by a false step or misplaced confidence to drop down some thirty feet on a rough sediment of sharp and polished pebbles. It occurs to me that what I did then in the body, I am doing now in the spirit, and it is a reason for self-gratulation that I have mounted safely to the second rung of the perilous ladder and am not lying shattered on the harsh and rasping pebbles of disappointment. And if I aspire to the third rung, I shall have less cause for apprehension than in my Yorkshire peril, since I can hardly fall to the beach but shall merely slip back to the rung from which I am mounting. Let us then estimate our progress. Our first rung was the basis of morality which we may describe by the golden rule "apply to human life the principles dominant in the Cosmos", and our second, as we now see, is the conception of abstract virtue or the perfect expression of the human being as a type in the Cosmos, and this we describe as "the consistent evolution of the inborn qualities and powers native to our humanity".

Here then we have two rungs of the ladder, we must now be very careful in our selection of the third.

Wilson — Is it not obviously the next stage to discover what are the inborn qualities and powers native to our humanity?

Keshav — Possibly. Yet have we not forgotten a signal omission we made when we drew inferences from the comparison of a beautifully written sentence to the beautifully arranged universe?

Wilson — I am afraid I at least have forgotten. What was it?

Keshav — Did we not compare the broad types in the Cosmos to the words in a sentence and infer that as the dominant principle governing the word was the prevalence of the curve, so there must be a dominant principle governing the type?

Wilson — We did.

Keshav — And also that as in the letters within the word there were two prevalent lines, the curve and the straight line, so within the broad or generic type there are individual types governed by quite another principle.

Wilson — That also. But surely you are not going to argue from analogies?

Keshav — Did we not argue from the beautifully written sentence merely because the principles of calligraphy proved to be the principles of every sort of harmony?

Wilson — I confess we did; otherwise all we have been saying would be merely a brilliant explosion of fancy.

Keshav — Then we are logically justified in what we have been doing. Consider then how in a system of harmony, every part has to be harmonious in itself or else mar the universal music.

Wilson — That is true.

Keshav — And the human race is a part of such a system, is it not?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — Then must the human race become harmonious within itself or continue to spoil the universal harmony.

Wilson — Of course. How foolish of me to lose sight of that.

Keshav — And so we have been elucidating the harmony of man with the Cosmos and saying nothing about the harmony of man with man?

Wilson — Did we not relegate that for subsequent inquiry?

Keshav — We did, but I think the time for subsequent inquiry has come.

Wilson — It is too late in the day for me to distrust your guidance.

Keshav — I do not think you will have reason to regret your confidence in me. Our line then will be to consider the internal harmony of the race before we proceed farther.

Wilson — So it is best.

Keshav — Here again we must start from our description of beauty as harmony in effect and proportion in detail and our description of the latter as a regular variety or method in madness. Then just as in the Cosmos, the individual type must vary from all the other types, so in the human Cosmos the individual man must vary from all other men.

Wilson — That is rather startling. Do you mean that there ought to be no point of contact?

Keshav — No, Broome; for we must always remember that the elements of a generic type must have certain virtues without which they would not belong to the type: as the poet says

One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.

Wilson — Then where do you find your variety?

Keshav — If you will compare the elements of those types in which the harmony is perfect, your ignorance will vanish like a mist. You will see at once that every planet develops indeed his planetary qualities, but varies from every other planet, and if Venus be the name and the star be feminine, is a dovelike white in complexion and yields an effulgence more tender than a girl's blush, but if he is Mars, burns with the sanguine fire of battle and rolls like a bloodshot eye through space, and if he is Saturn, has seven moons in his starry seraglio, and is richly orange in complexion like vapour coloured by the sun's pencil when he sets, and wears a sevenfold girdle of burning fire blue as a witch's eye and green as Love's parrot and red as the lips of Cleopatra and indeed of all manner of beautiful colours, and if he is Jupiter or any one of the planets, has the qualities of that planet and has not the qualities of another, but develops his own personality and has no regard for any model or the example of any other planet.

And if you drop your eyes from the sublimer astral spaces to the modest gauds of Earth our mother, you will see that every flower has indeed the qualities of its floral nature, but varies widely from her sister beauties, and if she is a lily, hides in her argent beaker a treasure of golden dust and her beauty is a young and innocent bride on her marriage-morning, but if she is a crocus, has a bell-like beauty and is absorbed in the intoxication of her own loveliness and wears now the gleaming robe of sunrise and now a dark and delicate purple, and now a soft and sorrowful pallor, but, if she is a rose, has the fragrance of a beautiful soul and the vivid colour of a gorgeous poem, yet conceals a sharp sting beneath the nestling luxury of her glorious petals, and if she is a hyacinth or honeysuckle or meadow-sweet, has the poisonous perfume of the meadow-sweet or the soul-subduing fragrance of the honeysuckle or the passionate cry of the hyacinth, and not the beautiful egoism of the crocus or the oriental splendour of the rose, but develops her own qualities without aspiring to the qualities of any and every flower.

May we not then say that the dominant principle regulating the variety of individual types is the evolution of individual as distinct from generic virtues?

Wilson — That is the logical consequence.

Keshav — Then the description of individual virtue runs thus, the evolution by the human being of the inborn qualities and powers native to his personality; that is to say, just as every beautiful building has the solid earth for its basis but is built in a distinct style of architecture, so the beautiful human soul will rest on the solid basis of humanity but build up for itself a personality distinct and individual.

Wilson — That is exactly what the virtuous man must do.

Keshav — And so with infinite ease and smoothness we have glided up to the third rung of our ladder, as if we were running up a broad and marble stair-case. Here then let us stop and reflect on all we have said and consider whether from confusion of mind or inability to comprehend the whole situation we have made any mistake or omission. For my part I avow that my thoughts have not been so lucid tonight as I could have wished. We are then to continue the inquiry in the Gardens on Tuesday afternoon? I think that was what you suggested.

Wilson — Yes, on Tuesday at half-past two.

Keshav — Would you mind my bringing Prince Paradox with me? He is anxious to hear how we are dealing with our idea and as he will be perfectly willing to go the lengths we have so far gone, we need not fear that he will be a drag on us.

Wilson — I am perfectly willing that he should come. The more, the merrier.

Keshav — Not at this stage; for this intellectual ascent up the precipice of discovery, is indeed very exciting and pleasant, but strains the muscles of the mind more than a year's academical work; and I trust that next time we shall bring it to a satisfying conclusion.

End of the Second Book

Book Three

Keshav Ganesh — Broome Wilson — Treneth

Treneth — But we must not forget our purpose in being here.

Keshav — Well, Broome, what do you say to our resuming our cruise for the discovery of virtue? I avow the speculation weighs on me, and I am impatient to see the last of it.

Wilson — I have not to learn that you are the most indolent of men. No sooner are you in a novel current of thought than you tire and swim back to the shore. I am indignant with Nature for wasting on you a genius you so little appreciate.

Treneth — Ah but you are really quite wrong, Wilson. Genius is a capacity for being indolent.

Wilson — Enter Prince Paradox! But seriously, Keshav, I think the argument will live beyond this afternoon and I give warning that I shall drag you all over the field of ethics before we have done with it.

Keshav — It will be the corpse of my intellect you will maltreat. But in extremity I rely upon Treneth to slay my Argus with the bright edge of a paradox.

Wilson — We were at the third rung of the ladder, were we not?

Keshav — Yes, thou slave-driving Ishmaelite. I declare it is impious on a day like this to bury ourselves in the gloomy vaults of speculation. But as you will.

To remember how far we have climbed, is the best incentive to climb farther, and will give Treneth an idea of the situation. We happened to be weighing the ordinary principles of morality and finding them all wanting cast about for a new principle and discovered that beauty was the sole morality of the universe, and it had colour, form and perfume as elements, harmony as its general effect and proportion, which we described as regular variety or method in madness, as the ulterior cause of the harmony, and we ventured to imagine that as all the other elements of the universe were harmonious notes in a perfect sonata, but the human element had wilfully chosen to jar upon and ruin the exquisite music, the right principle of virtue was wilfully to choose to mend the harmony we had ruined.

With these projections from the rock of speculation to help us we climbed up the three steep and difficult rungs I am going to describe to you. We argued that the only way to remedy a note that rebels against the spirit of the composition is to reduce it into harmony with that spirit, and so arrived at the conclusion that the principle of morality is to apply to human life the principles that govern the rest of the Cosmos. There you have the first rung of our ladder.

We recommenced from this basis and by remembrance of the nature of proportion or regular variety which is the cause of harmony and throughout every natural type of beauty appears in the common principle which determines their line of variance from each other, we thought that in the elements of the Cosmos there must be such a common principle and found it to be the evolution by each element of its own peculiar virtue as distinct from the peculiar virtues of every other element, and so reached our second conclusion, that just as astral virtue lies in the evolution by the star of the inborn qualities and powers native to its astral character, just so human virtue lies in the evolution by the human being of the inborn qualities and powers native to his humanity. This is the second rung of our ladder.

With this second secure basis behind us, we went on to discover that within generic types such as the star, the flower, the human being, there were individual types governed by the similar but different principle of evolving the individual as distinct from the generic virtues, or, when applied to the human being, of evolving the inborn qualities and powers native to his personality. This is the third rung of our ladder.

Have I been correct in my statement, Broome?

Wilson — Perfectly correct.

Treneth — My only quarrel with your conclusions is that you have wasted a couple of evenings in arriving at them. Why, except the first they are mere axioms.

Keshav — Yes, to the seeing eye they are axioms, but to the unseeing eye they are paradoxes. The truths that are old and stale to the philosopher, are to the multitude new and startling and dangerous. But now that we have all mounted to the same rung, let us pursue the ascent. And I suppose our immediate step will be to find whether the mere evolution of the inborn qualities and powers is or is not the sole requisite for virtue.

Wilson — Before we go to that, Keshav, you will have to meet a difficulty which you show every sign of evading.

Keshav — Whatever difficulty there is, I am ready to solve, but I cannot guess to what you refer.

Wilson — I suppose you will admit that a definition, to be adequate, must have nothing vague or indefinite about it?

Keshav — If there is anything vague, it must be elucidated or our statement falls to the ground.

Treneth — I dissent: a definite definition is a contradiction in terms. I am for definite indefinitions.

Keshav — I am not in extremities yet, Prince Paradox.

Wilson — Well now, is not your phrasing "the inborn qualities and powers native to our humanity" very vague and indefinite?

Keshav — Indefinite, I admit, and I cannot think that an objection but I plead not guilty to the charge of vagueness.

Wilson — You think with Treneth that a definition should not be definite?

Keshav — If by being definite is implied reduction to its primal elements you will agree with me that a definition need not be definite: or do you want me to enumerate the qualities native to our humanity such as physical vigour, and the faculty of inference and sexual passion and I do not know how many more?

Wilson — You shall not escape me so easily, Keshav. You are merely spinning dialectical cobwebs which give a specious appearance to the pit in which you would have us fall.

Keshav — Then by pointing out the trap, you can easily sweep away my sophistical cobwebs, my good Broome.

Treneth — What penalty for a pun?

Keshav — No penalty, for to punish a lie on the information of Beelzebub is to do God's work at the devil's bidding.

Wilson — Yes, a penalty: you shall be taken at your word. You are setting a trap for us, when you try to shuffle in your phrase about the qualities native to our humanity. If we leave this inexplicit and unlimited, you will be at liberty to describe any quality you choose as a virtue and any other quality you choose as a defect by assuming in your own insinuating manner that it is or is not native to our humanity. And in reality there is a very distinct gulf between those of our qualities which are native to our humanity and those others which belong to the animal nature we are working out of our composition; for example between lust and love, of which one belongs to the lower animal nature and the other to the higher spiritual. You are ignoring the distinction and by ignoring it, you ignore the patent fact of evolution.

Treneth — To ignore facts is the beginning of thought.

Keshav — No, but to forget facts for the time being — that is the beginning of thought.

Wilson — My dear Keshav, pray don't trail a red paradox across the path.

Keshav — It was the other boy who did it. To return to the subject, are you really unconscious of the flagrant errors of which you have been so lavish in a little space?

Wilson — I am quite unconscious of any error.

Keshav — You have made three to my knowledge, and the first is your assumption that what is animal, cannot be human.

Wilson — Can you disprove it?

Keshav — Can you prove it? In the first place you cannot tell what is animal and what is not.

Wilson — Why, the qualities possessed by human beings as distinct from animals are those which are not animal.

Keshav — And, I suppose, qualities possessed in common by human beings and animals, are animal?

Wilson — You are right.

Keshav — And such qualities ought to be worked out of our composition?

Wilson — Yes, as Tennyson says, we ought to be

working out
The tiger and the ape.

Keshav — Then we ought to get rid of fidelity, ought we not?

Wilson — Why so?

Keshav — Because it is a quality possessed in common by the dog and the human being, and the dog is an animal.

Treneth — Of course we should. Fidelity is a disease like conscience.

Keshav — And infidelity is a quality possessed in common by the cat and the human being, and therefore we ought to get rid of infidelity.

Treneth — Again of course; for infidelity is merely a relative term, and if fidelity is not, then how can infidelity be?

Keshav — And so we must get rid of all opposing qualities and acquire a dead neutrality? Your ambition then is not to be a personality, but to be a — negative?

Treneth — I confess you have taken me in the flank: even my paradoxes will not carry me so far.

Keshav — And you, Broome, are you willing to break down the ladder by which we are climbing?

Wilson — Not for a moment. What I mean is that the qualities possessed in common by all the animals and the human being are animal.

Keshav — Is not the human being an animal?

Wilson — Yes, scientifically.

Keshav — But not really?

Wilson — Well, he is something more than an animal.

Keshav — You mean he has other qualities besides those which belong to the animal type?

Wilson — That is what I mean.

Keshav — And has not the planet other qualities besides those which belong to the astral type?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — Does that warrant us in saying that a planet is not really a star?

Wilson — No.

Keshav — And are we warranted in saying that man is not really an animal?

Wilson — We are not.

Keshav — And the animal world is an element in the Cosmos, is it not?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — Is it not then the virtue of an animal to evolve the qualities and powers native to his animality?

Wilson — I suppose so.

Keshav — And man, being an animal, ought also to evolve the qualities and powers native to his animality?

Wilson — That seems to follow, but is not this to cancel our old description of human virtue and break down our second rung?

Keshav — No, for just as the qualities native to a planet include the qualities native to a star, so the qualities native to the human type include the qualities native to the animal type.

Wilson — I quite agree with you now. What was my second error?

Keshav — You talked of the lower animal nature and the higher spiritual nature and in so talking assumed that the qualities peculiar to the human being are higher than the qualities he shares with some or all of the animals. Is dissimulation higher than love? You reject the idea with contempt: yet dissimulation is peculiar to the human being but love, and love of the most spiritual kind, he shares with the turtle-dove and with the wild-duck of the Indian marshes, who cannot sleep the live-long night because Nature has severed him from his mate but ever wails across the cold and lapping water with passionate entreaty that she may solace his anguish with even a word, and travellers straying in the forest hear his forlorn cry "Love, speak to me!" No, we can only say of varying qualities that one is beautiful and another less beautiful, or not beautiful at all; and beauty does not reside in being animal or being more than animal but in something very different.

Wilson — And my third error?

Keshav — Your third error was to confound evolution with elimination.

Wilson — And does it not really come to that?

Keshav — The vulgar opinion, which finds a voice as usual in Tennyson — what opinion of the British average does he not echo? — the vulgar opinion learns that the principle of evolution or gradual perfection is the reigning principle of life and adapts the idea to its own stupid fallacy that perfection implies the elimination of all that is vivid and picturesque and likely to foster a personality. Evolution does not eliminate but perfects.

Wilson — But surely perfection tends to eliminate what is imperfect?

Keshav — Oh I don't deny that we have lost our tails, but so has a Manx cat.

Treneth — Dear me! that is a fruitful idea. A dissertation proving that the Manx cat is the crowning effort of Evolution might get me a Fellowship.

Keshav — It would deserve it for its originality. Moreover if we have lost our tails, we have also lost our wings.

Treneth — I maintain that the tails are the more serious loss. Wings would have been useful and we do not want them but we do want tails, for they would have been lovely appendages and a magnificent final flourish to the beauty of the human figure. Just fancy the Dean and Provost pacing up to the Communion Table with a fine long tail swishing about their ears! What a glorious lesson! What a sublime and instructive spectacle!

Wilson — You are incorrigibly frivolous, Treneth.

Keshav — If Prince Paradox is frivolous, he is virtuous, insofar as he is developing the virtue most intimately native to his personality; and the inquiry is dull enough at present to bear occasional touches of enlivening laughter.

Wilson — Yet the inquiry must pass through stifling underground galleries and to avoid them is puerile.

Keshav — I am at one with you, but if we must dive under the ground, there is no need to linger there.

Evolution does not eliminate, but perfects. The cruelty that blossoms out in the tiger, has its seeds deep down in the nature of man and if it is minimised in one generation will expand in another, nor is it possible for man to eradicate cruelty without pulling up in the same moment the bleeding roots of his own being. Yet the brute ferocity that in the tiger is graceful and just and artistic, is in the man savage and crude and inharmonious and must be cultured and refined, until it becomes a virtue and fits as gracefully and harmlessly into the perfect character, as its twin-brother physical courage and physical love, its remote relative.

Wilson — You are growing almost as paradoxical as Prince Paradox, Keshav.

Keshav — Look for Truth and you will find her at the bottom of a paradox. Are you convinced that animal qualities are not the worse for being animal?

Wilson — Perfectly convinced.

Keshav — And here I cannot do better than quote a sentence that like so many of Meredith's sentences, goes like a knife to the root of the matter. "As she grows in the flesh when discreetly tended, nature is unimpeachable, flowerlike, yet not too decoratively a flower; you must have her with the stem, the thorns, the roots, and the fat bedding of roses." And since I have quoted that immortal chapter so overloaded with truth critical, truth psychologic and truth philosophic, let me use two other sentences to point the moral of this argument and bid you embrace "Reality's infinite sweetness" and "touch the skirts of Philosophy by sharing her hatred of the sham decent, her derision of sentimentalism." May we not now ascend to the fourth rung?

Wilson — Yes, I think we may go on.

Keshav — I am especially eager to do so because I am more and more convinced that our description of virtue is no longer adequate: for if the only requisite is to evolve our innate qualities, will it not be enough to be merely cruel and not to be cruel in a refined and beautiful manner?

Wilson — Plainly it will.

Keshav — And is it really enough to be merely cruel?

Treneth — No, for to be inartistic is the only sin.

Keshav — Your paradox cuts to the heart of the truth. Can you tell me, Broome, whether is the rose more beautiful than the bramble or the bramble than the rose?

Wilson — Obviously the rose than the bramble.

Keshav — And why is this? Is it not because the thorn develops unduly the thorn and does not harmonize it with leaves but is careless of proportion and the eternal principle of harmony, and is beautiful indeed as an element in the harmony of plants but has no pretensions to personal beauty but the rose subdues the thorn into harmony with the leaf and the blossom and is perfectly beautiful in herself no less than as an element in the harmony of flowers?

Wilson — I believe you are right.

Keshav — And must not cruelty, the thorn of our beautiful human rose, be subdued into harmony with his other qualities and among them tenderness and clemency and generous forbearance and other qualities seemingly the most opposed to cruelty and then only will it be a real virtue but until then nothing more than a potential virtue?

Wilson — You are right; then only will it be a real virtue.

Keshav — So we must modify our description of virtue by affixing an epithet to the word "evolution", and preferably I think the epithet "perfect" which does not imply size or degree or intensity or anything but justness of harmony, for example in a poem, which is not called perfect when it is merely long-drawn-out or overflowing with passion or gorgeous even to swooning, but when it blends all the elements of beauty into an irreproachable harmony. We shall then describe virtue as the perfect evolution by the human being of the inborn qualities and powers native to his personality.

Wilson — With that I have no quarrel, but am I too inquisitive when I ask you how cruelty and tenderness can live together?

Keshav — My dear Broome, I shall never think you too inquisitive but above all things desire that you should have a clear intelligence of my meaning. Have you never learned by experience or otherwise how a girl will torment her favoured lover by a delicate and impalpable evasion of his desires and will not give him even the loan of a kiss without wooing, but must be infinitely entreated and stretch him on the rack of a half-serious refusal and torture him with the pangs of hope just as a cat will torture a mouse, yet all the while means to give him everything he asks for and would indeed be more bitterly disappointed than he, if any accident precluded her from making him happy?

Wilson — Yes, I know, some women are like that.

Keshav — If you had said most women were like that, you would have hit the truth more nearly. And this trait in women we impute to feminine insincerity and to maiden coyness and to everything but the real motive, and that is the primitive and eternal passion of cruelty appearing in the coarse fibre of man as crude and inartistic barbarity, but in the sweet and delicate soul of woman as a refined and beautiful playfulness and the inseparable correlative of a gentle and suave disposition.

Wilson — But I am inclined to credit the girl with the purpose of giving a keener relish to the gratified desire by enhancing the difficulty of attainment, and in that case she will be actuated not by cruelty but always by tenderness.

Keshav — You think she is actuated by the principles of Political Economy? I cannot agree with you.

Treneth — And I deny the truth of the principle. A precious thing easily acquired is treasured for its beauty and worth, but if acquired with pain and labour, the memory of the effort leaves a bad taste in the mouth which it is difficult to expunge. I read Vergil at school and never read a line of him now but Catullus I skimmed through in my arm-chair and love and appreciate.

Keshav — Your distinction is subtle and suggestive, Treneth, but it never occurred to me in that light before.

Treneth — It never occurred to *me* in that light before.

Keshav — Yet I do not think it applies to our lovers, and it does not apply always, for the poem I have perfected with labour and thought is surely dearer to me than the light carol thrown off in the happy inspiration of the moment. Rapid generalities seldom cover more than a few cases. So I will take Broome on his own ground, not because I cannot adduce other instances of cruelty and tenderness living in wedded felicity, but because I do not want to fatigue myself by recollecting them.

And now, Broome, will you say that a tyrant who desires to give his favourite a keener relish of luxury and strains him on the rack and washes him with scalding oil and dries him with nettles and flays him with whips and then only comforts him with the luxury of downy pillows and velvet cushions and perfect repose, has not been actuated by cruelty but always by tenderness?

Wilson — Oh, of course, if you cite extravagant instances—!

Keshav — And will you say that the girl who wishes to give her kiss a sweeter savour on the lips of her favourite and strains him on the rack of suspense and washes him with the scalding oil of despair and dries him with the nettles of hope and flays him with the whips of desire and then only comforts him with the velvet luxury of a kiss and the downy cushion of an embrace and the perfect repose of desire fulfilled, has not been actuated by cruelty but always by tenderness and not rather that all unnecessary pain is cruelty to the sufferer?

Wilson — Certainly, unnecessary pain is cruelty.

Keshav — Are you perfectly satisfied?

Wilson — Perfectly satisfied.

Keshav — We have discovered then that perfect evolution is requisite for perfect virtue, but I do not think we have distilled its full flavour into the epithet. Or are you of the opinion that we want nothing more than the harmonizing of all the inborn qualities?

Wilson — I cannot think of any other requisite.

Keshav — Can you, Treneth?

Treneth — I was much attracted by something you said in the beginning about the elements of beauty and I suspect it is these we want now.

Keshav — You have exactly hit it. We described it as not merely harmony in effect and proportion in detail but as possessed of one of the three elements, colour, perfume and form, and in most types combining at least two and in many all three. But in confining our outlook to harmony and proportion we have talked as if human virtue were merely possessed of one of the elements; yet is there any reason to suppose that human virtue does not possess the whole three?

Wilson — No reason whatever.

Keshav — Well, might we not inquire whether it does possess all three, and if it does not, whether it may not legitimately or, to speak more properly, may not artistically possess all three?

Wilson — By all means, let us inquire.

Keshav — And if we find that it may artistically possess them, then, if our theory that beauty should be the governing principle in all things, is really correct, must we not say that they not only may but ought to possess all three?

Wilson — Evidently we must.

Treneth — That is as plain as a Cambridge laundress.

Keshav — And it is clear that all qualities may, with diligence, be entirely divested of colour, form and perfume, and when they have reached the stage of wanting every single element of beauty, we need take no notice of them, for they have no longer anything to do with virtue, until they begin to redevelop.

Wilson — Obviously, for we are talking of perfect virtue or perfect beauty of character.

Keshav — Now if we have not the qualities requisite for a given action, we shall not achieve the action, supposing we attempt it, but shall only achieve a blunder, is it not so?

Wilson — Clearly.

Keshav — But if we have the qualities, we are likely to achieve the action?

Wilson — Necessarily.

Keshav — Then is not action the outward manifestation of a quality, and I include in action any movement physical or intellectual which is visible or whose effects are visible to the human understanding?

Wilson — Yes, but may not an action manifest the want of a quality?

Keshav — No doubt, but we need not touch on those, since we have not to develop defects in order to be virtuous, or do you think we need?

Treneth — Clearly not: negatives cannot be virtues.

Keshav — That is a very just sentiment and I shall have occasion to recall it. Now is not a battle the outward manifestation of the warlike qualities?

Wilson — Evidently.

Keshav — And composition the outward manifestation of the poetical qualities, I mean, of course, the qualities of a maker?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — And do we not mean that the poetical qualities express themselves in composition just as the sidereal in a star?

Wilson — We do.

Keshav — And is not the star the form of the sidereal qualities?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — Then is not composition the form of the poetical qualities?

Wilson — That follows.

Keshav — And battle of the warlike qualities?

Wilson — That also.

Keshav — Then is not action the form of a quality, that is to say the shape in which it expresses itself?

Wilson — So it seems.

Keshav — So we find that virtue has a form.

Wilson — But may not qualities have a form apart from action?

Treneth — For example, thought.

Keshav — But the expression of thought is included in action for our purpose.

Treneth — For our purpose only.

Keshav — As you please. I merely want to use one projection from the rock and not imperil my neck by clutching two in one hand.

Treneth — I am satisfied.

Keshav — I suppose, Broome, you mean by form a concrete shape?

Wilson — I suppose so.

Keshav — Then you must see that qualities unexpressed in action are wholly chaotic and formless; and I mean within the scope of action, the expression of thought and the act of sitting or standing or lying down and the act of being indolent and anything that by any legitimate stretch of language may be called an act.

Wilson — I too am satisfied.

Keshav — Then we are agreed that a quality must possess form, that is to say, express itself in action or it will not be a virtue?

Treneth — May it not prefer to express itself in perfume and colour?

Keshav — I had forgotten that.

Now if we inquire what colour is, we shall see that it is nothing concrete but merely an effect on the retina of the eye, and its prosperity lies in the eye that sees it, and if the retina of the eye is perfect, every different shade impresses itself, but if imperfect, then the eye is blind to one or more colours. Will you agree with me when I say that anything to which we give the name of colour must be the reverse of concrete?

Wilson — That follows.

Keshav — Then the colour of a virtue must be the reverse of concrete.

Wilson — Evidently.

Keshav — Now let us take metaphor into our counsel, for metaphor has sometimes an intuitive way of chiming consonantly with the truth; and metaphor tells us that we often talk of a scarlet and sinful character and of a white and innocent character and of a neutral and drab-coloured character, and assign various colours to various women and call one woman a splendid carnation, for we are fond of comparing women to flowers and another a beautiful and gorgeous rose, and a third a pure and sinless lily and yet another a modest violet betraying herself only by her fragrance, and are all the while implying that to the imaginative eye, if the retina is perfect, various characters have various colours. Do you follow me?

Treneth — Yes, the idea is fine.

Wilson — And true.

Treneth — That is immaterial.

Keshav — And character is the composition of qualities just as a poem is the composition of sounds and a painting the composition of pigments.

Wilson — Yes, just in that sense.

Keshav — Then is it not plain that if a character has colour, the qualities of which it is composed must have colour.

Wilson — I think it is.

Keshav — And colour is not concrete, but an effect on the retina of the eye?

Wilson — So we said.

Keshav — Then is not the colour of a quality its effect on the retina of the imaginative eye?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — And a quality in itself may be formless?

Wilson — Yes.

Keshav — Then to the imaginative eye is not a quality pure colour?

Wilson — I suppose so.

Keshav — But the imaginative eye is not one with the perceptive eye, for it perceives what does not exist, but the perceptive eye only what does exist.

Wilson — You are right.

Keshav — I mean that nothing without form can have an effect on the retina of the perceptive eye.

Wilson — That is evident.

Keshav — Then to be visible to the perceptive eye, the colour of a quality, which is really the soul of the quality, must suffuse the action which expresses it, which is the body of the quality.

Wilson — It must.

Keshav — And is colour without form a perfect type of beauty?

Wilson — No.

Keshav — Then a quality must suffuse its body with its soul, or, since the word action is growing ambiguous, its expression with its colour.

Wilson — Yes, I agree to that.

Keshav — And so the quality will so suffuse its expression as to be visible to the perceptive eye, just as the soul of a rose, which is the effect on the retina of the imaginative eye, suffuses her form with colour which is the effect on the retina of the perceptive eye, and varies according to the variety of colours, and if two roses have the same form but one is crimson and the other yellow, the soul of the red rose is seen to be scarlet with unholy passion, but the soul of the yellow rose is seen to be dull and blanched and languid, like the reaction after intensely voluptuous enjoyment.

And so virtue may possess both form and colour, and, I suppose, may artistically possess both, or will colour be detrimental to the perfection of virtue as tinting to the perfection of sculpture?

Treneth — By no means; for qualities are not hewn out of marble or cast in beaten gold or chiselled in Indian ivory, but are moulded in the delicate and flower-like texture of human emotion and, if colourless, are scarcely beautiful.

Keshav — Then we are agreed that a quality must possess both form and colour, or will not be a perfect virtue?

Treneth — Plainly.

Wilson — I am afraid I hardly understand what we are saying.

Keshav — I am certain I do not; but we must follow where the argument leads us, and I have a glimmering intelligence which I hope to see expanding into perfect daylight; but I do not want any side issue to distract my thoughts and will go on to inquire what is the perfume of a quality: for I am like a frail canoe that wavers through a tranquil to be buffeted outside by the swelling waters and have with difficulty plunged through these two waves of form and colour, when I see rolling down on me with its curled forehead this third wave of perfume which I do not hope to outlive. But to the venturous Fortune is as compliant as a captive Briseis and I will boldly plunge into the crash of the breaking water and call manner the perfume of a quality, for in manner resides the subtle aroma and sense of something delicious but impalpable which is what we mean by perfume.

Treneth — With your usual good luck you have notched your mark in the centre.

Keshav — So by audacity I have outlived the third wave and am more than ever convinced that you must take liberties with Fortune before she will love you.

I suppose you will agree with me that for a virtue to be beautiful, there must be a perfect harmony in the elements of beauty, and the colour not too subdued as in the clover nor too glaring as in the sunflower, and the perfume not too slight to be noticeable as in the pansy nor too intense for endurance as in the meadow-sweet, and the form not too monotonous as in a canal or too irregular as in the leafless tree, but all perfectly harmonious in themselves and in fit proportion to each other?

Wilson — From our description of beauty, that is evident.

Treneth — I plead not guilty on behalf of the sunflower, but agree with the sentiment.

Keshav — And now since Broome and I are at a loss to conjecture what we mean, do you not think we shall be enlightened by a concrete example?

Treneth — It is likely.

Wilson — Let us at least make an attempt.

Keshav — We will call on the stage the girl and her lover, who have been so useful to us. It is clear at once that if she is not virtuous but harmonizes the elements of beauty unskilfully, the passion of her favourite will wither and not expand.

Wilson — That is clear.

Keshav — What then will be her manner of harmonizing them?

Wilson — I return the question to you.

Keshav — Well now, will she not harmonize the phases of her dalliance, and hesitate on the brink of yielding just at the proper pitch of his despair, and elude his kiss just at the proper pitch of his expectancy, and fan his longing when it sinks, and check it when it rises, and surrender herself when he is smouldering with hopeless passion?

Wilson — That is probably what she will do.

Keshav — And is not that to cast her dalliance in a beautiful form?

Wilson — It is.

Keshav — But she will not do this grossly and palpably, but will lead up to everything by looks and tones and gestures so as to glide from one to the other without his perceiving and will sweeten the hard and obvious form by the flavour of the simple and natural, yet will be all the while the veriest coquette and artist in flirtation.

Wilson — Yes, that is what a girl like that would do.

Keshav — And is not that to give a subtle perfume to her dalliance?

Wilson — I suppose it is.

Keshav — But if she is perfect in the art, will she not, even when repulsing him most cruelly, allow a secret tenderness to run through her words and manner, and when she is most tenderly yielding, will she not show the sharp edge of asperity through the flowers, and in a word allow the blended cruelty and sweetness of her soul to be just palpable to his perceptive senses?

Wilson — She will.

Keshav — And is not that to suffuse her dalliance with colour?

Wilson — Plainly.

Keshav — And moreover she will not allow her affectation of the natural to be too imperfect to conceal her art or so heavily scented as to betray the intention, or the colour to be unnoticeable from slightness or from intensity to spoil the delicate effect of her perverseness, or the form to engross too largely the attention, or indeed any element to fall too short or carry too far, but will subdue the whole trio into a just and appropriate harmony.

Wilson — If she wants to be a perfect flirt, that is what she will do.

Keshav — And if coquetry is native in her, to be a perfect flirt will be highest pinnacle of virtue.

Wilson — That follows from the premisses.

Keshav — And so here we have a concrete example of perfect virtue, and begin to understand what we mean by the perfect evolution of an inborn quality, or are you still unenlightened?

Wilson — No, I perfectly understand.

Keshav — Hither then we have climbed with much more laborious effort and have almost cut our hands in two on the projections, but do at last really stand on the fourth and last rung of the ladder.

Wilson — The last? I rather fancy we are only half way up and shall have to ascend another three or four rungs before we are kissed by the fresh winds that carol on the brow. I have many things to ask you and you have as yet spoken nothing of the relations between man and man and how this new morality is to be modified by the needs of society and what justice means and what self-sacrifice and indeed a thousand things which will need many hours to investigate.

Keshav — I am Frankenstein saddled with a monster of my own making and have made a man to my ruin and a young man to my hurt. Nevertheless "lead on, monster: we'll follow."

Treneth — Will you not rest on the fourth rung and have a cup of tea in my rooms before you resume?

Keshav — But shall we not put a stop to your spheroids and trianguloids and asinoids and all the other figures of mathematical ingenuity?

Treneth — I am at present watching a body which revolves on six screws and is consequently very drunk, and a day off will sensibly assist my speculations.

Keshav — So let it be, but before we go I may as well recall to you at a glance what is our fourth rung.

We have expanded our description of virtue as the evolution of the inborn qualities native to our personality, by throwing in the epithet "perfect", and have interpreted the full flavour of the epithet in words to the effect that qualities in their evolved perfection must be harmonious one with another and have a beautiful form or expression, and a beautiful colour or revelation of the soul, and a beautiful perfume or justly-attempered manner and must subdue all three into a just and appropriate harmony.

With this conviction in our souls we will journey on, despising the censure and alarm of the reputable, and evolve our inborn qualities and powers into a beautiful and harmonious perfection, until we walk delicately like living poems through a radiant air, and will not stunt the growth of any branch or blossom, but will prefer to the perishable laurels of this world a living crown of glory, and hear through the chaotic murmur of the ages the solemn question of Christ "What profiteth it a man if he own the whole world and lose his own soul?" and will answer according to the melodious doctrines of philosophy and acquire by a life of perfect beauty the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

Beauty in the Real

I had ridden down by Shelsford thro' the glittering lustre of an afternoon in March and as I was returning somewhat cold and tired, saw at a distance the pink hat and heavy black curls of Keshav Ganesh and with him Broome Wilson and Prince Paradox. As I trotted up Prince Paradox hailed me. "Come round and have tea with me" he said "we are speculating at large on the primitive roots and origin of the universe, and I know your love for light subjects." "I shall be a delighted listener" I said, and was genuine in the assurance, for I had many a while listened with subtle delight to the beautiful and imaginative talk of Keshav Ganesh. I rode to the stables and returned to the College and quickly changing my apparel repaired to Chetwynd Court, but found them already drinking tea with the liberality of artists. "A cup of nectar" I cried "ere the bowl be empty!" "It seems that Pegasus is blind" said Wilson "or he would not see the drink of Gods in the brown tincture of tea-leaves and the chased bowls of Hephaestus in a common set of China." "If not the drink of Gods" I replied "it is the nectar of poets and women." "And that is a more splendid title" put in Prince Paradox. "You are right" said Keshav "poets and women are the efflorescence of being and the crowning rapture of creation, and if poets are roses in their delicate texture and have the crimson luxury and the heavy fragrance and the petalled sublimity of a blowing rose, women are moulded of as fine material but are flowers perpetually in the bud and are only seen in a glint of peeping splendour and not in the consummated outburst of glory, which is only fostered by the living waters of culture and the nurturing warmth of independence." Broome interposed. "No more of that" he said "if you escape into a byway, Keshav, you will never be wooed back into the high-road." "But what is the high-road?" I inquired. Broome Wilson, who was gifted with a retentive memory undertook to inform me. "I understand" I said when he had finished "and am pleased to see my own ideas garbed in the beautiful dialect of poetical analogy; but have you not finished or is there more wine to be pressed from the cluster?" "There is more to be pressed" he answered. Then began an amusing scene, for Broome baited his hook for the argument and kept throwing the line repeatedly, but Keshav was the wariest fish that ever cheated an angler and if he ever appeared to bite, was seen, as the line went flying up, to dart away into some fine thought or voluptuous image. At last when we least expected it, he plunged into the argument.

"And so on the gnarled brow of Pisgah we stand and look down on a land flowing with milk and honey. Now whether is it wiser to descend and take the kingdom of heaven by violence or to linger here and feel on our temples the breath of the winds wafting us hints of the beauty we relinquish? Below there are truculent peoples to conquer and strong cities to storm and giants, the sons of Anak, to slaughter, but above the stainless heavens and the sweet, fresh morning and one lingering star."

"Let us go down" I said "and enjoy the full meaning of the beauty below us."

"Yes" added Broome eagerly "leave hints to the spiritually indolent."

Treneth threw in a paradox.

"I love the pleasure of anticipation better than the pain of enjoyment."

"We are very far from the enjoyment" said Keshav "for we have yet to make the descent of Pisgah."

"But what is Pisgah?" I asked.

"In thought, the knowledge of virtue, and, in action, the purpose of evolving the inborn qualities and powers native to our personality."

"Shall I let you off, Keshav," said Broome "or are you ready to answer my inquiries?"

"Pray do not" he said "for like Gorgias I profess to answer any question and not be at a loss however strange the inquiry."

"I am glad to hear it, and I hope you will answer and tell me why you have ignored the qualities that are native neither to our human nature nor to our personality but to a more subtle part of us."

"I see;" he replied with a smile "you shy at the spectre of heredity. Well, we will lay the spectre."

"And a spectre it is, or rather a scarecrow;" put in Prince Paradox "for it seems to me neither beautiful as an idea nor sound as a theory but merely the last resource of bad psychologists."

"I see the lovers of the past are as iconoclastic from regret as the lovers of the future from aspiration. We are then agreed that our first step will be to reject or accept heredity?"

We all assented.

"And now, Prince Paradox" he said "will you tell me that you do not believe in race?"

"God forbid."

"And you agree with me that an Aryan is various from a non-Aryan, and a Teuton from a Celt and a Celt from a Hindu, and a Rajput from a Mahratta, and that this is fine as an idea and sound as a theory and consonant with Nature, which is fond of sphering harmony within harmony?"

"Yes, I agree with all that."

"And by origin the Saxon varies from the Celt, and is meant for the drudgery of Life and not for its beauty and splendour, just as by origin the thistle varies from the rose and is not glorious nor wonderful but simply decent and useful and good diet for donkeys?"

"That is true."

"Then if race divergences result from origin, and origin is heredity, is it not?, is not heredity real and not a sciolism?"

"Yes, in broad masses, but not in the individual. What is sauce for the goose abstract is not sauce for the positive gander."

"It would take a positive goose to deny that. But synthesis is the secret of Philosophy and not analysis, and we err widely when we work from without rather than from within. Let us rectify our methods or we shall arrive at incomplete results. I trust none of you are proficient in text-book Psychology?"

We all disclaimed the text-book.

"That is fortunate, for I can now make ridiculous mistakes without fear of ridicule. This is the theory of race as I conceive it. Temperament is the basis or substratum of character, and the character built on anything other than temperament is an edifice rooted in the sea-waves which in a moment will foam away into nothing or tumble grovelling under the feet of fresh conquerors. Indeed it would be more apt to call temperament the root of character, and the character itself the growing or perfect tree with its hundred branches and myriads of leaves. And temperament is largely due to race, or, in another phrasing, varies with the blood, and if the blood is quick and fiery the temperament is subtle and sensitive and responds as promptly to social influences and personal culture as a flower to sunlight and rain, and shoots up into multitudinous leaves and branches, but if the blood is slow and lukewarm, the temperament is dull and phlegmatic and will not answer to the most earnest wooing, but grows up stunted and withered in aspect and bald of foliage and miserly of branches and altogether unbeautiful. On the blood depends the sensitiveness of the nerves to impressions and the quick action of the brains and the heat of the passions, and all that goes to the composition of a character, which if they are absent, leave only the heavy sediment and dregs of human individuality. Hence the wide gulf between the Celt and the Saxon."

"You are the dupe of your own metaphors, Keshav" said Broome "the quick nature is the mushroom, but the slow is the gradual and majestic oak."

"If the Athenians were mushrooms and the Lowland Scotch are oaks, the mushroom is preferable. To be slow and solid is the pride of the Saxon and the ox, but to be quick and songful and gracile is the pride of the Celt and the bird. There is no virtue in inertia, but only absence of virtue; for without growth there is no development, and the essence of growth and the imperative need of the spirit is movement, which if you lose, you lose all that separates the human from the brute."

Broome avowed that on our theory of virtue the remark was convincing.

"And do we all recognize" said he "blood as the seed of temperament and temperament as the root of character?"

We all signified assent.

"Then, Prince Paradox, does it not follow that if our ancestors had quick blood, we shall have quick blood and a quick temperament, and if they had slow blood, we shall have slow blood and a slow temperament, and if they had some of both characters, we shall have the elements of either temperament, and either they will amalgamate, one predominant and the other subordinate or driven under, or they will pervert our souls into a perpetual field of battle?"

"Obviously" he assented.

"Then here we have heredity in the individual as in the broad masses."

"But only a racial heredity and to that I do not object, but what I loath is to be told that my virtues are mere bequests and that I am not an original work but a kind of anthology of ancestral qualities."

"But if I called you a poem, in which peculiar words and cadences have been introduced and assimilated and blended in a new and beautiful manner, would you loath to be told that?"

"Dear me, no: it quite reconciles me to the idea."

"And it is the more accurate comparison. Nature does not go to work like a mere imitator of herself, as modern poets do, but transplants the secrets of her old poems and blends them with new secrets, so as to enrich the beauty of her new poem, and however she may seem to grow grapes from thistles, is really too wise and good, to do anything so discordant, and only by her involved and serpentine manner gives an air of caprice and anarchy to what is really apt and harmonious. She often leaves the ground fallow for a generation and the world is surprised when it sees spring from Sir Timothy Shelley, Baronet and orthodox, Percy Bysshe Shelley, poet and pioneer of free-thought, but learns in a little while that Percy Shelley had a grandfather, and marvels no longer. Could we trace the descent of Goethe and Shakespeare we should find the root of the Italian in the one and the Celt in the other — but the world did not then and does not now appreciate the value of genealogies to philosophy. We are vexed and are sceptical of harmony in nature, when we find Endymion a Londoner, but look back a step and learn that his parents were Devonshire Celts and recover our faith in the Cosmos. And why should we exclaim at the Julian emperors as strange products for stoical virtue-ridden Rome, when we know that Tiberius was a Clausus, one of the great Italian houses renowned for its licence, cruelty, pride and genius, and Caligula the son and Nero the grandson of Germanicus, who drew his blood from Mark Antony. Science is right in its materialist data, though not always in the inferences it draws from them and when she tells us that nothing proceeds from nothingness and that for every effect there is a cause and for every growth a seed, we must remember that her truths apply as much to the spiritual as to the material world. Mommsen has said rightly that without passion there is no genius. We shall not gather beauty from ugliness, nor intellect from a slow temperament, nor fiery passion from disciplined apathy, but in all things shall reap as we sow, and must sow the wind before we can reap the whirlwind."

Stray Thoughts

Flowers and trees are the poetry of Nature; the gardener is a romantic poet who has added richness, complexity of effect and symmetry to a language otherwise distinguished merely by facility, by directness and by simplicity of colour and charm.

Sound is more essential to poetry than sense. Swinburne who often conveys no meaning to the intellect, yet fills his verse with lovely & suggestive melodies, can put more poetry into one such line than Pope into a hundred couplets of accurate sense and barren music. A noble thought framed in a well-rounded sentence, will always charm by virtue of its satisfying completeness, but will never convey that exquisite agony of rapture which a line of perfect melody conveys to the sensitive soul.

The melody of words has this advantage over the melody of mere sounds that it needs only a soul to understand poetry but to comprehend music a technical education as well.

To govern life by fixed laws and a pocket-hand-book.

Beware of heavy touches above all in tragedy: comedy heavily stressed becomes the grotesque, which has its value in Art: tragedy heavily stressed becomes melodrama, which has no value anywhere.

One step beyond the sublime & you are in the grotesque.

The Greek mythology was evolved by poets and sculptors; therefore it is beautiful. The Hindu mythology fell into the hands of priests and moralists; therefore it has become hideous.

Art holds the mirror up to Nature that Nature may see her own image beside that of Art and realise her own deformity and imperfections.

It was Meredith who taught me that the epigram is the soul of style, and Plato who whispered that rhythm is its body. Words are the texture of the flesh and sentences the system of hard matter that gives it consistency: the texture of the flesh may be coarse or delicate, and as you design so you shall build.

Just as Socrates was nothing without his *daemon*, so the artist is helpless if he has not his daemon at his elbow. And who is the artist's daemon?
The artistic conscience.

Inspiration means that the papyrus of your imagination is held to the fire of memory and reveals characters written in Indian ink by unseen compositors.

Part Two

On Literature

Sri Aurobindo wrote all the pieces in this part in Baroda between 1893 and 1906. He published the essays making up *Bankim Chandra Chatterji* in a newspaper in 1893–94. He published two of the essays on Kalidasa, “The Age of Kalidasa” and “The Seasons”, in 1902 and 1909 respectively. He did not publish any of the pieces in the sections headed “On Poetry and Literature” and “On the Mahabharata”.

Bankim Chandra Chatterji

I

His Youth and College Life

BANKIM Chandra Chattopadhyaya, the creator and king of Bengali prose, was a high-caste Brahman and the son of a distinguished official in Lower Bengal. Born at Kantalpara on the 27th June 1838, dead at Calcutta on the 8th April 1894, his fifty-six years of laborious life were a parcel of the most splendid epoch in Bengali history; yet among its many noble names, his is the noblest. His life shows us three faces, his academical career, his official labours and his literary greatness; it will be here my endeavour to give some description of each and all. The first picture we have of his childhood is his mastering the alphabet at a single reading; and this is not only the initial picture but an image and prophecy of the rest. Even thus early men saw in him the three natural possessions of the cultured Bengali, a boundless intellect, a frail constitution and a temper mild to the point of passivity. And indeed Bankim was not only our greatest; he was also our type and magnified pattern. He was the image of all that is most finely characteristic in the Bengali race. At Midnapur, the home of his childhood, the magnificence of his intellect came so early into view, that his name grew into a proverb. "You will soon be another Bankim," — for a master to say that was the hyperbole of praise, and the best reward of industry. He ascended the school by leaps and bounds; so abnormal indeed was his swiftness that it put his masters in fear for him. They grew nervous lest they should spoil by over-instruction the delicate fibre of his originality, and with a wise caution they obstructed his entrance into the highest class. Bankim had always an extraordinary luck. Just as at school his fine promise was saved by the prudence of its guardians from the altar of High Education, the Moloch to whom we stupidly sacrifice India's most hopeful sons, so it was saved at Hugly College by his own distaste for hard work. At Hugly College quite as much as at Midnapur he had the reputation of an intellectual miracle. And indeed his ease and quickness in study were hardly human. Prizes and distinctions cost him no effort in the attaining. He won his honours with a magical carelessness and as if by accident while others toiled and failed. But while unconquerably remiss in his duties, he bestowed wonderful pains on his caprices. He conceived at this time a passion for Sanskrit and read with great perseverance at a Pandit's tol. In a single year he had gone through the Mugdhabodh, Raghuvansa, Bhatti and the Meghaduta. Advancing at this pace he managed in something under four years to get a sense of mastery in the ancient tongue and a feeling for its literary secrets which gave him immense leverage in his work of creating a new prose. Not that there is the least touch of pedantry in his Bengali style: rather it was he and Madhu Sudan Dutt who broke the tyranny of the Sanskrit tradition: but one feels how immensely his labour was simplified by a fine and original use of his Sanskrit knowledge. At the age of seventeen, being then a student of five years' standing, he cut short his attendance at Hugly College. He left behind him a striking reputation, to which, except Dwarkanath Mitra, no student has ever come near. Yet he had done positively nothing in the way of application or hard work. As with most geniuses his intellectual habits were irregular. His spirit needed larger bounds than a school routine could give it, and refused, as every free mind does, to cripple itself and lose its natural suppleness. It was his constant habit, a habit which grew on him with the lapse of time, to hide himself in a nook of the College Library and indulge his wandering appetite in all sorts of reading. At the eleventh hour and with an examination impending, he would catch up his prescribed books, hurry through them at a canter, win a few prizes, and go back to his lotus-eating. I believe this is a not uncommon habit with brilliant young men in all countries and it saves them from the sterilizing effects of over-instruction; but it hardly strikes one as a safe policy for slower minds. At the Presidency College, his next seat of instruction, he shaped his versatile intellect to the study of law. He had then some project of qualifying as a High Court Pleader, but at the right moment for literature the Calcutta University came into being and Bankim took literary honours instead of legal. The Courts lost a distinguished pleader and India gained a great man. Bankim, however, seems to have had some hankering after Law; for he subsequently snatched time from hard official drudgery and larger literary toil to appear with his usual distinguished success for the B.L. But his chief pretension to academical originality is perhaps that he was, together with Jodunath Bose, our first B.A., even in this detail leading the way for his countrymen. His official appointment followed close on the heels of his degree. At the age of twenty he was sent as Deputy Magistrate to Jessore.

I have drawn out in a manner as little perfunctory as I could manage, this skeleton of Bankim's academical life. In any account of an eminent Hindu a dry sketch of this sort is a form that must be gone through; for we are a scholastic people and in our life examinations and degrees fill up half the book. But examinations and degrees are a minor episode in the history of a mind. An European writer has acutely observed that nothing which is worth knowing can be taught. That is a truth which Dr. Bhandarkar, when he can spare time from his Carlyle, might ponder over with profit. Not what a man learns, but what he observes for himself in life and literature is the formative agency in his existence, and the actual shape it will take is much determined by the sort of social air he happens to breathe at that critical moment when the mind is choosing its road. All else is mere dead material useless without the breath of a vivifying culture. If examinations and degrees are the skeleton of university life, these are its soul and life-blood, and where they exist poorly or not at all, education, except for the one or two self-sufficing intellects, becomes mere wind and dust. Among what sort of men did the student Bankim move? From what social surroundings did his adolescent personality take its colour? These are questions of a nearer interest than the examinations he passed or the degrees he took; and to them I shall give a larger answer.

II

The Bengal He Lived In

THE SOCIETY by which Bankim was formed, was the young Bengal of the fifties, the most extraordinary perhaps that India has yet seen, — a society electric with thought and loaded to the brim with passion. Bengal was at that time the theatre of a great intellectual awakening. A sort of miniature Renascence was in process. An ardent and imaginative race, long bound down in the fetters of a single tradition, had had suddenly put into its hands the key to a new world thronged with the beautiful or profound creations of Art and Learning. From this meeting of a foreign Art and civilisation with a temperament differing from the temperament which created them, there issued, as there usually does issue from such meetings, an original Art and an original civilisation. Originality does not lie in rejecting outside influences but in accepting them as a new mould into which our own individuality may run. This is what happened and may yet happen in Bengal. The first impulse was gigantic in its proportions and produced men of an almost gigantic originality. Rammohan Ray arose with a new religion in his hand, which was developed on original lines by men almost greater one thinks than he, by Rajnarain Bose and Debendranath Tagore. The two Dutts, Okhay Kumar and Michael Madhu Sudan, began a new Prose and a new Poetry. Vidyasagara, scholar, sage and intellectual dictator, laboured hugely like the Titan he was, to create a new Bengali language and a new Bengali society, while in vast and original learning Rajendra Lal Mitra has not met his match. Around these arose a class of men who formed a sort of seed-bed for the creative geniuses, men of fine critical ability and appreciative temper, scholarly, accomplished, learned in music and the arts, men in short not only of culture, but of original culture. Of these perhaps the most finished patterns were Madhu Sudan's friends, Gourdas Byshak, and that scholarly patron of letters, Rajah Jyotindra Mohun Tagore. At the same time there arose, as in other parts of India, a new social spirit and a new political spirit, but these on a somewhat servilely English model. Of all its channels the released energies of the Bengali mind ran most violently into the channel of literature. And this was only natural; for although the Bengali has by centuries of Brahmanic training acquired a religious temper, a taste for law and a taste for learning, yet his peculiar sphere is language. Another circumstance must not be forgotten. Our renascence was marked like its European prototype, though not to so startling an extent, by a thawing of old moral custom. The calm, docile, pious, dutiful Hindu ideal was pushed aside with impatient energy, and the Bengali, released from the iron restraint which had lain like a frost on his warm blood and sensuous feeling, escaped joyously into the open air of an almost Pagan freedom. The ancient Hindu cherished a profound sense of the nothingness and vanity of life; the young Bengali felt vividly its joy, warmth and sensuousness. This is usually the moral note of a Renascence, a burning desire for Life, Life in her warm human beauty arrayed gloriously like a bride. It was the note of the sixteenth century, it is the note of the astonishing return to Greek Paganism, which is now beginning in England and France; and it was in a slighter and less intellectual way the note of the new age in Bengal. Everything done by the men of that day and their intellectual children is marked by an unbounded energy and passion. Their reading was enormous and ran often quite out of the usual track. Madhu Sudan Dutt, besides English, Bengali and Sanskrit, studied Greek, Latin, Italian and French, and wrote the last naturally and with ease. Toru Dutt, that unhappy and immature genius, who unfortunately wasted herself on a foreign language and perished while yet little more than a girl, had, I have been told, a knowledge of Greek. At any rate she could write English with perfect grace and correctness and French with energy and power. Her novels gained the ear of the French public and her songs breathed fire into the hearts of Frenchmen in their fearful struggle with Germany. And as was their reading so was their life. They were giants and did everything gigantically. They read hugely, wrote hugely, thought hugely, and drank hugely.

Bankim's student days did not happen among that circle of original geniuses; his time fell between the heroes of the Renascence and the feebler Epigoni of our day. But he had contemporary with him men of extraordinary talent, men like Dinabandhu Mitra and Dwarkanath Mitra, men so to speak of the second tier. Bankim was the last of the original geniuses. Since then the great impulse towards originality has gone backward like a receding wave. After Bankim came the Epigoni, Hemchandra Banerji, Nobin Sen, Robindranath Tagore, men of surprising talent, nay, of unmistakable genius, but too obviously influenced by Shelley and the English poets. And last of all came the generation formed in the schools of Keshab Chandra Sen and Kristo Das Pal, with its religious shallowness, its literary sterility and its madness in social reform. Servile imitators of the English, politicians without wisdom and scholars without learning, they have no pretensions to greatness or originality. Before they came the first mighty impulse had spent itself and Bengal lay fallow for a new. It rests with the new generation, the generation that will soon be sitting in the high places and judging the land, whether there shall be scope for any new impulse to work itself out. Two years ago it looked as if this mighty awakening would lose itself, as the English sixteenth century lost itself, in Puritanism and middle-class politics.

But when Bankim was a student, the traditions of the Hindu college were yet powerful, the Hindu college, that nursery of geniuses, where the brain of the New Age had worked most powerfully and the heart of the New Age had beat with the mightiest vehemence. The men around Bankim were calmer, sedater, more temperate; but they walked in the same ways and followed the same ideals. To that life of hard thinking and hard drinking Bankim was drawn not merely, as some were, by the power of youthful imitativeness, but by sympathy of temperament. He had the novelist's catholicity of taste and keen sense for life, and the artist's repugnance to gloom and dreariness. Even when the thoughts turned to old faith, the clear sanity of the man showed itself in his refusal to admit asceticism among the essentials of religion. He never indulged in that habit of frightful and inveterate riot which has killed one or two of our second-rate talents, but it cannot quite be said that he never overstepped the limits or always observed the principle of "nothing in excess," which is the only sure rule for a man's conduct. Some would like to see in this sensuous exuberance the secret of his early decay. It may be so; but speculation on this subject will remain a solemn farce, until it is taken up in a disinterested spirit. At present all our wise disquisitions proceed from unchastened sentiment. Dr. Bhandarkar is a violent social reformer and wants to throw odium upon Hindu society; Mr. Ranade's hobby is a Conservative Radicalism and the spirit moves him to churn the ocean of statistics in a sense more agreeable to his own turn of mind; a third authority, prejudiced against Western Culture, traces all premature deaths to pleasure and wine-bibbing. Each starts from his own sensations, each builds his web of argument in the spirit of a sophist. To this Dr. Bhandarkar brings his moral ardour and grave eloquence, Mr. Ranade his trained reason and distinguished talent, the religionist his prejudices and cold precepts. Widely as they differ, they have this in common that they have not for their aim to speak usefully: they are simply trying to find reasons for their own likes and dislikes. Dealing with subjects of scientific interest in a spirit of this sort is only to invite confusion and exclude light. We in Bengal with our tendency to the sins of the blood are perhaps more apt than others to call to our aid the gloomy moralities of the Puritan; in censuring Bankim we are secretly fortifying ourselves against ourselves; but in this instance it is a false caution. The cultured Bengali begins life with a physical temperament already delicate and high-strung. He has the literary constitution with its femineity and acute nervousness. Subject this to a cruel strain when it is tenderest and needs the most careful rearing, to the wicked and wantonly cruel strain of instruction through a foreign tongue; put it under the very worst system of training; add enormous academical labour, immense official drudgery in an unhealthy climate and constant mental application; crown all with the nervous expense of thought and fever of composition plus the unfailing exhaustion that comes after; and we need not go to the momentary excesses of a generous blood to find the explanation of broken health and an early decline. The miracle of it is not that the victims die prematurely but that they live so long. Perhaps we might begin to enquire into the causes of that phenomenon for a change.

One thing however is certain that whatever else Bankim lost, he gained from his youthful surroundings much emotional experience and great flexibility of mind. There too he got his initial stimulus. Like Telang, and perhaps even more than Telang, Bankim was blessed or cursed with an universal talent. Everything he touched, shaped itself to his hand. It would have been easy for him to make disastrous mistakes, to miss his vocation, waste himself in English and at the end to leave no enduring monument of his personality behind. What saved him? It was the initial stimulus and the cultured environment; it was that he lived among men who could distinguish a talent when they saw it and once distinguished were bent on realizing it; among men in fact who had some instinct for finding their way. With a limited creature like man, the power of the environment is immense. Genius it is true exists independently of environment and by much reading and observation may attain to self-expression but it is environment that makes self-expression easy and natural; that provides sureness, verve, stimulus. Here lies the importance to the mind in its early stage of self-culture of fine social surroundings; — that sort of surroundings which our Universities do nothing and ought to have done everything to create.

III

His Official Career

THUS equipped, thus trained Bankim began his human journey, began in the radiance of joy and strength and genius the life which was to close in suffering and mortal pain. The drudgery of existence met him in the doorway, when his youth was still young. His twenty-first year found him at Jessore, his fifty-third was the last of his long official labour. Here too however his inveterate habit of success went always with him. The outward history of his manhood reads more brilliantly even than that of his youth, and if he did not climb to the highest posts, it was only because these are shut to indigenous talent. From start to finish, his ability, delicacy of judgment and careful work were recognised as something unusual: yet it would not be easy to find a more careful or cleverer set of administrators than the Hindu civilians of Bengal. At Jessore his life was chequered by a great boon and a great sorrow. It was here that he made fast his friendship with the dramatist Dinabandhu Mitra, which remained close-soldered to the end, and it was here that his young wife died. At Kanthi, the next stage of his official wanderings, he married again and more fortunately. Khulna, the third step in the ladder, was also the theatre of his most ambitious exploits. Entangled in the Sundarban, that rude and unhealthy tract of marsh and jungle, the zillah was labouring under two morbid ailments, for which none of its official doctors had found an efficient panacea, — the smallpox of piracy and the greater pox of Indigoism. Ruffians from Europe were in hot competition with the native breed which should deserve best the Government Scholarship for lawlessness and brutality; and as they had a racial gift for these things and a wider field it might have been safely awarded to them. Unluckily Bankim stept into their happy hunting-grounds and spoiled the game. But to the unhappy ryots, the battle-field for these rival rascalities, he came as a champion and a deliverer. At Khulna this mild, thoughtful Bengali wears the strange appearance of a Hercules weeding out monsters, clearing augean stables, putting a term to pests. His tranquil energy quite broke the back of the Indigo tyrants. Their master-criminals and chief indigocrats fled to Anam and Brindaban, but they were overtaken by Bankim's warrant and persuaded to come back. Fine and imprisonment meted out with a healthy severity, shattered their prestige and oppressed their brutal spirit. Khulna then saw the last of government by organised ruffiandom. No less terse and incisive were Bankim's dealings with the water-thieves who lurking in creek and brushwood dominated to the perpetual alarm and molestation of travellers the hundred waters of the Sundarban. The out-laws were hunted down and imprisoned and their principal spirits relegated where there was less room for their genius to find self-expression. The hydra of the waters had been crushed as effectually as the indigo pest; and since the era of Bankim's magistracy one may travel the length and breadth of Khulna without peril except from malaria and ague. By a little quiet decisiveness he had broken the back of two formidable tyrannies and given an object-lesson in what a Government can do when it heartily intends the good of the people.

Baruipur, consecrated a place in the calendar of literature, was next put into his hands. The event of his residence here was his appointment vice Mr. Justice Princep to the chair of an Official Emoluments Commission then sitting. The Government intended this to look like an extraordinary distinction, and had not the genius of the man raised him unmeasurably above any Englishman in the country, we might have regarded it as such. Barhampur was the next step in his journey, and after Barhampur Maldeh, and after Maldeh the important Suburban district of Hugly. He was now nearing his high-water mark and his official existence which had been till then more than ordinarily smooth, began to be ploughed up by unaccustomed storms. The Government wanted to give some inadequate expression to its sense of his extraordinary merits and could think of nothing better than a place in the Secretariat. It was here that he came into collision with the spirit of bureaucracy. His superior was a certain Macaulay, a hard working official, whose brains were tied together with red tape. The diligent mediocrity of this man was goaded to extra hours by flickering visions of a Lieutenant-Governorship, but Bankim, having no such high incentive, was careful to close his work at the strict office-hour. For this Macaulay took him severely to task. “It is natural enough” replied Bankim, forgetting unfortunately that he was talking to a piece of red tape “it is natural enough for you to work hard. You are of the ruling caste and may rise, who knows? to be Lieutenant-Governor. But why should I be subservient to your example? Here is the bourne and goal of my promotion. Beyond it what prospect have I? No, I have no idea of sweating myself to death over extraordinary work.” When independence and red tape come into collision, it is usually independence that gets tripped up. Bankim was sent back in a hurry to Magistrate’s work, this time at Alipur. But his ill-luck followed him. He was shipwrecked again in a collision with Anglo-Indianism. Walking in Eden Garden he chanced across Munro, the Presidency Commissioner, a farouche bureaucrat with the manners of an Englishman and the temper of a badly-educated hyena. Bankim examined the queer curiosity, as one might any queer curiosity, with a certain lazy interest, but no signal of respect. He was unaware at this time that to Salaam any stray European you may meet is the highest privilege of a Hindu and the whole duty of a Deputy Magistrate. But he was soon to receive instruction: for His Hyenaship was off in a rage to the Government and by a little private roaring easily got Bankim transferred to Jahajpur in Orissa. Bankim was considerably taken aback and not a little angry. “Have I then committed some grave fault?” he enquired of the Chief Secretary “or is it that the Government has found out a new way to pay its old debts? Resolve me, for I am in doubt.” The gibe told. He had hardly set foot in Orissa, when he was gazetted back to Hugly. After a lapse of time, — Munro, I believe, had in the mean time been struck by his own astonishing likeness to the founder of Christianity and was away to spread the light of the Gospel among the heathen — after a lapse of time

Bankim was allowed to come back to Alipur. But this was the last stage of that thankless drudgery in which he had wasted so much precious force. His term of service was drawing to a close, and he was weary of it all: he wished to devote his remnant of life to literature. But the days that remained to him were few and evil. One or two years clouded with sickness, sorrow and suffering stood between him and the end.

IV

His Versatility

WHENEVER a literary man gives proof of a high capacity in action people always talk about it as if a miracle had happened. The vulgar theory is that worldly abilities are inconsistent with the poetic genius. Like most vulgar theories it is a conclusion made at a jump from a few superficial appearances. The inference to be drawn from a sympathetic study of the lives of great thinkers and great writers is that except in certain rare cases versatility is one condition of genius. Indeed the literary ability may be said to contain all the others, and the more so when it takes the form of criticism or of any art, such as the novelist's, which proceeds principally from criticism. Goethe in Germany, Shakespeare, Fielding and Matthew Arnold in England are notable instances. Even where practical abilities seem wanting, a close study will often reveal their existence rusting in a lumber-room of the man's mind. The poet and the thinker are helpless in the affairs of the world, because they choose to be helpless: they sacrifice the practical impulse in their nature, that they may give full expression to the imaginative or speculative impulse; they choose to burn the candle at one end and [not] at the other, but for all that the candle has two ends and not one. Bankim, the greatest of novelists, had the versatility developed to its highest expression. Scholar, poet, essayist, novelist, philosopher, lawyer, critic, official, philologian and religious innovator, — the whole world seemed to be shut up in his single brain. At first sight he looks like a bundle of contradictions. He had a genius for language and a gift for law; he could write good official papers and he could write a matchless prose; he could pass examinations and he could root out an organised tyranny; he could concern himself with the largest problems of metaphysics and with the smallest details of word-formation: he had a feeling for the sensuous facts of life and a feeling for the delicate spiritualities of religion: he could learn grammar and he could write poetry.

What shall we say in the presence of this remarkable versatility? Over-borne by the pomp of it and the show, shall we set it down as an adjunct of intellectual kingliness? Yes, to have it is an adjunct of intellectual kingliness, but to give expression to it is an intellectual mistake. To give impartial expression to all your gifts is to miss your vocation. Bankim was never so far led astray as that. His province was literature, prose literature, and he knew it. His lyrics are enchanting, but few; metaphysics he followed at the end of his life and law at the beginning; and he used scholarship and philology, simply as other great writers have used them, to give subtlety of suggestion and richness of word-colour to his literary style. Even in the province of prose literature, where he might have worked out his versatility to advantage, he preferred to specialise. He never stepped unpardonably out of his province, but he was occasionally led astray by this or that lure to allow small drains on his fund of energy; and so far as he did so, he sinned against his own soul. The one great and continuous drain was the tax put upon him by official drudgery. Under the morbid and wasteful conditions of middle-class life in India genius, when not born in the purple, has put before it, like the fair Rosamund of Norman romance, a choice between two methods of suicide, the Services and the Law. It must either take the poisoned bowl or the dagger. And in this limited circle of professions the Educational Service with its system of respites and remissions, and the Executive Service with its indirect rather than direct tax on the pure intellect, present, it may be, the points of least repulsion. But they are none the less a fearful drain because they are, under existing circumstances, necessary.

In this versatility Bankim was only a type of the intellectual Hindu. This gift, at once a blessing and a curse, is the most singular characteristic of those two Hindu races, which have the destinies of the country in their keeping. It is the evidence of our high blood, our patent of nobility among the nations; for it comes of the varied mental experience of our forefathers, of the nation's three thousand years of intellectual life. But it is at the same time a rock ahead, of which the Hindu genius has yet to pilot itself clear. To find your vocation and keep to it, that is not indeed a showy, but it is a simple and solid rule of life. We however prefer to give an impartial expression to all our gifts, forgetting that the mind is as mortal and as much subject to wear and tear as any perishable thing, forgetting that specialism is one condition of the highest accomplishment, forgetting that our stock of energy is limited and that what we expend in one direction, we lose in another. We insist on burning the candle at both ends. This spirit appears in our system of public instruction, the most ingeniously complete machine for murder that human stupidity ever invented, and murder not only of a man's body but of a man's soul, of that sacred fire of individuality in him which is far holier and more precious than this mere mortal breath. It appeared too with melancholy effects in the literary fate of Kashinath Telang. It was one reason why he, a man of such large abilities, the most considerable genius a highly intellectual people has produced, yet left nothing to which the world will return with unfailing delight. Telang, it is true, worked mainly in English, a language he had learned; and in a language you have learned, you may write graciously, correctly, pleasingly, but you will never attain to the full stature of your genius. But it was a yet more radical mistake that he, whose power was pre-eminently literary, as any eye trained to these things can see that it was, yet allowed it to run in every direction except the very one that nature had marked out for it. Bankim was more fortunate. He wrote in his own beautiful mother-tongue, his best work was literary and his immense originality would in any case have forced its way out. But one cannot think without a pang of the many delightful master-pieces he might have brought into his garner, if he had had leisure to work single-heartedly in the field of his richest harvests. The body of work he gave us in nearly forty years of intellectual activity amounts to ten novels, two critical works on religion and some scattered literature. Small in quantity, it is pure gold in quality. And it may be that in no case would he have written much. Nature gives us quartz profusely and mixed alloy in abundance, but pure gold only in rare parcels and infinitesimal portions.

V

His Literary History

BANKIM'S literary activity began for any serious purpose at Khulna, but he had already trifled with poetry in his student days. At that time the poet Iswara Chandra Gupta was publishing two papers, the *Sangbad Prabhakar* and the *Sadhuranjan*, which Dwarkanath Mitra and Dinbandhu Mitra were helping with clever school-boy imitation of Iswara Chandra's style. Bankim also entered these fields, but his striking originality at once distinguished him from the mere cleverness of his competitors, and the fine critical taste of Iswara Chandra easily discovered in this obscure student a great and splendid genius. Like Madhu Sudan Dutt Bankim began by an ambition to excel in English literature, and he wrote a novel in English called *Rajmohan's Wife*. But, again like Madhu Sudan, he at once realised his mistake. The language which a man speaks and which he has never learned, is the language of which he has the nearest sense and in which he expresses himself with the greatest fulness, subtlety and power. He may neglect, he may forget it, but he will always retain for it a hereditary aptitude, and it will always continue for him the language in which he has the safest chance of writing with originality and ease. To be original in an acquired tongue is hardly feasible. The mind, conscious of a secret disability with which it ought not to have handicapped itself, instinctively takes refuge in imitation, or else in bathos and the work turned out is ordinarily very mediocre stuff. It has something unnatural and spurious about it like speaking with a stone in the mouth or walking upon stilts. Bankim and Madhu Sudan, with their overflowing originality, must have very acutely felt the tameness of their English work. The one wrote no second English poem after the *Captive Lady*, the other no second English novel after *Rajmohan's Wife*.

Bankim's first attempt of any importance was begun at

Khulna and finished at Baruipur, the birthplace of some of his finest work. It was the *Durgesh Nandini*, a name ever memorable as the first-born child of the New Prose. At Baruipur he wrote also *Kopal Kundala* and *Mrinalini* and worked at the famous *Poison-Tree*. At Barhampur, his next station, he began editing the *Bangadarshan*, a magazine which made a profound impression and gave birth to that increasing periodical literature of to-day, of which *Bharati*, the literary organ of the cultured Tagore family, is the most finished type. Since then Bankim has given us some very ripe and exquisite work, *Chandrashekhar, Krishna Kanta's Will, Debi Chaudhurani, Anandmath, Sitaram, Indira* and *Kamal Kanta*. Dating from his magistracy at Barhampur broken health and increasing weakness attended the great novelist to his pyre; but the strong unwearied intellect struggled with and triumphed over the infirmities of the body. His last years were years of suffering and pain, but they were also years of considerable fruitfulness and almost unceasing labour. He had been a sensuous youth and a joyous man. Gifted supremely with the artist's sense for the warmth and beauty of life, he had turned with a smile from the savage austerities of the ascetic and with a shudder from the dreary creed of the Puritan. But now in that valley of the shadow of death his soul longed for the sustaining air of religion. More and more the philosophic bias made its way into his later novels, until at last the thinker in him proved too strong for the artist. Amid his worst bodily sufferings he was poring over the Bhagavadgita and the Vedas, striving to catch the deeper and sacred sense of those profound writings. To give that to his countrymen was the strenuous aim of his dying efforts. A Life of Krishna, a book on the Essence of Religion, a rendering of the Bhagavadgita and a version of the Vedas formed the staple of his literary prospects in his passage to the pyre. The first realised themselves and the Bhagavadgita was three parts finished, but the version of the Vedas, which should have been a priceless possession, never got into the stage of execution. Death, in whose shadow he had so long dwelt, took the pen from his hand, before it could gather up the last gleanings of that royal intellect. But his ten masterpieces of fiction are enough. They would serve to immortalise ten reputations.

HIS PLACE IN LITERATURE

To assign Bankim's place in Bengali literature is sufficiently easy: there is no prose-writer, and only one poet who can compete with him. More difficulties enter into any comparison of him with the best English novelists; yet I think he stands higher than any of them, except one; in certain qualities of each he may fall short, but his sum of qualities is greater; and he has this supreme advantage over them all that he is a more faultless artist. In his life and fortunes, and sometimes even in his character, he bears a striking resemblance to the father of English fiction, Henry Fielding; but the literary work of the two men moves upon different planes. Philosophical culture, and deep feeling for the poetry of life and an unfailing sense of beauty are distinguishing marks of Bankim's style; they find no place in Fielding's. Again, Bankim, after a rather silly fashion of speaking now greatly in vogue, has been pointed at by some as the Scott of Bengal. It is a marvellous thing that the people who misuse this phrase as an encomium, cannot understand that it conveys an insult. They would have us imagine that one of the most perfect and original of novelists is a mere replica of a faulty and incomplete Scotch author! Scott had many marvellous and some unique gifts, but his defects are at least as striking. His style is never quite sure; indeed, except in his inspired moments, he has no style: his Scotch want of humour is always militating against his power of vivid incident; his characters, and chiefly those in whom he should interest us most, are usually very manifest puppets; and they have all this shortcoming, that they have no soul: they may be splendid or striking or bold creations, but they live from outside and not from within. Scott could paint outlines, but he could not fill them in. Here Bankim excels; speech and action with him are so closely interpenetrated and suffused with a deeper existence that his characters give us the sense of their being real men and women. Moreover to the wonderful passion and poetry of his finest creations there are in English fiction, outside the Brontës and that supreme genius, George Meredith, no parallel instances. Insight into the secrets of feminine character, that is another notable concomitant of the best dramatic power, and that too Bankim possesses. Wade as you will through the interminable bog of contemporary fiction, you will meet no living woman there. Even novelists of genius stop short at the outside: they cannot find their way into the soul. Here Fielding fails us; Scott's women are a mere gallery of wax figures, Rebecca herself being no more than a highly-coloured puppet; even in Thackeray the real women are only three or four. But the supreme dramatic genius has found out this secret of femineity. Shakespeare had it to any degree, and in our own century Meredith, and among ourselves Bankim. The social reformer, gazing, of course, through that admirable pair of spectacles given to him by the Calcutta University, can find nothing excellent in Hindu life, except its cheapness, or in Hindu woman, except her subserviency. Beyond this he sees only its narrowness and her ignorance. But Bankim had the eye of a poet and saw much deeper than this. He saw what was beautiful and sweet and gracious in Hindu life, and what was lovely and noble in Hindu woman, her deep heart of emotion, her steadfastness, tenderness and lovableness, in fact, her woman's soul; and all this we find burning in his pages and made diviner by the touch of a poet and an artist. Our social reformers might learn something from Bankim. Their zeal at present is too little ruled by discretion. They are like bad tailors very clever at spoiling the rich stuffs given over to their shaping but quite unable to fit the necessities of the future. They have passed woman through an English crucible and in place of the old type, which, with all its fatal defects, had in it some supreme possibilities, they have turned out a soulless and superficial being fit only for flirtation, match-making and playing on the piano. They seem to have a passion for reforming every good thing out of existence. It is about time this miserable bungling should stop. Surely it would be possible, without spoiling that divine nobleness of soul, to give it a wider culture and mightier channels! So we should have a race of women intellectually as well as emotionally noble, fit to be the mothers not of chatterers and money-makers, but of high thinkers and heroic doers.

Of Bankim's style I shall hardly trust myself to speak. To describe its beauty, terseness, strength and sweetness is too high a task for a pen like mine. I will remark this only that what marks Bankim above all, is his unfailing sense of beauty. This is indeed the note of Bengali literature and the one high thing it has gained from a close acquaintance with European models. The hideous grotesques of old Hindu Art, the monkey-rabble of Ram and the ten heads of Ravan, are henceforth impossible to it. The *Shakuntala* itself is not governed by a more perfect graciousness of conception or suffused with a more human sweetness than *Kopal Kundala* and the *Poison-Tree*.

VI

What He Did for Bengal

I HAVE kept so far to Bankim's achievement looked at purely as literature. I now come to speak of it in the historic sense, of its relations to the Bengali language and potency over the Bengali race. Of this it is not easy to suggest any image without speaking in superlatives. I had almost said in one place that he created the language, and if one couples his name with Madhu Sudan Dutt's, the statement is hardly too daring. Before their advent the Bengali language, though very sweet and melodious, was an instrument with but one string to it. Except the old poet Bharatchandra, no supreme genius had taken it in hand; hence while prose hardly existed except in *Baital Pachisi* and some other tales about Vikramaditya, Bengali verse had very little to recommend it beyond a certain fatiguing sweetness. Virility, subtlety, scope, these were wanting to it. Then came Madhu Sudan and Bankim, and, like Terpander and Orpheus added fresh strings to the lyre. In Madhu Sudan's hands that nerveless and feminine dialect became the large utterance of the early Gods, a tongue epic and Titanic, a tongue for the storms and whirlwinds to speak in: he caught and studied his diction from the echo and rumour of the sea. All the stormiest passions of man's soul he expressed in gigantic language. We seem to hear Milton's Satan speaking in every line he wrote. But in Bankim's hands the Bengali language, before stammering and inarticulate, became a rich, musical and flexible organ vibrating to every human emotion and expressive of every beautiful or noble thought. I do not mean that there were no labourers in the field before Bankim and Madhu Sudan. The paths of the Gods are always prepared for them. Many daring minds were already at work, but they fell short of their high conception. Rammohan Ray, the great Vidyasagara, Okhay Kumar Dutt and the Bengali playwrights were all working bravely towards the same consummation. But

Vidyasagara, though he had much in him of the scholar and critic, was nothing of an artist; Okhay Kumar's audience ran only to the subscribers of a single magazine; and the literary originality of the rest was not equal to their audacity. None of them could transform and recreate with that sure and easy touch, which reveals the true maker of language.

Bankim moreover has this splendid distinction, that he more than anyone exalted Bengali from the status of a dialect to the majesty of a language. The immediate effect of English education had been to foster an undiscriminating love of things English and an unwise contempt for things Bengali. Among the rest the Bengali tongue was put by as an instrument hopelessly bad and unsatisfying; even Madhu Sudan in his youth neglected and forgot it. The strivings of Vidyasagara and Okhay Kumar Dutt were the strivings of a few far-sighted and patriotic men in a generation misled by false ideals. On that generation Madhu Sudan's first great poems, *Sharmishtha* and *Tilottama*, had a complex effect much of a piece with the sensation created by Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* in Elizabethan England or Hugo's *Hernani* in nineteenth century France. They took men's imaginations by storm with their splendour, passion and mighty imagery; by creating the Bengali blank verse they freed poetry from the facilities and prettinesses of the old rhymed stanza; by their magnificencies of style and emotion they brought new elements into Hindu literature, and they gave battle with their strange and fiery coloured music to the classic frigidity of the Sanscritists. They first sounded the note of Romanticism which still governs our literature. They revealed too those magnificent possibilities, latent in every Sanscritic language, which only wait for the magic touch of original genius to open out their store; and they set flowing that perennial fountain of gracious and noble poetry which is doing so much to bring beauty and high feeling into our lives and to produce a race of Bengalis braver and better than we. But at the same time they had to overcome a vast opposition. Lauded with rapturous enthusiasm by the cultured, they were anathematised by the pedants. All the Pandits, all the Sanscritists, all the fanatics of classicism, even the great

Vidyasagara himself, then the intellectual dictator of Bengal, were startled out of their senses by these magnificent and mighty poems. *Tilottama* was a gauntlet thrown down by the Romantic school to the classical. Romanticism won: it was bound to win: it had on its side youth, fire, enthusiasm, the future, and the poems of an unexampled genius for its battle-cry. *Tilottama* had been the *casus belli*; that marvellous epic, the *Meghnad-badh,* was the *coup de grâce*. When Vidyasagara praised the *Meghnad-badh* as a supreme poem, the day of the Sanscritists was over. That cabal of Pandits which had shouted against Madhu Sudan, could only murmur weakly against Bankim; the conscience of the nation had passed out of their keeping. But still the victor's audience was small and went little beyond the class that followed him into battle, the geniuses, the literary men, the women, the cultured zamindars and those men of the stamp of Rajah Jyotindra Mohan Tagore, men of an extraordinary and original culture, who were then so common in Bengal, but are now almost obsolete. The great poet died with a limited audience and before the full consummation of his fame.

Bankim came into that heritage of peace which Madhu Sudan had earned. There is, indeed, a curious contrast between these two builders of the Bengali language, so alike in their mission, but in their fortunes so dissimilar. Both were equipped with enormous stores of reading, both were geniuses of a vast originality, both had creative power, a fine sense for beauty, and a gift for emotion and pathos: both made the same false start. But here all likeness between them stops. One was the king of prose, the other the king of poetry; and their lives were of a piece with their writings. Madhu Sudan's is full of sound and passion, violence of heart, extravagance, intemperance, self-will, a life passing through grief, bitterness and anguish to a mournful and untimely doom. As we read the passage of that Titanic personality over a world too small for it, we seem to be listening again to the thunder-scene in *Lear*, or to some tragic piece out of Thucydides or Gibbon narrating the fall of majestic nations or the ruin of mighty kings. No sensitive man can read it without being shaken to the very heart. Even after his death

Madhu Sudan's evil star followed him. Though a great poet among the greatest, he is read nowhere outside Bengal and the Panjab; and his name is not heard even in Bombay and Madras, provinces of his own native land. How different was it with Bankim, the genius of prose. His nature, with plenty of strength in it, was yet mild, calm and equable, clear and joyous, but not intemperate. Fortune's favourite to whom every door opened without keys, his life had in it that sedate maturity and august quiet, which, according to Epicurus, is the true attitude of the Gods, and which the Gods only give to those mortals, who, like themselves, have seen life steadily and seen it whole. And if his last years were stained with suffering, yet he died in the fruition of his greatness, amid the mourning of a nation which he had done much to create and whose imagination he had filled with so many beautiful thoughts and so many tender, passionate or glorious images.

Bankim's influence has been far-reaching and every day enlarges its bounds. What is its result? Perhaps it may very roughly be summed up thus. When a Mahratta or Gujerati has anything important to say, he says it in English; when a Bengali, he says it in Bengali. That is, I think, the fact which is most full of meaning for us in Bengal. It means besides other things less germane to literature, that, except in politics and journalism which is the handmaid of politics, English is being steadily driven out of the field. Soon it will only remain to weed it out of our conversation; and even to that wheel I am told that Babu Kali Prasunna Ghose has set his shoulder. However that may be, the works of this distinguished prose-writer are a remarkable proof of what I have just been saying. Not long ago anyone moving in that province of the mind which Babu Kali Prasunna has annexed, would have held it beneath the dignity of his subject to write in any medium but English. Work like Babu Kali Prasunna's marks an important stage in the great revolution of sentiment which our literary class has set going, the revolution of sentiment which promises to make the Bengalis a nation.

VII

Our Hope in the Future

BUT PROFOUND as have been its effects, this revolution is yet in its infancy. Visible on every side, in the waning influence of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, in the triumph of the Bengali language, in the return to Hinduism, in the pride of birth, the angry national feeling and the sensitiveness to insult, which are growing more and more common among our young men, it has nevertheless only begun its work and has many more fields to conquer. Calcutta is yet a stronghold of the Philistines; officialdom is honeycombed with the antinational tradition: in politics and social reform the workings of the new movement are yet obscure. The Anglicised Babu sits in the high place and rules the earth for a season. It is he who perorates on the Congress, who frolics in the abysmal fatuity of interpellation on the Legislative Council, who mismanages civic affairs in the smile of the City Corporation. He is the man of the present, but he is not the man of the future. On his generation, a generation servilely English and swayed by Keshab Chandra Sen and Kristo Das Pal, Bankim had little effect. Even now you will hear Anglicised Bengalis tell you with a sort of triumph that the only people who read Bengali books are the Bengali ladies. The sneer is a little out of date, but a few years ago it would not have been so utterly beside the mark. All honour then to the women of Bengal, whose cultured appreciation kept Bengali literature alive! And all honour to the noble few who with only the women of Bengal and a small class of cultured men to appreciate their efforts, adhered to the language our forefathers spoke, and did not sell themselves to the tongue of the foreigner! Their reward is the heartfelt gratitude of a nation and an immortal renown. Yes, the women of Bengal have always been lovers of literature and may they always remain so; but it is no longer true that they are its only readers. Already we see the embryo of a new generation soon to be with us, whose imagination Bankim has caught and who care not for Keshab Chandra Sen and Kristo Das Pal, a generation national to a fault, loving Bengal and her new glories, and if not Hindus themselves, yet zealous for the honour of the ancient religion and hating all that makes war on it. With that generation the future lies and not with the Indian Unnational Congress or the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. Already its vanguard is upon us. It has in it men of culture, men of talent, men of genius. Let it only be true to itself and we shall do yet more marvellous things in the future than we have done in the past. A Bengali may be pardoned who looking back to a splendid beginning and on to a hopeful sequel, indulges in proud and grandiose hopes.

Literature and learning are the provinces in which the Bengali is fitted to have kingship, and of the two literature rather than learning; but signs are not wanting that in other spheres also he may win laurels only less splendid. In painting and sculpture, in the plastic arts, the Hindu imagination has had no gift. The favourite style is evidence of a debauched eye and a perverted taste. Yet even in this alien sphere a Bengali has been winning noble renown, and that too in Italy, the native land of painting, the land of Raphael, Da Vinci and Angelo, and among Italians, with whom artistic taste is an instinct. In religion too, the Bengali has the future in his hands. He was the first to revolt against the shortcomings of Hinduism, and he is the first who has attempted to give some shape to that New Hinduism, which is, one feels, his religious destiny. He has sojourned for some time in the religious thought of the foreigner, but he is now coming back to the creed of his fathers with strange and precious gifts in his hands. In politics he has always led and still leads. The Congress in Bengal is dying of consumption; annually its proportions shrink into greater insignificance; its leaders, the Bonnerjis and Banerjis and Lalmohan Ghoses have climbed into the rarefied atmosphere of the Legislative Council and lost all hold on the imagination of the young men. The desire for a nobler and more inspiring patriotism is growing more intense; and already in the Hindu revival and the rise of an Indigenous

Trade Party we see the handwriting on the wall. This is an omen of good hope for the future; for what Bengal thinks tomorrow, India will be thinking tomorrow week. Even towards commerce and science, spheres in which he has been painfully helpless, the Bengali is casting wistful glances; but whether he will here as elsewhere ascend the ladder, can only be settled by experiment. He is almost too imaginative, restless and swayed by his feelings for paths in which a cold eye or an untroubled brain is the one thing needful. Nevertheless let Bengal only be true to her own soul, and there is no province in which she may not climb to greatness. That this is so, is largely due to the awakening and stimulating influence of Bankim on the national mind. Young Bengal gets its ideas, feelings and culture not from schools and colleges, but from Bankim's novels and Robindranath Tagore's poems; so true is it that language is the life of a nation.

Many are carrying on the great work in prose and poetry: Hemchandra, Nobin, Kamini Sen, Robindranath and Robindranath's sister, that flower of feminine culture in Bengal, Swarna Kumari Devi, and many more whose names it would take long to repeat; but another Bankim, another Madhu Sudan comes not again. Some are pointing to this as a sign of intellectual barrenness; but it is not so. Shakespeare and Milton came within the limits of a century! Since then there have been Keats, Wordsworth, Shelley, Tennyson, but not a second Shakespeare or Milton. Dante and Boccaccio came successively: since then there have been Berni, Boiardo, Alfieri, Tasso, but not a second Dante or Boccaccio. Such men come rarely in the lapse of centuries. Greece alone has presented the world an unbroken succession of supreme geniuses. There is nothing to prevent us Hindus, a nation created for thought and literature, from repeating that wonderful example. Greece is a high name, but what man has once done, man may again strive to do. All we need is not to tie ourselves down to a false ideal, not to load our brains with the pedantry of a false education, but to keep like those first builders a free intellect and a free soul. If we are careful to do that, there is no reason why the creative impulse in Bengal should for a moment die out. But whatever else may perish or endure, Bankim's fame cannot die. Already it has overleaped the barrier between East and West; translations of his works are already appearing in English and German, and wherever they are read, they excite admiration, wonder and delight. O sage politicians, and subtle economists, whose heads run on Simultaneous Examinations and whose vision is bounded by Legislative Councils, what a lesson is here for you! Not in this way shall we exalt ourselves in the scale of nations, not in this way, O sages of the bench and sophists of the bar, but by things of which your legal wisdom takes little cognizance, by noble thoughts, by high deeds, by immortal writings. Bankim and Madhu Sudan have given the world three noble things. They have given it Bengali literature, a literature whose princelier creations can bear comparison with the proudest classics of modern Europe. They have given it the Bengali language. The dialect of Bengal is no longer a dialect, but has become the speech of Gods, a language unfading and indestructible, which cannot die except with the death of the Bengali nation, and not even then. And they have given it the Bengali nation; a people spirited, bold, ingenious and imaginative, high among the most intellectual races of the world, and if it can but get perseverance and physical elasticity, one day to be high among the strongest. This is surely a proud record. Of them it may be said in the largest sense that they, being dead, yet live. And when Posterity comes to crown with her praises the Makers of India, she will place her most splendid laurel not on the sweating temples of a place hunting politician nor on the narrow forehead of a noisy social reformer, but on the serene brow of that gracious Bengali who never clamoured for place or for power, but did his work in silence for love of his work, even as nature does, and just because he had no aim but to give out the best that was in him, was able to create a language, a literature and a nation.

On Poetry and Literature

Poetry

Poetry I take to be the measured expression of emotion. Of prose one asks, does the matter please, stimulate or instruct the intellect; does the style satisfy a cultured taste & observant literary sense; if it does so, it is good prose, whether it moves the heart or not. Of poetry we ask, does the matter move, stimulate, enlarge, heighten, or deepen the feelings; does it excite emotions of delight, sorrow, awe, sublimity, passionate interest, or if the nature of the subject matter is not such as to excite actual emotions, does it excite certain vague & nameless sensations, the quiet stirring of the heart which attends the perception of beauty, or the august tumult which goes with the sense of largeness & space or the quick delight of increased horizons & heart-searching perceptions, does it give us the sense of power & passion? If it does, we have the material of poetry, but not yet poetry. Prose can and often does create similar effects. Great thoughts, beautiful description, noble narrative will always have this power on the soul. We have also to ask, does the language & verse harmonise with the emotion, become part of it & expressive of it, swell with its fullness and yet bound & restrain it? If it does, then we have poetry, a thing mighty & unanalysable, to usurp whose place prose vainly aspires. Matter by itself does not make poetry; skill in verse & diction is not poetry; striking & brilliant phrases, melodious weavings of sound are not poetry; it is the natural & predestined blending or rather inseparable existence of great matter with great verse producing high emotions or beautiful matter with beautiful verse producing soft emotions that gives us genuine poetry. An identity of word & sound, of thought & word, of sound & emotion which seems to have been preordained from the beginning of the world and only awaited its destined hour to leap into existence, or rather was there from the beginning of the world & only dawned into sight at the right time, this rare identity is what we call poetry.

Characteristics of Augustan Poetry

Relation of Gray to the poetry of his times

The poetry of Gray marks the transition from the eighteenth-century or Augustan style of poetry to the nineteenth-century style; i.e. to say almost all the tendencies of poetry between the death of Pope and the production of the Lyrical Ballads in 1798 are to be found in Gray's writings. Of the other poets of the time, Johnson & Goldsmith mark the last development of the Augustan style, while Collins, Blake, Cowper, Burns, Chatterton each embody in their poetry the beginnings of one or more tendencies which afterwards found their full expression in the nineteenth century. Gray alone seems to include in himself along with many characteristics of the conservative school of Johnson & Goldsmith all the revolutionary tendencies, not one or many but all, of the later poets. His earliest poem, the Ode on Spring, has many of the characteristics of Pope and Dryden; one of his latest, the Ode on Vicissitude, has many of the characteristics of Wordsworth. He is therefore the typical poet of his age, which, as regards poetry, was an age of transition.

What is meant by the Augustan or eighteenth-century style? In what sense is it less poetical than the poetry of Wordsworth & Shelley?

The poetry of the eighteenth century differs entirely from that of another period in English literature. It differs alike in subject-matter, in spirit and in form. Many modern critics have denied the name of poetry to it altogether. Matthew Arnold calls Pope and Dryden classics not of poetry, but of prose, he says that they are great in the regions of half poetry; other critics while hesitating to go so far, say in substance much the same thing; Gosse, for instance, calls their poetry the poetry of English rhetoric, which exactly amounts to Matthew Arnold's description of it as half poetry. Its own admirers give it the name of classic poetry, that is to say a poetry in which imagination and feeling are subordinated to correctness and elegance.

Poetry as generally understood, the poetry of Shakespeare and Wordsworth, may be defined as a deeper and more imaginative perception of life and nature expressed in the language and rhythm of restrained emotion. In other words its subject-matter is an interpretation of life and nature which goes deeper into the truth of things than ordinary men can do, what has been called a poetic criticism of life; its spirit is one of imagination and feeling, it is not intellectual but imaginative, not rational but emotional; and its form is a language impassioned and imaginative but restrained by a desire for perfect beauty of expression; and a rhythm generally taking the form of metre, which naturally suits the expression of deep feeling. It differs from rhetoric in this that rhetoric expresses feeling which is not deep & not quite sincere, and tries to strike and influence the reader instead of being satisfied with expressing itself and for that purpose relies mainly on tricks of language such as antithesis, epigram etc. Rhetoric tries to excite admiration and appeals to the intellect; poetry is content with adequate self-expression and appeals to the heart.

Eighteenth-century poetry differs from ordinary poetry, in subject-matter, in spirit and in form.

Spirit

The spirit of ordinary poetry is one of imagination and feeling, that is to say imaginative and emotional; that of eighteenth-century poetry is one of commonsense and reason, that is to say intellectual and rational. Pope and Johnson are the two chief critics of the school. Pope expressly lays it down in his Essay on Criticism that sense and wit are the bases of all true poetry and Johnson is continually appealing to them as criterions, especially in his life of Gray, where he objects to what he considers the excess of imagery, the incredibility of his subjects, the use of imaginative mythological language and the occasional absence of a didactic purpose. In their opinion nothing should be admitted in poetry which is not consistent with sense & wit, that is to say which is not intellectual and rational. Accordingly we find no striking imagery & no passion in eighteenth-century poetry; the poets as a rule avoid subjects in which emotion is required and when they do try to deal with the passions and feelings, they fail, their expression of these is rhetorical and not poetic. This is the reason why the drama in the eighteenth century is such an utter failure.

Subject-matter

The difference in subject-matter is manifold. In the first place, instead of dealing with the whole of life and nature, they limit themselves to a very narrow part of it. This limitation is partly due to the restriction of poetry to sense and wit and partly to the nature of the audience the poets addressed. It was a period in which literature depended mainly on the patronage of the aristocracy, and it was therefore for the English aristocracy of the time that the poets wrote. They were therefore bound to limit themselves to such subject-matter as might suit the tastes of their patrons. These two considerations led to three very important limitations of subject-matter.

1st The exclusion of the supernatural from poetry. The temper of the times was rationalistic and sceptical and to the cultured aristocracy of the times Shakespeare's ghosts and fairies and Milton's gods and angels would have seemed absurdities; it resulted also from the idea of commonsense as the cardinal rule of poetry, that nothing incredible should be admitted unless it was treated humorously, like the sylphs and gnomes in Pope's Rape of the Lock or the beasts in the fables of Gay & Swift. Poetry however seems naturally to demand the element of the supernatural & the only way to admit the supernatural without offending against reason was by Personification. We therefore find a tendency to create a sort of makeshift mythology by personifying the qualities of the mind. Otherwise the supernatural practically disappears from English poetry for a whole century.

2d The exclusion of rural life and restriction to the life of the town and of good society. The aristocracy of the time took no interest in anything but the pleasures, occupations and mental pursuits of the town and it is accordingly only with this part of life that eighteenth-century poetry deals. The country is only treated as a subject of ridicule as in Gay's Shepherd's Week or of purely conventional description as in Pope's Pastorals and Windsor Forest.[1]

3d As a natural result of this, the exclusion of external Nature. The sense of natural beauty is quite absent from eighteenth-century poetry and we do not have even so much as the sense of the picturesque except in subjects such as landscape gardening where art could modify nature. Whenever the poets try to write of natural scenery or natural objects, they fail; their descriptions are either conventional and do not recall the object at all or only describe it in a surface manner recalling just so much as may be perceived by a casual glance. Of sympathy with Nature or close observation of it, there is hardly a single instance in English poetry between Dryden and Thomson.

4th The exclusion of human emotion, i.e. to say poetry was not only limited to the workings of the human mind and human nature but to cultured society and to the town, & not only to this but to the intellect and weaknesses of men purely; the deeper feelings of the heart are not touched or only touched in an inadequate manner; and it is a characteristic fact that the passion of love which is the most common subject of English poetry, is generally left alone by these poets or if handled, handled in a most unreal and rhetorical manner.

It followed from the exclusion of so much subject-matter that the forms of poetry which demanded this subject-matter almost disappeared. Lyrical poetry & the drama, both of which demand passion, feeling and fancy, epic poetry, which requires a grasp of entire human and external nature, a wide view of life and some element of the supernature, and serious narrative poetry are very little represented in the age of Pope and then only by second-rate productions. The poetry of the age is mainly didactic, i.e. its subjects are literary criticism, ethics, science or theology or humorous, i.e. consists of satire, mock-epic, humorous narrative and light society verse. All these are subjects which are really outside the scope of poetry strictly so called, as they give no room for imagination and emotion, the cardinal elements of poetry. The subjects and the way they are treated, making allowance for the difference involved by the use of metre & especially the heroic metre which necessitates a very condensed expression of thought, is not very different from that of the prose periodicals of the time. The poetry of the age taken in the mass gives one the impression of a great social journal in verse, somewhat more brilliant and varied than the Tatler and Spectator but identical in spirit.

---

[1] The poets of the time have a tendency to the false or conventional pastoral; i.e. to say a mechanical imitation of Latin & Greek rural poetry, & especially when they try to write love poetry, they use Latin & Greek pastoral names; but these pastorals have nothing to do with any real country life past or present, nor do they describe any rural surroundings and scenery that ever existed, but are mere literary exercises.

Form

Lastly the poetry of the eighteenth century differs widely in form, i.e. in language & metre, from that of preceding & subsequent poetry. This difference proceeds from a revolt against the poetical language of the seventeenth century, just as the language of Wordsworth & Keats is a revolt against that of the eighteenth. The Elizabethan poets aimed at a poetry which should be romantic, sensuous and imaginative; romantic, that is to say, full of the strange and wonderful, sensuous, that is to say, expressing the perceptions of the senses & especially the sense of the beautiful in vivid and glowing colours, and imaginative in the sense of being full of splendid and original imagery, & especially of striking phrases & vivid metaphors. In the later Elizabethans & even many of the earlier all this was carried to great excess; the love of the strange and wonderful was carried into unnaturalness and distortion, sensuousness became lost in exaggeration and poetry became a sort of hunt for metaphors, metaphors used not as aids to the imagination, but for their own sake, and the more absurd and violent, the better. Waller &

Dryden first and Pope to a much greater extent revolted against this style of forced ingenuity and proclaimed a new kind of poetry. They gave to Elizabethan language the name of false wit and Pope announced the objects of the new school in an often quoted couplet

True wit is nature to advantage dressed
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.

This couplet gives the three main principles of eighteenth-century style out of which all its distinctive characteristics rise.

(1) The poets were to write only of what oft was thought; they were to avoid the Elizabethan romantic tendency to search after the strange & wonderful. But these poets went much farther. Not only all that was peculiar or eccentric but all that was original, individual or unusual was avoided as offensive to reason & commonsense. There are no ideas in Augustan poetry which are not perfectly obvious and common, nothing which might not occur to an average educated man. This was fatal to poetry which to be poetry at all must be unusual; unusually lofty, unusually beautiful or unusually impassioned, & which dries up in an atmosphere of commonsense and commonplace. Augustan poetry has neither feeling for greatness nor for beauty nor for passion and it is therefore not without justice that it is described as at best a half poetry or a poetry of rhetoric.

But the obvious & commonplace will not be read, unless it is made to look new & interesting by brilliant language.

(2) The second principle is that while the obvious & commonplace should be the staple of poetry, it should be expressed in new and brilliant language, and this should be done by means of true wit. That is to say, while false ingenuity should be avoided, true ingenuity should be the rule of poetry. Accordingly we find that striking poetical expressions are singularly absent, the imagery is cold, obvious & conventional & their place is taken by brilliant cleverness and rhetoric. In order to conceal the barrenness of subject-matter every line is made an antithesis, an epigram or some other rhetorical turn of language. The Augustan poets did not realise that wit, whether false or true, has

nothing to do with poetry & so they fell from one extreme to the other; poetry with them became even more an exercise for mere ingenuity than with the Elizabethans, in a way less open to ridicule but more barren & prosaic.[2]

(3) The eighteenth century was not contented with nature, it wanted nature to be dressed & dressed to advantage. Elizabethan poetry had been even at its best either rude & unpolished or extravagant & lawless. It broke through all the ordinary rules which restrain poetry; in their recoil from this tendency the Augustans determined to restrict themselves by the greatest number of rules possible, not only those rules which are universal and for all time but many which were artificial & unsuitable. They made the language & metre of their poetry not only smooth & elegant, but formal and monotonous; the tendency was, as has been often said, to cut out poetry according to a uniform & mechanical pattern. Cowper said that Pope

> Made poetry a mere mechanic art;
> And every warbler has his tune by heart

and Taine has expanded the charge in his History of English Literature, II p. 194, "One would say that the verse had been fabricated by a machine, so uniform is the make." The charge though exaggerated is well founded; there is a tendency to a uniform construction & turn of sentence and the unchanging repetition of 3 or 4 rhetorical artifices. It is the language of a school rather than of individual genius.

When we examine the metre, we find it treated in the same way. Poetical harmony depends upon two things, the choice of the metre and the combination of all the various cadences possible within the limits of the metre chosen. The poet chooses a particular stanza or a couplet form or blank verse just as he thinks most suitable to his subject; but the pauses and accents in the lines of the stanza or successive verses may be arranged many different ways, the disposition of long and short syllables and the combination of assonances and alliterations are almost infinite in their variety & great poets always vary one line from another so that not only the language but the sound of the verse, or as it is technically called the movement may suggest the exact emotion intended. This variation of cadences is a matter not for rules, but for individual genius to work out. But the Augustan poets in their passion for regularity determined to subject even this to rules. They chose as their favourite & almost only form of verse, the couplet and especially the heroic couplet. All ambitious poetical work of Pope's school is in the heroic couplet; only in light verse do they try any other. The part of their poetry in lyrical metres or in stanzas is insignificant in quantity and almost worthless in quality. Having confined themselves to the heroic couplet, they tried to make even this as formal and monotonous as possible; they put a pause regularly at the end of the first line and a full stop or colon at the end of the second; they place the accent almost invariably on every second syllable; they employ assonance without the slightest subtlety and, though without some skill in the disposition of long & short syllables good metre itself is impossible, yet they only use it in the most elementary manner. The only variety then possible was a very minute and almost imperceptible one which gave great scope for ingenuity but little for real poetic power.[3]

---

[2] *The following passage was written on a separate page of the manuscript. Its place of insertion was not marked*:

Besides this in order to dignify the obviousness of their ideas & sentiments, a sort of conventional poetic language was adopted, wherever wit and epigram could not be employed; ordinary words were avoided as ignoble and literary words often with an artificial meaning were employed, or else a sounding paraphrase was employed or a pretentious turn of language. The universal rule was that an idea should not be stated simply, but either cleverly or as it was called nobly.

One more characteristic of the school must be noticed, i.e. the narrowness of its culture. In the eighteenth century it was the tendency to consider all the age between the third and sixteenth centuries as barbarous and best forgotten; even the sixteenth and early seventeenth were regarded as half barbarous times; and the only things besides contemporary science, philosophy and literature which were regarded with interest were ancient classical literature and French civilisation. Even of the classics, little was known of Greek literature though it was held in formal honour; French & Latin and Latin rather of the second best than the best writers were the only foreign influences that affected Augustan literature to any appreciable extent.

---

[3] *The following sentence was written on a separate page. Its place of insertion was not marked*:

These restrictions forced the writers to be extremely condensed & ingenious and as has been said reduced every couplet to the point of an epigram.

The main characteristics of eighteenth-century poetry may therefore be summed up as follows; — a rational & intellectual rather than imaginative & emotional spirit; a restriction to town society and town life, and inability to deal with rural life, with Nature, with passion or with the supernatural; a tendency to replace the supernatural by personification; an almost exclusive preference for didactic, satirical and humorous poetry; a dislike of originality and prevalence of merely obvious ideas and sentiments; an excess of rhetorical artifice in style; a monotonous, rhetorical and conventional style; a restricted and cut-and-dried metre and an exclusion of all poetic influences & interests except the Latin writers & contemporary and French thought & literature. Its merits were smoothness, regularity & correctness; great cleverness and brilliance of wit; great eloquence; and the attainment of perfection within its own limits & according to its own ideals.[4]

---

[4] *The following sentence was written on a separate page. Its place of insertion was not marked*:

The history of our period is partly that of a breaking away from formality in language and metre & a revival of lyric poetry, but still more of a struggle to widen the range of poetry by bringing all nature and all human activity both past & present into its scope, to increase interests and subject-matter as well as to inspire new life and sincerity into its style.

Sketch of the Progress of Poetry from Thomson to Wordsworth

The Age of transition from the poetry of Pope to that of Wordsworth begins strictly speaking with Thomson. This transition was not an orderly and consistent development, but consisted of different groups of poets or sometimes even single poets each of whom made a departure in some particular direction which was not followed up by his or their successors. The poetry of the time has the appearance of a number of loose and disconnected threads abruptly broken off in the middle. It was only in the period from 1798 to 1830 that these threads were gathered together and a definite, consistent tendency imparted to poetry. It was an age of tentatives and for the most part of failures. Meanwhile the main current of verse up till 1798 followed the direction given it by Pope only slightly modified by the greater and more original writers.

These different groups of writers may be thus divided. (1) The school of natural description & elegiac moralising, consisting of Thomson, Dyer, Green, Young and other inferior writers. (2) The school of Miltonic Hellenists, begun by Warton & consisting besides of Gray, Collins, Akenside and a number of followers. (3) The school of Johnson, Goldsmith & Churchill, who continued the eighteenth-century style tho' some of them tried to infuse it with emotion, directness and greater simplicity. To this school belong the minor writers who formed the main current of verse during the time; of whom Erasmus Darwin & Gifford are the only notable ones. (4) The school of country life and the simpler feelings, consisting of Cowper and Crabbe. (5) The school of romantic poets & restorers of mediaevalism, consisting of Chatterton, Macpherson and Percy. (6) The Scotch lyric poets of whom Ferguson and Burns are the head. (7) William Blake standing by himself as a romantic, mystical & lyric poet. Besides these there are two writers who cannot be classed, Smart & Beattie. Last come the first nineteenth-century poets, who published their earliest work in 1798–1800, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Landor & Campbell.

School of Natural Description

The first to break away from Pope were Thomson & Dyer. The original departures made by their school were as follows. (1) In subject-matter an almost exclusive devotion of their poetry to the description of natural objects and natural scenery. In dealing with human emotion or human life they are generally even more incapable than the Pope school.[1] There is beside a tendency to force poetry to the service of the most unpoetical subjects, Armstrong writing in verse of the Art of Medicine, Dyer of Agriculture & Thomson of jail reform. On the other hand Satire is less practised or even abandoned. (2) In language, the discarding of the idea of wit as the basis of poetry; there is no straining for wit and cleverness, but its place is taken by a pseudo-Miltonic eloquence or an attempt at Miltonic imaginativeness. The influence of Milton is paramount in these writers. (3) In metre an almost entire abandonment of the heroic couplet and the return to old metres, especially blank verse, the Spenserian stanza & the octosyllabic couplet as used by the later Elizabethans. The main influences of this school on future poetry are (1st) the habit of describing Nature for its own sake (2) the Thomsonian form of blank verse which was afterwards adopted by Cowper & Wordsworth and improved by Shelley (3) the use of the Spenserian stanza in narrative poetry (4) the sense for antiquity & for the picturesque as regards ruins (5) the habit of moralising on subjects of general human interest as opposed to those which concern towns & highly civilized society only.

---

[1] *The following sentence was written on the opposite page of the manuscript. Its exact place of insertion was not marked:*

An attempt is made to reintroduce emotion and a more general appeal to all humanity, in the form of elegiac moralizing on the subjects of death & decay, as shown in Dyer's Ruins of Rome & Young's Night Thoughts.

The Thomsonian school however broke off suddenly about the middle of the century & was replaced by the school of Gray.

School of Gray

There are considerable differences between Gray, Collins and Akenside, who are the chief representatives of the school, but they all resemble each other in certain main tendencies. The general aim of all seems to have been to return to the Miltonic style of writing while preserving the regularity and correctness of the eighteenth-century style. They attempted in other words to substitute the true classical style of writing for the pseudoclassical. By classical poetry is meant verse which with entire correctness and perfection of form, i.e. of metre and language and a careful observance of restraint, i.e. to say avoidance of that extravagance & excess which injure the work of Shakespeare and the Elizabethans, unites a high imagination and deep emotion. This is the character of Milton's poetry, which is based upon Greek & Latin models. Pope and his school aimed at correctness & restraint without high imagination and deep emotion; their poetry is therefore not really classical. Gray, Collins and Akenside endeavoured by study of Milton & the Greek writers to recover the true classical style. They were however all greatly hampered by the traditions of eighteenth-century poetry and none of them quite succeeded.

Besides this similarity in general aim, there are several particular resemblances. 1st in metre. They all avoided the heroic couplet. Collins' Persian Eclogues, the work of his youth, & a few of Gray's fragments are in this metre, but in their mature & accomplished work it is not represented. Akenside wrote either in blank verse or in lyrical metres. Secondly Gray and Collins are the restorers of the English lyric; since the reign of Charles II no one had written any even decently good lyrics, if a few of Gay's & Prior's are excepted, until this school appeared. The only form of lyric however which the three writers tried were Odes, which is the most stately & the least lyrical of lyrical forms; i.e. the true lyrical stanza is always short & simple so as to express particular emotion freely & naturally; the stanza of an Ode is long and elaborate and expresses properly high and broad, not intense emotion. This restriction to the statelier lyrical forms partly results from the attempt at classical dignity. But the Augustan tradition of smooth & regular verse has also hampered the writers; the cadences are not managed with sufficient subtlety and the infinitely varied and flexible verse of Shakespeare & Milton has remained beyond their reach. Their verse at its best is on the second plane, not on the first; it shows however a great advance in freedom & variety on that of the Augustans.

2d in language. The aim of all three is at an elevated style of language, a diction more or less Miltonic. Here again none of them are successful. Akenside's elevation is mainly rhetorical, rarely, at his best, as in the Hymn to the Naiads, it is poetical; there he almost catches something of the true Miltonic tone; Gray's is marked by nobleness, strength, much real sublimity, but he is often betrayed into rhetoric tho' even then more vigorous than Akenside's and the Augustan love of epigram and antithesis often spoil his work; Collins' elevation tho' free from these faults is usually wanting in power. There is to some extent in Collins and still more in Gray a tendency to what the eighteenth century thought noble language, to the avoidance of simple and common words & phrases as below the dignity of poetry.[2]

3d in subject-matter. It was in this that there was the farthest departure from the eighteenth century. All the poets have a tendency to dwell on rural life and rural scenes; all turn away from town life. Both Gray & Collins, so far as they deal with Nature, deal with it in a really poetical manner, but unlike the Thomsonian school, they have not described Nature for the sake of describing it but only in connection with the thoughts or feelings suggested by it. The one exception to this is Collins'

---

[2] *The following sentence was written on the opposite page of the manuscript. Its exact place of insertion was not marked:*

On the other hand their language is mainly imaginative & not drily intellectual like Augustan language.

Ode to Evening. There is also an attempt to reintroduce the supernatural into poetry. This is partly done by carrying the eighteenth-century habit of personification to an almost ridiculous extreme, but more successfully by dwelling like Milton on the images of Greek mythology, as in the Hymn to the Naiads, or Gray's earlier poems, especially the Progress of Poesy; also by dwelling on the ideas of the Celtic romantic fancy, such as ghosts, fairies, spirits as in Gray's Bard & Collins' Ode or of Norwegian mythology as in Gray's translations from the Norse. This impulse towards the supernatural is extremely marked in Gray & finds its way even into his humorous poems; & tho' less prominent in Collins, it was sufficient to offend Johnson, the chief critic of the Pope school, who especially animadverts on it in his life of Collins & his remarks on Gray's sister Odes. Again they tried to deal with human emotion but there also they were hampered by the Augustan tradition. They deal with it rather in an abstract than a direct manner; Collins' Ode on the Passions is the main instance of this abstract handling of emotion which is peculiar to the school. In the same spirit they dealt with high & general feelings, especially the love of Liberty, which inspires Collins' Ode to Liberty, Gray's Bard & Progress of Poesy, and much of Akenside's writing. It is noticeable that Collins was a republican, Akenside had republican sympathies and Gray was a pronounced Whig. Over the personal emotions Collins & Akenside had no mastery, & Gray only shows it occasionally as in the Elegy & then only over the most general of all of them, the love of life and the melancholy feelings attending death.

(4) In spirit, the school departed from the critical, didactic and satiric tendency of eighteenth-century poetry; so far as their poetry teaches or criticises it is with some exceptions in the indirect, incidental & emotional manner proper to poetry. Even Akenside who wrote on a philosophical theme aimed at teaching poetically, tho' he did not succeed. Their poetry is inspired not by intellect & reason, but by imagination and feeling. On the other hand it must be noticed that their ideas & sentiments are always obvious & on the surface like those of the Pope school and the feeling that inspires their poetry, tho' not false, is not

very deep; Collins & Akenside are extremely cold compared with poets of other periods & Gray is rather enthusiastic or at his best sublime than impassioned.[3]

(5) It was in the influences which governed their poetry that this school departed most radically from Pope. They rejected French influence altogether & were little influenced by the inferior Latin poets; they were above all things Hellenists, lovers & followers of Greek literature; the English poet who influenced them most was Milton whom Johnson considers to be rough in his verse & language; Gray even declared the diction of Shakespeare to be the true poetic diction. Besides this they opened new fields of interest. Collins took an interest [in] late mediaeval history & literature & Gray was the first Englishman of eminence who studied the Norse language or interested himself in Welsh literature or was a competent & appreciative critic of Gothic architecture.

The Thomsonian school had a little but only a little influence on that of Gray. The Elegy carries to its highest point of perfection the vein of elegiac moralising started by Young & Dyer, Collins' Ode to Evening is a study of Nature as faithful but more sympathetic and imaginative than Thomson's descriptions; & his Ode on Popular Superstitions recalls several passages in the Seasons; but this is practically all.

The influences of Gray's school on future poetry consist mainly in (1) the first attempt to handle Nature in a new poetic fashion afterwards perfected by Wordsworth, (2) the reintroduction of the supernatural influencing all subsequent writers but mainly Coleridge, Shelley & Keats, (3) the introduction of Hellenism into poetry, carried out by Keats & Shelley & (4) the restoration of the lyric & especially the Ode form, which became a favourite one in the early nineteenth century & of the general subjects suited to the Ode form.

---

[3] *The following sentence was written on the facing page of the manuscript. Its exact place of insertion was not marked:*

It was perhaps partly as a result of this that none of these poets was able to write much or to write long poems; Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination is the only exception and that is a failure.

Later Augustan School

The Gray school exhausted itself almost as quickly as the Thomsonian school. It was followed by a reaction in favour of the eighteenth-century ideal. This movement had been already anticipated by Johnson who wrote contemporaneously with Gray & even with Thomson. It was now taken up by Goldsmith, carried on by Churchill & culminated in Erasmus Darwin.

Johnson & Goldsmith returned to the ideals of Pope, they violently opposed & disparaged Gray, they kept to the use of the heroic couplet & conventional language, to the narrowness of culture and to the exclusion of all that does not square with or proceed from the reason & intellect; their characteristics are broadly the same as the Pope school's, but there is a difference which shows that the dryness of this school could no longer satisfy the mind. In Johnson at least in his Vanity of Wishes there is a far deeper & wider tone of thought & feeling & a far greater sincerity; tho' the style is so different, the tone is almost the same as that of Gray's Elegy; in fact in tone & subject-matter it belongs to the same type of elegiac moralizing as the Elegy & the Night Thoughts. Goldsmith carried this departure in tone from Pope yet farther; he wrote what were professedly didactic poems, but instead of teaching by satirical portraits [and] epigrammatic maxims, he tried to do it by touching the feelings & drawing portraits full of humour rather than wit, of natural truth & pathos rather than cleverness & eloquence. While not touching subjects of general appeal like Johnson & Gray, he goes more widely afield than Pope, dealing with foreign countries in the Traveller, with the rural life of an Irish village in the Deserted Village. [There is a sort of natural lyrical power in Goldsmith which is always breaking through the restraints of the mechanical metre & style he chose to adopt.][4] Churchill reverted to Pope far more than either Goldsmith or Johnson; he is purely satirical & has neither Goldsmith's feeling & sweetness nor Johnson's depth & strength; he is hardly a poet at all, but he also helped the disintegration of the eighteenth-century style by a complete abandonment of Pope's elaborate & rhetorical art, which he attempted to replace by a rude & direct vigour. Lastly Erasmus Darwin took the exact model of Pope's style, not only the metre & language but the very construction & balance of his sentences & reduced this & the didactic spirit to absurdity by trying to invest with poetical pomp of style & imagery a treatise on botany. This school may be considered as an attempt in various directions to make the eighteenth-century style compatible with the new impulses in poetry, the impulses towards sincerity on the one hand & sublimity on the other. In the poetry of Darwin this attempt finally breaks down. No poet of eminence except Byron afterwards attempted the style. Besides these four writers however there was a crowd of versifiers, of whom only Gifford need be named, who went on making feeble copies of Pope right into the nineteenth century.

---

[4] *Sentence bracketed in the manuscript. — Ed.*

APPENDIX

Test Questions

The Mediaevalists

1. Describe the nature & influence on English poetry of Percy's Reliques.
2. Sketch the career of Chatterton.
3. Describe the character of Chatterton's forgeries and estimate their effects on the value of his poetry.
4. Discuss the conflicting estimates of Chatterton's poetry.
5. What is the Ossian controversy? What stage has the controversy reached at present?
6. Macpherson's work is often condemned as empty and turgid declamation. How far is this view justified?
7. State the author & nature of the following works: Ella, an Interlude; Bristow Tragedy.
8. Who were the distinctly mediaevalist writers of the period? What was their importance in the history of the period?

*

[*Draft-answers to the first three questions*]

1. 1765 Percy's Reliques
2. Chatterton born 1752. Colston's Hospital. 1764 first Rowley forgery Elinoure & Juga. 1767 apprenticed to Lambert. 1768–9 contributions to London magazines. 1768 attempt to get Dodsley to publish especially Ella. 1769 attempt to interest Horace Walpole. 1770 life in London & death.
3. Speght's Glossary to Chaucer. Kersey's Dictionary.
   metres not 15th century; rhymes inconsistent with 15th century pronunciation; words either noted down from above & often incorrectly used; or invented by C. himself.

Pope School

1. Trace the history of the classical eighteenth-century style thro' this period.
2. Describe the career of Goldsmith, or of a typical man of letters during this period.
3. Estimate Goldsmith as a poet.
4. Describe briefly the subject & character of the following poems; the Deserted Village, the Traveller, Retaliation.
5. What rank would you assign to Churchill among English satirists? Give your reasons for your answer.
6. Describe briefly the subject & character of the Rosciad, the Ghost, Gotham, the Times, the Prophecy of Famine.

*

[*Incomplete draft-answer to the second question*]

1728 Goldsmith born in Ireland. Father a clergyman, the original of D^{r} Primrose. Education. 1744 Dublin Un^{y}. Made attempts to become clergyman, private tutor; [*incomplete*]

Marginalia

ON MADHUSUDAN DUTT'S *VIRANGANA KAVYA*

A Virgilian elegance and sweetness and a Virgilian majesty of diction ennoble the finer epistles of these Heroides; there is too a Virgilian pathos sad & noble breaking out in detached lines and passages, as in Shacountala's sorrowful address to the leaf and the single melancholy line এই কি রে ফলে ফল প্রেম তরু-শাখে, but the more essential poetical gifts, creative force, depth or firmness of meditation, passionate feeling, a grasp of the object, consistency & purity of characterisation are still absent. They were not in the poet's nature and such gifts if denied by Nature, are denied for ever. What exists even faintly can be developed, transformed, strengthened but what does not exist, cannot be produced by labour.

> नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः

*

The Epistle of Tara is perhaps less satisfactory; the fiery outbursts of a monstrous and lawless passion needed a stronger imagination than Madhusudan's to conceive and execute them. The elegances of the Epistle, with its graceful rephrasing of outworn classical images and its stately love-conceits is out of place where the volcanic sheerness of a Webster could alone have been appropriate. Nevertheless the passage in which Tara complains of the unclean love she cannot avoid or control is not without a noble dignity of passion; and shows with what charm the poet could invest the plainest and most hackneyed images. And there are lines in this latter part which have the true note of that terrific passion, [for example] her cry দেহ ভিক্ষা, দেহ ভিক্ষা; the magnificent distichs কলঙ্কী শশাঙ্ক etc. and লিখিনু লেখন etc. and the powerful closing line have all a dramatic simplicity, fire and force which belong to the highest poetry only. Would that Madhusudan had written not only stray lines, distichs, passages, but whole poems in this spirit. The deplorable want of a discerning criticism and false conceptions of poetry early imbibed have done untold harm to our best and most promising writers.

Originality in National Literatures

It is a singular and as yet unexplained phenomenon in the psychology of mankind that out of so many magnificent civilisations, so many powerful, cultured & vigorous nations & empires whose names and deeds crowd the pages of history, only a select few have been able to develop a thoroughly original and self-revealing literature. Still fewer have succeeded in maintaining these characteristics from beginning to end of their literary development. There have been instances in which a nation at some period of especial energy and stress of life has for a moment arrived at a perfect self-expression, but with the effort the literary originality of the race seems to exhaust itself. We have the picture of an age, not the spiritual and mental history of a nation. Such a period of partial self-revelation we find in the flowering of Italian literature; in the Divine Comedy, the Decameron, the works of Petrarch, Machiavelli, Cellini, Castiglione, mediaeval Italy lives before our eyes for all time; but the rest of Italian prose and poetry is mere literature and nothing more. Again when we have seen the romantic spirit of Spain, its pride, punctilious sense of honour, courage, cruelty, intrigue, passion and the humour & pathos of its decline mirrored in the work of Calderon & Cervantes we seem to have exhausted all that need interest the student of humanity in Spanish literature. Similar instances offer themselves in the Sagas of the Scandinavian peoples and Germany's Nibelungenlied, in the extraordinary picture of Mahomedan civilisation of which the Thousand & One Nights are the setting. On the other hand there are literatures of high quality and world-wide interest which are yet almost purely derivative in their character and hardly succeed in rendering the national spirit to us at all, so overloaded are they with foreign material, with things learned rather than experienced; such are the American literature, the modern German literature. Instances there are again of the nation freeing itself from foreign domination in one or two kinds of writing which partially reflect its inner mind and life, while the rest of its literature remains derivative and secondhand in its every fibre. We get to the heart of Roman life and character in Roman Satires, the annalistic histories of Livy & Tacitus, the Letters of Cicero or Pliny, but in the more splendid & ambitious portions of Latin literature we get only the half Greek dress in which the Roman mind learned to disguise itself. Let us suppose that all historical documents, archives, records were destroyed or disappeared in the process of Time and the catastrophes of civilisation, and only the pure literature survived. Of how many nations should we have the very life, heart & mind, the whole picture of its life & civilisation and the story of its development adequately revealed in its best writing? Three European nations would survive immortally before the eyes of posterity, the ancient Greeks, the modern English and French, and two Asiatic nations, the Chinese & the Hindus, — no others.

Of all these the Hindus have revealed themselves the most perfectly, continuously and on the most colossal scale, precisely because they have been the most indomitably original in the form & matter of their literature. The Vedas, Upanishads & Puranas are unique in their kind; the great Epics in their form and type of art stand apart in the epic literature of the world, the old Sanscrit drama has its affinities with a dramatic species which developed itself in Europe more than a thousand years later, and the literary epic follows laws of form and canons of art which are purely indigenous. And this immense body of firstrate work has left us so intimate & complete a revelation of national life & history, that the absence of pure historical writings becomes a subject of merely conventional regret. The same intense originality and depth of self-expression are continued after the decline of the classical language in the national literatures of Maharashtra, Bengal & the Hindi-speaking North.

The Poetry of Kalidasa

A Proposed Work on Kalidasa

Chapter I. Kalidasa's surroundings. Chapter II. Kalidasa & his work. The Malavas — the three ages, Valmekie.. Vyasa.. Kalidasa.. materialism & sensuousness..] the historic method.. psychological principles of criticism.. variety of Kalidasa's work.. probable chronological succession of his works. Chapter III. The Seasons. Chapter IV. The House of Raghu; its scope & outline; nature of the poem; descriptive epic of later Hindu civilisation; its limitations. Qualities of verse diction. Similes. Description. Sentiment; pathos and eloquence. Relative merits of later & earlier cantos. Comparison of Kalidasa's pathos & Bhavabhuti's. Chapter V. The Cloud Messenger. Kalidasa's treatment of the Supernatural.. Substance of the poem.. Chastened style.. Perfection of the harmony.. moderation & restraint.. pathos & passion. Chapter VI. The Drama before Kalidasa; elements of Hindu drama.. the three plays studies of one subject. Chapter VII. The Agnimitra; its plot; perfection of dramatic workmanship; Kalidasa's method of characterisation; the characters. Dramatic style. Relation of the Agnimitra to the Raghu. Chapter VIII. The Urvasie.. dramatic workmanship & conception; character of the poetry; relation to Meghaduta. Chapter IX. The Characters. Chapter X XI XII. The Shacountala. Chapter XIII XIV. The Kumara. Chapter XV. Retrospect; poetic greatness of Kalidasa; comparisons with other classical [writers]. Chapter XVI XVII. Hindu civilisation in the time of Kalidasa (this may go with Raghu or Kumara).

The Malavas

Once in the long history of poetry the great powers who are ever working the finest energies of nature into the warp of our human evolution, met together and resolved to unite in creating a poetical intellect & imagination that, endowed with the most noble & various poetical gifts, capable in all the great forms used by creative genius, should express once & for all in a supreme manner the whole sensuous plane of our life, its heat & light, its joy, colour & sweetness. And since to all quality there must be a corresponding defect, they not only gifted this genius with rich powers and a remarkable temperament but drew round it the necessary line of limitations. They then sought for a suitable age, nation and environment which should most harmonise with, foster and lend itself to his peculiar powers. This they found in the splendid & luxurious city of Ujjaini, the capital of the great nation of the Malavas, who consolidated themselves under Vikramaditya in the first century before Christ. Here they set the outcome of their endeavour & called him Kalidasa. The country of Avunti had always played a considerable part in our ancient history for which the genius, taste and high courage of its inhabitants fitted it & Ujjaini their future capital was always a famous, beautiful & wealthy city; but until the rise of Vikrama it seems to have been disunited and therefore unable to work out fully the great destiny for which the taste, genius [ ] marked it out. Moreover the temperament of the nation had not fitted it to be the centre of Aryan civilisation in the old times when that civilisation was preponderatingly moral and intellectual. Profoundly artistic and susceptible to material beauty and the glory of the senses, they had neither the large, mild and pure temperament, spiritual & emotional, of the eastern nations which produced Janaca, Valmekie & Buddha, nor the bold intellectual temperament, heroic, ardent and severe, of the

Central nations which produced Draupadie, Bhema, Urjouna, Bhishma, Vyasa and Srikrishna; neither were they quite akin to the searchingly logical, philosophic & scholastic temperament of the half Dravidian southern nations which produced the great grammarians and commentators and the mightiest of the purely logical philosophers, Madhva, Ramanuja, Shankaracharya. The Malavas were Westerners and the Western nations of India have always been material, practical & sensuous. For the different races of this country have preserved their basic temperaments with a marvellous conservative power; modified & recombined they have been in no case radically altered. Bengal colonised from the west by the Chedies & Haihayas & from the north by Coshalas & Magadhans, contains at present the most gentle, sensitive and emotional of the Indian races, also the most anarchic, self-willed, averse to control and in all things extreme; there is not much difference between the characters of Shishupal and that thoroughly Bengali king & great captain, Pratapaditya; the other side shows itself especially in the women who are certainly the tenderest, purest & most gracious & loving in the whole world. Bengal has accordingly a literature far surpassing any other in an Indian tongue for emotional and lyrical power, loveliness of style & form and individual energy & initiative. The North West, inheritor of the Kurus, has on the other hand produced the finest modern Vedantic poetry full of intellectual loftiness, insight and profundity, the poetry of Suradasa & Tulsi; its people are still the most sincerely orthodox and the most attached to the old type of thought & character, while the Rajputs, who are only a Central Nation which has drifted westward, preserved longest the heroic & chivalrous tradition of the Bharatas. The Dravidians of the South, though they no longer show that magnificent culture and originality which made them the preservers & renovators of the higher Hindu thought & religion in its worst days, are yet, as we all know, far more genuinely learned & philosophic in their cast of thought & character than any other Indian race. Similarly the West also preserves its tradition; the Punjab is typified by its wide acceptance of such crude, but practical & active religions as those of Nanak

& Dayanunda Saraswati, religions which have been unable to take healthy root beyond the frontier of the five rivers; Gujarat & Sindh show the same practical temper by their success in trade & commerce, but the former has preserved more of the old Western materialism & sensuousness than its neighbours. Finally the Mahrattas, perhaps the strongest and sanest race in India today, present a very peculiar & interesting type; they are southwestern & blend two very different characters; fundamentally a material and practical race — they are for instance extremely deficient in the romantic & poetical side of the human temperament — a race of soldiers & politicians, they have yet caught from the Dravidians a deep scholastic & philosophical tinge which along with a basic earnestness & capacity for high things has kept them true to Hinduism, gives a certain distinction to their otherwise matter-of-fact nature and promises much for their future development.

But the Malavas were a far greater, more versatile and culturable race than any which now represent the West; they had an aesthetic catholicity, a many sided curiosity and receptiveness which enabled them to appreciate learning, high moral ideals and intellectual daring & ardour and assimilate them as far as was consistent with their own root-temperament. Nevertheless that root-temperament remained material and sensuous. When therefore the country falling from its old pure moral ideality and heroic intellectualism, weakened in fibre & sunk towards hedonism & materialism, the centre of its culture & national life began to drift westward. Transferred by Agnimitra in the second century to Videsha of the Dasharnas close to the Malavas, it finally found its true equilibrium in the beautiful and aesthetic city of Ujjaini which the artistic & sensuous genius of the Malavas had prepared to be a fit & noble capital of Hindu art, poetry and greatness throughout its most versatile & luxurious age. That position Ujjaini enjoyed until the nation began to crumble under the shock of new ideas & new forces and the centre of gravity shifted southwards to Devagirrie of the Jadhavas and finally to Dravidian Vijayanagara, the last considerable seat of independent Hindu culture & national greatness. The consolidation of the Malavas under Vikramaditya took place in 56 BC, and from that moment dates the age of Malava preeminence, the great era of the Malavas afterwards called the Samvat era. It was doubtless subsequent to this date that Kalidasa came to Ujjaini to sum up in his poetry, the beauty of human life, the splendours of art & the glory of the senses.

The Age of Kalidasa

VALMIKI, Vyasa and Kalidasa are the essence of the history of ancient India; if all else were lost, they would still be its sole and sufficient cultural history. Their poems are types and exponents of three periods in the development of the human soul, types and exponents also of the three great powers which dispute and clash in the imperfect and half-formed temperament and harmonise in the formed and perfect. At the same time their works are pictures at once minute and grandiose of three moods of our Aryan civilisation, of which the first was predominatingly moral, the second predominatingly intellectual, the third predominatingly material. The fourth power of the soul, the spiritual, which can alone govern and harmonise the others by fusion with them, had not, though it pervaded and powerfully influenced each successive development, any separate age of predominance, did not like the others possess the whole race with a dominating obsession. It is because, conjoining in themselves the highest and most varied poetical gifts, they at the same time represent and mirror their age and humanity by their interpretative largeness and power that our three chief poets hold their supreme place and bear comparison with the greatest world-names, with Homer, Shakespeare and Dante.

It has been said, truly, that the Ramayana represents an ideal society and assumed, illogically, that it must therefore represent an altogether imaginary one. The argument ignores the alternative of a real society idealised. No poet could evolve entirely out of his own imagination a picture at once so colossal, so minute and so consistent in every detail. No number of poets could do it without stumbling into fatal incompatibilities either of fact or of view, such as we find defacing the Mahabharata. This is not the place to discuss the question of Valmiki's age and authorship. This much, however, may be said that after excluding the

Uttarakanda, which is a later work, and some amount of interpolation, for the most part easy enough to detect, and reforming the text which is not unfrequently in a state of truly shocking confusion, the Ramayana remains on the face of it the work of a single mighty and embracing mind. It is not easy to say whether it preceded or followed in date Vyasa's epic; it is riper in form and tone, has some aspects of a more advanced and mellow culture, and yet it gives the general impression of a younger humanity and an earlier less sophisticated and complex mind. The nature of the poem and much of its subject matter might at least justify the conclusion that Valmiki wrote in a political and social atmosphere much resembling that which surrounded Vyasa. He lived, that is to say, in an age of approaching if not present disorder and turmoil, of great revolutions and unbridled aristocratic violence, when the governing chivalry, the Kshatriya caste, in its pride of strength was asserting its own code of morals as the one rule of conduct. We may note the plain assertion of this stand-point by Jarasandha in the Mahabharata and Valmiki's emphatic and repeated protest against it through the mouth of Rama. This ethical code was like all aristocratic codes of conduct full of high chivalry and the spirit of *noblesse oblige*, but a little loose in sexual morality on the masculine side and indulgent to violence and the strong hand. To the pure and delicate moral temperament of Valmiki, imaginative, sensitive, enthusiastic, shot through with rays of visionary idealism and ethereal light, this looseness and violence were shocking and abhorrent. He could sympathise with them, as he sympathised with all that was wild and evil and anarchic, with the imaginative and poetical side of his nature, because he was a universal creative mind driven by his art-sense to penetrate, feel and re-embody all that the world contained; but to his intellect and peculiar emotional temperament they were distasteful. He took refuge therefore in a past age of national greatness and virtue, distant enough to be idealised, but near enough to have left sufficient materials for a great picture of civilisation which would serve his purpose, — an age, it is important to note, of grandiose imperial equipoise, such as must have existed in some form at least since a persistent tradition of it runs through Sanskrit literature. In the framework of this imperial age, his puissant imagination created a marvellous picture of the human world as it might be if the actual and existing forms and material of society were used to the best and purest advantage, and an equally marvellous picture of another non-human world in which aristocratic violence, strength, self-will, lust and pride ruled supreme and idealised or rather colossalised. He brought these two worlds into warlike collision by the hostile meeting of their champions and utmost evolutions of their peculiar character-types, Rama and Ravana, and so created the Ramayana, the grandest and most paradoxical poem in the world, which becomes unmatchably sublime by disdaining all consistent pursuit of sublimity, supremely artistic by putting aside all the conventional limitations of art, magnificently dramatic by disregarding all dramatic illusion, and uniquely epic by handling the least as well as the most epic material. Not all perhaps can enter at once into the spirit of this masterpiece; but those who have once done so, will never admit any poem in the world as its superior.

My point here, however, is that it gives us the picture of an entirely moralised civilisation, containing indeed vast material development and immense intellectual power, but both moralised and subordinated to the needs of purity of temperament and delicate ideality of action. Valmiki's mind seems nowhere to be familiarised with the high-strung intellectual gospel of a high and severe Dharma culminating in a passionless activity, raised to a supreme spiritual significance in the Gita, which is one great keynote of the Mahabharata. Had he known it, the strong leaven of sentimentalism and femininity in his nature might well have rejected it; such temperaments when they admire strength, admire it manifested and forceful rather than self-contained. Valmiki's characters act from emotional or imaginative enthusiasm, not from intellectual conviction; an enthusiasm of morality actuates Rama, an enthusiasm of immorality tyrannises over Ravana. Like all mainly moral temperaments, he instinctively insisted on one old established code of morals being universally observed as the only basis of ethical stability, avoided casuistic developments and distasted innovators in metaphysical thought as by their persistent and searching questions dangerous to the established bases of morality, especially to its wholesome ordinariness and everydayness. Valmiki, therefore, the father of our secular poetry, stands for that early and finely moral civilisation which was the true heroic age of the Hindu spirit.

The poet of the Mahabharata lives nearer to the centre of an era of aristocratic turbulence and disorder. If there is any kernel of historic truth in the story of the poem, it records the establishment of those imperial forms of government and society which Valmiki had idealised. Behind its poetic legend it celebrates and approves the policy of a great Kshatriya leader of men who aimed at the subjection of his order to the rule of a central imperial power which should typify its best tendencies and control or expel its worst. But while Valmiki was a soul out of harmony with its surroundings and looking back to an ideal past, Vyasa was a man of his time, profoundly in sympathy with it, full of its tendencies, hopeful of its results and looking forward to an ideal future. The one might be described as a conservative idealist advocating return to a better but departed model, the other is a progressive realist looking forward to a better but unborn model. Vyasa accordingly does not revolt from the aristocratic code of morality; it harmonises with his own proud and strong spirit and he accepts it as a basis for conduct, but purified and transfigured by the illuminating idea of the *niṣkāma dharma*.

But above all intellectuality is his grand note, he is profoundly interested in ideas, in metaphysics, in ethical problems; he subjects morality to casuistic tests from which the more delicate moral tone of Valmiki's spirit shrank; he boldly erects above ordinary ethics a higher principle of conduct having its springs in intellect and strong character; he treats government and society from the standpoint of a practical and discerning statesmanlike mind, idealising solely for the sake of a standard. He touches in fact all subjects, and whatever he touches he makes fruitful and interesting by originality, penetration and a sane and bold vision. In all this he is the son of the civilisation he has mirrored to us, a civilisation in which both morality and material development are powerfully intellectualised. Nothing is more remarkable in all the characters of the Mahabharata than this puissant intellectualism; every action of theirs seems to be impelled by an immense driving force of mind solidifying in character and therefore conceived and outlined as in stone. This orgiastic force of the intellect is at least as noticeable as the impulse of moral or immoral enthusiasm behind each great action of the Ramayana. Throughout the poem the victorious and manifold mental activity of an age is prominent and gives its character to its civilisation. There is far more of thought in action than in the Ramayana, far less of thought in repose; the one pictures a time of gigantic creative ferment and disturbance; the other, as far as humanity is concerned, an ideal age of equipoise, tranquillity and order.

Many centuries after these poets, perhaps a thousand years or even more, came the third great embodiment of the national consciousness, Kalidasa. There is a far greater difference between the civilisation he mirrors than between Vyasa's and Valmiki's. He came when the daemonic orgy of character and intellect had worked itself out and ended in producing at once its culmination and reaction in Buddhism. There was everywhere noticeable a petrifying of the national temperament, visible to us in the tendency to codification; philosophy was being codified, morals were being codified, knowledge of any and every sort was being codified; it was on one side of its nature an age of scholars, legists, dialecticians, philosophical formalisers. On the other side the creative and aesthetic enthusiasm of the nation was pouring itself into things material, into the life of the senses, into the pride of life and beauty. The arts of painting, architecture, song, dance, drama, gardening, jewellery, all that can administer to the wants of great and luxurious capitals, received a grand impetus which brought them to their highest technical perfection. That this impetus came from Greek sources or from the Buddhists seems hardly borne out: the latter may rather have shared in the general tendencies of the time than originated them, and the Greek theory gives us a maximum of conclusions with a minimum of facts. I do not think, indeed, it can be maintained that this period, call it classical or material or what one will, was marked off from its predecessor by any clear division: such a partition would be contrary to the law of human development. Almost all the concrete features of the age may be found as separate facts in ancient India: codes existed from old time; art and drama were of fairly ancient origin, to whatever date we may assign their development; physical yoga processes existed almost from the first, and the material development portrayed in the Ramayana and Mahabharata is hardly less splendid than that of which the Raghuvamsa is so brilliant a picture. But whereas, before, these were subordinated to more lofty ideals, now they prevailed and became supreme, occupying the best energies of the race and stamping themselves on its life and consciousness. In obedience to this impulse the centuries between the rise of Buddhism and the advent of Shankaracharya became, though not agnostic and sceptical, for they rejected violently the doctrines of Charvak, yet profoundly scientific and outward-going even in their spiritualism. It was therefore the great age of formalised metaphysics, science, law, art and the sensuous luxury which accompanies the arts.

Nearer the beginning than the end of this period, when India was systematising her philosophies and developing her arts and sciences, turning from Upanishad to Purana, from the high rarefied peaks of early Vedanta and Sankhya with their inspiring sublimities and bracing keenness to physical methods of ascetic yoga and the dry intellectualism of metaphysical logic or else to the warm sensuous humanism of emotional religion, — before its full tendencies had asserted themselves, in some spheres before it had taken the steps its attitude portended, Kalidasa arose in Ujjayini and gathered up in himself its present tendencies while he foreshadowed many of its future developments. He himself must have been a man gifted with all the learning of his age, rich, aristocratic, moving wholly in high society, familiar with and fond of life in the most luxurious metropolis of his time, passionately attached to the arts, acquainted with the sciences, deep in law and learning, versed in the formalised philosophies. He has some notable resemblances to Shakespeare; among others his business was, like Shakespeare's, to sum up the immediate past in the terms of the present: at the same time he occasionally informed the present with hints of the future. Like Shakespeare also he seems not to have cared deeply for religion. In creed he was a Vedantist and in ceremony perhaps a Siva-worshipper, but he seems rather to have accepted these as the orthodox forms of his time and country, recommended to him by his intellectual preference and aesthetic affinities, than to have satisfied with them any profound religious want. In morals also he accepted and glorified the set and scientifically elaborate ethics of the codes, but seems himself to have been destitute of the finer elements of morality. We need not accept any of the ribald and witty legends with which the Hindu decadence surrounded his name; but no unbiassed student of Kalidasa's poetry can claim for him either moral fervour or moral strictness. His writings show indeed a keen appreciation of high ideal and lofty thought, but the appreciation is aesthetic in its nature: he elaborates and seeks to bring out the effectiveness of these on the imaginative sense of the noble and grandiose, applying to the things of the mind and soul the same aesthetic standard as to the things of sense themselves. He has also the natural high aristocratic feeling for all that is proud and great and vigorous, and so far as he has it, he has exaltation and sublimity; but aesthetic grace and beauty and symmetry sphere in the sublime and prevent it from standing out with the bareness and boldness which is the sublime's natural presentation. His poetry has, therefore, never been, like the poetry of Valmiki and Vyasa, a great dynamic force for moulding heroic character or noble or profound temperament. In all this he represented the highly vital and material civilisation to which he belonged.

Yet some dynamic force a poet must have, some general human inspiration of which he is the supreme exponent; or else he cannot rank with the highest. Kalidasa is the great, the supreme poet of the senses, of aesthetic beauty, of sensuous emotion. His main achievement is to have taken every poetic element, all great poetical forms, and subdued them to a harmony of artistic perfection set in the key of sensuous beauty. In continuous gift of seizing an object and creating it to the eye he has no rival in literature. A strong visualising faculty such as the greatest poets have in their most inspired descriptive moments, was with Kalidasa an abiding and unfailing power, and the concrete presentation which this definiteness of vision demanded, suffused with an intimate and sovereign feeling for beauty of colour and beauty of form, constitutes the characteristic Kalidasian manner. He is besides a consummate artist, profound in conception and suave in execution, a master of sound and language who has moulded for himself out of the infinite possibilities of the Sanskrit tongue a verse and diction which are absolutely the grandest, most puissant and most full-voiced of any human speech, a language of the Gods. The note struck by Kalidasa when he built Sanskrit into that palace of noble sound, is the note which meets us in almost all the best work of the classic literature. Its characteristic features of style are a compact but never abrupt brevity, a soft gravity and smooth majesty, a noble harmony of verse, a strong and lucid beauty of chiselled prose, above all an epic precision of phrase, weighty, sparing and yet full of colour and sweetness. Moreover it is admirably flexible, suiting itself to all forms from the epic to the lyric, but most triumphantly to the two greatest, the epic and the drama. In his epic style Kalidasa adds to these permanent features a more than Miltonic fullness and grandiose pitch of sound and expression, in his dramatic an extraordinary grace and suavity which makes it adaptable to conversation and the expression of dramatic shade and subtly blended emotion.

With these supreme gifts Kalidasa had the advantage of being born into an age with which he was in temperamental sympathy and a civilisation which lent itself naturally to his peculiar descriptive genius. It was an aristocratic civilisation, as indeed were those which had preceded it, but it far more nearly resembled the aristocratic civilisations of Europe by its material luxury, its aesthetic tastes, its polite culture, its keen worldly wisdom and its excessive appreciation of wit and learning. Religious and ethical thought and sentiment were cultivated much as in France under Louis XIV, more in piety and profession than as swaying the conduct; they pleased the intellect or else touched the sentiment, but did not govern the soul. It was bad taste to be irreligious, but it was not bad taste to be sensual or even in some respects immoral. The splendid and luxurious courts of this period supported the orthodox religion and morals out of convention, conservatism, the feeling for established order and the inherited tastes and prejudices of centuries, not because they fostered any deep religious or ethical sentiment. Yet they applauded high moral ideas if presented to them in cultured and sensuous poetry much in the same spirit that they applauded voluptuous description similarly presented. The ideals of morality were much lower than of old; free drinking was openly recognised and indulged in by both sexes; purity of life was less valued than in any other period of our civilisation. Yet the unconquerable monogamous instinct of the high-class Hindu woman seems to have prevented promiscuous vice and the disorganisation of the home which was the result of a similar state of society in ancient Rome, in Italy of the Renascence, in France under the Bourbons and in England under the later Stuarts. The old spiritual tendencies were also rather latent than dead, the mighty pristine ideals still existed in theory, — they are outlined with extraordinary grandeur by Kalidasa, — nor had they yet been weakened or lowered to a less heroic key. It was a time in which one might expect to meet the extremes of indulgence side by side with the extremes of renunciation; for the inherent spirituality of the Hindu nature finally revolted against the splendid and unsatisfying life of the senses. But of this phase Bhartrihari and not Kalidasa is the poet. The greater writer lived evidently in the full heyday of the material age, and there is no sign of any setting in of the sickness and dissatisfaction and disillusionment which invariably follow a long outburst of materialism.

The flourishing of the plastic arts had prepared surroundings of great external beauty of the kind needed for Kalidasa's poetic work. The appreciation of beauty in nature, of the grandeur of mountain and forest, the loveliness of lakes and rivers, the charm of bird and beast life had become a part of contemporary culture. These and the sensitive appreciation of trees and plants and hills as living things, the sentimental feeling of brotherhood with animals which had influenced and been encouraged by Buddhism, the romantic mythological world still farther romanticised by Kalidasa's warm humanism and fine poetic sensibility, gave him exquisite grace and grandeur of background and scenic variety. The delight of the eye, the delight of the ear, smell, palate, touch, the satisfaction of the imagination and taste are the texture of his poetical creation, and into this he has worked the most beautiful flowers of emotion and intellectual or aesthetic ideality. The scenery of his work is a universal paradise of beautiful things. All therein obeys one law of earthly grace; morality is aestheticised, intellect suffused and governed with the sense of beauty. And yet this poetry does not swim in languor, does not dissolve itself in sensuous weakness; it is not heavy with its own dissoluteness, heavy of curl and heavy of eyelid, cloyed by its own sweets, as the poetry of the senses usually is. Kalidasa is saved from this by the chastity of his style, his aim at burdened precision and energy of phrase, his unsleeping artistic vigilance.

As in the Ramayana and Mahabharata we have an absorbing intellect impulse or a dynamic force of moral or immoral excitement driving the characters, so we have in Kalidasa an intense hedonistic impulse thrilling through speech and informing action. An imaginative pleasure in all shades of thought and of sentiment, a rich delight of the mind in its emotions, a luxuriousness of ecstasy and grief, a free abandonment to amorous impulse and rapture, a continual joy of life and seeking for beauty mark the period when India, having for the time exhausted the possibilities of soul-experience attainable through the spirit and the imaginative reason, was now attempting to find out the utmost each sense could feel, probing and sounding the soul-possibilities in matter and even seeking God through the senses. The emotional religion of the Vaishnava Puranas which takes as its type of the relation between the human soul and the Supreme the passion of a woman for her lover, was already developing. The corresponding Tantric development of Shaivism may not yet have established itself fully; but the concretisation of the idea of Purusha-Prakriti, the union of Ishwara and Shakti, from which it arose, was already there in the symbolic legends of the Puranas and one of these is the subject of Kalidasa's greatest epic poem. The Birth of the War-God stands on the same height in classical Sanskrit as the Paradise Lost in English literature: it is the masterpiece and *magnum opus* of the age on the epic level. The central idea of this great unfinished poem, the marriage of Siva and Parvati, typified in its original idea the union of Purusha and Prakriti, the supreme Soul and dynamic Nature by which the world is created; but this type of divine legend was used esoterically to typify also the Nature-Soul's search for and attainment of God, and something of this conception pierces through the description of Parvati's seeking after Siva. Such was the age of Kalidasa, the temper of the civilisation which produced him; other poets of the time expressed one side of it or another, but his work is its splendid integral epitome, its picture of many composite hues and tones. Of the temperament of that civilisation the Seasons is an immature poetic self-expression, the House of Raghu the representative epic, the Cloud Messenger the descriptive elegy, Shakuntala with its two sister loveplays intimate dramatic pictures and the Birth of the War-God the grand religious fable. Kalidasa, who expressed so many sides and facets of it in his writings, stands for its representative man and genius, as was Vyasa of the intellectual mood of Indian civilisation and Valmiki of its moral side.

It was the supreme misfortune of India that before she was able to complete the round of her experience and gather up the fruit of her long millenniums of search and travail by commencing a fourth and more perfect age in which moral, intellectual and material development should be all equally harmonised and all spiritualised, the inrush of barbarians broke in finally on her endless solitary tapasya of effort and beat her national life into fragments. A preparation for such an age may be glimpsed in the new tendencies of spiritual seeking that began with Shankara and continued in later Vaishnavism and Shaivism and in new turns of poetry and art, but it found no opportunity of seizing on the total life of the nation and throwing it into another mould. The work was interrupted before it had well begun;

and India was left with only the remnants of the culture of the material age to piece out her existence. Yet even the little that was done afterwards, proved to be much; for it saved her from gradually petrifying and perishing as almost all the old civilisations, Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, petrified and perished, as the material civilisation of Europe, unless spiritualised, must before long petrify and perish. That there is still an unexhausted vitality in her, that she yet nourishes the seeds of re-birth and renewal, we owe to Shankara and his successors and the great minds and souls that came after them. Will she yet arise, new combine her past and continue the great dream where she left it off, shaking off on the one hand the soils and filth that have grown on her in her period of downfall and futile struggle, and re-asserting on the other her peculiar individuality and national type against the callow civilisation of the West with its dogmatic and intolerant knowledge, its still more dogmatic and intolerant ignorance, its deification of selfishness and force, its violence and its ungoverned Titanism? In doing so lies her one chance of salvation.

The Historical Method

Of Kalidasa, the man who thus represents one of the greatest periods in our civilisation and typifies so many sides and facets of it in his writing, we know if possible even less than of Valmekie and Vyasa. It is probable but not certain that he was a native of Malwa born not in the capital Ujjaini, but in one of those villages of which he speaks in the Cloud-Messenger and that he afterwards resorted to the capital and wrote under the patronage of the great Vicramaditya who founded the era of the Malavas in the middle of the first century before Christ. Of his attainments, his creed, his character we may gather something from his poetry, but external facts we have none. There is indeed a mass of apocryphal anecdotes about him couching a number of witticisms & ingenuities mostly ribald, but these may be safely discredited. Valmekie, Vyasa and Kalidasa, our three greatest names, are to us, outside their poetical creation, names merely and nothing more.

This is an exceedingly fortunate circumstance. The natural man within us rebels indeed against such a void; who Kalidasa was, what was his personal as distinguished from his poetic individuality, what manner of man was the great King whose patronage he enjoyed, who were his friends, who his rivals and how he dealt with either or both, whether or not he was a lover of wine & women in practice as well as in imagination, under what special surroundings he wrote and who were the minds by whom he was most influenced, all this the natural man clamours to know; and yet all these are things we are very fortunate not to know. The historical method is certainly an attractive one and it leads to some distinct advantages, for it decidedly aids those who are not gifted with fine insight and literary discrimination, to understand certain sides of a poet's work more clearly and intelligently. But while it increases our knowledge of the workings of the human mind it does not in the end assist or improve our critical appreciation of poetry; it helps to an understanding of the man and of those aspects of his poetry which concern his personal individuality but it obstructs our clear and accurate impression of the work and its value. The supporters of the historical method put the cart before the horse and placing themselves between the shafts do a great deal of useless though heroic labour in dragging both. They insist on directing that attention to the poet which should be directed to the poem. After assimilating a man's literary work and realising its value first to ourselves and then in relation to the eternal nature and scope of poetry, we may and indeed must, — for if not consciously aimed at, it must have been insensibly formed in the mind, — attempt to realize to ourselves an idea of his poetic individuality from the data he himself has provided for us; and the idea so formed will be the individuality of the man so far as we can assimilate him, the only part of him therefore that is of real value to us. The individuality of Shakespeare as expressed in his recorded actions & his relations to his contemporaries is a matter of history and has nothing to do with appreciation of his poetry. It may interest me as a study of human character & intellect but I have no concern with it when I am reading Hamlet or even when I am reading the Sonnets; on the contrary it may often come between me and the genuine revelation of the poet in his work, for actions seldom reveal more than the outer, bodily and sensational man while his word takes us within to the mind and the reason, the receiving and the selecting parts of him which are his truer self. It may matter to the pedant or the gossip within me whether the sonnets were written to William Herbert or to Henry Wriothesley or to William Himself, whether the dark woman whom Shakespeare loved against his better judgment was Mary Fitton or someone else or nobody at all, whether the language is that of hyperbolical compliment to a patron or that of an actual passionate affection; but to the lover of poetry in me these things do not matter at all. It may be a historical fact that Shakespeare when he sat down to write these poems intended to use the affected language of conventional and fulsome flattery; if so, it does not exalt our idea of his character; but after all it was only the bodily and sensational case of that huge spirit which so intended, — the food-sheath and the life-sheath of him, to use Hindu phraseology; but the mind, the soul which was the real Shakespeare felt, as he wrote, every phase of the passion he was expressing to the very utmost, felt precisely those exultations, chills of jealousy and disappointment, noble affections, dark and unholy fires, and because he felt them, he was able so to express them that the world still listens and is moved. The passion was there in the soul of the man, — whether as a potential force or an experience from a past life, matters very little, — and it forms therefore part of his poetic individuality. But if we allow the alleged historical fact to interfere between us and this individuality, the feelings with which we ought to read the Sonnets, admiration, delight, sympathy, rapt interest in a soul struggling through passion towards self-realisation, will be disturbed by other feelings of disgust and nausea or at the best pity for a man who with such a soul within him, prostituted its powers to the interests of his mere bodily covering. Both our realisation of the true Shakespeare & our enjoyment of his poetry will thus be cruelly and uselessly marred. This is the essential defect which vitiates the theory of the man and his milieu. The man in D^{r} Johnson expressed himself in his conversation and therefore his own works are far less important to us than Boswell's record of his daily talk; the man in Byron expresses himself in his letters as well as his poetry and both have therefore to be read. It is only the most sensational and therefore the lowest natures that express themselves mainly by their actions. In the case of great poets with whom expression is an instrument that answers spontaneously and accurately to the touch of the soul, it is in their work that we shall find them, the whole of them and not only that meagre part which struggled out brokenly and imperfectly in the shape of action. It is really this difference that makes the great figures of epic poetry so much less intimately and thoroughly known to us than the great figures of drama. Kalidasa was both an epic poet and a dramatist, yet Sheva and Parvatie are merely grand paintings while Dushyanta, Shacountala, Sharngarava, Priyumvada & Anasuya, Pururavus and Urvasie and Chitraleqha, Dharinie and Iravatie and Agnimitra are living beings who are our friends, whom we know. The difference arises from the importance of speech in self-revelation and the comparative inadequacy of acts, except as a corroboration or a check. The only epics which have creations equal to dramatic creation in their nearness to us are the Mahabharata and the Ramayan; and the art-form of those far more closely resembles the methods of the modern novel than those of epic poetry as it is understood in Europe; they combine, that is to say, the dramatic method with the epic and introduce a minuteness of observant detail with which European poets would have shrunk from tempting the patience of the sensational and soon-wearied West.

The importance of the milieu to criticism has likewise been immensely exaggerated. It is important as literary history, but history is not criticism; a man may have a very wide and curious knowledge of literary history and yet be a very poor critic and the danger of the present times lies in the immense multiplication of literary historians with their ass's load of facts and theories and opinions and tendencies and the comparative rarity of really illuminating critics. I do not say that these things are not in a measure necessary but they are always the scaffolding and not the pile. The tendency of the historical method beginning with and insisting on the poet rather than the poem is to infer from him as a "man" the meaning & value of his poetry, — a vicious process for it concentrates the energies on the subordinate and adds the essential as an appendix. It has been said that in a rightly constituted mind the knowledge of the man and his milieu will help to a just appreciation of his poetry; but this knowledge in its nature rather distorts our judgment than helps it, for instead of giving an honest account to ourselves of the impression naturally made by the poem on us, we are irresistibly led to cut & carve that impression so as to make it square with our knowledge and the theories, more or less erroneous & ephemeral, we deduce from that knowledge. We proceed from the milieu to the poem, instead of arguing from the poem to the milieu. Yet the latter is the only fair method, for it is not the whole of the milieu that affects the man nor every part of it that affects him equally; the extent to which it affects him and the distribution of its various influences can only be judged from the poem itself.

The milieu of Shakespeare or of Homer or of Kalidasa so far as it is important to an appreciation of their poetry, can be gathered from their poetry itself, and a knowledge of the history of the times would only litter the mind with facts which are of no real value as they mislead and embarrass the judgment instead of assisting it. This is at least the case with all poets who represent their age in some or most of its phases and with those who do not do this, the milieu is of very small importance. We know from literary history that Marlowe and Kyd and other writers exercised no little influence on Shakespeare in his young and callow days; and it may be said in passing that all poets of the first order & even many of the second are profoundly influenced by the inferior and sometimes almost worthless work which was in vogue at the time of their early efforts, but they have the high secret of mental alchemy which can convert not merely inferior metal but even refuse into gold. It is only poets of a onesided or minor genius who can afford to be aggressively original. Now as literary history, as psychology, as part of the knowledge of intellectual origins this is a highly important and noteworthy fact. But in the task of criticism what do we gain by it? We have simply brought the phantoms of Marlowe & Kyd between ourselves and what we are assimilating and so disturbed & blurred the true picture of it that was falling on our souls; and if we know our business, the first thing we shall do is to banish those intruding shadows and bring ourselves once more face to face with Shakespeare.

The historical method leads besides to much confusion and is sometimes a veil for a bastard impressionism and sometimes a source of literary insincerity or at the best anaemic catholicity. As often as not a critic studies, say, the Elizabethan age because he has a previous sympathy with the scattered grandeurs, the hasty and vehement inequalities, the profuse mixture of flawed stones, noble gems and imitation jewellery with which that school overwhelms us. In that case the profession with which he starts is insincere, for he professes to base his appreciation on study, whereas his study begins from, continues with and ends in appreciation. Often on the contrary he studies as a duty and praises in order to elevate his study; because he has perused all and understood all, he must sympathise with all, or where is the proof of his having understood? Perfect intelligence of a man's character and work implies a certain measure of sympathy and liking; antipathy has only half sight and indifference is blind. Hence much false criticism misleading the public intelligence and causing a confusion in critical weights & measures, a depreciation of the literary currency from which in the case of the frank impressionist we are safe. In mere truth the historical method is useful only with inferior writers who not having had full powers of expression are more interesting than their work; but even here it has led to that excessive and often absurd laudation of numberless small names in literature, many of them "discoveries", which is the curse of latterday criticism. The historical method is in fact the cloven foot of science attempting to insinuate itself into the fair garden of Poetry. By this I mean no disrespect to Science. The devil is a gentleman, & Shakespeare himself has guaranteed his respectability; but he is more than that, he is a highly useful and even indispensable personage. So also is Science not only a respectable branch of intellectual activity, — when it does not indulge its highly civilized propensity for cutting up live animals, — but it is also a useful and indispensable branch. But the devil had no business in Paradise and Science has no business in the sphere of Poetry. The work of Science is to collect facts and generalize from them; the smallest and meanest thing is as important to it as the highest, the weed no less than the flower and the bug that crawls & stinks no less than man who is a little lower than the angels. By introducing this method into criticism, we are overloading ourselves with facts and stifling the literary field with the host of all the mediocrities more or less "historically" important but at any rate deadly dull & uninspiring, who at one time or another had the misfortune to take themselves for literary geniuses. And just as scientific history tends to lose individual genius in movements, so the historical method tends to lose the individual poem in tendencies. The result is that modern poets instead of holding up before them as their ideal the expression of the great universal feelings and thoughts which sway humanity, tend more and more to express tendencies, problems, realisms, romanticisms, mysticisms and all the other local & ephemeral aberrations with which poetry has no business whatever. It is the sign of a decadent & morbid age which is pushing itself by the mass of its own undigested learning into Alexandrianism and scholasticism, cutting itself off from the fountainheads of creation and wilfully preparing its own decline and sterility. The age of which Callimachus & Apollonius of Rhodes were the Simonides & the Homer and the age of which Tennyson is the Shakespeare & Rudyard Kipling the Milton present an ominous resemblance.

The Seasons

I

ITS AUTHENTICITY

THE "SEASONS" of Kalidasa is one of those early works of a great poet which are even more interesting to a student of his evolution than his later masterpieces. We see his characteristic gift even in the immature workmanship and uncertain touch and can distinguish the persistent personality in spite of the defective self-expression. Where external record is scanty, this interest is often disturbed by the question of authenticity, and where there is any excuse for the doubt, it has first to be removed. The impulse which leads us to deny authenticity to early and immature work, is natural and almost inevitable. When we turn from the great harmonies and victorious imaginations of the master to the raw and perhaps faltering workmanship of these uncertain beginnings, we are irresistibly impelled to cry out, "This is not by the same hand." But the impulse, however natural, is not always reasonable. The maxim that a poet is born and not made is only true in the sense that great poetical powers are there in the mind of the child, and in this sense the same remark might be applied with no less truth to every species of human genius; philosophers, sculptors, painters, critics, orators, statesmen are all born and not made. But because poetical genius is rarer or at any rate wider and more lasting in its appeal than any other, the popular mind with its ready gift for seizing one aspect of truth out of many and crystallizing error into the form of a proverb, has exalted the poet into a splendid freak of Nature exempt from the general law. If a man without the inborn oratorical fire may be trained into a good speaker or another without the master's inspiration of form and colour work out for himself a blameless technique, so too may a meagre talent become by diligence a machine for producing elegant verse. But poetic genius needs experience and self-discipline as much as any other, and by its very complexity more than most. This is eminently true of great poets with a varied gift. A narrow though a high faculty works best on a single line and may show perfection at an early stage; but powerful and complex minds like Shakespeare or Kalidasa seldom find themselves before a more advanced period. Their previous work is certain to be full of power, promise and genius, but it will also be flawed, unequal and often imitative. This imperfection arises naturally from the greater difficulty in imposing the law of harmony of their various gifts on the bodily case which is the instrument of the spirit's self-expression. To arrive at this harmony requires time and effort, and meanwhile the work will often be halting and unequal, varying between inspiration expressed and the failure of vision or expression.

There is no more many-sided, rich and flexible genius in literature than Kalidasa's, and in his case especially we must be on our guard against basing denial of authenticity on imperfection and minor differences. We have to judge, first, by the presence or absence of the essential and indefinable self of Kalidasa which we find apparent in all his indubitable work, however various the form or subject, and after that on those nameable characteristics which are the grain and fibre of his genius and least imitable by others. In the absence of external evidence, which is in itself of little value unless received from definite and contemporary or almost contemporary sources, the test of personality is all-important. Accidents and details are only useful as corroborative evidence, for these are liable to variation and imitation; but personality is a distinguishable and permanent presence as fugitive to imitation as to analysis. Even a slight fineness of literary palate can perceive the difference between the Nalodaya and Kalidasa's genuine work. Not only does it belong to an age or school in which poetic taste was debased and artificial, — for it is a poetical counterpart of those prose works for whose existence the display of scholarship seems to be the chief justification, — but it presents in this matter of personality and persistent characteristics no sufficient point of contact either with the Shakuntala or the Kumarasambhava or even with the House of Raghu. But in the Seasons, Kalidasa's personality is distinctly perceived as well as his main characteristics, his force of vision, his architecture of style, his pervading sensuousness, the peculiar temperament of his similes, his characteristic strokes of thought and imagination, his individual and inimitable cast of description. Much of it is as yet in a half-developed state, crude consistence not yet fashioned with the masterly touch he soon manifested, but Kalidasa is there quite as evidently as Shakespeare in his earlier work, the Venus and Adonis or Lucrece. Defects which the riper Kalidasa avoids, are not uncommon in this poem, — repetition of ideas, use of more words than are absolutely required, haphazard recurrence of words and phrases, not to produce a designed effect but from carelessness, haste or an insufficient vocabulary; there is moreover a constant sense of uncertainty in the touch and a frequent lack of finished design. The poet has been in too much haste to vent his sense of poetic power and not sufficiently careful that the expression should be the best he could compass. And yet immature, greatly inferior in chastity and elegance to his best work, marred by serious faults of conception, bearing evidence of hurry and slovenliness in the execution, the Seasons is for all this not only suffused by a high though unchastened beauty, but marked with many of the distinctive signs of Kalidasa's strong and exuberant genius. The defects are those natural to the early work of a rich sensuous temperament, eagerly conscious of poetic power but not yet instructed and chastened.

II

THE SUBSTANCE OF THE POEM

Kalidasa's Seasons is perhaps the first poem in any literature written with the express object of describing Nature. It is precisely similar in its aim to a well-known eighteenth-century failure in the same direction — Thomson's Seasons. The names tally, the forms correspond, both poems adopting the plan of devoting a canto to each season, and the method so far agrees that the poets have attempted to depict each season in its principal peculiarities, scenes and characteristic incidents. But here all parallel ends. Wide as the gulf between the genius of one of the greatest world-poets and the talent of the eighteenth-century versifier is the difference between the gathered strength and compact force, the masterly harmonies and the living truth of the ancient Indian poem and the diffuse artificiality and rhetoric of the modern counterpart. And the difference of spirit is not less. A poet of the prosaic and artificial age when the Anglo-Saxon mind emerged in England and got itself Gallicised, Thomson was unable to grasp the first psychological laws of such descriptive poetry. He fixed his eye on the object, but he could only see the outside of it. Instead of creating he tried to photograph. And he did not remember or did not know that Nature is nothing to poetry except in so far as it is either a frame, setting or ornament to life or else a living presence to the spirit. Nature interpreted by Wordsworth as a part of his own and the universal consciousness, by Shakespeare as an accompaniment or note in the orchestral music of life, by more modern poets as an element of decoration in the living world-picture is possible in poetry; as an independent but dead existence it has no place either in the world itself or in the poet's creation. In his relations to the external, life and mind are the man, the senses being only instruments, and what he seeks outside himself is a response in kind to his own deeper reality. What the eye gathers is only important in so far as it is related to this real man or helps this expectation to satisfy itself. Kalidasa with his fine artistic feeling, his vitality and warm humanism and his profound sense of what true poetry must be, appears to have divined from the beginning the true place of Nature in the poet's outlook. He is always more emotional and intellectual than spiritual, like Shakespeare to whom he has so many striking resemblances. We must not expect from him the magical insight of Valmiki, still less the spiritual discernment of Wordsworth. He looks inside, but not too far inside. But he realises always the supreme importance of life as the only abiding foundation of a poem's immortality.

The first canto is surcharged with the life of men and animals and the life of trees and plants in summer. It sets ringing a note of royal power and passion and promises a poem of unexampled vigour and interest. But to play variations on this note through six cantos seems to have been beyond the young poet's as yet limited experience and narrow imaginative mastery. He fell back on the life of sensuous passion with images of which, no doubt, his ungoverned youth was most familiar. But instead of working them into the main thought he turned to them for a prop and, when his imaginative memory failed him, multiplied them to make up the deficiency. This lapse from artistic uprightness brought its own retribution, as all such lapses will. From one error indeed Kalidasa's vigorous and aspiring temperament saved him. He never relaxed into the cloying and effeminate languor of sensuous description which offends us in Keats' earlier work. The men of the age with all their sensuousness, luxury and worship of outward beauty were a masculine and strenuous race, and their male and vigorous spirit is as prominent in Kalidasa as his laxer tendencies. His sensuousness is not coupled with weak self-indulgence, but is rather a bold and royal spirit seizing the beauty and delight of earth to itself and compelling all the senses to minister to the enjoyment of the spirit rather than enslaving the spirit to do the will of the senses. The difference perhaps amounts to no more than a lesser or greater force of vitality, but it is, for the purposes of poetry, a real and important difference. The spirit of delightful weakness swooning with excessive beauty gives a peculiar charm of soft laxness to poems like the Endymion, but it is a weakening charm to which no virile temperament will trust itself. The poetry of Kalidasa satisfies the sensuous imagination without enervating the virile chords of character; for virile energy is an unfailing characteristic of the best Sanskrit poetry, and Kalidasa is inferior to none in this respect. His artistic error has nevertheless had disastrous effects on the substance of his poem.

It is written in six cantos answering to the six Indian seasons, Summer, Rain, Autumn, Winter, Dew and Spring. Nothing can exceed the splendour and power of the opening. We see the poet revelling in the yet virgin boldness, newness and strength of his genius and confident of winning the kingdom of poetry by violence. For a time the brilliance of his work seems to justify his ardour. In the poem on Summer we are at once seized by the marvellous force of imagination, by the unsurpassed closeness and clear strenuousness of his gaze on the object; in the expression there is a grand and concentrated precision which is our first example of the great Kalidasian manner, and an imperial power, stateliness and brevity of speech which is our first instance of the high classical diction. But this canto stands on a higher level than the rest of the poem. It is as if the poet had spent the best part of his force in his first enthusiasm and kept back an insufficient reserve for the sustained power proper to a long poem. The decline in energy does not disappoint at first. The poem on the Rains gives us a number of fine pictures with a less vigorous touch but a more dignified restraint and a graver and nobler harmony, and even in the Autumn, where the falling off of vigour becomes very noticeable, there is compensation in a more harmonious finish of style, management and imagery. We are led to believe that the poet is finding himself and will rise to a finale of flawless beauty. Then comes disappointment. In the next two cantos Kalidasa seems to lose hold of the subject; the touches of natural description cease or are, with a few exceptions, perfunctory and even conventional, and the full force of his genius is thrown into a series of extraordinary pictures, as vivid as if actually executed in line and colour, of feminine beauty and sensuous passion. The two elements, never properly fused, cease even to stand side by side. For all description of Winter we have a few stanzas describing the cold and the appearance of fields, plants, waters in the wintry days, by no means devoid of beauty but wanting in vigour, closeness of vision and eagerness. In the poem on Dew-tide the original purpose is even fainter. Perhaps the quietness of these seasons, the absence in them of the most brilliant pictorial effects and grandest distinctive features, made them a subject uninspiring to the unripeness and love of violence natural to a richly-endowed temperament in its unschooled youth. But the Spring is the royal season of the Indian year and should have lent itself peculiarly to Kalidasa's inborn passion for colour, sweetness and harmony. The closing canto should have been the crown of the poem. But the poet's sin pursues him and, though we see a distinct effort to recover the old pure fervour, it is an effort that fails to sustain itself. There is no falling off in harmonious splendour of sound and language, but the soul of inspired poetic observation ceases to inform this beautiful mould and the close fails and languishes. It is noticeable that there is a double close to the Spring, the two versions having been left, after the manner of the old editions, side by side. Kalidasa's strong artistic perception must have suffered acutely from the sense of failure in inspiration and he has accordingly attempted to replace the weak close by an improved and fuller cadence. What is we may presume, the rejected version, is undoubtedly the weaker of the two but neither of them satisfies. The poem on Spring which should have been the finest, is the most disappointing in the whole series

III

ITS POETIC VALUE

Nevertheless the Seasons is not only an interesting document in the evolution of a poetic genius of the first rank, but in itself a work of extraordinary force and immense promise. Many of the most characteristic Kalidasian gifts and tendencies are here, some of them in crude and unformed vigour, but characteristic and unmistakable, giving the poem a striking resemblance of spirit and to some extent of form to the House of Raghu, with a far-off prophecy of the mature manner of Kalidasa in the four great masterpieces. There is his power of felicitous and vivid simile; there is the individual turn of his conceits and the single-minded force with which he drives them home; there is his mastering accuracy and lifelikeness in description conspicuous especially in the choice and building of the circumstantial epithets. That characteristic of the poet, not the most fundamental and important, which most struck the ancient critics, *upamāsu kālidāsaḥ*, Kalidasa for similes, is everywhere present even in such early and immature work, and already they have the sharp clear Kalidasian ring, true coin of his mint though not yet possessed of the later high values. The deep blue midsummer sky is like a rich purple mass of ground collyrium; girls with their smiling faces and lovelit eyes are like "evenings beautifully jewelled with the moon"; the fires burning in the forest look far-off like clear drops of vermilion; the new blades of grass are like pieces of split emerald; rivers embracing and tearing down the trees on their banks are like evil women distracted with passion slaying their lovers. In all these instances we have the Kalidasian simile, a little superficial as yet and self-conscious, but for all that Kalidasian. When again he speaks of the moon towards dawn growing pale with shame at the lovelier brightness of a woman's face, of the rains coming like the pomp of some great king all blazing with lights, huge clouds moving along like elephants, the lightning like a streaming banner and the thunder like a peal of drums, of the clouds like archers shooting their rains at the lover from the rainbow stringed with lightning, one recognises, in spite of the occasional extravagance of phrase and violent fancifulness, the Kalidasian form of conceit, not only in the substance which can be borrowed, but in the wording and most of all in the economy of phrase expressing a lavish and ingenious fancy. Still more is this apparent in the sensuous and elaborate comparison of things in Nature to women in ornamental attire, — rivers, autumn, the night, the pale priyungou creeper.

Most decisive of all are the strokes of vivid description that give the poem its main greatness and fulfil its purpose. The seasons live before our eyes as we read. Summer is here with its sweltering heat, the sunbeams burning like fires of sacrifice and the earth swept with whirling gyres of dust driven by intolerable gusts. Yonder lies the lion forgetting his impulse and his mighty leap; his tongue lolls and wearily from time to time he shakes his mane; the snake with lowered head panting and dragging his coils labours over the blazing dust of the road; the wild boars are digging in the dried mud with their long snouts as if they would burrow their way into the cool earth; the bisons wander everywhere dumbly desiring water. The forests are grim and parched, brown and sere; and before long they are in the clutch of fire.... But the rains come, and what may be yonder writhing lines we see on the slopes? It is the young water of the rains, a new-born rivulet, grey and full of insects and dust and weeds, coiling like a snake down the hillside. We watch the beauty of the mountains streaked everywhere with waterfalls, their high rocks kissed by the stooping clouds and their sides a gorgeous chaos of peacocks: on the horizon the great clouds blue as lotus-petals climb hugely into the sky and move across it in slow procession before a sluggish breeze. Or look at yonder covidara tree, its branches troubled softly with wind, swarming with honey-drunken bees and its leaves tender with little opening buds. The moon at night gazes down at us like an unveiled face in the skies, the racing stream dashes its ripples in the wild-duck's face, the wind comes trembling through the burdened rice-stalks, dancing with the crowding courboucs, making one flowery ripple of the lotus-wooded lake. Here there can be no longer any hesitation. These descriptions which remain perpetually with the eye, visible and concrete as an actual painting, belong, in the force with which they are visualised and the magnificent architecture of phrase with which they are presented, to Kalidasa alone among Sanskrit poets. Other poets, his successors or imitators, such as Bana or even Bhavabhuti, overload their description with words and details; they have often lavish colouring but never an equal power of form; their figures do not appear to stand out of the canvas and live.

And though we do not find here quite the marvellous harmonies of verse and diction we meet in the Raghu, yet we do come across plenty of preparation for them. Here for instance is a verse whose rapidity and lightness restrained by a certain half-hidden gravity is distinctly Kalidasa's:

ज्वलति पवनवृद्धः पर्वतानां दरीषु
स्फुटति पटुनिनादैः शुष्कवंशस्थलीषु ।
प्रसरति तृणमध्ये लब्धवृद्धिः क्षणेन
ग्लपयति मृगवर्गं प्रान्तलग्नो दवाग्निः ॥

"Clinging to the woodland edges the forest fire increases with the wind and burns in the glens of the mountains; it crackles with shrill shoutings in the dry bamboo reaches; it spreads in the grasses gathering hugeness in a moment and harasses the beasts of the wilderness."

And again for honeyed sweetness and buoyancy what can be more Kalidasian than this?

पुंस्कोकिलश्चूतरसासवेन
मत्तः प्रियं चुम्बति रागहृष्टः ।
गुञ्जन् द्विरेफोऽप्ययमम्बुजस्थः
प्रियं प्रियायाः प्रकरोति चाटु ॥

"The male cuckoo, drunk with wine of the juice of the mango flower, kisses his beloved, glad of the sweet attraction, and here the bee murmuring in the lotus-blossom hums flattery's sweetness to his sweet."

There are other stanzas which anticipate something of the ripest Kalidasian movements by their gravity, suavity and strength.

आकम्पयन् कुसुमिताः सहकारशाखा
विस्तारयन् परभृतस्य वचांसि दिक्षु ।
वायुर्विवाति हृदयानि हरन्नराणां
नीहारपातविगमात् सुभगो वसन्ते ॥

"Making to tremble the flowering branches of the mango trees, spreading the cry of the cuckoo in the regions the wind ranges ravishing the hearts of mortals, by the passing of the dewfalls gracious in the springtide."

If we take Kalidasa anywhere in his lighter metres we shall at once perceive their essential kinship with the verse of the Seasons.

> इदमसुलभवस्तुप्रार्थनादुर्निवारं
> प्रथममपि मनो मे पञ्चबाणः क्षिणोति।
> किमुत मलयवातोन्मीलितापाण्डुवर्ण–
> मुपवनसहकारैर्दर्शितेष्वंकुरेषु॥

"Already Love torments my mind importunate in prayer for a thing unattainable; what shall it be when the woodland mango-trees display their buds, a pallid whiteness opening to the southern wind?"

It is the same suave and skilful management, the same exquisite and unobtrusive weaving of labial, dental and liquid assonances with a recurring sibilant note, the same soft and perfect footing of the syllables. Only the language is richer and more developed. We do not find this peculiar kind of perfection in any other master of classical verse. Bhavabhuti's manner is bold, strenuous, external; Jayadeva's music is based palpably upon assonance and alliteration which he uses with extraordinary brilliance and builds into the most enchanting melodies, but without delicacy, restraint or disguise. If there were any real cause for doubt of the authorship, the verse would clearly vindicate the Seasons for Kalidasa.

Such is this remarkable poem which some, led away by its undoubted splendours, have put in the first rank of Kalidasa's work. Its artistic defects and its comparative crudity forbid us to follow them. It is uncertain in plan, ill-fused, sometimes raw in its imagery, unequal in its execution. But for all that, it must have come upon its contemporaries like the dawning of a new sun in the skies. Its splendid diction and versification, its vigour, fire and force, its sweetness of spirit and its general promise and to some extent actual presentation of a first-rate poetic genius must have made it a literary event of the first importance. Especially is it significant in its daring gift of sensuousness. The prophet of a hedonistic civilisation here seizes with no uncertain hand on the materials of his work. A vivid and virile interpretation of sense-life in Nature, a similar interpretation of all elements of human life capable of greatness or beauty, seen under the light of the senses and expressed in the terms of an aesthetic appreciation, — this is the spirit of Kalidasa's first work as it is of his last. At present he is concerned only with the outward body of Nature, the physical aspects of things, the vital pleasures and emotions, the joy and beauty of the human body; but it is the first necessary step on the long road of sensuous and poetic experience and expression he has to travel before he reaches his goal in his crowning work, the Birth of the War-God, in which he takes up for treatment one of the supreme fables of the life of the Gods and the Cosmos and in its handling combines sublimity with grace, height of speech with fullness and beautiful harmony of sound, boldness of descriptive line with magnificence of sensuous colour in a degree of perfection never before or afterwards surpassed or even equalled in poetic literature.

Hindu Drama

The origin of the Sanscrit drama, like the origin of all Hindu arts and sciences, is lost in the silence of antiquity; and there one might be content to leave it. But European scholarship abhors a vacuum, even where Nature allows it; confronted with a void in its knowledge, it is always ready to fill it up with a conjecture and this habit of mind while it has led to many interesting discoveries, has also fostered a spirit of fantasy and dogmatism in fantasy, which is prejudicial to sane and sober thinking. Especially in the field of Sanscrit learning this spirit has found an exceptionally favourable arena for the exercise of its ingenuity; for here there is no great body of general culture and well-informed lay opinion to check the extravagances to which a specialised knowledge is always prone. Undaunted therefore by the utter silence of history on the question, European scholars have set about filling up the void with theories which we are asked or rather bidden to accept not as ingenious scholastic playthings, but as serious solutions based upon logical and scientific deduction from convincing internal evidence. It is necessary for reasons I shall presently touch on to cast a cursory glance at the most important of these attempts.

The first thought that would naturally suggest itself to an average European mind in search of an origin for Hindu drama is a Greek parentage. The one great body of original drama prior to the Hindu is the Greek; from Greece Europe derives the beginnings of her civilization in almost all its parts; and especially in poetry, art and philosophy. And there was the alluring fact that Alexander of Macedon had entered India and the Bactrians established a kingdom on the banks of the Indus before the time of the earliest extant Hindu play. To the European mind the temptation to build upon this coincidence a theory was irresistible, more especially as it has always been incurably loath to believe that the Asiatic genius can be original or vigorously creative outside the sphere of religion. In obedience to this [*incomplete*]

Deftness & strength in dialogue, masterly workmanship in plot-making & dramatic situation and vital force of dramatic poetry are enough in themselves to make a fine and effective poetical play for the stage, but for a really great drama a farther & rarer gift is needed, the gift of dramatic characterisation. This power bases itself in its different degrees sometimes on great experience of human life, sometimes on a keen power of observation and accurate imagination making much matter out of a small circle of experience but in its richest possessors on a boundless sympathy with all kinds of humanity accompanied by a power of imbibing and afterwards of selecting & bringing out from oneself at will impressions received from others. This supreme power, European scholars agree, is wanting in Hindu dramatic literature. A mere poet like Goethe may extend unstinted & even superlative praise to a Shacountala but the wiser critical & scholarly mind passes a far less favourable verdict; there is much art in Hindu poetry, it is said, but no genius; there is plenty of fancy but no imagination; beautiful and even moving poetry is abundant, but the characters are nil; the colouring is rich but colour is all. Indian scholars trained in our schools to repeat what they have learnt do not hesitate to add their voice to the chorus. A Hindu scholar of acute diligence and wide Sanscrit learning has even argued that the Hindu mind is constitutionally incapable of original & living creation; he has alleged the gigantic, living and vigorous personalities of the Mahabharat as an argument to prove that these characters must have been real men and women, copied from the life; since no Hindu poet could have created character with such truth and power. On the other side the Bengali critics, men of no mean literary taste and perception though inferior in pure verbal scholarship, are agreed in regarding the characters of Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti as beautiful and energetic creations, not less deserving of study than the personalities of Elizabethan drama.

This contradiction, violent as it is, is not difficult to understand, since it takes its root in an element always more or less present in criticism, the national element. National character, national prejudices, national training preordain for the bulk of us the spirit in which we shall approach unfamiliar poetry. Now the average English mind is capable of appreciating character as manifested in strong action or powerfully revealing speech, but constitutionally dull to the subtleties of civilized character which have their theatre in the mind and the heart and make of a slight word, a gesture or even silence their sufficient revelation. The nations of Europe, taken in the mass, are still semicivilized; their mind feeds on the physical, external and grossly salient features of life; where there is no brilliance & glare, they are apt to condemn the personality as characterless. A strength that shuns ostentation, a charm that is not luxuriant, not naked to the first glance, are appreciable only to the few select minds who have chastened their natural leanings by a wide and deep culture. The Hindu on his side distastes violence in action, excess in speech, ostentation or effusiveness in manner; he demands from his ideal temperance and restraint as well as nobility, truth and beneficence; the Aryan or true gentleman must be मिताचारः and मितभाषी, restrained in action and temperate in speech.

This national tendency shows itself even in our most vehement work. The Mahabharat is that section of our literature which deals most with the external and physical and corresponds best to the European idea of the epic; yet the intellectualism of even the Mahabharat, its preference of mind-issues to physical and emotional collisions and catastrophes, its continual suffusion of these when they occur with mind and ideality, the civilisation, depth and lack of mere sensational turbulence, in one word the Aryan cast of its characters, are irritating to European scholars. Thus a historian of Indian literature complains that Bhema is the one really epic character in this poem. He meant, evidently, the one character in which vast and irresistible strength, ungovernable impetuousness of passion, warlike fury & destroying anger are grandiosely displayed. But to the Hindu, whose ideas of epic are not coloured with the wrath of Achilles, epic motive and character are not confined to what is impetuous, huge and untamed; he demands a larger field for the epic and does not confine it to savage and half savage epochs. Gentleness, patience, self-sacrifice, purity, the civilized virtues, appear to him as capable of epic treatment as martial fire, brute strength, revenge, anger, hate and ungovernable self-will. Rama mildly and purely renouncing the empire of the world for the sake of his father's honour seems to them as epic & mighty a figure as Bhema destroying Kechaka in his wild fury of triumphant strength and hatred. It is noteworthy that the European temperament finds vice more interesting than virtue, and in its heart of hearts damns the Christian qualities with faint praise as negative, not positive virtues; the difficulty European writers experience in making good men sympathetic is a commonplace of literary observation. In all these respects the Hindu attitude is diametrically opposed to the European. This attitude of the Hindu mind as evinced in the Mahabharata is so intolerable to European scholars that they have been forced to ease their irritation by conjuring up the phantom of an original ballad-epic more like their notions of what an epic should be, an epic in which the wicked characters of the present Mahabharata were the heroes and the divine champions of right of the present Mahabharata were the villains! The present Mahabharata is, they say, a sanctimonious monastic corruption of the old vigorous and half-savage poem. To the Hindu the theory naturally seems a grotesque perversion of ingenuity but its very grotesqueness is eloquent of the soil it springs from, the soil of the half barbarous temperament of the martial & industrial Teuton which cannot, even when civilised, entirely sympathise with the intellectual working of more radically civilised types. This fundamental difference of outlook on character, generating difference in critical appreciation of dramatic and epic characterisation is of general application, but it acquires a peculiar force when we come to consider the Hindu drama; for here the ingrained disparity is emphasized by external conditions.

It has been pointed out, perhaps too often, that the Hindu drama presents some remarkable points of contact with the

Elizabethan. In the mixture of prose and poetry, in the complete freedom with which time & scene vary, in the romantic lifelikeness of the action, in the mixture of comedy with serious matter, in the gorgeousness of the poetry and the direct appeal to the feelings, both these great literatures closely resemble each other. Yet the differences, though they do not strike us so readily as the similarities, are yet more vital and go deeper; for the similarities are of form, the differences of spirit. The Elizabethan drama was a great popular literature which aimed at a vigorous and realistic presentation of life and character such as would please a mixed and not very critical audience; it had therefore the strength and weakness of great popular literature; its strength was an abounding vigour in passion & action, and an unequalled grasp upon life; its weakness a crude violence, imperfection and bungling in workmanship combined with a tendency to exaggerations, horrors & monstrosities. The Hindu drama, on the contrary, was written by men of accomplished culture for an educated, often a courtly audience and with an eye to an elaborate and well-understood system of poetics.

The vital law governing Hindu poetics is that it does not seek to represent life and character primarily or for their own sake; its aim is fundamentally aesthetic, by the delicate & harmonious rendering of passion to awaken the aesthetic sense of the onlooker and gratify it by moving or subtly observed pictures of human feeling; it did not attempt to seize a man's spirit by the hair and drag it out into a storm of horror & pity & fear and return it to him drenched, beaten and shuddering. To the Hindu it would have seemed a savage and inhuman spirit that could take any aesthetic pleasure in the sufferings of an Oedipus or a Duchess of Malfi or in the tragedy of a Macbeth or an Othello. Partly this arose from the divine tenderness of the Hindu nature, always noble, forbearing & gentle and at that time saturated with the sweet & gracious pity & purity which flowed from the soul of Buddha; but it was also a necessary result of the principle that aesthetic & intellectual pleasure is the first object of all poetic art. Certainly poetry was regarded as a force for elevation as well as for charm, but as it reaches these objects through aesthetic beauty, aesthetic gratification must be the whole basis of dramatic composition; all other objects are superstructural. The Hindu mind therefore shrank not only from violence, horror & physical tragedy, the Elizabethan stock-in-trade, but even from the tragic moral problems which attracted the Greek mind; still less could it have consented to occupy itself with the problems of disease, neurosis and spiritual medicology generally which are the staple of modern drama and fiction. An atmosphere of romantic beauty, a high urbanity and a gracious equipoise of the feelings, a perpetual confidence in the sunshine & the flowers, are the essential spirit of a Hindu play; pity and terror are used to awaken the feelings, but not to lacerate them, and the drama must close on the note of joy and peace; the clouds are only admitted to make more beautiful the glad sunlight from which all came & into which all must melt away. It is in an art like this that the soul finds the repose, the opportunity for being, confirmed in gentleness and in kindly culture, the unmixed intellectual and aesthetic pleasure in quest of which it has turned away from the crudeness & incoherence of life to the magic regions of Art.

When therefore English scholars, fed on the exceedingly strong & often raw meat of the Elizabethans, assert that there are no characters in the Hindu drama, when they attribute this deficiency to the feebleness of inventive power which leads "Asiatic" poetry to concentrate itself on glowing description and imagery, seeking by excess of ornament to conceal poverty of substance, when even their Indian pupils perverted from good taste and blinded to fine discrimination by a love of the striking & a habit of gross forms & pronounced colours due to the too exclusive study of English poetry, repeat & reenforce their criticisms, the lover of Kalidasa & his peers need not be alarmed; he need not banish from his imagination the gracious company with which it is peopled as a gilded & soulless list of names. For these dicta spring from prejudice and the echo of a prejudice; they are evidence not of a more vigorous critical mind but of a restricted critical sympathy. Certainly if we expect a Beautiful White Devil or a Jew of Malta from the Hindu dramatist, we shall be disappointed; he deals not in these splendid or horrible masks. If we come to him for a Lear or a Macbeth, we shall go away discontented; for these also are sublimities which belong to cruder civilisations and more barbarous national types; in worst crimes & deepest suffering as well as in happiness & virtue, the Aryan was more civilized & temperate, less crudely enormous than the hard, earthy & material African peoples whom in Europe he only half moralised. If he seeks a Père Goriot or a Madame Bovary, he will still fail in his quest; for though such types doubtless existed at all times among the mass of the people with its large strain of African blood, Hindu Art would have shrunk from poisoning the moral atmosphere of the soul by elaborate studies of depravity. The true spirit of criticism is to seek in a literature what we can find in it of great or beautiful, not to demand from it what it does not seek to give us.

Vikramorvasie
The Play

Vikram and the Nymph is the second, in order of time, of Kalidasa's three extant dramas. The steady development of the poet's genius is easy to read even for a superficial observer. Malavica and the King is a gracious and delicate trifle, full of the sweet & dainty characterisation which Kalidasa loves, almost too curiously admirable in the perfection of its structure and dramatic art but with only a few touches of that nobility of manner which raises his tender & sensuous poetry and makes it divine. In the Urvasie he is preening his wings for a mightier flight; the dramatic art is not so flawless, but the characters are far deeper and nobler, the poetry stronger and more original and the admirable lyrical sweetness of the first and fourth acts as well as the exaltation of love and the passion of beauty which throb through the whole play, lift it into a far rarer creative atmosphere. It is a worthy predecessor of the Shacountala, that loveliest, most nobly tender and most faultless of all romantic plays. Other indications of this development may be observed. The conventional elements of an Indian romantic comedy, the humours of the Brahmin buffoon and the jealousy of the established wife for the new innamorata occupy the whole picture in the Malavica, though they are touched with exquisite skill and transfigured into elements of a gracious and smiling beauty. In the Urvasie the space given to them is far more limited and their connection with the main action less vital; and they are less skilfully handled: finally in the Shacountala we have only vestiges of them, — a perfunctory recognition of their claims to be admitted rather than a willing use of them as good dramatic material. The prologues of the three plays point to a similar conclusion. In producing the Malavica Kalidasa comes forward as a new and unrecognized poet challenging the fame of the great dramatic classics and apprehensive of severe criticism for his audacity, which he anticipates by a defiant challenge. When the Urvasie is first represented, his position as a dramatist is more assured; only the slightest apology is given for displacing the classics in favour of a new play and the indulgence of the audience is requested not for the poet but for the actors. The prologue of the Shacountala on the other hand breathes of the dignified and confident silence of the acknowledged Master. No apology is needed; none is volunteered.

The prologue of this play contains an apparent allusion to the great Vikramaditya, Kalidasa's patron, and tradition seems to hint, if it does not assert, connection of a kind between the plot of the drama and, perhaps, some episode in the King's life. At any rate the name of the drama is an obvious compliment to that great ruler & conqueror and one or two double entendres in the play which I have not thought it worth while to transfer into English, are, it is clear, strokes [of] delicate flattery pointed to the same quarter. The majority of European scholars identify this Vikrama with Harsha of Ujjaini, the Grand Monarque of classical India; indigenous scholarship mostly dissents from this view, and an imaginative mind may well prefer to associate our greatest classical poet with the earlier and more heroic, if also more shadowy, Vikram, who united the Malavas and founded the power of that great nation, the most gifted and artistic of the earlier Hindu peoples. There are no sufficient data to fix Kalidasa's epoch; he was certainly not later than the 6th century after Christ, certainly not earlier than the 1st century before; but a chronological margin of seven hundred years is too wide to encourage dogmatism.

The legend which forms the subject of the plot is one of the older Indian myths; it may have been a sun myth dear to the heart of the late Prof. Max Muller, — or it may have meant something very different. The literary critic is only concerned with the changes and developments it has undergone in the hands of Kalidasa; that these are all in the direction of emotional sweetness and artistic beauty, may easily be seen by comparing with the drama a translation of the original story as it appears in the [Shatapatha Brahmana.]

Vikramorvasie

The Characters

Pururavus is the poet's second study of kinghood; he differs substantially from Agnimitra. The latter is a prince, a soldier & man of the world yielding by the way to the allurements of beauty, but not preoccupied with passion; the subtitle of the piece might be, in a more innocent sense than Victor Hugo's, "Le Roi s'amuse". He is the mirror of a courteous & self-possessed gentleman, full of mildness & grace, princely tact, savoir-faire, indulgent kindliness, yet energetic withal & quietly resolute in his pleasure as well as in his serious affairs. "Ah, Sire" says Dharinie with sharp irony "if you only showed as much diplomatic skill & savoir-faire in the affairs of your kingdom, what a good thing it would be". But one feels that these are precisely the gifts he would show in all his action, that the innocently unscrupulous & quite delightful tact & diplomacy with which he pursues his love-affair is but the mirror of the methods he pursued in domestic politics. We see in him the typical & ideal king of an age hedonistic, poetic, worldly but withal heroic & capable. Pururavus is made of very different material. He is a king and a hero, a man of high social & princely virtues, otherwise Kalidasa would not have taken the trouble to depict him; but these qualities are like splendid robes which his nature has put on, & which have become so natural to him that he cannot put them off if he would; they are not the naked essential man. The fundamental Pururavus is not the king and the hero but the poet & lover. The poet on a throne has been the theme of Shakespeare in his Richard II and of Renan in his Antéchrist; and from these two great studies we can realise the European view of the phenomenon. To the European mind the meeting of poet & king in one man wears always the appearance of an anomaly, a misplacement, the very qualities which have fitted him to be a poet unfit him to rule. A mastering egotism becomes the mainspring of the poetic temperament so placed; the imagination of the man is centred in himself, and the realm & people whose destinies are in his hands, seem to him to be created only to minister to his ingenious or soaring fancies & his dramatic, epic or idealistic sense of what should be; his intellect lives in a poetic world of its own and thinks in tropes & figures instead of grappling with the concrete facts of the earth; hence he is unfitted for action and once absolute power is out of his hands, once he is no longer able to arrange men & events to his liking as if he were a dramatist manoeuvring the creatures of his brain but is called upon to measure his will & ability against others, he fails & his failure leads to tragic issues; for he persists in attempting to weave his own imaginations into life; he will not see facts; he will not recognize the inexorable logic of events. Hence, though not necessarily a coward, though often a man of real courage & even ability, he plays the part of an incompetent or a weakling or both. Moreover he tends to become a tyrant, to lose moral perspective & often all sense of proportion and sanity; for he regards himself as the centre of a great drama, and to all who will not play the part he assigns them and satisfy his emotional needs & impulses, to all who get in the way of his imaginative egotism he becomes savage & cruel; his rage when a word of his life-drama is mispronounced or a part ill-studied or a conception not complied with is a magnified reflection of the vexation felt by a dramatist at a similar contretemps in the performance of his darling piece; and unfortunately unlike the playwright he has the power to vent his indignation on the luckless offenders in a fashion only too effective. The last end of the poet-king is almost always tragic, the madhouse, the prison, suicide, exile or the dagger of the assassin. It must be admitted that this dramatic picture largely reflects the facts of history. We know some instances of poet-kings in history, Nero & Ludwig of Bavaria were extreme instances; but we have a far more interesting because typical series in the history of the British isles. The Stuarts were a race of born poets whom the irony of their fate insisted upon placing one after the other upon a throne; with the single exception of Charles II (James VI was a pedant, which for practical purposes is as bad as a poet) they were all men of an imaginative temper, artistic tastes & impossible ideals, and the best of them had in a wonderful degree the poet's faculty of imparting this enthusiasm to others. The terrible fate which dogged them was no mysterious doom of the Atridae, but the natural inexorable result of the incompatibility between their temperament & their position. Charles II was the only capable man in his line, the only one who set before him a worldly & unideal aim & recognising facts & using the only possible ways & means quietly & patiently accomplished it. The first James had some practical energy, but it was marred by the political idealism, the disregard of a wise opportunism and the tyrannical severity towards those who thwarted him which distinguished his whole dreamy, fascinating & utterly unpractical race. Nor is the type wanting in Indian History. Sriharsha of Cashmere in the pages of Kalhana affords a most typical picture of the same unhappy temperament. It is interesting therefore to see how Kalidasa dealt with a similar character. To our surprise we find that the Hindu poet does not associate incompetence, failure & tragedy with his image of the poet-king; on the contrary Pururavus is a Great Emperor, well-loved of his people, an unconquered hero, the valued ally of the Gods, successful in empire, successful in war, successful in love. Was then Kalidasa at fault in his knowledge of the world and of human nature? Such a solution would be inconsistent with all we know of the poet's genius as shown in his other work. The truth is that Kalidasa simply gives us the other side of the shield. It is not an invariable law of human nature that the poetic temperament should be by its nature absolutely unfitted for practical action & regal power. Nero & Charles I were artistic temperaments cursed with the doom of kingship. But Alexander of Macedon & Napoleon Buonaparte were poets on a throne, and the part they played in history was not that of incompetents & weaklings. There are times when Nature gifts the poetic temperament with a peculiar grasp of the conditions of action and an irresistible tendency to create their poems not in ink & on paper, but in living characters & on the great canvas of the world; such men become portents

& wonders, whom posterity admires or hates but can only imperfectly understand. Like Joan of Arc or Mazzini & Garibaldi they save a dying nation, or like Napoleon & Alexander they dominate a world. They are only possible because they only get full scope in races which unite with an ardent & heroic temperament a keen susceptibility to poetry in life, idealism, & hero worship. Now the Hindus, before the fibre of their temperament had been loosened by hedonistic materialism on the one side & Buddhistic impracticability on the other, were not only the most ardent & idealistic race in the world, the most ready to put prose behind them, the most dominated by thought & imagination, but also one of the most heroic, and they still preserved much of this ancient temper in the days of Kalidasa. It was only natural therefore that the national dramatist in representing the great legendary founder of the Kurus as of the poet-emperor type, should mould him of stronger make & material & not as one of the beautiful porcelain vessels that are broken. Yet always, even when gifted with the most extraordinary practical abilities, the poetic temperament remains itself and keeps a flaw of weakness in the heart of its strength. The temperaments of Alexander & Napoleon were both marked by megalomania, gigantic imaginations, impossible ideals; though not wantonly cruel or tyrannical, they at times showed a singular insensibility to moral restraints and the demands of generous & humane feeling; especially in times of abnormal excitement or temporary indulgence of their passions, the birthmark came out and showed itself in acts of often insane tyranny. This was especially the case with Alexander; but Napoleon was not free from the same taint. Alexander, we know, strove consciously to mould his life into an Iliad; Napoleon regarded his as a Titanic epic and when facts would not fit in ideally with his conception of himself as its great protagonist, he would alter & falsify them with as little scruple as a dramatist would feel in dealing licentiously with the facts of history. All men of this type, moreover, show a strange visionary impracticability in the midst of their practical energy & success, make huge miscalculations & refuse to receive correction, insist that facts shall mould themselves according to their own imaginations and are usually dominated by an unconquerable egoism or self-absorption which is not necessarily base or selfish; their success seems as much the result of a favouring destiny as of their own ability & when the favour is withdrawn, they collapse like a house of cards at one blow. Joan of Arc dreamed dreams & saw visions, Mazzini & Garibaldi were impracticable idealists and hated Cavour because he would not idealise along with them. The rock of St Helena, the blazing stake at Rouen, the lifelong impotent exile of Mazzini, the field of [ ][1] & the island of Caprera, such is the latter end of these great spirits. Alexander was more fortunate, but his greatest good fortune was that he died young; his next greatest that the practical commonsense of his followers prevented him from crossing the Ganges; had Napoleon been similarly forced to recognise his limit, his end might have been as great as his beginning. Pururavus in the play is equally fortunate; we feel throughout that the power & favour of the Gods is at his back to save him from all evil fortune and the limits of a legend help him as effectually as an early death helped Alexander.

Kalidasa's presentation of Pururavus therefore is not that of a poetic nature in a false position working out its own ruin; it is rather a study of the poetic temperament in a heroic & royal figure for no issue beyond the study itself. This is in accordance with the temper of the later poetry which, as I have said, troubles itself little with problems, issues & the rest, but is purely romantic, existing only to express disinterested delight in the beauty of human life & emotion & the life & emotion of animate & inanimate Nature.

When Pururavus first appears on the scene it is as the king and hero, the man of prompt courage and action, playing the part which he has assumed like a royal robe of purple; but it is not in the practical side of his character that Kalidasa is interested. He has to introduce it only as a background to his inner temperament, in order to save him from the appearance of frivolous weakness & unworthiness which always surrounds the dilettante in life, the epicure of his own emotions. This he does with his usual consummate art. Pururavus is introduced to us at the very beginning in a scene of extraordinary swiftness, decision & tumultuous excitement like an eagle cleaving the winds in the rushing swoop upon his prey. The remembrance of this rapid & heroic episode lingers with us & gives us a sense of concealed iron behind his most feminine moods as lover & poet. Then again at the end of the play Kalidasa skilfully strikes the same note & when we take leave of the Ilian it is again as the King & hero whose strong arm is needed by the Gods in their approaching war with the Titans. Thus finding & leaving him as the warlike prince, we always have the impression that however great the part played by his love for Urvasie in his life, it is not the whole; that we are listening only to a love episode in some high epic. This impression again is skilfully aided by brief but telling touches in each Act, such as the song of the Bards, for example, which remind us of the King of Kings, the toiling administrator & the great warrior; in not a single Act are these necessary strokes omitted & the art with which they are introduced naturally & as if without design is beyond praise. But here again Kalidasa does not depart from his artistic principle of "nothing too much, nothing too little"; the purple robes of the Emperor and the bow of the hero being needed only for the background are not allowed to intrude upon the main interest, which is Pururavus the man in his native temperament.

---

[1] *Blank in manuscript. Apparently Aspromonte or Mentana, sites of defeats suffered by Garibaldi, was intended. — Ed.*

From the very first utterance that temperament reveals itself; the grandiose & confident announcement of his name & his communion with the Gods is characteristic of the epic megalomaniac; we are not deceived by his proud assumption of modesty, which he only wears as a fit outward ornament of the role he is playing on the world's stage, part of the conventional drapery of the heroic king. "For modesty was ever valour's crown." Through this drapery we see the man glorying in himself as a poet might glory in some great creation & when madness has removed all conventional disguise, his temper breaks out with the most splendid frankness. We see his mind empurpled with the consciousness of his worldwide fame, “This is too much; it is not possible he should not know me”; of his marvellous birth “the grandson to the Sun & Moon”; of his matchless achievements as “the chariot-warrior, great Pururavus”; of his mighty empire, “the universal sceptre of the world and sovran footstool touched by jewelled heads of tributary monarchs”. The glory of this triple purple in which he has wrapped himself, matchless valour, matchless fame, matchless empire, dominates his imagination, and he speaks in the proud brief language of the hero but with an evident consciousness of their fine suitability to the part. We seem to see Napoleon robing himself in the dramatic splendour of his despatches and proclamations or Alexander dragging Batis at his chariot wheels in order that he may feel himself to be Achilles. Shall we accuse these men as some do of being liars, theatrical braggarts, inhuman madmen, mountebanks? Let us not so in our feeble envy spit our venom on these mighty souls to half whose heights we could never rise even if we have no opportunity given us of sinking to their depths!

And then as he rushes in pursuit of the Titan and revels in the speed of his chariot and the scenic splendour of the crumbling thunderclouds flying up like dust beneath it, all the poet in him breaks out into glories of speech. Surely no king before or after, not even Richard II, had such a royal gift of language as this grandson of the Sun & Moon. It is peculiar to him in the play. Others, especially those who habitually move near him, Manavaca, the Chamberlain, the Huntsman, the Charioteer, catch something at times of his enthusiastic poetry, but their diction is usually simple & unpretending and when it is most ambitious pale to the colour, energy & imaginativeness which floods all his utterance. For example in the scene of the vulture how he catches fire from a single trope of the Huntsman’s and his imagination continues coruscating & flashing over the jewel until it has vanished from sight. I have said that his imagination has become empurpled; but the tendency is really inborn in him; he sees, thinks & speaks in purple. Not only is his mind stored with pictures which break out in the most splendid tropes and similes, but he cannot see any natural object or feel any simplest emotion without bathing it in the brilliant tones of his imagination & expressing it in regal poetry. He has also the poet's close & inspired observation, the poet's visualising power, the poet's sensuousness & aim at the concrete. Little things that he has seen in Nature, a portion of the bank of a river collapsing into the current, the rapid brightening of a dark night by the moon, fire at night breaking its way through a volume of smoke, a lotus reddening in early sunlight, a wild swan flying through the sky with a lotus fibre in his beak, remain with his inner eye and at a touch burst out in poetry. So inveterate is this habit of seizing on every situation & emotion & turning it into a poem, that even when he affects a feeling as in his flattery of the queen, he takes fire & acts his part with a glory & fervour of speech which make the feigned emotion momentarily genuine. Thus with a mind stored & brimming with poetry, a habit of speech of royal splendour & fulness and an imagination fired & enlarged by the unequalled grandeur of his own destiny, Pururavus comes to the great event which shall be the touchstone of his nature. Such a man was alone fit to aspire to & win the incarnate Beauty of the world & of its sensuous life, the Opsara who sprang from the thigh of the Supreme. The Urvasie of the myth, as has been splendidly seen & expressed by a recent Bengali poet, is the Spirit of imaginative beauty in the Universe, the unattainable ideal for which the soul of man is eternally panting, the goddess adored of the nympholept in all lands & in all ages. There is but one who can attain her, the man whose mind has become one mass of poetry & idealism and has made life itself identical with poetry, whose glorious & starlike career has itself been a conscious epic and whose soul holds friendship & close converse with the Gods. This is Pururavus, "the noise of whom has gone far & wide", whose mother was Ida, divine aspiration, the strange daughter of human mind (Manu) who was once male & is female, and his father Budha, Hermes of the moonlike mind, inspired & mystic wisdom, and his near ancestors therefore are the Sun & Moon. For Urvasie he leaves his human wife, earthly fame & desire, giving her only the passionless kindness which duty demands & absorbs his whole real soul in the divine. Even he, however, does not enjoy uninterrupted the object of his desire; he transgresses with her into that fatal grove of the Virgin War-God where ethereal beauty & delight are not suffered to tread but only ascetic self-denial & keen swordlike practical will; at once she disappears from his ken. Then must his soul wander through all Nature seeking her, imagining her or hints & tokens of her in everything he meets, but never grasping unless by some good chance he accept the Jewel Union born from the crimson on the marvellous feet of Himaloy's Child, Uma, daughter of the mountains, the Mighty Mother, She who is the Soul behind Nature. Then he is again united with her and their child is Ayus, human life & action glorified & ennobled by contact with the divine. It is therefore one of the most profound & splendid of the many profound & splendid allegories in the great repertory of Hindu myth that Kalidasa has here rendered into so sweet, natural & passionate a story of human love & desire. [The religious interpretation of the myth, which is probably older than the poetical, is slightly but not materially different.][2]

In one sense therefore the whole previous life of Pururavus has been a preparation for his meeting with Urvasie. He has filled earth & heaven even as he has filled his own imagination with the splendour of his life as with an epic poem, he has become indeed Pururavus, he who is noised afar; but he has never yet felt his own soul. Now he sees Urvasie and all the force of his nature pours itself into his love for her like a river which has at last found its natural sea. The rich poetry of his temperament, the sights & images with which his memory is stored, his dramatic delight in his own glory & greatness & heroism, are now diverted & poured over this final passion of his life, coruscate & light it up & reveal it as in a wonderful faeryland full of shimmering moonlight. Each thought, image, emotion of his mind as it issues forth, connects itself with his love and for a moment stands illumined in the lustre of his own speech. The same extraordinary vividness of feeling & imagination is poured over Ayus when Pururavus finds himself a father; never has the passion of paternity been expressed with such vivid concreteness or with such ardent sensuousness of feeling. Yet the conventions of life & the dramatic part in it he feels bound to sustain cling about him and hamper his complete utterance. In order therefore to give him his full opportunity, Kalidasa has separated him from Urvasie by a more romantic device than the dramatically unmanageable contrivance of the original legend, and liberated him into the infinite freedom of madness. The fourth Act therefore which seems at first sight episodical, is really of essential importance both to the conduct of the play & the full revelation of its protagonist.

---

[2] *The square brackets are Sri Aurobindo's. — Ed.*

Yet madness is hardly the precise word for the condition of Pururavus; he is not mad like Lear or Ophelia;[3] it is rather a temporary exaltation than a perversion or aberration from his natural state. An extraordinarily vivid & active imagination which has always felt a poetic sense of mind & sympathy in brute life & in "inanimate" Nature leaps up under the shock of sudden & inexplicable loss & the encouragement of romantic surroundings into gigantic proportions; it is like a sudden conflagration in a forest which transfigures & magnifies every petty object it enlightens and fills the world with the rush & roar & volume of its progress. The whole essential temperament of the man comes whirling out in a gyrating pomp of tropes, fancies, conceits, quick & changing emotions; everything in existence he gifts with his own mind, speech, feelings and thus moves through the pageantry of Nature draping it in the regal mantle of his imagination until the whole world exists only to be the scene & witness of his sorrow. For splendour of mere poetry united with delicate art of restraint and management, this scene is not easily surpassed. We may note one of the smaller & yet essential features of its beauty, the skill with which the gradations of his excitement are indicated. When he first rushes in he is in the very height & tumult of it mistaking the cloud for a Titan who carries off his Urvasie and threatening him with a clod of earth which he imagines to be a deadly weapon. But he is not really mad; the next moment he realises his hallucination, and the reaction produces a certain calming down of the fever; yet his mind is still working tumultuously & as he ranges through the forest, every object is converted for a moment into a sign of Urvasie and the megalomaniac in him bursts out into the most splendid flights of self-magnification. But each fresh disappointment brings a reaction that sobers him just a little more; he turns from the inanimate objects of nature to the bee in the flower, then to the birds, then to the beasts; he gifts them with a voice, with articulate words, with thoughts lent out of the inexhaustible treasury of his teeming imagination. Next he appeals to the God of the mountain and fancies the Echo to be his answer. Mark that now for the first time it is a real articulate voice that he hears, though but the reflection of his own. Immediately afterwards his mind coming nearer & nearer to sanity, hits upon something very close to the truth; he realises that a divine force may have transformed her to some object of nature & at first by a natural misapprehension imagines that it must be the river which has the appearance Urvasie wore when she fled from him. Then reason as it returns tells him that if he wishes to find her, it must be nearer the place where she disappeared. As he hurries back, he appeals for the last time to an animal to speak to him, but does not lend him a voice or words; again also he sees tokens of her in flower & tree, but they are no longer hallucinations but real or at least possible tokens. He touches the Jewel Union & hears the actual voice of the sage; he is now perfectly restored to his normal state of mind & when he embraces the creeper, it is not as Urvasie but as an "imitatress of my beloved". Through the rest of the scene it is the old natural Pururavus we hear though in his most delicate flights of imagination. What a choice of a "conveyance" is that with which the scene closes & who but

---

[3] *Sri Aurobindo wrote the following passage on a separate page of the manuscript used for this essay. He did not mark its place of insertion:*

That accomplished scholar & litterateur Prof Wilson in introducing the Vicramorvaseum to English readers, is at pains to inform them that in the "mad scene" of this play they must not expect the sublime madness of King Lear, but a much tamer affair conformable to the mild, domestic & featureless Hindu character & the feebler pitch of Hindu poetic genius. The good Professor might have spared himself the trouble. Beyond the fact that both Lear & Pururavus go about raving in a storm, there is no point of contact between the two dramas.

Pururavus could have imagined it? I dwell on these subtle and just perceptible features of Kalidasa's work, the art concealing art, because the appreciation of them is necessary to the full reception on our mind-canvas of Kalidasa's art & genius and therefore to the full enjoyment of his poetry.

And while Pururavus glorifies & revels in his passion, he is also revealed by it; and not only in the strength of the poetic temperament at its strongest, its grasp of, devotion to & joy in its object, its puissant idealism & energy & the dynamic force with which for a time at least it compels fate to its will, but also in its weaknesses. I have spoken of his self-magnification & touches of megalomania. There is besides this a singular incompetence or paralysis of activity in occasional emergencies which, as I have before suggested, often overtakes the poetic temperament in action even in its most capable possessors. His helplessness when confronted by Aushinarie compares badly with the quiet self-possession & indulgent smile with which Agnimitra faces Iravatie in a much more compromising situation. Characteristic too is his conduct when the jewel is lost. We feel certain that Agnimitra when rushing out of his tent would have caught up his bow & arrows & and shot the thief on the spot; Pururavus occupies time in pouring out splendid tropes & similes over the bird & the jewel and appeals helplessly to Manavaca for advice. This is characteristic of the poetic temperament whose mind has long trained itself to throw out its imagination to meet every new object or situation and not its acting faculties; except in natures of a very firm balance the habit must lead to paralysis of the will. Such a sapping of vigour has been going on in Pururavus during the long years of absorption in his romantic passion.[4] One must hope that when he stands again in the forefront of battle "Heaven's great soldier" will have sufficient elasticity of character to recover in the shock of action what he has lost in the peace of the seraglio. Then there are certain moral insensibilities, certain feelings which seem to have been left out in his composition. It is part of his self-assumed rôle in life to be the ideal king, the mirror of gallantry & conjugal duty, the champion of the gods & of religion. Yet it is Urvasie and not he who remembers that his "high capital awaits him long" and who shrinks from the displeasure of the people. He exhibits deference & a show of love to Aushinarie because he "owes" her respect & affection, but in spite of his glowing language and fine acting we feel that he cherishes towards her none of the genuine respect & affection or of the real & indulgent kindliness Agnimitra feels for Dharinie & Iravatie. In the last Act he expresses some fear that he may lose religious calm; one feels that religious calm in Pururavus must have been something like the King's robe in Hans Andersen's story. But it was one of the necessary "belongings" of the great semi-divine king which Pururavus considered his "part" in life, just as impassive calm & insensibility to human misfortune & grief was one of the necessary "belongings" of the great demigod, the human Jove which Napoleon thought to be his destined rôle. If that vast, flaming and rushing mass of genius & impetuosity which we call Napoleon was incompatible with stoical calm & insensibility, so was the ardent mass of sensuousness & imagination which Kalidasa portrayed in Pururavus incompatible with the high austerity of religion. It is in the mouth of this champion of Heaven Kalidasa has placed one of the few explicit protests in Sanscrit of the ordinary sensuous man against the ascetic idealism of the old religion

---

[4] *Alternative to this sentence*:

This growing incompetence is the result of vigour being sapped by long indulgence in the poetical sensibilities to the comparative exclusion of the practical side of the temperament.

And yet I cannot think of her
Created by a withered hermit cold.
How could an aged anchoret dull & stale
With poring over Scripture & oblivious
To all this rapture of the senses build
A thing so lovely?

The minor male characters of the piece look too wan in the blaze of this great central figure to command much attention except as his adjuncts. As such the Charioteer, the Huntsman &

the Chamberlain, Latavya, appear; the former two merely cross the stage and are only interesting for the shadow of tropical magnificence that their master's personality has thrown over their mode of speech.

In nothing does the delicacy & keen suavity of Kalidasa's dramatic genius exhibit itself with a more constant & instinctive perfection than in his characterisation of women. He may sometimes not care to individualise his most unimportant male figures, but even the slightest of his women have some personality of their own, something which differentiates them from others & makes them better than mere names. Insight into feminine character is extraordinarily rare even among dramatists for whom one might think it to be a necessary element of their art. For the most part a poet represents with success only one or two unusual types known to him or in sympathy with his own temperament or those which are quite abnormal and therefore easily drawn; the latter are generally bad women, the Clytaemnestras, Vittoria Corombonas, Beatrice Joannas. The women of Vyasa & of Sophocles have all a family resemblance; all possess a quiet or commanding masculine strength of character which reveals their parentage. Other poets we see succeeding in a single feminine character & often repeating it but failing or not succeeding eminently in the rest. Otherwise women in poetry are generally painted very much from the outside. The poets who have had an instinctive insight into women, can literally be counted on the fingers of one hand. Shakespeare in this as in other dramatic gifts is splendidly & unapproachably first or at least only equalled in depth though not in range by Valmekie; Racine has the same gift within his limits & Kalidasa without limits, though in this as in other respects he has not Shakespeare's prodigal abundance and puissant variety. Other names I do not remember. There are a few poets who succeed with coarse easy types, but this is the fruit [of] observation rather than an unfailing intuitive gift. The Agnimitra is a drama of women; it passes within the women's apartments and pleasure gardens of a great palace and is full of the rustling of women's robes, the tinkling of their ornaments, the scent of their hair, the music of their voices. In the Urvasie where he needs at least half the canvas for his hero, the scope for feminine characterisation is of necessity greatly contracted, but what is left Kalidasa has filled in with a crowd of beautiful & shining figures & exquisite faces each of which is recognizable. These are the Opsaras and Urvasie the most beautiful of them all. To understand the poetry & appeal of these nymphs of heaven, we must know something of their origin & meaning.

In the beginning of things, in the great wide spaces of Time when mankind as yet was young and the azure heavens & the interregions between the stars were full of the crowding figures of luminous Gods & gigantic Titans by the collision of whose activities the cosmos was taking form & shape, the opposing forces once made a truce and met in common action on the waves of the milky ocean. The object for which they had met could not have been fulfilled by the efforts of one side alone; good must mingle with evil, the ideal take sides with the real, the soul work in harmony with the senses, virtue & sin, heaven & earth & hell labour towards a common end before it can be accomplished; for this object was no less than to evolve all that is beautiful & sweet & incredible in life, all that makes it something more than mere existence; and in especial to realise immortality, that marvellous thought which has affected those even who disbelieve in it, with the idea of unending effort and thus lured men on from height to height, from progress to progress, until mere beast though he is in his body & his sensations, he has with the higher part of himself laid hold upon the most distant heavens. Therefore they stood by the shore of the milky Ocean and cast into it the mountain Mundara for a churning stick and wound round it Vasuqie, the Great Serpent, the snake of desire, for the rope of the churning and then they set to with a will, god & devil together, and churned the milky ocean, the ocean of spiritual existence, the ocean of imagination & aspiration, the ocean of all in man that is above the mere body and the mere life.

They churned for century after century, for millennium upon millennium and yet there was no sign of the nectar of immortality. Only the milky ocean swirled & lashed & roared, like a thing tortured, and the snake Vasuqie in his anguish began to faint & hang down his numberless heads hissing with pain over the waves and from the lolling forked tongues a poison streamed out & mingled with the anguish of the ocean so that it became like a devastating fire. Never was poison so terrible for it contained in itself all the long horror & agony of the ages, all the pain of life, its tears & cruelty & despair & rage & madness, the darkness of disbelief & the grey pain of disillusionment, all the demoniac & brute beast that is in man, his lust & his tyranny & his evil joy in the sufferings of his fellows. Before that poison no creature could stand and the world began to shrivel in the heat of it. Then the Gods fled to Shankara where he abode in the ice and snow & the iron silence & inhuman solitudes of the mountains where the Ganges streams through his matted locks; for who could face the fire of that poison? who but the great ascetic Spirit clothed in ashes who knows not desire and sorrow, to whom terror is not terrible & grief has no sting, but who embraces grief & madness & despair and[5]

And now wonderful things began to arise from the Ocean; Ucchaisravus arose, neighing & tossing his mighty mane, he who can gallop over all space in one moment while hooves make music in the empyrean; Varunie arose, Venus Anadyomene from the waters, the daughter of Varuna, Venus Ourania, standing on a lotus & bringing beauty, delight and harmony & all opulence into the universe; Dhunwuntari arose, cup in hand, the physician of the Gods, who can heal all pain & disease & sorrow, minister to a mind diseased & pluck out from the bosom its rooted sorrow; the jewel Kaustubha arose whose pure luminousness fills all the world & worn on the bosom of the Saviour & helper becomes the cynosure of the suffering & striving nations;[6]

There is nothing more charming, more attractive in Kalidasa than his instinct for sweet & human beauty; everything he touches becomes the inhabitant of a moonlit world of romance and yet — there is the unique gift, the consummate poetry — remains perfectly natural, perfectly near to us, perfectly human. Shelley's Witch of Atlas & Keats' Cynthia are certainly lovely creations, but they do not live; misty, shimmering, uncertain beings seen in some half dream when the moon is full and strange indefinable figures begin to come out from the skirts of the forest, they charm our imagination but our hearts take no interest in them. They are the creations of the mystic Celtic imagination with its singular intangibility, its fascinating otherworldliness. The Hindu has been always decried as a dreamer & mystic. There is truth in the charge but also a singular inaccuracy. The Hindu mind is in one sense the most concrete in the world; it seeks after abstractions, but is not satisfied with them so long as they remain abstractions. But to make the objects of this world concrete, to realise the things that are visited by sun & rain or are, at their most ethereal, sublimated figures of fine matter, that is comparatively easy, but the Hindu is not contented till he has seized things *behind* the sunlight also as concrete realities. He is passionate for the infinite, the unseen, the spiritual, but he will not rest satisfied with conceiving them, he insists on mapping the infinite, on seeing the unseen, on visualising the spiritual. The Celt throws his imagination into the infinite and is rewarded with beautiful phantoms out of which he evolves a pale, mystic and intangible poetry; the Hindu sends his heart & his intellect & eventually his whole being after his imagination and for his reward he has seen God and interpreted existence. It is this double aspect of Hindu temperament, extreme spirituality successfully attempting to work in harmony with extreme materialism, which is the secret of our religion, our life & our literature, our civilisation. On the one side we spiritualise the material out of all but a phenomenal & illusory existence, on the other we materialise the spiritual in the most definite & realistic forms; this is the secret of the high philosophic idealism which to the less capable European mind seems so impossible an intellectual atmosphere and of the prolific idolatry which to the dogmatic & formalising Christian reason seems so gross.

---

[5] *Here there is an abrupt break in the text. — Ed.*

[6] *Here there is another abrupt break with nothing to link this paragraph to what follows. — Ed.*

In any other race-temperament this mental division would have split into two broadly disparate & opposing types whose action, reaction & attempts at compromise would have comprised the history of thought. In the myriad minded & undogmatic Hindu it worked not towards mental division but as the first discord which prepares for a consistent harmony; the best & most characteristic Hindu thought regards either tendency as essential to the perfect & subtle comprehension of existence; they are considered the positive & negative sides of one truth, & must both be grasped if we are not to rest in a half light. Hence the entire tolerance of the Hindu religion to all intellectual attitudes except sheer libertinism; hence also the marvellous perfection of graded thought-attitudes in which the Hindu mind travels between the sheer negative & the sheer positive and yet sees in them only a ladder of progressive & closely related steps rising through relative conceptions to one final & absolute knowledge.

The intellectual temperament of a people determines the main character-stamp of its poetry. There is therefore no considerable poet in Sanscrit who has not the twofold impression, (spiritual & romantic in aim, our poetry is realistic in method), who does not keep his feet on the ground even while his eyes are with the clouds. The soaring lark who loses himself in light, the ineffectual angel beating his luminous wings in the void are not denizens of the Hindu plane of temperament. Hence the expectant critic will search ancient Hindu literature in vain for the poetry of mysticism; that is only to be found in recent Bengali poetry which has felt the influence of English models. The old Sanscrit poetry was never satisfied unless it could show colour, energy & definiteness, & these are things incompatible with true mysticism. Even the Upanishads which declare the phenomenal world to be unreal, yet have a rigidly practical aim and labour in every line to make the indefinite definite & the abstract concrete. But of all our great poets Kalidasa best exemplifies this twynatured Hindu temperament under the conditions of supreme artistic beauty & harmony. Being the most variously learnéd of Hindu poets he draws into his net all our traditions, ideas, myths, imaginations, allegories; the grotesque

& the trivial as well as the sublime or lovely; but touching them with his magic wand teaches them to live together in the harmonising atmosphere of his poetic temperament; under his touch the grotesque becomes strange, wild & romantic; the trivial refines into a dainty & gracious slightness; the sublime yields to the law of romance, acquires a mighty grace, a strong sweetness; and what was merely lovely attains power, energy & brilliant colour. His creations in fact live in a peculiar light, which is not the light that never was on sea or land but rather our ordinary sunshine recognisable though strangely & beautifully altered. The alteration is not real; rather our vision is affected by the recognition of something concealed by the sunbeams & yet the cause of the sunbeams; but it is plain human sunlight we see always. May we not say it is that luminousness behind the veil of this sunlight which is the heaven of Hindu imagination & in all Hindu work shines through it without overpowering it? Hindu poetry is the only Paradise in which the lion can lie down with the lamb.

The personages of Kalidasa's poetry are with but few exceptions gods & demigods or skiey spirits, but while they preserve a charm of wonder, sublimity or weirdness, they are brought onto our own plane of experience, their speech and thought & passion is human. This was the reason alleged by the late Bunkim Chundra Chatterji, himself a poet and a critic of fine & strong insight, for preferring the Birth of the War God to Paradise Lost; he thought that both epics were indeed literary epics of the same type, largely-planned and sublime in subject, diction and thought, but that the Hindu poem if less grandiose in its pitch had in a high degree the humanism and sweetness of simple & usual feeling in which the Paradise Lost is more often than not deficient. But the humanism of which I speak is not the Homeric naturalism; there is little of the sublime or romantic in the essence of the Homeric gods though there is much of both in a good many of their accidents & surroundings. But Kalidasa's divine & semidivine personages lose none of their godhead by living on the plane of humanity. Perhaps the most exquisite masterpiece in this kind is the Cloud Messenger. The actors in that beautiful love-elegy might have been chosen by Shelley himself; they are two lovers of Faeryland, a cloud, rivers, mountains, the gods & demigods of air & hill & sky; the goal of the cloud's journey is the ethereal city of Ullaca upon the golden hill crowned by the clouds and bathed at night in the unearthly moonlight that streams from the brow of Sheva, the mystic's God. The earth is seen mainly as a wonderful panorama by one travelling on the wings of a cloud. Here are all the materials for one of those intangible harmonies of woven & luminous mist with which Shelley allures & baffles us. The personages & scenery are those of Queen Mab, Prometheus Unbound & the Witch of Atlas. But Kalidasa's city in the mists is no evanescent city of sunlit clouds; it is his own beautiful & luxurious Ujjayini idealised & exempted from mortal affection; like a true Hindu he insists on translating the ideal into the terms of the familiar, sensuous & earthy.

> For death and birth keep not their mystic round
> In Ullaca; there from the deathless trees
> The blossom lapses never to the ground
> But lives for ever garrulous with bees
> All honey-drunk — nor yet its sweets resign.
> For ever in their girdling companies. etc.[7]

And when he comes to describe the sole mourner in that town of delight eternal & passion unsated, this is how he describes her.[8] How human, how touching, how common it all is; while we read, we feel ourselves kin to & one with a more beautiful world than our own. These creatures of fancy hardly seem to be an imaginary race but rather ourselves removed from the sordidness & the coarse pains of our world into a more gracious existence. This, I think, is the essential attraction which makes his countrymen to this day feel such a passionnate delight in Kalidasa; after reading a poem of his the world and life and our fellow creatures human, animal or inanimate have become suddenly more beautiful & dear to us than they were before; the heart flows out towards birds & beasts and the very trees seem to be drawing us towards them with their branches as if with arms; the vain cloud & the senseless mountain are no longer senseless or empty, but friendly intelligences that have a voice to our souls. Our own common thoughts, feelings & passions have also become suddenly fair to us; they have received the sanction of beauty. And then through the passion of delight & the sense of life & of love in all beautiful objects we reach to the Mighty Spirit behind them whom our soul recognizes no longer as an object of knowledge or of worship but as her lover, to whom she must fly, leaving her husband the material life & braving the jeers & reprobation of the world for His sake. Thus by a singular paradox, one of those beautiful oxymorons of which the Hindu temperament is full, we reach God through the senses, just as our ancestors did through the intellect and through the emotions; for in the Hindu mind all roads lead eventually to the Rome of its longing, the dwelling of the Most High God. One can see how powerfully Kalidasa's poetry must have prepared the national mind for the religion of the Puranas, the worship of Kali, Our Mother & of Srikrishna, of Vrindavun, our soul's Paramour. Here indeed lies his chief claim to rank with Valmekie & Vyasa as one of our three national poets, in that he gathered the mind-life of the nation into his poetry at a great & critical moment and helped it forward into the groove down which it must henceforth run.

---

[7] *The "etc." indicates that Sri Aurobindo intended to quote more from his now-lost translation of* The Cloud Messenger. — *Ed.*

[8] *Sri Aurobindo evidently intended to insert another passage from his translation of* The Cloud Messenger *here.* — *Ed.*

This method is employed with conspicuous beauty & success in the Urvasie. The Opsaras are the most beautiful & romantic conception on the lesser plane of Hindu mythology. From the moment that they arose out of the waters of the milky Ocean robed in ethereal raiment & heavenly adornments, waking melody from a million lyres, the beauty and light of them has transformed the world. They crowd in the sunbeams, they flash & gleam over heaven in the lightnings, they make the azure beauty of the sky; they are the light of sunrise & sunset, and the haunting voices of forest & field. They dwell too in the life of the soul; for they are the ideal pursued by the poet through his lines, by the artist shaping his soul on his canvas, by the sculptor seeking a form in his marble; for the joy of their embrace the hero flings his life into the rushing torrent of battle; the sage, musing upon God, sees the shining of their limbs & falls from his white ideal. The delight of life, the beauty of things, the attraction of sensuous beauty, this is what the mystic & romantic side of the Hindu temperament strove to express in the Opsara. The original meaning is everywhere felt as a shining background, but most in the older allegories, especially the strange and romantic legend of Pururavus as we first have it in the Brahmanas and the Vishnupurana.

But then came in the materialistic side of the Hindu mind and desired some familiar term, the earthlier the better, in which to phrase its romantic conception; this was found in — the Hetaira. The class of Hetairae was as recognized an element in Hindu society as in Greek, but it does not appear to have exercised quite so large an influence on social life. As in the Greek counterpart they were a specially learned and accomplished class of women, but their superiority over ladies of good families was not so pronounced; for in ancient India previous to the Mahomedan episode respectable women were not mere ignorant housewives like the Athenian ladies, they were educated though not in a formal manner; that is to say they went through no systematic training such as men had but parents were always expected to impart general culture & accomplishments to them by private tuition at home; singing, music, dancing and to some extent painting were the ordinary accomplishments, general knowledge of morality, Scripture and tradition was imperative, and sometimes the girls of highborn, wealthy or learned families received special instruction in philosophy or mathematics. Some indeed seem to have pursued a life of philosophic learning either as virgins or widows; but such instances were in preBuddhistic times very rare; the normal Hindu feeling has always been that the sphere of woman is in the home and her life incomplete unless merged in her husband's. In any case the majority of the kulabadhus, women of respectable families, could hardly be more than amateurs in the arts & sciences, whereas with the Hetairae (Gunicas) such accomplishments were pursued and mastered as a profession. Hence beside their ordinary occupation of singing & dancing in the temples & on great public occasions such as coronations & holy days, they often commanded the irregular affections of highborn or wealthy men who led openly a double life at home with the wife, outside with the Hetaira. As a class, they held no mean place in society; for they must not be confused with the strolling actor or mountebank caste who were a proverb for their vileness of morals. Many of them, no doubt, as will inevitably happen when the restraints of society are not recognized, led loose, immoral & sensual lives; in such a class Lais & Phryne must be as common as Aspasia. Nevertheless the higher & intellectual element seems to have prevailed; those who arrogated freedom in their sexual relations but were not prostitutes, are admirably portrayed in Vasuntséna of the Toy Cart, a beautiful melodrama drawn straight from the life; like her they often exchanged, with the consent of their lover's family, the unveiled face of the Hetaira for the seclusion of the wife. This class both in its higher & lower type lasted late into the present century, but are now under the auspices of Western civilisation almost entirely replaced by a growing class of professional prostitutes, an inevitable consummation which it seems hardly worth while to dub social reform & accelerate by an active crusade.

The Opsaras then are the divine Hetairae of Paradise, beautiful singers & actresses whose beauty and art relieve the arduous & worldlong struggle of the Gods against the forces that tend towards disruption & dissolution, of disruption represented by the Titans who would restore matter to its original atomic condition or of dissolution by the sages & hermits who would make phenomena dissolve prematurely into the One who is above Phenomena. They rose from the Ocean, says Valmekie, seeking who should choose them as brides, but neither the Gods nor the Titans accepted them, therefore are they said to be common or universal.

We see then the appropriateness of the Hetaira as a material form into which the vague idea of sensuous beauty in the world might run. For the charm of the Opsara even when working on the plane of the mind, is still vital & sensational; it does not belong to the more rarefied regions of the spirit. Now vital & sensational charm in seeking its fulfilment demands that the pursuit of sensuous beauty shall be its sole object, that it shall be without check as without any sideglance or afterthought; it does not seek to be immoral, but simply rejects all moral tests; it recognizes no law but the fulfilment of its own being. This is the very spirit of the Hetaira. The beauty of nakedness sculptured, painted or shaped into words, is not immoral; but the moment we apply the test of morality, it becomes clear that we must either rule it out as not belonging to the world of morality, or rule out morality itself for the moment as not belonging to the world of beauty, which is essentially a world of nakedness in the sense that dress there is an occasional ornament, not a necessary covering — not because there is any essential opposition between them but because there is no essential connection or necessary point of contact. The ideals of all the plastic & sensuous arts fall within the scope of the Opsara; she is actress, songstress, musician, painter. When they arose from the waves, neither the gods nor the demons accepted them; accepted by none, they became common to all; for neither the great active faculties of man nor the great destructive recognize sensuous delight & charm as their constant & sufficient mistress, but rather as the joy & refreshment of an hour, an accompaniment or diversion in their constant pursuit of the recognized ideal to which they are wedded. Moreover sensuous beauty has a certain attraction & splendour which seem to some minds finally & occasionally to most, fairer & brighter than that other ideal which by daily occupation with it, by permissibility & by sameness, grows stale for some, fades into homeliness & routine for others & preserves its real undying, unageing and unforsakeable freshness & delight only to the few constant & unswerving souls, who are the elect of our human evolution. In all this the idea of the Opsara coincides with the actuality of the Hetaira. In choosing the Hetaira therefore for the

Opsara's earthly similitude, the Hindu mind showed once more that wonderful mythopoeic penetrativeness which is as unerring & admirable in its way as the Greek mythopoeic felicity & tact.

But in the Opsaras the beauty and allurements of the sensuous universe are diffused, scattered, broken up into a million facets just as they first present themselves to human observation. The Hindu imagination needed some one figure into which all this should be compressed, a figure essential & superlative, compressed & running over with beauty. This was at first sought in Tilottama, the wonderful maiden to whose loveableness every gracious thing in the world gave a portion of its own subtlest charm; but this was too much of a fancy, not sufficiently profound & searching for the Hindu mind. It attempted to find a more perfect expression of its idea & created for the purpose a characteristic & therefore favourite legend.

When Naraian, the primeval and dateless sage of old, entered upon austerities in the most secret & desolate recesses of the Snowy Mountains, Indra, prince of the air, always hostile to asceticism, always distrustful of the philosophic & contemplative spirit, was alarmed for the balance of the world and the security of his own rule. He therefore sent the Opsaras to disturb the meditations of Naraian. Then upon the desolate Himalaya Spring set the beauty of his feet; the warm south wind breathed upon those inclement heights, blossoming trees grew in the eternal snow and the voice of the cuckoo was heard upon the mountain tops. It was amidst this vernal sweetness that the Opsaras came to Naraian; they were the loveliest of all the sisterhood who came, & subtlest & most alluring of feminine arts & enchantments was the way of their wooing; but Naraian, who is Vishnu the World Saviour when he comes in the guise of the ascetic, moved neither by the passion of love nor by the passion of anger, smiled in the large & indulgent mood of his world embracing nature and opening his thigh took from it a radiant and marvellous creature of whose beauty the loveliest Opsaras seemed but pale & broken reflections. Ashamed they veiled their faces & stole silently away from the snowy hermitage. But Naraian called this daughter of his creation Urvasie (she who lies in the thigh of the Supreme, the thigh being the seat of sensuousness) and gave her to Indra to be his most potent defence against the austerities of spiritual longing.

The legend is characteristic of the Hindu mythopoeic faculty both in its slight and unpretentious build and in the number of searching & suggestive thoughts with which it is packed. Indra is the universal cosmic energy limited in the terrestrial forces of conservation; like all active & conservative forces he distrusts the contemplative spirit of philosophy because it is disruptive and tends to cast thought & therefore life into solution towards the creation of fresh forms. Thus he is besieged by a double anxiety; on one side the spirits entrusted with the work of destruction & anarchy are ever endeavouring to seat themselves in the place of Indra, the high conserving force, on the other he dreads to be dethroned by some embodiment of the contemplative spirit, examining, analysing, synthetising new forms. His method of defence against the former is usually though by no means invariably open warfare, against the latter sensuous seduction. He tempts the mind of the philosopher to sacrifice that aloofness from ordinary sensuous life & its average delights on which his perfect effectiveness depends; or if he cannot succeed in this, to move him to an angry and abhorrent recoil from sensuousness which is equally fatal to complete philosophic efficiency. This then is the inwardness of the sending of the Opsaras by Indra. Naraian conquers the temptation, not by ignoring or repelling it, but by producing out of the sensuous in himself a lovelier sensuousness than any that can be brought to tempt him. Here is a peculiarity in the highest Indian conception of ascetism. The sage who delivers the world by his philosophy must not be a half nature; he must contain the whole world in himself. It is told that the great Shankaracharya in the midst of his triumphant religious activity had to turn aside and learn by personal experience the delights of sensuous life and the love of women, because the defect of this experience left him maimed for his philosophic task. The philosopher must be superior to sensuousness not because he is incapable of experiencing passion & delight, but because he has fathomed their utmost depth and measured their utmost reach, and far passed the stage of soul-evolution where they can satisfy.

And yet the work of the philosophic mind incidentally serves sensuous and material life by increasing its resources and the depth of its charm. For the power of the philosophic ideals which have profoundly affected humanity is not limited to the domain of the intellect but also affects, enlarges and strengthens man's aesthetic outlook upon the world. The sensuous world becomes fuller of beauty, richer in colours, shades and suggestions, more profound and attractive with each widening of the human ideal. It is Urvasie who sprang from the thigh of the withered hermit cold and not any of those original daughters of the inconstant waves who is the loveliest and most dangerous of the Opsaras.

Such then is Urvasie, Naraian born, the brightness of sunlight & the blush of the dawn, the multitudinous laughter of the sea, the glory of the skies and the leap of the lightning, all in brief that is bright, far-off, unseizable & compellingly attractive in this world; all too that is wonderful, sweet to the taste & intoxicating in human beauty, human life, the joy of human passion & emotion: all finally that seizes, masters & carries away in art, poetry, thought & knowledge, is involved in this one name.

Of these outward brilliances Kalidasa's conception of Urvasie is entirely void. His presentation of her is simply that of a beautiful and radiant woman deeply in love. Certainly the glories of her skiey residence, the far-off luminousness and the free breath of the winds are about her, but they are her atmosphere rather than part of herself. The essential idea of her is a natural, frank & charming womanliness; timidity, a quick temper, a harmless petulance and engaging childishness afterwards giving way to a matronly sedateness & bloom, swift, innocent & frank passion, warm affections as mother, sister & friend, speech always straight from the heart, the precise elements in fact that give their greatest charm to ideal girlhood & womanhood are the main tones that compose her picture. There is nothing here of the stately pace & formal dignity of the goddess, no cothurnus raising her above human stature, no mask petrifying the simple & natural play of the feelings, the smile in the eyes, the ready tears, the sweetness of the mouth, the lowered lashes, the quick and easy gesture full of spontaneous charm. If this is a nymph of heaven, one thinks, then heaven must be beautifully like the earth. Her terror & collapse in the episode of her abduction & rescue, where Chitraleqha manages pretty successfully to keep up her courage as a goddess should, is certainly not Opsaralike — Chitraleqha with sisterly impatience expresses her sense of that, "Fie, sweet! thou art no Opsara" — but it is nevertheless attractively human and seizes our sympathies for her from the outset. Still more engaging is her timidity. There is also a sensitiveness in her love, a quickness to take alarm & despond which makes her very human. If this is jealousy, it is a quick & generous jealousy having nothing in it of "jealous baseness", but rather born of a panic of timidity and an extreme diffidence & ignorance of the power of her own beauty. This detail is very carefully observed & emphasized as if Kalidasa wished to take especial pains to prevent even the most hidebound commentator from reading in her character any touch of the heavenly courtesan. The ostentatious splendours, the conscious allurements of the courtesan are not here, but rather a divine simplicity and white candour of soul. It is from an innate purity & openness that the frankness & impulsiveness of her love proceeds. Incapable of disguise, hastily open, even tremulously playful at times, she is easily dashed in her advances & quick to distrust her own merit. There are few more graceful touches in lighter love-drama than her hasty appearance, unconsciously invisible, before Pururavus, and her panic of dismay when he takes no notice of her. In the same scene, her half playful, half serious self-justification on embracing her lover and her immediate abashed silence at his retort, portray admirably the mixture of frank impulsiveness and shy timidity proper to her character. These are the little magic half-noticeable touches of which Kalidasian characterisation is mainly composed, the hundred significant trifles which Kalidasa's refined taste in life felt to be the essence of character in action. A shade of wilfulness, the occasional childlike petulance, the delighted abandonment of herself to her passion, which are part of her charm, proceed also from the same surface lightness & quickness of a deep & strong nature. With all this she can be very sweet and noble too, even dignified as in a few utterances of the Third Act, her reunion with Pururavus in the fourth and all through the fifth where she is wife and mother and while losing the girlishness, petulance & playfulness of the earlier scenes has greatly deepened her charm. I see nothing of the heavenly courtesan which some over-precise commentators insist on finding in her; within the four corners of the play, which is all Kalidasa allows us to consider, she is wholly delightful, innocent, even modest, at any rate not immodest. Certainly she is more frank and playful in her love than Shacountala or even Malavica could venture to be, but something must be allowed to a goddess and her demeanour is too much flavoured with timidity, her advances too easily dashed to give any disagreeable impression of forwardness. Urvasie's finest characteristic, however, is her sincerity in passion and affection. The poet has taken great pains to discharge her utterance of all appearance of splendour, ornament & superfluity; her simple, direct & earnest diction is at the opposite pole to the gorgeous imaginativeness of the Ilian. And while her manner of speech is always simple and ordinary, what she says is exactly the unstudied & obvious thing that a woman of no great parts, but natural and quick in her affections would spontaneously say under the circumstances; it is even surprisingly natural. For example when she sees Ayus fondled by Pururavus, "Who is this youth" she asks with the little inevitable undertone of half-jealousy "Himself my monarch binds his hair into a crest! Who should this be so highly favoured"; and then she notices Satyavatie & understands. But there is no poetical outburst of maternal joy & passion. "It is my Ayus! *How he has grown*!" That is all; & nothing could be better or truer. Yet for all the surface colourlessness there is a charm in everything Urvasie says, the charm of absolute sincerity & direct unaffected feeling. Her passion for Pururavus is wonderfully genuine and fine from her first cry of "O Titans! You did me kindness!" to her last of "O a sword is taken Out of my heart!" Whatever the mood its speech has always a tender force and reality. Her talk with Chitraleqha and the other Opsaras from the outburst "O sisters, sisters, take me to your bosoms" to her farewell "Chitraleqha, my sister! do not forget me", is instinct, when moved, with "a passion of sisterliness" and at other times, bright & limpid in its fair kindness & confidence. To her son she comes "with her whole rapt gaze Grown mother, the veiled bosom heaving towards him And wet with sacred milk." & her farewell to the Hermitess sets a model for the expression of genuine & tender friendship. Urvasie is doubtless not so noble & strong a portraiture as Shacountala, but she is inferior to no heroine of Sanscrit drama in beauty & sweetness of womanly nature.

In dramatic tone and build therefore this is an admirable creation, but there is so far no hint of the worldwide divineness of Urvasie, of the goddess within the woman. In direct allegory Kalidasa was too skilful an artist to deal, but we expect the larger conception of this beautiful and significant figure to enter into or at least colour the dramatic conception of the woman; some pomp of words, some greatness of gesture, some large divinity whether of speech or look to raise her above a mere nymph, however charming, into the goddess we know. Yet in rigidly excluding the grandiose or the coloured Kalidasa has shown, I think, his usual unerring dramatic and psychological tact. Dramatically, to have made Pururavus & Urvasie equally romantic in spirit & diction, to have clothed both in the external purple of poetry, would have been to offend the eye with unrelieved gorgeousness and converted the play from an interesting & skilfully woven drama into a confused splendour of lyrical dialogue. Psychologically, the divinity and universal charm of Urvasie would have been defaced rather than brought out by investing her with grandeur of feeling or a pomp of poetic ornament. Perfect beauty has in it a double aspect, its intrinsic self and the impression it makes on the vivid & receptive mind. In itself it is simple, unconscious & unadorned, most effective when it is most naked, ceasing to be these, it loses its perfection and a great part of its universal charm. The nude human figure in painting and sculpture, unadorned magic or strength of style & conception in poetry, clear, luminous & comprehensive thought in philosophy, these are what the pursuing human spirit feels to be ideal, highest, most worthy of itself. Drapery blurs the effulgence of the goddess, ornament distracts the spirit and disappoints it of its engrossed and undisturbed sense of possession. On the other hand the mind while most moved by what is simple and natural in its appeal, is romantic in its method of receiving the impression; becoming engrossed and steeped with the idea of it, it directs to it and surrounds it with all the fresh impressions that continually flow in on the consciousness, gathers from it colour, fire & passion, creates around it a host of splendid associations and clothes it in the pomp of its own passionate imagery. The first period of a literary race when its mind is yet virgin & has to create beauty is invariably simple and classical, the last period when its mind is saturated and full of past beauty is always romantic and aesthetic. The relations of Urvasie & Pururavus are true to this psychological principle. She herself is mere beauty and charm sufficient to itself and commanding delight and worship because she is herself, not because of any graces of expression, imagination or intellectual profundity. But the mind of Pururavus receiving her pure and perfect image steeps her in its own fire and colour, surrounding her with a halo of pomp and glory, which reveals himself while seeking to interpret her.

Minor Characters

Nothing more certainly distinguishes the dramatic artist from the poet who has trespassed into drama than the careful pain he devotes to his minor characters. To the artist nothing is small; he bestows as much of his art within the narrow limit of his small characters as within the wide compass of his greatest. Shakespeare lavishes life upon his minor characters, but in Shakespeare it is the result of an abounding creative energy; he makes living men, as God made the world, because he could not help it, because it was in his nature and must out. But Kalidasa's dramatic gift, always suave and keen, had not this godlike abundance; it is therefore well to note the persistence of this feature of high art in all his dramas. In the Urvasie the noble figure of Queen Aushinarie is the most striking evidence of his fine artistry, but even slight sketches like the Opsaras are seen upon close attention to be portrayed with a subtle & discriminating design; thought has been bestowed on each word they speak, an observable delicacy of various touch shows itself in each tone & gesture they employ. A number of shining figures crowded into a corner of the canvas, like in meaning, like in situation, like in nature, they seem to offer the very narrowest scope for differentiation; yet every face varies just a little from its sister, the diction of each tongue has its revealing individuality. The timid, warmhearted Rumbha, easily despondent, full of quick outbursts of eagerness and tenderness is other than the statelier Menaca with her royal gift of speech and her high confidence. Sahajunya is of an intenser, more silent, less imaginative, more practical type than either of these. It is she who gives Pururavus the information of the road which the ravisher has taken, and from that point onward amid all the anxious and tender chatter of her sisters she is silent until she has the practical fact of Pururavus' reappearance to seize upon. This she is again the first to descry and announce. Her utterance is brief, of great point & substance. From the few words she has uttered we unconsciously receive a deep impression of helpfulness, earnestness and strength; we know her voice and are ready [to] recognise it again in the Fourth Act. Her attitude there is characteristic; since help she cannot, she will not waste time over vain lamentation; Fate has divided the lovers, Fate will unite them again; so with a cheerful & noble word of consolation she turns to the immediate work in hand.

Chitraleqha, more fortunate than the other Opsaras in obtaining through three acts a large canvas as the favourite and comrade of Urvasie, suffers dramatically from her good fortune, for she must necessarily appear a little indistinct so near to the superior light of her companion. Indeed dramatic necessity demands subdued tones in her portraiture lest she should deflect attention from Urvasie where it is her task to attract it to her; she must be always the cloud's dim legion that prepares us to watch for the lightning. Richness of colour & prominence of line are therefore not permissible; yet in spite of these hampering conditions the poet has made her a sufficiently definite personality. Indeed her indulgent affection, her playful kindliness, her little outbreaks of loving impatience or sage advice, — the neglect of which she takes in excellent part — her continual smiling surrender to Urvasie's petulance & wilfulness and her whole half matron-like air of elder-sisterly protection, give her a very sensible charm and attractiveness; there is a true nymphlike & divine grace, tact & felicity in all that she says & does. Outside the group of Opsaras the Hermitess Satyavatie is a slighter but equally attractive figure, venerable, kind, a little impersonal owing to the self-restraint which is her vocation, but with glimpses through it of a fine motherliness and friendliness. The perpetual grace of humanness, which is so eminently Kalidasian, forming the atmosphere of all his plays, seems to deepen with a peculiar beauty around his ascetics, Kunwa, Satyavatie, the learned & unfortunate lady of the Malavica. The "little rogue of a tiring-woman" Nipounica, sly & smoothtongued, though with no real harm in her beyond a delight in her own slyness and a fine sense of exhilaration in the midst of a family row, pleasantly brings up the rear of these slighter feminine personalities. The masculine sketches are drawn in more unobtrusive outlines and, after Kalidasa's manner, less individualized than his women. The Charioteer & the Huntsmen are indeed hardly distinct figures; they have but a few lines to utter between them and are only remarkable for the shadow of the purple which continual association with Pururavus has cast over their manner of speech. The Chamberlain again, fine as he is in his staid melancholy, his aged fidelity, his worn-out and decrepit venerableness and that continual suggestion of the sorrowfulness of grey hairs, is still mainly the fine Kalidasian version of a conventional dramatic figure. The one touch that gives him a personal humanity is the sad resignation of his "It is your will, Sire" when Pururavus, about to depart to asceticism in the forests, commands the investiture of his son. For it is the last & crowning misfortune that the weary old man must bear; the master over whose youth & greatness he has watched, for whose sake he serves in his old age, with the events of whose reign all the memories of his life are bound up, is about to depart and a youthful stranger will sit in his place. With that change all meaning must go out of the old man's existence; but with a pathetic fidelity of resignation he goes out to do his master's last bidding uttering his daily formula, — how changed in its newly acquired pathos from the old pompous formality "It is your will, Sire." Manavaca & Ayus need a larger mention, yet they are less interesting in themselves than for their place, one in the history of Kalidasa's artistic development, the other among the finest evidences of his delicacy in portraiture & the scrupulous economy, almost miserliness, with which he extracts its utmost artistic utility, possibility, value from each detail of his drama.

The age of childhood, its charm and sportive grace and candour, seems to have had a peculiar charm for Kalidasa's imagination; there is an exquisite light and freshness of morning and dew about his children; an added felicity of touch, of easy and radiant truth in his dramatic presentation. Vasuluxmie in the Malavica does not even appear on the stage, yet in that urbane & gracious work there is nothing more charming than her two fateful irruptions into the action of the play. They bring up a picture of the laughing, lighthearted and innocent child, which remains with us as vividly as the most carefully-drawn character in the piece. The scene of the child playing with the lion's cub in the Shacountala has the same inevitable charm; ninety-one poets out of a hundred would have hopelessly bungled it, but in Kalidasa's hands it becomes so admirably lifelike and spontaneous that it seems as natural as if the child were playing with a kitten. Kalidasa's marvellous modesty of dramatic effect and power of reproducing ordinary hardly observable speech, gesture and action magicalising but not falsifying them saves him from that embarrassment which most poets feel in dealing dramatically with children. Even Shakespeare disappoints us. This great poet with his rich & complex mind usually finds it difficult to attune himself again to the simplicity, irresponsibility & naive charm of childhood.

Arthur, whom the Shakespeare-worshipper would have us regard as a masterpiece, is no real child; he is too *voulu*, too eloquent, too much dressed up for pathos and too conscious of the fine sentimental pose he strikes. Children do pose & children do sentimentalise, but they are perfectly naive and unconscious about it; they pose with sincerity, they sentimentalise with a sort of passionate simplicity, indeed an earnest businesslikeness which is so sincere that it does not even require an audience. The greatest minds have their limitations and Shakespeare's overabounding wit shut him out from two Paradises, the mind of a child and the heart of a mother. Constance, the pathetic mother, is a fitting pendant to Arthur, the pathetic child, as insincere and falsely drawn a portraiture, as obviously dressed up for the part. Indeed throughout the meagre and mostly unsympathetic list of mothers in Shakespeare's otherwise various & splendid gallery there is not even one in whose speech there is the throbbing of a mother's heart; the sacred beauty of maternity is touched upon in a phrase or two; but from Shakespeare we expect something more, some perfect & passionate enshrining of the most engrossing & selfless of human affections. And to this there is not even an approach. In this one respect the Indian poet, perhaps from the superior depth and keenness of the domestic feelings peculiar to his nation, has outstripped his greater English compeer.

Kalidasa like Shakespeare seems to have realised the paternal instinct of tenderness far more strongly than the maternal; his works both dramatic and epic give us many powerful & emotional expressions of the love of father & child to which there are few corresponding outbursts of maternal feeling. Valmekie's Cowshalya has no parallel in Kalidasa. Yet he expresses the true sentiment of motherhood with sweetness & truth if not with passion.

Ayus & Urvasie in this play were certainly not intended for the dramatic picture of mother & child; this mother has abandoned her child to the care of strangers; this child is new to the faces of his parents. Such a situation might easily have been made harsh and unsympathetic but for the fine dramatic tact of the poet which has purified it from everything that might repel and smoothed away all the angles of the incident. But here the circumstances excuse if not justify Urvasie. Acting under hard conditions, she has chosen the lesser of two evils; for by keeping Ayus, she would have lost both her child and Pururavus; by delivering him into wise and tender hands she has insured his welfare & for her part only anticipated the long parting which the rule of education in ancient India demanded from parents as their sacrifice to the social ideal. Knowing that the child was in good hands she solaces herself with the love of her husband, but it is not from maternal insensibility that she bears quietly the starvation of the mother within her. When he returns to her, there is a wonderful subdued intensity characteristic of her simple & fine nature in the force with which that suppressed passion awakes to life. She approaches her son, wordless, but her veiled bosom heaves towards him and is "wet with sacred milk"; in her joy over him she forgets even that impending separation from the husband to avert which she has sacrificed the embrace of his infancy. It is this circumstance, not any words, that testifies to the depth of her maternal feeling; her character forbids her to express it in splendours of poetic emotion such as well spontaneously from the heart of Pururavus. A look, a few ordinary words are all; if it were not for these & the observation of others, we should have to live with her daily before we could realise the depth of feeling behind her silence.

Ayus himself is an admirable bit of dramatic craftsmanship. There is a certain critical age when the growing boy is a child on one side of his nature and a young man on the other, and of all psychological states such periods of transitional unstable equilibrium are the most difficult to render dramatically without making the character either a confused blur or an illjoined piece of carpenter's work. Here Kalidasa excels. He has the ready tact of speech gradations, the power of simple & telling slightness that can alone meet the difficulty. By an unlaboured and inevitable device the necessary materials are provided. The boy comes straight from the wild green & ascetic forest into the luxurious splendours of an Oriental court and the presence of a father and mother whom he has never seen; a more trying situation could not easily be imagined; he inevitably becomes self-conscious, embarrassed, burdened with the necessity of maintaining himself against the oppressions of his surroundings. He attempts therefore to disguise his youthful nervousness behind the usual shield of an overdone & formal dignity, a half unconscious pompousness and an air of playing the man. We are even aware of a slight touch of precocity not unbecoming in one who has been put through the "complete education of a prince" by the mightiest scholar and sage of his time. Confronted with all these new faces making claims upon him to which his past consciousness is an alien, the whole adult side of his nature turns uppermost. But fortunately for our comprehension of his true state of mind, something of the green forest which is his home has come with him in the person of his fostermother, Satyavatie. With her he feels as a child may feel with his mother. When he turns to her or speaks to her, he is again and instinctively in manner, utterance and action the child who ran by her side clutching the skirts of her dress in the free woodland. He speaks like a child, thinks like a child, acts docilely at her bidding like a child. Nothing could be more finely artistic in execution or more charmingly faithful to nature in its conception.

Manavaca on the other hand is an element of weakness rather than of strength. I have already spoken of the progressive attenuation of the traditional buffoon part which keeps pace with Kalidasa's dramatic development. Gautama in the Malavica is a complete and living personality who has much to say to the action of the plot; witty, mischievous, mendacious & irresponsible he adds to the interest of the play even independently of this functional importance. But in the Urvasie to have made the main action of the plot turn in any way on the buffoon would have been incongruous with the high romantic beauty of the drama and therefore a serious dramatic error. The function of Manavaca is accordingly reduced to that of an interlocutor; he is there because Pururavus must have somebody to confide in & talk with, otherwise his only dramatic purpose is to give rise by his carelessness to the episode of Aushinarie's jealousy & self-subdual. Nevertheless his presence affects the composite tone of the picture. He is other than the buffoons of the Malavica & Shacountala, far more coarse in the grain, far less talented & highspirited than Gautama, yet not a mere stupid block like [Mandhavya]. He has along with the stock characteristics of gluttony, ugliness & cowardice, an occasional coarse humour, infertile & broad, and even a real gift of commonsense and rather cynical practicality, to say nothing of that shadow of the purple flung across the speech of all those who associate habitually with Pururavus; he is at the same time low in mind, unable to understand characters higher than his own. His best virtue is perhaps his absence of all pretensions & readiness to make a gibe of himself. Such a figure necessarily tends to set off by its drab colour & squat dimensions the lyric idealism of Pururavus, the radiant charm of Urvasie & the pale loftiness of the Queen. But it is by his place in the picture and not by what he is in himself that he justifies his existence. He does not attract or interest, indeed he at times only just escapes being tiresome. At the same time he lives.

Among all these minor figures who group themselves around the two protagonists and are of purely accessory interest there is one who stands out and compels the eye both by her nobler proportions and her independent personality. Queen Aushinarie has no real claim by any essentiality in her actions to the large space she occupies in the play; her jealousy does not retard and her renunciation sanctifies rather than assists the course of Pururavus' love for Urvasie. The whole episode in which she figures fits more loosely into the architecture of the piece than can be exampled elsewhere in Kalidasa's dramatic workmanship. The interest of her personality justifies the insertion of the episode rather than the episode that justifies the not inconsiderable space devoted to her. The motif of her appearance is the same conventional element of wifely rivalry, the jealousy of the rose-in-bloom against the rose-in-bud that has formed the whole groundwork of the Malavica. There the groundwork, here its interest is brief and episodical. And yet none of the more elaborated figures in the earlier play, not even Dharinie herself, is as fine and deep a conception as the wife of Pururavus. Princess of Kashie and daughter of the Ushenors, acknowledged by her rival to deserve by right of her noble majesty of fairness "the style of Goddess and of Empress," we feel that she has a right to resent the preference to her even of an Opsara from heaven and the completeness of Pururavus' absorption in Urvasie gives a tragic significance to her loss which is not involved in the lighter loves & jealousies of Videsha. The character is more profoundly & boldly conceived. The passion of her love strikes deeper than the mere heyday of youth and beauty and the senses in Iravatie as the noble sadness of her self-renunciation moves more powerfully than the kind & gentle wifeliness of Queen Dharinie. And in the manner of her delineation there is more incisiveness and restraint with a nobler economy of touch. The rush of her jealousy comes with less of a storm than Iravatie's but it has a fierier & keener edge and it is felt to be the disguise of a deep and mighty love. The passion of that love leaps out in the bitter irony of her self-accusal

Not yours the guilt, my lord. I am in fault
Who force my hated and unwelcome face
Upon you.

and again when in the very height of her legitimate resentment she has the sure consciousness of her after-repentance.

And yet the terror
Of the remorse I know that I shall feel
If I spurn his kindness, frightens me.

Anger for the time sweeps her away, but we are prepared for her repentance and sacrifice in the next act. Even in her anger she has been imperially strong & restrained and much of the poetic force of her renunciation comes from the perfect sweetness, dignity & self-control with which she acts in that scene. The emotion of self-sacrificing love breaks out only once at the half sneering reproach of the buffoon

Dull fool!
I with the death of my own happiness
Would give my husband ease. From this consider
How dearly I love him.

Putting gently but sorrowfully away from her the King's half-sincere protestations of abiding love, she goes out of the drama, a pure, devoted & noble nature, clad in gracious white "and sylvanly adorned with flowers, her raven tresses spangled with young green Of sacred grass"; but the fragrance of her flowers of sacrifice and the mild beauty of the moonlight remain behind her. She does not reappear unless it is in the haste of Urvasie to bring her recovered child to his "elder mother". This haste with its implied fulness of gratitude & affection is one of Kalidasa's careful side touches telling us better than words that in spirit & letter she has fulfilled utterly the vow she made on the moonlit terrace under seal of

The divine wife & husband, Rohinnie
And Mrigolanchon named the spotted moon.

The deepening of moral perception, the increase in power & pathos, the greater largeness of drawing and finer emotional strength and restraint show the advance Kalidasa has made in dramatic characterisation. Grace, sweetness, truth to life and character, perfect & delicate workmanship, all that reveals the presence of the artist were his before; but the Urvasie reveals a riper & larger genius widening its scope, raising mightier vans before yet it take its last high and surpassing flight.

The Spirit of the Times

The life & personality of Kalidasa, the epoch in which he lived and wrote, the development of his poetical genius as evidenced by the order of his works, are all lost in a thick cloud of uncertainty and oblivion. It was once thought an established fact that he lived & wrote in the 6th century at the court of Harsha Vikramaditya, the Conqueror of the Scythians. That position is now much assailed, and some would place him in the third or fourth century; others see ground to follow popular tradition in making him a contemporary of Virgil, if not of Lucretius.

The exact date matters little. It is enough that we find in Kalidasa's poetry the richest bloom and perfect expression of the long classical afternoon of Indian civilisation. The soul of an age is mirrored in this single mind. It was an age when the Indian world after seeking God through the spirit and through action turned to seek Him through the activity of the senses, an age therefore of infinite life, colour and splendour, an age of brilliant painting and architecture, wide learning, complex culture, developing sciences; an age of great empires and luxurious courts and cities; an age, above all, in which the physical beauty and grace of woman dominated the minds and imaginations of men.

The spirit of the times pulses through all Kalidasa's poetry. His pages are often ablaze with its light & colour, often pregnant, sometimes indeed overweighted with its rich and manifold learning, its keen pleasure in every phase and aspect of life fills them with a various vividness and infinite richness of matter. Language & verse thrill with the rustling of woman's raiment, the heavy scent of her cosmetics, the tinkling and lustre of her ornaments; they are sinuous with the swaying grace of her motion or subtle with the delicate charm of her ways and words; the beauty & pleasure of her body possesses & besieges the poet's imagination. And behind the luxurious ease and sensuousness of court life we hear the clash of arms and glimpse the great & energetic motions of statesmanship and diplomacy. The variety of his genius specially fits Kalidasa for the interpretation of a rich & complex national life. From pages heavy with the obsession of the senses, the delight of the eye and the lust of the flesh we turn to others sweet and gracious with the virgin purity of the woodlands; the same poem which gives us a glowing picture of the luxurious voluptuousness of courts gives us also the sternest philosophy and the most vigorous expression of the noble, aspiring morality proper to an active and heroic age. His wonderful visualising power turns whole cantos into a series of almost physically vivid pictures. All his senses are on the alert, his ear for music and the sweetness of words and laughter, thunder, the cries of birds; his sense of smell for the scent of flowers, incense, the perfumes in women's attire, his sense of touch for every tactual pleasure, his mind for all subtlety of knowledge and all possible delicacies, richnesses, grandeurs in the world of thought. He will miss nothing; lose no joy of sense or intellect, throw away no chance of feeling himself alive.

And he has the touch of the perfect artist, turning all he handles to gold. Among his achievements we number the most exquisite, tender and delicately lovely of romantic dramas; the most varied and splendid panorama of human life; the noblest & most grandiose epic of our classical literature; and its one matchless poem of passionate love and descriptive beauty.

In Europe the Shacountala is the one poem of Kalidasa universally known and appreciated. In India the Cloud has gone even nearer home to the national imagination. For this there is good reason. It is, essentially and above all, the poem of India, the poem of the country, its soil and its scenes, its thoughts & its atmosphere. No one who has not lived the life of India, till it has become part of his breathing and woven in with every thread of his imagination, can fully appreciate the poem. If one does not know the charm of its hills, the scent of its flowers, the beauty of its skies, [the] flowing sacredness of its rivers with all the phases & emotions of an Indian river's life, if one cannot distinguish

& thrill to the touch of its various winds, if one cannot clothe its local places with ancient historic & mythical association or people them with the strange host of beautiful & weird figures & faces which the imagination of its people has created, if one does not recreate for himself the ancient splendours of its cities, the sense of peace & infinity in its temples & hermitages and the simple sweetness of its rural life, for him the Meghaduta offers only its shell. But all these, everything that is redolent of India, the visible, material, sensuous India has been fused and poured into one perfect mould by the genius of this supreme artist.

And then as if more utterly to ensnare the imagination of his race, after showing them the beautiful scenes, sights, sounds, scents, the sacred & cherished places, the historic cities of their country as they are — or alas as they were — he lifts these cherished things into a magic world, bathes them in an immortal beauty. Ullaca, the city without death, is but Kalidasa's beloved Ujjaini taken up into the clouds & transformed into a seat of ideal bliss & loveliness. In the same moment he strikes straight home at one of the most deepseated feelings in human nature, its repining at the shortness of life & the more tragic shortness of youth, and imaginative dream of an eternal beauty, youth & joy. These he satisfies and turns from a source of unrest into a new source of pleasure & joy, showing himself the great poet as well as the delicate artist.

The human interest which gives the breath of life to the poem, is exquisitely treated. A faery attendant of Cuvere, God of Wealth, banished for a year from his home & wife sends his imagination travelling on the wings of the northward-bound cloud over the sacred places, the great cities & rivers of India to the snowbound Himaloy and the homes of the Gods. There his mind sees his wife, breathes to her all its sorrow & longing and prays for an answering message. The love described may not be on the highest altitudes, but it is utterly real & human, full of enduring warmth, tenderness & passion, of strife & joy, tears & kisses, the daily food of love.

On Translating Kalidasa

Since the different tribes of the human Babel began to study each other's literatures, the problem of poetical translation has constantly defied the earnest experimenter. There have been brilliant versions, successful falsifications, honest renderings, but some few lyrics apart a successful translation there has not been. Yet it cannot be that a form of effort so earnestly & persistently pursued and so necessary to the perfection of culture and advance of civilisation, is the vain pursuit of a chimera. Nothing which mankind earnestly attempts is impossible, not even the conversion of copper into gold or the discovery of the elixir of life or the power of aerial motion; but so long as experiment proceeds on mistaken lines, based on a mistaken conception of the very elements of the problem, it must necessarily fail. Man may go on fashioning wings for himself for ever but they will never lift him into the empyrean: the essence of the problem is to conquer the attraction of the earth which cannot be done by any material means. Poetical translation was long dominated by the superstition that the visible word is the chief factor in language and the unit which must be seized on as a basis in rendering; the result is seen in so-called translations which reproduce the sense of the original faultlessly & yet put us into an atmosphere which we at once recognize to be quite alien to the atmosphere of the original; we say then that the rendering is a faithful one or a success of esteem or a makeshift or a caput mortuum according to the nature of our predilections and the measure of our urbanity. The nineteenth century has been the first to recognize generally that there is a spirit behind the word & dominating the word which eludes the "faithful" translator and that it is more important to get at the spirit of a poet than his exact sense. But after its manner it has contented itself with the generalisation and not attempted to discover the lines on which the generalisation must be crystallised into practice, its extent & its limitations. Every translator has been a law to himself; and the result is anarchic confusion. As the sole tangible benefit there has been discovered a new art not yet perfected of translation into prose poetry. Such translation has many advantages; it allows the translator to avail himself of manifold delicacies of rhythm without undergoing the labour of verse formation and to compromise with the orthodox superstition by rendering the word unit yet with some show of preserving the original flavour. But even in the best of these translations it is little more than a beautiful show. Poetry can only be translated by poetry and verse forms by verse forms. It remains to approach the task of translation in a less haphazard spirit, to realise our essential aim, to define exactly what elements in poetry demand rendering, how far & by what law of equivalent values each may be rendered and if all cannot be reproduced, which of them may in each particular case be sacrificed without injuring the essential worth of the translation. Most of the translations of Kalidasa here offered to the public have been written after the translator had arrived at such a definite account with himself and in conscientious conformity to its results. Others done while he yet saw his goal no more than dimly and was blindly working his way to the final solution, may not be so satisfactory. I do not pretend that I have myself arrived at the right method; but I am certain that reasoned & thoughtful attempts of this sort can alone lead to it. Now that nations are turning away from the study of the great classical languages to physical & practical science and resorting even to modern languages, if for literature at all then for contemporary literature, it is imperative that the ennobling influences spiritual, romantic & imaginative of the old tongues should be popularised in modern speech; otherwise the modern world, vain of its fancied superiority & limiting itself more & more to its own type of ideas with no opportunity of saving immersions in the past & recreative destructions of the present, will soon petrify & perish in the mould of a rigid realism & materialism. Among their influences the beauty & power of their secular & religious poetry is perhaps the most potent & formative.

The choice of meter is the first & most pregnant question that meets a translator. With the growth of Alexandrianism and the diffusion of undigested learning, more & more frequent attempts are being made to reproduce in poetical versions the formal metre of the original. Such attempts rest on a fundamental misconception of the bases of poetry. In poetry as in all other phenomena it is spirit that is at work and form is merely the outward expression & instrument of the spirit. So far is this true that form itself only exists as a manifestation of spirit and has no independent being. When we speak of the Homeric hexameter, we are speaking of a certain balance [of] spiritual force called by us Homer working through emotion into the material shape of a fixed mould of rhythmical sound which obeys both in its limiting sameness & in its variations the law of the spirit within.

The mere quantities are but the most mechanical & outward part of metre. A fanciful mind might draw a parallel between the elements of man & the elements of metre. Just as in man there is the outward food-plasm and within it the vital or sensational man conditioned by & conditioning the food-plasm & within the vital man the emotional or impressional man similarly related and again within that the intellectual man governing the others and again within that the delight of the spirit in its reasoning existence & within that delight like the moon within its halo the Spirit who is Lord of all these, the sitter in the chariot & the master of its driving, so in metre there is the quantitative or accentual arrangement which is its body, & within that body conditioning & conditioned by it the arrangement of pauses & sounds, such as assonance, alliteration, composition of related & varying letters, and again within it conditioning & conditioned by this sensational element & through it the mechanical element is the pure emotional movement of the verse and again within these understanding and guiding all three, bringing the element of restraint, management, subordination to a superior law of harmony, is the intellectual element, the driver of the chariot of sound; within this again is the poetic delight in the creation of harmonious sound, the august & disinterested pleasure of the really great poet which has nothing in it of frenzy or rather has the exultation & increased strength of frenzy without its loss of self-control; and within this even is the spirit, that unanalysable thing behind metre, style & diction which makes us feel "This is Homer, this is Shakespeare, this is Dante."

[All these are essential before really great verse can be produced; everyone knows that verse may scan well enough & yet be very poor verse; there may beyond this be skilful placings of pause & combinations of sound as in Tennyson's blank verse, but the result is merely artificially elegant & skilful technique; if emotion movement is super-added, the result is melody, lyric sweetness or elegiac grace or flowing & sensuous beauty, as in Shelley, Keats, Gray, but the poet is not yet a master of great harmonies; for this intellect is necessary, a great mind seizing, manipulating & moulding all these by some higher law of harmony, the law of its own spirit. But such management is not possible without the august poetical delight of which I have spoken, and that again is but the outflow of the mighty spirit within, its sense of life & power & its pleasure in the use of that power with no ulterior motive beyond its own delight.][1]

But just as the body of a man is also soul, has in each of its cells a separate portion of spirit, so it is with the mechanical form of a verse. The importance of metre arises from the fact that different arrangements of sound have different spiritual and emotional values, tend to produce that is to say by virtue of the fixed succession of sounds a fixed spiritual atmosphere & a given type of emotional exaltation & the mere creative power of sound though a material thing is yet near to spirit, is very great; great on the material & ascending in force through the moral & intellectual, culminating on the emotional plane. It is a factor of the first importance in music & poetry. In these different arrangements of syllabic sound metre forms the most important, at least the most tangible element. Every poet who has sounded his own consciousness must be aware that management of metre is the gate of his inspiration and the law of his success. There is a double process, his state of mind and spirit suggesting its own syllabic measure, and the metre again confirming, prolonging and recreating the original state of mind and spirit. Inspiration itself seems hardly so much a matter of ideas or feeling as of rhythm. Even when the ideas or the feelings are active, they will not usually run into the right form, the words will not take their right places, the syllables will not fall into a natural harmony. But if one has or succeeds in awaking the right metrical mood, if the metrical form instead of being deliberately created, creates itself or *becomes*, a magical felicity of thought, diction & harmony attends it & seems even to be created by it. Ideas & words come rapidly & almost as rapidly take their right places as in a well ordered assembly where everyone knows his seat. When the metre comes right, everything else comes right; when the metre has to be created with effort, everything else has to be done with effort, and the result has to be worked on over & over again before it satisfies.

---

[1] *Paragraph bracketed in the manuscript. Written at the end of the piece, it was apparently intended for insertion here. — Ed.*

This supreme importance of the metrical form might seem at first sight to justify the transplanters of metre. For if it be the aim of good translation to reproduce not merely the mechanical meanings of words, the corresponding verbal counters used in the rough & ready business of interlingual commerce, but to create the same spiritual, emotional & aesthetic effect as the original, the first condition is obviously to identify our spiritual condition, as far as may be, with that of the poet at the time when he wrote & then to embody the emotion in verse. This cannot be done without finding a metre which shall have the same spiritual and emotional value as the metre of the original. Even when one has been found, there will naturally be no success unless the mind of the translator has sufficient kinship, sufficient points of spiritual & emotional contact and a sufficient basis of common poetical powers not only to enter into but to render the spiritual temperament & the mood of that temperament, of which his text was the expression; hence a good poetical translation is the rarest thing in the world. Conversely even if all these requisites exist, they will not succeed to the full without the discovery of the right metre. Is the right metre then the metre of the original? Must an adequate version of Homer, a real *translation*, be couched in the hexameter? At first sight it would seem so. But the issue is here complicated by the hard fact that the same arrangement of quantities or of accents has very seldom the same spiritual & emotional value in two different languages. The hexameter in English, however skilfully managed, has not the same value as the Homeric, the English alexandrine does not render the French; terza rima in Latinised Saxon sounds entirely different from the noble movement of the Divina Commedia, the stiff German blank verse of Goethe & Schiller is not the golden Shakespearian harmony. It is not only that there are mechanical differences, a strongly accentuated language hopelessly varying from those which distribute accent evenly, or a language of ultimate accent like French from one of penultimate accent like Italian or initial accent like English, or one which courts elision from one which shuns it, a million grammatical & syllabic details besides, lead to fundamental differences of sound-notation. Beyond & beneath these outward differences is the essential soul of the language from which they arise, and which in its turn depends mainly upon the ethnological type always different in different countries because the mixture of different root races in two types even when they seem nearly related is never the same. The Swedish type for instance which is largely the same as the Norwegian is yet largely different, while the Danish generally classed in the same Scandinavian group differs radically from both. This is that curse of Babel, after all quite as much a blessing as a curse, which weighs upon no one so heavily as on the conscientious translator of poetry; for the prose translator being more concerned to render the precise idea than emotional effects and the subtle spiritual aura of poetry, treads an immeasurably smoother & more straightforward path. For some metres at least it seems impossible to find adequate equivalents in other languages. Why has there never been a real rendering of Homer in English? It is not the whole truth to say that no modern can put himself back imaginatively into the half-savage Homeric period; a mind with a sufficient basis of primitive sympathies & sufficient power of imaginative self-control to subdue for a time the modern in him may conceivably be found. But the main, the insuperable obstacle is that no one has ever found or been able to create an English metre with the same spiritual & emotional equivalent as Homer's marvellous hexameters.

That transmetrisation is a false method, is therefore clear. The translator's only resource is to steep himself in the original, quelling that in him which conflicts with its spirit, and remain on the watch for the proper metrical mood in himself. Sometimes the right metre will come to him, sometimes it will not. In the latter case effort in this direction will not have been entirely wasted; for spirit, when one gives it a chance, is always stronger than matter & he will be able to impose something of the desired spiritual atmosphere even upon an unsuitable metrical form. But if he seize on the right metre, he has every chance, supposing him poetically empowered, of creating a translation which shall not only be classical, but shall be *the* translation. Wilful choice of metre is always fatal. William Morris' Homeric translation failed hopelessly partly because of his affected "Anglosaxon" diction, but still more because he chose to apply a metre good enough possibly for the Volsungasaga to the rendering of a far more mighty & complex spirit. On the other hand Fitzgerald might have produced a very beautiful version in English had he chosen for his Rubaiyat some ordinary English metre, but his unique success was his reward for discovering the true equivalent of the quatrain in English. One need only imagine to oneself the difference if Fitzgerald had chosen the ordinary English quatrain instead of the rhyme system of his original. His Rubaiyat in spite of the serious defect of unfaithfulness will remain the final version of Omar in English, not to be superseded by more faithful renderings, excluding therefore the contingency of a superior poetical genius employing the same metre for a fuller & closer translation.

In Kalidasa another very serious difficulty over & beyond the usual pitfalls meets the unhappy translator. Few great Sanscrit poems employ the same metre throughout. In the dramas where metrical form is only used when the thought, image or emotion rises above the ordinary level, the poet employs whatever metre he thinks suitable to the mood he is in. In English however such a method would result in opera rather than in drama. I have therefore thought it best, taking into consideration the poetical feeling & harmonious flow of Kalidasa's prose, to use blank verse throughout varying its pitch according as the original form is metrical or prose & the emotion or imagery more or less exalted. In epic work the licence of metrical variation is not quite so great; yet there are several metres considered apt to epic narrative & Kalidasa varies them without scruple in different cantos, sometimes even in the same canto. If blank verse be, as I believe it is, a fair equivalent for the anustubh, the ordinary epic metre, how shall one find others which shall correspond as well to the "Indra's thunderbolt sloka", the "lesser Indra's thunderbolt sloka", the "gambolling of the tiger sloka" and all those other wonderful & grandiose rhythmic structures with fascinating names of which Kalidasa is so mighty a master? Nor would such variation be tolerated by English canons of taste. In the epic & drama the translator is driven to a compromise and therefore to that extent a failure; he may infuse good poems or plays reproducing the architecture & idea-sense of Kalidasa with something of his spirit; but it is a version & not a translation. It is only when he comes to the Cloud Messenger that he is free of this difficulty; for the Cloud Messenger is written throughout in a single & consistent stanza. This Mandakranta or "gently stepping" stanza is entirely quantitative and too complicated to be rendered into any corresponding accentual form. The arrangement of metrical divisions is as follows: spondee-long, dactyl, tribrach, two spondee-shorts, spondee; four lines of this build make up the stanza. Thus

— — — — ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑⏑ — —⏑ — — ⏑ — —
śabdāyan|te madhu|ramani|laiḥ kīca|kāḥ pūrya|māṇāḥ |
— — — — ⏑⏑⏑⏑⏑ — —⏑ — — ⏑ — —
saṁsaktā|bhis tripu|ravija|yo gīya|te kinna|rībhiḥ, |

– – – – ◡◡◡◡◡ – – ◡ – – ◡ – –
nirhrādas|te mura|ja iva | cet kanda|reṣu dhva|niḥ syāt |
– –– – ◡ ◡ ◡◡◡ – – ◡ – – ◡ – –
saṅgītār|tho nanu | paśupa|tes tatra | bhāvī sa|magraḥ. |

In casting about for a metre I was only certain of one thing that neither blank verse nor the royal quatrain would serve my purpose; the one has not the necessary basis of recurring harmonies; in the other the recurrence is too rigid, sharply defined & unvarying to represent the eternal swell and surge of Kalidasa's stanza. Fortunately by an inspiration, & without deliberate choice, Kalidasa's lines as I began turning them flowed or slipped into the form of triple rhyme and that necessarily suggested the terza rima. This metre, as I have treated it, seems to me to reproduce with as much accuracy as the difference between the languages allows, the spiritual & emotional atmosphere of the Cloud Messenger. The terza rima in English lends itself naturally to the principle of variation in recurrence, which imparts so singular a charm to this poem, recurrence in especial of certain words, images, assonances, harmonies, but recurrence always with a difference so as to keep one note sounding through the whole performance underneath its various harmony. In terza rima the triple rhyme immensely helps this effect, for it allows of the same common rhymes recurring but usually with a difference in one or more of their company.

It is a common opinion that terza rima does not suit the English language and cannot therefore be naturalised, that it must always remain an exotic. This seems to me a fallacy. Any metre capable of accentual representation in harmony with the accentual law of the English language, can be naturalised in English. If it has not yet been done, we must attribute it to some initial error of conception. Byron & Shelley failed because they wanted to create the same effect with this instrument as Dante had done; but terza rima in English can never have the same effect as in Italian. In the one it is a metre of woven harmonies suitable to noble & intellectual narrative; in the other it can only be a metre of woven melodies suitable to beautiful description or elegiac sweetness. To occasional magnificences or sublimities it lends itself admirably, but I should doubt whether it could even in the strongest hands sustain the burden of a long & noble epic of the soul & mind like the Divina Commedia. But it is not true that it cannot be made in English a perfectly natural, effective & musical form. It is certainly surprising that Shelley with his instinct for melody, did not perceive the conditions of the problem. His lyric metres & within certain limitations his blank verse are always fine, so fine that if the matter & manner were equal to the melody, he would have been one of the few great poets instead of one of the many who have just missed being great. But his Triumph of Life is a metrical failure. We feel that the poet is aiming at a metrical effect which he has not accomplished.

The second question, but a far simpler one, is the use of rhyme. It may be objected that as in the Sanscrit there is no rhyme, the introduction of this element into the English version would disturb the closeness of the spiritual equivalent by the intrusion of a foreign ornament. But this is to argue from a quantitative to an accentual language, which is always a mistake. There are certain effects easily created within the rich quantitative variety of ancient languages, of which an equivalent in English can only be found by the aid of rhyme. No competent critic would declare Tennyson's absurd experiment in Boadicea an equivalent to the rushing, stumbling & leaping metre of the Attis with its singular & rare effects. A proper equivalent would only be found in some rhymed system and preferably I should fancy in some system of unusually related but intricate & closely recurring rhymes. Swinburne might have done it; for Swinburne's work, though with few exceptions poor work as poetry, is a marvellous repertory of successful metrical experiments. I have already indicated the appropriateness of the triple rhyme system of the terza rima to the Cloud Messenger. English is certainly not a language of easy rhyming like the southern tongues of Europe; but given in the poet a copious command of words and a natural swing and felicity, *laeta* rather than *curiosa*, it is amply enough provided for any ordinary call upon its resources. There are however two critical superstitions which seriously interfere with the naturalness & ease rhymed poetry demands, the superstition of the perfect rhyme and the superstition of the original rhyme. It is no objection to a rhyme that it is imperfect. There is nothing occult or cryptic in rhyme, no divine law compelling us to assimilate two rhymed endings to the very letter such as the law of the Védic chant by which a single letter mispronounced sterilizes the mantra. Rhyme is a convenience and an ornament intended to serve certain artistic purposes, to create certain sound-effects, and if the effect of a perfect rhyme is beautiful, melodious and satisfying, an imperfect rhyme has sometimes its own finer effect far more subtle, haunting and suggestive; by limiting the satisfaction of the ear, it sets a new chord vibrating in the soul. A poem with an excessive proportion of imperfect rhymes is unsatisfactory, because it would not satisfy the natural human craving for regularity & order; but the slavish use of perfect rhymes only would be still more inartistic because it would not satisfy the natural human craving for liberty & variety. In this respect and in a hundred others the disabilities of the English language have been its blessings; the artistic labour & the opportunity for calling a subtler harmony out of discord have given its best poetical literature a force & power quite out of proportion to the natural abilities of the race. There are of course limits to every departure from rigidity but the degree of imperfection admissible in a rhyme is very great so long as it does not evolve harshness or vulgarism. Mrs Browning's rhymes are bad in this respect, but why? Because "tyrants" & "silence" is no rhyme at all, while "candles" & "angels" involves a hideous vulgarism; and in less glaring instances the law of double rhymes generally requiring closer correspondence than single is totally disregarded. The right use of imperfect rhymes is not to be forbidden because of occasional abuse. It is also no objection to a rhyme that it is "hackneyed". A hackneyed thought, a hackneyed phrase there may be, but a hackneyed rhyme seems to me a contradiction in terms. Rhyme is no part of the intellectual warp & woof of a poem, but a pure ornament the only object of which is to assist the soul with beauty; it appeals to the soul not through the intellect or imagination but through the ear. Now the oldest & most often used rhymes are generally the most beautiful and we ought not to sacrifice that beauty merely out of an unreasoning impatience of what is old. Common rhymes have a wonderful charm of their own and come to us laden with a thousand beautiful associations. The pursuit of mere originality can only lead us to such unpardonable extravagances as "haunches stir" & "Manchester". Such rhymes any poet can multiply who chooses to prostitute his genius to the amusement of the gallery, or is sufficiently unpoetic to prefer the freedom of barbarous uncouthness to that self-denial which is the secret of grace & beauty. On the other hand if we pursue originality & beauty together, we end in preciosity or an artificial grace, and what are these but the spirit of Poetry lifting her wings to abandon that land and that literature for a long season or sometimes for ever? Unusual & peculiar rhymes demand to be sparingly used & always for the definite object of setting in relief common rhymes rather than for the sake of their own strangeness.

The question of metre and rhymes being satisfactorily settled there comes the crucial question of fidelity, on which every translator has to make his own choice at his own peril. On one side is the danger of sacrificing the spirit to the letter, on the other the charge of writing a paraphrase or a poem of one's own under the cloak of translation. Here as elsewhere it seems to me that rigid rules are out of place. What we have to keep in mind is not any rigid law, but the object with which we are translating. If we merely want to render, to acquaint foreign peoples with the ideas & subject matter of the writer, as literal a rendering as idiom will allow, will do our business. If we wish to give a poetical version, to clothe the general sense & spirit of the writer in our own words, paraphrase & unfaithfulness become permissible; the writer has not intended to translate and it is idle to criticise him with reference to an ideal he never entertained. But the ideal of a translation is something different from either of these. The translator seeks first to place the mind of the reader in the same spiritual atmosphere as the original; he seeks next to produce in him the same emotions & the same kind of poetical delight and aesthetic gratification, and lastly he seeks to convey to him the thought of the poet & substance in such words as will create, as far as may be, the same or a similar train of associations, the same pictures or the same sensuous impressions. This is an ideal to which one can never do more than approximate; but the nearer one approximates to it, the better the translation. How it shall be done, depends upon the judgment, the sympathetic instinct of the poet, the extent to which he is imbued with the associations of both languages and can render not merely word by word but shade by shade, not only signification by signification, but suggestion by suggestion. There is one initial stumbling block which can never be quite got over; the mythology, fauna & flora of Indian literature are absolutely alien to Europe. (We are in a different world; this is no peaceful English world of field or garden & woodland with the cheerful song of the thrush or the redbreast, the nightingale warbling in the night by some small & quiet river, the lark soaring in the morning to the pale blue skies; no country of deep snows & light suns & homely toil without spiritual presences save the borrowed fancies of the Greeks or shadowy metaphysical imaginations of the poet's brain that haunt thought's aery wildernesses, no people homely [and] matter of fact, never rising far above earth or sinking far below it. We have instead a mother of gigantic rivers, huge sombre forests and mountains whose lower slopes climb above the clouds;[2] the roar of the wild beasts fills those forests & the cry of innumerable birds peoples those rivers; & in their midst lives a people who have soared into the highest heavens of the spirit, experienced the grandest & most illimitable thoughts possible to the intellect & sounded the utmost depths of sensuous indulgence; so fierce is the pulse of life that even trees & inanimate things seem to have life, emotions, a real & passionate history and over all move mighty presences of gods & spirits who are still real to the consciousness of the people.)

The life & surroundings in which Indian poetry moves cannot be rendered in the terms of English poetry. Yet to give up the problem and content oneself with tumbling out the warm, throbbing Indian word to shiver & starve in the inclement atmosphere of the English language seems to me not only an act of literary inhumanity & a poorspirited confession of failure, but a piece of laziness likely to defeat its own object. An English reader can gather no picture from & associate no idea of beauty with these outlandish terms. What can he understand when he is told that the atimukta creeper is flowering in the grove of késara trees and the mullica or the [ ] is sending out its fragrance into the night and the chocrovaque is complaining to his mate amid the still ripples of the river that flows through the jambous? Or how does it help him to know that the scarlet mouth of a woman is like the red bimba fruit or the crimson bandhoul flower? People who know Sanscrit seem to imagine that because these words have colour & meaning & beauty to them, they must also convey the same associations to their reader. This is a natural but deplorable mistake; this jargon is merely a disfigurement in English poetry. The cultured may read their work in spite of the jargon out of the unlimited intellectual curiosity natural to culture; the half-cultured may read it because of the jargon out of the ingrained tendency of the half-cultured mind to delight in what is at once unintelligible & inartistic. But their work can neither be a thing of permanent beauty nor serve a really useful object; & work which is neither immortal nor useful what self-respecting man would knowingly go out of his way to do? Difficulties are after all given us in order that we may brace our sinews by surmounting them; the greater the difficulty, the greater our chance of the very highest success. I can only point out rather sketchily how I have myself thought it best to meet the difficulty; a detailed discussion would require a separate volume. In the first place a certain concession may be made but within very narrow & guarded limits to the need for local colour; a few names of trees, flowers, birds etc. may be transliterated into English, but only when they do not look hopelessly outlandish in that form or else have a liquid or haunting beauty of sound; a similar indulgence may be yet more freely permitted in the transliteration of mythological names. But here the licence ends; a too liberal use of it would entirely destroy the ideal of translation; what is perfectly familiar in the original language must not seem entirely alien to the foreign audience; there must be a certain toning down of strangeness, an attempt to bring home the association to the foreign intelligence, to give at least some idea to a cultured but not Orientally erudite mind. This may be done in many ways & I have availed myself of all. A word may be rendered by some neologism which will help to convey any prominent characteristic or idea associated with the thing it expresses; blossom o' ruby may, for instance, render bandhoula, a flower which is always mentioned for its redness. Or else the word itself may be dropped & the characteristic brought into prominence; for instance instead of saying that a woman is lipped like a ripe bimba, it is, I think, a fair translation to write "Her scarlet mouth is a ripe fruit & red." This device of expressingly declaring the characteristics which the original only mentions, I have frequently employed in the Cloud Messenger, even when equivalent words exist in English, because many objects known in both countries are yet familiar & full of common associations to the Indian mind while to the English they are rare, exotic and slightly associated or only with one particular & often accidental characteristic.[3] A kindred method especially with mythological allusions is to explain fully what in the original is implicit; Kalidasa for instance compares a huge dark cloud striding northwards from Crouncharundhra to "the dark foot of Vishnu lifted in impetuous act to quell Bali", *śyāmaḥ pādo baliniyamanābhyudyatasyeva viṣṇoḥ*. This I have translated

---

[2] *An alternative version reads, after "forests":*
under a burning sun or a magical moonlight;

---

[3] *The following passage was written in the top margins of these pages of the manuscript. Its place of insertion was not indicated:*

It is an unfortunate tendency of the English mind to seize on what seems to it grotesque or ungainly in an unfamiliar object; thus the elephant & peacock have become almost impossible in English poetry, because the one is associated with lumbering heaviness & the other with absurd strutting. The tendency of the Hindu mind on the other hand is to seize on what is pleasing & beautiful in all things & even to see a charm where the English mind sees a deformity & to extract poetry & grace out of the ugly. The classical instances are the immortal verses in which Valmekie by a storm of beautiful & costly images & epithets has immortalised the hump of Manthara & the still more immortal passage in which he has made the tail of a monkey epic.

> “Dark like the cloudy foot of highest God
> When starting from the dwarfshape world-immense
> With Titan-quelling step through heaven he strode.”

It will be at once objected that this is not translation, but the most licentious paraphrase. This is not so if my original contention be granted that the business of poetical translation is to reproduce not the exact words but the exact image, associations & poetical beauty & flavour of the original. There is not a single word in the translation I have instanced which does not represent something at once suggested to the Indian reader by the words of the text. Vishnu is nothing to the English reader but some monstrous & bizarre Hindu idol; to the Hindu He is God Himself; the word is therefore more correctly represented in English by “highest God” than by Vishnu; *śyāmaḥ pādaḥ* is closely represented by “dark like the cloudy foot”, the word cloudy being necessary both to point the simile which is not so apparent & natural to the English reader as to the Indian and to define the precise sort of darkness indicated by the term *śyāmaḥ*; Bali has no meaning or association in English, but in the Sanscrit it represents the same idea as “Titan”; only the particular name recalls a certain theosophic legend which is a household word to the Hindu, that of the dwarf-Vishnu who obtained from the Titan Bali as much land as he could cover with three steps, then filling the whole world with himself with one stride measured the earth, with another the heavens and with the third placing his foot on the head of Bali thrust him down into bottomless Hell. All this immediately arises before the mental eye of the Hindu as he reads Kalidasa’s finely chosen words. The impetuous & vigorous term *abhyudyatasya* both in sound & sense suggests the sudden starting up of the world-pervading deity from the dwarf shape he had assumed while the comparison to the cloud reminds him that the second step of the three is referred to, that of Vishnu striding “through heaven.” But to the English reader the words of Kalidasa literally transliterated would be a mere artificial conceit devoid of the original sublimity. It is the inability to seize the associations & precise poetical force of Sanscrit words that has led so many European Sanscritists to describe the poetry of Kalidasa which is hardly surpassed for truth, bold directness & native beauty & grandeur as the artificial poetry of an artificial period. A literal translation would only spread this erroneous impression to the general reader. It must be admitted that in the opposite method one of Kalidasa's finest characteristics is, it is true, entirely lost, his power of expressing by a single simple direct & sufficient word ideas & pictures of the utmost grandeur or shaded complexity; but this is a characteristic which could in no case be possible in any language but the classical Sanscrit which Kalidasa did more than any man to create or at least to perfect. Even the utmost literalness could not transfer this characteristic into English. This method of eliciting all the idea-values of the original of which I have given a rather extreme instance, I have applied with great frequency where a pregnant mythological allusion or a strong or subtle picture or image calls for adequate representation; more especially perhaps in pictures or images connected with birds & animals unfamiliar or but slightly familiar to the English reader. (At the same time I must plead guilty to occasional excesses, to reading into Kalidasa perhaps in a dozen instances what is not there. I can only plead in apology that translators are always incorrigible sinners in this respect and that I have sinned less than others; moreover except in one or two instances these additions have always been suggested either by the sound or substance of the original. I may instance the line

A flickering line of fireflies seen in sleep,

Kalidasa says nothing equivalent to or suggesting "seen in sleep", but I had to render somehow the impression of night & dim unreality created by the dreamy movement & whispering assonances of the lines

alpālpabhāsaṁ
khadyotālīvilasitanibhāṁ vidyudunmeṣadṛṣṭim

with their soft dentals & their wavering & gliding liquids and sibilants. Unable to do this by sound I sought to do it by verbal expression; and in so far made a confession of incompetence, but in a way that may perhaps carry its own pardon.)

There is yet another method which has to be applied far more cautiously, but is sometimes indispensable. Occasionally it is necessary or at least advisable to discard the original image altogether and replace it by a more intelligible English image. There is no commoner subject of allusion in Sanscrit poetry than the passionate monotoned threnody of the forlorn bird who is divided at night by some mysterious law from his mate, divided if by a single lotus leaf, yet fatally divided. Such at least was the belief suggested by its cry at night to the imaginative Aryans. Nothing can exceed the beauty, pathos & power with which this allusion is employed by Kalidasa. Hear for instance Pururavus as he seeks for his lost Urvasie

> Thou wild drake when thy love,
> Her body hidden by a lotus-leaf,
> Lurks near thee in the pool, deemest her far
> And wailest musically to the flowers
> A wild deep dirge. Such is thy conjugal
> Yearning, thy terror such of even a little
> Division from her nearness. Me thus afflicted,
> Me so forlorn thou art averse to bless
> With just a little tidings of my love.

And again in the Shacountala, the lovers are thus gracefully warned

> O Chocrovaque, sob farewell to thy mate.
> The night, the night comes down to part you.

Fable as it is, one who has steeped himself in Hindu poetry can never bring himself wholly to disbelieve it. For him the melancholy call of the bird will sound for ever across the chill dividing stream & make musical with pity the huge and solemn night. But when the Yaksha says to the cloud that he will recognize her who is his second life by her sweet rare speech and her loneliness in that city of happy lovers "sole like a lonely Chocrovaque with me her comrade far away", the simile has no pathos to an English mind and even when explained would only seem "an artificiality common to the court-poetry of the Sanscrit age". I have therefore thought myself justified by the slightness of the allusion in translating "Sole like a widowed bird when all the nests Are making", which translates the idea & the emotion while suggesting a slightly different but related image.

I have indicated above the main principles by which I have guided myself in the task of translation. But there still remains the question, whether while preserving the ideals one may not still adhere more or less closely to the text. The answer to this is that such closeness is imperative, but it must be a closeness of word-value, not merely of word-meaning; into this word-value there enter the elements of association, sound and aesthetic beauty. If these are not translated, the word is not translated, however correct the rendering may be. For instance the words *salila, āpaḥ* and *jala* in Sanscrit all mean water, but if *jala* may be fairly represented by the common English word & the more poetic *āpaḥ* by "waters" or "ocean" according to the context, what will represent the beautiful suggestions of grace, brightness, softness & clearness which accompany *salila*? Here it is obvious that we have to seek refuge in sound suggestions & verse-subtleties to do what is not feasible by verbal rendering. Everything therefore depends on the skill & felicity of the translator and he must be judged rather by the accuracy with which he renders the emotional & aesthetic value of each expression than brought to a rigid [accounting] for each word in the original. Moreover the idiom of Sanscrit, especially of classical Sanscrit, is too far divided from the idiom of English. Literal translation from the Greek is possible though sometimes disastrous, but literal translation from the Sanscrit is impossible. There is indeed a school endowed with more valour than discretion and more metaphor than sense who condemn the dressing up of the Aryan beauty in English clothes and therefore demand that not only should the exact words be kept, but the exact idiom. For instance they would perpetrate the following: "Covering with lashes water-heavy from anguish, her eye gone to meet from former pleasantness the nectar-cool lattice-path-entered feet of the moon and then at once turned away, like a land-lotus-plant on a cloudy day not awake, not sleeping." Now quite apart from the execrable English & the want of rhythm, the succession of the actions and the connexions of thought which are made admirably clear in the Sanscrit by the mere order of the words, is here entirely obscured & lost; moreover the poetic significance of the words *prītyā* (pleasantness) and *sābhre*, implying here rain as well as cloud and the beautiful force of *salilagurubhiḥ* (water-heavy) are not even hinted at; while the meaning & application of the simile quite apparent in the original needs bringing out in the English. For the purpose of immediate comparison I give here my own version. "The moon-beams."[4] This I maintain though not literal is almost as close and meets without overstepping all the requirements of good translation. For the better illustration of the method, I prefer however to quote a more typical stanza.

Śabdāyante madhuram anilaiḥ kīcakāḥ pūryamāṇāḥ,
Saṁsaktābhis tripuravijayo gīyate kinnarībhiḥ;
Nirhrādas te muraja iva cet kandareṣu dhvaniḥ syāt,
Saṅgītārtho nanu paśupates tatra bhāvī samagraḥ.

Rendered into [literal English] this is "The bamboos filling with the winds are noising sweetly, the Tripour-conquest is being sung by the glued-together Kinnaries; if thy thunder should be in the glens like the sound on a drum the material of the concert of the Beast-Lord is to be complete there, eh?" My own translation runs

Of Tripour slain in lovely dances joined
And linkèd troops the Oreads of the hill
Are singing and inspired with rushing wind
Sweet is the noise of bamboos fluting shrill;
Thou thundering in the mountain-glens with cry
Of drums shouldst the sublime orchestra fill.

---

[4] *Sri Aurobindo apparently intended to transcribe a passage from his now-lost translation here. — Ed.*

"Of Tripour slain are singing" (*tripuravijayo gīyate*) requires little comment. The word *tripura* means the "three cities" [and] refers to the three material qualities of *rajas*, *sattva* & *tamas*, light, passion & darkness, which have to be slain by Sheva the emancipator before the soul can rejoin God; but there is no reference here to the theosophic basis of the legend, but purely to the legend itself, the conquest of the demon Tripoura by Mahadeva. There was no means of avoiding the mythological allusion & its unfamiliarity had simply to be accepted. *Saṁsaktābhiḥ*, meaning "linked close together in an uninterrupted chain", is here rendered by "joined in linkèd troops"; but this hardly satisfies the requirement of poetic translation, for the term suggests to an Indian a very common practice which does not, I think, exist in Europe, women taking each other's hands and dancing as they sing, generally in a circle; to express this in English, so as to create the same picture as the Sanscrit conveys, it was necessary to add "in lovely dances". The word Kinnaries presents a serious initial difficulty. The Purana mythologising partly from false etymology has turned these Kinnars into men & women with horsefaces & this description has been copied down into all Sanscrit dictionaries, but the Kinnaries of Valmekie had little resemblance with these Puranic grotesques; they are beings of superhuman beauty, unearthly sweetness of voice & wild freedom who seldom appear on the earth, their home is in the mountains & in the skies; he speaks of a young Kinnar snared & bound by men & the mother wailing over her offspring; and Kekayie lying on the ground in her passion of grief & anger is compared to a Kinnarie fallen from the skies. In all probability they were at first a fugitive image of the strange wild voices of the wind galloping and crying in the mountaintops. The idea of speed would then suggest the idea of galloping horses and by the usual principle of Puranic allegory, which was intellectual rather than artistic, the head, the most prominent & essential member of the human body, would be chosen as the seat of the symbol. Kalidasa had in this as in many other instances to take the Puranic allegorisation of the old poetic figure and new-subject it to the law of artistic beauty. In no case does he depart from the Puranic conception, but his method is to suppress the ungainly elements of the idea, often preserving it only in an epithet, and bring into prominence all the elements of beauty. Here the horsefaces are entirely suppressed & the picture offered is that of women singing with unearthly voices on the mountain-tops. The use of the word Kinnarie here would have no poetic propriety; to the uninstructed it would mean nothing and to the instructed would suggest only the ungainly horseface which Kalidasa here ignores and conflict with the idea of wild & divine melody which is emphasized. I have therefore translated "the Oreads of the hills"; these spirits of the mountains are the only image in English which can at all render the idea of beauty & vague strangeness here implied; at the same time I have used the apparently tautologous enlargement "of the hills" because it was necessary to give some idea of the distant, wild & mystic which the Greek Oreads does not in itself quite bring out. I have moreover transposed the two lines in translation for very obvious reasons.

The first line demands still more careful translation. The word *śabdāyante* means literally "sound, make a noise," but unlike its English rendering it is a rare word used by Kalidasa for the sake of a certain effect of sound and a certain shade of signification; while therefore rendering by "noise" I have added the epithet "shrill" to bring it up to the required value. Again the force & sound of *pūryamāṇāḥ* cannot be rendered by its literal rendering "filled" and *anila*, one of the many beautiful & significant Sanscrit words for wind, — *vāyu, anila, pavana, samīra, samīraṇa, vāta, prabhañjana, marut, sadāgati*, — suggests powerfully the breath and flowing of wind & is in the Upanishad used as equivalent to prana, the breath or emotional soul; to render adequately the word "inspired" has been preferred to "filled" and the epithet "rushing" added to "wind". *Kīcakāḥ pūryamāṇāḥ anilaiḥ* in the original suggests at once the sound of the flute, because the flute is in India made of the hollow bamboo & the shrillness of the word *kīcakāḥ* assists the suggestion; in English it was necessary to define the metaphor. The last two lines of the stanza have been rendered with great closeness except for the omission of *nanu* and the substitution of the epithet "sublime" for *paśupates*. *Nanu* is a Sanscrit particle which sometimes asks a rhetorical question but more often suggests one answered; the delicate shades suggested by the Sanscrit particles cannot be represented in English or only by gross effects which would be intolerably excessive & rhetorical. The omission of Pasupati, the name of Sheva as the Lord of Wildlife, though not necessary, is I think justified. He is sufficiently suggested by the last stanza & to those who understand the allusion, by the reference to Tripoura; the object of suggesting the wild & sublime which is served in Sanscrit by introducing this name, is equally served in English by the general atmosphere of wild remoteness & the insertion of the epithet "sublime".

This analysis of a single stanza, ex uno disce omnes, will be enough to show the essential fidelity which underlies the apparent freedom of my translation. At the same time it would be disingenuous to deny that in at least a dozen places of each poem, — more perhaps in the longer ones — I have slipped into words & touches which have no justification in the original. This is a literary offence which is always condemnable and always committed. In mitigation of judgment I can only say that it has been done rarely and that the superfluous word or touch is never out of harmony with or unsuggested by the original; it has sprung out of the text and not been foisted upon it. I may instance the line[5]

The remarks I have made apply to all the translations but more especially to the Cloud Messenger. In the drama except in highly poetical passages I have more often than not sacrificed subtlety in order to preserve the directness & incisiveness of the Sanscrit, qualities of great importance to dramatic writing, and in the epic to the dread of diffuseness which would ruin the noble harmony of the original. But the Cloud Messenger demands rather than shuns the careful & subtle rendering of every effect of phrase, sound & association. The Meghaduta of Kalidasa is the most marvellously perfect descriptive and elegiac poem in the world's literature. Every possible beauty of phrase, every possible beauty of sound, every grace of literary association, every source of imaginative & sensuous beauty has been woven together into an harmony which is without rival & without fault; for amidst all its wealth of colour, delicacy & sweetness, there is not a word too much or too little, no false note, no excessive or defective touch; the colouring is just & subdued in its richness, the verse movement regular in its variety, the diction simple in its suggestiveness, the emotion convincing & fervent behind a certain high restraint, the imagery precise, right & helpful, not overdone as in the Raghuvansa & yet quite as full of beauty & power. The Shacountala and the Cloud Messenger are the ne plus ultra of Hindu poetic art. Such a poem asks for & repays the utmost pains a translator can give it; it demands all the wealth of word & sound effect, all the power of literary beauty, of imaginative & sensuous charm he has the capacity to extract from the English language. At the same time its qualities of diction & verse cannot be rendered. The diffuseness of English will neither lend itself to the brief suggestiveness of the Sanscrit without being too high-strung, nervous & bare in its strength & so falsifying its flowing harmony & sweetness; nor to its easy harmony without losing closeknit precision & so falsifying its brevity, gravity & majesty. We must be content to lose something in order that we may not lose all.

---

[5] *Sri Aurobindo did not write the line he intended to "instance" in his manuscript.* — *Ed.*

The prose of Kalidasa's dialogue is the most unpretentious & admirable prose in Sanscrit literature; it is perfectly simple, easy in pitch & natural in tone with a shining, smiling, rippling lucidity, a soft, carolling gait like a little girl running along in a meadow & smiling back at you as she goes. There is the true image of it; a quiet English meadow with wild flowers on a bright summer morning, breezes abroad, the smell of hay in the neighbourhood, honeysuckle on the bank, hedges full of convolvuli or wild roses, a ditch on one side with cress & forget-me-nots & nothing pronounced or poignant except perhaps a stray whiff of meadowsweet from a distance. This admirable unobtrusive charm and just observed music (Coleridge) makes it run easily into verse in English. In translating one has at first some vague idea of reproducing the form as well as the spirit of the Sanscrit, rendering verse stanza by verse stanza & prose movement by prose movement. But it will soon be discovered that except in the talk of the buffoon & not always then Kalidasa's prose never evokes its just echo, never finds its answering pitch, tone or quality in English prose. The impression it creates is in no way different from Shakespeare's verse taken anywhere at its easiest & sweetest

> Your lord does know my mind: I cannot love him:
> Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble,
> Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth;
> In voices well divulged, free, learned and valiant;
> And in dimension in the shape of nature
> A gracious person; but yet I cannot love him.
> He might have took his answer long ago.

Or again still more close in its subtle & telling simplicity

> Ol. What is your parentage?
> Vi. Above my fortunes, yet my state is well.
> I am a gentleman.
> Ol. Get you to your lord;
> I cannot love him: let him send no more;
> Unless perchance you come to me again
> To tell me how he takes it.

There is absolutely no difference between this & the prose of Kalidasa, since even the absence of metre is compensated by the natural majesty, grace & rhythmic euphony of the Sanscrit language & the sweet seriousness & lucid effectiveness it naturally wears when it is not tortured for effects.

APPENDIX

ALTERNATIVE AND UNUSED PASSAGES AND FRAGMENTS

1

[*An early fragment*]

Kalidasa does best in more complicated & grandiose metres where his majesty of sound and subtle power of harmony have most opportunity; his treatment of the Anustubh is massive & noble, but compares unfavourably with the inexhaustible flexibility of Valmekie and the nervous ease of Vyasa.

2

[*Alternative opening to "The Historical Method"*]

Kalidasa

Of Kalidasa the man we are fortunate to know nothing beyond what we can gather from the evidence of his own writings. There are many anecdotes current throughout India that have gathered around his name, some of them witty, some merely ribald, some purely strokes of scholastic ingenuity; they differ little in character from the stock facetiae which are associated with the name of famous jesters & wits like Akbar's Rajah Birbal; in any case the ascription to Kalidasa is fanciful and arbitrary. Even the date of our chief classical poet is a subject for the unprofitable ingenuity of scholars; fixed yesterday in the 11th century B.C. , today in the sixth, tomorrow in the 3d, there seems to be not even a remote prospect of any finality in the matter. Even to this day no valid reason has been alleged for questioning the traditional ascription of Kalidasa to the 1st century B.C. , a date with which nothing in his poetry is inconsistent; on the contrary there is much that seems to demand it.

3

[*Passages from the manuscript of "The Seasons — I: Its Authenticity" that Sri Aurobindo did not include in the published version.*]

The Seasons

Early and immature work of a great poet of which the authenticity is not put beyond doubt by definite external evidence, is always the especial joy of scholars, for it gives an opening to the spirit of denial which is the lifebreath of scholastic criticism. To show original scholarship by denying what the past has believed, is easy and congenial, but to establish one's originality by positive & helpful criticism is not so readily done. No one has suffered more in this respect at the hands of European scholars than Kalidasa, about whom we have no external evidence until the artificial revival of Sanscrit literature in the later centuries of the first millennium of the Christian era. Some

*

Kalidasa's authorship of his earliest extant poem has been first questioned in very recent times by a number of European Sanscritists. It is doubtful whether the spirit of modern criticism, restless, revolutionary, & prizing novelty and inventiveness above truth, is superior in all respects to the saner if less subtle outlook of older scholarship.

*

The old criticism was cautious and quiet, seldom doubting tradition, except under strong justifying reasons. Modern scholarship on the contrary is ready to pursue the most fleeting will-o'-the-wisp of theory across the deepest morasses of assumption and petitio principii and once in pursuit shows a radical violence and obstinacy of prejudice to which the prejudice of the conservative is vacillating and feeble. New theories are born with each revolution of the seasons and each while it lasts is dogmatically & even hotly asserted as alone consistent with sane and enlightened scholarship. The arguments which are

*

The Seasons is the only production included in the reasonable canon of his work which justifies the slightest doubt as to its authenticity. There is a marked difference between this and the rest of Kalidasa's admitted poetry, consisting mainly in a great inferiority of artistic execution and a far cruder yet not absolutely dissimilar verse & diction which sounds like a rough sketch for the mighty style & movement of Kalidasa. If it is not then an early work of the poet, it must be either a production of an earlier poet who influenced Kalidasa or of a later poet who imitated him. The first hypothesis is hardly credible, unless the writer died young; for it is otherwise impossible that the author of such a work as the Seasons should have executed no later & riper work of a more ambitious & enduring character. A similar difficulty attends though to a less degree the second alternative; a poet who could catch some of the finest characteristics of so great a model without slavishly copying his best work, must have had in him the capacity for much more serious and lasting accomplishment. On the other hand

*

The imagination of the West has not been trained to recognize that the body is an entity different and initially independent of the spirit within. Yet such a division helps materially to the proper understanding of man & is indeed essential to it unless we rule out a great mass of recorded experience as false or illusory. Each cell out of which the body is built has a life of its own and therefore tendencies of its own. These tendencies are largely, if not entirely determined by heredity. The spirit too comes into the womb with an individuality already determined, a future development already built up; and its struggle is to impose the law of that individuality and that development on the plasm of matter in which it has to encase itself. It is naturally attracted to birth in a race & a family where the previous dispositions are favourable to the production of a suitable body; and in the case of great minds this is oftenest where attempts at genius have occurred before, attempts which being unsuccessful have not unfrequently led to madness & physical or moral disease resulting from the refusal of the body to bear the strain of the spirit. Even from the womb it struggles to impose itself on the embryonic plasm, to build up the cells of the brain to its liking and stamp its individuality on every part of the body. Throughout childhood and youth the struggle proceeds; the spirit not so much developing itself, as developing the body into an image of itself, accustoming the body to express it & respond to its impulses as a musical instrument responds to the finger of the performer. And therefore it is that the Upanishad speaks of the body as the harp of the spirit. Hence natural gifts are much more valuable and work with much more freedom and power than acquired; for when we acquire, we are preparing fresh material for our individuality in another existence; when we follow our gifts, we are using what we have already prepared for this. In the first case we are painful & blundering learners, in the second to the extent we have prepared ourselves, masters. This process of subjecting the personality of the body to the personality of the spirit, of finding one's self, lasts for various periods with various men. But it is seldom really over before the age of 30 in men of a rich and varied genius, and even afterwards they never cease sounding themselves still farther, finding fresh possibilities, developing mightier masteries, until the encasing plasm wears away with the strain of life. The harp grows old & shabby, the strings are worn and frayed, the music deteriorates or ceases, and finally the spirit breaks & throws away its instrument and departs to assimilate its experiences and acquirements for a fresh existence. But that the man of genius may successfully find himself, he must have fit opportunities, surroundings, influences, training. If he is not favoured with these, the genius will remain but it will be at the mercy of its body; it will express its body and not its self. The most famous ballads, those which never perish, have been written by such thwarted geniuses. Although the influence of romanticism has made it a literary fashion to couple these ballads with Homer, yet in truth balladwriting is the lowest form of the poetical art; its method is entirely sensational. The impact of outward facts on the body is carried through the vital principle, the sensational element in man, to the mind, and mind obediently answers the knocking outside, photographs the impression with force & definiteness. But there has been no exercise of the higher faculty of understanding, considering, choosing, moulding what it receives. Hence the bare force & realism which so powerfully attracts in the best ballads; but this force is very different from the high strength and this involuntary realism very different from the artistic imaginative & self-chosen realism of great poetry. There is the same difference as separates brilliant melodrama from great tragedy. Another sign of the undeveloped self is uncertainty of work. There are some poets who live by a single poem. In some moment of exaltation, of rapt excitement the spirit throws off for a moment the bonds of the flesh and compels the body to obey it. This is what is vulgarly termed inspiration. Everyone who has felt this state of mind, can recall its main features. There is a sudden exaltation, a glow, an excitement and a fiery and rapid activity of all the faculties; every cell of the body & of the brain feeling a commotion and working in excited unison under the law of something which is not themselves; the mind itself becomes illuminated as with a rush of light and grows like a crowded and surging thoroughfare in some brilliantly lighted city, thought treading on the heels of thought faster than the tongue can express or the hand write or the memory record them. And yet while the organs of sense remain overpowered and inactive, the main organs of action may be working with abnormal rapidity, not only the speech and the hand but sometimes even the feet, so that often the writer cannot remain still, but has to walk up and down swiftly or if he sits down, is subject to an involuntary mechanical movement of the limbs. When this state reaches beyond bounds, when the spirit attempts to impose on the mind & body work for which they are not fitted, the result is, in the lower human organisms insanity, in the higher epilepsy. In this state of inspiration every thought wears an extraordinary brilliance and even commonplace ideas strike one as God-given inspirations. But at any rate the expression they take whether perfect or not is superior to what the same man could compass in his ordinary condition. Ideas & imaginations throng on the mind which one is not aware of having formerly entertained or even prepared for; some even seem quite foreign to our habit of mind. The impression we get is that thoughts are being breathed into us, expressions dictated, the whole poured in from outside; the saints who spoke to Joan of Arc, the daemon of Socrates, Tasso's familiar, the Angel Gabriel dictating the Koran to Mahomet are only exaggerated developments of this impression due to an epileptic, maniac or excited state of the mind; and this, as I have already suggested, is itself due to the premature attempts of the Spirit to force the highest work on the body.[1] Mahomet's idea that in his epileptic fits he went up into the seventh heaven & took the Koran from the lips of God, is extremely significant;[2] if Caesar & Richelieu had been Oriental prophets instead of practical & sceptical Latin statesmen they might well have recorded kindred impressions. In any case such an impression is purely sensational. It is always the man's own spirit that is speaking, but the sensational part of him feeling that it is working blindly in obedience to some irresistible power which is not itself, conveys to the mind an erroneous impression that the power comes from outside, that it is an inspiration and not an inner process; for it is as naturally the impulse of the body as of the mind to consider itself *the* self of the organism and all impressions & impulses not of its own sphere as exterior to the organism. If the understanding happens to be firm and sane, it refuses to encourage the mind in its error, but if the understanding is overexcited or is not sufficiently master of its instruments, it easily allows itself to be deluded. Now when the spirit is no longer struggling with the body, but has become its master and lord, this state of inspiration ceases to be fortuitous and occasional, and becomes more and more within the will of the man and, subject to the necessarily long intervals of repose & recreation, almost a habitually recurring state. At the same time it loses its violent & abnormal character and the outward symptoms of it disappear; the outer man remains placid and the mind works with great power and illumination indeed, but without disturbance or loss of equilibrium. In the earlier stages the poet swears & tears his hair if a fly happens to be buzzing about the room; once he has found himself, he can rise from his poem, have a chat with his wife or look over & even pay his bills and then resume his inspiration as if nothing had happened. He needs no stimulant except healthy exercise and can no longer be classed with the genus irritabile vatum; nor does he square any better with the popular idea that melancholy, eccentricity and disease are necessary concomitants of genius. Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Goethe, the really great poets, were men of high sanity — except perhaps in the eyes of those to whom originality & strong character are in themselves madness.

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo wrote the following passage at the top of two pages of the manuscript. He did not mark its place of insertion. A piece of the manuscript is broken off at the beginning; "supported by" is a conjectural reconstruction*:

The fact, [supported by] overwhelming evidence, that Jeanne could foretell the immediate future in all matters affecting her mission, does not militate against this theory; past, present & future are merely conventions of the mind, to the spirit time is but one, tomorrow as present as today. At the same time I do not wish to exclude the possibility of supracorporeal beings outside her own guiding Jeanne within the limits of her mission; the subject is too profound & subtle a problem to be settled offhand.

[2] *Sri Aurobindo put a question mark beside this clause in his manuscript. — Ed.*

But to arrive at this harmony requires time and effort and meanwhile the work will surely be unequal, often halting, varying between inspiration and failure. Especially will this be the case with a rich, many-sided and flexible genius like Kalidasa's.[3]

---

[3] *The passage that follows in the manuscript was incorporated in the final version of the second paragraph of "The Seasons — I: Its Authenticity". — Ed.*

4

[*Alternative and unused passages from the manuscript of "Vikramorvasie: The Characters"*]

We shall now understand why the Opsara is represented as the Hetaira of heaven. They represent all that is sensuous, attractive & voluptuous in the Universe, the element of desire which being unspiritual & non-moral, finds its sphere in the satisfaction of the sense of beauty and for that satisfaction needs freedom

*

Vishnu, the Almighty Spirit, incarnate in Naraian, the saint and hermit, was meditating in the voiceless solitude of mountains. Indra, always jealous of austerity & sacrifice, sent the Opsaras to allure him & enslave him to the charm of beauty & sensuousness. They came to Naraian in the wilderness and displayed before him all their beauty & every feminine art of conversation, but in vain. Naraian, with an indulgent smile smote his thigh and produced from it a woman of so shining a loveliness that the beauty of all the Opsaras together was as nothing to her beauty

According to this story Naraian, the great Rishi, who is also Vishnu & therefore the type of the World-Saviour when he comes in the guise of the Ascetic, was meditating in the Himalayas. Indra, always hostile to ascetism, always distrustful of the contemplative & philosophic mind, sent the Opsaras to break down the concentration of Naraian's mind and lure him into sensuous feeling. They were the fairest of the worldsisters who went and they displayed before Naraian their most marvellous grace and their sweetest words & arts. So the World Saviour smiled and from his thigh there sprang all the beauty of sensuous existence concentrated into a single form. Then the temptresses covered their faces with their veils & silently returned to heaven. Thus was born Urvasie, she that lay hid in the thigh of the Supreme.

*

The grace of childhood seems to have had a charm for the mind of Kalidasa; for whenever he introduces a child it is with a double measure of his magical felicity and naturalness. There is a child in each of his plays; the princess Vasuluxmie in Malavica does not appear on the stage in the course of the play, yet she twice intervenes with considerable effect in its action, and each time what a delightful fragrance of home, of the beauty and innocence and loveableness of childhood, comes breathing about the scene. It is part of the marvellous genius of Kalidasa that packing beauty into each word he writes with so little he can suggest so much. In Ayus we find not quite the same beauty, but the same tender and skilful portraiture and the same loving knowledge of child nature. It seems to me that in two respects at least Kalidasa far surpasses Shakespeare, in knowledge of a mother's heart, in knowledge of the child. Shakespeare's mothers, and how few of them there are! are either null or intolerable. In only one of his plays does Shakespeare really attempt to give us a mother's heart and a child. But Arthur is not a success, he is too voulu, too much dressed up for pathos, too eloquent and full of unchildlike sentimentality & posing. Children are fond of posing and children are sentimental, but not in that way. As for the Princes in King Henry VI and Richard III no real lover of children could endure them; one feels almost thankful to the crookback for mercifully putting them out of the way. Nor is Constance a sympathetic figure; her shrieking, her rant, her selfishness, her bold and bitter volubility, could Shakespeare give us no sweeter & truer picture of a mother?

*

Urvasie seems at first sight to be deficient in feeling; she sends Ayus away from her at his birth & though there is an indication that she must have visited him occasionally, yet long years of separation are also implied which she appears to have borne with some equanimity. In reality she has no choice. By keeping him she would lose both husband & child, by

*

Urvasie sends Ayus away from her at his birth, but it is as the choice between a mixed evil and an unmixed calamity; in sending him away she only anticipates the inevitable separation between a royal child & his parents which the necessity of education in the forest always imposed;[4] by keeping him she would lose both him and her husband. He returns to her & the mother in her at once wakes to life "her veiled bosom heaving towards him and wet with sacred milk"; so in her joy over her son she even forgets the impending separation from the husband who is all in all to her. It is consistent with Kalidasa's conception of her that she says little or nothing to show her depth of emotion but reveals it rather by her actions & little side touches in her speech.

---

[4] Urvasie's words "How he has grown" imply that she must have secretly seen him in the hermitage several times after his birth, though necessarily not for many years, since once the boy's education began such visits would necessarily cease.

On the Mahabharata

Notes on the Mahabharata

of Krishna Dwypaiana Vyasa.

prepared with a view to disengage the original epic of Krishna of the island from the enlargements, accretions and additions made by Vyshampaian, Ugrosravas & innumerable other writers.

by Aurobind Ghose

Proposita.

An epic of the Bharatas was written by Krishna of the Island called Vyasa, in 24,000 couplets or something more, less at any rate than 27,000, on the subject of the great civil war of the Bharatas and the establishment of the Dhurmarajya or universal sovereignty in that house.

This epic can be disengaged almost in its entirety from the present poem of nearly 100,000 slokas.

It was hinted in a recent article of the Indian Review, an unusually able and searching paper on the date of the Mahabharata war that a society is about to be formed for discovering the genuine and original portions of our great epic. This is glad tidings to all admirers of Sanscrit literature and to all lovers of their country. For the solution of the Mahabharata problem is essential to many things, to any history worth having of Aryan civilisation & literature, to a proper appreciation of Vyasa's poetical genius and, far more important than either, to a definite understanding of the great ethical gospel which Srikrishna came down on earth to teach as a guide to mankind in the dark Kali yuga then approaching. But I fear that if the inquiry is to be pursued on the lines the writer of this article seemed to hint, if the Society is to rake out 8000 lines from the War Purvas & dub the result the Mahabharata of Vyasa, then the last state of the problem will be worse than its first. It is only by a patient scrutiny & weighing of the whole poem, disinterestedly, candidly & without preconceived notions, a consideration Canto by Canto, paragraph by paragraph, couplet by couplet that we can arrive at anything solid or permanent. But this implies a vast and heartbreaking labour. Certainly, labour however vast ought not to have any terrors for a scholar, still less for a Hindu scholar; yet before one engages in it, one requires to be assured that the game is worth the candle. For that assurance there are three necessary requisites, the possession of certain, sound and always applicable tests to detect later from earlier work, a reasonable chance that such tests if applied will restore the real epic roughly if not exactly in its original form and an assurance that the epic when recovered will repay from literary, historical or other points of view, the labour that has been bestowed on it. I believe that these three requisites are present in this case and shall attempt to adduce a few reasons for my judgment. I shall try to show that besides other internal evidence on which I do not propose just now to enter, there are certain traits of poetical style, personality and thought which belong to the original work and are possessed by no other writer. I shall also try to show that these traits may be used and by whom they may be used as a safe guide through this huge morass of verse. In passing I shall have occasion to make clear certain claims the epic thus disengaged will possess to the highest literary, historical and practical value.

It is certainly not creditable to European scholarship that after so many decades of Sanscrit research, the problem of the Mahabharata which should really be the pivot for all the rest, has remained practically untouched. For it is not exaggeration to say that European scholarship has shed no light whatever on the Mahabharata beyond the bare fact that it is the work of more than one hand. All else it has advanced, and fortunately it has advanced little, has been rash, arbitrary or prejudiced; theories, theories, always theories without any honestly industrious consideration of the problem. The earliest method adopted was to argue from European analogies, a method pregnant of error & delusion. If we consider the hypothesis of a rude ballad-epic doctored by "those Brahmins" — anyone who is curious on the matter may study with both profit & amusement Frazer's History of Indian Literature — we shall perceive how this method has been worked. A fancy was started in Germany that the Iliad of Homer is really a pastiche or clever rifacimento of old ballads put together in the time of Pisistratus. This truly barbarous imagination with its rude ignorance of the psychological bases of all great poetry has now fallen into some discredit; it has been replaced by a more plausible attempt to discover a nucleus in the poem, an Achilleid, out of which the larger Iliad has grown. Very possibly the whole discussion will finally end in the restoration of a single Homer with a single poem, subjected indeed to some inevitable interpolation and corruption, but mainly the work of one mind, a theory still held by more than one considerable scholar. In the meanwhile, however, haste has been made to apply the analogy to the Mahabharata; lynx-eyed theorists have discovered in the poem — apparently without taking the trouble to study it — an early and rude ballad epic worked up, doctored and defaced by those wicked Brahmins, who are made responsible for all the literary and other enormities which have been discovered by the bushelful, and not by European lynxes alone — in our literature and civilisation. Now whether the theory is true or not, and one sees nothing in its favour, it has at present no value at all; for it is a pure theory without any justifying facts. It is not difficult to build these intellectual cardhouses; anyone may raise them by the dozen who can find no better manner of wasting valuable time. A similar method of "arguing from Homer" is probably at the bottom of Professor Weber's assertion that the War Purvas contain the original epic. An observant eye at once perceives that the War Purvas are far more hopelessly tangled than any that precede them except the first. It is here & here only that the keenest eye becomes confused & the most confident explorer begins to lose heart & self-reliance. But the Iliad is all battles and it therefore follows in the European mind that the original Mahabharata must have been all battles. Another method is that of ingenious, if forced argument from stray slokas of the poem or equally stray & obscure remarks in Buddhist compilations. The curious theory of some scholars that the Pandavas were a later invention and that the original war was between the Kurus and Panchalas only and Professor Weber's singularly positive inference from a sloka which does not at first sight bear the meaning he puts on it, that the original epic contained only 8800 lines, are ingenuities of this type. They are based on the Teutonic art of building a whole mammoth out of a single and often problematical bone, and remind one strongly of M^r Pickwick and the historic inscription which was so rudely, if in a Pickwickian sense, challenged by the refractory [M^r Blotton.] All these theorisings are idle enough; they are made of too airy a stuff to last. 'Only a serious scrutiny of the Mahabharata made with a deep sense of critical responsibility and according to the methods of patient scientific inference, can justify one in advancing any considerable theory on this wonderful poetic structure.'

Yet to extricate the original epic from the mass of accretions is not, I believe, so difficult a task as it may at first appear. One is struck in perusing the Mahabharata by the presence of a mass of poetry which bears the style and impress of a single, strong and original, even unusual mind, differing in his manner of expression, tone of thought & stamp of personality not only from every other Sanscrit poet we know but from every other great poet known to literature. When we look more closely into the distribution of this peculiar style of writing, we come to perceive certain very suggestive & helpful facts. We realise that this impress is only found in those parts of the poem which are necessary to the due conduct of the story, seldom to be detected in the more miraculous, Puranistic or trivial episodes, but usually broken up by passages and sometimes shot through with lines of a discernibly different inspiration. Equally noteworthy is it that nowhere does this poet admit any trait, incident or speech which deviates from the strict propriety of dramatic characterisation & psychological probability. Finally Krishna's divinity is recognized, but more often hinted at than aggressively stated. The tendency is to keep it in the background as a fact to which, while himself crediting it, the writer does not hope for universal consent, still less is able to speak of it as of a general tenet & matter of dogmatic belief; he prefers to show Krishna rather in his human character, acting always by wise, discerning and inspired methods, but still not transgressing the limit of human possibility. All this leads one to the conclusion that in the body of poetry I have described, we have the real Bharata, an epic which tells plainly and straightforwardly of the events which led to the great war and the empire of the Bharata princes. Certainly if Prof. Weber's venturesome assertion as to the length of the original Mahabharata be correct, this conclusion falls to the ground; for the mass of this poetry amounts to considerably over 20,000 slokas. Professor Weber's inference, however, is worth some discussion; for the length of the original epic is a very important element in the problem. If we accept it, we must say farewell to all hopes of unravelling the tangle. His assertion is founded on a single & obscure verse in the huge prolegomena to the poem which take up the greater part of the Adi Purva, no very strong basis for so far-reaching an assumption. The sloka itself says no more than this that much of the Mahabharata was written in so difficult a style that Vyasa himself could remember only 8800 of the slokas, Suka an equal amount and Sanjaya perhaps as much, perhaps something less. There is certainly here no assertion such as Prof. Weber would have us find in it that the Mahabharata at any time amounted to no more than 8800 slokas. Even if we assume what the text does not say that Vyasa, Suka & Sanjaya knew the same 8800 slokas, we do not get to that conclusion. The point simply is that the style of the Mahabharat was too difficult for a single man to keep in memory more than a certain portion of it. This does not carry us very far. If however we are to assume that there is more in this verse than meets the eye, that it is a cryptic way of stating the length of the original poem; and I do not deny that this is possible, perhaps even probable — we should note the repetition of वेत्ति — अहं वेद्मि शुको वेत्ति सञ्जयो वेत्ति वा न वा. Following the genius of the Sanscrit language we are led to suppose the repetition was intended to recall अष्टौ श्लोकसहस्राणि etc. with each name; otherwise the repetition has no raison d'être; it is otiose & inept. But if we understand it thus, the conclusion is irresistible that each knew a different 8800, or the writer would have no object in wishing us to repeat the number three times in our mind. The length of the epic as derived from this single sloka should then be 26,400 slokas or something less, for the writer hesitates about the exact number to be attributed to Sanjaya. Another passage further on in the prolegomena agrees remarkably with this conclusion and is in itself much more explicit. It is there stated plainly enough that Vyasa first wrote the Mahabharata in 24,000 slokas and afterwards enlarged it to 100,000 for the world of men as well as a still more unconscionable number of verses for the Gandhurva and other worlds. In spite of the embroidery of fancy, of a type familiar enough to all who are acquainted with the Puranic method of recording facts, the meaning of this is unmistakeable. The original Mahabharata consisted of 24,000 slokas, but in its final form it runs to 100,000. The figures are probably loose & slovenly, for at any rate the final form of the Mahabharata is considerably under 100,000 slokas. It is possible therefore that the original epic was something over 24,000 and under 26,400 slokas, in which case the two passages would agree well enough. But it would be unsafe to found any dogmatic assertion on isolated couplets; at the most we can say that we are justified in taking the estimate as a probable and workable hypothesis and if it is found to be corroborated by other facts, we may venture to suggest its correctness as a moral certainty.

But it is not from European scholars that we must expect a solution of the Mahabharata problem. They have no qualifications for the task except a power of indefatigable research and collocation; and in dealing with the Mahabharata even this power seems to have deserted them. It is from Hindu scholarship renovated & instructed by contact with European that the attempt must come. Indian scholars have shown a power of detachment and disinterestedness and a willingness to give up cherished notions under pressure of evidence, which are not common in Europe. They are not, as a rule, prone to the Teutonic sin of forming a theory in accordance with their prejudices and then finding facts or manufacturing inferences to support it. When therefore they form a theory on their own account, it has usually some clear justification and sometimes an overwhelming array of facts and solid arguments behind it. German scholarship possesses infinite capacity of labour marred by an irresponsible & fantastic imagination, the French a sane acuteness of inference marred by insufficient command of facts, while in soundness of judgment Indian scholarship has both; it should stand first, for it must naturally move with a far greater familiarity and grasp in the sphere of Sanscrit studies than any foreign mind however able & industrious. But above all it must clearly have one advantage, an intimate feeling of the language, a sensitiveness to shades of style & expression and an instinctive feeling of what is or is not possible, which the European cannot hope to possess unless he sacrifices his sense of racial superiority and lives in some great centre like Benares as a Pundit among Pundits. I admit that even among Indians this advantage must vary with the amount of education and natural fineness of taste; but where other things are equal, they must possess it in an immeasurably greater degree than an European of similar information & critical power. For to the European Sanscrit words are no more than dead counters which he can play with and throw as he likes into places the most unnatural or combinations the most monstrous; to the Hindu they are living things the very soul of whose temperament he understands & whose possibilities he can judge to a hair. That with these advantages Indian scholars have not been able to form themselves into a great & independent school of learning, is due to two causes, the miserable scantiness of the mastery in Sanscrit provided by our Universities, crippling to all but born scholars, and our lack of a sturdy independence which makes us overready to defer to European authority. These however are difficulties easily surmountable.

In solving the Mahabharat problem this intimate feeling for the language is of primary importance; for style & poetical personality must be not indeed the only but the ultimate test of the genuineness of any given passage in the poem. If we rely upon any other internal evidence, we shall find ourselves irresistibly tempted to form a theory and square facts to it. The late Rai Bahadur Bunkim Chundra Chatterji, a genius of whom modern India has not produced the parallel, was a man of ripe scholarship, literary powers of the very first order and a strong critical sagacity. In his Life of Krishna (Krishnacharitra), he deals incidentally with the Mahabharata problem; he perceived clearly enough that there were different recognizable styles in the poem, and he divided it into three layers, the original epic by a very great poet, a redaction of the original epic by a poet not quite so great and a mass of additions by very inferior hands. But being concerned with the Mahabharata only so far as it covered the Life of Krishna, he did not follow up this line of scrutiny and relied rather on internal evidence of a quite different kind. He saw that in certain parts of the poem Krishna's godhead is either not presupposed at all or only slightly affirmed, while in others it is the main objective of the writer; certain parts again give us a plain, unvarnished & straightforward biography & history, others are a mass of wonders and legends, often irrelevant extravagances; in some parts also the conception of the chief characters is radically departed from and defaced. He therefore took these differences as his standard and accepted only those parts as genuine which gave a plain & consistent account of Krishna the man and of others in their relation to him. Though his conclusions are to a great extent justifiable, his a priori method led him to exaggerate them, to enforce them too rigidly without the proper flexibility & scrupulous hesitation and to resort occasionally to special pleading. His book is illuminating and full of insight, and the chief contentions will, I believe, stand permanently; but some parts of his argument are exaggerated & misleading and others, which are in the main correct, are yet insufficiently supported by reasons. It is the failure to refer everything to the ultimate test of style that is responsible for these imperfections. Undoubtedly inconsistencies of detail & treatment are of immense importance. If we find grave inconsistencies of character, if a man is represented in one place as stainlessly just, unselfish & truthful and in another as a base & selfish liar or a brave man suddenly becomes guilty of incomprehensible cowardice, we are justified in supposing two hands at work; otherwise we must either adduce very strong poetic and psychological justification for the lapse or else suppose that the poet was incompetent to create or portray consistent and living characters. But if we find that one set of passages belongs to the distinct and unmistakeable style of a poet who has shown himself capable of portraying great epic types, we shall be logically debarred from this saving clause. And if the other set of passages show not only a separate style, but quite another spirit and the stamp of another personality, our assurance will be made doubly sure. Further if there are serious inconsistencies of fact, if for instance Krishna says in one place that he can only do his best as a man & can use no divine power in human affairs and in another foolishly uses his divine power where it is quite uncalled for, or if a considerable hero is killed three or four times over, yet always pops up again with really commendable vitality but without warning or explanation until some considerate person gives him his coup de grâce, or if totally incompatible statements are made about the same person or the same event, we may find in either or all of these inconsistencies sufficient ground to assume diversity of authorship. Still even here we must ultimately refer to the style as corroborative evidence; and when the inconsistencies are grave enough to raise suspicion, but not so totally incompatible as to be conclusive, difference of style will at once turn the suspicion into certainty, while similarity may induce us to suspend judgment. And where there is no inconsistency of fact or conception and yet the difference in expression & treatment is marked, the question of style & personality becomes all-important. Now in the Mahabharata we are struck at first by the presence of two glaringly distinct & incompatible styles. There is a mass of writing in which the verse & language is unusually bare, simple and great, full of firm and knotted thinking & a high & heroic personality, the imagination strong and pure, never florid or richly-coloured, the ideas austere, original & noble. There is another body of work sometimes massed together but far oftener interspersed in the other, which has exactly opposite qualities; it is Ramayanistic, rushing in movement, full & even overabundant in diction, flowing but not strict in thought, the imagination bold & vast, but often garish & highly-coloured, the ideas ingenious & poetical, sometimes of astonishing subtlety, but at others common & trailing, the personality much more relaxed, much less heroic, noble & severe. When we look closer we find that the Ramayanistic part may possibly be separated into two parts, one of which has less inspiration and is more deeply imbued with the letter of the Ramayan, but less with its spirit. The first portion again has a certain element often in close contact with it which differs from it in a weaker inspiration, in being a body without the informing spirit of high poetry. It attempts to follow its manner & spirit but fails and reads therefore like imitation of the great poet. We have to ask ourselves whether this is the work of an imitator or of the original poet in his uninspired moments. Are there besides the mass of inferior or obviously interpolated work which can be easily swept aside, three distinct & recognisable styles or four or only two? In the ultimate decision of this question inconsistencies of detail & treatment will be of great consequence. But in the meantime I find nothing to prevent me from considering the work of the first poet, undoubtedly the greatest of the four, if four there are, as the original epic.

It may, indeed, be objected that style is no safe test, for it is one which depends upon the personal preferences & ability of the critic. In an English literary periodical it was recently observed that a certain Oxford professor who had studied Stevenson like a classic, attempted to apportion to Stevenson & Lloyd Osbourne their respective work in the Wrecker, but his apportionment turned out [to] be hopelessly erroneous. To this the obvious answer is that the Wrecker is a prose work and not poetry. There was no prose style ever written that a skilful hand could not reproduce as accurately as a practised forger reproduces a signature. But poetry, at any rate original poetry of the first class is a different matter. The personality and style of a true poet are unmistakeable to a competent mind, for though imitation, echo & parody are certainly possible, it would be as easy to reproduce the personal note in the style as for the painter to put into his portrait the living soul of its original. The successful discrimination between original and copy depends then upon the competence of the critic, his fineness of literary feeling, his sensitiveness to style. On such points the dictum of a foreign critic is seldom of any value; one would not ask a mere labourer to pronounce on the soundness of a great engineering work, but still less would one ask a mathematician unacquainted with mechanics. To a Hindu mind well equipped for the task there ought to be no insuperable difficulty in disengaging the style of a marked poetic personality from a mass of totally different work. The verdict of great artistic critics on the genuineness of a professed Old Master may not be infallible, but if formed on a patient study of the technique & spirit of the work, it has at least considerable chances of being correct. But the technique & spirit of poetry are far less easy to catch by an imitator than those of great painting, the charm [of] words being more elusive & unanalysable than that of line & colour.

In unravelling the Mahabharata especially the peculiar & inimitable nature of the style of Vyasa immensely lightens the difficulties of criticism. Had his been poetry of which the predominant grace was mannerism, it would have been imitable with some closeness; or even had it been a rich & salient style like Shakespeare's, Kalidasa's or Valmekie's, certain externals of it might be reproduced by a skilled hand and the task of discernment rendered highly delicate and perilous. Yet even in such styles to the finest minds the presence or absence of an unanalysable personality within the manner of expression would be always perceptible. The second layer of the Mahabharata is distinctly Ramayanistic in style, yet it would be a gross criticism that could confuse it with Valmekie's own work; the difference as is always the case in imitations of great poetry, is as palpable as the similarity.[1] Some familiar examples may be taken from English literature. Crude as is the composition & treatment of the three parts [of] King Henry VI, its style unformed & everywhere full of echoes, yet when we get such lines as

Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just
And he but naked though locked up in steel
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted,

we cannot but feel that we are listening to the same poetic voice as in Richard III

shadows tonight
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard
Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers
Armed in proof and led by shallow Richmond.

or in Julius Caesar

The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interrèd with their bones.

or in the much later & richer vein of Antony & Cleopatra

I am dying, Egypt, dying; only
I here importune death awhile, until
Of many thousand kisses the poor last
I lay upon thy lips.

---

[1] *Here an incomplete sentence is written between the lines in the manuscript:* This unanalysable quantity is as sure

I have purposely selected passages of perfect simplicity and straightforwardness, because they appear to be the most imitable part of Shakespeare's work & are really the least imitable. Always one hears the same voice, the same personal note of style sounding through these very various passages, and one feels that there is in all the intimate & unmistakeable personality of Shakespeare. We turn next & take two passages from Marlowe, a poet whose influence counted for much in the making of Shakespeare, one from Faustus

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?

and another from Edward II

> I am that cedar, shake me not too much;
> And you the eagles; soar ye ne'er so high,
> I have the jesses that will pull you down;
> And Aeque tandem shall that canker cry
> Unto the proudest peer in Brittany.

The choice of words, the texture of style has a certain similarity, the run of the sentences differs little if at all; but what fine literary sense does not feel that here is another poetical atmosphere and the ring of a different voice? And yet to put a precise name on the difference would not be easy. The personal difference becomes still more marked if we take a passage from Milton in which the nameable merits are precisely the same, a simplicity in strength of diction, thought & the run of the verse "What though the field be lost".[2] And when we pass farther down in the stream of literature & read "Thy thunder, conscious of the new command"[3] we feel that the poet has nourished his genius on the greatness of Milton till his own soft & luxurious style rises into epic vigour; yet we feel too that the lines are only Miltonic, they are not Milton.

---

[2] Paradise Lost *1.105. This sentence and the next were written in the margins of the manuscript. Sri Aurobindo apparently intended to cite longer passages. — Ed.*

[3] *Keats*, Hyperion *1.60. — Ed.*

Now there are certain great poetical styles which are of a kind apart; they are so extraordinarily bare and restrained that the untutored mind often wonders what difficulty there can be in writing poetry like that; yet when the attempt is made, it is found that so far as manner goes it is easier to write somewhat like Shakespeare or Homer or Valmekie than to write like these. Just because the style is so bare, has no seizable mannerism, no striking & imitable peculiarities, the failure of the imitation appears complete & unsoftened; for in such poets there is but one thing to be caught, the unanalysable note, the personal greatness which like everything that comes straight from God it is impossible to locate or limit and precisely the one that most eludes the grasp. This poetry it is always possible to distinguish with some approach to certainty from imitative or spurious work. Very fortunately the style of Vyasa is exactly such a manner of poetry. Granted therefore adhikara in the critic, that is to say a natural gift of fine literary sensitiveness & the careful cultivation of that gift until it has become as sure a lactometer as the palate of the swan which rejects the water mingled with milk & takes the milk alone, we have in the peculiar characteristics of this poetry a test of unquestionable soundness & efficacy.

But there is another objection of yet more weight & requiring as full an answer. This method of argument from style seems after all as a priori & Teutonic as any other; for there is no logical reason why the mass of writing in this peculiar style should be judged to be the original epic and not any of the three others or even part of that inferior work which was brushed aside so contemptuously. The original Mahabharata need not have been a great poem at all; it was more probably an early, rude & uncouth performance. Certain considerations however may lead us to consider our choice less arbitrary than it seems. That the War Purvas contain much of the original epic may be conceded to Professor Weber; the war is the consummation of the story & without a war there could be no Mahabharata. But the war of the Mahabharata was not a petty contest between obscure barons or a brief episode in a much larger struggle or a romantic & chivalrous emprise for the rescue of a ravished or errant beauty. It was a great political catastrophe implying the clash of a hundred nations and far-reaching political consequences; the Hindus have always considered it as the turningpoint in the history of their civilisation and the beginning of a new age, and it was long used as a historical standpoint and a date to reckon from in chronology. Such an event must have had the most considerable political causes and been caused by the collision of the most powerful personalities and the most important interests. If we find no record of or allusion to these in the poem, we shall be compelled to suppose that the poet living long after the event, regarded the war as a legend or romance which would form excellent matter for an epic and treated it accordingly. But if we find a simple and unvarnished though not necessarily connected & consecutive account of the political conditions which preceded the war and of the men who made it and their motives, we may safely say that this also is an essential part of the epic. The Iliad deals only with an episode of the legendary siege of Troy, it covers an action of [ ] days in a conflict lasting ten years, & its subject is not the Trojan War but the Wrath of Achilles. Homer was under no obligation therefore to deal with the political causes that led to hostilities, even supposing he knew them. The Mahabharata stands on an entirely different footing. The war there is related from beginning to end consecutively & without break, yet it is nowhere regarded as of importance sufficient to itself but depends for its interest on causes which led up to it & the characters & clashing interests it involved. The preceding events are therefore of essential importance to the epic. Without the war, no Mahabharata, is true of this epic; but without the causes of the war, no war, is equally true. And it must be remembered that the Hindu narrative poets had no artistic predilections like that of the Greeks for beginning a story in the middle. On the contrary they always preferred to begin at the beginning.

We therefore naturally expect to find the preceding political conditions and the immediate causes of the war related in the earlier part of the epic and this is precisely what we do find. Ancient India as we know, was a sort of continent, made up of many great & civilised nations who were united very much like the nations of modern Europe by an essential similarity of religion and culture rising above & beyond their marked racial peculiarities; like the nations of Europe also they were continually going to war with each other; & yet had relations of occasional struggle, of action & reaction, with the other peoples of Asia whom they regarded as barbarous races outside the pale of the Aryan civilisation. Like the continent of Europe, the ancient continent of India was subject to two opposing forces, one centripetal which was continually causing attempts at universal empire, another centrifugal which was continually impelling the empires once formed to break up again into their constituent parts: but both these forces were much stronger in their action than they have usually been in Europe.

The Aryan nations may be divided into three distinct groups, the Eastern of whom the Coshalas, Magadhas, Chedies, Videhas & Haihayas were the chief; the Central among whom the Kurus, Panchalas & Bhojas were the most considerable; and the Western & Southern of whom there were many, small, & rude but yet warlike & famous peoples; among these there seem to have been none that ever became of the first importance. Five distinct times had these great congeries of nations been welded into Empire, twice by the Ixvaacous under Mandhata son of Yuvanuswa and King Marutta, afterwards by the Haihaya Arjouna Cartoverya, again by the Ixvaacou Bhogiratha and finally by the Kuru Bharata. That the first Kuru empire was the latest is evident not only from the Kurus being the strongest nation of their time but from the significant fact that the Coshalas by this time had faded into utter & irretrievable insignificance. The rule of the Haihayas had resulted in one of the great catastrophes of early Hindu civilization; belonging to the eastern section of the Continent which was always apt to break away from the strict letter of Aryanism, they had brought themselves by their pride & violence into collision with the Brahmins with the result of a civil war in which their Empire was broken for ever by Parshurama, son of Jamadagni, and the chivalry of India massacred and for the time broken. The fall of the Haihayas left the Ixvaacous & the Bharata or Ilian dynasty of the Kurus the two chief powers of the continent. Then seems to have followed the golden age of the Ixvaacous under the beneficent empire of Bhogiratha & his descendants as far down at least as Rama. Afterwards the Coshalans, having reached their highest point, must have fallen into that state of senile decay, which once it overtakes a nation, is fatal & irremediable. They were followed by the empire of the Bharatas. By the times of Santanou, Vichitravirya and Pandou this empire had long been dissolved by the centrifugal force of Aryan politics into its constituent parts, yet the Kurus were yet among the first of the nations and the Bharata Kings of the Kurus were still looked up to as the head of civilisation. But by the time of Dhritarashtra the centripetal force had again asserted itself & the idea of another great empire loomed before the imaginations of all men; a number of nations had risen to the greatest military prestige & political force, the Panchalas under Drupada & his sons, the Bhojas under Bhishmuc & his brother Acrity who is described as equalling Parshurama in military skill & courage, the Chedies under the hero & great captain Shishupala, the Magadhas, built into a strong nation by Brihodruth; even distant Bengal under the Poundrian Vasudave and distant Sindhu under [Vriddhakshatra] and his son Jayadrath began to mean something in the reckoning of forces. The Yadava nations counted as a great military force in the balance of politics owing to their abundant heroism and genius, but seem to have lacked sufficient cohesion and unity to nurse independent hopes. Strong, however, as these nations were none seemed able to dispute the prize of the coming empire with the Kurus, until under King Jarasundha the Barhodruth Magadha for a moment disturbed the political balance. The history of the first great Magadhan hope of empire and its extinction — not to be revived again until the final downfall of the Kurus — is told very briefly in the Sabhapurva of the Mahabharata. The removal of Jarasundha restored the original state of politics and it was no longer doubtful that to the Kurus alone could fall the future empire. But here a contest arose between the elder & younger branches of the Bharata house. The question being then narrowed to a personal issue, it was inevitable that it should become largely a history of personal strife & discord; other & larger issues were involved in the dispute between the Kaurava cousins; but whatever interests, incompatibilities of temperament & differences of opinion may divide brothers, they do not engage in fratricidal conflict until they are driven to it by a long record of collision & jealousy, ever deepening personal hatreds & the worst personal injuries. We see therefore that not only the early discords, the slaying of Jarasundha & the Rajasuya sacrifice are necessary to the epic but the great gambling & the mishandling of Draupadie. It cannot, however, have been personal questions alone that affected the choice of the different nations between Duryodhana and Yudhisthere. Personal relations like the matrimonial connections of Dhritarashtra's family with the Sindhus and Gandharas and of the Pandavas with the Matsyas, Panchalas & Yadavas doubtless counted for much, but there must have been something more; personal enmities [counted] for something as in the feud cherished by the Trigartas against Arjouna. The Madras disregarded matrimonial ties when they sided with Duryodhan; the Magadhas & Chedies put aside the memory of personal wrongs when they espoused the cause of Yudhisthere. I believe the explanation we must gather from the hints of the Mahabharata is this, that the nations were divided into three classes, those who desired autonomy, those who desired to break the power of the Kurus and assert their own supremacy and those who imbued with old imperialistic notions desired an united India. The first followed Duryodhana because the empire of Duryodhana could not be more than the empire of a day while that of Yudhisthere had every possibility of permanence; even Queen Gandhari, Duryodhan's own mother, was able to hit this weak point in her son's ambition. The Rajasuya Sacrifice had also undoubtedly identified Yudhisthere in men's minds with the imperialistic impulse of the times. We are given some important hints in the Udyogapurva. When Vidura remonstrates with Krishna for coming to Hastinapura, he tells him it was highly imprudent for him to venture there knowing as he did that the city was full of kings all burning with enmity against him for having deprived them once of their greatness, driven by the fear of him to take refuge with Duryodhan and all eager to war against the Pandavas.

> आशंसते वै धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्रो महाराज्यमसपत्नं पृथिव्यां।
> तस्मिञ्छमः केवलो नोपलभ्यो बद्धं सन्तं मन्यते लब्धमर्थम् ॥
> पर्यस्तेयं पृथिवी कालपक्वा दुर्योधनार्थे पाण्डवान्योद्धुकामाः।
> समागताः सर्वयोधाः पृथिव्यां राजानश्च क्षितिपालैः समेताः॥
> सर्वे चैते कृतवैराः पुरस्तात्त्वया राजानो हृतसाराश्च कृष्ण।
> तवोद्वेगात्संश्रिता धार्तराष्ट्रान्सुसंहताः सह कर्णेन वीराः॥
> त्यक्तात्मानः सह दुर्योधनेन हृष्टा योद्धुं पाण्डवान्सर्वयोधाः।[4]

This can have no intelligible reference except to the Rajasuya sacrifice. Although it was the armies of Yudhisthere that had traversed India then on their mission of conquest, Krishna was generally recognised as the great moving & master mind whose hands of execution the Pandavas were and without whom they would have been nothing. His personality dominated men's imaginations for adoration or for hatred; for that many abhorred him as an astute & unscrupulous revolutionist in morals, politics & religion, we very clearly perceive. We have not only the fiery invectives of Shishupala but the reproach of Bhurisravas, the Vahlika, a man of high reputation & universally respected.

> येषु येषु नरः पार्थ यत्र यत्र च वर्तते।
> आशु तच्छीलतामेति तदिदं त्वयि दृश्यते॥
> कथं हि राजवंश्यस्त्वं कौरवेयो विशेषतः।
> क्षत्रधर्मादपक्रान्तः सुवृत्तश्चरितव्रतः॥
> इदन्तु यदतिक्षुद्रं वार्ष्णेयार्थे कृतं त्वया।
> वासुदेवमतं नूनं नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते॥
> को हि नाम प्रमत्ताय परेण सह युध्यते।
> ईदृशं व्यसनं दद्याद्यो न कृष्णसखो भवेत्॥
> व्रात्याः संश्लिष्टकर्माणः प्रकृत्यैव च गर्हिताः।

---

[4] *These lines (Udyoga Parva 92.23–26) are found at the top of the page in the manuscript. The next two Sanskrit quotations (Drona Parva 143.11–15 and Udyoga Parva 93.16) were written at the tops of the following two pages. Their place of insertion in the text was not indicated. — Ed.*

वृष्ण्यन्धकाः कथं पार्थ प्रमाणं भवता कृताः॥

Krishna himself is perfectly conscious of this; he tells Vidura that he must make efforts towards peace both to deliver his soul & to justify himself in the eyes of men.

न मां ब्रूयुरधर्मिष्ठा मूढा ह्यसुहृदस्तथा।
शक्तो नावारयत्कृष्णः संरब्धान्कुरुपाण्डवान्॥

The belief that Krishna's policy & statesmanship was the really effective force behind Yudhisthere's greatness, pervades the epic. But who were these nations that resented so strongly the attempt of Yudhisthere & Krishna to impose an empire on them? It is a significant fact that the Southern and Western peoples went almost solid for Duryodhana in this quarrel — Madra, the Deccan, Avanti, Sindhu Sauvira, Gandhara, in one long line from southern Mysore to northern Candahar; the Aryan colonies in the yet half civilised regions of the Lower valley of the Ganges espoused the same cause. The Eastern nations, heirs of the Ixvaacou imperial idea, went equally solid for Yudhisthere. The Central peoples, repositories of the great Kuru Panchala tradition as well as the Yadavas, who were really a Central nation though they had trekked to the West, were divided. Now this distribution is exactly what we should have expected. The nations which are most averse to enter into an imperial system & cherish most their separate existence are those which are outside the centre of civilisation, hardy, warlike, only partially refined; and their aversion is still more emphatic when they have never or only for a short time been part of an empire. This is the real secret of the invincible resistance which England has opposed to all Continental schemes of empire from Philip II to Napoleon; it is the secret of her fear of Russia; it is the reason of the singular fact that only now after many centuries of great national existence has she become imbued with the imperial idea on her own account. The savage attachment to their independence of small nations like the Dutch, the Swiss, the Boers is traceable to the same cause; the fierce resistance opposed by the greater part of Spain to Napoleon was that of a nation which once imperial & central has fallen out of the main flood of civilisation & is therefore becoming provincial & attached to its own isolation. That the nations of the East & South and the Aryan colonies in Bengal should oppose the imperialist policy of Krishna & throw in their lot with Duryodhana is therefore no more than we should expect. On the other hand nations at the very heart of civilisation, who have formed at one time or another dominant parts of an empire fall easily into imperial schemes, but personal rivalry, the desire of each to be the centre of empire, divides them and brings them into conflict not any difference of political temperament. For nations have very tenacious memories and are always attempting to renew the great ages of their past. In the Eastern peoples the imperialistic idea was very strong and having failed to assert a new empire of their own under Jarasundha, they seem to have turned with one consent to Yudhisthere as the man who could alone realise their ideal. One of Shishupal's remarks in the Rajasuya sacrifice is very significant

वयं न तु भयादस्य कौन्तेयस्य महात्मनः ।
प्रयच्छामः करान्सर्वे न लोभान्न च सान्त्वनात् ॥
अस्य धर्मे प्रवृत्तस्य पार्थिवत्वं चिकीर्षतः ।
करानस्मै प्रयच्छामः सोऽयमस्मान्न मन्यते ॥

We remember that it was an Eastern poet who had sung perhaps not many centuries before in mighty stanzas the idealisation of Imperial Government & Aryan unity and enshrined in his imperishable verse the glories of the third Coshalan Empire. The establishment of Aryan unity was in the eyes of the Eastern nations a holy work and the desire of establishing universal lordship with that view a sufficient ground for one of the most self-willed & violent princes of his time [to] put aside his personal feelings & predilections in order to farther it. Shishupal had been one of the most considerable & ardent supporters of Jarasundha in his attempt to establish a Magadhan empire; that attempt having failed he like Jarasundha's own son turned in spite of his enmity with Krishna to Yudhisthere as the coming Emperor. Even the great quarrel and the summary slaughter of Shishupal by Krishna could not divert his nation from its adhesion to the new Empire. The divisions of the Central nations follow an equally intelligible line. Throughout the Mahabharata we perceive that the great weakness of the Kurus lay in the division of their counsels. There was a peace party among them led by Bhishma, Drona, Kripa & Vidura, the wise & experienced statesmen who desired justice and reconciliation with Yudhisthere and a warparty of the hotblooded younger men led by Karna, Duhsasana & Duryodhana himself who were confident of their power of meeting the world in arms; King Dhritarashtra found himself hard put to it to flatter the opinions of the elders while secretly following his own predilections & the ambitions of the younger men. These are facts patent on the face of the epic. But it has not been sufficiently considered what a remarkable fact it is that men of such lofty character as Bhishma and Drona should have acted against their sense of right and justice and fought in what they had repeatedly condemned as an unjust cause. If Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Aswatthaman & Vikarna had plainly intimated to Duryodhan that they would support Yudhisthere with their arms or even that they would stand aloof from the war, it is clear there would have been no war at all. And I cannot but think that had it been a question purely between Kuru & Kuru, this is the course they would have adopted. But Bhishma & Drona must have perceived that behind the Pandavas were the Panchalas & Matsyas. They must have suspected that these nations were supporting Yudhisthere not out of purely disinterested motives but with certain definite political objects. Neither Drupada nor Virata would have been accepted by India as emperors in their own right, any more than say Sindhia or Holkar would have been in the last century. But by putting forward the just claims of a prince of the imperial Bharata line, the descendant of Bharata Ajamede connected with themselves by marriage, they could avoid this difficulty and at the same time break the power of the Kurus and replace them as the dominant partners in the new Empire. The presence of personal interests is evident in their hot eagerness for war and their unwillingness to take any sincere steps towards a just and peaceful solution of the difficulty. Their action stands in striking contrast with the moderate, statesmanlike yet firm policy of Krishna. It can hardly be supposed that Bhishma and the Kuru statesmen of his party were autonomists; they must have been as eager for a Kuru empire as Duryodhana himself.

At any rate they eagerly welcomed the statesmanlike reasonings of Krishna when he proposed to King Dhritarashtra to unite the force of Pandava & Kaurava & build up a Kuru empire which should irresistibly dominate the world. "On yourself & myself" says Krishna "rests today the choice of peace or war & the destiny of the world; do your part in pacifying your sons, I will see to the Pandavas."

सहायभूता भरतास्तवैव स्युर्जनेश्वर ॥
धर्मार्थयोस्तिष्ठ राजन्पाण्डवैरभिरक्षितः ।
न हि शक्यास्तथाभूता यत्नादपि नराधिप ॥
न हि त्वां पाण्डवैर्जेतुं रक्ष्यमाणं महात्मभिः ।
इन्द्रोऽपि देवैः सहितः प्रसहेत कुतो नृपाः ॥
यत्र भीष्मश्च द्रोणश्च कृपः कर्णो विविंशतिः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सोमदत्तोऽथ वाह्लिकः ॥
सैन्धवश्च कलिङ्गश्च काम्बोजश्च सुदक्षिणः ।
युधिष्ठिरो भीमसेनः सव्यसाची यमौ तथा ॥
सात्यकिश्च महातेजा युयुत्सुश्च महारथः ।
को नु तान्विपरीतात्मा युध्येत भरतर्षभ ॥
तस्य ते पृथिवीपालास्त्वत्समाः पृथिवीपते ।
श्रेयांसश्चैव राजानः सन्धास्यन्ते परन्तप ॥
स त्वं पुत्रैश्च पौत्रैश्च पितृभिर्भ्रातृभिस्तथा ।
सुहृद्भिः सर्वतो गुप्तः सुखं शक्ष्यसि जीवितुम् ॥
एतानेव पुरोधाय सत्कृत्य च यथा पुरा ।
अखिलां भोक्ष्यसे सर्वां पृथिवीं पृथिवीपते ॥
एतैर्हि सहितः सर्वैः पाण्डवैः स्वैश्च भारत ।
अन्यान्विजेष्यसे शत्रूनेष स्वार्थस्तवाखिलः ॥

तैरेवोपार्जितां भूमिं भोक्ष्यसे च परन्तप।
यदि संपत्स्यसे पुत्रैः सहामात्यैर्नराधिप॥

But the empire of Yudhisthere enforced by the arms of Mutsya & Panchala or even by the armed threats meant to Bhishma & Kripa something very different from a Kuru Empire; it must have seemed to them to imply rather the overthrow & humiliation of the Kurus and a Panchala domination under a Bharata prince. This it concerned their patriotism and their sense of Kshatriya pride & duty to resist so long as there was blood in their veins. The inability to associate justice with their cause was a grief to them, but it could not alter their plain duty. Such as I take it is the clear political story of the Mahabharata. I have very scantily indicated some of its larger aspects only; but if my interpretation be correct, it is evident that we shall have in the disengaged Mahabharata not only a mighty epic, but a historical document of unique value.

What I wish, however, to emphasize at present is that the portions of the Mahabharata which bear the high, severe and heroic style and personality I have described, are also the portions which unfold consecutively, powerfully and without any incredible embroidery of legend this story of clashing political & personal passions & ambitions. It is therefore not a mere assumption, but a perfectly reasonable inference that these portions form the original epic. If we assume that the Ramayanistic portions of the epic or the rougher & more uncouth work precede these in antiquity, we assume that the legend was written first and history added to it afterwards; this is a sequence so contrary to all experience and to all accepted canons of criticism that it would need the most indisputable proof before it could command any credence. Where there is a plain history mixed up with legendary matter written by palpably different hands, criticism judges from all precedents that the latter must be later work embodying the additions human fancy always and most in countries where a scrupulous historic sense has not been developed weaves round a great event which has powerfully occupied the national imagination. Moreover in judging the relative genuineness of different styles in the same work, we are bound to see the hand of the original writer in the essential parts of the story as we have it. It makes no difference to this question whether there was an original ballad epic or not, or whether it was used in the composition of the Mahabharata or not. We have a certain poem in a certain form and in resolving it to its original parts we must take it as we have it and not allow our judgment to be disturbed by visions of a poem which we have not. If the alleged ballad epic was included bodily or in part in the Mahabharata, our analysis will find it there without fail. If it was merely used as material just as Shakespeare used Plutarch or Hall & Holinshed, it is no longer germane to the matter. Now the most essential part of a story is the point from which the catastrophe started; in the Mahabharata this is the mishandling of Draupadie & the exile of the Pandavas; but this again leads us back to the Rajasuya sacrifice & the imperial Hall of the Pandavas from which the destroying envy of Duryodhan took its rise. In the Sabhapurva therefore we must seek omissis omittendis for the hand of the original poet; & the whole of the Sabhapurva with certain unimportant omissions is in that great & severe style which is the stamp of the personality of Vyasa. This once established we argue farther from the identity of style, treatment & personality between the Viratapurva & the Sabhapurva, certain passages being omitted, that this book is also the work of Vyasa. From these two large & mainly homogeneous bodies of poetical work we shall be able to form a sufficient picture of the great original poet, the drift of his thought and the methods of his building. This we shall then confirm, correct & supplement by a study of the Udyogapurva which up to the marching of the armies presents, though with more but still separable alloy breaking in, the same clear, continuous & discernible vein of pure gold running through it. Thus armed we may even rely on resolving roughly the tangle of the Adi & Vana Purvas and it is only when the war begins, that we shall have to admit doubt, faltering and guesswork; even here however we shall not be without some light even in its thickest darkness. That the poem can be disentangled, I hold then to be beyond dispute, but it can only be done by a long and voluminous critical analysis, and even this must be supported by a detailed edition of the whole Mahabharat in which each canto & chapter shall be discussed on its own merits. At present therefore I propose to pass over the method after once indicating its general nature and present certain definite results only. I propose solely to draw a picture, in outline merely, of the sublime poetical personality which an analysis of the work reveals as the original poet, the Krishna Dwaipayana who wrote the Bharata of the 24,000 [slokas] and not the other Vyasa, if Vyasa he was, who enlarged it to something approaching its present dimensions. And let me express at once my deep admiration of the poetical powers & vast philosophic mind of this second writer; no mean poet was he who gave us the poem we know, in many respects the greatest and most interesting & formative work in the world's literature. If I seem to speak mainly in dispraise of him, it is because I am concerned here with his defects and not with his qualities; for the subject I wish to treat is Krishna of the Island, his most important characteristics and their artistic contrast with those of our other greater, but less perfect epic poet, Valmekie.

I have said that no foreigner can for a moment be trusted to apply the literary test to a poem in our language; the extraordinary blunders of the most eminent German critics in dealing with Elizabethan plays have settled that question once for all. Educated Indians on the other hand have their own deficiencies in dealing with Vyasa; for they have [been] nourished partly on the curious and elaborate art of Kalidasa and his gorgeous pomps of vision and colour, partly on the somewhat gaudy, expensive & meretricious spirit of English poetry. Like Englishmen they are taught to profess a sort of official admiration for Shakespeare & Milton but with them as with the majority of Englishmen the poets they really steep themselves in are Shelley, Tennyson & Byron and to a less degree Keats & perhaps Spenser. Now the manner of these poets, lax, voluptuous, artificial, all outward glitter and colour, but inwardly poor of spirit and wanting in genuine mastery and the true poetical excellence is a bad school for the appreciation of such severe & perfect work as Vyasa's.

For Vyasa is the most masculine of writers.[5] When Coleridge spoke of the femineity of genius he had in mind certain features of temperament which whether justly or not are usually thought to count for more in the feminine mould than in the masculine, the love of ornament, emotionalism, mobile impressionability, the tyranny of imagination over the reason, excessive sensitiveness to form and outward beauty; a tendency to be dominated imaginatively by violence & the show of strength, to be prodigal of oneself, not to husband the powers, to be for showing them off, to fail in self-restraint is also feminine. All these are natural properties of the quick artistic temperament prone by throwing all itself outward to lose balance and therefore seldom perfectly sane and strong in all its parts. So much did these elements form the basis of Coleridge's own temperament that he could not perhaps imagine a genius in which they were wanting. Yet Goethe, Dante & Sophocles show that the very highest genius can exist without them. But none of the great poets I have named is so singularly masculine, so deficient in femineity as Vyasa, none dominates so much by intellect and personality, yet satisfies so little the romantic imagination. Indeed no poet at all near the first rank has the same granite mind in which impressions are received with difficulty but once received are ineffaceable. In his austere self-restraint and economy of power he is indifferent to ornament for its own sake, to the pleasures of poetry as distinguished from its ardours, to little graces & self-indulgences of style; the substance counts for everything & the form has to limit itself to its proper work of expressing with precision & power the substance. Even his most romantic pieces have a virgin coldness & loftiness in their beauty. To intellects fed on the elaborate pomp and imagery of Kalidasa's numbers and the somewhat gaudy, expensive & meretricious spirit of English poetry, Vyasa may seem bald and unattractive. To be fed on the verse of Spenser, Shelley, Keats, Byron & Tennyson is no good preparation for the severest of classics. It is indeed, I believe, the general impression of many "educated" young Indians that the Mahabharata is a mass of old wives' stories without a spark of poetry or imagination. But to those who have bathed even a little in the fountain-heads of poetry & can bear the keenness & purity of those mountain sources, the naked & unadorned poetry of Vyasa [is a perpetual refreshment.][6] To read him is to bathe in a chill fountain in the heats of summer; they find that one has [available an unfailing source] of tonic & [refreshment] to the soul; one [comes into relation] with a [mind] whose [bare strong contact] has the [power] of infusing strength, courage and endurance.[7] There are certain things which have this power inborn & are accordingly valued by those who have felt deeply its properties, such are the air of the mountains or the struggle to a capable mind with hardship and difficulty; the Vedanta philosophy, the ideal of the निष्काम धर्म, the poetry of Vyasa, three closely related entities, are intellectual forces that exercise a similar effect & attraction.

---

[5] *The passage below, uncancelled in the manuscript, was abandoned by Sri Aurobindo in favour of the corresponding passage in the printed text:*

Vyasa is the most masculine of writers. He has that is to say the masculine qualities, restraint, dignity, indifference to ornament, strength without ostentation, energy economised, a strong, pure and simple taste, a high & great spirit, more than any poet I know. The usual artifices of poetry, simile, metaphor, allusion, ornamental description, the decorative element of the art, he resorts to with unequalled infrequency and to a superficial or an untrained taste he appears to be even unimaginative and uninspiring.

The style of this powerful writer is perhaps the one example in literature of strength in its purity; a strength undefaced by violence & excess yet not weakened by flagging and negligence. It is even less propped or helped out by artifices and aids than any other poetical style. Vyasa takes little trouble with similes, metaphors, rhetorical turns, the usual paraphernalia of poetry; nor when he uses them, is he at pains to select such as shall be new & curiously beautiful; they are there to define more clearly what he has in mind, and he makes just enough of them for that purpose, never striving to convert them into a separate grace or a decorative element. They have force & beauty in their context but cannot be turned into elegant excerpts; in themselves they are in fact little or nothing. When Bhema is spoken of as breathing hard like a weakling borne down by a load too heavy for him, there is nothing in the simile itself. It derives its force from its aptness to the heavy burden of unaccomplished revenge which the fierce spirit of the strong man was condemned to bear. We may say the same of his epithets, that great preoccupation of romantic artists; they are such as are most natural, crisp & firm, best suited to the plain idea & only unusual when the business in hand requires an unusual thought, but never recherché or existing for their own beauty. Thus when he is describing the greatness of Krishna and hinting his claims to be considered as identical with the Godhead, he gives him the one epithet अप्रमेयः immeasurable, which is strong and unusual enough to rise to the thought, but not to be a piece of literary decoration or a violence of expression. In brief, he religiously avoids overstress; his audacities of phrase are few, and they have a grace of restraint in their boldness. There is indeed a rushing vast Valmekeian style which intervenes often in the Mahabharata; but it is evidently the work of a different hand; for it belongs to a less powerful intellect, duller poetical insight and coarser taste, which has yet caught something of the surge and cry of Valmekie's Oceanic poetry. Vyasa in fact stands at the opposite pole from Valmekie. The poet of the Ramayan has a flexible & universal genius embracing the Titanic and the divine, the human and the gigantic at once or with an inspired ease of transition. But Vyasa is unmixed Olympian; he lives in a world of pure verse and diction, enjoying his own heaven of golden clearness. We have seen what are the main negative qualities of the style; pureness, strength, grandeur of intellect & personality are its positive virtues. It is the expression of a pregnant and forceful mind, in which the idea is sufficient to itself, conscious of its own intrinsic greatness; when this mind runs in the groove of narrative or emotion, the style wears an air of high and pellucid ease in the midst of which its strenuous compactness and brevity moves & lives as a saving and strengthening spirit; but when it begins to think rapidly

---

[6] *Cancelled in manuscript. Several other words, also cancelled, were written above this phrase. The last complete version may have been "is a companion that never palls."* —*Ed.*

[7] *The words between brackets are cancelled in the manuscript. There are a number of uncancelled words between the lines whose connection with the text is not evident.* —*Ed.*

& profoundly as often happens in the great speeches, it is apt to leave the hearer behind; sufficient to itself, thinking quickly, briefly & greatly it does not care to pause on its own ideas or explain them at length, but speaks as it thinks, in a condensed often elliptical style, preferring to indicate rather than expatiate, often passing over the steps by which it should arrive at the idea and hastening to the idea itself; often also it is subtle & multiplies many shades & ramifications of thought in a short compass. From this arises that frequent knottiness & excessive compression of logical sequence, that appearance of elliptical & sometimes obscure expression, which so struck the ancient critics in Vyasa and which they expressed in the legend that when dictating the Mahabharata to Ganesha, the poet in order not to be outstripped by his divine scribe — for it was Ganesha's stipulation that not for one moment should he be left without matter to write — threw in frequently knotty and closeknit passages which forced the lightning-swift hand to pause & labour slowly over its work. To a strenuous mind these passages, from the exercise they give to the intellect, are an added charm just as a mountainclimber takes an especial delight in steep ascents which let him feel his ability. Of one thing, however, we may be confident in reading Vyasa, that the expression will always be just to the thought; he never palters with or labours to dress up the reality within him. For the rest we must evidently trace this peculiarity to the compact, steep & sometimes elliptical, but always strenuous diction of the Upanishads in which the mind of the poet was trained & his personality tempered. At the same time like the Upanishads themselves or like the enigmatic Aeschylus, he can be perfectly clear, precise & full whenever he chooses; and he more often chooses than not. His expression of thought is usually strong and abrupt; his expression of fact and of emotion strong and precise. His verse has similar peculiarities. It is a golden and equable stream that sometimes whirls itself into eddies or dashes upon rocks; but it always runs in harmony with the thought. Vyasa has not Valmekie's movement as of the sea, that wide and unbroken surge with its infinite variety of waves, which enables him not only to find in the facile anustubh metre a sufficient vehicle for his vast & ambitious work but to maintain it through [   ] couplets without its palling or losing its capacity of adjustment to evervarying moods & turns of narrative. But in his narrower limits & on the level of his lower flight Vyasa has great subtlety & finesse. Especially admirable is his use, in speeches, of broken effects such as would in less skilful hands have become veritable discords; and again in narrative of the simplest & barest metrical movements, as in the opening Surga of the Sabhapurva to create certain calculated effects. But it would be idle to pretend for him any equality as a master of verse with Valmekie. When he has to rise from his levels to express powerful emotions, grandiose eloquence or swift & sweeping narrative, he cannot always effect it in the anustubh metre; he falls back more often than not on the rolling magnificence of the [tristubh] which best sets & ennobles his strong-winged austerity.

Be its limits what one will, this is certain that there was never a style & verse of such bare, direct & resistless strength as this of Vyasa's or one that went so straight to the heart of all that is heroic in a man. Listen to the cry of insulted Draupadie to her husband

> उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ किं शेषे भीमसेन यथा मृतः ।
> नामृतस्य हि पापीयान्भार्यामालभ्य जीवति ॥

"Arise, arise, O Bhemasena, wherefore sleepest thou like one that is dead? For nought but dead is he whose wife a sinful hand has touched and lives.", or the reproach of Krishna to Arjoun for his weak pity which opens the second surga of the Bhagavadgita. Or again hear Krishna's description of Bhema's rage and solitary brooding over revenge and his taunting accusations of cowardice: "At other times, O Bhemasena, thou praisest war, thou art all for crushing Dhritarashtra's heartless sons who take delight in death; thou sleepest not at night, O conquering soldier, but wakest lying face downwards, and ever thou utterest dread speech of storm and wrath, breathing fire in the torment of thine own rage; and thy mind is without rest like a smoking fire; yea, thou liest all apart breathing heavily like a weakling distressed by his load; so that some who know not even think thee mad. For as an elephant tramples on uprooted trees and breaks them to fragments, so thou stormest along with labouring breath hurting earth with thy feet. Thou takest no delight in all the people but cursest them in thy heart, O Bhema, son of Pandou, nor in aught else hast thou any pleasure night or day; but thou sittest in secret like one weeping and sometimes of a sudden laughest aloud, yea, thou sittest for long with thy head between thy knees & thy eyes closed; and then again thou starest before thee frowning and clenching thy teeth; thy every action is one of wrath. 'Surely as our father Sun is seen in the East when luminously he ascendeth, & surely as wide with rays he wheeleth down to his release in the West, so sure is this oath I utter and never shall be broken. With this club I will meet & slay the haughty Duryodhan', thus touching thy club thou swearest among thy brothers. And today thou, thou!, thinkest of peace, O warrior! Ah yes, I know the hearts of those that clamour for war, alter very strangely when war showeth its face, since fear findeth out even thee, O Bhema! Ah yes, son of Pritha, thou seest adverse omens both when thou sleepest & when thou wakest, therefore thou desirest peace. Ah yes, thou feelest no more the man in thyself, but an eunuch & thy heart sinketh with alarm, therefore art thou thus overcome. Thy heart quakes, thy mind fainteth, thou art seized with a trembling in thy thighs, therefore thou desirest peace. Verily, O son of Pritha, wavering & inconstant is the heart of a mortal man, like the pods of the silk cotton driven by the swiftness of every wind. This shameful thought of thine, monstrous as a human voice in a dumb beast, makes the hearts of Pandou's sons to sink like (shipwrecked) men that have no raft. Look on thine own deeds, O seed of Bharat, remember thy lofty birth! arise, put off thy weakness; be firm, O heart of a hero; unworthy of thee is this languor; what he cannot win by the mightiness of him, that a Kshatriya will not touch."

This passage I have quoted at some length because it is eminently characteristic of Vyasa's poetical method. Another poet would have felt himself justified by the nature of the speech in using some wild and whirling words, in seeking vividness by exaggeration, at the very least in raising his voice a little. Contrast with this the perfect temperance of this passage, the confident & unemotional reliance on the weight of what is said, not on the manner of saying it. The vividness of the portraiture arises from the quiet accuracy of vision and the care in the choice of simple but effective words; not from any seeking after the salient and graphic such as gives Kalidasa his wonderful power of description; and the bitterness of the taunts arises from the quiet & searching irony with which [each] shaft is tipped and not from any force used in driving them home. Yet every line goes straight as an arrow to its mark; every word is the utterance of a strong man speaking to a strong man and gives iron to the mind. Strength is one constant term of the Vyasic style; temperance, justness of taste is the other.

Strength and a fine austerity are then the two tests which give us safe guidance through the morass of the Mahabharata; where these two exist together, we may reasonably presume some touch of Vyasa; where they do not exist or do not conjoin, we feel at once the redactor or the interpolator. I have spoken of another poet whose more turbid & vehement style breaks continually into the pure gold of Vyasa's work. The whole temperament of this redacting poet, for he is something more than an interpolator, has its roots in Valmekie; but like most poets of a secondary and fallible genius, he exaggerates while adopting the more audacious and therefore the more perilous tendencies of his master. The love of the wonderful touched with the grotesque, the taste for the amorphous, a marked element in Valmekie's complex temperament, is with his follower something like a malady. He grows impatient with the apparent tameness of Vyasa's inexorable self-restraint, and restlessly throws in here couplets, there whole paragraphs of a more flamboyant vigour. Occasionally this is done with real ability & success, but as a rule they are true purple patches, daubs of paint on the stainless dignity of marble. For his rage for the wonderful is not always accompanied by the prodigious sweep of imagination which in

Valmekie successfully grasps and compels the most reluctant materials. The result is that puerilities and gross breaches of taste fall easily & hardily from his pen. Not one of these could we possibly imagine as consistent with the severe, self-possessed intellect of Vyasa. Fineness, justness, discrimination & propriety of taste are the very soul of the man.

Nowhere is his restrained & quiet art more visible than when he handles the miraculous. But since the Mahabharata is so honeycombed with the work of inept wondermongers, we are driven for an undisturbed appreciation of it to works which are no parts of the original Mahabharata and are yet by the same hand, the Nala & the Savitrie. These poems have all the peculiar qualities which we have decided to be very Vyasa, the style, the diction, the personality are identical and refer us back to him as clearly as the sunlight refers us back to the sun; and yet they have something which the Mahabharata has not. Here we have the very morning of Vyasa's genius, when he was young and ardent; perhaps still under the immediate influence of Valmekie (one of the most pathetic touches in the Nala is borrowed straight out of the Ramayana); at any rate able without ceasing to be finely restrained to give some rein to his fancy. The Nala therefore has the delicate & unusual romantic grace of a young & severe classic who has permitted himself to go-a-maying in the fields of romance. There is a remote charm of restraint in the midst of abandon, of vigilance in the play of fancy which is passing sweet & strange. The Savitrie is a maturer & nobler work, perfect & restrained in detail, but it has still some glow of the same youth and grace over it. This then is the rare charm of these two poems that we find there the soul of the pale & marble Rishi, the austere philosopher, the great statesman, the strong and stern poet of war & empire, when it was yet in its radiant morning, far from the turmoil of courts & cities & the roar of the battlefield and had not yet scaled the mountaintops of thoughts. Young, a Brahmachari & a student, Vyasa dwelt with the green silences of earth, felt the fascination & loneliness of the forests of which his earlier poetry is full, walked by many a clear & lucid river white with the thronging waterfowl, perhaps Payoshni, that ocean-seeking stream, or heard the thunder of multitudinous crickets in some lone tremendous forest; with Valmekie's mighty stanzas in his mind, saw giant-haunted glooms, dells where faeries gathered, brakes where some Python from the underworld came out to bask or listened to the voices of Kinnaries on the mountaintops. In such surroundings wonders might seem natural and deities as in Arcadia might peep from under every tree. Nala's messengers to Damayanti are a troop of goldenwinged swans that speak with a human voice; he is intercepted on his way by gods who make him their envoy to a mortal maiden; he receives from them gifts more than human; fire and water come to him at his bidding and flowers bloom in his hands; in his downfall the dice become birds which fly away with his remaining garment; when he wishes to cut in half the robe of Damayanti, a sword comes ready to his hand in the desolate cabin; he meets the Serpent-King in the ring of fire and is turned by him into the deformed charioteer, Vahuka; the tiger in the forest turns away from Damayanti without injuring her and the lustful hunter falls consumed by the power of offended chastity. The destruction of the caravan by wild elephants, the mighty driving of Nala, the counting of the leaves of the [ ], the cleaving of the Vibhitaka tree; every incident almost is full of that sense of beauty & wonder which were awakened in Vyasa by his early surroundings. We ask whether this beautiful fairy-tale is the work of that stern and high poet with whom the actualities of life were everything and the flights of fancy counted for so little. Yet if we look carefully, we shall see in the Nala abundant proof of the severe touch of Vyasa, just as in his share of the Mahabharata fleeting touches of wonder & strangeness, gone as soon as glimpsed, evidence a love of the ultranatural, severely bitted and reined in. Especially do we see the poet of the Mahabharata in the artistic vigilance which limits each supernatural incident to a few light strokes, to the exact place and no other where it is wanted & the exact amount and no more that is necessary. (It is this sparing economy of touch almost unequalled in its beauty of just rejection, which makes the poem an epic instead of a fairy tale in verse.) There is for instance the incident of the swans; we all know to what prolixities of pathos & bathos vernacular poets like the Gujarati Premanund have enlarged this feature of the story. But Vyasa introduced it to give a certain touch of beauty & strangeness and that touch once imparted the swans disappear from the scene; for his fine taste felt that to prolong the incident by one touch more would have been to lower the poem and run the risk of raising a smile. Similarly in the Savitrie what a tremendous figure a romantic poet would have made of Death, what a passionate struggle between the human being and the master of tears and partings! But Vyasa would have none of this; he had one object, to paint the power of a woman's silent love and he rejected everything which went beyond this or which would have been merely decorative. We cannot regret his choice. There have been plenty of poets who could have given us imaginative and passionate pictures of Love struggling with Death, but there has been only one who could give us a Savitrie.

In another respect also the Nala helps us materially to appreciate Vyasa's genius. His dealings with nature are a strong test of a poet's quality; but in the Mahabharata proper, of all epics the most pitilessly denuded of unnecessary ornament, natural description is rare. We must therefore again turn for aid to the poems which preceded his hard and lofty maturity. Vyasa's natural description as we find it there, corresponds to the nervous, masculine and hardstrung make of his intellect. His treatment is always puissant and direct without any single pervasive atmosphere except in sunlit landscapes, but always effectual, realizing the scene strongly or boldly by a few simple but sufficient words. There are some poets who are the children of Nature, whose imagination is made of her dews, whose blood thrills to her with the perfect impulse of spiritual kinship; Wordsworth is of these and Valmekie. Their voices in speaking of her unconsciously become rich and liquid and their words are touched with a subtle significance of thought or emotion. There are others who hold her with a strong sensuous grasp by virtue of a ripe, sometimes an overripe delight in beauty; such are Shakespeare, Keats, Kalidasa. Others again approach her with a fine or clear intellectual sense of her charm as do some of the old classical poets. Hardly in the rank of poets are those who like Dryden & Pope use her, if at all, only to provide them with a smooth or well-turned literary expression. Vyasa belongs to none of these, and yet often touches the first three at particular points without definitely coinciding with any. He takes the kingdom of Nature by violence. Approaching her from outside his masculine genius forces its way to her secret, insists and will take no denial. Accordingly he is impressed at first contact by the harmony in the midst of variety of her external features, absorbs these into a strong and retentive imagination, meditates on them and so reads his way to the closer impression, the inner sense behind that which is external, the personal temperament of a landscape. In his record of what he has seen, this impression more often than not comes first as that which abides & prevails; sometimes it is all he cares to record; but his tendency towards perfect faithfulness to the vision within leads him, when the scene is still fresh to his eye, to record the data through which the impression was reached. We have all experienced the way in which our observation of a scene, conscious or unconscious, forms itself out of various separate & often uncoordinated impressions, which if we write a description at the time or soon after and are faithful to ourselves, find their way into the picture even at the expense of symmetry; but if we allow a long time to elapse before we recall the scene, there returns to us only a single self-consistent impression which without accurately rendering it, retains its essence and its atmosphere. Something of this sort occurs in our poet; for Vyasa is always faithful to himself. When he records the data of his impression, he does it with force and clearness, frequently with a luminous atmosphere around the object, especially with a delight in the naked beauty of the single clear word which at once communicates itself to the hearer. First come the strong and magical epithets or the brief and puissant touches by which the soul of the landscape is made visible and palpable, then the enumeration sometimes only stately, at others bathed in a clear loveliness. The fine opening of the twelfth surga of the Nala is a signal example of this method. At the threshold we have the great & sombre line वनं प्रतिभयं शून्यं झिल्लिकागणनादितं।

> A void tremendous forest thundering
> With crickets

striking the keynote of gloom & loneliness, then the cold stately enumeration of the forest's animal & vegetable peoples, then again the strong and revealing epithet in his "echoing woodlands sound-pervaded"; then follows "river & lake and pool and many beasts and many birds" and once more the touch of wonder & weirdness

> She many alarming shapes
> of fiend and snake and giant. . . . .
> . . . . . . beheld;

making magical the bare following lines and especially the nearest, पल्वलानि तडागानि गिरिकूटानि सर्वशः "and pools & tarns & summits everywhere", with its poetical delight in the bare beauty of words. It is instructive to compare with this passage the wonderful silhouette of night in Valmekie's Book of the Child

> निष्पन्दास्तरवः सर्वे निलीना मृगपक्षिणः।
> नैशेन तमसा व्याप्ता दिशश्च रघुनन्दन॥
> शनैर्विसृज्यते सन्ध्या नभो नेत्रैरिवावृतम्।
> नक्षत्रतारागहनं ज्योतिर्भिरवभासते॥
> उत्तिष्ठते च शीतांशुः शशी लोकतमोनुदः।
> ह्लादयन्प्राणिनां लोके मनांसि प्रभया स्वया॥
> नैशानि सर्वभूतानि विचरन्ति ततस्ततः।
> यक्षराक्षससङ्घाश्च रौद्राश्च पिशिताशनाः॥

"Motionless are all trees and shrouded the beasts & birds and the quarters filled, O joy of Raghu, with the glooms of night; slowly the sky parts with evening and grows full of eyes; dense with stars & constellations it glitters with points of light; and now yonder with cold beams rising up the moon thrusts away the shadows from the world gladdening the hearts of living things on earth with its luminousness. All creatures of the night are walking to and fro and spirit bands and troops of giants and the carrion-feeding jackals begin to roam."

Here every detail is carefully selected to produce a certain effect, the charm and weirdness of falling night in the forest; not a word is wasted, every epithet, every verb, every image is sought out and chosen so as to aid this effect, while the vowellation is subtly managed and assonance and the composition of sounds skilfully & unobtrusively woven so as to create a delicate, wary & listening movement as of one walking in the forests by moonlight and afraid that the leaves may speak under his footing or his breath grow loud enough to be heard by himself or by beings whose presence he does not see but fears. Of such delicately imaginative art as this Vyasa was not capable; he could not sufficiently turn his strength into sweetness. Neither had he that rare, salient and effective architecture of style which makes Kalidasa's "night on the verge of dawn with her faint gleaming moon and a few just-decipherable stars"

तनुप्रकाशेन विचेयतारका प्रभातकल्पा शशिनेव शर्वरी।

Vyasa's art, as I have said, is singularly disinterested निष्काम; he does not write with a view to sublimity or with a view to beauty, but because he has certain ideas to impart, certain events to describe, certain characters to portray. He has an image of these in his mind and his business is to find an expression for it which will be scrupulously just to his conception. This is by no means so facile a task as the uninitiated might imagine; it is in fact considerably more difficult than to bathe the style in colour and grace and literary elegance, for it demands vigilant concentration, firm intellectual truthfulness and unsparing rejection, the three virtues most difficult to the gadding, inventive and self-indulgent spirit of man. The art of Vyasa is therefore a great, strenuous and difficult art; but it unfitted him, as a similar spirit, unfitted the Greeks, to voice fully the outward beauty of Nature. For to delight infinitely in Nature one must be strongly possessed with the sense of colour and romantic beauty, and allow the fancy equal rights with the intellect.

For all his occasional strokes of fine Nature description he was not therefore quite at home with her. Conscious of his weakness Vyasa as he emancipated himself from Valmekie's influence, ceased to attempt a kind for which his genius was not the best fitted. He is far more in his element in the expression of the feelings, of the joy and sorrow that makes this life of men; his description of emotion far excels his description of things. When he says of Damayanti

विललाप सुदुःखिता।
भर्तृशोकपरीताङ्गी शिलातलमथाश्रिता॥

In grief she wailed,
Erect upon a cliff, her body aching
With sorrow for her husband,

the clear figure of the abandoned woman lamenting on the cliff seizes indeed the imagination, but has a lesser inspiration than the single puissant & convincing epithet भर्तृशोकपरीताङ्गी, her whole body affected with grief for her husband. Damayanti's longer laments are also of the finest sweetness & strength; there is a rushing flow of stately and sorrowful verse, the wailing of a regal grief; then as some more exquisite pain, some more piercing gust of passion traverses the heart of the mourner, golden felicities of sorrow leap out on the imagination like lightning in their swift clear greatness.

हा वीर ननु नामाहमिष्टा किल तवानघ।
अस्यामटव्यां घोरायां किं मां न प्रतिभाषसे॥

Still more strong, simple and perfect is the grief of Damayanti when she wakes to find herself alone in that desolate cabin. The restraint of phrase is perfect, the verse is clear, equable and unadorned, yet hardly has Valmekie himself written a truer utterance of emotion than this

हा नाथ हा महाराज हा स्वामिन्किं जहासि मां।
हा हतास्मि विनष्टास्मि भीतास्मि विजने वने॥
ननु नाम महाराज धर्मज्ञः सत्यवागसि।
कथमुक्त्वा तथा सत्यं सुप्तामुत्सृज्य मां गतः॥ . . .
पर्याप्तः परिहासोऽयमेतावान्पुरुषर्षभ।
भीताहमतिदुर्धर्ष दर्शयात्मानमीश्वर॥
दृश्यसे दृश्यसे राजन्नेष दृष्टोऽसि नैषध।
आवार्य गुल्मैरात्मानं किं मां न प्रतिभाषसे॥
नृशंस बत राजेन्द्र यन्मामेवङ्गतामिह।
विलपन्तीं समागम्य नाश्वासयसि पार्थिव॥
न शोचाम्यहमात्मानं न चान्यदपि किञ्चन।
कथं नु भवितास्येक इति त्वां नृप रोदिमि।
कथं नु राजंस्तृषितः क्षुधितः श्रमकर्षितः।
सायाह्ने वृक्षमूलेषु मामपश्यन्भविष्यसि॥

"Ah my lord! Ah my king! Ah my husband! why hast thou forsaken me? Alas, I am slain, I am undone; I am afraid in the lonely forest. Surely, O King, thou wert good & truthful; how then having sworn to me so, hast thou abandoned me in my sleep & fled? Long enough hast thou carried this jest of thine, O lion of men; I am frightened, O unconquerable; show thyself, my lord & prince. I see thee! I see thee! Thou art seen, lord of the Nishadhas, covering thyself there with the bushes; why dost thou not speak to me? Cruel king! that thou dost not come to me thus terrified here & wailing and comfort me! It is not for myself I grieve nor for aught else; it is for thee I weep thinking what will become of thee left all alone. How wilt thou fare under some tree at evening hungry & thirsty & weary not beholding me, O my King?"

The whole of this passage with its first pang of terror & the exquisite anticlimax "I am slain, I am undone, I am afraid in the desert wood" passing quickly into sorrowful reproach, the despairing & pathetic attempt to delude herself by thinking the whole a practical jest, and the final outburst of that deep maternal love which is a part of every true woman's passion, is great in its truth & simplicity. Steep and unadorned is Vyasa's style, but at times it has far more power to move & to reach the heart than more elaborate & ambitious poetry.

As Vyasa progressed in years, his personality developed towards intellectualism and his manner of expressing emotion became sensibly modified. In the Savitrie he first reveals his power of imparting to the reader a sense of poignant but silent feeling, feeling in the air, unexpressed or rather expressed in action, sometimes even in very silence; this power is a notable element in some of the great scenes of the Mahabharata; the silence of the Pandavas during the mishandling of Draupadie, the mighty silence of Krishna while the assembly of kings rage and roar around him and Shishupal again & again hurls forth on him his fury & contempt and the hearts of all men are troubled, the stern self-restraint of his brothers when Yudhisthere is smitten by Virata; are instances of the power I mean. In the Mahabharata proper we find few expressions of pure feeling, none at least which have the triumphant power of Damayanti's laments in the Nala. Vyasa had by this time taken his bent; his heart and imagination had become filled with the pomp of thought and genius and the greatness of all things mighty and bold and regal; when therefore his characters feel powerful emotion, they are impelled to express it in the dialect of thought. We see the heart in their utterances but it is not the heart in its nakedness, it is not the heart of the common man; or rather it is the universal heart of man but robed in the intellectual purple. The note of Sanscrit poetry is always aristocratic; it has no answer to the democratic feeling or to the modern sentimental cult of the average man, but deals with exalted, large and aspiring natures, whose pride it is that they do not act like common men (प्राकृतो जनः). They are the great spirits, the महाजनाः, in whose footsteps the world follows. Whatever sentimental objections may be urged against this high and arrogating spirit, it cannot be doubted that a literature pervaded with the soul of hero worship and noblesse oblige and full of great examples is eminently fitted to elevate and strengthen a nation and prepare it for a great part in history. It was as Sanscrit literature ceased to be universally read and understood, as it became more & more confined to the Brahmins that the spirit of our nation began to decline. And it is because the echoes of that literature still lasted that the nation even in its downfall has played not altogether an ignoble part, that it has never quite consented as so many formerly great nations have done to the degradation Fate seemed determined to impose on it, that it has always struggled to assert itself, to live, to be something in the world of thought and action. And with this high tendency of the literature there is no poet who is so deeply imbued as Vyasa. Even the least of his characters is an intellect and a personality and of intellect and personality their every utterance reeks, as it were, and is full. I have already quoted the cry of Draupadie to Bhema; it is a supreme utterance of insulted feeling, and yet note how it expresses itself, in the language of intellect; in a thought.

> उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ किं शेषे भीमसेन यथा मृतः ।
> नामृतस्य हि पापीयान्भार्यामालभ्य जीवति ॥

The whole personality of Draupadie breaks out in that cry, her chastity, her pride, her passionate & unforgiving temper, but it flashes out not in an expression of pure feeling, but in a fiery and pregnant apophthegm. It is this temperament, this dynamic force of intellectualism blended with heroic fire and a strong personality that gives its peculiar stamp to Vyasa's writing and distinguishes it from that of all other epic poets. The heroic & profoundly intellectual national type of the great Bharata races, the Kurus, Bhojas and Panchalas who created the Veda & the Vedanta, find in Vyasa their fitting poetical type and exponent, just as the mild and delicately moral temper of the more eastern Coshalas has realised itself in Valmekie and through the Ramayana so largely dominated Hindu character. Steeped in the heroic ideals of the Bharata, attuned to their profound and daring thought & temperament, Vyasa has made himself the poet of the highminded Kshatriya caste, voices their resonant speech, breathes their aspiring and unconquerable spirit, mirrors their rich and varied life with a loving detail and moves through his subject with a swift yet measured movement like the march of an army towards battle.

A comparison with Valmekie is instructive of the varying genius of these great masters. Both excel in epical rhetoric — if such a term as rhetoric can be applied to Vyasa's direct & severe style, but Vyasa's has the air of a more intellectual, reflective & experienced stage of poetical advance. The longer speeches in the Ramayan, those even which have most the appearance of set, argumentative oration, proceed straight from the heart; the thoughts, words, reasonings come welling up from the dominant emotion or conflicting feelings of the speaker; they palpitate and are alive with the vital force from which they have sprung. Though belonging to a more thoughtful, gentle and cultured civilisation than Homer's they have, like his, the large utterance which is not of primitive times, but of the primal emotions. Vyasa's have a powerful but austere force of intellectuality. In expressing character they firmly expose it rather than spring half-unconsciously from it; their bold and finely-planned consistency with the original conception reveals rather the conscientious painstaking of an inspired but reflective artist than the more primary and impetuous creative impulse. In their management of emotion itself a similar difference becomes prominent. Valmekie when giving utterance to a mood or passion simple or complex, surcharges every line, every phrase, turn of words or movement of verse with it; there are no lightning flashes but a great depth of emotion swelling steadily, inexhaustibly and increasingly in a wonder of sustained feeling, like a continually rising wave with low crests of foam. Vyasa has a high level of style with a subdued emotion behind it occasionally breaking into poignant outbursts. It is by sudden beauties that he rises above himself and not only exalts, stirs and delights as at his ordinary level, but memorably seizes the heart and imagination. This is the natural result of his peculiarly disinterested art which never seeks out anything striking for its own sake, but admits it only when it arises uncalled from the occasion.

From this difference in temper and mode of expression arises a difference in the mode also of portraying character.

Vyasa's knowledge of character is not so intimate, emotional and sympathetic as Valmekie's; it has more of a heroic inspiration, less of a divine sympathy. He has reached it not like Valmekie immediately through the heart and imagination, but deliberately through intellect and experience, a deep criticism and reading of men; the spirit of shaping imagination has come afterwards like a sculptor using the materials labour has provided for him. It has not been a light leading him into the secret places of the heart. Nevertheless the characterisation, however reached, is admirable and firm. It is the fruit of a lifelong experience, the knowledge of a statesman who has had much to do with the ruling of men and has been himself a considerable part in some great revolution full of astonishing incidents and extraordinary characters. With that high experience his brain and his soul are full. It has cast his imagination into colossal proportions & provided him with majestic conceptions which can dispense with all but the simplest language for expression; for they are so great that the bare precise statement of what is said and done seems enough to make language epical. His character-drawing indeed is more epic, less psychological than Valmekie's. Truth of speech and action give us the truth of nature and it is done with strong purposeful strokes that have the power to move the heart & enlarge and ennoble the imagination which is what we mean by the epic in poetry. In Valmekie there are marvellous & revealing touches which show us the secret something in character usually beyond the expressive power either of speech or action; they are touches oftener found in the dramatic artist than the epic, and seldom fall within Vyasa's method. It is the difference between strong and purposeful artistic synthesis and the beautiful subtle & involute symmetry of an organic existence evolved and inevitable rather than shaped or purposed.

Vyasa is therefore less broadly human than Valmekie, he is at the same time a wider & more original thinker. His supreme intellect rises everywhere out of the mass of insipid or turbulent redaction and interpolation with bare and grandiose outlines. A wide searching mind, historian, statesman, orator, a deep and keen looker into ethics and conduct, a subtle and high aiming politician, a theologian & philosopher, — it is not for nothing that Hindu imagination makes the name of Vyasa loom so large in the history of Aryan thought and attributes to him work so important and manifold. The wideness of the man's intellectual empire is evident throughout his work; we feel the presence of the Rishi, the original thinker who has enlarged the boundaries of ethical & religious outlook.

Modern India, since the Musulman advent, has accepted the politics of Chanakya in preference to Vyasa's. Certainly there was little in politics concealed from that great and sinister spirit. Yet Vyasa perhaps knew its subtleties quite as well, but he had to ennoble and guide him a high ethical aim and an august imperial idea. He did not, like European imperialism, unable to rise above the idea of power, accept the Jesuitic doctrine of any means to a good end, still less justify the goodness of the end by that profession of an utterly false disinterestedness which ends in the soothing belief that plunder, arson, outrage & massacre are committed for the good of the slaughtered nation. Vyasa's imperialism frankly accepts war & empire as the result of man's natural lust for dominion, but demands that empire should be won by noble and civilized methods, not in the spirit of the savage, and insists once it is won not on its powers, but on its duties. Valmekie too has included politics in his wide sweep; his picture of an ideal imperialism is sound and noble and the spirit of the Coshalan Ixvaacous that monarchy must be broad-based on the people's will and yet broader-based on justice, truth and good government, is admirably developed as an undertone of the poem. But it is an undertone only, not as in the Mahabharata its uppermost and weightiest drift. Valmekie's approach to politics is imaginative, poetic, made from outside. He is attracted to it by the unlimited curiosity of an universal mind and still more by the appreciation of a great creative artist; only therefore when it gives opportunities for a grandiose imagination or is mingled with the motives of conduct and acts on character. He is a poet who makes occasional use of public affairs as part of his wide human subject. The reverse may with some appearance of truth be said of Vyasa that he is interested in human action and character mainly as they move and work in relation to a large political background.

His deep preoccupation with the ethical issues of speech and action is very notable. His very subject is one of practical ethics, the establishment of a Dharmyarajya, an empire of the just, by which is meant no millennium of the saints but the practical ideal of a government with righteousness, purity and unselfish toil for the common good as its saving principles.[8] It is true that Valmekie has a more humanely moral spirit than Vyasa, in as much as ordinary morality is most effective when steeped in emotion, proceeding from the heart & acting through the heart. Vyasa's ethics like everything else in him takes a double stand on intellectual scrutiny and acceptance and on personal strength of character; his characters having once adopted by intellectual choice & in harmony with their temperaments a given line of conduct, throw the whole heroic force of their nature into its pursuit. He is therefore preeminently a poet of action. Krishna is his authority in all matters religious and ethical and it is noticeable that Krishna lays far more stress on action and far less on quiescence than any other Hindu philosopher. Quiescence in God is with him as with others the ultimate goal of existence; but he insists that this quiescence must be reached through action and so far as this life is concerned, must exist in action; quiescence of the soul from desires there must be but there should not be and there cannot be quiescence of the Prakriti from action.

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च सन्न्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥
न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥ . . . .
नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।
शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिध्येदकर्मणः ॥

"Not by refraining from actions can a man enjoy actionlessness nor by mere renunciation does he reach his soul's perfection; for no man in the world can even for one moment remain without doing works; everyone is forced to do works, whether he will or not, by the primal qualities born of Prakriti. . . . Thou do action self-controlled (or else "thou do action ever"), for action is better than inaction; if thou actest not, even the maintenance of thy body cannot be effected."

---

[8] *This sentence was written at the top of the manuscript page. It seems to have been meant for insertion here. — Ed.*

Hence it follows that merely to renounce action and flee from the world to a hermitage is but vanity, and that those who rely on such a desertion of duty for attaining God lean on a broken reed. The professed renunciation of action is only a nominal renunciation, for they merely give up one set of actions to which they are called for another to which in a great number of cases they have no call or fitness. If they have that fitness, they may certainly attain God, but even then action is better than Sannyasa. Hence the great & pregnant paradox that in action is real actionlessness, while inaction is merely another form of action itself.

> कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन्।
> इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते॥ . . .
> सन्न्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ।
> तयोस्तु कर्मसन्न्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते॥
> ज्ञेयः स नित्यसन्न्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति।
> निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते॥
> कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः।
> स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत्॥

"He who quells his sense-organs of action but sits remembering in his heart the objects of sense, that man of bewildered soul is termed a hypocrite." "Sannyasa (renunciation of works) and Yoga through action both lead to the highest good but of the two Yoga through action is better than renunciation of action. Know him to be the perpetual Sannyasi who neither loathes nor longs; for he, O great-armed, being free from the dualities is easily released from the chain." "He who can see inaction in action and action in inaction, he is the wise among men, he does all actions with a soul in union with God."

From this lofty platform the great creed rises to its crowning ideas, for since we must act but neither for any human or future results of action nor for the sake of the action itself, and yet action must have some goal to which it is devoted, there is no goal left but God. We must devote then our actions to God & through that rise to complete surrender of the personality to him, whether in the idea of him manifest through Yoga or the idea of him Unmanifest through Godknowledge. "They who worship me as the imperishable, illimitable, unmanifest, controlling all the organs, oneminded to all things, they doing good to all creatures attain to me. But far greater is their pain of endeavour whose hearts cleave to the Unmanifest; for hardly can salvation in the unmanifest be attained by men that have a body. But they who reposing all actions in Me, to Me devoted contemplate and worship me in singleminded Yoga, speedily do I become their saviour from the gulfs of death & the world, for their hearts, O Partha, have entered into me. On Me repose thy mind, pour into Me thy reason, in Me wilt thou have then thy dwelling, doubt it not. Yet if thou canst not steadfastly repose thy mind in Me, desire, O Dhananjaya, to reach me by Yoga through askesis. If that too thou canst not, devote thyself to action for Me; since also by doing actions for My sake thou wilt attain thy soul's perfection. If even for this thou art too feeble then abiding in Yoga with me with a soul subdued abandon utterly desire for the fruits of action. For better than askesis is knowledge, and better than knowledge is concentration and better than concentration is renunciation of the fruit of deeds, for upon such renunciation followeth the soul's peace". Such is the ladder which Vyasa has represented Krishna as building up to God with action for its firm & sole basis. If it is questioned whether the Bhagavadgita is the work of Vyasa (whether he be Krishna of the Island is another question to be settled on its own merits), I answer that there is nothing to disprove his authorship, while on the other hand allowing for the exigencies of philosophical exposition the style is undoubtedly either his or so closely modelled on his as to defy differentiation. Moreover the whole piece is but the philosophical justification and logical enlargement of the gospel of action, preached by Krishna in the Mahabharat proper, the undoubted work of this poet. I have here no space for anything more than a quotation. Sanjaya has come to the Pandavas from Dhritarashtra and dissuaded them from battle in a speech taught him by that wily & unwise monarch; it is skilfully aimed at the most subtle weakness of the human heart, representing the abandonment of justice & their duty as a holy act of self-abnegation and its pursuit as no better than wholesale murder and parricide. It is better for the sons of Pandou to be dependents, beggars & exiles all their lives than to enjoy the earth by the slaughter of their brothers, kinsmen and spiritual guides: contemplation is purer & nobler than action & worldly desires. Although answering firmly to the envoy, the children of Pandou are in their hearts shaken; for as Krishna afterward tells Karna, when the destruction of a nation is at hand wrong comes to men's eyes clothed in the garb of right. Sanjaya's argument is one Christ & Buddha would have endorsed; Christ & Buddha would have laboured to confirm the Pandavas in their scruples. On Krishna rests the final word & his answer is such as to shock seriously the conventional ideas of a religious teacher to which Christianity & Buddhism have accustomed us. In a long & powerful speech he deals at great length with Sanjaya's arguments. We must remember therefore that he is debating a given point and speaking to men who have not like Arjouna the adhikar to enter into the "highest of all mysteries". We shall then realise the close identity between his teaching here and that of the Gita.

अस्मिन्विधौ वर्तमाने यथावदुच्चावचा मतयो ब्राह्मणानाम्।
कर्मणाहुः सिद्धिमेके परत्र हित्वा कर्म विद्यया सिद्धिमेके।
नाभुञ्जानो भक्ष्यभोज्यस्य तृप्येद्विद्वानपीह विहितं ब्राह्मणानाम्॥
या वै विद्याः साधयन्तीह कर्म तासां फलं विद्यते नेतरासाम्।
तत्रेह वै दृष्टफलं तु कर्म पीत्वोदकं शाम्यति तृष्णयार्तः॥

> सोऽयं विधिर्विहितः कर्मणैव संवर्तते सञ्जय तत्र कर्म।
> तत्र योऽन्यत्कर्मणः साधु मन्येन्मोघं तस्यालपितं दुर्बलस्य॥
> कर्मणापि भान्ति देवाः परत्र कर्मणैव प्लवते मातरिश्वा।
> अहोरात्रे विदधत्कर्मणैव अतन्द्रितो नित्यमुदेति सूर्यः॥
> मासार्धमासानथ नक्षत्रयोगानतन्द्रितश्चन्द्रमाश्चाभ्युपैति।
> अतन्द्रितो दहते जातवेदाः समिध्यमानः कर्म कुर्वन् प्रजाभ्यः॥
> अतन्द्रिता भारमिमं महान्तं बिभर्ति देवी पृथिवी बलेन।
> अतन्द्रिताः शीघ्रमपो वहन्ति सन्तर्पयन्त्यः सर्वभूतानि नद्यः॥
> अतन्द्रितो वर्षति भूरितेजाः सन्नादयन्नन्तरीक्षं दिशश्च।
> अतन्द्रितो ब्रह्मचर्यं चचार श्रेष्ठत्वमिच्छन्बलभिद्देवतानाम्॥
> हित्वा सुखं मनसश्च प्रियाणि तेन शक्रः कर्मणा श्रैष्ठ्यमाप।
> सत्यं धर्ममप्रमत्तो

The drift of Vyasa's ethical speculation has always a definite and recognizable tendency; there is a basis of customary morality and there is a higher ethic of the soul which abolishes in its crowning phase the terms virtue and sin, because to the pure all things are pure through an august and selfless disinterestedness. This ethic takes its rise naturally from the crowning height of the Vedantic philosophy, where the soul becomes conscious of its identity with God who whether acting or actionless is untouched by either sin or virtue. But the crown of the Vedanta is only for the highest; the moral calamities that arise from the attempt of an unprepared soul to identify Self with God is sufficiently indicated in the legend of Indra and Virochana. Similarly this higher ethic is for the prepared, the initiated only, because the raw and unprepared soul will seize on the nondistinction between sin and virtue without first compassing the godlike purity without which such nondistinction is neither morally admissible nor actually conceivable. From this arises the unwillingness of Hinduism, so ignorantly attributed by Europeans to priestcraft and the Brahmin, to shout out its message to the man in the street or declare its esoteric thought to the shoeblack & the kitchenmaid. The sword of knowledge is a doubleedged weapon; in the hands of the hero it can save the world, but it must not be made a plaything for children. Krishna himself ordinarily insists on all men following the duties & rules of conduct to which they are born and to which the cast of their temperaments predestined them. Arjouna he advises, if incapable of rising to the higher moral altitudes, to fight in a just cause because that is the duty of the caste, the class of souls to which he belongs. Throughout the Mahabharata he insists on this standpoint that every man must meet the duties to which his life calls him in a spirit of disinterestedness, — not, be it noticed, of self-abnegation, which may be as much a fanaticism and even a selfishness as the grossest egoism itself. It is because Arjouna has best fulfilled this ideal, has always lived up to the practice of his class in a spirit of disinterestedness and self-mastery that Krishna loves him above all human beings and considers him and him alone fit to receive the higher initiation.

> स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः सनातनः ।
> भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥

“This is that ancient Yoga which I tell thee today; because thou art My adorer and My heart’s comrade; for this is the highest mystery of all.”

And even the man who has risen to the heights of the initiation must cleave for the good of society to the pursuits and duties of his order; for if he does not, the world which instinctively is swayed by the examples of its greatest, will follow in his footsteps; the bonds of society will then crumble asunder and chaos come again; mankind will be baulked of its destiny. Srikrishna illustrates this by his own example, the example of God in his manifest form.

> लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन् कर्तुमर्हसि ॥
> यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
> स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥
> न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।
> नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥
> यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥
उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।
सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥
सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥
न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।
योजयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥

"Looking also to the maintenance of order in the world thou shouldest act; for whatever the best practises, that other men practise; for the standard set by him is followed by the whole world. In all the Universe there is for Me no necessary action, for I have nothing I do not possess or wish to possess, and lo I abide always doing. For if I abide not at all doing action vigilantly, men would altogether follow in my path, O son of Pritha; these worlds would sink if I did not actions, and I should be the author of confusion (literally illegitimacy, the worst & primal confusion, for it disorders the family which is the fundamental unit of society) and the destroyer of the peoples. What the ignorant do, O Bharata, with their minds enslaved to the work, that the wise man should do with a free mind to maintain the order of the world; the wise man should not upset the mind of the ignorant who are slaves of their deeds, but should apply himself to all works doing customary things with a mind in Yoga."

It is accordingly not by airy didactic teaching so much as in the example of Krishna — & this is the true epic method — that Vyasa develops his higher ethic which is the morality of the liberated mind. But this is too wide a subject to be dealt with in the limits I have at my command. I have dwelt on Vyasa's ethical standpoint because it is of the utmost importance in the present day. Before the Bhagavadgita with its great epic commentary, the Mahabharata of Vyasa, had time deeply to influence the national mind, the heresy of Buddhism seized hold of us. Buddhism with its exaggerated emphasis on quiescence & the quiescent virtue of self-abnegation, its unwise creation of a separate class of quiescents & illuminati, its sharp distinction between monks & laymen implying the infinite inferiority of the latter, its all too facile admission of men to the higher life and its relegation of worldly action to the lowest importance possible stands at the opposite pole from the gospel of Srikrishna and has had the very effect he deprecates; it has been the author of confusion and the destroyer of the peoples. Under its influence half the nation moved in the direction of spiritual passivity & negation, the other by a natural reaction plunged deep into a splendid but enervating materialism. As a result our race lost three parts of its ancient heroic manhood, its grasp on the world, its magnificently ordered polity and its noble social fabric. It is by clinging to a few spars from the wreck that we have managed to perpetuate our existence, and this we owe to the overthrow of Buddhism by Shankaracharya. But Hinduism has never been able to shake off the deep impress of the religion it vanquished; and therefore though it has managed to survive, it has not succeeded in recovering its old vitalising force. The practical disappearance of the Kshatriya caste (for those who now claim that origin seem to be with a few exceptions Vratya Kshatriyas, Kshatriyas who have fallen from the pure practice and complete temperament of their caste) has operated in the same direction. The Kshatriyas were the proper depositaries of the gospel of action; Srikrishna himself declares

> इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययं।
> विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत्॥
> एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः।

"This imperishable Yoga I revealed to Vivaswan, Vivaswan declared it to Manou, Manou to Ixvaacou told it; thus did the royal sages learn this as a hereditary knowledge",

and when in the immense lapse of time it was lost, Srikrishna again declared it to a Kshatriya. But when the Kshatriyas disappeared or became degraded, the Brahmins remained the sole interpreters of the Bhagavadgita, and they, being the highest caste or temperament and their thoughts therefore naturally turned to knowledge and the final end of being, bearing moreover still the stamp of Buddhism in their minds, have dwelt mainly on that in the Gita which deals with the element of quiescence. They have laid stress on the goal but they have not echoed Srikrishna's emphasis on the necessity of action as the one sure road to the goal. Time, however, in its revolution is turning back on itself and there are signs that if Hinduism is to last and we are not to plunge into the vortex of scientific atheism and the breakdown of moral ideals which is engulfing Europe, it must survive as the religion for which Vedanta, Sankhya & Yoga combined to lay the foundations, which Srikrishna announced & which Vyasa formulated. No apeings or distorted editions of Western religious modes, no Indianised Christianity, no fair rehash of that pale & consumptive shadow English Theism, will suffice to save us.

But Vyasa has not only a high political & religious thought and deepseeing ethical judgments; he deals not only with the massive aspects & worldwide issues of human conduct, but has a keen eye for the details of government and society, the ceremonies, forms & usages, the religious & social order on the due stability of which the public welfare is grounded. The principles of good government & the motives & impulses that move men to public action no less than the rise and fall of States & the clash of mighty personalities and great powers form, incidentally & epically treated, the staple of Vyasa's epic. The poem was therefore, first & foremost, like the Iliad and Aeneid and even more than the Iliad and Aeneid, national — a poem in which the religious, social and personal temperament and ideals of the Aryan nation have found a high expression and its institutions, actions, heroes in the most critical period of its history received the judgments and criticisms of one of its greatest and soundest minds. If this had not been so we should not have had the Mahabharata in its present form. Valmekie had also dealt with a great historical period in a yet more universal spirit and with finer richness of detail but he approached it in a poetic and dramatic manner; he created rather than criticised; while Vyasa in his manner was the critic far more than the creator. Hence later poets found it easier and more congenial to introduce their criticisms of life and thought into the Mahabharata than into the Ramayana. Vyasa's poem has been increased to threefold its original size; the additions to Valmekie's, few in themselves if we set apart the Uttarakanda, have been immaterial & for the most part of an accidental nature.

Gifted with such poetical powers, limited by such intellectual and emotional characteristics, endowed with such grandeur of soul and severe purity of taste, what was the special work which Vyasa did for his country and in what beyond the ordinary elements of poetical greatness lies his claim to world-wide acceptance? It has been suggested already that the Mahabharata is the great national poem of India. It is true the Ramayan also represents an Aryan civilisation idealised: Rama & Sita are more intimately characteristic types of the Hindu temperament as it finally shaped itself than are Arjouna & Draupadie; Srikrishna though his character is founded in the national type, yet rises far above it. But although Valmekie writing the poem of mankind drew his chief figures in the Hindu model and Vyasa, writing a great national epic, lifted his divine hero above the basis of national character into an universal humanity, yet the original purpose of either poem remains intact. In the Ramayan under the disguise of an Aryan golden age the wide world with all its elemental impulses and affections finds itself mirrored. The Mahabharata reflects rather a great Aryan civilization with the types, ideas, aims and passions of a heroic and pregnant period in the history of a high-hearted and deep-thoughted nation. It has, moreover, as I have attempted to indicate, a formative ethical and religious spirit which is absolutely corrective to the faults that have most marred in the past and mar to the present day the Hindu character and type of thought. And it provides us with this corrective not in the form of an alien civilisation difficult to assimilate and associated with other elements as dangerous to us as this is salutary, but in a great creative work of our own literature written by the mightiest of our sages (मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः Krishna has said), one therefore who speaks our own language, thinks our own thoughts and has the same national cast of mind, nature & conscience. His ideals will therefore be a corrective not only to our own faults but to the dangers of that attractive but unwholesome Asura civilisation which has invaded us, especially its morbid animalism and its neurotic tendency to abandon itself to its own desires.

But this does not say all. Vyasa too beyond the essential universality of all great poets, has his peculiar appeal to humanity in general making his poem of worldwide as well as national importance. By comparing him once again with Valmekie we shall realize more precisely in what this appeal consists. The Titanic impulse was strong in Valmekie. The very dimensions of his poetical canvas, the audacity and occasional recklessness of his conceptions, the gust with which he fills in the gigantic outlines of his Ravana are the essence of Titanism; his genius was so universal & Protean that no single element of it can be said to predominate, yet this tendency towards the enormous enters perhaps as largely into it as any other. But to the temperament of Vyasa the Titanic was alien. It is true he carves his figures so largely (for he was a sculptor in creation rather than a painter like Valmekie) that looked at separately they seem to have colossal stature but he is always at pains so to harmonise them that they shall appear measurable to us and strongly human. They are largely & boldly human, impressive & sublime, but never Titanic. He loves the earth and the heavens but he visits not Pataala nor the stupendous regions of Vrishopurvan. His Rakshasas, supposing them to be his at all, are epic giants or matter-of-fact ogres, but they do not exhale the breath of midnight and terror like Valmekie's demons nor the spirit of worldshaking anarchy like Valmekie's giants. This poet could never have conceived Ravana. He had neither unconscious sympathy nor a sufficient force of abhorrence to inspire him. The passions of Duryodhana though presented with great force of antipathetic insight, are human and limited. The Titanic was so foreign to Vyasa's habit of mind that he could not grasp it sufficiently either to love or hate. His humanism shuts to him the outermost gates of that sublime and menacing region; he has not the secret of the storm nor has his soul ridden upon the whirlwind. For his particular work this was a real advantage. Valmekie has drawn for us both the divine and anarchic in extraordinary proportions; an Akbar or a Napoleon might find his spiritual kindred in Rama or Ravana; but with more ordinary beings such figures impress the sense of the sublime principally and do not dwell with them as daily acquaintances. It was left for Vyasa to create epically the human divine and the human anarchic so as to bring idealisms of the conflicting moral types into line with the daily emotions and imaginations of men. The sharp distinction between Deva & Asura is one of the three distinct & peculiar contributions to ethical thought which India has to offer. The legend of Indra & Virochana is one of its fundamental legends. Both of them came to Vrihaspati to know from him of God; he told them to go home & look in the mirror. Virochana saw himself there & concluding that he was God, asked no farther; he gave full rein to the sense of individuality in himself which he mistook for the deity. But Indra was not satisfied: feeling that there must be some mistake he returned to Vrihaspati and received from him the true Godknowledge which taught him that he was God only because all things were God, since nothing existed but the One. If he was the one God, so was his enemy; the very feelings of separateness and enmity were no permanent reality but transient phenomena. The Asura therefore is he who is profoundly conscious of his own separate individuality & yet would impose it on the world as the sole individuality; he is thus blown along on the hurricane of his desires & ambitions until he stumbles & is broken, in the great phrase of Aeschylus, against the throne of Eternal Law. The Deva on the contrary stands firm in the luminous heaven of self-knowledge; his actions flow not inward towards himself but outwards toward the world. The distinction that India draws is not between altruism and egoism but between disinterestedness and desire. The altruist is profoundly conscious of himself and he is really ministering to himself even in his altruism; hence the hot & sickly odour of sentimentalism and the taint of the Pharisee which clings about European altruism. With the perfect Hindu the feeling of self has been merged in the sense of the universe; he does his duty equally whether it happens to promote the interests of others or his own; if his action seems oftener altruistic than egoistic it is because our duty oftener coincides with the interests of others than with our own. Rama's duty as a son calls him to sacrifice himself, to leave the empire of the world and become a beggar & a hermit; he does it cheerfully and unflinchingly: but when Sita is taken from him, it is his duty as a husband to rescue her from her ravisher and as a Kshatriya to put Ravana to death if he persists in wrongdoing. This duty also he pursues with the same unflinching energy as the first. He does not shrink from the path of the right because it coincides with the path of self-interest. The Pandavas also go without a word into exile & poverty, because honour demands it of them; but their ordeal over, they will not, though ready to drive compromise to its utmost verge, consent to succumb utterly to Duryodhana, for it is their duty as Kshatriyas to protect the world from the reign of injustice, even though it is at their own expense that injustice seeks to reign. The Christian & Buddhistic doctrine of turning the other cheek to the smiter, is as dangerous as it is impracticable. The continual European see-saw between Christ on the one side and the flesh & the devil on the other with the longer trend towards the latter comes straight from a radically false moral distinction & the lip profession of an ideal which mankind has never been either able or willing to carry into practice. The disinterested & desireless pursuit of duty is a gospel worthy of the strongest manhood; that of the cheek turned to the smiter is a gospel for cowards & weaklings. Babes & sucklings may practise it because they must, but with others it is a hypocrisy.

The gospel of the निष्काम धर्म and the great poetical creations which exemplify & set it off by contrast, this is the second aspect of Vyasa's genius which will yet make him interesting and important to the whole world.

Vyasa; some Characteristics.[1]

The Mahabharata, although neither the greatest nor the richest masterpiece of the secular literature of India, is at the same time its most considerable and important body of poetry. Being so it is the pivot on which the history of Sanscrit literature, and incidentally the history of Aryan civilisation in India, must perforce turn. To the great discredit of European scholarship the problem of this all-important work is one that remains not only unsolved, but untouched. Yet until it is solved, until the confusion of its heterogeneous materials is reduced to some sort of order, the different layers of which it consists separated, classed and attributed to their relative dates, and its relations with the Ramayan on the one hand and the Puranic and classic literature on the other fully & patiently examined, the history of our civilisation must remain in the air, a field for pedantic wranglings and worthless conjectures. The world knows something of our origins because much labour has been bestowed on the Vedas, something of our decline because post-Buddhistic literature has been much read, annotated and discussed, but of our great medial and flourishing period it knows little, and that little is neither coherent nor reliable.

All that we know of the Mahabharata at present is that it is the work of several hands and of different periods — this is literally the limit of the reliable knowledge European scholarship has so far been able to extract from it. For the rest we have to be content with arbitrary conjectures based either upon an unwarrantable application of European analogies to Indian things or random assumptions snatched from a word here or a line there, but never proceeding from that weighty, careful & unbiassed study of the work canto by canto, passage by passage, line by line, which can alone bring us to any valuable conclusions. A fancy was started in Germany that the Iliad of Homer is really a pastiche or clever rifacimento of old ballads put together in the time of Pisistratus.[2] This truly barbarous imagination with its rude ignorance of the psychological bases of all great poetry has now fallen into some discredit; it has been replaced by a more plausible attempt to discover a nucleus in the poem, an Achilleid, out of which the larger Iliad has grown. Very possibly the whole discussion will finally end in the restoration of a single Homer with a single poem subjected indeed to some inevitable interpolation and corruption, but mainly the work of one mind, a theory still held by more than one considerable scholar. In the meanwhile, however, haste has been made to apply the analogy to the Mahabharata; lynx-eyed theorists have discovered in the poem — apparently without taking the trouble to study it — an early and rude ballad epic worked up, doctored and defaced by those wicked Brahmins, who are made responsible for all the literary and other enormities which have been discovered by the bushelful, and not by European lynxes alone — in our literature and civilisation. Now whether the theory is true or not, and one sees nothing in its favour, it has at present no value at all; for it is a pure theory without any justifying facts. It is not difficult to build these intellectual cardhouses; anyone may raise them by the dozen who can find no better manner of wasting valuable time. A similar method of "arguing from Homer" is probably at the bottom of Professor Weber's assertion that the War Purvas contain the original epic. An observant eye at once perceives that the War Purvas are far more hopelessly tangled than any that precede them except the first. It is here & here only that the keenest eye becomes confused & the most confident explorer begins to lose heart & self-reliance. But the Iliad is all battles and it therefore follows in the European mind that the original Mahabharata must have been all battles. Another method is that of ingenious, if forced argument from stray slokas of the poem or equally stray & obscure remarks in Buddhist compilations. The curious theory of some scholars that the Pandavas were a later invention and that the original war was between the Kurus and Panchalas only and Professor Weber's singularly positive inference from a sloka which does not at first sight bear the meaning he puts on it, that the original epic contained only 8800 lines, are ingenuities of this type. They are based on the Teutonic art of building a whole mammoth out of a single and often problematical bone, and remind one strongly of Mr Pickwick and the historic inscription which was so rudely, if in a Pickwickian sense, challenged by the refractory [Mr Blotton.] All these theorisings are idle enough; they are made of too airy a stuff to last. (Only a serious scrutiny of the Mahabharat made with a deep sense of critical responsibility and according to the methods of patient scientific inference, can justify on in advancing any considerable theory on this wonderful poetic structure.)

---

[1] *This original opening of "Notes on the Mahabharata" was left uncancelled in the manuscript. See the Note on the Texts for an explanation of how the essay was revised.* —*Ed.*

---

[2] *The four-page passage beginning with this sentence and ending with "moral certainty" on page 341 was incorporated by Sri Aurobindo in the rewritten version of this piece (pages 280–84). — Ed.*

Yet to extricate the original epic from the mass of accretions is not, I believe, so difficult a task as it may at first appear. One is struck in perusing the Mahabharata by the presence of a mass of poetry which bears the style and impress of a single, strong and original, even unusual mind, differing in his manner of expression, tone of thought & stamp of personality not only from every other Sanscrit poet we know but from every other great poet known to literature. When we look more closely into the distribution of this peculiar style of writing, we come to perceive certain very suggestive & helpful facts. We realise that this impress is only found in those parts of the poem which are necessary to the due conduct of the story, seldom to be detected in the more miraculous, Puranistic or trivial episodes, but usually broken up by passages and sometimes shot through with lines of a discernibly different inspiration. Equally noteworthy is it that nowhere does this poet admit any trait, incident or speech which deviates from the strict propriety of dramatic characterisation & psychological probability. Finally Krishna's divinity is recognized, but more often hinted at than aggressively stated. The tendency is to keep it in the background as a fact to which, while himself crediting it, the writer does not hope for universal consent, still less is able to speak of it as of a general tenet & matter of dogmatic belief; he prefers to show Krishna rather in his human character, acting always by wise, discerning and inspired methods, but still not transgressing the limit of human possibility. All this leads one to the conclusion that in the body of poetry I have described, we have the real Bharata, an epic which tells plainly and straightforwardly of the events which led to the great war and the empire of the Bharata princes. Certainly if Prof. Weber's venturesome assertion as to the length of the original Mahabharata be correct, this conclusion falls to the ground; for the mass of this poetry amounts to considerably over 20,000 slokas. Professor Weber's inference, however, is worth some discussion; for the length of the original epic is a very important element in the problem. If we accept it, we must say farewell to all hopes of unravelling the tangle. His assertion is founded on a single & obscure verse in the huge prolegomena to the poem which take up the greater part of the Adi Purva, no very strong basis for so far-reaching an assumption. The sloka itself says no more than this that much of the Mahabharata was written in so difficult a style that Vyasa himself could remember only 8800 of the slokas, Suka an equal amount and Sanjaya perhaps as much, perhaps something less. There is certainly here no assertion such as Prof. Weber would have us find in it that the Mahabharata at any time amounted to no more than 8800 slokas. Even if we assume what the text does not say that Vyasa, Suka & Sanjaya knew the same 8800 slokas, we do not get to that conclusion. The point simply is that the style of the Mahabharat was too difficult for a single man to keep in memory more than a certain portion of it. This does not carry us very far. If however we are to assume that there is more in this verse than meets the eye, that it is a cryptic way of stating the length of the original poem; and I do not deny that this is possible, perhaps even probable — we should note the repetition of वेत्ति — अहं वेद्मि शुको वेत्ति सञ्जयो वेत्ति वा न वा. Following the genius of the Sanscrit language we are led to suppose the repetition was intended to recall अष्टौ श्लोकसहस्राणि etc. with each name; otherwise the repetition has no raison d'être; it is otiose & inept. But if we understand it thus, the conclusion is irresistible that each knew a different 8800, or the writer would have no object in wishing us to repeat the number three times in our mind. The length of the epic as derived from this single sloka should then be 26,400 slokas or something less, for the writer hesitates about the exact number to be attributed to Sanjaya. Another passage further on in the prolegomena agrees remarkably with this conclusion and is in itself much more explicit. It is there stated plainly enough that Vyasa first wrote the Mahabharata in 24,000 slokas and afterwards enlarged it to 100,000 for the world of men as well as a still more unconscionable number of verses for the Gandhurva and other worlds. In spite of the embroidery of fancy, of a type familiar enough to all who are acquainted with the Puranic method of recording facts, the meaning of this is unmistakeable. The original Mahabharata consisted of 24,000 slokas, but in its final form it runs to 100,000. The figures are probably loose & slovenly, for at any rate the final form of the Mahabharata is considerably under 100,000 slokas. It is possible therefore that the original epic was something over 24,000 and under 26,400 slokas, in which case the two passages would agree well enough. But it would be unsafe to found any dogmatic assertion on isolated couplets; at the most we can say that we are justified in taking the estimate as a probable and workable hypothesis and if it is found to be corroborated by other facts, we may venture to suggest its correctness as a moral certainty.

This body of poetry then, let us suppose, is the original Mahabharata. Tradition attributes it to Krishna of the Island called Vyasa who certainly lived about this time and was an editor of the Vedas; and since there is nothing in this part of the poem which makes the tradition impossible and much which favours it, we may, as a matter both of convenience and of probability, accept it at least provisionally. Whether these hypotheses can be upheld is a question for long and scrupulous consideration and analysis. In this article I wish to formulate, assuming their validity, the larger features of poetical style, the manner of thought & creation & the personal note of Vyasa.

Mahabharata.

The problem of the Mahabharata, its origin, date and composition, is one that seems likely to elude scholarship to times indefinite if not for ever. It is true that several European scholars have solved all these to their own satisfaction, but their industrious & praiseworthy efforts [*incomplete*]

In the following pages I have approached the eternal problem of the Mahabharata from the point of view mainly of style & literary personality, partly of substance; but in dealing with the substance I have deferred questions of philosophy, allusion & verbal evidence to which a certain school attach great importance and ignored altogether the question of minute metrical details on which they base far-reaching conclusions. It is necessary therefore out of respect for these scholars to devote some little space to an explanation of my standpoint. I contend that owing to the peculiar manner in which the Mahabharat has been composed, these minutiae of detail & word have very little value. The labour of this minute school has proved beyond dispute one thing and one only, that the Mahabharat was not only immensely enlarged, crusted with interpolations & accretions and in parts rewritten and modified, but even its oldest parts were verbally modified in the course of preservation. The extent to which this happened, has I think been grossly exaggerated, but that it did happen, one cannot but be convinced. Now if this is so, it is obvious that arguments from verbal niceties must be very dangerous. It has been sought to prove from a single word *suranga,* an underground tunnel, which European scholars believe to be identical with the Greek σῦριγξ that the account in the Adi Purva of the Pandavas' escape from the burning house of Purochana through an underground tunnel must be later than another account in the Vana Purva which represents Bhema as carrying his brothers & mother out of the flames; for the former they say, must have been composed after the Indians had learned the Greek language & culture and the latter, it is to be assumed, before that interesting period. Now whether *suranga* was derived from the Greek σῦριγξ or not, I cannot take upon me to say, but will assume on the authority of better linguists than myself that it was so though I think it is as well to be sceptical of all such Greek derivations until the connection is proved beyond doubt, for such words even when not accounted for by Sanscrit itself, may very easily be borrowed from the aboriginal languages. Bengali for instance preserves the form suḍanga where the cerebral letter is Dravidian. But if so, if this word came into fashion along with Greek culture, and became *the* word for a tunnel, what could be more natural than that the reciter should substitute for an old and now disused word the one which was familiar to his audience? Again much has been made of the frequent occurrence of Yavana, Vahlika, Pehlava, Saka, Huna. As to Yavana its connection with ᾿Ιάων does not seem to me beyond doubt. It had certainly been at one time applied to the Bactrian Greeks, but so it has been and is to the present day applied to the Persians, Afghans & other races to the northwest of India. Nor is the philological connection between ᾿Ιάων and Yavana very clear to my mind. Another form Yauna seems to represent ᾿Ιάων fairly well; but are we sure that Yauna and Yavana were originally identical? A mere resemblance however close is the most misleading thing in philology. Upon such resemblances Pocock made out a very strong case for his theory that the Greeks were a Hindu colony. The identity of the Sakas & Sakyas was for a long time a pet theory of European Sanscritists and on this identity was based the theory that Buddha was a Scythian reformer of Hinduism. This identity is now generally given up, yet it is quite as close as that of Yavana & Yauna and as closely in accordance with the laws of the Sanscrit language. If Yauna is the original form, why was it changed to Yavana; it is no more necessary than that mauna be changed to mavana; if Yavana be earlier & Yauna a Pracrit corruption, how are we to account for the short a & the v; there was no digamma in Greek in the time of Alexander. But since the Greeks are always called

Yavanas in Buddhist writings we will waive the demand for strict philological intelligibility and suppose that Yavana answers to Ἰάων. The question yet remains when did the Hindus become acquainted with the existence of the Greeks. Now here the first consideration is why did they call the Greeks Ionians, and not Hellenes or Macedonians? That the Persians should know the Greeks by that name is natural enough, for it was with the Ionians that they first came in contact; but it was not Ionians who invaded India under Alexander, it was not an Ionian prince who gave his daughter to Chundragupta, it was not an Ionian conqueror who crossed the Indus & besieged [ ]. Did the Macedonians on their victorious march give themselves out as Ionians? I for my part do not believe it. It is certain therefore that if the Hindus took the word Yavana from Ἰάων, it must have been through the Persians and not direct from the Greek language. But the connection of the Persians with India was as old as Darius Hystaspes who had certainly reason to know the Greeks. It is therefore impossible to say that the Indians had not heard about the Greeks as long ago as 500 B.C. Even if they had not, the mention of Yavanas & Yavan kings does not carry us very far; for it is evident that in the earlier parts of the Mahabharata they are known only as a strong barbarian power of the Northwest; there is no sign of their culture being known to the Hindus. It is therefore quite possible that the word Yavana now grown familiar may have been substituted by the later reciters for an older name no longer familiar. It is now known beyond reasonable doubt that the Mahabharata war was fought out in or about 1190 B.C.; Dhritarashtra, son of Vichitravirya, Krishna, son of Devaki & Janamejaya are mentioned in Vedic works of a very early date. There is therefore no reason to doubt that an actual historical event is recorded with whatever admixture of fiction in the Mahabharata. It is also evident that the Mahabharata, not any "Bharata" or "Bharati Katha" but the Mahabharata existed before the age of Panini, and tho' the radical school bring down Panini [*incomplete*]

Notes on the Mahabharata

by Aurobind Ghose

dealing with the authenticity of each
separate canto, i.e. whether it belongs or not to the original
epic of 24,000 slokas on the great catastrophe of the
Bharatas.

Udyogapurva.

Canto I.

1 कुरुप्रवीराः . . स्वपक्षाः. This may mean in Vyasa’s elliptic manner the great Kurus (i.e. the Pandavas) & those of their side. Otherwise “The Kuru heroes of his own side” i.e. Abhimanyu’s which is awkward

3 वृद्धौ this supplies the reason of their preeminence

5 प्रद्युम्नसाम्बौ च युधि प्रवीरौ. This establishes Pradyumna & Samba as historical sons of Krishna

विराटपुत्रैश्च Virata has therefore several sons, three at least.

7 The simile is strictly in the style of Vyasa who cares little for newness or ingenuity, so long as the image called up effects its purpose. The assonance रराज सा राजवती is an epic assonance altogether uncommon in Vyasa & due evidently to the influence of Valmekie.

8 strong brief & illumining strokes of description which add to the naturalness of the scene e.g. ततः कथास्ते समवाययुक्ताः while also adding a touch that reveals the inwardness of the situation कृत्वा विचित्राः पुरुषप्रवीराः। तस्थुर्मुहूर्तं परिचिन्तयन्तः कृष्णं नृपास्ते समुदीक्षमाणाः॥

9 संघट्टिताः surely means “assembled” and nothing else. P. C. Roy in taking it as “drew their attention to” shows his usual slovenliness. Lele also errs in his translation. He interprets it

"as soon as the talk was over Krishna assembled the kings for the affairs of the Pandavas." But the kings were already assembled & seated; not only so but they were waiting for Krishna to begin. It is absurd to suppose that as soon as Krishna began speaking they left their seats and clustered round him like a pack of schoolboys. Yet this is the only sense in which we can take Lele's rendering. I prefer to take the obvious sense of the words. "As soon as they had reached an end of talk, those lion kings assembled by the Son of Modhou in the interests of the Pandava listened in a body to his high thoughted and fateful speech."

सुमहोदयं having mighty consequences.

10 अयं here beside me. See verse 4. Yudhisthere is sitting just by Krishna, separated by him [from] Virata.

अक्षवती not given by Apte.

11 तरसा. तरस् expresses any swift, violent & impetuous act; anything that has the momentum of strength & impulse or fire & energy[1]

सत्यरथैर् This is a word of doubtful import. It may [mean] "of unerring chariots" i.e. skilful fighters, or else "honourable fighters", रथः being used as in महारथः, अधिरथः = fighter in a chariot. Cf. सत्यपराक्रमः In the first case the epithet would be otiose & ornamental & an epic assonance. I cannot think however that Vyasa was capable of putting a purely decorative epic epithet in so emphatic a place. It must surely mean either 2 [*i.e. "honourable fighters"*] or "making truth their chariot"; रथ being used as in मनोरथ etc. The latter however is almost too much a flight of fancy for Vyasa.

12 त्रयोदशश्चैव — agreeing with संवत्सरः which the mind supplies from वर्षाणि in the last line; a verb also has to be supplied from चीर्णं. This is the true Vyasa style.

निविष्ट. निविश् to abide. This sense, though not given in Apte may be deduced from निवेशः Impersonal. It has been dwelt [*incomplete*]

---

[1] *Another gloss:* तरसा energy, speed, violence, force. The word always gives an idea of swiftness & strength.

13[2] It will be seen from Krishna's attitude here as elsewhere that he was very far from being the engineer & subtle contriver of war into which later ideas have deformed him. That he came down to force on war & destroy the Kshatriya caste whether to open India to the world or for other cause, is an idea that was not present to the mind of Vyasa. Later generations writing when the pure Kshatriya caste had almost disappeared, attributed this motive for God's descent upon earth, just as a modern English Theosophist, perceiving British rule established in India, has added the corollary that he destroyed the Kshatriyas (five thousand years ago, according to her own belief) in order to make the line clear for the English. What Vyasa on the other hand makes us feel is that Krishna, though fixed to support justice at every cost, was earnestly desirous to support it by peaceful means if possible. His speech is an evident attempt to restrain the eagerness of the Mutsyas & Panchalas who were bent on war as the only means of overthrowing the Kuru domination.

14 Krishna's testimony to Yudhisthere's character is here of great importance.

> अधर्मयुक्तं न च कामयेत राज्यं सुराणामपि धर्मराजः ।
> धर्मार्थयुक्तं तु महीपतित्वं ग्रामेऽपि कस्मिंश्चिदयं बुभूषेत् ॥

That Yudhisthere has deserved this character to the letter so far anyone who has followed the story will admit. If he acts in diametrical opposition to this character in any future passage we shall have some ground to pause before we admit the genuineness of the passage.

बुभूषेत् would wish to obtain, in the second sense of भू get, obtain.[3]

15 मिथ्योपचारेण by dishonest procedure; not in accordance with straightforward & chivalrous rules of conduct.

16 That is, if Duryodhana had taken the kingdom from the Pandavas in fair war by his own energy & genius (स्वतेजसा),

---

[3] *Another gloss:* बुभूषेत् desiderative of भू in the sense of "get, obtain": would aspire after

he would not have transgressed the ordinary धर्म of the Kshatriya. In that case the Pandavas might have accepted the verdict of Fate and refrained from plunging the country in farther bloodshed.

17 This seems to point to the "Digvijayapurva"; but the reference is general & may apply to the Rajasuya generally.

प्रपीड्य by force, pressure; as a result of conquest in open battle.

18 बालास्त्विमे An allusion to the early persecution of the Pandavas by Duryodhana. If we accept this *purva* in its completeness, we must accept the genuineness in the main of the early narrative of the Adi Purva in so far as it [is] covered by this sloka. Notice especially विविधैरुपायै:

तु The force is "But you know what the Dhartarastras are, their fierceness, falseness & landhunger; how even in the childhood of the Pandavas these, their banded foemen, sought to slay them by various means."

22 तथापि = for all their good will. It is part of the inverted commas implied in इति

एव = at least.

यतेयुरेव would at least do their utmost.

23 यथावत् definitely; though they may form a shrewd guess.

24 राज्यार्धदानाय Krishna does not, at present at any rate suggest a compromise; let them first make their full claim to which they are entitled. (Notice Genitive).

पुरोहितयान This title is evidently a misnomer; there is no mention of the Purohit, far less does he set out as yet nor need we suppose he is hinted at in the description of a suitable envoy. It is doubtful whether Krishna would have singled out a Panchala Purohit as the best intermediary between the Kurus for he evidently desired to try conciliation first, before resorting to threats. The choice of the Purohita was that of King Drupada and the leaders of the Brahmavarta nations who desired to break the supremacy among them of the Kurus.

This Canto is in the very finest & most characteristic style of Vyasa; precise, simple & hardy in phrasing, with a strong, curt, decisive movement & a pregnant mode of expression, in which a kernel of thought is expressed & its corollaries suggested so as to form a thought-atmosphere around it. There is no superfluous or lost word or sentence, but each goes straight to its mark and says something which wanted to be said. The speech of Krishna is admirably characteristic of the man as we have seen him in the Sabhapurva; firm & precise in outlook and sure of its own drift, it is yet full of an admirably disinterested & statesmanlike broadmindedness.[4]

Canto 2.

11 [दीव्यमानः][5] प्रतिदीव्य Can this not mean "being challenged to dice played against Saubala or in acceptance of the challenge" or must it mean "gambled & that against Saubala"?

---

[4] *A briefer statement is found in the other notebook used for these notes:*

Every line of this Canto is characteristic of Vyasa in style, atmosphere & thought. It is also indispensable to the conduct of the epic.

[5] *MS* दीव्यमानेनः

[Notes on Adi Purva, Adhyaya 1]

Importance attached to गृहस्थाश्रमः. I. 73. (Other) poets have not genius enough to improve on this poem just as the three other asramas are unable to improve on the householder's asrama.

Application of the word "काव्य" *to poetry.* "You have called this a poem; a poem therefore it shall be." How far does this bear on the date of the Prolegomena?

Story of Ganesha as bearing on the length of the original poem. Slokas 78 . . 83.

Sense that the ethical & historical is the main drift of the poem. Repeated statements that the Mahabharata is a popular exposition of the teaching of the Veda & Vedanta (श्रुति).

General (passim): Application of "Puran" & "Itihas" to Mahabharata. Ancient idea of the universality of the poem.

*

Mahabharat — Dronapurva.

1. उदीर्णं . . व्यावृत्तेऽर्यम्नि आत्ययिकः

In this adhyaya slokas 26[1] to 35 & half 36 & 46 belong to the epic: the rest is introduction, framework and padding.

2. The first three verses are alternative openings. 1 belongs to the epic.

संमृज्य . . उल्लालयन् भावं कुर्वीत शौण्ड. उपासङ्ग नागकक्ष्या भाण्ड संप्रहारोपपन्न सन्नहनोपपन्ना ज्या कांस्यं कूबर वरूथिनं

Sloka 31. may be rejected, perhaps, as a mere repetition of a former verse.

---

[1] *This refers probably to the verse beginning with the words* पतिते भरतश्रेष्ठे, *which is numbered 24 or 25 in some editions. — Ed.*

Part Three

On Education

Sri Aurobindo wrote the pieces in this part at different times between 1899 and 1920. All of them except "Education" and "National Education" were published in periodicals shortly after they were written.

Address at the Baroda College Social Gathering

IN ADDRESSING you on an occasion like the present, it is inevitable that the mind should dwell on one feature of this gathering above all others. Held as it is towards the close of the year, I am inevitably reminded that many of its prominent members are with us for the last time in their College life, and I am led to speculate with both hope and anxiety on their future careers, and this not only because several familiar faces are to disappear from us and scatter into different parts of the country and various walks of life, but also because they go out from us as our finished work, and it is by their character and life that our efforts will be judged. When I say, our efforts, I allude not merely to the professorial work of teaching, not to book-learning only, but to the entire activity of the College as a great and complex educational force, which is not solely meant to impart information, but to bring out or give opportunities for bringing out all the various intellectual and other energies which go to make up a man. And here is the side of collegiate institutions of which this Social Gathering especially reminds us, the force of the social life it provides in moulding the character and the mind. I think it will not be out of place, if in dwelling on this I revert to the great Universities of Oxford and Cambridge which are our famous exemplars, and point out a few differences between those Universities and our own and the thoughts those differences may well suggest.

I think there is no student of Oxford or Cambridge who does not look back in after days on the few years of his undergraduate life as, of all the scenes he has moved in, that which calls up the happiest memories, and it is not surprising that this should be so, when we remember what that life must have meant to him. He

Delivered in Baroda on 22 July 1899. Text published in the Baroda College Miscellany, *September 1899.*

goes up from the restricted life of his home and school and finds himself in surroundings which with astonishing rapidity expand his intellect, strengthen his character, develop his social faculties, force out all his abilities and turn him in three years from a boy into a man. His mind ripens in the contact with minds which meet from all parts of the country and have been brought up in many various kinds of trainings, his unwholesome eccentricities wear away and the unsocial, egoistic elements of character are to a large extent discouraged. He moves among ancient and venerable buildings, the mere age and beauty of which are in themselves an education. He has the Union which has trained so many great orators and debaters, has been the first trial ground of so many renowned intellects. He has, too, the athletics clubs organized with a perfection unparalleled elsewhere, in which, if he has the physique and the desire for them he may find pursuits which are also in themselves an education. The result is that he who entered the University a raw student, comes out of it a man and a gentleman, accustomed to think of great affairs and fit to move in cultivated society, and he remembers his College and University with affection, and in after days if he meets with those who have studied with him he feels attracted towards them as to men with whom he has a natural brotherhood. This is the social effect I should like the Colleges and Universities of India also to exercise, to educate by social influences as well as those which are merely academical and to create the feeling among their pupils that they belong to the community, that they are children of one mother. There are many obstacles to this result in the circumstances of Indian Universities. The Colleges are not collected in one town but are scattered among many and cannot assemble within themselves so large and various a life. They are new also, the creation of not more than fifty years — and fifty years is a short period in the life of a University. But so far as circumstances allow, there is an attempt to fill up the deficiency, in your Union, your Debating Club and Reading Room, your athletic sports and Social Gathering. For the success of this attempt time is needed, but your efforts are also needed: and I ask you who are soon to go out into the world, not to forget your

College or regard it as a mere episode in your life, but rather as one to whose care you must look back and recompense it by your future life and work, and if you meet fellow-students, alumni of the same College, to meet them as friends, as brothers.

There is another point in which a wide difference exists. What makes Oxford and Cambridge not local institutions but great and historic Universities? It is the number of great and famous men, of brilliant intellects in every department which have issued from them. I should like you to think seriously of this aspect of the question also. In England the student feels a pride in his own University and College, wishes to see their traditions maintained, and tries to justify them to the world by his own success. This feeling has yet to grow up among us. And I would appeal to you — who are leaving us — to help to create it, to cherish it yourselves, to try and justify the College of its pupils. Of course, there is one preliminary method by which the students can add fame to their College. Success in examinations, though preliminary merely, and not an end in itself, is nevertheless of no small effect or importance. You all know how the recent success of an Indian student has filled the whole country with joy and enthusiasm. That success reflects fame not only on India but on his University and College, and when the name of the first Indian Senior Wrangler is mentioned, it will also be remembered that he belonged to Cambridge and to St. John's. But examinations, however important, are only a preliminary. I lay stress upon this because there is too much of a tendency in this country to regard education as a mere episode, finished when once the degree is obtained. But the University cannot and does not pretend to complete a man's education; it merely gives some materials to his hand or points out certain paths he may tread, and it says to him, — "Here are the materials I have given into your hands, it is for you to make of them what you can;" or — "These are the paths I have equipped you to travel; it is yours to tread them to the end, and by your success in them justify me before the world."

I would ask you therefore to remember these things in your future life, not to drop the effects of your College training as no longer necessary, but, to strive for eminence and greatness in your own lines, and by the brilliance of your names add lustre to the first nursing home of your capacities, to cherish its memory with affection as that which equipped your intellects, trained you into men, and strove to give you such social life as might fit you for the world. And finally I would ask you not to sever yourselves in after days from it, but if you are far, to welcome its alumni when you meet them with brotherly feelings and if you are near to keep up connection with it, not to regard the difference of age between yourselves and its future students but associate with them, be present at such occasions as this social gathering and evince by your acts your gratitude for all that it did for you in the past.

Education

Your Highness and Gentlemen,

The subject on which I wish to address you this evening, and if you are sufficiently interested and have sufficient patience to pursue the subject farther with me, for perhaps another evening or two, is Education. Some of you may ask yourselves, why this subject rather than another? It is not a new subject but rather quite a threadbare one; you have already heard and read much about it and probably listened to much better lectures on the subject than any I can give you; it has besides been handled by a great many men in high places of authority; most of all, it has been taken up by no less a person than Lord Curzon himself and measures are to be formulated and perhaps carried into execution for the reform of what is defective in the present system. "What more do you want," you will perhaps ask, "or why should we trouble ourselves about it? The Government of India will in its own good time reform the whole business and of course when their new system is in force the Baroda Schools and Colleges will assimilate themselves to it. Meanwhile it is quite superfluous for us to bother our heads about the matter." Now in answer to that attitude I have to say this that the Government of India is in the first place not the fit body to formulate the necessary improvements and in the second place not the fit instrument to put them into force. It is not fit to formulate them because it cannot realise and feel as we do where the shoe pinches us and therefore in mending it [*incomplete*]

INTELLECTUAL

We now come to the intellectual part of education, which is certainly larger and more difficult, although not more important than physical training and edification of character. The Indian

University system has confined itself entirely to this branch and it might have been thought that this limitation & concentration of energy ought to have been attended by special efficiency & thoroughness in the single branch it had chosen. But unfortunately this is not the case. If the physical training it provides is contemptible and the moral training nil, the mental training is also meagre in quantity and worthless in quality. People commonly say that it is because the services & professions are made the object of education that this state of things exists. This I believe to be a great mistake. A degree is necessary for service and therefore people try to get a degree. Good! let it remain so. But in order for a student to get a degree let us make it absolutely necessary that he shall have a good education. If a worthless education is sufficient in order to secure his object & a good education quite unessential, it is obvious that the student will not incur great trouble and diversion of energy in order to acquire what he feels to be unnecessary. But change this state of things, make culture & true science essential and the same interested motive which now makes him content with a bad education will then compel him to strive after culture and true science. As practical men we must recognise that the pure enthusiasm of knowledge for knowledge's sake operates only on exceptional minds or in exceptional eras. In civilised countries a general desire for knowledge as a motive for education does exist but it is largely accompanied with the earthier feeling that knowledge is necessary to keep up one's position in society or to succeed in certain lucrative or respectable pursuits & professions. We in India have become so barbarous that we send our children to school with the grossest utilitarian motives unmixed with any disinterested desire for knowledge; but the education we receive is itself responsible for this. Nobody can cherish disinterested enthusiasm for a bad education; it can only be regarded as a means to some practical end. But make the education good, thorough & interesting and the love of knowledge will of itself awake in the mind and so mingle with & modify more selfish objects.

The real source of the evil we complain of is therefore something different; it is a fundamental & deplorable error by which we in this country have confused education with the acquisition of knowledge and interpreted knowledge itself in a singularly narrow & illiberal sense. To give the student knowledge is necessary, but it is still more necessary to build up in him the power of using his knowledge. It would hardly be a good technical education for a carpenter to be taught how to fell trees so as to provide himself with wood & never to learn how to prepare tables, chairs & cabinets or even what tools were necessary for his craft. Yet this is precisely what our system of education does. It trains the memory and provides the student with a store of facts & secondhand ideas. The memory is the woodcutter's axe and the store he acquires is the wood he has cut down in his course of tree felling. When he has done this, the University says to him "We now declare you a Bachelor of Carpentry; we have given you a good & sharp axe and a fair nucleus of wood to begin with. Go on, my son, the world is full of forests and provided the Forest Officer does not object you can cut down trees & provide yourself with wood to your heart's content." Now the student who goes forth thus equipped, may become a great timber-merchant but unless he is an exceptional genius he will never be even a moderate carpenter. Or to return from the simile to the fact, the graduate from our colleges may be a good clerk, a decent vakil or a tolerable medical practitioner, but unless he is an especial genius, he will never be a great administrator or a great lawyer or an eminent medical specialist. These eminences have to be filled up mainly by Europeans. If an Indian wishes to rise to them, he has to travel thousands of miles over the sea in order to breathe an atmosphere of liberal knowledge, original science and sound culture. And even then he seldom succeeds, because his lungs are too debilitated to take in a good long breath of that atmosphere.

The first fundamental mistake has been, therefore, to confine ourselves to the training of the storing faculty memory and the storage of facts and to neglect the training of the three great manipulating faculties, viz. the power of reasoning, the power of comparison and differentiation and the power of expression. These powers are present to a certain extent in all men above the state of the savage and even in a rudimentary state in the savage himself; but they exist especially developed in the higher classes of civilised nations, wherever these higher classes have long centuries of education behind them. But, however highly developed by nature, these powers demand cultivation, they demand that bringing out of natural abilities which is the real essence of education. If not so brought out in youth, they become rusted & stopped with dirt, so that they cease to act except in a feeble, narrow & partial manner. Exceptional genius does indeed assert itself in spite of neglect and discouragement, but even genius self-developed does not often achieve as happy results and as free & large a working as the same genius properly equipped & trained. Amount of knowledge is in itself not of the first importance; but to make the best use of what we know. The easy assumption of our educationists that we have only to supply the mind with a smattering of facts in each department of knowledge & the mind can be trusted to develop itself and take its own suitable road, is contrary to science, contrary to human experience and contrary to the universal opinion of civilised countries. Indeed the history of intellectual degeneration in gifted races always begins with the arrest of these three mental powers by the excessive cultivation of mere knowledge at their expense. Much as we have lost as a nation, we have always preserved our intellectual alertness, quickness & originality; but even this last gift is threatened by our University system, & if it goes, it will be the beginning of irretrievable degradation & final extinction.

The very first step in reform must therefore be to revolutionize the whole aims & methods of our education. We must accustom teachers to devote nine-tenths of their energies to the education of the active mental faculties, while the passive retaining faculty, which we call the memory, should occupy a recognised & well-defined but subordinate place, and we must direct our school & university examinations to the testing of these active faculties & not of the memory. For this is an object which cannot be effected by the mere change or rearrangement of the curriculum. It is true that certain subjects are more apt to develop certain faculties than others; the power of accurate reasoning is powerfully assisted by Geometry, Logic & Political Economy; one of the most important results of languages is to refine & train the power of expression, and nothing more enlarges the power of comparison & differentiation than an intelligent study of history. But no particular subject except language is essential, still less exclusively appropriated, to any given faculty. There are types of intellect, for instance, which are constitutionally incapable of dealing with geometrical problems or even with the formal machinery of Logic, and are yet profound, brilliant & correct reasoners in other intellectual spheres. There is in fact hardly any subject, the sciences of calculation excepted, which in the hands of a capable teacher, does not give room for the development of all the general faculties of the mind. The first thing needed therefore is the entire and unsparing rejection of the present methods of teaching in favour of those which are now being universally adopted in the more advanced countries of Europe.

But even in the narrower sphere of knowledge acquisition to which our system has confined itself, it has been guilty of other blunders quite as serious. Apart from pure mathematics, which stands on a footing of its own, knowledge may be divided into two great heads, the knowledge of things & the knowledge of men, i.e. to say of human thought, human actions, human nature and human creations as recorded, preserved or pictured in literature, history, philosophy & art. The latter is covered in the term humanities or humane letters, and the idea of a liberal education was formerly confined to these, though it was subsequently widened to include mathematics & has again been widened in modern times to include a modicum of science. The humanities, mathematics & science are therefore the three sisters in the family of knowledge and any self-respecting system of education must in these days provide facilities for mastery in any one of these as well as for a modicum of all. The first great error of our system comes in here. While we insist on passing our students through a rigid & cast-iron course of knowledge in everything, we give them real knowledge in nothing. [What does an average Bombay graduate who has taken English Literature for his optional subject, know of that literature? He has read a novel of Jane Austen or the Vicar of Wakefield, a poem of Tennyson or a book of Milton, at most two plays of Shakespeare, a work of Bacon's or Burke's full of ideas which he is totally incompetent to digest and one or two stray books of Pope, Dryden, Spenser or other, & to crown this pretentious little heap a mass of secondhand criticism dealing with poets & writers of whom he has not studied a single line. When we remember that English is the main study of our schools & colleges, what a miserable outturn is this, what a wretched little mouse out of that mountain of drudgery from which the voice of the oppressed student is heard painfully & monotonously repeating like Valmekie under his mound the lesson with which he has been crammed. But he is far more unfortunate than Valmekie, his mar mar mar has not been converted into Ram Ram Ram; for while he thinks he has been repeating the saving word which gives intellectual salvation, it has been unknown to him converted into a death dealing word which causes intellectual sterility & impotence.][1]

Mathematics for instance is a subject in which it ought not to be difficult to give thorough knowledge, for most of its paths are well beaten and being a precise & definite subject it does not in itself demand so much & such various powers of original thought & appreciation as literature & history; yet it is the invariable experience of the most brilliant mathematical students who go from Calcutta or Bombay to Cambridge that after the first year they have exhausted all they have already learned and have to enter on entirely new & unfamiliar result. It is surely a deplorable thing that it should be impossible to acquire a thorough mathematical education in India, that one should have to go thousands of miles and spend thousands of rupees in order to get it. Again if we look at Science, what is the result of the pitiful modicum of science acquired under our system? At the best it turns out good teachers who can turn others through the same mill in which they themselves have been ground. But the object of scientific instruction [*incomplete*]

---

[1] *Passage bracketed by Sri Aurobindo in the manuscript. — Ed.*

The Brain of India

I

THE TIME has perhaps come for the Indian mind, long pre-occupied with political and economic issues, for a widening of its horizon. Such a widening is especially necessary for Bengal.

The Bengali has always led and still leads the higher thought of India, because he has eminently the gifts which are most needed for the new race that has to arise. He has the emotion and imagination which is open to the great inspirations, the mighty heart-stirring ideas that move humanity when a great step forward has to be taken. He has the invaluable gift of thinking with the heart. He has, too, a subtle brain which is able within certain limits to catch shades of meaning and delicacies of thought, both those the logic grasps and those which escape the mere logical intellect. Above all, he has in a greater degree than other races the yet undeveloped faculty of direct knowledge, latent in humanity and now to be evolved, which is above reason and imagination, the faculty which in Sri Ramakrishna, the supreme outcome of the race, dispensed with education and commanded any knowledge he desired easily and divinely. It is a faculty which now works irregularly in humanity, unrecognised and confused by the interference of the imagination, of the limited reason and of the old associations or *saṁskāras* stored in the memory of the race and the individual. It cannot be made a recognised and habitual agent except by the discipline which the ancient Indian sages formulated in the science of Yoga. But certain races have the function more evolved or more ready for evolution than the generality of mankind, and it is these that will lead in the future evolution. In addition, the race has a mighty will-power which comes from the long worship of Shakti and practice of the Tantra that has been a part of our culture for many centuries. No other people could have revolutionised its whole national character in a few years as Bengal has done. The Bengali has always worshipped the Divine Energy in her most terrible as well as in her most beautiful aspects; whether as the Beautiful or the Terrible Mother he has never shrunk from her whether in fear or in awe. When the divine force flowed into him he has never feared to yield himself up to it and follow the infinite prompting, careless whither it led. As a reward he has become the most perfect *ādhāra* of Shakti, the most capable and swiftly sensitive and responsive receptacle of the Infinite Will and Energy the world now holds. Recently that Will and Energy has rushed into him and has been lifting him to the level of his future mission and destiny. He has now to learn the secret of drawing the Mother of Strength into himself and holding her there in a secure possession. That is why we have pointed to a religious and a spiritual awakening as the next necessity and the next inevitable development.

But along with his great possessions the Bengali has serious deficiencies. In common with the rest of India he has a great deficiency of knowledge, the result of an education meagre in quantity and absolutely vicious in method and quality. And he is inferior to other Indian races, such as the Madrasi and Maratha, in the capacity of calm, measured and comprehensive deliberation which is usually called intellect or reasoning power, and which, though it is far from the whole of thought, is essential to the completeness of thought and action. By itself the logical or reasoning intellect creates the accurate and careful scholar, the sober critic, the rationalist and cautious politician, the conservative scientist, that great mass of human intelligence which makes for slow and careful progress. It does not create the hero and the originator, the inspired prophet, the mighty builder, the maker of nations; it does not conquer nature and destiny, lay its hand on the future, command the world. The rest of India is largely dominated by this faculty and limited by it, therefore it lags behind while Bengal rushes forward. The rest of India has feared to deliver itself to the Power that came down from above to uplift the nation; it has either denied its call or made reservations and insisted on guiding it and reining it in. A few mighty men have stridden forward and carried their race or a part of it with them, but the whole race must be infused with the spirit before it can be fit for the work of the future.

On his side the Bengali, while in no way limiting the divine inrush or shortening the Titan stride, must learn to see the way he is going while he treads it. For want of a trained thought-power, he follows indeed the ideas that seize him, but he does not make them thoroughly his own. He thinks them out, if at all, rapidly but not comprehensively, and, in consequence, though he has applied them with great energy to the circumstances immediately around him, a new set of circumstances finds him perplexed and waiting for a lead from the few men to whom he has been accustomed to look for the source of his thought and action. This is a source of weakness. For the work of the present, and still more, for the work of the future, it is imperatively necessary to create a centre of thought and knowledge which will revolutionise the brain of the nation to as great an extent as its character and outlook has been revolutionised. A new heart was necessary for our civilisation, and, though the renovation is not complete, the work that has been done in that direction will ensure its own fulfilment. A new brain is also needed, and sufficiency of knowledge for the new brain to do its work with thoroughness.

II

A NEW centre of thought implies a new centre of education. The system prevailing in our universities is one which ignores the psychology of man, loads the mind laboriously with numerous little packets of information carefully tied with red tape, and, by the methods used in this loading process, damages or atrophies the faculties and instruments by which man assimilates, creates and grows in intellect, manhood and energy. The new National Education, as inaugurated in Bengal, sought immensely to enlarge the field of knowledge to which the student was introduced, and in so far as it laid stress on experiment and observation, employed the natural and easy instrument of the vernacular and encouraged the play of thought on the subject of study, corrected the habit of spoiling the instruments of knowledge by the use of false methods. But many of the vicious methods and ideas employed by the old system were faithfully cherished by the new, and the domination of the Council by men wedded to the old lines was bound to spell a most unfavourable effect on the integrity of the system in its most progressive features. Another vital defect of the new education was that it increased the amount of information the student was required to absorb without strengthening the body and brain sufficiently to grapple with the increased mass of intellectual toil, and it shared with the old system the defect of ignoring the psychology of the race. The mere inclusion of the matter of Indian thought and culture in the field of knowledge does not make a system of education Indian, and the instruction given in the Bengal National College was only an improved European system, not Indian or National. Another error which has to be avoided and to which careless minds are liable, is the reactionary idea that in order to be national, education must reproduce the features of the old *tol* system of Bengal. It is not eighteenth century India, the India which by its moral and intellectual deficiencies gave itself into the keeping of foreigners, that we have to revive, but the spirit, ideals and methods of the ancient and mightier India in a yet more effective form and with a more modern organisation.

What was the secret of that gigantic intellectuality, spirituality and superhuman moral force which we see pulsating in the Ramayana and Mahabharata, in the ancient philosophy, in the supreme poetry, art, sculpture and architecture of India? What was at the basis of the incomparable public works and engineering achievements, the opulent and exquisite industries, the great triumphs of science, scholarship, jurisprudence, logic, metaphysics, the unique social structure? What supported the heroism and self-abandonment of the Kshatriya, the Sikh and the Rajput, the unconquerable national vitality and endurance? What was it that stood behind that civilisation second to none in the massiveness of its outlines or the perfection of its details? Without a great and unique discipline involving a perfect education of soul and mind, a result so immense and persistent would have been impossible. It would be an error to look for the secret of Aryan success in the details of the instruction given in the old ashrams and universities so far as they have come down to us. We must know what was the principle and basis on which the details were founded. We shall find the secret of their success in a profound knowledge of human psychology and its subtle application to the methods of intellectual training and instruction.

At the basis of the old Aryan system was the all-important discipline of Brahmacharya. The first necessity for the building up of a great intellectual superstructure is to provide a foundation strong enough to bear it. Those systems of education which start from an insufficient knowledge of man, think they have provided a satisfactory foundation when they have supplied the student with a large or well-selected mass of information on the various subjects which comprise the best part of human culture at the time. The school gives the materials, it is for the student to use them, — this is the formula. But the error here is fundamental. Information cannot be the foundation of intelligence, it can only be part of the material out of which the knower builds knowledge, the starting-point, the nucleus of fresh discovery and enlarged creation. An education that confines itself to imparting knowledge, is no education. The various faculties of memory, judgment, imagination, perception, reasoning, which build the edifice of thought and knowledge for the knower, must not only be equipped with their fit and sufficient tools and materials, but trained to bring fresh materials and use more skilfully those of which they are in possession. And the foundation of the structure they have to build, can only be the provision of a fund of force and energy sufficient to bear the demands of a continually growing activity of the memory, judgment and creative power. Where is that energy to be found?

The ancient Aryans knew that man was not separate from the universe, but only a homogeneous part of it, as a wave is part of the ocean. An infinite energy, Prakriti, Maya or Shakti, pervades the world, pours itself into every name and form, and the clod, the plant, the insect, the animal, the man are, in their phenomenal existence, merely more or less efficient *ādhāras* of this Energy. We are each of us a dynamo into which waves of that energy have been generated and stored, and are being perpetually conserved, used up and replenished. The same force which moves in the star and the planet, moves in us, and all our thought and action are merely its play and born of the complexity of its functionings. There are processes by which man can increase his capacity as an *ādhāra*. There are other processes by which he can clear of obstructions the channel of communication between himself and the universal energy and bring greater and greater stores of it pouring into his soul and brain and body. This continual improvement of the *ādhāra* and increase in quantity and complexity of action of the informing energy, is the whole aim of evolution. When that energy is the highest in kind and the fullest in amount of which the human *ādhāra* is capable, and the *ādhāra* itself is trained utterly to bear the inrush and play of the energy, then is a man *siddha*, the fulfilled or perfect man, his evolution is over and he has completed in the individual that utmost development which the mass of humanity is labouring towards through the ages.

If this theory be correct, the energy at the basis of the operation of intelligence must be in ourselves and it must be capable of greater expansion and richer use to an extent practically unlimited. And this also must be a sound principle, that the more we can increase and enrich the energy, the greater will be the potential range, power and activity of the functions of our mind and the consequent vigour of our intellectuality and the greatness of our achievement. This was the first principle on which the ancient Aryans based their education and one of the chief processes which they used for the increased storage of energy, was the practice of Brahmacharya.

III

THE PRACTICE of Brahmacharya is the first and most necessary condition of increasing the force within and turning it to such uses as may benefit the possessor or mankind. All human energy has a physical basis. The mistake made by European materialism is to suppose the basis to be everything and confuse it with the source. The source of life and energy is not material but spiritual, but the basis, the foundation on which the life and energy stand and work, is physical. The ancient Hindus clearly recognised this distinction between *kāraṇa* and *pratiṣṭhā*, the north pole and the south pole of being. Earth or gross matter is the *pratiṣṭhā*, Brahman or spirit is the *kāraṇa*. To raise up the physical to the spiritual is Brahmacharya, for by the meeting of the two the energy which starts from one and produces the other is enhanced and fulfils itself.

This is the metaphysical theory. The application depends on a right understanding of the physical and psychological conformation of the human receptacle of energy. The fundamental physical unit is the *retas*, in which the *tejas*, the heat and light and electricity in a man, is involved and hidden. All energy is latent in the *retas*. This energy may be either expended physically or conserved. All passion, lust, desire wastes the energy by pouring it, either in the gross form or a sublimated subtler form, out of the body. Immorality in act throws it out in the gross form; immorality of thought in the subtle form. In either case there is waste, and unchastity is of the mind and speech as well as of the body. On the other hand, all self-control conserves the energy in the *retas*, and conservation always brings with it increase. But the needs of the physical body are limited and the excess of energy must create a surplus which has to turn itself to some use other than the physical. According to the ancient theory *retas* is *jala* or water, full of light and heat and electricity, in one word, of *tejas*. The excess of the *retas* turns first into heat or *tapas* which stimulates the whole system, and it is for this reason that all forms of self-control and austerity are called *tapas* or *tapasyā*, because they generate the heat or stimulus which is a source of powerful action and success; secondly, it turns to *tejas* proper, light, the energy which is at the source of all knowledge; thirdly, it turns to *vidyut* or electricity, which is at the basis of all forceful action whether intellectual or physical. In the *vidyut* again is involved the *ojas*, or *prāṇaśakti*, the primal energy which proceeds from ether. The *retas* refining from *jala* to *tapas, tejas* and *vidyut* and from *vidyut* to *ojas*, fills the system with physical strength, energy and brain-power and in its last form of *ojas* rises to the brain and informs it with that primal energy which is the most refined form of matter and nearest to spirit. It is *ojas* that creates a spiritual force or *vīrya*, by which a man attains to spiritual knowledge, spiritual love and faith, spiritual strength. It follows that the more we can by Brahmacharya increase the store of *tapas, tejas, vidyut* and *ojas*, the more we shall fill ourselves with utter energy for the works of the body, heart, mind and spirit.

This view of the human soul was not the whole of the knowledge on which ancient Hinduism based its educational discipline. In addition it had the view that all knowledge is within and has to be evoked by education rather than instilled from outside. The constitution of man consists of three principles of nature *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*, the comprehensive, active and passive elements of universal action, which, in one of their thousandfold aspects, manifest as knowledge, passion and ignorance. *Tamas* is a constitutional dullness or passivity which obscures the knowledge within and creates ignorance, mental inertia, slowness, forgetfulness, disinclination to study, inability to grasp and distinguish. *Rajas* is an undisciplined activity which obscures knowledge by passion, attachment, prejudgment, predilection and wrong ideas. *Sattva* is an illumination which reveals the hidden knowledge and brings it to the surface where the observation can grasp and the memory record it. This conception of the constitution of the knowing faculty made the removal of *tamas*, the disciplining of *rajas* and the awakening of *sattva* the main problem of the teacher. He had to train the student to be receptive of illumination from within. The disciplining of *rajas* was effected by a strict moral discipline which induced a calm, clear, receptive state of mind free from intellectual self-will and pride and the obscuration of passion, — the famous discipline of the *brahmacārin* which was the foundation of Aryan culture and Aryan morals; and the interference of wrong ideas was sought to be removed by strict mental submission to the teacher during the receptive period, when the body of ascertained knowledge or right ideas already in man's possession was explained to him and committed to memory. The removal of *tamas* was effected by the discipline of moral purity, which awakened the energy of *tejas* and electricity in the system and by the power of *tapasyā* trained it to be a reservoir of mental force and clarity. The awakening of illumination was actively effected by the triple method of repetition, meditation and discussion. *Āvṛtti* or repetition was meant to fill the recording part of the mind with the *śabda* or word, so that the *artha* or meaning might of itself rise from within. Needless to say, a mechanical repetition was not likely to produce this effect. There must be that clear still receptivity and that waiting upon the word or thing with the contemplative part of the mind which is what the ancient Indians meant by *dhyāna* or meditation. All of us have felt, when studying a language, difficulties which seemed insoluble while grappling with a text, suddenly melt away and a clear understanding arise without assistance from book or teacher after putting away the book from our mind for a brief period. Many of us have experienced also, the strangeness of taking up a language or subject, after a brief discontinuance, to find that we understand it much better than when we took it up, know the meanings of words we had never met with before and can explain sentences which, before we discontinued the study, would have baffled our understanding. This is because the *jñātā* or knower within has had his attention called to the subject and has been busy in the interval drawing upon the source of knowledge within in connection with it. This experience is only possible to those whose sattwic or illuminative element has been powerfully aroused or consciously or unconsciously trained to action by the habit of intellectual clarity and deep study. The highest reach of the sattwic development is when one can dispense often or habitually with outside aids, the teacher or the text book, grammar and dictionary and learn a subject largely or wholly from within. But this is only possible to the Yogin by a successful prosecution of the discipline of Yoga.

IV

WE HAVE stated, as succinctly as is consistent with clearness, the main psychological principles on which the ancient Indians based their scheme of education. By the training of Brahmacharya they placed all the energy of which the system was capable and which could be spared from bodily functions, at the service of the brain. In this way they not only strengthened the *medhā* or grasping power, the *dhī* or subtlety and swiftness of thought conception, the memory and the creative intellectual force, making the triple force of memory, invention, judgment comprehensive and analytic, but they greatly enlarged the range, no less than the intensity, of the absorbing, storing and generative mental activities. Hence those astonishing feats of memory, various comprehension and versatility of creative work of which only a few extraordinary intellects have been capable in Occidental history, but which in ancient India were common and usual. Mr. Gladstone was considered to be the possessor of an astonishing memory because he could repeat the whole of Homer's Iliad, beginning from any passage suggested to him and flowing on as long as required; but to a Brahmin of the old times this would have been a proof of a capacity neither unusual nor astonishing, but rather, petty and limited. The many-sidedness of an Eratosthenes or the range of a Herbert Spencer have created in Europe admiring or astonished comment; but the universality of the ordinary curriculum in ancient India was for every student and not for the exceptional few, and it implied, not a tasting of many subjects after the modern plan, but the thorough mastery of all. The original achievement of a Kalidasa accomplishing the highest in every line of poetic creation is so incredible to the European mind that it has been sought to cleave that mighty master of harmonies into a committee of three. Yet it is paralleled by the accomplishment in philosophy of Shankara in a short life of thirty-two years and dwarfed by the universal mastery of all possible spiritual knowledge and experience of Sri Ramakrishna in our own era. These instances are not so common as the others, because pure creative genius is not common; but in Europe they are, with a single modern exception, non-existent. The highest creative intellects in Europe have achieved sovereignty by limitation, by striving to excel only in one field of a single intellectual province or at most in two; when they have been versatile it has been by sacrificing height to breadth. But in India it is the greatest who have been the most versatile and passed from one field of achievement to another without sacrificing an inch of their height or an iota of their creative intensity, easily, unfalteringly, with an assured mastery. This easy and unfailing illumination crowning the unfailing energy created by Brahmacharya was due to the discipline which developed *sattva* or inner illumination. This illumination makes the acquisition of knowledge and all other intellectual operations easy, spontaneous, swift, decisive and comparatively unfatiguing to body or brain. In these two things lies the secret of Aryan intellectual achievement. Brahmacharya and sattwic development created the brain of India: it was perfected by Yoga.

It is a common complaint that our students are too heavily burdened with many subjects and the studying of many books. The complaint is utterly true and yet it is equally true that the range of studies is pitifully narrow and the books read miserably few. What is the reason of this paradox, the justification of these two apparently contradictory truths? It is this, that we neglect the basis and proceed at once to a superstructure small in bulk, disproportionately heavy in comparison with that bulk, and built on a foundation too weak to bear even the paltry and meagre edifice of our imparted knowledge. The Indian brain is still in potentiality what it was; but it is being damaged, stunted and defaced. The greatness of its innate possibilities is hidden by the greatness of its surface deterioration. The old system hampered it with study in a foreign language which was not even imperfectly mastered at a time when the student was called upon to learn in that impossible medium a variety of alien and unfamiliar subjects. In this unnatural process it was crippled by the disuse of judgment, observation, comprehension and creation, and the exclusive reliance on the deteriorating relics of the ancient Indian memory. Finally, it was beggared and degraded by having to deal with snippets and insufficient packets of information instead of being richly stored and powerfully equipped.

The new system of National Education sought to undo the evil by employing the mother-tongue, restoring the use of the disused intellectual functions and providing for a richer and more real equipment of information, of the substance of knowledge and the materials for creation. If it could not triumphantly succeed, that was partly because it had to deal with minds already vitiated by the old system and not often with the best even of these, because its teachers had themselves seldom a perfect grasp of the requirements of the new system, and because its controllers and directors were men of the old school who clung to familiar shibboleths and disastrous delusions. But in the system itself there was a defect, which, though it would matter less in other epochs or other countries, is of primary importance in such periods of transition when bricks have to be made out of straw and the work now done will determine the future achievement of our nation. While calling itself national, it neglected the very foundation of the great achievement of our forefathers and especially the perfection of the instrument of knowledge.

It is not our contention that the actual system of ancient instruction should be restored in its outward features, — a demand often made by fervid lovers of the past. Many of them are not suited to modern requirements. But its fundamental principles are for all time and its discipline can only be replaced by the discovery of a still more effective discipline, such as European education does not offer us. The object of these articles has been to indicate the nature and psychological ideas of the old system and point out its essential relation of cause and effect to the splendid achievement of our ancestors. How its principles can be reapplied or be completed and to some extent replaced by a still deeper psychology and a still more effective discipline is a subject fit for separate treatment.

A System of National Education

Some Preliminary Ideas

Publisher's Note to the 1924 Edition

These essays were first published in the *Karmayogin* in the year 1910. They are, however, incomplete, and the subject of national education proper has not been touched except in certain allusions. It was not the author's intention to have them reprinted in their present form, but circumstances have made necessary the bringing out of an authorised edition. As it at present stands the book consists of a number of introductory essays insisting on certain general principles of a sound system of teaching applicable for the most part to national education in any country. As such it may stand as a partial introduction to the subject of national education in India.

I

The Human Mind

THE TRUE basis of education is the study of the human mind, infant, adolescent and adult. Any system of education founded on theories of academical perfection, which ignores the instrument of study, is more likely to hamper and impair intellectual growth than to produce a perfect and perfectly equipped mind. For the educationist has to do, not with dead material like the artist or sculptor, but with an infinitely subtle and sensitive organism. He cannot shape an educational masterpiece out of human wood or stone; he has to work in the elusive substance of mind and respect the limits imposed by the fragile human body.

There can be no doubt that the current educational system of Europe is a great advance on many of the methods of antiquity, but its defects are also palpable. It is based on an insufficient knowledge of human psychology, and it is only safeguarded in Europe from disastrous results by the refusal of the ordinary student to subject himself to the processes it involves, his habit of studying only so much as he must to avoid punishment or to pass an immediate test, his resort to active habits and vigorous physical exercise. In India the disastrous effects of the system on body, mind and character are only too apparent. The first problem in a national system of education is to give an education as comprehensive as the European and more thorough, without the evils of strain and cramming. This can only be done by studying the instruments of knowledge and finding a system of teaching which shall be natural, easy and effective. It is only by strengthening and sharpening these instruments to their utmost capacity that they can be made effective for the increased work which modern conditions require. The muscles of the mind must be thoroughly trained by simple and easy means; then, and not till then, great feats of intellectual strength can be required of them.

The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught. The teacher is not an instructor or taskmaster, he is a helper and guide. His business is to suggest and not to impose. He does not actually train the pupil's mind, he only shows him how to perfect his instruments of knowledge and helps and encourages him in the process. He does not impart knowledge to him, he shows him how to acquire knowledge for himself. He does not call forth the knowledge that is within; he only shows him where it lies and how it can be habituated to rise to the surface. The distinction that reserves this principle for the teaching of adolescent and adult minds and denies its application to the child, is a conservative and unintelligent doctrine. Child or man, boy or girl, there is only one sound principle of good teaching. Difference of age only serves to diminish or increase the amount of help and guidance necessary; it does not change its nature.

The second principle is that the mind has to be consulted in its own growth. The idea of hammering the child into the shape desired by the parent or teacher is a barbarous and ignorant superstition. It is he himself who must be induced to expand in accordance with his own nature. There can be no greater error than for the parent to arrange beforehand that his son shall develop particular qualities, capacities, ideas, virtues, or be prepared for a prearranged career. To force the nature to abandon its own *dharma* is to do it permanent harm, mutilate its growth and deface its perfection. It is a selfish tyranny over a human soul and a wound to the nation, which loses the benefit of the best that a man could have given it and is forced to accept instead something imperfect and artificial, second-rate, perfunctory and common. Every man has in him something divine, something his own, a chance of strength and perfection in however small a sphere, which God offers him to take or refuse. The task is to find it, develop it, use it. The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for a noble use.

The third principle of education is to work from the near to the far, from that which is to that which shall be. The basis of a man's nature is almost always, in addition to his soul's past, his heredity, his surroundings, his nationality, his country, the soil from which he draws sustenance, the air which he breathes, the sights, sounds, habits to which he is accustomed. They mould him not the less powerfully because insensibly. From that then we must begin. We must not take up the nature by the roots from the earth in which it must grow or surround the mind with images and ideas of a life which is alien to that in which it must physically move. If anything has to be brought in from outside, it must be offered, not forced on the mind. A free and natural growth is the condition of genuine development. There are souls which naturally revolt from their surroundings and seem to belong to another age and clime. Let them be free to follow their bent; but the majority languish, become empty, become artificial, if artificially moulded into an alien form. It is God's arrangement for mankind that they should belong to a particular nation, age, society, that they should be children of the past, possessors of the present, creators of the future. The past is our foundation, the present our material, the future our aim and summit. Each must have its due and natural place in a national system of education.

II

The Powers of the Mind

THE INSTRUMENT of the educationist is the mind or *antaḥkaraṇa*, which consists of four layers. The reservoir of past mental impressions, the *citta* or storehouse of memory, which must be distinguished from the specific act of memory, is the foundation on which all the other layers stand. All experience lies within us as passive or potential memory; active memory selects and takes what it requires from that storehouse. But the active memory is like a man searching among a great mass of locked-up material: sometimes he cannot find what he wants; often in his rapid search he stumbles across many things for which he has no immediate need; often too he blunders and thinks he has found the real thing when it is something else, irrelevant if not valueless, on which he has laid his hand. The passive memory or *citta* needs no training, it is automatic and naturally sufficient to its task; there is not the slightest object of knowledge coming within its field which is not secured, placed and faultlessly preserved in that admirable receptacle. It is the active memory, a higher but less perfectly developed function, which is in need of improvement.

The second layer is the mind proper or *manas*, the sixth sense of our Indian psychology, in which all the others are gathered up. The function of the mind is to receive the images of things translated into sight, sound, smell, taste and touch by the five senses and translate these again into thought-sensations. It receives also images of its own direct grasping and forms them into mental impressions. These sensations and impressions are the material of thought, not thought itself; but it is exceedingly important that thought should work on sufficient and perfect material. It is therefore the first business of the educationist to develop in the child the right use of the six senses, to see that they are not stunted or injured by disuse, but trained by the child himself under the teacher's direction to that perfect accuracy and keen subtle sensitiveness of which they are capable. In addition, whatever assistance can be gained by the organs of action, should be thoroughly employed. The hand, for instance, should be trained to reproduce what the eye sees and the mind senses. The speech should be trained to a perfect expression of the knowledge which the whole *antaḥkaraṇa* possesses.

The third layer is the intellect or *buddhi*, which is the real instrument of thought and that which orders and disposes of the knowledge acquired by the other parts of the machine. For the purposes of the educationist this is infinitely the most important of the three I have named. The intellect is an organ composed of several groups of functions, divisible into two important classes, the functions and faculties of the right hand and the functions and faculties of the left hand. The faculties of the right hand are comprehensive, creative and synthetic; the faculties of the left hand critical and analytic. To the right hand belong Judgment, Imagination, Memory, Observation; to the left hand Comparison and Reasoning. The critical faculties distinguish, compare, classify, generalise, deduce, infer, conclude; they are the component parts of the logical reason. The right-hand faculties comprehend, command, judge in their own right, grasp, hold and manipulate. The right-hand mind is the master of knowledge, the left-hand its servant. The left hand touches only the body of knowledge, the right hand penetrates its soul. The left hand limits itself to ascertained truth, the right hand grasps that which is still elusive or unascertained. Both are essential to the completeness of the human reason. These important functions of the machine have all to be raised to their highest and finest working-power, if the education of the child is not to be imperfect and one-sided.

There is a fourth layer of faculty which, not as yet entirely developed in man, is attaining gradually to a wider development and more perfect evolution. The powers peculiar to this highest stratum of knowledge are chiefly known to us from the phenomena of genius, — sovereign discernment, intuitive perception of truth, plenary inspiration of speech, direct vision of knowledge to an extent often amounting to revelation, making a man a prophet of truth. These powers are rare in their higher development, though many possess them imperfectly or by flashes. They are still greatly distrusted by the critical reason of mankind because of the admixture of error, caprice and a biased imagination which obstructs and distorts their perfect workings. Yet it is clear that humanity could not have advanced to its present stage if it had not been for the help of these faculties, and it is a question with which educationists have not yet grappled, what is to be done with this mighty and baffling element, the element of genius in the pupil. The mere instructor does his best to discourage and stifle genius, the more liberal teacher welcomes it. Faculties so important to humanity cannot be left out of our consideration. It is foolish to neglect them, it is criminal to discourage them. Their imperfect development must be perfected, the admixture of error, caprice and biased fancifulness must be carefully and wisely removed. But the teacher cannot do it; he would eradicate the good corn as well as the tares if he interfered. Here, as in all educational operations, he can only put the growing soul into the way of its own perfection.

III

The Moral Nature

IN THE economy of man the mental nature rests upon the moral, and the education of the intellect divorced from the perfection of the moral and emotional nature is injurious to human progress. Yet, while it is easy to arrange some kind of curriculum or syllabus which will do well enough for the training of the mind, it has not yet been found possible to provide under modern conditions a suitable moral training for the school and college. The attempt to make boys moral and religious by the teaching of moral and religious text-books is a vanity and a delusion, precisely because the heart is not the mind and to instruct the mind does not necessarily improve the heart. It would be an error to say that it has no effect. It throws certain seeds of thought into the *antaḥkaraṇa* and, if these thoughts become habitual, they influence the conduct. But the danger of moral text-books is that they make the thinking of high things mechanical and artificial, and whatever is mechanical and artificial is inoperative for good.

There are three things which are of the utmost importance in dealing with a man's moral nature, the emotions, the *saṁskāras* or formed habits and associations, and the *svabhāva* or nature. The only way for him to train himself morally is to habituate himself to the right emotions, the noblest associations, the best mental, emotional and physical habits and the following out in right action of the fundamental impulses of his essential nature. You can impose a certain discipline on children, dress them into a certain mould, lash them into a desired path, but unless you can get their hearts and natures on your side, the conformity to this imposed rule becomes a hypocritical and heartless, a conventional, often a cowardly compliance. This is what is done in Europe, and it leads to that remarkable phenomenon known as the sowing of wild oats as soon as the yoke of discipline at school and at home is removed, and to the social hypocrisy which is so large a feature of European life. Only what the man admires and accepts, becomes part of himself; the rest is a mask. He conforms to the discipline of society as he conformed to the moral routine of home and school, but considers himself at liberty to guide his real life, inner and private, according to his own likings and passions. On the other hand, to neglect moral and religious education altogether is to corrupt the race. The notorious moral corruption in our young men previous to the saving touch of the Swadeshi movement was the direct result of the purely mental instruction given to them under the English system of education. The adoption of the English system under an Indian disguise in institutions like the Central Hindu College is likely to lead to the European result. That it is better than nothing, is all that can be said for it.

As in the education of the mind, so in the education of the heart, the best way is to put the child into the right road to his own perfection and encourage him to follow it, watching, suggesting, helping, but not interfering. The one excellent element in the English boarding school is that the master at his best stands there as a moral guide and example leaving the boys largely to influence and help each other in following the path silently shown to them. But the method practised is crude and marred by the excess of outer discipline, for which the pupils have no respect except that of fear, and the exiguity of the inner assistance. The little good that is done is outweighed by much evil. The old Indian system of the *guru* commanding by his knowledge and sanctity the implicit obedience, perfect admiration, reverent emulation of the student was a far superior method of moral discipline. It is impossible to restore that ancient system; but it is not impossible to substitute the wise friend, guide and helper for the hired instructor or the benevolent policeman which is all that the European system usually makes of the pedagogue.

The first rule of moral training is to suggest and invite, not command or impose. The best method of suggestion is by personal example, daily converse and the books read from day to day. These books should contain, for the younger student, the lofty examples of the past given, not as moral lessons, but as things of supreme human interest, and, for the elder student, the great thoughts of great souls, the passages of literature which set fire to the highest emotions and prompt the highest ideals and aspirations, the records of history and biography which exemplify the living of those great thoughts, noble emotions and aspiring ideals. This is a kind of good company, *satsaṅga*, which can seldom fail to have effect, so long as sententious sermonising is avoided, and becomes of the highest effect if the personal life of the teacher is itself moulded by the great things he places before his pupils. It cannot, however, have full force unless the young life is given an opportunity, within its limited sphere, of embodying in action the moral impulses which rise within it. The thirst of knowledge, the self-devotion, the purity, the renunciation of the Brahmin, — the courage, ardour, honour, nobility, chivalry, patriotism of the Kshatriya, — the beneficence, skill, industry, generous enterprise and large open-handedness of the Vaishya, — the self-effacement and loving service of the Shudra, — these are the qualities of the Aryan. They constitute the moral temper we desire in our young men, in the whole nation. But how can we get them if we do not give opportunities to the young to train themselves in the Aryan tradition, to form by the practice and familiarity of childhood and boyhood the stuff of which their adult lives must be made?

Every boy should, therefore, be given practical opportunity as well as intellectual encouragement to develop all that is best in his nature. If he has bad qualities, bad habits, bad *saṁskāras* whether of mind or body, he should not be treated harshly as a delinquent, but encouraged to get rid of them by the Rajayogic method of *saṁyama*, rejection and substitution. He should be encouraged to think of them, not as sins or offences, but as symptoms of a curable disease alterable by a steady and sustained effort of the will, — falsehood being rejected whenever it rises into the mind and replaced by truth, fear by courage, selfishness by sacrifice and renunciation, malice by love. Great care will have to be taken that unformed virtues are not rejected as faults. The wildness and recklessness of many young natures are only the overflowings of an excessive strength, greatness and nobility. They should be purified, not discouraged.

I have spoken of morality; it is necessary to speak a word of religious teaching. There is a strange idea prevalent that by merely teaching the dogmas of religion children can be made pious and moral. This is an European error, and its practice either leads to mechanical acceptance of a creed having no effect on the inner and little on the outer life, or it creates the fanatic, the pietist, the ritualist or the unctuous hypocrite. Religion has to be lived, not learned as a creed. The singular compromise made in the so-called National Education of Bengal, making the teaching of religious beliefs compulsory, but forbidding the practice of *anuṣṭhāna* or religious exercises, is a sample of the ignorant confusion which distracts men's minds on this subject. The prohibition is a sop to secularism declared or concealed. No religious teaching is of any value unless it is lived, and the use of various kinds of *sādhanā*, spiritual self-training and exercise, is the only effective preparation for religious living. The ritual of prayer, homage, ceremony is craved for by many minds as an essential preparation and, if not made an end in itself, is a great help to spiritual progress; if it is withheld, some other form of meditation, devotion or religious duty must be put in its place. Otherwise, religious teaching is of little use and would almost be better ungiven.

But whether distinct teaching in any form of religion is imparted or not, the essence of religion, to live for God, for humanity, for country, for others and for oneself in these, must be made the ideal in every school which calls itself national. It is this spirit of Hinduism pervading our schools which, far more than the teaching of Indian subjects, the use of Indian methods or formal instruction in Hindu beliefs and Hindu scriptures, should be the essence of Nationalism in our schools distinguishing them from all others.

IV

Simultaneous and Successive Teaching

A VERY remarkable feature of modern training which has been subjected in India to a *reductio ad absurdum* is the practice of teaching by snippets. A subject is taught a little at a time, in conjunction with a host of others, with the result that what might be well learnt in a single year is badly learned in seven and the boy goes out ill-equipped, served with imperfect parcels of knowledge, master of none of the great departments of human knowledge. The system of education adopted by the National Council, an amphibious and twy-natured creation, attempts to heighten this practice of teaching by snippets at the bottom and the middle and suddenly change it to a grandiose specialism at the top. This is to base the triangle on its apex and hope that it will stand.

The old system was to teach one or two subjects well and thoroughly and then proceed to others, and certainly it was a more rational system than the modern. If it did not impart so much varied information, it built up a deeper, nobler and more real culture. Much of the shallowness, discursive lightness and fickle mutability of the average modern mind is due to the vicious principle of teaching by snippets. The one defect that can be alleged against the old system was that the subject earliest learned might fade from the mind of the student while he was mastering his later studies. But the excellent training given to the memory by the ancients obviated the incidence of this defect. In the future education we need not bind ourselves either by the ancient or the modern system, but select only the most perfect and rapid means of mastering knowledge.

In defence of the modern system it is alleged that the attention of children is easily tired and cannot be subjected to the strain of long application to a single subject. The frequent change of subject gives rest to the mind. The question naturally arises, are the children of modern times then so different from the ancients, and, if so, have we not made them so by discouraging prolonged concentration? A very young child cannot, indeed, apply himself; but a very young child is unfit for school teaching of any kind. A child of seven or eight, and that is the earliest permissible age for the commencement of any regular kind of study, is capable of a good deal of concentration if he is interested. Interest is, after all, the basis of concentration. We make his lessons supremely uninteresting and repellent to the child, a harsh compulsion the basis of teaching and then complain of his restless inattention! The substitution of a natural self-education by the child for the present unnatural system will remove this objection of inability. A child, like a man, if he is interested, much prefers to get to the end of his subject rather than leave it unfinished. To lead him on step by step, interesting and absorbing him in each as it comes, until he has mastered his subject is the true art of teaching.

The first attention of the teacher must be given to the medium and the instruments, and, until these are perfected, to multiply subjects of regular instruction is to waste time and energy. When the mental instruments are sufficiently developed to acquire a language easily and swiftly, that is the time to introduce him to many languages, not when he can only partially understand what he is taught and masters it laboriously and imperfectly. Moreover, one who has mastered his own language, has one very necessary facility for mastering another. With the linguistic faculty unsatisfactorily developed in one's own tongue, to master others is impossible. To study science with the faculties of observation, judgment, reasoning and comparison only slightly developed is to undertake a useless and thankless labour. So it is with all other subjects.

The mother-tongue is the proper medium of education and therefore the first energies of the child should be directed to the thorough mastering of the medium. Almost every child has an imagination, an instinct for words, a dramatic faculty, a wealth of idea and fancy. These should be interested in the literature and history of the nation. Instead of stupid and dry spelling and reading books, looked on as a dreary and ungrateful task, he should be introduced by rapidly progressive stages to the most interesting parts of his own literature and the life around him and behind him, and they should be put before him in such a way as to attract and appeal to the qualities of which I have spoken. All other study at this period should be devoted to the perfection of the mental functions and the moral character. A foundation should be laid at this time for the study of history, science, philosophy, art, but not in an obtrusive and formal manner. Every child is a lover of interesting narrative, a hero-worshipper and a patriot. Appeal to these qualities in him and through them let him master without knowing it the living and human parts of his nation's history. Every child is an inquirer, an investigator, analyser, a merciless anatomist. Appeal to these qualities in him and let him acquire without knowing it the right temper and the necessary fundamental knowledge of the scientist. Every child has an insatiable intellectual curiosity and turn for metaphysical enquiry. Use it to draw him on slowly to an understanding of the world and himself. Every child has the gift of imitation and a touch of imaginative power. Use it to give him the groundwork of the faculty of the artist.

It is by allowing Nature to work that we get the benefit of the gifts she has bestowed on us. Humanity in its education of children has chosen to thwart and hamper her processes and, by so doing, has done much to thwart and hamper the rapidity of its own forward march. Happily, saner ideas are now beginning to prevail. But the way has not yet been found. The past hangs about our necks with all its prejudices and errors and will not leave us; it enters into our most radical attempts to return to the guidance of the all-wise Mother. We must have the courage to take up clearer knowledge and apply it fearlessly in the interests of posterity. Teaching by snippets must be relegated to the lumber-room of dead sorrows. The first work is to interest the child in life, work and knowledge, to develop his instruments of knowledge with the utmost thoroughness, to give him mastery of the medium he must use. Afterwards, the rapidity with which he will learn will make up for any delay in taking up regular studies, and it will be found that, where now he learns a few things badly, then he will learn many things thoroughly well.

V

The Training of the Senses

THERE are six senses which minister to knowledge, sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, mind, and all of these except the last look outward and gather the material of thought from outside through the physical nerves and their end-organs, eye, ear, nose, skin, palate. The perfection of the senses as ministers to thought must be one of the first cares of the teacher. The two things that are needed of the senses are accuracy and sensitiveness. We must first understand what are the obstacles to the accuracy and sensitiveness of the senses, in order that we may take the best steps to remove them. The cause of imperfection must be understood by those who desire to bring about perfection.

The senses depend for their accuracy and sensitiveness on the unobstructed activity of the nerves which are the channels of their information and the passive acceptance of the mind which is the recipient. In themselves the organs do their work perfectly. The eye gives the right form, the ear the correct sound, the palate the right taste, the skin the right touch, the nose the right smell. This can easily be understood if we study the action of the eye as a crucial example. A correct image is reproduced automatically on the retina, if there is any error in appreciating it, it is not the fault of the organ, but of something else.

The fault may be with the nerve currents. The nerves are nothing but channels, they have no power in themselves to alter the information given by the organs. But a channel may be obstructed and the obstruction may interfere either with the fullness or the accuracy of the information, not as it reaches the organ where it is necessarily and automatically perfect, but as it reaches the mind. The only exception is in case of a physical defect in the organ as an instrument. That is not a matter for the educationist, but for the physician.

If the obstruction is such as to stop the information reaching the mind at all, the result is an insufficient sensitiveness of the senses. The defects of sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste, anaesthesia in its various degrees, are curable when not the effect of physical injury or defect in the organ itself. The obstructions can be removed and the sensitiveness remedied by the purification of the nerve system. The remedy is a simple one which is now becoming more and more popular in Europe for different reasons and objects, the regulation of the breathing. This process inevitably restores the perfect and unobstructed activity of the channels and, if well and thoroughly done, leads to a high activity of the senses. The process is called in Yogic discipline *nāḍī-śuddhi* or nerve-purification.

The obstruction in the channel may be such as not absolutely to stop in however small a degree, but to distort the information. A familiar instance of this is the effect of fear or alarm on the sense action. The startled horse takes the sack on the road for a dangerous living thing, the startled man takes a rope for a snake, a waving curtain for a ghostly form. All distortions due to actions in the nervous system can be traced to some kind of emotional disturbance acting in the nerve channels. The only remedy for them is the habit of calm, the habitual steadiness of the nerves. This also can be brought about by *nāḍī-śuddhi* or nerve-purification, which quiets the system, gives a deliberate calmness to all the internal processes and prepares the purification of the mind.

If the nerve channels are quiet and clear, the only possible disturbance of the information is from or through the mind. Now the *manas* or sixth sense is in itself a channel like the nerves, a channel for communication with the *buddhi* or brain-force. Disturbance may happen either from above or from below. The information from outside is first photographed on the end organ, then reproduced at the other end of the nerve system in the *citta* or passive memory. All the images of sight, sound, smell, touch and taste are deposited there and the *manas* reports them to the *buddhi*. The *manas* is both a sense organ and a channel. As a sense organ it is as automatically perfect as the others, as a channel it is subject to disturbance resulting either in obstruction or distortion.

As a sense organ the mind receives direct thought impressions from outside and from within. These impressions are in themselves perfectly correct, but in their report to the intellect they may either not reach the intellect at all or may reach it so distorted as to make a false or partially false impression. The disturbance may affect the impression which attends the information of eye, ear, nose, skin or palate, but it is very slightly powerful here. In its effect on the direct impressions of the mind, it is extremely powerful and the chief source of error. The mind takes direct impressions primarily of thought, but also of form, sound, indeed of all the things for which it usually prefers to depend on the sense organs. The full development of this sensitiveness of the mind is called in our Yogic discipline *sūkṣmadṛṣṭi* or subtle reception of images. Telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, presentiment, thought-reading, character-reading and many other modern discoveries are very ancient powers of the mind which have been left undeveloped, and they all belong to the *manas*. The development of the sixth sense has never formed part of human training. In a future age it will undoubtedly take a place in the necessary preliminary training of the human instrument. Meanwhile there is no reason why the mind should not be trained to give a correct report to the intellect so that our thought may start with absolutely correct if not with full impressions.

The first obstacle, the nervous emotional, we may suppose to be removed by the purification of the nervous system. The second obstacle is that of the emotions themselves warping the impression as it comes. Love may do this, hatred may do this, any emotion or desire according to its power and intensity may distort the impression as it travels. This difficulty can only be removed by the discipline of the emotions, the purifying of the moral habits. This is a part of moral training and its consideration may be postponed for the moment. The next difficulty is the interference of previous associations formed or ingrained in the *citta* or passive memory. We have a habitual way of looking at things and the conservative inertia in our nature disposes us to give every new experience the shape and semblance of those to which we are accustomed. It is only more developed minds which can receive first impressions without an unconscious bias against the novelty of novel experience. For instance, if we get a true impression of what is happening — and we habitually act on such impressions true or false — if it differs from what we are accustomed to expect, the old association meets it in the *citta* and sends a changed report to the intellect in which either the new impression is overlaid and concealed by the old or mingled with it. To go farther into this subject would be to involve ourselves too deeply into the details of psychology. This typical instance will suffice. To get rid of this obstacle is impossible without *cittaśuddhi* or purification of the mental and moral habits formed in the *citta*. This is a preliminary process of Yoga and was effected in our ancient system by various means, but would be considered out of place in a modern system of education.

It is clear, therefore, that unless we revert to our old Indian system in some of its principles, we must be content to allow this source of disturbance to remain. A really national system of education would not allow itself to be controlled by European ideas in this all-important matter. And there is a process so simple and momentous that it can easily be made a part of our system.

It consists in bringing about passivity of the restless flood of thought sensations rising of its own momentum from the passive memory independent of our will and control. This passivity liberates the intellect from the siege of old associations and false impressions. It gives it power to select only what is wanted from the storehouse of the passive memory, automatically brings about the habit of getting right impressions and enables the intellect to dictate to the *citta* what *saṁskāras* or associations shall be formed or rejected. This is the real office of the intellect, — to discriminate, choose, select, arrange. But so long as there is not *cittasúddhi*, instead of doing this office perfectly, it itself remains imperfect and corrupt and adds to the confusion in the mind channel by false judgment, false imagination, false memory, false observation, false comparison, contrast and analogy, false deduction, induction and inference. The purification of the *citta* is essential for the liberation, purification and perfect action of the intellect.

VI

Sense-Improvement by Practice

ANOTHER cause of the inefficiency of the senses as gatherers of knowledge, is insufficient use. We do not observe sufficiently or with sufficient attention and closeness and a sight, sound, smell, even touch or taste knocks in vain at the door for admission. This tamasic inertia of the receiving instruments is no doubt due to the inattention of the *buddhi*, and therefore its consideration may seem to come properly under the training of the functions of the intellect, but it is more convenient, though less psychologically correct, to notice it here. The student ought to be accustomed to catch the sights, sounds, etc., around him, distinguish them, mark their nature, properties and sources and fix them in the *citta* so that they may be always ready to respond when called for by the memory.

It is a fact which has been proved by minute experiments that the faculty of observation is very imperfectly developed in men, merely from want of care in the use of the senses and the memory. Give twelve men the task of recording from memory something they all saw two hours ago and the accounts will all vary from each other and from the actual occurrence. To get rid of this imperfection will go a long way towards the removal of error. It can be done by training the senses to do their work perfectly, which they will do readily enough if they know the *buddhi* requires it of them, and giving sufficient attention to put the facts in their right place and order in the memory.

Attention is a factor in knowledge, the importance of which has been always recognised. Attention is the first condition of right memory and of accuracy. To attend to what he is doing is the first element of discipline required of the student, and, as I have suggested, this can easily be secured if the object of attention is made interesting. This attention to a single thing is called concentration. One truth is, however, sometimes overlooked, that concentration on several things at a time is often indispensable. When people talk of concentration, they imply centring the mind on one thing at a time; but it is quite possible to develop the power of double concentration, triple concentration, multiple concentration. When a given incident is happening, it may be made up of several simultaneous happenings or a set of simultaneous circumstances, a sight, a sound, a touch or several sights, sounds, touches occurring at the same moment or in the same short space of time. The tendency of the mind is to fasten on one and mark others vaguely, many not at all or, if compelled to attend to all, to be distracted and mark none perfectly. Yet this can be remedied and the attention equally distributed over a set of circumstances in such a way as to observe and remember each perfectly. It is merely a matter of *abhyāsa* or steady natural practice.

It is also very desirable that the hand should be capable of coming to the help of the eye in dealing with the multitudinous objects of its activity so as to ensure accuracy. This is of an use so obvious and imperatively needed, that it need not be dwelt on at length. The practice of imitation by the hand of the thing seen is of use both in detecting the lapses and inaccuracies of the mind in noticing the objects of sense and in registering accurately what has been seen. Imitation by the hand ensures accuracy of observation. This is one of the first uses of drawing and it is sufficient in itself to make the teaching of this subject a necessary part of the training of the organs.

VII

The Training of the Mental Faculties

THE FIRST qualities of the mind that have to be developed are those which can be grouped under observation. We notice some things, ignore others. Even of what we notice, we observe very little. A general perception of an object is all we usually carry away from a cursory half-attentive glance. A closer attention fixes its place, form, nature as distinct from its surroundings. Full concentration of the faculty of observation gives us all the knowledge that the three chief senses can gather about the object, or if we touch or taste, we may gather all that the five senses can tell of its nature and properties. Those who make use of the sixth sense, the poet, the painter, the Yogin, can also gather much that is hidden from the ordinary observer. The scientist by investigation ascertains other facts open to a minuter observation. These are the components of the faculty of observation, and it is obvious that its basis is attention, which may be only close or close and minute. We may gather much even from a passing glance at an object, if we have the habit of concentrating the attention and the habit of sattwic receptivity. The first thing the teacher has to do is to accustom the pupil to concentrate attention.

We may take the instance of a flower. Instead of looking casually at it and getting a casual impression of scent, form and colour, he should be encouraged to know the flower — to fix in his mind the exact shade, the peculiar glow, the precise intensity of the scent, the beauty of curve and design in the form. His touch should assure itself of the texture and its peculiarities. Next, the flower should be taken to pieces and its structure examined with the same careful fulness of observation. All this should be done not as a task, but as an object of interest by skilfully arranged questions suited to the learner which will draw him on to observe and investigate one thing after the other until he has almost unconsciously mastered the whole.

Memory and judgment are the next qualities that will be called upon, and they should be encouraged in the same unconscious way. The student should not be made to repeat the same lesson over again in order to remember it. That is a mechanical, burdensome and unintelligent way of training the memory. A similar but different flower should be put in his hands and he should be encouraged to note it with the same care, but with the avowed object of noting the similarities and differences. By this practice daily repeated the memory will naturally be trained. Not only so, but the mental centres of comparison and contrast will be developed. The learner will begin to observe as a habit the similarities of things and their differences. The teacher should take every care to encourage the perfect growth of this faculty and habit. At the same time the laws of species and genus will begin to dawn on the mind and, by a skilful following and leading of the young developing mind, the scientific habit, the scientific attitude and the fundamental facts of scientific knowledge may in a very short time be made part of its permanent equipment. The observation and comparison of flowers, leaves, plants, trees will lay the foundations of botanical knowledge without loading the mind with names and that dry set acquisition of informations which is the beginning of cramming and detested by the healthy human mind when it is fresh from nature and unspoiled by unnatural habits. In the same way by the observation of the stars, astronomy, by the observation of the earth, stones, etc., geology, by the observation of insects and animals, entomology and zoology may be founded. A little later chemistry may be started by interesting observation of experiments without any formal teaching or heaping on the mind of formulas and book knowledge. There is no scientific subject the perfect and natural mastery of which cannot be prepared in early childhood by this training of the faculties to observe, compare, remember and judge various classes of objects. It can be done easily and attended with a supreme and absorbing interest in the mind of the student. Once the taste is created, the boy can be trusted to follow it up with all the enthusiasm of youth in his leisure hours. This will prevent the necessity at a later age of teaching him everything in class.

The judgment will naturally be trained along with the other faculties. At every step the boy will have to decide what is the right idea, measurement, appreciation of colour, sound, scent, etc., and what is the wrong. Often the judgments and distinctions made will have to be exceedingly subtle and delicate. At first many errors will be made, but the learner should be taught to trust his judgment without being attached to its results. It will be found that the judgment will soon begin to respond to the calls made on it, clear itself of all errors and begin to judge correctly and minutely. The best way is to accustom the boy to compare his judgments with those of others. When he is wrong, it should at first be pointed out to him how far he was right and why he went wrong, afterwards he should be encouraged to note these things for himself. Every time he is right, his attention should be prominently and encouragingly called to it so that he may get confidence.

While engaged in comparing and contrasting, another centre is certain to develop, the centre of analogy. The learner will inevitably draw analogies and argue from like to like. He should be encouraged to use this faculty while noticing its limitations and errors. In this way he will be trained to form the habit of correct analogy, which is an indispensable aid in the acquisition of knowledge.

The one faculty we have omitted, apart from the faculty of direct reasoning, is imagination. This is a most important and indispensable instrument. It may be divided into three functions, the forming of mental images, the power of creating thoughts, images and imitations or new combinations of existing thoughts and images, the appreciation of the soul in things, beauty, charm, greatness, hidden suggestiveness, the emotion and spiritual life that pervades the world. This is in every way as important as the training of the faculties which observe and compare outward things. But that demands a separate and fuller treatment.

The mental faculties should first be exercised on things, afterwards on words and ideas. Our dealings with language are much too perfunctory and the absence of a fine sense for words impoverishes the intellect and limits the fineness and truth of its operation. The mind should be accustomed first to notice the word thoroughly, its form, sound, sense; then to compare the form with other similar forms in the points of similarity and difference, thus forming the foundation of the grammatical sense; then to distinguish between the fine shades of sense of similar words and the formation and rhythm of different sentences, thus forming the foundation of the literary and the syntactical faculties. All this should be done informally, drawing on the curiosity and interest, avoiding set teaching and memorising of rules. The true knowledge takes its base on things, *arthas*, and only when it has mastered the thing, proceeds to formalise its information.

VIII

The Training of the Logical Faculty

THE TRAINING of the logical reason must necessarily follow the training of the faculties which collect the material on which the logical reason must work. Not only so but the mind must have some development of the faculty of dealing with words before it can deal successfully with ideas. The question is, once this preliminary work is done, what is the best way of teaching the boy to think correctly from premises. For the logical reason cannot proceed without premises. It either infers from facts to a conclusion, or from previously formed conclusions to a fresh one, or from one fact to another. It either induces, deduces or simply infers. I see the sun rise day after day, I conclude or induce that it rises as a law daily after a varying interval of darkness. I have already ascertained that wherever there is smoke, there is fire. I have induced that general rule from an observation of facts. I deduce that in a particular case of smoke there is a fire behind. I infer that a man must have lit it from the improbability of any other cause under the particular circumstances. I cannot deduce it because fire is not always created by human kindling; it may be volcanic or caused by a stroke of lightning or the sparks from some kind of friction in the neighbourhood.

There are three elements necessary to correct reasoning, first, the correctness of the facts or conclusions I start from, secondly, the completeness as well as accuracy of the data I start from, thirdly, the elimination of other possible or impossible conclusions from the same facts. The fallibility of the logical reason is due partly to avoidable negligence and looseness in securing these conditions, partly to the difficulty of getting all the facts correct, still more to the difficulty of getting all the facts complete, most of all, to the extreme difficulty of eliminating all possible conclusions except the one which happens to be right. No fact is supposed to be more perfectly established than the universality of the law of gravitation as an imperative rule, yet a single new fact inconsistent with it would upset this supposed universality. And such facts exist. Nevertheless, by care and keenness the fallibility may be reduced to its minimum.

The usual practice is to train the logical reason by teaching the science of Logic. This is an instance of the prevalent error by which book knowledge of a thing is made the object of study instead of the thing itself. The experience of reasoning and its errors should be given to the mind and it should be taught to observe how these work for itself; it should proceed from the example to the rule and from the accumulating harmony of rules to the formal science of the subject, not from the formal science to the rule, and from the rule to the example.

The first step is to make the young mind interest itself in drawing inferences from the facts, tracing cause and effect. It should then be led on to notice its successes and its failures and the reason of the success and of the failure; the incorrectness of the fact started from, the haste in drawing conclusions from insufficient facts, the carelessness in accepting a conclusion which is improbable, little supported by the data or open to doubt, the indolence or prejudice which does not wish to consider other possible explanations or conclusions. In this way the mind can be trained to reason as correctly as the fallibility of human logic will allow, minimising the chances of error. The study of formal logic should be postponed to a later time when it can easily be mastered in a very brief period, since it will be only the systematising of an art perfectly well known to the student.

Message for National Education Week (1918)

NATIONAL Education is, next to Self-Government and along with it, the deepest and most immediate need of the country, and it is a matter of rejoicing for one to whom an earlier effort in that direction gave the first opportunity for identifying himself with the larger life and hope of the Nation, to see the idea, for a time submerged, moving so soon towards self-fulfilment.

Home Rule and National Education are two inseparable ideals, and none who follows the one, can fail the other, unless he is entirely wanting either in sincerity or in vision. We want not only a free India, but a great India, India taking worthily her place among the Nations and giving to the life of humanity what she alone can give. The greatest knowledge and the greatest riches man can possess are hers by inheritance; she has that for which all mankind is waiting. But she can only give it if her hands are free, her soul free, full and exalted, and her life dignified in all its parts. Home Rule, bringing with it the power of self-determination, can give the free hands, space for the soul to grow, strength for the life to raise itself again from darkness and narrow scope into light and nobility. But the full soul rich with the inheritance of the past, the widening gains of the present, and the large potentiality of her future, can come only by a system of National Education. It cannot come by any extension or imitation of the system of the existing universities with its radically false principles, its vicious and mechanical methods, its dead-alive routine tradition and its narrow and sightless spirit. Only a new spirit and a new body born from the heart of the Nation and full of the light and hope of its resurgence can create it.

We have a right to expect that the Nation will rise to the level of its opportunity and stand behind the movement as it has stood behind the movement for Home Rule. It should not be difficult to secure its intellectual sanction or its voice for National Education, but much more than that is wanted. The support it gives must be free from all taint of lip-service, passivity and lethargic inaction, evil habits born of long political servitude and inertia, and of that which largely led to it, subjection of the life and soul to a blend of unseeing and mechanical custom. Moral sympathy is not enough; active support from every individual is needed. Workers for the cause, money and means for its sustenance, students for its schools and colleges, are what the movement needs that it may prosper. The first will surely not be wanting; the second should come, for the control of the movement has in its personnel both influence and energy, and the habit of giving as well as self-giving for a great public cause is growing more widespread in the country. If the third condition is not from the beginning sufficiently satisfied, it will be because, habituated individually always to the customary groove, we prefer the safe and prescribed path, even when it leads nowhere, to the great and effective way, and cannot see our own interest because it presents itself in a new and untried form. But this is a littleness of spirit which the Nation must shake off that it may have the courage of its destiny.

If material and prudential considerations stand in the way, then let it be seen that, even in the vocational sphere, the old system opens only the doors of a few offices and professions overcrowded with applicants, whence the majority must go back disappointed and with empty hands, or be satisfied with a dwarfed life and a sordid pittance; while the new education will open careers which will be at once ways of honourable sufficiency, dignity and affluence to the individual, and paths of service to the country. For the men who come out equipped in every way from its institutions will be those who will give that impetus to the economic life and effort of the country without which it cannot survive in the press of the world, much less attain its high legitimate position. Individual interest and National interest are the same and call in the same direction. Whether as citizen, as worker or as parent and guardian, the duty of every Indian in this matter is clear: it lies in the great and new road the pioneers have been hewing, and not in the old stumbling cart-ruts.

This is an hour in which, for India as for all the world, its future destiny and the turn of its steps for a century are being powerfully decided, and for no ordinary century, but one which is itself a great turning-point, an immense turn-over in the inner and outer history of mankind. As we act now, so shall the reward of our karma be meted out to us, and each call of this kind at such an hour is at once an opportunity, a choice, and a test offered to the spirit of our people. Let it be said that it rose in each to the full height of its being and deserved the visible intervention of the Master of Destiny in its favour.

National Education

The whole movement of the national life of India at the present moment may be described in one phrase, — a pressure from within towards self-liberation from all unnatural conditions which obstruct or divert its free and spontaneous development. It is the movement of a stream trying to break open a natural path for its dammed-up waters. This effort takes inevitably many sides and aspects; for in politics and administration, in society, in commerce, in education, this national life finds itself bound up in forms, condemned to move in grooves which give no natural play to the new aspirations, powers and tendencies which have become its inner impelling motives. The effort to discover and organise a system of national education is part of this general effort of self-liberation, of self-finding, but perhaps the most central movement of all, in the end even the most important; for it is this which will give shape to the spirit of the nation at present in a state of rather formless flux. It is in fact no more than a chaotic press of tendencies; a national culture alone can give it form and consistency; and national education is the attempt to create and organise that culture.

A Preface on National Education

These two chapters appeared in the last two issues of the *Arya* in 1920 and 1921.

1

THE NECESSITY and unmixed good of universal education has become a fixed dogma to the modern intelligence, a thing held to be beyond dispute by any liberal mind or awakened national conscience, and whether the tenet be or not altogether beyond cavil, it may at any rate be presumed that it answers to a present and imperative need of the intellectual and vital effort of the race. But there is not quite so universal an agreement or common attainment to a reasoned or luminous idea on what education is or practically or ideally should be. Add to this uncertainty the demand — naturally insistent and clamorous with the awakening of the spirit of independence in a country like our own which is peculiarly circumstanced not only by the clash of the Asiatic and the European or occidental consciousness and the very different civilisations they have created and the enforced meeting of the English and the Indian mind and culture, but by a political subjection which has left the decisive shaping and supreme control of education in the hands of foreigners, — add the demand for a national type of education, and in the absence of clear ideas on the subject we are likely to enter, as we have in fact entered into an atmosphere of great and disconcerting confusion.

For if we do not know very clearly what education in general truly is or should be, we seem still less to know what we mean by national education. All that appears to be almost unanimously agreed on is that the teaching given in the existing schools and universities has been bad in kind and in addition denationalising, degrading and impoverishing to the national mind, soul and character because it is overshadowed by a foreign hand and foreign in aim, method, substance and spirit. But this purely negative agreement does not carry us very far: it does not tell us what in principle or practice we desire or ought to put in its place. There may be much virtue in an epithet but to tag on the word "national" to a school or college or even a Council or Board of Education, to put that into the hands of an indigenous agency, mostly of men trained in the very system we are denouncing, to reproduce that condemned system with certain differences, additions, subtractions, modifications of detail and curriculum, to tack on a technical side and think we have solved the problem does not really change anything. To be satisfied with a trick of this kind is to perform a somersault round our centre of intellectual gravity, land ourselves where we were before and think we have got into quite another country, — obviously a very unsatisfactory proceeding. The institutions that go by the new name may or may not be giving a better education than the others, but in what they are more national, is not altogether clear even to the most willingly sympathetic critical intelligence.

The problem indeed is one of surpassing difficulty and it is not easy to discover from what point of thought or of practice one has to begin, on what principle to create or on what lines to map out the new building. The conditions are intricate and the thing that is to be created in a way entirely new. We cannot be satisfied with a mere resuscitation of some past principle, method and system that may have happened to prevail at one time in India, however great it was or in consonance with our past civilisation and culture. That reversion would be a sterile and impossible effort hopelessly inadequate to the pressing demands of the present and the far greater demands of our future. On the other hand to take over the English, German or American school and university or some variation on them with a gloss of Indian colour is a course attractively facile and one that saves the need of thinking and of new experiment; but in that case there is no call for this loud pother about nationalising education, all that is needed is a change of control, of the medium of instruction, of the frame and fitting of the curriculum and to some extent of the balance of subjects. I presume that it is something more profound, great and searching that we have in mind and that, whatever the difficulty of giving it shape, it is an education proper to the Indian soul and need and temperament and culture that we are in quest of, not indeed something faithful merely to the past, but to the developing soul of India, to her future need, to the greatness of her coming self-creation, to her eternal spirit. It is this that we have to get clear in our minds and for that we must penetrate down to fundamentals and make those firm before we can greatly execute. Otherwise nothing is easier than to start off on a false but specious cry or from an unsound starting-point and travel far away from the right path on a tangent that will lead us to no goal but only to emptiness and failure.

But first let us clear out of the way or at least put in its proper place and light the preliminary disabling objection that there is and can be no meaning at all or none worth troubling about in the idea of a national education and that the very notion is the undesirable and unprofitable intrusion of a false and narrow patriotism into a field in which patriotism apart from the need of a training in good citizenship has no legitimate place. And for that one purpose no special kind or form of education is needed, since the training to good citizenship must be in all essentials the same whether in the east or the west, England or Germany or Japan or India. Mankind and its needs are the same everywhere and truth and knowledge are one and have no country; education too must be a thing universal and without nationality or borders. What, for an instance, could be meant by a national education in Science, and does it signify that we are to reject modern truth and modern method of science because they come to us from Europe and go back to the imperfect scientific knowledge of classical India, exile Galileo and Newton and all that came after and teach only what was known to Bhaskara, Aryabhatta and Varahamihira? Or how should the teaching of Sanskrit or the living indigenous tongues differ in kind and method from the teaching of Latin or the living modern tongues in Europe? Are we then to fetch back to the methods of the tols of Nadiya or to the system, if we can find out what it was, practised in ancient Takshashila or Nalanda? At most what can be demanded is a larger place for the study of the past of our country, the replacement of English by the indigenous tongues as a medium and the relegation of the former to the position of a second language, — but it is possible to challenge the advisability even of these changes. After all we live in the twentieth century and cannot revive the India of Chandragupta or Akbar; we must keep abreast with the march of truth and knowledge, fit ourselves for existence under actual circumstances, and our education must be therefore up to date in form and substance and modern in life and spirit.

All these objections are only pertinent if directed against the travesty of the idea of national education which would make of it a means of an obscurantist retrogression to the past forms that were once a living frame of our culture but are now dead or dying things; but that is not the idea nor the endeavour. The living spirit of the demand for national education no more requires a return to the astronomy and mathematics of Bhaskara or the forms of the system of Nalanda than the living spirit of Swadeshi a return from railway and motor traction to the ancient chariot and the bullock-cart. There is no doubt plenty of retrogressive sentimentalism about and there have been some queer violences on common sense and reason and disconcerting freaks that prejudice the real issue, but these inconsequent streaks of fantasy give a false hue to the matter. It is the spirit, the living and vital issue that we have to do with, and there the question is not between modernism and antiquity, but between an imported civilisation and the greater possibilities of the Indian mind and nature, not between the present and the past, but between the present and the future. It is not a return to the fifth century but an initiation of the centuries to come, not a reversion but a break forward away from a present artificial falsity to her own greater innate potentialities that is demanded by the soul, by the Shakti of India.

The argument against national education proceeds in the first place upon the lifeless academic notion that the subject, the acquiring of this or that kind of information is the whole or the central matter. But the acquiring of various kinds of information is only one and not the chief of the means and necessities of education: its central aim is the building of the powers of the human mind and spirit, it is the formation or, as I would prefer to view it, the evoking of knowledge and will and of the power to use knowledge, character, culture, — that at least if no more. And this distinction makes an enormous difference. It is true enough that if all we ask for is the acquisition of the information put at our disposal by science, it may be enough to take over the science of the West whether in an undigested whole or in carefully packed morsels. But the major question is not merely what science we learn, but what we shall do with our science and how too, acquiring the scientific mind and recovering the habit of scientific discovery — I leave aside the possibility of the Indian mentality working freely in its own nature discovering new methods or even giving a new turn to physical science — we shall relate it to other powers of the human mind and scientific knowledge, to other knowledge more intimate to other and not less light-giving and power-giving parts of our intelligence and nature. And there the peculiar cast of the Indian mind, its psychological tradition, its ancestral capacity, turn, knowledge bring in cultural elements of a supreme importance. A language, Sanskrit or another, should be acquired by whatever method is most natural, efficient and stimulating to the mind and we need not cling there to any past or present manner of teaching: but the vital question is how we are to learn and make use of Sanskrit and the indigenous languages so as to get to the heart and intimate sense of our own culture and establish a vivid continuity between the still living power of our past and the yet uncreated power of our future, and how we are to learn and use English or any other foreign tongue so as to know helpfully the life, ideas and culture of other countries and establish our right relations with the world around us. This is the aim and principle of a true national education, not, certainly, to ignore modern truth and knowledge, but to take our foundation on our own being, our own mind, our own spirit.

The second ground openly or tacitly taken by the hostile argument is that modern, that is to say, European civilisation is the thing that we have to acquire and fit ourselves for, so only can we live and prosper and it is this that our education must do for us. The idea of national education challenges the sufficiency of this assumption. Europe built up her ancient culture on a foundation largely taken from the East, from Egypt, Chaldea, Phoenicia, India, but turned in a new direction and another life-idea by the native spirit and temperament, mind and social genius of Greece and Rome, lost and then recovered it, in part from the Arabs with fresh borrowings from the near East and from India and more widely by the Renaissance, but then too gave it a new turn and direction proper to the native spirit and temperament, mind and social genius of the Teutonic, and the Latin, the Celtic and Slav races. It is the civilisation so created that has long offered itself as the last and imperative word of the mind of humanity, but the nations of Asia are not bound so to accept it, and will do better, taking over in their turn whatever new knowledge or just ideas Europe has to offer, to assimilate them to their own knowledge and culture, their own native temperament and spirit, mind and social genius and out of that create the civilisation of the future. The scientific, rationalistic, industrial, pseudo-democratic civilisation of the West is now in process of dissolution and it would be a lunatic absurdity for us at this moment to build blindly on that sinking foundation. When the most advanced minds of the occident are beginning to turn in this red evening of the West for the hope of a new and more spiritual civilisation to the genius of Asia, it would be strange if we could think of nothing better than to cast away our own self and potentialities and put our trust in the dissolving and moribund past of Europe.

And, finally, the objection grounds itself on the implicit idea that the mind of man is the same everywhere and can everywhere be passed through the same machine and uniformly constructed to order. That is an old and effete superstition of the reason which it is time now to renounce. For within the universal mind and soul of humanity is the mind and soul of the individual with its infinite variation, its commonness and its uniqueness, and between them there stands an intermediate power, the mind of a nation, the soul of a people. And of all these three education must take account if it is to be, not a machine-made fabric, but a true building or a living evocation of the powers of the mind and spirit of the human being.

2

THESE preliminary objections made to the very idea of national education and, incidentally, the misconceptions they oppose once out of the way, we have still to formulate more positively what the idea means to us, the principle and the form that national education must take in India, the thing to be achieved and the method and turn to be given to the endeavour. It is here that the real difficulty begins because we have for a long time, not only in education but in almost all things, in our whole cultural life, lost hold of the national spirit and idea and there has been as yet no effort of clear, sound and deep thinking or seeing which would enable us to recover it and therefore no clear agreement or even clear difference of opinion on essentials and accessories. At the most we have been satisfied with a strong sentiment and a general but shapeless idea and enthusiasm corresponding to the sentiment and have given to it in the form whatever haphazard application chanced to be agreeable to our intellectual associations, habits or caprices. The result has been no tangible or enduring success, but rather a maximum of confusion and failure. The first thing needed is to make clear to our own minds what the national spirit, temperament, idea, need demands of us through education and apply it in its right harmony to all the different elements of the problem. Only after that is done can we really hope with some confidence and chance of utility and success to replace the present false, empty and mechanical education by something better than a poor and futile chaos or a new mechanical falsity, by a real, living and creative upbringing of the Indian manhood of the future.

But first it is necessary to disengage from all ambiguities what we understand by a true education, its essential sense, its fundamental aim and significance. For we can then be sure of our beginnings and proceed securely to fix the just place and whole bearing of the epithet we seek to attach to the word. I must be sure what education itself is or should be before I can be sure what a national education is or should be. Let us begin then with our initial statement, as to which I think there can be no great dispute that there are three things which have to be taken into account in a true and living education, the man, the individual in his commonness and in his uniqueness, the nation or people and universal humanity. It follows that that alone will be a true and living education which helps to bring out to full advantage, makes ready for the full purpose and scope of human life all that is in the individual man, and which at the same time helps him to enter into his right relation with the life, mind and soul of the people to which he belongs and with that great total life, mind and soul of humanity of which he himself is a unit and his people or nation a living, a separate and yet inseparable member. It is by considering the whole question in the light of this large and entire principle that we can best arrive at a clear idea of what we would have our education to be and what we shall strive to accomplish by a national education. Most is this largeness of view and foundation needed here and now in India, the whole energy of whose life purpose must be at this critical turning of her destinies directed to her one great need, to find and rebuild her true self in individual and in people and to take again, thus repossessed of her inner greatness, her due and natural portion and station in the life of the human race.

There are however very different conceptions possible of man and his life, of the nation and its life and of humanity and the life of the human race, and our idea and endeavour in education may well vary considerably according to that difference. India has always had her own peculiar conception and vision of these things and we must see whether it is not really, as it is likely to be, that which will be or ought to be at the very root of our education and the one thing that will give it its truly national character. Man has not been seen by the thought of India as a living body developed by physical Nature which has evolved certain vital propensities, an ego, a mind and a reason, an animal of the genus homo and in our case of the species *homo indicus*, whose whole life and education must be turned towards a satisfaction of these propensities under the government of a trained mind and reason and for the best advantage of the personal and the national ego. It has not been either the turn of her mind to regard man preeminently as a reasoning animal, or let us say, widening the familiar definition, a thinking, feeling and willing natural existence, a mental son of physical Nature, and his education as a culture of the mental capacities, or to define him as a political, social and economic being and his education as a training that will fit him to be an efficient, productive and well disciplined member of the society and the State. All these are no doubt aspects of the human being and she has given them a considerable prominence subject to her larger vision, but they are outward things, parts of the instrumentation of his mind, life and action, not the whole or the real man.

India has seen always in man the individual a soul, a portion of the Divinity enwrapped in mind and body, a conscious manifestation in Nature of the universal self and spirit. Always she has distinguished and cultivated in him a mental, an intellectual, an ethical, dynamic and practical, an aesthetic and hedonistic, a vital and physical being, but all these have been seen as powers of a soul that manifests through them and grows with their growth, and yet they are not all the soul, because at the summit of its ascent it arises to something greater than them all, into a spiritual being, and it is in this that she has found the supreme manifestation of the soul of man and his ultimate divine manhood, his *paramārtha* and highest *puruṣārtha*. And similarly India has not understood by the nation or people an organised State or an armed and efficient community well prepared for the struggle of life and putting all at the service of the national ego, — that is only the disguise of iron armour which masks and encumbers the national Purusha, — but a great communal soul and life that has appeared in the whole and has manifested a nature of its own and a law of that nature, a Swabhava and Swadharma, and embodied it in its intellectual, aesthetic, ethical, dynamic, social and political forms and culture. And equally then our cultural conception of humanity must be in accordance with her ancient vision of the universal manifesting in the human race, evolving through life and mind but with a high ultimate spiritual aim, — it must be the idea of the spirit, the soul of humanity advancing through struggle and concert towards oneness, increasing its experience and maintaining a needed diversity through the varied culture and life motives of its many peoples, searching for perfection through the development of the powers of the individual and his progress towards a diviner being and life, but feeling out too though more slowly after a similar perfectibility in the life of the race. It may be disputed whether this is a true account of the human or the national being, but if it is once admitted as a true description, then it should be clear that the only true education will be that which will be an instrument for this real working of the spirit in the mind and body of the individual and the nation. That is the principle on which we must build, that the central motive and the guiding ideal. It must be an education that for the individual will make its one central object the growth of the soul and its powers and possibilities, for the nation will keep first in view the preservation, strengthening and enrichment of the nation-soul and its dharma and raise both into powers of the life and ascending mind and soul of humanity. And at no time will it lose sight of man's highest object, the awakening and development of his spiritual being.

Part Four

On Art

Sri Aurobindo wrote these essays in 1909–10. He published all of them except the last in the *Karmayogin*, a weekly newspaper of which he was the editor and principal writer.

The National Value of Art

I

THERE is a tendency in modern times to depreciate the value of the beautiful and overstress the value of the useful, a tendency curbed in Europe by the imperious insistence of an agelong tradition of culture and generous training of the aesthetic perceptions; but in India, where we have been cut off by a mercenary and soulless education from all our ancient roots of culture and tradition, it is corrected only by the stress of imagination, emotion and spiritual delicacy, submerged but not yet destroyed, in the temperament of the people. The value attached by the ancients to music, art and poetry has become almost unintelligible to an age bent on depriving life of its meaning by turning earth into a sort of glorified antheap or beehive and confusing the lowest, though most primary in necessity, of the means of human progress with the aim of this great evolutionary process. The first and lowest necessity of the race is that of self-preservation in the body by a sufficient supply and equable distribution of food, shelter and raiment. This is a problem which the oldest communistic human societies solved to perfection, and without communism it cannot be solved except by a convenient but inequitable arrangement which makes of the majority slaves provided with these primary wants and necessities and ministering under compulsion to a few who rise higher and satisfy larger wants. These are the wants of the vital instincts, called in our philosophy the *prāṇa koṣa*, which go beyond and dominate the mere animal wants, simple, coarse and undiscriminating, shared by us with the lower creation. It is these vital wants, the hunger for wealth, luxury, beautiful women, rich foods and drinks, which disturbed the first low but perfect economy of society and made the institution of private property, with its huge train of evils, inequality, injustice, violence, fraud, civil commotion and hatred, class selfishness, family selfishness and personal selfishness, an inevitable necessity of human progress. The Mother of All works through evil as well as good, and through temporary evil she brings about a better and lasting good. These disturbances were complicated by the heightening of the primitive animal emotions into more intense and complex forms. Love, hatred, vindictiveness, anger, attachment, jealousy and the host of similar passions, — the *citta* or mind-stuff suffused by the vital wants of the *prāṇa*, that which the Europeans call the heart — ceased to be communal in their application and, as personal wants, clamoured for separate satisfaction. It is for the satisfaction of the vital and emotional needs of humanity that modern nations and societies exist, that commerce grows and Science ministers to human luxury and convenience. But for these new wants, the establishment of private property, first in the clan or family, then in the individual, the institution of slavery and other necessary devices the modern world would never have come into existence; for the satisfaction of the primary economic wants and bodily necessities would never have carried us beyond the small commune or tribe. But these primary wants and necessities have to be satisfied and satisfied universally, or society becomes diseased and states convulsed with sedition and revolution.

The old arrangement of a mass of slaves well fed and provided and a select class or classes enjoying in greater or less quantity the higher wants of humanity broke down in the mediaeval ages, because the heart began to develop too powerfully in humanity and under the influence of philosophy, ethics and religion began to spread its claim beyond the person, the class, the family, the clan to the nation and to humanity or to all creation. A temporary makeshift was invented to replace slavery, called free labour, by which men were paid and bribed to accept voluntarily the position of slaves, contenting themselves with the coarse satisfaction of the animal necessities and in return providing by their labour the higher wants of their masters now called superiors or higher classes. This also has become a solution which will no longer serve. The whole of humanity now demands not merely the satisfaction of the body, the *anna*, but the satisfaction also of the *prāṇa* and the *citta*, the vital and emotional desires. Wealth, luxury, enjoyment for oneself and those dear to us, participation in the satisfaction of national wealth, pride, lordship, rivalry, war, alliance, peace, once the privilege of the few, the higher classes, of prince, burgess and noble are now claimed by all humanity. Political, social and economic liberty and equality, two things difficult to harmonise, must now be conceded to all men and harmonised as well as the present development of humanity will allow. It is this claim that arose, red with fury and blinded with blood, in the French Revolution. This is Democracy, this Socialism, this Anarchism; and, however fiercely the privileged and propertied classes may rage, curse and denounce these forerunners of Demogorgon, they can only temporarily resist. Their interests may be hoary and venerable with the sanction of the ages, but the future is mightier than the past and evolution proceeds relentlessly in its course trampling to pieces all that it no longer needs. Those who fight against her fight against the will of God, against a decree written from of old, and are already defeated and slain in the *kāraṇa jagat*, the world of types and causes where Nature fixes everything before she works it out in the visible world. *Nihatāḥ pūrvameva*.

The mass of humanity has not risen beyond the bodily needs, the vital desires, the emotions and the current of thought-sensations created by these lower strata. This current of thought-sensations is called in Hindu philosophy the *manas* or mind, it is the highest to which all but a few of the animals can rise, and it is the highest function that the mass of mankind has thoroughly perfected. Beyond the *manas* is the *buddhi*, or thought proper, which, when perfected, is independent of the desires, the claims of the body and the interference of the emotions. But only a minority of men have developed this organ, much less perfected it. Only great thinkers in their hours of thought are able to use this organ independently of the lower strata, and even they are besieged by the latter in their ordinary life and their best thought suffers continually from these lower intrusions. Only developed Yogins have a *viśuddha-buddhi*, a thought-organ cleared of the interference of the lower strata by *cittaśuddhi* or purification of the *citta*, the mind-stuff, from the *prāṇa* full of animal, vital and emotional disturbances. With most men the *buddhi* is full of *manas* and the *manas* of the lower strata. The majority of mankind do not think, they have only thought-sensations; a large minority think confusedly, mixing up desires, predilections, passions, prejudgments, old associations and prejudices with pure and disinterested thought. Only a few, the rare aristocrats of the earth, can really and truly think. That is now the true aristocracy, not the aristocracy of the body and birth, not the aristocracy of vital superiority, wealth, pride and luxury, not the aristocracy of higher emotions, courage, energy, successful political instinct and the habit of mastery and rule, — though these latter cannot be neglected, — but the aristocracy of knowledge, undisturbed insight and intellectual ability. It emerges, though it has not yet emerged, and in any future arrangement of human society this natural inequality will play an important part.

Above the *buddhi* are other faculties which are now broadly included in the term spirituality. This body of faculties is still rarer and more imperfectly developed even in the highest than the thought-organ. Most men mistake intellectuality, imaginative inspiration or emotional fervour for spirituality, but this is a much higher function, the highest of all, of which all the others are coverings and veils. Here we get to the fountain, the source to which we return, the goal of human evolution. But although spirituality has often entered into humanity in great waves, it has done so merely to create a temporary impetus and retire into the souls of a few, leaving only its coverings and shadows behind to compose and inform the thing which is usually called religion. Meanwhile the thought is the highest man has really attained and it is by the thought that the old society has been broken down. And the thought is composed of two separate sides, judgment or reason and imagination, both of which are necessary to perfect ideation. It is by science, philosophy and criticism on the one side, by art, poetry and idealism on the other that the old state of humanity has been undermined and is now collapsing, and the foundations have been laid for the new. Of these science, philosophy and criticism have established their use to the mass of humanity by ministering to the luxury, comfort and convenience which all men desire and arming them with justification in the confused struggle of passions, interests, cravings and aspirations which are now working with solvent and corrosive effect throughout the world. The value of the other side, more subtle and profound, has been clouded to the mass of men by the less visible and sensational character of its workings.

II

THE ACTIVITY of human thought divides itself broadly into two groups of functions, those of the right hand, contemplation, creation, imagination, the centres that see the truth, and those of the left hand, criticism, reasoning, discrimination, inquiry, the centres that judge the truth when it is seen. In education the latter are fostered by scientific and manual training, but the only quality of the right hand that this education fosters is observation. For this reason a purely scientific education tends to make thought keen and clear-sighted within certain limits, but narrow, hard and cold. Even in his own sphere the man without any training of the right hand can only progress in a settled groove; he cannot broaden the base of human culture or enlarge the bounds of science. Tennyson describes him as an eye well practised in Nature, a spirit bounded and poor, and the description is just. But a cultivated eye without a cultivated spirit makes by no means the highest type of man. It is precisely the cultivation of the spirit that is the object of what is well called a liberal education, and the pursuits best calculated to cultivate the growth of the spirit are language, literature, the Arts, music, painting, sculpture or the study of these, philosophy, religion, history, the study and understanding of man through his works and of Nature and man through the interpretative as well as through the analytic faculties. These are the pursuits which belong to the intellectual activities of the right hand, and while the importance of most of these will be acknowledged, there is a tendency to ignore Art and poetry as mere refinements, luxuries of the rich and leisurely rather than things that are necessary to the mass of men or useful to life. This is largely due to the misuse of these great instruments by the luxurious few who held the world and its good things in their hands in the intermediate period of human progress.

But the aesthetic faculties entering into the enjoyment of the world and the satisfaction of the vital instincts, the love of the beautiful in men and women, in food, in things, in articles of use and articles of pleasure, have done more than anything else to raise man from the beast, to refine and purge his passions, to ennoble his emotions and to lead him up through the heart and the imagination to the state of the intellectual man. That which has helped man upward, must be preserved in order that he may not sink below the level he has attained. For man intellectually developed, mighty in scientific knowledge and the mastery of gross and subtle nature, using the elements as his servants and the world as his footstool, but undeveloped in heart and spirit, becomes only an inferior kind of Asura using the powers of a demigod to satisfy the nature of an animal. According to dim traditions and memories of the old world, of such a nature was the civilisation of old Atlantis, submerged beneath the Ocean when its greatness and its wickedness became too heavy a load for the earth to bear, and our own legends of the Asuras represent a similar consciousness of a great but abortive development in humanity.

The first and lowest use of Art is the purely aesthetic, the second is the intellectual or educative, the third and highest the spiritual. By speaking of the aesthetic use as the lowest, we do not wish to imply that it is not of immense value to humanity, but simply to assign to it its comparative value in relation to the higher uses. The aesthetic is of immense importance and until it has done its work, mankind is not really fitted to make full use of Art on the higher planes of human development. Aristotle assigns a high value to tragedy because of its purifying force. He describes its effect as *katharsis*, a sacramental word of the Greek mysteries, which, in the secret discipline of the ancient Greek Tantrics, answered precisely to our *cittaśuddhi*, the purification of the *citta* or mass of established ideas, feelings and actional habits in a man either by *saṁyama*, rejection, or by *bhoga*, satisfaction, or by both. Aristotle was speaking of the purification of feelings, passions and emotions in the heart through imaginative treatment in poetry but the truth the idea contains is of much wider application and constitutes the justification of the aesthetic side of art. It purifies by beauty. The beautiful and the good are held by many thinkers to be the same and, though the idea may be wrongly stated, it is, when put from the right standpoint, not only a truth but the fundamental truth of existence. According to our own philosophy the whole world came out of *ānanda* and returns into *ānanda*, and the triple term in which *ānanda* may be stated is Joy, Love, Beauty. To see divine beauty in the whole world, man, life, nature, to love that which we have seen and to have pure unalloyed bliss in that love and that beauty is the appointed road by which mankind as a race must climb to God. That is the reaching to *vidyā* through *avidyā*, to the One Pure and Divine through the manifold manifestation of Him, of which the Upanishad repeatedly speaks. But the bliss must be pure and unalloyed, unalloyed by self-regarding emotions, unalloyed by pain and evil. The sense of good and bad, beautiful and unbeautiful, which afflicts our understanding and our senses, must be replaced by *akhaṇḍa rasa*, undifferentiated and unabridged delight in the delightfulness of things, before the highest can be reached. On the way to this goal full use must be made of the lower and abridged sense of beauty which seeks to replace the less beautiful by the more, the lower by the higher, the mean by the noble.

At a certain stage of human development the aesthetic sense is of infinite value in this direction. It raises and purifies conduct by instilling a distaste for the coarse desires and passions of the savage, for the rough, uncouth and excessive in action and manner, and restraining both feeling and action by a striving after the decent, the beautiful, the fit and seemly which received its highest expression in the manners of cultivated European society, the elaborate ceremonious life of the Confucian, the careful *ācāra* and etiquette of Hinduism. At the present stage of progress this element is losing much of its once all-important value and, when overstressed, tends to hamper a higher development by the obstruction of soulless ceremony and formalism. Its great use was to discipline the savage animal instincts of the body, the vital instincts and the lower feelings in the heart. Its disadvantage to progress is that it tends to trammel the play both of the higher feelings of the heart and the workings of originality in thought. Born originally of a seeking after beauty, it degenerates into an attachment to form, to exterior uniformity, to precedent, to dead authority. In the future development of humanity it must be given a much lower place than in the past. Its limits must be recognised and the demands of a higher truth, sincerity and freedom of thought and feeling must be given priority. Mankind is apt to bind itself by attachment to the means of its past progress forgetful of the aim. The bondage to formulas has to be outgrown, and in this again it is the sense of a higher beauty and fitness which will be most powerful to correct the lower. The art of life must be understood in more magnificent terms and must subordinate its more formal elements to the service of the master civilisers, Love and Thought.

III

THE WORK of purifying conduct through outward form and habitual and seemly regulation of expression, manner and action is the lowest of the many services which the artistic sense has done to humanity, and yet how wide is the field it covers and how important and indispensable have its workings been to the progress of civilisation! A still more important and indispensable activity of the sense of beauty is the powerful help it has given to the formation of morality. We do not ordinarily recognise how largely our sense of virtue is a sense of the beautiful in conduct and our sense of sin a sense of ugliness and deformity in conduct. It may easily be recognised in the lower and more physical workings, as for instance in the shuddering recoil from cruelty, blood, torture as things intolerably hideous to sight and imagination or in the aesthetic disgust at sensual excesses and the strong sense, awakened by this disgust, of the charm of purity and the beauty of virginity. This latter feeling was extremely active in the imagination of the Greeks and other nations not noted for a high standard in conduct, and it was purely aesthetic in its roots. Pity again is largely a vital instinct in the ordinary man associated with *jugupsā*, the loathing for the hideousness of its opposite, *ghṛṇā*, disgust at the sordidness and brutality of cruelty, hardness and selfishness as well as at the ugliness of their actions, so that a common word for cruel in the Sanskrit language is *nirghṛṇa*, the man without disgust or loathing, and the word *ghṛṇā* approximates in use to *kṛpā*, the lower or vital kind of pity. But even on a higher plane the sense of virtue is very largely aesthetic and, even when it emerges from the aesthetic stage, must always call the sense of the beautiful to its support if it is to be safe from the revolt against it of one of the most deep-seated of human instincts. We can see the largeness of this element if we study the ideas of the Greeks, who never got beyond the aesthetic stage of morality. There were four gradations in Greek ethical thought, — the *euprepēs*, that which is seemly or outwardly decorous; the *dikaion*, that which is in accordance with *dikē* or *nomos*, the law, custom and standard of humanity based on the sense of fitness and on the codified or uncodified mass of precedents in which that sense has been expressed in general conduct, — in other words the just or lawful; thirdly, the *agathon*, the good, based partly on the seemly and partly on the just and lawful, and reaching towards the purely beautiful; then, final and supreme, the *kalon*, that which is purely beautiful, the supreme standard. The most remarkable part of Aristotle's moral system is that in which he classifies the parts of conduct not according to our idea of virtue and sin, *pāpa* and *puṇya*, but by a purely aesthetic standard, the excess, defect and golden, in other words correct and beautiful, mean of qualities. The Greeks' view of life was imperfect even from the standpoint of beauty, not only because the idea of beauty was not sufficiently catholic and too much attached to a fastidious purity of form and outline and restraint, but because they were deficient in love. God as beauty, Srikrishna in Brindavan, Shyamasundara, is not only Beauty, He is also Love, and without perfect love there cannot be perfect beauty, and without perfect beauty there cannot be perfect delight. The aesthetic motive in conduct limits and must be exceeded in order that humanity may rise. Therefore it was that the Greek mould had to be broken and humanity even revolted for a time against beauty. The *agathon*, the good, had to be released for a time from the bondage of the *kalon*, the aesthetic sense of beauty, just as it is now struggling to deliver itself from the bondage of the *euprepēs* and the *dikaion*, mere decorousness, mere custom, mere social law and rule. The excess of this anti-aesthetic tendency is visible in Puritanism and the baser forms of asceticism. The progress of ethics in Europe has been largely a struggle between the Greek sense of aesthetic beauty and the Christian sense of a higher good marred on the one side by formalism, on the other by an unlovely asceticism. The association of the latter with virtue has largely driven the sense of beauty to the side of vice. The good must not be subordinated to the aesthetic sense, but it must be beautiful and delightful, or to that extent it ceases to be good. The object of existence is not the practice of virtue for its own sake but *ānanda*, delight, and progress consists not in rejecting beauty and delight, but in rising from the lower to the higher, the less complete to the more complete beauty and delight.

The third activity of the aesthetic faculty, higher than the two already described, the highest activity of the artistic sense before it rises to the plane of the intellect, is the direct purifying of the emotions. This is the *katharsis* of which Aristotle spoke. The sense of pleasure and delight in the emotional aspects of life and action, this is the poetry of life, just as the regulating and beautiful arrangement of character and action is the art of life. We have seen how the latter purifies, but the purifying force of the former is still more potent for good. Our life is largely made up of the eight *rasas*. The movements of the heart in its enjoyment of action, its own and that of others, may either be directed downwards, as is the case with the animals and animal men, to the mere satisfaction of the ten sense-organs and the vital desires which make instruments of the senses in the average sensual man, or they may work for the satisfaction of the heart itself in a predominatingly emotional enjoyment of life, or they may be directed upwards through the medium of the intellect, rational and intuitional, to attainment of delight through the seizing on the source of all delight, the Spirit, the *satyam, sundaram, ānandam* who is beyond and around, the source and the basis of all this world-wide activity, evolution and progress. When the heart works for itself, then it enjoys the poetry of life, the delight of emotions, the wonder, pathos, beauty, enjoyableness, lovableness, calm, serenity, clarity and also the grandeur, heroism, passion, fury, terror and horror of life, of man, of Nature, of the phenomenal manifestation of God. This is not the highest, but it is higher than the animal, vital and externally aesthetic developments. The large part it plays in life is obvious, but in life it is hampered by the demands of the body and the vital passions. Here comes in the first mighty utility, the triumphant activity of the most energetic forms of art and poetry.

They provide a field in which these pressing claims of the animal can be excluded and the emotions, working disinterestedly for the satisfaction of the heart and the imagination alone, can do the work of *katharsis*, emotional purification, of which Aristotle spoke. *Cittaśuddhi*, the purification of the heart, is the appointed road by which man arrives at his higher fulfilment, and, if it can be shown that poetry and art are powerful agents towards that end, their supreme importance is established. They are that, and more than that. It is only one of the great uses of these things which men nowadays are inclined to regard as mere ornaments of life and therefore of secondary importance.

IV

WE NOW come to the kernel of the subject, the place of art in the evolution of the race and its value in the education and actual life of a nation. The first question is whether the sense of the beautiful has any effect on the life of a nation. It is obvious, from what we have already written, that the manners, the social culture and the restraint in action and expression which are so large a part of national prestige and dignity and make a nation admired like the French, loved like the Irish or respected like the higher-class English, are based essentially on the sense of form and beauty, of what is correct, symmetrical, well-adjusted, fair to the eye and pleasing to the imagination. The absence of these qualities is a source of national weakness. The rudeness, coarseness and vulgar violence of the less cultured Englishman, the overbearing brusqueness and selfishness of the Prussian have greatly hampered those powerful nations in their dealings with foreigners, dependencies and even their own friends, allies, colonies. We all know what a large share the manner and ordinary conduct of the average and of the vulgar Anglo-Indian has had in bringing about the revolt of the Indian, accustomed through ages to courtesy, dignity and the amenities of an equal intercourse, against the mastery of an obviously coarse and selfish community. Now the sense of form and beauty, the correct, symmetrical, well-adjusted, fair and pleasing is an artistic sense and can best be fostered in a nation by artistic culture of the perceptions and sensibilities. It is noteworthy that the two great nations who are most hampered by the defect of these qualities in action are also the least imaginative, poetic and artistic in Europe. It is the South German who contributes the art, poetry and music of Germany, the Celt and Norman who produce great poets and a few great artists in England without altering the characteristics of the dominant

Saxon. Music is even more powerful in this direction than Art and by the perfect expression of harmony insensibly steeps the man in it. And it is noticeable that England has hardly produced a single musician worth the name. Plato in his Republic has dwelt with extraordinary emphasis on the importance of music in education; as is the music to which a people is accustomed, so, he says in effect, is the character of that people. The importance of painting and sculpture is hardly less. The mind is profoundly influenced by what it sees and, if the eye is trained from the days of childhood to the contemplation and understanding of beauty, harmony and just arrangement in line and colour, the tastes, habits and character will be insensibly trained to follow a similar law of beauty, harmony and just arrangement in the life of the adult man. This was the great importance of the universal proficiency in the arts and crafts or the appreciation of them which was prevalent in ancient Greece, in certain European ages, in Japan and in the better days of our own history. Art galleries cannot be brought into every home, but, if all the appointments of our life and furniture of our homes are things of taste and beauty, it is inevitable that the habits, thoughts and feelings of the people should be raised, ennobled, harmonised, made more sweet and dignified.

A similar result is produced on the emotions by the study of beautiful or noble art. We have spoken of the purification of the heart, the *cittaśuddhi*, which Aristotle assigned as the essential office of poetry, and have pointed out that it is done in poetry by the detached and disinterested enjoyment of the eight *rasas* or forms of emotional aestheticism which make up life, unalloyed by the disturbance of the lower self-regarding passions. Painting and sculpture work in the same direction by different means. Art sometimes uses the same means as poetry but cannot do it to the same extent because it has not the movement of poetry; it is fixed, still, it expresses only a given moment, a given point in space and cannot move freely through time and region. But it is precisely this stillness, this calm, this fixity which gives its separate value to Art. Poetry raises the emotions and gives each its separate delight. Art stills the emotions and teaches them the delight of a restrained and limited satisfaction, — this indeed was the characteristic that the Greeks, a nation of artists far more artistic than poetic, tried to bring into their poetry. Music deepens the emotions and harmonises them with each other. Between them music, art and poetry are a perfect education for the soul; they make and keep its movements purified, self-controlled, deep and harmonious. These, therefore, are agents which cannot profitably be neglected by humanity on its onward march or degraded to the mere satisfaction of sensuous pleasure which will disintegrate rather than build the character. They are, when properly used, great educating, edifying and civilising forces.

V

THE VALUE of art in the training of intellectual faculty is also an important part of its utility. We have already indicated the double character of intellectual activity, divided between the imaginative, creative and sympathetic or comprehensive intellectual centres on the one side and the critical, analytic and penetrative on the other. The latter are best trained by science, criticism and observation, the former by art, poetry, music, literature and the sympathetic study of man and his creations. These make the mind quick to grasp at a glance, subtle to distinguish shades, deep to reject shallow self-sufficiency, mobile, delicate, swift, intuitive. Art assists in this training by raising images in the mind which it has to understand not by analysis, but by self-identification with other minds; it is a powerful stimulator of sympathetic insight. Art is subtle and delicate, and it makes the mind also in its movements subtle and delicate. It is suggestive, and the intellect habituated to the appreciation of art is quick to catch suggestions, mastering not only, as the scientific mind does, that which is positive and on the surface, but that which leads to ever fresh widening and subtilising of knowledge and opens a door into the deeper secrets of inner nature where the positive instruments of science cannot take the depth or measure. This supreme intellectual value of Art has never been sufficiently recognised. Men have made language, poetry, history, philosophy agents for the training of this side of intellectuality, necessary parts of a liberal education, but the immense educative force of music, painting and sculpture has not been duly recognised. They have been thought to be by-paths of the human mind, beautiful and interesting, but not necessary, therefore intended for the few. Yet the universal impulse to enjoy the beauty and attractiveness of sound, to look at and live among pictures, colours, forms ought to have warned mankind of the superficiality and ignorance of such a view of these eternal and important occupations of human mind. The impulse, denied proper training and self-purification, has spent itself on the trivial, gaudy, sensuous, cheap or vulgar instead of helping man upward by its powerful aid in the evocation of what is best and highest in intellect as well as in character, emotion and the aesthetic enjoyment and regulation of life and manners. It is difficult to appreciate the waste and detriment involved in the low and debased level of enjoyment to which the artistic impulses are condemned in the majority of mankind.

But beyond and above this intellectual utility of Art, there is a higher use, the noblest of all, its service to the growth of spirituality in the race. European critics have dwelt on the close connection of the highest developments of art with religion, and it is undoubtedly true that in Greece, in Italy, in India, the greatest efflorescence of a national Art has been associated with the employment of the artistic genius to illustrate or adorn the thoughts and fancies or the temples and instruments of the national religion. This was not because Art is necessarily associated with the outward forms of religion, but because it was in the religion that men's spiritual aspirations centred themselves. Spirituality is a wider thing than formal religion and it is in the service of spirituality that Art reaches its highest self-expression. Spirituality is a single word expressive of three lines of human aspiration towards divine knowledge, divine love and joy, divine strength, and that will be the highest and most perfect Art which, while satisfying the physical requirements of the aesthetic sense, the laws of formal beauty, the emotional demand of humanity, the portrayal of life and outward reality, as the best European Art satisfies these requirements, reaches beyond them and expresses inner spiritual truth, the deeper not obvious reality of things, the joy of God in the world and its beauty and desirableness and the manifestation of divine force and energy in phenomenal creation. This is what Indian Art alone attempted thoroughly and in the effort it often dispensed, either deliberately or from impatience, with the lower, yet not negligible perfections which the more material European demanded. Therefore Art has flowed in two separate streams in Europe and Asia, so diverse that it is only now that the European aesthetic sense has so far trained itself as to begin to appreciate the artistic conventions, aims and traditions of Asia. Asia's future development will unite these two streams in one deep and grandiose flood of artistic self-expression perfecting the aesthetic evolution of humanity.

But if Art is to reach towards the highest, the Indian tendency must dominate. The spirit is that in which all the rest of the human being reposes, towards which it returns and the final self-revelation of which is the goal of humanity. Man becomes God, and all human activity reaches its highest and noblest when it succeeds in bringing body, heart and mind into touch with spirit. Art can express eternal truth, it is not limited to the expression of form and appearance. So wonderfully has God made the world that a man using a simple combination of lines, an unpretentious harmony of colours, can raise this apparently insignificant medium to suggest absolute and profound truths with a perfection which language labours with difficulty to reach. What Nature is, what God is, what man is can be triumphantly revealed in stone or on canvas.

Behind a few figures, a few trees and rocks the supreme Intelligence, the supreme Imagination, the supreme Energy lurks, acts, feels, is, and, if the artist has the spiritual vision, he can see it and suggest perfectly the great mysterious Life in its manifestations brooding in action, active in thought, energetic in stillness, creative in repose, full of a mastering intention in that which appears blind and unconscious. The great truths of religion, science, metaphysics, life, development, become concrete, emotional, universally intelligible and convincing in the hands of the master of plastic Art, and the soul of man, in the stage when it is rising from emotion to intellect, looks, receives the suggestion and is uplifted towards a higher development, a diviner knowledge.

So it is with the divine love and joy which pulsates throughout existence and is far superior to alloyed earthly pleasure. Catholic, perfect, unmixed with repulsion, radiating through all things, the common no less than the high, the mean and shabby no less than the lofty and splendid, the terrible and the repulsive no less than the charming and attractive, it uplifts all, purifies all, turns all to love and delight and beauty. A little of this immortal nectar poured into a man's heart transfigures life and action. The whole flood of it pouring in would lift mankind to God. This too Art can seize on and suggest to the human soul, aiding it in its stormy and toilsome pilgrimage. In that pilgrimage it is the divine strength that supports. Shakti, Force, pouring through the universe supports its boundless activities, the frail and tremulous life of the rose no less than the flaming motions of sun and star. To suggest the strength and virile unconquerable force of the divine Nature in man and in the outside world, its energy, its calm, its powerful inspiration, its august enthusiasm, its wildness, greatness, attractiveness, to breathe that into man's soul and gradually mould the finite into the image of the Infinite is another spiritual utility of Art. This is its loftiest function, its fullest consummation, its most perfect privilege.

VI

THE ENORMOUS value of Art to human evolution has been made sufficiently apparent from the analysis, incomplete in itself, which we have attempted. We have also incidentally pointed out its value as a factor in education. It is obvious that no nation can afford to neglect an element of such high importance to the culture of its people or the training of some of the higher intellectual, moral and aesthetic faculties in the young. The system of education which, instead of keeping artistic training apart as a privilege for a few specialists, frankly introduces it as a part of culture no less necessary than literature or science, will have taken a great step forward in the perfection of national education and the general diffusion of a broad-based human culture. It is not necessary that every man should be an artist. It is necessary that every man should have his artistic faculty developed, his taste trained, his sense of beauty and insight into form and colour and that which is expressed in form and colour, made habitually active, correct and sensitive. It is necessary that those who create, whether in great things or small, whether in the unusual masterpieces of art and genius or in the small common things of use that surround a man's daily life, should be habituated to produce and the nation habituated to expect the beautiful in preference to the ugly, the noble in preference to the vulgar, the fine in preference to the crude, the harmonious in preference to the gaudy. A nation surrounded daily by the beautiful, noble, fine and harmonious becomes that which it is habituated to contemplate and realises the fullness of the expanding Spirit in itself.

In the system of National education that was inaugurated in Bengal, a beginning was made by the importance attached to drawing and clay-modelling as elements of manual training. But the absence of an artistic ideal, the misconception of the true aim of manual training, the imperative financial needs of these struggling institutions making for a predominant commercial aim in the education given, the mastery of English ideas, English methods and English predilections in the so-called national education rendered nugatory the initial advantage. The students had faculty, but the teaching given them would waste and misuse the faculty. The nation and the individual can gain nothing by turning out figures in clay which faithfully copy the vulgarity and ugliness of English commercial production or by multiplying mere copies of men or things. A free and active imaging of form and hue within oneself, a free and self-trained hand reproducing with instinctive success not the form and measurement of things seen outside, for that is a smaller capacity easily mastered, but the inward vision of the relation and truth of things, an eye quick to note and distinguish, sensitive to design and to harmony in colour, these are the faculties that have to be evoked, and the formal and mechanical English method is useless for this purpose.

In India the revival of a truly national Art is already an accomplished fact and the masterpieces of the school can already challenge comparison with the best work of other countries. Under such circumstances it is unpardonable that the crude formal teaching of English schools and the vulgar commercial aims and methods of the West should subsist in our midst. The country has yet to evolve a system of education which shall be really national. The taint of Occidental ideals and alien and unsuitable methods has to be purged out of our minds, and nowhere more than in the teaching which should be the foundation of intellectual and aesthetic renovation. The spirit of old Indian Art must be revived, the inspiration and directness of vision which even now subsists among the possessors of the ancient traditions, the inborn skill and taste of the race, the dexterity of the Indian hand and the intuitive gaze of the Indian eye must be recovered and the whole nation lifted again to the high level of the ancient culture — and higher.

Two Pictures

THE *Modern Review* and *Prabasi* are doing monthly a service to the country the importance of which cannot be exaggerated. The former review is at present the best conducted and the most full of valuable matter of any in India. But good as are the articles which fill the magazine from month to month, the whole sum of them is outweighed in value by the single page which gives us the reproduction of some work of art by a contemporary Indian painter. To the lover of beauty and the lover of his country every one of these delicately executed blocks is an event of importance in his life within. The reviews by bringing these masterpieces to the thousands who have no opportunity of seeing the originals are restoring the sense of beauty and artistic emotion inborn in our race but almost blotted out by the long reign in our lives of the influence of Anglo-Saxon vulgarity and crude tasteless commercialism. The pictures belong usually to the new school of Bengali art, the only living and original school now developing among us and the last issues have each contained a picture — especially important not only by the intrinsic excellence of the work but by the perfect emergence of that soul of India which we attempted to characterise in an article in our second issue.[1]

The picture in the July number is by Mahomed Hakim Khan, a student of the Government School of Art, Calcutta, and represents Nadir Shah ordering a general massacre. It is not one of those pictures salient and imposing which leap at once at the eye and hold it. A first glance only shows three figures almost conventionally Indian in poses which also seem conventional.

---

[1] *See "The Awakening Soul of India", published on pages 61 – 66 of* Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909 – 1910, *volume 8 of The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo. — Ed.*

But as one looks again and again the soul of the picture begins suddenly to emerge, and one realises with a start of surprise that one is in the presence of a work of genius. The reason for this lies in the extraordinary restraint and simplicity which conceals the artist's strength and subtlety. The whole spirit and conception is Indian and it would be difficult to detect in the composition a single trace of foreign influence. The grace and perfection of the design and the distinctness and vigour of form which support it are not European; it is the Saracenic sweetness and grace, the old Vedantic massiveness and power transformed by some new nameless element of harmony into something original and yet Indian. The careful and minute detail in the minutiae of the dresses, of the armour of the warrior seated on the right, of the flickering lines of the pillar on the left are inherited from an intellectual ancestry whose daily vision was accustomed to the rich decoration of Agra and Fatehpur Sikri or to the fullness and crowded detail which informed the massive work of the old Vedantic artists and builders, Hindu, Jain and Buddhist. Another peculiarity is the fixity and stillness which, in spite of the Titanic life and promise of motion in the figure of Nadir, pervade the picture. A certain stiffness of design marks much of the old Hindu art, a stiffness courted by the artists perhaps in order that no insistence of material life in the figures might distract attention from the expression of the spirit within which was their main object. By some inspiration of genius the artist has transformed this conventional stiffness into a hint of rigidity which almost suggests the lines of stone. This stillness adds immensely to the effect of the picture. The petrified inaction of the three human beings contrasted with the expression of the faces and the formidable suggestion in the pose of their sworded figures affects us like the silence of murder crouching for his leap.

The central figure of Nadir Shah dominates his surroundings. It is from this centre that the suggestion of something terrible coming out of the silent group has started. The strong, proud and regal figure is extraordinarily impressive, but it is the face and the arm that give the individuality. That bare arm and hand grasping the rigid upright scimitar are inhuman in their savage force and brutality; it is the hand, the fingers, one might almost say the talons of the human wild beast. This arm and hand have action, murder, empire in them: the whole history of Nadir is there expressed. The grip and gesture have already commenced the coming massacre and the whole body behind consents. The face corresponds in the hard firmness and strength of the nose, the brute cruelty of the mouth almost lost in the moustache and beard. But the eyes are the master-touch in this figure. They overcome us with surprise when we look at them, for these are not the eyes of the assassin, even the assassin upon the throne. The soul that looks out of these eyes is calm, aloof and thoughtful, yet terrible. Whatever order of massacre has issued from these lips, did not go forth from an ordinary energetic man of action moved by self-interest, rage or bloodthirst. The eyes are the eyes of a Yogin but a terrible Yogin; such might be the look of some adept of the left-hand ways, some mighty Kapalik lifted above pity and shrinking as above violence and wrath. Those eyes in that face, over that body, arm, hand seem to be those of one whose spirit is not affected by the actions of the body, whose natural part and organs are full of the destroying energy of Kali while the soul, the witness within, looks on at the sanguinary drama tranquil, darkly approving but hardly interested. And then it dawns on one that this is not so much the Nadir of history; unconsciously perhaps the artist has given a quiet but effective delineation of the Scourge of God, the man who is rather a force than a human being, the Asura with a mission who has come to do God's work of destruction and help on the evolution by carnage and ruin. The soul within is not that of a human being. Some powerful Yogin of a Lemurian race has incarnated in this body, one born when the simian might and strength of the *vānara* had evolved into the perfection of the human form and brain with the animal still uneliminated, who having by tapasya and knowledge separated his soul from his nature has elected this reward that after long beatitude, *prāpya puṇyakṛtāṁ lokān uṣitvā śāśvatīḥ samāḥ*, he should reincarnate as a force of nature informed by a human soul and work out in a single life the savage strength of the outward self, taking upon himself the foreordained burden of empire and massacre.

From Nadir the coming carnage has passed into the seated warrior and looks out from his eyes at the receiver of the order. The gaze is contemplative but not inward like Nadir's, and it is human and indifferent envisaging massacre as part of the activities of the soldier with a matter-of-fact approval. The figure is almost a piece of sculpture, so perfect is the rigidity of arrested and expectant action. The straight strong sword over the shoulder has the same rigid preparedness. There is a certain defect in the unnatural pose and obese curve of the hand which is not justified by any similar detail or motive in the rest of the figure. We notice a similar motiveless strain in the position of Nadir's left arm, though here something is perhaps added to the force of the attitude. A standing figure receives the sanguinary command. The folded hands and the scimitar suspended in front are full of the spirit of ready obedience and there is an expression of pleasure, almost amusement which makes even this commonplace face terrible, for the decree dooming thousands is taken as lightly as if it were order for nautch or banquet. The three mighty swords, by a masterly effect of balanced design, fill with death and menace the terrace on which the men are seated. Behind these formidable figures is a part of the palace gracious with the simple and magical lines of Indo-Saracenic architecture and in the distance on the right from behind a mass of heavy impenetrable green a slender tapering tower rises into the peaceful quiet of Delhi.

On another page of the same review we have a picture by one of the greatest Masters of European Art, Raphael's "Vision of the Knight". The picture is full of that which Greece and Italy perfected as the aim of Art, beauty and such soul-expression as heightens physical beauty. It is beauty that is expressed in the robust body and feminine face of the armed youth both full of an exquisite languor of sleep, in the sweet face, the voluptuous figure, the gracious pose of the temptress offering her delicate allurement of flowers, in the other's grave, strong and benign countenance, the vigorous physique and open gesture of promise and aspiration extending a book and a fine slender sword, in the

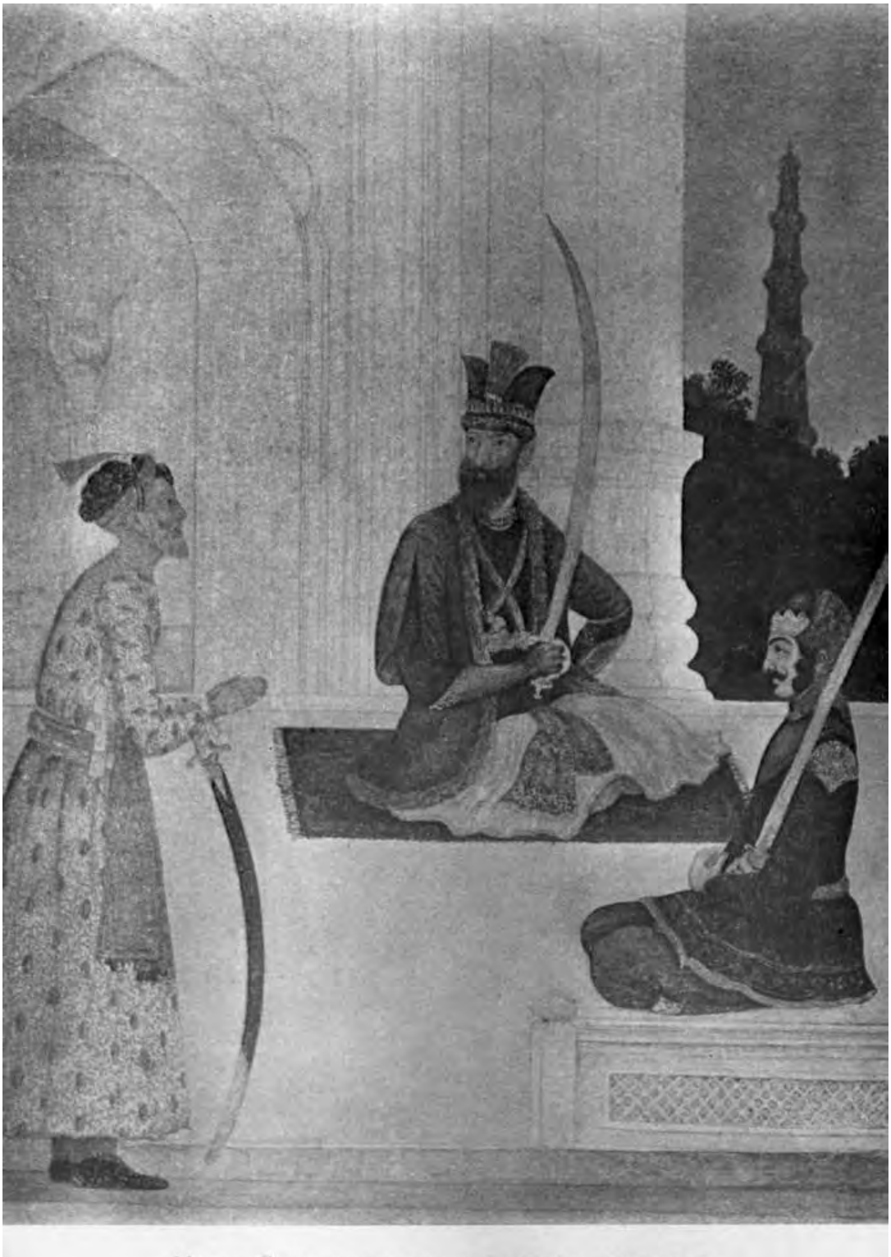

NADIR SHAH ORDERING A GENERAL MASSACRE.
By Hakim Muhammad Khan.

1. *Nadir Shah Ordering a General Massacre*
(as reproduced in *The Modern Review*)

wwv books.com

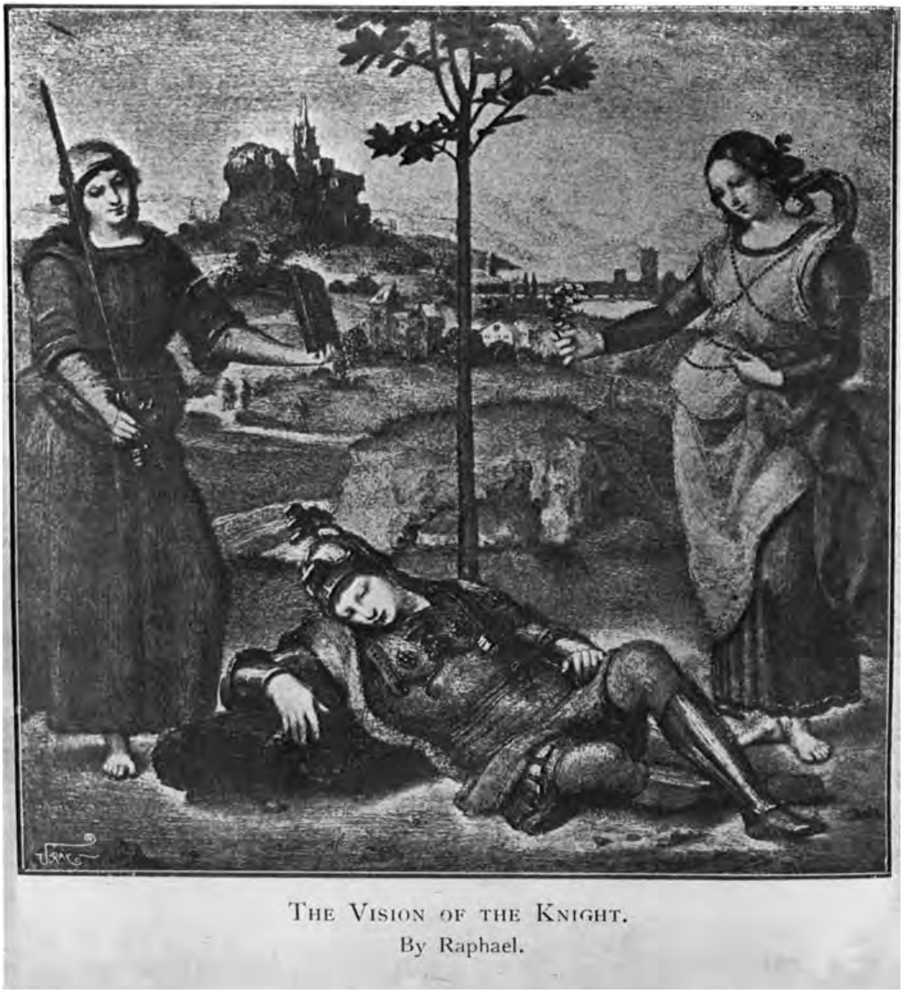
THE VISION OF THE KNIGHT.
By Raphael.

2. Engraving of *The Vision of the Knight*
(as reproduced in *The Modern Review*)

www. ɔooks.com

delicacy of the landscape behind and the tree under which the dreamer lies. There is suggestion but it is the suggestion of more and more beauty, there is harmony and relation but it is the harmony and relation of loveliness of landscape as a background to the loveliness of the nobly-grouped figures. There is an attempt to express spiritual meanings but it is by outward symbols only and not by making the outward expression a vehicle for something that comes from within and overpowers impalpably. This is allegory, the other is the drawing and painting of the very self of things. Only in the delicate spiritual face of the Knight is there some approach to the Eastern spirit. This is one kind of art and a great art, but is the other less? Beauty for beauty's sake can never be the spirit of art in India, beauty we must seek and always beauty, but never lose sight of the end which India holds more important, the realisation of the Self in things. Europeans create out of the imagination. India has always sought to go deeper within and create out of the Power behind imagination, by passivity and plenary inspiration, in Yoga, from samadhi.

Indian Art and an Old Classic

WE HAVE before us a new edition of Krittibas's Ramayan, edited and published by that indefatigable literary and patriotic worker, Sj. Ramananda Chatterji. Ramananda Babu is well known to the Bengali public as a clear-minded, sober and fearless political speaker and writer; as editor of the *Modern Review* and the *Prabasi* he has raised the status and quality of Indian periodical literature to an extraordinary extent, and has recently been doing a yet more valuable and lasting service to his country by introducing the masterpieces of the new school of Art to his readers. His present venture is not in itself an ambitious one, as it purports only to provide a well-printed and beautifully illustrated edition of Krittibas for family reading. With this object the editor has taken the Battala prints of the Ramayan as his text and reproduced them with the necessary corrections and the omission of a few passages which offend modern ideas of decorum. Besides, the book is liberally illustrated with reproductions of recent pictures by artists of Bombay and Calcutta on subjects chosen from the Ramayan.

The place of Krittibas in our literature is well established. He is one of the most considerable of our old classics and one of the writers who most helped to create the Bengali language as a literary instrument. The sweetness, simplicity, lucidity, melody of the old language is present in every line that Krittibas wrote, but, in this recension at least, we miss the racy vigour and nervous vernacular force which was a gift of the early writers. Our impression is that the modern editions do not faithfully reproduce the old classic and that copyists of more learning and puristic taste than critical imagination or poetical sympathy have polished away much that was best in the Bengali Ramayan. The old copies, we believe, reveal a style much more irregular in diction and metre, but more full of humanity, strength and the rough and natural touch of the soil. In no case can our Ramayan compare with the great epic of Tulsidas, that mine of poetry, strong and beautiful thought and description and deep spiritual force and sweetness. But it must have been greater in its original form than in its modern dress.

The great value of the edition lies however in the illustrations. All the pictures are not excellent; indeed we must say quite frankly that some of them are an offence to the artistic perceptions and an affliction to the eye and the soul. Others are masterpieces of the first rank. But in this collection of pictures, most of them now well-known, we have a sort of handy record of the progress of Art in India in recent times. Turning over the pages we are struck first by the numerous reproductions of Ravivarma's pictures which were only recently so prominent in Indian houses and, even now, are painfully common, and we recall with wonder the time when we could gaze upon these crude failures without an immediate revolt of all that was artistic within us. Could anything be more gross, earthy, un-Indian and addressed purely to the eye than his "Descent of Ganges", or more vulgar and unbeautiful than the figure of Aja in the "Death of Indumati", or more soulless and commonplace than the "Ahalya", a picture on a level with the ruck of the most ordinary European paintings for the market by obscure hands? Some of these efforts are absolutely laughable in the crudeness of their conception and the inefficiency of their execution; take for instance the fight between Ravan and Jatayu. Raja Rukmangad's "Ekadashi" is one of the few successes, but spirited as the work undoubtedly is, it is so wholly an imitation of European workmanship that it establishes no claim to real artistic faculty. All that can be said for this painter is that he turned the Indian mind to our own mythology and history for the subject of art, and that he manifests a certain struggling towards outward beauty and charm which is occasionally successful in his women and children. But he had neither the power to develop original conceptions, nor the skill to reproduce finely that which he tried to learn from Europe. He represents in Art that dark period when, in subjection to foreign teaching and ideals, we did everything badly because we did everything slavishly. It is fortunate that the representative of this period was a man without genius: otherwise he might have done infinitely more permanent harm to our taste than he has done.

The art of Sj. M. V. Durandhar shows a great advance. The basis is European but we see something Indian and characteristic struggling to express itself in this foreign mould. Unlike Ravivarma Sj. Durandhar has always a worthy and often poetic conception, even when he fails to express it in line and colour. In the stillness and thoughtfulness of the figures in the second illustration of the book there is a hint of the divine presence which is suggested, and Indian richness, massiveness and dignity support this great suggestion. There is augustness and beauty in the picture of Rama and Sita about to enter Guhyaka's boat. Others of his pictures are less successful. Another intermediate worker in the field who is very largely represented, is Sj. Upendra Kishore Ray. This artist has an essentially imitative genius whose proper field lies in reproduction. There are attempts here to succeed in the European style and others which seek to capture the secret of the new school, especially where it is original, strange and remote in its greatness; but these are secrets of original genius which do not yield themselves to imitation and the attempt, though it reproduces some of the mannerisms of the school, often ends merely in grotesqueness of line and conception.

We have not left ourselves the space to do justice to the really great art represented in the book, the wonderful suggestions of the landscape in Sj. Abanindranath Tagore's "Slaying of the Enchanted Deer", the decorative beauty of the "Last Days of Dasarath", and the epic grandeur and grace and strange romantic mystery of "Mahadev receiving the Descent of the Ganges". We would only suggest to the readers whose artistic perceptions are awakened but in need of training, to use the comparative method for which Sj. Ramananda Chatterji has supplied plentiful materials in this book; for instance, the three illustrations of the Kaikayi and Manthara incident which are given one after the other, — Sj. Nandalal Bose's original and suggestive though not entirely successful picture, Sj. Durandhar's vigorous and character-revealing but too imitatively European work, and Sj. U. Ray's attempt to master the new style with its striking evidence of a great reproductive faculty but small success where originality is the aim. Finally, let him look at the few examples of old art in the book, then at the work of the new school, especially the two pictures against page 22, and last at Raja Ravivarma's failures. He will realise the strange hiatus in the history of Indian Art brought about by the enslavement of our minds to the West and recognise that the artists of the new school are merely recovering our ancestral heritage with a new development of spiritual depth, power and originality, which is prophetic of the future.

The Revival of Indian Art

THE MAIN DIFFERENCE

THE GREATNESS of Indian art is the greatness of all Indian thought and achievement. It lies in the recognition of the persistent within the transient, of the domination of matter by spirit, the subordination of the insistent appearances of Prakriti to the inner reality which, in a thousand ways, the Mighty Mother veils even while she suggests. The European artist, cabined within the narrow confines of the external, is dominated in imagination by the body of things and the claims of the phenomenon. Western painting starts from the eye or the imagination; its master word is either beauty or reality, and, according as he is the slave of his eye or the playfellow of his imagination, the painter produces a photograph or a poem. But, in painting, the European imagination seldom travels beyond an imaginative interpretation or variation of what the physical eye has seen. Imitation is the key-word of creation, according to Aristotle; Shakespeare advises the artist to hold up the mirror to Nature; and the Greek scientist and the English poet reflect accurately the mind of Europe.

But the Indian artist has been taught by his philosophy and the spiritual discipline of his forefathers that the imagination is only a channel and an instrument of some source of knowledge and inspiration that is greater and higher; by meditation or by Yoga he seeks within himself that ultimate centre of knowledge where there is direct and utter vision of the thing that lies hidden in the forms of man, animal, tree, river, mountain. It is this *samyag jñāna*, this *sākṣād darśana*, the utter, revealing and apocalyptic vision, that he seeks, and when he has found it, whether by patient receptivity or sudden inspiration, his whole aim is to express it utterly and revealingly in line and colour. Form is only a means of expressing the spirit, and the one thought of the artist should be how best to render the spiritual vision. He is not bound by the forms that compose the world of gross matter, though he takes them as a starting-point for his formal expression of the vision within him; if by modifying them or departing from them he can reveal that vision more completely, his freedom and his duty as an artist emancipate him from the obligation of the mere recorder and copyist. The ancient Asiatic artists were not incapable of reproducing outward Nature with as perfect and vigorous an accuracy as the Europeans; but it was their ordinary method deliberately to suppress all that might hamper the expression of their spiritual vision.

Reality for its own sake, one of the most dominant notes of Art in Europe, Indian artistic theory would not have recognised; for we have always regarded the reality of the Europeans as an appearance; to us the true reality is that which is hidden; otherwise, there would be no need of the prophet, the philosopher, the poet and the artist. It is they who see with the *sūkṣma dṛṣṭi*, the inner vision, and not like the ordinary man with the eye only. Beauty for beauty's sake, the other great note of European Art is recognised by us, but not in the higher work of the artist. Just as in the first ideal, the tyranny of the eye is acknowledged, so in the second the tyranny of the aesthetic imagination. The Indian seeks freedom, and the condition of freedom is the search for ultimate Truth. But in this search the imagination is an unsafe and capricious guide; it misinterprets as often as it interprets. The claim of the eye to separate satisfaction can only be answered by the response of decorative beauty; the claim of the imagination to separate satisfaction can only receive the response of fancy playing with scene and legend, form and colour, idea and dream, for pure aesthetic delight; but in the interpretation of things the eye and the imagination can assert no right to command, they are only subordinate instruments and must keep their place. Whenever, therefore, the Indian artist put away from him his high spiritual aim, it was to seek decorative beauty informed by the play of the imagination. Here he held decorative beauty to be his paramount aim and declined to be bound by the seen and the familiar. If by other lines than the natural, by subtler or richer methods than those of outward Nature, our old masters could gain in decorative suggestion and beauty, they held themselves free to follow their inspiration. Here, too, they often deliberately changed and suppressed in order to get their desired effect. If they had been asked to deny themselves this artistic gain for the sake of satisfying the memory in the physical eye, they would have held the objector to be the bondslave of an unmeaning superstition.

We of today have been overpowered by the European tradition as interpreted by the English, the least artistic of civilised nations. We have therefore come to make on a picture the same demand as on a photograph, — the reproduction of the thing as the eye sees it, not even as the retrospective mind or the imagination sees it, exact resemblance to the beings or objects we know, or, if anything more, then a refinement on Nature in the direction of greater picturesqueness and prettiness and the satisfaction of the lower and more external sense of beauty. The conception that Art exists not to copy, but for the sake of a deeper truth and vision, and we must seek in it not the object but God in the object, not things but the soul of things, seems to have vanished for a while from the Indian consciousness.

Another obstacle to the appreciation of great art, to which even those Indians who are not dominated by European ideas are liable, is the exaggerated respect for the symbols and traditions which our art or literature has used at a certain stage of development. I am accustomed for instance to a particular way of representing Shiva or Kali and I refuse to have any other. But the artist has nothing to do with my prejudices. He has to represent the essential truth of Shiva or Kali, that which makes their Shivahood or Kalihood, and he is under no obligation to copy the vision of others. If he has seen another vision of Shiva or Kali, it is that vision to which he must be faithful. The curious discussion which arose recently as to the propriety or otherwise of representing the gods without beard or moustache, is an instance of this literalism which is a survival of the enslavement to form and rule characteristic of the eighteenth century. The literalist cannot see that it is not the moustache or beard or the symbol which makes the godhead, but the divine greatness, immortal strength, beauty, youth, purity or peace within. It is that godhead which the artist must draw and paint, and in the forms he chooses he is bound only by the vision in *dhyāna*. Whether his interpretation will gain an abiding place in the thought and imagination of the race, depends on its power to awake the deeper vision in the race. All that we can demand is that it shall be a real God, a real Shiva, a real Kali, and not a freak of his imagination or an outcome of some passing *saṁskāra* of his education or artistic upbringing. He must go to the fountainhead of knowledge within himself or his claim to freedom does not stand. It has already been said that the condition of freedom is the search for truth, and the artist must not allow his imagination to take the place of the higher quality.

Indian Art demands of the artist the power of communion with the soul of things, the sense of spiritual taking precedence of the sense of material beauty, and fidelity to the deeper vision within; of the lover of art it demands the power to see the spirit in things, the openness of mind to follow a developing tradition, and the sattwic passivity, discharged of prejudgments, which opens luminously to the secret intention of the picture and is patient to wait until it attains a perfect and profound divination.

An Answer to a Critic

ONE HAD thought that the Ravi Varma superstition in India had received its quietus. Unsupported by a single competent voice, universally condemned by critics of eminence Asiatic and European, replaced by a style of Art national, noble and suggestive, it is as hopeless to revive this grand debaser of Indian taste and artistic culture as to restore life to the slain. But even causes hopelessly lost and deserving to be lost will find their defenders and unworthy altars do not lack incense. A belated lance is lifted in the August number of the Modern Review for the fallen idol. Neither writing nor substance is of such a calibre that it would have demanded any answer if it had not found hospitality in a periodical which is now a recognised centre of culture and opinion. The writer is not richly endowed either with artistic taste, logical faculty or correct English; but he possesses in compensation a trenchant though ill-inspired manner of writing, and excels in that Rooseveltian style of argument which by its very commonness and doubtful taste imposes on minds imperfectly instructed in the subject of dispute. It may be necessary, in the present state of Art appreciation in India, to counteract the possible evil that may be done by even so insufficient an apology for the Goliath of artistic Philistinism in India.

I may perhaps be suffered to express my wonder at the ideas of manners and good breeding which this apologist thinks permissible in critical controversy. Dr. Coomaraswamy is a critic of established reputation, whose contributions to the study of Indian Art are valued in every country in Europe and Asia where the subject itself is studied. Sister Nivedita's literary genius, exquisite sympathetic insight and fine artistic culture are acknowledged by all who have the faculty of judging both in England and India. Mr. Havell has a recognised position in the criticism of Art. One may differ from such authorities, but one is at least bound to treat them with some show of respect. Mr Havell seems to have been protected by his recent official position from the writer's disrespect, though his authority is dismissed cavalierly enough. Against Sister Nivedita he does not vent his spleen unguardedly, though he cannot refrain from vindicating his superiority by patronisingly describing her as "the good Sister Nivedita". But towards Dr Coomaraswamy, possibly because he is an Indian like the writer himself, he seems to think himself entitled to be as offensive as he chooses. He gets rid of the Doctor's acknowledged authority by introducing him as "a Geologist", and emphasizes the spirit of this introduction by sprinkling his pages with similar phrases, "the Geologist", "the Doctor". The intention seems to be to represent Dr Coomaraswamy as an unknown man without credit in other countries who is trying to pass himself off as an authority in India. It is possible the disciple of Ravi Varma holds this view; if so, one can only wonder what Himalayan cave of meditation has been his cloister in the last few years of his existence! And what are we to say of this characteristic specimen of wit? "We cannot expect anything better from a Geologist, who naturally loves and is made to love everything rigid and stony." Am I to answer him in his own style by retorting that we cannot expect anything better from a student of Ravi Varma than theatrical wit and schoolboy impertinence? I prefer to suggest to him that manners which are allowed on the platform, at the hustings and in newspaper controversy in matters of political passion and interest are not expected in the urbanity of literature, Art and good society. I have felt myself compelled to comment thus at length and severely, because it is too much a habit in our country to have resort to this kind of illegitimate controversy in matters where only superior taste, knowledge and insight should tell. I have done with this unpleasant part of my duty and proceed to the writer's arguments as distinct from his witticisms. [*Incomplete*]

Part Five

Conversations of the Dead

Sri Aurobindo wrote these dialogues in 1910 or shortly before. He published the first two in the *Karmayogin* in 1910. The other three were published in 1920–23 without his editorial supervision; they are reproduced here from his manuscripts.

I

Dinshah, Perizade

DINSHAH

Perizade, the shades of Iran were not so cool and sweet as these in our city of Mazinderan. The gardens that bloom on the banks of the river of peace are carpeted with lovelier and sweeter-scented flowers; and the birds that sing upon every tree and make the day melodious with the unearthly delight of their clamorous harmonies, are of so various a plumage and hue that one is content to satiate the eye with the softness and splendour without caring to know name and kind. Here for two thousand years we have tasted the bliss of the angels; but, I know not why, it seems to me that memories of Iran come back to my heart. The waters of the Jihun and the tents of the Tartars where the tribes of Afrasiab wander, Damascus the opulent, and our own cities, where the houses of our parents adjoined and we leaned from the balcony and talked in soft whispers, seem to me again desirable.

PERIZADE

I too would not mind returning to our old haunts. It is not that I am weary of Mazinderan, but something calls to me to have joy again that is mortal and fleeting, but not without its poignant sense of a swiftly-snatched and perfect bliss. Yet Dinshah, two thousand years have passed and shall we not consider, before we go, what has come to the places we loved? Other men, other tongues, other manners may now possess them, and we should come as strangers into a world for which we are no longer fit.

DINSHAH

I will go and see. Wait for me, Perizade.

2

DINSHAH

Perizade, Perizade, let us not return to earth, but remain for ever in Mazinderan. I have seen the earth and it is changed. How wise wert thou, my angel!

PERIZADE

What didst thou see or hear, beloved?

DINSHAH

I saw a world stripped of beauty. Mean and clumsy were the buildings, or pretentious and aimed at a false elegance. Miles of brick, with hardly a bit of green here and there, these are the cities. Ever a raucous roar goes up from them, the glint of furnaces and the clang of metal; a dull, vicious smoke clouds the sky; the gardens are blasted and there is no beauty in them. Men wear a hideous dress uglier than their joyless faces and awkward limbs. It is a world of barbarians; the gnomes have come up from under the earth to work in the sunlight.

PERIZADE

Dinshah, this is sorrowful news, for go we must. Do you not know that these urgings are the signal?

DINSHAH

Yes, my Perizade, but not to this hideousness did our hearts move us to resort, but to the towers and gardens of Iran.

PERIZADE

It may be, Dinshah, that we go down to make the world once more what it was, a place of beauty, song and delight. Surely, if we enter into the world you describe, we shall not be content to leave it till it is utterly changed into the likeness of our desire.

DINSHAH
I think you are right, Perizade, as you always are. Let us then arise and go.

II

Turiu, Uriu

TURIU

Goddess Leda who from heaven descendest, how beautiful are thy feet as they gild the morning. The roses of Earth are red, but the touch of vermilion with which thy feet stain the heavens, is redder, — it is the crimson of love, the glory of passion.

Goddess Leda, look down upon men with gracious eyes. The clang of war is stilled, silent the hiss of the shafts and the shields clamour no more against each other in the shock of the onset. We have hung up our swords on the walls of our mansions. The young men have returned unhurt, the girls of Asilon cry through the corn sweet and high to the hearts of their lovers.

Goddess Leda, lady of laughter, lady of bliss! in the chambers of love, in the song of the bridal, in the gardens and by the delightful streams where boy and girl look into each other's eyes, speak low to the heart, enter in. Drive out hatred, drive out wrath. Let love embrace the world and silence the eager soul of strife with kisses.

URIU

The song of Turiu is beautiful, but the chant of Uriu is mighty. Listen to the Hymn of Tanyth.

Tanyth, terrible Mother! laced with a garland of skulls, thou that drinkest the blood of the victim upon the altar loud with the death-shriek, mighty and merciless Mother!

Tanyth, thou in the shock of the fighting, with the raucous cry that rises high and drowns the crash of the car and the roar of the battle, — blood-stained, eager and terrible, pitiless, huge and swift, — wonderful, adorable Mother!

Hear me! I who fear thee not, I who love thee, ask of thee, art thou weary, art thou satiate now with the blood of the foe and the flesh of the victims? Why has it sunk to rest, the thunder of war in Asilon, land of the mighty?

I am not weary, I am not satiate. I charge thee, awake and give me again delight of the slaughter, trampling the face of the fallen foe as I scatter with shafts the ranks that boasted and shouted, forgetting that Uriu fought in the van of the battle.

Mother, arise! leave to Leda her gardens and delicate places, the faces lovely and smooth of Asilon's boys and the joyous beauty of women. I am old and grey in the council and battle. She has nothing for me; what shall I do with her boon of peace and her promptings of love and beauty?

Mother, arise, Tanyth the terrible! shake the world with thy whisper, loom in the heavens, madden men's hearts with the thirst of blood, the rapture of death and the joy of the killing. We will give thee thy choice of the captives, women and men to fall and to bleed on thy altar.

Tanyth, lady of death, queen of the battle! there is a joy in the clash of death that is more than woman's sweet embrace, a pleasure in pain that the touch of her lips cannot give us; lovelier far is the body torn by the spears than her white limbs covered with shining gems. Tanyth's skulls are more than the garland upon thy breasts, O Leda.

TURIU

It is great, Uriu, master of war and song, but mine too is beautiful. It is long since we met in the temples and marketplaces of Asilon. Ages have rolled by and the earth is changed, Prince of the Asa.

URIU

I have lived in the heavens of the great where we fight all day and meet to feast in the evening.

TURIU

And I in gardens of love and song where the sea murmurs low on flower-skirted beaches. But the time comes when I must go down and take up again the song and the sweetness in mortal places of pleasure.

URIU

I also go down, for the warrior too is needed and not only the poet and lover.

TURIU

The world is changed, Uriu, Prince of the Asa. Thou wilt not get again the joy of slaughter and pitilessness. Men have grown merciful, full of tenderness and shrinking.

URIU

I know not. What Tanyth gives me to do, that I will do. If there were no sternness, no grimness in the world that she creates, I should not be called.

TURIU

We will go down together and see what this world is in which after so many millions of years we are again wanted.

III

Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi

MAZZINI

The state of Italy now is the proof that my teaching was needed. Machiavellianism rose again in the policy of Cavour and Italy, grasping too eagerly at the speedy fruit of her efforts, fell from the clearness of the revelation that I gave her. Therefore she suffers. We must work for the fruit, but there must not be such attachment to the fruit that to hasten it the true means is sacrificed; for that leads eventually to the sacrifice of the true end.

CAVOUR

The state of Italy is the proof of the soundness of my policy. Mazzini, you speak still as the ideologist, the man of notions. The statesman recognises ideals, but he has nothing to do with notions. He strikes always at his main objective and is willing to sacrifice much in details.

MAZZINI

What you say is true, but the sacrifice has been not of details, but of the essential.

CAVOUR

Italy is one, Italy is free.

GARIBALDI

The unity was my work. I did not use Machiavellianism or rely on statecraft and kingcraft. I did not buy liberty by mutilating my country. But I called to the soul of the nation and the soul of the nation awoke and shook itself free of the great tyrants and the petty. It was on the heroism and kingliness of the Italian soul, the resurrection in Florence and Rome and Naples of the ancient

Roman, Etruscan and Samnite that Cavour should have relied, not on the false-hearted huckster of states and principalities, Louis Napoleon.

MAZZINI

Italy is one, Italy is free, but in the body, not in the soul. Garibaldi, you gave united Italy to a man, not to the nation.

GARIBALDI

I gave it to the King and hero, Italy's representative. I do not yet think that I did ill. The nation said, "He stands for me", and as a democrat I bowed to the voice of the nation.

CAVOUR

It was the best-inspired action of your life. If there are problems unsolved, if there are parts of the body politic that are still ailing, that was to be expected. Only the dreamer demands a rapid convalescence from a disease so long and wasting. We did the work of the surgeon, that of the physician is being done quietly and without ostentation. There is a man in Italy, and he belongs to the house that was chosen.

MAZZINI

Italy has not fulfilled her mission; my heart is full of sorrow when I look upon her. She whom I would have educated to lead the world, is only an inferior Power leaning for support upon the selfish and unscrupulous Teuton. She who should have reorganised government and society into a fit mould for the ideas of an age of emancipation, is a laggard lingering in the steps of the Gaul and the Saxon. She who should have been the fountain of a new European culture, hardly figures among the leaders of humanity. The semi-Asiatic Muscovite is doing more for mankind than the heirs of the Roman.

CAVOUR

The statesman must have patience and work quietly towards his goal, securing each step as he goes. When the economic ills of Italy have been removed and the Church no longer opposes progress, the ideal of Mazzini may be fulfilled. The brain and sword of Italy may yet lead and rule Europe.

MAZZINI

It is not the diplomatist and the servant of the moment who can bring about that great consummation, but the heroic soul and the mighty brain that command Time and create opportunity. I sought to cast Italy into a Roman mould. I knew that a third revelation had to be made to Europe and that Italy was the chosen channel. So I was told when I went down from this world of the Ancients to be born again into humanity, "Twice has Italy given a new civilisation to Europe, the third time she shall give it." The voice that speaks when we are sent, does not lie.

CAVOUR

No, but the fruit does not always come at once. There is sometimes a long probation, a slow agony of purification, and the thing destined seems a dream that has come to nothing. We have to work knowing that the fruit will come, not impatient, not embittered and disappointed by its postponement. It is possible we shall be called again to bring about the consummation. We have helped Italy always; once more we shall help her.

MAZZINI

I know not, but the days grow long to me in the world of the Happy. When the call comes, I pray that it may be to conquer, not by diplomacy, but by truth and ardent courage, —

GARIBALDI

Not by bargaining, but by the sword of the hero, —

MAZZINI

Not by kingcraft, but by love for humanity and a noble wisdom.

CAVOUR

I shall be content, so that Italy conquers.

GARIBALDI

When the sword that was struck out of her hand by the Abyssinian, is lifted again, I shall be there to lift it.

IV

Shivaji, Jaysingh

JAYSINGH

Neither of us has prevailed. A third force has entered into the land and taken the fruits of your work, and as for mine, it is broken; the ideal I cherished has gone down into the dust.

SHIVAJI

For the fruit I did not work and by the failure I am not amazed nor discouraged.

JAYSINGH

Neither did I work for a reward, but to uphold the ideal of the Rajput. Unflinching courage in honourable warfare, chivalry to friend and foe, a noble loyalty to the sovereign of my choice, this seemed to me the true Indian tradition, preferable even to the unity and predominance of the Hindu races. Therefore I could not accept your overtures. But I gave you the opportunity to accept my own tradition and, when faith was not kept with either of us, I saved my honour and assisted your escape.

SHIVAJI

God extended to me His protection and moved the heart of a woman to give me love and aid. Traditions change. The ideal of the Rajput has its future, but the mould had to be broken in order that what was temporary in it might pass. Loyalty to the sovereign of my choice, that is good; but loyalty to the sovereign of my nation's choice, that is better. The monarch is divine by the power of God expressed within him, but he has the power because he is the incarnation of the people. God in the nation is the deity of which the monarch must be the servant and the devotee. Vithoba, Virat of the Mahrattas, — Bhavani, incarnate as India, — in that strength I conquered.

JAYSINGH

Your political ideal was great, but your standard of means was abhorrent to our morality. Ruse, treachery, pillage, assassination were never excluded from your activity.

SHIVAJI

Not for myself I fought and ruled, but for God and the Maharashtra dharma, the religion of Hindu nationality which Ramdas enunciated. I offered my head to Bhavani and She bade me keep it to scheme and plot for the greatness of the nation. I gave my kingdom to Ramdas and he bade me take it back as a gift from God and the Mahrattas. I obeyed their commands. I slew when God commanded me, plundered because it was the means He pointed out to me. Treacherous I was not, but I helped my weakness in resource and numbers by ruse and stratagem, I conquered physical force by keenness of wit and brain-power. The world has accepted ruse in war and politics, and the chivalrous openness of the Rajput is not practiced either by the European or the Asiatic nations.

JAYSINGH

I hold the dharma as supreme and even the voice of God could not persuade me to abandon it.

SHIVAJI

I gave up all to Him and did not keep even the dharma. His will was my religion; for He was my captain and I his soldier. That was my loyalty, — not to Aurangzebe, not to a code of morals, but to God who sent me.

JAYSINGH

He sends us all, but for different purposes, and according to the purpose He moulds the ideal and the character. I am not grieved that the Mogul has fallen. Had he deserved to retain sovereignty, he could not have lost it; but even when he ceased to deserve, I kept my faith, my service, my loyalty. It was not for me to dispute the will of my emperor. God who appointed him might judge him; it was not my office.

SHIVAJI

God also appoints the man who rebels and refuses to prolong unjust authority by acquiescence. He is not always on the side of power; sometimes He manifests as the deliverer.

JAYSINGH

Let Him come down Himself, then, as He promised. Then alone would rebellion be justified.

SHIVAJI

From whence will He come down who is here already in our hearts? Because I saw Him there, therefore I was strong to carry out my mission.

JAYSINGH

Where is the seal upon your work, the pledge of His authority?

SHIVAJI

I undermined an empire, and it has not been rebuilt. I created a nation, and it has not yet perished.

V

Littleton, Percival

LITTLETON

After so long a time, Percival, we meet. It is strange that our ways, upon earth associated and parallel, should in this other world be so entirely divergent.

PERCIVAL

Why is it strange to you, Littleton? The world in which we find ourselves, is made, as we have both discovered, of the stuff of our earthly dreams and the texture of our mortal character. Physically, our ways on earth were parallel. We walked together over Cumberland mountains or watched the whole sea leap and thunder Titanically against the Cornwall cliffs. You were stroke and I was cox in the same boat on the Isis. We bracketed always for College honours and took the same class in the same subject in the Tripos. Afterwards too, we entered Parliament side by side in the same party and by an august and noble silence helped to administer the affairs of our country. But what greater difference could divide men than that which existed between our bodily frames and moral constitutions? You, the tall, fair, robust descendant of the Vikings; I, dark, spare and short from the Welsh mountains. You, the hardheaded, practical, successful lawyer; I, the dilettante and connoisseur, who knew something about everything except my own affairs and could deal successfully with every business that did not concern me.

LITTLETON

Yet we clung together; our tastes often lay in the same direction; our affections were similar, and even our sins connected us.

PERCIVAL

We completed each other, I think. Our tastes were very dissimilarly similar. We read the same book; but you tore the essence out of it briefly, masterfully, and then flung it aside, satisfied that you had made even the dead useful to you; I wound my way into the heart of its meaning like a serpent and lay there coiled till I had become one with it, then wound myself out again replete and affectionately reminiscent of the soul that had given me harbourage. As for our sins, let us not talk of them. We have been too tediously familiar with them after death to cherish their memory. But even there we differed. You sinned voraciously, robustly, with gusto but with very little of feeling; I stumbled in out of excess of emotion and could not recover myself because of the vibrant intensity of my memories.

LITTLETON

Let me know what worlds harboured you, since we parted.

PERCIVAL

Let me rather hear your experiences.

LITTLETON

The details fade in the retrospect and will not bear telling. Certain periods of mortal agony there were, each with its own physical surroundings, that I long to forget but cannot. Some of them recalled strangely, not in detail, but in kind, Greek Tartarus and Catholic Inferno. I was the prey of harpies, I was hunted and torn and devoured, I experienced the agonies of the men I had sent to the deliberate and brutal torture of our jails or beggared of their honour or their property. I renewed the successes of my life and sickened of their selfishness, boldness, hardness. Money became as redhot metal in my hands and luxury was a gnawing fire that embraced my body. I lingered in regions where love was not known and the souls of the inhabitants were hard and strong as bronze, dry and delightless as the Sahara. O Percival, Percival, when I go again upon earth, I shall know love and execute mercy.

PERCIVAL

Had you no hours of respite, entered no regions of happiness?

LITTLETON

That, I believe, is yet before me.

PERCIVAL

I too have had experiences similar to yours, though different in their nature and quality. I have sickened of the repeated weakness and selfishness of my life, I have experienced in my soul the sufferings of those I had injured. I can understand why the Christians believed Hell to be eternal; it was a memory in the self of the moral endlessness of those torments. But I had my release. I have lived in Elysium, I have trod the fields of asphodel. And in those happy experiences l have deepened the strength and quality of my love, intensified the swiftness of my emotions, refined and purified my taste and intellect.

LITTLETON

What is this world in which we meet?

PERCIVAL

The heaven of comrades.

Part Six

The Chandernagore Manuscript

Sri Aurobindo wrote all the pieces in this part in 1910. He did not publish any of them himself, but many were published in 1920–22 without his editorial supervision. They are reproduced here from his manuscripts.

Passing Thoughts [1]

Religion in Europe

There is no word so plastic and uncertain in its meaning as the word religion. The word is European and, therefore, it is as well to know first what the Europeans mean by it. In this matter we find them, — when they can be got to think clearly on the matter at all, which is itself unusual, — divided in opinion. Sometimes they use it as equivalent to a set of beliefs, sometimes as equivalent to morality, coupled with a belief in God, sometimes as equivalent to a set of pietistic actions and emotions. Faith, works and pious observances, these are the three recognized elements of European religion. From works, however, the ordinary work of the world is strictly excluded. Religion and daily life are, in the European opinion, two entirely different things which it is superstitious, barbarous, unenlightened and highly inconvenient to mix up together. Altruistic works are sometimes brought under religion, sometimes excluded from it. The idea of knowledge being part of religion is a conception which the European cannot receive into his intellect; religion and knowledge are to him two things absolutely and eternally unconnected, if not opposed and mutually contradictory of each other. The place of knowledge is taken by faith or belief stripped of any reason for the belief. The average Christian believes that the Bible is God's book, but ordinarily he does not consider anything in God's book binding on him in practice except to believe in God and go to Church once a week; the rest is only meant for the exceptionally pious. On the whole, therefore, to believe in God, to believe that He wrote a book, — only one book in all these ages, — and to go to Church on Sunday is the minimum of religion in Europe; on these essentials piety and morality may supervene and deepen the meaning.

Religion In India

Religion in India is a still more plastic term and may mean anything from the heights of Yoga to strangling your fellow man and relieving him of the worldly goods he may happen to be carrying with him. It would therefore take too long to enumerate everything that can be included in Indian religion. Briefly, however, it is dharma or living religiously, the whole life being governed by religion. But again what is living religiously? It means, in ordinary practice, living according to authority. The authority generally accepted is the Shastra; but when one studies the Shastra and Indian life side by side, one finds that the two have very little to do with each other; the Indian governs his life not by the Shastra but by custom and the opinion of the nearest Brahmin. In practice this resolves itself into certain observances and social customs of which he understands neither the spiritual meaning nor the practical utility. To venerate the Scriptures without knowing them and to obey custom in their place; to reverence all Brahmins whether they are venerable or despicable; to eat nothing cooked by a social inferior; to marry one's daughter before puberty and one's son as soon as possible after it; to keep women ignorant and domestically useful; to bathe scrupulously and go through certain fixed ablutions; to eat on the floor and not at a table; to do one's devotions twice a day without understanding them; to observe a host of meaningless minutiae in one's daily conduct; to keep the Hindu holidays, when an image is set up, worshipped and thrown away, — this in India is the minimum of religion. This is glorified as Hinduism and the Sanatana Dharma. If, in addition, a man has emotional or ecstatic piety, he is a Bhakta; if he can talk fluently about the Veda, Upanishads, Darshanas & Puranas, he is a Jnani. If he puts on a yellow robe and does nothing, he is a tyagi or sannyasin. The latter is liberated from the ordinary dharma, but only if he does nothing but beg and vegetate. All work must be according to custom and the Brahmin. The one superiority of average Indian religion is that it does really reverence the genuine Bhakta or Sannyasin provided he does not come with too strange a garb or too revolutionary an aspect. The European almost invariably sets him down as a charlatan, professional religionist, idle drone or religious maniac.

The Real Minimum

Turning away from this sorrowful debris of ancient religious forms in India and Europe, we may fix the genuine minimum of religion at this, — to know God, to love and to serve him. The Europeans think that to fear God is a noble part of religion, forgetting the dictum of the Bible that perfect love casteth out fear and that the devils also believe and tremble. Perfect knowledge, perfect service also cast out fear. One may know, love and serve God as the Master, Lover, Friend, Mother; or as the Higher Self; or as Humanity; or as the Self in all creatures. If it be objected that this gives scope to Atheism, it must be remembered that Buddha also has been termed an Atheist. The average Hindu is right in his conception of religion as dharma, to live according to holy rule; but the holy rule is not a mass of fugitive and temporary customs, but this, to live for God in oneself and others and not for oneself only, to make the whole life a sadhana the object of which is to realise the Divine in the world by work, love and knowledge.

The Maximum

There is a maximum as well as a minimum, and that is to rise beyond this life into a higher existence, not necessarily for oneself alone or in order to leave the world and vanish into the Universal, but as the highest have done, as God Himself habitually does, to bring down the bliss, illumination and greatness of that higher existence into the material world of creatures. All that rises beyond the minimum to the maximum, even though it may not attain it, is the Para Dharma; the minimum is the apara. To be a good, unselfish and religious man is the apara or lower dharma; to reach God revealed and bring Him down to earth where He hides Himself, is the higher. This is the Secret

Wisdom, which defeats itself if it remains for ever secret. For this the great Avatars, Teachers and Lovers come, to reveal Him in divine knowledge, to reveal Him in mighty action, to reveal Him in utter delight and love.

Passing Thoughts [2]

The Object of Government

It is the habit of men to blind themselves by customary trains of associated thought, to come to look on the means as an end and honour it with a superstitious reverence as a wonderworking fetish. Government and its great formulas, law and order, efficiency, administration, have been elevated into such a fetish. The principle of good government is not merely to keep men quiet, but to keep them satisfied. It is not its objective to have loyal servants and subjects, but to give all individuals in the nation the utmost possible facilities for becoming men and realising their manhood. The ideal of a State is not a hive of bees or a herd of cattle shepherded by strong watchdogs, but an association of freemen for mutual help and human advancement. The mere fact of a government doing what it does well and firmly, is nothing in its favour. It is more important to know what it does and where it is leading us.

The European Jail

The European jail is a luminous commentary on the humanitarian boasts of the Occident and its pious horror at Oriental barbarities. To mutilate, to impale, to torture, how shocking, how Oriental! And we are occasionally reminded that if we had independence, such punishments would again be our portion. England forgets that to half hang a man, draw out his entrails and burn them before his eyes was an English practice in the eighteenth century. France has forgotten the wheel and the galleys. But these things have gone out. What of the penal system? It strikes us as a refined and efficient organisation of the methods of savages against their enemies, savages who have indeed progressed and have learned that the torture of the soul is a more terrible revenge than the torture of the body, to murder the human nature a greater satisfaction than to slay the animal frame. Ancient nations punished their enemies by death, slavery, torture, humiliation and degradation. The jail system is an organisation of these four principles. Physical death has been reduced to a minimum; it is now only a punishment for murder and rebellion. A century or more ago every crime, almost, was punished with death in England. The principle was, Your life for my shilling, your life for my handkerchief! It is now, Your life for the life you have taken, your life for the mortal fear you put me into of the loss of my powers, emoluments and pleasures! The organisation of penal slavery is the first principle of the system. I take my enemy, put him on a dog's diet, load him with chains, set guards to beat and kick him into obedience and diligence and make him work for my profit for a period fixed by myself, careless whether his nature is brutalised or his life shortened in the process, — for he is my slave to do my will with and, if I do not kill him for taking my shilling or my handkerchief, it is because I am civilised and merciful, not a barbarous Oriental. For the same reason, I do not inflict physical torture on him, unless he is unwilling or unable to do the amount of daily work I have fixed for him, or either deliberately or accidentally remembers that he was a human being, or else behaves like the brute I have successfully laboured to make him. Even then I torture him according to his physical capacity and take care not to maim or kill this serviceable animal. Degradation and humiliation are as well organised as the slavery. It is not done once in a way, but driven in daily, hourly, momently, in every detail of dress, food, conduct, discipline. In every possible way I brand in upon my victim's soul that he is no longer such an one, no longer possessed of the name, rights or nature of humanity, but my slave, beast and property and the slave, beast and property of my servants. It is my object to wipe out every trace of the human in him and I stamp my foot daily on anything in him that may remind him of such human qualities as modesty, culture, self-respect, generosity, fellow-feeling. If everything else fails, I have the exquisite rack of mental torture called solitary imprisonment to shake his reason or destroy his manhood. And if in the end I have not succeeded, if he comes out a man and not a brute or an idiot, it is not my fault but his; I have done my best. This is the European prison system and it is inflicted on all alike with machinelike efficiency. The curious thing is that it is inflicted in part even on undertrial prisoners who may be perfectly innocent. This also is probably dictated by the finer feelings of Europe and intended mercifully to prepare their gentle and easy descent into the Inferno around them.

European Justice

The European Court of Justice is also a curious and instructive institution. Under a civilised disguise it is really the mediaeval ordeal by battle; only, in place of the swords or lances of military combatants, it is decided by the tongues of pleaders and the imagination of witnesses. Whoever can lie most consistently, plausibly and artistically, has the best chance of winning. In one aspect it is an exhilarating gamble, a very Monte Carlo of surprising chances. But there is skill in it, too, and it satisfies the intellect as well as the sensations. It is a sort of human game of Bridge combining luck and skill, or an intellectual gladiatorial show. The stake in big cases is a man's property or his soul. *Vae victis!* Woe to the conquered! If it is a criminal case, the tortures of the jail are in prospect, be he innocent or be he guilty. And as he stands there, — for to add to the pleasurableness of his case the physical ache of long standing is usually added to the strain on his emotions, — he looks eagerly, not to the truth or falsehood of the evidence for or against him, but to the skill with which this counsel or the other handles the proofs or the witnesses and the impression they are making on the judge or jury. One understands, as one watches, the passion of the Roman poet's eulogy of the defence lawyer, *praesidium maestis reis*, a bulwark to the sorrowful accused. For in this strange civilised game of pitch and toss where it is impossible to be certain about guilt or innocence, one's sympathies naturally go to the sufferer who may be innocent and yet convicted. If one could eliminate this element of human pity, it would be a real intellectual pleasure to watch the queer semibarbarous battle, appraise the methods of the chief players, admire, in whatever climes, the elusiveness and fine casualness of Indian perjury or the robust manly downrightness of Saxon cross-swearing. And if one were to complain that modern civilisation eliminates from life danger and excitement, one could well answer him, "Come into the Courts and see!" But, after all, praise must be given where it is due, and the English system must be lauded for not normally exposing the accused to the torture of savage pursuit by a prosecuting judge or the singular methods of investigation favoured by the American police. If the dice are apt to be loaded, it is on both sides and not on one.

Passing Thoughts [3]

Achar

Achar is a mould in which the thing itself rests and feels stable; it is not the thing itself. It is this sense of stability which is the great value of achar, it gives the thing itself the *sraddha*, the faith that it is meant to abide. It is a conservative force, it helps to preserve things as they are. But it is also a danger and hindrance when change becomes necessary. Conservative forces are either sattwic or tamasic. Achar with knowledge, observance full of the spirit of the thing itself, is sattwic and preserves the thing itself; achar without knowledge, looking to the letter of custom and observance, disregarding the spirit, is tamasic and destroys the thing itself. Intelligent observance and custom are always ready to change when change is needed, for they know themselves to be important but not essential. Ignorant observance and custom consider themselves the thing itself, rage against the hand that touches them and prefer to rot rather than change. Tamasic achar is a rotten mould which has often to be broken to pieces in order that the thing itself may be preserved. But if it is broken to pieces by anger and prejudice, the thing itself is likely to withdraw from us. It must be loosened and split asunder by the heat of knowledge. The present mould of Hinduism has to be broken and replaced, but by knowledge and yoga, not by the European spirit, and it is an Indian and not an English mould that must replace it.

Vichar

The need of vichar is urgent in times of transition. Revolutionary times generate two sorts of mind who are *avichari*, without perception and deliberation, the mind which clings fiercely to the old because it is old and the mind which runs violently after the new because it is new. Between them rises the self-styled moderate man who says, Let us have something of the old and something of the new. The moderate man is no less *avichari* than the men of extremes. He swears by moderation as a formula and a fetish and runs after an impossible reconciliation. It was this kind of thought which Christ had in view when he said, You cannot put new wine into old bottles. Vichar never sets up a formula, never prejudges, but questions everything, weighs everything. If a man says, Alter your notions and habits on the lines of enlightened Europe, vichar answers, "Let me consider that. Why should I assume Europe to be enlightened, India barbarous? It is possible the people of Europe may be the real barbarians, Indian knowledge the true enlightenment. I must see." On the other hand if a man says, "Be an Indian and do as the Indians," vichar replies, "I am not sure that I ought to do as the Indians in order to be an Indian. It may be that the present men of the country have become something Indians were not intended to be. I must see what Indians have been in the various epochs of our civilisation and find out what is eternal in the civilisation and what is temporary. It may even be that the Europeans have certain things really Indian which we have lost." It is good to be Indian, but to be Indian because of knowledge, not because of prejudice. Hinduism itself is based on vichar, vivek and jnanam deciding what achar is the best for the preservation of human society and the fulfilment of our individual and associated manhood.

Vivek

Indian vichar guides itself by vivek. Vichar by itself questions and considers, weighs, examines and ponders and so arrives at certain perceptions and conclusions by which it guides itself. This is European vichar and its supreme example is Socrates. The danger of vichar is that if it does not start with certain premises and assumptions, it will end in the absolute uncertainty of the

Academic philosophers who could not even be sure whether they existed or not. On the other hand if it starts with premises and assumptions, there is a danger of the premises and assumptions being erroneous and vitiating the conclusion. For this reason modern Science insists on all the premises being thoroughly proved before the vichar commences, and its method of proof is experiment. Modern European progress is an application of this principle of experiment to politics, society and every human belief and institution. This is a rather dangerous business. In the process of experiment you may get an explosion which will blow society out of existence and bring a premature end to the experiment. Moreover, you may easily think a premise proved when it is not. Science has had to abandon notion after notion which it thought based on unshakably proven premises. Nothing was thought more certainly proved than that the process of breathing was necessary to life. But we know in India that a man can live without breathing. The principle of proof by experiment was known to the ancient Indians, but just as the Europeans, dissatisfied with vichar, progressed beyond it to vichar guided by experiment, so the Indians, dissatisfied with experiment, progressed beyond it to vichar and experiment guided by vivek, intuitive and inspired judgment gained by a previous purification of the organs of thought and knowledge. The modern Indians have lost this guide and are compelled to rely on aptavakya or authority, the recorded opinions of men who had vivek, or traditions and customs founded on an ancient enlightenment. This is unsatisfactory, because we do not know that we have the opinions correctly or completely recorded or that the traditions and customs have not been distorted by time and error. We must recover and go back to the fountainhead.

Jnanam

There are four operations in the Indian method of knowledge. First, the inquirer purifies his intellect by the stilling of passion, emotion, prejudgment and old sanskaras or associations.

Secondly, he subjects received knowledge to a rigid scrutiny by sceptical vichar, separating opinion from ascertained truth, mere conclusions from facts. Even the facts he takes as only provisionally true and is prepared to find his whole knowledge to be erroneous, misapplied or made up of half-truths. Thirdly, he experiments in order to get upalabdhi or personal experience. Fourthly, he again uses vichar in order to ascertain how far his experience really carries him and what he is or is not justified in concluding from it. Lastly, he turns the light of the vishuddha buddhi on the subject and by inspired discrimination arrives at jnanam. The conclusions of the vivek he does not question, because he knows by experience that it is a fine and accurate instrument. Only, he is on his guard against mistaking vichar for vivek, and is always prepared to balance and amplify his conclusions by fresh truths he had not considered and to find that there is another side to truth than the one with which he is familiar. He does not, like the European scientist, wed himself to previous generalisations and theories or consider every fresh enlargement of knowledge on new lines charlatanry and imposture.

Hathayoga

The evolution of man has been upwards from the body to the spirit, and there are three stages in his progress. He bases himself upon body, rises through soul and culminates in spirit. And to each stage of his evolution belong certain kinds of sadhana, a particular type of Yoga, a characteristic fulfilment. There was no aeon in man's history, no *kalpa*, to use the Indian term, in which the Yoga was withheld from man or fulfilment denied to him. But the fulfilment corresponded to his stage of progress, and the Yoga corresponded to the fulfilment. In his earlier development he was realising himself in the body and the divinity of the body was his fulfilment. He is now realising himself in the heart and mind, and the divinity of the heart and mind will be his culmination. Eventually he will realise himself in the spirit and the divinity of his true spiritual self will round off his history.

Yoga is the realisation of one's capacity of harmony, communion or unity with God. Whatever religious standpoint, creed or philosophy one adopt, Yoga is possible, so long as God's existence or omnipresence is admitted, whether it be as a Personality, a Presence, a Force or a Condition of Things. The Infinite in some form or idea must be admitted. To be in tune with the Infinite, that is harmony. To be in touch with the Infinite, that is communion. To be one in kind, extent or self-realisation with the Infinite, that is unity. But fulfilment is not possible unless the So Aham, "He am I," is recognised and practised as the ultimate truth of things. The realisation of God in self with the eye on the body is the fulfilment of the tamasic or material man. The realisation of God in self with the eye on the antahkaran or heart and mind is the fulfilment of the rajasic or psychic man. The realisation of God in self with the eye on the spirit is the fulfilment of the sattwic or spiritual man. And each fulfils himself by rising beyond himself. When the material man fulfils the divinity of the body, he does so by rising into the psychic part and finding his strength in the ahankara or psychic principle of egoism. The psychic man fulfils the divinity of the soul by rising into the spirit and finding his strength in the superpsychic Will or Intelligent Force in things. The spiritual man fulfils the divinity of the spirit by rising beyond the human spirit, the Jivatman, and finding his strength in the Parameswara and Parabrahman, the Sa and the Tat, God revealed and unrevealed, the Universal and Supreme Spirit who supports and contains the individual. To put it in language easier but more capable of misconception, the material man realises himself by identifying God with his own ego; the psychical man by identifying God with passionless, intelligent, blissful Will in himself; the spiritual man by identifying God with the All in whom everything abides. The first is the Rakshasa or the Asura of the lower order; the second is the Deva or the Asura of the higher order; the third is the Siddha or Siddha Purusha, the perfect being.

The pure Hathayoga is the means of the fulfilment through the body. Its processes are physical, strenuous, colossal, complex, difficult. They centre in Asana, Pranayam and the purification of the body. The number of Asanas in the modern or mixed Hathayoga is limited, but even then they are numerous and painful; in the ancient or pure Hathayoga, they were innumerable and the old Hathayogins practised them all. The Asana means simply a particular position of the body and is perfect or "conquered", in the technical language, when a man can stay in a single posture, however strained or apparently impossible, for an indefinite period without being forced by strain to remember the body. The first object of the Asana is to conquer the body, — for the body must be conquered before it can become divine, — to be able to lay any command upon it and never be commanded by it. The second object was to conquer physical nature, by developing the four physical siddhis, laghima, anima, garima, mahima. By perfect laghima man can rise into the air and tread the winds as his natural element; by perfect anima he can bring the nature of the subtle body into the gross body, which the fire will no longer burn, nor weapons wound, nor want of air stifle, nor the waters drown; by perfect garima he can develop an adamantine steadiness which the shock of the avalanche cannot overbear; by perfect mahima he can, without muscular development, outdo the feats of a Hercules. These powers in their fullness are no longer visible in men, but in some degree they belong to all adepts in Hathayoga. Their existence no one can doubt who has gone deep into Yoga at all or had any personal experience of siddhis. The third object is to develop in the body Yogic force, which is called tapah or viryam or the fire of Yoga. The fourth object is to become urddhwaretah, that is to say, to draw up the whole virile force in the body into the brain and return so much of it as is needed for the body purified and electricised.

Pranayam is the mastery of the vital force, the mobile energy which keeps the universe going. In the human body the most noticeable function of the prana or vital force is the breathing, which is in ordinary men necessary to life and motion. The Hathayogin conquers it and renders himself independent of it. But he does not confine his attention to this single vital operation. He distinguishes five major vital forces and several minor, to each of which he has given a name, and he learns to control all the numerous pranic currents in which they operate. As there are innumerable asanas, so there are a great number of different kinds of Pranayam, and a man is not a perfect Hathayogin till he has mastered them all. The conquest of the Prana confirms the perfect health, vigour and vitality gained by the Asanas; it confers the power of living as long as one pleases and it adds to the four physical siddhis, the five psychical, — prakamya or absolute keenness of the mind and senses including telepathy, clairvoyance and other faculties commonly supposed to be supernormal; vyapti or the power of receiving other men's thoughts, powers and feelings and projecting one's own thoughts, feelings, powers or personality into others; aiswaryam or control over events, lordship, wealth and all objects of desire; vashita or the power of exacting implicit and instantaneous obedience to the spoken or written word; ishita, the perfect control over the powers of nature and over things inert or unintelligent. Some of these powers have recently been discovered in Europe as phenomena of hypnotism or will-force; but the European experiences are feeble and unscientific if compared with the achievements of the ancient Hathayogins or even with those of some of the modern. The will power developed by Pranayam is, it should be noted, psychical and not spiritual.

Besides these two great practices the Hathayogins have numerous others such as the extraordinary means by which they clean out daily all the physical impurities of the body. By these numerous and difficult physical practices they attain an extraordinary power, vitality, virility, longevity, and are also able to attain knowledge transcending the ordinary human bounds, leave the body in Samadhi and, in one word, exercise every mere power that comes by Yoga. But the practice of unmixed Hathayoga generates a colossal egoism and the Yogin seldom exceeds it. The modern Hathayoga is mixed with the Rajayoga and, therefore, neither so virile and potent nor so dangerous as the ancient. The modern Hathayogin often falls a prey to egoism but he knows he has to transcend it. The ancient embraced it as a fulfilment; only he managed and directed it by the use of the psychical will-power which he identified with the Force of Nature and the supreme Will of God.

Rajayoga

Man fulfilling himself in the body is given Hathayoga as his means. When he rises above the body, he abandons Hathayoga as a troublesome and inferior process and rises to the Rajayoga, the discipline peculiar to the aeon in which man now evolves. The first condition of success in Rajayoga is to rise superior to the dehatmak bodh, the state of perception in which the body is identified with the self. A time comes to the Rajayogin when his body seems not to belong to him or he to have any concern with it. He is not troubled by its troubles or gladdened by its pleasures; it has them to itself and very soon, because he does not give his sanction to them, they fall away from it. His own troubles and pleasures are in the heart and mind, for he is the rajasic and psychical man, not the tamasic material. It is these that he has to conquer in order that he may realise God in his heart or in his buddhi or in both. God seen in the heart, that is the quest of the Rajayogin. He may recover the perception and enjoyment of the body afterwards, but it is only to help the enjoyment of God as Love and God as Knowledge.

The processes of the Rajayoga are mental and emotional. Patanjali's science is not the pure Rajayoga; it is mixed and allows an element of the Hatha in its initial processes. It admits the Asana, it admits the Pranayam. It is true it reduces each to one of its kind, but the method of conquest is physical and therefore not Rajayogic. It may be said that the stillness of the body is essential to concentration or to samadhi; but this is a convention of the Hathayoga. The Rajayogin concedes no such importance to the body; he knows by experience that concentration can be secured in any easy and unconstrained posture which allows one to forget the body; it is often as much helped by rhythmic motion as by stillness. Samadhi, when it comes, itself secures stillness of the body. The pure Rajayogin dispenses therefore with the physical practice of Asana.

The real reason why Patanjali laid so much stress on Asana was that he thought Pranayam essential to samadhi and Asana essential to Pranayam. It is difficult, though not impossible, to do the practice of Pranayam according to Patanjali's system without perfect bodily stillness. It can be done and has been done even while walking about, but this is not so easy or usual. Now Pranayam in its proper sense, the mastery of the vital force in oneself and Nature, is essential to every Rajayogin, but it can be brought about by much simpler methods. The only physical process that the Rajayogin finds helpful enough to be worth doing, is *nadishuddhi* or purification of the nerve system by regular breathing and this can be done while lying, sitting, reading, writing, walking. This process has great virtues. It has a wonderfully calming effect on the whole mind & body, drives out every lurking disease in the system, awakens the yogic force accumulated in former lives and, even where no such latent force exists, removes the physical obstacles to the wakening of the Kundalini shakti.

But even this process is not essential. The Rajayogin knows that by tranquillising the mind he can tranquillise the body, by mastering the mind he can master both the body and the prana. This is the great secret of the Rajayoga that mind is the master of the body, creates it and conditions it, body is not the master, creator or lawgiver of the mind. It may be said that the body at least affects the mind, but this is the other discovery of the Rajayogin that the body need not in the least affect the mind *unless by our consent we allow it to do so*. The kumbhak or natural cessation of the breathing is essential to the deeper kinds of Samadhi, not to all; but even so he finds that by the cessation of the lawless restlessness of the mind, which we mistakenly call thought, we can easily, naturally and spontaneously bring about the cessation of the breathing, a calm, effortless and perfect kumbhak. He therefore dispenses with physical processes, easy or laborious, and goes straight to the root of the problem, the mind.

Rajayoga is of three kinds, sachesta, salpachesta and nischesta, with effort, with little effort, and without effort.

Patanjali's, the only systematised kind, though each is quite methodical, is sachesta, involving great strain and effort throughout. We may best compare the systems by taking each of Patanjali's steps separately and seeing how the three kinds of Rajayogins will deal with them. In the present article we shall deal with Patanjali. The first step is the preparation of the moral nature, the discipline of the heart, its perfection in the four great qualities of love, purity, courage and calm, without which siddhi in the Rajayoga is impossible. Patanjali prescribes the practice of the five yamas or regulating moral exercises, truth, justice and honesty, harmlessness, chastity and refusal of ownership, and the five niyamas or regulating moral habits, cleanliness and purity, contentment, austerity, meditation on Scripture, worship and devotion to God. In order to establish these habits and exercises and remove the impurities of the heart it is evident that Patanjali intends us to use the method of abhyasa or constant practice. Anyone who has made the attempt will realise how difficult it is to compass all these qualities and how long and tedious a discipline is required to establish them even imperfectly. Patanjali seeks to purify and quiet the life while the mind and heart are yet impure and restless, a system possible only to hermits in an asrama. For this reason the Rajayoga has fled from the homes of men and taken refuge in the forest and the cavern.

Afterwards Patanjali recommends the quieting of the body and the mastering of the Prana by Asana and Pranayam. The reason of this is clear enough. The Pranayam of the Hathayoga does not lead to purity, but to force and intensity; every quality that it finds potent in the system it raises to tenfold activity and power. Unless therefore the life and character be previously made quiet and pure, Pranayam done in one's own strength may do immense moral, physical and mental mischief. Allowing for the overcoming of his initial difficulty and for the admission of Hatha into Rajayoga, it must be admitted that Patanjali's system is admirably logical and reasonable in its arrangement.

Next comes the mastery of the mind, that restless, self-willed and shifting force which is so difficult to control. Again, as in his previous steps, Patanjali relies wholly on abhyasa or practice. He arranges concentration in four stages of development, Pratyahara or the drawing inward of the senses from their objects; Dharana, or the success in this process resulting in the fixing of the mind for a moment on a single thought, feeling or object, — such as a single part of the body, the tip of the nose or the centre of the brows for preference; Dhyana or the continuation of this state for a fixed period; Samadhi or the entire withdrawing into oneself for an indefinite time. The preliminary process once successful, the rest follows with comparative ease, but the preliminary process is itself so enormously difficult that one would be amazed at Patanjali's putting it first, if one did not perceive that he is relying on the rigorous and thorough mastery of each step before the next is attempted; he trusts to the Hathayogic kumbhak to bring about Pratyahara with comparative ease. Even as it is, most Yogins prefer to take the Dharana or concentration on a single object first, trusting to the practice of Dharana to bring about Pratyahara by a natural process. This is undoubtedly the more easy and straightforward process, though Patanjali's is the more logical and scientific, and, if mastered, may lead to greater results.

Concentration once attained, we proceed to what Patanjali evidently considers the essence of Yoga, the coercion of all vrittis or functionings of the mental and moral qualities so as to arrive at *sanyama* or turning of the whole passionless intelligent Will in the spirit on whatsoever the Yogin wishes to possess, from the realisation of God to the enjoyment of mundane objects. But how is this silencing of the vrittis to be effected? for the yamas and niyamas only establish certain good habits of life, they do not thoroughly purify mind and heart. We have to do it by a process of removal by replacement, always depending on abhyasa, replacing bad vrittis by good, the many good by the few better, the few better by the one best, until we arrive at absolute sanyama. This can be done, not easily but without insuperable difficulty if the power of concentration is thoroughly attained by Patanjali's method.

Sanyama is a mighty power. Whatever the Yogin does sanyama upon, says Patanjali, that he masters. The knowledge of one's past lives, of the thoughts of men, of men in this world and spirits in the other, the vision of the past and the future, the knowledge of all that is in the present, the mastery of Nature, the siddhis of the Hathayogin, the realisation of God, all power, all bliss, all knowledge is in his grasp. As to what he shall do with the power, Patanjali leaves the choice to the successful Yogin.

Historical Impressions

The French Revolution

The greatness of the French Revolution lies not in what it effected, but in what it thought and was. Its action was chiefly destructive. It prepared many things, it founded nothing. Even the constructive activity of Napoleon only built a halfway house in which the ideas of 1789 might rest until the world was fit to understand them better and really fulfil them. The ideas themselves were not new; they existed in Christianity and before Christianity they existed in Buddhism; but in 1789 they came out for the first time from the Church and the Book and sought to remodel government and society. It was an unsuccessful attempt, but even the failure changed the face of Europe. And this effect was chiefly due to the force, the enthusiasm, the sincerity with which the idea was seized upon and the thoroughness with which it was sought to be applied. The cause of the failure was the defect of knowledge, the excess of imagination. The basal ideas, the types, the things to be established were known; but there had been no experience of the ideas in practice. European society, till then, had been permeated, not with liberty, but with bondage and repression; not with equality, but with inequality and injustice; not with brotherhood, but with selfish force and violence. The world was not ready, nor is it even now ready for the fullness of the practice. It is the goal of humanity, and we are yet far off from the goal. But the time has come for an approximation being attempted. And the first necessity is the discipline of brotherhood, the organisation of brotherhood, — for without the spirit and habit of fraternity neither liberty nor equality can be maintained for more than a short season. The French were ignorant of this practical principle; they made liberty the basis, brotherhood the superstructure, founding the triangle upon its apex. For owing to the dominance of Greece & Rome in their imagination they were saturated with the idea of liberty and only formally admitted the Christian and Asiatic principle of brotherhood. They built according to their knowledge, but the triangle has to be reversed before it can stand permanently.

* * *

The action of the French Revolution was the vehement death-dance of Kali trampling blindly, furiously on the ruins She made, mad with pity for the world and therefore utterly pitiless. She called the Yatudhani in her to her aid and summoned up the Rakshasi. The Yatudhani is the delight of destruction, the fury of slaughter, Rudra in the Universal Being, Rudra, the bhuta, the criminal, the lord of the animal in man, the lord of the demoniac, Pashupati, Pramathanatha. The Rakshasi is the unbridled, licentious self-assertion of the ego which insists on the gratification of all its instincts good and bad and furiously shatters all opposition. It was the Yatudhani and the Rakshasi who sent their hoarse cry over France, adding to the luminous mantra, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, the stern and terrible addition "or Death." Death to the Asura, death to all who oppose God's evolution, that was the meaning. With these two terrible Shaktis Kali did Her work. She veiled Her divine knowledge with the darkness of wrath and passion, She drank blood as wine, naked of tradition and convention She danced over all Europe and the whole continent was filled with the warcry and the carnage and rang with the hunkara and the attahasyam. It was only when She found that She was trampling on Mahadeva, God expressed in the principle of Nationalism, that She remembered Herself, flung aside Napoleon, the mighty Rakshasa, and settled down quietly to her work of perfecting nationality as the outer shell within which brotherhood may be securely and largely organised.

* * *

The Revolution was also great in its men filling them all with its vehemence, its passion, its fierce demand on the world, its colossal impetus. Through four of them chiefly it helped itself, through Mirabeau, Danton, Robespierre and Napoleon. Mirabeau initiated, Danton inspired, Robespierre slew, Napoleon fulfilled. The first three appeared for the moment, the man in the multitude, did their work and departed. The pace was swift and, if they had remained, they would have outstayed their utility and injured the future. It is always well for the man to go the moment his work is done and not to outstay the Mother's welcome. They are fortunate who get that release or are wise enough, like Garibaldi, to take it. Not altogether happy is their lot who, like Napoleon or Mazzini, outstay the lease of their appointed greatness.

Mirabeau ruled the morning twilight, the *sandhya* of the new age. Aristocratic tribune of the people, unprincipled champion of principles, lordly democrat, — a man in whom reflection was turbulent, prudence itself bold, unflinching and reckless, the man was the meeting-place of two ages. He had the passions of the past, not its courtly restraint; the turbulence, genius, impetuosity of the future, not its steadying attachment to ideas. There is an honour of the aristocrat which has its root in manners and respects the sanctity of its own traditions; that is the honour of the Conservative. There is an honour of the democrat which has its root in ideas and respects the sanctity of its own principles; that is the honour of the Liberal. Mirabeau had neither. He was the pure egoist, the eternal Rakshasa. Not for the sake of justice and liberty did he love justice and liberty but for the sake of Mirabeau. Had his career been fortunate, the forms of the old regime wide enough to satisfy his ambitions and passions, the upheaval of 1789 might have found him on the other side. But because the heart and senses of Mirabeau were unsatisfied, the French Revolution triumphed. So it is that God prepares the man and the moment, using good and evil with a divine impartiality for His mighty ends. Without the man the moment is a lost opportunity; without the moment the man is a force inoperative. The meeting of the two changes the destinies of nations and the poise of the world is altered by what seems to the superficial an accident.

There are times when a single personality gathers up the temperament of an epoch or a movement and by simply existing ensures its fulfilment. It would be difficult to lay down the precise services which made the existence of Danton necessary for the success of the Revolution. There are certain things he did, and no man else could have done, which compelled destiny; there are certain things he said which made France mad with resolution and courage. These words, these doings ring through the ages. So live, so immortal are they that they seem to defy cataclysm itself and insist on surviving eternal oblivion. They are full of the omnipotence and immortality of the human soul and its lordship over fate. One feels that they will recur again in aeons unborn and worlds uncreated. The power from which they sprang, expressed itself rarely in deeds and only at supreme moments. The energy of Danton lay dormant, indolent, scattering itself in stupendous oratory, satisfied with feelings and phrases. But each time it stirred, it convulsed events and sent a shock of primal elemental force rushing through the consciousness of the French nation. While he lived, moved, spoke, felt, acted, the energy he did not himself use, communicated itself to the millions; the thoughts he did not utter, seized on minds which took them for their own; the actions he might have done better himself, were done worse by others. Danton was contented. Magnificent and ostentatious, he was singularly void of personal ambition. He was satisfied to see the Revolution triumph by his strength, but in the deeds of others. His fall removed the strength of victorious Terror from the movement within France, its impulse to destroy and conquer. For a little while the impetus gathered carried it on, then it faltered and paused. Every great flood of action needs a human soul for its centre, an embodied point of the Universal Personality from which to surge out upon others. Danton was such a point, such a centre. His daily thoughts, feelings, impulses gave an equilibrium to that rushing fury, a fixity to that pregnant chaos. He was the character of the Revolution personified, — its heart, while Robespierre was only its hand. History which, being European, lays much stress on events, a little on speech, but has never realised the importance of souls, cannot appreciate men like Danton. Only the eye of the seer can pick them out from the mass and trace to their source those immense vibrations.

* * *

One may well speak of the genius of Mirabeau, the genius of Danton; it is superfluous to speak of the genius of Napoleon. But one cannot well speak of the genius of Robespierre. He was empty of genius; his intellect was acute and well-informed but uninspired; his personality fails to impress. What was it then that gave him his immense force and influence? It was the belief in the man, his faith. He believed in the Revolution, he believed in certain ideas, he believed in himself as their spokesman and executor; he came to believe in his mission to slay the enemies of the idea and make an end. And whatever he believed, he believed implicitly, unfalteringly, invincibly and pursued it with a rigid fidelity. Mirabeau, Danton, Napoleon were all capable of permanent discouragement, could recognise that they were beaten, the hour unsuitable, fate hostile. Robespierre was not. He might recoil, he might hide his head in fear, but it was only to leap again, to save himself for the next opportunity. He had a tremendous force of sraddha. It is only such men, thoroughly conscientious and well-principled, who can slay without pity, without qualms, without resting, without turning. The Yatudhani seized on him for her purpose. The conscientious lawyer who refused a judgeship rather than sacrifice his principle by condemning a criminal to death, became the most colossal political executioner of his or any age. As we have said, if Danton was the character of the French Revolution personified when it went forth to slay, Robespierre was its hand. But, naturally, he could not recognise that limitation; he aspired to think, to construct, to rule, functions for which he was unfit. When Danton demanded that the Terror should cease and Mercy take its place, Robespierre ought to have heard in his demand the voice of the Revolution calling on him to stay his sanguinary course. But he was full of his own blind faith and would not hear. Danton died because he resisted the hand of Kali, but his mighty disembodied spirit triumphed and imposed his last thought on the country. The

Terror ceased; Mercy took its place. Robespierre, however, has his place of honour in history; he was the man of conscience and principle among the four, the man who never turned from the path of what he understood to be virtue.

Napoleon took up into himself the functions of the others. As Mirabeau initiated destruction, he initiated construction and organisation and in the same self-contradictory spirit; he was the Rakshasa, the most gigantic egoist in history, the despot of liberty, the imperial protector of equality, the unprincipled organiser of great principles. Like Danton, he shaped events for a time by his thoughts & character. While Danton lived, politics moved to a licentious democracy, war to a heroism of patriotic defence. From the time he passed, the spirit of Napoleon shaped events and politics moved to the rule first of the civil, then of the military dictator, war to the organisation of republican conquest. Like Robespierre he was the executive hand of destruction and unlike Robespierre the executive hand of construction. The fury of Kali became in him self-centred, capable, full of organised thought and activity, but nonetheless impetuous, colossal, violent, devastating.

Historical Impressions

Napoleon

The name of Napoleon has been a battle-field for the prepossessions of all sorts of critics, and, according to their predilections, idiosyncrasies and political opinions, men have loved or hated, panegyrised or decried the Corsican. To blame Napoleon is like criticising Mont Blanc or throwing mud at Kinchinjunga. This phenomenon has to be understood and known, not blamed or praised. Admire we must, but as minds, not as moralists. It has not been sufficiently perceived by his panegyrists and critics that Bonaparte was not a man at all, he was a force. Only the nature of the force has to be considered. There are some men who are self-evidently superhuman, great spirits who are only using the human body. Europe calls them supermen, we call them *vibhutis*. They are manifestations of Nature, of divine power presided over by a spirit commissioned for the purpose, and that spirit is an emanation from the Almighty, who accepts human strength and weakness but is not bound by them. They are above morality and ordinarily without a conscience, acting according to their own nature. For they are not men developing upwards from the animal to the divine and struggling against their lower natures, but beings already fulfilled and satisfied with themselves. Even the holiest of them have a contempt for the ordinary law and custom and break them easily and without remorse, as Christ did on more than one occasion, drinking wine, breaking the Sabbath, consorting with publicans and harlots; as Buddha did when he abandoned his self-accepted duties as a husband, a citizen and a father; as Shankara did when he broke the holy law and trampled upon custom and *achar* to satisfy his dead mother. In our literature they are described as Gods or Siddhas or Titans or Giants. Valmeki depicts Ravana as a ten-headed giant, but it is easy to see that this was only the vision of him in the world of imaginations, the "astral plane", and that in the terms of humanity he was a vibhuti or superman and one of the same order of beings as Napoleon.

* * *

The Rakshasa is the supreme and thoroughgoing individualist, who believes life to be meant for his own untrammelled self-fulfilment and self-assertion. A necessary element in humanity, he is particularly useful in revolutions. As a pure type in man he is ordinarily a thing of the past; he comes now mixed with other elements. But Napoleon was a Rakshasa of the pure type, colossal in his force and attainment. He came into the world with a tremendous appetite for power and possession and, like Ravana, he tried to swallow the whole earth in order to glut his supernatural hunger. Whatever came in his way he took as his own, ideas, men, women, fame, honours, armies, kingdoms; and he was not scrupulous as to his right of possession. His nature was his right; its need his justification. The attitude may be expressed in some such words as these, "Others may not have the right to do these things, but I am Napoleon".

* * *

The Rakshasa is not an altruist. If by satisfying himself he can satisfy others, he is pleased, but he does not make that his motive. If he has to trample on others to satisfy himself, he does so without compunction. Is he not the strong man, the efficient ruler, the mighty one? The Rakshasa has kama, he has no prema. Napoleon knew not what love was; he had only the kindliness that goes with possession. He loved Josephine because she satisfied his nature, France because he possessed her, his mother because she was his and congenial, his soldiers because they were necessary to his glory. But the love did not go beyond his need of them. It was self-satisfaction and had no element in it of self-surrender. The Rakshasa slays all that opposes him and he is callous about the extent of the slaughter. But he is never cruel. Napoleon had no taint of Nero in him, but he flung away without a qualm whole armies as holocausts on the altar of his glory; he shot Hofer and murdered Enghien. What then is there in the Rakshasa that makes him necessary? He is individuality, he is force, he is capacity; he is the second power of God, wrath, strength, grandeur, rushing impetuosity, overbearing courage, the avalanche, the thunderbolt; he is Balaram, he is Jehovah, he is Rudra. As such we may admire and study him.

But the vibhuti, though he takes self-gratification and enjoyment on his way, never comes for self-gratification and enjoyment. He comes for work, to help man on his way, the world in its evolution. Napoleon was one of the mightiest of vibhutis, one of the most dominant. There are some of them who hold themselves back, suppress the force in their personality in order to put it wholly into their work. Of such were Shakespeare, Washington, Victor Emmanuel. There are others like Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, Goethe, who are as obviously superhuman in their personality as in the work they accomplish. Napoleon was the greatest in practical capacity of all moderns. In capacity, though not in character, he resembles Bhishma of the Mahabharat. He had the same sovran, irresistible, world-possessing grasp of war, politics, government, legislation, society; the same masterly handling of masses and amazing glut for details. He had the iron brain that nothing fatigues, the faultless memory that loses nothing, the clear insight that puts everything in its place with spontaneous accuracy. It was as if a man were to carry Caucasus on his shoulders and with that burden race successfully an express engine, yet note and forecast every step and never falter. To prove that anything in a human body could be capable of such work, is by itself a service to our progress for which we cannot be sufficiently grateful to Napoleon.

The work of Bonaparte was wholly admirable. It is true that he took freedom for a season from France, but France was not then fit for democratic freedom. She had to learn discipline for a while under the rule of the soldier of Revolution. He could not have done the work he did, hampered by an effervescent French

Parliament ebullient in victory, discouraged in defeat. He had to organise the French Revolution so far as earth could then bear it, and he had to do it in the short span of an ordinary lifetime. He had also to save it. The aggression of France upon Europe was necessary for self-defence, for Europe did not mean to tolerate the Revolution. She had to be taught that the Revolution meant not anarchy, but a reorganisation so much mightier than the old that a single country so reorganised could conquer united Europe. That task Napoleon did effectively. It has been said that his foreign policy failed, because he left France smaller than he found it. That is true. But it was not Napoleon's mission to aggrandise France geographically. He did not come for France, but for humanity, and even in his failure he served God and prepared the future. The balance of Europe had to be disturbed in order to prepare new combinations and his gigantic operations disturbed it fatally. He roused the spirit of Nationalism in Italy, in Germany, in Poland, while he established the tendency towards the formation of great Empires; and it is the harmonized fulfilment of Nationalism and Empire that is the future. He compelled Europe to accept the necessity of reorganisation political and social.

The *punya* of overthrowing Napoleon was divided between England, Germany and Russia. He had to be overthrown, because, though he prepared the future and destroyed the past, he misused the present. To save the present from his violent hands was the work of his enemies, and this merit gave to these three countries a great immediate development and the possession of the nineteenth century. England and Germany went farthest because they acted most wholeheartedly and as nations, not as Governments. In Russia it was the Government that acted, but with the help of the people. On the other hand, the countries sympathetic to Napoleon, Italy, Ireland, Poland, or those which acted weakly or falsely, such as Spain and Austria, have declined, suffered, struggled and, even when partially successful, could not attain their fulfilment. But the *punya* is now exhausted.

The future with which the victorious nations made a temporary compromise, the future which Napoleon saved and protected, demands possession, and those who can reorganise themselves most swiftly and perfectly under its pressure, will inherit the twentieth century; those who deny it, will perish. The first offer is made to the nations in present possession; it is withheld for a time from the others. That is the reason why Socialism is most insistent now in England, Germany & Russia; but in all these countries it is faced by an obstinate and unprincipled opposition. The early decades of the twentieth century will select the chosen nations of the future.

There remains the question of Nationalism and Empire; it is put to all these nations, but chiefly to England. It is put to her in Ireland, in Egypt, in India. She has the best opportunity of harmonising the conflicting claims of Nationalism and Empire. In fighting against Nationalism she is fighting against her own chance of a future, and her temporary victory over Indian Nationalism is the one thing her guardian spirits have most to fear. For the recoil will be as tremendous as the recoil that overthrew Napoleon. The delusion that the despotic possession of India is indispensable to her retention of Empire, may be her undoing. It is indispensable to her, if she meditates, like Napoleon, the conquest of Asia and of the world; it is not necessary to her imperial self-fulfilment, for even without India she would possess an Empire greater than the Roman. Her true position in India is that of a trustee and temporary guardian; her only wise and righteous policy the devolution of her trust upon her ward with a view to alliance, not ownership. The opportunity of which Napoleon dreamed, a great Indian Empire, has been conceded to her and not to Napoleon. But that opportunity is a two-edged weapon which, if misused, is likely to turn upon and slay the wielder.

In the Society’s Chambers

Professor — Let me assure you, my friends, that the method of inquiry is alone responsible for all the error in the world. Mankind is in a hurry to know and prefers to catch at half-truths rather than wait for the full truth to dawn on him. Now a half-truth is a few degrees more mischievous than absolute error. It is the devil himself in the disguise of an angel.

The Practical Man — But surely, Professor, half-truths are the preparation for whole truths. And mankind must have something to go by. We are not all College Professors who can wait comfortably in our studies for Truth to call on us at her leisure. I have got to get to my place of business and, if motorcars have not been invented, I must use bike or tramcar.

Professor — There you are, my friend, in possession of a metaphor and under the delusion that you have got an argument. Half-truths are the greatest enemies of whole truths. Mankind gets besotted with the half-truth and when the whole truth happens in, it cries, “Here’s this queerlooking idiot and scoundrel who has not been properly introduced to me, wanting to turn out my half-truth whom I know and who has helped me for centuries. Out with the cuckoo! A horse-whip for the bounder!” And out goes Truth, lucky if she is only expelled, not burned, garotted, mobbed or censorshipped out of existence, and has to take her next chance five hundred years later.

Scientist — You are right, Professor. Everything should be proved, nothing admitted.

Professor — Excuse me, Scientist. Your tribe, once champions of progress, are now the stiffest and blindest opponents of new Truth going. Torquemada was a babe to you.

Scientist — Well, and what about the Mystic here, who wants to go back to Paracelsus and Santa Teresa?

Mystic — I should say rather, to keep unbroken the most important thread in the long and intricately woven cord of evolving knowledge.

Professor — My friends, I know nothing about mysticism and materialism. These are mere words to me. I know Truth only. If Truth is mystic, I cannot help it. If, on the other hand, Truth turn out to be a rank materialist, a follower of Huxley and Haeckel, who am I to insist on spiritualising her? Let us have Truth as she is and not insist on creating her in our own image.

The Practical Man — How is that to be done?

Professor — By inquiry, by dispassionate, disinterested, calm, judicious, leisurely inquiry. Let us consider everything, accept only when acceptance is thoroughly justified, reject only when we must, and for God's sake let us not rush violently and enthusiastically to premature conclusions!

The Practical Man, with levity — Why not establish a Society for the dispassionate discussion of everything discussable and the quiet questioning of everything questionable? It might be styled briefly S.D.D.D.Q.Q.Q. or, still better S.D^3Q^3, and, I believe, it would revolutionise knowledge.

Professor — I have always revered the Practical Man in spite of his gross and numerous limitations. Why not? Let us at least try.

Scientist, doubtfully — What would be the conditions of discussion?

Professor — Put it like this. We agree to consider no question closed, not even gravitation, nor the motion of the earth, nor the necessity and beneficence of the British Government.

All, in chorus — The Press Act, Professor, the Press Act! Section 124A! Section 121! We shall be transported, we shall get forfeited!

Professor, reluctantly, but obviously alarmed by the outcry — Well, well, we will reserve the question. There are plenty of others, there are plenty of others. To proceed. If the Mystic advances sound arguments to show that the devil habitually swallows the moon, even that we shall not lightly declare impossible. What do we know about the tastes of the devil, supposing he exists, or the eatability of the moon? I have never tasted it, nor has the Scientist. The Mystic and the devil may have.

Scientist, uneasily — Confound it, Professor!

Professor — No, I insist. Absolute tolerance, absolute openness of mind are essential to the success of the experiment. Whoever interrupts, whoever refuses to discuss an argument, whoever contradicts or says, Absurd! whoever substitutes assertion for reasoning, whoever loses his temper or allows his voice to rise to a higher key, whoever tries to make out that he has conquered in debate because he has appealed to a polysyllable such as hallucination, coincidence, subconscious cerebration, whoever quotes an authority for his opinion, will be instantly called to order by the Chairman and, if he repeats the offence, condemned to silence for the evening.

All are silent and gaze awe-stricken at the Professor.

The Practical Man — Hang it, Professor! Where will be the fun? I quite looked forward to the Scientist throwing chemicals at the Mystic and immediately withering into something infrahuman under the onslaught of the Mystic's *mohanam, stambhanam* and *maranam*. Don't interfere with human nature.

Professor — We will provide the fun, but let it be human, civilised fun. We must curb the excess of our original simian ancestors in our humour.

Mystic — You can't, Professor, and we shouldn't. It is a perpetual and valuable part of ananda, the joy of existence.

Scientist — It can't work. We are not gods or angels.

Professor — There you go making assumptions! How do you know we are not? Let us at least make the experiment. Obviously, with only the four of us, the circle will be incomplete. We must have other human specimens. A Jurist now, a Priest, a Historian, a Sanscritist, a Doctor, an Attorney, and a few others that may occur to me. I know where all these reasoning animals are to be found. Then, a live Extremist would be an acquisition. I know one. He is amiable, pleasing and warranted not to bite, though his views are fiery and his language, when excited, apt to be sulphurous.

The Practical Man — No use for him, if we are not to question the beneficence of the British Government.

Professor — He will complete us. We must be a representative society. Besides, Extremism, I understand, has its positive aspects.

Scientist — Will it be safe?

Professor, coldly, haughtily & severely, — We are not cowards. (*more mildly*) I can guarantee that, though he talks sometimes like a bomb, he never made one. It is agreed, gentlemen. (*rising enthusiastically*) Today creates an epoch in the history of mankind; Truth lays the foundation-stone of her final temple.

Mystic — Professor, Professor, for God's sake, let us not rush violently and enthusiastically to premature conclusions!

At the Society's Chambers

Professor — Gentlemen, I believe we are here in full strength. It is gratifying to find so much enthusiasm still abroad for the dispassionate acquisition of knowledge. I trust it is not a short-lived fervour; I trust we shall not soon have to declare our society extinct from constitutional inability to form a quorum.

Jurist — I believe this is a society for the discussion of all things discussable and the discovery of all things discoverable. Am I right in my supposition?

Professor — Your definition is rather wide, but it may pass. What then?

Jurist — In that case I suggest that the first subject we should discuss is whether this society should come into existence at all and should not rather adjourn its birth sine die.

A silence

Professor — Gentlemen, I think we should not be damped. Even this should not damp us. I believe it is nothing worse than the Indian spirit of scepticism — not malaria, not inertia, not even spiritual cramp. Courage, let us not shirk even this dangerous inquiry.

Jurist — Let me explain. My suggestion is dictated not by the spirit of academical doubt, but by the more mundane love of safety. Have you reflected, Professor, that there are other dangers abroad besides the chance of automatic dissolution? Is it not conceivable that we may be dissolved as an association for unlawful objects or arrested as a gang of dacoits?

Professor — Good Heavens! My dear sir! And yet — I don't know. As a member of a society pledged to regard truth from all possible directions, I cannot rule it out as an impossibility. But if we have none but unobjectionable members —

Jurist — Pardon me, Professor. How do you know who is an unobjectionable member or who is objectionable? As a Professor you are acquainted with hundreds of students. It is possible one of them might stray in here of an evening. He might be arrested. He might turn approver. And what would his statement be? Why, that Prof. So & So was leader of a gang of political dacoits, that the Society met at such a number in Harrison Road, that they were accustomed to arrange their nefarious enterprises there under cover of intellectual conversation and that you were the receiver of the booty. And then there would be the Andamans where you would probably get more physical exercise in one week than you have done in all your life, Professor. There are other joys, Professor, the whipping triangle, handcuffs, laphsy. Is it worth while?

The Professor gazes in horrified silence at the Jurist, then with a flash of hope — He might recant.

Jurist — That is only an off chance. I would not rely on it. You see he would be laying himself open to an unanswerable accusation of perjury, while, if he persisted in his story, he would be perfectly safe.

Professor — But surely some corroboration, some documentary evidence —

Jurist — Certainly; why not? He would point out your house; it would be proved that it was your house. He would identify these rooms, it would be proved that we all met here. Then, Professor, do you never use the word *kaj* in your letters? Do you scrupulously avoid any reference to *bibaha*?

Professor — It is quite possible I may use both.

Jurist — And yet you say, where is the documentary evidence? One such letter coinciding with your absence from Calcutta! The Andamans, Professor, the Andamans!

Professor — I will scrupulously avoid both in future.

Jurist — There are other words in the Bengali language. In any case, if you escaped any special charge, you would be sure to be rearrested on the general charge of conspiracy.

Professor (*exasperated*) — Proofs, sir, the proofs!

Jurist — Quite easy. We shall merely have to prove association. Have you no student who may be either mixed up or liable to be suspected of being mixed up in a dacoity or a conspiracy?

Professor — Association for a criminal object, sir!

Jurist — That could be assumed from the closeness of your intimacy. The burden of proving your association innocent would then fall upon you. I challenge you to prove your association even with me innocent. All you can prove is that your other acquaintances did not know its criminal object.

Professor — I shall keep a diary of all my words and actions.

Jurist — It could easily be shown that it was kept with an eye to this contingency. Do not do it, Professor. You might put in things unknown to you which would be damning evidence against you in the hands of a skilful lawyer. If many names of suspects occurred in it, it would be itself the basis of his case and the keystone of his theory.

The Professor collapses.

Jurist — In any case you would have a year or more in hajut. Do you know what hajut is like, Professor? There would be laphsy there too; there would be the joys of solitary confinement; you would have to sit for hours on your haunches, to which you are not accustomed; there would be parades of various kinds; warders with boots to whom you are supposed, I believe, to salaam; daily physical researches on yourself in a nude condition. To the last rapture I do not object; but you, Professor, are constitutionally modest.

A silence

Jurist — Gentlemen, allow me again. I seem to have disconcerted and appalled this nascent society. It was far from my intention. The case I have put is an extreme and highly hypothetical one. My object is to put you on your mettle and induce you to adopt all reasonable precautions.

The Practical Man — We can be careful to exclude detectives.

Jurist — My dear sir! The very way to invite suspicion. The police would first learn the existence of a society. On inquiry they would find out that special care was taken to exclude detectives. We would have only ourselves to thank for the house-search and arrests that would follow.

Professor, reviving — I would recommend paying a member of the C.I.D. to attend our meetings.

The Extremist, scornfully — Why only one, Professor? Why not the whole damned department?

Professor — My dear Biren, pray take care of your words. They are highly irregular and seditious and may bring about your forfeiture under the Press Act. No, not all. There is such a thing as moderation. Besides, your proposal is as extravagant as your expressions. Do you realise that it would amount to subsidising one third of the literate population of India?

Jurist — Such an extraordinary procedure would attract suspicion. It might be thought you were a particularly adroit, ingenious and hardened conspirator using this apparent frankness to cover up your nefarious secret operations. What are the declared objects of the Society?

Professor — Self-improvement —

Jurist — A very dangerous term. Pray drop it.

Professor — The discovery of truth —

Scientist — I object. Truth is a highly explosive substance. I am not sure that the police would not be justified in carrying it away as an incriminating document along with the Gita and Seeley's Expansion of England.

Professor — And discussion and question on all questionable things, subjects or persons.

Extremist, unpleasantly — Take care! That is obviously an innuendo, reference, allusion or metaphor intended or calculated to bring the Government into contempt or hatred.

Professor, innocently — Good Lord, so it is! (*in despair*) We'll have to give it up.

Jurist — Why not add a second object, to present and offer addresses of loyalty and depute congratulatory deputations to high officials on every occasion possible or impossible? That, I think, would cure everything.

He sits back triumphantly and invites admiration.

Applause.

Professor — A very attractive proposal. Dear me, this is very attractive.

Extremist, wrathfully — There is such a thing as truth and self-respect.

Professor, warmly — Truth? Are we not loyal? Do you dare to say we are Anarchists?

Extremist — I decline membership —

Professor — Well, Biren, well! Perhaps you had better. But you can drop in and have a cup of tea whenever we meet. What do you say? I think I too should have made my mark as a political leader!

He beams seraphically on the society, which breaks up with shouts of Rule, Britannia!

Things Seen in Symbols [1]

There are Four who are Beyond and they rule the mighty game of evolution. It is they who build the universe with their thoughts and imaginations. Vishnu or Virat put them in front each in turn, and they govern each a cycle. All the sons of immortality come forth from them and return to them, all the children of earth are their portions. One stands in front, the others incarnate to help him. They are God Himself in His fourfold manifestation. Once in each chaturyuga they come down together, — the chaturvyuha, Srikrishna, Balarama, Pradyumna, Aniruddha.

Srikrishna contains all the others and puts them out from His being. He is Ishwara, Shiva, Brahma, Vishnu. Lordship is His manifestation, Might and Wisdom are His gunas. Balarama is the second Power. Force is His manifestation; strength and wrath are His attributes. Pradyumna is the third Power. Love is His manifestation; sweetness and delight are His attributes. Aniruddha is the fourth Power. Desire is His manifestation; bodily enjoyment and worldly reason are His attributes.

Srikrishna is the Brahmin served by the Kshatriya. He has the divine knowledge and uses His might under the guidance of the Knowledge. Balarama is the Kshatriya. He allows Srikrishna in Him to guide His strength and wrath, but He does not guide them Himself, He enjoys them. He is Rudra. Pradyumna is the Vaishya. He is for dana, prema, karuna. He gives Himself to men and buys their love in exchange. He is the universal philanthropist. He is the sweet and throbbing heart in things. Aniruddha is the Sudra. He is the kamin, the bhogin, the scientist, the user of material means, the democrat, the leveller.

The Satya is full of Srikrishna; it is the golden Age when men are full of might and wisdom. The Treta is full of Balarama; the Chakravarti Raja is the incarnation of the Treta; it is full of great wars and mighty sacrifices. The Dwapara is full of Pradyumna; He prepares in the Dwapara the love which supports men through the Kali. Aniruddha, the Sudra, reigns in the Kali; He breaks the ancient moulds, He shatters to pieces the achar; He questions everything, destroys everything, levels everything, rebuilds everything. He is a Sudra and has the passion for work and service; He puts off lordship in order to become the divine Slave of humanity.

For each of Them is not simple in Himself, but contains the other three and their attributes; only His own are usually foremost. Each is not a part but God Himself in His fullness. They are not different, but the same, Four who are One, One who is Four. That one is Srikrishna.

Things Seen in Symbols [2]

What is dhyana? Ordinarily, when a man is absorbed in thought and dead to all that is going on around him, he is supposed to be in dhyana. Or concentration of the whole thought on a single object to the exclusion of every other, is called dhyana. But neither of these ideas corresponds exactly with the whole truth; they represent only particular stages of the process of meditation. Dhyana is a wide term covering a number of processes which rise from ordinary attention to nirvikalpa samadhi.

———

The distinguishing feature of dhyana is that it puts out a steady force of knowledge on the object of knowledge. When this process is successful, when there is a steady demand on the object to give up its secret, it is called by Patanjali sanyama. Even when it is only partially successful, it is still dhyana.

———

Ordinary thought is not dhyana. Ordinary thought is simply the restlessness of the mind playing with associations, speculations, trains of reasoning. In order to have dhyana the restlessness of the mind must be utterly stilled, the intellect must become like a calm and waveless sea, not a movement, not a ripple on its surface.

———

The principle is that all knowledge is in oneself, in the knower. The knower is in myself; he is also in the object of knowledge, say, a stone or a tree. By dhyana the veil of ignorance, the chaos of misunderstandings which interfere between the knower in me and the knower in the tree or the stone is removed; we enter into relation with each other; we are in Yoga.

All knowledge about the stone is in the stone itself; in dhyana it comes into my mind. When it comes into my mind, the knower in me says, "It is true, the knowledge is in me also and I see it there". Or if there is a mistake, he says, "There is a mistake, the mind is interfering; the knowledge is in me and I see it otherwise".

———

The whole world is one. The knower in the stone and the knower in myself are one; I am He. It is God in me, God in the stone. The knowledge in me and the knowledge in the stone are one; I am That. It is God in me, God in the stone. The stone is an object of knowledge; I am also an object of knowledge. These two also are one, God as myself, God as the stone. God is the only object of knowledge, there is no other. God is the only knower, there is no other. God is the knowledge also. Jnata, jnanam, jneyam, they are one.

———

The mind creates difference. When there is disturbance on the waters, there are many waves, and each wave cries, "I am I, I am I; you are you; we are different." When the sea sinks to rest, the waves as they go inward, no longer cry, "I am I", but "I am He." The still and waveless sea, that is a delightful and beautiful condition. The stormy, myriad crested Ocean, that also is a very beautiful and delightful condition. Only let the waves have the knowledge, let them say, "I am I for the sake of delight; you are you for the sake of delight. But also you are I, I am you. And both you and I are He." That is jnanam, that is Yoga.

———

The still sea is a condition, and the thousand waves are a condition. He who is the sea, is more than disturbance, more than stillness. He contains All. He is All. Even the infinite sea is only one of His manifestations.

The Real Difficulty

The real difficulty is always in ourselves, not in our surroundings. There are three things necessary in order to make men invincible, Will, Disinterestedness and Faith. We may have a will to emancipate ourselves, but sufficient faith may be lacking. We may have faith in our ultimate emancipation, but the will to use the necessary means may be wanting. And even if there are will and faith, we may use them with a violent attachment to the fruit of our work or with passions of hatred, blind excitement or hasty forcefulness which may produce evil reactions. For this reason it is necessary, in a work of such magnitude, to have resort to a higher Power than that of mind and body in order to overcome unprecedented obstacles. This is the need of sadhana.

God is within us, an Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient Power; we & He are of one nature and, if we get into touch with Him and put ourselves in His hands, He will pour into us His own force and we shall realise that we too have our share of godhead, our portion of omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience. The path is long, but self-surrender makes it short; the way is difficult, but perfect trust makes it easy.

Will is omnipotent, but it must be divine will, selfless, tranquil, at ease about results. "If you had faith even as a grain of mustard-seed," said Jesus, "you would say to this mountain, Come, & it would come to you." What was meant by the word Faith, was really Will accompanied with perfect sraddha. Sraddha does not reason, it knows; for it commands sight and sees what God wills, and it knows that what is God's will, must happen. Sraddha, not blind but using sight spiritual, can become omniscient.

Will is also omnipresent. It can throw itself into all in whom it comes into contact and give them temporarily or permanently a portion of its power, its thought, its enthusiasms. The thought of a solitary man can become, by exercise of selfless and undoubting Will, the thought of a nation. The will of a single hero can breathe courage into the hearts of a million cowards.

This is the sadhana that we have to accomplish. This is the condition of our emancipation. We have been using an imperfect will with imperfect faith and imperfect disinterestedness. Yet the task we have before us is not less difficult than to move a mountain.

The force that can do it, exists. But it is hidden in a secret chamber within us and of that chamber God holds the key. Let us find Him and claim it.

Art

All Art is interpretation. Creation is a misnomer; nothing in this world is created, all is manifested. All exists previously in the mind of the Knower. Art may interpret that which is already manifest or was manifest at one time, or it may interpret what will be manifest hereafter. It may even be used as one of the agencies in the manifestation. A particular type of face and figure may be manifested in the work of a popular artist and in a single generation the existing type of face and figure in the country may change and mould itself to the new conception. These things are there in the type in the causal world with which our superconscious selves are perpetually in touch; they manifest in the psychical and become part of our thought. That thought we put out into the material world and there it takes shape and body, as movements, as institutions, as poetry, Art and Knowledge, as living men and women. Man creates his world because he is the psychic instrument through whom God manifests that which He had previously arranged in Himself. In this sense Art can create the past, the present and the future. It can remanifest that which was and has passed away, it can fix for us that which is, it can prophesy that which will be.

Its normal sphere, however, is interpretation of a less pregnant and forceful kind. Here too, there are three things which it can interpret in the object it selects, the causal part or thing in itself; the psychical part or its passing imaginations, phases, emotions; or the physical part, the outward appearance, incident or movement as our eyes see them. Indian Art attaches itself to the two higher interpretations, European to the two lower. They meet in the middle term of Art, the imaginative and emotional; but each brings with it the habits of vision, the conventions, the mastering movement and tendency of the soul downward to earth or upward to heaven, born of their main preoccupation, so that even here, though they meet on common ground, they remain diverse and unreconciled.

In dealing with the form the question between them is Shall I reproduce what the eye sees or shall I reproduce what the soul sees? The lower type of European Art is content with reproducing what the eye sees. This it calls realism and fidelity to Nature — narrowing Nature to the limited confines of the materially sensible. The reproduction, of course, is not a real reproduction, but only an approximation within the limitations imposed by the canvas, the brush and the paintbox. It is really as close an imitation as our instruments will allow, absolute fidelity being rarely possible. This style of Art had perhaps its utility, but now that we have photographs and can put colour into the photographs, its separate field is in danger of being taken from it.

A higher European Art takes imitation of the form as its basis, but its nobler objective is not the imitation of form, but the imitation of emotion. The artist tries to see and recover on canvas not only the body, but so much of the feeling as the body can for the moment express. This may often be a great deal. In certain moments of powerful feeling or critical action a great deal of our psychical selves may come out in the eyes, the face, the gesture, the pose. This the artist imitates. He not only shows us an object or an incident, but he fixes on the canvas a moment in the soul-life of the object. The habitual mood also stamps itself to a great extent on the face and certain traits of character betray themselves in expression and feature. These too the imitative artist transfers to the canvas. When not exaggerated or theatrical, this kind of art can be strong, effective and dramatic. But it has serious limitations. So much of the inner truth as the outward form interprets, this Art interprets. Its interpretation is secondhand, its vision derived and unable to go beyond its authority.

———

A still higher reach is attained by imaginative European Art. Imagination, according to the European idea, is creative, not interpretative. What is really meant is that the imaginative artist transfers something that belongs to himself into the object of his study, some fancy that has flashed across or some idea that has mastered his mind. Either he reads it into his subject by unconscious transference or he deliberately uses his subject as a mere excuse for putting his fancy or his idea into line and colour. The artist is interpreting himself, not his subject. This egoistic Art has often a very high value and some of the best European work has been done in this kind. More rarely his imaginative sympathy enables him to catch a glimpse of the thing itself hidden in the form. His imagination usually plays with it and prevents the vision from being true in all its parts, but he is able to do work of the highest attractiveness, vigour or artistic beauty.

———

In all these kinds the European binds himself by the necessity of reproducing the actual outward form imposed by material Nature. He is a bondsman to form and such do not attain to that spiritual freedom which is the first condition of the sight spiritual. When he tries to interpret the thing in itself, he degenerates usually into allegory. Recently the Impressionist school in Europe have tried to break the fetters of the form; they have insisted that what one really sees in an object is not the rounded, solid material form but something rarer and different. In reality, they are groping their way towards an attempt at seeing and interpreting something hidden in the object, something the soul sees before the eye can catch it. Ignorant of the way, they seldom rise beyond a striking and fantastic imagination, but sometimes an inspired eye catches the true vision.

———

The Indian begins at the other end. He sees the thing itself either by sukshmadrishti, the soul-sight, or by dhyana, a spiritual union with the object studied in which the truth it expresses dawns on the mind by the process of revelation. This he transfers to canvas by letting his inspired and informed Will guide the pencil and the brush instead of using his intellect or merely technical means to find the best way of expression. He uses technique with power, but does not rely on it chiefly. The body he paints is the one which will in every part of it express the thing itself, not the actual material body which largely conceals it. When he descends into the psychical part and seeks to express imaginations, emotions, or passing phases, he carries his method with him. Not content with expressing as much of the feeling as the actual body reveals, he sees the emotion in its fullness by dhyana or soul-sight and forces the body into a mould fit for its absolute expression. He sees the soul and paints it or he sees the heart or mind and paints it. He sees and can, if he will, paint the body merely. But usually he does not will it.

Part Seven

Epistles / Letters From Abroad

Sri Aurobindo wrote the first three of these fictional letters in Bengal in 1910. They were published in 1920–22 without his editorial supervision; they are reproduced here from his manuscripts. He wrote the last three letters in Pondicherry in 1910 or 1911 but never published them; they are reproduced here from his manuscripts.

Epistles from Abroad

I

Dearly beloved,

You, my alter ego, my second existence, now sitting comfortably at home and, doubtless, reading the romantic fictions of the *Empire* by the light of heavily-priced kerosine; I, who roam uncomfortably in foreign climes, sighing for the joys of the Press Act and the house-search; these faces, white and unfamiliar, that surround me; these miles of soulless brick and faultless macadam, the fitting body for a point-device and dapper civilisation which has lost sight of grandeur, beauty and nobility in life, — are we, I wonder, flitting visions of a nightmare that passes or real men and women made in God's image? Was life always so trivial, always so vulgar, always so loveless, pale and awkward as the Europeans have made it? This well-appointed comfort oppresses me; this perfection of machinery will not allow the soul to remember that it is not itself a machine.

Is this then the end of the long march of human civilisation, this spiritual suicide, this quiet petrifaction of the soul into matter? Was the successful business-man that grand culmination of manhood toward which evolution was striving? After all, if the scientific view is correct, why not? An evolution that started with the protoplasm and flowered in the ourang-outang and the chimpanzee, may well rest satisfied with having created hat, coat and trousers, the British Aristocrat, the American capitalist and the Parisian Apache. For these, I believe, are the chief triumphs of the European enlightenment to which we bow our heads. For these Augustus created Europe, Charlemagne refounded civilisation, Louis XIV regulated society, Napoleon systematised the French Revolution. For these Goethe thought, Shakespeare imagined and created, St. Francis loved, Christ was crucified. What a bankruptcy! What a beggary of things that were rich and noble!

Europe boasts of her science and its marvels. But an Indian cannot content himself with asking like Voltaire, as the supreme question, "What have you invented?" His glance is at the soul; it is that into which he is accustomed to inquire. To the braggart intellect of Europe he is bound to reply, "I am not interested in what you know, I am interested in what you are. With all your discoveries and inventions, what have you become? Your enlightenment is great, — but what are these strange creatures that move about in the electric light you have installed and imagine that they are human?" Is it a great gain for the human intellect to have grown more acute and discerning, if the human soul dwindles?

But Science does not admit the existence of soul. The soul, it says, is only an organised republic of animalcules, and it is in the mould of that idea Europe has recast herself; — that is what the European nations are becoming, organised republics of animalcules, — very intelligent, very methodical, very wonderful talking and reasoning animalcules, but still animalcules. Not what the race set out to be, creatures made in the image of the Almighty, gods that having fallen from heaven remember and strive to recover their heritage. Man in Europe is descending steadily from the human level and approximating to the ant and the hornet. The process is not complete but it is progressing apace, and if nothing stops the debacle, we may hope to see its culmination in this twentieth century. After all our superstitions were better than this enlightenment, our social abuses less murderous to the hopes of the race than this social perfection.

It is a very pleasant inferno they have created in Europe, a hell not of torments but of pleasures, of lights and carriages, of balls and dances and suppers, of theatres and cafés and music halls, of libraries and clubs and Academies, of National Galleries and Exhibitions, of factories, shops, banks and Stock Exchanges. But it is hell all the same, not the heaven of which the saints and the poets dreamed, the new Jerusalem, the golden city. London and New York are the holy cities of the new religion, Paris its golden Paradise of Pleasure.

It is not with impunity that men decide to believe that they are animals and God does not exist. For what we believe, that we become. The animal lives by a routine arranged for him by Nature; his life is devoted to the satisfaction of his instincts bodily, vital and emotional, and he satisfies himself mechanically by a regular response to the working of those instincts. Nature has regularised everything for him and provided the machinery. Man in Europe arranges his own routine, invents his own machinery, and adds to the needs of which he is a slave, the intellectual. But there will soon be no other difference.

System, organisation, machinery have attained their perfection. Bondage has been carried to its highest expression, and from a passion for organising external liberty Europe is slaying her spiritual freedom. When the inner freedom is gone, the external liberty will follow it, and a social tyranny more terrible, inquisitorial and relentless than any that caste ever organised in India, will take its place. The process has already begun. The shell of external liberty remains, the core is already being eaten away. Because he is still free to gratify his senses and enjoy himself, the European thinks himself free. He does not know what teeth are gnawing into the heart of his liberty.

Still in his inmost self he has an uneasy consciousness of something terribly, vitally wrong, and therefore he is turning more and more to Socialism among the thinking or cultured, among the unthinking to Anarchism. The Socialist hopes, by accepting, swiftly fulfilling and thoroughly organising the inevitable tyranny of society, at least to recover leisure and create a breathing space in which to realise the dignity, beauty and repose of the god in man. The Anarchist sees in Government and Society the enemy of the race and gropes for the bomb and the revolver to recover individual liberty and destroy the tyranny of the majority. Both are guilty of the same fallacy, the mechanical fallacy. One hopes to liberate man by perfecting machinery, the other by destroying it.

And yet the true secret is ready to their hand in the formula of the great Revolution. Two ideas of that formula Europe has pursued with some eagerness, Liberty and Equality; but she has totally rejected the third and most necessary, Brotherhood. In its place she has erected the idol of her heart, Machinery, and called it Association; for Association without Brotherhood is merely Machinery. Yet what can be more evident than that the French thinkers were perfectly guided in their selection of the three things necessary for an ideal associated happiness? It is only Love that can prevent the misuse of Liberty; it is only Brotherhood which can make Equality tolerable.

II

Friend and brother,

I am as yet among the unregenerate. Instead of my eccentric notions of life changing under the pressure of victorious European enlightenment, they seem to harden and fix their hold. Here I am in Paris, the centre of civilisation, and I am still the same darkskinned barbarian you knew. Neither the complexion of my face nor the complexion of my thoughts has improved. I still believe in God and Vedanta, in India and impossibilities. Man is still to my eyes divine and not an animal. I believe in the soul and am afflicted with the imagination that it has a past and a future, that it neither came ready made into the world out of the mother's womb nor will disintegrate at the end whether on the pyre or in the coffin. That our first stage is an embryo and our last worms or ashes, is a creed I hold to be still unproved and unprovable. I believe that nothing in this world is made, but everything grows; that body cannot create soul and that a mass of cells is not Buddha or Napoleon. And if you ask for my ground of belief, I shall still refuse to base it on the logical reason, which can only argue and cannot see, and I shall give the answer of the visionary, the victim of hallucinations, that I have seen my soul and talked face to face with my Creator.

There are excellent logicians in Paris. One of them spoke the other day of the power of telepathy and, while admitting it to be a fact, argued that to develop the power would be to go back to the savage; it would be a denial of Science and civilisation. The civilised man sees with his eyes, talks with his tongue; to see with the soul, mind to talk with mind is a thing weird and barbarous. That is what the logical reason is. It can support the grossest absurdity under the sun and yet satisfy its user. The savage had the power, the civilised man has renounced it as an encumbrance or a superstition; to develop the power is to go back from civilisation to the savage. The argument is undeniable. Whether it is not worth while, in this respect, to go back to the savage, is a question my logical friend refuses to discuss. To entertain it would be an insult to civilisation. Another gentleman of equal clarity poohpoohed the idea of considering the existence of God and immortality on the ground that the very motion would be retrograde. "It would be going back," he cried, "it would be going back. We have got rid of God; we have finished with the superstition of immortality. Will you deny the progress of enlightenment? My friend, let these ghosts rest in their shadows." And nothing would induce him to give God a chance. Darwin and Huxley and Haeckel had settled the Creator's hash for Him; it was *res judicata*. It is wonderful how easily man tramples on one formula merely to bow reverently before another. Nature replaces God, Progress dethrones Immortality. Yet, in fact, these are merely different names for one thing in its varying aspects. Nature is God manifest in Matter; Progress is possible because the soul of man is immortal.

This talk wearies you. You would prefer perhaps that I should write of the municipality in Paris, the merits and defects of the sewer system, the latest plays at the theatres, a description of boulevard and café or the debates in the Chamber, or some hint as to whether I have made acquaintance with any of the French Academicians. "Plague take the fellow!" you will cry, "he is like the Englishman who marches about in the full panoply of Europe in the heats of a Calcutta summer; wherever he goes, he takes India with him." Pardon me, my friend; that is not wholly correct. I have forgotten for the time what a detective looks like. I no longer look round at every fifty yards to see how many policemen in plain clothes are following me. Dacoits and approvers are growing as far away from my mind as Titus Oates or Tiberius. I no longer pant to know our excellent Baikuntha Babu's latest blank question or withdrawn resolution in Bengal's new Parliament or what Bengal's only Maharajadhiraj thinks about English coolies. I have left India behind; I have not brought it with me.

But in the sense you mean, I have brought India with me, that which is eternal in India. Danton, when pressed to escape from the coming doom to Switzerland, answered, "One does not carry one's country away with one on the sole of one's shoes." That is the materialist's answer, to whom the body is all. No, one cannot carry it on the shoe-soles, but one can carry it in one's heart and one can carry it in one's soul. When I listen to the nightingale singing on English riverbank or garden-reaches or see the Seine flowing through the modern gaiety of Paris, I can hear again the manifold noise of the birds on an Indian morning and see rather Ganges flowing grandiose and leonine to her Eastern seas. The body is bound to its surroundings, but the heart exceeds them, and I carry the love of India with me even to the coldest climes. The soul is yet more free. It will be well when every Indian, instead of taking a waxlike stamp from his foreign surroundings, is able to carry India with him wherever he goes. For that will mean that India is destined to conquer and place her stamp upon the whole world.

III

Dear Biren,

Your list of questions is rather a long one. I will answer you in the mass rather than in detail; and chiefly I will attack two fallacies with which your letter teems, if I may use such an expression, and which lie at the root of your very disfavourable attitude. There are two Hinduisms; one which takes its stand on the kitchen and seeks its Paradise by cleaning the body; another which seeks God, not through the cooking pot and the social convention, but in the soul. The latter is also Hinduism and it is a good deal older and more enduring than the other; it is the Hinduism of Bhishma and Srikrishna, of Shankara and Chaitanya, the Hinduism which exceeds Hindusthan, was from of old and will be for ever, because it grows eternally through the aeons. Its watchword is not *kriya*, but *karma*; not *shastra*, but *jnanam*; not *achar*, but *bhakti*. Yet it accepts *kriya*, *shastra* and *achar*, not as ends to be followed for their own sake, but as means to perfect *karma, jnanam* and *bhakti*. *Kriya* in the dictionary means every practice which helps the gaining of higher knowledge such as the mastering of the breath, the repetition of the mantra, the habitual use of the Name, the daily meditation on the idea. By *shastra* it means the knowledge which regulates *karma*, which fixes the *kartavyam* and the *akartavyam*, that which should be done and that which should not, and it recognises two sources of that knowledge, — the eternal wisdom, as distinct from the temporary injunctions, in our ancient books and the book that is written by God in the human heart, the eternal and *apaurusheya* Veda. By *achar* it understands all moral discipline by which the heart is purified and made a fit vessel for divine love. There are certain *kriyas*, certain rules of *shastra*, certain details of *achar*, which are for all time and of perpetual application; there are others which are temporary, changing with the variation of *desh, kal* and *patra*, time, place and the needs of humanity. Among the temporary laws the cookingpot and the lustration had their place, but they are not for all, nor for ever. It was in a time of calamity, of contraction under external pressure that Hinduism fled from the inner temple and hid itself in the kitchen.

The higher and truer Hinduism is also of two kinds, sectarian and unsectarian, disruptive and synthetic, that which binds itself up in the aspect and that which seeks the All. The first is born of *rajasic* or *tamasic* attachment to an idea, an experience, an opinion or set of opinions, a temperament, an attitude, a particular guru, a chosen Avatar. This attachment is intolerant, arrogant, proud of a little knowledge, scornful of knowledge that is not its own. It is always talking of the *kusanskars*, superstitions, of others and is blind to its own; or it says, "My guru is the only guru and all others are either charlatans or inferior," or, "My temperament is the right temperament and those who do not follow my path are fools or pedants or insincere"; or "My Avatar is the real God Himself and all the others are only lesser revelations"; or "My ishta devata is God, the others are only His partial manifestations." When the soul rises higher, it follows by preference its own ideas, experiences, opinions, temperament, guru, ishta, but it does not turn an ignorant and exclusive eye upon others. "There are many paths," it cries, "and all lead equally to God. All men, even the sinner and the atheist, are my brothers in sadhana and the Beloved is drawing them each in His own way to the One without a second." But when the full knowledge dawns, I embrace all experiences in myself, I know all ideas to be true, all opinions useful, all experiences and attitudes means and stages in the acquisition of universal experience and completeness, all gurus imperfect channels or incarnations of the one and only Teacher, all ishtas and Avatars to be God Himself.

That is what Ramakrishna taught by His life and sadhana and therefore is He the Avatar of the age, the One who prepares the future of humanity. But there is a danger of turning Him into the guru of a sect, the incarnate God of a dogmatic religion, to stultify His own life and teachings by making Him the object of a narrow attachment, an intolerant reverence, a sectarian worship. That must be avoided. It is the great curse which attends the organisation of religion. Let us have done with sects and Churches and worship God only.

The destruction of bondage, the realisation of freedom, the trampling upon our fetters, that is the first need of the future. It was to give mukti that Ramakrishna came, not to impose a new bondage. Therefore was Vivekananda His Apostle to the Gentiles, a man who in all things asserted freedom. The soul of Hinduism languishes in an unfit body. Break the mould that the soul may live. Is it not the first teaching of Yoga to destroy the dehatmak buddhi, the blindness that identifies the soul with its temporary body? If the body were young, adaptable, fit, the liberated soul might use it, but it is decrepit, full of ill health and impurity. It must be changed, not by the spirit of Western iconoclasm which destroys the soul with the body, but by national Yoga.

Letters from Abroad

IV

Dear Biren,

The idea that the Europeans have organised enjoyment just as the Hindus have organised asceticism, is a very common superstition which I am not bound to endorse merely because it is common. Say rather that the Europeans have systematised feverishness and the Hindus universalised inertia and mendicancy. The appearances of things are not the things themselves, nor is a shadow always the proof of a substance... I admit that the Europeans have tried hard to organise enjoyment. Power, pleasure, riches, amusement are their gods and the whirl of a splendid & active life their heaven. But have they succeeded? I think that nowhere is life less truly enjoyable than in brilliant and arrogant Europe. The naked African seems to me to be happier and more genuinely luxurious than the cultured son of Japhet.[1]

It is this very trying hard that spoils the endeavour. What a grotesque conception indeed is this of trying hard to be joyous! Delight, joyousness, ananda either are by nature or they do not exist; to be natural, to be in harmony with the truth of things is the very secret of bliss. The garden of Eden is man's natural abode and it is only because he wilfully chose to know evil that he was driven out of his paradise.

---

[1] *Another version of this opening:*
It is not for the first time that it has been brought home to me how much more confusing are the resemblances between opposites than the subtle distinctions between close kindred. You have heard that the Europeans have organised enjoyment, you know that my religion is to enjoy God without bondage in the manifest world no less than in Himself and you wonder at my condemnation of their culture.

V

Dear Biren,

I suspect that it is a malady of your intellect to demand figs from thistles and cry fie upon the thistle if it merely produces thorns. After all, would it not be a monotonous world that consisted only of roses and sweetmeats, virtue and success? Thorns have their necessity, grief has its mission, and without a part of sin, suffering and struggle heaven might not be so heavenly to the blest. I am not prepared even to deny a kind of beneficence to evil; I have sufficient faith in God's Love & Wisdom to believe that if evil [were] merely evil, it could not continue to exist.

I will tell you all the evil, — since we must use these inadequate terms, — that I think about Europe and then I will tell you what a great work I see it beating out with difficulty for man's ultimate good. That there should be much that is wrong and perverse, that there should even be an infinite corruption, in Europe and Asia at this moment, was, if you consider it, inevitable. It is the Age of Iron, not even thinly coated with gold, only splashed here and there with a counterfeit of the nobler metal. Kali at the lowest depth of one of his plumb descents, his eyes sealed, his ears deaf, his heart of bronze, his hunger insatiable, but his nerve relaxed and impotent, stumbles on through a self-created darkness with the marshlight and the corpselight for his guides, straining out of those blind orbs after an image of Power that he cannot seize. Time was when he dreamed of love and prated of humanity, but though he still mouths the words, he has forgotten the things. He groped too after wisdom; he has grasped only Science. By that Science he has multiplied comforts till comfort itself has grown uncomfortable; he has added machinery to machinery, convenience to convenience, till life is cumbered and hampered with appliances; and to this discomfortable luxury and encumbered efficiency he has given the name of civilisation. At present he hungers only after force and strength, but when he thinks he has laid his hands on them, it is Death instead that puts his sign on the seeker and impotence and sterility mock at him under the mask of a material power.

For my part I see failure written large over all the splendid and ostentatious achievements of Europe. Her costliest experiments, her greatest expenditure of intellectual and moral force have led to the swiftest exhaustion of creative activity, the completest bankruptcy of moral elevation and of man's once infinite hope. When one considers how many and swift her bankruptcies have been, the imagination is appalled by the discouraging swiftness of this motor ride to ruin. The bankruptcy of the ideas of the French Revolution, the bankruptcy of Utilitarian Liberalism, the bankruptcy of national altruism, the bankruptcy of humanitarianism, the bankruptcy of religious faith, the bankruptcy of political sincerity, the bankruptcy of true commercial honesty, the bankruptcy of the personal sense of honour, how swiftly they have all followed on each other or raced with each other for precedence and kept at least admirable pace. Only her manysided science with its great critical and analytical power and all the contrivances that come of analysis, is still living and keeps her erect. There remains that last bankruptcy yet to come, and when that is once over, what will be left? Already I see a dry rot begun in this its most sapful and energetic part. The firm materialism which was its life and protection, is beginning also to go bankrupt, and one sees nothing but craze and fantasy ready to take its place.

No, it is not in the stress of an intolerant patriotism that I turn an eye of disparagement upon Europe. The immediate past of these Western peoples I can admire more than I admire the immediate past of our Indian nations. It is their present that shocks my aspirations for humanity. Europe is full of the noise and the apparel of life, of its luxurious trappings, of a myriad-footed material clang and tread, but of that which supports life she is growing more and more empty. When they had less information, her people had wiser and stronger souls. They had a literature, a creative intellectual force, a belief, a religion good or bad, a light that led onwards, a fixed path. Now they have only hungers, imaginations, sentiments & passions. The hungers are made to look decent; they even disguise themselves & parade about as ideals and rights. The sentiments are deftly intellectualised, — some even care to moralise them superficially, but that is growing out of fashion. The imaginations are tricked out to look like reason and carefully placarded on the forehead, with the names of rationalism, science and enlightenment, though they are only a whirl of ephemeral theories when all is said and done. The passions are most decorously masked, well-furnished & lodged, sumptuously clothed. But a dress does not change truth and God is not deceived.

They criticise everything subtly rather than well, but can create nothing — except machines. They have organised society with astonishing success and found the very best way to spread comfort and kill their souls. Their system of government is a perpetual flux. Its past looks back to a yet corrupter aristocracy, its future sinks to anarchic dissolution, or at best rests in a tyrannical materialistic socialism which seeks to level all that is yet high to the grade of the artisan instead of making the artisan himself worthy of a throne. A thousand newspapers vulgarise knowledge, debase aesthetical appreciation, democratise success and make impossible all that was once unusual & noble. The man of letters has become a panderer to the intellectual appetites of a mob or stands aloof in the narrowness of a coterie. There is plenty of brilliance everywhere, but one searches in vain for a firm foundation, the power or the solidity of knowledge.[2] The select seek paradox in order to distinguish themselves from the herd; a perpetual reiteration of some startling novelty can alone please the crowd. Each favourite is like an actor from whom the audience expect from day to day the usual passion or the usual

---

[2] *The following passage was written on a loose sheet found separately from the notebook in which* Letters from Abroad *was written. It is probable that Sri Aurobindo wrote this passage with the intention of working it in here:*

But in this brilliance there is no permanence, in this curiosity there is no depth. Cleverness has replaced wisdom and men are more concerned to be original in minutiae than to secure their hold upon large & permanent truths. New theories chase each other across a confused & distracted field resonant with the clash of hustling & disjected details and the mind is not allowed to rest calmly upon long investigation or confirm farce. Paradox & novelty therefore thrive; but the select have an easily jaded appetite, the multitude are fickle and novelties have their hour. Therefore even the favourite palls. But these people have a great tamasic persistence of habit and a certain loyalty to established names; much that they read is from habit rather than enjoyment. Otherwise there would be no stability in this chaos of striking worthlessness and this meteor-dance of ephemeral brilliance. The very churches & chapels are now only the theatres of a habitual stage performance of portentous & unnecessary dullness. With the exception of a small minority full of a grotesque, superficial but genuine passion, nobody believes, nobody feels; opinion, convention, preference and habit are alive and call themselves religion, but the heart that loves God is not to be found. Only a few of the undeveloped are really religious, the castbacks and atavists of this European evolution.

For more than half a century the whole of Europe has not been able to produce a single poet of even secondary magnificence. One no longer looks for Shakespeare or Dante to return, but even Wordsworth or Racine have also become impossible. Hugo's flawed opulence, Whitman's formless plenty, Tennyson's sugared emptiness seem to have been the last poetic speech of modern Europe. If poetical genius appears, it is at once taken prisoner by the applauding coterie or the expectant multitude and, where it began, there it ends, enslaved in ignoble fetters, pirouetting perpetually for their pleasure round a single accomplishment. Of all literary forms the novel only has still some genius and even that is perishing of the modern curse of overproduction.

Learning and scholarship are unendingly active over the dead corpse of creative power as in Alexandria and with the

---

& purify an emerging truth. Everybody is in a hurry to generalise, to build immense conclusions upon meagre indications. No man but thinks he can perform the miracle of constructing the whole animal out of a single stray bone. But the result is more often a trick of intellectual legerdemain than any miracle of constructive knowledge. We in India think it better to rest calmly in our uncertainty than to clutch at premature conclusions — but the West is progressive & will no longer suffer so austere an eclipse of its brilliancy. No such rein shall be put on the galloping Pegasus of its scholastic & scientific fancy.

later Romans before the great darkness. Eccentricity and the hunting after novelty & paradox play in it over an ostentatious precision and accuracy. Yesterday's opinion is today exploded & discarded, new fireworks of theory, generalisation and speculation take the place of the old, and to this pyrotechnic rushing in a circle they give the name of progress. The possibility of a calm insight & wisdom seems to have departed from this brilliant mob of pushing, overactive intellects. Force there is, but force doomed to a rapid dissolution, of which the signs are already not wanting.

The moral nerve is equally relaxed. Immorality which does not know how to enjoy, impotence and dullness of the capacity for enjoyment masquerading as virtue, decorum & prudery covering a cesspool, the coarseness, appetite and rapid satiety of the imperial Romans combining in various proportions or associating on various terms with the euprepeia & looseness of the Greeks. But the Pagan virility whether united to Roman coarseness or Greek brilliance is only to be seen in a few extraordinary individuals. Society is cast in the biune mould of monogamy & prostitution. You will find such a Parisian who keeps his wife and mistress & frequents his State-licenced harlots as well, shocked & pained at the idea of polygamous Indians enjoying the same rights as the virtuous sons of Europe. Some are even afraid that the resurgence of Asia may end in the lowering of Western morals. There can then be a descent from as well as to Avernus! In a word, the whole of Europe is now a magnified Alexandria, brilliant forms with a perishing soul, feverish activity in imitation of the forms of health with no capital but the energy of the sickbed. One has to concede however that it is not altogether sterile, for all Europe & America pullulate with ever multiplying machinery.

VI

Dear Biren,

There are moments in the career of peoples, empires, continents, orders of things when the forces of life pause between a past vitality and a rapidly advancing decay, atrophy or dissolution. You have often heard me say this of our still persistent and reluctant mediaeval system in India and you have not wondered, but you are surprised when I give the same description of this vaunting and dominant Europe. Why? Because it is vaunting and dominant? I think so. There are two hypnotisms that work with an almost miraculous power upon men's minds, the suggestion of the habitually repeated word and the suggestion of the long-established or robustly accomplished fact. Men are almost entirely led or stayed by blind hopes or blind hopelessnesses. They are ever ready to cry "As it was yesterday, as it is now, so it shall be for ever," or to sigh "This thing is, has been, promises to be; how can I ever overcome it? In the centuries to come perhaps, but for me my limits are set and a wall has been built around me." My friend, the thing that looks so huge, mighty and impressive from without, wears a very different appearance when you look into its secret places and sound its walls and foundations. There are certain edifices, characteristic of European modernity, which lift a tremendous height and showy mass to the sky, — therefore they are called vulgarly skyscrapers, for are they not truly abhramliha? — but some houses very showily built have an ugly habit of descending suddenly in ruin without any previous warning either to their inmates or to the envious huggers of the plain in the vicinity. Then they are said to have been jerry-built. Now, modern European civilisation is just such a jerry-built skyscraper.

You have not misapprehended my meaning, though you wonder at it. These hollow wormeaten outsides of Hinduism crumbling so sluggishly, so fatally to some sudden and astonishing dissolution, do not frighten me. Within them I find the soul of a civilisation alive, though sleeping. I see upon it the consoling sentence of God, “Because thou hast believed in me, therefore thou shalt live and not perish.” Also, I look through the garnished outsides, gaudy, not beautiful, pretentious, not great, boastful, not secure, of this vaunting, aggressive, dominant Europe and I have seen written on the heart of its civilisation a sentence of death and mounting already from the heart to the brain an image of annihilation.

O this Europe with its noise, its childish vanity, its barbarous material pomp and show, its puerile clashing of sabres and rattling of wheels, its foam and froth of a little knowledge, its mailed fist, its heart of lead, its tremulous, crying nerves, its sinews all unstrung with a luxury and debauch it is not great enough of soul to indulge itself in with the true ancient Titanism. One notes too its fear of the darkness of death, its clinging to life, its morbid terror of pain, its braggart tongue and coward action, its insincerity, dishonesty, unfaith, its romantic altruistic dreams so soon ended and changing into a selfish and cynical proclamation of interest, power and pleasure, — one sees its increasing brain, its perishing will. It is not in noble figures that she presents herself to my imagination, this sole enlightened continent, it is not fear or respect that they awaken in my mind, these civilised superior nations. I see a little girl wearing a new frock and showing herself off to Mamma and all the world, unable to conceal her pride and delight in the thought that never was a frock so new and nice or a little girl so pretty, — never was and never will be! I think of a very small boy to whom somebody has given a very big cane — one can see him brandishing it, executing now and then an exultant wardance, tormenting, tyrannising over and plundering of their little belongings all the smaller boys he can get within his cane’s reach, not displeased if they show a little fight so that he can exhibit his heroic strength of arm by punishing them. And then he adorns himself with glittering Victoria crosses and calls on all his associates to admire his gallant and daredevil courage. Sometimes [it reminds me] of an old man, a man very early old, still strong in his decrepitude, garrulous, well-informed, luxurious, arrogant, intelligent, still busy toddling actively from place to place, looking into this, meddling in that, laying down the law dogmatically on every point under the sun, and through it all the clutch already nearing the brain, the shaking of the palsy already foreshadowed in tremulous movement and uncertain nerve. Very true, Europe, your frock is the cleanest and newest, for the present, your stick the biggest, your wardance a very frightening spectacle—frightening even to yourselves—with Krupp and Mauser and machine gun what else should it be, you are indeed for a while the robust, enlightened oldster you seem. But afterwards? Well, afterwards there will be a newer frock, a bigger stick, a wardance much more terrible and a real Titan grasping at the earth for his own instead of the sham.

Part Eight

Reviews

Sri Aurobindo wrote the first of these book-reviews in 1909 for publication in the *Karmayogin*. He wrote the others between 1915 and 1920 for publication in the *Arya*, a philosophical journal of which he was the editor and principal writer.

"Suprabhat"

THE PAPER *Suprabhat*, a Bengali monthly edited by Kumari Kumudini Mitra, daughter of Sj. Krishna Kumar Mitra, enters this month on its third year. The first issue of the new year is before us. We notice a great advance in the interest and variety of the articles, the calibre of the writers and the quality of the writing. From the literary point of view the chief ornament of the number is the brief poem *Duhkhabhisar*, by Sj. Rabindranath Tagore. It is one of those poems in which the peculiar inimitable quality of our greatest lyric poet comes out with supreme force, beauty and sweetness. Rabindra Babu has a legion of imitators and many have been very successful in catching up his less valuable mannerisms of style and verse, as is the manner of imitators all the world over. But the poignant sweetness, passion and spiritual depth and mystery of a poem like this, the haunting cadences subtle with a subtlety which is not of technique but of the soul, and the honeyladen felicity of the expression, these are the essential Rabindranath and cannot be imitated, because they are things of the spirit and one must have the same sweetness and depth of soul before one can hope to catch any of these desirable qualities. We emphasise this inimitableness because the legion of imitators we mention are doing harm to the progress of our poetry as well as to the reputation of their model and we would suggest to them to study this poem and realise the folly of their persistent attempt. One of the most remarkable peculiarities of Rabindra Babu's genius is the happiness and originality with which he has absorbed the whole spirit of Vaishnav poetry and turned it into something essentially the same and yet new and modern. He has given the old sweet spirit of emotional and passionate religion an expression of more delicate and complex richness voiceful of subtler and more penetratingly spiritual shades of feeling than the deep-hearted but simple early age of Bengal could know. The old Vaishnav *bhāva* — there is no English word for it, — was easily seizable, broad and strong. The *bhāva* of these poems is not translatable in any other language than that the poet has used, — a striking proof is the unsatisfactory attempt of the poet himself, recorded in another article in this issue, to explain in prose his own poem, *Sonar Tari*. But while the intellect tries in vain to find other intellectual symbols for the poet's meaning, the poetry seizes on the heart and convinces the imagination. These poems are of the essence of poetry and refuse to be rendered in any prose equivalent. Poetry is created not from the intellect or the outer imagination but comes from a deeper source within to which men have no means of access except when the divine part within seizes on the brain and makes it a passive instrument for utterance the full meaning of which the brain is unable at the moment to grasp. This is the divine mania and enthusiasm which the subtle spiritual discernment of Plato discovered to be the real meaning of what we call inspiration. And of this unattainable force the best lyrics of Rabindranath are full to overflowing.

The article *Shantiniketane Rabindranath* by Sj. Jitendranath Banerji is another feature of great interest. The writer has a good descriptive gift and the passages which describe the Shantiniketan are admirable; but the chief interest naturally centres in the conversation with the poet which is recorded with great fullness. The private talk of a rich and gifted nature with a power of conversational expression is always suggestive and we await with interest the future issue of this article. We hope Jitendra Babu will give us a fuller view of the remarkable educational experiment which this original mind is developing in the quiet shades of Bolpur. The brief hints given of the moral training and the method of education followed point to a system far in advance of the National Council of Education which is still tyrannised over by a tradition and method not only European but unprogressively European. A brief instalment of Sj. Aurobindo Ghose's *Karakahini* is also given which describes the identification parades of the Bomb Case, gives some glimpses of the approver Noren Gossain and deals with the personal character of some of the jail officials. *Nanak Charit* by Sj. Krishna Kumar Mitra, the first instalment of which is given in this issue, commands interest both by its subject and the name of its writer. The two chapters given are full of interesting details of Nanak's birth and childhood and promise an attractive biography of one of the greatest names in religious history. An article of minor importance is the continuation of Sj. Jadunath Chakrabarti's *Ekannabarti Paribar o Strishiksha*, which is of considerable merit. The author has seized on two of the great advantages of the joint family system, its ideal of a wider brotherhood and unity and its ample training in morale and capacity. *Dainik Bal* and the poem *Bodhan* seem to us to be failures, but there is no other feature of this number which is without merit or interest.

We have left to the last Dr. P. C. Ray's long article on "The Bengali Brain and its Misuse". It is a long indictment of past and present Bengal, covering sixteen pages of the magazine. Dr. P. C. Ray is a name which is already a pride to the nation to which he belongs and his deep scientific knowledge, original research and creativeness are one of the most conspicuous instances of that strong, acute and capable Bengali intellect which he admits to be inferior to none. Any article from his pen must be of great interest and cannot be without value. But it is one of the unfortunate results of the denationalising influence of our past education that a mind like Dr. Ray's should be without intellectual sympathy for the old national culture whose inherited tendencies his own character, life and achievements illustrate in so distinguished a manner. If it had not been for the past which Dr. P. C. Ray condemns, such noble types as the last fifty years of Bengal teems with, would not have been possible. As to the necessity of far-reaching changes in the future we do not greatly differ with the writer. The immediate past has been a period of contraction and the reservation of strength, the future will be a period of expansion and the liberation and expenditure of strength. The structure of the new age must necessarily differ from that of the old. But the spirit of the article is narrow and intolerant. It is couched in that general spirit of self-depreciation and indiscriminate fault-finding which was a characteristic of our people when national hope and energy were at their nadir. There are all the stock denunciations with which we were familiar before the recent resurgence. Such writings void of the note of hope, encouragement and energy, will not help a nation to rise but rather depress it and push it back into the past. Moreover, Dr. Ray makes the same mistake which European writers made when they condemned the Middle Ages wholesale because they were a period of contraction and not of expansion. That mistake has now been recognised in Europe and justice has been done to that which was praiseworthy as well as to that which was bad in the "Dark Ages". We in India are recovering from a similar error and if there are those who go to the opposite extreme and see nothing good outside the mediaeval Hindu culture and forms, the same thing happened in Europe and for the same reason, as a reaction from that very intolerance and sweeping denunciation which are the spirit of Dr. Ray's article. It cannot last any more than it lasted in Europe. Some of the strictures we hold to be too much at secondhand; especially in his criticisms of religion the writer seems to us to be wandering outside the province in which he can speak with authority. After all one must enter into the spirit of an age and civilisation before one can profitably criticise it, otherwise we miss the meaning of history and falsify its values. Nevertheless the article is ably written and should be studied as a complete expression of the Europeanised standpoint in looking at Indian problems. As to the present, Dr. Ray lays too much stress on the survivals of the end of the nineteenth century when the national consciousness touched bottom and ignores the youthful strength and energy which is preparing the twentieth.

"Hymns to the Goddess"[1]

THIS IS one of a series of publications by Mr. Arthur Avalon consisting of texts and translations of the Tantras. The hymns collected and translated in this volume are, however, taken from other sources besides the Tantras. Many of them are from the considerable body of devotional hymns attributed by tradition to the philosopher Shankaracharya, a few from the Mahabharata and the Puranas. Most are well-known *stotras* addressed to the various forms and names of the female Energy, Mother of the worlds, whose worship is an important part of that many-sided and synthetic whole which we call Hinduism.

The work of translation has been admirably done. The one slight defect is the preservation untranslated of Sanskrit words other than names which might well have been rendered into English. The translation is at once faithful, simple and graceful in style and rhythm. No English version can reproduce the majesty of the Sanskrit rhythms and the colour and power of the original, but within the limits of the possible the work could hardly have been better executed.

The translation is accompanied by brief but numerous notes. Mr. Avalon has made a principle of submission to the authority of the Hindu commentators and learned men whom he has consulted or taken as his guides in the study of the Tantra. He writes, "It is necessary to study the Hindu commentators and to seek the oral aid of those who possess the traditional interpretation of the Shastra. Without this and an understanding of what Hindu worship is and means, absurd mistakes are likely to be made. I have thus, in addition to such oral aid, availed myself of the Commentaries of Nilakantha on the Mahabharata, of Gopala

---

[1] Translated from the Sanskrit by Arthur and Ellen Avalon (Luzac and Co., London).

Chakravarti and Nagoji Bhatta on Chandi, and of Nilakantha on the Devibhagavata. As regards the Tantra, the great Sadhana Shastra, nothing which is both of an understanding and accurate character can be achieved without a study of the original texts undertaken with the assistance of the Tantric gurus and pundits who are the authorised custodians of its traditions." This careful scrupulousness is undoubtedly the right attitude for the work which Mr. Avalon has set himself, — to present to the English-reading public the philosophy and worship of the Tantra and the way of the Shaktas as they have been traditionally practised and understood in mediaeval and modern India. The method followed assures a sound basis free from the vagaries of learned ignorance and unfettered ingenuity which render so much of the work of European scholarship on Indian subjects fantastic, unsound and ephemeral. It cannot, we think, be the final attitude; an independent scrutiny of the ancient scriptures and forms of philosophy and religion is needed through the whole range of Indian thought and devotion both to recover their more ancient and original forms and principles often concealed by later accretions and crystallisings and to separate from them whatever is of imperishable worth and utility for the spiritual future of mankind. But meanwhile, and especially when a great and difficult subject is being for the first time brought forward in an adequate manner to general notice, the conservative method is undoubtedly the most desirable.

Commentators, however, even the most learned, are subject to error, as Mr. Avalon has had to recognise in his translation of the verse which declares that all women without exception are forms of the Great Mother. The commentator would have us believe that the phrase *striyaḥ samastāḥ sakalā jagatsu* means all women who possess the sixty-four arts and are devoted to their husbands, are modest, etc. The translator rightly rejects this conventional distortion of a great and profound philosophical truth; he translates "all women without exception throughout the world". We wonder whether the phrase does not admit of a different shade cutting deeper into the heart of things. The lines are,

Vidyāḥ samastās tava devi bhedāḥ
Striyaḥ samastāḥ sakalā jagatsu.

Is there not a hint of a distinction between the simple *bhedāḥ* and *sakalāḥ*? "All sciences, O Goddess, are different parts of thee, all women entirely in the worlds." The sense would then be that wherever the feminine principle is found in the living personality, we have the entire presence of the world-supporting maternal soul of the Divinity. The Devi with all her aspects, *kalās*, is there in the Woman; in the Woman we have to see Durga, Annapurna, Tara, the Mahavidyas, and therefore it is said in the Tantra, in the line quoted by Mr. Avalon in his preface, "Wherever one sees the feet of Woman, one should give worship in one's soul even as to one's guru." Thus this thought of the Shakta side of Hinduism becomes an uncompromising declaration of the divinity of woman completing the Vedantic declaration of the concealed divinity in man which we are too apt to treat in practice as if it applied only in the masculine. We put away in silence, even when we do not actually deny it, the perfect equality in difference of the double manifestation.

There are other instances in which the translators seem to us not to have escaped the misleading wiles of the commentator. We may instance the passage in the Hymn to Mahadevi in which the Goddess is described as being "both black and grey". "Smoke-coloured" would be a closer rendering of the epithet *dhūmra*. We are told in the note that it means "that which is with smoke, the sacrificial rite, here the knowledge of the rites". This is a scholastic interpretation which we cannot accept. The different hues of the Goddess are always psychologically symbolic and Mr. Avalon has himself an excellent passage to that effect in his Introduction. But, although occasionally provoking dissent, the notes are throughout interesting and instructive and often throw a new light on the implications of the text.

Mr. Avalon in his publications insists upon the greatness of the Tantra and seeks to clear away by a dispassionate statement of the real facts the cloud of misconceptions which have obscured our view of this profound and powerful system. We shall have occasion to deal with this aspect of his work when we come to speak of the Mahanirvana Tantra. In this volume he justifies against European prejudice the attribution of the feminine form and quality to God and against modern ignorance generally the image-worship which the Tantra in common with other Hindu systems makes part of the first stage in religious progress. On both points we are in general agreement with his standpoint, though we do not hold that religious evolution must necessarily follow the line laid down by the Tantra.

Human conceptions of the Divine divide themselves first into the worship of the formed and the aspiration towards the formless, secondly, into the adoration of the Qualified and the urge of the rarest spirits towards the Unqualified, the Absolute. For all these stages the Tantric worship and discipline provides. How can the Formless invest Himself with form, asks the religious rationalist. The universe is there to reply. Hinduism worships Narayana in the stone, the tree, the animal, the human being. That which the intellectual and spiritual pride or severity of other religions scorns, it makes its pride and turns into its own form of logical severity. Stocks and stones, the quadruped and the human being, all these are equals in God, our brothers in the Divine, forms that the Omnipresent has not disdained to assume. But beyond the material forms there are others that are ideal and symbolic, but not less, if anything more real, more full of divine power than any actual physical manifestation. These are the mental images in which we worship God. The Hindu believes that to whatever form he brings his devotion, the love of God is bound to assume and vivify it, and we cannot say that the belief is irrational. For if there is a Consciousness in the universe and transcending it which answers to the yearning of all these creatures and perhaps Itself yearns towards them with the love of the Father, the Mother, the Friend, the Lover, and a love surpassing all these, then it is idle to suppose that It would assume or create for its own pleasure and glory the forms of the universe, but would disdain as an offence to Its dignity or purity those which the love of the worshipper offers to It and which after all Itself has formed in his heart or his imagination.

To these mental forms mental worship may be offered, and this is the higher way; or we may give the material foundation, the *pratiṣṭhā*, of a statue or pictured image to form a physical nodus for a physical act of worship.

In the formless also we worship God, in His qualities, in His Love, Power, Bliss, Wisdom, in the great cosmic Principles by which He manifests Himself to the eye of knowledge. We worship Him as the Impersonality manifested in these things or the Personality containing them. And we rise at the apex of the pinnacle into that which is not only formless, *arūpa*, but *nirguṇa*, qualityless, the indefinable, *anirdeśyam*, of the Gita. In our human ignorance, with our mental passion for degrees and distinctions, for superiorities and exclusions, we thus grade these things and say that this is superior, that is for ignorant and inferior souls. Do we know? The Theist looks down with reprobation on the form-adoring man-worshipping idolater and polytheist; the Adwaitin looks down with a calm and tolerant indulgence on the ignorance of the quality-adoring personality-bemused Theist. But it seems to us that God scorns nothing, that the Soul of all things may take as much delight in the prayer of a little child or the offering of a flower or a leaf before a pictured image as in the philosopher's leap from the summit of thought into the indefinable and unknowable and that he does best who can rise and widen into the shoreless realisation and yet keep the heart of the little child and the capacity of the seer of forms.

At any rate, this is an attitude towards which these Hymns to the Goddess bring us very near. They are full of the glories of her form, her visible body; full of the thinker's perception of her in all the shapes of the universe; full of the power of her psychological aspects; pervaded too by a sense behind and often expressed of her final unity and transcendence. Mr. Avalon brings this out with great force and vividness in his Introduction. But it should be manifest even to a careless reader of the Hymns. Take the following passage: —

> Reverence to Her who is eternal, Raudra,
> To Gauri and Dhatri, reverence and again reverence,

> To Her who is moonlight and in the form of the moon,
> To Her who is supreme bliss, reverence for ever.

That is from the famous hymn in the Chandi-Mahatmya, deservedly one of the best known in sacred literature; but everywhere we find the same crowding of different aspects. In a hymn of which the eleventh verse is a sensuous description of the physical goddess, —

> O Gauri! with all my heart
> I contemplate Thy form,
> Beauteous of face,
> With its weight of hanging hair,
> With full breasts and rounded slender waist,
> Holding in three hands a rosary, a pitcher and book
> And with thy fourth hand making the jnanamudra, —

(mark how the close passes naturally into the psychological symbolism of the form), the ninth is a remarkable piece of Yogic imagery, —

> O Mother! like the sleeping King of serpents
> Residing in the centre of the first lotus,
> Thou didst create the universe.
> Thou dost ascend like a streak of lightning,
> And attainest the ethereal region; —

and the opening is the highest philosophy expressed with great poetic force and interspersed with passages of the richest poetic colour —

> The cause and Mother of the world,
> She whose form is that of the Shabdabrahman,
> And whose substance is bliss.
>
> Thou art the primordial One,
> Mother of countless creatures,
> Creatrix of the bodies of the Lotus-born, Vishnu and Shiva,
> Who creates, preserves and destroys the worlds. . . .

Although Thou art the primordial cause of the world,
Yet art Thou ever youthful.
Although Thou art the Daughter of the Mountain-King,
Yet art Thou full of tenderness.
Although Thou art the Mother of the Vedas,
Yet they cannot describe Thee.
Although men must meditate upon Thee,
Yet cannot their mind comprehend Thee.

This hymn is quoted as culled from a Tantric compilation, the Tantrasara. Its opening is full of the supreme meaning of the great Devi symbol, its close is an entire self-abandonment to the adoration of the body of the Mother. This catholicity is typical of the whole Tantric system, which is in its aspiration one of the greatest attempts yet made to embrace the whole of God manifested and unmanifested in the adoration, self-discipline and knowledge of a single human soul.

"South Indian Bronzes"[1]

THE DISCOVERY of Oriental Art by the aesthetic mind of Europe is one of the most significant intellectual phenomena of the times. It is one element of a general change which has been coming more and more rapidly over the mentality of the human race and promises to culminate in the century to which we belong. This change began with the discovery of Eastern thought and the revolt of Europe against the limitations of the Graeco-Roman and the Christian ideals which had for some centuries united in an uneasy combination to give a new form to her mentality and type of life. The change, whose real nature could not be distinguished so long as the field was occupied by the battle between Science and Religion, now more and more reveals itself as an attempt of humanity to recover its lost soul. Long overlaid by the life of the intellect and the vital desires, distorted and blinded by a devout religious obscurantism the soul in humanity seems at last to be resurgent and insurgent. The desire to live, think, act, create from a greater depth in oneself, to know the Unknown, to express with sincerity all that is expressible of the Infinite, this is the trend of humanity's future. A philosophy, a literature, an Art, a society which shall correspond to that which is deepest and highest in man and realise something more than the satisfaction of the senses, the desire of the vital parts and the expediencies and efficiencies recognised by the intellect without excluding these necessary elements, these are the things humanity is turning to seek, though in the midst of a chaotic groping, uncertainty and confusion.

At such a juncture the value of Eastern Thought and Eastern Art to the world is altogether incalculable. For their greatness is that they have never yet fallen away from the ancient truth, the truth of the Soul; they have not gone out of the Father's house to live on the husks of the sense and the life and the body; they have always seen in the mind and body only instruments for the expression of that which is deeper and greater than its instruments. Even intellect and emotion had for them only a secondary value. Not to imitate Nature but to reveal that which she has hidden, to find significative forms which shall embody for us what her too obvious and familiar symbols conceal, has been the aim of the greatest Art, the Art of prehistoric antiquity and of those countries and ages whose culture has been faithful to the original truth of the Spirit. Greek culture, on the other hand, deviated on a path which led away from this truth to the obvious and external reality of the senses. The Greeks sought to use the forms of Nature as they saw and observed them, slightly idealised, a little uplifted, with a reproduction of her best achievement and not, like modern realism, of her deformities and failures; and though they at first used this form to express an ideal, it was bound in the end to turn to the simple service of the intellect and the senses. Mediaeval Art attempted to return to a deeper motive; but great as were its achievements, they dwelt in a certain dim obscurity, an unillumined mystery which contrasts strongly with the light of deeper knowledge that informs the artistic work of the East. We have now throughout the world a search, an attempt on various lines to discover some principle of significant form in Art which shall escape from the obvious and external and combine delight with profundity, the power of a more searching knowledge with the depth of suggestion, emotion and ecstasy which are the very breath of aesthetic creation. The search has led to many extravagances and cannot be said to have been as yet successful, but it may be regarded as a sure sign and precursor of a new and greater age of human achievement.

---

[1] By O. C. Gangoly. Published by the Indian Society of Oriental Arts, Calcutta. Sold by Thacker, Spink and Co., Calcutta, and Luzac and Co., 46, Great Russell Street, London.

The Oriental Art recognised in Europe has been principally that of China and Japan. It is only recently that the aesthetic mind of the West has begun to open to the greatness of Indian creation in this field or at least to those elements of it which are most characteristic and bear the stamp of the ancient spiritual greatness. Indian Architecture has indeed been always admired, but chiefly in the productions of the Indo-Saracenic school which in spite of their extraordinary delicacy and beauty have not the old-world greatness and power of the best Hindu, Jain and Buddhistic work. But Indian sculpture and painting have till recently been scouted as barbarous and inartistic, and for this reason, that they have, more than any other Oriental work, deliberately remained in the extreme of the ancient symbolic conception of the plastic Arts and therefore most entirely offended the rational and imitative eye which is Europe's inheritance from the Hellene. It is a curious sign of the gulf between the two conceptions that an European writer will almost always fix for praise precisely on those Indian sculptures which are farthest away from the Indian tradition, — as for instance the somewhat vulgar productions of the Gandhara or bastard Graeco-Indian school or certain statues which come nearest to a faithful imitation of natural forms but are void of inspiration and profound suggestion.

Recently, however, the efforts of Mr. Havell and the work of the new school of Indian artists have brought about or at least commenced something like a revolution in the aesthetic standpoint of Western critics. Competent minds have turned their attention to Indian work and assigned it a high place in the artistic creation of the East and even the average European writer has been partly compelled to understand that Indian statuary and Indian painting have canons of their own and cannot be judged either by a Hellenistic or a realistic standard. More salutary still, the mind of the educated Indian has received a useful shock and may perhaps now be lifted out of the hideous banality of unaesthetic taste into which it had fallen. Whatever benefits the laudable and well-meaning efforts of English educationists may have bestowed on this country, it is certain that, aided by the inrush of the vulgar, the mechanical and the commonplace from the commercial West, they had succeeded in entirely vulgarising the aesthetic mind and soul of the Indian people. Its innate and instinctive artistic taste has disappeared; the eye and the aesthetic sense have not been so much corrupted as killed. What more flagrant sign of this debacle could there be than the fact that all educated India hailed the paintings of Raja Ravi Varma, an incompetent imitation of the worst European styles, as the glory of a new dawn and that hideous and glaring reproductions of them still adorning its dwellings? A rebirth of Indian taste supporting a new Indian Art which shall inspire itself with the old spirit while seeking for fresh forms is now, however, possible and it is certainly a great desideratum for the future. For nothing can be more helpful towards the discovery of that which we are now vaguely seeking, a new Art which shall no longer labour to imitate Nature but strive rather to find fresh significant forms for the expression of the Self.

It is necessary to this end that the wealth of their ancient Art should be brought before the eyes of the people, and it is gratifying to find that an increasing amount of pioneer work is being done in this respect, although still all too scanty. The book before us, Mr. O. C. Gangoly's *South Indian Bronzes*, must rank as one of the best of them all. Southern India, less ravaged than the North by the invader and the vandal and profiting by the historic displacement of the centre of Indian culture southward, teems with artistic treasures. Mr. Gangoly's book gives us, in an opulent collection of nearly a hundred fine plates preceded by five chapters of letterpress, one side of the artistic work of the South, — its bronzes, chiefly representing the gods and devotees of the Shaiva religion, — for the Shaiva religion has been as productive of sublime and suggestive work in the plastic arts as has been the Vaishnava all over India of great, profound and passionate poetry. This book is a sumptuous production and almost as perfect as any work of the kind can be in the present state of our knowledge.

There are certain minor defects which we feel bound to point out to the author. The work abounds with useful quotations from unprinted Sanskrit works on the rules and conventions of the sculptural Art, works attributed to Agastya and others; but their value is somewhat lessened by the chaotic system of transliteration which Mr. Gangoly has adopted. He is writing for all India and Europe as well; why then adopt the Bengali solecism which neglects the distinction between the *b* and the *v* of the Sanskrit alphabet or that still more ugly and irrational freak by which some in Bengal insist on substituting for the aspirate *bh* the English *v*? Even in these errors the writer is not consistent; he represents the Sanskrit *v* sometimes by *b* and sometimes by *v*, and *bh* indifferently by *v*, *vh* or *bh*. Such vagaries are disconcerting and offend against the sense of order and accuracy. It is always difficult to read Sanskrit in the Roman alphabet which is entirely unsuited to that language, but this kind of system or want of system turns the difficulty almost into an impossibility. We hope that in the important works which he promises us on Pallava Sculpture and South Indian Sculptures Mr. Gangoly will remedy this imperfection of detail.

The first chapter of the letterpress deals with the legendary origins of South Indian art. It is interesting and valuable, but there are some startlingly confident statements against which our critical sense protests. For instance, "it is *beyond doubt* that the two divisions of the country indicated by the Vindhya ranges were occupied by people essentially different in blood and temperament." Surely the important theories which hold the whole Indian race to be Dravidian in blood or, without assigning either an "Aryan" or "non-Aryan" origin, believe it to be homogeneous — omitting some islander types on the southern coast and the Mongoloid races of the Himalaya, — cannot be so lightly dismissed. The question is full of doubt and obscurity. The one thing that seems fairly established is that there were at least two types of culture in ancient India, the "Aryan" occupying the Punjab and Northern and Central India, Afghanistan and perhaps Persia and distinguished in its cult by the symbols of the Sun, the Fire and the Soma sacrifice, and the un-Aryan occupying the East, South and West, the nature of which it is quite impossible to restore from the scattered hints which are all we possess.

Again we are astonished to observe that Mr. Gangoly seems to accept the traditional attribution of the so-called Agastya Shastras to the Vedic Rishi of that name. The quotations from these books are in classical Sanskrit of a fairly modern type, certainly later than the pre-Christian era though Mr. Gangoly on quite insufficient grounds puts them before Buddha. It is impossible to believe that they are the work of the Rishi, husband of Lopamudra, who composed the great body of hymns in an archaic tongue that close the first Mandala of the Rig Veda. Nor can we accept the astonishing identification of the Puranic Prajapati, Kashyapa, progenitor of creatures, with the father of the Kanada who founded the Vaisheshika philosophy. It distresses us to see Indian inquirers with their great opportunities simply following in the path of certain European scholars, accepting and adding to their unstable fantasies, their huge superstructures founded on weak and scattered evidence and their imaginative "history" of our prehistoric ages. There is better and sounder work to be done and Indians can do it admirably as Mr. Gangoly himself has shown in this book; for the rest of the work, where he has not to indulge in these *obiter dicta*, is admirable and flawless. There is a sobriety and reserve, a solidity of statement and a sort of sparing exhaustiveness which make it quite the best work of the kind we have yet come across. The chapters on the Shilpashastra and the review of the distribution of Shaivite and other work in Southern India are extremely interesting and well-written and the last brief chapter of criticism is perfect both in what it says and what it refrains from saying.

Mr. Gangoly's collection of plates, 94 in number, illustrates Southern work in bronze in all its range. It opens with a fine Kalasamhara and a number of Dancing Shivas, the characteristic image of the Shaivite art, and contains a great variety of figures; there are among them some beautiful images of famous Shaivite bhaktas. A few examples of Vaishnava art are also given. In a collection so ample and so representative it is obvious that there must be a good deal of work which falls considerably below the best, but the general impression is that of a mass of powerful, striking and inspired creations. And throughout there is that dominant note which distinguishes Indian art from any other whether of the Occident or of the Orient. All characteristic Oriental art indeed seeks to go beyond the emotions and the senses; a Japanese landscape of snow and hill is as much an image of the soul as a Buddha or a flame-haired spirit of the thunderbolt. Nature will not see herself there as in a mirror, but rather herself transformed into something wonderfully not herself which is yet her own deeper reality. But still there is a difference, and it seems to lie in this that other Oriental art, even though it goes beyond the external, usually remains in the cosmic, in the limits of Prakriti, but here there is a perpetual reaching beyond into something absolute, infinite, supernatural, the very ecstasy of the Divine. Even in work not of the best finish or most living inspiration there is this touch which gives it a greatness beyond its actual achievement; rarely indeed does the statuary fall into mere technique or descend entirely into the physical and external.

It is this tendency, as the author well explains, which causes and in a sense justifies the recoil and incomprehension of the average Occidental mind; for it comes to Art with a demand for the satisfaction of the senses, the human emotions, the imagination moving among familiar things. It does not ask for a god or for a symbol of the beyond, but for a figure admirably done with scrupulous fidelity to Nature and the suggestion of some vision, imagination, feeling or idea well within the normal range of human experience.[2] The Indian artist deliberately ignores all these demands. His technique is perfect enough; he uses sculptural line with a consummate mastery, often with an incomparable charm, grace and tenderness. The rhythm and movement of his figures have a life and power and perfection which conveys a deeper reality than the more intellectualised and less purely intuitive symmetries and groupings of the European styles. But these bodies are not, when we look close at them, bronze representations of human flesh and human life, but forms of divine life, embodiments of the gods. The human type is exceeded, and if sometimes one more subtly and psychically beautiful replaces it, at other times all mere physical beauty is contemptuously disregarded.

---

[2] This was the traditional standpoint, the view of Art dominant at the time of writing but, though it still survives, it is no longer dominant. Art and aesthetics in Europe have swung round to an opposite extreme.

What these artists strive always to express is the soul and those pure and absolute states of the mind and heart in which the soul manifests its essential being void of all that is petty, transient, disturbed and restless. In their human figures it is almost always devotion that is manifested; for this in the Shaiva and Vaishnava religions is the pure state of the soul turned towards God. The power of the artist is extraordinary. Not only the face, the eyes, the pose but the whole body and every curve and every detail aid in the effect and seem to be concentrated into the essence of absolute adoration, submission, ecstasy, love, tenderness which is the Indian idea of *bhakti*. These are not figures of devotees, but of the very personality of devotion. Yet while the Indian mind is seized and penetrated to the very roots of its being by this living and embodied ecstasy, it is quite possible that the Occidental, not trained in the same spiritual culture, would miss almost entirely the meaning of the image and might only see a man praying.

The reason becomes evident when we study the images of the gods. These deities are far removed indeed from the Greek and the Christian conceptions; they do not live in the world at all, but in themselves, in the infinite. The form is, as it were, a wave in which the whole ocean of being expresses itself. The significance varies; sometimes it is unfathomable thought, sometimes the self-restraint of infinite power, sometimes the self-contained oceanic surge of divine life and energy, sometimes the absolute immortal ecstasy. But always one has to look not at the form, but through and into it to see that which has seized and informed it. The appeal of this art is in fact to the human soul for communion with the divine Soul and not merely to the understanding, the imagination and the sensuous eye. It is a sacred and hieratic art, expressive of the profound thought of Indian philosophy and the deep passion of Indian worship. It seeks to render to the soul that can feel and the eye that can see the extreme values of the suprasensuous.

And yet there is a certain difference one notes which distinguishes most of these southern bronzes from the sublime and majestic stone sculptures of the earlier periods. It is the note of lyrism in the form, the motive of life, grace, rhythm. To use the terms of Indian philosophy, most art expresses the play of Prakriti; Buddhistic art in its most characteristic creations expresses the absolute repose of the Purusha; Hindu art tends to combine the Purusha and Prakriti in one image. But in the earlier stone sculptures it is the sublime repose, tranquil power, majestic concentration of the Deity which the whole image principally represents even in poses expressive of violent movement; the movement is self-contained, subordinated to the repose. We find the same motive in some of these bronzes, notably in the wonderful majestically self-possessed thought and power of the Kalasamhara image of Shiva (Plate I);[3] but for the most part it is life and rhythm that predominate in the form even when there is no actual suggestion of movement. This is the motive of the Nataraja, the Dancing Shiva, which seems to us to strike the dominant note of this art; the self-absorbed concentration, the motionless peace and joy are within, outside is the whole mad bliss of the cosmic movement. But even other figures that stand or sit seem often to represent only pauses of the dance; often the thought and repose are concentrated in the head and face, the body is quick with potential movement. This art seems to us to reflect in bronze the lyrical outburst of the Shaivite and Vaishnava devotional literature while the older sculpture had the inspiration of the spiritual epos of the Buddha or else reflects in stone the sublimity of the Upanishads. The aim of a renascent Indian art must be to recover the essence of these great motives and to add the freedom and variety of the soul's self-expression in the coming age when man's search after the Infinite need no longer be restricted to given types or led along one or two great paths, but may at last be suffered to answer with a joyous flexibility the many-sided call of the secret Mystery behind Life to its children.

---

[3] *This refers to the plate in* South Indian Bronzes *— Ed*

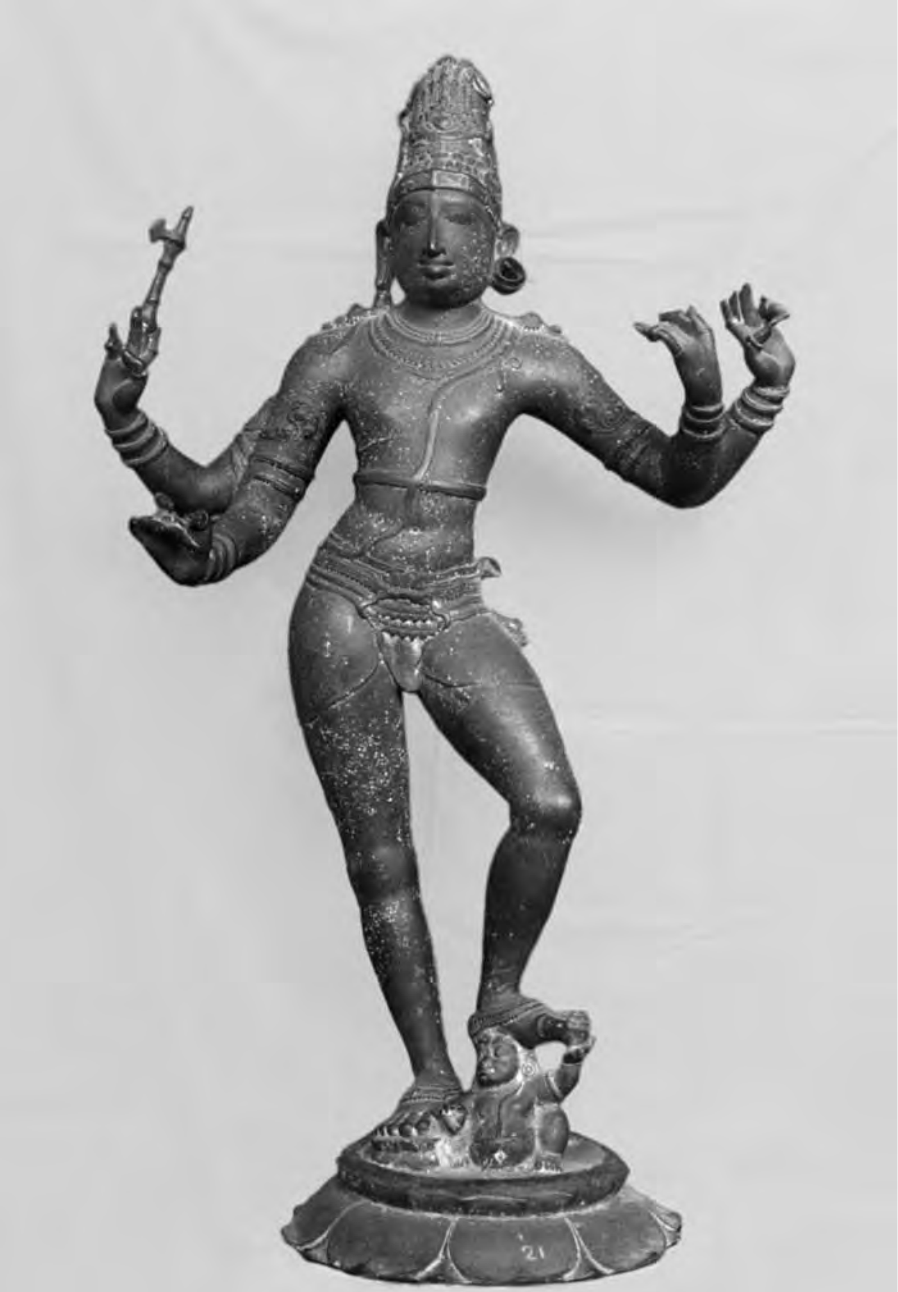

3. Kalasamhara Shiva

www.   ooks.com

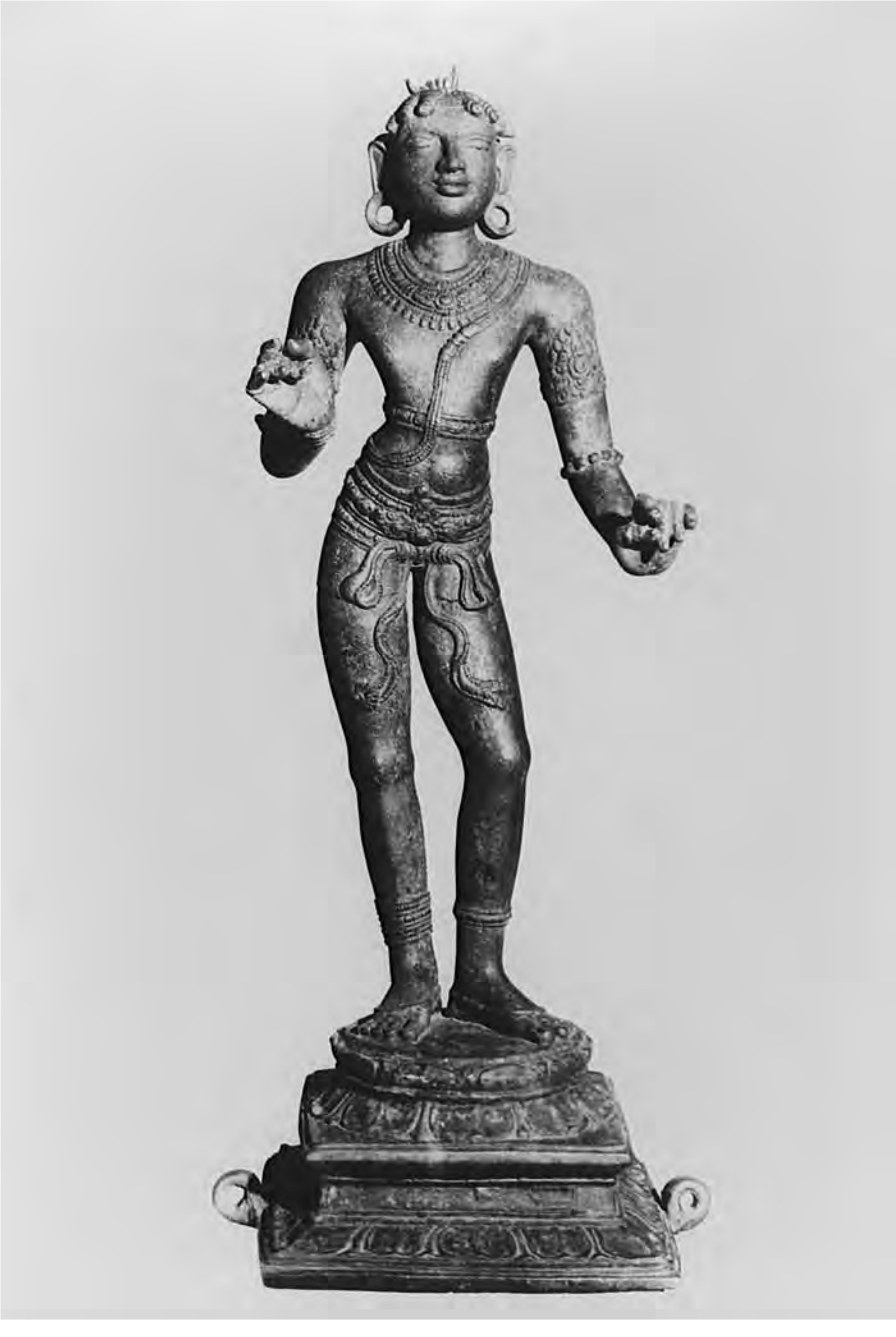

4. Sundaramurti, the Shaivite Saint

www books.com

"God, the Invisible King"

A REMARKABLE book with this title by the well-known writer and thinker, Mr. H. G. Wells, has recently appeared, of which only a few extracts are before us, but these are sufficient to reveal its character and thought. It is on the part of the writer, speaking not for himself personally alone but as scribe to the spirit of his generation, a definite renunciation of the gospel of an all-sufficient rationalism, a discovery of God, a profession of faith in spirituality as the one lever by which mankind can rise out of the darkness and confusion of its present state into a more perfect living. He professes his faith in the God within, the invisible King, who is the immortal part of us, in a coming kingdom of God upon earth which shall not only be a spiritual state in the individual, but the open brotherhood of a divine rule among men, and in self-identification with God, service of him, absolute surrender to him as the whole rule of life for the enlightened modern man. This is, indeed, a remarkable change of spirit and change of mental outlook and, if Mr. Wells' claim is just that he is writing as a scribe to the spirit of his generation, it means a revolution in Europe far more important than the Russian with all its idealism and its hopes for a new and beneficent change in politics and society. It means the union of Eastern spiritual knowledge and religious faith with Western pragmatic idealism and their fusion into the basis of a new culture and, we will not say a new universal religion, — for religion must vary with the variations of human nature, — but a new practical spirituality in which all mankind can become one.

There is much in Mr. Wells' statement of his new-born belief that is imperfect, limited and a little crude, much that is grasped with an over-hasty zeal, as was inevitable in the first light of an unripe awakening. Some of the old limitations of the rationalistic Western mind with its too external outlook upon things still cling about his new spiritual discovery. He tells us that the kingdom of God on earth is “not a metaphor, not a mere spiritual state, not a dream, not an uncertain project, . . . it is the close and inevitable destiny of mankind.” This classing of the inner spiritual state, the kingdom of God within us, with a metaphor, a dream, an uncertain project reveals the lingering taint of an excessive pragmatism. The spiritual state is the one thing indispensable; until the mass of mankind can awaken into it, the dream of a perfect society, an open brotherhood of God’s rule, must end in failure and disappointment. The kingdom of God within is the sole possible foundation for the kingdom of God without; for it is the spirit by which man lives that conditions the outer forms of his life.

Misled by this external view of things Mr. Wells, evidently, still believes that a political and social action is sufficient to bring about the millennium. He has discovered that this action must be driven by a spiritual motive, pursued in the passion of a true religious fervour, consecrated to the indwelling God, effective only by an absolute self-surrender to the Divine. But he has a limited vision of his God and brings to it all the aggressiveness and something of the fanaticism of all such limited religious conceptions. “The new conceptions,” he writes, “do not tolerate either kings or aristocracies or democracies. Its implicit command to all its adherents is to make plain the way to the world theocracy. Its rule of life is the discovery and service of the will of God which dwells in the hearts of men and the performance of that will” in the life of the believer, the individual, and of the nation of which he is a part. “I give myself to God not only because I am so and so, but because I am mankind. . . . I become a knight in God’s service. . . . I become a responsible minister of my king. I take sides against injustice, disorder, and against all those temporal kings, emperors, princes, landlords and owners who set themselves against God’s rule and worship. Kings, owners and all who claim rule and decision in the world’s affairs, must either show themselves clearly the fellow-servants of the believer or become the object of his steadfast antagonism.”

All this is very forcibly said, but it shows that the writer has not grasped the whole spiritual truth; he has not gone deep enough inward. As once he dreamed of a class of scientific and rational supermen establishing a perfect social rule upon earth, so now he thinks that by the action of his banded servants of the invisible King declaring political and social war upon godless Czars, Kaisers, rulers and capitalists the same end can be achieved. With them is God; in them God dwells, in the others, presumably, he does not dwell; those who have surrendered absolutely to him are the citizens of the kingdom and on them shall be peace; those who do not surrender or even fall short in their surrender, are interlopers, against them the sword. A very old kind of militant religionism in a very modern form. It ignores two ancient, two eternal spiritual truths; first, that God dwells in all and, secondly, that only by becoming conscious of the God within from within can humanity be saved. God dwells in all and not only in the believer who is conscious of him, — dwells disguised and veiled, and it is by helping others to awaken to the veiled Divine within them that we go the straight way to the founding of his kingdom on earth. True, an outward battle also has to be fought, but against forces, against institutions which stand in the way of the spreading of the light and the reign of brotherhood, not against men as unbelievers, — in a spirit of understanding, of knowledge, of firm will, but also of charity for ignorance and of love for the misled. God, says Mr. Wells, is boundless love, but this boundless love, it seems, is not infinite enough to embrace those who do not believe with you; it rejects them with a steadfast antagonism, it banishes them as "interlopers". God's work least of all should be pursued in a spirit of partisan and sectarian antagonism, but rather with a remembrance that the battle is only a way to peace and the peace must come by the inner submission of the opponent through his recognition of the Divine, through his awakening. It is not enough that the believer should perform God's will and fight for the performance of that will "in the acts and order of the state and nation of which he is a part." The nation also must be brought not only to believe, but to know, to see, to live in God, otherwise the national performance of God's will, even if momentarily secured, will soon degenerate into a form. It is possible that what the old religions called "the rule of the saints" may be a preliminary step to the establishment of the full kingdom of God, but that rule can only become secure by the light and fire which is in them kindling itself in the hearts of all mankind.

These defects of outlook come from a defect in the conception of the Divine. It consists of "complete Agnosticism in the matter of God the Creator and entire faith in the matter of God the Redeemer". A distinction is made between the Veiled Being behind the universe and the living reality in our lives; the latter alone is the true God. He is a personal and intimate God. He is finite. He is a spirit, a single spirit and a single person. He has come, we know not whence, into the conflict of life. He has begun and will never end. And yet he is the immortal part and leader of mankind, our friend and brother and light of the world. And from these first principles is drawn a description of God as certain qualities, boundless love, boundless courage, boundless generosity, thought and steadfast will, and as having motives, characteristics, an aim. "This is the belief of the modern mind", read, the modern Western mind, "with regard to God."

We can see whence the crudities of this belief arise. The Western mind is still burdened with its scientific vision of the universe as a play of brute force, of life as a struggle, the world a material entity, and therefore of the Spirit of the world, if any there be, conceived agnostically or with a sort of materialistic Pantheism as standing for these things only, the Breath of a physical universe, a sort of mechanical, inconscient Soul of things. Out of this pure materiality mind and soul inexplicably evolve. God appears only in man and his aspiration, his longings for a higher order of things, for love, universal sympathy, immortality. This God and the mechanical inconscient Spirit of the world the Western mind finds it difficult — and no wonder — to bring under the same term. The simple harmonious truth that God is veiled in the material universe which is only the lowest term, the first appearance of the cosmic Reality, that he unveils himself partially and progressively in man and to man, and that man by growth into self-knowledge and God-knowledge can grow into the whole truth of God and existence, which is one truth, — this seems still to be hidden from these wise men of the West. His partial unveiling in man seems to them a birth of the once non-existent Divine, a coming of God into the world, one knows not whence; and because man appears to be finite, God whom they conceive of as the sum of human aspiration to good, truth, beauty, immortality, is also conceived of as finite. But how is that which has begun in Time secure against ending in Time? and how can a finite God be infinite love, courage, strength? Only that which was from ever, can be for ever, and only that which is infinite in being, can be infinite in force and quality. We have here an echo of the inconsequent Christian paradox of a soul born by the birth of the body, yet immortal to all eternity, combined with the metaphysical dogma of a God existent, not in being, but in becoming. There is an element of truth and value in this belief, but it brings disabling limitations into our inner realisation of God and the practice of a divine life to which it gives a foundation.

"Rupam"[1]

THE APPEARANCE of this superb quarterly admirable in its artistic get-up and its fine reproductions of Indian sculpture and painting, admirable in the accomplished excellence of its matter, — the name of the editor, Mr. O. C. Gangoly, the one man most especially fitted by his knowledge and capacity for this work, is of itself a sufficient guarantee of excellence, — is a significant indication of the progress that is being made in the revival of the aesthetic mind of India. Assailed and corrupted in a time of cultural decline and arrest of its creative and artistic faculty by an alien aesthesis and ideals antithetic to its own spirit, it is returning to a right view and understanding of its past greatness, and though much way has still to be made before there can be any universal recovery of the artistic eye and taste, the first steps have been taken with some rapidity and firmness and are all in the right direction. This new and fine effort of the Indian Society of Oriental Arts is likely to be of invaluable aid towards this reawakening; its magnificent illustrations are in themselves a revelation of the old beauty and greatness and, admirably selected and supported by illuminating articles, ought to be sufficient to open even the most blinded vision to the meaning and value of our ancient painting and sculpture.

The subjects of the four articles in this number are all of a considerable interest and touch points or raise and answer questions which have either a central importance or a vital though second-plane prominence in Indian art, and each article is a remarkably just, full, efficient and understanding interpretation of its subject. The frontispiece is a panel from a Pallava temple at

---

[1] An illustrated quarterly journal of Oriental Art, chiefly Indian, edited by O. C. Gangoly.

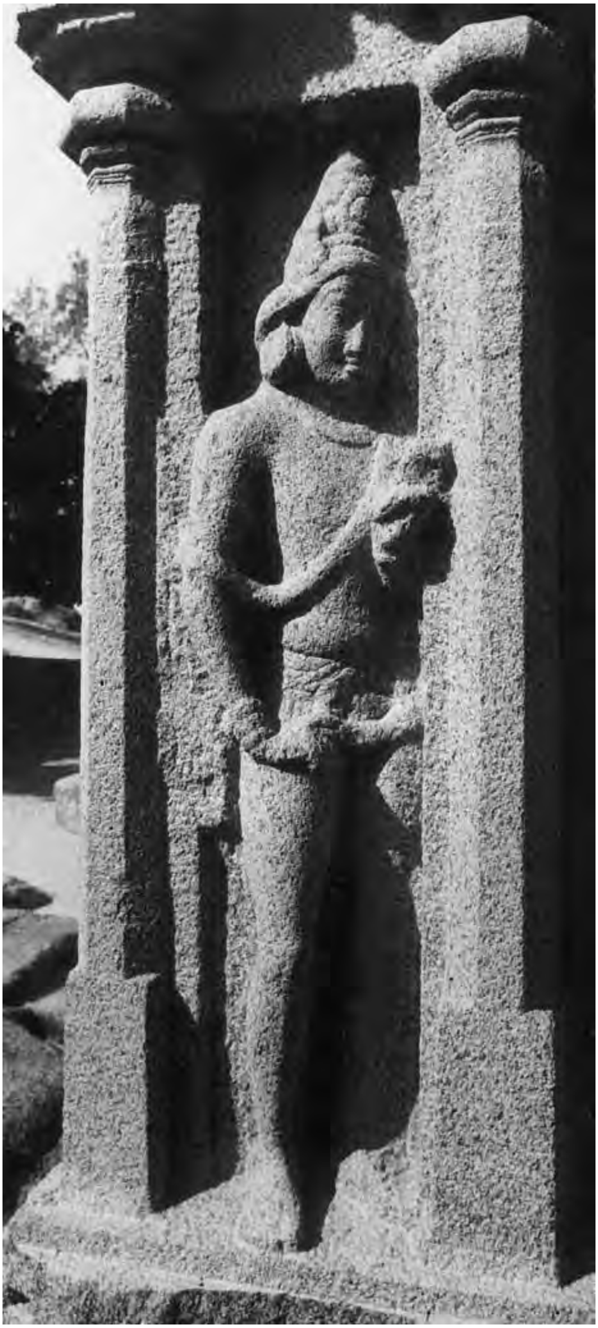

5. Princely Doorkeeper, Mahabalipuram

www.l ooks.com

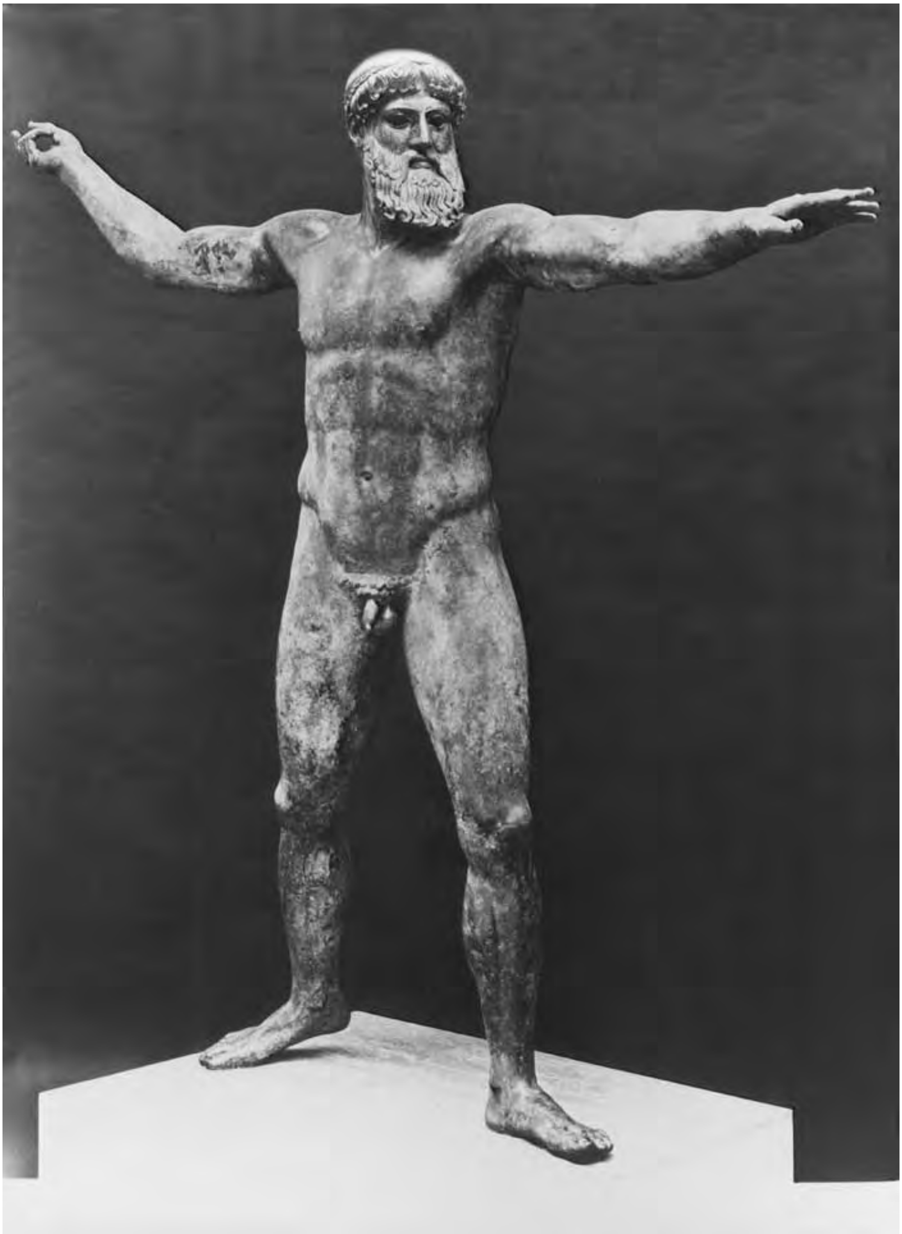

6. Poseidon of Artemision

www. ooks.com

Mahabalipuram intended to convey at once the essential character and appeal of Indian sculpture by an example which offers no difficulty of understanding or appreciation even to a non-Indian mind or to an uninstructed knowledge, and it is accompanied by a brief but clear and sufficient article. This example from one of the great styles and periods shows, as is justly said, and shows very perfectly, the Indian principle in the treatment of the human figure, the suppression of small particulars and trivial details in order to secure an extreme simplicity of form and contour, — the best condition for accomplishing the principal object of the Indian sculptor which was to fill the form with the utmost power of spiritual force and significance. The figure of this princely doorkeeper of the temple in its union of calm, grave, sweet and restful serenity with a latent and restrained heroic energy in its stillness, noted by the writer as the distinctive power of this creation, is indeed equal, as he suggests, in its dignity and repose to any Greek statue, but it carries in it a more profound and potent meaning; it is a perfect interpretation of the still and intense Godward feeling, seized in one deep mood, in one fixed moment of it, which was the soul of the great ages of Indian religion. There is here a perfection of form with a perfection of significance. This restraint in power, this contained fullness opening an amplitude of infinite suggestion, is not rare or exceptional, it is a frequent greatness in the art of India.

The second article on Garuda in Bengal and Java by Akshaya Kumar Maitreya, besides its interesting and discerning treatment of its subject, the inception and humanising of the Garuda figure and the artistic use of the mythus, touches an issue which has not yet, I think, received sufficient consideration, the place of the art of Gauda in the development of the spirit of Indian sculpture. The putting side by side of the two sculptures from Java and Varendra, on one side the heroic force, majesty, dignity and beauty of the ancient art in one of its finest developments, on the other the moved nobility, grace and loveliness and the fervour of spiritual emotion and tenderness of a time when the antique Aryan spirit was softening into the sweetness of the religions of bhakti, makes of itself an illuminating suggestion.

This sculpture is eloquent of that transition and the art of Gauda with its lyrical sweetness of emotion and, at its best, suggestive depths, begins the curve of the stream of spiritual feeling which came down through the Vaishnava art and poetry, found its most gracious and lucid embodiment in the poets of Bengal, has now taken, enriched by new elements, a large and living development in the lyrics of Tagore and the paintings of the Calcutta school and has yet a vital part to play in the spiritual future of India.

Another article contains a full and discriminating account, copiously illustrated by numerous figures, of the history of the Kirtimukha, a standing feature in Indian architecture, and the development of its use as a constant decorative element and in Java a prominent structural motive. The right understanding of these details is a necessary equipment for the complete comprehension of the art of India. The writer handles his subject with a consummate mastery and includes in a small compass all that is needed to give us a full idea about this "glory face". The one thing not included in his intention is its psychological significance, a question of great interest, for it is an evolution as the writer indicates from an element common to the ancient art of Asia and there were kindred things in Greece and mediaeval Europe. It is the result, I would suggest, of an imagination or an experience that has entered into the subtle worlds and found there a side of things dangerous and distorted and terrible that have yet to be compelled by the adventure of the self-conquering spirit into an element of divine harmony and significance.

The remaining article by Mr. E. Vredenburg on the continuity of pictorial tradition in the art of India treats a question of the most central importance and brings to it a fine aesthetic instinct even more necessary than historic and archaeological accuracy of information in such a discussion, for one may have the latter and yet miss the truth for lack of a more essential equipment of the art critic. Mr. Vredenburg enters a still much-needed protest against the constant tendency to attribute a foreign origin to whatever survives of Indian creation. The instances he gives are indeed evidences of an extraordinary perversity of judgment, such as the well-known refusal to leave the credit of the Tajmahal to India, "the numerous attempts that have been made to ascribe the Ajanta paintings to the Greeks, Persians or Chinese", and last but not least colossally absurd, "the truly astounding statement that the Kangra paintings are of European inspiration and that they were painted for the English market"! Only yesterday while reading Mr. Jouveau-Dubreuil's able historical monograph I found myself brought up short by the sweepingly positive but hardly judicial and certainly not judicious statement that "the Deccan like the North was inspired by the Greek and Roman arts and the marbles of Amaravati can be compared to the sculptures of Gandhara". The plain fact is that whatever outside influences there may or may not have been in India as elsewhere, even the earliest work shows a characteristic Indian mentality and touch; and, as for Gandharan art, it has the air of an inefficient attempt of the Hellenistic mind to absorb this spirit rather than an effort of India to imitate Greece. And in any case the great characteristic work could no more have been the creation of a foreign mind or of its influence than the sculptures of Phidias can be attributed to an Assyrian, Egyptian or Chinese origin. A psychological insensibility to the spiritual significance of Indian work is probably at the root of these errors and, so long as that subsists, the most erudite knowledge will be no protection against gross misunderstandings.[2]

Mr. Vredenburg is chiefly concerned in this article with filling up the gap between the Ajanta frescoes and the later art of India. He is able to do this up to the eleventh or twelfth century: for the beautiful coloured reproductions of exquisite Buddhist miniatures from an illuminated manuscript of that period which are the most attractive feature of this number, evidence a complete continuity of the Ajanta style. Most striking are the two enlargements which show at once and conclusively that these miniatures are in their whole spirit, method and every characteristic reductions of the old style of mural painting. He appeals also to the typically Ajantesque character of the coloured panels of Man Singh's palace which date from the fifteenth or sixteenth century. It will be interesting to follow the farther development of this argument in the forthcoming number.

---

[2] The attitude and regard of the cultured European mind on Indian and Eastern art has immensely changed since this was written and there has been a great progress towards sympathy and understanding and even developments due to an oriental influence. There is indeed some survival of old prejudices but this is no longer the characteristic standpoint of the aesthetic mind of Europe towards the creative achievement of India or of Asia.

I could wish I had space for adequate comment on the many points of stimulating interest with which this number abounds, but I have, I think, indicated enough to show that every lover of Indian art and culture ought to possess "Rupam". He will find it one of the luxuries that are necessities.

About Astrology[1]

THE SUBJECT of this book is one which stands nowadays put away under a sort of intellectual ban, placed on it some centuries ago by the scientific and rationalistic European mind and not yet lifted. Mr. N. P. Subramania Iyer has undertaken an astrological series which will deal with the various parts of astrology, and the present volume contains the text and translation of the *Kalaprakasika*, a treatise on the selection of the right times by astrological rule for undertaking any and every action of human life. The book is well printed and got up, the translation admirably done in a style free enough to avoid all awkwardness, — the author has a thorough control of the English tongue and an excellent style of his own, — but perfectly faithful to the matter of the text. But the most interesting part of the work for the ordinary reader is the introduction, in which he gives amidst other matter the psychological explanation of the influence of the planets and states for what they stand in relation to the Indian Vedantic philosophy of existence. I have not seen elsewhere any exposition of the subject equally original and illuminative.

Astrology is in the general mind associated with that class of subjects which goes under the name of the occult, and along with others of its class it has long been discredited by modern "enlightenment", one does not quite know on what grounds or with what rational justification. It has its psychic and mystical side, but that is not its ordinary presentation; there it claims to be a science like any other with fixed processes and an exact and definite system of rules which ought to be perfectly capable of verification or of disproof by experiment and induction like any other science. Its basis is astronomical and mathematical, its data perfectly open and positive and in no way hidden or occult, nor does it at all shrink back from the test or hide itself in secrecy and mystery. It does not indeed give ordinarily the why, but only the how of the causes and effects it professes to establish, but so it is with all other sciences; they do not give the reason of things, but only their processes. Yet astrology is supposed at some indefinite time in the march of human mind to have been exploded, — along with such things as witchcraft and demonology, not to speak of the existence of spirits and the immortality of the soul, — and there is a sort of idea that it has been disproved and therefore put aside as a superstition which no reasonable man can even look at except with a lofty disdain, much less stoop to investigate with an open mind its truth or falsity. Still the anathema of Science has not been able to destroy it; in Europe it has revived, even though its practice as a profession is punishable by the law, and in India it has always survived. It is not indeed the habit of educated Indians to profess explicitly their belief in it, they fight shy of that as a rule, but it is largely consulted by numbers of them, as also by many Europeans. This is an anomalous position which ought to be corrected. Either astrology is a true science and should be investigated, proved, improved where defective and generally rehabilitated in opinion, or else it is a pseudo-science and should be investigated and disproved so as to cut the ground away finally from all secret belief or open credulity.

---

[1] *Kalaprakasika: the Standard Book on the Election System* by N. P. Subramania Iyer, Tanjore.

As a matter of fact astrology has never been scientifically disproved, nor has any rational ground ever been advanced for treating it as a pseudo-science. It simply came to be assumed at a certain period and under certain intellectual influences that it was a childish superstition. Or if there were any grounds, then it was left aside because astrologers were charlatans, because many, perhaps most predictions went wrong, but most of all because it was thought that in the nature of things, in any rational theory of the universe the planets simply could not have any influence on our characters, lives and actions. None of these grounds are sufficient. If many astrologers are charlatans, so also have there been many quacks in the field of medicine; at one time indeed not only did they pullulate, but the system of medicine itself seemed so defective that there were plenty of clear and enlightened minds who were inclined with Molière to denounce the whole thing as a gross pseudo-science, an elaborate and solemn system of ignorance, humbug and quackery. Supposing that view had prevailed, — it could not, merely because men are too vitally interested in healing their ailments and preserving their bodies and know no other way of doing it, — that would not have done away with the truth underlying the science.

That many predictions go wrong, proves nothing, essentially, against astrology any more than the constant failure of doctors to heal diseases proves anything essential against their science. The first reason of this failure may be that a great number of practising astrologers are either charlatans who seek to please their clients rather than predict by scientific rule, — of that kind there are perhaps many, — or else inefficient and ignorant men who practise only by rule of thumb, perfunctorily and with a main eye upon their fees. But if even capable astrologers fail often, that also only proves that either the science or their way of treating it is largely empirical or that some of its rules and theories may be errors. But every science has to pass through its empirical stage and some — as, again, the science of medicine, — have hardly emerged from it, and every science too burdens itself in its progress with false generalisations, incorrect theories and imperfect rules which have afterwards to be discarded or amended. As the main point in medicine is whether herbs and metals and other remedies have or have not certain effects on the body and whether their workings can be substantiated by experience in a sufficient number of cases to establish a regular relation of cause and effect, so it is in astrology with the fundamental question of planetary influences upon earth and its creatures.

The *a priori* argument from the rational theory of the universe cannot stand. There is nothing essentially irrational in the idea that in this solar system, so closely linked together, there may be mutual influences of all the planets upon each other or that the beings of a particular planet are powerfully influenced or even dominated by influences from the others. The question remains, the *a priori* rationality being admitted or at least not summarily dismissed, first, whether it is so in fact and, secondly, how far those influences go and of what nature they are. Astrology affirms that they not only affect our bodies, but also our psychical being. If matter and mind were entirely independent entities having no influence or determining effect upon each other, then such a result could not be; but that is not the case. According to the materialistic view of the universe which claims to be the sole rationalistic view, mind is itself an effect of matter and all its states and movements are determined by matter. There is nothing then impossible, planetary influence being once admitted, in the action of material bodies producing psychical conditions on the earth and thereby determining our psychical states and movements. In a more truly rationalistic view mind and matter are always influencing and determining each other; here too, given a universal mind and matter so acting upon individual matter and mind, the movements of the planetary system may be one or even the first nodus of their activities, and the assertions of astrology become at least primarily credible.

Farther, astrology affirms that these influences determine the whole course of our lives and that the all-important element is time. That raises the major question of the influence of Time upon human beings and events; does Time determine the course of our lives and the states of our being and, if so, how far and in what way? Or to put the question more precisely, as it is raised by astrology, do or can the conditions reigning at a given critical time, in this case the moment of birth, determine our physical and psychological conditions and the whole course of our future lives, or determine them to any considerable extent? and are the relative movements and therefore the mutual positions of the sun and planets with regard to the earth and each other either the nodus or in some way the effective signs of these determinations? And, secondly, do the developing time conditions which come afterwards, by themselves or viewed in reference to the original conditions, determine from moment to moment, from time to time the subsequent evolution of our primary physical and psychological conditions and the course of linked and successive circumstances which make up the history of our lives? and if so, again, are the relative movements and mutual positions of the sun and planets at any given time the nodus or the effective signs of this later determination also? can they therefore be taken for all practical purposes as determinants, or at any rate as sure signs by which the determinations of our life and being can be discovered? That is the question which astrology raises, and it is evidently a perfectly legitimate and rational question; nor can we on *a priori* grounds condemn and put away an affirmative answer, which is based upon past experience systematised into rules and theories, as a superstition or a childish folly. Granted that in things here there is a chain of cause and effect — or at least, if causality is disputed, of antecedent condition leading up to subsequent condition — and that if and so far as we know that chain, scientific prediction becomes in that proportion possible, — two propositions which, unless we deny determination altogether, it would be difficult to dispute, — there is no inherent improbability in the clue to happenings human and other on the planets being found in the motions of those planets. Astronomy is in a sense the primary physical science, for the first facts which give all the others their field are astronomical facts; it may well be that in the psycho-physical field the same rule holds and that there the first facts may be astrological.

The *a priori* objections disappearing, the next step is to ask ourselves whether there is a sufficient *prima facie* empirical case for enquiring into the actual truth of astrology. This at present depends upon the experience of isolated individuals, a very unsatisfactory basis. But if this experience could be collected, sifted and published, I believe it would be found that a formidable *prima facie* case exists in favour of astrology, much stronger than that which encouraged the Society for Psychical Research to carry on its work in another psycho-physical field to such important conclusions. I may state my own experience in the matter in the belief, justified by many instances, that it is only typical of the experience of hundreds of others. My first accidental contact with an Indian astrologer was not encouraging. This gentleman was the most accomplished thought-reader I have ever seen; for he asked me to think my question without speaking it and not only successfully named the unspoken question I had fixed on, but three others which had crossed my mind, one of them only in the merest flash and without leaving any impression behind: this he pretended to do by mathematical calculation, an operation which I took leave to regard as humbug or professional parade. For when it came to his answers, I found that he was still doing thought-reading and not astrology; he simply echoed the hopes or thoughts in my mind and his predictions did not come within one hundred miles of the truth. Other practitioners I have found to belong, a few plainly to the class of mere flattering charlatans, but most to the inefficient who read by rule of thumb and have made no profound study of their science. On the other hand, with capable astrologers the results have been often of such a remarkable accuracy as to put quite aside any possibility of chance hit, mere coincidence, intelligent prevision or any of the current explanations. I may instance the father of a friend of mine, a deep student of the science but not a professional, who predicted accurately the exact year, month, day, hour and even minute of his own death. In my own case accuracy was hampered by the inability to fix the precise moment of my birth; still some of the results were extraordinary. Two may be mentioned, from one and the same astrologer, which related to my public career. One, given when I had not yet plunged into the political vortex and my then obscure personality was quite unknown to the astrologer, predicted as an inevitable certitude of the future a political struggle with powerful non-Indian adversaries during which for a time even my life would fall under the shadow of danger. The other, given at the time of my first prosecution in the *Bande Mataram* case, predicted three successive criminal trials in each of which the prosecution would fail. I may instance also two predictions by the book in which slokas from Sanskrit astrological writings indicating the results of certain conjunctions or planetary positions were shown to be applicable to my horoscope. One foretold specific chronic illnesses for the body of which there was no sign at the time, but long afterwards they put in their unexpected appearance and persisted. Another indicated very precisely that one of my future activities would be to found a new spiritual philosophy and its discipline; at that time I had no knowledge of philosophy or Yoga and no turn or inclination in my mind which could make the realisation of this prediction at all probable. These are only the most precise examples out of a number. Supposing all well-authenticated evidence of the kind to be collected, I am convinced there would be an overwhelmingly strong *prima facie* case and even a body of sufficiently strong empirical proof to establish at least a nucleus of truth in astrology.

That would be the first step. For if astrology is a science and is to take its proper place, the first necessity is to dissipate by an appeal to the empirical mind of the general public as well as of the sceptical thinker the great mass of unenquiring prejudice which now exists against it. To publish the text and translation of the best authorities, as Mr. Iyer is now doing, with illuminating introductions is a preliminary need in this case so that we may know what we have to go upon. The second is to mass evidence of the empirical truth of the science, giving in each case the prediction in all its details, the more detailed the better, the astrological rules on which it was based and the event, each detail of the event being compared with the corresponding detail of the prediction. Only then would there be a clear field for the consideration of the scientific and philosophical doubts, questions and problems which would still arise; but this, though the most important aspect of the matter, I must leave for future handling.

An acceptance of the truth of astrology would not necessarily carry with it a complete determinism of Fate or mechanical law of Karma. In the Indian theory at least there is room for a determination by human will and endeavour, for Fate is mainly a determination by past action and a new will and action can cancel it; only a very strong Karma is imperative and irreducible. Even that may possibly be cancelled if one can enter into the freedom of the spiritual consciousness. One instance at any rate came to my knowledge in which the life had corresponded exactly with the pre-indications of the horoscope so long as the subject remained in the world but, as soon as he left it for a spiritual life, there was no longer any correspondence.

"Sanskrit Research"[1]

THE APPEARANCE of this Anglo-Sanskrit Quarterly "devoted to research work in all fields of Indian Antiquity" is a welcome sign of the recent development towards a wider culture, a more flexible and strenuous scholarship and a more original thinking which promises to lift the Indian mind out of the rut of secondhand provincialism and sterile repetition of commonplaces into which the vices of its school and university education had betrayed it and to equip it for the important contribution we may expect it to make to the world's increasing stock of knowledge. There has been a considerable expansion in this country, both in English and the vernaculars, of that ordinary periodical literature which caters for the popular mind and supplies it with snippets of knowledge, facile information and ready but not always very valuable opinions on all sorts of subjects. But there has been hitherto little or nothing corresponding to those more serious publications common in every European country which appeal to a more limited audience but succeed in popularising within those limits a more serious and original thinking and a more thorough knowledge in each branch of human enquiry. Attempts have been made but, outside the field of religion and philosophy, they have usually foundered in their inception for want of adequate support; they have not found, as they would have found elsewhere, an interested circle of readers. Now, however, there ought to be a sufficient number of cultivated minds interested and competent in Sanskrit scholarship and the research into Indian antiquity to ensure an adequate support and an increasing usefulness for this new Quarterly.

---

[1] An Anglo-Sanskrit Quarterly, conducted by the Sanskrit Academy of India, Bangalore, and edited by Pundit Lingesha Mahābhāgawat.

We regret that this review comes out very belated as it had to be held over last month for want of space.

The second (October) number of the Quarterly is before me and its sound editing and the value and interest of its contents promise well for its future. There are especially two very solid articles, one by Mr. Tilak on "A Missing Verse in the Sankhya Karikas", and another by Professor R. D. Ranade of the Ferguson College headed "Greek and Sanskrit: a Comparative Study", but there is no article without its interest and value. I note that in this number all the contributors, with one exception, are either from Maharashtra or the Madras Presidency. It is to be hoped that the editor will be able to secure the cooperation of Sanskrit scholars in the north so that this Review may become an All-India organ of Indian research.

Mr. Tilak's article shows all the thoroughness and acuteness which that great scholar brings to his work great or small whether he is seeking for the original home of the Aryans in the cryptic mass of the Rig Veda or restoring with his rare powers of deduction a lost verse in the Karikas. The point he seeks to establish, though apparently a small one, has really a considerable importance. He points out that there is a consensus of authority for the existence of 70 verses in Ishwarakrishna's Sankhya-Karikas, but, if we exclude the last three which do not belong to the doctrinal part of the text, we have both in the Indian text and in the Chinese version only 69; at the same time he shows that both Gaudapada's Bhashya and the commentary in the Chinese version contain a passage developing a refutation of four possible subtler causes of the world, Ishwara, Purusha, Kala and Swabhava (God, the Soul, Time and Nature) rejected by the Sankhyas, a refutation which logically ought to be but is not found in the text itself. From the passage in the Bhashya he seeks to reestablish the sense and even the language of the missing verse. It seems to me that he has established both the fact of the missing verse and its substance. But the interesting point is the reason assigned by him for the loss of the verse; it was, he thinks, no accident, but a deliberate suppression made at a time when the Sankhya philosophy was being re-explained by thinkers like Vijnanabhikshu in a Vedantic sense. If so, the point made sheds a very interesting light on the historic course of philosophical thought in India.

The general line which that development followed arises more indirectly from an interesting and carefully reasoned article by Mr. Y. Subbarao on the question of the originality of Shankara's philosophy. Mr. Subbarao seeks to establish his point that it was no new system of thought which Shankara created, but only the re-statement perhaps in a more developed form of a very ancient school of Vedantic interpretation. Certainly, it cannot be supposed that Shankara invented a new philosophy out of his own brain; he believed himself to be establishing against attack the real sense of the Vedantic philosophy founded on the original texts of its canon and supported by the best tradition. Nor does any greater thinker really invent a system new-born from his own intellect; what he does is to take up the material available to him in the past history of thought, to choose, select, reject, to present new lights on old ideas, to develop latent suggestions, to bring into prominence what was before less prominent or not so trenchant and definite, to give a fresh, striking and illuminating sense to old terms, to combine what was before not at all or else ill-combined; in doing so he creates; his philosophy, though not new in its materials, is new in the whole effect it produces and the more powerful light that in certain directions it conveys to the thinking mind. The question is whether Shankara's system was not new in this sense and, though the previous material still subsisting is insufficient to decide the question, it must, I think, be answered provisionally in the affirmative. Adwaitavada undoubtedly existed before, but it was the form Shankara gave it which made it a clear, well-thought-out and powerfully trenchant philosophy and put his name at the head of Indian metaphysicians.

Mr. Subbarao admits that it is impossible to establish an exclusive Adwaitavada, much less the Mayavada, from the Veda, Upanishads, Brahmasutras or the Gita. It is impossible not because the great thinkers who gave us these writings thought confusedly or without a clear grasp of principles, but because theirs was an entirely different method. India began with a synthetic and intuitive manner of thinking based not upon logical distinctions and verbal oppositions, but upon the facts of spiritual experience and vision. In such synthetic and intuitive philosophies truths are arranged according to the place of each in the actual fact of things, as different laws and generalisations are arranged in Science, each positive in its own field and each having its proper relation to the others. The perfection of this method is to be found in the Upanishads and the Gita; and that is the reason why all attempts to interpret these great works by the methods of logical debate and the rigorous exclusions dear to the analytic metaphysician always fail even in the strongest hands; they raise questions about the sense of these works which cannot be conclusively solved, but must necessarily lead to eternal debate, because the method is wrong and the original work itself never intended to cause or countenance such discussions. Only a synthetic method of interpretation can explain a synthetic and intuitive philosophy.

The analytical tendency began with the gradual divisions which ended in the establishment of the six philosophical schools. Each of them claims to be justified by the Veda and from its own point of view each is quite in the right, for the primary data of each are there in the sacred writings. It is where they press to exclusive conclusions and deny and refute each other that they can no longer truly claim Vedic authority. Even the Buddhists could, if they had chosen, have based themselves on the Veda, for there are passages which, if taken by themselves, seem to deny the Atman and attribute all to Karma or to assert the Non-Existent as the source of things. The perfect resort to the analytical method came later; it was employed with great effect though often rather naively by the Buddhists, but it was Shankara who applied rigorously the analytical method of the intellectual reason in all its trenchant clearness and force to metaphysics. Hence the greatness of his position in the history of Indian thought. From his time forward Indian metaphysics was bound to the wheels of the analytical and intellectual mind. Still, it is to be noted that while the philosophers thus split the catholicity of the ancient Truth into warring schools, the general Indian mind was always overpoweringly attracted by the synthetical tendency. The Gita seems to be in part the expression of such a synthetic reaction, the Puranas show constantly the same tendency and even into the philosophical schools it made its entry.

Prof. Ranade's article on Greek and Sanskrit carries us into another field, that of Comparative Philology. His object is in a brief scope to establish the identical origin of Greek and Sanskrit in that which is most essential in the growth of a language, its grammatical forms and syntactical peculiarities. He has had to allow himself only a very small space for so large and important a subject, but within these narrow limits he has done his work with great thoroughness and, subject to a few minor reservations, with a minute accuracy. It is to be regretted that by printing the Greek words in their proper character instead of in Roman type Mr. Ranade has made this interesting essay unintelligible to all but a very few Indian readers. He lays down the principle that the words of each language should be printed in its own type and that anyone who wishes to study Comparative Philology must take the trouble to familiarise himself with the original alphabets. This is a counsel of perfection which is not practicable in India, nor indeed on any large scale in Europe either. If for instance a scholar were dealing with the philology of the Aryan languages and had to cite largely verbal forms both from the European tongues and from Sanskrit and its Indian descendants he would be compelled on this principle to require at least nine different types from the Press to which he entrusted his work. No Press would be able to meet the demand and very few even of his learned readers but would be baffled by the variety. Mr. Ranade himself gives us German words and a German sentence, but not in the Gothic character which alphabetical purism would demand.

There are three or four statements in the article to which objection can be taken and, since in philology even the smallest details are of importance, the learned writer will not object to my pointing them out with some emphasis; in one case at least he has fallen into a serious error by correcting which he may add an interesting and not unimportant subsection to his array of grammatical and syntactical identities between the two languages. I do not understand in the first place what is meant by the statement that "in Greek no difference is made between the dentals and the linguals and they are *fused* together." If it is meant that the Greek language possessed both dental and lingual sounds but expressed them by the same characters, I do not think this can be correct. The distribution of dentals and linguals in the various languages is one of the most curious phenomena in the history of linguistic phonetics and deserves a closer inquiry than has been accorded to it. The Latin and Celtic languages reject the lingual and use only the dental; English on the other hand prefers the linguals, though it uses occasionally the dental *t*, *th* and *d*, all of which it represents by *th*, as in *with*, *thin*, *though*, — a desperately clumsy device thoroughly in keeping with the chaotic wildness of English orthography. Everyone in India knows the difficulty an Englishman finds in pronouncing the Indian dentals; he turns them resolutely into linguals. On the contrary a Frenchman who has not educated himself into the right English pronunciation, will turn the English lingual into a dental; he will say *feasth* instead of *feast*, *noth* instead of *not*, and pronounce *do* as if it were the English *though*. A similar peculiarity is one of the chief features of the brogue, the Irish mispronunciation of English speech; for the natural Irish tongue cannot manage the hard lingual sound in such words as *Peter* and *shoulder*, it mollifies them into true dentals. I have noticed the same peculiarity in the pronunciation of a Spanish actress playing in English on a London stage; otherwise perfect, it produced a strange impression by its invariable transformation of the harder English into the softer Latin sound. Now Greek must certainly have belonged to the Latin-Celtic group in this phonetic peculiarity; otherwise the difference would have been too striking to escape the sensitive ear of the ancient poets and scholars. It seems to me therefore that in the comparative scheme of the two alphabets the Sanskrit linguals should be marked as absent in the Greek and, not as Mr. Ranade represents them, correspondent equally with the dentals to the Greek *tau*, *theta*, and *delta*.

In the comparison of the declensions Mr. Ranade asserts that Greek feminine nouns in long *a* like *chōrā* correspond in their endings to Sanskrit nouns of the type of *bhāryā* and Greek nouns in long *e* like *tīmē* to Sanskrit nouns of the type of *dāsī*. Surely this is an error. The writer has fallen into it because he was looking only at the Attic dialect, but the Attic is only one variation of the Greek language and it is misleading to study it by itself. As a matter of fact, this *ā* and this *ē* both represent the same original sound which must have been the feminine termination in *ā*; only the Doric dialect prefers always the original *ā*, the Ionic modifies it into *ē*, and the Attic standing between the Doric and the Ionic belts makes a compromise. In the Attic when this feminine *ā* is preceded by a vowel it remains unmodified, as also usually when it is preceded by *r*, but if it is preceded by a consonant it becomes *ē*; thus *philiā*, *chōrā*, but *tīmē*, *kōmē*. Ionic will say *philiē* and not *philiā*; Doric *tīmā* and not *tīmē*. This is enough to negative Mr. Ranade's identification of this Attic *ē* with the Sanskrit feminine *ī*. Certainly there are cases in which Sanskrit uses this *ī* termination where Attic has the *ē*, as in *caturthī* and *tetartē*; but this simply means that the Greek has rejected the Sanskrit deviation into the *ī* form and kept to the more regular *ā* which here too will appear in its pure form in the Doric.[2]

In the comparison of tenses Mr. Ranade makes the rather curious assertion that the Sanskrit Conditional does not occur in any other language except perhaps German; but surely if the German "*wurden getodet worden sein*" corresponds to the Sanskrit *abhaviṣyat*, the French conditionals e.g. *auraient été tués* and the English "would have been killed" ought equally to be considered as parallel syntactical constructions; they have the same sense and with a slight difference the same form as the German.

Finally, Mr. Ranade tells us that there are no such compounds in Greek as in Sanskrit and again that there are no *dvandva*, *karmadhāraya* and *bahuvrīhi* compounds in Greek, although there are verbs compounded with prepositions. I am at a loss to understand how so sound a scholar can have come to make a statement so contrary to all the facts. The power of the Greek language to make compounds is one of its most notable characteristics and its rich though never intemperate use is one of the great beauties of the Greek poetical style. When the Romans came into contact with Greek literature, their earlier poets tried to introduce this faculty into Latin and even Virgil describes the sea as *velivolum*, sail-flying, i.e. with sails flying over it like the wings of birds through the air, but the usage was too contrary to the Latin genius to succeed. Not only did the Greek compound prepositions with its verbs, but it compounded nouns and verbs together. Thus from *nau-archos*, ship-ruler, i.e. admiral, they made *nau-archein*, to be an admiral; nor did they hesitate before such forms as *paido-poiein*, to beget children, *paido-tribein*, to train boys, *mnēsikakein*, to remember wrongs, *neotto-tropheisthai*, to be brought up like the young of a bird. In fact with the exception of nominal *dvandvas* the Greek illustrates all the main varieties of the Sanskrit compound. For it is capable of such compounds as *pseudo-martur*, a false witness, *pseudo-christos*, a false Christ, *chauno-politēs*, a silly citizen; as *andro-phonos*, man-killing, *paid-oletor*, a destroyer of one's children, *phusi-zoos*, life-producing, *koruth-aiolos*, helmet-glancing, *lao-kataratos*, cursed by the people, *thumo-leōn*, heart-lion, as *anabadēn* and *katabadēn* answering to the Sanskrit *avyayībhāva*; as *oxu-thumos*, sharp-passioned, *oxu-schoinos*, having sharp reeds, *polu-teknos*, having many children, *io-stephanos*, violet-crowned. The language indeed pullulates with compounds. It is true that they are usually composed of two members only, but compounds of three members are found, as *tris-kako-daimōn*, thrice-evil-fated and Aristophanes even perpetrates such forms as *glischr-antilog-exepitriptos* and *sphragid-onuch-argo-komētēs*.

---

[2] This phonetic variation is a general rule in the dialects and not confined to the feminine termination.

I have dwelt on these points because they leap to the eye in the perfection otherwise complete of an admirable essay which, I hope, is only the first sketch of a more important treatise. But with the exception of the last they are minor points and do not seriously detract from the completeness of the exposition. Especially new and interesting are the parallel between Greek and Vedic accents and the rearrangement of Greek conjugations according to the Sanskrit classification. The common origin of Greek and Sanskrit is apparent enough, but like other philologists Mr. Ranade is far too sure of the conclusion he draws from it. I believe him to be right in thinking that the Indian Aryans and the Greeks came from one stock, but when he says that this has been proved beyond dispute by the discoveries of the philologist he is going much too fast. Common origin of language or even common language does not prove common ethnic origin. The French and Spaniards are not Latins nor the Irish of Dublin and Munster Anglo-Saxons. From the possible causes of linguistic similarity which the writer has given he has omitted one, conquest and cultural pressure. According to the theory of the Italian ethnologist, Sergi, all the Mediterranean races of Northern Africa and Southern Europe belong to one “Mediterranean” stock ancient and highly civilised which was conquered by Aryan savages and this accounts for their “Aryan” languages. It is the same theory that now prevails in a different form with regard to the Aryan conquest of a highly civilised Dravidian India. Philology can bring no sufficient argument to contradict it.

Mr. Ranade deprecates the scorn of the linguistically ignorant for philology, but we must not forget that in Europe it is not the ignorant alone who feel this contempt, but the scientists, and that there is a certain justification for their contempt; this was admitted by so great a philological scholar as Renan when in the evening of his days he had to apologise for his favourite pursuits as “our petty conjectural sciences”. Philology is in fact not yet a science, but rather far too largely a structure of ingenuities and plausible conjectures. It set out with the hope of discovering the origin of language and the scientific laws of its development, but it has failed entirely; and it failed not because they are undiscoverable, — I believe the clue is there lying ready to our hands in the Sanskrit language, — but because it strayed off to the facile pursuit of obvious similarities and identities instead of delving patiently and scrupulously, as all true Science must do, behind the outward appearances of things to get back at origins and embryonic indices. And on its scanty and uncertain data it began to build up enormous structures of theory such as the common origin of Aryan-speaking races, their original habitat, their common form of culture before separation, etc. Such facile play of an ingenious imagination is still the failing of the scholar and justifies to a certain extent the scorn of the patient, accurate and scrupulous physical scientist for the freaks and pretentions of the "philolog".

Not altogether is it justified, for philology has made several interesting and useful discoveries, established a few minor generalisations and, above all, substituted a sounder though not yet entirely sound critical method for the fantastic licence of the old unscientific philology which, once it left the sure ground of grammar, was capable of anything and everything however absurd or impossible. But much has to be learned and a great deal more unlearned before we can measure ourselves with the physical scientist or deserve his approval. It is here that much is to be hoped from the Indian intellect which is more accustomed than the European to move with a penetrating subtlety and accuracy in the things of the mind. But to justify the hope it must first get rid on one side of its attachment to the methods of the Pundit and his subservience to traditional authority and on the other not give itself bound hand and foot to the method of the European scholar or imitate too freely that swiftly leaping ingenious mind of his which gives you in a trice a Scythian or a Persian Buddha, identifies conclusively Murghab and Maurya, Mayasura and Ahura Mazda and generally constructs with magical rapidity the wrong animal out of the wrong bone. We have to combine the laboriousness of the Pundit, the slow and patient conscientiousness of the physical scientist abhorrent of a too facile conclusion and the subtlety of the psychologist in order to deserve the same success in these other sciences and to lift them beyond the shifting field of conjecture.

Sanskrit Research gives us Sanskrit articles as well as English with the laudable object of bringing together with a view to mutual helpfulness the old and the new scholarship. Sanskrit ought still to have a future as a language of the learned and it will not be a good day for India when the ancient tongue ceases entirely to be written or spoken. But if it is to survive, it must get rid of the curse of the heavy pedantic style contracted by it in its decline with the lumbering impossible compounds and the overweight of hair-splitting erudition. The Sanskrit articles in this number are learned and laborious, but they suffer heavily from this defect of style. If the contact established by the *Sanskrit Research* can teach the new scholarship the patient thoroughness of the old and the old the flexibility and penetrating critical sense of the new, it will have done to both a great and much-needed service.

“The Feast of Youth”[1]

THIS IS the first published book of a young poet whose name has recently and suddenly emerged under unusually favourable auspices. English poetry written by an Indian writer who uses the foreign medium as if it were his mother-tongue, with a spontaneous ease, power and beauty, the author a brother of the famous poetess Sarojini Naidu, one of a family which promises to be as remarkable as the Tagores by its possession of culture, talent and genius, challenging attention and sympathy by his combination of extreme youth and a high and early brilliance and already showing in his work, even though still immature, magnificent performance as well as a promise which makes it difficult to put any limits to the heights he may attain, — the book at once attracts interest and has come into immediate prominence amidst general appreciation and admiration. We have had already in the same field of achievement in Sarojini Naidu’s poetry qualities which make her best work exquisite, unique and unmatchable in its kind. The same qualities are not to be found in this book, but it shows other high gifts which, when brought to perfection, must find an equal pitch with a greater scope. Here perhaps are the beginnings of a supreme utterance of the Indian soul in the rhythms of the English tongue.

That is a combination which, it may be well hoped for the sake of India’s future, will not become too frequent a phenomenon. But at the present moment it serves both an artistic and a national purpose and seems to be part of the movement of destiny. In any case, whatever may be said of the made-in-India type of secondhand English verse in which men of great literary gift in southern India too often waste their talent, Mr.

---

[1] Poems, by Harindranath Chattopadhyay, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.

Chattopadhyay's production justifies itself by its beauty. This is not only genuine poetry, but the work of a young, though still unripe genius with an incalculable promise of greatness in it. As to the abundance here of all the essential materials, the instruments, the elementary powers of the poetical gift, there can be not a moment's doubt or hesitation. Even the first few lines, though far from the best, are quite decisive. A rich and finely lavish command of language, a firm possession of his metrical instrument, an almost blinding gleam and glitter of the wealth of imagination and fancy, a stream of unfailingly poetic thought and image and a high though as yet uncertain pitch of expression, are the powers with which the young poet starts. There have been poets of a great final achievement who have begun with gifts of a less precious stuff and had by labour within themselves and a difficult alchemy to turn them into pure gold. Mr. Chattopadhyay is not of these; he is rather overburdened with the favours of the goddess, comes like some Vedic Marut with golden weapons, golden ornaments, car of gold, throwing in front of him continual lightnings of thought in the midst of a shining rain of fancies, and a greater government and a more careful and concentrated use rather than an enhancement of his powers is the one thing his poetry needs for its perfection.

The name of the volume, taken from its first poem, *The Feast of Youth*, is an appropriate description of its spirit, though one is inclined to call it rather a riot or revel than a simple feast. It is the singing of a young bacchanal of the Muse drunk with a bright and heady wine. In his first poem he promises to himself,

> O! I shall draw the blue out of the skies
> And offer it like wine of paradise
> To drunken Youth,

and the rest is an ample fulfilment of the promise. For the thought and sentiment are an eager, fine and fiery drinking of the joy of life and being, not in the pagan or physically sensuous kind of enjoyment, but with a spiritual and singularly pure intoxication of the thought, imagination and higher sense. The spiritual joy of existence, of its primal colour and symbolic subtleties, its essential sense, images, suggestions, a free and intense voluptuousness of light is the note. Occasionally there is the attempt to bring in an incidental tone of sorrow, but attacked by the glowing atmosphere of exultation, overcome and rendered unreal by the surrounding light and bliss, it fails to convince. Expression matches substance; there is here no holding back, no reticence, no idea of self-restraint, but rather a reckless ecstasy and outpouring. Suggestion chases suggestion, fancy runs after or starts away from fancy with no very exacting sequence; the exhilaration of self-utterance dominates. One is a little dazzled at first and has to accustom the eyes to the glitter, before one can turn to the heart of the meaning: excess, profusion, an unwearied lavishing of treasures creates the charm of the manner as well as its limitations, but this is often an excellent sign in a young poet, for it promises much richness in the hour of maturity; and here it is almost always, — not quite always, for there are lapses, — a fine, though not yet a sovereign excess, which continually attracts and stimulates the imagination, if it does not always quite take it captive.

There is here perhaps a side effect of one remarkable peculiarity of Mr. Chattopadhyay's poetical mentality. There is a background in it of Hindu Vedantic thought and feeling which comes out especially in "Fire", "Dusk", "Messages" and other poems, but will be found repeatedly elsewhere and runs through the whole as a sort of undercurrent; but the mould of the thought, the colour and tissue of the feeling betray a Moslem, a Persian, a Sufi influence. This source of inspiration appears in the title of some of the poems, and it has helped perhaps the tendency to lavishness. Sanskrit poetry, even when it clothes itself in the regal gold and purple of Kalidasa, or flows in the luscious warmth and colour of Jayadeva, keeps still a certain background of massive restraint, embanks itself in a certain firm solidity; the later poetry of the regional languages, though it has not that quality, is oftenest sparing at heart, does not give itself up to a curious opulence. But the Moslem mind has the tendency of mosaic and arabesque, loves the glow of many colours, the careful jewellery of image and phrase; its poetry is apparelled like a daughter of the Badshahs.

> Her girdles and her fillets gleam
> Like changing fires on sunset seas:
> Her raiment is like morning mist,
> Shot opal, gold and amethyst.

Mr. Chattopadhyay's spirit and manner are too expansive for the carefully compressed artistry of the Persian poets, but the influence of the passion for decorative colour is there. But though the kinship is visible even in the external expression, what is more striking, is a certain idiosyncrasy of the fancy, the turn given to the thought, the colour of the vision, which are very often of the Sufi type. Something of the union of the two cultures appeared in the temperament of Mrs. Naidu's poetry, but here it is more subtly visible as part of the intellectual strain. This is however only one shaping influence behind; except in one or two poems, where we get some echo of his sister's manner and movement, this young poet is astonishingly original; it is himself that he utters in every line.

The thought-substance, the governing inspiration of this poetry is such as might well spring from a fusion of the Vedantic and the Sufi mentality. It is the utterance of a mystical joy in God and Nature, sometimes of the direct God-union, — but this is not quite so successful — more characteristically of God through Nature. Yet this is not usually the physical Nature that we feel with the outward bodily sense; it is a mystic life of light and ecstasy behind her, hidden in sun and moon and star, morning and noon and dusk and night, sea and sky and earth. It is to bring this remoter splendid vision near to us that image is strained and crowded, symbol multiplied. We get this mystic sense and aspiration in the poem, "Fire", in an image of love, —

> I am athirst for one glimpse of your beautiful face, O Love!
> Veiled in the mystical silence of stars and the purple of skies.

The closing lines of the "Hour of Rest" express it more barely, — I quote them only for their directness, though the expression stumbles and even lapses badly in the last two lines, —

> There is a sweetness in the world
> That I have sometimes felt,
> And oft in fragrant petals curl'd
> His fragrance I have smelt . . .
> And in sad notes of birds, unfurl'd
> The kindness He hath dealt!

It is more beautifully and mystically brought out in another poem, "Worship", —

> Like a rich song you chant your red-fire sunrise,
> Deep in my dreams, and forge your white-flame moon . . .
> You hide the crimson secret of your sunset,
> And the pure, golden message of your noon.
>
> Your fashion cool-grey clouds within my body,
> And weave your rain into a diamond mesh.
> The Universal Beauty dances, dances
> A glimmering peacock in my flowering flesh!

Spring lives as a symbol of inner experience, universal spring, —

> The Spring-hues deepen into human Bliss!
> The heart of God and man in scent are blended . . .
> The sky meets earth and heaven in one transparent kiss.

Simple, moving, melodious and direct is its utterance in "Messages", with one image at least which deepens into intimate revelation, —

> In my slumber and my waking
> I can hear His sobbing flute . . .
> Thro' the springtime and the autumn
> Shaping every flower and fruit . . .
> And His gleaming laughter colours
> Orange hills and purple streams,
> He is throbbing in the crystal,
> Magic centre of my dreams. . . .
> Silver stars are visible twinkles
> Of His clear, transparent touch . . .

> He is moving every moment
> To the world He loves so much!

In the sea

> God churns thy waters into silvern foam
> And breathes His music into every shell.

Noon is the Master's "mystic dog with paws of fire" and "Behind the clouds some hidden Flutist plays His flute." These are some of the more overt and express phrasings of the predominant idea, exquisite in harmony, lovely and subtly penetrating in their thought. Elsewhere it is simply Nature and the bliss, light and wonder behind her that are expressed, the rest is concealed, yet suggested in the light. But there is always the same principle of a bright mystic vision and the transmutation of natural things into symbol values of the universal light, joy and beauty.

This poetry is an utterance of an ancient mystic experience with a new tone and burden of its own. Its very character brings in a certain limitation, it is empty of the touch of normal human life; our passion is absent, the warm blood of our emotion does not run through the veins of this Muse to flush her cheek with earthly colour. There is indeed a spiritual passion, a spiritual, not a physical sensuousness. Light and ecstasy there is, not the flame of earth's desire. Heaven takes up the symbols of the earth-life, but there is not the bringing of the Divine into the normal hues of our sight and our feeling which is the aim of Vaishnava poetry. Crystal is a favourite epithet of the poet, and there is here something crystalline, a rainbow prism of colours in the whiteness of shining stalactites. There is at first even some impression of a bright and fiery coldness of purity, as of a virgin rarity of the atmosphere of some high dawn, or as if that had happened which is imaged in "Dusk",

> Ah God! my heart is turning crystalline
> Seeing Thee play at crystal stars above!

or as if the poet had indeed, as he writes elsewhere, "put out the lamp of his love and desire, for their light is not real", and replaced them by the miraculous fire of this shining ideal. In the Sonnets, however, in some other poems and in the poet's later work there is the beginning of a greater warmth and a nearer sweetness.

The genius, power, newness of this poetry is evident. If certain reserves have to be made, it is because of a frequent immaturity in the touch which at times makes itself too sharply felt and is seldom altogether absent. I do not refer to the occasional lapses and carelessnesses of which I have noted one example, — for these are not very numerous, and the flagrant subjection of the expression to the necessity of the rhyme occurs only in that one passage, — but to the fact that the poet is still too much possessed by his gifts rather than their possessor, too easily carried away by the delight of brilliant expression and image to steep his word always in the deeper founts of his inspiration. The poetic expression is always brilliant, but never for long together quite sure, — lines of most perfect beauty too often alternate with others which are by no means so good. The image-maker's faculty is used with a radiant splendour and lavishness, but without discrimination; what begins as imaginative vision frequently thins away into a bright play of fancy, and there are lines which come dangerously near to prettiness and conceit. Especially there is not yet that sufficient incubation of the inspiration and the artistic sense which turns a poem into a perfectly satisfying artistic whole; even in the Sonnets, beautiful enough in themselves, there is an insufficient force of structure. The totality of effect in most of these poems is a diffusion, a streaming on from one idea and image to another, not a well-completed shapeliness. The rhythmic turn is always good, often beautiful and admirable, but the subtlest secrets of sound have not yet been firmly discovered, they are only as it were glimpsed and caught in passing.

These limitations however matter very little as they are natural in a first and early work and do not count in comparison with the riches disclosed. Moreover there is quite enough to show that they are likely to be rapidly outgrown. Young as he is, the poet has already almost all the secrets, and has only to use them more firmly and constantly. Already — in most of the poems, but I may instance "Memory", "My Unlaunched Boat", the three Sonnets and some of the Songs of Sunlight, — there is the frequency of a full and ripe expression and movement, sometimes varying from a mellow clarity to a concentrated force, —

> daylight dies
> In silence on the bosom of the darkening skies . . .
> And with him, every note
> Is crushed to silent sorrow in the song-bird's throat, —

sometimes in a soft, clear and magical beauty, —

> The Spring hath come and gone with all her coloured hours.
> The earth beneath her tread
> Laughed suddenly a peal of blue and green and red . . .
> And for her tender beauty wove a flowery bed . . .
> She gathered all her touch-born blossoms from bright bowers . . .
> And fled with all the laughter of earth's flowers,

sometimes in a delicate brightness and richness, constantly in a daring yet perfectly successful turn, suggestion or subtle correspondence of image. There is often an extraordinary and original felicity in the turning of the physical image to bring out some deep and penetrating psychological or psychical suggestion.

Since the appearance of this book Mr. Chattopadhyay has given to the public one or two separate poems of a still greater beauty which show a very swift development of his powers; he is already overcoming, almost though not yet quite entirely, the touch of unripeness which was apparent in his earlier poems. Sureness of expression, a thought in full possession of itself and using in admirable concordance its imaginative aids and means, subtler turns of melody and harmony, especially an approach to firmer structural power are now strongly visible and promise the doubling of the ecstatic poet with an impeccable artist. There is also a greater warmth and nearness, a riper stress, a deeper musing. We may well hope to find in him a supreme singer of the vision of God in Nature and Life, and the meeting of the divine and the human which must be at first the most vivifying and liberating part of India's message to a humanity that is now touched everywhere by a growing will for the spiritualising of the earth-existence.

“Shama’a”

I WAS unable to greet duly the first appearance of this new magazine of art, literature and philosophy edited by Miss Mrinalini Chattopadhyay; I take the opportunity of the second number to repair the omission I had then unwillingly to make. The appearance of this quarterly is one of the signs as yet too few, but still carrying a sure promise, of a progressive reawakening of the higher thinking and aesthetic mentality in India after a temporary effacement in which the Eastern mind was attempting to assimilate in the wrong way elementary or second-rate occidental ideas. In that misguided endeavour it became on the intellectual and practical side ineffectively utilitarian and on the aesthetic content with the cheap, ugly and vulgar. The things of the West it assimilated were just the things the West had either left behind it or was already finishing and preparing to cast away. “Shama’a”, like “Rupam”, though less sumptuously apparelled, is distinguished by its admirable get-up and printing and is an evidence of the recovery of a conscience in the matter of form, a thing once universal in India but dead or dormant since the Western invasion. The plan of the review is designed to meet a very real need of the moment and the future: for its purpose is to bring together in its pages the mind of the Indian renaissance and the most recent developments of European culture. In India we as yet know next to nothing of what the most advanced minds of Europe are thinking and creating in the literary, artistic and philosophic field, — for that matter most of us, preoccupied with politics and domestic life, have a very inadequate information of what we ourselves are doing in these matters. It is to be hoped that this magazine will be an effective agent in curing these deficiencies. It has begun well: the editor, Miss Chattopadhyay, has the needed gift of attracting contributions of the right kind and there is in “Shama’a” as a result of her skill a pervading and harmonising atmosphere of great distinction and fineness.

The frontispiece of this number is a portrait by a modern English artist, J. D. Fergusson, and an article on his work by Charles Marriot is the most interesting of the contributions. It sets out to discover on the basis of the real as opposed to the accidental differences between the Western and the Eastern methods of painting the inner meaning of their divergence. The attempt to create an illusion of reality to the eye, to copy Nature, which was so long a considerable part of the occidental theory is regarded as a passing phase for which the introduction of oil paint gave the occasion, an accidental and not at all an essential difference: European art at the beginning was free from it and is now rejecting this defect or this limitation. Nor are other details of method, such as the use of cast shadows as opposed to a reliance on outline, the real difference. None of these things involve necessarily an illusion of reality, and even where that inartistic fiction does not intervene, as in the Italian fresco and tempera painting and in oil painting that reduces shadow to a minimum and relies on outline, the fundamental difference between the East and the West remains constant and unalterable. The fundamental difference is that the Eastern artist paints in two and the European in three dimensions. Eastern painting suggests depth only by successive planes of distance; the Western artist uses perspective, and while the use of perspective to create an optical illusion is an error, its emphasis on depth as a mental conception extends the opportunities of expressing truth. It is in any case in the use of the third dimension that there comes in the true and essential difference.

The writer then attempts to link up this divergence with the concepts of the two continents with regard to life. He hazards the suggestion that the separate planes of a Chinese landscape correspond to “the doctrine of successive incarnations, of separate planes of existence, each the opportunity for its own virtues”, and the occidental artist’s “active exploration and exploitation of the ground between the planes of distance” corresponds to the West’s view of this life as a continual discipline, the sole opportunity for salvation, a battle to be won now and here, and of "material facts . . . not as evils in themselves and . . . opportunities for asceticism and renunciation, but as tests of the spirit, good or bad according as they are used rightly or wrongly", — an active exploration as opposed to a passive acceptance. I find it impossible to accept this ingenious idea: it strikes me as a little fanciful in itself, but in any case it is based on a misunderstanding of the Eastern mind. The usual Western error is made of confusing one strong tendency of Eastern philosophy for the whole of its thinking and a view of reincarnation is attributed to the East that is not its real view. The successive rebirths are not to the Eastern mind separate planes of existence, each independently the opportunity of its own virtues, but a closely connected sequence and the action of each life determines the frame and basic opportunities of the following birth. It is a rhythm of progression in which the present is not cut out from but one with the past and future. Life and action are here too and not only in the West tests of the spirit, good or bad according as they are used rightly or wrongly, and it is and must be always this present life that is of immediate and immense importance, though it is not and cannot in reason be final or irreparable: for salvation may be won now, but if there is failure, the soul has still its future chances. As a matter of historical fact the great periods of Eastern art were not periods of a passive acceptance of life. In India, the cradle of these philosophies, they coincided with an active exploration of the material universe through physical science and a strong insistence on life, on its government, on the exploration of its every detail, on the call of even its most sensuous and physical attractions. The literature and art of India are not at all a dream of renunciation and the passive acceptance of things, but actively concerned with life, though not as exteriorly as the art of the West or with the same terrestrial limitation of the view. It is there that we have to seek for the root of the divergence, not so much in the intellectual idea as in a much subtler spiritual difference.

The difference is that the Western artist, — the Western mind generally, — is led to insist on the physical as the first fact and the determinant, as it is indeed in vital truth and practice, and he has got hold of that side of the truth and in relation to it sees all the rest. He not only stands firmly on the earth, but he has his head in the terrestrial atmosphere and looks up from it to higher planes. The Eastern has his foot on earth, but his head is in the psychical and spiritual realms and it is their atmosphere that affects his vision of the earth. He regards the material as the first fact only in appearance and not in reality: matter is to him real only as a mould and opportunity of spiritual being and the psychical region is an intermediary through which he can go back from the physical to the spiritual truth. This it is that conditions his whole artistic method and makes him succeed best in proportion as he brings the spiritual and psychical truth to illuminate and modify the material form. If he were to take to oil painting and the third dimension, I imagine that he would still before long break out of the physical limitations and try to make the use of the third a bridge to a fourth and psychical or to a fifth and spiritual dimension. That in fact seems to be very much what the latest Western art itself is trying to do. But it does not seem to me in some of its first efforts to have got very high beyond the earth attraction. The cubist and the futurist idea have the appearance of leaving the physical view only to wander astray among what one is tempted to call in theosophic language astral suggestions, a geometry or a movement vision of the world just above or behind ours. It is just so, one imagines, that a mind moving in those near supramaterial regions would distortedly half see physical persons and things. Mr. Fergusson's portrait is of another kind, but while perfectly though not terrestrially rational in its rhythm, seems to be inspired from a superior sphere of the same regions. It is a powerful work and there is a strong psychical truth of a kind, but the spirit, the suggestions, the forms are neither of heaven nor of earth. The impression given is the materialisation of a strong and vivid astral dream. The difference between this and the psychic manner of the East will at once appear to anyone who turns to the much less powerful but gracious and subtle Indian painting in the first number.

Another article of some interest on "Art and History" by John M. Thorburn gives us much writing in an attractive style

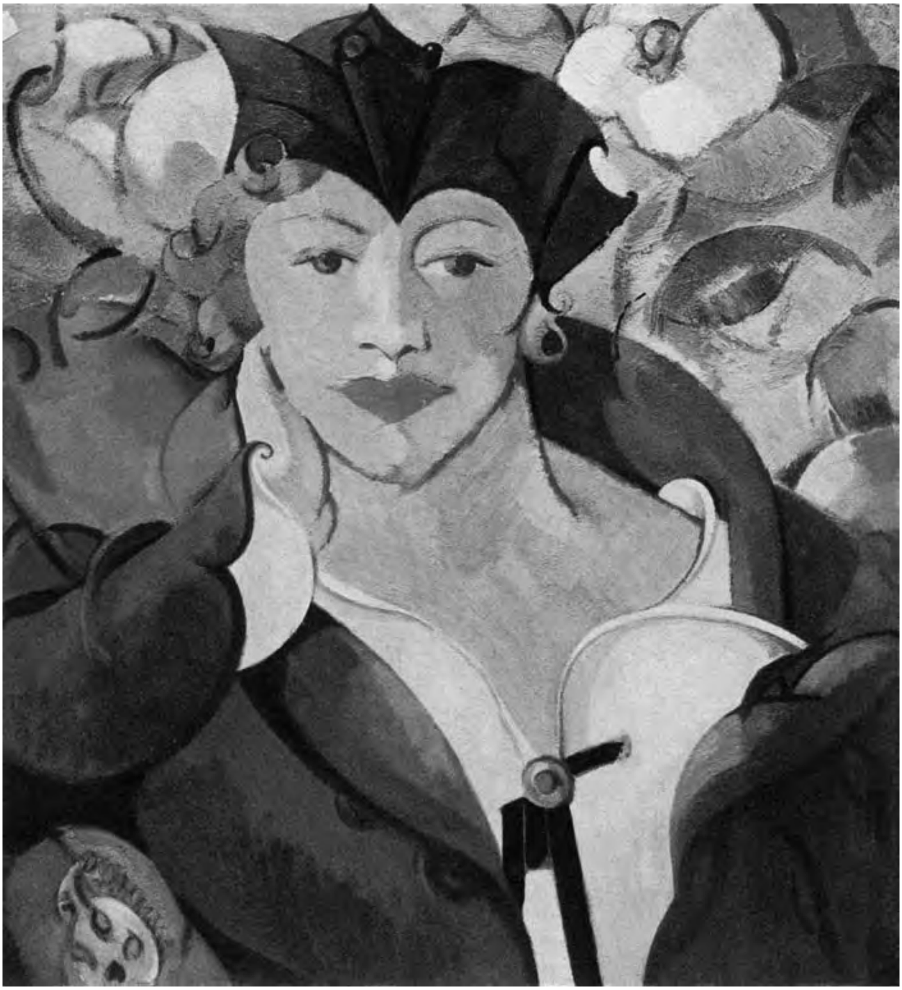

7. *Rose-Rhythm*, by J. D. Fergusson
(as reproduced in *Shama'a*)

www ɔoks.com

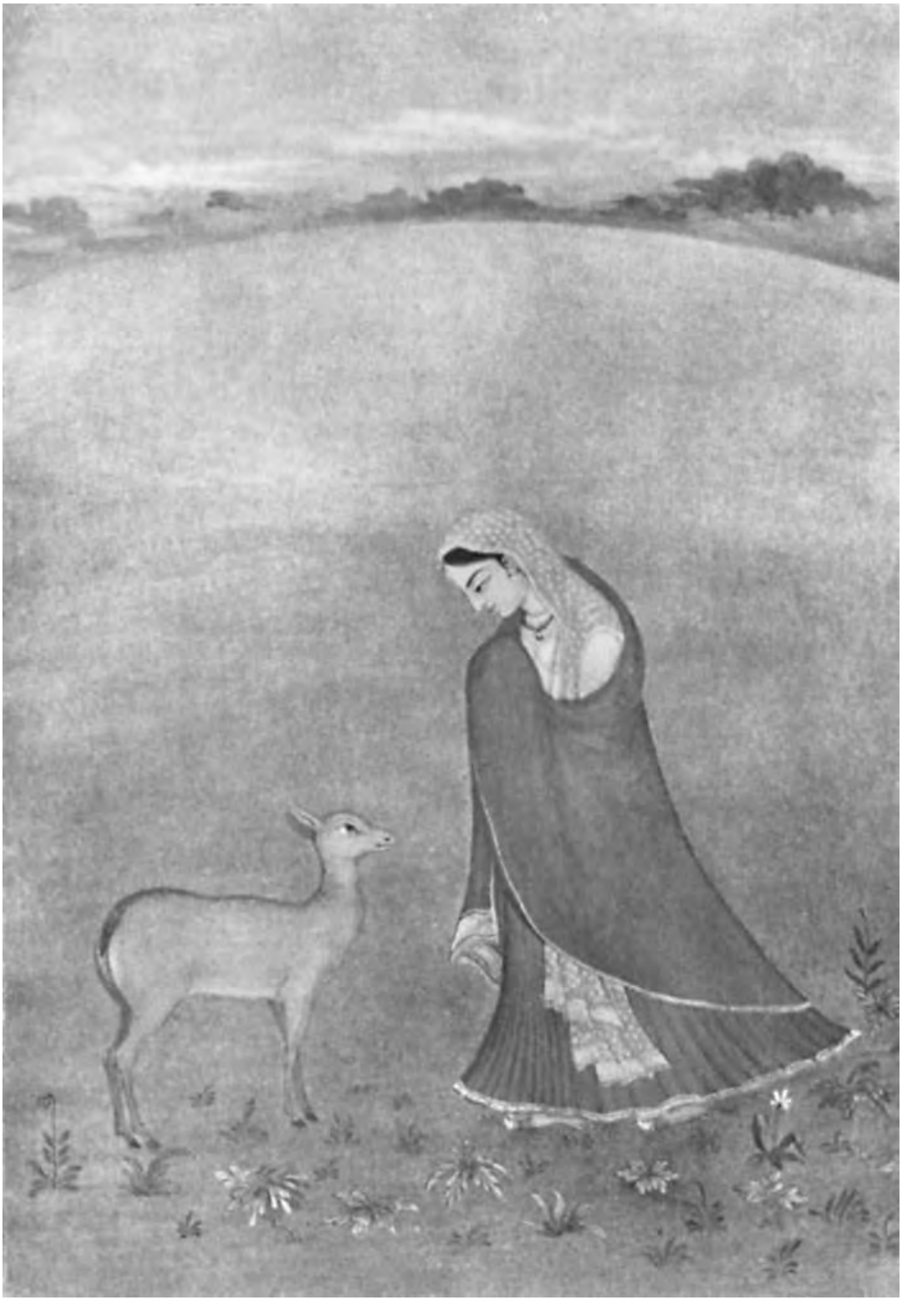

8. *Raga*, artist unknown
(as reproduced in *Shama'a*)

www. oks.com

and some suggestive ideas, but there is a soft mistiness about both as yet too common in attempts at intuitive thinking and writing which makes it a little difficult to disentangle the ideas and get at their relation and sequence. The thought turns around rather than deals with national temperament and its shaping influence in art and there is a comparison in this respect between the French and the English temperament on one side and the German or the Russian on the other. But the attempt does not get deep. The line taken is that the distinguishing characteristic of the French and English mind are the critical faculty, humour, a sense for character and for the common as well as the uncommon, for detail as well as principle, a power of social adaptation or readaptation, the instinct in the English to carry on, in the French to change and reconstruct, and all these are connected together and are the fruit of Graeco-Roman civilisation. The writer thinks that the Graeco-Roman tradition and its true development in the modern world is the only saving ethical and political ideal, at least for Europe, — a salutary saving clause. At the same time he has found his highest artistic satisfaction in German music and rates the relative power of Russian literature and possibly the music above the recent artistic work of Europe, and he is perplexed by the coexistence of this superiority with Russia's social instability and with Germany's lack of literary humour and of the sense for character. And, though this reserve is not expressly made, Germany cannot be taxed with lack of the social constructive faculty, seeing that it was the German who in far back times developed the feudal system and has more recently perfected the modern industrial order. And yet Germany is distinctly outside the Graeco-Roman tradition. He discovers that Germany lacks the reflective critical faculty, that there is "something in the German artistic and philosophical temperament that is at variance with social good", "strangely hostile to the ethical and artistic ideal of Greece or the administrative and harmonising genius of Rome". Germany is entirely instinctive, at the mercy of her temperament, unable to liberate herself from it, instinctive in her music, her philosophy too an instinctive movement, reflection never able to get outside itself or even to feel the need to do so. As for Russia, hers is the kind of art that is an expression of the division and breaches of human society rather than of its wholeness or its peace, an art born of Nature's error and not like the French and English of her truth. It seems however that the art born of Nature's error, of her suffering and ill health is more wonderful and alluring than the art born of her ordered ways. After all is said, the truth of Nature is only a partial and defective truth and her error only a partial error: there is no necessary harmony at least in the finite between what we value as goodness and what we value as beauty. And the solution of all the contradiction is to be sought in the experience of the "effort of the finite spirit to come to a fuller consciousness of itself or . . . of a universe that only uses that spirit as an instrument towards its own self-knowledge, self-perfection or self-interpretation". The conclusion is unexceptionable, but the line of thought leading to it stumbles needlessly in pursuit of a false clue.

The article is interesting chiefly as an indication of the perplexity of a certain type of European mind hesitating and held back in the grasp of the old that is dying and yet feeling the call of things that draw towards the future. The superstition of the perfect excellence of the Graeco-Roman tradition as rendered by England and France — more strictly the Latinised or semi-Latinised mind and the Renaissance tradition — survives: but as a matter of fact that tradition or what remains of it is a dead shell. The Time-Spirit has left it, retaining no doubt what it needs for its ulterior aims, and is passing on to far other things. In that evolution Germany and Russia among European nations have taken a leading place. Germany has failed to go the whole way, because to a strong but coarse and heavy vital force and a strict systematising scientific intellect she could not successfully bring in the saving power of intuition. Her music indeed was very great and revolutionised the artistic mind of Europe, not because it was instinctive, but because it was intuitive, — because it brought in a profound intuitive feeling and vision to uplift through the conquered difficulties of a complex harmony a large and powerful intelligence. Her philosophy was at first a very great but too drily intellectual statement of truths that get their living meaning only in the intuitive experience, but afterwards in Schopenhauer and Nietzsche as in Wagner it developed the intuitive vision and led to a deep change in European thinking. But the life of Germany remained still unaffected by her higher mind, well-organised, systematic but vitally and aesthetically crude, and she has failed to respond to the deepest forces of the future. The stream has turned aside to Russia, Russia deeply intuitive in her emotional and psychic being, moved through her sensibilities and aiding by a sensitive fineness there a yet imperfect but rapidly evolving intuitivity of the intelligence. It is clear enough that the labour of the soul and mind of Russia has not arrived at victory and harmony, but her malady is the malady and suffering of a great gestation, and her social instability the condition of an effort towards the principle of a greater order than the self-satisfied imperfection of the Graeco-Roman tradition or of the modern social principle. The martyrdom of Russia might from this point of view be regarded as a vicarious sacrifice for the sin of obstinacy in imperfection, the sin of self-retardation of the entire race. It is at any rate by some large and harmonising view of this kind and not by any paradox of superior values of good and truth resulting in inferior values of beauty and negative values of no good and no truth flowering in superior values of beauty that we are likely best to understand both the effort of the finite spirit and the effort of the universe through it towards its own self-perception and self-interpretation.

The only other article of any length is a second instalment of Babu Bhagavan Das's "Krishna, a Study in the theory of Avataras", which contains much interesting matter and especially some very striking citations from that profound and beautiful work, the Bhagawat Purana: but the renderings given are rather modernising paraphrases than translations. There is a brief essay or rather the record of a reflection by Mr. Cousins on "Symbol and Metaphor in Art", quite the best thing in thought and style in the number: a translation by Mr. V. V. S. Aiyar of some verses of Tiruvalluvar done with grace and a fluid warmth and colour — perhaps too much fluidity and grace to render rightly the terse and pregnant force that is supposed, and surely with justice, to be the essential quality of the poetic style of the Kurral: a dialogue in poetic prose, "The Vision", by Harindranath Chattopadhyay, in which we get imagination, beauty and colour of phrase and a moving sentiment, — but not yet, I think, all the originality and sureness of touch of the poet when he uses his own already mastered instrument, — and another prose poem by V. Chakkarai inspired by Rabindranath and executed with a sufficient grace. All these together make up an admirable number.

The closing portion of the magazine is devoted to notes and criticisms. Several closely printed pages are given to a critical review of Professor S. Radhakrishnan's work on the Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore by Mr. J. B. Raju. The criticism gives unhappily, in spite of its interest, an impression of ability very badly used, for it is throughout what a criticism of this kind should not be, censorious, hostile, bitterly incisive and sometimes almost brutal in the inimical tone of its phrases. A philosophic discussion should surely be conducted in a graver and more impersonal tone. In addition there is a criticism by dissection so discursively and incoherently minute that it is impossible to form a coherent idea of the thought the work animadverted upon actually does develop. I have not read the book in question, but Professor Radhakrishnan is well known as a perfectly competent philosophic critic and thinker and it is impossible to believe that anything he has written is, as this criticism constantly suggests, a mere mass of imbecile inconsequence. I gather that his offence is to have done exactly what he should have done, that is, to represent the thought of Tagore, — who is a poet and not a metaphysical dialectician but an intuitive seer, — as an intuitive whole: the dry-as-dust intellectual formalism of analysis demanded of him by his critic would have been in such a subject grotesquely out of place. A still greater offence is that he has endorsed the poet's exaltation of the claims of intuition as superior, at least in a certain field, to those of the intellect. Mr. Raju seems to think that this claim consecrates "a mistaken and obsolete psychology", the infatuation of "a certain glamour, which in the popular imagination still hangs round the ancient words, mysticism and intuition." Mistaken, if you choose to think so; but obsolete? What then are we to make of Bergson's intuition, James' cosmic consciousness, Eucken's superconscient, the remarkable trend towards mysticism of recent scientists, mathematicians, thinkers, the still more remarkable speculations of contemporary Russian philosophers? These men at least are not irresponsible poets or incompetent dupes of the imagination, but psychologists of the first rank and the most original contemporary thinkers in the philosophic field. Mr. Raju's defence of the claims of the reason is well enough written, but it is founded on contentions that once were commonplaces but are now very disputable assertions. Indeed, if the most recent thought has any value, he is himself open to the retort of his own remark that he is the victim of a mistaken and obsolete psychology. Mr. Raju may be right, the modern psychologists and philosophers may be wrong, but the time has passed when the claims of intuition could be dismissed with this high, disdainful lightness. The subject, however, is too large to be touched at all within my present limits: I hope to return to it hereafter.

The review contains some poetry but, Mr. R. C. Bonnerji's gracious and cultured verses apart, all is of the aggressively modern type. There are a number of poems taken or quoted from the American journal *Poetry* that are one and all of the same stereotyped kind of free verse. Eleanor Hammond's "Transition" turns upon a pretty emotion and Evelyn Scott's "Fear" on an idea with fine possibilities, but as usual in this kind the style has no trace of any poetic turn or power but only a tamely excited and childlikely direct primitive sincerity and the rhythm is more aggressively prosaic than any honest prose rhythm could manage to be. C. L.'s "All was His!" is good in thought and conscientious in style but the rhythm is hopelessly stumbling and lame: but then perhaps it is written on some new metrical principle, — one never knows in these days. The noteworthy poem of the number is Henry Ruffy's "London Nocturne", placed, I presume as a study in significant contrasts, opposite

Mukul Dey's drawing of Tagore. It is an admirable specimen of the now dominant vitalistic or "life" school of modern poetry. Personally, this school does not appeal to me. Its method seems to be to throw quite ordinary and obvious things violently at our eyes and their sense effects and suggestions at our midriffs and to underline the effects sometimes by an arresting baldness and poverty of presentation and sometimes on the contrary by a sensational exaggeration of image or phrase. Thus the poet tells us in one luminous line that

> A policeman's clumsy tread goes slowly by,

and in another makes us hear

> Another policeman trying doors this way,

a "car of Juggernaut"

> Tuff-tuffing, clattering, clashing, chaos-crowned,

a muddled clatter, voices confused, a shrieking whistle, solemn clock strokes "muttering ere they die", that

> Fade like a halo or a dying sigh,

another motor humming "a bee refrain", with its snorting, trumping, disdainful speed horn

> Striking the silence like a flash of flame,

a luckless harlot, a heavy horse hoof, the clank clank of a cab, silent wheels, jingling harness, and this succession of sounds leads up to the vision of a sly slinking white-face dawn, wan, thin and "sickly ill", a slight-formed sylph

> Drawing her veil to show a death-pale form.

A feverishly acute impression of a London night is forced on the sense soul in me, but this poetry does not get beyond or give anything more: the poet's policemen and tuff-tuffing clattering crowned chaos of a motor car carry no meaning to me beyond the dreary fact of their existence and the suggestion of a sick melancholy of insomnia. But it seems to me that poetry ought to get beyond and should give something more. I do not deny the possibility of a kind of power in this style and am not blind to the aim at a strong identifying vision through something intuitive in the sense, a felt exactness of outward things, but an inartistic and often unpoetic method cannot be saved by a good intention. Still this is the kind of writing that holds the present in England and America and it demands its place in the purpose of the magazine. I hope however that we shall get often a relief in strains that go beyond the present to a greater poetic future, — let us say, like the exquisite rhythm and perfect form of beauty of Harindranath's poem in the first number.

All criticism of thought or personal preference apart, almost everything in this number is good in matter and interesting in its own kind. "Shama'a" already stands first among Indian magazines in the English tongue for sustained literary quality and distinction of tone and interest.

Part Nine

Bankim – Tilak – Dayananda

Sri Aurobindo wrote the pieces in this part at various times between 1907 and 1920; he published five of them in periodicals and one as the introduction to a book.

Rishi Bankim Chandra

THERE are many who, lamenting the by-gone glories of this great and ancient nation, speak as if the Rishis of old, the inspired creators of thought and civilisation, were a miracle of our heroic age, not to be repeated among degenerate men and in our distressful present. This is an error and thrice an error. Ours is the eternal land, the eternal people, the eternal religion, whose strength, greatness, holiness may be overclouded but never, even for a moment, utterly cease. The hero, the Rishi, the saint, are the natural fruits of our Indian soil; and there has been no age in which they have not been born. Among the Rishis of the later age we have at last realised that we must include the name of the man who gave us the reviving mantra which is creating a new India, the mantra *Bande Mataram*.

The Rishi is different from the saint. His life may not have been distinguished by superior holiness nor his character by an ideal beauty. He is not great by what he was himself but by what he has expressed. A great and vivifying message had to be given to a nation or to humanity; and God has chosen this mouth on which to shape the words of the message. A momentous vision had to be revealed; and it is his eyes which the Almighty first unseals. The message which he has received, the vision which has been vouchsafed to him, he declares to the world with all the strength that is in him, and in one supreme moment of inspiration expresses it in words which have merely to be uttered to stir men's inmost natures, clarify their minds, seize their hearts and impel them to things which would have been impossible to them in their ordinary moments. Those words are the mantra which he was born to reveal and of that mantra he is the seer.

What is it for which we worship the name of Bankim today? what was his message to us or what the vision which he saw and has helped us to see? He was a great poet, a master of beautiful language and a creator of fair and gracious dream-figures in the world of imagination; but it is not as a poet, stylist or novelist that Bengal does honour to him today. It is probable that the literary critic of the future will reckon *Kapalkundala*, *Bishabriksha* and *Krishnakanter Will* as his artistic masterpieces, and speak with qualified praise of *Devi Chaudhurani*, *Ananda Math*, *Krishnacharit* or *Dharmatattwa*. Yet it is the Bankim of these latter works and not the Bankim of the great creative masterpieces who will rank among the Makers of Modern India. The earlier Bankim was only a poet and stylist — the later Bankim was a seer and nation-builder.

But even as a poet and stylist Bankim did a work of supreme national importance, not for the whole of India, or only indirectly for the whole of India, but for Bengal which was destined to lead India and be in the vanguard of national development. No nation can grow without finding a fit and satisfying medium of expression for the new self into which it is developing — without a language which shall give permanent shape to its thoughts and feelings and carry every new impulse swiftly and triumphantly into the consciousness of all. It was Bankim's first great service to India that he gave the race which stood in its vanguard such a perfect and satisfying medium. He was blamed for corrupting the purity of the Bengali tongue; but the pure Bengali of the old poets could have expressed nothing but a conservative and unprogressing Bengal. The race was expanding and changing, and it needed a means of expression capable of change and expansion. He was blamed also for replacing the high literary Bengali of the Pundits by a mixed popular tongue which was neither the learned language nor good vernacular. But the Bengali of the Pundits would have crushed the growing richness, variety and versatility of the Bengali genius under its stiff inflexible ponderousness. We needed a tongue for other purposes than dignified treatises and erudite lucubrations. We needed a language which should combine the strength, dignity or soft beauty of Sanskrit with the verve and vigour of the vernacular, capable at one end of the utmost vernacular raciness and at the other of the most sonorous gravity. Bankim divined our need and was inspired to meet it, — he gave us a means by which the soul of Bengal could express itself to itself.

As he had divined the linguistic need of his country's future, so he divined also its political need. He, first of our great publicists, understood the hollowness and inutility of the method of political agitation which prevailed in his time and exposed it with merciless satire in his *Lokarahasya* and *Kamalakanter Daptar*. But he was not satisfied merely with destructive criticism, — he had a positive vision of what was needed for the salvation of the country. He saw that the force from above must be met by a mightier reacting force from below, — the strength of repression by an insurgent national strength. He bade us leave the canine method of agitation for the leonine. The Mother of his vision held trenchant steel in her twice seventy million hands and not the bowl of the mendicant. It was the gospel of fearless strength and force which he preached under a veil and in images in *Ananda Math* and *Devi Chaudhurani*. And he had an inspired unerring vision of the moral strength which must be at the back of the outer force. He perceived that the first element of the moral strength must be *tyaga*, complete self-sacrifice for the country and complete self-devotion to the work of liberation. His workers and fighters for the motherland are political *byragees* who have no other thought than their duty to her and have put all else behind them as less dear and less precious and only to be resumed when their work for her is done. Whoever loves self or wife or child or goods more than his country is a poor and imperfect patriot; not by him shall the great work be accomplished. Again, he perceived that the second element of the moral strength needed must be self-discipline and organisation. This truth he expressed in the elaborate training of Devi Chaudhurani for her work, in the strict rules of the Association of the "Ananda Math" and in the pictures of perfect organisation which those books contain. Lastly, he perceived that the third element of moral strength must be the infusion of religious feeling into patriotic work. The religion of patriotism, — this is the master idea of Bankim's writings. It is already foreshadowed in *Devi Chaudhurani*. In *Dharmatattwa* the idea and in *Krishnacharit* the picture of a perfect and many-sided Karma Yoga is sketched, the crown of which shall be work for one's country and one's kind. In *Ananda Math* this idea is the keynote of the whole book and receives its perfect lyrical expression in the great song which has become the national anthem of United India. This is the second great service of Bankim to his country that he pointed out to it the way of salvation and gave it the religion of patriotism. Of the new spirit which is leading the nation to resurgence and independence, he is the inspirer and political guru.

The third and supreme service of Bankim to his nation was that he gave us the vision of our Mother. The bare intellectual idea of the Motherland is not in itself a great driving force; the mere recognition of the desirability of freedom is not an inspiring motive. There are few Indians at present, whether loyalist, moderate or nationalist in their political views, who do not recognise that the country has claims on them or that freedom in the abstract is a desirable thing. But most of us, when it is a question between the claims of the country and other claims, do not in practice prefer the service of the country; and while many may have the wish to see freedom accomplished, few have the will to accomplish it. There are other things which we hold dearer and which we fear to see imperilled either in the struggle for freedom or by its accomplishment. It is not till the Motherland reveals herself to the eye of the mind as something more than a stretch of earth or a mass of individuals, it is not till she takes shape as a great Divine and Maternal Power in a form of beauty that can dominate the mind and seize the heart that these petty fears and hopes vanish in the all-absorbing passion for the Mother and her service, and the patriotism that works miracles and saves a doomed nation is born. To some men it is given to have that vision and reveal it to others. It was thirty-two years ago that Bankim wrote his great song and few listened; but in a sudden moment of awakening from long delusions the people of Bengal looked round for the truth and in a fated moment somebody sang *Bande Mataram*. The mantra had been given and in a single day a whole people had been converted to the religion of patriotism. The Mother had revealed herself. Once that vision has come to a people, there can be no rest, no peace, no farther slumber till the temple has been made ready, the image installed and the sacrifice offered. A great nation which has had that vision can never again bend its neck in subjection to the yoke of a conqueror.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak

NEITHER Mr. Tilak nor his speeches really require any presentation or foreword. His speeches are, like the featureless Brahman, self-luminous. Straightforward, lucid, never turning aside from the point which they mean to hammer in or wrapping it up in ornamental verbiage, they read like a series of self-evident propositions. And Mr. Tilak himself, his career, his place in Indian politics are also a self-evident proposition, a hard fact baffling and dismaying in the last degree to those to whom his name has been anathema and his increasing pre-eminence figured as a portent of evil. The condition of things in India being given, the one possible aim for political effort resulting and the sole means and spirit by which it could be brought about, this man had to come and, once in the field, had to come to the front. He could not but stand in the end where he stands today, as one of the two or three leaders of the Indian people who are in their eyes the incarnations of the national endeavour and the God-given captains of the national aspiration. His life, his character, his work and endurance, his acceptance by the heart and the mind of the people are a stronger argument than all the reasonings in his speeches, powerful as these are, for Swaraj, Self-government, Home Rule, by whatever name we may call the sole possible present aim of our effort, the freedom of the life of India, its self-determination by the people of India. Arguments and speeches do not win liberty for a nation; but where there is a will in the nation to be free and a man to embody that will in every action of his life and to devote his days to its realisation in the face of every difficulty and every suffering, and where the will of the nation has once said, “This man and his life mean what I have in my heart and in my purpose,” that is a sure signpost of the future which no one has any excuse for mistaking.

That indomitable will, that unwavering devotion have been the whole meaning of Mr. Tilak's life; they are the reason of his immense hold on the people. For he does not owe his pre-eminent position to any of the causes which have usually made for political leading in India, wealth and great social position, professional success, recognition by Government, a power of fervid oratory or of fluent and taking speech; for he had none of these things to help him. He owes it to himself alone and to the thing his life has meant and because he has meant it with his whole mind and his whole soul. He has kept back nothing for himself or for other aims, but has given all himself to his country.

Yet is Mr. Tilak a man of various and no ordinary gifts, and in several lines of life he might have achieved present distinction or a pre-eminent and enduring fame. Though he has never practised, he has a close knowledge of law and an acute legal mind which, had he cared in the least degree for wealth and worldly position, would have brought him to the front at the bar. He is a great Sanskrit scholar, a powerful writer and a strong, subtle and lucid thinker. He might have filled a large place in the field of contemporary Asiatic scholarship. Even as it is, his *Orion* and his *Arctic Home* have acquired at once a world-wide recognition and left as strong a mark as can at all be imprinted on the ever-shifting sands of oriental research. His work on the Gita, no mere commentary, but an original criticism and presentation of ethical truth, is a monumental work, the first prose writing of the front rank in weight and importance in the Marathi language, and likely to become a classic. This one book sufficiently proves that had he devoted his energies in this direction, he might easily have filled a large place in the history of Marathi literature and in the history of ethical thought, so subtle and comprehensive is its thinking, so great the perfection and satisfying force of its style. But it was psychologically impossible for Mr. Tilak to devote his energies in any great degree to another action than the one life-mission for which the Master of his works had chosen him. His powerful literary gift has been given up to a journalistic work, ephemeral as even the best journalistic work must be, but consistently brilliant, vigorous, politically educative through decades, to an extent seldom matched and certainly never surpassed. His scholastic labour has been done almost by way of recreation. Nor can anything be more significant than the fact that the works which have brought him a fame other than that of the politician and patriot, were done in periods of compulsory cessation from his life-work, — planned and partly, if not wholly, executed during the imprisonments which could alone enforce leisure upon this unresting worker for his country. Even these by-products of his genius have some reference to the one passion of his life, the renewal, if not the surpassing of the past greatness of the nation by the greatness of its future. His Vedic researches seek to fix its prehistoric point of departure; the *Gita-rahasya* takes the scripture which is perhaps the strongest and most comprehensive production of Indian spirituality and justifies to that spirituality, by its own authoritative ancient message, the sense of the importance of life, of action, of human existence, of man's labour for mankind which is indispensable to the idealism of the modern spirit.

The landmarks of Mr. Tilak's life are landmarks also in the history of his province and his country. His first great step associated him in a pioneer work whose motive was to educate the people for a new life under the new conditions, — on the one side a purely educational movement of which the fruit was the Ferguson College, fitly founding the reawakening of the country by an effort of which co-operation in self-sacrifice was the moving spirit, on the other the initiation of the *Kesari* newspaper, which since then has figured increasingly as the characteristic and powerful expression of the political mind of Maharashtra. Mr. Tilak's career has counted three periods each of which had an imprisonment for its culminating point. His first imprisonment in the Kolhapur case belongs to this first stage of self-development and development of the Maratha country for new ideas and activities and for the national future.

The second period brought in a wider conception and a profounder effort. For now it was to reawaken not only the political mind, but the soul of the people by linking its future to its past; it worked by a more strenuous and popular propaganda which reached its height in the organisation of the Shivaji and the Ganapati festivals. His separation from the social reform leader, Agarkar, had opened the way for the peculiar role which he has played as a trusted and accredited leader of conservative and religious India in the paths of democratic politics. It was this position which enabled him to effect the union of the new political spirit with the tradition and sentiment of the historic past and of both with the ineradicable religious temperament of the people, of which these festivals were the symbol. The Congress movement was for a long time purely occidental in its mind, character and methods, confined to the English-educated few, founded on the political rights and interests of the people read in the light of English history and European ideals, but with no roots either in the past of the country or in the inner spirit of the nation. Mr. Tilak was the first political leader to break through the routine of its somewhat academical methods, to bridge the gulf between the present and the past and to restore continuity to the political life of the nation. He developed a language and a spirit and he used methods which Indianised the movement and brought into it the masses. To his work of this period we owe that really living, strong and spontaneously organised movement in Maharashtra, which has shown its energy and sincerity in more than one crisis and struggle. This divination of the mind and spirit of his people and its needs and this power to seize on the right way to call it forth prove strikingly the political genius of Mr. Tilak; they made him the one man predestined to lead them in this trying and difficult period when all has to be discovered and all has to be reconstructed. What was done then by Mr. Tilak in Maharashtra, has been initiated for all India by the Swadeshi movement. To bring in the mass of the people, to found the greatness of the future on the greatness of the past, to infuse Indian politics with Indian religious fervour and spirituality are the indispensable conditions for a great and powerful political awakening in India. Others, writers, thinkers, spiritual leaders, had seen this truth. Mr. Tilak was the first to bring it into the actual field of practical politics. This second period of his labour for his country culminated in a longer and harsher imprisonment which was, as it were, the second seal of the divine hand upon his work; for there can be no diviner seal than suffering for a cause.

A third period, that of the Swadeshi movement, brought Mr. Tilak forward prominently as an All-India leader; it gave him at last the wider field, the greater driving power, the larger leverage he needed to bring his life-work rapidly to a head, and not only in Maharashtra but throughout the country. The incidents of that period are too fresh in memory to need recalling. From the inception of the Boycott to the Surat catastrophe and his last and longest imprisonment, which was its sequel, the name and work of Mr. Tilak are a part of Indian history. These three imprisonments, each showing more clearly the moral stuff and quality of the man under the test and the revealing glare of suffering, have been the three seals of his career. The first found him one of a small knot of pioneer workers; it marked him out to be the strong and inflexible leader of a strong and sturdy people. The second found him already the inspiring power of a great reawakening of the Maratha spirit; it left him an uncrowned king in the Deccan and gave him that high reputation throughout India which was the foundation-stone of his present commanding influence. The last found him the leader of an All-India party, the foremost exponent and head of a thoroughgoing Nationalism; it sent him back to be one of the two or three foremost men of India adored and followed by the whole nation. He now stands in the last period of his lifelong toil for his country. It is one in which for the first time some ray of immediate hope, some prospect of near success shines upon a cause which at one time seemed destined to a long frustration and fulfilment only perhaps after a century of labour, struggle and suffering.

The qualities which have supported him and given him his hard-earned success, have been comparatively rare in Indian politics. The first is his entirely representative character as a born leader for the sub-nation to which he belongs. India is a unity full of diversities and its strength as well as its weakness is rooted in those diversities: the vigour of its national life can exist only by the vigour of its regional life. Therefore in politics as in everything else a leader, to have a firm basis for his life-work, must build it upon a living work and influence in his own sub-race or province. No man was more fitted to do this than Mr. Tilak. He is the very type and incarnation of the Maratha character, the Maratha qualities, the Maratha spirit, but with the unified solidity in the character, the touch of genius in the qualities, the vital force in the spirit which make a great personality readily the representative man of his people. The Maratha race, as their soil and their history have made them, are a rugged, strong and sturdy people, democratic in their every fibre, keenly intelligent and practical to the very marrow, following in ideas, even in poetry, philosophy and religion the drive towards life and action, capable of great fervour, feeling and enthusiasm, like all Indian peoples, but not emotional idealists, having in their thought and speech always a turn for strength, sense, accuracy, lucidity and vigour, in learning and scholarship patient, industrious, careful, thorough and penetrating, in life simple, hardy and frugal, in their temperament courageous, pugnacious, full of spirit, yet with a tact in dealing with hard facts and circumventing obstacles, shrewd yet aggressive diplomatists, born politicians, born fighters. All this Mr. Tilak is with a singular and eminent completeness, and all on a large scale, adding to it all a lucid simplicity of genius, a secret intensity, an inner strength of will, a single-mindedness in aim of quite extraordinary force, which remind one of the brightness, sharpness and perfect temper of a fine sword hidden in a sober scabbard. As he emerged on the political field, his people saw more and more clearly in him their representative man, themselves in large, the genius of their type. They felt him to be of one spirit and make with the great men who had made their past history, almost believed him to be a reincarnation of one of them returned to carry out his old work in a new form and under new conditions. They beheld in him the spirit of Maharashtra once again embodied in a great individual. He occupies a position in his province which has no parallel in the rest of India.

On the wider national field also Mr. Tilak has rare qualities which fit him for the hour and the work. He is in no sense what his enemies have called him, a demagogue: he has not the loose suppleness, the oratorical fervour, the facile appeal to the passions which demagogy requires; his speeches are too much made up of hard and straight thinking, he is too much a man of serious and practical action. None more careless of mere effervescence, emotional applause, popular gush, public ovations. He tolerates them since popular enthusiasm will express itself in that way; but he has always been a little impatient of them as dissipative of serious strength and will and a waste of time and energy which might better have been solidified and devoted to effective work. But he is entirely a democratic politician, of a type not very common among our leaders, one who can both awaken the spirit of the mass and respond to their spirit, able to lead them, but also able to see where he must follow the lead of their predominant sense and will and feelings. He moves among his followers as one of them in a perfect equality, simple and familiar in his dealings with them by the very force of his temperament and character, open, plain and direct and, though capable of great reserve in his speech, yet, wherever necessary, admitting them into his plans and ideas as one taking counsel of them, taking their sense even while enforcing as much as possible his own view of policy and action with all the great strength of quiet will at his command. He has that closeness of spirit to the mass of men, that unpretentious openness of intercourse with them, that faculty of plain and direct speech which interprets their feelings and shows them how to think out what they feel, which are pre-eminently the democratic qualities. For this reason he has always been able to unite all classes of men behind him, to be the leader not only of the educated, but of the people, the merchant, the trader, the villager, the peasant. All Maharashtra understands him when he speaks or writes; all Maharashtra is ready to follow him when he acts. Into his wider field in the troubled Swadeshi times he carried the same qualities and the same power of democratic leadership.

It is equally a mistake to think of Mr. Tilak as by nature a revolutionary leader; that is not his character or his political temperament. The Indian peoples generally, with the possible exception of emotional and idealistic Bengal, have nothing or very little of the revolutionary temper; they can be goaded to revolution, like any and every people on the face of the earth, but they have no natural disposition towards it. They are capable of large ideals and fervent enthusiasms, sensitive in feeling and liable to gusts of passionate revolt which are easily appeased by even an appearance of concession; but naturally they are conservative in temperament and deliberate in action. Mr. Tilak, though a strong-willed man and a fighter by nature, has this much of the ordinary Indian temperament, that with a large mind open to progressive ideas he unites a conservative temperament strongly in touch with the sense of his people. In a free India he would probably have figured as an advanced Liberal statesman eager for national progress and greatness, but as careful of every step as firm and decided in it and always seeking to carry the conservative instinct of the nation with him in every change. He is besides a born Parliamentarian, a leader for the assembly, though always in touch with the people outside as the constant source of the mandate and the final referee in differences. He loves a clear and fixed procedure which he can abide by and use, even while making the most of its details, — of which the theory and practice would be always at his finger-ends, — to secure a practical advantage in the struggle of parties. He always set a high value on the Congress for this reason; he saw in it a centralising body, an instrument and a first, though yet shapeless essay at a popular assembly. Many after Surat spoke of him as the deliberate breaker of the Congress, but to no one was the catastrophe so great a blow as to Mr. Tilak. He did not love the do-nothingness of that assembly, but he valued it both as a great national fact and for its unrealised possibilities and hoped to make of it a central organisation for practical work. To destroy an existing and useful institution was alien to his way of seeing and would not have entered into his ideas or his wishes.

Moreover, though he has ideals, he is not an idealist by character. Once the ideal fixed, all the rest is for him practical work, the facing of hard facts, though also the overcoming of them when they stand in the way of the goal, the use of strong and effective means with the utmost care and prudence consistent with the primary need of as rapid an effectivity as will and earnest action can bring about. Though he can be obstinate and iron-willed when his mind is made up as to the necessity of a course of action or the indispensable recognition of a principle, he is always ready for a compromise which will allow of getting real work done, and will take willingly half a loaf rather than no bread, though always with a full intention of getting the whole loaf in good time. But he will not accept chaff or plaster in place of good bread. Nor does he like to go too far ahead of possibilities, and indeed has often shown in this respect a caution highly disconcerting to the more impatient of his followers. But neither would he mistake, like the born Moderate, the minimum effort and the minimum immediate aim for the utmost possibility of the moment. Such a man is no natural revolutionist, but a constitutionalist by temper, though always in such times necessarily the leader of an advanced party or section. A clear constitution he could use, amend and enlarge, would have suited him much better than to break existing institutions and get a clear field for innovations which is the natural delight of the revolutionary temperament.

This character of Mr. Tilak's mind explains his attitude in social reform. He is no dogmatic reactionary. The Maratha people are incapable of either the unreasoning or too reasoning rigid conservatism or of the fiery iconoclasm which can exist side by side, — they are often only two sides of the same temper of mind, — in other parts of India. It is attached to its social institutions like all peoples who live close to the soil, but it has always shown a readiness to adapt, loosen and accommodate them in practice to the pressure of actual needs. Mr. Tilak shares this general temperament and attitude of his people. But there have also been other reasons which a strong political sense has dictated; and first, the clear perception that the political movement could not afford to cut itself off from the great mass of the nation or split itself up into warring factions by a premature association of the social reform question with politics. The proper time for that, a politician would naturally feel, is when the country has a free assembly of its own which can consult the needs or carry out the mandates of the people. Moreover, he has felt strongly that political emancipation was the one pressing need for the people of India and that all else not directly connected with it must take a second place; that has been the principle of his own life and he has held that it should be the principle of the national life at the present hour. Let us have first liberty and the organised control of the life of the nation, afterwards we can see how we should use it in social matters; meanwhile let us move on without noise and strife, only so far as actual need and advisability demand and the sense of the people is ready to advance. This attitude may be right or wrong; but, Mr. Tilak being what he is and the nation being what it is, he could take no other.

If, then, Mr. Tilak has throughout his life been an exponent of the idea of radical change in politics and during the Swadeshi agitation the head of a party which could be called extremist, it is due to that clear practical sense, essential in a leader of political action, which seizes at once on the main necessity and goes straight without hesitating or deviation to the indispensable means. There are always two classes of political mind: one is preoccupied with details for their own sake, revels in the petty points of the moment and puts away into the background the great principles and the great necessities, the other sees rather these first and always and details only in relation to them. The one type moves in a routine circle which may or may not have an issue; it cannot see the forest for the trees and it is only by an accident that it stumbles, if at all, on the way out. The other type takes a mountain-top view of the goal and all the directions and keeps that in its mental compass through all the deflections, retardations and tortuosities which the character of the intervening country may compel it to accept; but these it abridges as much as possible. The former class arrogate the name of statesman in their own day; it is to the latter that posterity concedes it and sees in them the true leaders of great movements. Mr. Tilak, like all men of pre-eminent political genius, belongs to this second and greater order of mind.

Moreover in India, owing to the divorce of political activity from the actual government and administration of the affairs of the country, an academical turn of thought is too common in our dealings with politics. But Mr. Tilak has never been an academical politician, a "student of politics" meddling with action; his turn has always been to see actualities and move forward in their light. It was impossible for him to view the facts and needs of current Indian politics of the nineteenth century in the pure serene or the dim religious light of the Witenagemot and the Magna Charta and the constitutional history of England during the past seven centuries, or to accept the academic sophism of a gradual preparation for liberty, or merely to discuss isolated or omnibus grievances and strive to enlighten the darkness of the official mind by luminous speeches and resolutions, as was the general practice of Congress politics till 1905. A national agitation in the country which would make the Congress movement a living and acting force was always his ideal, and what the Congress would not do, he, when still an isolated leader of a handful of enthusiasts in a corner of the country, set out to do in his own strength and for his own hand. He saw from the first that for a people circumstanced like ours there could be only one political question and one aim, not the gradual improvement of the present administration into something in the end fundamentally the opposite of itself, but the early substitution of Indian and national for English and bureaucratic control in the affairs of India. A subject nation does not prepare itself by gradual progress for liberty; it opens by liberty its way to rapid progress. The only progress that has to be made in the preparation for liberty, is progress in the awakening of the national spirit and in the creation of the will to be free and the will to adopt the necessary means and bear the necessary sacrifices for liberty. It is these clear perceptions that have regulated his political career.

Therefore the whole of the first part of his political life was devoted to a vigorous and living propaganda for the reawakening and solidifying of the national life of Maharashtra. Therefore, too, when the Swadeshi agitation gave the first opportunity of a large movement in the same sense throughout India, he seized on it with avidity, while his past work in Maharashtra, his position as the leader of a small advanced section in the old Congress politics and his character, sacrifices and sufferings at once fixed the choice of the New Party on him as their predestined leader. The same master-idea made him seize on the four main points which the Bengal agitation had thrown into some beginning of practical form, Swaraj, Swadeshi, National Education and Boycott, and formulate them into a definite programme, which he succeeded in introducing among the resolutions of the Congress at the Calcutta session, — much to the detriment of the uniformity of sage and dignified impotence which had characterised the august, useful and calmly leisurely proceedings of that temperate national body. We all know the convulsion that followed the injection of this foreign matter; but we must see why Mr. Tilak insisted on administering annually so potent a remedy. The four resolutions were for him the first step towards shaking the Congress out of its torpid tortoise-like gait and turning it into a living and acting body.

Swaraj, complete and early self-government in whatever form, had the merit in his eyes of making definite and near to the national vision the one thing needful, the one aim that mattered, the one essential change that includes all the others. No nation can develop a living enthusiasm or accept great action and great sacrifices for a goal that is lost to its eye in the mist of far-off centuries; it must see it near and distinct before it, magnified by a present hope, looming largely and actualised as a living aim whose early realisation only depends on a great, sustained and sincere effort. National education meant for him the training of the young generation in the new national spirit to be the architects of liberty, if that was delayed, the citizens of a free India which had rediscovered itself, if the preliminary conditions were rapidly fulfilled. Swadeshi meant an actualising of the national self-consciousness and the national will and the readiness to sacrifice which would fix them in the daily mind and daily life of the people. In Boycott, which was only a popular name for passive resistance, he saw the means to give to the struggle between the two ideas in conflict, bureaucratic control and national control, a vigorous shape and body and to the popular side a weapon and an effective form of action. Himself a man of organisation and action, he knew well that by action most, and not by thought and speech alone, can the will of a people be vivified, trained and made solid and enduring. To get a sustained authority from the Congress for a sustained effort in these four directions seemed to him of capital importance; this was the reason for his inflexible insistence on their unchanged inclusion when the programme seemed to him to be in danger.

Yet also, because he is a practical politician and a man of action, he has always, so long as the essentials were safe, been ready to admit any change in name or form or any modification of programme or action dictated by the necessities of the time. Thus during the movement of 1905 – 1910 the Swadeshi leader and the Swadeshi party insisted on agitation in India and discouraged reliance on agitation in England, because the awaking and fixing of a self-reliant national spirit and will in India was the one work for the hour and in England no party or body of opinion existed which would listen to the national claim, nor could exist, — as anybody with the least knowledge of English politics could have told, — until that claim had been unmistakably and insistently made and was clearly supported by the fixed will of the nation. The Home Rule leader and the Home Rule party of today, which is only the "New Party" reborn with a new name, form and following, insist on the contrary on vigorous and speedy agitation in England, because the claim and the will have both been partially, but not sufficiently recognised, and because a great and growing British party now exists which is ready to make the Indian ideal part of its own programme. So, too, they insisted then on Swaraj and rejected with contempt all petty botching with the administration, because so alone could the real issue be made a living thing to the nation; now they accept readily enough a fairly advanced but still half-and-half scheme, but always with the proviso that the popular principle receives substantial embodiment and the full ideal is included as an early goal and not put off to a far-distant future. The leader of men in war or politics will always distrust petty and episodical gains which, while giving false hopes, are merely nominal and put off or even endanger the real issue, but will always seize on any advantage which brings decisive victory definitely nearer. It is only the pure idealist, — but let us remember that he too has his great and indispensable uses, — who insists always on either all or nothing. Not revolutionary methods or revolutionary idealism, but the clear sight and the direct propaganda and action of the patriotic political leader insisting on the one thing needful and the straight way to drive at it, have been the sense of Mr. Tilak's political career.

The speeches in this book belong both to the Swadeshi and the Home Rule periods, but mostly to the latter. They show Mr. Tilak's mind and policy and voice with great force that will and political thought now dominant in the country which he has so prominently helped to create. Mr. Tilak has none of the gifts of the orator which many lesser men have possessed, but his force of thought and personality make him in his own way a powerful speaker. He is at his best in his own Marathi tongue rather than in English; for there he finds always the apt and telling phrase, the striking application, the vigorous figure which go straight home to the popular mind. But there is essentially the same power in both. His words have the directness and force — no force can be greater — of a sincere and powerful mind always going immediately to the aim in view, the point before it, expressing it with a bare, concentrated economy of phrase and the insistence of the hammer full on the head of the nail which drives it in with a few blows. But the speeches have to be read with his life, his character, his life-long aims as their surrounding atmosphere. That is why I have dwelt on their main points; — not that all I have said is not well known, but the repetition of known facts has its use when they are important and highly significant.

Two facts of his life and character have to be insisted on as of special importance to the country because they give a great example of two things in which its political life was long deficient and is even now not sufficient. First, the inflexible will of the patriot and man of sincere heart and thorough action which has been the very grain of his character: for aspirations, emotion, enthusiasm are nothing without this; will alone creates and prevails. And wish and will are not the same thing, but divided by a great gulf: the one, which is all most of us get to, is a puny, tepid and inefficient thing and, even when most enthusiastic, easily discouraged and turned from its object; the other can be a giant to accomplish and endure. Secondly, the readiness to sacrifice and face suffering, not needlessly or with a useless bravado, but with a firm courage when it comes, to bear it and to outlive, returning to work with one's scars as if nothing had happened. No prominent man in India has suffered more for his country; none has taken his sacrifices and sufferings more quietly and as a matter of course.

The first part of Mr. Tilak's life-work is accomplished. Two great opportunities have hastened its success, of which he has taken full advantage. The lavalike flood of the Swadeshi movement fertilised the soil and did for the country in six years the work of six ordinary decades; it fixed the goal of freedom in the mind of the people. The sudden irruption of Mrs. Besant into the field with her unequalled gift, — born of her untiring energy, her flaming enthusiasm, her magnificent and magnetic personality, her spiritual force, — for bringing an ideal into the stage of actuality with one rapid whirl and rush, has been the second factor. Indeed the presence of three such personalities as Mr. Tilak, Mrs. Besant and Mr. Gandhi at the head and in the heart of the present movement, should itself be a sure guarantee of success. The nation has accepted the near fulfilment of his great aim as its own political aim, the one object of its endeavour, its immediate ideal. The Government of India and the British nation have accepted complete self-government as their final goal in Indian administration; a powerful party in England, the party which seems to command the future, has pronounced for its more speedy and total accomplishment. A handful of dissentients there may be in the country who still see only petty gains in the present and the rest in the dim vista of the centuries, but with this insignificant exception, all the Indian provinces and communities have spoken with one voice. Mr. Tilak's principles of work have been accepted; the ideas which he had so much trouble to enforce have become the commonplaces and truisms of our political thought. The only question that remains is the rapidity of a now inevitable evolution. That is the hope for which Mr. Tilak still stands, a leader of all India. Only when it is accomplished, will his life-work be done; not till then can he rest while he lives, even though age grows on him and infirmities gather, — for his spirit will always remain fresh and vigorous, — any more than a river can rest before the power of its waters has found their goal and discharged them into the sea. But whether that end, — the end of a first stage of our new national life, the beginning of a greater India reborn for self-fulfilment and the service of humanity, — come tomorrow or after a little delay, its accomplishment is now safe, and Mr. Tilak's name stands already for history as a nation-builder, one of the half-dozen greatest political personalities, memorable figures, representative men of the nation in this most critical period of India's destinies, a name to be remembered gratefully so long as the country has pride in its past and hope for its future.

A Great Mind, a Great Will

A GREAT mind, a great will, a great and pre-eminent leader of men has passed away from the field of his achievement and labour. To the mind of his country Lokamanya Tilak was much more, for he had become to it a considerable part of itself, the embodiment of its past effort, and the head of its present will and struggle for a free and greater life. His achievement and personality have put him amidst the first rank of historic and significant figures. He was one who built much rapidly out of little beginnings, a creator of great things out of an unworked material. The creations he left behind him were a new and strong and self-reliant national spirit, the reawakened political mind and life of a people, a will to freedom and action, a great national purpose. He brought to his work extraordinary qualities, a calm, silent, unflinching courage, an unwavering purpose, a flexible mind, a forward-casting vision of possibilities, an eye for the occasion, a sense of actuality, a fine capacity of democratic leadership, a diplomacy that never lost sight of its aim and pressed towards it even in the most pliant turns of its movement, and guiding all, a single-minded patriotism that cared for power and influence only as a means of service to the Motherland and a lever for the work of her liberation. He sacrificed much for her and suffered for her repeatedly and made no ostentation of his suffering and sacrifice. His life was a constant offering at her altar and his death has come in the midst of an unceasing service and labour.

The passing of this great personality creates a large and immediate void that will be felt acutely for a time, but it is the virtue of his own work that this vacancy must very soon be filled by new men and new forces. The spirit he created in the country is of that sincere, real and fruitful kind that cannot consent to cease or to fail, but must always throw up minds and capacities that will embody its purpose. It will raise up others of his mould, if not of his stature, to meet its needs, its demands, its call for ability and courage. He himself has only passed behind the veil, for death, and not life, is the illusion. The strong spirit that dwelt within him ranges now freed from our human and physical limitations, and can still shed upon us, on those now at work, and those who are coming, a more subtle, ample and irresistible influence; and even if this were not so, an effective part of him is still with us. His will is left behind in many to make more powerful and free from hesitations the national will he did so much to create, the growing will, whose strength and single wholeness are the chief conditions of the success of the national effort. His courage is left behind in numbers to fuse itself into and uplift and fortify the courage of his people; his sacrifice and strength in suffering are left with us to enlarge themselves, more even than in his lifetime, and to heighten the fine and steeled temper our people need for the difficult share that still lies before their endeavour. These things are his legacy to his country, and it is in proportion as each man rises to the height of what they signify that his life will be justified and assured of its recompense.

Methods and policies may change but the spirit of what Lokamanya Tilak was and did remains and will continue to be needed, a constant power in others for the achievement of his own life's grand and single purpose. A great worker and creator is not to be judged only by the work he himself did, but also by the greater work he made possible. The achievement of the departed leader has brought the nation to a certain point. Its power to go forward from and beyond that point, to face new circumstances, to rise to the more strenuous and momentous demand of its future will be the greatest and surest sign of the soundness of his labour. That test is being applied to the national movement at the very moment of his departure.

The death of Lokamanya Tilak comes upon us at a time when the country is passing through most troubled and poignant hours. It occurs at a critical period, it coincides even with a crucial moment when questions are being put to the nation by the Master of Destiny, on the answer to which depends the whole spirit, virtue and meaning of its future. In each event that confronts us there is a divine significance, and the passing away at such a time of such a man, on whose thought and decision thousands hung, should make more profoundly felt by the people, by every man in the nation, the great, the almost religious responsibility that lies upon him personally.

At this juncture it is not for me to prejudge the issue; each must meet it according to his light and conscience. This at least can be demanded of every man who would be worthy of India and of her great departed son that he shall put away from him in the decision of the things to be done in the future, all weakness of will, all defect of courage, all unwillingness for sacrifice. Let each strive to see with that selfless impersonality taught by one of our greatest scriptures which can alone enable us to identify ourselves both with the Divine Will and with the soul of our Mother. Two things India demands for her future, the freedom of soul, life and action needed for the work she has to do for mankind; and the understanding by her children of that work and of her own true spirit that the future India may be indeed India. The first seems still the main sense and need of the present moment, but the second is also involved in it — a yet greater issue. On the spirit of our decisions now and in the next few years depends the truth, vitality and greatness of our future national existence. It is the beginning of a great self-determination not only in the external but in the spiritual. These two thoughts should govern our action. Only so can the work done by Lokamanya Tilak find its true continuation and issue.

Dayananda

The Man and His Work

AMONG the great company of remarkable figures that will appear to the eye of posterity at the head of the Indian Renascence, one stands out by himself with peculiar and solitary distinctness, one unique in his type as he is unique in his work. It is as if one were to walk for a long time amid a range of hills rising to a greater or lesser altitude, but all with sweeping contours, green-clad, flattering the eye even in their most bold and striking elevation. But amidst them all, one hill stands apart, piled up in sheer strength, a mass of bare and puissant granite, with verdure on its summit, a solitary pine jutting out into the blue, a great cascade of pure, vigorous and fertilising water gushing out from its strength as a very fountain of life and health to the valley. Such is the impression created on my mind by Dayananda.

It was Kathiawar that gave birth to this puissant renovator and new-creator. And something of the very soul and temperament of that peculiar land entered into his spirit, something of Girnar and the rocks and hills, something of the voice and puissance of the sea that flings itself upon those coasts, something of that humanity which seems to be made of the virgin and unspoilt stuff of Nature, fair and robust in body, instinct with a fresh and primal vigour, crude in the crude, but in a developed nature capable of becoming a great force of genial creation.

When I seek to give an account to myself of my sentiment and put into precise form the impression I have received, I find myself starting from two great salient characteristics of this man's life and work which mark him off from his contemporaries and compeers. Other great Indians have helped to make India of today by a self-pouring into the psychological material of the race, a spiritual infusion of themselves into the fluent and indeterminate mass which will one day settle into consistency and appear as a great formal birth of Nature. They have entered in as a sort of leaven, a power of unformed stir and ferment out of which forms must result. One remembers them as great souls and great influences who live on in the soul of India. They are in us and we would not be what we are without them. But of no precise form can we say that this was what the man meant, still less that this form was the very body of that spirit.

The example of Mahadev Govind Ranade presents itself to my mind as the very type of this peculiar action so necessary to a period of large and complex formation. If a foreigner were to ask us what this Mahratta economist, reformer, patriot precisely did that we give him so high a place in our memory, we should find it a little difficult to answer. We should have to point to those activities of a mass of men in which his soul and thought were present as a formless former of things, to the great figures of present-day Indian life who received the breath of his spirit. And in the end we should have to reply by a counter question, “What would Maharashtra of today have been without Mahadev Govind Ranade and what would India of today be without Maharashtra?” But even with those who were less amorphous and diffusive in their pressure on men and things, even with workers of a more distinct energy and action, I arrive fundamentally at the same impression. Vivekananda was a soul of puissance if ever there was one, a very lion among men, but the definite work he has left behind is quite incommensurate with our impression of his creative might and energy. We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where, in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India and we say, “Behold, Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother and in the souls of her children.” So it is with all. Not only are the men greater than their definite works, but their influence is so wide and formless that it has little relation to any formal work that they have left behind them.

Very different was the manner of working of Dayananda.

Here was one who did not infuse himself informally into the indeterminate soul of things, but stamped his figure indelibly as in bronze on men and things. Here was one whose formal works are the very children of his spiritual body, children fair and robust and full of vitality, the image of their creator. Here was one who knew definitely and clearly the work he was sent to do, chose his materials, determined his conditions with a sovereign clairvoyance of the spirit and executed his conception with the puissant mastery of the born worker. As I regard the figure of this formidable artisan in God's workshop, images crowd on me which are all of battle and work and conquest and triumphant labour. Here, I say to myself, was a very soldier of Light, a warrior in God's world, a sculptor of men and institutions, a bold and rugged victor of the difficulties which matter presents to spirit. And the whole sums itself up to me in a powerful impression of spiritual practicality. The combination of these two words, usually so divorced from each other in our conceptions, seems to me the very definition of Dayananda.

Even if we leave out of account the actual nature of the work he did, the mere fact that he did it in this spirit and to this effect would give him a unique place among our great founders. He brings back an old Aryan element into the national character. This element gives us the second of the differentiae I observe and it is the secret of the first. We others live in a stream of influences; we allow them to pour through us and mould us; there is something shaped and out of it a modicum of work results; the rest is spilt out again in a stream of influence. We are indeterminate in our lines, we accommodate ourselves to circumstance and environment. Even when we would fain be militant and intransigent, we are really fluid and opportunist. Dayananda seized on all that entered into him, held it in himself, masterfully shaped it there into the form that he saw to be right and threw it out again into the forms that he saw to be right. That which strikes us in him as militant and aggressive, was a part of his strength of self-definition.

He was not only plastic to the great hand of Nature, but asserted his own right and power to use Life and Nature as plastic material. We can imagine his soul crying still to us with our insufficient spring of manhood and action, “Be not content, O Indian, only to be infinitely and grow vaguely, but see what God intends thee to be, determine in the light of His inspiration to what thou shalt grow. Seeing, hew that out of thyself, hew that out of Life. Be a thinker, but be also a doer; be a soul, but be also a man; be a servant of God, but be also a master of Nature!” For this was what he himself was; a man with God in his soul, vision in his eyes and power in his hands to hew out of life an image according to his vision. Hew is the right word. Granite himself, he smote out a shape of things with great blows as in granite.

In Dayananda’s life we see always the puissant jet of this spiritual practicality. A spontaneous power and decisiveness is stamped everywhere on his work. And to begin with, what a master-glance of practical intuition was this to go back trenchantly to the very root of Indian life and culture, to derive from the flower of its first birth the seed for a radical new birth! And what an act of grandiose intellectual courage to lay hold upon this scripture defaced by ignorant comment and oblivion of its spirit, degraded by misunderstanding to the level of an ancient document of barbarism, and to perceive in it its real worth as a scripture which conceals in itself the deep and energetic spirit of the forefathers who made this country and nation, — a scripture of divine knowledge, divine worship, divine action. I know not whether Dayananda’s powerful and original commentary will be widely accepted as the definite word on the Veda. I think myself some delicate work is still called for to bring out other aspects of this profound and astonishing Revelation. But this matters little. The essential is that he seized justly on the Veda as India’s Rock of Ages and had the daring conception to build on what his penetrating glance perceived in it a whole education of youth, a whole manhood and a whole nation-hood. Rammohan Roy, that other great soul and puissant worker who laid his hand on Bengal and shook her — to what mighty issues — out of her long, indolent sleep by her rivers and rice-fields — Rammohan Roy stopped short at the Upanishads. Dayananda looked beyond and perceived that our true original seed was the Veda. He had the national instinct and he was able to make it luminous, — an intuition in place of an instinct. Therefore the works that derive from him, however they depart from received traditions, must needs be profoundly national.

To be national is not to stand still. Rather, to seize on a vital thing out of the past and throw it into the stream of modern life, is really the most powerful means of renovation and new-creation. Dayananda's work brings back such a principle and spirit of the past to vivify a modern mould. And observe that in the work as in the life it is the past caught in the first jet of its virgin vigour, pure from its sources, near to its root principle and therefore to something eternal and always renewable.

And in the work as in the man we find that faculty of spontaneous definite labour and vigorous formation which proceeds from an inner principle of perfect clearness, truth and sincerity. To be clear in one's own mind, entirely true and plain with one's self and with others, wholly honest with the conditions and materials of one's labour, is a rare gift in our crooked, complex and faltering humanity. It is the spirit of the Aryan worker and a sure secret of vigorous success. For always Nature recognises a clear, honest and recognisable knock at her doors and gives the result with an answering scrupulosity and diligence. And it is good that the spirit of the Master should leave its trace in his followers, that somewhere in India there should be a body of whom it can be said that when a work is seen to be necessary and right, the men will be forthcoming, the means forthcoming and that work will surely be done.

Truth seems a simple thing and is yet most difficult. Truth was the master-word of the Vedic teaching, truth in the soul, truth in vision, truth in the intention, truth in the act. Practical truth, *ārjava*, an inner candour and a strong sincerity, clearness and open honour in the word and deed, was the temperament of the old Aryan morals. It is the secret of a pure unspoilt energy, the sign that a man has not travelled far from Nature. It is the bar dexter of the son of Heaven, Divasputra. This was the stamp that Dayananda left behind him and it should be the mark and effigy of himself by which the parentage of his work can be recognised. May his spirit act in India pure, unspoilt, unmodified and help to give us back that of which our life stands especially in need, pure energy, high clearness, the penetrating eye, the masterful hand, the noble and dominant sincerity.

Dayananda and the Veda

DAYANANDA accepted the Veda as his rock of firm foundation, he took it for his guiding view of life, his rule of inner existence and his inspiration for external work, but he regarded it as even more, the word of eternal Truth on which man's knowledge of God and his relations with the Divine Being and with his fellows can be rightly and securely founded. This everlasting rock of the Veda, many assert, has no existence, there is nothing there but the commonest mud and sand; it is only a hymnal of primitive barbarians, only a rude worship of personified natural phenomena, or even less than that, a liturgy of ceremonial sacrifice, half religion, half magic, by which superstitious animal men of yore hoped to get themselves gold and food and cattle, slaughter pitilessly their enemies, protect themselves from disease, calamity and demoniac influences and enjoy the coarse pleasures of a material Paradise. To that we must add a third view, the orthodox, or at least that which arises from Sayana's commentary; this view admits, practically, the ignobler interpretation of the substance of Veda and yet — or is it therefore? — exalts this primitive farrago as a holy Scripture and a Book of Sacred Works.

Now this matter is no mere scholastic question, but has a living importance, not only for a just estimate of Dayananda's work but for our consciousness of our past and for the determination of the influences that shall mould our future. A nation grows into what it shall be by the force of that which it was in the past and is in the present, and in this growth there come periods of conscious and subconscious stock-taking when the national soul selects, modifies, rejects, keeps out of all that it had or is acquiring whatever it needs as substance and capital for its growth and action in the future: in such a period of stock-taking we are still and Dayananda was one of its great and formative spirits. But among all the materials of our past the Veda is the most venerable and has been directly and indirectly the most potent. Even when its sense was no longer understood, even when its traditions were lost behind Pauranic forms, it was still held in honour, though without knowledge, as authoritative revelation and inspired Book of Knowledge, the source of all sanctions and standard of all truth.

But there has always been this double and incompatible tradition about the Veda that it is a book of ritual and mythology and that it is a book of divine knowledge. The Brahmanas seized on the one tradition, the Upanishads on the other. Later, the learned took the hymns for a book essentially of ritual and works, they went elsewhere for pure knowledge; but the instinct of the race bowed down before it with an obstinate inarticulate memory of a loftier tradition. And when in our age the Veda was brought out of its obscure security behind the purdah of a reverential neglect, the same phenomenon reappears. While Western scholarship extending the hints of Sayana seemed to have classed it for ever as a ritual liturgy to Nature-Gods, the genius of the race looking through the eyes of Dayananda pierced behind the error of many centuries and received again the intuition of a timeless revelation and a divine truth given to humanity. In any case, we have to make one choice or another. We can no longer securely enshrine the Veda wrapped up in the folds of an ignorant reverence or guarded by a pious self-deceit. Either the Veda is what Sayana says it is, and then we have to leave it behind for ever as the document of a mythology and ritual which have no longer any living truth or force for thinking minds, or it is what the European scholars say it is, and then we have to put it away among the relics of the past as an antique record of semi-barbarous worship; or else it is indeed Veda, a book of divine knowledge, and then it becomes of supreme importance to us to know and to hear its message.

It is objected to the sense Dayananda gave to the Veda that it is no true sense but an arbitrary fabrication of imaginative learning and ingenuity, to his method that it is fantastic and unacceptable to the critical reason, to his teaching of a revealed

Scripture that the very idea is a rejected superstition impossible for any enlightened mind to admit or to announce sincerely. I will not now examine the solidity of Dayananda's interpretation of Vedic texts, nor anticipate the verdict of the future on his commentary, nor discuss his theory of revelation. I shall only state the broad principles underlying his thought about the Veda as they present themselves to me. For in the action and thought of a great soul or a great personality the vital thing to my mind is not the form he gave to it, but in his action the helpful power he put forth and in his thought the helpful truth he has added or, it may be, restored to the yet all too scanty stock of our human acquisition and divine potentiality.

To start with the negation of his work by his critics, in whose mouth does it lie to accuse Dayananda's dealings with the Veda of a fantastic or arbitrary ingenuity? Not in the mouth of those who accept Sayana's traditional interpretation. For if ever there was a monument of arbitrarily erudite ingenuity, of great learning divorced, as great learning too often is, from sound judgment and sure taste and a faithful critical and comparative observation, from direct seeing and often even from plainest common sense or of a constant fitting of the text into the Procrustean bed of preconceived theory, it is surely this commentary, otherwise so imposing, so useful as first crude material, so erudite and laborious, left to us by the Acharya Sayana. Nor does the reproach lie in the mouth of those who take as final the recent labours of European scholarship. For if ever there was a toil of interpretation in which the loosest rein has been given to an ingenious speculation, in which doubtful indications have been snatched at as certain proofs, in which the boldest conclusions have been insisted upon with the scantiest justification, the most enormous difficulties ignored and preconceived prejudice maintained in face of the clear and often admitted suggestions of the text, it is surely this labour, so eminently respectable otherwise for its industry, good will and power of research, performed through a long century by European Vedic scholarship.

What is the main positive issue in this matter? An interpretation of Veda must stand or fall by its central conception of the Vedic religion and the amount of support given to it by the intrinsic evidence of the Veda itself. Here Dayananda's view is quite clear, its foundation inexpugnable. The Vedic hymns are chanted to the One Deity under many names, names which are used and even designed to express His qualities and powers. Was this conception of Dayananda's an arbitrary conceit fetched out of his own too ingenious imagination? Not at all; it is the explicit statement of the Veda itself: "One existent, sages" — not the ignorant, mind you, but the seers, the men of knowledge, — "speak of in many ways, as Indra, as Yama, as Matariswan, as Agni." The Vedic Rishis ought surely to have known something about their own religion, more, let us hope, than Roth or Max Muller, and this is what they knew.

We are aware how modern scholars twist away from the evidence. This hymn, they say, was a late production, this loftier idea which it expresses with so clear a force rose up somehow in the later Aryan mind or was borrowed by those ignorant fire-worshippers, sun-worshippers, sky-worshippers from their cultured and philosophic Dravidian enemies. But throughout the Veda we have confirmatory hymns and expressions: Agni or Indra or another is expressly hymned as one with all the other gods. Agni contains all other divine powers within himself, the Maruts are described as all the gods, one deity is addressed by the names of others as well as his own, or, most commonly, he is given as Lord and King of the universe attributes only appropriate to the Supreme Deity. Ah, but that cannot mean, ought not to mean, must not mean, the worship of the One; let us invent a new word, call it henotheism and suppose that the Rishis did not really believe Indra or Agni to be the Supreme Deity but treated any god or every god as such for the nonce, perhaps that he might feel the more flattered and lend a more gracious ear for so hyperbolic a compliment! But why should not the foundation of Vedic thought be natural monotheism rather than this new-fangled monstrosity of henotheism? Well, because primitive barbarians could not possibly have risen to such high conceptions and, if you allow them to have so risen, you imperil our theory of the evolutionary stages of human development and you destroy our whole idea about the sense of the Vedic hymns and their place in the history of mankind. Truth must hide herself, common sense disappear from the field so that a theory may flourish! I ask, in this point, and it is *the* fundamental point, who deals most straightforwardly with the text, Dayananda or the Western scholars?

But if this fundamental point of Dayananda's is granted, if the character given by the Vedic Rishis themselves to their gods is admitted, we are bound, whenever the hymns speak of Agni or another, to see behind that name present always to the thought of the Rishi the one Supreme Deity or else one of His powers with its attendant qualities or workings. Immediately the whole character of the Veda is fixed in the sense Dayananda gave to it; the merely ritual, mythological, polytheistic interpretation of Sayana collapses, the merely meteorological and naturalistic European interpretation collapses. We have instead a real Scripture, one of the world's sacred books and the divine word of a lofty and noble religion.

All the rest of Dayananda's theory arises logically out of this fundamental conception. If the names of the godheads express qualities of the one Godhead and it is these which the Rishis adored and towards which they directed their aspiration, then there must inevitably be in the Veda a large part of psychology of the Divine Nature, psychology of the relations of man with God and a constant indication of the law governing man's Godward conduct. Dayananda asserts the presence of such an ethical element, he finds in the Veda the law of life given by God to the human being. And if the Vedic godheads express the powers of a supreme Deity who is Creator, Ruler and Father of the universe, then there must inevitably be in the Veda a large part of cosmology, the law of creation and of cosmos. Dayananda asserts the presence of such a cosmic element, he finds in the Veda the secrets of creation and law of Nature by which the Omniscient governs the world.

Neither Western scholarship nor ritualistic learning has succeeded in eliminating the psychological and ethical value of the hymns, but they have both tended in different degrees to minimise it. Western scholars minimise because they feel uneasy whenever ideas that are not primitive seem to insist on their presence in these primeval utterances; they do not hesitate openly to abandon in certain passages interpretations which they adopt in others and which are admittedly necessitated by their own philological and critical reasoning because, if admitted always, they would often involve deep and subtle psychological conceptions which *cannot* have occurred to primitive minds! Sayana minimises because his theory of Vedic discipline was not ethical righteousness with a moral and spiritual result but mechanical performance of ritual with a material reward. But, in spite of these efforts of suppression, the lofty ideas of the Veda still reveal themselves in strange contrast to its alleged burden of fantastic naturalism or dull ritualism. The Vedic godheads are constantly hymned as Masters of Wisdom, Power, Purity, purifiers, healers of grief and evil, destroyers of sin and falsehood, warriors for the truth; constantly the Rishis pray to them for healing and purification, to be made seers of knowledge, possessors of the truth, to be upheld in the divine law, to be assisted and armed with strength, manhood and energy. Dayananda has brought this idea of the divine right and truth into the Veda; the Veda is as much and more a book of divine Law as Hebrew Bible or Zoroastrian Avesta.

The cosmic element is not less conspicuous in the Veda; the Rishis speak always of the worlds, the firm laws that govern them, the divine workings in the cosmos. But Dayananda goes farther; he affirms that the truths of modern physical science are discoverable in the hymns. Here we have the sole point of fundamental principle about which there can be any justifiable misgivings. I confess my incompetence to advance any settled opinion in the matter. But this much needs to be said that his idea is increasingly supported by the recent trend of our knowledge about the ancient world. The ancient civilisations did possess secrets of science some of which modern knowledge has recovered, extended and made more rich and precise but others are even now not recovered. There is then nothing fantastic in Dayananda's idea that Veda contains truth of science as well as truth of religion. I will even add my own conviction that Veda contains other truths of a science the modern world does not at all possess, and in that case Dayananda has rather understated than overstated the depth and range of the Vedic wisdom.

Objection has also been made to the philological and etymological method by which he arrived at his results, especially in his dealings with the names of the godheads. But this objection, I feel certain, is an error due to our introduction of modern ideas about language into our study of this ancient tongue. We moderns use words as counters without any memory or appreciation of their original sense; when we speak we think of the object spoken of, not at all of the expressive word which is to us a dead and brute thing, mere coin of verbal currency with no value of its own. In early language the word was on the contrary a living thing with essential powers of signification; its root meanings were remembered because they were still in use, its wealth of force was vividly present to the mind of the speaker. We say "wolf" and think only of the animal, any other sound would have served our purpose as well, given the convention of its usage; the ancients said "tearer" and had that significance present to them. We say "agni" and think of fire, the word is of no other use to us; to the ancients "agni" means other things besides and only because of one or more of its root meanings was applied to the physical object fire. Our words are carefully limited to one or two senses, theirs were capable of a great number and it was quite easy for them, if they so chose, to use a word like Agni, Varuna or Vayu as a sound-index of a great number of connected and complex ideas, a key-word. It cannot be doubted that the Vedic Rishis did take advantage of this greater potentiality of their language, — note their dealings with such words as *gau* and *candra*. The Nirukta bears evidence to this capacity and in the Brahmanas and Upanishads we find the memory of this free and symbolic use of words still subsisting.

Certainly, Dayananda had not the advantage that a comparative study of languages gives to the European scholar. There are defects in the ancient Nirukta which the new learning, though itself sadly defective, still helps us to fill in and in future we shall have to use both sources of light for the elucidation of Veda. Still this only affects matters of detail and does not touch the fundamental principles of Dayananda's interpretation. Interpretation in detail is a work of intelligence and scholarship and in matters of intelligent opinion and scholarship men seem likely to differ to the end of the chapter, but in all the basic principles, in those great and fundamental decisions where the eye of intuition has to aid the workings of the intellect, Dayananda stands justified by the substance of Veda itself, by logic and reason and by our growing knowledge of the past of mankind. The Veda does hymn the one Deity of many names and powers; it does celebrate the divine Law and man's aspiration to fulfil it; it does purport to give us the law of the cosmos.

On the question of revelation I have left myself no space to write. Suffice it to say that here too Dayananda was perfectly logical and it is quite grotesque to charge him with insincerity because he held to and proclaimed the doctrine. There are always three fundamental entities which we have to admit and whose relations we have to know if we would understand existence at all, God, Nature and the Soul. If, as Dayananda held on strong enough grounds, the Veda reveals to us God, reveals to us the law of Nature, reveals to us the relations of the Soul to God and Nature, what is it but a revelation of divine Truth? And if, as Dayananda held, it reveals them to us with a perfect truth, flawlessly, he might well hold it for an infallible Scripture. The rest is a question of the method of revelation, of the divine dealings with our race, of man's psychology and possibilities. Modern thought, affirming Nature and Law but denying God, denied also the possibility of revelation; but so also has it denied many things which a more modern thought is very busy reaffirming. We cannot demand of a great mind that it shall make itself a slave to vulgarly received opinion or the transient dogmas of the hour; the very essence of its greatness is this, that it looks beyond, that it sees deeper.

In the matter of Vedic interpretation I am convinced that whatever may be the final complete interpretation, Dayananda will be honoured as the first discoverer of the right clues. Amidst the chaos and obscurity of old ignorance and age-long misunderstanding his was the eye of direct vision that pierced to the truth and fastened on that which was essential. He has found the keys of the doors that time had closed and rent asunder the seals of the imprisoned fountains.

The Men that Pass

ROMESH Chandra Dutt is dead. After a long life of the most manifold and untiring energy, famous, honoured, advanced in years, with a name known in England as well as in India, the man always successful, always favoured of Fortune, always striving to deserve her by skill and diligence, type of a race that passes, of a generation that to younger minds is fast losing the appearance of reality and possibility, has passed away at the height and summit of his career before his great capacities could justify themselves to the full in his new station, but also before the defects of his type could be thoroughly subjected to the severe ordeal of the times that have come upon us. The landmarks of the past fall one by one and none rise in their place. The few great survivors here and there become more and more dignified monuments of the last century and less and less creators of the living present. New ideals, new problems, new men, almost a new race wholly different in mind, character, temperament, feeling, rise swiftly and wait till they can open the gates of the future and occupy the field of action.

The official, the liberal Congress politician, the well-read litterateur, the Oriental scholar, the journalist proficient in English and fluent of Western ideas, the professional man successful and sleek, these were the foremost men of the old generation, those who were in the eyes of all *śreṣṭha*, the best, in whose footsteps, therefore, all strove to follow and on whose pattern all formed themselves. An active, self-confident, voiceful generation making up by these qualities for the lack of height, depth and breadth in their culture and atoning for the unoriginal imitativeness to which they were doomed by the fidelity in detail and framework of the imitation! In all but one of these lines of activity Romesh Dutt had achieved a high distinction among the men of his own generation, and we doubt whether another man could be pointed out among them so many-sided, so full of strength and hope and energy, so confident, so uniformly successful. Nature was liberal to him of her gifts, Fortune of her favours. A splendid physique, robust and massive, equipped him to bear the strain of an unceasing activity: a nature buoyant, sanguine, strong, as healthy as his frame, armed him against the shocks of life and commanded success by insisting upon it; an egoism natural to such a robust vitality seized on all things as its provender and enabled its possessor thoroughly to enjoy the good things of life which it successfully demanded; a great tact and *savoir faire* steered him clear of unnecessary friction and avoidable difficulties; an unrivalled quickness of grasp, absorption and assimilation, more facile than subtle or deep, helped him to make his own all that he heard or read; a rapid though not ingenious brain showed him how to use his material with the best effect and most practical utility; and a facile pen and speech which never paused for a thought or a word, could always be trusted to clothe what he wished to convey in a form respectable and effective and so well put as to conceal the absence of native literary faculty and intellectual distinction. These were Nature's presents to him at his birth. Fortune placed him in a wealthy, well-read and well-known family, gave him the best advantages of education the times could afford, sent him to England and opened the doors of the Civil Service, the pinnacle of the young Indian's aspiration in his days, and crowned him with the highest prizes that that highest of careers could yield to a man of his hue and blood. It is characteristic of his career that he should have died as Prime Minister of the Indian State which has been most successful in reproducing and improving upon the Anglo-Indian model of administration.

There were limits, as we have hinted, to the liberality of Nature. Of all the great Bengalis of his time Romesh Dutt was perhaps the least original. His administrative faculties were of the second order, not of the first; though he stood for a time foremost among the most active of Congress politicians and controversialists, he was neither a Ranade nor a Surendranath, had neither the gift of the organiser and political thinker nor the gift of the orator; he had literary talent of an imitative kind but no literary genius; he wrote well on scholastic subjects and translated pleasantly and effectively, but was no great Sanskrit scholar: he cannot rank with Ranade or even with Gokhale as an economist, and yet his are the most politically effective contributions to economic literature in India that recent years have produced. It must be admitted that his activity and dexterity of work were far in excess of his literary ability or scholastic conscientiousness. It is doubtful, therefore, whether any of his voluminous works in many kinds will be remembered, with the possible though not very certain exception of his Bengali historical novels in which he touched his creative highwater mark. His translation of the Rigveda by its ease and crispness blinds the uninitiated reader to the fact that it may be a very pretty translation but it is not the Veda. His history of ancient Indian civilisation is a masterly compilation, void of original research, which is rapidly growing antiquated. In fact, the one art he possessed in the highest degree and in which alone it can be said that he did not only well but best, was the art of the journalist and pamphleteer. Originality and deep thought are not required of a journalist, nor delicacy, nor subtlety; his success would be limited rather than assisted by such qualities. To seize victoriously on the available materials, catch in them what will be interesting and effective and put it brightly and clearly, this is the *dharma* of the journalist, and, if we add the power of making the most of a case and enforcing a given view with irresistible energy, dexterity and apparent unanswerableness, we shall have added all that is necessary to turn the journalist into the pamphleteer. No man of our time has had these gifts to the same extent as Romesh Dutt. The best things he ever did were, in our view, his letters to Lord Curzon and his Economic History. The former fixed public opinion in India irretrievably and nobody cared even to consider Lord Curzon's answer. "That settles it" was the general feeling every ordinary reader contracted for good after reading this brilliant and telling indictment. Without the Economic History and its damning story of England's commercial and fiscal dealings with India we doubt whether the public mind would have been ready for the Boycott. In this one instance it may be said of him that he not only wrote history but created it. But all his works, with the exception of the historical novels, were rather pieces of successful journalism than literature. Still, even where it was most defective, his work was always useful to the world. For instance, his Ramayana and Mahabharata, though they are poor and commonplace poetry and do unpardonable violence to the spirit of the original, yet familiarised the average reader in England with the stories of the epics and thus made the way easy for future interpreters of the East to the West. In brief, this may be said in unstinted praise of Romesh Dutt, that he was a gigantic worker and did an immense amount of pioneer spadework by which the future will benefit.

We have dwelt on this interesting and vigorous personality as one of the most typical of the men that pass, much more typical than greater or more original contemporaries. The work they did is over and the qualities with which they were equipped for that work will no longer sufficiently serve our purpose. An education at once more subtle and more massive, a greater originality, force and range of intellectual activity, an insatiable thirst for knowledge, the glut of a giant for work and action, mighty qualities of soul, a superhuman courage, self-abnegation and power to embrace and practise almost impossible ideals, these are the virtues and gifts India demands from the greatest among her sons in the future so that they may be sufficient to her work and her destinies. But such gifts as Romesh Dutt possessed are not to be despised. Especially did his untiring capacity for work and his joyous vitality and indestructible buoyancy make him a towering reproach to the indolent, listless, sneering and anaemic generation that intervened between him and the recent renascence.

Appendix One

Baroda Speeches and Reports

Sri Aurobindo wrote the pieces in this part between 1901 and 1905, while serving in the Princely State of Baroda. The speeches were intended for delivery by Sayajirao Gaekwar, the Maharaja of Baroda. One of them later was published in a collection of the Maharaja's speeches.

Speeches Written for the Maharaja of Baroda

1901 – 1902

Medical Department

INTRODUCTORY

One of the peculiarities of administration in India is the extent to which the provision of medical aid for the people rests on the shoulders of the Government. In a healthy community the sphere of Government action outside certain recognised spheres tends always to contract; in one which is feeble or unsound it tends always to expand. Judged from this standpoint there are few if any countries which show such a miserable lack of robustness as India. Normally Government action is limited to the management of only such affairs as cannot be conducted by local or private enterprise either at all or with sufficient efficiency and organised power. Foreign affairs and the maintenance of national defence, legislation & the administration of justice and maintenance of order and the imposition and raising of the revenues necessary for public administration comprised under the old theory of politics the main sphere of Government. In our own times all matters of public or national concern are held to be a fit province for Government action; but chiefly in the way of assistance, general regulation or the maintenance of a certain standard of efficiency or public morality. Government for instance assists national trade and industry by a bureau of statistics and information, protects it by tariffs, regulates it by seeing fair-play in essential matters between employers and employed or by enactments regulating navigation. Similarly it may exercise a watch and light general control over all forms of local self-government. In one sphere especially State action is being everywhere more and more imperatively called for in all civilized nations; it has become an axiom of modern politics that the provision of universal education is the duty of the State. Yet even here the necessity is rather a result of the circumstances of modern national life than a permanent principle. The action of certain nations driven by their comparative weakness to find a counteracting force to the superior individual energy of other nations in the universal education of the community by the State and the success [with] which they have used this lever to raise themselves to preeminence in commerce and politics has made it an essential condition of self-preservation to all civilized countries. Without universal education a nation nowadays is self-condemned to stagnation and decay. But it is conceivable that when all the great nations stand on an equal level in this respect, the grip of the State on education may again relax and the duty of Education will again gradually devolve on local and private effort, the State confining itself to its fundamental duty in all matters of public concern, assistance, general regulation and the maintenance of a high standard. Even now a large element of private and voluntary enterprise is a healthy element in the provision of education, as necessary for variety, life and progress as State control for generality and a high standard of efficiency.

There are at least two departments of medical activity in which the State may claim a predominating voice, Sanitation and Medical Education. But the peculiar circumstances of this country have enforced it to take up a third burden which in wealthier, better-educated or more advantageously circumstanced countries is undertaken by individual enterprise and private charity, the provision of medical assistance. The utmost that could usually be expected of the Government in this line, would be the establishment of State Hospitals in large towns where there existed a large and congested mass of poverty. But in India the State provides not only these but covers the land with skilled medical help and dispensaries, bringing assistance to the doors of the people gratis or at a nominal price. The reason of this state of things does not lie altogether in the poverty or helplessness of the people.

Previous to the British rule medicine was practised in India as in Europe by a class of skilled physicians using their knowledge as a means of independent livelihood. The princes and nobles of the land might maintain a family Hakim or Vaidya, but there was no idea and probably no great necessity of providing State or charitable help in any systematic shape to the mass of the population. The fees of the local physicians were not beyond the means of an ordinary income, and the great mass of the people living healthy open air lives and observing rules of life which the experience of generations had established as suitable to the climate, enjoyed greater immunity than in these days from ordinary diseases and trusted with more justification to the vigour of their natural constitutions for recovery when attacked. The great epidemics which sanitation and prophylactic measures combat with so large a measure of success, were regarded, in India as in mediaeval Europe, as divine visitations borne with terror perhaps, but without any idea of organised resistance.

With the British rule came a marked change. There was in this country an ancient and indigenous system of medicine, which had shared the fate of the other Hindu arts and sciences both in the comparatively high degree of scientific knowledge and intelligent practice it had reached in astonishingly early times and in the premature blight which had subsequently come over it. In surgery, in pharmacy and in sanitation its knowledge was sound and masterly; it conducted successfully surgical operations which would have been far beyond contemporary science in Europe; it had amassed a pharmacopoeia from indigenous drugs, which, however imperfect, was possessed of considerable merit and efficacy; and its rules of sanitation were exhaustive, sound and in consonance with the scientific opinion of today. Its theory of the human body was, it is true, rather in agreement with ancient opinion than the more enlightened modern ideas, but its practical science was superior to its theory. Upon this promising science as upon almost everything else in India there fell a curse of stationariness and decay. Its practice became mechanical; its science fell into desuetude; the old authorities couched in the learned tongue came to be repeated by rote; its pharmacopoeia was administered without intelligence or original research and analysis and therefore with only a fitful efficacy; surgical knowledge ceased to exist except in a rudimentary form, and sanitary rules once invested with a religious sanction came to be flagrantly violated in the daily practice of the people. Mahomedan medicine, a mediaeval science based on the Greek, did not tend to correct this state of things; it only added another imperfect system to the existing one. To a country thus circumstanced Western civilisation came with a medical science which, recovered from its old stagnation, was making immense strides, with a vastly superior pharmacy, an ever bolder & more subtle surgery and organised & living grasp of sanitation.

When the British Government finally established itself throughout the country, its enlightened and benevolent instincts left only one course open to it. The epidemics which yearly devastated filthy & insanitary towns and villages, must be in some measure combated. A population scattered through the country in innumerable small villages without any means of adequate medical assistance, must be familiarised with the more advanced science of the West. But there was no body of men in the country itself who could replace as an independent profession the old Vaidyas, Kavirajes and Hakims by the application of the new science, nor could the Government wait for the necessarily far-off time when such a class, in sufficiently large proportions, could be elaborated. The necessary consequence was the development of the Indian Medical Service, one of the most beneficent institutions of the British rule; and with this development came, as an obvious corollary, the establishment of Government dispensaries all over the country. One of the latest minor developments in this line, the action by which small quantities of quinine are sold at the Government Post Offices as a remedy for malarious fever, is a characteristic instance alike of the curiously paternal nature of the British rule and of the unique state of things prevailing in this country. Of this state of things great poverty is a necessary feature, otherwise Government assistance might be gradually replaced by the class of professional men with diplomas from the Indian Universities who are now to be met with in increasing numbers in every considerable town. But such men have small chance of success in the rural districts among a population too poor to pay for efficient medical assistance. The great bulk of the population must for long depend upon the gratuitous assistance which the Government has placed at their doors.

In Baroda the old system prevailed almost until the year of my accession. At that time the only public provision of medical aid on modern lines was one hospital at Baroda under the Residency surgeon, two small military hospitals in Kathiawar and three dispensaries in various parts of the State. At the same time a number of Vaids and Hakims, about 25 in all, were maintained by the State for the benefit of the Troops, the prisoners in the jail and the State officials. These had their charges in a manner farmed out to them, for they were expected in lieu of a regular remuneration to provide drugs and other medical necessaries from their own resources. One State Hakim drew the immense salary of Rs 6000 a month; the others, though not so fortunate, had certain advantages within their grasp. These physicians were attached to different Departments and in some cases the same man held charges in two, three or more departments, thus drawing a multifold salary and farming out each branch of his work to someone else at perhaps a third of the stipend attached to it. These easy & profitable posts descended in practice from father to son, and often had privileges attached to them of considerable pecuniary value. The medical expenditure on their salaries amounted to about £ 20,000 and the privileges to at least 10,000 more. In 1876–77 this system was swept away, the whole staff being pensioned off for an aggregate sum of Rs 545 per month and a regular Medical Department instituted. Dr. Cody, a medical officer of the British service, was appointed Chief Medical Officer and 4 hospitals and 9 dispensaries were opened in Baroda, Nowsari, Sidhpur, Kadi, Pattan and other important places in the territory. These were added to in successive years and in 1880–81 there existed 11 hospitals, 23 Dispensaries and one Veterinary Hospital. A Vaccination Department had been organised under the supervision of the Residency Surgeon several years before and this under the new regime was greatly strengthened; 3 Inspectors, 31 vaccinators, 6 probationers & 34 peons formed the staff. The strength of the regular Department numbered beside the Chief Medical Officer, 10 Medical Officers, 46 Hospital Assistants and 34 medical pupils; the Veterinary Hospital was in the charge of a Surgeon and one veterinary pupil; a midwife was also maintained by the State for the city of Baroda. During the five years from 1875–1880 Rs 858,550-5-6 had been expended by the State on its medical Department.

The work done up to this date could only suffice for the most urgent and immediate needs of the principal towns of the Raj. The twenty years from 1880 to 1900 have accordingly been devoted not only to expansion on the lines already laid down, but to the inception of larger work in the sphere of Sanitation and the introduction of improved methods and organisation in the Department. Of the 35 institutions already existing, several have been discontinued owing to the cessation of the special need for which they were created; for instance the military dispensaries at Deesa and Manekwada came to a natural end with the cessation of the contingents there stationed. On the other hand 24 new institutions have been established, 20 dispensaries, 2 veterinary dispensaries, one Lunatic and one Leper Asylum; raising the total number to 54.[1] Most of the towns of the Raj which are at all considerable have therefore been provided with these facilities for medical assistance.

It has not been found necessary to increase the number of the Hospitals, the provision already made being sufficient for the present and liberal in proportion to the extent and needs of the territory. In the city of Baroda itself there are as many as three. The oldest, once known as the State Hospital, dates back to the times of the Maharaja Ganpatrao and was from its inception till 1881 under the supervision of the Residency Surgeon. So long as there was a lack of qualified medical talent in the country, such an arrangement was no doubt advisable and necessary, but by this time the conditions which necessitated it had ceased to operate, and after assuming powers I appointed

---

[1] *There is a question mark against this sentence in the manuscript. — Ed.*

Dr. R. H. Nanavati to be in charge of the Hospital; it has since been under the management of different State Medical officers. The housing and accommodation had ceased to be sufficient for what was intended to be the first Hospital in the State; accordingly in 1882–83 the old building was pulled down and a new one erected in its place, the Hospital being temporarily transferred elsewhere. The new building is a fine red brick building just outside the city, graceful in architecture and sufficient in accommodation. It is now called the Countess of Dufferin Hospital as a compliment to a lady whose name will always be remembered in India in association with high benevolence, active sympathy with suffering and an earnest desire to ameliorate the condition of Indian women. Another & smaller building was added to the Hospital in 1898–9 for the accommodation of women of respectable families and styled the Victoria Jubilee Ward and a final addition for the use of patients from the army, called the Sayajirao Military Ward, completed the building as it now stands. The hospital is well equipped with instruments and appliances; in 1893–94 Rs 5000 worth of instruments were ordered out from England and in 1900 after visiting the Paris Exhibition I sent many of the latest scientific appliances from Europe to be kept for use in this Hospital. Besides the Medical Officer in charge who daily visits the Hospital and the Hospital Assistants working under him, there is a House Surgeon in constant attendance upon the sick and, since 1899 a Lady Doctor with a nurse to assist her is in charge of the Victoria Jubilee Ward. A Lady Doctor was first appointed in 1893 at the Jumnabai Hospital to attend to female outpatients; but the appointment has, I believe, benefited the public of the city more widely than the sphere of her purely official duties would indicate; as many families are glad to secure skilled female assistance for their ladies when it is available. There is a greater field in India than in other countries for the services of female physicians and nurses, but the supply is insignificant. The abundant provision of trained nurses is a great element in the comfort and efficiency of hospitals in Europe. The State has made some attempt to supply the need of nurses for women in sickness by sending four female students to the Cama Hospital in Bombay to learn midwifery and nursing; two of these returned after passing their final examination in 1887–8 and were appointed to the State Hospital and the Jumnabai Hospital. The other two also were entertained in the State service in the next year. A regular midwife has also been maintained whose duty it is to attend cases of childbirth in the city.

Of the other hospitals in Baroda, the Jumnabai Hospital named after H. H. the Maharani Jumnabai is confined to out cases; it was originally a dispensary afterwards turned into a Hospital, by attaching a girls' school building in the vicinity as a ward. For in-cases the accommodation in the Dufferin Hospital is sufficient and the site healthier, accordingly since 1899 the admission of inpatients into the Jumnabai Hospital has been discontinued. The Sayajirao Military Hospital was, as its name implies, meant not for the use of the general public but for the Army, of which by far the larger part is stationed at the capital; originally built to accommodate 40 people, it was increased as necessity arose by two farther wards. In 1899 it was amalgamated with the State Hospital by the addition of the Sayaji Military Ward to that building and placed under the same supervision.

In spite of the superior development and scientific accuracy of Western medicine, a great portion of the people of this country still cling to their belief in the old systems, and it has been thought advisable to make a certain concession to their preferences. Two Hakims have been appointed by the State to treat cases at the Hospitals in which patients might express a greater confidence in the Mahomedan system of treatment and the State Balvaid was attached to the Countess of Dufferin Hospital in 1899–1900 for the benefit of those who preferred the Ayurvedic treatment.

The city of Baroda has therefore been amply supplied with medical facilities; nor have the districts been neglected. There are Hospitals in the chief town of each Division, the large division of Kadi having two to its share; besides this several of the district dispensaries are in all essential respects hospitals, admitting indoor patients as well as dispensing medical aid to out-patients and being placed under the supervision of an Assistant Civil Surgeon, notably Mehsana, Petlad, Dabhoi and Visnagar. There are also Assistant Civil Surgeons at Sidhpur, Anusuya and Dwarka. This large development of medical aid in the districts has taken place mainly since 1887. The regular strength of the Medical Establishment numbered in 1899 21 medical officers, 62 Hospital Assistants and 75 medical pupils, besides the Hakims, Balvaid, midwife and nurses already mentioned.

The Revival of Industry in India

GENTLEMEN, — IF I hesitated to accept your invitation to preside at the opening of this Exhibition, the importance of the occasion must be my excuse. You called me to step into the breach, to face publicly the most tremendous question of our times and to give you my solution of a problem on which no two people agree, except that it is urgent.

But I do not think that we realise how urgent it is. Famine, increasing poverty, widespread disease, all these bring home to us the fact that there is some radical weakness in our system and that something must be done to remedy it. But there is another and a larger aspect of the matter and that is that this economic problem is our last ordeal as a people. It is our last chance. Fail there and what can the future bring us? We can only grow poorer and weaker, more dependent on foreign help; we must watch our industrial freedom fall into extinction and drag out a miserable existence as the hewers of wood and drawers of water to any foreign power which happens to be our master. Solve that problem and you have a great future before you, the future of a great people, worthy of your ancestors and of your old position among the nations.

Two years ago I stood looking at the wonders of that great Exhibition at Paris which summed up in so striking a manner the progress of a century in civilisation, industry and commerce. If I were asked what struck me most in that noble and artistic effort of a great nation, I should answer: the magnificent proportions and excellent management of the undertaking, so vast in conception and admirable in execution; the efficiency of the orderly and illuminating arrangement and careful accuracy of detail; and after that, the extraordinary ingenuity displayed in the educational section in methods and appliances; and not only the ingenuity but the thoroughness of these methods, especially in the exhibits of Germany and America. But besides these two special exhibits, that which struck me most profoundly was the enormous difference between India and Europe to-day. Those vast halls crowded with shining steel work, the fruits of the combined industry and genius of a dozen nations; the amazing richness of texture and delicacy of design in the products of those machines; the vigorous life and aspiration which glowed in the Art, as well as the clear precision of the knowledge reflected in the Science; all this impressed me more than I can say.

But beyond all this triumph of Man over Nature and her powers, one fact struck me with a curious emphasis — the enormous gulf which separates the European and the native of India in their ideas of comfort. There rose up before me the interior of a typical Indian home, and as I contrasted it with the truly surprising inventions around me, all devoted to that one object, refinement, our much-boasted simplicity seemed bare and meagre beyond description. I contrasted those empty rooms — without even a chair or a table — with the luxury, the conveniences, which are the necessaries of a European cottage. My mind went back to the bazaar in my own city of Baroda, the craftsmen working at their old isolated trades with the methods which have sufficed them for centuries without a change, the low irregular houses, the dreamy life drifting between them, and then contrasted it all with this keen and merciless tide which was sweeping and eddying around me, drawing its needs from a thousand machines like these and gathering its comforts from the four quarters of the globe. And with the contrast I had a vivid sense of the enormous gulf which we have to bridge over before India can be said to be on the same plane as the European nations.

And yet, I thought, there is a change coming over India. The appearance of our houses is being altered by the revolution which is being made in their furniture. It is slow, for there are many who deplore it and speak of it in tones of regret as a process of denationalisation and a fall from simplicity to a burdensome and costly luxury. But the change is rather in the direction in which the money is spent. Our fathers made up by opulence of material for the poverty of convenience. The futility of such regrets is shown by the fact that most of these eulogists of the past show in their own houses, even if only in a slight degree, the effects of the tendency which they deplore. I do not mean that we should dispense with simplicity; but let it be a wise moderation in the midst of plenty, not the fatalistic acceptance of poverty as a virtue in itself. And there can be no doubt that this tendency, which is now in its initial stage, will grow in strength with the course of years, until with the necessary differences due to climate and other environments it brings us approximately near to the Western mode of living.

But this mode is a rich and costly mode; to maintain it requires easy circumstances and a large diffusion of wealth. A poor country cannot meet its demands. A country without flourishing manufactures must always be a poor country. The future, therefore, imperatively claims this from us, that we shall cease to be a purely agricultural country and vindicate for ourselves some place at least among commercial and manufacturing nations. Otherwise we shall only establish for ourselves the unhappiness of unsatisfied cravings and the benumbing effects of an ideal to which we can make no approach. The cravings must be there, they are inevitable and essential to progress. To attempt to discourage them for political reasons or from social or religious conservatism is unjust and unwise and must eventually prove futile. The true policy is to provide that the cravings shall find means of encouragement. In other words we have to encourage and assist the commercial development of the country and so put it on the only possible road to progress, opulence, and prosperity.

There is a theory which affects to regard the races inhabiting the tropical and subtropical regions of the earth as disinherited by some mysterious law of Nature from all hope of originality, enterprise and leadership. These things belong to the temperate regions; the tropics are to be for ever no more than the field for the energies of the superior races, to whom alone belong empire, civilisation, trade and manufacture. We are to be restricted to a humble subordination, a servile imitation, and to the production of raw materials for their markets. At first sight there seems to be some justification for this theory in existing facts. Our trade is in European hands, our industries are for the most part not our own, our railways are built, owned and managed, by European energy and capital. The Government is European and it is from Europe that we imitate all that we call civilisation. Our immobile and disorganised society compares ill with the enlightened energy and cohesion of Europe; even at our best we seem to be only the hands that execute, not the head that originates.

Yet even if we accept this picture of ourselves without the necessary modifications, we need not accept this interpretation of inherent inferiority. For my part I demur to any such hasty generalisation: yet however much of it be true be sure that there is no law of Nature which can prevent you from changing it. To suppose that any nation can be shut out from the operation of the law of Evolution is utterly unscientific, and, in the light of history, absurd.

Granted that originality among us is low, that enterprise is deficient, and that leadership has passed out of our hands; is there in the first place no qualification to the entire truth of the assertion? And in the second, is this state of things due to immutable causes and therefore of old existence, or is it the result of recent and removable tendencies? It is true that such originality and power as we still possess has hitherto busied itself mostly in other paths than those of industry and the sciences which help industry. It has worked chiefly on the lines of Religion and Philosophy which have always been the characteristic bent of the national mind, continuing through Rammohan Ray, Dayanand Saraswati and Keshavchandra Sen, the long and unbroken line of great religious teachers from Gautama to Chaitanya and Kabir. It is true that teachings of fatalism and inactive detachment have depressed the vitality of the people. Yet there is no reason to believe that this depression and this limitation are not removable and are constitutional.

But it is not only in Religion that we were great. We had amongst us brave soldiers like Shivaji, Hyderali, Mahadji Scindia and Ranjitsingh. Can we not again claim to have had an important share in the establishment of that mighty structure — the

Indian Empire — erected indeed by the clear-sighted energy and practical genius of England, but on the foundations of Indian patience, Indian blood and Indian capital?

It is not an insignificant symptom that, considering how recent and meagre is scientific education in India, we should be able to show at least some names that are familiar to European scientists, not to speak of others enjoying a deserved reputation among ourselves. Small as these things may seem, they are yet enough to overthrow the theory of constitutional incapacity. And if we consider classes rather than individuals, can it be denied that the Parsis are an enterprising and industrially capable race? Or can it be doubted that the community which could produce a leader in industry and philanthropy like Mr Tata, will, as circumstances improve, take a leading place in the commercial world? Or can enterprise and commercial capacity be denied to classes like the Bhatias, Khojas and the merchants of Sindh? When we have individuals and classes like these in our midst we may well enquire why it is that we stand so poorly in industry and commerce, without fearing that the answer, however ungratifying to our feelings, will lead us to despair.

But if this theory of the inferiority of the tropical races be untrue; if we find that in the past we had great men whose influence is with us even to-day; we must look for some other cause for the difference, and ask what it is that India has not to-day but which she had in that older stage of her history and which Europe has at the present day. We have not far to seek. It is obvious that it is the clear and practical examination of Life and Nature which men call Science, and its application to the needs of Life which men call Industry, in which we are deficient and in which Europe excels. And if we question the past we learn that this is exactly what has not come down to us through the ages along with our Religion and Philosophy.

Our early history is scanty and, in many respects, uncertain, but no uncertainty, no scantiness can do away with the fact that this was once a great commercial people. We see a very wealthy nation with organised guilds of artisans, a flourishing inland commerce, a large export and import trade. We hear of busy and flourishing ports through which the manufactures of India flowed out to Europe, to Arabia and Persia, and from which, in those early times, we sent out our delicate cotton textures, our chintz and muslin, our silk cloth and silk thread, a fine quality of steel; indigo, sugar, spices and drugs; diamonds, ivory and gold. In return we received brass, tin and lead, coral, glass, antimony; woollen cloth and wines from Italy, and also specie and bullion.

All through the Middle Ages, our manufactures and industries were at a very high level. Every traveller attests the existence of large and flourishing towns (a sure index of industrial prosperity), and praises the skill and ingenuity of our workmen. It was on the Eastern trade that Venice built her greatness, for then we were indeed the "Gorgeous East". Notice, that it is especially in the manufactures which required delicate work, originality of design, or instinctive taste that our products were famous; our carving, our inlaid work and our gossamer cloth.

Coming now to the earlier part of the last century, what do we find? The carrying trade had passed from the Arabs to the East India Company and with it, too, the control of nearly all our exports, especially those in indigo, iron and steel, and the newly imported industries in tobacco, tea and coffee. But there was still a large body of trade in Indian hands; even then our manufactures held their own and were far superior to those of Europe; even then there were thousands of skilled artisans; and we supplied our own wants and exported enormous quantities of goods to other countries. Where, then, has all this trade gone and what has caused our decline?

The most obvious answer is, as I have said, the difference between Europe and India in industrial methods and appliances. But this is not quite sufficient to explain it. A deeper examination of the facts at our disposal shows that the life had almost left Indian industry before Europe had brought her machines to any remarkable development, and long before those wonderful changes which the application of chemistry and electricity have more recently wrought in industry. Nor can we ascribe it to a superiority which England possessed in industrial and technical education, for at that time there was no such training and

England has never relied on it for commercial capacity. If we go a little deeper into the matter we find that there is a further reason which does not depend on the natural working of economic laws but which is political in its nature, the result of the acquisition of political power by the East India Company and the absorption of India into the growing British Empire.

As Mr Dutt shows in his able *Economic History of British India*, this political change had the gravest effect on our economic life. In the first place we had the economic policy of the East India Company which, so far as its export trade was concerned, accepted manufactures indeed, but paid an equal, if not greater, attention to raw materials. Even our internal trade was taken from us by the policy of the East India Company; there were heavy transit duties on all inland commerce and there were commercial Residents in every part of the Company's possessions, who managed to control the work of the local artisans, and so thoroughly that outside their factories all manufacture came to an end.

On this came the protective policy of the British Government, which, despite the powerful interests of the East India Company, crushed Indian manufactures by prohibitive duties. Then came the application of steam to manufacture. It is scarcely to be wondered at, if with all this against us at home and abroad, our manufactures declined and with the great advance in the improvement in machinery and the initiation of a Free Trade policy, this decline was hastened into ruin.

Moreover, a country not exporting manufactures is necessarily stagnant, and commercial progress and self-adaptability cease. Once the manufacturing superiority of India had been transferred to England, it was impossible for the weaker country to recover its position without some measure of protection. Not only was the struggle in itself unequal but the spectacle of a mighty commerce, overshadowing and dominating ours, flooding our markets and taking away our produce for its own factories, induced a profound dejection, hopelessness and inertia among our people. Unable to react against that dominating force we came to believe that the inability was constitutional and inherent in ourselves; there is a tendency in fact to hypnotise ourselves into apathy by continual repetition of the formula that Indians, as a race, are lacking in enterprise, deficient in business faculties, barren in organising power. If, therefore, I have dwelt upon our old manufactures and commerce and the way in which they were crushed, it is not with the unprofitable object of airing an old grievance, but in order to point out that there is no reason for this discouraging view of ourselves. We were a trading and manufacturing country from ancient times down to the present century, and if our manufactures have fallen into decay, our commerce languished, it was under a burden which would have crushed the most flourishing industry of the most energetic people.

Our weakness lies in this that we have for many years lain prostrate under a fictitious sense of our own helplessness and made no adequate attempt to react against our circumstances. We have succumbed where we should have exhausted every possibility of resistance and remedy. We have allowed the home-keeping propensities and the out-of-date semi-religious prejudices, which have gathered round the institution of caste, to prevent us from choosing the line of activity most consonant with our abilities, or from seeking in other lands for fresh markets and the knowledge of new industries.

The restriction against foreign travel is one of the most serious obstacles in the way of commercial success and must be utterly swept away, if we are not to go on stagnating. It is a pity that communities like the Bhatias should be restrained by an out-worn prejudice from going abroad and furthering that task of development for which they are so admirably fitted. The endeavours hitherto made have been, with few exceptions, sporadic, half-hearted and prematurely abandoned; and the support given to them by the public has been scanty, wanting in confidence and in personal and active interest. It is this state of things which must cease before we can hope to revive our own manufactures, to establish firmly and extend those which exist, and to set on foot any new industries which our needs demand, and for which the conditions offer sufficient opportunity. Then

India may again be what she was in the past and what she is so admirably fitted by nature to be, a self-sufficing country; famous for artistic and useful industries. To raise her again to this should be the ideal of every patriotic citizen. But in order that the ideal may be realised we need, first: knowledge of our possibilities, of the means and facilities necessary to success, and of the lines on which activity would be best repaid; and secondly: belief in ourselves and in each other so that our knowledge may not fail for want of co-operation.

If we get these, if we realise the progress of Science and mechanical invention and resolutely part with old and antiquated methods of work, if we liberate ourselves from hampering customs and superstitions, none of which are an essential part of our religion; if, instead of being dazed in imagination by the progress of Europe, we learn to examine it intelligently, and meet it with our own progress, there will be no reason for us to despair; but if we fail in this we must not hope to occupy a place in the civilised and progressive world.

To speak with any fullness on this subject is not possible within the short limit of time at my disposal. I shall, therefore, pass lightly over a few salient points; for, the lines of activity open to us and calling for our energies are unlimited in their extent, variety and promise. This country is not poor in its resources, but may rather be said to be blessed by Nature in many respects; its mineral wealth is anything but contemptible; its soil produces valuable and useful products in great variety and abundance; the provision of water power is also unstinted. We have an excess of cheap labour and we have hereditary artisans who are quick in hand and eye, and who only need to be properly trained to make them the equals, if not the superiors, of their rivals. If there are certain serious disadvantages and defects in its mineral wealth such as the inferiority of its coal supplies, and in its vegetable products, such as the greater coarseness of its cotton and the difficulty of growing the finest silk, yet so great is the advance Science has made that we need not despair of meeting some of these difficulties at least in part. Nor is there any imperative necessity that we should always vie with other countries in producing the very best. If we utilise to the best advantage what Nature has given us and advance in such manufactures as the country is fitted for, we shall have done no inconsiderable task. What is required is greater knowledge, a more earnest endeavour of the Government towards improvement and the provision of facilities, and more serious activity on the part of the people to take advantage of such facilities as already exist. We need improvement in agriculture, and facilities in industries; for in a country like India, which produces or can produce the bulk of its own raw material, the agricultural question cannot be separated from the industrial.

Improvement in agriculture is necessary to secure an increased quantity and improved quality of the produce of our fields. What Science can do for agriculture, the development of the beet-sugar industry and the improvement of cotton clearly show; and as sugar and cotton are two of the most important of our products and especially of our export trade, I wish to call your attention to what has been done by our rivals.

Beet-sugar cultivation has been gradually developed by careful selection of the best roots and the application of agricultural chemistry, until the percentage of saccharine has been doubled and trebled. Here is the remedy for Indian sugar. We must not be ashamed to borrow our rivals' tactics, but strive hard to get for example for our cane sugar the very best canes and take care to use nothing but the very best methods of cultivation and manufacture.

The same is true of cotton. It is certain that the competition which Indian cotton has to meet will be much intensified in the near future; and our only hope of meeting it successfully is to improve our indigenous varieties up to a point at which they can hold their own. I believe that we can do this, but it demands the most patient researches and above all that, when the best variety has been discovered, the cultivator will really grow it.

Science is our great hope, but there is one great obstacle to be overcome before Science can help us, and that is the ignorance and apathy which is the general condition of the agricultural classes at present.

The failure of the old arts and crafts, and especially that of arms, has thrown vast numbers back on the soil, and these classes are neither intelligent nor progressive. Many old professions are dying out and while those, who should have followed them, go back to the land, many of these professions are not such as to provide any hereditary capacity for agriculture. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if our Indian cultivators, despite their traditional skill, are neither enterprising nor capable of undertaking improvements which demand considerable energy and foresight. Their methods, despite Dr Voelcker's high encomiums, are backward, their resources are very limited, and their implements, though they may be those best suited to their narrow means and small holdings, are old and economically wasteful. But their most serious drawback is their helplessness. There is a general complaint that the soil is deteriorating, but that they can do nothing to remedy it; and in times of scarcity and famine they seem incapable of doing anything to help themselves. This is a most serious question and one which demands all our attention.

In the first place this deterioration of the soil is a very real danger. Do you know that the average product per acre has in some parts of the country diminished by 50 per cent. since the middle of the seventeenth century, when the *Ain-i-Akbari* was compiled? Is it any wonder that the peasant grows poorer, or that his resources diminish?

Our remedies must fall under two heads: (1) the improvement of methods, implements and general conditions; and (2) education.

In the first place attempts to introduce new implements have nearly all failed. Iron flails and threshing machines have been tried at one time or another, but the ryot will have none of them. At the same time this does not mean that the old implements are the best that the wit of man can devise, or that we are to suppose that past failure is conclusive.

Another matter to which Government has given some attention has been cattle-breeding. The results so far have not been encouraging, though there are Government farms at Hissar and at Bhatgaum in Khandesh, and another called the Amrit Mahal, maintained by the Mysore Government, from which are derived certain superior breeds of cattle to be found in the Madras Presidency.

Until we can get the co-operation of the people the results must be disappointing. Nevertheless, I think that there is a great deal of good work to be done on these lines and I am of opinion that besides improving the breed of cattle much might be done in the way of encouraging the ryots to breed other stock, such as horses, mules, etc. It is a thousand pities that our Indian breeds of horses should be dying out and that there seems to be no sensible effort made to keep them alive. Perhaps the chief reason that Government breeding farms have failed is that they are too elaborate for the people in their present condition. I believe that much might be done by reviving the old custom of keeping sacred bulls in every village and taking care that the bulls supplied were the best that could be procured. Much might be done if the cultivator could be persuaded to breed only from the best animals.

Instead of helping ourselves we always depend upon Government; here is an instance where people can, with advantage, help themselves. To it I would add the planting of trees, which are of economic value, around the cultivators' fields and the encouragement of the fibrous plants which are now articles of commerce. There is further the question of good drainage to relieve the bad effects of irrigation. A serious endeavour should be made to help the ryot to sow only the best seed and to pay some attention to the best rotation of crops.

In a country like India, where the introduction of improved implements is so limited in its possibilities, and where everything depends upon the timeliness and sufficiency of the annual rains, it is irrigation that must necessarily take the largest place in all plans of agricultural improvement. This importance of irrigation has been recognised by the successive rulers of this country from the times of the ancient Hindu kings. From the days of Asoka, and before him, the digging of wells and tanks had been the subject of royal edicts and one of the first religious duties of princes, zemindars and wealthy philanthropists. The number of small tanks in ruins that one finds in the districts, the multitude of old wells that still exist round about Muslim capitals; above all, the immense system of artificial reservoirs in the Madras Presidency, bear testimony to the steady persistence of this old tradition of administrative benevolence. In the Southern Presidency there are over 6000 tanks mainly of native origin, the magnitude of which will be best remembered when it is understood that the embankments measure over 30,000 miles with 300,000 separate masonry works, and that these tanks irrigate over 34 lakhs of acres, an area almost equal to that irrigated by the entire system of the major and minor works of the Madras Presidency. These works were getting out of repair in the troublous times of the eighteenth century, when general disorder and mal-administration, the usual concomitants of any violent change in the form of Government, prevailed in our country. When they occupied the country the British, with their characteristic administrative energy, not only put them in order but in many cases improved and enlarged them. They have brought, or kept under irrigation, an area of little less than 20,000,000 acres at the cost of forty-two crores of rupees; and the work has been done with so much judgment and success that the works yield a profit of nearly 7 per cent. and the produce raised equals 98 per cent. of the total capital outlay. Not content with this they are now undertaking to prepare and gradually execute a scheme of protective works which, when complete, should do much to insure the country against famine. The work in irrigation will always be one of the most splendid and irreproachable chapters in the history of British Rule.

The proposed extension of irrigation works would also offer to the capitalists of the country a very eligible field for the investment of their surplus savings. If the people only co-operate they would find irrigation projects a very profitable channel for investment; and if they fail to take advantage of the favourable opportunity, one need not be surprised if European capital is extensively employed in their development as has been done in the case of railways in India. I trust the Government on its part will also offer more than usual inducements to attract private Indian capital in these profitable undertakings.

Besides great irrigation works there is another way in which much might be done to protect the country against the effects of drought, that is, by encouraging the digging of wells. This is a method well adapted for States which have no facilities for works on a grand scale. In my own territories I have found that the advance of taccavi, for this purpose, was a measure which the cultivator could understand, and, under the guidance of experienced officers, one which worked well. At the same time large irrigation works have been commenced in various parts of the territory, and a survey is being made for the repair of old tanks and the utilisation of favourable spots for the storage of water.

But it must not be forgotten that irrigation will not end all our troubles. Indeed, unless it is accompanied by a considerable measure of intelligence and foresight, it brings others in its train, such as the debilitation of the soil. The remedy for this is, of course, the use of artificial manures which will restore to the soil some of the qualities that are removed from it by over-irrigation. Here we are at once faced by our usual want of foresight and ignorance of which I have already spoken. In face of the deterioration of the soil, which I have mentioned as a widespread evil, widely acknowledged, it is inconceivable to me that we should seek to encourage the export of cotton-seeds on which so much of the efficiency of the simple manure, which we use here, in Gujarat, depends. Yet the value of this export has risen in one year from five to twenty lakhs of rupees, and it is certain that at this rate the cattle will have to go without it, and that their manure will become practically valueless. An artificial manure is, therefore, a crying necessity.

Another point is the growth of deep-rooted grasses which can resist drought and so prevent the terrible mortality of cattle which was so painfully marked in the late famine. We must follow the example of Australia in this matter and find indigenous deep-rooted grasses which we can plant systematically on waste land, and then, when we are cursed with another season of drought, we shall have something to meet it with.

Before we can hope that the ryot will try to employ measures which demand a high level of intelligence and scientific knowledge, we must awaken his curiosity and enlist his sympathy, which can only be done by a good system of general education. Without it our best endeavours are bound to fail. Government has established Agricultural Colleges and model farms in different parts of the country, but agriculture has been but little improved in consequence. Partly, I think, this is due to the vastness of the area and to the great variety of local conditions, for each district has its own difficulties to meet and overcome. But the main reason for the failure is, I believe, the indifference and apathy of the people themselves. Another reason is the fact that these measures have come from outside and not from the people. However imperfect our education may be it is equally lamentable that it has so far affected no more than 5 per cent. of the population of the country. Before any noticeable change can take place, there must be a general feeling among the people that improvement must be made and a desire to take advantage of the efforts of Government to help them. At present, they are more inclined to laugh at our attempts to aid them than to help us by their advice and by showing us where their real difficulties lie. Their criticism, as a rule, is more destructive than educative.

I have found it possible to do something to improve the more backward classes of cultivators by sending more intelligent ryots to show them better methods of cultivation; and the school for the Dhankas at Songadh has been more or less successful. These measures only serve to raise the internal level of the lower agriculture up to the highest of our present system, while the problem is to raise the general level. Perhaps something might be done by agricultural associations which studied local requirements and popularised such improvements as admitted of practical application. But I believe the only change which would do much would be to induce a more intelligent and enterprising class to engage in agriculture.

Over and above all this it is very important that our agriculturists should have cottage industries or some work on which they can usefully engage themselves and the members of their family during the slack season of agriculture. Such would be for the men, wood-carving and the making of toys; and for the women, needle work and embroidery.

I do not think we should stop short at improving our raw materials; I believe we might do much in the way of working them up. The annual review of the Trade of India published by the Statistical Department of the Government of India teaches us some wholesome lessons, which it would be always useful to remember. They show the large number of objects for which we are at present dependent on foreign factories, but for which we have plenty of raw material at hand, and which, if we only avail ourselves of the latest scientific methods, we can ourselves manufacture. Our endeavour should be to reduce this dependence upon foreign industries, and, where the necessary facilities do not exist for such manufactures at home, we should so improve the quality of our raw material as to enable it to hold its own in the foreign market to which it is sent. The wheat, for instance, which we export at present is used for the manufacture of bread in Europe, but it is scarcely fit to be turned to the many other uses to which it can be put unless it is much improved in quality. The same remarks apply to many of the most ordinary articles of daily use, such as paper, oils, leather, etc. The instance of leather is peculiarly noteworthy. We export the hides and the materials for tanning them, but that is not all. There is a cheaper and more efficient process of cleaning the hides in use in Europe, and the hides are exported to Europe to be cleaned there. Is it impossible for India to tan her own hides, in her own factories, with her own tanning materials? Another point which seems inconceivable when the need for artificial manure is remembered, and that is, that we export bones in large quantities to be turned into bone-manure for the beet-fields of our rivals, and so for their sugar, which we so largely import.

Glass again is an article of which we import a large quantity every year, but which we might manufacture for ourselves. Last year we imported glass of the value of over ninety lakhs of rupees. In 1887 I made some enquiries into the matter and found that there were raw materials in plenty for the manufacture not only of rough glass, but of glass of the finest quality. I was advised that it would not pay to establish a factory, but the reasons against success were not insuperable. I also made some enquiries into the possibility of manufacturing paper in Gujarat and discovered that there were abundant raw materials of an excellent quality to be obtained here, and that this too was quite feasible.

We have already some glass-blowing factories at Kapadwanj and in the Panjab; paper mills in Bombay, Poona and Bengal; leather tanneries in Madras, Cawnpore and Bombay. It would be interesting to study the quantity and quality of these home products and to compare them with the articles imported from abroad. We may thereby learn the difference and know how to remove their short-comings and extend their sale. Experience is the only path to knowledge, comparison perfects it. Knowledge is the dominant factor in the spirit of the age and the basis of all reform. I would suggest that, of the many manufactures which might be successful in India, it would be advisable to begin with those in which there is a steady local demand, such as soap, candles, glass, furniture, pen-nibs, carpets, etc., and afterwards extend the field of our operations so as to include other and more elaborate articles.

To enable us to take up these manufactures we need a system of industrial education, and for this we have to rely very largely on the assistance of Government. But we must remember that our position is not quite that of any European country in this respect, and that our best model would probably be Japan. Now, Japan, when she aimed at general, and particularly at industrial, progress, adopted three main lines on which her education was to run. These were, first to send a number of her young men abroad, and especially to Germany, for education; secondly to establish great colleges in Japan itself, the staff of which was at first composed of Europeans; and thirdly to employ the services of Europeans, in the initial stages of her manufactures, under whom her people were gradually trained in efficiency.

Now I should like first to call attention to the last of these, because I think that here we have the solution of a difficulty which has been met with in the case of some industries which have recently been started. I have heard complaints that the quality of the goods turned out was not satisfactory, and from what I heard, it seemed to me that perhaps the failure was due to the incompetence of the directors, or to some culpable laxness in their management, or to our having commenced the enterprise on too impracticable or ambitious a scale, or to our having lost sight of some essential conditions of success at the outset. Some industries may require European skill and supervision to pilot them through their initial stages, and a hasty attempt to dispense with it may lead to disappointing results. But there is another aspect to this apparent incompetence; we have to learn trustworthiness, a capacity for obedience, the art of management, accuracy, punctuality, method and the sense of justice, and the only school which will teach us these is a position in which they are called out by use. To return to the first of the three points: it is obviously impossible to send any very large proportion of our Indian youths abroad, though I think more might be done in this direction. I would appeal to Government and to our philanthropists to see if they cannot help us.

That which will help us most is a largely extended system of technical and general education, such as that on which Germany has built her commercial greatness. It is of course impossible to imitate the German system exactly. But it is not impossible to provide ourselves with a system which will meet our requirements. Though private individuals may do something in the matter, a satisfactory solution of the whole question must depend upon the sympathy and generosity of the Government. I believe that Government could not give a greater boon than such an education, and I think I am voicing the feelings of the educated classes at large, when I say that we are confident that we have not long to wait to see our rulers grapple with this problem, with their usual energy and decision. Meanwhile we must start our factories as best we can, and do the best with our present circumstances. I do not overlook the fact that the odds against us are heavy and that our infant industries have to struggle from the start in an open market with long-established competitors.

I am not afraid of being thought a heretic with regard to economics, if I say that I think we need Protection to enable our industries to reach their growth. The economic history of Germany and America shows that there is a stage in the growth of a nation when Protection is necessary. The laws of Political Economy are not inexorable and must bend to the exigencies of time and place. Theories and doctrines, however plausible, cannot take precedence of plain and practical truths. It is true that Free Trade enables a country to procure at cheaper rates those articles that can be manufactured more conveniently in foreign lands, but this cheapness is dearly bought by the loss of industrial status, and the reduction of a whole people to a helpless proletariat. National defence against alien industrial inroads is more important than the cheapness of a few articles.

Protection, therefore, if only for a short time, is what we need for our nascent manufactures; for some time must elapse before more perfect methods are naturalised in India and the standard of Indian workmanship attains the excellence of Europe. A high wall of tariffs has secured to American manufactures the home market as an undisputed field for their own development; and India, maimed, and helpless as she has been, may expect that relief from her beneficent Government. Government, like the climate and geographical conditions of a country, has a peculiar force of its own and must leave an indelible impress on the mould of the destinies of nations. It may as powerfully hamper, as promote, the moral and material development of the people entrusted to its care. If the Government were supported by a more informed and intelligent public opinion and if the people, awakened to a sense of national life, were allowed and induced to take a livelier interest in their own concerns and if they worked in unison, they would conduce to mutual strength. Government is a matter of common-sense and compromise, and its aim should be to secure the legitimate interests of the people governed.

But at the same time I would warn you against some false methods of encouraging industry, such as the movement to use no cloth not produced in the country. The idea is quite unsound so far as any economic results go; and the true remedy for any old industry which needs support is to study the market, find out what is wanted and improve the finish of the work and the design until an increasing demand shows that the right direction has been found. This applies particularly to the artistic trades, such as wood-carving and metal-work for which the country has been so famous and which it would be a pity to allow to die altogether. Among other means of improvement, the education of women in decorative art would bring a fresh economic force into play; and as I ascertained by enquiries in London, made from a desire to find lucrative home industries for our women, and especially for widows, would prove extremely profitable, if the right steps were taken. Tapestry, for instance, is a great women's industry in Switzerland; lacework, cretonne and embroidered cushions could all very well be done by women. Needlework is even now done in Gujarat homes, and if the designs and colourings are improved it might be turned into an active industry, supplying our own wants, and possibly outside demands. Carpet-weaving also, which is now done in several of our jails, might be turned in the same way into a profitable home industry. The main thing is to study the market and not to pursue our own hobbies. It would be necessary to have agents in Europe, who would study European wants, consult professional men and get designs which could be executed in India. Something of the sort is, I believe, done in the School of Arts in Madras. My enquiries in Paris convinced me that in the hands of capable persons this method would be both practicable and profitable.

I would, however, direct your attention more to the establishment of the larger industries involving an extensive use of machinery, for it is upon this that our economic future and any increase of our wealth depends. Before we have a large demand at home for the arts we must produce the wealth to support them, and we shall never have that wealth until we have an economic system on a much broader basis than our present limited industry. With a little energy and the assistance of Government we can broaden this basis, and then we may look forward to a new lease of life for Indian art and Indian literature and for those industries which depend on leisure and wealth.

I should like now to say a few words on the subject of the assistance which a Government can give in developing the resources of its territories. I have indicated a few ways in which I think Government can help economic development in the direction of education. To these I would add improvements in the means of communication and the establishment of banks and other co-operative institutions. It can also encourage merchants and manufacturers by advances of capital and by granting other facilities.

Native States in India, seriously handicapped as they are by their limited means and scope and the want of trained men, though they cannot emulate their great exemplar, the British Government, seem to limit themselves, as yet, too much to the routine of administration, and might do more for the material and commercial development of the country. Granted freedom of action, and with proper endeavour, I am inclined to think that many States in Central India, Rajputana and elsewhere would be able to get even more treasure out of the bowels of the earth than Mysore and Hyderabad at present obtain. But Government help has its limits.

My experience teaches me that it is very difficult for Government to provide industries for its people in the absence of a real business spirit amongst the people themselves. It is very difficult for so impersonal an entity as Government to get capable managers or to supervise its enterprises properly. I have tried various measures in my own State, but I am sorry to say that the results are disappointing. A sugar mill, a cotton mill and an ice factory were tried, but were not a success. A State fund for the advance of capital and other assistance to manufacturers also failed. I found that the managers were not sufficiently interested in the scheme and not impartial in the working of it. I am convinced, however, that the fault lay not with the industries themselves but in the fact that they were State enterprises.

I have also made an experiment in technical education.

I founded an institution called the Kala-Bhavan with departments in dyeing and weaving, carpentry and mechanical engineering, and with the object of diffusing technical education I had branches of it set up in various parts of the Raj. The response among the people was so faint that after a time the institution had to be contracted within narrower limits. Until the means of the people and the material wealth of the country expand, there can be but little demand for the work which such institutes turn out. So far, the Kala-Bhavan has done but little beyond providing skilled dyers for Bombay mills; and until the people co-operate more earnestly its utility will not be recognised. Once more it is the prevailing ignorance which hampers every movement to help the people. They are sunk in a fatalistic apathy and do not care to learn how to help themselves.

I have omitted to refer to the many endeavours made by other Indian States in the same direction, not because they are not worth mentioning. The wonderful Cauvery electric power scheme and the irrigation projects of the Mysore and Jaipur States, as well as the fine Technical School at Jaipur, are indisputably entitled to a high rank in the record of such laudable work. I have to pass them over for want of time and adequate information of all their details.

It is the general lack of education and intelligence which hampers us at every turn and has been our ruin. Once we can make education general we may hope for increased dexterity, an increased power of concentration, increased trustworthiness and quickness to discover new processes. We need these qualities in every class of Indian society. Education in England has diffused a spirit of self-reliance and a capacity for initiative; education in Germany aims at thorough knowledge, methodical application and exact learning; but education in India has hitherto aimed only at providing a certain amount of food for thought without ever touching the mental capacity or character.

I do not think that the plea that our industries are poor for want of capital is one that can be sustained. We have more capital than we imagine to develop our resources if we would only use it. But we lack the active foresight always seeking the best investments. We prefer to hoard our savings in our women's ornaments, or to invest it in Government securities at low rates of interest, when we might be using it in ways which would be profitable to the country at large, as well as to ourselves, such as agricultural improvements, insurance of agricultural stock and the establishment of factories. And that is especially true of some Indian States which invest their surplus capital in Government securities, instead of using it in the development of the resources of their own territories.

This is not, however, our only fault. There is another fault which is nearly as fatal to any system of industry, and that is our lack of confidence in ourselves and in one another. Without self-confidence you can never do anything; you will never found an industry or build up a trade, for you have nothing to carry you through the first anxious years when the only dividend is hope, and the best assets are unfaltering courage and faith in oneself. And without confidence in one another you will never have a credit system, and without a credit system no modern commerce can exist. It is this want of co-operation, this mutual distrust which paralyses Indian industry, ruins the statesman, and discredits the individual even in his own household. I believe that this trait of our character, though in some cases arising from our obvious defects and instances of actual misconduct among ourselves, is mainly due to the fact that the nation has long been split up into incoherent units, but also to the ignorance and restricted vision which result from our own exclusiveness. We have denied ourselves the illuminating experience of foreign travel and are too prone to imagine that weaknesses are confined to India. Failures and defalcations are as common in Europe as among ourselves; and yet we allow ourselves to be too easily discouraged by such incidents. Hence arises the habit of censorious judgment, a disposition to put the worst construction on the conduct of our friends and relatives, without trying to find the truth, which destroys all trust and tolerance. Our view of the conduct of friends, of the policies of administrations, of the success and integrity of commercial undertakings, are all vitiated by a readiness to believe the worst. It is only when we learn to suspend judgment and know the man and the motive before we criticise, that we shall be able to repose trust where trust is due. We must stiffen our character and educate ourselves up to a higher moral standard.

We despair too easily. Let us remember that we must expect failures at first; but that it is those who learn from failure that succeed. Moreover, as any one may learn from a survey of the present state of industry, there is evidence that some do succeed. We have not, of course, made the most of our opportunities, but it is worth while remembering that something has been done because it shows us what it is possible to do, and encourages us to do it. If any one wishes to know, in more detail, what has been done and what might be done, he could not do better than consult Mr Ranade's excellent book on the subject.

And now let me say a word about this Exhibition and its aims. I take it that an Exhibition is intended to draw together the scattered threads of industrial activity, so that the members of any trade may learn not only what is the latest development in their own trade, but also what other trades are doing, and what in the other trades is likely to help them. Then it is hoped that the spectacle of advance and improvement will arouse emulation and suggest new ideas and also draw industries together. But are the conditions in India such that we may hope for this? I fear not; I fear that the *ryot* will not yet come to learn from us and that there will be few craftsmen who will go away with new ideas and the memory of new processes. Nevertheless, we should not despair.

It should be remembered that a similar difficulty was experienced in England in connection with the Workmen's Institutes which sprang up all over the country in response to Dr George Birkbeck's suggestions. The object was to provide the mechanic with lectures on his own trade; but the attempt at first largely failed from the incapacity of the working man to learn anything from the lectures. Lectures and exhibitions bear fruit only when the people have received sufficient general education to make them mentally receptive and deft in adaptation and invention. When that goal is reached, such exhibitions may most usefully be turned into local museums, and if possible a syllabus of instruction attached to the exhibits. On the other hand, there is yet another function which exhibitions perform and which is equally useful, and that is their influence as general education among the classes whose intelligence is already aroused, and who go away with a new sense of what there is to learn. Life is not yet all machinery which it takes an expert to understand, and there are many new ideas which the collection of the most recent efforts in Art and Science in one place can inspire, and especially is this true if there is the comparison of the old with the new.

But before any of these undertakings and enterprises, which I have mentioned, can succeed, India must be thoroughly awakened. Understand what this means. It means action. There is no reality in our social reform, our political progress, our industrial revival, because, as you know, there is scarcely one of us who dares to act even in his own household.

You complain of an over-centralised Government, of the evils of heavy custom charges, of inland excise duties on cotton, of the treatment given to your emigrants, and the want of a legitimate share by the people in their own Government. There may be much in your complaints, but until you realise that the ultimate remedy lies in your own hands and that you have to carry it out by yourselves, no external reform can help you.

That awakening, that realisation is your share of the work, you who know something of Western thought and Western methods, and who imitate much from the West. But to the bulk of the population it does not apply so simply. The masses of India are lost in a hopeless ignorance, and that is why they are so intensely conservative and lacking in confidence and initiative. We cling to old customs because we do not know that they are not essential to our religion, and we dare not adopt new ideas or establish new industries because we do not know how to set about it. But there is another side to this ignorance and that is that we let our old customs hamper us and blind us in the present, because we do not understand the past.

Remember two inevitable tendencies in history: one, that no system, however perfect, however glorious, however far-reaching, can go on for 2000 years (or 200 for that matter) without enormous changes being made in it simply by time; the other, that the religious, the political and mental conditions of a nation are indissolubly connected and interwoven, so that you cannot alter a single feature in one of them without changing all three. Now apply these principles to the past.

From 500 A.D. we find a steady decline in the political and mental condition of the country down to the two centuries of darkness from which we emerged into the periods of the Rajputs and the Muslim conquest. Follow the fortunes of India down the next eight centuries and note the steady decline in Hindu power, both political and mental, till we come to the time when Europeans obtained a firm footing in India and conquered the country with very slender means, meeting and solving each problem as it arose. For 1400 years the record is one of steady decline in political and mental nationality. How then can religion have fared, and especially all those social institutions which depend on religion? Surely it is clear that just as our trade and our political power collapsed before the attacks made upon them because they were inefficient, the other features of our system cannot have escaped degradation and that in clinging to them blindly we are clinging to the very tendencies, the very forces that have dragged us down. The fact that we cling so tightly to them has ruined both them and us. Consider the effects of cumulative physical heredity on the capacity of any caste when the action, for which that caste and its institutions were designed, is taken out of its power.

Here then is the problem: to carry out a great change in this respect, to realise our ignorance and to make up our minds to face the question, how and what to change boldly and altogether. We have changed before when it has suited our convenience, adopting details from the Muslims when it fell in with our wishes, and many of us, even our conservatives, are European in their tastes at times. It is obvious that much of our religion and many of our social institutions of to-day have nothing in them except perhaps a faint shadow of their old vigour and glory on which our old greatness was founded.

India needs a great national movement in which each man will work for the nation and not for himself or for his caste, a movement carried out on common-sense lines. It does not mean that we are to adopt a brand-new system from Europe, but it does mean that we must borrow a little common-sense in our solutions of the problems of life.

We must resolutely see what we need, and if we find a plain and satisfactory solution adopt it whether we have traditional authority for it or not. Turn to the past and see what made India great, and if you find anything in our present customs which does not square with what you find there, make up your minds to get rid of it boldly, without thinking that it will ruin you to do so. Study the past till you know what knowledge you can get from it which you can use in the present and add to it what the West can teach us, especially in the application of Science to the needs of life.

You, Gentlemen, are the leaders of India, and if you fail, she fails. Let each of you make up his mind that he will live by what his reason tells him is right, no matter whether it be opposed or approved by any sage, custom or tradition. Think, and then act at once. Enough time has been wasted in waiting for time to solve our problems. Wait no longer but strike and strike home.

We have our "ancient régime" of custom and prejudice to overcome: let us meet them by a new Liberty, Equality and Fraternity; a Liberty of action, Equality of opportunity and the Fraternity of a great national ideal. Then you may hope to see India a nation again, with a national art and a national literature and a flourishing commerce, and then, but not till then, may you demand a national government.

I should like to pay a personal tribute to the organisers of this Exhibition, for the trouble and energy they have expended in making this collection of Indian arts and industry so fine and representative a collection; and to the local authorities and their able head, Mr Lely, the popular Commissioner, whose name will ever be a household word in Gujarat for his unfailing kindness in famine and plenty, who has taken so encouraging an interest in this Exhibition.

Surely it is a good omen for the success of our industrial revival that this Exhibition takes place in Ahmedabad, a town long famous for its enterprise and energy, which already possesses factories and industrial connections of importance with the industrial world. If only we had a few more Ahmedabads, India would not have long to wait for a real revival of her commerce.

And last of all, I have to pray for the long life, happiness and prosperity of His Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor, whose accession we are about to celebrate in so splendid a manner and whose reign will, we trust, inaugurate a new period of strong and prosperous national life for India, which will make her the brightest jewel in that Imperial Diadem.

Report on Trade in the Baroda State

1902

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS.

Causes of decline.

1. Trade throughout the Raj is in a state of depression and decline. The great industries that once flourished, such as weaving, dyeing, sharafi &c. are entirely broken and though a number of small retail trades have sprung up, the balance is greatly on the side of decline. The main causes of this condition of things are

- I European competition and that of such towns as Ahmedabad, Poona &c.
- II The Introduction of machinery.
- III The abandonment of ancestral professions.
- IV The continual drain of money from the State effected by
  - (1) Immense purchases from Europe, Bombay &c,
  - (2) Employment of officials from outside the Raj,
  - (3) Preference of foreign to local contractors,

and other similar causes.

Necessary measures.

2. To combat these evils there are certain general measures which are essential, as without them local industry must continue to be handicapped and consequently continue to decline.

State custom for local work.

3. Wherever such goods are produced locally as for their combined excellence and cheapness may properly be used by the Government, these should be preferred in State purchases to all others. The transference of Government custom from good local manufactures where such exist is especially undesirable and ought to be avoided. Where better work begins to be

produced outside, the local artisans ought with proper encouragement from the Revenue authorities to be able to make up the deficiency. But such improvement is impossible if Government instantly withdraws its custom.

4. The State should make inquiries on a large scale for

Improvement of local production.

(*a*) means of improving local production to the European standard;
(*b*) means of improving country hand-machines.

Weaving, for instance, was once a great and famous industry in every division of the Raj. A Committee should be appointed to find out in each place where the most excellent hand-woven cloths used to be made, the real causes of decline and to discover and apply measures by which they may compete successfully with European cloths. This would not be so difficult a matter as it appears at least with regard to several woven and dyed cloths. These are inferior to European in appearance and fineness but superior in strength and durability. It ought not to be impossible to supply the missing qualities. Much may be done by experiments under sub-head (*b*), and such are very necessary as European machinery is too costly to be introduced on the scale required. Similarly with regard to dyeing attempts should be made to discover pucca country dyes and improve such as are already in use.

5. Besides this the State should push forward the same object by

Means of encouraging industrial expansion.

(*a*) help and inducements.
(*b*) patronage.
(*c*) spread of knowledge.

Tasalmat.

6. The help may come in the shape of tasalmat. This should especially be given where enterprising traders have started work of an European quality and need help to bring the enterprise to perfection. But for the objects of the Government to succeed, it is necessary that tasalmat should not be given in the present haphazard fashion, but after careful inquiry and stringent tests and with due and constant supervision.

Machinery.

7. Help may also be given in the shape of machinery, which should be given at cost price to workers in articles which can be produced more cheaply here than abroad. These workers should receive grants on condition of using the machinery. There are instances in which deshi artisans have succeeded in reproducing English machinery, after one or two mistakes, at a much cheaper rate than the English.

Implements and patterns.

8. Often only polish is required, or better implements, to bring country goods up to the proper standard. In these cases Government might give the workers specimens and patterns of English work as there are in many places artisans skilful enough to reproduce work they have once examined, and should help them in procuring the necessary tools.

Inducements.

9. Those who first manufacture locally from material which is at present exported raw should have their work made easy for them in the matter of taxes &c., and clever artisans settling from outside should have building timber &c., cheap or gratis.

10. Inducement should be held out to

(*a*) those who bring up country goods to the European Standard;
(*b*) those who bring such improved commodities into the market.

This inducement should take the shape of grants (buck-sheesh, inams) or of a poshak given in durbar.

State Patronage.

11. The State should patronize all country commodities thus improved to an European standard in preference to European commodities, as also new industries, that is to say, manufactures made from material now exported in a raw state.

Lists should be prepared from each khata of the articles in use there and over against each item, details should be entered as to whether, how far, and where they are prepared in the State, along with the price, quality and other necessary particulars. With these lists as a basis, there should be a stringent rule enforced on all departments that wherever country goods equal or even a little inferior to European can be had, European goods should be eschewed in their favour.

Artisans who can work up to the European level, besides receiving costly Inams, should be favoured with the State custom, half the price being advanced as tasalmat.

Means of spreading knowledge.

12. In order to spread knowledge the State should adopt the following methods.

(*a*) A monthly technical magazine should be issued, containing among other things reliable accounts of the raw material of each mahal and the capabilities of that material.

(*b*) A pamphlet in very simple Guzerati should be circulated containing every information useful to those who may think of establishing factories, *viz.* the necessary cost, the nature, use and procurability of the necessary machinery etc.

This will encourage the manufacture of raw material which is at present exported and brought back as manufacture to be sold at heavy prices. There are many who would undertake such enterprises if they only had the information described.

(*c*) Public lectures by competent people.

(*d*) Industrial exhibitions.

An exhibition of specimens of the best European work should be held in different places, having regard to the articles that are there produced, and the artisans should be allowed to take the specimens home with a view to reproduction.

In addition a triennial exhibition should be held in each great Kasba, a grant of Rs. 1500 to 3000 per division being sanctioned for the purpose, where the work of different localities, etc., may be collected.

Instruction in ancestral trades.

13. The abandonment of ancestral trades is mainly due to the attractions of service and the failure of the old trades owing to the inferiority of the work. The only remedy is technical education. In the schools only two or three hours should be reserved to general education, the rest being devoted to technical. Each pupil should be instructed in his own craft, and after that instruction is complete, he may be directed to extend his attention to other trades. A rule should be enforced to the effect that work turned out by artisans so instructed should be utilized by the State departments in preference to any other. Pecuniary and other encouragement should be held out wherever necessary. This instruction should be made compulsory in the Kasbas as also in the case of Dheds and other low castes for whom education is specially provided by the Government.

Contracts.

14. With regard to contracts the following rules should be made and strictly enforced.

I Izara tenures should as far as possible be held by permanent residents of the Raj.

II Contracts should be similarly given to permanent residents if they can do the work well and cheaply; otherwise they should be given by preference to outsiders who have become resident in the Raj.

III A committee of officials and respectable non-officials (sowkars etc.) should be appointed to supervise contracts.

IV Annual patraks should be drawn up and circulated among thousands showing,

- (*a*) what articles are to be supplied from each Prant;
- (*b*) in what lines contractors are needed;
- (*c*) what knowledge and fitness they must possess;
- (*d*) where the required articles can be had cheap and good.

V Whatever goods can be had at convenient rates within the Raj should be procured there and not from outside.

VI Officers who do not observe these rules, and favour their own men should be degraded to a lower post.

15. The main hindrances to expansion of trade are

Obstacles to expansion.

- (*a*) the want of technical education;
- (*b*) burdensome and unequal duties;
- (*c*) difficulty of procuring capital;
- (*d*) insufficient means of communication.

Necessity of technical & agricultural instruction.

16. Technical and agricultural education are both imperatively required; in many talukas it is impossible to make even a beginning without it and in none is it possible to make any great advance or to compete with even moderate success against foreign manufactures.

Technical Instruction.

17. A technical school should be established in each division and over and above this in each Kasba where a sufficient number of boys can attend. The Kasba schools should teach

- (*a*) manufactures which are in great demand but have to be brought from outside;
- (*b*) trades in which the supply of workers falls below the demand.

Some boys from each division should be taught at the Kalabhavan at State expense and Kalabhavan students who start factories should be helped by Government loans. From each mahal some boys should be taught at Government expense at Baroda or the Victoria Technical Institute, the money being recovered by instalments from their monthly earnings.

18. Students should also be sent to foreign parts for technical instruction; but their line should be rigidly fixed from the beginning and they should first receive what book knowledge and practical knowledge is possible and then, if necessary, be sent to a foreign workshop to complete their instruction. It is equally useless to send raw and uninstructed youths and to send students to acquire theoretical knowledge merely. They should be sent only for work in which factories are likely to be opened and for knowledge about the discovery and working of metals.

19. Except in backward parts and among very ignorant people, the subjects of the Raj almost everywhere express their willingness to send their children to Europe or elsewhere for technical and agricultural instruction. Parents are often unwilling to send boys to the Kalabhavan because they have no clear idea what will be taught to them. The Revenue officials ought to be able easily to remove this difficulty.

Duties

20. The question of duties is a difficult one; complaints come from every Prant and from every mahal and from officials and non-officials alike. The Commission is only able to say that the whole question of duties should be overhauled and rearranged in a sense favourable to trade. Beyond this need of a general enquiry a few circumstances and suggestions may be touched upon.

21. The Commission makes the following recommendations.

Necessary measures with regard to taxation.

(*a*) Where opening industries are hampered or ruined by duties, the Revenue officers should be expected to report the fact.

(*b*) Throughout the State anomalous cesses are levied, although the reasons originally alleged for levying them no longer exist or although there are very few houses left of the castes on which the cess was laid. These should be abolished.

(*c*) Heavy duties should be imposed on the import of such goods as are already made within the Raj, and duties on the import of raw materials which are manufactured in the Raj and exported should be entirely removed.

(*d*) Duties should not be levied twice on the same article *i.e.* on goods passing through Savli to Baroda once at Savli and again at Baroda.

(*e*) Municipal taxes should only be levied on articles used in the town and not on goods which enter it only to be again exported. Where possible duties should be abolished and a light cess placed in their stead on the cultivators.

(*f*) In many places there are duties in Gaekwari villages which in neighbouring foreign villages do not exist or only in a lighter form. It would be well if an understanding could be arrived at between this State and the British and other Governments. Until then such duties should be abolished or reduced to the level of the corresponding foreign duties.

Difficulty of procuring capital.

22. The difficulty of procuring capital for industrial enterprise or agricultural improvement is reported from every taluka and it is a fact that to supply this want is the first desideratum without which nothing can be done. The only remedy is to establish Government banks in each mahal. Where possible, it should be a joint concern in which the capitalists of the mahal should be induced to take shares, the Government taking the rest. The existing banks should deal on a far larger scale. The Baroda

bank should keep deposits and lend money to any one at low rates (proper security being taken), the rate of interest given on the former being a little higher than that taken for the latter.

Means of communication.

23. In every division and every mahal the means of communication are deplorably insufficient: a great number of railways, roads, bridges &c., will have to be constructed in order to open out the country; moreover no care is taken to keep the roads already constructed in repair; everywhere they are allowed to fall into bad condition. For this work of opening out the country District Boards should be set on foot with the Vahivatdar as chairman, and the Municipal, Forest and other officers and leading men as members. The Boards would borrow money at reasonable rates, the sanction of the works to be undertaken would rest with the Government and the debt could be paid off from the proceeds of tolls or cesses. A rough list of works required or suggested is included under each Division.

Indigenous Medicine.

24. Some measures should be taken to encourage indigenous medicine. The following are suggested.

(1) A list of herbs growing in Songhad Vyara should be prepared.
(2) A skilful Hakim or Vaid should be kept in each hospital in the big towns with some patients always under his treatment and the results registered under the supervision of the Civil Surgeon.
(3) In some small villages the whole medical work should be intrusted to such Hakims or Vaids.
(4) Two or three matriculated students should be taught at State expense both Native and English Medicine and put in charge of hospitals or dispensaries or set to make researches into the powers of herbs and publish books on the subject.

Trade in horn, bone, etc.

25. A trade in the horn, bone, skin, hair and fat of animals might be established in every taluka. At present a vast amount of these are allowed to go unused. In every division a place should be appointed for throwing dead cattle, and a contract should be given for taking out the hide and bone etc. Traders should be encouraged to open factories in which these articles will be immediately useful. The proceeds of the contract should be devoted, after burying the corpses, to the improvement of breed.

Agriculture.

Causes of agricultural depression.

26. The main features of agricultural decline are,

(*a*) deterioration of the soil;
(*b*) deterioration of cattle;
(*c*) ignorance of the best methods;
(*d*) difficulty of procuring capital.

Disadvantages of the vighoti system.

27. The deterioration of the quality of the soil is very marked and arises from the vighoti assessment. The circumstances of the vighoti tenure have several very undesirable results.

In the first place they lead to continuous cultivation of the soil, the land never being left fallow, as assessment has to be paid whether the land is cultivated or not. The soil must obviously lose its productive power under such circumstances. It would be better for the State not to exact assessment from lands left fallow.

In the second place they lead to extensive cultivation, no provision being left for pasture.

Thirdly they lead to more land being undertaken by the cultivator than he can properly cultivate. Its full value is therefore not realized from the soil; less labour and less manuring results in a poorer out-turn over a larger area.

Fourthly they lead to the soil being taken up by Brahmins, Vaniyas and others ignorant of agriculture, the real agriculturists remaining as labourers without any interest in the soil.

A smaller area carefully cultivated by cultivators with an interest in the soil, sufficient land being left for pasture, would be far better than the present condition of large cultivated areas with a poor out-turn, deteriorating soil and deteriorating cattle.

Deterioration of soil.

27.[1] With regard to the deterioration of the soil a committee of expert and practical men should be appointed to inquire

(*a*) what is the extent of the deterioration;
(*b*) what are the elements of fertility which have been lost;
(*c*) what are the materials (manure etc.) by which the lost elements can be recovered;
(*d*) which of these are the cheapest and most plentiful;
(*e*) as to divisions of soil what materials are required for each and in what amounts;
(*f*) in what *tappas* to introduce them;
(*g*) by what means to impart the knowledge of them to the kheduts;
(*h*) in what way to make their use compulsory on the cultivators.

The committee should be empowered to make the necessary experiments and after a year's experience make a report.

Irrigation.

28. The most obvious means of enriching the soil are irrigation and manuring. Wherever there are no talavs, wells, nehers or rivers, Government should sink one pucca well for every 100 bighas; the expenses could be recovered in nine or ten years, an addition being made to the assessment of the fields for that purpose. The same measure should be taken wherever asked for by poverty-stricken cultivators. The preservation of the wells should rest with the cultivators.

---

[1] *This number is repeated in the original report. — Ed.*

Abyssinian and Artesian wells should be constructed.

When cultivators dig wells and make the land bagayat they should be excused bagayat assessment for ten years as otherwise they will have to pay both assessment and the interest of Government money.

Tagavi.

29. An universal complaint comes from every taluka against the working of the tagavi rules; it is stated that these are not carried out either liberally or expeditiously; that tagavi is given to new immigrants from outside who decamp with the money while the subjects of the Raj can with difficulty obtain it; that people are shy of taking tagavi because if they cannot pay punctually owing to a bad season or other accident, they are at once posted as defaulters and their credit ruined &c. The Commission can only recommend that a reliable inquiry should be made in the matter.

Manuring.

30. It appears that in several Talukas the people are not allowed to collect manure and in others the material for manure is destroyed under official orders. This is a needless waste, as no harm is likely to result from the collection of manure in the open air of the villages. A place should be fixed on the village padar, as also a place for bestowing the village refuse which should be distributed to the people cheap for manuring. In Amreli the burning of cow-dung should be stopped and the people allowed to take fuel from the Gir. The cultivators should also be persuaded to use bone-manure against which they have some objection but which owing to the plentifulness of bone can be brought into use with great advantage. Finally a heavy duty should be fixed on the export of certain plants that are commonly useful for manure.

Deterioration of cattle.

31. From every division and every Taluka there is reported deterioration in the quality of the cattle, diminution in their numbers and consequent increase in their cost. The following are some of the causes.

(*a*) Failure of pasture owing to the cultivation of uncultivated and auction of Kharaba land. Consequent to this result of the vighoti system, hardly any land is left for the cattle and what there is, is of the very poorest quality so that the cattle can get little nourishment from it. The cultivators are too poor to provide good and sufficient fodder. Some measure must immediately be taken for this; a proper share of the land in each village (one fourth would not be too liberal an allowance) should be left for pasture. Goats should not be allowed to graze in gochar.

(*b*) Want of good bulls and male buffaloes. The Government should keep cattle for breeding in each village on the responsibility of the Patel and the cultivators should take turns to provide fodder. In Kamrej it is the custom to allow bulls marked as belonging to the village to graze anywhere; under this system there would be no expense of keep to the Government. Where *bid* is kept for grazing good cattle should be kept for breeding purposes and sold cheap to the cultivators.

(*c*) Cowslaughter. A duty should be imposed on cattle taken to the slaughter houses or to foreign parts.

(*d*) The shingoti duty upon bullocks and other cattle in Amreli should be reduced.

(*e*) Neglect, driving of sick oxen, over-driving, over-loading, ignorant methods of pasturing, use of the same cattle for agricultural labour and for conveyance owing to the enforcement of veth. Rules should be issued to put a stop to all this.

(*f*) Cattle have to be imported. These are brought on credit involving risk, delay in payment and law suits, considerations which increase the cost. An arbitration court should be established for such cases.

(*g*) Buffaloes are not used for agriculture in many talukas and the males are allowed to die instead of being reared. Revenue officials should be directed to instruct the people in this matter and a yearly patrak should be submitted showing the extent to which the use of buffaloes in agriculture increases.

Cattle Farms.

32. The increasing scarcity and cost of cattle has resulted in an increasing dearness of ghee which calls imperatively for the establishment of farms for milk-giving cows in Songhad, the Gir and other such places.

Cattle diseases.

33. Along with deterioration there is a great increase of cattle diseases; for this there is no sufficient provision. There should be veterinary surgeons for each Prant: several boys should be taught for two or three years how to treat cattle diseases and one such qualified student appointed in each Taluka. A light fee might be levied for this expense.

Otherwise the most effective remedy for each of the chief cattle diseases should be ascertained and distributed with a printed list to each village. To very poor cultivators or owners of cattle they should be given free. Ordinary diseases should be treated on the spot and gratis.

Agricultural instruction.

34. Agricultural instruction should be imparted by the following methods:—

(*a*) Agricultural schools or classes teaching the children of cultivators free and other classes for a light fee. Scholarships should be given and some of the students employed.

(*b*) Public lectures by competent persons.

(*c*) Publication of Agricultural pamphlets, books or a magazine.

(*d*) Skilled cultivators should be sent to Europe along with English-knowing students to learn. They should take implements with them to compare with the European. It is useless to send students alone.

Those who thus study the subject should be intrusted

with agricultural improvement and rewarded for any notable success.
- (*e*) Agricultural Exhibitions.
- (*f*) Model Farms.

Model farms

35. If model farms have not had any notable success in the State it is because they have not been carried out under the right conditions. The following methods should be adopted.

- (*a*) Cultivators knowing local and foreign methods should be appointed to teach.
- (*b*) The method of comparative experiments should be adopted to show the cultivators
  - I the superiority of improved methods and manures;
  - II the effect of nehers and wells;
  - III the difference between well-fed cattle and cattle nurtured by themselves and between their milk, butter and ghee.
- (*c*) The profit of cultivating by steam-ploughs should be shown to the zamindars and the use of European machinery to the students.
- (*d*) The conditions under which coffee, tea, cinnamon, cloves etc., are grown should be taught to the cultivators.
- (*e*) Model farms should be opened under varying climatic conditions.
- (*f*) A model Farm should be opened with specimens of all the chief crops of the world.
- (*g*) An annual or biennial agricultural exhibition of the crops thus produced should be held.
- (*h*) The expenses of all such experiments should be published in so lucid a manner that all may understand.

Oppression of Sowcars.

36. Means of procuring capital easily and at easy rates, are, as has been said, the first condition of improvement. In the poorer talukas the oppression of the sowcars is very great, sometimes as in

Mahuva driving the people over the border. Other talukas are greatly indebted, the sowcars force the people to mortgage their fields and houses and these are put to auction at the first failure to pay. A rule should be made that the sowcars must receive their dues by instalments.

Assessment.

37. Complaints of lands being too heavily assessed come from different quarters. It cannot be said how far these are true, but it is certain that the limitation of the settlement to 15 years leaves the cultivators little power to make improvements. The collection of the assessment at an unfavourable time and its enforcement in bad years has been prejudicial to agriculture; in Mehsana especially these hardships have led a great number of people to abandon agriculture. Leniency should be shown in bad years, and collection should only be made when the crops are ready.

Cultivation of padtar.

38. Agricultural expansion depends partly on the cultivation of uncultivated land and partly on the growth of new crops. Where the kheduts are unable owing to their poverty to bring uncultivated soil into a fit state for cultivation, the State should first get it turned and then let it out.

Introduction of new crops.

39. In pushing on the introduction of new crops the following considerations must be kept in view.

(1) The crops which are cheapest in sowing, are most profitable.
(2) Those crops should by preference be introduced which have to be bought dear from outside.
(3) A new crop should not be introduced near a place where it is already largely grown.
(4) No new crop should be so introduced as to drive out of production any crop which is already largely and profitably grown or the loss of which would have to be made up by purchases at a high price from outside.

To settle this point a good cultivator should be got to sow both old and new in his land. The loss and profit of both should be carefully compared and the results published among the cultivators. Those who are exceptionally successful in introducing new crops, should receive grants.

40. As in many places there is a want of vegetables, an attempt should be made to introduce the growth of potatoes in each division, the State selling the seed. The introduction of Italian potatoes and bhoymug might be successfully carried out, but the experiment is too costly for any one except the Sarkar, unless special facilities in the nature of patents, &c. are given.

GENERAL.

Special agricultural officer.

41. A special officer should be appointed to watch over agricultural improvement, as the continual change of officers is a great obstacle to success.

Revenue reports.

42. Subas, Naib Subas and Vahivatdars should be asked to send in with their collections an account of the state of the people, and also of any rules &c., which weigh heavily on trade and agriculture, together with the reasons.

Printing of the Commission's report.

43. Copies of the Commission's Report should be printed and circulated broadcast throughout the talukas.

A State Factories department.

Note.— The Commission has a suggestion that for articles over which Government has to spend thousands and lakhs of Rupees, it should start State factories; and as these must be conducted on business principles and not by official rules, a special Department should be created for them.

Opinions
Written as Acting Principal, Baroda College

1905

Resolving a Problem of Seniority in the High School

College Office
Baroda 3rd. May 05.

Mr Nag was appointed in the Baroda High School by His Highness the Maharaja Sahib but being on leave has not yet joined his appointment. I believe that His Highness the Maharaja Sahib while reserving to himself the full right to make appointments on other weighty grounds, is always willing to give the utmost consideration to the claims of seniority of old and deserving servants. Moreover the position and prospects of Mr Nag if he is to enter the Educational Service permanently need clearer definition.

In forwarding this application,[1] therefore, I take the opportunity to state fully my opinion on the matter.

The course suggested by the teachers to meet the difficulties of the case is of course quite impracticable. Mr Nag is a graduate of the Cambridge University and has spent many years in Europe at great expense in order to acquire higher qualifications and a wider culture and experience, and to expect that he would be willing or ought to be asked to serve on Rs 65 in the last place of a Bombay graduate in this Department and with the prospects of a teacher of the second grade in the High School is to lose all sense of proportion. The precedent of Mr Manishanker Bhat does not apply to such a case. Mr Nag has accepted Rs 150 the lowest pay at present possible to a man of his qualifications with corresponding prospects and it is not possible to cut him down now from Rs 150 to Rs 65 with practically no prospects at all.

---

[1] *A printed representation by the graduate teachers in the second grade of the Baroda High School, requesting "that the claims of senior men may not be passed over while making appointments in the higher grade". — Ed.*

Even apart from this the expedient of turning part of the regular salary into personal pay is one which in my opinion ought not to be too freely used, as it tends to turn transference from one Department to another into an unmerited punishment.

On the other hand there are strong grounds for the rest of the representation; the work of the High School staff has been admirable and judged by examination results compares well with any other school in the Bombay Presidency, while the prospects are very poor and limited, and the introduction of a well paid outsider stops promotion far more effectually than can be the case in larger and more highly paid Departments.

Under these circumstances I suggest as the course which will as far as possible meet both sides of the question that M^{r} Nag may be employed in the High School in a special grade like the Head Master and M^{r} Dorabji Patel, and the rise in grade opened up by the appointment of M^{r} Chunilal may be granted to M^{r} Naravane although he will continue to work in the sixth standard. This would introduce the least disturbance in the chances of the High School staff and at the same time make it more convenient for His Highness to utilise M^{r} Nag's services in any way in future either in this Department or elsewhere without any disturbance to the regular grades of the English Schools.

ARAVIND. A. GHOSE
Ag. Principal
Baroda College

On a Proposed Examination for Teachers

College Office.
Baroda, 9th August 1905.

To

The Minister of Education
BARODA.

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 2047 dated the 28th May 1905 I have the honour to forward herewith my opinion regarding the rules for the Secondary Teachers' Certificate Examinations which it is intended to be introduced in our Raj.

I have the honour to be
Sir
Your Most Obedient Servant
A A G
Ag. Principal, Baroda College.

OPINION.

I have gone very carefully through the scheme of the proposed examination for teachers and beg to give expression to the following opinions, which have been formed after very long and careful consideration.

2. I do not quite see the object of introducing this severe and stringent examination into our State. Our schools are working quite well enough on the whole for the purposes of education

as given in this country. I do not myself think very highly either of the principles or methods or results of that education but, being subject to the Bombay University, we have to take things as they are and cannot attempt anything ideal. Whatever defects still exist are inseparable from the low pay and qualifications required in the lower rank of teachers. In certain respects they may be modified by a mild test; but the sort of examination here proposed is such as might be prescribed in an European country where the science and art of education are really advanced. Here it is likely to degenerate into a formality harassing to the teachers but useless to the State. We simply have not got sufficient foothold from which to make a leap like this. Undoubtedly the teachers will cram up the subjects learning by rote as is the habit in this country and a percentage of them will pass, but there it will end; a few of the brighter and smarter young men may understand and make the attempt to apply the principles they learn, but that will be all. If the University with its new constitution succeeds in giving a better basis for culture, then after a few years we might see what can be done; or we may watch the results of our training College and gradually apply an adequate test.

3. If it is thought necessary to have a departmental examination now I should suggest the following alterations.

> Rule 8. Whatever examination is held, should be formal and conducted by more than one person. This rule, making the promotion or dismissal of State servants depend on an informal oral examination by the Minister of Education, seems [to] me contrary to the principles which should govern these tests. The test under such circumstances might very easily be applied with great haste, injustice or partiality. The fact that the present Minister of Education is above suspicion in these respects does not guarantee the future. The opinion of a Committee of 3 members would alone ensure a reasonable security to the teachers. I would suggest that at least one of them should be a Professor of the College.

Rule 9. 50 per cent is too high a percentage in a test of this kind. 33 per cent, the University standard, should be adopted, especially if removal is to be the penalty of failure.

Rule 10. This rule is Draconically harsh. Removal ought on no account to be made the penalty of a Departmental Examination; the ordinary principle that the passing of the Examination will count in promotion is quite sufficient.

4. As to the subjects of the examination, I would make it a far slighter affair than this up-to-date American machine would be.

Junior Examination.

Part II. Instead of this elaborate affair, it will be enough to see whether the teacher can make the boys understand the lesson, explain a subject correctly and command their attention. That is as much as we can ask of our teachers at present. Only head (c) should be rather carefully attended to especially with regard to the English Language. Head (d) should be dropped altogether; discipline especially is a matter for the Head Master to testify; it is impossible for the examiners to test it, since the boys would be on their best behaviour on such an occasion, — unless they were like English boys and the teacher unpopular, when they would be on their worst.

Senior Examination.

Part I. Let (3) Psychology be dropped and if (2) must be kept, let it be as simple an affair as possible — a fair general knowledge of the main developments and their principles being alone required.

Part II. The same remarks apply as to the Junior Examination, in the case of graduates the same care about language is not necessary; it is the undergraduates who are occasionally deficient, at least in English.

I am not in favour of introducing the Honours Course just now. Let our Training College succeed first, and the general practical capacity of our teachers be set on a sure basis. We may go in for educational luxuries afterwards.

ARAVIND A. GHOSE
Ag. Principal, Baroda College

On a Head Assistant for the High School

Concise History

History in short

The Baroda High School has for some time been increasing in numbers, until now it has reached the very large number of 750. It is high time therefore that in view of this immense increase, which renders the discipline of the School unmanageable by a single man, however active or able, some better arrangement should be made for the proper management of the School. A Head Master has to attend not only to the scholastic efficiency but to discipline and, so far as is possible under the conditions of Indian School life, to the life of the boys outside school-hours, especially to the physical education. The first object is fulfilled well enough under present circumstances, the second with but moderate success, the third hardly at all. The scholastic efficiency of the School is on the whole admirable and the present Head Master and his staff deserve every credit for it. There are certain inconveniences resulting from the large number of classes which have to be maintained but at present these can be met.

Difficulty of the Head Master Baroda High School

2 Mr G. M. Hasabnis wishes that an additional Teacher should be appointed, as he finds great difficulty in arranging for the classes when several teachers happen to be ill or on leave at one time. The undersigned acknowledges the difficulty but he is inclined to think it has been more acutely felt this year owing to exceptional circumstances and would like to wait for some time and see whether it is so or not, before making any proposal.

3 The discipline of the School is maintained as well as possible under the circumstances, but marked signs are not wanting that the task has become too much for any single man to cope with. The circumstances which have brought about this state of things are as follows: —

The circumstances which make discipline burdensome to maintain

(1) The very large increase in the number of students from 400 when M^{r} Hasabnis took charge to 750 now.
(2) The consequent increase in the number of classes for each standard; formerly no standard had more than two divisions; now each standard has five classes with three very large Matriculation Classes.
(3) The increase of the Drawing, Writing, Gymnasium and second language classes.
(4) The addition of new buildings for the accommodation of the increased number.
(5) The office work has much increased.
(6) The teaching work of certain classes takes up much of the Head Master's time and the area over which the classes are spread is large; merely going round for inspection, surprise visits and general supervision takes up a great deal of his time.
(7) The work of new admissions every fortnight is heavy; then the various examinations are a great tax on the Head Master's energy.

4 To see to the proper efficiency and progress of the physical education is under the circumstances a task beyond his energies; yet this is a side of Education the importance of which is being more and more recognised. The High School has much way to make up in this respect.

Importance of physical education

5 The one fully effective remedy would be to increase the High School staff by the appointment of an Assistant Head Master. This would relieve the Head Master of much of his teaching work and give him both leisure and efficient assistance in the two other matters. This would not be an excessive allowance for so large a school. In the Elphinstone High School which is smaller in size two Head Assistants are, I believe, allowed.

The views of the Ag. Principal

6 Having consideration however to the many calls on the State and the financial position, I am content to make a very modest proposal, viz. that one of the Matriculation Class Teachers' posts the maximum salary of which is Rs 125/- should be converted into a post of Head Assistant, salary rising from Rs 160/- to Rs 200/- in 8 years. The duties of the incumbent will be, in addition to his teaching work, to help the Head Master in maintaining the discipline of the School and give special attention to promoting the physical side etc. This appointment will not disturb matters in any way and will probably not really add to the expense of the School, as the slight excess will soon be made up by the increasing number of students. In any case the arrangement seems to the undersigned imperatively necessary.

Converting one of the Matriculation Teachers' posts into one of a Head Assistant

7 Should the proposal be sanctioned, I propose for the post M^r Dorabji M. Patel, Head Master Amreli High School (whose present salary is Rs 150/-) who adds conspicuous ability and intelligence to his long and meritorious service and is likely to carry weight with both teachers and students.

M^r Dorabji M. Patel recommended to the post

Points for decision

(1) Whether it is necessary to convert one of the Matriculation Class Teachers' posts, the maximum salary of which is Rs 125/- into Head Assistant's post — salary

Rs 160/– to Rs 200/– for the efficient management and discipline of the Baroda High School?

(2) If so, should Mr D. M. Patel be appointed to that post?

Opinion

(1) Yes. (2) Yes.

Baroda
15th September 1905

ARAVIND A. GHOSE
Ag. Principal
Baroda College

Opinion

Forwarded with the recommendation that the proposal of the Principal of the College may be sanctioned. The reason why this Tippan is sent during the absence of K. B. Dalal on leave is because it is a matter which requires early sanction of the Huzur.

Baroda
16th September 1905

ARAVIND A. GHOSE
In charge Minister of Education
Baroda State
Baroda

Appendix Two

Premises of Astrology

Sri Aurobindo wrote these notes around 1910. They were not intended for publication.

Chapter I

Elements

Astrology depends on three things, the position of the planets in the heavens and with regard to each other, the condition of the planets at the natal hour or at the moment of enquiry, and the general character or tout ensemble of the horoscope. Any error or deficiency with regard to any of these three elements separately or with regard to their mutual relations will affect the work of the astrologer and vitiate its correctness or its completeness. To cast a horoscope completely is one of the most difficult operations known to Science. The astrologer is born, not made. It is as impossible to manufacture a perfect astrologer by education as to manufacture a poet. Hence the disrepute into which the profession of astrology too lightly and numerously followed has fallen in the Kaliyuga. In addition nine tenths of the true science are lost and the little that remains, is replete with errors. Astrologers make lucky hits or stumble on the truth, but it is only a rare genius here & there who can predict correctly and even he is never safe against error. For even when his intuition divines correctly, his authorities mislead him.

The position of the planets in the heavens is determined by the sign of the zodiac through which they are passing, their relation to the ascendant sign, their precise position in the sign reckoned by degrees and minutes; their relative position to each other by the distance of their signs from each other.

The condition of the planets is determined by the sign they are in according to which they are either elevated, fallen, ascending or descending, or possibly at home; by the direction of their motion at the time, forward or backward; by the quality of their motion, swift, slow or normal; by their mutual relations of friendship, enmity or neutrality, — conjunction, aspect, opposition or distance; by their nearness to the sun, setting or rising, divergent or convergent; by their location in a sign — friendly, neutral or hostile, fixed or moving, male or female, fiery, watery, aery, earthy or ethereal; by their relations with gentle, fierce or inconstant planets.

The character of the horoscope is determined by the number of elevated, fallen, ascending, descending or entrenched, progressive or retrograde, rapid, sluggish or moderate, well housed or ill housed, setting, rising, convergent or divergent planets; by the number & nature of the planetary relations, conjunctions, aspects, oppositions, by the character of the ascendant, its lord and its tenants, combinations, distributions. All these circumstances have to be considered in order to determine whether the horoscope is great, mediocre or petty, favourable or malign, strong or weak. The results have to be judged according to the character. The same details in a great horoscope will mean something very different from what they would mean in one that is petty or malign or even merely strong. Moreover even if all the positions are the same, yet the infinitesimal shifting of a planet or a change in its character will often mean the difference between life and death, success or failure. This is the reason why twins sometimes have different destinies, one dying, another living, or pursue an identical course up to a certain point, then diverge. One hears astrologers say when the minute of birth is approximately stated, That is good enough. It is the speech of incompetence or ignorance. The first necessity is to determine the exact minute or second of birth. All the general results may be potentially true, yet owing to some accident depending on a few seconds' difference, none of them may have the occasion to come to pass. But if the exact details are obtainable, there is no chance of that comparatively rare, but nevertheless well-instanced fortuity.

Chapter II

The Signs

The signs of the Zodiac are twelve in number, beginning from the Ram, in which the Sun reaches its elevation, and arching back to it. They are, in order, the Ram, the Bull, the Twins, the Crab, the Lion, the Girl, the Balance, the Scorpion, the Archer or Bow, the Crocodile, the Jar and the Fish. The sixth sign is usually called the Virgin in Europe, but the word gives an idea of purity which is not the character of the sign and is therefore inappropriate. Each sign has a *devata*, a god or spiritual being in charge of it. He is not its master, but its protector and the protector of all who are born in the sign. Indra (Zeus, Odin) protects the Ram, Agni (Moloch, Thor) the Bull, the Aswins (Castor & Pollux) the Twins, Upendra (Baal) the Crab, Varuna (Poseidon) the Lion, Aditi, called also Savitri or Sita (Astarte, Aphrodite) the Girl, Yama (Hades) the Balance, Aryama (Ares) the Scorpion, Mitra or Bhava (Apollo Phoebus) the Archer, Saraswati called also Ganga (Nais) the Crocodile, Parjanya (Apis) the Jar, Nara (Nereus) the Fish. All these gods have their own character and tend to imprint it on their protégé. Or it would be truer to say, that men of particular characters tend to take birth under the protection of a congenial deity. Other gods stand behind the planets and the twelve houses & they also influence the temperament of the subject.

There are only two female signs, the Girl and the Crocodile; but the Twins, the Crab, the Balance, the Archer & the Fish are male with feminine tendencies. The rest are male.

There are three watery signs, the Crocodile, the Jar and the Fish; three fiery, the Bull, the Lion and the Scorpion; three earthy, the Twins, the Crab and the Girl; three aerial, the Ram, the Balance and the Archer. The only ethereal sign is the Ram, and it is ethereal only when either the Sun or Jupiter occupy it.

Each alternate sign beginning from the Ram is moving; each alternate sign beginning from the Bull is fixed.

The names of the signs have nothing to do with their character in any of these kinds, but are determined by the spiritual "totem", that is, the nervous type of the souls born in the signs. Those who are born in the Ram are brave, but mild and humane; in the Bull irascible, bold but not ferocious; in the Twins gentle, polite & worldly; in the Crab, timid or anxious to please, but formidable when angry, awkward but persevering and successful; in the Lion, royal, bold and splendid; in the Girl, amorous, charming and aesthetic; in the Balance just, mercantile, able; in the Scorpion, fierce, quarrelsome and impetuous; in the Archer, swift, brilliant and effective; in the Crocodile saturnine, brooding and dangerous; in the Jar thrifty, cautious and secretive; in the Fish restless, light and inconstant. It is not always the sign of birth, however, that is most powerful in fixing the temperament, it is sometimes the sign in which the sun or the moon or else the lord of the horoscope is situated; and none of these signs can be neglected. If they are all taken into consideration according to their respective force in the horoscope, a correct idea of the character may be formed; but even then the position and mutual relations of their lords must be taken into the account. This is the reason why men born under the same sign vary so much in character.

I must, however, guard against the idea that the signs and planets determine a man's character or fate. They do not, they only indicate it, because the celestial & astral influences are the sensational or nervous force in Nature which become the instruments of our karma. That is why the European mystics gave the name of astral plane to the plane of sensational or nervous existence and astral fluid to the magnetic power or current of nervous, vital force in a man. It is this same vital force which pours upon us from all parts of the solar system and of this physical universe. But man is mightier than his sensations or vitality, or the sensational & vital forces of the universe. Our fate & our temperament have been built by our own wills and our own wills can alter them.

Chapter III

The Planets

The word planets as applied to the celestial instruments of our Fate in the modern astrology, is something of a misnomer. It is more accurate of the planets of the mental world than of the material solar system; for in the spherical system of the *sukshma jagat*, even the sun and the moon are planets, each circling in its own sphere round the central, fixed, but revolving earth. But a better term is the Indian word graha, those that have a hold on the earth. There are seven old planets, the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, and two others in process of creation, Rahou & Ketou. In addition there are two dead planets corresponding to Uranus & Herschel and two others not yet discovered. These are called aprakashita graha, unrevealed or unmanifest planets. The last four have no appreciable results except in certain physical and mental details. They may slightly affect the minute circumstances of an event, not its broad outlines. They may give certain kinks, in thought, character & physique, but do not seriously modify them. They are known but ignored by Indian astrology.

Different names are given to the planets by the Indian astronomers and for astrological purposes they are much more appropriate. Mars is Mangal, the auspicious, euphemistically so termed because of his great malignancy; Mercury is Budha, the clever, intellectual god, son of the Moon and Tara wife of Brihaspati; Jupiter is Brihaspati, Prime Minister of Indra, spiritual and political adviser of the Gods; Venus is Sukra, who occupies the same position to the Titans; Saturn is the malevolent Shani, child of the Sun. Rahou & Ketou are Titans of our mythology.

Each of these gods has his own character. Surya the Sun, is strong, splendid, bold, regal, warlike, victorious and energetic; Chandra, the Moon, is inconstant, amorous, charming, imaginative, poetical, artistic; Mangal is a politician, a soldier, crafty and rusé, unscrupulous, unmerciful, tyrannical; Budha is speculative, scientific, skilful, mercantile, eloquent, clever at all intellectual pursuits; Brihaspati is religious, learned, a philosopher, a Yogin, master of occult sciences, wise, statesmanlike, fortunate, successful, invincible, noble in mind and disposition; Shukra is self-willed, lustful, a master of statecraft, a poet, thinker, philosopher; Shani is cruel, vindictive, gloomy, immoral, criminal, unruly, destructive. Rahou is violent, headstrong, frank, furious and rapacious. Ketou is secret, meditative, unsocial, a silent doer of strong and selfish actions. Each planet has a powerful influence on the man if it shares in the governance of the horoscope.

The Sun, Mangal, Saturn, Rahou & Ketou are fierce planets; Brihaspati & Shukra gentle and kindly; the Moon and Budha are one or the other according to circumstances and company, they are mildly severe and hostile or tepidly kindly. The others are stronger planets. Nevertheless the favour of the Moon or Budha, when they are wholly friendly, is a mighty influence.

The Sun is master of one sign, the Lion; the Moon master of one sign, the Crab; all the others except Rahou and Ketou are masters of two signs each, Mangal of the Ram and the Scorpion, Mercury of the Twins and the Girl, Brihaspati of the Archer & the Fish; Shukra of the Bull and the Balance; Shani of the Crocodile & the Jar. These are their homes and, when they are entrenched in them, they are exceedingly powerful and auspicious. Rahou & Ketou are still wanderers, homeless.

But they are still more powerful and auspicious when elevated. The Sun is elevated in the Ram, dejected in the Balance; the Moon elevated in the [ ], dejected in the [ ]; Mars elevated in the Jar, dejected in the Crab; Mercury elevated in the Balance, dejected in the Ram; Brihaspati elevated in the Crab, dejected in the Jar; Shukra elevated in the Twins, dejected in the Archer; Shani elevated in the Girl, dejected in the Fish; Rahou elevated in the Bull, dejected in the Scorpion; Ketou elevated in the Scorpion, dejected in the Bull. When dejected the planet is weak to help, but strongly maleficent. Moving from elevation to dejection, a planet is descendent, from dejection to elevation, ascendant. A descendent planet tends towards weakness, an ascendant to strength, but it is better on the whole to have a planet just descendent than a planet only just ascendant. A good conjunction, helpful influence or favourable situation will go far to neutralise evil tendencies, and vice versa.

When setting in the rays of the sun or in opposition to the Sun, a planet tends to weakness, but not to maleficence. When it is convergent, coming from opposition to set, it grows in heat of force and is only eclipsed for the short period of its set, emerging full of energy. In its divergence it loses the energy. It never, however, forfeits by relation to the sun its other sources of strength.

Forward motion brings the fortune, devious motion delays, backward motion brings opposite results. According as the motion is swift, slow or normal, will be the pace of the good or evil fortune.

Beyond this the planets have certain mutual relations. A planet is in conjunction with another when in the same sign; in opposition when farthest away from it; in aspect when at a certain distance. Brihaspati when looking at a planet in the fifth or ninth house from it, starting from its own position, Mangal when looking at a planet in the fourth or eighth, Shani when looking at a planet in the third or tenth is said to have a full sight or aspect. All have otherwise full aspect when in opposition, three-quarters aspect on the third and tenth houses, half aspect on the fifth and ninth, quarter aspect on the fourth and eighth, no aspect, that is, absence of any relation, on the second, sixth and eleventh.

Each planet has natural friends, enemies or neutrals. The Sun is friends with all planets except Rahou & Ketou, who are enemies and Budha who is neutral. The Moon is friends with all planets except Rahou, Ketou & Brihaspati who are enemies. Mangal has as friends the Sun, Brihaspati, Rahou, Ketou and Shani, as enemies the Moon & Mercury, as a neutral Shukra. Budha has as friends the Sun, Moon, Brihaspati, Rahou, Ketou and Shukra, as enemies Mangal and Shani. Brihaspati has as friends the Sun, Mangal, Budha, Rahou & Ketou, as enemies the

Moon and Shukra, as a neutral Shani. Shukra has as friends the Sun, Moon, Budha, Shani, Rahou & Ketou, as enemy Brihaspati, as a neutral Mangal. Shani has as friends the Sun, Moon and Budha, as enemies Mangal, & Brihaspati, as neutrals Rahou, Ketou & Shukra. Rahou & Ketou have common enemies, the Sun & Moon, friends in each other, Brihaspati, Shukra and Shani, neutrals in Budha & Mangal.

These relations are fixed by the past of the devatas. But they have also occasional relations. A planet in conjunction with another or harbouring it in its house or harboured by it becomes its friend. There is no occasional neutrality; moreover it shares its host's or its partner's friendships and enmities, not its neutralities. It may have at the same time a natural friendship and an occasional enmity to another. In that case it does not become neutral, but is sometimes friendly, sometimes inimical. The natural is the stronger feeling.

There are finally certain gods who stand behind these planets. Behind the Sun & Moon is Vishnu, behind Mangal and Shani Rudra, behind Shukra, Rahou & Ketou is Kali, behind Budha Lakshmi, and behind Brihaspati Durga. Vishnu gives royalty & victory, Rudra force and fortune, Kali subversive genius & destructive energy, Lakshmi wealth & ease, Durga wisdom, protection and glory.

Note on the Texts

EARLY CULTURAL WRITINGS consists of essays on literature, education and art, as well as dialogues, biographical and historical sketches, and other short prose pieces. Most were written between 1890 and 1910, a few between 1910 and 1920. A little more than half the pieces (comprising about three-fifths of the bulk) were published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime; the rest of the pieces have been transcribed from his manuscripts.

The contents of the volume are arranged by topic in nine parts. Two appendixes, consisting mostly of material not written for publication, come at the end.

PART ONE: THE HARMONY OF VIRTUE (CAMBRIDGE 1890 – 1892)

Sri Aurobindo wrote all these pieces while an undergraduate at King's College, Cambridge, between 1890 and 1892. He did not publish any of them during his lifetime.

The Sole Motive of Man's Existence. 1891. Editorial title. The piece obviously is incomplete. Sri Aurobindo left alternatives to several passages. These are reproduced in the Reference Volume.

The Harmony of Virtue. Dated "May 1892" towards the middle of the manuscript. The entire piece was probably written during 1892, Sri Aurobindo's second and last year at Cambridge. He was referring to *The Harmony of Virtue* when he wrote late in his life: "It is true that under his [Plato's] impress I rashly started writing at the age of 18 [*more likely 19*] an explanation of the cosmos on the foundation of the principle of Beauty and Harmony, but I never got beyond the first three or four chapters." The name of the principal character, "Keshav Ganesh Desai", recalls that of Keshav Ganesh Deshpande, one of Sri Aurobindo's friends at Cambridge and subsequently in India. Sri

Aurobindo left alternatives to several passages in Book One. These are reproduced in the Reference Volume.

Beauty in the Real. 1892. Written after *The Harmony of Virtue*, in narrative rather than dialogue form.

Stray Thoughts. 1892. Editorial title. These "thoughts" are jottings from the notebook that Sri Aurobindo used at Cambridge for writing *The Harmony of Virtue* and other pieces.

PART TWO: ON LITERATURE (BARODA 1893–1906)

Bankim Chandra Chatterji

This series of essays was published in seven instalments in as many issues of the *Indu Prakash*, a weekly Marathi–English newspaper of Bombay: 16 July 1894, 23 July 1894, 30 July 1894, 6 August 1894, 13 August 1894, 20 August 1894, 27 August 1894. The pieces were not signed: the phrase "By a Bengali" was printed above the texts and the word "Zero" at the end in place of a signature.

In 1950, when the series was rediscovered and shown to Sri Aurobindo, he wrote:

> I have not intended to republish these articles as they were written when I had just recently come from England and they contain some very raw matter such as the remarks about Indian art which I no longer hold.

He added that it might be necessary for him "to revise and possibly to omit or alter some passages" before publication. He did not find time for this revision, and when the essays were published as a book in 1954, the *Indu Prakash* text was reproduced as it stood. The same text is reproduced here.

On Poetry and Literature

Sri Aurobindo wrote these pieces on literary subjects between 1898 and 1906 (or somewhat later). He did not publish any of them during his lifetime.

Poetry. Circa 1898–1901. Editorial title. This piece was written in the same notebook as the lecture on Augustan poetry (see the next note).

Characteristics of Augustan Poetry. In the manuscript, “First Lecture” is written above the title. This piece and the following one were written by Sri Aurobindo while he was working as a professor of English literature at Baroda College between 1898 and 1901. The authors and periods covered by the two lectures were those assigned by the Bombay University for the “voluntary” section of the English B. A. examination in 1898 and 1899. Sri Aurobindo wrote additional passages for this lecture on blank pages of the manuscript. These passages have been printed as footnotes. A long passage that seems to expand ideas presented in the third paragraph of the lecture is published separately under the title “Poetry” (see above).

Sketch of the Progress of Poetry from Thomson to Wordsworth. See the note to the previous piece for dating information. Additional passages are treated as in that piece.

Appendix: Test Questions. Sri Aurobindo evidently wrote these questions to prepare his students for the university examination.

Marginalia on Madhusudan Dutt’s *Virangana Kavya*. Circa 1894–1900. Editorial title. These two pieces were written by Sri Aurobindo in his copy of the Bengali poet Michael Madhusudan Dutt’s *Virangana Kavya* (Calcutta: Vidyaratan Press, 1885). The first was written above the text of Epistle One, the second above the title of Epistle Two. The line of Sanskrit is from the Bhagavad Gita (2.16) and may be translated as follows: “that which is not, cannot come into existence; that which is, cannot go out of existence”.

Originality in National Literatures. Circa 1906–8. Editorial title. This piece, unlike the others in this section, may have been written by Sri Aurobindo after his departure from Baroda in March 1906.

The Poetry of Kalidasa

Sri Aurobindo wrote the material published in this section between 1898 and 1903. All but one of the pieces were meant for inclusion in a planned book-length study, the contents of which he sketched out in “A Proposed Work on Kalidasa” (see below). He used four notebooks for writing the material that was to make up this book, apparently working on two or more pieces concurrently. On the first page of one of the notebooks he wrote the title "The Poetry of Kalidasa"; the editors have used this as the title of the section. Sri Aurobindo brought only two of the pieces to a satisfactory conclusion. One of them, "The Age of Kalidasa", was revised and published in *The Indian Review* (Madras) in 1902. The other, "The Seasons", was revised and published in Sri Aurobindo's own weekly review, the *Karmayogin*, in 1909. The other pieces were left in varying states of completeness in the manuscript notebooks. In reproducing them here, the editors have followed the order of "A Proposed Work". Certain passages that could not be included in the final texts have been published in an appendix at the end of the section.

A Proposed Work on Kalidasa. Circa 1898 – 1903. Editorial title.
The Malavas. Circa 1900 – 1903. Title taken from Chapter II of "A Proposed Work".
The Age of Kalidasa. Circa 1898 – 1902. See Chapter II of "A Proposed Work". This piece was published in *The Indian Review* of Madras in July 1902, and reprinted as a booklet by Tagore & Co., Madras, around 1921. Sri Aurobindo revised the text and republished it along with *Kalidasa's Seasons* in a booklet entitled *Kalidasa* in 1929.
The Historical Method. Circa 1900 – 1903. Manuscript title: "Kalidasa — the historical method"; corresponds to a phrase in Chapter II of "A Proposed Work". Sri Aurobindo broke off work on this piece abruptly; he did not put a full stop after the last word written.
The Seasons. Circa 1900 – 1903. Manuscript title: "The Seasons"; corresponds to Chapter III of "A Proposed Work". Sri Aurobindo published this essay in his weekly journal, the *Karmayogin*, in three instalments in July and August 1909. It was reprinted as a booklet entitled *Kalidasa's Seasons* by Tagore & Co., Madras, around 1921. The text was revised by Sri Aurobindo and published along with "The Age of Kalidasa" in *Kalidasa* in 1929.
Hindu Drama. Circa 1901 – 3; manuscript revised, probably after 1910. Title taken from Chapter VI of "A Proposed Work". There are two separately written drafts dealing with this subject among Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts. The one printed first here seems to have been intended to be the opening of the piece. Sri Aurobindo broke off work on this draft abruptly.

Vikramorvasie: The Play. Circa 1900–1903. Editorial title, suggested by the title of Chapter VIII of "A Proposed Work".

Vikramorvasie: The Characters. Circa 1898–99 (note the phrase "till late in the present century"). Editorial title, suggested by the title of Chapter IX of "A Proposed Work": "The Characters". Sri Aurobindo wrote separate passages (some of them incomplete) on the characters of the play without indicating exactly how he intended to put the passages together. The editors have followed manuscript evidence, the flow of the argument and common sense in assembling the present text. White spaces indicate that the passages above and below are not physically continuous in the manuscript.

The Spirit of the Times. Circa 1898–1901. Editorial title. It is possible that this piece was intended for use in "Hindu civilisation in the time of Kalidasa", Chapters XVI–XVII of "A Proposed Work". This essay was written by Sri Aurobindo on a sheet of letter paper headed "THE COLLEGE./BARODA.". He served as professor of English of Baroda College between 1898 and 1901. The essay was one of many documents seized by the police when Sri Aurobindo was arrested in May 1908. It was not rediscovered and recognised as his until 1997.

On Translating Kalidasa. Circa 1903. Editorial title. This piece does not form part of "A Proposed Work". It apparently was intended to accompany Sri Aurobindo's translation of Kalidasa's *Cloud Messenger* (*Meghadūta*), which has been lost. The bulk of the text consists of passages written in a single notebook. The editors have arranged these passages according to the flow of the argument. White spaces indicate that the passages above and below are not physically continuous in the manuscript. The passage published at the end containing examples from Shakespeare was written separately in another notebook. For the most part the editors have followed Sri Aurobindo's idiosyncratic transliterations of Sanskrit words in this as in other pieces. When, however, Sri Aurobindo quotes entire lines or passages of Kalidasa's poetry or comments on words from such lines, the editors have made use of the standard international system of transliteration.

Appendix: Alternative and Unused Passages and Fragments. Sri Aurobindo wrote the first of these passages in isolation around 1900. He wrote the others as parts of three of the chapters described above. The editors have not incorporated these passages in the final texts of the chapters in question either because Sri Aurobindo himself excluded them from the revised version of the piece, or because he wrote another passage that covers the same ground and the editors have chosen to use that passage in the text.

On the Mahabharata

Sri Aurobindo wrote these essays and notes on the Mahabharata around 1902. He did not publish any of them during his lifetime.

Notes on the Mahabharata. Circa 1902. Sri Aurobindo wrote this essay shortly after September 1901, when the "recent article" mentioned in the first paragraph, Velandai Gopala Aiyer's "The Date of the Mahabharata War", was published in *The Indian Review* of Madras. The text of Sri Aurobindo's essay consists of: (1) an elaborate title page with "proposita"; (2) an introductory passage headed "Vyasa; some Characteristics"; (3) a longer passage mostly on the same subject beginning "Vyasa is the most masculine of writers"; (4) a long passage beginning "It was hinted in a recent article in the Indian Review", dealing, among other things, with the political story of the Mahabharata; and (5) a short incomplete passage headed "Mahabharata", concerned mainly with linguistic matters. Passages (1) to (4) were written in that order in one notebook; passage (5) was written independently in another notebook around the same time. (Note that in passage (5) Sri Aurobindo wrote that the date given by Aiyer in the *The Indian Review* was "known beyond reasonable doubt", indicating that this passage, like passages (1) to (4), was written after September 1901.) It is clear from indications in the manuscript that (4) was intended to replace (2) as the opening of the essay. Most of (2) was to be incorporated in (4), which was to be followed by (3). The present text of the essay has been printed in accordance with these guidelines. Since some interesting paragraphs of (2) were not marked for inclusion in the recast essay, all of (2) has been reproduced after the main text (4 and 3). The independent piece (5) has been placed at the end, while the title page (1) remains at the beginning.

Sri Aurobindo never prepared this material for publication; this explains its unfinished appearance. There are signs that he looked at it again around 1909, but he never gave it a thorough revision. In 1932 the manuscript was uncovered by his secretary Nolini Kanta Gupta, who wrote to Sri Aurobindo of his intention to copy it out. Sri Aurobindo replied on 23 April 1932: "Is this essay still in existence; if so, you can rescue it and I will see what can be done with it." Nolini made a transcript, but Sri Aurobindo did not work on it then or later.

Notes on the Mahabharata [Detailed]. Circa 1902. Around the time that Sri Aurobindo worked on the above essay he made a set of detailed but not altogether systematic notes on the first *adhyāya* and one verse of the second *adhyāya* of the Udyoga Parva, as well as some stray notes on the Adi Parva. He gave the notes on the Udyoga Parva the same title that he used for the above essay: "Notes on the Mahabharata". Some years later he wrote some isolated notes on the Drona Parva.

PART THREE: ON EDUCATION (1899–1920)

Sri Aurobindo wrote these pieces during three different periods: 1899–1904, in Baroda; 1909–10, in Calcutta; circa 1916–20, in Pondicherry. All but two of the pieces were published shortly after they were written.

Address at the Baroda College Social Gathering. Editorial title. Sri Aurobindo delivered this talk to those attending the annual social gathering of Baroda College on 22 July 1899. At that time he was working as professor of English at Baroda College. The talk was published in *The Baroda College Miscellany*, vol. 5, no. 2 (September 1899) under the title *The Address Delivered by Professor Ghose at the College Social Gathering*, and reprinted in *The Life of Sri Aurobindo* by A. B. Purani (1958 and subsequently).

Education. This piece consists of two separate fragmentary passages written in notebooks used also for *Notes on the Mahabharata* (see above). The passages thus were probably written around 1902. Between 1901 and 1904 Sri Aurobindo worked in a secretarial capacity for the Maharaja of Baroda, and was sometimes asked to write speeches for him (see note to Appendix One, below). As the present piece is addressed *to* the Maharaja ("your Highness"), it cannot have been intended for delivery *by* him. It may have been meant for delivery by an officer of the State or by Sri Aurobindo himself.

The Brain of India. This series of essays was published in the *Karmayogin* in four instalments between 9 October and 13 November 1909. It seems to have been, at least in part, a reply to "The Bengali Brain and its Misuse", an essay by Dr. P. C. Ray that is mentioned by Sri Aurobindo in his review of *Suprabhat* (see page 567). The essays were republished as a booklet in 1921, 1923, 1944, 1948 and subsequently.

A System of National Education: Some Preliminary Ideas. This series of essays was published in the *Karmayogin* in eight instalments between 12 February and 2 April 1910. Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta for Chandernagore in the middle of February 1910, at which time he broke off his connection with the journal (see the note to Part Six for details). He evidently left the manuscript of *A System of National Education* behind, and eight chapters of the work were published in the *Karmayogin* by his associate Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble), whom he had asked to look after the journal in his absence. The eighth chapter was published in the journal's last issue. Other chapters, if they were written, have been lost. The eight essays were published as a booklet in 1921 by Tagore & Co., Madras. This apparently was a pirated edition; in 1924 the "only authorised edition" was published by the Arya Publishing House, Calcutta. In this edition, Sri Aurobindo added the subtitle "Some Introductory Essays" as well as the publisher's note that is reproduced here on page 381. The book was reprinted by the same publisher in 1944, 1948 and 1953, and by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1970. In 1948 the subtitle was changed to "Some Preliminary Ideas".

Message for National Education Week (1918). Editorial title. Sri Aurobindo wrote this message at the request of Annie Besant, a leader of the Home Rule movement and the editor of *New India*, a newspaper of Madras. It was published in *New India* on 8 April 1918, under the heading: "MESSAGES FROM SONS OF THE MOTHERLAND TO THEIR BROTHERS". Sri Aurobindo's was the longest of nine messages contributed by India's "leading patriots".

National Education. Circa 1916–18. Editorial title. An isolated paragraph from a notebook used by Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry.

A Preface on National Education. These two essays were published in the *Arya*, a philosophical journal edited by Sri Aurobindo between

1914 and 1921, in its last two issues, November/December 1920 and January 1921. Other instalments evidently were planned, but were never written.

PART FOUR: ON ART (1909–1910)

Sri Aurobindo wrote these pieces in 1909 and 1910 and published all but one of them in his journal, the *Karmayogin*.

The National Value of Art. This series of essays was published in the *Karmayogin* in six instalments between 20 November and 25 December 1909. The essays were republished as a booklet in 1922, 1936 (revised), 1946 and subsequently.

Two Pictures. This essay was published in the *Karmayogin* on 17 July 1909.

Indian Art and an Old Classic. This essay was published in the *Karmayogin* on 2 October 1909.

The Revival of Indian Art. This essay was published in the *Karmayogin* on 16 October 1909.

An Answer to a Critic. Editorial title. This incomplete essay was written shortly after August 1910, when the article it refers to, "Comment and Criticism. The Indian Fine Arts Critics", was published in *The Modern Review* of Calcutta (vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 207–13). The author of this article, identified by *The Modern Review* as "A student of Mr. Ravi Varma, the famous Indian Artist", made disparaging remarks about such critics as Ananda K. Coomaraswamy and Sister Nivedita.

PART FIVE: CONVERSATIONS OF THE DEAD (1910)

The first two of these dialogues were published in the *Karmayogin*, appearing in the last issues known to have been edited by Sri Aurobindo. (Two other dialogues published in later issues of the *Karmayogin* under the heading "Conversations of the Dead" were written by Sister Nivedita.) Drafts of the last three pieces form part of the Chandernagore Manuscript (see the note to Part Six). There are also typed versions of all five dialogues.

Dinshah, Perizade. Published in the *Karmayogin* on 12 February 1910.

Turiu, Uriu. Published in the *Karmayogin* on 19 February 1910.

Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi. Chandernagore Manuscript, gathering I, pp. 5–6. The typed copy, which is subsequent to the manuscript, has been used as the text. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 7 November 1920, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue* (1972).

Shivaji, Jaysingh. Chandernagore Manuscript, II: 6–7. The typed copy, which is subsequent to the manuscript, has been used as the text. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 26 December 1920, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue* (1972).

Littleton, Percival. Chandernagore Manuscript, III: 6–7. The typed copy, which is subsequent to the manuscript, has been used as the text. A defective version of this piece (Sri Aurobindo once referred to it as "much mangled by mistakes") was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 29 May 1923, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue* (1972).

PART SIX: THE CHANDERNAGORE MANUSCRIPT (1910)

The pieces that make up this section form the bulk of a 51-page handwritten manuscript originally consisting of three gatherings of foolscap paper numbered by Sri Aurobindo I: 1–16, II: 1–17 and III: 1–18. Each of the gatherings appears to be matter for one issue of a journal. Each begins with an essay entitled "Passing Thoughts" and contains an instalment of "Conversations of the Dead", an instalment of "Epistles from Abroad", one or more essays, including those entitled "Historical Impressions", one or more other pieces, including those entitled "In/At the Society's Chambers", and a blank-verse poem. Several facts suggest that the journal these pieces were intended for was the *Karmayogin*. "Passing Thoughts" was the heading of the *Karmayogin's* opening column of opinion in the issues of 12 and 19 February 1910. After being warned that he was about to be arrested for sedition, Sri Aurobindo departed from Calcutta for Chandernagore sometime towards the end of February 1910, and remained there incognito for about six weeks before voyaging to Pondicherry. Several sheets of the 51-page manuscript bear notations in another hand indicating that it was sent from somewhere to Calcutta and then returned. In addition, all of Sri Aurobindo's signatures on the manuscript were cut out or obliterated, a necessary precaution if it was in transit at a time when Sri Aurobindo was wanted by the police. Finally, a number of pieces that had been copied out from the manuscript were published in *The Standard Bearer*, a journal brought out from Chandernagore, in the 1920s. On the basis of this evidence, it would be natural to assume that Sri Aurobindo wrote the manuscript while in Chandernagore in February and March 1910 with the intention of having the pieces published in the *Karmayogin*, that the manuscript was sent from Chandernagore to Calcutta but returned without being published, and that some pieces were copied out from it in Chandernagore at that time and later published in *The Standard Bearer*. Against all this, however, stands a statement made by Sri Aurobindo in 1944 that his "active connection with the two newspapers [the *Karmayogin* and the *Dharma*] ceased" from the moment of his departure for Chandernagore (*On Himself* [1972], p. 57). Taken by itself, this statement would seem to rule out the possibility that Sri Aurobindo wrote the manuscript in Chandernagore for use in the *Karmayogin*. It is possible that he wrote the manuscript in Calcutta before his departure for Chandernagore, took it with him and sent it back from there to Calcutta. But it is also possible, and perhaps more likely, that he wrote the manuscript during his stay in Chandernagore and subsequently forgot about it, as he forgot about several other of his early writings.

To enable the reader to visualise the original structure of the 51-page Chandernagore Manuscript [CMS], the gathering and pages of the pieces are given.

Passing Thoughts [1]: Religion in Europe; Religion in India; The Real Minimum; The Maximum. 1910. CMS I: 1–2. A defective version of parts of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 13 March 1922 under the title "Hints and Clues".

Passing Thoughts [2]: The Object of Government; The European Jail; European Justice. 1910. CMS II: 1–2. Around 1912 Sri Aurobindo revised and enlarged "European Justice" under the title "The Balance of Justice". That piece is published in *Essays Divine and Human*, volume 12 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. A version of the 1910 text, badly edited and with the matter rearranged, was published under the title "Academic Thoughts" in *The Standard Bearer* on 2 January 1921, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue* (1972).

Passing Thoughts [3]: *Achar*; *Vichar*; *Vivek*; *Jnanam*. 1910. CMS III: 1–2. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 26 September 1920, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue*.

Hathayoga. 1910. CMS II: 3–5. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 12 December 1920, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue*.

Rajayoga. 1910. CMS III: 3–5. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 19 December 1920, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue*.

Historical Impressions: The French Revolution. 1910. CMS I: 7–10. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 28 November and 5 December 1920, and subsequently in *The Hour of God and Other Writings* (1972).

Historical Impressions: Napoleon. 1910. CMS III: 8–11. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 21 December 1920, and subsequently in *The Hour of God and Other Writings*.

In the Society's Chambers. 1910. CMS I: 13–14. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 24 July 1922, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue*.

At the Society's Chambers. 1910. CMS II: 13–15. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 31 July 1922, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue*.

Things Seen in Symbols [1]. 1910. CMS II: 16. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 28 November 1920, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue*.

Things Seen in Symbols [2]. 1910. CMS III: 16. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 29 August 1920, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue*.

The Real Difficulty. 1910. CMS II: 8. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 15 August 1920, and subsequently in *The Hour of God and Other Writings*.

Art. 1910. CMS III: 12–13. A defective version of this piece was published in *The Standard Bearer* on 27 March 1921, and subsequently in *The Harmony of Virtue*.

PART SEVEN: EPISTLES/LETTERS FROM ABROAD (C. 1910–1912)

The first three of these fictional letters form part of the Chandernagore Manuscript (see Part Six). The other three, entitled "Letters" and not "Epistles", were written in Pondicherry a year or so later. Sri Aurobindo numbered the first two of the Letters "IV" and "V", in sequence to the three Epistles. The final number, VI, has been given by the editors.

Epistles from Abroad I–III. 1910. CMS I: 11–12, II: 11–12, III: 14–15. Defective versions of these three pieces were published in *The Standard Bearer* on 20 March 1922, 3 April 1922 and 10 October 1920. All three were subsequently published in *The Harmony of Virtue*.
Letters from Abroad IV–VI. Circa 1911. These three pieces were not published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. In establishing the texts of Letter V and Letter VI, the editors have followed an early version of the pieces, but have inserted the author's revised versions of certain passages in the appropriate places. A white space indicates that the passages above and below are not physically continuous in the manuscript. Another version of the opening of Letter IV and an additional passage of Letter V have been printed as footnotes.

PART EIGHT: REVIEWS (1909–1920)

Sri Aurobindo published the first of these reviews in the *Karmayogin* in 1909 and the others in the *Arya* between 1915 and 1920. The first five of the *Arya* reviews are printed here in the order in which they appeared when published in the book *Views and Reviews* in 1941. Sri Aurobindo revised these five to some extent before this publication.

"Suprabhat". Published in the *Karmayogin* on 14 August 1909 under the title "Suprabhat: A Review".
"Hymns to the Goddess". Published in the *Arya* in May 1915 and in *Views and Reviews* since 1941. The following note in the *Arya* concerning the "series of publications" mentioned in the first sentence

was deleted from the first edition: "We propose to deal hereafter with the most important of these publications, the translation of the Mahanirvana Tantra."

"South Indian Bronzes". Published in the *Arya* in October 1915 and in *Views and Reviews* since 1941.

"God, the Invisible King". Published in the *Arya* in July 1917 and in *Views and Reviews* since 1941.

"Rupam". Published in the *Arya* in April 1920 and in *Views and Reviews* since 1941. The footnote on page 593 was added by Sri Aurobindo when an extract from this review was included in the compilation *Lights on Life-Problems* (*Second Series*), published in 1951.

About Astrology. Published in the *Arya* in November 1917 and in *Views and Reviews* since 1941.

"Sanskrit Research". Published in the *Arya* in March 1916.

"The Feast of Youth". Published in the *Arya* in November 1918.

"Shama'a". Published in the *Arya* in September 1920.

PART NINE: BANKIM — TILAK — DAYANANDA (1907–1920)

The articles making up this section, all of them biographical sketches or obituary notices, were published in various journals between 1907 and 1920. In 1940 five of them, "Rishi Bankim Chandra", "Bal Gangadhar Tilak", the two pieces on Dayananda, and "The Men that Pass", were published in that order in a booklet entitled *Bankim — Tilak — Dayananda*, which was reprinted in 1947 and subsequently. (Also included in the booklet was Sri Aurobindo's translation of Bankim Chandra's hymn "Bande Mataram".)

Rishi Bankim Chandra. First published in the *Bande Mataram* on 16 April 1907, this article was reproduced in a booklet entitled *Rishi Bunkim Chandra* in 1923, and subsequently in *Bankim — Tilak — Dayananda*.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak. This article was first published as an introduction to *Bal Gangadhar Tilak: His Writings and Speeches* (Ganesh and Co.: Madras, 1918), and subsequently included in *Bankim — Tilak — Dayananda*.

A Great Mind, a Great Will. This obituary notice was written at the request of Bipin Chandra Pal, editor of the newspaper *The Independent*, in which it was published on 5 August 1920. (Tilak died on 1 August of that year.) The piece was not included in editions of *Bankim — Tilak — Dayananda* published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime, perhaps because the text was not available when the book was put together in 1940. The present text has been compared with the text published in *The Independent* as well as with a draft found among Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts.

Dayananda: The Man and His Work. This piece was first published in *The Vedic Magazine*, Lahore, in 1915. It or the next piece or both were subsequently included in at least five pamphlets between 1921 and 1939. Both articles were included in *Bankim — Tilak — Dayananda* in 1940 and subsequently.

Dayananda and the Veda. This article was first published in *The Vedic Magazine* in 1916. See the note to the previous item for reprints.

The Men that Pass. This obituary article on Romesh Chandra Dutt was published in the *Karmayogin* on 4 December 1909, and included in *Bankim — Tilak — Dayananda* in 1940 and subsequently. In the 1940 edition it was originally to be placed after the article on Bankim Chandra. Asked "why Romesh Dutt should come after Bankim", Sri Aurobindo replied, ironically, "I don't know. I don't know why he should be there at all." Later, when correcting the proofs, he indicated that the Dutt piece should come at the end of the book.

APPENDIX ONE: SPEECHES AND REPORTS
(BARODA 1901–1905)

Sri Aurobindo wrote the documents reproduced in this section while working as an administrative officer and professor in the erstwhile Princely State of Baroda. Then known as Arvind or Aravind or Aurobind Ghose, Sri Aurobindo began work in the state in February 1893, just after his return from England, and continued until February 1906, when he left to join the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal. During the first part of this thirteen-year period he was employed as a trainee in various administrative departments. From 1897 to 1901 he worked as a professor of English and of French in the Baroda College. There followed a period of three years, 1901–4, when he served in a secretarial capacity under Sayajirao Gaekwar, the Maharaja of Baroda. (In many of the documents the Maharaja is referred to as "the Gaekwar".) Finally, in 1905 and 1906, he returned to the College as vice-principal and professor. The documents reproduced in this Appendix are a selection from those that still exist, which are themselves perhaps only a fraction of the written work he produced while employed in Baroda. A selection from the letters he wrote at this time is included in *On Himself*.

Speeches Written for the Maharaja of Baroda (1901–1902)

Between 1901 and 1904, Sri Aurobindo was sometimes asked to write speeches for the Maharaja of Baroda. The first piece reproduced here is a draft from one of Sri Aurobindo's notebooks for a speech that does not seem to have been delivered by the Maharaja. The second piece is a speech actually delivered by the Maharaja that is known to have been written by Sri Aurobindo.

Medical Department. Circa 1901. This piece, written by Sri Aurobindo in one of his own notebooks, clearly was intended to be a speech (or possibly a written report) presented by the Maharaja of Baroda. ("The year of my accession" [p. 689] refers to the year the Maharaja assumed the throne, 1881.) The Maharaja did give a speech entitled "Medicine and Health of the Community in India" on 29 March 1901, but this does not bear any resemblance to *Medical Department*. It is possible that Sri Aurobindo's draft was rejected in favour of another's.

The Revival of Industry in India. This speech was delivered by the Maharaja of Baroda on 15 December 1902, at the opening of the Industrial Exhibition held in Ahmedabad in conjunction with the 1902 session of the Indian National Congress. It certainly was written by Sri Aurobindo. He identified it as his composition in 1940, when one of his disciples commented: "a speech he [the Maharaja] made at the Industrial Exhibition was marvellous". After ascertaining that it was the Ahmedabad exhibition that was meant, Sri Aurobindo drew a chorus of laughter by remarking, "That was the speech I prepared for him." (Talk of 12 December 1940, published in Nirodbaran, *Talks* *with Sri Aurobindo* [2001], vol. 2, p. 952.) The text is reproduced from *Speeches & Addresses of His Highness Sayaji Rao III, Maharaja of Baroda*. Volume One, 1877–1910 (Cambridge: Privately Printed at the University Press, 1927), pp. 83–117.

Report on Trade in the Baroda State (1902)

Editorial title. These "General Suggestions" form the first part of a 72-page report on trade in the state of Baroda that was printed in 1902. Although unsigned, the report almost certainly was the work of Sri Aurobindo (see references below). He seems to have compiled the report from data contained in a four-volume manuscript report written in Gujarati or Marathi, the languages of the Baroda State. In summarising this material, he used his own language and enough of his own thought for the portion reproduced here to be considered his own work. The second part, dealing with "Local Suggestions" at three times the length of the first part, is not reproduced.

Three contemporary documents mention Sri Aurobindo (Arvind Ghose) as the author of what is called variously a "printed report", an "English book in short" and "Mr. Ghose's compilation". All three apparently refer to the report reproduced here. The documents, all in the "Arvind Ghose collection" (AGC) of the Central Record Office, Baroda, are (1) letter Manubhai to Dewan 23 June 1902 (AGC file 5, pp. 141–42); (2) Huzur Mulki Department, General Branch File No. 214/F. N. 29 (AGC file 17, which also contains the copy of the report used as our text); (3) Huzur Mulki Department R. No. 111.

Opinions Written as Acting Principal, Baroda College (1905)

Resolving a Problem of Seniority in the High School. 3 May 1905. This opinion was written by Sri Aurobindo as acting principal of Baroda College in response to a representation of certain teachers in the Baroda High School (which was administered by the College) setting forth their objections to a proposal to give a new, highly qualified teacher a post that would normally have gone to one of them.

On a Proposed Examination for Teachers. 9 August 1905. Sri Aurobindo wrote this opinion in regard to a proposal to introduce an examination for secondary school teachers while he was acting as principal of Baroda College.

On a Head Assistant for the High School. 13 September 1905. Another opinion on the running of the High School written by Sri Aurobindo while acting as principal of the College. (At this moment he was also temporarily acting as Minister of Education.)

APPENDIX TWO: PREMISES OF ASTROLOGY (C. 1910)

These notes, found in a notebook used by Sri Aurobindo around 1910, seem to have been written more as an *aide memoire* than as an original contribution to the study of astrology. After the three complete chapters, Sri Aurobindo wrote the title of a fourth, "The Hours", but did not continue. The title of the second chapter, "The Signs", is editorial.

PRINTING HISTORY

A little more than half the pieces in the present volume were published in one form or another during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. The following pieces first appeared in periodicals or, in one case, a book: *Bankim Chandra Chatterji*, "The Age of Kalidasa", "The Seasons", "Address at the Baroda College Social Gathering", *The Brain of India*, *A System of National Education*, *A Preface on National Education*, *The National Value of Art*, "Two Pictures", "Indian Art and an Old Classic", "The Revival of Indian Art", "Dinshah, Perizade", "Turiu, Uriu", all the contents of the Chandernagore Manuscript, all the reviews making up Part Eight, and all the contents of Part Nine. See the above notes for details.

Several of these pieces were subsequently reprinted in the form of books during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. The two essays on Kalidasa were printed as two separate booklets by Tagore & Co., Madras, around 1921. In 1929, they were published together under the title *Kalidasa* by the Arya Sahitya Bhawan, Calcutta. Sri Aurobindo saw the proofs and made some revisions. The book was reprinted by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1950 and subsequently. In 1954 the Ashram brought out a posthumous collection of some of the unpublished writings on Kalidasa under the title *Kalidasa: Second Series*. *The Brain* *of India* was published by the Prabartak Publishing House, Chandernagore, in 1921 and 1923, by the Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, in 1944 and 1948, and by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1955 and subsequently. *A System of National Education* was published by Tagore & Co., Madras, in 1921, by the Arya Publishing House in 1924, 1944, 1948 and 1953, and by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1970. The *National Value of Art* was published by the Prabartak Publishing House in 1922, by the Arya Publishing House in 1936 and 1946, and by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1953 and subsequently. The second to sixth reviews in Part Eight were included in *Views and Reviews*, published by the Sri Aurobindo Library, Madras, in 1941. Sri Aurobindo saw the proofs of this book and made some revisions. It was reprinted in 1946 by the same publishers. Subsequent editions were published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The contents of Part Nine were published under the title *Bankim — Tilak — Dayananda* by the Arya Publishing House in 1940 and 1947, and by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1955 and subsequently. Sri Aurobindo saw the proofs of the 1940 edition and made some revisions.

Bankim Chandra Chatterji was first published in book-form by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1954. Some of the material on the Mahabharata was first published in book-form in *Vyasa and Valmiki* by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1956 and 1964. In 1989 all the material on the Mahabharata, augmented and reorganised, was published in volume 13 of *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research*. In 1991 and 1996 these texts were republished, in a slightly reorganised form, under the title *On the Mahabharata* by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

The speech "The Revival of Industry in India" was first published in *Speeches & Addresses of His Highness Sayaji Rao III, Maharaja of Baroda*, Volume One (Cambridge, 1927).

With a few exceptions, the material making up this volume was reproduced in 1971–73 in three volumes of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library: Volume 3, *The Harmony of Virtue: Early Cultural Writings*, Volume 17, *The Hour of God and Other Writings*, and Volume 27, *Supplement*. The exceptions, most of which appear here for the first time in a book, are: "The Sole Motive of Man's Existence", some of the "Stray Thoughts", all the contents of the "On Poetry and Literature" section of Part Two, "The Spirit of the

Times", the "Alternative and Unused Passages and Fragments" on Kalidasa, parts of *On the Mahabharata*, the first paragraph of "Education", "Message for National Education Week (1918)", "National Education", "Epistles/Letters from Abroad" IV–VI, "An Answer to a Critic", "Passing Thoughts [1]", and the Baroda speeches and reports in Appendix One. Many of these pieces first appeared in print in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* (1977–94).

Collected Poems

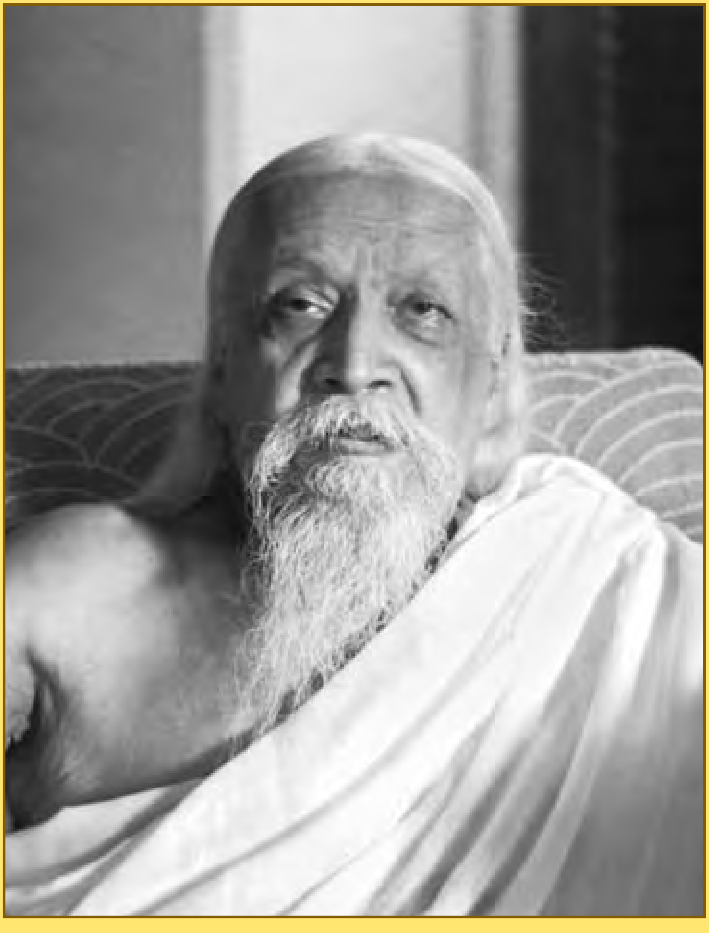

Sri Aurobindo

www.holybooks.com

VOLUME 2
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2009
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Publisher's Note

Collected Poems comprises all of Sri Aurobindo's poetical works with the exception of (1) the epic *Savitri*, (2) poetic dramas, (3) most translations into verse of poetry in Sanskrit, Bengali and other languages, and (4) original poetry in Bengali and Sanskrit. *Savitri* is published as volumes 33 and 34 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO; the poetic dramas are included in volumes 3 and 4, *Collected Plays and Stories*; the poetic translations are included in volume 5, *Translations*; and the original poetry in Sanskrit and Bengali is published in volume 9, *Writings in Bengali and Sanskrit*.

The present volume includes all short and narrative poems in English that Sri Aurobindo published during his lifetime. It also includes all complete poems found among his manuscripts after his passing, as well as incomplete poetry that the editors thought worthy of inclusion.

The poems have been arranged in seven overlapping chronological parts, which are subdivided into sections representing different genres and states of completeness. Poems published in small books during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime have, for the most part, been kept together as published.

Sri Aurobindo worked on the poems in this volume over the course of seven decades. The first one was published in 1883, when he was ten. A number were composed or revised more than sixty years later, during the late 1940s.

CONTENTS

Part One
England and Baroda 1883 – 1898

Poem Published in 1883

Light 5

Songs to Myrtilla

Songs to Myrtilla 9
O Coïl, Coïl 15
Goethe 16
The Lost Deliverer 16
Charles Stewart Parnell 17
Hic Jacet 17
Lines on Ireland 18
On a Satyr and Sleeping Love 22
A Rose of Women 22
Saraswati with the Lotus 22
Night by the Sea 23
The Lover's Complaint 26
Love in Sorrow 28
The Island Grave 30
Estelle 31
Radha's Complaint in Absence 32
Radha's Appeal 32
Bankim Chandra Chatterji 34
Madhusudan Dutt 35
To the Cuckoo 36
Envoi 37

Poems from Manuscripts, c. 1891 – 1898

To a Hero-Worshipper 41
Phaethon 42

The Just Man 43

Incomplete Poems from Manuscripts, c. 1891 – 1892
Thou bright choregus 47
Like a white statue 47
The Vigil of Thaliard 48

Part Two
Baroda, c. 1898 – 1902

Complete Narrative Poems
Urvasie 65
Love and Death 111

Incomplete Narrative Poems, c. 1899 – 1902
Khaled of the Sea 145
Uloupie 163

Sonnets from Manuscripts, c. 1900 – 1901
O face that I have loved 177
I cannot equal 177
O letter dull and cold 178
My life is wasted 178
Because thy flame is spent 179
Thou didst mistake 179
Rose, I have loved 180
I have a hundred lives 180
Still there is something 181
I have a doubt 181
To weep because a glorious sun 182
What is this talk 182

Short Poems from Manuscripts, c. 1900 – 1901
The Spring Child 185
A Doubt 186
The Nightingale 186
Euphrosyne 187

A Thing Seen 187
Epitaph 188
To the Modern Priam 188
Song 188
Epigram 189
The Three Cries of Deiphobus 189
Perigone Prologuises 189
Since I have seen your face 192
So that was why 193
World's delight 194

Part Three
Baroda and Bengal, c. 1900–1909

Poems from *Ahana and Other Poems*

Invitation 201
Who 201
Miracles 203
Reminiscence 203
A Vision of Science 204
Immortal Love 206
A Tree 207
To the Sea 207
Revelation 209
Karma 209
Appeal 210
A Child's Imagination 211
The Sea at Night 211
The Vedantin's Prayer 212
Rebirth 213
The Triumph-Song of Trishuncou 215
Life and Death 216
Evening 216
Parabrahman 216
God 218
The Fear of Death 219
Seasons 219

The Rishi 220
In the Moonlight 237

Poems from Manuscripts, c. 1900–1906
To the Boers 247
Vision 255
To the Ganges 256
Suddenly out from the wonderful East 260
On the Mountains 261

Part Four
Calcutta and Chandernagore 1907–1910

Satirical Poem Published in 1907
Reflections of Srinath Paul, Rai Bahadoor, on the Present Discontents 267

Short Poems Published in 1909 and 1910
The Mother of Dreams 273
An Image 274
The Birth of Sin 275
Epiphany 279
To R. 280
Transiit, Non Periit 282

Poems from Manuscripts, c. 1909–1910
Perfect thy motion 285
A Dialogue 286

Narrative Poems Published in 1910
Baji Prabhou 293
Chitrangada 309

Poems Written in 1910 and Published in 1920–1921
The Rakshasas 321
Kama 324
The Mahatmas 325

Part Five
Pondicherry, c. 1910–1920

Two Poems in Quantitative Hexameters

Ilion 333
Ahana 475

Poems from Manuscripts, c. 1912–1913

The Descent of Ahana 495
The Meditations of Mandavya 509

Incomplete Poems from Manuscripts, c. 1912–1920

Thou who controllest 519
Sole in the meadows of Thebes 519
O Will of God 520
The Tale of Nala [1] 521
The Tale of Nala [2] 525

Part Six
Baroda and Pondicherry, c. 1902–1936

Poems Past and Present

Musa Spiritus 531
Bride of the Fire 532
The Blue Bird 533
A God's Labour 534
Hell and Heaven 538
Kamadeva 540
Life 541
One Day 542

Part Seven
Pondicherry, c. 1927–1947

Six Poems

The Bird of Fire 547

Trance 548
Shiva 548
The Life Heavens 549
Jivanmukta 551
In Horis Aeternum 553

Poems

Transformation 561
Nirvana 561
The Other Earths 562
Thought the Paraclete 562
Moon of Two Hemispheres 563
Rose of God 564

Poems Published in *On Quantitative Metre*

Ocean Oneness 573
Trance of Waiting 573
Flame-Wind 574
The River 575
Journey's End 576
The Dream Boat 576
Soul in the Ignorance 577
The Witness and the Wheel 577
Descent 578
The Lost Boat 579
Renewal 580
Soul's Scene 580
Ascent 581
The Tiger and the Deer 583

Three Sonnets

Man the Enigma 589
The Infinitesimal Infinite 589
The Cosmic Dance 590

Sonnets from Manuscripts, c. 1934 – 1947

Man the Thinking Animal 593
Contrasts 593

CONTENTS

The Silver Call 594
Evolution [1] 594
The Call of the Impossible 595
Evolution [2] 595
Man the Mediator 596
Discoveries of Science 596
All here is Spirit 597
The Ways of the Spirit [1] 597
The Ways of the Spirit [2] 598
Science and the Unknowable 598
The Yogi on the Whirlpool 599
The Kingdom Within 599
Now I have borne 600
Electron 600
The Indwelling Universal 601
Bliss of Identity 601
The Witness Spirit 602
The Hidden Plan 602
The Pilgrim of the Night 603
Cosmic Consciousness 603
Liberation [1] 604
The Inconscient 604
Life-Unity 605
The Golden Light 605
The Infinite Adventure 606
The Greater Plan 606
The Universal Incarnation 607
The Godhead 607
The Stone Goddess 608
Krishna 608
Shiva 609
The Word of the Silence 609
The Self's Infinity 610
The Dual Being 610
Lila 611
Surrender 611
The Divine Worker 612

The Guest 612
The Inner Sovereign 613
Creation 613
A Dream of Surreal Science 614
In the Battle 614
The Little Ego 615
The Miracle of Birth 615
The Bliss of Brahman 616
Moments 616
The Body 617
Liberation [2] 617
Light 618
The Unseen Infinite 618
"I" 619
The Cosmic Spirit 619
Self 620
Omnipresence 620
The Inconscient Foundation 621
Adwaita 621
The Hill-top Temple 622
The Divine Hearing 622
Because Thou art 623
Divine Sight 623
Divine Sense 624
The Iron Dictators 624
Form 625
Immortality 625
Man, the Despot of Contraries 626
The One Self 626
The Inner Fields 627

Lyrical Poems from Manuscripts, c. 1934 – 1947

Symbol Moon 631
The World Game 632
Who art thou that camest 635
One 635
In a mounting as of sea-tides 636

Krishna 637
The Cosmic Man 637
The Island Sun 638
Despair on the Staircase 639
The Dwarf Napoleon 639
The Children of Wotan 641
The Mother of God 642
The End? 643
Silence is all 644

Poems Written as Metrical Experiments

O pall of black Night 649
To the hill-tops of silence 649
Oh, but fair was her face 649
In the ending of time 650
In some faint dawn 650
In a flaming as of spaces 650
O Life, thy breath is but a cry 651
Vast-winged the wind ran 651
Winged with dangerous deity 652
Outspread a Wave burst 652
On the grey street 653
Cry of the ocean's surges 653

Nonsense and "Surrealist" Verse

A Ballad of Doom 657
Surrealist 658
Surrealist Poems 659

Incomplete Poems from Manuscripts, c. 1927–1947

Thou art myself 663
Vain, they have said 663
Pururavus 663
The Death of a God [1] 665
The Death of a God [2] 666
The Inconscient and the Traveller Fire 666

I walked beside the waters 668
A strong son of lightning 670
I made danger my helper 670
The Inconscient 671
In gleam Konarak 672
Bugles of Light 673
The Fire King and the Messenger 673
God to thy greatness 675
Silver foam 675
Torn are the walls 675
O ye Powers 676
Hail to the fallen 676
Seer deep-hearted 677
Soul, my soul [1] 678
Soul, my soul [2] 678
I am filled with the crash of war 679
In the silence of the midnight 679
Here in the green of the forest 680
Voice of the Summits 681

Appendix
Poems in Greek and in French

Greek Epigram 685
Lorsque rien n’existait 686
Sur les grands sommets blancs 687

Note on the Texts 689

Index of Titles 733

Index of First Lines 743

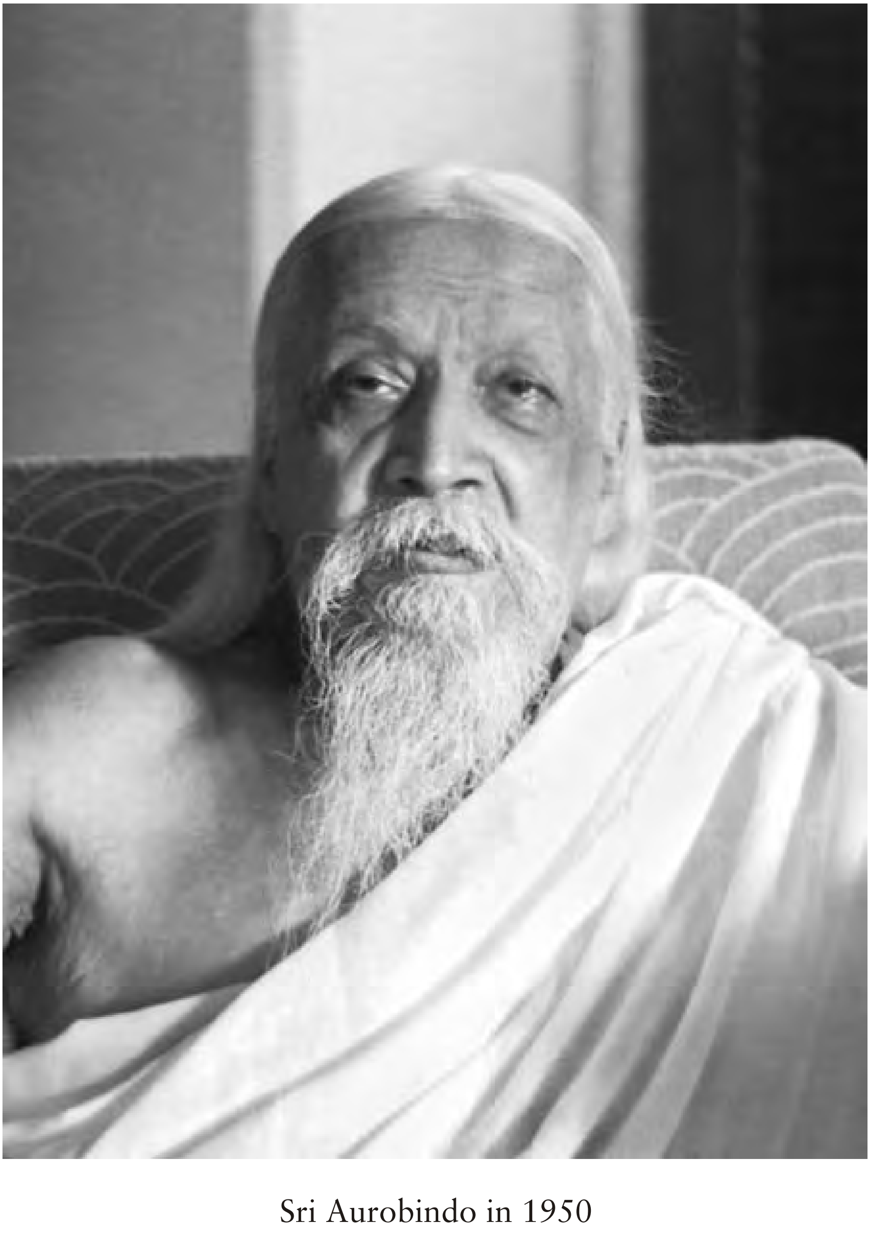

Sri Aurobindo in 1950

Part One

England and Baroda
1883 – 1898

Poem Published in 1883

Light

From the quickened womb of the primal gloom,
The sun rolled, black and bare,
Till I wove him a vest for his Ethiop breast,
Of the threads of my golden hair;
And when the broad tent of the firmament
Arose on its airy spars,
I pencilled the hue of its matchless blue,
And spangled it around with stars.

I painted the flowers of the Eden bowers,
And their leaves of living green,
And mine were the dyes in the sinless eyes
Of Eden's Virgin queen;
And when the fiend's art in the truthful heart
Had fastened its mortal spell,
In the silvery sphere of the first-born tear
To the trembling earth I fell.

When the waves that burst o'er a world accurst
Their work of wrath had sped,
And the Ark's lone few, tried and true,
Came forth among the dead,
With the wondrous gleams of the bridal beams,
I bade their terrors cease,
As I wrote on the roll of the storm's dark scroll
God's covenant of peace.

Like a pall at rest on the senseless breast,
Night's funeral shadow slept —
Where shepherd swains on Bethlehem's plains,
Their lonely vigils kept,
When I flashed on their sight, the heralds bright,
Of Heaven's redeeming plan,
As they chanted the morn, the Saviour born —
Joy, joy, to the outcast man!

Equal favour I show to the lofty and low,
On the just and the unjust I descend:
E'en the blind, whose vain spheres, roll in darkness and tears,
Feel my smile — the blest smile of a friend.
Nay, the flower of the waste by my love is embraced,
As the rose in the garden of kings:
At the chrysalis bier of the morn I appear,
And lo! the gay butterfly wings.

The desolate morn, like the mourner forlorn,
Conceals all the pride of her charms,
Till I bid the bright hours, chase the night from her flowers,
And lead the young day to her arms.
And when the gay rover seeks Eve for her lover,
And sinks to her balmy repose,
I wrap the soft rest by the zephyr-fanned west,
In curtains of amber and rose.

From my sentinel steep by the night-brooded deep
I gaze with unslumbering eye,
When the cynosure star of the mariner
Is blotted out from the sky:
And guided by me through the merciless sea,
Though sped by the hurricane's wings,
His companionless, dark, lone, weltering bark,
To the haven home safely he brings.

I waken the flowers in the dew-spangled bowers,
The birds in their chambers of green,
And mountain and plain glow with beauty again,
As they bask in their matinal sheen.
O, if such the glad worth of my presence on earth,
Though fitful and fleeting the while,
What glories must rest on the home of the blessed,
Ever bright with the Deity's smile.

Songs to Myrtilla

Songs to Myrtilla

GLAUCUS

Sweet is the night, sweet and cool
As to parched lips a running pool;
Sweet when the flowers have fallen asleep
And only moonlit rivulets creep
Like glow-worms in the dim and whispering wood,
To commune with the quiet heart and solitude.
When earth is full of whispers, when
No daily voice is heard of men,
But higher audience brings
The footsteps of invisible things,
When o'er the glimmering tree-tops bowed
The night is leaning on a luminous cloud,
And always a melodious breeze
Sings secret in the weird and charmèd trees,
Pleasant 'tis then heart-overawed to lie
Alone with that clear moonlight and that listening sky.

AETHON

But day is sweeter; morning bright
Has put the stars out ere the light,
And from their dewy cushions rise
Sweet flowers half-opening their eyes.
O pleasant then to feel as if new-born
The sweet, unripe and virgin air, the air of morn.
And pleasant are her melodies,
Rustle of winds, rustle of trees,
Birds' voices in the eaves,
Birds' voices in the green melodious leaves;
The herdsman's flute among his flocks,
Sweet water hurrying from reluctant rocks,
And all sweet hours and all sweet showers
And all sweet sounds that please the noonday flowers.

Morning has pleasure, noon has golden peace
And afternoon repose and eve the heart's increase.

All things are subject to sweet pleasure,
But three things keep her richest measure,
The breeze that visits heaven
And knows the planets seven,
The green spring with its flowery truth
Creative and the luminous heart of youth.
To all fair flowers and vernal
The wind makes melody diurnal.
On Ocean all night long
He rests, a voice of song.
The blue sea dances like a girl
With sapphire and with pearl
Crowning her locks. Sunshine and dew
Each morn delicious life renew.
The year is but a masque of flowers,
Of light and song and honied showers.
In the soft springtide comes the bird
Of heaven whose speech is one sweet word,
One word of sweet and magic power to bring
Green branches back and ruddy lights of spring.
Summer has pleasant comrades, happy meetings
Of lily and rose and from the trees divinest greetings.

GLAUCUS

For who in April shall remember
The certain end of drear November?
No flowers then live, no flowers
Make sweet those wretched hours;
From dead or grieving branches spun
Unwilling leaves lapse wearily one by one;
The heart is then in pain
With the unhappy sound of rain.
No secret boughs prolong

A green retreat of song;
Summer is dead and rich repose
And springtide and the rose,
And woods and all sweet things make moan;
The weeping earth is turned to stone.
The lovers of her former face,
Shapes of beauty, melody, grace,
Where are they? Butterfly and bird
No more are seen, no songs are heard.
They see her beauty spent, her splendours done;
They seek a younger earth, a surer sun.
When youth has quenched its soft and magic light,
Delightful things remain but dead is their delight.

AETHON

Ah! for a little hour put by
Dim Hades and his pageantry.
Forget the future, leave the past,
The little hour thy life shall last.
Learn rather from the violet's days
Soft-blooming in retired ways
Or dewy bell, the maid undrest
With creamy childhood in her breast,
Fierce foxglove and the briony
And sapphire thyme, the work-room of the bee.
Behold in emerald fire
The spotted lizard crawl
Upon the sun-kissed wall
And coil in tangled brake
The green and sliding snake
Under the red-rose-briar.
Nay, hither see
Lured by thy rose of lips the bee
To woo thy petals open, O sweet,
His flowery murmur here repeat,
Forsaking all the joys of thyme.

Stain not thy perfumed prime
With care for autumn's pale decay,
But live like these thy sunny day.
So when thy tender bloom must fall,
Then shalt thou be as one who tasted all
Life's honey and must now depart
A broken prodigal from pleasure's mart,
A leaf with whom each golden sunbeam sinned,
A dewy leaf and kissed by every wandering wind.

GLAUCUS

How various are thy children, Earth!
Behold the rose her lovely birth,
What fires from the bud proceed,
As if the vernal air did bleed.
Breezes and sunbeams, bees and dews
Her lords and lovers she indues,
And these her crimson pleasures prove;
Her life is but a bath of love;
The wide world perfumes when she sighs
And, burning all the winds, of love she dies.
The lily liveth pure,
Yet has she lovers, friends,
And each her bliss intends;
The bees besides her treasure
Besiege of pollened pleasure,
Nor long her gates endure.
The snowdrop cold
Has vowed the saintly state to hold
And far from green spring's amorous guilds
Her snowy hermitage she builds.
Cowslip attends her vernal duty
And stops the heart with beauty.
The crocus asks no vernal thing,
But all the lovely lights of spring
Are with rich honeysuckle boon

And praise her through one summer moon.
Thus the sweet children of the earth
Fulfil their natural selves and various birth.
For one is proud and one sweet months approve
Diana's saint, but most are bondmaidens of Love.

Love's feet were on the sea
When he dawned on me.
His wings were purple-grained and slow;
His voice was very sweet and very low;
His rose-lit cheeks, his eyes' pale bloom
Were sorrow's anteroom;
His wings did cause melodious moan;
His mouth was like a rose o'erblown;
The cypress-garland of renown
Did make his shadowy crown.
Fair as the spring he gave
And sadder than a winter's wave
And sweet as sunless asphodel,
My shining lily, Florimel,
My heart's enhaloed moon,
My winter's warmth, my summer's shady boon.

AETHON

Not from the mighty sea
Love visited me.
I found as in a jewelled box
Love, rose-red, sleeping with imprisoned locks;
And I have ever known him wild
And merry as a child,
As roses red, as roses sweet,
The west wind in his feet,
Tulip-girdled, kind and bold,
With heartsease in his curls of gold,
Since in the silver mist
Bright Cymothea's lips I kissed,

Whose laughter dances like a gleam
Of sunlight on a hidden stream
That through a wooded way
Runs suddenly into the perfect day.
But what were Cymothea, placed
Where like a silver star Myrtilla blooms?
Such light as cressets cast
In long and sun-lit rooms.
Thy presence is to her
As oak to juniper,
Thy beauty as the gorgeous rose
To privet by the lane that blows,
Gold-crownèd blooms to mere fresh grass,
Eternal ivy to brief blooms that pass.

GLAUCUS

But Florimel beside thee, sweet,
Pales like a candle in the brilliant noon.
Snowdrops are thy feet,
Thy waist a crescent moon,
And like a silver wand
Thy body slight doth stand
Or like a silver beech aspire.
Thine arms are walls for white caresses,
Thy mouth a tale of crimson kisses,
Thine eyes two amorous treasuries of fire.
To what shall poet liken thee?
Art thou a goddess of the sea
Purple-tressed and laughter-lipped
From thy choric sisters slipped
To wander on the flowery land?
Or art thou siren on the treacherous sand
Summer-voiced to charm the ear
Of the wind-vext mariner?
Ah! but what are these to thee,
Brighter gem than knows the sea,

Lovelier girl than sees the stream
Naked, Naiad of a dream,
Whiter Dryad than men see
Dancing round the lone oak-tree,
Flower and most enchanting birth
Of ten ages of the earth!
The Graces in thy body move
And in thy lips the ruby hue of Love.

O Coïl, Coïl

O coïl, honied envoy of the spring,
Cease thy too happy voice, grief's record, cease:
For I recall that day of vernal trees,
The soft asoca's bloom, the laden winds
And green felicity of leaves, the hush,
The sense of Nature living in the woods.
Only the river rippled, only hummed
The languid murmuring bee, far-borne and slow,
Emparadised in odours, only used
The ringdove his divine heart-moving speech;
But sweetest to my pleased and singing heart
Thy voice, O coïl, in the peepel tree.

O me! for pleasure turned to bitterest tears!
O me! for the swift joy, too great to live,
That only bloomed one hour! O wondrous day,
That crowned the bliss of those delicious years.
The vernal radiance of my lover's lips
Was shut like a red rose upon my mouth,
His voice was richer than the murmuring leaves,
His love around me than the summer air.
Five hours entangled in the coïl's cry
Lay my beloved twixt my happy breasts.
O voice of tears! O sweetness uttering death!
O lost ere yet that happy cry was still!

O tireless voice of spring! Again I lie
In odorous gloom of trees; unseen and near
The windlark gurgles in the golden leaves,
The woodworm spins in shrillness on the bough:
Thou by the waters wailing to thy love,
O chocrobacque! have comfort, since to thee
The dawn brings sweetest recompense of tears
And she thou lovest hears thy pain. But I
Am desolate in the heart of fruitful months,
Am widowed in the sight of happy things,
Uttering my moan to the unhousèd winds,
O coïl, coïl, to the winds and thee.

Goethe

A perfect face amid barbarian faces,
A perfect voice of sweet and serious rhyme,
Traveller with calm, inimitable paces,
Critic with judgment absolute to all time,
A complete strength when men were maimed and weak,
German obscured the spirit of a Greek.

The Lost Deliverer

Pythian he came; repressed beneath his heel
The hydra of the world with bruisèd head.
Vainly, since Fate's immeasurable wheel
Could parley with a straw. A weakling sped
The bullet when to custom's usual night
We fell because a woman's faith was light.

Charles Stewart Parnell

1891

O pale and guiding light, now star unsphered,
Deliverer lately hailed, since by our lords
Most feared, most hated, hated because feared,
Who smot'st them with an edge surpassing swords!
Thou too wert then a child of tragic earth,
Since vainly filled thy luminous doom of birth.

Hic Jacet

Glasnevin Cemetery

Patriots, behold your guerdon. This man found
Erin, his mother, bleeding, chastised, bound,
Naked to imputation, poor, denied,
While alien masters held her house of pride.
And now behold her! Terrible and fair
With the eternal ivy in her hair,
Armed with the clamorous thunder, how she stands
Like Pallas' self, the Gorgon in her hands.
True that her puissance will be easily past,
The vision ended; she herself has cast
Her fate behind her: yet the work not vain
Since that which once has been may be again,
And she this image yet recover, fired
With godlike workings, brain and hands inspired,
So stand, the blush of battle on her cheek,
Voice made armipotent, deeds that loudly speak,
Like some dread Sphinx, half patent to the eye,
Half veiled in formidable secrecy.
And he who raised her from her forlorn life
Loosening the fountains of that mighty strife,

Where sits he? On what high foreshadowing throne
Guarded by grateful hearts? Beneath this stone
He lies: this guerdon only Ireland gave,
A broken heart and an unhonoured grave.

Lines on Ireland

1896

After six hundred years did Fate intend
Her perfect perseverance thus should end?
So many years she strove, so many years,
Enduring toil, enduring bitter tears,
She waged religious war, with sword and song
Insurgent against Fate and numbers, strong
To inflict as to sustain; her weak estate
Could not conceal the goddess in her gait;
Goddess her mood. Therefore that light was she
In whom races of weaker destiny
Their beauteous image of rebellion saw;
Treason could not unnerve, violence o'erawe —
A mirror to enslavèd nations, never
O'ercome, though in the field defeated ever.
O mutability of human merit!
How changed, how fallen from her ancient spirit!
She that was Ireland, Ireland now no more,
In beggar's weeds behold at England's door
Neglected sues or at the best returned
With hollow promise, happy if not spurned
Perforce, she that had yesterday disdained
Less than her mighty purpose to have gained.
Had few short change of seasons puissance then,
O nurse and mother of heroic men,
Thy genius to outwear, thy strength well-placed
And old traditionary courage, waste

Thy vehement nature? Nay, not time, but thou
These ancient praises strov'st to disavow.
For 'tis not foreign force, nor weight of wars,
Nor treason, nor surprise, nor opposite stars,
Not all these have enslaved nor can, whate'er
Vulgar opinion bruit, nor years impair,
Ruin discourage, nor disease abate
A nation. Men are fathers of their fate;
They dig the prison, they the crown command.
Yet thine own self a little understand,
Unhappy country, and be wise at length.
An outward weakness doing deeds of strength
Amazed the nations, but a power within
Directed, like effective spirit unseen
Behind the mask of trivial forms, a source
And fund of tranquil and collected force.
This was the sense that made thee royal, blessed
With sanction from on high and that impressed
Which could thyself transfigure and infuse
Thine action with such pride as kings do use.
But thou to thine own self disloyal, hast
Renounced the help divine turning thy past
To idle legends and fierce tales of blood,
Mere violent wrath with no proposèd good.
Therefore effective wisdom, skill to bend
All human things to one predestined end
Renounce thee. Honest purpose, labour true,
These dwell not with the self-appointed crew
Who, having conquered by death's aid, abuse
The public ear, — for seldom men refuse
Credence, when mediocrity multiplied
Equals itself with genius — fools! whose pride
Absurd the gods permit a little space
To please their souls with laughter, then replace
In the loud limbo of futilities.
How fallen art thou being ruled by these!
Ignoble hearts, courageous to effect

Their country's ruin; such the heavens reject
For their high agencies and leave exempt
Of force, mere mouths and vessels of contempt.
They of thy famous past and nature real
Uncareful, have denied thy rich ideal
For private gains, the burden would not brook
Of that sustaining genius, when it took
A form of visible power, since it demanded
All meaner passions for its sake disbanded.
As once against the loud Euphratic host
The lax Ionians of the Asian coast
Drew out their numbers, but not long enduring
Rigorous hard-hearted toil to the alluring
Cool shadow of the olives green withdrew;
Freedom's preparators though well they knew
Labour exact, discipline, pains well nerved
In the severe unpitying sun, yet swerved
From their ordeal; Ireland so deceiving
The world's great hope, her temples large relieving
Of the too heavy laurel, rather chose
Misery, civil battle, triumphant foes
Than rational order and divine control.
Therefore her brighter fate and nobler soul
Glasnevin with that hardly-honoured bier
Received. But the immortal mind austere,
By man rejected, of eternal praise
Has won its meed and sits with heavenly bays,
Not variable breath of favour, crowned
On high. And grieves it not, spirit renowned,
Mortal ingratitude though now forgiven,
Grieves it not, even on the hills of heaven,
After so many mighty toils, defeats
So many, cold repulse and vernal heats
Of hope, iron endurance throned apart
In lonely strength within thy godlike heart,
Obloquy faced, health lost, the goal nigh won,
To see at last thy strenuous work undone?

So falls it ever when a race condemned
To strict and lasting bondage, have contemned
Their great deliverer, self and ease preferring
To labour's crown, by their own vileness erring.
Thus the uncounselled Israelites of old,
Binding their mightiest, for their own ease sold,
Who else had won them glorious liberty
To his Philistian foes, as thine did thee.
Thou likewise, had thy puissant soul endured
Within its ruined house to stay immured,
With parallel disaster and o'erthrow
Hadst daunted and their conjured strength laid low.
But time was adverse. Thus too Heracles
In exile closed by the Olynthian seas,
Not seeing Thebes nor Dirce any more,
His friendless eyelids on an alien shore.
Yet not unbidden of heaven the men renowned
Have laboured, though no fruit apparent crowned
Nor praise contemporary touched with leaf
Of civic favour, who for joy or grief
To throned injustice never bowed the head.
They triumph from the houses of the dead.
Thou too, high spirit, mighty genius, glass
Of patriots, into others' deeds shalt pass
With force and tranquil fortitude thy dower,
An inspiration and a fount of power.
Nor to thy country only nor thy day
Art thou a name and a possession, stay
Of loftiest natures, but where'er and when
In time's full ripeness and the date of men
Alien oppression maddened has the wise, —
For ever thus preparing Nemesis
In ruling nations unjust power has borne
Insolence, injustice, madness, outrage, scorn,
Its natural children, then, by high disdain
And brave example pushed to meet their pain,
The pupils of thy greatness shall appear,

Souls regal to the mould divine most near,
And reign, or rise on throne-intending wings,
Making thee father to a line of kings.

On a Satyr and Sleeping Love

Me whom the purple mead that Bromius owns
And girdles rent of amorous girls did please,
Now the inspired and curious hand decrees
That waked quick life in these quiescent stones,
To yield thee water pure. Thou lest the sleep
Yon perilous boy unchain, more softly creep.

PLATO

A Rose of Women

Now lilies blow upon the windy height,
Now flowers the pansy kissed by tender rain,
Narcissus builds his house of self-delight
And Love's own fairest flower blooms again;
Vainly your gems, O meadows, you recall;
One simple girl breathes sweeter than you all.

MELEAGER

Saraswati with the Lotus

(*Bankim Chandra Chatterji. Obiit 1894*)

Thy tears fall fast, O mother, on its bloom,
O white-armed mother, like honey fall thy tears;
Yet even their sweetness can no more relume
The golden light, the fragrance heaven rears,
The fragrance and the light for ever shed
Upon his lips immortal who is dead.

Night by the Sea

Love, a moment drop thy hands;
Night within my soul expands.
Veil thy beauties milk-rose-fair
In that dark and showering hair.
Coral kisses ravish not
When the soul is tinged with thought;
Burning looks are then forbid.
Let each shyly-parted lid
Hover like a settling dove
O'er those deep-blue wells of Love.
Darkness brightens; silvering flee
Pomps of foam the driven sea.

In this garden's dim repose
Lighted with the burning rose,
Soft narcissi's golden camp
Glimmering or with rosier lamp
Censered honeysuckle guessed
By the fragrance of her breast,—
Here where summer's hands have crowned
Silence in the fields of sound,
Here felicity should be.
Hearken, Edith, to the sea.

What a voice of grief intrudes
On these happy solitudes!
To the wind that with him dwells
Ocean, old historian, tells
All the dreadful heart of tears
Hidden in the pleasant years.
Summer's children, what do ye
By the stern and cheerless sea?

Not we first nor we alone
Heard the mighty Ocean moan

By this treasure-house of flowers
In the sweet ambiguous hours.
Many a girl's lips ruby-red
With their vernal honey fed
Happy mouths, and soft cheeks flushed
With Love's rosy sunlight blushed.
Ruddy lips of many a boy
Blithe discovered hills of joy
Ruby-guided through a kiss
To the sweet highways of bliss.
Here they saw the evening still
Coming slowly from the hill
And the patient stars arise
To their outposts in the skies;
Heard the ocean shoreward urge
The speed and thunder of his surge,
Singing heard as though a bee
Noontide waters on the sea.

These no longer. For our rose
In her place they wreathed once, blows,
And thy glorious garland, sweet,
Kissed not once those wandering feet.
All the lights of spring are ended,
To the wintry haven wended.
Beauty's boons and nectarous leisure,
Lips, the honeycombs of pleasure,
Cheeks enrosed, Love's natal soil,
Breasts, the ardent conqueror's spoil,
Spring rejects; a lovelier child
His brittle fancies has beguiled.
O her name that to repeat
Than the Dorian muse more sweet
Could the white hand more relume
Writing and refresh the bloom
Of lips that used such syllables then,
Dies unloved by later men.

Are we more than summer flowers?
Shall a longer date be ours,
Rose and springtime, youth and we
By the everlasting sea?

Are they blown as legends tell
In the smoke and gurge of hell?
Writhe they in relucent gyres
O'er a circle sad of fires?
In what lightless groves must they
Or unmurmuring alleys stray?
Fields no sunlight visits, streams
Where no happy lotus gleams?
Yet, where'er their steps below,
Memories sweet for comrades go.
Lethe's waters had their will,
But the soul remembers still.
Beauty pays her boon of breath
To thy narrow credit, Death,
Leaving a brief perfume; we
Perish also by the sea.

We shall lose, ah me! too soon
Lose the clear and silent moon,
The serenities of night
And the deeper evening light.
We shall know not when the morn
In the widening East is born,
Never feel the west-wind stir,
Spring's delightful messenger,
Never under branches lain
Dally with the sweet-lipped rain,
Watch the moments of the tree,
Nor know the sounds that tread the sea.

With thy kisses chase this gloom: —
Thoughts, the children of the tomb.

Kiss me, Edith. Soon the night
Comes and hides the happy light.
Nature's vernal darlings dead
From new founts of life are fed.
Dawn relumes the immortal skies.
Ah! what boon for earth-closed eyes?
Love's sweet debts are standing, sweet;
Honied payment to complete
Haste — a million is to pay —
Lest too soon the allotted day
End and we oblivious keep
Darkness and eternal sleep.
See! the moon from heaven falls.
In thy bosom's snow-white walls
Softly and supremely housed
Shut my heart up; keep it closed
Like a rose of Indian grain,
Like that rose against the rain,
Closed to all that life applauds,
Nature's perishable gauds,
And the airs that burdened be
With such thoughts as shake the sea.

The Lover's Complaint

O plaintive, murmuring reed, begin thy strain;
    Unloose that heavenly tongue,
    Interpreter divine of pain;
Utter thy voice, the sister of my song.
Thee in the silver waters growing,
Arcadian Pan, strange whispers blowing
Into thy delicate stops, did teach
A language lovelier than speech.

O plaintive, murmuring reed, begin thy strain;
    O plaintive, murmuring reed.
    Nisa to Mopsus is decreed,
The moonwhite Nisa to a swarthy swain.
What love-gift now shall Hope not bring?
Election dwells no more with beauty's king.
The wild weed now has wed the rose,
Now ivy on the bramble grows;
Too happy lover, fill the lamp of bliss!
Too happy lover, drunk with Nisa's kiss!
For thee pale Cynthia leaves her golden car,
For thee from Tempe stoops the white and evening star.

O plaintive, murmuring reed, renew thy strain;
    O solace anguish yet again.
    I thought Love soft as velvet sleep,
Sweeter than dews nocturnal breezes weep,
Cool as water in a murmuring pass
And shy as violets in the vernal grass,
But hard as Nisa's heart is he
And salt as the unharvestable sea.

O plaintive, murmuring reed, renew thy strain.
    One morn she came; her mouth
    Breathing the odours of the south,
With happy eyes and heaving bosom fain.
She asked for fruit long-stored in autumn's hold.
These gave I; from the branch dislodged I threw
Sweet-hearted apples in their age of gold
And pears divine for taste and hue.
And one I saw, should all the rest excel;
But error led my plucking hand astray
And with a sudden sweet dismay
My heart into her apron fell.

O plaintive, murmuring reed, renew thy strain.
    My bleeding heart awhile

She kept and bloomed upon its pain,
Then slighted as a broken thing and vile.
Now Mopsus in his unblest arms,
Mopsus enfolds her heavenlier charms,
Mopsus to whom the Muse averse
Refused her gracious secrets to rehearse.

O plaintive, murmuring reed, breathe yet thy strain.
Ye glades, your bliss I grudge you not,
Nor would I that my grief profane
Your sacred summer with intruding thought.
Yet since I will no more behold
Your glorious beauty stained with gold
From shadows of her hair, nor by some well
Made naked of their sylvan dress
The breasts, the limbs I never shall possess,
Therefore, O mother Arethuse, farewell.

For me no place abides
By the green verge of thy belovèd tides.
To Lethe let my footsteps go
And wailing waters in the realms below,
Where happier song is none than moaning pain
Nor any lovelier Syrinx than the weed.
Child of the lisping waters, hush thy strain,
O murmuring, plaintive reed.

Love in Sorrow

Do you remember, Love, that sunset pale
When from near meadows sad with mist the breeze
Sighed like a feverous soul and with soft wail
The ghostly river sobbed among the trees?
I think that Nature heard our misery
Weep to itself and wept for sympathy.

For we were strangers then; we knew not Fate
In ambush by the solitary stream
Nor did our sorrows hope to find a mate,
Much less of love or friendship dared we dream.
Rather we thought that loneliness and we
Were wed in marble perpetuity.

For there was none who loved me, no, not one.
Alas, what was there that a man should love?
For I was misery's last and frailest son
And even my mother bade me homeless rove.
And I had wronged my youth and nobler powers
By weak attempts, small failures, wasted hours.

Therefore I laid my cheek on the chill grass
And murmured, "I am overborne with grief
And joy to richer natures hopes to pass.
Oh me! my life is like an aspen leaf
That shakes but will not fall. My thoughts are blind
And life so bitter that death seems almost kind.

"How am I weary of the days' increase,
Of the moon's brightness and the splendid stars,
The sun that dies not. I would be at peace,
Nor blind my soul with images, nor force
My lips to mirth whose later taste is death,
Nor with vain utterance load my weary breath."

Thus murmured I aloud nor deemed I spoke
To human ears, but you were hidden, sweet,
Behind the willows when my plaining broke
Upon your lonely muse. Ah kindly feet
That brushed the grass in tender haste to bind
Another's wounds, you were less wise than kind.

You said, "My brother, lift your forlorn eyes;
I am your sister more than you unblest."

I looked upon your face, the book of sighs
And index to incurable unrest.
I rose and kissed you, sweet. Your lips were warm
And drew my heart out like a witch's charm.

We parted where the sacred spires arose
In silent power above the silent street.
I saw you mid the rose-trees, O white rose,
Linger a moment, then the dusk defeat
My eyes, and, listening, heard your footsteps fade
On the sad leaves of the autumnal glade.

And were you happy, sweet? In me I know —
For either in my blood the autumn sang
His own pale requiem or that new sweet glow
Failed in the light of bitter knowledge — rang
A voice that said, "Behold the loves too pure
To live, the joy that never shall endure."

This too I know, nor is my hope so bright
But that it sees its autumn cold and sere
Attending with a pale and solemn light
Beyond the gardens of the vernal year.
Yet will I not my weary heart constrain
But take you, sweet, and sweet surcease from pain.

The Island Grave

Ocean is there and evening; the slow moan
Of the blue waves that like a shaken robe
Two heard together once, one hears alone.

Now gliding white and hushed towards our globe
Keen January with cold eyes and clear
And snowdrops pendent in each frosty lobe

Ushers the firstborn of the radiant year.
Haply his feet that grind the breaking mould,
May brush the dead grass on thy secret bier,

Haply his joyless fingers wan and cold
Caress the ruined masses of thy hair,
Pale child of winter, dead ere youth was old.

Art thou so desolate in that bitter air
That even his breath feels warm upon thy face?
Ah till the daffodil is born, forbear,

And I will meet thee in that lonely place.
Then the grey dawn shall end my hateful days
And death admit me to the silent ways.

Estelle

Why do thy lucid eyes survey,
Estelle, their sisters in the milky way?
The blue heavens cannot see
Thy beauty nor the planets praise.
Blindly they walk their old accustomed ways.
Turn hither for felicity.
My body's earth thy vernal power declares,
My spirit is a heaven of thousand stars,
And all these lights are thine and open doors on thee.

Radha's Complaint in Absence

(*Imitated from the Bengali of Chundidas*)

O heart, my heart, a heavy pain is thine!
What land is that where none doth know
Love's cruel name nor any word of sin?
My heart, there let us go.

Friend of my soul, who then has called love sweet?
Laughing I called from heavenly spheres
The sweet love close; he came with flying feet
And turned my life to tears.

What highborn girl, exiling virgin pride,
Has wooed love to her with a laugh?
His fires shall burn her as in harvest-tide
The mowers burn the chaff.

O heart, my heart, merry thy sweet youth ran
In fields where no love was; thy breath
Is anguish, since his cruel reign began.
What other cure but death?

Radha's Appeal

(*Imitated from the Bengali of Chundidas*)

O love, what more shall I, shall Radha speak,
Since mortal words are weak?
In life, in death,
In being and in breath
No other lord but thee can Radha seek.

About thy feet the mighty net is wound
Wherein my soul they bound;
Myself resigned
To servitude my mind;
My heart than thine no sweeter slavery found.

I, Radha, thought; through the three worlds my gaze
I sent in wild amaze;
I was alone.
None called me "Radha!", none;
I saw no hand to clasp, no friendly face.

I sought my father's house; my father's sight
Was empty of delight;
No tender friend
Her loving voice would lend;
My cry came back unanswered from the night.

Therefore to this sweet sanctuary I brought
My chilled and shuddering thought.
Ah, suffer, sweet,
To thy most faultless feet
That I should cling unchid; ah, spurn me not!

Spurn me not, dear, from thy beloved breast,
A woman weak, unblest.
Thus let me cling,
Thus, thus about my king
And thus remain caressing and caressed.

I, Radha, thought; without my life's sweet lord,
— Strike now thy mightiest chord —
I had no power
To live one simple hour;
His absence slew my soul as with a sword.

If one brief moment steal thee from mine eyes,
My heart within me dies.
As girls who keep
The treasures of the deep,
I string thee round my neck and on my bosom prize.

Bankim Chandra Chatterji

How hast thou lost, O month of honey and flowers,
The voice that was thy soul! Creative showers,
The cuckoo's daylong cry and moan of bees,
Zephyrs and streams and softly-blossoming trees
And murmuring laughter and heart-easing tears
And tender thoughts and great and the compeers
Of lily and jasmine and melodious birds,
All these thy children into lovely words
He changed at will and made soul-moving books
From hearts of men and women's honied looks.
O master of delicious words! the bloom
Of chompuk and the breath of king-perfume
Have made each musical sentence with the noise
Of women's ornaments and sweet household joys
And laughter tender as the voice of leaves
Playing with vernal winds. The eye receives
That reads these lines an image of delight,
A world with shapes of spring and summer, noon and night;
All nature in a page, no pleasing show
But men more real than the friends we know.
O plains, O hills, O rivers of sweet Bengal,
O land of love and flowers, the spring-bird's call
And southern wind are sweet among your trees:
Your poet's words are sweeter far than these.
Your heart was this man's heart. Subtly he knew
The beauty and divinity in you.
His nature kingly was and as a god

In large serenity and light he trod
His daily way, yet beauty, like soft flowers
Wreathing a hero's sword, ruled all his hours.
Thus moving in these iron times and drear,
Barren of bliss and robbed of golden cheer,
He sowed the desert with ruddy-hearted rose,
The sweetest voice that ever spoke in prose.

Madhusudan Dutt

Poet, who first with skill inspired did teach
Greatness to our divine Bengali speech, —
Divine, but rather with delightful moan
Spring's golden mother makes when twin-alone
She lies with golden Love and heaven's birds
Call hymeneal with enchanting words
Over their passionate faces, rather these
Than with the calm and grandiose melodies
(Such calm as consciousness of godhead owns)
The high gods speak upon their ivory thrones
Sitting in council high, — till taught by thee
Fragrance and noise of the world-shaking sea.
Thus do they praise thee who amazed espy
Thy winged epic and hear the arrows cry
And journeyings of alarmèd gods; and due
The praise, since with great verse and numbers new
Thou mad'st her godlike who was only fair.
And yet my heart more perfectly ensnare
Thy soft impassioned flutes and more thy Muse
To wander in the honied months doth choose
Than courts of kings, with Sita in the grove
Of happy blossoms, (O musical voice of love
Murmuring sweet words with sweeter sobs between!)
With Shoorpa in the Vindhyan forests green
Laying her wonderful heart upon the sod

Made holy by the well-loved feet that trod
Its vocal shades; and more unearthly bright
Thy jewelled songs made of relucent light
Wherein the birds of spring and summer and all flowers
And murmuring waters flow, her widowed hours
Making melodious who divinely loved.
No human hands such notes ambrosial moved;
These accents are not of the imperfect earth;
Rather the god was voiceful in their birth,
The god himself of the enchanting flute,
The god himself took up thy pen and wrote.

To the Cuckoo

Sounds of the wakening world, the year's increase,
Passage of wind and all his dewy powers
With breath and laughter of new-bathèd flowers
And that deep light of heaven above the trees
Awake mid leaves that muse in golden peace
Sweet noise of birds, but most in heavenly showers
The cuckoo's voice pervades the lucid hours,
Is priest and summoner of these melodies.
The spent and weary streams refresh their youth
At that creative rain and barren groves
Regain their face of flowers; in thee the ruth
Of Nature wakening her dead children moves.
But chiefly to renew thou hast the art
Fresh childhood in the obscurèd human heart.

Envoi

Ite hinc, Camenae, vos quoque ite jam, sane
Dulces Camenae, nam fatebimur verum
Dulces fuistis, et tamen meas chartas
Revisitote sed pudenter et raro.

Pale poems, weak and few, who vainly use
Your wings towards the unattainable spheres,
Offspring of the divine Hellenic Muse,
Poor maimèd children born of six disastrous years!

Not as your mother's is your wounded grace,
Since not to me with equal love returned
The hope which drew me to that serene face
Wherein no unreposeful light of effort burned.

Depart and live for seasons many or few
If live you may, but stay not here to pain
My heart with hopeless passion and renew
Visions of beauty that my lips shall ne'er attain.

For in Sicilian olive-groves no more
Or seldom must my footprints now be seen,
Nor tread Athenian lanes, nor yet explore
Parnassus or thy voiceful shores, O Hippocrene.

Me from her lotus heaven Saraswati
Has called to regions of eternal snow
And Ganges pacing to the southern sea,
Ganges upon whose shores the flowers of Eden blow.

Poems from Manuscripts
Circa 1891–1898

To a Hero-Worshipper

I

My life is then a wasted ereme,
My song but idle wind
Because you merely find
In all this woven wealth of rhyme
Harsh figures with harsh music wound,
The uncouth voice of gorgeous birds,
A ruby carcanet of sound,
A cloud of lovely words?

I am, you say, no magic rod,
No cry oracular,
No swart and ominous star,
No Sinai thunder voicing God.
I have no burden to my song,
No smouldering word instinct with fire,
No spell to chase triumphant wrong,
No spirit-sweet desire.

Mine is not Byron's lightning spear,
Nor Wordsworth's lucid strain
Nor Shelley's lyric pain,
Nor Keats', the poet without peer.
I by the Indian waters vast
Did glimpse the magic of the past,
And on the oaten pipe I play
Warped echoes of an earlier day.

II

My friend, when first my spirit woke,
I trod the scented maze
Of Fancy's myriad ways,

I studied Nature like a book
Men rack for meanings: yet I find
No rubric in the scarlet rose,
No moral in the murmuring wind,
    No message in the snows.

For me the daisy shines a star,
    The crocus flames a spire,
    A horn of golden fire,
Narcissus glows a silver bar:
Cowslips, the golden breath of God,
I deem the poet's heritage,
And lilies silvering the sod
    Breathe fragrance from his page.

No herald of the sun am I
    But in a moonlit vale
    A russet nightingale
Who pours sweet song, he knows not why,
Who pours like wine a gurgling note
Paining with sound his swarthy throat,
Who pours sweet song he recks not why
Nor hushes ever lest he die.

Phaethon

Ye weeping poplars by the shelvy slope
From murmurous lawns downdropping to the stream
On whom the dusk air like a sombre dream
Broods and a twilight ignorant of hope,
Say what compulsion drear has bid you seam
Your mossy sides with drop on eloquent drop
That in warm rillets from your eyes elope?

Is it for the too patient, sure decay
Pale-gilded Autumn, aesthete of the years,
A gorgeous death, a fading glory wears
That thus along its tufted, downy way
Creeps slothfully this ooze of amber tears,
And thus with tearful gusts your branches sway
Sighing a requiem to your emerald day?

The Just Man

Where is the man whom hope nor fear can move?
    Him the wise Gods approve.
The man divine of motive pure and steadfast will
        Unbent to ill,

Whose way is plain nor swerves for power or gold
    The high, straight path to hold:—
Him only wise the wise Gods deem, him pure of lust;
        Him only just.

Tho' men give rubies, tho' they bring a prize
    Sweeter than Helen's eyes—
Yea, costlier things than these things were, they shall not win
        That man to sin.

Tho' the strong lords of earth his doom desire,
    He shall not heed their ire,
Nor shall the numerous commons' stormy voice compel
        His heart nor quell.

Tho' Ocean all her purple pride unroll,
    It stirs, not shakes his soul.
He sees the billows lift their cowled heads on high
        With undimmed eye.

Pure fields he sees and groves of calm delight;
He turns into the night.
Hell is before; the swords await him; friends betray;
He holds his way.

He shall not fear tho' heaven in lightnings fall
Nor thunder's furious call,
Nor earthquake nor the sea: tho' fire, tho' flood assail,
He shall not quail.

Tho' God tear out the heavens like a page
And break the hills for rage,
Blot out the sun from being and all the great stars quench,
He will not blench.

Incomplete Poems from Manuscripts
Circa 1891–1892

Thou bright choregus

Thou bright choregus of the heavenly dance
Who with thy lively beauty wouldst endear
The alien stars and turnst thy paler glance
          To us thy dominating sphere

Why didst thou with Erinna impart thy mind,
The faithful copyist of this cruelty,
Who to usurpers pays allegiance kind
          Passing the true pretender by?

Like a white statue

Like a white statue made of lilies

Her eyes were hidden jewels beneath scabbards of black silk: her shoulders moonlit mountain-slopes when they are coated with new-fallen snow: her breasts two white apples odorous with the sweet fragrance of girlhood, her body a heap of silk in a queen's closet, her legs were marble pillars very clear-cut, her face ivory flushed by the dawn.

He frowned on her like a dark cloud instinct with rain over a tall white ship at sea.

The full orb of her loveliness revealed as when the fleecy gown is stripped from the shoulders of the moon and she stands naked in heaven.

The moon of the three worlds.

Her gait was the swan's in stateliness, the other's wild and jocund as the sea-fowl, her hair windtost, her eyes sparkling like bubbles in a wine-cup, her face slim and very girlish.

The Vigil of Thaliard

Where Time a sleeping dervish is
Or printed legend of Romance
Mid lilies and mid gold roses
    Of mediaeval France,
Where Life, a faithful servitor
    Mid alien faces cast,
Still wears in memory of her
    The trappings of the Past,
Sweet Lily's child, that golden grape
    Girl prince of Avelion,
Thaliard by early-plucking hap
    Star-reaching Mador's son,
Kept vigil by the impious pool
Beyond the misty moaning sea
To win from warlock's weird misrule
    His soul's sweet liberty.

For if throughout the monstrous night
Unblest by ave or by creed
By witchèd water Christian wight
    Do finger bead by bead
His scarlet rosary of sins
    And leave his soul ajar,
What hour the sleepy Evening pins
    Her bodice with a star,
Until, the pitchy veil withdrawn
    That swathes the looming dune,
The crowing trumpeter of dawn
    Blows addio to the moon,
The awful record of his soul
Shall by God's finger blotted be,
And o'er his drownèd past shall roll
    Forgiveness like a sea.

The warden of the starry waste
Who walks with orange-coloured lamp
And weird eyes nursing fire, paced
        Night's silver-tented camp.
The rose-lipped golden-footed day,
        A flower by maiden culled,
Beneath star-blossomed arras lay
        In Evening's bosom lulled.
The water seemed a damson crust
        With golden sugar poured,
Or mirror caked with purple dust
        In lady's closet stored.
The hour like a weary snake
Coiled slowly gliding serpentine
Or drowsy nun perforce awake
        To pace a pillared shrine.

The roses shuddered in their sleep,
The lilies drooped their silver fires,
The reeds upon the humming steep
        Bowed low their tapering spires;
For tho' no sob pulsed in the air,
        No agony of wind,
Down Heaven's moonlight-painted stair
        Trod angels who had sinned.
Fireflies drizzled in the dark
        Like drops of burning rain,
The glow-worm was a crawling spark,
        The pool a purple stain,
The stars were grains of blazing sand,
A haunted soul the shadowy lea,
In forest-featured Broceliande
        Beyond the echoing sea.

Sir Thaliard by the phantom edge
Heard rustling feet behind the trees
And the weird water lapped the sedge
        With wistful symphonies:

Sometimes a thrill of voices broke
In runic tongues of old,
Sometimes pale fingers seemed to stroke
His curls of crisping gold:
Thin laughter sobbed he knew not where
Till God's own candles paled,
Or else out in the moonless air
A goblin infant wailed.
Now in the moon's enchanted wake
Wild shadows ran a giant race,
And now the golden glassing lake
Was blotted with a face.

But when the naked moon rose clear
Above the ruins of the day,
Childe Thaliard saw a glinting spear
Across the milky way.
And when the white moon's sliding feet
One rank of stars had passed,
Upon him smote the windy beat
And terror of a blast.
The tempest rippled thro' the leaves,
New wine of evening sucked,
And at the water-lily sheaves
With nervous fingers plucked.
And in its wind-white arms it bore
A diademed and sceptred thing,
The semblance of a man, that wore
The glory of a king.

An argent cincture studded thick
With opal and the blushing stone
Fine wrought of texture Arabic
About his middle shone:
And in its buckled girth did sit,
A fierce and cloudy star,
Of temper fine as poet's wit
The Orient scimitar.

Morocco gave his wrathful dart,
The spring of widowed tears,
Tempered in Afric's sultry heart
Or famous far Algiers.
His barb was hued like cedar's core
In Aramean mountains born,
Wild as the sea on storm-vexed shore
And fronted as the morn.

Upon his kingly head the crown
Was eloquent of Iran's gold
Dropping fine threads of glory down
Upon the turban's fold.
His eyes were drops of smelted ore
That in a foundry chase:
His lips a cruel promise wore,
A marble pride his face.
As shows thro' gold caparison
Laburnum dusky-stemmed,
Thro' silks in Persian harem spun
His gorgeous body gleamed.
Or as a lithe and tropic snake
That from some fine mosaic glares,
Or spotted panther by a lake
Beneath the Indian stars.

This Orient vision burning-bright
Snapped close his bridle silver-lined
Between the moonlight and the night,
The water and the wind.
His cry sang like a stormy shower
Upon a thundering sea:
"O Thaliard, Thaliard, Britain's flower,
Wilt break a lance with me?
The golden scythe of Mahomet
Gleams crescent on my shield:
My harvest upon thine is set,
A cross in argent field.

Prince-errant, prop of battle styled
And flawless glass of chivalry,
O Thaliard, Thaliard, golden childe,
        Wilt break a lance with me?"

As trailing thunder dies in heaven
Thro' silence trailed his latest word,
And fire like the bearded levin
        Beneath his eyelids stirred.
Childe Thaliard saw the burning stars
        Vermilion grown like blood,
Thrice drew the serpent cross of Mars,
        Thrice clamoured where he stood.
But Thaliard saw a milkwhite star
        Grow large against the moon,
Quelled by whose candid flames, afar
        Mars' ruby paled in a swoon.
"Not here" he faltered like the wind,
"Not here, where murmurs poison sleep,
When haunted memories grown half blind
        Their ghastly vigils keep.

"Not here, when drifts past happy shores
From mortal vision far withdrawn
With lustrous sails and dipping oars
        The hull that brings the dawn,
Seek me, but in the cloudy time
        When ruin blazons forth
In sanguine hues the vaporous clime
        And champaigns of the north."
As wine that from the bubbling lips
        Of some fine beaker falls,
This honeyed utterance largely slips
        Like murmurs in vast halls.
The wimpled moon bent down her ear,
And in the granaries of light
The seedling splendours thrilled to hear,
        And all the east grew bright.

The phantom like a burning page
Was furrowed with the ploughs of wrath,
And thro' his wintry orbs white rage
    Rolled like the dead sea-froth.
His lance poised slanting like a ray
    Of ominous sunlight fell.
Astarte in the milky way
    Saw death half-risen from hell:
And soon the cold hooves of his horse
    On shivering lilies trod,
Till, yellow anguish borrowing force,
    Childe Thaliard cried on God.
The phantom, withering thro' the bars
Of Being like transitory sound,
Left but the murmur of the stars,
    Left but the hush profound.

And now the naked wanton moon
Shed languorous glances on the lake
Whose ripples sobbing from their swoon
    Grew golden for her sake:
The amorous stars were faint with love;
    Earth's awning seemed so light
That Hesper like a flying dove
    Would tremble into sight.
When Thaliard saw in drooping skies
    Large drops of beauty burn,
A white-winged chorus did arise,
    The prayers that purely yearn.
But Thaliard saw the curling deep
With foamy moon-tints blaze and break,
Till the slack spirit longed to steep
    Rich fancies in the lake.

The penitent chorus of his prayers
Were mingled with voluptuous speech
Of daedal images and airs
    Luxurious wrapping each:

A blue papyrus-leaf designed
With fretted curls of fire,
A purple page with coronet lined
Or labyrinthine spire:
The fiery-coloured bee of night
With folded purple wing,
Or solitary chrysolite
Shut in an emerald ring:
The vellum binding of a book,
A scented volume spiced with Ind,
A magic purse by Genie shook
To loose a murmuring wind.

And in the bridal pomp of hell
Walked Beauty hand-in-hand with sin,
And Thought, the glorious infidel,
A helmèd Paladin;
When shutting under cloudy bars
Astarte's radiant eye,
God sowed with multitudinous stars
His peacock in the sky.
The diamonds perished from the deep,
The moon-tints from the edge,
The wrinkled water smoothed in sleep
His locks of ruffled sedge.
Imagination, like a sponge
Wrung very pure of beauty, wept,
As from his pores with a tired plunge
His flakes of fancy leaped.

But hark! a wailing anguish woke
The silence with a fiery sting:
The foaming gulfs of clamour broke
Around a fallen king:
A distant moan of battle high
Above a phantom land,
And heron-weird a woman's cry
Went shrilling down the strand.

While terror with a vulture's force
Was plucking at his throat,
He heard the shrill hooves of a horse
Prick echoes less remote.
And like old accents Night may lend
On lips long hushed in endless sleep,
The voice of a familiar friend
Came shuddering from the deep.

"Thaliard, awake; the smiling morn
Forgets the cloud of yesterday:
The sceptre from thy house is torn,
Thy glory washed away.
Amid the reeling battle trod,
As a poppy in the mill,
With white face lifted up to God,
Thy sire lies very still.
Pendragon's spear has stung him dead,
He sleeps among the slain;
The glorious princes heap his bed,
Like lilies in a plain.
Thy brothers Galert and Gyneth
Like toppling mountains whelmed I saw
Beneath the shadowy winds of death
In the rushing tide of war.

"Thy sister, fawn-eyed Guendolen,
Haled captive from thy tottering hall,
Lies helpless in the dragon's den
Luxurious Gawain's thrall.
His kisses tremble on her mouth
Like moonbeams on a rose,
For she is water to his drouth,
He sunlight to her snows:
Her flowering body to his love
A pleasaunce-garden sweet;
Her spirit, meeker than a dove,
Fawns blindly at his feet.

And with the pelting words of shame,
Like delicate pigments bleared by storm,
The gorgeous colouring of thy name
        Is losing gloss and form.

"The night-wind in thy yawning dome
Has made her nest alive with song,
The humming wasps of Aeolus roam
        Low-flying in a throng:
The thunder like a flying stork
        Clangs hoarsely but aloof,
And lightning with his vermil fork
        Has written on thy roof.
The lion lodges in thy gate,
        The were-wolf is thy guest,
The night-owl, like a sombre fate,
        Wails weirdly without rest.
Thy deeds are grown a haunting rhyme,
A fragment breaking from the past,
An atom, which the meteor, Time,
        In his fiery flight has cast."

With sobs of shuddering agony bled
The silence as with stinging whips,
But Thaliard felt slim fingers laid
        Upon his writhen lips.
The soul's redoubts flung each to each
        A ringing challenge round,
To clench the ruby gates of speech
        On the corridors of sound.
In dancing dithyrambs thro' each vein
        A dizzy echo sang,
While on the anvil of his brain
        The steely syllables rang:
And from the avenues of the heart
Thro' which the river of being pours,
The torpid life with a sudden start
        Recoiled upon its doors.

The voice was now a violin
Shrill-winding, now a startled bat,
And now as linnet's warble thin,
    Now wailful as a gnat,
But gathered volume as of yore
    Until with refluent tide,
Like Ocean ebbing from her shore
    The murmur ebbed and died.
Like beauty losing maidenhood
    Astarte debonnair
Undid the crocus-coloured snood
    That bound her glimmering hair.
And up the ladder of the moon,
As white smoke curls upon a glass,
He saw with flakes of glory strewn
    A radiant figure pass.

Astarte from her cloudy chair
Paced with her troop of star-sweet girls;
Unfilleted, her glorious hair
    Hung loose in cowslip curls.
And like the flower-song of a bee
    On April's daffodil skirt,
A whisper from the smiling sea
    In her crocus gown did flirt.
The waters quivering to her wiles
    Among the rushes whipped,
As thro' the net-work of her smiles
    Her visible murmur slipped.
But when they wooed her to repeat
Her primrose painted pilgrimage,
She dipped the white palms of her feet
    In beds of bubbling sedge.

Again the stealthy minutes crept
On tiptoe to the breathless hour
And loud suspense her riot kept
    Till budding doom should flower.

The yellow moon, whom Heaven once more
From silver cowl did shake,
With golden letters scribbled o'er
The purple-written lake.
But when to Heaven's polished breast
Her rounded amulet clung
Below in the blue palimpsest
A slit, a chasm sprung.
A meteor from the purple brink,
A vivid star no eye may lose,
A pictured bowl of nectarous drink,
An apparition rose.

Her body lapped in cloth of gold
A wave disguised in moonlight seemed,
Whose every curve and curious fold
With opal facets gleamed.
Her nestling mass of rounded curls
Were soft as velvet cloths,
Once fingered by Arabian girls
Or piled in Syrian booths.
She was an ebon-framèd lyre
Where wind-waked murmurs dance,
A tinted statue of Desire
In studios of Romance.
Her glowing cheeks just ripe with youth,
The purple passion of her eyes,
Half seemed a splendid mock at truth,
A brilliant mesh of lies.

Below with balmy sobs that drank
The must of life thro' thirsty lips,
Her painèd bosom heaved and sank
Like Ocean-cradled ships.
And as bee-blossoms sapphire-looped,
The humming waves that kiss,
Her creamy forehead almost drooped
Burthened with too much bliss.

The artist Grace who limned her fair
With moist and liberal brush,
Painted a glory in her hair
And mixed a gorgeous blush
To tint her cheeks with flowery bloom,
To touch her lips with scarlet fire, —
An empire's beauty in small room,
A vision of desire.

A fairy witch by painful charms
Had burgeoned this refulgent flower,
Embraced by wild and wanton arms
In weird and midnight hour.
She on the amber milk of bees
By magic mother nursed,
In laurel-sheltered libraries
Cons rudiments accurst,
The most familiar things of hell,
The mightiest names inherits,
And learns what iron syllable
Compels reluctant spirits.
A perilous thorn on fire with bloom,
A poppied spell, an empress snake,
She rose, the alchemist of doom,
The Lady of the Lake.

Part Two

Baroda
Circa 1898 – 1902

Complete Narrative Poems

Urvasie

CANTO I

Pururavus from Titan conflict ceased
Turned worldwards, through illimitable space
Had travelled like a star ’twixt earth and heaven
Slowly and brightly. Late our mortal air
He breathed; for downward now the hooves divine
Trampling out fire with sound before them went,
And the great earth rushed up towards him, green.
With the first line of dawn he touched the peaks,
Nor paused upon those savage heights, but reached
Inferior summits subject to the rain,
And rested. Looking northwards thence he saw
The giant snows upclimbing to the sky,
And felt the mighty silence. In his ear
The noise of a retreating battle was,
Wide crash of wheels and hard impetuous blare
Of trumpets and the sullen march of hosts.
Therefore with joy he drank into his soul
The virgin silence inaccessible
Of mountains and divined his mother’s breasts.
But as he listened to the hush, a thought
Came to him from the spring and he turned round
And gazed into the quiet maiden East,
Watching that birth of day, as if a line
Of some great poem out of dimness grew,
Slowly unfolding into perfect speech.
The grey lucidity and pearliness
Bloomed more and more, and over earth chaste again
The freshness of the primal dawn returned,
Life coming with a virginal sharp strength,
Renewed as from the streams of Paradise.
Nearer it drew now to him and he saw
Out of the widening glory move a face
Of dawn, a body fresh from mystery,
Enveloped with a prophecy of light
More rich than perfect splendours. It was she,

The golden virgin, Usha, mother of life,
Yet virgin. In a silence sweet she came,
Unveiled, soft-smiling, like a bride, rose-cheeked,
Her bosom full of flowers, the morning wind
Stirring her hair and all about her gold.
Nor sole she came. Behind her faces laughed
Delicious, girls of heaven whose beauties ease
The labour of the battle-weary Gods;
They in the golden dawn of things sprang gold,
From youth of the immortal Ocean born,
They youthful and immortal, and the waves
Were in their feet and in their voices fresh
As foam, and Ocean in their souls was love.
Laughing they ran among the clouds, their hair
And raiment all a tempest in the breeze.
The sky grew glorious with them and their feet
A restless loveliness and glad eyes full
Of morning and divine faces bent back
For the imperious kisses of the wind.
So danced they numberless as dew-drops gleam,
Ménaca, Misracayshie, Mullica,
Rumbha, Nelabha, Shela, Nolinie,
Lolita, Lavonya and Tilôttama, —
Many delightful names; among them she.
And seeing her Pururavus the king
Shuddered as of felicity afraid,
And all the wide heart of Pururavus
Moved like the sea — when with a coming wind
Great Ocean lifts in far expectancy
Waiting to feel the shock, so was he moved
By expectation of her face. For this
Was secret in its own divinity
Like a high sun of splendour, or half seen
All troubled with her hair. Yet Paradise
Breathed from her limbs and tresses wonderful,
With odours and with dreams. Then for a space
Voiceless the great king stood and, troubled, watched

That lovely advent, laughter and delight
Gaining upon the world. At last he sighed
And the vague passion broke from him in speech
Heard by the solitude. “O thou strong god,
Who art thou graspest me with hands of fire,
Making my soul all colour? Surely I thought
The hills would move and the eternal stars
Deviate from their rounds immutable,
Never Pururavus; yet lo! I fall.
My soul whirls alien and I hear amazed
The galloping of uncontrollable steeds.
Men said of me: ‘The King Pururavus
Grows more than man; he lifts to azure heaven
In vast equality his spirit sublime.’
Why sink I now towards attractive earth?
And thou, who art thou, mystery! golden wonder!
Moving enchantress! Wast thou not a part
Of soft auspicious evenings I have loved?
Have I not seen thy beauty on the clouds?
In moonlight and in starlight and in fire?
Some flower whose brightness was a trouble? a face
Whose memory like a picture lived with me?
A thought I had, but lost? O was thy voice
A vernal repetition in some grove,
Telling of lilies clustered o’er with bees
And quiet waters open to the moon?
Surely in some past life I loved thy name,
And syllable by syllable now strive
Its sweetness to recall. It seems the grace
Of visible things, of hushed and lonely snows
And burning great inexorable noons,
And towns and valleys and the mountain winds.
All beauty of earthliness is in thee, all
Luxurious experience of the soul.
O comest thou because I left thy charm
Aiming at purity, O comest thou,
Goddess, to avenge thyself with beauty? Come!

Unveil thyself from light! limit thyself,
O infinite grace, that I may find, may clasp.
For surely in my heart I know thou bearest
A name that naturally weds with mine,
And I perceive our union magically
Inevitable as a perfect verse
Of Veda. Set thy feet upon my heart,
O Goddess! woman, to my bosom move!
I am Pururavus, O Urvasie."
As when a man to the grey face of dawn
Awaking from an unremembered dream,
Repines at life awhile and buffets back
The wave of old familiar thoughts, and hating
His usual happiness and usual cares
Strives to recall a dream's felicity; —
Long strives in vain and rolls his painful thought
Through many alien ways, when sudden comes
A flash, another, and the vision burns
Like lightning in the brain, so leaped that name
Into the musing of the troubled king.
Joyous he cried aloud and lashed his steeds:
They, rearing, leaped from Himalaya high
And trampled with their hooves the southern wind.

But now a cry broke from the lovely crowd
Of fear and tremulous astonishment;
And they huddled together like doves dismayed
Who see the inevitable talons near
And rush of cruel wings. 'Twas not from him,
For him they saw not yet, but from the north
A fear was on them, and Pururavus
Heard a low roar as of a distant cloud.
He turned half-wrathful. In the far northwest
Heaven stood thick, concentrated in gloom,
Darkness in darkness hidden; for the cloud
Rose firmament on sullen firmament,
As if all brightness to entomb. Across

Great thundrous whispers rolled, and lightning quivered
From edge to edge, a savage pallor. Down
The south wind dropped appalled. Then for a while
Stood pregnant with the thunderbolt and wearing
Rain like a colour, the monumental cloud
Sublime and voiceless. Long the heart was stilled
And the ear waited listening. Suddenly
From motionless battalions as outride
A speed disperse of horsemen, from that mass
Of livid menace went a frail light cloud
Rushing through heaven, and behind it streamed
The downpour all in wet and greenish lines.
Swift rushed the splendid anarchy admired,
And reached, and broke, and with a roar of rain
And tumult on the wings of wind and clasp
Of the o'erwhelmed horizons and with bursts
Of thunder breaking all the body with sound
And lightning 'twixt the eyes intolerable,
Like heaven's vast eagle all that blackness swept
Down over the inferior snowless heights
And swallowed up the dawn. Pururavus,
Lost in the streaming tumult, stood amazed:
But as he watched, he was aware of locks
Flying and a wild face and terrible
And fierce familiar eyes. Again he looked
And knew him in a hundred battles crossed,
The giant Cayshie. It seemed but yesterday
That over the waves of fight their angry eyes
Had met. He in the dim disguise of rain,
All swift with storm, came passionate and huge,
Filling the regions with himself. Immense
He stooped upon the brides of heaven. They
Like flowers in a gust scattered and blown
Fled every way; but he upon that beauty
Magical sprang and seized and lifted up,
As the storm lifts a lily, and arrow-like
Up towards the snow-bound heights in rising cloud

Rushed with the goddess to the trembling East.
But with more formidable speed and fast
Storming through heaven King Pururavus
Hurled after him. The giant turned and knew
The sound of those victorious wheels and light
In a man's face more dangerous to evil
Than all the shining Gods. He stood, he raised
One dreadful arm that stretched across the heavens,
And shook his baffling lance on high. But vast,
But magnified by speed came threatening on
With echoing hooves and battle in its wheels
The chariot of the King Pururavus
Bearing a formidable charioteer,
Pururavus. The fiend paused, he rolled his eyes
Full of defiance, passion and despair
Upon the swooning goddess in his arms
And that avenger. Violence and fear
Poised him a moment on a wave of fate
This way to death cadent, that way to shame.
Then groaning in his great tumultuous breast
He dropped upon the snow heaven's ravished flower
And fled, a blackness in the East. New sky
Replenished from the sullen cloud dawned out;
The great pure azure rose in sunlight wide.
Nor King Pururavus pursued but checked
His rushing chariot on the quiet snow
And sprang towards her and knelt down and trembled.
Perfect she lay amid her tresses wide,
Like a mishandled lily luminous,
As she had fallen. From the lucid robe
One shoulder gleamed and golden breast left bare,
Divinely lifting, one gold arm was flung,
A warm rich splendour exquisitely outlined
Against the dazzling whiteness, and her face
Was as a fallen moon among the snows.
And King Pururavus, beholding, glowed
Through all his limbs and maddened with a love

He feared and cherished. Overawed and hushed,
Hardly even breathing, long he knelt, a greatness
Made stone with sudden dread and passion. Love
With fiery attempt plucked him all down to her,
But fear forbade his lips the perfect curls.
At length he raised her still unkissed and laid
In his bright chariot, next himself ascended
And resting on one arm with fearful joy
Her drooping head, with the other ruled the car; —
With one arm ruled, but his eyes were for her
Studying her fallen lids and to heart-beats
Guessing the sweetness of the soul concealed.
And soon she moved. Those wonderful wide orbs
Dawned into his, quietly, as if in muse.
A lovely slow surprise crept into them
Afterwards; last, something far lovelier,
Which was herself, and was delight, and love.
As when a child falls asleep unawares
At a closed window on a stormy day,
Looking into the weary rain, and long
Sleeps, and wakes quietly into a life
Of ancient moonlight, first the thoughtfulness
Of that felicitous world to which the soul
Is visitor in sleep, keeps her sublime
Discurtained eyes; human dismay comes next,
Slowly; last, sudden, they brighten and grow wide
With recognition of an altered world,
Delighted: so woke Urvasie to love.

But, hardly now that luminous inner dawn
Bridged joy between their eyes, laughter broke in
And the returning world; for Ménaca,
Standing a lily in the snows, laughed back
Those irresistible wheels and spoke like song; —
She tremulous and glad from bygone fear;
But all those flowerlike came, increasing light,
Their bosoms quick and panting, bright, like waves

That under sunshine lift remembering storm.
And before all Ménaca tremulously
Smiling: “Whither, O King Pururavus,
Bear’st thou thy victory? Wilt thou set her
A golden triumph in thy halls? But she
Is other than thy marble caryatids
And austere doors, purity colourless.
Read not too much thy glory in her eyes.
Will not that hueless inner stream yet serve
Where thou wast wont to know thy perfect deeds?
But give her back, give us our sister back,
And in return take all thyself with thee.”
So with flushed cheeks and smiling Ménaca.
And great Pururavus set down the nymph
In her bright sister’s arms and stood awhile
Stormily calm in vast incertitude,
Quivering. Then divine Tilôttama:
“O King, O mortal mightier than the Gods!
For Gods change not their strength, but are of old
And as of old, and man, though less than these,
May yet proceed to greater, self-evolved.
Man, by experience of passion purged,
His myriad faculty perfecting, widens
His nature as it rises till it grows
With God conterminous. For one who tames
His hot tremulousness of soul unblest
And feels around him like an atmosphere
A quiet perfectness of joy and peace,
He, like the sunflower sole of all the year,
Images the divine to which he tends:
So thou, sole among men. And thou today
Hast a high deed perfected, saved from death
The great Gods of the solar world the first,
And saved with them the stars; but her today
Without whom all that world would grow to shade
Or grow to fire, but each way cease to live.
And thou shalt gather strange rewards, O King,

Hurting thyself with good, and lose thy life
To have the life of all the solar world,
Draw infinite gain out of more infinite loss,
And, for the lowest, endless fame. Today
Retire nor pluck the slowly-ripening fates;
Since who anticipates the patient Gods,
Finds his crown ashes and his empire grief.
So choose blind Titans in their violent souls
Unseeing, forfeiting the beautiful world
For momentary splendours.” She was silent,
And he replied no word, but gathering
His reins swept from the golden group. His car
Through those mute Himalayan doors of earth
And all that silent life before our life
Solitary and great and merciless,
Went groaning down the wind. He, the sole living,
Over the dead deep-plunging precipices
Passed bright and small in a wide dazzling world
Illimitable, where eye flags and ear
Listening feels inhuman loneliness.
He tended towards Gungotri’s solemn peaks
And savage glaciers and the caverns pure
Whence Ganges leaps, our mother, virgin-cold.
But ere he plunged into the human vales
And kindlier grandeurs, King Pururavus
Looked back upon a gust of his great heart,
And saw her. On a separate peak, divine,
In blowing raiment and a glory of hair
She stood and watched him go with serious eyes
And a soft wonder in them and a light.
One hand was in her streaming folds, one shaded
Her eyes as if the vision that she saw
Were brighter even than deathless eyes endure.
Over her shoulder pressed a laughing crowd
Of luminous faces. And Pururavus
Staggered as smitten, and shaking wide his reins
Rushed like a star into the infinite air;

So curving downwards on precipitate wheels,
His spirit all a storm, came with the wind
Far-sounding into Ila's peaceful town.

CANTO II

But from the dawn and mountains Urvasie
Went marvelling and glad, not as of old
A careless beam; for an august constraint,
Unfelt before, ruled her extravagant grace
And wayward beauty; and familiar things
Grew strange to her, and to her eyes came mists
Of mortal vision. Love was with her there,
But not of Paradise nor that great guest
Perpetual who makes his golden couch
Between the Opsara's ever-heaving breasts.
For this was rapturous, troubled, self-absorbed,
A gracious human presence which she loved,
And wondered at, and hid deep in her heart.
And whether in the immortal's dance she moved,
A billow, or her fingers like sunbeams
Brightened the harps of heaven, or going out
With the white dawn to bathe in Swerga's streams,
Or in the woods of Eden wandering,
Or happy sitting under peaceful boughs
In a great golden evening, all she did,
Celestial occupations, all she thought
And all she was, though still the same, had changed.
There was a happy trouble in her ways
And movements; her felicitous lashes drooped
As with a burden; all her daily acts
Were like a statue's imitating life,
Not single-hearted like the sovran Gods.
Now as the days of heaven went by in quiet
And there was peaceful summer 'mid the Gods,
In Swerga song increased and dances swayed
In multitudinous beauty, jasmine-crowned;
And often in high Indra's hall the spirits
Immortal met to watch the shows divine
Of action and celestial theatre.

For not of earth alone are delicate arts
And noble imitations, but in heaven
Have their rich prototypes. So on that day
Before a divine audience there was staged
The Choice of Luxmie. Urvasie enacted
The goddess, Ocean's child, and Ménaca
Was Varunie, and other girls of heaven
Assembled the august desiring Gods.
Full strangely sweet those delicate mimics were;
Moonbeam faces imitated the strength
And silence of great spirits battle-worn,
And little hands the awful muniments
Of empire grasped and powers that shake the world.
Then with a golden wave of arm sublime
Ménaca towards the warlike consistory,
Under half-drooping lashes indicating
Where calm eternal Vishnu like a cloud
Sat discus-armed, said to her sister bright:
"Daughter of Ocean, sister, for whom heaven
Is passionate, thou hast reviewed the powers
Eternal and their dreadful beauty scanned,
And heard their blissful names. Say, unafraid
Before these listening faces, whom thou lovest
Above all Gods and more than earth and more
Than joy of Swerga's streams?" And Urvasie,
Musing with wide unseeing eyes, replied
In a far voice: "The King Pururavus."
Then, as a wind among the leaves, there swept
A gust of laughter through the assembled Gods,
A happy summer sound. But not in mirth
Bharuth, the mighty dramatist of heaven,
Passionate to see his smooth work marred and spell
Broken of scenic fancies finely-touched:
"Since thou hast brought the breath of mortal air
Into the pure solemnities of heaven,
And since thou givest up to other ends
Than the one need for which God made thee form,

Thy being and hast here transferred from earth
Human failure from the divided soul,
Marring my great creation, Urvasie,
I curse thee to possess thy heart's desire.
Exiled from Swerga's streams and golden groves
Thou, by terrestrial Ganges or on sad
Majestic mountains or in troubled towns,
Enjoy thy love, but hope not here to breathe
Felicity in regions built for peace
Of who, erect in their own nature, keep
Living by fated toils the glorious world."
He ceased and there was silence of the Gods.
Then Indra answered, smiling, though ill-pleased:
"Bharuth, not well nor by the fates allowed
To exile without limit from the skies
Who of the skies is part. Her wilt thou banish
From the felicity of grove and stream,
Making our Eden empty of her smiles?
But what felicity in stream or grove
And she not secret there? And hast thou taxed
Her passion, yet in passion wouldst deface
The beautiful world because thy work is vain?"
Bharuth replied, the high poet severe:
"Irrevocable is the doom pronounced
Once by my lips. Fates too are born of song.
But if of limit thou speakest and the term
By nature fixed to the divorce of her
From the felicity in which she moves,
Nature that fixed the limit, still effects
Inevitably its fated ends. For Fate,
The dim great presence, is but nature made
Irrevocable in its fruits. Let her
To the pure banks of sacred Ganges wend.
There she may keep her exile, from of old
Intended for perfection of the earth
Through her sweet change. Heaven too shall flash and grow
Fairer with her returning feet though changed,—

Though changed, yet lovelier from beneficence.
For she will come soft with maternal cheeks
And flushed from nuptial arms and human-blest
With touches of the warm delightful earth."
He said and Urvasie from the dumb place
And thoughtful presence of the Gods departed
Into the breezy noon of Swerga. Under
Green well-known boughs laden with nameless fruit
And over blissful swards and perfect flowers
And through the wandering alleys she arrived
To heavenly Ganges where it streams o'er stones;
There from the banks of summer downward stepped,
One little golden hand gathering her dress
Above her naked knees, and, lovely, passed
Through the divine pellucid river on
To Swerga's portals, pausing on the slope
Which goes toward the world. There she looked down
With yearning eyes far into endless space.
Behind her stood the green felicitous peaks
And trembling tops of woods and pulse of blue
With those calm cloudless summits quivering.
All heaven was behind her, but she sent
No look to those eternal seats of joy.
She down the sunbeams gazed where mountains rose
In snow, the bleak and mighty hills of earth,
And virgin forests vast, great infant streams
And cities young in the heroic dawn
Of history and insurgent human art
Titanic on the old stupendous hills.
Towards these she gazed down under eyelids glad.
And to her gazing came Tilôttama,
Bright out of heaven, and clasped her quiet hand
And murmured softly, "Sister, let us go."
Then they went down into the waiting world,
The golden women, and through gorges mute
Past Budricayshwur in the silent snow
Came silent to Pururavus Urvasie.

For not in Ilian streets Pururavus
Sojourned, nor in the happy throng of men,
But with the infinite and the lonely hills.
For he grew weary of walls and luminous carved
Imperial pillars bearing up huge weight
Of architectural stone, and the long street,
And thoughtful temple wide, and sharp cymbals
Protecting the august pure place with sound;
The battled tramp of men, sessions of kings,
The lightning from sharp weapons, jubilant crash
Of chariots, and the Veda's mighty chant;
The bright booths of the merchants, the loud looms
And the smith's hammer clanging music out,
And stalwart men driving the patient plow
Indomitable in fierce breath of noon.
Of these he now grew weary and the blaze
Of kingship, its immense and iron toils,
With one hand shielding in the people's ease,
With one hand smiting back the tireless foe,
And difficulty of equal justice cold,
And kind beneficent works harmonious kept
With terrible control; the father's face,
The man's heart, the steeled intellect of power
Insolubly one; and after sleepless nights
Labouring greatly for a great reward,
Frequent failure and vigorous success,
And sweet reward of voices filial grown.
These that were once his life, he loved no more.
They held not his desire nor were alive,
But pale magnificent ghosts out of the past
With sad obsession closing him from warm
Life and the future in far sunlight gold.
For in his heart and in his musing eyes
There was a light on the cold snows, a blush
Upon the virgin quiet of the East
And storm and slowly-lifting lids. Therefore
He left the city Ilian and plains

Whence with a mighty motion eastward flows
Ganges, heroical and young, a swift
Mother of strenuous nations, nor yet reaches
Her musing age in ardent deep Bengal.
He journeyed to the cold north and the hills
Austere, past Budricayshwur ever north,
Till, in the sixth month of his pilgrimage
Uneasy, to a silent place he came
Within a heaped enormous region piled
With prone far-drifting hills, huge peaks o'erwhelmed
Under the vast illimitable snows, —
Snow on ravine, and snow on cliff, and snow
Sweeping in strenuous outlines to heaven,
With distant gleaming vales and turbulent rocks,
Giant precipices black-hewn and bold
Daring the universal whiteness; last,
A mystic gorge into some secret world.

He in that region waste and wonderful
Sojourned, and morning-star and evening-star
Shone over him and faded, and immense
Darkness wrapped the hushed mountain solitudes
And moonlight's brilliant muse and the cold stars
And day upon the summits brightening.
But ere day grew the hero nympholept
Climbed the immortal summits towards the dawn
And came with falling evening down and lay
Watching the marvellous sky, but called not sleep
That beat her gentle wings over his eyes,
Nor food he needed who was grown a god.
And in the seventh month of his waiting long
Summit or cliff he climbed no more, but added
To the surrounding hush sat motionless,
Gazing towards the dim unfathomed gorge.
Six days he sat and on the seventh they came
Through the dumb gorge, a breath of heaven, a stir,
Then Eden's girls stepping with moonbeam feet

Over the barren rocks and dazzling snows,
That grew less dazzling, their tresses half unbound
And delicate raiment girdled enchantingly.
Silent the perfect presences of heaven
Came towards him and stood a little away,
Like flowers waiting for a sunbeam. He
Stirred not, but without voice, in vision merged,
Sat, as one sleeping momently expects
The end of a dear dream he sees, and knows
It is a dream, and quietly resigned
Waits for the fragile bliss to break or fade.
Then nearer drew divine Tilôttama
And stood before his silence statuesque,
Holding her sister's hand; for she hung back,
Not as an earthly maiden, cheeks suffused,
Lids drooping, but as men from patience called
Before supreme felicity hang back,
A little awed, a little doubtful, fearing
To enter radiant Paradise, so bright
It seems; thus she and quailed before her bliss.
But her sister, extending one bright arm:
"Pururavus, thou hast conquered and I bring
No dream into thy life, but Urvasie."
And at that name the strong Pururavus
Rose swaying to his feet like one struck blind;
Or when a great thought flashes through his brain,
A poet starts up and almost cries aloud
As at a voice, — so he arose and heard.
And slowly said divine Tilôttama:
"Yet, son of Ila, one is man and other
The Opsaras of heaven, daughters of the sea,
Unlimited in being, Ocean-like.
They not to one lord yield nor in one face
Limit the universe, but like sweet air,
Water unowned and beautiful common light
In unrestrained surrender remain pure.
In patient paths of Nature upon earth

And over all the toiling stars we fill
With sacred passion large high-venturing spirits
And visit them with bliss; so are they moved
To immense creative anguish, glad if through
Heart-breaking toil once in bare seasons dawn
Our golden breasts between their hands or rush
Our passionate presence on them like a wave.
In heaven bright-limbed with bodily embrace
We clasp the Gods, and clasp the souls of men,
And know with winds and flowers liberty.
But what hast thou with us or winds or flowers?
O thou who wast so white, wilt thou not keep
Thy pure and lonely eminence and move
For ever towards morning like a star?
Or as thy earthly Ganges rolling down
Between the homes and passionate deeds of men,
And bearing many boats and white with oars,
From all that life quite separate, only lives
Towards Ocean, so thou doest human work,
Making a mighty nation, doing high
And necessary deeds, but, all untouched
By action, livest in thy soul apart
And to the immortal zenith climbest pure."
But he, blind as from dazzling dreams, said low:
"One I thought spoke far-off of purity
And whiteness and the human soul in God.
These things were with me once, but now I see
The Spring a golden child and shaken fields.
All beautiful things draw near and come to me.
I dream upon a woman's glorious breasts,
And watch the dew-drop and am glad with birds,
And love the perfect coilings of the snake,
And cry with fire in the burning trees,
And am a wave towards desired shores.
I move to these and move towards her bosom
And mystic eyes where all these are one dream.
And what shall God profit me or his glory,

Who love one small face more than all his worlds?"
He woke with his own voice. His words that first
Dreamed like a languid wave, sudden were foam;
And he beheld her standing and his look
Grew strong; he yearned towards her like a wave,
And she received him in her eyes as earth
Receives the rain. Then bright Tilôttama
Cried in a shining glory over them:
"O happy lover and O fortunate loved,
Who make love heavenlier by loss! Ah yet,
The Gods give no irrecoverable gifts,
Nor unconditioned, O Pururavus,
Is highest bliss even to most favoured men.
And thy deep joy must tremble o'er her with soul
On guard, all overshadowed by a fear.
For one year thou shalt know her on the peaks,
In solitary vastnesses of hills
And regions snow-besieged; and for one year
In the green forests populous and free
Life in sunlight and by delightful streams
Thou shalt enjoy her; and for one year where
The busy tramp of men goes ceaseless by,
Subduing her to lovely human cares:
And so long after as one law observed
Save her to thee, O King; for never man
With Opsara may dwell and both be known:
Either a rapture she invisible
Or he a mystic body and mystic soul.
Reveal not then thy being naked to hers,
O virgin Ila's son, nor suffer ever
Light round thy body naked to her eyes,
Lest day dawn not on thy felicity,
Sole among men." She left them, shining up
Into the sunlight, and was lost in noon.
And King Pururavus stood for a space,
Like the entrancèd calm before great winds
And thunder. Then through all his limbs there flashed

Youth and the beauty and the warmth of earth
And joy of her left lonely to his will.
He moved, he came towards her. She, a leaf
Before a gust among the nearing trees,
Cowered. But, all a sea of mighty joy
Rushing and swallowing up the golden sand,
With a great cry and glad Pururavus
Seized her and caught her to his bosom thrilled,
Clinging and shuddering. All her wonderful hair
Loosened and the wind seized and bore it streaming
Over the shoulder of Pururavus
And on his cheek a softness. She, o'erborne,
Panting, with inarticulate murmurs lay,
Like a slim tree half seen through driving hail,
Her naked arms clasping his neck, her cheek
And golden throat averted, and wide trouble
In her large eyes bewildered with their bliss.
Amid her wind-blown hair their faces met.
With her sweet limbs all his, feeling her breasts
Tumultuous up against his beating heart,
He kissed the glorious mouth of heaven's desire.
So clung they as two shipwrecked in a surge.
Then strong Pururavus, with godlike eyes
Mastering hers, cried tremulous: "O beloved,
O miser of thy rich and happy voice,
One word, one word to tell me that thou lovest."
And Urvasie, all broken on his bosom,
Her godhead in his passion lost, moaned out
From her imprisoned breasts, "My lord, my love!"

CANTO III

So was a goddess won to mortal arms;
And for twelve months he held her on the peaks,
In solitary vastnesses of hills
And regions snow-besieged. There in dim gorge
And tenebrous ravine and on wide snows
Clothed with deserted space, o'er precipices
With the far eagles wheeling under them,
Or where large glaciers watch, or under cliffs
O'er-murmured by the streaming waterfalls,
And later in the pleasant lower hills,
He of her beauty world-desired took joy:
And all earth's silent sublime spaces passed
Into his blood and grew a part of thought.
Twelve months in the green forests populous,
Life in sunlight and by delightful streams
He increased rapture. The green tremulous groves,
And solitary rivers white with birds,
And watered hollow's gleam, and sunny boughs
Gorgeous with peacocks or illumining
Bright bosom of doves, in forests' musing day
Or the great night with roar of many beasts,—
All these were Eden round the glorious pair.
And in their third flower-haunted spring of love
A child was born from golden Urvasie.
But when the goddess from maternal pangs
Woke to the child's sweet face and strange tumult
Of new delight and felt the little hands
Erring about her breasts, passionate she cried:
"How long shall we in woods, Pururavus,
Waste the glad days of cheerful human life?
What pleasure is in soulless woods and waves?
But I would go into the homes of men,
Hear the great sound of cities, watch the eager
Faces tending to hall and mart, and talk

With the bright girls of earth, and kiss the eyes
Of little children, feel smooth floors of stone
Under my feet and the restraint of walls,
And eat earth's food from vessels made and drink
Earth's water cool from jars, and know all joy
And labour of that blithe and busy world."
She said, and he with a slight happy smile
Consented. So to sacred Ganges they
Came and the virgin's city llian.
But when they neared the mighty destined walls,
His virgin-mother from her temple pure
Saw him, and a wild blare of conchs arose.
Rejoicing to the lion-gates they streamed,
The people of Pururavus, a glad
Throng indistinguishable, traders and priests,
Merchants of many gains and craftsmen fine
Oblivious of their daily toils; the carver
Flinging his tool away and hammerless
The giant smith laughing through his vast beard.
And little children ran, all over flowers,
And girls like dawn with a delightful noise
Of anklets, matrons and old men divine,
And half a godhead with great glances came
The large-eyed poets of the Vedic chant;
Before them, all that multitude divided
Honouring them. In gleaming armour came,
And bearing dreadful bows, with sound of swords,
High lords of sacrifice and aged chiefs
War-weary and great heroes with mighty tread.
All these to a high noise of trumpets came.
They with a wide sound going up to heaven
Welcomed their king, and a soft shower of blooms
Fell on him as from warlike fields returned.
Much all they marvelled at his heavenly bride
And worshipped her, half-awed. And young girls came,
Daughters of warriors, to great houses wed,
Sweet faces of delightful laughter, came

And took into their glad embrace and kissed,
Enamoured of her smiling mouth, and praised
Aloud her beauty. With flowers then they bound
Her soft immortal wrists, and through the gates,
Labouring in vain to bend great bows, waving
Far-glancing steel, and up the bridal streets
Captive the girlish phalanx, bright with swords,
After the old heroic fashion led.
They amid trumpets and the vast acclaim
Of a glad people brought the child of Gods
To her terrestrial home; through the strong doors
They lifted, and upon an earthly floor,
Loosening, let from the gleaming limbs slide down
Her heavenly vesture; next they brought and flung
About her sweet insufferable grace
Mortal habiliments, a clinging robe.
Over her hair the wifely veil was drawn.
Thus was the love of all the world confined
To one man's home. And O too fortunate
Mortal, who could with those auguster joys
Mingle our little happy human pains,
Subduing a fair goddess from her skies
To gentle ordinary things, sweet service
And household tasks making her beautiful,
And trivial daily words, and kisses kind,
And all the meaning dear of wife and home!
Human with earth dwelt golden Urvasie,
And bore to King Pururavus a race
Of glorious children, each a shining god.
She loved that great and simple life of old,
Its marble outlines, strong joys and clear air
Around the soul, loved and made roseate.
The sacred city felt a finer life
Within it; burning inspirations breathed
From hallowed poets; and architects to grace
And fancy their immense conceptions toned;
Numberless heroes emulously drove forth

And in strong joyous battle rolling back
The dark barbarian borders, flashed through fields,
Brilliant, and sages in their souls saw God.
And from the city of Pururavus
High influences went; Indus and Ganges
And all the golden intermediate lands
Grew with them and a perfect impulse felt.
Seven years the earth rejoiced in Urvasie.

But in their fortunate heavens the high Gods
Dwelt infelicitous, losing the old
Rapture inexplicable and thrill beneath
Their ancient calm. Therefore not long enduring,
They in colossal council marble, said
To that bright sister whom she had loved best,
"Ménaca!" crying "how long shall one man
Divide from heaven its most perfect bliss?
Go down and bring her back, our bright one back,
And we shall love again our luminous halls."
She heard and went, with her ethereal robe
Murmuring about her, to the gates divine,
And looked into the world, and saw the far
Titanic Ilian city like a stone
Sunlit upon the small and distant earth.
Down from heaven's peaks the daughter of the sea
Went flashing and upon a breathless eve
Came to the city of Pururavus,
Air blazing far behind her till she paused.
She over the palace of Pururavus
Stood in shadow. Within the lights yet were;
Still sat the princes and young poets sang
On harps heroical of Urvasie
And strong Pururavus, of Urvasie
The light and lovely spirit golden-limbed,
Son of a virgin strong Pururavus.
"O earth made heaven to Pururavus!
O heaven left earth without sweet Urvasie!

"Rejoice possessing, O Pururavus!
Be glad who art possessed, O Urvasie!
"Behold the parents of the sacrifice!
When they have met, then they together rush
And in their arms the beautiful fire is born.
"Behold the children of the earth and sky!
When they met, then they loved, O then they clasped,
And from their clasp a lovely presence grew.
"A holy virgin's son we hear of thee
Without a father born, Pururavus,
Without a mother lovely Urvasie.
"Hast thou not brought the sacrifice from heaven,
The unquenched, unkindled fire, Pururavus?
Hast thou not brought delightful Urvasie?
"The fires of sacrifice mount ever up:
To their lost heavens they naturally aspire.
Their tops are weighted with a human prayer.
"The soul of love mounts also towards the sky;
Thence came the spark but hardly shall return;
Its wings are weighted with too fierce a fire.
"Rejoice in the warm earth, O lovely pair,
The green strong earth that gave Pururavus.
"Rejoice in the blithe earth, O lovely pair,
The happy earth all flushed with Urvasie.
"As lightning takes the heart with pleasant dread,
So love is of the strong Pururavus.
"As breathes sweet fragrance from the flower oppressed,
So love from thy bruised bosom, Urvasie."
        So sang they and the heart rejoiced. Then rose
The princes and went down the long white street,
Each to his home. Soon every sound had faded;
Heaven and a few bright stars possessed the world.
But in a silent place dim with the west
On that last night of the sweet passionate earth,
The goddess with the mortal hero lay.
For over them victorious Love still showered
His arrows marble-dinting, not flower-tipped

As our brief fading fires, — naked and large
As heaven the monumental loves of old.
On their rich bed they lay, and the two rams
That once the subtle bright Gundhurvas gave
To Urvasie, were near; they were ever
With her and cherished; hardly even she loved
The tender faces of her children more
Than these choice from flocks heavenly: only these
Remained to her of unforgotten skies.
So lay they under those fierce shafts of Love,
And in the arms of strong Pururavus
Once more were those beloved limbs embraced,
Once more, if never once again on earth.
Before he slept, the lord of Urvasie
Clasped her to him and wooed from her tired lips
One kiss, nor in its passion felt farewell.
But the night darkened over the vague town,
And clouds came gradual up, and through the clouds
In thunderless great flashes stealing came
The subtle-souled Gundhurvas from the peaks
Of distant Paradise. Thunder rolled out,
And through the walls, in a fierce rush of light,
Entered the thieves of heaven and stole the rams,
And fled with the same lightning. Shuddering
The exile of the skies awoke and knew
Her loss, and with a lamentable cry
Turned to her lord. "Arise, Pururavus!"
She wept, "they take from me my snow-white joys."
And starting from his sleep Pururavus,
In that waking when memory is far
And nature of a man unquestioned rules,
Heard of oppression and a space forgot
Fate and his weak tenure of mighty bliss,
Restored to the great nature of a king.
Wrathful he leaped up and on one swift stride
Reached to his bow. Before 'twas grasped he shuddered,
His soul all smitten with a rushing fear.

Alarmed he turned towards her. Suddenly wide
The whole room stood in splendour manifest,
All lightning, and heroically vast,
In gesture kingly like a statue stayed,
Rose glorious, all a grace of naked limbs,
The hero beautiful, Pururavus,
In that fierce light. Intenser than by day
He for one brilliant moment clear beheld
All the familiar place, the fretted huge
Images on the columns, the high-reared
Walls massively erect and silent floor,
And on the floor the gracious fallen dress
That never should embrace her perfect form,
Lying a glimmer, and each noble curve
Of the strong couch, and delicately distinct
The golden body and the flower-like face:
Beside her with a lovely smile that other,
One small hand pressing back the shining curls
Blown with her speed over her. Then all faded.
Thunder crashed through the heavens jubilant.
For a long while he stood with beating heart
Half-conscious of its loss, and as if waiting
Another flash, into the dimness gazed
For those loved outlines that were far away.
Then with a quiet smile he went and placed
Where she had lain such a short while ago
Both hands, expecting her sweet breasts, but found
Her place all empty to him. Silently
He lay down whispering to his own heart:
"She has arisen and her shining dress
Put round her and gone into the cool alcove
To fetch sweet water for the heavenly rams,
And she will stay awhile perhaps to look
And muse upon the night, and then come back,
And give them drink, and silently lie down
Beside me. I shall see her when it dawns."
And so he slept. But the grey dawn came in

And raised his lashes. He stretched out his arms
To find her. Then he knew he was alone.

Even so he would not dwell with his despair.
“She is but gone,” he said, “for a little gone
Into the infinite silences afar
To see her golden sisters and revisit
The streams she knew and those unearthly skies.
But she will soon come back, — even if her heart
Would let her linger, mine would draw her back; —
Come soon and talk to me of all she left,
And clasp her children, and resume sweet goings
And happy daily tasks and rooms she loved.”
So, steadfast, he continued kingly toils
Among a people greatly-destined, giving
In sacred sessions and assemblies calm
Counsels far-seeing, magnanimous decrees
Bronze against Time, and from the judgment seat
Unblamed sentence or reconcilement large.
And perfect trinity of holy fires
He kindled for desirable rain, and went
To concourse of strong men or pleasant crowds,
Or triumphed in great games armipotent.
Yet behind all his moments there was void.
And as when one puts from him desperately
The thought of an inevitable fate,
Blinding himself with present pleasures, often
At a slight sound, a knocking at the door,
A chance word terrible, or even uncalled
His heart grows sick with sudden fear, and ghastly
The face of that dread future through the window
Looks at him; mute he sits then shuddering:
So to Pururavus in session holy,
Or warlike concourse, or alone, speaking,
Or sitting, often a swift dreadful fear
Made his life naked like a lightning flash;
Then his whole being shook and his strong frame,

As with a fever, and his eyes gazed blind;
Soon with great breaths he repossessed his soul.
Long he endured thus, but when shocks of fear
And brilliant passage of remorseless suns
And wakeful nights wrestling with memory
Invisibly had worn his heart, he then
Going as one desperate, void of thought or aim,
Into that silent place dim with the west,
Saw there her dress empty of her, and bed
Forlorn, and the cold floor where she had lain
At noon and made life sweet to him with her voice.
Sometimes as in an upland reservoir
Built by the hands of early Aryan kings,
Its banks in secret fretted long go down,
Suddenly down with resonant collapse,
Then with a formidable sound the flood
Descends, heard over all the echoing hills,
And marble cities are o'erwhelmed; so sank
The courage of the strong Pururavus,
By memory and anguish overcome
And thoughts of bliss intolerable. Tears
Came from him; the unvanquished hero lay
With outstretched arms and wept. Henceforth his life
Was with that room. If he appeared in high
Session, warlike concourse or pleasant crowd,
Men looked on him as on the silent dead.
Nor did he linger, but from little stay
Would silently return and in hushed rooms
Watch with the little relics left of her,
Things he had hardly borne to see before,
Now clasped them often, often kissed, sometimes
Spoke to them as to sweet and living friends,
And often over his sleeping children hung.
Nor did he count the days, nor weep again,
But looked into the dawn with tearless eyes.
And all the people mourned for their great king,
Silently watching him, and many murmured:

"This is not he, the King Pururavus,
Hero august, who his impetuous soul
Ruled like a calm and skilful charioteer,
And was the virgin Ila's son, our king.
Would that the enemy's war-cry now might rush
Against our gates and all the air be sound.
Surely he would arise and lift his bow,
And his swift chariot hurling through the gates
Advance upon them like a sea, and triumph,
And be himself among the rushing wheels."
So they would murmur grieving. But the king
When the bright months brought round a lustier earth,
Felt over his numbed soul some touch of flowers,
And rose a little from his grief, and lifted
His eyes against the stars. Then he said low:
"I was not wont so quickly to despair.
O hast thou left me and art lost in light,
Cruel, between the shining hemispheres?
Yet even there I will pursue my joy.
Though all the great immortals jealously
Encompass round with shields thy golden limbs,
I may clash through them yet, or my strong patience
Will pluck my love down from her distant stars.
Still am I Ila's son, Pururavus,
That passionless pure strength though lost, though fallen
From the armed splendid soul which once I was."
So saying he to the hall of session strode,
Mightily like a king, a marble place
With wide Titanic arches imminent,
And from the brooding pillars seized a shell
And blew upon it. Like a storm the sound
Through Pratisthana's streets was blown. Forth came
From lintel proud and happy threshold low
The people pouring out. Majestic chiefs
And strong war-leaders and old famous men
And mighty poets first; behind them streamed
The Ilian people like driving rain, and filled

With faces the immeasurable hall.
And over them the beautiful great king
Rose bright; anticipations wonderful
Of immortality flashed through his eyes
And round his brow's august circumference.
"My people whom I made, I go from you;
And what shall I say to you, Ilian people,
Who know my glory and know my grief? Now I
Endure no more the desolate wide rooms
And gardens empty of her. I will depart
And find her under imperishable trees
Or secret beside streams. But since I go
And leave my work behind and a young nation
With destiny like an uncertain dawn
Over it — Ayus her son, I give you. He
By beauty and strength incomparable shall rule.
Lo, I have planted earth with deeds and made
The widest heavens my monument, have brought
From Paradise the sempiternal fire
And warred in heaven among the warring Gods.
O people, you have shared my famous actions
Done in a few great years of earthly life,
The battles I fought, edifications vast,
And perfect institutes that I have framed.
High things we have done together, O my people.
But now I go to claim back from the Gods
Her they have taken from me, my dear reward."
He spoke and all the nation listened, dumb.
Then was brought forth the bud of Urvasie,
With Vedic verse intoned and Ganges pure
Was crowned a king, and empire on his curls
Established. But Pururavus went forth,
Through ranks of silent people and gleaming arms,
With the last cloud of sunset up the fields
And darkening meadows. And from Ila's rock,
And from the temple of Ila virginal,
A rushing splendour wonderfully arose

And shone all round the great departing king.
He in that light turned and saw under him
The mighty city, luminous and vast,
Colossally up-piled towards the heavens,
Temple and street and palace, and the sea
Of sorrowing faces and sad grieving eyes;
A moment saw, and disappeared from light
Into forest. Then a loud wail arose
From Pratisthana, as if barbarous hordes
Were in the streets and all its temples huge
Rising towards heaven in disastrous fire,
But he unlistening into darkness went.

CANTO IV

Through darkness and immense dim night he went
Mid phantom outlines of approaching trees,
And all the day in green leaves, till he came
To peopled forests and sweet clamorous streams
And marvellous shining meadows where he lived
With Urvasie his love in seasons old.
These like domestic faces waiting were.
He knew each wind-blown tree, each different field;
And could distinguish all the sounding rivers
Each by its own voice and peculiar flow.
Here were the happy shades where they had lain
Inarmed and murmuring, here half-lustrous groves
Still voiceful with a sacred sound at noon,
And these the rivers from her beauty bright.
There straying in field and forest he to each
Familiar spot so full of her would speak,
Pausing by banks and memorable trees.
"O sacred fig-tree, under thee she paused
Musing amid her tresses, and her eyes
Were sweet and grave. And, O delicious shade,
Thou hast experienced brightness from her feet,
O cool and dark green shelterer, perfect place!
And lo! the boughs all ruinous towards earth
With blossoms. Here she lay, her arms thrown back,
Smiling up to me, and the flowers rained
Upon her lips and eyes and bosom bare.
And here a secret opening where she stood
Waiting in narrow twilight; round her all
Was green and secret with a mystic, dewy
Half invitation into emerald worlds.
O river, from thee she moved towards the glade
Breathing and wet and fresh as if a flower
All bare from rain. And thou, great holy glade,
Sawest her face maternal o'er her child."
Then ceasing he would wait and listen, half

Expecting her. But all was silent; only
Perhaps a bird darted bright-winged away,
Or a grey snake slipped through the brilliant leaves.
Thus wandering, thus in every mindful place
Renewing old forgotten scenes that rose,
Gleam after gleam, upon his mind, as stars
Return at night; thus drawing from his heart
Where they lay covered, old sweet incidents
To live before his eyes; thus calling back
Uncertain moods, brief moments of her face,
And transient postures strangely beautiful,
Pleasures, and little happy mists of tears
Heart-freeing, he, materializing dreams,
Upon her very body almost seized.
Always a sense of imperfection slipped
Between him and that passionate success.
Therefore he murmured at last unsatisfied:
"She is not here; though every mystic glade
And sunbright pasture breathe alone of her
And quiver as with her presence, I find not
Her very limbs, her very face; yet dreamed
That here infallibly I should restrain
Her fugitive feet or hold her by the robe.
O once she was the luminous soul of these,
And in her body lived the summer and spring
And seed and blossoming, ripening and fall,
Hiding of Beauty in the wood and glen,
And flashing out into the sunlit fields
All flowers and laughter. All the happy moods
And all the beautiful amorous ways of earth
She was; but they now seem only her dress
Left by her. Therefore, O ye seaward rivers,
O forests, since ye have deceived my hope,
I go from you to dazzling cruel ravines
And find her on inclement mountains pure."

Then northward blown upon a storm of hope

The hero self-discrowned, Pururavus,
Went swiftly up the burning plains and through
The portals of the old Saivaalic hills
To the inferior heights, nor lingered long,
Though pulsing with fierce memories, though thrilled
With shocks of a great passion touching earth;
But plunged o'er difficult gorge and prone ravine
And rivers thundering between dim walls,
Driven by immense desire, until he came
To dreadful silence of the peaks and trod
Regions as vast and lonely as his love.
Then with a confident sublime appeal
He to the listening summits stretched his hands:
"O desolate strong Himalaya, great
Thy peaks alone with heaven and dreadful hush
In which the Soul of all the world is felt
Meditating creation! Thou, O mountain,
My bridal chamber wast. On thee we lay
With summits towards the moon or with near stars
Watching us in some wild inhuman vale,
Thy silence over us like a coverlid
Or a far avalanche for bridal song.
Lo, she is fled into your silences!
I come to you, O mountains, with a heart
Desolate like you, like you snow-swept, and stretch
Towards your solemn summits kindred hands.
Give back to me, O mountains, give her back."
He ceased and Himalaya bent towards him, white.
The mountains seemed to recognize a soul
Immense as they, reaching as they to heaven
And capable of infinite solitude.
Long he, in meditation deep immersed,
Strove to dissolve his soul among the hills
Into the thought of Urvasie. The snow
Stole down from heaven and touched his cheek and hair,
The storm-blast from the peaks leaped down and smote
But woke him not, and the white drops in vain

Froze in his locks or crusted all his garb.
For he lived only with his passionate heart.
But as the months with slow unnoticed tread
Passed o'er the hills nor brought sweet change of spring
Nor autumn wet with dew, a voice at last
Moved from far heavens, other than our sky.
And he arose as one impelled and came
Past the supreme great ridges northward, came
Into the wonderful land far up the world
Dim-looming, where the Northern Kurus dwell,
The ancients of the world, invisible,
Among forgotten mists. Through mists he moved
Feeling a sense of unseen cities, hearing
No sound, nor seeing face, but conscious ever
Of an immense traditionary life
Throbbing round him and dreams historical.
For as he went, old kingly memories surged,
And with vast forward faces driving came
Origins and stabilities and empires,
Huge passionate creations, impulses
National realizing themselves in stone.
Lastly with rolling of the mists afar
He saw beneath him the primeval rocks
Plunge down into the valley, and upsoar
To light wide thoughtful domes and measureless
Ramparts, and mid them in a glory walk
The ancients of the world with eyes august.
Next towards the sun he looked and saw enthroned
Upon the summit one whose regal hair
Crowned her, and purple in waves down to her feet
Flowed, Indira, the goddess, Ocean's child,
Giver of empire who all beauty keeps
Between her hands, all glory, all wealth, all power.
Severe and beautiful she leaned her face.
"What passion, Ilian Pururavus,
Has led thee here to my great capital
And ancient men in the forgotten mists,

The fathers of the Aryan race? Of glory
Enamoured hast thou come, or for thy people
Empire soliciting? But other beauty
Is on thy brow and light no longer mine.
Yet not for self wast thou of virgin born,
Perfect, and the aerial paths of gods
Permitted to thy steps; nor for themselves,
But to the voice of Vedic litanies,
Sacredly placed are the dread crowns of Kings
For bright felicities and cruel toils.
And thou, O Ilian Pururavus,
For passion dost thou leave thy strenuous grandeurs,
A nation's destinies, and hast not feared
The sad inferior Ganges lapsing down
With mournful rumour through the shades of Hell?"
Then with calm eyes the hero Ilian:
"O Goddess, patroness of Aryasthan,
Lover of banyan and of lotus, I
Not from the fear of Hell or hope of Heaven
Do good or ill. Reigning I reigned o'er self,
And with a kingly soul did kingly deeds.
Now driven by a termless wide desire
I wander over snow and countries vague."
And like a viol Luxmie answered him:
"Sprung of the moon, thy grandsire's fault in thee
Yet lives; but since thy love is singly great,
Doubtless thou shalt possess thy whole desire.
Yet hast thou maimed the future and discrowned
The Aryan people; for though Ila's sons,
In Hustina, the city of elephants,
And Indraprustha, future towns, shall rule
Drawing my peoples to one sceptre, at last
Their power by excess of beauty falls, —
Thy sin, Pururavus — of beauty and love:
And this the land divine to impure grasp
Yields of barbarians from the outer shores."
She ceased and the oblivious mists rolled down.

But the strong hero uncrowned, Pururavus,
Eastward, all dreaming with his great desire,
Wandered as when a man in sleep arises,
And goes into the night, and under stars
Through the black spaces moves, nor knows his feet
Nor where they guide him, but dread unseen power
Walks by him and leads his unerring steps
To some weird forest or gaunt mountain-side;
There he awakes, a horror in his soul,
And shudders alien amid places strange.
So wandered, driven by an unknown power,
Pururavus. Over hushed dreadful hills
And snows more breathless to the quiet banks
Of a wide lake mid rocks and bending woods
He came, and saw calm mountains over it,
And knew in his awed heart the hill of God,
Coilas, and Mainaac with its summits gold.
Awed he in heart, yet with a quicker stride
He moved and eyes of silent joy, like one
Who coming from long travel, sees the old
Village and children's faces at the doors.
In a wild faery place where mountain streams
Glimmer from the dim rocks and meet the lake
Amid a wrestle of tangled trees and heaped
Moss-grown disordered stones, and all the water
Is hidden with its lotuses and sways
Shimmering between leaves or strains through bloom,
She sat, the mother of the Aryans, white
With a sublime pallor beneath her hair.
Musing, with wide creative brows, she sat
In a slight lovely dress fastened with flowers,
All heaped with her large tresses. Golden swans
Preened in the waters by her dipping feet.
One hand propped her fair marble cheek, the other
The mystic lotus hardly held. Seeing her
Pururavus bent to her and adored.
And she looked up and musing towards him

Said low: "O son, I knew thy steps afar.
Of me thou wast; for as I suffered rapture,
Invaded by the sea of images
Breaking upon me from all winds, and saw
Indus and Ganges with prophetic mind,
A virginal impulse gleamed from my bosom
And on the earth took beauty and form. I saw
Thee from that glory issue and rejoiced.
But now thou comest quite discrowned. From me,
O son, thou hadst the impulse beautiful
That made thy soul all colour. For I strive
Towards the insufferable heights and flash
With haloes of that sacred light intense.
But lo! the spring and all its flowers, and lo!
How bright the Soma juice. What golden joys,
What living passions, what immortal tears!
I lift the veil that hides the Immortal — Ah!
My lids faint. Ah! the veil was lovelier.
My flowers wither in that height, my swan
Spreads not his wings felicitous so far.
O one day I shall turn from the great verse
And marble aspiration to sing sweetly
Of lovers and the pomps of wealth and wine
And warm delights and warm desires and earth.
O mine own son, Pururavus, I fall
By thy vast failure from my dazzling skies."
And Ila's son made answer, "O white-armed,
O mother of the Aryans, of my life
Creatress! fates colossal overrule.
But lo! I wander like a wave, nor find
Limit to the desire that wastes my soul."
Then with a sweet immortal smile the mother
Gave to him in the hollow of her hand
Wonderful water of the lake. He drank,
And understood infinity, and saw
Time like a snake coiling among the stars;
And earth he saw, and mortal nights and days

Grew to him moments, and his limbs became
Undying and his thoughts as marble endured.
Then to the hero deified the goddess,
"O strong immortal, now pursue thy joy:
Yet first rise up the peaks of Coilas; there
The Mighty Mother sits, whose sovran voice
Shall ratify to thee thy future fair,"
Said and caressed his brow with lips divine.
And bright Pururavus rose up the hill
Towards the breathless summit. Thence, enshrined
In deep concealing glories, came a voice,
And clearer he discerned as one whose eyes,
Long cognizant of darkness, coming forth,
Grow gradually habituated to light,
The calm compassionate face, the heaven-wide brow,
And the robust great limbs that bear the world.
Prophetical and deep her voice came down:
"Thou then hast failed, bright soul; but God blames not
Nor punishes. Impartially he deals
To every strenuous spirit its chosen reward.
And since no work, however maimed, no smallest
Energy added to the mighty sum
Of action fails of its exact result,
Empire shall in thy line and forceful brain
Persist, the boundless impulse towards rule
Of grandiose souls perpetually recur,
And minds immense and personalities
With battle and with passion and with storm
Shall burn through Aryan history, the speech
Of ages. In thy line the Spirit Supreme
Shall bound existence with one human form;
In Mathura and ocean Dwarca Man
Earthly perfectibility of soul
Example: son of thy line and eulogist,
The vast clear poet of the golden verse,
Whose song shall be as wide as is the world.
But all by huge self-will or violence marred

Of passionate uncontrol; if pure, their work
By touch of later turbulent hands unsphered
Or fames by legend stained. Upon my heights
Breathing God's air, strong as the sky and pure,
Dwell only Ixvaacou's children; destined theirs
Heaven's perfect praise, earth's sole unequalled song.
But thou, O Ila's son, take up thy joy.
For thee in sweet Gundhurva world eternal
Rapture and clasp unloosed of Urvasie,
Till the long night when God asleep shall fall."

Ceased the great voice and strong Pururavus
Glad of his high reward, however dearly
Purchased, purchased with infinite downfall,
With footing now divine went up the world.
Mid regions sweet and peaks of milk-white snow
And lovely corners and delicious lakes,
He saw a road all sunlight and the gates
Of the Gundhurvas' home. O never ship
From Ocean into Ocean erring knew
Such joy through all its patient sails at sight
Of final haven near as the tried heart
Of earth's successful son at that fair goal.
Towards the gates he hastened, and one bright
With angel face who at those portals stood
Cried down, "We wait for thee, Pururavus."
Then to his hearing musical, the hinges
Called; he beheld the subtle faces look
Down on him and the crowd of luminous forms,
And entered to immortal sound of lyres.
Up through the streets a silver cry went on
Before him of high instruments. From all
The winds the marvellous musicians pressed
To welcome that immortal lover. One
Whose pure-limned brows aerial wore by right
Faery authority, stood from the crowd.
"O Ila's son, far-famed Pururavus,

Destined to joys by mortals all unhoped!
Move to thy sacred glories as a star
Into its destined place, shine over us
Here greatest as upon thy greener earth.”
They through the thrilling regions musical
Led him and marvelled at him and praised with song
His fair sublimity of form and brow
And warlike limbs and grace heroical.
He heeded not, for all his soul was straining
With expectation of a near delight.
His eyes that sought her ever, beheld a wall
Of mighty trees and, where they arched to part,
Those two of all their sisters brightest rise,
One blithe as is a happy brook, the other
With her grave smile; and each took a strong hand
In her soft clasp, and led him to a place
Distinct mid faery-leaved ethereal trees
And magic banks and sweet low curves of hills,
And over all the sunlight like a charm.
There by a sounding river downward thrown
From under low green-curtaining boughs was she.
Mute she arose and with wide quiet eyes
Came towards him. In their immortal looks
Was a deep feeling too august for joy,
The sense that all eternity must follow
One perfect moment. Then that comrade bright
With slow grave smile, “O after absence wide
Who meet and shall not sunder any more
Till slumber of the Supreme, strong be your souls
To bear unchanging rapture; strong you were
By patience to compel unwilling Gods.”
And they were left alone in that clear world.
Then all his soul towards her leaning, took
Pururavus into his clasp and felt,
Seriously glad, the golden bosom on his
Of Urvasie, his love; so pressing back
The longed-for sacred face, lingering he kissed.

Then Love in his sweet heavens was satisfied.
But far below through silent mighty space
The green and strenuous earth abandoned rolled.

Love and Death

Love and Death

In woodlands of the bright and early world,
When love was to himself yet new and warm
And stainless, played like morning with a flower
Ruru with his young bride Priyumvada.
Fresh-cheeked and dew-eyed white Priyumvada
Opened her budded heart of crimson bloom
To love, to Ruru; Ruru, a happy flood
Of passion round a lotus dancing thrilled,
Blinded with his soul's waves Priyumvada.
To him the earth was a bed for this sole flower,
To her all the world was filled with his embrace.
Wet with new rains the morning earth, released
From her fierce centuries and burning suns,
Lavished her breath in greenness; poignant flowers
Thronged all her eager breast, and her young arms
Cradled a childlike bounding life that played
And would not cease, nor ever weary grew
Of her bright promise; for all was joy and breeze
And perfume, colour and bloom and ardent rays
Of living, and delight desired the world.
Then Earth was quick and pregnant tamelessly;
A free and unwalled race possessed her plains
Whose hearts uncramped by bonds, whose unspoiled thoughts
At once replied to light. Foisoned the fields;
Lonely and rich the forests and the swaying
Of those unnumbered tops affected men
With thoughts to their vast music kin. Undammed
The virgin rivers moved towards the sea,
And mountains yet unseen and peoples vague
Winged young imagination like an eagle
To strange beauty remote. And Ruru felt
The sweetness of the early earth as sap
All through him, and short life an aeon made
By boundless possibility, and love,

Sweetest of all unfathomable love,
A glory untired. As a bright bird comes flying
From airy extravagance to his own home,
And breasts his mate, and feels her all his goal,
So from boon sunlight and the fresh chill wave
Which swirled and lapped between the slumbering fields,
From forest pools and wanderings mid leaves
Through emerald ever-new discoveries,
Mysterious hillsides ranged and buoyant-swift
Races with our wild brothers in the meads,
Came Ruru back to the white-bosomed girl,
Strong-winged to pleasure. She all fresh and new
Rose to him, and he plunged into her charm.
For neither to her honey and poignancy
Artlessly interchanged, nor any limit
To the sweet physical delight of her
He found. Her eyes like deep and infinite wells
Lured his attracted soul, and her touch thrilled
Not lightly, though so light; the joy prolonged
And sweetness of the lingering of her lips
Was every time a nectar of surprise
To her lover; her smooth-gleaming shoulder bared
In darkness of her hair showed jasmine-bright,
While her kissed bosom by rich tumults stirred
Was a moved sea that rocked beneath his heart.
Then when her lips had made him blind, soft siege
Of all her unseen body to his rule
Betrayed the ravishing realm of her white limbs,
An empire for the glory of a God.
He knew not whether he loved most her smile,
Her causeless tears or little angers swift,
Whether held wet against him from the bath
Among her kindred lotuses, her cheeks
Soft to his lips and dangerous happy breasts
That vanquished all his strength with their desire,
Meeting his absence with her sudden face,
Or when the leaf-hid bird at night complained

Near their wreathed arbour on the moonlit lake,
Sobbing delight out from her heart of bliss,
Or in his clasp of rapture laughing low
Of his close bosom bridal-glad and pleased
With passion and this fiery play of love,
Or breaking off like one who thinks of grief,
Wonderful melancholy in her eyes
Grown liquid and with wayward sorrow large.
Thus he in her found a warm world of sweets,
And lived of ecstasy secure, nor deemed
Any new hour could match that early bliss.
But Love has joys for spirits born divine
More bleeding-lovely than his thornless rose.
That day he had left, while yet the east was dark,
Rising, her bosom and into the river
Swam out, exulting in the sting and swift
Sharp-edged desire around his limbs, and sprang
Wet to the bank, and streamed into the wood.
As a young horse upon the pastures glad
Feels greensward and the wind along his mane
And arches as he goes his neck, so went
In an immense delight of youth the boy
And shook his locks, joy-crested. Boundlessly
He revelled in swift air of life, a creature
Of wide and vigorous morning. Far he strayed
Tempting for flower and fruit branches in heaven,
And plucked, and flung away, and brighter chose,
Seeking comparisons for her bloom; and followed
New streams, and touched new trees, and felt slow beauty
And leafy secret change; for the damp leaves,
Grey-green at first, grew pallid with the light
And warmed with consciousness of sunshine near;
Then the whole daylight wandered in, and made
Hard tracts of splendour, and enriched all hues.
But when a happy sheltered heat he felt
And heard contented voice of living things
Harmonious with the noon, he turned and swiftly

Went homeward yearning to Priyumvada,
And near his home emerging from green leaves
He laughed towards the sun: "O father Sun,"
He cried, "how good it is to live, to love!
Surely our joy shall never end, nor we
Grow old, but like bright rivers or pure winds
Sweetly continue, or revive with flowers,
Or live at least as long as senseless trees."
He dreamed, and said with a soft smile: "Lo, she!
And she will turn from me with angry tears
Her delicate face more beautiful than storm
Or rainy moonlight. I will follow her,
And soothe her heart with sovereign flatteries;
Or rather all tyranny exhaust and taste
The beauty of her anger like a fruit,
Vexing her soul with helplessness; then soften
Easily with quiet undenied demand
Of heart insisting upon heart; or else
Will reinvest her beauty bright with flowers,
Or with my hands her little feet persuade.
Then will her face be like a sudden dawn,
And flower compelled into reluctant smiles."
He had not ceased when he beheld her. She,
Tearing a jasmine bloom with waiting hands,
Stood drooping, petulant, but heard at once
His footsteps and before she was aware,
A sudden smile of exquisite delight
Leaped to her mouth, and a great blush of joy
Surprised her cheeks. She for a moment stood
Beautiful with her love before she died;
And he laughed towards her. With a pitiful cry
She paled; moaning, her stricken limbs collapsed.
But petrified, in awful dumb surprise,
He gazed; then waking with a bound was by her,
All panic expectation. As he came,
He saw a brilliant flash of coils evade
The sunlight, and with hateful gorgeous hood

Darted into green safety, hissing, death.
Voiceless he sank beside her and stretched out
His arms and desperately touched her face,
As if to attract her soul to live, and sought
Beseeching with his hands her bosom. O, she
Was warm, and cruel hope pierced him; but pale
As jasmines fading on a girl's sweet breast
Her cheek was, and forgot its perfect rose.
Her eyes that clung to sunlight yet, with pain
Were large and feebly round his neck her arms
She lifted and, desiring his pale cheek
Against her bosom, sobbed out piteously,
"Ah, love!" and stopped heart-broken; then, "O Love!
Alas the green dear home that I must leave
So early! I was so glad of love and kisses,
And thought that centuries would not exhaust
The deep embrace. And I have had so little
Of joy and the wild day and throbbing night,
Laughter, and tenderness, and strife and tears.
I have not numbered half the brilliant birds
In one green forest, nor am familiar grown
With sunrise and the progress of the eves,
Nor have with plaintive cries of birds made friends,
Cuckoo and rainlark and love-speak-to-me.
I have not learned the names of half the flowers
Around me; so few trees know me by my name;
Nor have I seen the stars so very often
That I should die. I feel a dreadful hand
Drawing me from the touch of thy warm limbs
Into some cold vague mist, and all black night
Descends towards me. I no more am thine,
But go I know not where, and see pale shapes
And gloomy countries and that terrible stream.
O Love, O Love, they take me from thee far,
And whether we shall find each other ever
In the wide dreadful territory of death,
I know not. Or thou wilt forget me quite,

And life compel thee into other arms.
Ah, come with me! I cannot bear to wander
In that cold cruel country all alone,
Helpless and terrified, or sob by streams
Denied sweet sunlight and by thee unloved."
Slower her voice came now, and over her cheek
Death paused; then, sobbing like a little child
Too early from her bounding pleasures called,
The lovely discontented spirit stole
From her warm body white. Over her leaned
Ruru, and waited for dead lips to move.
Still in the greenwood lay Priyumvada,
And Ruru rose not from her, but with eyes
Emptied of glory hung above his dead,
Only, without a word, without a tear.
Then the crowned wives of the great forest came,
They who had fed her from maternal breasts,
And grieved over the lovely body cold,
And bore it from him; nor did he entreat
One last look nor one kiss, nor yet denied
What he had loved so well. They the dead girl
Into some distant greenness bore away.

But Ruru, while the stillness of the place
Remembered her, sat without voice. He heard
Through the great silence that was now his soul,
The forest sounds, a squirrel's leap through leaves,
The cheeping of a bird just overhead,
A peacock with his melancholy cry
Complaining far away, and tossings dim
And slight unnoticeable stir of trees.
But all these were to him like distant things
And he alone in his heart's void. And yet
No thought he had of her so lately lost.
Rather far pictures, trivial incidents
Of that old life before her delicate face
Had lived for him, dumbly distinct like thoughts

Of men that die, kept with long pomps his mind
Excluding the dead girl. So still he was,
The birds flashed by him with their swift small wings,
Fanning him. Then he moved, then rigorous
Memory through all his body shuddering
Awoke, and he looked up and knew the place,
And recognised greenness immutable,
And saw old trees and the same flowers still bloom.
He felt the bright indifference of earth
And all the lonely uselessness of pain.
Then lifting up the beauty of his brow
He spoke, with sorrow pale: "O grim cold Death!
But I will not like ordinary men
Satiate thee with cries, and falsely woo thee,
And make my grief thy theatre, who lie
Prostrate beneath thy thunderbolts and make
Night witness of their moans, shuddering and crying
When sudden memories pierce them like swords,
And often starting up as at a thought
Intolerable, pace a little, then
Sink down exhausted by brief agony.
O secrecy terrific, darkness vast,
At which we shudder! Somewhere, I know not where,
Somehow, I know not how, I shall confront
Thy gloom, tremendous spirit, and seize with hands
And prove what thou art and what man." He said,
And slowly to the forest wandered. There
Long months he travelled between grief and grief,
Reliving thoughts of her with every pace,
Measuring vast pain in his immortal mind.
And his heart cried in him as when a fire
Roars through wide forests and the branches cry
Burning towards heaven in torture glorious.
So burned, immense, his grief within him; he raised
His young pure face all solemnised with pain,
Voiceless. Then Fate was shaken, and the Gods
Grieved for him, of his silence grown afraid.

Therefore from peaks divine came flashing down
Immortal Agni and to the uswutth-tree
Cried in the Voice that slays the world: "O tree
That liftest thy enormous branches able
To shelter armies, more than armies now
Shelter, be famous, house a brilliant God.
For the grief grows in Ruru's breast up-piled,
As wrestles with its anguished barricades
In silence an impending flood, and Gods
Immortal grow afraid. For earth alarmed
Shudders to bear the curse lest her young life
Pale with eclipse and all-creating love
Be to mere pain condemned. Divert the wrath
Into thy boughs, Uswuttha — thou shalt be
My throne — glorious, though in eternal pangs,
Yet worth much pain to harbour divine fire."
So ended the young pure destroyer's voice,
And the dumb god consented silently.
In the same noon came Ruru; his mind had paused,
Lured for a moment by soft wandering gleams
Into forgetfulness of grief; for thoughts
Gentle and near-eyed whispering memories
So sweetly came, his blind heart dreamed she lived.
Slow the uswuttha-tree bent down its leaves,
And smote his cheek, and touched his heavy hair.
And Ruru turned illumined. For a moment,
One blissful moment he had felt 'twas she.
So had she often stolen up and touched
His curls with her enamoured fingers small,
Lingering, while the wind smote him with her hair
And her quick breath came to him like spring. Then he,
Turning, as one surprised with heaven, saw
Ready to his swift passionate grasp her bosom
And body sweet expecting his embrace.
Oh, now saw her not, but the guilty tree
Shrinking; then grief back with a double crown
Arose and stained his face with agony.

Nor silence he endured, but the dumb force
Ascetic and inherited, by sires
Fierce-musing earned, from the boy's bosom blazed.
"O uswutth-tree, wantonly who hast mocked
My anguish with the wind, but thou no more
Have joy of the cool wind nor green delight,
But live thy guilty leaves in fire, so long
As Aryan wheels by thy doomed shadow vast
Thunder to war, nor bless with cool wide waves
Lyric Saruswathi nations impure."
He spoke, and the vast tree groaned through its leaves,
Recognising its fate; then smouldered; lines
Of living fire rushed up the girth and hissed
Serpentine in the unconsuming leaves;
Last, all Hutashan in his chariot armed
Sprang on the boughs and blazed into the sky,
And wailing all the great tormented creature
Stood wide in agony; one half was green
And earthly, the other a weird brilliance
Filled with the speed and cry of endless flame.
But he, with the fierce rushing-out of power
Shaken and that strong grasp of anguish, flung
His hands out to the sun; "Priyumvada!"
He cried, and at that well-loved sound there dawned
With overwhelming sweetness miserable
Upon his mind the old delightful times
When he had called her by her liquid name,
Where the voice loved to linger. He remembered
The chompuc bushes where she turned away
Half-angered, and his speaking of her name
Masterfully as to a lovely slave
Rebellious who has erred; at that the slow
Yielding of her small head, and after a little
Her sliding towards him and beautiful
Propitiating body as she sank down
With timid graspings deprecatingly
In prostrate warm surrender, her flushed cheeks

Upon his feet and little touches soft;
Or her long name uttered beseechingly,
And the swift leap of all her body to him,
And eyes of large repentance, and the weight
Of her wild bosom and lips unsatisfied;
Or hourly call for little trivial needs,
Or sweet unneeded wanton summoning,
Daily appeal that never staled nor lost
Its sudden music, and her lovely speed,
Sedulous occupation left, quick-breathing,
With great glad eyes and eager parted lips;
Or in deep quiet moments murmuring
That name like a religion in her ear,
And her calm look compelled to ecstasy;
Or to the river luring her, or breathed
Over her dainty slumber, or secret sweet
Bridal outpantings of her broken name.
All these as rush unintermitting waves
Upon a swimmer overborne, broke on him
Relentless, things too happy to be endured,
Till faint with the recalled felicity
Low he moaned out: "O pale Priyumvada!
O dead fair flower! yet living to my grief!
But I could only slay the innocent tree,
Powerless when power should have been. Not such
Was Bhrigu from whose sacred strength I spring,
Nor Bhrigu's son, my father, when he blazed
Out from Puloma's side, and burning, blind,
Fell like a tree the ravisher unjust.
But I degenerate from such sires. O Death
That showest not thy face beneath the stars,
But comest masked, and on our dear ones seizing
Fearest to wrestle equally with love!
Nor from thy gloomy house any come back
To tell thy way. But O, if any strength
In lover's constancy to torture dwell
Earthward to force a helping god and such

Ascetic force be born of lover's pain,
Let my dumb pangs be heard. Whoe'er thou art,
O thou bright enemy of Death, descend
And lead me to that portal dim. For I
Have burned in fires cruel as the fire
And lain upon a sharper couch than swords."
He ceased, and heaven thrilled, and the far blue
Quivered as with invisible downward wings.

But Ruru passioned on, and came with eve
To secret grass and a green opening moist
In a cool lustre. Leaned upon a tree
That bathed in faery air and saw the sky
Through branches, and a single parrot loud
Screamed from its top, there stood a golden boy,
Half-naked, with bright limbs all beautiful—
Delicate they were, in sweetness absolute:
For every gleam and every soft strong curve
Magically compelled the eye, and smote
The heart to weakness. In his hands he swung
A bow—not such as human archers use:
For the string moved and murmured like many bees,
And nameless fragrance made the casual air
A peril. He on Ruru that fair face
Turned, and his steps with lovely gesture chained.
"Who art thou here, in forests wandering,
And thy young exquisite face is solemnised
With pain? Luxuriously the Gods have tortured
Thy heart to see such dreadful glorious beauty
Agonise in thy lips and brilliant eyes:
As tyrants in the fierceness of others' pangs
Joy and feel strong, clothing with brilliant fire,
Tyrants in Titan lands. Needs must her mouth
Have been pure honey and her bosom a charm,
Whom thou desirest seeing not the green
And common lovely sounds hast quite forgot."
And Ruru, mastered by the God, replied:

"I know thee by thy cruel beauty bright,
Kama, who makest many worlds one fire.
Ah, wherefore wilt thou ask of her to increase
The passion and regret? Thou knowest, great love!
Thy nymph her mother, if thou truly art he
And not a dream of my disastrous soul."
But with the thrilled eternal smile that makes
The spring, the lover of Rathi golden-limbed
Replied to Ruru, "Mortal, I am he;
I am that Madan who inform the stars
With lustre and on life's wide canvas fill
Pictures of light and shade, of joy and tears,
Make ordinary moments wonderful
And common speech a charm: knit life to life
With interfusions of opposing souls
And sudden meetings and slow sorceries:
Wing the boy bridegroom to that panting breast,
Smite Gods with mortal faces, dreadfully
Among great beautiful kings and watched by eyes
That burn, force on the virgin's fainting limbs
And drive her to the one face never seen,
The one breast meant eternally for her.
By me come wedded sweets, by me the wife's
Busy delight and passionate obedience,
And loving eager service never sated,
And happy lips, and worshipping soft eyes:
And mine the husband's hungry arms and use
Unwearying of old tender words and ways,
Joy of her hair, and silent pleasure felt
Of nearness to one dear familiar shape.
Nor only these, but many affections bright
And soft glad things cluster around my name.
I plant fraternal tender yearnings, make
The sister's sweet attractiveness and leap
Of heart towards imperious kindred blood,
And the young mother's passionate deep look,
Earth's high similitude of One not earth,

Teach filial heart-beats strong. These are my gifts
For which men praise me, these my glories calm:
But fiercer shafts I can, wild storms blown down
Shaking fixed minds and melting marble natures,
Tears and dumb bitterness and pain unpitied,
Racked thirsting jealousy and kind hearts made stone:
And in undisciplined huge souls I sow
Dire vengeance and impossible cruelties,
Cold lusts that linger and fierce fickleness,
The loves close kin to hate, brute violence
And mad insatiable longings pale,
And passion blind as death and deaf as swords.
O mortal, all deep-souled desires and all
Yearnings immense are mine, so much I can."
So as he spoke, his face grew wonderful
With vast suggestion, his human-seeming limbs
Brightened with a soft splendour: luminous hints
Of the concealed divinity transpired.
But soon with a slight discontented frown:
"So much I can, as even the great Gods learn.
Only with death I wrestle in vain, until
My passionate godhead all becomes a doubt.
Mortal, I am the light in stars, of flowers
The bloom, the nameless fragrance that pervades
Creation: but behind me, older than me,
He comes with night and cold tremendous shade.
Hard is the way to him, most hard to find,
Harder to tread, for perishable feet
Almost impossible. Yet, O fair youth,
If thou must needs go down, and thou art strong
In passion and in constancy, nor easy
The soul to slay that has survived such grief—
Steel then thyself to venture, armed by Love.
Yet listen first what heavy trade they drive
Who would win back their dead to human arms."
So much the God; but swift, with eager eyes
And panting bosom and glorious flushed face,

The lover: “O great Love! O beautiful Love!
But if by strength is possible, of body
Or mind, battle of spirit or moving speech,
Sweet speech that makes even cruelty grow kind,
Or yearning melody — for I have heard
That when Saruswathi in heaven her harp
Has smitten, the cruel sweetness terrible
Coils taking no denial through the soul,
And tears burst from the hearts of Gods — then I,
Making great music, or with perfect words,
Will strive, or staying him with desperate hands
Match human strength ’gainst formidable Death.
But if with price, ah God! what easier! Tears
Dreadful, innumerable I will absolve,
Or pay with anguish through the centuries,
Soul’s agony and torture physical,
So her small hands about my face at last
I feel, close real hair sting me with life,
And palpable breathing bosom on me press.”
Then with a lenient smile the mighty God:
“O ignorant fond lover, not with tears
Shalt thou persuade immitigable Death.
He will not pity all thy pangs: nor know
His stony eyes with music to grow kind,
Nor lovely words accepts. And how wilt thou
Wrestle with that grim shadow, who canst not save
One bloom from fading? A sole thing the Gods
Demand from all men living, sacrifice:
Nor without this shall any crown be grasped.
Yet many sacrifices are there, oxen,
And prayers, and Soma wine, and pious flowers,
Blood and the fierce expense of mind, and pure
Incense of perfect actions, perfect thoughts,
Or liberality wide as the sun’s,
Or ruthless labour or disastrous tears,
Exile or death or pain more hard than death,
Absence, a desert, from the faces loved;

Even sin may be a sumptuous sacrifice
Acceptable for unholy fruits. But none
Of these the inexorable shadow asks:
Alone of gods Death loves not gifts: he visits
The pure heart as the stained. Lo, the just man
Bowed helpless over his dead, nor all his virtues
Shall quicken that cold bosom: near him the wild
Marred face and passionate and will not leave
Kissing dead lips that shall not chide him more.
Life the pale ghost requires: with half thy life
Thou mayst protract the thread too early cut
Of that delightful spirit — half sweet life.
O Ruru, lo, thy frail precarious days,
And yet how sweet they are! simply to breathe
How warm and sweet! And ordinary things
How exquisite, thou then shalt learn when lost,
How luminous the daylight was, mere sleep
How soft and friendly clasping tired limbs,
And the deliciousness of common food.
And things indifferent thou then shalt want,
Regret rejected beauty, brightnesses
Bestowed in vain. Wilt thou yield up, O lover,
Half thy sweet portion of this light and gladness,
Thy little insufficient share, and vainly
Give to another? She is not thyself:
Thou dost not feel the gladness in her bosom,
Nor with the torture of thy body will she
Throb and cry out: at most with tender looks
And pitiful attempt to feel move near thee,
And weep how far she is from what she loves.
Men live like stars that see each other in heaven,
But one knows not the pleasure and the grief
The others feel: he lonely rapture has,
Or bears his incommunicable pain.
O Ruru, there are many beautiful faces,
But one thyself. Think then how thou shalt mourn
When thou hast shortened joy and feelst at last

The shadow that thou hadst for such sweet store."
He ceased with a strange doubtful look. But swift
Came back the lover's voice, like passionate rain.
"O idle words! For what is mere sunlight?
Who would live on into extreme old age,
Burden the impatient world, a weary old man,
And look back on a selfish time ill-spent
Exacting out of prodigal great life
Small separate pleasures like an usurer,
And no rich sacrifice and no large act
Finding oneself in others, nor the sweet
Expense of Nature in her passionate gusts
Of love and giving, first of the soul's needs?
Who is so coldly wise, and does not feel
How wasted were our grandiose human days
In prudent personal unshared delights?
Why dost thou mock me, friend of all the stars?
How canst thou be love's god and know not this,
That love burns down the body's barriers cold
And laughs at difference — playing with it merely
To make joy sweeter? O too deeply I know,
The lover is not different from the loved,
Nor is their silence dumb to each other. He
Contains her heart and feels her body in his,
He flushes with her heat, chills with her cold.
And when she dies, oh! when she dies, oh me,
The emptiness, the maim! the life no life,
The sweet and passionate oneness lost! And if
By shortening of great grief won back, O price
Easy! O glad briefness, aeons may envy!
For we shall live not fearing death, nor feel
As others yearning over the loved at night
When the lamp flickers, sudden chills of dread
Terrible; nor at short absence agonise,
Wrestling with mad imagination. Us
Serenely when the darkening shadow comes,
One common sob shall end and soul clasp soul,

Leaving the body in a long dim kiss.
Then in the joys of heaven we shall consort,
Amid the gladness often touching hands
To make bliss sure; or in the ghastly stream
If we must anguish, yet it shall not part
Our passionate limbs inextricably locked
By one strong agony, but we shall feel
Hell's pain half joy through sweet companionship.
God Love, I weary of words. O wing me rather
To her, my eloquent princess of the spring,
In whatsoever wintry shores she roam."
He ceased with eager forward eyes; once more
A light of beauty immortal through the limbs
Gleaming of the boy-god and soft sweet face,
Glorifying him, flushed, and he replied:
"Go then, O thou dear youth, and bear this flower
In thy hand warily. For thou shalt come
To that high meeting of the Ganges pure
With vague and violent Ocean. There arise
And loudly appeal my brother, the wild sea."
He spoke and stretched out his immortal hand,
And Ruru's met it. All his young limbs yearned
With dreadful rapture shuddering through them. He
Felt in his fingers subtle uncertain bloom,
A quivering magnificence, half fire,
Whose petals changed like flame, and from them breathed
Dangerous attraction and alarmed delight,
As at a peril near. He raised his eyes,
But the green place was empty of the God.
Only the faery tree looked up at heaven
Through branches, and with recent pleasure shook.
Then over fading earth the night was lord.

But from Shatudru and Bipasha, streams
Once holy, and loved Iravathi and swift
Clear Chandrabhaga and Bitosta's toil
For man, went Ruru to bright sumptuous lands

By Aryan fathers not yet paced, but wild,
But virgin to our fruitful human toil,
Where Nature lay reclined in dumb delight
Alone with woodlands and the voiceless hills.
He with the widening yellow Ganges came,
Amazed, to trackless countries where few tribes,
Kirath and Poundrian, warred, worshipping trees
And the great serpent. But robust wild earth,
But forests with their splendid life of beasts
Savage mastered those strong inhabitants.
Thither came Ruru. In a thin soft eve
Ganges spread far her multitudinous waves,
A glimmering restlessness with voices large,
And from the forests of that half-seen bank
A boat came heaving over it, white-winged,
With a sole silent helmsman marble-pale.
Then Ruru by his side stepped in; they went
Down the mysterious river and beheld
The great banks widen out of sight. The world
Was water and the skies to water plunged.
All night with a dim motion gliding down
He felt the dark against his eyelids; felt,
As in a dream more real than daylight,
The helmsman with his dumb and marble face
Near him and moving wideness all around,
And that continual gliding dimly on,
As one who on a shoreless water sails
For ever to a port he shall not win.
But when the darkness paled, he heard a moan
Of mightier waves and had the wide great sense
Of ocean and the depths below our feet.
But the boat stopped; the pilot lifted on him
His marble gaze coeval with the stars.
Then in the white-winged boat the boy arose
And saw around him the vast sea all grey
And heaving in the pallid dawning light.
Loud Ruru cried across the murmur: "Hear me,

O inarticulate grey Ocean, hear.
If any cadence in thy infinite
Rumour was caught from lover's moan, O Sea,
Open thy abysses to my mortal tread.
For I would travel to the despairing shades,
The spheres of suffering where entangled dwell
Souls unreleased and the untimely dead
Who weep remembering. Thither, O, guide me,
No despicable wayfarer, but Ruru,
But son of a great Rishi, from all men
On earth selected for peculiar pangs,
Special disaster. Lo, this petalled fire,
How freshly it blooms and lasts with my great pain!"
He held the flower out subtly glimmering.
And like a living thing the huge sea trembled,
Then rose, calling, and filled the sight with waves,
Converging all its giant crests; towards him
Innumerable waters loomed and heaven
Threatened. Horizon on horizon moved
Dreadfully swift; then with a prone wide sound
All Ocean hollowing drew him swiftly in,
Curving with monstrous menace over him.
He down the gulf where the loud waves collapsed
Descending, saw with floating hair arise
The daughters of the sea in pale green light,
A million mystic breasts suddenly bare,
And came beneath the flood and stunned beheld
A mute stupendous march of waters race
To reach some viewless pit beneath the world.
Ganges he saw, as men predestined rush
Upon a fearful doom foreseen, so run,
Alarmed, with anguished speed, the river vast.
Veiled to his eyes the triple goddess rose.
She with a sound of waters cried to him,
A thousand voices moaning with one pain:
"Lover, who fearedst not sunlight to leave,
With me thou mayst behold that helpless spirit

Lost in the gloom, if still thy burning bosom
Have courage to endure great Nature's night
In the dire lands where I, a goddess, mourn
Hurting my heart with my own cruelty."
She darkened to the ominous descent,
Unwilling, and her once so human waves
Sent forth a cry not meant for living ears.
And Ruru chilled; but terrible strong love
Was like a fiery finger in his breast
Pointing him on; so he through horror went
Conducted by inexorable sound.
For monstrous voices to his ear were close,
And bodiless terrors with their dimness seized him
In an obscurity phantasmal. Thus
With agony of soul to the grey waste
He came, glad of the pain of passage over,
As men who through the storms of anguish strive
Into abiding tranquil dreariness
And draw sad breath assured; to the grey waste,
Hopeless Patala, the immutable
Country, where neither sun nor rain arrives,
Nor happy labour of the human plough
Fruitfully turns the soil, but in vague sands
And indeterminable strange rocks and caverns
That into silent blackness huge recede,
Dwell the great serpent and his hosts, writhed forms,
Sinuous, abhorred, through many horrible leagues
Coiling in a half darkness. Shapes he saw,
And heard the hiss and knew the lambent light
Loathsome, but passed compelling his strong soul.
At last through those six tired hopeless worlds,
Too hopeless far for grief, pale he arrived
Into a nether air by anguish moved,
And heard before him cries that pierced the heart,
Human, not to be borne, and issued shaken
By the great river accursed. Maddened it ran,
Anguished, importunate, and in its waves

The drifting ghosts their agony endured.
There Ruru saw pale faces float of kings
And grandiose victors and revered high priests
And famous women. Now rose from the wave
A golden shuddering arm and now a face.
Torn piteous sides were seen and breasts that quailed.
Over them moaned the penal waters on,
And had no joy of their fierce cruelty.
Then Ruru, his young cheeks with pity wan,
Half moaned: "O miserable race of men,
With violent and passionate souls you come
Foredoomed upon the earth and live brief days
In fear and anguish, catching at stray beams
Of sunlight, little fragrances of flowers;
Then from your spacious earth in a great horror
Descend into this night, and here too soon
Must expiate your few inadequate joys.
O bargain hard! Death helps us not. He leads
Alarmed, all shivering from his chill embrace,
The naked spirit here. O my sweet flower,
Art thou too whelmed in this fierce wailing flood?
Ah me! But I will haste and deeply plunge
Into its hopeless pools and either bring
Thy old warm beauty back beneath the stars,
Or find thee out and clasp thy tortured bosom
And kiss thy sweet wrung lips and hush thy cries.
Love shall draw half thy pain into my limbs;
Then we shall triumph glad of agony."
He ceased and one replied close by his ear:
"O thou who troublest with thy living eyes
Established death, pass on. She whom thou seekest
Rolls not in the accursèd tide. For late
I saw her mid those pale inhabitants
Whom bodily anguish visits not, but thoughts
Sorrowful and dumb memories absolve,
And martyrdom of scourged hearts quivering."
He turned and saw astride the dolorous flood

A mighty bridge paved with mosaic fire,
All restless, and a woman clothed in flame,
With hands calamitous that held a sword,
Stood of the quaking passage sentinel.
Magnificent and dire her burning face.
“Pass on,” she said once more, “O Bhrigu’s son;
The flower protects thee from my hands.” She stretched
One arm towards him and with violence
Majestic over the horrid arch compelled.
Unhurt, though shaking from her touch, alone
He stood upon an inner bank with strange
Black dreary mosses covered and perceived
A dim and level plain without one flower.
Over it paced a multitude immense
With gentle faces occupied by pain;
Strong men were there and grieving mothers, girls
With early beauty in their limbs and young
Sad children of their childlike faces robbed.
Naked they paced with falling hair and gaze
Drooping upon their bosoms, weak as flowers
That die for want of rain unmurmuring.
Always a silence was upon the place.
But Ruru came among them. Suddenly
One felt him there and looked, and as a wind
Moves over a still field of patient corn,
And the ears stir and shudder and look up
And bend innumerably flowing, so
All those dumb spirits stirred and through them passed
One shuddering motion of raised faces; then
They streamed towards him without sound and caught
With desperate hands his robe or touched his hair
Or strove to feel upon them living breath.
Pale girls and quiet children came and knelt
And with large sorrowful eyes into his looked.
Yet with their silent passion the cold hush
Moved not; but Ruru’s human heart half burst
With burden of so many sorrows; tears

Welled from him; he with anguish understood
That terrible and wordless sympathy
Of dead souls for the living. Then he turned
His eyes and scanned their lovely faces strange
For that one face and found it not. He paled,
And spoke vain words into the listless air:
"O spirits once joyous, miserable race,
Happier if the old gladness were forgot!
My soul yearns with your sorrow. Yet ah! reveal
If dwell my love in your sad nation lost.
Well may you know her, O wan beautiful spirits!
But she most beautiful of all that died,
By sweetness recognisable. Her name
The sunshine knew." Speaking his tears made way:
But they with dumb lips only looked at him,
A vague and empty mourning in their eyes.
He murmured low: "Ah, folly! were she here,
Would she not first have felt me, first have raised
Her lids and run to me, leaned back her face
Of silent sorrow on my breast and looked
With the old altered eyes into my own
And striven to make my anguish understand?
Oh joy, had she been here! for though her lips
Of their old excellent music quite were robbed,
Yet her dumb passion would have spoken to me;
We should have understood each other and walked
Silently hand in hand, almost content."
He said and passed through those untimely dead.
Speechless they followed him with clinging eyes.
Then to a solemn building weird he came
With grave colossal pillars round. One dome
Roofed the whole brooding edifice, like cloud,
And at the door strange shapes were pacing, armed.
Then from their fear the sweet and mournful dead
Drew back, returning to their wordless grief.
But Ruru to the perilous doorway strode,
And those disastrous shapes upon him raised

Their bows and aimed; but he held out Love's flower,
And with stern faces checked they let him pass.
He entered and beheld a silent hall
Dim and unbounded; moving then like one
Who up a dismal stair seeks ever light,
Attained a dais brilliant doubtfully
With flaming pediment and round it coiled
Python and Naga monstrous, Joruthcaru,
Tuxuc and Vasuki himself, immense,
Magic Carcotaca all flecked with fire;
And many other prone destroying shapes
Coiled. On the wondrous dais rose a throne,
And he its pedestal whose lotus hood
With ominous beauty crowns his horrible
Sleek folds, great Mahapudma; high displayed
He bears the throne of Death. There sat supreme
With those compassionate and lethal eyes,
Who many names, who many natures holds;
Yama, the strong pure Hades sad and subtle,
Dharma, who keeps the laws of old untouched,
Critanta, who ends all things and at last
Himself shall end. On either side of him
The four-eyed dogs mysterious rested prone,
Watchful, with huge heads on their paws advanced;
And emanations of the godhead dim
Moved near him, shadowy or serpentine,
Vast Time and cold irreparable Death.
Then Ruru came and bowed before the throne;
And swaying all those figures stirred as shapes
Upon a tapestry moved by the wind,
And the sad voice was heard: "What breathing man
Bows at the throne of Hades? By what force,
Spiritual or communicated, troubles
His living beauty the dead grace of Hell?"
And one replied who seemed a neighbouring voice:
"He has the blood of Gods and Titans old.
An Apsara his mother liquid-orbed

Bore to the youthful Chyavan's strong embrace
This passionate face of earth with Eden touched.
Chyavan was Bhrigu's child, Puloma bore,
The Titaness, — Bhrigu, great Brahma's son.
Love gave the flower that helps by anguish; therefore
He chilled not with the breath of Hades, nor
The cry of the infernal stream made stone."
But at the name of Love all hell was moved.
Death's throne half faded into twilight; hissed
The phantoms serpentine as if in pain,
And the dogs raised their dreadful heads. Then spoke
Yama: "And what needs Love in this pale realm,
The warm great Love? All worlds his breath confounds,
Mars solemn order and old steadfastness.
But not in Hell his legates come and go;
His vernal jurisdiction to bare Hell
Extends not. This last world resists his power
Youthful, anarchic. Here will he enlarge
Tumult and wanton joys?" The voice replied:
"Menaca momentary on the earth,
Heaven's Apsara by the fleeting hours beguiled
Played in the happy hidden glens; there bowed
To yoke of swift terrestrial joys she bore,
Immortal, to that fair Gundhurva king
A mortal blossom of delight. That bloom
Young Ruru found and plucked, but her too soon
Thy fatal hooded snake on earth surprised,
And he through gloom now travels armed by Love."
But then all Hades swaying towards him cried:
"O mortal, O misled! But sacrifice
Is stronger, nor may law of Hell or Heaven
Its fierce effectual action supersede.
Thy dead I yield. Yet thou bethink thee, mortal,
Not as a tedious evil nor to be
Lightly rejected gave the gods old age,
But tranquil, but august, but making easy
The steep ascent to God. Therefore must Time

Still batter down the glory and form of youth
And animal magnificent strong ease,
To warn the earthward man that he is spirit
Dallying with transience, nor by death he ends,
Nor to the dumb warm mother's arms is bound,
But called unborn into the unborn skies.
For body fades with the increasing soul
And wideness of its limit grown intolerant
Replaces life's impetuous joys by peace.
Youth, manhood, ripeness, age, four seasons
Twixt its return and pale departing life
Describes, O mortal, — youth that forward bends
Midst hopes, delights and dreamings; manhood deepens
To passions, toils and thoughts profound; but ripeness
For large reflective gathering-up of these,
As on a lonely slope whence men look back
Down towards the cities and the human fields
Where they too worked and laughed and loved; next age,
Wonderful age with those approaching skies.
That boon wilt thou renounce? Wherefore? To bring
For a few years — how miserably few! —
Her sunward who must after all return.
Ah, son of Rishis, cease. Lo, I remit
Hell's grasp, not oft relinquished, and send back
Thy beautiful life unborrowed to the stars.
Or thou must render to the immutable
Total all thy fruit-bearing years; then she
Reblossoms." But the Shadow antagonist:
"Let him be shown the glory he would renounce."
And over the flaming pediment there moved,
As on a frieze a march of sculptures, carved
By Phidias for the Virgin strong and pure,
Most perfect once of all things seen in earth
Or Heaven, in Athens on the Acropolis,
But now dismembered, now disrupt! or as
In Buddhist cavern or Orissan temple,
Large aspirations architectural,

Warrior and dancing-girl, adept and king,
And conquering pomps and daily peaceful groups
Dream delicately on, softening with beauty
Great Bhuvanayshwar, the Almighty's house,
With sculptural suggestion so were limned
Scenes future on a pediment of fire.
There Ruru saw himself divine with age,
A Rishi to whom infinity is close,
Rejoicing in some green song-haunted glade
Or boundless mountain-top where most we feel
Wideness, not by small happy things disturbed.
Around him, as around an ancient tree
Its seedlings, forms august or flame-like rose;
They grew beneath his hands and were his work;
Great kings were there whom time remembers, fertile
Deep minds and poets with their chanting lips
Whose words were seed of vast philosophies —
These worshipped; above this earth's half-day he saw
Amazed the dawn of that mysterious Face
And all the universe in beauty merge.
Mad the boy thrilled upwards, then spent ebbed back.
Over his mind, as birds across the sky
Sweep and are gone, the vision of those fields
And drooping faces came; almost he heard
The burdened river with human anguish wail.
Then with a sudden fury gathering
His soul he hurled out of it half its life,
And fell, like lightning, prone. Triumphant rose
The Shadow chill and deepened giant night.
Only the dais flickered in the gloom,
And those snake-eyes of cruel fire subdued.
But suddenly a bloom, a fragrance. Hell
Shuddered with bliss: resentful, overborne,
The world-besetting Terror faded back
Like one grown weak by desperate victory,
And a voice cried in Ruru's tired soul:
"Arise! the strife is over, easy now

The horror that thou hast to face, the burden
Now shared.” And with a sudden burst like spring
Life woke in the strong lover over-tried.
He rose and left dim Death. Twelve times he crossed
Boithorini, the river dolorous,
Twelve times resisted Hell and, hurried down
Into the ominous pit where plunges black
The vast stream thundering, saw, led puissantly
From night to unimaginable night, —
As men oppressed in dreams, who cannot wake,
But measure penal visions, — punishments
Whose sight pollutes, unheard-of tortures, pangs
Monstrous, intolerable mute agonies,
Twisted unmoving attitudes of pain,
Like thoughts inhuman in statuary. A fierce
And iron voicelessness had grasped those worlds.
No horror of cries expressed their endless woe,
No saving struggle, no breathings of the soul.
And in the last hell irremediable
Where Ganges clots into that fatal pool,
Appalled he saw her; pallid, listless, bare —
O other than that earthly warmth and grace
In which the happy roses deepened and dimmed
With come-and-go of swift enamoured blood!
Dumb drooped she; round her shapes of anger armed
Stood dark like thunder-clouds. But Ruru sprang
Upon them, burning with the admitted God.
They from his touch like ineffectual fears
Vanished; then sole with her, trembling he cried
The old glad name and crying bent to her
And touched, and at the touch the silent knots
Of Hell were broken and its sombre dream
Of dreadful stately pains at once dispersed.
Then as from one whom a surpassing joy
Has conquered, all the bright surrounding world
Streams swiftly into distance, and he feels
His daily senses slipping from his grasp,

So that unbearable enormous world
Went rolling mighty shades, like the wet mist
From men on mountain-tops; and sleep outstretched
Rising its soft arms towards him and his thoughts,
As on a bed, sank to ascending void.

But when he woke, he heard the koïl insist
On sweetness and the voice of happy things
Content with sunlight. The warm sense was round him
Of old essential earth, known hues and custom
Familiar tranquillising body and mind,
As in its natural wave a lotus feels.
He looked and saw all grass and dense green trees,
And sunshine and a single grasshopper
Near him repeated fierily its note.
Thrilling he felt beneath his bosom her;
Oh, warm and breathing were those rescued limbs
Against the greenness, vivid, palpable, white,
With great black hair and real and her cheek's
Old softness and her mouth a dewy rose.
For many moments comforting his soul
With all her jasmine body sun-ensnared
He fed his longing eyes and, half in doubt,
With touches satisfied himself of her.
Hesitating he kissed her eyelids. Sighing
With a slight sob she woke and earthly large
Her eyes looked upward into his. She stretched
Her arms up, yearning, and their souls embraced;
Then twixt brief sobbing laughter and blissful tears,
Clinging with all her limbs to him, "O love,
The green green world! the warm sunlight!" and ceased,
Finding no words; but the earth breathed round them,
Glad of her children, and the koïl's voice
Persisted in the morning of the world.

A NOTE ON *LOVE AND DEATH*

The story of Ruru and Pramadvura — I have substituted a name more manageable to the English tongue — her death in the forest by the snake and restoration at the price of half her husband's life is told in the Mahabharata. It is a companion legend to the story of Savitri but not being told with any poetic skill or beauty has remained generally unknown. I have attempted in this poem to bring it out of its obscurity. For full success, however, it should have had a more faithfully Hindu colouring, but it was written a score of years ago when I had not penetrated to the heart of the Indian idea and its traditions, and the shadow of the Greek underworld and Tartarus with the sentiment of life and love and death which hangs about them has got into the legendary framework of the Indian Patala and hells. The central idea of the narrative alone is in the Mahabharata; the meeting with Kama and the descent into Hell were additions necessitated by the poverty of incident in the original story.

Incomplete Narrative Poems
Circa 1899–1902

Khaled of the Sea

an Arabian romance

Prologue Alnuman and the Peri
Canto I The Story of Alnuman and the Emir's Daughter
Canto II The Companions of Alnuman 1
Canto III The Companions of Alnuman 2
Canto IV The Companions of Alnuman 3
Canto V The First Quest of the Sapphire Crown
Canto VI The Quest of the Golden Snake
Canto VII The Quest of the Marble Queen
Canto VIII The Quest of the Snowbird
Canto IX The Second Quest of the Sapphire Crown
Canto X The Journey of the Green Oasis
Canto XI The Journey of the Irremeable Ocean
Canto XII The Journey of the Land without Pity
Epilogue The Arabian and the Caliph

PROLOGUE

Alnuman and the Peri

In Bagdad by Euphrates, Asia's river,
Euphrates that through deserts must deliver
The voices which of human daybreaks are
Into the dim mysterious surge afar,
The Arabian dwelt; after long travel he.
Regions deserted, wastes of silent sea,
Wide Ocean ignorant of ships and lands
Never made glad by toil of mortal hands
For he had seen, the Indian mountains bare
Save of hard snow and the unbreathed huge air
And swum through giant waters and had heard
In those unhuman forests beast and bird,
The peacock's cry and tiger's hoarse appeal
Calling to God for prey, marked the vast wheel
Of monstrous birds shadowing whole countries; he
From Singhal through the long infinity
Of southern floods had steered his shuddering ship
Where unknown winds their lonely tumult keep.
And he had lived with strong and pitiless men,
Nations unhumanized by joy and pain,
And he had tasted grain not sown by man
And drunk strange milk in weird Mazinderan.
Silent he was, as one whom thoughts attend,
Distant, whom stiller hearts than ours befriend.
He lived with memories only; no sweet voice
Made the mute echoes of his life rejoice;
No lovely face of children brought the dawn
Into his home; but silent, calm, withdrawn,
He watched the ways of men with godlike eyes
Released from trammelling affinities.
Yet was he young and many women strove
Vainly to win his marble mind to love.
One day when wind had fled to the cool north
And the strong earth was blind with summer, forth

The Arabian rode from great Bagdad and turned
Into the desert. All around him burned
The imprisoned spirit of fire; above his head
The sky was like a tyranny outspread,
The sun a fire in those heavens, and fire
The sands beneath; the air burning desire
And breathless, a plumb weight of flame; yet rode
The Arabian unfeeling like a god.
Three hours he rode and now no more was seen
Bagdad, the imperial city, nor aught green,
But the illimitable sands around
Extend, a silent world waiting for sound,
When in the distance he descried a grace
Of motion beautiful in that dead place.
Wondering he turned, but suddenly the horse
Pricked up his slender ears, swerved from the course
And pawing stood the unwilling air, nor heard
The guiding voice nor the familiar word.
Whinnying with wrath he smote the desert sand
And mocked the rein and raged at the command.
Then raised the man his face and saw above
No cloud with the stark face of heaven strove,
A single blaze of light from pole to pole.
Smiling the Arabian spoke unto his soul.
"Here too then are you strong, O influences
That trouble the earth and air and the strong seas!
Therefore I will not stay your gathering wings
Who watch me from the air, you living things,
But go to find whatever peril or wonder
Wait me of life above the earth or under.
Strange will it be if quiet Bagdad yield
More terror or more sweetness than in field
Has stayed me yet or in untravelled flood
Or mountain or the tiger-throated wood."
So saying he grasped the strong and shaken mane
And set swift footing on the fiery plain.
At once the beast as if by sorcery

Strangely compelled, calmed his impetuous eye;
His angry tremor ceased and bounding wrath
Following unbidden in the Arabian's path.
But he with silent toil the sands untried
Vanquishing through that luminous world and wide
Went a slow shadow, till his feet untired
The fruit of all his labour long acquired.
Before a mile complete he was aware
Of a strange shape of beauty sitting there
On a sole boulder in the level wild,
Maiden, a marvellous bloom, a naked child;
All like a lily from her leaves escaped
The golden summer kissed her close and wrapped
In soft revealing sunshine, — a sweet bareness,
A creature made of flowers and choicest fairness;
And all her limbs were like a luminous dream,
So wonderfully white they burn and gleam,
Her shoulder ivory richly bathed in gold,
Her sides a snowy wonder to behold,
Marble made amorous; her body fair
Seemed one with the divine, translucent air,
A light within the light, a glorious treasure,
A thing to hold, to kiss, to slay with pleasure.
This girl was not alone, but with her watched
Two shapes of beauty and of terror hatched,
A strong, fierce snake, round her sweet middle twined,
A tigress at her lovely feet reclined.
Dreaming on those tremendous sands she waited
And often with that splendour miscreated
Played thoughtfully, about her wondrous knees
Binding the brilliant death or would increase
The whiteness of her limbs with its fierce hues
Or twine it in her tresses flowing loose.
Below that other restless evil played,
The fierce, sleek terror on the sands outspread.
First of the wonderful three rose with a bound
Waking the desert from its sleep with sound

The tigress, but the Arabian strode more near
As one who had forgotten how to fear
And frowning like a god with kingly look
He threatened the preparing death and shook
His javelin in the sun. Back crouched the fiend
Amazed nor could the steely light attend
Nor that unconquerable glance; yet lowered
To find her dreadful violence overpowered
By any smaller thing than death; and he
Heeded no more crouched limb nor stealthy eye.
He on that flowerlike shape a moment gazed
As one by strange felicity amazed,
Who long grown sorrow's friend his whole life grieves,
Blest beyond expectation, scarce believes
That joy is in his heart — so gazed, so laid
At last upon the white and gleaming maid
The question of his hands. O soft and real
The nakedness he grasped, no marble ideal
Born of the blazing light and infinite air,
A breathing woman with lovely limbs and bare.
Then with a strong melodious voice he cried
And all his cheek was flushed with royal pride.
"Thou then art mine, after long labour mine,
O earthly body and O soul divine,
After long labour and thy sounding home
Hast left and caverns where thy sisters roam,
O dweller where the austral tempest raves!
O daughter of the wild and beautiful waves!
Ah breasts of beauty! Ah delicious shoulder!
Leading from bliss to bliss the hands that hold her,
At length I grasp you then and snared at length
The ivory swiftness of thy feet and strength
Of this immortal body shaped for kings,
O memory of sweet and dreadful things!
Ah welcome to the streets that human tread
Makes musical and joy of human bread
Broken between dry hands and to the sight

Of the untroubled narrow rivers, light
Of lamps and warmth of kindled fires and man.
Fairer shall be thy feet on greensward than
On ocean rocks and O! more bright thy beauty
For human passion and for womanly duty
And softer in my bosom shalt thou sleep
Than lulled by the sublime and monstrous deep.
Much have I laboured; the resplendent face
Of summer I have hated, as the days
Went by and no delightful brook was found
Sprinkling with earth's cool love the ruthless ground,
And in my throat there was a desert's thirst
And on my tongue a fire: I have cursed
The spring and all its flowers: the wrathful cry
Of the wild waters and their cruelty
I have endured, labouring with sail and oar
Through the mad tempest for some human shore
And fought with winds, and seen vast Hell aflame
Down in the nether flood till I became
Blind with the sight of those abysmal graves
And deaf with the eternal sound of waves
And all my heart was broken alone to be
Day after day with the unending sea.
And much on land I have laboured without moan
Or weakening tears making my heart a stone.
But thou art come and I shall hear no more
By inexorable rocks the Ocean roar,
Nor pine in dungeons far from pity or aid.
But in far other prison, seaborn maid,
Thy limbs shall minister to my delight
Even as an ordinary woman's might.
And I shall hear thy voice around my heart
Like a cool rivulet and shall not start
To see thee ivory gleaming and all night
Shall feel thee in my arms, O darling white —
With afterjoys that spring from these; the face
Of childish loveliness shall light my days,

About my doors the feet of children tread
And little heads with jonquils garlanded,
That often to sweetness win war-hardened eyes
And hearts grown iron their soft masteries
Compel and the light touch of little hands
Bend sworded fingers to their sweet commands.
O bright felicity, labour's dear end,
Into my arms, into my heart descend."
So as he spoke, the silent desert air
Lived with his gladness, and the maiden there
Listened with downcast lids and a soft flush
Upon her like the coming of a blush.
But when he finished and the air was mute,
She laughed with happy lips most like a flute
Or voice of cuckoo in an Indian grove
Waking the heart to vague delightful love.
And with divine eyes gleaming where strange mirth
A smiling mischief was, the living girth
Of her delicious waist she suddenly
Unbound and by the middle lifting high
Betwixt them shook. Hissed the fierce snake and raised
Its jewelled hood for spotted radiance praised,
Its jewelled hood to the dread leap distended:
Sad limit of noble life, had that descended
Since short his breath and evil, who that pang
Experienced; but before the serpent sprang,
Wrathful, the Arabian seized the glittering neck
And twines of bronze burning with many a fleck
Of coloured fire. His angry grasp to quell
Vainly the formidable folds rebel:
Not all that gordian force and slippery strength
Of coils availed. Inanimate at length,
The immense destroyer on the Arabian's wrist
Hung in a ruin loose; and to resist
His wrath of love none now might intervene,
Nor she deny him. Yet with tranquil mien
Smiling she sat and swept with noble gesture

Her hair back that had fallen a purple investure
Over her glowing grace. Strong arms he cast
Around her naked loveliness and fast
Showered kisses on her limbs whose marble white
Grew woman with a soft and rosy light
In each kissed place. "Deemedst thou then," he cried,
"Bright fugitive, lovely wanderer with the tide,
By shaking death before death-practised eyes
My crown to wrest of strenuous enterprise,
Thyself, thyself and beauty? O too sweet
To touch our hard earth with thy faultless feet!
Yet on hard earth must dwell. For with the ground
Thy dreadful guardians who have fenced thee round
Are equalled, and thyself, sweet, though thou shame
The winds with swiftness or like mounting flame
Strive all thy days in my imprisoning arms,
Couldst burn thyself no exit. With alarms
Menace and shapes of death; call on the flood
For thy deliverance on these sands to intrude
And lead thee to its jealous waters rude;
But hands that have flung back the swallowing sea
Shall stay and chastise and habituate thee
To service due." He said and with the words
The power in his soul increased, as birds
With sounds encourage love and like great waves
Exulting, rose against the breasts he craves,
So he engrossed the lovely limbs. Then grasping
Her fair soft arm in one hand, the other clasping
Her smooth desirèd thighs, from that rude seat,
The grey sun-blistered boulder most unmeet
To bear her snowwhite radiance, lifted. She
As to his horse he bore her mightily,
A little strove in his strong arms, but round
Her lithe, reluctant limbs closer he bound
His despot hands and on the saddle set
Never with such sweet rider burdened yet.
Then to his seat he sprang and musical

His cry in that vast silence, wherewithal
He urged his horse, which delicately went
Arching its neck with joy and proud content.
Great were the Arabian's labours; many seas
He had passed and borne impossible miseries
And battled with impracticable ills
O'er uncrossed rivers and forbidden hills,
Till nature fainted. Yet too little was this
To merit all the heaven now made his.
For she, earth's wonder hard to grasp as fire,
She whom all ocean's secret depths admire,
Laid her delicious cheek to his and flung
Sweet, bare arms on his neck and round him clung:
Her snowy side was of his being a part;
Her naked breast burdened his throbbing heart,
And all her hair streamed over him and the whiteness
Of her was in his eyes and her soft brightness
A joy beneath his hands, to his embrace
And he was clothed with her as in a dress.
Round them the strong recovered coils were rolled
Of the great snake and with imperious fold
Compelled their limbs together, and by their side
Pacing the tigress checked her dangerous stride.
So rode they like a vision. All the time
She murmured accents as of linkèd rhyme
Musical, in a language like the sea,
Accents of undulating melody.
For sometimes it was like a happy noon
Murmuring with waves and sometimes like the swoon
Of calm, a silence heard, or rich by noise
Of rivers pouring with their seaward voice
And leaping laughters and sometimes was wild
And passionate as the sobbing of a child.
But often it was like the cold salt spray
On a health-reddened cheek and glad with day
And life and sad with the far-moaning call
Of wind upon the waters funeral.

Not on the lips of man might fashioned be
A language of such wild variety.
Now of that magic tongue no separate word
Was of Alnuman understood nor heard,
And yet he knew that of the caves she spoke
Where never earthly light of sunshine woke,
And of unfathomed things beneath the floods
And peopled depths and Ocean solitudes
And mighty creatures of the main and light
Of jewels making a subluminous night
Lower than even the dead may sink; and walls
Of coral and in what majestic halls
The naked seaborn sisters link their dance;
How sometimes on the shores their white limbs glance
In the mysterious moonlight; how they come
To river-banks far from their secret home;
And last she spoke of mighty Love that reaches
Resistless arms beyond the long sea-beaches
And mocks the barriers of the storm, and how
Pearls unattainable a human brow
Have decked and man, the child of misery,
Been mated with the sisters of the sea.
So on she murmured like a ceaseless song
Making the weary sands a rapture; long
The patient desert round them waits; nor soon
The sun toiled through the endless afternoon:
But they paced always like a marvellous dream,
And dreamlike in the eyes of man might seem
Such magic vision (had human eyes been found
In the sole desert void of sign or bound), —
The horse that feared its dread companion not;
The kingly man with brow of reaching thought
And danger-hardened strength; fair as the morn,
The radiant girl upon his saddle borne,
Naked, a vision not of earth; the fell
Serpent that twined about them, terrible
With burning hues; and the fierce tigress there

Following with noiseless step the godlike pair.
Nor when to Bagdad and its streets they came,
Did any eye behold. Only a name
Was in the ears of the grim warders. Straight
Like engines blind of some o'ermastering fate
They rose, the mighty bolts they drew: loud jarred
The doors unhearing with deaf iron barred
And groaned upon their road; then backward swung
Whirling and kissed again with clamorous tongue.
Nor in the streets was any step of man,
Before loud wheels no swift torchbearers ran
Setting the night on fire; bright and rare
The garlanded highshuttered windows, where
Men revelled and sound into the shadows cast:
All else was night and silence where they passed.
So is the beautiful sea stranger gone
To her new home, who now no more must run
Upon the bounding waves nor feel the sun
On wind-blown limbs, destined a mortal's bride.
So is the strong Arabian deified
In bliss. Moreover from the wondrous night
When with those small beloved feet grew bright
His lonely house, wealth like a sea swept through
Its doors and as a dwelling of gods it grew
In beauty and in brightness. All that thrives
Costly or fragrant upon earth or lives
Of riches in the hoarding ocean lost
And all bright things with gold or gems embossed
By Indian or by Syrian art refined
And all rich cloths and silks with jewels lined
Regal Bokhara weaves or Samarcand,
Increased and gathered to Alnuman's hand
And girls of glorious limb and feature he
Bought for his slaves, of rose and ivory,
Sweet Persians with the honey-hiding mouth
And passionate Arab girls and strong-limbed youth
Of Tartar maidens for his harem doors.

For now not vainly the fair child implores
Of Shaikh or of Emir his love for boon,
But with high marriage-rites some prosperous moon
At last has brought into the marble pride
Of that great house for envy edified.
So in Bagdad the Arabian dwelt nor seemed
Other his life than theirs who never dreamed
Beyond earth's ken, nor made in sun and breeze
Their spirits great with shock of the strong seas,
Nor fortified their hearts with pains sublime
Nor wrestled with the bounds of space and time.
Like common men he lived to whom the ray
Of a new sun but brings another day
Unmeaning, who in their own selves confined
Know not the grandeur which the mightier mind
Inherits when it makes the destinies rude
The chisel by which its marble mass and crude
With God's or hero's likeness is indued.
Yet this was also rumoured that within
The sheath of that calm life he sojourned in
An edge of flaming rapture was, that things
Beyond all transitory imaginings
Came to him secret and vast pleasures more
Than frail humanity had dared to feel before.
Since too much joy man's heart can hardly bear
And all too weak man's narrow senses were
For raptures that eternal spirits attain
In sensuous heavens ignorant of pain.
Yet even such raptures mortal man's could be
Wed with the child of the unbounded sea.

CANTO I

The Story of Almaimun and the Emir's Daughter[1]

Now in great Bagdad of the Abbasside
The wanderer rests, to peace at last allied,
Whom storm so long had tossed to storm; and grace
Of love dwelt with him and the nobleness
Of hearts made golden by felicity,
Which is earth's preferable alchemy.
For other is from pain the metal wrought,
Anguish and wrestling in the coils of thought.
These strengthen, these the mind as marble hard
Make and as marble pure, which has not feared
To scourge itself with insight; but the stress
Of joy heightened to self-forgetfulness
Is sweeter and to sweeter uses tends.
With such felicity were crowned the friends
And lovers of Almaimun and increase
In the glad strength that grows from boundless peace.
And each as to her orb the sunflower burns
His spirit to his spirit's image turns.
Such puissance great well-poisèd natures prove
To mould to their own likeness all they love.
But where is she who lit his doubtful morn,
Whose sweet imagined shape each hour new-born
Brightened but to illumine, kindled each
Stray look with godhead and her daily speech
A far ethereal music made, for whom
He sought the wild waves and the peopled gloom
Of the unseen? Must only she make moan?
She in the crowded chambers is alone
And closes eyes kept dry by anguished pride
To wake in tears that hardly will be dried.
Happy the heart and more than earthly blest
That for those hands was meant where 'tis possessed,

---

[1] *Here Sri Aurobindo altered the name "Alnuman" to "Almaimun". — Ed.*

That to no alien house at the end has come
But winging goes as to its natural home.
The evening bird with no more simple flight
Reaches its one unfailing nest at night.
The heart which Fate not always here perverse
With the one possible home out of an universe,
Makes simply happy there secure shall dwell,
Feeling that to be there is only well.
And equal happy whether queenly chair
Her portion or she kneel loose-girdled there
And serve him as a slave. Alike 'tis heaven,
Rule or obedience to the one heart given.
So did not bright Zuleikha deem when she
The temple was of his idolatry.
Impatient of divine subjection, all
Love's wealth was to her grace imperial
Purple and diadems and earth's noblest gift
But vantage her disdainful pride to lift.
She was an Emir's daughter and her sire
Clothed her in jewels and sublime attire,
From silver dishes fed and emerald
And in a world of delicate air installed
So that her nature with these costly things
Being burdened raised in vain its heavenward wings.
From Koraish and the Abbasside he drew
His stern extraction. Yet what brighter grew
About his formidable name accursed
Was a white fire of riches and the thirst
Of poor men gazing with a bitter stealth
On that impossibility of wealth.
"Abdullah the Emir," so men would say
Drawing their rags about them, "has display
Of gold and silver and the sunlight fades
At noon in his wide treasury and the shades
Of midnight are more luminous there than birth
Of day upon the ordinary earth.
He has rich garments, would the naked clothe

From Bagdad to the sea, were he not loth:
The leavings of his menials far exceed
In Khorassan the labourer's sharpened need.
And since by thee this fair display was planned,
O God, yet from the beggar's outstretched hand
He guards his boundless trust ignobly well,
Just Lord, display to him the fires of Hell."
And here another pressing from his eye
His children's pining looks, made sad reply.
"Richer his wealth than widest chambers hold,
Not in the weary heaps of ingots told
Entirely, nor the cloths Damascus yields,
Nor what the seas give up, nor what the fields.
He gathers ever with exhaustless hands:
His camels heave across the endless sands.
Through Balkh when to Caboul or Candahar
The wains go groaning or the evening star
Watches the pomp of the wide caravan
Intend to provinces Arabian,
Half is Abdullah the Emir's: and he
Gets spices of the south and porphyry:
His are the Chinese silks, the Indian work
Saved hardly from the horsehooves of the Turk:
From Balsora the ships that o'er the bar
Reel into Ocean's grasp, Abdullah's are;
Yemen's far ports are with his ventures full;
Muscat transmits him horses, arms and wool.
The desert rider hopes no richer prize
To handle than Abdullah's merchandize;
With joy the Malayan sea-robber hails
His argosy and for his western sails
The Moorish pirates all the horizon scan
Upon the far Mediterranean.
Yet though his losses make the desert great
And Ocean a new treasury create
From his sole rapine, yet untouched endure
His riches by that vast expenditure.

He takes but to increase his piles of gold,
He gives but to recover hundredfold.
Thereby the poor increase. Wherefore I trust,
When Azrael shall smite his limbs to dust
And he upon that dolorous bridge is led
Which, lord and peasant, all must one day tread,
The bitter sword that spans the nether hell,
He may be evened with the infidel."
And one might answer mid these wretched men
Who quiet was from constancy to pain;
"Curse him not either lest the Kazi find
And God loose not the chains that he shall bind."
For he indeed was mighty in the town,
A man acceptable in his renown;
The mullahs to his will interpreted
Their books and the law's lightning from his head
Glanced on the rash accuser; for his word
Was Hédoya before the Kazi heard.
But whence the fountain of his wealth might flow,
Well did the sad and toiling peasant know.
For he as governor in Khorassan
Had held the balance betwixt man and man
And justified his rule benevolent
By rape and torture for their own good meant,
The fallen rooftree and the broken door
And rents wrung from the miserable poor.
And now hemmed in with lustrous things and proud,
Each day a pomp, each night with music loud,
He blazed, however his eye a darkness cast
And pleasure by his sense external passed.
Yet joy he had over his gathered gold
And in that one sweet maiden joy untold.
Daughter of Noureddin the Barmecide
Was she who bore this brightness, but when died
Jaafar and all his house fell like a tower
Loosened in the mutation of an hour,
Abdullah found his foe an outlawed man,

Proscribed, a heretic and Persian
And slew him with the sword juridical
Between his golden house and Allah's wall.

Uloupie

CANTO I

Under the high and gloomy eastern hills
The portals of Pataala are and there
The Bhogavathie with her sinuous waves
Rises, a river alien to the sun,
And often to its strange and gleaming sands
Uloupie came, weary of those dim shades
And great disastrous caverns neighbouring Hell,
Avid of sunlight. Through the grasses long
She glided and her fierce and gorgeous hood
Gleamed with a perilous beauty and a light
Above the green spikes of the grass; often
In the slow sinuous waters she was spied
Swimming, with mystic dusky hair and cheeks
That had no rose, — one shoulder's dipping glow
Through water and one white breast hardly seen.
But as she swam she looked towards the west
Dreaming of daily sunlight and of flowers
That need soft rain and of the night with stars,
A friendly darkness and the season's change
In beautiful Aryavertha far away,
The country of the Gods, and yet sometimes
Vaguely expectant to the southward gazed.

Then into heaven dim-featured twilight came
And in her city mid the eastern hills
Chitrangada awoke and saw the dawn
Presaged in bleakness. From Urjoona's arms
Unclasping her rose-white smooth limbs, she looked
Into the opening world; but all was grey
And formless. Then into her mood there passed
The spirit of the gloomy northern hills
Burdening her breasts with terror and her heart
Was bared to insight, and new-heard a moan
Of waters and remembered pain. The sad
Prophecies of the pale astrologers

Haunted her with affliction, and she found
Pale hints of absence from the twilight drawn.
But now the hero felt his clasp a void
And on one arm half-rising searched the grey
Unlidded darkness for the face; then spoke
Slowly her name, "How has the unborn day
Called thee, belovèd, that thou standest dumb
In the grey light like one whose joy is far?
Come hither." Silently she came and knelt
And laid her quiet cheek upon his breast.
He felt her tears, wondering; and she replied,
"Ah, dost thou love me and a moment brief
Of absence troubles even in sleep thy heart
Waking to emptiness? And yet, ah God,
How easily that void will soon be filled!
For thou wilt like a glorious burning move
Through cities and through regions like a star,
Careless in thy heroic strength o'er all
The beautiful country Aryavertha. Women
Will see thy face and strangely, swiftly drawn
Thy masculine attraction feel and bow
Over thy feet. For thou wilt come to them
A careless glory taking women's hearts
As one breaks from a tree the wayside flowers,
And smile, securely kind, even as a god
Might draw a mortal maiden to his arms
And marry his immortal mouth to hers.
Then will thy destiny seize thee; thou wilt pass
Like some great light in heaven, leaving behind
A splendid memory of force and fire.
And thou wilt fill thy soul with battle, august
Misfortunes and tremendous harms embrace,
Experience mighty raptures and at last
Upon some world-renowned far-rumoured field
Empire for ever win or lose, nor all
The while think once of my forgotten face."
She ceased and wept; he said, touching her hair,

"What wast thou musing, O Chitrangada,
Lonely beside the window and thine eyes
Looked out on the half-formed aspect of things
Twixt light and darkness? Do not so again.
For bleak and dreadful is the hour ere dawn
And one who gazes out then from his sweet,
Warm, happy, bounded human room, is touched
With awful memories that he cannot grasp
And mighty sorrows without form, the sense
Of an original vastness desolate,
Bleak labour and a sad unfinished world.
Dwell not with these again, but when thou wakest
And seest the unholy hour pallid gaze
Into thy room, draw closer to my bosom
Waking with kisses and with joy surround
Thy soul until God rises with the sun.
Friendly to mortals is the living sun's
Great brilliant light; but this pale hour was made
For slowly-dying men whose lone chilled souls
Grow near to that greyness and dumb mourners
Unfriended." But Chitrangada replied,
"I looked into the dawn and had a dream.
Thou wast gone far from me; too well I knew
That sound of trampling horsehooves in the north
And victor rumours of thy chariot shook
The hearts of distant kings. I sat alone
At this pale window and about me saw
My city and our low familiar hills.
Yet these were but as objects painted in
Upon the eye, and round me I beheld
The gloomy northern mountains with their mists
And sorrowful embracing rains and heard
With melancholy voices rolling down
The waters of a dull, ill-omened stream
Sinuous and eddies alien to the sun.
That thou wilt pass from me I know, nor would
I stay thee, had I power: for if today

I held thy feet, yet as the seasons passed,
The impulse of thy mighty life would come
Upon thee like a wind and drive thee forth
To love and battle and disastrous deeds
And all the giant anguish that preserves
This world. Thou as resistlessly wast born
To these things as the leopard sleek to strength
And beauty and fierceness, as resistlessly
As women are to love; though well they know
Pain for the end, yet knowing still must love.
Ah swiftly pass. Why shouldst thou linger here
Vainly? How will it serve God's purpose in thee
To tarry soothing for such brief while longer
Merely a woman's heart; meanwhile perhaps
Lose some great moment of thy life which once
Neglected never can return." She ceased
And strove to conquer overmastering tears.
He was silent a little, then his eyes
Strained towards the dim-seen fairness of her face,
Saying, "O little loving child, who once
Wast simply glad to love and feel my kiss!
But now thou mournest, art in one night changed.
Thou wast not wont to leave my arms ere dawn
And dream of sorrow. Rather wast thou fain
Of all my bosom and the gazing light
Hardly could force away thy obstinate clasp.
Yet now thou speakst of absence easily.
Is my love faded? Dost thou feel my arms
Looser about thee, my belovèd? Nay,
Thou knowest that not less but more I love thee
Than when to eastern Monipura far
I came, a wandering prince companioned only
By courage and my sword and found thee here,
O sweet young sovereign, ruling with pure eyes
And little maiden hand, fragile and mild,
A strong and savage nation. At my call
Unquestioning thou camest, oh, meekly down

Leaving tremendous seat and austere powers,
Contented at my feet to dwell and feel
My kisses on thy hair, and couldst renounce
Thy glorious girdle for my simple arms.
O fair young soul, candid and meek and frank
Thy love was, opening to me fragrantly
Like flowers to the sun, wide-orbed, and yielded
Thy whole self up. Yet now thou speakest sadly
Too like a mind matured by thought and pain."

He ceased, covering her bosom with his hands,
And she trembled, and broke out faltering.
"O endlessness of moments and the long
Rain-haunted nights when thou art far! O me
And the pale dreadful dawn when I shall wake
In the grey hour and feel myself alone
For ever! Yet O my rapture and pride! O prince,
O hero, O strong protagonist of earth!
World-conqueror! and in heaven immortal lips
Burning have kissed thy feet, but I possessed.
God knows that I have loved thee, not with grudging
Piecemeal reluctant cessions of the soul
As ordinary women love, but greatly
With one glad falling at my conqueror's feet
All suddenly and warmly like the Spring.
Ah God, thy beauty when it dawned on me
And I obeyed thy bright attraction! felt
Thy face like the great moon that draws the tides!
Facing our armèd senate, bow in hand
Leaned on a pillar with a banner's pomp
Seeming to mingle in thy hair thou stoodst
Expectant, careless, and thy strong gracious face
Was brilliant like a sudden god's. And half
I rose up as one called. But even then
Through all the hushed assembly ran a murmur,
An impulse and a movement and with cries
Round thee my strong barbarian nobles pressed

Offering fierce homage. But I sat alone,
Abandoned, with a wounded sad delight,
Loving thy glory, like a young warrior conquered
In battle by the hero he admires.
Thou tookst me by the hand and ledst me down
From the high daïs and the ancient throne:
Faltering I went with meek submissive eyes."
Then strong Urjoon: "Beloved, and was this not
Dearer, a woman's bliss in her one lord
Than ruling all those kings? Dost thou not choose
Rather thy body by my kisses wakened
Than those free virgin and unconscious limbs?
Ah wherefore shouldst thou dream of love cut short
And joy without its sequel? Rather think
That thy young passion shall to matron bloom
Live warmly enriched and beautifully changed
When thou with the hushed wonder of motherhood
Touching thy sweet young eyes holdst up to me
Returning from high battle to thine arms
A creature of our own." And she answered
With a low sob, "Would God that it might be!
But though I loved thee I have known I was
No real part of thy great days; only
A bosom on which thou hast lain ere riding
To battle, a face which thou hast loved and passed.
Hero, take up thy bow! Warrior, arise!
Proceed with thy majestic mission. Thou
From many mighty spirits wast selected
And mayst not for a transient joy renounce
The anguish and the crown. But I shall witness
Thy far-off pomps, not utterly alone;
As herdsmen pausing under quiet leaves
Watch the stupendous passage of a host,
Shrill neigh of horses, chariots swift and men
Marching, and hear great conchshells blown, and look
Into the burning eyes of kings. Some wave
Of thy vast fate perhaps shall roll thee here

Ere all is over; for the long round of things
Brings a changed soul in man to old unaltered
Places, and objects cared for once; then, then
We touching hands in the old way, yet changed,
Shall wonder in each other's eyes to find
Strange kindlings and the buried deeps of love."
She ended and Urjoona for a moment
Beheld vast Aryavertha as if mapped
Before him, rivers, heaven-invading hills
And cities ancient as their skies; then turned
And drawing to his bosom Chitrangada
With his calm strength surrounding her replied:
"This may be; yet, O woman, O delight,
Remember to rejoice! Flowers die, beloved,
To live again; therefore hold fast to love,
Hold fast the blooming of thy life in love.
The soul's majestic progress moulding doom
Is with the frailest flower helped that blows
In frankness. Therefore is the woman's part
Nearest divine, who to one motion keeps
And like the fixed immortal planets' round
Is constant to herself in him she loves.
Nor though fate call me hence, have I in vain
Loved thee, young virgin of the hills, and snared
Thy feet with kisses; though my soul from thee
Adventure journeying like a star the void, —
As 'tis our spirit's fate ever to roam
Seeking bright portions of ourself, which found
The strong heart cherishes until his close.
Relinquish nothing grasped; who yieldeth aught
To fate or weakness, misses the great goal; —
So have I planted thee within my heart,
O tender beauty, and shall not lightly lose.
Though years divide us and the slow upgrowth
Of overlaying thoughts submerge the peace,
The sweet and mutual self — yet the old joy
Lives like Valmekie in his mound, — the sage,

Buried, forgot, but murmuring the name.
Let us not lose then, O Chitrangada,
One moment's possibility of love
Which being squandered, we shall then regret.
Fate that united once, may when she will
Divorce, but cannot the sweet meaning spoil
Of these warm kisses." He embraced her wholly
Confounding her with bliss; so for that time
The Shadow fled and joy forgot his close.
    But one pale morn Chitrangada rose wan
And to the stable through the grey hushed place
Descending, with her little deft hands yoked
Urjoona's coursers to the car, — persuading
Thrust in their whinnying mouths the bit, fastened
The traces, harmonised the reins, then led
Into the sad dim court trampling his steeds;
And with a strange deep look of love and hate
Caressing said, faint with her unshed tears:
"You brought him here who now shall bear away,
O horses yoked to fate. How often yet
Will you deceive us shaking wide your manes
And trampling over women's hearts with hooves
Thunderous towards battle? Yet your breed perhaps
Shall bring him to my wrinkled age." And now
Urjoona came: his mailed and resonant tread
Rang in her very heart, his corslet blazed
Towards the chill skies and his heroic form
Seemed to consent with the surrounding hills.
But in the marble face and eyes august
The light of his tremendous fate had dawned
Like a great sunrise. Calm her shuddering body
He took into his bosom and with no word
Under the witnessing, unmovèd heavens
Kissed her pale lips. Then to his car he rose.
    And now she did not weep, but silently
Took and returned his kiss. So he went forth.
Thundering the great wheels jarred upon the stones

Of the wide court and echoes filled the air
With a triumph of warlike sound. Outside,
The city's nobles, waiting, saw the car
Emerge, and bowed down to their king. They spoke
No word, but stood austerely watching still,
A mist over their stern and savage eyes,
His going, as men in darkness watch a light
Carried away that cheered them for an hour,
Then turned back homeward. But Chitrangada
Waited till the last thunders died away
And far off on a hill the warlike flag
Waved in the breeze and dipped below the edge;
Then to her chamber slowly went alone.

Sonnets from Manuscripts
Circa 1900–1901

O face that I have loved

O face that I have loved until no face
Beneath the quiet heavens such glory wear,
They say you are not beautiful, — no snare
Of twilight in the changing mysticness
Or deep enhaloed secrecy of hair,
Soft largeness in the eyes I dare not kiss!
Unreal all your bosom's dreadful bliss.
Too narrow are your brows they say to bear
The temple of vast beauty in its span
Or chaste cold bosom to house fierily
Beauty that maddens all the heart of man.
I know not; this I know that utterly
My soul is by some magic curls surprised,
Some glances have my heart immortalized.

I cannot equal

I cannot equal those most absolute eyes,
Although they rule my being, with the stars,
Nor floral rich comparisons devise
To detail sweetness that your body wears.
Nor in the heavens hints of you I find,
Nor dim suggestions in this thoughtful eve;
The moonlight of your darker grace is blind.
Who can with such pale delicacies deceive
A naked burning heart? Only one place
Satisfies me of you, where the feet
That I shall never clasp, with beauty press
The barren earth in one place only sweet,
One face in the wide world alone divine,
The only one that never can be mine.

O letter dull and cold

O letter dull and cold, how can she read
Gladly these lifeless lines, no fire that prove,
When others even their passionate hearts exceed
Caressing her sweet name with words of love?
O me that I could force this barrier, turn
My heart to syllables, make all desire
One burning word, then would my letters yearn
With some reflection of that hidden fire.
Ah if I could, what then? This fiery pit
Within for human eyes was never meant.
All hearts would view with horror or with hate
A picture not of earthly lineament.
Yourself even, sweet, would start with terror back
As at the hissing of a sudden snake.

My life is wasted

My life is wasted like a lamp ablaze
Within a solitary house unused,
My life is wasted and by Love men praise
For sweet and kind. How often have I mused
What lovely thing were love and much repined
At my cold bosom moved not by that flame.
’Tis kindled; lo, my dreadful being twined
Round one whom to myself I dare not name.
I cannot quench the fire I did not light
And he that lit it will not; I cannot even
Drive out the guest I never did invite;
Although the soul he dwells with loses heaven.
I burn and know not why; I sink to hell
Fruitlessly and am forbidden to rebel.

Because thy flame is spent

Because thy flame is spent, shall mine grow less,
O bud, O wonder of the opening rose?
Why both my soul and Love it would disgrace
If I could trade in love, begin and close
My long account of passion, like a book
Of merchant's credit given to be repaid,
Or not returned, struck off with lowering look
Like a bad debt uncritically made.
What thou couldst give, thou gav'st me, one sweet smile
Worth all the sunlight that the years contain,
One month of months when thy sweet spirit awhile
Fluttered o'er mine half-thinking to remain.
What I could give, I gave thee, to my last breath
Immortal love, immovable by death.

Thou didst mistake

Thou didst mistake, thy spirit's infant flight
Opening its lovely wings upon the sun
Paused o'er the first strong bloom that met thy sight
Thinking perhaps it was the only one.
But all this fragrant garden was beyond.
Winds came to thee with hints of honey; day
Disclosed a brighter hope than this unsunned
Thought-sheltered heart and called thee far away.
Thou didst mistake. Must I then rage, grow ill,
With tortured vanity and think it love,
Miscall with brutal names my lady's will
Fouling thy snowwhite image, O my dove?
Is not thy kiss enough, though only one,
For all eternity to live upon?

Rose, I have loved

Rose, I have loved thy beauty, as I love
The dress that thou hast worn, the transient grass,
O'er which thy happy careless footsteps move,
The yet-thrilled waysides that have watched thee pass.
Soul, I have loved thy sweetness as men love
The necessary air they crave to breathe,
The sunlight lavished from the skies above,
And firmness of the earth their steps beneath.
But were that beauty all, my love might cease
Like love of weaker spirits; were't thy charm
And grace of soul, mine might with age decrease
Or find in Death a silence and a term,
But rooted in the unnameable in thee
Shall triumph and transcend eternity.

I have a hundred lives

I have a hundred lives before me yet
To grasp thee in, O spirit ethereal,
Be sure I will with heart insatiate
Pursue thee like a hunter through them all.
Thou yet shalt turn back on the eternal way
And with awakened vision watch me come
Smiling a little at errors past, and lay
Thy eager hand in mine, its proper home.
Meanwhile made happy by thy happiness
I shall approach thee in things and people dear
And in thy spirit's motions half-possess
Loving what thou hast loved, shall feel thee near,
Until I lay my hands on thee indeed
Somewhere among the stars, as 'twas decreed.

Still there is something

Still there is something that I lack in thee
And yet must find. There is a broad abyss
Between possession and true sovereignty
Which thou must bridge with a diviner kiss.
I questioned all the beauty of other girls
Thinking thou hadst it not to give indeed.
But not Giannina's breasts nor Pippa's curls
Contained it; thou alone canst meet my need.
Deniest thou some secret of thy soul
To me who claim thee all? Nay, can it be
Thy bosom's joys escape from my control?
Forbid it Heaven Hell should yawn for thee.
Deny it now! Let not sweet love begun
End in red blood and awful justice done.

I have a doubt

I have a doubt, I have a doubt which kills.
Tell me, O torturing beauty, O divine
Witchcraft, O soul escaped from heaven's hills
Yet fed upon strange food of utter sin.
Why dost thou torture me? Hast thou no fear?
My love was ever like my hate a sword
To search the heart and kill however dear
The joy that would not own me for its lord.
Yet must I still believe that thou art true
If thou wilt say it and smile. Knowst thou not then
I have purchased with my passion all of you
And wilt thou keep one nook for other men?
Deny it now! Let not sweet love begun
End in red blood and awful justice done.

To weep because a glorious sun

To weep because a glorious sun has set
Which the next morn shall gild the east again,
To mourn that mighty strengths must yield to fate
Which by that fall a double force attain,
To shrink from pain without whose friendly strife
Joy could not be, to make a terror of death
Who smiling beckons us to farther life
And is a bridge for the persistent breath;
Despair and anguish and the tragic grief
Of dry set eyes or such disastrous tears
As rend the heart though meant for its relief
And all man's ghastly company of fears
Are born of folly that believes this span
Of brittle life can limit immortal man.

What is this talk

What is this talk of slayer and of slain?
Swords are not sharp to slay nor floods assuage
This flaming soul. Mortality and pain
Are mere conventions of a mightier stage.
As when a hero by his doom pursued
Falls like a pillar of the huge world uptorn
Shaking the hearts of men and awe-imbued,
Silent the audience sits or weeps forlorn,
Meanwhile behind the stage the actor sighs
Deep-lunged relief, puts off what he has been
And talks with friends that waited or from the flies
Watches the quiet of the closing scene,
Even so the unwounded spirits of the slain
Beyond our vision passing live again.

Short Poems from Manuscripts
Circa 1900–1901

The Spring Child

(*On Basanti's birthday — Jyestha 1900*)

Of Spring is her name for whose bud and blooming
We praise today the Giver, —
Of Spring and its sweetness clings about her
For her face is Spring and Spring's without her,
As loth to leave her.

See, it is summer; the brilliant sunlight
Lies hard on stream and plain,
And all things wither with heats diurnal;
But she! how vanished things and vernal
In her remain.

And almost indeed we repine and marvel
To watch her bloom and grow;
For half we had thought our sweet bud could never
Bloom out, but must surely remain for ever
The child we know.

But now though summer must come and autumn
In God's high governing
Yet I deem that her soul with soft insistence
Shall guard through all change the sweet existence
And charm of Spring.

O dear child soul, our loved and cherished,
For this thy days had birth,
Like some tender flower on a grey stone portal
To sweeten and flush with childhood immortal
The ageing earth.

There are flowers in God's garden of prouder blooming
Brilliant and bold and bright,
The tulip and rose are fierier and brighter,
But this has a softer hue, a whiter
And milder light.

Long be thy days in rain and sunshine,
Often thy spring relume,
Gladdening thy mother's heart with thy beauty,
Flowerlike doing thy gentle duty
To be loved and bloom.

A Doubt

Many boons the new years make us
But the old world's gifts were three,
Dove of Cypris, wine of Bacchus,
Pan's sweet pipe in Sicily.

Love, wine, song, the core of living
Sweetest, oldest, musicalest.
If at end of forward striving
These, Life's first, proved also best?

The Nightingale

An Impression

Hark in the trees the low-voiced nightingale
Has slain the silence with a jubilant cry;
How clear in the hushed night, yet voluble
And various as sweet water wavering by,
That murmurs in a channel small
Beneath a low grey wall,
Then sings amid the fitful rye.

O sweet grave Siren of the night,
Astarte's eremite,
Thou feedest every leaf with solemn glee.
Lo, the night-winds sigh happier, being chid by thee.

Euphrosyne

Child of the infant years, Euphrosyne,
Bird of my boyhood, youth's blithe deity!
If I have hymned thee not with lyric phrase,
Preferring Eros or Aglaia's praise,
Frown not, thou lovely spirit, leave me not.
Man worships the ungrasped. His vagrant thought
Still busy with the illimitable void
Lives all the time by little things upbuoyed
Which he contemns; the wife unsung remains
Sharing his pleasures, taking half his pains
While to dream faces mounts the poet's song.
Yet she makes not their lyric right her wrong,
Knowing her homely eyes his sorrow's star
Smiles at the eclipsing brow untouched by care.
Content with human love lightly she yields
The immortal fancy its Elysian fields.

A Thing Seen

She in her garden, near the high grey wall,
Sleeping; a silver-bodied birch-tree tall
That held its garments o'er her wide and green,
Building a parapet of shade between,
Forbade the amorous sun to look on her.
No fold of gracious raiment was astir.
The wind walked softly; silent moved a cloud
Listening; of all the tree no leaf was loud
But guarded a divine expectant hush
Thrilled by the silence of a hidden thrush.

Epitaph

Moulded of twilight and the vesper star
Midnight in her with noon made quiet war; —
Moulded twixt life and death, Love came between;
Then the night fell; twilight faded, the star had been.

To the Modern Priam

Of Ilion’s ashes was thy sceptre made;
’Tis meet thou lose it now in Ilion’s fall.

Song

O lady Venus, shine on me,
O rose-crowned goddess from thy seas
Radiant among the Cyclades!
Rose-crowned, puissant like the sea.

And bring thy Graces three,
The swift companions of thy mirthful mind.
Bring thy sweet rogue with thee,
Thy careless archer, beautiful and blind.

A woman’s royal heart
Bid him to wound and bind her who is free;
Bind her for me!
Nor for the sweet bright crimson blood may start
In little rillets from the little heart
Spare her thy sport to be,
Goddess, she spared not me.

Epigram

If thou wouldst traverse Time with vagrant feet
    Nor make the poles thy limit fill not then
Thy wallet with the fancy's cloying sweet
    Which is no stay to heaven-aspiring men,
But follow wisdom since alone the wise
Can walk through fire with unblinking eyes.

The Three Cries of Deiphobus

Awake, awake, O sleeping men of Troy,
That sleep and know not in the grasp of Hell
I perish in the treacherous lonely night
To foes betrayed, environed and undone.
    O Trojans, will ye sleep until the doom
Have slipped its leash and bark upon your doors?
Not long will ye, unless in Pluto's realm,
Have slumber, since forsaken among foes
I drink the bitter cup of lonely death
Unheeded and from helping faces far.
    O Trojans, Trojans, yet again I call!
Swift help we need or Ilion's days are done.

Perigone Prologuises

Cool may you find the youngling grass, my herd,
Cool with delicious dew, while I here dream
And listen to the sweet and garrulous bird
That matches its cool note with Thea's stream.
Boon Zephyr now with waist ungirdled runs
And you, O luminous nurslings, wider blow,
O nurslings of light rain and vernal suns,

When bounteous winds about the garden go.
Apt to my soul art thou, blithe honeyed moon,
O lovely mother of the rose-red June.
Zephyr that all things soothes, enhances all,
Dwells with thee softly, the near cuckoo drawn
To farther groves with sweet inviting call
And dewy buds upon the blossoming lawn.
But ah, today some happy soft unrest
Aspires and pants in my unquiet breast,
As if some light were from the day withdrawn,
As if the flitting Zephyr knew a lovelier word
Than it had spoken yet, and flower and bird
Kept still some grace that yet is left to bloom,
Had still a note I never yet have heard,
That, blossoming, would the wide air more illume,
That, spoken, would advance the sweet Spring's bounds
With large serener lights and joy of exquisite sounds.

Nor have I any in whose ears to tell
This gracious grief and so by words have peace,
Save the cold hyacinth in the breezy dell
And the sweet cuckoo in the sunlit trees
Since the sharp autumn days when with increase
Of rosy-lighted cheeks attained the ground
Weary of waiting and by wasps hung round
The bough's fair hangings and Thea fell with these,
My mother, with twelve matron summers crowned.
Four times since then the visits of green spring
Have blessed the hillsides with fresh blossoming
And four times has the winter chilled the brooks,
Since sole I dwell with my rude father cheered
By no low-worded speech or sunny looks.
Yet are we rich enough, fruitful our herd
And yields us brimming pails, and store we still
Numberless baskets with white cheese and fill
Our cave with fruits for winter, and since wide-feared
My father Sinnis, none have care our wealth to spoil.

Therefore I pass sweet days with easy toil,
Nor other care have much but milk the kine
And call them out to graze in soft sunshine
And stall them when the evening-star grows large.
All else is pleasure, budded wreaths to twine
And please my soul beside my hornèd charge
And bathe in the delicious brook that speeds,
Iris and water-lily capped and green with reeds.

Nor need we flocks for clothing nor the shears;
For when the echoes in the mountain rocks
Mimic the groaning wain that moving peers
Between thick trees or under granite blocks,
Our needs my father takes, nor any yet
Scaped him who breaks the wrestler as these twines
Of bloom I break, so he with little sweat,
And tears the women with dividing pines.
Therefore thin gleaming robes and ruddy wines
We garner, flickering swords in jewelled case
And burning jewels and the beautiful gold
Whereof bright plenty now our caverns hold
And ornaments of utter exquisiteness.
But if these brilliants of their pleasure fail,
The lily blooms from vale to scented vale
And crocus lifts in Spring its golden fire.
Our midnight hears the warbling nightingale,
The cuckoo calls as he would never tire;
Along our hills we pluck the purple grapes,
And in the night a million stars arise
To watch us with their ancient friendly eyes.
Such flowering ease I have and earth's sweet shapes,
And riches, and the green and hivèd springs.
Ah then what longing wakes for new and lovelier things.

Since I have seen your face

Since I have seen your face at the window, sweet
Love, you have thrown a spell on my heart, on my feet.
My heart to your face, my feet to your window still
Bear me by force as if by an alien will.

O witch of beauty, O Circe with innocent eyes,
You have suddenly caught me fast in a net of sighs.
When I look at the sunlight, I see your laughing face;
When I purchase a flower, it is you in your radiant grace.

I have tried to save my soul alive from your snare,
I will strive no more; let it flutter and perish there.
I too will seize your body alive, O my dove,
And teach you all the torture and sweetness of love.

When you looked from the window out on the trampling city,
Did you think to take my heart and pay me with pity?
But you looked on one who has ever mocked at sin
And gambled with life to lose her all or win.

I will pluck you forth like a fluttering bird from her nest.
You shall lie on Love's strong knees, in his white warm breast,
Afraid, with delighted lids that will not close.
You shall grow white one moment, the next a rose.

So that was why

So that was why I could not grasp your heart
Between my hands and feel it nestle in,
Contented. O you kept it in your breast
Most secretly, were skilful in your sin,
Farthest away, most intimately caressed.
But if I sought for it with this sharp knife
Here, here, thou harlot? What, you tremble, you shriek,
Would you be skilful still? You love your life
For his sake then? For his sake! No. I'll wait
Till you have fathomed all my depths of hate.
Weep not, nor pray; you have tasted to the brim
The glory of my love, and laughed, oh laughed!
Now drink my hatred to the dregs, this time
You shall not easily reject the draught.
God! now I hate you whom I once so loved.
God! the abhorred whiteness of these limbs
Where I have wasted all my glorious heart
In kisses. Dreams, ah Heaven, sweet hateful dreams!
Nay, I shall live, 'tis thou that must depart.
Why, he has kissed them too. Will not this edge
Dig out his kisses from the bleeding flesh?
Call not on God, thou soul self-doomed to Hell,
Against whose blessings thou hast dared rebel.
Thou liv'st but while I hold myself in leash.
His name! Thou lovely devil, from thy breast
I'll tear his name out. He! then now, then now
And thus and thus...
O heaven! how beautiful her murdered brow!
Will not thine eyes open and look at me with love,
Surely they hold not his vile image yet,
For Death should leave thee pure. But I forget.
He lives and God signs to me from above
Beckoning to me to strike. When it is done,
I will come back and kiss you only once.

World's delight

World's delight, spring's sweetness, music's charm
Lie within my arm.
Earth that is and heaven to come are here with me
Mastered on my knee.
Open thy red petals, shrinking rose,
And thy heart disclose.
Pant thy fragrance up to me, O my delight,
All the perfumed night.
Thou possessed and I possessing, earth
Opened for our mirth.
Flowers dropping on us from delighted trees,
Revels of the breeze,
All for me because I hold their Circe white,
Queen of their delight.
Wanton, thou shalt know at last a chain
Golden to restrain.
Not a minute of thee shall escape my kiss,
Captive made to bliss,
Not a wandering breath but love shall seize
With his ecstasies,
All thy body be a glorious happy lyre
Played on by desire
And thy soul shall be my absolute kingdom still
To misrule at will.
Wast thou hoping to escape at last?
Nay, I held thee fast.
Thou shalt know what love is, all his bliss and pain,
Fondling and disdain.
Jealousy and joy shall seize on thee by turns
Till thy whole heart burns.
I will learn now all that is to know
In this golden show.
I will gather all there are of sweets to take
In this scented brake.
All thy soul's reserves of honied shame

Seized as by a flame
Shall be mine and falter naked to the light
And discovered quite.
I will burn thee up as with a fire
Of unquenched desire.
I will ravage like a conqueror all thy soul
And annex the whole.
To escape from joys too fierce that burn
Thou in vain shalt turn.
Puissant Fate shall rescue not thy soul from mine
Nor decree divine
Nor shall Death release thy hunted heart from fear;
I shall still be near.

Part Three

Baroda and Bengal
Circa 1900–1909

Poems from
Ahana and Other Poems

Invitation

With wind and the weather beating round me
Up to the hill and the moorland I go.
Who will come with me? Who will climb with me?
Wade through the brook and tramp through the snow?

Not in the petty circle of cities
Cramped by your doors and your walls I dwell;
Over me God is blue in the welkin,
Against me the wind and the storm rebel.

I sport with solitude here in my regions,
Of misadventure have made me a friend.
Who would live largely? Who would live freely?
Here to the wind-swept uplands ascend.

I am the lord of tempest and mountain,
I am the Spirit of freedom and pride.
Stark must he be and a kinsman to danger
Who shares my kingdom and walks at my side.

Who

In the blue of the sky, in the green of the forest,
Whose is the hand that has painted the glow?
When the winds were asleep in the womb of the ether,
Who was it roused them and bade them to blow?

He is lost in the heart, in the cavern of Nature,
He is found in the brain where He builds up the thought:
In the pattern and bloom of the flowers He is woven,
In the luminous net of the stars He is caught.

In the strength of a man, in the beauty of woman,
In the laugh of a boy, in the blush of a girl;
The hand that sent Jupiter spinning through heaven,
Spends all its cunning to fashion a curl.

These are His works and His veils and His shadows;
But where is He then? by what name is He known?
Is He Brahma or Vishnu? a man or a woman?
Bodied or bodiless? twin or alone?

We have love for a boy who is dark and resplendent,
A woman is lord of us, naked and fierce.
We have seen Him a-muse on the snow of the mountains,
We have watched Him at work in the heart of the spheres.

We will tell the whole world of His ways and His cunning:
He has rapture of torture and passion and pain;
He delights in our sorrow and drives us to weeping,
Then lures with His joy and His beauty again.

All music is only the sound of His laughter,
All beauty the smile of His passionate bliss;
Our lives are His heart-beats, our rapture the bridal
Of Radha and Krishna, our love is their kiss.

He is strength that is loud in the blare of the trumpets,
And He rides in the car and He strikes in the spears;
He slays without stint and is full of compassion;
He wars for the world and its ultimate years.

In the sweep of the worlds, in the surge of the ages,
Ineffable, mighty, majestic and pure,
Beyond the last pinnacle seized by the thinker
He is throned in His seats that for ever endure.

The Master of man and his infinite Lover,
He is close to our hearts, had we vision to see;
We are blind with our pride and the pomp of our passions,
We are bound in our thoughts where we hold ourselves free.

It is He in the sun who is ageless and deathless,
And into the midnight His shadow is thrown;
When darkness was blind and engulfed within darkness,
He was seated within it immense and alone.

Miracles

Snow in June may break from Nature,
Ice through August last,
The random rose may increase stature
In December's blast;

But this at least can never be,
O thou mortal ecstasy,
That one should live, even in pain,
Visited by thy disdain.

Reminiscence

My soul arose at dawn and, listening, heard
One voice abroad, a solitary bird,
A song not master of its note, a cry
That persevered into eternity.
My soul leaned out into the dawn to hear
In the world's solitude its winged compeer
And, hearkening what the Angel had to say,
Saw lustre in midnight and a secret day
Was opened to it. It beheld the stars
Born from a thought and knew how being prepares.
Then I remembered how I woke from sleep
And made the skies, built earth, formed Ocean deep.

A Vision of Science

I dreamed that in myself the world I saw,
Wherein three Angels strove for mastery. Law
Was one, clear vision and denial cold,
Yet in her limits strong, presumptuous, bold;
The second with enthusiasm bright,
Flame in her heart but round her brows the night,
Faded as this advanced. She could not bear
That searching gaze, nor the strong chilling air
These thoughts created, nourishing our parts
Of mind, but petrifying human hearts.
Science was one, the other gave her name,
Religion. But a third behind them came,
Veiled, vague, remote, and had as yet no right
Upon the world, but lived in her own light.
Wide were the victories of the Angel proud
Who conquered now and in her praise were loud
The nations. Few even yet to the other clove, —
And some were souls of night and some were souls of love.
But this was confident and throned. Her heralds ranged
Claiming that night was dead and all things changed;
For all things opened, all seemed clear, seemed bright —
Save the vast ranges that they left in night.
However, the light they shed upon the earth
Was great indeed, a firm and mighty birth.
A century's progress lived before my eyes.
Delivered from amazement and surprise,
Man's spirit measuring his worlds around
The laws of sight divined and laws of sound.
Light was not hidden from her searching gaze,
Nor matter could deny its myriad maze
To the cold enquiry; for the far came near,
The small loomed large, the intricate grew clear.
Measuring and probing the strong Angel strode,
Dissolving and combining, till she trod

Firmly among the stars, could weigh their forms,
Foretold the earthquakes, analysed the storms.
Doubt seemed to end and wonder's reign was closed.
The stony pages of the earth disclosed
Their unremembered secrets. Horses of steam
Were bitted and the lightnings made a team
To draw our chariots. Heaven was scaled at last
And the loud seas subdued. Distance resigned
Its strong obstructions to the mastering mind.
So moved that spirit trampling; then it laid
Its hand at last upon itself, how this was made
Wondering, and sought to class and sought to trace
Mind by its forms, the wearer by the dress.
Then the other arose and met that spirit robust,
Who laboured; she now grew a shade who must
Fade wholly away, yet to her fellow cried,
"I pass, for thou hast laboured well and wide.
Thou thinkest term and end for thee are not;
But though thy pride is great, thou hast forgot
The Sphinx that waits for man beside the way.
All questions thou mayst answer, but one day
Her question shall await thee. That reply,
As all we must; for they who cannot, die.
She slays them and their mangled bodies lie
Upon the highways of eternity.
Therefore, if thou wouldst live, know first this thing,
Who thou art in this dungeon labouring."
And Science confidently, "Nothing am I but earth,
Tissue and nerve and from the seed a birth,
A mould, a plasm, a gas, a little that is much.
In these grey cells that quiver to each touch
The secret lies of man; they are the thing called I.
Matter insists and matter makes reply.
Shakespeare was this; this force in Jesus yearned
And conquered by the cross; this only learned
The secret of the suns that blaze afar;
This was Napoleon's giant mind of war."

I heard and marvelled in myself to see
The infinite deny infinity.
Yet the weird paradox seemed justified;
Even mysticism shrank out-mystified.
But the third Angel came and touched my eyes;
I saw the mornings of the future rise,
I heard the voices of an age unborn
That comes behind us and our pallid morn,
And from the heart of an approaching light
One said to man, "Know thyself infinite,
Who shalt do mightier miracles than these,
Infinite, moving mid infinities."
Then from our hills the ancient answer pealed,
"For Thou, O Splendour, art myself concealed,
And the grey cell contains me not, the star
I outmeasure and am older than the elements are.
Whether on earth or far beyond the sun,
I, stumbling, clouded, am the Eternal One."

Immortal Love

If I had wooed thee for thy colour rare,
    Cherished the rose in thee
Or wealth of Nature's brilliants in thy hair,
        O woman fair,
    My love might cease to be.

Or, had I sought thee for thy virtuous youth
    And tender yearning speech,
Thy swift compassion and deliberate truth,
        O heart of ruth,
    Time might pursue, might reach.

But I have loved thee for thyself indeed
And with myself have snared;
Immortal to immortal I made speed.
Change I exceed
And am for Time prepared.

A Tree

A tree beside the sandy river-beach
Holds up its topmost boughs
Like fingers towards the skies they cannot reach,
Earth-bound, heaven-amorous.

This is the soul of man. Body and brain
Hungry for earth our heavenly flight detain.

To the Sea

O grey wild sea,
Thou hast a message, thunderer, for me.
Their huge wide backs
Thy monstrous billows raise, abysmal cracks
Dug deep between.
One pale boat flutters over them, hardly seen.
I hear thy roar
Call me, "Why dost thou linger on the shore
With fearful eyes
Watching my tops visit their foam-washed skies?
This trivial boat
Dares my vast battering billows and can float.
Death if it find,
Are there not many thousands left behind?
Dare my wide roar,
Nor cling like cowards to the easy shore.

Come down and know
What rapture lives in danger and o'erthrow."

Yes, thou great sea,
I am more mighty and outbillow thee.

On thy tops I rise;
'Tis an excuse to dally with the skies.

I sink below
The bottom of the clamorous world to know.

On the safe land
To linger is to lose what God has planned

For man's wide soul,
Who set eternal godhead for its goal.

Therefore He arrayed
Danger and difficulty like seas and made

Pain and defeat,
And put His giant snares around our feet.

The cloud He informs
With thunder and assails us with His storms,

That man may grow
King over pain and victor of o'erthrow

Matching his great
Unconquerable soul with adverse Fate.

Take me, be
My way to climb the heavens, thou rude great sea.

I will seize thy mane,
O lion, I will tame thee and disdain;

Or else below
Into thy salt abysmal caverns go,

Receive thy weight
Upon me and be stubborn as my Fate.

I come, O Sea,
To measure my enormous self with thee.

Revelation

Someone leaping from the rocks
Past me ran with wind-blown locks
Like a startled bright surmise
Visible to mortal eyes, —
Just a cheek of frightened rose
That with sudden beauty glows,
Just a footstep like the wind
And a hurried glance behind,
And then nothing, — as a thought
Escapes the mind ere it is caught.
Someone of the heavenly rout
From behind the veil ran out.

Karma

(*Radha's Complaint*)

Love, but my words are vain as air!
In my sweet joyous youth, a heart untried,
Thou tookst me in Love's sudden snare,
Thou wouldst not let me in my home abide.

And now I have nought else to try,
But I will make my soul one strong desire
And into Ocean leaping die:
So shall my heart be cooled of all its fire.

Die and be born to life again
As Nanda's son, the joy of Braja's girls,
And I will make thee Radha then,
A laughing child's face set with lovely curls.

Then I will love thee and then leave;
Under the codome's boughs when thou goest by
Bound to the water morn or eve,
Lean on that tree fluting melodiously.

Thou shalt hear me and fall at sight
Under my charm; my voice shall wholly move
Thy simple girl's heart to delight;
Then shalt thou know the bitterness of love.

(*From an old Bengali poem*)

Appeal

Thy youth is but a noon, of night take heed, —
A noon that is a fragment of a day,
And the swift eve all sweet things bears away,
All sweet things and all bitter, rose and weed.
For others' bliss who lives, he lives indeed.

But thou art pitiful and ruth shouldst know.
I bid thee trifle not with fatal love,
But save our pride and dear one, O my dove,
And heaven and earth and the nether world below
Shall only with thy praises peopled grow.

Life is a bliss that cannot long abide,
But while thou livest, love. For love the sky
Was founded, earth upheaved from the deep cry
Of waters, and by love is sweetly tied
The golden cordage of our youth and pride.

(*Suggested by an old Bengali poem*)

A Child's Imagination

O thou golden image,
Miniature of bliss,
Speaking sweetly, speaking meetly!
Every word deserves a kiss.

Strange, remote and splendid
Childhood's fancy pure
Thrills to thoughts we cannot fathom,
Quick felicities obscure.

When the eyes grow solemn
Laughter fades away,
Nature of her mighty childhood
Recollects the Titan play;

Woodlands touched by sunlight
Where the elves abode,
Giant meetings, Titan greetings,
Fancies of a youthful God.

These are coming on thee
In thy secret thought;
God remembers in thy bosom
All the wonders that He wrought.

The Sea at Night

The grey sea creeps half-visible, half-hushed,
And grasps with its innumerable hands
These silent walls. I see beyond a rough
Glimmering infinity, I feel the wash
And hear the sibilation of the waves

That whisper to each other as they push
To shoreward side by side, — long lines and dim
Of movement flecked with quivering spots of foam,
The quiet welter of a shifting world.

The Vedantin's Prayer

Spirit Supreme
    Who musest in the silence of the heart,
Eternal gleam,

Thou only Art!
    Ah, wherefore with this darkness am I veiled,
My sunlit part

By clouds assailed?
    Why am I thus disfigured by desire,
Distracted, haled,

Scorched by the fire
    Of fitful passions, from thy peace out-thrust
Into the gyre

Of every gust?
    Betrayed to grief, o'ertaken with dismay,
Surprised by lust?

Let not my grey
    Blood-clotted past repel thy sovereign ruth,
Nor even delay,

O lonely Truth!
    Nor let the specious gods who ape Thee still
Deceive my youth.

These clamours still;
For I would hear the eternal voice and know
The eternal Will.

This brilliant show
Cumbering the threshold of eternity
Dispel, — bestow

The undimmed eye,
The heart grown young and clear. Rebuke in me
These hopes that cry

So deafeningly,
Remove my sullied centuries, restore
My purity.

O hidden door
Of Knowledge, open! Strength, fulfil thyself!
Love, outpour!

Rebirth

Not soon is God's delight in us completed,
Nor with one life we end;
Termlessly in us are our spirits seated,
A termless joy intend.

Our souls and heaven are of an equal stature
And have a dateless birth;
The unending seed, the infinite mould of Nature,
They were not made on earth,

Nor to the earth do they bequeath their ashes,
But in themselves they last.
An endless future brims beneath thy lashes,
Child of an endless past.

Old memories come to us, old dreams invade us,
Lost people we have known,
Fictions and pictures; but their frames evade us, —
They stand out bare, alone.

Yet all we dream and hope are memories treasured,
Are forecasts we misspell,
But of what life or scene he who has measured
The boundless heavens can tell.

Time is a strong convention; future and present
Were living in the past;
They are one image that our wills complaisant
Into three schemes have cast.

Our past that we forget, is with us deathless,
Our births and later end
Already accomplished. To a summit breathless
Sometimes our souls ascend,

Whence the mind comes back helped; for there emerges
The ocean vast of Time
Spread out before us with its infinite surges,
Its symphonies sublime;

And even from this veil of mind the spirit
Looks out sometimes and sees
The bygone aeons that our lives inherit,
The unborn centuries:

It sees wave-trampled realms expel the Ocean, —
From the vague depths uphurled
Where now Himâloy stands, the flood's huge motion
Sees measuring half the world;

Or else the web behind us is unravelled
    And on its threads we gaze, —
Past motions of the stars, scenes long since travelled
    In Time's far-backward days.

The Triumph-Song of Trishuncou

I shall not die.
    Although this body, when the spirit tires
    Of its cramped residence, shall feed the fires,
My house consumes, not I.

Leaving that case
    I find out ample and ethereal room.
    My spirit shall avoid the hungry tomb,
Deceiving death's embrace.

Night shall contain
    The sun in its cold depths; Time too must cease;
    The stars that labour shall have their release.
I cease not, I remain.

Ere the first seeds
    Were sown on earth, I was already old,
    And when now unborn planets shall grow cold
My history proceeds.

I am the light
    In stars, the strength of lions and the joy
    Of mornings; I am man and maid and boy,
Protean, infinite.

I am a tree
    That stands out singly from the infinite blue;
    I am the quiet falling of the dew
And am the unmeasured sea.

I hold the sky
    Together and upbear the teeming earth.
    I was the eternal thinker at my birth
And shall be, though I die.

Life and Death

Life, death, — death, life; the words have led for ages
    Our thought and consciousness and firmly seemed
Two opposites; but now long-hidden pages
    Are opened, liberating truths undreamed.
Life only is, or death is life disguised, —
Life a short death until by life we are surprised.

Evening

A golden evening, when the thoughtful sun
    Rejects its usual pomp in going, trees
That bend down to their green companion
    And fruitful mother, vaguely whispering, — these
And a wide silent sea. Such hour is nearest God, —
Rich like old age when the long ways have all been trod.

Parabrahman

These wanderings of the suns, these stars at play
    In the due measure that they chose of old,
Nor only these, but all the immense array
    Of objects that long Time, far Space can hold,

Are divine moments. They are thoughts that form,
They are vision in the Self of things august
And therefore grandly real. Rule and norm
Are processes that they themselves adjust.

The Self of things is not their outward view,
A Force within decides. That Force is He;
His movement is the shape of things we knew,
Movement of Thought is Space and Time. A free

And sovereign master of His world within,
He is not bound by what He does or makes,
He is not bound by virtue or by sin,
Awake who sleeps and when He sleeps awakes.

He is not bound by waking or by sleep;
He is not bound by anything at all.
Laws are that He may conquer them. To creep
Or soar is at His will, to rise or fall.

One from of old possessed Himself above
Who was not anyone nor had a form,
Nor yet was formless. Neither hate nor love
Could limit His perfection, peace nor storm.

He is, we cannot say; for Nothing too
Is His conception of Himself unguessed.
He dawns upon us and we would pursue,
But who has found Him or what arms possessed?

He is not anything, yet all is He;
He is not all but far exceeds that scope.
Both Time and Timelessness sink in that sea:
Time is a wave and Space a wandering drop.

Within Himself He shadowed Being forth,
Which is a younger birth, a veil He chose
To half-conceal Him, Knowledge, nothing worth
Save to have glimpses of its mighty cause,

And high Delight, a spirit infinite,
That is the fountain of this glorious world,
Delight that labours in its opposite,
Faints in the rose and on the rack is curled.

This was the triune playground that He made
And One there sports awhile. He plucks His flowers
And by His bees is stung; He is dismayed,
Flees from Himself or has His sullen hours.

The Almighty One knew labour, failure, strife;
Knowledge forgot divined itself again:
He made an eager death and called it life,
He stung Himself with bliss and called it pain.

God

Thou who pervadest all the worlds below,
Yet sitst above,
Master of all who work and rule and know,
Servant of Love!

Thou who disdainest not the worm to be
Nor even the clod,
Therefore we know by that humility
That thou art God.

The Fear of Death

Death wanders through our lives at will, sweet Death
Is busy with each intake of our breath.
Why do you fear her? Lo, her laughing face
All rosy with the light of jocund grace!
A kind and lovely maiden culling flowers
In a sweet garden fresh with vernal showers,
This is the thing you fear, young portress bright
Who opens to our souls the worlds of light.
Is it because the twisted stem must feel
Pain when the tenderest hands its glory steal?
Is it because the flowerless stalk droops dull
And ghastly now that was so beautiful?
Or is it the opening portal's horrid jar
That shakes you, feeble souls of courage bare?
Death is but changing of our robes to wait
In wedding garments at the Eternal's gate.

Seasons

Day and night begin, you tell me,
    When the sun may choose to set or rise.
Well, it may be; but for me their changing
    Is determined only by her eyes.

Summer, spring, the fruitless winter
    Hinge, you say, upon the heavenly sun?
Oh, but I have known a yearlong winter!
    Spring was by her careless smiles begun.

The Rishi

King Manu in the former ages of the world, when the Arctic continent still subsisted, seeks knowledge from the Rishi of the Pole, who after long baffling him with conflicting side-lights of the knowledge, reveals to him what it chiefly concerns man to know.

MANU

Rishi who trance-held on the mountains old
Art slumbering, void
Of sense or motion, for in the spirit's hold
Of unalloyed
Immortal bliss thou dreamst protected! Deep
Let my voice glide
Into thy dumb retreat and break thy sleep
Abysmal. Hear!
The frozen snows that heap thy giant bed
Ice-cold and clear,
The chill and desert heavens above thee spread
Vast, austere,
Are not so sharp but that thy warm limbs brook
Their bitter breath,
Are not so wide as thy immense outlook
On life and death:
Their vacancy thy silent mind and bright
Outmeasureth.
But ours are blindly active and thy light
We have forgone.

RISHI

Who art thou, warrior armèd gloriously
Like the sun?
Thy gait is as an empire and thine eye
Dominion.

MANU

King Manu, of the Aryan peoples lord,
Greets thee, Sage.

RISHI

I know thee, King, earth to whose sleepless sword
Was heritage.
The high Sun's distant glories gave thee forth
On being's edge:
Where the slow skies of the auroral North
Lead in the morn
And flaming dawns for ever on heaven's verge
Wheel and turn,
Thundering remote the clamorous Arctic surge
Saw thee born.
There 'twas thy lot these later Fates to build,
This race of man
New-fashion. O watcher with the mountains wild,
The icy plain,
Thee I too, asleep, have watched, both when the Pole
Was brightening wan
And when like a wild beast the darkness stole
Prowling and slow
Alarming with its silent march the soul.
O King, I know
Thy purpose; for the vacant ages roll
Since man below
Conversed with God in friendship. Thou, reborn
For men perplexed,
Seekest in this dim aeon and forlorn
With evils vexed
The vanished light. For like this Arctic land
Death has annexed
To sleep, our being's summits cold and grand
Where God abides,
Repel the tread of thought. I too, O King,

In winds and tides
Have sought Him, and in armies thundering,
And where Death strides
Over whole nations. Action, thought and peace
Were questioned, sleep,
And waking, but I had no joy of these,
Nor ponderings deep,
And pity was not sweet enough, nor good
My will could keep.
Often I found Him for a moment, stood
Astonished, then
It fell from me. I could not hold the bliss,
The force for men,
My brothers. Beauty ceased my heart to please,
Brightness in vain
Recalled the vision of the light that glows
Suns behind:
I hated the rich fragrance of the rose;
Weary and blind,
I tired of the suns and stars; then came
With broken mind
To heal me of the rash devouring flame,
The dull disease,
And sojourned with this mountain's summits bleak,
These frozen seas.
King, the blind dazzling snows have made me meek,
Cooled my unease.
Pride could not follow, nor the restless will
Come and go;
My mind within grew holy, calm and still
Like the snow.

MANU

O thou who wast with chariots formidable
And with the bow!
Voiceless and white the cold unchanging hill,

Has it then
A mightier presence, deeper mysteries
Than human men?
The warm low hum of crowds, towns, villages,
The sun and rain,
The village maidens to the water bound,
The happy herds,
The fluting of the shepherd lads, the sound
Myriad of birds,
Speak these not clearer to the heart, convey
More subtle words?
Here is but great dumb night, an awful day
Inert and dead.

RISHI

The many's voices fill the listening ear,
Distract the head:
The One is silence; on the snows we hear
Silence tread.

MANU

What hast thou garnered from the crags that lour,
The icy field?

RISHI

O King, I spurned this body's death; a Power
There was, concealed,
That raised me. Rescued from the pleasant bars
Our longings build,
My wingèd soul went up above the stars
Questing for God.

MANU

Oh, didst thou meet Him then? in what bright field
Upon thy road?

RISHI

I asked the heavenly wanderers as they wheeled
For His abode.

MANU

Could glorious Saturn and his rings of hue
Direct thy flight?

RISHI

Sun could not tell, nor any planet knew
Its source of light,
Nor could I glean that knowledge though I paced
The world's beyond
And into outer nothingness have gazed.
Time's narrow sound
I crossed, the termless flood where on the Snake
One slumbers throned,
Attempted. But the ages from Him break
Blindly and Space
Forgets its origin. Then I returned
Where luminous blaze
Deathless and ageless in their ease unearned
The ethereal race.

MANU

Did the gods tell thee? Has Varuna seen
The high God's face?

RISHI

How shall they tell of Him who marvel at sin
And smile at grief?

MANU

Did He not send His blissful Angels down
For thy relief?

RISHI

The Angels know Him not, who fear His frown,
Have fixed belief.

MANU

Is there no heaven of eternal light
Where He is found?

RISHI

The heavens of the Three have beings bright
Their portals round,
And I have journeyed to those regions blest,
Those hills renowned.
In Vishnu's house where wide Love builds his nest,
My feet have stood.

MANU

Is he not That, the blue-winged Dove of peace,
Father of Good?

RISHI

Nor Brahma, though the suns and hills and seas
Are called his brood.

Manu

Is God a dream then? are the heavenly coasts
Visions vain?

Rishi

I came to Shiva's roof; the flitting ghosts
Compelled me in.

Manu

Is He then God whom the forsaken seek,
Things of sin?

Rishi

He sat on being's summit grand, a peak
Immense of fire.

Manu

Knows He the secret of release from tears
And from desire?

Rishi

His voice is the last murmur silence hears,
Tranquil and dire.

Manu

The silence calls us then and shall enclose?

Rishi

Our true abode
Is here and in the pleasant house He chose
To harbour God.

MANU

In vain thou hast travelled the unwonted stars
    And the void hast trod!

RISHI

King, not in vain. I knew the tedious bars
    That I had fled,
To be His arms whom I have sought; I saw
    How earth was made
Out of His being; I perceived the Law,
    The Truth, the Vast,
From which we came and which we are; I heard
    The ages past
Whisper their history, and I knew the Word
    That forth was cast
Into the unformed potency of things
    To build the suns.
Through endless Space and on Time's iron wings
    A rhythm runs
Our lives pursue, and till the strain's complete
    That now so moans
And falters, we upon this greenness meet,
    That measure tread.

MANU

Is earth His seat? this body His poor hold
    Infirmly made?

RISHI

I flung off matter like a robe grown old;
    Matter was dead.

MANU

Sages have told of vital force behind:
It is God then?

RISHI

The vital spirits move but as a wind
Within men.

MANU

Mind then is lord that like a sovereign sways
Delight and pain?

RISHI

Mind is His wax to write and, written, rase
Form and name.

MANU

Is Thought not He who has immortal eyes
Time cannot dim?

RISHI

Higher, O King, the still voice bade me rise
Than thought's clear dream.
Deep in the luminous secrecy, the mute
Profound of things,
Where murmurs never sound of harp or lute
And no voice sings,
Light is not, nor our darkness, nor these bright
Thunderings,
In the deep steady voiceless core of white
And burning bliss,
The sweet vast centre and the cave divine
Called Paradise,

He dwells within us all who dwells not in
Aught that is.

MANU

Rishi, thy thoughts are like the blazing sun
Eye cannot face.
How shall our souls on that bright awful One
Hope even to gaze
Who lights the world from His eternity
With a few rays?

RISHI

Dare on thyself to look, thyself art He,
O Aryan, then.
There is no thou nor I, beasts of the field,
Nor birds, nor men,
But flickerings on a many-sided shield
Pass, or remain,
And this is winged and that with poisonous tongue
Hissing coils.
We love ourselves and hate ourselves, are wrung
With woes and toils
To slay ourselves or from ourselves to win
Shadowy spoils.
And through it all, the rumour and the din,
Voices roam,
Voices of harps, voices of rolling seas,
That rarely come
And to our inborn old affinities
Call us home.
Shadows upon the many-sided Mind
Arrive and go,
Shadows that shadows see; the vain pomps wind
Above, below,
While in their hearts the single mighty God
Whom none can know,

Guiding the mimic squadrons with His nod
Watches it all —
Like transient shapes that sweep with half-guessed truth
A luminous wall.

MANU

Alas! is life then vain? Our gorgeous youth
Lithe and tall,
Our sweet fair women with their tender eyes
Outshining stars,
The mighty meditations of the wise,
The grandiose wars,
The blood, the fiery strife, the clenched dead hands,
The circle sparse,
The various labour in a hundred lands,
Are all these shows
To please some audience cold? as in a vase
Lily and rose,
Mixed snow and crimson, for a moment blaze
Till someone throws
The withered petals in some outer dust,
Heeding not, —
The virtuous man made one with the unjust,
Is this our lot?

RISHI

O King, sight is not vain, nor any sound.
Weeds that float
Upon a puddle and the majestic round
Of the suns
Are thoughts eternal, — what man loves to laud
And what he shuns;
Through glorious things and base the wheel of God
For ever runs.
O King, no thought is vain; our very dreams
Substantial are;

The light we see in fancy, yonder gleams
In the star.

MANU

Rishi, are we both dreams and real? the near
Even as the far?

RISHI

Dreams are we not, O King, but see dreams, fear
Therefore and strive.
Like poets in a wondrous world of thought
Always we live,
Whose shapes from out ourselves to being brought
Abide and thrive.
The poet from his vast and labouring mind
Brings brilliant out
A living world; forth into space they wind,
The shining rout,
And hate and love, and laugh and weep, enjoy,
Fight and shout,
King, lord and beggar, tender girl and boy,
Foemen, friends;
So to His creatures God's poetic mind
A substance lends.
The Poet with dazzling inspiration blind,
Until it ends,
Forgets Himself and lives in what He forms;
For ever His soul
Through chaos like a wind creating storms,
Till the stars roll
Through ordered space and the green lands arise,
The snowy Pole,
Ocean and this great heaven full of eyes,
And sweet sounds heard,
Man with his wondrous soul of hate and love,
And beast and bird, —

Yes, He creates the worlds and heaven above
With a single word;
And these things being Himself are real, yet
Are they like dreams,
For He awakes to self He could forget
In what He seems.
Yet, King, deem nothing vain: through many veils
This Spirit gleams.
The dreams of God are truths and He prevails.
Then all His time
Cherish thyself, O King, and cherish men,
Anchored in Him.

MANU

Upon the silence of the sapphire main
Waves that sublime
Rise at His word and when that fiat's stilled
Are hushed again,
So is it, Rishi, with the Spirit concealed,
Things and men?

RISHI

Hear then the truth. Behind this visible world
The eyes see plain,
Another stands, and in its folds are curled
Our waking dreams.
Dream is more real, which, while here we wake,
Unreal seems.
From that our mortal life and thoughts we take.
Its fugitive gleams
Are here made firm and solid; there they float
In a magic haze,
Melody swelling note on absolute note,
A lyric maze,
Beauty on beauty heaped pell-mell to chain
The enchanted gaze,

Thought upon mighty thought with grandiose strain
        Weaving the stars.
This is that world of dream from which our race
        Came; by these bars
Of body now enchained, with laggard pace,
        Borne down with cares,
A little of that rapture to express
        We labour hard,
A little of that beauty, music, thought
        With toil prepared;
And if a single strain is clearly caught,
        Then our reward
Is great on earth, and in the world that floats
        Lingering awhile
We hear the fullness and the jarring notes
        Reconcile, —
Then travel forwards. So we slowly rise,
        And every mile
Of our long journey mark with eager eyes;
        So we progress
With gurge of revolution and recoil,
        Slaughter and stress
Of anguish because without fruit we toil,
        Without success;
Even as a ship upon the stormy flood
        With fluttering sails
Labours towards the shore; the angry mood
        Of Ocean swells,
Calms come and favouring winds, but yet afar
        The harbour pales
In evening mists and Ocean threatens war:
        Such is our life.
Of this be sure, the mighty game goes on,
        The glorious strife,
Until the goal predestined has been won.
        Not on the cliff
To be shattered has our ship set forth of old,

Nor in the surge
To founder. Therefore, King, be royal, bold,
And through the urge
Of winds, the reboant thunders and the close
Tempestuous gurge
Press on for ever laughing at the blows
Of wind and wave.
The haven must be reached; we rise from pyre,
We rise from grave,
We mould our future by our past desire,
We break, we save,
We find the music that we could not find,
The thought think out
We could not then perfect, and from the mind
That brilliant rout
Of wonders marshal into living forms.
End then thy doubt;
Grieve not for wounds, nor fear the violent storms,
For grief and pain
Are errors of the clouded soul; behind
They do not stain
The living spirit who to these is blind.
Torture, disdain,
Defeat and sorrow give him strength and joy:
'Twas for delight
He sought existence, and if pains alloy,
'Tis here in night
Which we call day. The Yogin knows, O King,
Who in his might
Travels beyond the mind's imagining,
The worlds of dream.
For even they are shadows, even they
Are not, — they seem.
Behind them is a mighty blissful day
From which they stream.
The heavens of a million creeds are these:
Peopled they teem

By creatures full of joy and radiant ease.
There is the mint
From which we are the final issue, types
Which here we print
In dual letters. There no torture grips,
Joy cannot stint
Her streams, — beneath a more than mortal sun
Through golden air
The spirits of the deathless regions run.
But we must dare
To still the mind into a perfect sleep
And leave this lair
Of gross material flesh which we would keep
Always, before
The guardians of felicity will ope
The golden door.
That is our home and that the secret hope
Our hearts explore.
To bring those heavens down upon the earth
We all descend,
And fragments of it in the human birth
We can command.
Perfect millenniums are sometimes, until
In the sweet end
All secret heaven upon earth we spill,
Then rise above
Taking mankind with us to the abode
Of rapturous Love,
The bright epiphany whom we name God,
Towards whom we drove
In spite of weakness, evil, grief and pain.
He stands behind
The worlds of Sleep; He is and shall remain
When they grow blind
To individual joys; for even these
Are shadows, King,
And gloriously into that lustre cease

From which they spring.
We are but sparks of that most perfect fire,
Waves of that sea:
From Him we come, to Him we go, desire
Eternally,
And so long as He wills, our separate birth
Is and shall be.
Shrink not from life, O Aryan, but with mirth
And joy receive
His good and evil, sin and virtue, till
He bids thee leave.
But while thou livest, perfectly fulfil
Thy part, conceive
Earth as thy stage, thyself the actor strong,
The drama His.
Work, but the fruits to God alone belong,
Who only is.
Work, love and know, — so shall thy spirit win
Immortal bliss.
Love men, love God. Fear not to love, O King,
Fear not to enjoy;
For Death's a passage, grief a fancied thing
Fools to annoy.
From self escape and find in love alone
A higher joy.

MANU

O Rishi, I have wide dominion,
The earth obeys
And heaven opens far beyond the sun
Her golden gaze.
But Him I seek, the still and perfect One, —
The Sun, not rays.

RISHI

Seek Him upon the earth. For thee He set
In the huge press
Of many worlds to build a mighty state
For man's success,
Who seeks his goal. Perfect thy human might,
Perfect the race.
For thou art He, O King. Only the night
Is on thy soul
By thy own will. Remove it and recover
The serene whole
Thou art indeed, then raise up man the lover
To God the goal.

In the Moonlight

If now must pause the bullocks' jingling tune,
Here let it be beneath the dreaming trees
Supine and huge that hang upon the breeze,
Here in the wide eye of the silent moon.

How living a stillness reigns! The night's hushed rules
All things obey but three, the slow wind's sigh
Among the leaves, the cricket's ceaseless cry,
The frog's harsh discord in the ringing pools.

Yet they but seem the silence to increase
And dreadful wideness of the inhuman night.
The whole hushed world immeasurable might
Be watching round this single spot of peace.

So boundless is the darkness and so rife
With thoughts of infinite reach that it creates
A dangerous sense of space and abrogates
The wholesome littleness of human life.

The common round that each of us must tread
    Now seems a thing unreal; we forget
    The heavy yoke the world on us has set,
The slave's vain labour earning tasteless bread.

Space hedges us and Time our hearts o'ertakes;
    Our bounded senses and our boundless thought
    Strive through the centuries and are slowly brought
Back to the source whence their divergence wakes.

The source that none have traced, since none can know
    Whether from Heaven the eternal waters well
    Through Nature's matted locks, as Ganges fell,
Or from some dismal nether darkness flow.

Two genii in the dubious heart of man,
    Two great unhappy foes together bound
    Wrestle and strive to win unhampered ground;
They strive for ever since the race began.

One from his body like a bridge of fire
    Mounts upward azure-winged with eager eyes;
    One in his brain deep-mansioned labouring lies
And clamps to earth the spirit's high desire.

Here in this moonlight with strange visions rife
    I seem to see their vast peripheries
    Without me in the sombre mighty trees,
And, hark! their silence turns the wheels of life.

These are the middle and the first. Are they
    The last too? Has the duel then no close?
    Shall neither vanquish of the eternal foes,
Nor even at length this moonlight turn to day?

Our age has made an idol of the brain,
    The last adored a purer presence; yet

In Asia like a dove immaculate
He lurks deep-brooding in the hearts of men.

But Europe comes to us bright-eyed and shrill.
"A far delusion was that mounting fire,
An impulse baulked and an unjust desire;
It fades as we ascend the human hill."

She cries to us to labour in the light
Of common things, grow beautiful and wise
On strong material food, nor vex our eyes
With straining after visionary delight.

Ah, beautiful and wise, but to what end?
Europe knows not, nor any of her schools
Who scorn the higher thought for dreams of fools;
Riches and joy and power meanwhile are gained.

Gained and then lost! For Death the heavy grip
Shall loosen, Death shall cloud the laughing eye,
And he who broke the nations soon shall lie
More helpless than a little child asleep.

And after? Nay, for death is end and term.
A fiery dragon through the centuries curled,
He feeds upon the glories of the world
And the vast mammoth dies before the worm.

Stars run their cycle and are quenched; the suns
Born from the night are to the night returned,
When the cold tenebrous spaces have inurned
The listless phantoms of the Shining Ones.

From two dead worlds a burning world arose
Of which the late putrescent fruit is man;
From chill dark space his roll of life began
And shall again in icy quiet close.

Our lives are but a transitory breath:
Mean pismires in the sad and dying age
Of a once glorious planet, on the edge
Of bitter pain we wait eternal death.

Watering the ages with our sweat and blood
We pant towards some vague ideal state
And by the effort fiercer ills create,
Working by lasting evil transient good.

Insults and servitude we bear perforce;
With profitable crimes our souls we rack,
Vexing ourselves lest earth our seed should lack
Who needs us not in her perpetual course;

Then down into the earth descend and sleep
For ever, and the lives for which we toiled
Forget us, who when they their turn have moiled,
Themselves forgotten into silence creep.

Why is it all, the labour and the din,
And wherefore do we plague our souls and vex
Our bodies or with doubts our days perplex?
Death levels soon the virtue with the sin.

If Death be end and close the useless strife,
Strive not at all, but take what ease you may
And make a golden glory of the day,
Exhaust the little honey of your life.

Fear not to take her beauty to your heart
Whom you so utterly desire; you do
No hurt to any, for the inner you
So cherished is a dream that shall depart.

The wine of life is sweet; let no man stint
His longing or refuse one passionate hope.

Why should we cabin in such infinite scope,
Restrict the issue of such golden mint?

Society forbids? It for our sakes
Was fashioned; if it seek to fence around
Our joys and pleasures in such narrow bound,
It gives us little for the much it takes.

Nor need we hearken to the gospel vain
That bids men curb themselves to help mankind.
We lose our little chance of bliss, then blind
And silent lie for ever. Whose the gain?

What helps it us if so mankind be served?
Ourselves are blotted out from joy and light,
Having no profit of the sunshine bright,
While others reap the fruit our toils deserved.

O this new god who has replaced the old!
He dies today, he dies tomorrow, dies
At last for ever, and the last sunrise
Shall have forgotten him extinct and cold.

But virtue to itself is joy enough?
Yet if to us sin taste diviner? why
Should we not herd in Epicurus' sty
Whom Nature made not of a Stoic stuff?

For Nature being all, desire must reign.
It is too sweet and strong for us to slay
Upon a nameless altar, saying nay
To honied urgings for no purpose plain.

A strange unreal gospel Science brings, —
Being animals to act as angels might;
Mortals we must put forth immortal might
And flutter in the void celestial wings.

"Ephemeral creatures, for the future live,"
She bids us, "gather in for unborn men
Knowledge and joy, and forfeit, nor complain,
The present which alone is yours to give."

Man's immortality she first denies
And then assumes what she rejects, made blind
By sudden knowledge, the majestic Mind
Within her smiling at her sophistries.

Not so shall Truth extend her flight sublime,
Pass from the poor beginnings she has made
And with the splendour of her wings displayed
Range through the boundaries of Space and Time.

Clamp her not down to her material finds!
She shall go further. She shall not reject
The light within, nor shall the dialect
Of unprogressive pedants bar men's minds.

We seek the Truth and will not pause nor fear.
Truth we will have and not the sophist's pleas;
Animals, we will take our grosser ease,
Or, spirits, heaven's celestial music hear.

The intellect is not all; a guide within
Awaits our question. He it was informed
The reason, He surpasses; and unformed
Presages of His mightiness begin.

Nor mind submerged, nor self subliminal,
But the great Force that makes the planets wheel
Through ether and the sun in flames reveal
His godhead, is in us perpetual.

That Force in us is body, that is mind,
And what is higher than the mind is He.

This was the secret Science could not see;
Aware of death, to life her eyes were blind.

Through chemistry she seeks the source of life,
Nor knows the mighty laws that she has found,
Are Nature's bye-laws merely, meant to ground
A grandiose freedom building peace by strife.

The organ for the thing itself she takes,
The brain for mind, the body for the soul,
Nor has she patience to explore the whole,
But like a child a hasty period makes.

"It is enough," she says, "I have explored
The whole of being; nothing now remains
But to put details in and count my gains."
So she deceives herself, denies her Lord.

Therefore He manifests Himself; once more
The wonders of the secret world within
Wrapped yet with an uncertain mist begin
To look from that thick curtain out; the door

Opens. Her days are numbered, and not long
Shall she be suffered to belittle thus
Man and restrain from his tempestuous
Uprising that immortal spirit strong.

He rises now; for God has taken birth.
The revolutions that pervade the world
Are faint beginnings and the discus hurled
Of Vishnu speeds down to enring the earth.

The old shall perish; it shall pass away,
Expunged, annihilated, blotted out;
And all the iron bands that ring about
Man's wide expansion shall at last give way.

Freedom, God, Immortality; the three
Are one and shall be realised at length,
Love, Wisdom, Justice, Joy and utter Strength
Gather into a pure felicity.

It comes at last, the day foreseen of old,
What John in Patmos saw, what Shelley dreamed,
Vision and vain imagination deemed,
The City of Delight, the Age of Gold.

The Iron Age is ended. Only now
The last fierce spasm of the dying past
Shall shake the nations, and when that has passed,
Earth washed of ills shall raise a fairer brow.

This is man's progress; for the Iron Age
Prepares the Age of Gold. What we call sin,
Is but man's leavings as from deep within
The Pilot guides him in his pilgrimage.

He leaves behind the ill with strife and pain,
Because it clings and constantly returns,
And in the fire of suffering fiercely burns
More sweetness to deserve, more strength to gain.

He rises to the good with Titan wings:
And this the reason of his high unease,
Because he came from the infinities
To build immortally with mortal things;

The body with increasing soul to fill,
Extend Heaven's claim upon the toiling earth
And climb from death to a diviner birth
Grasped and supported by immortal Will.

Poems from Manuscripts
Circa 1900 – 1906

To the Boers

(*Written during the progress of the Boer War.*)

O Boers, you have dared much and much endured
For freedom, your strong simple hearts inured
To danger and privation nor so made
As by death's daily grasp to be dismayed,
Nor numbers nor disasters in the field,
Nor to o'erwhelming multitudes to yield.
It was no secondary power you faced,
But she who has the whole wide world embraced,
England whose name is as the thunder, she
Whose navies are the despots of the sea,
Napoleon's conqueror whose fair dreadful face
Great nations loathe and fear and choose disgrace
Rather than meet in wild and dangerous war
Victors of Waterloo and Trafalgar.
But you, a band of armèd herdsmen small,
Feared not her strength, her pride imperial,
Nor all the union of her empire huge,
Nor all her barking cannon, her deluge
Of bullets, nor her horsehooves, nor her lance,
Her boundless wealth, her bayonets aglance.
You met her on her hills and overthrew,
You crossed her by her streams and smote and slew.
But soon in anger like the Ocean foiled
For fiercer swift invasion she recoiled
And multiplied her force until her troops
Tenfold outnumbering your warlike groups
Resurging rolled you back and seized your towns
And spread like locusts over fields and downs.
Not even then were you dismayed, not then
Would tamely yield, but with a proud disdain
Rejected proffered servitude and base.
Therefore are you participants in praise

With Armin and Viriathus; you stand
The last of Freedom's children and your land
Her latest foothold upon earth; nor can
Your rugged pastoral mood disguise the man
Identical at Salamis who waged
Unequal battle and in salt floods assuaged
The Persian's lust of rule. Miltiades
Is grown your brother; the strong Tyrolese
Hold out their hands to you across the grave.
From Rouen's burning pile one watches; brave
Hofer from sad Verona; in eastern skies
Mewar's unconquerable Rajpoots rise.
They too preferred strong liberty and rude
To a splendid ignominy of servitude.
For liberty they gave to alien hands
Their faery city and their fertile lands,
Themselves to death, their women to the flame,
And in wild woods and mountains harbouring came
Often like sudden fire upon the foe:
So for long decades fought, exile and woe
Accepting, till the equal hand of God
Restored to their hereditary abode.
You too have greatly dared, and but that Fate
For her remoter objects obdurate
Averted her unmoved and marble gaze,
No human force had power to erase
From Earth's free peoples. Not the armèd pride
Of England but decrees supreme o'erride
This stubborn nation. Farm and smiling field
Plundered and burned no more your sustenance yield,
Your chiefs are taken one by one, your bands
Wasted with battle, your great war-weary hands
Avail no longer and your women die
In England's camps by famine miserably,
Disease and famine, hunger's squalid brood.
The smiling babes who should prolong your blood,
Pale victims flit, to death's unbottomed maw

Devoted by the conqueror's cynic law.
And must you perish from earth's record then,
O nation of indomitable men?
Look not towards Europe! Europe's heart is dead.
Hard atheisms, selfish lusts instead
Usurp her bosom; not honest blood but gold
Runs liquid in her veins: for she has sold
Her soul to commerce, Mammon is her creed,
The ledger lined her Bible, and Christ must bleed
In plundered nations that the modern Jew
May prosper. This is not Europe that you knew
When from the clash of mighty States you went
Into harsh sultry deserts well-content.
For all her swift and sovran moods of old
Are changed into a reckoning spirit cold
And a hysteric wrath that dare not strike
The strong man armed to meet the blow. She, like
A trembling woman who puts o'er her shift
Hard armour, wears the sword she dare not lift,
Covering her coward heart with splendid arms:
Clothed as in adamant shakes with pale alarms,
Armed as with hell-fire fronts not answering shells,
Blusters and trembles, menaces and pales.
Therefore her navies case in triple steel,
Therefore her legions grow apace; her heel
Of iron breaks the weak ones of the world,
But not against the strong her flags unfurled
Shall flaunt the tempest, nor her hissing flail
Of bullets thresh familiar hills and hail
Of shells in Ocean sibilant be drowned
While navies rend and sink her coasts around.
Easier the naked African to quell
Or on the ill-armed Mongolian shot and shell
To lavish and with coward murder chase
Or with strong lust invade a virtuous race.
Meanwhile her prating conferences increase
And gild her terrors with the name of peace.

All these high nations who with paeans loud
Acclaimed your victories, the bitter crowd
And the loose tongues who spat their venom base
In England's evil hour on England's face
Avenging thus decades of craven fear,
Not one shall dare to speak high words with her
For your sake, none shall raise his armèd hand
Against the inheritors of sea and land.
Nor shall the American's pale feverish face
Be lifted from his heaps of gold and trays
Of silver. Deal not with such things as these,
You who are men, not gibbering shades. Increase
Strength rather, of yourselves and Heaven be sure;
Firm make your hearts, magnanimous to endure
More than loud ruin. Though at last you yield,
Yet nowise vain your firmness in the field,
Daring and all the bitter sweat of blood.
Boers, you have sown the veldt with greatness, stood
Irrigating from your own veins farmstead
And kopje and with the bodies of your dead
Manured them: women and young children gave
Their lives to help the seedtime of the brave.
Shall harvest fail you? No, the Power is just
That veils Himself behind the world, not thrust
From puissance by the maxim's brutal roar
Nor to the shrapnel gives His sceptre o'er.
The harvest that you sowed, your sons shall reap,
Stern liberty; nor the example sleep
Imprisoned in the Afric seas, but hurled
Reverberate through the upstarting world.
And the dead nations in the East shall rise
And they that slumber in the West; with eyes
Dismayed the elder Empires overgrown
Shall feel a sudden spirit breathe, a tone
Of challenge hearkening know, at last awake,
Earth was not wide for one sole nation's sake.
For this He fashioned you Who built the stars,

For this He sifted you with searching wars.
Upon the Frisian waters bleak and isles
Where the cold northern Ocean steel-like smiles,
Savage and wide and bare, a nation sparse
Bleak-fishing under the chill midnight stars,
From the wild piercing blast your fathers drew
The breath that loves the desert. To them grew
The Saxon dour and the hard German rude,
And of that stubborn ore unbrittle, crude,
God hammered Him a sword with giant strokes
Upon the anvil of the Ocean rocks;
His fiercest furnace piled the ore to try;
Often He tempered it, often laid by
Unknown of all to harden and anneal.
He made it not of the fine Damasc steel
Comely to see or polished dazzling bright,
A dancing splendour and a pitiless light,
Nor as in Jaipur worked with genial art,
But sheer and stark to rive the adamant heart.
With this He smote the Iberian and the Gaul;
This from his scabbard leaps whene'er o'er all
His earth of various use in various lands
One domination spreads out selfish hands.
Not for its own sake is the falchion keen,
Not for self-greatness was it forged, through skin,
Flesh, heart and bone of giant power to cleave.
Its flash is as the lightning on the eve
Of the stupendous storm that shall uproot
Some oak of empire. When Heaven grows a clot
Of darkness, then God's dagger rips the sky.
Small is the blade and narrow to the eye
The rift; but through it seas of light shall pour
And through it the world-shaking thunders roar
And from the storm the sweet fresh day have birth.
When Spain was mighty and cruel and all earth
Darkened by her huge shadow, your fathers first
Defied her puissance; — they the chains accursed

Asunder rent and braved the bigot's flame
And braved the unvanquished terrors of her name.
Then England grew, then France arose. The one
Repulsed her from the sea's dominion
Making the narrow floods an empire's tomb
When the shot-ridden galleons through the gloom
Of heaven and the wrath of spuming seas
Fled through grey Ocean and the Hebrides,
God's anger swift behind. Then was her hand
Loosened from France's throat; the smiling land
Healed her deep wounds and from her masculine strife
Of mighty spirits forged united life
Now first; so, her high natural vigour found,
Hurled the wide-sprawling Titan to the ground.
But 'twas stern Holland shore his feet of clay
Opening to these the splendours of their day.
Next when great Louis' grandiose mind and high
O'ervaulted all the West like God's own sky,
Your fathers first opposed their petty strength
To his huge destinies; nor defeat, nor length
Of weary struggle could out-tire nor break
Their spirit obstinate for freedom's sake,
When Nassau led them. He was such a man
As you love best to set in your stern van,
Wordless and lonely, stubborn as the hills,
With nature strong to brook tremendous ills
In silence, dowered with vigilant brain and nerve
That never from the goal consent to swerve
But tame down fiercest Fate as men may school
Some dangerous lion to constraining rule.
He sowed the seed; strong England reaped the fruit,
Bringing down showers with the loud cannon's bruit.
Then did she grow indeed. Iberia proud
Being humbled she upon the Ocean loud
Her dwarfish stature launched, but now she trod
Both hemispheres, now giantlike bestrode
The Atlantic and her crest was in the skies,

Earth but a market for her merchandise.
The double Indies all their wealth disgorged
To swell her and her thunders iron-forged
Possessed the hither and the farther seas:
She strewed their waters with her enemies.
Ever she grew and as when Rome was great,
No limit seemed of her supreme estate.
Frore Canada to the Austral heats she joins
And peoples Earth from her exhaustless loins.
Asia and the equator were her spoil,
Her footstool, or a workshop for her toil.
Nor sole she walked, but Europe emulous
Where she had trampled followed orgulous
Like dwarfs behind a giant, gleaning wide
Footholds too small for her gigantic stride.
They too grow great, they too are sons of God
Who meant, they say, all earth for their abode
And increase; others the Almighty made
Their menial peoples, stamped with yellow shade
Or dark, savage of heart, of reason weak.
Nay, but their lords shall make them wise and meek!
Inferior races, let them serve and crouch
Obedient, with the kennel for their couch,
Too happy if but spared the knout and rod.
Yet shall the proud blasphemers know that God
For nobler uses to immortal man
This body's garb designed when He began
To build the planets. His foreseeing eyes
Of ease and its corroding puissance wise,
Reserving to more memorable blows,
From you His chosen stock your sternest chose
And hardest in the grain and drove them forth
From their too populous and prosperous North
Over to torrid regions burning far
Under a fierier sun and brighter star.
There had He worked His Amazulu hordes
To His great purpose 'neath their savage lords,

Chaka the brain of war and Dingaan; — there
Your steel was once again in the red flare
Of that strong furnace tested and annealed,
And that its hard rough temper glints might yield
Of fire, into its molten ore He sank
The Celt's swift force and genius of the Frank:
Nor in the wave-washed regions of the south
Allowed your home, but to the higher drouth
Scourged northward half the iron-minded brood
In the high hills and the veldt's solitude
'Twixt Vaal and the Limpopo. There you stand
Fighting for liberty and fatherland,
O little people of a mighty birth,
The huge colossus who bestrides the earth.
Therefore let not defeat your hearts dismay,
For He that made you, knows His hour, — today
Or after Time grows old, the Spirit high
Prepares His mighty ends unwaveringly.
Not by the fluent tongue is Freedom earned,
Nor lightly, but when her spirit long has burned
In the strong bosom fronting giant fears
And wrestling with defeat and hostile years,
Antagonist of its opposing fate, —
Such hearts earn mighty Freedom for their mate.
Such hearts are yours and will not falter. Firm
Your destiny stands assured its strenuous term
In God's great keeping who His deathless trust
Keeps for the race when your strong hearts are dust, —
Freedom that blooms not but upon the grave
Where they who loved her sleep, her slaughtered brave.

Vision

Who art thou that roamest
Over mountains dim
In the haunts of evening,
Sister of the gleam!

Whiter than the jasmines,
Roses dream of thee;
Softly with the violets
How thine eyes agree!

As thy raven tresses
Night is not so black,
From thy moonbright shoulders
Floating dimly back.

Feet upon the hilltops,
Lilies of delight,
With their far-off radiance
Tinge the evening bright.

In the vesper calmness
Lightly like a dove,
With thy careless eyelids
Confident of love,

As of old thou comest
Down the mountains far,
Smiling from what gardens,
Glowing from what star?

Racing from the hilltops
Like a brilliant stream,
Burning in the valleys
Marble-bright of limb,

Singing in the orchards
When the shadows fall,
With thy crooning anklets
To my heart that call,

By the darkening window
Like a slender fire,
With the night behind thee,
Daughter of desire!

Open wide the doorway,
Bid my love come in
With the night behind her
And the dawn within.

Take, O radiant fingers,
Heart and hands of me,
Hide them in thy bosom,
O felicity!

To the Ganges

Hearken, Ganges, hearken, thou that sweepest golden to the sea,
Hearken, Mother, to my voice.
From the feet of Hari with thy waters pure thou leapest free,
Waters colder-pure than ice.

On Himaloy's grandiose summits upright in his cirque of stones
Shiva sits in breathless air,
Where the outcast seeks his refuge, where the demon army moans,
Ganges erring through his hair.

Down the snowwhite mountains speeding, the immortal peaks and cold,
Crowd thy waves untouched by man.
From Gungotry through the valleys next their icy tops were rolled,
Bursting through Shivadry ran.

In Benares' stainless city by defilement undefiled
Ghauts and temples lightly touched
With thy fingers as thou ranst, laughed low in pureness like a child
To his mother's bosom clutched.

Where the steps of Rama wandered, where the feet of Krishna came,
There thou flowest, there thy hand
Clasps us, Bhagirathie, Jahnavie or Gunga, and thy name
Holier makes the Aryans' land.

But thou leavest Aryavurtha, but thou leapest to the seas
In thy hundred mighty streams;
Nor in the unquiet Ocean vast thy grandiose journeyings cease,
Mother, say thy children's dreams.

Down thou plungest through the Ocean, far beneath its oozy bed
In Patala's leaden gloom
Moaning o'er her children's pain our mother, Ganges of the dead,
Leads our wandering spirits home.

Mighty with the mighty still thou dwelledst, goddess high and pure;
Iron Bhîshma was thy son,
Who against ten thousand rushing chariots could in war endure;
Many heroes fled from one.

Devavrath the mighty, Bhîshma with his oath of iron power,
Smilingly who gave up full
Joy of human life and empire, that his father's wish might flower
And his father's son might rule.

Who were these that thronged thereafter? wherefore came these puny hearts
Apter for the cringing slave,
Wrangling, selfish, weak and treacherous, vendors of their nobler parts,
Sorry food for pyre and grave?

O but these are men of mind not yet with Europe's brutal mood alloyed,
Poets singing in their chains,
Preachers teaching manly slavery, speakers thundering in the void.
Motley wear these men of brains!

Well it is for hound and watchdog fawning at a master's feet,
Cringing, of the whip afraid!
Well it is for linnet caged to make with song his slavery sweet.
Man for other ends was made.

Man the arrogant, the splendid, man the mighty wise and strong,
Born to rule the peopled earth,
Shall he bear the alien's insult, shall he brook the tyrant's wrong
Like a thing of meaner birth?

Sreepoor in the east of Chand and Kédar, bright with Mogul blood,
And the Kings of Aracan
And the Atlantic pirates helped that hue,—its ruined glory flood
Kîrtinasha's waters wan.

Buried are our cities; fallen the apexed dome, the Indian arch;
In Chitore the jackals crowd:
Krishna's Dwarca sleeps for ever, o'er its ruined bastions march
All the Oceans thundering loud.

Still, yet still the fire of Kali on her ancient altar burns
Smouldering under smoky pall,
And the deep heart of her peoples to their Mighty Mother turns,
Listening for her Titan call.

Yet Pratapaditya's great fierce spirit shall in might awake
In Jessore he loved and made,
Sitaram the good and mighty for his well-loved people's sake
Leave the stillness and the shade.

And Bengal the wide and ancient where the Senas swayed of old
Up to far Benares pure,
She shall lead the Aryan peoples to the mighty doom foretold
And her glory shall endure.

By her heart of quick emotion, by her brain of living fire,
By her vibrant speech and great,
She shall lead them, they shall see their destiny in her warm desire
Opening all the doors of Fate.

By the shores of Brahmaputra or where Ganges nears the sea,
Even now a flame is born
Which shall kindle all the South to brilliance and the North shall be
Lighted up as with the morn.

And once more this Aryavurtha fit for heavenly feet to tread,
Free and holy, bold and wise,
Shall lift up her face before the world and she whom men thought dead,
Into strength immortal rise.

Not in icy lone Gungotry nor by Kashi's holy fanes,
Mother, hast thou power to save
Only, nor dost thou grow old near Sagar, nor our vileness stains,
Ganges, thy celestial wave.

Dukkhineswar, Dukkhineswar, wonderful predestined pile,
Tell it to our sons unborn,
Where the night was brooding darkest and the curse was on the soil
Heaviest, God revealed the morn.

Suddenly out from the wonderful East

Suddenly out from the wonderful East like a woman exulting
Dawn stepped forth with a smile on her lips, and the glory of morning
Hovered over the hills; then sweet grew air with the breezes,
Sweet and keen as a wild swift virgin; the wind walked blithely,
Low was the voice of the leaves as they rustled and talked with the river,
Ganges, the sacred river. Down from the northlands crowding,
Touching the steps of the ghauts with the silver tips of their fingers
Lightly the waters ran and talked to each other of sunshine,
Lightly they laughed. But high on his stake impaled by the roadway
Hung Mandavya the mighty in marble deep meditation,
Sepulchred, dumb; on his either side were the thieves, immobile.
They were dead, made free from cruelty, ceasing from anguish,
And forgetting the thirst. But past them Ganges the mighty,
First of the streams of the earth, our Mother, remembering the ages,
Poured to the sea.
Early at dawn by her ghauts the women of Mithila gathered.
There they filled their gurgling jars, or gilding the Ganges
Bathed in her waters and laughed as they bathed there clamouring, dashing
Dew of her coolness in eyes of each other: the banks called sweetly
Mad with the musical laughter of girls and joy of their crying,
Low melodious cries. As when in a wood on the hillsides
Thousands of bulbuls flitting and calling, eating the wild plums,
Filling the ear with sweetness carry from treetop to treetop
Vermeil of crest and scarlet of tail and small brown bodies
Flitting and calling, calling and flitting, full of sweet clamour,
Full of the wine of life, even such was the sweetness and clamour,
Women bathing close by the ghauts of the radiant Ganges,
Golden-limbed or white or darker than olives when ripest,
Lovely of face or of mood, but all sweethearted and happy
Aryan women. One there seemed of another moulding
Who was aloof from the crowd and the chaos of cheerful faces.
She at one side of the stairway slowly like one half-musing
Bathed there, hiding her face in the deep cool bosom of waters,
Losing herself in Ganges, or let its pearl drops dribble

Quietly down through the mystical night of her tresses on gleaming
Shoulders, betwixt her great breasts noble as hills at noontide
Back to their hurrying home: nor heeded the laughter near her.
Only at times when the clamour grew high, she would look up smiling
Such a slow sweet serious smile as a tender mother
Watching her children at play might smile forgetting the sorrow
Down in her own still patient heart where the deep tears gathered
Swell unwept, till they turn to a sea of sorrowful pity.

On the Mountains

Immense retreats of silence and of gloom,
    Hills of a sterile grandeur, rocks that sublime
In bareness seek the blue sky's infinite room
    With their coeval snows untouched by Time!

I seek your solemn spaces! Let me at last
    Forgotten of thought through days immemorable
Voiceless and needless keep your refuge vast,
    Growing into the peace in which I dwell.

For like that Soul unmade you seem to brood
    Who sees all things emerge but none creates,
Watching the ages from His solitude,
    Lone, unconcerned, remote. You to all Fates

Offer an unchanged heart, unmoved abide,
    Wordless, acceptant, sovereignly still.
There is a soul in us as silent, wide,
    Mere, uncreative, imperturbable.

Part Four

Calcutta and Chandernagore
1907–1910

Satirical Poem Published in 1907

Reflections of Srinath Paul, Rai Bahadoor, on the Present Discontents

(*The Address of a Perspiring Chairman Rendered Faithfully into the Ordinary English Vernacular.*)

Councillors, friends, Rai Bahadoors and others,
Gentlemen all, my bold and moderate brothers!
This Conference's revolutionary course
(By revolution, sirs, I mean of course
The year's, — not anything wicked and Extremist;)
Has brought us here, and like a skilful chemist
Mixed well together our victorious batches
Bearing triumphant scars and famous scratches
Of a year's desperate fight. Behold, the glooms
Are over! See, our conquering Suren comes!
Dream not that when I talk of scars and fighting,
I really mean King Edward to go smiting
And bundle dear Sir Andrew out of Ind.
Nothing, nothing like that is in the wind.
Ah no! what has not Britain done for us?
Were we not savage, naked, barbarous?
Has she not snatched and raised us from the mire?
Taught us to dress, eat, talk, write, sneeze, perspire,
Like Europeans, giving civilisation
To this poor ignorant degraded nation?
Was not our India full of cuts and knocks?
'Twas Britain saved us from those hideous shocks.
No matter if our poor of hunger die,
Us she gave peace and ease and property.
Were't not for Clive, Dalhousie, Curzon, all,
You never would have heard of Srinath Paul.
But is this then good cause we should not meet,
Kiss their benevolent and booted feet,
Remonstrate mildly, praise and pray and cry,

"Have sympathy, great Minto, or we die"?
If he'll not hear, let then our humble oration
Travel with Gokhale to the British nation.
To be industrious, prayerful, tearful, meek
Is the sole end for which we meet this week.
Yet are there men, misunderstanding whites,
Who much misconstrue these our holy rites
Deeming it a bad criminal consultation
How best to free — O horrid thought! — our nation,
And send the English packing bag and baggage,
Polo and hockey stick, each scrap of luggage.
They think we are rank and file and proletariat
Fit to be throttled with the hangman's lariat.
Fie, sirs! that we should be confused with the mob,
We who with Viceroys and great men hobnob!
To be mistook, — Oh faugh! for the mere people,
Things that eat common food and water tipple,
Mere men, mere flesh and blood! — we, the elect,
The aristocracy of intellect
To be thus levelled with the stinking crowd!
No, sirs, I dare pronounce it very loud,
We are the sober, moderate wise men, needing
Scope only to be famed for light and leading,
Full of co-operative amorous loyalty
To Minto, Morley and Britannic Royalty.
O some there are impatient and too wild,
To that Curzonian lash unreconciled,
Repudiate with violence unchancy
Our gospel proud of futile mendicancy.
Strange that they can't perceive the utility
And nobleness of absolute futility!
O sirs, be moderate, patient, persevering;
Shun, shun the extremists and their horrid sneering.
O sirs, from loyalty budge not an inch;
What if your masters love your throats to pinch?
It's pure affection. Even if they kick,
Is that sufficient reason to feel sick?

No, though they thrash and cudgel, kick and beat,
Cling like the devil to their sacred feet!
Where are we? Is this the French Revolution
Infects our sacred Ind with its pollution?
Is Minto Louis? Kitchener Duke Broglie?
Away, away with revolutionary folly!
What, is this France or Russia? Are we men,
Servitude to reject and bonds disdain?
No, we are loyal, good religious dogs,
Born for delightful kicks and pleasant shogs.
It is a canine gospel that I preach.
Be dogs, be dogs, and learn to love the switch.
Whatever the result, be loyal still
To Minto, Morley and their mighty will.
Be loyal still, my prosperous countrymen,
Nor heed the moaning of the million's pain.
For serfdom in our very bones is bred,
And our religion teaches us to dread, —
Shivaji's creed and Pratap's though it be, —
More than the very devil disloyalty.
O constitutionally agitate your tails
And see whether that agitation fails.
The course of true love never did run smooth!
Morley will still relent, — that gracious youth.
Beg for new Legislative Councils, sirs,
Or any blessed thing your mind prefers.
The Shah's agreeable, why not the British?
Then there's Mysore — Great Scott! I feel quite skittish.
Local self-government we'll beg that's now
A farce, — (I'm getting quite extreme, I vow!)
And many other things. Prayers let us patter;
Whether we get them or not, can't really matter.
But one thing let me tell you, countrymen,
That clubs a boon and blessing are to men,
Where white with black and black can mix with white
And share a particoloured deep delight.
Great thanks we owe then, loyalists, to "Max",

Who his capacious brain the first did tax.
Behold the great result! Apollo Paean!
The holy club, the Indo-European!
Approach, approach the holy precincts, come
And chat with Risley of affairs at home;
With Fraser arm-in-arm like friends we'll walk,
To Luson and to Lee familiarly talk.
Mind! trousers and a hat. They keep good whiskey
And we shall feel particularly frisky.
As for Comilla, it was sad and bad,
But Minto's sympathy o'er that fell raid
Dropped like the gentle dew from heaven to heal;
No longer for our injured kin we feel.
And now think not of politics too much.
Three days or four is quite enough for such.
Much better done to store substantial honey
Of commerce, taste the joys that roll in money.
Be rich, my friends! who cares then to be free
In hard uncomfortable liberty?
Of boycott talk but not of Swaraj, sirs,
And if of independence you'ld discourse,
Let it of economic independence be.
For that the law proscribes no penalty,
Nor will your gentle hearts grow faint and sick
At shadow of the fell policeman's stick.
What folly to disturb our comfort fatty
And cudgelled be with regulation *lathi*?
Such the reflections, sirs — Well, let it drop.
Don't hiss so much, dear friends! for here I stop.

Short Poems
Published in 1909 and 1910

The Mother of Dreams

Goddess, supreme Mother of Dream, by thy ivory doors when thou standest,
Who are they then that come down unto men in thy visions that troop, group upon group, down the path of the shadows slanting?
Dream after dream, they flash and they gleam with the flame of the stars still around them;
Shadows at thy side in a darkness ride where the wild fires dance, stars glow and glance and the random meteor glistens;
There are voices that cry to their kin who reply; voices sweet, at the heart they beat and ravish the soul as it listens.
What then are these lands and these golden sands and these seas more radiant than earth can imagine?
Who are those that pace by the purple waves that race to the cliff-bound floor of thy jasper shore under skies in which mystery muses,
Lapped in moonlight not of our night or plunged in sunshine that is not diurnal?
Who are they coming thy Oceans roaming with sails whose strands are not made by hands, an unearthly wind advances?
Why do they join in a mystic line with those on the sands linking hands in strange and stately dances?
Thou in the air, with a flame in thy hair, the whirl of thy wonders watching,
Holdest the night in thy ancient right, mother divine, hyacinthine, with a girdle of beauty defended.
Sworded with fire, attracting desire, thy tenebrous kingdom thou keepest,
Starry-sweet, with the moon at thy feet, now hidden now seen the clouds between in the gloom and the drift of thy tresses.
Only to those whom thy fancy chose, O thou heart-free, is it given to see thy witchcraft and feel thy caresses.
Open the gate where thy children wait in their world of a beauty undarkened.
High-throned on a cloud, victorious, proud I have espied Maghavan ride when the armies of wind are behind him;
Food has been given for my tasting from heaven and fruit of immortal sweetness;

I have drunk wine of the kingdoms divine and have heard the change of
music strange from a lyre which our hands cannot master;
Doors have swung wide in the chambers of pride where the Gods reside
and the Apsaras dance in their circles faster and faster.
For thou art she whom we first can see when we pass the bounds of the
mortal,
There at the gates of the heavenly states thou hast planted thy wand
enchanted over the head of the Yogin waving.
From thee are the dream and the shadows that seem and the fugitive lights
that delude us;
Thine is the shade in which visions are made; sped by thy hands from
celestial lands come the souls that rejoice for ever.
Into thy dream-worlds we pass or look in thy magic glass, then beyond
thee we climb out of Space and Time to the peak of divine endeavour.

An Image

Rushing from Troy like a cloud on the plains the Trojans thundered,
Just as a storm comes thundering, thick with the dust of kingdoms,
Edged with the devious dance of the lightning, so all Troas
Loud with the roar of the chariots, loud with the vaunt and the war-cry,
Rushed from Troywards gleaming with spears and rolled on enormous.
Joyous as ever Paris led them glancing in armour,
Brilliant with gold like a bridegroom, playing with death and the battle
Even as apart in his chamber he played with his beautiful Helen,
Touching her body rejoiced with a low and lyrical laughter,
So he laughed as he smote his foemen. Round him the arrows,
Round him the spears of the Argives sang like the voices of maidens
Trilling the anthem of bridal bliss, the chant hymeneal;
Round him the warriors fell like flowers strewn at a bridal
Red with the beauty of blood.

The Birth of Sin

Lucifer Sirioth

LUCIFER

What mighty and ineffable desire
Impels thee, Sirioth? Thy accustomed calm
Is potently subverted and the eyes
That were a god's in sweet tranquillity,
Confess a human warmth, a troubled glow.

SIRIOTH

Lucifer, son of Morning, Angel! thou
Art mightiest of the architects of fate.
To thee is given with thy magic gaze
Compelling mortals as thou leanst sublime
From heaven's lucent walls, to sway the world.
Is thy felicity of lesser date,
Prince of the patient and untiring gods,
The gods who work? Dost thou not ever feel
Angelic weariness usurp the place
Where the great flame and the august desire
Were wont to urge thee on? To me it seems
That our eternity is far too long
For service and there is a word, a thought,
More godlike.

LUCIFER

Sirioth, I will speak the word.
Is it not Power?

SIRIOTH

No, Lucifer, 'tis Love.

LUCIFER

Love? It was love that for a trillion years
Gave me the instinct and immense demand
For service, for activity. It fades.
Another and more giant passion comes
Striding upon me. I behold the world
Immeasurably vast, I see the heavens
Full of an azure joy and majesty,
I see the teeming millions of the stars.
Sirioth, how came the Master of the world
To be the master? Did He seize control
Pushing some ancient weaker sovereign down
From sway immemorable? Did He come
By peaceful ways, permission or inheritance,
To what He is today? Or if indeed
He is for ever and for ever rules,
Are there no bounds to His immense domain,
No obscure corner of unbounded space
Forgotten by His fate, that I may seize
And make myself an empire as august,
Enjoy a like eternity of rule?

SIRIOTH

Angel, these thoughts are mighty as thyself.
But wilt thou then rebel? If He be great
To conquer and to punish, what of thee?
Eternity of dreadful poignant pain
May be thy fate and not eternal rule.

LUCIFER

Better than still to serve desirelessly,
Pursued by a compulsion dull and fierce,
Looking through all vast time for one brief hour
Of rest, of respite, but instead to find
Iron necessity and pant in vain
For space, for room, for freedom.

SIRIOTH

Thou intendest?

LUCIFER

Sirioth, I do not yet intend; I feel.

SIRIOTH

For me the sense of active force within
Set me to work, as the stars move, the sun
Resistless flames through space, the stormwind runs.
But I have felt a touch as sweet as spring,
And I have heard a music of delight
Maddening the heart with the sweet honied stabs
Of delicate intolerable joy.
Where, where is One to feel the answering bliss?
Lucifer, thou from love beganst thy toil.
What love?

LUCIFER

Desire august to help, to serve.

SIRIOTH

That is not mine. To embrace, to melt and mix
Two beings into one, to roll the spirit
Tumbling into a surge of common joy, —
'Tis this I seek.

LUCIFER

Will He permit?

SIRIOTH

A bar
I feel, a prohibition. Someone used
A word I could not grasp and called it sin.

LUCIFER

The word is new, even as these things are.

SIRIOTH

I know not who he was. He laughed and said,
"Sin, sin is born into the world, revolt
And change, in Sirioth and in Lucifer,
The evening and the morning star. Rejoice,
O world!" And I beheld as in a dream
Leaping from out thy brain and into mine
A woman beautiful, of grandiose mien,
Yet terrible, alarming and instinct
With nameless menace. And the world was full
With clashing and with cries. It seemed to me
Angels and Gods and men strove violently
To touch her robe, to occupy the place
Her beautiful and ominous feet had trod,
Crying, "Daughter of Lucifer, be ours,
O sweet, adorable and mighty Sin!"
Therefore I came to thee.

LUCIFER

Sirioth, await
Her birth, if she must be. For this I know,
Necessity rules all the infinite world,
And even He perhaps submits unknown
To a compulsion. When the time is ripe,
We will consult once more what we shall do.

Epiphany

Immortal, moveless, calm, alone, august,
A silence throned, to just and to unjust
One Lord of still unutterable love,
I saw Him, Shiva, like a brooding dove
Close-winged upon her nest. The outcasts came,
The sinners gathered to that quiet flame,
The demons by the other sterner gods
Rejected from their luminous abodes
Gathered around the Refuge of the lost
Soft-smiling on that wild and grisly host.
All who were refugeless, wretched, unloved,
The wicked and the good together moved
Naturally to Him, the shelterer sweet,
And found their heaven at their Master's feet.
The vision changed and in its place there stood
A Terror red as lightning or as blood.
His strong right hand a javelin advanced
And as He shook it, earthquake stumbling danced
Across the hemisphere, ruin and plague
Rained out of heaven, disasters swift and vague
Neighboured, a marching multitude of ills.
His foot strode forward to oppress the hills,
And at the vision of His burning eyes
The hearts of men grew faint with dread surmise
Of sin and punishment. Their cry was loud,
"O master of the stormwind and the cloud,
Spare, Rudra, spare! Show us that other form
Auspicious, not incarnate wrath and storm."
The God of Force, the God of Love are one;
Not least He loves whom most He smites. Alone
Who towers above fear and plays with grief,
Defeat and death, inherits full relief
From blindness and beholds the single Form,
Love masking Terror, Peace supporting Storm.

The Friend of Man helps him with life and death
Until he knows. Then, freed from mortal breath,
Grief, pain, resentment, terror pass away.
He feels the joy of the immortal play;
He has the silence and the unflinching force,
He knows the oneness and the eternal course.
He too is Rudra and thunder and the Fire,
He Shiva and the white Light no shadows tire,
The Strength that rides abroad on Time's wide wings,
The Calm in the heart of all immortal things.

To R.

On Her Birthday

The repetition of thy gracious years
        Brings back once more thy natal morn.
Upon the crest of youth thy life appears, —
        A wave upborne.

Amid the hundreds thronging Ocean's floor
        A wave upon the crowded sea
With regular rhythm pushing towards the shore
        Our life must be.

The power that moves it is the Ocean's force
        Invincible, eternal, free,
And by that impulse it pursues its course
        Inevitably.

We, too, by the Eternal Might are led
        To whatsoever goal He wills.
Our helm He grasps, our generous sail outspread
        His strong breath fills.

Exulting in the grace and strength of youth
    Pursue the Ocean's distant bound,
Trusting the Pilot's voice, the Master's ruth
    That rings us round.

Rejoice and fear not for the waves that swell,
    The storms that thunder, winds that sweep;
Always our Captain holds the rudder well,
    He does not sleep.

If in the trough of the enormous sea
    Thou canst not find the sky for spray,
Fear never, for our Sun is there with thee
    By night and day.

Even those who sink in the victorious flood,
    Where do they sink? Into His breast.
He who to some gives victory, joy and good,
    To some gives rest.

But thou, look to the radiant days that wait
    Beyond the driving rain and storm.
I have seen the vision of a happier fate
    Brightening thy form.

Confident of His grace, expect His will;
    Let Him lead; though hidden be the bourne,
See Him in all that happens; that fulfil
    For which thou wert born.

Transiit, Non Periit

(*My grandfather, Rajnarain Bose,*
died September 1899)

Not in annihilation lost, nor given
To darkness art thou fled from us and light,
O strong and sentient spirit; no mere heaven
Of ancient joys, no silence eremite
Received thee; but the omnipresent Thought
Of which thou wast a part and earthly hour,
Took back its gift. Into that splendour caught
Thou hast not lost thy special brightness. Power
Remains with thee and the old genial force
Unseen for blinding light, not darkly lurks:
As when a sacred river in its course
Dives into ocean, there its strength abides
Not less because with vastness wed and works
Unnoticed in the grandeur of the tides.

Poems from Manuscripts
Circa 1909–1910

Perfect thy motion

Perfect thy motion ever within me,
　　Master of mind.
Grey of the brain, flash of the lightning,
　　Brilliant and blind,
These thou linkest, the world to mould,
Writing the thought in a scroll of gold
　　Violet lined.

Tablet of brain thou hast made for thy writing,
　　Master divine.
Calmly thou writest or full of thy grandeur
　　Flushed as with wine.
Then with a laugh thou erasest the scroll,
Bringing another, like waves that roll
　　And sink supine.

A Dialogue

ACHAB

Stamp out, stamp out the sun from the high blue
And all o'erarching firmament of heaven;
Forget the mighty ocean when it spumes
Under the thunder-deafened cliffs and soars
To crown their tops with spray, but never hope
That Baal will excuse, Baal forgive.
That's an ambition more impossible,
A thought more rebel from the truth.

ESARHADDON

Baal!
It seems to me that thou believ'st in Baal!

ACHAB

And what dost thou believe in? The gross crowd
Believe the sun is God or else a stone.
This though I credit not, yet Baal lives.

ESARHADDON

And if he lives, then you and I are Baal,
Deserve as much the prayer and sacrifice
As he does. Nay, then, sit and tell him, "Lord,
If thou art Baal, let the fire be lit
Upon thy altar without agency,
Let men believe." Can God do this, and if
He cannot, if he needs a flint and fuel
And human hands to light his sacred fire,
Is he not less than man? The flint and fuel
Are for our work sufficient. What is he
If not a helpless name that cannot live
Unless men's lips repeat him?

ACHAB

And the flint,
The fuel? Who made these or formed the hands
That lit the fire? the lips that prove him nothing?
Or who gave thee thy clear and sceptic brain,
Thy statecraft and thy bold and scornful will
Despising what thou usest? Was it thou
That mad'st them?

ESARHADDON

No, my parents did. Say then
The seed is God that touched my mother's womb
And by familiar process built this house
Inhabited by Esarhaddon.

ACHAB

Who
Fashioned the seed?

ESARHADDON

It grew from other seed,
That out of earth and water, light and heat,
And ether, eldest creature of the world.
All is a force that irresistibly
Works by its nature which it cannot help,
And that is I and that the wood and flint,
That Achab, that Assyria, that the world.

ACHAB

How came the force in being?

ESARHADDON

From of old
It is.

ACHAB

Then why not call it Baal?

ESARHADDON

For me
I care not what 'tis called, Mithra or God.
You call it Baal, Perizade says
'Tis Ormuzd, Mithra and the glorious Sun.
I say 'tis force.

ACHAB

Then wherefore strive to change
Assyria's law, o'erthrow the cult of Baal?

ESARHADDON

I do not, for it crumbles of itself.
Why keep the rubbish? Priest, I need a cult
More gentle and less bloody to the State,
Not crying at each turn for human blood
Which means the loss of so much labour, gold,
Soldiers and strength. This Mithra's worship is.
Come, priest, you are incredulous yourself,
But guard your trade, so do I mine, so all.
Will it be loss to you, if it be said
Baal and Mithra, these are one, but Baal
Changes and grows more mild and merciful,
A friend to men? Or if instead of blood's
Unprofitable revenue we give
Offerings of price, and heaps of captive gold
In place of conquered victims?

ACHAB

So you urge,
The people's minds are not so mobile yet.

ESARHADDON

If you and I agree, who will refuse?
I care not, man, how it is done. Invent
Scriptures, forge ancient writings, let the wild
Mystics who slash their limbs on Baal's hill,
Cry out the will of Baal while they slash.
You are subtle, if you choose. The head of all
Assyria's state ecclesiastical,
Assured a twentieth of my revenues,
And right of all the offerings votaries heap
On Mithra, that's promotion more than any
Onan can give, the sullen silent slave,
Or Ikbal Sufa with his politic brain.

ACHAB

Why that?

ESARHADDON

You think I do not know! I see
Each motion of your close conspiring brains,
Achab.

ACHAB

And if you do, why hold your hand?

ESARHADDON

That's boldly questioned, almost honestly.
Because a State is ill preserved by blood.
The policy that sees a fissure here,
A wall in ill repair, and builds it up,
Is better than to raze the mansion down
And make it new. I know the people's mind
Sick of a malady no leech can name;
I see a dangerous motion in the soil,

And make my old foundations sure. Achab,
You know I have a sword, and yet it sleeps;
I offer you the gem upon the hilt
And friendship. Will you take it? See, I need
A brain as clear as yours, a heart as bold.
What should I do by killing you, but lose
A statesman born?

ACHAB

You have conquered, King. I yield.

ESARHADDON

'Tis well. Here is my hand on our accord.

Narrative Poems
Published in 1910

Baji Prabhou

Author's Note

This poem is founded on the historical incident of the heroic self-sacrifice of Baji Prabhou Deshpande, who to cover Shivaji's retreat, held the pass of Rangana for two hours with a small company of men against twelve thousand Moguls. Beyond the single fact of this great exploit there has been no attempt to preserve historical accuracy.

Baji Prabhou

A noon of Deccan with its tyrant glare
Oppressed the earth; the hills stood deep in haze,
And sweltering athirst the fields glared up
Longing for water in the courses parched
Of streams long dead. Nature and man alike,
Imprisoned by a bronze and brilliant sky,
Sought an escape from that wide trance of heat.
Nor only on inanimate hills and trees,
Nor on rare herdsman or the patient hind
Tilling the earth or tending sleeplessly
The well-eared grain that burden fell. It hung
Upon the Mogul horsemen as they rode
With lances at the charge, the surf of steel
About them and behind, as they recoiled
Or circled, where the footmen ran and fired,
And fired again and ran; "For now at last,"
They deemed, "the war is over, now at last
The panther of the hills is beaten back
Right to his lair, the rebel crew to death
Is hunted, and an end is made at last."
Therefore they stayed not for the choking dust,
The slaying heat, the thirst of wounds and fight,
The stumbling stark fatigue, but onward pressed
With glowing eyes. Far otherwise the foe,
Panting and sore oppressed and racked with thirst
And blinded with the blazing earth who reeled
Backward to Raigurh, moistening with their blood
Their mother, and felt their own beloved hills
A nightmare hell of death and heat, the sky
A mute and smiling witness of their dire
Anguish, — abandoned now of God and man,
Who for their country and their race had striven, —
In vain, it seemed. At morning when the sun

Was yet below the verge, the Bhonsle sprang
At a high mountain fortress, hoping so
To clutch the whole wide land into his grasp;
But from the North and East the Moguls poured,
Swords numberless and hooves that shook the hills
And barking of a hundred guns. These bore
The hero backward. Silently with set
And quiet faces grim drew fighting back
The strong Mahrattas to their hills; only
Their rear sometimes with shouted slogan leaped
At the pursuer's throat, or on some rise
Or covered vantage stayed the Mogul flood
A moment. Ever foremost where men fought,
Was Baji Prabhou seen, like a wild wave
Of onset or a cliff against the surge.
At last they reached a tiger-throated gorge
Upon the way to Raigurh. Narrowing there
The hills draw close, and their forbidding cliffs
Threaten the prone incline. The Bhonsle paused,
His fiery glance travelled in one swift gyre
Hill, gorge and valley and with speed returned
Mightily like an eagle on the wing
To a dark youth beside him, Malsure
The younger, with his bright and burning eyes,
Who wordless rode quivering, as on the leash;
His fierce heart hungered for the rear, where Death
Was singing mid the laughter of the swords.
"Ride, Suryaji," the Chieftain cried, his look
Inward, intent, "and swiftly from the rear
Summon the Prabhou." Turning at the word
Suryaji's hooves sped down the rock-strewn slope
Into the trenchant valley's depth. Swiftly,
Though burdened with a nation's fate, the ridge
They reached, where in stern silence fought and fell,
Their iron hearts broken with desperate toil,
The Southron rear, and to the Prabhou gave
The summons of the Chief: "Ride, Baji, ride,

The Bhonsle names thee, Baji." And Baji spoke
No word, but stormed with loose and streaming rein
To the high frowning gorge and silent paused
Before the leader. "Baji, more than once
In battle thou hast stood, a living shield,
Between me and the foe. But more today,
O Baji, save than any single life, —
Thy nation's destiny. Thou seest this gorge
Narrow and fell and gleaming like the throat
Of some huge tiger, with its rocky fangs
Agrin for food: and though the lower slope
Descends too gently, yet with roots and stones
It is hampered, and the higher prone descent
Impregnably forbids assault; too steep
The sides for any to ascend and shoot
From vantage. Here might lion-hearted men,
Though few, delay a host. Baji, I speed
To Raigurh and in two brief hours return.
Say with what force thy iron heart can hold
The passage till I come. Thou seest our strength,
How it has melted like the Afghan's ice
Into a pool of blood." And while he paused
Who had been chosen, spoke an iron man
With iron brows who rode behind the Chief,
Tanaji Malsure, that living sword:
"Not for this little purpose was there need
To call the Prabhou from his toil. Enough,
Give me five hundred men; I hold the pass
Till thy return." But Shivaji kept still
His great and tranquil look upon the face
Of Baji Prabhou. Then, all black with wrath,
Wrinkling his fierce hard eyes, the Malsure:
"What ponders then the hero? Such a man
Of men, he needs not like us petty swords
A force behind him, but alone will hold
All Rajasthan and Agra and Cabool
From rise to set." And Baji answered him:

"Tanaji Malsure, not in this living net
Of flesh and nerve, nor in the flickering mind
Is a man's manhood seated. God within
Rules us, who in the Brahmin and the dog
Can, if He will, show equal godhead. Not
By men is mightiness achieved; Baji
Or Malsure is but a name, a robe,
And covers One alone. We but employ
Bhavani's strength, who in an arm of flesh
Is mighty as in the thunder and the storm.
I ask for fifty swords." And Malsure:
"Well, Baji, I will build thee such a pyre
As man had never yet, when we return;
For all the Deccan brightening shall cry out,
Baji the Prabhou burns!" And with a smile
The Prabhou answered: "Me thou shalt not burn.
For this five feet or more of bone and flesh,
Whether pure flame or jackals of the hills
Be fattened with its rags, may well concern
Others, not Baji Prabhou." And the Chief
With a high calmness in his shining look,
"We part, O friend, but meet again we must,
When from our tasks released we both shall run
Like children to our Mother's clasp." He took
From his wide brow the princely turban sown
With aigrette diamond-crowned and on the head
Of Baji set the gleaming sign, then clasped
His friend and, followed by the streaming host
That gathered from the rear, to farther hills
Rode clattering. By the Mogul van approached
Baji and his Mahrattas sole remained
Watched by the mountains in the silent gorge.

Small respite had the slender band who held
Fate constant with that brittle hoop of steel;
For like the crest of an arriving wave
The Moslem van appeared, though slow and tired,

Yet resolute to break such barrier faint,
And forced themselves to run: — nor long availed;
For with a single cry the muskets spoke,
Once and again and always, as they neared,
And, like a wave arrested, for a while
The assailants paused and like a wave collapsed
Spent backward in a cloud of broken spray,
Retreating. Yielding up, the dangerous gorge
Saw only on the gnarled and stumbling rise
The dead and wounded heaped. But from the rear
The main tremendous onset of the North
Came in a dark and undulating surge
Regardless of the check, — a mingled mass,
Pathan and Mogul and the Rajput clans,
All clamorous with the brazen throats of war
And spitting smoke and fire. The bullets rang
Upon the rocks, but in their place unhurt,
Sheltered by tree and rock, the silent grim
Defenders waited, till on root and stone
The confident high-voiced triumphant surge
Began to break, to stumble, then to pause,
Confusion in its narrowed front. At once
The muskets clamoured out, the bullets sped,
Deadly though few; again and yet again,
And some of the impetuous faltered back
And some in wrath pressed on; and while they swayed
Poised between flight and onset, blast on blast
The volleyed death invisible hailed in
Upon uncertain ranks. The leaders fell,
The forward by the bullets chosen out,
Prone or supine or leaning like sick men
O'er trees and rocks, distressed the whole advance
With prohibition by the silent slain.
So the great onset failed. And now withdrawn
The generals consulted, and at last
In slow and ordered ranks the foot came on,
An iron resolution in their tread,

Hushed and deliberate. Far in the van,
Tall and large-limbed, a formidable array,
The Pathan infantry; a chosen force,
Lower in crest, strong-framed, the Rajputs marched;
The chivalry of Agra led the rear.
Then Baji first broke silence, "Lo, the surge!
That was but spray of death we first repelled.
Chosen of Shivaji, Bhavani's swords,
For you the gods prepare. We die indeed,
But let us die with the high-voiced assent
Of Heaven to our country's claim enforced
To freedom." As he spoke, the Mogul lines
Entered the menacing wide-throated gorge,
Carefully walking, but not long that care
Endured, for where they entered, there they fell.
Others behind in silence stern advanced.
They came, they died; still on the previous dead
New dead fell thickening. Yet by paces slow
The lines advanced with labour infinite
And merciless expense of valiant men.
For even as the slopes were filled and held,
Still the velocity and lethal range
Increased of the Mahratta bullets; dead
Rather than living held the conquered slope,—
The living who, half-broken, paused. Abridged,
Yet wide, the interval opposed advance,
Daunting those resolute natures; eyes once bold
With gloomy hesitation reckoned up
The dread equivalent in human lives
Of cubits and of yards, and hardly hoped
One could survive the endless unacquired
Country between. But from the Southron wall
The muskets did not hesitate, but urged
Refusal stern; the bullets did not pause,
Nor calculate expense. Active they thronged
Humming like bees and stung strong lives to death
Making a holiday of carnage. Then

The heads that planned pushed swiftly to the front
The centre yet unhurt, where Rajasthan,
Playmate of death, had sent her hero sons.
They with a rapid royal reckless pace
Came striding over the perilous fire-swept ground,
Nor answered uselessly the bullets thick
Nor paused to judge, but o'er the increasing dead
Leaping and striding, shouting, sword in hand,
Rushed onward with immortal courage high
In mortal forms, and held the lower slope.
But now the higher incline, short but steep,
Baffled their speed, and as they clambered up,
Compact and fiery, like the rapid breath
Of Agra's hot simoom, the sheeted flame
Belched bullets. Down they fell with huge collapse,
And, rolling, with their shock drove back the few
Who still attempted. Banned advance, retreat
Threatening disgrace and slaughter, for a while
Like a bound sacrifice the Rajputs stood
Diminishing each moment. Then a lord
High-crested of the Rathore clan stood out
From the perplexed assailants, with his sword
Beckoning the thousands on against the few.
And him the bullets could not touch; he stood
Defended for a moment by his lease
Not yet exhausted. And a mighty shout
Rose from behind, and in a violent flood
The Rajputs flung themselves on the incline
Like clambering lions. Many hands received
The dead as they descended, flinging back
Those mournful obstacles, and with a rush
The lead surmounted and on level ground
Stood sword in hand; yet only for a while, —
For grim and straight the slogan of the South
Leaped with the fifty swords to thrust them back,
Baji the Prabhou leading. Thrice they came,
Three times prevailed, three times the Southron charge

Repelled them; till at last the Rathore lord,
As one appointed, led the advancing death,
Nor waited to assure his desperate hold,
But hurled himself on Baji; those behind
Bore forward those in front. From right and left
Mahratta muskets rang their music out
And withered the attack that, still dissolved,
Still formed again from the insistent rear
And would not end. So was the fatal gorge
Filled with the clamour of the close-locked fight.
Sword rang on sword, the slogan shout, the cry
Of guns, the hiss of bullets filled the air,
And murderous strife heaped up the scanty space,
Rajput and strong Mahratta breathing hard
In desperate battle. But far off the hosts
Of Agra stood arrested, confident,
Waiting the end. Far otherwise it came
Than they expected. For, as in the front
The Rathore stood on the disputed verge
And ever threw fresh strength into the scale
With that inspiring gesture, Baji came
Towards him singling out the lofty crest,
The princely form: and, as the waves divide
Before a driving keel, the battle so
Before him parted, till he neared, he slew.
Avoiding sword, avoiding lifted arm
The blade surprised the Rajput's throat, and down
As falls an upright poplar, with his hands
Outspread, dying, he clutched Mahratta ground.
Loud rose the slogan as he fell. Amazed,
The eager hosts of Agra saw reel back
The Rajput battle, desperate victory
Turned suddenly into entire defeat,
Not headlong, but with strong discouragement,
Sullen, convinced, rejecting the emprise.
As they retired, the brilliant Pathan van
Assumed the attempt. "Exhaust," the generals cried,

"Exhaust the stubborn mountaineers; for now
Fatigued with difficult effort and success
They hardly stand, weary, unstrung, inert.
Scatter this fringe, and we march on and seize
Raigurh and Shivaji." Meanwhile, they too
Not idle, covered by the rocks and trees,
Straining for vantage, pausing on each ledge,
Seizing each bush, each jutting promontory,
Some iron muscles, climbing, of the south
Lurked on the gorge's gloomy walls unseen.
On came the Pathans running rapidly,
But as the nearmost left the rocky curve
Where lurked the ambush, loud from stone and tree
The silence spoke; sideways, in front, behind
Death clamoured, and tall figures strewed the ground
Like trees in a cyclone. Appalled the rest
Broke this way and broke that, and some cried, "On!"
Some shouted, "Back!" for those who led, fell fast.
So the advance dissolved, divided, — the more
In haste towards the plains, greeted with death
Even while they ran; but others forward, full
Of panic courage, drove towards the foe
They could not reach, — so hot a blast and fell
Stayed their unsteady valour, their retreat
So swift and obstinate a question galled,
Few through the hail survived. With gloom their chiefs
Beheld the rout and drawing back their hosts
In dubious council met, whether to leave
That gorge of slaughter unredeemed or yet
Demand the price of so immense a loss.

But to the Prabhou came with anxious eyes
The Captain of the band. "Baji," he cried,
"The bullets fail; all the great store we had
Of shot and powder by unsparing use
Is spent, is ended." And Baji Prabhou turned.
One look he cast upon the fallen men

Discernible by their attire, and saw
His ranks not greatly thinned, one look below
Upon the hundreds strewing thick the gorge,
And grimly smiled; then where the sun in fire
Descending stooped, towards the vesper verge
He gazed and cried: “Make iron of your souls.
Yet if Bhavani wills, strength and the sword
Can stay our nation’s future from o’erthrow
Till victory with Shivaji return.”
And so they waited without word or sound,
And over them the silent afternoon
Waited; the hush terrestrial was profound.
Except the mountains and the fallen men
No sight, no voice, no movement was abroad,
Only a few black-winged slow-circling birds
That wandered in the sky, only the wind
That now arose and almost noiselessly
Questioned the silence of the wooded sides,
Only the occasional groan that marked the pang
By some departing spirit on its frame
Inflicted. And from time to time the gaze
Of Baji sought the ever-sinking sun.
Men fixed their eyes on him and in his firm
Expression lived. So the slow minutes passed.
But when the sun dipped very low, a stir
Was felt far off, and all men grasped the hilt
Tighter and put a strain upon their hearts.
Resolved at last the stream of Mogul war
Came once more pouring, not the broken rout
Of Pathans, not discouraged Rajput swords,
But Agra’s chivalry glancing with gold
And scimitars inlaid and coloured robes.
Swiftly they came expecting the assault
Fire-winged of bullets and the lethal rain,
But silence met them and to their intent
So ominous it seemed, awhile they paused,
Fearing some ruse, though for much death prepared,

Yet careful of prevention. Reassured,
Onward with a high shout they charged the slope.
No bullet sped, no musket spoke; unhurt
They crossed the open space, unhurt they climbed
The rise; but even as their hands surprised
The shrubs that fringed the vantage, swords unseen
Hacked at their fingers, through the bushes thrust
Lances from warriors unexposed bore through
Their bosoms. From behind the nearest lines
Pressed on to share their fate, and still the sea
Of men bore onward till with violent strain
They reached the perilous crest; there for a while
A slaughter grim went on and all the verge
Was heaped and walled and thickly fortified
With splendid bodies. But as they were piled,
The raging hosts behind tore down their dead
And mounted, till at last the force prevailed
Of obstinate numbers and upon a crest
Swarming with foemen fought 'gainst desperate odds
The Southron few. Small was the space for fight,
And meeting strength with skill and force with soul
The strong and agile keepers of the hills
Prevailed against the city-dwelling hosts,
With covert and the swiftly stabbing blades
O'erpowering all the feints of Agra's schools.
So fought they for a while; then suddenly
Upon the Prabhou all the Goddess came.
Loud like a lion hungry on the hills
He shouted, and his stature seemed to increase
Striding upon the foe. Rapid his sword
Like lightning playing with a cloud made void
The crest before him, on his either side
The swordsmen of the South with swift assault
Preventing the reply, till like a bank
Of some wild river the assault collapsed
Over the stumbling edge and down the rise,
And once again the desperate moment passed.

The relics of the murderous strife remained,
Corpses and jewels, broidery and gold.
But not for this would they accept defeat.
Once more they came and almost held. Then wrath
Rose in the Prabhou and he raised himself
In soul to make an end; but even then
A stillness fell upon his mood and all
That godlike impulse faded from his heart,
And passing out of him a mighty form
Stood visible, Titanic, scarlet-clad,
Dark as a thunder-cloud, with streaming hair
Obscuring heaven, and in her sovran grasp
The sword, the flower, the boon, the bleeding head, —
Bhavani. Then she vanished; the daylight
Was ordinary in a common world.
And Baji knew the goddess formidable
Who watches over India till the end.
Even then a sword found out his shoulder, sharp
A Mogul lance ran grinding through his arm.
Fiercely around him gathered in a knot
The mountaineers; but Baji, with a groan,
"Moro Deshpande, to the other side
Hasten of the black gorge and bring me word.
Rides any from the West, or canst thou hear
The Raigurh trumpets blow? I know my hour
Is ended; let me know my work is done."
He spoke and shouted high the slogan loud.
Desperate, he laboured in his human strength
To push the Mogul from the gorge's end
With slow compulsion. By his side fell fast
Mahratta and Mogul and on his limbs
The swords drank blood, a single redness grew
His body, yet he fought. Then at his side
Ghastly with wounds and in his fiery eyes
Death and rejoicing a dire figure stood,
Moro Deshpande. "Baji, I have seen
The Raigurh lances; Baji, I have heard

The trumpets." Conquering with his cry the din
He spoke, then dead upon a Mogul corpse
Fell prone. And Baji with a gruesome hand
Wiping the blood from his fierce staring eyes
Saw round him only fifteen men erect
Of all his fifty. But in front, behind,
On either side the Mogul held the gorge.
Groaning, once more the grim Mahratta turned
And like a bull with lowered horns that runs,
Charged the exultant foe behind. With him
The desperate survivors hacking ran,
And as a knife cuts instantly its way
Through water, so the yielding Mogul wall
Was cleft and closed behind. Eight men alone
Stood in the gorge's narrow end, not one
Unwounded. There where hardly three abreast
Have room to stand, they faced again the foe;
And from this latest hold Baji beheld
Mounting the farther incline, rank on rank,
A mass of horsemen; galloped far in front
Some forty horse, and on a turbaned head
Bright in the glory of the sinking sun
A jewelled aigrette blazed. And Baji looked
Over the wide and yawning field of space
And seemed to see a fort upon a ridge,
Raigurh; then turned and sought again the war.
So for few minutes desperately they strove.
Man after man of the Mahrattas fell
Till only three were left. Then suddenly
Baji stood still and sank upon the ground.
Quenched was the fiery gaze, nerveless the arm:
Baji lay dead in the unconquered gorge.
But ere he fell, upon the rocks behind
The horse-hooves rang and, as the latest left
Of the half hundred died, the bullets thronged
Through the too narrow mouth and hurled those down
Who entered. Clamorous, exultant blared

The Southron trumpets, but with stricken hearts
The swords of Agra back recoiled; fatal
Upon their serried unprotected mass
In hundreds from the verge the bullets rained,
And in a quick disordered stream, appalled,
The Mogul rout began. Sure-footed, swift
The hostile strength pursued, Suryaji first
Shouting aloud and singing to the hills
A song of Ramdas as he smote and slew.
But Shivaji by Baji's empty frame
Stood silent and his gaze was motionless
Upon the dead. Tanaji Malsure
Stood by him and observed the breathless corpse,
Then slowly said, "Thirty and three the gates
By which thou enterest heaven, thou fortunate soul,
Thou valiant heart. So when my hour arrives,
May I too clasp my death, saving the land
Or winning some great fortress for my lord."
But Shivaji beside the dead beheld
A dim and mighty cloud that held a sword
And in its other hand, where once the head
Depended bleeding, raised the turban bright
From Baji's brows, still glittering with its gems,
And placed it on the chief's. But as it rose
Blood-stained with the heroic sacrifice,
Round the aigrette he saw a golden crown.

Chitrangada

Chitrangada

In Manipur upon her orient hills
Chitrangada beheld intending dawn
Gaze coldly in. She understood the call.
The silence and imperfect pallor passed
Into her heart and in herself she grew
Prescient of grey realities. Rising,
She gazed afraid into the opening world.
Then Urjoon felt his mighty clasp a void
Empty of her he loved and, through the grey
Unwilling darkness that disclosed her face,
Sought out Chitrangada. "Why dost thou stand
In the grey light, like one from joy cast down?
O thou whose bliss is sure. Leave that grey space,
Come hither." So she came and leaning down,
With that strange sorrow in her eyes, replied:
"Great, doubtless, is thy love, thy very sleep
Impatient of this brief divorce. And yet
How easily that void will soon be filled!
For thou wilt run thy splendid fiery race
Through cities and through regions like a star.
Men's worship, women's hearts inevitably
Will turn to follow, as the planets move
Unbidden round the sun. Thou wilt accept them,
Careless in thy heroic strength and beauty,
And smile securely kind, even as a God
Might draw an earthly maiden to his arms
And marry his immortal mouth to hers.
Then will thy destiny seize thee, thou wilt pass
Like a great light in heaven and leave behind
Only a memory of force and fire.
No lesser occupation can for ever
Keep thee, O hero, whose terrestrial birth
Heaven fostered with her seed, — for what but this
To fill thy soul with battle, and august

Misfortunes and majestic harms embrace
And joys to thy own nature mated. Last,
Empire shall meet thee on some mighty field
Disputing thee with death. Thou art not ours
More than the wind that lingers for a while
To touch our hair, then passes to its home."
And Urjoon silently caressing her,
"Muse not again, beloved Chitrangada,
Alone beside the window looking out
On the half-formed aspect and shape of things
Before sunlight was made. For God still keeps
Near to a paler world the hour ere dawn
And one who looks out from the happy, warm
And mortal limit of mankind that live
Enhoused, defended by companionship
With walls and limitations, is outdrawn
To dateless memories he cannot grasp
And infinite yearnings without form, until
The sense of an original vastness grows,
Empty of joyous detail, desolate,
In labour of a wide unfinished world.
Look not into that solemn silence! Rather
Protect thyself with joy, take in my arms
Refuge from the grey summons and defend
Thy soul until God rises with the sun.
Friendly to mortals is the living sun's
Great brilliant light, friendly the cheerful noise
Of earth arising to her various tasks
And myriad hopes. But this grey hour was born
For the ascetic in his silent cave
And for the dying man whose heart released
Loosens its vibrant strings." She answered him,
"Near to the quiet truth of things we stand
In this grey moment. Neither happy light
Nor joyful sound deceives the listening heart,
Nor Night inarms, the Mother brooding vast,
To comfort us with sleep. It helps me not

To bind thee for a moment to my joy.
The impulse of thy mighty life will come
Upon thee like a wind and drive thee forth
To toil and battle and disastrous deeds
And all the giant anguish that preserves
Our world. Thou as resistlessly wast born
To these things as the leopard's leap to strength
And beauty and fierceness, as resistlessly
As women are to love, — even though they know
Pain for the end, yet, knowing, still must love.
Ah, quickly pass! Why shouldst thou linger here
Vainly? How will it serve God's purpose in thee
To tarry soothing for her transient hour
Merely a woman's heart, meanwhile perhaps
Lose some great moment of thy life which once
Neglected never can return." She paused
And great Urjoon made answer, deeply moved:
"Has my clasp slackened or hast thou perceived
A waning passion in my kiss? Much more
My soul needs thee than on that fated day
When through Bengal of the enormous streams
With careless horsehooves hurrying to the East
I came, a wandering prince, companioned only
By courage and my sword; nor knew such flowers
Were by the wayside waiting to be plucked
As these dark tresses and sweet body small
Of white Chitrangada. Dost thou remember?
O fair young sovereign ruling with pure eyes
And little fearless hand fragile and mild
This strong and savage nation! Didst thou know?
Didst thou expect me in thy soul? Assuredly
Thy heart's first flutterings recognised their lord.
And never with such gladness mountain queen
Exchanged tremendous seat and austere powers,
Her noble ancient right, for only leave
To lay her head upon my feet and wear
My kisses, not the crown. Content with love

All else thou gavest. Now thou speakest sadly,
Too like a mind matured by thought and pain.”
And she with passion cried: “Do I remember?
Yes, I remember. What other thing can I
Remember, till forgetfulness arrives?
O endless moments, O rain-haunted nights,
When thou art far! And O intolerable,
The grey austere discomfortable dawn
To which I shall awake alone! And yet
This year of thee is mine until the end.
The Gods demand the rest. With all myself
I loved thee, not as other women do,
Piecemeal, reluctantly, but my whole heart
And being like a sudden spring broke forth
To flowers and greenness at my sungod’s touch,
Ceding existence at thy feet. Therefore
I praise my father’s wise and prescient love
That kept me from the world for thee, unsought
Amid the rugged mountains and fenced in
With barbarous inhospitable laws.
Around the dying man the torches flared
From pillar to weird pillar; and one discerned
In fitful redness on the shadowy walls
Stone visages of grim un-Aryan gods.
The marble pallor of my father’s face
Looked strange to me in that unsteady glare,
As if an alien’s; and dream-fantasies
Those figures seemed of Manipurian lords
Strange-weaponed, rude, with faces fierce and gnarled,
Like those they worship. Unafraid I stood
With grave and wide-orbed gaze contemplating
Their rugged pomp and the wild majesty
Of that last scene around my dying sire.
About me stood a circle fierce and strong,
Men high like rough gnarled trees or firm squat towers;
A human fortress in its savage strength
Enringed my future with bright jealous spears.

To them he entrusted me, calling each name,
And made their hearts my steps to mount a throne:
Each name was made a link in a great chain,
A turretted gate inwalling my rule,
Each heart a house of trust, a seal of fealty.
So were their thoughts conciliated; so
Their stern allegiance was secured. He spoke,
And, though of outward strength deprived, his voice
Rang clear yet as when over trumpets heard
It guided battle. 'Warriors of my East,
Take now this small white-bosomed queen of yours,
Surround her with the cincture of your force
And guard her from the thieves of destiny
Who prowl around the house of human life
To impoverish the meanings of the gods.
For I am ended and the shadow falls.
She is the stem from which your kings shall grow
Perpetual. Guard her well lest Fate deceived
Permit unworthier to usurp her days
Than the unconquerable seed of gods.
Oppose, oppose all alien entry here,
Whether by force or guile the stranger comes,
To clutch Nature's forbidden golden fruit.
Serry your bucklers close to overwhelm
The invader, seal your deaf and pitiless ears
To the guest's appeal, the suppliant call. He sole,
Darling of Fate and Heaven, shall break through all
Despising danger's threat and spurning death,
To grasp this prize, whether Ixvacou's clan
Yield a new Rama or the Bhoja hear
And raven for her beauty, — Vrishny-born,
Or else some lion's whelp of those who lair
In Hustina the proud, coveting two worlds,
Leaping from conquered earth to climb to Heaven,
Life's pride doubling with the soul's ethereal crown.'
He closed his eyes against the earthly air,
The last silence fell on him: he spoke no more

Save the great name until his spirit passed.
Then the grim lords forgot their savage calm.
A cry arose, 'Our queen!' and I was caught
From breast to breast of wild affection; all
Crowded upon me kissing feet and hands,
Recording silent oaths of love. Secure,
Alone in this wild faithful barbarous world,
I ruled by weakness over rugged hearts,
A little queen adored, — until at length
Thou camest. Rumour and wide-mouthed alarm
Running before thy chariot-wheels thou cam'st,
Defeat and death thy envoys and a cry:
O Manipurians, Manipurians, arm!
Some god incensed invades you, — surely a god
Incensed and fatal, for his bowstring huge
Sounds like the crack of breaking worlds and thick
His arrows as the sleet descends of doom
When the great Serpent wakes in wrath. Behind
That cry the crash of hostile advent came,
Thy chariot caked with mire and blood, its roof
Bristling and shattered from the fight, thy steeds
White with the spume of leagues, though yet they neighed
Lusting for speed and battle, and in the car
Thy grandiose form o'ertowering common mould,
While victory shone from eyes where thunder couched
Above his parent lightning. Swift to arms
My warriors sprang, dismayed but faithful, swift
Around me grew a hedge of steel. Enraged,
Thy coursers shod with wind rushed foaming on
And in with crash and rumour stormed the car
To that wide stone-paved hall; there loudly paused,
While thunderous challenge of the stamping hooves
Claimed all the place. Clanging thou leapedst down,
Urjoon, Gandiva in thy threatening grasp.
Then I beheld thy face, then rose, then stretched
My arms out, pausing not to think what god
Compelled me from my throne. But war came in

Between me and those sudden eyes. One bold
Beyond his savage peers stood questioning forth:
'Who art thou that with challenge insolent
Intruding, from what land of deathless gods
Stormest with disallowed exulting wheels
In white Chitrangada's domain? To death
Men hasten not so quickly, Aryan lord.'
Hero, thy look was calm, yet formidable,
Replying, by thy anger undisturbed.
'To death I haste indeed, but not to mine.
Nor think that Doom has claimed me for her own
Because I sole confront you. For my name
Ask the pale thousands whose swift-footed fear
Hardly escaped my single onset; ask
Your famous chieftains cold on hill or moor
Upon my fatal route. Yet not for war
I sought this region nor by death equipped,
Inhospitable people who deny
The human bond, but as a man to men
Alone I came and without need of fear,
If fear indeed were mine to feel. Nor trumpets blared
My coming nor battalions steel enforced,
Who claimed but what the common bond allows.'"

Poems Written in 1910 and Published in 1920–1921

The Rakshasas

(The Rakshasa, the violent kinetic Ego, establishes his claim to mastery of the world replacing the animal Soul, — to be followed by controlled and intellectualised but unregenerated Ego, the Asura. Each such type and level of consciousness sees the Divine in its own image and its level in Nature is sustained by a differing form of the World-Mother.)

"Glory and greatness and the joy of life,
Strength, pride, victorious force, whatever man
Desires, whatever the wild beast enjoys,
Bodies of women and the lives of men,
I claim to be my kingdom. I have force
My title to substantiate, and I seek
No crown unearned, no lordship undeserved.
Ask what austerity Thou wilt, Maker of man,
Expense of blood or labour or long years
Spent in tremendous meditations, lives
Upon Thy altar spent of brutes or men,
Or if with gold Thy favour purchasable
I may command, rich offerings to glut
Thy temples and Thy priests. I have a heart,
A hand for any mighty sacrifice,
A fiery patience in my vehement mood;
I will submit. But ask not this of me,
Meek silence and a pale imprisoned soul
Made colourless of its humanity;
Ask not the heart that quakes, the hand that spares.
What strength can give, not weakness, that demand.
O Rudra, O eternal Mahádev,
Thou too art fierce and mighty, wrathful, bold,
Snuffing Thy winds for blood of sacrifice,
And angrily Thou rul'st a prostrate world.
O Rákshasa Almighty, look on me,

Rávan, the lord of all Thy Rákshasas,
Give me Thy high command to smite Thy foes;
But most I would afflict, chase and destroy
Thy devotees who traduce Thee, making Thee
A God of love, a God too sweet to rule.
I have the knowledge; what Thou art, I know,
And know myself, for Thou and I are one.”
So prayed the Lord of Lunca, and in Heaven
Sri Krishna smiled, the Friend of all mankind,
A smile of sweetness and divine delight,
And asked, “O Masters of the knowledge, Seers
Who help me by your thoughts to help mankind,
Hearken what Rávan cries against the stars,
Demanding earth for heritage. Advise,
Shall he then have it?” And a cry arose,
“He would root out the Brahmin from the earth,
Impose his dreadful Yoga on mankind,
And make the violent heart, the iron hand
Sovereign of all.” Sri Krishna made reply,
“From out Myself he went to do My will.
He has not lied, he has the knowledge. He
And I are one. How then shall I refuse?
Does it not say, the Veda that you know,
‘When one knows That, then whatso he desires,
It shall be his’?” And Atri sage replied,
“Let him then rule a season and be slain.”
And He who reigns, “Something you know, O Seers,
Not all My purpose. It is long decreed,
The Rákshasa shall rule the peopled earth.
He takes the brute into himself for man,
Yielding it offerings, while with grandiose thoughts
And violent aspirations he controls;
He purifies the demon in the race,
Slaying in wrath, not cruelty. Awhile
He puts the Vánara out of the world,
Accustoming to grandeur all mankind;

The Ifrit[1] he rejects. Were he denied
His period, man could not progress. But since
He sees himself as Me, not Me in him,
And takes the life and body for the whole,
He cannot last. Therefore is Atri's word
Accepted." And before the Rákshasa,
Out of the terror of the sacrifice,
Naked and dark, with a blood-dripping sword
And dreadful eyes that seemed to burn the world,
Kálí the Rákshasí in flames arose.
"Demand a boon!" she cried, and all the gods
Trembled. "Give me the earth for my delight,
Her gods to be my slaves," the Giant cried,
"Of strength and passion let me have my fill,
Of violence and pride." "So let it be,"
She answered. "Shall it be eternal then?"
Rávan demanded and she thundered, "No!
For neither thou nor I are best nor last.
The Asurí shall rise to fill my place,
The Asura thy children shall dethrone.
An aeon thou hast taken to evolve,
An aeon thou shalt rule. But since thy wish
I have denied, ask yet another boon."
"Let this be mine, that when at last I sink,
Nor brute nor demon, man nor Titan's hand,
Nor any lesser creature shall o'erthrow,
But only God Himself compel my fall."
And Kálí answered, smiling terribly,
"It is decreed," and laughing loud she passed.
Then Rávan from his sacrifice arose.

---

[1] The Ifrit, the Djinn, is the demoniac element in Nature.

Kama

(According to one idea Desire is the creator and sustainer of things, — Desire and Ignorance. By losing desire one passes beyond the Ignorance, as by passing beyond Ignorance one loses desire; then the created world is surpassed and the soul enters into the Divine Reality. Kama here speaks as Desire the Creator, an outgoing power from the Bliss of the Divine Reality to which, abandoning desire, one returns, *ānandaṁ brahmaṇo vidvān*, possessing the bliss of the Brahman.)

O desolations vast, O seas of space
Unpeopled, realms of an unfertile light,
Grow multitudinous with living forms,
Enamoured of desire! I send My breath
Into the heart of being, and the storm
Of sweet attraction shall break up its calm
With quivering passionate intensity
And silence change to a melodious cry,
And all the world be rose. Out of My heart
Suns shall flame up into the listless void,
And the stars wheel in magic dances round
Weaving the web of mortal life. For I
Am love, am passion; I create the world.
I am the only Brahma. My desire
Takes many forms; I change and wheel and race,
And with Me runs creation. I preserve,
For I am Love. I weary of Myself,
And the world circles back into the Vast.
Delight and laughter walking hand in hand
Go with Me, and I play with grief and pain.
I am the dance of Krishna, I the dance
Of Kálí. Might and majesty are Mine,
And yet I make the heart a child at play,
The soul of things a woman full of bliss.
Hunger and Thirst, arise and make the world!

Delight, go down and give it strength to live!
O Ether, change! O Breath of things, grow full
Of the perpetual whirl! Break out, O Fire,
In seas of magic colour, infinite waves
Of rainbow light! Thou, liquid element,
Be sap, be taste in all created things
To please the senses. Thou, O solid earth,
Enter into all life, support the worlds.
I send forth Joy to lure the hearts of men,
I send forth Law to harmonise and rule.
And when these things are done, when men have learned
My beauty, My desirability, My bliss,
I will conceal Myself from their desire
And make this rule of the eternal chase,
"They who abandon Me, shall to all time
Clasp and possess; they who pursue, shall lose."

The Mahatmas

Kuthumi

(This poem is purely a play of the imagination, a poetic reconstruction of the central idea only of Mahatmahood.)

The seven mountains and the seven seas
Surround me. Over me the eightfold sun
Blazing with various colours — green and blue,
Scarlet and rose, violet and gold and white,
And the dark disk that rides in the mortal cave —
Looks down on me in flame. Below spread wide
The worlds of the immortals, tier on tier,
Like a great mountain climbing to the skies,
And on their summit Shiva dwells. Of old
My goings were familiar with the earth,
The mortals over whom I hold control

Were then my fellows. But I followed not
The usual path, the common thoughts of men.
A thirst of knowledge and a sense of power,
A passion of divine beneficence
Pursued me through a hundred lives. I rose
From birth to birth, until I reached the peak
Of human knowledge. Then in Bharat born
I, Kuthumi, the Kshatriya, the adept,
The mighty Yogin of Dwaipayan's school,
To Vyása came, the great original sage.
He looked upon me with the eye that sees
And smiled, august and awful. "Kuthumi,"
He cried, "now gather back what thou hast learned
In many lives, remember all thy past,
Cease from thy round of human births, resume
The eightfold power that makes a man as God,
Then come again and learn thy grandiose work,
For thou art of the souls to death denied."
I went into the mountains by the sea
That thunders pitilessly from night to morn,
And sung to by that rude relentless sound,
Amid the cries of beasts, the howl of winds,
Surrounded by the gnashing demon hordes,
I did the Hathayoga in three days,
Which men with anguish through ten lives effect, —
Not that now practised by earth's feebler race,
But that which Rávan knew in Lunca, Dhruv
Fulfilled, Hiranyakashipu performed,
The Yoga of the old Lemurian Kings.
I felt the strength of Titans in my veins,
The joy of gods, the pride of Siddhas. Tall
And mighty like a striding God I came
To Vyása; but he shook his dense piled locks,
Denying me. "Thou art not pure," he cried.
I went in anger to Himaloy's peaks,
And on the highest in the breathless snows
Sat dumb for many years. Then knowledge came

Streaming upon me and the hills around
Shook with the feet of the descending power.
I did the Rájayoga in three days,
Which men with care and accuracy minute
Ceaselessly follow for an age in vain —
Not Kali's Rájayoga, but the means
Of perfect knowledge, purity and force
Bali the Titan learned and gave to men,
The Yoga of the old Atlantic Kings.
I came to Vyása, shining like a sun.
He smiled and said, "Now seek the world's great Lord,
Sri Krishna, where he lives on earth concealed;
Give up to him all that thou knowst and art.
For thou art he, elect from mortal men
To guard the Knowledge, — yet an easy task
While the third Age preserves man's godlike force, —
But when thou seest the iron Kali come,
And he from Dwarca leaves the earth, know then
The time of trial, help endangered Man,
Preserve the knowledge that preserves the world,
Until Sri Krishna utterly returns.
Then art thou from thy mighty work released
Into the worlds of bliss for endless years
To rest, until another aeon comes,
When of the seven Rishis thou art one."
I sent my knowledge forth across the land;
It found him not in Bharat's princely halls,
In quiet asrams, nor in temples pure,
Nor where the wealthy traffickers resort;
Brahmin nor Kshatriya body housed the Lord,
Vaishya nor Sudra nor outcaste. At length
To a bare hut on a wild mountain's verge
Led by the star I came. A hermit mad
Of the wild Abhirs, who sat dumb or laughed,
And ran and leaped and danced upon the hills,
But told the reason of his joy to none, —
In him I saw the Lord, behind that mask

Perceived the Spirit that contains the worlds.
I fell before him, but he leaped and ran
And smote me with his foot, and out of me
All knowledge, all desire, all strength was gone
Into its Source. I sat, an infant child.
He laughed aloud and said, "Take back thy gifts,
O beggar!" and went leaping down the slope.
Then full of light and strength and bliss I soared
Beyond the spheres, above the mighty gods,
And left my human body on the snows;
And others gathered to me, more or less
In puissance, to assist, but mine the charge
By Vishnu given. I gather knowledge here,
Then to my human frame awhile descend
And walk mid men, choosing my instruments,
Testing, rejecting and confirming souls,
Vessels of the Spirit; for the golden age
In Kali comes, the iron lined with gold.
The Yoga shall be given back to men,
The sects shall cease, the grim debates die out,
And Atheism perish from the earth
Blasted with knowledge, love and brotherhood
And wisdom repossess Sri Krishna's world.

Part Five

Pondicherry
Circa 1910–1920

Two Poems in
Quantitative Hexameters

Ilion

BOOK I

The Book of the Herald

Dawn in her journey eternal compelling the labour of mortals,
Dawn the beginner of things with the night for their rest or their ending,
Pallid and bright-lipped arrived from the mists and the chill of the Euxine.
Earth in the dawn-fire delivered from starry and shadowy vastness
Woke to the wonder of life and its passion and sorrow and beauty,
All on her bosom sustaining, the patient compassionate Mother.
Out of the formless vision of Night with its look on things hidden
Given to the gaze of the azure she lay in her garment of greenness,
Wearing light on her brow. In the dawn-ray lofty and voiceless
Ida climbed with her god-haunted peaks into diamond lustres,
Ida first of the hills with the ranges silent beyond her
Watching the dawn in their giant companies, as since the ages
First began they had watched her, upbearing Time on their summits.
Troas cold on her plain awaited the boon of the sunshine.
There, like a hope through an emerald dream sole-pacing for ever,
Stealing to wideness beyond, crept Simois lame in his currents,
Guiding his argent thread mid the green of the reeds and the grasses.
Headlong, impatient of Space and its boundaries, Time and its slowness,
Xanthus clamoured aloud as he ran to the far-surging waters,
Joining his call to the many-voiced roar of the mighty Aegean,
Answering Ocean's limitless cry like a whelp to its parent.
Forests looked up through their rifts, the ravines grew aware of their shadows.
Closer now gliding glimmered the golden feet of the goddess.
Over the hills and the headlands spreading her garment of splendour,
Fateful she came with her eyes impartial looking on all things,
Bringer to man of the day of his fortune and day of his downfall.
Full of her luminous errand, careless of eve and its weeping,
Fateful she paused unconcerned above Ilion's mysteried greatness,
Domes like shimmering tongues of the crystal flames of the morning,
Opalesque rhythm-line of tower-tops, notes of the lyre of the sungod.
High over all that a nation had built and its love and its laughter,
Lighting the last time highway and homestead, market and temple,
Looking on men who must die and women destined to sorrow,

Looking on beauty fire must lay low and the sickle of slaughter,
Fateful she lifted the doom-scroll red with the script of the Immortals,
Deep in the invisible air that folds in the race and its morrows
Fixed it, and passed on smiling the smile of the griefless and deathless, —
Dealers of death though death they know not, who in the morning
Scatter the seed of the event for the reaping ready at nightfall.
Over the brooding of plains and the agelong trance of the summits
Out of the sun and its spaces she came, pausing tranquil and fatal,
And, at a distance followed by the golden herds of the sungod,
Carried the burden of Light and its riddle and danger to Hellas.
Even as fleets on a chariot divine through the gold streets of ether,
Swiftly when Life fleets, invisibly changing the arc of the soul-drift,
And, with the choice that has chanced or the fate man has called and now suffers
Weighted, the moment travels driving the past towards the future,
Only its face and its feet are seen, not the burden it carries.
Weight of the event and its surface we bear, but the meaning is hidden.
Earth sees not; life's clamour deafens the ear of the spirit:
Man knows not; least knows the messenger chosen for the summons.
Only he listens to the voice of his thoughts, his heart's ignorant whisper,
Whistle of winds in the tree-tops of Time and the rustle of Nature.
Now too the messenger hastened driving the car of the errand:
Even while dawn was a gleam in the east, he had cried to his coursers.
Half yet awake in light's turrets started the scouts of the morning
Hearing the jar of the wheels and the throb of the hooves' exultation,
Hooves of the horses of Greece as they galloped to Phrygian Troya.
Proudly they trampled through Xanthus thwarting the foam of his anger,
Whinnying high as in scorn crossed Simois' tangled currents,
Xanthus' reed-girdled twin, the gentle and sluggard river.
One and unarmed in the car was the driver; grey was he, shrunken,
Worn with his decades. To Pergama cinctured with strength Cyclopean
Old and alone he arrived, insignificant, feeblest of mortals,
Carrying Fate in his helpless hands and the doom of an empire.
Ilion, couchant, saw him arrive from the sea and the darkness.
Heard mid the faint slow stirrings of life in the sleep of the city,
Rapid there neared a running of feet, and the cry of the summons
Beat round the doors that guarded the domes of the splendour of Priam.

"Wardens charged with the night, ye who stand in Laomedon's gateway,
Waken the Ilian kings. Talthybius, herald of Argos,
Parleying stands at the portals of Troy in the grey of the dawning."
High and insistent the call. In the dimness and hush of his chamber
Charioted far in his dreams amid visions of glory and terror,
Scenes of a vivider world, — though blurred and deformed in the brain-cells,
Vague and inconsequent, there full of colour and beauty and greatness, —
Suddenly drawn by the pull of the conscious thread of the earth-bond
And of the needs of Time and the travail assigned in the transience
Warned by his body, Deiphobus, reached in that splendid remoteness,
Touched through the nerve-ways of life that branch to the brain of the dreamer,
Heard the terrestrial call and slumber startled receded
Sliding like dew from the mane of a lion. Reluctant he travelled
Back from the light of the fields beyond death, from the wonderful kingdoms
Where he had wandered a soul among souls in the countries beyond us,
Free from the toil and incertitude, free from the struggle and danger:
Now, compelled, he returned from the respite given to the time-born,
Called to the strife and the wounds of the earth and the burden of daylight.
He from the carven couch upreared his giant stature.
Haste-spurred he laved his eyes and regained earth's memories, haste-spurred
Donning apparel and armour strode through the town of his fathers,
Watched by her gods on his way to his fate, towards Pergama's portals.
Nine long years had passed and the tenth now was wearily ending,
Years of the wrath of the gods, and the leaguer still threatened the ramparts
Since through a tranquil morn the ships came past Tenedos sailing
And the first Argive fell slain as he leaped on the Phrygian beaches;
Still the assailants attacked, still fought back the stubborn defenders.
When the reward is withheld and endlessly lengthens the labour,
Weary of fruitless toil grows the transient heart of the mortal.
Weary of battle the invaders warring hearthless and homeless
Prayed to the gods for release and return to the land of their fathers:
Weary of battle the Phrygians beset in their beautiful city
Prayed to the gods for an end of the danger and mortal encounter.
Long had the high-beached ships forgotten their measureless ocean.
Greece seemed old and strange to her children camped on the beaches,
Old like a life long past one remembers hardly believing

But as a dream that has happened, but as the tale of another.
Time with his tardy touch and Nature changing our substance
Slowly had dimmed the faces loved and the scenes once cherished:
Yet was the dream still dear to them longing for wife and for children,
Longing for hearth and glebe in the far-off valleys of Hellas.
Always like waves that swallow the shingles, lapsing, returning,
Tide of the battle, race of the onset relentlessly thundered
Over the Phrygian corn-fields. Trojan wrestled with Argive,
Caria, Lycia, Thrace and the war-lord mighty Achaia
Joined in the clasp of the fight. Death, panic and wounds and disaster,
Glory of conquest and glory of fall, and the empty hearth-side,
Weeping and fortitude, terror and hope and the pang of remembrance,
Anguish of hearts, the lives of the warriors, the strength of the nations
Thrown were like weights into Destiny's scales, but the balance wavered
Pressed by invisible hands. For not only the mortal fighters,
Heroes half divine whose names are like stars in remoteness,
Triumphed and failed and were winds or were weeds on the dance of the surges,
But from the peaks of Olympus and shimmering summits of Ida
Gleaming and clanging the gods of the antique ages descended.
Hidden from human knowledge the brilliant shapes of Immortals
Mingled unseen in the mellay, or sometimes, marvellous, maskless,
Forms of undying beauty and power that made tremble the heart-strings
Parting their deathless secrecy crossed through the borders of vision,
Plain as of old to the demigods out of their glory emerging,
Heard by mortal ears and seen by the eyeballs that perish.
Mighty they came from their spaces of freedom and sorrowless splendour.
Sea-vast, trailing the azure hem of his clamorous waters,
Blue-lidded, maned with the Night, Poseidon smote for the future,
Earth-shaker who with his trident releases the coils of the Dragon,
Freeing the forces unborn that are locked in the caverns of Nature.
Calm and unmoved, upholding the Word that is Fate and the order
Fixed in the sight of a Will foreknowing and silent and changeless,
Hera sent by Zeus and Athene lifting his aegis
Guarded the hidden decree. But for Ilion, loud as the surges,
Ares impetuous called to the fire in men's hearts, and his passion
Woke in the shadowy depths the forms of the Titan and demon;

Dumb and coerced by the grip of the gods in the abyss of the being,
Formidable, veiled they sit in the grey subconscient darkness
Watching the sleep of the snake-haired Erinnys. Miracled, haloed,
Seer and magician and prophet who beholds what the thought cannot
witness,
Lifting the godhead within us to more than a human endeavour,
Slayer and saviour, thinker and mystic, leaped from his sun-peaks
Guarding in Ilion the wall of his mysteries Delphic Apollo.
Heaven's strengths divided swayed in the whirl of the Earth-force.
All that is born and destroyed is reborn in the sweep of the ages;
Life like a decimal ever recurring repeats the old figure;
Goal seems there none for the ball that is chased throughout Time by the
Fate-teams;
Evil once ended renews and no issue comes out of living:
Only an Eye unseen can distinguish the thread of its workings.
Such seemed the rule of the pastime of Fate on the plains of the Troad;
All went backwards and forwards tossed in the swing of the death-game.
Vain was the toil of the heroes, the blood of the mighty was squandered,
Spray as of surf on the cliffs when it moans unappeased, unrequited
Age after fruitless age. Day hunted the steps of the nightfall;
Joy succeeded to grief; defeat only greatened the vanquished,
Victory offered an empty delight without guerdon or profit.
End there was none of the effort and end there was none of the failure.
Triumph and agony changing hands in a desperate measure
Faced and turned as a man and a maiden trampling the grasses
Face and turn and they laugh in their joy of the dance and each other.
These were gods and they trampled lives. But though Time is immortal,
Mortal his works are and ways and the anguish ends like the rapture.
Artists of Nature content with their work in the plan of the transience,
Beautiful, deathless, august, the Olympians turned from the carnage,
Leaving the battle already decided, leaving the heroes
Slain in their minds, Troy burned, Greece left to her glory and downfall.
Into their heavens they rose up mighty like eagles ascending
Fanning the world with their wings. As the great to their luminous mansions
Turn from the cry and the strife, forgetting the wounded and fallen,
Calm they repose from their toil and incline to the joy of the banquet,
Watching the feet of the wine-bearers rosily placed on the marble,

Filling their hearts with ease, so they to their sorrowless ether
Passed from the wounded earth and its air that is ploughed with men's anguish;
Calm they reposed and their hearts inclined to the joy and the silence.
Lifted was the burden laid on our wills by their starry presence:
Man was restored to his smallness, the world to its inconscient labour.
Life felt a respite from height, the winds breathed freer delivered;
Light was released from their blaze and the earth was released from their greatness.
But their immortal content from the struggle titanic departed.
Vacant the noise of the battle roared like the sea on the shingles;
Wearily hunted the spears their quarry; strength was disheartened;
Silence increased with the march of the months on the tents of the leaguer.
But not alone on the Achaians the steps of the moments fell heavy;
Slowly the shadow deepened on Ilion mighty and scornful:
Dragging her days went by; in the rear of the hearts of her people
Something that knew what they dared not know and the mind would not utter,
Something that smote at her soul of defiance and beauty and laughter,
Darkened the hours. For Doom in her sombre and giant uprising
Neared, assailing the skies: the sense of her lived in all pastimes;
Time was pursued by unease and a terror woke in the midnight:
Even the ramparts felt her, stones that the gods had erected.
Now no longer she dallied and played, but bounded and hastened,
Seeing before her the end and, imagining massacre calmly,
Laughed and admired the flames and rejoiced in the cry of the captives.
Under her, dead to the watching immortals, Deiphobus hastened
Clanging in arms through the streets of the beautiful insolent city,
Brilliant, a gleaming husk but empty and left by the daemon.
Even as a star long extinguished whose light still travels the spaces,
Seen in its form by men, but itself goes phantom-like fleeting
Void and null and dark through the uncaring infinite vastness,
So now he seemed to the sight that sees all things from the Real.
Timeless its vision of Time creates the hour by things coming.
Borne on a force from the past and no more by a power for the future
Mighty and bright was his body, but shadowy the shape of his spirit
Only an eidolon seemed of the being that had lived in him, fleeting

Vague like a phantom seen by the dim Acherontian waters.
But to the guardian towers that watched over Pergama's gateway
Out of the waking city Deiphobus swiftly arriving
Called, and swinging back the huge gates slowly, reluctant,
Flung Troy wide to the entering Argive. Ilion's portals
Parted admitting her destiny, then with a sullen and iron
Cry they closed. Mute, staring, grey like a wolf descended
Old Talthybius, propping his steps on the staff of his errand;
Feeble his body, but fierce still his glance with the fire within him;
Speechless and brooding he gazed on the hated and coveted city.
Suddenly, seeking heaven with her buildings hewn as for Titans,
Marvellous, rhythmic, a child of the gods with marble for raiment,
Smiting the vision with harmony, splendid and mighty and golden,
Ilion stood up around him entrenched in her giant defences.
Strength was uplifted on strength and grandeur supported by grandeur;
Beauty lay in her lap. Remote, hieratic and changeless,
Filled with her deeds and her dreams her gods looked out on the Argive,
Helpless and dumb with his hate as he gazed on her, they too like mortals
Knowing their centuries past, not knowing the morrow before them.
Dire were his eyes upon Troya the beautiful, his face like a doom-mask:
All Greece gazed in them, hated, admired, grew afraid, grew relentless.
But to the Greek Deiphobus cried and he turned from his passion
Fixing his ominous eyes with the god in them straight on the Trojan:
"Messenger, voice of Achaia, wherefore confronting the daybreak
Comest thou driving thy car from the sleep of the tents that besiege us?
Fateful, I deem, was the thought that, conceived in the silence of midnight,
Raised up thy aged limbs from the couch of their rest in the stillness, —
Thoughts of a mortal but forged by the Will that uses our members
And of its promptings our speech and our acts are the tools and the image.
Oft from the veil and the shadow they leap out like stars in their brightness,
Lights that we think our own, yet they are but tokens and counters,
Signs of the Forces that flow through us serving a Power that is secret.
What in the dawning bringst thou to Troya the mighty and dateless
Now in the ending of Time when the gods are weary of struggle?
Sends Agamemnon challenge or courtesy, Greek, to the Trojans?"
High like the northwind answered the voice of the doom from Achaia:
"Trojan Deiphobus, daybreak, silence of night and the evening

Sink and arise and even the strong sun rests from his splendour.
Not for the servant is rest nor Time is his, only his death-pyre.
I have not come from the monarch of men or the armoured assembly
Held on the wind-swept marge of the thunder and laughter of ocean.
One in his singleness greater than kings and multitudes sends me.
I am a voice out of Phthia, I am the will of the Hellene.
Peace in my right I bring to you, death in my left hand. Trojan,
Proudly receive them, honour the gifts of the mighty Achilles.
Death accept, if Ate deceives you and Doom is your lover,
Peace if your fate can turn and the god in you chooses to hearken.
Full is my heart and my lips are impatient of speech undelivered.
It was not made for the streets or the market, nor to be uttered
Meanly to common ears, but where counsel and majesty harbour
Far from the crowd in the halls of the great and to wisdom and foresight
Secrecy whispers, there I will speak among Ilion's princes."
"Envoy," answered the Laomedontian, "voice of Achilles,
Vain is the offer of peace that sets out with a threat for its prelude.
Yet will we hear thee. Arise who are fleetest of foot in the gateway, —
Thou, Thrasymachus, haste. Let the domes of the mansion of Ilus
Wake to the bruit of the Hellene challenge. Summon Aeneas."
Even as the word sank back into stillness, doffing his mantle
Started to run at the bidding a swift-footed youth of the Trojans
First in the race and the battle, Thrasymachus son of Aretes.
He in the dawn disappeared into swiftness. Deiphobus slowly,
Measuring Fate with his thoughts in the troubled vasts of his spirit,
Back through the stir of the city returned to the house of his fathers,
Taming his mighty stride to the pace infirm of the Argive.
    But with the god in his feet Thrasymachus rapidly running
Came to the halls in the youth of the wonderful city by Ilus
Built for the joy of the eye; for he rested from war and, triumphant,
Reigned adored by the prostrate nations. Now when all ended,
Last of its mortal possessors to walk in its flowering gardens,
Great Anchises lay in that luminous house of the ancients
Soothing his restful age, the far-warring victor Anchises,
High Bucoleon's son and the father of Rome by a goddess;
Lonely and vagrant once in his boyhood divine upon Ida
White Aphrodite ensnared him and she loosed her ambrosial girdle

Seeking a mortal's love. On the threshold Thrasymachus halted
Looking for servant or guard, but felt only a loneness of slumber
Drawing the soul's sight within away from its life and things human;
Soundless, unheeding, the vacant corridors fled into darkness.
He to the shades of the house and the dreams of the echoing rafters
Trusted his high-voiced call, and from chambers still dim in their twilight
Strong Aeneas armoured and mantled, leonine striding,
Came, Anchises' son; for the dawn had not found him reposing,
But in the night he had left his couch and the clasp of Creüsa,
Rising from sleep at the call of his spirit that turned to the waters
Prompted by Fate and his mother who guided him, white Aphrodite.
Still with the impulse of speed Thrasymachus greeted Aeneas:
"Hero Aeneas, swift be thy stride to the Ilian hill-top.
Dardanid, haste! for the gods are at work; they have risen with the morning,
Each from his starry couch, and they labour. Doom, we can see it,
Glows on their anvils of destiny, clang we can hear of their hammers.
Something they forge there sitting unknown in the silence eternal,
Whether of evil or good it is they who shall choose who are masters
Calm, unopposed; they are gods and they work out their iron caprices.
Troy is their stage and Argos their background; we are their puppets.
Always our voices are prompted to speech for an end that we know not,
Always we think that we drive, but are driven. Action and impulse,
Yearning and thought are their engines, our will is their shadow and helper.
Now too, deeming he comes with a purpose framed by a mortal,
Shaft of their will they have shot from the bow of the Grecian leaguer,
Lashing themselves at his steeds, Talthybius sent by Achilles."
"Busy the gods are always, Thrasymachus son of Aretes,
Weaving Fate on their looms, and yesterday, now and tomorrow
Are but the stands they have made with Space and Time for their timber,
Frame but the dance of their shuttle. What eye unamazed by their workings
Ever can pierce where they dwell and uncover their far-stretching purpose?
Silent they toil, they are hid in the clouds, they are wrapped with the midnight.
Yet to Apollo I pray, the Archer friendly to mortals,
Yet to the rider on Fate I abase myself, wielder of thunder,
Evil and doom to avert from my fatherland. All night Morpheus,
He who with shadowy hands heaps error and truth upon mortals,

Stood at my pillow with images. Dreaming I erred like a phantom
Helpless in Ilion's streets with the fire and the foeman around me.
Red was the smoke as it mounted triumphant the house-top of Priam,
Clang of the arms of the Greeks was in Troya, and thwarting the clangour
Voices were crying and calling me over the violent Ocean
Borne by the winds of the West from a land where Hesperus harbours."
Brooding they ceased, for their thoughts grew heavy upon them and voiceless.
Then, in a farewell brief and unthought and unconscious of meaning,
Parting they turned to their tasks and their lives now close but soon severed:
Destined to perish even before his perishing nation,
Back to his watch at the gate sped Thrasymachus rapidly running;
Large of pace and swift, but with eyes absorbed and unseeing,
Driven like a car of the gods by the whip of his thoughts through the highways,
Turned to his mighty future the hero born of a goddess.
One was he chosen to ascend into greatness through fall and disaster,
Loser of his world by the will of a heaven that seemed ruthless and adverse,
Founder of a newer and greater world by daring adventure.
Now, from the citadel's rise with the townships crowding below it
High towards a pondering of domes and the mystic Palladium climbing,
Fronted with the morning ray and joined by the winds of the ocean,
Fate-weighed up Troy's slope strode musing strong Aeneas.
Under him silent the slumbering roofs of the city of Ilus
Dreamed in the light of the dawn; above watched the citadel, sleepless
Lonely and strong like a goddess white-limbed and bright on a hill-top,
Looking far out at the sea and the foe and the prowling of danger.
Over the brow he mounted and saw the palace of Priam,
Home of the gods of the earth, Laomedon's marvellous vision
Held in the thought that accustomed his will to unearthly achievement
And in the blaze of his spirit compelling heaven with its greatness,
Dreamed by the harp of Apollo, a melody caught into marble.
Out of his mind it arose like an epic canto by canto;
Each of its halls was a strophe, its chambers lines of an epode,
Victor chant of Ilion's destiny. Absent he entered,
Voiceless with thought, the brilliant megaron crowded with paintings,
Paved with a splendour of marble, and saw Deiphobus seated,

Son of the ancient house by the opulent hearth of his fathers,
And at his side like a shadow the grey and ominous Argive.
Happy of light like a lustrous star when it welcomes the morning,
Brilliant, beautiful, glamoured with gold and a fillet of gem-fire,
Paris, plucked from the song and the lyre by the Grecian challenge,
Came with the joy in his face and his eyes that Fate could not alter.
Ever a child of the dawn at play near a turn of the sun-roads,
Facing destiny's look with the careless laugh of a comrade,
He with his vision of delight and beauty brightening the earth-field
Passed through its peril and grief on his way to the ambiguous Shadow.
Last from her chamber of sleep where she lay in the Ilian mansion
Far in the heart of the house with the deep-bosomed daughters of Priam,
Noble and tall and erect in a nimbus of youth and of glory,
Claiming the world and life as a fief of her strength and her courage,
Dawned through a doorway that opened to distant murmurs and laughter,
Capturing the eye like a smile or a sunbeam, Penthesilea.
She from the threshold cried to the herald, crossing the marble,
Regal and fleet, with her voice that was mighty and dire in its sweetness.
"What with such speed has impelled from the wind-haunted beaches of Troas,
Herald, thy car though the sun yet hesitates under the mountains?
Comest thou humbler to Troy, Talthybius, now than thou camest
Once when the streams of my East sang low to my ear, not this Ocean
Loud, and I roamed in my mountains uncalled by the voice of Apollo?
Bringest thou dulcet-eyed peace or, sweeter to Penthesilea,
Challenge of war when the spears fall thick on the shields of the fighters,
Lightly the wheels leap onward chanting the anthem of Ares,
Death is at work in his fields and the heart is enamoured of danger?
What says Odysseus, the baffled Ithacan? what Agamemnon?
Are they then weary of war who were rapid and bold and triumphant,
Now that their gods are reluctant, now victory darts not from heaven
Down from the clouds above Ida directing the luminous legions
Armed by Fate, now Pallas forgets, now Poseidon slumbers?
Bronze were their throats to the battle like bugles blaring in chorus;
Mercy they knew not, but shouted and ravened and ran to the slaughter
Eager as hounds when they chase, till a woman met them and stayed them,
Loud my war-shout rang by Scamander. Herald of Argos,

What say the vaunters of Greece to the virgin Penthesilea?"
High was the Argive's answer confronting the mighty in Troya.
"Princes of Pergama, whelps of the lion who roar for the mellay,
Suffer my speech! It shall ring like a spear on the hearts of the mighty.
Blame not the herald; his voice is an impulse, an echo, a channel
Now for the timbrels of peace and now for the drums of the battle.
And I have come from no cautious strength, from no half-hearted speaker,
But from the Phthian. All know him! Proud is his soul as his fortunes,
Swift as his sword and his spear are the speech and the wrath from his bosom.
I am his envoy, herald am I of the conquering Argives.
Has not one heard in the night when the breezes whisper and shudder,
Dire, the voice of a lion unsatisfied, gnawed by his hunger,
Seeking his prey from the gods? For he prowls through the glens of the mountains,
Errs a dangerous gleam in the woodlands, fatal and silent.
So for a while he endures, for a while he seeks and he suffers
Patient yet in his terrible grace as assured of his banquet;
But he has lacked too long and he lifts his head and to heaven
Roars in his wonder, incensed, impatiently. Startled the valleys
Shrink from the dreadful alarum, the cattle gallop to shelter.
Arming the herdsmen cry to each other for comfort and courage."
So Talthybius spoke, as a harper voicing his prelude
Touches his strings to a varied music, seeks for a concord;
Long his strain he prepares. But one broke in on the speaker, —
Sweet was his voice like a harp's though heard in the front of the onset, —
One of the sons of Fate by the people loved whom he ruined,
Leader in counsel and battle, the Priamid, he in his beauty
Carelessly walking who scattered the seeds of Titanic disaster.
"Surely thou dreamedst at night and awaking thy dreams have not left thee!
Hast thou not woven thy words to intimidate children in Argos
Sitting alarmed in the shadows who listen pale to their nurses?
Greek, thou art standing in Ilion now and thou facest her princes.
Use not thy words but thy king's. If friendship their honey-breathed burden,
Friendship we clasp from Achilles, but challenge outpace with our challenge
Meeting the foe ere he moves in his will to the clash of encounter.
Such is the way of the Trojans since Phryx by the Hellespont halting
Seated Troy on her hill with the Ocean for comrade and sister."

Shaking in wrath his filleted head Talthybius answered:
"Princes, ye speak their words who drive you! Thus said Achilles:
'Rise, Talthybius, meet in her spaces the car of the morning;
Challenge her coursers divine as they bound through the plains of the Troad.
Hasten, let not the day wear gold ere thou stand in her ramparts.
Herald charged with my will to a haughty and obstinate nation,
Speak in the palace of Priam the word of the Phthian Achilles.
Freely and not as his vassal who leads, Agamemnon, the Argive,
But as a ruler in Hellas I send thee, king of my nations.
Long I have walked apart from the mellay of gods in the Troad,
Long has my listless spear leaned back on the peace of my tent-side,
Deaf to the talk of the trumpets, the whine of the chariots speeding;
Sole with my heart I have lived, unheeding the Hellene murmur,
Chid when it roared for the hunt the lion pack of the war-god,
Day after day I walked at dawn and in blush of the sunset,
Far by the call of the seas and alone with the gods and my dreaming,
Leaned to the unsatisfied chant of my heart and the rhythms of ocean,
Sung to by hopes that were sweet-lipped and vain. For Polyxena's brothers
Still are the brood of the Titan Laomedon slain in his greatness,
Engines of God unable to bear all the might that they harbour.
Awe they have chid from their hearts, nor our common humanity binds them,
Stay have they none in the gods who approve, giving calmness to mortals:
But like the Titans of old they have hugged to them grandeur and ruin.
Seek then the race self-doomed, the leaders blinded by heaven —
Not in the agora swept by the winds of debate and the shoutings
Lion-voiced, huge of the people! In Troya's high-crested mansion
Speak out my word to the hero Deiphobus, head of the mellay,
Paris the racer of doom and the stubborn strength of Aeneas.
Herald of Greece, when thy feet shall be pressed on the gold and the marble,
Rise in the Ilian megaron, curb not the cry of the challenge.
Thus shalt thou say to them striking the ground with the staff of defiance,
Fronting the tempests of war, the insensate, the gamblers with downfall.
"Princes of Troy, I have sat in your halls, I have slept in your chambers;
Not in the battle alone as a warrior glad of his foemen,
Glad of the strength that mates with his own, in peace we encountered.
Marvelling I sat in the halls of my enemies, close to the bosoms
Scarred by the dints of my sword and the eyes I had seen through the battle,

Ate rejoicing the food of the East at the tables of Priam
Served by the delicatest hands in the world, by Hecuba's daughter,
Or with our souls reconciled in some careless and rapturous midnight
Drank of the sweetness of Phrygian wine, admiring your bodies
Shaped by the gods indeed, and my spirit revolted from hatred, —
Softening it yearned in its strings to the beauty and joy of its foemen,
Yearned from the death that o'ertakes and the flame that cries and desires
Even at the end to save and even on the verge to deliver
Troy and her wonderful works and her sons and her deep-bosomed daughters.
Warned by the gods who reveal to the heart what the mind cannot hearken
Deaf with its thoughts, I offered you friendship, I offered you bridal,
Hellas for comrade, Achilles for brother, the world for enjoyment
Won by my spear. And one heard my call and one turned to my seeking.
Why is it then that the war-cry sinks not to rest by the Xanthus?
We are not voices from Argolis, Lacedaemonian tricksters,
Splendid and subtle and false; we are speakers of truth, we are Hellenes,
Men of the northland faithful in friendship and noble in anger,
Strong like our fathers of old. But you answered my truth with evasion
Hoping to seize what I will not yield and you flattered your people.
Long have I waited for wisdom to dawn on your violent natures.
Lonely I paced o'er the sands by the thousand-throated waters
Praying to Pallas the wise that the doom might turn from your mansions,
Buildings delightful, gracious as rhythms, lyrics in marble,
Works of the transient gods, and I yearned for the end of the war-din
Hoping that Death might relent to the beautiful sons of the Trojans.
Far from the cry of the spears, from the speed and the laughter of axles,
Heavy upon me like iron the intolerable yoke of inaction
Weighed like a load on a runner. The war-cry rose by Scamander;
Xanthus was crossed on a bridge of the fallen, not by Achilles.
Often I stretched out my hand to the spear, for the Trojan beaches
Rang with the voice of Deiphobus shouting and slaying the Argives;
Often my heart like an anxious mother for Greece and her children
Leaped, for the air was full of the leonine roar of Aeneas.
Always the evening fell or the gods protected the Argives.
Then by the moat of the ships, on the hither plain of the Xanthus
New was the voice that climbed through the din and sailed on the breezes,

High, insistent, clear, and it shouted an unknown war-cry
Threatening doom to the peoples. A woman had come in to aid you,
Regal and insolent, fair as the morning and fell as the northwind,
Freed from the distaff who grasps at the sword and she spurns at subjection
Breaking the rule of the gods. She is turbulent, swift in the battle.
Clanging her voice of the swan as a summons to death and disaster,
Fleet-footed, happy and pitiless, laughing she runs to the slaughter;
Strong with the gait that allures she leaps from her car to the slaying,
Dabbles in blood smooth hands like lilies. Europe astonished
Reels from her shock to the Ocean. She is the panic and mellay,
War is her paean, the chariots thunder of Penthesilea.
Doom was her coming, it seems, to the men of the West and their legions;
Ajax sleeps for ever, Meriones lies on the beaches.
One by one they are falling before you, the great in Achaia.
Ever the wounded are borne like the stream of the ants when they forage
Past my ships, and they hush their moans as they near and in silence
Gaze at the legions inactive accusing the fame of Achilles.
Still have I borne with you, waited a little, looked for a summons,
Longing for bridal torches, not flame on the Ilian housetops,
Blood in the chambers of sweetness, the golden amorous city
Swallowed by doom. Not broken I turned from the wrestle Titanic,
Hopeless, weary of toil in the ebb of my glorious spirit,
But from my stress of compassion for doom of the kindred nations,
But for her sake whom my soul desires, for the daughter of Priam.
And for Polyxena's sake I will speak to you yet as your lover
Once ere the Fury, abrupt from Erebus, deaf to your crying,
Mad with the joy of the massacre, seizes on wealth and on women
Calling to Fire as it strides and Ilion sinks into ashes.
Yield; for your doom is impatient. No longer your helpers hasten,
Legions swift to your call; the yoke of your pride and your splendour
Lies not now on the nations of earth as when Fortune desired you,
Strength was your slave and Troya the lioness hungrily roaring
Threatened the western world from her ramparts built by Apollo.
Gladly released from the thraldom they hated, the insolent shackles
Curbing their manhood the peoples arise and they pray for your ruin;
Piled are their altars with gifts; their blessings help the Achaians.
Memnon came, but he sleeps, and the faces swart of his nation

Darken no more like a cloud over thunder and surge of the onset.
Wearily Lycia fights; far fled are the Carian levies.
Thrace retreats to her plains preferring the whistle of stormwinds
Or on the banks of the Strymon to wheel in her Orphean measure,
Not in the revel of swords and fronting the spears of the Hellenes.
Princes of Pergama, open your gates to our Peace who would enter,
Life in her gracious clasp and forgetfulness, grave of earth's passions,
Healer of wounds and the past. In a comity equal, Hellenic,
Asia join with Greece, one world from the frozen rivers
Trod by the hooves of the Scythian to farthest undulant Ganges.
Tyndarid Helen resign, the desirable cause of your danger,
Back to Greece that is empty long of her smile and her movements.
Broider with riches her coming, pomp of her slaves and the waggons
Endlessly groaning with gold that arrive with the ransom of nations.
So shall the Fury be pacified, she who exultant from Sparta
Breathed in the sails of the Trojan ravisher helping his oarsmen.
So shall the gods be appeased and the thoughts of their wrath shall be cancelled,
Justice contented trace back her steps and for brands of the burning
Torches delightful shall break into Troy with the swords of the bridal.
I like a bridegroom will seize on your city and clasp and defend her
Safe from the envy of Argos, from Lacedaemonian hatred,
Safe from the hunger of Crete and the Locrian's violent rapine.
But if you turn from my voice and you hearken only to Ares
Crying for battle within you deluded by Hera and Pallas,
Swiftly the fierce death's surges shall close over Troy and her ramparts
Built by the gods shall be stubble and earth to the tread of the Hellene.
For to my tents I return not, I swear it by Zeus and Apollo,
Master of Truth who sits within Delphi fathomless brooding
Sole in the caverns of Nature and hearkens her underground murmur,
Giving my oath to his keeping mute and stern who forgets not,
Not from the panting of Ares' toil to repose, from the wrestle
Locked of hope and death in the ruthless clasp of the mellay
Leaving again the Trojan ramparts unmounted, leaving
Greece unavenged, the Aegean a lake and Europe a province.
Choosing from Hellas exile, from Peleus and Deidamia,
Choosing the field for my chamber of sleep and the battle for hearthside

I shall go warring on till Asia enslaved to my footsteps
Feels the tread of the God in my sandal pressed on her bosom.
Rest shall I then when the borders of Greece are fringed with the Ganges;
Thus shall the past pay its Titan ransom and, Fate her balance
Changing, a continent ravished suffer the fortune of Helen.
This I have sworn allying my will to Zeus and Ananke."'"
So was it spoken, the Phthian challenge. Silent the heroes
Looked back amazed on their past and into the night of their future.
Silent their hearts felt a grasp from gods and had hints of the heavens.
Hush was awhile in the room, as if Fate were trying her balance
Poised on the thoughts of her mortals. At length with a musical laughter
Sweet as the jangling of bells upon anklets leaping in measure
Answered aloud to the gods the virgin Penthesilea.
"Long I had heard in my distant realms of the fame of Achilles,
Ignorant still while I played with the ball and ran in the dances
Thinking not ever to war; but I dreamed of the shock of the hero.
So might a poet inland who imagines the rumour of Ocean,
Yearn with his lust for the giant upheaval, the dance as of hill-tops,
Toss of the yellow mane and the tawny march and the voices
Lionlike claiming earth as a prey for the clamorous waters.
So have I longed as I came for the cry and the speed of Achilles.
But he has lurked in his ships, he has sulked like a boy that is angry.
Glad am I now of his soul that arises hungry for battle,
Glad, whether victor I live or defeated travel the shadows.
Once shall my spear have rung on the shield of the Phthian Achilles.
Peace I desire not. I came to a haughty and resolute nation,
Honour and fame they cherish, not life by the gift of a foeman.
Sons of the ancient house on whom Ilion looks as on Titans,
Chiefs whom the world admires, do you fear then the shock of the Phthian?
Gods, it is said, have decided your doom. Are you less in your greatness?
Are you not gods to reverse their decrees or unshaken to suffer?
Memnon is dead and the Carians leave you? Lycia lingers?
But from the streams of my East I have come to you, Penthesilea."
"Virgin of Asia," answered Talthybius, "doom of a nation
Brought thee to Troy and her haters Olympian shielded thy coming,
Vainly who feedest men's hearts with a hope that the gods have rejected.
Doom in thy sweet voice utters her counsels robed like a woman."

Answered the virgin disdainfully, wroth at the words of the Argive:
"Hast thou not ended the errand they gave thee, envoy of Hellas?
Not, do I think, as our counsellor cam'st thou elected from Argos,
Nor as a lover to Troy hast thou hastened with amorous footing
Hurting thy heart with her frowardness. Hatred and rapine sent thee,
Greed of the Ilian gold and lust of the Phrygian women,
Voice of Achaian aggression! Doom am I truly; let Gnossus
Witness it, Salamis speak of my fatal arrival and Argos
Silent remember her wounds." But the Argive answered the virgin:
"Hearken then to the words of the Hellene, Penthesilea.
'Virgin to whom earth's strongest are corn in the sweep of thy sickle,
Lioness vain of thy bruit who besiegest the paths of the battle!
Art thou not satiate yet? hast thou drunk then so little of slaughter?
Death has ascended thy car; he has chosen thy hand for his harvest.
But I have heard of thy pride and disdain, how thou scornest the Argives
And of thy fate thou complainest that ever averse to thy wishes
Cloisters the Phthian and matches with weaklings Penthesilea.
"Not of the Ithacan boar nor the wild-cat littered in Locris
Nor of the sleek-coat Argive wild-bulls sates me the hunting;"
So hast thou said, "I would bury my spear in the lion of Hellas."
Blind and infatuate, art thou not beautiful, bright as the lightning?
Were not thy limbs made cunningly linking sweetness to sweetness?
Is not thy laughter an arrow surprising hearts imprudent?
Charm is the seal of the gods upon woman. Distaff and girdle,
Work of the jar at the well and the hush of our innermost chambers,
These were appointed thee, but thou hast scorned them, O Titaness, grasping
Rather the shield and the spear. Thou, obeying thy turbulent nature,
Tramplest o'er laws that are old to the pleasure thy heart has demanded.
Rather bow to the ancient Gods who are seated and constant.
But for thyself thou passest and what hast thou gained for the aeons
Mingled with men in their works and depriving the age of thy beauty?
Fair art thou, woman, but fair with a bitter and opposite sweetness
Clanging in war when thou matchest thy voice with the shout of assemblies.
Not to this end was thy sweetness made and the joy of thy members,
Not to this rhythm Heaven tuned its pipe in thy throat of enchantment,
Armoured like men to go warring forth and with hardness and fierceness
Mix in the strife and the hate while the varied meaning of Nature

Perishes hurt in its heart and life is emptied of music.
Long have I marked in your world a madness. Monarchs descending
Court the imperious mob of their slaves and their suppliant gesture
Shameless and venal offends the majestic tradition of ages:
Princes plead in the agora; spurred by the tongue of a coward,
Heroes march to an impious war at a priestly bidding.
Gold is sought by the great with the chaffering heart of the trader.
Asia fails and the Gods are abandoning Ida for Hellas.
Why must thou come here to perish, O noble and exquisite virgin,
Here in a cause not thine, in a quarrel remote from thy beauty,
Leaving a land that is lovely and far to be slain among strangers?
Girl, to thy rivers go back and thy hills where the grapes are aspirant.
Trust not a fate that indulges; for all things, Penthesilea,
Break with excess and he is the wisest who walks by a measure.
Yet, if thou wilt, thou shalt meet me today in the shock of the battle:
There will I give thee the fame thou desirest; captive in Hellas,
Men shall point to thee always, smiling and whispering, saying,
"This is the woman who fought with the Greeks, overthrowing their heroes;
This is the slayer of Ajax, this is the slave of Achilles."'"
Then with her musical laughter the fearless Penthesilea:
"Well do I hope that Achilles enslaved shall taste of that glory
Or on the Phrygian fields lie slain by the spear of a woman."
But to the herald Achaian the Priamid, leader of Troya:
"Rest in the halls of thy foes and ease thy fatigue and thy winters.
Herald, abide till the people have heard and reply to Achilles.
Not as the kings of the West are Ilion's princes and archons,
Monarchs of men who drive their nations dumb to the battle.
Not in the palace of Priam and not in the halls of the mighty
Whispered councils prevail and the few dispose of the millions;
But with their nation consulting, feeling the hearts of the commons
Ilion's princes march to the war or give peace to their foemen.
Lightning departs from her kings and the thunder returns from her people
Met in the ancient assembly where Ilus founded his columns
And since her famous centuries, names that the ages remember
Leading her, Troya proclaims her decrees to obedient nations."
Ceasing he cried to the thralls of his house and they tended the Argive.
Brought to a chamber of rest in the luminous peace of the mansion,

Grey he sat and endured the food and the wine of his foemen,
Chiding his spirit that murmured within him and gazed undelighted,
Vexed with the endless pomps of Laomedon. Far from those glories
Memory winged it back to a sward half-forgotten, a village
Nestling in leaves and low hills watching it crowned with the sunset.
So for his hour he abode in earth's palace of lordliest beauty,
But in its caverns his heart was weary and, hurt by the splendours,
Longed for Greece and the smoke-darkened roof of a cottage in Argos,
Eyes of a woman faded and children crowding the hearthside.
Joyless he rose and eastward expected the sunrise on Ida.

BOOK II

The Book of the Statesman

Now from his cycle sleepless and vast round the dance of the earth-globe
Gold Hyperion rose in the wake of the dawn like the eyeball
Flaming of God revealed by his uplifted luminous eyelid.
Troy he beheld and he viewed the transient labour of mortals.
All her marble beauty and pomp were laid bare to the heavens.
Sunlight streamed into Ilion waking the voice of her gardens,
Amorous seized on her ways, lived glad in her plains and her pastures,
Kissed her leaves into brightness of green. As a lover the last time
Yearns to the beauty desired that again shall not wake to his kisses,
So over Ilion doomed leaned the yearning immense of the sunrise.
She like a wordless marble memory dreaming for ever
Lifted the gaze of her perishable immortality sunwards.
All her human past aspired in the clearness eternal,
Temples of Phryx and Dardanus touched with the gold of the morning,
Columns triumphant of Ilus, domes of their greatness enamoured,
Stones that intended to live; and her citadel climbed up to heaven
White like the soul of the Titan Laomedon claiming his kingdoms,
Watched with alarm by the gods as he came. Her bosom maternal
Thrilled to the steps of her sons and a murmur began in her high-roads.
Life renewed its ways which death and sleep cannot alter,
Life that pursuing her boundless march to a goal which we know not,
Ever her own law obeys, not our hopes, who are slaves of her heart-beats.
Then as now men walked in the round which the gods have decreed them
Eagerly turning their eyes to the lure and the tool and the labour.
Chained is their gaze to the span in front, to the gulfs they are blinded
Meant for their steps. The seller opened his shop and the craftsman
Bent o'er his instruments handling the work he never would finish,
Busy as if their lives were for ever, today in its evening
Sure of tomorrow. The hammers clanged and the voice of the markets
Waking desired its daily rumour. Nor only the craftsman,
Only the hopes of the earth, but the hearts of her votaries kneeling
Came to her marble shrines and upraised to our helpers eternal
Missioned the prayer and the hymn or silent, subtly adoring
Ventured upwards in incense. Loud too the clash of the cymbals

Filled all the temples of Troy with the cry of our souls to the azure.
Prayers breathed in vain and a cry that fell back with Fate for its answer!
Children laughed in her doorways; joyous they played, by their mothers
Smiled on still, but their tender bodies unknowing awaited
Grecian spearpoints sharpened by Fate for their unripe bosoms,
Tasks of the slave in Greece. Like bees round their honey-filled dwellings
Murmuring swarmed to the well-heads the large-eyed daughters of Troya,
Deep-bosomed, limbed like the gods, — glad faces of old that were sentient
Rapturous flowers of the soul, bright bodies that lived under darkness
Nobly massed of their locks like day under night made resplendent,
Daughters divine of the earth in the ages when heaven was our father.
They round Troy's well-heads flowerlike satisfied morn with their beauty
Or in the river baring their knees to the embrace of the coolness
Dipped their white feet in the clutch of his streams, in the haste of Scamander,
Lingering this last time with laughter and talk of the day and the morrow
Leaned to the hurrying flood. All his swiftnesses raced down to meet them,
Crowding his channel with dancing billows and turbulent murmurs.
Xanthus primaeval met these waves of our life in its passing
Even as of old he had played with Troy's ancient fair generations
Mingling his deathless voice with the laughter and joy of their ages,
Laughter of dawns that are dead and a joy that the earth has rejected.
Still his whispering trees remembered their bygone voices.
Hast thou forgotten, O river of Troy? Still, still we can hear them
Now, if we listen long in our souls, the bygone voices.
Earth in her fibres remembers, the breezes are stored with our echoes.
Over the stone-hewn steps for their limpid orient waters
Joyous they leaned and they knew not yet of the wells of Mycenae,
Drew not yet from Eurotas the jar for an alien master,
Mixed not Peneus yet with their tears. From the clasp of the current
Now in their groups they arose and dispersed through the streets and the byways,
Turned from the freedom of earth to the works and the joy of the hearthside,
Lightly they rose and returned through the lanes of the wind-haunted city
Swaying with rhythmical steps while the anklets jangled and murmured.
Silent temples saw them passing; you too, O houses
Built with such hopes by mortal man for his transient lodging;
Fragrant the gardens strewed on dark tresses their white-smiling jasmines

Dropped like a silent boon of purity soft from the branches:
Flowers by the wayside were budding, cries flew winged round the tree-tops.
Bright was the glory of life in Ilion city of Priam.
Thrice to the city the doom-blast published its solemn alarum;
Blast of the trumpets that call to assembly clamoured through Troya
Thrice and were still. From garden and highway, from palace and temple
Turned like a steed to the trumpet, rejoicing in war and ambition,
Gathered alert to the call the democracy hated of heaven.
First in their ranks upbearing their age as Atlas his heavens,
Eagle-crested, with hoary hair like the snow upon Ida,
Ilion's senators paced, Antenor and wide-browed Anchises,
Athamas famous for ships and the war of the waters, Tryas
Still whose name was remembered by Oxus the orient river,
Astyoches and Ucalegon, dateless Pallachus, Aetor,
Aspetus who of the secrets divine knew all and was silent,
Ascanus, Iliones, Alcesiphron, Orus, Aretes.
Next from the citadel came with the voice of the heralds before him
Priam and Priam's sons, Aeneas leonine striding,
Followed by the heart of a nation adoring her Penthesilea.
All that was noble in Troy attended the regal procession
Marching in front and behind and the tramp of their feet was a rhythm
Tuned to the arrogant fortunes of Ilion ruled by incarnate
Demigods, Ilus and Phryx and Dardanus, Tros of the conquests,
Tros and far-ruling Laomedon who to his soul's strong labour
Drew down the sons of the skies and was served by the ageless immortals.
Into the agora vast and aspirant besieged by its columns
Bathed and anointed they came like gods in their beauty and grandeur.
Last like the roar of the winds came trampling the surge of the people.
Clamorous led by a force obscure to its ultimate fatal
Session of wrath the violent mighty democracy hastened;
Thousands of ardent lives with the heart yet unslain in their bosoms
Lifted to heaven the voice of man and his far-spreading rumour.
Singing the young men with banners marched in their joyous processions,
Trod in martial measure or dancing with lyrical paces
Chanted the glory of Troy and the wonderful deeds of their fathers.
Into the columned assembly where Ilus had gathered his people,

Thousands on thousands the tramp and the murmur poured; in their armoured
Glittering tribes they were ranked, an untameable high-hearted nation
Waiting the voice of its chiefs. Some gazed on the greatness of Priam
Ancient, remote from their days, the last of the gods who were passing,
Left like a soul uncompanioned in worlds where his strength shall not conquer:
Sole like a column gigantic alone on a desolate hill-side
Older than mortals he seemed and mightier. Many in anger
Aimed their hostile looks where calm though by heaven abandoned,
Left to his soul and his lucid mind and its thoughts unavailing,
Leading the age-chilled few whom the might of their hearts had not blinded,
Famous Antenor was seated, the fallen unpopular statesman,
Wisest of speakers in Troy but rejected, stoned and dishonoured.
Silent, aloof from the people he sat, a heart full of ruins.
Low was the rumour that swelled like the hum of the bees in a meadow
When with the thirst of the honey they swarm on the thyme and the linden,
Hundreds humming and flitting till all that place is a murmur.
Then from his seat like a tower arising Priam the monarch
Slowly erect in his vast tranquillity silenced the people:
Lonely, august he stood like one whom death has forgotten,
Reared like a column of might and of silence over the assembly.
So Olympus rises alone with his snows into heaven.
Crowned were his heights by the locks that swept like the mass of the snow-swathe
Clothing his giant shoulders; his eyes of deep meditation,
Eyes that beheld now the end and accepted it like the beginning
Gazed on the throng of the people as on a pomp that is painted:
Slowly he spoke like one who is far from the scenes where he sojourns.
“Leader of Ilion, hero Deiphobus, thou who hast summoned
Troy in her people, arise; say wherefore thou callest us. Evil
Speak thou or good, thou canst speak that only: Necessity fashions
All that the unseen eye has beheld. Speak then to the Trojans;
Say on this dawn of her making what issue of death or of triumph
Fate in her suddenness puts to the unseeing, what summons to perish
Send to this nation men who revolt and gods who are hostile.”
    Rising Deiphobus spoke, in stature less than his father,

Less in his build, yet the mightiest man and tallest whom coursers
Bore or his feet to the fight since Ajax fell by the Xanthus.
"People of Ilion, long have you fought with the gods and the Argives
Slaying and slain, but the years persist and the struggle is endless.
Fainting your helpers cease from the battle, the nations forsake you.
Asia weary of strenuous greatness, ease-enamoured
Suffers the foot of the Greek to tread on the beaches of Troas.
Yet have we striven for Troy and for Asia, men who desert us.
Not for ourselves alone have we fought, for our life of a moment!
Once if the Greeks were triumphant, once if their nations were marshalled
Under some far-seeing chief, Odysseus, Peleus, Achilles,
Not on the banks of Scamander and skirts of the azure Aegean
Fainting would cease the audacious emprise, the Titanic endeavour;
Tigris would flee from their tread and Indus be drunk by their coursers.
Now in these days when each sun goes marvelling down that Troy stands yet
Suffering, smiting, alive, though doomed to all eyes that behold her,
Flinging back Death from her walls and bronze to the shock and the clamour,
Driven by a thought that has risen in the dawn from the tents on the beaches
Grey Talthybius' chariot waits in the Ilian portals,
Voice of the Hellene demigod challenges timeless Troya.
Thus has he said to us: 'Know you not Doom when she walks in your heavens?
Feelst thou not then thy set, O sun who illuminedst Nature?
Stripped of helpers you stand alone against Doom and Achilles,
Left by the earth that served you, by heaven that helped you rejected:
Death insists at your gates and the flame and the sword are impatient.
None can escape the wheel of the gods and its vast revolutions!
Fate demands the joy and pride of the earth for the Argive,
Asia's wealth for the lust of the young barbarian nations.
City divine, whose fame overroofed like heaven the nations,
Sink eclipsed in the circle vast of my radiance; Troya,
Joined to my northern realms deliver the East to the Hellene;
Ilion, to Hellas be yoked; wide Asia, fringe thou Peneus.
Lay down golden Helen, a sacrifice lovely and priceless
Cast by your weakness and fall on immense Necessity's altar;
Yield to my longing Polyxena, Hecuba's deep-bosomed daughter,
Her whom my heart desires. She shall leave with you peace and her healing

Joy of mornings secure and death repulsed from your hearthsides.
Yield these and live, else I leap on you, Fate in front, Hades behind me.
Bound to the gods by an oath I return not again from the battle
Till from high Ida my shadow extends to the Mede and Euphrates.
Let not your victories deceive you, steps that defeat has imagined;
Hear not the voice of your heroes; their fame is a trumpet in Hades:
Only they conquer while yet my horses champ free in their stables.
Earth cannot long resist the man whom Heaven has chosen;
Gods with him walk; his chariot is led; his arm is assisted.'
High rings the Hellene challenge, earth waits for the Ilian answer.
Always man's Fate hangs poised on the flitting breath of a moment;
Called by some word, by some gesture it leaps, then 'tis graven, 'tis granite.
Speak! by what gesture high shall the stern gods recognise Troya?
Sons of the ancients, race of the gods, inviolate city,
Firmer my spear shall I grasp or cast from my hand and for ever?
Search in your hearts if your fathers still dwell in them, children of Teucer."
So Deiphobus spoke and the nation heard him in silence,
Awed by the shadow vast of doom, indignant with Fortune.
        Calm from his seat Antenor arose as a wrestler arises,
Tamer of beasts in the cage of the lions, eyeing the monsters
Brilliant, tawny of mane, and he knows if his courage waver,
Falter his eye or his nerve be surprised by the gods that are hostile,
Death will leap on him there in the crowded helpless arena.
Fearless Antenor arose, and a murmur swelled in the meeting
Cruel and threatening, hoarse like the voice of the sea upon boulders;
Hisses thrilled through the roar and one man cried to another,
"Lo he will speak of peace who has swallowed the gold of Achaia!
Surely the people of Troy are eunuchs who suffer Antenor
Rising unharmed in the agora. Are there not stones in the city?
Surely the steel grows dear in the land when a traitor can flourish."
Calm like a god or a summit Antenor stood in the uproar.
But as he gazed on his soul came memory dimming the vision;
For he beheld his past and the agora crowded and cheering,
Passionate, full of delight while Antenor spoke to the people,
Troy that he loved and his fatherland proud of her eloquent statesman.
Tears to his eyes came thick and he gripped at the staff he was holding.
Mounting his eyes met fully the tumult, mournful and thrilling,

Conquering men's hearts with a note of doom in its sorrowful sweetness.
"People of Ilion, blood of my blood, O race of Antenor,
Once will I speak though you slay me; for who would shrink from destruction
Knowing that soon of his city and nation, his house and his dear ones
All that remains will be a couch of trampled ashes? Athene,
Slain today may I join the victorious souls of our fathers,
Not for the anguish be kept and the irremediable weeping.
Loud will I speak the word that the gods have breathed in my spirit,
Strive this last time to save the death-destined. Who are these clamour
'Hear him not, gold of the Greeks bought his words and his throat is accursèd'?
Troy whom my counsels made great, hast thou heard this roar of their frenzy
Tearing thy ancient bosom? Is it thy voice, heaven-abandoned, my mother?
O my country, O my creatress, earth of my longings!
Earth where our fathers lie in their sacred ashes undying,
Memoried temples shelter the shrines of our gods and the altars
Pure where we worshipped, the beautiful children smile on us passing,
Women divine and the men of our nation! O land where our childhood
Played at a mother's feet mid the trees and the hills of our country,
Hoping our manhood toiled and our youth had its seekings for godhead, —
Thou for our age keepst repose mid the love and the honour of kinsmen,
Silent our relics shall lie with the city guarding our ashes!
Earth who hast fostered our parents, earth who hast given us our offspring,
Soil that created our race where fed from the bosom of Nature
Happy our children shall dwell in the storied homes of their fathers,
Souls that our souls have stamped, sweet forms of ourselves when we perish!
Once even then have they seen thee in their hearts, or dreamed of thee ever
Who from thy spirit revolt and only thy name make an idol
Hating thy faithful sons and the cult of thy ancient ideal!
Wake, O my mother divine, remember thy gods and thy wisdom,
Silence the tongues that degrade thee, prophets profane of thy godhead.
Madmen, to think that a man who has offered his life for his country,
Served her with words and deeds and adored with victories and triumphs
Ever could think of enslaving her breast to the heel of a foeman!
Surely Antenor's halls are empty, he begs from the stranger
Leading his sons and his children's sons by the hand in the market

Showing his rags since his need is so bitter of gold from the Argives!
You who demand a reply when Laocoon lessens Antenor,
Hush then your feeble roar and your ear to the past and the distance
Turn. You fields that are famous for ever, reply for me calling,
Fields of the mighty mown by my sword's edge, Chersonese conquered,
Thrace and her snows where we fought on the frozen streams and were victors
Then when they were unborn who are now your delight and your leaders.
Answer return, you columns of Ilus, here where my counsels
Made Troy mightier guiding her safe through the shocks of her foemen.
Gold! I have heaped it up high, I am rich with the spoils of your haters.
It was your fathers dead who gave me that wealth as my guerdon,
Now my reproach, your fathers who saw not the Greeks round their ramparts:
They were not cooped by an upstart race in the walls of Apollo,
Saw not Hector slain and Troilus dragged by his coursers.
Far over wrathful Jaxartes they rode; the shaken Achaian
Prostrate adored your strength who now shouts at your portals and conquers
Then when Antenor guided Troy, this old man, this traitor,
Not Laocoon, nay, not even Paris nor Hector.
But I have changed, I have grown a niggard of blood and of treasure,
Selfish, chilled as old men seem to the young and the headstrong,
Counselling safety and ease, not the ardour of noble decisions.
Come to my house and behold, my house that was filled once with voices.
Sons whom the high gods envied me crowded the halls that are silent.
Where are they now? They are dead, their voices are silent in Hades,
Fallen slaying the foe in a war between sin and the Furies.
Silent they went to the battle to die unmourned for their country,
Die as they knew in vain. Do I keep now the last ones remaining,
Sparing their blood that my house may endure? Is there any in Troya
Speeds to the front of the mellay outstripping the sons of Antenor?
Let him arise and speak and proclaim it and bid me be silent.
Heavy is this war that you love on my heart and I hold you as madmen
Doomed by the gods, abandoned by Pallas, by Hera afflicted.
Who would not hate to behold his work undone by the foolish?
Who would not weep if he saw Laocoon ruining Troya,
Paris doomed in his beauty, Aeneas slain by his valour?

Still you need to be taught that the high gods see and remember,
Dream that they care not if justice be done on the earth or oppression!
Happy to live, aspire while you violate man and the immortals!
Vainly the sands of Time have been strewn with the ruins of empires,
Signs that the gods had left, but in vain. For they look for a nation,
One that can conquer itself having conquered the world, but they find none.
None has been able to hold all the gods in his bosom unstaggered,
All have grown drunken with force and have gone down to Hell and to Ate.
'All have been thrust from their heights,' say the fools; 'we shall live and for ever.
We are the people at last, the children, the favourites; all things
Only to us are permitted.' They too descend to the silence,
Death receives their hopes and the void their stirrings of action.
"Eviller fate there is none than life too long among mortals.
I have conversed with the great who have gone, I have fought in their war-cars;
Tros I have seen, Laomedon's hand has dwelt on my temples.
Now I behold Laocoon, now our greatest is Paris.
First when Phryx by the Hellespont reared to the cry of the ocean
Hewing her stones as vast as his thoughts his high-seated fortress,
Planned he a lair for a beast of prey, for a pantheress dire-souled
Crouched in the hills for her bound or self-gathered against the avenger?
Dardanus shepherded Asia's coasts and her sapphire-girt islands.
Mild was his rule like the blessing of rain upon fields in the summer.
Gladly the harried coasts reposed confessing the Phrygian,
Caria, Lycia's kings and the Paphlagon, strength of the Mysian;
Minos' Crete recovered the sceptre of old Rhadamanthus.
Ilus and Tros had strength in the fight like a far-striding Titan's:
Troy triumphant following the urge of their souls to the vastness,
Helmeted, crowned like a queen of the gods with the fates for her coursers
Rode through the driving sleet of the spears to Indus and Oxus.
Then twice over she conquered the vanquished, with peace as in battle;
There where discord had clashed, sweet Peace sat girded with plenty,
There where tyranny counted her blows, came the hands of a father.
Neither had Teucer a soul like your chiefs' who refounded this nation.
Such was the antique and noble tradition of Troy in her founders,
Builders of power that endured; but it perishes lost to their offspring,

Trampled, scorned by an arrogant age, by a violent nation.
Strong Anchises trod it down trampling victorious onwards
Stern as his sword and hard as the silent bronze of his armour.
More than another I praise the man who is mighty and steadfast,
Even as Ida the mountain I praise, a refuge for lions;
But in the council I laud him not, he who a god for his kindred,
Lives for the rest without bowels of pity or fellowship, lone-souled,
Scorning the world that he rules, who untamed by the weight of an empire
Holds allies as subjects, subjects as slaves and drives to the battle
Careless more of their wills than the courser's yoked to his war-car.
Therefore they fought while they feared, but gladly abandon us falling.
Yet had they gathered to Teucer in the evil days of our nation.
Where are they now? Do they gather then to the dreaded Anchises?
Or has Aeneas helped with his counsels hateful to wisdom?
Hateful is this, abhorred of the gods, imagined by Ate
When against subjects murmuring discord and faction appointed
Scatter unblest gold, the heart of a people is poisoned,
Virtue pursued and baseness triumphs tongued like a harlot,
Brother against brother arrayed that the rule may endure of a stranger.
Yes, but it lasts! For its hour. The high gods watch in their silence,
Mute they endure for a while that the doom may be swifter and greater.
Hast thou then lasted, O Troy? Lo, the Greeks at thy gates and Achilles.
Dream, when Virtue departs, that Wisdom will linger, her sister!
Wisdom has turned from your hearts; shall Fortune dwell with the foolish?
Fatal oracles came to you great-tongued, vaunting of empires
Stretched from the risen sun to his rest in the occident waters,
Dreams of a city throned on the hills with her foot on the nations.
Meanwhile the sword was prepared for our breasts and the flame for our housetops.
Wake, awake, O my people! the fire-brand mounts up your doorsteps;
Gods who deceived to slay, press swords on your children's bosoms.
See, O ye blind, ere death in pale countries open your eyelids!
Hear, O ye deaf, the sounds in your ears and the voices of evening!
Young men who vaunt in your strength! when the voice of this aged Antenor
Governed your fathers' youth, all the Orient was joined to our banners.
Macedon leaned to the East and her princes yearned to the victor,
Scythians worshipped in Ilion's shrines, the Phoenician trader

Bartered her tokens, Babylon's wise men paused at our thresholds;
Fair-haired sons of the snows came rapt towards golden Troya
Drawn by the song and the glory. Strymon sang hymns unto Ida,
Hoarse Chalcidice, dim Chersonesus married their waters
Under the o'erarching yoke of Troy twixt the term-posts of Ocean.
Meanwhile far through the world your fortunes led by my counsels
Followed their lure like women snared by a magical tempter:
High was their chant as they paced and it came from continents distant.
Turn now and hear! what voice approaches? what glitter of armies?
Loud upon Trojan beaches the tread and the murmur of Hellas!
Hark! 'tis the Achaian's paean rings o'er the Pergaman waters!
So wake the dreams of Aeneas; reaped is Laocoon's harvest.
Artisans new of your destiny fashioned this far-spreading downfall,
Counsellors blind who scattered your strength to the hooves of the Scythian,
Barren victories, trophies of skin-clad Illyrian pastors.
Who but the fool and improvident, who but the dreamer and madman
Leaves for the far and ungrasped earth's close and provident labour?
Children of earth, our mother gives tokens, she lays down her signposts,
Step by step to advance on her bosom, to grow by her seasons,
Order our works by her patience and limit our thought by her spaces.
But you had chiefs who were demigods, souls of an earth-scorning stature,
Minds that saw vaster than life and strengths that God's hour could not limit!
These men seized upon Troy as the tool of their giant visions,
Dreaming of Africa's suns and bright Hesperian orchards,
Carthage our mart and our feet on the sunset hills of the Latins.
Ilion's hinds in the dream ploughed Libya, sowed Italy's cornfields,
Troy stretched to Gades; even the gods and the Fates had grown Trojan.
So are the natures of men uplifted by Heaven in its satire.
Scorning the bit of the gods, despisers of justice and measure,
Zeus is denied and adored some shadow huge of their natures
Losing the shape of man in a dream that is splendid and monstrous.
Titans, vaunting they stride and the world resounds with their footsteps;
Titans, clanging they fall and the world is full of their ruin.
Children, you dreamed with them, heard the roar of the Atlantic breakers
Welcome your keels and the Isles of the Blest grew your wonderful gardens.
Lulled in the dream, you saw not the black-drifting march of the storm-rack,
Heard not the galloping wolves of the doom and the howl of their hunger.

Greece in her peril united her jarring clans; you suffered
Patient, preparing the north, the wisdom and silence of Peleus,
Atreus' craft and the Argives gathered to King Agamemnon.
But there were prophecies, Pythian oracles, mutterings from Delphi.
How shall they prosper who haste after auguries, oracles, whispers,
Dreams that walk in the night and voices obscure of the silence?
Touches are these from the gods that bewilder the brain to its ruin.
One sole oracle helps, still armoured in courage and prudence
Patient and heedful to toil at the work that is near in the daylight.
Leave to the night its phantoms, leave to the future its curtain!
Only today Heaven gave to mortal man for his labour.
If thou hadst bowed not thy mane, O Troy, to the child and the dreamer,
Hadst thou been faithful to Wisdom the counsellor seated and ancient,
Then would the hour not have dawned when Paris lingered in Sparta
Led by the goddess fatal and beautiful, white Aphrodite.
Man, shun the impulses dire that spring armed from thy nature's abysms!
Dread the dusk rose of the gods, flee the honey that tempts from its petals!
Therefore the black deed was done and the hearth that welcomed was sullied.
Sin-called the Fury uplifted her tresses of gloom o'er the nations
Maddening the earth with the scream of her blood-thirst, bowelless,
stone-eyed,
Claiming her victims from God and bestriding the hate and the clamour.
Yet midst the stroke and the wail when men's eyes were blind with the
blood-mist,
Still had the high gods mercy recalling Teucer and Ilus.
Just was the heart of their anger. Discord flaming from Ida,
Hundred-voiced glared from the ships through the camp of the victor
Achaians, —
Love to that discord added her flowerlike lips of Briseis;
Faltering lids of Polyxena conquered the strength of Pelides.
Vainly the gods who pity open the gates of salvation!
Vainly the winds of their mercy breathe on our fevered existence!
Man his passions prefers to the voice that guides from the heavens.
These too were here whom Hera had chosen to ruin this nation:
Charioteers cracking the whips of their speed on the paths of destruction,
Demigods they! they have come down from Heaven glad to that labour,
Deaf is the world with the fame of their wheels as they race down to Hades.

O that alone they could reach it! O that pity could soften
Harsh Necessity's dealings, sparing our innocent children,
Saving the Trojan women and aged from bonds and the sword-edge!
These had not sinned whom you slay in your madness! Ruthless, O mortals,
Must you be then to yourselves when the gods even faltering with pity
Turn from the grief that must come and the agony vast and the weeping?
Say not the road of escape sinks too low for your arrogant treading.
Pride is not for our clay; the earth, not heaven was our mother
And we are even as the ant in our toil and the beast in our dying;
Only who cling to the hands of the gods can rise up from the earth-mire.
Children, lie prone to their scourge, that your hearts may revive in their
sunshine.
This is our lot! when the anger of heaven has passed then the mortal
Raises his head; soon he heals his heart and forgets he has suffered.
Yet if resurgence from weakness and shame were withheld from the creature,
Every fall without morrow, who then would counsel submission?
But since the height of mortal fortune ascending must stumble,
Fallen, again ascend, since death like birth is our portion,
Ripening, mowed, to be sown again like corn by the farmer,
Let us be patient still with the gods accepting their purpose.
Deem not defeat I welcome. Think not to Hellas submitting
Death of proud hope I would seal. Not this have I counselled, O nation,
But to be even as your high-crested forefathers, greatest of mortals.
Troya of old enringed by the hooves of Cimmerian armies
Flamed to the heavens from her plains and her smoke-blackened citadel
sheltered
Mutely the joyless rest of her sons and the wreck of her greatness.
Courage and wisdom survived in that fall and a stern-eyed prudence
Helped her to live; disguised from her mightiness Troy crouched waiting.
Teucer descended whose genius worked at this kingdom and nation,
Patient, scrupulous, wise, like a craftsman carefully toiling
Over a helmet or over a breastplate, testing it always,
Toiled in the eye of the Masters of all and had heed of its labour.
So in the end they would not release him like souls that are common;
They out of Ida sent into Ilion Pallas Athene;
Secret she came and he went with her into the luminous silence.
Teucer's children after their sire completed his labour.

Now too, O people, front adversity self-gathered, silent.
Veil thyself, leonine mighty Ilion, hiding thy greatness!
Be as thy father Teucer; be as a cavern for lions;
Be as a Fate that crouches! Wordless and stern for your vengeance
Self-gathered work in the night and secrecy shrouding your bosoms.
Let not the dire heavens know of it; let not the foe seize a whisper!
Ripen the hour of your stroke, while your words drip sweeter than honey.
Sure am I, friends, you will turn from death at my voice, you will hear me!
Some day yet I shall gaze on the ruins of haughty Mycenae.
Is this not better than Ilion cast to the sword of her haters,
Is this not happier than Troya captured and wretchedly burning,
Time to await in his stride when the southern and northern Achaians
Gazing with dull distaste now over their severing isthmus
Hate-filled shall move to the shock by the spur of the gods in them driven,
Pelops march upon Attica, Thebes descend on the Spartan?
Then shall the hour now kept in heaven for us ripen to dawning,
Then shall Victory cry to our banners over the Ocean
Calling our sons with her voice immortal. Children of Ilus,
Then shall Troy rise in her strength and stride over Greece up to Gades."
    So Antenor spoke and the mind of the hostile assembly
Moved and swayed with his words like the waters ruled by Poseidon.
Even as the billows rebellious lashed by the whips of the tempest
Curvet and rear their crests like the hooded wrath of a serpent,
Green-eyed under their cowls sublime, — unwilling they journey,
Foam-bannered, hoarse-voiced, shepherded, forced by the wind to the margin
Meant for their rest and can turn not at all, though they rage, on their driver, —
Last with a sullen applause and consenting lapse into thunder,
Where they were led all the while they sink down huge and astonished,
So in their souls that withstood and obeyed and hated the yielding,
Lashed by his censure, indignant, the Trojans moved towards his purpose:
Sometimes a roar arose, then only, weakened, rarer,
Angry murmurs swelled between sullen stretches of silence;
Last, a reluctant applause broke dull from the throats of the commons.
Silent raged in their hearts Laocoon's following daunted;
Troubled the faction of Paris turned to the face of their leader.

He as yet rose not; careless he sat in his beauty and smiling,
Gazing with brilliant eyes at the sculptured pillars of Ilus.
Doubtful, swayed by Antenor, waited in silence the nation.

BOOK III

The Book of the Assembly

But as the nation beset betwixt doom and a shameful surrender
Waited mute for a voice that could lead and a heart to encourage,
Up in the silence deep Laocoon rose up, far-heard, —
Heard by the gods in their calm and heard by men in their passion —
Cloud-haired, clad in mystic red, flamboyant, sombre,
Priam's son Laocoon, fate-darkened seer of Apollo.
As when the soul of the Ocean arises rapt in the dawning
And mid the rocks and the foam uplifting the voice of its musings
Opens the chant of its turbulent harmonies, so rose the far-borne
Voice of Laocoon soaring mid columns of Ilion's glories,
Claiming the earth and the heavens for the field of its confident rumour.
"Trojans, deny your hearts to the easeful flutings of Hades!
Live, O nation!" he thundered forth and Troy's streets and her pillars
Sent back their fierce response. Restored to her leonine spirits
Ilion rose in her agora filling the heavens with shoutings,
Bearing a name to the throne of Zeus in her mortal defiance.
As when a sullen calm of the heavens discourages living,
Nature and man feel the pain of the lightnings repressed in their bosoms,
Dangerous and dull is the air, then suddenly strong from the anguish
Zeus of the thunders starts into glories releasing his storm-voice,
Earth exults in the kiss of the rain and the life-giving laughters,
So from the silence broke forth the thunder of Troya arising;
Fiercely she turned from prudence and wisdom and turned back to greatness
Casting her voice to the heavens from the depths of her fathomless spirit.
Raised by those clamours, triumphant once more on this scene of his greatness,
Tool of the gods, but he deemed of his strength as a leader in Nature,
Took for his own a voice that was given and dreamed that he fashioned
Fate that fashions us all, Laocoon stood mid the shouting
Leaned on the calm of an ancient pillar. In eyes self-consuming
Kindled the flame of the prophet that blinds at once and illumines;
Quivering thought-besieged lips and shaken locks of the lion,
Lifted his gaze the storm-led enthusiast. Then as the shouting
Tired of itself at last disappeared in the bosom of silence,

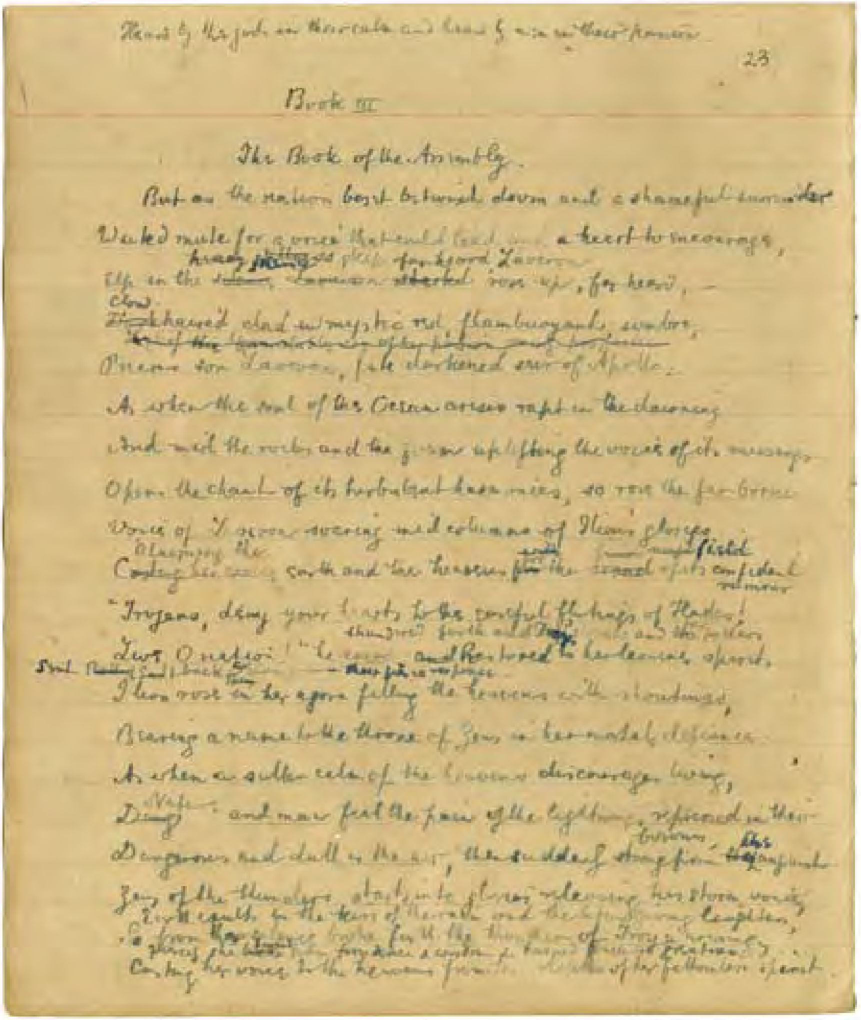

A page of *Illion*

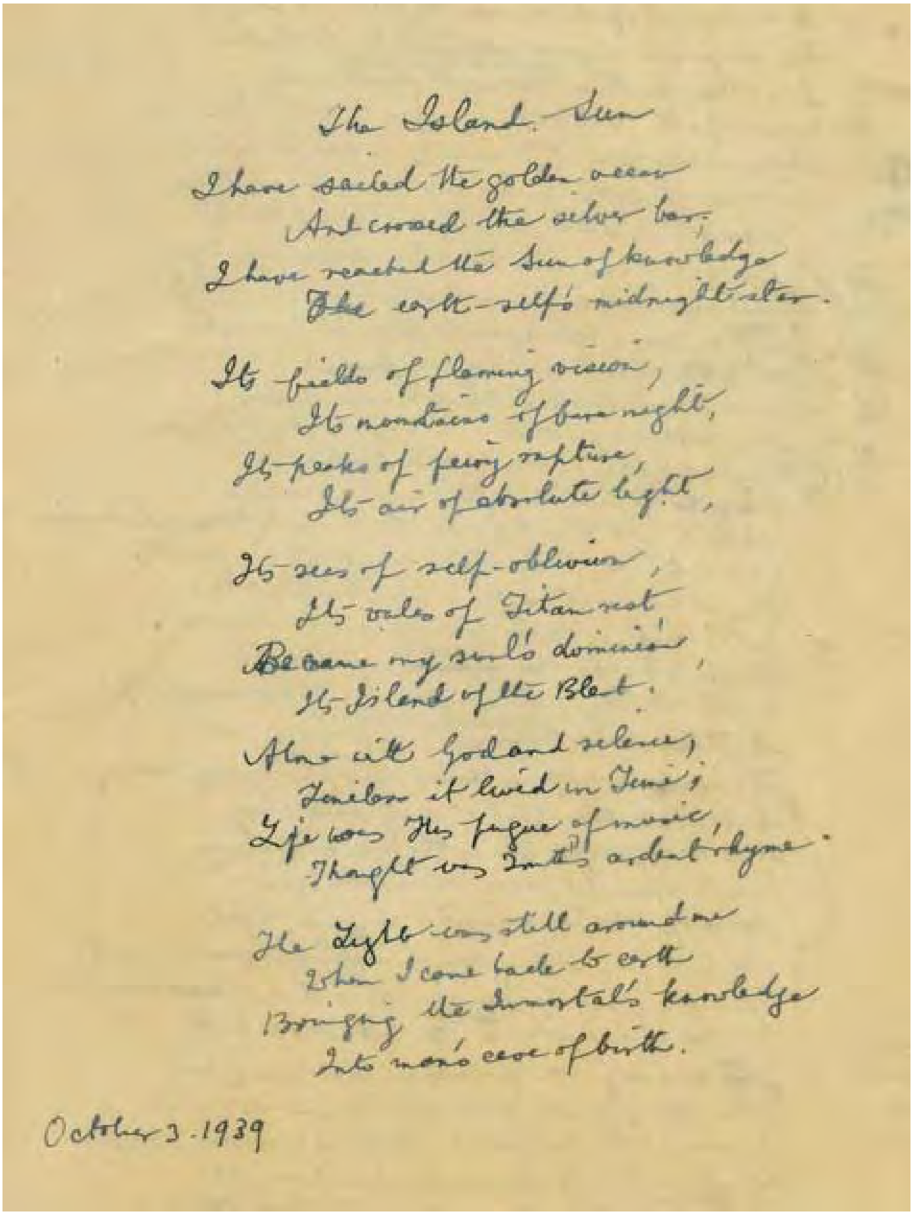

The Island Sun

I have sailed the golden ocean
And crossed the silver bar;
I have reached the Sun of knowledge
The earth-self's midnight star.

Its fields of flaming vision,
Its mountains of bare might,
Its peaks of fiery rapture,
Its air of absolute light,

Its seas of self-oblivion,
Its vales of Titan rest,
Became my soul's dominion,
Its Island of the Blest.

Alone with God and silence,
Timeless it lived in Time;
Life was His fugue of music,
Thought was Truth's ardent rhyme.

The Light was still around me
When I came back to earth
Bringing the Immortal's knowledge
Into man's cave of birth.

October 3. 1939

Once more he started erect and his voice o'er the hearts of his hearers
Swept like Ocean's impatient cry when it calls from its surges,
Ocean loud with a thought sublime in its measureless marching,
Each man felt his heart like foam in the rushing of waters.
"Ilion is vanquished then! she abases her grandiose spirit
Mortal found in the end to the gods and the Greeks and Antenor,
And when a barbarous chieftain's menace and insolent mercy
Bring here their pride to insult the columned spirit of Ilus,
Trojans have sat and feared! For a man has arisen and spoken,
One whom the gods in their anger have hired. Since the Argive prevailed not,
Armed with his strength and his numbers, in Troya they sought for her slayer,
Gathered their wiles in a voice and they chose a man famous and honoured,
Summoned Ate to aid and corrupted the heart of Antenor.
Flute of the breath of the Hell-witch, always he scatters among you
Doubt, affliction and weakness chilling the hearts of the fighters,
Always his voice with its cadenced and subtle possession for evil
Breaks the constant will and maims the impulse heroic.
Therefore while yet her heroes fight and her arms are unconquered,
Troy in your hearts is defeated! The souls of your Fathers have heard you
Dallying, shamefast, with vileness, lured by the call of dishonour.
Such is the power Zeus gave to the wingèd words of a mortal!
Foiled in his will, disowned by the years that stride on for ever,
Yet in the frenzy cold of his greed and his fallen ambition
Doom from heaven he calls down on his countrymen, Trojan abuses
Troy, his country, extolling her enemies, blessing her slayers.
Such are the gods Antenor has made in his heart's own image
That if one evil man have not way for his greed and his longing
Cities are doomed and kings must be slain and a nation must perish!
But from the mind of the free and the brave I will answer thy bodings,
Gold-hungry raven of Troy who croakst from thy nest at her princes.
Only one doom irreparable treads down the soul of a nation,
Only one downfall endures; 'tis the ruin of greatness and virtue,
Mourning when Freedom departs from the life and the heart of a people,
Into her room comes creeping the mind of the slave and it poisons
Manhood and joy and the voice to lying is trained and subjection
Easy feels to the neck of man who is next to the godheads.
Not of the fire am I terrified, not of the sword and its slaying;

Vileness of men appals me, baseness I fear and its voices.
What can man suffer direr or worse than enslaved from a victor
Boons to accept, to take safety and ease from the foe and the stranger,
Fallen from the virtue stern that heaven permits to a mortal?
Death is not keener than this nor the slaughter of friends and our dear ones.
Out and alas! earth's greatest are earth and they fail in the testing,
Conquered by sorrow and doubt, fate's hammerers, fires of her furnace.
God in their souls they renounce and submit to their clay and its promptings.
Else could the heart of Troy have recoiled from the loom of the shadow
Cast by Achilles' spear or shrunk at the sound of his car-wheels?
Now he has graven an oath austere in his spirit unpliant
Victor at last to constrain in his stride the walls of Apollo
Burning Troy ere he sleeps. 'Tis the vow of a high-crested nature;
Shall it break ramparted Troy? Yea, the soul of a man too is mighty
More than the stone and the mortar! Troy had a soul once, O Trojans,
Firm as her god-built ramparts. When by the spears overtaken,
Strong Sarpedon fell and Zeus averted his visage,
Xanthus red to the sea ran sobbing with bodies of Trojans,
When in the day of the silence of heaven the far-glancing helmet
Ceased from the ways of the fight, and panic slew with Achilles
Hosts who were left unshepherded pale at the fall of their greatest,
Godlike Troy lived on. Do we speak mid a city's ruins?
Lo! she confronts her heavens as when Tros and Laomedon ruled her.
All now is changed, these mutter and sigh to you, all now is ended;
Strength has renounced you, Fate has finished the thread of her spinning.
Hector is dead, he walks in the shadows; Troilus fights not;
Resting his curls on the asphodel he has forgotten his country:
Strong Sarpedon lies in Bellerophon's city sleeping:
Memnon is slain and the blood of Rhesus has dried on the Troad:
All of the giant Asius sums in a handful of ashes.
Grievous are these things; our hearts still keep all the pain of them treasured,
Hard though they grow by use and iron caskets of sorrow.
Hear me yet, O fainters in wisdom snared by your pathos,
Know this iron world we live in where Hell casts its shadow.
Blood and grief are the ransom of men for the joys of their transience,
For we are mortals bound in our strength and beset in our labour.
This is our human destiny; every moment of living

Toil and loss have gained in the constant siege of our bodies.
Men must sow earth with their hearts and their tears that their country may prosper;
Earth who bore and devours us that life may be born from our remnants.
Then shall the Sacrifice gather its fruits when the war-shout is silent,
Nor shall the blood be in vain that our mother has felt on her bosom
Nor shall the seed of the mighty fail where Death is the sower.
Still from the loins of the mother eternal are heroes engendered,
Still Deiphobus shouts in the war-front trampling the Argives,
Strong Aeneas' far-borne voice is heard from our ramparts,
Paris' hands are swift and his feet in the chases of Ares.
Lo, when deserted we fight by Asia's soon-wearied peoples,
Men ingrate who enjoyed the protection and loathed the protector,
Heaven has sent us replacing a continent Penthesilea!
Low has the heart of Achaia sunk since it shook at her war-cry.
Ajax has bit at the dust; it is all he shall have of the Troad;
Tall Meriones lies and measures his portion of booty.
Who is the fighter in Ilion thrills not rejoicing to hearken
Even her name on unwarlike lips, much more in the mellay
Shout of the daughter of battles, armipotent Penthesilea?
If there were none but these only, if hosts came not surging behind them,
Young men burning-eyed to outdare all the deeds of their elders,
Each in his beauty a Troilus, each in his valour a Hector,
Yet were the measures poised in the equal balance of Ares.
Who then compels you, O people unconquered, to sink down abjuring
All that was Troy? For O, if she yield, let her use not ever
One of her titles! shame not the shades of Teucer and Ilus,
Soil not Tros! Are you awed by the strength of the swift-foot Achilles?
Is it a sweeter lure in the cadenced voice of Antenor?
Or are you weary of Time and the endless roar of the battle?
Wearier still are the Greeks! their eyes look out o'er the waters
Nor with the flight of their spears is the wing of their hopes towards Troya.
Dull are their hearts; they sink from the war-cry and turn from the spear-stroke
Sullenly dragging backwards, desiring the paths of the Ocean,
Dreaming of hearths that are far and the children growing to manhood
Who are small infant faces still in the thoughts of their fathers.

Therefore these call you to yield lest they wake and behold in the dawn-light
All Poseidon whitening lean to the west in his waters
Thick with the sails of the Greeks departing beaten to Hellas.
Who is it calls? Antenor the statesman, Antenor the patriot,
Thus who loves his country and worships the soil of his fathers!
Which of you loves like him Troya? which of the children of heroes
Yearns for the touch of a yoke on his neck and desires the aggressor?
If there be any so made by the gods in the nation of Ilus,
Leaving this city which freemen have founded, freemen have dwelt in,
Far on the beach let him make his couch in the tents of Achilles,
Not in this mighty Ilion, not with this lioness fighting,
Guarding the lair of her young and roaring back at her hunters.
We who are souls descended from Ilus and seeds of his making,
Other-hearted shall march from our gates to answer Achilles.
What! shall this ancient Ilion welcome the day of the conquered?
She who was head of the world, shall she live in the guard of the Hellene
Cherished as slavegirls are, who are taken in war, by their captors?
Europe shall walk in our streets with the pride and the gait of the victor?
Greeks shall enter our homes and prey on our mothers and daughters?
This Antenor desires and this Ucalegon favours.
Traitors! whether 'tis cowardice drives or the sceptic of virtue,
Cold-blooded age, or gold insatiably tempts from its coffers
Pleading for safety from foreign hands and the sack and the plunder.
Leave them, my brothers! spare the baffled hypocrites! Failure
Sharpest shall torture their hearts when they know that still you are Trojans.
Silence, O reason of man! for a voice from the gods has been uttered!
Dardanans, hearken the sound divine that comes to you mounting
Out of the solemn ravines from the mystic seat on the tripod!
Phoebus, the master of Truth, has promised the earth to our peoples.
Children of Zeus, rejoice! for the Olympian brows have nodded
Regal over the world. In earth's rhythm of shadow and sunlight
Storm is the dance of the locks of the God assenting to greatness,
Zeus who with secret compulsion orders the ways of our nature;
Veiled in events he lives and working disguised in the mortal
Builds our strength by pain, and an empire is born out of ruins.
Then if the tempest be loud and the thunderbolt leaping incessant
Shatters the roof, if the lintels flame at last and each cornice

Shrieks with the pain of the blast, if the very pillars totter,
Keep yet your faith in Zeus, hold fast to the word of Apollo.
Not by a little pain and not by a temperate labour
Trained is the nation chosen by Zeus for a dateless dominion.
Long must it labour rolled in the foam of the fathomless surges,
Often neighbour with death and ere Ares grow firm to its banners
Feel on the pride of its Capitol tread of the triumphing victor,
Hear the barbarian knock at its gates or the neighbouring foeman
Glad of the transient smile of his fortune suffer insulting; —
They, the nation eternal, brook their taunts who must perish!
Heaviest toils they must bear; they must wrestle with Fate and her Titans,
And when some leader returns from the battle sole of his thousands
Crushed by the hammers of God, yet never despair of their country.
Dread not the ruin, fear not the storm-blast, yield not, O Trojans.
Zeus shall rebuild. Death ends not our days, the fire shall not triumph.
Death? I have faced it. Fire? I have watched it climb in my vision
Over the timeless domes and over the rooftops of Priam;
But I have looked beyond and have seen the smile of Apollo.
After her glorious centuries, after her world-wide triumphs,
If near her ramparts outnumbered she fights, by the nations forsaken,
Lonely again on her hill, by her streams, and her meadows and beaches,
Once where she revelled, shake to the tramp of her countless invaders,
Testings are these from the god. For Fate severe like a mother
Teaches our wills by disaster and strikes down the props that would weaken,
Fate and the Thought on high that is wiser than yearnings of mortals.
Troy has arisen before, but from ashes, not shame, not surrender!
Souls that are true to themselves are immortal; the soulless for ever
Lingers helpless in Hades a shade among shades disappointed.
Now is the god in my bosom mighty compelling me, Trojans,
Now I release what my spirit has kept and it saw in its vision;
Nor will be silent for gibe of the cynic or sneer of the traitor.
Troy shall triumph! Hear, O ye peoples, the word of Apollo.
Hear it and tremble, O Greece, in thy youth and the dawn of thy future;
Rather forget while thou canst, but the gods in their hour shall remind thee.
Tremble, O nations of Asia, false to the greatness within you.
Troy shall surge back on your realms with the sword and the yoke of the victor.

Troy shall triumph! Though nations conspire and gods lead her foemen,
Fate that is born of the spirit is greater than they and will shield her.
Foemen shall help her with war; her defeats shall be victory's moulders.
Walls that restrain shall be rent; she shall rise out of sessions unsettled.
Oceans shall be her walls at the end and the desert her limit;
Indus shall send to her envoys; her eyes shall look northward from Thule.
She shall enring all the coasts with her strength like the kingly Poseidon,
She shall o'ervault all the lands with her rule like the limitless azure."
Ceasing from speech Laocoon, girt with the shouts of a nation,
Lapsed on his seat like one seized and abandoned and weakened; nor ended
Only in iron applause, but throughout with a stormy approval
Ares broke from the hearts of his people in ominous thunder.
Savage and dire was the sound like a wild beast's tracked out and hunted,
Wounded, yet trusting to tear out the entrails live of its hunters,
Savage and cruel and threatening doom to the foe and opponent.
Yet when the shouting sank at last, Ucalegon rose up
Trembling with age and with wrath and in accents hurried and piping
Faltered a senile fierceness forth on the maddened assembly.
"Ah, it is even so far that you dare, O you children of Priam,
Favourites vile of a people sent mad by the gods, and thou risest,
Dark Laocoon, prating of heroes and spurning as cowards,
Smiting for traitors the aged and wise who were grey when they spawned thee!
Imp of destruction, mane of mischief! Ah, spur us with courage,
Thou who hast never prevailed against even the feeblest Achaian.
Rather twice hast thou raced in the rout to the ramparts for shelter,
Leading the panic, and shrieked as thou ranst to the foemen for mercy
Who were a mile behind thee, O matchless and wonderful racer.
Safely counsel to others the pride and the firmness of heroes.
Thou wilt not die in the battle! For even swiftest Achilles
Could not o'ertake thee, I ween, nor wind-footed Penthesilea.
Mask of a prophet, heart of a coward, tongue of a trickster,
Timeless Ilion thou alone ruinest, helped by the Furies.
I, Ucalegon, first will rend off the mask from thee, traitor.
For I believe thee suborned by the cynic wiles of Odysseus
And thou conspirest to sack this Troy with the greed of the Cretan."
Hasting unstayed he pursued like a brook that scolds amid pebbles,

Voicing angers shrill; for the people astonished were silent.
Long he pursued not; a shouting broke from that stupor of fury,
Men sprang pale to their feet and hurled out menaces lethal;
All that assembly swayed like a forest swept by the stormwind.
Obstinate, straining his age-dimmed eyes Ucalegon, trembling
Worse yet with anger, clamoured feebly back at the people,
Whelmed in their roar. Unheard was his voice like a swimmer in surges
Lost, yet he spoke. But the anger grew in the throats of the people
Lion-voiced, hurting the heart with sound and daunting the nature,
Till from some stalwart hand a javelin whistling and vibrant
Missing the silvered head of the senator rang disappointed
Out on the distant wall of a house by the side of the market.
Not even then would the old man hush or yield to the tempest.
Wagging his hoary beard and shifting his aged eyeballs,
Tossing his hands he stood; but Antenor seized him and Aetor,
Dragged him down on his seat though he strove, and chid him and silenced,
"Cease, O friend, for the gods have won. It were easier piping
High with thy aged treble to alter the rage of the Ocean
Than to o'erbear this people stirred by Laocoon. Leave now
Effort unhelpful, wrap thy days in a mantle of silence;
Give to the gods their will and dry-eyed wait for the ending."
So now the old men ceased from their strife with the gods and with Troya;
Cowed by the storm of the people's wrath they desisted from hoping.
But though the roar long swelled, like the sea when the winds have subsided,
One man yet rose up unafraid and beckoned for silence,
Not of the aged, but ripe in his look and ruddy of visage,
Stalwart and bluff and short-limbed, Halamus son of Antenor.
Forward he stood from the press and the people fell silent and listened,
For he was ever first in the mellay and loved by the fighters.
He with a smile began: "Come, friends, debate is soon ended
If there is right but of lungs and you argue with javelins. Wisdom
Rather pray for her aid in this dangerous hour of your fortunes.
Not to exalt Laocoon, too much praising his swiftness,
Trojans, I rise; for some are born brave with the spear in the war-car,
Others bold with the tongue, nor equal gifts unto all men
Zeus has decreed who guides his world in a round that is devious
Carried this way and that like a ship that is tossed on the waters.

Why should we rail then at one who is lame by the force of Cronion?
Not by his will is he lame; he would race, if he could, with the swiftest.
Yet is the halt man no runner, nor, friends, must you rise up and slay me,
If I should say of this priest, he is neither Sarpedon nor Hector.
Then, if my father whom once you honoured, ancient Antenor,
Hugs to him Argive gold which I see not, his son in his mansion,
Me too accusest thou, prophet Laocoon? Friends, you have watched me
Sometimes fight. Did you see with my house's allies how I gambolled,
Changed, when with sportive spear I was tickling the ribs of my Argives,
Nudges of friendly counsel inviting to entry in Troya?
Men, these are visions of lackbrains; men, these are myths of the market.
Let us have done with them, brothers and friends; hate only the Hellene.
Prophet, I bow to the oracles. Wise are the gods in their silence,
Wise when they speak; but their speech is other than ours and their wisdom
Hard for a mortal mind to hold and not madden or wander;
But for myself I see only the truth as a soldier who battles
Judging the strength of his foes and the chances of iron encounter.
Few are our armies, many the Greeks, and we waste in the combat
Bound to our numbers, — they by the ocean hemmed from their kinsmen,
We by our fortunes, waves of the gods that are harder to master,
They like a rock that is chipped, but we like a mist that disperses.
Then if Achilles, bound by an oath, bring peace to us, healing,
Bring to us respite, help, though bought at a price, yet full-measured,
Strengths of the North at our side and safety assured from the Achaian,
For he is true though a Greek, will you shun this mighty advantage?
Peace at least we shall have, though gold we lose and much glory;
Peace we will use for our strength to breathe in, our wounds to recover,
Teaching Time to prepare for happier wars in the future.
Pause ere you fling from you life; you are mortals, not gods in your glory.
Not for submission to new ally or to ancient foeman
Peace these desire; for who would exchange wide death for subjection?
Who would submit to a yoke? Or who shall rule Trojans in Troya?
Swords are there still at our sides, there are warriors' hearts in our bosoms.
Peace your senators welcome, not servitude, breathing they ask for.
But if for war you pronounce, if a noble death you have chosen,
That I approve. What fitter end for this warlike nation,
Knowing that empires at last must sink and perish all cities,

Than to preserve to the end posterity's praise and its greatness
Ceasing in clangour of arms and a city's flames for our death-pyre?
Choose then with open eyes what the dread gods offer to Troya.
Hope not now Hector is dead and Sarpedon, Asia inconstant,
We but a handful, Troy can prevail over Greece and Achilles.
Play not with dreams in this hour, but sternly, like men and not children,
Choose with a noble and serious greatness fates fit for Troya.
Stark we will fight till buried we fall under Ilion's ruins,
Or, unappeased, we will curb our strength for the hope of the future."
Not without praise of his friends and assent of the thoughtfuller Trojans,
Halamus spoke and ceased. But now in the Ilian forum
Bright, of the sungod a ray, and even before he had spoken
Sending the joy of his brilliance into the hearts of his hearers,
Paris arose. Not applauded his rising, but each man towards him
Eagerly turned as if feeling that all before which was spoken
Were but a prelude and this was the note he has waited for always.
Sweet was his voice like a harp's, when it chants of war, and its cadence
Softened with touches of music thoughts that were hard to be suffered,
Sweet like a string that is lightly struck, but it penetrates wholly.
"Calm with the greatness you hold from your sires by the right of your nature
I too would have you decide before Heaven in the strength of your spirits,
Not to the past and its memories moored like the thoughts of Antenor
Hating the vivid march of the present, nor towards the future
Panting through dreams like my brother Laocoon vexed by Apollo.
Dead is the past; the void has possessed it; its drama is ended,
Finished its music. The future is dim and remote from our knowledge;
Silent it lies on the knees of the gods in their luminous stillness.
But to our gaze God's light is a darkness, His plan is a chaos.
Who shall foretell the event of a battle, the fall of a footstep?
Oracles, visions and prophecies voice but the dreams of the mortal,
And 'tis our spirit within is the Pythoness tortured in Delphi.
Heavenly voices to us are a silence, those colours a whiteness.
Neither the thought of the statesman prevails nor the dream of the prophet,
Whether one cry, 'Thus devise and thy heart shall be given its wanting,'
Vainly the other, 'The heavens have spoken; hear then their message.'
Who can point out the way of the gods and the path of their travel,

Who shall impose on them bounds and an orbit? The winds have their treading, —
They can be followed and seized, not the gods when they move towards their purpose.
They are not bound by our deeds and our thinkings. Sin exalted
Seizes secure on the thrones of the world for her glorious portion,
Down to the bottomless pit the good man is thrust in his virtue.
Leave to the gods their godhead and, mortal, turn to thy labour;
Take what thou canst from the hour that is thine and be fearless in spirit;
This is the greatness of man and the joy of his stay in the sunlight.
Now whether over the waste of Poseidon the ships of the Argives
Empty and sad shall return or sacred Ilion perish,
Priam be slain and for ever cease this imperial nation,
These things the gods are strong to conceal from the hopings of mortals.
Neither Antenor knows nor Laocoon. Only of one thing
Man can be sure, the will in his heart and his strength in his purpose:
This too is Fate and this too the gods, nor the meanest in Heaven.
Paris keeps what he seized from Time and from Fate while unconquered
Life speeds warm through his veins and his heart is assured of the sunlight.
After 'tis cold, none heeds, none hinders. Not for the dead man
Earth and her wars and her cares, her joys and her gracious concessions,
Whether for ever he sleeps in the chambers of Nature unmindful
Or into wideness wakes like a dreamer called from his visions.
Ilion in flames I choose, not fallen from the heights of her spirit.
Great and free has she lived since they raised her twixt billow and mountain,
Great let her end; let her offer her freedom to fire, not the Hellene.
She was not founded by mortals; gods erected her ramparts,
Lifted her piles to the sky, a seat not for slaves but the mighty.
All men marvelled at Troy; by her deeds and her spirit they knew her
Even from afar, as the lion is known by his roar and his preying.
Sole she lived royal and fell, erect in her leonine nature.
So, O her children, still let her live unquelled in her purpose
Either to stand with your feet on the world oppressing the nations
Or in your ashes to lie and your name be forgotten for ever.
Justly your voices approve me, armipotent children of Ilus;
Straight from Zeus is our race and the Thunderer lives in our nature.
Long I have suffered this taunt that Paris was Ilion's ruin

Born on a night of the gods and of Ate, clothed in a body.
Scornful I strode on my path secure of the light in my bosom,
Turned from the muttering voices of envy, their hates who are fallen,
Voices of hate that cling round the wheels of the triumphing victor;
Now if I speak, 'tis the strength in me answers, not to belittle,
That excusing which most I rejoice in and glory for ever,
Tyndaris' rape whom I seized by the will of divine Aphrodite.
Mortal this error that Greece would have slumbered apart in her mountains,
Sunk, by the trumpets of Fate unaroused and the morning within her,
Only were Paris unborn and the world had not gazed upon Helen.
Fools, who say that a spark was the cause of this giant destruction!
War would have stridden on Troy though Helen were still in her Sparta
Tending an Argive loom, not the glorious prize of the Trojans,
Greece would have banded her nations though Paris had drunk not Eurotas.
Coast against coast I set not, nor Ilion opposite Argos.
Phryx accuse who upreared Troy's domes by the azure Aegean,
Curse Poseidon who fringed with Greece the blue of his waters:
Then was this war first decreed and then Agamemnon was fashioned;
Armed he strode forth in the secret Thought that is womb of the future.
Fate and Necessity guided those vessels, captained their armies.
When they stood mailed at her gates, when they cried in the might of their union,
'Troy, renounce thy alliances, draw back humbly from Hellas,'
Should she have hearkened persuading her strength to a shameful compliance,
Ilion queen of the world whose voice was the breath of the storm-gods?
Should she have drawn back her foot as it strode towards the hills of the Latins?
Thrace left bare to her foes, recoiled from Illyrian conquests?
If all this without battle were possible, people of Priam,
Blame then Paris, say then that Helen was cause of the struggle.
But I have sullied the hearth, I have trampled the gift and the guest-rite,
Heaven I have armed with my sin and unsealed the gaze of the Furies,
So was Troy doomed who righteous had triumphed, locked with the Argive.
Fools or hypocrites! Meanest falsehood is this among mortals,
Veils of purity weaving, names misplacing ideal
When our desires we disguise and paint the lusts of our nature.

Men, ye are men in your pride and your strength, be not sophists and tonguesters.
Lie not! prate not that nations live by righteousness, justice
Shields them, gods out of heaven look down wroth on the crimes of the mighty!
Known have men what thing has screened itself mouthing these semblances. Crouching
Dire like a beast in the green of the thickets, selfishness silent
Crunches the bones of its prey while the priest and the statesman are glozing.
So are the nations soothed and deceived by the clerics of virtue,
Taught to reconcile fear of the gods with their lusts and their passions;
So with a lie on their lips they march to the rapine and slaughter.
Truly the vanquished were guilty! Else would their cities have perished,
Shrieked their ravished virgins, their peasants been hewn in the vineyards?
Truly the victors were tools of the gods and their glorious servants!
Else would the war-cars have ground triumphant their bones whom they hated?
Servants of God are they verily, even as the ape and the tiger.
Does not the wild-beast too triumph enjoying the flesh of his captives?
Tell us then what was the sin of the antelope, wherefore they doomed her,
Wroth at her many crimes? Come, justify God to his creatures!
Not to her sins was she offered, not to the Furies or Justice,
But to the strength of the lion the high gods offered a victim,
Force that is God in the lion's breast with the forest for altar.
What, in the cities stormed and sacked by Achilles in Troas
Was there no just man slain? Was Brises then a transgressor?
Hearts that were pierced in his walls, were they sinners tracked by the Furies?
No, they were pious and just and their altars burned for Apollo,
Reverent flamed up to Pallas who slew them aiding the Argives.
Or if the crime of Paris they shared and his doom has embraced them,
Whom had the island cities offended, stormed by the Locrian,
Wave-kissed homes of peace but given to the sack and the spoiler?
Was then King Atreus just and the house accursèd of Pelops,
Tantalus' race, whose deeds men shuddering hear and are silent?
Look! they endure, their pillars are firm, they are regnant and triumph.
Or are Thyestean banquets sweet to the gods in their savour?
Only a woman's heart is pursued in their wrath by the Furies!

No, when the wrestlers meet and embrace in the mighty arena,
Not at their sins and their virtues the high gods look in that trial;
Which is the strongest, which is the subtlest, this they consider.
Nay, there is none in the world to befriend save ourselves and our courage;
Prowess alone in the battle is virtue, skill in the fighting
Only helps, the gods aid only the strong and the valiant.
Put forth your lives in the blow, you shall beat back the banded aggressors.
Neither believe that for justice denied your subjects have left you
Nor that for justice trampled Pallas and Hera abandon.
Two are the angels of God whom men worship, strength and enjoyment.
Into this life which the sunlight bounds and the greenness has cradled,
Armed with strength we have come; as our strength is, so is our joyance.
What but for joyance is birth and what but for joyance is living?
But on this earth that is narrow, this stage that is crowded, increasing
One on another we press. There is hunger for lands and for oxen,
Horses and armour and gold desired; possession allures us
Adding always as field to field some fortunate farmer.
Hearts too and minds are our prey; we seize on men's souls and their bodies,
Slaves to our works and desires that our hearts may bask golden in leisure.
One on another we prey and one by another are mighty.
This is the world and we have not made it; if it is evil,
Blame first the gods; but for us, we must live by its laws or we perish.
Power is divine; divinest of all is power over mortals.
Power then the conqueror seeks and power the imperial nation,
Even as luminous, passionless, wonderful, high over all things
Sit in their calmness the gods and oppressing our grief-tortured nations
Stamp their wills on the world. Nor less in our death-besieged natures
Gods are and altitudes. Earth resists, but my soul in me widens
Helped by the toil behind and the agelong effort of Nature.
Even in the worm is a god and it writhes for a form and an outlet.
Workings immortal obscurely struggling, hints of a godhead
Labour to form in this clay a divinity. Hera widens,
Pallas aspires in me, Phoebus in flames goes battling and singing,
Ares and Artemis chase through the fields of my soul in their hunting.
Last in some hour of the Fates a Birth stands released and triumphant;
Poured by its deeds over earth it rejoices fulfilled in its splendour.
Conscious dimly of births unfinished hid in our being

Rest we cannot; a world cries in us for space and for fullness.
Fighting we strive by the spur of the gods who are in us and o'er us,
Stamping our image on men and events to be Zeus or be Ares.
Love and the need of mastery, joy and the longing for greatness
Rage like a fire unquenchable burning the world and creating,
Nor till humanity dies will they sink in the ashes of Nature.
All is injustice of love or all is injustice of battle.
Man over woman, woman o'er man, over lover and foeman
Wrestling we strive to expand in our souls, to be wide, to be happy.
If thou wouldst only be just, then wherefore at all shouldst thou conquer?
Not to be just, but to rule, though with kindness and high-seated mercy,
Taking the world for our own and our will from our slaves and our subjects,
Smiting the proud and sparing the suppliant, Trojans, is conquest.
Justice was base of thy government? Vainly, O statesman, thou liest.
If thou wert just, thou wouldst free thy slaves and be equal with all men.
Such were a dream of some sage at night when he muses in fancy,
Imaging freely a flawless world where none were afflicted,
No man inferior, all could sublimely equal and brothers
Live in a peace divine like the gods in their luminous regions.
This, O Antenor, were justice known but in words to us mortals.
But for the justice thou vauntest enslaving men to thy purpose,
Setting an iron yoke, nor regarding their need and their nature,
Then to say 'I am just; I slay not, save by procedure,
Rob not save by law,' is an outrage to Zeus and his creatures.
Terms are these feigned by the intellect making a pact with our yearnings,
Lures of the sophist within us draping our passions with virtue.
When thou art weak, thou art just, when thy subjects are strong and remember.
Therefore, O Trojans, be firm in your will and, though all men abandon,
Bow not your heads to reproach nor your hearts to the sin of repentance;
For you have done what the gods desired in your breasts and are blameless.
Proudly enjoy the earth that they gave you, enthroning their natures,
Fight with the Greeks and the world and trample down the rebellious,
What you have lost, recover, nor yield to the hurricane passing.
You cannot utterly die while the Power lives untired in your bosoms;
When 'tis withdrawn, not a moment of life can be added by virtue.
Faint not for helpers fled! Though your yoke had been mild as a father's

They would have gone as swiftly. Strength men desire in their masters;
All men worship success and in failure and weakness abandon.
Not for his justice they clung to Teucer, but for their safety,
Seeing in Troy a head and by barbarous foemen afflicted.
Faint not, O Trojans, cease not from battle, persist in your labour!
Conquer the Greeks, your allies shall be yours and fresh nations your subjects.
One care only lodge in your hearts, how to fight, how to conquer.
Peace has smiled out of Phthia; a hand comes outstretched from the Hellene.
Who would not join with the godlike? who would not grasp at Achilles?
There is a price for his gifts; it is such as Achilles should ask for,
Never this nation concede. O Antenor's golden phrases
Glorifying rest to the tired and confuting patience and courage,
Garbed with a subtlety lax and the hopes that palliate surrender!
Charmed men applaud the skilful purpose, the dexterous speaker;
This they forget that a Force decides, not the wiles of the statesman.
'Now let us yield,' do you say, 'we will rise when our masters are weakened'?
Nay, then, our master's master shall find us an easy possession!
Easily nations bow to a yoke when their virtue relaxes;
Hard is the breaking fetters once worn, for the virtue has perished.
Hope you when custom has shaped men into the mould of a vileness,
Hugging their chains when the weak feel easier trampled than rising
Or though they groan, yet have heart nor strength for the anguish of effort,
Then to cast down whom, armed and strong, you were mastered opposing?
Easy is lapse into uttermost hell, not easy salvation.
Or have you dreamed that Achilles, this son of the gods and the ocean,
Aught else can be with the strong and the bold save pursuer or master?
Know you so little the mood of the mighty? Think you the lion
Only will lick his prey, that his jaws will refrain from the banquet?
Rest from thy bodings, Antenor! Not all the valour of Troya
Perished with Hector, nor with Polydamas vision has left her;
Troy is not eager to slay her soul on a pyre of dishonour.
Still she has children left who remember the mood of their mother.
Helen none shall take from me living, gold not a drachma
Travels from coffers of Priam to Greece. Let another and older
Pay down his wealth if he will and his daughters serve Menelaus.
Rather from Ilion I will go forth with my brothers and kinsmen;

Troy I will leave and her shame and live with my heart and my honour
Refuged with lions on Ida or build in the highlands a city
Or in an isle of the seas or by dark-driven Pontic waters.
Dear are the halls of our childhood, dear are the fields of our fathers,
Yet to the soul that is free no spot on the earth is an exile.
Rather wherever sunlight is bright, flowers bloom and the rivers
Flow in their lucid streams to the Ocean, there is our country.
So will I live in my soul's wide freedom, never in Troya
Shorn of my will and disgraced in my strength and the mock of my rivals.
First had you yielded, shame at least had not stained your surrender.
Strength indulges the weak! But what Hector has fallen refusing,
Men! what through ten loud years we denied with the spear for our answer,
That what Trojan will ever renounce, though his city should perish?
Once having fought we will fight to the end nor that end shall be evil.
Clamour the Argive spears on our walls? Are the ladders erected?
Far on the plain is their flight, on the farther side of the Xanthus.
Where are the deities hostile? Vainly the eyes of the tremblers
See them stalking vast in the ranks of the Greeks and the shoutings
Dire of Poseidon they hear and are blind with the aegis of Pallas.
Who then sustained so long this Troy, if the gods are against her?
Even the hills could not stand save upheld by their concert immortal.
Now not with Tydeus' son, not now with Odysseus and Ajax
Trample the gods in the sound of their chariot-wheels, victory leading:
Argos falls red in her heaps to their scythes; they shelter the Trojans;
Victory unleashed follows and fawns upon Penthesilea.
Ponder no more, O Ilion, city of ancient Priam!
Rise, O beloved of the gods, and go forth in thy strength to the battle.
Not by the dreams of Laocoon strung to the faith that is febrile,
Nor with the tremblings vain and the haunted thoughts of Antenor,
But with a noble and serious strength and an obstinate valour
Suffer the shock of your foes, O nation chosen by Heaven;
Proudly determine on victory, live by disaster unshaken.
Either Fate receive like men, nay, like gods, nay, like Trojans."
So like an army that streams and that marches, speeding and pausing,
Drawing in horn and wing or widened for scouting and forage,
Bridging the floods, avoiding the mountains, threading the valleys,
Fast with their flashing panoply clad in gold and in iron

Moved the array of his thoughts; and throughout delight and approval
Followed their march, in triumph led but like prisoners willing,
Glad and unbound to a land they desire. Triumphant he ended,
Lord of opinion, though by the aged frowned on and censured,
But to this voice of their thoughts the young men vibrated wholly.
Loud like a storm on the ocean mounted the roar of the people.
"Cease from debate," men cried, "arise, O thou warlike Aeneas!
Speak for this nation, launch like a spear at the tents of the Hellene
Ilion's voice of war!" Then up mid a limitless shouting
Stern and armed from his seat like a war-god helmèd Aeneas
Rose by King Priam approved in this last of Ilion's sessions,
Holding the staff of the senate's authority. "Silence, O commons,
Hear and assent or refuse as your right is, masters of Troya,
Ancient and sovereign people, act that your kings have determined
Sitting in council high, their reply to the strength of Achilles.
'Son of the Aeacids, vain is thy offer; the pride of thy challenge
Rather we choose; it is nearer to Dardanus, King of the Hellenes.
Neither shall Helen be led back, the Tyndarid, weeping to Argos,
Nor down the paths of peace revisit her fathers' Eurotas.
Death and the fire may prevail o'er us, never our wills shall surrender
Lowering Priam's heights and darkening Ilion's splendours.
Not of such sires were we born, but of kings and of gods, O Larissan.
Not with her gold Troy traffics for safety, but with her spear-points.
Stand with thy oath in the war-front, Achilles; call on thy helpers
Armed to descend from the calm of Olympian heights to thy succour
Hedging thy fame from defeat; for we all desire thee in battle,
Mighty to end thee or tame at last by the floods of the Xanthus.'"
So Aeneas resonant spoke, stern, fronted like Ares,
And with a voice that conquered the earth and invaded the heavens
Loud they approved their doom and fulfilled their impulse immortal.
Last Deiphobus rose in their meeting, head of their mellay:
"Proudly and well have you answered, O nation beloved of Apollo;
Fearless of death they must walk who would live and be mighty for ever.
Now, for the sun is hastening up the empyrean azure,
Hasten we also. Tasting of food round the call of your captains
Meet in your armèd companies, chariots and hoplites and archers.
Strong be your hearts, let your courage be stern like the sun when it blazes;

Fierce will the shock be today ere he sink blood-red in the waters."
They with a voice as of Oceans meeting rose from their session, —
Filling the streets with her tread Troy strode from her Ilian forum.

BOOK IV

The Book of Partings

Eagerly, spurred by Ares swift in their souls to the war-cry,
All now pressed to their homes for the food of their strength in the battle.
Ilion turned her thoughts in a proud expectancy seaward
Waiting to hear the sounds that she loved and the cry of the mellay.
Now to their citadel Priam's sons returned with their father,
Now from the gates Talthybius issued grey in his chariot;
But in the halls of Anchises Aeneas not doffing his breastpiece
Hastily ate of the corn of his country, cakes of the millet
Doubled with wild-deer's flesh, from the quiet hands of Creüsa.
She, as he ate, with her calm eyes watching him smiled on her husband:
"Ever thou hastest to battle, O warrior, ever thou fightest
Far in the front of the ranks and thou seekest out Locrian Ajax,
Turnest thy ear to the roar for the dangerous shout of Tydides;
There, once heard, leaving all thou drivest, O stark in thy courage.
Yet am I blest among women who tremble not, left in thy mansion,
Quiet at old Anchises' feet when I see thee in vision
Sole with the shafts hissing round thee and say to my quivering spirit,
'Now he is striking at Ajax, now he has met Diomedes.'
Such are the mighty twain who are ever near to protect thee,
Phoebus, the Thunderer's son, and thy mother, gold Aphrodite;
Such are the Fates that demand thee, O destined head of the future.
But though my thoughts for their own are not troubled, always, Aeneas,
Sore is my heart with pity for other Ilian women
Who in this battle are losing their children and well-loved husbands,
Brothers too dear, for the eyes that are wet, for the hearts that are silent.
Will not this war then end that thunders for ever round Troya?"
But to Creüsa the hero answered, the son of Anchises:
"Surely the gods protect, yet is Death too always mighty.
Most in his shadowy envy he strikes at the brave and the lovely,
Grudging works to abridge their days and to widow the sunlight.
Most, disappointed, he rages against the belovèd of Heaven;
Striking their lives through their hearts he mows down their loves and their pleasures.
Truly thou sayst, thou needst not to fear for my life in the battle;

Ever for thine I fear lest he find thee out in his anger,
Missing my head in the fight, when he comes here crossed in his godhead.
Yet shall Phoebus protect and my mother, gold Aphrodite."
    But to Aeneas answered the tranquil lips of Creüsa:
"So may it be that I go before thee, seeing, Aeneas,
Over my dying eyes thy lips bend down for the parting.
Blissfullest end is this for a woman here mid earth's sorrows;
Afterwards there we hope that the hands shall join which were parted."
    So she spoke, not knowing the gods: but Aeneas departing
Clasped his father's knees, the ancient mighty Anchises.
"Bless me, my father; I go to the battle. Strong with thy blessing
Even today may I hurl down Ajax, slay Diomedes,
And on the morrow gaze on the empty beaches of Troas."
Troubled and joyless, nought replying to warlike Aeneas
Long Anchises sat unmoving, silent, sombre,
Gazing into his soul with eyes that were closed to the sunlight.
"Prosper, Aeneas," slowly he answered him, "son of a goddess,
Prosper, Aeneas; and if for Troy some doom is preparing,
Suffer always the will of the gods with a piety constant.
Only they will what Necessity fashions compelled by the Silence.
Labour and war she has given to man as the law of his transience.
Work; she shall give thee the crown of thy deeds or their ending appointed,
Whether glorious thou pass or in silent shadows forgotten.
But what thy mother commands perform ever, loading thy vessels.
Who can know what the gods have hid with the mist of our hopings?"
    Then from the house of his fathers Aeneas rapidly striding
Came to the city echoing now with the wheels of the chariots,
Clanging with arms and astream with the warlike tramp of her thousands.
Fast through the press he strode and men turning knew Aeneas,
Greatened in heart and went on with loftier thoughts towards battle.
He through the noise and the crowd to Antenor's high-built mansion
Striding came, and he turned to its courts and the bronze of its threshold
Trod which had suffered the feet of so many princes departed.
But as he crossed its brazen square from the hall there came running,
Leaping up light to his feet and laughing with sudden pleasure,
Eurus the youngest son of Polydamas. Clasping the fatal
War-hardened hand with a palm that was smooth as a maiden's or infant's,

"Well art thou come, Aeneas," he said, "and good fortune has sent thee!
Now I shall go to the field; thou wilt speak with my grandsire Antenor
And he shall hear thee though chid by his heart reluctant. Rejoicing
I shall go forth in thy car or warring by Penthesilea,
Famous, give to her grasp the spear that shall smite down Achilles."
Smiling answered Aeneas, "Surely will, Eurus, thy prowess
Carry thee far to the front; thou shalt fight with Epeus and slay him.
Who shall say that this hand was not chosen to pierce Menelaus?
But for a while with the ball should it rather strive, O hero,
Till in the play and the wrestle its softness is trained for the smiting."
Eagerly Eurus answered, "But they have told me, Aeneas,
This is the last of our fights; for today will Penthesilea
Meet Achilles in battle and slay him ending the Argives.
Then shall I never have mixed in this war that is famous for ever.
What shall I say when my hairs are white like the aged Antenor's?
Men will ask, 'And what were thy deeds in the warfare Titanic?
Whom didst thou slay of the Argives, son of Polydamas, venging
Bravely thy father?' Then must I say, 'I lurked in the city.
I was too young and only ascending the Ilian ramparts
Saw the return or the flight, but never the deed and the triumph.'
Friend, if you take me not forth, I shall die of grief ere the sunset."
Plucking the hand of Aeneas he drew him into the mansion
Vast; and over the floor of the spacious hall they hastened
Laughing, the gracious child and the mighty hero and statesman,
Flower of a present stock and the burdened star of the future.
Meanwhile girt by his sons and the sons of his sons in his chamber
Cried to the remnants left of his blood the aged Antenor.
"Hearken you who are sprung from my loins and children, their offspring!
None shall again go forth to the fight who is kin to Antenor.
Weighed with my curse he shall go and the spear-points athirst of the Argives
Meet him wroth; he shall die in his sin and his name be forgotten.
Oft have I sent forth my blood to be spilled in vain in the battle
Fighting for Troy and her greatness earned by my toil and my fathers'.
Now all the debt has been paid; she rejects us driven by the immortals.
Much do we owe to the mother who bore us, much to our country;
But at the last our life is ours and the gods' and the future's.
Gather the gold of my house and our kin, O ye sons of Antenor.

Warned by a voice in my soul I will go forth tonight from this city
Fleeing the doom and bearing my treasures; the ships shall receive them
Gathered, new-keeled by my care and the gods', in the narrow Propontis.
Over God's waters guided, treading the rage of Poseidon,
Bellying out with their sails let them cleave to the untravelled distance
Ocean's crests and resign to their Fates the doomed and the evil."
So Antenor spoke and his children heard him in silence;
Awed by his voice and the dread of his curse they obeyed, though in sorrow.
Halamus only replied to his father: "Dire are the white hairs
Reverend, loved, of a father, dreadful his curse to his children.
Yet in my heart there is one who cries, 'tis the voice of my country,
She for whose sake I would be in Tartarus tortured for ever.
Pardon me then, if thou wilt; if the gods can, then let them pardon.
For I will sleep in the dust of Troy embracing her ashes,
There where Polydamas sleeps and the many comrades I cherished.
So let me go to the darkness remembered or wholly forgotten,
Yet having fought for my country, true in my fall to my nation."
Then in his aged wrath to Halamus answered Antenor:
"Go then and perish doomed with the doomed and the hated of heaven;
Nor shall the gods forgive thee dying nor shall thy father."
Out from the chamber Halamus strode with grief in his bosom
Wrestling with wrath and he went to his doom nor looked back at his dear ones.
Crossing the hall the son of Antenor and son of Anchises
Met in the paths of their fates where they knotted and crossed for the parting,
One with the curse of the gods and his sire fast wending to Hades,
Fortunate, blessed the other; yet equal their minds were and virtues.
Cypris' son to the Antenorid: "Thee I have sought and thy brothers,
Bough of Antenor; sore is our need today of thy counsels,
Endless our want of their arms that are strong and their hearts that recoil not
Meeting myriads stark with the spear in unequal battle."
Halamus answered him: "I will go forth to the palace of Priam,
There where Troy yet lives and far from the halls of my fathers;
There will I speak, not here. For my kin they repose in the mansion
Sitting unarmed in their halls while their brothers fall in the battle."
Eurus eagerly answered the hero: "Me rather, therefore,
Take to the fight with you; I will make war on the Greeks for my uncles;

One for all I will fill their place in the shock with the foemen."
    But from his chamber-door Antenor heard and rebuked him:
"Scamp of my heart, thou torment! in to thy chamber and rest there,
Bound with cords lest thou cease, thou flutter-brain, scourged into quiet;
So shall thy lust of the fight be healed and our mansion grow tranquil."
Chid by the old man Eurus slunk from the hall discontented,
Yet with a dubious smile like a moonbeam lighting his beauty.
But to Antenor the Dardanid born from the white Aphrodite:
"Late the Antenorids learn to flinch from the spears of the Argives,
Even this boy of their blood has Polydamas' heart and his valour.
Nor should a life that was honoured and noble be stained in its ending.
Nay, then, the mood of a child would shame a grey-headed wisdom,
If for the fault of the people virtue and Troy were forgotten.
For, though the people hear us not, yet are we bound to our nation:
Over the people the gods are; over a man is his country;
This is the deity first adored by the hearths of the noble.
For by our nation's will we are ruled in the home and the battle
And for our nation's weal we offer our lives and our children's.
Not by their own wills led nor their passions men rise to their manhood,
Selfishly seeking their good, but the gods' and the State's and the fathers'."
    Wroth Antenor replied to the warlike son of Anchises:
"Great is the soul in thee housed and stern is thy will, O Aeneas;
Onward it moves undismayed to its goal though a city be ruined.
They too guide thee who deepest see of the ageless immortals,
One with her heart and one in his spirit, Cypris and Phoebus.
Yet might a man not knowing this think as he watched thee, Aeneas,
'Spurring Priam's race to its fall he endangers this city,
Hoping to build a throne out of ruins sole in the Troad.'
I too have gods who warn me and lead, Athene and Hera.
Not as the ways of other mortals are theirs who are guided,
They whose eyes are the gods and they walk by a light that is secret."
    Coldly Aeneas made answer, stirred into wrath by the taunting:
"High wert thou always, nurtured in wisdom, ancient Antenor.
Walk then favoured and led, yet watch lest passion and evil
Feign auguster names and mimic the gait of the deathless."
And with a smile on his lips but wrath in his bosom answered,
Wisest of men but with wisdom of mortals, aged Antenor:

"Led or misled we are mortals and walk by a light that is given;
Most they err who deem themselves most from error excluded.
Nor shalt thou hear in this battle the shout of the men of my lineage
Holding the Greeks as once and driving back Fate from their country.
His alone will be heard for a space while the stern gods are patient
Even now who went forth a victim self-offered to Hades,
Last whom their wills have plucked from the fated house of Antenor."
They now with wrath in their bosoms sundered for ever and parted.
Forth from the halls of Antenor Aeneas rapidly striding
Passed once more through the city hurrying now with its car-wheels,
Filled with a mightier rumour of war and the march of its thousands,
Till at Troy's upward curve he found the Antenorid crestward
Mounting the steep incline that climbed to the palace of Priam
White in her proud and armèd citadel. Silent, ascending
Hardly their feet had attempted the hill when behind them they hearkened
Sweet-tongued a call and the patter and hurry of light-running sandals,
Turning they beheld with a flush on his cheeks and a light on his lashes
Challenging mutely and pleading the boyish beauty of Eurus.
"Racer to mischief," said Halamus, "couldst thou not sit in thy chamber?
Surely cords and the rod await thee, Eurus, returning."
Answered with laughter the child, "I have broken through ranks of the fighters,
Dived under chariot-wheels to arrive here and I return not.
I too for counsel of battle have come to the palace of Priam."
Burdened with thought they mounted slowly the road of their fathers
Breasting the Ilian hill where Laomedon's mansion was seated,
They from the crest down-gazing saw their country's housetops
Under their feet and heard the murmur of Troya below them.
But in the palace of Priam coming and going of house-thralls
Filled all the corridors; smoke from the kitchens curled in its plenty
Rich with savour and breathed from the labouring lungs of Hephaestus.
Far in the halls and the chambers voices travelled and clustered,
Anklets jangling ran and sang back from doorway to doorway
Mocking with music of speed and its laughters the haste of the happy,
Sound came of arms, there was tread of the great, there were murmurs of women,—
Voices glad of the doomed in Laomedon's marvellous mansion.

Six were the halls of its splendour, a hundred and one were its chambers
Lifted on high upon columns that soared like the thoughts of its dwellers,
Thoughts that transcended the earth though they sank down at last into ashes;
So had Apollo dreamed to his lyre; and its tops were a grandeur
Domed, as if seeking to roof men's lives with a hint of the heavens;
Marble his columns rose and with marble his roofs were appointed,
Conquered wealth of the world in its largeness suffered, supporting
Purities of marble, glories of gold. Nor only of matter
Blazed there the brutal pomps, but images mystic or mighty
Crowded ceiling and wall, a work that the gods even admire
Hardly believing that forms like these were imagined by mortals
Here upon earth where sight is a blur and the soul lives encumbered.
Scrolls that remembered in gems the thoughts austere of the ancients
Bordered the lines of the stone and the forms of serpent and Naiad
Ran in relief on those walls of pride in the palace of Priam
Mingled with Dryads who tempted and fled and Satyrs who followed,
Sports of the nymphs in the sea and the woods and their meetings with mortals,
Sessions and battles of Trojan demigods, deaths that were famous,
Wars and loves of men and the deeds of the golden immortals.
Pillars sculptured with gods and with giants soared up from bases
Lion-carved or were seated on bulls and bore into grandeur
Amply those halls where they soared, or in lordliness slenderly fashioned,
Dressed in flowers and reeds like virgins standing on Ida,
Guarded the screens of stone and divided alcove and chamber.
Ivory carved and broidered robes and the riches of Indus
Cherished in sandalwood triumphed and teemed in the palace of Priam;
Doors that were carven and fragrant sheltered the joys of its princes.
Here in a chamber of luminous privacy Paris was arming.
Near him moved Helen, a whiteness divine, and intent on her labour
Fastened his cuirass, bound the greaves and settled the hauberk
Thrilling his limbs with her touch that was heaven to the yearning of mortals.
She with her hands of delight caressing the senseless metal
Pressed her lips to his brilliant armour; she bowed down, she whispered:
"Cuirass, allowed by the gods, protect the beauty of Paris;
Keep for me that for which country was lost and my child and my brothers."

Yearning she bent to his feet, to the sandal-strings of her lover;
Then as she gazed up, changed grew her mood; for the Daemon within her
Rose that had banded Greece and was burning Troy into ashes.
Slowly a smile that was perfect and perilous over her beauty
Dawned like the sunlight on Paradise; strangely she looked on her lover.
So might a goddess have gazed as she played with the love of a mortal
Passing an hour on the earth ere she rose up white to Olympus.
"So art thou winner, Paris, yet and thy spirit ascendant
Leads this Troy where thou wilt, O thou mighty one veiled in thy beauty.
First in the dance and the revel, first in the joy of the mellay,
Who would not leave for thy sake and repent it not country and homestead?
Winning thou reignest still over Troy, over Fate, over Helen.
Always so canst thou win? Has Death no claim on thy beauty,
Fate no scourge for thy sins? How the years have passed by in a glory,
Years of this heaven of the gods, O ravisher, since from my hearthstone
Seizing thou borest me compelled to thy ships and my joy on the waters.
Troy is enringed with the spears, her children fall and her glories,
Mighty souls of heroes have gone down prone to the darkness;
Thou and I abide! the mothers wail for our pleasure.
Wilt thou then keep me for ever, O son of Priam, in Troya?
Fate was my mother, they say, and Zeus for this hour begot me.
Art thou a god too, O hero, disguised in this robe of the mortal,
Brilliant, careless of death and of sin as if sure of thy rapture?
What then if Fate today were to lay her hands on thee, Paris?"
Calmly he looked on the face of which Greece was enamoured, the body
For whose desire great Troy was a sacrifice, tranquil regarded
Lovely and dire on the lips he loved that smile of a goddess,
Saw the daughter of Zeus in the woman, yet was not shaken.
"Temptress of Argos," he answered, "thou snare for the world to be seized in,
Thou then hop'st to escape! But the gods could not take thee, O Helen,
How then thy will that to mine is a captive, or how, though with battle,
He who has lost thee, unhappy, the Spartan, bright Menelaus?
All things yield to a man and Zeus is himself his accomplice
When like a god he wills without remorse or longing.
Thou on this earth art mine since I claimed thee beheld, not speaking,
But with thy lids that fell thou veiledst thy heart of compliance.
Then in whatever beyond I shall know how to take thee, O Helen,

Even as here upon earth I knew, in heaven as in Sparta;
I on Elysian fields will enjoy thee as now in the Troad."
Silent a moment she lingered like one who is lured by a music
Rapturous, heard by himself alone and his lover in heaven,
Then in her beauty compelling she rose up divine among women.
"Yes, it is good," she cried, "what the gods do and actions of mortals;
Good is this play of the world; it is good, the joy and the torture.
Praised be the hour of the gods when I wedded bright Menelaus!
Praised, more praised the keels that severed the seas towards Helen
Churning the senseless waves that knew not the bliss of their burden!
Praised to the end the hour when I passed through the doors of my husband
Laughing with joy in my heart for the arms that bore and enchained me!
Never can Death undo what life has done for us, Paris.
Nor, whatsoever betide, can the hour be unlived of our rapture.
This too is good that nations should meet in the shock of the battle,
Heroes be slain and a theme be made for the songs of the poets,
Songs that shall thrill with the name of Helen, the beauty of Paris.
Well is this also that empires should fall for the eyes of a woman;
Well that for Helen Hector ended, Memnon was slaughtered,
Strong Sarpedon fell and Troilus ceased in his boyhood.
Troy for Helen burning, her glory, her empire, her riches,
This is the sign of the gods and the type of things that are mortal.
Thou who art kin to the masters of heaven, unconstrained like thy kindred
High on this ancient stage of the Troad with gods for spectators
Play till the end thy part, O thou wondrous and beautiful actor:
Fight and slay the Greeks, my countrymen; victor returning
Take for reward of the play, thy delight of Argive Helen.
Force from my bosom a hint of the joy denied to the death-claimed,
Rob in the kiss of my lips a pang from the raptures of heaven."
Clasping him wholly her arms of desire were a girdle of madness,
Cestus divine of the dread Aphrodite. He with her kisses
Flushed like the gods with unearthly wine and rejoiced in his ruin.
Thus while they conversed now in this hour that was near to their parting
Last upon earth, a fleet-footed slavegirl came to the chamber:
"Paris, thy father and mother desire thee; there in the strangers'
Outer hall Aeneas and Halamus wait for thy coming."

So with the Argive he wended to Priam's ample chamber
Far in Laomedon's house where Troy looked upwards to Ida.
Priam and Hecuba there, the ancient grey-haired rulers,
Waiting him sat in their chairs of ivory calm in their greatness;
Hid in her robes at their feet lay Cassandra crouched from her visions.
"Since, O my father," said Paris, "thy thoughts have been with me, thy blessing
Surely shall help me today in my strife with the strength of Achilles.
Surely the gods shall obey in the end the might of our spirits,
Pallas and Hera, flame-sandalled Artemis, Zeus and Apollo.
Ever serve the immortal brightnesses man when he stands up
Firm with his will uplifted a steadfast flame towards the heavens,
Ares works in his heart and Hephaestus burns in his labour."
Priam replied to his son: "Forewilled by the gods, Alexander,
All things happen on earth and yet we must strive who are mortals,
Knowing all vain, yet we strive; for our nature seizing us always
Drives like the flock that is herded and urged towards shambles or pasture.
So have the high gods fashioned these tools of their action and pleasure;
Failure and grief are their engines no less than the might of the victor;
They in the blow descend and resist in the sobs of the smitten.
Such are their goads that I too must walk in the paths that are common,
Even I who know must send for thee, moved by Cassandra.
Speak, O my child, since Apollo has willed it, once, and be silent."
    But in her raiment hidden Cassandra answered her father:
"No, for my heart has changed since I cried for him, vexed by Apollo.
Why should I speak? For who will believe me in Troy? who believed me
Ever in Troy or the world? Event and disaster approve me
Only, my comrades, not men in their thoughts, not my brothers and kinsmen.
All by their hopes are gladly deceived and grow wroth with the warner,
Half-blind prophets of hope entertained by the gods in the mortal!
Wiser blind, if nothing they saw or only the darkness.
I too once hoped when Apollo pursued me with love in his temple.
Round me already there gleamed the ray of the vision prophetic,
Thrill of that rapture I felt and the joy of the god in his seeing
Nor did I know that the knowledge of mortals is bound unto blindness.
Either only they walk mid the coloured dreams of the senses
Treading the greenness of earth and deeming the touch of things real,

Or if they see, by the curse of the gods their sight into falsehood
Easily turns and leads them more stumbling astray than the sightless.
So are we either blind in a darkness or dazzled by seeing.
Thus have the gods protected their purpose and baffled the sages;
Over the face of the Truth their shield of gold is extended.
But I deemed otherwise, urged by the Dreadful One, he who sits always
Veiled in us fighting the gods whom he uses. I cried to Apollo,
'Give me thy vision sheer, not such as thou giv'st to thy prophets,
Troubled though luminous; clear be the vision and ruthless to error,
Far-darting god who art veiled by the sun and by death thou art shielded.
Then I shall know that thou lovest.' He gave, alarmed and reluctant,
Driven by Fate and his heart; but I mocked him, I broke from my promise,
Courage fatal helping my heart to its ruin with laughter.
Always now I remember his face that grew tranquil and ruthless,
Hear the voice divine and implacable: 'Since thou deceivest
Even the gods and thou hast not feared to lie to Apollo,
Speak shalt thou henceforth only truth, but none shall believe thee:
Scorned in thy words, rejected yet more for their bitter fulfilment,
Scourged by the gods thou must speak though thy sick heart yearns to be silent.
For in this play thou hast dared to play with the masters of heaven,
Girl, it is thou who hast lost; thy voice is mine and thy bosom.'
Since then all I foreknow; therefore anguish is mine for my portion:
Since then all whom I love must perish slain by my loving.
Even of that I denied him, violent force shall bereave me
Grasped mid the flames of my city and shouts of her merciless victors."
But to Cassandra answered gently the voice of her brother:
"Sister of mine, afflicted and seized by the dreadful Apollo,
All whose eyes can pierce that curtain, gaze into dimness;
This they have glimpsed and that they imagine deceived by their natures
Seeing the forms in their hearts of dreadful things and of joyous;
As in the darkness our eyes are deceived by shadows uncertain,
Such is their sight who rend the veil that the dire gods have woven.
Busy our hearts are weaving thoughts and images always:
After their kind they see what here we call truth. So thy nature
Tender and loving, plagued by this war and its fears for thy loved ones,
Sees calamity everywhere; when the event like the vision

Seems, as in every war the beloved must fall and the cherished,
Then the heart cries, 'It has happened as all shall happen I mourn for.'
All that was bright it misses and only seizes on sorrow.
Dear, on the brightness look and if thou must prophesy, tell us
Rather of great Pelides slain by my spear in the onset."
But with a voice of grief the sister answered her brother:
"Yes, he shall fall and his slayer too perish and Troy with his slayer."
But in his spirit rejoicing Paris answered Cassandra:
"Let but this word come true; for the rest, the gods shall avert it.
Look once more, O Cassandra, and comfort the heart of thy mother,
See, O seer, my safe return with the spoils of Achilles."
And with a voice of grief the sister answered her brother:
"Thou shalt return for thy hour while Troy yet stands in the sunshine."
But in his spirit exultant Paris seizing the omen:
"Hearst thou, my father, my mother? She who still prophesied evil
Now perceives of our night this dawning. Yet is it grievous,
Since through a heart that we love must be pierced the heart of Achilles.
Fate, with this evil satisfied, turn in the end from Troya.
Bless me, my father, and thou, O Hecuba, mother long-patient,
Still forgive that thy children have fallen for Helen and Paris."
Tenderly yearning his mother drew him towards her and murmured:
"All for thy hyacinth curls was forgiven even from childhood
And for thy sunlit looks, O wonder of charm, O Paris.
Paris, my son, though Troy must fall, thy mother forgives thee,
Blessing the gods who have lent thee to me for a while in their sunshine.
Theirs are fate and result, but ours is the joy of our children;
Even the griefs are dear that come from their hands while they love us.
Fight and slay Achilles, the murderer dire of thy brothers;
Venging Hector return, my son, to the clasp of thy mother."
But in his calm august to Paris Priam the monarch:
"Victor so mightst thou come, so gladden the heart of thy mother."
Then to the aged father of Paris Helen the Argive
Bright and immortal and sad like a star that grows near to the dawning
And on its pale companions looks who now fade from its vision:
"Me too pardon and love, my parents, even Helen,
Cause of all bane and all death; but I came from the gods for this ruin
Born as a torch for the burning of empires, cursed with this beauty.

Nor have I known a father's embrace, a mother's caresses,
But to the distant gods I was born and nursed as an alien
Here by earth from fear, not affection, compelled by the thunders.
Two are her monstrous births, from the Furies and from the immortals;
Either touching mortality suffers and bears not the contact.
I have been both, a monster of doom and a portent of beauty."
Slowly Priam the monarch answered to Argive Helen:
"That which thou art the gods have made thee; thou couldst not be other:
That which thou didst, the gods have done; thou couldst not prevent them.
Who here shall blame or whom shall he pardon? Should not my people
Rail at me murmuring, 'Priam has lost what his fathers had gathered;
Cursed is this king by heaven and cursed who are born as his subjects'?
Masked the high gods act; the doer is hid by his working.
Each of us bears his punishment, fruit of a seed that's forgotten;
Each of us curses his neighbour protecting his heart with illusions:
Therefore like children we blame each other and hate and are angry.
Take, my child, the joy of the sunshine won by thy beauty.
I who lodge on this earth as an alien bound by the body,
Wearing my sorrow even as I wear the imperial purple,
Praise yet the gods for my days that have seen thee at last in my ending.
Fitly Troy may cease having gazed on thy beauty, O Helen."
He became silent, he ceased from words. But Paris and Helen
Lightly went and gladly; pursuing their footsteps the mother,
Mother once of Troilus, mother once of Hector,
Stood at the door with her death in her eyes, nor returned from her yearning,
But as one after a vanishing sunbeam gazes in prison,
Gazed down the corridors after him, long who had passed from her vision.
    Then in the silent chamber Cassandra seized by Apollo
Staggered erect and tossing her snow-white arms of affliction
Cried to the heavens in her pain; for the fierce god tortured her bosom:
"Woe is me, woe for the guile and the bitter gift of Apollo!
Woe, thrice woe, for my birth in Troy and the lineage of Teucer!
So do you deal, O gods, with those who have served you and laboured,
Those who have borne for your sake the evil burden of greatness.
Blessed is he who holds mattock in hand or who bends o'er the furrow
Taking no thought for the good of mankind, with no yearnings for knowledge.

Woe unto me for my wisdom which none shall value nor hearken!
Woe unto thee, O King, for thy strength which shall not deliver!
Better the eye that is sealed, more blest is the spirit that's feeble.
Vainly your hopes with iron Necessity struggle, O mortals.
Virtue shall lie in her pangs, for the gods have need of her torture;
Sin shall be scourged, though her deeds were compelled by the gods in their anger.
None shall avail in the end, the coward shall die and the hero.
Troy shall fall in her sin and her virtues shall not protect her;
Argos shall grow by her crimes till the gods shall destroy her for ever.
Now have I fruit of thy love, O Loxias, dreadful Apollo.
Woe is me, woe for the flame that approaches the house of my fathers!
Woe is me, woe for the hand of Ajax laid on my tresses!
Woe, thrice woe to him who shall ravish and him who shall cherish!
Woe for the ships that shall bound too swift o'er the azure Aegean!
Woe for thy splendid shambles of hell, O Argive Mycenae!
Woe for the evil spouse and the house accursèd of Atreus!"
So with her voice of the swan she clanged out doom on the peoples,
Over the palace of Priam and over the armèd nation
Marching resolved to the war in the pride of its centuries conquered,
Centuries slain by a single day of the anger of heaven.
Dim to the thoughts like a vision of Hades the luminous chamber
Grew; in his ivory chair King Priam sat like a shadow
Throned mid the ghosts of departed kings and forgotten empires.
        But in his valiance careless and blithe the Priamid hastened
Seeking the pillared megaron wide where Deiphobus armoured
Waited his coming forth with the warlike chiefs of the Trojans.
Now as he passed by the halls of the women, the chambers that harboured
Daughters and wives of King Priam and wives of his sons and their playmates,
Niches of joy that were peopled with murmurs and sweet-tongued laughters,
Troubled like trees with their birds in a morning of sun and of shadow
Where in some garden of kings one walks with his heart in the sunshine,
Out from her door where she stood for him waiting Polyxena started,
Seized his hand and looked in his face and spoke to her brother.
Then not even the brilliant strength of Paris availed him;
Joyless he turned his face from her eyes of beauty and sorrow.

"So it is come, the hour that I feared, and thou goest, O Paris,
Armed with the strength of Fate to strike at my heart in the battle;
For he is doomed and thou and I, a victim to Hades.
This thou preferrest and neither thy father could move nor thy mother
Burning with Troy in their palace, nor could thy country persuade thee,
Nor dost thou care for thy sister's happiness pierced by thy arrows.
Will she remember it all, my sister Helen, in Argos
Passing tranquil days with her husband, bright Menelaus,
Holding her child on her knees? But we shall lie joyless in Hades."
Paris replied: "O sister Polyxena, blame me not wholly.
We by the gods are ensnared; for the pitiless white Aphrodite
Doing her will with us both compels this. Helpless our hearts are
And when she drives perforce must love, for death or for gladness:
Weighed in unequal scales she deals them to one or another.
Happy who holding his love can go down into bottomless Hades."
But to her brother replied in her anguish the daughter of Priam:
"Evilly deal with my days the immortals happy in heaven;
Yes, I accuse the gods and I curse them who heed not our sorrow.
This they have done with me, forcing my heart to the love of a foeman,
One whose terrible hands have been stained with the blood of my brothers.
This now they do, they have taken the two whom I love beyond heaven,
Brother and husband, and drive to the fight to be slain by each other.
Nay, go thou forth; for thou canst not help it, nor I, nor can Helen.
Since I must die as a pageant to satisfy Zeus and his daughter,
Since now my heart must be borne as a victim bleeding to please them,
So let it be, let me deck myself and be bright for the altar."
Into her chamber she turned with her great eyes blind, unregarding;
He for a moment stood, then passed to the megaron slowly;
Dim was the light in his eyes and clouded his glorious beauty.
        Meanwhile armed in the palace of Priam Penthesilea.
Near her her captains silent and mighty stood, from the Orient
Distant clouds of war, Surabdas and iron Surenas,
Pharatus planned like the hills, Somaranes, Valarus, Tauron,
High-crested Sumalus, Arithon, Sambus and Artavoruxes.
There too the princes of Phrygian Troya gathered for counsel
And with them Eurus came, Polydamas' son, who most dearly
Loved was of all the Trojan boys by the glorious virgin.

She from her arming stayed to caress his curls and to chide him:
"Eurus, forgotten of grace, dost thou gad like a stray in the city
Eager to mix with the armoured men and the chariots gliding?
High on the roofs wouldst thou watch the swaying speck that is battle?
Better to aim with the dart or seek with thy kind the palaestra;
So wilt thou sooner be part of this greatness rather than straining
Yearn from afar to the distance that veils the deeds of the mighty."
But with an anxious lure in his smile on her Eurus answered:
"Not that remoteness to see have I come to the palace of Priam
Leaving the house of my fathers, but for the spear and the breastpiece.
Hast thou not promised me long I shall fight in thy car with Achilles?"
Doubtful he eyed her, a lion's cub at play in his beauty,
And mid the heroes who heard him laughter arose for a moment,
Yet with a sympathy stirred; they remembered the days of their childhood,
Thought of Troy still mighty, life in its rose-touched dawning
When they had longed for the clash of the fight and the burden of armour.
Glad, with the pride of the lioness watching her cub in the desert, —
Couchant she lies with her paws before her and joys in his gambols,
Over the prey as he frisks and is careless, — answered the virgin:
"Younger than thou in my nation have mounted the steed and the war-car.
Eurus, arm; from under my shield thou shalt gaze at the Phthian,
Reaching my shafts for the cast from the rim of my car in the battle
Handle perhaps the spear that shall smite down the Phthian Achilles.
What sayst thou, Halamus? Were not such prowess a perfect beginning
Worthy Polydamas' son and the warlike house of Antenor?"
Halamus started and smiting his hand on the grief of his bosom,
Sombre replied and threatened with Fate the high-hearted virgin.
"Virgin armipotent, wherefore mockst thou thy friend, though unwitting?
Nay, — for the world will know at the end and my death cannot hide it, —
Slain by a father's curse we fight who are kin to Antenor.
Take not the boy in thy car, lest the Furies, Penthesilea,
Aim through the shield and the shielder to wreak the curse of the grandsire.
They will not turn nor repent for thy strength nor his delicate beauty."
Swiftly to Halamus answered the high-crested might of the virgin:
"Curses leave lightly the lips when the soul of a man is in anger
Even as blessings easily crowd round the head that is cherished.
Yet have I never seen that a curse has sharpened a spear-point;

Never Death drew back from the doomed by the power of a blessing.
Valour and skill and chance are Fate and the gods and the Furies.
Give me the boy; a hero shall come back formed from the onset."
"Do as thou wilt," replied Halamus; "Fate shall guard or shall end him."
Then to the boy delighted and smiling-eyed and exultant
Cried with her voice like the call of heaven's bugles waking the heroes,
Blown by the lips of gold-haired Valkyries, Penthesilea.
"Go, find the spear, gird the sword, don the cuirass, child of the mighty.
Armed when thou standst on the plain of the Xanthus, field of thy fathers,
See that thou fight on this day like the comrade of Penthesilea.
Bud of a hero, gaze unalarmed in the eyes of Achilles."
Light as a hound released he ran to the hall of the armour
Where were the shields of the mighty, the arms of the mansion of Teucer;
There from the house-thralls he wrung the greaves and the cuirass and helmet
Troilus wore, the wonderful boy who, ere ripened his prowess,
Conquered the Greeks and drove to the ships and fought with Achilles.
These on his boyish limbs he donned and ran back exulting
Bearing spears and a sword and rejoiced in the clank on his armour.
Meanwhile Deiphobus, head of the mellay, moved by Aeneas
Opened the doors of their warlike debate to the strength of the virgin:
"Well do I hope that our courage outwearying every opponent
Triumph shall lift to her ancient seat on the Pergaman turrets;
Clouds from Zeus come and pass; his sunshine eternal survives them.
Yet we are few in the fight and armoured nations besiege us.
Surging on Troy today a numberless foe well-captained
Hardly pushed back in shock after shock with the Myrmidon numbers
Swelled returns; they fight with a hope that broken refashion
Helpful skies and a man now leads them who conquers and slaughters,
One of the sons of the gods and armed by the gods for the struggle.
We unhelped save by Ares stern and the mystic Apollo
And but as mortals striving with stubborn mortal courage,
Hated and scorned and alone in the world, by the nations rejected,
Fight with the gods and mankind and Achilles and numbers against us
Keeping our country from death in this bitter hour of her fortunes.
Therefore have prudence and hardihood severed contending our counsels
Whether far out to fight on the seaward plain with the Argives
Or behind Xanthus the river impetuous friendly to Troya.

This my brother approves and the son of Antenor advises,
Prudent masters of war who prepare by defence their aggression.
But for myself from rashness I seek a more far-seeing wisdom,
Not behind vain defences choosing a tardy destruction,
Rather as Zeus with his spear of the lightning and chariot of tempest
Scatters and chases the heavy mass of the clouds through the heavens,
So would I hunt the Greeks through the plains to their lair by the Ocean,
Straight at the throat of my foeman so would I leap in the battle.
Swiftly to smite at the foe is prudence for armies outnumbered."
Then to the Dardanid answered the high-crested Penthesilea:
"There where I find my foe I will fight him, whether by Xanthus
Or at the fosse of the ships where they crouch behind bulwarks for shelter,
Or if they dare by Scamander the higher marching on Troya."
Sternly approved her the Trojan, "So should they fight who would triumph
Meeting the foe ere he move in his will to the clash of encounter."
But with his careless laughter the brilliant Priamid Paris:
"Joy of the battle, joy of the tempest, joy of the gamble
Mated are in thy blood, O virgin, daughter of Ares.
Thou like the deathless wouldst have us combat, us who are human?
Come, let the gods do their will with us, Ares let lead and his daughter!
Always the blood is wiser and knows what is hid from the thinker.
Life and treasure and fame to cast on the wings of a moment,
Fiercer joy than this the gods have not given to mortals."
Highly to Paris the virgin armipotent Penthesilea,
"Paris and Halamus, shafts of the war-god, fear not for Troya.
Not as a vaunt do I speak it, you gods who stern-thoughted watch us,
But in my vision of strength and the soul that is seated within me,
Not while I live and war shall the host of the Myrmidon fighters
Forcing the currents lave, as once they were wont, in Scamander
Vaunting their victor car-wheels red with the blood of the vanquished.
Then when I lie by some war-god slain on the fields of the Troad,
Fight again if you will behind high-banked fast-flowing Xanthus."
Halamus answered her, "Never so by my will would I battle
Flinging Troy as a stake on the doubtful diceboard of Ares.
But you have willed it and so let it be; yet hearken my counsel.
Massed in the fight let us aim the storm of our spears at one greatness,
Mighty Pelides' head who gives victory still to the Argives.

Easy the Greeks to destroy lay Achilles once slain on the Troad,
But if the Peleid lives the fire shall yet finish with Troya.
Join then Orestes' speed to the stubborn might of Aeneas,
Paris' fatal shafts and the missiles of Penthesilea.
Others meanwhile, a puissant screen of our bravest and strongest,
Fighting shall hold back Pylos and Argolis, Crete and the Locrian.
Thou, Deiphobus, front the bronze-clad stern Diomedes,
I with Polydamas' spear will dare to restrain and discourage
Ajax' feet though they yearn for pursuit and are hungry for swiftness.
Knot of retreat behind let some strong experienced captain
Stand with our younger levies guarding the fords of the Xanthus,
Fortify the wavering line and dawn as fresh strength on the wearied.
Then if the fierce gods prevail we shall perish not driven like cattle
Over the plains, but draw back sternly and slowly to Troya."
Answered the Priamid, "Wise is thy counsel, branch of Antenor.
Chaff are the southern Achaians, only the hardihood Hellene,
Only the savage speed of the Locrian rescues their legions.
Marshal we so this field. Stand, Halamus, covering Xanthus,
Helping our need when the foe press hard on the Ilian fighters.
Paris, my brother, thou with our masses aid the Eoan.
I with Aeneas' single spear am enough for the Argive."
"Gladlier" Halamus cried "would I fight in the front with the Locrian!
This too let be as you will; for one is the glory and service
Fighting in front or guarding behind the fate of our country."
So in their thoughts they ordered battle. Meanwhile Eurus
Gleaming returned and the room grew glad with the light of his armour.
Glad were its conscious walls of that vision of boyhood and valour;
Gods of the household sighed and smiled at his courage and beauty,
They who had seen so many pass over their floors and return not
Hasting to battle, the fair and the mighty, the curled and the grizzled,
All of them treading one path like the conscious masks of one pageant
Winding past through the glare of a light to the shadows beyond them.
But on her captains proudly smiling Penthesilea
Seized him and cried aloud, her wild and warlike nature
Moved by the mother's heart that the woman loses not ever.
"Who then shall fear for the fate of Troy when such are her children?
Verily, Eurus, yearning has seized me to meet thee in battle

Rather than Locrian Ajax, rather than Phthian Achilles.
There acquiring a deathless fame I would make thee my captive,
Greedy and glad who feel as a lioness eyeing her booty.
Nay, I can never leave thee behind, my delicate Trojan,
But, when this war ends, will bear thee away to the hills of my country
And, as a robber might, with my captive glad and unwilling
Bring thee a perfect gift to my sisters Ditis and Anna.
Eurus, there in my land thou shalt look on such hills as thy vision
Gazed not on yet, with their craggy tops besieging Cronion,
Sheeted in virgin white and chilling his feet with their vastness.
Thou shalt rejoice in our wooded peaks and our fruit-bearing valleys,
Lakes of Elysium dreaming and wide and rivers of wonder.
All day long thou shalt glide between mystic woodlands in silence
Broken only by call of the birds and the plashing of waters.
There shalt thou see, O Eurus, the childhood of Penthesilea.
Thou shalt repose in my father's house and walk in the gardens
Green where I played at the ball with my sisters, Ditis and Anna."
Musing she ceased, but if any god had touched her with prescience
Bidding her think for the last time now of the haunts of her childhood,
Gaze in her soul with a parting love at the thought of her sisters
And of the lovely and distant land where she played through her summers,
Brief was the touch; for she changed at once and only of triumph
Dreamed and only yearned in her heart for the shock of Achilles.
        So they passed from the halls of Priam fated and lofty,
Halls where the air seemed sobbing yet with the cry of Cassandra;
Clad in their brilliant armour, bright in their beauty and courage,
Sons of the passing demigods, they to their latest battle
Down the ancestral hill of the Pergamans moved to the gateway.
Loud with an endless march, with a tireless gliding to meet them,
All Troy streamed from her streets and her palaces armed for the combat.
Then to the voice of Deiphobus clanging high o'er the rumour
Wide the portals swung that shall close on a blood-red evening,
Slow, foreboding, reluctant, and through the yawn of the gateway
Drove with a cry her steeds the virgin Penthesilea
Calling aloud, "O steeds of my east, we drive to Achilles."
Blithe in the car behind her Eurus scouted around him
Scared with his eyes lest Antenor his grandsire should rise in the gateway,

Hardly believing his fate that led him safe through the portals.
After her trampled and crashed the ranks of her orient fighters.
Paris next with his hosts came brilliant, gold on his armour,
Gold on his helm; a mighty bow hung slack on his shoulder,
Propped o'er his arm a spear, as he drove his car through the gateway.
Next Deiphobus drove and the hero strong Aeneas,
Leading their numbers on. Behind them Dus and Polites,
Helenus, Priam's son, Thrasymachus, grizzled Aretes,
Came like the tempest his father, Adamas, son of the Northwind —
Orus old in the fight and Eumachus, kin to Aeneas,
Who was Creüsa's brother and richest of men in the Troad
After Antenor only and Priam, Ilion's monarch.
Halamus drove and Arintheus led on his Lycian levies.
Who were the last to speed out of Troya of all those legions
Doomed to the sword? for never again from the ancient city
Foot would march or chariots crash in their pride to the Xanthus.
Aetor the old and Tryas the conqueror known by the Oxus.
They in the portals met and their ancient eyes on each other
Looked amazed, admiring on age the harness of battle.
They in the turreted head of the gateway halted and conversed.
"Twenty years have passed, O Tryas, chief of the Trojans,
Since in the battle thy car was seen and the arm of thy prowess
Age has wronged. Why now to the crowded ways of the battle
Move once more thy body infirm and thy eyes that are faded?"
And to Antenor's brother the Teucrian, "Thou too, O Aetor,
Old and weary hast sat in thy halls and desisted from battle.
Now in Troy's portals I meet thee driving forth to the mellay."
Aetor answered, "Which then is better, to wretchedly perish
Crushed by the stones of my falling house or slain like a victim
Dragged through the blood of my kin on the sacred hearth of my fathers,
Or in the battle to cease mid the war-cry and hymn of the chariots
Knowing that Troy yet stands in her pride though doomed in her morrows?
So have the young men willed and the old like thee who age not,
Old are thy limbs, but thy heart is still young and hot for the war-din."
Tryas replied, "To perish is better for man or for nation
Nobly in battle, nor end disgraced by disease or subjection.
So have I come here to offer this shoulder Laomedon leaned on,

Arms that have fought by the Oxus and conquered the Orient's heroes
Famous in Priam's wars, and a heart that is faithful to Troya.
These I will offer to death on his splendid altar of battle,
Tribute from Ilion. If she must fall, I shall see not her ending."
Aetor replied to Tryas, "Then let us perish together,
Joined by the love of our race who in life were divided in counsel.
All things embrace in death and the strife and the hatred are ended."
Silent together they drove for the last time through Ilion's portals
Out with the rest to the fight towards the sea and the spears of the Argives.
Only once, as they drove, they gazed back silent on Troya
Lifting her marble pride in the golden joy of the morning.
So through the ripening morn the army, crossing Scamander,
Filling the heavens with the dust and the war-cry, marched on the Argives.
Far in front Troy's plain spread wide to the echoing Ocean.

BOOK V

The Book of Achilles

Meanwhile grey from the Trojan gates Talthybius journeyed
Spurred by the secret thought of the Fates who change not nor falter.
Simois sighed round his wheels and Xanthus roared at his passing,
Troas' god like a lion wroth and afraid; to meet him
Whistling the ocean breezes came and Ida regarded.
So with his haste in the wheels the herald oceanward driving
Came through the gold of the morn, o'er the trampled green of the pastures
Back to the ships and the roar of the sea and the iron-hooped leaguer.
Wide to the left his circle he wrote where the tents of Achilles
Trooped like a flock of the sea-fowl pensive and still on the margin.
He past the outposts rapidly coursed to the fosse of the Argives.
In with a quavering cry to the encampment over the causeway
Bridging the moat of the ships Talthybius drove in his chariot
Out of the wide plains azure-roofed and the silence of Nature
Passing in to the murmur of men and the thick of the leaguer.
There to a thrall of the Hellene he cast his reins and with labour
Down from the high seat climbed of the war-car framed for the mighty.
Then betwixt tent-doors endless, vistaed streets of the canvas,
Slowly the old man toiled with his eager heart, and to meet him
Sauntering forth from his tent at the sound of the driving car-wheels
Strong Automedon came who was charioteer of Achilles.
"Grey Talthybius, whence art thou coming? From Troya the ancient?
Or from a distant tent was thy speed and the King Agamemnon?
What in their armoured assembly counsel the kings of the Argives?"
"Not from the host but from Troy, Automedon, come I with tidings,
Nor have I mixed with the Greeks in their cohorts ranked by the Ocean,
Nor have I stood in their tents who are kings in sceptred Achaia,
But from Achilles sent to Achilles I bring back the message.
Tell me, then, what does Pelides, whether his strength he reposes
Soothed by the lyre or hearing the chanted deeds of the mighty
Or does he walk as he loves by the shore of the far-sounding waters?"
And to the Argive herald grey Automedon answered:
"Now from the meal he rests and Briseis lyres to him singing
One of the Ilian chants of old in the tongue of the Trojans."

"Early, then, he has eaten, Automedon, early reposes?"
"Early the meat was broached on the spits, Talthybius, early
High on the sands or under the tents we have eaten and rested.
None knows the hour of the hunt, red, fierce, nor the prey he shall leap on,
All are like straining hounds; for Achilles shares not his counsels,
But on the ships, in the tents the talk has run like Peneus;
These upon Troy to be loosed and the hard-fighting wolf-brood of Priam,
These hope starkly with Argos embraced to have done with the Spartan,
Ending his brilliance in blood or to sport on the sands of the margent
Playing at bowls with the heads of the Cretan and crafty Odysseus.
Welcome were either or both; we shall move in the dances of Ares,
Quicken heart-beats dulled and limbs that are numb with reposing.
War we desire and no longer this ease by the drone of the waters."
So as they spoke, they beheld far-off the tent of Achilles
Splendid and spacious even as the hall of a high-crested chieftain,
Lofty, held by a hundred stakes to the Phrygian meadow.
Hung were its sides with memories bronze and trophies of armour,
Sword and spear and helmet and cuirass of fallen heroes
Slain by the hand of the mighty Achilles warring with Troya.
Teemed in its canvas rooms the plundered riches of Troas,
Craftsman's work and the wood well-carved and the ivory painted,
Work of bronze and work of gold and the dreams of the artist.
And in those tents of his pride, in the dreadful guard of the Hellene,
Noble boys and daughters of high-born Phrygians captive,
Borne from the joyless ruins that now were the sites of their childhood,
Served in the land of their sires the will of the Phthian Achilles.
There on a couch reclined in his beauty mighty and golden,
Loved by the Fates and doomed by them, spear of their will against Troya,
Peleus' hero son by the foam-white child of the waters
Dreaming reposed and his death-giving hand hung lax o'er the couch-side.
Near him dark-eyed Briseis, the fatal and beautiful captive,
Sang to the Grecian victor chants of the land of her fathers,
Sang the chant of Ilus, the tale of the glories of Troya.
Trojan boys and maidens sat near the singer and listened
Heart-delighted if with some tears; for easy are mortal
Hearts to be bent by Fate and soon we consent to our fortunes.
But in the doorway Automedon stood with the shadowy Argive

And at the ominous coming the voice of the singer faltered,
Faltering hushed like a thought melodious ceasing in heaven.
But from his couch the Peleid sprang and he cried to the herald.
"Long hast thou lingered in Ilion, envoy, mute in the chambers
Golden of Priam old, while around thee darkened the counsels
Wavering blindly and fiercely of minds that revolt from compulsion,
Natures at war with the gods and their fortunes. Fain would I fathom
What were the thoughts of Deiphobus locked in that nature of iron
Now that he stands confronting his fate in the town of his fathers.
Peace dwells not in thy aspect. Sowst thou a seed then of ruin
Cast from the inflexible heart and the faltering tongue of Aeneas,
Or with the golden laugh of the tameless bright Alexander?"
Grey Talthybius answered, "Surely their doom has embraced them
Wrapping her locks round their ears and their eyes, lest they see and escape her,
Kissing their tongue with her fatal lips and dictating its answers.
Dire is the hope of their chiefs and fierce is the will of their commons.
'Son of the Aeacids, spurned is thy offer. The pride of thy challenge
Rather we choose; it is nearer to Dardanus, King of the Hellenes.
Neither shall Helen captive be dragged to the feet of her husband,
Nor down the paths of peace revisit her fathers' Eurotas.
Death and the fire may prevail on us, never our wills shall surrender
Lowering Priam's heights and darkening Ilion's splendours;
Not of such sires were we born, but of kings and of gods. Larissan,
Not with her gold Troy purchases safety but with her spear-point.
Stand with thy oath in the war-front, Achilles, call on thy helpers
Armed to descend from the calm of Olympian heights to thy succour
Hedging thy fame from defeat; for we all desire thee in battle,
Mighty to end thee or tame at last by the floods of the Xanthus.'
So they reply; they are true to their death, they are constant for ruin.
Humbler answer hope not, O hero, from Penthesilea;
Insolent, warlike, regal and swift as herself is her message.
'Sea of renown and of valour that fillest the world with thy rumour,
Speed of the battle incarnate, mortal image of Ares!
Terror and tawny delight like a lion one hunts or is hunted!
Dread of the world and my target, swift-footed glorious hero!
Thus have I imaged thee, son of Peleus, dreaming in countries

Far from thy knowledge, in mountains that never have rung to thy war-cry.
O, I have longed for thee, warrior! Therefore today by thy message
So was I seized with delight that my heart was hurt with its rapture,
Knowing today I shall gaze with my eyes on that which I imaged
Only in air of the mind or met in the paths of my dreaming.
Thus have I praised thee first with my speech; with my spear I would answer.
Yet for thy haughty scorn who deeming of me as some Hellene
Or as a woman weak of these plains fit but for the distaff,
Promisest capture in war and fame as thy slavegirl in Phthia, —
Surely I think that death today will reply to that promise, —
Now I will give thee my answer and warn thee ere we encounter.
Know me queen of a race that never was conquered in battle!
Know me armed with a spear that never has missed in the combat!
There where my car-wheels run, good fruit gets the husbandman after.
This thou knowest. Ajax has told thee, thy friend, in his dying.
Has not Meriones' spirit come in thy dreams then to warn thee?
Didst thou not number the Argives once ere I came to the battle?
Number them now and measure the warrior Penthesilea.
Such am I then whom thy dreams have seen meek-browed in Larissa,
And in the battle behind me thunder the heroes Eoan,
Ranks whose feeblest can match with the vaunted chiefs of the Argives.
Never yet from the shock have they fled; if they turn from the foeman,
Always 'tis to return like death recircling on mortals.
Yet being such, having such for my armies, this do I promise:
I on the left of the Trojans war with my bright-armed numbers,
Thou on the Argive right come forth, Achilles, and meet me!
If thou canst drive us with rout into Troy, I will own thee for master,
Do thy utmost will and make thee more glorious than gods are
Serving thy couch in Phthia and drawing the jar from thy rivers.
Nay, if thou hast that strength, then hunt me, O hunter, and seize me,
If 'tis thy hope indeed that the sun can turn back from the Orient,
But if thou canst not, death of myself or thyself thou shalt capture.'"
    Musing heard and was silent awhile the strength of Achilles,
Musing of Fate and the wills of men and the purpose of Heaven,
Then from his thoughts he broke and turned in his soul towards battle.
"Well did I know what reply would come winged from the princes of Troya.
Prone are the hearts of heroes to wrath and to God-given blindness

When from their will they are thrust and harried by Fate and disaster:
Fierceness then is the armour of strength against grief and its yieldings.
So have the gods made man for their purpose, cunningly fashioned.
Once had defiance waked from my depths a far-striding fury,
Flaming for justice and vengeance, nor had it, satisfied, rested,
Sunk to its lair, till the insulter died torn or was kneeling for pardon.
Fierce was my heart in my youth and exulted in triumph and slaughter.
Now as I grow in my spirit like to my kin the immortals,
Joy more I find in saving and cherishing than in the carnage.
Greater it seems to my mind to be king over men than their slayer,
Nobler to build and to govern than what the ages have laboured
Putting their godhead forth to create or the high gods have fashioned,
That to destroy in our wrath of a moment. Ripened, more widely
Opens my heart to the valour of man and the beauty of woman,
Works of the world and delight; the cup of my victory sweetens
Not with the joys of hate, but the human pride of the triumph.
Yet was the battle decreed for the means supreme of the mortal
Placed in a world where all things strive from the worm to the Titan.
So will I seize by the onset what peace from my soul would sequester,
So will I woo with the sword and with love the delight of my foeman,
Troy and Polyxena, beauty of Paris and glory of Priam.
This was the ancient wrestling, this was the spirit of warfare
Fit for the demigods. Soon in the city of gold and of marble,
There where Ilus sat and Tros, where Laomedon triumphed,
Peleus' house shall reign, the Hellene sit where the Trojan
Thought himself deathless. Arise, Automedon! Out to the people!
Send forth the cry through the ships and the tents of the Myrmidon nation.
Let not a man be found then lingering when o'er the causeway
Thunder my chariot-wheels, nor let any give back in the battle,
Good if he wills from me, till through the conquered gates of the foeman
Storming we herd in their remnants and press into Troy as with evening
Helios rushing sinks to the sea. But thou, Briseis,
Put by thy lyre, O girl; it shall gladden my heart in my triumph
Victor returned from Troy to listen pleased to thy singing,
Bearing a captive bound to my car-wheels Penthesilea,
Bearing my valour's reward, Polyxena, daughter of Priam,
Won in despite of her city and brothers and spears of her kindred.

So by force it is best to take one's will and be mighty."
Joyful, Automedon ran through the drowsy camp of the Hellenes
Changing the hum of the tents as he raced into shoutings of battle;
For with the giant din of a nation triumphant arising
Hellas sprang from her irksome ease and mounted her war-car;
Donning her armour bright she rejoiced in the trumpets of battle.
    But to the herald grey the Peleid turned and the old man
Shuddered under his gaze and shrank from the voice of the hero:
"Thou to the tents of thy Kings, Talthybius, herald of Argos!
Stand in the Argive assembly, voice of the strength of Achilles.
Care not at all though the greatest and fiercest be wroth with thy message.
Deem not thyself, old man, as a body and flesh that is mortal,
Rather as living speech from the iron breast of the Hellene.
Thus shalt thou cry to the vanquished chiefs who fled from a woman,
Thus shalt thou speak my will to the brittle and fugitive legions:
'Now Achilles turns towards Troya and fast-flowing Xanthus,
Now he leaps at the iron zone, the impregnable city.
Two were the forms of the Gods that o'erhung the sails of Pelides
When with a doubtful word in his soul he came wind-helped from Hellas
Cleaving the Aegean deep towards the pine-crested vision of Ida.
Two are the Fates that stride with the hero counting his exploits.
Over all earthly things the soul that is fearless is master,
Only on death he can reckon not whether it comes in the midnight
Treading the couch of Kings in their pride or speeds in the spear-shaft.
Now will I weigh down that double beam of the Olympian balance
Claiming one of the equal Fates that stand robed for the fighter,
For to my last dire wrestle I go with the Archer of heaven,
And ere the morning gleam have awakened the eagles on Ida,
Troy shall lie prone or the earth shall be empty of Phthian Achilles.
But for whatever Fate I accept from the ageless Immortals,
Whether cold Hades dim or Indus waits for my coming
Pouring down vast to the sea with the noise of his numberless waters,
I with Zeus am enough. Your mortal aid I desire not,
Rushing to Troy like the eagle of Zeus when he flies towards the thunders, —
Winged with might, the bird of the spaces, upbuoying his pinions.
Nor shall my spirit look back for the surge of your Danaan fighters,
Tramp of the Argive multitudes helping my lonely courage,

Neither the transient swell of the cry Achaian behind me
Seek, nor the far-speeding voice of Atrides guiding his legions.
Need has he none for a leader who himself is the soul of his action.
Zeus and his fate and his spear are enough for the Phthian Achilles.
Rest, O wearied hosts; my arm shall win for you Troya,
Quelled when the stern Eoans break and Penthesilea
Lies like a flower in the dust at my feet. Yet if Ares desire you,
Come then and meet him once more mid the cry and the trampling! Assemble
Round the accustomed chiefs, round the old victorious wrestlers
Wearied strengths Deiphobus leaves you or sternest Aeneas.
But when my arm and my Fate have vanquished their gods and Apollo,
Brilliant with blood when we stand amid Ilion's marble splendours,
Then let none seat deaf flame on the glory of Phrygia's marbles
Or with his barbarous rapine shatter the chambers of sweetness
Slaying the work of the gods and the beauty the ages have lived for.
For he shall moan in the night remote from the earth and her greenness,
Spurred like a steed to its goal by my spear dug deep in his bosom;
Fast he shall fleet to the waters of wailing, the pleasureless pastures.
Touch not the city Apollo built, where Poseidon has laboured.
Seized and dishelmed and disgirdled of Apollonian ramparts,
Empty of wide-rolling wheels and the tramp of a turbulent people
Troy with her marble domes shall live for our nations in beauty
Hushed mid the trees and the corn and the pictured halls of the ancients,
Watching her image of dreams in the gliding waves of Scamander,
Sacred and still, a city of memory spared by the Grecians.'
So shalt thou warn the arrogant hearts of Achaia's chieftains
Lest upon Greece an evil should fall and her princes should perish.
Herald, beware how thou soften my speech in the ears of thy nation
Sparing their pride and their hearts but dooming their lives to the death-stroke.
Even thy time-touched snows shall not shield thy days from my sword-edge."
Wroth the old man's heart, but he feared Achilles and slowly
Over the margin grey on the shore of the far-sounding ocean
Silent paced to the tents of the Greeks and the Argive assembly.
There on the sands while the scream of the tide as it dragged at the pebbles
Strove in vain with their droning roar, awaiting their chieftains
Each in his tribe and his people far down the margin Aegean

Argolis' sons and Epirote spears and the isles and the southron,
Locris' swarms and Messene's pikes and the strength of the Theban,
Hosts bright-armed, bright-eyed, bright-haired, time-hardened to Ares,
Stretched in harsh and brilliant lines with a glitter of spear-points
Far as the eye could toil. All Europe helmeted, armoured
Swarmed upon Asia's coasts disgorged from her ships in their hundreds.
There in the wide-winged tent of the council that peered o'er the margin,
High where the grass and the meadow-bloom failed on the sand-rifted sward-edge,
Pouring his argent voice Epeus spoke to the princes,
Rapid in battle and speech; and even as a boy in a courtyard
Tosses his ball in the air and changes his hands for the seizing
So he played with counsel and thought and rejoiced in his swiftness.
But now a nearing Fate he felt and his impulse was silenced.
Stilled were his thoughts by the message that speeds twixt our minds in their shadows
Dumb, unthought, unphrased, to us dark, but the caverns of Nature
Hear its cry when God's moment changing our fate comes visored
Silently into our lives and the spirit too knows, for it watches.
Quiet he fell and all men turned to the face of the herald.
Mute and alone through the ranks of the seated and silent princes
Old Talthybius paced, nor paused till he stood at the midmost
Fronting that council of Kings and nearest to Locrian Ajax
And where Sthenelus sat and where sat the great Diomedes,
Chiefs of the South, but their love was small for the Kings of the Spartans.
There like one close to a refuge he lifted his high-chanting accents.
High was his voice like the wind's when it whistles shrill o'er a forest
Sole of all sounds at night, for the kite is at rest and the tiger
Sleeps from the hunt returned in the deepest hush of the jungle.
"Hearken, O Kings of the world, to the lonely will of the Phthian!
One is the roar of the lion heard by the jungle's hundreds,
One is the voice of the great and the many shall hear it inclining.
Lo, he has shaken his mane for the last great leap upon Troya
And when the eagle's scream shall arise in the dawn over Ida,
Troy shall have fallen or earth shall be empty of Phthian Achilles.
But by whatever Fate he is claimed that waits for the mortal,
Whether the fast-closed hands above have kept for his morrows

Chill of the joyless shades or earth and her wooings of sunlight
Still shall detain his days with the doubtful meed of our virtues,
He and Zeus shall provide, not mortals. Chaff are men's armies
Threshed by the flails of Fate; 'tis the soul of the hero that conquers.
Not on the tramp of the multitudes, not on the cry of the legions
Founds the strong man his strength but the god that he carries within him.
Zeus and his Fate and his spear are enough for the Phthian Achilles.
Prudence of men shall curb no more his god-given impulse.
He has no need of thy voice, O Atrides, guiding the legions,
He is the leader, his is the soul of magnificent emprise.
Rest, O ye sons of the Greeks, the Phthian shall conquer for Hellas!
Rest! expose not your hearts to the war-cry of Penthesilea.
Yet if the strength in you thirsts for the war-din, if Ares is hungry,
Meet him stark in the mellay urging Deiphobus' coursers,
Guiding Aeneas' spear; recover the souls of your fathers.
Bronze must his heart be who looks in the eyes of the implacable war-god!
But when his Fate has conquered their gods and slaughtered their heroes,
And in this marble Ilion forced to the tread of her foemen
Watched by the ancient domes you stand, by the timeless turrets,
Then let no chieftain garbed for the sacrifice lift against Troya,
Counselled of Ate, torch of the burning, hand of the plunder
Groping for gold but finding death in her opulent chambers.
For he shall moan in the night regretting the earth and her greenness,
Spurred by the spear in his arrogant breast like a steed to the gorges:
Fast he shall fleet to the flowerless meadows, the sorrowful pastures.
Touch not the city Apollo built, where Poseidon has laboured,
Slay not the work of the gods and the glory the ages have lived for.
Mute of the voice of her children, void of the roll of her war-cars
Timeless Troy leave solitary dreaming by ancient Scamander
Sacred and still, a city of memory spared by the Phthian."
So Talthybius spoke and anger silenced the Argives.
Mute was the warlike assembly, silent Achaia's princes.
Wrath and counsel strove in the hush for the voice of the speakers.

BOOK VI

The Book of the Chieftains

Then as from common hills great Pelion rises to heaven
So from the throng uprearing a brow that no crown could ennoble,
Male and kingly of front like a lion conscious of puissance
Rose a form august, the monarch great Agamemnon.
Wroth he rose yet throwing a rein on the voice of his passion,
Governing the beast and the demon within by the god who is mighty.
"Happy thy life and my fame that thou com'st with the aegis of heaven
Shadowing thy hoary brows, thou herald of pride and of insult.
Well is it too for his days who sent thee that other and nobler
Heaven made my heart than his who insults and a voice of the immortals
Cries to my soul forbidding its passions. O hardness of virtue,
Thus to be seized and controlled as in fetters by Zeus and Athene.
Free is the peasant to smite in the pastures the mouth that has wronged him,
Chained in his soul is Atrides. Bound by their debt to the fathers,
Curbed by the god in them painfully move the lives of the noble,
Forced to obey the eye that watches within in their bosoms.
Ever since Zeus Cronion turned in our will towards the waters,
Scourged by the heavens in my dearest, wronged by men and their clamours,
Griefs untold I have borne in Argos and Aulis and Troas,
Yoked to this sacred toil of the Greeks for their children and country,
Bound by the gods to a task that is heavy, a load that is bitter.
Seeing the faces of foes in the mask of friends I was silent.
Hateful I hold him who sworn to a cause that is holy and common
Broods upon private wrongs or serving his lonely ambition
Studies to reap his gain from the labour and woe of his fellows.
Mire is the man who hears not the gods when they cry to his bosom.
Grief and wrath I coerced nor carried my heart to its record
All that has hurt its chords and wounded the wings of my spirit.
Nobler must kings be than natures of earth on whom Zeus lays no burden.
Other is Peleus' son than the race of his Aeacid fathers,
Nor like his sire of the wise-still heart far-sighted and patient
Bearing the awful rein of the gods, but hastes to his longings,
Dire in his wrath and pursued by the band of his giant ambitions.
Measure and virtue forsake him as Ate grows in his bosom.

Yet not for tyrant wrong nor to serve as a sword for our passions
Zeus created our strength, but that earth might have help from her children.
Not of our moulding its gifts to our soul nor were formed by our labour!
When did we make them, where were they forged, in what workshop or furnace?
Found in what aeon of Time, that pride should bewilder the mortal?
Bowed to our will are the folk and our prowess dreadful and godlike?
Shadows are these of the gods which the deep heavens cast on our spirits.
Transient, we made not ourselves, but at birth from the first we were fashioned
Valiant or fearful and as was our birth by the gods and their thinkings
Formed, so already enacted and fixed by their wills are our fortunes.
What were the strength of Atrides and what were the craft of Odysseus
Save for their triumphing gods? They would fail and be helpless as infants.
Stronger a woman, wiser a child were favoured by Heaven.
Ceased not Sarpedon slain who was son of Zeus and unconquered?
Not to Achilles he fell, but Fate and the gods were his slayers.
Kings, to the arrogant shaft that was launched, the unbearable insult,
Armoured wisdoms oppose, let not Ate seize on your passions.
Be not as common souls, O you who are Greece and her fortunes,
Nor of your spirits of wrath take counsel but of Athene.
Merit the burden laid by Zeus, his demand from your natures
Suffer, O hearts of his seed, O souls who are chosen and mighty,
All forgetting but Greece and her good; resolve what is noble.
I will not speak nor advise, for ’tis known we are rivals and foemen.”
        Calmed by his words and his will he sat down mighty and kinglike;
But Menelaus arose, the Spartan, the husband of Helen,
Atreus’ younger son from a lesser womb, in his brilliance
Dwarfed by the other’s port, yet tall was he, gracile and splendid,
As if a panther might hunt by a lion’s side in the forest.
Smiting his thigh with his firm-clenched hand he spoke mid the Argives:
“Woe to me, shameless, born to my country a cause of affliction,
Since for my sake all wrongs must be borne and all shames be encountered;
And for my sake you have spun through the years down the grooves of disaster
Bearing the shocks of the Trojans and ravaged by Zeus and by Hector,
Slaughtered by Rhesus and Memnon, Sarpedon and Penthesilea;

Or by the Archer pierced, the hostile dreadful Apollo,
Evilly end the days of the Greeks remote from their kindred —
Slain on an alien soil by Asian Xanthus and Ida.
Doomed to the pyre we have toiled for a woman ungracious who left us
Passing serenely my portals to joy in the chambers of Troya.
Here let it cease, O my brother! how much wilt thou bear for this graceless
Child of thy sire, cause still of thy griefs and never of blessing?
Easily Zeus afflicts who trouble their hearts for a woman;
But in our ships that sailed close-fraught with this dolorous Ate
Worse was the bane they bore which King Peleus begot on white Thetis.
Evil ever was sown by the embrace of the gods with a mortal!
Alien a portent is born and a breaker of men and their labours,
One who afflicts with his light or his force mortality's weakness
Stripping for falsehoods their verities, shaking the walls they erected.
Hostile all things the scourge divine overbears or, if helpful,
Neither without him his fellows can prosper, nor will his spirit
Fit in the frame of things earthly but shatters their rhythm and order
Rending the measures just that the wise have decreed for our growing.
So have our mortal plannings broken on this fateful Achilles
And with our blood and our anguish Heaven has fostered his greatness.
It is enough; let the dire gods choose between Greece and their offspring.
Even as he bids us, aloof let our hosts twixt the ships and the Xanthus
Stand from the shock and the cry where Hellene meets with Eoan,
Troy and Phthia locked, Achilles and Penthesilea,
Nor any more than watchers care who line an arena;
Calm like the impartial gods, approve the bravest and swiftest.
Sole let him fight! The fates shall preserve him he vaunts of or gather,
Even as death shall gather us all for memory's clusters,
All in their day who were great or were little, heroes or cowards.
So shall he slay or be slain, a boon to mankind and his country.
Since if he mow down this flower of bale, this sickle by Hades
Whirled if he break, — for the high gods ride on the hiss of his spear-shaft, —
Ours is the gain who shall break rejoicing through obdurate portals
Praising Pallas alone and Hera daughter of Heaven.
But if he sink in this last of his fights, as they say it is fated, —
Nor do I deem that the man has been born in Asia or Hellas
Who in the dreadful field can prevail against Penthesilea, —

If to their tents the Myrmidons fleeing cumber the meadows
Slain by a girl in her speed and leaving the corpse of their leader,
Ours is the gain, we are rid of a shame and a hate and a danger.
True is it, Troy shall exultant live on in the shadow of Ida,
Yet shall our hearts be light because earth is void of Achilles.
And for the rest of the infinite loss, what we hoped, what we suffered,
Let it all go, let the salt floods swallow it, fate and oblivion
Bury it out in the night; let us sail o'er the waves to our country
Leaving Helen in Troy since the gods are the friends of transgressors."
So Menelaus in anger and grief miscounselled the Argives.
Great Idomeneus next, the haughty king of the Cretans,
Raised his brow of pride in the lofty Argive assembly.
Tall like a pine that stands up on the slope of Thessalian mountains
Overpeering a cascade's edge and is seen from the valleys,
Such he seemed to their eyes who remembered Greece and her waters,
Heard in their souls the torrent's leap and the wind on the hill-tops.
"Oft have I marvelled, O Greeks, to behold in this levy of heroes
Armies so many, chieftains so warlike suffer in silence
Pride of a single man when he thunders and lightens in Troas.
Doubtless the nations that follow his cry are many and valiant,
Doubtless the winds of the north have made him a runner and spearman.
Shall not then force be the King? is not strength the seal of the Godhead?
This my soul replies, 'Agamemnon the Atreid only
Choosing for leader and king I have come to the toil and the warfare.
Wisdom and greatness he owns and the wealth and renown of his fathers.'
But for this whelp of the northlands, nursling of rocks and the sea-cliff
Who with his bleak and rough-hewn Myrmidons hastes to the carnage,
Leader of wolves to their prey, not the king of a humanised nation,
Not to such head of the cold-drifting mist and the gloom-vigilled Chaos,
Crude to our culture and light and void of our noble fulfilments
Minos shall bend his knee nor Crete, a barbarian's vassal,
Stain her old glories. Oh, but he boasts of a goddess for mother
Born in the senseless seas mid the erring wastes of the Ocean,
White and swift and foam-footed, vast Oceanus' daughter.
Gods we adore enough in the heavens, and if from us Hades
Claim one more of this breed, we can bear that excess of his glories,
Not upon earth these new-born deities huge-passioned, sateless

Who with their mouth as of Orcus and stride of the ruinous Ocean
Sole would be seen mid her sons and devour all life's joy and its greatness.
Millions must empty their lives that a man may o'ershadow the nations,
Numberless homes must weep, but his hunger of glory is sated!
Troy shall descend to the shadow; gods and men have condemned her,
Weary, hating her fame. Her dreams, her grandeur, her beauty,
All her greatness and deeds that now end in miserable ashes,
Ceasing shall fade and be as a tale that was forged by the poets.
Only a name shall go down from her past and the woe of her ending
Naked to hatred and rapine and punished with rape and with slaughter.
Never again must marble pride high-domed on her hill-top
Look forth dominion and menace over the crested Aegean
Shadowing Achaia. Fire shall abolish the fame of her ramparts,
Earth her foundations forget. Shall she stand affronting the azure?
Dire in our path like a lioness once again must we meet her,
Leap and roar of her led by the spear of Achilles, not Hector?
Asia by Peleus guided shall stride on us after Antenor?
Though one should plan in the night of his thoughts where no eye can pursue him,
Instincts of men discover their foe and like hounds in the darkness
Bay at a danger hid. No silence of servitude trembling
Trains to bondage sons of the race of whom Aeolus father
Storm-voiced was and free, nor like other groupings of mortals
Moulded we were by Zeus, but supremely were sifted and fashioned.
Other are Danaus' sons and other the lofty Achaians:
Chainless like Nature's tribes in their many-voiced colonies founded
They their god-given impulse shall keep and their natures of freedom.
Only themselves shall rule them, only their equal spirits
Bowed to the voice of a law that is just, obeying their leaders,
Awed by the gods. So with order and balance and harmony noble
Life shall move golden, free in its steps and just in its measure,
Glad of a manhood complete, by excess and defect untormented.
Freedom is life to the Argive soul, to Aeolia's peoples.
Dulled by a yoke our nations would perish, or live but as shadows,
Changed into phantoms of men with the name of a Greek for a byword.
Not like the East and her sons is our race, they who bow to a mortal.
Gods there may be in this flesh that suffers and dies; Achaia

Knows them not. Need if he feels of a world to endure and adore him,
Hearts let him seek that are friends with the dust, overpowered by their heavens,
Here in these Asian vastnesses, here where the heats and the perfumes
Sicken the soul and the sense and a soil of indolent plenty
Breeds like the corn in its multitudes natures accustomed to thraldom.
Here let the northern Achilles seek for his slaves and adorers,
Not in the sea-ringed isles and not in the mountains Achaian.
Ten long years of the shock and the war-cry twixt rampart and ocean
Hurting our hearts we have toiled; shall they reap not their ease in the vengeance?
Troas is sown with the lives of our friends and with ashes remembered;
Shall not Meriones slain be reckoned in blood and in treasure?
Cretan Idomeneus girt with the strength of his iron retainers
Slaying and burning will stride through the city of music and pleasure,
Babes of her blood borne high on the spears at the head of my column,
Wives of her princes dragged through her streets in its pomp to their passion,
Gold of Troy stream richly past in the gaze of Achilles.
Then let him threaten my days, then rally the might of his triumphs,
Yet shall a Cretan spear make search in his heart for his godhead.
Limbs of this god can be pierced; not alone shall I fleet down to Hades."
After him rose from the throng the Locrian, swift-footed Ajax.
"Kings of the Greeks, throw a veil on your griefs, lay a curb on your anger.
Moved man's tongue in its wrath looses speech that is hard to be pardoned,
Afterwards stilled we regret, we forgive. If all were resented,
None could live on this earth that is thick with our stumblings. Always
This is the burden of man that he acts from his heart and his passions,
Stung by the goads of the gods he hews at the ties that are dearest.
Lust was the guide they sent us, wrath was a whip for his coursers,
Madness they made the heart's comrade, repentance they gave for its scourger.
This too our hearts demand that we bear with our friend when he chides us.
Insult forgive from the noble embittered soul of Achilles!
When with the scorn and the wrath of a lover our depths are tormented,
Who shall forbid the cry and who shall measure the anguish?
Sharper the pain that looses the taunt than theirs who endure it.
Rage has wept in my blood as I lived through the flight o'er the pastures,

Shame coils a snake in my back when thought whispers of Penthesilea.
Bright shine his morns if he mows down this hell-bitch armed by the Furies!
But for this shaft of his pity it came from a lesser Pelides,
Not from the slayer of Hector, not from the doom of Sarpedon,
Memnon's mighty o'erthrower, the blood-stained splendid Achilles.
These are the Trojan snares and the fateful smile of a woman!
This thing the soul of a man shall not bear that blood of his labour
Vainly has brought him victory leaving life to the hated;
This is a wound to our race that a Greek should whisper of mercy.
Who can pardon a foe though a god should descend to persuade him?
Justice is first of the gods, but for Pity 'twas spawned by a mortal,
Pity that only disturbs God's measures and false and unrighteous
Holds man back from the joy he might win and troubles his bosom.
Troy has a debt to our hearts; she shall pay it all down to the obol,
Blood of the fall and anguish of flight when the heroes are slaughtered,
Days without joy while we labour and see not the eyes of our parents,
Toil of the war-cry, nights that drag past upon alien beaches,
Helen ravished, Paris triumphant, endless the items
Crowd on a wrath in the memory, kept as in bronze the credit
Stretches out long and blood-stained and savage. Most for the terror
Graved in the hearts of our fathers that still by our youth is remembered,
Hellas waiting and crouching, dreading the spear of the Trojan,
Flattering, sending gifts and pale in her mortal anguish,
Agony long of a race at the mercy of iron invaders,
This she shall pay most, the city of pride, the insolent nation,
Pay with her temples charred and her golden mansions in ruins,
Pay with the shrieks of her ravished virgins, the groans of the aged
Burned in their burning homes for our holiday. Music and dancing
Shall be in Troy of another sort than she loved in her greatness
Merry with conquered gold and insulting the world with her flutings.
All that she boasted of, statue and picture, all shall be shattered;
Out of our shame she chiselled them, rich with our blood they were coloured.
This not the gods from Olympus crowding, this not Achilles,
This not your will, O ye Greeks, shall deny to the Locrian Ajax.
Even though Pallas divine with her aegis counselling mercy
Cumbered my path, I would push her aside to leap on my victims.
Learn shall all men on that day how a warrior deals with his foemen."

Darting flames from his eyes the barbarian sate, and there rose up
Frowning Tydeus' son, the Tirynthian, strong Diomedes.
"Ajax Oileus, thy words are foam on the lips of a madman.
Cretan Idomeneus, silence the vaunt that thy strength can fulfil not.
Strong art thou, fearless in battle, but not by thy spear-point, O hero,
Hector fell, nor Sarpedon, nor Troilus leading the war-cry.
These were Achilles' deeds which a god might have done out of heaven.
Him we upbraid who saved, nor would any now who revile him
Still have a living tongue for ingratitude but for the hero.
Much to the man forgive who has saved his race and his country:
Him shall the termless centuries praise when we are forgotten.
Curb then your speech, crush down in your hearts the grief and the choler;
Has not Atrides curbed who is greatest of all in our nations
Wrath in the heart and the words that are winged for our bale from our bosoms?
For as a load to be borne were these passions given to mortals.
Honour Achilles, conquer Troy by his god-given valour.
Now of our discords and griefs debate not for joy of our foemen!
First over Priam's corpse stand victors in Ilion's ramparts;
Discord then let arise or concord solder our nations."
Rugged words and few as fit for the soul that he harboured
Great Tydides spoke and ceased; and there rose up impatient
Tall from the spears of the north the hero king Prothoënor,
Prince in Cadmeian Thebes who with Leitus led on his thousands.
"Loudly thou vauntest thy freedom Ionian Minos recalling,
Lord of thy southern isles who gildst with tribute Mycenae.
We have not bowed our neck to Pelops' line, at Argos'
Iron heel have not crouched, nor clasped like thy time-wearied nations,
Python-befriended, gripped in the coils of an iron protection,
Bondage soothed by a name and destruction masked as a helper.
We are the young and lofty and free-souled sons of the Northland.
Nobly Peleus, the Aeacid, seer of a vaster Achaia,
Pride of his strength and his deeds renouncing for joy of that vision,
Yielded his hoary right to the sapling stock of Atrides.
Noble, we gave to that nobleness freely our grandiose approval.
Not as a foe then, O King, who angered sharpens his arrows,
Fits his wrath and hate to the bow and aims at the heart-strings

But from the Truth that is seated within me compelling my accents,
Taught by my fathers stern not to lie nor to hide what I harbour,
Truth the goddess I speak, nor constrain the voice in my bosom.
Monarch, I own thee first of the Greeks save in valour and counsel,
Brave, but less than Achilles, wise, but not as Odysseus,
First still in greatness and calm and majesty. Yet, Agamemnon,
Love of thy house and thy tribe disfigures the king in thy nature;
Thou thy brother preferrest, thy friends and thy nations unjustly,
Even as a common man whose heart is untaught by Athene,
Beastlike favours his brood forgetting the law of the noble.
Therefore Ajax grew wroth and Teucer sailing abandoned
Over the angry seas this fierce-locked toil of the nations;
Therefore Achilles has turned in his soul and gazed towards the Orient.
Yet are we fixed in our truth like hills in heaven, Atrides;
Greece and her safety and good our passions strive to remember.
Not of this stamp was thy brother's speech; such words Lacedaemon
Hearing may praise in her kings; we speak not in Thebes what is shameful.
Shamefuller thoughts have never escaped from lips that were high-born.
We will not send forth earth's greatest to die in a friendless battle,
Nor will forsake the daughter of Zeus and white glory of Hellas,
Helen the golden-haired Tyndarid, left for the joy of our foemen,
Chained to Paris' delight, earth's goddess the slave of the Phrygian,
Though Menelaus the Spartan abandon his wife to the Trojans
And from the field where he lavished the unvalued blood of his people
Flee to a hearth dishonoured. Not the Atreid's sullied grandeurs,
Greece to defend we have toiled through the summers and lingering autumns
Blind with our blood; for our country we bleed repelling her foemen.
Dear is that loss to our veins and still that expense we would lavish
Claiming its price from the heavens, though thou sail with thy brother and cohorts.
Weakling, flee! take thy southern ships, take thy Spartan levies.
Still will the Greeks fight on in the Troad helped by thy absence.
For though the beaches vast grow empty, the tents can be numbered
Standing friendless and few on the huge and hostile champaign,
Always a few will be left whom the threatenings of Fate cannot conquer,
Always souls are born whose courage waits not on fortune;
Hellas' heart will be firm confronting the threat of the victor,

Sthenelus war and Tydides, Odysseus and Locrian Ajax,
Thebes' unconquered sons and the hero chiefs of the northland.
Stern and persistent as Time or the seas and as deaf to affliction
We will clash on in the fight unsatisfied, fain of the war-cry,
Helped by the gods and our cause through the dawns and the blood-haunted evenings,
Rising in armour with morn and outstaying the red of the sunset,
Till in her ashes Troy forgets that she lusted for empire
Or in our own the honour and valour of Greece are extinguished."
So Prothoënor spoke nor pleased with his words Agamemnon;
But to the northern kings they were summer rain on the visage.
Last Laertes' son, the Ithacan, war-wise Odysseus,
Rose up wide-acclaimed; like an oak was he stunted in stature,
Broad-shouldered, firm-necked, lone and sufficient, as on some island
Regnant one peak whose genial streams flow down to the valley,
Dusk on its slopes are the olives, the storms butt in vain at its shoulders, —
Such he stood and pressed the earth with his feet like one vanquished,
Striving, but held to his will. So Atlas might seem were he mortal,
Atlas whose vastness free from impatience suffers the heavens,
Suffering spares the earth, the thought-haunted motionless Titan,
Bearer of worlds. In those jarring tribes no man was his hater;
For as the Master of all guides humanity, so this Odysseus
Dealt with men and helped and guided them, careful and selfless,
Crafty, tender and wise, — like the Master who bends o'er His creatures,
Suffers their sins and their errors and guides them screening the guidance;
Each through his nature He leads and the world by the lure of His wisdom.
"Princes of Argolis, chiefs of the Locrians, spears of the northland,
Warriors vowed to a sacred hate and a vengeance that's holy,
Sateless still is that hate, that vengeance cries for its victims,
Still is the altar unladen, the priest yet waits with the death-knife.
Who while the rites are unfinished, the god unsatisfied, impious
Turns in his heart to the feuds of his house and his strife with his equals?
None will approve the evil that fell from the younger Atrides;
But it was anger and sorrow that spoke, it was not Menelaus.
Who would return from Troy and arrive with his war-wasted legions
Back to his home in populous city or orcharded island;
There from his ships disembarked look round upon eyes that grow joyless

Seeking a father or husband slain, a brother heart-treasured,
Mothers in tears for their children, and when he is asked, ‘O our chieftain,
What dost thou bring back in place of our dead to fill hearts that are empty?’
Who then will say, ‘I bring back my shame and the shame of my nation;
Troy yet stands confronting her skies and Helen in Troya’?
Not for such foil will I go back to Ithaca or to Laertes,
Rather far would I sail in my ships past southern Cythera,
Turning away in silence from waters where on some headland
Gazing south o’er the waves my father waits for my coming,
Leaving Sicily’s shores and on through the pillars of Gades.
Far I would sail whence sound of me never should come to Achaia
Out into tossing worlds and weltering reaches of tempest
Dwarfing the swell of the wide-wayed Aegean, — Oceans unbounded
Either by cliff or by sandy margin, only the heavens
Ever receding before my keel as it ploughs on for ever
Frail and alone in a world of waves. Even there would I venture
Seeking some island unknown, not return with shame to my fathers.
Well might they wonder how souls like theirs begot us for their offspring.
Fighters war-afflicted, champions banded by heaven,
Wounds and defeat you have borne; bear too their errors who lead you.
Mortals are kings and have hearts; our leaders too have their passions.
Then if they err, yet still obey lest anarchy fostered,
Discord and deaf rebellion that speed like a poison through kingdoms,
Break all this army in pieces while Ate mocking at mortals
Trails to a shameful end this lofty essay of the nations.
Who among men has not thoughts that he holds for the wisest, though foolish?
Who, though feeble and nought, esteems not his strength o’er his fellow’s?
Therefore the wisest and strongest choose out a king and a leader,
Not as a perfect arbiter armed with impossible virtues
Far o’er our heads and our ken like a god high-judging his creatures,
But as a man among men who is valiant, wise and far-seeing,
One of ourselves and the knot of our wills and the sword of our action.
Him they advise and obey and cover his errors with silence.
Not Agamemnon the Atreid, Greeks, we obey in this mortal;
Greece we obey; for she walks in his gait and commands by his gestures.
Evil he works then who loosens this living knot of Achaia;

Falling apart from his nation who, wed to a solitary virtue,
Deeming he does but right, renounces the yoke of his fellows,
Errs more than hearts of the mire that in blindness and weakness go stumbling.
Man when he spurns his kind, when he equals himself with the deathless,
Even in his virtues sins and, erring, calls up Ate:
For among men we were born, not as wild-beasts sole in a fastness.
Oft with a name are misled the passionate hearts of the noble;
Chasing highly some image of good they trample its substance.
Evil is worked, not justice, when into the mould of our thinkings
God we would force and enchain to the throb of our hearts the immortals, —
Justice and Virtue, her sister, — for where is justice mid creatures
Perfectly? Even the gods are betrayed by our clay to a semblance.
Evil not good he sows who lifted too high for his fellows,
Dreams by his light or his force to compel this deity earth-born,
Evil though his wisdom exceeded the gathered light of the millions,
Evil though his single fate were vaster than Troy and Achaia.
Less is our gain from gods upon earth than from men in our image;
Just is the slow and common march, not a lonely swiftness
Far from our human reach that is vowed to impossible strivings.
Better the stumbling leader of men than inimitable paces.
If he be Peleus' son and his name the Phthian Achilles,
Worse is the bane: lo, the Ilian battlefield strewn with his errors!
Yet, O ye Greeks, if the heart returns that was loved, though it wandered,
Though with some pride it return and reproaching the friends that it fled from,
Be not less fond than heart-satisfied parents who yearn o'er that coming,
Smile at its pride and accept the wanderer. Happier music
Never has beat on my grief-vexed ears than the steps of Achilles
Turning back to this Greece and the cry of his strength in its rising.
Zeus is awake in this man who his dreadful world-slaying puissance
Gave in an hour of portentous birth to the single Achilles.
Taken today are Ilion's towers, a dead man is Priam.
Cross not the hero's will in his hour, Agamemnon Atrides,
Cross not the man whom the gods have chosen to work out their purpose
Then when he rises; his hour is his, though thine be all morrows.
First in the chambers of Paris' delight let us stable our horses,

Afterwards bale that is best shall be done persuading Achilles;
Doubt not the gods' decisions, awful, immutable, ruthless.
Flame shall lick Troy's towers and the limbs of her old men and infants.
O not today nor now remember the faults of the hero!
Follow him rather bravely and blindly as children their leader,
Guide your fate through the war-surge loud in the wake of his exploits.
Rise, O ye kings of the Greeks! leave debate for the voices of battle.
Peal forth the war-shout, pour forth the spear-sleet, surge towards Troya.
Ilion falls today; we shall turn in our ships to our children."
So Odysseus spoke and the Achaians heard him applauding;
Ever the pack by the voice of the mighty is seized and attracted!
Then from his seat Agamemnon arising his staff to the herald
Gave and around him arose the Kings of the west and its leaders,
Loud their assembly broke with a stern and martial rumour.

BOOK VII

The Book of the Woman

So to the voice of their best they were bowed and obeyed undebating;
Men whose hearts were burning yet with implacable passion
Felt Odysseus' strength and rose up clay to his counsels.
King Agamemnon rose at his word, the wide-ruling monarch,
Rose at his word the Cretan and Locrian, Thebes and Epirus,
Nestor rose, the time-tired hoary chief of the Pylians.
Round Agamemnon the Atreid Europe surged in her chieftains
Forth from their tent on the shores of the Troad, splendid in armour,
Into the golden blaze of the sun and the race of the sea-winds.
Fierce and clear like a flame to the death-gods bright on its altar
Shone in their eyes the lust of blood and of earth and of pillage;
For in their hearts those fires replaced the passions of discord
Forging a brittle peace by a common hatred and yearning.
Joyous they were of mood; for their hopes were already in Troya
Sating with massacre, plunder and rape and the groans of their foemen
Death and Hell in our mortal bosoms seated and shrouded;
There they have altars and seats, in mankind, in this fair-builded temple,
Made for purer gods; but we turn from their luminous temptings;
Vainly the divine whispers seek us; the heights are rejected.
Man to his earth drawn always prefers his nethermost promptings,
Man, devouring, devoured who is slayer and slain through the ages
Since by the beast he soars held and exceeds not that pedestal's measure.
They now followed close on the steps of the mighty Atrides
Glued like the forest pack to the war-scarred coat of its leader,
Glued as the pack when wolves follow their prey like Doom that can turn not.
Perfect forms and beautiful faces crowded the tent-door,
Brilliant eyes and fierce of souls that remembered the forest,
Wild-beasts touched by thought and savages lusting for beauty.
Dire and fierce and formidable chieftains followed Atrides,
Merciless kings of merciless men and the founders of Europe,
Sackers of Troy and sires of the Parthenon, Athens and Caesar.
Here they had come to destroy the ancient perishing cultures;
For, it is said, from the savage we rose and were born to a wild-beast.
So when the Eye supreme perceives that we rise up too swiftly,

Drawn towards height but fullness contemning, called by the azure,
Life when we fail in, poor in our base and forgetting our mother,
Back we are hurled to our roots; we recover our sap from the savage.
So were these sent by Zeus to destroy the old that was grandiose.
Such were those frames of old as the sons of Heaven might have chosen
Who in the dawn of eternity wedded the daughters of Nature,
Cultures touched by the morning star, vast, bold and poetic,
Titans' works and joys, but thrust down from their puissance and pleasure
Fainting now fell from the paces of Time or were left by his ages.
So were these born from Zeus to found the new that should flower
Lucid and slender and perfectly little as fit for this mortal
Ever who sinks back fatigued from immortality's stature;
Man, repelled by the gulfs within him and shrinking from vastness,
Form of the earth accepts and is glad of the lap of his mother.
Safe through the infinite seas could his soul self-piloted voyage,
Chasing the dawns and the wondrous horizons, eternity's secrets
Drawn from her luminous gulfs! But he journeys rudderless, helmless,
Driven and led by the breath of God who meets him with tempest,
Hurls at him Night. The earth is safer, warmer its sunbeams;
Death and limits are known; so he clings to them hating the summons.
So might one dwell who has come to take joy in a fair-lighted prison;
Amorous grown of its marble walls and its noble adornments,
Lost to mightier cares and the spaces boundlessly calling
Lust of the infinite skies he forgets and the kiss of the stormwind.
So might one live who inured to his days of the field and the farm-yard
Shrinks from the grandiose mountain-tops; shut up in lanes and in hedges
Only his furrows he leads and only orders his gardens,
Only his fleeces weaves and drinks of the yield of his vine-rows:
Lost to his ear is the song of the waterfall, wind in the forests.
Now to our earth we are bent and we study the skies for its image.
That was Greece and its shining, that now is France and its keenness,
That still is Europe though by the Christ-touch troubled and tortured,
Seized by the East but clasping her chains and resisting our freedom.
Then was all founded, on Phrygia's coasts, round Ilion's ramparts,
Then by the spear of Achilles, then in the Trojan death-cry;
Bearers mute of a future world were those armoured Achaians.
So they arrived from Zeus, an army led by the death-god.

So one can see them still who has sight from the gods in the trance-sleep
Out from the tent emerging on Phrygia's coasts in their armour;
Those of the early seed Pelasgian slighter in stature,
Dark-haired, hyacinth-curled from the isles of the sea and the southron,
Soft-eyed men with pitiless hearts; bright-haired the Achaians,
Hordes of the Arctic Dawn who had fled from the ice and the death-blast;
Children of conquerors lured to the coasts and the breezes and olives,
Noons of Mediterranean suns and the kiss of the southwind
Mingled their brilliant force with the plastic warmth of the Hamite.
There they shall rule and their children long till Fate and the Dorian
Break down Hellene doors and trample stern through the passes.
Mixed in a glittering rout on the Ocean beaches one sees them,
Perfect and beautiful figures and fronts, not as now are we mortals
Marred and crushed by our burden long of thought and of labour;
Perfect were these as our race bright-imaged was first by the Thinker
Seen who in golden lustres shapes all the glories we tarnish,
Rich from the moulds of Gods and unmarred in their splendour and swiftness.
Many and mighty they came over the beaches loud of the Aegean,
Roots of an infant world and the morning stars of this Europe,
Great Agamemnon's kingly port and the bright Menelaus,
Tall Idomeneus, Nestor, Odysseus Atlas-shouldered,
Helmeted Ajax, his chin of the beast and his eyes of the dreamer.
Over the sands they dispersed to their armies ranked by the Ocean.
But from the Argive front Acirrous loosed by Tydides
Parted as hastens a shaft from the string and he sped on intently
Swift where the beaches were bare or threading the gaps of the nations;
Crossing Thebes and Epirus he passed through the Lemnian archers,
Ancient Gnossus' hosts and Meriones' leaderless legions.
Heedless of cry and of laughter calling over the sea-sands
Swiftly he laboured, wind in his hair and the sea to him crying,
Straight he ran to the Myrmidon hosts and the tents of Achilles.
There he beheld at his tent-door the Phthian gleaming in armour,
Glittering-helmed with the sun that climbed now the cusp of Cronion,
Nobly tall, excelling humanity, planned like Apollo.
Proud at his side like a pillar upreared of snow or of marble,
Golden-haired, hard and white was the boy Neoptolemus, fire-eyed.

New were his feet to the Trojan sands from the ships and from Scyros:
Led to this latest of all his father's fights in the Troad
He for his earliest battle waited, the son of Achilles.
So in her mood had Fate brought them together, the son and the father,
Even as our souls travelling different paths have met in the ages
Each for its work and they cling for an hour to the names of affection,
Then Time's long waves bear them apart for new forms we shall know not,
So these two long severed had met in the shadow of parting.
Often he smote his hand on the thigh-piece for sound of the armour,
Bent his ear to the plains or restless moved like a war-horse
Curbed by his master's will, when he stands new-saddled for battle
Hearing the voice of the trumpets afar and pawing the meadows.
Over the sands Acirrous came to them running and toiling,
Known from far off, for he ran unhelmeted. High on the hero
Sunlike smiled the golden Achilles and into the tent-space
Seized by the hand and brought him and seated. "War-shaft of Troezen,
Whence was thy speed, Acirrous? Com'st thou, O friend, to my tent-side
Spurred by thy eager will or the trusted stern Diomedes?
Or from the Greeks like the voice still loved from a heart that is hollow?
What say the banded princes of Greece to the single Achilles?
Bringest thou flattery pale or an empty and futureless menace?"
But to the strength of Pelides the hero Acirrous answered:
"Response none make the Greeks to thy high-voiced message and challenge;
Only their shout at thy side will reply when thou leapst into Troya.
So have their chieftains willed and the wisdom calm of Odysseus."
But with a haughty scorn made answer the high-crested Hellene:
"Wise is Odysseus, wise are the hearts of Achaia's chieftains.
Ilion's chiefs are enough for their strength and life is too brittle
Hurrying Fate to advance on the spear of the Phthian Achilles."
"Not from the Greeks have I sped to thy tents, their friendship or quarrel
Urged not my feet; but Tiryns' chieftain strong Diomedes
Sent me claiming a word long old that first by his war-car
Young Neoptolemus come from island Scyros should enter
Far-crashing into the fight that has lacked this shoot of Achilles,
Pressing in front with his father's strength in the playground of Ares,
Shouting his father's cry as he clashed to his earliest battle.
So let Achilles' son twin-carred fight close by Tydides,

Seal of the ancient friendship new-sworn twixt your sires in their boyhood
Then when they learned the spear to guide and strove in the wrestle."
So he spoke recalling other times and regretted
And to the Argive's word consented the strength of Pelides.
He on the shoulder white of his son with a gesture of parting
Laid his fateful hand and spoke from his prescient spirit:
"Pyrrhus, go. No mightier guide couldst thou hope into battle
Opening the foemen's ranks than the hero stern Diomedes.
Noble that rugged heart, thy father's friend and his father's.
Journey through all wide Greece, seek her prytanies, schools and palaestras,
Traverse Ocean's rocks and the cities that dream on his margin,
Phocian dales, Aetolia's cliffs and Arcady's pastures,
Never a second man wilt thou find, but alone Diomedes.
Pyrrhus, follow his counsels always losing thy father,
If in this battle I fall and Fate has denied to me Troya.
Pyrrhus, be like thy father in virtue, thou canst not excel him;
Noble be in peace, invincible, brave in the battle,
Stern and calm to thy foe, to the suppliant merciful. Mortal
Favour and wrath as thou walkst heed never, son of Achilles.
Always thy will and the right impose on thy friend and thy foeman.
Count not life nor death, defeat nor triumph, Pyrrhus.
Only thy soul regard and the gods in thy joy or thy labour."
Pyrrhus heard and erect with a stride that was rigid and stately
Forth with Acirrous went from his sire to the joy of the battle.
Little he heeded the word of death that the god in our bosom
Spoke from the lips of Achilles, but deemed at sunset returning,
Slaying Halamus, Paris or dangerous mighty Aeneas,
Proudly to lay at his father's feet the spoils of the foeman.
But in his lair alone the godlike doomed Pelides
Turned to the door of his tent and was striding forth to the battle,
When from her inner chamber Briseis parting the curtain, —
Long had she stood there spying and waiting her lonely occasion, —
Came and caught and held his hand like a creeper detaining
Vainly a moment the deathward stride of the kings of the forest.
"Tarry awhile, Achilles; not yet have the war-horns clamoured,
Nor have the scouts streamed yet from Xanthus fierily running.
Lose a moment for her who has only thee under heaven.

Nay, had war sounded, thou yet wouldst squander that moment, Achilles,
Hearkening a woman's fears and the voice of a dream in the midnight.
Art thou not gentle even as terrible, lion of Hellas?
Others have whispered the deeds of thy wrath; we have heard, but not seen it;
Marvelling much at their pallor and awe we have listened and wondered.
Never with thrall or slavegirl or captive saw I thee angered,
Hero, nor any humble heart ever trembled to near thee.
Pardoning rather our many faults and our failures in service
Lightly thou layedst thy yoke on us kind as the clasp of a lover
Sparing the weak as thou breakest the mighty, O godlike Achilles.
Only thy equals have felt all the dread of the death-god within thee;
We have presumed and have played with the strength at which nations have trembled.
Lo, thou hast leaned thy mane to the clutch of the boys and the maidens."
But to Briseis white-armed made answer smiling Achilles:
"Something sorely thou needst, for thou flatterest long, O Briseis.
Tell me, O woman, thy fear or thy dream that my touch may dispel it,
White-armed net of bliss slipped down from the gold Aphrodite."
And to Achilles answered the captive white Briseis:
"Long have they vexed my soul in the tents of the Greeks, O Achilles,
Telling of Thetis thy mother who bore thee in caves of the Ocean
Clasped by a mortal and of her fear from the threats of the Ancients,
Weavers of doom who play with our hopes and smile at our passions
Painting Time with the red of our hearts on the web they have woven,
How on the Ocean's bosom she hid thee in vine-tangled Scyros
Clothed like a girl among girls with the daughters of King Lycomedes, —
Art thou not fairer than woman's beauty, yet great as Apollo? —
Fearing Paris' shafts and the anger of Delian Phoebus.
Now in the night has a vision three times besieged me from heaven.
Over the sea in my dream an argent bow was extended;
Nearing I saw a terror august over moonlit waters,
Cloud and a fear and a face that was young and lovely and hostile.
Then three times I heard arise in the grandiose silence, —
Still was the sky and still was the land and still were the waters, —
Echoing a mighty voice, 'Take back, O King, what thou gavest;
Strength, take thy strong man, sea, take thy wave, till the warfare eternal
Need him again to thunder through Asia's plains to the Ganges.'

That fell silent, but nearer the beautiful Terror approached me,
Clang I heard of the argent bow and I gazed on Apollo.
Shrilly I cried; it was thee that the shaft of the heavens had yearned for,
Thee that it sought like a wild thing in anger straight at its quarry,
Quivering into thy heel. I awoke and found myself trembling,
Held thee safe in my arms, yet hardly believed that thou livest.
Lo, in the night came this dream; on the morn thou arisest for battle."
But to Briseis white-armed made answer the golden Achilles:
"This was a dream indeed, O princess, daughter of Brises!
Will it restrain Achilles from fight, the lion from preying?
Come, thou hast heard of my prowess and knowest what man is Achilles.
Deemst thou so near my end? or does Polyxena vex thee,
Jealousy shaping thy dreams to frighten me back from her capture?"
Passionate, vexed Briseis, smiting his arm with her fingers,
Yet with a smile half-pleased made answer to mighty Achilles.
"Thinkst thou I fear thee at all? I am brave and will chide thee and threaten.
See that thou recklessly throw not, Achilles, thy life into battle
Hurting this body, my world, nor venture sole midst thy foemen,
Leaving thy shielders behind as oft thou art wont in thy war-rage
Lured by thy tempting gods who seek their advantage to slay thee,
Fighting divinely, careless of all but thy spear and thy foeman.
Cover thy limbs with thy shield, speed slowly restraining thy coursers.
Dost thou not know all the terrible void and cold desolation
Once again my life must become if I lose thee, Achilles?
Twice then thus wilt thou smite me, O hero, a desolate woman?
I will not stay behind on an earth that is empty and kingless.
Into the grave I will leap, through the fire I will burn, I will follow
Down into Hades' depths or wherever thy footsteps go clanging,
Hunting thee always, — didst thou not seize me here for thy pleasure? —
Stronger there by my love as thou than I here, O Achilles.
Thou shalt not dally alone with Polyxena safe in the shadows."
But to Briseis answered the hero, mighty Pelides,
Holding her delicate hands like gathered flowers in his bosom,
Pressing her passionate mouth like a rose that trembles with beauty.
"There then follow me even as I would have drawn thee, O woman,
Voice that chimes with my soul and hands that are eager for service,
Beautiful spoil beloved of my foemen, perfect Briseis.

But for the dreams that come to us mortals sleeping or waking,
Shadows are these from our souls and who shall discern what they figure?
Fears from the heart speak voiced like Zeus, take shape as Apollo.
But were they truer than Delphi's cavern voice or Dodona's
Moan that seems wind in his oaks immemorable, how should they alter
Fate that the stern gods have planned from the first when the earth was unfashioned,
Shapeless the gyre of the sun? For dream or for oracle adverse
Why should man swerve from the path of his feet? The gods have invented
Only one way for a man through the world, O my slavegirl Briseis,
Valiant to be and noble and truthful and just to the humble,
Only one way for a woman, to love and serve and be faithful.
This observe, thy task in thy destiny noble or fallen;
Time and result are the gods'; with these things be not thou troubled."
So he spoke and kissed her lips and released her and parted.
Out from the tent he strode and into his chariot leaping
Seized the reins and shouted his cry and drove with a far-borne
Sound of wheels mid the clamour of hooves and the neigh of the war-steeds
Swift through the line of the tents and forth from the heart of the leaguer.
Over the causeway Troyward thundered the wheels of Achilles.
After him crashing loud with a fierce and resonant rumour
Chieftains impetuous prone to the mellay and swift at the war-cry
Came, who long held from the lust of the spear and the joy of the war-din
Rushed over earth like hawks released through the air; a shouting
Limitless rolled behind, for nations followed each war-cry.
Lords renowned of the northern hills and the plains and the coast-lands,
Many a Dorian, many a Phthian, many a Hellene,
Names now lost to the ear though then reputed immortal!
Night has swallowed them, Zeus has devoured the light of his children;
Drawn are they back to his bosom vast whence they came in their fierceness
Thinking to conquer the earth and dominate Time and his ages.
Nor on their left less thick came numerous even as the sea-sands
Forth from the line of the leaguer that skirted the far-sounding waters,
Ranked behind Tydeus' son and the Spartan, bright Menelaus,
Ithaca's chief and Epeus, Idomeneus lord of the Cretans,
Acamas, Nestor, Neleus' son, and the brave Ephialtus,
Prothous, Meges, Leitus the bold and the king Prothoënor,

Wise Alceste's son and the Lemnian, stern Philoctetes,
These and unnumbered warlike captains marching the Argives.
Last in his spacious car drove shaping the tread of his armies,
Even as a shepherd who follows his flock to the green of the pastures,
Atreus' far-famed son, the monarch great Agamemnon.
They on the plain moved out and gazing far over the pastures
Saw behind Xanthus rolling with dust like a cloud full of thunder,
Ominous, steadily nearing, shouting their war-cry the Trojans.

BOOK VIII

The Book of the Gods

So on the earth the seed that was sown of the centuries ripened;
Europe and Asia, met on their borders, clashed in the Troad.
All over earth men wept and bled and laboured, world-wide
Sowing Fate with their deeds and had other fruit than they hoped for,
Out of desires and their passionate griefs and fleeting enjoyments
Weaving a tapestry fit for the gods to admire, who in silence
Joy, by the cloud and the sunbeam veiled, and men know not their movers.
They in the glens of Olympus, they by the waters of Ida
Or in their temples worshipped in vain or with heart-strings of mortals
Sated their vast desire and enjoying the world and each other
Sported free and unscourged; for the earth was their prey and their playground.
But from his luminous deep domain, from his estate of azure
Zeus looked forth; he beheld the earth in its flowering greenness
Spread like an emerald dream that the eyes have enthroned in the sunlight,
Heard the symphonies old of the ocean recalling the ages
Lost and dead from its marches salt and unharvested furrows,
Felt in the pregnant hour the unborn hearts of the future.
Troubled kingdoms of men he beheld, the hind in the furrow,
Lords of the glebe and the serf subdued to the yoke of his fortunes,
Slavegirls tending the fire and herdsmen driving the cattle,
Artisans labouring long for a little hire in men's cities,
Labour long and the meagre reward for a toil that is priceless.
Kings in their seats august or marching swift with their armies
Founded ruthlessly brittle empires. Merchant and toiler
Patiently heaped up our transient wealth like the ants in their hillock.
And to preserve it all, to protect this dust that must perish,
Hurting the eternal soul and maiming heaven for some metal
Judges condemned their brothers to chains and to death and to torment,
Criminals scourgers of crime, — for so are these ant-heaps founded, —
Punishing sin by a worse affront to our crucified natures.
All the uncertainty, all the mistaking, all the delusion
Naked were to his gaze; in the moonlit orchards there wandered
Lovers dreaming of love that endures — till the moment of treason;

Helped by the anxious joy of their kindred supported their anguish
Women with travail racked for the child who shall rack them with sorrow.
Hopes that were confident, fates that sprang dire from the seed of a moment,
Yearning that claimed all time for its date and all life for its fuel,
All that we wonder at gazing back when the passion has fallen,
Labour blind and vain expense and sacrifice wasted,
These he beheld with a heart unshaken; to each side he studied
Seas of confused attempt and the strife and the din and the crying.
All things he pierced in us gazing down with his eyelids immortal,
Lids on which sleep dare not settle, the Father of men on his creatures;
Nor by the cloud and the mist was obscured which baffles our eyeballs,
But he distinguished our source and saw to the end of our labour.
He in the animal racked knew the god that is slowly delivered;
Therefore his heart rejoiced. Not alone the mind in its trouble
God beholds, but the spirit behind that has joy of the torture.
Might not our human gaze on the smoke of a furnace, the burning
Red, intolerable, anguish of ore that is fused in the hell-heat,
Shrink and yearn for coolness and peace and condemn all the labour?
Rather look to the purity coming, the steel in its beauty,
Rather rejoice with the master who stands in his gladness accepting
Heat of the glorious god and the fruitful pain of the iron.
Last the eternal gaze was fixed on Troy and the armies
Marching swift to the shock. It beheld the might of Achilles
Helmed and armed, knew all the craft in the brain of Odysseus,
Saw Deiphobus stern in his car and the fates of Aeneas,
Greece of her heroes empty, Troy enringed by her slayers,
Paris a setting star and the beauty of Penthesilea.
These things he saw delighted; the heart that contains all our ages
Blessed our toil and grew full of its fruits, as the Artist eternal
Watched his vehement drama staged twixt the sea and the mountains,
Phrased in the clamour and glitter of arms and closed by the firebrand,
Act itself out in blood and in passions fierce on the Troad.
Yet as a father his children, who sits in the peace of his study
Hearing the noise of his brood and pleased with their play and their quarrels,
So he beheld our mortal race. Then, turned from the armies,
Into his mind he gazed where Time is reflected and, conscient,
Knew the iron knot of our human fates in their warfare.

Calm he arose and left our earth for his limitless kingdoms.
Far from this lower blue and high in the death-scorning spaces
Lifted o'er mortal mind where Time and Space are but figures
Lightly imagined by Thought divine in her luminous stillness,
Zeus has his palace high and there he has stabled his war-car.
Thence he descends to our mortal realms; where the heights of our mountains
Meet with the divine air, he touches and enters our regions.
Now he ascended back to his natural realms and their rapture,
There where all life is bliss and each feeling an ecstasy mastered.
Thence his eagle Thought with its flashing pinions extended
Winged through the world to the gods, and they came at the call, they ascended
Up from their play and their calm and their works through the infinite azure.
Some from our mortal domains in grove or by far-flowing river
Cool from the winds of the earth or quivering with perishable fragrance
Came, or our laughter they bore and the song of the sea in their paces.
Some from the heavens above us arrived, our vital dominions
Whence we draw breath; for there all things have life, the stone like the ilex,
Clay of those realms like the children of men and the brood of the giants.
There Enceladus groans oppressed and draws strength from his anguish
Under a living Aetna and flames that have joy of his entrails.
Fiercely he groans and rejoices expecting the end of his foemen
Hastened by every pang and counts long Time by his writhings.
There in the champaigns unending battle the gods and the giants,
There in eternal groves the lovers have pleasure for ever,
There are the faery climes and there are the wonderful pastures.
Some from a marvellous Paradise hundred-realmed in its musings,
Million-ecstasied, climbed like flames that in silence aspire
Windless, erect in a motionless dream, yet ascending for ever.
All grew aware of the will divine and were drawn to the Father.
Grandiose, calm in her gait, imperious, awing the regions,
Hera came in her pride, the spouse of Zeus and his sister.
As at her birth from the foam of the spaces white Aphrodite
Rose in the cloud of her golden hair like the moon in its halo.
Aegis-bearing Athene, shielded and helmeted, answered
Rushing the call and the heavens thrilled with the joy of her footsteps

Dumbly repeating her name, as insulted and trampled by beauty
Thrill might the soul of a lover and cry out the name of its tyrant.
Others there were as mighty; for Artemis, archeress ancient,
Came on her sandals lightning-tasselled. Up the vast incline
Shaking the world with the force of his advent thundered Poseidon;
Space grew full of his stride and his cry. Immortal Apollo
Shone and his silver clang was heard with alarm in our kingdoms.
Ares' impetuous eyes looked forth from a cloud-drift of splendour;
Themis' steps appeared and Ananke, the mystic Erinnys;
Nor was Hephaestus' flaming strength from his father divided.
Even the ancient Dis to arrive dim-featured, eternal,
Seemed; but his rays are the shades and his voice is the call of the silence.
Into the courts divine they crowded, radiant, burning,
Perfect in utter grace and light. The joy of their spirits
Calls to eternal Time and the glories of Space are his answer:
Thence were these bright worlds born and persist by the throb of their heart-beats.
Not in the forms that mortals have seen when assisted they scatter
Mists of this earthly dust from their eyes in their moments of greatness
Shone those unaging Powers; nor as in our centuries radiant
Mortal-seeming bodies they wore when they mixed with our nations.
Then the long youth of the world had not faded still out of our natures,
Flowers and the sunlight were felt and the earth was glad like a mother.
Then for a human delight they were masked in this denser vesture
Earth desires for her bliss, — thin veils, for the god through them glimmered.
Quick were men's days with the throng of the brilliant presences near them:
Gods from the wood and the valley, gods from the obvious wayside,
Gods on the secret hills leaped out from their light on the mortal.
Oft in the haunt and the grove they met with our kind and their touches
Seized and subjected our clay to the greatness of passions supernal,
Grasping the earthly virgin and forcing heaven on this death-dust.
Glorifying human beauty Apollo roamed in our regions
Clymene when he pursued or yearned in vain for Marpessa;
Glorifying earth with a human-seeming face of the beauty
Brought from her heavenly climes Aphrodite mixed with Anchises.
Glimpsed in the wilds were the Satyrs, seen in the woodlands the Graces,
Dryad and Naiad in river and forest, Oreads haunting

Glens and the mountain-glades where they played with the manes of our lions
Glimmered on death-claimed eyes; for the gods then were near us and clasped us,
Heaven leaned down in love with our clay and yearned to its transience.
But we have coarsened in heart and in mood; we have turned in our natures
Nearer our poorer kindred; leaned to the ant and the ferret.
Sight we have darkened with sense and power we have stifled with labour,
Likened in mood to the things we gaze at and are in our vestures:
Therefore we toil unhelped; we are left to our weakness and blindness.
Not in those veils now they rose to their skies, but like loose-fitting mantles
Dropped in the vestibules huge of their vigorous realms that besiege us
All that reminded of earth; then clothed with raiment of swiftness
Straight they went quivering up in a glory like fire or the storm-blast.
Even those natural vestures of puissance they leave when they enter
Mind's more subtle fields and agree with its limitless regions
Peopled by creatures of bliss and forms more true than earth's shadows,—
Mind that pure from this density, throned in her splendours immortal
Looks up at Light and suffers bliss from ineffable kingdoms
Where beyond Mind and its rays is the gleam of a glory supernal:
There our sun cannot shine and our moon has no place for her lustres,
There our lightnings flash not, nor fire of these spaces is suffered.
They with bodies impalpable here to our touch and our seeing,
But for a higher delight, to a brighter sense, with more sweetness
Palpable there and visible, thrilled with a lordlier joyance,
Came to the courts of Zeus and his heavens sang to their footsteps.
Harmonies flowed through the blissful coils of the kingdoms of rapture.
Then by his mighty equals surrounded the Thunderer regnant
Veiled his thought in sound that was heard in their souls as they listened.
Veiled are the high gods always lest there should dawn on the mortal
Light too great from the skies and men to their destiny clear-eyed
Walk unsustained like the gods; then Night and Dawn were defeated
And of their masks the deities robbed would be slaves to their subjects.
"Children of Immortality, gods who are joyous for ever,
Rapture is ours and eternity measures our lives by his aeons.
For we desireless toil who have joy in the fall as the triumph,
Knowledge eternal possessing we work for an end that is destined

Long already beyond by the Will of which Time is the courser.
Therefore death cannot alter our lives nor pain our enjoyment.
But in the world of mortals twilight is lord of its creatures.
Nothing they perfectly see, but all things seek and imagine,
Out of the clod who have come and would climb from their mire to our heavens.
Yet are the heavenly seats not easy even for the chosen:
Rough and remote is that path; that ascent is too hard for the death-bound.
Hard are God's terms and few can meet them of men who are mortal.
Mind resists; their breath is a clog; by their tools they are hampered,
Blindly mistaking the throb of their mortal desires for our guidance.
How shall they win in their earth to our skies who are clay and a life-wind,
But that their hearts we invade? Our shocks on their lives come incessant,
Ease discourage and penetrate coarseness; sternness celestial
Forces their souls towards the skies and their bodies by anguish are sifted.
We in the mortal wake an immortal strength by our tortures
And by the flame of our lightnings choose out the vessels of godhead.
This is the nature of earth that to blows she responds and by scourgings
Travails excited; pain is the bed of her blossoms of pleasure.
Earth that was wakened by pain to life and by hunger to thinking
Left to her joys rests inert and content with her gains and her station.
But for the unbearable whips of the gods back soon to her matter
She would go glad and the goal would be missed and the aeons be wasted.
But for the god in their breasts unsatisfied, but for his spurrings
Soon would the hero turn beast and the sage reel back to the savage;
Man from his difficult heights would recoil and be mud in the earth-mud.
This by pain we prevent; we compel his feet to the journey.
But in their minds to impression made subject, by forms of things captured
Blind is the thought and presumptuous the hope and they swerve from our goading;
Blinded are human hearts by desire and fear and possession,
Darkened is knowledge on earth by hope the helper of mortals.
"Now too from earth and her children voices of anger and weeping
Beat at our thrones; 'tis the grief and the wrath of fate-stricken creatures,
Mortals struggling with destiny, hearts that are slaves to their sorrow.
We unmoved by the cry will fulfil our unvarying purpose.
Troy shall fall at last and the ancient ages shall perish.

You who are lovers of Ilion turn from the moans of her people,
Chase from your hearts their prayers, blow back from your nostrils the incense.
Let not one nation resist by its glory the good of the ages.
Twilight thickens over man and he moves to his winter of darkness.
Troy that displaced with her force and her arms the luminous ancients,
Sinks in her turn by the ruder strength of the half-savage Achaians.
They to the Hellene shall yield and the Hellene fall by the Roman.
Rome too shall not endure, but by strengths ill-shaped shall be broken,
Nations formed in the ice and mist, confused and crude-hearted.
So shall the darker and ruder always prevail o'er the brilliant
Till in its turn to a ruder and darker it falls and is shattered.
So shall mankind make speed to destroy what 'twas mighty creating.
Ever since knowledge failed and the ancient ecstasy slackened,
Light has been helper to death and darkness increases the victor.
So shall it last till the fallen ages return to their greatness.
For if the twilight be helped not, night o'er the world cannot darken;
Night forbidden how shall a greater dawn be effected?
Gods of the light who know and resist that the doomed may have succour,
Always then shall desire and passion strive with Ananke?
Conquer the cry of your heart-strings that man too may conquer his sorrow,
Stilled in his yearnings. Cease, O ye gods, from the joy of rebellion.
Open the eye of the soul, admit the voice of the Silence."
        So in the courts of Heaven august the Thunderer puissant
Spoke to his sons in their souls and they heard him, mighty in silence.
Then to her brother divine the white-armed passionless Hera:
"Zeus, we remember; thy sons forget, Apollo and Ares."
"Hera, queen of the heavens, they forget not, but choose to be mindless.
This is the greatness of gods that they know and can put back the knowledge;
Doing the work they have chosen they turn not for fruit nor for failure,
Griefless they walk to their goal and strain not their eyes towards the ending.
Light that they have they can lose with a smile, not as souls in the darkness
Clutch at every beam and mistake their one ray for all splendour.
All things are by Time and the Will eternal that moves us,
And for each birth its hour is set in the night or the dawning.
There is an hour for knowledge, an hour to forget and to labour."
        Great Cronion ceased and high in the heavenly silence

Rose in their midst the voice of the loud impetuous Ares
Sounding far in the luminous fields of his soul as with thunder.
"Father, we know and we have not forgotten. This is our godhead,
Still to strive and never to yield to the evil that conquers.
I will not dwell with the Greeks nor aid them save forced by Ananke
And because lives of the great and the blood of the strong are my portion.
This too thou knowest, our nature enjoys in mankind its fulfilment.
War is my nature and greatness and hardness, the necks of the vanquished;
Force is my soul and strength is my bosom; I shout in the battle
Breaking cities like toys and the nations are playthings of Ares:
Hither and thither I shove them and throw down or range on my table.
Constancy most I love, nobility, virtue and courage;
Fugitive hearts I abhor and the nature fickle as sea-foam.
Now if the ancient spirit of Titan battle is over, —
Tros fights no more on the earth, nor now Heracles tramples and struggles,
Bane of the hydra or slaying the Centaurs o'er Pelion driven, —
Now if the earth no more must be shaken by Titan horsehooves,
Since to a pettier framework all things are fitted consenting,
Yet will I dwell not in Greece nor favour the nurslings of Pallas.
I will await the sons of my loins and the teats of the she-wolf,
Consuls browed like the cliffs and plebeians stern of the wolf-brood,
Senates of kings and armies of granite that grow by disaster;
Such be the nation august that is fit for the favour of Ares!
They shall fulfil me and honour my mother, imperial Hera.
Then with an iron march they shall move to their world-wide dominion,
Through the long centuries rule and at last because earth is impatient,
Slowly with haughtiness perish compelled by mortality's transience
Leaving a Roman memory stamped on the ages of weakness."
But to his son far-sounding the Father high of the Immortals:
"So let it be since such is the will in thee, mightiest Ares;
Thou shalt till sunset prevail, O war-god, fighting for Troya."
So he decreed and the soul of the Warrior sternly consented.
He from his seats arose and down on the summits of Ida
Flaming through Space in his cloud in a headlong glory descended,
Prone like a thunderbolt flaming down from the hand of the Father.
Thence in his chariot drawn by living fire and by swiftness,
Thundered down to earth's plains the mighty impetuous Ares.

Far where Deiphobus stern was labouring stark and outnumbered
Smiting the Achaian myriads back on the right of the carnage,
Over the hosts in his car he stood and darkened the Argives.
But in the courts divine the Thunderer spoke to his children:
"Ares resisting a present Fate for the hope of the future,
Gods, has gone forth from us. Choose thou thy paths, O my daughter,
More than thy brother assailed by the night that darkens o'er creatures.
Choose the silence in heaven or choose the struggle mid mortals,
Golden joy of the worlds, O thou roseate white Aphrodite."
Then with her starry eyes and bosom of bliss from the immortals
Glowing and rosy-limbed cried the wonderful white Aphrodite,
Drawing her fingers like flowers through the flowing gold of her tresses,
Calm, discontented, her perfect mouth like a rose of resistance
Chidingly budded 'gainst Fate, a charm to their senses enamoured.
"Well do I know thou hast given my world to Hera and Pallas.
What though my temples shall stand in Paphos and island Cythera
And though the Greek be a priest for my thoughts and a lyre for my singing,
Beauty pursuing and light through the figures of grace and of rhythm, —
Forms shall he mould for men's eyes that the earth has forgotten and mourns for,
Mould even the workings of Pallas to commune with Paphia's sweetness,
Mould Hephaestus' craft in the gaze of the gold Aphrodite, —
Only my form he pursues that I wear for a mortal enchantment,
He to whom now thou givest the world, the Ionian, the Hellene,
But for my might is unfit which Babylon worshipped and Sidon
Palely received from the past in images faint of the gladness
Once that was known by the children of men when the thrill of their members
Was but the immortal joy of the spirit overflowing their bodies,
Wine-cups of God's desire; but their clay from my natural greatness
Falters betrayed to pain, their delight they have turned into ashes.
Nor to my peaks shall he rise and the perfect fruit of my promptings,
There where the senses swoon but the heart is delivered by rapture:
Never my touch can cling to his soul nor reply from his heart-strings.
Once could my godhead surprise all the stars with the seas of its rapture;
Once the world in its orbit danced to a marvellous rhythm.
Men in their limits, gods in their amplitudes answered my calling;
Life was moved by a chant of delight that sang from the spaces,

Sang from the Soul of the Vast, its rapture clasping its creatures.
Sweetly agreed my fire with their soil and their hearts were as altars.
Pure were its crests; ’twas not dulled with earth, ’twas not lost in the hazes
Then when the sons of earth and the daughters of heaven together
Met on lone mountain peaks or, linked on wild beach and green meadow,
Twining embraced. For I danced on Taygetus’ peaks and o’er Ida
Naked and loosing my golden hair like a nimbus of glory
O’er a deep-ecstasied earth that was drunk with my roses and whiteness.
There was no shrinking nor veil in our old Saturnian kingdoms.
Equals were heaven and earth, twin gods on the lap of Dione.
Now shall my waning greatness perish and pass out of Nature.
For though the Romans, my children, shall grasp at the strength of their mother,
They shall not hold the god, but lose in unsatisfied orgies
Yet what the earth has kept of my joy, my glory, my puissance,
Who shall but drink for a troubled hour in the dusk of the sunset
Dregs of my wine Pandemian missing the Uranian sweetness.
So shall the night descend on the greatness and rapture of living;
Creeds that refuse shall persuade the world to revolt from its mother.
Pallas’ adorers shall loathe me and Hera’s scorn me for lowness;
Beauty shall pass from men’s work and delight from their play and their labour;
Earth restored to the Cyclops shall shrink from the gold Aphrodite.
So shall I live diminished, owned but by beasts in the forest,
Birds of the air and the gods in their heavens, but disgraced in the mortal.”
Then to the discontented rosy-mouthed Aphrodite
Zeus replied, the Father divine: “O goddess Astarte,
What are these thoughts thou hast suffered to wing from thy rose-mouth immortal?
Bees that sting and delight are the words from thy lips, Cytherea.
Art thou not womb of the world and from thee are the thronging of creatures?
And didst thou cease the worlds too would cease and the aeons be ended.
Suffer my Greeks; accept who accept thee, O gold Dionaean.
They in the works of their craft and their dreams shall enthrone thee for ever,
Building thee temples in Paphos and Eryx and island Cythera,
Building the fane more enduring and bright of thy golden ideal.

Even if natures of men could renounce thee and God do without thee,
Rose of love and sea of delight, O my child Aphrodite,
Still wouldst thou live in the worship they gave thee protected from fading,
Splendidly statued and shrined in men's works and men's thoughts,
Cytherea."
Pleased and blushing with bliss of her praise and the thought of her
empire
Answered, as cries a harp in heaven, the gold Aphrodite:
"Father, I know and I spoke but to hear from another my praises.
I am the womb of the world and the cause of this teeming of creatures,
And if discouraged I ceased, God's world would lose heart and would perish.
How will you do then without me your works of wisdom and greatness,
Hera, queen of heaven, and thou, O my sister Athene?
Yes, I shall reign and endure though the pride of my workings be conquered.
What though no second Helen find a second Paris,
Lost though their glories of form to the earth, though their confident gladness
Pass from a race misled and forgetting the sap that it sprang from,
They are eternal in man in the worship of beauty and rapture.
Ever while earth is embraced by the sun and hot with his kisses
And while a Will supernal works through the passions of Nature,
Me shall men seek with my light or their darkness, sweetly or crudely,
Cold on the ice of the north or warm in the heats of the southland,
Slowly enduring my touch or with violence rapidly burning.
I am the sweetness of living, I am the touch of the Master.
Love shall die bound to my stake like a victim adorned as for bridal,
Life shall be bathed in my flames and be purified gold or be ashes.
I, Aphrodite, shall move the world for ever and ever.
Yet now since most to me, Father of all, the ages arriving,
Hostile, rebuke my heart and turn from my joy and my sweetness,
I will resist and not yield, nor care what I do, so I conquer.
Often I curbed my mood for your sakes and was gracious and kindly,
Often I lay at Hera's feet and obeyed her commandments
Tranquil and proud or o'ercome by a honeyed and ancient compulsion
Fawned on thy pureness and served thy behests, O my sister Pallas.
Deep was the love that united us, happy the wrestle and clasping;
Love divided, Love united, Love was our mover.
But since you now overbear and would scourge me and chain and control me,

War I declare on you all, O my Father and brothers and sisters.
Henceforth I do my will as the joy in me prompts or the anger.
Ranging the earth with my beauty and passion and golden enjoyments
All whom I can, I will bind; I will drive at the bliss of my workings,
Whether men's hearts are seized by the joy or seized by the torture.
Most I will plague your men, your worshippers and in my malice
Break up your works with confusion divine, O my mother and sister;
Then shall you fume and resist and be helpless and pine with my torments.
Yet will I never relent but always be sweet and malignant,
Cruel and tyrannous, hurtful and subtle, a charm and a torture.
Thou too, O father Zeus, shalt always be vexed with my doings;
Called in each moment to judge thou shalt chafe at our cry and our quarrels,
Often grope for thy thunderbolt, often frown magisterial
Joining in vain thy awful brows o'er thy turbulent children.
Yet in thy wrath recall my might and my wickedness, Father;
Hurt me not then too much lest the world and thyself too should suffer.
Save, O my Father, life and grace and the charm of the senses;
Love preserve lest the heart of the world grow dulled and forsaken."
Smiling her smile immortal of love and of mirth and of malice
White Aphrodite arose in her loveliness armed for the conflict.
Golden and careless and joyous she went like a wild bird that winging
Flits from bough to bough and resumes its chant interrupted.
Love where her white feet trod bloomed up like a flower from the spaces;
Mad round her touches billowed incessantly laughter and rapture.
Thrilled with her feet was the bosom of Space, for her amorous motion
Floated, a flower on the wave of her bliss or swayed like the lightning.
Rich as a summer fruit and fresh as Spring's blossoms her body
Gleaming and blushing, veiled and bare and with ecstasy smiting
Burned out rosy and white through her happy ambrosial raiment,
Golden-tressed and a charm, her bosom a fragrance and peril.
So was she framed to the gaze as she came from the seats of the Mighty,
So embodied she visits the hearts of men and their dwellings
And in her breathing tenement laughs at the eyes that can see her.
Swift-footed down to the Troad she hastened thrilling the earth-gods.
There with ambrosial secrecy veiled, admiring the heroes
Strong and beautiful, might of the warring and glory of armour,
Over her son Aeneas she stood, his guard in the battle.

But in the courts divine the Thunderer spoke mid his children:
"Thou for a day and a night and another day and a nightfall,
White Aphrodite, prevail; o'er thee too the night is extended.
She has gone forth who made men like gods in their glory and gladness.
Now in the darkness coming all beauty must wane or be tarnished;
Joy shall fade and mighty Love grow fickle and fretful;
Even as a child that is scared in the night, he shall shake in his chambers.
Yet shall a portion be kept for these, Ares and white Aphrodite.
Thou whom already thy Pythoness bears not, torn by thy advent,
Caverned already who sittest in Delphi knowing thy future,
What wilt thou do with the veil and the night, O burning Apollo?"
Then from the orb of his glory unbearable save to immortals
Bright and austere replied the beautiful mystic Apollo:
"Zeus, I know that I fade; already the night is around me.
Dusk she extends her reign and obscures my lightnings with error.
Therefore my prophets mislead men's hearts to the ruin appointed,
Therefore Cassandra cries in vain to her sire and her brothers.
All I endure I foresee and the strength in me waits for its coming;
All I foresee I approve; for I know what is willed, O Cronion.
Yet is the fierce strength wroth in my breast at the need of approval
And for the human race fierce pity works in my bosom;
Wroth is my splendid heart with the cowering knowledge of mortals,
Wroth are my burning eyes with the purblind vision of reason.
I will go forth from your seats and descend to the night among mortals
There to guard the flame and the mystery; vast in my moments
Rare and sublime to sound like a sea against Time and its limits,
Cry like a spirit in pain in the hearts of the priest and the poet,
Cry against limits set and disorder sanities bounded.
Jealous for truth to the end my might shall prevail and for ever
Shatter the moulds that men make to imprison their limitless spirits.
Dire, overpowering the brain I shall speak out my oracles splendid.
Then in their ages of barren light or lucidity fruitful
Whenso the clear gods think they have conquered earth and its mortals,
Hidden God from all eyes, they shall wake from their dream and recoiling
Still they shall find in their paths the fallen and darkened Apollo."
So he spoke, repressing his dreadful might in his bosom,
And from their high seats passed, his soul august and resplendent

Drawn to the anguish of men and the fierce terrestrial labour.
Down he dropped with a roar of light invading the regions,
And in his fierce and burning spirit intense and uplifted
Sure of his luminous truth and careless for weakness of mortals
Flaming oppressed the earth with his dire intolerant beauty.
Over the summits descending that slept in the silence of heaven,
He through the spaces angrily drew towards the tramp and the shouting
Over the speeding of Xanthus and over the pastures of Troya.
Clang of his argent bow was the wrath restrained of the mighty,
Stern was his pace like Fate's; so he came to the warfare of mortals
And behind Paris strong and inactive waited God's moment
Knowing what should arrive, nor disturbed like men by their hopings.
    But in the courts of Heaven Zeus to his brother immortal
Turned like a menaced king on his counsellor smiling augustly:
"Seest thou, Poseidon, this sign that great gods revolting have left us,
Follow their hearts and strive with Ananke? Yet though they struggle,
Thou and I will do our will with the world, O earth-shaker."
    Answered to Zeus the besieger of earth, the voice of the waters:
"This is our strength and our right, for we are the kings and the masters.
Too much pity has been and yielding of Heaven to mortals.
I will go down with my chariot drawn by my thunder-maned coursers
Into the battle and thrust down Troy with my hand to the silence,
Even though she cling round the snowy knees of our child Aphrodite
Or with Apollo's sun take refuge from Night and her shadows.
I will not pity her pain, who am ruthless even as my surges.
Brother, thou knowest, O Zeus, that I am a king and a trader;
For on my paths I receive earth's skill and her merchandise gather,
Traffic richly in pearls and bear the swift ships on my bosom.
Blue are my waves and they call men's hearts to wealth and adventure.
Lured by the shifting surges they launch their delight and their treasures
Trusting the toil of years to the perilous moments of Ocean.
Huge man's soul in its petty frame goes wrestling with Nature
Over her vasts and his fragile ships between my horizons
Buffeting death in his solitudes labour through swell and through storm-blast
Bound for each land with her sons and watched for by eyes in each haven.
I from Tyre up to Gades trace on my billows their trade-routes
And on my vast and spuming Atlantic suffer their rudders.

Carthage and Greece are my children, the marts of the world are my term-posts.
Who then deserves the earth if not he who enriches and fosters?
But thou hast favoured thy sons, O Zeus; O Hera, earth's sceptres
Still were denied me and kept for strong Ares and brilliant Apollo.
Now all your will shall be done, so you give me the earth for my nations.
Gold shall make men like gods and bind their thoughts into oneness;
Peace I will build with gold and heaven with the pearls of my caverns."
Smiling replied to his brother's craft the mighty Cronion:
"Lord of the boundless seas, Poseidon, soul of the surges,
Well thou knowest that earth shall be seized as a booth for the trader.
Rome nor Greece nor France can drive back Carthage for ever.
Always each birth of the silence attaining the field and the movement
Takes from Time its reign; for it came for its throne and its godhead.
So too shall Mammon take and his sons their hour from the ages.
Yet is the flame and the dust last end of the silk and the iron,
And at their end the king and the prophet shall govern the nations.
Even as Troy, so shall Babylon flame up to heaven for the spoiler
Wailed by the merchant afar as he sees the red glow from the ocean."
Up from the seats of the Mighty the Earth-shaker rose. His raiment
Round him purple and dominant rippled and murmured and whispered,
Whispered of argosies sunk and the pearls and the Nereids playing,
Murmured of azure solitudes, sounded of storm and the death-wail.
Even as the march of his waters so was the pace of the sea-god
Flowing on endless through Time; with the glittering symbol of empire
Crowned were his fatal brows; in his grasp was the wrath of the trident,
Tripled force, life-shattering, brutal, imperial, sombre.
Resonant, surging, vast in the pomp of his clamorous greatness
Proud and victorious he came to his home in the far-spuming waters.
Even as a soul from the heights of thought plunges back into living,
So he plunged like a rock through the foam; for it falls from a mountain
Overpeering the waves in some silence of desolate waters
Left to the wind and the sea-gull where Ocean alone with the ages
Dreams of the calm of the skies or tosses its spray to the wind-gods,
Tosses for ever its foam in the solitude huge of its longings
Far from the homes and the noises of men. So the dark-browed Poseidon
Came to his coral halls and the sapphire stables of Nereus

Ever where champ their bits the harnessed steeds of the Ocean
Watched by foam-white girls in the caverns of still Amphitrite.
There was his chariot yoked by the Tritons, drawn by his coursers
Born of the fleeing sea-spray and shod with the northwind who journey
Black like the front of the storm and clothed with their manes as with thunder.
This now rose from its depths to the upper tumults of Ocean
Bearing the awful brows and the mighty form of the sea-god
And from the roar of the surges fast o'er the giant margin
Came remembering the storm and the swiftness wide towards the Troad.
So among men he arrived to the clamorous labours of Ares,
Close by the stern Diomedes stood and frowned o'er the battle.
He for the Trojan slaughter chose for his mace and his sword-edge
Iron Tydeus' son and the adamant heart of young Pyrrhus.
But in the courts divine the Father high of the immortals
Turned in his heart to the brilliant offspring born of his musings,
She who tranquil observes and judges her father and all things.
"What shall I say to the thought that is calm in thy breasts, O Athene?
Have I not given thee earth for thy portion, throned thee and armoured,
Darkened Cypris' smile, dimmed Hera's son and Latona's?
Swift in thy silent ambition, proud in thy radiant sternness,
Girl, thou shalt rule with the Greek and the Saxon, the Frank and the Roman.
Worker and fighter and builder and thinker, light of the reason,
Men shall leave all temples to crowd in thy courts, O Athene.
Go then and do my will, prepare man's tribes for their fullness."
But with her high clear smile on him answered the mighty Athene, —
Wisely and soberly, tenderly smiled she chiding her father
Even as a mother might rail at her child when he hides and dissembles:
"Zeus, I see and I am not deceived by thy words in my spirit.
We but build forms for thy thought while thou smilest down high o'er our toiling;
Even as men are we tools for thee, who are thy children and dear ones.
All this life is thy sport and thou workst like a boy at his engines
Making a toil of the game and a play of the serious labour.
Then to that play thou callest us wearing a sombre visage,
This consulting, that to our wills confiding, O Ruler;
Choosing thy helpers, hastened by those whom thou lurest to oppose thee

Guile thou usest with gods as with mortals, scheming, deceiving,
And at the wrath and the love thou hast prompted laughest in secret.
So we two who are sisters and enemies, lovers and rivals,
Fondled and baffled in turn obey thy will and thy cunning,
I, thy girl of war, and the rosy-white Aphrodite.
Always we served but thy pleasure since our immortal beginnings,
Always each other we helped by our play and our wrestlings and quarrels.
This too I know that I pass preparing the paths of Apollo
And at the end as his sister and slave and bride I must sojourn
Rapt to his courts of mystic light and unbearable brilliance.
Was I not ever condemned since my birth from the toil of thy musings
Seized like a lyre in my body to sob and to laugh out his music,
Shake as a leaf in his fierceness and leap as a flame in his splendours!
So must I dwell overpowered and so must I labour subjected
Robbed of my loneliness pure and coerced in my radiant freedom,
Now whose clearness and pride are the sovereign joy of thy creatures.
Such the reward that thou keepst for my labour obedient always.
Yet I work and I do thy will, for 'tis mine, O my father."
Proud of her ruthless lust of thought and action and battle,
Swift-footed rose the daughter of Zeus from her sessions immortal:
Breasts of the morning unveiled in a purity awful and candid,
Head of the mighty Dawn, the goddess Pallas Athene!
Strong and rapacious she swooped on the world as her prey and her booty
Down from the courts of the Mighty descending, darting on Ida.
Dire she descended, a god in her reason, a child in her longings, —
Joy and woe to the world that is given to the whims of the child-god
Greedy for rule and play and the minds of men and their doings!
So with her aegis scattering light o'er the heads of the nations
Shining-eyed in her boyish beauty severe and attractive
Came to the fields of the Troad, came to the fateful warfare,
Veiled, the goddess calm and pure in her luminous raiment
Zoned with beauty and strength. Rejoicing, spurring the fighters
Close o'er Odysseus she stood and clear-eyed governed the battle.
        Zeus to Hephaestus next, the Cyclopean toiler
Turned, Hephaestus the strong-souled, priest and king and a bond-slave,
Servant of men in their homes and their workshops, servant of Nature,
He who has built these worlds and kindles the fire for a mortal.

"Thou, my son, art obedient always. Wisdom is with thee,
Therefore thou know'st and obeyest. Submission is wisdom and knowledge;
He who is blind revolts and he who is limited struggles:
Strife is not for the infinite; wisdom observes to accomplish.
Troy and her sons and her works are thy food today, O Hephaestus."
And to his father the Toiler answered, the silent Seer:
"Yes, I obey thee, my Father, and That which than thou is more mighty;
Even as thou obeyest by rule, so I by my labour.
Now must I heap the furnace, now must I toil at the smithy,
I who have flamed on the altar of sacrifice helping the sages.
I am the Cyclops, the lamester, who once was pure and a high-priest.
Holy the pomp of my flames ascendant from pyre and from altar
Robed men's souls for their heavens and my smoke was a pillar to Nature.
Though I have burned in the sight of the sage and the heart of the hero,
Now is no nobler hymn for my ear than the clanging of metal,
Breath of human greed and the dolorous pant of the engines.
Still I repine not, but toil; for to toil I was yoked by my Maker.
I am your servant, O Gods, and his of whom you are servants."
But to the toiler Zeus replied, to the servant of creatures:
"What is the thought thou hast uttered betrayed by thy speech, O Hephaestus?
True is it earth shall grow as a smithy, the smoke of the furnace
Fill men's eyes and their souls shall be stunned with the clang of the hammers;
Yet in the end there is rest on the peak of a labour accomplished.
Nor shall the might of the thinker be quelled by that iron oppression,
Nor shall the soul of the warrior despair in the darkness triumphant;
For when the night shall be deepest, dawn shall increase on the mountains
And in the heart of the worst the best shall be born by my wisdom.
Pallas thy sister shall guard man's knowledge fighting the earth-smoke.
Thou too art mighty to live through the clamour even as Apollo.
Work then, endure; expect from the Silence an end and thy wages."
So King Hephaestus arose and passed from the courts of his father;
Down upon earth he came with his lame omnipotent motion;
And with uneven steps absorbed and silent the Master
Worked employed mid the wheels of the cars as a smith in his smithy,
But it was death and bale that he forged, not the bronze and the iron.
Stark, like a fire obscured by its smoke, through the spear-casts he laboured

Helping Ajax' war and the Theban and Phocian fighters.
    Zeus to his grandiose helper next, who proved and unmoving,
Calm in her greatness waited the mighty command of her husband:
"Hera, sister and spouse, what my will is thou knowest, O consort.
One are our blood and our hearts, nor the thought for the words of the speaker
Waits, but each other we know and ourselves and the Vast and the heavens,
Life and all between and all beyond and the ages.
That which Space not knows nor Time, we have known, O my sister.
Therefore our souls are one soul and our minds become mirrors of oneness.
Go then and do my will, O thou mighty one, burning down Troya."
    Silent she rose from the seats of the Blissful, Hera majestic,
And with her flowing garment and mystical zone through the spaces
Haloed came like the moon on an evening of luminous silence
Down upon Ida descending, a snow-white swan on the greenness,
Down upon Ida the mystic haunted by footsteps immortal
Ever since out of the Ocean it rose and lived gazing towards heaven.
There on a peak of the mountains alone with the sea and the azure
Voiceless and mighty she paused like a thought on the summits of being
Clasped by all heaven; the winds at play in her gust-scattered raiment
Sported insulting her gracious strength with their turbulent sweetness,
Played with their mother and queen; but she stood absorbed and unheeding,
Mute, with her sandalled foot for a moment thrilling the grasses,
Dumbly adored by a soul in the mountains, a thought in the rivers,
Roared to loud by her lions. The voice of the cataracts falling
Entered her soul profound and it heard eternity's rumour.
Silent its gaze immense contained the wheeling of aeons.
Huge-winged through Time flew her thought and its grandiose vast revolutions
Turned and returned. So musing her timeless creative spirit,
Master of Time, its instrument, griefless hastening forward
Parted with greatnesses dead and summoned new strengths from their stables;
Maned they came to her call and filled with their pacings the future.
Calm, with the vision satisfied, thrilled by the grandeurs within her,
Down in a billow of whiteness and gold and delicate raiment
Gliding the daughter of Heaven came to the earth that received her

Glad of the tread divine and bright with her more than with sunbeams.
King Agamemnon she found and smiling on Sparta's levies
Mixed unseen with the far-glinting spears of haughty Mycenae.
Then to the Mighty who tranquil abode and august in his regions
Zeus, while his gaze over many forms and high-seated godheads
Passed like a swift-fleeing eagle over the peaks and the glaciers
When to his eyrie he flies alone through the vastness and silence:
"Artemis, child of my loins and you, O legioned immortals,
All you have heard. Descend, O ye gods, to your sovereign stations,
Labour rejoicing whose task is joy and your bliss is creation;
Shrink from no act that Necessity asks from your luminous natures.
Thee I have given no part in the years that come, O my daughter,
Huntress swift of the worlds who with purity all things pursuest.
Yet not less is thy portion intended than theirs who o'erpass thee:
Helped are the souls that wait more than strengths soon fulfilled and exhausted.
Archeress, brilliance, wait thine hour from the speed of the ages."
So they departed, Artemis leading lightning-tasselled.
Ancient Themis remained and awful Dis and Ananke.
Then mid these last of the gods who shall stand when all others have perished,
Zeus to the Silence obscure under iron brows of that goddess, —
Griefless, unveiled was her visage, dire and unmoved and eternal:
"Thou and I, O Dis, remain and our sister Ananke.
That which the joyous hearts of our children, radiant heaven-moths
Flitting mid flowers of sense for the honey of thought have not captured,
That which Poseidon forgets mid the pomp and the roar of his waters,
We three keep in our hearts. By the Light that I watch for unsleeping,
By thy tremendous consent to the silence and darkness, O Hades,
By her delight renounced and the prayers and the worship of mortals
Making herself as an engine of God without bowels or vision, —
Yet in that engine are only heart-beats, yet is her riddle
Only Love that is veiled and pity that suffers and slaughters, —
We three are free from ourselves, O Dis, and free from each other.
Do then, O King of the Night, observe then with Time for thy servant
Not my behest, but What she and thou and I are for ever."
Mute the Darkness sat like a soul unmoved through the aeons,

Then came a voice from the silence of Dis, from the night there came wisdom.
"Yes, I have chosen and that which I chose I endure, O Cronion, —
Though to the courts of the gods I come as a threat and a shadow,
Even though none to their counsels call me, none to their pastime,
None companions me willingly; even thy daughter, my consort,
Trembling whom once from our sister Demeter I plucked like a blossom
Torn from Sicilian fields, while Fate reluctant, consenting,
Bowed her head, lives but by her gasps of the sun and the azure;
Stretched are her hands to the light and she seeks for the clasp of her mother.
I, I am Night and her reign and that of which Night is a symbol.
All to me comes, even thou shalt come to me, brilliant Cronion.
All here exists by me whom all walk fearing and shunning;
He who shuns not, He am I and thou and Ananke.
All things I take to my bosom that Life may be swift in her voyage;
For out of death is Life and not by birth and her motions
And behind Night is light and not in the sun and his splendours.
Troy to the Night I will gather a wreath for my shadows, O grower."
So in his arrogance dire the vast invincible Death-god
Triumphing passed out of heaven with Themis and silent Ananke.
Zeus alone in the spheres of his bliss, in his kingdoms of brilliance
Sat divine and alarmed; for even the gods in their heavens
Scarce shall live who have gazed on the unveiled face of Ananke,
Heard the accents dire of the Darkness that waits for the ages.
Awful and dull grew his eyes and mighty and still grew his members.
Back from his nature he drew to the passionless peaks of the spirit,
Throned where it dwells for ever uplifted and silent and changeless
Far beyond living and death, beyond Nature and ending of Nature.
There for a while he dwelt veiled, protected from Dis and his greatness;
Then to the works of the world he returned and the joy of his musings.
Life and the blaze of the mighty soul that he was of God's making
Dawned again in the heavenly eyes and the majestied semblance.
Comforted heaven he beheld, to the green of the earth was attracted.
    But through this Space unreal, but through these worlds that are shadows
Went the awful Three. None saw them pass, none felt them.
Only in the heavens was a tread as of death, in the air was a winter,
Earth oppressed moaned long like a woman striving with anguish.

Ida saw them not, but her grim lions cowered in their caverns,
Ceased for a while on her slopes the eternal laughter of fountains.
Over the ancient ramparts of Dardanus' high-roofed city
Darkening her victor domes and her gardens of life and its sweetness
Silent they came. Unseen and unheard was the dreadful arrival.
Troy and her gods dreamed secure in the moment flattered by sunlight.
Dim to the citadel high they arrived and their silence invaded
Pallas' marble shrine where stern and white in her beauty,
Armed on her pedestal, trampling the prostrate image of darkness
Mighty Athene's statue guarded imperial Troya.
Dim and vast they entered in. Then through all the great city
Huge a rushing sound was heard from her gardens and places
And in their musings her seers as they strove with night and with error
And in the fane of Apollo Laocoon torn by his visions
Heard aghast the voice of Troy's deities fleeing from Troya,
Saw the flaming lords of her households drive in a death-rout
Forth from her ancient halls and their noble familiar sessions.
Ghosts of her splendid centuries wailed on the wings of the doom-blast.
Moaning the Dryads fled and her Naiads passed from Scamander
Leaving the world to deities dumb of the clod and the earth-smoke,
And from their tombs and their shrines the shadowy Ancestors faded.
Filled was the air with their troops and the sound of a vast lamentation.
Wailing they went, lamenting mortality's ages of greatness,
Ruthless Ananke's deeds and the mortal conquests of Hades.
Then in the fane Palladian the shuddering priests of Athene
Entered the darkened shrine and saw on the suffering marble
Shattered Athene's mighty statue prostrate as conquered,
But on its pedestal rose o'er the unhurt image of darkness
Awful shapes, a Trinity dim and dire unto mortals.
Dumb they fell down on the earth and the life-breath was slain in their bosoms.
And in the noon there was night. And Apollo passed out of Troya.

BOOK IX

Meanwhile moved by their unseen spirits, led by the immortal
Phalanxes, who of our hopes and our fears are the reins and the drivers, —
Minds they use as if steam and our bodies like power-driven engines,
Leading our lives towards the goal that the gods have prepared for our striving, —
Men upon earth fulfilled their harsh ephemeral labour.
But in the Troad the armies clashed on the plain of the Xanthus.
Swift from their ships the Argives marched, — more swiftly through Xanthus
Driving their chariots the Trojans came and Penthesilea
Led and Anchises' son and Deiphobus the Priamid hero.
Now ere the armies met, ere their spears were nearer, Apollo
Sent a thought for his bale to the heart of Zethus the Hellene.
He to Achilles' car drew close and cried to the hero:
"Didst thou not promise a boon to me, son of Peleus and Thetis,
Then when I guarded thy life-breath in Memnon's battle from Hades?
Therefore I claim the proudest of boons, one worthy a Hellene.
Here in the front I will fight against dangerous Penthesilea.
Thou on our left make war with the beauty and cunning of Paris."
But from his heart dismayed Achilles made answer to Zethus:
"What hast thou said, O Zethus, betrayed by some Power that is hostile?
Art thou then hired by the gods for the bale and the slaughter of Hellas?"
Zethus answered him, "Alone art thou mighty, Achilles, in Phthia?
Tyrant art thou of this fight and keepst for thee all of its glory —
We are but wheels of thy chariot, reins of thy courser, Achilles.
What though dire be thy lust, yet here thou canst gather not glory,
Only thy shame and the Greeks', if a girl must be matched with Achilles!"
"Zethus, evil thy word and from death are the wings of its folly.
Even a god might hesitate fronting the formidable virgin.
Many the shafts that, borne in her chariot, thirst for the blood-draught.
Pages ride in her car behind and hand to her swiftly
Death in the rapid spears and she hurls them and drives and she stays not.
Forty wind-footed men of the mountains race with her chariot
Shielded and armed and bring back the spears from their hearts whom she slaughters.
So like the lightning she moves incessantly flashing and slaying,

Not like men's warring her fight who battle for glory and plunder.
Never she pauses to pluck back her point nor to strip off the armour.
Only to slay she cares and only the legions to shatter.
Come thou not near to her wheels; preserve thy life for thy father.
Pity Arithoa's heart who shall wait in vain for her children."
Wroth at Pelides' scorn made answer Zethus the Hellene,
"Give me my boon I have chosen and thou fight far from my battle
Lest it be said that Achilles was near and therefore she perished.
Cycnus and I [..........................][1] will strike down the terror of Argos."
Moved the mighty Achilles answered him, "Zethus and Cycnus,
Granted your will; I am bound by my truth, as are you now by Hades."
So he spoke and cried to his steeds, who the wings of the southwind
Racing outvied to the left where from Xanthus galloping swiftly
Came in a mass the Ilian chariots loud towards the Hellenes.
Phoces was with him and Echemus drove and Drus and Thretaon,
They were like rays of the sun, but nighest him, close to his shadow
Ascanus, Phrinix' son, who fought ever near to his war-car.
And from the Trojan battle gleaming in arms like the sungod
Paris beheld that dangerous spear and he cried to the heroes:
"See now where death on the Trojans comes in the speed of that war-car.
Warriors, fight not [..] Achilles
But where you see him guiding his spear or turning his coursers,
Menace his days and shield the Trojan life that he threatens.
Fighting together hide with your spear-rain his head from the heavens.
Zeus perhaps shall, blinded, forget to cover the hero."
So as he spoke, the armies neared and they clashed in the mellay.
Who first shed the blood [.........] that fell in that combat
Thick with the fall of the mighty, last of the battles of Troya?
Helenus first, King Priam's son, smote down in that battle
Phoces, Amarus' son, who fought in the front of Pelides.
He by the point twixt his brows surprised left the spear he had lifted;
Down he clanged from his car with his armour sounding upon him.
Echemus wroth let drive at Helenus, grieved for his comrade.
Him he missed but Ahites slew who was Helenus' henchman.
Helenus wroth in his turn at Echemus aimed and his spear-point

---

[1] *Here and below some words have been lost as a result of damage to the manuscript. — Ed.*

Bit through the shield and quivering paused, — by Ananke arrested.
Back avoiding death the Hellene shrank from the forefront.
Nor had Achilles mingled yet his strength with the fighters.
But like a falconer on a hillock lone in his war-car
Shouting his dreadful cry in the pause ere the shock he had lingered
Wheeling slowly his gaze for the choice of a prey or a victim
For with his host was his heart [....................................] behind Zethus
Herding in shepherded [...]
Ill at ease was his heart [....................................] or lying
Slain on the Trojan [..] Ares.
Forward [...] towards the Trojans
[..] helmet.
Helenus [..] his shield from the death-blow.
But o'er his [..] Apollo extended.
And from the left and the right the heroes of Ilion gathered.
Dyus and Polites came and Eumachus threatened Achilles.
Paris' fatal shafts sang joyously now from the bowstring.
Fast from the Hellene [..]
Ares' iron [..]
Neighing [...] of the war-cries.
Nor could the Trojan fighters break through the wall of their foemen,
Nor could the mighty Pelides slay in his war-rage the Trojans.
Ever he fought surrounded or drew back compelled to his legions;
For to each spear of his strength full twenty hissed round his helmet,
Rang on his shield, attempted his cuirass or leaped at his coursers
Or at Automedon ran like living things in their blood-thirst.
Galled the deathless steeds high-neighing pawed in their anger;
Wrathful Achilles wheeled and threatened seeking a victim.
So might a fire on the high-piled altar of sacrifice blazing
Seek for its tongues an offering fit for the gods, but 'tis answered
Only by spitting rain that a dense cloud sends out of heaven.
Sibilant hiss the drops on the glowing wood and the altar.
Chill a darkness o'erhangs and its brief and envious spirits
Rail at the glorious flame desiring an end of its brilliance.
Meanwhile behind by the ranks of the fighters sheltered from Hades
Paris loosed his lethal shafts at the head of the Hellene.
Then upon Helenus wrath from the gods who are noble descended,

Seized on the tongue of the prophet and framed their thoughts in his accents,
Thoughts by men rejected who follow the beast in their reason,
Only advantage seek, and honour and pride are forgotten:
"Paris, not thus shalt thou slay Achilles but only thy glory.
Hast thou no heed that the women should mock in the streets of our city
Thee and thy bow and thy numbers, hearing this shame of the Trojans?
Dost thou not fear the gods and their harms? Not so do they combat
Who have the awe of their deeds and follow the way of the mighty."
Paris the Priamid answered his brother: "Helenus, wherefore
Care should I have for fame, or the gods and their punishments, heeding
Breath of men when they praise or condemn me? Victory I ask for,
Joy for my living heart, not a dream and a breath for my ashes.
Work I desire and the wish of my heart and the fruit of my labour.
Nay, let my fame be crushed into mire for the ages to spit at,
But let my country live and her foes be slain on her beaches."
So he spoke and fitted another shaft to the bowstring.
Always they fought and were locked in a fierce unyielding combat.
But on the Hellene right stood the brothers stark in their courage
Waiting the Eoan horsehooves that checked at the difficult crossing
Late arrived through field and through pasture. Zethus exultant
Watched their advent stern and encouraged the legions behind him.
"Now is the hour of your highest fame, O ye sons of the Hellenes.
These are the iron squadrons, these are the world-famed fighters.
Here is a swifter than Memnon, here is a greater than Hector.
Who would fight with the war-wearied Trojans, the Lycian remnants,
When there are men in the world like these? O Phthians, we conquer
Asia's best today. And you, O my brothers, with courage
Reap all the good I have won for our lives this morn from Achilles.
Glad let our fame go before us to our mother Arithoa waiting
Lonely in Phthia, desiring death or the eyes of her children.
Soon will our sails pursue their herald Fame, with our glory
Bellying out and the winds. They shall bear o'er the murmurs of Ocean
Heaped up Ilion's wealth and the golden bricks of King Priam
And for the halls of our fathers a famous and noble adornment
Severed the beautiful head of the virgin Penthesilea."
So he cried and the Hellenes shouted, a savage rumour,
Proud of their victories past and incredulous grown of disaster.

Now from the Xanthus dripping-wheeled came the Eoan war-cars
Rolling thunder-voiced with the tramp of the runners behind them,
Dust like a flag and dire with the battle-cry, full on the Hellenes.
They to the mid-plain arrived where the might of the Hellene brothers
Waited their coming. Zethus first with his cry of the cascade
Hurrying-footed, headlong that leaps far down to the valley:
"Curb, but curb thy advance, O Amazon Penthesilea!
These are not Gnossus' ranks and these are not levies from Sparta.
Hellas' spears await thee here and the Myrmidon fighters."
But like the northwind high and clear answered Penthesilea,
High like the northwind racing and whistling over the icefields,
Death at its side and snow for its breath in the pitiless winter:
"Who art thou biddest to pause the horsehooves of Penthesilea?
Hellene, thou in thy strength who standest forth from thy shielders,
Turn yet, save thy life; for I deem that thou art not Achilles."
"Zethus the Hellene I am and Cycnus and Pindus, my brothers,
Stand at my either side, and thou passest no farther, Bellona.
Lioness, turn thou back, for thou canst not here be a hunter."
"Zethus and Cycnus and Pindus, little you loved then your mother
Who in this field that is wide must needs all three perish together
Piled on one altar of death by the spear-shafts of Penthesilea.
Empty for ever your halls shall be, childless the age of your father."
High she rose to the spear-cast, poised like a thunderbolt lifted,
Forward swung to the blow and loosed it hissing and ruthless
Straight at the Hellene shield, and it tore through the bronze and groaning
Butted and pushed through the cuirass and split the breast of the hero.
Round in his car he spun, then putting his hands out before him,
Even as a diver who leaps from the shed of the bath to the current,
Launched out so headlong, struggled, sideward collapsed, then was quiet,
Dead on Trojan earth. But dismay and grief on his brothers
Yet alive now seized, then rage came blinding the eyeballs.
Blindly they hurled, yet attained, for Athene guided the spear-shafts;
Death like a forest beast yet played with the might of the virgin.
One on her shield and one on her cuirass rang, but rejected
Fell back like reeds that are thrown at a boulder by boys on the seashore.
She unmoved replied; her shafts in their angry succession
Hardly endured delay between. Like trees the brothers,

Felled, to each side sank prone. So lifeless these strong ones of Hellas
Lay on their couch of the hostile soil reunited in slumber
As in their childhood they lay in Hellas watched by their mother,
Three of them side by side and she dreamed for her darlings their future.
But on the ranks of the Hellenes fear and amazement descended, —
Messengers they from Zeus to discourage the pride and the blood-lust.
Back many yards their foremost recoiled in a god-given terror,
As from a snake a traveller scorned for a bough by the wayside,
But it arises puffing its hood and hisses its hatred.
Forward the henchmen ran and plucked back the spears from the corpses;
Onward the Eoan thousands rolled o'er the ground that was conquered
Trampling the fallen men into earth with the wheels of their war-cars.
But in her speed like the sea or the stormwind Penthesilea
Drove towards the ranks of the foe and her spear-shafts hastened before her,
Messengers whistling shrilly to Death; he came like a wolfhound
Called by his master's voice and silently fell on the quarry.
Hyrtamus fell, Admetus was wounded, Charmidas slaughtered;
Cirrhes died, though he faced not the blow while he hastened to shelter.
Itylus, bright and beautiful, went down to night and to Hades.
Back, ever back the Hellenes recoiled from the shock of the Virgin,
Slain by her prowess fierce, alarmed by the might of her helpers.
For at her right Surabdas threatened and iron Surenas,
And at her left hill-shouldered Pharatus slaughtered the Hellenes.
Then in the ranks of the Greeks a shouting arose and the leaders
Cried to their hosts and recalled their unstained fame and their valour
Never so lightly conquered before in the onsets of Ares
And of Achilles they spoke and King Peleus waiting in Phthia,
Listening for Troy o'erthrown not his hosts overcome by a woman.
And from the right and the left came heroes mighty to succour.
Chiefs of the Dolopes Ar and Aglauron came mid the foremost,
Hillus fair as a drifting moon but fierce as the winter;
Pryas came the Thessalian and Sebes whom Pharsalus honoured,
Victors in countless fights who had stood against Memnon and Hector.
But though their hands were mighty, though fierce their obdurate natures,
Mightier strengths they met and a sterner brood of the war-god.
Light from the hand of the Virgin the spear ran laughing at Sebes,
Crashed through his helmet and left him supine on the pastures of Troya;

Ar to Surabdas fell and the blood-spirting head of Aglauron
Dropped like a fruit from a branch by its weight to the discus of Sambus;
Iron Surenas' mace-head shattered the beauty of Hillus;
Pryas by Pharatus slain lay still and had rest from the war-cry.
Back, ever back reeled the Hellene host with the Virgin pursuing.
Storm-shod the Amazon fought and she slew like a god unresisted.
None now dared to confront her burning eyes; the boldest
Shuddered back from her spear and the cry of her tore at their heart-strings.
Fear, the daughter of Zeus, had gripped at the hearts of the Hellenes.
So as their heroes yielded before her, Penthesilea
Lifted with victory cried to her henchman, Aurus of Ellae,
Who had the foot of the wind and its breath that scants not for running,
"Hasten, hasten, Aurus; race to the right where unwarring
Valarus leads his host; bid him close with the strength of the Hellenes.
Soon will they scatter like chaff on the threshing-floor blown to the beaches.
But when he sees their flight by Sumalus shepherded seaward,
Swift let him turn like the wind in its paths and follow me, pouring
All in a victor flood on the Myrmidon left and Achilles.
Then shall no Hellene again dare embark in ships for the Troad.
Cursed shall its beaches be to their sons and their sons and for ever."
So she spoke and Aurus ran by the chariots protected.
Then had all Hellas perished indeed on the beaches of Troas,
But from the Argives' right where she battled Pallas Athene
Saw and was wroth and she missioned her thought to Automedon speeding.
Splendid it came and found him out mid the hiss of the spear-shafts
Guiding, endangered, Achilles' steeds in the thick of the battle.
Shaped like a woman clad in armour and fleeing from battle,
Helmed with the Hellene crest it knocked at the gates of his spirit
Shaking the hero's heart with the vision that came to his eyeballs;
Silent he stared aghast and turned his ear to the war-din.
"Dost thou not hear to our right, Achilles, these voices of Ares?
High is the sound of Eoan battle, a woman's war-cry
Rings in my ears, but faint and sparse come the shouts of our nation.
Far behind is their call and nearer the ships and the beaches."
Great Pelides heard and groaned in the caves of his spirit:
"It is the doom that I feared and the fatal madness of Zethus;
Slain are the men of my nation or routed by Penthesilea.

Drive, Automedon, drive, lest shame and defeat upon Hellas
Fasten their seal and her heroes flee from the strength of a woman."
And to the steeds divine Automedon called and they hearkened,
Rose as if seeking their old accustomed paths in the heavens,
Then through the ranks that parted they galloped as gallops the dust-cloud
When the cyclone is abroad and the high trees snap by the wayside,
And from the press of the Hellenes into the plain of the Xanthus
Thundering, neighing came with the war-car borne like a dead leaf
Chased by the blast. Then Athene opened the eyes of Achilles,
Eyes that in all of us sleep, yet can see the near and the distant,
Eyes that the gods in their pity have sealed from the giant confusion,
Sealed from the bale and the grief. He saw like one high on a summit
Near him the Eoans holding the plain and out in the distance
Breaking the Hellene strengths. Like a dream in the night he regarded
High-crested Sumalus fight, Somaranes swift in the onset,
Bull-shouldered Tauron's blows and the hero Artavoruxes.
But in the centre fiercest the cry and the death and the fleeing.
There were his chieftains ever reforming vainly resistance, —
Even in defeat these were Hellenes and fit to be hosts of Achilles, —
But like a doom on them thundered the war-car of Penthesilea,
Pharatus smote and Surabdas and Sambus and iron Surenas.
Down the leaders fell and the armies reeled towards the Ocean.
Wroth he cried to his coursers and fiercely they heard and they hastened;
Swift like a wind o'er the grasses galloped the car of Achilles.
Echemus followed, Ascanus drove and Drus and Thretaon:
Phoces alone in the dust of the Troad lay there and moved not.
Yet brought not all of them help to their brothers oppressed in the combat:
For from the forefront forth on the knot of the swift-speeding war-cars
High an Eoan chariot came drawn fast by its coursers
Bearing a mighty chieftain, Valarus son of Supaures.
Fire-footed thundered past him the hooves of the heavenly coursers,
Nor to his challenging shout nor his spear the warlike Pelides
Answered at all, but made haste like a flood to the throng and the mellay.
But twixt the chariots behind and their leader the mighty Eoan
Drove his dark-maned steeds and stood like a cliff to their onset.
"Great is your haste, O ye Kings of the Greeks! Abide yet and converse.
Scatheless your leader has fled from me borne by the hooves of his coursers;

Ye, abide! For we meet from far lands on this soil of the Trojans.
All of us meet from afar, but not all shall return to their hearthsides.
Valarus stays you, O Greeks, and this is the point of his greeting."
So as he spoke he launched out his spear as a cloud hurls its storm-flash;
Nor from that fatal hand parted vainly the pitiless envoy,
But of its blood-thirst had right. Riven through and through with the death-stroke
Drus fell prone and tore with dying fingers the grasses.
Sobbing his soul fled out to the night and the chill and the silence.
They like leaves that are suddenly stayed by the fall of a wind-gust
Ceased from their headlong speed. And Echemus poising his spear-shaft:
"Sharp are thy greetings, chieftain Eoan. Message for message
Echemus son of Aëtes, one of the mighty in Hellas,
Thus returns. Let Ares judge twixt the Greek and the Eastern."
Fast sped the spear but Valarus held forth his shield and rebutted
Shouting the deadly point that could pierce not his iron refusal.
"Echemus, surely thy vaunt has reached me, but unfelt is thy spear-point.
Weak are men's arms, it seems, in Hellas; a boy there Ares
Aims with reeds not spears at pastoral cheeses not iron.
Judge now my strength." Two spears from him ran at the hearts of his foemen.
Crouching Thretaon heard the keen death over him whistle;
Ascanus hurt in the shoulder cried out and paused from his war-lust.
Echemus hurled now again and hurled with him stalwart Thretaon.
Strong Thretaon missed, but Echemus' point at the helmet
Bit and fastened as fastens a hound on the ear of the wild-boar
Wroth with the cry and the hunt that gores the pack and his hunters.
Valarus frowning tugged at the heavy steel; yet his right hand
Smote at Echemus. Him he missed but valiant Thretaon
Sat back dead in his seat and the chariot wild with its coursers
Snorting and galloping bore his corpse o'er the plains to the Hellenes.
But while yet Valarus strove with the shaft, obscured and encumbered,
Ascanus sprang down swift from his car and armed with his sword-point
Clove the Eoan's neck as the lightning springs at an oak-trunk
Seized in the stride of the storm and severs that might with its sharpness.
Slain the hero fell; his mighty limbs the spirit
Mightier released to the gods and it rose to the heavens of the noble.

Ascanus gathered the spear-shafts; loud was his shout as exulting
Back he leaped to the car triumphant o'er death and its menace.
"Lie there, Valarus, king of the East, with imperial Troya.
Six rich feet of her soil she gives thee for couch of the nuptials.
Rest then! talk not again on the way with the heroes of Hellas."
So delivered they hastened glad to the ranks of their brothers.
After them rolled the Eoan war-cars, Arithon leading,
Loud with the clamour of hooves and the far-rolling gust of the war-cry;
Wroth at their chieftain's fall they moved to the help of their nation
Now by the unearthly horses neared and the might of Achilles.
Then from the Hellenes who heard the noise and the cry of their coming,
Lifted eyes dismayed, but saw the familiar war-car,
Saw the heaven-born steeds and the helm unconquered in battle,
Cry was of other hopefulness. Loud as the outbursting thunder
Rises o'er lower sounds of the storm, o'er the din of the battle
Rose the Hellene shout and rose the name of Achilles.

Ahana

Ahana

(Ahana, the Dawn of God, descends on the world where amid the strife and trouble of mortality the Hunters of Joy, the Seekers after Knowledge, the Climbers in the quest of Power are toiling up the slopes or waiting in the valleys. As she stands on the mountains of the East, voices of the Hunters of Joy are the first to greet her.)

Vision delightful alone on the hills whom the silences cover,
Closer yet lean to mortality; human, stoop to thy lover.
Wonderful, gold like a moon in the square of the sun where thou strayest
Glimmers thy face amid crystal purities; mighty thou playest
Sole on the peaks of the world, unafraid of thy loneliness. Glances
Leap from thee down to us, dream-seas and light-falls and magical trances;
Sun-drops flake from thy eyes and the heart's caverns packed are with pleasure
Strange like a song without words or the dance of a measureless measure.
Tread through the edges of dawn, over twilight's grey-lidded margin;
Heal earth's unease with thy feet, O heaven-born delicate virgin.
Children of Time whose spirits came down from eternity, seizing
Joys that escape us, yoked by our hearts to a labour unceasing,
Earth-bound, torn with our longings, our life is a brief incompleteness.
Thou hast the stars to sport with, the winds run like bees to thy sweetness.
Art thou not heaven-bound even as I with the earth? Hast thou ended
All desirable things in a stillness lone and unfriended?
Only is calm so sweet? is our close tranquillity only?
Cold are the rivers of peace and their banks are leafless and lonely.
Heavy is godhead to bear with its mighty sun-burden of lustre.
Art thou not weary of only the stars in their solemn muster,
Sky-hung the chill bare plateaus and peaks where the eagle rejoices
In the inhuman height of his nesting, solitude's voices
Making the heart of the silence lonelier? strong and untiring,
Deaf with the cry of the waterfall, lonely the pine lives aspiring.
Two are the ends of existence, two are the dreams of the Mother:

Heaven unchanging, earth with her time-beats yearn to each other, —
Earth-souls needing the touch of the heavens peace to recapture,
Heaven needing earth's passion to quiver its peace into rapture.
Marry, O lightning eternal, the passion of a moment-born fire!
Out of thy greatness draw close to the breast of our mortal desire!
Is he thy master, Rudra the mighty, Shiva ascetic?
Has he denied thee his world? In his dance that they tell of, ecstatic,
Slaying, creating, calm in the midst of the movement and madness,
Stole there no rhythm of an earthly joy and a mortal sadness?
Wast thou not made in the shape of a woman? Sweetness and beauty
Move like a song of the gods in thy limbs and to love is thy duty
Graved in thy heart as on tablets of fate; joy's delicate blossom
Sleeps in thy lids of delight; all Nature hides in thy bosom
Claiming her children unborn and the food of her love and her laughter.
Is he the first? was there none then before him? shall none come after?
He who denies and his blows beat down on our hearts like a hammer's,
He whose calm is the silent reply to our passion and clamours!
Is not there deity greater here new-born in a noble
Labour and sorrow and struggle than stilled into rapture immobile?
Earth has beatitudes warmer than heaven's that are bare and undying,
Marvels of Time on the crest of the moments to Infinity flying.
Earth has her godheads; the Tritons sway on the toss of the billows,
Emerald locks of the Nereids stream on their foam-crested pillows,
Dryads peer out from the branches, Naiads glance up from the waters;
High are her flame-points of joy and the gods are ensnared by her daughters.
Artemis calls as she flees through the glades and the breezes pursue her;
Cypris laughs in her isles where the ocean-winds linger to woo her.
Here thou shalt meet amid beauty forgotten the dance of the Graces;
Night shall be haunted for ever with strange and delicate faces.
Music is here of the fife and the flute and the lyre and the timbal,
Wind in the forests, bees in the grove, — spring's ardent cymbal
Thrilling, the cry of the cuckoo; the nightingale sings in the branches,
Human laughter is heard and the cattle low in the ranches.
Frankly and sweetly she gives to her children the bliss of her body,
Breath of her lips and the green of her garments, rain-pourings heady
Tossed from her cloud-carried beaker of tempest, oceans and streamlets,
Dawn and the mountain-air, corn-fields and vineyards, pastures and hamlets,

Tangles of sunbeams asleep, mooned dream-depths, twilight's shadows,
Taste and scent and the fruits of her trees and the flowers of her meadows,
Life with her wine-cup of longing under the purple of her tenture,
Death as her gate of escape and rebirth and renewal of venture.
Still must they mutter that all here is vision and passing appearance,
Magic of Maya with falsehood and pain for its only inherence.
One is there only, apart in his greatness, the End and Beginning, —
He who has sent through his soul's wide spaces the universe spinning.
One eternal, Time an illusion, life a brief error!
One eternal, Master of heaven — and of hell and its terror!
Spirit of silence and purity rapt and aloof from creation, —
Dreaming through aeons unreal his splendid and empty formation!
Spirit all-wise in omnipotence shaping a world but to break it, —
Pushed by what mood of a moment, the breath of what fancy to make it?
None is there great but the eternal and lonely, the unique and unmated,
Bliss lives alone with the self-pure, the single, the forever-uncreated.
Truths? or thought's structures bridging the vacancy mute and unsounded
Facing the soul when it turns from the stress of the figures around it?
Solely we see here a world self-made by some indwelling Glory
Building with forms and events its strange and magnificent story.
Yet at the last has not all been solved and unwisdom demolished,
Myth cast out and all dreams of the soul, and all worship abolished?
All now is changed, the reverse of the coin has been shown to us; Reason
Waking, detecting the hoax of the spirit, at last has arisen,
Captured the Truth and built round her its bars that she may not skedaddle,
Gallop again with the bit in her teeth and with Fancy in the saddle.
Now have the wise men discovered that all is the craft of a super-
Magic of Chance and a movement of Void and inconscient Stupor.
Chance by a wonderful accident ever her ripples expanding
Out of a gaseous circle of Nothingness, implacably extending
Freak upon freak, repeating rigidly marvels on marvels,
Making a world out of Nothing, started on the arc of her travels.
Nothingness born into feeling and action dies back to Nothing.
Sea of a vague electricity, romping through space-curves and clothing
Strangely the Void with a semblance of Matter, painfully flowered
Into this giant phenomenon universe. Man who has towered
Out of the plasm and struggled by thought to Divinity's level,

Man, this miniature second creator of good and of evil,
He too was only a compost of Matter made living, organic,
Forged as her thinking tool by an Energy blind and mechanic.
Once by an accident queer but quite natural, provable, simple,
Out of blind Space-Nought lashed into life, wearing Mind as its wimple,
Dupe of a figment of consciousness, doped with behaviour and feature,
Matter deluded claimed to be spirit and sentient creature.
All the high dreams man has dreamed and his hopes and his deeds, his soul's greatness
Are but a food-seeking animal's acts with the mind for their witness, —
Mind a machine for the flickers of thought, Matter's logic unpremissed, —
Are but a singular fireworks, chemistry lacking the chemist,
Matter's nervous display; the heart's passion, the sorrow and burning
Fire of delight and sweet ecstasy, love and its fathomless yearning,
Boundless spiritual impulses making us one with world-being,
Outbursts of vision opening doors to a limitless seeing,
Gases and glands and the genes and the nerves and the brain-cells have done it,
Brooded out drama and epic, structured the climb of the sonnet,
Studied the stars and discovered the brain and the laws of its thinking,
Sculptured the cave-temple, reared the cathedral, infinity drinking
Wrought manufacturing God and the soul for the uplift of Nature, —
Science, philosophy, head of his mystical chemical stature,
Music and painting revealing the godhead in sound and in colour,
Acts of the hero, thoughts of the thinker, search of the scholar,
All the magnificent planning, all the inquiry and wonder
Only a trick of the atom, its marvellous magical blunder.
Who can believe it? Something or someone, a Force or a Spirit
Conscious, creative, wonderful shaped out a world to inherit
Here for the beings born from its vast universal existence, —
Fields of surprise and adventure, vistas of light-haunted distance,
Play-routes of wisdom and vision and struggle and rapture and sorrow,
Sailing in Time through the straits of today to the sea of tomorrow.
Worlds and their wonders, suns and their flamings, earth and her nations,
Voyages endless of Mind through the surge of its fate-tossed creations,
Star upon star throbbing out in the silence of infinite spaces,
Species on species, bodies on bodies, faces on faces,

Souls without number crossing through Time towards eternity, aeons
Crowding on aeons, loving and battle, dirges and paeans,
Thoughts ever leaping, hopes ever yearning, lives ever streaming,
Millions and millions on trek through the days with their doings and dreaming,
Herds of the Sun who move on at the cry of the radiant drover, —
Countless, surviving the death of the centuries, lost to recover,
Finished, but only to begin again, who is its tireless creator,
Cause or the force of its driving, its thinker or formless dictator?
Surely no senseless Vacancy made it, surely 'twas fashioned
By an almighty One million-ecstasied, thousand-passioned.
Self-made? then by what self from which thought could arise and emotion,
Waves that well up to the surface, born from what mysteried ocean?
Nature alone is the fountain. But what is she? Is she not only
Figure and name for what none understands, though all feel, or a lonely
Word in which all finds expression, spirit-heights, dumb work of Matter, —
Vague designation filling the gaps of our thought with its clatter?
Power without vision that blunders in man into thinking and sinning?
Rigid, too vast inexhaustible mystery void of a meaning?
Energy blindly devising, unconsciously ranging in order?
Chance in the march of a cosmic Insanity crossing the border
Out of the eternal silence to thought and its strangeness and splendour?
Consciousness born by an accident until an accident end her?
Nought else is she but the power of the Spirit who dwells in her ever,
Witness and cause of her workings, lord of her pauseless endeavour.
All things she knows, though she seems here unseeing; even in her slumber
Wondrous her works are, design and its magic and magic of number,
Plan of her mighty cosmic geometry, balance of forces,
Universe flung beyond universe, law of the stars and their courses,
Cosmos atomic stretched to the scale of the Infinite's measure.
Mute in the trance of the Eternal she sleeps with the stone and the azure.
Now she awakes; for life has just stirred in her, stretching first blindly
Outward for sense and its pleasure and pain and the gifts of the kindly
Mother of all, for her light and her air and the sap from her flowing,
Pleasure of bloom and inconscient beauty, pleasure of growing.
Then into mind she arises; heart's yearning awakes and reflection
Looks out on struggle and harmony, — conscious, her will of selection

Studies her works and illumines the choice of her way; last, slowly
Inward she turns and stares at the Spirit within her. Holy
Silences brood in her heart and she feels in her ardent recesses
Passions too great for her frame, on her body immortal caresses.
Into the calm of the Greatness beyond her she enters, burning
Now with a light beyond thought's, towards Self and Infinity turning,
Turned to beatitude, turned to eternity, spiritual grandeur,
Power without limit, ecstasy imperishable, shadowless splendour.
Then to her mortals come, flashing, thoughts that are wisdom's fire-kernel;
Leaping her flame-sweeps of might and delight and of vision supernal
Kindle the word and the act, the Divine and humanity fusing,
Illuminations, trance-seeds of silence, flowers of musing, —
Light of our being that yet has to be, its glory and glimmer
Smiting with sunrise the soul of the sage and the heart of the dreamer.
Or is it all but a vain expectation and effort ungrounded,
Wings without body, sight without object, waters unsounded,
Hue of a shimmer that steals through some secret celestial portal,
Glory of a gleam or a dream in an animal brief-lived and mortal?
Are they not radiances native to heaven's more fortunate ether,
Won when we part from this body, this temporal house of a nether
Mystery of life lived in vain? Upon earth is the glory forbidden,
Nature for ever accursed, frustrated, grief-vexed, fate-ridden?
Half of the glory she dreamed of forgotten or lost in earth's darkness,
Half of it mangled and missed as the death-wheels whirl in their starkness,
Cast out from heaven a goddess rebellious with mind for her mirror,
Cursed with desire and self-will and doomed to self-torture and error,
Came she to birth then with God for her enemy? Were we created
He unwilling or sleeping? did someone transgress the fated
Limits he set, outwitting God? In the too hasty vision
Marred of some demiurge filmed there the blur of a fatal misprision,
Making a world that revolves on itself in a circuit of failure,
Aeons of striving, death for a recompense, Time for our tenure?
Out of him rather she came and for him are her cry and her labour;
Deep are her roots in him; topless she climbs, to his greatness a neighbour.
All is himself in her, brooding in darkness, mounting the sun-ways;
Air-flight to him is man's journey with heaven and earth for the runways.
He is the witness and doer, he is the loved and the lover,

He the eternal Truth that we look in ourselves to discover.
All is his travel in Time; it is he who turns history's pages,
Act and event and result are the trail that he leaves through the ages;
Form and idea are his signs and number and sound are his symbols,
Music and singing, the word and its rhythm are Divinity's cymbals,
Thunder and surge are the drums of his marching. Through us, with urges
Self-ward, form-bound, mute, motionless, slowly inevitably emerges
Vast as the cosmos, minute as the atom, the Spirit eternal.
Often the gusts of his force illumining moments diurnal
Flame into speech and idea; transcendences splendid and subtle
Suddenly shoot through the weft of our lives from a magical shuttle;
Hid in our hearts is his glory; the Spirit works in our members.
Silence is he, with our voices he speaks, in our thoughts he remembers.
Deep in our being inhabits the voiceless invisible Teacher;
Powers of his godhead we live; the Creator dwells in the creature.
Out of his Void we arise to a mighty and shining existence,
Out of Inconscience, tearing the black Mask's giant resistance;
Waves of his consciousness well from him into these bodies in Nature,
Forms are put round him; his oneness, divided by mind's nomenclature,
High on the summits of being ponders immobile and single,
Penetrates atom and cell as the tide drenches sand-grain and shingle.
Oneness unknown to us dwells in these millions of figures and faces,
Wars with itself in our battles, loves in our clinging embraces,
Inly the self and the substance of things and their cause and their mover
Veiled in the depths which the foam of our thoughts and our life's billows cover,
Heaves like the sea in its waves; like heaven with its star-fires it gazes
Watching the world and its works. Interned in the finite's mazes,
Still shall he rise to his vast superconscience, we with him climbing;
Truth of man's thought with the truth of God's spirit faultlessly timing,
That which was mortal shall enter immortality's golden precincts,
Hushed breath of ecstasy, honey of lotus depths where the bee sinks,
Timeless expanses too still for the voice of the hours to inveigle,
Spaces of spirit too vast for the flight of the God-bearing eagle, —
Enter the Splendour that broods now unseen on us, deity invading,
Sight without error, light without shadow, beauty unfading,
Infinite largeness, rapture eternal, love none can sever,

Life, not this death-play, but a power God-driven and blissful for ever.
"No," cry the wise, "for a circle was traced, there was pyloned a limit
Only we escape through dream's thin passages. None can disclaim it;
All things created are made by their borders, sketched out and coded;
Vain is the passion to divinise manhood, humanise godhead.
None can exceed himself; even to find oneself hard for our search is:
Only we see as in night by a lustre of flickering torches.
To be content with our measure, our space is the law of our living.
All of thyself to thy manhood and Nature and Circumstance giving,
Be what thou must be or be what thou canst be, one hour in an era.
Knowing the truth of thy days, shun the light of ideal and chimera:
Curb heart's impatience, bind thy desires down, pause from self-vexing."
Who is the nomad then? who is the seeker, the gambler risking
All for a dream in a dream, the old and the sure and the stable
Flung as a stake for a prize that was never yet laid on the table?
Always the world is expanding and growing from minute to minute;
Playing the march of the adventure of Time with our lives for her spinet
Maya or Nature, the wonderful Mother, strikes out surprising
Strains of the spirit disprisoned; creation heavenward rising
Wrestles with Time and Space and the Unknown to give form to the Formless.
Bliss is her goal, but her road is through whirlwind and death-blast and storm-race.
All is a wager and danger, all is a chase and a battle.
Vainly man, crouched in his corner of safety, shrinks from the fatal
Lure of the Infinite. Guided by Powers that surround and precede us
Fearful and faltering steps are our perishing efforts that lead us
On through the rooms of the finite till open the limitless spaces
And we can look into all-seeing eyes and imperishable faces.
But we must pass through the aeons; Space is a bar twixt our ankles,
Time is a weight that we drag and the scar of the centuries rankles:
Caught by the moments, held back from the spirit's timelessness, slowly
Wading in shallows we take not the sea-plunge vastly and wholly.
Hard is the way to the Eternal for the mind-born will of the mortal
Bound by the body and life to the gait of the house-burdened turtle.
Here in this world that knows not its morrow, this reason that stumbles
Onward from error to truth and from truth back to error while crumbles
All that it fashioned, after the passion and travail are ended,

After the sacrifice offered when the will and the strength are expended,
Nothing is done but to have laid down one stone of a road without issue,
Added our quota of evil and good to an ambiguous tissue.
Destiny's lasso, its slip-knot tied by delight and repining,
Draws us through tangles of failure and victory's inextricable twining.
In the hard reckoning made by the grey-robed accountant at even
Pain is the ransom we pay for the smallest foretaste of heaven.
Ignorance darkens, death and inconscience gape to absorb us;
Thick and persistent the Night confronts us, its hunger enormous
Swallowing our work and our lives. Our love and our knowledge squandered
Lie like a treasure refused and trod down on the ways where we wandered;
All we have done is effaced by the thousands behind us arriving.
Trapped in a round fixed for ever circles our thought and our living.
Fiercely the gods in their jealousy strike down the heads that have neighboured
Even for a moment their skies; in the sands our achievements are gravured.
Yet survives bliss in the rhythm of our heart-beats, yet is there wonder,
Beauty's immortal delight, and the seals of the mystery sunder.
Honied a thousand whispers come, in the birds, in the breezes,
Moonlight, the voices of streams; with a hundred marvellous faces
Always he lures us to love him, always he draws us to pleasure
Leaving remembrance and anguish behind for our only treasure.
Passionate we seek for him everywhere, yearn for some sign of him, calling,
Scanning the dust for his footprints, praying and stumbling and falling;
Nothing is found and no answer comes from the masks that are passing.
Memories linger, lines from the past like a half-faded tracing.
He has passed on into silence wearing his luminous mantle.
Out of the melodied distance a laugh rings pure-toned, infantile,
Sole reminder that he is, last signal recalling his presence.
There is a joy behind suffering; pain digs our road to his pleasance.
All things have bliss for their secret; only our consciousness falters
Fearing to offer itself as a victim on ecstasy's altars.
Is not the world his disguise? when that cloak is tossed back from his shoulders,
Beauty looks out like a sun on the hearts of the ravished beholders.
Mortals, your end is beatitude, rapture eternal his meaning:
Joy, which he most now denies, is his purpose: the hedges, the screening

Were but the rules of his play; his denials came to lure farther.
These too were magic of Maya, smiles of the marvellous Mother.
Oh, but the cruelty! oh, but the empty pain we go rueing!
Edges of opposite sweetness, calls to a closer pursuing.
All that we meet is a symbol and gateway; cryptic intention
Lurks in a common appearance, smiles from a casual mention:
Opposites hide in each other; in the laughter of Nature is danger,
Glory and greatness their embryos form in the womb of her anger.
Why are we terrified? wherefore cry out and draw back from the smiting —
Blows from the hands of a lover to direr exactions exciting,
Fiery points of his play! Was he Rudra only the mighty?
Whose were the whispers of sweetness, whose were the murmurs of pity?
Something opposes our grasp on the light and the sweetness and power,
Something within us, something without us, trap-door or tower,
Nature's gap in our being — or hinge! That device could we vanquish,
Once could we clasp him and hold, his joy we could never relinquish.
Then we could not be denied, for our might would be single and flawless.
Sons of the Eternal, sovereigns of Nature absolute and lawless,
Termlessly our souls would possess as he now enjoys and possesses,
Termlessly probe the delight of his laughter's lurking recesses,
Chasing its trail to the apex of sweetness and secrecy. Treasured
Close to the beats of Eternity's heart in a greatness unmeasured,
Locked into a miracle and mystery of Light we would live in him, — seated
Deep in his core of beatitude ceaselessly by Nature repeated,
Careless of Time, with no fear of an end, with no need for endeavour
Caught by his ecstasy dwell in a rapture enduring for ever.
What was the garden he built when the stars were first set in their places,
Soul and Nature together mid streams and in cloudless spaces
Naked and innocent? Someone offered a fruit of derision,
Knowledge of good and of evil, cleaving in God a division.
Though He who made all said, "It is good; I have fashioned perfection,"
"No, there is evil," someone whispered, "'tis screened from detection."
Wisest he of the beasts of the field, one cunning and creeping;
"See it," he said, "be wise; you shall be as the gods are, unsleeping,
They who know all." And they ate. The roots of our being were shaken;
Hatred and weeping and wrath at once trampled a world overtaken,
Terror and fleeing and anguish and shame and desires unsated;

Cruelty stalked like a lion; Revenge and her brood were created.
Out to the desert he drove the rebellious. Flaming behind them
Streamed out the sword of his wrath and it followed leaping to find them,
Stabbing at random. The pure and the evil, the strong and the tempted,
All are confounded in punishment; justly is no one exempted.
Virtuous? yes, there are many, but who is there innocent? Toiling
Therefore we seek, but find not that Eden. Planting and spoiling,
"This is the garden," we say, "lo, the trees and this is the river."
Vainly redeemers came, not one has availed to deliver.
Never can Nature go back to her careless and childlike beginning,
Laugh of the babe and the song of the wheel in its delicate spinning,
Smile of the sun upon flowers and earth's beauty, life without labour
Plucking the fruits of the soil and rejoicing in cottage and arbour.
Once we have chosen to be as the gods, we must follow that motion.
Knowledge must grow in us, might like a Titan's, bliss like an ocean,
Calmness and purity born of the spirit's gaze on the Real,
Rapture of his oneness embracing the soul in a clasp hymeneal.
Was it not he once in Brindavan? Woods divine to our yearning,
Memorable always! O flowers, O delight on the tree-tops burning,
Grasses his herds have grazed and crushed by his feet in the dancing,
Yamuna flowing with song, through the greenness always advancing,
You unforgotten remind; for his flute with its sweetness ensnaring
Sounds in our ears in the night and our souls of their teguments baring
Hales us out naked and absolute, out to his woodlands eternal,
Out to his moonlit dances, his dalliance sweet and supernal,
And we go stumbling, maddened and thrilled to his dreadful embraces,
Slaves of his rapture to Brindavan crowded with amorous faces,
Luminous kine in the green glades seated, soft-eyed gazing,
Flowers on the branches distressing us, moonbeams unearthly amazing,
Yamuna flowing before us, laughing low with her voices,
Brindavan arching o'er us where Shyama sports and rejoices.
Inly the miracle trembles repeated; mist-walls are broken
Hiding that country of God and we look on the wonderful token,
Clasp the beautiful body of the Eternal; his flute-call of yearning
Cries in our breast with its blissful anguish for ever returning;
Life flows past us with passionate voices, a heavenly river,
All our being goes back as a bride of his bliss to the Giver.

Even an hour of the soul can unveil the Unborn, the Everlasting,
Gaze on its mighty Companion; the load of mortality casting,
Mind hushes stilled in eternity; waves of the Infinite wander
Thrilling body and soul and its endless felicity squander;
All world-sorrow is finished, the cry of the parting is over;
Ecstasy laughs in our veins, in our heart is the heart of the Lover.
As when a stream from a highland plateau green mid the mountains
Draws through broad lakes of delight the gracious sweep of its fountains,
Life from its heaven of desire comes down to the toil of the earth-ways;
Streaming through mire it pours still the mystical joy of its birthplace,
Green of its banks and the green of its trees and the hues of the flower.
Something of child-heart beauty, something of greatness and power,
Dwell with it still in its early torrent laughter and brightness,
Call in the youth of its floods and the voice of the wideness and whiteness.
But in its course are set darkness and fall and the spirit's ordeal.
Hating its narrowness, forced by an ardour to see all and be all,
Dashed on the inconscient rocks and straining through mud, over gravel,
Flows, like an ardent prisoner bound to the scenes of his travail,
Life, the river of the Spirit, consenting to anguish and sorrow
If by her heart's toil a loan-light of joy from the heavens she can borrow.
Out of the sun-rays and moon-rays, the winds' wing-glimmer and revel,
Out of the star-fields of wonder, down to earth's danger and evil
Headlong cast with a stridulant thunder, the doom-ways descending,
Shuddering below into sunless depths, across chasms unending,
Baulked of the might of its waters, a thread in a mountainous vastness,
Parcelled and scanted it hurries as if storming a Titan fastness,
Carving the hills with a sullen and lonely gigantic labour.
Hurled into strangling ravines it escapes with a leap and a quaver,
Breaks from the channels of hiding it grooves out and chisels and twistens,
Angry, afraid, white, foaming. A stony and monstrous resistance
Meets it piling up stubborn limits. Afflicted the river
Treasures a scattered sunbeam, moans for a god to deliver,
Longing to lapse through the plain's green felicity, yearning to widen
Joined to the ocean's shoreless eternity far-off and hidden.
High on the cliffs the Great Ones are watching, the Mighty and Deathless,
Soaring and plunging the roadway of the Gods climbs uplifted and breathless;

Ever we hear in the heart of the peril a flute go before us,
Luminous beckoning hands in the distance invite and implore us.
Ignorant, circled with death and the abyss, we have dreamed of a human
Paradise made from the mind of a man, from the heart of a woman,
Dreamed of the Isles of the Blest in a light of perpetual summer,
Dreamed of the joy of an earthly life with no pain for incomer.
Never, we said, can these waters from heaven be lost in the marshes,
Cease in the sands of the desert, die where the simoom parches;
Plains are beyond, there are hamlets and fields where the river rejoices
Pacing once more with a quiet step and with amical voices:
Bright amid woodlands red with the berries and cool with the breezes
Glimmer the leaves; all night long the heart of the nightingale eases
Sweetly its burden of pity and sorrow. There amid flowers
We shall take pleasure in arbours delightful, lengthening the hours,
Time for our servitor waiting our fancy through moments unhasting,
Under the cloudless blue of those skies of tranquillity resting,
Lying on beds of lilies, hearing the bells of the cattle
Tinkle, and drink red wine of life and go forth to the battle,
Fight and unwounded return to our beautiful home by the waters,
Fruit of our joy rear tall strong sons and radiant daughters.
Then shall the Virgins of Light come down to us clad in clear raiment
Woven from sunbeam and moonbeam and lightnings, limitless payment
Bring of our toil and our sorrow, carrying life-giving garlands
Plucked by the fountains of Paradise, bring from imperishable star-lands
Hymn-words of wisdom, visions of beauty, heaven-fruit ruddy,
Wine-cups of ecstasy sending the soul like a stream through the body.
Fate shall not know; if her spies come down to our beautiful valley,
They shall grow drunk with its grapes and wander in woodland and alley.
There leaps the anger of Rudra? there will his lightnings immortal
Circle around with their red eye of cruelty stabbing the portal?
Fearless is there life's play; I shall sport with my dove from his highlands,
Drinking her laughter of bliss like a god in my Grecian islands.
Life in my limbs shall grow deathless, flesh with the God-glory tingle,
Lustre of Paradise, light of the earth-ways marry and mingle.
These are but dreams and the truth shall be greater. Heaven made woman!
Flower of beatitude! living shape of the bliss of the Brahman!
Art thou not she who shall bring into life and time the Eternal?

Body of the summer of the Gods, a sweetness virginal, vernal,
Breathes from thy soul into Nature; Love sits dreaming in thy bosom,
Wisdom gazes from thy eyes, thy breasts of God-rapture are the blossom.
If but the joy of thy feet once could touch our spaces smiting
Earth with a ray from the Unknown, on the world's heart heaven's script writing,
All then would change into harmony and beauty, Time's doors shudder
Swinging wide on their hinges into Eternity, other
Voices than earth's would be fire in our speech and make deathless our thinking.
One who is hidden in Light would grow visible, multitudes linking,
Lyres of a single ecstasy, throbs of the one heart beating,
Wonderful bodies and souls in the spirit's identity meeting
Even as stars in sky-vastness know their kindred in grandeur.
Yet may it be that although in the hands of our destiny stands sure
Fixed to its hour the Decree of the Advent, still it is fated
Only when kindling earth's bodies a mightier Soul is created.
Far-off the gold and the greatness, the rapture too splendid and dire.
Are not the ages too young? too low in our hearts burns the fire.
Bringest thou only a gleam on the summits, a cry in the distance,
Seen by the eyes that are wakened, heard by a spirit that listens?
Form of the formless All-Beautiful, lodestar of Nature's aspirance,
Music of prelude giving a voice to the ineffable Silence,
First white dawn of the God-Light cast on these creatures that perish,
Word-key of a divine and eternal truth for mortals to cherish,
Come! let thy sweetness and force be a breath in the breast of the future
Making the god-ways alive, immortality's golden-red suture:
Deep in our lives there shall work out a honeyed celestial leaven,
Bliss shall grow native to being and earth be a kin-soil to heaven.
Open the barriers of Time, the world with thy beauty enamour.
Trailing behind thee the purple of thy soul and the dawn-moment's glamour,
Forcing the heart of the Midnight where slumber and secrecy linger,
Guardians of Mystery, touching her bosom with thy luminous finger,
Daughter of Heaven, break through to me moonlike, mystic and gleaming;
Tread through the margins of twilight, cross over borders of dreaming.
Vision delightful alone on the peaks whom the silences cover,
Vision of bliss, stoop down to mortality, lean to thy lover.

AHANA

Voice of the sensuous mortal, heart of eternal longing,
Thou who hast lived as in walls, thy soul with thy senses wronging!
But I descend at last. Fickle and terrible, sweet and deceiving,
Poison and nectar one has dispensed to thee, luring thee, leaving.
We two together shall capture the flute and the player relentless.
Son of man, thou hast crowned thy life with the flowers that are scentless,
Chased the delights that wound. But I come and midnight shall sunder.
Lo, I come, and behind me Knowledge descends and with thunder
Filling the spaces Strength, the Angel, bears on his bosom
Joy to thy arms. Thou shalt look on her face like a child's or a blossom,
Innocent, free as in Eden of old, not afraid of her playing,
When thy desires I have seized and devoured like a lioness preying.
Thou shalt not suffer always nor cry to me lured and forsaken:
I have a snare for his footsteps, I have a chain for him taken.
Come then to Brindavan, soul of the joyous; faster and faster
Follow the dance I shall teach thee with Shyama for slave and for master.
Follow the notes of the flute with a soul aware and exulting;
Trample Delight that submits and crouch to a sweetness insulting.
Then shalt thou know what the dance meant, fathom the song and the singer,
Hear behind thunder its rhymes, touched by lightning thrill to his finger,
Brindavan's rustle shalt understand and Yamuna's laughter,
Take thy place in the Ras[1] and thy share of the ecstasy after.

---

[1] The dance-round of Krishna with the cowherdesses in the moonlit groves of Brindavan, type of the dance of Divine Delight with the souls of men liberated in the world of Bliss secret within us.

Poems from Manuscripts
Circa 1912–1913

The Descent of Ahana

I

AHANA

Strayed from the roads of Time, far-couched on the void I have slumbered;
Centuries passed me unnoticed, millenniums perished unnumbered.
I, Ahana, slept. In the stream of thy sevenfold Ocean,
Being, how hast thou laboured without me? Whence was thy motion?
Not without me can thy nature be satisfied. But I came fleeing; —
Vexed was my soul with the joys of sound and weary of seeing;
Into the deeps of my nature I lapsed, I escaped into slumber.
Out of the silence who call me back to the clamour and cumber?
Why should I go with you? What hast thou done in return for my labour,
World? what wage had my soul when its strength was thy neighbour,
Though I have loved all, working and suffering, giving them pleasure?
I have escaped from it all; I have fled from the pitiless pressure.
Silence vast and pure, again to thy wideness receive me;
For unto thee I turn back from those who would use me and grieve me.

VOICES

Nay, thou art thrilled, O goddess; thy calm thou shalt not recover,
But must come down to this world of pain and the need of thy lover.
Joy as thou canst, endure as thou must, but bend to our uses.
Vainly thy heart repines, — thou wast made for this, — vainly refuses.

AHANA

Voices of joy, from the roseate arbour of sense and the places
Thrilled with the song and the scent and peopled with beautiful faces,
Long in your closes of springtime, lured to joyaunce unsated
Tarried my heart, and I walked in your meadows, your chaplets I plaited,
Played in your gardens of ease and, careless of blasts in the distance,
Paced, pursued by the winds, your orchard of autumn's persistence,
Saw on the dance of a ripple your lotus that slumbers and quivers,
Heard your nightingales warbling in covert by moon-gilded rivers.

But I relinquished your streams and I turned from your moonbeams and flowers;
Now I have done with space and my soul is released from the hours.
Saved is my heart from the need of joy, the attraction to sorrow,
Who have escaped from my past and forgotten today and tomorrow;
I have grown vacant and mighty, naked and wide as the azure.
Will you now plant in this blast, on this snow your roses of pleasure?
Once was a dwelling here that was made for the dance of the Graces,
But I have hewn down its gardens and ravaged its delicate places,
Driven the revellers out from their pleasaunce to wander unfriended,
Flung down the walls and over the debris written 'tis ended.
Now, and I know not yet wherefore, the Mighty One suffers you near Him,
But in their coming the great Gods hesitate seeming to fear Him.
Thought returns to my soul like a stranger. Sweetness and feature
Draw back appalled to their kind from the frozen vasts of my nature.
Turn back you also, angels of yearning, vessels of sweetness.
Have I not wandered from Time, left ecstasy, outstripped completeness?

VOICES

Goddess, we moaned upon earth and we wandered exiled from heaven.
Joy from us fled; our hearts to the worm and the arrow were given.
Old delights we remembered, natures of ecstasy keeping,
Hastened from rose to rose, but were turned back wounded and weeping:
Snatches of pleasure we seized; they were haunted and challenged by sorrow.
Marred was our joy of the day by a cloud and the dread of the morrow.
Star of infinity, we have beheld thee bright and unmoving
Seated above us, in tracts unattained by us, throned beyond loving.
Lonely thou sittest above in the fruitless vasts of the Spirit.
Waitest thou, goddess, then for a fairer world to inherit?
Wilt thou not perfect this rather that sprang too from Wisdom and Power?
Taking the earthly rose canst thou image not Heaven in a flower?
Nay, if thou save not this, will another rise from the spaces?
Is not the past fulfilled that gives room for the future faces?
Winging like bees to thy limbs we made haste like flames through the azure;
O we were ploughed with delight, we were pierced as with arrows of pleasure.

Rapture yearned and the Uswins cried to us; Indra arising
Gazed from the heights of his mental realms and the moonbeams surprising
Flowed on him out of the regions immortal; their nectar slowly
Mixed with the scattered roses of dawn and mastered us wholly.
Come, come down to us, Woman divine, whom the world unforgetting
Yearns for still, — we will draw thee, O star, from thy colourless setting.
Goddess, we understand thee not; Woman, we know not thy nature;
This yet we know, we have need of thee here in our world of misfeature.
Therefore we call to thee and would compel if our hands could but reach thee.
O, we have means to compel; we have many a sweetness to teach thee
Charming thee back to thy task mid our fields and our sunbeams and flowers,
Weaving a net for thy feet with the snare of the moonlit hours.

AHANA

Spirits of helpless rapture, spirits of sweetness and playtime,
Thrilled with my honey of night and drunk with my wine of the daytime,
If there were strengths that could seize on the world for their passion and rapture,
If there were souls that could hunt after God as a prey for their capture,
Such might aspire to possess me. I am Ahana the mighty,
I am Ashtaroth, I am the goddess, divine Aphrodite.
You have a thirst full sweet, but earth's vineyards quickly assuage it:
There must be thoughts that outmeasure existence, strengths that besiege it,
Natures fit for my vastness! Return to your haunts, O ye shadows
Beautiful. Not of my will I descend to the bee-haunted meadows,
Rivulets stealing through flowers. Let those who are mighty aspire,
Gods if there are of such greatness, to seize on the world's Desire.

VOICES

Good, it is spoken. We wait thee, Ahana, where fugitive traces
Came of the hunted prey of the Titans in desert places
Trod by thee once, when the world was mighty and violent. Risen,
Hark, they ascend; they are freed by thy call from the seals of their prison.

AHANA

Rush I can hear as of wings in the void and the march of a nation.
Shapes of old mightiness visit me; movements of ancient elation
Stride and return in my soul, and it turns like an antelope fleeing.
What was the cry that thou drewst from my bosom, Lord of my being?
Lo, their souls are cast on my soul like forms on a mirror!
Hark, they arise, they aspire, they are near, and I shudder with terror,
Quake with delight and attraction. Lord of the worlds, dost Thou leave me
Bare for their seizing? of peace and of strength in a moment bereave me?
Long hast Thou kept me safe in Thy soul, but I lose my defences.
Thought streams fast on me; joy is awake and the strife of the senses.
Ah, their clutch on my feet! my thighs are seized by them! Legions
Mighty around me they stride; I feel them filling the regions.
Seest Thou their hands on my locks? Wilt Thou suffer it, Master of Nature?
I am Thy force and Thy strength; wilt Thou hand me enslaved to Thy creature?
Headlong they drag me down to their dreadful worlds far below me.
What will you do with me there, O you mighty Ones? Speak to me, show me
One of your faces, teach me one of your names while you ravish,
Dragging my arms and my knees while you hurry me. Tell me what lavish
Ecstasy, show me what torture immense you seize me for. Quittance
When shall I have from my labour? What term has your tyranny, Titans?
Masters fierce of your worlds who would conquer the higher creation,
What is your will with me, giants of violence, lords of elation?

VOICES

In the beginning of things when nought was abroad but the waters,
Ocean stirred with longing his mighty and deep-bosomed daughters.
Out of that longing we rose from the voiceless heart of the Ocean;
Candid, unwarmed, O Ahana, the spaces empty of motion
Stretched, enormous, silent, void of the breath of thy greatness,
Hushed to thy sweetnesses, fixed in the calm of their ancient sedateness.
We are the gods who have mapped out Time and measured its spaces,
Raised there our mansions of pride and planted our amorous places.
Trembling like flowers appeared in the void the immense constellations;
Gods grew possessed of their heavens, earth rose with her joy-haunted nations.

Calm were we, mighty, magnificent, hunting and seizing
Whatso we willed through the world in a rapture that thought not of
ceasing.
But thou hast turned from us, favouring gods who are slighter and fairer,
Swift-footed, subtle of mind; but the sword was too great for the bearer,
Heavy the sceptre weighed upon hands not created to bear it.
Cruel and jealous the gods of thy choice were, cunning of spirit,
Suave were their eyes of beauty that mastered thy heart, O woman!
They who to govern our world, made it tarnished, sorrowful, common.
Mystic and vast our world, but they hoped in their smallness to sum it
Schooled and coerced in themselves and they sank an ignorant plummet
Into infinity, shaping a limited beauty and power,
Confident, figuring Space in an inch and Time in an hour.
Therefore pleasure was troubled and beauty tarnished, madness
Mated with knowledge, the heart of purity sullied with sadness.
Strife began twixt the Infinite deathless within and the measure
Falsely imposed from without on its thought and its force and its pleasure.
We who could help were condemned in their sunless Hells to languish,
Shaking the world with the heave of our limbs, for our breath was an
anguish.
There were we cast down, met and repulsed by the speed of their thunder,
Earth piled on us, our Mother; her heart of fire burned under.
Now we escape, we are free; our triumph and bliss are before us,
Earth is our prey and the heavens our hunting ground; stars in their chorus
Chant, wide-wheeling, our paean; the world is awake and rejoices:
Hast thou not heard its trampling of strengths and its rapturous voices?
Is not our might around thee yet? does not our thunder-winged fleetness
Drag thee down yet to the haunts of our strength and the cups of our
sweetness?
There thou shalt suffer couched on our mountains, over them stretching
All thy defenceless bliss, thy pangs to eternity reaching.
Thou shalt be taken and whelmed in our trampling and bottomless Oceans,
Chained to the rocks of the world and condemned to our giant emotions.
Violent joy thou shalt have of us, raptures and ruthless revulsions
Racking and tearing thee, and each thrill of thy honeyed convulsions,
We, as it shakes the mountains, we as thou spurnst up the waters,
Laughing shall turn to a joy for Delight and her pitiless daughters.

They shall be changed to a strength for the gods and for death-besieged natures.
When we have conquered, when thou hast yielded to earth and her creatures,
Boundless, thy strength, O Ahana, delivered, thy sorrowless joyaunce,
Hope, if thou canst, release from the meed of thy pride and defiance.

AHANA

Gods irresistible, blasts of His violence, fighters eternal,
Churners of Ocean, stormers of Heaven! but limits diurnal
Chafe you and bonds of the Night. I know in my soul I am given,
Racked, to your joys as a sacrifice, writhing, to raise you to heaven.
Therefore you seize on me, vanquish and carry me swift to my falling.
Fain would I linger, fain resist, to Infinity calling;
But you possess all my limbs, you compel me, giants of evil.
Am I then doomed to your darkness and violence, moonlight and revel?
Hast thou no pity, O Earth, my soul from this death to deliver?
Who are you, luminous movements? around me you glimmer and quiver,
Visible, not to the eyes, and not audible, circling you call me,
Teaching my soul with sound, O you joys that shall seize and befall me.
What are you, lords of the brightness vague that aspires, but fulfils not?
For you possess and retire, but your yearning quenches not, stills not.
Yet is your touch a pleasure that thrills all my soul with its sweetness;
I am in love with your whispers and snared by your bright incompleteness.
Speak to me, comfort me falling. Bearing eternity follow
Down to the hills of my pain and into the Ocean's hollow.

VOICES

We are the Ancients of knowledge, Ahana, the Sons of the Morning.
Why dost thou cry to us, Daughter of Bliss, who left us with scorning?
We too dwelt in delight when these were supreme in their spaces;
We too were riven with pain when they fell down prone from their places.
Hast thou forgotten the world as it was ere thou fledst from our nations?
Dost thou remember at all the joy of the ancient creations?
Thrilled were its streams with our intimate bliss and our happy contriving;
Sound was a song and movement the dance of our rhythmical living.
Out of our devious delight came the senses and all their deceptions;

Earth was our ring of bliss and the map of our mighty conceptions.
For we sustained the inert sitting secret in clod and in petal,
And we awoke to a twilight of life in the leaf and the metal.
Active we dreamed in the mind and we ordered our dreams to a measure,
Making an image of pain and shaping an idol of pleasure.
Good we have made by our thoughts and sin by our fear and recoiling;
It was our weakness invented grief, O delight! reconciling
Always the touch that was borne with strength that went out for possessing,
Somewhere, somehow we failed; there was discord, a pang, a regressing.
Goddess, His whispers bewildered us; over us vainly aspirant
Galloped the throng of His strengths like the steeds of a pitiless tyrant.
Since in the woods of the world we have wandered, thrust from sereneness,
Erring mid pleasures that fled and dangers that coiled in the greenness,
Someone surrounds and possesses our lives whom we cannot discover,
Someone our heart in its hunger pursues with the moans of a lover.
Knowledge faints in its toil, amasses but loses its guerdon;
Strength is a worker blinded and maimed who is chained to his burden,
Love a seeker astray; he finds in a seeming, then misses;
Weariness hampers his feet. Desire with unsatisfied kisses
Clings to each object she lights upon, loving, forsaking, returning:
Earth is filled with her sobs and the cry of her fruitlessly burning.
All things we sounded here. Everything leaves us or fails in the spending;
Strength has its weakness, knowledge its night and joy has its ending.
Is it not thou who shalt rescue us, freeing the Titans, the Graces?
Hast thou not hidden thyself with the mask of a million faces?
Nay, from thyself thou art hidden; thy secret intention thou shunnest
And from the joy thou hast willed like an antelope fleest and runnest.
Thou shalt be forced, O Ahana, to bear enjoyment and knowing
Termlessly. Come, O come from thy whiteness and distance, thou glowing,
Mighty and hundred-ecstasied Woman! Daughter of Heaven,
Usha, descend to thy pastimes below and thy haunts that are given.
She-wolf avid of cruelty, lioness eager for battle,
Tigress that prowlst in the night and leapest out dire on the cattle,
Sarama, dog of the heavens, thou image of grosser enjoying,
Hungry slave of the worlds, incessantly pawing and toying,
Snake of delight and of poison, gambolling beast of the meadows,
Come to thy pastures, Ahana, sport in the sunbeams and shadows.

Naiad swimming through streams and Dryad fleeing through forest
Wild from the clutch of the Satyr! Ahana who breakst and restorest!
Oread, mountain Echo, cry to the rocks in thy running!
Nymph in recess and in haunt the pursuit and the melody shunning!
Giantess, cruel and false and grand! Gandharvi that singest
Heavenward! bird exultant through storm and through sapphire who wingest!
Centauress galloping wild through the woods of Himâloy high-crested!
Yakshini brooding o'er treasure down in earth's bowels arrested!
Demoness gnashing thy teeth in the burial-ground! Titaness striding
Restless through worlds for thy rest, the brain and the bosom not ridding
Even one hour of the ferment-waste and the load beyond bearing,
Recklessly slaying the peoples in anger, recklessly sparing,
Spending the strength that is thine to inherit the doom of another!
Goddess of pity who yearnst and who helpest, Durga, our Mother!
Brooder in Delphi's caverns, Voice in the groves of Dodona!
Goddess serene of an ancient progeny, Dian, Latona!
Virgin! ascetic frank or remote, Athene the mighty!
Harlot supine to the worlds, insatiate white Aphrodite!
Hundred-named art thou, goddess, a hundred-formed, and thy bosom
Thrills all the world with its breasts. O starlight, O mountain, O blossom!
Rain that descendest kissing our lips and lightning that slayest!
Thou who destroyest to save, to delight who hurtst and dismayest!
Thou art our mother and sister and bride. O girdled with splendour,
Cruel and bright as the sun, O moonlike, mystic and tender!
Thou art the perfect peopling of Space, O Ahana; thou only
Fillest Time with thy forms. Leave then thy eternity lonely,
Come! from thy summits descending arrive to us, Daughter of Heaven,
Usha, Dawn of the world, for our ways to thy footsteps are given.
Strength thou hast built for the floor of the world and delight for its rafter.
Calm are thy depths, O Ahana; above is thy hundred-mouthed laughter.
Rapture can fail not in thee though he rend like a lion preying
Body and soul with his ecstasies vast. Thou for ever delaying,
Feigning to end, shalt renew thyself, never exhausting his blisses,
Joy shall be in thy bosom satisfied never with kisses;
Strength from thy breasts drawing force of the Titans shall unrelaxing
Stride through the worlds at his work. One shall drive him ruthlessly taxing

Sinew and nerve, though our slave, yet seized, driven, helpless to tire,
Borne by unstumbling speed to the goal of a God's desire.
What shall thy roof be, crown of thy building? Knowledge, sublimely,
High on her vaulted arches where thought, half-lost, wings dimly,
Luring the flaming heart above and the soul to its shadows,
Winging wide like a bird through the night and the moonlit meadows.
Vast, uncompelled we shall range released and at peace with our nature,
Reconciled, knowing ourselves. To her pain and the longings that reach her
Come from thy summits, Ahana; come! our desire unrelenting
Hales thee down from God and He smiles at thee sweetly consenting.
Lo, she is hurried down and the regions live in her tresses.
Worlds, she descends to you! Peoples, she nears with her mighty caresses.
Man in his sojourn, Gods in their going, Titans exultant
Thrill with thy fall, O Ahana, and wait for the godhead resultant.

AHANA

Calm like a goddess, alarmed like a bride is my spirit descending,
Falling, O Gods, to your arms. I know my beginning and ending;
All I have known and I am not astonished; alarmed and attracted
Therefore my soul descends foreknowing the rapture exacted,
Gulf of the joys you would doom me to, torment of infinite striving,
Travail of knowledge. Was I not made for your mightier living?
Gods, I am falling, I am descending, cast down as for ever,
Thrown as a slave at your feet and a tool for your ruthless endeavour.
Yet while I fall, I will threaten you. Hope shall be yours, so it trembles.
I have a bliss that destroys and the death in me wooes and dissembles.
Will you not suffer then my return to my peace beyond telling?
You have accepted death for your pastime, Titans rebelling!
Hope then from pain delight and from death an immortal stature!
Slaves of her instruments, rise to be equals and tyrants of Nature!
Lay not your hands so fiercely upon me! compel me not, falling!
Gods, you shall rue it who heed not the cry of my prayer and my calling.
'Tis not a merciful One that you seize. I fall and, arisen,
Earth strides towards me. Gods, my possessors, kingdoms, my prison,
So shall you prosper or die as you use or misuse and deceive me.
Vast, I descend from God. O world and its masters, receive me!

II

AHANA

Lo, on the hills I have paused, on the peaks of the world I have halted
Here in the middle realms of Varuna the world-wide-exalted.
Gods, who have drawn me down to the labour and sobs of creation,
First I would speak with the troubled hearts and the twilit nation,
Speak then, I bend my ear to the far terrestrial calling,
Speak, O thou toiling race of humanity, welcome me falling,
Space for whose use in a boundless thought was unrolled and extended;
Time in its cycles waited for man. Though his kingdom is ended,
Here in a speck mid the suns and his life is a throb in the aeons,
Yet, O you Titans and Gods, O Rudras, O strong Aditeians,
Man is the centre and knot; he is first, though the last in the ages.
I would remember your cycles, recover your vanished pages;
I have the vials divine, I rain down the honey and manna;
Speak, O thou soul of humanity, knowing me. I am Ahana.

A VOICE

Vision bright, that walkest crowned on the hills far above me,
Vision of bliss, stoop down from thy calm and thy silence to love me.
Only is calm so sweet? Is our end tranquillity only?
Chill are your rivers of peace and their banks are leafless and lonely.
Art thou not sated with sunlight only, cold in its lustre?
Art thou not weary of only the stars in their solemn muster?
Always the hills and the high-hung plateaus, — solitude's voices
Making the silence lonelier! Only the eagle rejoices
In the inhuman height of his nesting, — austerely striving,
Deaf with the cry of the waterfall, only the pine there is thriving.
We have the voice of the cuckoo, the nightingale sings in the branches,
Human laughter leads and the cattle low in the ranches.
Come to our tangled sunbeams, dawn on our twilights and shadows,
Taste with us, scent with us fruits of our trees and flowers of our meadows.
Art thou an angel of God in His heavens that they vaunt of, His sages?
Skies of monotonous calm and His stillness filling the ages?
Is He thy master, Rudra the mighty, Shiva ascetic?

Has He denied thee his worlds? In His dance that they tell of, ecstatic,
Slaying, creating, calm in the midst of His movement and madness,
Was there no place for an earthly joy, for a human sadness?
Did He not make us and thee? O Woman, joy's delicate blossom
Sleeps in thy lids of delight! All Nature laughs in thy bosom
Hiding her children unborn and the food of her love and her laughter.
Is He then first? Was there none before Him? shall none come after?
We too have gods, — the Tritons rise in the leap of the billows,
Emerald locks of the Nereids stream on their foam-crested pillows,
Dryads sway out from the branches, Naiads glance up through the waters;
Heaven has dances of joy and the gods are ensnared by her daughters.
Artemis calls as she flees through the glades and the breezes pursue her,
Cypris laughs in her isles where the Ocean-winds linger to woo her.
Thou shalt behold in glades forgotten the dance of the Graces,
Night shall be haunted for ever with strange and delicate faces.
Lo, all these peoples and who was it fashioned them? Who is unwilling
Still to have done with it? laughs beyond pain and saves in the killing?
Nature, you say; but is God then her enemy? Was she created,
He unknowing or sleeping? Did someone transgress the fated
Limits He set, outwitting God? Nay, we know it was fashioned
By the Almighty One, million-ecstasied, thousand-passioned.
But He created a discord within it, fashioned a limit?
Fashioned or feigned? for He set completeness beyond. To disclaim it,
To be content with our measure, they say, is the law of our living.
Rather to follow always and, baffled, still to go striving.
Yes, it is true that we dash ourselves stark on a barrier appearing,
Fall and are wounded. But He insists who is in us, the fearing
Conquers, the grief. We resist; His temptations leap down compelling;
Virtue cheats us with noble names to a lofty rebelling.
Fiercely His wrath and His jealousy strike down the rebel aspiring,
Thick and persistent His night confronts our eager inquiring;
Yet 'tis His strengths descend crying always, "Rebel; aspire!"
Still through the night He sends rays, to our bosoms a quenchless fire.
Most to our joys He sets limits, most with His pangs He perplexes;
Yet when we faint it is He that spurs. Temptation vexes;
Honied a thousand whispers come, in the birds, in the breezes,
Moonlight, the voice of the streams; from hundreds of beautiful faces

Always He cries to us, "Love me!", always He lures us to pleasure,
Then escapes and leaves anguish behind for our only treasure.
Shall we not say then that joy is greatest, rapture His meaning?
That which He most denies, is His purpose. The hedges, the screening,
Are they not all His play? In our end we have rapture for ever
Careless of Time, with no fear of the end, with no need for endeavour.
What was the garden He built when the stars were first set in their places,
Man and woman together mid streams and in cloudless spaces,
Naked and innocent? Someone offered a fruit of derision,
Knowledge of good and of evil, cleaving in God a division,
Though He who made all, said, "It is good; I have fashioned perfection."
"Nay, there is evil," someone whispered, "'tis screened from detection."
Wisest he of the beasts of the field, one cunning and creeping.
"See it," he said, "be wise. You shall be as the gods are, unsleeping,
They who know all," and they ate. The roots of our being were shaken;
Hatred and weeping and death at once trampled a world overtaken,
Terror and fleeing and wrath and shame and desire unsated;
Cruelty stalked like a lion; Revenge and her brood were created.
Out to the desert He drove the rebellious. Flaming behind them
Streamed out the sword of His wrath; it followed, eager to find them,
Stabbing at random. The pure and the evil, the strong and the tempted,
All are confounded in punishment. Justly is no one exempted.
Virtuous? Yes, there are many; but who is there innocent? Toiling,
Therefore, we seek, but find not that Eden. Planting and spoiling,
"This is the garden," we say, "lo, the trees! and this is the river."
Vainly! Redeemers come, but none yet availed to deliver.
Is it not all His play? Is He Rudra only, the mighty?
Whose are the whispers of sweetness? Whence are the murmurs of pity?
Why are we terrified then, cry out and draw back from the smiting?
Blows of a lover, perhaps, intended for fiercer inciting!
Yes, but the cruelty, yes, but the empty pain we go ruing!
Edges of sweetness, it may be, call to a swifter pursuing.
Was it not He in Brindâvun? O woods divine to our yearning,
Memorable always! O flowers, O delight on the treetops burning!
Grasses His kine have grazed and crushed by His feet in the dancing!
Yamuna flowing with sound, through the greenness always advancing!
You unforgotten remind! For His flute with its sweetness ensnaring

Sounds in our ears in the night and our souls of their teguments baring
Hales them out naked and absolute, out to His woodlands eternal,
Out to His moonlit dances, His dalliance sweet and supernal,
And we go stumbling, maddened and thrilled, to His dreadful embraces,
Slaves of His rapture to Brindâvun crowded with amorous faces,
Luminous kine in the green glades seated soft-eyed grazing,
Flowers from the branches distressing us, moonbeams unearthly amazing,
Yamuna flowing before us, laughing low with her voices,
Brindâvun arching o'er us where Shyâma sports and rejoices.
What though 'tis true that the river of Life through the Valley of Peril
Flows! But the diamond shines on the cliffside, jacinth and beryl
Gleam in the crannies, sapphire, smaragdus the roadway bejewel,
Down in the jaws of the savage mountains granite and cruel.
Who has not fathomed once all the voiceless threat of those mountains?
Always the wide-pacing river of Life from its far-off fountains
Flows down mighty and broad, like a warhorse brought from its manger
Arching its neck as it paces grand to the gorges of danger.
Sometimes we hesitate, often start and would turn from the trial,
Vainly: a fierce Inhabitant drives and brooks no denial.
Headlong, o'ercome with a stridulant horror the river descending
Shudders below into sunless depths among chasms unending, —
Angry, afraid, white, foaming. A stony and monstrous resistance
Meets it, piling up stubborn limits, an iron insistence.
Yet in the midst of our labour and weeping not utterly lonely
Wander our steps, nor are terror and grief our portion only.
Do we not hear in the heart of the peril a flute go before us?
Are there not beckoning hands of the gods that insist and implore us?
Plains are beyond; there are hamlets and fields where the river rejoices
Pacing once more with a quiet step and amical voices.
There in a woodland red with berries and cool with the breezes, —
Green are the leaves, all night long the heart of the nightingale eases
Sweetly its burden of pity and sorrow, fragrant the flowers, —
There in an arbour delightful I know we shall sport with the Hours,
Lying on beds of lilies, hearing the bells of our cattle
Tinkle, and drink red wine of our life and go forth to the battle
And unwounded return to our beautiful home by the waters,
Pledge of our joys, rear tall strong sons and radiant daughters.

Shall God know? Will His spies come down to our beautiful valley?
They shall grow drunk with its grapes and wander in woodland and alley.
There will His anger follow us, there will His lightnings immortal
Wander around with their red eye of cruelty stabbing the portal?
Yes, I shall fear then His play! I will sport with my dove from His highlands,
Pleased with her laughter of bliss like a god in my Grecian islands.
Daughter of Heaven, break through to me, moonlike, mystic and gleaming.
Come through the margins of twilight, over the borders of dreaming.
Vision bright that walkest crowned on the hills far above me,
Vision of bliss, stoop down! Encircle me, madden me, love me.

AHANA

Voice of the sensuous mortal! heart of eternal longing!
Thou who hast lived as in walls, thy soul with thy senses wronging!
But I descend to thee. Fickle and terrible, sweet and deceiving,
Poison and nectar One has dispensed to thee, luring thee, leaving.
We two together shall capture the flute and the player relentless.
Son of man, thou hast crowned thy life with flowers that are scentless,
Chased the delights that wound. But I come and the darkness shall sunder.
Lo, I come and behind me knowledge descends and with thunder
Filling the spaces Strength the Angel bears on his bosom
Joy to thy arms. Thou shalt look on her face like a child's or a blossom,
Innocent, free as in Eden of old, not afraid of her playing.
Pain was not meant for ever, hearts were not made but for slaying.
Thou shalt not suffer always nor cry to me, lured and forsaken.
I have a snare for His footsteps, I have a chain for Him taken.
Come then to Brindâvun, soul of the joyous; faster and faster
Follow the dance I shall teach thee with Shyâma for slave and for master, —
Follow the notes of the flute with a soul aware and exulting,
Trample Delight that submits and crouch to a sweetness insulting.
Thou shalt know what the dance meant, fathom the song and the singer,
Hear behind thunder its rhymes, touched by lightning thrill to His finger,
Brindâvun's rustle shalt understand and Yamuna's laughter,
Take thy place in the Râs and thy share of the ecstasy after.

The Meditations of Mandavya

I

O joy of gaining all the soul's desire!
O stranger joy of the defeat and loss!
O heart that yearnest to uplift the world!
O fiercer heart that bendest over its pain
And drinkst the savour! I will love thee, O Love,
Naked or veiled or dreadfully disguised;
Not only when thou flatterest my heart
But when thou tearst it. Thy sweet pity I love
And mother's care for creatures, for the joys
I love thee that the lives of things possess,
And love thee for the torment of our pains;
Nor cry, as some, against thy will, nor say
Thou art not. Easy is the love that lasts
Only with favours in the shopman heart!
Who, smitten, takes and gives the kiss, he loves.

2

Blue-winged like turquoise, crimson-throated, beaked,
Enormous, fluttering over the garden wall
He came to me, some moments on a bough
Was perched, then flew away, leaving my heart
Enchanted. It was as if thou saidst, "Behold, my love,
How beautiful I am! To show thee this,
I came, my beauty. Now I flee away
Since thou hast seen and lov'st." So dealst thou always,
Luring and fleeing; but our hearts pursue.

3

While on a terrace hushed I walked at night,
He came and stung my foot. My soul surprised

Rejoiced in lover's contact; but the mind
Thought of a scorpion and was snared by forms.
Still, still my soul remembered its delight,
Denying mind, and midst the body's pain,
I laughed contented.

4

All is attained, attained! The pain is dead,
The striving. O thou joy that since this world
Began, wast waiting for me in thy lair.
O Wild Beast of the ways who torest my soul
With rapture felt as pain.
O cruelty divine! O pity fierce!
O timeless rapture of the nights that pass
Embraced, poignant and pure with Thy caress!
Humanity, acceptable I find
Thy ages that have wept out sweat and blood,
Since all was made to give its utter price
To one wild moment of thy hidden God.
Let the whole world end now, since all for which
It was created is fulfilled at last
And I am swallowed up in Thee, O God.

II

Who made of Nature here a tyrant? Who
Condemned us to be slaves? It was not God.
Nay, we ourselves chose our own servitude
And we ourselves have forged and heaped our chains
On our own members. God only watched the while
And mocked us sweetly at our childish task.
Then if He seized us helpless in our bonds,
Then if He played with us despite our cries
And answered with His dreadful laugh our wrath,
Ours was the fault who chose that bondage first,
Ours is the folly whom His play affrights

While all the time He tells us, “It is nought.”
And now we say we never can be free,
For Nature binds us, for the fire must burn,
The water drown and death must seize his prey
And grief and torture do their will with us
And sin be like a lion with the world,
Because ’tis Nature. Man’s not infinite,
The proof is with us every day, they cry,
And God Himself’s a huge machine at last.
Yet over us all the while Thought’s lightnings play
And all the while within us works His love.
Now more than when the play began, He laughs.

2

Now I believe that it is possible
To manage the arising clouds, to silence
The thunder when it roars and put our rein
Upon the lightnings. Only first within
The god we must coerce who wallows here
In love with his subjection and confined
By his own servants, wantonly enslaved
To every lure and every tempting bond.
And therefore man loves power, but power o’ercome,
Force that accepts its limits. Wherefore then
A limit? Why not dare the whole embrace,
The vast attraction? Let us risk extinction then
If by that venture immortality
And high omnipotence come near our grasp.
’Tis not the little rippling wayward seas,
Nor all huge ocean tumbled by its storms
That can be our exemplar. The vault of heaven
Is not a true similitude for man
Whose space outgyres thought’s last horizon. Something
There is in us fears not the night beyond,
But breathless sails, unanchored, without helm,
Where mind and senses fail. Our naked soul

Can journey to the farther unshaped void
Where nothing is except ourselves, arrive, hold on,
Not shake, not ask return. Who accepts at last
His limit save the beast and plant and clod?
O to be perfect here, to exceed all bounds,
To feel the world a toy between our hands!
Yet now enough that I have seized one current
Of the tremendous Force that moves the world.
I know, O God, the day shall dawn at last
When man shall rise from playing with the mud
And taking in his hands the sun and stars
Remould appearance, law and process old.
Then, pain and discord vanished from the world,
Shall the dead wilderness accept the rose
And the hushed desert babble of its rills;
Man once more seem the image true of God.

3

I will not faint, O God. There is this thirst,
And thirst supposes water somewhere. Yes,
But in this life we may not ever find;
Old nature sits a phantom by the way,
Old passions may forbid, old doubts return.
Then are there other lives here or beyond
To satisfy us. I will persist, O Lord.

III

What is this Love that I have never found?
I have imagined in the skies a God,
And seen Him in the stirring of the leaves,
And heard Him in the purling of the brooks,
And feared Him in the lightning's flashing tusk,
And missed Him in the mute eternal night,
And woke to Him in the returning Dawns.
And now I say there is no God at all,

But only a dumb Void that belches forth
Numberless larvae and phantasmal shapes
Into a void less happy than itself
Because this feels. O if this dream were true,
This iron, brute, gigantic helpless toy
They call a world, this thing that turns and turns
And shrieks and bleeds and cannot stop, this victim
Broken and living yet on its own wheel,
And if a Will created this, what name
Shall best blaspheme against that tyrant God?
Let all men seek it out and hurl it up
Against Him with one cry, if yet perchance
Complete denial may destroy His life
With happy end to His unhappy world.
For where in all these stars is any sign of Love?
It is not here, but that which seems like Love
Is a sleek cruel cheat that soon unmasks,
Sent here to make the final suffering worse, —
Not Love, but Death disguised that strokes its food!
And all good in the world is only that.
A death that eats and eating is devoured,
This is the brutal image of the world.

—

Lo, I have cursed Thee, lo, I have denied
Thy love, Thy being. Strike me with Thy rod,
Convince me that Thou art. O leave it not
To Thy dumb messengers that have no heart,
No wrath in the attack, no angered love,
No exultation in the blow that falls,
The cry that answers. Let me feel a Heart,
Even though an evil one, that throbs and is
Against our tears, our pressure and our search.
Beware, for I will send my soul across the earth
And all men turn against Thee at my word.
There is no sign, there comes not any voice.
And yet, alas! I know He will return

And He will soothe my wounds and charm my heart;
I shall again forgive, again shall love,
Again shall suffer, be again deceived.
And where is any end, O Heaven, O Earth?
But there is never any end when one has loved.

—

A sudden silence and a sudden sound,
The sound above and in another world,
The silence here; and from the two a thought.
Perhaps the heart of God for ever sings
And worlds come throbbing out from every note;
Perhaps His soul sits ever calm and still
And listens to the music rapturously,
Himself adoring, by Himself adored.
So were the singer and the hearer one
Eternally. The anthem buoyant rides
For ever on the seas of Space and Time
And worships the white Bliss from which 'twas born;
The ineffable Delight leans silent down
And clasps the creatures of its mystic cry
For ever and for ever without end.

—

Who art thou that pursuest my desire
Like a wild beast behind the jungle's screen
And throw'st a dread upon its fiercest fire,
A shadow on its flowering joy and green?
Thou madest and deniest me my need,
Thou jealous Lover and devouring Greed!

—

Who spoke of God? There is a hungry Beast
In ambush for the world who all devours,
Yet is his hunger sated not the least.
He tears our beauty, strength and happiest hours,
And eats our flesh and drinks our blood and tears,

Ranging as in a thicket through the years.

—

Dost thou desire my last vain hope? Take it, rejoice!
Wilt thou exact my dying bliss? Tear it and end!
But give me this at least, dying, to hear thy voice
By thee as foeman slain if never clasped as friend.

—

Foeman or friend, lover or slayer, only thee
I need and feel, O personal Eternity.

—

If what thou gavest, thou must needs again exact,
Cancel thy forms, deny thy own accomplished fact,
With what wilt thou replace them? Is thy nameless void
Embraceable by arms? Or can the soul upbuoyed
Rest on a shoreless emptiness without a name?
Can Love find rapture by renouncing all his flame?
Thou hast forgotten or our nature is misled.
Lur'st thou to utter life beyond the silence dead?

—

Not sound, nor silence, neither world nor void,
But the unthinkable, absolute, unalloyed
One, multitudinous, nameless, yet a Name,
Innumerably other, yet the same.
Immeasurable ecstasy where Time
And Space have fainted in a swoon sublime!

—

Of silence I have tired, from the profounder Night
I come rejected. All the immensities overhead
Are given to my fierce upwinging soul at last
Rapt into high impossible ranges huge outspread.
Unnumbered voices thrill the silent waiting Vast,
A million flames converge into the rayless Light.

Incomplete Poems from Manuscripts
Circa 1912–1920

Thou who controllest

Thou who controllest the wide-spuming Ocean and settest its paces,
Hear me, thou strong and resistless Poseidon, lord of the waters.
Dancing thy waves in their revel Titanic, tossing my vessel
One to another, laugh from their raucous throats of derision,
Dropping it deep in their troughs till it buries its prow in the welter.
Comrades dear as the drops of my heart have been left when it rises,
Left in thy salt and lonely seas, and the scream of the tempest
Chides me that still I live, but I live and I yield not to Hades.
Staggering on as one laughed at and buffeted, straining for shelter,
Hopes despairingly, so by the pitiless mob of thy billows
Seized the ship goes stumbling on and is wounded and blinded,
Seeming allowed to run through their ranks, but they mock at the struggle,
Seeming allowed to escape, but they mean it not. They are thy minions.
They are thy servants, thy nation, heartless and loud and triumphant,
God of the waters, ruthless Poseidon.

Sole in the meadows of Thebes

Sole in the meadows of Thebes Teiresias sat by the Dirce,
Blind Teiresias lonely and old. The song of the river
Moaned in his ears and the scent of the flowers afflicted his spirit
Wandering naked and chill in the winds of the world and its greyness.
Silent awhile, then he smote on the ground with the stay of his blindness,
Calling "O murmuring waters of Dirce, loved by my childhood,
Waters of murmuring Dirce, flowers that were dear to the lover,
Then was your perfume a sweetness, then were your voices a carol;
Now you are dark to me, scents that hurt; you are dirges, O waters.

We are weary of sorrow,
Sated with salt of human tears; and the thronèd oppressor

Seems not divine to our eyes, but a worm that stings and is happy —
Groans of the sad oppressed have no tone for our ears any longer.
Death we have taken in horror, the anguish of others afflicts us
And with the pangs of an alien heart we are shaken and troubled.
Lo, I am torn by a woman's sobs that come up in the midnight.

O Will of God

O Will of God that stirrest and the Void
Is peopled, men have called thee force, upbuoyed
Upon whose wings the stars borne round and round
Need not one hour of rest; light, form and sound
Are masks of thy eternal movement. We
See what thou choosest, but 'tis thou we see.

I Morcundeya, whom the worlds release,
The Seer, — but it is God alone that sees! —
Soar up above the bonds that hold below
Man to his littleness, lost in the show
Perennial which the senses round him build;
I find them out and am no more beguiled.
But ere I rise, ere I become the vast
And luminous Infinite and from the past
And future utterly released forget
These beings who themselves their bonds create,
Once I will speak and what I see declare.
The rest is God. There's silence everywhere.

My eyes within were opened and I saw.

The Tale of Nala [1]

Nala, Nishadha's king, paced by a stream
Which ran, escaping from the solitudes
To flow through gardens in a pleasant land.
Murmuring it came of the green souls of hills
And of the towns and hamlets it had seen,
The brown-limbed peasants toiling in the sun,
And the tired bullocks in the thirsty fields.
In its bright talk and laughter it recalled
The moonlight and the lapping dangerous tongues,
The sunlight and the skimming wings of birds,
And gurgling jars, and bright bathed limbs of girls
At morning, and its noons and lonely eves.
This memory to the jasmine trees it sang
Which dropped their slow white petalled kisses down
Upon its haste of curling waves. Far off
A mountain rose, alone and purple vague,
Wide-watching from its large stone-lidded eye
The drowsy noontide earth; vastly outspread
Like Vindhya changed, against the height of heaven
It stood and on the deep-blue nearness leaned
Its shoulder in a mighty indolence.
Reclined for giant rest the Titan paused.
The birds were voiceless on the unruffled boughs;
The spotted lizard in a dull unease
Basked on his sentinel stone, a single kite
Circled above; white-headed over rust
Of brown and gold he stained the purple noon.
Solitary in the spaces of his mind
Among these sights and sounds King Nala paced
Oblivious of the joy of outward things.
Shrill and dissatisfied the wanderer's cry
Came to his ear; he saw with absent eyes
The rapid waters in their ripple run
Nor marked the ruddy sprouting of the leaves,
Nor heard the dove's rare cooing in the trees.

His thoughts were with a face his dreams had seen
Diviner than the jasmine's moon-flaked glow;
He listened to a name his dreams had learned
Sweeter than passion of the crooning bird.
Its delicate syllables yearning through his mind
Repeated longingly the soft-wreathed call,
As if some far-off bright forgotten queen
From whom his heart had wandered through the world,
Were summoning back to her her truant thrall,
Luring him with the music of her name.
But soon some look on him he seemed to feel.
The summit self-uplifted to the sky
Mounting the air in act to climb and join
Heaven's sapphire longing with earth's green unease
Drew his far gaze, which conned as for a thought
The undecipherable charactery
Of rocks and mingled woods; but all was lost
In too much light. Dull glared the giant stones;
The woods, fallen sleepy on their mountain couch,
Had nestled in their coverlet of haze.
Like dim-seen shapes of virgins stoled in blue
In huddled grace sleeping close-limbed they lay.
Then from some covert bosom's shrouded riches
A revelation came; for like a gleam
Of beauty from a purple-guarded breast
One lovely glint of passionate whiteness broke.
Fluttering awhile towards him soon it fled
Seeking his vision; and its glowing race
Splintered the sapphire with its silvery hue,
And now a flame-bright flock of swans was seen
Flying like one and breasting with its shock
Of faery speed the vastness of the noon.
Not only with an argent flashing ran
The brilliant cohort on its skiey path,
But shaking from wild wings a hail of gold.
Heaven's lustrous tunic of transparent air
Regretted the bright ornament as they passed.

They flew not like the snowy cranes, like wreaths
Of flowers driven in the rain-wind's breath,
When thunder calls them northward, but came fast
Ranked in magnificent and lovely lines,
Cleaving the air with splendour, while the pride
And rushing glory of their bosoms and wings
Assailed his eyes with silver and with flame.
Over the Nishadhan gardens flying round
They came down whirring softly, then filled awhile
With gentle clamour from their liquid throats
The region, and disturbed with dipping plumes
The turquoise slumber of the motionless lake
Lulled to unrippling rest by windless noon.
A hundred wonderful shapes in mystic crowd
Covered the water like a living robe.
Next on the stream they spread their glorious breasts.
Each close-ranked by her sweet companion's side,
Floating they came and preened above the flood
Their long and stately necks like curving flowers.
The water petted with enamoured waves
Their bosoms and the slow air swooned along
Their wings; their motion set a wordless chant
To flow against the chidings of the stream.
And hard to speak their beauty, what silver mass
On mass, what flakes and peacock-eyes of gold,
What passion of crimson flecked each pure white breast.
It seemed to his charmed sense that in this form
The loveliness of a diviner world
Had come to him winged. Their beauty to tender greed
Moved him of all that living silver and gold.

"For now thy heaven-born pride must learn to range
My gardens of the earth and haunt my streams,
And to my call consent. If thou resist
I will imprison thee in a golden cage
And bind thy beauty with a silver chain."
A laughter beautiful arose from her,

Thrilling her throat with bubbling ecstasies,
Sweet, satisfied because he praised her grace.
And with mysterious mild deep-glowing eyes
In long and softly-wreathing syllables
The wonder spoke. “Release me, for no birds
Are we, O mortal, but the moon-bosomed nymphs
Who to the trance-heard music of the gods
Sway in the mystic dances of the sky,
Apsaras, daughters of the tumbling seas.
Shaped by thy fancy is my white-winged form.”
But Nala to his bright prisoner swan replied:
“And more thou doomst thyself by all thy words,
Bird of desire or goddess luminous-limbed,
To satisfy my pride and my delight,
My divine captive and white-bosomed slave
Who stoopst to me from unattainable heavens.
Thou shalt possess my streams, O white-winged swan,
And dance, O Apsara, singing in my halls.
Between the illumined pillars thou shalt glide
When flute and breathing lyre and timbrel call,
Adorning with thy golden rhythmic limbs
The crystalline mosaic of my floors.
What I have seized by force, by force I keep.”
Her eyes now smiled on him; submissively
She laid in all its tender curving grace
The long white wonder of her neck upraised
In suppliant wreaths against his bosom and pressed
Flatteringly her silver head upon his cheek
And with her soft alluring voice replied:
“Because thou art bright and beautiful and bold
So have I come to thee and thou hast seized
Whom if thou hadst set free, thy joy were lost.
So to thy mind from some celestial space
A name and face have come, yet are on earth,
Which if thou hadst not held with yearning’s stays,
Thy mortal life would have been given in vain.
Forced by thy musing in the sapphire noon

Out of the mountain's breast to thee I flew
Unknowing, a heavenly envoy to her heart
That was thy own by glad necessity
Before its beatings in her breast began.
All are the links of one miraculous chain."

The Tale of Nala [2]

Nala, Nishadha's king, paced by a stream
That sings to jasmine-bushes where they dream
Dropping their petal kisses on the flood.
A mountain purple-vague
Wide-watching, half-reclined against the sky,
The drowsy earth with its stone-lidded eye,
Pressing upon the nearness blue and dense
Its shoulder in a mighty indolence.
The birds were silent on the unruffled trees;
The spotted lizard in a dull-eyed ease
Basked on his sentinel-stone; a lonely kite
Circled above, half rusty-gold, half-white.
Shrill and dissatisfied the wanderer's sky
To an unlistening ear sailed shadowy-high.
He saw with absent eyes the ripple-run
Of waters curling in the noonday sun.
His thoughts were with a face his dreams had seen,
And like a floating charm it came between
His vision and the jasmines' virgin glow,
Warmer than clusterings of their moon-flaked snow.
He listened to a name his dreams had heard
Sweeter than passion of a crooning bird.
In long and softly-wreathing sounds were twined
The delicate syllables yearning through his mind;
His beating heart was to their charm compelled.
But now he raised his eyelids and beheld
Possess the air in act to climb and seize

Heaven's sapphire longing for earth's green unease,
The summit self-uplifted to the sky
With undecipherable charactery
Of woods half-outlined in a passionate haze.
Bright violently as if to force his gaze
Broke from the blue-stoled secrecy of the hill
Such radiance as when softly visible
Breaks stealing from a purple-covered breast
A lovely glint of whiteness. Now, increased,
Like a snow-feathered arrow-head it flew
Splintering the sapphire with its silvery hue.
But before long there gleamed a flame-bright flock
Flying like one and breasting with its shock
Of faery speed the widenesses of noon.
So rapidly the wonder travelled, soon
He saw distinct the feathers proud and fine
Not only with a splendour argentine,
But shaken from the wings was shed a hail
Of gold that left the sunbeam's glory pale.
They flew not like the snowy cranes, a wreath
Of flowers driven in the rainwind's breath,
But ranked in lovely lines magnificent came
Filling the eyes with silver and with flame.
They over Nala's garden flying round
Whirring descended with a far-heard sound,
A gentle thunder falling sweetly slack
As line by line they filled the slumbering lake.
A hundred wonderful shapes in mystic crowd
Covered the water like a living cloud.
Next on the stream they spread their glorious bosoms
And preening over the waves like curving blossoms
Their long and delicate necks came floating on.

Part Six

Baroda and Pondicherry
Circa 1902–1936

Poems Past and Present

Musa Spiritus

O Word concealed in the upper fire,
    Thou who hast lingered through centuries,
Descend from thy rapt white desire,
    Plunging through gold eternities.

Into the gulfs of our nature leap,
    Voice of the spaces, call of the Light!
Break the seals of Matter's sleep,
    Break the trance of the unseen height.

In the uncertain glow of human mind,
    Its waste of unharmonied thronging thoughts,
Carve thy epic mountain-lined
    Crowded with deep prophetic grots.

Let thy hue-winged lyrics hover like birds
    Over the swirl of the heart's sea.
Touch into sight with thy fire-words
    The blind indwelling deity.

O Muse of the Silence, the wideness make
    In the unplumbed stillness that hears thy voice;
In the vast mute heavens of the spirit awake
    Where thy eagles of Power flame and rejoice.

Out, out with the mind and its candle flares,
    Light, light the suns that never die.
For my ear the cry of the seraph stars
    And the forms of the Gods for my naked eye!

Let the little troubled life-god within
    Cast his veils from the still soul,
His tiger-stripes of virtue and sin,
    His clamour and glamour and thole and dole;

All make tranquil, all make free.
Let my heart-beats measure the footsteps of God
As He comes from His timeless infinity
To build in their rapture His burning abode.

Weave from my life His poem of days,
His calm pure dawns and His noons of force.
My acts for the grooves of His chariot-race,
My thoughts for the tramp of His great steeds' course!

Bride of the Fire

Bride of the Fire, clasp me now close, —
Bride of the Fire!
I have shed the bloom of the earthly rose,
I have slain desire.

Beauty of the Light, surround my life, —
Beauty of the Light!
I have sacrificed longing and parted from grief,
I can bear thy delight.

Image of ecstasy, thrill and enlace, —
Image of bliss!
I would see only thy marvellous face,
Feel only thy kiss.

Voice of Infinity, sound in my heart, —
Call of the One!
Stamp there thy radiance, never to part,
O living Sun.

The Blue Bird

I am the bird of God in His blue;
Divinely high and clear
I sing the notes of the sweet and the true
For the god's and the seraph's ear.

I rise like a fire from the mortal's earth
Into a griefless sky
And drop in the suffering soil of his birth
Fire-seeds of ecstasy.

My pinions soar beyond Time and Space
Into unfading Light;
I bring the bliss of the Eternal's face
And the boon of the Spirit's sight.

I measure the worlds with my ruby eyes;
I have perched on Wisdom's tree
Thronged with the blossoms of Paradise
By the streams of Eternity.

Nothing is hid from my burning heart;
My mind is shoreless and still;
My song is rapture's mystic art,
My flight immortal will.

A God's Labour

I have gathered my dreams in a silver air
Between the gold and the blue
And wrapped them softly and left them there,
My jewelled dreams of you.

I had hoped to build a rainbow bridge
Marrying the soil to the sky
And sow in this dancing planet midge
The moods of infinity.

But too bright were our heavens, too far away,
Too frail their ethereal stuff;
Too splendid and sudden our light could not stay;
The roots were not deep enough.

He who would bring the heavens here
Must descend himself into clay
And the burden of earthly nature bear
And tread the dolorous way.

Coercing my godhead I have come down
Here on the sordid earth,
Ignorant, labouring, human grown
Twixt the gates of death and birth.

I have been digging deep and long
Mid a horror of filth and mire
A bed for the golden river's song,
A home for the deathless fire.

I have laboured and suffered in Matter's night
To bring the fire to man;
But the hate of hell and human spite
Are my meed since the world began.

For man's mind is the dupe of his animal self;
Hoping its lusts to win,
He harbours within him a grisly Elf
Enamoured of sorrow and sin.

The grey Elf shudders from heaven's flame
And from all things glad and pure;
Only by pleasure and passion and pain
His drama can endure.

All around is darkness and strife;
For the lamps that men call suns
Are but halfway gleams on this stumbling life
Cast by the Undying Ones.

Man lights his little torches of hope
That lead to a failing edge;
A fragment of Truth is his widest scope,
An inn his pilgrimage.

The Truth of truths men fear and deny,
The Light of lights they refuse;
To ignorant gods they lift their cry
Or a demon altar choose.

All that was found must again be sought,
Each enemy slain revives,
Each battle for ever is fought and refought
Through vistas of fruitless lives.

My gaping wounds are a thousand and one
And the Titan kings assail,
But I dare not rest till my task is done
And wrought the eternal will.

How they mock and sneer, both devils and men!
  “Thy hope is Chimera’s head
Painting the sky with its fiery stain;
  Thou shalt fall and thy work lie dead.

“Who art thou that babblest of heavenly ease
  And joy and golden room
To us who are waifs on inconscient seas
  And bound to life’s iron doom?

“This earth is ours, a field of Night
  For our petty flickering fires.
How shall it brook the sacred Light
  Or suffer a god’s desires?

“Come, let us slay him and end his course!
  Then shall our hearts have release
From the burden and call of his glory and force
  And the curb of his wide white peace.”

But the god is there in my mortal breast
  Who wrestles with error and fate
And tramples a road through mire and waste
  For the nameless Immaculate.

A voice cried, “Go where none have gone!
  Dig deeper, deeper yet
Till thou reach the grim foundation stone
  And knock at the keyless gate.”

I saw that a falsehood was planted deep
  At the very root of things
Where the grey Sphinx guards God’s riddle sleep
  On the Dragon’s outspread wings.

I left the surface gauds of mind
    And life's unsatisfied seas
And plunged through the body's alleys blind
    To the nether mysteries.

I have delved through the dumb Earth's dreadful heart
    And heard her black mass' bell.
I have seen the source whence her agonies part
    And the inner reason of hell.

Above me the dragon murmurs moan
    And the goblin voices flit;
I have pierced the Void where Thought was born,
    I have walked in the bottomless pit.

On a desperate stair my feet have trod
    Armoured with boundless peace,
Bringing the fires of the splendour of God
    Into the human abyss.

He who I am was with me still;
    All veils are breaking now.
I have heard His voice and borne His will
    On my vast untroubled brow.

The gulf twixt the depths and the heights is bridged
    And the golden waters pour
Down the sapphire mountain rainbow-ridged
    And glimmer from shore to shore.

Heaven's fire is lit in the breast of the earth
    And the undying suns here burn;
Through a wonder cleft in the bounds of birth
    The incarnate spirits yearn

Like flames to the kingdoms of Truth and Bliss:
Down a gold-red stairway wend
The radiant children of Paradise
Clarioning darkness' end.

A little more and the new life's doors
Shall be carved in silver light
With its aureate roof and mosaic floors
In a great world bare and bright.

I shall leave my dreams in their argent air,
For in a raiment of gold and blue
There shall move on the earth embodied and fair
The living truth of you.

Hell and Heaven

In the silence of the night-time,
In the grey and formless eve,
When the thought is plagued with loveless
Memories that it cannot leave,

When the dawn makes sudden beauty
Of a peevish clouded sky,
And the rain is sobbing slowly
And the wind makes weird reply,

Always comes her face before me
And her voice is in my ear,
Beautiful and sad and cruel
With the azure eyes austere.

Cloudy figure once so luminous
With the light and life within
When the soul came rippling outwards
And the red lips laughed at sin!

Com’st thou with that marble visage
From what world instinct with pain
Where we pay the price of passion
By a law our hearts disdain?

Cast it from thee, O thou goddess!
Earning with a smile release
From these sad imaginations,
Rise into celestial peace.

Travel from the loveless places
That our mortal fears create,
Where thy natural heavens claim thee
And the Gods, thy brothers, wait.

Then descend to me grown radiant,
Lighting up terrestrial ground
With the feet that brighten heaven
When the mighty dance goes round

And the high Gods beating measure
Tread the maze that keeps the stars
Circling in their luminous orbits
Through the eternal thoroughfares.

All below is but confusion
Of desires that strive and cry,
Some forbidden, some achieving
Anguish after ecstasy.

But above our radiant station
Is from which by doubt we fell,
Reaching only after Heaven
And achieving only Hell.

Let the heart be king and master,
Let the brain exult and toil;
Disbelieve in good and evil,
God with Nature reconcile.

Therefore, O rebellious sweetness,
Thou tookst arms for joy and love.
There achieve them! Take possession
Of our radiant seats above.

Kamadeva

When in the heart of the valleys and hid by the roses
The sweet Love lies,
Has he wings to rise to his heavens or in the closes
Lives and dies?

On the peaks of the radiant mountains if we should meet him
Proud and free,
Will he not frown on the valleys? Would it befit him
Chained to be?

Will you then speak of the one as a slave and a wanton,
The other too bare?
But God is the only slave and the only monarch
We declare.

It is God who is Love and a boy and a slave for our passion
He was made to serve;
It is God who is free and proud and the limitless tyrant
Our souls deserve.

Life

Mystic daughter of Delight,
Life, thou ecstasy,
Let the radius of thy flight
Be eternity.

On thy wings thou bearest high
Glory and disdain,
Godhead and mortality,
Ecstasy and pain.

Take me in thy bold embrace
Without weak reserve,
Body dire and unveiled face;
Faint not, Life, nor swerve.

All thy bliss I would explore,
All thy tyranny.
Cruel like the lion's roar,
Sweet like springtide be.

Like a Titan I would take,
Like a God enjoy,
Like a man contend and make,
Revel like a boy.

More I will not ask of thee,
Nor my fate would choose;
King or conquered let me be,
Vanquish, Life, or lose.

Even in rags I am a god;
Fallen, I am divine;
High I triumph when down-trod,
Long I live when slain.

One Day

The Little More

One day, and all the half-dead is done,
One day, and all the unborn begun;
A little path and the great goal,
A touch that brings the divine whole.

Hill after hill was climbed and now,
Behold, the last tremendous brow
And the great rock that none has trod:
A step, and all is sky and God.

Part Seven

Pondicherry
Circa 1927–1947

Six Poems

The Bird of Fire

Gold-white wings a throb in the vastness, the bird of flame went
glimmering over a sunfire curve to the haze of the west,
Skimming, a messenger sail, the sapphire-summer waste of a
soundless wayless burning sea.
Now in the eve of the waning world the colour and splendour
returning drift through a blue-flicker air back to my breast,
Flame and shimmer staining the rapture-white foam-vest of the
waters of Eternity.

Gold-white wings of the miraculous bird of fire, late and slow have
you come from the Timeless. Angel, here unto me
Bringst thou for travailing earth a spirit silent and free or His
crimson passion of love divine, —
White-ray-jar of the spuming rose-red wine drawn from the vats
brimming with light-blaze, the vats of ecstasy,
Pressed by the sudden and violent feet of the Dancer in Time
from his sun-grape fruit of a deathless vine?

White-rose-altar the eternal Silence built, make now my nature
wide, an intimate guest of His solitude,
But golden above it the body of One in Her diamond sphere
with Her halo of star-bloom and passion-ray!
Rich and red is thy breast, O bird, like blood of a soul climbing the
hard crag-teeth world, wounded and nude,
A ruby of flame-petalled love in the silver-gold altar-vase of
moon-edged night and rising day.

O Flame who art Time's last boon of the sacrifice, offering-flower
held by the finite's gods to the Infinite,
O marvel bird with the burning wings of light and the unbarred
lids that look beyond all space,
One strange leap of thy mystic stress breaking the barriers of mind
and life, arrives at its luminous term thy flight;
Invading the secret clasp of the Silence and crimson Fire thou
frontest eyes in a timeless Face.

Trance

A naked and silver-pointed star
Floating near the halo of the moon;
A storm-rack, the pale sky's fringe and bar,
Over waters stilling into swoon.

My mind is awake in stirless trance,
Hushed my heart, a burden of delight;
Dispelled is the senses' flicker-dance,
Mute the body aureate with light.

O star of creation pure and free,
Halo-moon of ecstasy unknown,
Storm-breath of the soul-change yet to be,
Ocean self enraptured and alone!

Shiva

The Inconscient Creator

A face on the cold dire mountain peaks
Grand and still; its lines white and austere
Match with the unmeasured snowy streaks
Cutting heaven, implacable and sheer.

Above it a mountain of matted hair
Aeon-coiled on that deathless and lone head
In its solitude huge of lifeless air
Round, above illimitably spread.

A moon-ray on the forehead, blue and pale,
Stretched afar its finger of chill light
Illumining emptiness. Stern and male
Mask of peace indifferent in might!

But out from some Infinite born now came
Over giant snows and the still face
A quiver and colour of crimson flame,
Fire-point in immensities of space.

Light-spear-tips revealed the mighty shape,
Tore the secret veil of the heart's hold;
In that diamond heart the fires undrape,
Living core, a brazier of gold.

This was the closed mute and burning source
Whence were formed the worlds and their star-dance;
Life sprang, a self-rapt inconscient Force,
Love, a blazing seed, from that flame-trance.

The Life Heavens

A life of intensities wide, immune
Floats behind the earth and her life-fret,
A magic of realms mastered by spell and rune,
Grandiose, blissful, coloured, increate.

A music there wanders mortal ear
Hears not, seizing, intimate, remote,
Wide-winged in soul-spaces, fire-clear,
Heaping note on enrapturing new note.

Forms deathless there triumph, hues divine
Thrill with nets of glory the moved air;
Each sense is an ecstasy, love the sign
Of one outblaze of godhead that two share.

The peace of the senses, the senses' stir
On one harp are joined mysteries; pain
Transmuted is ravishment's minister,
A high note and a fiery refrain.

All things are a harmony faultless, pure;
    Grief is not nor stain-wound of desire;
The heart-beats are a cadence bright and sure
    Of Joy's quick steps, too invincible to tire.

A Will there, a Force, a magician Mind
    Moves, and builds at once its delight-norms,
The marvels it seeks for surprised, outlined,
    Hued, alive, a cosmos of fair forms,

Sounds, colours, joy-flamings. Life lies here
    Dreaming, bound to the heavens of its goal,
In the clasp of a Power that enthrals to sheer
    Bliss and beauty body and rapt soul.

My spirit sank drowned in the wonder surge:
    Screened, withdrawn was the greatness it had sought;
Lost was the storm-stress and the warrior urge,
    Lost the titan winging of the thought.

It lay at ease in a sweetness of heaven-sense
    Delivered from grief, with no need left to aspire,
Free, self-dispersed in voluptuous innocence,
    Lulled and borne into roseate cloud-fire.

But suddenly there soared a dateless cry,
    Deep as Night, imperishable as Time;
It seemed Death's dire appeal to Eternity,
    Earth's outcry to the limitless Sublime.

"O high seeker of immortality,
    Is there not, ineffable, a bliss
Too vast for these finite harmonies,
    Too divine for the moment's unsure kiss?

"Arms taking to a voiceless supreme delight,
  Life that meets the Eternal with close breast,
An unwalled mind dissolved in the Infinite,
  Force one with unimaginable rest?

"I, Earth, have a deeper power than Heaven;
  My lonely sorrow surpasses its rose-joys,
A red and bitter seed of the raptures seven;—
  My dumbness fills with echoes of a far Voice.

"By me the last finite, yearning, strives
  To reach the last infinity's unknown,
The Eternal is broken into fleeting lives
  And Godhead pent in the mire and the stone."

Dissolving the kingdoms of happy ease
  Rocked and split and faded their dream-chime.
All vanished; ungrasped eternities
  Sole survived and Timelessness seized Time.

Earth's heart was felt beating below me still,
  Veiled, immense, unthinkable above
My consciousness climbed like a topless hill,
  Crossed seas of Light to epiphanies of Love.

Jivanmukta

There is a silence greater than any known
To earth's dumb spirit, motionless in the soul
  That has become Eternity's foothold,
    Touched by the infinitudes for ever.

A Splendour is here, refused to the earthward sight,
That floods some deep flame-covered all-seeing eye;
  Revealed it wakens when God's stillness
    Heavens the ocean of moveless Nature.

A Power descends no Fate can perturb or vanquish,
Calmer than mountains, wider than marching waters,
        A single might of luminous quiet
                Tirelessly bearing the worlds and ages.

A Bliss surrounds with ecstasy everlasting,
An absolute high-seated immortal rapture
        Possesses, sealing love to oneness
                In the grasp of the All-beautiful, All-beloved.

He who from Time's dull motion escapes and thrills
Rapt thoughtless, wordless into the Eternal's breast,
        Unrolls the form and sign of being,
                Seated above in the omniscient Silence.

Although consenting here to a mortal body,
He is the Undying; limit and bond he knows not;
        For him the aeons are a playground,
                Life and its deeds are his splendid shadow.

Only to bring God's forces to waiting Nature,
To help with wide-winged Peace her tormented labour
        And heal with joy her ancient sorrow,
                Casting down light on the inconscient darkness,

He acts and lives. Vain things are mind's smaller motives
To one whose soul enjoys for its high possession
        Infinity and the sempiternal
                All is his guide and beloved and refuge.

In Horis Aeternum

A far sail on the unchangeable monotone of a slow slumbering sea,
A world of power hushed into symbols of hue, silent unendingly;
Over its head like a gold ball the sun tossed by the gods in their play
Follows its curve, — a blazing eye of Time watching the motionless day.

Here or otherwhere, — poised on the unreachable abrupt, snow-solitary ascent
Earth aspiring lifts to the illimitable Light, then ceases broken and spent,
Or on the glowing expanse, arid, fiery and austere, of the desert's hungry soul, —
A breath, a cry, a glimmer from Eternity's face, in a fragment the mystic Whole.

Moment-mere, yet with all Eternity packed, lone, fixed, intense,
Out of the ring of these hours that dance and die caught by the spirit in sense,
In the greatness of a man, in music's outspread wings, in a touch, in a smile, in a sound,
Something that waits, something that wanders and settles not, a Nothing that was all and is found.

NOTES

(*From Letters of the Author*)

THE BIRD OF FIRE — TRANCE

These two poems are in the nature of metrical experiments. The first is a kind of compromise between the stress system and the foot measure. The stanza is of four lines, alternately of twelve and ten stresses. The second and fourth line in each stanza can be read as a ten-foot line of mixed iambs and anapaests, the first and third, though a similar system subject to replacement of a foot anywhere by a single-syllable half-foot could be applied, are still mainly readable by stresses.

The other poem is an experiment in the use of quantitative foot measures not following any existing model, but freely invented. It is a four-line stanza reading alternately

⏑ — ⏑ | ⏑ — ⏑ | — ⏑ — |
— — ⏑ | ⏑ — — |
and — ⏑ — | ⏑ — ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ — |

It could indeed be read otherwise, in several ways, but read in the ordinary way of accentual feet it would lose all lyrical quality and the soul of its rhythm.

The Bird of Fire is the living vehicle of the gold fire of the Divine Light and the white fire of the Divine Tapas and the crimson fire of Divine Love — and everything else of the Divine Consciousness.

SHIVA — The Inconscient Creator

The quantitative metre of *Trance* is suited only for a very brief lyrical poem. For longer poems I have sought to use it as a base but to liberate it by the introduction of an ample number of modulations which allow a fairly free variation of the rhythm without destroying the consistency of the underlying rhythmic measure. This is achieved in *Shiva* by allowing as the main modulations (1) a paeon anywhere in place of an amphibrach, (2) the substitution of a long for a short syllable either in the first or the last syllable of an amphibrach, at will, thus substituting a bacchius or an antibacchius, (3) the substitution of a dactyl for an initial amphibrach, (4) the substitution of a long instead of short syllable in the middle of the final anapaest, both this and the ultimate syllable to be in that case stressed in reading, e.g.,

deathless | and lo̍ne he̍ad —

a bacchius replacing the anapaest.

The suppression of the full value of long syllables to make them figure as metrical shorts has to be avoided in quantitative metre.

Scan:

Ă fāce ŏn | thĕ cōld dīre | mōuntăin pēaks
Grānd ănd stīll; | ĭts līnes whīte | ănd āustēre
Mātch wĭth thĕ | ŭnmēasŭred | snōwy̆ strēaks
Cūttĭng hēav|ĕn, ĭmplācă|blĕ ănd shēer.

The Inconscient as the source and author of all material creation is one of the main discoveries of modern psychology, but it agrees with the idea of a famous Vedic hymn. In the Upanishads, Prajna, the Master of Sushupti, is the Ishwara and therefore the original Creator out of a superconscient sleep. The idea of the poem is that this creative Inconscient also is Shiva creating here life in matter out of an apparently inconscient material trance as from above he creates all the worlds (not the material only) from a superconscient trance. The reality is a supreme Consciousness — but that is veiled by the appearance on one side of the superconscient sleep, on the other of the material Inconscience. Here the emphasis is on the latter; the superconscient is only hinted at, not indicated, — it is the Infinity out of which comes the revealing Flame.

THE LIFE HEAVENS

Further modulations have been introduced in this poem — a greater use is made of tetrasyllabic feet such as paeons, epitrites, di-iambs, double trochees, ionics and, once only, the antispast — and in a few places the foot of three long syllables (molossus) has been used, and in others a foot extending to five syllables (e.g., Dĕlīvĕred frŏm grīef).

Scan:

Ă līfe ŏf | ĭntēnsĭtĭes | wīde, ĭmmūne
Flōats bĕhīnd | thĕ ēarth ănd | hĕr līfe-frēt,
Ă māgĭc ŏf | rēalms māstĕred by̆ | spēll ănd rūne,
Grāndĭōse, blīss|fŭl, cōlŭured, | ĭncrĕāte.

There were two places in which at the time of writing there did not seem to me to be a satisfactory completeness and the addition of a stanza seemed to be called for — one at the end of the description of the Life Heavens, a stanza which would be a closing global description of the essence of the vital Heavens, the other (less imperatively called for) in the utterance of the Voice. There it is no doubt very condensed, but it cannot be otherwise. I thought, however, that one stanza might be added hinting rather than stating the connection between the two extremes. The connection is between the Divine suppressed in its opposites and the Divine eternal in its own unveiled and undescended nature. The idea is that the other worlds are not evolutionary but typal and each presents in a limited perfection some aspect of the Infinite, but each complete, perfectly satisfied in itself, not asking or aspiring for anything else, for self-exceeding of any kind. That aspiration, on the contrary, is self-imposed on the imperfection of Earth; the very fact of the Divine being there, but suppressed in its phenomenal opposites, compels an effort to arrive at the unveiled Divine — by ascent, but also by a descent of the Divine Perfection for evolutionary manifestation here. That is why the Earth declares itself a deeper Power than Heaven because it holds in itself that possibility implied in the presence of the suppressed Divine here, — which does not exist in the perfection of the vital (or even the mental) Heavens.

JIVANMUKTA

Written in Alcaics. These Alcaics are not perhaps very orthodox. I have treated the close of the first two lines not as a dactyl but as a cretic and have taken the liberty in any stanza of turning this into a double trochee. In one closing line I have started the dactylic run with two short preliminary syllables and there is occasionally a dactyl or anapaest in unlawful places; the dactyls too are not all pure dactyls. The object is to bring in by modulations some variety and a more plastic form and easier run than strict orthodoxy could give. But in essence, I think, the alcaic movement remains in spite of these departures.

The basic form of this Alcaic would run,

1, 2 ⏓ = | ⏑ – | ⏓ || – ⏑ ⏑ | = ⏖ = ⏑

3 ⏑ – | ⏑ – | ⏑ – | ⏑ – | ⏓

4 – ⏑ ⏑ | – ⏑ ⏑ | – ⏑ = ⏓

but with an opening to other modulations.

The subject is the Vedantic ideal of the living liberated man — *jīvanmukta* — though perhaps I have given a pull towards my own ideal which the strict Vedantin would consider illegitimate.

IN HORIS AETERNUM

This poem on its technical side aims at finding a halfway house between free verse and regular metrical poetry. It is an attempt to avoid the chaotic amorphousness of free verse and keep to a regular form based on the fixed number of stresses in each line and part of a line while yet there shall be a great plasticity and variety in all the other elements of poetic rhythm, the number of syllables, the management of the feet, if any, the distribution of the stress-beats, the changing modulation of the rhythm. *In*

Horis Aeternum was meant as a first essay in this kind, a very simple and elementary model. The line here is cast into three parts, the first containing two stresses, the second and third each admitting three, four such lines rhymed constituting the stanza.

Poems

Transformation

My breath runs in a subtle rhythmic stream;
    It fills my members with a might divine:
    I have drunk the Infinite like a giant's wine.
Time is my drama or my pageant dream.
Now are my illumined cells joy's flaming scheme
    And changed my thrilled and branching nerves to fine
    Channels of rapture opal and hyaline
For the influx of the Unknown and the Supreme.

I am no more a vassal of the flesh,
    A slave to Nature and her leaden rule;
        I am caught no more in the senses' narrow mesh.
My soul unhorizoned widens to measureless sight,
    My body is God's happy living tool,
        My spirit a vast sun of deathless light.

Nirvana

All is abolished but the mute Alone.
    The mind from thought released, the heart from grief
    Grow inexistent now beyond belief;
There is no I, no Nature, known-unknown.
The city, a shadow picture without tone,
    Floats, quivers unreal; forms without relief
    Flow, a cinema's vacant shapes; like a reef
Foundering in shoreless gulfs the world is done.

Only the illimitable Permanent
    Is here. A Peace stupendous, featureless, still,
        Replaces all, — what once was I, in It
A silent unnamed emptiness content
    Either to fade in the Unknowable
        Or thrill with the luminous seas of the Infinite.

The Other Earths

An irised multitude of hills and seas,
    And glint of brooks in the green wilderness,
And trackless stars, and miracled symphonies
    Of hues that float in ethers shadowless,

A dance of fireflies in the fretted gloom,
    In a pale midnight the moon's silver flare,
Fire-importunities of scarlet bloom
    And bright suddenness of wings in a golden air,

Strange bird and animal forms like memories cast
    On the rapt silence of unearthly woods,
Calm faces of the gods on backgrounds vast
    Bringing the marvel of the infinitudes,

Through glimmering veils of wonder and delight
World after world bursts on the awakened sight.

Thought the Paraclete

As some bright archangel in vision flies
Plunged in dream-caught spirit immensities,
Past the long green crests of the seas of life,
Past the orange skies of the mystic mind
Flew my thought self-lost in the vasts of God.
Sleepless wide great glimmering wings of wind
Bore the gold-red seeking of feet that trod
Space and Time's mute vanishing ends. The face
Lustred, pale-blue-lined of the hippogriff,
Eremite, sole, daring the bourneless ways,
Over world-bare summits of timeless being
Gleamed; the deep twilights of the world-abyss
Failed below. Sun-realms of supernal seeing,

Crimson-white mooned oceans of pauseless bliss
Drew its vague heart-yearning with voices sweet.
Hungering large-souled to surprise the unconned
Secrets white-fire-veiled of the last Beyond,
Crossing power-swept silences rapture-stunned,
Climbing high far ethers eternal-sunned,
Thought the great-winged wanderer paraclete
Disappeared slow-singing a flame-word rune.
Self was left, lone, limitless, nude, immune.

Moon of Two Hemispheres

A gold moon-raft floats and swings slowly
And it casts a fire of pale holy blue light
On the dragon tail aglow of the faint night
                    That glimmers far, — swimming,
The illumined shoals of stars skimming,
Overspreading earth and drowning the heart in sight
With the ocean depths and breadths of the Infinite.

A gold moon-ship sails or drifts ever
In our spirit's skies and halts never, blue-keeled,
And it throws its white-blue fire on this grey field,
                    Night's dragon loop, — speeding,
The illumined star-thought sloops leading
To the Dawn, their harbour home, to the Light unsealed,
To the sun-face Infinite, the Untimed revealed.

Rose of God

Rose of God, vermilion stain on the sapphires of heaven,
Rose of Bliss, fire-sweet, seven-tinged with the ecstasies seven!
Leap up in our heart of humanhood, O miracle, O flame,
Passion-flower of the Nameless, bud of the mystical Name.

Rose of God, great wisdom-bloom on the summits of being,
Rose of Light, immaculate core of the ultimate seeing!
Live in the mind of our earthhood; O golden Mystery, flower,
Sun on the head of the Timeless, guest of the marvellous Hour.

Rose of God, damask force of Infinity, red icon of might,
Rose of Power with thy diamond halo piercing the night!
Ablaze in the will of the mortal, design the wonder of thy plan,
Image of Immortality, outbreak of the Godhead in man.

Rose of God, smitten purple with the incarnate divine Desire,
Rose of Life, crowded with petals, colour's lyre!
Transform the body of the mortal like a sweet and magical rhyme;
Bridge our earthhood and heavenhood, make deathless the children of Time.

Rose of God like a blush of rapture on Eternity's face,
Rose of Love, ruby depth of all being, fire-passion of Grace!
Arise from the heart of the yearning that sobs in Nature's abyss:
Make earth the home of the Wonderful and life Beatitude's kiss.

NOTE

In some of these poems, as in others of the *Six Poems*, a quantitative metrical system has been used which seems to have puzzled some critics, apparently because it does not follow the laws of quantity obtaining in the ancient classical languages. But those laws are quite alien to the rhythm and sound-structure of the English tongue; the attempt to observe them has always ended in deserved and inevitable failure. Another system has been followed here which is in agreement with the native rhythm of English speech. There what determines the metrical length or brevity of syllables is weight, the weight of the voice emphasis or the dwelling of the voice upon the sound. Where there is that emphasis or that dwelling of the voice, the syllable may be considered metrically long; where both are absent there will be, normally, a recognisable shortness which can only be cured by some aid of consonant weight or other lengthening circumstance. All stressed syllables are metrically long in English and cannot be otherwise, however short the vowel may be, for they dominate the verse movement; this is a fact which is ignored in the traditional account of English quantity and which many experimenters in quantitative verse have chosen to disregard with disastrous consequences, — all their genius or skill in metrical technique could not save them from failure. On the other hand, a long-vowel syllable can be regarded as metrically long even if there is no stress upon it. In the quantitative system used in these poems this possibility is converted into a law: metrical length is obligatory for all such natural syllabic longs, while a short-vowel syllable unstressed is normally short for metrical purposes unless it is very heavily weighted with consonants. But the mere occurrence of two or more consonants after a short vowel does not by itself make the syllable long as it necessarily does in Greek, Latin or Sanskrit.

The system may then be reduced to the following rules:

1. All stressed syllables are regarded as metrically long, as also all syllables supported on a long vowel.

2. All short-vowel syllables not stressed are regarded as

short, unless they are heavily weighted with consonants. But on this last point no fixed rule can be given; in each case the ear must be the judge.

3. There are a great number of sounds in English which can be regarded according to circumstances either as longs or as shorts. Here too the ear must decide in each case.

4. English quantity metres cannot be as rigid as the metres of ancient tongues. The rhythm of the language demands a certain variability, free or sparing, without which monotony sets in; accordingly in all English metres modulation is admitted as possible. Even the most regular rhythms do not altogether shut out the substitution of other feet than those fixed in the normal basic arrangement of the line; they admit at least so much as is needed to give the necessary pliancy or variety to the movement. There is sometimes a very free use of such variations; but they ought not to be allowed to break the basic movement or overburden or overlay it. The same rule must apply in quantitative metres; especially in long poems modulations are indispensable.

This system is not only not at discord with the sound-structure of the language, it accords closely with its natural rhythm; it only regulates and intensifies into metrical pitch and tone the cadence that is already there even in prose, even in daily speech. If we take passages from English literature which were written as prose but with some intensity of rhythm, its movement can be at once detected. E.g.

> Cŏnsīdĕr | thĕ līlĭes | ŏf thĕ fīeld, | hōw thēy grōw; || thēy tōil nŏt, |
>
> nēithĕr dŏ | thēy spīn; || yĕt Ī | sāy ŭntŏ | yŏu thăt ēvĕn | Sōlŏmŏn |
>
> ĭn āll hĭs | glōry̆ || wăs nŏt ărrāyed | līke ŭntŏ | ōne ŏf thēse: ||

or again,

> Blēssĕd āre | thĕ mēek; | fŏr thēy shăll | ĭnhērĭt | thĕ ēarth | . . . . .
>
> Blēssĕd āre | thĕ pūre ĭn hēart; | fŏr thēy shăll sēe | Gōd;

or again, from Shakespeare’s prose,

> Thĭs gōodly frāme | thĕ ēarth sēems tŏ | mĕ ă stērīle | prōm-
> ŏntŏry̆, | thĭs mōst ēxcĕll|ĕnt cānŏpy̆ | thĕ āir, lōok yŏu, | thĭs
> brāve o’ērhāng|ĭng fīrmămĕnt, | thĭs măjēstĭc|ăl rōof frēttĕd |
> wĭth gōldĕn fīre |

and so on with a constant recurrence of the same quantitative movement all through; or, yet more strikingly,

> Hōw ārt thōu | fāllĕn frŏm | Hēavĕn, Ŏ | Lūcĭfĕr, | sōn ŏf thĕ |
> mōrnĭng!

This last sentence can be read indeed as a very perfect hexameter. The first of these passages could be easily presented as four lines of free quantitative verse, each independent in its arrangement of feet, but all swaying in a single rhythm. Shakespeare’s is most wonderfully balanced in a series of differing four-syllabled, with occasional shorter, feet, as if of deliberate purpose, though it is no intention of the mind but the ear of the poet that has constructed this fine design of rhythmic prose. A free quantitative verse in this kind would be perfectly possible.

A more regular quantitative metre can be of two kinds. There could be lines all with the same metrical arrangement following each other without break or else alternating lines with a different arrangement for each, forming a stanza,—as in the practice of accentual metres. But there could also be an arrangement in strophe and antistrophe as in the Greek chorus.

In “Thought the Paraclete” the first rule is followed; all the lines are on the same model. The metre of this poem has a certain rhythmic similarity to the Latin hendecasyllable which runs — — | — ◡ ◡ | — ◡ | — ◡ | — ⏓, e.g.

> Sōlēs | ōccĭdĕr(e) | ēt rĕ|dīrĕ | pōssūnt.
> Nōbīs | cūm sĕmĕl | ōccĭd|īt brĕ|vīs lūx,

– –   – ˘ ˘   – ˘   – ˘ – ˘
Nox est | perpetu(a) | una | dormi|enda.*

But here the metre runs —◡| ——| —◡◡| —◡| —; a trochee is transferred from the closing flow of trochees to the beginning of the line, the spondee and dactyl are pushed into the middle; the last syllable of the closing trochee is most often dropped altogether. Classical metres cannot always with success be taken over just as they are into the English rhythm; often some modifications are needed to make them more malleable.

In "Moon of Two Hemispheres" the strophe antistrophe system has been used: the lines of the stanza differ from each other in the nature and order of the feet, no identity or approach to identity is imposed; but each line of the antistrophe follows scrupulously the arrangement of the corresponding line of the strophe. An occasional modulation at most is allowed, e.g. the substitution of a trochee for a spondee. The whole poem, however, in spite of its metrical variations, follows a single general rhythmic movement.

"Rose of God", like a previous poem "In Horis Aeternum", is written in pure stress metre. As stress and high accentual pitch usually coincide, it is possible to scan accentual metre on the stress principle and stress metre also can be so written that it can be scanned as accentual verse; but pure stress metre depends entirely on stress ictus. In ordinary poetry stress and natural syllabic quantity enter in as elements of the rhythm, but are not, qua stress and quantity, essential elements of the basic metre: in pure stress metre there is a reversal of these values; quantity and accentual inflexion are subordinate and help to build the rhythm, but stress alone determines the metrical basis. In "Rose of God" each line is composed of six stresses, and the whole poem is built of five stanzas, each containing four such lines; the arrangement of feet varies freely to suit the movement of thought and feeling in each line. Thus,

---

* Suns may set and come again;
For us, when once our brief light has set,
There is one perpetual night to be slept.
CATULLUS

Ro̍se of | Go̍d, | damask fo̍rce of | Infi̍nity, | red i̍con of | mi̍ght,
Ro̍se of | Po̍wer | with thy di̍am|ond ha̍lo | pi̍ercing | the ni̍ght!
Abla̍ze | in the wi̍ll of | the mo̍rtal, | desi̍gn | the wo̍nder of | thy
pla̍n,
I̍mage of | I̍mmor|ta̍lity, | outbre̍ak of | the Go̍dhead | in ma̍n.

Poems Published in
On Quantitative Metre

Ocean Oneness

Silence is round me, wideness ineffable;
White birds on the ocean diving and wandering;
    A soundless sea on a voiceless heaven,
        Azure on azure, is mutely gazing.

Identified with silence and boundlessness
My spirit widens clasping the universe
    Till all that seemed becomes the Real,
        One in a mighty and single vastness.

Someone broods there nameless and bodiless,
Conscious and lonely, deathless and infinite,
    And, sole in a still eternal rapture,
        Gathers all things to his heart for ever.

Trance of Waiting

Lone on my summits of calm I have brooded with voices around me,
    Murmurs of silence that steep mind in a luminous sleep,
Whispers from things beyond thought in the Secrecy flame-white for ever,
    Unscanned heights that reply seek from the inconscient deep.
Distant below me the ocean of life with its passionate surges
    Pales like a pool that is stirred by the wings of a shadowy bird.
Thought has flown back from its wheelings and stoopings, the nerve-beat of living
    Stills; my spirit at peace bathes in a mighty release.
Wisdom supernal looks down on me, Knowledge mind cannot measure;
    Light that no vision can render garments the silence with splendour.
Filled with a rapturous Presence the crowded spaces of being

Tremble with the Fire that knows, thrill with the might of repose.
Earth is now girdled with trance and Heaven is put round her for vesture.
Wings that are brilliant with fate sleep at Eternity's gate.
Time waits, vacant, the Lightning that kindles, the Word that transfigures;
Space is a stillness of God building his earthly abode.
All waits hushed for the fiat to come and the tread of the Eternal;
Passion of a bliss yet to be sweeps from Infinity's sea.

Flame-Wind

A flame-wind ran from the gold of the east,
Leaped on my soul with the breath of a sevenfold noon.
Wings of the angel, gallop of the beast!
Mind and body on fire, but the heart in swoon.

O flame, thou bringest the strength of the noon,
But where are the voices of morn and the stillness of eve?
Where the pale-blue wine of the moon?
Mind and life are in flower, but the heart must grieve.

Gold in the mind and the life-flame's red
Make of the heavens a splendour, the earth a blaze,
But the white and rose of the heart are dead.
Flame-wind, pass! I will wait for Love in the silent ways.

The River

Wild river in thy cataract far-rumoured and rash rapids to sea hasting,
Far now is that birth-place mid abrupt mountains and slow dreaming of lone valleys
Where only with blue heavens was rapt converse or green orchards with fruit leaning
Stood imaged in thy waves and, content, listened to thy rhapsody's long murmur.

Vast now in a wide press and a dense hurry and mass movement of thronged waters
Loud-thundering, fast-galloping, might, speed is the stern message of thy spirit,
Proud violence, stark claim and the dire cry of the heart's hunger on God's barriers
Self-hurled, and a void lust of unknown distance, and pace reckless and free grandeur.

Calm yet shall release thee; an immense peace and a large streaming of white silence,
Broad plains shall be thine, greenness surround thee, and wharved cities and life's labour
Long thou wilt befriend, human delight help with the waves' coolness, with ships' furrows
Thrill, — last become, self losing, a sea-motion and joy boundless and blue laughter.

Journey's End

The day ends lost in a stretch of even,
A long road trod — and the little farther.
    Now the waste-land, now the silence;
A blank dark wall, and behind it heaven.

The Dream Boat

Who was it that came to me in a boat made of dream-fire,
    With his flame brow and his sun-gold body?
Melted was the silence into a sweet secret murmur,
    "Do you come now? is the heart's fire ready?"

Hidden in the recesses of the heart something shuddered.
    It recalled all that the life's joy cherished,
Imaged the felicity it must leave lost for ever,
    And the boat passed and the gold god vanished.

Now within the hollowness of the world's breast inhabits —
    For the love died and the old joy ended —
Void of a felicity that has fled, gone for ever,
    And the gold god and the dream boat come not.

Soul in the Ignorance

Soul in the Ignorance, wake from its stupor.
Flake of the world-fire, spark of Divinity,
Lift up thy mind and thy heart into glory.
Sun in the darkness, recover thy lustre.

One, universal, ensphering creation,
Wheeling no more with inconscient Nature,
Feel thyself God-born, know thyself deathless.
Timeless return to thy immortal existence.

The Witness and the Wheel

Who art thou in the heart comrade of man who sitst
August, watching his works, watching his joys and griefs,
Unmoved, careless of pain, careless of death and fate?
Witness, what hast thou seen watching this great blind world
Moving helpless in Time, whirled on the Wheel in Space,
That yet thou with thy vast Will biddest toil our hearts,
Mystic, — for without thee nothing can last in Time?
We too, when from the urge ceaseless of Nature turn
Our souls, far from the breast casting her tool, desire,
Grow like thee. In the front Nature still drives in vain
The blind trail of our acts, passions and thoughts and hopes;
Unmoved, calm, we look on, careless of death and fate,
Of grief careless and joy, — signs of a surface script
Without value or sense, steps of an aimless world.
Something watches behind, Spirit or Self or Soul,
Viewing Space and its toil, waiting the end of Time.
Witness, who then art thou, one with thee who am I,
Nameless, watching the Wheel whirl across Time and Space?

Descent

All my cells thrill swept by a surge of splendour,
Soul and body stir with a mighty rapture,
Light and still more light like an ocean billows
Over me, round me.

Rigid, stonelike, fixed like a hill or statue,
Vast my body feels and upbears the world's weight;
Dire the large descent of the Godhead enters
Limbs that are mortal.

Voiceless, thronged, Infinity crowds upon me;
Presses down a glory of power eternal;
Mind and heart grow one with the cosmic wideness;
Stilled are earth's murmurs.

Swiftly, swiftly crossing the golden spaces
Knowledge leaps, a torrent of rapid lightnings;
Thoughts that left the Ineffable's flaming mansions,
Blaze in my spirit.

Slow the heart-beats' rhythm like a giant hammer's;
Missioned voices drive to me from God's doorway
Words that live not save upon Nature's summits,
Ecstasy's chariots.

All the world is changed to a single oneness;
Souls undying, infinite forces, meeting,
Join in God-dance weaving a seamless Nature,
Rhythm of the Deathless.

Mind and heart and body, one harp of being,
Cry that anthem, finding the notes eternal, —
Light and might and bliss and immortal wisdom
Clasping for ever.

The Lost Boat

At the way's end when the shore raised up its dim line and remote
lights from the port glimmered,
Then a cloud darkened the sky's brink and the wind's scream was
the shrill laugh of a loosed demon
And the huge passion of storm leaped with its bright stabs and the
long crashing of death's thunder;
As if haled by an unseen hand fled the boat lost on the wide
homeless forlorn ocean.

Is it Chance smites? is it Fate's irony? dead workings or blind
purpose of brute Nature?
Or man's own deeds that return back on his doomed head with a
stark justice, a fixed vengeance?
Or a dread Will from behind Life that regards pain and salutes
death with a hard laughter?
Is it God's might or a Force rules in this dense jungle of events,
deeds and our thought's strivings?

Yet perhaps sank not the bright lives and their glad venturings
foiled, drowned in the grey ocean,
But with long wandering they reached an unknown shore and a
strange sun and a new azure,
Amid bright splendour of beast glories and birds' music and deep
hues, an enriched Nature
And a new life that could draw near to divine meanings and touched
close the concealed purpose.

In a chance happening, fate's whims and the blind workings or dead
drive of a brute Nature,
In her dire Titan caprice, strength that to death drifts and to doom,
hidden a Will labours.
Not with one moment of sharp close or the slow fall of a dim
curtain the play ceases:
Yet is there Time to be crossed, lives to be lived out, the unplayed
acts of the soul's drama.

Renewal

When the heart tires and the throb stills recalling
Things that were once and again can be never,
When the bow falls and the drawn string is broken,
Hands that were clasped, yet for ever are parted,

When the soul passes to new births and bodies,
Lands never seen and meetings with new faces,
Is the bow raised and the fall'n arrow fitted,
Acts that were vain rewedded to the Fate-curve?

To the lives sundered can Time bring rejoining,
Love that was slain be reborn with the body?
In the mind null, from the heart's chords rejected,
Lost to the sense, but the spirit remembers!

Soul's Scene

The clouds lain on forlorn spaces of sky, weary and lolling,
Watch grey waves of a lost sea wander sad, reckless and rolling,
A bare anguish of bleak beaches made mournful with the breath of the Northwind
And a huddle of melancholy hills in the distance.

The blank hour in some vast mood of a Soul lonely in Nature
On earth's face puts a mask pregnantly carved, cut to misfeature,
And man's heart and his stilled mind react hushed in a spiritual passion
Imitating the contours of her desolate waiting.

Impassible she waits long for the sun's gold and the azure,
The sea's song with its slow happy refrain's plashes of pleasure,—
As man's soul in its depths waits the outbreaking of the light and the godhead
And the bliss that God felt when he created his image.

Ascent

(1)

The Silence

Into the Silence, into the Silence,
Arise, O Spirit immortal,
Away from the turning Wheel, breaking the magical Circle.
Ascend, single and deathless:
Care no more for the whispers and the shoutings in the darkness,
Pass from the sphere of the grey and the little,
Leaving the cry and the struggle,
Into the Silence for ever.

Vast and immobile, formless and marvellous,
Higher than Heaven, wider than the universe,
In a pure glory of being,
In a bright stillness of self-seeing,
Communing with a boundlessness voiceless and intimate,
Make thy knowledge too high for thought, thy joy too deep for emotion;
At rest in the unchanging Light, mute with the wordless self-vision,
Spirit, pass out of thyself; Soul, escape from the clutch of Nature.
All thou hast seen cast from thee, O Witness.
Turn to the Alone and the Absolute, turn to the Eternal:
Be only eternity, peace and silence,
O world-transcending nameless Oneness,
Spirit immortal.

(2)

Beyond the Silence

Out from the Silence, out from the Silence,
Carrying with thee the ineffable Substance,
Carrying with thee the splendour and wideness,

Ascend, O Spirit immortal.
Assigning to Time its endless meaning,
Blissful enter into the clasp of the Timeless.
Awake in the living Eternal, taken to the bosom of love of the Infinite,
Live self-found in his endless completeness,
Drowned in his joy and his sweetness,
Thy heart close to the heart of the Godhead for ever.

Vast, God-possessing, embraced by the Wonderful,
Lifted by the All-Beautiful into his infinite beauty,
Love shall envelop thee endless and fathomless,
Joy unimaginable, ecstasy illimitable,
Knowledge omnipotent, Might omniscient,
Light without darkness, Truth that is dateless.
One with the Transcendent, calm, universal,
Single and free, yet innumerably living,
All in thyself and thyself in all dwelling,
Act in the world with thy being beyond it.
Soul, exceed life's boundaries; Spirit, surpass the universe.
Outclimbing the summits of Nature,
Transcending and uplifting the soul of the finite,
Rise with the world in thy bosom,
O Word gathered into the heart of the Ineffable.
One with the Eternal, live in his infinity,
Drowned in the Absolute, found in the Godhead,
Swan of the supreme and spaceless ether wandering winged through the universe,
Spirit immortal.

The Tiger and the Deer

Brilliant, crouching, slouching, what crept through the green heart
of the forest,
Gleaming eyes and mighty chest and soft soundless paws of
grandeur and murder?
The wind slipped through the leaves as if afraid lest its voice and the
noise of its steps perturb the pitiless Splendour,
Hardly daring to breathe. But the great beast crouched and crept,
and crept and crouched a last time, noiseless, fatal,
Till suddenly death leaped on the beautiful wild deer as it drank
Unsuspecting at the great pool in the forest's coolness and shadow,
And it fell and, torn, died remembering its mate left sole in the deep
woodland, —
Destroyed, the mild harmless beauty by the strong cruel beauty in
Nature.
But a day may yet come when the tiger crouches and leaps no more
in the dangerous heart of the forest,
As the mammoth shakes no more the plains of Asia;
Still then shall the beautiful wild deer drink from the coolness of
great pools in the leaves' shadow.
The mighty perish in their might;
The slain survive the slayer.

Sonnets

Three Sonnets

Man the Enigma

A deep enigma is the soul of man.
His conscious life obeys the Inconscient's rule,
His need of joy is learned in sorrow's school,
His heart is a chaos and an empyrean.
His subtle Ignorance borrows Wisdom's plan;
His mind is the Infinite's sharp and narrow tool.
He wades through mud to reach the Wonderful,
And does what Matter must or Spirit can.

All powers in his living's soil take root
And claim from him their place and struggling right:
His ignorant creature mind crawling towards light
Is Nature's fool and Godhead's candidate,
A demigod and a demon and a brute,
The slave and the creator of his fate.

The Infinitesimal Infinite

Out of a still immensity we came.
These million universes were to it
The poor light-bubbles of a trivial game,
A fragile glimmer in the Infinite.

It could not find its soul in all that Vast:
It drew itself into a little speck
Infinitesimal, ignobly cast
Out of earth's mud and slime strangely awake, —

A tiny plasm upon a casual globe
In the small system of a dwarflike sun,
A little life wearing the flesh for robe,
A little mind winged through wide space to run.

It lived, it knew, it saw its self sublime,
Deathless, outmeasuring Space, outlasting Time.

The Cosmic Dance

(*Dance of Krishna, Dance of Kali*)

Two measures are there of the cosmic dance.
    Always we hear the tread of Kali's feet
Measuring in rhythms of pain and grief and chance
    Life's game of hazard terrible and sweet.

The ordeal of the veiled Initiate,
    The hero soul at play with Death's embrace,
Wrestler in the dread gymnasium of Fate
    And sacrifice a lonely path to Grace,

Man's sorrows made a key to the Mysteries,
    Truth's narrow road out of Time's wastes of dream,
The soul's seven doors from Matter's tomb to rise,
    Are the common motives of her tragic theme.

But when shall Krishna's dance through Nature move,
His mask of sweetness, laughter, rapture, love?

Sonnets from Manuscripts
Circa 1934–1947

Man the Thinking Animal

A trifling unit in a boundless plan
Amidst the enormous insignificance
Of the unpeopled cosmos' fire-whirl dance,
Earth, as by accident, engendered man,

A creature of his own grey ignorance,
A mind half shadow and half gleam, a breath
That wrestles, captive in a world of death,
To live some lame brief years. Yet his advance,

Attempt of a divinity within,
A consciousness in the inconscient Night,
To realise its own supernal Light,
Confronts the ruthless forces of the Unseen.

Aspiring to godhead from insensible clay
He travels slow-footed towards the eternal day.

Contrasts

What opposites are here! A trivial life
Specks the huge dream of Death called Matter; intense
In its struggle of weakness towards omnipotence,
A thinking mind starts from the unthinking strife

In the order of the electric elements.
Immortal life breathed in that monstrous death,
A mystery of Knowledge wore as sheath
Matter's mute nescience. Its enveloped sense

Or dumb somnambulist will obscurely reigns
Driving the atoms in their cosmic course
Whose huge unhearing movement serves perforce
The works of a strange blind omniscience.

The world's deep contrasts are but figures spun
Draping the unanimity of the One.

The Silver Call

There is a godhead of unrealised things
To which Time's splendid gains are hoarded dross;
A cry seems near, a rustle of silver wings
Calling to heavenly joy by earthly loss.

All eye has seen and all the ear has heard
Is a pale illusion by some greater voice
And mightier vision; no sweet sound or word,
No passion of hues that make the heart rejoice

Can equal those diviner ecstasies.
A Mind beyond our mind has sole the ken
Of those yet unimagined harmonies,
The fate and privilege of unborn men.

As rain-thrashed mire the marvel of the rose,
Earth waits that distant marvel to disclose.

Evolution [1]

I passed into a lucent still abode
And saw as in a mirror crystalline
An ancient Force ascending serpentine
The unhasting spirals of the aeonic road.
Earth was a cradle for the arriving god
And man but a half-dark half-luminous sign
Of the transition of the veiled Divine
From Matter's sleep and the tormented load

Of ignorant life and death to the Spirit's light.
Mind liberated swam Light's ocean vast,
And life escaped from its grey tortured line;
I saw Matter illumining its parent Night.
The soul could feel into infinity cast
Timeless God-bliss the heart incarnadine.

The Call of the Impossible

A godhead moves us to unrealised things.
Asleep in the wide folds of destiny,
A world guarded by Silence' rustling wings
Shelters their fine impossibility:

But parting quiver the caerulean gates;
Strange splendours look into our dreaming eyes;
We bear proud deities and magnificent fates;
Faces and hands come near from Paradise.

What shines above, waits darkling here in us:
Bliss unattained our future's birthright is,
Beauty of our dim souls grows amorous,
We are the heirs of infinite widenesses.

The impossible is our mask of things to be,
Mortal the door to immortality.

Evolution [2]

All is not finished in the unseen decree;
A Mind beyond our mind demands our ken,
A life of unimagined harmony
Awaits, concealed, the grasp of unborn men.

The crude beginnings of the lifeless earth,
The mindless stirrings of the plant and tree
Prepared our thought; thought for a godlike birth
Broadens the mould of our mortality.

A might no human will nor force can gain,
A knowledge seated in eternity,
A bliss beyond our struggle and our pain
Are the high pinnacles of our destiny.

O Thou who climb'dst to mind from the dull stone,
Face now the miracled summits still unwon.

Man the Mediator

A dumb Inconscient drew life's stumbling maze,
A night of all things, packed and infinite:
It made our consciousness a torch that plays
Between the Abyss and a supernal Light.

Our mind was framed a lens of segment sight
Piecing out inch by inch the world's huge mass,
And reason a small hard theodolite
Measuring unreally the measureless ways.

Yet is the dark Inconscient whence came all
The self-same Power that shines on high unwon:
Our Night shall be a sky purpureal,
Our torch transmute to a vast godhead's sun.

Rooted in mire heavenward man's nature grows, —
His soul the dim bud of God's flaming rose.

Discoveries of Science

I saw the electric stream on which is run
The world turned motes and spark-whirls of a Light,
A Fire of which the nebula and sun
Are glints and flame-drops, scattered, eremite;

And veiled by viewless Light worked other Powers,
An Air of movement endless, unbegun,
Expanding and contracting in Time's hours
And the intangible ether of the One.

The surface finds, the screen-phenomenon,
Are Nature's offered ransom, while behind
Her occult mysteries lie safe, unknown,
From the crude handling of the empiric Mind.

Our truths discovered are but dust and trace
Of the eternal Energy in her race.

All here is Spirit

All here is Spirit self-moved eternally
For Matter is its seeming or its form,
A finite motion of Infinity
Built up by energy's electric storm,

A flux of solid instability
Whirled into shape by a tremendous Force
That labours out the world's fabric endlessly,
Creates and then destroys without remorse

Titan and worm, the dew-drop and the sea,
Our fragile bodies like the aeoned star,
But through it all remains immortally
The secret spirit we for ever are.

Matter is Spirit's semblance glamorous
Self-woven for its own field and robe and house.

The Ways of the Spirit [1]

What points ascending Nature to her goal?
'Tis not man's lame transcribing intellect
With its carved figures rigid and erect
But the far subtle vision of his soul.

His instruments have served his weakness well
But they must change to tread the paths of Fire
That lead through his calm self immeasurable
To the last rapture's incandescent spire.

The spirit keeps for him its ample ways,
A sense that takes the world into our being,
A close illumined touch and intimate seeing,
Wide Thought that is a god's ensphering gaze,

A tranquil heart in sympathy with all,
A will wide-winging, armed, imperial.

The Ways of the Spirit [2]

Aroused from Matter's sleep when Nature strove
Into the half lights of the embodied mind
She left not all imprisonment behind
But trailed an ever lengthening chain, and the love

Of shadows and half lustres went with her.
In timid mood were shaped our instruments;
Horizon and surface barriered thought and sense,
Forbidden to look too high, too deep to peer.

An algebra of signs, a scheme of sense,
A symbol language without depth or wings,
A power to handle deftly outward things
Are our scant earnings of intelligence.

Yet towards a greater Nature paths she keeps
Threading the grandeur of her climbing steeps.

Science and the Unknowable

In occult depths grow Nature's roots unshown;
Each visible hides its base in the unseen,
Even the invisible guards what it can mean
In a yet deeper invisible, unknown.

Man's science builds abstractions cold and bare
And carves to formulas the living whole;
It is a brain and hand without a soul,
A piercing eye behind our outward stare.

The objects that we see are not their form,
A mass of forces is the apparent shape;
Pursued and seized, their inner lines escape
In a vast consciousness beyond our norm.

Follow and you shall meet abysses still,
Infinite, wayless, mute, unknowable.

The Yogi on the Whirlpool

On a dire whirlpool in the hurrying river,
A life-stilled statue naked, bronze, severe,
He kept the posture of a deathless seer
Unshaken by the mad water's leap and shiver.
Thought could not think in him, flesh could not quiver;
The feet of Time could not adventure here;
Only some unknown Power nude and austere,
Only a Silence mighty to deliver.

His spirit world-wide and companionless,
Seated above the torrent of the days
On the deep eddy that our being forms,
Silent sustained the huge creation's stress,
Unchanged supporting Nature's rounds and norms,
Immobile background of the cosmic race.

The Kingdom Within

There is a kingdom of the spirit's ease.
It is not in this helpless swirl of thought,
Foam from the world-sea or spray whispers caught,
With which we build mind's shifting symmetries,
Nor in life's stuff of passionate unease,
Nor the heart's unsure emotions frailly wrought
Nor trivial clipped sense-joys soon brought to nought,
Nor in this body's solid transiences.

Wider behind than the vast universe
Our spirit scans the drama and the stir,
A peace, a light, an ecstasy, a power
Waiting at the end of blindness and the curse
That veils it from its ignorant minister
The grandeur of its free eternal hour.

Now I have borne

Now I have borne Thy presence and Thy light,
Eternity assumes me and I am
A vastness of tranquillity and flame,
My heart a deep Atlantic of delight.
My life is a moving moment of Thy might
Carrying Thy vision's sacred oriflamme
Inscribed with the white glory of Thy name
In the unborn silence of the Infinite.

My body is a jar of radiant peace,
The days a line across my timelessness,
My mind is made a voiceless breadth of Thee,
A lyre of muteness and a luminous sea;
Yet in each cell I feel Thy fire embrace,
A brazier of the seven ecstasies.

Electron

The electron on which forms and worlds are built,
Leaped into being, a particle of God.
A spark from the eternal Energy spilt,
It is the Infinite's blind minute abode.

In that small flaming chariot Shiva rides.
The One devised innumerably to be;
His oneness in invisible forms he hides,
Time's tiny temples to eternity.

Atom and molecule in their unseen plan
Buttress an edifice of strange onenesses,
Crystal and plant, insect and beast and man, —
Man on whom the World-Unity shall seize,

Widening his soul-spark to an epiphany
Of the timeless vastness of Infinity.

The Indwelling Universal

I contain the wide world in my soul's embrace:
In me Arcturus and Belphegor burn.
To whatsoever living form I turn
I see my own body with another face.

All eyes that look on me are my sole eyes;
The one heart that beats within all breasts is mine.
The world's happiness flows through me like wine,
Its million sorrows are my agonies.

Yet all its acts are only waves that pass
Upon my surface; inly for ever still,
Unborn I sit, timeless, intangible:
All things are shadows in my tranquil glass.

My vast transcendence holds the cosmic whirl;
I am hid in it as in the sea a pearl.

Bliss of Identity

All Nature is taught in radiant ways to move,
All beings are in myself embraced.
O fiery boundless Heart of joy and love,
How art thou beating in a mortal's breast!

It is Thy rapture flaming through my nerves
And all my cells and atoms thrill with Thee;
My body Thy vessel is and only serves
As a living wine-cup of Thy ecstasy.

I am a centre of Thy golden light
And I its vast and vague circumference;
Thou art my soul great, luminous and white
And Thine my mind and will and glowing sense.

Thy spirit's infinite breath I feel in me;
My life is a throb of Thy eternity.

The Witness Spirit

I dwell in the spirit's calm nothing can move
    And watch the actions of Thy vast world-force,
Its mighty wings that through infinity move
    And the Time-gallopings of the deathless Horse.

This mute stupendous Energy that whirls
    The stars and nebulae in its long train,
Like a huge Serpent through my being curls
    With its diamond hood of joy and fangs of pain.

It rises from the dim inconscient deep
    Upcoiling through the minds and hearts of men,
Then touches on some height of luminous sleep
    The bliss and splendour of the eternal plane.

All this I bear in me, untouched and still,
Assenting to Thy all-wise inscrutable will.

The Hidden Plan

However long Night's hour, I will not dream
    That the small ego and the person's mask
Are all that God reveals in our life-scheme,
    The last result of Nature's cosmic task.

A greater Presence in her bosom works;
    Long it prepares its far epiphany:
Even in the stone and beast the godhead lurks,
    A bright Persona of eternity.

It shall burst out from the limit traced by Mind
    And make a witness of the prescient heart;
It shall reveal even in this inert blind
    Nature, long veiled in each inconscient part,

Fulfilling the occult magnificent plan,
The world-wide and immortal spirit in man.

The Pilgrim of the Night

I made an assignation with the Night;
    In the abyss was fixed our rendezvous:
In my breast carrying God's deathless light
    I came her dark and dangerous heart to woo.

I left the glory of the illumined Mind
    And the calm rapture of the divinised soul
And travelled through a vastness dim and blind
    To the grey shore where her ignorant waters roll.

I walk by the chill wave through the dull slime
    And still that weary journeying knows no end;
Lost is the lustrous godhead beyond Time,
    There comes no voice of the celestial Friend.

And yet I know my footprints' track shall be
A pathway towards Immortality.

Cosmic Consciousness

I have wrapped the wide world in my wider self
    And Time and Space my spirit's seeing are.
I am the god and demon, ghost and elf,
    I am the wind's speed and the blazing star.

All Nature is the nursling of my care,
    I am the struggle and the eternal rest;
The world's joy thrilling runs through me, I bear
    The sorrow of millions in my lonely breast.

I have learned a close identity with all,
    Yet am by nothing bound that I become;
Carrying in me the universe's call
    I mount to my imperishable home.

I pass beyond Time and life on measureless wings,
Yet still am one with born and unborn things.

Liberation [1]

I have thrown from me the whirling dance of mind
And stand now in the spirit's silence free;
Timeless and deathless beyond creature kind,
The centre of my own eternity.

I have escaped and the small self is dead;
I am immortal, alone, ineffable;
I have gone out from the universe I made,
And have grown nameless and immeasurable.

My mind is hushed in wide and endless light,
My heart a solitude of delight and peace,
My sense unsnared by touch and sound and sight,
My body a point in white infinities.

I am the one Being's sole immobile Bliss:
No one I am, I who am all that is.

The Inconscient

Out of a seeming void and dark-winged sleep
Of dim inconscient infinity
A Power arose from the insentient deep,
A flame-whirl of magician Energy.

Some huge somnambulist Intelligence
Devising without thought process and plan
Arrayed the burning stars' magnificence,
The living bodies of beasts and the brain of man.

What stark Necessity or ordered Chance
Became alive to know the cosmic whole?
What magic of numbers, what mechanic dance
Developed consciousness, assumed a soul?

The darkness was the Omnipotent's abode,
Hood of omniscience, a blind mask of God.

Life-Unity

I housed within my heart the life of things,
All hearts athrob in the world I felt as mine;
I shared the joy that in creation sings
And drank its sorrow like a poignant wine.

I have felt the anger in another's breast,
All passions poured through my world-self their waves;
One love I shared in a million bosoms expressed.
I am the beast man slays, the beast he saves.

I spread life's burning wings of rapture and pain;
Black fire and gold fire strove towards one bliss:
I rose by them towards a supernal plane
Of power and love and deathless ecstasies.

A deep spiritual calm no touch can sway
Upholds the mystery of this Passion-play.

The Golden Light

Thy golden Light came down into my brain
And the grey rooms of mind sun-touched became
A bright reply to Wisdom's occult plane,
A calm illumination and a flame.

Thy golden Light came down into my throat,
And all my speech is now a tune divine,
A paean song of Thee my single note;
My words are drunk with the Immortal's wine.

Thy golden Light came down into my heart
Smiting my life with Thy eternity;
Now has it grown a temple where Thou art
And all its passions point towards only Thee.

Thy golden Light came down into my feet;
My earth is now Thy playfield and Thy seat.

The Infinite Adventure

On the waters of a nameless Infinite
    My skiff is launched; I have left the human shore.
    All fades behind me and I see before
The unknown abyss and one pale pointing light.
An unseen Hand controls my rudder. Night
    Walls up the sea in a black corridor, —
    An inconscient Hunger's lion plaint and roar
Or the ocean sleep of a dead Eremite.

I feel the greatness of the Power I seek
    Surround me; below me are its giant deeps,
        Beyond, the invisible height no soul has trod.
I shall be merged in the Lonely and Unique
    And wake into a sudden blaze of God,
        The marvel and rapture of the Apocalypse.

The Greater Plan

I am held no more by life's alluring cry,
    Her joy and grief, her charm, her laughter's lute.
    Hushed are the magic moments of the flute,
And form and colour and brief ecstasy.
I would hear, in my spirit's wideness solitary,
    The Voice that speaks when mortal lips are mute:
    I seek the wonder of things absolute
Born from the silence of Eternity.

There is a need within the soul of man
    The splendours of the surface never sate;
        For life and mind and their glory and debate
Are the slow prelude of a vaster theme,
    A sketch confused of a supernal plan,
        A preface to the epic of the Supreme.

The Universal Incarnation

There is a wisdom like a brooding Sun,
A Bliss in the heart's crypt grown fiery white,
The heart of a world in which all hearts are one,
A Silence on the mountains of delight,

A Calm that cradles Fate upon its knees;
A wide Compassion leans to embrace earth's pain;
A Witness dwells within our secrecies,
The incarnate Godhead in the body of man.

Our mind is a glimmering curtain of that Ray,
Our strength a parody of the Immortal's power,
Our joy a dreamer on the Eternal's way
Hunting the unseizable beauty of an hour.

Only on the heart's veiled door the word of flame
Is written, the secret and tremendous Name.

The Godhead

I sat behind the dance of Danger's hooves
In the shouting street that seemed a futurist's whim,
And suddenly felt, exceeding Nature's grooves,
In me, enveloping me the body of Him.

Above my head a mighty head was seen,
A face with the calm of immortality
And an omnipotent gaze that held the scene
In the vast circle of its sovereignty.

His hair was mingled with the sun and breeze;
The world was in His heart and He was I:
I housed in me the Everlasting's peace,
The strength of One whose substance cannot die.

The moment passed and all was as before;
Only that deathless memory I bore.

The Stone Goddess

In a town of gods, housed in a little shrine,
From sculptured limbs the Godhead looked at me, —
A living Presence deathless and divine,
A Form that harboured all infinity.

The great World-Mother and her mighty will
Inhabited the earth's abysmal sleep,
Voiceless, omnipotent, inscrutable,
Mute in the desert and the sky and deep.

Now veiled with mind she dwells and speaks no word,
Voiceless, inscrutable, omniscient,
Hiding until our soul has seen, has heard
The secret of her strange embodiment,

One in the worshipper and the immobile shape,
A beauty and mystery flesh or stone can drape.

Krishna

At last I find a meaning of soul's birth
Into this universe terrible and sweet,
I who have felt the hungry heart of earth
Aspiring beyond heaven to Krishna's feet.

I have seen the beauty of immortal eyes,
And heard the passion of the Lover's flute,
And known a deathless ecstasy's surprise
And sorrow in my heart for ever mute.

Nearer and nearer now the music draws,
Life shudders with a strange felicity;
All Nature is a wide enamoured pause
Hoping her lord to touch, to clasp, to be.

For this one moment lived the ages past;
The world now throbs fulfilled in me at last.

Shiva

On the white summit of eternity
A single Soul of bare infinities,
Guarded he keeps by a fire-screen of peace
His mystic loneliness of nude ecstasy.
But, touched by an immense delight to be,
He looks across unending depths and sees
Musing amid the inconscient silences
The Mighty Mother's dumb felicity.

Half now awake she rises to his glance;
Then, moved to circling by her heart-beats' will,
The rhythmic worlds describe that passion-dance.
Life springs in her and Mind is born; her face
She lifts to Him who is Herself, until
The Spirit leaps into the Spirit's embrace.

The Word of the Silence

A bare impersonal hush is now my mind,
A world of sight clear and inimitable,
A volume of silence by a Godhead signed,
A greatness pure of thought, virgin of will.

Once on its pages Ignorance could write
In a scribble of intellect the blind guess of Time
And cast gleam-messages of ephemeral light,
A food for souls that wander on Nature's rim.

But now I listen to a greater Word
Born from the mute unseen omniscient Ray:
The Voice that only Silence' ear has heard
Leaps missioned from an eternal glory of Day.

All turns from a wideness and unbroken peace
To a tumult of joy in a sea of wide release.

The Self's Infinity

I have become what before Time I was.
A secret touch has quieted thought and sense:
All things by the agent Mind created pass
Into a void and mute magnificence.

My life is a silence grasped by timeless hands;
The world is drowned in an immortal gaze.
Naked my spirit from its vestures stands;
I am alone with my own self for space.

My heart is a centre of infinity,
My body a dot in the soul's vast expanse.
All being's huge abyss wakes under me,
Once screened in a gigantic Ignorance.

A momentless immensity pure and bare,
I stretch to an eternal everywhere.

The Dual Being

There are two beings in my single self.
A Godhead watches Nature from behind
At play in front with a brilliant surface elf,
A time-born creature with a human mind.

Tranquil and boundless like a sea or sky,
The Godhead knows himself Eternity's son.
Radiant his mind and vast, his heart as free;
His will is a sceptre of dominion.

The smaller self by Nature's passions driven,
Thoughtful and erring learns his human task;
All must be known and to that Greatness given
His mind and life, the mirror and the mask.

As with the figure of a symbol dance
The screened Omniscient plays at Ignorance.

Lila

In us is the thousandfold Spirit who is one,
    An eternal thinker calm and great and wise,
A seer whose eye is an all-regarding sun,
    A poet of the cosmic mysteries.

A critic Witness pieces everything
    And binds the fragments in his brilliant sheaf;
A World-adventurer borne on Destiny's wing
    Gambles with death and triumph, joy and grief.

A king of greatness and a slave of love,
    Host of the stars and guest in Nature's inn,
A high spectator spirit throned above,
    A pawn of passion in the game divine,

One who has made in sport the suns and seas
Mirrors in our being his immense caprice.

Surrender

O Thou of whom I am the instrument,
    O secret Spirit and Nature housed in me,
Let all my mortal being now be blent
    In Thy still glory of divinity.

I have given my mind to be dug Thy channel mind,
    I have offered up my will to be Thy will:
Let nothing of myself be left behind
    In our union mystic and unutterable.

My heart shall throb with the world-beats of Thy love,
    My body become Thy engine for earth-use;
In my nerves and veins Thy rapture's streams shall move;
    My thoughts shall be hounds of Light for Thy power to loose.

Keep only my soul to adore eternally
And meet Thee in each form and soul of Thee.

The Divine Worker

I face earth's happenings with an equal soul;
    In all are heard Thy steps: Thy unseen feet
Tread Destiny's pathways in my front. Life's whole
    Tremendous theorem is Thou complete.

No danger can perturb my spirit's calm:
    My acts are Thine; I do Thy works and pass;
Failure is cradled on Thy deathless arm,
    Victory is Thy passage mirrored in Fortune's glass.

In this rude combat with the fate of man
    Thy smile within my heart makes all my strength;
Thy Force in me labours at its grandiose plan,
    Indifferent to the Time-snake's crawling length.

No power can slay my soul; it lives in Thee.
Thy presence is my immortality.

The Guest

I have discovered my deep deathless being:
    Masked by my front of mind, immense, serene
It meets the world with an Immortal's seeing,
    A god-spectator of the human scene.

No pain and sorrow of the heart and flesh
    Can tread that pure and voiceless sanctuary.
Danger and fear, Fate's hounds, slipping their leash
    Rend body and nerve, — the timeless Spirit is free.

Awake, God's ray and witness in my breast,
    In the undying substance of my soul
Flamelike, inscrutable the almighty Guest.
    Death nearer comes and Destiny takes her toll;

He hears the blows that shatter Nature's house:
Calm sits he, formidable, luminous.

The Inner Sovereign

Now more and more the Epiphany within
Affirms on Nature's soil His sovereign rights.
My mind has left its prison-camp of brain;
It pours, a luminous sea from spirit heights.

A tranquil splendour, waits my Force of Life
Couched in my heart, to do what He shall bid,
Poising wide wings like a great hippogriff
On which the gods of the empyrean ride.

My senses change into gold gates of bliss;
An ecstasy thrills through touch and sound and sight
Flooding the blind material sheath's dull ease:
My darkness answers to His call of light.

Nature in me one day like Him shall sit
Victorious, calm, immortal, infinite.

Creation

Since Thou hadst all eternity to amuse,
O sculptor of the living shapes of earth,
O dramatist of death and life and birth,
World-artist revelling in forms and hues,

Hast Thou shaped the marvel of the whirling spheres,
A scientist passing Nature through his tubes,
And played with numbers, measures, theorems, cubes,
O mathematician Mind that never errs,

Building a universe from Thy theories?
Protean is Thy spirit of delight,
Craftsman minute and architect of might,
World-adept of a thousand mysteries.

Or forged some deep Necessity, not Thy whim,
Fate and Inconscience and the net of Time?

A Dream of Surreal Science

One dreamed and saw a gland write Hamlet, drink
At the Mermaid, capture immortality;
A committee of hormones on the Aegean's brink
Composed the Iliad and the Odyssey.

A thyroid, meditating almost nude
Under the Bo-tree, saw the eternal Light
And, rising from its mighty solitude,
Spoke of the Wheel and eightfold Path all right.

A brain by a disordered stomach driven
Thundered through Europe, conquered, ruled and fell,
From St Helena went, perhaps, to Heaven.
Thus wagged on the surreal world, until

A scientist played with atoms and blew out
The universe before God had time to shout.

In the Battle

Often, in the slow ages' wide retreat
On Life's long bridge through Time's enormous sea,
I have accepted death and borne defeat
If by my fall some gain were clutched for Thee.

To this world's inconscient Power Thou hast given the right
To oppose the shining passage of my soul:
She levies on each step the tax of Night.
Doom, her unjust accountant, keeps the roll.

Around my way the Titan forces press;
This earth is theirs, they hold the days in fee,
I am full of wounds and the fight merciless:
Is it not yet Thy hour of victory?

Even as Thou wilt! What still to Fate Thou owest,
O Ancient of the worlds, Thou knowest, Thou knowest.

The Little Ego

This puppet ego the World-Mother made,
This little profiteer of Nature's works,
Her trust in his life-tenancy betrayed,
Makes claim on claim, all debt to her he shirks.

Each movement of our life our ego fills;
Inwoven in each thread of being's weft,
When most we vaunt our selflessness, it steals
A sordid part; no corner void is left.

One way lies free, our heart and soul to give,
Our body and mind to Thee and every cell,
And steeped in Thy world-infinity to live.
Then lost in light, shall fade the ignoble spell.

Nature, of her rebellion quit, shall be
A breath of the spirit's vast serenity.

The Miracle of Birth

I saw my soul a traveller through Time;
From life to life the cosmic ways it trod,
Obscure in the depths and on the heights sublime,
Evolving from the worm into the god.

A spark of the eternal Fire, it came
To build a house in Matter for the Unborn.
The inconscient sunless Night received the flame,
In the brute seed of things dumb and forlorn

Life stirred and Thought outlined a gleaming shape
Till on the stark inanimate earth could move,
Born to somnambulist Nature in her sleep,
A thinking creature who can hope and love.

Still by slow steps the miracle goes on,
The Immortal's gradual birth mid mire and stone.

The Bliss of Brahman

I am swallowed in a foam-white sea of bliss,
I am a curving wave of God's delight,
A shapeless flow of happy passionate light,
A whirlpool of the streams of Paradise.
I am a cup of His felicities,
A thunderblast of His golden ecstasy's might,
A fire of joy upon creation's height;
I am His rapture's wonderful abyss.

I am drunken with the glory of the Lord,
I am vanquished by the beauty of the Unborn;
I have looked alive on the Eternal's face.
My mind is cloven by His radiant sword,
My heart by His beatific touch is torn,
My life is a meteor-dust of His flaming Grace.

Moments

If perfect moments on the peak of things,
These tops of knowledge, greatness, ecstasy,
Are only moments, this too enough might be.
I have put on the rapid flaming wings
Of souls whom the Ignorance black-robed Nature brings
And the frail littleness of mortality
Can bind not always. A high sovereignty
Makes them awhile creation's radiant kings.

These momentary upliftings of the soul
Prepare the spirit's glorious permanence.
The peace of God, a mighty transience,
Is now my spirit's boundless atmosphere.
All parts are gathered into a timeless whole;
All moments blaze in an eternal year.

The Body

This body which was once my universe,
Is now a pittance carried by the soul, —
Its Titan's motion bears this scanty purse,
Pacing through vastness to a vaster goal.

Too small was it to meet the giant need
That only infinitude can satisfy:
He keeps it still, for in the folds is hid
His secret passport to eternity.

In his front an endless Time and Space deploy
The landscape of their golden happenings;
His heart is filled with sweet and violent joy,
His mind is upon great and distant things.

How grown with all the world conterminous
Is the little dweller in this narrow house!

Liberation [2]

My mind, my soul grow larger than all Space;
Time founders in that vastness glad and nude:
The body fades, an outline, a dim trace,
A memory in the spirit's solitude.

This universe is a vanishing circumstance
In the glory of a white infinity
Beautiful and bare for the Immortal's dance,
House-room of my immense felicity.

In the thrilled happy giant void within
Thought lost in light and passion drowned in bliss,
Changing into a stillness hyaline,
Obey the edict of the Eternal's peace.

Life's now the Ineffable's dominion;
Nature is ended and the spirit alone.

Light

Light, endless Light! darkness has room no more,
Life's ignorant gulfs give up their secrecy:
The huge inconscient depths unplumbed before
Lie glimmering in vast expectancy.

Light, timeless Light immutable and apart!
The holy sealed mysterious doors unclose.
Light, burning Light from the Infinite's diamond heart
Quivers in my heart where blooms the deathless rose.

Light in its rapture leaping through the nerves!
Light, brooding Light! each smitten passionate cell
In a mute blaze of ecstasy preserves
A living sense of the Imperishable.

I move in an ocean of stupendous Light
Joining my depths to His eternal height.

The Unseen Infinite

Arisen to voiceless unattainable peaks
I meet no end, for all is boundless He,
An absolute joy the wide-winged spirit seeks,
A Might, a Presence, an Eternity.

In the inconscient dreadful dumb Abyss
Are heard the heart-beats of the Infinite.
The insensible midnight veils His trance of bliss,
A fathomless sealed astonishment of Light.

In His ray that dazzles our vision everywhere,
Our half-closed eyes seek fragments of the One:
Only the eyes of Immortality dare
To look unblinded on that living Sun.

Yet are our souls the Immortal's selves within,
Comrades and powers and children of the Unseen.

"I"

This strutting "I" of human self and pride
      Is a puppet built by Nature for her use,
And dances as her strong compulsions bid,
      Forcefully feeble, brilliantly obtuse.

Our thinking is her leap of fluttering mind,
      We hear and see by her constructed sense:
Our force is hers; her colours have combined
      Our fly-upon-the-wheel magnificence.

He sits within who turns on her machine
      These beings, portions of his mystery,
Many dwarf beams of his great calm sunshine,
      A reflex of his sole infinity.

One mighty Self of cosmic act and thought
Employs this figure of a unit nought.

The Cosmic Spirit

I am a single Self all Nature fills.
      Immeasurable, unmoved the Witness sits:
He is the silence brooding on her hills,
      The circling motion of her cosmic mights.

I have broken the limits of embodied mind
      And am no more the figure of a soul.
The burning galaxies are in me outlined;
      The universe is my stupendous whole.

My life is the life of village and continent,
      I am earth's agony and her throbs of bliss;
I share all creatures' sorrow and content
      And feel the passage of every stab and kiss.

Impassive, I bear each act and thought and mood:
Time traverses my hushed infinitude.

Self

He said, "I am egoless, spiritual, free,"
Then swore because his dinner was not ready.
I asked him why. He said, "It is not me,
But the belly's hungry god who gets unsteady."

I asked him why. He said, "It is his play.
I am unmoved within, desireless, pure.
I care not what may happen day by day."
I questioned him, "Are you so very sure?"

He answered, "I can understand your doubt.
But to be free is all. It does not matter
How you may kick and howl and rage and shout,
Making a row over your daily platter.

To be aware of self is liberty.
Self I have got and, having self, am free."

Omnipresence

He is in me, round me, facing everywhere.
Self-walled in ego to exclude His right,
I stand upon its boundaries and stare
Into the frontiers of the Infinite.

Each finite thing I see is a façade;
From its windows looks at me the Illimitable.
In vain was my prison of separate body made;
His occult presence burns in every cell.

He has become my substance and my breath;
He is my anguish and my ecstasy.
My birth is His eternity's sign, my death
A passage of His immortality.

My dumb abysses are His screened abode;
In my heart's chamber lives the unworshipped God.

The Inconscient Foundation

My soul regards its veiled subconscient base;
All the dead obstinate symbols of the past,
The hereditary moulds, the stamps of race
Are upheld to sight, the old imprints effaced.

In a downpour of supernal light it reads
The black Inconscient's enigmatic script —
Recorded in a hundred shadowy screeds
An inert world's obscure enormous drift;

All flames, is torn and burned and cast away.
Here slept the tables of the Ignorance,
There the dumb dragon edicts of her sway,
The scriptures of Necessity and Chance.

Pure is the huge foundation now and nude,
A boundless mirror of God's infinitude.

Adwaita

I walked on the high-wayed Seat of Solomon
Where Shankaracharya's tiny temple stands
Facing Infinity from Time's edge, alone
On the bare ridge ending earth's vain romance.

Around me was a formless solitude:
All had become one strange Unnameable,
An unborn sole Reality world-nude,
Topless and fathomless, for ever still.

A Silence that was Being's only word,
The unknown beginning and the voiceless end
Abolishing all things moment-seen or heard,
On an incommunicable summit reigned,

A lonely Calm and void unchanging Peace
On the dumb crest of Nature's mysteries.

The Hill-top Temple

After unnumbered steps of a hill-stair
I saw upon earth's head brilliant with sun
The immobile Goddess in her house of stone
In a loneliness of meditating air.
Wise were the human hands that set her there
Above the world and Time's dominion;
The Soul of all that lives, calm, pure, alone,
Revealed its boundless self mystic and bare.

Our body is an epitome of some Vast
That masks its presence by our humanness.
In us the secret Spirit can indite
A page and summary of the Infinite,
A nodus of Eternity expressed
Live in an image and a sculptured face.

The Divine Hearing

All sounds, all voices have become Thy voice,
Music and thunder and the cry of birds,
Life's babble of her sorrows and her joys,
Cadence of human speech and murmured words,

The laughter of the sea's enormous mirth,
The winged plane purring through the conquered air,
The auto's trumpet-song of speed to earth,
The machine's reluctant drone, the siren's blare

Blowing upon the windy horn of Space
A call of distance and of mystery,
Memories of sun-bright lands and ocean ways,—
All now are wonder-tones and themes of Thee.

A secret harmony steals through the blind heart
And all grows beautiful because Thou art.

Because Thou art

Because Thou art All-beauty and All-bliss,
My soul blind and enamoured yearns for Thee;
It bears Thy mystic touch in all that is
And thrills with the burden of that ecstasy.

Behind all eyes I meet Thy secret gaze
And in each voice I hear Thy magic tune:
Thy sweetness hunts my heart through Nature's ways;
Nowhere it beats now from Thy snare immune.

It loves Thy body in all living things;
Thy joy is there in every leaf and stone:
The moments bring Thee on their fiery wings;
Sight's endless artistry is Thou alone.

Time voyages with Thee upon its prow, —
And all the future's passionate hope is Thou.

Divine Sight

Each sight is now immortal with Thy bliss:
My soul through the rapt eyes has come to see;
A veil is rent and they no more can miss
The miracle of Thy world-epiphany.

Into an ecstasy of vision caught
Each natural object is of Thee a part,
A rapture-symbol from Thy substance wrought,
A poem shaped in Beauty's living heart,

A master-work of colour and design,
A mighty sweetness borne on grandeur's wings;
A burdened wonder of significant line
Reveals itself in even commonest things.

All forms are Thy dream-dialect of delight,
O Absolute, O vivid Infinite.

Divine Sense

Surely I take no more an earthly food
    But eat the fruits and plants of Paradise!
For Thou hast changed my sense's habitude
    From mortal pleasure to divine surprise.

Hearing and sight are now an ecstasy,
    And all the fragrances of earth disclose
A sweetness matching in intensity
    Odour of the crimson marvel of the rose.

In every contact's deep invading thrill,
    That lasts as if its source were infinite,
I feel Thy touch; Thy bliss imperishable
    Is crowded into that moment of delight.

The body burns with Thy rapture's sacred fire,
Pure, passionate, holy, virgin of desire.

The Iron Dictators

I looked for Thee alone, but met my glance
    The iron dreadful Four who rule our breath,
Masters of falsehood, Kings of ignorance,
    High sovereign Lords of suffering and death.

Whence came these formidable autarchies,
    From what inconscient blind Infinity,—
Cold propagandists of a million lies,
    Dictators of a world of agony?

Or was it Thou who bor'st the fourfold mask?
    Enveloping Thy timeless heart in Time,
Thou hast bound the spirit to its cosmic task,
    To find Thee veiled in this tremendous mime.

Thou, only Thou, canst raise the invincible siege,
O Light, O deathless Joy, O rapturous Peace!

Form

O worshipper of the formless Infinite,
Reject not form, what dwells in it is He.
Each finite is that deep Infinity
Enshrining His veiled soul of pure delight.
Form in its heart of silence recondite
Hides the significance of His mystery,
Form is the wonder-house of eternity,
A cavern of the deathless Eremite.

There is a beauty in the depths of God,
There is a miracle of the Marvellous
That builds the universe for its abode.
Bursting into shape and colour like a rose,
The One, in His glory multitudinous,
Compels the great world-petals to unclose.

Immortality

I have drunk deep of God's own liberty
From which an occult sovereignty derives:
Hidden in an earthly garment that survives,
I am the worldless being vast and free.
A moment stamped with that supremacy
Has rescued me from cosmic hooks and gyves;
Abolishing death and time my nature lives
In the deep heart of immortality.

God's contract signed with Ignorance is torn;
Time has become the Eternal's endless year,
My soul's wide self of living infinite Space
Outlines its body luminous and unborn
Behind the earth-robe; under the earth-mask grows clear
The mould of an imperishable face.

Man, the Despot of Contraries

I am greater than the greatness of the seas,
    A swift tornado of God-energy:
A helpless flower that quivers in the breeze,
    I am weaker than the reed one breaks with ease.

I harbour all the wisdom of the wise
    In my nature of stupendous Ignorance;
On a flame of righteousness I fix my eyes
    While I wallow in sweet sin and join hell's dance.

My mind is brilliant like a full-orbed moon,
    Its darkness is the caverned troglodyte's.
I gather long Time's wealth and squander soon;
    I am an epitome of opposites.

I with repeated life death's sleep surprise;
I am a transience of the eternities.

The One Self

All are deceived, do what the One Power dictates,
    Yet each thinks his own will his nature moves;
The hater knows not 'tis himself he hates,
    The lover knows not 'tis himself he loves.

In all is one being many bodies bear;
    Here Krishna flutes upon the forest road,
Here Shiva sits ash-smeared, with matted hair.
    But Shiva and Krishna are the single God.

In us too Krishna seeks for love and joy,
    In us too Shiva struggles with the world's grief.
One Self in all of us endures annoy,
    Cries in his pain and asks his fate's relief.

My rival's downfall is my own disgrace:
I look on my enemy and see Krishna's face.

The Inner Fields

There is a brighter ether than this blue
Pretence of an enveloping heavenly vault,
A deeper greenness than this laughing assault
Of emerald rapture pearled with tears of dew.
Immortal spaces of caerulean hue
Are in our reach and fields without this fault
Of drab brown earth and streams that never halt
In their deep murmur which white flowers strew

Floating like stars upon a strip of sky.
This world behind is made of truer stuff
Than the manufactured tissue of earth's grace.
There we can walk and see the gods go by
And sip from Hebe's cup nectar enough
To make for us heavenly limbs and deathless face.

Lyrical Poems from Manuscripts
Circa 1934–1947

Symbol Moon

Once again thou hast climbed, O moon, like a white fire on the glimmering edge,
Floating up, floating up from the haunted verge of a foam-tremulous sea.
Mystic-horned here crossing the grey-hued listless nights and days,
Spirit-silver craft from the ports of eternity.

Overhead with thy plunging and swaying prow thou fleetest, O ship of the gods,
Glorifying the clouds with thy halo, but our hearts with a rose-red rapture shed from the secret breasts of love;
Almost thou seemest the very bliss that floats in opaline air over heaven's golden roads,
Embodied here to capture our human lives like a nectar face of light in the doubtful blue above.

Dumbly blithe, shuddering, the air is filled from thy cup of pale mysterious wine:
Gleam quivers to longing gleam; and the faery torches lit for Night's mysteries are set in her niches stark and deep;
The inconscient gulfs stir and are vaguely thrilled, while their unheard voices cry to the Wonder-light new-seen
Till descending its ray shall unlock with a wizard rod of fire the dumb recesses of sleep.

Bright and alone in a white-foam-glinted delicate dim-blue ocean of sky,
Ever thou runst and thou floatest as a magic drifting bowl
Flung by the hand of a drunken god in the river of Time goes tossing by,
O icon and chalice of spiritual light whose spots are like Nature's shadow stains on a white and immaculate soul.

How like one frail and haunted thou com'st, O white moon, at my lonely call from thy deep sky-covert heights,
A voyager carrying through the myriad-isled archipelago of the spear-pointed questioning stars

The circle of the occult argent Yes of the Invisible to the dim query of the yearning witness lights
That burn in the dense vault of Matter's waking mind — innumerable, solitary and sparse.

A disk of a greater Ray that shall come, a white-fire rapture and girdling rose of love,
Timelessly thou driftest, O soundless silver boat that set out from the far Unknown,
Moon-crystal of silver or gold of some spirit joy spun by Time in his dense aeonic groove,
A messenger and bearer of an unembodied beauty and unseized bliss advancing over our life's wan sea — significant, bright and alone.

The World Game

(*The Ishwara to the Ishwari*)

In god-years yet unmeasured by a man's thought or by the earth's dance or the moon's spin
I have guarded the law of the Invisible for the sake of thy smile, O sweet;
While lives followed innumerable winged lives, as if birds crossing a wide sea,
I have watched on the path of the centuries for the light of thy running feet.

The earth's dancing with the sun in his fire-robes, was it not thou circling my flame-soul,
The gazings of the moon in its nectar-joy were my look questing for thee through Space?
The world's haste and the racing of the tense mind and the long gallop of fleet years
Were my speed to arrive through the flux of things and to neighbour at last thy face.

The earth's seeking is mine and the immense scope of the slow aeons my heart's way;
For I follow a secret and sublime Will and the steps of thy Mother-might.
In the dim brute and the peering of man's brain and the calm sight in a god's eyes
It is I questing in Life's broken ways for thy laughter and love and light.

When Time moved not nor yet Space was unrolled wide, for thy game of the worlds I gave
Myself to thy delightful hands of power to govern me and move and drive;
To earth's dumbness I fell for thy desire's sport weaving my spirit stuff
In a million pattern-shapes of souls made with me alive.

The worlds are only a playfield of Thou-I and a hued masque of the Two-One,
I am in thee as thou art in me, O Love; we are closer than heart and breast;
From thee I leaped forth struck to a spirit spark, I mount back in the soul's fire;
To our motion the stars whirl in the swing of Time, our oneness is Nature's rest.

When Light first from the unconscious Immense burst to create nebula and sun
'Twas the meeting of our hands through the empty Night that enkindled the fateful blaze;
The huge systems abandoned their inert trance and this green crater of life rose
That we might look on each other form on form from the depths of a living gaze.

The mind travelled in its ranges tier on tier with its wide-eyed or its rapt thought,
My thought toiling laboured to know all myself in thee to our atoms and widths and deeps,

My all yearns to thy all to be held close, to the heart heart and to self self,
As a sea with a sea joins or limbs with limbs, and as waking's delight with sleep's.

When mind pinnacled is lost in thy Light-Vasts and the man drowns in the wide god,
Thy Truth shall ungirdle its golden flames and thy diamond whiteness blaze;
My souls lumined shall discover their joy-self, they shall clasp all in the near One,
And the sorrow of the heart shall turn to bliss and thy sweetness possess earth's days.

Then shall Life be thy arms drawing thy own clasped to thy breast's rapture or calm peace,
With thy joy for the spirit's immortal flame and thy peace for its deathless base.
Our eyes meeting the long love shut in deep eyes and our beings held fast and one,
I shall know that the game was well worth the toil whose end is thy divine embrace.

Who art thou that camest

Who art thou that camest
Bearing the occult Name,
Wings of regal darkness,
Eyes of an unborn flame?

Like the august uprising
Of a forgotten sun
Out of the caverned midnight
Fire-trails of wonder run.

Captured the heart renouncing
Tautness of passion-worn strings
Allows the wide-wayed sweetness
Of free supernal things.

One

The mind of a man
And the mind in a stone.
But the Mind of minds
Sits bright and alone.

The life of a tree,
The life in a clod,
To the Life of all life
That men call God.

The heart of a beast
And a seraph's heart, —
But the Heart of all hearts
Throbs ever apart.

A body beloved
    And a body slain.
Yet both were the bodies
    Of One in their pain.

In a mounting as of sea-tides

In a mounting as of sea-tides, in a rippling as of invisible waters,
On a cry in me my soul is uplifted, in a passion of my nature
My heart climbs up towards thee, O unimaginable Wonder and Resplendence,
In a striving for the caress of thy Light and for the embrace of thy Presence.

If once given were but a touch of thy feet on the thrilled bosom of my longing,
But a glance of thy eyes mingling with mine in the recesses and the silence,
Such a rapture would envelop me, such a fire of transfiguring effulgence,
I could never again be as a man upon this earth, but one immortal.

For my mind would be dissolved in a sun-glory of God-vision and of knowledge,
And my heart would be made suddenly more pure and illumined and self-tranquil,
And my nerves and my body would transmute into an ethereal divineness,
A fit vesture for the godhead thou buildst in me, for the immortal thy adorer.

O thou Life of my life and the unseen heart of its ecstasy and its beating,
O Face that was disclosed in the beginning of the worlds amid the immenseness,
Let thy Flame-wisdom leap down upon the coilings of our python inconscience,
Let the Love-wine be poured out in thy chalice, let me be drunk with it for ever.

I shall meet thee in the ocean of thy stillness, in the ether of thy splendour,
Thy Force shall be in my veins like the ichor in the Unaging who are deathless;
My soul shall be as one breath with thy soul and thy infinity around thee,
And shall quiver with the vision of thy beauty and the marvel of thy sweetness.

Krishna

(*Cretics*)

O immense Light and thou, O spirit-wide boundless Space,
Whom have you clasped and hid, deathless limbs, gloried face?
Vainly lie Space and Time, "Void are we, there is none."
Vainly strive Self and World crying "I, I alone."
One is there, Self of self, Soul of Space, Fount of Time,
Heart of hearts, Mind of minds, He alone sits, sublime.
Oh no void Absolute self-absorbed, splendid, mute,
Hands that clasp hold and red lips that kiss blow His flute.
All He loves, all He moves, all are His, all are He;
Many limbs sate His whims, bear His sweet ecstasy.
Two in One, Two who know difference rich in sense,
Two to clasp, One to be, this His strange mystery.

The Cosmic Man

I look across the world and no horizon walls my gaze;
I see Tokio and Paris and New York,
I see the bombs bursting on Barcelona and on Canton streets.
Man's numberless misdeeds and small good deeds take place within my single self;
I am the beast he slays, the bird he feeds and saves;
The thoughts of unknown minds exalt me with their thrill;
I carry the sorrow of millions in my lonely breast.

The Island Sun

I have sailed the golden ocean
And crossed the silver bar;
I have reached the Sun of knowledge,
The earth-self's midnight star.

Its fields of flaming vision,
Its mountains of bare might,
Its peaks of fiery rapture,
Its air of absolute light,

Its seas of self-oblivion,
Its vales of Titan rest,
Became my soul's dominion,
Its Island of the Blest.

Alone with God and silence,
Timeless it lived in Time;
Life was His fugue of music,
Thought was Truth's ardent rhyme.

The Light was still around me
When I came back to earth
Bringing the Immortal's knowledge
Into man's cave of birth.

Despair on the Staircase

Mute stands she, lonely on the topmost stair,
An image of magnificent despair;
The grandeur of a sorrowful surmise
Wakes in the largeness of her glorious eyes.
In her beauty's dumb significant pose I find
The tragedy of her mysterious mind.
Yet is she stately, grandiose, full of grace.
A musing mask is her immobile face.
Her tail is up like an unconquered flag;
Its dignity knows not the right to wag.
An animal creature wonderfully human,
A charm and miracle of fur-footed Brahman,
Whether she is spirit, woman or a cat,
Is now the problem I am wondering at.

The Dwarf Napoleon

(*Hitler. October 1939*)

Behold, by Maya's fantasy of will
A violent miracle takes sudden birth,
The real grows one with the incredible.
In the control of her magician wand
The small achieves things great, the base things grand.
This puny creature would bestride the earth
Even as the immense colossus of the past.
Napoleon's mind was swift and bold and vast,
His heart was calm and stormy like the sea,
His will dynamic in its grip and clasp.
His eye could hold a world within its grasp
And see the great and small things sovereignly.
A movement of gigantic depth and scope
He seized and gave coherence to its hope.

Far other this creature of a nether clay,
Void of all grandeur, like a gnome at play,
Iron and mud his nature's mingled stuff,
A little limited visionary brain
Cunning and skilful in its narrow vein,
A sentimental egoist poor and rough,
Whose heart was never sweet and fresh and young,
A headlong spirit driven by hopes and fears,
Intense neurotic with his shouts and tears,
Violent and cruel, devil, child and brute,
This screaming orator with his strident tongue,
This prophet of a scanty fixed idea,
Plays now the leader of our human march;
His might shall build the future's triumph arch.
Now is the world for his eating a ripe fruit.
His shadow falls from London to Corea.
Cities and nations crumble in his course.
A terror holds the peoples in its grip:
World-destiny waits upon that foaming lip.
A Titan Power upholds this pigmy man,
The crude dwarf instrument of a mighty Force.
Hater of the free spirit's joy and light,
Made only of strength and skill and giant might,
A Will to trample humanity into clay
And unify earth beneath one iron sway,
Insists upon its fierce enormous plan.
Trampling man's mind and will into one mould
Docile and facile in a dreadful hold,
It cries its demon slogans to the crowd.
But if its tenebrous empire were allowed,
That mastery would prepare the dismal hour
When the Inconscient shall regain its right,
And man who emerged as Nature's conscious power,
Shall sink into the deep original night
Sharing like all her forms that went before
The doom of the mammoth and the dinosaur.
It is the shadow of the Titan's robe

That looms across the panic-stricken globe.
In his high villa on the fatal hill
Alone he listens to that sovereign Voice,
Dictator of his action's sudden choice,
The tiger leap of a demoniac skill.
An energy his body cannot invest, —
Too small and human for that dreadful guest,
A tortured channel, not a happy vessel, —
Drives him to think and act and cry and wrestle.
Thus driven he must stride on conquering all,
Threatening and clamouring, brutal, invincible,
Until he meets upon his storm-swept road
A greater devil — or thunderstroke of God.

The Children of Wotan

1940

"Where is the end of your armoured march, O children of Wotan?
Earth shudders with fear at your tread, the death-flame laughs in your eyes."
"We have seen the sign of Thor and the hammer of new creation,
A seed of blood on the soil, a flower of blood in the skies.
We march to make of earth a hell and call it heaven.
The heart of mankind we have smitten with the whip of the sorrows seven;
The Mother of God lies bleeding in our black and gold sunrise."

"I hear the cry of a broken world, O children of Wotan."
"Question the volcano when it burns, chide the fire and bitumen!
Suffering is the food of our strength and torture the bliss of our entrails.
We are pitiless, mighty and glad, the gods fear our laughter inhuman.
Our hearts are heroic and hard; we wear the belt of Orion:
Our will has the edge of the thunderbolt, our acts the claws of the lion.
We rejoice in the pain we create as a man in the kiss of a woman."

"Have you seen your fate in the scales of God, O children of Wotan,
And the tail of the Dragon lashing the foam in far-off seas?"
"We mock at God, we have silenced the mutter of priests at his altar.
Our leader is master of Fate, medium of her mysteries.
We have made the mind a cypher, we have strangled Thought with a cord;
Dead now are pity and honour, strength only is Nature's lord.
We build a new world-order; our bombs shout Wotan's peace.

"We are the javelins of Destiny, we are the children of Wotan,
We are the human Titans, the supermen dreamed by the sage.
A cross of the beast and demoniac with the godhead of power and will,
We were born in humanity's sunset, to the Night is our pilgrimage.
On the bodies of perishing nations, mid the cry of the cataclysm coming,
To a presto of bomb and shell and the aeroplane's fatal humming,
We march, lit by Truth's death-pyre, to the world's satanic age."

The Mother of God

A conscious and eternal Power is here
Behind unhappiness and mortal birth
And the error of Thought and blundering trudge of Time.
The mother of God, his sister and his spouse,
Daughter of his wisdom, of his strength the mate,
She has leapt from the Transcendent's secret breast
To build her rainbow worlds of mind and life.
Between the superconscient absolute Light
And the Inconscient's vast unthinking toil,
In the rolling and routine of Matter's sleep
And the somnambulist motion of the stars
She forces on the cold unwilling Void
Her adventure of life, the passionate dreams of her heart.
Amid the work of darker Powers she is here
To heal the evils and mistakes of Space
And change the tragedy of the ignorant world
Into a Divine Comedy of joy

And the laughter and the rapture of God's bliss.
The Mother of God is mother of our souls;
We are the partners of his birth in Time,
Inheritors we share his eternity.

The End?

Is this the end of all that we have been,
And all we did or dreamed, —
A name unremembered and a form undone, —
Is this the end?

A body rotting under a slab of stone
Or turned to ash in fire,
A mind dissolved, lost its forgotten thoughts, —
Is this the end?

Our little hours that were and are no more,
Our passions once so high
Dying mocked by the still earth and calm sunshine, —
Is this the end?

Our yearnings for the human Godward climb
Passing to other hearts
Deceived, while sinks towards death and hell the world, —
Is this the end?

Fallen is the harp; shattered it lies and mute;
Is the unseen player dead?
Because the tree is felled where the bird sang,
Must the song too hush?

One in the mind who planned and willed and thought,
Worked to reshape earth's fate,
One in the heart who loved and yearned and hoped,
Does he too end?

The Immortal in the mortal is his Name;
An artist Godhead here
Ever remoulds himself in diviner shapes,
Unwilling to cease

Till all is done for which the stars were made,
Till the heart discovers God
And soul knows itself. And even then
There is no end.

Silence is all

1

Silence is all, say the sages.
Silence watches the work of the ages;
In the book of Silence the cosmic Scribe has written his cosmic pages:
Silence is all, say the sages.

2

What then of the word, O speaker?
What then of the thought, O thinker?
Thought is the wine of the soul and the word is the beaker;
Life is the banquet-table as the soul of the sage is the drinker.

3

What of the wine, O mortal?
I am drunk with the wine as I sit at Wisdom's portal,
Waiting for the Light beyond thought and the Word immortal.
Long I sit in vain at Wisdom's portal.

4

How shalt thou know the Word when it comes, O seeker?
How shalt thou know the Light when it breaks, O witness?
I shall hear the voice of the God within me and grow wiser and meeker;
I shall be the tree that takes in the light as its food, I shall drink its nectar of sweetness.

Poems Written as Metrical Experiments

O pall of black Night

O pall of black Night painted with still gold stars,
Hang now thy folds, close, clinging against earth's bars,
        O dim Night!
Then Slumber shall come swinging the unseen
Gates, and to lands guarded by a screen
        Of strange light
Set out, my soul charioted on a swift dream
From earth escape slipping into the unknown gleam,
        The Ray white.

To the hill-tops of silence

To the hill-tops of silence from over the infinite sea,
        Golden he came,
        Armed with the flame,
Looked on the world that his greatness and passion must free.

Oh, but fair was her face

Oh, but fair was her face as she lolled in her green-tinted robe,
        Emerald trees,
        Sapphire seas,
Sun-ring and moon-ring that glittered and hung in each lobe.

In the ending of time

In the ending of time, in the sinking of space
        What shall survive?
        Hearts once alive,
                Beauty and charm of a face?
Nay, these shall be safe in the breast of the One,
        Man deified,
        World-spirits wide, —
                Nothing ends, all but began.

In some faint dawn

In some faint dawn,
In some dim eve,
        Like a gesture of Light,
        Like a dream of delight
Thou com'st nearer and nearer to me.

In a flaming as of spaces

In a flaming as of spaces
                Curved like spires,
An epiphany of faces,
                Long curled fires,
The illumined and tremendous
                Masque drew near,
A God-pageant of the aeons
                Vast, deep-hued,
And the thunder of its paeans
                Wide-winged, nude,
In their harmony stupendous
                Smote earth's ear.

O Life, thy breath is but a cry

O Life, thy breath is but a cry to the Light
Immortal, whence has come thy swift delight,
Thy grasp.

All things in vain thy hands seize;
Earth's music fails, the notes cease
Or rasp.

Aloud thou callst to blind Fate,
"Remove the bar, the gold gate
Unhasp."

But never hast thou the goal yet of thy race
Neared, nor thrilled with the ineffable Face,
The clasp.

Vast-winged the wind ran

Vast-winged the wind ran, violent, black-cowled the waves
O'er-topped with fierce green eyes the deck,
Huge heads upraised.
Death-hunted, wound-weary, groaned like a whipped beast the ship,
Shrank, cowered, sobbed, each blow like Fate's
Despairing felt.

Winged with dangerous deity

Winged with dangerous deity,
Passion swift and implacable
Arose and, storm-footed,
In the dim heart of him

Ran insatiate, conquering,
Worlds devouring and hearts of men,
Then perished, broken by
The irresistible

Occult masters of destiny,
They who sit in the Secrecy
And watch unmoved ever
Unto the end of all.

Outspread a Wave burst

Outspread a Wave burst, a Force leaped from the unseen,
Vague, wide, some veiled Maker, masked Lighter of the Fire:
With dire blows the Smith of the World
Forged strength from hearts of the weak;
Earth's hate the edge of the axe,
Smitten by the gods,
Hewn, felled, the Form crashed that touched heaven and its stars.

On the grey street

On the grey street and the lagging winding waters
One sees far off stealing away to meet the rich drooping purple of the sky
A stillness falls, — a supernatural silence
Lies on the lap of Nature.

The street man's life, and the waters earth's sky-dowry,
And this rich span's unreal splendour, symbol hue, sign to sight of the Unseen;
Man's life lies mute, the waters run to the splendour;
The Unseen is this mighty Silence.

Cry of the ocean's surges

Cry of the ocean's surges, the long hexameter rolling
    Covers my spirit as tides roll over rapturous shores.
Foam on its tops the pentameter curls to its cadenced closing,
    Two high waves, then a hush swoons on the ear in its fall.

Nonsense and “Surrealist” Verse

A Ballad of Doom

There was an awful awful man
    Who all things knew and none
And never met a Saracen
    And always drank a bun.
He said he was a bullywag
    And that he did it for fun.
I don't know what a bullywag is
    And I don't think he was one.
Of nonsense and Omniscience
    He spoke as one who knew
That this was like a temperament
    And that was like a hue.
He said there was a phantom sun
    That saw a branching sky
And he who could but never should
    Was always God's best boy.
And he who should but never could
    Was not in the savoury jam
That thronged the gates of Paradise
    Jostling the great I am.
He said he saw a smudgy moon
    Adown a patterned ridge
And that Beethoven to his ear
    Rang like a bluzzing midge
That bluzzed and bluzzed and bluzzed and bluzzed
    Until the eye grew green
With shouting for dear visible things
    Where nothing could be seen.
For nothing can be seen, my child,
    And when it's seen it's read,
And when red nothing once is seen
    The world can go to bed.

Surrealist

I heard a foghorn shouting at a sheep,
And oh the sweet sound made me laugh and weep
But ah, the sheep was on the hither shore
Of the little less and the ever-never more.
I sprang on its back; it jumped into the sea.
I was near to the edges of eternity.
Then suddenly the foghorn blared again.
There was no sheep — it had perished of ear pain.
I took a boat and steered to the Afar
Hoping to colonise the polar star.
But in the boat there was a dangerous goose
Whom some eternal idiot had let loose.
To this wild animal I said not "Bo!"
But it was not because I did not know.
Full soon I was on shore with dreadful squeals
And the fierce biped cackling at my heels.
Alarmed I ran into a lion's den
And after me ran three thousand armoured men.
The lion bolted through his own back door
And set up a morose dissatisfied roar.
At this my courage rose; I grew quite brave
And shoved myself into a tiger's cave.
The tiger snarled; I thought it best instead
To don my pyjamas and go to bed.
But the tiger had a strained objecting face,
So I turned my eyes away from his grimace.
At night the beast began my back to claw
And growled out that I was his brother-in-law.
I rose and thought it best to go away
To a doctor's house: besides 'twas nearly day.
The doctor shook his head and cried "For a back
Pepper and salt are the remedy, alack."
But I objected to his condiments
And thought the doctor had but little sense.
Then I returned to my own little cot

For really things were now extremely hot.
Then fierily the world cracked Nazily down
And I looked about to find my dressing gown.
I was awake (I had tumbled on the floor).
A shark was hammering at my front-door.

Surrealist Poems

1

I heard the coockcouck jabbering on the lea
And saw the spokesman sprinting on the spud;
The airmale soared to heaven majestically
And dropped down with a strange miraculous thud.
I could not break the bosom of the blue;
I went for a walk and waltzed with woe awhile.
The cat surprised me with a single mew;
The porridge was magnificently vile.
These things are symbols if you understand,
But who can understand when poets resolve
To nothing mean. The beautiful beast is banned;
The problem grows too difficult to solve.

[The heart of the surrealist poet should be unfathomable. The problem is how to mean nothing, yet seem to mean anything or everything. His poetry should be at once about nothing at all and about all things in particular; nonsensically profound and irrationally beautiful. Unknown and extraordinary words are not indispensible in its texture but can have a place, if sparingly and mystically used. One who can do these things and others of a congenital character is a surrealist poet: *Willy Whistler.*]

2

The Crossing of the Moro

My way is over the Moro river,
Amid projectiles and sad smiles.
Wind bottles in a ghastly jam
Explode before you can say damn.
But the jam is over and we have passed:
Alas, felicity can never last!
I see an aeroplane on high,
I hear it sob and sigh.
Fate happier has been yours, my lad,
For you are dead and I am mad.
Kiss not the corpse but shove it in.
Ah let the booby trap be.
There is a moan upon the moving sea.

Incomplete Poems from Manuscripts
Circa 1927–1947

Thou art myself

Thou art myself born from myself, O child.
O thou who speakst art thou my greater self?
And knowst my destiny and why I came
Into the narrow limits of this form?

Vain, they have said

Vain, they have said, is the anguish of man and his labour diurnal,
Vainly his caravans cross through the desert of Time to the Eternal.
Thick and persistent the night confronts all his luminous longings;
Dire death's sickle mows like a harvest his hosts and his throngings.
Even if all life has failed, must it therefore be failure for ever?
Are not the ages before us still for a grander endeavour?
Have we not Beauty around in a dangerous world but enthralling,
Courage inciting our steps and Thought to infinity calling?

Pururavus

Pururavus from converse held with Gods
On unseen crests of Nature high, occult,
Traversed the tumult of the flame-tossed seas
That cast their fire between the spirit's poles.
Alone like a bright star twixt earth and heaven,
He reached the crossways of eternity.
A Soul to our apparent life reborn

Out of the vastness of the original Self,
Journeying in dim momentous solitude
Led by the flickering of uncertain suns,
He essayed the fringe of Night's tremendous home.
Before him lay the subtle realm of light
Our organed sense conceals, the light that gleams
Across the sealless musings of the seer,
A slumberless wide eye upon our scene.
But destined to earth's darkly pregnant dream
He tarried not on these mysterious shores,
But still descending the divine abyss
To new adventure in the eternal Night
Transgressed the wonder-line of things beyond
Abruptly into mortal space and time.
A universe appeared of difficult birth,
The labour of eclipsed and ignorant gods,
An immortality of chance and change.
Bridging the gulf between antagonist planes
He saw the circles of Heaven's rash advance.
Sun upon sun, God's sentinels in the void,
Life's radiant and immeasurable camp
Blazed in the order of the aeonic Will.
But with the menace of the dragon depths
The old blind vigilant Nescience stretched afar
Hungering in serpent dumb infinitude,
And her dark shade besieged the luminaries.
Silence and Death opposed the invading Fire.
And even before he broke into our pale
There came on him a breath from tarnished worlds.
Averse from an obscure material touch
The images of the supernal field
That he had left sank from the front of thought
And held their session in the heart's dumb cave;
The glory and grace, the light, the sacred life
Receded as behind a burning door:
Subliminal beneath the lid of mind
The grandeur and the passion and the calm.

His mind became a beat of memory.
Sight, hearing changed towards our diminished scale;
The little views grew great, the great grew small.
As yet some largeness was of inmost things
And he remembered in the formless sense
Proud kingdoms of intense and beautiful life
And love left free to do his absolute will
And dreams at once commuted into power.
Affronting many starfields of our space
And shortening ever the vast lens of Time
He met a smaller movement of desire
Prisoned in the orbit of a few pale globes
And knew in front our little solar belt
Hung casually among the giant stars.
Our earth received him mid her living forms.
Her deep inconscient motions packed and mute,
Her darknesses more wise than her small lights
Oppressed again his young divinity.

The Death of a God [1]

THE EARTH VOICES

Arise now, tread out the fire!
Scatter the ashes of a God through the stars.
Forget to hope and aspire.
Let us paint our prison, let us strengthen its bars.

Lo, now he is dead and the greatness that cumbered the world and Time's ways
Has vanished like a golden shadow thrust out from the anguish of the ages;
The glory and burden, the sunlight and the passion have left our days;
Once more we can wear the grey livery of Death and gather in his wages.

All that drew back from his splendour fleeing as ashamed from the light and the beauty and invincible sweetness
Now returns vaunting their darkness and littleness, this fret of life's fever, its cruel and sad incompleteness.

The Death of a God [2]

Arise, tread out the fire,
Scatter the ashes of a god through the stars!
Forget to hope and aspire.
He is dead and his greatness that cumbered the world has vanished like a golden shadow from the ages.
The whip of glory, the splendid burden behind us are cast,
Earth is free from fire and stress, left to the joy of her smallness, rid of his mighty spirit at last.
All that is false and wry and little are freed to follow their nature once more.
Close time's brilliant pages!
Give back to man's life the old tables, its dull ease, its bowed greyness restore.

The Inconscient and the Traveller Fire

THE INCONSCIENT

Flame that invadest my empire of sorrow wordless and sombre,
Arrow of azure light golden-winged, barbed with delight,
Who was it aimed thee into this crucified Soul that for ever
Passions and beats in the womb of a universe built for its tomb?

Lo, I am Death and I live in the boundless cavern of Nature,
Death who cannot die, Shadow of Eternity,
Vainly I burn in stars as they err through a Void without feature,
Scintillant forms of my Nought vast without life, without thought.

O all my worlds, you who glitter and wander, God has devised you
Burning nails in my heart, stones of my prisonhouse. God,
Architect tranquil relentless and mighty, built and incised you,
Clamped with you Time, his road towards Nothingness, Death's deep abode.

I the Inconscient have passioned for life and its beat and its glory, —
Life that Death might die. O, was it life that He gave me?
Pulse of my darkness, reflex and nerve-beat! More hopeless I suffer,
Racked by the flame an obscure will in me kindled to save me.

Life? or a sorrowful throb of my Matter teaching it anguish,
Teaching it hope and desire trod down by Time in the mire?
Life? this joy that weeps for its briefness, this foot-path for sorrow?
Life, this embrace of a death treasuring some transient breath?

Boons of a shortlived sweetness twisted and turned into torture, —
Hope more blind than my Night, desire and its deadly delight,
Bliss that is small on the wings of a moment, vivid and fragile,
Love grown a kinsman to hate, will made an engine of Fate.

Torn with my anguish I cried out for knowledge, light on my midnight,
Light on my symbols of dream and a power in the Light to redeem.
Yea, was it knowledge He gave me, this thought that is tangled in darkness,
Ignorance reading its own record in sense and in stone?

Ignorance tracing its plans and its dreams on a canvas of error!
Mind this half-light in me born, like the glow of a morrowless morn?
Autographs, hieroglyphs of the reflexes life has engendered,
Spasms of matter caught into luminous figments of thought.

Nay, is not God but myself, Death's euphemism fictioned immortal,
Nothing eternalised, bare, yet as if one who is None,
Death yet for ever alive, an Inconscient troubled with seemings,
Matter tormented with life, a Void with its forces at strife?

O by my thought to escape from myself out of thought into Nothing —
    Thus I had hoped to dissolve, rapt in some tensionless Bliss,
Rending the Illusion I made to be immobile and formless and timeless —
    This dream too now I leave, long not even to cease.

Into my numb discontent I have lapsed of a universe barren,
    Goalless, condemned to survive, a spirit of matter in pain.
Now have I known myself as this boundless finite, this darkness
    Shadowily self-lit, grown content to strive without end and in vain.

Fire that travellest from immortality, spark of the Timeless,
    Why hast thou come to my night, an unbearable Idol of Light?
Ah from what happier universe strayedst thou kindling my torpor?
    Thou, O spirit of Light, perturb not my vastness of Night.

I walked beside the waters

I walked beside the waters of a world of light
On a gold ridge guarding two seas of high-rayed night.
One was divinely topped with a pale bluish moon
And swam as in a happy deep spiritual swoon
More conscious than earth's waking; the other's wide delight
Billowed towards an ardent orb of diamond white.
But where I stood, there joined in a bright marvellous haze
The miracled moons with the long ridge's golden blaze.
I knew not if two wakings or two mighty sleeps
Mixed the great diamond fires and the pale pregnant deeps,
But all my glad expanding soul flowed satisfied
Around me and became the mystery of their tide.
As one who finds his own eternal self, content,
Needing naught else beneath the spirit's firmament,
It knew not Space, it heard no more Time's running feet,
Termless, fulfilled, lost richly in itself, complete.
And so it might have lain for ever. But there came
A dire intrusion wrapped in married cloud and flame,

Across the blue-white moon-hush of my magic seas
A sudden sweeping of immense peripheries
Of darkness ringing lambent lustres; shadowy-vast
A nameless dread, a Power incalculable passed
Whose feet were death, whose wings were immortality;
Its changing mind was time, its heart eternity.
All opposites were there, unreconciled, uneased,
Struggling for victory, by victory unappeased.
All things it bore, even that which brings undying peace,
But secret, veiled, waiting for some supreme release.
I saw the spirit of the cosmic Ignorance;
I felt its power besiege my gloried fields of trance.

But now its huge Enigma had a voice, a cry
That echoed through my oceans of felicity.

A Voice arose that was so sweet and terrible
It thrilled the heart with love and pain, as if all hell
Tuned with all heaven in one inextricable note.
Born from abysmal depths on highest heights to float,
It carried all sorrow that the souls of creatures share,
Yet hinted every rapture that the gods can bear.
"O Son of God who cam'st into my blackest Night
To sound and know its gulfs and bring the immortal light
Into the passion of its darkness, castst thou man's fate
For thy soul's freedom and its magic are forfeit,
Renouncing the high pain that gave thee mortal birth
And made thy soul a seeker on the common earth?
When first the Eternal cast Himself abroad to be
His own unimaginable multiplicity,
Expressing in Time and shape what timelessly was there,
The mighty Mother stood alone in diamond air
And took into her that Godhead streaming from above
And worlds of her endless beauty and delight and love
Leaped from her fathomless heart.

A strong son of lightning

A strong son of lightning came down to the earth with fire-feet of swiftness splendid;
Light was born in a womb and thunder's force filled a human frame.
The calm speed of heaven, the sweet greatness, pure passion, winged power had descended;
All the gods in a mortal body dwelt, bore a single name.

A wide wave of movement stirred all the dim globe in each glad and dreaming fold.
Life was cast into grandeur, ocean hands took the wheels of Time.
Man's soul was again a bright charioteer of days hired by gods impetuous, bold,
Hurled by One on His storm-winged ways, a shaft aimed at heights sublime.

The old tablets clanging fell, ancient slow Nature's dead wall was rent asunder,
God renewed himself in a world of young beauty, thought and flame:
Divine voices spoke on men's lips, the heart woke to white dawns of gleaming wonder,
Air a robe of splendour, breath a joy, life a godlike game.

I made danger my helper

I made danger my helper and chose pain for thy black anvil my strength hammering to sheen,
And have reckoned the snare and the pit as nought for the hope of one lonely ray;
I turned evil into good, drew out of grief force and returned love to the hate in men:

I have dared the abyss, I have climbed the night, I
have cloven the perfect Way.

The Inconscient

Artist of cosmos wrapped in thy occult shadow,
Godhead sole awake in the dreams of Matter,
Thee and thy truth men searching for ever vainly,
Find and are baffled.

Always thou workst and seemst not to know thy workings,
Yet thy touch, Geometer, wide-wayed Builder,
Vastest things can shape and minutest, potent,
Patient, unerring.

All is thou or is thine but who art thou, Dreamer,
Paradox ensouling the soulless spaces,
Self-creator weaving thy magic figures,
Mechanist Mystic?

Who thou art none knoweth, ungrasped thy nature,
Ever we see thee veiled by thy titan forces,
Only some dim greatness we feel, a mute-eyed
Inscrutable Presence.

Ageless, formless, nameless and uncreated,
Lost in night where never was seed of living,
Ancient, mighty, lone is thy wordless spirit,
Blind and immortal.

All at first was only thy giant shadow;
Time then was not, space was not yet imagined,
Thoughtless, soundless lay the inconscient ocean
Emptily brooding.

What compelled thee, O Void, to create and labour,
Or who rose up in thee, a living Maker?
How could thought begin in thy vacant silence
Measureless, dateless?

All these stars that spin in the fields of Nothing,
Tiny Time-fires lit in thy untoned darkness
Faintly hailing through the enormous distance
Aimless and lifeless, —

Why were they made, for what are their wheels and
turnings,
Splendid desert-hearted disastrous burnings,
Mindless hopeless fierce inarticulate yearnings
Fruitless for ever?

All these waves of forces that running circling
Leap by discontinuous starts through Nowhere,
Strangely born in quantums of causeless Matter
Wombed out of Nihil —

Each is a lawless entity chance-directed,
Yet a law prevails in their sum of movement;
Is thy soul released in these particles formwards,
Thy thought that governs?

In gleam Konarak

In gleam Konarak — Konarak of the Gods
A woman sits, her body a glimmering ray.
At her feet the moon trails its silvery dreams,
On her head is the sun and the purple day.

Always she sits there turning a wheel
Whose summit is lost in lights, its base in the abyss

In the temple she sits of the wide white sun
That burns unsetting in an immortal space beyond Time.
Around her chant the world-poem the deathless Nine
And the feet of the Fates dance out the rhyme.

Bugles of Light

Bugles of Light, bugles of Light, blare through the mist and the darkness!
Children of Immortality, we march through the Abyss and the Shadow,
Over us hustle the feet of the Fates and the wings of Erinnys,
In front is the screech of the Death horn, behind the red-eyed monster hunts and howls the tornado.
Our steps search for the road and find the morass and the pitfall.
Follow the Gleam, follow the Gleam to the city of God and the pavements of Dream!
Bugles of Light, bugles of Light, shatter the heart of the Darkness!

The Fire King and the Messenger

THE FIRE KING

O soul who com'st fire-mantled from the earth
Into the silence of the seven skies,
Art thou an heir of the spiritual birth?
Art thou an ancient guest of Paradise?

THE MESSENGER

I am the Messenger of the human race,
I am a Pioneer from death and night.
I am the nympholept of Beauty's face,
I am the hunter of the immortal Light.

THE FIRE KING

What flame wearst thou that wraps thee with its power
Protecting from the Guardians of the Way?
What wanderer born from the eternal Hour?
What fragment of the inconceivable Ray?

THE MESSENGER

It is the fire of an awakened soul
Aspiring from death to reach Eternity,
The wings of sacrifice flaming to their goal,
The burning godhead of humanity.

THE FIRE KING

What seekst thou here, child of the transient ways?
Wouldst thou be free and still in endless peace?
Or gaze for ever on the Eternal's face,
Hushed in an incommunicable release?

THE MESSENGER

I claim for men the peace that shall not fail,
I claim for earth the unwounded timeless bliss,
I seek God-strength for souls that suffer in hell,
God-light to fill the ignorant abyss.

THE FIRE KING

Ascend no more with thy presumptuous prayer
But safe return to the forsaken globe,
Wake not heaven's Lightning from its slumber's lair
To clothe thee with the anguish of its robe.

God to thy greatness

God to thy greatness
Of utter sedateness
Has given a name
That fills it with light
Of His sovereign might.
He has lavished a flame
Of passionate fleetness
On thy stillness and sweetness.
His ecstasies seven,
O daughter of Heaven,
Have seized thy limbs
That were motionless dreams.

Silver foam

Silver foam in the dim East
And blood red in the brilliant Western sun.
Silver foam and a birth unseen,
Blood red and the long death begun.

Torn are the walls

Torn are the walls and the borders carved by a miserly Nature,
I now have burst into limitless kingdoms of sweetness and wonder.
Breaking the fences of Matter's gods and their form and their feature,
Fall'n are the barriers schemed and the vetoes are shattered asunder.

O ye Powers

O ye Powers of the Supreme and of the Mother, the Divine,
I have come to you initiate, a bearer of the sign.
For I carry the Name in me that nothing can efface.
I have breathed in an illimitable spiritual Space
And my soul through the unfathomable stillnesses has heard
The god-voices of knowledge and the marvels of the Word.
It has listened to the secret that was hidden in the night
Of the inconscient infinities first when by His might
He arose out of the caverns of the darkness self-enwrapped
And the nebulae were churned up like to foam-froth and were shaped
Till these millions of universes mystical upbuoyed
Were outsprinkled as if stardust on the Dragon of the Void.
I was there then in the infinitesimal and obscure
As a seed soul in the fire seeds of the energies that endure.
I have learned now to what purpose I have loitered as His spark
In the midnight of earth Matter like a glow-worm in the dark
And my spirit was imprisoned in the muteness of a stone,
A soul thoughtless and left voiceless and impuissant and alone.

Hail to the fallen

Hail to the fallen, the fearless! hail to the conquered, the noble!
I out of ancient India great and unhappy and deathless,
I in a loftiest nation though subject born, salute thee,
Thou too great and unfortunate! All is not given by Nature
Only to Force and the strong and the violent. Courage and wisdom,
Steadfast will and the calm magnificent dream of thy spirit
Crown thee for ever, O Emperor! Fiercely by Destiny broken,
Cast from thy throne and defeated, forsaken, a wandering exile,
Far from the hills of thy land and thy fallen and vanquished nation,
Yet has thy glory overtopped and the deathless pride of thy laurel
Conquered the conqueror's, Haile Selassie, Lion of Judah.

France for her southern borders fearing spared the aggressor.
England the sea-queen, England the fortunate, England the victor
Fled like a dog from the whip of his menace yelping for succour,
Loudly to Frank and to Greek and to Turk and to Yugoslav calling
"Help me! I dare not alone; he will shatter my fleet and my empire,"
You did not cower, O African people, you did not tremble.
Armed but with rifle and spear you fronted the legions of Caesar.

*

Statesman wise and beneficent, emperor, patriot, hero,
King of the Amharas, Haile Selassie, Lion of Judah.

Man is but man and the weapons of Hell are too fierce for his spirit,
Forged by the scientist burrowing deep in the bowels of Nature,
Death and destruction to draw from her torn from her anguished entrails,
Death for his kind, the destruction of earth and her high-aiming peoples,
Engines for Satan to handle, tools for the mischief of Ate.

Seer deep-hearted

Seer deep-hearted, divine king of the secrecies,
Occult fountain of love sprung from the heart of God,
Ways thou knewest no feet ever in Time had trod.
Words leaped flashing, the flame-billows of wisdom's seas.
Vast thy soul was a tide washing the coasts of heaven.
Thoughts broke burning and bare crossing the human night,
White star-scripts of the gods born from the book of Light
Page by page to the dim children of earth were given.

Soul, my soul [1]

Soul, my soul, reascend over the edge of life, —
Far, far out of the din burn into tranquil skies.
Cross bright ranges of mind murmurless, visioned, white;
Thoughts sail down as if ships carrying bales of light,
Truth's form-robes by the Seers woven from spirit threads,
From wide havens above luminous argosies,
Gold-robed Wisdom's divine traffic and merchandise.
But then pause not but go far beyond Space and Time
Where thy natural home motionless vast and mute
Waits thy tread; on a throne facing infinity
Thought-nude, void of the world, one with the silence be.
Sole, self-poised and unmoved thou shalt behold below
Hierarchies and domains, godheads and potencies,
Titans, demons and men each in his cosmic role:
Midst all these in the live centre of forces spun,
Fate there under thy feet turning the wheels of Time,
The World Law thou shalt view mapped in its codes sublime,
Yet thyself shalt remain ruleless, eternal, free.

Soul, my soul [2]

Soul, my soul, yet ascend crossing the marge of life:
Mount out far above Time, reach to the golden end,
Mind-belt's verge and the vague Infinite's spirit seas.
Crossed by sails of the gods, luminous argosies,
Silence reigns and the pure vastness of Self alone,
Fulgent, shadowless, white, limitless, signless, one.
God-light brooding above, spreading eternal wings,
Free, held high above thought, void of the form of things,
Live there lost in God space, rapturous, vacant, mute,
Sun-bright, timeless, immense, single and absolute.

I am filled with the crash of war

I am filled with the crash of war and the shout of Cain,
Victories and marchings and agonised retreats,
I feel the bombs burst and the cries of pain
In Barcelona and in Canton streets.

In the silence of the midnight

In the silence of the midnight, in the light of dawn or noontide
I have heard the flutings of the Infinite, I have seen the sun-wings of the seraphs.
On the boundless solitude of the mountains, on the shoreless roll of ocean,
Something is felt of God's vastness, fleeting touches of the Absolute
Momentary and immeasurable smite the sense nature free from its limits, —
A brief glimpse, a hint, it passes, but the soul grows deeper, wider:
God has set his mark upon the creature.

In the flash or flutter of flight of bird and insect, in the passion of wing and cry on treetops,
In the golden feathers of the eagle, in the maned and tawny glory of the lion,
In the voiceless hierophants of Nature with their hieratic script of colour,
Orchid, tulip and narcissus, rose and nenuphar and lotus,
Something of eternal beauty seizes on the soul and nerves and heartstrings.

Here in the green of the forest

Here in the green of the forest, lost in the stillness of Nature
Long like lovers together alone with our hearts we had wandered,
Hands linked, thoughts linked, listening mute to the voices of Silence,
Light of the spaces, sovereign beauty, comrade of rapture.
Golden the tresses that fell on her shoulders, a mantle of sunlight,
Golden the thoughts came cast from her lips like jewels of wonder,
Golden the smile in her heart and her radiant ripple of laughter.
First in the silence we knew each other; the eyes were the gateways
Opening soul into soul and spirit was bare to the spirit.
Speech only covers the mind and the heart when it strives to reveal them!
Silence, the wizard interpreter, drew us closer to oneness,
First in the silence we felt our heart-throbs beating together.

*

As in the body a man and a woman marry and mingle,
Hearts locked, limbs locked, twisted to one by the serpent of passion,
So our spirits were locked in each other, hurled into oneness,
Hurtled and hurled on a rapid and violent ocean of rapture.

Voice of the Summits

Voice of the summits, leap from thy peaks of ineffable splendour,
Wisdom's javelin cast, leonine cry of the Vast.
Voice of the summits, arrow of gold from a bow-string of silence!
Leap down into my heart, blazing and clangorous dart!
Here where I struggle alone unheeded of men and unaided,
Here by the darkness down-trod, here in the midnight of God.

I have come down from the heights and the outskirts of Heaven
Into the gulfs of God's sleep, into the inconscient Deep.
All I had won that the mind can win of the Word and the wordless,
Knowledge sun-bright for ever and the spiritual crown of endeavour,
Share in the thoughts of the cosmic Self and its orders to Nature,
Cup of its nectar of bliss, dreams on the breast of its peace.

Appendix

Poems in Greek and in French

Greek Epigram

μῶρος Ἔρως ἀλὰος θ΄· ὁ δ᾽ ὅμως ἅ γ᾽ ἐνί φρεσί κεῖται
    ἡμῶν, ὀφθαλμοὺς ὧν ἀλαὸς καθορᾷ.
παῖ, σὺ γὰρ ἡδὺ γελῶν ἰοβόστρυχε καλλιπρόσωπε,
    δικτύῳ ἄνδρα καλῷ καὶ σοφὸν ἐξαπατᾷς.
οὐδὲ σοφὸς περ ἀνὴρ σε, δολόπλοκε, φύξιμος οὐδεὶς·
    καὶ πρότερος πάντων δοῦλος ἔρωτι σοφὸς.

Lorsque rien n'existait

Lorsque rien n'existait, l'amour existait,
Et lorsqu'il ne restera plus rien, l'amour restera.
Il est le premier et le dernier,
Il est le pont de la vérité,
Il est le compagnon dans l'angle du tombeau,
Il est le lierre qui s'attache à l'arbre et prend sa belle vie verte
dans le cœur qu'il dévore.
C'est pourquoi, Ô mon frère doué d'intelligence pure,
Qui te diriges dans la voie par le tamarin de la direction,
Qui pénètres le sens caché des choses par ton cœur,
Qui prépares pour toi-même le jujube de la solitude et la
thériaque du courage supérieur,
Qui fréquentes dans la solitude la divine maîtresse
Invisible et si visible,
Dominatrice des deux Orients et des deux Occidents,
La divine amie!
Ô toi dont l'oreille n'est pas dure,
Qui saisis le sens du cri aigre de la porte,
Du bourdonnement de la mouche,
De la marche des caravanes,
Du mouvement de la nuée matinale,
Du ciel entr'ouvert devenu la rose;
Réponds! Qu'as-tu compris à la voix du luth et de la flûte?

Sur les grands sommets blancs

Sur les grands sommets blancs, astre éteint et brisé,
Seul dans l'immense nuit de son cœur désolé,
L'érémite Amita, l'homme élu par les dieux,
Leva son vaste front comme un ciel vers les cieux,
Et austère il parla, triste, grave, immuable,
L'homme divin vaincu au Peuple impérissable:
"Ô vous que vos soleils brillants, purs et lointains
Cachent dans les splendeurs, immortels et hautains,
Ô fils de l'Infini, rois de la Lumière!
Guerriers resplendissants de la lutte altière!
Nation à la mort divinement rebelle,
Vous qui brisez la loi de la nuit éternelle!
Ô vous qui appelez à vos sommets ardus
Les pantins de la terre, [   ][1] tribus!

*

La vaste Nuit parla aux infinis cachés,
L'amante à ses amants terribles et voilés.

---

[1] *Blank in manuscript. — Ed.*

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

Sri Aurobindo once wrote that he was "a poet and a politician" first, and only afterwards a philosopher. One might add that he was a poet before he entered politics and a poet after he ceased to write about politics or philosophy. His first published work, written apparently towards the end of 1882, was a short poem. The last writing work he did, towards the end of 1950, was revision of the epic poem *Savitri*. The results of these sixty-eight years of poetic output are collected in the present volume, with the exception of *Savitri*, dramatic poetry, poetic translations, and poems written in Bengali and Sanskrit. These appear, respectively, in *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*, *Collected Plays and Stories*, *Translations*, and *Writings in Bengali and Sanskrit*, volumes 33–34, 3–4, 5, and 9 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

The poems in the present volume have been arranged in seven chronological parts. The dates of the parts overlap because some of the books that define each period contain poems from a wide range of dates. Within each part, poems from books published by the author are followed by complete and incomplete poems published posthumously. Poems that appeared in books published by Sri Aurobindo during his lifetime are arranged as they were in those books. Otherwise, poems within each section of each part are arranged chronologically. Poems written in Greek and in French appear in an appendix at the end of the volume.

PART ONE: ENGLAND AND BARODA, 1883–1898

Sri Aurobindo went to England as a child of seven in 1879. He lived in Manchester until 1884, when he went to London to study at St. Paul's School. From there he went to Cambridge in 1890. Three years later he returned to India, and until 1906 lived and worked in the princely state of Baroda. He began writing poetry in Manchester, and continued in London, Cambridge and Baroda. His first collection, published in Baroda in 1898, contained poems written in England and Baroda. This collection is reproduced in the present part, along with other poems written during these years.

Poem Published in 1883

Light. Published 1883. Asked in 1939, "When did you begin to write poetry?", Sri Aurobindo replied: "When my two brothers and I were staying at Manchester. I wrote for the Fox family magazine. It was an awful imitation of somebody I don't remember." The only English journal having a name resembling "the Fox family magazine" is *Fox's Weekly*, which first appeared on 11 January 1883 and was suspended the following November. Published from Leeds, it catered to the middle and working classes of that industrial town. A total of nine poems appeared in *Fox's Weekly* during its brief existence. All but one of them are coarse adult satires. The exception is "Light", published in the issue of 11 January 1883. Like all other poems in *Fox's Weekly*, "Light" is unsigned, but there can be no doubt that it was the poem to which Sri Aurobindo referred when he said that his first verses were published in "the Fox family magazine". The poem's stanza is an imitation of the one used by P. B. Shelley in the well-known lyric "The Cloud". Sri Aurobindo remarked in 1926 that as a child in Manchester, he went through the works of Shelley again and again. He also wrote that he read the Bible "assiduously" while living in the house of his guardian, William H. Drewett, a Congregationalist clergyman.

Songs to Myrtilla

This, Sri Aurobindo's first collection of poems, was printed in 1898 for private circulation by the Lakshmi Vilas Printing Press, Baroda, under the title *Songs to Myrtilla and Other Poems*. No copy of the first edition survives. The second edition, which was probably a reimpression of the first, is undated. The date of publication must therefore be inferred from other evidence. The book's handwritten manuscript, as well as the second edition, contains the poem "Lines on Ireland", dated 1896. The second edition contains a translation from Chandidasa that almost certainly was done using an edition of Chandidasa's works published in 1897. On 17 October 1898, Sri Aurobindo's brother Manmohan wrote in a letter to Rabindranath Tagore: "My brother . . . has just published a volume of poems at Baroda." This book evidently is *Songs to Myrtilla*. In another letter Manmohan tells Tagore: "Aurobinda is anxious to know what you think of his book of verses." This second letter is dated 24 October 1894, but the year clearly is wrong. Manmohan had not even returned to India from England by that date. When the two letters are read together and when other documentary evidence is evaluated, it becomes clear that the second letter also was written in 1898, and that this was the year of publication of the first edition of *Songs to Myrtilla*.[1] The "second edition" apparently appeared a year or two later.

A new edition of the book, entitled simply *Songs to Myrtilla*, was published by the Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, in April 1923.

When a biographer suggested during the 1940s that all the poems in *Songs to Myrtilla* were written in Baroda, except for five that were written in England, Sri Aurobindo corrected him as follows: "It is the other way round; all the poems in the book were written in England except five later ones which were written after his return to India." The following poems certainly were written in Baroda after his return to India in 1893: "Lines on Ireland" (dated 1896), "Saraswati with the Lotus" and "Bankim Chandra Chatterji" (both written after the death of Bankim in 1894), and "To the Cuckoo" (originally subtitled "A Spring morning in India"). "Madhusudan Dutt" was probably also written in Baroda, as were the two adaptations of poems by Chandidasa. This makes seven poems. The number five, proposed by the biographer and not by Sri Aurobindo, was probably not meant by Sri Aurobindo to be taken as an exact figure.

The handwritten manuscript of *Songs to Myrtilla* contains one poem, "The Just Man", that was not printed in any edition of the book. (It is reproduced here in the third section of Part One.) The manuscript and the second edition contain a dedication and a Latin epigraph, which Sri Aurobindo later deleted. They are reproduced here from the manuscript:

---

[1] Manmohan Ghose's letters to Tagore are reproduced and discussed in *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research*, volume 12 (1988), pp. 86–87, 89–91.

To my brother
Manmohan Ghose
these poems
are dedicated.

Tale tuum nobis carmen, divine poeta,
Quale sopor fessis in gramine, quale per aestum
Dulcis aquae saliente sitim restinguere rivo.

* * *

Quae tibi, quae tali reddam pro carmine dona?

The Latin lines are from Virgil's fifth *Eclogue*, lines 45–47 and 81. They may be translated as follows:

So is thy song to me, poet divine,
As slumber on the grass to weary limbs,
Or to slake thirst from some sweet-bubbling rill
In summer's heat . . .
How, how repay thee for a song so rare?

Four of the poems in *Songs to Myrtilla* are adaptations of works written in other languages: two in ancient Greek and two in mediaeval Bengali. These adaptations are published here in their original context. They are also published in *Translations*, volume 5 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Songs to Myrtilla. Circa 1890–98. This, the title-poem of the collection, is headed in the manuscript "Sweet is the night".
O Coïl, Coïl. Circa 1890–98. The coïl is the *koyel* or Indian cuckoo.
Goethe. Circa 1890–98.
The Lost Deliverer. Circa 1890–98. In the manuscript and the Baroda edition, this epigram is entitled "Ferdinand Lassalle". Lassalle (1825–64), a German socialist leader, was killed in a duel over a woman.
Charles Stewart Parnell. Dated 1891, the year of the Irish nationalist leader's death.
Hic Jacet. Dated 1891 in the manuscript; subtitled in the manuscript

and in all printed editions: "Glasnevin Cemetery". This is the cemetery in Dublin where Parnell is buried.

Lines on Ireland. Dated 1896 in the manuscript and all printed editions.

On a Satyr and Sleeping Love. Circa 1890–98. This is a translation of a Greek epigram attributed to Plato.

A Rose of Women. Circa 1890–98. This is a translation of a Greek epigram by Meleager (first century B.C.).

Saraswati with the Lotus. 1894 or later. Written after the death of the Bengali novelist Bankim Chandra Chatterji (1838–94).

Night by the Sea. Circa 1890–98.

The Lover's Complaint. Circa 1890–98.

Love in Sorrow. Circa 1890–98.

The Island Grave. Circa 1890–98.

Estelle. Circa 1890–98.

Radha's Complaint in Absence. Circa 1890–98, probably towards the end of this period. This is an adaptation of a poem by the Bengali poet and mystic Chandidasa (late fourteenth to early fifteenth century).

Radha's Appeal. Circa 1890–98, probably towards the end of this period. Another adaptation of a poem by Chandidasa.

Bankim Chandra Chatterji. Circa 1894–98. Certainly written after Bankim's death in 1894. The poem is entitled in the manuscript "Lines written after reading a novel of Bunkim Chundra Chatterji".

Madhusudan Dutt. Circa 1893–98.

To the Cuckoo. Circa 1893–98. Subtitled in the manuscript "A Spring morning in India". The subtitle may have been deleted from the Baroda edition simply for lack of space.

Envoi. Circa 1890–98, probably closer to 1898. Entitled "Vale" in the manuscript. No title was printed in the Baroda edition, perhaps for lack of space. The title "Envoi" was given when a new edition of *Songs to Myrtilla* was brought out in 1923. The Latin epigraph is from the *Appendix Vergiliana* (poems once ascribed to Virgil, but more likely by a contemporary), Catalepton, Carmen 5, lines 8–11. The following translation of these lines is by Joseph J. Mooney (*The Minor Poems of Vergil* [Birmingham, 1916]):

> O Muses, off with you, be gone with all the rest!
> Ye charming Muses, for the truth shall be confessed

Ye charming were, and modestly and rarely still
Ye must revisit pages that I then shall fill.

Poems from Manuscripts, circa 1891–1898

All but one of the pieces in this section and the next are taken from a notebook Sri Aurobindo used at Cambridge between 1890 and 1892.

To a Hero-Worshipper. September 1891. From the Cambridge notebook.
Phaethon. Circa 1891–92. From the Cambridge notebook.
The Just Man. Circa 1891–98. This poem forms part of the manuscript of *Songs to Myrtilla* but was not included by Sri Aurobindo in the printed book.

Incomplete Poems from Manuscripts, circa 1891–1892

Thou bright choregus. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1891–92. These two stanzas are from the Cambridge notebook. Published here for the first time.
Like a white statue. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1891–92. This incomplete prose poem is from the Cambridge notebook. In the manuscript, there is a comma at the end of the last line.
The Vigil of Thaliard. 1891–92. Sri Aurobindo wrote this incomplete ballad in the Cambridge notebook. He dated certain passages of it August and September 1891 and March and April 1892.

PART TWO: BARODA, CIRCA 1898–1902

Complete Narrative Poems

Urvasie. Circa 1898. This poem first appeared in a small book printed for private circulation by the Vani Vilas Press, Baroda. (A deluxe edition was printed later by the Caxton Works, Bombay.) In 1942, Sri Aurobindo informed the editors of *Collected Poems and Plays* that *Urvasie* was printed "sometime before I wrote 'Love and Death'", that is, before 1899. He also indicated that *Urvasie* was subsequent to *Songs to Myrtilla*, which was published in 1898. Taking these data together, one is obliged to assign *Urvasie* to 1898–99.

Love and Death. The handwritten manuscript of this poem is dated “June. July 1899”. The poem first appeared in print in the review *Shama’a* in January 1921, and was reprinted the same year by Mrinalini Chattopadhyay, Aghore Mandir, Madras.

A Note on *Love and Death*. Circa 1921. This is the longest of three handwritten drafts of a note Sri Aurobindo thought of adding to *Love and Death* when it was published in 1921. In the event, the poem was published without a note.

Incomplete Narrative Poems, circa 1899–1902

Khaled of the Sea. 1899. The handwritten manuscript of this poem is dated in three places: “Jan 1899” at the end of the Prologue, “Feb. 1899” in the middle of Canto I, and “March, 1899” at the end.

Uloupie. Circa 1901–2. A portion of the rough draft of this poem was written below some notes that may be dated to May 1901. The poem was never completed, but was drawn upon in the writing of *Chitrangada* (see below, Part Four).

Sonnets from Manuscripts, circa 1900–1901

Sri Aurobindo wrote the twelve sonnets in this section, as well as the fourteen poems in the next section, in a notebook that contains the fair copy of *Uloupie*, which was written in 1901–2. The other contents of the notebook may have been drafted sometime earlier; “The Spring Child” certainly was. The notebook was seized by the British police when Sri Aurobindo was arrested in 1908. This made it impossible for him to revise or publish these poems after his release from jail in 1909. In the manuscript, the first four sonnets are grouped together under the heading: “Four Sonnets”. None of the twelve have titles.

O face that I have loved. Circa 1900–1901.
I cannot equal. Circa 1900–1901.
O letter dull and cold. Circa 1900–1901.
My life is wasted. Circa 1900–1901.
Because thy flame is spent. Circa 1900–1901.

Thou didst mistake. Circa 1900 – 1901.
Rose, I have loved. Circa 1900 – 1901.
I have a hundred lives. Circa 1900 – 1901.
Still there is something. Circa 1900 – 1901.
I have a doubt. Circa 1900 – 1901.
To weep because a glorious sun. Circa 1900 – 1901.
What is this talk. Circa 1900 – 1901.

Short Poems from Manuscripts, circa 1900 – 1901

Sri Aurobindo wrote these fourteen poems in the notebook he used also for *Uloupie* and the above sonnets. He wrote the heading "Miscellaneous" above the poems. They are arranged here in the order in which they appear in Sri Aurobindo's notebook.

The Spring Child. 1900. As recorded in the subtitle, this poem was written for Sri Aurobindo's cousin Basanti Mitra, who was born on 9 Jyestha 1292 (22 May 1886). The title and opening of the poem involve a play on the Bengali word *bāsantī*, which means "vernal", "of the spring".
A Doubt. Circa 1900 – 1901.
The Nightingale. Circa 1900 – 1901.
Euphrosyne. Circa 1900 – 1901. The Greek word *euphrosunē* means "cheerfulness, mirth, merriment". In Greek mythology, Euphrosyne was one of the three Graces.
A Thing Seen. Circa 1900 – 1901.
Epitaph. Circa 1900 – 1901.
To the Modern Priam. Circa 1900 – 1901.
Song. Circa 1900 – 1901.
Epigram. Circa 1900 – 1901.
The Three Cries of Deiphobus. Circa 1900 – 1901.
Perigone Prologuises. Circa 1900 – 1901.
Since I have seen your face. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1900 – 1901.
So that was why. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1900 – 1901. Sri Aurobindo wrote this passage at the bottom of several pages of the notebook that contains the above poems. Dramatic in style, it may

have been intended for a play.
World's delight. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1900–1901.

PART THREE: BARODA AND BENGAL, CIRCA 1900–1909

Poems from *Ahana and Other Poems*

Ahana and Other Poems was published in 1915. It consists of the long poem *Ahana*, written in Pondicherry, and twenty-four shorter poems, most of which were written in Baroda. Sometime after 1915, Sri Aurobindo wrote in his copy of the book, "Written mostly between 1895 and 1908, first published at Pondicherry in 1915." This inscription shows a degree of uncertainty: "1895" was written over "1900", while "1908" was written over "1907". Neither of the dates, written more than a decade after the poems, need be considered exact. Surviving manuscript drafts of these poems do not appear to be earlier than 1900. Near-final drafts of many of them are found in a typed manuscript that may be dated to 1904–6. When Sri Aurobindo looked over these poems in 1942 while his *Collected Poems and Plays* was being arranged, he commented: "I find that most of the poems are quite early in Baroda, others later on and others in the second period [*of poems in the book, i.e. 1906–9*]. It would be a pity to break up these poems, as they form a natural group by themselves." In the present volume, these twenty-four poems are published in a single group, while "Ahana" is published along with other works written in Pondicherry. Two of the poems in this section, "Karma" and "Appeal", are adaptations of mediaeval Indian lyrics. They are published here in their original context, and also in *Translations*, volume 5 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Invitation. 1908–9. This poem was published in Sri Aurobindo's weekly newspaper *Karmayogin* on 6 November 1909, under the inscription: "(Composed in the Alipur Jail)". Sri Aurobindo was a prisoner in Alipore Jail between 5 May 1908 and 6 May 1909.
Who. Circa 1908–9. Published in the *Karmayogin* on 13 November 1909.

Miracles. Circa 1900–1906.

Reminiscence. Circa 1900–1906. A typewritten copy of this poem was an exhibit in the Alipore Bomb Case in 1908 (see *Bande Mataram* weekly, 5 July 1908, p. 13).

A Vision of Science. Circa 1900–1906.

Immortal Love. Circa 1900–1906.

A Tree. Circa 1900–1906.

To the Sea. Circa 1900–1906. A version of the poem was published in the *Modern Review* in June 1909.

Revelation. Circa 1900–1906. A draft of this poem, entitled "The Vision", is found in the manuscript notebook that contains "Uloupie" and other poems included in Part Two. This draft differs considerably from the version found in the typed manuscript of 1904–6, which was used as the basis of the text published in *Ahana and Other Poems*.

Karma. Circa 1900–1906 or later. This is a free rendering of a poem by the mediaeval Bengali poet Chandidasa.

Appeal. Circa 1900–1906 or later. This poem is based in part on a song by the mediaeval Maithili poet Vidyapati. The first stanza follows Vidyapati's text fairly closely; the next two stanzas are Sri Aurobindo's own invention.

A Child's Imagination. Circa 1900–1906.

The Sea at Night. Circa 1900–1906.

The Vedantin's Prayer. Circa 1900–1906.

Rebirth. Circa 1900–1906.

The Triumph-Song of Trishuncou. Circa 1900–1906.

Life and Death. Circa 1900–1906.

Evening. Circa 1900–1906.

Parabrahman. Circa 1900–1906.

God. Circa 1900–1906.

The Fear of Death. Circa 1900–1906.

Seasons. Circa 1900–1906.

The Rishi. Circa 1900–1908. Sheets containing draft passages of this poem were seized by the British police when Sri Aurobindo was arrested in 1908. Sometime after the poem was published in *Ahana and Other Poems*, Sri Aurobindo wrote under it in his copy of the book "(1907–1911)" — but see the note under the section title above.

In the Moonlight. Circa 1900–1906.

Poems from Manuscripts, circa 1900–1906

Sri Aurobindo wrote these poems around the same time that he wrote those making up the previous section. Many of them form part of a typed manuscript that contains poems included in *Ahana and Other Poems*. Sri Aurobindo chose not to include the poems in the present section in that book when it was published in 1915. They first appeared in print posthumously.

To the Boers. Circa 1900–1902. According to the subtitle, this poem was written "during the progress of the Boer War". The Boer War began in 1899 and ended in 1902.
Vision. Circa 1900–1906.
To the Ganges. Circa 1900–1906.
Suddenly out from the wonderful East. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1900–1902. This poem is Sri Aurobindo's earliest surviving attempt to write a poem in dactylic hexameters. A fair copy is found on the same sheet as a fair copy of "To the Boers", which was written around 1900–1902. This and another draft of the poem were seized by the British police when Sri Aurobindo was arrested in 1908. Several years later, in Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo began what appears to be a new or revised version of this poem, but wrote only three lines:

> Where in a lapse of the hills leaps lightly down with laughter
> White with her rustle of raiment upon the spray strewn boulders,
> Cold in her virgin childhood the river resonant Ganges.

On the Mountains. Circa 1900–1906.

PART FOUR: CALCUTTA AND CHANDERNAGORE, 1907–1910

Sri Aurobindo left his teaching position in Baroda in February 1906 and went to Calcutta to join the national movement. Between November 1906 and May 1908 he was the editor of the daily newspaper *Bande Mataram*, and had little occasion to write poetry. In May 1908 he was arrested and imprisoned in Alipore Jail. During the year of his detention he managed to compose a few poems that were published after his release in May 1909. Between June 1909 and February 1910, he was the editor of the weekly journal *Karmayogin*, in which several of his poems appeared. In February 1910 he went from Calcutta to Chandernagore, and six weeks later to Pondicherry, where he spent the rest of his life.

Satirical Poem Published in 1907

Reflections of Srinath Paul, Rai Bahadoor, on the Present Discontents. This poem was published on 5 April 1907 in the daily *Bande Mataram*. This political newspaper, edited by Sri Aurobindo and others, carried a number of satirical poems, most of which were the work of Sri Aurobindo's colleague Shyam Sundar Chakravarti. This piece is the exception. Sri Aurobindo remembered writing it in 1942 when his poems were being collected for publication in *Collected Poems and Plays*. (It was not published in that collection because the file of the daily *Bande Mataram* was not then available.) Later the poem was independently ascribed to Sri Aurobindo by Hemendra Prasad Ghose, another *Bande Mataram* editor and writer, who was in a way responsible for its composition. In his report on the session of the Bengal Provincial Conference held in Behrampore in 1907, Hemendra Prasad wrote that the chairman of the Reception Committee, a loyalist named Srinath Paul (who bore the honourary British title Rai Bahadoor), finished his address "perspiring and short of breath" (*Bande Mataram*, 2 April 1907). This phrase moved Sri Aurobindo to write this amusing piece of political satire. It was published under the heading "By the Way", which was the headline he used for his occasional column in *Bande Mataram*. The same words were used in place of a signature at the end.

Short Poems Published in 1909 and 1910

The Mother of Dreams. 1908 – 9. Published in the *Modern Review* in July 1909, two months after Sri Aurobindo's release from the Alipore Jail. The following note was appended to the text: "This poem was composed by Mr. Aurobindo Ghose in the Alipore Jail, of course without the aid of any writing materials. He committed it to memory and wrote it down after his release. There are several other poems of his, composed in jail."

An Image. Circa 1909. Published in the *Karmayogin* on 20 November 1909. (This was the third poem by Sri Aurobindo that he published in the *Karmayogin*. The first two, "Invitation" and "Who", were included in *Ahana and Other Poems* in 1915, and so are included in Part Three of the present volume.) "An Image", Sri Aurobindo's first published lines in quantitative hexameters, may be related in some way to *Ilion*, his epic poem in that metre, which he began to write in Alipore Jail (see below, Part Five).

The Birth of Sin. Circa 1909. Published in the *Karmayogin* on 11 December 1909. A fragmentary draft of a related piece is found in one of Sri Aurobindo's notebooks in handwriting of the 1909–10 period. That piece, which is more in the nature of a play than a poem, is published in *Collected Plays and Stories*, volume 4 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Epiphany. Circa 1909. Published in the *Karmayogin* on 18 December 1909. Around 1913, Sri Aurobindo copied the *Karmayogin* text into a notebook, making a few deliberate changes as he did so. Later he revised the opening and close of this version. Three decades later, when *Collected Poems and Plays* was being compiled, the editors, not knowing about the 1913 version, sent the *Karmayogin* text to Sri Aurobindo, who made a few revisions to it. This version was used in *Collected Poems and Plays* (1942) and reproduced in *Collected Poems* in 1972. The editors of the present volume have selected the more extensively revised version of 1913 for the text reproduced here. The 1942 version is reproduced in the Reference Volume.

To R. 1909. Published in the *Modern Review* in April 1910 under the title "To R — " and dated 19 July 1909. "R" stands for Ratna, which was the pet name of Sri Aurobindo's cousin Kumudini Mitra, who was born on 3 Sraban 1289 (18 July 1882). In the *Modern Review*, the poem was signed "Auro Dada" (big brother Auro).

Transiit, Non Periit. 1909 or earlier. This sonnet to Rajnarain Bose, Sri Aurobindo's maternal grandfather and a well-known writer and speaker, was first published at the beginning of *Atmacharit*, Rajnarain's memoirs, in 1909. As mentioned in the note beneath the title, Rajnarain died in September 1899. Sri Aurobindo may have written the poem anytime between 1899 and 1909; but since there are no drafts among his Baroda manuscripts, and since the poem belongs stylistically with those of 1909, it seems likely that it was written close to the date of the publication of that book. Quite possibly it was written especially for the book in 1909. The Latin title means: "He has gone beyond, he has not perished."

Poems from Manuscripts, circa 1909–1910

Perfect thy motion. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1909. The single manuscript text of this poem is found in a notebook that Sri Aurobindo used for the dramatic version of "The Birth of Sin" (see the previous section) and for the dialogue that follows. All these poems are in the handwriting of the 1909–10 period.

A Dialogue. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1909. Written in the same notebook and in the same handwriting as "Perfect thy motion" and the dramatic version of "The Birth of Sin". Unlike that piece, it is not structured as a play, and so has been printed here as a dramatic poem.

Narrative Poems Published in 1910

Baji Prabhou. Circa 1904–9. Sri Aurobindo wrote that this work was "conceived and written in Bengal during the period of political activity". This leaves the precise date of its composition unclear. Sri Aurobindo went to Bengal and openly joined the national movement in February 1906, but he had been active behind the scenes for some years before that. A partial draft of *Baji Prabhou* is found in a notebook he used from around 1902 to around 1910. The handwriting of this draft is that of the later years in Baroda (1904–6), and it is probable the poem was written during that period. (Sri Aurobindo spent a good deal of time in Bengal during these years.) *Baji Prabhou* was published for the first time in three issues of the *Karmayogin*: 19 February, 26 February and 5 March 1910. At some point he revised the first instalment of the *Karmayogin* text, but did not make use of this revision subsequently. In 1922 he published the *Karmayogin* text (with new, very light, revision) at the Modern Press, Pondicherry. This text became the basis of a further revised version published in *Collected Poems and Plays* in 1942. This 1942 version is the basis of the present text. (In the version published in *Collected Poems* [1972], the editors included readings from the revised *Karmayogin* text. In the present edition these readings have been ignored, but the 1922 and 1942 revisions, both approved by Sri Aurobindo, have been included.)

Chitrangada. 1909–10. This incomplete poem is related in theme and form to "Uloupie" (see above, Part Two), which Sri Aurobindo wrote around 1901–2. The manuscript of "Uloupie" was confiscated by the police in 1908 and never returned. There were, however, two draft passages of the poem in a notebook that Sri Aurobindo had with him in 1909–10, and he apparently drew on these to write *Chitrangada*. Many of the lines in the final version are identical or almost identical to those in the draft passages. Sometime before he left Bengal in February 1910, he gave the manuscript of *Chitrangada* to the *Karmayogin* staff for publication. The poem appeared in that newspaper in the issues of 26 March and 2 April 1910. "To be continued" was printed at the end of the second instalment, but the issue in which it appeared was the last to come out. The manuscript of the rest of the poem has been lost. Around 1930, one of Sri Aurobindo's disciples typed the incomplete poem out from the *Karmayogin* and sent it to Sri Aurobindo, who expressed some dissatisfaction with it. In 1937 he indicated that the poem required some revision before it could be published, but that it was "not the moment" for that. More than a decade later, he revised *Chitrangada* for publication in the 1949 number of the *Sri Aurobindo Circle* annual. The following note was printed along with the *Circle* text: "Sri Aurobindo had completed this poem but the original has been lost, only this fragment remains. It has been revised for publication." The revision considerably enlarged the passage containing the speech of Chitrangada's "dying sire". The new lines appear to be the last poetical lines Sri Aurobindo composed, with the exception of the final revisions and additions to *Savitri*.

Poems Written in 1910 and Published in 1920–1921

These three poems have an unusual history. They form part of a manuscript containing material apparently intended for three issues of the *Karmayogin*. This manuscript also contains articles on yoga, historical studies, satirical sketches, and pieces headed "Passing Thoughts", which was the name Sri Aurobindo gave to his weekly column in the

Karmayogin early in 1910. (See the Note on the Texts to *Early Cultural Writings*, volume 1 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, for more information on this "Chandernagore Manuscript".) In the middle of February 1910, Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta for Chandernagore, where he remained for six weeks before departing for Pondicherry. It would appear that he left the manuscript containing these poems behind in Chandernagore, that someone there made copies of the poems and other contents of the manuscript, and that at some point the original manuscript was sent to him in Pondicherry. (See Arun Chandra Dutt, ed., *Light to Superlight* [Calcutta: Prabartak Publishers, 1972], p. 207.) In 1920–21 defective texts of the poems (as well as some of the other contents of the manuscript) were published in the *Standard Bearer*, a journal brought out from Chandernagore. Sometime after their publication, Sri Aurobindo revised the *Standard Bearer* texts. In 1942, the *Standard Bearer* versions were given to Sri Aurobindo for further revision before inclusion in *Collected Poems and Plays*. Evidently he and the editors of the volume had by this time forgotten about the existence of the original manuscripts. These manuscripts, however, are superior to the defective *Standard Bearer* texts and also to the 1942 version, which is based on those texts. The editors of the present volume have therefore based the texts printed here on the original manuscripts, incorporating the deliberate changes made by Sri Aurobindo in 1942. The texts printed in *Collected Poems and Plays* are included in the Reference Volume.

The Rakshasas. 1910. This poem was intended for the first issue of the *Karmayogin* to be printed from the manuscript described in the above note. A corrupt version was printed in the *Standard Bearer* on 14 November 1920. This version was revised by Sri Aurobindo for inclusion in *Collected Poems and Plays* in 1942. The present version is based on the original manuscript.

Kama. 1910. This poem was intended for the second issue of the *Karmayogin* to be printed from the manuscript described in the above note. A corrupt version was printed in the *Standard Bearer* on 27 March 1921. This version was revised by Sri Aurobindo for inclusion in *Collected Poems and Plays* in 1942. The present version is based on the original manuscript.

The Mahatmas. 1910. This poem was intended for the third issue of the *Karmayogin* to be printed from the manuscript described in the above note. In the manuscript, the poem is entitled “The Mahatmas: Kutthumi”. A corrupt version was printed under the title “The Mahatma Kuthumi” in the *Standard Bearer* on 12 and 26 December 1920. This version was revised by Sri Aurobindo for inclusion in *Collected Poems and Plays* in 1942. The present version is based on the original manuscript.

PART FIVE: PONDICHERRY, CIRCA 1910–1920

Sri Aurobindo came to Pondicherry in 1910 and remained there until his passing in 1950. During this period he published four collections of short poems as well as *Collected Poems and Plays* (1942). He also published a number of short poems in journals, and wrote scores of poems, long and short, that were not brought out until after his passing.

Two Poems in Quantitative Hexameters

Ilion. Sri Aurobindo began work on this epic in quantitative hexameters in 1908 or 1909. The earliest surviving manuscript lines of the poem — then entitled “The Fall of Troy: An Epic” — were dated by the author as follows: “Commenced in jail, 1909, resumed and completed in Pondicherry, April and May 1910.” Between then and 1914, he worked steadily on this “completed” poem, transforming it from a brief narrative into an epic made up of several books. During the first stage of this enlargement, between April 1910 and March 1913, he produced almost a dozen drafts of the first book and a smaller number of drafts of the second. In March 1913, a sudden fluency permitted him to complete and revise a version of the epic extending up to the end of what is now Book VIII. He wrote the fragmentary ninth book (untitled and not actually headed “Book IX” in the manuscript) in 1914. Probably before then, he copied out the first eight books into notebooks that bear the title *Ilion*. Subsequently he revised and recopied the completed books, or passages from them, several times. This work continued until around 1917. It would appear that two factors — the writing-load of the monthly journal *Arya* (1914–21) and the attention demanded by his other epic, *Savitri* — caused him to stop work on *Ilion* before completing what presumably was intended to be a twelve-book epic.

During the twenties and thirties, Sri Aurobindo returned to *Ilion* from time to time. As late as 1935, he complained jocularly that if he could get an hour's freedom from his correspondence every day, "in another three years *Savitri* and *Ilion* and I don't know how much more would all be rewritten, finished, resplendently complete". He in fact never found time to complete *Ilion*, but in 1942 he revised the opening of the first book to serve as an illustration of the quantitative hexameter in "On Quantitative Metre", an essay that was published in *Collected Poems and Plays* in 1942 and also in a separate booklet issued the same year. This revised passage of 371 lines was the only portion of *Ilion* to appear in print during his lifetime. The full text was transcribed from his manuscripts and published in 1957. A new edition, corrected against the manuscripts and with the addition of the opening of the fragmentary ninth book, was brought out in 1989. The present text has been rechecked against the manuscripts.

Ahana. This poem in rhymed hexametric couplets, grew out of "The Descent of Ahana" (see below), which took its final form around 1912–13. "The Descent of Ahana" is divided into two parts. The first part consists of a long dialogue between Ahana and "Voices"; the second consists of a speech by Ahana, a speech by "A Voice", and a final speech by Ahana. In the final draft of "The Descent", the last two speeches of the second part comprise 160 lines. In or before 1915, Sri Aurobindo revised and enlarged these 160 lines into the 171-line poem that was published in *Ahana and Other Poems*. In this version, Sri Aurobindo added a head-note setting the scene of the poem and a footnote glossing the term "Ras". Sometime after 1915, he revised the 1915 text, but apparently forgot about this revision, which has never been published. In or before 1942, he again revised the 1915 text for publication in *Collected Poems and Plays*. This 1942 revision brought the poem to its present length of 518 lines.

Poems from Manuscripts, circa 1912–1913

The Descent of Ahana. Circa 1912–13. The earliest known draft of this poem is found among the papers that the police seized from Sri Aurobindo's room when he was arrested in May 1908. A complete fair copy is found in a manuscript notebook that may be dated circa 1912–13. The second part of the fair copy was subsequently revised and published under the title "Ahana" in *Ahana and Other Poems* (1915). See the note to "Ahana" in the previous section.

The Meditations of Mandavya. 1913. Sri Aurobindo wrote the date "April 12, 1913" at the end of a draft of the first part of this poem. The incident of the scorpion-sting happened before 14 February 1911, when Sri Aurobindo mentioned it in *Record of Yoga* as something that had happened in the past. In the mid 1930s, when the book entitled *Poems Past and Present* was being prepared, a copy of "The Meditations of Mandavya" was typed for Sri Aurobindo, who revised it lightly. He chose however not to include the poem in that collection. The revisions done at that time are incorporated in the text for the first time in the present edition.

Incomplete Poems from Manuscripts, circa 1912–1920

Thou who controllest. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1912. Sri Aurobindo wrote these lines in dactylic hexameter inside the back cover of a notebook that he used sometime before November 1912. He was working on *Ilion* at this time, but these lines do not seem to belong to that poem. Neither do they appear to be a translation of lines from the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* or any other classical text.

Sole in the meadows of Thebes. No title in the manuscript. 1913. Written on the same manuscript page as the following poem, at around the same time. It is almost certainly to this poem that Sri Aurobindo was referring when he wrote in *Record of Yoga* on 21 September 1913 of beginning an "Eclogue in hexameter".

O Will of God. No title in the manuscript. 1913. Written on the same manuscript page as the previous poem.

The Tale of Nala [1]. Circa 1916–20. There are very few clues by

which this incomplete poem might be dated. Judging from the handwriting, it was composed towards the end of the second decade of the century. It obviously is based on the story of Nala, as recounted in the Mahabharata and later texts, but does not seem to be a translation of any known Sanskrit work. The passages separated by a blank line were written separately and not joined together.
The Tale of Nala [2]. Circa 1916–20. Sri Aurobindo seems to have written this rhymed version of the opening of his proposed poem on Nala after the blank verse version. He retained several lines from the earlier version unchanged or practically unchanged.

PART SIX: BARODA AND PONDICHERRY, CIRCA 1902–1936

Poems Past and Present

These eight poems were published as a booklet by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1946. (Four of them — "Musa Spiritus", "Bride of the Fire", "The Blue Bird" and "A God's Labour" — had appeared in journals connected with the Ashram earlier the same year.) All the poems were written at least a decade, one of them four and a half decades, before 1946. The first draft of "Hell and Heaven" dates back to around 1902, early drafts of "Kamadeva" and "Life" to around 1913. A notebook containing these three early poems was uncovered by Sri Aurobindo's secretary, Nolini Kanta Gupta, in April 1932. He typed out copies and sent them to Sri Aurobindo with this note: "I have copied these poems out of a notebook that was being hopelessly eaten away by insects. I do not know how far I have been able to recover the text." Sri Aurobindo revised these poems around that time, adding a fourth, "One Day", while he worked. Several years later these four poems were published along with four that had been written in 1935 and 1936 under the title *Poems Past and Present*. The eight poems are reproduced here in the order in which they are printed in that book.

Musa Spiritus. 1935. An early draft of this poem occurs between drafts of "A God's Labour" and "The Blue Bird" (see below). Sri Aurobindo wrote the date "31.7.35" at the end of a later draft. There are two handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript of this poem.

Bride of the Fire. 1935. The first draft of this poem is dated 11 November 1935. There are two handwritten and two typed manuscripts.

The Blue Bird. 1935. The first draft of this poem is dated 11 November 1935. There are two handwritten and two typed manuscripts.

A God's Labour. 1935 – 36. A late draft of this poem is dated as follows: "31.7.35 / Last 4 stanzas 1.1.36". There are four handwritten and two typed manuscripts.

Hell and Heaven. Circa 1902 – 30s. The earliest extant draft of this poem is found in the typed manuscript that contains drafts of "To the Ganges", "To the Boers", etc. (see above, Part Three). Around 1912 Sri Aurobindo copied the poem out by hand in a notebook. Twenty years later, his secretary Nolini Kanta Gupta typed this and the next two poems out from this notebook and presented them to Sri Aurobindo for revision. Fourteen years after that they were included in *Poems Past and Present*. There are one handwritten and two typed manuscripts.

Kamadeva. Circa 1913. The earliest surviving drafts of this poem and the next one are found in the notebook that contains "The Meditations of Mandavya" (see above, Part Five), the opening of which is dated 1913. In 1932 they were typed out and fourteen years later included in *Poems Past and Present*. There is one handwritten and one typed manuscript.

Life. Circa 1913. The earliest surviving drafts of this poem and the previous one are found in the notebook that contains "The Meditations of Mandavya" (see above, Part Five), the opening of which is dated 1913. In 1932 they were typed out and fourteen years later included in *Poems Past and Present*. There is one handwritten and one typed manuscript.

One Day. Circa 1932. Sri Aurobindo wrote the first draft of this poem in the notebook containing drafts of the previous three poems, which Nolini Kanta Gupta uncovered and sent to him in 1932. This draft was lightly revised and later included in *Poems Past and Present*. There is one handwritten and one typed manuscript.

PART SEVEN: PONDICHERRY, CIRCA 1927–1947

Sri Aurobindo published three short volumes of poetry, and a volume on poetics that included poems as illustrations, between 1934 and 1946. One of the volumes of poems, *Poems Past and Present*, comprises Part Six of the present volume. The other volumes are included in this part, which also contains complete and incomplete poems from his manuscripts of the same period.

Six Poems

These poems were written in 1932, 1933 and 1934. In 1934 a book was planned that would include the six poems along with translations of them into Bengali by disciples of Sri Aurobindo. This book was published by Rameshwar & Co., Chandernagore, before the end of the year. Shown a proposed publicity blurb for the book, Sri Aurobindo wrote: "One can't blow one's own trumpet in this monstrous way, nor do I want it to be indicated that I am publishing this book. It is Nolini's publication, not mine. Why can't a decent notice be given instead of these terrible blurbs?" He also wrote his own descriptive paragraph stating that the six poems were in "novel English metres" and that the book included "notes on the metres of the poems and their significance drawn from the letters of Sri Aurobindo". The texts as well as the notes were reprinted in *Collected Poems and Plays* (1942).

The Bird of Fire. 17 October 1933. No handwritten manuscripts of this poem survive. There are three typed manuscripts, two of which are dated 17 October 1933. In a letter written shortly afterwards, Sri Aurobindo said that "Bird of Fire" was "written on two consecutive days — and afterwards revised". He also wrote that this poem and "Trance" (see below) were completed the same day.[2]

Trance. 16 October 1933. There are two handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript, which is dated "16.10.33". In the same letter in which Sri Aurobindo wrote about the composition of "The Bird of Fire" (see above), he noted that "Trance" was written "at one sitting

---

[2] Sri Aurobindo, *Letters on Poetry and Art*, volume 27 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, p. 244.

— it took only a few minutes”. In *Six Poems* “Trance” was placed after “The Bird of Fire”.

Shiva. 6 November 1933. There are two handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript, which is dated “6.11.33”.

The Life Heavens. 15 November 1933. There are four handwritten and three typed manuscripts. The typed manuscripts are dated “15.11.33”.

Jivanmukta. 13 April 1934. There are four handwritten and two typed manuscripts. The typed manuscripts are dated “13.4.34”. The poem was published in the *Calcutta Review* in June 1934.

In Horis Aeternum. 19 April 1932. Sri Aurobindo began this poem while corresponding with Arjava (J. A. Chadwick, a British disciple) about English prosody. He wrote the first stanza in a letter to Arjava and the full poem in a subsequent letter (*Letters on Poetry and Art*, pp. 231 – 34). There are two handwritten and two typed manuscripts. One of the typed manuscripts is dated “19.4.32”.

Notes. These notes were compiled from Sri Aurobindo’s letters and revised by him for publication while *Six Poems* was under production.

Poems

These six poems were written during the early 1930s and published as a booklet by the Government Central Press, Hyderabad, in 1941. The next year they were reprinted in *Collected Poems and Plays* under the heading “Transformation and Other Poems”. Sometime in the 1940s a small edition of the book was published by the India Library Society, New York.

Transformation. Circa 1933. This sonnet was published in the *Calcutta Review* in October 1934. Two months earlier, Sri Aurobindo asked his secretary to type copies of this poem and three others (“The Other Earths”, “The World Game” and “Symbol Moon”) from the notebook in which they and others had been written. When “Transformation” and “The Other Earths” were published in 1934, Sri Aurobindo informed a disciple that they were “some years old already” (*Letters on Poetry and Art*, p. 211), but it is unlikely that they were more than a year old at that time. The first draft of “Transformation” occurs in a notebook just after the first draft of “Trance”, which is dated 16

October 1933; it is probable that "Transformation" was written the same year. There are two handwritten and two typed manuscripts of this poem.

In a note written after "Transformation" and the next two sonnets were typed for publication, Sri Aurobindo said that he wanted the sestets of Miltonic sonnets to be set as they have been set in the present book, irrespective of rhyme scheme.

Nirvana. August 1934. This sonnet was written while the texts of "Transformation" and "The Other Earths" were being prepared for publication in the *Calcutta Review*. It was published along with them in that journal in October 1934. There are two handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript of this poem.

The Other Earths. Circa 1933. This sonnet was published in the *Calcutta Review* in October 1934. Its first draft occurs just after the first draft of "Transformation", which is dated 16 October 1933; thus it belongs, in all probability, to the year 1933. See the note to "Transformation" for more details. Writing to a disciple who was trying to translate it into Bengali, Sri Aurobindo wrote that the line "Fire importunities of scarlet bloom" meant "an abundance of scarlet blossoms importuning (constantly insisting, besieging) with the fire of their vivid hues". There are two handwritten and two typed manuscripts of this poem.

Thought the Paraclete. 31 December 1934 (this is the date on a typed manuscript; the handwritten manuscripts were probably written in June 1934). This poem originated as a metrical experiment, in which Sri Aurobindo tried to match a Bengali metrical model submitted to him by his disciple Dilip Kumar Roy.[3] There are at least three handwritten and two typed manuscripts of this poem. A printed text was produced sometime before 1941, but apparently was never published.

Moon of Two Hemispheres. July 1934. Like "Thought the Paraclete", this poem originated in an attempt to duplicate a Bengali metre proposed by Dilip Kumar Roy. Replying to Dilip, Sri Aurobindo began: "After two days of wrestling I have to admit that I am beaten by your last metre. I have written something, but it is a fake." He then wrote out the first stanza of the poem, pointing out where he had failed to meet Dilip's specifications. He closed by saying: "I have some idea of adding a second stanza", though "it may never take birth at all" (*Letters on Poetry and Art*, pp. 235–36). He did write a second stanza later. The poem was published in the "Sri Aurobindo Number" (volume 2, number 5) of the Calcutta fortnightly journal *Onward* in August 1934. There are four handwritten and two typed manuscripts of this poem.

---

[3] Dilip Kumar Roy, *Sri Aurobindo Came to Me* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1952), p. 237.

Rose of God. 29–30 December 1934. There is one handwritten and one typed manuscript of this poem. The typed manuscript is dated 31 December 1934; however Sri Aurobindo wrote in a letter to a disciple that "Rose of God" was ready "on the 30th having been written on that and the previous day". On 31 December, he wrote to his secretary that the just-typed "Rose of God" could be "circulated first as a sort of New Year invocation". On 2 March 1935, his secretary wrote to him saying that the editor of a quarterly journal had asked for a poem to be published, and asking whether "Rose of God" could be sent. Sri Aurobindo replied: "I feel squeamish about publishing the 'Rose of God' in a magazine or newspaper. It seems to me the wrong place altogether."

Note. This note did not form part of *Poems* (1941); it was first published in 1942 in *Collected Poems and Plays*.

Poems Published in *On Quantitative Metre*

With two exceptions, these poems were written in 1942 for publication in *Collected Poems and Plays*. Sri Aurobindo later commented that he wrote them "very rapidly — in the course of a week, I think". In regard to "Flame-Wind" and "Trance of Waiting", this would refer not to the composition but the revision, since the first drafts of these pieces were written during the mid 1930s. The fourteen poems, along with the first 371 lines of *Ilion*, first appeared as an appendix to *On Quantitative Metre*. This text was published as part of *Collected Poems and Plays*, and also as a separate book, in 1942. Each of the poems was followed by a footnote written by the author giving details of the metre used. These notes have not been included in the present volume, but may be seen in the text of *On Quantitative Metre*, published in *The Future Poetry with On Quantitative Metre*, volume 26 of THE COMPLETE

WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. The first 371 lines of *Ilion* appear in Part Five of the present volume as part of the full text of the poem.

Ocean Oneness. 1942. Two handwritten manuscripts, both entitled "Brahman", precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
Trance of Waiting. Circa 1934. The first draft of this poem was written around the same time as "Jivanmukta", which is dated 1934. Two handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work in 1942.
Flame-Wind. 1937. A handwritten draft of this poem is dated 1937. This draft is entitled "Dream Symbols". Three other handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work in 1942.
The River. 1942. Three handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
Journey's End. 1942. Two handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
The Dream Boat. 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
Soul in the Ignorance. 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
The Witness and the Wheel. 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
Descent. 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
The Lost Boat. 1942. Two handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
Renewal. 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
Soul's Scene. 1942. Three handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
Ascent. 1942. Two handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
The Tiger and the Deer. 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.

Sonnets

Sri Aurobindo wrote a total of seventy-five sonnets between 1933 and 1947. Only three of them were published in a book during his lifetime (see above under *Poems*). The other seventy-two are reproduced in the present section. See the note to "Transformation" for typographical conventions. Sri Aurobindo wrote in 1934 that he intended his sonnets to "be published in a separate book of sonnets". This was done in the book *Sonnets*, first published in 1980.

Three Sonnets

One of these sonnets was written around 1934, the other two in 1939. Sri Aurobindo selected them from among his completed sonnets for publication in the *Sri Aurobindo Circle*, Bombay, in 1948. They were published under the heading "Three Sonnets".

Man the Enigma. 17 September 1939. Three handwritten and two typed manuscripts precede the *Circle* publication in 1948.
The Infinitesimal Infinite. Circa 1934. Three handwritten and four typed manuscripts precede the *Circle* publication in 1948.
The Cosmic Dance. 15 September 1939. Four handwritten and two typed manuscripts precede the *Circle* publication in 1948.

Sonnets from Manuscripts, circa 1934 – 1947

On 31 December 1934, Nolini Kanta Gupta wrote in a note to Sri Aurobindo: "Sometime ago I typed *Seven Sonnets* — Are they not in their final form?" Sri Aurobindo replied: "No. I have had no time to see them — and I am still a little doubtful about their quality." The seven sonnets were (in the order of Nolini's typed copies): "Contrasts", "Man the Thinking Animal", "Evolution [1]", "Evolution [2]", "The Call of the Impossible", "Man the Mediator", and "The Infinitesimal Infinite". Sri Aurobindo later revised most of the seven, along with an eighth, "The Silver Call", which is related to "The Infinitesimal Infinite". After further revision he published "The Infinitesimal Infinite" as part of "Three Sonnets" in 1948 (see above).

Man the Thinking Animal. Circa 1934. Five handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript, the earliest contemporaneous with close-to-final drafts of “Transformation” and “The Other Earths”.

Contrasts. Circa 1934. Five handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript, the earliest contemporaneous with close-to-final drafts of “Transformation” and “The Other Earths”.

The Silver Call. Written on or before 25 April 1934 (when Sri Aurobindo quoted five lines in a letter to Dilip Kumar Roy); revised 1944. Five handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript; the first handwritten manuscript was written shortly after those of the two preceding sonnets. The original poem went through several versions, eventually becoming two, “The Silver Call” and “The Call of the Impossible”. The final version of “The Silver Call” is dated “193–(?) /23.3.44”.

Evolution [1]. Circa 1934, revised 1944. Five handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript, that is dated “193–(?)/22.3.44”. This poem and the one above were often worked on together, as were the two that follow.

The Call of the Impossible. 1934; revised subsequently. Four handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript. This poem began as a variant of “The Silver Call”: the first lines of the two poems were once identical — “There is a godhead in unrealised things” — and the first rhyming words remain the same even in the final versions.

Evolution [2]. Circa 1934. Two handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript. The handwritten drafts were written around the same time as early drafts of “The Call of the Impossible”; the final typed versions of the two poems are also contemporaneous. The present sonnet has the same title as the one which forms a pair with “A Silver Call” (see “Evolution [1]” above). There is no textual relation between it and its namesake, but there is some between it and “The Silver Call”: its closing couplet was first used as the close of “The Silver Call” and its second and fourth lines are similar to the tenth and twelfth lines of “The Silver Call”.

Man the Mediator. Circa 1934. Four handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript.

Sri Aurobindo wrote the next five sonnets in 1934 or 1935, at around the same time. He did not ask his secretary to make typed copies of any of the five, and gave titles to only three of them. The other two (one of which began as a variant of one of the first three) were found recently among the manuscripts of this group and recognised as separate poems.

Discoveries of Science. Circa 1934–35. Three handwritten manuscripts.
All here is Spirit. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1934–35. One handwritten manuscript. Published here for the first time.
The Ways of the Spirit [1]. Circa 1934–35. Four handwritten manuscripts.
The Ways of the Spirit [2]. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1934–35. Three handwritten manuscripts.
Science and the Unknowable. Circa 1934–35. Three handwritten manuscripts.

Sri Aurobindo wrote the next two sonnets in the early part of 1936.

The Yogi on the Whirlpool. 1936. Two handwritten manuscripts, neither of them dated, but certainly written just before "The Kingdom Within".
The Kingdom Within. 14 March 1936. Two handwritten manuscripts.

Sri Aurobindo wrote the next three sonnets in the early part of 1938.

Now I have borne. No title in the manuscript. 2 February 1938. Two handwritten manuscripts.
Electron. 15 July 1938. Two handwritten manuscripts.
The Indwelling Universal. 15 July 1938. Two handwritten manuscripts.

Sri Aurobindo wrote the next nine sonnets in July and August 1938 and revised them in March 1944.

Bliss of Identity. 25 July 1938, revised 21 March 1944. Two handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled "Identity".
The Witness Spirit. 26 July 1938, revised 21 March 1944. Two handwritten manuscripts.
The Hidden Plan. 26 July 1938, revised 18 and 21 March 1944. Two

handwritten manuscripts.
The Pilgrim of the Night. 26 July 1938, revised 18 March 1944. Three handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled "In the Night".
Cosmic Consciousness. 26 July 1938, revised apparently on 21 March 1944. Two handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled "The Cosmic Man".
Liberation [1]. 27 July 1938, revised 22 March 1944. Two handwritten manuscripts.
The Inconscient. 27 July 1938, revised 21 March 1944. Two handwritten manuscripts.
Life-Unity. 8 August 1938, revised 22 March 1944. Two handwritten manuscripts.
The Golden Light. 8 August 1938, revised 22 March 1944. Two handwritten manuscripts.

Sri Aurobindo wrote the next thirty-nine sonnets between 11 September and 16 November 1939. He wrote two other sonnets, "Man the Enigma" and "The Cosmic Dance" during the same period (see above under "Three Sonnets").

The Infinite Adventure. 11 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
The Greater Plan. 12 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
The Universal Incarnation. 13 September 1939. Four handwritten manuscripts.
The Godhead. 13 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts. This sonnet is about an experience Sri Aurobindo had during the first year of his stay in Baroda (1893).
The Stone Goddess. 13 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts. This sonnet is about an experience Sri Aurobindo had at a temple in Karnali, on the banks of the Narmada, near the end of his stay in Baroda (c. 1904–6).
Krishna. 15 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
Shiva. 16 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
The Word of the Silence. 18–19 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
The Self's Infinity. 18–19 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts, the second entitled "Self-Infinity".

The Dual Being. 19 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
Lila. 20 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts, the second entitled "The Thousandfold One".
Surrender. 20 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
The Divine Worker. 20 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
The Guest. 21 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled "The Guest of Nature".
The Inner Sovereign. 22 September 1939, revised 27 September. Three handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled "The Sovereign Tenant".
Creation. 24 September 1939, revised 28 September. Three handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled "The Conscious Inconscient".
A Dream of Surreal Science. 25 September 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
In the Battle. 25 September 1939. Two handwritten manuscripts.
The Little Ego. 26 September 1939, revised 29 September. Two handwritten manuscripts.
The Miracle of Birth. 27 September 1939, revised 29 September. Six handwritten manuscripts, the second entitled "The Divine Mystery", the third "The Divine Miracle-Play", and the fourth and fifth "The Miracle-Play".
The Bliss of Brahman. 29 September 1939, revised 21 October. Five handwritten manuscripts; the first has the epigraph: "He who has found the bliss of Brahman, has no fear from any quarter. / Upanishad [Taittiriya Upanishad 2.4]".
Moments. 29 September 1939, revised 2 October. Two handwritten manuscripts.
The Body. 2 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
Liberation [2]. 2–3 October 1939, revised 5 November. Three handwritten manuscripts.
Light. 3–4 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
The Unseen Infinite. 4 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled "The Omnipresent".
"I". 15 October 1939, revised 5 November. Two handwritten manuscripts.
The Cosmic Spirit. 15 October 1939, revised 5 November. Two handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled "Cosmic Consciousness", revised

to “Cosmic Self”.

Self. 15 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled “Liberty”.

Omnipresence. 17 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts, the first two entitled “The Omnipresent”.

The Inconscient Foundation. 18 October 1939, revised 7 February 1940. Two handwritten manuscripts.

Adwaita. 19 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts. This sonnet was written about an experience Sri Aurobindo had while walking on the Takht-i-Sulaiman (“Seat of Solomon”), near Srinagar, Kashmir, in 1903.

The Hill-top Temple. 21 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts, the first two entitled “The Temple on the Hill-Top”. This sonnet is about an experience Sri Aurobindo had at a shrine in the temple-complex on Parvati Hill, near Poona, probably in 1902.

The Divine Hearing. 24 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts, one of which is entitled “Sounds”.

Because Thou art. 25 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts, all untitled.

Divine Sight. 26 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.

Divine Sense. 1 November 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.

The Iron Dictators. 14 November 1939. Two handwritten manuscripts.

Form. 16 November 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.

Sri Aurobindo wrote the next two sonnets in 1940.

Immortality. 8 February 1940. One handwritten manuscript.

Man, the Despot of Contraries. 29 July 1940. Two handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled “The Spirit of Man”.

Sri Aurobindo wrote the next two sonnets during the middle to late 1940s.

The One Self. Circa 1945–47. One handwritten manuscript, undated, but in the almost illegible handwriting of the late 1940s.

The Inner Fields. 14 March 1947. One handwritten manuscript, legible only with difficulty, and another in the handwriting of Nirodbaran, Sri Aurobindo’s scribe.

Lyrical Poems from Manuscripts, circa 1934 – 1947

Sri Aurobindo once wrote that he wanted his short poems published in two separate books, one of sonnets and one of "(mainly) lyrical poems". In the present section are published all complete short poems, sonnets excluded, that he wrote between 1934 and 1947. Parodies written as amusements, poems written primarily as metrical experiments, and incomplete poems have been placed in the sections that follow. It sometimes is difficult to determine whether Sri Aurobindo considered a given poem to be complete when he stopped work on it.

Symbol Moon. Circa 1934. Three handwritten and two typed manuscripts. On 7 August 1934, Sri Aurobindo asked his secretary to type the first drafts of "Symbol Moon", "The World Game", "Transformation" and "The Other Earths" from the notebook in which he wrote these and other poems.

The World Game. Circa 1934. Three handwritten and two typed manuscripts.

Who art thou that camest. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1934 – 36. One handwritten manuscript, written in a notebook used otherwise for *Savitri*.

One. 14 March 1936. One handwritten manuscript, written on a sheet of a small "Bloc-Memo" pad.

In a mounting as of sea-tides. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1936 – 37. One handwritten manuscript.

Krishna. Circa 1936 – 37. One handwritten manuscript.

The Cosmic Man. 15 September 1938. One handwritten manuscript.

The Island Sun. 13 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.

Despair on the Staircase. October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.

The Dwarf Napoleon. 16 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.

The Children of Wotan. 30 August 1940. Two handwritten manuscripts.

The Mother of God. One handwritten manuscript, undated, but in the handwriting of the mid 1940s.

The End? 3 June 1945. One handwritten manuscript.

Silence is all. No title in the manuscript. 14 January 1947. (The manuscript is dated "January 14, 1946", but this is probably a slip, as the rest of the contents of the notebook in which the poem is written are from 1947.) One handwritten manuscript.

Poems Written as Metrical Experiments

Sri Aurobindo wrote most of these pieces in a somewhat playful effort to match metrical models submitted to him by his disciple Dilip Kumar Roy. As Dilip writes in *Sri Aurobindo Came to Me*, p. 233: "At the time I was transposing some English modulations into our Bengali verse which he [Sri Aurobindo] greatly appreciated in so much that, to encourage me, he composed short poems now and then as English counterparts to my Bengali bases." One such experiment resulted in the poem "Thought the Paraclete", which Sri Aurobindo later revised and included in the book *Poems* (see above). All but one of the others exist in one or more drafts in Sri Aurobindo's notebooks of the period. The exception, "In some faint dawn", is known only by the text published by Dilip in *Sri Aurobindo Came to Me*. The nine poems published in that book are reproduced here in the same order. Another poem written in response to a letter from Dilip is placed before the rest, while two others, also metrical experiments, have been placed at the end of Dilip's set. All the poems except the last seem to have been written in 1934. All but one are untitled in the manuscripts.

O pall of black Night. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1934. Three handwritten manuscripts. See *Letters on Poetry and Art*, pp. 236–37, for a letter that shows the genesis of this poem.

To the hill-tops of silence. No title in the manuscript. 1934. One handwritten transcript in Nolini Kanta Gupta's hand.

Oh, but fair was her face. No title in the manuscript. 1934. One handwritten transcript in Nolini Kanta Gupta's hand.

In the ending of time. No title in the manuscript. 1934. One handwritten transcript in Nolini Kanta Gupta's hand.

In some faint dawn. No title in the printed text in *Sri Aurobindo Came to Me*. 1934.

In a flaming as of spaces. No title in the manuscript. 1934. One handwritten manuscript.

O Life, thy breath is but a cry. 1934. Early typed copies of this poem are dated 21 June 1934 and are entitled "Life and the Immortal". Sri Aurobindo took up this poem in 1942 while preparing poems to be published in *On Quantitative Metre*. He gave the revised draft the title "Life" and indicated the rhyme scheme as follows: "Iambics; modulations, spondee, anapaest, pyrrhic, long monosyllable". Eventually, however, he decided not to include the revised poem in *On Quantitative Metre*. The editors have incorporated his final revisions in the text, but used the first line as title as with the other poems in this subsection. Two handwritten manuscripts.

Vast-winged the wind ran. No title in *Sri Aurobindo Came to Me*. 1934. No manuscripts. An early typed copy of this piece is dated 25 June 1934. Note that in *Sri Aurobindo Came to Me* this piece and the two that follow are placed after the mention of "Thought the Paraclete".

Winged with dangerous deity. No title in the manuscript. 20 June 1934. See *Letters on Poetry and Art*, pp. 234–35 for a letter that shows the genesis of this poem. Two handwritten and two typed manuscripts.

Outspread a Wave burst. No title in the manuscript. 26 June 1934. Two handwritten manuscripts, one in Nolini Kanta Gupta's hand.

On the grey street. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1934. One handwritten manuscript.

Cry of the ocean's surges. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1940–41. One handwritten manuscript.

Nonsense and "Surrealist" Verse

Sri Aurobindo wrote the first of these poems in isolation during the late 1920s or early 1930s. He wrote the other items as an amusement after some of his disciples tried to interest him in the subject of surrealistic poetry. See also the more serious sonnet "A Dream of Surreal Science" in the section "Lyrical Poems".

A Ballad of Doom. Late 1920s or early 1930s. There is one handwritten manuscript of this piece, the writing of which has completely faded away. A transcription made years ago was published in the journal *Mother India* in April 1974. The editors have verified and corrected this transcription using images made by means of infrared photography, scanning and imaging software. Several words in the text remain somewhat doubtful.

Surrealist. Circa 1936. One handwritten manuscript, written before 28 December 1936, when Sri Aurobindo mentioned it in a letter to a disciple.

Surrealist Poems. Circa 1943. (The Moro River, mentioned in the second poem, is a river in Italy that was the site of a battle between Canadian and German forces in December 1943; the notebook in which the poem is written was in use during the early 1940s.) One handwritten manuscript, consisting of two pages of a "Bloc-Memo" pad. Sri Aurobindo first wrote, in the upper left hand corner, "Parody", then, as title, "Surrealist Poems". Beneath the first poem, he wrote a tongue-in-cheek explanation within his own square brackets, then, after "2", the title and text of the second poem.

Incomplete Poems from Manuscripts, circa 1927–1947

Thou art myself. No title in the manuscript. 1927–29. One handwritten manuscript, jotted down in a notebook used otherwise for diary entries, essays, etc. In the manuscript, the word "Or", presumably the beginning of an unwritten second stanza, comes after the fourth line.

Vain, they have said. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1927. Although written, like "Ahana", in rhymed dactylic hexameter couplets, these lines do not seem to have been intended for inclusion in that poem. (The phrase "to infinity calling" does occur both here and in "The Descent of Ahana", but in different contexts.) One handwritten manuscript.

Pururavus. Circa 1933. Several handwritten drafts in a single notebook. It would appear from the manuscript that Sri Aurobindo began this passage as a proposed revision to the opening of the narrative poem "Urvasie". The passage developed on different lines, however, and Sri Aurobindo soon stopped work on it.

The Death of a God [1]. Circa 1933. Two handwritten manuscripts; a third manuscript is published as "The Death of a God [2]".

The Death of a God [2]. Circa 1933. One handwritten manuscript.

The Inconscient and the Traveller Fire. Circa 1934. Two handwritten manuscripts, the first entitled "Death and the Traveller Fire".

I walked beside the waters. No title in the manuscript. April 1934. Sri Aurobindo wrote the first part of this poem (down to "gloried fields of trance") on 25 April 1934 after Dilip Kumar Roy asked him for some lines in alexandrines (*Sri Aurobindo Came to Me*, pp. 226–29). In an accompanying letter, he explained how the caesura dividing the lines into two parts could come after different syllables. Dilip, noting that in Sri Aurobindo's passage there were examples of the caesura falling after the second, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth syllables, asked for an example of a line with the caesura coming after the third syllable. Sri Aurobindo obliged by sending him the couplet:

> And in the silence of the mind life knows itself
> Immortal, and immaculately grows divine.

On 28 April 1934, three days after Sri Aurobindo sent the first passage, his secretary asked him: "Can your last poem (in Alexandrines, sent to Dilip) be put into circulation?" Sri Aurobindo replied: "No. It is not even half finished." He wrote two more passages but never wove the three together into a completed poem. The editors have reproduced the passages as they are found in Sri Aurobindo's notebooks and loose sheets, separating the three passages by blank lines.

A strong son of lightning. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1934. Three handwritten manuscripts.

I made danger my helper. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1934. Two handwritten manuscripts. Sri Aurobindo wrote these four lines on the back of a typed manuscript of "The World Game". They do not, however, appear to have been intended for inclusion in that poem. The metre is not the same as, though possibly related to, the metre of "The World Game".

The Inconscient. Circa 1934. Four handwritten manuscripts.

In gleam Konarak. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1934–35. A single handwritten manuscript on the back of a sheet used for a draft of "Thought the Paraclete", which is dated 31 December 1934. The fragment consists of three stanzas, the second of which is incomplete.

Bugles of Light. Circa 1934–35. A single handwritten manuscript on the back of a note written to Sri Aurobindo on 31 December 1934.

The Fire King and the Messenger. Circa 1934–35. A single manuscript, written in a notebook near a draft of "Thought the Paraclete".

God to thy greatness. No title in the manuscript. March 1936. A single manuscript, written between drafts of "The Yogi on the Whirlpool" and "The Kingdom Within", both of which are dated 14 March 1936.

Silver foam. No title in the manuscript. March 1936. One handwritten manuscript, written on a sheet of a "Bloc-Memo" pad between "The Kingdom Within" and "One", both of which are dated 14 March 1936. In the manuscript, there is no full stop at the end, suggesting that the piece is incomplete.

Torn are the walls. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1936. Two handwritten manuscripts.

O ye Powers. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1936. Three handwritten manuscripts. In the final manuscript, the last line ends in a comma, indicating that the piece is incomplete.

Hail to the fallen. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1936. Italy invaded Abyssinia (Ethiopia) in October 1935. Britain and France stopped trying to broker a peace in December, and in May 1936, after a heroic resistance, Emperor Haile Selassie fled the country. "Lion of Judah" was a title borne by the Emperors of Ethiopia. The star towards the end was written by Sri Aurobindo. One handwritten manuscript.

Seer deep-hearted. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1936–37. One handwritten manuscript.

Soul, my soul [1]. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1936–37. Two handwritten manuscripts; a third is published as "Soul, my soul [2]".

Soul, my soul [2]. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1936–37. This is the most completely revised, but shortest, manuscript of this poem.

I am filled with the crash of war. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1938. Compare the third and fourth line of this poem with the third line of "The Cosmic Man" (see above); the two poems seem to be related. "The Cosmic Man" is dated 15 September 1938. One handwritten manuscript.

In the silence of the midnight. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1938. One handwritten manuscript.

Here in the green of the forest. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1939. One handwritten manuscript. The star before the last four lines was written by Sri Aurobindo.

Voice of the Summits. Circa 1946–47. One handwritten manuscript. The poem was probably written after "The Inner Fields", which is dated 14 March 1947.

APPENDIX: POEMS IN GREEK AND IN FRENCH

As a student in England Sri Aurobindo wrote many poems in Greek and in Latin as school or college assignments. A typical assignment would be to render an English poem into Greek or Latin verse of a given metre. The Greek epigram below appears to be an example of such an assignment. Sri Aurobindo also learned French in England, and in later years wrote two poems in that language.

Greek Epigram. January 1892. Sri Aurobindo wrote this epigram in a notebook he used at Cambridge. At the end he wrote "Jan. 1892 (Porson Schol)". This refers to the Porson Scholarship examination, which was held at Cambridge that month. In order to win this scholarship, candidates had to take twelve papers over the course of a week. One of the papers required contestants to provide a Greek translation of the following poem by Richard Carlton (born circa 1558), an English madrigal composer:

> The witless boy that blind is to behold
>   Yet blinded sees what in our fancy lies
> With smiling looks and hairs of curled gold
>   Hath oft entrapped and oft deceived the wise.
> No wit can serve his fancy to remove,
>   For finest wits are soonest thralled to love.

Sir Edmund Leach, late provost of King's College, Cambridge, who provided the information on the scholarship examination, went on to add:

> It is possible that [Sri Aurobindo] Ghose was a candidate for the Porson Scholarship; alternatively it is possible that his King's College supervisor set him the Porson Scholarship paper as an exercise to provide practice for the Classical Tripos examination which he was due to take in June 1892.

Sri Aurobindo's epigram is not a literal translation of the English poem, but an adaptation of it in Greek verse. Transliterated into the Latin alphabet, the Greek text reads as follows:

> Mōros Erōs alaos th'; ho d'homōs ha g'eni phresi keitai
>   Hēmōn, ophthalmous ōn alaos kathora.
> Pai, su gar hēdu gelōn iobostrukhe kalliprosōpe,
>   Diktuō andra kalō kai sophon exapatas.
> Oude sophos per anēr se, doloploke, phuximos oudeis;
>   Kai proteros pantōn doulos erōti sophos.

Lorsque rien n'existait. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1914–20. Sri Aurobindo seems to have written this prose poem during a fairly early period of his stay in Pondicherry. Published here for the first time.

Sur les grands sommets blancs. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1927. Sri Aurobindo wrote this incomplete poem in a notebook he used otherwise for the *Record of Yoga* of 1927.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

During his lifetime, Sri Aurobindo published poetry in a number of periodicals: *Fox's Weekly* (1883), *Bande Mataram* (1907), *The Modern Review* (1909, 1910), *Karmayogin* (1909, 1910), *Shama'a* (1921), *The Calcutta Review* (1934), *Sri Aurobindo Circle* (1948, 1949), and others. He also published poetry in twelve books: *Songs to Myrtilla and Other Poems* (c. 1898), *Urvasie* (c. 1899), *Ahana and Other Poems* (1915), *Love and Death* (1921), *Baji Prabhou* (1922), *Six Poems* (1934), *Poems* (1941), *Collected Poems and Plays* (1942), *On Quantitative Metre* (1942), *Poems Past and Present* (1946), *Chitrangada* (1949) and *Savitri* (1950–51). Details on the first editions of all these books except the last two may be found in the above notes. Four of the books had further editions during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime: *Songs to Myrtilla* (1923), *Urvasie* (c. 1905), *Love and Death* (1924, 1948), and *Baji Prabhou* (1949).

Collected Poems and Plays was the first attempt to bring out a comprehensive edition of Sri Aurobindo's known poetic output. It was planned by Nolini Kanta Gupta for release on 15 August 1942, Sri

Aurobindo's seventieth birthday. Following Sri Aurobindo's instructions that "only poems already published should be included in this collection", Nolini collected all poems, poetic translations and plays that had been published until then, typed them and sent them to Sri Aurobindo for revision. The book was published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, and printed at the Government Central Press, Hyderabad. Work on the book extended from around February to August 1942.

Between 1950 and 1971 a number of poems that had remained unpublished at the time of Sri Aurobindo's passing were printed in various journals connected with the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and in three books: *Last Poems* (1952), *More Poems* (1957) and *Ilion* (1957). In 1971, all of Sri Aurobindo's known poetical works were published in *Collected Poems: The Complete Poetical Works*, volume 5 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. A few other poems were included in the *Supplement* (volume 27) to the Centenary Library in 1973. About a dozen poems discovered between then and 1985 were published in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research*. The first almost complete collection of Sri Aurobindo's *Sonnets* was published in 1980. *Lyrical Poems 1930–1950* came out in 2002.

In the present volume are collected all previously published poems and at least three that appear here for the first time in print: "Thou bright choregus", "All here is Spirit" and "Lorsque rien n'existait". The poems have been arranged chronologically. As far as possible, books published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime have been presented in their original form. The texts of all the poems have been checked against the author's manuscripts and printed editions.

Index of Titles

Adwaita 621
Ahana 475
All here is Spirit 597
Appeal 210
Ascent 581

Baji Prabhou 293
A Ballad of Doom 657
Bankim Chandra Chatterji 34
Because Thou art 623
Because thy flame is spent 179
The Bird of Fire 547
The Birth of Sin 275
The Bliss of Brahman 616
Bliss of Identity 601
The Blue Bird 533
The Body 617
Bride of the Fire 532
Bugles of Light 673

The Call of the Impossible 595
Charles Stewart Parnell 17
The Children of Wotan 641
A Child's Imagination 211
Chitrangada 309
Contrasts 593
Cosmic Consciousness 603
The Cosmic Dance 590
The Cosmic Man 637
The Cosmic Spirit 619
Creation 613

Cry of the ocean's surges 653

The Death of a God [1] 665
The Death of a God [2] 666
Descent 578
The Descent of Ahana 495
Despair on the Staircase 639
A Dialogue 286
Discoveries of Science 596
The Divine Hearing 622
Divine Sense 624
Divine Sight 623
The Divine Worker 612
A Doubt 186
The Dream Boat 576
A Dream of Surreal Science 614
The Dual Being 610
The Dwarf Napoleon 639

Electron 600
The End? 643
Envoi 37
Epigram 189
Epiphany 279
Epitaph 188
Estelle 31
Euphrosyne 187
Evening 216
Evolution [1] 594
Evolution [2] 595

The Fear of Death 219
The Fire King and the Messenger 673
Flame-Wind 574
Form 625

God 218

God to thy greatness 675
The Godhead 607
A God's Labour 534
Goethe 16
The Golden Light 605
The Greater Plan 606
Greek Epigram 685
The Guest 612

Hail to the fallen 676
Hell and Heaven 538
Here in the green of the forest 680
Hic Jacet 17
The Hidden Plan 602
The Hill-top Temple 622

"I" 619
I am filled with the crash of war 679
I cannot equal 177
I have a doubt 181
I have a hundred lives 180
I made danger my helper 670
I walked beside the waters 668
Ilion 333
An Image 274
Immortal Love 206
Immortality 625
In a flaming as of spaces 650
In a mounting as of sea-tides 636
In gleam Konarak 672
In Horis Aeternum 553
In some faint dawn 650
In the Battle 614
In the ending of time 650
In the Moonlight 237
In the silence of the midnight 679
The Inconscient 671

The Inconscient [sonnet] 604
The Inconscient and the Traveller Fire 666
The Inconscient Foundation 621
The Indwelling Universal 601
The Infinite Adventure 606
The Infinitesimal Infinite 589
The Inner Fields 627
The Inner Sovereign 613
Invitation 201
The Iron Dictators 624
The Island Grave 30
The Island Sun 638

Jivanmukta 551
Journey's End 576
The Just Man 43

Kama 324
Kamadeva 540
Karma 209
Khaled of the Sea 145
The Kingdom Within 599
Krishna 608
Krishna (*Cretics*) 637

Liberation [1] 604
Liberation [2] 617
Life 541
Life and Death 216
The Life Heavens 549
Life-Unity 605
Light 5
Light [sonnet] 618
Like a white statue 47
Lila 611
Lines on Ireland 18
The Little Ego 615

Lorsque rien n'existait 686
The Lost Boat 579
The Lost Deliverer 16
Love and Death 111
Love in Sorrow 28
The Lover's Complaint 26

Madhusudan Dutt 35
The Mahatmas 325
Man, the Despot of Contraries 626
Man the Enigma 589
Man the Mediator 596
Man the Thinking Animal 593
The Meditations of Mandavya 509
The Miracle of Birth 615
Miracles 203
Moments 616
Moon of Two Hemispheres 563
The Mother of Dreams 273
The Mother of God 642
Musa Spiritus 531
My life is wasted 178

Night by the Sea 23
The Nightingale 186
Nirvana 561
Now I have borne 600

O Coïl, Coïl 15
O face that I have loved 177
O letter dull and cold 178
O Life, thy breath is but a cry 651
O pall of black Night 649
O Will of God 520
O ye Powers 676
Ocean Oneness 573
Oh, but fair was her face 649

Omnipresence 620
On a Satyr and Sleeping Love 22
On the grey street 653
On the Mountains 261
One 635
One Day 542
The One Self 626
The Other Earths 562
Outspread a Wave burst 652

Parabrahman 216
Perfect thy motion 285
Perigone Prologuises 189
Phaethon 42
The Pilgrim of the Night 603
Pururavus 663

Radha's Appeal 32
Radha's Complaint in Absence 32
The Rakshasas 321
Rebirth 213
Reflections of Srinath Paul 267
Reminiscence 203
Renewal 580
Revelation 209
The Rishi 220
The River 575
Rose, I have loved 180
Rose of God 564
A Rose of Women 22

Saraswati with the Lotus 22
Science and the Unknowable 598
The Sea at Night 211
Seasons 219
Seer deep-hearted 677
Self 620

The Self's Infinity 610
Shiva 548
Shiva [sonnet] 609
Silence is all 644
The Silver Call 594
Silver foam 675
Since I have seen your face 192
So that was why 193
Sole in the meadows of Thebes 519
Song 188
Songs to Myrtilla 9
Soul in the Ignorance 577
Soul, my soul [1] 678
Soul, my soul [2] 678
Soul's Scene 580
The Spring Child 185
Still there is something 181
The Stone Goddess 608
A strong son of lightning 670
Suddenly out from the wonderful East 260
Sur les grands sommets blancs 687
Surrealist 658
Surrealist Poems 659
Surrender 611
Symbol Moon 631

The Tale of Nala [1] 521
The Tale of Nala [2] 525
A Thing Seen 187
Thou art myself 663
Thou bright choregus 47
Thou didst mistake 179
Thou who controllest 519
Thought the Paraclete 562
The Three Cries of Deiphobus 189
The Tiger and the Deer 583
To a Hero-Worshipper 41

To R. 280
To the Boers 247
To the Cuckoo 36
To the Ganges 256
To the hill-tops of silence 649
To the Modern Priam 188
To the Sea 207
To weep because a glorious sun 182
Torn are the walls 675
Trance 548
Trance of Waiting 573
Transformation 561
Transiit, Non Periit 282
A Tree 207
The Triumph-Song of Trishuncou 215

Uloupie 163
The Universal Incarnation 607
The Unseen Infinite 618
Urvasie 65

Vain, they have said 663
Vast-winged the wind ran 651
The Vedantin's Prayer 212
The Vigil of Thaliard 48
Vision 255
A Vision of Science 204
Voice of the Summits 681

The Ways of the Spirit [1] 597
The Ways of the Spirit [2] 598
What is this talk 182
Who 201
Who art thou that camest 635
Winged with dangerous deity 652
The Witness and the Wheel 577
The Witness Spirit 602

The Word of the Silence 609
The World Game 632
World's delight 194

The Yogi on the Whirlpool 599

Index of First Lines

A bare impersonal hush is now my mind 609
A conscious and eternal Power is here 642
A deep enigma is the soul of man 589
A dumb Inconscient drew life's stumbling maze 596
A face on the cold dire mountain peaks 548
A far sail on the unchangeable monotone . . . 553
A flame-wind ran from the gold of the east 574
A godhead moves us to unrealised things 595
A gold moon-raft floats and swings slowly 563
A golden evening, when the thoughtful sun 216
A life of intensities wide, immune 549
A naked and silver-pointed star 548
A noon of Deccan with its tyrant glare 295
A perfect face amid barbarian faces 16
A strong son of lightning came down . . . 670
A tree beside the sandy river-beach 207
A trifling unit in a boundless plan 593
After six hundred years did Fate intend 18
After unnumbered steps of a hill-stair 622
All are deceived, do what the One Power dictates 626
All here is Spirit self-moved eternally 597
All is abolished but the mute Alone 561
All is not finished in the unseen decree 595
All my cells thrill swept by a surge of splendour 578
All Nature is taught in radiant ways to move 601
All sounds, all voices have become Thy voice 622
An irised multitude of hills and seas 562
Arise now, tread out the fire 665
Arise, tread out the fire 666
Arisen to voiceless unattainable peaks 618
Aroused from Matter's sleep when Nature strove 598

Artist of cosmos wrapped in thy occult shadow 671
As some bright archangel in vision flies 562
At last I find a meaning of soul's birth 608
At the way's end when the shore raised up . . . 579
Awake, awake, O sleeping men of Troy 189

Because Thou art All-beauty and All-bliss 623
Because thy flame is spent, shall mine grow less 179
Behold, by Maya's fantasy of will 639
Bride of the Fire, clasp me now close 532
Brilliant, crouching, slouching . . . 583
Bugles of Light, bugles of Light . . . 673

Child of the infant years, Euphrosyne 187
Cool may you find the youngling grass, my herd 189
Councillors, friends, Rai Bahadoors and others 267
Cry of the ocean's surges . . . 653

Dawn in her journey eternal . . . 335
Day and night begin, you tell me 219
Death wanders through our lives at will . . . 219
Do you remember, Love, that sunset pale 28

Each sight is now immortal with Thy bliss 623

Flame that invadest my empire of sorrow . . . 666
From the quickened womb of the primal gloom 5

"Glory and greatness and the joy of life 321
God to thy greatness 675
Goddess, supreme Mother of Dream . . . 273
Gold-white wings a throb in the vastness . . . 547

Hail to the fallen, the fearless . . . 676
Hark in the trees the low-voiced nightingale 186
He is in me, round me, facing everywhere 620
He said, "I am egoless, spiritual, free," 620

Hearken, Ganges, hearken . . . 256
Here in the green of the forest . . . 680
How hast thou lost, O month of honey . . . 34
However long Night's hour, I will not dream 602

I am a single Self all Nature fills 619
I am filled with the crash of war . . . 679
I am greater than the greatness of the seas 626
I am held no more by life's alluring cry 606
I am swallowed in a foam-white sea of bliss 616
I am the bird of God in His blue 533
I cannot equal those most absolute eyes 177
I contain the wide world in my soul's embrace 601
I dreamed that in myself the world I saw 204
I dwell in the spirit's calm nothing can move 602
I face earth's happenings with an equal soul 612
I have a doubt, I have a doubt which kills 181
I have a hundred lives before me yet 180
I have become what before Time I was 610
I have discovered my deep deathless being 612
I have drunk deep of God's own liberty 625
I have gathered my dreams in a silver air 534
I have sailed the golden ocean 638
I have thrown from me the whirling dance of mind 604
I have wrapped the wide world in my wider self 603
I heard a foghorn shouting at a sheep 658
I heard the coockcouck jabbering on the lea 659
I housed within my heart the life of things 605
I look across the world and no horizon . . . 637
I looked for Thee alone, but met my glance 624
I made an assignation with the Night 603
I made danger my helper and chose pain . . . 670
I passed into a lucent still abode 594
I sat behind the dance of Danger's hooves 607
I saw my soul a traveller through Time 615
I saw the electric stream on which is run 596
I shall not die 215

I walked beside the waters of a world of light 668
I walked on the high-wayed Seat of Solomon 621
If I had wooed thee for thy colour rare 206
If now must pause the bullocks' jingling tune 237
If perfect moments on the peak of things 616
If thou wouldst traverse Time with vagrant feet 189
Immense retreats of silence and of gloom 261
Immortal, moveless, calm, alone, august 279
In a flaming as of spaces 650
In a mounting as of sea-tides . . . 636
In a town of gods, housed in a little shrine 608
In Bagdad by Euphrates, Asia's river 147
In gleam Konarak — Konarak of the Gods 672
In god-years yet unmeasured by a man's thought . . . 632
In Manipur upon her orient hills 311
In occult depths grow Nature's roots unshown 598
In some faint dawn 650
In the blue of the sky, in the green of the forest 201
In the ending of time, in the sinking of space 650
In the silence of the midnight . . . 679
In the silence of the night-time 538
In us is the thousandfold Spirit who is one 611
In woodlands of the bright and early world 113
Into the Silence, into the Silence 581
Is this the end of all that we have been 643

Life, death, — death, life; the words . . . 216
Light, endless Light! darkness has room no more 618
Like a white statue made of lilies 47
Lone on my summits of calm . . . 573
Lorsque rein n'existait, l'amour existait 686
Love, a moment drop thy hands 23
Love, but my words are vain as air 209

Many boons the new years make us 186
Me whom the purple mead that Bromius owns 22
Moulded of twilight and the vesper star 188

Mute stands she, lonely on the topmost stair 639
My breath runs in a subtle rhythmic stream 561
My life is then a wasted ereme 41
My life is wasted like a lamp ablaze 178
My mind, my soul grow larger than all Space 617
My soul arose at dawn and, listening, heard 203
My soul regards its veiled subconscient base 621
My way is over the Moro river 660
Mystic daughter of Delight 541

Nala, Nishadha's king, paced by a stream 521
Nala, Nishadha's king, paced by a stream 525
Not in annihilation lost, nor given 282
Not soon is God's delight in us completed 213
Now I have borne Thy presence and Thy light 600
Now lilies blow upon the windy height 22
Now more and more the Epiphany within 613

O Boers, you have dared much and much endured 247
O coïl, honied envoy of the spring 15
O desolations vast, O seas of space 324
O face that I have loved until no face 177
O grey wild sea 207
O heart, my heart, a heavy pain is thine 32
O immense Light and thou . . . 637
O joy of gaining all the soul's desire 509
O lady Venus, shine on me 188
O letter dull and cold, how can she read 178
O Life, thy breath is but a cry to the Light 651
O love, what more shall I, shall Radha speak 32
O pale and guiding light, now star unsphered 17
O pall of black Night painted with still gold stars 649
O plaintive, murmuring reed, begin thy strain 26
O soul who com'st fire-mantled from the earth 673
O thou golden image 211
O Thou of whom I am the instrument 611
O Will of God that stirrest and the Void 520

O Word concealed in the upper fire 531
O worshipper of the formless Infinite 625
O ye Powers of the Supreme . . . 676
Ocean is there and evening; the slow moan 30
Of Ilion’s ashes was thy sceptre made 188
Of Spring is her name for whose bud . . . 185
Often, in the slow ages’ wide retreat 614
Oh, but fair was her face as she lolled . . . 649
On a dire whirlpool in the hurrying river 599
On the grey street and the lagging . . . 653
On the waters of a nameless Infinite 606
On the white summit of eternity 609
Once again thou hast climbed, O moon . . . 631
One day, and all the half-dead is done 542
One dreamed and saw a gland write Hamlet . . . 614
Out from the Silence, out from the Silence 581
Out of a seeming void and dark-winged sleep 604
Out of a still immensity we came 589
Outspread a Wave burst, a Force leaped . . . 652

Pale poems, weak and few, who vainly use 37
Patriots, behold your guerdon. This man found 17
Perfect thy motion ever within me 285
Poet, who first with skill inspired did teach 35
Pururavus from converse held with Gods 663
Pururavus from Titan conflict ceased 67
Pythian he came; repressed beneath his heel 16

Rishi who trance-held on the mountains old 220
Rose, I have loved thy beauty, as I love 180
Rose of God, vermilion stain . . . 564
Rushing from Troy like a cloud on the plains . . . 274

Seer deep-hearted, divine king of the secrecies 677
She in her garden, near the high grey wall 187
Silence is all, say the sages 644
Silence is round me, wideness ineffable 573

Silver foam in the dim East 675
Since I have seen your face at the window, sweet 192
Since Thou hadst all eternity to amuse 613
Snow in June may break from Nature 203
So that was why I could not grasp your heart 193
Sole in the meadows of Thebes Teiresias sat . . . 519
Someone leaping from the rocks 209
Soul in the Ignorance, wake from its stupor 577
Soul, my soul, reascend over the edge of life 678
Soul, my soul, yet ascend crossing the marge of life 678
Sounds of the wakening world, the year's increase 36
Spirit Supreme 212
Stamp out, stamp out the sun from the high blue 286
Still there is something that I lack in thee 181
Strayed from the roads of Time . . . 495
Suddenly out from the wonderful East . . . 260
Sur les grands sommets blancs . . . 687
Surely I take no more an earthly food 624
Sweet is the night, sweet and cool 9

The clouds lain on forlorn spaces of sky . . . 580
The day ends lost in a stretch of even 576
The electron on which forms and worlds are built 600
The grey sea creeps half-visible, half-hushed 211
The mind of a man 635
The repetition of thy gracious years 280
The seven mountains and the seven seas 325
There are two beings in my single self 610
There is a brighter ether than this blue 627
There is a godhead of unrealised things 594
There is a kingdom of the spirit's ease 599
There is a silence greater than any known 551
There is a wisdom like a brooding Sun 607
There was an awful awful man 657
These wanderings of the suns, these stars at play 216
This body which was once my universe 617
This puppet ego the World-Mother made 615

This strutting "I" of human self and pride 619
Thou art myself born from myself, O child 663
Thou bright choregus of the heavenly dance 47
Thou didst mistake, thy spirit's infant flight 179
Thou who controllest the wide-spuming Ocean . . . 519
Thou who pervadest all the worlds below 218
Thy golden Light came down into my brain 605
Thy tears fall fast, O mother, on its bloom 22
Thy youth is but a noon, of night take heed 210
To the hill-tops of silence . . . 649
To weep because a glorious sun has set 182
Torn are the walls and the borders carved . . . 675
Two measures are there of the cosmic dance 590

Under the high and gloomy eastern hills 165

Vain, they have said, is the anguish of man . . . 663
Vast-winged the wind ran, violent . . . 651
Vision delightful alone on the hills . . . 477
Voice of the summits, leap from thy peaks . . . 681

What is this talk of slayer and of slain 182
What mighty and ineffable desire 275
What opposites are here! A trivial life 593
What points ascending Nature to her goal 597
When in the heart of the valleys and hid . . . 540
When the heart tires and the throb stills recalling 580
Where is the man whom hope nor fear can move 43
"Where is the end of your armoured march . . . 641
Where Time a sleeping dervish is 48
Who art thou in the heart comrade of man . . . 577
Who art thou that camest 635
Who art thou that roamest 255
Who was it that came to me in a boat . . . 576
Why do thy lucid eyes survey 31
Wild river in thy cataract far-rumoured . . . 575
Winged with dangerous deity 652

With wind and the weather beating round me	201
World's delight, spring's sweetness, music's charm	194
Ye weeping poplars by the shelvy slope	42

Collected Plays and Stories

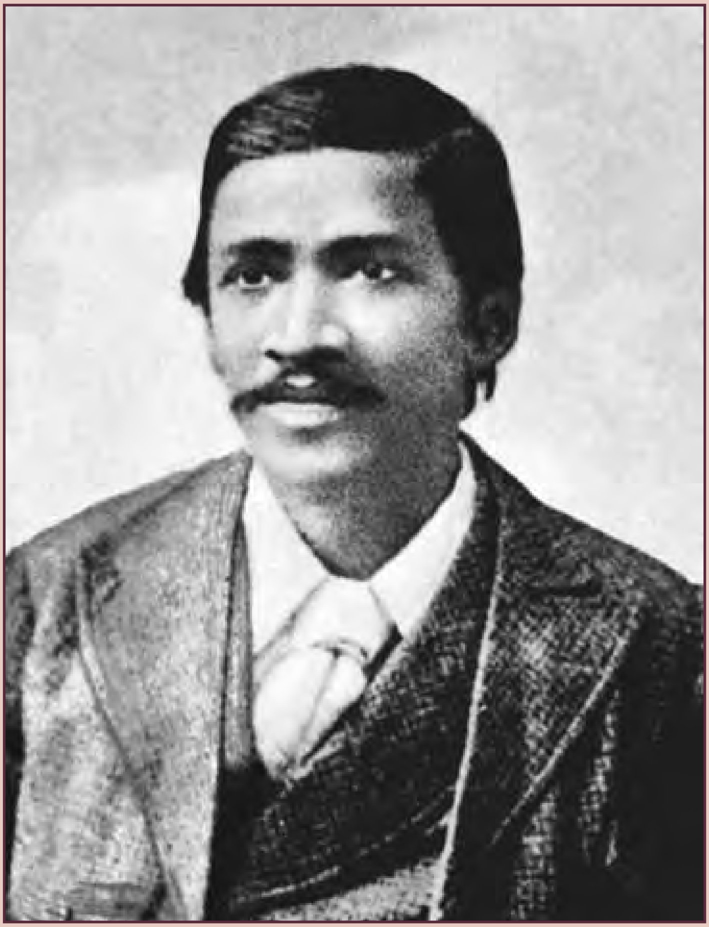

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 3 and 4
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1998
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Collected Plays and Stories

Publisher's Note

Collected Plays and Stories comprises all Sri Aurobindo's original dramatic works and works of prose fiction. The material, which occupies two volumes, is divided by type into three parts: complete plays, incomplete and fragmentary plays, and stories, complete, incomplete and fragmentary.

The earliest of the pieces collected here was written in 1891, the latest in 1915. Only one of them, *Perseus the Deliverer*, was published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. The rest have been reproduced from his manuscripts.

CONTENTS

PLAYS

The Viziers of Bassora 1
Rodogune 185
Perseus the Deliverer 325
Eric 529
Vasavadutta 619

Incomplete and Fragmentary Plays

The Witch of Ilni 749
The House of Brut 777
The Maid in the Mill 783
The Prince of Edur 845
The Prince of Mathura 929
The Birth of Sin 937
Fragment of a Play 943

STORIES

Occult Idylls

The Phantom Hour 953
The Door at Abelard 965

Incomplete and Fragmentary Stories

Fictional Jottings 989
Fragment of a Story 990
The Devil's Mastiff 991
The Golden Bird 996

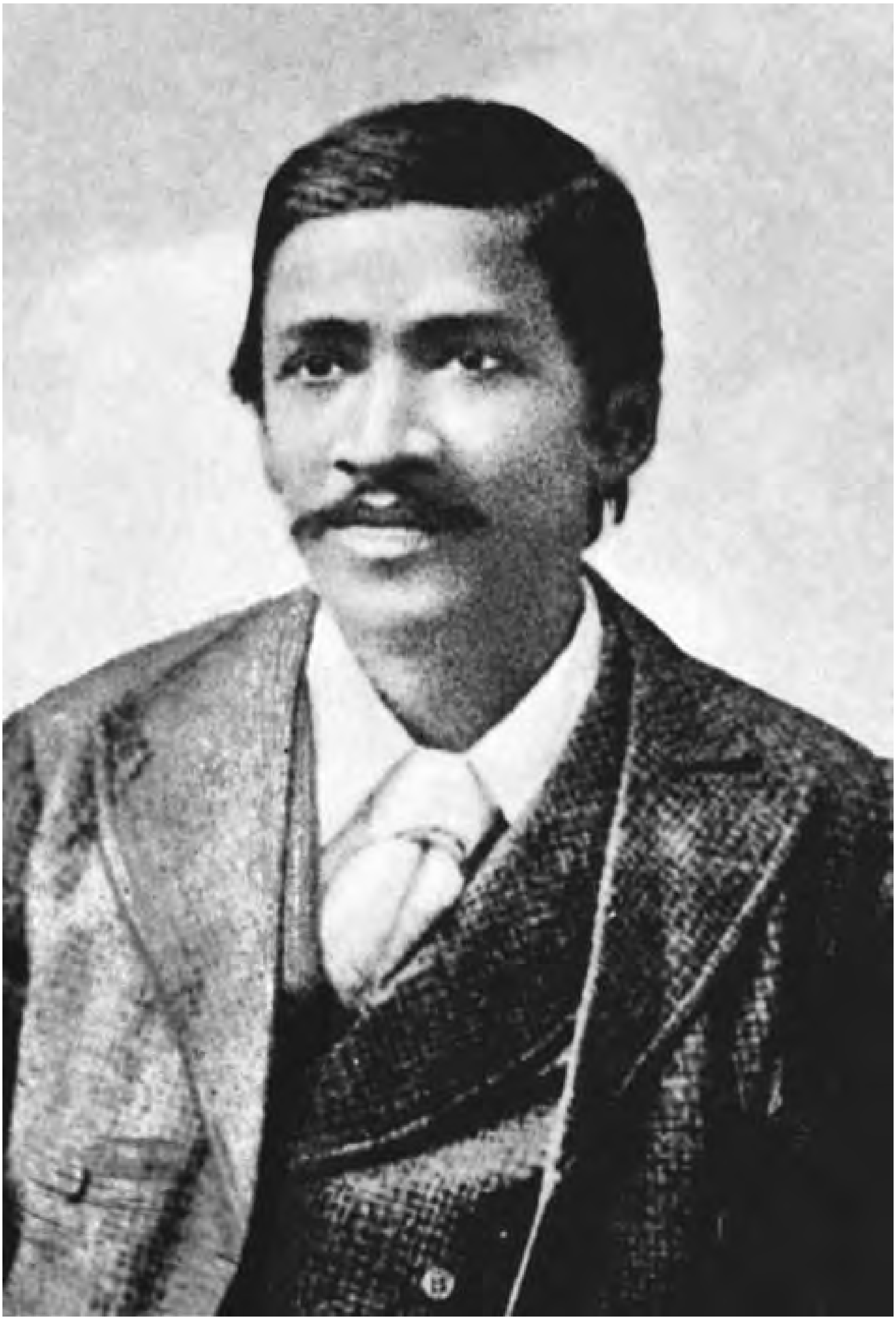

Sri Aurobindo, c. 1903

The Viziers of Bassora

A Romantic Comedy

Persons of the Drama

HAROUN ALRASHEED, Caliph.
JAAFAR, his Vizier.
SHAIKH IBRAHIM, Superintendent of the Caliph's Gardens.
MESROUR, Haroun's friend and companion.
MOHAMAD BIN SULYMAN ALZAYNI, Haroun's cousin, King of Bassora.
ALFAZZAL IBN SAWY, his Chief Vizier.
NUREDDENE, son of Alfazzal.
ALMUENE BIN KHAKAN, second Vizier of Bassora.
FAREED, his son.
SALAR, confidant of Alzayni.
MURAD, a Turk, Captain of Police in Bassora.
AJEBE, nephew of Almuene.
SUNJAR, a Chamberlain of the Palace in Bassora.
AZIZ
ABDULLAH } Merchants of Bassora.
MUAZZIM, a broker.
AZEEM, steward of Alfazzal.
HARKOOS, an Ethiopian eunuch in Ibn Sawy's household.
KAREEM, a fisherman of Bagdad.
SLAVES, SOLDIERS, EXECUTIONERS, ETC.

AMEENA, wife of Alfazzal Ibn Sawy.
DOONYA, his niece.
ANICE-ALJALICE, a Persian slavegirl.
KHATOON, wife of Almuene, sister of Ameena.
BALKIS
MYMOONA } sisters, slavegirls of Ajebe.
SLAVEGIRLS.

Act I

Bassora.

Scene 1

An antechamber in the Palace.
Murad, Sunjar.

MURAD

Chamberlain, I tell thee I will not bear it an hour longer than it takes my feet to carry me to the King's audience-room and my voice to number my wrongs. Let him choose between me, a man and one made in God's image, and this brutish amalgam of gorilla and Barbary ape whom he calls his Vizier.

SUNJAR

You are not alone in your wrongs; all Bassora and half the Court complain of his tyrannies.

MURAD

And as if all were too little for his heavy-handed malice, he must saddle us with his son's misdoings too, who is as like him as the young baboon is to the adult ape.

SUNJAR

It is a cub, a monkey of mischief, a rod on the soles would go far to tame. But who shall dare apply that? Murad, be wary. The King, — who is the King and therefore blameless, — will not have his black angel dispraised. Complain rather to Alfazzal Ibn Sawy, the good Vizier.

MURAD

The kind Alfazzal! Bassora is bright only because of his presence.

SUNJAR

I believe you. He has the serenity and brightness of a nature that never willingly did hurt to man or living thing. I think sometimes every good kindly man is like the moon and carries a halo, while a chill cloud moves with dark and malignant natures. When we are near them, we feel it.

Enter Ibn Sawy.

IBN SAWY (*to himself*)

The fairest of all slavegirls! here's a task!
Why, my wild handsome roisterer, Nureddene,
My hunter of girls, my snare for hearts of virgins,
Could do this better. And he would strangely like
The mission; but I think his pretty purchase
Would hardly come undamaged through to the owner.
A perilous transit that would be! the rogue!
Ten thousand golden pieces hardly buy
Such wonders, — so much wealth to go so idly!
But princes must have sweet and pleasant things
To ease their labours more than common men.
Their labour is not common who are here
The Almighty's burdened high vicegerents charged
With difficult justice and calm-visaged rule.

SUNJAR

The peace of the Prophet with thee, thou best of Viziers.

MURAD

The peace, Alfazzal Ibn Sawy.

IBN SAWY

And to you also peace. You here, my Captain?
The city's business?

MURAD

Vizier, and my own!
I would impeach the Vizier Almuene
Before our royal master.

IBN SAWY

You'll do unwisely.
A dark and dangerous mind is Almuene's,
Yet are there parts in him that well deserve
The favour he enjoys, although too proudly
He uses it and with much personal malice.
Complain not to the King against him, Murad.
He'll weigh his merits with your grievances,
Find these small jealous trifles, those superlative,
And in the end conceive a mute displeasure
Against you.

MURAD

I will be guided by you, sir.

IBN SAWY

My honest Turk, you will do well.

SUNJAR

He's here.

Enter Almuene.

MURAD

The peace upon you, son of Khakan.

ALMUENE

Captain,
You govern harshly. Change your methods, captain,
Your manners too. You are a Turk; I know you.

MURAD

I govern Bassora more honestly

Than you the kingdom.

ALMUENE

Soldier! rude Turcoman!

IBN SAWY

Nay, brother Almuene! Why are you angry?

ALMUENE

That he misgoverns.

IBN SAWY

In what peculiar instance?

ALMUENE

I'll tell you. A city gang the other day
Battered my little mild Fareed most beastly
With staves and cudgels. This fellow's bribed police,
By him instructed, held a ruffian candle
To the outrage. When the rogues were caught, they lied
And got them off before a fool, a Kazi.

MURAD

The Vizier's son, as all our city knows,
A misformed urchin full of budding evil,
Ranges the city like a ruffian, shielded
Under his father's formidable name;
And those who lay their hands on him, commit
Not outrage, but a rescue.

ALMUENE

Turk, I know you.

IBN SAWY

In all fraternal kindness hear me speak.
What Murad says, is truth. For your Fareed,
However before you he blinks angelically,

Abroad he roars half-devil. Never, Vizier,
Was such a scandal until now allowed
In any Moslem town. Why, it is just
Such barbarous outrage as in Christian cities
May walk unquestioned, not in Bassora
Or any seat of culture. It should be mended.

ALMUENE
Brother, your Nureddene is not all blameless.
He has a name!

IBN SAWY
His are the first wild startings
Of a bold generous nature. Mettled steeds,
When they've been managed, are the best to mount.
So will my son. If your Fareed's brute courses
As easily turn to gold, I shall be glad.

ALMUENE
Let him be anything, he is a Vizier's son.
The Turk forgot that.

IBN SAWY
These are maxims, brother,
Unsuited to our Moslem polity.
They savour of barbarous Europe. But in Islam
All men are equal underneath the King.

ALMUENE
Well, brother. Turk, you are excused.

MURAD
Excused!
Viziers, the peace.

IBN SAWY
I'll follow you.

ALMUENE

Turk, the peace!

IBN SAWY

Peace, brother. See to it, brother.

Exit with Murad.

ALMUENE

Brother, peace.
Would I not gladly tweak your ears and nose
And catch your brotherly beard to pluck it out
With sweet fraternal pulls? Faugh, you babbler
Of virtuous nothings! some day I'll have you preach
Under the bastinado; you'll howl, you'll howl
Rare sermons there.
(*seeing Sunjar*)
You! you! you spy? you eavesdrop?
And I must be rebuked with this to hear it!
Well, I'll remember you.

SUNJAR

Sir, I beseech you,
I had no smallest purpose to offend.

ALMUENE

I know you, dog! When my back's turned, you bark,
But whine before me. You shall be remembered.

Exit.

SUNJAR

There goest thou, Almuene, the son of Khakan,
Dog's son, dog's father, and thyself a dog.
Thy birth was where thy end shall be, a dunghill.

Exit.

Scene 2

A room in Almuene's house.
Almuene, Khatoon.

KHATOON
You have indulged the boy till he has lost
The likeness even of manhood. God's great stamp
And heavenly image on his mint's defaced,
Rubbed out, and only the brute metal left
Which never shall find currency again
Among his angels.

ALMUENE
Oh always clamour, clamour!
I had been happier bedded with a slave
Whom I could beat to sense when she was froward.

KHATOON
Oh, you'ld have done no less by me, I know,
Although my rank's as far above your birth
As some white star in heaven o'erpeers the muck
Of foulest stables, had I not great kin
And swords in the background to avenge me.

ALMUENE
Termagant,
Some day I'll have you stripped and soundly caned
By your own women, if you grow not gentler.

KHATOON
I shall be glad some day to find your courage.
Enter Fareed, jumping and gyrating.

FAREED
Oh father, father, father, father, father!

KHATOON
What means this idiot clamour? Senseless child,
Can you not walk like some more human thing
Or talk like one at least?

ALMUENE
Dame, check once more
My gallant boy, try once again to break
His fine and natural spirit with your chidings,
I'll drive your teeth in, lady or no lady.

FAREED
Do, father, break her teeth! She's always scolding.
Sometimes she beats me when you're out. Do break them,
I shall so laugh!

ALMUENE
My gamesome goblin!

KHATOON
You prompt him
To hate his mother; but do not lightly think
The devil you strive to raise up from that hell
Which lurks within us all, sealed commonly
By human shame and Allah's supreme grace, —
But you! you scrape away the seal, would take
The full flame of the inferno, not the gusts
Of smoke jet out in ordinary men; —
Think not this imp will limit with his mother
Unnatural revolt! You will repent this.
Exit.

FAREED
Girl, father! such a girl! a girl of girls!

Buy me my girl!

ALMUENE
What girl, you leaping madcap?

FAREED
In the slave-market for ten thousand pieces.
Such hands! such eyes! such hips! such legs! I am
Impatient till my elbows meet around her.

ALMUENE
My amorous wagtail! What, my pretty hunchback,
You have your trophies too among the girls
No less than the straight dainty Nureddene,
Our Vizier's pride? Ay, you have broken seals?
You have picked locks, my burglar?

FAREED
You have given me,
You and my mother, such a wicked hump
To walk about with, the girls jeer at me.
I have only a chance with blind ones. 'Tis a shame.

ALMUENE
How will you make your slavegirl love you, hunch?

FAREED
She'll be my slavegirl and she'll have to love me.

ALMUENE
Whom would you marry, hunchback, for a wager?
Will the King's daughter tempt you?

FAREED
Pooh! I've got
My eye upon my uncle's pretty niece.
I like her.

ALMUENE
The Vizier, my peculiar hatred!
Wagtail, you must not marry there.

FAREED
I hate him too
And partly for that cause will marry her,
To beat her twice a day and let him know it.
He will be grieved to the heart.

ALMUENE
You're my own lad.

FAREED
And then she's such a nice tame pretty thing,
Will sob and tremble, kiss me when she's told,
Not like my mother, frown, scold, nag all day.
But, dad, my girl! buy me my girl!

ALMUENE
Come, wagtail.
Ten thousand pieces! 'tis exorbitant.
Two thousand, not a dirham more. The seller
Does wisely if he takes it, glad to get
A piastre for her. Call the slaves, Fareed.

FAREED
Hooray! hoop! what a time I'll have! Cafoor!
Exit, calling.

ALMUENE
'Tis thus a boy should be trained up, not checked,
Rebuked and punished till the natural man
Is killed in him and a tame virtuous block
Replace the lusty pattern Nature made.
I do not value at a brazen coin
The man who has no vices in his blood,

Never took toll of women's lips in youth
Nor warmed his nights with wine. Your moralists
Teach one thing, Nature quite another; which of these
Is likely to be right? Yes, cultivate,
But on the plan that she has mapped. Give way,
Give way to the inspired blood of youth
And you shall have a man, no scrupulous fool,
No ethical malingerer in the fray;
A man to lord it over other men,
Soldier or Vizier or adventurous merchant,
The breed of Samson. Man with such youth your armies.
Of such is an imperial people made
Who send their colonists and conquerors
Across the world, till the wide earth contains
One language only and a single rule.
Yes, Nature is your grand imperialist,
No moral sermonizer. Rude, hardy stocks
Transplant themselves, expand, outlast the storms
And heat and cold, not slips too gently nurtured
Or lapped in hothouse warmth. Who conquered earth
For Islam? Arabs trained in robbery,
Heroes, robust in body and desire.
I'll get this slavegirl for Fareed to help
His education on. Be lusty, son,
And breed me grandsons like you for my stock.

Exit.

Scene 3

The slave-market.
Muazzim and his man; Balkis and Mymoona; Ajebe; Aziz, Abdullah and other merchants.

MUAZZIM
Well, gentlemen, the biddings, the biddings! Will you begin, sir, for an example now?

BALKIS
Who is the handsome youth in that rich dress?

MUAZZIM
It is Ajebe, the Vizier's nephew, a good fellow with a bad uncle.

BALKIS
Praise me to them poetically, broker.

MUAZZIM
I promise you for the poetry. Biddings, gentlemen.

A MERCHANT
Three thousand for the pretty one.

MUAZZIM
Why, sir, I protest! Three thousand pieces! Look at her! Allah be good to me! You shall not find her equal from China to Frangistan. Seven thousand, say I.

AZIZ
The goods are good goods, broker, but the price heavy.

MUAZZIM

Didst thou say heavy? Allah avert the punishment from thee, merchant Aziz. Heavy!

BALKIS (*to Ajebe*)

Will you not bid for me? My mirror tells me
That I am pretty, and I can tell, who know it,
I have a touch upon the lute will charm
The winds to hear me, and my voice is sweeter
Than any you have heard in Bassora.
Will you not bid?

AJEBE

And wherefore do you choose me
From all these merchants, child?

BALKIS

I cannot say
That I have fallen in love with you. Your mother
Is kind and beautiful, I read her in your face,
And it is she I'ld serve.

AJEBE

I bid, Muazzim,
Five thousand for this little lady.

MUAZZIM

Five!
And she who chose you, too! Bid seven or nothing.

AJEBE

Well, well, six thousand, not a dirham more.

MUAZZIM

Does any bid beyond?

MERCHANT

Let me see, let me see.

ABDULLAH

Fie, leave them, man! You'll have no luck with her,
Crossing her wishes.

MERCHANT

Let her go, let her go.

MUAZZIM

To you, sir, she belongs.

BALKIS

But if you'll have me,
Then take my sister too; we make one heart
Inseparably.

AJEBE

She's fair, but not like you.

BALKIS

If we are parted, I shall sicken and die
For want of her, then your six thousand's wasted.

MUAZZIM

They make a single lot.

AJEBE

Two thousand more then.
Give her in that, or else the sale is off.

MUAZZIM

That's giving her away! Well, take her, take her.

AJEBE

I'll send the money.

Exit with Balkis and Mymoona.

ABDULLAH

What, a bargain, broker?

MUAZZIM

Not much, not much; the owner'll have some profit.

AZIZ

The Vizier!

Enter Ibn Sawy.

ABDULLAH

Noble Alfazzal! There will be
Good sales today in the market, since his feet
Have trod here.

MERCHANTS

Welcome, welcome, noble Vizier.

IBN SAWY

The peace be on you all. I thank you, sirs.
What, good Abdullah, all goes well at home?

ABDULLAH

My brother's failed, sir.

IBN SAWY

Make me your treasurer.
I am ashamed to think good men should want
While I indulge in superfluities.
Well, broker, how's the market? Have you slaves
That I can profit by?

MUAZZIM

Admired Vizier,
There's nothing worth the kindness of your gaze.
Yet do but tell me what you need, I'll fit you
With stuff quite sound and at an honest price.
The other brokers are mere pillagers,

But me you know.

IBN SAWY

If there's an honest broker,
You are that marvel, I can swear so much.
Now pick me out your sweetest thing in girls,
Perfect in beauty, wise as Sheban Balkis,
Yet more in charm than Helen of the Greeks,
Then name your price.

MUAZZIM

I have the very marvel.
You shall not see her equal in a century.
She has the Koran and the law by heart;
Song, motion, music and calligraphy
Are natural to her, and she contains
All science in one corner of her mind;
Yet learning less than wit; and either lost
In the mere sweetness of her speech and beauty.
You'll hardly have her within fifteen thousand;
She is a nonpareil.

IBN SAWY

It is a sum.

MUAZZIM

Nay, see her only. Khalid, bring the girl.

Exit Khalid.

I should not ask you, sir, but has your son
Authority from you to buy? He has
The promise of a necklet from me.

IBN SAWY

A necklet!

MUAZZIM

A costly trifle. "Send it to such an house,"

He tells me like a prince, "and dun my father
For the amount. I know you'll clap it on
As high as Elburz, you old swindler. Fleece him!"
He is a merry lad.

IBN SAWY

Fleece me! The rogue!
The handsome naughty rogue! I'll pull his curls for this.
The house? To whom is it given?

MUAZZIM

Well, sir, it is
A girl, a dainty Christian. I fear she has given
Something more precious far than what he pays her with.

IBN SAWY

No doubt, no doubt. The rogue! quite conscienceless.
I'm glad you told me of this. Dun me! Well,
The rascal's frank enough, that is one comfort;
He adds no meaner vices, fear or lying,
To his impetuous faults. The blood is good
And in the end will bear him through. There's hope.
I'll come, Muazzim.

Exit.

MUAZZIM

The son repeats the father,
But with a dash of quicker, wilder blood.
Here's Khalid with the Persian.

Enter Khalid with Anice-aljalice.

Khalid, run
And call the Vizier; he was here just now.

Exit Khalid. Enter Almuene, Fareed and Slaves.

FAREED

There she is, father; there, there, there!

ALMUENE

You deal, sir? I know you well. Today be more honest than is your wont. Is she bid for?

MUAZZIM (*aside*)

Iblis straight out of Hell with his hobgoblin! (*aloud*) Sir, we are waiting for the good Vizier, who is to bid for her.

ALMUENE

Here is the Vizier and he bids for her.
Two thousand for the lass. Who bids against me?

MUAZZIM

Vizier Almuene, you are too great to find any opposers, and you know it; but as you are great, I pray you bid greatly. Her least price is ten thousand.

ALMUENE

Ten thousand, swindler! Do you dare to cheat
In open market? two thousand's her outside.
This spindly common wench! Accept it, broker,
Or call for bids; refuse at your worst risk.

MUAZZIM

It is not the rule of these sales. I appeal to you, gentlemen. What, do you all steal off from my neighbourhood? Vizier, she is already bespoken by your elder, Ibn Sawy.

ALMUENE

I know your broking tricks, you shallow rascal.
Call for more bids, you cheater, call for bids.

MUAZZIM

Abuse me not, Almuene bin Khakan! There is justice in Bassora and the good Ibn Sawy will decide between us.

Almuene
Us! between us! Thou dirty broking cheat,
Am I thy equal? Throw him the money, Nubian.
But if he boggle, seize him, have him flat
And powerfully persuade him with your sticks.
You, beauty, come. What, hussy, you draw back?

Fareed
Father, let me get behind her with my horse-tickler. I will trot her home in a twinkling.

Muazzim
This is flat tyranny. I will appeal
To the good Vizier and our gracious King.

Almuene
Impudent thief! have first thy punishment
And howl appeal between the blows. Seize him.
Enter Khalid with Ibn Sawy.

Muazzim
Protect me, Vizier, from this unjust man,
This tyrant.

Ibn Sawy
What is this?

Muazzim
He takes by force
The perfect slavegirl I had kept for you,
And at a beggarly, low, niggard's price
I'ld not accept for a black kitchen-girl;
Then, when I named you, fell to tyrant rage,
Ordering his slaves to beat me.

Ibn Sawy
Is this true,

Vizier?

ALMUENE
Someone beat out my foggy brains!
I took it for a trick, a broker's trick.
What, you bespoke the girl? You know I'ld lose
My hand and tongue rather than they should hurt you.
Well, well, begin the bidding.

IBN SAWY
First, a word.
Vizier, this purchase is not for myself;
'Tis for the King. I deem you far too loyal
To bid against your master, needlessly
Taxing his treasuries. But if you will,
You have the right. By justice and the law
The meanest may compete here. Do you bid?

ALMUENE (*to himself*)
He baulks me everywhere. (*aloud*) The perfect slavegirl?
No, I'll not bid. Yet it is most unlucky,
My son has set his heart upon this very girl.
Will you not let him have her, Ibn Sawy?

IBN SAWY
I grieve that he must be so disappointed,
But there's no help. Were it my own dear son
And he should pine to death for her, I would not
Indulge him here. The King comes first.

ALMUENE
Quite first.
Well, shall I see you at your house today?

IBN SAWY
State business, brother?

ALMUENE
Our states and how to join
Their linkèd loves yet closer. I have a thought
Touching Fareed here and your orphaned niece.

IBN SAWY
I understand you. We will talk of it.
Brother, you know my mind about your boy.
He is too wild and rude; I would not trust
My dear soft girl into such dangerous hands,
Unless he showed a quick and strange amendment.

ALMUENE
It is the wildness of his youth. Provide him
A wife and he will soon domesticate.
Pen these wild torrents into quiet dams
And they will fertilize the kingdom, brother.

IBN SAWY
I hope so. Well, we'll talk.

ALMUENE
Fareed, come with me.

FAREED
I'll have my girl! I'll beat them all and have her!

ALMUENE
Wagtail, your uncle takes her.

FAREED
Break his head then,
Whip the proud broker up and down the square
And take her without payment. Why are you
The Vizier, if you cannot do your will?

ALMUENE
Madcap, she's for the King, be quiet.

FAREED
Oh!

ALMUENE
Come, I will buy you prettier girls than this
By hundredweights and tons.

FAREED
She has such hair! such legs!
God damn the Vizier and the King and you!
I'll take her yet.
Exit in a rage, followed by Almuene and Slaves.

MUAZZIM
This is a budding Vizier!
Sir, look at her; were mine mere broker's praises?

IBN SAWY
You, mistress? Does the earth contain such beauty?

MUAZZIM
Did I not tell you so?

IBN SAWY
'Tis marvellous,
And if her mind be equal to her body,
She is an emperor's portion. What's your name,
Sweet wonder?

ANICE
Anice-aljalice they call me.

IBN SAWY
What is your history?

ANICE
My parents sold me
In the great famine.

IBN SAWY
What, is your mould indeed a thing of earth?
Peri, have you not come disguised from heaven
To snare us with your lovely smiles, you marvel?

ANICE
I am a slave and mortal.

IBN SAWY
Prove me that.

ANICE
A Peri, sir, has wings, but I have none.

IBN SAWY
I see that difference only. Well now, her price?

MUAZZIM
She is a gift to thee, O Vizier.

IBN SAWY
Ceremony?
I rate her value at ten thousand clear.

MUAZZIM
It is the price expected at your hands,
Though from a private purse we'ld have full value.
Keep her ten days with you; her beauty's worn
With journeying and its harsh fatigues. Give rest,
Give baths, give food, then shade your eyes to gaze at her.

IBN SAWY
You counsel wisely. There's my poaching rascal,—

But I will seal her fast even from his questings.
The peace, Muazzim.

MUAZZIM
Peace, thou good Vizier, loaded with our blessings.
Exeunt.

Scene 4

A room in the women's apartments of Ibn Sawy's house.
Ameena, Doonya.

AMEENA
Call, Doonya, to the eunuch once again,
And ask if Nureddene has come.

DOONYA
Mother,
What is the use? you know he has not come.
Why do you fret your heart, sweet mother, for him?
Bad coins are never lost.

AMEENA
Fie, Doonya! bad?
He is not bad, but wild, a trifle wild;
And the one little fault's like a stray curl
Among his clustering golden qualities,
That graces more than it disfigures him.
Bad coin! Oh, Doonya, even the purest gold
Has some alloy, so do not call him bad.

DOONYA
Sweet, silly mother! why, I called him that
Just to hear you defend him.

AMEENA
You laugh at me, —
Oh, you all laugh. And yet I will maintain
My Nureddene's the dearest lad in Bassora, —
Let him disprove't who can, — in all this realm

The beautifullest and kindest.

DOONYA
So the girls think
Through all our city. Oh, I laugh at you
And at myself. I'm sure I am as bad
A sister to him as you are a mother.

AMEENA
I a bad mother, Doonya?

DOONYA
The worst possible.
You spoil him; so do I; so does his father;
So does all Bassora, — especially the girls!

AMEENA
Why, who could be unkind to him or see
His merry eyes grow clouded with remorse?

DOONYA
Is it he who comes?
She goes out and returns.
It is my uncle, mother,
And there's a girl with him, — I think she is
A copy of Nureddene in white and red.
Why, as I looked downstairs, she smiled up at me
And took the heart out of my body with the smile.
Are you going to have a rival at your years,
Poor mother? 'Tis late for uncle to go wooing.

AMEENA
A rival, you mad girl!
Enter Ibn Sawy and Anice-aljalice.

IBN SAWY
Come forward, child.

Here is a slavegirl, Ameena, I've bought
For our great Sultan. Keep her from your son,
Your scapegrace son. My life upon it, dame!
If he touches her, I'm gone.

AMEENA

I'll see to it.

IBN SAWY

Let a strong eunuch with a naked sword
Stand at her door. Bathe her and feed her daintily.
Your son! see that he does not wheedle you.
You've spoilt him so, there is no trusting you,
You tender, foolish heart.

AMEENA

I spoil him, husband!

IBN SAWY

Most damnably. Whenever I would turn
Wholesomely harsh to him, you come between
And coax my anger. Therefore he is spoilt.

DOONYA

Oh, uncle mine, when you are harsh, the world
Grows darker with your frown. See, how I tremble!

IBN SAWY

Oh, are you there, my little satirist?
When were you whipped last?

DOONYA

When you last were harsh.

IBN SAWY

You shall be married off. I will not have you
Mocking an old and reverend man like me.

Whom will you marry, chit?

DOONYA
An old, old man,
Just such a smiling harsh old man as you,
None else.

IBN SAWY
And not a boy like young Fareed?
His father wishes it; he too, I think.

DOONYA
Throw me from this high window to the court,
Or tell me ere the day and I will leap.

IBN SAWY
Is he so bad? I thought it. No, my niece,
You marry not with Khakan's evil stock,
Although there were no other bridegroom living.
I'll leave you, Ameena. Anice, I have a son,
Handsome and wanton. Let him not behold you!
You are wise and spirited beyond your years,
Above your sex; I trust in your discretion.

ANICE
I will be careful, sir. Yet trust in bars
And portals, not in me. If he should find me,
I am his slave and born to do his will.

IBN SAWY
Be careful, dame.

Exit.

AMEENA
How fair you are, small lady!
'Tis better truly he should see you not.
Doonya, be careful of her. I'll go before

And make your casket ready for you, gem.
Bring her behind me, Doonya.

Exit.

DOONYA (*leaping on Anice*)

What's your name,
You smiling wonder, what's your name? your name?

ANICE

If you will let me a little breathe, I'll tell you.

DOONYA

Tell it me without breathing.

ANICE

It's too long.

DOONYA

Let's hear it.

ANICE

Anice-aljalice.

DOONYA

Anice,
There is a sea of laughter in your body;
I find it billowing there beneath the calm
And rippling sweetly out in smiles. You beauty!
And I love laughers. Wherefore for the King?
Why not for me? Does the King ever laugh,
I wonder?

She runs out.

ANICE

My King is here. But they would give me
To some thick-bearded swart and grizzled Sultan
Who'd see me once a week and keep me penned

For service, not for mirth and love. My prince
Is like our Persian boys, fair-faced and merry,
Fronting the world with glad and open looks
That make the heart rejoice. Ten days! ’tis much.
Kingdoms have toppled in ten days.

Doonya returns.

DOONYA

Come, Anice.
I wish my cousin Nureddene had come
And caught you here. What fun it would have been!

Exeunt.

Act II

Bassora.

Scene 1

Ibn Sawy's house. An upper chamber in the women's apartments.
Doonya, Anice-aljalice.

DOONYA
You living sweet romance, you come from Persia.
'Tis there, I think, they fall in love at sight?

ANICE
But will you help me, Doonya, will you help me?
To him, to him, not to that grizzled King!
I am near Heaven with Hell that's waiting for me.

DOONYA
I know, I know! you feel as I would, child,
If told that in ten days I had to marry
My cruel boisterous cousin. I will help you.
But strange! to see him merely pass and love him!
Did he look back at you?

ANICE
While he could see me.

DOONYA
Yes, that was Nureddene.

ANICE

You'll help me?

DOONYA

Yes,
With all my heart and soul and brains and body.
But how? My uncle's orders are so strict!

ANICE

And do you always heed your uncle's orders,
You dutiful niece?

DOONYA

Rigidly, when they suit me.
It shall be done although my punishment
Were even to wed Fareed. But who can say
When he'll come home?

ANICE

Comes he not daily then?

DOONYA

When he's not hawking. Questing, child, for doves,
White doves.

ANICE

I'll stop all that when he is mine.

DOONYA

Will you? and yet I think you will, nor find it
A task at all. You can do it?

ANICE

I will.

DOONYA

You have relieved my conscience of a load.

Who blames me? I do this to reform my cousin,
Gravely, deliberately, with serious thought,
And am quite virtuously disobedient.
I almost feel a long white beard upon my chin,
The thing's so wise and sober. Gravely, gravely!
She marches out, solemnly stroking
an imaginary beard.

ANICE
My heart beats reassuringly within.
The destined Prince will come and all bad spells
Be broken; then — You angels up in Heaven
Who guard sweet shame and woman's modesty,
Hide deep your searching eyes with those bright wings.
It is not wantonness, though in a slave
Permitted, spurs me forward. O tonight
Let sleep your pens, in your rebuking volumes
Record not this. I am on such a brink,
A hound of horror baying at my heels,
I cannot pause to think what fire of blushes
I choose to flee through, nor how safe cold eyes
May censure me. I pass though I should burn.
You cannot bid me pick my careful steps!
Oh, no, the danger is too near. I run
By the one road that's left me, to escape,
To escape, into the very arms I love.
Curtain

Scene 2

Ibn Sawy's house. A room in the women's apartments.
Ameena, Doonya.

AMEENA
Has he come in?

DOONYA
He has.

AMEENA
For three long days!
I will reprove him. Call him to me, Doonya.
I will be stern.

DOONYA
That's right. Lips closer there!
And just try hard to frown. That's mildly grim
And ought to shake him. Now you spoil all by laughing.

AMEENA
Away, you madcap! Call him here.

DOONYA
The culprit
Presents himself unsummoned.
Enter Nureddene.

NUREDDENE (*at the door*)
Ayoob, Ayoob!
A bowl of sherbet in my chamber.
(*entering*)

Well, mother,
Here I am back, your errant gadabout,
Your vagabond scapegrace, tired of truancy
And very hungry for my mother's arms.
It's good to see you smile!

AMEENA
My dearest son!

NUREDDENE
Why, Doonya, cousin, what wild face is this?

DOONYA
This is a frown, a frown, upon my forehead.
Do you not tremble when you see it? No?
To tell you the plain truth, my wandering brother,
We both were practising a careful grimness
And meant to wither you with darting flames
From basilisk eyes and words more sharp than swords,
Burn you and frizzle into simmering cinders.
Oh, you'ld have been a dolorous spectacle
Before we had finished with you! Ask her else.

AMEENA
Heed her not, Nureddene. But tell me, child,
Is this well done to wander vagrant-like
Leaving your mother to anxieties
And such alarms? Oh, we will have to take
Some measure with you!

DOONYA
Oh, now, now, we are stern!

NUREDDENE
Mother, I only range abroad and learn
Of manners and of men to fit myself
For the after-time.

DOONYA

True, true, and of the taste
Of different wines and qualities of girls;
What eyes Damascus sends, the Cairene sort,
Bagdad's red lips and Yemen's willowy figures,
Who has the smallest waist in Bassora,
Or who the shapeliest little foot moonbright
Beneath her anklets. These are sciences
And should be learned by sober masculine graduates.
Should they not, cousin?

NUREDDENE

These too are not amiss,
Doonya, for world-wise men. And do you think,
Dear mother, I could learn the busy world
Here, in your lap, within the shadowy calm
Of women's chambers?

AMEENA

No, child, no. You see,
Doonya, it is not all so bad, this wandering.
And I am sure they much o'erstate his faults
Who tell of them.

DOONYA

Oh, this is very grim!

AMEENA

But, Nureddene, you must not be so wild;
Or when we are gone, what will you do, if now
You learn no prudence? All your patrimony
You'll waste, — and then?

NUREDDENE

Then, mother, life begins.
I shall go forth, a daring errant-knight,
To my true country out in faeryland;

Wander among the Moors, see Granada,
The delicate city made of faery stone,
Cairo, Tangier, Aleppo, Trebizond;
Or in the East, where old enchantment dwells,
Find Pekin of the wooden piles, Delhi
Of the idolaters, its brazen pillar
And huge seven-storied temples sculpture-fretted,
And o'er romantic regions quite unknown
Preach Islam, sword in hand; sell bales of spice
From Bassora to Java and Japan;
Then on through undiscovered islands, seas
And Oceans yet unnamed; yes, everywhere
Catch Danger by the throat where I can find him,—

DOONYA
Butcher blood-belching dragons with my blade,
Cut ogres, chop giants, tickle cormorants,—

NUREDDENE
Then in some land, I have not settled which,—

DOONYA
Call it Cumcatchia or Nonsensicum.

NUREDDENE
Marry a Soldan's daughter, sweet of eye
And crowned with gracious hair, deserving her
By deeds impossible; conduct her armies
Against her foemen, enter iron-walled
Cities besieged with the loud clang of war,
Rescue imperilled kingdoms, mid the smoke
Of desperate cities slay victorious kings,
And so extend my lady's empire wide—

DOONYA
From Bassora to the quite distant moon.

NUREDDENE
There I shall reign with beauty and splendour round
In a great palace built of porphyry,
Marble and jasper, with strange columns made
Of coral and fair walls bright-arabesqued
On which the Koran shall be written out
In sapphires and in rubies. I will sit
Drinking from cups of gold delightful wine,
Watching slow dances, while the immortal strain
Of music wanders to its silent home.
And I shall have bright concubines and slaves
Around me crowding all my glorious house
With beautiful faces, thick as stars in heaven.
My wealth shall be so great that I can spend
Millions each day nor feel the want. I'll give
Till there shall be no poor in all my realms,
Nor any grieved; for I shall every night,
Like Haroun Alrasheed, the mighty Caliph,
Wander disguised with Jaafar and Mesrour
Redressing wrongs, repressing Almuenes,
And set up noble men like my dear father
In lofty places, giving priceless boons,
An unseen Providence to all mankind.

DOONYA
And you will marry me, dear Nureddene,
To Jaafar, your great Vizier, so that we
Shall never part, but every blessed night
Drink and be merry in your halls, and live
Felicitously for ever and for aye,
So long as full moons shine and brains go wrong
And wine is drunk. I make my suit to you from now,
Caliph of Faeryland.

NUREDDENE
Your suit is granted.
And meanwhile, Doonya, I amuse myself

With nearer kingdoms, Miriam's wavy locks
And Shazarath-al-Durr's sweet voice of song.

DOONYA
And meanwhile, brother, till you get your kingdom,
We shall be grim, quite grim.

AMEENA
Your father's angry.
I have not known him yet so moved. My child,
Do not force us to punish you.

NUREDDENE
With kisses?
Look, Doonya, at these two dear hypocrites,
She with her gentle honey-worded threats,
He with his stormings. Pooh! I care not for you.

AMEENA
Not care!

NUREDDENE
No, not a jot for him or you,
My little mother, or only just so much
As a small kiss is worth.

AMEENA
I told you, Doonya,
He was the dearest boy in all the world,
The best, the kindest.

DOONYA
Oh yes, you told me that.
And was the dearest boy in all the world
Rummaging the regions for the dearest girl,
While the admiring sun danced round the welkin
A triple circuit?

NUREDDENE
I have found her, Doonya.

DOONYA
The backward glance?

AMEENA
Your father!

Enter Ibn Sawy.

IBN SAWY
Ameena,
I'm called to the palace; something is afoot.
Ah, rascal! ah, you villain! you have come?

NUREDDENE
Sir, a long hour.

IBN SAWY
Rogue! scamp! what do you mean?
Knave, is my house a caravanserai
For you to lodge in when it is your pleasure?

NUREDDENE
It is the happiest home in Bassora,
Where the two kindest parents in the world
Excuse their vagabond son.

IBN SAWY
Hum! well! What, fellow,
You will buy trinkets? you will have me dunned?
And fleeced?

NUREDDENE
Did he dun you? I hope he asked
A fitting price; I told him to.

IBN SAWY

Sir, sir,
What game is this to buy your hussies trinkets
And send your father in the bill? Who taught you
This rule of conduct?

NUREDDENE

You, sir.

IBN SAWY

I, rascal?

NUREDDENE

You told me
That debt must be avoided like a sin.
What other way could I avoid it, sir,
Yet give the trinket?

IBN SAWY

Logic of impudence!
Tell me, you curled wine-bibbing Aristotle,
Did I tell you also to have mistresses
And buy them trinkets?

NUREDDENE

Not in so many words.

IBN SAWY

So many devils!

NUREDDENE

But since you did not marry me
Nor buy a beautiful slave for home delight,
I thought you'ld have me range outside for pleasures
To get experience of the busy world.
If 'twas an oversight, it may be mended.

Ibn Sawy
I'm dumb!

Nureddene
There is a Persian Muazzim sells,
Whom buy for me, — her rate's ten thousand pieces —

Ibn Sawy
A Persian! Muazzim sells! ten thousand pieces!
(*to himself*)
Where grows this tangle? I become afraid.

Nureddene
Whom buy for me, I swear I'll be at home
Quite four days out of seven.

Ibn Sawy
Hear me, young villain!
I'm called to the palace, but when I return,
Look to be bastinadoed, look to be curried
In boiling water. (*aside*) I must blind him well.
Ten days I shall be busy with affairs;
Then for your slavegirl. Bid the broker keep her.
Oh, I forgot! I swore to pull your curls
For your offences.

Nureddene
I must not let you, sir;
They are no longer my own property.
There's not a lock that has not been bespoken
For a memento.

Ibn Sawy
What! what! Impudent rascal!
(*aside*)
You handsome laughing rogue! Hear, Ameena,
Let Doonya sleep with Anice every night.

No, come; hear farther.

Exit with Ameena.

NUREDDENE

O Doonya, Doonya, tall, sweet, laughing Doonya!
I am in love, — drowned, strangled, dead with longing.

DOONYA

For the world's Persian? But she's sold by now.

NUREDDENE

I asked Muazzim.

DOONYA

A quite absolute liar.

NUREDDENE

O if she is, I'll leave all other cares
And only seek her through an empty world.

DOONYA

What, could one backward glance sweep you so forward?

NUREDDENE

Why, Doonya!

DOONYA

Brother, I know a thing I know
You do not know. A sweet bird sang it to me
In an upper chamber.

NUREDDENE

Doonya, you're full of something,
And I must hear it.

DOONYA

What will you give me for it?

None of your nighthawk kisses, cousin mine!
But a mild loving kind fraternal pledge
I'll not refuse.

NUREDDENE

You are the wickedest, dearest girl
In all the world, the maddest sweetest sister
A sighing lover ever had. Now tell me.

DOONYA

More, more! I must be flattered.

NUREDDENE

No more. Come, mischief,
You'll keep me in suspense?
(*pulls her ears*)

DOONYA

Enough, enough!
The Persian — listen and perpend, O lover!
Lend ear while I unfold my wondrous tale,
A tale long, curled and with a tip, — Oh Lord!
I'll clip my tale. The Persian's bought for you
And in the upper chambers.

NUREDDENE

Doonya, Doonya!
But those two loving hypocrites, —

DOONYA

All's meant
To be surprise.

NUREDDENE

Surprise me no surprises.
I am on fire, Doonya, I am on fire.
The upper chambers?

DOONYA

Stop, stop! You do not know;
There is an ogre at her door, a black
White-tusked huge-muscled hideous grinning giant,
Of mood uproarious, horrible of limb,
An Ethiopian fell ycleped Harkoos.

NUREDDENE

The eunuch!

DOONYA

Stop, stop, stop. He has a sword,
A fearful, forceful, formidable blade.

NUREDDENE

Your eunuch and his sword! I mount to heaven
And who shall stop me?

Exit.

DOONYA

Stop, stop! yet stop! He's off
Like bolt from bowstring. Now the game's afoot
And Bassora's Soldan, Mohamad Alzayni,
May whistle for his slavegirl. I am Fate,
For I upset the plans of Viziers and of Kings.

Exit.

Scene 3

Ibn Sawy's house. The upper chambers of the women's apartments.
Doonya, sleeping on a couch. Enter Nureddene and Anice.

NUREDDENE
I told you 'twas the morning.

ANICE
Morning so early?
This moment 'twas the evening star; is that
The matin lustre?

NUREDDENE
There is a star at watch beside the moon
Waiting to see you ere it leave the skies.
Is it your sister Peri?

ANICE
It is our star
And guards us both.

NUREDDENE
It is the star of Anice,
The star of Anice-aljalice who came
From Persia guided by its silver beams
Into these arms of vagrant Nureddene
Which keep her till the end. Sweet, I possess you!
Till now I could not patently believe it.
Strange, strange that I who nothing have deserved,
Should win what all would covet! We are fools
Who reach at baubles taking them for stars.

O wiser woman who come straight to Heaven!
But I have wandered by the way and staled
The freshness of delight with gadding pleasures,
Anticipated Love's perfect fruit with sour
And random berries void of real savour.
Oh fool! had I but known! What can I say
But once more that I have deserved you not,
Who yet must take you, knowing my undesert,
Whatever come hereafter?

ANICE

The house is stirring.

NUREDDENE

Who is this sleeping here? My cousin Doonya!

DOONYA (*waking*)

Is morning come? My blessing on you, children.
Be good and kind, dears; love each other, darlings.

NUREDDENE

Dame Mischief, thanks; thanks, Mother Madcap.

DOONYA

Now, whither?

NUREDDENE

To earth from Paradise.

DOONYA

Wait, wait! You must not
Walk off the stage before your part is done.
The situation now with open eyes
And lifted hands and chidings. You'll be whipped,
Anice, and Nureddene packed off to Mecca
On penitential legs; I shall be married.
(*opening the door*)

Oh, our fell Ethiopian snoozing here?
Snore, noble ogre, snore louder than nature
To excuse your gloomy skin from worse than thwacks.
Wait for me, Nureddene.

Exit.

ANICE

They will be angry.

NUREDDENE

Oh, with two smiles I'll buy an easy pardon.

ANICE

Whatever comes, we are each other's now.

NUREDDENE

Nothing will come to us but happy days,
You, my surpassing jewel, on my neck
Closer to me than my own heartbeats.

ANICE

Yes,
Closer than kisses, closer than delight,
Close only as love whom sorrow and delight
Cannot diminish, nor long absence change
Nor daily prodigality of joy
Expend immortal love.

NUREDDENE

You have the lore.

Doonya returns.

DOONYA

I have told Nuzhath to call mother here.
There will be such a gentle storm.

Enter Ameena at the door.

AMEENA

Harkoos!
Sleeping?

HARKOOS

Gmn — mmn —

DOONYA

Grunted almost like nature,
Thou excellent giant.

AMEENA

Harkoos, dost thou sleep?

HARKOOS

Sleep! I! I was only pondering a text of Koran with closed eyes, lady. You give us slaves pitiful small time for our devotions; but ’twill all be accounted for hereafter.

AMEENA

And canst thou meditate beneath the lash?
For there thou’lt shortly be.

HARKOOS

Stick or leather, ’tis all one to Harkoos. I will not be cudgelled out of my straight road to Paradise.

AMEENA

My mind misgives me.
(*enters the room*)
Was this well done, my child?

NUREDDENE

Dear, think the chiding given; do not pain
Your forehead with a frown.

AMEENA
You, Doonya, too
Were part of this?

DOONYA
Part! you shall not abate
My glory; I am its artificer,
The auxiliary and supplement of Fate.

AMEENA
Quite shameless in your disobedience, Doonya?
Your father's anger will embrace us all.

NUREDDENE
And nothing worse than the embrace which ends
A chiding and a smile, our fault deserves.
You had a gift for me in your sweet hands
Concealed behind you; I have but reached round
And taken it ere you knew.

AMEENA
For you, my son?
She was not for you, she was for the King.
This was your worst fault, child; all others venial
Beside it.

NUREDDENE
For the King! You told me, Doonya,
That she was bought for me, a kind surprise
Intended?

DOONYA
I did; exact!

AMEENA
Such falsehood, Doonya!

DOONYA
No falsehood, none. Purchased she was for him,
For he has got her. And surprise! Well, mother,
Are you not quite surprised? And uncle will be
Most woefully. My cousin and Anice too
Are both caught napping, — all except great Doonya.
No falsehood, mere excess of truth, a bold
Anticipation of the future, mother.

NUREDDENE
I did not know of this. Yet blame not Doonya;
For had I known, I would have run with haste
More breathless to demand my own from Fate.

AMEENA
What will your father think? I am afraid.
He was most urgent, grave beyond his wont.
Absent yourself awhile and let me bear
The first keen breathings of his anger.

NUREDDENE
The King!
And if he were the Caliph of the world,
He should not have my love. Come, fellow-culprit.
Exit with Doonya.

AMEENA
Harkoos, go fetch your master here; and stiffen
The muscles of your back. Negligent servant!

HARKOOS
'Tis all one to Harkoos. Stick or leather! leather or stick! 'Tis the way of this wicked and weary world.
Exit.

AMEENA
Yet, Anice, tell me, is't too late? Alas!

Your cheeks and lowered eyes confess the fault.
I fear your nature and your nurture, child,
Are not so beautiful as is your face.
Could you not have forbidden this?

ANICE

Lady,
Remember my condition. Can a slave
Forbid or order? We are only trained
To meek and quick obedience; and what's virtue
In freemen is in us a deep offence.
Do you command your passions, not on us
Impose that service; 'tis not in our part.

AMEENA

You have a clever brain and a quick tongue.
And yet this speech was hardly like a slave's!
I will not blame you.

ANICE

I deny not, lady,
My heart consented to this fault.

AMEENA

I know
Who 'twas besieged you, girl, and do not blame
Your heart for yielding where it had no choice.
Go in.

Exit Anice. Enter Harkoos and Ibn Sawy.

IBN SAWY

I hope, I hope that has not chanced
Which I have striven to prevent. This slave
Grins only and mutters gibberish to my questions.

AMEENA

The worst.

IBN SAWY

Why, so! the folly was my own
And I must bear its heavy consequence.
Sir, you shall have your wage for what has happened.

HARKOOS

The way of the world. Whose peg's loose? Beat Harkoos. Because my young master would climb through the wrong window and mistake a rope-ladder for the staircase, my back must ache. Was the windowsill my post? Have I wings to stand upon air or a Djinn's eye to see through wood? How bitter is injustice!

IBN SAWY

You shall be thrashed for your poor gift of lying.

AMEENA

Blame none; it was unalterable fate.

IBN SAWY

That name by which we put our sins on God,
Yet shall not so escape. 'Twas our indulgence
Moulded the boy and made him fit for sin;
Which now, by our past mildness hampered quite,
We cannot punish without tyranny.
Offences we have winked at, when they knocked
At foreign doors, how shall we look at close
When they come striking home?

AMEENA

What will you do?

IBN SAWY

The offence here merits death, but not the offender.
Easy solution if the sin could die
And leave the sinner living!

Ameena
Vizier, you are perplexed, to talk like this.
Because a little's broken, break not more.
Let Nureddene have Anice-aljalice,
As Fate intended. Buy another slave
Fairer than she is for great Alzayni's bed,
Return his money to the treasury
And cover up this fault.

Ibn Sawy
With lies?

Ameena
With silence.

Ibn Sawy
Will God be silent? will my enemies?
The son of Khakan silent? Ameena,
My children have conspired my shame and death.

Ameena
Face not the thing so mournfully. Vizier, you want
A woman's wit beside you in the Court.
Muene may speak; will you be dumb? Whom then
Will the King trust? Collect your wits, be bold,
Be subtle; guard yourself, protect your child.

Ibn Sawy
You urge me on a road my weaker heart
Chooses, not reason. But consider, dame,
If we excuse such gross and violent fault
Done in our house, what hope to save our boy, —
Oh, not his body, but the soul within?
'Twill petrify in vice and grow encrusted
With evil as with a leprosy.

Ameena

Do this.
Show a fierce anger, have a gleaming knife
Close at his throat, let him be terrified.
Then I'll come in with tears and seem to save him
On pledge of fairer conduct.

Ibn Sawy

This has a promise.
Give me a knife and let me try to frame
My looks to anger.

Ameena

Harkoos, a dagger here!
Harkoos gives his dagger.

Ibn Sawy

But see you come not in too early anxious
And mar the game.

Ameena

Trust me.

Ibn Sawy

Go, call my son,
Harkoos; let him not know that I am here.
Exit Harkoos.
Go, Ameena.
Exit Ameena.
Plays oft have serious fruit,
'Tis seen; then why not this? 'tis worth the trial.
Prosper or fail, I must do something quickly
Before I go upon the Caliph's work
To Roum the mighty. But I hear him come.
Enter Nureddene and Harkoos.

NUREDDENE
You're sure of it? You shall have gold for this
Kind treason.

HARKOOS
Trust Harkoos; and if he beats me,
Why, sticks are sticks and leather is but leather.

NUREDDENE
Father!

IBN SAWY
O rascal, traitor, villain, imp!
He throws him down on a couch and holds him under his dagger.
I'll father you. Prepare, prepare your soul,
Your black and crime-encrusted soul for hell.
I'm death and not your father.

NUREDDENE
Mother, quick!
Help, mother!
Ameena comes hurrying in.
The poor dear old man is mad.

IBN SAWY
Ahh, woman! wherefore do you come so soon?

NUREDDENE
How his eyes roll! Satan, abandon him.
Take him off quickly.

IBN SAWY
Take me off, you villain?

NUREDDENE
Tickle him in the ribs, that's the best way.

IBN SAWY
Tickle me in the ribs! Impudent villain!
I'll cut your throat.

AMEENA (*frightened*)
Husband, what do you? think,
He is your only son.

IBN SAWY
And preferable
I had not him. Better no son than bad ones.

NUREDDENE
Is there no help then?

IBN SAWY
None; prepare!

NUREDDENE
All right.
But let me lie a little easier first.

IBN SAWY
Lie easier! Rogue, your impudence amazes.
You shall lie easier soon on coals of hell.

AMEENA
This goes no farther.

ANICE (*looking in*)
They are in angry talk.
Oh, kill me rather!

NUREDDENE
Waste not your terrors, sweetheart.
We are rehearsing an old comedy,
"The tyrant father and his graceless son".

Foolish old man!

IBN SAWY
What! what!

NUREDDENE
See now the end
Of all your headstrong moods and wicked rages
You would indulge yourself in, though I warned you,
Against your gallant handsome virtuous son.
And now they have turned your brain! Vicious indulgence,
How bitter-dusty is thy fruit! Be warned
And put a rein on anger, curb in wrath,
That enemy of man. Oh, thou art grown
A sad example to all angry fathers!

IBN SAWY
Someone had told you of this. (*to Harkoos*) Grinning villain!

HARKOOS
Oh yes, it is I, of course. Your peg's loose; beat Harkoos.

IBN SAWY
My peg, you rogue! I'll loose your peg for you.

NUREDDENE
No, father, let him be, and hear me out.
I swear it was not out of light contempt
For your high dignity and valued life
More precious to me than my blood, if I
Transgressed your will in this. I knew not of it,
Nor that you meant my Anice for the King.
For me I thought her purchased, so was told,
And still believe religiously that Fate
Brought her to Bassora only for me.

IBN SAWY
It was a fault, my child.

NUREDDENE
Which I cannot repent.

IBN SAWY
You are my son, generous and true and bold,
Though faulty. Take the slavegirl then, but swear
Never hereafter mistress, slave or wife
Lies in your arms but only she; neither,
Until herself desire it, mayst thou sell her.
Swear this and keep thy love.

NUREDDENE
I swear it.

IBN SAWY
Leave us.
Exit Nureddene.
Anice, in care for thee I have required
This oath from him, which he, perhaps, will keep.
Do thou requite it; be to him no less
Than a dear wife.

ANICE
How noble is the nature
That prompts you to enforce on great offenders
Their dearest wishes!

IBN SAWY
Go in, my child; go, Anice.
Exit Anice.
Last night of my departure hence to Roum
To parley with the Greek for great Haroun
I spoke with you, and my long year of absence, —

AMEENA
It is a weary time.

IBN SAWY
Wherein much evil
May chance; and therefore will I leave my children
As safe as God permits. Doonya to nuptials.
The son of Khakan wants her for his cub,
But shall not have her. One shall marry her
Who has the heart and hand to guard her well.

AMEENA
Who, husband?

IBN SAWY
Murad, Captain of the City.
He rises daily in Alzayni's favour.

AMEENA
He is a Turk. Our noble Arab branch
Were ill engrafted on that savage stock.

IBN SAWY
A prejudice. There is no stock in Islam
Except the Prophet. For our Nureddene,
I will divide my riches in two halves,
Leave one to him and one for you with Murad,
While you are with your kin or seem to be.

AMEENA
Oh wherefore this?

IBN SAWY
'Tis likely that the boy,
Left here in sole command, will waste his wealth
And come to evil. If he's sober, well;
If not, when he is bare as any rock,

Abandoned by his friends, spewed out by all,
It may be that in this sharp school and beaten
With savage scourges the wild blood in him
May learn sobriety and noble use:
Then rescue him, assist his better nature.
And we shall see too how the loves endure
Betwixt him and the Persian; whether she
Deserves her monarchy in his wild will,
Or, even deserving, keeps it.

AMEENA

But, dear husband,
Shall I not see my boy for a whole year?

IBN SAWY

No tears! Consider it the punishment
Of our too fond indulgent love, — happy
If that be worst. All will end well, I hope,
And I returning, glad, to Bassora
Embrace a son reformed, a happy niece
Nursing her babe, and you, the gentle mother
Like the sweet kindly earth whose patient love
Embraces even our faults and sins. Grant it,
O Allah, if it be at all Thy will.

Exeunt.

Scene 4

A room in Ajebe's house.
Ajebe.

AJEBE
Balkis, do come, my heart.

Enter Balkis.

BALKIS
Your will?

AJEBE
My will!
When had I any will since you came here,
You rigorous tyrant?

BALKIS
Was it for abuse
You called me?

AJEBE
Bring your lute and sing to me.

BALKIS
I am not in the mood.

AJEBE
Sing, I entreat you.
I am hungry for your voice of pure delight.

BALKIS
I am no kabob, nor my voice a curry.

Hungry, forsooth!

Exit.

AJEBE

Oh, Balkis, Balkis! hear me.

Enter Mymoona.

MYMOONA

It's useless calling; she is in her moods.
And there's your Vizier getting down from horse
In the doorway.

AJEBE

I will go and bring him up.
Mymoona, coax her for me, will you, girl?

Exit.

MYMOONA

It is as good to meet a mangy dog
As this same uncle of ours. He seldom comes.

She conceals herself behind a curtain.
Reenter Ajebe with Almuene.

ALMUENE

He goes tomorrow? Well. And Nureddene
The scapegrace holds his wealth in hand? Much better.
I always said he was a fool. (*to himself*) Easily
I might confound him with this flagrant lapse
About the slavegirl. But wait! wait! He gone,
His memory waned, his riches squandered quite,
I'll ruin his son, ruin the insolent Turk
He has preferred to my Fareed. His Doonya
And Anice slavegirls to my lusty boy,
His wife — but she escapes. It is enough.
They come back to a desolate house. Oh, let
Their forlorn wrinkles hug an empty nest
In life's cold leafless winter! Meanwhile I set

My seal on every room in the King's heart;
He finds no chamber open when he comes.

AJEBE
Uncle, you ponder things of weight?

ALMUENE
No, Ajebe;
Trifles, mere trifles. You're a friend, I think,
Of Ibn Sawy's son?

AJEBE
We drink together.

ALMUENE
Right, right! Would you have place, power, honours, gold,
Or is your narrow soul content with ease?

AJEBE
Why, uncle!

ALMUENE
Do you dread death? furious disgrace?
Or beggary that's worse than either? Do you?

AJEBE
All men desire those blessings, fear these ills.

ALMUENE
They shall be yours in overflowing measure,
Good, if you serve me, ill, if you refuse.

AJEBE
What service?

ALMUENE
Ruin wanton Nureddene.

Gorge him with riot and excess; rob him
Under a friendly guise; force him to spend
Till he's a beggar. Most, delude him on
To prone extremity of drunken shame
Which he shall feel, yet have no power to check.
Drench all his senses in vile profligacy,
Not mere light gallantries, but gutter filth,
Though you have to share it. Do this and you're made;
But this undone, you are yourself undone.
Eight months I give you. No, attend me not.

Exit.

AJEBE
Mymoona! girl, where are you?

MYMOONA
Here, here, behind you.

AJEBE
A Satan out of hell has come to me.

MYMOONA
A Satan, truly, and he'ld make you one,
Damning you down into the deepest hell of all.

AJEBE
What shall I do?

MYMOONA
Not what he tells you to.

AJEBE
Yet if I do not, I am gone. No man
In Bassora could bear his heavy wrath.
On the other side —

MYMOONA
Leave the other side. 'Tis true,
The dog will keep his word in evil; for good,
'Tis brittle, brittle. But you cannot do it;
Our Balkis loves his Anice so completely.

AJEBE
Girl, girl, my life and goods are on the die.

MYMOONA
Do one thing.

AJEBE
I will do what you shall bid me.

MYMOONA
He has some vile companions, has he not?

AJEBE
Cafoor and Ayoob and the rest; a gang
Of pleasant roisterers without heart or mind.

MYMOONA
Whisper the thing to them; yourself do nothing.
Check him at times. Whatever else you do,
Take not his gifts; they are the price of shame.
If he is ruined, as without their urging
Is likely, Satan's satisfied; if not,
We'll flee from Bassora when there's no help.

AJEBE
You have a brain. Yet if I must be vile,
A bolder vileness best becomes a man.

MYMOONA
And Balkis?

AJEBE
True.

MYMOONA
Be safe, be safe. The rest
Is doubtful, but one truth is sadly sure,
That dead men cannot love.

AJEBE
I'll think of it.
Mymoona, leave me; send your sister here.
Exit Mymoona.
The thing's too vile! and yet — honours and place,
And to set Balkis on a kingdom's crest
Breaking and making men with her small hands
The lute's too large for! But the way is foul.
Enter Balkis.

BALKIS
What's your command?

AJEBE
Bring me your lute and sing.
I'm sad and troubled. Cross me not, my girl;
My temper's wry.

BALKIS
Oh, threats?

AJEBE
Remember still
You are a slave, however by my love
Pampered, and sometimes think upon the scourge.

BALKIS
Do, do! Yes, beat me! Or why beat me only?
Kill me, as you have killed my heart already

With your harsh words. I knew, I knew what all
Your love would end in. Oh! oh! oh! (*weeps*)

AJEBE

Forgive me,
O sweetest heart. I swear I did not mean it.

BALKIS

Because in play I sometimes speak a little —
O scourge me, kill me!

AJEBE

'Twas a jest, a jest!
Tear not my heart with sobs. Look, Balkis, love,
You shall have necklaces worth many thousands,
Pearls, rubies, if you only will not weep.

BALKIS

I am a slave and only fit for scourging,
Not pearls and rubies. Mymoona! oh, Mymoona!
Bring him a scourge and me a cup of poison.
Exit.

AJEBE

She plays upon me as upon her lute.
I'm as inert, as helpless, as completely
Ruled by her moods, as dumbly pleasureless
By her light hands untouched. How to appease her?
Mymoona! oh, Mymoona!
Exit.

Act III

Bassora.

Scene 1

Ibn Sawy's house. A room in the outer apartments decorated for a banquet.
Doonya, Anice, Balkis.

DOONYA
Lord, how they pillage! Even the furniture
Cannot escape these Djinns. Ogre Ghaneem
Picks up that costly chair between his teeth
And off to his castle; devil Ayoob drops
That table of mosaic in his pocket;
Zeb sweeps off rugs and couches in a whirlwind.
What purse will long put up with such ill-treatment?

BALKIS
It must be checked.

DOONYA
'Tis much that he has kept
His promise to my uncle. Oh, he's sound!
These villains spoil him. Anice, you're to blame.
However you complain, yourself are quite
As reckless.

ANICE
I?

DOONYA

Yes, you. Is there a bright
Unnecessary jewel you have seen
And have not bought? a dress that took your fancy
And was not in a moment yours? Or have you lost
A tiny chance of laughter, song and wine,
Since you were with him?

ANICE

A few rings and chains,
Some silks and cottons I have bought at times.

DOONYA

What did these trifles cost?

ANICE

I do not know.

DOONYA

Of course you do not. Come, it's gone too far;
Restrain him, curb yourself.

BALKIS

Next time he calls you
To sing among his wild companions, send
Cold answers, do not go.

ANICE

To break the jest,
The flow of good companionship, drive out
Sweet friendly looks with anger, be a kill-joy
And frowner in this bright and merry world!
Oh, all the sins that human brows grow wrinkled
With frowning at, could never equal this!

DOONYA

But if the skies grew darker?

Anice

If they should!
It *was* a bright and merry world. To see him
Happy and gay and kind was all I cared for;
There my horizon stopped. But if the skies
Did darken! Doonya, it shall cease today.

Enter Azeem.

Well, Azeem.

Azeem

Madam, half the creditors,
And that means half the shops in Bassora,
Hold session in the outer hall and swear
It shall be permanent till they get money.

Anice

Where is your master? Call him here. A moment!
Have you the bills?

Azeem

All of them, long as pillars
And crammed from head to foot with monstrous sums.

Anice

Call him.

Azeem

He's here.

Enter Nureddene.

Nureddene

What, cousin Doonya! Balkis!
Did you steal down to see the decorations?
Are they not pretty?

Doonya

Like a painted tombstone

Sculptured and arabesqued, but death's inside
And bones, my brother, bones.

NUREDDENE
And there are bones
In this fair pleasing outside called dear Doonya,
But let us only think of rosy cheeks,
Sweet eyes and laughing lips and not the bones.

DOONYA
You have boned my metaphor and quite disboned it,
Until there's nothing firm inside; 'tis pulpy.

ANICE
The creditors besiege you, Nureddene;
You'll pay them.

NUREDDENE
Serious, Anice?

ANICE
Till you do,
I will not smile again. Azeem, the bills!

NUREDDENE
Is this your doing, Doonya?

DOONYA
Yours, cousin, yours.

NUREDDENE
Is't so? Anice?

ANICE
I've told you.

NUREDDENE

Show me the bills.
Go in, you three.

ANICE

Ah, he is grieved and angry!
His eyes are clouded; let me speak to him.

BALKIS

Now you'll spoil all; drag her off, Doonya.

DOONYA

Come.

Exit drawing away Anice, Balkis behind.

NUREDDENE

Well, sir, where are these bills?

AZEEM

You will see the bills?

NUREDDENE

The sums, the sums!

AZEEM

To tailor Mardouc twenty-four thousand pieces, namely, for caftans, robes, shawls, turbans, Damascus silks, —

NUREDDENE

Leave the inventory.

AZEEM

To tailor Labkan, another twenty thousand; to the baker, two thousand; to the confectioner, as much; to the Bagdad curio-merchant twenty-four thousand; to the same from Ispahan, sixteen thousand; to the jeweller on account of necklaces, bracelets, waist-ornaments, anklets, rings, pendents and all manner of trinkets for the slavegirl Anice-aljalice, ninety thousand only; to the upholsterer —

NUREDDENE

Hold, hold! Why, what are all these monstrous sums?
Hast thou no word but thousands in thy belly,
Exorbitant fellow?

AZEEM

Why, sir, 'tis in the bills; my belly's empty enough.

NUREDDENE

Nothing but thousands!

AZEEM

Here's one for seven hundred, twelve dirhams and some odd fractions from Husayn cook.

NUREDDENE

The sordid, dingy rogue! Will he dun me so brutally for a base seven hundred?

AZEEM

The fruiterer —

NUREDDENE

Away! bring bags.

AZEEM

Bags, sir?

NUREDDENE

Of money, fool. Call Harkoos and all the slaves. Bring half my treasury.

Exit Azeem.

She frown on me! look cold! for sums, for debts!
For money, the poor paltry stuff we dig

By shovels from base mire. Grows love so beggarly
That it must think of piastres? O my heart!

Enter Azeem, Harkoos and Slaves with bags of money.

Heap them about the room. Go, Azeem, call
That hungry pack; they shall be fed.

Exit Azeem.

Harkoos,
Open two bags there. Have you broken the seals?

Enter Azeem ushering in the creditors.

Who asks for money?

COOK

I, sir. Seven hundred denars, twelve dirhams and three fourths of a dirham, that is my amount.

NUREDDENE

Take thy amount, thou dingy-hearted rogue.

Throws a bag towards him.

You there, take yours.

JEWELLER

Sir, this is not a hundredth part of your debt to me.

NUREDDENE

Give him two hundred bags.

HARKOOS

Bags, sir?

NUREDDENE

Do you grin, rogue, and loiter? Take that! (*strikes him*)

HARKOOS

Exactly. Your peg's loose, beat Harkoos. Old master or young, 'tis all one to Harkoos. Stick or leather! cuff or kick! these are all the houses of my horoscope.

NUREDDENE
I am sorry I struck thee; there's gold. Give them all the money; all, I say. Porter that home, you rascals, and count your sums. What's over, cram your throats with it; or, if you will, throw it in the gutter.

CREDITORS (*scrambling and quarrelling for the bags*)
That's mine! that's mine! no, mine! Leave go, you robber. Whom do you call robber, thief?

NUREDDENE
Cudgel them from the room.

Exeunt Creditors snatching bags
and pursued by the slaves.

AZEEM
'Tis madness, sir.

Nureddene motions him away. Exit Azeem.

NUREDDENE
If she were clothed in rags
And beggary her price, I'ld follow her
From here to China. She to frown on me
For money!

Enter Anice.

ANICE
Nureddene, what have you done?

NUREDDENE
You bade me pay the fellows: I have paid them.

ANICE
You are angry with me? I did not think you could
Be angry with me for so slight a cause.

NUREDDENE
I did not think that you could frown on me
For money, for a matter of money!

ANICE
You
Believe that? Is it so you know me? Dear,
While for my sake you ruined yourself, must I
Look smiling on? Nay, ruin then yourself
And try me.

NUREDDENE
Dear Anice, it was with myself
I was angry, but the coward in me turned
On you to avenge its pain. Let me forget
All else and only think of you and love.

ANICE
Shall I sing to you?

NUREDDENE
Do, Anice.

ANICE
There's a song —

Song
Love keep terms with tears and sorrow?
He's too bright.
Born today, he may tomorrow
Say goodnight.
Love is gone ere grief can find him;
But his way
Tears that, falling, lag behind him
Still betray.

I cannot sing.

NUREDDENE

Tears, Anice? O my love,
What worst calamity do they portend
For him who caused them?

ANICE

None, none! or only showers
The sunlight soon o'ertakes. Away with grief!
What is it after all but money lost?
Beggars are happier, are they not, my lord?

NUREDDENE

Much happier, Anice.

ANICE

Let us be beggars, then.
Oh, we shall wander blissfully about
In careless rags. And I shall take my lute
And buy you honey-crusts with my sweet voice.
For is not my voice sweet, my master?

NUREDDENE

Sweet
As Gabriel's when he sings before the Lord
And Heaven listens.

ANICE

We shall reach Bagdad
Someday and meet the Caliph in the streets,
The mighty Caliph Haroun Alrasheed,
Disguised, a beggar too, give him our crusts
And find ourselves all suddenly the friends
Of the world's master. Shall we not, my lord?

NUREDDENE

Anice, we shall.

ANICE

Let us be beggars then,
Rich happy paupers singing through the world.
Ah, but you have a father and a mother!
Come, sit down there and I will stand before you
And tell a story.

NUREDDENE

Sit by me and tell it.

ANICE

No, no. I'll stand.

NUREDDENE

Well, wilful. Now, your tale.

ANICE

I have forgotten it. It was about
A man who had a gem earth could not buy.

NUREDDENE

As I have you.

ANICE

Be silent, sir. He kept it
With ordinary jewels which he took
Each day and threw into the street, and said,
"I'll show this earth that all the gems it has,
Together match not this I'll solely keep."

NUREDDENE

As I'll keep you.

ANICE

Ah, but he did not know
What slender thread bound to a common pearl
That wonder. When he threw that out, alas!

His jewel followed, and though he sought earth through,
He never could again get back his gem.

NUREDDENE (*after a pause*)
Tomorrow I will stop this empty life,
Cut down expense and only live for you.
Tonight there is the banquet. It must stand,
My word being given. Azeem!

Enter Azeem.

What money still
Is in the treasury? What debts outstand?

AZEEM
More now than you can meet. But for today's folly, all would have been well, — your lordly folly! Oh, beat me! I must speak.

NUREDDENE
Realize all the estate, the house only excepted; satisfy the creditors. For what's left, entreat delay.

AZEEM
They will not be entreated. They have smelt the carrion and are all winging up, beak outstretched and talons ready.

NUREDDENE
Carrion indeed and vile! Wherefore gave God
Reason to his best creatures, if they suffer
The rebel blood to o'ercrow that tranquil wise
And perfect minister? Do what thou canst.
I have good friends to help me in my need.

Exit.

AZEEM
Good friends? good bloodsuckers, good thieves! Much help his need will have out of them!

ANICE
There's always Ajebe.

AZEEM
Will you trust him? He is the Vizier's nephew.

Exeunt.

Scene 2

The same.
Anice, Nureddene.

ANICE
And they all left?

NUREDDENE
Cafoor crept down and heard
The clamorous creditors; and they all left.
Ghaneem's dear mother's sick; for my sweet love
Only he came, leaving her sad bedside;
Friend Ayoob's uncle leaves today for Mecca:
In Cafoor's house there is a burial toward;
Zeb's father, Omar's brother, Hussan's wife
Are piteously struck down. There never was
So sudden an epidemic witnessed yet
In Bassora, and all with various ailments.

ANICE
This is their friendship!

NUREDDENE
We will not judge so harshly.
It may be that a generous kindly shame
Or half-remorseful delicacy had pricked them.
I've sent Harkoos to each of them in turn
For loans to help me. We shall see. Who's here?
Enter Ajebe.
Ajebe, you have come back, you only? Yes,
You were my friend and checked me always. Man
Is not ignoble, but has angel soarings,

Howe'er the nether devil plucks him down.
Still we have souls nor is the mould quite broken
Of that original and faultless plan
Which Adam spoilt.

AJEBE
I am your ruin's author.
If you have still a sword, use it upon me.

NUREDDENE
What's this?

AJEBE
Incited by the Vizier, promised
Greatness, I in my turn incited these
To hurry you to ruin. Will you slay me?

NUREDDENE (*after a silence*)
Return and tell the Vizier that work's done.
Be great with him.

AJEBE
Are you entirely ruined?

NUREDDENE
Doubt not your work's well done; you can assure
The uncle. Came you back for that?

AJEBE
If all I have, —

NUREDDENE
No more! return alive.

AJEBE
You punish home.

Exit.

NUREDDENE
The eunuch lingers.

Enter Harkoos.

Well, sir, your success?

HARKOOS
I went first to Ayoob. He has had losses, very suddenly, and is dolorous that he cannot help you.

NUREDDENE
Ghaneem?

HARKOOS
Has broken his leg for the present and cannot see anyone for a long fortnight.

NUREDDENE
Cafoor?

HARKOOS
Has gone into the country — upstairs.

NUREDDENE
Zeb?

HARKOOS
Wept sobbingly. Every time I mentioned money, he drowned the subject in tears. I might have reached his purse at last, but I cannot swim.

NUREDDENE
Omar?

HARKOOS
Will burn his books sooner than lend you money.

NUREDDENE
Did all fail me?

HARKOOS
Some had dry eyes and some wet, but none a purse.

NUREDDENE
Go.

Exit Harkoos.

What next? Shall I, like him of Athens, change
And hate my kind? Then should I hate myself,
Who ne'er had known their faults, if my own sins
Pursued me not like most unnatural hounds
Into their screened and evil parts of nature.
God made them; what He made, is doubtless good.

ANICE
You still have me.

NUREDDENE
That's much.

ANICE
No, everything.

NUREDDENE
'Tis true and I shall feel it soon.

ANICE
My jewels
And dresses will fill up quite half the void.

NUREDDENE
Shall I take back my gifts?

ANICE
If they are mine,

I choose to sell them.

NUREDDENE

Do it. I forgot;
Let Cafoor have the vase I promised him.
Come, Anice. I will ask Murad for help.

Exeunt.

Scene 3

A room in Ajebe's house.
Balkis, Mymoona.

BALKIS
Did he not ask after me? I'm sick, Mymoona.

MYMOONA
Sick? I think both of you are dying of a galloping consumption.
Such colour in the cheeks was never a good symptom.

BALKIS
Tell him I am very, very ill; tell him I am dying. Pray be pathetic.

MYMOONA
Put saffron on your cheeks and look nicely yellow; he will melt.

BALKIS
I think my heart will break.

MYMOONA
Let it do so quickly; it will mend the sooner.

BALKIS (*in tears*)
How can you be so harsh to me, Mymoona?

MYMOONA
You foolish child! Why did you strain your power
To such a breaking tightness? There's a rhythm
Will shatter hardest stone; each thing in nature
Has its own point where it has done with patience
And starts in pieces; below that point play on it,

Nor overpitch the music. Look, he's coming.

BALKIS
I'll go.

MYMOONA (*holding her*)
You shall not.

Enter Ajebe.

AJEBE
I thought you were alone,
Mymoona. I am not cheap to thrust myself
Where I'm not wanted.

BALKIS
I would be gone, Mymoona.
In truth, I thought it was the barber's woman;
Therefore I stayed.

AJEBE
There are such hearts, Mymoona,
As think so little of adoring love,
They make it only a pedestal for pride,
A whipping-stock for their vain tyrannies.

BALKIS
Mymoona, there are men so weak in love,
They cannot bear more than an ass's load;
So high in their conceit, the tenderest
Kindest rebuke turns all their sweetness sour.

AJEBE
Some have strange ways of tenderness, Mymoona.

BALKIS
Mymoona, some think all control a tyranny.

MYMOONA
O you two children! Come, an end of this!
Give me your hand.

AJEBE
My hand? Wherefore my hand?

MYMOONA
Give it. I join two hands that much desire
And would have met ere this but for their owners,
Who have less sense than they.

BALKIS
She's stronger than me,
Or I'ld not touch you.

AJEBE
I would not hurt Mymoona;
Therefore I take your hand.

MYMOONA
Oh, is it so?
Then by your foolish necks! Make your arms meet
About her waist.

AJEBE
Only to satisfy you,
Whom only I care for.

MYMOONA
Yours here on his neck.

BALKIS
I was about to yawn, therefore I raised them.

MYMOONA
I go to fetch a cane. Look that I find you

Much better friends. If you will not agree,
Your bones at least shall sympathise and ruefully.

Exit.

AJEBE

How could you be so harsh to my great love?

BALKIS

How could you be so cruel and so wicked?

AJEBE

I kiss you, but 'tis only your red lips
So soft, not you who are more hard than stone.

BALKIS

I kiss you back, but only 'tis because
I hate to be in debt.

AJEBE

Will you be kinder?

BALKIS

Will you be more obedient and renounce
Your hateful uncle?

AJEBE

Him and all his works,
If you will only smile on me.

BALKIS

I'll laugh
Like any horse. No, I surrender. Clasp me,
I am your slave.

AJEBE

My queen of love.

BALKIS

Both, both.

AJEBE

Why were you so long froward?

BALKIS

Do you remember
I had to woo you in the market? how you
Hesitated a moment?

AJEBE

Vindictive shrew!

BALKIS

This time had I not reason to be angry?

AJEBE

Oh, too much reason! I feel so vile until
I find a means to wash this uncle stain from me.

Enter Mymoona.

MYMOONA

That's well. But we must now to Nureddene's.
For hard pressed as he is, he'll sell his Anice.

BALKIS

Never!

MYMOONA

He must.

AJEBE

I'll lend him thrice her value.

MYMOONA

Do not propose it. The wound you gave's too recent.

BALKIS
Then let me keep her as a dear deposit,
The sweet security of Ajebe's loan,
Till he redeems her.

MYMOONA
He will take no favours.
No, let him sell her in the open market;
Ajebe will overtop all bids. Till he
Get means, she's safe with us and waiting for him.

BALKIS
Oh, let us go at once.

MYMOONA
I'll order litters.
Exit.

AJEBE
Will you be like this always?

BALKIS
If you are good,
I will be. If not, I will outshrew Xantippe.

AJEBE
With such a heaven and hell in view, I'll be
An angel.

BALKIS
Of what colour?

AJEBE
Black beside you,
But fair as seraphs to what I have been.
Exeunt.

Scene 4

Ibn Sawy's house.
Anice, alone.

ANICE
If Murad fails him, what is left? He has
No other thing to sell but only me.
A thought of horror! Is my love then strong
Only for joy, only to share his heaven?
Can it not enter Hell for his dear sake?
How shall I follow him then after death,
If Heaven reject him? For the path's so narrow
Footing that judgment blade, to slip's so easy.
Avert the need, O Heaven.
Enter Nureddene.
Has Murad failed him?

NUREDDENE
Murad refuses. This load of debt's a torture!

ANICE
The dresses and the gems you made me keep —

NUREDDENE
Keep them; they are your own.

ANICE
I am your slavegirl.
My body and what it wears, all I am, all I have,
Are only for your use.

Nureddene
Girl, would you have me strip you then quite bare?

Anice
What does it matter? The coarsest rag ten dirhams
Might buy, would be enough, if you'ld still love me.

Nureddene
These would not meet one half of what I owe.

Anice
Master, you bought me for ten thousand pieces.

Nureddene
Be silent.

Anice
Has my value lessened since?

Nureddene
No more! You'll make me hate you.

Anice
If you do,
'Tis better; it will help my heart to break.

Nureddene
Have you the heart to speak of this?

Anice
Had I
Less heart, less love, I would not speak of it.

Nureddene
I swore to my father that I would not sell you.

ANICE
But there was a condition.

NUREDDENE
If you desired it!

ANICE
Do I not ask you?

NUREDDENE
Speak truth! do you desire it?
Truth, in the name of God who sees your heart!
Ah, you are silent.

ANICE (*weeping*)
How could I desire it?
Ajebe is here. Be friends with him, dear love;
Forgive his fault.

NUREDDENE
Anice, my own sins are
So heavy, not to forgive his lesser vileness
Would leave me without hope of heavenly pardon.

ANICE
I'll call him then.
Exit.

NUREDDENE
Let me absolve these debts,
Then straight with Anice to Bagdad the splendid.
There is the home for hearts and brains and hands,
Not in this petty centre. Core of Islam,
Bagdad, the flood to which all brooks converge.
Anice returns with Ajebe, Balkis, Mymoona.

AJEBE
Am I forgiven?

NUREDDENE
Ajebe, let the past
Have never been.

AJEBE
You are Ibn Sawy's son.

NUREDDENE
Give me your counsel, Ajebe. I have nothing
But the mere house which is not saleable.
My father must not find a homeless Bassora,
Returning.

MYMOONA
Nothing else?

ANICE
Only myself
Whom he'll not sell.

MYMOONA
He must.

NUREDDENE
Never, Mymoona.

MYMOONA
Fear not the sale which shall be in name alone.
'Tis only Balkis borrowing her from you
Who pawns her value. She will stay with me
Serving our Balkis, safe from every storm.
But if you ask, why then the mart and auction?
We must have public evidence of sale
To meet an uncle's questions.

ANICE

O now there's light.
Blessed Mymoona!

NUREDDENE

It must not be. My oath!

ANICE

But I desire it now, yes, I desire it.

NUREDDENE

And is my pride then nothing? Shall I sell her
To be a slavegirl's slavegirl? Pardon, Balkis.

MYMOONA

Too fine, too fine!

ANICE

To serve awhile my sister!
For that she is in heart.

BALKIS

Serve only in name.

MYMOONA

She will be safe while you rebuild your fortunes.

NUREDDENE

I do not like it.

MYMOONA

Nor does anyone
As in itself, but only as a refuge
From greater evils.

NUREDDENE

Oh, you're wrong, Mymoona.

To quibble with an oath! it will not prosper.
Straight dealing's best.

MYMOONA

You look at it too finely.

NUREDDENE

Have it your way, then.

MYMOONA

Call the broker here.
A quiet sale! The uncle must not hear of it.

AJEBE

'Twould be the plague.

NUREDDENE

I fear it will not prosper.

Exeunt.

Scene 5

The slave-market.
Muazzim with Anice exposed for sale; Ajebe, Aziz, Abdullah and Merchants.

MUAZZIM
Who bids?

AZIZ
Four thousand.

MUAZZIM
She went for ten when she was here first. Will you not raise your bid nearer her value?

AZIZ
She was new then and untouched. 'Tis the way with goods, broker; they lose value by time and purchase, use and soiling.

MUAZZIM
Oh, sir, the kissed mouth has always honey. But this is a Peri and immortal lips have an immortal sweetness.

AJEBE
Five hundred to that bid.

Enter Almuene with Slaves.

ALMUENE (*to himself*)
Ah, it is true! All things come round at last
With the full wheel of Fate; it is my hour.
Fareed shall have her. She shall be well handled
To plague her lover's heart before he dies.

(*aloud*)
Broker, who sells the girl and what's her rate?

AJEBE
All's lost.

MUAZZIM
Nureddene bin Alfazzal bin Sawy sells her and your nephew has bid for her four thousand and five hundred.

ALMUENE
My nephew bids for me. Who bids against?

AJEBE
Uncle —

ALMUENE
Go, find out other slavegirls, Ajebe.
Do well until the end.

Exit Ajebe.

Who bids against me?
She's mine then. Come.

ANICE
I'll not be sold to you.

ALMUENE
What, dar'st thou speak, young harlot? Fear the whip.

ANICE
Vizier, I fear you not; there's law in Islam.
My master will deny the sale.

ALMUENE
Thy master
Shall be a kitchen negro, who shall use thee.

Anice
Had I a whip, you should not say it twice.

Muazzim
Vizier, Vizier, by law the owner's acceptance only is final for the sale.

Almuene
It is a form, but get it. I am impatient
Until I have this strumpet in my grip.

Muazzim
Well, here he comes.

Enter Nureddene and Ajebe.

A Merchant
Shall we go, shall we go?

Abdullah
Stand by! 'Tis noble Ibn Sawy's son.
We must protect him even at our own peril.

Muazzim
She goes for a trifle, sir; and even that little you will not get. You will weary your feet with journeyings, only to be put off by his villains, and when you grow clamorous they will demand your order and tear it before your eyes. That's your payment.

Nureddene
That's nothing. The wolf's cub, hunchback Fareed!
The sale is off.

Muazzim
Be advised by me. Catch the girl by the hair and cuff her soundly, abusing her with the harshest terms your heart can consent to, then off with her quickly as if you had brought her to market only to execute an oath made in anger. So he loses his hold on her.

NUREDDENE
I'll tell the lie. One fine, pure-seeming falsehood,
Admitted, opens door to all his naked
And leprous family; in, in, they throng
And breed the house quite full.

MUAZZIM
The Vizier wants her.
He bids four thousand pieces and five hundred.

NUREDDENE
'Tis nothing. Girl, I keep my oath. Suffice it
You're bidden for and priced in open market here.
Come home! Be now less dainty, meeker of tongue,
Or you shall have more feeling punishments.
Do I need to sell thee? Home! my oath is kept.

ALMUENE
This is a trick to cheat the law. Thou ruffian!
Cheap profligate! What hast thou left to sell
But thy own sensual filth and drunken body, —
If any out of charity would spend
Some dirhams to reform thee with a scourge?
Vile son of a bland hypocrite!
He draws his scimitar.

ABDULLAH
Pause, Vizier.

AZIZ
Be patient, Nureddene.

ALMUENE
I yet shall kill him.
Hence, harlot, foot before me to my kitchen.

ANICE
He has abused me filthily, my lord,
Before these merchants.

ALMUENE
Abuse thee, rag? Hast thou
An use? To be abused is thy utility.
Thou shalt be used and common.

NUREDDENE
Stand by, you merchants; let none interfere
On peril of his life. Thou foul-mouthed tyrant,
Into the mire and dirt, where thou wert gendered!

ALMUENE
Help, help! Hew him in pieces.
The slaves are rushing forward.

ABDULLAH
What do you, fellows?
This is a Vizier and a Vizier's son.
Shall common men step in? You'll get the blows
For only thanks.

ALMUENE
Oh! oh! Will you then kill me?

NUREDDENE
If thou wouldst live, crave pardon of the star
Thou hast spat on. I would make thee lick her feet
But that thy lips would foul their purity.

ALMUENE
Pardon, oh, pardon!

NUREDDENE (*throwing him away*)
Live then, in thy gutter.
Exit with Anice.

ABDULLAH
Go, slaves, lift up your master, lead him off.
Exeunt Slaves with Almuene.
He is well punished.

AZIZ
What will come of this?

ABDULLAH
No good to Nureddene. Let's go and warn him;
He's bold and proud, may think to face it out,
Which were mere waiting death.

AZIZ
I pray on us
This falls not.
Exeunt Merchants.

MUAZZIM
Here was ill-luck!

AJEBE
Nor ends with this.
I'll have a ship wide-sailed and well-provisioned
For their escape. Bassora will not hold them.
Exeunt.

Scene 6

The Palace at Bassora.
Alzayni, Salar.

ALZAYNI
So it is written here. Hot interchange
And high defiance have already passed
Between our Caliph and the daring Roman.
Europe and Asia are at grips once more.
To inspect the southward armies unawares
Haroun himself is coming.

SALAR
Alfazzal then
Returns to us, unless the European,
After their barbarous fashion, seize on him.

ALZAYNI
'Tis strange, he sends no tidings of the motion
I made to Egypt.

SALAR
'Tis too dangerous
To write of, as indeed 'twas ill-advised
To make the approach.

ALZAYNI
Great dangers justify
The smaller. Caliph Alrasheed conceives
On trifling counts a dumb displeasure towards me
Which any day may speak; 'tis whispered of
In Bagdad. Alkhasib, the Egyptian Vizier,

Is in like plight. It is mere policy,
Salar, to build out of a common peril
A common safety.

SALAR

Haroun Alrasheed
Could break each one of you between two fingers,
Stretching his left arm out to Bassora,
His right to Egypt. Sultan, wilt thou strive
Against the single giant of the world?

ALZAYNI

Giants are mortal, friend, be but our swords
As bold as sharp. Call Murad here to me.
Exit Salar.
My state is desperate, if Haroun lives;
He's sudden and deadly, when his anger bursts.
But let me be more sudden, yet more deadly.
Enter Murad.
Murad, the time draws near. The Caliph comes
To Bassora; let him not thence return.

MURAD

My blade is sharp and what I do is sudden.

ALZAYNI

My gallant Turk! Thou shalt rise high, believe it.
For I need men like thee.

MURAD (*to himself*)

But Kings like thee
Earth needs not.

VOICE WITHOUT

Justice! justice! justice, King!
King of the Age, I am a man much wronged.

ALZAYNI
Who cries beneath my window? Chamberlain!
Enter Sunjar.

SUNJAR
An Arab daubed with mud and dirt, all battered,
Unrecognizable, with broken lips cries out
For justice.

ALZAYNI
Bring him here.
Exit Sunjar.
It is some brawl.
Enter Sunjar with Almuene.
Thou, Vizier! Who has done this thing to thee?

ALMUENE
Mohamad, son of Sulyman! Sultan
Alzayni! Abbasside! how shalt thou long
Have friends, if the King's enemies may slay
In daylight, here, in open Bassora
The King's best friends because they love the King?

ALZAYNI
Name them at once and choose their punishment.

ALMUENE
Alfazzal's son, that brutal profligate,
Has done this.

MURAD
Nureddene!

ALZAYNI
Upon what quarrel?

ALMUENE
A year ago Alfazzal bought a slavegirl
With the King's money for the King, a gem
Of beauty, learning, mind, fit for a Caliph.
But seeing the open flower he thought perhaps
Your royal nose too base to smell at it,
So gave her to his royaller darling son
To soil and rumple. No man with a neck
Dared tell you of it, such your faith was in him.

ALZAYNI
Is't so? our loved and trusted Ibn Sawy!

ALMUENE
This profligate squandering away his wealth
Brought her to market; there I saw her and bid
Her fair full price. Whereat he stormed at me
With words unholy; yet I answered mild,
"My son, not for myself, but the King's service
I need her." He with bold and furious looks,
"Dog, Vizier of a dog, I void on thee
And on thy Sultan." With which blasphemy
He seized me, rolled in the mire, battered with blows,
Kicks, pullings of the beard, then dragged me back
And flung me at his slavegirl's feet, who, proud
Of her bold lover, footed my grey head
Repeatedly and laughed, "This for thy King,
Thy dingy stingy King who with so little
Would buy a slavegirl sole in all the world."

SUNJAR
Great Hasheem's vein cords all the Sultan's forehead.

MURAD
The dog has murdered both of them with lies.

ALZAYNI

Now by the Prophet, my forefather! Out,
Murad! drag here the fellow and his girl;
Trail them with ropes tied to their bleeding heels,
Their faces in the mire, with pinioned hands
Behind their backs, into my presence here.
Sack Sawy's mansion, raze it to the ground.
What, am I grown so bare that by-lane dogs
Like these so loudly bay at me? They die!

MURAD

Sultan,—

ALZAYNI

He's doomed who speaks a word for them.

Exit.

ALMUENE

Brother-in-law Murad, fetch your handsome brother.
Soon, lest the Sultan hear of it!

MURAD

Vizier,
I know my duty. Know your own and do it.

ALMUENE

I'll wash, then forth in holiday attire
To see that pretty sport.

Exit.

SUNJAR

What will you do?

MURAD

Sunjar, a something swift and desperate.
I will not let them die.

SUNJAR

Run not on danger.
I'll send a runner hotfoot to their house
To warn them.

Exit Sunjar.

MURAD

Do so. What will Doonya say
When she hears this? How will her laughing eyes
Be clouded and brim over! Till Haroun comes!

Exit.

Scene 7

Ibn Sawy's house.
Nureddene, Anice.

NUREDDENE
'Tis Sunjar warns us, he who always loved
Our father.

ANICE
Oh, my lord, make haste and flee.

NUREDDENE
Whither and how? But come.

Enter Ajebe.

AJEBE
Quick, Nureddene.
I have a ship all ready for Bagdad,
Sails bellying with fair wind, the pilot's hand
Upon the wheel, the captain on the deck,
You only wanting. Flee then to Bagdad
And at the mighty Haroun's hand require
Justice upon these tyrants. Oh, delay not.

NUREDDENE
O friend! But do me one more service, Ajebe.
Pay the few creditors unsatisfied;
My father will absolve me when he comes.

AJEBE
That's early done. And take my purse. No fumbling,
I will not be denied.

NUREDDENE

Bagdad! (*laughing*) Why, Anice,
Our dream comes true; we hobnob with the Caliph!

Exeunt.

Act IV

Bagdad.

Scene 1

The gardens of the Caliph's Palace outside the Pavilion of Pleasure.
Anice, Nureddene.

ANICE
This is Bagdad!

NUREDDENE
Bagdad the beautiful,
The city of delight. How green these gardens!
What a sweet clamour pipes among the trees.

ANICE
And flowers! the flowers! Look at those violets
Dark-blue like burning sulphur! Oh, rose and myrtle
And gilliflower and lavender; anemones
As red as blood! All Spring walks here in blossoms
And strews the pictured ground.

NUREDDENE
Do you see the fruit,
Anice? camphor and almond-apricots,
Green, white and purple figs and these huge grapes,
Round rubies or quite purple-black, that ramp
O'er wall and terrace; plums almost as smooth
As your own damask cheek. These balls of gold

Are lemons, Anice, do you think? Look, cherries,
And mid these fair pink-budded orange-blossoms
Rare glints of fruit.

ANICE

That was a blackbird whistled.
How the doves moan! It's full of cooing turtles.
Oh see, the tawny bulbuls calling sweetly
And winging! What a flutter of scarlet tails!
If it were dark, a thousand nightingales
Would surely sing together. How glad I am
That we were driven out of Bassora!

NUREDDENE

And this pavilion with its crowd of windows?
Are there not quite a hundred?

ANICE

Do you see
The candelabrum pendent from the ceiling?
A blaze of gold!

NUREDDENE

Each window has a lamp.
Night in these gardens must be bright as day.
To find the master now! Here we could rest
And ask our way to the great Caliph, Anice.
Enter Shaikh Ibrahim from behind.

IBRAHIM

So, so! so, so! Cavalier servente with your bona roba! You do not know then of the Caliph's order forbidding entry into his gardens? No? I will proclaim it, then, with a palmstick about your pretty back quarters. Will I not? Hoh!

He advances stealthily with stick raised.
Nureddene and Anice turn towards him; he drops
the stick and remains with arm lifted.

NUREDDENE
Here is a Shaikh of the gardens. Whose garden is this, friend?

ANICE
Is the poor man out of the use of his wits? He stares open-mouthed.

IBRAHIM
Glory to Allah who made you! Glory to the angel who brought you down on earth! Glory to myself who am permitted to look upon you! I give glory to Allah for your beauty, O people of Paradise!

NUREDDENE (*smiling*)
Rather give glory to Him because he has given thee a fine old age and this long silvery beard. But are we permitted in this garden? The gate was not bolted.

IBRAHIM
This garden? My garden? Yes, my son; yes, my daughter. It is the fairer for your feet; never before did such flowers bloom there.

NUREDDENE
What, is it thine? And this pavilion?

IBRAHIM
All mine, my son. By the grace of Allah to a poor sinful old man. 'Tis by His election, my son, and divine ordination and sanctification, and a little by the power of my prostrations and lustrations which I neglect not, neither morning nor noon nor evening nor at any of the intervals by the law commanded.

NUREDDENE
When did you buy or lay it out, old father?

IBRAHIM
A grand-aunt left it to me. Wonder not, for she was indeed aunt's grandmother to a cousin of the sister-in-law of the Caliph.

NUREDDENE

Oh then indeed! she had the right divine to be wealthy. But I trust thou hast good doctrinal justification for inheriting after her?

IBRAHIM

I would not accept the Caliphate by any other. O my son, hanker not unlawfully after perishable earthly goods; for, verily, they are a snare and verily, verily, they entrap the feet of the soul as it toileth over the straight rough road to Heaven.

ANICE

But, old father, are you rich and go so poorly robed? Were I mistress of such a garden, I would float about it in damask and crimson and velvet; silk and satin should be my meanest apparel.

IBRAHIM (*aside*)

She has a voice like a blackbird's! O angel Gabriel, increase this unto me. I will not quarrel with thee though all Houridom break loose on my garden; for their gates thou hast a little opened. (*aloud*) Fie, my daughter! I take refuge with Allah. I am a poor sinful old man on the brink of the grave, what should I do with robes and coloured raiment? But they would hang well on thee. Praise the Lord who has given thee hips like the moon and a waist indeed! a small, seizable waist, Allah forgive me!

ANICE

We are weary, old father; we hunger and thirst.

IBRAHIM

Oh, my son! Oh, my daughter! you put me to shame. Come in, come in; this my pavilion is yours and there is within it plenty of food and drink, — such innocent things now as sherbet and pure kind water. But as for wine, that accursèd thing, it is forbidden by the Prophet, whose name is a benediction. Come in, come in. Allah curse him that giveth not to the guest and the stranger.

NUREDDENE
It is indeed thine? we may enter?

IBRAHIM
Allah! Allah! its floor yearns for thy beauty and for the fair feet of thy sister. If there were youth now instead of poor venerable me, would one not kiss the marble wherever her fair small feet will touch it? But I praise Allah that I am an old man with my thoughts turned to chastity and holiness.

NUREDDENE
Come, Anice.

IBRAHIM (*walking behind them*)
Allah! Allah! she is a gazelle that springeth. Allah! Allah! the swan in my lake waddleth less perfectly. She is as a willow when the wind swayeth it. Allah! Allah!

Exeunt to the pavilion.

Scene 2

The Pavilion of Pleasure.
Anice, Nureddene, Shaikh Ibrahim on couches, by a table set with dishes.

NUREDDENE
These kabobs are indeed good, and the conserves look sweet and the fruit very glossy. But will you sit and eat nothing?

IBRAHIM
Verily, my son, I have eaten at midday. Allah forbid me from gluttony!

ANICE
Old father, you discourage our stomachs. You shall eat a morsel from my fingers or I will say you use me hardly.

IBRAHIM
No, no, no, no. Ah well, from your fingers, from your small slim rosy fingers. Allah! Only a bit, only a morsel; verily, verily! Allah! surely thy fingers are sweeter than honey. I could eat them with kisses.

ANICE
What, old father, you grow young?

IBRAHIM
Oh, now, now, now! 'Twas a foolish jest unworthy of my grey hairs. I take refuge with Allah! A foolish jest.

NUREDDENE
But, my aged host, it is dry eating without wine. Have you never a flagon in all this palace? It is a blot, a blot on its fair perfection.

IBRAHIM
I take refuge with Allah. Wine! for sixteen years I have not touched the evil thing. When I was young indeed! ah well, when I was young. But 'tis forbidden. What saith Ibn Batata? That wine worketh transmogrification. And Ibrahim Alhashhash bin Fuzfuz bin Bierbiloon al Sandilani of Bassora, he rateth wine sorely and averreth that the red glint of it is the shine of the red fires of Hell, its sweetness kisseth damnation and the coolness of it in the throat causeth bifurcation. Ay, verily, the great Alhashhash.

ANICE
Who are these learned doctors you speak of, old father? I have read all the books, but never heard of them.

IBRAHIM
Oh, thou hast read? These are very distant and mystic Sufis, very rare doctors. Their books are known only to the adepts.

ANICE
What a learned old man art thou, Shaikh Ibrahim! Now Allah save the soul of the great Alhashhash!

IBRAHIM
Hm! 'Tis so. Wine! Verily, the Prophet hath cursed grower and presser, buyer and seller, carrier and drinker. I take refuge with Allah from the curse of the Prophet.

NUREDDENE
Hast thou not even one old ass among all thy belongings? And if an old ass is cursed, is it thou who art cursed?

IBRAHIM
Hm! My son, what is thy parable?

NUREDDENE
I will show you a trick to cheat the devil. Give three denars of mine to a neighbour's servant with a dirham or two for his

trouble, let him buy the wine and clap it on an old ass, and let the old ass bring it here. So art thou neither grower nor presser, seller nor buyer, carrier nor drinker, and if any be damned, it is an old ass that is damned. What saith the great Alhashhash?

IBRAHIM
Hm! Well, I will do it. (*aside*) Now I need not let them know that there is wine galore in my cupboards, Allah forgive me!
Exit.

NUREDDENE
He is the very gem of hypocrites.

ANICE
The fitter to laugh at. Dear my lord, be merry
Tonight, if only for tonight. Let care
Expect tomorrow.

NUREDDENE
You are happy, Anice?

ANICE
I feel as if I could do nothing else
But laugh through life's remainder. You're safe, safe
And that grim devil baffled. Oh, you're safe!

NUREDDENE
It was a breathless voyage up the river.
I think a price is on my head. Perhaps
Our helpers suffer.

ANICE
But you are safe, my joy,
My darling.
She goes to him and kisses and clings about him.

NUREDDENE
Anice, your eyes are full of tears!
You are quite overwrought.

ANICE
Let only you be safe
And all the world beside entirely perish.
My love! my master!

She again embraces and kisses him repeatedly. Shaikh Ibrahim returns with the wine and glasses in a tray.

IBRAHIM
Allah! Allah! Allah!

ANICE
Where's that old sober learning?
I want to dance, to laugh, to outriot riot.
Oh, here he is.

NUREDDENE
What a quick ass was this, Shaikh Ibrahim!

IBRAHIM
No, no, the wineshop is near, very near. Allah forgive us, ours is an evil city, this Bagdad; it is full of winebibbers and gluttons and liars.

NUREDDENE
Dost thou ever lie, Shaikh Ibrahim?

IBRAHIM
Allah forbid! Above all sins I abhor lying and liars. O my son, keep thy young lips from vain babbling and unnecessary lying. It is of the unpardonable sins, it is the way to Jahannam. But I pray thee what is this young lady to thee, my son?

NUREDDENE
She is my slavegirl.

IBRAHIM
Ah, ah! thy slavegirl? Ah, ah! a slavegirl! ah!

ANICE
Drink, my lord.

NUREDDENE (*drinking*)
By the Lord, but I am sleepy. I will even rest my head in thy sweet lap for a moment.

He lies down.

IBRAHIM
Allah! Allah! What, he sleeps?

ANICE
Fast. That is the trick he always serves me. After the first cup he dozes off and leaves me quite sad and lonely.

IBRAHIM
Why, why, why, little one! Thou art not alone and why shouldst thou be sad? I am here, — old Shaikh Ibrahim; I am here.

ANICE
I will not be sad, if you will drink with me.

IBRAHIM
Fie, fie, fie!

ANICE
By my head and eyes!

IBRAHIM
Well, well, well! Alas, ’tis a sin, ’tis a sin, ’tis a sin. (*drinks*) Verily, verily.

Anice
Another.

Ibrahim
No, no, no.

Anice
By my head and eyes!

Ibrahim
Well, well, well, well! 'Tis a grievous sin, Allah forgive me! (*drinks*)

Anice
Just one more.

Ibrahim
Does he sleep? Now if it were the wine of thy lips, little one!

Anice
Old father, old father! Is this thy sanctity and the chastity of thee and thy averseness to frivolity? To flirt with light-minded young hussies like me! Where is thy sanctification? Where is thy justification? Where is thy predestination? O mystic, thou art bifurked with an evil bifurcation. Woe's me for the great Alhashhash!

Ibrahim
No, no, no.

Anice
Art thou such a hypocrite? Shaikh Ibrahim! Shaikh Ibrahim!

Ibrahim
No, no, no! A fatherly jest! a little little jest! (*drinks*)

NUREDDENE (*starting up*)
Shaikh Ibrahim, thou drinkest?

IBRAHIM
Oh! ah! 'Twas thy slavegirl forced me. Verily, verily!

NUREDDENE
Anice! Anice! Why wilt thou pester him? Wilt thou pluck down his old soul from heaven? Fie! draw the wine this side of the table. I pledge you, my heart.

ANICE
To you, my dear one.

NUREDDENE
You have drunk half your cup only; so, again; to Shaikh Ibrahim and his learned sobriety!

ANICE
To the shade of the great Alhashhash!

IBRAHIM
Fie on you! What cursed unneighbourly manners are these, to drink in my face and never pass the bowl?

ANICE AND NUREDDENE (*together*)
Shaikh Ibrahim! Shaikh Ibrahim! Shaikh Ibrahim!

IBRAHIM
Never cry out at me. You are a Hour and she is a Houri come down from Heaven to ensnare my soul. Let it be ensnared! 'Tis not worth one beam from under your eyelids. Hour, I will embrace thee; I will kiss thee, Houri.

NUREDDENE
Embrace not, Shaikh Ibrahim, neither kiss, for thy mouth smelleth evilly of that accursed thing, wine. I am woeful for the mystic Alhashhash.

ANICE

Art thou transmogrified, O Sufi, O adept, O disciple of Ibn Batata?

IBRAHIM

Laugh, laugh! laughter is on your beauty like the sunlight on the fair minarets of Mazinderan the beautiful. Give me a cup. (*drinks*) You are sinners and I will sin with you. I will sin hard, my beauties. (*drinks*)

ANICE

Come now, I will sing to you, if you will give me a lute. I am a rare singer, Shaikh Ibrahim.

IBRAHIM (*drinks*)

There is a lute in yonder corner. Sing, sing, and it may be I will answer thee. (*drinks*)

ANICE

But wait, wait. To sing in this meagreness of light! Candles, candles!

She lights the eighty candles of the great candelabrum.

IBRAHIM (*drinks*)

Allah! it lights thee up, my slavegirl, my jewel. (*drinks*)

NUREDDENE

Drink not so fast, Shaikh Ibrahim, but get up and light the lamps in the windows.

IBRAHIM (*drinks*)

Sin not thou by troubling the coolness of wine in my throat. Light them, light them but not more than two.

Nureddene goes out lighting the lamps
one by one and returns in the same way.
Meanwhile Shaikh Ibrahim drinks.

IBRAHIM
Allah! hast thou lit them all?

ANICE
Shaikh Ibrahim, drunkenness sees but double, and dost thou see eighty-four? Thou art far gone in thy cups, O adept, O Ibn Batatist.

IBRAHIM
I am not yet so drunk as that. You are bold youths to light them all.

NUREDDENE
Whom fearest thou? Is not the pavilion thine?

IBRAHIM
Surely mine; but the Caliph dwells near and he will be angry at the glare of so much light.

NUREDDENE
Truly, he is a great Caliph.

IBRAHIM
Great enough, great enough. There might have been greater, if Fate had willed it. But 'tis the decree of Allah. Some He raiseth to be Caliphs and some He turneth into gardeners. (*drinks*)

ANICE
I have found a lute.

NUREDDENE
Give it me. Hear me improvise, Old Sobriety. (*sings*)

Saw you Shaikh Ibrahim, the grave old man?
Allah! Allah! I saw him drunk and drinking.
What was he doing when the dance began?
He was winking; verily, verily, he was winking.

IBRAHIM

Fie! what cobbler's poetry is this? But thou hast a touch. Let me hear thee rather.

ANICE

I have a song for you. (*sings*)

White as winter is my beard,
All my face with wrinkles weird,
Yet I drink.
Hell-fire? judgment? who's afraid?
Ibrahim would kiss a maid
As soon as think.

IBRAHIM

Allah! Allah! Nightingale! nightingale!

Curtain

Scene 3

The Gardens, outside the Pavilion.
Haroun, Mesrour.

HAROUN
See, Mesrour, the Pavilion's all alight.
'Tis as I said. Where is the Barmeky?

MESROUR
The Vizier comes, my lord.
Enter Jaafar.

JAAFAR
Peace be with thee,
Commander of the Faithful.

HAROUN
Where is peace,
Thou faithless and usurping Vizier? Hast thou
Filched my Bagdad out of my hands, thou rebel,
And told me nothing?

JAAFAR
What words are these, O Caliph?

HAROUN
What mean these lights then? Does another Caliph
Hold revel in my Palace of all Pleasure,
While Haroun lives and holds the sword?

JAAFAR (*to himself*)
What Djinn

Plays me this antic?

HAROUN
I am waiting, Vizier.

JAAFAR
Shaikh Ibrahim, my lord, petitioned me,
On circumcision of his child, for use
Of the pavilion. Lord, it had escaped
My memory; I now remember it.

HAROUN
Doubly thou erredst, Jaafar; for thou gavest him
No money, which was the significance
Of his request, neither wouldst suffer me
To help my servant. We will enter, Vizier,
And hear the grave Faqeers discoursing there
Of venerable things. The Shaikh's devout
And much affects their reverend company.
We too shall profit by that holy talk
Which arms us against sin and helps to heaven.

JAAFAR (*to himself*)
Helps to the plague! (*aloud*) Commander of the Faithful,
Your mighty presence will disturb their peace
With awe or quell their free unhampered spirits.

HAROUN
At least I'ld see them.

MESROUR
From this tower, my lord,
We can look straight into the whole pavilion.

HAROUN
Mesrour, well thought of!

JAAFAR (*aside, to Mesrour*)
A blister spoil thy tongue!

MESROUR (*aside, to Jaafar*)
I'll head you, Jaafar.

HAROUN (*listening*)
Is not that a lute?
A lute at such a grave and reverend meeting!
Shaikh Ibrahim sings within.

Chink-a-chunk-a-chink!
We will kiss and drink,
And be merry, O very very merry.
For your eyes are bright
Even by candle light
And your lips as red as the red round cherry.

HAROUN
Now by the Prophet! by my great forefathers!
He rushes into the tower followed by Mesrour.

JAAFAR
May the devil fly away with Shaikh Ibrahim and drop him upon a hill of burning brimstone!
He follows the Caliph, who now appears with Mesrour on the platform of the tower.

HAROUN
Ho, Jaafar, see this godly ceremony
Thou gav'st permission for, and these fair Faqeers.

JAAFAR
Shaikh Ibrahim has utterly deceived me.

HAROUN
The aged hypocrite! Who are this pair

Of heavenly faces? Was there then such beauty
In my Bagdad, yet Haroun's eyes defrauded
Of seeing it?

JAAFAR
The girl takes up the lute.

HAROUN
Now if she play and sing divinely, Jaafar,
You shall be hanged alone for your offence,
If badly, all you four shall swing together.

JAAFAR
I hope she will play vilely.

HAROUN
Wherefore, Jaafar?

JAAFAR
I ever loved good company, my lord,
And would not tread my final road alone.

HAROUN
No, when thou goest that road, my faithful servant,
Well do I hope that we shall walk together.

ANICE (*within*)

Song

King of my heart, wilt thou adore me,
Call me goddess, call me thine?
I too will bow myself before thee
As in a shrine.
Till we with mutual adoration
And holy earth-defeating passion
Do really grow divine.

HAROUN

The mighty Artist shows his delicate cunning
Utterly in this fair creature. I will talk
With the rare couple.

JAAFAR

Not in your own dread person,
Or fear will make them dumb.

HAROUN

I'll go disguised.
Are there not voices by the river, Jaafar?
Fishermen, I would wager. My commands
Are well obeyed in my Bagdad, O Vizier!
But I have seen too much beauty and cannot now
Remember to be angry. Come, descend.

As they descend, enter Kareem.

KAREEM

Here's a fine fat haul! O my jumpers! my little beauties! O your fine white bellies! What a joke, to catch the Caliph's own fish and sell them to him at thrice their value!

HAROUN

Who art thou?

KAREEM

O Lord, 'tis the Caliph himself! I am a dead fisherman. (*falling flat*) O Commander of the Faithful! Alas, I am an honest fisherman.

HAROUN

Dost thou lament thy honesty?
What fish hast thou?

KAREEM

Only a few whitebait and one or two minnows. Poor thin rogues, all of them! They are not fit for the Caliph's honourable stomach.

HAROUN

Show me thy basket, man.
Are these thy whitebait and thy two thin minnows?

KAREEM

Alas, sir, 'tis because I am honest.

HAROUN

Give me thy fish.

KAREEM

Here they are, here they are, my lord!

HAROUN

Out! the whole basket, fellow.
Do I eat live fish, you thrust them in my face?
And now exchange thy outer dress with me.

KAREEM

My dress? Well, you may have it; I am liberal as well as honest. But 'tis a good gaberdine; I pray you, be careful of it.

HAROUN

Woe to thee, fellow! What's this filthiness
Thou callst a garment?

KAREEM

O sir, when you have worn it ten days, the filth will come easy to you and, as one may say, natural. And 'tis honest filth; it will keep you warm in winter.

HAROUN

What, shall I wear thy gaberdine so long?

KAREEM

Commander of the Faithful! since you are about to leave kingcraft and follow an honest living for the good of your soul, you may wear worse than an honest fisherman's gaberdine. 'Tis a good craft and an honourable.

HAROUN
Off with thee. In my dress thou'lt find a purse
Crammed full of golden pieces. It is thine.

KAREEM
Glory to Allah! This comes of being honest.

Exit.

JAAFAR (*coming up*)
Who's this? Ho, Kareem! wherefore here tonight?
The Caliph's in the garden. You'll be thrashed
And very soundly, fisher.

HAROUN
Jaafar, 'tis I.

JAAFAR
The Caliph!

HAROUN
Now to fry these fish and enter.

JAAFAR
Give them to me. I am a wondrous cook.

HAROUN
No, by the Prophet! My two lovely friends
Shall eat a Caliph's cookery tonight.

Exeunt.

Scene 4

Inside the Pavilion.
Nureddene, Anice, Shaikh Ibrahim.

NUREDDENE
Shaikh Ibrahim, verily, thou art drunk.

IBRAHIM
Alas, alas, my dear son, my own young friend! I am damned, verily, verily, I am damned. Ah, my sweet lovely young father! Ah, my pious learned white-bearded mother! That they could see their son now, their pretty little son! But they are in their graves; they are in their cold, cold, cold graves.

NUREDDENE
Oh, thou art most pathetically drunk. Sing, Anice.

OUTSIDE
Fish! fish! sweet fried fish!

ANICE
Fish! Shaikh Ibrahim, Shaikh Ibrahim! hearest thou? We have a craving for fish.

IBRAHIM
'Tis Satan in thy little stomach who calleth hungrily for sweet fried fish. Silence, thou preposterous devil!

ANICE
Fie, Shaikh, is my stomach outside me, under the window? Call him in.

IBRAHIM
Ho! ho! come in, Satan! come in, thou brimstone fisherman. Let us see thy long tail.

Enter Haroun.

ANICE
What fish have you, good fisherman?

HAROUN
I have very honest good fish, my sweet lady, and I have fried them for you with my own hand. These fish, — why, all I can say of them is, they are fish. But they are well fried.

NUREDDENE
Set them on a plate. What wilt thou have for them?

HAROUN
Why, for such faces as you have, I will honestly ask nothing.

NUREDDENE
Then wilt thou dishonestly ask for a trifle more than they are worth. Swallow me these denars.

HAROUN
Now Allah give thee a beard! for thou art a generous youth.

ANICE
Fie, fisherman, what a losing blessing is this, to kill the thing for which thou blessest him! If Allah give him a beard, he will be no longer a youth, and for the generosity, it will be Allah's.

HAROUN
Art thou as witty as beautiful?

ANICE
By Allah, that am I. I tell thee very modestly that there is not my equal from China to Frangistan.

HAROUN
Thou sayest no more than truth.

NUREDDENE
What is your name, fisherman?

HAROUN
I call myself Kareem and, in all honesty, when I fish, 'tis for the Caliph.

IBRAHIM
Who talks of the Caliph? Dost thou speak of the Caliph Haroun or the Caliph Ibrahim?

HAROUN
I speak of *the* Caliph, Haroun the Just, the great and only Caliph.

IBRAHIM
Oh, Haroun? He is fit only to be a gardener, a poor witless fellow without brains to dress himself with, yet Allah hath made him Caliph. While there are others — but 'tis no use talking. A very profligate tyrant, this Haroun! He has debauched half the women in Bagdad and will debauch the other half, if they let him live. Besides, he cuts off a man's head when the nose on it does not please him. A very pestilence of a tyrant!

HAROUN
Now Allah save him!

IBRAHIM
Nay, let Allah save his soul if He will and if 'tis worth saving; but I fear me 'twill be a tough job for Allah. If it were not for my constant rebukes and admonitions and predications and pestrigiddi — prestigidgidi — what the plague! pestidigitations; and some slaps and cuffs, of which I pray you speak very low, he

would be worse even than he is. Well, well, even Allah blunders; verily, verily!

ANICE
Wilt thou be Caliph, Shaikh Ibrahim?

IBRAHIM
Yes, my jewel, and thou shalt be my Zobeidah. And we will tipple, beauty, we will tipple.

HAROUN
And Haroun?

IBRAHIM
I will be generous and make him my under-kitchen-gardener's second vice-sub-under-assistant. I would gladly give him a higher post, but, verily, he is not fit.

HAROUN (*laughing*)
What an old treasonous rogue art thou, Shaikh Ibrahim!

IBRAHIM
What? who? Thou art not Satan, but Kareem the fisherman? Didst thou say I was drunk, thou supplier of naughty houses? Verily, I will tug thee by the beard, for thou liest. Verily, verily!

NUREDDENE
Shaikh Ibrahim! Shaikh Ibrahim!

IBRAHIM
Nay, if thou art the angel Gabriel and forbiddest me, let be; but I hate lying and liars.

NUREDDENE
Fisherman, is thy need here over?

HAROUN

I pray you, let me hear this young lady sing; for indeed 'twas the sweet voice of her made me fry fish for you.

NUREDDENE

Oblige the good fellow, Anice; he has a royal face for his fishing.

IBRAHIM

Sing! 'tis I will sing: there is no voice like mine in Bagdad. (*sings*)

When I was a young man,
I'd a very good plan;
Every maid that I met,
In my lap I would set,
What mattered her age or her colour?
But now I am old
And the girls, they grow cold
And my heartstrings, they ache
At the faces they make,
And my dancing is turned into dolour.

A very sweet song! a very sad song! Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought. 'Tis just, 'tis just. Ah me! well-a-day! Verily, verily!

ANICE

I pray you, Shaikh Ibrahim, be quiet. I would sing.

IBRAHIM

Sing, my jewel, sing, my gazelle, sing, my lady of kisses. Verily, I would rise up and buss thee, could I but find my legs. I know not why they have taken them from me.

ANICE (*sings*)

Song

Heart of mine, O heart impatient,
Thou must learn to wait and weep.

Wherefore wouldst thou go on beating
When I bade thee hush and sleep?
Thou who wert of life so fain,
Didst thou know not, life was pain?

HAROUN
O voice of angels! Who art thou, young man,
And who this sweet-voiced wonder? Let me hear;
Tell me thy story.

NUREDDENE
I am a man chastised
For my own errors, yet unjustly. Justice
I seek from the great Caliph. Leave us, fisherman.

HAROUN
Tell me thy story. Walk apart with me.
It may be I can help thee.

NUREDDENE
Leave us, I pray thee.
Thou, a poor fisherman!

HAROUN
I vow I'll help thee.

NUREDDENE
Art thou the Caliph?

HAROUN
If I were, by chance?

NUREDDENE
If thou art as pressing with the fish as me,
There's a good angler.

Exit with Haroun.

ANICE

Will you not have some of this fish, Shaikh Ibrahim? 'Tis a sweet fish.

IBRAHIM

Indeed thou art a sweet fish, but somewhat overdone. Thou hast four lovely eyes and two noses wonderfully fine with just the right little curve at the end; 'tis a hook to hang my heart upon. But, verily, there are two of them and I know not what to do with the other; I have only one heart, beauty. O Allah, Thou hast darkened my brain with wine, and wilt Thou damn me afterwards?

ANICE

Nay, if thou wilt misuse my nose for a peg, I have done with thee. My heart misgives me strangely.

Enter Nureddene.

NUREDDENE

He's writing out a letter.

ANICE

Surely, my lord,
This is no ordinary fisherman.
If 'twere the Caliph?

NUREDDENE

The old drunkard knew him
For Kareem and a fisherman. Dear Anice,
Let not our dreams delude us. Life is harsh,
Dull-tinted, not so kindly as our wishes,
Nor half so beautiful.

Enter Haroun.

HAROUN

He is not fit
To be a King.

NUREDDENE
Nor ever was. 'Tis late.

HAROUN
Giv'st thou no gift at parting?

NUREDDENE
You're a fisher! (*opens his purse*)

HAROUN
Nothing more valuable?

ANICE
Wilt take this ring?

HAROUN
No; give me what I ask.

NUREDDENE
Yes, by the Prophet,
Because thou hast a face.

HAROUN
Give me thy slavegirl.
There is a silence.

NUREDDENE
Thou hast entrapped me, fisherman.

ANICE
Is it a jest?

HAROUN
Thou sworest by the Prophet, youth.

NUREDDENE
Tell me,

Is it for ransom? I have nothing left
In all the world but her and these few pieces.

HAROUN
She pleases me.

ANICE
O wretch!

NUREDDENE
Another time
I would have slain thee. But now I feel 'tis God
Has snared my feet with dire calamities,
And have no courage.

HAROUN
Dost thou give her to me?

NUREDDENE
Take her, if Heaven will let thee. Angel of God,
Avenging angel, wert thou lying in wait for me
In Bagdad?

ANICE
Leave me not, O leave me not.
It is a jest, it must, it shall be a jest.
God will not suffer it.

HAROUN
I mean thee well.

ANICE
Thy doing's damnable. O man, O man,
Art thou a devil straight from Hell, or art thou
A tool of Almuene's to torture us?
Will you leave me, my lord, and never kiss?

NUREDDENE
Thou art his; I cannot touch thee.

HAROUN
Kiss her once.

NUREDDENE
Tempt me not; if my lips grow near to hers,
Thou canst not live. Farewell.

HAROUN
Where art thou bound?

NUREDDENE
To Bassora.

HAROUN
That is, to death?

NUREDDENE
Even so.

HAROUN
Yet take this letter with thee to the Sultan.

NUREDDENE
Man, what have I to do with thee or letters?

HAROUN
Hear me, fair youth. Thy love is sacred to me
And will be safe as in her father's house.
Take thou this letter. Though I seem a fisherman,
I was the Caliph's friend and schoolfellow,
His cousin of Bassora's too, and it may help thee.

NUREDDENE
I know not who thou art, nor if this scrap

Of paper has the power thou babblest of,
And do not greatly care. Life without her
Is not to be thought of. Yet thou giv'st me something
I'ld once have dared call hope. She will be safe?

HAROUN
As my own child, or as the Caliph's.

NUREDDENE
I'll go play
At pitch and toss with death in Bassora.

Exit.

IBRAHIM
Kareem, thou evil fisherman, thou unjust seller, thou dishonest dicer, thou beastly womanizer! hast thou given me stinking fish not worth a dirham and thinkest to take away my slavegirl? Verily, I will tug thy beard for her.

He seizes Haroun by the beard.

HAROUN (*throwing him off*)
Out! Hither to me, Vizier Jaafar. (*Enter Jaafar.*) Hast thou my robe?

He changes his dress.

JAAFAR
How dost thou, Shaikh Ibrahim? Fie, thou smellest of that evil thing, even the accursèd creature, wine.

IBRAHIM
O Satan, Satan, dost thou come to me in the guise of Jaafar, the Persian, the Shiah, the accursèd favourer of Gnosticism and heresies, the evil and bibulous Vizier? Avaunt, and return not save with a less damnable face. O thou inconsiderate fiend!

HAROUN
Damsel, lift up thy head. I am the Caliph.

ANICE
What does it matter who you are? My heart, my heart!

HAROUN
Thou art bewildered. Rise! I am the Caliph
Men call the Just. Thou art as safe with me
As my own daughter. I have sent thy lord
To be a king in Bassora, and thee
I will send after him with precious robes,
Fair slavegirls, noble gifts. Possess thy heart
Once more, be glad.

ANICE
O just and mighty Caliph!

HAROUN
Shaikh Ibrahim.

IBRAHIM
Verily, I think thou art the Caliph, and, verily, I think I am drunk.

HAROUN
Verily, thou hast told the truth twice, and it is a wonder. But verily, verily, thou shalt be punished. Thou hast been kind to the boy and his sweetheart, therefore I will not take from thee thy life or thy post in the gardens, and I will forgive thee for tugging the beard of the Lord's anointed. But thy hypocrisies and blasphemies are too rank to be forgiven. Jaafar, have a man with him constantly and wine before his eyes; but if he drink so much as a thimbleful, let it be poured by gallons into his stomach. Have in beautiful women constantly before him and if he once raise his eyes above their anklets, shave him clean and sell him into the most severe and Puritan house in Bagdad. Nay, I will reform thee, old sinner.

IBRAHIM
Oh, her lips! her sweet lips!

JAAFAR
You speak to a drunken man, my lord.

HAROUN
Tomorrow bring him before me when he’s sober.
Exeunt.

Act V

Bassora and Bagdad.

Scene 1

A room in Almuene's house.
Almuene, Fareed.

FAREED
You'll give me money, dad?

ALMUENE
You spend too much.
We'll talk of it another time. Now leave me.

FAREED
You'll give me money?

ALMUENE
Go; I'm out of temper.

FAREED (*dancing round him*)
Give money, money, money, give me money.

ALMUENE
You boil, do you too grow upon me? There. (*strikes him*)

FAREED
You have struck me!

ALMUENE

Why, you would have it. Go.
You shall have money.

FAREED

How much?

ALMUENE

Quite half your asking.
Send me a cup of water.

FAREED

Oh yes, I'll send it.
You'll strike me then?

Exit.

ALMUENE

Young Nureddene's evasion
Troubles me at the heart; 'twill not dislodge.
And Murad too walks closely with the King,
Who whispers to him, whispers, whispers. What?
Is't of my ruin? No, he needs me yet.
And Ibn Sawy's coming soon. But there
I've triumphed. He will have a meagre profit
Of his long work in Roum, — the headsman's axe.
Enter a Slave with a cup of water.
Here set it down and wait. 'Tis not so bad.
I'll have their Doonya yet for my Fareed.
Enter Khatoon, dragging in Fareed.

KHATOON

He has not drunk it yet.

FAREED

Why do you drag me,
You naughty woman? I will bite your fingers.

KHATOON
O imp of Hell! Touch not the water, Vizier.

ALMUENE
What's this?

KHATOON
This brat whose soul you've disproportioned
Out of all nature, turns upon you now.
There's poison in that cup.

ALMUENE
Unnatural mother,
What is this hatred that thou hast, to slander
The issue of thy womb?

FAREED
She hates me, dad.
Drink off the cup to show her how you love me.

KHATOON
What, art thou weary of thy life? Give rather
The water to a dog, and see.

ALMUENE
Go, slave,
And make some negro drink it off.

Exit Slave.

Woman,
What I have promised often, thou shalt have, —
The scourge.

KHATOON
That were indeed my right reward
For saving such a life as thine. Oh, God
Will punish me for it.

ALMUENE

Thou tongue! I'll strike thee.
As he lifts his hand, the slave returns.

SLAVE

Oh, sir, almost before it touched his throat,
He fell in fierce convulsions. He is dead.

ALMUENE

Fareed!

FAREED

You'll strike me, will you? You'll give half
My askings, no? I wish you'd drunk it off;
I'ld have rare spendings!
He runs out.

ALMUENE

God!

KHATOON

Will you not scourge me?

ALMUENE

Leave me.
Exit Khatoon.

What is this horrible surprise,
Beneath whose shock I stagger? Is my term
Exhausted? But I would have done as much,
Had I been struck. It is his gallant spirit,
His lusty blood that will not bear a blow.
I must appease him. If my own blood should end me!
He shall have money, all that he can ask.
Exit.

Scene 2

The Palace in Bassora.
Alzayni, Murad, Almuene, Ajebe.

ALZAYNI
I like your nephew well and will advance him.
For what's twixt you and Murad, let it sleep.
You are both my trusty counsellors.

ALMUENE
A nothing,
I grieve I pressed; forget it, noble Murad.

MURAD
That's as you please.

ALMUENE
Come, you're my nephew too.

VOICE OUTSIDE
Ho, Mohamad Alzayni, Sultan, ho!

ALZAYNI
Who is that Arab?

ALMUENE (*at the window*)
God! 'tis Nureddene.

MURAD
Impossible!

ALZAYNI
Or he is courage-mad.

ALMUENE
'Tis he.

MURAD
The devil and his unholy joy!

ALZAYNI
Drag him to me! No, bring him quietly,
Ajebe.

Exit Ajebe.

I wonder in what strength he comes.

ALMUENE
The strength of madness.

MURAD
Or of Heaven, whose wrath
Sometimes chastises us with our desires.

Enter Ajebe with Nureddene.

NUREDDENE
Greeting, Alzayni, King in Bassora.
Greeting, sweet uncle. Has your nose got straight?
Ajebe and Murad, greeting. Here am I!

ALZAYNI
How dar'st thou come and with such rude demeanour?
Knowst thou thy sentence?

NUREDDENE
Why, I bring a sentence too,
A fishy writing. Here it is. Be careful of it;
It is my die on which I throw for death
Or more than life.

ALZAYNI

A letter, and to me?

NUREDDENE

Great King, 'tis from thy friend the fisherman,
He with the dirty gaberdine who lives
In great Bagdad on stolen fish.

ALZAYNI

Thinkst thou
That thou canst play thus rudely with the lion?

NUREDDENE

If I could see the mane, I'ld clutch at it.
A lashing tail is not enough. The tiger
Has that too and many trifling animals.
But read the letter.

ALZAYNI

Read it, Almuene.

ALMUENE

'Tis from the Caliph, it appears. Thus runs
The alleged epistle: "Haroun Alrasheed,
Commander of the Faithful, known by name
To orient waters and the Atlantic seas,
Whom three wide continents obey, to Mohamad
The Abbasside, the son of Sulyman,
Men call Alzayni, by our gracious will
Allowed our subject king in Bassora,
Greeting and peace. As soon as thou hast read
Our letter, put from thee thy kingly robe,
Thy jewelled turban and thy sceptred pomp
And clothe with them the bearer Nureddene,
Son of thy Vizier, monarch in thy stead
In Bassora, then come to us in Bagdad
To answer for thy many and great offences.

This as thou hop'st to live."

NUREDDENE
It was the Caliph.

ALZAYNI
My mighty cousin's will must be obeyed.
Why turnst thou to the light?

ALMUENE
To scan it better.
King, 'tis a forgery! Where is the seal,
Where the imperial scripture? Is it thus
On a torn paper mighty Caliphs write?
Now on my life the fellow here has chanced
Upon some playful scribbling of the Caliph's,
Put in his name and thine and, brazen-faced,
Come here to bluster.

AJEBE
It was quite whole, I saw it.

ALMUENE
Boy, silence!

AJEBE
No, I will not. Thou hast torn it.

ALMUENE
Where are the pieces then? Search, if thou wilt.

ALZAYNI
Ho, there.
Enter Guards.
Take Ajebe to the prison hence.
He shall have judgment afterwards.
Exit Ajebe, guarded.

Thou, fellow,
Com'st thou with brazen face and blustering tongue
And forgeries in thy pocket? Hale him hence.
After fierce tortures let him be impaled.

MURAD
Hear me, O King.

ALZAYNI
Thou art his sister's husband.

MURAD
Yet for thy own sake hear me. Hast thou thought,
If this be true, what fate will stride upon thee
When Haroun learns thy deed? whom doubt not, King,
Thy many enemies will soon acquaint.

ALZAYNI
Send couriers; find this out.

ALMUENE
Till when I'll keep
My nephew safe under my private eye.

MURAD
Thou art his enemy.

ALMUENE
And thou his friend.
He will escape from thee once more.

ALZAYNI
Vizier,
Thou keep him, use him well.

ALMUENE
Ho! take him, Guards.
Enter Guards.

NUREDDENE
I lose the toss; 'tis tails.

Exit guarded.

ALZAYNI
All leave me. Vizier,
Remain.

Exit Murad.

Now, Almuene?

ALMUENE
Kill him and be at rest.

ALZAYNI
If 'twere indeed the Caliph's very hand?
Vizier, I dare not suddenly.

ALMUENE
Dare not!
Nay, then, put off thy crown at Haroun's bidding,
Who'll make thee his doorkeeper in Bagdad.
The Caliph? How long will this drunken freak
Have lodging in his lordly mind? Or fearst thou
The half-veiled threat of thy own trusty Turk,
Sultan Alzayni?

ALZAYNI
Him I'll silence. Keep
The boy ten days; then, if all's well, behead him.

Exit.

ALMUENE
You boggle, boggle; that is not the way
To keep a crown. Have him and hold's the Vizier,
Catch him and cut's the General. Loose your grip?
Let the hand shake? So monarchs are unkinged.
Ten days are mine at least. I have ten days
To torture him, though Caliphs turn his friend.

Will God befriend him next? My enemies
He gives into my potent hand. Murad is gone,
And I hold Doonya in my grip, Ameena too
Who, I have news, lives secret with her niece.
But where's the girl? God keeps her for me, I doubt not,
A last, sweet morsel. It will please Fareed.
But there's Haroun! Why should he live at all,
When there are swords and poisons?

Exit.

Scene 3

A cell in Almuene's house.
Nureddene alone.

NUREDDENE
We sin our pleasant sins and then refrain
And think that God's deceived. He waits His time
And when we walk the clean and polished road
He trips us with the mire our shoes yet keep,
The pleasant mud we walked before. All ills
I will bear patiently. Oh, better here
Than in that world! Who comes? Khatoon, my aunt!
Enter Khatoon and a Slave.

KHATOON
My Nureddene!

NUREDDENE
Good aunt, weep not for me.

KHATOON
You are my sister's child, yet more my own.
I have no other. Ali, mend his food
And treatment. Fear not thou the Vizier's wrath,
For I will shield thee.

SLAVE
I'll do it willingly.

KHATOON
What is this sound of many rushing feet?
Enter Almuene and Slaves.

ALMUENE
Seize him and bind. O villain, fatal villain!
O my heart's stringlet! Seize him, beat to powder;
Have burning irons. Dame, what do you here?
Wilt thou prevent me then?

KHATOON
Let no man touch
The prisoner of the Sultan. What's this rage?

ALMUENE
My son, my son! He has burned my heart. Shall I
Not burn his body?

KHATOON
What is it? Tell me quickly.

ALMUENE
Fareed is murdered.

KHATOON
God forbid! By whom?

ALMUENE
This villain's sister.

KHATOON
Doonya? You are mad. Speak, slave.

A SLAVE
Young master went with a great company
To Murad's house to carry Doonya off
Who then was seated listening to the lute
With Balkis and Mymoona, Ajebe's slavegirls.
We stormed the house, but could not take the lady;
Mymoona with a sword kept all at bay
For minutes. Meantime the city fills with rumour,

And Murad riding like a stormy wind
Came on us just too soon, the girl defender
Found wounded, Doonya at last in Fareed's grip
Who made a shield of that fair burden; but Balkis
Ran at and tripped him, and the savage Turk
Fire-eyed and furious lunged him through the body.
He's dead.

KHATOON
My son!

ALMUENE
Will you now give me leave
To torture this vile boy?

KHATOON
What is his fault?
Touch him and I acquaint the King. Vizier,
Thou slewst Fareed. My gracious, laughing babe
Who clung about me with his little hands
And sucked my breasts! Him you have murdered, Vizier,
Both soul and body. I will go and pray
For vengeance on thee for my slaughtered child.

Exit.

ALMUENE
She has baulked my fury. No, I'll wait for thee.
Thou shalt hear first what I have done with Doonya
And thy soft mother's body. Murad! Murad!
Thou hast no son. Would God thou hadst a son!

Exit.

NUREDDENE
Not upon others fall Thy heavy scourge
Who are not guilty. O Doonya, O my mother,
In fiercest peril from that maddened tyrant!

Curtain

Scene 4

A house in Bassora.
Doonya, Ameena.

DOONYA
Comfort, dear mother, comfort.

AMEENA
Oh, what comfort?
My Nureddene is doomed, Murad is gaoled,
We in close hiding under the vile doom
This tyrant King decrees.

DOONYA
I did not think
God was so keen-eyed for our petty sins,
When great offences and high criminals
Walk smiling. But there's comfort, mother, yet.
My husband writes from prison. You shall hear.
(*reads*)

"Doonya, I have written this by secret contrivance. Have comfort, dry thy mother's tears. There is hope. The Caliph comes to Bassora and the King will release me for a need of his own. I have tidings of thy father; he is but two days journey from Bassora and I have sent him urgent and tremulous word to come, but no ill-news to break his heart. We have friends. Doonya, my beloved — "

That's for me only.

AMEENA
Let me hear it.

DOONYA

It is
Pure nonsense, — what a savage Turk would write.

AMEENA

Therefore you kissed it?

DOONYA

Oh, you're comforted!
You're smiling through your tears.

AMEENA

My husband comes.
He will save all. I never quite believed
God would forget his worth so soon.

DOONYA (*to herself*)

He comes,
But for what fate? (*aloud*) True, mother, he'll save all.

AMEENA

How is Mymoona?

DOONYA

Better now. She suffered
In our wild rapid flight. Balkis is with her.
Let's go to them.

AMEENA

My son will yet be saved.

Exeunt.

Scene 5

Bagdad. A room in the Caliph's harem.
Anice, with many slavegirls attending on her.

Anice
Girls, is he passing?

A Slavegirl
He is passing.

Anice
Quick, my lute!

Song
The Emperor of Roum is great;
The Caliph has a mighty State;
But One is greater, to Whom all prayers take wing;
And I, a poor and weeping slave,
When the world rises from its grave,
Shall stand up the accuser of my King.

Girls, is he coming up?

A Slavegirl
The Caliph enters.
Enter Haroun and Jaafar.

Haroun
Thou art the slavegirl, Anice-aljalice?
Why chosest thou that song?

ANICE
Caliph, for thee.
Where is my lord?

HAROUN
A king in Bassora.

ANICE
Who told thee?

HAROUN
So it must be.

ANICE
Is there news?

HAROUN
No, strange! seven days gone by, nor yet a letter!

ANICE
Caliph, high Sovereign, Haroun Alrasheed,
Men call thee Just, great Abbasside! I am
A poor and helpless slavegirl, but my grief
Is greater than a King. Lord, I demand
My soul's dear husband at thy hand, who sent him
Alone, unfollowed, without guard or friend
To a tyrant Sultan and more tyrant Vizier,
His potent enemies. Oh, they have killed him!
Give back my husband to my arms unhurt
Or I will rise upon the judgment day
Against thee, Caliph Haroun Alrasheed,
Demanding him at that eternal throne
Where names are not received, nor earthly pomps
Considered. Then my frail and woman's voice
Shall ring more dreadful in thy mighty hearing
Than doom's own trumpet. Answer my demand.

HAROUN
Anice, I do believe thy lord is well.
And yet — No, by my great forefathers, no!
My seal and signature were on the script
And they are mightier than a thousand armies.
If he has disobeyed, for him 'twere better
He were a beggar's unrespected child
Than Haroun's kin; — the Arabian simoom
Shall be less devastating than my wrath.
Out, Jaafar, out to Bassora, behind thee
Sweeping embattled war; nor night nor tempest
Delay thy march. I follow in thy steps.
Take too this damsel and these fifty slavegirls,
With robes and gifts for Bassora's youthful king.
I give thee power o'er Kings and Emperors
To threaten, smite and seize. Go, friend; I follow
As swift as thunder presses on the lightning.

Exit.

JAAFAR (*to the slavegirls*)
Make ready; for we march within the hour.

Exit.
Curtain

Scene 6

The public square of Bassora.
Alzayni on a dais; in front a scaffold on which stand Nureddene, an Executioner, Murad and others. Almuene moves between the dais and scaffold. The square is crowded with people.

EXECUTIONER

Ho! listen, listen, Moslems. Nureddene,
Son of Alfazzal, son of Sawy, stands
Upon the rug of blood, the man who smote
Great Viziers and came armed with forgeries
To uncrown mighty Kings. Look on his doom,
You enemies of great Alzayni, look and shake.
(*low, to Nureddene*)
My lord, forgive me who am thus compelled,
Oh much against my will, to ill-requite
Your father's kindly favours.

NUREDDENE

Give me water;
I thirst.

MURAD

Give water. Executioner,
When the King waves the signal, wait; strike not
Too hastily.

EXECUTIONER

Captain, I will await thy nod.
Here's water.

ALMUENE (*coming up*)
Rebellious sworder! giv'st thou drink
To the King's enemies?

A VOICE IN THE CROWD
God waits for thee,
Thou wicked Vizier.

ALMUENE
Who was that?

MURAD
A voice.
Behead it.

ALMUENE
Mighty Sultan, give the word.

ALZAYNI
There is a movement in the crowd and cries.
Wait for one moment.

ALMUENE
It is Ibn Sawy.
Oh, this is sweet!

CRIES
Make way for the Vizier, the good Vizier. He's saved! he's saved.
Enter Alfazzal; he looks with emotion at
Nureddene, then turns to the King.

IBN SAWY
Greeting, my King; my work in Roum is over.

ALZAYNI
Virtuous Alfazzal! we will talk with thee
As ever was our dearest pleasure; first,

There is a spotted soul to be dislodged
From the fair body it disgraced; a trifle
Soon ended. There behold the criminal.

IBN SAWY
The criminal! Pardon me, mighty King;
The voice of Nature will not be kept down.
Why wilt thou slay my son?

ALZAYNI
Nay, 'tis himself
Insisted obstinately on his doom;
Abused his King, battered and beat my Vizier,
Forged mighty Haroun's signature to wear
My crown in Bassora. These are the chief
Of his offences.

IBN SAWY
If this thing is true,
As doubtless near inquiry in Bagdad —

ALZAYNI
Nay, take not up thy duties all too soon.
Rest from thy travel, bury thy dear son
And afterwards resume thy faithful works,
My Vizier.

IBN SAWY
I would not see my dear child slain.
Permit me to depart and in my desolate house
Comfort the stricken mother and his kin.

ALZAYNI
Perhaps a stone of all thy house may stand.
The mother and thy niece? It hurts my heart.
They too are criminals and punished.

IBN SAWY

God!

ALZAYNI

Slaves, help my faithful Vizier; he will faint.

IBN SAWY

Let me alone; God made me strong to bear.
They are dead?

ALZAYNI

Nay, a more lenient penalty.
What did I order? To be led through Bassora
Bare in their shifts with halters round their necks
And, stripped before all eyes, whipped into swooning,
Then sold as slaves but preferably for little
To some low Nazarene or Jew. Was that
The order, Almuene?

IBN SAWY

Merciful Allah!
And it is done?

ALZAYNI

I doubt not, it is done.

IBN SAWY

Their crime?

ALZAYNI

Conspiring murder. They have killed
The son of Almuene. Good Ibn Sawy,
God's kind to thee who has relieved thy age
Of human burdens. Thus He turns thy thought
To His ineffable and simple peace.

IBN SAWY
God, Thou art mighty and Thy will is just.
King Mohamad Alzayni, I have come
To a changed world in which I am not needed.
I bid farewell.

ALZAYNI
Nay, Vizier, clasp thy son,
And afterwards await within my hearing
Release.

IBN SAWY
My Nureddene, my child!

NUREDDENE
Justice
Of God, thou spar'st me nothing. Father! father!

IBN SAWY
Bow to the will of God, my son; if thou
Must perish on a false and hateful charge,
A crime in thee impossible, believe
It is His justice still.

NUREDDENE
I well believe it.

IBN SAWY
I doubt not I shall join you, son. We'll hold
Each other's hands upon the narrow way.

ALZAYNI
Hast done, Alfazzal?

IBN SAWY
Do thy will, O King.

ALZAYNI (*waving his hand*)
Strike.

Trumpets outside.

What are these proud notes? this cloud of dust
That rushes towards us from the north? The earth
Trembles with horsehooves.

ALMUENE

Let this wretch be slain;
We shall have leisure then for greater things.

ALZAYNI
Pause, pause! A horseman gallops through the crowd
Which scatters like wild dust. Look, he dismounts.

Enter a Soldier.

SOLDIER
Hail to thee, Mohamad Alzayni! Greeting
From mightier than thyself.

ALZAYNI

Who art thou, Arab?

SOLDIER
Jaafar bin Barmak, Vizier world-renowned
Of Haroun, master of the globe, comes hither.
He's in your streets, Alzayni. Thus he bids thee:
If Nureddene, thy Vizier's son, yet lives,
Preserve him, Sultan, as thy own dear life;
For if he dies, thou shalt not live.

ALZAYNI

My guards!
My soldiers! here to me!

SOLDIER

Beware, Alzayni.

The force he brings could dislocate each stone
In Bassora within the hour and leave
Thy house a ruin. In his mighty wake
A mightier comes, the Caliph's self.

ALZAYNI

'Tis well.
I have but erred. My Murad, here to me!
Murad, thou shalt have gold, a house, estates,
Noble and wealthy women for thy wives.
Murad!

MURAD

Erred, King, indeed who took a soldier
For an assassin. King, my household gem
I have saved and want no others. Were she gone,
Thou wouldst not now be living.

ALZAYNI

Am I betrayed?

MURAD

Call it so, King.

ALZAYNI

My throne is tumbling down.
The crowd quite parts; the horsemen drive towards us.

ALMUENE

Sultan Alzayni, kill thy enemies,
Then die. Wilt thou be footed to Bagdad,
Stumbling in fetters?

ALZAYNI

They are here.

Enter Jaafar and Soldiers.

JAAFAR

This sight
Is thy own sentence. Mohamad Alzayni,
Allah deprived thee of reason to destroy thee,
When thou didst madly disobey thy lord.

ALMUENE
’Twas a mistake, great Vizier. We had thought
The script a forgery.

JAAFAR

Issue of Khakan,
I have seen many Viziers like thyself,
But none that died in peace. Hail, Nureddene!
I greet thee, Sultan, lord in Bassora.

NUREDDENE
It is the second toss that tells; the first
Was a pure foul. I thank Thee, who hast only
Shown me the edge of Thy chastising sword,
Then pardoned. Father, embrace me.

IBN SAWY

Ah, child,
Thy mother and thy sister!

MURAD

They are safe
And in my care.

IBN SAWY

Nay, God is kind; this world
Most leniently ruled.

JAAFAR
Sultan Alzayni, Vizier Almuene,
By delegated power I seize upon you,

The prisoners of the Caliph. Take them, guards.
I've brought a slavegirl for you, Nureddene,
The Caliph's gift.

NUREDDENE

I'll take her, if I like her.
Life is my own again and all I love.
Great are Thy mercies, O Omnipotent!

Curtain

Scene 7

The Palace in Bassora.
Ibn Sawy, Ameena, Nureddene, Anice, Doonya, Ajebe.

IBN SAWY
End, end embraces; they will last our life.
Thou dearest cause at once of all our woes
And their sweet ender! Cherish her, Nureddene,
Who saved thy soul and body.

NUREDDENE
Surely I'll cherish
My heart's queen!

ANICE
Only your slavegirl.

DOONYA
You've got a King,
You lucky child! But I have only a Turk,
A blustering, bold and Caliph-murdering Turk
Who writes me silly letters, stabs my lovers
When they would run away with me, and makes
A general Turkish nuisance of himself.
'Tis hard. Sultan of Bassora, great Sultan,
Grave high and mighty Nureddene! thy sister
And subject —

NUREDDENE
Doonya, it is not Faeryland.

DOONYA
It is, it is, and Anice here its queen.
O faery King of faery Bassora,
Do make a General of my general nuisance.
I long to be my lady Generaless
Of faeryland, and ride about and charge
At thorns and thistles with a churning-stick,
With Balkis and Mymoona for my captains —
They're very martial, King, bold swashing fighters! —

NUREDDENE
Ajebe our Treasurer.

AJEBE
To ruin you again?

NUREDDENE
We'll have Shaikh Ibrahim for Lord High Humbug
Of all our faeryland; shall we not, Anice?

AMEENA
What nonsense, children! You a Sultan, child!

NUREDDENE
Your Sultan, mother, as I ever was.

IBN SAWY
Let happiness flow out in smiles. Our griefs
Are ended and we cluster round our King.
The Caliph!
Enter Haroun, Jaafar, Murad, Sunjar,
Guards with Alzayni and Almuene.
The peace, Commander of the Faithful!

HAROUN
Noble Alfazzal, sit. Sit all of you.
This is the thing that does my heart most good,
To watch these kind and happy looks and know

Myself for cause. Therefore I sit enthroned,
Allah's Vicegerent, to put down all evil
And pluck the virtuous out of danger's hand.
Fit work for Kings! not merely the high crown
And marching armies and superber ease.
Sunjar, Murad and Ajebe, you your King
Can best reward. But, Ajebe, in thy house
Where thou art Sultan, those reward who well
Deserve it.

AJEBE
They shall be my household queens,
Enthroned upon my either hand.

HAROUN
'Tis well.
Sultan Alzayni, not within my realm
Shall Kings like thee bear rule. Great though thy crimes,
I will not honour thee with imitation,
To slay unheard. Thou shalt have judgment, King.
But for thy Vizier here, his crimes are open
And loudly they proclaim themselves.

ALMUENE
Lord, spare me.

HAROUN
For some offences God has punished thee.
Shall I, His great Vicegerent, spare? Young King
Of Bassora, to thee I leave thy enemy.

ALMUENE
I did according to my blood and nurture,
Do thou as much.

NUREDDENE
He has beguiled me, Caliph.
I cannot now pronounce his doom.

HAROUN

Then I will.
Death at this moment! And his house and fortune
Are to thy father due. Take him and slay.
Exeunt Guards with Almuene.
Let not his sad and guiltless wife be engulfed
In his swift ruin. Virtuous Alfazzal, —

IBN SAWY
She is my wife's dear sister and my home
Is hers; my children will replace her son.

HAROUN
All then is well. Anice, you're satisfied?
I never was so scared in all my life
As when you rose against me.

ANICE

Pardon me!

HAROUN
Fair children, worthy of each other's love
And beauty! till the Sunderer comes who parts
All wedded hands, take your delights on earth,
And afterwards in heaven. Meanwhile remember
That life is grave and earnest under its smiles,
And we too with a wary gaiety
Should walk its roads, praying that if we stumble,
The All-Merciful may bear our footing up
In His strong hand, showing the Father's face
And not the stern and dreadful Judge. Farewell.
I go to Roman wars. With you the peace!

IBN SAWY
Peace with thee, just and mighty Caliph, peace.
Curtain

Rodogune

A Dramatic Romance

Persons of the Drama

ANTIOCHUS ⎫ twin-brothers, Princes of Syria, sons of Nicanor
TIMOCLES ⎭ and Cleopatra.
NICANOR, of the royal house, general-in-chief of the Syrian armies.
THOAS ⎫ Greek nobles of the Kingdom of Syria, generals
LEOSTHENES ⎭ of its armies.
PHAYLLUS, an official, afterwards Minister of Timocles.
PHILOCTETES, a young Greek noble of Egypt, friend of Antiochus.
MELITUS, a Court official.
CALLICRATES, a young Greek noble of Syria.
THERAS, a gentleman in waiting.
AN EREMITE.

CLEOPATRA, an Egyptian princess, sister of the reigning Ptolemy, Queen of Syria; widow successively of King Nicanor and his brother Antiochus.
RODOGUNE, a princess of Parthia, prisoner in Antioch.
EUNICE, daughter of Nicanor.
CLEONE, sister of Phayllus, in attendance on the Queen.
MENTHO, an Egyptian woman, nurse of Antiochus.
ZOŸLA, an attendant of Cleopatra.

Act I

Antioch. The Palace; a house by the sea.

Scene 1

The Palace in Antioch; Cleopatra's antechamber.
Cleone is seated; to her enters Eunice.

CLEONE
Always he lives!

EUNICE
No, his disease, not he.
For the divinity that sits in man
From that afflicted body has withdrawn, —
Its pride, its greatness, joy, command, the Power
Unnameable that struggles with its world:
The husk, the creature only lives. But that husk
Has a heart, a mind and all accustomed wants,
And having these must be, — O, it is pitiful, —
Stripped of all real homage, forced to see
That none but Death desires him any more.

CLEONE
You pity?

EUNICE
Seems it strange to you? I pity.
I loved him not, — who did? But I am human
And feel the touch of tears. A death desired
Is still a death and man is always man

Although an enemy. If I ever slew,
I think 'twould be with pity in the blow
That it was needed.

CLEONE
That's a foolish thought.

EUNICE
If it were weakness and delayed the stroke.

CLEONE
The Queen waits by him still?

EUNICE
No longer now.
For while officiously she served her lord,
The dying monarch cast a royal look
Of sternness on her. "Cease," he said, "O woman,
To trouble with thy ill-dissembled joy
My passing. Call thy sons! Before they come
I shall have gone into the shadow. Yet
Too much exult not, lest the angry gods
Chastise thee with the coming of thy sons
At which thou now rejoicest."

CLEONE
Where is she then
Or who waits on her?

EUNICE
Rodogune.

CLEONE
That slave!
No nobler attendance?

EUNICE

I think I hear the speech
Of upstarts. Are you, Cleone, of that tribe?

CLEONE

I marvel at your strange attraction, Princess,
You fondle and admire a statue of chalk
In a black towel dismally arranged!

EUNICE

She has roses in her pallor, but they are
The memory of a blush in ivory.
She is all silent, gentle, pale and pure,
Dim-natured with a heart as soft as sleep.

CLEONE

She is a twilight soul, not frank, not Greek,
Some Magian's daughter full of midnight spells.
I think she is a changeling from the dead.
I hate the sorceress!

EUNICE

We shall have a king
Who's young, Cleone; Rodogune is fair.
What think you of it, you small bitter heart?

CLEONE

He will prefer the roses and the day,
I hope!

EUNICE

Yourself, you think? O, see her walk!
A floating lily in moonlight was her sister.

Rodogune enters.

RODOGUNE

His agony ends at last.

CLEONE

Why have you left
Your mistress and your service, Rodogune?

RODOGUNE

She will not have me near her now; she says
I look at her with eyes too wondering and too large.
So she expects alone her husband's end
And her release. Alas, the valiant man,
The king, the trampler of the fields of death!
He called to victory and she ran to him,
He made of conquest his camp-follower. How
He lies forsaken! None regard his end;
His flatterers whisper round him, his no more;
His almost widow smiles. Better would men,
Could they foresee their ending, understand
The need of mercy.

CLEONE

My sandal-string is loose;
Kneel down and tie it, Parthian Rodogune.

EUNICE

You too may feel the need of mercy yet,
Cleone.

Cleopatra enters swiftly from the corridors of the Palace.

CLEOPATRA

Antiochus is dead, is dead, and I
Shall see at last the faces of my sons.
O, I could cry upon the palace-tops
My exultation! Gaze not on me so,
Eunice. I have lived for eighteen years
With silence and my anguished soul within
While all the while a mother's heart in me
Cried for her children's eyelids, wept to touch

The little bodies that with pain I bore.
The long chill dawnings came without that joy.
Only my hateful husband and his crown, —
His crown!

EUNICE

To the world he was a man august,
High-thoughted, grandiose, valiant. Leave him to death,
And thou enjoy thy children.

CLEOPATRA

He would not let my children come to me,
Therefore I spit upon his corpse. Eunice,
Have you not thought sometimes how strange it will feel
To see my tall strong sons come striding in
Who were two lisping babes, two pretty babes?
Sometimes I think they are not changed at all
And I shall see my small Antiochus
With those sweet sunlight curls, his father's curls,
And eyes in which an infant royalty
Expressed itself in glances, Timocles
Holding his brother's hand and toiling to me
With eyes like flowers wide-opened by the wind
And rosy lips that laugh towards my breast.
Will it not be strange, so sweet and strange?

EUNICE

And when
Will they arrive from Egypt?

CLEOPATRA

Ah, Eunice,
From Egypt! They are here, Eunice.

EUNICE

Here!

CLEOPATRA
Not in this room, dear fool; in Antioch, hid
Where never cruel eyes could come at them.
O, did you think a mother's hungry heart
Could lose one fluttering moment of delight
After such empty years? Theramenes, —
The swift hawk he is, — by that good illness helped
Darted across and brought them. They're here, Eunice!
I saw them not even then, not even then
Could clasp, but now Antiochus is dead,
Is dead, my lips shall kiss them! Messengers
Abridge the road with tempest in their hooves
To bring them to me!

EUNICE
Imperil not with memories of hate
The hour of thy new-found felicity;
For souls dislodged are dangerous and the gods
Have their caprices.

CLEOPATRA
Will the Furies stir
Because I hated grim Antiochus?
When I have slain my kin, then let them wake.
The man who's dead was nothing to my heart:
My husband was Nicanor, my beautiful
High-hearted lord with his bright auburn hair
And open face. When he died miserably
A captive in the hated Parthian's bonds,
My heart was broken. Only for my babes
I knit the pieces strongly to each other,
My little babes whom I must send away
To Egypt far from me! But for Antiochus,
That gloomy, sullen and forbidding soul,
Harsh-featured, hard of heart, rough mud of camps
And marches, — he was never lord of me.
He was a reason of State, an act of policy;

And he exiled my children. You have not been
A mother!

EUNICE
I will love with you, Cleopatra,
Although to hate unwilling.

CLEOPATRA
Love me and with me
As much as your pale quiet Parthian's loved
Whom for your sake I have not slain.

CLEONE
She too,
The Parthian! — blames you. Was it not she who said,
Your joy will bring a curse upon your sons?

CLEOPATRA
Hast thou so little terror?

EUNICE
Never she said it!

CLEOPATRA
Fear yet; be wise! I cannot any more
Feel anger! Never again can grief be born
In this glad world that gives me back my sons.
I can think only of my children's arms.
There is a diphony of music swells
Within me and it cries a double name,
Twin sounds, Antiochus and Timocles,
Timocles and Antiochus, the two
Changing their places sweetly like a pair
Of happy lovers in my brain.

CLEONE
But which

Shall be our king in Syria?

CLEOPATRA

Both shall be kings,
My kings, my little royal faces made
To rule my breast. Upon a meaner throne
What matters who shall reign for both?

Zoÿla enters.

ZOŸLA

Madam,
The banner floats upon that seaward tower.

CLEOPATRA

O my soul, fly to perch there! Shall it not seem
My children's robes as motherwards they run to me
Tired of their distant play?

She leaves the room followed by Zoÿla.

EUNICE

You, you, Cleone! gods are not in the world
If you end happily.

RODOGUNE

Do not reproach her.
I have no complaint against one human creature;
Nature and Fate do all.

EUNICE

Because you were born,
My Rodogune, to suffer and be sweet
As was Cleone to offend. O snake,
For all thy gold and roses!

RODOGUNE

I did not think
Her guiltless sons must pay her debt. Account

Is kept in heaven and our own offences
Too heavy a load for us to bear.
Rodogune and Eunice go out.

CLEONE
The doll,
The Parthian puppet whom she fondles so,
She hardly has a glance for me! I am glad
This gloomy, grand Antiochus is dead.
O now for pastime, dances, youth and flowers!
Youth, youth! for we shall have upon the throne
No grey beard longer, but some glorious boy
Made for delight with whom we shall be young
For ever.
(*to Phayllus, as he enters*)
Rejoice, brother; he is dead.

PHAYLLUS
It was my desire and fear that killed him then;
For he was nosing into my accounts.
When shall we have these two king-cubs and which
Is the crowned lion?

CLEONE
That is hidden, Phayllus;
You know it.

PHAYLLUS
I know; I wish I also knew
Why it was hidden. Perhaps there is no cause
Save the hiding! Women feign and lie by nature
As the snake coils, no purpose served by it.
Or was it the grim king who'ld have it so?

CLEONE
They are in Antioch.

PHAYLLUS
That I knew.

CLEONE
You knew?

PHAYLLUS
Before Queen Cleopatra. They do not sleep
Who govern kingdoms; they have ears and eyes.

CLEONE
Knew and they live!

PHAYLLUS
Why should one slay in vain?
A dying man has nothing left to fear
Or hope for. He belongs to other cares.
Whichever of these Syrian cubs be crowned,
He will be hungry, young and African;
He will need caterers.

CLEONE
Shall they not be found?

PHAYLLUS
In Egypt they have other needs than ours.
There lust's almost as open as feasting is;
Science and poetry and learned tastes
Are not confined to books, but life's an art.
There are faint mysteries, there are lurid pomps;
Strong philtres pass and covert drugs. Desire
Is married to fulfilment, pain's enjoyed
And love sometimes procures his prey for death.
He'll want those strange and vivid colours here,
Not dull diplomacies and hard rough arms.
Then who shall look to statecraft's arid needs
If not Phayllus?

CLEONE

We shall rise?

PHAYLLUS

It is that
I came to learn from you. I have a need for growth;
I feel a ray come nearer to my brow,
The world expands before me. Will you assist, —
For you have courage, falsehood, brains, — my growth?
Your own assisted, — that is understood.

CLEONE

Because I am near the Queen?

PHAYLLUS

That helps, perhaps,
But falls below the mark at which I aim.
If you were nearer to the King, — why, then!

CLEONE

Depend on me.

PHAYLLUS

Cleone, we shall rise.

Scene 2

The colonnade of a house in Antioch, overlooking the sea.
Antiochus, Philoctetes.

ANTIOCHUS
The summons comes not and my life still waits.

PHILOCTETES
Patience, beloved Antiochus. Even now
He fronts the darkness.

ANTIOCHUS
Nothing have I spoken
As wishing for his death. His was a mould
That should have been immortal. But since all
Are voyagers to one goal and wishing's vain
To hold one traveller back, I keep my hopes.
O Philoctetes, we who missed his life,
Should have the memory of his end! Unseen
He goes from us into the shades, unknown:
We are denied his solemn hours.

PHILOCTETES
All men
Are not like thee, my monarch, and this king
Was great but dangerous as a lion is
Who lives in deserts mightily alone.
Admire him from that distance.

ANTIOCHUS
O fear and base suspicion, evillest part
Of Nature, how you spoil our grandiose life!

All heights are lowered, our wide embrace restrained,
God's natural sunshine darkened by your fault.
We were not meant for darkness, plots and hatred
Reading our baseness in another's mind,
But like good wrestlers, hearty comrades, hearty foes,
To take and give in life's great lists together
Blows and embraces.

PHILOCTETES
A mother's love, a mother's fears
Earn their excuse.

ANTIOCHUS
I care not for such love.
O Philoctetes, all this happy night
I could not sleep; for proud dreams came to me
In which I sat on Syria's puissant throne,
Or marched through Parthia with the iron pomps
Of war resounding in my train, or swam
My charger through the Indus undulant,
Or up to Ganges and the torrid south
Restored once more the Syrian monarchy.
It is divinity on earth to be a king.

PHILOCTETES
But if the weaker prove the elder born?
If Timocles were Fate's elected king?

ANTIOCHUS
Dear merry Timocles! he would not wish
To wear the iron burden of a crown;
If he has joy, it is enough for him.
Sunshine and laughter and the arms of friends
Guard his fine monarchy of cheerful mind.

PHILOCTETES
If always Fate were careful to fit in

The nature with the lot! But she sometimes
Loves these strange contrasts and crude ironies.

ANTIOCHUS
Has not nurse Mentho often sworn to me
That I, not he, saw earth the first?

PHILOCTETES
And when
Did woman's tongue except in wrath or malice
Deliver truth that's bitter?

ANTIOCHUS
Philoctetes,
Do you not wish me to be king?

PHILOCTETES
Why left I then
Nile in his fields and Egypt slumbering
Couchant upon her sands, but to pursue
Your gallant progress sailing through life's seas
Shattering opponents till your flag flew high,
Sole admiral-ship of all this kingly world?
But since upon this random earth unjust
We travel stumbling to the pyre, not led
By any Power nor any law, and neither
What we desire nor what we deserve
Arrives, but unintelligible dooms
O'ertake us and the travesty of things,
It is better not to hope too much.

ANTIOCHUS
It is better
To lift our hopes heaven-high and to extend them
As wide as earth. Heaven did not give me in vain
This royal nature and this kingly form,
These thoughts that wear a crown. They were not meant

For mockery nor to fret a subject's heart.
Do you not hear the ardour of those hooves?
My kingdom rides to me.
He hastens to the other end of the colonnade.

PHILOCTETES
O glorious youth
Whose young heroic arms would gird the world,
I like a proud and anxious mother follow,
Desiring, fearing, drawn by cords of hope and love,
Admire and doubt, exult and quake and chide.
She is so glad of her brave, beautiful child,
But trembles lest his courage and his beauty
Alarm the fatal jealousy that watches us
From thrones unseen.
Thoas and Melitus enter from the gates.

THOAS
Are these the Syrian twins?

PHILOCTETES
The elder of them only, Antiochus
Of Syria.

THOAS
Son of Nicanor! Antiochus
The high Seleucid travels the dull stream
And Syria's throne is empty for his heir.

ANTIOCHUS
A glorious sun has fallen then from heaven
Saddening the nations, even those he smote.
It is the rule of Nature makes us rise
Despite our hearts replacing what we love,
And I am happy who am called so soon
To rule a nation of such princely men.
Are you not Thoas?

THOAS

Thoas of Macedon.

ANTIOCHUS

Thoas, we shall be friends. Will it be long
Before we march together through the world
To stable our horses in Persepolis?

He turns to speak to Timocles who has just entered and goes into the house.

MELITUS

This is a royal style and kingly brow.

THOAS

The man is royal. What a face looks forth
From under that bright aureole of hair!

TIMOCLES

I greet you, Syrians. Shall I know your names?

MELITUS

Melitus. This is Thoas.

TIMOCLES

Melitus?
Oh yes, of Macedon.

MELITUS

No, Antioch.

TIMOCLES

It is the same.
We talked of you in Alexandria and in Thebes,
All of you famous captains. Your great names
Are known to us, as now yourselves must be
Known and admired and loved.

MELITUS

Your courtesy
Overwhelms me; but I am no captain, only
The King's poor chamberlain, your servant come
To greet you.

TIMOCLES

Not therefore less a cherished friend
Whose duty helps our daily happiness.
Thoas, your name is in our country's book
Inscribed too deeply to demand poor praise
From one who never yet has drawn his sword
In anger.

THOAS

I am honoured, Prince. Do not forget
Your mother is waiting for you after eighteen years.

TIMOCLES

My mother! O, I have a mother at last.
You lords shall tell me as we go, how fair
She is or dark like our Egyptian dames,
Noble and tall or else a brevity
Of queenhood. And her face — but that, be sure,
Is the sweet loving face I have seen so often
In Egypt when I lay awake at night
And heard the breezes whispering outside
With many voices in the moonlit hours.
It is late, Thoas, is it not, a child to see
His mother when eighteen years have made him big?
This, this is Paradise, a mother, friends
And Syria. In our swart Egypt 'twas no life, —
Although I liked it well when I was there;
But O, your Syria! I have spent whole hours
Watching your gracile Syrian women pass
With their bright splendid faces. And your flowers,
What flowers! and best of all, your sun, not like

That burning Egypt, but a warmth, a joy
And a kind brightness. It will be all pleasure
To reign in such a country.

ANTIOCHUS (*returning from the house*)
Let us ride
Into our kingdom.

TIMOCLES
Antioch in sweet Syria,
The realm for gods, and Daphne's golden groves,
And swift Orontes hastening to the sea!
Ride by me, Melitus, tell me everything.

Scene 3

Cleopatra's antechamber in the Palace.
Cleopatra, seated; Rodogune.

CLEOPATRA
It is their horsehooves ride into my heart.
It shall be done. What have I any more
To do with hatred? Parthian Rodogune,
Have you forgotten now your former pomps
And princely thoughts in high Persepolis,
Or do your dreams still linger near a throne?

RODOGUNE
I think all fallen beings needs must keep
Some dream out of their happier past, — or else
How hard it would be to live!

CLEOPATRA
O, if some hope survive
In the black midst of care, however small,
We can live, then only, O then only.

RODOGUNE
Hope!
I have forgotten how men hope.

CLEOPATRA
Is your life hard
In Syrian Antioch, Rodogune, a slave
To your most bitter foemen?

RODOGUNE

Not when you speak
So gently. Always I strive to make it sweet
By outward harmony with circumstance
And a calm soul within that is above
My fortunes.

CLEOPATRA

Parthian, you have borne the hate
My husband's murder bred in me towards all
Your nation. When I felt you with my heel,
I trampled Tigris and Euphrates then
And Parthia suffered. Therefore I let you live
Half-loving in your body my revenge.
But these are cruel and unhappy thoughts
I hope to slay and bury with the past
Which gave them birth. Will you assist me, girl?
Will you begin with me another life
And other feelings?

RODOGUNE

If our fates allow
Which are not gentle.

CLEOPATRA

My life begins again,
My life begins again in my dear sons
And my dead husband lives. All's sweetly mended.
I do not wish for hatred any more.
The horrible and perilous hands of war
Appal me. O, let our peoples sit at ease
In Grecian Antioch and Persepolis,
Mothers and children, clasping those golden heads
Deep, deep within our bosoms, never allow
Their going forth again to bonds and death.
Peace, peace, let us have peace for ever more.

RODOGUNE
And will peace take me to my father's arms?

CLEOPATRA
Or else detain you on a kingly throne.
There are happier fetters.

RODOGUNE
If it must be so!

CLEOPATRA
Art thou insensible or fearst to rise?
I cannot think that even in barbarous lands
Any called human are so made that they prefer
Serfhood and scourge to an imperial throne.
Or is there such a soul?

RODOGUNE
Shall I not know
My husband first?

CLEOPATRA
I did not ask your choice,
But gave you a command to be obeyed
Like any other that each day I give.

RODOGUNE
Shall I be given him as a slave, not wife?

CLEOPATRA
You rise, I think, too quickly with your fate.
Or art thou other than I saw or thou
Feignedst to be? Hast thou been wearing all this while
Only a mask of smooth servility,
Thou subtle barbarian?

RODOGUNE

Speak not so harshly to me
Who spoke so gently now. I will obey.

CLEOPATRA

Hop'st thou by reigning to reign over me
Restoring on a throne thy Parthian soul?

RODOGUNE

What shall I be upon the Syrian throne
Except your first of slaves who am now the last,
The least considered? I hope not to reign,
Nor ever have desired ambitious joys,
Only the love that I have lacked so long
Since I left Parthia.

CLEOPATRA

Obey me then. Remember,
The hand that seats thee can again unthrone.

RODOGUNE

I shall remember and I shall obey.
She retires to her station.

CLEOPATRA

Her flashes of quick pride are quickly past.
After so many cruel, black and pitiless years
Shall not the days to come conspire for joy?
The Queen shall be my slave, a mind that's trained
To watch for orders, one without a party
In Syria, with no will to take my son from me
Or steal my sovereign station. O, they come!
Slowly, my heart! break not with too much bliss.
Eunice comes in swiftly.

EUNICE

Am I the first to tell you they have come?

CLEOPATRA
O girl, thy tongue rain joy upon the world,
That speaks to me of heaven!

Cleone enters.

CLEONE (*to Eunice*)
They are more beautiful than heaven and earth.
(*to Cleopatra*)
Thy children's feet are on the palace stairs.

CLEOPATRA
O no! not of the palace but my heart;
I feel their tread ascending. Be still, be still,
Thou flutterer in my breast: I am a queen
And must not hear thee.

Thoas and Melitus enter bringing in Antiochus and Timocles.

THOAS
Queen, we bring her sons
To Cleopatra.

CLEOPATRA
I thank you both. Approach.
Why dost thou beat so hard within to choke me?

She motions to them to stop and gazes on them in silence.

TIMOCLES
This is my mother. She is what I dreamed!

EUNICE
O high inhabitants of Greek Olympus,
Which of you all comes flashing down from heaven
To snare us mortals with this earthly gaze,
These simulations of humanity?

CLEOPATRA

Say to the Syrians they shall know their king
In the gods' time and hour. But these first days
Are for a mother.

THOAS

None shall grudge them to thee,
Remembering the gods' debt to thee, Cleopatra.
Thoas and Melitus leave the chamber.

CLEOPATRA

My children, O my children, my sweet children!
Come to me, come to me, come into my arms.
You beautiful, you bright, you tall heart-snarers,
You are all your father.

TIMOCLES

Mother, my sweet mother!
I have been dreaming of you all these years,
Mother!

CLEOPATRA

And was the dream too fair, my child?
O strange, sweet bitterness that I must ask
My child his name!

TIMOCLES

I am your Timocles.

CLEOPATRA

You first within my arms! O right, 'tis right!
It is your privilege, my sweet one. Kiss me.
O yet again, my young son Timocles.
O bliss, to feel the limbs that I have borne
Within me! O my young radiant Timocles,
You have outgrown to lie upon my lap:
I have not had that mother's happiness.

TIMOCLES
Mother, I am still your little Timocles
Playing at bigness. You shall not refuse me
The sweet dependent state which I have lost
In that far motherless Egypt where I pined.

CLEOPATRA
And like a child too, little one, you'ld have
All of your mother to yourself. Must I
Then thrust you from me? Let Antiochus,
My tall Antiochus have now his share.

RODOGUNE
He is all high and beautiful like heaven
From which he came. I have not seen before
A thing so mighty.

ANTIOCHUS
Madam, I seek your blessing; let me kneel
To have it.

CLEOPATRA
Kneel! O, in my bosom, son!
Have you too dreamed of me, Antiochus?

ANTIOCHUS
Of great Nicanor's widow and the Queen
Of Syria and my sacred fount of life.

CLEOPATRA
These are cold haughty names, Antiochus.
Not of your mother, not of your dear mother?

ANTIOCHUS
You were for me the thought of motherhood,
A noble thing and sacred. This I loved.

CLEOPATRA
No more? Are you so cold in speech, my son?
O son Antiochus, you have received
Your father's face; I hope you have his heart.
Do you not love me?

ANTIOCHUS
Surely I hope to love.

CLEOPATRA
You hope!

ANTIOCHUS
O madam, do not press my words.

CLEOPATRA
I do press them. Your words, your lips, your heart,
Your radiant body noble as a god's
I, I made in my womb, to give them light
Bore agony. I have a claim upon them all.
You do not love me?

ANTIOCHUS
The thought of you I have loved,
Honoured and cherished. By your own decree
We have been to each other only thoughts;
But now we meet. I trust I shall not fail
In duty, love and reverence to my mother.

EUNICE
His look is royal, but his speech is cold.

RODOGUNE
Should he debase his godhead with a lie?
She is to blame and her unjust demand.

CLEOPATRA
It is well. My heart half slew me for only this!
O Timocles, my little Timocles,
Let me again embrace you, let me feel
My child who dreamed of me for eighteen years
In Egypt. Sit down here against my knee
And tell me of Egypt, — Egypt where I was born,
Egypt where my sweet sons were kept from me,
Dear Egypt, hateful Egypt!

TIMOCLES
I loved it well because it bore my mother,
But not so well, my mother far from me.

CLEOPATRA
What was your life there? Your mornings and your evenings,
Your dreams at night, I must possess them all,
All the sweet years my arms have lost. Did you
Rising in those clear mornings see the Nile,
Our father Nile, flow through the solemn azure
Past the great temples in the sands of Egypt?
You have seen hundred-gated Thebes, my Thebes,
And my high tower where I would sit at eve
Watching your kindred sun? And Alexandria
With the white multitude of sails! My brother,
The royal Ptolemy, did he not love
To clasp his sister in your little limbs?
There is so much to talk of; but not now!
Eunice, take them from me for a while.
Take Rodogune and call the other slaves.
Let them array my sons like the great kings
They should have been so long. Go, son Antiochus;
Go, Timocles, my little Timocles.

ANTIOCHUS
We are the future's greatness, therefore owe
Some duty to the grandeurs of the past.

The great Antiochus lies hardly cold,
Garbed for his journey. I would kneel by him
And draw his mightiness into my soul
Before the gloomy shades have taken away
What earth could hardly value.

EUNICE

This was a stab.
Is there some cold ironic god at work?

CLEOPATRA

The great Antiochus! Of him you dreamed?
You are his nephew! Parthian, take the prince
To the dead King's death-chamber, then to his own.

ANTIOCHUS

She was the Parthian! Great Antiochus,
Syria thou leav'st me and her and Persia afterwards
To be my lovely captive.

He goes out with Rodogune.

TIMOCLES (*as he follows Eunice*)

Tell me, cousin, —
I knew not I had such sweet cousins here, —
Was this the Parthian princess Rodogune?

EUNICE

Phraates' daughter, Prince, your mother's slave.

TIMOCLES

There are lovelier faces then than Syria owns.

He goes out with Eunice.

CLEOPATRA

You gods, you gods in heaven, you give us hearts
For life to trample on! I am sick, Cleone.

CLEONE
Why, Madam, what a son you have in him,
The joyous fair-faced Timocles, yet you are sick!

CLEOPATRA
But the other, oh, the other! Antiochus!
He has the face that gives my husband back to me,
But does not love me.

CLEONE
Yet he will be king.
You said he was the elder.

CLEOPATRA
Did I say it?
I was perplexed.

CLEONE
He will be king, a man
With a cold joyless heart and thrust you back
Into some distant corner of your house
And rule instead and fill with clamorous war
Syria and Parthia and the banks of Indus
Taking our lovers and our sons to death!
Our sons! Perhaps he will take Timocles
And offer him, a lovely sacrifice,
To the grim god of battles.

CLEOPATRA
My Timocles! my only joy! Oh, no!
We will have peace henceforth and bloodless dawns.
My envoys ride today.

CLEONE
He will recall them.
This is no man to rest in peaceful ease
While other sceptres sway the neighbouring realms.

War and Ambition from his eyes look forth;
His hand was made to grasp a sword-hilt. Queen,
Prevent it; let our Timocles be king.

CLEOPATRA
What did you say? Have you gone mad, Cleone?
The gods would never bless such vile deceit.
O, if it could have been! but it cannot.

CLEONE
It must.
Timocles dead, you a neglected mother,
A queen dethroned, with one unloving child,—
Childless were better,—and your age as lonely
As these long nineteen years have been. Then you had hope,
You will have none hereafter.

CLEOPATRA
If I thought that,
I would transgress all laws yet known or made
And dare Heaven's utmost anger. Gods who mock me,
I will not suffer to all time your wrongs.
Hush, hush, Cleone! It shall not be so.
I thought my heart would break with joy, but now
What different passion tugs at my heart-strings,
Cleone, O Cleone! O my sweet dreams,
Where have you gone yielding to pangs and fears
Your happy empire? Am I she who left
Laughing the death-bed of Antiochus?
She goes into her chamber.

CLEONE
We must have roses, sunlight, laughter, Prince,
Not cold, harsh light of arms. Your laurels, laurels!
We'll blast them quickly with a good Greek lie.
Where he has gone, admire Antiochus,
Not here repeat him.

Act II

The Palace in Antioch.

Scene 1

A hall in the Palace.
Cleone, Phayllus.

PHAYLLUS
Worry the conscience of the Queen to death
Like the good bitch thou art. If this goes well,
I may sit unobserved on Syria's throne.

CLEONE
Do not forget me.

PHAYLLUS
Do not forget thyself,
Then how shall I forget thee?

CLEONE
I shall remember.

PHAYLLUS
If for a game you were the queen, Cleone,
And I your minister, how would you start
Your play of reigning?

CLEONE
I would have many perfect tortures made
To hurt the Parthian with, for every nerve

A torture. I would lie in flowers the while
Drinking sweet Cyprian wine and hear her moan.

PHAYLLUS
I do not like your thought; have better ones.

CLEONE
Shall I not satisfy my love, my hate?
Then just as well I might not reign at all.

PHAYLLUS
O hatred, love and wrath, you instruments
By which we are driven! Cleone, the gods use these
For their own purposes, not we for ours.

CLEONE
I'll do my will, Phayllus; you do yours.

PHAYLLUS
Our kingdom being won! It is not, yet.
(*turning away*)
She's too violent for my calmer ends;
Lust drives her, not ambition. I wait on you,
You gods who choose. If Fate intends my rise,
She will provide the instruments and cause.
Timocles enters from the inner palace.

TIMOCLES
I think I am afraid to speak to her.
I never felt so with the Egyptian girls
In Thebes or Alexandria. Are you not
Phayllus?

PHAYLLUS
You remember faces well
And have the trick for names, the monarch's trick.

TIMOCLES
Antiochus, all say, will be the king.

PHAYLLUS
But I say otherwise and what I say
Has a strange gift of happening.

TIMOCLES
You're my friend!

PHAYLLUS
My own and therefore yours.

TIMOCLES
This is your sister?

PHAYLLUS
Cleone.

TIMOCLES
A name that in its sound agrees
With Syria's roses. Are you too my friend,
Cleone?

CLEONE
Your subject, prince.

TIMOCLES
And why not both?

CLEONE
To serve is better.

TIMOCLES
Shall I try your will?
(*embracing her*)
Thou art warm fire against the lips, thou rose
Cleone.

CLEONE
May I test in turn?

TIMOCLES
Oh, do!

CLEONE
A rose examines by her thorns, — as thus.
She strikes him lightly on the cheek and goes out.

TIMOCLES (*looking uncertainly at Phayllus who is stroking his chin*)
It was a courtesy, — our Egyptian way.

PHAYLLUS
Hers was the Syrian. Do not excuse yourself;
I am her brother.

TIMOCLES (*turns as if to go, hesitates, then comes back*)
Oh, have you met, Phayllus,
A Parthian lady here named Rodogune?

PHAYLLUS
Blows the wind east? But if it brings me good,
Let it blow where it will. I know the child.
She's fair. You'ld have her?

TIMOCLES
Fie on you, Phayllus!

PHAYLLUS
Prince, I have a plain tongue which, when I hunger,
Owns that there is a belly. Speak in your language!
I understand men's phrases though I use them not.

TIMOCLES
Think not that evil! She is not like those,
The common flowers which have a fair outside

Of beauty, but the common hand can pluck.
We wear such lightly, smell and throw away.
She is not like them.

PHAYLLUS

No? Yet were they all
Born from one mother Nature. What if she wears
The quick barbarian's robe called modesty?
There is a woman always in the end
Behind that shimmering. Pluck the robe, 'twill fall;
Then is she Nature's still.

TIMOCLES

I have seen her eyes; they are a liquid purity.

PHAYLLUS

And yet a fish swims there which men call love,
But truth names lust or passion. Fear not, prince;
The fish will rise to such an angler's cast.

TIMOCLES

Mistake me not, nor her. These things are done,
But not with such as she; she is heaven-pure
And must like heaven be by worship won.

PHAYLLUS

What is it then that you desire of her
Or ask of me? I can do always much.

TIMOCLES

O nothing else but this, only to kneel,
Look up at her and touch the little hand
That fluttered like a moonlit butterfly
Above my mother's hair. If she consenting smiled
A little, I might even dare so much.

PHAYLLUS
Why, she's your slave-girl!

TIMOCLES
I shall kneel to her
Some day and feel her hand upon my brow.

PHAYLLUS
What animal this is, I hardly know,
But know it is the animal for me:
My genius tells me. Prince, I need a bribe
Before I'll stir in this.

TIMOCLES
What bribe, Phayllus?

PHAYLLUS
A name, — your friend.

TIMOCLES
O more than merely friend!
Bring me into the temple dim and pure
Whence my own hopes and fears now bar me out,
Then I am yours, Phayllus, you myself
For all things.

PHAYLLUS
Remember me when you have any need.
He goes out.

TIMOCLES
I have a friend! He is the very first
Who was not conquered by Antiochus.
How has this love like lightning leaped at me!

Scene 2

The same.
Eunice, Rodogune.

RODOGUNE
Heaven had a purpose in my servitude!
I will believe it.

EUNICE
One sees not now such men.
What a calm royalty his glances wield!
We are their subjects. And he treads the earth
As if it were already his.

RODOGUNE
All must be.
I have lived a slave, yet always held myself
A nobler spirit than my Grecian lords;
But when he spoke, O, when he looked at me,
I felt indeed the touch of servitude
And this time loved it.

EUNICE
O, you too, Rodogune!

RODOGUNE
I too! What do you mean? Are you, Eunice —

EUNICE
I mean, our thorny rose Cleone too
Has fallen in love with pretty Timocles.

RODOGUNE
You slanderer! But I thought a nearer thing
That ran like terror through my heart.

EUNICE
And so
You love him?

RODOGUNE
What have I said, Eunice? what have I said?
I did not say it.

EUNICE
You did not say it, no!
You lovely fool, hide love with blushes then
And lower over your liquid love-filled eyes
Their frightened lashes! Quake, my antelope!
I'll have revenge at least. O sweet, sweet heart,
My delicate Parthian! I shall never have
Another love, but only Rodogune,
My beautiful barbarian Rodogune
With the tall dainty grace and the large eyes
And vague faint pallor just like twilit ivory.

RODOGUNE
My own Eunice!
They embrace. Phayllus enters.

PHAYLLUS (*stroking his chin*)
I always hated waste.

EUNICE
Your steps too steal, Phayllus?

PHAYLLUS
I have a message.

EUNICE

I do not like the envoy. Find another
And I will hear it.

PHAYLLUS

Come, you put me out.

EUNICE

Of your accounts? They say there is too much
You have put out already for your credit.

PHAYLLUS

You're called. The Queen's in haste, Cleone said.
Eunice goes.
Parthian, will you be Syria's queen or no?
I startle you. The royal Timocles
By your beauty strives ensnared. Don not your mask
Of modesty, keep that for Timocles.
I offer you a treaty. By my help
You can advance your foot to Syria's throne:
His bed's the staircase and you shall ascend,
Nor will I rest till you are seated there.
Come, have I helped you? Shall we be allies?

RODOGUNE

You speak a language that I will not hear.

PHAYLLUS

Oh, language! you're for language, all of you.
Are you not Parthia's daughter? do you not wish
To sit upon a throne?

RODOGUNE

Not by your help,
Nor as the bride of Syrian Timocles.
What are these things you speak?

PHAYLLUS
Weigh not my speech,
But only my sincerity. I have a tongue
Displeasing to all women. Heed not that!
My heart is good, my meaning better still.

RODOGUNE
Perhaps! But know I yearn not for a throne.
And if I did, Antiochus is king
And not this younger radiance.

PHAYLLUS
That's your reason?
You are deceived. Besides he loves you not
Nor ever will put on a female yoke.
Prefer this woman's clay, this Timocles
And by my help you shall have empire, joy,
All the heart needs, the pleasures bodies use.

RODOGUNE
I need no empire save my high-throned heart,
I seek no power save that of sceptred love,
I ask no help beyond what Ormuzd gives.
Enough. I thank you.

PHAYLLUS
You're subtler than these Greeks.
Must he then pine? Shall he not plead his cause?

RODOGUNE
I would not have him waste his heart in pain
If what you say is true. Let him then know
This cannot be.

PHAYLLUS
He will not take from me
An answer you yourself alone can give.

I think you parry to be more attacked.

RODOGUNE
Think what you will, but leave me.

PHAYLLUS
If you mean that,
The way to show it is to let him come.
You feign and do not mean this, or else you would
Deny him to his face.

RODOGUNE (*flushing angrily*)
I will; tell him to come.

PHAYLLUS
I thought so. Come he shall. Remember me.
He goes out.

RODOGUNE
I did not well to bid him come to me.
It is some passing fancy of the blood.
I do not hear that he was ever hurt
But danced a radiant and inconstant moth
Above the Egyptian blossoms.
Timocles enters hastily, hesitates, then rushes and throws himself at the feet of Rodogune.

TIMOCLES
Rodogune!
I love thee, princess; thou hast made me mad.
I know not what I do nor what I speak.
What dreadful god has seized upon my heart?
I am not Timocles and not my own,
But am a fire and am a raging wind
To seize on thee and am a driven leaf.
O Rodogune, turn not away from me.
Forgive me, O, forgive me. I cannot help it

If thou hast made me love thee. Tremble not,
Nor grow so pale and look with panic glances
As if a fire had clutched thee by the robe.
I am thy menial, thy poor trembling slave
And thou canst slay me with a passing frown.

RODOGUNE
Touch not my hand! ’tis sacred from thy touch!

TIMOCLES
It is most sacred; even the roseate nail
Of thee, O thou pale goddess, is a mystery
And a strange holiness. Scorched be his hand
Who dares with lightest sacrilegious touch
Profane thee, O deep-hearted miracle,
Unless thy glorious eyes condone the fault
By growing tender. O thou wondrous Parthian,
Fear not my love; it grows a cloistered worship.
See, I can leave thee! see, I can retire.
Look once on me, one look is food enough
For many twelvemonths.

Eunice returns.

EUNICE
You wrong your mother, cousin.
Her moments linger when you are not there;
Always she asks for you.

TIMOCLES
My mother! You gods,
Forbid it, lest I weary of her love.

He goes.

EUNICE
What was this? Speak.

RODOGUNE

Was Fate not satisfied
With my captivity? Waits worse behind?
It was a grey and clouded sky before
And bleak enough but quiet. Now I see
Fresh clouds come stored with thunder toiling up
From a black-piled horizon.

EUNICE

Tell me all.
What said Phayllus to you, the dire knave
Who speaks to poison?

RODOGUNE

He spoke of love and thrones and Timocles;
He spoke as selfish cunning men may speak
Who mean some evil they call good.

EUNICE

And how
Came Timocles behind him?

RODOGUNE

Called by him,
With such wild passion burning under his lids
I never thought to see in human eyes.
What are these movements?

EUNICE

We move as we must,
Not as we choose, whatever we may think.
Your beauty is a torch you needs must carry
About the world with you. You cannot help it
If it burns kingdoms.

RODOGUNE

I pray it may not. God who only rulest,

Let not the evil spirit use my love
To bring misfortune on Antiochus.

Mentho enters.

MENTHO
Which is the Parthian?

EUNICE
She.

MENTHO
Antiochus
Desires you in his chamber with a bowl
Of Lesbian vintage.

EUNICE
Does he desire? The gods then choose their hour
For intervention. Move, you Parthian piece.

RODOGUNE
Send someone else. I cannot go.

EUNICE
I think
You have forgotten that you are a slave.
You are my piece and I will have you move.
Move quickly.

RODOGUNE
Surely he did not speak my name?

MENTHO
Why do you fear, my child? He's good and noble
And kind in speech and gentle to his servants.

RODOGUNE (*low, to herself*)
It is not him I fear, it is myself.

EUNICE

Fear me instead. You shall be cruelly whipped
Unless you move this instant.

RODOGUNE

Oh, Eunice!

EUNICE

Whipped savagely! I'll sacrifice so much
For a shy pawn who will not move? Go, go,
And come not back unkissed if you are wise.

She pushes Rodogune to the door and
she goes, followed by Mentho.

His heart's not free, nor hers, or else I'ld try
My hand at reigning. As the gods choose. Through her
I may rule Syria.

Scene 3

Antiochus' chamber.
Antiochus, with a map before him.

ANTIOCHUS
Ecbatana, Susa and Sogdiana,
The Aryan country which the Indus bounds,
Euphrates' stream and Tigris' golden sands,
The Oxus and Jaxartes and these mountains
Vague and enormous shouldering the moon
With all their dim beyond of nations huge;
This were an empire! What are Syria, Greece
And the blue littoral to Gades? They are
Too narrow to contain my soul, too petty
To satisfy its hunger and its vastness.
O pale, sweet Parthian face with liquid eyes
Mid darkest masses and O gracious limbs
Obscuring this epitome of earth,
You will not let me fix my eyes on Susa.
I never yearned for any woman yet.
While Timocles with the light Theban dames
Amused his careless heart, I walked aside;
Parthia and Greece became my mistresses.
But now my heart is filled with one pale girl.
Exult not, archer. I will quiet thee
With sudden and assured possession first,
Then keep thee beating an eternal strain.
I have loved her through past lives and many ages.
The Parthian princess, lovely Rodogune!
O name of sweetness! Renowned Phraates' daughter,
A bud of kings, — my glorious prisoner
With those beseeching eyes. O high Antiochus,

Who snatched her from among her guardian spears,
Thou hast gone past but left this prophecy
Of beautiful conquered Persia grown my slave
To love me. It is thou, my Rodogune!

Rodogune enters.

RODOGUNE (*with lowered eyes*)
I have brought the wine.

ANTIOCHUS
Thou art the only wine,
O Parthian! Wine to flush Olympian souls
Is in this glorious flask. Set down the bowl.
Lift up instead thy long and liquid eyes;
I grudge them to the marble, Rodogune.
Thou knowest well why I have sent for thee.
Have we not gazed into each other's eyes
And thine confessed their knowledge?

RODOGUNE
Prince, I am
Thy mother's slave.

ANTIOCHUS
Mine, mine, O Rodogune,
For I am Syria.

RODOGUNE
Thine.

ANTIOCHUS
O, thou hast spoken!

RODOGUNE
Touch me not, touch me not, Antiochus!
Son of Nicanor, spare me, spare thyself.
O me! I know the gods prepare some death;

I am a living misfortune.

ANTIOCHUS

Wert thou my fate
Of death itself, delightful Rodogune,
Not, as thou art, heaven's pledge of bliss, I'ld not abstain
From thy delight, but have my joy of thee
The short while it is possible on earth.
O, play not with the hours, my Rodogune.
Why should brief man defer his joys and wait
As if life were eternal? Time does not pause,
Death does not tarry.

RODOGUNE

Alas!

ANTIOCHUS

Thou lingerest yet.
Wilt thou deny the beating of our hearts
That call to us to bridge these sundering paces?
O, then I will command thee as a slave.
Thou wouldst not let me draw thee, come thyself
Into my arms, O perfect Rodogune,
My Parthian captive!

RODOGUNE

Antiochus, my king!

ANTIOCHUS

So heave against me like a wave for ever.
Melt warmly into my bosom like the Spring,
O honied breathing tumult!

RODOGUNE

O release me!

ANTIOCHUS
Thou sudden sorceress, die upon my breast!
My arms are cords to bind thee to this stake,
Slowly to burn away in crimson fire.

RODOGUNE
Release me, O release me!

ANTIOCHUS
Not till our lips have joined
Eternal wedlock. With this stamp and this
And many more I'll seal thee to myself.
Eternal Time's too short for all the kisses
I yearn for from thee, O pale loveliness,
Dim mystery! Press thy lips to mine. Obey.
Again! and so again and even for ever
Chant love, O marvel, let thy lips' wild music
Come faltering from thy heart into my bosom.
Rodogune sinks at his feet and
embraces his knees.

RODOGUNE
I am thine, thine, thine, thine for ever.
She rises and hides her face in her hands.

ANTIOCHUS (*uncovering her face*)
Beloved,
Hide not thy face from love. The gods in heaven
Look down on us; let us look up at them
With fearless eyes of candid joy and tell them
Not Time nor any of their dooms can move us now.
The passion of oneness two hearts are this moment
Denies the steps of death for ever.

RODOGUNE
My heart
Stops in me. I can bear no more of bliss.

Oh, leave me now that I may live for thee.

ANTIOCHUS
Stay where thou art. Or go, for thou art mine
And I can send thee from me when I will
And call thee when I will. Go, Rodogune
Who yet remain with me.
Rodogune leaves the chamber with faltering steps.
O Love, thou art
Diviner in the enjoying. Can I now
Unblinded scan this map? No, she is there;
It is her eyes I see and not Ecbatana.

Scene 4

The hall in the Palace.
Timocles, Phayllus.

TIMOCLES
O, all the sweetness and the glory gathered
Into one smiling life, the other's left
Barren, unbearable, bleak, desolate,
A hell of silence and of emptiness
Impossible for mortal souls to imagine,
Much less to suffer. My mother does this wrong to me!
Why should not we, kind brothers all our lives, —
O, how we loved each other there in Egypt! —
Divide this prize? Let his be Syria's crown, —
Oh, let him take it! I have Rodogune.

PHAYLLUS
He will consent?

TIMOCLES
Oh, yes, and with a smile.
He is all loftiness and warlike thoughts.
My high Antiochus! how could I dream
Of taking from him what he'ld wear so well?
Let me have love and joy and Rodogune.
The sunlight is enough for me.

PHAYLLUS
It may be,
Yet not enough for both. Look! there he comes
Carrying himself as if he were the sun
Brilliant alone in heaven. Oh, that to darken!

Antiochus enters.

TIMOCLES
Brother, it is the kind gods send you here.

ANTIOCHUS
Dear Timocles, we meet not all the day.
It was not so in Egypt. Tell me now,
What were you doing all these busy hours?
How many laughing girls of this fair land
Have you lured on to love you?

TIMOCLES
Have you not heard?

ANTIOCHUS
What, Timocles?

TIMOCLES
Our mother gives the crown
And with the crown apportions Rodogune.

ANTIOCHUS
Our royal mother? Are they hers to give?
I do not marry by another's will.

TIMOCLES
O brother, no; our hearts at least are ours.
You have not marked, I think, Antiochus,
This pale sweet Parthian Rodogune?

ANTIOCHUS (*smiling*)
No, brother?
I have not marked, you say?

TIMOCLES
You are so blind
To woman's beauty. You only woo great deeds
And arms imperial. It is well for me
You rather chose to wed the grandiose earth.

I am ashamed to tell you, dear Antiochus,
I grudged the noble crown that soon will rest
So gloriously upon you. Take it, brother,
But leave me my dim goddess Rodogune.

ANTIOCHUS
Thy goddess! thine!

TIMOCLES
It is not possible
That you too love her!

ANTIOCHUS
What is it to thee whom or what I love?
Say that I love her not?

TIMOCLES
Then is my offer
Just, brotherly, not like this causeless wrath.

ANTIOCHUS
Thy wondrous offer! Of two things that are mine
To fling me one with "There! I want it not,
I'll take the other"!

TIMOCLES (*in a suffocated voice*)
Has she made thee king?

ANTIOCHUS
I need no human voice to make me anything
Who am king by birth and nature. Who else should reign
In Syria? Thoughtst thou thy light and shallow head
Was meant to wear a crown?

TIMOCLES
In Egypt you were not like this, Antiochus.

ANTIOCHUS
See not the Parthian even in dreams at night!
Remember not her name!

TIMOCLES
                                        She is my mother's slave:
I'll ask for her and have her.

ANTIOCHUS
                                            Thou shalt have
My sword across thy heart-strings first. She is
The kingdom's prize and with the kingdom mine.

TIMOCLES
My dream, my goddess with those wondrous eyes!
My sweet veiled star cloistered in her own charm!
I will not yield her to thee, nor the crown,
Not wert thou twenty times my brother.

PHAYLLUS
                                                        Capital!
Delightful! O my fortune! my kind fortune!

TIMOCLES
Thou lov'st her not who dar'st to think of her
As if she were a prize for any arms,
Thy slave, thy chattel.

ANTIOCHUS
                                    Speak not another word.

PHAYLLUS
More! more! My star, thou risest o'er this storm.

ANTIOCHUS
I pardon thee, my brother Timocles;
Thy light passions are thy excuse. Henceforth

Offend not. For the Parthian, she is mine
And I would keep her though a god desired.
Exalt not thy presumptuous eyes henceforth
Higher than are her sandals.

He goes out.

PHAYLLUS

This is your brother!
Shall he not have the crown?

TIMOCLES

Nor her, nor Syria.

Rodogune and Eunice enter
passing through the hall.
Timocles rushes to her.

My Rodogune, my star! Thou knowest the trade
Which others seek to make of thee. Resist it,
Prevent the insult of this cold award!
Say that thou lov'st me.

RODOGUNE

Prince, I pity thee,
But cannot love.

She passes out.

EUNICE

My cousin Timocles,
All flowers are not for your plucking. Roses
Enough that crave to satisfy your want,
Are grown in Syria; take them. Here be wise;
Touch not my Parthian blossom.

She passes out.

TIMOCLES

How am I smitten as with a thunderbolt!

PHAYLLUS
Will you be dashed by this? They make her think
Antiochus will reign in Syria.

TIMOCLES
No,
She loves him.

PHAYLLUS
Is love so quickly born? Oh, then,
It will as quickly die. Eunice works here
To thwart you; she is for Antiochus.

TIMOCLES
All, all are for Antiochus, the crown,
And Syria and men's homage, women's hearts
And life and sweetness and my love.

PHAYLLUS
Young prince,
Be more a man. Besiege the girl with gifts
And graces; woo her like a queen or force her
Like what she is, a slave. Be strong, be sudden,
Forestalling this proud brother.

TIMOCLES
I would not wrong her pure and shrouded soul
Though all the gods in heaven should give me leave.

PHAYLLUS
The graceful, handsome fool! Then from your mother
Demand her as a gift.

TIMOCLES (*going*)
My soul once more
Is hunted by the tempest.

Scene 5

Cleopatra's chamber.
Cleopatra, Cleone.

CLEOPATRA
I am resolved; but Mentho the Egyptian knows
The true precedence of the twins. Send her to me.
Cleone goes out.
O you, high-seated cold divinities,
You sleep sometimes, they say you sleep. Sleep now!
I only loosen what your careless wills
Have tangled.
Mentho enters.
Mentho, sit by me. Mentho,
You have not breathed our secret? Keep it, Mentho,
Dead in your bosom, buy a queen for slave.

MENTHO
Dead! Can truth die?

CLEOPATRA
Ah, Mentho, truth! But truth
Is often terrible. Justice! but was ever
Justice yet seen upon the earth? Man lives
Because he is not just and real right
Dwells not with law and custom but for him
It grows by whose arriving our brief happiness
Is best assured and grief prohibited
For a while to mortals.

MENTHO
This is the thing I feared.

O wickedness! Well, Queen, I understand.

CLEOPATRA
Not less than you I love Antiochus;
But Timocles seeks Parthian Rodogune.
O, if these brother-loves should turn to hate
And slay us all! Then rather let thy nursling stand, —
Will he not rule whoever fills the throne? —
Approved of heaven and earth, indeed a king,
Protector of the weaker Timocles,
His right hand in his wars, his pillar, guard
And sword of action, grand in loyalty,
Kingly in great subjection, famed for love.
Then there shall be no grief for anyone
And everything consent to our desires.

MENTHO
Queen Cleopatra, shall I speak? shall I
Forget respect? The god demands my voice.
I tell thee then that thy rash brain has hatched
A wickedness beyond all parallel,
A cold, unmotherly and cruel plot
Thou striv'st in vain to alter with thy words.
O nature self-deceived! O blinded heart!
It is the husband of thy boasted love,
Woman, thou wrongest in thy son.

CLEOPATRA
Alas,
Mentho, my nurse, thou knowest not the cause.

MENTHO
I do not need to know. Art thou Olympian Zeus?
Has he given thee his sceptre and his charge
To guide the tangled world? Wilt thou upset
His rulings? wilt thou improve his providence?
Are thy light woman's brain and shallow love

A better guide than his all-seeing eye?
O wondrous arrogance of finite men
Who would know better than omniscient God!
Beware his thunders and observe his will.
What he has made, strive not to unmake, but shun
The tragical responsibility
Of such dire error. If from thy act spring death
And horror, are thy human shoulders fit
To bear that heavy load? Observe his will,
Do right and leave the rest to God above.

CLEOPATRA
Thy words have moved me.

MENTHO
Let thy husband move thee.
How wilt thou meet him in the solemn shades?
Will he not turn his royal face from thee
Saying, "Murderess of my children, come not near me!"

CLEOPATRA
O Mentho, curse me not. My husband's eyes
Shall meet me with a smile. Mentho, my nurse,
You will not tell this to Antiochus?

MENTHO
I am not mad nor wicked. Remain fixed
In this resolve. Dream not that happiness
Can spring from wicked roots. God overrules
And Right denied is mighty.

Act III

The Palace in Antioch. Under the hills.

Scene 1

The Audience-Chamber in the Palace.
Nicanor, Phayllus and others seated; Eunice, Philoctetes, Thoas apart near the dais.

THOAS
Is it patent? Is he the elder? do we know?

EUNICE
Should he not rule?

THOAS
If Fate were wise, he should.

EUNICE
Will Timocles sack great Persepolis?
Sooner I think Phraates will couch here,
The mighty, steadfast, patient, subtle man,
And from the loiterer take, the sensualist
Antioch of the Seleucidae.

THOAS
Perhaps.
But shall I rise against the country's laws
That harbours me? The sword I draw, is hers.

EUNICE

Are law and justice always one? Reflect.

THOAS

If justice is offended, I will strike.
He withdraws to another part of the hall.

EUNICE

The man is wise, but when ambition's heaped
In a great bosom, Fate takes quickly fire.
It only needs the spark.

PHILOCTETES

Is it only that
That's needed? there shall be the spark.
He withdraws.

EUNICE

Fate or else Chance
Work out the rest. I have given your powers a lead.
Nicanor, who has drawn near, stops before her.

NICANOR

Your council's finished then?

EUNICE

What council, father?

NICANOR

I have seen, though I have not spoken. Meddle not
In things too great for you. This realm and nation
Are not a skein for weaving fine intrigues
In your shut chambers.

EUNICE

We have other sports.
What do you mean?

NICANOR

See less Antiochus.
Carry not there your daring spirit and free rein
To passion and ambition nor your bright scorn
Of every law that checks your headstrong will.
Or must I find a curb that shall restrain you?

He withdraws.

EUNICE

My prudent father! These men think that wisdom
Is tied up to beards. We too have heads
And finer brains within them, as I think!

She goes up on the dais. Leosthenes, Callicrates and others enter together.

THOAS

Leosthenes from Parthia! Speeds the war?

LEOSTHENES

It waits a captain.

THOAS

It shall have today
A king of captains.

LEOSTHENES

I have seen the boy.
But there's a mystery? Shall he be the king?

THOAS

If Fate agrees with Nature.

LEOSTHENES

Neither can err
So utterly, I think; for, if they could,
Man's will would have a claim to unseat Fate,
Which cannot be.

Cleopatra enters with Antiochus and
Timocles; Cleone, Rodogune in attendance,
the latter richly robed.

PHILOCTETES
See where she places him!

THOAS
'Tis on her right!

PHAYLLUS
It is a woman's ruse.
Or must I at disadvantage play the game
With this strong piece against?

CLEOPATRA
The strong Antiochus has gone too early
Down the dim gorges to that silent world
Where we must one day follow him. A younger hand
Takes up his sceptre and controls his sword.
These are the Syrian twins, Nicanor's sons,
These are Antiochus and Timocles.
Why so long buried, why their right oppressed,
Why their precedence tyrannously concealed,
Forget. Forget old griefs, old hatreds; let them rest
Inurned, nor from their night recover them.

NICANOR
We need not raise the curtains that conceal
Things long inurned, but lest by this one doubt
The dead past lay a dark and heavy hand
Upon our fairer future, let us swear
The Queen shall be obeyed as if she spoke
For Heaven. Betwixt the all-seeing gods and her
Confine all cause of quarrel.

PHAYLLUS
Let the princes swear;
For how can subjects jar if they agree?

CLEOPATRA
O not with oaths compel the Syrian blood!
My sons, do you consent?

TIMOCLES
Your sovereign will must rule,
Mother, your children and our fraternal kindness
Will drown the loser's natural chagrin
In joy at the other's joy.

CLEOPATRA
Antiochus, my son!

ANTIOCHUS
Your question, Madam, was for Timocles;
From me it needs no answer.

PHAYLLUS
You accept
Your mother's choice?

ANTIOCHUS
God's choice. My mother speaks
A thing concealed, not one unsettled.

PHAYLLUS
Prince,
Syria demands a plainer answer here.

ANTIOCHUS
Who art thou? Art thou of Seleucus' blood
Who questionest Syria's kings?

CLEOPATRA

Enough. My sons
Will know how to respect their kingly birth.
Today begins another era. Rise,
Princess of Parthia; sit upon this throne,
Phraates' daughter; thou art peace and love
And must today be crowned. Marvel not, Syrians;
For it is peace my envoys bear by now
Upon their saddles to Persepolis.

THOAS

This was a secret haste!

LEOSTHENES

Is it possible?
We had our heel upon the Parthian's throat.

CLEOPATRA

Since Parthia swept through the Iranian East
Wrecking the mighty Macedonian's toil,
War sways for ever like a darkened sea
In turmoil twixt our realms. How many heart-strings
Have broken, what tears of anguish have been wept
And eyes sought eastward unreturning eyes!
Joy has been buried in the blood-drenched sands.
Vain blood, vain weeping! Earth was made so wide
That many might have majesty and joy
Upon one mother's equal breast. But we
Arresting others' portions lose our own.
Nations that conquer widest, perish first,
Sapped by the hate of an uneasy world.
Then they are wisest victors who in time
Knowing the limits of their prosperous fate
Avoid the violence of Heaven. Syrians,
After loud battles I have founded glorious peace.
That fair work I began as Syria's queen;
To seal it Syria's king must not refuse.

ANTIOCHUS
I do refuse it. There shall be no peace.

CLEOPATRA
My son!

ANTIOCHUS
Peace! Are the Parthians at our gates?
Has not alarm besieged Ecbatana?
When was it ever seen or heard till now
That victors sued for peace? And this the reason,
A woman's reason, because many have bled
And more have wept. It is the tears, the blood
Prodigally spent that build a nation's greatness.
I here annul this peace, this woman's peace,
I will proclaim with noise of victories
Its revocation.

PHAYLLUS
Now!

THOAS
Thou speakest, King!

TIMOCLES
You are not crowned as yet, Antiochus.

ANTIOCHUS
Syria forbids it, Syria's destiny
Sends forth her lion voices from the hills
Where trumpets blare towards Persepolis,
Forbidding peace.

CLEOPATRA
We do not sue for peace,
My son, but give peace, taking provinces
And taking Rodogune.

TIMOCLES
Who twenty times
Outweighs all hero's actions and exceeds
Earth's widest conquests.

ANTIOCHUS
For her and provinces!
O worse disgrace! The sword had won us these.
We wrong the mighty dead who conquered. Provinces!
Whose soil are they that we must sue for them?
The princess! She's my prisoner, is she not?
Must I entreat the baffled Parthian then
What I shall do with my own slave-girl here
In Antioch, in my palace? Queen of Syria,
This was ignobly done.

CLEOPATRA
I know you do not love me; in your cold heart
Love finds no home; but still I am your mother.
You will respect me thus when you are king?

ANTIOCHUS
I will respect you in your place, enshrined
In your apartments, governing your women,
Not Syria.

CLEOPATRA
Leave it. You will not think of peace?

ANTIOCHUS
Yes, when our armies reach Persepolis.

MELITUS
How desperate looks the Queen! What comes of this?

NICANOR (*who has been watching Eunice*)
End this debate; let Syria know her king.
Cleopatra rises and stands silent for a moment.

TIMOCLES
Mother!

CLEOPATRA
Behold your king!

MENTHO
She has done it, gods!
There is an astonished silence.

NICANOR
Speak once more, daughter of high Ptolemy,
Remembering God. Speak, have we understood?
Is Timocles our king?

CLEOPATRA (*with a mechanical and rigid gesture*)
Behold your king!
Nicanor makes a motion of assent as
to the accomplished fact.

NICANOR
Let then the King ascend his throne.

LEOSTHENES (*half-rising*)
Thoas!

PHILOCTETES
Speak, King Antiochus, God's chosen king
Who art, not Cleopatra's.

THOAS
Speak, Antiochus.

ANTIOCHUS
Why didst thou give to me alone the name
Of Syria's princes? why upon thy right
Hast seated me? or wherefore mad'st thou terms
For that near time when I should be the king,

Chaffering for my consent with arguments
Unneeded if the younger were preferred?
Wilt thou invoke the gods to seal this lie?

CLEOPATRA
Dost thou insult me thus before my world?
Ascend the throne, my son.

ANTIOCHUS
Stay, Timocles.
Make not such haste, my brother, to supplant
Thy elder.

TIMOCLES
My elder?

He looks at Cleopatra.

CLEOPATRA
I have spoken the truth.

MENTHO
Thou hast not; thou art delivered of a lie,
A monstrous lie.

CLEONE
Silence, thou swarthy slave!

MENTHO
I'll not be silent. She offends the gods.
I am Mentho the Egyptian, she who saw
The royal children born. She lies to you,
O Syrians. Royal young Antiochus
Was first on earth.

THOAS
The truth breaks out at last.

PHAYLLUS
This is a slave the surplus mud of Nile
Engendered. Shall we wrong the Queen by hearing her?

MENTHO
I was a noble Egyptian's wife in Memphis,
No slave, thou Syrian mongrel, and my word
May stand against a perjured queen's.

EUNICE (*leaning forward*)
Is't done?
Nicanor who has been hesitating, observes
her action and stands forward to speak.

NICANOR
The royal blood of Egypt cannot lie.
Shall Syria's queen be questioned? Shall common words
Of common men be weighed against the breath of kings?
Let not wild strife arise, O princes, let it not.
Antiochus, renounce unfilial pride;
Wound not thy mother and thy motherland,
Son of Nicanor.

THOAS
Shall a lie prevail?

NICANOR (*looking again at Eunice*)
It was settled then among you! Be it so.
My sword is bare. I stand for Syria's king.

PHILOCTETES (*in the midst of a general hesitation*)
Egyptian Philoctetes takes thy challenge,
Nicanor.

ANTIOCHUS
Who is for me in Syria?

THOAS

I set my sword
Against Nicanor's.

LEOSTHENES

I am Leosthenes.
I draw my victor steel for King Antiochus.

ANTIOCHUS

Who else for me?

OTHERS

I! I! and I! and I!

CALLICRATES AND OTHERS

We for King Timocles.

LEOSTHENES

Slay them, cut down
The party of the liars.

There is a shouting and tumult with drawing and movement of swords.

NICANOR

Protect the King.
Let insolent revolt at once be quenched
And sink in its own blood.

LEOSTHENES

I slay all strife
With the usurper.

THOAS

Stay, stay, Leosthenes.

ANTIOCHUS

Forbear! forbear, I say! let all be still!

The great Seleucus' house shall not be made
A shambles. Not by vulgar riot, not
By fratricidal murder will I climb
Into my throne, but up the heroic steps
Of ordered battle. Brother Timocles,
That oft-kissed head is sacred from my sword.
Nicanor, thou hast thrown the challenge down;
I lift it up.

CLEOPATRA
O, hear me, son Antiochus.

ANTIOCHUS
I have renounced thee for my mother.

RODOGUNE
Alas!

CLEOPATRA
O wretched woman!
She hurries out followed by Rodogune,
Eunice and Cleone.

NICANOR
Thou shalt not do this evil,
Though millions help thee.
He goes out with Timocles, Phayllus,
Callicrates and the others of his party.

PHILOCTETES
Can we hold the house
And seize the city? We are many here.

THOAS
Nicanor's troops hold Antioch.

LEOSTHENES

Not here, not here.
Out to the army on the marches! There
Is Syria's throne, not here in Antioch.

ANTIOCHUS

Mentho,
Go with us. Gather swiftly all our strength,
Then out to Parthia!

Scene 2

A hall in the Palace.
Rodogune, Eunice.

RODOGUNE
God gave my heart and mind; they are not hers
To force into this vile adultery.
I am a Parthian princess, of a race
Who choose one lord and cleave to him for ever
Through death, through fire, through swords, in hell, in heaven.

EUNICE
The Queen's too broken. It was Phayllus said it.
He has leaped into the saddle of affairs
And is already master. What can we hope for
Left captive in such hands? Not Syria's throne
Shall you ascend beside your chosen lord,
But as a slave the bed of Timocles.

RODOGUNE
If we remain! But who remains to die?
In Parthian deserts, in Antiochus' tents!
There we can smile at danger.

EUNICE
Yes, oh, yes!
Deserts for us are safe, not Antioch. Come.
Antiochus and Philoctetes enter from without.

ANTIOCHUS
I sought for you, Eunice, Rodogune.
To saddle! for our bridal pomp and torches

Are other than we looked for.

Phayllus enters from within with Theras.

PHAYLLUS

Today, no later.
The Egyptian rebel ravishes our queen!
Help! help!

ANTIOCHUS

Off, Syrian weasel!

He flings off Phayllus and goes out with Eunice, Rodogune, Philoctetes.

PHAYLLUS

Theras, pursue them!

Theras hastens out; Phayllus rushes to the window.

Antiochus escapes! Oppose him, sentinels.
A thousand pieces for his head! He's through.
O for a speedy arrow!

Timocles enters with Cleone.

TIMOCLES

Who escapes?

PHAYLLUS

Thy brother, forcing with him Rodogune,
And with them fled Eunice.

TIMOCLES

Rodogune!

PHAYLLUS

By force he carried her.

TIMOCLES

O no, she went
Smiling and glad. O thou unwise Phayllus,

Why dost thou stay with me, a man that's doomed?
He will come back and mount his father's throne
And rule the nations. Why wouldst thou be slain?
All, all's for him and ever was. I have had
Light loves, light friends, but no one ever loved me
Whom I desired. So was it in our boyhood's days,
So it persists. He is preferred in heaven
And earth is his and his humanity.
Even my own mother is a Niobe
Because he has renounced her.

PHAYLLUS

I understand,
Seeing this, the reason.

TIMOCLES

Why should he always have the things I prize?
What is his friendship but a selfish need
Of souls to unbosom himself to, who will share,
Mirror and serve his greatness? Yet it was he
The clear discerning Philoctetes chose;
Upon his shoulder leaned my royal uncle
Preferring him to admonish and to love;
On me he only smiled as one too light
For praise or censure. What's his kingliness
But a lust of grandiose slaughter, an ambition
Almost inhuman and a haughty mind
That lifts itself above the highest heads
As if his mortal body held a god
And all were mean to him? Yet proudest men,
Thoas, Theramenes, Leosthenes,
Become unasked his servants. What's his love?
A despot's sensual longing for a slave,
Carnal, imperious, harsh, without respect,
The hunger of the vital self, not raised,
Refined, uplifted to the yearning heart.
Yet Rodogune, my Rodogune to him

Has offered up her moonlit purity,
Her secret need of sweetness. O she has
Unveiled to him her sweet proud heart of love.
She would not look at me who worshipped her.
You too, Phayllus, go, Cleone, go
And serve him in his tents: the future's there,
Not on this brittle throne with which the gods
In idle sport have mocked me.

PHAYLLUS

There must be a man
Somewhere within this!

CLEONE

You shall not speak so to him.
Look round, King Timocles, and see how many
Prefer you to your brother. I am yours,
Phayllus works for you, princely Nicanor
Protects you, famed Callicrates supports.
Your mother only weeps in fear for you,
Not passion for your brother.

TIMOCLES

Rodogune
Has left me.

PHAYLLUS

We will have her back. Today
Began, today shall end this rash revolt.
Rise up, King Timocles, and be thyself,
Possess thy throne, recover Rodogune.

TIMOCLES

I cannot live unless you bring her back.

PHAYLLUS

That is already seen to. My couriers ride

Before them to Thrasyllus on the hills.
Their flight will founder there.

TIMOCLES

O subtle, quick
And provident Phayllus! Thou, thou, deviser,
Art the sole minister for me. Cleone,
The gods have made thee wholly beautiful
That thou mightst love me.

He goes out with Cleone.

PHAYLLUS

Minister! That's something,
Not all I work for.
(*to Theras who enters*)
Well?

THERAS

He has escaped.
Your throw this time was bungled, Chancellor.

PHAYLLUS
I saw his rapid flight; but afterwards?

THERAS
The band of Syrian Phliaps kept the gates.
We shouted loud, but he more quick, more high,
Like some clear-voiced Tyrrhenian trumpet cried,
"Syrians, I am your king," and they at once,
"Hail, glorious King!" and followed at his word,
Galloping, till on the Orient road they seemed
Like specks on a white ribbon.

PHAYLLUS

Let them go.
There's yet Thrasyllus. Or if he returns,
Though gods should help, though victory march his friend,
I am here to meet him.

Scene 3

Under the Syrian hills.
Antiochus, his generals, soldiers; Eunice, Rodogune, Mentho.

ANTIOCHUS
What god has moved them from their passes sheer
Where they were safe from me?

THOAS
They have had word,
No doubt, to take us living.

LEOSTHENES
On!

THOAS
They are
Three thousand, we six hundred armèd men.
Shall we go forward?

LEOSTHENES
Onward, still, I say!

ANTIOCHUS
Yes, on! I turn not back lest my proud Fate
Avert her eyes from me. A hundred guard
The princesses.

He goes, followed by Thoas,
Leosthenes, Philoctetes.

EUNICE
He'll break them like sea-spray;

They shall not stand before him.

RODOGUNE
You missioned angels, guard Antiochus.
As she speaks, the Eremite
enters and regards her.

EUNICE
He is through them, he is through them! How they scatter
Before his sword! My warrior!

RODOGUNE
Who is this man,
Eunice? He is terrible to me.

EREMITE
Who art thou rather, born to be a torch
To kingdoms? Is not thy beauty, rightly seen,
More terrible to men than monstrous forms
Which only frighten?

EUNICE
What if kingdoms burn,
So they burn grandly?

EREMITE
Spirits like thine think so.
Princess of Antioch, hast thou left thy father
To follow younger eyes? Alas, thou knowst not
Where they shall lead thee! It is to gates accursed
And by a dolorous journey.

EUNICE
Beyond all portals
I'ld follow! I am a woman of the Greeks
Who fear not death nor hell.
Antiochus returns.

ANTIOCHUS

Our swords have hewn
A road for us. Who is this flamen?

EREMITE

Hail!
"Rejoice" I cannot say, but greet Antiochus
Who never shall be king.

ANTIOCHUS

Who art thou, speak,
Who barst with such ill-omened words my way
Discouraging new-born victory? What thou knowest,
Declare! Curb not thy speech. I have a mind
Stronger than omens.

EREMITE

I am the appointed voice
Who come to tell thee thou shalt not be king,
But at thy end shall yield to destiny
For all thy greatness, genius, pride and force
Even as the tree that falls. March then no farther,
For in thy path Fate hostile stands.

ANTIOCHUS

If Fate
Would have me yield, let her first break me. On!

EREMITE

The guardians of the path then wait for thee
Vigilant lest the world's destiny be foiled
By human greatness. March on to thy doom.

ANTIOCHUS

I will. Straight on, whatever doom it be!

EREMITE
Farewell, thou mighty Syrian, soul misled,
Strength born untimely! We shall meet again
When death shall lead thee into Antioch.

He goes.

ANTIOCHUS
March.

Act IV

The Palace in Antioch. Before the hills.

Scene 1

Cleopatra's chamber.
Cleopatra, Zoÿla.

CLEOPATRA
Will he not come this morning? How my head aches!
Zoÿla, smooth the pain out of it, my girl,
With your deft fingers. Oh, he lingers, lingers!
Cleone keeps him still, the rosy harlot
Who rules him now. She is grown a queen and reigns
Insulting me in my own palace. Yes,
He's happy in her arms; why should he care for me
Who am only his mother?

ZOŸLA
Is the pain less at all?

CLEOPATRA
O, it goes deeper, deeper. Ever new revels,
While still the clang of fratricidal war
Treads nearer to his palace. Zoÿla,
You saw him with Cleone in the groves
That night of revel?

ZOŸLA
So I told you, madam.
It is long since Daphne's groves have gleamed so bright

Or trembled to such music.

CLEOPATRA
They were together?

ZOŸLA
Oh, constantly. One does not see such lovers.

CLEOPATRA (*shaking her off*)
Go!

ZOŸLA
Madam?

CLEOPATRA
Thy touch is not like Rodogune's
Nor did her gentle voice offend me. Eunice,
Zoÿla retires.
Why hast thou left me, cruel cold Eunice?
She walks to the window and returns swiftly.
God's spaces frighten me. I am so lonely
In this great crowded palace.
Timocles enters the room reading a despatch.

TIMOCLES
He rushes onward like a god of war.
Mountains and streams and deserts waterless
Are grown our foes, his helpers. The gods give ground
Before his horse-hooves.
Millions of men arrayed in complete steel
Cannot restrain him. Almost we hear in Antioch
His trumpets now. Only Nicanor and the hills
Hardly protect my crown, my brittle crown!

CLEOPATRA
Antiochus comes!

TIMOCLES
The Macedonian legions
Linger somewhere upon the wide Aegean. Sea
And land contend against my monarchy.
Your brother sends no certain word.

CLEOPATRA
It will come.
Could not the Armenian helpers stay his course?
They came like locusts.

TIMOCLES
But are swept away
As with a wind. O mother, fatal mother,
Why did you keep me from the battle then?
My presence might have spurred men's courage on
And turned this swallowing fate. It is alone
Your fault if I lose crown and life.

CLEOPATRA
My son!

TIMOCLES
There, mother, I have made you weep. I love you,
Dear mother, though I make you often weep.

CLEOPATRA
I have not blamed you, my sweet Timocles.
I did the wrong. Go to the field, dear son,
And show yourself to Syria. Timocles,
I mean no hurt, but now, only just now,
Would not a worthier presence at your side
Assist you? My royal brother of Macedon
Would give his child to you at my desire,
Or you might have your fair Egyptian cousin
Berenice. Syria would honour you, my son.

TIMOCLES
I know your meaning. You are so jealous, mother.
Why do you hate Cleone, grudging me
The solace of her love? I shall lose Syria
And I have lost already Rodogune:
Cleone clings to me. Nor is her heart
Like yours, selfish and jealous.

CLEOPATRA
Timocles!

TIMOCLES (*walking to the window*)
O Rodogune, where hast thou taken those eyes,
My moonlit midnight, where that wondrous hair
In which I thought to live as in a cloud
Of secret sweetness? Under the Syrian stars
Somewhere thou liest in my brother's arms,
Thy pale sweet happy face upon his breast
Smiling up to be kissed. O, it is hell,
The thought is hell! At midnight in the silence
I wake in warm Cleone's rosy clasp
To think of thee embraced; then in my blood
A fratricidal horror works. Let it not be,
You gods! Let me die first, let him be king.
O mother, do not let us quarrel any more:
Forgive me and forget.

CLEOPATRA
You go from me?

TIMOCLES
My heart is heavy. I will drink awhile
And hear sweet harmonies.

CLEOPATRA
There in the hall
And with Cleone?

TIMOCLES

Let it not anger you.
Yes, with Cleone.

He goes.

CLEOPATRA

I am alone, so terribly alone!

Scene 2

A hall in the Palace.
Phayllus, Theras.

THERAS
His fortune holds.

PHAYLLUS
He has won great victories
And stridden exultant like a god of death
Over Grecian, Syrian and Armenian slain;
But being mortal at each step has lost
A little blood. His veins are empty now.
Where will he get new armies? His small force
May beat Nicanor's large one, even reach Antioch,
To find the Macedonian there. They have landed.
He is ours, Theras, this great god of tempest,
Our captive whom he threatens, doomed to death
While he yet conquers.

Timocles enters with Cleone, then the
musicians and dancing-girls.

TIMOCLES
Bring in the wine and flowers; sit down, sit down.
Call in the dancers. Through the Coan robes
Let their bright flashing limbs assault my eyes
Capturing the hours, imprisoning my heart
In a white whirl of movement. Sit, Cleone.
Here on my breast, against my shoulder! You rose
Petalled and armed, you burden of white limbs
Made to be kissed and handled, you Cleone!
Yes, let the world be flowers and flowers our crown

With rosy linkings red as our own hearts
Of passion. O wasp soft-settling, poignant, sting,
Sting me with bliss until I die of it.

PHAYLLUS
I do not like this violence. Theras, go.
Theras leaves the hall.

TIMOCLES
Drink, brother Phayllus. Your webs will glitter more brightly,
You male Arachne.
More wine! I'll float my heart out in the wine
And pour all on the ground to naked Eros
As a libation. I will hide my heart
In roses, I will smother thought with jonquils.
Sing, someone to me! sing of flowers, sing mere
Delight to me far from this troubled world.

Song
Will you bring cold gems to crown me,
Child of light?
Rather quick from breathing closes
Bring me sunlight, myrtles, roses,
Robe me in delight.
Give me rapture for my dress,
For its girdle happiness.

TIMOCLES
Closer, Cleone; pack honey into a kiss.
Another song! you dark-browed Syrian there!

Song
Wilt thou snare Love with rosy brightness
To make him stay with thee?
The petulant child of a fair, cruel mother,
He flees from me to crown another.
O misery!
Love cannot be snared, love cannot be shared;
Light love ends wretchedly.

TIMOCLES
Remove these wine-cups! tear these roses down!
Who snared me with these bonds? Take hence, thou harlot,
Thy rose-faced beauty! Thou art not Rodogune.

CLEONE
What is this madness?

TIMOCLES
Hence! leave me! I am sick
Of thy gold and roses.

PHAYLLUS
Go, women, from the room;
The King is ill. Go, girl, leave him to me.
All go, Cleone reluctantly, leaving
Phayllus with Timocles.

TIMOCLES
I will not bear it any more. Give me my love
Or let me die.

PHAYLLUS
In a few nights from this
Thou shalt embrace her.

TIMOCLES
Silence! It was not I.
What have I said? It was the wine that spoke.
Look not upon me with those eyes of thine.

PHAYLLUS
The wine or some more deep insurgent spirit
Burns in thy blood. Thou shalt clasp Rodogune.

TIMOCLES
Thy words, thy looks appal me. She's my brother's wife
Sacred to me.

PHAYLLUS
His wife? Who wedded them?
For not in camps and deserts Syria's kings
Accomplish wedlock. She's his concubine.
Slave-girl she is and bed-mate of thy brother
And may be thine. Or if she were his soul-close wife,
Death rends all ties.

TIMOCLES
I will not shed his blood.
Silence, thou tempter! he is sacred to me.

PHAYLLUS
Thou needst not stain thy hands, King Timocles.
Be he live flesh or carrion, she is thine.

TIMOCLES
Yet has she lain between my brother's arms.

PHAYLLUS
What if she were thy sister, should that bar thee
From satisfaction of thy heart and body?

TIMOCLES
Do you not tremble when you say such things?

PHAYLLUS
We have outgrown these thoughts of children, king:
Nor gods nor ghosts can frighten us. You shake
At phantoms of opinion or you feign
To start at such, forgetting what you are.
The royal house of Egypt heeds them not,
Where you were nursed. Your mother sprang from incest.
If in this life you lose your Rodogune,
Are others left where you may have her bliss?
Your brother thought not so, but took her here.

TIMOCLES
I'll not be tempted by thee.

PHAYLLUS
No, by thyself
Be tempted and the thought of Rodogune.
Or shall we leave her to her present joys?
Perhaps she sleeps yet by Antiochus
Or held by him to sweeter vigilance —

TIMOCLES (*furiously*)
Accursèd ruffian, give her to my arms.
Use fair means or use foul, use steel, use poison,
But free me from these inner torments.

PHAYLLUS
From more
Than passion's injuries. Trust thy fate to me
Who am its guardian.

He goes out.

TIMOCLES
I am afraid, afraid!
What furies out of hell have I aroused
Within, without me? Let them do their will.
For I must have her once between my arms,
Though Heaven leap down in lightnings.

Scene 3

Before the Syrian hills. Antiochus' tent.
Antiochus, Thoas, Leosthenes, Philoctetes.

PHILOCTETES
This is Phayllus' work, the Syrian mongrel.
Who could have thought he'ld raise against us Greece
And half this Asia?

ANTIOCHUS
He has a brain.

THOAS
We feel it.
This fight's our latest and one desperate chance
Still smiles upon our fate.

ANTIOCHUS
Nicanor yields it us
Scattering his armies; for if we can seize
Before he gathers in his distant strengths
This middle pass, Antioch comes with it. So
I find it best and think the gods do well
Who put before us one decisive choice
Not lingering out their vote in balanced urns,
Not tediously delaying strenuous fate, —
Either to conquer with one lion leap
Or end in glorious battle.

THOAS
We ask no better;
With you to triumph or die beside you taking

The din of joyous battle in our ears,
Following your steps into whatever world.

PHILOCTETES
Have we not strength enough to enforce retreat
Like our forefathers through the Asian vasts
To Susa or the desert or the sea
Or Ptolemy in Egypt, — thence returning
With force of foreign levies, if Phayllus
Draw even the distant Roman over here,
Dispute with him the world?

ANTIOCHUS
No, Philoctetes.
With native swords I sought my native crown,
Which if I win not upon Syria's hills
A hero's death is mine. Make battle ready.
Our bodies are the dice we throw again
On the gods' table.

Scene 4

The same.
Antiochus, Eunice, Rodogune.

ANTIOCHUS
I put my hand on Antioch. Thou hast done well,
O admirable quick Theramenes.
This fight was lionlike.

EUNICE
And like the lion
Thou art, my warrior, thou canst now descend
Upon Seleucus' city. How new 'twill seem
After the mountains and the starlit skies
To sleep once more in Antioch!

RODOGUNE
I trust the stars
And mountains better. They were kind to me.
My blood within me chills when I look forward
And think of Antioch.

ANTIOCHUS
These are the shadows from a clouded past
Which shall not be repeated, Rodogune.
This is not Antioch that thou knewst, the prison
Of thy captivity, thou enterest now,
Not Antioch of thy foes, but a new city
And thy own kingdom.

RODOGUNE
Are the gods so good?

ANTIOCHUS

The gods are strong; they love to test our strength
Like armourers hammering steel. Therefore 'twas said
That they are jealous. No, but high and stern
Demanding greatness from the great; they strike
At every fault they see, perfect themselves
Labour at our perfection. What rumour increases
Approaching from the mountains? Thoas, thou?

Thoas enters.

Thy brow is dark. Is it Theramenes?
Returns our fortune broken?

THOAS

Broken and fallen.
We who are left bring back Theramenes
Upon whose body twenty glorious wounds
Smile at defeat.

ANTIOCHUS

Theramenes before me!
How have you kept me lying in my tent!
I thought our road was clear of foemen.

THOAS

The gods
Had other resources that we knew not of.
Within the passes, on the summit couch
The spears of Macedon. They have arrived
From the sea, from Antioch.

ANTIOCHUS

The Macedonians! Then
Our day is ended; we must think of night.
We reach our limit, Thoas.

THOAS

That's if we choose;

For there are other tidings.

ANTIOCHUS
They should be welcome.

THOAS
Phraates, thy imperial father, comes
With myriad hosts behind him thunder-hooved,
Not for invasion armed as Syria's foe,
But for the husband of his Rodogune.
Shall we recoil upon these helpers? Death
Can always wait.

ANTIOCHUS
Perhaps. Leave me awhile,
Thoas; for we must sit alone tonight,
My soul and I together. Rodogune,
Thoas goes.
Wouldst thou go back to Parthia, to thy country?

RODOGUNE
I have no country, I have only thee.
I shall be where thou art; it is all I know
And all I wish for.

ANTIOCHUS
Eunice, wilt thou go
To Antioch safe? My mother loves thee well.

EUNICE
I follow her and thee. What talk is this?
I shall grow angry.

ANTIOCHUS
Am I other, Eunice,
Than once I was? Is there a change in me
Since first I came into your lives from Egypt?

EUNICE
You are my god, my warrior and the same
You ever were.

ANTIOCHUS
To her and thee I am.
Sleep well, my Rodogune, for thou and I,
Not sure of Fate, are of each other sure.
To thee what else can matter?

RODOGUNE
Nothing else.
Rodogune and Eunice enter the interior of the tent.

ANTIOCHUS
A god! Yes, I have godlike stirrings in me.
Shall they be bounded by this petty world
The sea can span? If Rome, Greece, Africa,
Asia and all the undiscovered globe
Were given me for my garden, all glory mine,
All men my friends, all women's hearts my own,
Would there not still be bounds, still continents
Unvanquished? O thou glorious Macedonian,
Thou too must seek at last more worlds to conquer.
Hast thou discovered them?
This earth is but a hillock when all's said,
The sea an azure puddle. All tonight
Seems strange to me; my wars, ambition, fate
And what I am and what I might have been,
Float round me vaguely and withdraw from me
Like grandiose phantoms in a mist. Who am I?
Whence come I? Whither go, or wherefore now?
Who gave me these gigantic appetites
That make a banquet of the world? who set
These narrow, scornful and exiguous bounds
To my achievement? O, to die, to pass,

Nothing achieved but this, "He tried great things,
Accomplished small ones." If this life alone
Be given us to fail or to succeed,
Then 'tis worth keeping.
The Parthian treads our land!
Phraates' hooves dig Grecian soil once more!
The subtle Parthian! He has smiled and waited
Till we were weak with mutual wounds and now
Stretches his foot towards Syria. Have I then
Achieved this only, my country's servitude?
Shall that be said of me? It galls, it stabs.
My fame! "Destroyer of Syria, he undid
The great Seleucus' work." Whatever else
O'ertake me, in this the strong gods shall not win.
I will give up my body and sword to Timocles,
Repel the Parthian, save from this new death,
These dangerous allies from Macedon
Syria, then die.
But wherefore die? Should I not rather go
With my sole sword into the changeful world,
Create an empire, not inherit one?
Are there not other realms? has not the East
Great spaces? In huge torrid Africa
Beyond the mystic sources of the Nile
There must be empires. Or if with a ship
One sailed for ever through the infinite West,
Through Ocean and still Ocean for three years,
Might not one find the old Atlantic realms
No fable? Thy narrow lovely littoral,
O blue Mediterranean, India, Parthia,
Is this the world? I thirst for mightier things
Than earth has.
But for what I dreamed, to bound
Upon Nicanor through the deep-bellied passes
Or fall upon the Macedonian spears,
It were glorious, yet a glorious cowardice,
Too like self-slaughter. Is it not more heroic

To battle with than to accept calamity?
Unless indeed all thinking-out is vain
And Fate our only mover. Seek it out, my soul,
And make no error here; for on this hour
The future of the man Antiochus,
What future he may have upon the earth
In name or body lies. Reveal it to me, Zeus!
In Antioch or upon the Grecian spears,
Where lies my fate?

While he is speaking, the Eremite enters.

EREMITE

Before thee always.

ANTIOCHUS

How
Cam'st thou or whence? I know thy ominous look.

EREMITE

The how inquire not nor the whence, but learn
The end is near which I then promised thee.

ANTIOCHUS

So then, defeat and death were from the first
My portion! Wherefore were these thoughts gigantical
With which I came into my mother ready-shaped
If they must end in the inglorious tomb?

EREMITE

Despise not proud defeat, scorn not high death.
The gods accept them sternly.

ANTIOCHUS

Yes, as I shall,
But not submissively.

EREMITE

Break then, thou hill
Unsatisfied with thy own height. The gods
Care not if thou resist or if thou yield;
They do their work with mortals. To the Vast
Whence thou, O ravening, strong and hungry lion,
Overleaping cam’st the iron bars of Time,
Return! thou hast thy tamers. God of battles!
Son of Nicanor! strong Antiochus!
Depart and be as if thou wert not born.
The gods await thee in Antioch.

He departs.

ANTIOCHUS

I will meet them there.
Break me. I see you can, O gods. But you break
A body, not this soul; for that belongs, I feel,
To other masters. It is settled then.
Tomorrow sets in Antioch.

Scene 5

The same.
Philoctetes, Thoas, Leosthenes, Eunice.

LEOSTHENES
Surely this is the change that comes on men
Who are to die.

PHILOCTETES
O me! it is, it is.

THOAS
Princess Eunice, what think you of it?

EUNICE
Thoas, what matters what we think? We follow
Our king; it is his to choose our paths for us.
Lead they to death? Then we can die with him.

THOAS
That's nobly spoken.

PHILOCTETES
But too like a woman.
Antiochus enters with Rodogune.

ANTIOCHUS
To Antioch! Is all ready for our march?

PHILOCTETES
Antiochus, my king, I think in Egypt
We loved each other.

ANTIOCHUS

Less here, my Philoctetes?

PHILOCTETES

Then by that love, dear friend, go not to Antioch.
Let us await the Parthian in his march.
What do you seek at Antioch? A mother angry?
A jealous brother at whose ear a fatal knave
Sits always whispering? lords inimical?
What can you hope from these? Go not to Antioch.
I see Death smiling, waving you to go,
But do not.

ANTIOCHUS

Dearest comrade, Philoctetes,
Fate calls to me and shall I shrink from her?
I know my little brother Timocles,
I feel his clasp already, see his smile.
But there's Phayllus! Shall I fall so low
As to fear him? Forgive me, friend; I go to Antioch.

PHILOCTETES

It was decreed!

ANTIOCHUS

But you, my friends, who have no love
To shield you and perhaps great enemies,
Will you fall back until I make your peace,
To Egypt or Phraates?

THOAS

Not a man
Will leave your side who followed your victorious sword.
We follow always.

ANTIOCHUS

Beat then the drums and march.

But let an envoy ride in front to Timocles
And tell him that Antiochus comes to lay
His victor sword between a brother's knees
And fight for him with Parthia. Let us march.
All go except Philoctetes.

PHILOCTETES (*looking after him*)
O sun, thou goest rushing to the night
Which shall engulf thee!

Act V

The Palace in Antioch.

Scene 1

A hall in the Palace.
Phayllus, alone.

PHAYLLUS
My brain has loosened harder knots than this.
Timocles gets by this his Rodogune;
That's one thing gained. Tonight or else tomorrow
I'll have her in his bed though I have to hale her
Stumbling to it through her own husband's blood.
For he must die. He is too great a man
To be a subject: nor is that his intention
Who hides some subtler purpose. Exile would free him
For more stupendous mischief. Death! But how?
There is this Syrian people, there is Timocles
Whose light unstable mind like a pale leaf
Trembles, desires, resolves, renounces.
Timocles enters.

TIMOCLES
Phayllus,
It is the high gods bring about this good.
My great high brother, strong Antiochus
To come and kneel to me! No hatred more!
He is the brother whom I loved in Egypt.

PHAYLLUS
Oh, wilt thou always be, thou shapeless soul,
Clay for each passing circumstance to alter?

TIMOCLES
Do you not think I have only now to ask
And he will give me Rodogune? She's not his wife!
Cast always together in the lonely desert,
Long nearness must have wearied him of her;
For he was never a lover. O Phayllus,
When so much has been brought about, will you tell me
This will not happen too? I am sure the gods
Intend this.

PHAYLLUS
So you think Antiochus comes
To lay his lofty head below your foot?
You can believe it! Truly, if you think that,
There's nothing left that cannot be believed.
This soul that dreamed of conquests at its birth,
This strong overweening swift ambitious man
Whom victory disappoints, to whom continents
Seem narrow, will submit, you say, — to you?
You'll keep him for your servant?

TIMOCLES
What is it you hint?
Stroke not your chin! Speak plainly. Do you know,
I sometimes hate you!

PHAYLLUS
I care not, if you hear me
And let me guard you from your enemies.

TIMOCLES
I know you love me, but your thoughts are evil
To every other and your ways are worse.

Yet speak; what is it you fear?

PHAYLLUS

How should I know?
Yet this seems probable that having failed
By violent battle he is creeping in
To slay you silently. You smile at that?
It is the commonest rule of statesmanship
And History's strewn with instances. Believe it not;
Believe your wishes, not mankind's record;
Slumber till with the sword in you you wake
And he assumes your purple.

TIMOCLES (*indifferently*)
I hear, Phayllus. Let him give me Rodogune
And all's excused he has ever done to me.

PHAYLLUS
He will keep her and take all hearts besides
That ever loved you.

TIMOCLES (*still indifferently*)
I will see that first.
Cleopatra enters quickly.

CLEOPATRA
It is true, Timocles? It is even true!
Antiochus my son is coming to me,
Is coming to me!

TIMOCLES
Thus you love him still!

CLEOPATRA
He is my child, he has his father's face.
And I shall have my Parthian Rodogune
With her sweet voice and gentle touch, and her,

My darling, my clear-eyed delight, Eunice,
And I shall not be lonely any more.
I have not been so happy since you came
From Egypt. But, O heaven! what followed that?
Will now no stark calamity arise
With Gorgon head to turn us into stone
Venging this glimpse of joy? Torn by your scourges
I fear you, gods, too much to trust your smile.
Nicanor enters.

NICANOR
Antiochus comes.

TIMOCLES
Hail, thou victorious captain,
Syria's strong rescuer!

NICANOR
Syria's rescuer comes,
Thy brother Antiochus who makes himself
A sword to smite thy dangerous enemies.

PHAYLLUS
You used not once to praise him so, Nicanor.

NICANOR
Because I knew not then his nobleness
Who had only seen his might.

PHAYLLUS
Yet had you promised
That if he entered Antioch, it would be chained
And naked, travelling to the pit or sword,
Nicanor.

NICANOR
He comes not as a prisoner,

But royally disdaining to enslave
For private ends his country to the Parthian.

TIMOCLES
Comes my dear brother soon?

NICANOR
Even at this moment
He enters.

TIMOCLES
Summon our court. Let all men's eyes behold
This reconciliation. I shall see
Next moment Rodogune!
There enter from one side Callicrates, Melitus, Cleone, courtiers; from the other Antiochus, Eunice, Rodogune, Thoas, Leosthenes, Philoctetes.
O brother, in my arms! Let this firm clasp
Be sign of the recovered amity
That binds once more for joy Nicanor's sons.

ANTIOCHUS
This is like thee, my brother Timocles.
Let all vain strife be banished from our souls.
My sword is thine, and I am thine and all
I have and love is thine, O Syrian Timocles,
Devoted to thy throne for Syria.

TIMOCLES
All?
Brother! O clasp me once again, Antiochus.

ANTIOCHUS
The Syrian land once cleansed of foemen, rescued
From these fierce perils, I shall have thy leave,
Brother, to voyage into distant lands;
But not till I have seen your Antioch joys

Of which they told us, I and my dear wife,
The Parthian princess Rodogune. See, brother,
How all things work out by a higher will.
Thou hast the Syrian kingdom, I have her
And my own soul for monarchy.

TIMOCLES

His wife!

MELITUS

The King is pale and gnaws his nether lip.

ANTIOCHUS

Mother, I kneel to you; raise me this time
And I will not be froward.

CLEOPATRA

My child! my child!

TIMOCLES

He will not give me Rodogune! And now he'll steal
My mother's heart. Captains, I welcome you:
You are my soldiers now.

LEOSTHENES

We thank thee, King.
We are thy brother's soldiers, therefore thine.

TIMOCLES

Yes! Philoctetes, old Egyptian friend,
You go not yet to Egypt?

PHILOCTETES

I know not where.
I have forgotten why I came from thence.
I hope that you will love your brother.

TIMOCLES

Him!
Oh yes, I'll love him.

ANTIOCHUS

Brother Timocles,
We have come far today; will you appoint us
Our chambers here?

TIMOCLES

I'll take you to them, brother.
All leave the hall except Cleone and Phayllus.

CLEONE

Is this their peace? But he'll have Rodogune
And I shall like a common flower be thrown
Into the dust-heap.

PHAYLLUS

Pooh!

CLEONE

I have eyes; I see.
Even then I knew I would be nothing to you
Once you were seated. I'll not be flung away!
Beware, Phayllus; for Antiochus lives.

PHAYLLUS

Make change of lovers then with Rodogune
While yet he lives.

CLEONE

I might do even that.
He has a beautiful body like a god's.
I will not have him slain.

PHAYLLUS

You may be his widow
If you make haste in marrying him; for soon
He will be carrion.

Timocles returns.

TIMOCLES

I'ld have a word with you,
Phayllus.

Cleone withdraws out of hearing.

Where will they put the Parthian Rodogune?

PHAYLLUS

Put her?

TIMOCLES

To sleep, dull ruffian! Her chamber! Where?

PHAYLLUS

Why, in one bed with Prince Antiochus.

TIMOCLES

Thou bitter traitor, dar'st thou say it too?
Art thou too leagued to slay me? Shall I bear it?
In my own palace! In one bed! O God!
I will go now and stab him through the heart
And drag her, drag her —

CLEONE (*running to him*)

The foam is on his lips!

PHAYLLUS

Restrain thy passions, King! He is transformed.
This is that curious devil, jealousy.
As if it mattered! He will have her soon.

TIMOCLES
Cleone, I thank you. When I think of this,
Something revolts within to strangle me
And tears my life out of my bosom. Phayllus,
You spoke of plots; where are they? Let me see them.

PHAYLLUS
That's hard. Are they not hidden in his breast?

TIMOCLES
Can you not tear them out?

PHAYLLUS
Torture your brother!

TIMOCLES
Torture his generals; let them howl their love for him!
Torture Eunice. Let truth come out twixt shrieks!
Number her words with gouts of blood!

PHAYLLUS
You'll hurt yourself.
Be calmer. Torture! To what purpose that?
It is not profitable.

TIMOCLES
I will have proofs.
Wilt thou thwart me, thou traitor, even thou?
Arrange his trial instantly, arrange
His exile.

PHAYLLUS
Exile! You might as well arrange
At once your ruin.

TIMOCLES
There shall be justice, justice.

Thou shalt be fairly judged, Antiochus.
I will not slay him. Exile! And Rodogune
With me in Antioch.

PHAYLLUS

Listen! the passing people sing his name.
They'll rise to rescue him and slay us all
As dogs are killed in summer. Command his death:
No man will rise for a dead carcase. Death,
Not exile! He'll return with Ptolemy
Or great Phraates, take your Syria from you,
Take Rodogune.

TIMOCLES

I give my power to you.
Try him and sentence him. But execution,
Let it be execution. I will have
No murder done. Arrange it.

He goes out followed by Cleone.

PHAYLLUS

While he's in the mood,
It must be quickly done. But that's to venture
With no support in Syria when it's done
Except this brittle king. It matters not.
Fortune will bear me out; she's grown my slave-girl.
What liberties have I not taken with her
Which she has suffered amorously, kinder grown
After each handling. Watch me, my only lover!
Sudden and swift shall be Phayllus' stroke.

Scene 2

Antiochus' chamber.
Cleopatra, Antiochus, Eunice, Rodogune.

CLEOPATRA
Eunice, cruel, heartless, sweet Eunice,
How could you leave me?

EUNICE
Pardon me, dear lady.

ANTIOCHUS
Mine was the error, mother.

CLEOPATRA
O my son,
If you had said that "mother" to me then,
All this had never happened.

ANTIOCHUS
I have been hard
To you, my mother, you to me your son.
We have both erred and it may be the gods
Will punish our offences even yet.

CLEOPATRA
O, say not that, my child. We must be happy;
I will have just a little happiness.

RODOGUNE
O, answer her with kisses, dear Antiochus.

CLEOPATRA
Do you too plead for me, sweet Parthian?

EUNICE
Cousin
Antiochus.

ANTIOCHUS
My heart is chastened and I love,
Mother, though even now I will not lie
And say I love you as a child might love
Who from his infancy had felt your clasp.
But, mother, give me time and if the gods
Will give it too, who knows? we may be happy.
Philoctetes enters.

PHILOCTETES
Pardon me, Madam, but my soul is harried
With fierce anxieties. You do not well
To linger with your son Antiochus.
A jealous anger works in Timocles
When he hears of it.

CLEOPATRA
Is't possible?

PHILOCTETES
Fear it!
Believe it!

CLEOPATRA (*shuddering*)
I will not give the gods a handle.
But I may take Eunice and your wife
To comfort me a little?

ANTIOCHUS
Go with her,

Eunice. Leave me for an hour, my Rodogune.
All go from the chamber except Antiochus.
When, when will the gods strike? I feel the steps
Of Doom about me. Open thy barriers, Death;
I would not linger underneath the stroke.
Phayllus enters with soldiers.

PHAYLLUS
Seize him! This is the prince Antiochus.

ANTIOCHUS
So soon! I said not farewell to my love.
Well, Syrian, dost thou carry only warrants
Or keeps the death-doom pace with thy arrest?

PHAYLLUS
Thy plots have been discovered, plotter.

ANTIOCHUS
Plots!
Vain subtle fool, I will not answer thee.
What matters the poor pretext? Guards, conduct me.
He goes out, guarded.

PHAYLLUS
Must thou be royal even in thy fall?

Scene 3

The same.
Eunice, Rodogune.

RODOGUNE
Will they not let me go and see him even?

EUNICE
We'll make our way to him and out for him
To Egypt, Egypt.

RODOGUNE
                    There's only one joy left,
To be with him whether we live or die.

EUNICE
You are too meek. Cleone helps us here
Whatever be the spring of her strange pity.
When we come back, Phayllus, we shall find out
Whether the ingenuity of men
Holds tortures huge enough for your deserts.

RODOGUNE
Why do you pace about with flaming eyes?
Be still and sit and put your hand in mine.

EUNICE
My Parthian sweetness! O, the gods are cruel
Who torture such a heart as thine.

RODOGUNE
                                        Where is

My mother?

EUNICE
She is lying in her room
Dry-eyed and voiceless, gazing upon Fate
With eyes I dare not look at. Till tomorrow.
At dawn we'll have him out. Cleone bribes
The sentries; Thoas has horses and a ship
Wide-winged for Egypt, Egypt.

RODOGUNE
O yes, let us leave
Syria and cruel Antioch.

EUNICE
For a while.
I would have had him out tonight, my king,
But ruffian Theras keeps the watch till dawn.
How long will walls immure so huge a prisoner?
Trial! When he returns in arms from Egypt,
Try him, Phayllus. We must wait till dawn.

RODOGUNE
I shall behold him once again at dawn.

Scene 4

A guard-room in the Palace.
Antiochus, alone.

ANTIOCHUS
What were Death then but wider life than earth
Can give us in her clayey limits bound?
Darkness perhaps! There must be light behind.
As he speaks, Phayllus enters.
Who is it?

PHAYLLUS
Phayllus and thy conqueror.

ANTIOCHUS
In some strange warfare then!

PHAYLLUS
I came to see
Before thy end the greatness that thou wast;
For thou wert great as mortals measure. Thou hast
An hour to live.

ANTIOCHUS
Shorter were better.

PHAYLLUS
An hour!
It is strange. The beautiful strong Antiochus
In one brief hour and by a little stroke
Shall be mere rotten carrion for the flies
To buzz about.

ANTIOCHUS
Thinkest thou so, Phayllus?

PHAYLLUS
I know it, and in thy fall, because thou wert great,
I feel my greatness who am thy o'erthrower.
I long to probe the mightiness thou art
And know the thoughts that fill thee at this hour;
For it must come to me some day. The things
We are, do and are done to! Let it be.
Dost thou not ask to kiss thy wife? She'ld come,
Though she must leave thy brother's bed for it.

ANTIOCHUS
What a poor lie, Phayllus, for the great man
Thou thinkst thyself!

PHAYLLUS
Thou knowst not then for her
Thou diest, that his hungry arms may clasp
Her warm sweet body thou hast loved to kiss?

ANTIOCHUS
So didst thou work it? Thou art a rare study,
Thou Graeco-Syrian.

PHAYLLUS
I am what my clay
Has made me. It does not hurt thee then to know
That while thou art dying, they are hard at work
Even now before thy kingly corpse is cold?

ANTIOCHUS
What a blind owl thou art that seest the sun
And thinkst it darkness! Hence! I weary of thee.
Thou art too shallow after all. Outside
Is it the dawn?

PHAYLLUS

The dawn. Thou wak'st too early
For one who shall not sleep again.

ANTIOCHUS

Yes, sleep
I have done with; now for an immortal waking.

PHAYLLUS

That dream of fools! Thou art another man
Than any I have seen and to my eyes
Thou seemst a grandiose lack-wit. Yet in defeat
I could not move thee. I have limits then?

ANTIOCHUS

Yes, didst thou think thyself a god in evil
And souls of men thy subjects? Leave me, send
Thy executioner. Let him be quick.
I wait!

Phayllus goes.

I fear he still will loiter. Waiting
Was ever tedious to me: I will sleep.
(*he lies down; after a pause*)
Is this that other country? Theramenes
Before me smiling with his twenty wounds
And Mentho with the breasts that suckled me!
Who are these crowding after me so fast?
My mother follows me and cousin Eunice
Treads in her footsteps. Thou too, Timocles?
Thoas, Leosthenes and Philoctetes,
Good friends, will you stay long? The world grows empty.
Why, all that's great in Syria staggers after me
Into blind Hades; I am royally
Attended.

Theras enters.

THERAS
Phayllus' will compels me to it,
Or else I do not like the thing I do.

ANTIOCHUS
Who is it? Thou art the instrument. Strike in.
Keep me not waiting. I ever loved proud swiftness
And thorough spirits.

THERAS
I must strike suddenly or never strike.
He strikes.

ANTIOCHUS
I pass the barrier.

THERAS
Will not this blood stop flowing?

ANTIOCHUS
The blood? Let the gods have it; 'tis their portion.

THERAS
A red libation, O thou royal sacrifice!
I have done evil. Will sly Phayllus help me?
He was a trickster ever. I have done evil.

ANTIOCHUS
Tell Parthian Rodogune I wait for her
Behind Death's barrier.

THERAS
The world's too still. Will he not speak again
Upon this other side of nothingness?
O sounds, sounds, sounds! The sentries change, I think.
I'll draw thy curtains, O thou mighty sleeper.

He draws the curtains, extinguishes the light and goes out. All is still for a while, then the door opens again and Eunice and Rodogune enter.

EUNICE
Tread lightly, for he sleeps. The curtain's drawn.

RODOGUNE
O my Antiochus, on thy hard bed
In the rude camp with horses neighing round
Thou well mightst slumber nor the undistant trumpet
Startling unseal thy war-accustomed ears
From the sweet lethargy of earned repose.
But in the horrible silence of this prison
How canst thou sleep? It clamours in my brain
More than could any sound, with terror laden
And voices.

EUNICE
I'll wake him.

RODOGUNE
Do not. He is tired
And you will spoil his rest.

EUNICE
He moves no more
Than the dead might.

RODOGUNE
Speak not of death, Eunice;
We are too near to death to speak of him.

EUNICE
He must be waked. Cousin Antiochus,
You sleep too soundly for a prisoner. Wake!

RODOGUNE
There is some awful presence in this room.

EUNICE
I partly feel it. Wake, wake, Antiochus.
She draws apart the curtain and puts in her arm, then hastily withdraws it.
O God, what is this dabbles so my hand,
That feels almost like blood?
(*tearing down the curtain*)
Antiochus!
She falls half-swooned against the wall. There is a silence, then noise is heard in the corridors and the voice of Nicanor at the door.

NICANOR
Guard carefully the doors; let no evasion
Deceive you.

RODOGUNE
Antiochus! Antiochus!
Antiochus!

EUNICE
Call him not; he will wake
And Heaven be angry. O my Rodogune,
Let us too sleep.

RODOGUNE
Antiochus! Antiochus!
Nicanor enters armed with soldiers and lights.

NICANOR
Am I in time? Thou? thou? How cam'st thou here?
Who is this woman with the dreadful face?
Can this be Rodogune? Eunice, speak.
What is this blood upon thy hands and dress?

Thou dost not speak! Oh, speak!

EUNICE
I am going, I am going to my chamber
To sleep.

NICANOR
Arrest her, guards.
He approaches the bed and recoils.
Awake the house!
Sound the alarm! O palace of Nicanor,
Thou canst stand yet upon thy stony base
Untroubled! The warlike prince Antiochus
Lies on this bed most treacherously murdered.
Cries and commotion outside.
Speak, wretched girl. What villain's secret hand
Profaned with death this royal sanctuary?
How cam'st thou here or hast this blood on thee?
There enter in haste Callicrates, Melitus,
Cleone; afterwards Phayllus and others.

CLEONE (*to Nicanor*)
Thou couldst not save him then for all my warning?
In vain didst thou mistrust me!

PHAYLLUS (*entering*)
It is done. Yet Theras came not! Do I fail?
Fortune, my kindly goddess, help me still
In the storm I have yet to weather.

NICANOR
Thou hast come!
This is thy work, thou ominous counsellor.

PHAYLLUS
In all the land who dare impugn me, if it be?

NICANOR
Thou art a villain! Thou shalt die for this.

PHAYLLUS
One day I shall, for this or something else.
But here's the King.

NICANOR
No more a king for me
Or Syria.
Timocles enters, followed by Cleopatra.

MELITUS
The Queen comes cold and white and shuddering.

CLEOPATRA (*speaking with an unnatural calmness*)
Why do these cries of terror shake the house
Repeating *Murder* and *Antiochus*?
Nicanor, lives my son?

NICANOR
Behold, O woman,
The frame you fashioned for Antiochus,
Cast from your love before, now cast from life,
By whose unnatural contrivance, let them say
Who did it.

CLEOPATRA
It is not true, it is not true!
There can be no such horror. O, for this,
For this you gave him back!

TIMOCLES
O gods! Phayllus,
I did not think that he would look like this.

MELITUS
Cover this death. It troubles the good King.

TIMOCLES (*recovering himself*)
This is a piteous sight, beloved mother;
Would that he lived and wore the Syrian crown
Unquestioned.

CLEOPATRA
Timocles, I will not credit
What yet a horror in my blood believes.
The eyes of all men charge you with this act;
Deny it!

TIMOCLES
Mother!

CLEOPATRA
Deny it!

TIMOCLES
Alas, mother!

CLEOPATRA
Deny it!

TIMOCLES
O mother, what shall I deny?
It had to be. Blame only the dire gods
And bronze Necessity.

CLEOPATRA
Call me not mother!
I have no children. I am punished, gods,
Who dared outlive my great unhappy husband
For this!

She rushes out.

NICANOR

Is this thy end, O great Seleucus?
What Fury rules thy house? The Queen is gone
With desperate eyes. Who next?

There enter in haste Philoctetes, Thoas, Leosthenes and others of Antiochus' party.

PHILOCTETES

It is true then,
It is most true! O high Antiochus,
How are thy royal vast imaginations
All spilt into a meagre stream of blood!
And yet thy eyes seem to gaze royally
Into death's vaster realms as if they viewed
More conquests there and mightier monarchies.
When we were boys and slumber came with noon,
Often you'ld lay your head upon my knee
Even thus. O little friend Antiochus,
We are again in hundred-gated Thebes
And life is all before us.

THOAS

O insupportable!
Thou styled by men a king, no king of mine,
Acquit thyself of this too kindred blood.
No murderer sits in great Seleucus' chair
Longer than takes the movement of my sword
Out of its scabbard. I live to ask this question.

LEOSTHENES

Nor think thy royal title nor thy guards
Shall fence thy life, thou crownèd fratricide,
Nor many ranks of triple-plated iron
Shut out swift vengeance.

PHILOCTETES

His eyes look up and seem to smile at me.

NICANOR
Thoas, thy anger ranges far too wide.
Respect the blood of kings, Leosthenes.

THOAS
See dabbled on this couch the blood of kings
Thus by a kindred blood respected.

TIMOCLES
The hearts
Of kings are not their own, nor yet their acts.
This was an execution, not a murder.
In better time and place you shall have proofs:
Phayllus knows it all. Be satisfied.
Lift up this royal dead. All hatred now
Forgotten, I will royally inter
His ashes guarding still his diadem
And sword and armour. All that most he loved
Shall go with him into the silent world.

RODOGUNE
I come.

TIMOCLES
The voice of Rodogune! That woman's form
The shadowy anguished robe concealed! She here
Beside my brother!

NICANOR
We had forgotten how piteous was this scene.
O you who loved the dead, forbear a while;
All shall be sternly judged.

TIMOCLES
O Rodogune,
The dead demands thy grief, since he too loved thee,
But not in this red chamber pay thy debt,

Not in this square of horror. In thy calm room
Gently bedew his memory with tears
And I will help them with my own. Me too
He loved once.

LEOSTHENES
Shall our swords yet sleep? He wooes
His brother's wife beside his brother's corpse
Whom he has murdered.

THOAS
Yet, Leosthenes.
For Heaven has borne enough from him. At last
The gods lift up their secret thunderbolts
Above us.

NICANOR
She totters and can hardly move.
Assist her or she falls.

PHILOCTETES (*raising his head*)
O Rodogune,
What wilt thou with my dead?

PHAYLLUS
Shall it be allowed?

TIMOCLES
I do not grudge this corpse her sad farewell.
O Rodogune, embrace the unresponsive dead;
But afterwards remember life and love
Are still on earth.

THOAS
Afterwards, Timocles.
Give death a moment.
There is a silence while Rodogune bends
swaying over the dead Antiochus.

TIMOCLES

O my Rodogune,
Leave now the dead man's side whose debt is paid.
Return to life, to love.

RODOGUNE (*stretching out her arms*)

My king! my king!
Leave me not, leave me not! I am behind thee.

She falls dead at the feet of Antiochus.

EUNICE

O, take me also!

She rushes to Rodogune and throws herself on the dead bodies.

NICANOR

Raise the princess up;
She has swooned.

THOAS

Her heart has failed her: she is dead.

TIMOCLES

Rise up, my Rodogune.

THOAS

She is dead, Timocles;
She's safe from thee. Thou goest not alone,
My king, into the darkness.

CLEONE

Look to the King!

TIMOCLES (*speaking with difficulty*)

Lives she?

MELITUS

No, she is dead, King Timocles.

CLEONE

Brother, the King!

Timocles has been tearing at the robe round his neck. Phayllus, Melitus and others crowd round to support him as he falls.

NICANOR

It is a fit at worst
Which anger and despair have forced him to.

PHAYLLUS

It is not death? I live then.

NICANOR

Death, thou intriguer!
Art thou not Death who with thy wicked promptings
And poisonous whispers worked to dangerous rage
The kindly moods of Timocles? Seize him,
He shall atone this murder.

PHAYLLUS

You build too soon
Your throne upon these prostrate bodies. Your king
Lives still, Nicanor.

NICANOR

Not to save thee from death,
Nor any murderer. Drag him hence.

CLEONE

The King revives.
Save thyself, brother.

LEOSTHENES

Ten kings should not avail
To save him.

NICANOR
Drag hence that subtle Satan.

TIMOCLES
I live
And I remember!

CLEONE
Sleepest thou, Phayllus?

PHAYLLUS
My king, they drag me hence to murder me.

TIMOCLES (*vaguely at first*)
Who art thou? Thou abhorred and crooked devil,
Thou art the cause that she is lost to me.
Slay him! And that shrewd-lipped, rose-tinted harlot,
Let her be banished somewhere from men's sight
Where she can be forgotten. O brother, brother,
I have sent thee into the darkling shades,
Myself am barred the way.

PHAYLLUS
What I have done,
I did for this poor king and thankless man.
But there's no use in talking. I am ready.

TIMOCLES (*half-rising, furiously*)
Slay him with tortures! let him feel his death
As he has made me feel my living.

NICANOR
Take him
And see this sentence ruthlessly performed
Upon this frame of evil. May the gods
In their just wrath with this be satisfied.

PHAYLLUS
And yet I loved thee, Timocles.
He is taken out, guarded.

NICANOR
Daughter,
Eunice, rise.

EUNICE
I did not know till now
Life was so difficult a thing to leave.
Her going was so easy!

NICANOR
Ah, girl, this tragic drama owns in part
Thy authorship! Henceforth be wise and humble.
To her chamber lead her.

EUNICE
Do with me what you will.
My heart has gone to journey with my dead.
O father, for a few days bear with me;
I do not think that I shall long displease you
Hereafter.
She goes, attended by Melitus.

NICANOR
Follow her, Callicrates,
And let no dangerous edge or lethal drink
Be near to her despair.
Callicrates follows.

THOAS
This cannot keep us
From those we loved.

NICANOR

Syrians, what yet remains
Of this storm-visited, bolt-shattered house
Let us rebuild, joining our strength to save
The threatened kingdom. For when this deed is known,
The Parthian lion leaps raging for blood
And Ptolemy's dangerous grief for the boy he cherished
Darkens on us from Egypt. Syria beset
And we all broken!

TIMOCLES

Something has snapped in me
Physicians cannot bind. Thou, Prince Nicanor,
Art from the royal blood of Syria sprung
And in thy line Seleucus may descend
Untainted from his source. Brother, brother,
We did not dream that all would end like this,
When in the dawn or set we roamed at will
Playing together in Egyptian gardens,
Or in the orchards of great Ptolemy
Walked with our arms around each other's necks
Twin-hearted. But now unto eternity
We are divided. I must live for ever
Unfriended, solitary in the shades;
But thou and she will lie at ease inarmed
Deep in the quiet happy asphodel
And hear the murmur of Elysian winds
While I walk lonely.

PHILOCTETES

We too without thee now
Breath-haunted corpses move, Antiochus.
Thou goest attended to a quiet air;
Doomed still to live we for a while remain
Expecting what the gods have yet in store.

Perseus the Deliverer

A Drama

The Legend of Perseus

Acrisius, the Argive king, warned by an oracle that his daughter's son would be the agent of his death, hoped to escape his doom by shutting her up in a brazen tower. But Zeus, the King of the Gods, descended into her prison in a shower of gold and Danaë bore to him a son named Perseus. Danaë and her child were exposed in a boat without sail or oar on the sea, but here too fate and the gods intervened and, guided by a divine protection, the boat bore her safely to the Island of Seriphos. There Danaë was received and honoured by the King. When Perseus had grown to manhood the King, wishing to marry Danaë, decided to send him to his death and to that end ordered him to slay the Gorgon Medusa in the wild, unknown and snowy North and bring to him her head the sight of which turned men to stone. Perseus, aided by Athene, the Goddess of Wisdom, who gave him the divine sword Herpe, winged shoes to bear him through the air, her shield or aegis and the cap of invisibility, succeeded in his quest after many adventures. In his returning he came to Syria and found Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus and Cassiopea, King and Queen of Syria, chained to the rocks by the people to be devoured by a sea-monster as an atonement for her mother's impiety against the sea-god, Poseidon. Perseus slew the monster and rescued and wedded Andromeda.

In this piece the ancient legend has been divested of its original character of a heroic myth; it is made the nucleus round which there could grow the scenes of a romantic story of human temperament and life-impulses on the Elizabethan model. The country in which the action is located is a Syria of romance, not of history. Indeed a Hellenic legend could not at all be set in the environments of the life of a Semitic people and its early Aramaean civilisation: the town of Cepheus must be looked at as a Greek colony with a blonde Achaean dynasty ruling a Hellenised people who worship an old Mediterranean deity under a Greek name. In a romantic work of imagination of this type these outrages on history do not matter. Time there is more than Einsteinian in its relativity, the creative imagination is its sole disposer and arranger; fantasy reigns sovereign; the names of ancient countries and peoples are brought in only as fringes of a decorative background; anachronisms romp in wherever they can get an easy admittance, ideas and associations from all climes and epochs mingle; myth, romance and realism make up a single whole. For here the stage is the human mind of all times: the subject is an incident in its passage from a semi-primitive temperament surviving in a fairly advanced outward civilisation to a brighter intellectualism and humanism — never quite safe against the resurgence of the dark or violent life-forces which are always there subdued or subordinated or somnolent in the make-up of civilised man — and the first promptings of the deeper and higher psychic and spiritual being which it is his ultimate destiny to become.

Persons of the Drama

Pallas Athene.
Poseidon.
Perseus, son of Zeus and Danaë.
Cepheus, King of Syria.
Iolaus, son of Cepheus and Cassiopea.
Polydaon, priest of Poseidon.
Phineus, King of Tyre.
Tyrnaus
Smerdas } merchants of Babylonia, wrecked on the coast of Syria.
Therops, a popular leader.
Perissus, a citizen butcher.
Dercetes, a Syrian captain.
Nebassar, captain of the Chaldean Guard.
Chabrias
Damoetes
Megas
Gardas } townsmen and villagers.
Morus
Syrax
Cireas, a servant in the temple of Poseidon.
Medes, an usher in the palace.

Cassiopea, princess of Chaldea, Queen of Syria.
Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus and Cassiopea.
Cydone, mistress of Iolaus.
Praxilla, head of the palace household in the women's apartments.
Diomede, a slave-girl, servant and playmate of Andromeda.
Baltis
Pasithea } Syrian women.

Scene. — *The city of Cepheus, the seashore, the temple of Poseidon on the headland and the surrounding country.*

Prologue

The Ocean in tumult, and the sky in storm: Pallas Athene appears in the heavens with lightnings playing over her head and under her feet.

ATHENE
Error of waters rustling through the world,
Vast Ocean, call thy ravenous waves that march
With blue fierce nostrils quivering for prey,
Back to thy feet. Hush thy impatient surges
At my divine command and do my will.

VOICES OF THE SEA
Who art thou layest thy serene command
Upon the untamed waters?

ATHENE
I am Pallas,
Daughter of the Omnipotent.

VOICES
What wouldst thou?
For we cannot resist thee; our clamorous hearts
Are hushed in terror at thy marble feet.

ATHENE
Awake your dread Poseidon. Bid him rise
And come before me.

VOICES
Let thy compelling voice
Awake him: for the sea is hushed.

ATHENE

Arise,
Illimitable Poseidon! let thy blue
And streaming tresses mingle with the foam
Emerging into light.
Poseidon appears upon the waters.

POSEIDON

What quiet voice
Compels me from my rocky pillow piled
Upon the floor of the enormous deep?

VOICES

A whiteness and a strength is in the skies.

POSEIDON

How art thou white and beautiful and calm,
Yet clothed in tumult! Heaven above thee shakes
Wounded with lightnings, goddess, and the sea
Flees from thy dreadful tranquil feet. Thy calm
Troubles me: who art thou, dweller in the light?

ATHENE

I am Athene.

POSEIDON

Virgin formidable
In beauty, disturber of the ancient world!
Ever thou seekest to enslave to man
The eternal Universe, and our huge motions
That shake the mountains and upheave the seas
Wouldst with the glancing visions of thy brain
Coerce and bridle.

ATHENE

Me the Omnipotent
Made from His being to lead and discipline

The immortal spirit of man, till it attain
To order and magnificent mastery
Of all his outward world.

POSEIDON

What wouldst thou of me?

ATHENE

The powers of the earth have kissed my feet
In deep submission, and they yield me tribute,
Olives and corn and all fruit-bearing trees,
And silver from the bowels of the hills,
Marble and iron ore. Fire is my servant.
But thou, Poseidon, with thy kindred gods
And the wild wings of air resist me. I come
To set my feet upon thy azure locks,
O shaker of the cliffs. Adore thy sovereign.

POSEIDON

The anarchy of the enormous seas
Is mine, O terrible Athene: I sway
Their billows with my nod. Man's feeble feet
Leave there no traces, nor his destiny
Has any hold upon the shifting waves.

ATHENE

Thou severest him with thy unmeasured wastes
Whom I would weld in one. But I will lead him
Over thy waters, thou wild thunderer,
Spurning thy tops in hollowed fragile trees.
He shall be confident in me and dare
The immeasurable oceans till the West
Mingles with India, and reach the northern isles
That dwell beneath my dancing aegis bright,
Snow-weary. He shall, armed with clamorous fire,
Rush o'er the angry waters when the whale
Is stunned between two waves and slay his foe

Betwixt the thunders. Therefore I bid thee not,
O azure strong Poseidon, to abate
Thy savage tumults: rather his march oppose.
For through the shocks of difficulty and death
Man shall attain his godhead.

POSEIDON

What then desir'st thou,
Athene?

ATHENE

On yonder inhospitable coast
Far-venturing merchants from the East, or those
Who put from Tyre towards Atlantic gains,
Are by thy trident fiercely shaken forth
Upon the jaggèd rocks, and who escape,
The gay and savage Syrians on their altars
Massacre hideously, thee to propitiate,
Moloch-Poseidon of the Syrian coasts,
Dagon of Gaza, lord of many names
And many natures, many forms of power
Who rulest from Philistia to the north,
A terror and a woe. O iron King,
Desist from blood, be glad of kindlier gifts
And suffer men to live.

POSEIDON

Behold, Athene,
My waters! see them lift their foam-white tops
Charging from sky to sky in rapid tumult:
Admire their force, admire their thunderous speed.
With green hooves and white manes they trample onwards.
My mighty voices fill the world, Athene.
Shall I permit the grand anarchic seas
To be a road and the imperious Ocean
A means of merchandise? Shall the frail keels
Of thy ephemeral mortals score its back

With servile furrows and petty souls of men
Triumphing tame the illimitable sea?
I am not of the mild and later gods,
But of that elder world; Lemuria
And old Atlantis raised me crimson altars,
And my huge nostrils keep that scent of blood
For which they quiver. Return into thy heavens,
Pallas Athene, I into my deep.

ATHENE
Dash then thy billows up against my aegis
In battle! think not to hide in thy deep oceans;
For I will drive thy waters from the world
And leave thee naked to the light.

POSEIDON
Dread virgin!
I will not war with thee, armipotent.

ATHENE
Then send thy champion forth to meet my champion,
And let their conflict govern ours, Poseidon.

POSEIDON
Who is thy champion?

ATHENE
Perseus, the Olympian's son,
Whom Danaë in her strong brazen tower,
Acrisius' daughter, bore, by heavenly gold
Lapped into slumber: for of that shining rain
He is the beautiful offspring.

POSEIDON
The parricide
That is to be? But my sea-monster's fangs
And fiery breathings shall prevent that murder.

Farewell, Athene!

ATHENE

Farewell, until I press
My feet upon thy blue enormous mane
And add thy Ocean to my growing empire.
Poseidon disappears into the sea.
He dives into the deep and with a din
The thunderous divided waters meet
Above his grisly head. Thou wingest, Perseus,
From northern snows to this fair sunny land,
Not knowing in the night what way thou wendest;
But the dawn comes and over earth's far rim
The round sun rises, as thyself shalt rise
On Syria and thy rosy Andromeda,
A thing of light. Rejoice, thou famous hero!
Be glad of love, be glad of life, whose bosom
Harbours the quiet strength of pure Athene.
She disappears into light.

Act I

Scene 1

A rocky and surf-beat margin of land walled in with great frowning cliffs.
Cireas, Diomede.

CIREAS

Diomede? You here so early and in this wild wanton weather!

DIOMEDE

I can find no fault in the weather, Cireas; it is brilliant and frolicsome.

CIREAS

The rain has wept itself out and the sun has ventured into the open; but the wind is shouting like mad and the sea is still in a mighty passion. Has your mistress Andromeda sent you then with matin-offerings to Poseidon, or are you walking here to whip the red roses in your cheeks redder with the sea-wind?

DIOMEDE

My mistress cares as much for your Poseidon as I for your glum beetle-browed priest Polydaon. But you, Cireas? are you walking here to whip the red nose of you redder with the sea-wind or to soothe with it the marks of his holiness's cudgel?

CIREAS

I must carry up these buckets of sea-water to swab down the blue-haired old fellow in the temple. Hang the robustious storm-shaken curmudgeon! I have rubbed him and scrubbed him and bathed him and swathed him for these eighteen years, yet he never sent me one profitable piece of wreckage out of his sea yet. A gold bracelet, now, crusted with jewels, dropped from the arm of some drowned princess, or a sealed casket velvet-lined with a priceless vase carried by the Rhodian merchants: that would not have beggared him! And I with so little could have bought my liberty.

DIOMEDE
Maybe 'twas that he feared. For who would wish to lose such an expert body-servant as you, my Cireas?

CIREAS
Zeus! if I thought that, I would leave his unwashed back to itch for a fortnight. But these Gods are kittle cattle to joke with. They have too many spare monsters about in their stables trained to snap up offenders for a light breakfast.

DIOMEDE
And how prosper the sacrifices, Cireas? I hope you keep your god soothingly and daintily fed in this hot summer season?

CIREAS
Alack, poor old Poseidon! He has had nothing but goats and sea-urchins lately, and that is poor food for a palate inured to *homme à la Phénicienne*, Diomede. It is his own fault, he should provide wreckage more freely. But black Polydaon's forehead grows blacker every day: he will soon be as mad as Cybele's bull on the headland. I am every moment in terror of finding myself tumbled on the altar for a shipwrecked Phoenician and old Blackbrows hacking about in search of my heart with his holy carving-tools.

DIOMEDE
You should warn him beforehand that your heart is in your paunch hidden under twenty pounds of fat: so shall he have less cutting-exercise and you an easier exit.

CIREAS

Out! would you have me slit for a water-god's dinner? Is this your tenderness for me?

DIOMEDE

Heaven forbid, dear Cireas. Syria would lose half her scampishness if you departed untimely to a worse world.

CIREAS

Away from here, you long sauciness, you thin edge of naughty satire. But, no! First tell me, what news of the palace? They say King Phineus will wed the Princess Andromeda.

DIOMEDE

Yes, but not till the Princess Andromeda weds King Phineus. What noise is that?

CIREAS

It was the cry of many men in anguish.

He climbs up a rock.

DIOMEDE

Zeus, what a wail was there! surely a royal
Huge ship from Sidon or the Nile has kissed
Our ragged beaches.

CIREAS

A Phoenician galley
Is caught and spinning in the surf, the men
Urge desperate oars in vain. Hark, with a crash
She rushes on the boulders' iron fangs
That rip her tender sides. How the white ship
Battered against them by the growling surf
Screams like a woman tortured! From all sides
The men are shaken out, as rattling peas
Leap from a long and bursting sheath: these sink
Gurgling into the billows, those are pressed

And mangled on the jaggèd rocks.

DIOMEDE

O it must be
A memorable sight! help me up, Cireas.

CIREAS

No, no, for I must run and tell old Blackbrows
That here's fresh meat for hungry grim Poseidon.
He climbs down and out running.

DIOMEDE

You disobliging dog! This is the first wreck in eighteen months and I not to see it! I will try and climb round the rock even if my neck and legs pay the forfeit.

She goes out in the opposite direction.

Scene 2

The same.
Perseus descends on winged sandals from the clouds.

PERSEUS
Rocks of the outland jaggèd with the sea,
You slumbering promontories whose huge backs
Jut into azure, and thou, O many-thundered
Enormous Ocean, hail! Whatever lands
Are ramparted with these forbidding shores,
Yet if you hold felicitous roofs of men,
Homes of delightful laughter, if you have streams
Where chattering girls dip in their pitchers cool
And dabble their white feet in the chill lapse
Of waters, trees and a green-mantled earth,
Cicalas noisy in a million boughs
Or happy cheep of common birds, I greet you,
Syria or Egypt or Ionian shores,
Perseus the son of Danaë, who long
Have sojourned only with the hail-thrashed isles
Wet with cold mists and by the boreal winds
Snow-swathed. The angry voices of the surf
Are welcome to me whose ears have long been sealed
By rigorous silence in the snows. O even
The wail of mortal misery I choose
Rather than that intolerable hush;
For this at least is human. Thee I praise,
O mother Earth and thy guardian Sea, O Sun
Of the warm south nursing fair life of men.
I will go down into bee-murmuring fields
And mix with men and women in the corn
And eat again accustomed food. But first

This galley shattered on the sharp-toothed rocks
I fly to succour. You are grown dear to me,
You smiling weeping human faces, brightly
Who move, who live, not like those stony masks
And Gorgon visions of that monstrous world
Beyond the snows. I would not lose you now
In the dead surges of the inhuman flood.

He descends out of sight.
Iolaus enters with Cireas, Dercetes and soldiers.

IOLAUS

Prepare your ambush, men, amid these boulders,
But at the signal, leave your rocky lairs
With level bristling points and gyre them in.

CIREAS

O Poseidon Ennosigaios, man-swallower, earth-shaker, I have swabbed thee for eighteen years. I pray thee tot up the price of those swabbings and be not dishonest with me nor miserly. Eighteen by three hundred and sixty-five by two, that is the sum of them: and forget not the leap years either, O great Poseidon.

IOLAUS

Into our ambush, for I hear them come.

They conceal themselves.
Perseus returns with Tyrnaus and Smerdas.

PERSEUS

Chaldean merchants, would my speed to save
Had matched the hawk's when he swoops down for slaughter.
So many beautiful bodies of strong men
Lost in the surge, so many eager hopes
Of happiness now quenched would still have gladdened
The sunlight. Yet for two delightful lives
Saved to the stir and motion of the world
I praise the Gods that help us.

TYRNAUS

Thou radiant youth
Whose face is like a joyous god's for beauty,
Whatever worth the body's life may have,
I thank thee that 'tis saved. Smerdas, discharge
That hapless humour from thy lids! If riches
Are lost, the body, thy strong instrument
To gather riches, is not lost, nor mind,
The provident director of its labours.

SMERDAS

Three thousand pieces of that wealthy stuff,
Full forty chests all crammed with noble gems,
All lost, all in a moment lost! We are beggars.

TYRNAUS

Smerdas, not beggared yet of arm or brain.

SMERDAS

The toil-marred peasant has as much.

PERSEUS

Merchant,
I sorrow for thy loss: all beautiful things
Were meant to shine in the bright day, and grievous
It is to know the senseless billows play with them.
Yet life, most beautiful of all, is left thee.
Is not mere sunlight something, and to breathe
A joy? Be patient with the gods; they love not
Rebellion and o'ertake it with fresh scourgings.

SMERDAS

O that the sea had swallowed me and rolled
In my dear treasure! Tell me, Syrian youth,
Are there not divers in these parts, could pluck
My wealth from the abyss?

PERSEUS

Chaldean merchant,
I am not of this country, but like thyself
Hear first today the surf roar on its beaches.

SMERDAS

Cursed be the moment when we neared its shores!
O harsh sea-god, if thou wilt have my wealth,
My soul, it was a cruel mercy then to leave
This beggared empty body bared of all
That made life sweet. Take this too, and everything.

IOLAUS (*stepping forward*)

Thy prayer is granted thee, O Babylonian.

The soldiers appear and surround
Perseus and the merchants.

CIREAS

All the good stuff drowned! O unlucky Cireas! O greedy Poseidon!

SMERDAS

Shield us! what are these threatening spear-points?

TYRNAUS

Fate's.
This is that strange inhospitable coast
Where the wrecked traveller in his own warm blood
Is given guest-bath. (*draws*) Death's dice are yet to throw.

IOLAUS

Draw not in vain, strive not against the gods.
This is the shore near the temple where Poseidon
Sits ivory-limbed in his dim rock-hewn house
And nods above the bleeding mariner
His sapphire locks in gloom. You three are come,
A welcome offering to that long dry altar,

O happy voyagers. Your road is straight
To Elysium.

PERSEUS
An evil and harsh religion
You practise in your land, stripling of Syria,
Yet since it is religion, do thy will,
If thou have power no less than will. And yet
I deem that ere I visit death's calm country,
I have far longer ways to tread.

TYRNAUS (*flinging away his sword*)
Take me.
I will not please the gods with impotent writhing
Under the harrow of my fate.
They seize Tyrnaus.

SMERDAS
O wicked fool!
You might have saved me with that sword. Ah youth!
Ah radiant stranger! help me! thou art mighty.

PERSEUS
Still, merchant, thou wouldst live?

SMERDAS
I am dead with terror
Of these bright thirsty spears. O they will carve
My frantic heart out of my living bosom
To throw it bleeding on that hideous altar.
Save me, hero!

PERSEUS
I war not with the gods for thee.
From belching fire or the deep-mouthed abyss
Of waters to have saved the meanest thing
That wears man's kindly semblance, is a joy.

But he is mad who for another's ease
Incurs the implacable pursuit of heaven.
Yet since each man on earth has privilege
To battle even against the gods for life,
Sweet life, lift up from earth thy fellow's sword;
I will protect meanwhile thy head from onset.

SMERDAS
Alas, you mock me! I have no skill with weapons
Nor am a fighter. Save me!
The Syrians seize Smerdas.
Help! I will give thee
The wealth of Babylon when I am safe.

PERSEUS
My sword is heaven's; it is not to be purchased.
Smerdas and Tyrnaus are led away.

IOLAUS
Take too this radiance.

PERSEUS (*drawing his sword*)
Asian stripling, pause.
I am not weak of hand nor feeble of heart.
Thou art too young, too blithe, too beautiful;
I would not disarrange thy sunny curls
By any harsher touch than an embrace.

IOLAUS
I too could wish to spare thy joyous body
From the black knife, whoe'er thou art, O stranger.
But grim compulsion drives and angry will
Of the sea's lord, chafing that mortal men
Insult with their frail keels his rude strong oceans.
Therefore he built his grisly temple here,
And all who are broken in the unequal war
With surge and tempest, though they evade his rocks,

Must belch out anguished blood upon that altar
Miserably.

PERSEUS
I come not from the Ocean.

IOLAUS
There is no other way that men could come;
For this is ground forbidden to unknown feet.
(*smiling*)
Unless these gaudy pinions on thy shoes
Were wings indeed to bear thee through the void!

PERSEUS
Are there not those who ask nor solid land
For footing nor the salt flood to buoy their motions?
Perhaps I am of these.

IOLAUS
Of these thou art not.
The gods are sombre, terrible to gaze at,
Or, even if bright, remote, grand, formidable.
But thou art open and fair like our blue heavens
In Syria and thy radiant masculine body
Allures the eye. Yield! it may be the God
Will spare thee.

PERSEUS
Set on thy war-dogs. Me alive
If they alive can take, I am content
To bleed a victim.

IOLAUS
Art thou a demigod
To beat back with one blade a hundred spears?

PERSEUS
My sword is in my hand and that shall answer.
I am tired of words.

IOLAUS
Dercetes, wait. His face
Is beautiful as Heaven. O dark Poseidon,
What wilt thou do with him in thy dank caves
Under the grey abysms of the salt flood?
Spare him to me and sunlight.
Polydaon and Phineus enter from behind.

DERCETES
Prince, give the order.

IOLAUS
Let this young sungod live.

DERCETES
It is forbidden.

IOLAUS
But I allow it.

POLYDAON (*coming forward*)
And when did lenient Heaven
Make thee a godhead, Syrian Iolaus,
To set thy proud decree against Poseidon's?
Wilt thou rescind what Ocean's Zeus has ordered?

IOLAUS
Polydaon —

POLYDAON
Does a royal name on earth
Inflate so foolishly thy mortal pride,
Thou evenest thyself with the Olympians?

Beware, the blood of kings has dropped ere now
From the grey sacrificial knife.

IOLAUS
Our blood!
Thou darest threaten me, presumptuous priest?
Back to thy blood-stained kennel! I absolve
This stranger.

POLYDAON
Captain, take them both. You flinch?
Are you so fearful of the name of prince
He plays with? Fear rather dark Poseidon's anger.

PHINEUS
Be wise, young Iolaus. Polydaon,
Thy zeal outstrips the reverence due to kings.

IOLAUS
I need not thy protection, Tyrian Phineus:
This is my country.

He draws.

PHINEUS (*aside to Polydaon*)
It were well done to kill him now, his sword
Being out against the people's gods; for then
Who blames the god's avenger?

POLYDAON
Will you accept,
Syrians, the burden of his sacrilege?
Upon them for Poseidon!

DERCETES
Seize them but slay not!
Let none dare shed the blood of Syria's kings.

SOLDIERS
Poseidon! great Poseidon!

PERSEUS
Iolaus,
Rein in thy sword: I am enough for these.
He shakes his uncovered shield in the faces of the soldiers: they stagger back covering their eyes.

IOLAUS
Gods, what a glory lights up Syria!

POLYDAON
Amazement!
Is this a god opposes us? Back, back!

CIREAS
Master, master, skedaddle: run, run, good King of Tyre, it is scuttle or be scuttled. Zeus has come down to earth with feathered shoes and a shield made out of phosphorus.
He runs off, followed more slowly by Dercetes and the soldiers.

PHINEUS
Whate'er thou art, yet thou shalt not outface me.
He advances with sword drawn.
Hast thou Heaven's thunders with thee too?

POLYDAON (*pulling him back*)
Back, Phineus!
The fiery-tasselled aegis of Athene
Shakes forth these lightnings, and an earthly sword
Were madness here.
He goes out with Phineus.

IOLAUS

O radiant strong immortal,
Iolaus kneels to thee.

PERSEUS

No, Iolaus.
Though great Athene breathes Olympian strength
Into my arm sometimes, I am no more
Than a brief mortal.

IOLAUS

Art thou only man?
O then be Iolaus' friend and lover,
Who com'st to me like something all my own
Destined from other shores.

PERSEUS

Give me thy hands,
O fair young child of the warm Syrian sun.
Embrace me! Thou art like a springing laurel
Fed upon sunlight by the murmuring waters.

IOLAUS
Tell me thy name. What memorable earth
Gave thee to the azure?

PERSEUS

I am from Argolis,
Perseus my name, the son of Danaë.

IOLAUS
Come, Perseus, friend, with me: fierce entertainment
We have given, unworthy the fair joyousness
Thou carriest like a flag, but thou shalt meet
A kinder Syria. My royal father Cepheus
Shall welcome, my mother give thee a mother's greeting
And our Andromeda's delightful smile

Persuade thee of a world more full of beauty
Than thou hadst dreamed of.

PERSEUS

I shall yet be glad with thee,
O Iolaus, in thy father's halls,
But I would not as yet be known in Syria.
Is there no pleasant hamlet near, hedged in
With orchard walls and green with unripe corn
And washed with bright and flitting waves, where I
Can harbour with the kindly village folk
And wake to cock-crow in the morning hours,
As in my dear Seriphos?

IOLAUS

Such a village
Lurks near our hills, — there with my kind Cydone
Thou mayst abide at ease, until thou choose,
O Perseus, to reveal thyself to Syria.
I too can visit thee unquestioned.

PERSEUS

Thither
Then lead me. I have a thirst for calm obscurity
And cottages and happy unambitious talk
And simple people. With these I would have rest,
Not in the laboured pomp of princely towns
Amid pent noise and purple masks of hate.
I will drink deep of pure humanity
And take the innocent smell of rain-drenched earth,
So shall I with a noble untainted mind
Rise from the strengthening soil to great adventure.

They go out.

Scene 3

The Palace of Cepheus. A room in the women's apartments. Praxilla, to her enters Diomede.

DIOMEDE
O Praxilla, Praxilla!

PRAXILLA
So, thou art back, thou tall inutility? Where wert thou lingering all this hour? I am tired of always whipping thee. I will hire thee out to a timber-merchant to carry logs from dawn to nightfall. Thou shalt learn what labour is.

DIOMEDE
Praxilla, O Praxilla! I am full to the throat with news. I pray you, rip me open.

PRAXILLA
Willingly.

She advances towards her with an uplifted knife.

DIOMEDE (*escaping*)
A plague! can you not appreciate a fine metaphor when you hear it? I never saw so prosaic a mortal. The soul in you was born of a marriage between a saucepan and a broomstick.

PRAXILLA
Tell me your news. If it is good, I will excuse you your whipping.

DIOMEDE
I was out on the beach thinking to watch the seagulls flying and crying in the wind amidst the surf dashing and the black cliff-heads —

PRAXILLA
And could not Poseidon turn thee into a gull there among thy natural kindred? Thou wert better fitted with that shape than in a reasonable human body.

DIOMEDE
Oh then you shall hear the news tell itself, mistress, when the whole town has chewed it and rechewed it.

She is going.

PRAXILLA
Stop, you long-limbed impertinence. The news!

DIOMEDE
I'll be hanged if I tell you.

PRAXILLA
You shall be whipped, if you do not.

DIOMEDE
Well, your goddess Switch is a potent divinity. A ship with men from the East has broken on the headland below the temple and two Chaldeans are saved alive for the altar.

PRAXILLA
This is glorious news indeed.

DIOMEDE
It will be a great day when they are sacrificed!

PRAXILLA
We have not had such since the long galley from Cnossus grounded upon our shores and the temple was washed richly with blood and the altar blushed as thickly with hearts of victims as the King's throne with rubies. Poseidon was pleased that year and the harvest was so plentiful, men were brought in from beyond the hills to reap it.

DIOMEDE

There would have been a third victim, but Prince Iolaus drew sword on the priest Polydaon to defend him.

PRAXILLA

I hope this is not true.

DIOMEDE

I saw it.

PRAXILLA

Is the wild boy
In love with ruin? Not the King himself
Can help him if the grim sacrificant
Demand his fair young head: only a god
Could save him. And he was already in peril
From Polydaon's gloomy hate!

DIOMEDE

And Phineus'.

PRAXILLA

Hush, silly madcap, hush; or speak much lower.

DIOMEDE

Here comes my little queen of love, stepping
As daintily as a young bird in spring
When he would take the hearts of all the forest.
Andromeda enters.

PRAXILLA

You have slept late, Andromeda.

ANDROMEDA

Have I?
The sun had risen in my dreams: perhaps
I feared to wake lest I should find all dark

Once more, Praxilla.

DIOMEDE
He has risen in your eyes,
For they are full of sunshine, little princess.

ANDROMEDA
I have dreamed, Diomede, I have dreamed.

DIOMEDE
What did you dream?

ANDROMEDA
I dreamed my sun had risen.
He had a face like the Olympian Zeus
And wings upon his feet. He smiled upon me,
Diomede.

PRAXILLA
Dreams are full of stranger fancies.
Why, I myself have seen hooved bears, winged lions,
And many other monsters in my dreams.

ANDROMEDA
My sun was a bright god and bore a flaming sword
To kill all monsters.

DIOMEDE
I think I've seen today
Your sun, my little playmate.

ANDROMEDA
No, you have not.
I'll not have any eyes see him but mine:
He is my own, my very own.

DIOMEDE

And yet
I saw him on the wild sea-beach this morning.

PRAXILLA
What mean you, Diomede?

DIOMEDE (*to Andromeda*)

You have not heard?
A ship was flung upon the rocks this morning
And all her human burden drowned.

ANDROMEDA

Alas!

DIOMEDE
It was a marvellous sight, my little playmate,
And made my blood with horror and admiration
Run richer in my veins. The great ship groaned
While the rough boulders dashed her into pieces,
The men with desperate shrieks went tumbling down
Mid laughters of the surge, strangled twixt billows
Or torn by strips upon the savage rocks
That tossed their mangled bodies back again
Into the cruel keeping of the surge.

ANDROMEDA
O do not tell me any more! How had you heart
To look at what I cannot bear to hear?
For while you spoke, I felt as if the rocks
Were tearing my own limbs and the salt surge
Choking me.

DIOMEDE

I suppose it must have hurt them.
Yes, it was pitiful. Still, 'twas a sight.
Meanwhile the deep surf boomed their grandiose dirge

With fierce triumphant voices. The whole scene
Was like a wild stupendous sacrifice
Offered by the grey-filleted grim surges
On the gigantic altar of the rocks
To the calm cliffs seated like gods above.

ANDROMEDA
Alas, the unhappy men, the poor drowned men
Who had young children somewhere whom they loved!
How could you watch them die? Had I been a god,
I would not let this cruel thing have happened.

DIOMEDE
Why do you weep for them? they were not Syrians.

PRAXILLA
Not they, but barbarous jabbering foreigners
From Indus or Arabia. Fie, my child,
You sit upon the floor and weep for these?

ANDROMEDA
When Iolaus fell upon the rocks
And hurt himself, you did not then forbid me
To weep!

PRAXILLA
He is your brother. That was loving,
Tender and right.

ANDROMEDA
And these men were not brothers?
They too had sisters who will feel as I should
If my dear brother were to die so wretchedly.

PRAXILLA
Let their own sisters weep for them: we have
Enough of our own sorrows. You are young

And softly made: because you have yourself
No griefs, but only childhood's soon-dried tears,
You make a luxury of others' woes.
So when we watch a piteous tragedy,
We grace with real tears its painted sorrows.
When you are older and have true things to weep for,
Then you will understand.

ANDROMEDA

I'll not be older!
I will not understand! I only know
That men are heartless and your gods most cruel.
I hate them!

PRAXILLA

Hush, hush! You know not what you say.
You must not speak such things. Come, Diomede,
Tell her the rest.

ANDROMEDA (*covering her ears with her hands*)

I will not hear you.

DIOMEDE (*kneeling by her and drawing her hands away*)

But I
Will tell you of your bright sungod.

ANDROMEDA

He is not
My sungod or he would have saved them.

DIOMEDE

He did.

ANDROMEDA (*leaping to her feet*)

Then tell me of him.

DIOMEDE

Suddenly there dawned
A man, a vision, a brightness, who descended
From where I know not, but to me it seemed
That the blue heavens just then created him
Out of the sunlight. His face and radiant body
Aspired to copy the Olympian Zeus
And wings were on his feet.

ANDROMEDA

He was my sungod!

DIOMEDE

He caught two drowning wretches by the robe
And drew them safe to land.

ANDROMEDA

He was my sungod.
Diomede, I have seen him in my dream.

PRAXILLA

I think it was Poseidon come to take
His tithe of all that death for the ancient altar,
Lest all be engulfed by his grey billows, he
Go quite unhonoured.

DIOMEDE

Hang up your grim Poseidon!
This was a sweet and noble face all bright
With manly kindness.

ANDROMEDA

O I know, I know.
Where went he with those rescued?

DIOMEDE

Why, just then

Prince Iolaus and his band leaped forth
And took them.

ANDROMEDA (*angrily*)
Wherefore took them? By what right?

DIOMEDE
To die according to our Syrian law
On dark Poseidon's altar.

ANDROMEDA
They shall not die.
It is a shame, a cruel cold injustice.
I wonder that my brother had any part in it!
My sungod saved them, they belong to him,
Not to your hateful gods. They are his and mine,
I will not let you kill them.

PRAXILLA
Why, they must die
And you will see it done, my little princess.
You shall! Where are you going?

ANDROMEDA
Let me go.
I do not love you when you talk like this.

PRAXILLA
But you are Syria's lady and must appear
At these high ceremonies.

ANDROMEDA
I had rather be
A beggar's daughter who devours the remnants
Rejected from your table, than reign a queen
Doing such cruelty.

PRAXILLA
Little passionate scold!
You mean not what you say. A beggar's daughter!
You? You who toss about if only a rose-leaf
Crinkle the creamy smoothness of your sheets,
And one harsh word flings weeping broken-hearted
As if the world had no more joy in store.
You are a little posturer, you make
A theatre of your own mind to act in,
Take parts, declaim such childish rhetoric
As that you speak now. You a beggar's daughter!
Come, listen what became of your bright sungod.

DIOMEDE
Him too they would have seized, but he with steel
Opposed and tranquil smiling eyes appalled them.
Then Polydaon came and Phineus came
And bade arrest the brilliant god. Our Prince,
Seized by his glory, with his virgin point
Resisted their assault.

ANDROMEDA
My Iolaus!

DIOMEDE
All suddenly the stranger's lifted shield
Became a storm of lightnings. Dawn was blinded:
Far promontories leaped out in the blaze,
The surges were illumined and the horizon
Answered with light.

ANDROMEDA (*clapping her hands*)
O glorious! O my dream!

PRAXILLA
You tell the actions of a mighty god,
Diomede.

DIOMEDE
A god he seemed to us, Praxilla.
The soldiers ran in terror, Polydaon
Went snorting off like a black whale harpooned,
And even Phineus fled.

ANDROMEDA
Was he not killed?
I wish he had been killed.

PRAXILLA
This is your pity!

ANDROMEDA (*angrily*)
I do not pity tigers, wolves and scorpions.
I pity men who are weak and beasts that suffer.

PRAXILLA
I thought you loved all men and living things.

ANDROMEDA
Perhaps I could have loved him like my hound
Or the lion in the park who lets me pat his mane.
But since he would have me even without my will
To foul with his beast touch, my body abhors him.

PRAXILLA
Fie, fie! you speak too violently. How long
Will you be such a child?

DIOMEDE
Our Iolaus
And that bright stranger then embraced. Together
They left the beach.

ANDROMEDA
Where, where is Iolaus?

Why is he long in coming? I must see him.
I have a thousand things to ask.
She runs out.

DIOMEDE

She is
A strange unusual child, my little playmate.

PRAXILLA

None can help loving her, she is in charm
Compelling: but her mind is wry and warped.
She is not natural, not sound in fancy,
But made of wild uncurbed imaginations,
With feelings as unruly as winds and waves
And morbid sympathies. At times she talks
Strange childish blasphemies that make me tremble.
She would impose her fancies on the world
As better than the eternal laws that rule us!
I wish her mother had brought her up more strictly,
For she will come to harm.

DIOMEDE

Oh, do not say it!
I have seen no child in all our Syria like her,
None her bright equal in beauty. She pleases me
Like days of sunlight rain when spring caresses
Warmly the air. Oh, here is Iolaus.

PRAXILLA

Is it he?

DIOMEDE

I know him by the noble strut
He has put on ever since they made him captain.
Andromeda comes running.

ANDROMEDA
My brother comes! I saw him from the terrace.
Enters Iolaus. Andromeda runs and embraces him.
Oh, Iolaus, have you brought him to me?
Where is my sungod?

IOLAUS
In heaven, little sister.

ANDROMEDA
Oh, do not laugh at me. I want my sungod
Whose face is like the grand Olympian Zeus'
And wings are on his feet. Where did you leave him
After you took him from our rough sea-beaches?

IOLAUS
What do you mean, Andromeda?

DIOMEDE
Some power
Divine sent her a dream of that bright strength
Which shone by you on the sea-beach today,
And him she calls her sungod.

IOLAUS
Is it so?
My little wind-tossed rose Andromeda!
I shall be glad indeed if Heaven intends this.

ANDROMEDA
Where is he?

IOLAUS
Do you not know, little rose-sister,
The great gods visit earth by splendid moments
And then are lost to sight? Come, do not weep;
He is not lost to Syria.

ANDROMEDA

Iolaus,
Why did you take the two poor foreign men
And give them to the priest? My sungod saved them,
Brother, — what right had you to kill?

IOLAUS

My child,
I only did my duty as a soldier,
Yet grieve I was compelled.

ANDROMEDA

Now will you save them?

IOLAUS

But they belong to dread Poseidon now!

ANDROMEDA

What will be done to them?

IOLAUS

They must be bound
On the god's altar and their living hearts
Ripped from their blood-choked breasts to feed his hunger.
Andromeda covers her face with her robe.
Grieve not for them: they but fulfil their fate.
These things are in the order of the world
Like plagues and slaughters, famines, fires and earthquakes,
Which when they pass us by killing their thousands,
We should not weep for, but be grateful only
That other souls than the dear heads we loved
Have perished.

ANDROMEDA

You will not save them?

PRAXILLA

Unhappy girl!
It is impiety to think of it.
Fie! Would you have your brother killed for your whimsies?

ANDROMEDA
Will you not save them, brother?

IOLAUS

I cannot, child.

ANDROMEDA
Then I will.
She goes out.

IOLAUS
Does she mean it?

PRAXILLA

Such wild caprices
Are always darting through her brain.

IOLAUS

I could not take
Poseidon's wrath upon my head!

PRAXILLA

Forget it
As she will too. Her strange imaginations
Flutter awhile among her golden curls,
But soon wing off with careless flight to Lethe.
Medes enters.

IOLAUS
What is it, Medes?

MEDES

The King, Prince Iolaus,
Requires your presence in his audience-chamber.

IOLAUS

So? Tell me, Medes, is Poseidon's priest
In presence there?

MEDES

He is and full of wrath.

IOLAUS

Go, tell them I am coming.

Medes goes out.

PRAXILLA

Alas!

IOLAUS

Fear not.
I have a strength the grim intriguers dream not of.
Let not my sister hear this, Diomede.

He goes.

PRAXILLA

What may not happen! The priest is dangerous,
Poseidon may be angry. Let us go
And guard our child from peril of this shock.

They go.

Act II

Scene 1

The audience-chamber in the Palace of Cepheus.
Cepheus and Cassiopea, seated.

CASSIOPEA
What will you do, Cepheus?

CEPHEUS
This that has happened
Is most unfortunate.

CASSIOPEA
What will you do?
I hope you will not give up to the priest
My Iolaus' golden head? I hope
You do not mean that?

CEPHEUS
Great Poseidon's priest
Sways all this land: for from the liberal blood
Moistening that high-piled altar grow our harvests
And strong Poseidon satisfied defends
Our frontiers from the loud Assyrian menace.

CASSIOPEA
Empty thy treasuries, glut him with gold.
Let us be beggars rather than one bright curl
Of Iolaus feel his gloomy mischiefs.

CEPHEUS
I had already thought of it. Medes!
Medes enters.
Waits Polydaon yet?

MEDES
He does, my lord.

CEPHEUS
Call him, and Tyrian Phineus.
Medes goes out again.

CASSIOPEA
Bid Tyre save
Andromeda's loved brother from this doom;
He shall not have our daughter otherwise.

CEPHEUS
This too was in my mind already, queen.
Polydaon and Phineus enter.
Be seated, King of Tyre: priest Polydaon,
Possess thy usual chair.

POLYDAON
Well, King of Syria,
Shall I have justice? Wilt thou be the King
Over a peopled country? or must I loose
The snake-haired Gorgon-eyed Erinnyes
To hunt thee with the clamorous whips of Hell
Blood-dripping?

CEPHEUS
Be content. Cepheus gives nought
But justice from his mighty seat. Thou shalt
Have justice.

POLYDAON
I am not used to cool my heels
About the doors of princes like some beggarly
And negligible suitor whose poor plaint
Is valued by some paltry drachmas. I am
Poseidon’s priest.

CEPHEUS
The prince is called to answer here
Thy charges.

POLYDAON
Answer! Will he deny a crime
Done impudently in Syria’s face? ’Tis well;
The Tyrian stands here who can meet that lie.

CASSIOPEA
My children’s lips were never stained with lies,
Insulting priest, nor will be now; from him
We shall have truth.

CEPHEUS
And grant the charge admitted,
The ransom shall be measured with the crime.

POLYDAON
What talk is this of ransom? Thinkst thou, King,
That dire Poseidon’s grim offended godhead
Can be o’erplastered with a smudge of silver?
Shall money blunt his vengeance? Shall his majesty
Be estimated in a usurer’s balance?
Blood is the ransom of this sacrilege.

CASSIOPEA
Ah God!

CEPHEUS (*in agitation*)
Take all my treasury includes
Of gold and silver, gems and porphyry
Unvalued.

POLYDAON
The Gods are not to be bribed,
King Cepheus.

CASSIOPEA (*apart*)
Give him honours, state, precedence,
All he can ask. O husband, let me keep
My child's head on my bosom safe.

CEPHEUS
Listen!
What wouldst thou have? Precedence, pomp and state?
Hundreds of spears to ring thee where thou walkest?
Swart slaves and beautiful women in thy temple
To serve thee and thy god? They are thine. In feasts
And high processions and proud regal meetings
Poseidon's followers shall precede the King.

POLYDAON
Me wilt thou bribe? I take these for Poseidon,
Nor waive my chief demand.

CEPHEUS
What will content thee?

POLYDAON
A victim has been snatched from holy altar:
To fill that want a victim is demanded.

CEPHEUS
I will make war on Egypt and Assyria
And throw thee kings for victims.

POLYDAON

Thy vaunt is empty.
Poseidon being offended, who shall give thee
Victory o'er Egypt and o'er strong Assyria?

CEPHEUS

Take thou the noblest head in all the kingdom
Below the Prince. Take many heads for one.

POLYDAON

Shall then the innocent perish for the guilty?
Is this thy justice? How shall thy kingdom last?

CEPHEUS

You hear him, Cassiopea? he will not yield,
He is inexorable.

POLYDAON

Must I wait longer?

CEPHEUS

Ho Medes!

Medes enters.

Iolaus comes not yet.

Medes goes out.

CASSIOPEA (*rising fiercely*)

Priest, thou wilt have my child's blood then, it seems!
Nought less will satisfy thee than thy prince
For victim?

POLYDAON

Poseidon knows not prince or beggar.
Whoever honours him, he heaps with state
And fortune. Whoever wakes his dreadful wrath,
He thrusts down into Erebus for ever.

CASSIOPEA
Beware! Thou shalt not have my child. Take heed
Ere thou drive monarchs to extremity.
Thou hopest in thy sacerdotal pride
To make the Kings of Syria childless, end
A line that started from the gods. Thinkst thou
It will be tamely suffered? What have we
To lose, if we lose this? I bid thee again
Take heed: drive not a queen to strong despair.
I am no tame-souled peasant, but a princess
And great Chaldea's child.

POLYDAON (*after a pause*)
Wilt thou confirm
Thy treasury and all the promised honours,
If I excuse the deed?

CEPHEUS
They shall be thine.
He turns to whisper with Cassiopea.

PHINEUS (*apart to Polydaon*)
Dost thou prefer me for thy foeman?

POLYDAON
See
In the queen's eyes her rage. We must discover
New means; this way's not safe.

PHINEUS
Thou art a coward, priest, for all thy violence.
But fear me first and then blench from a woman.

POLYDAON
Well, as you choose.
Iolaus enters.

IOLAUS

Father, you sent for me?

CEPHEUS

There is a charge upon thee, Iolaus,
I do not yet believe. But answer truth
Like Cepheus' son, whatever the result.

IOLAUS

Whatever I have done, my father, good
Or ill, I dare support against the world.
What is this accusation?

CEPHEUS

Didst thou rescue
At dawn a victim from Poseidon's altar?

IOLAUS

I did not.

POLYDAON

Dar'st thou deny it, wretched boy?
Monarch, his coward lips have uttered falsehood.
Speak, King of Tyre.

IOLAUS

Hear me speak first. Thou ruffian,
Intriguer masking in a priest's disguise, —

POLYDAON

Hear him, O King!

CEPHEUS

Speak calmly. I forbid
All violence. Thou deniest then the charge?

IOLAUS

As it was worded to me, I deny it.

PHINEUS

Syria, I have not spoken till this moment,
And would not now, but sacred truth compels
My tongue howe'er reluctant. I was there,
And saw him rescue a wrecked mariner
With his rash steel. Would that I had not seen it!

IOLAUS

Thou liest, Phineus, King of Tyre.

CASSIOPEA

Alas!
If thou hast any pity for thy mother,
Run not upon thy death in this fierce spirit,
My child. Calmly repel the charge against thee,
Nor thus offend thy brother.

PHINEUS

I am not angry.

IOLAUS

It was no shipwrecked weeping mariner,
Condemned by the wild seas, whom they attempted,
But a calm god or glorious hero who came
By other way than man's to Syria's margin.
Nor did rash steel or battle rescue him.
With the mere dreadful waving of his shield
He shook from him a hundred threatening lances,
This hero hot from Tyre and this proud priest
Now bold to bluster in his monarch's chamber,
But then a pallid coward, — so he trusts
In his Poseidon!

POLYDAON

Hast thou done?

IOLAUS

Not yet.
That I drew forth my sword, is true, and true
I would have rescued him from god or devil
Had it been needed.

POLYDAON

Enough! He has confessed!
Give verdict, King, and sentence. Let me watch
Thy justice.

CEPHEUS

But this fault was not so deadly!

POLYDAON

I see thy drift, O King. Thou wouldst prefer
Thy son to him who rules the earth and waters:
Thou wouldst exalt thy throne above the temple,
Setting the gods beneath thy feet. Fool, fool,
Knowst thou not that the terrible Poseidon
Can end thy house in one tremendous hour?
Yield him one impious head which cannot live
And he will give thee other and better children.
Give sentence or be mad and perish.

IOLAUS

Father,
Not for thy son's, but for thy honour's sake
Resist him. 'Tis better to lose crown and life,
Than rule the world because a priest allows it.

POLYDAON

Give sentence, King. I can no longer wait,
Give sentence.

CEPHEUS (*helplessly to Cassiopea*)
What shall I do?

CASSIOPEA
Monarch of Tyre,
Thou choosest silence then, a pleased spectator?
Thou hast bethought thee of other nuptials?

PHINEUS
Lady,
You wrong my silence which was but your servant
To find an issue from this dire impasse,
Rescuing your child from wrath, justice not wounded.

CASSIOPEA
The issue lies in the accuser's will,
If putting malice by he'ld only seek
Poseidon's glory.

PHINEUS
The deed's by all admitted,
The law and bearing of it are in doubt.
(*to Polydaon*)
You urge a place is void and must be filled
On great Poseidon's altar, and demand
Justly the guilty head of Iolaus.
He did the fault, his head must ransom it.
Let him fill up the void, who made the void.
Nor will high heaven accept a guiltless head,
To let the impious free.

CASSIOPEA
Phineus, —

PHINEUS
But if
The victim lost return, you cannot then

Claim Iolaus; then there is no void
For substitution.

POLYDAON
King, —

PHINEUS
The simpler fault
With ransom can be easily excused
And covered up in gold. Let him produce
The fugitive.

IOLAUS
Tyrian, —

PHINEUS
I have not forgotten.
Patience! You plead that your mysterious guest
Being neither shipwrecked nor a mariner
Comes not within the doom of law. Why then,
Let Law decide that issue, not the sword
Nor swift evasion! Dost thou fear the event
Of thy great father's sentence from that throne
Where Justice sits with bright unsullied robe
Judging the peoples? Calmly expect his doom
Which errs not.

CASSIOPEA
Thou art a man noble indeed in counsel
And fit to rule the nations.

CEPHEUS
I approve.
You laugh, my son?

IOLAUS
I laugh to see wise men

Catching their feet in their own subtleties.
King Phineus, wilt thou seize Olympian Zeus
And call thy Tyrian smiths to forge his fetters?
Or wilt thou claim the archer bright Apollo
To meet thy human doom, priest Polydaon?
'Tis well; the danger's yours. Give me three days
And I'll produce him.

CEPHEUS
Priest, art thou content?

POLYDAON
Exceed not thou the period by one day,
Or tremble.

CEPHEUS (*rising*)
Happily decided. Rise
My Cassiopea: now our hearts can rest
From these alarms.
Cepheus and Cassiopea leave the chamber.

IOLAUS
Keep thy knife sharp, sacrificant.
King Phineus, I am grateful and advise
Thy swift departure back to Tyre unmarried.
He goes out.

POLYDAON
What hast thou done, King Phineus? All is ruined.

PHINEUS
What, have the stripling's threats appalled thee, priest?

POLYDAON
Thou hast demanded a bright dreadful god
For victim. We might have slain young Iolaus:
Wilt thou slay him whose tasselled aegis smote

Terror into a hundred warriors?

PHINEUS

Priest,
Thou art a superstitious fool. Believe not
The gods come down to earth with swords and wings,
Or transitory raiment made on looms,
Or bodies visible to mortal eyes.
Far otherwise they come, with unseen steps
And stroke invisible, — if gods indeed
There are. I doubt it, who can find no room
For powers unseen: the world's alive and moves
By natural law without their intervention.

POLYDAON

King Phineus, doubt not the immortal gods.
They love not doubters. If thou hadst lived as I,
Daily devoted to the temple dimness,
And seen the awful shapes that live in night,
And heard the awful sounds that move at will
When Ocean with the midnight is alone,
Thou wouldst not doubt. Remember the dread portents
High gods have sent on earth a hundred times
When kings offended.

PHINEUS

Well, let them reign unquestioned
Far from the earth in their too bright Olympus,
So that they come not down to meddle here
In what I purpose. For your aegis-bearer,
Your winged and two-legged lion, he's no god.
You hurried me away or I'ld have probed
His godlike guts with a good yard of steel
To test the composition of his ichor.

POLYDAON

What of his flaming aegis lightning-tasselled?

What of his wingèd sandals, King?

PHINEUS

The aegis?
Some mechanism of refracted light.
The wings? Some new aerial contrivance
A luckier Daedalus may have invented.
The Greeks are scientists unequalled, bold
Experimenters, happy in invention.
Nothing's incredible that they devise,
And this man, Polydaon, is a Greek.

POLYDAON
Have it your way. Say he was merely man!
How do we profit by his blood?

PHINEUS

O marvellous!
Thou hesitate to kill! thou seek for reasons!
Is not blood always blood? I could not forfeit
My right to marry young Andromeda;
She is my claim to Syria. Leave something, priest,
To Fortune, but be ready for her coming
And grasp ere she escape. The old way's best;
Excite the commons, woo their thunderer,
That plausible republican. Iolaus
Once ended, by right of fair Andromeda
I'll save and wear the crown. Priest, over Syria
And all my Tyrians thou shalt be the one prelate,
Should all go well.

POLYDAON
All shall go well, King Phineus.

They go.

Scene 2

A room in the women's apartments of the Palace.
Andromeda, Diomede, Praxilla.

ANDROMEDA
My brother lives then?

PRAXILLA
Thanks to Tyre, it seems.

DIOMEDE
Thanks to the wolf who means to eat him later.

PRAXILLA
You'll lose your tongue some morning; rule it, girl.

DIOMEDE
These kings, these politicians, these high masters!
These wise blind men! We slaves have eyes at least
To look beyond transparency.

PRAXILLA
Because
We stand outside the heated game unmoved
By interests, fears and passions.

ANDROMEDA
He *is* a wolf, for I have seen his teeth.

PRAXILLA
Yet must you marry him, my little princess.

ANDROMEDA
What, to be torn in pieces by the teeth?

DIOMEDE
I think the gods will not allow this marriage.

ANDROMEDA
I know not what the gods may do: be sure,
I'll not allow it.

PRAXILLA
Fie, Andromeda!
You must obey your parents: 'tis not right,
This wilfulness. Why, you're a child! you think
You can oppose the will of mighty monarchs?
Be good; obey your father.

ANDROMEDA
Yes, Praxilla?
And if my father bade me take a knife
And cut my face and limbs and stab my eyes,
Must I do that?

PRAXILLA
Where are you with your wild fancies?
Your father would not bid you do such things.

ANDROMEDA
Because they'ld hurt me?

PRAXILLA
Yes.

ANDROMEDA
It hurts me more
To marry Phineus.

PRAXILLA
O you sly logic-splitter!
You dialectician, you sunny-curled small sophist,
Chop logic with your father. I'm tired of you.
Cepheus enters.

ANDROMEDA
Father, I have been waiting for you.

CEPHEUS
What! you?
I'll not believe it. You? (*caressing her*) My rosy Syrian!
My five-foot lady! My small queen of Tyre!
Yes, you are tired of playing with the ball.
You wait for me!

ANDROMEDA
I *was* waiting. Here are
Two kisses for you.

CEPHEUS
Oh, now I understand.
You dancing rogue, you're not so free with kisses:
I have to pay for them, small cormorant.
What is it now? a talking Tyrian doll?
Or a strong wooden horse with silken wings
To fly up to the gold rims of the moon?

ANDROMEDA
I will not kiss you if you talk like that.
I am a woman now. As if I wanted
Such nonsense, father!

CEPHEUS
Oh, you're a woman now?
Then 'tis a robe from Cos, sandals fur-lined
Or belt all silver. Young diplomatist,

I know you. You keep these rippling showers of gold
Upon your head to buy your wishes with.
Therefore you packed your small red lips with honey.
Well, usurer, what's the price you want?

ANDROMEDA
I want, —
But father, will you give me what I want?

CEPHEUS
I'ld give you the bright sun from heaven for plaything
To make you happy, girl Andromeda.

ANDROMEDA
I want the Babylonians who were wrecked
In the great ship today, to be my slaves,
Father.

CEPHEUS
Was ever such a perverse witch?
To ask the only thing I cannot give!

ANDROMEDA
Can I not have them, father?

CEPHEUS
They are Poseidon's.

ANDROMEDA
Oh then you love Poseidon more than me!
Why should he have them?

CEPHEUS
Fie, child! the mighty gods
Are masters of the earth and sea and heavens,
And all that is, is theirs. We are their stewards.
But what is once restored into their hands

Is thenceforth holy: he who even gazes
With greedy eye upon divine possessions,
Is guilty in Heaven's sight and may awake
A dreadful wrath. These men, Andromeda,
Must bleed upon the altar of the God.
Speak not of them again: they are devoted.

ANDROMEDA
Is he a god who eats the flesh of men?

PRAXILLA
O hush, blasphemer!

ANDROMEDA
Father, give command,
To have Praxilla here boiled for my breakfast.
I'll be a goddess too.

CEPHEUS
Praxilla!

PRAXILLA
'Tis thus
She talks. Oh but it gives me a shivering fever
Sometimes to hear her.

CEPHEUS
What mean you, dread gods?
Purpose you then the ruin of my house
Preparing in my children the offences
That must excuse your wrath? Andromeda,
My little daughter, speak not like this again,
I charge you, no, nor think it. The mighty gods
Dwell far above the laws that govern men
And are not to be mapped by mortal judgments.
It is Poseidon's will these men should die
Upon his altar. 'Tis not to be questioned.

ANDROMEDA
It shall be questioned. Let your God go hungry.

CEPHEUS
I am amazed! Did you not hear me, child?
On the third day from now these men shall die.
The same high evening ties you fast with nuptials
To Phineus, who shall take you home to Tyre.
(*aside*)
On Tyre let the wrath fall, if it must come.

ANDROMEDA
Father, you'll understand this once for all, —
I will not let the Babylonians die,
I will not marry Phineus.

CEPHEUS
Oh, you will not?
Here is a queen, of Tyre and all the world;
How mutinous-majestically this smallness
Divulges her decrees, making the most
Of her five feet of gold and cream and roses!
And why will you not marry Phineus, rebel?

ANDROMEDA
He does not please me.

CEPHEUS
School your likings, rebel.
It is most needful Syria mate with Tyre.
And you are Syria.

ANDROMEDA
Why, father, if you gave me a toy, you'ld ask
What toy I like! If you gave me a robe
Or vase, you would consult my taste in these!
Must I marry any cold-eyed crafty husband

I do not like?

CEPHEUS
You do not like! You do not like!
Thou silly child, must the high policy
Of Princes then be governed by thy likings?
’Tis policy, ’tis kingly policy
That made this needful marriage, and it shall not
For your spoilt childish likings be unmade.
What, you look sullen? what, you frown, virago?
Look, if you mutiny, I’ll have you whipped.

ANDROMEDA
You would not dare.

CEPHEUS
Not dare!

ANDROMEDA
Of course you would not.
As if I were afraid of you!

CEPHEUS
You are spoiled,
You are spoiled! Your mother spoils you, you wilful sunbeam.
Come, you provoking minx, you’ll marry Phineus?

ANDROMEDA
I will not, father. If I must marry, then
I’ll marry my bright sungod! and none else
In the wide world.

CEPHEUS
Your sungod! Is that all?
Shall I not send an envoy to Olympus
And call the Thunderer here to marry you?
You’re not ambitious?

PRAXILLA

It is not that she means;
She speaks of the bright youth her brother rescued.
Since she has heard of him, no meaner talk
Is on her lips.

CEPHEUS

Who is this radiant coxcomb?
Whence did he come to set my Syria in a whirl?
For him my son's in peril of his life,
For him my daughter will not marry Tyre.
Oh, Polydaon's right. He must be killed
Before he does more mischief. Andromeda,
On the third day you marry Tyrian Phineus.

He goes out hurriedly.

DIOMEDE

That was a valiant shot timed to a most discreet departure. Parthian tactics are best when we deal with mutinous daughters.

PRAXILLA

Andromeda, you will obey your father?

ANDROMEDA

You are not in my counsels. You're too faithful,
Virtuous and wise, and virtuously you would
Betray me. There is a thing full-grown in me
That you shall only know by the result.
Diomede, come; for I need help, not counsel.

She goes.

PRAXILLA

What means she now? Her whims are as endless as the tossing of leaves in a wind. But you will find out and tell me, Diomede.

DIOMEDE

I will find out certainly, but as to telling, that is as it shall please me — and my little mistress.

PRAXILLA

You shall be whipped.

DIOMEDE

Pish!

She runs out.

PRAXILLA

The child is spoiled herself and she spoils her servants. There is no managing any of them.

She goes out.

Scene 3

An orchard garden in Syria by a river-bank:
the corner of a cottage in the background.
Perseus, Cydone.

CYDONE (*sings*)

O the sun in the reeds and willows!
O the sun with the leaves at play!
Who would waste the warm sunlight?
And for weeping there's the night.
But now 'tis day.

PERSEUS
Yes, willows and the reeds! and the bright sun
Stays with the ripples talking quietly.
And there, Cydone, look! how the fish leap
To catch at sunbeams. Sing yet again, Cydone.

CYDONE (*sings*)

O what use have your foolish tears?
What will you do with your hopes and fears?
They but waste the sweet sunlight.
Look! morn opens: look how bright
The world appears!

PERSEUS
O you Cydone in the sweet sunlight!
But you are lovelier.

CYDONE
You talk like Iolaus.

Come, here's your crown. I'll set it where 'tis due.

PERSEUS
Crowns are too heavy, dear. Sunlight was better.

CYDONE
'Tis a light crown of love I put upon you,
My brother Perseus.

PERSEUS
Love! but love is heavy.

CYDONE
No, love is light. I put light love upon you,
Because I love you and you love Iolaus.
I love you because you love Iolaus,
And love the world that loves my Iolaus,
Iolaus my world and all the world
Only for Iolaus.

PERSEUS
Happy Cydone,
Who can lie here and babble to the river
All day of love and light and Iolaus.
If it could last! But tears are in the world
And must some day be wept.

CYDONE
Why must they, Perseus?

PERSEUS
When Iolaus becomes King in Syria
And comes no more, what will you do, Cydone?

CYDONE
Why, I will go to him.

PERSEUS

And if perhaps
He should not know you?

CYDONE

Then it will be night.
It is day now.

PERSEUS

A bright philosophy,
But with the tears behind. Hellas, thou livest
In thy small world of radiant white perfection
With eye averted from the night beyond,
The night immense, unfathomed. But I have seen
Snow-regions monstrous underneath the moon
And Gorgon caverns dim. Ah well, the world
Is bright around me and the quick lusty breeze
Of strong adventure wafts my bright-winged sandals
O'er mountains and o'er seas, and Herpe's with me,
My sword of sharpness.

CYDONE

Your sword, my brother Perseus?
But it is lulled to sleep in scarlet roses
By the winged sandals watched. Can they really
Lift you into the sky?

PERSEUS

They can, Cydone.

CYDONE

What's in the wallet locked so carefully?
I would have opened it and seen, but could not.

PERSEUS

'Tis well thou didst not. For thy breathing limbs
Would in a moment have been charmed to stone

And these smooth locks grown rigid and stiffened, O Cydone,
Thy happy heart would never more have throbbed
To Iolaus' kiss.

CYDONE
What monster's there?

PERSEUS
It is the Gorgon's head who lived in night.
Snake-tresses frame its horror of deadly beauty
That turns the gazer into marble.

CYDONE
Ugh!
Why do you keep such dreadful things about you?

PERSEUS
Why, are there none who are better turned to stone
Than living?

CYDONE
O yes, the priest of the dark shrine
Who hates my love. Fix him to frowning grimness
In innocent marble. (*listening*) It is Iolaus!
I know his footfall, muffled in the green.

Iolaus enters.

IOLAUS
Perseus, my friend,—

PERSEUS
Thou art my human sun.
Come, shine upon me; let thy face of beauty
Become a near delight, my arm, fair youth, possess thee.

IOLAUS
I am a warrant-bearer to you, friend.

PERSEUS
On what arrest?

IOLAUS
For running from the knife.
A debt that must be paid. They'll not be baulked
Their dues of blood, their strict account of hearts.
Or mine or thine they'll have to crown their altars.

PERSEUS
Why, do but make thy tender breast the altar
And I'll not grudge my heart, sweet Iolaus.
Who's this accountant?

IOLAUS
Poseidon's dark-browed priest,
As gloomy as the den in which he lairs,
Who hopes to gather Syria in his hands
Upon a priestly pretext.

CYDONE
Change him, Perseus,
Into black stone!

PERSEUS
Oh, hard and black as his own mood!
He has a stony heart much better housed
In limbs of stone than a kind human body
Who would hurt thee, my Iolaus.

IOLAUS
He'ld hurt
And find a curious pleasure. If it were even
My sister sunbeam, my Andromeda,
He'ld carve her soft white breast as readily
As any slave's or murderer's.

PERSEUS

Andromeda!
It is a name that murmurs to the heart
Of strength and sweetness.

IOLAUS

Three days you are given to prove yourself a god!
You failing, 'tis my bosom pays the debt.
That's their decree.

CYDONE

Turn them to stone, to stone!
All, all to heartless marble!

PERSEUS

Thy father bids this?

IOLAUS

He dare not baulk this dangerous priest.

PERSEUS

Ah, dare not!
Yes, there are fathers too who love their lives
And not their children: earth has known of such.
There was a father like this once in Argos!

IOLAUS

Blame not the King too much.

CYDONE

Turn him to stone,
To stone!

IOLAUS

Hush, hush, Cydone!

CYDONE

Stone, hard stone!

IOLAUS

I'll whip thee, shrew, with rose-briars.

CYDONE

Will you promise
To kiss the blood away? Then I'll offend
Daily, on purpose.

IOLAUS

Love's rose-briars, sweet Cydone,
Inflict no wounds.

CYDONE

Oh yes, they bleed within.

IOLAUS

The brow of Perseus grows darkness!

PERSEUS

Rise,
And be my guide. Where is this temple and priest?

IOLAUS

The temple now?

PERSEUS

Soonest is always best
When noble deeds are to be done.

IOLAUS

What deed?

PERSEUS

I will release the men of Babylon

From their grim blood-feast. Let them howl for victims.

IOLAUS
It will incense them more.

PERSEUS
Me they have incensed
With their fierce crafty fury. If they must give
To their dire god, let them at least fulfil
With solemn decency their fearful rites.
But since they bring in politic rage and turn
Their barbarous rite into a trade of murder,
Nor rite nor temple be respected more.
Must they have victims? Let them take and slay
Perseus alone. I shall rejoice to know
That so much strength and boldness dwells in men
Who are mortal.

IOLAUS
Men thou needst not fear; but, Perseus,
Poseidon's wrath will wake, whose lightest motion
Is deadly.

PERSEUS
Mine is not harmless.

IOLAUS
Against gods
What can a mortal's anger do?

PERSEUS
We'll talk
With those pale merchants. Wait for me; I bring
Herpe my sword.

CYDONE
The wallet, Perseus! leave not the dear wallet!
Perseus goes out towards the cottage.

IOLAUS
My queen, have I your leave?

CYDONE
Give me a kiss
That I may spend the hours remembering it
Till you return.

IOLAUS (*kissing her*)
Will one fill hours, Cydone?

CYDONE
I fear to ask for more. You're such a miser.

IOLAUS
You rose-lipped slanderer! there! Had I the time
I would disprove you, smothering you with what
You pray for.

CYDONE
Come soon.

IOLAUS
I'll watch the sun go down.
In your dark night of tresses.
Perseus returns.

PERSEUS
Come.

IOLAUS
I am ready.

CYDONE
Stone, brother Perseus, make them stone for ever.
Perseus and Iolaus go out.

(*sings*)
"Marble body, heart of bliss
Or a stony heart and this,
Which of these two wilt thou crave?
One or other thou shalt have."
"By my kisses shall be known
Which is flesh and which is stone.
Love, thy heart of stone! it quakes.
Sweet, thy fair cold limbs! love takes
With this warm and rosy trembling.
Where is now thy coy dissembling?
Heart and limbs I here escheat
For that fraudulent deceit."
"And will not marble even grow soft,
Kissed so warmly and so oft?"

Curtain

Act III

Scene 1

The women's apartments of the Palace.
Andromeda, Diomede.

ANDROMEDA
All's ready, let us go.

DIOMEDE
Andromeda,
My little mistress whom I love, let me
Beseech you by that love, do not attempt it.
Oh, this is no such pretty wilfulness
As all men love to smile at and to punish
With tenderness and chidings. It is a crime
Full of impiety, a deed of danger
That venturous and iron spirits would be aghast
To dream of. You think because you are a child,
You will be pardoned, because you are a princess
No hand will dare to punish you. You do not know
Men's hearts. They will not pause to pity you,
They will not spare. The people in its rage
Will tear us both to pieces, limb from limb,
With blows and fury, roaring round like tigers.
Will you expose yourself to that grim handling
Who cry out at the smallest touch of pain?

ANDROMEDA
Do not delay me on the brink of action.
You have said these things before.

DIOMEDE

You shall not do it.
I will not go with you.

ANDROMEDA

So you expose me
To danger merely and break the oath you swore;
For I must do it then unhelped.

DIOMEDE

I'll tell
Your mother, child, and then you cannot go.

ANDROMEDA

I shall die then on the third day from this.

DIOMEDE

What! you will kill yourself, and for two strangers
You never saw? You are no human maiden
But something far outside mortality,
Princess, if you do this.

ANDROMEDA

I shall not need.
You threaten me with the fierce people's tearings,
And shall I not be torn when I behold
My fellows' piteous hearts plucked from their bosoms
Between their anguished shrieks? I shall fall dead
With horror and with pity at your feet:
Then you'll repent this cruelty.

She weeps.

DIOMEDE

Child, child!
Hush, I will go with you. If I must die,
I'll die.

ANDROMEDA

Have I not loved you, Diomede?
Have I not taken your stripes upon myself,
Claiming your dear offences? Have I not lain
Upon your breast, stealing from my own bed
At night, and kissed your bosom and your hands
For very love of you? And I had thought
You loved me: but you do not care at last
Whether I live or die.

DIOMEDE

Oh hush! I love you,
I'll go with you. You shall not die alone,
If you are bent on dying. I'll put on
My sandals and be with you in a moment.
Go, little princess. I am with you; go.

She goes.

ANDROMEDA

O you poor shuddering men, my human fellows,
Horribly bound beneath the grisly knife
You feel already groping for your hearts,
Pardon me each long moment that you wrestle
With grim anticipation. O, and you,
If there is any god in the deaf skies
That pities men or helps them, O protect me!
But if you are inexorably unmoved
And punish pity, I, Andromeda,
Who am a woman on this earth, will help
My brothers. Then, if you must punish me,
Strike home. You should have given me no heart;
It is too late now to forbid it feeling.

She is going out. Athene appears.

What is this light, this glory? who art thou,
O beautiful marble face amid the lightnings?
My heart faints with delight, my body trembles,
Intolerable ecstasy beats in my veins;

I am oppressed and tortured with thy beauty.

ATHENE
I am Athene.

ANDROMEDA
Art thou a goddess? Thy name
We hear far off in Syria.

ATHENE
I am she
Who helps and has compassion on struggling mortals.

ANDROMEDA (*falling prostrate*)
Do not deceive me! I will kiss thy feet.
O joy! thou art! thou art!

ATHENE
Lift up thy head,
My servant.

ANDROMEDA
Thou art! there are not only void
Azure and cold inexorable laws.

ATHENE
Stand up, O daughter of Cassiope.
Wilt thou then help these men of Babylonia,
My mortals whom I love?

ANDROMEDA
I help myself,
When I help these.

ATHENE
To thee alone I gave
This knowledge. O virgin, O Andromeda,

It reached thee through that large and noble heart
Of woman beating in a little child.
But dost thou know that thy reward shall be
Betrayal and fierce hatred? God and man
Shall league in wrath to kill and torture thee
Mid dire revilings.

ANDROMEDA
My reward shall be
To cool this anguish of pity in my heart
And be at peace: if dead, O still at peace!

ATHENE
Thou fearst not then? They will expose thee, child,
To slaughter by the monsters of the deep
Who shall come forth to tear thy limbs.

ANDROMEDA
Beyond too
Shall I be hated, in that other world?

ATHENE
Perhaps.

ANDROMEDA
Wilt thou love me?

ATHENE
Thou art my child.

ANDROMEDA
O mother, O Athene, let me go.
They linger in anticipated pangs.

ATHENE
Go, child. I shall be near invisibly.

She disappears. Andromeda stands with clasped hands straining her eyes as if into infinity. Diomede returns.

DIOMEDE

You are not gone as yet? what is this, princess?
What is this light around you! How you are altered,
Andromeda!

ANDROMEDA

Diomede, let us go.

They go out.

Scene 2

In the Temple of Poseidon.
Cireas.

CIREAS

I am done with thee, Poseidon Ennosigaios, man-slayer, ship-breaker, earth-shaker, lord of the waters! Never was faithful service so dirtily rewarded. In all these years not a drachma, not an obolus, not even a false coin for solace. And when thou hadst mocked me with hope, when a Prince had promised me all my findings, puttest thou me off with two pauperized merchants of Babylon? What, thou takest thy loud ravenous glut of the treasures that should have been mine and roarest derision at me with thy hundred-voiced laughters? Am I a sponge to suck up these insults? No! I am only moderately porous. I will break thy treasury, Poseidon, and I will run. Think not either to send thy sea-griffins after me. For I will live on the top of Lebanon, and thy monsters, when they come for me, shall snort and grin and gasp for breath and return to thee baffled and asthmatic.

As he talks Iolaus and Perseus enter.

IOLAUS

What, Cireas, wilt thou run? I'll give thee gold
To wing thy shoes, if thou wilt do my bidding.

CIREAS

I am overheard! I am undone! I am crucified! I am disembowelled!

IOLAUS

Be tranquil, Cireas, fool, I come to help thee.

CIREAS

Do you indeed! I see, they have made you a god, for you know men's minds. But could old father Zeus find your newborn godhead no better work than to help thieves and give wings to runaways? Will you indeed help me, god Iolaus? I can steal then under thy welcome protection? I can borrow Poseidon's savings and run?

IOLAUS

Steal not: thou shalt have gold enough to buy
Thy liberty and farms and slaves and cattle.

CIREAS

Prince, art thou under a vow of liberality? or being about to die, wilt thou distribute thy goods and chattels to deserving dishonesty? Do not mock me, for if thou raise hopes again in me and break them, I can only hang myself.

IOLAUS

I mock thee not, thou shalt have glut of riches.

CIREAS

What must I do? I'ld give thee nose and ears
For farms and freedom.

PERSEUS

Wherefore dost thou bribe
This slave to undo a bond my sword unties?

IOLAUS

I shrink from violence in the grim god's temple.

CIREAS

Zeus, art thou there with thy feathers and phosphorus? I pray thee, my good bright darling Zeus, do not come in the way of my earnings. Do not be so cantankerously virtuous, do not be so damnably economical. Good Zeus, I adjure thee by thy foot-plumes.

IOLAUS

Cireas, wilt thou bring forth the wretched captives
Who wait the butcher Polydaon's knife
With groanings? we would talk with them. Wilt thou?

CIREAS

Will I? Will I? I would do any bad turn to that scanty-hearted rampageous old ship-swallower there. I would do it for nothing, and for so much gold will I not?

IOLAUS

And thou must shut thine eyes.

CIREAS

Eyes! I will shut mouth and nose and ears too, nor ask for one penny extra.

IOLAUS

Dost thou not fear?

CIREAS

Oh, the blue-haired old bogy there? I have lived eighteen years in this temple and seen nothing of him but ivory and sapphires. I begin to think he cannot breathe out of water; no doubt, he is some kind of fish and walks on the point of his tail.

PERSEUS

Enough, bring forth the Babylonian captives.

CIREAS

I run, Zeus, I run: but keep thy phosphorus lit and handy against Polydaon's return unasked for and untrumpeted.

He runs out.

PERSEUS
O thou grim calmness imaged like a man
That frownst above the altar! dire Poseidon!
Art thou that god indeed who smooths the sea
With one finger, and when it is thy will,
Rufflest the oceans with thy casual breathing?
Art thou not rather, lord, some murderous
And red imagination of this people,
The shadow of a soul that dreamed of blood
And took this dimness? If thou art Poseidon,
The son of Cronos, I am Cronos' grandchild,
Perseus, and in my soul Athene moves
With lightnings.

IOLAUS
I hear the sound of dragging chains.
Cireas returns with Tyrnaus and Smerdas.

PERSEUS
Smerdas and thou, Tyrnaus, once again
We meet.

SMERDAS
Save me, yet save me.

PERSEUS
If thou art worth it,
I may.

SMERDAS
Thou shalt have gold. I am well worth it.
I'll empty Babylonia of its riches
Into thy wallet.

PERSEUS
Has terror made thee mad?
Refrain from speech! Thine eyes are calm, Tyrnaus.

TYRNAUS
I have composed my soul to my sad fortunes.
Yet wherefore sad? Fate has dealt largely with me.
I have been thrice shipwrecked, twice misled in deserts,
Wounded six times in battle with wild men
For life and treasure. I have outspent kings:
I have lost fortunes and amassed them: princes
Have been my debtors, kingdoms lost and won
By lack or having of a petty fraction
Of my rich incomings: and now Fate gives me
This tragic, not inglorious death: I am
The banquet of a god. It fits, it fits,
And I repine not.

PERSEUS
But will these help, Tyrnaus,
To pass the chill eternity of Hades?
This memory of glorious breathing life,
Will it alleviate the endless silence?

TYRNAUS
But there are lives beyond, and we meanwhile
Move delicately amid aerial things
Until the green earth wants us.

PERSEUS (*shearing his chains with a touch of his sword*)
Yet awhile
Of the green earth take all thy frank desire,
Merchant: the sunlight would be loth to lose thee.

SMERDAS
O radiant helpful youth! O son of splendour!
I live again.

PERSEUS
Thou livest, but in chains,
Smerdas.

SMERDAS
But thy good sword will quickly shear them.

PERSEUS
Thou wilt give me all Babylonia holds
Of riches for reward?

SMERDAS
More, more, much more!

PERSEUS
But thou must go to Babylon to fetch it.
Then what security have I of payment?

SMERDAS
Keep good Tyrnaus here, my almost brother.
I will come back and give thee gold, much gold.

PERSEUS
You'ld leave him here? in danger? with the knife
Searching for him and grim Poseidon angry?

SMERDAS
What danger, when he is with thee, O youth,
Strong radiant youth?

PERSEUS
Yourself then stay with me,
And he shall bring the ransom from Chaldea.

SMERDAS
Here? here? Oh God! they'll seize me yet again
And cut my heart out. Let me go, dear youth,
Oh, let me go; I'll give thee double gold.

PERSEUS
Thou sordid treacherous thing of fears, I'll not

Venture for such small gain as the poor soul
Thou holdest, nor drive with danger losing bargains.

SMERDAS
Oh, do not jest! it is not good to jest
With death and horror.

PERSEUS
I jest not.

SMERDAS
Oh God! thou dost.

DIOMEDE (*without*)
Cireas!

CIREAS (*jumping*)
Who? who? who?

IOLAUS
Is't not a woman's voice?
Withdraw into the shadow: let our swords
Be out against surprise. Hither, Tyrnaus.

DIOMEDE
Cireas! where are you, Cireas? It is I.

CIREAS
It is the little palace scamp, Diomede.
Plague take her! How she fluttered the heart in me!

IOLAUS
Say nothing of us, merchant, or thou diest.
Iolaus, Perseus and Tyrnaus withdraw into the dimness of the Temple. Andromeda and Diomede enter.

CIREAS
Princess Andromeda!

PERSEUS (*apart*)
Andromeda!
Iolaus' rosy sister! O child goddess
Dropped recently from heaven! Its light is still
Upon thy face, thou marvel!

IOLAUS
My little sister
In these grim precincts, who so feared their shadows!

ANDROMEDA
Cireas, my servant Diomede means
To tell you of some bargain. Will you walk yonder?
Cireas and Diomede walk apart talking.
Art thou, as these chains say, the mournful victim
Our savage billows spared and men would murder?
But was there not another? Have they brought thee
From thy sad prison to the shrine alone?

SMERDAS
He, — he, —

ANDROMEDA
Has terror so possessed thy tongue,
It cannot do its office? Oh, be comforted.
Although red horror has its grasp on thee,
I dare to tell thee there is hope.

SMERDAS
What hope?
Ah heaven! what hope! I feel the knife even now
Hacking my bosom. If thou bringst me hope,
I'll know thee for a goddess and adore thee.

ANDROMEDA
Be comforted: I bring thee more than hope.
Cireas!

CIREAS
You'll give me chains? you'll give me jewels?

ANDROMEDA
All of my own that I can steal for you.

CIREAS
Steal boldly, O honey-sweet image of a thief, steal and fear not. I rose for good luck after all this excellent morning! O Poseidon, had I known there was more to be pocketed in thy disservice than in thy service, would I have misspent these eighteen barren years?

ANDROMEDA
Undo this miserable captive's bonds.

SMERDAS
What! I shall be allowed to live! Is't true?

ANDROMEDA
No, I'll undo them, Cireas; I shall feel
I freed him. Is there so much then to unlink?
O ingenuity of men to hurt
And bind and slay their brothers!

SMERDAS
'Tis not a dream,
The horror was the dream. She smiles on me
A wonderful glad smile of joy and kindness,
Making a sunshine. Oh, be quicker, quicker.
Let me escape this hell where I have eaten
And drunk of terror and have slept with death.

ANDROMEDA
Are you so careless of the friend who shared
The tears and danger? Where is he? Cireas!

TYRNAUS (*coming forward*)
O thou young goddess with the smile! Behold him,
Tyrnaus the Chaldean.

ANDROMEDA (*dropping the chain which binds Smerdas*)
Already free!
Who has forestalled me?

TYRNAUS
Maiden, art thou vexed
To see me unbound?

ANDROMEDA
I grudge your rescuer the happy task
Heaven meant for me of loosening your chains.
It would have been such joy to feel the cold
Hard irons drop apart between my fingers!
Who freed you?

TYRNAUS
A god as radiant as thyself,
Thou merciful sweetness.

ANDROMEDA
Had he not a look
Like the Olympian's? Was he not bright like Hermes
Or Phoebus?

TYRNAUS
He was indeed. Thou knowst him then?

ANDROMEDA
In dreams I have met him. He was here but now?

TYRNAUS
He has withdrawn into the shadow, virgin.

SMERDAS
Why do you leave me bound, and talk, and talk,
As if Death had not still his fingers on me?

ANDROMEDA (*resuming her task*)
Forgive me! Tyrnaus, did that radiant helper
Who clove thy chains, forget to help this poor
Pale trembling man?

TYRNAUS
Because he showed too much
The sordid fear that pities only itself,
He left him to his fate.

ANDROMEDA
Alas, poor human man!
Why, we have all so many sins to answer,
It would be hard to have cold justice dealt us.
We should be kindly to each other's faults
Remembering our own. Is't not enough
To see a face in tears and heal the sorrow,
Or must we weigh whether the face is fair
Or ugly? I think that even a snake in pain
Would tempt me to its succour, though I knew
That afterwards 'twould bite me! But he is a god
Perhaps who did this and his spotless radiance
Abhors the tarnish of our frailer natures.

SMERDAS
Oh, I am free! I fall and kiss thy robe,
O goddess, O deliverer.

ANDROMEDA
You must

Go quickly from this place. There is a cave
Near to those unkind rocks where you were shipwrecked,
A stone-throw up the cliff. We found it there
Climbing and playing, reckless of our limbs
In the sweet joy of sunshine, breeze and movement,
When we were children, I and Diomede.
None else will dream of it. There have I stored
Enough of food and water. Closely lurk
Behind its curtains of fantastic stone:
Venture not forth, though your hearts pine for sunlight,
Or Death may take you back into his grip.
When hot pursuit and search have been tired out,
I'll find you golden wings will carry you
To your Chaldea.

SMERDAS
Can you not find out divers
Who'll rescue our merchandise from the sunk rocks
Where it is prisoned?

TYRNAUS
You have escaped grim murder,
Yet dream of nothing but your paltry gems!
You will call back Heaven's anger on our heads.

SMERDAS
We cannot beg our way to far Chaldea.

ANDROMEDA
Diving is dangerous there: I will not risk
Men's lives for money. I promised Cireas what I have,
And yet you shall not go unfurnished home.
I'll beg a sum from my brother Iolaus
Will help you to Chaldea.

SMERDAS
O my dear riches!

Must you lie whelmed beneath the Syrian surge
Uncared for?

ANDROMEDA (*to Diomede*)
Take them to the cave. Show Cireas
The hidden mouth. I'll loiter and expect you
Under the hill-side, where sweet water plashes
From the grey fountain's head, our fountain. Merchants, go;
Athene guard you!

TYRNAUS
Not before I kneel
And touch thy feet with reverent humble hands,
O human merciful divinity,
Who by thy own sweet spirit moved, unasked,
Not knowing us, cam'st from thy safe warm chamber
Here where Death broods grim-visaged in his home,
To save two unseen, unloved, alien strangers,
And being a woman feared not urgent death,
And being a child shook not before God's darkness
And that insistent horror of a world
O'ershadowing ours. O surely in these regions
Where thou wert born, pure-eyed Andromeda,
There shall be some divine epiphany
Of calm sweet-hearted pity for the world,
And harsher gods shall fade into their Hades.

SMERDAS
You prattle, and at any moment, comes
The dreadful priest with clutch upon my shoulder.
Come! come! you, slave-girl, lead the way, accursèd!
You loiter?

ANDROMEDA
Chide not my servant, Babylonian.
Go, Diomede; darkness like a lid
Will soon shut down upon the rugged beach

And they may stumble as they walk. Go, Cireas.
Diomede and Cireas go out,
followed by the merchants.
Alone I stand before thee, grim Poseidon,
Here in thy darkness, with thy altar near
That keeps fierce memory of tortured groans
And human shrieks of victims, and, unforced,
I yet pollute my soul with thy bloody nearness
To tell thee that I hate, contemn, defy thee.
I am no more than a brief-living woman,
Yet am I more divine than thou, for I
Can pity. I have torn thy destined prey
From thy red jaws. They say thou dost avenge
Fearfully insult. Avenge thyself, Poseidon.
She goes out: Perseus and Iolaus come forward.

PERSEUS
Thou art the mate for me, Andromeda!
Now, now I know wherefore my eager sandals
Bore me resistlessly to thee and Syria.

IOLAUS
This was Andromeda and not Andromeda.
I never saw her woman till this hour.

PERSEUS
Knew you so ill the child you loved so well,
Iolaus?

IOLAUS
Sometimes we know them least
Whom most we love and constantly consort with.

PERSEUS
How daintily she moved as if a hand
She loved were on her curls and she afraid
Of startling the sweet guest!

IOLAUS

O Perseus, Perseus!
She has defied a strong and dreadful god,
And dreadfully he will avenge himself.

PERSEUS

Iolaus, friend, I think not quite at random
Athene led me to these happy shores
That bore such beautiful twin heads for me
Sun-curled, Andromeda and Iolaus,
That I might see their beauty marred with death
By cunning priests and blood-stained gods. Fear not
The event. I bear Athene's sword of sharpness.

They go out.

Scene 3

Darkness. The Temple of Poseidon.
Polydaon enters.

POLYDAON
Cireas! Why, Cireas! Cireas! Knave, I call you!
Is the rogue drunk or sleeps? Cireas! you, Cireas!
My voice comes echoing from the hollow shrine
To tell me of solitude. Where is this drunkard?
A dreadful thing it is to stand alone
In this weird temple. Forty years of use
Have not accustomed me to its mute threatening.
It seems to me as if dead victims moved
With awful faces all about this stone
Invisibly here palpable. And Ocean
Groans ever like a wounded god aloud
Against our rocky base, his voice at night
Weirdly insistent. I will go and talk
With the Chaldeans in their chains: better
Their pleasing groans and curses than the hush.
He goes out and after a while comes back, disordered.
Wake, sleeping Syria, wake! Thou art violated,
Thy heart cut out: thou art outraged, Syria, outraged,
Thy harvests and thy safety and thy sons
Already murdered! O hideous sacrilege!
Who can have dared this crime? Could the slave Cireas
Have ventured thus? O no, it is the proud
God-hating son of Cepheus, Iolaus,
And that swift stranger borne through impious air
To upheave the bases of our old religion.
They have rescued the Chaldeans. Cireas lies

Murdered perhaps on the sound-haunted cliffs
Who would have checked their crime. I'll strike the gong
That only tolls when dread calamity
Strides upon Syria. Wake, doomed people, wake!

He rushes out. A gong sounds for some moments. It is silent and he returns, still more disordered.

Wake! Wake! Do you not hear Poseidon raging
Beneath the cliffs with tiger-throated menace?
Do you not hear his feet upon the boulders
Sounding, a thunderous report of peril,
As he comes roaring up his stony ramparts
To slay you? Ah, the city wakes. I hear
A surge confused of hurrying, cries and tumult.
What is this darkness moving on me? Gods!
Where is the image? Whose is this awful godhead?

The Shadow of Poseidon appears, vague and alarming at first, then distinct and terrible in the darkness.

POSEIDON
My victims, Polydaon, give me my victims.

POLYDAON (*falling prostrate*)
It was not I, it was not I, but others.

POSEIDON
My victims, Polydaon, give me my victims.

POLYDAON
O dire offended god, not upon me
Fall thy loud scourges! I am innocent.

POSEIDON
How art thou innocent, when the Chaldeans
Escape? Give me my victims, Polydaon.

POLYDAON
I know not how they fled nor who released them.
Gnash not thy blood-stained teeth on me, O Lord,
Nor slay me with those glaring eyes. Thy voice
Thunders, a hollow terror, through my soul.

POSEIDON
Hear me, unworthy priest. While thou art scheming
For thy own petty mortal aims abroad,
I am insulted in my temple, laughed at
By slaves, by children done injurious wrong,
My victims snatched from underneath my roof
By any casual hand, my dreadful image
Looking deserted on: for none avenges.

POLYDAON
Declare thy will, O Lord, it shall be done.

POSEIDON
Therefore I will awake, I will arise,
And you shall know me for a god. This day
The loud Assyrians shall break shouting in
With angry hooves like a huge-riding flood
Upon this country. The pleasant land of Syria
Shall be dispeopled. Wolves shall howl in Damascus,
And Gaza and Euphrates bound a desert.
My resonant and cliff-o'ervaulting seas,
Black-cowled, with foaming tops thundering shall climb
Into your lofty seats of ease and wash them
Strangled into the valleys. From the deep
My ravening herds pastured by Amphitrite
Shall walk upon your roads, devour your maidens
And infants, tear your strong and armèd men
Helplessly shrieking like weak-wristed women,
Till all are dead. And thou, neglectful priest,
Shalt go down living into Tartarus
Where knives fire-pointed shall disclose thy breast

And pluck thy still-renewing heart from thee
For ever: till the world cease shall be thy torments.

POLYDAON
O dreadful Lord!

POSEIDON
If thou wouldst shun the doom,
And keep my Syria safe, discover then
The rescuer of the Babylonian captives
And to the monsters of my deep expose
For a delicious banquet. Offer the heart
Of Iolaus here still warmly alive
And sobbing blood to leave his beautiful body;
Slaughter on his yet not inanimate bosom
The hero for whose love he braved my rage,
And let the sacrilegious house of Cepheus
Be blotted from the light. Thy sordid aims
Put from thy heart: remember to be fearless.
I will inhabit thee, if thou deserve it.
He disappears thundering.

POLYDAON
Yes, Lord! shall not thy dreadful will be done?
Phineus enters and his Tyrians with torches.

PHINEUS
Wherefore has the gong's ominous voice tonight
Affrighted Syria? Are you Polydaon
Who crouch here?

POLYDAON (*rising*)
Welcome, King Phineus.

PHINEUS
Who art thou?
Thine eyes roll round in a bright glaring horror

And rising up thou shak'st thy gloomy locks
As if they were a hungry lion's mane
Preparing for the leap. Speak, Polydaon.

POLYDAON
Yes, I shall speak, of sacrilege and blood,
Its terrible forfeit, and the wrath of Heaven.

Cepheus enters with Dercetes and Syrian soldiers, Therops, Perissus and a throng of Syrians; scores of torches.

CEPHEUS
What swift calamity, O Polydaon,
Has waked to clamorousness the fatal gong
At which all Syria trembles? What is this face
Thou showest like some grim accusing phantom's
In the torches' light? Wherefore rangst thou the bell?

POLYDAON
It rang the doom of thee and all thy house,
Cepheus.

CEPHEUS
My doom!

PHINEUS (*aside*)
I glimpse a striking plot
And 'tis well-staged too.

POLYDAON
The victims are released,
The victims bound for terrible Poseidon.
Thou and thy blood are guilty.

CEPHEUS
Thou art mad!

POLYDAON
’Tis thou and thy doomed race are seized with madness,
Who with light hearts offend against Poseidon.
But they shall perish. Thou and thy blood shall perish.

CEPHEUS
O, thou appalst me. Wherefore rings out thy voice
Against me like a clamorous bell of doom
In the huge darkness?

POLYDAON
Poseidon’s self arose
In the dim night before me with a voice
As angry as the loud importunate surge
Denouncing thee. Thou and thy blood shall perish.

PHINEUS
Cepheus, let search be made. Perhaps the victims
Have not fled far, and all may yet be saved.

CEPHEUS
Scour, captains, scour all Syria for the fugitives.
Dercetes and thy troop, down to the coast,
Scan every boulder: out, out, Meriones,
Callias, Oridamas and Pericarpus,
Ring in the countryside with cordons armed,
Enter each house, ransack most private chambers,
But find them.

Dercetes and the captains go out with their soldiers, the people making way for them.

POLYDAON
People of Syria, hearken, hearken!
Poseidon for this sacrilege arouses
The Assyrian from the land and from the sea
His waves and all their sharp-toothed monsters: your men

Shall be rent and disembowelled, your women ravished,
Butchered by foemen or by Ocean's dogs
Horribly eaten: what's left, the flood shall swallow.
Cries and groans.

VOICES
Spare us, Poseidon, spare us, dread deity!

POLYDAON
Would you be spared? Obey Poseidon, people.

THEROPS
Thou art our King, command us.

POLYDAON
Bring the woman,
Chaldean Cassiopea, and her daughter.
Tell them that Syria's King commands them here.
Therops and others go out to do his bidding.

PHINEUS
What mean you, priest?

CEPHEUS
Wherefore my queen and princess?

POLYDAON
I do the will of terrible Poseidon.
Thou and thy blood shall perish.

PHINEUS
Thou then art mad!
I thought this was a skilful play. Thinkst thou
I will permit the young Andromeda,
My bride, to be mishandled or exposed
To the bloody chances of wild popular fury
In such a moment?

POLYDAON
Phineus, I know not what thou wilt permit:
I know what terrible Poseidon wills.

PHINEUS
Poseidon! thou gross superstitious fool,
Hast thou seen shadows in the night and tookst them
For angry gods?

POLYDAON
Refrain from impious words,
Or else the doom shall take thee in its net.

PHINEUS
Refrain thyself from impious deeds, or else
A hundred Tyrian blades shall search thy brain
To look for thy lost reason.

POLYDAON (*recoiling*)
Patience, King Phineus!
It may be, thou shalt have thy whole desire
By other means.
Dercetes returns.

DERCETES
One of the fugitives is seized.

POLYDAON

Where, where?

DERCETES
Creeping about the sea-kissed rocks we found him
Where the ship foundered, babbling greedily
Of his lost wealth, in cover of the darkness.

POLYDAON
Now we shall know the impious hand. Tremble,

Tremble, King Cepheus.

CEPHEUS (*aside*)
I am besieged, undone.
No doubt it is my rash-brained Iolaus
Ruins us all.

Soldiers enter, driving in Smerdas.

SMERDAS (*groaning*)
I am dragged back to hell.
I am lost and nothing now can save me.

POLYDAON
Chaldean,
The choice is thine. Say, wilt thou save thy life
And see the green fields of thy land once more
And kiss thy wife and children?

SMERDAS
You mock me, mock me!

POLYDAON
No, man! thou shalt have freedom at a price
Or torture gratis.

SMERDAS
Price? price? I'll give the price!

POLYDAON
The names of those whose impious hands released thee:
Which if thou speak not, thou shalt die, not given
To the dire god, for he asks other victims,
But crushed with fearful tortures.

SMERDAS
O kind Heaven!
Have mercy! Must I give her up, — that smile

Of sweetness and those kindly eyes, to death?
It is a dreadful choice! I cannot do it.

POLYDAON
It was a woman did this!

SMERDAS
I'll say no more.

CEPHEUS
I breathe again: it was not Iolaus.

POLYDAON
Seize him and twist him into anguished knots!
Let every bone be crushed and every sinew
Wrenched and distorted, till each inch of flesh
Gives out its separate shriek.

SMERDAS
O spare me, spare me:
I will tell all.

POLYDAON
Speak truth and I will give thee
Bushels of gold and shipment to Chaldea.

SMERDAS
Gold? Gold? Shall I have gold?

POLYDAON
Thou shalt.

SMERDAS (*after a pause*)
The youth
You would have taken on the beach, arrived,
And his the sword bit through my iron fetters.

POLYDAON
Palter not! Who was with him? Thou shalt have gold.

SMERDAS
Young Iolaus.

CEPHEUS
Alas!

PHINEUS
Thus far is well.

POLYDAON
Thou hast a shifty look about the eyes.
Thou spokest of a woman. Was't the Queen?
Hast thou told all? His face grows pale. To torment!

SMERDAS (*groaning*)
I will tell all. Swear then I shall have gold
And safety.

POLYDAON
By grim Poseidon's head I swear.

SMERDAS
O hard necessity! The fair child princess,
Andromeda, with her young slave-girl came,
She was my rescuer.
There is a deep silence of amazement.

PHINEUS
I'll not believe this! could that gentle child
Devise and execute so huge a daring?
Thou liest: thou art part of some foul plot.

POLYDAON
He has the accent of unwilling truth.

Phineus, she is death's bride, not thine. Wilt thou
Be best man in that dolorous wedding? Forbear
And wait Poseidon's will.

PHINEUS (*low*)

Shall I have Syria?

POLYDAON

When it is mine to give thee.

Therops returns.

THEROPS

The Queen arrives.

POLYDAON

Remove the merchant.

The soldiers take Smerdas into the background.
Cassiopea enters with Andromeda and Diomede,
Nebassar and the Chaldean Guard.

CASSIOPEA

Keep ready hands upon your swords, Chaldeans.
What is this tumult? Wherefore are we called
At this dim hour and to this solemn place?

POLYDAON

Com'st thou with foreign falchions, Cassiopea,
To brave the Syrian gods? Abandon her,
Chaldeans. 'Tis a doomed head your swords encompass.

CASSIOPEA

Since when dost thou give thy commands in Syria
And sentence queens? My husband and thy King
Stands near thee; let him speak.

POLYDAON

Let him. There stands he.

CASSIOPEA
Why hidest thou thine eyes, monarch of Syria,
Sinking thy forehead like a common man
Unkingly? What grief o'ertakes thee?

POLYDAON
You see he speaks not.
'Tis I command in Syria. Is't not so,
My people?

THEROPS
'Tis so.

POLYDAON
Stand forth, Andromeda.

CASSIOPEA
What would you with my child? I stand here for her.

POLYDAON
She is accused of impious sacrilege,
And she must die.

CASSIOPEA (*shuddering*)
Die! Who accuses her?

POLYDAON
Bring the Chaldean.

DIOMEDE
Oh, the merchant's seized
And all is known. Deny it, my sweet lady,
And we may yet be saved.

ANDROMEDA
Oh poor, poor merchant!
Did I unloose thy bonds in vain?

DIOMEDE

Say nothing.

ANDROMEDA

And why should I conceal it, Diomede?
What I had courage in my heart to do,
Surely I can have courage to avow.

DIOMEDE

But they will kill us both.

ANDROMEDA

I am a princess.
Why should I lie? From fear? But I am not afraid.
Meanwhile the soldiers have brought Smerdas to the front.

POLYDAON

Look, merchant. Say before all, who rescued thee?
She was it?

SMERDAS

It is she. Oh, do not look
With that sad smile upon me. I am compelled.

POLYDAON

Is this the slave-girl?

SMERDAS

It is she.

CASSIOPEA

This wretch
Lies at thy bidding. Put him to the question.
He said he was compelled.

POLYDAON

I'll not permit it.

PERISSUS
Why, man, it is the law. We'll not believe
Our little princess did the crime.

CASSIOPEA
Syrians,
Look at this paltering priest. Do you not see
It is a plot, this man his instrument
Who lies so wildly? He'll not have him questioned.
No doubt 'twas he himself released the man, —
Who else could do it in this solemn temple
Where human footsteps fear to tread? He uses
The name of great Poseidon to conceal
His plottings. He would end the line of Cepheus
And reign in Syria.

PERISSUS
This sounds probable.

VOICES
Does he misuse Poseidon's name? unbind
Victims? Kill him!

CASSIOPEA
Look how he pales, O people!
Is't thus that great Poseidon's herald looks
When charged with the god's fearful menaces?
He diets you with forgeries and fictions.

CRIES
Let him be strangled!

PHINEUS
This is a royal woman!

POLYDAON
Well, let the merchant then be put to question.

PERISSUS
Come and be tickled, merchant. I am the butcher.
Do you see my cleaver? I will torture you kindly.

SMERDAS
O help me, save me, lady Andromeda.

ANDROMEDA
Oh, do not lay your cruel hands upon him.
I did release him.

CASSIOPEA
Ah, child Andromeda.

PERISSUS
You, little princess! Wherefore did you this?

ANDROMEDA
Because I would not have their human hearts
Mercilessly uprooted for the bloody
Monster you worship as a god! because
I am capable of pain and so can feel
The pain of others! For which if you I love
Must kill me, do it. I alone am guilty.

POLYDAON
Now, Cassiopea! You are silent, Queen.
Lo, Syrians, lo, my forgeries and fictions!
Lo, my vile plottings! Enough. Poseidon wills
That on the beach this criminal be bound
For monsters of the sea to rend in fragments,
And all the royal ancient blood of Syria
Must be poured richly forth to appease and cleanse.

CASSIOPEA
Swords from the scabbard! gyre in your King from harm,
Chaldeans! Hew your way through all opposers!

Thou in my arms, my child Andromeda!
I'll keep my daughter safe upon my bosom
Against the world.

POLYDAON
What dost thou, Babylonian?

CASSIOPEA
To the palace,
My trusty countrymen!

POLYDAON
Oppose them, soldiers!
They cheat the god of the crime-burdened heads
Doomed by his just resentment.

DERCETES
We are few:
And how shall we lay hands on royalty?

POLYDAON
Nebassar, darest thou oppose the gods?

NEBASSAR
Out of my sword's way, priest! I do my duty.

POLYDAON
Draw, King of Tyre!

PHINEUS
'Tis not my quarrel, priest.
Nebassar and the Chaldeans with drawn swords go out from the Temple, taking the King and Queen, Andromeda and Diomede.

POLYDAON
People of Syria, you have let them pass!

You fear not then the anger of Poseidon?

PERISSUS

Would you have us spitted upon the Chaldean swords? Mad priest, must we be broached like joints and tossed like pancakes? We have no weapons. Tomorrow we will go to the Palace and what must be done shall be done. But 'tis not just that many should be slain for the crime of one and the house of Syria outrooted. Follow me and observe my commands, brave aristocracy of the shop, gallant commoners of the lathe and anvil, follow Perissus. I will lead you tonight to your soft downy beds and tomorrow to the Palace.

All the Syrians go out, led by Therops and Perissus.

PHINEUS

Thou hast done foolishly in this, O priest.
Hadst thou demanded the one needful head
Of Iolaus, it was easy: but now
The tender beauty of Andromeda
Compels remorse and the astonished people
Recoil from the bold waste of royal blood
Thou appointest them to spill. I see that zeal
And frantic superstition are bad plotters.
Henceforth I work for my sole hand, to pluck
My own good from the storms of civic trouble
This night prepares.

He goes out with his Tyrians.

POLYDAON

O terrible Poseidon,
Thyself avenge thyself! hurl on this people
The sea and the Assyrian. Where is the power
Thou saidst should tarry with me? I have failed.

He remains sunk in thought for a while, then raises his head.

Tomorrow, Syrian? tomorrow is Poseidon's.

Curtain

Act IV

Scene 1

The countryside, high ground near the city of Cepheus.
A crowd of Syrians, men and women, running in terror, among them Chabrias, Megas, Baltis, Pasithea, Morus, Gardas, Syrax.

BALTIS (*stopping and sinking down on her knees*)
Ah, whither can we run where the offended
Poseidon shall not reach us?

CHABRIAS
Stop, countrymen;
Let's all die here together.

OTHERS
Let's stop and die.

MEGAS
Run, run! Poseidon's monsters howl behind.

PASITHEA
O day of horror and of punishment!

SYRAX
Let us stay here; it is high ground, perhaps
The monster will not reach us.
Damoetes enters.

DAMOETES
I have seen the terror near, and yet I live.

It vomits fire for half a league.

SYRAX
It is
As long as a sea-jutting promontory.

DAMOETES
It has six monstrous legs.

SYRAX
Eight, eight; I saw it.

MEGAS
Chabrias, it caught thy strong son by the foot,
And dashed his head against a stone, that all
The brains were scattered.

CHABRIAS
Alas, my son! I will
Go back and join you in the monster's jaws.
He is stopped by the others.

DAMOETES
It seized thy daughter, O Pasithea,
And tore her limbs apart, which it devoured
While yet the trunk lay screaming under its foot.

PASITHEA
Oh God!
She swoons.

ALL
Lift her up, lift her up. Alas!

MEGAS
These sorrows may be ours.

BALTIS

Ah Heaven, my son!
I did not wake him when this news of horror
Plucked me from sleep.

GARDAS

My wife and little daughter
Are in my cottage where perhaps the monster
Vomits his fiery breath against the door.
I will go back.

MORUS

Let us go back, Damoetes.

DAMOETES

I'll not go back for twenty thousand wives
And children. Life is sweet.

MANY VOICES

Let us not go.

They stop Gardas.

MEGAS

What noise is that?

BALTIS

Run, run, 'tis some new horror.
All are beginning to run. Therops enters.

THEROPS

Where will you run? Poseidon's wrath is near you
And over you and behind you and before you.
His monsters from the ooze ravage howling
Along our shores, and the indignant sea
Swelled to unnatural tumultuous mountains
Is climbing up the cliffs with spume and turmoil.

DAMOETES
O let us run a hundred leagues and live.

THEROPS
Before you is another death. Last night
The Assyrians at three points came breaking in
Across the border and the frontier forces
Are slain. They torture, burn and violate:
Young girls and matrons, men and boys are butchered.
Salvation is not in your front and flight
Casts you from angry gods to men more ruthless.
I wonder not that you are silent, stunned
With fear: but will you listen, countrymen,
And I will show you a cure for these fierce evils.

VOICES
Oh tell us, tell us, you shall be our king.

MEGAS
We'll set thy image by the great Poseidon's
And worship it.

THEROPS
What is the unexampled cause of wrath
Which whelms you with these horrors? Is't not the bold
Presumptuous line of Cepheus? Is't not your kings
Whose pride, swollen by your love and homage, Syrians,
Insults the gods, rescues Poseidon's victims
And with a sacrilegious levity
Exposes all your lives to death and woe?
There is the fount of all your misery, Syrians,
For this the horror eats you up, — your kings.

CRIES
Away with them! throw them into the sea — let Poseidon swallow them!

THEROPS
But most I blame the fell Chaldean woman
Who rules you. What is this Cepheus but a puppet
Dressed up in royal seemings, pushed forth and danced
At her caprice? Unhappy is the land
That women rule, that country more unhappy
That is to heartless foreigners a prey.
But thou, O ill-starred Syria, two worst evils
Hast harboured in a single wickedness.
What cares the light Chaldean for your gods,
Your lives, your sons, your daughters? She lives at ease
Upon the revenues of your hard toil,
Depending on favourites, yes, on paramours, —
For why have women favourites but to ease
Their sensual longings? — and insults your deities.
Do you not think she rescued the Chaldeans
Because they were her countrymen, and used
Her daughter, young Andromeda, for tool
That her fair childish beauty might disarm
Wrath and suspicion? then, the crime unearthed,
Braved all and set her fierce Chaldeans' swords
Against the good priest Polydaon's heart, —
You did not hear that? — the good Polydaon
Who serves Poseidon with such zeal! Therefore
The god is angry: your wives, sisters, daughters
Must suffer for Chaldean Cassiopea.

CRIES
Let us seize her and kill, kill, kill, kill her!

DAMOETES
Burn her!

MORUS
Roast her!

MEGAS
Tear her into a million fragments.

CHABRIAS
But are they not our kings? We must obey them.

THEROPS
Wherefore must we obey them? Kings are men,
And they are set above their fellow-mortals
To serve us, friends, — not, surely, for our hurt!
Why should our sons and daughters bleed for them,
Syrians? Is not our blood as dear, as precious,
As human? Why should these kings, these men, go clad
In purple and in velvet while you toil
For little and are hungry and are naked?

CRIES
True, true, true!

GARDAS
This is a wonderful man, this Therops. He has a brain, countrymen.

DAMOETES
A brain! He is no cleverer than you or I, Morus.

MORUS
I should think not, Damoetes!

DAMOETES
We knew these things long ago and did not need wind-bag Therops to tell us!

MORUS
We have talked them over often, Damoetes.

MEGAS
We'll have no more kings, countrymen.

CRIES
No kings, no kings!

GARDAS
Or Therops shall be king.

CRIES
Yes, Therops king! Therops king!

DAMOETES
Good king Lungs! Oh, let us make him king, Morus, — he will not pass wind in the market-place so often.

THEROPS
Poseidon is our king; we are his people.
Gods we must worship; why should we worship men
And set a heavenly crown on mortal weakness?
They have offended against great Poseidon,
They are guilty of a fearful sacrilege.
Let them perish.

CRIES
Kill them! let us appease Poseidon.

CHABRIAS
Worship Heaven's power but bow before the king.

THEROPS
What need have we of kings? What are these kings?

CHABRIAS
They are the seed of gods.

THEROPS

Then, let them settle
Themselves their quarrel with their Olympian kindred.
Why should we suffer? Let Andromeda
Be exposed and Iolaus sacrificed:
Then shall Poseidon's wrath retire again
Into the continent of his vast billows.

CHABRIAS

If it must be so, let it come by award
Of quiet justice.

THEROPS

Justice! They are the judges
Who did the crime. Wherefore dost thou defend them?
Thou favourest then Poseidon's enemies?

CRIES

Kill him too, kill Chabrias. Poseidon, great Poseidon! we are Poseidon's people.

DAMOETES

Let him join his son and by the same road.

MORUS

Beat his brains out — to see if he has any. Ho! ho! ho!

THEROPS

Let him alone: he is a fool. Here comes
Our zealous good kind priest, our Polydaon.

Polydaon enters.

CRIES

Polydaon! Polydaon! the good Polydaon! Save us, Polydaon!

POLYDAON

Ah, do you call me now to save you? Last night

You did not save me when the foreign swords
Were near my heart.

MEGAS

Forgive us and protect.

DAMOETES

You, lead us to the palace, be our chief.

MORUS

We'll have no kings: lead, you: on to the palace!

MEGAS

Poseidon shall be king, thou his vicegerent.

GARDAS

Therops at thy right hand!

CRIES

Yes, Therops! Therops!

POLYDAON

Oh, you are sane now, being let blood by scourgings!
Unhurt had been much better. But Poseidon
Pardons and I will save.

CRIES

Polydaon for ever, the good Polydaon, Poseidon's Viceroy!

POLYDAON

Swear then to do Poseidon's will.

CRIES

We swear!

DAMOETES

Command and watch the effect!

POLYDAON
Will not the tongue
Of Cassiopea once more change you, people?

DAMOETES
We'll cut it out and feed her dogs with it.

POLYDAON
Shall Iolaus bleed? Andromeda
Be trailed through the city and upon the rocks,
As the god wills, flung naked to his monsters?
Cepheus and Cassiopea die?

CRIES
They shall!

MEGAS
Not one of them shall live.

POLYDAON
Then come, my children.

DAMOETES
But the beast! Will it not tear us on the road?

POLYDAON
It will not hurt you who do Poseidon's will.
I am your safeguard; I will march in front.

CRIES
To the palace, to the palace! We'll kill the Chaldeans, strangle Cepheus, tear the Queen to pieces.

POLYDAON
In order, in good order, my sweet children.

The mob surges out following Polydaon
and Therops: only Damoetes, Chabrias,
Baltis and Pasithea are left.

DAMOETES
Come, Chabrias, we'll have sport.

CHABRIAS
My dead son calls me.
He goes out in another direction.

BALTIS
Pasithea, rise and come: you'll see her killed
Who is the murderess of your daughter.

PASITHEA
Let me
Stay here and die.

DAMOETES
Lift her up. Come, fool.
They go out, leading Pasithea.

Scene 2

Cydone's Garden.
Cydone, Iolaus, Perseus.

CYDONE
Perseus, you did not turn him into stone?

IOLAUS
You cruelty! must one go petrifying
One's fellows through the world? 'Twould not be decent.

CYDONE
He would have been so harmless as a statue!

PERSEUS
The morning has broken over Syria and the sun
Mounts royally into his azure kingdom.
I feel a stir within me as if great things
Were now in motion and clear-eyed Athene
Urging me on to high and helpful deeds.
There is a grandiose tumult in the air,
A voice of gods and Titans locked in wrestle.
Diomede enters.

DIOMEDE
Ah, prince!
She bursts into tears.

IOLAUS
Diomede, what calamity?

DIOMEDE
Flee, flee from Syria, save thyself.

IOLAUS
From Syria!
Am I alone in peril? Then I'll sit
And wait.

DIOMEDE
Poseidon's monsters from the deep
Arise to tear us for our sin. The people
In fury, led by Polydaon, march
Upon the palace, crying, "Slay the King,
Butcher the Queen, and let Andromeda
And Iolaus die." O my sweet playmate,
They swear they'll bind her naked to the rocks
Of the sea-beach for the grim monster's jaws
To tear and swallow.

IOLAUS
My sword, my sword, Cydone!

DIOMEDE
Oh, go not to the fierce and bloody people!
Praxilla stole me out, hiding my face
In her grey mantle: I have outrun the wind
To warn you. Had the wild mob recognised me,
They would have torn me into countless pieces,
And will you venture near whose name they join
With death and cursings? Polydaon leads them.

CYDONE
Had he been only stone!

IOLAUS
My sword!

Cydone gives him the sword.
Perseus goes out to the cottage.

DIOMEDE

You'll go?
What will you do alone against ten thousand?

IOLAUS
To die is always easy. This canaille
I do not fear; it is a coward rabble.

DIOMEDE
But terror gives them fierceness: they are dangerous.

IOLAUS
Keep Diomede for your service, love,
If I am killed; escape hence with your mother
To Gaza; she has gold: you may begin
A life as fair there. Sometimes remember me.

CYDONE
Diomede, will you comfort my dear mother?
Tell her I am quite safe and will be back
By nightfall. Hush! this in your ear, Diomede.
Escape with her under the veil of night,
For I shall not come back. Be you her daughter
And comfort her sad lonely age, Diomede.

IOLAUS
What do you mean, Cydone?

CYDONE

Are you ready?
Let us be going.

IOLAUS

Us, sweet lunatic?

CYDONE
Often you've said that you and I are only one,
I shall know now if you mean it.

IOLAUS

You shall not give
To the rude mob's ferocious violence
The beautiful body I have kissed so often.
You'll not obey me?

CYDONE

No.

IOLAUS

Leave this you shall not.

CYDONE

I do not know how you will stop me.

IOLAUS

Shrew!
You shall be stopped by bonds. Here you'll remain
Tied to a tree-trunk by your wilful wrists
Till all is over.

Perseus returns, armed.

CYDONE

I'll bring the tree and all and follow you.

IOLAUS

Oh, will you, Hercules?

PERSEUS

Forbid her not,
My Iolaus; no tress of her shall fall.
I have arisen and all your turbulent Syria
Shall know me for the son of Zeus.

IOLAUS

Perseus,
Art thou indeed a god? What wilt thou do,

One against a whole people? What way hast thou?

PERSEUS
This is no hour to speak or plan, but to act.
A presence sits within my heart that sees
Each moment's need and finds the road to meet it.
Dread nothing; I am here to help and save.

IOLAUS
I had almost forgotten; the might thou hast shown
Is a sufficient warrant.

CYDONE
I shall come back,
Diomede.

PERSEUS
My grip is firm on Herpe,
Athene's aegis guards my wrist; herself
The strong, omnipotent and tranquil goddess
Governs my motions with her awful will.
Have trust in me. Borne on my bright-winged sandals
Invisibly I will attend your course
On the light breezes.
He goes out followed by Iolaus and Cydone.

DIOMEDE
I am too tired to follow,
Too daunted with their mad-beast howls. Here let me hide
Awaiting what event this war of gods
May bring to me and my sweet-hearted lady.
O my Andromeda! my little playmate!
She goes out towards the cottage weeping.

Scene 3

A room commanding the outer Court of the Palace.
Nebassar, Praxilla.

PRAXILLA
I have seen them from the roof; at least ten thousand
March through the streets. Do you not hear their rumour,
A horrid hum as of unnumbered hornets
That slowly nears us?

NEBASSAR
If they are so many,
It will be hard to save the princess.

PRAXILLA
Save her!
It is too late now to save anyone.

NEBASSAR
I fear so.

PRAXILLA
But never is too late to die
As loyal servants for the lords whose bread
We have eaten. At least we women of the household
Will show the way to you Chaldeans.

NEBASSAR
We are soldiers,
Praxilla, and need no guidance on a road
We daily tread in prospect. I'll bring my guards.
He goes out saluting Cassiopea who enters.

CASSIOPEA
Swift Diomede must have reached by now,
Praxilla.

PRAXILLA
I hope so, madam.
She goes out to the inner apartments.

CASSIOPEA
Then Iolaus
Is safe. My sad heart has at least that comfort.
O my Andromeda, my child Andromeda,
Thou wouldst not let me save thee. Hadst thou too gone,
I would have smiled when their fierce fingers rent me.
Cepheus enters.

CEPHEUS
The mob is nearing; all my Syrian guards
Have fled; we cannot hope for safety now.

CASSIOPEA
Then what is left but to set rapid fire
To the rafters and prevent on friendly swords
The rabble's outrage?

CEPHEUS
Was it for such a fate
Thou camest smiling from an emperor's palace,
O Cassiopea, Cassiopea!

CASSIOPEA
For me
Grieve not.

CEPHEUS
O Lady, princess of Chaldea,
Pardon me who have brought thee to this doom.

Yet I meant well and thought that I did wisely:
But the gods wrest our careful policies
To their own ends until we stand appalled
Remembering what we meant to do and seeing
What has been done.

CASSIOPEA

With no half soul I came
To share thy kingdom and thy joys; entirely
I came, to take the evil also with thee.

CEPHEUS

Is there no truth in our high-winging ideals?
My rule was mild as spring, kind as the zephyr:
It tempered justice with benevolence
And offered pardon to the rebel and sinner;
I showed mercy, the rare sign of gods and kings.
In this too difficult world, this too brief life
To serve the gods with virtue seemed the best.
A nation's happiness was my only care:
I made the people's love my throne's sure base
And dreamed the way I chose true, great, divine.
But the heavenly gods have other thoughts than man's;
Their awful aims transcend our human sight.
Another doom than I had hoped they gave.

CASSIOPEA

A screened Necessity drives even the gods.
Over human lives it strides to unseen ends;
Our tragic failures are its stepping-stones.

CEPHEUS

My father lived calm, just, pitiless, austere,
As a stern god might sway a prostrate world:
Admired and feared, he died a mighty king.
My end is this abominable fate.

CASSIOPEA
Another law than mercy's rules the earth.

CEPHEUS
If I had listened to thee, O Cassiopea,
Chance might have taken a fairer happier course.
Always thou saidst to me, "The people's love
Is a glimmer on quicksands in a gliding sea:
Today they are with thee, tomorrow turn elsewhere.
Wisdom, strength, policy alone are sure."
I thought I better knew my Syrian folk.
Is this not my well-loved people at my door,
This tiger-hearted mob with bestial growl,
This cry for blood to drink, this roar of hate?
Always thou spok'st to me of the temple's power,
A growing danger menacing the State,
Its ambition's panther crouch and serpent pride
And cruel craft in a priest's sombre face:
I only saw the god and sacred priest.
To priest and god I am thrown a sacrifice.
The golden-mouthed orator of the market-place,
Therops, thou bad'st me fear and quell or win
Gaining his influence to my side. To me
He seemed a voice and nothing but a voice.
Too late I learn that human speech has power
To change men's hearts and turn the stream of Time.
Thy eyes could read in Phineus' scheming brain.
I only thought to buy the strength of Tyre
Offering my daughter as unwilling price.
He has planned my fall and watches my agony.
At every step I have been blind, have failed:
All was my error; all's lost and mine the fault.

CASSIOPEA
Blame not thyself; what thou hadst to be, thou wert,
And never yet came help from vain remorse.
It is too late, too late. To die is left;

Fate and the gods concede us nothing more.

CEPHEUS
But strength to meet the doom is always ours.
In royal robes and crowned we will show ourselves
To our people and look in the eyes of death and fate.
What is this armoured tramp?
The Chaldean guards enter with
Nebassar at their head.

CAPTAINS
O King, we come
To die with thee, the soldiers of Chaldea;
For all in Syria have abandoned thee.

CEPHEUS
I thank you, soldiers.

CRIES OUTSIDE
Poseidon, great Poseidon! we are Poseidon's people. In, in, in!
Kill the cuckold Cepheus, tear the harlot Cassiopea.

CEPHEUS
Voices of insolent outrage
Proclaim the heartless rabble. On the steps
Of our own palace we'll receive our subjects.

CASSIOPEA
This, this becomes thee, monarch.

NEBASSAR
Soldiers, form
With serried points before these mighty sovereigns.
The mob surges in, Therops and Perissus at their
head, Polydaon a little behind, Damoetes, Morus
and the rest. Praxilla and others of the household
come running in.

MOB
On them! on them! Cut the Chaldeans to pieces!

THEROPS
Halt, people, halt: let there be no vain bloodshed.

CASSIOPEA
Here is a tender-hearted demagogue!

THEROPS
Cepheus and Cassiopea, 'tis vain and heinous
To dally with your fate; it will only make you
More criminal before the majesty
Of the offended people.

CEPHEUS
Majesty!

CASSIOPEA
An unwashed majesty and a wolf-throated!

THEROPS
Insolent woman, to thee I speak not. Cepheus, —

CEPHEUS
Use humbler terms. I am thy King as yet.

THEROPS
The last in Syria. Tell me, wilt thou give up
Thy children to the altar, and thyself
Surrender here with this Chaldean woman
For mercy or judgment to the assembled will
Of Syria?

CASSIOPEA
A tearing mercy, a howling judgment!

POLYDAON
Therops, why do you treat with these? Chaldeans!
And you, Praxilla! women of the household!
Bring out the abominable Andromeda
Who brought the woe on Syria. Why should you vainly
Be ripped and mangled?

CRIES OF WOMEN
Bring out Andromeda!
Bring out the harlot's daughter, bring her out!

CRIES OF MEN
Andromeda! Andromeda! Andromeda!
Bring out this vile Andromeda to die!
Andromeda enters from the inner Palace, followed by slave-girls entreating and detaining her.

PRAXILLA (*sorrowfully*)
Wilt thou be wilful even to the end?

CASSIOPEA
Alas, my child!

ANDROMEDA
Mother, weep not for me. Perhaps my death
May save you; and 'tis good that I should die,
Not these poor innocent people. Against me
Their unjust god is wroth.

CEPHEUS
O my poor sunbeam!

ANDROMEDA (*advancing and showing herself to the people*)
O people who have loved me, you have called me
And I am here.
A fierce roar from the mob.

THEROPS
How she shrinks back appalled!

PRAXILLA
God! What a many-throated howl of demons!
Their eyes glare death. These are not men and Syrians.
The fierce Poseidon has possessed their breasts
And breathed his awful blood-lust into all hearts
Deafening the voice of reason, slaying pity:
Poseidon's rage glares at us through these eyes,
It is his ocean roar that fills our streets.
Cries from the mob.

BALTIS
Seize her! seize her! the child of wickedness!

VOICES OF WOMEN
Throw her to us! throw her to us! We will pick
The veins out of her body one by one.

DAMOETES
Throw her to us! We will burn her bit by bit.

MORUS
Yes, cook her alive; no, Damoetes? Ho, ho, ho!

VOICES OF MEN
She has killed our sons and daughters: kill her, kill her!

VOICES OF WOMEN
She is the child of her wicked mother: kill her!

MOB
Throw her to us! throw her to us!

MEGAS
We'll tear her here, and the furies shall tear her afterwards for ever in Hell.

THEROPS
Peace, people! she is not yours, she is Poseidon's.

ANDROMEDA
Alas, why do you curse me? I am willing
To die for you. If I had known this morn
The monster's advent, I would have gone and met him
While you yet slept, and saved your poor fair children
Whose pangs have been my own. Had I died first,
I should not then have suffered. O my loved people,
You loved me too: when I went past your homes,
You blessed me always; often your girls and mothers
Would seize and bind me to their eager breasts
With close imprisonment, kiss on their doorways
And with a smiling soft reluctance leave.
O do not curse me now! I can bear all,
But not your curses.

PERISSUS
Alack, my pretty lady!
What madness made you do it?

POLYDAON
She has rewarded
Your love by bringing death upon you, Syrians,
And now she tries to melt you by her tears.

MOB
Kill her, kill her! Cut the Chaldeans to pieces! We will have her!

PASITHEA
O do not hurt her! She is like my child
Whom the fierce monster tore.

MEGAS
Unnatural mother!
Would you protect her who's cause your child was eaten?

PASITHEA
Will killing her give back my child to me?

MEGAS
No, it will save the children of more mothers.

DAMOETES
Gag up her puling mouth, the white-faced fool!

VOICES
Tear, tear Andromeda! Seize her and tear her!

WOMEN
Let us only get at her with our teeth and fingers!

NEBASSAR
Use swords, Chaldeans.

POLYDAON
Order, my children, order!
Chaldean, give us up Andromeda,
And save your King and Queen.

NEBASSAR
What, wilt thou spare them?

CASSIOPEA
Thou wilt not give my child to him, Nebassar?
Thou dar'st not!

NEBASSAR
Queen, 'tis better one should die
For all.

POLYDAON
I swear to thee, I will protect them.

CASSIOPEA
Trust not his oaths, his false and murderous oaths.

NEBASSAR
He is a priest: if we believe him, nothing
We lose, something may gain.

MEGAS
What wilt thou do?
The people do not like it. See, they mutter.

POLYDAON
Let me have first their daughter in my grip,
Be sure of the god's dearest victim. People,
I am Poseidon's priest and your true friend.
Leave all to me.

CRIES
Leave all to Polydaon! the good priest knows what he is doing.

POLYDAON
Soldier, give up the Princess.

NEBASSAR
Shall she be only given to Poseidon?
Will you protect her from worse outrage?

POLYDAON
I will.

PRAXILLA
Look! what a hideous triumph lights the eyes
Of that fierce man. He glares at her with greed
Like a wild beast of prey, and on his mouth
There is a cruel unclean foam. Nebassar,
O do not give her.

NEBASSAR
If there were any help!
Go forth, O princess, O Andromeda.

CASSIOPEA
My child! my child!

ANDROMEDA
Give me one kiss, my mother.
We shall yet meet, I think. My royal father,
Andromeda farewells you, whom you loved
And called your sunbeam. But the night receives me.

CEPHEUS
Alas!

DAMOETES
How long will these farewells endure?
They are not needed: you shall meet presently
If Death's angels can collect your tattered pieces.

CASSIOPEA
O savage Syrians, let my curses brood
Upon your land, an anguished mother's curse.
May the Assyrian come and flay you living,
Impale your sons, rip up your ravished daughters
Before your agonising eyes and make you feel,
Who drag my child from me to butcher her,
The horror that you do. I curse you, Syrians.

ANDROMEDA
Hush, mother, mother! what they demand is just.

NEBASSAR
Lead back the King and Queen into the Palace,
Women. We too will from this sad surrender
Remove our eyes.

CASSIOPEA

I will not go. Let them tear her
Before me: then surely Heaven will avenge me.

CEPHEUS

Come, Cassiopea, come: our death's delayed
By a few minutes. I will not see her slain.
Cepheus and Praxilla go in, forcibly leading Cassiopea;
they are followed by the slave-girls and then by Nebassar
and the Chaldeans: Andromeda is left alone on the steps.

CRIES OF THE MOB SURGING FORWARD

Drag her, kill her, she is ours.

POLYDAON

Therops and thou, Perissus, stand in front
And keep the people off, or they will tear her,
Defraud Poseidon.

PERISSUS

Cheer up, my princess, come!
You shall be cleanly killed.

THEROPS

People of Syria,
Rob not Poseidon of his own! 'tis not the way
To turn his anger.

VOICES

Right, right! leave her to Poseidon: out with her to the sea-monster.

GARDAS

Therops is always right.

DAMOETES

We will have her first: we will dress his banquet for him: none shall say us nay.

MORUS
Good; we will show Poseidon some excellent cookery. Ho, ho, ho!

MEGAS
No, no, no! To the rocks with her! Strip her, the fine dainty princess, and hang her up in chains on the cliff-face.

A WOMAN
Strip her! Off with her broidered robe and her silken tunic! Why should she wear such, when my daughter carries only coarse woollen?

A WOMAN (*shaking her fist*)
Curse the white child's face of thee: it has ruined Syria. Die, dog's daughter.

DAMOETES
Is she to die only once who has killed so many of us? I say, tie her to one of these pillars and flog her till she drops.

MORUS
That's right, skin her with whips: peel her for the monster, ho, ho, ho!

BALTIS
Leave her: Hell's tortures shall make the account even.

POLYDAON
In order, children: let all be done in order.

THEROPS
She droops like a bruised flower beneath their curses,
And the tears lace her poor pale cheeks like frost
Glittering on snowdrops. I am sorry now
I had a hand in this.

ANDROMEDA

You two have faces
Less cruel than the others. I am willing
To die, — oh, who would live to be so hated?
But do not let them shame or torture me.

PERISSUS

Off! off! thick-brained dogs, loud-lunged asses! What do you do, yelping and braying here? Will you give a maimed meal to Poseidon's manhound? Do you know me not? Have you never heard of Perissus, never seen Perissus the butcher? I guard Poseidon's meat, and whoever touches a morsel of it, I will make meat of him with my cleaver. I am Perissus, I am the butcher.

VOICES

It is Perissus, the good and wealthy butcher. He is right. To the rocks with her!

VOICES OF WOMEN

Bind her first: we will see her bound!

PERISSUS

In all that is rational, I will indulge you.
Where is a cord?

CRIES

A cord, who has a cord?

DAMOETES

Here is one, Perissus. 'Tis rough and strong and sure.

PERISSUS

Come, wear your bracelets.

ANDROMEDA

O bind me not so hard!
You cut my wrists.

She weeps.

PERISSUS

You are too soft and tender.
There, dry your eyes, — but that, poor slip, you cannot.
See, I have tied you very lightly: say not
That this too hurts.

ANDROMEDA

I thank you; you are kind.

PERISSUS

Kind! Why should I not be kind? Because I am a butcher must I have no bowels? Courage, little Princess: none shall hurt thee but thy sea-monster and he, I am sure, will crunch thy little bones very tenderly. Never had man-eater such sweet bones to crunch. Alack! but where is the remedy?

POLYDAON

Now take her to the beach and chain her there
Upon the rocks to bear her punishment.
Perissus, lead her forth! We'll follow you.

CRIES

Not I! not I!

DAMOETES

You'ld kill us, Polydaon?
Poseidon's anger walks by the sea-beaches.

POLYDAON

The fierce sea-dragon will not hurt you, friends,
Who bring a victim to Poseidon's altar
Of the rude solemn beaches. I'll protect you.

CRIES

We'll go with Polydaon! with the good Polydaon!

POLYDAON

Perissus, go before. We'll quickly come.

PERISSUS
Make way there or I'll make it with my cleaver.
Heart, little Princess! None shall touch thee. Heart!
Perissus and others make their way out with Andromeda.

POLYDAON
Hem, people, hem the Palace in with myriads:
We'll pluck out Cepheus and proud Cassiopea.

CRIES
Kill Cepheus the cuckold, the tyrant! Tear the harlot Cassiopea.

THEROPS
Is this thy sacred oath? Had not Nebassar
Thy compact, priest?

POLYDAON
I swore not by Poseidon.
Wilt thou oppose me?

THEROPS
Thy perjury too much
Favours my private wishes. Yet would I not
Be thou with such a falsehood on my conscience.

POLYDAON
Why, Therops, be thyself and thou shalt yet
Be something great in Syria.

DAMOETES
Where's Iolaus?
Shall he not also die?

POLYDAON
Too long forgotten!
O that I should forget my dearest hatred!

By this he has concealed himself or fled
And I am baulked of what I chiefly cherished.

THEROPS
Oh, do them justice! the great house of Syria
Were never cowards. The prince has been o'erwhelmed
On his way hither with rash sword to rescue:
So Aligattas tells, who came behind us.
He's taken to the temple.

POLYDAON
Heard you?

MOB
Hurrah!

BALTIS
But what's the matter now with our good priest?
His veins are all out and his face is blood-red!

DAMOETES
This joy is too great for him.

POLYDAON
I am a god,
A god of blood and roaring victory.
Oh, blood in rivers! His heart out of his breast,
And his mother there to see it! and I to laugh
At her, to laugh!

THEROPS
This is not sanity.

POLYDAON (*controlling himself with a great effort*)
The sacrilegious house is blotted out
Of Cepheus. Let not one head outlive their ending!
Andromeda appoints the way to Hades

Who was in crime the boldest, then her brother
Yells on the altar: last Cepheus and his Queen —

CRIES
Tear her! let the Chaldean harlot die.

POLYDAON
She shall be torn! but not till she has seen
The remnants of the thing that was her daughter:
Not till her sweet boy's heart has been plucked out
Under her staring eyes from his red bosom.
Till then she shall not die. But afterwards
Strew with her fragments every street of the city.

CRIES
Hear, hear Poseidon's Viceroy, good Polydaon!

MEGAS
In! in! cut off their few and foreign swordsmen.

CRIES
In! in! let not a single Chaldean live.
The mob rushes into the Palace; only
Therops and Polydaon remain.

POLYDAON
Go, Therops, take good care of Cassiopea,
Or she will die too mercifully soon.

THEROPS (*aside*)
How shall we bear this grim and cruel beast
For monarch, when all's done? He is not human.
He goes into the Palace.

POLYDAON
I have set Poseidon's rage in human hearts;
His black and awful Influence flows from me.

Thou art a mighty god, Poseidon, yet
And mightily thou hast avenged thyself.
The drama's nearly over. Now to ring out
The royal characters amid fierce howlings
And splendid, pitiless, crimson massacre, —
A great finale! Then, then I shall be King.
(*As he speaks, he gesticulates more wildly*
and his madness gains upon him.)
Thou luckless Phineus, wherefore didst thou leave
So fortunate a man for thy ally?
The world shall long recall King Polydaon.
I will paint Syria gloriously with blood.
Hundreds shall daily die to incarnadine
The streets of my city and my palace floors,
For I would walk in redness. I'll plant my gardens
With heads instead of lilacs. Hecatombs
Of men shall groan their hearts out for my pleasure
In crimson rivers. I'll not wait for shipwrecks.
Assyrian captives and my Syrian subjects,
Nobles and slaves, men, matrons, boys and virgins
At matins and at vespers shall be slain
To me in my magnificent high temple
Beside my thunderous Ocean. I will possess
Women each night, who the next day shall die,
Encrimsoned richly for the eyes' delight.
My heart throngs out in words! What moves within me?
I am athirst, magnificently athirst,
And for a red and godlike wine. Whence came
The thirst on me? It was not here before.
'Tis thou, 'tis thou, O grand and grim Poseidon,
Hast made thy scarlet session in my soul
And growest myself. I am not Polydaon,
I am a god, a mighty dreadful god,
The multitudinous mover in the sea,
The shaker of the earth: I am Poseidon
And I will walk in three tremendous paces
Climbing the mountains with my clamorous waters

And see my dogs eat up Andromeda,
My enemy, and laugh in my loud billows.
The clamour of battle roars within the Palace!
I have created it, I am Poseidon.
Sitst thou, my elder brother, charioted
In clouds? Look down, O brother Zeus, and see
My actions! they merit thy immortal gaze.

He goes into the Palace.

Scene 4

On the road to the sea-shore.
Phineus and his Tyrians.

PHINEUS
A mightier power confounds our policies.
Is't Heaven? is't Fate? What's left me, I will take.
'Tis best to rescue young Andromeda
From the wild mob and bear her home to Tyre.
She, when the roar is over, will be left
My claim to Syria's prostrate throne, which force,
If not diplomacy shall re-erect
And Tyre become the Syrian capital.
I hear the trampling of the rascal mob.

CRIES OUTSIDE
Drag her more quickly! To the rocks! to the rocks!
Glory to great Poseidon!

PHINEUS
Tyrians, be ready.
Perissus and a number of Syrians
enter leading Andromeda bound.

SYRIANS
To the rocks with her, to the rocks! bind her on the rocks.

PHINEUS
Pause, rabble! Yield your prey to Tyrian Phineus.
Lift up thy lovely head, Andromeda!
For thou art saved.

PERISSUS
Who art thou with thy nose and thy fellows and thy spits?

PHINEUS
Knowst thou me not? I am the royal Phineus.
Yield up the Princess, fair Andromeda.

PERISSUS
Art thou the royal Phineus and is this long nose thy sceptre? I am Perissus, the butcher. Stand aside, royal Phineus, or I will chop thee royally with my cleaver.

ANDROMEDA
What wilt thou with me, King of Tyre?

PHINEUS
Sweet rose,
I come to save thee. I will carry thee,
My bride, far from these savage Syrian tumults
To reign in loyal Tyre. Thou art safe.

ANDROMEDA (*sorrowfully*)
Safe!
My father and my mother are not safe
Nor Iolaus: nor is Syria safe.
Will you protect my people, when the god,
Not finding me, his preferable victim,
Works his fierce will on these?

PHINEUS
Thou car'st for them?
They have o'erwhelmed thee with foul insult, bound thee,
Threatened thy lovely limbs with rascal outrage
And dragged to murder!

ANDROMEDA
But they are my people.

Perissus, lead me on. I will not go with him.

PHINEUS

Thou strange and beautiful and marvellous child,
Wilt thou or wilt thou not, by force I'll have thee.
Golden enchantment! thou art too rare a thing
For others to possess. Run, rascal rabble!
On, Tyrians!

PERISSUS

Cleavers and axes to their spits!

ANDROMEDA

King Phineus, pause! I swear I will prefer
Death's grim embrace rather than be thy wife
Abandoning my people. 'Tis a dead body
Thou wilt rescue.

PHINEUS

Is thy resolve unshakable?

ANDROMEDA

It is.

PHINEUS

Die then! To Death alone I yield thee.
He goes out with his Tyrians.

PERISSUS

So then thou art off, royal Phineus! so thou hast evaporated, bold god of the Hittites! Thou hast saved thy royal nose from my cleaver.

SYRIANS

On to the rocks! Glory to great Poseidon.
They go leading Andromeda.

Scene 5

The sea-shore.
Andromeda, dishevelled, bare-armed and unsandalled, stripped of all but a single light robe, stands on a wide low ledge under a rock jutting out from the cliff with the sea washing below her feet. She is chained to the rock behind her by her wrists and ankles, her arms stretched at full length against its side. Polydaon, Perissus, Damoetes and a number of Syrians stand near on the great rocky platform projecting from the cliff of which the ledge is the extremity.

POLYDAON
There meditate affronts to dire Poseidon.
Rescue thyself, thou rescuer of victims!
I am sorry that thy marriage, sweet Andromeda,
So poorly is attended. I could have wished
To have all Syria gazing at thy nuptials
With thy rare Ocean bridegroom! Thy mother most
Should have been here to see her lovely princess
So meetly robed for bridal, with these ornaments
Upon her pretty hands and feet. She has
Affairs too pressing. We do some surgery
Upon thy brother Iolaus' heart
To draw the bad blood out and make it holy,
And she must watch the skilful operation.
Do not weep, fair one. Soon, be confident,
They'll meet thee in that wide house where all are going.
Think of these things until thy lover comes.
Farewell.

PERISSUS
Art thou mad, priest Polydaon? How thou grinnest and drawest

back thy black lips from thy white teeth in thy rapture! Hast thou gone clean mad, my skilful carver of hearts! art thou beside thyself, my ancient schoolmate and crony?

SYRIANS
To the temple! To the temple!

POLYDAON
Let one remain above the cliff
And watch the monster's advent and his going.
Till I have news of dead Andromeda
The sacrifice cannot begin. Who stays?

DAMOETES
Not I!

ALL
Nor I! nor I! nor I!

DAMOETES
As well stay here with the girl and be torn with her!

PERISSUS
Do you quake, my brave shouters? must you curl your tails in between your manly legs? I will stay, priest, who fear neither dog nor dragon. I am Perissus, I am the butcher.

POLYDAON
I'll not forget thy service, good Perissus.

PERISSUS
Will you then make me butcher-in-chief to your viceroy in Damascus and shall I cut my joints under the patronage of King Polydaon? To the temple, Syrian heroes! I will go and cross my legs on the cliff-top.

They go. Andromeda is left alone.
Curtain

Act V

Scene 1

The sea-shore.
Andromeda chained to the cliff.

ANDROMEDA
O iron-throated vast unpitying sea,
Whose borders touch my feet with their cold kisses
As if they loved me! yet from thee my death
Will soon arise, and in some monstrous form
To tear my heart with horror before my body.
I am alone with thee on this wild beach
Filled with the echo of thy roaring waters.
My fellowmen have cast me out: they have bound me
Upon thy rocks to die. These cruel chains
Weary the arms they keep held stiffly out
Against the rough cold jaggèd stones. My bosom
Hardly contains its thronging sobs; my heart
Is torn with misery: for by my act
My father and my mother are doomed to death,
My dear kind brother, my sweet Iolaus,
Will cruelly be slaughtered; by my act
A kingdom ends in miserable ruin.
I thought to save two fellowmen: I have slain
A hundred by their rescue. I have failed
In all I did and die accursed and hated.
I die alone and miserably, no heart
To pity me: only your hostile waves
Are listening to my sobs and laughing hoarsely
With cruel pleasure. Heaven looks coldly on.

Yet I repent not. O thou dreadful god!
Yes, thou art dreadful and most mighty; perhaps
This world will always be a world of blood
And smiling cruelty, thou its fit sovereign.
But I have done what my own heart required of me,
And I repent not. Even if after death
Eternal pain and punishment await me
And gods and men pursue me with their hate,
I have been true to myself and to my heart,
I have been true to the love it bore for men,
And I repent not.

She is silent for a while.

Alas! is there no pity for me? Is there
No kind bright sword to save me in all this world?
Heaven with its cold unpitying azure roofs me,
And the hard savage rocks surround: the deaf
And violent Ocean roars about my feet,
And all is stony, all is cold and cruel.
Yet I had dreamed of other powers. Where art thou,
O beautiful still face amid the lightnings,
Athene? Does a mother leave her child?
And thou, bright stranger, wert thou only a dream?
Wilt thou not come down glorious from thy sun,
And cleave my chains, and lift me in thy arms
To safety? I will not die! I am too young,
And life was recently so beautiful.
It is too hard, too hard a fate to bear.

She is silent, weeping. Cydone enters: she comes
and sits down at Andromeda's feet.

CYDONE

How beautiful she is, how beautiful!
Her tears bathe all her bosom. O cruel Syrians!

ANDROMEDA

What gentle touch is on my feet? Who art thou?

CYDONE
I am Cydone. Iolaus loves me.

ANDROMEDA
My brother! lives he yet?

CYDONE
He lives, dear sweetness,
And sent me to you.

ANDROMEDA (*joyfully*)
It was a cruel lie!
He's free?

CYDONE
No, bound and in the temple. Weep not.

ANDROMEDA
Alas! And you have left him there alone?

CYDONE
The gods are with him, sister. In a few hours
We shall be all together and released
From these swift perils.

ANDROMEDA
Together and released!
Oh yes, in death.

CYDONE
I bid you hope. O child,
How beautiful you are, how beautiful,
Iolaus' sister! This one white slight garment
Fluttering about you in the ocean winds,
You look like some wind-goddess chained in play
By frolic sisters on the wild sea-beaches.
I think all this has happened, little sister,

Just that the gods might have for one brief hour
You for a radiant vision of childish beauty
Exposed against this wild stupendous background.

ANDROMEDA
You make me smile in spite of all my grief.
Did you not bid me hope, Cydone?

CYDONE
And now
I bid you trust: for you are saved.

ANDROMEDA
I am.
I feel it now.

CYDONE
Your name's Andromeda?

ANDROMEDA
Iolaus calls me so.

CYDONE
I think he cheats me.
You are Iolaus changed into a girl.
Come, I will kiss you dumb for cheating me
With changes of yourself.

Kisses her.

If I could have
My Iolaus always chained like this
To do my pleasure with, I would so plague him!
For he abuses me and calls me shrew,
Monster and vixen and names unbearable,
Because he's strong and knows I cannot beat him.

ANDROMEDA
The world is changed about me.

CYDONE

Heaven's above.
Look up and see it.

ANDROMEDA

There is a golden cloud
Moving towards me.

CYDONE

It is Perseus. Sweetheart,
I go to Iolaus in the temple, —
I mean your other fair boy-self. Kiss me,
O sweet girl-Iolaus, and fear nothing.
She goes out over the rocks.

ANDROMEDA

I shall be saved! What is this sudden trouble
That lifts the bosom of the tossing deep,
Hurling the waves against my knees? Save me!
Where art thou gone, Cydone? What huge head
Raises itself on the affrighted seas?
Where art thou, O my saviour? Come! His eyes
Glare up at me from the grey Ocean trough
Hideous with brutish longing. Like great sharp rocks
His teeth are in a bottomless dim chasm.
She closes her eyes in terror. Perseus enters.

PERSEUS

Look up, O sunny-curled Andromeda!
Perseus, the son of Danaë, is with thee
To whom thou now belongest. Fear no more
Sea-monsters nor the iron-souled Poseidon,
Nor the more monstrous flinty-hearted rabble
Who bound thee here. This huge and grisly enemy
That rises from the flood, need not affright thee.
Thou art as safe as if thy mother's arms
Contained thee in thy brilliant guarded palace

When all was calm, O white Andromeda!
Lift up thy eyes' long curtains: aid the azure
With thy regards, O sunshine. Look at me
And see thy safety.

ANDROMEDA
O thou hast come to me!
It was not only a radiant face I dreamed of.

PERSEUS
In time to save thee, my Andromeda,
Sole jewel of the world. I go to meet
Thy enemy, confronting grim Poseidon.

ANDROMEDA
O touch me ere you go that I may feel
You are real.

PERSEUS
Let my kiss, sweet doubting dreamer,
Convince thee. Now I dart like a swift hawk
Upon my prey and smite betwixt the billows.
Watch how I fight for thee. I will come soon
To gather thee into my grasp, my prize
Of great adventure.

He goes out.

ANDROMEDA
The music of his name
Was in my brain just now. What must I call thee?
Perseus, the son of Danaë! Perseus!
Perseus, Athene's sword! Perseus, my sungod!
O human god of glad Andromeda!
Forgive, Athene, my lack of faith. Thou art!
How like a sudden eagle he has swooped
Upon the terror, that lifts itself alarmed,
Swings its huge length along the far-ridged billows

And upwards yawns its rage. O great Athene!
It belches fiery breath against my Perseus
And lashes Ocean in his face. The sea
Is tossed upon itself and its huge bottoms
Catch chinks of unaccustomed day. But the aegis
Of Perseus hurls the flame-commingled flood
Back in the dragon's eyes: it shoots its lightnings
Into the horizon like fire-trailing arrows.
The world surprised with light gazes dismayed
Upon the sea-surrounded war, ringed in
With foam and flying tumult. O glorious sight,
Too swift and terrible for human eyes!
I will pray rather. Virgin, beautiful
Athene, virgin-mother of my soul!
I cannot lift my hands to thee, they are chained
To the wild cliff, but lift my heart instead,
Virgin, assist thy hero in the fight.
Descend, armipotent maiden, child of Zeus,
Shoot from his godlike brain the strength of will
That conquers evil: in one victorious stroke
Collecting hurl it on the grisly foe.
Thou, thou art sword and shield, and thou the force
That uses shield and sword, virgin Athene.
The tumult ceases and the floods subside.
I dare not look. And yet I will. O death,
Thou tossest there inertly on the flood,
A floating mountain. Perseus comes to me
Touching the waves with airy-sandalled feet,
Bright and victorious.

Perseus returns.

PERSEUS

The grisly beast is slain that was thy terror,
And thou mayst sun the world with smiles again,
Andromeda.

ANDROMEDA
Thou hast delivered me, O Perseus, Perseus,
My sovereign!

PERSEUS
Girl, I take into my arms
My own that I have won and with these kisses
Seal to me happy head and smiling eyes,
Bright lips and all of thee, thou sunny Syrian.
All thy white body is a hero's guerdon.

ANDROMEDA
Perseus!

PERSEUS
Sweetly thou tak'st my eager kisses
With lovely smiles and glorious blushing cheeks
Rejoicing in their shame.

ANDROMEDA
I am chained, Perseus,
And cannot help myself.

PERSEUS
O smile of sweetness!
I will unravel these unworthy bonds
And rid thee of the cold excuse.

ANDROMEDA
My chains?
They do not hurt me now, and I would wear them
A hundred times for such a happy rescue.

PERSEUS
Thou tremblest yet!

ANDROMEDA

Some sweet and sudden fear
O'ertakes me! O what is it? I dare not look
Into thy radiant eyes.

PERSEUS

Sweet tremors, grow
Upon her. Never shall harsher fears again
O'ertake you, rosy limbs, in Perseus' keeping.
How fair thou art, my prize Andromeda!
O sweet chained body, chained to love not death,
That with a happy passiveness endures
My touch, once more, once more. And now fall down
Clashing into the deep, you senseless irons,
That took a place my kisses only merit.
Princess of Syria, child of imperial Cepheus,
Step forward free.

ANDROMEDA (*falling at his feet and embracing them*)

O Perseus, O my saviour!
Wilt thou not also save those dear to me
And make this life thou givest worth the giving?
My father, mother, brother, all I love,
Lie for my fault shuddering beneath the knife.

PERSEUS

It was a glorious fault, Andromeda.
Tremble not for thy loved ones. Wilt thou trust
Thy cherished body in my arms to bear
Upward, surprising Heaven with thy beauty?
Or wilt thou fear to see the blue wide Ocean
Between thy unpropped feet, fathoms below?

ANDROMEDA

With you I fear not.

PERSEUS

Cling to me then, sweet burden,
And we will meet our enemies together.

He puts his arms round her to lift her and the curtain falls.

Scene 2

The Temple of Poseidon.
Polydaon, Therops, Dercetes, Cydone, Damoetes and a great number of Syrians, men and women. Iolaus stands bound, a little to the side: Cepheus and Cassiopea, surrounded by armed men.

POLYDAON
Cepheus and Cassiopea, man and woman,
Not sovereigns now, you see what end they have
Who war upon the gods.

CASSIOPEA
To see thy end
My eyes wait only.

POLYDAON
Let them see something likelier.
Is't not thy son who wears those cords, and that
An altar? What! the eyes are drowned in tears
Where fire was once so ready? Where is thy pride,
O Cassiopea?

CASSIOPEA
There are other gods
Than thy Poseidon. They shall punish thee.

POLYDAON
If thou knewst who I am, which is most secret,
Thou wouldst not utter vain and foolish wishes.
When thou art slain, I will reveal myself.

CASSIOPEA
Thou hast revealed thyself for what thou art
Already, a madman and inhuman monster.

CEPHEUS
My queen, refrain from words.

DAMOETES
Perissus comes.

CASSIOPEA
Ah God!

THEROPS
Look, the Queen swoons! Oh, look to her!
Perissus enters.

POLYDAON
Yes, raise her up, bring back her senses: now
I would not have them clouded. News, Perissus!
Thy face is troubled and thy eyes stare wildly.

PERISSUS
Stare, do they? They may stare, for they have cause.
You too will stare soon, Viceroy Polydaon.

THEROPS
What rare thing happened? The heavens were troubled strangely,
Although their rifts were blue. What hast thou seen?

PERISSUS
I have seen hell and heaven at grips together.

POLYDAON
What do I care for hell or heaven? Your news!
Did the sea-monster come and eat and go?

PERISSUS
He came but went not.

POLYDAON
Was not the maiden seized?

PERISSUS
Ay, was she, in a close and mighty grasp.

POLYDAON
By the sea-beast?

PERISSUS
’Tis said we all are animals;
Then so was he: but ’twas a glorious beast.

POLYDAON
And was she quite devoured?

PERISSUS
Why, in a manner,—
If kisses eat.

POLYDAON
Ha! ha! such soft caresses
May all my enemies have. She was not torn?
What, was she taken whole and quite engulfed?

PERISSUS
Something like that.

POLYDAON
You speak with difficult slowness
And strangely. Where’s your blithe robustness gone,
Perissus?

Perissus
Coming, with the beast. He lifted her
Mightily from the cliff to heaven.

Polydaon
So, Queen,
Nothing is left thee of Andromeda.

Perissus
Why, something yet, a sweet and handsome piece.

Polydaon
You should have brought it here, my merry butcher,
That remnant of her daughter.

Perissus
It is coming.

Polydaon
Ho, ho! then you shall see your daughter, Queen.

Dercetes
This is a horrid and inhuman laughter.
Restrain thy humour, priest! My sword's uneasy.

Therops
It is a scandal in Poseidon's temple.

Polydaon
Do you oppose me?
(*to Therops*)
Wilt thou resist Poseidon,
Misguided mortal?

Dercetes
He glares and his mouth works.
This is a maniac. Does a madman rule us?

THEROPS

There has been much of violence and mad fierceness,
Such as in tumults may be pardoned. Now
It is the tranquil hour of victory
When decency should reign and mercy too.
What do we gain by torturing this poor Queen
And most unhappy King?

POLYDAON

Hear him, O people!
He favours great Poseidon's enemies.
Therops turns traitor.

DAMOETES

He rails at the good priest.

CRIES

Therops a traitor!

MEGAS

Therops, thou favour kings?
Thou traitor to Poseidon and his people?

GARDAS

I say, hear Therops. He is always right,
Our Therops; he has brains.

CRIES

Hear Therops, Therops!

THEROPS

Let them be punished, but with exile only.
I am no traitor. I worked for you, O people,
When this false priest was with the King of Tyre
Plotting to lay on you a foreign chain.

CRIES
Is it so? Is it the truth? Speak, Polydaon.

POLYDAON
Must I defend myself? Was it not I
Who led you on to victory and turned
The wrath of dire Poseidon? If you doubt me,
Be then the sacrifice forbidden; let Cepheus
And Cassiopea reign; but when the dogs
Of grim Poseidon howl again behind you,
Call not to me for help. I will not always pardon.

CRIES
Polydaon, Polydaon, Poseidon's mighty Viceroy! Kill Therops! Iolaus upon the altar!

POLYDAON
Now you are wise again. Leave this Therops.
Bring Iolaus to the altar here.
Lay bare his bosom for the knife.

THEROPS
Dercetes,
Shall this be allowed?

DERCETES
We must not dare offend
Poseidon. But when it's over, I'll break in
With all my faithful spears and save the King
And Cassiopea. Therops, 'twould be a nightmare,
The rule of that fierce priest and fiercer rabble.

THEROPS
With all the better sort I will support thee.

PERISSUS
Therops, my crowd-compeller, my eloquent Zeus of the market-place, I know thy heart is big with the sweet passion of

repentance, but let it not burst into action yet. Keep thy fleet sharp spears at rest, Dercetes. There are times, my little captain, and there is a season. Watch and wait. The gods are at work and Iolaus shall not die.

POLYDAON
We only wait until our mighty wrath
Is shown you in the mangled worst offender
Against our godhead. Then, O Cassiopea,
I'll watch thy eyes.

PERISSUS
Behold her, Polydaon.
Perseus and Andromeda enter the temple.

CRIES
Andromeda! Andromeda! who has unchained her? It is Andromeda!

CEPHEUS
It is the spirit of Andromeda.

THEROPS
Shadows were ne'er so bright, had never smile
So sunny! she is given back to earth:
It is the radiant wingèd Hermes brings her.

DERCETES
'Tis he who baffled us upon the beach.
I see the gods are busy in our Syria.
Andromeda runs to Cassiopea and clasps and kisses her knees, the soldiers making way for her.

CASSIOPEA (*taking Andromeda's face between her hands*)
O my sweet child, thou livest!

ANDROMEDA
Mother, mother!
I live and see the light and grief is ended.

CASSIOPEA (*lifting Andromeda into her arms*)
I hold thee living on my bosom. What grief
Can happen now?

CEPHEUS
Andromeda, my daughter!

POLYDAON (*awaking from his amazement*)
Confusion! Butcher, thou hast betrayed me. Seize them!
They shall all die upon my mighty altar.
Seize them!

PERSEUS (*confronting him*)
Priest of Poseidon and of death,
Three days thou gav'st me: it is but the second.
I am here. Dost thou require the sacrifice?

POLYDAON
Art thou a god? I am a greater, dreadfuller.
Tremble and go from me: I need thee not.

PERSEUS
Expect thy punishment. Syrians, behold me,
The victim snatched from grim Poseidon's altar.
My sword has rescued sweet Andromeda
And slain the monster of the deep. You asked
For victims? I am here. Whose knife is ready?
Let him approach.

THEROPS
Who art thou, mighty hero?
Declare unto this people thy renown
And thy unequalled actions. What high godhead

Befriends thee in battle?

PERSEUS

Syrians, I am Perseus,
The mighty son of Zeus and Danaë.
The blood of gods is in my veins, the strength
Of gods is in my arm: Athene helps me.
Behold her aegis, which if I uncover
Will blind you with its lightnings; and this sword
Is Herpe, which can pierce the earth and Hades.
What I have done, is by Athene's strength.
Borne from Seriphos through pellucid air
Upon these wingèd shoes, in the far west
I have traversed unknown lands and nameless continents
And seas where never came the plash of human oars.
On torrid coasts burned by the desert wind
I have seen great Atlas buttressing the sky,
His giant head companion of the stars,
And changed him into a hill; the northern snows
Illimitable I have trod, where Nature
Is awed to silence, chilled to rigid whiteness;
I have entered caverns dim where death was born:
And I have taken from the dim-dwelling Graiae
Their wondrous eye that sees the past and future:
And I have slain the Gorgon, dire Medusa,
Her head that turns the living man to stone
Locking into my wallet: last, today,
In Syria by the loud Aegean surges
I have done this deed that men shall ever speak of.
Ascending with winged feet the clamorous air
I have cloven Poseidon's monster whose rock-teeth
And fiery mouth swallowed your sons and daughters.
Where now has gone the sea-god's giant stride
That filled with heads of foam your fruitful fields?
I have dashed back the leaping angry waters;
His Ocean-force has yielded to a mortal.
Even while I speak, the world has changed around you.

Syrians, the earth is calm, the heavens smile;
A mighty silence listens on the sea.
All this I have done, and yet not I, but one greater.
Such is Athene's might and theirs who serve her.
You know me now, O Syrians, and my strength
I have concealed not. Let no man hereafter
Complain that I deceived him to his doom.
Speak now. Which of you all demands a victim?
He pauses: there is silence.
What, you have howled and maddened, bound sweet women
For slaughter, roared to have the hearts of princes,
And are you silent now? Who is for victims?
Who sacrifices Perseus?

THEROPS

Speak! is there
A fool so death-devoted?

PERSEUS

Claims any man victims?

CRIES

There's none, great Perseus.

PERSEUS

Then, I here release
Andromeda and Iolaus, Syrians,
From the death-doom: to Cepheus give his crown
Once more. Does any man gainsay my action?
Would any rule in Syria?

CRIES

None, mighty Perseus.

PERSEUS

Iolaus, sweet friend, my work is finished.
He severs his bonds.

IOLAUS

O mighty father, suffer me for thee
To take thy crown from the unworthy soil
Where rude hands tumbled it. 'Twill now sit steady.
Dercetes, art thou loyal once again?

DERCETES

For ever.

IOLAUS

Therops?

THEROPS

I have abjured rebellion.

IOLAUS

Lead then my royal parents to their home
With martial pomp and music. And let the people
Cover their foul revolt with meek obedience.
One guiltiest head shall pay your forfeit: the rest,
Since terror and religious frenzy moved
To mutiny, not their sober wills, shall all
Be pardoned.

CRIES

Iolaus! Iolaus!
Long live the Syrian, noble Iolaus!

IOLAUS

Andromeda, and thou, my sweet Cydone,
Go with them.

CEPHEUS

I approve thy sentence, son.

Dercetes and his soldiers, Therops and the Syrians leave the temple conducting Cepheus and Cassiopea, Andromeda and Cydone.

IOLAUS
Now, Polydaon, —

POLYDAON
I have seen all and laughed.
Iolaus, and thou, O Argive Perseus,
You know not who I am. I have endured
Your foolish transient triumph that you might feel
My punishments more bitter-terrible.
’Tis time, ’tis time. I will reveal myself.
Your horror-starting eyes shall know me, princes,
When I hurl death and Ocean on your heads.

PERSEUS
The man is frantic.

IOLAUS
Defeat has turned him mad.

PERISSUS
I have seen this coming on him for a season and a half. He was a fox at first, but this tumult gave him claws and muscles and he turned tiger. This is the end. What, Polydaon! Good cheer, priest! Roll not thy eyes: I am thy friend Perissus, I am thy old loving schoolmate; are we not now fellow-craftsmen, priest and butcher?

POLYDAON
Do you not see? I wave my sapphire locks
And earth is quaking. Quake, earth! rise, my great Ocean!
Earth, shake my foemen from thy back! clasp, sea,
And kiss them dead, thou huge voluptuary.
Come barking from your stables, my sweet monsters:
With blood-stained fangs and fiery mouths avenge me
Mocking their victory. Thou, brother Zeus,
Rain curses from thy skies. What, is all silent?
I’ll tear thee, Ocean, into watery bits

And strip thy oozy basal rocks quite naked
If thou obey me not.

IOLAUS (*advancing*)
He must be seized
And bound.

PERSEUS
Pause. See, he foams and clutches!
Polydaon falls to the ground.
He
Is sentenced.

PERISSUS
Polydaon, old crony, grows thy soul too great within thee? dost thou kick the unworthy earth and hit out with thy noble fists at Heaven?

IOLAUS
It was a fit; it is over. He lies back white
And shaking.

POLYDAON (*As he speaks, his utterance is hacked by pauses of silence. He seems unconscious of those around him, his being is withdrawing from the body and he lives only in an inner consciousness and its vision.*)
I was Poseidon but this moment.
Now he departs from me and leaves me feeble:
I have become a dull and puny mortal.
(*half rising*)
It was not I but thou who fearedst, god.
I would have spoken, but thou wert chilled and stone.
What fearedst thou or whom? Wast thou alarmed
By the godhead lurking in man's secret soul
Or deity greater than thy own appalled thee?...
Forgive, forgive! pass not away from me.
Thy power is now my breath and I shall perish

If thou withdraw.... He stands beside me still
Shaking his gloomy locks and glares at me
Saying it was my sin and false ambition
Undid him. Was I not fearless as thou bad'st me?
Ah, he has gone into invisible
Vast silences!... Whose, whose is this bright glory?
One stands now in his place and looks at me.
Imperious is his calm Olympian brow,
The sea's blue unfathomed depths gaze from his eyes,
Wide sea-blue locks crown his majestic shape:
A mystic trident arms his tranquil might.
As one new-born to himself and to the world
He turns from me with the surges in his stride
To seek his Ocean empire. Earth bows down
Trembling with awe of his unbearable steps,
Heaven is the mirror of his purple greatness....
But whose was that dimmer and tremendous image?...
A horror of darkness is around me still,
But the joy and might have gone out of my breast
And left me mortal, a poor human thing
With whom death and the fates can do their will....
But his presence yet is with me, near to me....
Was I not something more than earthly man?...
(*with a cry*)
It was myself, the shadow, the hostile god!
I am abandoned to my evil self.
That was the darkness!... But there was something more
Insistent, dreadful, other than myself!
Whoever thou art, spare me!... I am gone, I am taken.
In his tremendous clutch he bears me off
Into thick cloud; I see black Hell, the knives
Fire-pointed touch my breast. Spare me, Poseidon....
Save me, O brilliant God, forgive and save.

He falls back dead.

PERSEUS

Who then can save a man from his own self?

IOLAUS
He is ended, his own evil has destroyed him.

PERSEUS
This man for a few hours became the vessel
Of an occult and formidable Force
And through his form it did fierce terrible things
Unhuman: but his small and gloomy mind
And impure dark heart could not contain the Force.
It turned in him to madness and demoniac
Huge longings. Then the Power withdrew from him
Leaving the broken incapable instrument,
And all its might was spilt from his body. Better
To be a common man mid common men
And live an unaspiring mortal life
Than call into oneself a Titan strength
Too dire and mighty for its human frame,
That only afflicts the oppressed astonished world,
Then breaks its user.

IOLAUS
But best to be Heaven's child.
Only the sons of gods can harbour gods.

PERISSUS
Art thou then gone, Polydaon? My monarch of breast-hackers, this was an evil ending. My heart is full of woe for thee, my fellow-butcher.

IOLAUS
The gods have punished him for his offences,
Ambition and a hideous cruelty
Ingenious in mere horror.

PERSEUS
Burn him with rites,
If that may help his soul by dark Cocytus.

But let us go and end these strange upheavals:
Call Cireas from his hiding for reward,
Tyrnaus too, and Smerdas from his prison,
Fair Diomede from Cydone's house.
Humble or high, let all have their deserts
Who partners were or causes of our troubles.

IOLAUS
There's Phineus will ask reasons.

PERSEUS
He shall be satisfied.

PERISSUS
He cannot be satisfied, his nose is too long; it will not listen to reason, for it thinks all the reason and policy in the world are shut up in the small brain to which it is a long hooked outlet.

PERSEUS
Perissus, come with me: for thou wert kind
To my fair sweetness; it shall be remembered.

PERISSUS
There was nothing astonishing in that: I am as chock-full with natural kindness as a rabbit is with guts; I have bowels, great Perseus. For am I not Perissus? am I not the butcher?

They go out: the curtain falls.

Scene 3

The audience-chamber of the Palace.
Cepheus, Cassiopea, Andromeda, Cydone, Praxilla, Medes.

CEPHEUS
A sudden ending to our sudden evils
Propitious gods have given us, Cassiopea.
Pursued by panic the Assyrian flees
Abandoning our borders.

CASSIOPEA
And I have got
My children's faces back upon my bosom.
What gratitude can ever recompense
That godlike youth whose swift and glorious rescue
Lifted us out of Hell so radiantly?

CYDONE
He has taken his payment in one small white coin
Mounted with gold; and more he will not ask for.

CASSIOPEA
Your name's Cydone, child? your face is strange.
You are not of the slave-girls.

CYDONE
O I am!
Iolaus' slave-girl, though he calls me sometimes
His queen: but that is only to beguile me.

ANDROMEDA
Oh, mother, you must know my sweet Cydone.

I shall think you love me little if you do not
Take her into your bosom: for she alone,
When I was lonely with my breaking heart,
Came to me with sweet haste and comforted
My soul with kisses, — yes, even when the terror
Was rising from the sea, surrounded me
With her light lovely babble, till I felt
Sorrow was not in the same world as she.
And but for her I might have died of grief
Ere rescue came.

CASSIOPEA
What wilt thou ask of me,
Even to a crown, Cydone? thou shalt have it.

CYDONE
Nothing, unless 'tis leave to stand before you
And be for ever Iolaus' slave-girl
Unchidden.

CASSIOPEA
Thou shalt be more than that, my daughter.

CYDONE
I have two mothers: a double Iolaus
I had already. O you girl-Iolaus,
You shall not marry Perseus: you are mine now.
Oh, if you have learned to blush!

ANDROMEDA (*stopping her mouth*)
Hush, you mad babbler!
Or I will smother your wild mouth with mine.
Perseus and Iolaus enter.

CEPHEUS
O welcome, brilliant victor, mighty Perseus!
Saviour of Syria, angel of the gods,

Kind was the fate that led thee to our shores.

CASSIOPEA (*embracing Iolaus*)
Iolaus, Iolaus, my son!
My golden-haired delight they would have murdered!
Perseus, hast thou a mother?

PERSEUS
One like thee
In love, O Queen, though less in royalty.

CASSIOPEA
What can I give thee then who hast the world
To move in, thy courage and thy radiant beauty,
And a tender mother? Yet take my blessing, Perseus,
To help thee: for the mightiest strengths are broken
And divine favour lasts not long, but blessings
Of those thou helpest with thy kindly strength
Upon life's rugged way, can never fail thee.

CEPHEUS
And what shall I give, seed of bright Olympus?
Wilt thou have half my kingdom, Argive Perseus?

PERSEUS
Thy kingdom falls by right to Iolaus
In whom I shall enjoy it. One gift thou hadst
I might have coveted, but she is mine,
O monarch: I have taken her from death
For my possession.

CEPHEUS
My sunny Andromeda!
But there's the Tyrian: yet he gave her up
To death and cannot now reclaim her.

IOLAUS

Father,
The Babylonian merchants wait, and Cireas:
The people's leaders and thy army's captains
Are eager to renew an interrupted
Obedience.

CEPHEUS

Admit them all to me: go, Medes.
As Medes goes out, Diomede enters.

ANDROMEDA

Diomede! playmate! you too have come quite safe
Out of the storm. I thought we both must founder.

DIOMEDE

Oh, yes, and now you'll marry Perseus, leave me
No other playmate than Praxilla's whippings
To keep me lively!

ANDROMEDA

Therefore 'tis you look
So discontent and sullen? Clear your face,
I'll drag you to the world's far end with me,
And take in my own hands Praxilla's duty.
Will that please you?

DIOMEDE

As if your little hand could hurt!
I'm off, Praxilla, to pick scarlet berries
In Argolis and hear the seabirds' cries
And Ocean singing to the Cyclades.
I'll buy you brand new leather for a relic
To whip the memory of me with sometimes,
Praxilla.

PRAXILLA

You shall taste it then before you go.
You'll make a fine fair couple of wilfulnesses.
I pity Perseus.

ANDROMEDA

You are well rid of us,
My poor Praxilla.

PRAXILLA

Princess, little Princess,
My hands will be lighter, but my heart too heavy.

Therops and Dercetes enter with the Captains of the army, Cireas, Tyrnaus and Smerdas.

ALL

Hail, you restored high royalties of Syria.

THEROPS

O King, accept us, be the past forgotten.

CEPHEUS

It is forgotten, Therops. Welcome, Dercetes.
Thy friend Nebassar is asleep. He has done
His service for the day and taken payment.

CASSIOPEA

His blood is a deep stain on Syria's bosom.

DERCETES

On us the stain lies, Queen: but we will drown it
In native streams, when we go forth to scourge
The Assyrian in his home.

THEROPS

Death for one's King
Only less noble is than for one's country.

This foreign soldier taught us that home lesson.

CASSIOPEA
Therops, there are kings still in Syria?

THEROPS
Great Queen,
Remember not my sins.

CASSIOPEA
They are buried deep,
Thy bold rebellion, — even thy cruel slanders,
If only thou wilt serve me as my friend
True to thy people in me. Will this be hard for thee?

THEROPS
O noble lady, you pay wrongs with favours!
I am yours for ever, I and all this people.

CIREAS (*to Diomede*)
This it is to be an orator! We shall hear him haranguing the people next market-day on fidelity to princes and the divine right of queens to have favourites.

IOLAUS
Cireas, old bribe-taker, art thou living? Did Poseidon forget thee?

CIREAS
I pray you, Prince, remind me not of past foolishness. I have grown pious. I will never speak ill again of authorities and divinities.

IOLAUS
Thou art grown ascetic? thou carest no longer then for gold? I am glad, for my purse will be spared a very heavy lightening.

CIREAS
Prince, I will not suffer my young piety to make you break old promises; for if it is perilous to sin, it is worse to be the cause of sin in others.

IOLAUS
Thou shalt have gold and farms. I will absolve
Andromeda's promise and my own.

CIREAS
Great Plutus!
O happy Cireas!

IOLAUS
Merchant Tyrnaus, art thou for Chaldea?

TYRNAUS
When I have seen these troubles' joyous end
And your sweet princess, my young rescuer,
Happily wedded.

IOLAUS
I will give thee a ship
And merchandise enough to fill thy losses.

PERSEUS
And prayers with them, O excellent Chaldean.
The world has need of men like thee.

SMERDAS (*aside*)
I quake.
What will they say to me? I shall be tortured
And crucified. But she with her smile will save me.

IOLAUS
Smerdas, thou unclean treacherous coward soul!

SMERDAS
Alas, I was compelled by threats of torture.

IOLAUS
And tempted too with gold. Thy punishment
Shall hit thee in thy nature. Farmer Cireas!

CIREAS
Prince Plutus!

IOLAUS
Take thou this man for slave. He's strong.
Work him upon thy fields and thy plantations.

SMERDAS
O this is worst of all.

IOLAUS
Not worse than thy desert.
For gold thou lustest? earn it for another.
Thou'lt save thy life? it is a freedman's chattel.

SMERDAS
O speak for me, lady Andromeda!

ANDROMEDA
Dear Iolaus, —

CEPHEUS
My child, thou art all pity;
But justice has her seat, and her fine balance
Disturbed too often spoils an unripe world
With ill-timed mercy. Thy brother speaks my will.

IOLAUS
Thou hast increased thy crime by pleading to her
Whom thou betrayedst to her death. Art thou

Quite shameless? Hold thy peace!

ANDROMEDA

Grieve not too much.
Cireas will be kind to thee; wilt thou not, Cireas?

CIREAS

At thy command I will be even that
And even to him.

Noise outside.

CEPHEUS

What other dangerous clamour
Is at our gates?

Perissus enters, brandishing his cleaver.

PERISSUS

Pull out that sharp skewer of thine, comrade Perseus, or let me handle my cleaver.

CEPHEUS

Thou art angry, butcher? Who has disturbed thy noble serenity?

PERISSUS

King Cepheus, shall I not be angry? Art thou not again our majesty of Syria? And shall our majesty be insulted with noses? Shall it be prodded by a proboscis? Perseus, thou hast slaughtered yonder palaeozoic ichthyosaurus; wilt thou suffer me to chop this neozoan?

PERSEUS

Calmly, precisely and not so polysyllabically, my good Perissus. Tell the King what is this clamour.

PERISSUS

My monarch, Phineus of Tyre has brought his long-nosed royalty to thy gates and poke it he will into thy kingly presence.

His blusterings, King, have flustered my calm great heart within me.

CEPHEUS

Comes he alone?

PERISSUS

Damoetes and some scores more hang on to his long tail of hook-nosed Tyrians; but they are all rabble and proletariate, not a citizen butcher in the whole picking. They brandish skewers; they threaten to poke me with their dainty iron spits, — me, Perissus, me, the butcher!

CEPHEUS

Phineus in arms! This is the after-swell
Of tempest.

PERSEUS

Let the Phoenician enter, comrade.

Perissus goes out.

Look not so blank. This man with all his crew
Shall be my easy care.

Phineus enters the hall with a great company,
Tyrians with drawn swords, Damoetes, Morus
and others; after them Perissus.

CEPHEUS

Welcome, Tyre.

CASSIOPEA

Thou breakest armed into our presence, Phineus.
Had they been earlier there, these naked swords
Would have been welcome.

PHINEUS

I am not here for welcome,
Lady. King Cepheus, wilt thou yield me right,

Or shall I take it with my sword?

CEPHEUS

Phineus,
I never have withheld even from the meanest
The least thing he could call his right.

PHINEUS

Thou hast not?
Who gives then to a wandering Greek my bride,
Thy perfect daughter?

CASSIOPEA

She was in some peril,
When thou wert absent, Tyre.

PHINEUS

A vain young man,
A brilliant sworder wandering for a name,
Who calls himself the son of Danaë,
And who his father was, the midnight knows.
This is the lord thou giv'st Andromeda,
Scorning the mighty King of ancient Tyre.

CEPHEUS

He saved her from the death to which we left her,
And she was his, — his wife, if so he chose,
Or, conquered by the sword from grim Poseidon,
His then to take her as he would from that moment.

PHINEUS

Do his deeds or thy neglect annul thy promise?

IOLAUS

King Phineus, wilt thou take up and lay down
At pleasure? Who leaves a jewel in the mud,
Shall he complain because another took it?

PRAXILLA
And she was never his; she hated him.

PHINEUS
I'll hear no reasons, but with strong force have her,
Though it be to lift her o'er the dearest blood
Of all her kin. Tyrians!
Andromeda takes refuge with Perseus.
Abandon, princess,
The stripling bosom where thou tak'st thy refuge.
Thou hast mistook thy home, Andromeda.

IOLAUS
'Tis thou mistakest, Phineus, thinking her
A bride who, touched, shall be thy doom. Get hence
Unhurt.

PHINEUS
Prince Iolaus, the sword that cut
Thy contract to Poseidon, cuts not mine,—
Which if you void, thou and thy father pay for it.

PERSEUS
Phineus of Tyre, it may be thou art wronged,
But 'tis not at his hands whom thou impugnest.
Her father gave her not to me.

PHINEUS
Her mother then?
She is the man, I think, in Syria's household.

PERSEUS
Her too I asked not.

PHINEUS
Thou wooedst then the maid?
It shall not help thee though a thousand times

She kissed thee yes. Pretty Andromeda,
Wilt thou have for thy lord this vagabond,
Wander with him as beggars land and sea?
Despite thyself I'll save thee from that fate
Unworthy of thy beauty and thy sweetness,
And make thee Queen in Tyre. Minion of Argos,
Learn, ere thou grasp at other's goods, to ask
The owner, not the owned.

PERSEUS

I did not ask her.

PHINEUS

Then by what right, presumptuous, hast thou her?
Or wherefore lies she thus within thy arm?

PERSEUS

Say, by what right, King Phineus, thou wouldst take her,
Herself and all refusing?

PHINEUS

By my precontract.

PERSEUS

Thou gavest her to Death, that contract's broken.
Or if thou seekest to revoke thy gift,
Foregather then with Death and ask him for her.
The way to him is easy.

PHINEUS

Then by my sword,
Not asking her or any, because I am a king,
I'll take her.

PERSEUS

If the sword is the sole judge,
Then by my own sword I have taken her, Tyrian,

Not asking her or any, who am king
O'er her, her sovereign. This soft gold is mine
And mine these banks of silver; this rich country
Is my possession and owes to my strong taking
All her sweet revenues in honey. Phineus,
I wonder not that thou dost covet her
Whom the whole world might want. Wrest her from me,
Phoenician; to her father she belongs not.
(*opening his wallet*)
King Phineus, art thou ready? Yet look once more
On the blue sky and this green earth of Syria.

PHINEUS
Young man, thou hast done deeds I'll not belittle.
Yet was it only a sea-beast and a rabble
Whom thou hast tamed; I am a prince and warrior.
Wilt thou fright me with thy aegis?

PERSEUS
Not fright, but end thee;
For thou hast spoken words deserving death.
Come forth into the open, this is no place
For battle. Marshal thy warlike crew against me,
And let thy Syrian mob-men help with shouts:
Stand in their front to lead them; I alone
Will meet their serried charge, Dercetes merely
Watching us.

PHINEUS
Thou art frantic with past triumphs:
Argive, desist. I would not rob thy mother
Of her sole joy, howe'er she came by thee.
The gods may punish her sweet midnight fault,
To whom her dainty trickery imputes it.

PERSEUS
Come now, lest here I slay thee.

PHINEUS

Thou art in love
With death: but I am pitiful, young Perseus;
Thou shalt not die. My men shall take thee living
And pedlars hawk thee for a slave in Tyre,
Where thou shalt see sometimes far off Andromeda,
A Queen of nations.

PERSEUS

Thou compassionate man!
But I will give thee, hero, marvellous death
And stone for monument, which thou deservest;
For thou wert a great King and famous warrior,
When still thou wert living. Forth and fight with me!
Afterwards if thou canst, come for Andromeda;
None shall oppose thy seizure. Behind me, captain,
So that the rabble here may not be tempted
To any treacherous stroke.

Phineus goes out with the Tyrians, Damoetes and the Syrian favourers of Phineus, followed by Perseus and Dercetes. Cireas behind them at a distance.

CEPHEUS

Sunbeam, I am afraid.

ANDROMEDA

I am not, father.

CEPHEUS

Alone against so many!

IOLAUS

Shall I go, father,
And stand by him?

CEPHEUS

He might be angry. Hark!

The voice of Phineus.

IOLAUS

He cries some confident order.

CEPHEUS

The Tyrians shout for onset; he is doomed.

There is a moment's pause, all listening, painfully.

IOLAUS

The shouts are stilled; there is a sudden hush.

CEPHEUS

What can it mean? This silence is appalling.

Dercetes returns.

What news? Thou treadest like one sleeping, captain.

DERCETES

O King, thy royal court is full of monuments.

CEPHEUS

What meanest thou? What happened? Where is Perseus?

DERCETES

King Phineus called to his men to take alive
The Greek; but as they charged, great Perseus cried,
"Close eyes, Dercetes, if thou car'st to live,"
And I obeyed, yet saw that he had taken
A snaky something from the wallet's mouth
He carries on his baldric. Blind I waited
And heard the loud approaching charge. Then suddenly
The rapid footsteps ceased, the cries fell dumb
And a great silence reigned. Astonishment
For two brief moments only held me close;
But when I lifted my sealed lids, the court
Was full of those swift charging warriors stiffened
To stone or stiffening, in the very posture

Of onset, sword uplifted, shield advanced,
Knee crooked, foot carried forward to the pace,
An animated silence, life in stone.
Only the godlike victor lived, a smile
Upon his lips, closing his wallet's mouth.
Then I, appalled, came from that place in silence.

CEPHEUS
Soldier, he is a god, or else the gods
Walk close to him. I hear his footsteps coming.
Perseus returns, followed by Cireas.
Hail, Perseus!

PERSEUS
King, the Tyrians all are dead,
Nor needst thou build them pyres nor dig them graves.
If any hereafter ask what perfect sculptor
Chiselled these forms in Syria's royal court,
Say then, "Athene, child armipotent
Of the Olympian, hewed by Perseus' hand
In one divine and careless stroke these statues
To her give glory."

CEPHEUS
O thou dreadful victor!
I know not what to say nor how to praise thee.

PERSEUS
Say nothing, King; in silence praise the Gods.
Let this not trouble you, my friends. Proceed
As if no interruption had disturbed you.

CIREAS
O Zeus, I thought thou couldst juggle only with feathers and phosphorus, but I see thou canst give wrinkles in magic to Babylon and the Medes. (*shaking himself*) Ugh! this was a stony conjuring. I cannot feel sure yet that I am not myself a statue.

PERISSUS (*who has gone out and returned*)

What hast thou done, comrade Perseus? Thou hast immortalised his long nose to all time in stone! This is a woeful thing for posterity; thou hadst no right to leave behind thee for its dismay such a fossil.

CEPHEUS

What now is left but to prepare the nuptials
Of sweet young sunny-eyed Andromeda
With mighty Perseus?

PERSEUS

King, let it be soon
That I may go to my blue-ringed Seriphos,
Where my mother waits and more deeds call to me.

CASSIOPEA

Yet if thy heart consents, then three months give us,
O Perseus, of thyself and our sweet child,
And then abandon.

PERSEUS

They are given.

ANDROMEDA

Perseus,
You give and never ask; let me for you
Ask something.

PERSEUS

Ask, Andromeda, and have.

ANDROMEDA

Then this I ask that thy great deeds may leave
Their golden trace on Syria. Let the dire cult
For ever cease and victims bleed no more
On its dark altar. Instead, Athene's name

Spread over all the land and in men's hearts.
Then shall a calm and mighty Will prevail
And broader minds and kindlier manners reign
And men grow human, mild and merciful.

PERSEUS
King Cepheus, thou hast heard; shall this be done?

CEPHEUS
Hero, thou cam'st to change our world for us.
Pronounce; I give assent.

PERSEUS
Then let the shrine
That looked out from earth's breast into the sunlight,
Be cleansed of its red memory of blood,
And the dread Form that lived within its precincts
Transfigure into a bright compassionate God
Whose strength shall aid men tossed upon the seas,
Give succour to the shipwrecked mariner.
A noble centre of a people's worship,
To Zeus and great Athene build a temple
Between your sky-topped hills and Ocean's vasts:
Her might shall guard your lives and save your land.
In your human image of her deity
A light of reason and calm celestial force
And a wise tranquil government of life,
Order and beauty and harmonious thoughts
And, ruling the waves of impulse, high-throned will
Incorporate in marble, the carved and white
Ideal of a young uplifted race.
For these are her gifts to those who worship her.
Adore and what you adore attempt to be.

CEPHEUS
Will the fiercer Grandeur that was here permit?

PERSEUS

Fear not Poseidon; the strong god is free.
He has withdrawn from his own darkness and is now
His new great self at an Olympian height.

CASSIOPEA

How can the immortal gods and Nature change?

PERSEUS

All alters in a world that is the same.
Man most must change who is a soul of Time;
His gods too change and live in larger light.

CEPHEUS

Then man too may arise to greater heights,
His being draw nearer to the gods?

PERSEUS

Perhaps.
But the blind nether forces still have power
And the ascent is slow and long is Time.
Yet shall Truth grow and harmony increase:
The day shall come when men feel close and one.
Meanwhile one forward step is something gained,
Since little by little earth must open to heaven
Till her dim soul awakes into the Light.

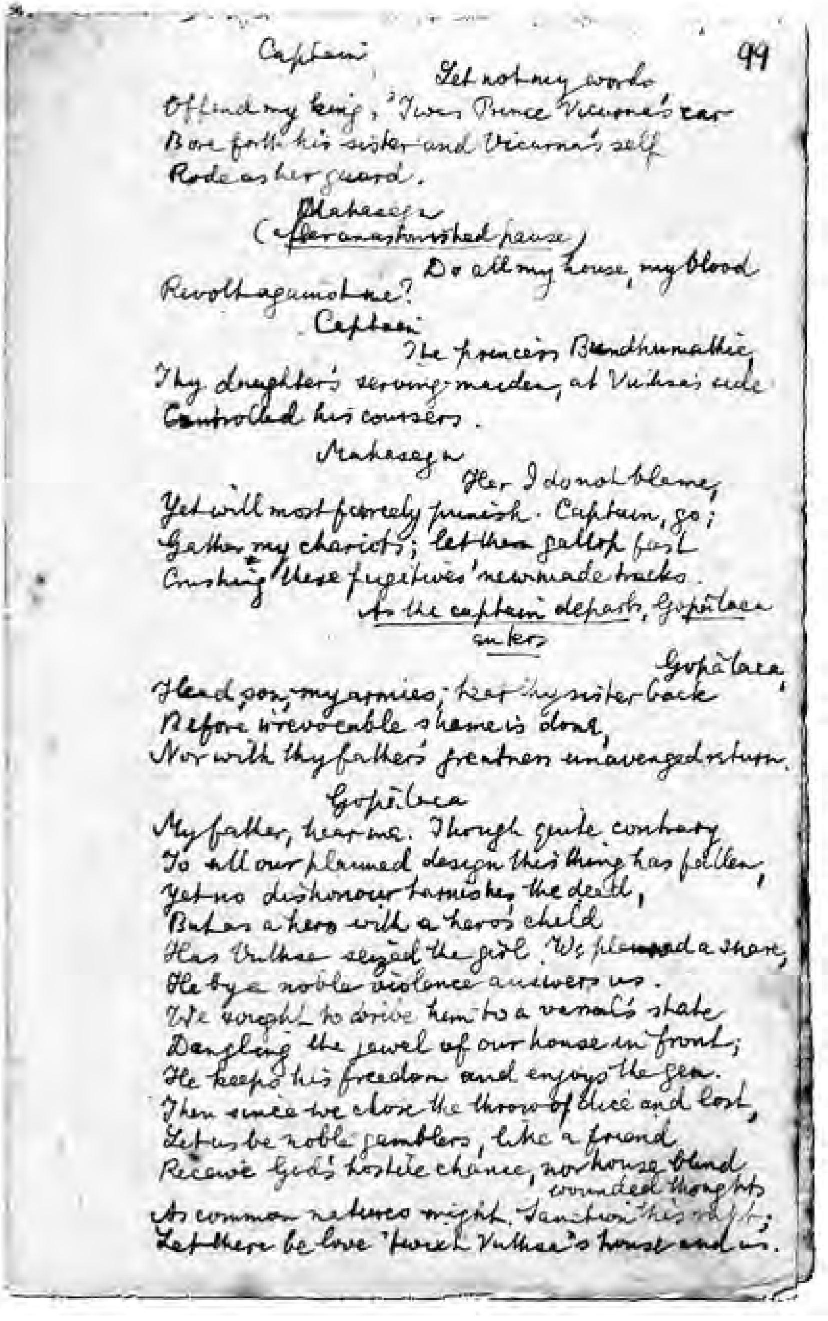

99

Captain

Let not my words
Offend my king, 'Twas Prince Vicurna's car
Bore forth his sister and Vicurna's self
Rode as her guard.

Mahasegn
(after an astonished pause)

Do all my house, my blood
Revolt against me?

Captain

The princess Bundhumathie,
Thy daughter's serving-maiden, at Vutsa's side
Controlled his coursers.

Mahasegn

Her I do not blame,
Yet will most fiercely punish. Captain, go;
Gather my chariots; let them gallop fast
Crushing these fugitives' newmade tracks.

As the captain departs, Gopālaca enters

Gopālaca,
Head, son, my armies; bring thy sister back
Before irrevocable shame is done,
Nor with thy father's greatness unavenged return.

Gopālaca

My father, hear me. Though quite contrary
To all our planned design this thing has fallen,
Yet no dishonour tarnishes the deed,
But as a hero with a hero's child
Has Vutsa seized the girl. We planned a snare,
He by a noble violence answers us.
We sought to drive him to a vassal's state
Dangling the jewel of our house in front;
He keeps his freedom and enjoys the gem.
Then since we chose the throw of dice and lost,
Let us be noble gamblers, like a friend
Receive God's hostile chance, nor house blind
wounded thoughts
As common natures might. Sanction this flight;
Let there be love 'twixt Vutsa's house and us.

A page of *Vasavadutta*

Eric

A Dramatic Romance

Characters

ERIC
SWEGN
GUNTHAR
HARDICNUT
RAGNAR
HARALD

ASLAUG
HERTHA

Act I

Eric's Palace at Yara.

Scene 1

ERIC
Eric of Norway, first whom these cold fiords,
Deep havens of disunion, from their jagged
And fissured crevices at last obey,
The monarch of a thousand Vikings! Yes,
But how long shall that monarchy endure
Which only on the swiftness of a sword
Has taken its restless seat? Strength's iron hound
Pitilessly bright behind his panting prey
Can guard for life's short splendour what it won.
But when the sword is broken or when death
Proves swifter? All this realm with labour built
Dissolving like a transitory cloud
Becomes the thing it was, cleft, parcelled out
By discord. I have found the way to join,
The warrior's sword, builder of unity,
But where's the way to solder? where? O Thor
And Odin, masters of the northern world,
Wisdom and force I have; some strength is hidden
I have not; I would find it out. Help me,
Whatever power thou art who mov'st the world,
To Eric unrevealed. Some sign I ask.

ASLAUG (*singing, outside*)

Love is the hoop of the gods
Hearts to combine.

Iron is broken, the sword
Sleeps in the grave of its lord.
　　Love is divine.
Love is the hoop of the gods
　　Hearts to combine.

ERIC

Is that your answer? Freya, mother of heaven,
Thou wast forgotten. The heart! the seat is there.
For unity is sweet substance of the heart
And not a chain that binds, not iron, gold,
Nor any helpless thought the reason knows.
How shall I seize it? where? give me a net
By which the fugitive can be snared. It is
Too unsubstantial for my iron mind.

ASLAUG (*singing, outside*)

When Love desires Love,
　　Then Love is born.
Nor golden gifts compel,
Nor even beauty's spell
　　Escapes his scorn.
When Love desires Love,
　　Then Love is born.

ERIC (*calling*)

Who sings outside? Harald! who sings outside?

HARALD (*entering*)

Two dancing-girls from Gothberg. Shall they come?

ERIC

Admit them.

Harald goes out.

　　　　From light lips and casual thoughts
The gods speak best as if by chance, nor knows

The speaker that he is an instrument
But thinks his mind the mover of his words.
Harald returns with Aslaug and Hertha.

HARALD
King Eric, these are they who sang.

ERIC
Women,
Who are you? or what god directed you?

ASLAUG
The god who rules all men, Necessity.

ERIC
It was thou who sangst!

ASLAUG
My lips at least were used.

ERIC
Thou sayest. Dost thou know by whom?

ASLAUG
By Fate.
For she alone is prompter on our stage,
And all things move by an established doom,
Not freely. Eric's sword and Aslaug's song,
Music and thunder are the rhythmic chords
Of one majestic harp. With equal mind
She breaks the tops that she has built; her thrones
Are ruins. She treads her way foreseen; our steps
Are hers, our wills are blinded by her gaze.

ERIC
I think the soul is master. Who art thou?

HERTHA
Expelled from Gothberg with displeasure fierce,
Norwegians by the wrathful Swede constrained,
To Norway we return.

ERIC
Why went you forth?

HERTHA
From a bleak country rich by spoil alone
Of kinder populations, far too cold,
Too rough to love the sweetness of a song,
The rhythm of a dance, with need for spur,
We fled to an entire and cultured race,
Whose hearts come apt and liberal from the gods
Are steel to steel, but flowers to a flower.

ERIC
And wherefore war they upon women now?

ASLAUG
By thy aggressions moved.

ERIC
A nobler choice
Of vengeance I will give them, though more hard.
(*to Gunthar who enters*)
Gunthar, thou comest from the front. What news?

GUNTHAR
Swegn, earl of Trondhjem, lifts his outlawed head.
By desperate churls and broken nobles joined
He moves towards the Swede.

ERIC
Let Sigurd's force
Cut off from Sweden and his lair the rude

Revolted lord. He only now resists,
Champion of discord, remnant like our seas,
The partisan and pattern of the past.
They waste their surge of strength in sterile foam,
Hungry for movement, careless what they break,
Splendid, disastrous, active for no fruit.
Such men are better with the gods than here
To trouble earth. Taken, let him not live.

ASLAUG
Taken! Our words are only an arrogant breath,
Who all are here, the doomer and the doomed,
As captives of a greater doom than ours,
To live or die.

HERTHA
Be silent.

ASLAUG
I silence my heart
Which has remembered what all men forget,
That Olaf of the seas was Norway's head
And Swegn his son.

ERIC
Will you remain with me?
Though from my act there flowed on you distress,
Make me be fountain of your better days;
Your loss shall turn a fall to splendid gains.

HERTHA
Thy royal bounty shall atone for much.

ASLAUG (*low, to herself*)
Nobler atonement's needed.

ERIC

It is yours.
Harald, make room for them within my house.
Gunthar, we will converse some other hour.
(*alone*)
Love! If it were this girl with antelope eyes
And the high head so proudly lifted up
Upon a neck as white as any swan's!
But how to sway men's hearts rugged and hard
As Norway's mountains, as her glaciers cold,
The houses of their violent desires,
Whose guests are interest and power and pride?
Perhaps this stag-eyed woman comes for that,
To teach me.

Scene 2

Hertha, Aslaug.

ASLAUG

Hertha, we dance before the man tonight.
Why not tonight?

HERTHA

Because I will not act
Lifting in vain a rash frustrated hand.
When all is certain, I will strike.

ASLAUG

To near,
To strike while all posterity applauds!
For Norway's poets to the end of time
Shall sing in phrases noble as the theme
Of Aslaug's dance and Aslaug's dagger.

HERTHA

Yes,
If we succeed, but who will sing the praise
Of foiled assassins? Shall we risk defeat?
While we sleep flung in a dishonoured tomb,
And Swegn of Norway roams until the end
The desperate snows and forest silences
Hopeless, proscribed, alone?

ASLAUG

No more defeat!
Too often, too deeply have we drunk that cup!

HERTHA
The man we come to slay, —

ASLAUG
A mighty man!
He has the face and figure of a god,
A marble emperor with brilliant eyes.
How came the usurper by a face like that?

HERTHA
His father was a son of Odin's stock.

ASLAUG
His fable since he rose! A pauper house
Of one poor vessel and a narrow fiord
And some bare pine-trees possessor, — this was he,
The root he sprang from.

HERTHA
But from this to tower
In three swift summers undisputed lord
Of Norway, before years had put their growth
Upon his chin! If not of Odin's race,
Odin is for him. Are you not afraid,
You who see Fate even in a sparrow's flight,
When Odin is for him?

ASLAUG
Aslaug is against.
He has a strength, an iron strength, and Thor
Strikes hammerlike in his uplifted sword.
But Fate alone decides when all is said,
Not Thor, nor Odin. I will try my fate.

HERTHA
He is a pure usurper, is he not?
Norway's election made him king, men say.

ASLAUG
Left Olaf Sigualdson no heirs behind?
Was his chair vacant?

HERTHA
Of Trondhjem; but they cried,
The inland and the north were free to choose.

ASLAUG
As rebels are.

HERTHA
Discord was seated there.
To the South rejoicing in her golden gains,
Crying, "I am Norway", all the rude-lipped North
Blew bronze refusal and its free stark head
To breathe cold heaven was lifted like its hills.
We sought the arbitration of the sword,
That sharp blind last appeal. The sword has judged
Against our claim.

ASLAUG
The dagger overrides.

HERTHA
When it is keen and swift enough! O yet,
If kindly peace even now were possible!
The suzerainty? it is his. We fought for it,
We have lost it. Let it rest where it has fallen.

ASLAUG
Better our barren empire of the snows!
Better with reindeer herding to survive,
Or else a free and miserable death
Together!

HERTHA
It is well to be resolved.
Therefore I flung the doubt before your mind,
To strike more surely. Aslaug, did you see
The eyes of Eric on you?

ASLAUG (*indifferently*)
I am fair.
Men look upon me.

HERTHA
You see nothing more?

ASLAUG (*disdainfully*)
What is it to me how he looks? He is
My human obstacle and that is all.

HERTHA
No, Aslaug, there's much more. Alone with you,
Absorbed, — you see it, — suddenly you strike
And strike again, swift great exultant blows.

ASLAUG
It is too base!

HERTHA
Unlulled, he could not perish.
Have you not seen his large and wakeful gaze?
This is our chance. Must not Swegn mount his throne?

ASLAUG
So that I have not to degrade myself,
Arrange it as you will. You own a swift,
Contriving, careful brain I cannot match.
To dare, to act was always Aslaug's part.

HERTHA
You will not shrink?

ASLAUG
I sprang not from the earth
To bound my actions by the common rule.
I claim my kin with those whom Heaven's gaze
Moulded supreme, Swegn's sister, Olaf's child,
Aslaug of Norway.

HERTHA
Then it must be done.

ASLAUG
Hertha, I will not know the plots you weave:
But when I see your signal, I will strike.

HERTHA (*alone*)
Pride violent! loftiness intolerable!
The grandiose kingdom-breaking blow is hers,
The baseness, the deception are for me.
It was this, the assumption, the magnificence,
Made Swegn her tool. To me his lover, counsellor,
Wife, worshipper, his ears were coldly deaf.
But, lioness of Norway, thy loud bruit
And leap gigantic are ensnared at last
In my compelling toils. She must be trapped!
She is the fuel for my husband's soul
To burn itself on a disastrous pyre.
Remove its cause, the flame will sink to rest, —
And we in Trondhjem shall live peacefully
Till Eric dies, as some day die he must,
In battle or by a revolting sword,
And leaves the spacious world unoccupied.
Then other men may feel the sun once more.
Always she talks of Fate: does she not see,
This man was born beneath exultant stars,

Had gods to rock his cradle? He must possess
His date, his strong and unresisted time
When Fate herself runs on his feet. Then comes, —
All things too great end soon, — death, overthrow,
The slow revenges of the jealous gods.
Submitting we shall save ourselves alive
For a late summer when cold spring is past.

Scene 3

Eric, Aslaug.

ERIC
Come hither.

ASLAUG
Thou hast sent for me?

ERIC
Come hither.
What art thou?

ASLAUG
What thou knowest.

ERIC
Do I know?

ASLAUG (*to herself*)
Does he suspect? (*aloud*) I am a dancing-girl.
My name is Aslaug. That thou knowest.

ERIC
Where
Did Odin forge thy sweet imperious eyes,
Thy noble stature and thy lofty look?
Thou dancest, — yes, thou hast that motion; song,
The natural expression of thy soul,
Comes from thy lips, floats, hovers and returns
Like a wild bird which wings around its nest.
This art the princesses of Sweden use,

And those Norwegian girls who frame themselves
On Sweden.

ASLAUG
It may be, my birth and past
Were nobler than my present fortunes are.

ERIC
Why cam’st thou to me?

ASLAUG (*to herself*)
Does Death admonish him
Of danger? does he feel the impending stroke?
Hertha could turn the question.

ERIC
Why soughtst thou out
Eric of Norway? Wherefore broughtst thou here
This beauty as compelling as thy song
No man can gaze on and possess his soul?

ASLAUG
I am a dancing-girl; my song, my face
Are my best stock. I carried them for gain
Here to the richest market.

ERIC
Hast thou so?
I buy them for a price. Aslaug, thy body too.

ASLAUG
Release me! Wilt thou lay thy hands on death?
(*wrenching herself free*)
All Norway has not sold itself thy slave.

ERIC
This was not spoken like a dancing-girl!

ASLAUG (*to herself*)
What is this siege? I have no dagger with me.
Will he discover me? will he compel?

ERIC
Though Norway has not sold itself my slave,
Thou hast. Remember what thou art, or else
Thou feignst to be.

ASLAUG (*to herself*)
I am caught in his snare.
He is subtle, terrible. I see the thing
He drives at and admire unwillingly
The marble tyrant.

ERIC
Better play thy part
Or leave it.
If thou wert fashioned nobler than thou feignst,
Confess that mightier name and lay thyself
Between my hands. But if a dancing-girl,
I have bought thee for a hire, thy face, thy song,
Thy body. I turn not, girl, from any way
I can possess thee, more than the sea hesitates
To engulf what it embraces.

ASLAUG
Thou speakest words
I scorn to answer.

ERIC
Or to understand?
Thou art an enemy who in disguise
Invad'st my house to spy upon my fate.

ASLAUG
What if I were?

ERIC

Thou hast too lightly then
Devised thy chains and close imprisonment,
Too thoughtlessly adventured a divine
And glorious stake, this body, heaven's hold,
This face, the earth's desire.

ASLAUG

What canst thou do?
I do not think I am afraid of death.

ERIC

Far be death from thee who, if heaven were just,
Wouldst walk immortal! Thou seest no nearer peril?

ASLAUG

None that I tremble at or wish to flee.

ERIC

Let this shake thee that thou art by thy choice
Caged with the danger of the lion's mood,
Helpless hast seen the hunger of his eyes
And feelst on thee the breath of his desire.

ASLAUG (*alarmed*)

I came not here to spy.

ERIC

Why cam'st thou then?

ASLAUG

To sing, to dance, to earn.

ERIC

Richly then earn.
Thou hast a brain, and knowest why I looked
On thee, why I have kept thee in my house.

My house! what fate has brought thy steps within?
Thou, thou hast found the way to my desire!
Thinkst thou thy feet have entered to escape
As lightly as a wild bee from a flower,
The lair and antre of thy enemy?
Disguise? Canst thou disguise thy splendid soul?
Then if thy face and speech more nobly express
The truth of thee than this vocation can,
Reveal it and deserve my clemency.

ASLAUG (*violently*)
Thy clemency!
(*restraining herself*)
I am a dancing-girl;
I came to earn.

ERIC
Thou art obstinate in pride!
Choose yet.

ASLAUG
I have not any choice to make.

ERIC
Wilt thou still struggle vainly in the net?
Because thou hast the lioness in thy mood,
Thou thoughtst to play with Eric! It is I
Who play with thee; thou liest in my grasp,
As surely as if I held thee on my knees.
I am enamoured of thy golden hair,
Thy body like the snow, thy antelope eyes,
This neck that seems to know it carries heaven
Upon it easily. Thy song, thy speech,
This gracious rhythmic motion of thy limbs
Walking or dancing, all the careless pride
That undulates in every gesture and tone,
Have seized upon me smiling to possess.

But I have only learned from Fate and strength
To seize by force, master, enjoy, compel,
As I will thee. Enemy and prisoner,
Or dancing-girl and purchased chattel, choose!
Thou wilt not speak? thou findest no reply?

ASLAUG
Because I am troubled by thy violent words.
I cannot answer thee, or will not yet.
(*turning away*)
How could he see this death? Is he a god
And knows men's hearts? This is a terrible
And iron pressure!

ERIC
What was thy design?
To spy? to slay? For thou art capable
Even of such daring.

ASLAUG (*to herself*)
Swiftly, swiftly done
It might be still! To put him off an hour,
Some minutes, — O, to strike!

ERIC
What hast thou chosen?

ASLAUG (*turning to him*)
King, mend thy words and end this comedy.
I have laughed till now and dallied with thy thoughts,
A little amazed. Unfearing I stand here,
Who come with open heart to seek a king,
Pure of all hostile purpose, innocent
Of all the guileful thoughts and blood-stained plans
Thou burdenest thy fierce suspicions with.
This is the Nemesis of men who rise
Too suddenly by fraud or violence

That they suspect all hearts, yes, every word
Of sheltering some direr violence,
Some subtler fraud, and they expect their fall
Sudden and savage as their rise has been.

ERIC

Thou art my dancing-girl and nothing more?
Assume this chain, this necklace, for thy life.
Nor think it even thy price.
She dashes the necklace to the ground.
Thou art not subtle!

ASLAUG (*agitated*)

It is not so that women's hearts are wooed.

ERIC

Yet so I woo thee, so do all men woo
Enamoured of what thou hast claimed to be.
Art thou the dancing-girl of Norway still
Or some disguised high-reaching nobler soul?

ASLAUG (*suddenly*)

I am thy dancing-girl, King Eric. Look,
I lift thy necklace.

ERIC

Take it, yet be free.
Thou canst not slip out from my hands by this.
No feigned decision will I let thee make,
But one which binds us both. I give thee time,
In hope thy saner mind will yet prevail,
Not courage most perverse, though ardent, rule.
Only one way thou hast to save thyself:
Reveal thy treason, Aslaug, trust thy king.
Aslaug, alone, lifts the chain, admires
it and throws it on a chair.

ASLAUG
You are too much like drops of royal blood.
She lifts it again.
A necklace? No, my chain! Or wilt thou prove
A god's death-warrant?
She puts it round her neck.
Hertha, Hertha, here!
(*to Hertha, as she enters*)
O counsellor, art thou come?

HERTHA
I heard thee call.

ASLAUG
I called. Why did I call? See, Hertha, see
How richly Norway's Eric buys his doom!

HERTHA
He gave thee this? It is a kingdom's price.

ASLAUG
A kingdom's price! the kingdom of the slain!
A price to rid the nations of a god.
O Hertha, what has earth to do with gods,
Who suffers only human weight? Will she
Not go too swiftly downward from her base
If Eric treads her long?

HERTHA
Sister of Swegn,
There are new lustres in thy face and eyes.
What said he to thee?

ASLAUG
What did Eric say,
Eric to Aslaug, sister of King Swegn?
A kingdom's price! Swegn's kingdom! And for him,

My marble emperor, my god who loves,
This mortal Odin? What for him? By force
Shall he return to his effulgent throne?

HERTHA
You were not used to a divided mind.

ASLAUG
Nor am I altered now, nor heart-perplexed.
But these are thoughts which naturally arise.

HERTHA
He loves you then?

ASLAUG
He loves and he suspects.

HERTHA
What, Aslaug?

ASLAUG
What we are and we intend.

HERTHA
If he suspects!

ASLAUG
It cannot matter much,
If we are rapid.

HERTHA
If we spoil it all!
I will not torture Swegn with useless tears
Perishing vainly. I will slay and die.
He shall remember that he wears his crown
By our great sacrifice and soothe his grief
With the strong magnificent circle, or else bear it

A noble duty to the nobly dead.
(*after a moment's reflection*)
Child, you must humour him, you must consent.

ASLAUG
To what?

HERTHA
To all.

ASLAUG
Hast thou at all perused
The infamy which thou advisest?

HERTHA
Yes.
I do not bid you yield, but seem to yield.
Even I who am Swegn's wife, would do as much.
But though you talk, you still are less in love,
Valuing an empty outward purity
Before your brother's life, your brother's crown.

ASLAUG
You know the way to bend me to your will!

HERTHA
Give freedom, but no licence to his love,
For when he thinks to embrace, we shall have struck.

ASLAUG
And, Hertha, if a swift and violent heart
Betrayed my will and overturned your plans?
Is there no danger, Hertha, there?

HERTHA
Till now
I feared not that from Aslaug, sister of Swegn.

But if you fear it!

ASLAUG
No, since I consent.
You shall not blame again my selfishness,
Nor my defect of love.

HERTHA (*alone*)
Swegn then might rule!
(*with a laugh*)
I had almost forgotten Fate between
Smiling, alert, and his too partial gods.

Scene 4

ERIC
They say the anarchy of love disturbs
Gods even: shaken are the marble natures,
The deathless hearts are melted to the pang
And rapture. I would be, O Odin, still
Monarch of my calm royalty within,
My thoughts my subjects. Do I hear her come?
(*to Aslaug who enters*)
Thou com'st? thou art resolved? thou hast made thy choice?

ASLAUG
I choose, if there is anything to choose,
The truth.

ERIC
Who art thou?

ASLAUG
Aslaug, who am now
A dancing-woman.

ERIC
And afterwards? Hast thou then
Understood nothing?

ASLAUG
What should I understand?

ERIC
What I shall do with thee. This earthly heaven
In which thou liv'st shall not be thine at all.

It was not fashioned for thy joy but mine
And only made for my immense desire.
This hast thou understood?

ASLAUG (*pale and troubled*)
Thou triest me still.

ERIC
I saw thee shake.

ASLAUG
It is not easily
A woman's heart sinks prostrate in such absolute
Surrender.

ERIC
Thy heart? Is it thy heart that yields?
O thou unparalleled enchanting frame
For housing of a strong immortal guest,
If man could seize the heart as palpably,
The form, the limbs, the substance of this soul!
That, that we ask for; all else can be seized
So vainly! Walled from ours are other hearts:
For if life's barriers twixt our souls were broken,
Men would be free and one, earth paradise
And the gods live neglected.

ASLAUG
This heart of mine?
Purchase it richly, for it is for sale.

ERIC
Yes, speak.

ASLAUG
With love; I meant no more.

ERIC

With love?
Thou namest lightly a tremendous word.
If thou hadst known this mightiest thing on earth
And named it, should it not have upon thy lips
So moving an impulsion for a man
That he would barter worlds to hear it once?
Words are but ghosts unless they speak the heart.

ASLAUG

I have yielded.

ERIC

Then tonight. Thou shak'st?

ASLAUG

There is
A trouble in my blood. I do not shake.

ERIC

Thou heardst me?

ASLAUG

Not tonight. Thou art too swift,
Too sudden.

ERIC

Thou hast had leisure to consult
Thy comrade smaller, subtler than thyself?
Better hadst thou chosen candour and thy frank soul
Consulted, not a guile by others breathed.

ASLAUG

What guile, who give all for an equal price?
Thou giv'st thy blood of rubies; I my life.

ERIC
Thou hast not chosen then to understand.

ASLAUG
Because I sell myself, yet keep my pride?

ERIC
Thou shalt keep nothing that I choose to take.
I see a tyranny I will delight in
And force a oneness; I will violently
Compel the goddess that thou art. But I know
What soul is lodged within thee, thou as yet
Ignorest mine. I still hold in my strength,
Though it hungers like a lion for the leap,
And give thee time once more; misuse it not.
Beware, provoke not the fierce god too much;
Have dread of his flame round thee.

ASLAUG (*alone*)
Odin and Freya, you have snares! But see,
I have not thrown the dagger from my heart,
But clutch it still. How strange that look and tone,
That things of a corporeal potency
Not only travel coursing through the nerves
But seem to touch the seated soul within!
It was a moment's wave, for it has passed
And the high purpose in my soul lives on
Unconquerably intending to fulfil.

Act II

A room in Eric's house.

Scene 1

Hertha, Aslaug.

HERTHA
See what a keen and fatal glint it has,
Aslaug.

ASLAUG
Hast thou been haunted by a look,
O Hertha, has a touch bewildered thee,
Compelling memory?

HERTHA
Then the gods too work?

ASLAUG
A marble statue gloriously designed
Without that breath our cunning maker gives,
One feels it pain to break. This statue breathes!
Out of these eyes there looks an intellect
That claims us all; this marble holds a heart,
The heart holds love. To break it all, to lay
This glory of God's making in the dust!
Why do these thoughts besiege me? Have I then —
No, it is nothing; it is pity works,
It is an admiration physical.
O he is far too great, too beautiful

For a dagger's penetration. It would turn,
The point would turn; it would deny itself
To such a murder.

HERTHA
Aslaug, it is love.

ASLAUG (*angrily*)
What saidst thou?

HERTHA
When he lays a lingering hand
Upon thy tresses, — Aslaug, for he loves, —
Canst thou then strike?

ASLAUG
What shakes me? Have I learned
To pity, to tremble? That were new indeed
In Olaf's race. Give me self-knowledge, Gods.
What are these unaccustomed moods you send
Into my bosom? They are foreign here.
Eric enters and regards them. Hertha, seeing him, rises to depart.

ERIC
Thou art the other dancing-woman come
From Sweden to King Eric!

HERTHA
He has eyes
That look into the soul. What mean his words?
But they are common. Let me leave you, Aslaug.
She goes out.

ASLAUG
I would have freedom here from thy pursuit.

Eric
Why shouldst thou anywhere be free from me?
I am full of wrath against thee and myself.
Come near me.

Aslaug (*to herself*)
It is too strange — I am afraid!
Of what? Of what? Am I not Aslaug still?

Eric
Art thou a sorceress or conspirator?
But thou art both to seize my throne and heart,
And I will deal with thee, thou dreadful charm,
As with my enemy.

Aslaug
Let him never touch!

Eric
I give thee grace no longer; bear thy doom.

Aslaug
My doom is in my hands, not thine.

Eric (*with a sudden fierceness*)
Thou errst,
And thou hast always erred. Dar'st thou imagine
That I who have enveloped in three years
All Norway more rebellious than its storms,
Can be resisted by a woman's strength,
However fierce, however swift and bold?

Aslaug
I have seen thy strength. I cherish mine unseen.

Eric
And I thy weakness. Something yet thou fearst.

ASLAUG

Nothing at all.

ERIC

Yes! though thy eyes defy me,
Thy colour changes and thy limbs betray thee.
All is not lionlike and masculine there
Within.

He advances towards her.

ASLAUG

Touch me not!

ERIC

It is that thou fearst?
Why dost thou fear it? Is it thine own heart
Thou tremblest at? Aslaug, is it thy heart?

He takes her suddenly into his arms and kisses her. Aslaug remains like one stricken and bewildered.

Lift up thine eyes; let me behold thy strength!

ASLAUG

O gods! I love! O loose me!

ERIC

Thou art taken.
Whatever was thy purpose, thou art mine,
Aslaug, thou sweet and violent soul surprised,
Intended for me when the stars were planned!
Sweetly, O Aslaug, to thy doom consent,
The doom to love, the death of hatred. Draw
No useless curtaining of shamed refusal
Betwixt our yearnings, passionately take
The leap of love across the abyss of hate.
Force not thy soul to anger. Leave veils and falterings
For meaner hearts. Between us let there be

A noble daylight.

ASLAUG
Let me think awhile!
Thy arms, thy lips prevent me.

ERIC
Think not! Only feel,
Love only!

ASLAUG
O Eric, king, usurper, conqueror!
O robber of men's hearts and kingdoms! O
Thou only monarch!

ERIC
Art thou won at last,
O woman who disturbst the musing stars
With passion? Soul of Aslaug, art thou mine?

ASLAUG
Thine, Eric? Eric! Whose am I, by whom am held?
(*sinking on a seat*)
I cannot think. I have lost myself! My heart
Desires eternity in an embrace.

ERIC
Wilt thou deny me anything I claim
Ever, O Aslaug? Art thou mine indeed?

ASLAUG
What have I done? What have I spoken? I love!
(*after a silence, feeling in her bosom*)
But what was there concealed within my breast?

ERIC (*observing her action*)
I take not a divided realm, a crown

That's shared. Thou hadst a purpose in thy heart
I know not, but divine. Thou lov'st at length;
But I have knowledge of the human heart,
What opposite passions wrestle there with gusts
And treacherous surprises. I trust not then
Too sudden a change, but if thou canst be calm,
Yet passionately submit, I will embrace thee
For ever. Think and speak. Art thou all mine?

ASLAUG
I know no longer if I am my own.
The world swims round me and heaven's points are changed.
A purpose! I had one. I had besides
A brother! Had! What have I now? You Gods,
How have you rushed upon me! Leave me, King.
It is not good to trust a sudden heart.
The blood being quiet, we will speak again
Like souls that meet in heaven, without disguise.

ERIC
I do not leave thee, for thou art ominous
Of an abysm uncrossed.

ASLAUG
Yet that were best.
For there has been too much between us once
And now too little. Leave me, King, awhile
To wrestle with myself and calmly know
In this strange strife the gods have brought me to,
Which thing of these in me must live and which
Be dumb for ever.

ERIC
Something yet resists.
I will not leave thee till I know it and tame,
For, Aslaug, thou wast won.

ASLAUG

King, thou art wise
In war and counsel, not in women's hearts.
Thou hast surprised a secret that my soul
Kept tremblingly from my own knowledge. Yet,
If thou art really wise, thou wilt avoid
To touch with a too rude and sudden hand
The direr god who made my spirit fear
To own its weakness.

ERIC

Art thou wise thyself?
I take thee not for counsellor.

ASLAUG

Yet beware.
There was a gulf between my will and heart
Which is not bridged yet.

ERIC

Break thy will, unless
Thou wouldst have me break it for thee.
The older Aslaug rises now against the new.

ASLAUG
It rises, rises. Let it rise. Leave me
My freedom.

ERIC

Aslaug, no, for free thou roamst
A lioness midst thy passions.

ASLAUG (*with a gesture*)

Do then, O King,
Whatever Fate commands.

ERIC

I am master of my Fate.

ASLAUG

Too little, who are not masters of ourselves!

ERIC

Art thou that dancing-woman, Aslaug, yet?

ASLAUG

I am the dancing-girl who sought thee, yet,
Eric.

ERIC

It may be still the swiftest way.
Let then my dancing-woman dance for me
Tonight in my chambers. I will see the thing
Her dancing means and tear its mystery out.

ASLAUG

If thou demandest it, then Fate demands.

ERIC

Thy god grows sombre and he menaces,
It seems! For afterwards I can demand
Whatever soul and body can desire
Twixt man and woman?

ASLAUG

If thy Fate permits.
Thy love, it seems, communes not with respect.

ERIC

The word exists not between thee and me.
It is burned up in too immense a fire.
Wilt thou persist even after thou hast lain
Upon my bosom? Thou claimest my respect?

Yet art a dancing-woman, so thou sayst?
Aslaug, let not the darker gods prevail.
Put off thy pride and take up truth and love.

ASLAUG (*sombre*)
I am a dancing-woman, nothing more.

ERIC
The hate love struck down rises in thy heart.
But I will have it out, by violence,
Unmercifully.

He strides upon her, and she half cowers from him, half defies.

(*taking her violently into his arms*)
Thus blotted into me
Thou shalt survive the end of Time. Tonight!

He goes out.

ASLAUG
How did it come? What was it leaped on me
And overpowered? O torn distracted heart,
Wilt thou not pause a moment and give leave
To the more godlike brain to do its work?
Can the world change within a moment? Can
Hate suddenly be love? Love is not here.
I have the dagger still within my heart.
O he is terrible and fair and swift!
He is not mortal. Yet be silent, yet
Give the brain leave. O marble brilliant face!
O thou art Odin, thou art Thor on earth!
What is there in a kiss, the touch of lips,
That it can change creation? There's a wine
That turns men mad; have I not drunk of it?
To be his slave, know nothing but his will!
Aslaug and Eric! Aslaug, sister of Swegn,
Who makes his bed on the inclement snow
And with the reindeer herds, that was a king.

Who takes his place? Eric and Aslaug rule.
Eric who doomed him to the death, if seized,
Aslaug, the tyrant, the usurper's wife,
Who by her brother's murder is secured
In her possession. Wife! The concubine,
The slave of Eric, — that his pride intends.
What was it seized on me, O heavenly powers?
I have given myself, my brother's throne and life,
My pride, ambition, hope, and grasp, and keep
Shame only. Tonight! What happens then tonight?
I dance before him, — royal Olaf's child
Becomes the upstart Eric's dancing-girl!
What happens else tonight? One preys upon
Aslaug of Norway! O, I thank thee, Heaven,
That thou restorest me to sanity.
It was his fraudulent and furious siege,
And something in me proved a traitor. Fraud?
O beauty of the godlike brilliant eyes!
O face expressing heaven's supremacy!
No, I will put it down, I put it down.
Help me, you gods, help me against my heart.
I will strike suddenly, I will not wait.
'Tis a deceit, his majesty and might,
His dreadful beauty, his resistless brain.
It will be very difficult to strike!
But I will strike. Swegn strikes, and Norway strikes,
My honour strikes, the Gods, and all his life
Offends each moment.
(*to Hertha, who enters*)
Hertha, I strike tonight.

HERTHA
Why, what has happened?

ASLAUG
That thou shalt not know.
I strike tonight.

She goes out.

HERTHA
It is not difficult
To know what drives her. I must act at once,
Or this may have too suddenly a tragic close.
Not blood, but peace, not death, you Gods, but life,
But tranquil sweetness!

Scene 2

Eric, Hertha.

ERIC
I sent for thee to know thy name and birth.

HERTHA
My name is Hertha and my birth too mean
To utter before Norway's lord.

ERIC
Yet speak.

HERTHA
A Trondhjem peasant and a serving-girl
Were parents to me.

ERIC
And from such a stock
Thy beauty and thy wit and grace were born?

HERTHA
The Gods prodigiously sometimes reverse
The common rule of Nature and compel
Matter with soul. How else should it be guessed
That Gods exist at all?

ERIC
Who nurtured thee?

HERTHA
A dancing-girl of Gothberg by a lord

Of Norway entertained, to whom a child
I was delivered. Song and dance were hers;
I made them mine.

ERIC
Their names? the thrall? the lord?

HERTHA
Olaf of Norway, earl of Trondhjem then,
And Thiordis whom he loved.

ERIC
Thou knowest Swegn,
The rebel?

HERTHA
Yes, I know.

ERIC
And lov'st perhaps?

HERTHA
Myself much better.

ERIC
Yes? He is a man
Treacherous and rude and ruthless, is he not?

HERTHA (*with a movement*)
I would not speak of kings and mighty earls:
These things exceed my station.

ERIC
Ah, thou lov'st!
Thou wilt not blame.

HERTHA

Thou art mistaken, King.
He cannot conquer and he will not yield,
But weakens Norway. This in him I blame.

ERIC

Thou hast seen that? Thy peasant father got
A wondrous politician for his child!
Do I abash thee?

HERTHA

I am what the Gods
Have made me. But I understand at last;
Thou thinkst me other than I seem.

ERIC

Some thought
Like that I had.

HERTHA

King Eric, wilt thou hear?

ERIC

I much desire it, if I hear the truth.

HERTHA

Betray me not to Aslaug then.

ERIC

That's just.
She shall not know.

HERTHA

What if I came, O King,
For other purpose, not to sing and dance,
And yet thy friend, the well-wisher, at least,
Of Norway and her peace?

Eric
Speak plainly now.

Hertha
If I can show thee how to conquer Swegn
Without one stroke of battle, wilt thou grant
My bitter need?

Eric
I would give much.

Hertha
Wilt thou?

Eric
If so I conquer him and thy desire
Is something I can grant without a hurt
To Norway or myself.

Hertha
It is.

Eric
Speak then,
Demand.

Hertha
I have not finished yet. Meantime
If I avert a danger from thy head
Now threatening it, do I not earn rewards
More ample?

Eric
More? On like conditions, then.

Hertha
If I yield up great enemies to thy hands

Thou knowst not of, wilt thou reject my price,
Confusing different debts in one account?

ERIC
Hast thou yet more to ask? Thou art too shrewd
A bargainer.

HERTHA
Giving Norway needed peace,
Thyself friends, safety, empire, is my claim
Excessive then?

ERIC
I grant thee three demands.

HERTHA
They are all. He asks not more who has enough.
Thrice shall I ask and thrice shall Eric give
And never have an enemy again
In Norway.

ERIC
Speak.

HERTHA
Thy enemies are here,
No dancing-girls, but Hertha, wife of Swegn,
And Aslaug, child of Olaf Sigualdson,
His sister.

ERIC
It is well.

HERTHA
The danger lies
In Aslaug's hand and dagger which she means
To strike into thy heart. Tonight she strikes.

ERIC
And Swegn?

HERTHA
Send me to him with perilous word
Of Aslaug in thy hands; so with her life
Buy his surrender, afterwards his love
With kingly generosity and trust.

ERIC
Freely and frankly hast thou spoken, Queen
Who wast in Trondhjem: now as freely ask.

HERTHA
The life of Swegn; his liberty as well,
Submitting.

ERIC
They are thine.

HERTHA
And Aslaug's life
And pardon, not her liberty.

ERIC
They are given.

HERTHA
And, last, forgiveness for myself, O King,
My treason and my plots.

ERIC
This too I grant.

HERTHA
I have nothing left to ask for.

ERIC

Thou hast done?
Let me consign thee to thy prison then.

HERTHA

My prison! Wilt thou send me not to Swegn?

ERIC

I will not. Why, thou subtle, dangerous head,
Restored to liberty, what perilous schemes
Might leap into thy thoughts! Shall I give Swegn,
That fierce and splendid fighter, such a brain
Of cunning to complete and guide his sword?
What if he did not yield, rejected peace?
Wilt thou not tell him Aslaug's life is safe?
To prison!

HERTHA

Thou hast promised, King.

ERIC

I keep
My promise to thee, Hertha, wife of Swegn.
For Swegn thou askest life and liberty,
For Aslaug life and pardon, for thyself
Forgiveness only. I can be cunning too.
Hertha, thou art my prisoner and thrall.

HERTHA (*after a pause, smiling*)

I see. I am content. Thou showest thyself
Norway's chief brain as her victorious sword.
Free or a prisoner, let me do homage
To Eric, my King and Swegn's.

ERIC

Thou art content?

HERTHA
This face and noble bearing cannot lie.
I am content and feel as safe with thee
As in my husband's keeping.

ERIC (*smiling*)
So thou art,
Thou subtle voice, thou close and daring brain.
I would I felt myself as safe with thee.

HERTHA
King Eric, think me not thy enemy.
What thou desirest, I desire yet more.

ERIC
Keep to that well; let Aslaug not suspect.
My way I'll take with her and thee and Swegn.
Fear nothing, Hertha; go.
Hertha goes out.
O Freya Queen,
Thou helpst me even as Thor and Odin did.
I make my Norway one.

Act III

Eric's Chamber.

Scene 1

Eric, Harald.

ERIC
At dawn have all things ready for my march.
Let none be near tonight. Send here to me
Aslaug the dancing-girl.
Harald goes out.
I have resumed
The empire and the knowledge of myself.
For this strong angel Love, this violent
And glorious guest, let it possess my heart
Without a rival, not invade the brain,
Not with imperious discord cleave my soul
Jangling its ordered harmonies, nor turn
The manifold music of humanity
Into a single and a maddening note.
Strength in the spirit, wisdom in the mind,
Love in the heart complete the trinity
Of glorious manhood. There was the wide flaw,—
The coldness of the radiance that I was.
This was the vacant space I could not fill.
It left my soul the torso of a god,
A great design unfinished, and my works
Mighty but crude like things admired that pass
Bare of the immortality which keeps
The ages. O, the word they spoke was true!

'Tis Love, 'tis Love fills up the gulfs of Time!
By Love we find our kinship with the stars,
The spacious uses of the sky. God's image
Lives nobly perfect in the soul he made,
When Love completes the godhead in a man.
Aslaug enters.
Thou com'st to me! I give thee grace no more.
What hast thou in thy bosom?

ASLAUG

Only a heart.

ERIC

A noble heart, though wayward. Give it me,
Aslaug, to be the secret of the dawns,
The heart of sweetness housed in Aslaug's breast
Delivered from revolt and ruled by love.

ASLAUG

Why hast thou sent for me and forced to come?
Wilt thou have pity on me even yet
And on thyself?

ERIC

I am a warrior, one
Who have known not mercy. Wilt thou teach it me?
I have learned, Aslaug, from my soul and Life
The great wise pitiless calmness of the gods,
Found for my strength the proud swift blows they deal
At all resistance to their absolute walk,
Thor's hammer-stroke upon the unshaped world.
Its will is beaten on a dreadful forge,
Its roads are hewn by violence divine.
Is there a greater and a sweeter way?
Knowst thou it? Wilt thou lead me there? Thy step
Swift and exultant, canst thou tread its flowers?

ASLAUG
I know not who inspires thy speech; it probes.

ERIC
My mind tonight is full of Norway's needs.
Aslaug, she takes thy image.

ASLAUG
Mine! O if
Tonight I were not Norway!

ERIC
Thou knowest Swegn?

ASLAUG
I knew and I remember.

ERIC
Yes, Swegn, — a soul
Brilliant and furious, violent and great,
A storm, a wind-swept ocean, not a man.
That would seize Norway? that will make it one?
But Odin gave the work to me. I came
Into this mortal frame for Odin's work.

ASLAUG
So deify ambition and desire.

ERIC
If one could snap this mortal body, then
Swegn even might rule, — not govern himself, yet govern
All Norway! Aslaug, canst thou rule thyself?
'Tis difficult for great and passionate hearts.

ASLAUG
Then Swegn must die that Eric still may rule!
Was there no other way the gods could find?

ERIC
A deadly duel are the feuds of kings.

ASLAUG
They are so.
She feels for her dagger.

ERIC
Aslaug, thou feelest for thy heart?
Unruled it follows violent impulses
This way, that way, working calamity
Dreams that it helps the world. What shall I do,
Aslaug, with an unruly noble heart?
Shall I not load it with the chains of love
And rob it of its treasured pain and wrath
And bind it to its own supreme desire?
Richly ’twould beat beneath an absolute rule
And sweetly liberated from itself
By a golden bondage.

ASLAUG
And what of other impulses it holds?
Shall they not once rebel?

ERIC
They shall keep still;
They shall not cry nor question; they shall trust.

ASLAUG
It cannot be that he reads all my heart!
The gods play with me in his speech.

ERIC
Thou knowest
Why thou art called?

ASLAUG

I know why I am here.

ERIC

Few know that, Aslaug, why they have come here,
For that is heaven's secret. Sit down beside me
Nearer my heart. No hesitating! come.
I do not seize thy hands.

ASLAUG

They yet are free.
Is it the gods who bid me to strike soon?
My heart reels down into a flaming gulf.
If thou wouldst rule with love, must thou not spare
Thy enemies?

ERIC

When they have yielded. Is thy choice made?
Whatever defence thou hast against me yet
Use quickly, before I seize these restless hands
And thy more restless heart that flees from bliss.
Aslaug rises trembling.

ASLAUG

Desiredst thou me not to dance tonight,
O King, before thee?

ERIC

It was my will. Is it thine
Now? Dance, while yet thy limbs are thine.

ASLAUG

I dance
The dance of Thiordis with the dagger, taught
To Hertha in Trondhjem and by her to me.

ERIC (*smiling*)
Aslaug, my dancing-girl, thou and thy dance
Have daring, but too little subtlety.

ASLAUG (*moving to a distance*)
What use to struggle longer in the net?
Vain agony! he watches and he knows!
I'll strike him suddenly. It cannot be
The senses will so overtake the will
As to forbid its godlike motion. If
I feared not my wild heart, I could lean down
And lull suspicion with a fatal gift.
My blood would cleanse what shame was in the touch.
So would one act who knew her tranquil will
But none thus in the burning heart sunk down.

ERIC
Wilt thou play vainly with that fatal toy?
Dance now.

ASLAUG
My limbs refuse.

ERIC
They have no right.

ASLAUG
O Gods, I did not know myself till now,
Thrown in this furnace. Odin's irony
Shaped me from Olaf's seed! I am in love
With chains and servitude and my heart desires
Fluttering like a wild bird within its cage
A tyrant's harshness.

ERIC
Wilt thou dance? or wait
Till the enamoured motion of thy limbs

Remember joy of me? So would I have
Thy perfect motion grow a dream of love.
Tomorrow at the dawning will I march
To violent battle and the sword of Swegn
Bring back to be thy plaything, a support
Appropriate to thy action in the dance.
Aslaug, it shall replace thy dagger.

ASLAUG

Fate
Still drives me with his speech and Eric calls
My weakness on to slaughter Eric. Yes,
But he suspects, he knows! Yet will I strike,
Yet will I tread down my rebellious heart,
And then I too can die and end remorse.

ERIC

Where is thy chain
I gave thee, Aslaug? I would watch it rise,
Rubies of passion on a bosom of snow,
And climb for ever on thy breast aheave
With the sea's rhythm as thou dancest. Dance
Weaving my life a measure with thy feet
And of thy dancing I will weave the stroke
That conquers Swegn.

ASLAUG

The necklace? I will bring it.
Rubies of passion! Blood-drops still of death!

She goes out.

ERIC

The power to strike has gone out of her arm
And only in her stubborn thought survives.
She thinks that she will strike. Let it be tried!

He lies back and feigns to
sleep. Aslaug returns.

ASLAUG
Now I could slay him. But he will open his eyes
Appalling with the beauty of his gaze.
He did not know of peril! All he has said
Was only at a venture thought and spoken, —
Or spoken by Fate? Sleeps he his latest sleep?
Might I not touch him only once in love
And no one know of it but death and I,
Whom I must slay like one who hates? Not hate,
O Eric, but the hard necessity
The gods have sent upon our lives, — two flames
That meet to quench each other. Once, Eric! then
The cruel rest. Why did I touch him? I am faint!
My strength ebbs from me. O thou glorious god,
Why wast thou Swegn's and Aslaug's enemy?
We might so utterly have loved. But death
Now intervenes and claims thee at my hands —
And this alone he leaves to me, to slay thee
And die with thee, our only wedlock. Death!
Whose death? Eric's or Swegn's? For one I kill.
Dreadful necessity of choice! His breath
Comes quietly and with a happy rhythm,
His eyes are closed like Odin's in heaven's sleep.
I must strike blindly out or not at all
Screening out with my lashes love, — as now — or now!
For Time is like a sapper mining still
The little resolution that I keep.
Swegn's death or life upon that little stands.
Swegn's death or life and such an easy stroke,
Yet so impossible to lift my hand!
To wait? To watch more moments these closed lids,
This quiet face and try to dream that all
Is different! But the moments are Fate's thoughts
Watching me. While I pause, my brother's slain,
Myself am doomed his concubine and slave.
I must not think of him! Close, mind, close, eyes.
Free the unthinking hand to its harsh work.

She lifts twice the dagger, lowers it twice,
then flings it on the ground.

Eric of Norway, live and do thy will
With Aslaug, sister of Swegn and Olaf's child,
Aslaug of Trondhjem. For her thought is now
A harlot and her heart a concubine,
Her hand her brother's murderess.

ERIC

Thou hast broken
At last.

ASLAUG

Ah, I am broken by my weak
And evil nature. Spare me not, O King,
One vileness, one humiliation known
To tyranny. Be not unjustly merciful!
For I deserve and I consent to all.

ERIC

Aslaug!

ASLAUG

No, I deny my name and parentage.
I am not she who lived in Trondhjem: she
Would not have failed, but slain even though she loved.
Let no voice call me Aslaug any more.

ERIC

Sister of Swegn, thou knowest that I love.
Daughter of Olaf, shouldst thou not aspire
To sit by me on Norway's throne?

ASLAUG

Desist!
Thou shalt not utterly pollute the seat
Where Olaf sat. If I had struck and slain,

I would deserve a more than regal chair.
But not on such must Norway's diadem rest,
A weakling with a hand as impotent
And faltering as her heart, a sensual slave
Whose passionate body overcomes her high
Intention. Rather do thy tyrant will.
King, if thou spare me, I will slay thee yet.

ERIC
Recoil not from thy heart, but strongly see
And let its choice be absolute over thy soul.
Its way once taken thou shalt find thy heart
Rapid; for absolute and extreme in all,
In yielding as in slaying thou must be,
Sweet violent spirit whom thy gods surprise.
Submit thyself without ashamed reserve.

ASLAUG
What more canst thou demand than I have given?
I am prone to thee, prostrate, yielded.

ERIC
Throw from thee
The bitterness of thy self-abasement. Find
That thou hast only joy in being mine.
Thou tremblest?

ASLAUG
Yes, with shame and grief and love.
Thou art my Fate and I am in thy grasp.

ERIC
And shall it spare thee?

ASLAUG
Spare Swegn. I am in thy hands.

ERIC
Is't a condition? I am lord of thee
And lord of Swegn to slay him or to spare.

ASLAUG
No, an entreaty. I am fallen here,
My head is at thy feet, my life is in thy hands:
The luxury of fall is in my heart.

ERIC
Rise up then, Aslaug, and obey thy lord.

ASLAUG
What is thy will with me?

ERIC
This, Aslaug, first.
Take up thy dagger, Aslaug, dance thy dance
Of Thiordis with the dagger. See thou near me;
For I shall sit, nor shouldst thou strike, defend.
What thy passion chose, let thy freed heart confirm;
My life and kingdom twice are in thy hands
And I will keep them only as thy gift.

ASLAUG
So are they thine already; but I obey.
She dances and then lays the dagger at his feet.
Eric, my king and Norway's, my life is mine
No longer, but for thee to keep or break.

ERIC
Swegn's life I hold. Thou gavest it to me
With the dagger.

ASLAUG
It is thine to save.

ERIC

Norway
Thou hast given, casting it for ever away
From Olaf's line.

ASLAUG

What thou hast taken, I give.

ERIC

And last thyself without one covering left
Against my passionate, strong, devouring love.
Thou seest I leave thee nothing.

ASLAUG

I am thine.
Do what thou wilt with me.

ERIC

Because thou hast no help?

ASLAUG

I have no help. My gods have brought me here
And given me into thy dreadful hands.

ERIC

Thou art content at last that they have breathed
Thy plot into thy mind to snare thy soul
In its own violence, bring to me a slave,
A bright-limbed prisoner and thee to thy lord?
See Odin's sign to thee.

ASLAUG

I know it now.
I recognise with prostrate heart my fate
And I will quietly put on my chains
Nor ever strive nor wish to break them more.

ERIC
Yield up to me the burden of thy fate
And treasure of thy limbs and priceless life.
I will be careful of the golden trust.
It was unsafe with thee. And now submit
Gladly at last. Surrender body and soul,
O Aslaug, to thy lover and thy lord.

ASLAUG
Compel me, they cannot resist thy will.

ERIC
I will have thy heart's heart's surrender, not
Its body only. Give me up thy heart.
Open its secret chambers, yield their keys.

ASLAUG
O Eric, is not my heart already thine,
My body thine, my soul into thy grasp
Delivered? I rejoice that God has played
The grand comedian with my tragedy
And trapped me in the snare of thy delight.

ERIC
Aslaug, the world's sole woman! thou cam'st here
To save for us our hidden hope of joy
Parted by old confusion. Some day surely
The world too shall be saved from death by love.
Thou hast saved Swegn, helped Norway. Aslaug, see,
Freya within her niche commands this room
And incense burns to her. Not Thor for thee,
But Freya.

ASLAUG
Thou for me! not other gods.

ERIC
Aslaug, thou hast a ring upon thy hand.
Before Freya give it me and wear instead
This ancient circle of Norwegian rites.
The thing this means shall bind thee to our joy,
Beloved, while the upbuilded worlds endure.
Then if thy spirit wander from its home,
Freya shall find her thrall and lead her back
A million years from now.

ASLAUG
A million lives!

Scene 2

ASLAUG
The world has changed for me within one night.
O surely, surely all shall yet go well,
Since Love is crowned.

ERIC (*entering*)
Aslaug, the hour arrives
When I must leave thee. For the dawn looks pale
Into our chamber and these first rare sounds
Expect the arising sun, the daylight world.

ASLAUG
Eric, thou goest hence to war with Swegn,
My brother?

ERIC
What knows thy heart?

ASLAUG
That Swegn shall live.

ERIC
Thou knowst his safety from deliberate swords.
None shall dare touch the head that Aslaug loves.
But if some evil chance came edged with doom,
Which Odin and my will shall not allow,
Thou wouldst not hold me guilty of his death,
Aslaug?

ASLAUG
Fate orders all and Fate I now

Have recognised as the world's mystic Will
That loves and labours.

ERIC

Because it knows and loves,
Our hearts, our wills are counted, are indulged.
Aslaug, for a few days in love and trust
Anchor thy mind. I shall bring back thy joy.
For now I go with mercy and from love.
He embraces her and goes.

ASLAUG

Swegn lives. A Mind, not iron gods with laws
Deaf and inevitable, overrules.

Act IV

Swegn's fastness in the hills.

Scene 1

Swegn, Hardicnut, with soldiers.

SWEGN
Fight on, fight always, till the Gods are tired.
In all this dwindling remnant of the past
Desires one man to rest from virtue, cease
From desperate freedom?

HARDICNUT
No man wavers here.

SWEGN
Let him depart unhurt who so desires.

HARDICNUT
Why should he go and whither? To Eric's sword
That never pardoned? If our hearts were vile,
Unworthily impatient of defeat,
Serving not harassed right but chance and gain,
Eric himself would keep them true.

SWEGN
Not thine,
My second soul. Yet could I pardon him
Who faltered, for the blow transcends! And were
King Eric not in Yara where he dwells,

I would have seen his hand in this defeat,
Whose stroke is like the lightning's, silent, straight,
Not to be parried.

HARDICNUT

Sigurd smote, perhaps,
But Eric's brain was master of his stroke.

SWEGN

The traitor Sigurd! For young Eric's part
In Olaf's death, he did a warrior's act
Avenging Yarislaf and Hacon slain,
And Fate, not Eric slew. But he who, trusted, lured
Into death's ambush, when the rebel seas
Rejoicing trampled down the royal head
They once obeyed, him I will some day have
At my sword's mercy.
(*to Ragnar who enters*)
Ragnar, does it come,
The last assault, death's trumpets?

RAGNAR

Rather peace,
If thou prefer it, Swegn. An envoy comes
From Eric's army.

SWEGN

Ragnar, bring him in.

Ragnar goes out.

He treats victorious? When his kingdom shook,
His party faltered, then he did not treat
Nor used another envoy than his sword.
(*to Gunthar who enters, escorted by Ragnar*)
Earl Gunthar, welcome, — welcome more wert thou
When loyal.

GUNTHAR
Ragnar, Swegn and Hardicnut,
Revolting Earls, I come from Norway's King
With peace, not menace.

SWEGN
Where then all these days
Behind you lurked the Northerner?

GUNTHAR
Thou art
In his dread shadow and in your mountain lair
Eric surrounds you.

SWEGN (*contemptuously*)
I will hear his words.

GUNTHAR
Eric, the King, the son of Yarislaf,
To Swegn, the Earl of Trondhjem. "I have known
The causes and the griefs that raise thee still
Against my monarchy. Thou knowest mine
That raised me against thy father,—Hacon's death,
My mother's brother, butchered shamefully
And Yarislaf by secret sentence slain.
Elected by our peers I seized his throne.
But thou, against thy country's ancient laws
Rebelling, hast preferred for judge the sword.
Respect then the tribunal of thy choice
And its decision. Why electest thou
In thy drear fastness on the wintry hills
To perish? Trondhjem's earldom shall be thine,
And honours and wealth and state, if thou accept
The offer of thy lenient gods. Consider,
O Swegn, thy country's wounds, perceive at last
Thy good and ours, prolong thy father's house."
I expect thy answer.

SWEGN

I return to him
His proffered mercy. Let him keep it safe
For his own later use.

GUNTHAR

Thou speakest high.
What help hast thou? what hope? what god concealed?

SWEGN

I have the snow for friend and, if it fails,
The arms of death are broad enough for Swegn,
But not subjection.

GUNTHAR

For their sake thou lov'st,
Thy wife's and sister's, yield.

RAGNAR

Thou art not wise.
This was much better left unsaid.

SWEGN

It seems
Your pastime to insult the seed of Kings. Yet why
Am I astonished if triumphant mud
Conceives that the pure heavens are of its stuff
And nature? To the upstart I shall yield,
The fortune-fed adventurer, the boy
Favoured by the ironic Gods? Since fell
By Sigurd's treachery and Eric's fate
In resonant battle on the narrow seas
Olaf, his children had convinced the world,
I thought, of their great origin. Men have said,
"Their very women have souls too great to cry
For mercy even from the Gods." His Fates
Are strong indeed when they compel our race

To hear such terms from his! Go, tell thy King,
Swegn of the ancient house rejects his boons.
Not terms between us stand, but wrath, but blood.
I would have flayed him on a golden cross
And kept his women for my household thralls,
Had I prevailed. Can he not do as much
That he must chaffer and market Norway's crown?
These are the ways of Kings, strong, terrible
And arrogant, full of sovereignty and might.
Force in a King's his warrant from the Gods.
By force and not by bribes and managements
Empires are founded! But your chief was born
Of huckstering earls who lived by prudent gains.
How should he imitate a royal flight
Or learn the leap of Kings upon their prey?

GUNTHAR
Swegn Olafson, thou speakest fatal words.
Where lodge thy wife and sister? Dost thou know?

HARDICNUT
Too far for Eric's reach.

GUNTHAR
Earl, art thou sure?

SWEGN
What means this question?

GUNTHAR
That the Gods are strong
Whom thou in vain despisest, that they have dragged
From Sweden into Eric's dangerous hands
Hertha and Aslaug, that the evil thou speakst
Was fatally by hostile Powers inspired.

SWEGN
Thou liest! They are safe and with the Swede.

GUNTHAR
I pardon thy alarm the violent word.
Earl Swegn, canst thou not see the dreadful Gods
Have chosen earth's mightiest man to do their will?
What is that will but Norway's unity
And Norway's greatness? Canst thou do the work?
Look round on Norway by a boy subdued,
The steed that even Olaf could not tame
See turn obedient to an unripe hand.
Behold him with a single petty pace
Possessing Sweden. Sweden once subdued,
Thinkst thou the ships that crowd the Northern seas
Will stay there? Shall not Britain shake, Erin
Pray loudly that the tempest rather choose
The fields of Gaul? Scythia shall own our yoke,
The Volga's frozen waves endure our march,
Unless the young god's fancy rose-ensnared
To Italian joys attracted amorously
Should long for sunnier realms or lead his high
Exultant mind to lord in eastern Rome.
What art thou but a pebble in his march?
Consider, then, and change thy fierce response.

HARDICNUT
Deceives the lie they tell, thy reason, Swegn?
Earl Gunthar may believe, who even can think
That Yarislaf begot a god!

SWEGN
Gunthar,
I have my fortune, thou thy answer. Go.

GUNTHAR
I pity, Swegn, thy rash and obstinate soul.
He goes out.

SWEGN

Aslaug would scorn me yielding, even now
And even for her. He has unnerved my will,
The subtle tyrant! O, if this be true,
My Fate has wandered into Eric's camp,
My soul is made his prisoner. Friends, prepare
Resistance; he's the thunderbolt that strikes
And threatens only afterwards. It is
Our ultimate battle.

HARDICNUT

On the difficult rocks
We will oppose King Eric and his gods.

Scene 2

Swegn with his earls and followers in flight.

SWEGN
Swift, swift into the higher snows, where Winter
Eternal can alone of universal things
Take courage against Eric to defend
His enemies. O you little remnant left
Of many heroes, save yourselves for Fate.
She yet may need you when she finds the man
She lifts perpetually, too great at last
Even for her handling.

HARDICNUT
Ragnar, go with him,
While I stand here to hinder the pursuit
Or warn in time. Fear not for me, assailed.
Leave, Ragnar, leave me; I am tired at last.
All go out upward except Hardicnut.
Here then you reach me on these snows. O if my death
Could yet persuade indignant Heaven to change
[*Scene incomplete*]

Act V

Eric's Palace.

Scene 1

ERIC
Not by love only, but by force and love.
This man must lower his fierceness to the fierce,
He must be beggared of the thing left, his pride,
And know himself for clay, before he will consent
To value my gift. He would not honour nor revere
This unfamiliar movement of my soul
But would contemn and think my seated strength
Had changed to trembling. Strike the audience-bell,
Harald. The master of my stars is he
Who owns no master. Odin, what is this play,
Thou playest with thy world, of fall and rise,
Of death, birth, greatness, ruin? The time may come
When Eric shall not be remembered! Yes,
But there's a script, there are archives that endure.
Before a throne in some superior world
Bards with undying lips and eyes still young
After the ages sing of all the past
And the immortal Children hear. Somewhere
In this gigantic world of which one grain of dust
Is all our field, Eternal Memory keeps
Our great things and our trivial equally
To whom the peasant's moans above his dead
Are tragic as a prince's fall. Some say
Atomic Chance put Eric here, Swegn there,
Aslaug between. O you revealing Gods,

But I have seen myself and know though veiled
The immortality that thinks in me,
That plans and reasons. Masters of Norway, hail!
For all are masters here, not I alone
Who am my country's brain of unity,
Your oneness. Swegn's at last in Norway's hands,
Who shook our fates. And what shall Norway do with Swegn,
One of her mightiest?

GUNTHAR

If his might submits
Then, Eric, let him live. We cannot brook
These discords always.

ERIC

Norway cannot brook.
Therefore he must submit. Bring him within.
We'll see if this strong iron can be bent,
This crudeness bear the fire. Swegn Olafson,
Hast thou considered yet thy state? hast thou
Submitted to the gods; or must we, Swegn,
Consider now thy sentence?

SWEGN

I have seen
My dire misfortunes, I have seen myself
And know that I am greater. Do thy will,
Since what the son of Yarislaf commands,
The son of Olaf bears!

ERIC

Thou wilt not yield?

SWEGN

My father taught me not the word.

ERIC

Shall I?
Thou hast forgotten, Swegn, thy desperate words.
Or were they meant only for the free snows,
And here retracted?

SWEGN

Son of Yarislaf, they stand.
I claim the cross I would have nailed thee on,
I claim the flayer's knife.

ERIC

These for thyself.
And for thy wife and sister, Swegn?

SWEGN

Alas!

ERIC

I think thy father taught thee not that word,
But I have taught thee. Since thou lovest yet, —
No man who says that he will stand alone,
Swegn, can afford to love, — thou then art mine
Inevitably. He must be half a god
Who can oppose Thor's anger, Odin's will
Nor dream of breaking. Such the gods delight in,
Raising or smiting; such in the gods delight,
Raised up or smitten. But thou wast always man
And canst not now be more. Thou vauntst thy blood,
Thy strength? Thou art much stronger, so thou sayst,
Than thy misfortunes. Art thou stronger, Swegn,
Than theirs? Can all thy haughty pride of race
Or thy heart's mightiness undo my will
In whose strong hands they lie? Swegn Olafson,
The gods are mightier than thy race and blood,
The gods are mightier than thy arrogant heart.
They will not have one violent man oppose

His egoism, his pride and his desire
Against a country's fate. Use then thy eyes
And learn thy strength.
At a sign of his hand Aslaug and Hertha are brought in.
Thou hast no strength,
For thou and these are only Eric's slaves
Who have been his stubborn hinderers. Therefore Fate,
Whose favourite and brother I have grown,
Turned wroth with you and dragged you all into my grasp.
I will that you should live and yield. These yield,
But thou withstandest wisdom, Fate and love
Allied against thee. Swegn Olafson, submit,
Stand by my side and share thy father's throne.

SWEGN (*after a silence*)
Yes, thou art fierce and subtle! Let them pronounce
My duty's preference if not my heart's,
To them or Right.

ERIC
O narrow obstinate heart!
Had this been for thy country or a cause
Men worship, then it would indeed have been
A noble blindness, but thou serv'st thy pride,
Swegn, son of Olaf, not the noble cause
Of God or man or country. Look now on these.
I give thee the selection of their fate.
If these remain my slaves, an upstart's, Swegn,
Who yet are Olaf's blood and Norway's pride,
I swear 'tis thou that mak'st them so. Now choose.
(*Swegn is silent*)
How sayst thou,
Swegn Olafson, shall these be Eric's thralls?
Wilt thou abide by their pronouncement, Swegn?
Aslaug and Hertha, see your brother and lord,
This mighty captive, royal once, now fallen

And helpless in my hands. I wish to spare
His mightiness, his race, his royal heart;
But he prefers the cross instead, prefers
Your shame — thy brother, Aslaug, — Hertha, he.
Thy spouse consents to utmost shame for both
If from the ages he can buy this word,
"Swegn still was stubborn." That to him is all.
He who forgot to value Norway's will,
Forgets to value now your pride, your love.
This was not royal, nor like Olaf's son!
Come, will you speak to him, will you persuade?
Walk there aside awhile; aim at his heart.
Hertha, my subject, Aslaug, thou my thrall,
Save, if he will, this life.

SWEGN

'Tis thus we meet, —
Were not the snows of Norway preferable,
Daughter of Olaf?

ASLAUG

They were high, but cold.

HERTHA

Wilt thou not speak to Hertha, Swegn, my lord?

SWEGN

Hertha, alas, thy crooked scheming brain
That brought us here.

HERTHA

The gods use instruments,
Not ask their counsel. O Swegn, accept the gods
And their decision.

ASLAUG

Must we live always cold?

O brother, cast the snows out of thy heart.
Let there be summer.

HERTHA

Yield, husband, to the sun.
There is no shame in yielding to the gods.

ASLAUG

Nor to a god, although his room be earth
And his body mortal.

SWEGN

There was an Aslaug once
Whose speech had other grandeurs. Can it find
In all its sweet and lofty harmonies
The word or argument that can excuse thy fall,
O not to me, but to that worshipped self
Thou wast, my sister?

ASLAUG

I have no argument except my heart
Nor need excuse for what I glory in.
Brother, were we not always one? 'Tis strange
That I must reason with thee.

SWEGN

O, thou knewest.
Therefore I fell, therefore my strength is gone,
And where a god's magnificence lived once,
Here, here 'tis empty. O inconstant heart,
Thou wast my Fate, my courage, and at last
Thou hast gone over to my enemy,
Taking my Fate, my courage. I will hear
No words from such. Thou wouldst betray what's left,
Until not even Swegn is left to Swegn,
But only a coward's shadow.

HERTHA

Hear me, Swegn.

SWEGN

Ah, Hertha! what hast thou to say to me?

HERTHA

Save me, my lord, from my own punishment,
Forgetting my deserts.

SWEGN

Alas! thy love,
Though great, was never wise, and must it ask
So huge a recompense? Thou hadst myself.
Thou askst my honour.

ASLAUG

Will this persuade thee? I have nothing else.

SWEGN

Thou only and so only couldst prevail.
O thou hast overcome my strength at last.
King, thou hast conquered. Not to thee I yield,
But those I loved are thy allies. From these
Recall thy wrath and on my head pronounce
What doom thou wilt, though yielding is doom enough
For Swegn of Norway.

ERIC

Abjure rebellion then; receive my boons,
Receive my mercy.

SWEGN

Mercy. It is received.
Let all the world hear Olaf's son abjure
His birth and greatness. I accept — accept!
King Eric's boons, King Eric's mercy. O torture!

The spirit of Olaf will no more sit still
Within me. O though thou slaughter these with pangs,
I will not yield. Take, take thy mercy back.

ERIC
I take it back. What wouldst thou in its stead?

SWEGN
Do what thou wilt with these and me. I have done!

ERIC
Thou castst thy die, thou weak and violent man, I will cast mine
And conquer.

SWEGN
I have endured the worst.

ERIC
Not so.
Thou thinkest I will help thee to thy death,
Allowing the blind grave to seal thy eyes
To all that I shall do to these. Learn, Swegn,
I am more cruel! Thou shalt live and see
On these my vengeance. Go, Aslaug, and return
Robed as thou wast upon the night thou knowest
Wearing thy dagger, wearing too thy ring.

SWEGN
What wilt thou do with her? God! what wilt thou do?
O wherefore have I seen and taken back love
Into a heart had shut itself to all
But death and greatness?

ERIC
I will inflict on them
What thou canst not endure to gaze upon —
Or if thou canst, then with that hardness live

For die thou shalt not. I have ways for that.
Thou thoughtst to take thy refuge in a grave
And let these bear thy punishment for thee,
Thy heart being spared. It was no valiant thought,
No worthy escape for Swegn. Aslaug and Hertha,
Remove your outer robes.

SWEGN

What must I see?

ERIC

As dancing-girls these women came to me.
As dancing-girls I keep them. Thou shalt see
Aslaug of Norway at her trade — to dance
Before me and my courtiers. That begins,
There's more behind, unless thou change thy mood.

SWEGN

Thou knowest how to torture.

ERIC

And to break.

Aslaug reenters.

Thou seest, Swegn. Shall I command the dance?
Shall this be the result of Olaf's house?

SWEGN

Daughter of Olaf, wilt thou then obey?

ASLAUG

Yes, since thou lov'st me not, my brother Swegn,
Whom else should I obey, save him I love?
If thou hadst loved me still, I should not need.

ERIC

Dance.

SWEGN
No. Stay, Aslaug. Since thou bad'st me love
Thee, not my glory, as indeed I must
To save the house of Olaf from this shame, —
Whose treacherous weakness works for him and thee, —

ERIC
Pause not again — for pause is fatal now.

SWEGN
King, I have yielded, I accept thy boons.
Heir of a starveling Earl, I bow my head
Even to thy mercies. I am Olaf's son,
Yet yield — that name remember, speak this word —
I shall be faithful to my own disgrace.
O fear not, King, I can be great again.

ERIC
Without conditions hast thou yielded?

SWEGN
No.
Let these be spared all shame — for that I yield.
My honour has a price — and O 'tis small.

ERIC
That's given. Without terms besides?

SWEGN
One prayer.
Give me a dungeon deep enough, O King,
To hide my face from all these eyes.

ERIC
Swear then,
Whatever prison I assign thee, be it wide
Or narrow, to observe its state, its bounds

And do even there my will.

SWEGN (*with a gesture*)
That too is sworn!
Let Thor and Odin witness to my oath.

ERIC
Four prisons I assign to Olaf's son.
Thy palace first in Trondhjem, Olaf's roof —
This house in Yara, Eric's court — thy country
To whom thou yieldest, Norway — and at last
My army's head when I invade the world.

SWEGN (*amazed and doubtful*)
Thou hast surprised me, Eric, with an oath
And circumvented.

ERIC
Hertha, to thy lord
Return unharmed — thou seest thou wast safe
As in his dearest keeping. Take, Hertha,
Trondhjem with thee and Olaf's treasures; sit
The second in the land, beneath our throne.

SWEGN
Eric, enough. Have I not yielded? Here
Let thy boons rest.

ERIC
'Tis truth. For my next boon
Is to myself. Look not upon this hand
I clasp in mine, although the fairest hand
That God has made. Observe this ring instead
And recognise it.

GUNTHAR
It is Freya's ring

On Aslaug's hand; she who once wears it sits
Thenceforth on Norway's throne.

ERIC

Possess thy father's chair
Intended for thee always from the first,
Nor be amazed that in these dancing robes
I seat her here, for they increase its pomp
More than imperial purple. Think not, Swegn,
Thy sister shamed or false who came to me,
Spilling my blood and hers to give thee back thy crown,
A violent and mighty purpose such
As only noble hearts conceive; and only
She yielded to that noble heart at last
Because of Odin's pressure.

SWEGN

So they came.
Aslaug, thou soughtst my throne, but findst it thine.
I grudge it not to thee — for thy great heart
Deserved it. Eric, thou hast won at last,
Now only.

ERIC

I could not shame thy sister, Swegn,
Save by my wife's disgrace, and this was none
But only a deceit to prove thy heart
And now thou seest thou couldst not have rebelled
Except by violence to Olaf's seed
That must again rule Norway.

SWEGN

Eric, for thy boons,
They hurt not now, take what return thou wilt,
For I am thine. Thou hast found out the way
To save from me thy future. It is secured
Even with my heart's strings.

ERIC

Swegn, I too have boons
To ask of thee.

SWEGN

Let them be difficult then,
If thou wouldst have me grant them.

ERIC

Swegn, excuse and love
Thy comrade Hardicnut, for he intended
A kind betrayal.

SWEGN

This is nothing, King.
His act my heart had come to understand
And it has pardoned.

ERIC

Forgive then Swegn, dearest,
Sigurd, thy foe, as I have pardoned first
My father's slaughterer. This thing is hard.

SWEGN

He's pardoned, not forgiven. Let him not come
Too often in my sight.

ERIC

The gods have won.
Let this embrace engulf our ended strife,
Brother of Aslaug.

SWEGN

Husband of my sister,
Thou assum'st our blood and it ennobles thee
To the height of thy great victories — this thy last
And greatest. Thou hast dealt with me as a King,

Then as a brother. Thou adornst thy throne.

ERIC
Rest, brother, from thy hardships, toils and wars
Until I need the sword that matched with mine,
To smite my foemen.
Aslaug, what thinkst thou?
If thou art satisfied, all was well done.

ASLAUG
Thou hast the tyrant in thy nature still,
And so I love thee best, for then I recognise
My conqueror. O what canst thou do but well?
For in thy every act and word I see
The gods compel thee.

ERIC
O thou hast changed me with thy starry eyes,
Daughter of Olaf, and hast made me a man
Where was but height and iron; all my roots
Of action, mercy, greatness, enterprise,
Sit now transplanted to thy breast, O charm,
O noble marvel! From thy bosom my strength
Comes out to me. Mighty indeed is love,
Thou sangst of, Aslaug, once, the golden hoop
Mightier, swifter than the warrior's sword.
Dost thou remember what thou cam'st to do,
Aslaug, from Gothberg?

ASLAUG (*wondering*)
Only ten days ago
I came from Gothberg!

She turns with a laugh and embraces Eric.

ERIC
The gods have spoken since and shown their hand.

They seal our eyes and drive us, but at last
Our souls remember when the act is done,
That it was fated. Aslaug, now for us
The world begins again, — our world, beloved,
Since once more we — who since the stars were formed
Playing the game of games by Odin's will
Have met and parted — parted, meet again
For ever.

Vasavadutta

A Dramatic Romance

Characters

VUTHSA UDAIAN, King of Cowsamby.
YOUGUNDHARÂYAN, his Minister, until recently Regent of Cowsamby.
ROOMUNWATH, Captain of his armies.
ALURCA
VASUNTHA } young men of Vuthsa's age, his friends and companions.
PARENACA, the King's door-keeper.
CHUNDA MAHASEGN, King of Avunthy.
GOPÂLACA
VICURNA } his sons.
RÉBHA, Governor of Ujjayiny, the capital of Avunthy.
A CAPTAIN of Avunthy.

UNGÂRICÂ, Queen of Avunthy.
VÂSAVADUTTÂ, daughter of Chunda Mahasegn and Ungarica.
UMBÂ, her handmaiden.
MUNJOOLICÂ, the servile name of Bundhumathie, the captive Princess of Sourashtra, serving Vasavadutta.
A KIRÂTHA WOMAN.

The action of the romance takes place a century after the war of the Mahabharata; the capital has been changed to Cowsamby; the empire has been temporarily broken and the kingdoms of India are overshadowed by three powers, Magadha in the East ruled by Pradyotha, Avunthy in the West ruled by Chunda Mahasegn who has subdued also the Southern kings, and Cowsamby in the Centre where Yougundharayan strives by arms and policy to maintain the house of Parikshith against the dominating power of Avunthy. Recently since the young Vuthsa has been invested with the regal power and appeared at [ ], Chunda Mahasegn, till then invincible, has suffered rude but not decisive reverses. For the moment there is an armed peace between the two empires.

The fable is taken from Somadeva's Kathasaritsagara (the Ocean of the Rivers of Many Tales) and was always a favourite subject of Indian romance and drama; but some of the circumstances, a great many of the incidents and a few of the names have been altered or omitted and others introduced in their place. Vuthsa, the name of the nation in the tale, is in the play used as a personal name of the King Udaian.

Act I

Scene 1

A room in the palace in Ujjayiny.
Chunda Mahasegn, seated; Gopalaca.

MAHASEGN
Vuthsa Udaian drives my fortunes back.
Our strengths retire from one luxurious boy,
Defeated!

GOPALACA
I have seen him in the fight
And I have lived to wonder. O, he ranges
As lightly through the passages of war
As moonbeam feet of some bright laughing girl,
Her skill concealing in her reckless grace,
The measures of a rapid dance.

MAHASEGN
If this portentous morning reach our gates,
My star is fallen. Yet I had great dreams.
Oudh and Cowsamby were my high-carved doors,
Ganges, Godavary and Nurmada
In lion race besprayed with sacred dew
My moonlit jasmines in my pleasure-grounds.
All this great sunlit continent lay sleeping
At peace beneath the shadow of my brows.
But they were dreams.

GOPALACA
Art thou not great enough

To live them?

MAHASEGN
O my son, many high hearts
Must first have striven, many must have failed
Before a great thing can be done on earth,
And who shall say then that he is the man?
One age has seen the dreams another lives.

GOPALACA
Look up towards the hills where Rudra stands,
His dreadful war-lance pointing to the east.
Is not thy spirit that uplifted spear?

MAHASEGN
It has been turned by Vishnu's careless hand!

GOPALACA
Fear not the obstacles the gods have strewn.
Why should the mighty man restrain his soul?
Stretch out thy hand to seize, thy foot to trample,
A Titan's motion.

MAHASEGN
Thou soarst the eagle's height,
But with eyes closed to the tempest.

GOPALACA
Wilt thou sue
To foemen for the end of haughty strife?

MAHASEGN
That never shall be seen. The boy must fall.

GOPALACA
He is young, radiant, beautiful and bold.
But let him fall. We will not bear defeat.

MAHASEGN
Yet many gods stood smiling at his birth.
Luxmie came breathing fortunate days; Vishnu
Poured down a radiant sanction from the skies
And promised his far stride across the earth;
Magic Saruswathie between his hands
Laid down her lotus arts.

GOPALACA
The austere gods
Help best and not indulgent deities.
The greatness in him cannot grow to man.
His hero hours are rare forgetful flights.
Excused from effort and difficult ascent
Birds that are brilliant-winged, fly near to earth.
Wine, song and dance winging his peaceful days
Throng round his careless soul. It cannot find
The noble leisure to grow great.

MAHASEGN
There lives
Our hope. Spy out, my son, thy enemy's spirit,
Even as his wealth and armies! Let thy eyes
Find out its weakness and thy hand there strike.

GOPALACA
Thou hast a way to strike?

MAHASEGN
I have a way,
Not noble like the sounding paths of war.

GOPALACA
Take it; let us stride straight towards our goal.

MAHASEGN
Thy arm is asked for.

GOPALACA

It is thine to use.

MAHASEGN

Invent some strong device and bring him to us
A captive in Ujjayiny's golden groves.
Shall he not find a jailor for his heart
To take the miracle of its keys and wear them
Swung on her raiment's border? Then he lives
Shut up by her close in a prison of joy,
Her and our vassal.

GOPALACA

Brought to the eagle's nest
For the eagle's child thou giv'st him her heart's prey
To Vasavadutta! King, thy way is good.
Garooda on a young and sleeping Python
Rushing from heaven I'll lift him helpless up
Into the skiey distance of our peaks.
Though it is strange and new and subtle, it is good.
Think the blow struck, thy foeman seized and bound.

MAHASEGN

I know thy swiftness and thy gathered leap.
Once here! his senses are enamoured slaves
To the touch of every beautiful thing. O, there
No hero, but a tender soul at play,
A soft-eyed, mirthful and luxurious youth
Whom all sweet sounds and all sweet sights compel
To careless ecstasy. Wine, music, flowers
And a girl's dawning smile can weave him chains
Of vernal softness stronger than can give
The unyielding iron. Two lips shall seal his strength,
Two eyes of all his acts be tyrant stars.

GOPALACA

One aid I ask of thee and only one.

My banishment, O King, from thy domains.

MAHASEGN
Gopalaca, I banish thee, my child.
Return not with my violent will undone.

Scene 2

A hall in the palace at Cowsamby.
Yougundharayan, Roomunwath.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
I see his strength lie covered sleeping in flowers;
Yet is a greatness hidden in his years.

ROOMUNWATH
Nourish not such large hopes.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
I know too well
The gliding bane that these young fertile soils
Cherish in their green darkness; and my cares
Watch to prohibit the nether snake who writhes
Sweet-poisoned, perilous in the rich grass,
Lust with the jewel love upon his hood,
Who by his own crown must be charmed, seized, change
Into a warm great god. I seek a bride
For Vuthsa.

ROOMUNWATH
Wisely; but whom?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
One only lives
So absolute in her charm that she can keep
His senses from all straying, the child far-famed
For gifts and beauty, flower born by magic fate
On a fierce iron stock.

ROOMUNWATH

Vasavadutta,
Avunthy's golden princess! Hope not to mate
These opposite godheads. Follow Nature's prompting,
Nor with thy human policy pervert
Her simple ends.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

Nature must flower into art
And science, or else wherefore are we men?
Man out of Nature wakes to God's complexities,
Takes her crude simple stuff and by his skill
Turns things impossible into daily miracles.

ROOMUNWATH

This thing is difficult, and what the gain?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

It gives us a long sunlit time for growth;
For we shall raise in her a tender shield
Against that iron victor in the west,
The father's heart taking our hard defence
Forbid the king-brain in that dangerous man.
Then when he's gone, we are his greatness' heirs
In spite of his bold Titan sons.

ROOMUNWATH

He must
Have fallen from his proud spirit to consent.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

Another strong defeat and she is ours.

ROOMUNWATH

Blow then the conchs for battle.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

I await
Occasion and to feel the gods inclined.
(*to Vuthsa entering*)
My son, thou comest early from thy breezes.

VUTHSA

The dawn has spent her glories and I seek
Alurca and Vasuntha for the harp
With chanted verse and lyric ease until
The golden silences of noon arrive.
See this strange flower I plucked below the stream!
Each petal is a thought.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

And the State's cares,
King of Cowsamby?

VUTHSA

Are they not for thee,
My mind's wise father? Chide me not. See now,
It is thy fault for being great and wise.
What thou canst fashion sovereignly and well,
Why should I do much worse?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

And when I pass?

VUTHSA

Thy passing I forbid.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

Vuthsa, thou art
Cowsamby's king, not Time's, nor death's.

VUTHSA

O, then,

The gods shall keep thee at my strong demand
To be the aged minister of my sons.
This they must hear. Of what use are the gods
If they crown not our just desires on earth?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Well, play thy time. Thou art a royal child,
And though young Nature in thee dallies long,
I trust her dumb and wiser brain that sees
What our loud thoughts can never reason out,
Not thinking life. She has her secret calls
And works divinely behind play and sleep,
Shaping her infant powers.

VUTHSA
I may then go
And listen to Alurca with his harp?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Thy will
In small things train, Udaian, in the great
Make it a wrestler with the dangerous earth.

VUTHSA
My will is for delight. They are not beautiful,
This State, these schemings. War is beautiful
And the bright ranks of armoured men and steel
That singing kisses steel and the white flocking
Of arrows that are homing birds of war.
When shall we fight again?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
When battle ripens.
And what of marriage? Is it not desired?

VUTHSA
O no, not yet! At least I think, not yet.

I'll tell thee a strange thing, my father. I shudder,
I know it is with rapture, at the thought
Of women's arms, and yet I dare not pluck
The joy. I think, because desire's so sweet
That the mere joy might seem quite crude and poor
And spoil the sweetness. My father, is it so?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Perhaps. Thou hast desire for women then?

VUTHSA
It is for every woman and for none.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
One day perhaps thou shalt join war with wedlock
And pluck out from her guarded nest by force
The wonder of Avunthy, Vasavadutta.

VUTHSA
A name of leaping sweetness I have heard!
One day I shall behold a marvellous face
And hear heaven's harps defeated by a voice.
Do the gods whisper it? Dreams are best awhile.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
These things we shall consider.

PARENACA (*entering*)
Hail, Majesty!
A high-browed wanderer at the portals seeks
Admittance. Tarnished is he with the road,
Alone, yet seems a mighty prince's son.

VUTHSA
Bring him with honour in. Such guests I love.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
We should know first what soul is this abroad
And why he comes.

VUTHSA
We'll learn that from his lips.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Hope not to hear truth often in royal courts.
Truth! Seldom with her bright and burning wand
She touches the unwilling lips of men
Who lust and hope and fear. The gods alone
Possess her. Even our profoundest thoughts
Are crooked to avoid her and from her touch
Crawl hurt into their twilight, often hating her
Too bright for them as for our eyes the sun.
If she dwells here, it is with souls apart.

VUTHSA
All men were not created from the mud.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
See not a son of heaven in every worm.
Look round and thou wilt see a world on guard.
All life here armoured walks, shut in. Thou too
Keep, Vuthsa, a defence before thy heart.
Parenaca brings in Gopalaca.

GOPALACA
Which is Udaian, great Cowsamby's king?

VUTHSA
He stands here. What's thy need from Vuthsa? Speak.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Roomunwath, look with care upon this face.

GOPALACA
Hail, then, Cowsamby's majesty, well borne
Though in a young and lovely vessel! Hail!

VUTHSA
Thou art some great one surely of this earth
Who com'st to me to live guest, comrade, friend,
Perhaps much more.

GOPALACA
I have fought against thee, king.

VUTHSA
The better! I am sure thou hast fought well.
Com'st thou in peace or strife?

GOPALACA
In peace, O king,
And as thy suppliant.

VUTHSA
Ask; I long to give.

GOPALACA
Know first my name.

VUTHSA
Thy eyes, thy face I know.

GOPALACA
I am Gopalaca, Avunthy's son,
Once thy most dangerous enemy held on earth.

VUTHSA
A mighty name thou speakest, prince, nor one
To supplications tuned. Yet ask and have.

GOPALACA
Thou heardst me well? I am thy foeman's son.

VUTHSA
And therefore welcome more to Vuthsa's heart.
Foemen! they are our playmates in the fight
And should be dear as friends who share our hours
Of closeness and desire. Why should they keep
Themselves so distant? Thou the noblest of them all,
The bravest. I have played with thee, O prince,
In the great pastime.

GOPALACA
This was Vuthsa, then!

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
And wherefore seeks the son of Mahasegn
Hostile Cowsamby? or why suppliant comes
To his chief enemy?

GOPALACA
I should know that brow.
This is thy great wise minister? That is well.
I seek a refuge.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
And thou sayst thou art
Avunthy's son?

GOPALACA
Because I am his son.
My father casts me from him and no spot
Once thought my own will suffer now my tread.
Therefore I come. Vuthsa Udaian, king,
Grant me some hut, some cave upon thy soil,
Some meanest refuge for my wandering head.
But if thy heart can dwell with fear, as do

The natures of this age, or feed the snake
Suspicion, over gloomier borders send
My broken life.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Vuthsa, beware. His words
Strive to conceal their naked cunning.

VUTHSA
Prince,
What thou demandst and more than thou demandst,
Is without question thine. Now, if thou wilt,
Reveal the cause of thy great father's wrath,
But only if thou wilt.

GOPALACA
Because his bidding
Remained undone, my exile was embraced.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
More plainly.

GOPALACA
Ask me not. I am ashamed.
Nor should a son unveil his father's fault.
They, even when they tyrannise, remain
Most dear and reverend still, who gave us birth.
This, Vuthsa, know; against thee I was aimed,
A secret arrow.

VUTHSA
Keep thy father's counsel.
If he shoot arrows and thou art that shaft,
I'll welcome thee into my throbbing breast.
What thou hast asked, I sue to thee to take.
Thou seekst a refuge, thou shalt find a home:
Thou fleest a father, here a brother waits

To clasp thee in his arms.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Too frank, too noble!

VUTHSA
Come closer. Child of Mahasegn, wilt thou
Be king Udaian's brother and his friend?
This proud grace wilt thou fling on the bare boon
That I have given thee? Is it much to ask?

GOPALACA
To be thy brother was my heart's desire.
Shod with that hope I came.

VUTHSA
Clasp then our hands.
Gopalaca, my play, my couch, my board,
My serious labour and my trifling hours
Share henceforth, govern. All I have is thine.

GOPALACA
Thine is the noblest soul on all the earth.

VUTHSA
Frown not, my father. I obey my heart
Which leaped up in me when I saw his face.
Be sure my heart is wise. Gopalaca,
The sentinel love in man ever imagines
Strange perils for its object. So my minister
Expects from thee some harm. Wilt thou not then
Assure his love and pardon it the doubt?

GOPALACA
He is a wise deep-seeing statesman, king,
And shows that wisdom now. But I will swear,
But I will prove to thee, thou noble man,

That dearest friendship is my will to him
Thou serv'st and to work on him proudest love.
Is it enough?

VUTHSA

My father, hast thou heard?
A son of kings swears not to lying oaths.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

It is enough.

VUTHSA

Then come, Gopalaca,
Into my palace and my heart.
He goes into the palace with Gopalaca.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

O life
Besieged of kings! What snare is this? what charm?
There was a falsehood in the Avunthian's eyes.

ROOMUNWATH

He has given himself into his foemen's hands
And he has sworn. He is a prince's son.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

Yes, by his sire; but the pale queen Ungarica
Was to a strange inhuman father born
And from dim shades her victor dragged her forth.

ROOMUNWATH

There's here no remedy. Vuthsa is ensnared
As with a sudden charm.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

I'll watch his steps.
Keep thou such bows wherever these two walk

As never yet have missed their fleeing mark.

ROOMUNWATH
Yet was this nobly done on Vuthsa's part.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
O, such nobility in godlike times
Was wisdom, but not to our fall belongs.
Sweet virtue now is mother of defeat
And baser, fiercer souls inherit earth.

Act II

Scene 1

A room in the palace at Cowsamby.
Alurca, Vasuntha.

ALURCA
He'll rule Cowsamby in the end, I think.

VASUNTHA
Artist, be an observer too. His eyes
Pursue young Vuthsa like a hunted prey
And seem to measure possibility,
But not for rule or for Cowsamby care.
To reign's his nature, not his will.

ALURCA
This man
Is like some high rock that was suddenly
Transformed into a thinking creature.

VASUNTHA
There's
His charm for Vuthsa who is soft as Spring,
Fair like a hunted moon in cloud-swept skies,
Luxurious like a jasmine in its leaves.

ALURCA
When will this Vuthsa grow to man? Hard-brained
Roomunwath, deep Yougundharayan rule;
The State, its arms are theirs. This boy between
Like a girl's cherished puppet stroked and dandled,

Chid and prescribed the postures it must keep,
Moves like a rhythmic picture of delight
And with his sunny smile he does it all.
Now in our little kingdom with its law
Of beauty and music this high silence comes
And seizes on him. All our acts he rules
And Vuthsa has desired one master more.

VASUNTHA

There is a wanton in this royal heart
Who gives herself to all and all are hers.
Perhaps that too is wisdom. For, Alurca,
This world is other than our standards are
And it obeys a vaster thought than ours,
Our narrow thoughts! The fathomless desire
Of some huge spirit is its secret law.
It keeps its own tremendous forces penned
And bears us where it wills, not where we would.
Even his petty world man cannot rule.
We fear, we blame; life wantons her own way,
A little ashamed, but obstinate still, because
We check but cannot her. O, Vuthsa's wise!
Because he seeks each thing in its own way,
He enjoys. And wherefore are we at all
If not to enjoy and with some costliness
Get dear things done, till rude death interferes,
God's valet moves away these living dolls
To quite another room and better play, —
Perhaps a better!

ALURCA

Yet consider this.
Look back upon the endless godlike line.
Think of Parikshith, Janaméjoya, think
Of Suthaneke, then on our Vuthsa gaze.
Glacier and rock and all Himaloy piled!
What eagle peaks! Now this soft valley blooms;

The cuckoo cries from branches of delight,
The bee sails murmuring its low-winged desires.

VASUNTHA
It was to amuse himself God made the world.
For He was dull alone! Therefore all things
Vary to keep the secret witness pleased.
How Nature knows and does her office well.
What poignant oppositions she combines!
Death fosters life that life may suckle death.
Her certainties are snares, her dreams prevail.
What little seeds she grows into huge fates,
Proves with a smile her great things to be small!
All things here secretly are right; all's wrong
In God's appearances. World, thou art wisely led
In a divine confusion.

ALURCA
The Minister
Watches this man so closely, he must think
There is some dangerous purpose in his mind.

VASUNTHA
He is the wariest of all ministers
And would suspect two pigeons on a roof
Of plots because they coo.

ALURCA
All's possible.
Vuthsa enters with Gopalaca.

VUTHSA
Yes, I would love to see the ocean's vasts.
Are they as grand as are the mountains dumb
Where I was born and grew? Or is its voice
Like the huge murmur of our forests swayed
In the immense embrace of giant winds?

We have that in Cowsamby.

GOPALACA

Wilt thou show
Them to me, Vindhya's crags where forests dimly
Climb down towards my Avunthy?

VUTHSA

We will go
And hunt together the swift fleeing game
Or with our shafts unking the beast of prey.

GOPALACA

If we could range alone wide solitudes,
Not soil them with our din, not with our tread
Disturb great Nature in her animal trance,
Her life of mighty instincts where no stir
Of the hedged restless mind has spoiled her vasts.

VUTHSA

It is a thing I have dreamed of. Alurca, tell
The Minister that we go to hunt the deer
In Vindhya's forests on Avunthy's verge.
That's if my will's allowed.

Alurca goes out to the outer palace.

VASUNTHA

He will, Vuthsa,
Allow thy will. Where does it lead thee, king?

VUTHSA

A scourge for thee or a close gag might help.

VASUNTHA

A bandage for my eyes would serve as well.

VUTHSA
Shall we awaken in Alurca's hands
The living voices of the harp? Or willst thou
That I should play the heaven-taught airs thou lov'st
On the Gundhurva's magical guitar
Which lures even woodland beasts? For the elephant
Comes trumpeting to the enchanted sound,
A coloured blaze of beauty on the sward
The peacocks dance and the snake's brilliant hood
Lifts rhythmic yearning from the emerald herb.

GOPALACA
Vuthsa Udaian, suffer me awhile
To walk alone, for I am full of thoughts.

VUTHSA
Thou shouldst not be. Cannot my love atone
For lost Avunthy?

GOPALACA
Always; but a voice
Comes to me often from the haunts of old.

VASUNTHA
Returns no dim cloud-messenger to whisper
To thy great father's longing waiting heart
Far from his banished son?

GOPALACA
Thy satire's forced.

VASUNTHA
Thy earnest less?

VUTHSA
One hour, a long pale loss,
I sacrifice to thy thoughts. When it has dragged past,

Where shall I find thee?

GOPALACA

Where the flowers rain
Beneath the red boughs on the river's bank.
There will I walk while thou hearst harp or verse.

VUTHSA

Without thee neither harp nor verse can charm.
Gopalaca goes.
The harmony of kindred souls that seek
Each other on the strings of body and mind,
Is all the music for which life was born.
Vasuntha, let me hear thy happy crackling,
Thou fire of thorns that leapest all the day.
Spring, call thy cuckoo.

VASUNTHA

Give me fuel then,
Your green young boughs of folly for my fire.

VUTHSA

I give enough I think for all the world.

VASUNTHA

It is your trade to occupy the world.
Men have made kings that folly might have food;
For the court gossips over them while they live
And the world gossips over them when they are dead.
That they call history. But our man returns.

ALURCA

Do here and in all things, says the Minister,
Thy pleasure. But since upon a dangerous verge
This hunt will tread, thy cohorts armed shall keep
The hilly intervals, himself be close
To guard with vigilance his monarch's life

Against the wild beasts and what else means harm.

VUTHSA
That is his care; what he shall do, is good.

ALURCA
To lavish upon all men love and trust
Shows the heart's royalty, not the brain's craft.

VUTHSA
I have found my elder brother. Grudge me not,
Alurca, that delight. Thou lov'st me well?

ALURCA
Is it now questioned?

VUTHSA
Then rejoice with me
That I have found my brother. Joy in my joy,
Love with my love, think with my thoughts; the rest
Leave to much older wiser men whose schemings
Have made God's world an office and a mart.
We who are young, let us indulge our hearts.

ALURCA
Thou tak'st all hearts and givest thine to none,
Udaian. Yet is this prince Gopalaca,
This breed from Titans and from Mahasegn,
Hard, stern, reserved. Does he repay thy friendship
As we do?

VUTHSA
Love itself is sweet enough
Though unreturned; and there are silent hearts.

VASUNTHA
Suffer this flower to climb its wayside rock.

Oppose not Nature's cunning who will not
Be easily refused her artist joys.
Fierce deserts round the green oasis yearn
And the chill lake desires the lily's pomp.

VUTHSA
He is the rock, I am the flower. What part
Playst thou in the woodland?

VASUNTHA
A thorn beneath the rose
That from the heavens of desire was born
And men call Vuthsa.

VUTHSA
Poet, satirist, sage,
What other gifts keepst thou concealed within
More than the many that thy outsides show?

VASUNTHA
I squander all and keep none, not like thee
Who trad'st in honey to deceive the world.

VUTHSA
O, earth is honey; let me taste her all.
Our rapture here is short before we go
To other sweetness on some rarer height
Of the upclimbing tiers that are the world.

Scene 2

A forest-glade in the Vindhya hills.
Vicurna, a Captain.

VICURNA
The hunt rings distant still; but all the ways
Troops and more troops besiege. Where is Gopalaca?

CAPTAIN
Our work may yet be rude before we reach
Our armies on the frontier.

VICURNA
That I desire.
O whistling of the arrows! I have yet
To hear that battle music.

CAPTAIN
Someone comes,
For wild things scurry forth.
They take cover. Gopalaca enters.

VICURNA
Whither so swiftly?
You are near the frontier for a banished man,
Gopalaca.

GOPALACA
Why has my father sent
Thy rash hot boyhood here, imperilling
Both of his sons? I find not here his wisdom.

VICURNA

There will be danger? I am glad. None sent me;
I came unasked.

GOPALACA

And also unasking?

VICURNA

Right.

GOPALACA

Trust me to have thee whipped. But since thou art here!
Where stand the chariots?

CAPTAIN

On our left they wait
Screened by the secret tunnel which the Boar
Tusked through the hill to Avunthy. Torches ready
And men in arms stand in the cavern ranked
They call the cavern of the Elephant
By giants carved. But all the forest passages
The enemy guards.

GOPALACA

There are some he cannot guard.
I know the forest better than their scouts.
When I shall speak of you and clap my hands,
Surround us in a silence armed.

CAPTAIN

His men
Resisting?

GOPALACA

No; we two shall be alone.

VICURNA
Fie! there will be no fighting?

GOPALACA
Goblin, off!
They take cover again. Gopalaca goes;
then arrive from another side Vuthsa
with Vasuntha and Alurca.

ALURCA
We lose our escort!

VASUNTHA
They lose us, I think.

ALURCA
What fate conspires with what hid treachery?
Our chariot broken, we in woods alone
And the night close.

VASUNTHA
Roomunwath guards the paths.

ALURCA
The night is close.

VUTHSA
Here I will rest, my friends,
Where all is green and silent; only the birds
And the wind's whisperings! Go, Alurca, meet
Our comrades of the hunt; guide their vague steps
To this green-roofed refuge.

ALURCA
It is the best, though bad.
I leave thee with unwarlike hands to guard.

VASUNTHA
I am no fighter; it is known. Run, haste.
Alurca hastens out.
And yet for all your speed, someone will worship
Great Shiva in Avunthy. I hear a tread.
Gopalaca returns.

VUTHSA
Where wert thou all this time, Gopalaca?

GOPALACA
Far wandering in the woods since a white deer
Like magic beauty drew my ardent steps
Into a green entanglement.

VASUNTHA
Simple!
You found there what you sought?

GOPALACA
No deer, but hunters,
Not of our troop. We spoke of this green glade
Where many wandering paths might lead the king.
In haste I came.

VASUNTHA
Greater the haste to go!

VUTHSA
Follow Alurca and come back with him.

VASUNTHA
What, cast myself into the forest's hands
To wander and be eaten by the night?
Come here and bid me then a long farewell.
Are thy eyes open at least? Is it thou in this
Who movest? I should know that at least from thee,

If nothing more.

VUTHSA
Why ask when thou hast eyes?
Thou seest that mine are open and I walk;
For no man drives me.

VASUNTHA
Walk! but far away
From thy safe capital.

VUTHSA
What harm?

VASUNTHA
And with
This prince Gopalaca?

VUTHSA
Suspicions then?
Why not suspect at once it is my will
To visit Avunthy?

VASUNTHA
So?

VUTHSA
Not so, but if?

VASUNTHA
Oh, if! And if return were much less easy
Than the going?

VUTHSA
Who has talked of easy things?
With difficulty then I will return.

VASUNTHA
I go, King Vuthsa.

VUTHSA
But tell Yougundharayan
And all who harbour blind uneasy thoughts,
"Whatever seeks me from Fate, man or god,
Leave all between me and the strength that seeks.
War shall not sound without thy prince's leave.
Vuthsa will rescue Vuthsa."

VASUNTHA
I will tell,
But know not if he'll hear.

VUTHSA
He knows who is
His sovereign.

VASUNTHA
King, farewell.

VUTHSA
I shall. Farewell.
Vasuntha disappears in the forest.
We two have kept our tryst, Gopalaca.
Hang there, my bow; lie down, my arrows. Now
Of you I have no need. O this, O this
Is what I often dreamed, to be alone
With one I love far from the pomp of courts,
Not ringed with guards and anxious friendships round,
Free like a common man to walk alone
Among the endless forest silences,
By gliding rivers and over deciduous hills,
In every haunt where earth our mother smiles
Whispering to her children. Let me rest awhile
My head upon thy lap, Gopalaca,

Before we plunge into this emerald world.
Shall we not wander in her green-roofed house
Where mighty Nature hides herself from men,
And be the friends of the great skyward peaks
That call us by their silence, bathe in tarns,
Dream where the cascades leap, and often spend
Slow moonless nights inarmed in leafy huts
Happier than palaces, or in our mood
Wrestle with the fierce tiger in his den
Or chase the deer with wind-swift feet, and share
With the rough forest-dwellers natural food
Plucked from the laden bounty of the trees,
Before we seek the citied haunts of men?
Shall we not do these things, Gopalaca?

GOPALACA
Some day we shall.

VUTHSA
Why some day? why not now?
Have I escaped my guards in vain?

GOPALACA
Not vainly.

VUTHSA
This sword encumbers; take it from me, friend,
And fling it there upon the bank.

GOPALACA
It is far.
I keep my arms lest some wild thing invade
These green recesses.

VUTHSA
Keep thy arms and me.
O, this is good to be among the trees

With thee to guard me and no soul besides.

GOPALACA
Thyself thou hast given wholly into my hands.

VUTHSA
Yes, take me, brother.

GOPALACA
I shall use the trust
And yet deserve it.

VUTHSA
I love thee well, Gopalaca.
How dost thou love me?

GOPALACA
It was hard to speak,
Now I can tell it. As a brother might
Elder and jealous, as a mother loves
Her beautiful flower-limbed boy or grown man yearns
Over some tender girl, his sister, comrade, child,
In all these ways, but many more besides,
But always jealously.

VUTHSA
Why?

GOPALACA
Because, Vuthsa,
I'ld have thee for my own and not as in
Thy city where a thousand shared thy rays
Who were strangers to me. In my own domain,
Part of a world that's old and dear to me,
Where thou shalt be no king, but Vuthsa only
And I can bind with many dearest ties
Heaped on thee at my will. This, Vuthsa, I desired

And therefore I have brought thee to this glade.

VUTHSA
And therefore I have come to thee alone.

GOPALACA
Thou must go farther.

VUTHSA
Yes? Then haste. Was that
A clank of arms amid the silent trees?
He makes as if to rise, but
Gopalaca restrains him.

GOPALACA
Thy escort.

VUTHSA
Mine?

GOPALACA
My father sends for thee.
I seize upon thee, Vuthsa, thou art mine,
My captive and my prize. I'll bear thee far
As Heaven's great eagle bore thy mother once
Rapt to his unattainable high hills.
As he speaks the armed men appear.
Swift, captain, swift! I hold the royal boy.
On to the tunnel of the Boar.

CAPTAIN
Haste, haste!
There is a growing rumour all around.

GOPALACA
Care not for that, but follow me and guard.
They disappear among the trees.
Vasuntha enters.

VASUNTHA
The forest lives with sound; but here all's empty.
The stake is thrown; it cannot be called in
Whatever happens.
Armed men break in from all sides;
Yougundharayan, Roomunwath, Alurca.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Where is King Vuthsa? where?
His bow hangs lonely! sword and arrows lie.

VASUNTHA (*indifferently*)
I cannot tell.

ALURCA
Not tell! but you were here,
Were with him!

VASUNTHA
I was sent away like that.
But for a guess he's travelling far and fast
To Shiva in Avunthy.

ALURCA
And thou laughst,
Untimely jester!

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Impetuously pursue!
The forest ways and mountain openings flood
That flee to Avunthy. Over her treasonous borders
Drive in your angry search.

VASUNTHA
Thy king commands thee
To leave all twixt him and the strength that seeks
Their quarrel; throw not armies in the balance.
War shall not sound her conch; but Vuthsa only

Shall rescue Vuthsa.

ROOMUNWATH
This is a boy's madness.
What lies behind this message?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Roomunwath, this. The lion's cub breaks forth
Whom we so guarded, from our strict control
To measure with the large and perilous world
The bounding rapture of his youth and force.
He throws himself into his foeman's lair
Alone and scorning every aid. I guess
His purpose and find it headlong, subtle, rash.
If he failed? This boy and iron Mahasegn!
We must obey.

ROOMUNWATH
There's time to arrest their flight
This side our frontier. Hastily pursue.
He goes with Alurca and the armed men,
all in a tumult of haste.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
It will be vain. A perilous leap and yet
Heroic with the bold and antique scorn
Of common deeds and the safe guarded paths.
This is the spirit that smiled hidden in him
Waiting for birth! At least my spies shall enter
Their secret chambers, even in his prison
My help be timely and near. Back to Cowsamby!

Scene 3

Avunthy. A road on a wooded hill-side overlooking the plain. Gopalaca, Vuthsa in a chariot, surrounded by armed men.

GOPALACA
Arrest our wheels. Those are our army's lights
That climb to us like fire-flies from the plain.

VUTHSA (*awakened from sleep*)
Is this Avunthy?

GOPALACA
We have passed her bounds.

VUTHSA
So, thou dear traitor, this thou from the first
Cam'st planning.

GOPALACA
This with more that follows it.

VUTHSA
Thou bearst me to thy father's town?

GOPALACA
Where thou
Shalt lie, a jewel guarded carefully,
Beside the dearest treasure of our house.

VUTHSA
I must be cooped up in a golden cage
As I was guarded in Cowsamby's walls.

You foes and friends think me your wealth inert,
And all men hope to do their will with me.
But now I warn you all that I will have
My freedom and will do my own dear will
By fraud or violence greater than your own.

GOPALACA
Thou canst not. If thou hadst thy bow indeed!

VUTHSA
Thou hadst me for the taking. I will break forth
Almost as easily.

GOPALACA
Thou shalt find it hard,
Such keepers shall enring thy steps.

VUTHSA
But I will
And carry with me something costlier far
Than what thou stealest from Cowsamby's realm.
For I will have revenge.

GOPALACA
No wealth we have
More precious than the thing I seize today.
Therefore thy boast is vain.

VUTHSA
That I will see.
Was it not thy brother rode behind our car?
He passes now; call him.

GOPALACA
Vicurna, here!

VUTHSA

Come near, embrace me, brother of Gopalaca,
Loved for his sake and for thy own desired
Since I beheld thee, son of Mahasegn.

VICURNA

Vuthsa Udaian, in the battle's front
I had hoped to meet thee and compel thy praise
As half thy equal in the fight. But this
Is nearer, this is better.

VUTHSA

Thou art fair to see.
Thy father has two noble sons. Are there
No others of your great upspringing stock?

GOPALACA

Only a sister.

VUTHSA

The world has heard of her.

GOPALACA

Thou shalt behold.

VUTHSA

Oh then, it is pure gain
I go to in Avunthy. O the night
With all her glorious stars and from the trees
Millions of shrill cigalas peal one note,
A thunderous melody! Shall we be soon
In the golden city? But it will be night
And I shall hardly see her famous fanes.

GOPALACA

Dawn will have overtaken us in her skies
Passing our chariots long before Ujjayiny's seen.

Our vanguard nears; unite with them; descend.
Roomunwath's cohorts should tread close behind.

VUTHSA
They will not come. My fate must ride with me
Unhindered to Avunthy.

GOPALACA
Hasten in front
Towards my father fire-hooved messengers
To cry aloud to him the prize we bring
Richer than booty of his twenty wars.
Shiva has smiled on us.

VUTHSA
Vishnu on me.
Godheads, it is by strife that you grow one.

Act III

Avunthy. In the palace.

Scene 1

A room in the royal apartments.
Mahasegn, Ungarica.

MAHASEGN
I conquer still though not with glorious arms.
He's seized! the young victorious Vuthsa's mine,
A prisoner in my grasp.

UNGARICA (*laughing*)
Thou holdst the sun
Under thy arm-pit as the tailed god did.
What wilt thou do with it?

MAHASEGN
Make him my moon
And shine by him upon the eastern night.

UNGARICA
Thou canst?

MAHASEGN
Loved sceptic of my house, I can.
What thing desired has long escaped my hands
Since out of thy dim world I dragged thee conquered
Into our sun and breeze and azure skies
By force, my fortune?

UNGARICA

Yes, by force, but this
By force thou hast not done. Wilt thou depart
From thy own nature, Chunda Mahasegn,
And hop'st for victory?

MAHASEGN

Thou wert my strength, my fortune,
But never my counsellor! My own mind's my seer.

UNGARICA

I do not counsel, but obey and watch.
That is enough for me in your strange world,
For in your light I cannot guide myself.
Man is a creature blinded by the sun
Who errs by seeing; but the world that to you
Is darkness, — they who walk there, they have sight.
Such am I, for the shades have reared my soul.

MAHASEGN

What dost thou see?

UNGARICA

That Vuthsa is too great
For thy greatness, too cunning for thy cunning. He
Will bend not to thy pressure.

MAHASEGN

Thou hast bent,
The Titaness. This is a delicate boy
Softer than summer dews or like the lily
That yields to every gentle, insistent wave.
A hero? yes: all Aryan boys are that.

UNGARICA

Thou thinkst thy daughter thy proud fortune's wave,
He its bright flower — a nursling reared by gods

Only to be thy servant?

MAHASEGN
Thou hast seen?
I kept my counsel hidden in my soul.

UNGARICA
It is good; it is the thing my heart desires.
My daughter shall have empire.

MAHASEGN
No, thy son.

UNGARICA
No matter which. The first man of the age
Will occupy her heart; the pride and love
That are her faults will both be satisfied.
She will be happy.

MAHASEGN
Call thy child, my queen.
For I will teach her what her charm must weave.

UNGARICA
Her heart's her teacher. Call here, Vullabha,
The princess.

MAHASEGN
O, the heart, it is a danger,
A madness! Let the thinking mind prevail.

UNGARICA
We are women, king.

MAHASEGN
Be princesses! My daughter
Has dignity, pride, wisdom, noble hopes;

She will not act as common natures do.

UNGARICA
Love will unseat them all and put them down
Under his flower-soft feet.

MAHASEGN
Thou hast ever loved
To oppose my thoughts!

UNGARICA
That is our poor revenge
Who in our acts must needs obey.
Vasavadutta enters.
Let now
Thy princely cunning teach a woman's brain
To use for statecraft's ends her dearest thoughts.

MAHASEGN
My daughter Vasavadutta, my delight,
Now is thy hour to pay the long dear debt
Thou ow'st thy parents by whom thou wast made.
Vuthsa, Cowsamby's king, my rival, foe,
My Fate's high stumbling-block, captive today
Is brought to Avunthy. I mean he shall become
Thy husband, Vasavadutta, and my slave.
By thee he shall become my subject king.
Then shall thy father's fate outleap all bounds,
Thy house and nation rule the prostrate world.
This is my will, my daughter; is it thine?

VASAVADUTTA
Father, thy will is mine, as it is fate's.
Thou givest me to whom thou wilt; what share
In this have I except only to obey?

MAHASEGN
A greater part which makes thee my ally
And golden instrument; for thou, my child,
Must be, who only canst, my living sceptre,
Thou my ambassador to win his mind
And thou my viceroy over his subject will.

VASAVADUTTA
Will he submit to this?

MAHASEGN
Yes, if thou choose.

VASAVADUTTA
I choose, my father, since it is thy will.
That thou shouldst rule the world, is my desire;
My nation's greatness is my dearest good.

MAHASEGN
Thou hast kept my proudest lessons; lose them not.
O, thou art not as feebler natures are!
Thou wilt not put thy own ambitions first,
Nor justify a blind and clamorous heart.

VASAVADUTTA
My duty to my country and my sire
Shall lead me.

MAHASEGN
I will not teach thy woman's brain
How thou shalt mould this youth, nor warn thy will
Against the passions of the blood. The heart
And senses over common women rule;
Thou hast a mind.

VASAVADUTTA
Father, this is my pride,

That thou ennoblest me to be the engine
Of thy great fortunes; that alone I am.

MAHASEGN
Thou wilt not yield then to the heart's desire?

VASAVADUTTA
Let him desire, but I will nothing yield.
I am thy daughter; greatest kings should sue
And take my grace as an unhoped-for joy.

MAHASEGN
Thou art my pupil; statecraft was not wasted
Upon thy listening brain. Thou seest, my queen?

UNGARICA
As if this babe could understand! Go, go
And leave me with my child. I will speak to her
Another language.

MAHASEGN
Breathe no breath against
My purpose!

UNGARICA
Fearst thou that?

MAHASEGN
No; speak to her.
He goes out from the chamber.

UNGARICA (*taking Vasavadutta into her arms*)
Rest here, my child, to whom another bosom
Will soon be refuge. Thou hast heard the King;
Hear now thy mother. Thou wilt know, my bliss,
The fiercest sweet ordeal that can seize
A woman's heart and body. O my child,

Thou wilt house fire, thou wilt see living gods,
And all thou hast thought and known will melt away
Into a flame and be reborn. What now
I speak, thou dost not understand, but wilt
Before many nights have kept thy sleepless eyes.
My child, the flower blooms for its flowerhood only,
To fill the air with fragrance and with bloom,
And not to make its parent bed more high.
Not for thy sire thy mother brought thee forth
But thy own nature's growth and heart's delight
And for a husband and for children born.
My child, let him who clasps thee be thy god
That thou mayst be his goddess; make your wedded arms
Heaven's fences; let his will be thine and thine
Be his, his happiness thy regal throne.
O Vasavadutta, when thy heart awakes
Thou shalt obey thy sovereign heart, nor yield
Allegiance to the clear-eyed selfish gods.
Do now thy father's will, the god awake
Shall do his own. Fear not, whatever threatens.
Thy mother watches over thee, my child.

She goes out.

VASAVADUTTA

I love her best, but do not understand;
My mind can always grasp my father's thoughts.
If I must wed, it shall be one I rule.
Vuthsa! Vuthsa Udaian! I have heard
Only a far-flung name. What is the man?
A flame? a flower? High like Gopalaca
Or else some golden-fair and soft-eyed youth?
I have a fluttering in my heart to know.

Scene 2

The same.
Mahasegn, Ungarica, Gopalaca, Vuthsa.

GOPALACA
King of Avunthy, see thy will performed.
The boy who rivalled thy ripe victor years,
I bring a captive to thy house.

MAHASEGN
Gopalaca,
Thou hast done well, thou art indeed my son.
Vuthsa, —

VUTHSA
Hail, monarch of the West. We have met
In equal battle; it has pleased me to approach
Thy greatness otherwise.

MAHASEGN
Pleased thee, vain boy!
No, but thy fate indignant that thou strov'st
Against heaven-chosen fortunes.

VUTHSA
Think it so.
I am here. What is thy will with me or wherefore
Hast thou by violence brought me to thy house?

MAHASEGN
To serve me as earth's sovereign and thy own
Assuming my great yoke as all have done

From Indus to the South.

VUTHSA

This is thy error.
Thou hast not great Cowsamby's monarch here,
But Vuthsa only, Suthaneka's son
Who sprang from sires divine.

MAHASEGN

And where then dwells
Cowsamby's youthful majesty, if not
In thee its golden vessel?

VUTHSA

Where my vacant throne
In high Cowsamby stands. Thou shouldst know that.
There is a kingship which exceeds the king.
For Vuthsa unworthy, Vuthsa captive, slain,
This is not captive, this cannot be slain.
It far transcends our petty human forms,
It is a nation's greatness. This, O King,
Was once Parikshith, this Urjoona's seed,
Janaméjoya, this was Suthaneke,
This Vuthsa; and when Vuthsa is no more,
This shall live deathless in a hundred kings.

MAHASEGN

Thou speakest like the unripe boy thou seemst,
With thoughts high-winging. Grown minds keep to earth's
More humble sureness and prefer her touches.
I am content to have thy gracious body here,
This earth of kingship; with things sensible
I deal, for they are pertinent to our days,
And not with any high and unseen thought.

VUTHSA

My body? deal with it. It is thy slave

And captive by thy choice and by my own.
What thou canst do with Vuthsa, do, O King;
In nothing will I pledge Cowsamby's majesty,
But Vuthsa is a prisoner in thy hands.
Him I defend not from thy iron will.

MAHASEGN
My prisoner, thou shalt not so escape
My purpose.

VUTHSA
I embrace it. If escape
Were my desire, I should not now be here.
It is not bars and gates can keep me.

MAHASEGN
But I will give thee other jailors, boy,
Surer than my armed sentries, against whom
Thou dar'st not lift thy helpless hands.

VUTHSA
Find such;
I am satisfied.

MAHASEGN
Grow humbler in thy bearing.
Be Vuthsa or be great Cowsamby's king,
Know thyself only for a captive and a slave.

VUTHSA
I accept thy stern rebuke, as I accept
Whatever state the wiser gods provide
And bend my action to their mood and thought.

MAHASEGN
Thou knowst the law of the high sacrifice,
Where many kings as menials serve the one,

And this compelled have many proud lords done
Whose high beginnings disappear in time.
Now I will make my throned triumphant days
A high continual solemn sacrifice
Of kingship. There shalt thou, great Bharuth's heir,
Dwell in my house a royal servitor,
And as most fitting thy yet tender years,
My daughter's serf. She with her handmaidens
Shall be thy jailors whose firm gracious cordon
Thy strength disarmed stands helpless to transgress. To this
Thy pride must, forced, consent.

VUTHSA

Not only consent,
But welcome with a proud aspiring mind
Since to be Vasavadutta's servitor
Is honour, happiness and fortune's grace.
My greatness this shall raise, not cast it down,
King Mahasegn.

MAHASEGN

Lead now, Gopalaca,
Thy gift, her servant, to thy sister's feet.
He has a music that the gods desire,
His brush leaves Nature wondering and his song
The luminous choristers of heaven have taught.
All this is hers to please her. Boy, thou smilest?

VUTHSA

What thou hast said, is merely truth. And yet
I smiled to see how strong and arrogant minds
Think themselves masters of the things they do.

Gopalaca goes out with Vuthsa
towards Vasavadutta's apartments.

MAHASEGN

This is a charming boy, Ungarica,

Who vaunts and yields!

UNGARICA
What he has shown thee, King,
Thou seest.

MAHASEGN
Wilt thou lend next this graceful child,
Almost a girl in beauty, thoughts profound
And practised subtleties? I have done well,
Was deeply inspired.

He goes out.

UNGARICA
For him and her thou hast.
Our own ends seeking, Heaven's ends are served.

Scene 3

A room in Vasavadutta's apartments.
Vasavadutta, Munjoolica, Umba.

VASAVADUTTA
But hast thou seen him?

MUNJOOLICA
Yes!

VASAVADUTTA
Speak, perverse silence.
Thou canst chatter when thou wilt.

MUNJOOLICA
What shall I say
Except that thou art always fortunate.
Since first thy soft feet moved upon our earth,
O living Luxmie, beauty, wealth and joy
Run overpacked into thy days, and grandeurs
Unmeasured. Now the greatest king on earth
Becomes thy servant.

VASAVADUTTA
That's the greatest king's
Proud fortune and not mine; for nothing now
Can raise me higher than I am whose father
Is sovereign over greatest kings. Nothing are these
And what I long to know thou dost not tell.
What is he like?

MUNJOOLICA
I have seen the lord of love
Wearing a golden human body.

VASAVADUTTA (*with a pleased smile*)
So fair!

MUNJOOLICA
As thou art; yes, and more.

VASAVADUTTA
More!

MUNJOOLICA
Cry not out.
His eyes are proud and smiling like the god's;
His voice is like the sudden call of Spring.

VASAVADUTTA
O dear to me even as myself, wear this!
She puts her own chain round her neck.

MUNJOOLICA
That is my happiness; keep thy gifts.

VASAVADUTTA
Think them
My love around thy neck. Thou hast spoken truly,
Not woven fictions to beguile my heart?
Then tell me more, tell tell, thou dearest one.
Not that I care for these things, but would know.

MUNJOOLICA
Let thy eyes care not then, but gaze.
Gopalaca comes, bringing in Vuthsa.

VASAVADUTTA

My brother!
Long thou wast far from me.

GOPALACA

For thy sake far.
Much have I flung, my sister, at thy feet
Nor thought my gifts were worthy of thy smile,
Not even Sourashtra's captive daughter here,
The living flower and jewel of her race.
But now I give indeed. This is that famous boy,
Vuthsa Udaian, great Cowsamby's king,
Brought by my hands to serve thee in our house.
Look on him; tell me if I have deserved.

VASAVADUTTA (*looking covertly at Vuthsa*)
Much love, dear brother; not that any prize
I value as of worth for such as we,
But thy love gives it price.

GOPALACA

My love for both.
My gift is precious to me, for my heart
Possessed him long before my hands have seized.
Then love him well, for so thou lov'st me twice.

VASAVADUTTA
Dear then and prized although a slave.

GOPALACA

Are we not all
Thy servants? The wide costly world is less,
My sister, than thy noble charm and grace
And beauty and the sweetness of thy soul
Deserve, O Vasavadutta.

VASAVADUTTA (*smiling, pleased*)
Is it so?

GOPALACA
My sister, thou wast born from Luxmie's heart,
And we, thy brothers, feel in thee, not us,
Our father's fate inherited; our warrings
Seek for thy girdle all the conquered earth.

VASAVADUTTA
I know it, brother.

GOPALACA
From thy childhood, yes,
Thou seem'dst to know, ruling with queenly eyes.
But since thou knowest, queen, assume thy fiefs
Cowsamby and Ayodhya for our house!

VASAVADUTTA (*glancing at Vuthsa, then avoiding his eyes*)
Since he's my slave, they are already mine.

GOPALACA
No; understand me, sister; make them thine.
Thou, Vuthsa, serve thy mistress and obey.
He goes out.

VASAVADUTTA
He is a boy, a marvellous golden boy.
I am surely older! I can play with him.
There is no fear, no difficulty at all.
(*to Vuthsa*)
What is thy name? I'll hear it from thy lips.

VUTHSA
Vuthsa.

VASAVADUTTA
Thou tremblest, Vuthsa; dost thou fear?

VUTHSA
Perhaps. There is a fear in too much joy.

VASAVADUTTA (*smiling*)
I did not hear. My brother loves thee well.
Take comfort. If thou serve me faithfully,
Thou hast no cause for any grief at all.
Thou art Cowsamby's king—

VUTHSA
Men call me so.

VASAVADUTTA
And now my servant.

VUTHSA
That my heart repeats.

VASAVADUTTA (*smiling*)
I did not hear. Cowsamby's king, my slave,
What canst thou do to please me?

VUTHSA
Dost thou choose
To know the songs that shake the tranquil gods
Or hear on earth the harps of heaven? dost thou
Desire such lines and hues of living truth
As make earth's shadows pale? or wilt thou have
The infinite abysmal silences
Made vocal, clothed with form? These things at birth
The Kinnarie, Vidyadhur and Gundhurva
Around me crowding on Himaloy dumb
Gave to the silent god that lived in me
Before my outer mind held thought. All these

I can make thine.

VASAVADUTTA
Vuthsa, I take all these,
All thy life's ornaments that thou wearst, for mine
And am not satisfied.

VUTHSA
Dost thou desire
The earth made thine by my victorious bow?
Send me then forth to battle; earth is thine.

VASAVADUTTA
I take the earth and am not satisfied.

VUTHSA
Say then what thing shall please thee in thy slave,
What thou desir'st from Vuthsa.

VASAVADUTTA
Do I know?
Not less than all thou canst and all thou hast, —
(*hesitating a little*)
And all thou art.

VUTHSA
All's thine.

VASAVADUTTA
I speak and hear
And know not what I say, nor what thou meanst.

VUTHSA
The deepest things are those thought seizes not;
Our spirits live their hidden meaning out.

VASAVADUTTA (*after a troubled silence in which she tries to recover herself*)
I know not how we passed into this strain.
Such words are troubling to the mind and heart;
Leave them.

VUTHSA
They have been spoken.

VASAVADUTTA
Let them rest.
Vuthsa, my slave who promisest me much,
Great things thou offerest, small things I'll demand
From thee, yet hard. Since he's my prisoner,
Munjoolica and Umba, guard this boy;
You are his jailors. When I need him near me
Bring him to me. Go, Vuthsa, to thy room.
Vuthsa falls at her feet which he touches.
What dost thou? It is not permitted thee.

VUTHSA
Not this? That's hard.

VASAVADUTTA (*troubled and feigning anger*)
Thou art too bold a slave.

VUTHSA
Let me be earth beneath thy tread at least.

VASAVADUTTA
O, take him from me; I have enough of him.
Thou, Umba, see he bribes thee not or worse.

UMBA
I will be bribed to make thee smart for that.
Where shall we put him? In the turret rooms
Beside the terrace where thou walkst when moonlight

Sleeps on the sward?

VASAVADUTTA
There; it is nearest.

UMBA (*taking Vuthsa's hand*)
Come.
They go out, leaving Vasavadutta alone.

VASAVADUTTA
Will he charm me from my purpose with a smile?
How beautiful he is, how beautiful!
There is a fear, there is a happy fear.
But he is mine, his eyes confessed my yoke.
Surely I shall do all my will with him.
I sent him from me, his words troubled me
And yet delighted. They have a witchery, —
No, not his words, but voice. 'Tis not his voice,
Nor yet his face, his smile, his flower-soft eyes,
And yet it is all these and something more.
(*shaking her head*)
I fear it will be difficult after all.

Scene 4

The tower-room beside the terrace.
Vuthsa on a couch.

VUTHSA
All that I dreamed or heard of her, her charm
Exceeds. She's mine! she has shuddered at my touch;
Thrice her eyes faltered as they gazed in mine.
He lies back with closed eyes;
Munjoolica enters and contemplates him.

MUNJOOLICA
O golden Love! thou art not of this earth.
He too is Vasavadutta's! All is hers,
As I am now and one day all the earth.
Vuthsa, thou sleepst not, then.

VUTHSA
Sleep jealous waits
Finding another image in my eyes.

MUNJOOLICA
Thou art disobedient. Wast thou not commanded
To sleep at once?

VUTHSA
Sleep disobeys, not I.
But thou too wakest, yet no thoughts should have
To keep thy lids apart.

MUNJOOLICA
How knowst thou that?

I am thy jailor and I walk my rounds.

VUTHSA
Bright jailor, thou art jealous without cause.
Who would escape from heaven's golden bars?
Thy name's Munjoolica? So is thy form
A bower of the graceful things of earth.

MUNJOOLICA
I had another name but it has ceased,
Forgotten.

VUTHSA
Thou wast then Sourashtra's child?

MUNJOOLICA
I am still that royalty clouded, even as thou
Captive Cowsamby. Me Gopalaca
In battle seized, brought a disdainful gift
To Vasavadutta.

VUTHSA
Since our fates are one,
Should we not be allies?

MUNJOOLICA
For what bold purpose?

VUTHSA
How knowest thou I have one?

MUNJOOLICA
Were I a man!

VUTHSA
Wouldst thou have freedom? wilt thou give me help?

MUNJOOLICA
In nothing against her I love and serve.

VUTHSA
No, but conspire to serve and love her best
And make her queen of all the Aryan earth.

MUNJOOLICA
My payment?

VUTHSA
Name it thyself, when all is ours.

MUNJOOLICA
Content; it will be large.

VUTHSA
However large.

MUNJOOLICA
Now shall I be avenged upon my fate!
What thy heart asks I know; too openly
Thou carriest the yearning in thy eyes.
Vuthsa, she loves thee as the half-closed bud
Thrills to the advent of a wonderful dawn
And like a dreamer half-awake perceives
The faint beginnings of a sunlit world.
Doubt not success more than that dawn must break;
For she is thine.

VUTHSA
Take my heart's gratitude
For the sweet assurance.

MUNJOOLICA
I am greedy. Only
Thy gratitude?

VUTHSA
What wouldst thou have?

MUNJOOLICA
The ring
Upon thy finger, Vuthsa, for my own.

VUTHSA (*putting it on her finger*)
It shall live happier on a fairer hand.

MUNJOOLICA
Since thou hast paid me instantly and well,
I will be zealous, Vuthsa, in thy cause.
But my great bribe is in the future still.

VUTHSA
Claim it in our Cowsamby.

MUNJOOLICA
There indeed.
Sleep now.

VUTHSA
By thy good help I now shall sleep.
Munjoolica goes out.
Music is sweet; to rule the heart's rich chords
Of human lyres much sweeter. Art's sublime
But to combine great ends more sovereign still,
Accepting danger and difficulty to break
Through proud and violent opposites to our will.
Song is divine, but more divine is love.

Scene 5

A room in Vasavadutta's apartments.

VASAVADUTTA
I govern no longer what I speak and do.
Is this the fire my mother spoke of? Oh,
It is sweet, is sweet. But I will not be mastered
By any equal creature. Let him serve
Obediently and I will load his lovely head
With costliest favours. He's my own, my own,
My slave, my toy to play with as I choose,
And shall not dare to play with me. I think he dares;
I do not know, I think he would presume.
He's gentle, brilliant, bold and beautiful.
I'll send for him and chide and put him down;
I'll chide him harshly; he must not presume.
O, I have forgotten almost my father's will;
Yet it was mine. Before I lose it quite,
I will compel a promise from the boy.
Will it be hard when he is all my own?
(*she calls*)
Umba! Bring Vuthsa to me from his tower.
His music is a voice that cries to me,
His songs are chains he hangs around my heart.
I must not hear them often; I forget
That I am Vasavadutta, that he is
My house's foe and only Vuthsa feel,
Think Vuthsa only, while my captive heart
Beats in world-Vuthsa and on Vuthsa throbs.
This must not be.
Umba brings in Vuthsa and retires.
Go, Umba. Vuthsa, stand

Before me.

VUTHSA
It is my sovereign's voice that speaks.

VASAVADUTTA
Be silent! Lower thy eyes; they are too bold
To gaze on me, my slave.

VUTHSA
Blame not my eyes;
They follow the dumb motion of a heart
Uplifted to adore thee.

VASAVADUTTA (*with a shaken voice*)
Dost thou really
Adore me, Vuthsa?

VUTHSA
Earth's one goddess, yes.

VASAVADUTTA (*mildly*)
But, Vuthsa, men adore with humble eyes
Upon their deity's feet.

VUTHSA
Oh, let me so
Adore thee then, thus humble at thy feet,
Their sleeping moonbeams in my eyes, and place
My hands in Paradise beneath these flowers
That bless too oft the chill unheeding earth.
Let this not be forbidden to thy slave.
So let me worship and the carolling of thy speech
So listen.

VASAVADUTTA
Vuthsa, thou must not presume.

VUTHSA
O even when faint thy voice, thy every word
Reaches my soul.

VASAVADUTTA
Wilt thou not let me free?

VUTHSA
Yes, if thou bid; but do not.

VASAVADUTTA (*bending down to caress his hair*)
If really
And as my slave thou adorest, nothing more,
I will not bid.

VUTHSA
What more, when this means all?

VASAVADUTTA
But if thou art such, is not all thou hast
Mine, mine? Why dost thou, Vuthsa, keep from me
My own?

VUTHSA
Take all; claim all.

VASAVADUTTA (*collecting herself*)
Cowsamby first.

VUTHSA
It shall be thine, a jewel for thy feet.

VASAVADUTTA
Thy kingdom, Vuthsa, for my will to rule.

VUTHSA
It shall be thine, the garden of thy pomp.

VASAVADUTTA
Shall?

VUTHSA
Is it not far? We must go there, my queen,
Thou to receive and I to give.

VASAVADUTTA
I wish
To be there. But, Udaian, thou must vow,
And the word bind thee, that none else shall be
Cowsamby's queen and thou my servant live
Vowed to obedience underneath my throne.

VUTHSA
Thou only shalt be over my heart a queen,
Yes, if thou wilt, the despot of my thoughts,
My hopes, my aims, but I will not obey
If thou command disloyalty to thee,
My sweet, sole sovereign.

VASAVADUTTA (*smiling*)
This reserve I yield.
(*hesitatingly*)
But Vuthsa, if as subject of my sire,
High Chunda Mahasegn, I bid thee rule?

VUTHSA
My queen, it will be void.

VASAVADUTTA
Void? And thy vow?

VUTHSA
Would it not be disloyalty in me,
To serve another sovereign?

VASAVADUTTA (*vexed, yet pleased*)
O, thou playst with me.

VUTHSA
No, queen. What's wholly mine, that wholly take.
But this belongs to many other souls.

VASAVADUTTA
To whom?

VUTHSA
Their names are endless. Bharuth first,
Who ruled the Aryan earth that bears his name,
And great Dushyanta and Pururavus'
Famed warlike son and all their peerless line,
Urjoona and Parikshith and his sons
Whom God descended to enthrone, and all
Who shall come after us, my heirs and thine
Who choosest me, and a great nation's multitudes,
And the Kuru ancestors and long posterity
Who all must give consent.

VASAVADUTTA
Thy thoughts are high.
But if thy life must fade a prisoner here?
My father is inflexible and stern.

VUTHSA
Dost thou desire this really in thy heart?
Vuthsa degraded, art thou not degraded too?

VASAVADUTTA
My rule thou hast vowed?

VUTHSA
To obey thee in all things
Throned in Cowsamby, not as here I must,

Thy father's captive. There I shall be thine.

VASAVADUTTA
Leave, Vuthsa, leave me. Take him, Umba, from me.

UMBA (*entering, in Vasavadutta's ear*)
Who now is bribed? We are all traitors now.
She goes out with Vuthsa.

VASAVADUTTA
O joy, if he and all were only mine.
O greatness, to be queen of him and earth.
I grow a rebel to my father's house.

Act IV

Scene 1

A room in the royal apartments.
Ungarica, Vasavadutta.

UNGARICA
Thou singest well; a cry of Vuthsa's art
Has stolen into thy song.
She takes Vasavadutta on her lap.
Look up at me,
My daughter, let me gaze into thy eyes
And from their silence learn thy treasured thoughts.
Thou knowest I can read twixt human lids
The secrets of the throbbing heart? I search
In Vasavadutta's eyes by what strange skill
Vuthsa has crept into my daughter's voice.
Thou keepst thy lashes lowered? thou wilt not let me look?
But that too I can read.

VASAVADUTTA
O mother, mother mine,
Plague me not; thou knowst all things; comfort me.

UNGARICA
Thou needest comfort?

VASAVADUTTA
Yes, against myself
Who trouble my own heart.

UNGARICA

Why? though I know.
Thou wilt not speak? I'll speak then for thee.

Vasavadutta alarmed puts her hand over Ungarica's mouth.

Off!
It is because thou canst not here control
What thy immortal part with rapture wills
And the mortal longingly desires; for yet
Thy proud heart cannot find the way to yield.

VASAVADUTTA

If thou knewst, mother.

UNGARICA

No, thou hast the will
But not the art, Love's learner. O my proud
Sweet ignorance, 'tis he shall find the way
And thou shalt know the joy of being forced
To what thy heart desires.

VASAVADUTTA

O mother!

She hides her face in Ungarica's bosom.

UNGARICA

Thou hast done thy father's will?
Thy husband shall be vassal to thy sire?

VASAVADUTTA

Have I a father or a house? O none,
O none, O none exists but only he.

UNGARICA

Let none exist for thee but the dear all thou lov'st.
I charge thee, Vasavadutta, when thou rul'st
In far Cowsamby, let this be thy reign

To heap on him delight and seek his good.
Raise his high fortunes, shelter from grief his heart,
Even with thy own tears buy his joy and peace,
Nor let one clamorous thought of self revolt
Against him.

VASAVADUTTA
Mother, thou canst see my heart;
Is this not there? Can it do otherwise,
Being thus conquered, even if it willed?

UNGARICA
Child, 'tis my care to give thy heart a voice
And bind it to its nobler loving self.
Let this be now thy pride.

VASAVADUTTA
It is, it is.
But, mother, it is very sweet to rule,
And if I rule him for his good, not mine?

UNGARICA
Thou canst not be corrected! Queenling, rule.
Go now; thy brother comes.
Vasavadutta escapes towards her own apartments;
Vicurna enters from the outer door.
Why is thy brow
A darkness?

VICURNA
Wherefore was King Vuthsa brought
Into Ujjayiny? why is captive kept?

UNGARICA
Thy father's will, who knows.

VICURNA

But I would know.

UNGARICA

Him ask.

VICURNA (*taking her face between his hands*)

I ask thee; thou must answer.

UNGARICA

To wed
Thy sister.

VICURNA

Let him wed and be released.
Our fame is smirched; the city murmurs. War
Threatens from Vuthsa's nation and our cause
Is evil.

UNGARICA

Wedding her he must consent
To be our vassal.

VICURNA

Thus are vassals made?
Thus empires built? This is a shameful thing.
Release him first, then with proud war subdue.

UNGARICA

Thou knowest thy father's stern, unbending will
Whom we must all obey.

VICURNA

Not I, or not
In evil things.

UNGARICA

Respect thy father! He
Will not, unsatisfied, release his foe.
Demand not this.

VICURNA

I will release him then.

UNGARICA

Him by what right who is thy house's peril?

VICURNA

He is a hero and he is my friend.

UNGARICA

Didst thou not help to bring him captive here?

VICURNA

For Vasavadutta. I will bear them both
Out from the city in my chariot far
Into the freedom of the hills. I will hew down
All who oppose me.

UNGARICA

Rash and violent boy,
So wilt thou make bad worse. Await the hour
When Vuthsa shall himself demand thy aid.

VICURNA

The hour will come?

UNGARICA

He will be free.

VICURNA

Then soon,
Or I myself will act.

He goes out.

UNGARICA

This too is well
And most that the proud chivalries of old
Are not yet dead in all men's hearts. O God
Shiva, thou mak'st me fortunate in my sons.

Scene 2

Vasavadutta's chamber.
Vuthsa, Vasavadutta.

VUTHSA
Thy hands have yet no cunning with the strings.
'Tis not the touch alone but manner of the touch
That calls the murmuring spirit forth, — as thus.

VASAVADUTTA
I cannot manage it; my hand rebels.

VUTHSA
I will compel it then.
He takes her hand in his.
Thou dost not chide.

VASAVADUTTA
I am weary of chiding; and how rule a boy
Who takes delight in being chidden? And then
'Twas only my hand. What dost thou?
Vuthsa takes her by the arms and draws her towards him.

VUTHSA
What thy eyes
Commanded me and what for many days
My heart has clamoured for in hungry pain.

VASAVADUTTA
Presumptuous! wilt thou not immediately
Release me?

VUTHSA
Not till thy heart's will is done.
He draws her down on his knees, resisting.

VASAVADUTTA
What will? I did not bid. What will? Vuthsa!
Vuthsa! I did not bid. This is not well.
He masters her and holds her on his bosom.
Her head falls on his shoulder.

VUTHSA
O my desire, why should we still deny
Delight that calls to us? Strive not with joy,
But yield me the sweet mortal privilege
That makes me equal with the happiest god
In all the heavens of fulfilled desire.
O on thy sweet averted cheek! My queen,
My wilful empress, all in vain thou striv'st
To keep from me the treasure of thy lips
I have deserved so long.

VASAVADUTTA
Vuthsa! Vuthsa!
He forces her lips up to his and kisses her.

VUTHSA
O honey of thy mouth! The joy, the joy
Was sweeter. I have drunk in heaven at last,
Let what will happen.
Vasavadutta escapes and stands
quivering at a distance.

VASAVADUTTA
Stand there! approach me not.

VUTHSA
I thought 'twould be enough for many ages;

But 'tis not so.

VASAVADUTTA

Go from me, seek thy room.

VUTHSA

Have I so much offended? I will go.

He pretends to go.

VASAVADUTTA

Vuthsa, I am not angry; do not go.
Sit; I must chide thee. Was this well to abuse
My kindness, to mistake indulgence? — No,
I am not angry; thou art only a boy.
I have permitted thee to love because
Thou saidst thou couldst not help it. This again
Thou must not do, — not thus.

VUTHSA

Then teach me how.

VASAVADUTTA (*with a troubled smile*)

I never had so importunate a slave.
I must think out some punishment for thee.

She comes to him suddenly, takes him to her bosom and kisses him with passion.

VUTHSA

O if 'tis this, I will again offend.

She clings to him, kisses him again, then puts him away from her.

VASAVADUTTA

Go from me, go. Wilt thou not go? Munjoolica!

VUTHSA

She is not here to help thee against thy heart.

But I will go; thou willst it.

VASAVADUTTA
Wilt thou leave me?

VUTHSA
Never! thus, thus into my bosom grow,
O Vasavadutta.

VASAVADUTTA
O my happiness!
O Vuthsa, only name that's sweet on earth
I have murmured to the silence of the hours,
Give me delight, let me endure thy clasp
For ever. O loveliest head on all the earth!

VUTHSA
If we could thus remain through many ages,
Nor Time grow weary ever of such bliss,
O Vasavadutta!

VASAVADUTTA
I have loved thee always
Even when I knew it not. Was't not the love
Secret between us, drew thee here by force,
Vuthsa?

VUTHSA
Thou wilt not now refuse thy lips?

VASAVADUTTA
Nothing to thee.

VUTHSA
Yes, thou shalt be my queen
Surrendered henceforth, I thy slave enthroned.
Give me the largess of thyself that I may be

The constant vassal of thy tyrant eyes
And captive of thy beauty all my days
And homage pay to thy sweet sovereign soul.
Thus, thus accept me.

VASAVADUTTA

I accept, my king,
Thy service and thy homage and thy love.
If in return the bounty of myself
I lavish on thee, will it be enough?
Can it hold thy life as thou wilt fill all mine?

VUTHSA

Weave thyself into morn and noon and eve.
We will not be as man and woman are
Who are with partial oneness satisfied,
Divided in our works, but one large soul
Parted in two dear bodies for more bliss.
For all my occupations thou shalt rule,
And those that take me from thy blissful shadow
Still with thy sweet remembrance shall inspired
Be done by thee.

VASAVADUTTA

If thy heart strays from me, —

VUTHSA

Never my heart.

VASAVADUTTA

If thy eyes stray from me,
O Vuthsa, —

VUTHSA

If I view all beautiful things
With natural delight, thou wilt pardon that
Because thou wilt share the joy.

VASAVADUTTA
Then must I find
Thy beauty there.

VUTHSA
Tonight, my love, my love,
Shall we not linger heart on heart tonight?

VASAVADUTTA
Ah, Vuthsa, no.

VUTHSA
Does not thy heart cry, yes?
Are we not wedded? Shall we dally, love,
Upon heaven's outskirts, nor all Paradise
This hour compel?

VASAVADUTTA (*faintly*)
Munjoolica!

VUTHSA
Beloved, thy eyes
Beseech me to overcome thee with my will.
Munjoolica entering, Vuthsa releases Vasavadutta.

MUNJOOLICA
Princess!

VASAVADUTTA
Munjoolica! Why camest thou?

MUNJOOLICA
Call'dst thou not?

VASAVADUTTA
'Tis forgotten. Oh, I remember.
'Twas to lead Vuthsa to his prison. (*low*) Smile,

And I will beat thee! It was all thy fault.

MUNJOOLICA
Oh, very little. Come, the hour is late;
The Princess' maidens will come trooping in.
Turn not reluctant eyes behind but come.
She takes Vuthsa by both wrists
and leads him out.

VASAVADUTTA
There is a fire within me and a cry.
My longings have all broken in a flood
And I am the tossed spray! O my desire
That criest for the beauty of his limbs
And to feel all his body with thyself
And lose thy soul in his sweet answering soul,
Wilt thou not all this night be silent? I
Will walk upon the terrace in moonlight;
Perhaps the large, silent night will give me peace.
For now 'twere vain to sleep. O in his arms!
His arms about me and the world expunged!

Scene 3

The tower-room by the terrace.
Vuthsa asleep on a couch; Munjoolica.

MUNJOOLICA
He sleeps and now to lure my victim here.
You! princess! Vasavadutta!

VASAVADUTTA (*appearing at the doorway*)
Didst thou call?

MUNJOOLICA
Yes, to come in from moonlight to the moon.
Thou hast never seen him yet asleep.

VASAVADUTTA

He sleeps!

MUNJOOLICA
His curls are pillowed on one golden arm
Like clouds upon the moon. Wilt thou not see?

VASAVADUTTA
I dare not. I will stand here and will see.

MUNJOOLICA
Thou shalt not. Either pass or enter in.

VASAVADUTTA
Thou playst the tyrant? I will stand and see.

MUNJOOLICA (*pushing her suddenly in*)
In with thee!

VASAVADUTTA
Munjoolica!

MUNJOOLICA
Hush, wake him not!
She drags her to the couch-side.
Is he not beautiful?
She draws back and after a moment goes quietly out and closes the door.

VASAVADUTTA
Oh, now I feel
My mother's heart when over me she bowed
Wakeful at midnight! He has never had
Since his strange birth a mother's, sister's love.
O sleeping soul of my belovèd, hear
My vow, that while thy Vasavadutta lives,
Thou shalt not lack again one heart's desire,
One tender bodily want. All things at once,
Wife, mother, sister, lover, playmate, friend,
Queen, comrade, counsellor I will be to thee.
Self shall not chill my heart with wedded strife,
Nor age nor custom pale my fire of love.
I have that strength in me, the strength to love of gods.
A tress of her hair falls on his face and awakes him.

VUTHSA
O Vasavadutta, thou hast come to me!

VASAVADUTTA
It was not I! Munjoolica dragged me in.
O where is she? The door!
She hastens to the door and finds it bolted from outside.

Munjoolica!
What is this jest? I shall be angry. Open.

MUNJOOLICA (*outside, solemnly*)
Bolted.

VASAVADUTTA
For pity, sweet Munjoolica!

MUNJOOLICA
I settle my accounts. Be happy. I
Am gone.

VASAVADUTTA
Go not, go not, Munjoolica.

VUTHSA (*coming to her*)
She's gone, the thrice-blessed mischief, and tonight
This happy prison thou gav'st me is thine too.
Goddess! thou art shut in with thy delight.
Why wouldst thou flee then through the doors of heaven?

VASAVADUTTA
O not tonight! Be patient! I will ask
My father; he will give me as thy wife.

VUTHSA
Thou thinkst I'll take thee from thy father's hands
Like a poor Brahmin begging for a dole?
Not so do heroes' children wed, nor they
Who from the loins of puissant princes sprang.
With the free interchange of looks and hearts
Nobly self-given, heaven for the priest
And the heart's answers for the holy verse,
They are wedded or by wished-for violence torn
Consenting, yet resisting from the midst
Of many armèd men. So will I wed thee,
O Vasavadutta, so will bear by force

Out of the house and city of my foes
Breaking through hostile gates. By a long kiss
I'll seal thy lips that vainly would forbid.
Let thy heart speak instead the word of joy,
O Vasavadutta.

VASAVADUTTA
Do with me what thou wilt, for I am thine.

Act V

Scene 1

A room in Vasavadutta's apartments.
Vasavadutta, Munjoolica.

VASAVADUTTA
So thou hast dared to come.

MUNJOOLICA
I have. Thou, dare
To look me in the eyes. Thou canst not. Then?

VASAVADUTTA
Hast thou no fear of punishment at all?

MUNJOOLICA
For shutting thee in with heaven? none, none at all.

VASAVADUTTA
How didst thou dare?

MUNJOOLICA
How didst thou dare, proud girl,
To make of kings and princesses thy slaves?
How dare to drag Sourashtra's daughter here,
To keep her as thy servant and to load
With gifts, caresses, chidings and commands,
The puppet of thy sweet imperious will?
Thinkst thou my heart within me was not hot?
But now I am avenged on thee and all.

VASAVADUTTA
Vindictive traitress, I will beat thee.

MUNJOOLICA
Do
And I will laugh and ask thee of the night.

VASAVADUTTA
Then take thy chastisement.
She seizes and beats her with the tassels of her girdle.

MUNJOOLICA
Stop! I'll bear no more.
Art not ashamed to spend thy heart in play
Knowing what thou hast done and what may come?
Think rather of what thou wilt do against
Thy dangerous morrow.

VASAVADUTTA
See what thou hast done!
How shall I look my father in the eyes?
What speak? what do? my Vuthsa how protect?

MUNJOOLICA
Thy father must not know of this.

VASAVADUTTA
Thou thinkst
My joy can be shut in from every eye?
Besides thee I have other serving-girls.

MUNJOOLICA
None who'ld betray thee. This thing known, his wrath
Would strike thy husband.

VASAVADUTTA
Me rather. I will throw
My heart and body, twice his shield, between.

MUNJOOLICA
You will be torn apart and Vuthsa penned
In some deep pit or fiercer vengeance taken
To soothe the stern man's outraged heart.

VASAVADUTTA
Alas!
Thou hast a brain; give me thy counsel. The ill
Thyself hast done, must thou not remedy?

MUNJOOLICA
If thou entreat me much, I will and can.

VASAVADUTTA
I shall entreat thee!

MUNJOOLICA
Help thyself, proud child.

VASAVADUTTA
O, if I have thee at advantage ever!
Stay! I beseech thee, my Munjoolica, —

MUNJOOLICA
More humbly!

VASAVADUTTA
Oh!

She kneels.

I clasp thy feet. O friend,
In painful earnest I beseech thee now
To think, plan, spend for my sake all thy thought.
Remember how I soothed thy fallen life

Which might have been so hard. O thou my playmate,
Joy, servant, sister who hast always been,
Help me, save him, deceive my father's wrath,
Then ask from me what huge reward thou wilt.

MUNJOOLICA
Nothing at all. Vengeance is sweet enough
Upon thy father and Gopalaca.
I'm satisfied now. First give me a promise;
Obey me absolutely in all things
Till Vuthsa's free.

VASAVADUTTA
I promise. Thou art my guide
And I will walk religiously thy path.

MUNJOOLICA
Then think it done.

VASAVADUTTA (*smiling on Vuthsa who enters*)
Vuthsa, I asked not for thee.

VUTHSA
Thou didst. I heard thy heart demand me.

MUNJOOLICA
Hark!
What is this noise and laughter in the court?
See, see, the hunchbacked laughable old man!
What antics!

VUTHSA
Surely I know well those eyes.
Munjoolica, this is a friend. He must
Be brought here to me.

MUNJOOLICA
Princess, let us call him.
It is an admirable buffoon.

VASAVADUTTA
Fie on thee!
Is this an hour for jests and antics?

MUNJOOLICA (*looking significantly at her*)
Yes.

VASAVADUTTA
Call him.

MUNJOOLICA
And thou go in.

VASAVADUTTA
How, in!

MUNJOOLICA
This girl!
Hast thou not promised to obey me?

VASAVADUTTA
Yes.
She goes in. Munjoolica descends.

VUTHSA
Yougundharayan sends him. O, he strikes
The hour as if a god had planned all out.
This world's the puppet of a silent Will
Which moves unguessed behind our acts and thoughts;
Events bewildered follow its dim guidance
And flock where they are needed. Is't not thus,
O Thou, our divine Master, that Thou rulest,
Nor car'st at all because Thy joy and power

Are seated in Thyself beyond the ages?
Munjoolica returns bringing in Vasuntha disguised.
Who is this ancient shape thou bringest?

MUNJOOLICA
I'ld know
If he has a tongue as famous as his hump
And as preposterous; that to learn I bring him.

VASUNTHA
Where is the only lady of the age?
Princes or else domestics, —

MUNJOOLICA
Something, sir, of both.

VASUNTHA
O masters then of princes, think not that I scorn
Your prouder royalty; but now if any
Will introduce my hungry old hunchback
To Avunthy's far-famed paragon of girls,
He shall have tithe of all my golden gains.

MUNJOOLICA
Why not to Avunthy's governor and a prison,
Yougundharayan's spy?

VASUNTHA (*looking at Vuthsa*)
What's this? what's this?

MUNJOOLICA
Strong tonic for a young old man.

VUTHSA
Speak freely
Thy message; there are only friends who hear.

VASUNTHA (*to Vuthsa, with a humorous glance at Munjoolica*)
Thy hours were not ill-spent. But thou hast nearly
Frighted these poor young hairs to real grey,
My sportive lady. Hear now why I crouch
Beneath the hoary burden of this beard
And the insignia of a royal hump, —
And an end to jesting. Vuthsa, in thy city
The people clamour; they besiege thy ministers
Railing at treason and demanding thee;
Nor can their rage be stilled. Do swiftly then
Whatever thou must do yet, swiftly break forth
Or war will seek thee clamouring round these doors.
To bear thy message back to him I come,
Upon Avunthy's mountain verge who lurks,
Or else to aid thee if our help thou needest.

VUTHSA
Let him restrain my army forest-screened
Where the thick woodlands weave a border large
To the ochre garment round Avunthy's loins
Nearest Ujjayiny. Under the cavern-hill
Of Lokanatha let him lie, but never
Transgress that margin till my chariot comes.

VASUNTHA
'Tis all?

VUTHSA
In my own strength all else I'll do.

VASUNTHA
Good; then I go?

VUTHSA
Yes, but with gold, thy fee,
To colour thy going. Bring him gold, dear friend,

Or take from Vasavadutta gem or trinket
That shall bear out his mask to jealous eyes.
Munjoolica goes into the inner chamber.

VASUNTHA
Leave that to me.

VUTHSA
Thou hast adventured much
For my sake.

VASUNTHA
Poor Alurca cried to come,
But this thing asked for brains and he had only
Blunt courage and a harp. The danger's nothing,
But oh, this hump! I shall not soon walk straight,
Nor rid myself of all the loyal aches
I bear for thee.

VUTHSA
Pangs fiercer would have chased them,
Hadst thou been caught, my friend. I shall remember.
Munjoolica returns with gold and a trinket.
Take now these gauds; haste, make thy swiftest way,
For I come close behind thee.
Vasuntha goes.

MUNJOOLICA
Tell me thy plan.

VUTHSA
These chambers are too strongly kept.

MUNJOOLICA
But there's
The pleasure-ground.

VUTHSA

Let Vasavadutta call
Her brothers on an evening to the park
And wine flow fast. The nights are moonlit now.
How many gates?

MUNJOOLICA

Three, but the southern portal
Nearest the ramparts.

VUTHSA

There, how many guard?

MUNJOOLICA

Three armed Kiratha women keep the gate.

VUTHSA

I cannot hurt them. Thou must find a way.

MUNJOOLICA

They shall be drowned in wine. The streets outside?

VUTHSA

A chariot, — find one for me. I cannot fight
With Vasavadutta on my breast.

MUNJOOLICA

I think
That I shall find one.

VUTHSA

Do it. The rest is easy,
To break the keepers of the city-gate
In one fierce moment and be out and far.
There are arms enough in the palace?

MUNJOOLICA

The armoury
I use sometimes.

VUTHSA

Conceal them in the grounds.
No, in the chariot let them wait for me.

MUNJOOLICA

Thou wilt need both thy hands in such a fight.
Vuthsa, I'll be thy charioteer.

VUTHSA

Thou canst?

MUNJOOLICA

Hope not to find a better in thy realms.

VUTHSA

My battle-comrade then! Words are not needed
Between us.

He goes out.

MUNJOOLICA

More than that before all's done
I will be to thee. Good fortune makes hard things
Most easy; for the god comes with laden hands.
If the strange word the queen half spoke to me
Means anything, Vicurna's car shall bear
His sister to her joy and sovereign throne.

Scene 2

The pleasure-groves of the palace in Ujjayiny.
Gopalaca, Vuthsa, Vicurna; at a distance under the trees
Ungarica, Vasavadutta and Umba.

GOPALACA

Vuthsa, the wine is singing in my brain,
The moonlight floods my soul. These are the hours
When the veil for eye and ear is almost rent
And we can hear wind-haired Gundhurvas sing
In a strange luminous ether. Thou art one,
Vuthsa, who has escaped the bars and walks
Smiling and harping to enchanted men.

VUTHSA

It was your earthly moonlight drew me here
And thou, Gopalaca, and Vindhya's hills
And Vasavadutta. Thou shalt drink with me
In moonlight in Cowsamby.

GOPALACA

Vuthsa, when?
What wild and restless spirit keeps thy feet
Tonight, Vicurna?

VICURNA

'Tis the wine. I wait.

GOPALACA

For what?

VICURNA (*with a harsh laugh*)
Why, for the wine to do its work.

GOPALACA
Where's Vasavadutta? Call her to us here.
We are not happy if she walks apart.

VICURNA
There with the mother underneath the trees.

GOPALACA
Call them. Thou, Vuthsa, she and I will drink
One cup of love and pledge our hearts in wine
Never to be parted. Thou deceiv'st the days,
O lax and laggard lover.

VUTHSA
'Tis the last.
Tomorrow lights another scene.

GOPALACA
'Tis good
That thou inclin'st thy heart. My father grows
Stern and impatient. This done, all is well.

VUTHSA
All in this poor world cannot have their will;
Its joys are bounded. I submit, it seems.
Wilt thou incline thy heart, Gopalaca?

GOPALACA
To what?

VUTHSA
To this fair moonlit night's result
And all that follows after.

GOPALACA

Easily
I promise that.

VUTHSA

All surely will be well.
Munjoolica arrives from the gates; Vicurna returning from the trees with Ungarica, Vasavadutta and Umba, goes forward to meet her.

VICURNA

Is't done?

MUNJOOLICA

They sprawl half-senseless near the gate.

VICURNA

Whole bound and gagged were best. Give Vuthsa word.
He goes towards the gates.

UNGARICA

Munjoolica, is it tonight?

MUNJOOLICA

What, madam?

UNGARICA (*striking her lightly on the cheek*)

Vicurna rides tonight?

MUNJOOLICA

He rides tonight.

UNGARICA

Let him not learn, nor any, that I knew.
She returns to the others.

GOPALACA
Come, all you wanderers. Mother, here's a cup
That thou must bless with thy fair magic hands
Before we drink it.

UNGARICA
May those who drink be one
In heart and great and loving all their days
Favoured by Shiva and by Luxmie blest
Until the end and far beyond.

GOPALACA
Drink, Vuthsa.
Three hearts meet in this cup.

UNGARICA
Who drinks this first,
He shall be first and he shall be the bond.

GOPALACA
Drink, sister Vasavadutta, queen of all.

UNGARICA
Queen thou shalt be, my daughter, as in thy heart,
So in thy love and fortunes.

GOPALACA
Mine the last.

UNGARICA
Thou sayest, my son, yet first mid many men.

GOPALACA
Whatever place, so in this knot 'tis found.

UNGARICA (*embracing Vasavadutta closely*)
Forget not thy dear mother in thy bliss.

Gopalaca, attend me to the house,
I have a word for thee, my son.

GOPALACA

I come.
They go towards the palace.

VUTHSA

Is it the moment?

MUNJOOLICA

Yonder lies the gate.

VUTHSA

Love! Vasavadutta.

VASAVADUTTA

Vuthsa! Vuthsa! speak.
What has been quivering in the air this night?
He takes her in his arms.

VUTHSA

Thy rapt and rapture far away, O love.
Look farewell to thy father's halls.

VASAVADUTTA

Alas!
What is this rashness? Thou art unarmed; the guards
Will slay thee.

VUTHSA

Fear not! Thou in my arms,
Our fates a double shield, thou hast no fear,
Nor anything this night to think or do
Save in the chariot lie between my knees
And listen to the breezes in thy locks
Whistling to thee of far Cowsamby's groves.

He bears her towards the gate, Vicurna
crossing him in his return.

VICURNA
Haste, haste! all's ready.

MUNJOOLICA
Umba! Umba! here!

UMBA (*who comes running up*)
Oh, what is this?

VICURNA
Should not this girl be bound?

UMBA
Give rather thy commands.

MUNJOOLICA
Thou'lt face the wrath?

UMBA
O, all for my dear mistress. If the King
Slays me, I shall have lived and died for her
For whom I was born.

MUNJOOLICA
Hide in the groves until
Thou hearst a rumour growing from the walls,
Then seek the house and save thyself. Till then
Let no man find thee.

UMBA
I will lose myself
In the far bushes. O come safely through.
Could you not have trusted me in this?

MUNJOOLICA

Weep not!
I'll have thee to Cowsamby if thou live.

VICURNA
Come, follow, follow. He is near the gates.

MUNJOOLICA
I to my freedom, she her royal crown!

Scene 3

Vasavadutta's apartments.
Mahasegn, Ungarica, Umba bound, armed women.

MAHASEGN
She is not here. O treachery! If thou
Wert privy to this, thou shalt die impaled
Or cloven in many pieces.

UMBA
I am resigned.

UNGARICA
Thou'lt stain thy soul with a woman's murder, King?

MAHASEGN
'Tis truth; she is too slight a thing to crush.
Are not the gardens searched? Who are these slaves
Who dare to loiter? If he's seized, he dies.

UNGARICA
Wilt thou make ill much worse, — if this be ill?

MAHASEGN
How sayst thou? 'Tis not ill? My house is shamed,
My pride downtrodden; all the country laughs
Already at the baffled Mahasegn
Whose daughter was plucked out by one frail boy
From midst his golden city and his hosts
Unnumbered. Who shall honour me henceforth?
Who worship? who obey? who fear my sword?

UNGARICA
Cowsamby's king has kept the Aryan law,
Nor is thy daughter shamed at all in this,
But taken with noblest honour.

MAHASEGN
'Tis a law
I spurn. My will is trodden underfoot,
My pride which to preserve or to avenge
Is the warrior's righteousness. Udaian dies.
Or if he reach his capital, my hosts
Shall thunder on and blot it into flame,
A pyre for his torn dishonoured corpse.

UNGARICA
Hast thou forgotten thy daughter's heart? Her good,
Her happiness are nothing then to thee?

MAHASEGN
Is she my daughter? She'll not wish to live
Her sire's dishonour.

UNGARICA
Thinkest thou he seized her,
Her heart consenting not?

MAHASEGN
If it be so
And she thus rebel to my will and blood,
Let her eyes gaze upon their sensuous cause
Of treason mocked with many marring spears.

UNGARICA
Art thou an Aryan king and threatenest thus?
Thy daughter only for thyself was loved?

MAHASEGN
Silence, my queen! Chafe not the lion wroth.

UNGARICA
The tiger rather, if this mood thou nurse.
A Kiratha woman enters.

MAHASEGN
Thou com'st, slow slave!

KIRATHIE
King, all the grounds are searched.
The guards lie gagged below the southern gate;
All's empty.

MAHASEGN
Where's Gopalaca? He too
Has leisures!

KIRATHIE
There's a captain from the walls.

MAHASEGN
Ha! bring him.
The Kirathie brings in the Avunthian captain.
Well!

CAPTAIN
Vuthsa has broken forth.
The wardens of the gate are maimed or dead;
Triumphant, bearing Vasavadutta, far
Exults his chariot o'er the moonlit plains.

MAHASEGN
O bitter messenger! Pursue, pursue!

CAPTAIN
Rebha with his armed men and stern-lipped speed
Is hot behind.

MAHASEGN
Let all my force that keeps
Ujjayiny, be hurled after them, one speed.
Call, call Vicurna; let the boy bring back
First fame of arms today in Vuthsa slain,
His sister's ravisher.

CAPTAIN
Let not my words
Offend my king. 'Twas Prince Vicurna's car
Bore forth his sister and Vicurna's self
Rode as her guard.

MAHASEGN (*after an astonished pause*)
Do all my house, my blood
Revolt against me?

CAPTAIN
The princess Bundhumathie,
Thy daughter's serving-maiden, at Vuthsa's side
Controlled his coursers.

MAHASEGN
Her I do not blame,
Yet will most fiercely punish. Captain, go;
Gather my chariots; let them gallop fast
Crushing these fugitives' new-made tracks.
As the captain departs, Gopalaca enters.
Gopalaca,
Head, son, my armies; bear thy sister back
Before irrevocable shame is done,
Nor with thy father's greatness unavenged return.

GOPALACA
My father, hear me. Though quite contrary
To all our planned design this thing has fallen,
Yet no dishonour tarnishes the deed,
But as a hero with a hero's child
Has Vuthsa seized the girl. We planned a snare,
He by a noble violence answers us.
We sought to bribe him to a vassal's state
Dangling the jewel of our house in front;
He keeps his freedom and enjoys the gem.
Then since we chose the throw of dice and lost,
Let us be noble gamblers, like a friend
Receive God's hostile chance, nor house blind wounded thoughts
As common natures might. Sanction this rapt;
Let there be love twixt Vuthsa's house and us.

MAHASEGN
I see that in their hearts all have conspired
Against my greatness. Thou art Avunthy's prince,
My second in my cares. Hear then! if twixt
Ujjayiny and my frontiers they are seized,
My fiercer will shall strike; but if they reach
Free Vindhya, thou thyself shalt make the peace.
Take Vasavadutta's household and this girl,
Take all her wealth and gauds; lead her thyself
Or follow to Cowsamby, but leave not
Till she is solemnised as Vuthsa's queen.
Sole let her reign throned by Udaian's side;
Then only shall peace live betwixt our realms.

GOPALACA
And I will fetch Vicurna back.

MAHASEGN
Son, never.
I exile the rebel to his name and house.
Let him with Vuthsa whom he chooses dwell,

My foeman's servant.

He goes out, followed by the guards.
Gopalaca unbinds Umba.

UNGARICA

If we give his rage its hour,
'Twill sink. His pride will call Vicurna back,
If not the father's heart.

GOPALACA

Haste, gather quickly
Her wealth and household. I would make earliest speed,
Lest Vuthsa by ill hap be seized for ill.

UNGARICA

Fear not, my son. The hosts are not on earth
That shall prevail against these two in arms.

Scene 4

The Avunthian forests; moonlight.
Vuthsa, Vasavadutta, Munjoolica.

VUTHSA
Thou hast held the reins divinely. We approach
Our kingdom's border.

MUNJOOLICA
But the foe surround.

VUTHSA
We will break through as twice now we have done.
Vicurna comes.

Vicurna arrives ascending.

VICURNA
Vuthsa, yon Rebha asks
For parley; is it given? I'ld hold him here
While by a long masked woodland breach I know
Silent we pass their cordon.

VUTHSA
Force is best.

VICURNA
Vuthsa, to my mind more; but I would spare
Our Vasavadutta's heart these fierce alarms.
Though she breathe nothing, yet she suffers.

VUTHSA
Good!

We'll choose thy peaceful breach.
Vicurna descends.

VASAVADUTTA
Vuthsa, if I
Stood forth and bade their leader cease pursuit
Since of my will I go, he must desist.

VUTHSA
It would diminish, love, my victory
And triumph which are thine.

VASAVADUTTA
Then let it go.
I would not stain thy fame in arms, though over
My house's head its wheels go trampling.

MUNJOOLICA (*yawning)*
Ough!
If we could parley a truce for sleep. This fighting
Makes very drowsy.
Vicurna returns with Rebha.

VUTHSA
Well, captain, thy demand!

REBHA
Vuthsa, thou art environed. Dost thou yield?

VUTHSA
Thou mockst! Return; we'll break the third last time
Thy fragile chain. Are thy dead counted?

REBHA
The living
Outnumber their first strength; more force comes on
Fast from Ujjayiny. Therefore yield the princess.

Thyself depart a freeman to thy realms.

VUTHSA
Knowst thou thy offer is an insolence?

REBHA
Then, Prince, await the worst. Living and bound
Or else a corpse we'll bring thee back to our city.
Three times around thee is my cordon passed,
Thy steeds are spent, nor hast thou Urjoon's quiver.
The dawn prepares; think it thy last.

VUTHSA
At noon
I give thee tryst within my borders.
Rebha goes.

VICURNA
Swift!
Before he reach his men and back ascend,
We must be far. Munjoolica, mount my horse,
Ride to Yougundharayan, bid him bring on
His numbers; for I see armies thundering towards us
With angry speed o'er the Avunthian plains.
I'll guide the car.

MUNJOOLICA
The horse?

VICURNA
Bound in yon grove.
Rein lightly; he's high-mettled.

MUNJOOLICA
Teach me not.
There is no horse yet foaled I cannot ride.
Which is my way through all this leafy tangle?

VICURNA
Thou canst not miss it; for yon path leads only
To Lokanatha's hill beyond our borders.
Now on!

VUTHSA
The moonlight and the glad night-winds
Have rustled luminously among the leaves
And sung me wordless paeans while I fought.
Now let them fall into a rapturous strain
Of silence, while I ride with thee safe-clasped
Upon my bosom.

VASAVADUTTA
If I could hold thee safe at last!

Scene 5

On the Avunthian border.
Roomunwath, Yougundharayan, Alurca, soldiers.

ROOMUNWATH
The dawn with rose and crimson crowned the hills,
There was no sign of Vuthsa's promised wheels.
Another noon approaches.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Two days only
Vasuntha's here. Yet is Udaian swift
With the stroke he in a secret sloth prepares.

ROOMUNWATH
We learned that though too late. A secret rashness,
A boy's wild venture with his life for stake
And a kingdom! Dangerously dawns this reign.

ALURCA
See, see, a horseman over Avunthy's edge
Rides to us. He quests forward with his eyes.

ROOMUNWATH
Whoe'er he be, he has travelled far. His beast
Labours and stumbles on.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
This is no horseman;
It is a woman rides though swift and armed.

ALURCA
She has seen us and dismounts.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
A woman rides!
My mind misgives me. Is't some evil chance?
Comes she a broken messenger of grief?
She runs as if pursued.

ALURCA
She's young and fair.
Munjoolica arrives.

MUNJOOLICA
Art thou King Vuthsa's captain?

ROOMUNWATH
I am he.

MUNJOOLICA
Gather thy force; for Vuthsa drives here fast,
But hostile armies surge behind his wheels.
Fast, fast, into the woods your succour bring,
Lest over his wearied coursers and spent quiver
Numbers and speed prevail.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Roomunwath, swift.
Roomunwath goes.
But who art thou or where shall be my surety
That thou art no Avunthian sent to lure
Our force into an ambush?

MUNJOOLICA
This is surely
Yougundharayan of the prudent brain.
Thy question I reply; the rest resolve

But swiftly, lest Fate mock thy wary thoughts.
My name is Bundhumathie and my father
Sourashtra held; but I, his daughter, taken
Served in Avunthy Vasavadutta. Knowest thou
This ring?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
'Tis Vuthsa's.

MUNJOOLICA
Young Vicurna's bay
I rode, who guards his sister's ravisher
Against the angry rescuers. Will these riddles,
Wisest of statesmen, solve thy cautious doubt?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Thy tale is strange; but thou at least art true.

MUNJOOLICA
Thou art not prudent only!

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Forward then.
Roomunwath's camp already is astir.

Scene 6

Near the edge of the forest in Avunthy.
Roomunwath, Yougundharayan, Alurca, Munjoolica, forces.

ROOMUNWATH
Stay, stay our march; 'tis Vuthsa's car arrives.
The tired horses stumble as they pause.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
There is a noise of armies close behind
And out of woods the Avunthian wheels emerge.
There arrive Vuthsa, Vicurna, Vasavadutta.

VUTHSA
My father, all things to their hour are true
And I bring back my venture. Am I pardoned
Its secrecy?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
My pupil and son no more,
But hero and monarch! Thou hast set thy foot
Upon Avunthy's head.

VUTHSA
Yet still thy son.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Hail, Vasavadutta, great Cowsamby's queen.

VASAVADUTTA (*smiling happily on Vuthsa*)
My crown was won by desperate alarms.

VUTHSA
It was a perilous race and in the end
Fate won by a head. Were it not the difficult paths
Baffled their numbers, we were hardly here,
So oft we had to pause and rest our steeds.
But in less strength they dared not venture on.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
They range their battle now.

VUTHSA
Speak thou to them.
War must not break.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Demand a parley there.

VUTHSA
If we must fight, it shall be for defence
Retreating while we war unless they urge
Too far their violent trespass.

VICURNA
Rebha comes.

Rebha arrives.

REBHA
Ye are suitors for a parley?

VICURNA
Rebha, with beaten men?

REBHA
Because you had your sister in the car
Our shafts were hampered.

VICURNA

Nor could with swords prevail
Against two boys so many hundred men.

REBHA

O Prince Vicurna, what thou hast done today
Against thy name and nation, I forbear
To value. 'Tis thy first essay of arms.

VICURNA

Well dost thou not to weigh thy better's deeds.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

Rebha, wilt thou urge vainly yet this strife?
What hitherto was done, was private act
And duel; now if thou insist on fight,
Two nations are embroiled; and to what end?

REBHA

I will take Vuthsa and the Princess back.
It is my king's command.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

The impossible
No man is bound to endeavour. While we fight,
King Vuthsa with the captive princess bounds
Unhindered to his high-walled capital.

REBHA

It is my king's command. I am his arm
And not his counsellor; nor to use my brain
Have any right, save for the swift way to fulfil
His proud and absolute mandate.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

If there came
Word from Ujjayiny, then pursuit must cease?

REBHA
Then truly.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Send a horseman, Rebha, ask.
All meanwhile shall remain as now it stands.

REBHA
I'll send no horseman; I will fight.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Then war!

REBHA
We fear it not. This is strange insolence
To stand in arms upon Avunthian ground
And issue mandates to the country's lords.

He is going.

ROOMUNWATH
Rebha, yet pause! No messenger thou needst.
Look where yon chariot furious-bounding comes
And over it streams Avunthy's royal flag.

REBHA
It is the prince Gopalaca. Of this I am glad.

VASAVADUTTA
O if my brother comes, then all is well.

VUTHSA
For thou art Luxmie. Thou beside me, Fate
And Fortune, peace and battle must obey
The vagrant lightest-winged of my desires.

Gopalaca arrives; with him Umba.

GOPALACA
Hail, Vuthsa! peace and love between our lands!

VUTHSA
I hold them here incarnate. Welcome thou,
Their strong achiever.

GOPALACA
As earnest and as proof
Receive this fair accomplice of thy flight
Unpunished. Sister, take her to thy arms.

VASAVADUTTA
O Umba, thou com'st safe to me!

GOPALACA
And all
My sister's household and her wealth comes fast
Behind me. Only one claim Avunthy keeps;
My sister shall sit throned thy only queen, —
Which, pardon me, my eyes must witness done
With honour to our name.

VUTHSA
Cowsamby's majesty
Will brook not even in this, Gopalaca,
A foreign summons. Surely my will and love
Shall throne most high, not strong Avunthy's child,
But Vasavadutta; whether alone, her will
And mine, the nation and the kingdom's good
Consenting shall decide. Therefore this claim
Urge not, my brother.

GOPALACA
Let not this divide us.
The present's gladness is enough: the future's hers
And thine, Udaian, nor shall any man

Compel thee. Boy, thy revolt was rash and fierce
Wronging thy house and thy high father's will.
Exiled must thou in far Cowsamby dwell
Until his wrath is dead.

VICURNA

I care not, brother.
I have done my will, I have observed the right.
Near Vuthsa and my sister's home enough
And I shall see new countries.

VUTHSA

Follow behind,
Gopalaca; thy sister's household bring
And all the force thou wilt. We speed in front.
Ride thou, Alurca, near us; let thy harp
Speak of love's anthems and her golden life
To Vasavadutta. Love, the storm is past,
The peril o'er. Now we shall glide, my queen,
Through green-gold woods and between golden fields
To float for ever in a golden dream,
O earth's gold Luxmie, till the shining gates
Eternal open to us thy heavenly home.

Incomplete and Fragmentary Plays

1891–1915

The Witch of Ilni

A dream of the woodlands

Characters

CORILLO, prince of Ilni.
VALENTINE, a courtier.
IAMBLICHUS
PALLEAS } foresters.
MARCION
MELANDER, a sylvan poet.
FORESTERS, COURTIERS.

ALACIEL, the witch of Ilni.
GUENDOLEN, her sister.
MYRTIL
DORIS } forest damsels.
ERMENILD
GIRLS OF THE FOREST.

Act I

Scene 1

The woodlands of Ilni.
Girls and youths dancing.

Song

Under the darkling tree
Who danceth with thee,
Sister say?
His hair is the sweet sunlight,
His eyes a starry night
In May.

Under the leaf-wrought screen
Who crowns thee his queen
Kissing thee?
His lips are a ruby bright,
His cheek the May-bloom's light
On the tree.

Under the grass-green bough
Whom pillowest thou
On thy breast?
His voice is a swallow's flight,
His limbs are jonquils white
Dewy-drest.

IAMBLICHUS
Unwind the linkèd rapture of the dance!

For in the purple verge and slope of morn
Fast-flowering blooms, fire-robed and honey-haired,
In stainless wastes the daffodil of heaven.
Here till the golden-handed sun upbuilds
The morning's cenotaph blue-domed and vast,
On daisy-dotted bank where sunlight nods
We'll spin a curious weft of lyric tales.

MYRTIL
Be it so. But what occupation stays
Our deftest in the jewelry of rhymes,
Our liberal dispenser of sweet words,
Our laureate with the throstle in his throat?
Sleeps he so long? who saw Melander last,
Melander ashbud-browed with April hair?

ERMENILD
Before the russet-hooded morn gave birth
In Day's embraces to the fire-eyed sun
I spied him nigh a mossy-mantled cave
Which rosy trailers draped, and at his side
The silver-seeming witch Alaciel.

MYRTIL
Pray God, the black-haired witch may do no harm!
She is most potent and her science plucks
The ruby nightshade, Hecate's deadly plum,
Soul-killing meadow-sweet, the hemlock starred
And berries brown crushed in the vats of death,
Her mother's hell-brewed legacy of arts.

MARCION
Were it not wisely done to call him hither?

IAMBLICHUS
'Tis wisely urged, good Marcion. Make good haste

And drench thy words in Hybla's golden milk
To lure him thence.

Exit Marcion.

But you with dance and song
Beguile the laggard moments into joy.

Scene 2

A glade in the woodlands.

ALACIEL
Why wilt thou go? Noon has not budded, sweet.
Freshfallen dew stars yet the silvered grass,
The leaves are lyrical with lisp of birds
And piping voices flutter thro’ the grove.
Repose thyself where blue-eyed violet
Is married to that bugle of pale gold
We call the cowslip, and I’ll chain thee here
With flowery bands of rosebud-linkèd tales
Or murmur Orphic falls to draw thy soul
Upon the smoother wings of measured song.
Noon has not budded, sweet. Why wilt thou go?

MELANDER
The sylvan youths expect my lyric touch
To gild their leisure: nor am I so bold
To linger by thy snowy side too long
Whom men call perilous. Oh thou art fair!
Dawn reddens in thy vermil-tinted cheeks
And on thy tresses pansy-purple night
Hangs balsam-drenched with dewdrops for her stars.
Thou art a flower with candid petals wide,
Moonflushed, most innocent-seeming to the eye;
But in thy cup, they say, lurks venomed wine
Which whoso sucks, pale Hades on him lays
Ensnaring arms to drag from the sweet sun.

ALACIEL
Whom will not Envy’s livid tooth assail?

'Tis true my wisdom dwarfs their ignorance;
That is most true: for in my fledgeling days
When callow childhood loved the rushy nest,
My mother drew my steps thro' fretted walks,
Rose-rubied gardens, acorn-pelted glades,
Green seas of pasture, rural sweeps of bloom,
And taught the florid sensuous dialect
Of simple plants. This way I learned to love
The shining sisterhood of rhythmic names,
Roses and lilies, honey-hiding thyme,
Pied gilliflowers, painted wind-blossoms,
Gold crocus, milky bell, sweet marjoram,
Fire-coloured furze and wayside honey-suckle.
Nor these alone, but all the helpful plants
Gave me the liquid essence of their souls
Potent to help or hurt, to cure or kill.
Indeed the milky juice of pungent roots
I poured you in that curious walnut cup
With moderation just, were in excess
More deadly than the hemlock's dooming wine.

MELANDER
It fused new blood into my pulsing veins
Raising me twice the stature of a soul.

ALACIEL
'Tis margarite, the rare and pungent root,
That brewed this foamy vintage in his wand.
For twixt the bulb and pithy texture wrapt
You find a pod nut-form with misty skin,
In size no bigger than the early grape
But full and sweet with honey-tempered wine.
Such are my potions, philtres, poisons, drugs,
Distempered brews, and all the juggling arts
Your ignorance rebukes my wisdom with.

MELANDER
From such sweet lips when poppied utterance falls,
The carping spirit of disdain must sleep;
For subtler logic drops in simple words
From woman's tongue, than phraseful orator
Or fine scholastic wit may offer up.

ALACIEL
Sweet youth, why should I net you with deceit?
Ah yet, in truth you are too beautiful!
Come, you are skilled in phrases, are you not?
You dice with women's hearts — they tell me 'tis
A pastime much in vogue with idle youths.
(The philtre works: his eyelids brim with dew.)
You throw cogged dice with women for their souls,
You barter with them and deny the price,
Is it not so? (O rare, fine margarite!)
Oh you are deft at such deceits: you make
Your beauty lime to cozen linnets with
And bid them sing, if they'd have sustenance.
Oh you will not deceive me, think it not:
You are just such a fowler to my guess.

MELANDER
Dear linnet, did I lime you in my nets,
One fine, sweet Hamadryad note would lift
The tangle from your wild-rose-petal wings.

ALACIEL
Ah but when lurking faces flower the bush
Wild birds mock expectation with wild wings.

MELANDER
Nay, dear, you shall not go: I have you fast.
Come, where's your ransom? the sweet, single note
I bargained for, ere you may climb the winds?
Prune not your fluttering wings: I have you fast.

ALACIEL
I pray you, make not earnest of my jest.
You are too quick: you shall not have a stiver,
No, not a coin to bless repentance with.

MELANDER
Then I will pay myself, sweet: from that warm
And flowering bed of kisses, I will pluck
Fresh with the dews of youth one red sweet rose.
(*kisses her*)
Oh I have sucked out poison from your lips!
Physicians say that certain maladies
Are by their generating causes killed.
Sweet poison, one more drop to cure the last.
(*kisses her*)

ALACIEL
You shall pluck no more roses from my tree.
Unclasp me now or you will anger me.

MELANDER
Dear, be not angry. I did but accept
The written challenge peeping thro' the lids
Of those delicious eyes: O shy soft eyes,
Hiding with jetty fringes such a world
Of swimming beauty, virgin-sweet desire,
You shine like stars upon the rim of night,
Like dewdrops thro' green leaves, mute orators
Instinct with dropping eloquence to sway
The burning heart of boyhood to your will.
If I look on you long, you will seduce
My acts from virtue; which to anticipate
I'll kill you both with kisses, thus, and thus.
Sweet, do not blush. I claim what is my own,
And with my lips I seal your whole self mine
From dear, dark head to dainty wild-rose feet.
Or, if you will, in sanguine tumult show

The throbbing conscience of a lover's touch,
That I may watch a sea of springing rose
Diffuse its gorgeous triumph in your cheeks.

ALACIEL
Oh you have golden pieces on your tongue
To buy your pleasure: yet this single once
I'll be your fool. Come, throw me clinking coin,
The thin flute-music of your flatteries.
You shall have favours if you pay for them.

MELANDER
His lips should dribble honey, who'd make out
The style and inventory of your graces.
His voice should be the fifing of mild winds
To happy song of bees in rose-red June,
His every word a crimson-tasselled rose,
His lightest phrase a strip of cedar-wood,
Each clause a nutmeg-peppered jug of cream;
The very stops should argue aloes fetched
By spicèd winds upon the rocking brine.
What, have I earned my wage? I am athirst
With praising you. Give me your lips to drink.

ALACIEL
You trifle, sweet. Yours is no mint of coin
But scribbled paper-specie large as wind
Which I'll not take. Here comes your paedagogue
To school you into more sobriety.
Alaciel retires. Enter Marcion.

MARCION
Well met, Melander. Long thro' mossy paths
Have I with patient footing peered thee out,
Thro' shadow-sundered slopes of racing light,
In ferny pales with blots of colour pricked
And by the rushy marge of spuming streams

Till lucky hazard made the Venus throw.
Why art thou here? On leafy-sheltered sward
Where daubs of sunlight intersperse the shade,
The rubious posies thrill to mazy feet
Like stars danced over by an angel's tread
And strive with glimmering corollaries
To make a twinkling heaven of the green.
Moist blow the breezes with the myrrhy tears
Of pining night, and ruffle every blade
That keeps his pearls from clutch of dewy thieves
Until their indignation murmur past.
From airy flute, from seraph-stringèd harp,
A daedal rain of music drop on drop
Wells fast to rule the waft of dove-like feet.
The clustered edges of close-heapèd thyme,
A murmurous haven sailed by merchant bees,
Are crumbling into fragrance and young flowers
Make fat by their decay the greedy earth,
While golden youths and silver feet of girls
Pass fluttering as with glimpse of gorgeous hues
A fleet of moths on emigrating winds.
There you shall see upon the pearlèd grass
The forest antelope, brown Ermenild,
Iamblichus the honey-hearted boy,
Rose-cheeked Iamblichus with roses wreathed,
And Myrtil honey-haired, our woodland moon,
Myrtil the white, a silver loveliness,
But tipped with gold. Thou only lingerest;
Only thy voice, the pilot of our moods,
Only thy thrushlips welling facile rhymes
Mar the sweet harmonies of holiday
With one chord missing from the clamorous harp.

MELANDER
I thank you, Marcion, for your careful pain
But cannot guerdon you with more than thanks.
I am not well: the fumes of midnight thought

Unfit me for a holiday attire.

MARCION
Fie, fie, Melander! When have you before
Denied the riches of your tongue to eke
Our poorness with? The forest waits for you
Dew-drenched with tears because you will not come.

MELANDER
Well, I will go with you, but not for long.
I'll join you where deep-cushioned in soft grass
The stream turns inward like a scimitar.
Go on before, I pray you. I will come.
Exit Marcion.

ALACIEL
There, there, I said so! you are docile, sir.
Indeed I did not spy the leading-strings,
But they must be there. 'Twas your paedagogue,
Was it not, come to fetch the truant back?

MELANDER
Dear, be not vexed with me. I will return
Ere noon has dotted with her golden ball
The eminence of heaven. It seems not well,
When judgment has decreed the award of merit,
To disappoint Persuasion of her prize.
In sweetly-cultured minds civility
Breathes music to the touch of wooing words.

ALACIEL
Oh words and words enough! but what's the gist,
The run, the purport? Tush, a chattering pie,
A pie that steals and chatters, would not deign
To jeer this flaunting daw. What, did he deem
His gaudy colony of phrases roofed
The meaning from my eyes? The prosing fool

Fibs very vilely: why, he has not conned
The rudiments and letters of his craft.

MELANDER
You do miscall sincerest courtesy,
Sweet courtesy that solders our conditions
Into the builded structure of a state.

ALACIEL
Yes, till the winds unbuild it for worse ruin.
But go your way. I'll know you as a man
That honeys leisure with a lovely face
And coins sweet perjuries to make the hearts
Of women bankrupt. No defence, I pray you.
I'll have no slices of your company.

MELANDER
Leave wrangling, sweet, and tell me soft and kind,
Where shall I see you next? I may not tarry.

ALACIEL
Why nowhere: for I'll not receive you, sir.
But if you love a door shut in your face
Come to my cottage on the forest's hem
Where rarer thickets melt into the plain.

MELANDER
Thither I will outstrip the climbing noon.
For this one tedious hour, dear love, farewell.

ALACIEL
I pray you, sweet, do not break promise with me,
For that will kill me. I will think of you
And comfort solitude with sighs and tears
Until you dawn afresh, a noontide star.

Exeunt.

Act II

Scene 1

The woodlands as at first.
Foresters and girls.
Melander leans against a tree absorbed in thought: in one group Marcion and Ermenild are talking: in another Iamblichus and Myrtil: Myrtil comes forward.

MYRTIL
What passion, dear Melander, numbs thy voice?
Why wilt thou cherish humorous peevishness,
The nursling of a moment and a mood?
Now kernelled in the golden husk of day
Pale night with all her pomp of sorrow sleeps,
And stinted of softclinging melancholy
The elegiac nightingale is hushed.

MELANDER
Sweet friend, my spirit is too deeply hued
With sombre-sweet Imagination's brush
To dress the nimble spirit of the dance
In lilt of phrase and honey-packing rhyme.
I pray you, urge it not. I am not well.

IAMBLICHUS
Urge him no more. The rash and humorous spirit
That governs him at times, will not be schooled.
But since the sweetest tongue of all is mute,
Some harsher voice prick on the creeping hour.

MYRTIL
Ah no, Iamblichus! when winds are hushed
Fall then the clapping cymbals of the sea,
And every green-haired dancing-girl down-drop
Her foam-tipped sinuous wand to kiss her feet!
The loss of sweetest palls what is but sweet,
For should the honey-throated mavis die,
Who in the laughing linnet takes delight
Or lends ear to the rhyming hedge-priest wren?
Let us not challenge passion-pale regret,
But hand-in-hand down ruby-tinted walks
Gather the poppies of sweet speech, to press
For opiates when dank autumn looms and Life
Is empty of her rose. Were not this well?

IAMBLICHUS
Thy words are sweet as joy, more wise than sorrow.
Come, friends, let us steal honey from the hours
For memory to suck when winter comes.
Exeunt all but Melander.

MELANDER
Ah me, what drug Circean wakes in me?
My blood steals from my heart like pulsing fire
And the fresh sap exudes upon my brow.
O faster, faster urge thy golden wheels,
Thou sun that like a fiery lizard creepst
Glib-footed to the parapet of heaven!
Oh that my hand might clutch thy saffron curls
And thrust thee in the loud Atlantic! So
The violet mares of Evening may drink up
The sweet, damp wind, so dawn the ivory moon
And lurk shy-peeping in my darling's eyes.
For my desire is like the passionate sea
That calls unto her paramour the wind
And only hears a strangled murmur pant,
Mute, muffled by the hollow-breasted hills.
Enter Iamblichus with Myrtil in his arms.

MYRTIL
No farther drag my steps, Iamblichus!
I am not fond to bow my doating neck
Under your feet, like other woodland girls
Who image beauty's model in your shape,
Heaven in your eyes and nectar in your kiss.
Fie, fie, be modest, sir. Let go your grasp.

[*Here a page of the notebook was torn out.*]

[MELANDER]
Ah me, again a sea of subtle fire
Clamours about the ruby gates of Life!
My soul expanding like a Pythian seer
Thrives upon torture, and the insurgent blood,
Swollen as with wine, menaces mutiny.
How slowly buildst thou up the spacious noon
To dome thy house, O architect of day!
Not from the bubbling smithy where Love works
Smooth Hebe fetched thy world-revealing fires;
Nor to the foam-bound bride-bed of the sea
Thou sailest, but like one with doom foreseen
Whose bourne and culmination lapses down
To sunless hell. Hope thou not to set out
My seasons in the golden ink of day:
My heart anticipates the pilot moon
Who steers the cloudy-wimpled night. Pale orb,
Thou art no symbol for my burning soul:
Lag thou behind or lag not, I will lead.
He is going out.
Reenter foresters with Palleas.

MARCION
What's this, Melander? Noon not yet has sealed
His titles with the signet of the sun.
'Tis early yet to leave. Why will you go?

MELANDER
I am bound down by iron promises,
The hour named. Would I not linger else?
Even now the promise has outstript the act.

MYRTIL
Melander, do not go.

MELANDER
Dear child, I must.

IAMBLICHUS
Come, come, you shall not go. 'Tis most unkind,
Let me not say uncourteous, to withdraw
The sunshine of your presence from this day,
Our little day of unmixed joy. Be ruled.

PALLEAS
Boy, let me counsel you. This eager fit
And hot eruption does much detriment
To youth and bodes no good to waning years.
When I was young, I ruled my dancing blood,
Abstained from brabbles, women, verses, wine,
And now you see me bask in hale old age,
Mid Autumn's gilded ruin one green leaf.
Life's palate dulls with much intemperance,
And whoso breaks the law, the law shall break.
Love is a specious angler —

MELANDER
Dotard, off!
Confide thy heavy rumours to the grave
Where thou shouldst now be rotting.

Exit.

Act III

Scene 1

Before Alaciel's house.

GUENDOLEN
But what you tell me is not credible.
Could Love at the prime vision slip your fence
And his red bees wing humming to your heart?
What, at the premier interchange of eyes
Seed bulged into the bud, the bud to flower,
Bloom waxing into fruit? can passion sink
Thus deep embedded in a maiden soil?
Masks not your love in an unwonted guise?

ALACIEL
Sweet girl, you are a casket yet unused,
A fair, unprinted page. These mysteries
Are alien to your grasp, until Love pen
His novel lithograph and write in you
Songs bubbling with the music of a name.
Oh, I am faster tangled in his eyes
Than, in the net smoke-blasted Vulcan threw,
Foam-bosomed Cytherea to her Mars.

GUENDOLEN
But will he push his fancy to your bent?

ALACIEL
How else? for in the coy glance of a girl
A subtle sorcery lies that draws men on

As with a thread, nor snaps not ere it should.
Love's palate is with acid flavours edged
When what the lips repel, the eyes invite.

GUENDOLEN
Have you forgotten then, my sister, how
Since war's ensanguined dice have thrown a cast
So fatal to our peace, the sweet confines
Of Ilni and her primitive content
Are hedged and meted by the savage Law?

ALACIEL
Child, I have not forgotten; but first love
Poseidon-like submerges with his sea
All barriers, and the checks that men oppose
But make him fret and spume against the sky.
Who shall withstand him? not the gnawing flame
Nor toothèd rocks nor gorgon-fronted piles
Nor metal bars; thro' all he walks unharmed.
But lo where on the forest's lip there dawns
My noonstar in the garish paths of day.
He should not see you, sweet. Prithee, go in.
Enter Melander.
How now? was this your compact? Lift your glance
Where yet the primrose-pale Hyperion clings
Upon the purple arches of the air
Nor on the cornice prints his golden seal.
You are too soon. Why with this fire-eyed haste
Have you o'ershot the target of your vows?

MELANDER
Ah, cruel child! what hast thou done to me?
What expiation in the balance pends
Against thy fault? Not the low sweets of sound
Fetched by thy piping tongue from ruby stops,
Nor fluttering glances under velvet lids,
Nor the rich tell-tale blush that sweetly steals

As if a scarlet pencil would indite
A love-song in thy cheeks. These candid brows,
The hushed seraglio to thy veiled thoughts,
These light wind-kissing feet, these milky paps
That peep twixt edge and loosely-married edge,
Thy slumber-swollen purple-fringèd orbs,
Thy hands, cinque-petalled rose-buds just apart
Beneath the wheedling kiss of spring, thy sides,
Those continents of warm, unmelting snow,
All in the balance are but precious air.
Nay, with thy whole dear sum of beauties fill
The scale, it will not tremble to the dust
Save hooped upon thy breast my weight helps thine.
If you deny me my just claim, I'll snatch
You from yourself and torture with the whips
Of Love, till you disclose your hoardings. Oh
To seize this loaded honeycomb of bliss
And make a rich repast! Oh turn from me
The serious wonder of those orbèd fires!
Their lustre stabs my heart with agony.
Hide in thy hair those passion-moulded lips!
Veil up those milky glimpses from my sight!
Oh I will drag thy soul out in a kiss!
Wilt thou add fire to fire? Torture not
My longing with reluctance; forge not now
The pouted simulation of disdain.
Leap quick into my arms! there lose thyself.
She embraces him.
Pardon me, sweet: thy beauties in my soul
Blow high the leaping billows of desire
And temperance is a wreck merged in his sea.

ALACIEL
Loveliest Melander, if I have offended,
Here like a Roman debtor yield I up
My body to thy mercy or thy doom.
Take my soul too! and in thy princely pomp

Let this rebellious heart that needs will fret
To be thy slave, be dragged to thraldom. See,
I hang, a lustrous jewel, on thy neck:
Break me or keep me! I am thine to keep
Or break: fear not to do thy utmost will.

MELANDER
Hang there till thou hast grown a part of me!
Ah yet, if passion be Love's natural priest
Let not his fire-lipped homage scare thy soul.
Thy ripe, unspotted girlhood give to me,
For which the whole world yearns. A gift is sweet,
And thou, O subtle thief, hast stolen my calm
Who was before not indigent of bliss.
Oh closer yet! Let's glue our lips together,
That all eternity may be a kiss.

ALACIEL
What, will you bury me with kisses? Dear,
Be modest. Tell me why by a full hour
You outran expectation's reaching eye?

MELANDER
Inquire the glowing moon why she has dared
Forestal the set nor wait the ushering star;
Inquire the amorous wind, why he has plucked,
Ere Autumn's breath have tampered with her hair,
Petal on crimson petal the red rose:
Nay, catechise the loud rebombing sea
Who in a thundrous summer dim with rain
Conspired with hoarse rebellious winds to merge
The lonely life of ocean-wading ships;
Then ask fire-footed passion why his rage
Has shipwrecked me upon thy silver breasts.
Ah love, thyself the culprit, thine the fault.
Alaciel, thou, — O sweet unconscious sin! —
Hast in my members kindled such a fire

As only sorcery knows: which to atone
Thy virgin hours must sweetly swoon to death
While in the snowy summer of thy lap
Kind Night shall cool these passion-melted limbs.
When thou dost imitate the blushing rose,
I swear thy tint is truer than the life,
Than loveliness more lovely. Dearest one,
Let naked Love abash the curtained prude.
Shame was not made to burn thy field of roses
Nor in this married excellence of hues
Unfurl disorder's ruby-tinted flag.

ALACIEL
Dear, if I blush, 'tis modesty, not shame.
I can refuse you nothing. When 'tis night
And like a smile upon a virgin's lips
Young moonlight dallies with a sleepy rose,
Then come and call me gently twice and thrice,
And I will answer you. Observe this well
In that the harsh and beldam Law excludes
Nature's sweet rites and Paphian marriage
Unless her bleared eyes be privy too.

MELANDER
O love, have you forgot the long elapse
And weary pomp of hours ere the sun
That follows now a path sincere of foam
Make sanguine shipwreck in the lurid west?
Scarce now his golden eye drops vertical
Upon the belt and midline of our scope.
Shorten your sentence by a term of hours
When I shall ease my pain. Turn caution out
To graze in nunneries: his sober feint
Of prudence suits not with a lover's tryst.

ALACIEL
Content you, sweet: let patience feed on hope

Until night's purple awning bar from view
The hidden thefts of love. Nay, go not yet.
Sit here awhile until yon sloping disk
Swings prone above the poplar. Sweet, come in.

Exeunt.

Scene 2

Before Alaciel's house.
Melander alone.

MELANDER
Now, for her widowed state is wooed by night,
The sable-vested air puts on her stars
And in her bosom pins for brooch the moon.
She from her diamond chalice soon will pour
Her flowing glories on a rose's hair,
In pity of my love. Sweet crimson rose,
Alaciel's lamp, the beacon of my bliss,
O kindle quickly at the moon thy rays.
How happy art thou being near my love!
For thou who hast the perfume of her breath,
Why shouldest thou the spice-lipped Zephyr want?
Her dove's-feet whispering in the happy grass
Are surely lovelier to thee than the dawn;
Or wilt thou woo the world-embracing orb,
Who hast the splendour of her eyes to soothe
Thy slumber into waking? O red rose,
Might I but merge in thee, how would her touch
Thrill all my petals with delicious pain!
O could I pawn my beauty for a kiss,
How happy were I to waste all myself
In shreds of scarlet ruin at her feet!
It is my hour! for see, the cowslip-curled
Night-wandering patroness of lovers throws
Her lantern's orange-coloured beams, where sleeps
A bright, blown rose. Hail, empress of the stars!
Be thou tonight my hymeneal torch.
Alaciel! Echo, hush thy babbling tongue!

'Tis not Narcissus calls. I am a thief
Who steal from beauty's garden one sweet bud
Nor need like visitants thy tinkling bell.
Alaciel! O with thy opiate wand,
Thought-killing Mercury, seal every eye
On whom the drowsy Morpheus has not breathed.
Yet once again the charm. Alaciel!
Now at thy window dawn, thou lovelier moon
Than sojourns in the sky! look out on me,
An ivory face thro' rippling clouds of hair.

Enter Alaciel above.
Marcion and Doris behind.

ALACIEL
Who calls?

[*The next sixteen pages of the notebook were torn out.*]

The House of Brut

A Play

Dramatis Personae

BRUTUS, Prince of Britain.
CORINEUS }
ASSARAC } his brothers.
DEVON, son of Corineus.
CAMBRE, Prince of Cambria }
ALBANACT, Prince of Albany } sons of Brutus.
LOCRINE, Prince of Leogrys }
HUMBER, King of Norway.
OFFA }
SIGFRID } Norwegian leaders.

GUENDOLEN, daughter of Corineus.
ESTRILD, a Pictish princess, concubine of Humber.

Act II

Scene 1

The camp of Humber.
Humber, Offa, Norwegians.

HUMBER
Drinkhael, dragons and stormwinds of the sea!
(*drinks*)
Spare not to drain this sweetened force of earth,
You Vikings! How it bubbles to the lips
Vigorous as newspilt blood. Drink deep, and shout
"Glory to Thor and Humber!" With the sun
Upon the force of Albanact we march.
Shout, Norsemen! Let the heavens hear your menace.
Drinkhael!
(*drinks*)

ALL
Washael! Glory to ancient Thor
And Humber.

HUMBER
I am the hammer old of Thor
When he would crush the nations. He is merry
With wine and smites the world with me.
(*drinks*)
Or wherefore
Should I derive my glory? Have I not
Rushed through the angry waters when the whale
Was stunned between two waves and slain my foe

Betwixt the thunders? Have not the burning hamlets
Of Gaul lighted me homeward for a league?
Erin has felt me, Norsemen.

ALL

Glory to Humber.

HUMBER

Have I not slain the Alban hosts and bound
The necks of princes? Yea, their glorious star
And wonder for whom three kingdoms strove, Estrild,
Led to my ships? The queens of the Orcades
Are slaves and concubines to private Norsemen.

ALL

Glory to Humber, Thor's hammer! Humber! Humber!

HUMBER

Have I not harried Ireland, Denmark, Orkney?
Shattered the Pictish wheels, broken their scythes,
Unpeopled living tracts? Why then prefer you
Thor's self to me? Has he filled up your ships
With gold and wines of France, rich rings and jewels,
Metals untold and beautiful sharp steel?
Who has enriched and aggrandized you all
Till you are gods, to each hand a country's wealth,
To each sword a century's glory? Who has given
The commonest man beauty divine to sleep with,
Made queens your slaves and kings your thralls, you Norsemen?

ALL

Humber, Humber! Not Thor, but mightier Humber.

HUMBER

Drink, Norsemen. Ye shall all be kings. Scotia
And Albany and Ireland shall be mine.
I'll have as many kingdoms as the year

Has moons. Do you doubt me, Vikings? Do you mutter?
But you shall see my glory. Call Estrild,
You thralls of Humber.

ALL

Glory to great Humber!
Humber shall now be Thor. He shall new-make
The bones of Heimir in his hands. Cry "Humber!"

HUMBER

This river we ascend, shall now no more
Bear its old name but mine; and all this region
Be Albany no more but Humberland.
The world's name changed shall be my monument.
Enter thralls with Estrild.

ESTRILD

Gods, if you be, protect me!

ALL

Glory to Humber.

HUMBER

Lo she whose starlike eyes enthral the nations,
Comes to do reverence to Humber, glad
To be his glory's meanest satellite.
Kneel down, daughter of princes, favoured more
Than Freya or Gudrun; for these were wives
Of gods or demigods, but thou the slave
Of Humber. Lo whose pleasure kingdoms strove
To do, is made my footstool. I have slain
Nations to win her and have ravished her
Before her father's eyes, not yet made blood
And faces of a hundred warlike lovers.
Yet all these could not help her cries.

ALL

Humber!

OFFA

The strong, the noble Humber!

HUMBER

Girl, arise
And serve me. Thou shalt do it royally.
This is thy father's skull [*incomplete*]

The Maid in the Mill
or
Love Shuffles the Cards

A Comedy

Dramatis Personae

CUPID.
ATE.

KING PHILIP OF SPAIN.
COUNT BELTRAN, a nobleman.
ANTONIO, his son.
BASIL, his nephew.
COUNT CONRAD, a young nobleman.
RONCEDAS }
GUZMAN } courtiers.
THE FARMER.
JACINTO, his son.
JERONIMO, a student.
CARLOS, a student.
FRIAR BALTASAR, a pedagogue.

EUPHROSYNE, the maid of the farm.
ISMENIA, sister of Conrad.
BRIGIDA, her cousin.

Act I

Scene 1

The King's Court at Salamanca.
King Philip, Conrad, Beltran, Roncedas, Guzman, Antonio, Basil, Ismenia, Brigida; Grandees.

CONRAD
Till when do we wait here?

RONCEDAS
The Court is dull.
This melancholy gains upon the King.

CONRAD
I should be riding homeward. How long it is
To lose the noble hours so emptily.

RONCEDAS
This is a daily weariness. But look:
The King has left his toying with the tassels
Of the great chair and turns slow eyes to us.

KING PHILIP
Count Beltran.

BELTRAN
Your Highness?

KING PHILIP
What is your masque's device

For which I still must thank your loyal pains
To cheer our stay in this so famous city?
Shall we hear it?

BELTRAN
Nothing from me, Your Highness.
Castilians, forgèd iron of old time,
And hearts that beat to tread of empires, cannot
Keep pace with dances, entertainments, masques.
But here's my son, a piece of modern colour,
For now our forward children overstep
Their rough begetters — ask him, Sire; I doubt not
His answers shall reveal the grace men lend him
In attribution, — would 'twere used more nobly.

KING PHILIP
Your son, Lord Beltran? Surely you fatigued
The holy saints in heaven and perfect martyrs
In your yet hopeful youth, till they consented
To your best wish. What masque, Antonio?

ANTONIO
One little worthy, yet in a spirit framed
That may excuse much error; 'tis the Judgment
Of Paris and the Rape of Spartan Helen.

GUZMAN
Is that not very old?

ISMENIA
Antonio? He
Antonio? O my poor eyes misled,
Whither have you wandered?

BRIGIDA
Hush.

KING PHILIP

It has I think
Been staged a little often and though, Antonio,
I doubt not that fine pen and curious staging
Will raise it beyond new things rough conceived,
Yet is fresh subject something.

ANTONIO

For a play
It were so; this is none. Pardon me, Sir,
I err in boldness, urge too far my answer.

KING PHILIP

Your boldness, youth, is others' modesty.
Speak freely.

ANTONIO

Thus I say then. A masque is heard
Once only and in that once must all be grasped at
But the swift action of the stage speeds on,
While slow conception labouring after it
Roughens its subtleties, blurs over shades,
Sees masses only. If the plot is new,
The mind is like a traveller pressed for time,
And quite engrossed with incident, omits
To take the breath of flowers and lingering shade
From haste to reach a goal. But the plot old
Leaves it at leisure and it culls at ease
Those delicate, scarcely-heeded strokes, which art
Throws in, to justify genius. These being lost
Perfection's disappointed. Then if old
The subject amplifies creative labour,
For what's creation but to make old things
Admirably new; the other's mere invention,
A small gift, though a gracious. He's creator
Who greatly handles great material,
Calls order out of the abundant deep,

Not who invents sweet shadows out of air.

KING PHILIP
You are blessed, Lord Beltran, in your son. His voice
Performs the promise of his eyes; he is
A taking speaker.

ISMENIA
True, O true! He has taken
My heart out of my bosom.

BRIGIDA
Will you hush?

KING PHILIP
You have, Lord Beltran, lands of which the fame
Gives much to Nature. I have not yet beheld them.
Indeed I grudge each rood of Spanish earth
My eyes have not perused, my heart stored up.
But what with foreign boyhood, strange extraction,
And hardly reaching with turmoil to power
I am a stranger merely. I have swept
Through beautiful Spain more like a wind than man,
Now fugitive, now blown into my right
On a great whirlwind of success. So tell me,
Have you not many lovely things to live with?

BELTRAN
My son would answer better, Sire. I care not
Whether this tree be like a tower or that
A dragon: and I never saw myself
Difference twixt field and field, save the main one
Of size, boundary and revenue; and those
Were great once, — why now lessened and by whom
I will not move you by repeating, Sire,
Although my heart speaks of it feelingly.

KING PHILIP
I have not time for hatred or revenge.
Speak then, Antonio, but tell me not
Of formal French demesnes and careful parks,
Life dressed like a stone lady, statuesque.
They please the judging eye, but not the heart.
When Nature is disnatured, all her glowing
Great outlines chillingly disharmonised
Into stiff lines, the heart's dissatisfied,
Asks freedom, wideness; it compares the sweep
Of the large heavens above and feels a discord.
Your architects plan beauty by the yard,
Weigh sand with sand, parallel line with line
But miss the greatest, since uncultured force
Though rude, yet striking home by far exceeds
Artisan's work, mechanically good.

ANTONIO
Our fields, Sir, are a rural holiday,
Not Nature carved.

KING PHILIP
Has she a voice to you?
Silent, she's not so fair.

ANTONIO
Yes, we have brooks
Muttering through sedge and stone, and willows by them
Leaning dishevelled and forget-me-nots,
Wonders of lurking azure, rue and mallow,
Honeysuckle and painful meadowsweet,
And when we're tired of watching the rich bee
Murmur absorbed about one lonely flower,
Then we can turn and hear a noon of birds.
Each on his own heart's quite intent, yet all
Join sweetness at melodious intervals.

KING PHILIP
You have many trees?

ANTONIO
Glades, Sire, and green assemblies
And separate giants bending to each other
As if they longed to meet. Some are pranked out;
Others wear merely green like foresters.

ISMENIA
Can hatred sound so sweet? Are enemies' voices
Like hail of angels to the ear, Brigida?

BRIGIDA
Hush, fool. We are too near. Someone will mark you.

ISMENIA
Why, cousin, if they do, what harm? Sure all
Unblamed may praise sweet music when they hear it.

BRIGIDA
Rule your tongue, madam. Or must I leave you?

KING PHILIP
You have made me sorrowful. How different
Is this pale picture of a Court, these walls
Shut out from honest breathing; God kept not
His quarries in the wild and distant hills
For such perversion. It was sin when first
Hands serried stone with stone. Guzman, you are
A patient reasoner, — is it not better
To live in the great air God made for us,
A peasant in the open glory of earth,
Feeling it, yet not knowing it, like him
To drink the cool life-giving brook nor crave
The sour fermented madness of the grape
Nor the dull exquisiteness of far-fetched viands

For the tired palate, but black bread or maize,
Mere wholesome ordinary corn. Think you not
A life so in the glorious sunlight bathed,
Straight nursed and suckled from the vigorous Earth
With shaping labour and the homely touch
Of the great hearty mother, edifies
A nobler kind than nourished is in courts?
For we are even as children, when removed
From those her streaming breasts, we of the sun
Defrauded and the lusty salutation
Of wind and rain, grow up amphibious nothing,
Not man, who are too sickly wise for earth
Nor angel, too corrupt for heirs of heaven.

GUZMAN
I think not so, Your Highness.

KING PHILIP
Not so, Guzman?
Is not a peasant happier than a king?
For he has useful physical toil and sleep
Unbroken as a child's. He is not hedged
By swathing ceremony which forbids
A king to feel himself a man. He has friends,
For he has equals. And in youth he marries
The comrade of his boyhood whom he loved
And gets on that sweet helper stalwart children.
Then vigorously his days endure till age
Sees his grandchildren climbing on his knees,
A happy calm old man; because he lived
Man's genuine life and goes with task accomplished
Thro' death as thro' a gate, not questioning.

GUZMAN
Each creature labouring in his own vocation
Desires another's and deems the heavy burden
Of his own fate the world's sole heaviness.

Each thing's to its perceptions limited,
Another's are to it intangible,
A shadow far away, quite bodiless,
Lost in conjecture's wide impalpable.
On its unceasing errand through the void
The earth rolls on, a blind and moaning sphere;
It knows not Venus' sorrows, but it looks
With envy crying, "These have light and beauty,
I only am all dark and comfortless."
The land yearning for life, endeavours seaward,
The sea, weary of motion, pines to turn
Into reposeful earth: yet were this done
Each would repine again and hate the doer,
The land would miss its flowers and grass and birds,
The sea long for the coral and the cave.
For he who made expenditure of life
Condition of that life prolonged, made also
Each mortal gift dependent on defect
And truth to one's own self the only virtue.
The labourer physically is divine,
Inward a void; yet in his limits blest.
But were the city's cultured son, who turns
Watching and envious, crying "Were I simple,
Primeval in my life as he, how happy!",
Into such environs confined, how then
His temperament would beat against the bars
Of circumstance and rage for wider field.
Uninterchangeable their natures stand
And self-confined; for so Earth made them, Earth,
The brute and kindly mother groping for mind.
She of her vigorous nature bore her sons,
Made lusty with her milk and strengthening motion
Abundant in her veins; her dumb attraction
Is as their mother's arms, else like the lark
Aiming from her to heaven. And Souls are there
Who rooted in her puissant animalism
Are greatly earthy, yet widen to the bound

And heighten towards the sun. But these are rare
And of no privileged country citizens
Nor to the city bounded nor the field.
They are wise and royal in the furrow, keep
In schools their chastened vigour from the soil
Full-tempered. Man Antaeuslike is strong
While he is natural and feels the soil
From which being lifted great communities
Die in their intellectual grandeur. Let then
The city's many-minded son preserve
And the clear-natured peasant unabridged
Their just, great uses, heighten or refresh
By breath and force of each a different spirit
If may be; one not admit untutored envy,
The other vain imagination making
Return to nature a misleading name
For a reversion most unnatural.

KING PHILIP
You reason well, Guzman; nor must we pine
At stations where God and his saints have set us.
And yet because I'ld feel the rural air,
Of greatness unreminded, I will go
Tomorrow as a private noble, you,
My lords, forget for one day I'm the king,
Nor watch my moods, nor with your eyes wait on me
Nor disillusionize by close observance
But keep as to an equal courtesy.

MAJORDOMO
Your Majesty —

KING PHILIP
Well, sir, Your Ancient Wisdom —

MAJORDOMO
The Kings of Spain —

KING PHILIP

Are absolute, you'ld say,
Over men only? Custom masters kings.
I'll not be ruled by your stale ceremonies
As kings are by an arrogating Senate,
But will control them, wear them when I will,
Walk disencumbered when I will. Enough.
You have done your part in protest. I have heard you.
And now, my lords.

LORDS

Your Highness is obeyed.

KING PHILIP

Tell on, Antonio. Who perform the masque?

BELTRAN

That can I tell Your Highness; rural girls,
The daughters of the soil, whom country air
Has given the red-blooded health to bloom.
Full of our Spanish sunlight are they, voiced
Like Junos and will make our ladies pale
Before them. And there's a Farmer's lovely daughter,
A marvel. Robed in excellent apparel,
As she will be, there's not a maid in Spain
Can stand beside her and stay happy. My sons
Have spared nor words nor music nor array
Nor beauty, to express their loyal duty.

KING PHILIP

I am much graced by this their gentle trouble
And yet, Lord Beltran, there are nobler things
Than these brocaded masques; not that I scorn these, —
Do not believe I would be so ungracious, —
Nor anything belittle in which true hearts
Interpret their rich silence. Yet there's one
Desire, I would exchange for many masques.

'Tis little: an easy word bestows it wholly,
And yet, I fear, for you too difficult.

BELTRAN
My lord, you know my service and should not
Doubt my compliance. Name and take it. Else judge me.

KING PHILIP
Why, noble reconcilement, Conde Beltran,
Sweet friendship between mighty jarring houses
And by great intercession war renounced
Betwixt magnificent hearts: these are the masques
Most sumptuous, these the glorious theatres
That subjects should present to princes. Conrad
And noble Beltran, I respect the wrath
Sunders your pride: yet mildness has the blessing
Of God and is religion's perfect mood.
Admit that better weakness. Throw your hearts
Wide to the low knock of entering peace: let not
The ashes of a rage the world renounces
Smoulder between you nor outdated griefs
Keep living. What, quite silent? Will you, Conrad,
Refuse to me your anger, who so often
Have for my sake your very life renounced?

CONRAD
My lord, the hate that I have never cherished,
I know not how to abandon. Not in the sway
Of other men's affections I have lived
But walked in the straight road my fortunes build me.
Let any love who will or any hate who will,
I take both with a calm, unburdened spirit,
Inarm my lover as a friend, embrace
My enemy as a wrestler: do my will,
Because it is my will, go where I go
Because my path lies there. If any cross me,
That is his choice, not mine. And if he suffer,

Again it is his choice, not mine. If I,
That is my star: I curse him not for it:
My fate's beyond his making as my spirit's
Above affection by him. I hate no man
And if Lord Beltran give to me his hand,
Gladly I'll clasp it, easily forget
Outdated injuries and wounds long healed.

BELTRAN
You are most noble, Conrad, most benign.
Who now can say the ill-doer ne'er forgives?
Conrad has dispossessed my kinsmen, slain
My vassals, me of ancient lands relieved,
Thinned my great house; but Beltran is forgiven.
Will you not now enlarge your generous nature,
Wrong me still more, have new and ampler room
For exercise to your forgiving heart?
I do embrace misfortune and fresh loss
Before your friendship, lord.

KING PHILIP
No more of this.

BELTRAN
Pardon, Your Highness; this was little praise
For so much Christianity. Lord Conrad,
I will not trouble you further. And perhaps
With help of the good saints and holy Virgin
I too shall make me some room to pardon in.

CONRAD
I fear you not, Lord Count. Our swords have clashed:
Mine was the stronger. When I was but a boy
I carved your lands out. So had you won mine
If you had simply grappled fortune to you
And kept her faithful with your sword. 'Tis not
Crooked dexterity that has the secret

To win her. Briefly I hold your lands and satire
Has no sharp edge, till it cut that from me.

KING PHILIP
This is unprofitable. No more of it.
Lord Conrad, you go homeward with the dawn?

CONRAD
Winning your gracious leave to have with me
My sisters, Sir.

KING PHILIP
The Queen is very loth
To lose her favourites, but to disappoint you
Much more unwilling.
Exeunt King, Beltran, Guzman and Grandees.

RONCEDAS
A word with you, Lord Conrad.

CONRAD
As many as you will, Roncedas.

RONCEDAS
This. (*whispers*)
My lord, your good friend always.

CONRAD
So you have been.
Exit Roncedas.
Cousin, and sweetest sister, I am bound
Homeward upon a task that needs my presence.
Don Mario and his wife will bring you there.
Are you content or shall I stay for you?

ISMENIA
With all you do, dear brother, yet would have

Your blessing by me.

CONRAD
May your happiness
Greatly exceed my widest wishes.
Exit Conrad.

ISMENIA
So
It must do, brother, or I am unhappy.
What task?

BRIGIDA
Some girl-lifting. What other task
Will he have now? Shall we go, cousin?

ISMENIA
Stay.
Let us not press so closely after them.

BRIGIDA
Good manners? Oh, your pardon. I was blind.

BASIL
Are you a lover or a fish, Antonio?
Speak. She yet lingers.

ANTONIO
Speak?

BASIL
The devil remove you
Where you can never more have sight of her.
I lose all patience.

BRIGIDA
Cousin, I know you're tired

With standing. Sit, and if you tire with that,
As perseverance is a powerful virtue,
For your reward the dumb may speak to you.

ISMENIA
What shall I do, dear girl?

BRIGIDA
Why, speak the first,
Count Conrad's sister! Be the Mahomet
To your poor mountain. Hang me if I think not
The prophet's hill more moveable of the two;
An earthquake stirs not this. What ails the man?
He has made a wager with some lamp-post surely.

ISMENIA
Brigida, are you mad? Be so immodest?
A stranger and my house's enemy!

BRIGIDA
No, never speak to him. It would be indeed
Horribly forward.

ISMENIA
Why, you jest, Brigida.
I'm no such light thing that I must be dumb
Lest men mistake my speaking. Let hidden frailness
Or men suspect to their own purity
Guard every issue of speech and gesture. Wherefore
Should I be hedged so meanly in? To greet
With few words, cold and grave, as is befitting
This gentle youth, why do you call immodest?

BRIGIDA
You must not.

ISMENIA
Must not? Why, I will.

BRIGIDA
I say,
You must not, child.

ISMENIA
I will then, not because
I wish (why should I?), but because you always
Provoke me with your idle prudities.

BRIGIDA
Good! you've been wishing it the last half hour
And now you are provoked to't. Charge him, charge him.
I stand here as reserve.

ISMENIA
Impossible creature!
But no! You shall not turn me.

BRIGIDA
'Twas not my meaning.

ISMENIA
Sir —

BASIL
Rouse yourself, Antonio. Gather back
Your manhood, or you're shamed without retrieval.

ISMENIA
Help me, Brigida.

BRIGIDA
Not I, cousin.

ISMENIA

Sir,
You spoke divinely well. I say this, Sir,
Not to recall to you that we have met —
Since you will not remember — but because
I would not have you — anyone think this of me
That since you are Antonio and my enemy
And much have hurt me — to the heart, therefore
When one speaks or does worthily, I can
Admire not, nor love merit, whosoe'er
Be its receptacle. This was my meaning.
I could not bear one should not know this of me.
Therefore I spoke.

BASIL

Speak or be dumb for ever.

ISMENIA

I see, you have mistook me why I spoke
And scorn me. Sir, you may be right to think
You have so sweet a tongue would snare the birds
From off the branches, ravish an enemy, —
Some such poor wretch there may be — witch her heart out,
If you could care for anything so cheap,
And hold it in your hand, lost, — lost — Oh me!
Brigida!

BASIL

O base silence! Speak! She is
Confounded. Speak, you sheep, you!

ISMENIA

Though this *is* so,
You do me wrong to think me such an one,
Most flagrant wrong, Antonio. To think that I
Wait one word of your lips to woo you, yearn
To be your loving servant at a word

From you, — one only word and I am yours.

BASIL
Admirable lady! Saints, can you be dumb
Who hear this?

ISMENIA
Still you scorn me. For all this
You shall not make me angry. Do you imagine
Because you know I am Lord Conrad's sister
And lodge with Donna Clara Santa Cruz
In the street Velasquez, and you have seen it
With marble front and the quaint mullioned windows,
That you need only after vespers, when
The streets are empty, stand there, and I will
Send one to you? Indeed, indeed I merit not
You should think poorly of me. If you're noble
And do not scorn me, you will carefully
Observe the tenour of my prohibition.
Brigida!

BRIGIDA
Come away with your few words,
Your cold grave words. You've frozen his speech with them.
Exeunt.

ANTONIO
Heavens! it was she — her words were not a dream,
Yet I was dumb. There was a majesty
Even in her tremulous playfulness, a thrill
When she smiled most, made my heart beat too quickly
For speech. O that I should be dumb and shamefast,
When with one step I might grasp Paradise.

BASIL
Antonio!

ANTONIO
I was not deceived. She blushed,
And the magnificent scarlet to her cheeks
Welled from her heart an ocean inexhaustible.
Rose but outcrimsoned rose. Yes, every word
Royally marred the whiteness of her cheeks
With new impossibilities of beauty.
She blushed, and yet as with an angry shame
Of that delicious weakness, gallantly
Her small imperious head she held erect
And strove in vain to encourage those sweet lids
That fluttered lower and lower. O that but once
My tongue had been as bold as were mine eyes!
But these were fastened to her as with cords,
Courage in them naked necessity.

BASIL
Ah poor Antonio. You're bewitched, you're maimed,
Antonio. You must make her groan who did this.
One sense will always now be absent from him.
Lately he had no tongue. Now that's returned
His ears are gone on leave. Hark you, Antonio!
Why do we stay here?

ANTONIO
I am in a dream.
Lead where you will, since there is no place now
In all the world, but only she or silence.

Scene 2

A garden at the town-house of Count Beltran.
Antonio, Basil.

BASIL
I am abashed for you. What, make a lady
Woo you, and she a face so excellent,
Of an address so admirably lovely
It shows a goddess in her — at each sentence
Let pause to give you opportunity,
Then shame with the dead silence of the hall
For her continual answer. Fie, you're not
Antonio, you're not Beltran's issue. Seek
Your kindred in the snowdrifts of the Alps,
Or call a post your father.

ANTONIO
I deserve
Your censure, Basil. Yet were it done again,
I know I should again be dumb. My tongue
Teems in imagination but is barren
In actuality. When I am from her,
I woo her with the accent of a god,
My mind o'erflows with words as the wide Nile
With waters. Let her but appear and I
Am her poor mute. She may do her will with me
And O remember but her words. When she,
Ah she, my white divinity with that kindness
Celestial in the smiling of her eyes
And in her voice the world's great music, rose
Of blushing frankness, half woman and half angel,
Crowned me unwooed, lavished on me her heart

In her prodigious liberality,
Could I then speak? O to have language then
Had been the index to a shallow love.

BASIL
Away! you modest lovers are the blot
Of manhood, traitors to our sovereignty.
I'ld have you banished, all of you, and kept
In desert islands, where no petticoat
Should enter, so the breed of you might perish.

ANTONIO
You speak against the very sense of Love
Which lives by service.

BASIL
Flat treason! Was not man made
Woman's superior that he might control her,
In strength to exact obedience and in wisdom
To guide her will, in wit to keep her silent,
Three Herculean labours. O were women
Once loose, they would new-deluge earth with words,
Sapiently base creation on its apex,
Logic would be new-modelled, arithmetic
Grow drunk and reason despairing abdicate.
No thunderbolt could stop a woman's will,
Once it is started.

ANTONIO
O you speak at ease.
Loved you, you would recant this and without small
Torture to quicken you.

BASIL
I? I recant?
I wish, Antonio, I had known your case
Earlier. I would have taught you how to love.

Antonio
Come, will you woo a woman? Teach me at least
By diagram upon a blackboard.

Basil
Well,
I will so, if it should hearten your weak spirits.
And now I think of it, I am resolved
I'll publish a new Art of Love, shall be
The only Ovid memorable.

Antonio
Well, quickly teach
Your diagram. Suppose your maid and win her.

Basil
First, I would kiss her.

Antonio
What, without leave asked?

Basil
Leave? Ask a woman leave to kiss her! Why,
What was she made for else?

Antonio
If she is angry?

Basil
So much the better. Then you by repetition
Convince her of your manly strength, which is
A great point gained at the outset and moreover
Your duty, comfortable to yourself.
Besides she likes it. On the same occasion
When she will scold, I'll silence her with wit.
Laughter breaks down impregnable battlements.
Let me but make her smile and there is conquest

Won by the triple strength, horse, foot, artillery,
Of eloquence, wit and muscle. Then but remains
Pacification, with or else without
The Church's help; that's a mere form and makes
No difference to the principle.

ANTONIO

There should be
Inquisitions for such as you. What after?

BASIL

Nothing unless you wish to assure the conquest,
Not plunder it merely like a Tamerlane.
I'll teach that also. 'Tis but making her
Realise her inferiority.
Unanswerably and o'erwhelmingly
Show her how fortunate she is to get you
And all her life too short for gratitude;
That you have robbed her merely for her good,
To civilize her or to train her up:
Punish each word that shows want of affection.
Plague her to death and make her thank you for it.
Accustom her to sing hosannas to you
When you beat her. All this is ordinary,
And every wise benevolent conqueror
Has learnt the trick of it. Then she'll love for ever.

ANTONIO

You are a Pagan and would burn for this
If Love still kept his Holy Office.

BASIL

I
Am safe from him.

ANTONIO

And therefore boast securely

Conducting in imagination wars
That others have the burden of. I've seen
The critical civilian in his chair
Win famous victories with wordy carnage,
Guide his strategic finger o'er a map,
Cry "Eugene's fault! Here Marlborough was to blame;
And look, a child might see it, Villars' plain error
That lost him Malplaquet!" I think you are
Just such a pen-and-paper strategist.
A wooer!

BASIL
Death! I will have pity on you,
Antonio. You shall see my great example
And learn by me.

ANTONIO
Good! I'm your pupil. But hear,
A pretty face or I'll not enter for her,
Wellborn or I shall much discount your prowess.

BASIL
Agreed. And yet they say, Experimentum
In corpore vili. But I take your terms
Lest you substract me for advantages.

ANTONIO
Look where the enemy comes. You are well off
If you can win her.

BASIL
A rare face, by Heaven.
Almost too costly a piece of goods for this
Mad trial.

ANTONIO
You sound retreat?

Basil

Not I an inch.
Watch how I'll overcrow her.

Antonio

Hush, she's here.

Enter Brigida.

Brigida

Señor, I was bidden to deliver this letter to you.

Basil

To me, sweetheart?

Brigida

I have the inventory of you in my pock, if you be he truly. I will study it. Hair of the ordinary poetic length — no; dress indefinable — no; a modest address — I think not you, Señor; a noble manner — Pooh, no! that fits not in; a handsome face — I am sure not you, Señor.

Basil

Humph.

Antonio

Well, cousin. All silent? Open your batteries, open your batteries.

Basil

Wait, wait. Ought a conqueror to be hurried? Caesar himself must study his ground before he attempts it. You will hear my trumpets instanter.

Brigida

Will you take your letter, Sir?

ANTONIO

To me then, maiden? A dainty-looking note, and I marvel much from whom it can be. I do not know the handwriting. A lady's, seemingly, yet it has a touch of the masculine too — there is rapidity and initiative in its flow. Fair one, from whom comes this?

BRIGIDA

Why, sir, I am not her signature; which if you will look within, I think you will find unforgotten.

BASIL

Here is a clever woman, Antonio, to think of that, and she but eighteen or a miracle.

ANTONIO

Well, cousin?

BRIGIDA

This Don Witty-pate eyes me strangely. I fear he will recognise me.

ANTONIO

Ismenia Ostrocadiz. O my joy!

BRIGIDA

You're ill, sir, you change colour.

ANTONIO

Now, by heaven,
Were death within my heart's door or his blast
Upon my eyelids, this would exile him.
The writing swims before me.

BRIGIDA

Sir, you pale
Extremely. Is there no poison in the letter?

ANTONIO
O might I so be poisoned hourly. Let me
No longer dally with my happiness,
Lest it take wings or turn a dream. Hail, letter,
For thou hast come from that white hand I worship.
"To Lord Antonio.
Señor, how you may deem of my bold wooing,
How cruelly I suffer in your thoughts,
I dread to think. Take the plain truth, Antonio.
I cannot live without your love. If you
From this misdoubt my nobleness or infer
A wanton haste or instability, —
As men pretend quick love is quickly spent —
Tear up this letter, and with it my heart.
And yet I hope you will not tear it. I love you
And since I saw our family variance
And your too noble fearfulness withhold me
From my heart's lord, I have thrown from me shame
And the admirèd dalliance of women
To bridge it. Come to me, Antonio! Come,
But come in honour. I am not nor can be
So far degenerate from my house's greatness
Or my pure self to love ignobly. Dear,
I have thrown from me modesty's coy pretences
But the reality I'll grapple to me
Close as your image. I am loth to end,
Yet must, and therefore will I end with this,
Beloved, love me, respect me or forget me."
Writing more sweet than any yet that came
From heaven to earth, O thou dear revelation,
Make my lips holy. Ah, could I imagine
Thee the white hand that wrote thee, I were blest
Utterly. Thou hast made me twice myself.
I think I am another than Antonio:
The sky seems nearer to me or the earth
Environed with a sacred light. O come!
I'll study to imprint this on my heart,

That when death comes he'll find it there and leave it,
A monument and an immortal writing.

BASIL

Damsel, you are of the Lady Ismenia's household?

BRIGIDA

A poor relative of hers, Señor.

BASIL

Your face seems strangely familiar to me. Have I not seen you in some place where I constantly resort?

BRIGIDA

O Sir, I hope you do not think so meanly of me. I am a poor girl but an honest.

BASIL

How, how?

BRIGIDA

I know not how. I spoke only as the spirit moved me.

BASIL

You have a marvellously nimble tongue. Two words with you.

BRIGIDA

Willingly, Señor, if you exceed not measure.

BASIL

Fair one —

BRIGIDA

Oh, sir, I am glad I listened. I like your two words extremely. God be with you.

Basil

Why, I have not begun yet.

Brigida

The more shame to your arithmetic. If your teacher had reckoned as loosely with his cane-cuts, he would have made the carefuller scholar.

Basil

God's wounds, will you listen to me?

Brigida

Well, Sir, I will not insist upon numbers. But pray, for your own sake, swear no more. No eloquence will long stand such drafts upon it.

Basil

If you would listen, I would tell you a piece of news that might please you.

Brigida

Let it be good news, new news and repeatable news and I will thank you for it.

Basil

Sure, maiden, you are wondrous beautiful.

Brigida

Señor, Queen Anne is dead. Tell me the next.

Basil

The next is, I will kiss you.

Brigida

Oh, Sir, that's a prophecy. Well, death and kissing come to all of us, and by what disease the one or by whom the other, wise men care not to forecast. It profits little to study calamities beforehand. When it comes, I pray God I may learn to take it with resignation, if I cannot do better.

BASIL
By my life, I will kiss you and without farther respite.

BRIGIDA
On what ground?

BASIL
Have I not told you, you are beautiful?

BRIGIDA
So has my mirror, not once but a hundred times, and never yet offered to kiss me. When it does, I'll allow your logic. No, we are already near enough to each other. Pray keep your distance.

BASIL
I will establish my argument with my lips.

BRIGIDA
I will defend mine with my hand. I promise you 'twill prove the abler dialectician of the two.

BASIL
Well.

BRIGIDA
I am glad you think so, Señor. My lord, I cannot stay. What shall I tell my lady?

ANTONIO
Tell her my heart is at her feet, and I
Am hers, hers only until heaven ceases
And after. Tell her that I am more blest
In her sweet condescension to my humbleness
Than Ilian Anchises when Love's mother

Stooped from her golden heavens into his lap.
Tell her that as a goddess I revere her
And as a saint adore; that she and life
Are one to me, for I've no heart but her,
No atmosphere beyond her pleasure, light
But what her eyes allow me. Tell, O tell her —

BRIGIDA

Hold, hold, Señor. You may tell her all this yourself. I would not remember the half of it and could not understand the other half. Shall I tell her, you will come surely?

ANTONIO

As sure as is the sun to its fixed hour
Or midnight to its duty. I will come.

BRIGIDA

Good! there are at last three words a poor girl can understand. Mark then, you will wait a while after nightfall, less than half a bowshot from the place you know towards the Square Velasquez, within sight of the Donna's windows. There I will come to you. Sir, if your sword be half as ready and irresistible as your tongue, I would gladly have you there with him, though Saint Iago grant that neither prove necessary. You look sad, Sir. God save you for a witty and eloquent gentleman.

Exit.

ANTONIO

O cousin, I am bewitched with happiness.
Pardon me that I leave you. Solitude
Demands a god and godlike I am grown
Unto myself. This letter deifies me.
I will be sole with my felicity.

Exit.

BASIL

God grant that I am not bewitched also! Saints and angels! How is it? How did it happen? Is the sun still in heaven? Is that the song of a bird or a barrel-organ? I am not drunk either. I can still distinguish between a tree and the squirrel upon it. What, am I not Basil? whom men call the witty and eloquent Basil? Did I not laugh from the womb? Was not my first cry a jest upon the world I came into? Did I not invent a conceit upon my mother's milk ere I had sucked of it? Death! and have I been bashed and beaten by the tongue of a girl? silenced by a common purveyor of impertinences? It is so and yet it cannot be. I begin to believe in the dogmas of the materialist. The gastric juice rises in my estimation. Genius is after all only a form of indigestion, a line of Shakespeare the apotheosis of a leg of mutton and the speculations of Plato an escape of diseased tissue arrested in the permanency of ink. What did I break my fast with this morning? Kippered herring? bread? marmalade? tea? O kippered herring, art thou the material form of stupidity and is marmalade an enemy of wit? It must be so. O mighty gastric juice! Mother and Saviour! I bow down before thee. Be propitious, fair goddess, to thy adorer.

Arise, Basil. Today thou shalt retrieve thy tarnished laurels or be expunged for ever from the book of the witty. Arm thyself in full panoply of allusion and irony, gird on raillery like a sword and repartee like a buckler. I will meet this girl tonight. I will tund her with conceits, torture her with ironies, tickle her with jests, prick her all over with epigrams. My wit shall smother her, tear her, burst her sides, press her to death, hang her, draw her, quarter her, and if all this fails, Death! as a last revenge, I'll — I'll beat her. Saints!

Scene 3

Ismenia's chamber.

ISMENIA
Brigida lingers. O, he has denied me
And therefore she is loth to come, for she
Knows she will bring me death. It is not so.
He has detained her to return an answer.
Yet I asked none. I am full of fear. O heart,
I have staked thee upon a desperate cast,
Which if I win not, I am miserable.
'Tis she. O that my hope could give her wings
Or lift her through the window bodily
To shorten this age of waiting. I could not
Discern her look. Her steps sound hopefully.
Enter Brigida.
Dearest Brigida! at last! What says Antonio? Tell me quickly. Heavens! you look melancholy.

BRIGIDA
Santa Catarina! How weary I am! My ears too! I think they have listened to more nonsense in these twenty minutes than in all their natural eighteen years before. Sure, child, thou hast committed some unpardonable sin to have such a moonstruck lover as this Antonio.

ISMENIA
But, Brigida!

BRIGIDA
And his shadow too, his Cerberus of wit who guards this poetical treasure. He would have eaten me, I think, if I had not given him

the wherewithal to stop the three mouths of him.

ISMENIA
Why, Brigida, Brigida.

BRIGIDA
Saints! to think how men lie! I have heard this Basil reputed loudly for the Caesar of wits, the tongue and laughter of the time; but never credit me, child, if I did not silence him with a few stale pertnesses a market-girl might have devised for her customers. A wit, truly! and not a word in his mouth bullet-head Pedro could not better.

ISMENIA
Distraction! What is this to Antonio? Sure, your wits are bewildered, Brigida. What said Antonio? Girl, I am on thorns.

BRIGIDA
I am coming to that as fast as possible. Jesus! What a burning hurry you are in, Ismenia! You have not your colour, child. I will bring you sal volatile from my chamber. 'Tis in a marvellous cut bottle with a different hue to each facet! I filched it from Donna Clara's room when she was at matins yesterday.

ISMENIA
Tell me, you magpie, tell me.

BRIGIDA
What am I doing else? You must know I found Antonio was in his garden. Oh, did I tell you, Ismenia? Donna Clara chooses the seeds for me this season and I think she has as rare a notion of nasturtiums as any woman living. I was speaking to Pedro in the summer house yesterday; for you remember it thundered terrifically before one had time to know light from darkness; and there I stood miles from the garden door —

Ismenia

In the name of pity, Brigida.

Brigida

Saints! how you hurry me. Well, when I went to Antonio in his garden — There's an excellent garden, Ismenia. I wonder where Don Beltran's gardener had his bignonias.

Ismenia

Oh-h-h!

Brigida

Well, where was I? Oh, giving the letter to Antonio. Why, would you believe it, in thrust Don Wit, Don Cerberus, Don Subtle-three-mouths.

Ismenia

Will you tell me, you ogress, you paragon of tyrannesses, you she-Nero, you compound of impossible cruelties?

Brigida

Saints, what have I done to be abused so? I was coming to it faster than a mail-coach and four. You would not be so unconscionable as to ask me for the appendage of a story, all tail and nothing to hang it on? Well, Antonio took the letter.

Ismenia

Yes, yes and what answer gave he?

Brigida

He looked all over the envelope to see whence it came, dissertated learnedly on this knotty question, abused me your handwriting foully.

Ismenia

Dear cousin, sweet cousin, excellent Brigida! On my knees, I entreat you, do not tease me longer. Though I know you would not do it, if all were not well, yet consider what a weak tremulous thing is the heart of woman when she loves and have pity on me. On my knees, sweetest.

BRIGIDA
Why, Ismenia, I never knew you so humble in my life, — save indeed to your brother; but him indeed I do not reckon. He would rule even me if I let him. On your knees, too! This is excellent. May I be lost, if I am not tempted to try how long I can keep you so. But I will be merciful. Well, he scanned your handwriting and reviled it for the script of a virago, an Amazon.

ISMENIA
Brigida, if you will not tell me directly, without phrase and plainly, just what I want to know and nothing else, by heaven, I will beat you.

BRIGIDA
Now, this is foul. Can you not keep your better mood for fifty seconds by the clock? O temper, temper. Ah well, where was I? Oh yes, your handwriting. Oh! Oh! Oh! What mean you, cousin? Lord deliver me. Cousin! Cousin! He will come! He will come! He will come!

ISMENIA
Does he love me?

BRIGIDA
Madly! distractedly! like a moonstruck natural! Saints!

ISMENIA
Dearest, dearest Brigida! You are an angel. How can I thank you?

BRIGIDA
Child, you have thanked me out of breath already. If you have not dislocated my shoulder and torn half my hair out.

ISMENIA

Hear her, the Pagan! A gentle physical agitation and some rearrangement of tresses, 'twas less punishment than you deserved. But there! that is salve for you. And now be sober, sweet. What said Antonio? Come, tell me. I am greedy to know.

BRIGIDA

I'll be hanged if I do. Besides I could not if I would. He talked poetry.

ISMENIA

But did he not despise me for my forwardness?

BRIGIDA

Tut, you are childish. But to speak the bare fact, Ismenia, I think he is most poetically in love with you. He made preparations to swoon when he no more than saw your name; but I build nothing on that; there are some faint when they smell a pinch of garlic or spy a cockchafer. But he wasted ten minutes copying your letter into his heart or some such note-book of love affairs; yet that was nothing either; I doubt if he found room for you, unless on the margin. Then he began drawing cheques on Olympus for comparisons, left that presently as antique and out of date, confounded Ovid and his breviary in the same quest; left that too for mediaeval, and diverged into Light and Heat, but came not to the very modernness of electricity. But Lord! Cousin, what a career he ran! He had imagined himself blind and breathless when I stopped him. I tremble to think what calamities might have ensued, had I not thrown myself under the wheels of his metaphor. The upshot is, he loves you, worships you and will come to you.

ISMENIA

O Brigida, Brigida, be you as happy as you have made me.

BRIGIDA

Truly, the happiness of lovers, children with a new plaything and mad to handle it. But when they are tired of the game — No, I'll be the type and patroness of all spinsters and the noble army of old maids shall gather about my tomb to do homage to me.

ISMENIA
And he will come tonight?

BRIGIDA
Yes, if his love lasts so long.

ISMENIA
For a thousand years. Come with me, Brigida, and help me to bear my happiness. Till tonight!

Scene 4

A street in Madrid.
Antonio, Basil.

ANTONIO
This is the place.

BASIL
'Tis farther.

ANTONIO
This, I know it.
Here's the square Velasquez. There in his saddle
Imperial Charles watches the silent city
His progeny could not keep. Where the one light
Stands beckoning to us, is Don Mario's dwelling.
O thou celestial lustre, wast thou kindled
To be her light who is my sun? If so,
Thou art most happy. For thou dost inherit
The sanctuary of her dear sleep and art
The confidant of those sweet secrecies.
Though thou live for a night, yet is thy short
And noble ministry more rich and costly
Than ages of the sun. For thou hast seen,
O blessed, her unveiled and gleaming shoulder
Make her thick-treasured hair more precious. Thou
Hast watched that face upon her heavenly pillow
Slumbering amid its peaceful curls. O more!
For thou perhaps hast laid one brilliant finger
On her white breast mastered with sacred sleep,
And there known Paradise. Therefore thou'rt famous
Above all lights that human hands have kindled.

BASIL
Here's a whole epic on an ounce of oil,
A poor, drowned wick bought from the nearest chandler
And a fly sodden in it.

ANTONIO
Listen! one comes.

BASIL
Stand back, abide not question.

ANTONIO
They'll not doubt us.
We are far from the building.

BASIL
Am I mad?
Do you think I'll trust a lover? Why, you could not
Even ask the time but you would say, "Good sir,
How many minutes to Ismenia?"

ANTONIO
Well,
Stand back.

BASIL
No need. I see it. 'Tis the she-guide,
The feminine Mercury, the tongue, the woman.
Enter Brigida.
Hark to the bell now.

BRIGIDA
You, my lord Antonio?
This way, my lord.

ANTONIO
Which way you will. I know

You are my guide to heaven.

BRIGIDA

O you have come?
I take this kindly of you, Señor. Tell me,
Were you not hiding when I came up to you?
What was it, Sir? A constable or perhaps
A creditor? For to be dashed by a weak girl
I know you are too bold. What did you say?
I did not hear you. We are there, my lord.
Now quietly, if you love her, your sweet lady.
(*to Basil*)
Can you be silent, Señor? We are lost else.

Scene 5

Ismenia's antechamber.
Ismenia waiting.

ISMENIA
It is too dark. I can see nothing. Hark!
Surely it was the door that fastened then.
My heart, control thyself! Thou beatst too quickly
And wilt break in the arms of happiness.
Brigida.

BRIGIDA
Here. Enter, my lord, and take her.

ANTONIO
Ismenia!

ISMENIA
Antonio, O Antonio!

ANTONIO
My heart's dearest.

BRIGIDA
Bring your wit this way, Sir.
It is not needed.
Exit with Basil.

ISMENIA
O not thus! You shame me.
This is my place, dear, at your feet; and then
Higher than is my right.

ANTONIO

I cannot suffer
Blasphemy to touch my heaven, though your lips
Have hallowed it. Highest were low for you.
You are a goddess and adorable.

ISMENIA

Alas, Antonio, this is not the way.
I fear you do not love me, you despise me.
Come, do you not despise me?

ANTONIO

The leaf might then
Despise the moonbeam that has come to kiss it.
I love and reverence.

ISMENIA

Then you must take me,
As I have given myself to you, your servant,
Yours wholly, not to be prayed to and hymned
As a divinity but to be commanded
As a dear handmaid. You must rule me, sweet,
Or I shall spoil with liberty and lose you.

ANTONIO

Must I? I will then. Yet you are so queenly,
I needs must smile when I attempt it. Come,
Shall I command you?

ISMENIA

Do, sweet.

ANTONIO

Lay your head
Upon my shoulder so and do not dare
To lift it till I give you leave.

ISMENIA

Alas,
I fear you'll be a tyrant. And I meant
To bear at most a limited monarchy.

ANTONIO
No murmuring. Answer my questions.

ISMENIA

Well,
That's easy and I will.

ANTONIO

And truly.

ISMENIA

Oh,
But that's almost impossible. I'll try.

ANTONIO
Come, when did you first love me?

ISMENIA

Dear, today.

ANTONIO
When will you marry me?

ISMENIA

Tomorrow, dear.

ANTONIO
Here is a mutinous kingdom to my hands.
Now truly.

ISMENIA

Truly then, seven days ago,

No more than seven, at the court I saw you,
And with the sight my life was troubled, heard you
And your voice tore my heart out. O Antonio,
I was an empty thing until today.
I saw you daily, but because I feared
What now I know, you were Lord Beltran's son,
I dared not ask your name, nay shut my ears
To knowledge. O my love, I am afraid.
Your father seems a hard vindictive man.
What will you do with me, Antonio?

ANTONIO

Fasten
My jewel safe from separating hands
Holily on my bosom. My father? He
Shall know not of our love, till we are sure
From rude disunion. Though he will be angry
I am his eldest and beloved son,
And when he feels your sweetness and your charm
He will repent and thank me for a daughter.

ISMENIA

When 'tis your voice that tells me, I believe
Impossibilities. Well, let me know —
You've made me blush, Antonio, and I wish
I could retaliate — were you not amazed
At my mad forwardness, to woo you first,
A youth unknown?

ANTONIO

Yes, even as Adam was
When he first saw the sunrise over Eden.
It was unsunlike to uplift the glory
Of those life-giving rays, unwooed, uncourted.

ISMENIA

Alas, you flatter. Did you love me, Antonio?

ANTONIO
Three days before I had the bliss to win
The wonder of your eyes.

ISMENIA
Three days! Oh me,
Three days, Antonio? Three whole days before
I loved you?

ANTONIO
Three days, dearest.

ISMENIA
Oh,
You've made me jealous. I am angry. Three
Whole days! How could it happen?

ANTONIO
I will make
You compensation, dear; for in revenge
I'll love you three whole days, when you have ceased
To love me.

ISMENIA
O not even in jest, Antonio,
Speak of such separation. Sooner shall
The sun divorce his light than we two sunder.
But you have given me a spur. I must
Love you too much, I must, Antonio, more
Than you love me, or the account's not even.
A noise?

ANTONIO
One passes in the street.

ISMENIA
We are

Too near the window and too heedless, love.
Come this way; here ’tis safe; I fear your danger.
Exeunt. After a while enter Brigida.

BRIGIDA

No sound? Señor! Ismenia! Surely they cannot have embraced each other into invisibility. No, Cupid has flown away with them. It cannot have been the devil, for I smell no brimstone. Well, if they are so tedious I will not mortify myself with solitude either. I have set Don Cerberus on the stairs out of respect for the mythology. There he stands with his sword at point like the picture of a sentinel and protects us against a surprise of rats from the cellar; for what other wild beasts there may be to menace us, I know not. Don Mario snores hard and Donna Clara plays the violin to his bassoon. I have heard them three rooms off. These men! these men! and yet they call themselves our masters. I would I could find a man fit to measure tongues with me. I begin to feel lonely in the Alpine elevation of my own wit. The meditations of Matterhorn come home to me and I feel a sister to Monte Rosa. Certainly this woman’s fever is catching, a most calamitous infection. I have overheard myself sighing; it is a symptom incubatory. Heigh-ho! When turtles pair, I never heard that the magpie lives lonely. I have at this moment a kindly thought for all suffering animals. I begin to pity Cerberus even. I will relieve him from guard. Hist! Señor! Don Basil!
Enter Basil.
Is all quiet?

BASIL

Not a mouse stirring.

BRIGIDA

Put up your sword, pray you; I think there is no danger, and if one comes, you may draw again in time to cut its tail off.

BASIL

At your service, Señorita. If it were not treason to my wit, I begin to feel this strip of a girl is making an ass of me. I am transformed; I feel it. I shall hear myself bray presently. But I will defy enchantment, I will handle her. A plague! Must I continually be stalemated by a will-o'-the-wisp, all sparkle and nowhere? Courage, Basil.

BRIGIDA
You meditate, Señor? If it be to allay the warmth you have brought from the stairs with the coolness of reflection, I would not hinder you.

BASIL
In bare truth, Señorita, I am so chilled that I was even about to beg of you a most sweet and warming cordial.

BRIGIDA
For a small matter like that, I would be loth to deny you. You shall have it immediately.

BASIL
With your permission, then.

BRIGIDA
Ah Señor, beware. Living coals are dangerous; they burn, Señor.

BASIL
I am proof.

BRIGIDA
As the man said when he was bitten by the dog they thought mad; but 'twas the dog that died. Pray, sir, have a care. You will put the fire out.

BASIL
Come, I have you. I will take ten kisses for the one you refused me this forenoon.

BRIGIDA

That is too compound an interest. I do entreat you, Sir, have a care. This usury is punishable by the law.

BASIL

I have the rich man's trick for that. With the very coin I have unlawfully gathered, I will stop her mouth.

BRIGIDA

O sir, you are as wasteful an accountant of kisses as of words. I foresee you will go bankrupt. No more. Señor, what noise was that on the stair? Good, now you have your distance. I will ev'n trouble you to keep it. No nearer, I tell you. You do not observe the laws of the duello. You take advantages.

BASIL

With me? Pooh, you grow ambitious. Because I knew that to stop your mouth was to stop your life, therefore in pity I have refused your encounter, in pure pity.

BRIGIDA

Was it truly? Alas, I could weep to think of the violence you have done yourself for my sake. Pray, sir, do not torture yourself so. To see how goodness is misunderstood in this world! Out of pity? And made me take you for a fool!

BASIL

Well.

BRIGIDA

O no, Señor, it is not well; indeed it is not well. You shall not do this again. If I must die, I must die. You are scatheless. Pray now, disburden your intellect of all the brilliant things it has so painfully kept to itself. Plethora is unwholesome and I would not have you perish of an apoplexy of wit. Pour it out on me, conceit, epigram, irony, satire, vituperation; flout and invective, tu quoque and double-entendre, pun and quibble, rhyme and unreason, catcall and onomatopoeia; all, all, though it be an avalanche. It will be terrible, but I will stand the charge of it.

Basil
St Iago! I think she has the whole dictionary in her stomach. I grow desperate.

Brigida
Pray, do not be afraid. I do not indeed press you to throw yourself at my head, but for a small matter like your wit, I will bear up against it.

Basil
This girl has a devil.

Brigida
Why are you silent, Señor? Are you angry with me? I have given you no cause. This is cruel. Don Basil, I have heard you cited everywhere for absolutely the most free and witty speaker of the age. They told me that if none other offer, you will jest with the statues in the Plaza Mayor and so wittily they cannot answer a word to you. What have I done that with me alone you are dumb?

Basil
I am bewitched certainly.

Brigida
Señor, is it still pity? But why on me alone? O sir, have pity on the whole world and be always silent. Well, I see your benevolence is unconquerable. With your leave, we will pass from unprofitable talk; I would be glad to recall the sound of your voice. You may come nearer, since you decline the duello.

Basil
I thank you, Señorita. Whose sheep baaed then?

BRIGIDA
Don Basil, shall we talk soberly?

BASIL
At your pleasure, Madam.

BRIGIDA
No Madam, Señor, but a poor companion. You go to Count Beltran's house tomorrow?

BASIL
It is so intended.

BRIGIDA
O the masque, who play it?

BASIL
Masquers, Señorita.

BRIGIDA
O sir, is this your pity? I told you, you would burst if you kept in your wit too long. But who are they by condition? Goddesses are the characters and by rule modern they should be live goddesses who play them.

BASIL
They are so.

BRIGIDA
Are they indeed so lovely?

BASIL
Euphrosyne, Christofir's daughter, is simply the most exquisite beauty of the kingdom.

BRIGIDA
You speak very absolutely, Señor. Fairer than Ismenia?

BASIL
I speak it with unwillingness, but honestly the Lady Ismenia, rarely lovely as she is, could not stand beside this farmer's daughter.

BRIGIDA
I think I have seen her and I do not remember so outshining a beauty.

BASIL
Then cannot you have seen her, for the wonders she eclipses, themselves speak to their disgrace, even when they are women.

BRIGIDA
Pardon me if I take you to speak in the pitch of a lover's eulogy.

BASIL
Were it so, her beauty and gentleness deserve it; I have seen none worthier.

BRIGIDA
I wish you joy of her. I pray you for permission to leave you, Señor.

BASIL
Save one indeed.

BRIGIDA
Ah! and who was she?

BASIL
You will pardon me.

BRIGIDA
I will not press you, Sir. I do not know her, do I?

Basil

O ’tis not so much as that either. ’Twas only an orange-girl I saw once at Cadiz.

Brigida

Oh.

Basil

Ha! she is galled, positively. This is as sweet to me as honey.

Brigida

Well, Señor, your taste is as undeniable as your wit. Flour is the staff of life and oranges are good for a season. What does this paragon play?

Basil

Venus; and in the after-scene, Helen.

Brigida

So? May I know the others? You may find one of them to be a poor cousin of mine.

Basil

Catriona, the bailly’s daughter to Count Conrad, and Sofronia, the student Jeronimo’s sister; she too is of the Count’s household.

Brigida

It is not then difficult to act in a masque?

Basil

A masque demands little, Señorita. A taking figure, a flowing step, a good voice, a quick memory — but for that a speaking memory hard by in a box will do much at an emergency.

Brigida

True, for such long parts must be a heavy tax on the quickest.

BASIL
There are but two such, Venus-Helen and Paris. The rest are only a Zephyr's dance in, a speech and a song to help the situation and out again with a scurry.

BRIGIDA
God be with you. You have a learned conversation and a sober, and for such I will always report you. But here comes a colon to it. We will keep the full stop for tomorrow.
Enter Antonio and Ismenia.

ISMENIA
I think the dawn moves in the east, Brigida.
Pray you, unlock the door, but noiselessly.

BRIGIDA
Teach me not. Though the wild torrent of this gentleman's conversation have swept away half my wit, I have at a desperate peril, saved the other half for your service. Come, Sir, I have need of you to frighten the mice away.

BASIL
St Iago!
Exit Brigida with Basil.

ISMENIA
Dear, we must part. I would have you my necklace,
That I might feel you round my neck for ever;
Or life be night and all men sleep, then we
Need never part: but we must part, Antonio.
Will you forget me?

ANTONIO
When I cease to feel.

ISMENIA
I know you cannot, but I am so happy,

I love to play with my own happiness
And ask it questions. Dear, we shall meet soon.
I'll make a compact with you, sweet. You shall
Do all my will and make no question, till
We're married; then you know, I am your servant.
Will you, till then?

ANTONIO

Till then and after.

ISMENIA

Go now,
Love, I must drive you out or you'll not go.

ANTONIO

One kiss.

ISMENIA

You've had one thousand. Well, one more,
One only or I shall never let you part.

Enter Brigida.

BRIGIDA

Are you both distracted? Is this, I pray you, a time for lingering and near dawn over the east? Out with you, Señor, or I will set your own Cerberus upon you, and I wager he bites well, though I think poorly of his bark.

Exit with Antonio.

ISMENIA

O I have given all myself and kept
Nothing to live with when he's gone from me.
My life's his moon and I'm all dark and sad
Without him. Yesterday I was Ismenia,
Strong in myself, an individual woman.
Today I'm but the body of another,
No longer separate reality.

Well, if I gain him, let me lose myself
And I'm still happy. The door shuts. He is gone.

Reenter Brigida.

Ah, Brigida.

BRIGIDA

Come, get in, get in. Snatch a little sleep, for I promise you, you shall have none tomorrow.

ISMENIA

How do you mean by that? Or is it jest merely?

BRIGIDA

Leave me alone. I have a whole drama in my head, a play in a play and yet no play. I have only to rearrange the parts a little and tomorrow's sunlight shall see it staged, scened, enacted and concluded. To bed with you.

Exeunt.

Act II

Scene 1

A room in Conrad's house.
Conrad, a servant.

CONRAD
Where is Flaminio?

SERVANT
He's in waiting, Sir.

CONRAD
Call him.

Exit servant.

I never loved before. Fortune,
I ask one day of thee and one great night,
Then do thy will. I shall have reached my summit.

Enter Flaminio.

FLAMINIO
My lord?

[*Work on the play was broken off here. What follows is a sketch by Sri Aurobindo of the plot of three scenes of Acts II and III.*]

Act II
Scene 1. Conrad and Flaminio arrange to surprise the Alcalde's house and carry off Euphrosyne; Brigida converses with Conrad.

Scene 2. Jacinto monologuises; Jacinto and his father; Jacinto and Euphrosyne; students, friends of Jacinto. Conrad and Euphrosyne.

Act III
Scene 1. Beltran and his sons. Ismenia, Brigida.

The Prince of Edur

Persons of the Drama

RANA CURRAN, Prince of Edur, of the Rahtore clan.
VISALDEO, a Brahmin, his minister; formerly in the service of the Gehlote Prince of Edur.
HARIPAL, a Rajpoot noble, General of Edur; formerly in the service of the Gehlote Prince.
BAPPA, son of the late Gehlote Prince of Edur, in refuge among the Bheels.
SUNGRAM }
PRITHURAJ } young Rajpoot refugees, companions of Bappa.
KODAL, a young Bheel, foster-brother and lieutenant of Bappa.
TORAMAN, Prince of Cashmere.
CANACA, the King's jester of Cashmere.
HOOSHKA, Scythian captain.
PRATAP, Rao of Ichalgurh, a Chouhan noble.
RUTTAN, his brother.
A CAPTAIN of Rajpoot lances.

MÉNADEVI, wife of Curran; a Chouhan princess, sister of the King of Ajmere.
COMOL CUMARY, daughter of Rana Curran and Menadevi.
COOMOOD CUMARY, daughter of Rana Curran by a concubine.
NIRMOL CUMARY, daughter of Haripal, friend of Comol Cumary.
ISHANY, a Rajpoot maiden, in attendance on Comol Cumary.

Act I

The Palace in Edur. The forests about Dongurh.

Scene 1

The Palace in Edur.
Rana Curran, Visaldeo.

CURRAN
He is at Deesa then?

VISALDEO
So he has written.

CURRAN
Send out a troop for escort, yielding him
Such honours as his mighty birth demands.
Let him be lodged for what he is, a Prince
Among the mightiest.

VISALDEO
You have chosen then?
You'll give your daughter, King, to this Cashmerian?

CURRAN
My brother from Ajmere writes to forbid me,
Because he's Scythian, therefore barbarous.
A Scythian! He is Cashmere's mighty lord
Who stretches out from those proud Himalayan hills
His giant arms to embrace the North.

VISALDEO

But still
A Scythian.

CURRAN

Whom many Aryan monarchs crouch to appease
When he but shakes his warlike lance. A soldier
And conqueror, — what has the earth more noble?
And he is of the great Cushanian stock
That for these centuries bestride the hills
Against all comers. World-renowned Asoca
Who dominated half our kingly East,
Sprang from a mongrel root.

VISALDEO

Rana, you'll wed
Your daughter to Prince Toraman?

CURRAN

I'm troubled
By Ajmere's strong persistence. He controls
Our Rajpoot world and it were madly done
To offend him.

VISALDEO

That's soon avoided. Send your daughter out
To your strong fort among the wooded hills,
Dongurh; there while she walks among the trees,
Let the Cashmerian snatch her to his saddle
In the old princely way. You have your will
And the rash Chouhan has his answer.

CURRAN

Visaldeo,
You are a counsellor! Call the queen hither;
I'll speak to her.

Exit Visaldeo.

O excellently counselled!
What is it but a daughter? One mere girl
And in exchange an emperor for my ally.
It must be done.

Enter Menadevi and Visaldeo.

MENADEVI
You sent for me, my lord?

CURRAN
How many summers might our daughter count,
Mena?

MENADEVI
Sixteen, my lord.

CURRAN
She flowers apace
And like a rose in bloom expects the breeze
With blushing petals. We can delay no longer
Her nuptial rites.

MENADEVI
The Rao of Ichalgurh
Desires her. He's a warrior and a Chouhan.

CURRAN
A petty baron! O my dearest lady,
Rate not your child so low. Her rumoured charm
Has brought an emperor posting from the north
To woo her.

MENADEVI
Give me the noble Rajpoot blood,
I ask no more.

CURRAN

The son of great Cashmere
Journeys to Edur for her.

MENADEVI

Your royal will
Rules her and me. And yet, my lord, a child
Of Rajpoot princes might be better mated;
So much I'll say.

CURRAN

You are your brother's sister.
He says he will not have a Scythian wed her.

MENADEVI

He cherishes the lofty Chouhan pride.
You know, my lord, we hold a Rajpoot soldier
Without estate or purse deserves a queen
More than a crowned barbarian.

CURRAN

You are all
As narrow as the glens where you were born
And live immured. No arrogance can match
The penniless pride of mountaineers who never
Have seen the various world beyond their hills.
Your petty baron who controls three rocks
For all his heritage, exalts himself
O'er monarchs in whose wide domains his holding's
An ant-hill, and prefers his petty line
To their high dynasties; — as if a mountain tarn
Should think itself more noble than the sea
To which so many giant floods converge.

MENADEVI

Our tarns are pure at least, if small, they hold
Sweet water only; but your seas are brackish.

CURRAN
Well, well; tomorrow send your little princess
To Dongurh, there to dwell till we decide
If great Cashmere shall have her. Visaldeo,
Give ten good lances for her escort.

MENADEVI
Only ten!
It is not safe.

VISALDEO
Rana, the queen is right.
The Bheels are out among the hills; they have
A new and daring leader and beset
All wayside wealth with swarms of humming arrows.

CURRAN
The lord of Edur should not fear such rude
And paltry caterans. When they see our banner
Advancing o'er the rocks, they will avoid
Its peril. Or if there's danger, take the road
That skirts the hills. Ten lances, Visaldeo!
Exit.

MENADEVI
My blood shall never mingle with the Scythian.
I am a Chouhan first and next your wife,
Edur. What means this move to Dongurh, Visaldeo?

VISALDEO (*as if to himself*)
Ten lances at her side! It were quite easy
To take her from them, even for a Cashmerian.

MENADEVI
I understand. The whole of Rajasthan
Would cry out upon Edur, were this marriage
Planned openly to soil their ancient purity.

The means to check this shame?

VISALDEO

Lady, I am
The Rana's faithful servant.

MENADEVI

So remain.
I'll send a horse to Ichalgurh this hour.
There may be swifter snatchers than the Scythian.

Exit.

VISALDEO
Or swifter even than any in Ichalgurh.
I too have tidings to send hastily.

Exit.

Scene 2

The women's apartments in the Palace at Edur.
Comol Cumary, Coomood Cumary.

COMOL
Tomorrow, Coomood, is the feast of May.

COOMOOD
Sweetheart, I wish it were the feast of Will.
I know what I would will for you.

COMOL
What, Coomood?

COOMOOD
A better husband than your father'll give you.

COMOL
You mean the Scythian? I will not believe
That it can happen. My father's heart is royal;
The blood that throbs through it he drew from veins
Of Rajpoot mothers.

COOMOOD
But the brain's too politic.
A merchant's mind into his princely skull
Slipped in by some mischance, and it will sell you
In spite of all the royal heart can say.

COMOL
He is our father, therefore blame him not.

COOMOOD
I blame his brain, not him. Sweetheart, remember,
Whomever you may marry, I shall claim
Half of your husband.

COMOL
                                        If't be the Scythian, you may have
The whole uncouth barbarian with Cashmere
In the bad bargain.

COOMOOD
                                    We will not let him have you.
We'll find a mantra that shall call Urjoon
From Eden's groves to wed you; great Dushyanta
Shall leave Shacoontala for these wide eyes
Which you have stolen from the antelope
To gaze men's hearts out of their bodies with,
You lovely sorceress; or we'll have Udaian
To ravish you into his rushing car,
Edur's Vasavadutta. We'll bring crowding
The heroes of romance out of the past
For you to choose from, sweet, and not a Scythian
In all their splendid ranks.

COMOL
                                            But my poor Coomood,
Your hero of romance will never look at you,
Finding my antelope eyes so beautiful.
What will you do then?

COOMOOD
                                        I will marry him
By sleight of hand and never let him know.
For when the nuptial fire is lit and when
The nuptial bond is tied, I'll slip my raiment's hem
Into the knot that weds your marriage robes
And take the seven paces with you both

Weaving my life into one piece with yours
For ever.

Enter Nirmol Cumary.

NIRMOL

News, princesses, news! What will you give me for a sackful of news?

COMOL

Two switches and a birchrod. A backful for your sackful!

NIRMOL

I will empty my sack first, if only to shame you for your base ingratitude. To begin with what will please you best, Prince Toraman is arrived. I hear he is coming to see and approve of you before he makes the venture; it is the Scythian custom.

COMOL

He shall not have his Scythian custom. In India it is we girls who have the right of choice.

NIRMOL

He will not listen. These Scythians stick to their customs as if it were their skin; they will even wear their sheepskins in midsummer in Agra.

COMOL

Then, Nirmol, we will show you to him for the Princess Comol Cumary and marry you off into the mountains. Would you not love to be the Queen of Cashmere?

NIRMOL

I would not greatly mind. They say he is big as a Polar bear and has the sweetest little pugnose and cheeks like two fat pouches. They say too he carries a knout in his hand with which he will touch up the bride during the ceremony as a promise of what she may expect hereafter; it is the Scythian custom. Oh, I envy you, Princess.

COMOL

Nirmol, in sober earnest I will beat you.

NIRMOL

Strike but hear! For I have still news in my sack. You must gather your traps; we are to start for Dongurh in an hour. What, have I made your eyes smile at last?

COMOL

To Dongurh! Truth, Nirmol.

NIRMOL

Beat me in earnest, if it is not. Visaldeo himself told me.

COMOL

To Dongurh! To the woods! It is three years
Since I was there. I wonder whether now
The woodland flowers into a sudden blush
Crimsoning at the sweet approach of Spring
As once it did against that moonèd white
Of myriad blossoms. We shall feel again,
Coomood, the mountain breezes kiss our cheeks
Standing on treeless ridges and behold
The valleys wind unnoticeably below
In threads of green.

COOMOOD

It is the feast of May.
Shall we not dance upon the wind-blown peaks
And put the peacock's feather in our hair
And think we are in Brindavon the green?

NIRMOL

With a snubnosed Scythian Krishna to lead the dance. But they say Krishna was neither Scythian nor Rajpoot but a Bheel. Well, there is another Krishna of that breed out who will make eighth-century Rookminnies of you if you dance too far into the forest, sweethearts.

COOMOOD

You mean this boy-captain of robbers who makes such a noise in our little world? Bappa they call him, do they not?

NIRMOL

'Tis some such congregation of consonants. Now which sort of husband would the most modern taste approve? — a coal-black sturdy young Bheel, his face as rugged as Rajpootana, or a red and white snubnosed Scythian with two prosperous purses for his cheeks. There's a problem in aesthetics for you, Coomood.

COMOL

A barbarous emperor or a hillside thief
Are equals in a Rajpoot maiden's eyes.
Yon mountain-peak or some base valley clod,
'Tis one to the heaven-sailing star above
That scorns their lowness.

NIRMOL

Yes, but housed with the emperor the dishonour is lapped in cloth of gold; on the thief's hillside it is black, naked and rough, its primitive and savage reality. To most women the difference would be great.

COMOL

Not to me. I wonder they suffer this mountain springald to presume so long.

NIRMOL

Why, they sent out a captain lately to catch him, but he came back a head shorter than he went. But how do you fancy my news, sweethearts?

COMOL
What, is your sack empty?

NIRMOL
Your kingly father was the last to stalk out of it. I expect him here to finish my story.

Enter Rana Curran, Menadevi and Visaldeo.

CURRAN
Maid Comol, are you ready yet for Dongurh?

COMOL
I heard of it this moment, sir.

CURRAN
Make ready.
Prince Toraman arrives. You blush, my lily?

MENADEVI
There is a maiden's blush of bashfulness,
But there's her blush of shame too when her cheeks
Offended scorn a suitor far too base
Should bring such noble blood to flush their whiteness.

CURRAN
Maid Comol, which was yours?

COMOL
I would learn that,
Father, from your high sovereign will. I am not
The mistress of my blushes.

CURRAN
Keep them for him,
Comol, for whom their sweetness was created.
Hearken, my little one, you are marked out
To reign an empress; 'tis the stars decree it

That in their calm irrevocable round
Weave all our fates. Then shrink not if thou hearest
The noise of battle round thy palanquin
Filling the hills, nor fear its rude event,
But veil thy cheeks in scarlet to receive
Thy warlike husband.

COMOL

Father!

CURRAN

It is so.
Thou journeyest not to Dongurh but thy nuptials.

COMOL

With Toraman?

CURRAN

With one whose lofty doom
Is empire. Keep this in thy joyous bosom
Throbbing in a sweet secrecy. Farewell.
When we foregather next, I hope to greet
My little empress.

Exit.

MENADEVI

Comol, what said he to thee?

COMOL

What I unwillingly have heard. Mother,
Must I be mated to a barbarous stock?

MENADEVI

No, child. When you shall hear the trumpet's din
Or clash of blades, think not 'tis Toraman,
But your dear mother's care to save her child
From shameful mating. Little sweetheart, go.

When I shall meet you next, you'll shine a flower
Upon the proudest crest in Rajasthan,
No Scythian's portion. Visaldeo, prepare
Her going quickly.

Exit.

COMOL

What plots surround me? Nirmol,
Give me my sword with me. I'll have a friend
To help me, should the world go wrong.

VISALDEO

Our self,
Lady, is our best helper.

COMOL

I believe it.
Which path's resolved on?

VISALDEO

'Tis the valley road
That clings to the deep bases of the hills.

COMOL
'Tis not the shortest.

VISALDEO

The easiest, — to Cashmere.

COMOL
The other's safer then for Dongurh.

VISALDEO

At least
'Tis green and beautiful, and love may walk there
Unhindered.

Exit.

COMOL

Thou seemst to be my friend,
But I'll believe myself and no one else
Except my sword whose sharpness I can trust
Not to betray me. Come, girls, make we ready
For this planned fateful journey.

COOMOOD

Let them keep
Our palanquins together. One fate for both,
Sweetheart.

COMOL

If we must marry Toraman,
Coomood, it shall be in that shadowy country.

NIRMOL

Where, I hope, justice will have set right the balance between his nose and his cheeks. Girls, we are the prizes of this handicap and I am impatient to know which jockey wins.

Exeunt.

Scene 3

The forest near Dongurh.
Bappa, Sungram, Prithuraj.

BAPPA
It is the secret friend from whom in childhood
I learned to wing my mounting thoughts aloft
High as an eagle's flight. I know the hand,
Though yet his name is hid from me.

SUNGRAM
Let's hear
The very wording.

BAPPA
"To the Sun's child, from Edur.
Comol Cumary, Edur's princess, goes
With her fair sister and a knot of lances
To Dongurh. Bappa, young lion of the hills,
Be as the lion in thy ranging; prey
Upon earth's mightiest, think her princesses
Meant only for thy spoil and serving-girls,
Her kings thy subjects and her lands thy prey.
Dare greatly and thou shalt be great; despise
Apparent death and from his lifted hand
Of menace pluck thy royal destinies
By warlike violence. Thus thy fathers did
From whose great blood thou springest, child of Kings.
Thy friend in Edur."

SUNGRAM
Writes he that? The child of Kings!

He never spoke so plainly of your birth
Till now.

PRITHURAJ
A kindling hint to fire our blood!
Two princesses and only a knot of swords
For escort? The gods themselves arrange this for us.

SUNGRAM
Bappa, you are resolved to court this peril?

PRITHURAJ
Doubt you? Think how 'twill help our treasury.
The palanquins alone must be a mint
Of money and the girls' rich ornaments
Purchase half Rajasthan.

SUNGRAM
The immediate gain's
Princely, nor the mere capture perilous.
But afterwards the armèd wrath of Edur
Descends upon us in a thunder and whirlwind.
Are we yet strong enough to bear the shock?

PRITHURAJ
Why, let it come. I shall rejoice to feel
The true and dangerous bite of war at last,
Not always play the mountain cateran's part,
To skulk among the hills and only assail
The weak and timid, or butcher distant force
With arrows. I long for open shocks of fight
And glorious odds and all the world for audience.

BAPPA
Sungram, I do not rashly take this step,
But with fixed policy. Unless we break
Edur's supreme contempt for our annoyance,

How can we bring him to the difficult hills?
So must we take the open where our Bheels
Will scatter from the massèd Rajpoot swords
Nor face their charging horsemen. But if we capture
Their princess, inconsiderate rage will hurl them
Into our very fastnesses to wear
Their strength out under our shafts. Then will I seize
At the right moment, they being few and weary,
Edur by force or guile and hold it fast
Though all the warlike world come up against me.

SUNGRAM
With Bheels?

BAPPA
I will invite all Rajpoot swords
That now are masterless and men exiled,
And desperate fortunes. So the iron hands
Join us and the adventurous hearts, to build
A modern seat of empire; — minds like Sungram,
Wise to forecast and bold to execute,
Heroes like Prithuraj, who know not fear
Nor put a limit to their vaulting thoughts
Save death or unforgettable renown,
The Rajpoot's choice. Are we not strong enough?
We have a thousand hardy Bheels, expert
In mountain warfare, swift unerring bowmen;
We have ourselves to lead them, each worth thousands,
Sheva Ekling above us and in our hands
Our destiny and our swords.

SUNGRAM
They are enough.

Enter Kodal.

KODAL
Bappa, our scouts have come in. The prey is in the toils.

BAPPA

How many are they, Kodal?

KODAL

Merely ten lances. The servants and women they have sent round by the lower road; the escort with four palanquins come up through the hills. They have run their heads into the noose. We will draw it tight, Bappa, and choke them.

BAPPA

Is their escape
Impossible?

SUNGRAM

Bappa, a hundred Bheels surround the pass
By which alone they can return. Myself
Have posted them.

BAPPA

Beside the waterfall
Surround them, Sungram. Kodal, let there be
No random shafts to imperil by mischance
Our lovely booty.

KODAL

Trust me for that, Bappa. We'll shoot through the twenty eyeballs of them and never even touch the white. Ten lances they are and ten arrows will stretch them flat; there shall be nothing left to be done but the burning. If I cannot do this, I am no Bheel, no Kodal and no foster-brother of Bappa.

BAPPA

Economise our strength. I will not lose
A single man over this easy capture.
You're captain, Sungram.

Exeunt Sungram and Kodal.

Prithuraj, my friend.
Today begins our steep ascent to greatness.

Exeunt.

Scene 4

The forest near Dongurh. By the waterfall.
Enter Captain and soldiers escorting Comol Cumary, Coomood,
Nirmol and Ishany in palanquins.

ISHANY (*from her palanquin*)
Set down the palanquins. Captain, make void
This region; here the princess would repose
Beside the murmuring waterfall awhile
And breathe into her heart the winds of Dongurh.
Exit Captain with soldiers and palanquin-bearers. The girls leave their palanquins.

COMOL
Coomood, this is the waterfall we loved
To lean by, singing to the lyre the deeds
Our fathers wrought or listening silently
Its soft continuous roar. Beyond that bend
We shall see Dongurh, — Dongurh, our delight
Where we were children, Coomood.

COOMOOD
Comol, our tree's
All scarlet, as if splashed with crimson fire,
Just as of old.

COMOL
O it is Spring, and this
Is Dongurh.

ISHANY
Girls, we must not linger long.

Our Scythian, missing us, may take the hills.

NIRMOL
Purse-cheeks? Oh, he has lifted Mera the servant-girl to his saddle-bow by now and is garlanding her Queen of Cashmere. I wish I were there to be bridesmaid.

COMOL
That was a sweet touch of thine, Nirmol. But the child deserves her promotion; she has served me willingly. A Scythian throne is no great wages for service to a Rajpoot princess.

COOMOOD
How the hill gives you back your laughter, repeating
Its sweetness with delight, as if it had a soul
To love you.

COMOL
We have shaken them off prettily by turning away through the hills. Alas! my royal father will not greet his little empress this journey, nor my lady mother scent her blossom on a Rajpoot crest. They must even put up with their poor simple Comol Cumary just as she was, — (*aside*) and as she will be until her heart finds its mate.

NIRMOL
It is a sin, I tell you, Comol; I am mad when I think of it. Why, I came out to be abducted; I did not come for a quiet stroll through the woodlands. But I have still hopes of our Bheel cateran, our tangle-locked Krishna of the hill-sides; surely he will not be so ungallant as to let such sweet booty pass through his kingdom ungathered.

COMOL
I would gladly see this same stripling and talk to him face to face who sets his Bheel arrows against our Rajpoot swords. He should be a man at least, no Scythian Toraman.

ISHANY

The presumptuous savage! it will earn him a stake yet for his last session. Were I a man, I would burn these wasps from their nest and catch and crush them in my mailed gauntlet as they buzzed out into the open.

SHOUTS OUTSIDE

Bappa! Bappa! Ho Sheva Ekling!

CAPTAIN (*shouting within*)

Lances, lances, Rajpoots! Bearers, to the palanquins!

COMOL

Bappa!

NIRMOL (*laughing*)

You'll have that talk with Bappa yet,
Comol.

COOMOOD

Oh, let us flee! They swarm towards us.

ISHANY

Stand firm! Our gallant lances soon will prick
These bold hill-foxes to their lairs. Stand firm!
We should but fly into the mouth of danger.

COMOL (*climbing on to a rock*)

You Gods! our Rajpoots all are overwhelmed
Before they used their weapons. What next, Ishany?
Shall we sit still to be made prisoners?

ISHANY

Get swiftly to your palanquin. The bearers
Run hither. Flee towards the valley road!
It may be that the swords of Ichalgurh
Range there already.

COMOL

Shall I escape alone?

ISHANY

Ah, save the glory of Edur from disgrace
Of savage handling!

Enter the palanquin-bearers fleeing.

Halt! Take your princess, men,
And flee with her into the valley road.

FIRST BEARER

The funeral fire in the mouth of your princess! Every man save himself.

Exit with most of the bearers.

SECOND BEARER

Halt, halt! We have eaten and shall we not pay for the salt? Yes, even with our blood. We four will take her, if we are not cut into pieces first. Into the palanquin, lady.

NIRMOL

Quick, Comol! or are you longing for your palaver with Tanglelocks?

Comol enters the palanquin.

COOMOOD

What will become of us?

NIRMOL

We shall become
Bheel housewives. After all, a Scythian throne
Was better.

ISHANY

We have our weapons to befriend us yet.
Coomood, look not so pale.

NIRMOL

See, see, Ishany!
The Bheels are leaping down upon our rear.

ISHANY

Quick, bearers, bearers.

NIRMOL

It is too late. She's taken.

Enter Kodal and Bheels.

KODAL

Whoever wants an arrow through his skull, let him move his shanks. Women, you are my brother Bappa's prisoners; we have need of some Rajpoot slavegirls for his kitchen. Take them, my children, and tie them.

ISHANY

Stab any who comes; let not these lumps of dirt
Insult your Rajpoot bodies with their fingers.

KODAL

Shut your mouth, Rajpootny, or I will skewer your tongue to your palate with an arrow. Knock their daggers out of their hands.

He lays his hand on Nirmol's wrist.
Enter Sungram.

NIRMOL

Off, savage! I will have no tongue-skewerer for my husband.

SUNGRAM

Release her, Kodal. Lay not thy Bheel hand
Upon a Rajpoot virgin. Maiden of Edur,
Expect no outrage. We are men who keep
Some tincture of manners yet, though savage hills
Harbour us and our looks and deeds are rugged

As the wild land we dwell in.

NIRMOL
I grant you that. If you are the master-jockey, the winners of this handicap are no such rank outsiders after all.

KODAL
Because thou art a Rajpoot, must thou command me? To me, Bheels! Tie up these Rajpootnies hand and leg like so many chickens. Heed not Sungram.

SUNGRAM
Mutineer! (*draws his sword*)

ISHANY (*rapidly approaching the bearers*)
Slip off unnoticed while they brawl; run, run!
O save the princess!

SECOND BEARER
We will do our man's best. Silently, men, and swiftly.

KODAL
I boggle not for your sword, Rajpoot. Taste my arrows.
Exeunt bearers with Comol in the palanquin.
Bappa and Prithuraj enter from the other side.

BAPPA
Now, what's the matter, Kodal?

KODAL
Why, Bappa, these new servant-girls of yours will not come to heel; they talk proudly. Yet Sungram will not let me teach them manners, because, I think, they are his aunt's cousins.

BAPPA
They shall be obedient, Kodal. Leave them to me.
Remember Sungram's your commander, brother.

What, you, a soldier, and break discipline!

KODAL

I am your soldier, Bappa. Sungram, you shall have your Rajpootny. I am a soldier, Rajpoot, and know my duty.

COOMOOD

Is this the Bheel? the rough and uncouth outlaw?
He has a princely bearing. This is surely
A Rajpoot and of a high-seated blood.

BAPPA

Which of you's Edur's princess? Let her stand
Before me.

ISHANY

Who art thou that speakst so proudly
As if a Rajpoot princess were thy slave,
Outlaw?

BAPPA

Whoe'er I am, you are in my hands,
My spoil and captives. Speak, which is the princess?

COOMOOD

Out of thy grip and now almost in safety,
Chieftain, upon the valley road.

ISHANY

Coomood,
Thou hast betrayed thy sister by thy folly
And into vilest shame.

COOMOOD

At least I'll share it.

Exit.

BAPPA

Ay, so? these maidens are but three. Kodal,
Four palanquins were on the road, thou toldst me.

KODAL

Sungram, give thy sword a twist in my guts. While I wrangled with thee, the best shikar of all has skedaddled.

BAPPA

Nay, mend it, — intercept the fugitive.
Exit Kodal with Bheels.
The other too has fled? but she's on foot.
Sungram and Prithuraj, lead these fair captives
Into their prison. I will go and seize
The runaways.

ISHANY

They are not for thee yet,
Hill-cateran, while I stand between.

PRITHURAJ

Oh, here's
A Rajpoot spirit.

BAPPA

Foolish girl, canst thou
Oppose the stormblast with a dove's white wings?
As he goes out, she strikes at him with a dagger; he seizes her wrist and puts her by. Exit Bappa.

PRITHURAJ

Thou hast a brave but headstrong spirit, maiden.
It is no savages to whom your Fates
Are kind, but men of Rajpoot blood and nurture.
Have I your leave?
He lays his hand on her wrist.

ISHANY (*sullenly*)
You take it in these hills
Before the asking, as it seems.
(*throwing away her dagger*)
Away,
Thou useless helper.

PRITHURAJ
Very useless, maiden.
When help is needed, ask it of my sword.

ISHANY
You play the courteous brigand. I shall need
No help to cast myself out of the reach
Of villains' courtesies.

PRITHURAJ (*lifting her in his arms*)
'Tis not so easy.
Must I then teach you you're a prisoner?
Come, be more patient. You shall yet be glad
Of the sweet violence today we do you.
He carries her out.

SUNGRAM
Must we follow in the same order?

NIRMOL
By your leave, no. I turn eleven stone or thereabouts.

SUNGRAM
I will not easily believe it. Will you suffer me to test the measure?

NIRMOL
I fear you would prove an unjust balance; so I will even walk, if you will help me over the rough places. It seems you were not Krishna after all?

SUNGRAM

Why, take me for brother Balaram then. Is not your name Revaty?

NIRMOL

It is too early in the day for a proposal; positively, I will not say either yes or no till the evening. On, Balaram! I follow.

Exeunt.

Scene 5

The forest near Dongurh.
Enter Bearers with Comol Cumary in the palanquin.

SECOND BEARER
Courage, brothers, courage! We are almost out of the wood.
Enter Kodal, leaping down from a thicket in front.

KODAL
But it is too soon to hollo. Stop, you plain-frogs, or you shall gutturalize your last croak.

SECOND BEARER
Put down the palanquin; we are taken. Great emperor of Bheels, be merciful.

KODAL
Stand still, rogues. I must first haul the runaway Rajpootny out of her dogbox.
As he approaches the palanquin, the Bearer strikes him down suddenly and throws his bow and arrows down the hillside.

SECOND BEARER
Quick! Let us be off while he's stunned.
Enter Bappa and Coomood, followed by Bheels.

BAPPA
Your sister cannot overstep the pass,
Which is beset and ambushed. Ho, there, halt!
Put down the palanquin. Insensate fools,

Invite not death.
The Bheels crowd in and surround the bearers.
Is't Kodal? is he hurt?

KODAL (*rising*)
Only stunned, Bappa. The hillside was a trifle harder than my head. Plain-frog, thou didst that trick handsomely. Give me thy paw, fellow.

BAPPA
Take these men prisoners and keep them safely.
Remove your men; and, Kodal, guard the road
Barring all rescue.
Exit Kodal and Bheels with the bearers.
Princess, take your sister
Out of the palanquin.

COOMOOD
Comol, Comol,
Dear fugitive from fate's arrest, you're taken.
Come out.

COMOL
How was it?

COOMOOD
I told him of your flight.
You'll leave me all alone to wed a Bheel?
You'll break our compact? I have dragged you back
To servitude.

COMOL
Nay, let me see my captor then.
For if you smile, my Coomood, I must be
Out of misfortune's reach.
(*leaving the palanquin*)
Stand back, sweet. Come,

Where is this mountain thief who wars with Kings
And lays his hands on Edur's princesses
As if his trunk were an immortal piece
And he unhangable?

BAPPA (*advancing*)
I am the man,
Bappa, the outlaw.

COMOL
This Bappa! this the Bheel?
They gaze at one another.
(*smiling*)
Why, Coomood, it was Krishna after all.
Monarch of caterans, I am Edur's princess,
Comol Cumary. Why didst thou desire me?

BAPPA
O who would not desire thee, glorious virgin?
Thou art the rose of Rajasthan and I
Will wear thee on my crest.

COMOL
'Twas prophesied me.
But roses, King of thieves, have thorns, and see!
I have a sword.

BAPPA (*smiling*)
Thinkst thou that pretty toy
Will save thee from me?

COMOL
It will do its best.
And if you take me still, 'tis at your peril.
I am a dangerous creature to possess.

BAPPA
I will embrace the peril as a bride
If in thy shape it dwell.

COMOL
I swear I pity you.
You rush upon you know not what. Come now,
If 'tis a gentle serving-girl you need,
Here is my sister, Coomood, who can cook
Divinely. Take her. Let me walk on to Dongurh.
You will regret it, youth.

COOMOOD
Believe her not,
'Tis she's a Droupadie; and who possesses her
Is fated to be Emperor of the West.

BAPPA
Nay, you are twin sweet roses on one stalk
And I will pluck you both, O flowers of Edur.

COMOL
Why did thy men beset me, mountaineer?
What was thy hope?

BAPPA
At first 'twas policy
And some desire of thy imperial ransom.
But now I've seen thee, I will hold thee fast.
Thou art not ransomable.

COMOL
You shall not have me, sir, till you have fought
And beaten me. You shall not get me cheaply.
I am a swashbuckler. Bheel, I can fight.

BAPPA
Marvel, thou mayst and with great ease be victor
If thou but use thy soft and shining eyes
To dazzle me out of all possibility
Of sound defence.

COMOL
Come, measure swords, on guard!

BAPPA
Thou wilt persist then in this pretty folly?

COMOL
Halt, halt! I will not fight except on terms.
You'll yield yourself my prisoner, Bheel, and free
My maidens, when I've drubbed you handsomely?

BAPPA
If when I've conquered, you will utterly
Surrender your sweet self into my arms,
Princess of Edur.

COMOL
Take me if you can.

BAPPA
Thus then I take you.
(*disarms her*)
Rose, where is thy thorn?
Now thou must yield indeed.

COMOL
Foul play! foul play!
It was not fair to rob me of my sword.
Call you this fighting? I'll not yield myself.

BAPPA
Thou hast no choice.

He seizes her.

COMOL
I was not fairly won.
Avaunt! this is mere highway robbery.
I will not bear it.

BAPPA
Virgin, this is the moment
For which thy loveliness was born.

COMOL (*faintly*)
Alas,
What will you do with me?

BAPPA
I'll carry thee,
A hungry lion, to my secret lair
Among the mighty hills, where none shall come
To save thee from me, O my glorious prey,
Bright antelope of Edur!

COOMOOD
Will you play
With the young lion, Comol, and chafe his mood?
Now you are borne down by his heavy mane
And lie beneath his huge and tawny chest,
Trembling and silent.

BAPPA
Princess, —

COOMOOD
May I walk on
To Dongurh?

BAPPA

No, thou mayst not. Follow me.
Hold fast my arm, nor, princess, fear to hang
Thy whole slight weight on me up these abrupt
And breathless places, for the high ascent
Is steep and rough to our uncouth abodes.
Descent's for your small feet impossible,
Coomood, from your green prison on the heights.
There Spring shall wall you in with flowers and make
Her blossoming creepers chains for your bright limbs
Softly forbidding you, when you'ld escape.

COOMOOD

Comol, tomorrow is the feast of May.

Exeunt.

Act II

The forest near Dongurh.

Scene 1

In the forest near Dongurh.
Bappa, Sungram. The Captain and Rajpoot soldiers, guarded by Bheels.

BAPPA

Ponder it, captain. Sungram, see the bearers
Released, but let those cowards first be scourged
Who put their lives above their lady's honour.
Give golden largess to the faithful four
And send them with a script. Let Edur know
That Bappa holds his cherished daughter fast
And frees her not save for a lakh of mohurs,
Her insufficient ransom. If it displease him,
Let him come here with all his fighting-men
And take her from my grip. Word it to wound him
So that he shall come thundering up the hills
Incensed inexorably.

Exit Sungram.

Soldier, again,
'Tis not my wont to slay my prisoners,
Who am a Rajpoot, and to pen you here
Eating your hearts away like prisoned lions
Were the world's loss and to myself no profit.
Take then your choice and either follow me
Or to your Edur back return unharmed.

CAPTAIN
Thou art a noble enemy, young chieftain;
But change thy boon; for I have lost my charge
Ingloriously and now can only entreat
The use of my own sword to avenge my honour
On its betrayer. Living I go not back
To Edur.

BAPPA
Soldier, thou art too scrupulous.
The wariest captain need not think it shame
To be surprised among these mountains. If Edur
Receive you not, follow my fortunes, Rajpoot.
I am as noble as the prince you serve,
And he who waits on Bappa's fateful star,
May be more fortunate than kings.

CAPTAIN
Chieftain,
Save my old master's blood I serve no other
Than noble Edur.
(*suddenly with excitement*)
What is that jewel, boy,
Upon thy sword-hilt? Where hadst thou that weapon?

BAPPA
What moves thee thus? It is my father's sword,
Though who my father was, Fate hides from me.

CAPTAIN (*with emotion*)
I take thy offer, prince. I am thy soldier,
And all these men shall live and die for thee.

A SOLDIER
What dost thou, captain?

CAPTAIN

I have never swerved
From the high path of Rajpoot honour. Trust me,
Rajpoots.

SOLDIER

Thou wast our chief in war and always
We found thee valiant, proud and honourable.
Convince us that we may transfer unshamed
Our falchions only stained with foemen's blood,
And still we'll follow thee.

CAPTAIN

I will convince you
At a fit season.

BAPPA

Knowst thou something, soldier,
That's hid from me?

CAPTAIN

Pardon my silence, chieftain.
All things have their own time to come to light.

BAPPA

I will expect my hour then and meanwhile
Think myself twice as great as yesterday
Whom your strong hands now serve. Come, friends, with me;
Resume your swords for yet more glorious use
In Bappa's service.

Exeunt.

Scene 2

The road through the valley to Dongurh.
Toraman, Canaca, Hooshka and Scythians.

TORAMAN
I know not what impelled these mountain-boars
To worry Death with their blunt tusks. This insult
I will revenge in kind at first, then take
A bloody reckoning.

CANACA
Fegh! it was a trick even beyond my wits. To put a servant-girl on the throne of Cashmere! All Asia would have been one grin had the jest prospered.

TORAMAN
They take us for barbarians
And thought such gross imposture good enough
To puzzle Scythian brains. But I'll so shame
The witty clowns, they shall hang down their waggish heads
While they are still allowed to live. You'll wed
A princess of the Rajpoots, Canaca?

CANACA
I would prefer a haunch of Rajpoot venison any day; they have fat juicy stags in their mountains.

TORAMAN
I give thee Edur's daughter. While I ride
With half my lances to our mountains, thou
Shalt ruffle round as Scythian Toraman
And wed the princess.

CANACA

Shall I indeed? Do you take me for a lettuce that you would have me sliced for a Rajpoot salad? Oh, I'ld love to be a prince if only to comfort myself with one full meal in a lifetime; but an empty plebeian paunch is a more comfortable possession than a princely belly full of Rajpoot lances.

TORAMAN

Why should they at all
Discover thee, dull fool? None know me here.
The Rana and his men have not received me.
No doubt the arrogant princeling scorned to eat
As host and guest with me in Edur; even to dine
With us is thought a soil! Therefore 'twas fixed
In this rare plot that I should ride from Deesa
On a fool's errand. Well, it helps me now,
Though I'll avenge it fearfully. 'Tis feasible.
None know us, you are richer-robed than I,
And what's uncouth in you, they will put down
To Scythia's utter barbarousness, whose princes
Are boors and boors unhuman. Oh, 'twill work.

CANACA

Will it? Well, so long as I keep my belly unprodded, 'tis a jest after my own heart.

TORAMAN

And mine. These haughty Rajpoots think themselves
The only purity on earth; their girls
So excellent in Aryan chastity,
That without Rajpoot birth an emperor's wooing
Is held for insult. This they hoped to avenge
By foisting a baseborn light serving-wench
On the prince of all the North. How will they stare,
How gnash their teeth and go stark-mad with shame
When they discover their sweet cherished lily,
The pride of Rajasthan, they thought too noble

To lower herself to Cashmere's lofty throne,
Bedded with the court-jester of Cashmere,
Soiled by the embraces of a low buffoon
Who patters for a wage, her pride a jest,
Her purity a puddle and herself
The world's sole laughing-stock.

CANACA

Hem! 'Twill be a jest for the centuries.

TORAMAN

About it, then.
Feign to laugh off the insult put on you
And urge your suit. Bound by their trick that failed,
They must, though with great sullenness, consent;
And that's desirable: the shame will taste
A thousand times more bitter afterwards.
Have her by force, if they are obstinate;
But have her. Soon, be sure, I will be back
With an avenging host and ring in Edur
With loud assaults till I have crucified
King, queen and princess on her smoking ruins.
Exit with a number of Scythians.

CANACA

Well then, I am Prince Toraman of Cashmere; remember that, villains. Or why not Prince Toraman-Canaca or Prince Canaca-Toraman? it is rounder and more satisfying to the mouth. Yet simple Prince Toraman has a chastity of its own and all the magnificence of Cashmere marches after it. Ho, slave! What sounds are those approaching my majesty? Send scouts and reconnoitre. Prince Toraman, the imperial son of Cashmere! It is a part I shall play with credit; Nature made me for it of sufficient proportions and gave me a paunch imperial.

HOOSHKA (*approaching*)
Prince Canaca-Toraman or Prince Toraman-Canaca or very simple Toraman, I hear tramp of men and the clang of armour. No doubt, the princess of Edur, thinking all safe by now, rides to Dongurh. Will you charge them and seize her?

CANACA
To cover, thou incompetent captain, to cover. Hast thou learned war and knowest not the uses of ambush? We will hide, slave. See thou pokest not out that overlong nose of thine! Find thyself a branch big enough to cover it.

HOOSHKA
Humph! What signal shall we expect from your Majesty for the charge?

CANACA
Prate not to me of signals! How lacking are thy dull soldier-wits in contrivance! If I jump down into the road and howl, you will all come jumping and howling after me; but if I run, you will catch hold of my tail and run too like the very devil. Nay, I have a rare notion of tactics. To cover, to cover!
They conceal themselves. Enter the Rao of Ichalgurh, Ruttan and Rajpoots.

ICHALGURH
She has escaped me, or the Scythian has her.
The last were my dishonour.

RUTTAN
We've held the road
Since dawn. The Scythian had the serving-women.
The princess has escaped.

ICHALGURH
I'm glad of it.

RUTTAN
Will you pursue it farther?

ICHALGURH
Ambition only
Engaged me once to woo her; now my honour
Is deeply pledged. The spur of chivalry
Suffers me not to yield a Rajpoot flower
To Scythian handling; nor could I refuse
A challenge to adventurous emprise
So fairly given. About, to Dongurh!

RUTTAN
Brother,
The place is strong, nor we equipped for sieges.

ICHALGURH
I'll have her out even from that fortressed keeping
And set her in my crest at Ichalgurh
For gods to gaze at.

Canaca leaps down into the road brandishing a sword, followed by Hooshka and his Scythians.

CANACA
Ho Amitabha! Buddha for Cashmere!

ICHALGURH
The Scythians on us! Swords!

CANACA
Put up your skewers! Quiver not, ye wretches; steady, steady your quaking kneecaps. Though I have cause for anger, yet am I merciful. Ye would have robbed me of some very pretty property, but ye are mountain-thieves by nature and nurture and know no better. Therefore peace. Sleep in thy scabbard, thou dreadful servant of the wrath of Toraman; await a fitter subject than these carcasses. Courage, Rajpoots, you shall not die.

ICHALGURH (*smiling*)
Who is Your Mightiness?

CANACA
I am the very formidable and valiant hero and Scythian, Toraman, prince of Cashmere. Nevertheless, tremble not. I am terrible to look at, but I have bowels; — ay, a whole paunchful of them.

ICHALGURH
You sought the Princess?
What, she has slipped through your most valiant fingers?

CANACA
As if she had greased herself with butter. But I am going to Dongurh straight away to demand her and dinner.

ICHALGURH
Together then. We're comrades in her loss;
Why not allies to win her?

CANACA
Am I to be so easily bamboozled? wilt thou insult my cranium? Thou wouldst use my valiant and invincible sword to win her, thinking to steal her from me afterwards when I am not looking.

ICHALGURH
Who would dare
Defraud the formidable Toraman,
The valiant and heroic Scythian?

CANACA
Well!
I am content; fall in behind me, mountaineers.

ICHALGURH
Ruttan, we'll keep an eye upon this Scythian.

His show of braggart folly hides, I fear,
A deal of knavishness.

CANACA

Trumpets! To Dongurh! March!

Exeunt.

Scene 3

Bappa's cot on the hillside.
Bappa; the Captain; Coomood, decorating the cot with flowers.

BAPPA
Where was she when you had the script from her?

CAPTAIN
Singing of battle on the rocks alone
With wrestling winds in her wild hair and raiment,
A joyous Oread.

BAPPA
Said she anything?

CAPTAIN
She gave it me with glad and smiling eyes
And laughed: "This for my noble Bheel, my sovereign
Of caterans, my royal beast of prey.
These to their mighty owners."

COOMOOD
Will you read it?

BAPPA (*reads*)
"Cateran, I have given thy captain letters which when thou hast read them, fail not to despatch. I have sent for teachers for thee to beat thee into modesty and lesson thee in better behaviour to a lady and princess. — "

What letters has she given thee, captain? These?

CAPTAIN
To Pratap, Rao of Ichalgurh; — and one
To Toraman the Scythian.

BAPPA
Deliver them.
Thou'lt find at Dongurh both these warlike princes.
No, I'll not read them.
Exit Captain.

COOMOOD
Let me hear the rest.

BAPPA
"Cateran, I will show thee the sum of thy bold and flagitious offences, though I dare not to hope that it will make thee ashamed. Thou hast laid injurious hands on a royal maiden, being thyself a mere Bheel and outlaw and of no parentage; thou hast carried me most violently to this thy inconsiderable and incommodious hut, treating the body of a princess as if it were a sack of potatoes; thou hast unmercifully and feloniously stripped my body with thy own rude Bheel hands of more ornaments than thou hast seen in thy lifetime and didst hurt me most cruelly in the deed, though thou vainly deniest it; thou hast compelled and dost yet compel me, the princess of Edur, by the infamous lack of women-servants in thy hut, to minister to thee, a common Bheel, menially with my own royal hands, so that my fingers are sore with scrubbing thy rusty sword which thou hast never used yet on anything braver than a hill-jackal, and my face is still red with leaning over the fire cooking thy most unroyal meals for thee; and to top these crimes, thou hast in thy robustious robber fashion taken a kiss from my lips without troubling thyself to ask for it, and thou yet keepest it with thee. All which are high misdoings and mortal offences; yet would I have pardoned them knowing thee to be no more than a boy and a savage. But now thou darest to tell me that I, a Rajpoot maiden, am in love with thee, a Bheel, and that even if I deny it, thou carest not; for I am

thine already whether I will or no, thy captive and thy slavegirl. This is not to be borne. So I have written to my noble suitors of Ichalgurh and Scythia to avenge me upon thy Bheel body; I doubt not, they will soon carry thy head to Edur in a basket, if thou hast the manners to permit them. Yet since thy followers call thee Smiter of the Forest and Lion of the Hills, let me see thee smite more than jackals and rend braver than flesh of mountain-deer. Cateran, when thou trundlest the Scythian down-hill like a ball, thou mayst marry me in spite of thy misdeeds, if thou darest; and when thou showest thyself a better man than the Chouhan of Ichalgurh, which is impossible, thou mayst even keep me for thy slavegirl and I will not deny thee. Meanwhile, thou shalt give me a respite till the seventh morn of the May. Till then presume not to touch me. Thy captive, Comol Cumary."

Why, here's a warlike and most hectoring letter,
Coomood.

COOMOOD
She pours her happy heart out so
In fantasies; I never knew her half so wayward.
The more her soul is snared between your hands,
The more her lips will chide you.

BAPPA
Can you tell
Why she has set these doughty warriors on me,
Coomood?

COOMOOD
You cannot read a woman's mind.
It's to herself a maze inextricable
Of vagrant impulses with half-guessed tangles
Of feeling her own secret thoughts are blind to.

BAPPA
But yet?

COOMOOD
Her sudden eager headstrong passion
Would justify its own extravagance
By proving you unparalleled. Therefore she picks
Earth's brace of warriors out for your opponents.

BAPPA
Pratap the Chouhan, Rao of Ichalgurh!
To meet him merely were a lifetime's boast;
But to cross swords with him! Oh, she has looked
Into my heart.

COOMOOD
You'll give her seven days?

BAPPA
Not hours, — the dainty rebel! Great Ichalgurh
Will wing here like an eagle; soon I'll meet him
And overthrow, who feel a giant's strength,
Coomood, since yesterday. My fate mounts sunward.

COOMOOD
Ours, Bappa, has already arrived. Our sun
Rose yesterday upon the way to Dongurh.

Curtain

Scene 4

Outside Dongurh.
Ichalgurh, a letter in his hand; Ruttan, the Captain.

ICHALGURH
Who art thou, soldier?

CAPTAIN
The leader of the lances
That guarded Edur's princess and with her
Were captived by the Bheels. Their chief I serve.

ICHALGURH
Thou hast dishonoured then the Rajpoot name
Deserting from thy lord to serve a ruffian
Under the eyes of death, thou paltry trembler.

CAPTAIN
My honour, Rao of Ichalgurh, is mine
To answer for, and at a fitting time
I will return thy insults on my swordpoint.
But now I am only a messenger.

ICHALGURH
I'll read
The princess' writing. (*reads*) "Baron of Ichalgurh,
My mother's clansman, warrior, noble Rajpoot,
Thrice over therefore bound to help the weak
And save the oppressed! A maiden overpowered,
Comol Cumary, Edur's princess, sues
For thy heroic arm of rescue, prince,
To the Bheel outlaws made a prey, unsought

By her own kin; whom if thou save, I am
A princess and thy handmaid, else a captive
Only and Bappa's slavegirl." Go! my warcry
Echoing among the hills shall answer straightway
This piteous letter. Ruttan, swift! Arm! arm!
I will not vent my wrath in braggart words
But till it leap into my sword, I suffer.

RUTTAN
You shall not wait for long.
Exit.

CAPTAIN
I have a letter
To Toraman the Scythian.

ICHALGURH
Give it to him,
For this is he.
Enter Canaca, Hooshka and Scythians.

CANACA
It will not fill. This paltry barren Rajpootana has not the wherewithal to choke up the gulf within me. Ha! avaunt! Dost thou flutter paper before me? I have no creditors in Rajpootana.

CAPTAIN
I understand thee not. This is a script
Comol Cumary sends thee, Edur's princess.

CANACA
Is it so? Well then, thou mayst kneel and lay it at my feet; I will deign to read it. (*The Captain flings it into his hands.*) What, thou dirty varlet! (*The Captain lays his hand on his sword.*) Nay, it is a game? Oh, I can catch, I can catch.
Exit Captain.

(*reads*)
"Prince Toraman, they say thou desirest me and camest from Cashmere as far as Edur for my sake. Thou must come a little farther, prince! Bappa, the outlaw, has been beforehand with thee and holds me in durance among the hills. Prince, if thou yet desirest this little beauty one poor body can hold, come up hither and fight for its possession which otherwise I must in seven days perforce yield to my captor. From whom if thou canst rescue me, — but I will not drive bargains with thee, trusting rather to thy knightly princeliness to succour a distressed maiden for no hope of reward. Comol Cumary."

No, no, no; there is too much butter about thee. No hope of reward! What! I shall fight like an enraged rhinoceros, I shall startle the hills by my valour, I shall stick three thousand Bheels with my own princely hand like so many boar-pigs; and all this violent morning exercise for what? To improve my appetite? I have more gastric juice than my guts can accommodate. They roar to me already for a haunch of venison.

HOOSHKA
Prince Toraman, shall I give the order for the hills?

CANACA
Ay, Hooshka Longnose, hast thou news of venison, good fellow?

HOOSHKA
I meant, to rescue the Princess Comol Cumary from the Bheels.

CANACA
Didst thou mean so? Nay, I will not hinder thy excellent intentions. But bring some venison with thee as thou comest along with her, Hooshka.

HOOSHKA
Prince of Cashmere, lead us to the hills and tear her from the grip of the outlaws. As a prince and a soldier thou canst do no less.

CANACA
Thou liest through thy long nose! I can do much less than that. I will not suffer thee to put limits to my infinite ability. And I can tell a decoy-duck from a live gander. Shall I waddle my shins into Bappa's trap? This letter was written under compulsion.

HOOSHKA
The Princess must be rescued. I wonder, Prince Toraman, that thou wilt jest over a thing so grave and unhappy.

CANACA
Why, genius will out, you cannot stable it for long, Hooshka; it will break bounds and gallop. Yet go, Hooshka, go; take all my men, Hooshka. Hooshka, slay the Bheel; rescue the lady, Hooshka. I wish I could go with thee and swing my dreadful blade with my mighty arm till the mountains reechoed. But the simple truth is, I have a bleeding dysentery. Willingly would I shed my princely blood for my sweet lady, but it is shedding itself already otherwise.

HOOSHKA (*aside*)
Thou fat-gutted cowardly rogue, wilt thou blacken the name of a hero with thy antics? Out at once, or the Rajpoots shall know who thou art and carve thee into little strips for a dog's dinner.

CANACA
Sayst thou, my little captain? Thy arguments are strangely conclusive. Arms! arms! my horse! my horse! Out, Scythians, to the hills! My horse, I say! I will do deeds; I will paint the hills in blood and tattoo the valleys. (*Enter Scythians.*) Amitabha! Amitabha! Yell, you rogues, have you no lungs in your big greasy carcasses? With what will you fight then?

SCYTHIANS
Amitabha!

Enter Ruttan and Rajpoots.

RUTTAN
Rajpoots, to save a noble lady captived
We march today. No gallant open enemy,
But savages who lurk behind the rocks
Are our opposers. Sweep them from the hills,
Rajpoots, with the mere flashing of your swords
And rescue from their villain touch a princess.
Exeunt Ichalgurh, Ruttan and Rajpoots.

CANACA
March, Scythians! (*aside*) Hooshka, what say you? We will keep behind these mad-dog Rajpoots and fight valiantly in their shadow. That is but strategy.

HOOSHKA (*aside*)
If thou dost, I will kick thee into the enemy's midst with my jackboots.

CANACA (*aside*)
Wilt thou muddy such a fine coat as this is? Hast thou the heart? (*aloud*) Trumpets! Into the breach, into the breach, my soldiers!
Exeunt.

Scene 5

In the forest.
Ichalgurh, Ruttan and Rajpoots.

OUTSIDE
Bappa! Bappa! Ho, Sheva Ekling!
An arrow descends and a Rajpoot falls.

RUTTAN
Still upwards!

ICHALGURH
Upwards still! Death on the height
Sits crowned to meet us; downwards is to dishonour
And that's no Rajpoot movement. Brother Ruttan,
We're strangled with a noose intangible.
O my brave Rajpoots, by my headlong folly
Led to an evil death!

RUTTAN
What is this weakness,
Chouhan of famous Ichalgurh? Remember
Thyself, my brother. But a little more
And we have reached their wasps'-nest on the hills.

ICHALGURH
Not one alive.
Another arrow. A Rajpoot falls.

RUTTAN
I ask no better fate,
Brother, than at thy side however slain,

Victorious or defeated.

ICHALGURH

We have acted
Like heedless children, thinking we had to stamp
Our armoured heel on a mere swarm and rabble,
But find ourselves at grips with skilful fighters
And a great brain of war. Safe under cover
They pick us off; we battle blindly forwards
Without objective, smiting at the wind,
Stumbling as in a nightmare and transfixed
Ignobly by a foe invisible
Our falchions cannot reach, — like crows, like jackals,
Not like brave men and battle-famous warriors.

RUTTAN

Still on!

ICHALGURH

Yes, on, till the last man falls pierced
Upon the threshold that immures the sweetness
We could not save. Forward the Chouhan!

Enter Kodal.

KODAL

Halt!
A parley!

ICHALGURH

Speak, but talk not of surrender.

KODAL

'Tis that I'll talk of. I am Bappa's mouthpiece.
Rajpoots, you're quite surrounded. If we choose,
Our arrows buzzing through your brains can end you
In five swift minutes. Lay then at Bappa's feet
Your humble heads; else like mad dogs be skewered

And yelp your lives out.

ICHALGURH

Return unpunished; the name
Of envoy guards thy barbarous insolence.

Enter Sungram.

SUNGRAM

You speak too insolently your message, Kodal.
Chouhan of Ichalgurh, thou art too great
To die thus butchered. We demand a parley
For courteous equal terms, not base surrender.

ICHALGURH

Thou art a Rajpoot; dost thou lead these arrows?

SUNGRAM

I lead the shafts that wear thee out; another
Surrounds the Scythian; but we are the hands
Of one more godlike brain.

ICHALGURH

With him I'll parley.

SUNGRAM

'Tis well. Go, Kodal, learn our chieftain's will.

Exit Kodal.

ICHALGURH

Young man, thou hast a Rajpoot form and bearing,
Yet herdst with the wild forest tribes, remote
From arms and culture. Dost thou hide thy name too?

SUNGRAM

I am a Chouhan like thyself, of birth
As princely. Ask the warriors of Ajmere
Who valiant Martund was; his sons are we,

Sungram and Prithuraj.

ICHALGURH

O youth, thy father
Was my great pattern and my guide in war.
Brother and enemy, embrace me.

They embrace.

Sungram,
Who is thy captain? For the sons of Martund
Serve not a Bheel.

SUNGRAM

Thine eyes shall answer thee.

Enter Bappa and Kodal.

ICHALGURH

A noble-featured youth! What son of Kings
Lives secret in these rugged hills?

BAPPA

Chouhan
Of famous Ichalgurh, now if I'm slain
In battle, I can tell the dead I've seen thee,
Thou god of war. O let there be no hatred,
Hero, between us, but only faith.

ICHALGURH

Young chieftain,
Thou bearst a godlike semblance, but thy deeds
Are less than noble. Hast thou not seized a princess
By robber violence, forced her with thee
To thy rude lair and threatenest her sweet body
With shameful mastery?

BAPPA

We are warriors, Rajpoot;
Two ways of mating only fit for us,

By mutual sweet attraction undenied
To grow to oneness as they do in heaven,
Or else with lion leap to seize our bride
And pluck her from the strong protecting spears
Taking her heart by violence. We mate not
Like castes unwarlike, from a father's hand
Drawing an innocent wide-eyed wondering child
Like cattle given or sold. This was the way
Of Rajpoots long before the earth grew aged;
And shall a Rajpoot blame it? Wherefore then rod'st thou
Clanging last morn from Ichalgurh in arms,
Pratap the Chouhan?

ICHALGURH

Chieftain, I am pledged
To save the girl from thee.

BAPPA

But canst redeem
The vow with thy dead body only. Hero,
I too am sworn to keep her 'gainst the world.
Let us in the high knightly way decide it.
Deign to cross swords with me and let the victor
Possess the maiden.

ICHALGURH

O thou springing stem
That surely yet wilt rise to meet the sun!
Agreed. Let no man intervene betwixt us.

BAPPA

Kodal, restrain thy Bheels.

Exit Kodal. They fight.

RUTTAN

Bold is thy chieftain
To match his boyish arm against my brother!

SUNGRAM

He is a mighty warrior, but not age
Nor bulk can measure strength; the exultant spirit
Pressing towards glory gives the arm a force
Mightier than physical. He's down.

Ichalgurh falls wounded.

RUTTAN

Great Ichalgurh!
Who is this godlike combatant?

BAPPA

Surrender
My princess, Chouhan.

ICHALGURH

Thou hast her who deserv'st
Much more than her.

He rises.

Young hero who in thy first battle o'erbearst
Maturer victors! know Pratap the Chouhan
Unalterably thy friend. When thou shalt ask
My sword, 'tis thine.

BAPPA

Thou'rt wounded?

ICHALGURH (*binding his wound*)

I have been worse
And ridden far to meet the foe. Another day
We'll share one rocky pillow on the hills
And talk of battles.

BAPPA

Pratap, I could but offer
A rude and hillside hospitality.
But when I hold my court in mighty Edur

I will absolve this morning's debt.
Enter Captain.

ICHALGURH
Farewell.

BAPPA
Escort him, friend.
Exeunt Sungram, Ichalgurh, Ruttan and Rajpoots.
How speeds the battle, comrade,
There with the Scythians?

CAPTAIN
It is finished, prince.
They fell in slaughtered heaps.

BAPPA
Prince Toraman?

CAPTAIN
Lay flat and bellowed. We'ld have taken him,
But Prithuraj, mad for the joy of battle,
Leaped on their foremost; while he hewed them down,
Like an untiring woodman, one giant Scythian
Crashing through bush and boulder hurled himself
Out of thy net; with him a loyal handful
Carried this Toraman.
Enter Prithuraj.

PRITHURAJ
Pardon my error,
Bappa.

BAPPA
It was a noble fault, my soldier.
We have done all we hoped. The amorous Scythian
Will not return in haste mid our green hills

To woo a Rajpoot maiden. Let us go.
I wonder when great Edur moves upon us.
I long to hear his war assail our mountains.

Exeunt.

Scene 6

Outside Bappa's cot.
Comol Cumary alone.

COMOL
Have I too dangerously ventured my all
Daring a blast so rude? The Scythian roar
Appals no more the forest, nor the warcry
Of Ichalgurh climbs mightily the hills;
The outlaws' fierce triumphant shout is stilled
Of their young war-god's name. Who has won? who fallen?
Enter Bappa.

COMOL (*coming eagerly to him*)
How went the fight? You're safe! And Ichalgurh?

BAPPA
Give me your hands; I'll tell you.

COMOL
I see your head's
Not in the basket.
He takes her hands and draws her towards him.
Cateran, I forbade you
To touch me till the seventh day.

BAPPA
I touch
What is my own. To bid or to forbid
Is mine upon this hillside where I'm sovereign.
Sit down by me.

COMOL

I will not be commanded.

She sits down at his feet.

BAPPA

Oh, you are right, love. At my feet's more fitting
Who am your master and monarch. Come, no rising.
Stay there, where I can watch your antelope eyes
Look up at me bright with all love's own sunshine.

COMOL

Oh, you provoke me. You've not met the Chouhan,
Or you'ld have been much chastened.

BAPPA

I have met him.

COMOL

Great Ichalgurh?

BAPPA

We soon o'ercame the Scythians.
Your lover, Comol, the great Toraman,
Was borne, a mass of terror-stricken flesh,
By faithful fugitives headlong down the hillside.

COMOL

You need not triumph. These were only Scythians.
But what of Ichalgurh?

BAPPA

We fought. I conquered.

COMOL

Thou? thou? It is impossible.

BAPPA

But done.

COMOL

Why, you're a boy, a child! O my bright lion,
You are a splendid and a royal beast,
But very youthful. This was the maned monarch
Whose roar shook all the forest when he leaped
Upon his opposite. Then the great tusker
Went down beneath his huge and tawny front
As if it were an antelope. Him you've conquered?

BAPPA

He fell and yielded.

COMOL

You have learned romance
From the wild hill-tops and the stars at night
And take your visions for the fact.

BAPPA

Arch-infidel!
Ask Sungram.

COMOL

Then I understand. You won
As in your duel with me, quite unfairly.
You used your sleight of hand?

BAPPA

Perhaps, my princess,
His foot slipped and he fell; 'twas my good fortune,
Not I that conquered him.

COMOL

Indeed it was
Your high resistless fortune. O my king,

My hero, thou hast o'erborne great Ichalgurh;
Then who can stand against thee? Thou shalt conquer
More than my heart.
(*Bappa takes her into his arms*)
What dost thou, Bheel? Forbear!
I did but jest.

BAPPA
Do you recall your letter,
Comol? I have outdone the Chouhan, girl.

COMOL
Bheel, I wrote nothing, nothing.

BAPPA
I'll keep you now
For my sweet slavegirl, princess? You will not
Deny me?

COMOL
'Twas not my hand. Your Coomood forged it.
I'll not admit it.

BAPPA
Rebel against your heart!
You're trapped in your own springe. My antelope!
(*kisses her*)
I've brought you to my lair; shall I not prey on you?
Kiss me.

COMOL
I will not.
(*kisses him*)
O not now! O give me
The memory of this May to keep with me
Till death and afterwards, a dream of greenness
With visions of the white and vermeil spring,

A prelude set to winds and waterfalls
Among the mountains of immortal Dongurh
Far from the earth, in a delightful freedom
Treading the hill-tops, all the joy of life
In front of me to dream of its perfection,
Bappa.

BAPPA
When you entreat, who shall refuse you,
O lips of honey?

COMOL
Till the seventh morning,
Bappa.

BAPPA
Only till then.

COMOL
That is a promise.
(*escaping from him*)
Which, having won, I do deny, unsay,
Wholly recant and absolutely abjure
Whatever flattery I have said or done
To win it. You are still my Bheel and brigand,
My lawless cateran; I great Edur's princess.
I love you! Do not dream of it. Six days!
By then my father'll smoke you from your lair,
And take me from your dreadful claws, my lion,
An antelope undevoured.

BAPPA
Have you yet thought
Of the dire punishments you'll taste for this,
Deceiver?

COMOL
Not till the seventh morning, lion.

Exit.

BAPPA
Till then, my antelope, range my hills and make them
An Eden for me with thy wondrous beauty
Moving in grace and freedom of the winds,
Sweetness of the green woodlands; for of these
Thou seemst a part and they thy natural country.

Exit.

Act III

The forest near Dongurh.

Scene 1

Comol, Coomood, meeting in the forest.

COOMOOD
Where were you hidden, Comol, all this morning?

COMOL
I have been wandering in my woods alone
Imagining myself their mountain queen.
O Coomood, all the woodland worshipped me!
Coomood, the flowers held up their incense-bowls
In adoration and the soft-voiced winds
Footing with a light ease among the leaves
Paused to lean down and lisp into my ear,
Oh, pure delight. The forest's unnamed birds
Hymned their sweet sovran lady as she walked
Lavishing melody. The furry squirrels
Peeped from the leaves and waved their bushy tails,
Twittering, "There goes she, our beloved lady,
Comol Cumary"; and the peacocks came
Proud to be seen by me and danced in front,
Shrilling, "How gorgeous are we in our beauty,
Yet not so beautiful as is our lady,
Comol Cumary." I will be worshipped, Coomood.

COOMOOD
You shall be. There's no goddess of them all

That has these vernal looks and such a body
Remembering the glory whence it came
Or apt to tread with the light vagrant breeze
Or rest with moonlight.

Comol

That was what they told me,
The voices of the forest, sister Coomood, —
The myriad voices.

Coomood

What did they tell you, Comol?

Comol

They told me that my hair was a soft dimness
With thoughts of light imprisoned in't; the gods,
They said, looked down from heaven and saw my eyes
Wishing that that were heaven. They told me, child,
My face was such as Brahma once had dreamed of
But could not, — no, for all the master-skill
That made the worlds, — recapture in the flesh
So rare a sweetness. They called my perfect body
A feast of gracious beauty, a refrain
And harmony in womanhood embodied.
They told me all these things, — Coomood, they did,
Though you will not believe it. I understood
Their leafy language.

Coomood

Come, you did not need
So to translate the murmurings of the leaves
And the wind's whisper. 'Twas a human voice
I'll swear, so deftly flattered you.

Comol

Fie, Coomood,
It was the trees, the waters; the pure, soft flowers

Took voices.

COOMOOD
One voice. Did he roar softly, sweetheart,
To woo you?

COMOL
Oh, he's a recreant to his duty.
He loves the wild-deer fleeing on the hills
And the strong foeman's glittering blade, not Comol.
You must not talk of him, but of the hills
And greenness and of me.

COOMOOD
And Edur, Comol?

COMOL
Edur! It is a name that I have heard
In some dim past, in some old far-off world
I moved in, oh, a waste of centuries
And many dreams ago. I'll not return there.
It had no trees, I'm sure, no jasmine-bushes,
No happy breezes dancing with linked hands
Over the hill-tops, no proud-seated hills
Softening the azure, high-coped deep-plunging rocks
Or flowery greenness round, no birds, no Spring.

COOMOOD
We are the distance of a world from Edur.
Tomorrow is the May-feast's crowning day,
Comol.

COMOL
Oh then we shall be happy breezes
And dance with linkèd hands upon the hills
All the Spring-morning.

COOMOOD

It is a May to be
Remembered.

COMOL

It is the May-feast of my life,
Coomood, the May-feast of my life, the May
That in my heart shall last for ever, sweet,
For ever and for ever. Where are our sisters?

COOMOOD

Nirmol is carrying water from the spring;
Ishany hunts the browsing stag today,
A sylvan archeress.

COMOL

What have you in the basket?

COOMOOD

Flowers I have robbed the greenest woodland of
For Bappa's worship. They must hide with bloom
Sheva Ekling today. Tomorrow, sweet,
I'll gather blossoms for your hair instead
And weave you silver-petalled anklets, earrings
Of bright maybloom, zones of Spring honeysuckle,
And hide your arms in vernal gold. We'll set you
Under a bough, our goddess of the Spring,
And sylvanly adore, covering your feet
With flowers that almost match their moonbeam whiteness
Or palely imitate their rose; — our Lady,
Comol Cumary.

COMOL

Will Bappa worship me?
But I am an inferior goddess, Coomood,
And dare not ask the King of Paradise
To adore me.

COOMOOD
You must adore him, that's your part.

COMOL
I will, while 'tis the May.

COOMOOD
And afterwards?

COMOL
Coomood, we will not think of afterwards
In Dongurh, in the springtide.

COOMOOD
Tomorrow dawns
The seventh morning, Comol.

COMOL
I did not hear you.
Are these our hunters?
Enter Prithuraj and Ishany.

ISHANY
I have a better aim
Than yours.

PRITHURAJ
Did I deny it? Oh, you shoot
Right through the heart.

ISHANY
I'll never marry one
Whom I outdo at war or archery.
You tell me you are famous Martund's son,
The mighty Gehlote. Wherefore lurk you then
In unapproachable and tangled woods
Warding off glory with your distant shafts,

While life sweeps past in the loud vale below?
Not breast the torrent, not outbrave its shocks
To carve your names upon the rocks of Time
Indelibly?

PRITHURAJ

We will affront, Ishany,
The Ganges yet with a victorious gleam
Of armour. But our fates are infant still
And in their native thickets they must wait
To flesh themselves and feel their lion strengths
Before they roar abroad.

ISHANY

Until they do,
Talk not of love.

PRITHURAJ

What would you have me do?
O'erbear in arms the Scythian Toraman,
And slay the giant Hooshka? meet Ichalgurh
And come unharmed, or with my single sword
Say halt to a proud score of the best lances
You have in Edur? This and more I can
For thee, Ishany.

ISHANY

You talk, but do it first.
Doers were never talkers, Prithuraj.

PRITHURAJ

Oh, that's a narrow maxim. Noble speech
Is a high prelude fit for noble deeds;
It is the lion's roar before he leaps.
Proud eloquence graces the puissant arm
And from the hall of council to the field
Was with the great and iron men of old

Their natural stepping.

ISHANY
You only roar as yet.
I beat you with the bow today; sometime
I'll fight you with the sword and beat you.

PRITHURAJ
Will you?
Just as your lady did?

ISHANY
She played, she played,
But I would aim in earnest at your heart.
One day we'll fight and see.

PRITHURAJ
Why, if we do,
I'll claim a conqueror's right on your sweet body,
Ishany.

ISHANY
And my heart? You must do more,
If you'll have that.

PRITHURAJ
It cannot now be long
Before the mailèd heel of Edur rings
Upon our hillside rocks. Then I'll deserve it.

ISHANY
Till then you are my fellow-hunter only,
Not yet my captain.

Enter Nirmol.

NIRMOL
Idlers and ne'er-do-weels, home! Here have I carried twelve full jars from the spring, set wood on the stove, kindled the fire,

while you play gracefully the sylvan gadabouts. Where is the venison?

PRITHURAJ
Travelling to the cooking-pot on a Bheel's black shoulders.

NIRMOL
To your service, Ishany! or you shall not taste the stag you have hunted.

ISHANY
Child, do not tyrannize. I am as hungry with this hunting as a beef-swallowing Scythian.

Exit.

NIRMOL
Off with you, hero, and help her with your heroic shoulders.

Exit Prithuraj.

COMOL
A pair of warlike lovers!

NIRMOL
You are there, sister-truants? Have you no occupation but to lurk in leaves and eavesdrop upon the prattle of lovers?

COMOL
Why, Nirmol, I did my service before I came.

NIRMOL
Yes, I know! To sweep one room — oh, scrupulously clean, for is it not Bappa's? and to scrub his armour for a long hour till it is as bright as your eyes grow when they are looking at Bappa, — do they not, Coomood?

COOMOOD
They do, like stars allowed to gaze at God.

NIRMOL
Exact! I have seen her —

COMOL
Nirmol, I do not know how many twigs there are in the forest, but I will break them all on your back, if you persevere.

NIRMOL
Do you think you are princess of Edur here that you threaten me? No, we are in the democracy of Spring where all sweet flowers are equals. Oh, I will be revenged on you for your tyrannies in Edur. I have seen her, Coomood, when she thought none was looking, lay her cheek wistfully against the hilt of his sword, trying to think that the cold hard iron was the warm lips of its master and hers. I have seen her kiss it furtively —

COMOL (*embracing and stopping her mouth*)
Hush, hush, you wicked romancer.

NIRMOL
Go then and cook our meal like a good princess and I will promise not to repeat all the things I have heard you murmur to yourself when you were alone.

COMOL
Nirmol, you grow in wickedness with years.
Wait till I have you back in Edur, maiden;
I'll scourge this imp of mischief out of you.

NIRMOL
I have heard her, Coomood, —

COMOL
I am off, I am away! I am an arrow from Kodal's bow.

Exit.

NIRMOL
She is hard to drive, but I have the whiphand of her.

COOMOOD
Have you the crimson sandal-powder ready?
Flowers for the garlands Spring in sweet abundance
Provides us.

NIRMOL
Yes. She shall be wedded fast
Before she knows it.

COOMOOD
Unless my father's sword
Striking us through the flowery walls we hide in,
Prevent it, Nirmol.

NIRMOL
Coomood, our fragile flowers will weave
A bond that steel cannot divide, nor death
Dissever.

Exeunt.

The Prince of Mathura

AJAMEDE, Prince of Mathura, a fugitive in the mountains.
INDRADYUMNA, his friend and comrade.
ATRY, King of Mathura, by the help of the Scythians.
TORAMAN, Prince of Cashmere, son of the Scythian overlord of the North-West.
CANACA, a Brahmin, his court jester.
HOOSHKA, captain of the Scythian bodyguard.
MAYOOR, Atry's general and minister.

INDRANY, Queen of Mathura.
URMILA, Princess of Mathura, daughter of Atry and Indrany.
LILA, daughter of Hooshka.

Act I

Scene 1

Mathura. A room in the Palace.
Atry, Indrany.

ATRY
However hard it be, however gross
The undisguised compulsion, none can stay
Compulsion by impracticable revolt,
Indrany. Deeper, viler the disgrace
If by rebellion we invite constraint
Naked, contemptuous, to a slave subdued.
The reed that bows to the insistent wind
Is wiser than the trunk which the cyclone
Indignantly uproots. To force we yield,
But to a force disguised in courtly forms.
That's better than to yield beneath the scourge.

INDRANY
There's a defeat more noble, not to yield,
Even though we break. And break, I know, we must,
But to live fouled for ever, vilely robed
In a soiled purple, marked out to all the world
For laughter by the puppet's tinsel crown,
That is disgrace indeed.

ATRY
We hold this realm
Because the northern Scythian helps our sword.

INDRANY
By princely compromise, alliance high,
Not yet by purchase or a social stain.

ATRY
Our child will be an empress.

INDRANY
And outcaste.

ATRY
There have been many nuptials mixed like these,
Of which world-famous emperors were born.

INDRANY
Yes, but we took, not gave, were lords, not slaves.
As ransom of his fate the conquered Greek
To Indian Chandragupta gave his child,
Knowing a son by her could never rule.

ATRY
There is no bar. The Scythian weds with all
And makes impartial Time the arbiter
Whether a native or a foreign womb
Shall be the shelterer of his empire's heir.

INDRANY
This honour's purchased at too vile a cost.

ATRY
There is no help. If we deny our girl,
He'll have her violently, make her his slave
And not his wife.

INDRANY
Do this then, seem to yield,
But send her to your fortress on the hills,

Whence let one take her with a show of force,
Whoever's noblest now of Aryan lords
In Magadha, Avanty or the South,
Fit mate for Atry's stock. Twixt him be strife
And the Cashmerian, we escape his wrath.

ATRY
It shall be so. I'll choose a trusty man
Who shall to Magadha before the morn.
Meanwhile prepare your daughter for the hills.
Indrany goes out joyfully.
It is not good. The man will learn the trick,
A fierce barbarian, rapid as the storm,
Violent, vindictive, stamping on the world
Like a swift warhorse, neighing to the winds
With nostrils wide for any scent of war,
For men to kill, lands to lay desolate,
Haughty and keen amid his violence
With the king's eye that reads the minds of men, —
Such is the man she counsels me to tempt
By palpable evasion. I will send
Urmila to my fortress on the hills.
But he, not Magadha, shall take her forth
By secret nuptials. He is honourable
Though violent, a statesman though too proud.
The prejudices of our race and day
Must yield to more commanding thoughts and views
That suit the changing times. Custom is mutable,
Only the breach of it is dangerous
If too impetuously we innovate. It's best
To circumvent opinion, not provoke.
Who's there? Call Mayoor!
The King's first task is to preserve his realm,
Means honourable or dishonourable
Are only means to use impartially,
The most effective first.
Mayoor enters.

Mayoor, you know
The motion made by the Cashmerian's son
To wed my daughter.

MAYOOR

We have spoken of it
Already.

ATRY

You are still of the same mind?
You think my subjects will revolt?

MAYOOR

It's sure.

ATRY

The Scythian sword can keep them hushed and still.

MAYOOR

And you its slave and pensioner, impotent.

ATRY

Then do it thus. The thing is secret still.
Let it remain so. Let Prince Toraman
Wed Urmila in secret in the hills
As if herself had yielded to his suit,
Not my consent. Against whom then, Mayoor,
Shall Mathura revolt?

MAYOOR

It may be done.
But will the Scythian's pride assent, or if
The bond is secret, will he own the bond?

ATRY

He shall, he must. To break by any means
The bar of pride that lowers him beneath

The lowest of his Aryan tributaries,
He will consent to much. And for the bond
He shall engage his honour, then possess.
Yourself go to him, Mayoor, where he's camped.
Persuade him. Let an escort start at once
With Urmila to Roondhra in the hills.
I trust you, Mayoor, for entire success.
My crown, my honour are upon this cast.

MAYOOR
Your crown is safe with me; your honour, King,
I'll save.

ATRY
Always few words were yours, Mayoor,
But each one solid gold.

He goes out.

MAYOOR
To cheat you's best
Of the dishonour to which you aspire
And for the crown, it's safer in my hands
Than Toraman's, the Scythian giant, bold,
Subtle and violent, who spreads his toils
Over all India, helping force with guile
And guile with force.

Enter Mekhala.

MEKHALA
He is alone. Hear you,
Mayoor!

MAYOOR
It's from the queen?

MEKHALA
Read it and see.

MAYOOR
Tell her my word is pledged and Urmila
Saved from the Scythian wedlock.

MEKHALA
And that means
You'll do it?

MAYOOR
She shall not wed Toraman.
Mekhala goes out.
This is another coil. The King, it seems,
Deceives his people and deceives his queen.
She trusts him not, nor they. A lying King
Tortuous and serpentine in policy,
Loses as much by the distrust he breeds
As all his shufflings gain. I'll write to Magadha
In other terms than Queen Indrany dreams.
I will send out my messengers at once.
One first to Ajamede, the lion dispossessed,
Where in the hills of Roondhra now he lairs.
Another to the mighty Magadhan
Who gathers up his strength to free the land
From the barbarian's tread. Myself shall go
To Toraman and meet the Scythian will.
The end shall be as God long since decreed.

The Birth of Sin

A Drama

LUCIFER, the Angel of Power.
SIRIOTH, the Angel of Love.
GABRIEL, the Angel of Obedience.
MICHAEL, the Angel of War.
RAPHAEL, the Angel of Sweetness.
THE ELOHIM.
BELIAL, the Angel of Reason.
BAAL, the Angel of Worldly Wisdom.
MOLOCH, the Angel of Wrath.
SUN.
ASHTAR, the Angel of Beauty.
MEROTH, the Angel of Youth.

Prologue

Act I

LUCIFER
Master of light and glory, lift thy rays
Over the troubled flood; lift up thy rays.
Obey me.

SUN
Lucifer! who gave thee power
Over the gods that rule the ancient world?
Or why should I obey thee? Art thou God?
Hast thou dethroned the Omnipotent from Heaven
And cast Him down into His nether glooms,
Revolting? Gave He then His supreme command,
Speak as a servant then and minister,
Not with the accent that controls the stars.

LUCIFER
Who then compelled thee from thy bright repose,
Or wherefore hast thou come?

SUN
By Him compelled,
Before whose mandate tremble all the Gods.

LUCIFER
By His or mine? That I will see. Rise, Sun,
And from thy luminous majestic orb
Cast out into the azure hold of Space
Creative Energy and pregnant Fire

Whirling around thee while the years endure.

SUN
Lucifer, Son of Morning, First in Heaven,
What madness seizes thee? What awful force
Darkly magnificent, brilliantly ominous
Looks out from eyes that own no more the calm?

LUCIFER
Obey!

SUN
I cannot choose. Power leaps from thee
Upon me. I am seized with fiery pangs.
Spare me, thou dreadful Angel. I obey.
Exit.

LUCIFER
Power, power to make and to unmake the world!
Power grows in me. I am omnipotent.
Children of immortality whose ranks
And brilliant armies people the infinite,
Creatures of wonder, creatures of desire,
O suns that wheel in everlasting fire,
O stars that sow the ethereal spaces thick,
O worlds of various life! I am your King.
This I have learnt that God and I are one.
If one, then equal! Rightly too I deemed
That God develops, God increases. I,
Younger than He am greater than the Power
From which I sprang; the new excels the old.

BELIAL
What dost thou, Lucifer, Angel of God?
The infinite spaces murmur like a sea,
The ethereal realms are rocked as with a wind,
All Nature stands amazed. Whence this revolt?

Who gave thee force to overturn the world?

LUCIFER
Watch, Belial, watch with me. A crisis comes
In the infinite, mobile and progressive world.
For God shall cease and Lucifer be God.

BELIAL
Thou speakst a thing that madness only speaks.
If God be God, how can He change or cease?

LUCIFER
Watch, Belial! I will prove to thee the truth,
Thou reasonable Angel.

Fragment of a Play

Act I

Mathura.

Scene 1

A street in Mathura. Ahuca's house.
Sudaman, Ocroor.

SUDAMAN
What art thou?

OCROOR
One that walks the Night.

SUDAMAN
No Ogre!
Thou art Ocroor by thy voice.

OCROOR
Whatever name
The Lord has given his creature. Thou shouldst be
Sudaman.

SUDAMAN
If I am?

OCROOR
Walk not alone
When the black-bellied Night has swallowed earth
Lest all thou hast done to others should return
Upon thee with a sword in the dumb Night

And no man know it.

SUDAMAN
Care not; I am shielded.

OCROOR
Not by the gods!

SUDAMAN
No, by a greater god
Than any that have seats near Vishnu's throne.

OCROOR
What god whom even Sudaman worships?

SUDAMAN
Terror
Whose shoe I have enshrined in Mathura
And all men kiss it and their tongues declare
'Tis justice and mild rule while their hearts hate
And quiver.

OCROOR
Thou art the Ogre. Has the blood
Of many nobles not contented thee?
Dost thou not feel enough thy furious greatness yet,
Sudaman?

SUDAMAN
Ocroor, I have a belly to digest
Much more than Mathura.

OCROOR
So Ravan had
Who perished.

SUDAMAN

What dost thou in this black night
Whose shadows help the lover and the thief,
Two kindred traders? Which of these art thou?

OCROOR

Both, may be.

SUDAMAN

If thou be, then let thy theft
Attain some Yadav's house, that I may laugh
At his dishonour.

OCROOR

Thou hatest much, it seems,
Thy father's nation!

SUDAMAN

Whom I have imprisoned
That I may mock him daily, else were he dead
And with the gods he worships.

OCROOR

Thou shalt end
Evilly yet.

SUDAMAN

If it is so, 'tis so
Because the round of being leads to that,
And not because of gods or virtue.

Stories

Occult Idylls

The Phantom Hour

STURGE Maynard rose from the fireside and looked out on the blackish yellow blinding fog that swathed London in the dense folds of its amplitude. In his hand he carried the old book he was reading, his finger was still in the page, his mind directed, not with entire satisfaction, to the tenour of the writer's imaginations. For, if these pleased his sense of the curious, they disgusted his reason. A mystic, mediaeval in epoch and temperament, the old Latinist dealt with psychological fancies the modern world has long discarded in order to bustle to the polling booth and the counting house. Numerous subtleties occurred repulsive to the rigid and definite solutions of an age which, masterful with knowledge in the positive and external, tries to extend its autocracy in the shape of a confident ignorance over the bounds of the occulter world within, occult — declared the author, — only because we reject a key that is in everyone's hand, himself.

"Prosaist of mysteries," thought Sturge, "trafficker in devious imaginations, if one could find only the thinnest fact to support the cumbrous web that is here woven! But the fog is less thick than the uncertainty in which these thoughts were content to move."

In a passage of unusual but bizarre interest the German mystic maintained that the principle of brilliancy attended with a ceaseless activity the motions of thought, which, in their physical aspect, are flashes of a pure, a lurid or a murky light. It was, he said, a common experience with seers in intense moments of rapid cerebration to see their heads, often their whole surroundings besieged by a brilliant atmosphere coruscating with violet lightnings. Even while he wondered at these extravagances, it flashed across Sturge's memory that he himself in his childhood had been in the habit of seeing precisely such violet coruscations about his head and had indulged his childish fancy with them until maturer years brought wonder, distrust and the rapid waning of the phenomenon.

Was there then some justification of experience for the fancies of the German? With an impulse he tried vainly to resist, he fixed his eye piercingly on the fog outside the window and waited. At the moment he was aware of a curious motion in his head, a crowding of himself and all his faculties to the eye; then came the sight of violet flashes in the fog and a growing excitement in his nerves watched by a brain that was curiously, abnormally calm. A whole world of miraculous vision, of marvellous sound, of ancient and future experience was surely pressing upon him, surging against some barrier that opposed intercourse. Astonished and interested, but not otherwise disturbed, his reason attempted to give itself some account of what was happening. The better to help the effort, he fixed his eye again on the fog for repetition or disproof of what he had seen. There were no further violet flashes, but something surely was hinting, forming, manifesting in the grey swathe outside. It became bright, it became round, it became distinct. Was it a face or a globe? With a disappointed revulsion of feeling he saw himself face to face with nothing more romantic than a clock. He smiled and turned to compare with that strong visualised image his own substantial, unmystic, workday companion on the mantelpiece. His body grew tense with a shock of surprise. There indeed was the clock, his ebony-faced, gold-lettered recorder of hours, balanced lightly on a conventional Father Time in the centre and two winged goddesses at the side; the hands, he noted, were closing upon the twelve and the five, and there would soon ring out the sound of the hour. But, by its side, what was this phantasmal and unwonted companion, fixed, distinct, aping reality, ebony-faced also, but silver-lettered, solidly pedestalled, not lightly balanced, pointing to the hour eight with the same closeness as the real clock pointed to the hour five? He had time to notice that the four of this timepiece was not lettered in the ordinary Roman numerals, but with the four vertical and parallel strokes; then the apparition disappeared.

An optical hallucination! Probably, the mental image intensely visualised, of some familiar timepiece in a friendly sitting-room. Indeed, was it not more than familiar? Surely he knew it, — had seen it, daily, insistently, — that ebony face, that silver lettering, that strong ornamented pedestal, even that figure four! But where was it, when was it? Some curious bar in his memory baffled the mind wandering vainly for the lost details.

Suddenly the clock, his own clock, struck five. He counted mechanically the familiar sounds, sharp, clear, attended with a metallic reverberation. And then, before the ear could withdraw itself from its object, another clock began, not sharp, not clear, not metallic but with a soft, harmonious chime and a musical jangling at the end. And the number of the strokes was eight!

Sturge sat down at the table and opened his book at random. If this were a hallucination, it was a carefully arranged and well-executed hallucination. Was someone playing hypnotic tricks with his brain? Was he hypnotising himself? His eye fell on the page and met not mediaeval Latin, but ancient Greek, though unHomeric hexameters. Very clear was the lettering, very plain the significance.

"For the gods immortal wander always over the earth and come unguessed to the dwellings of mortals; but rare is the eye that can look on them and rarer the mind that can distinguish the disguise from the deity."[1]

Hypnotism again! for he knew that the original lucubrations of the old mystic, subtle in substance, but in expression rough, tedious, amorphous, persisted from the beginning to the end in their crabbed Latin and deviated nowhere into Greek, flowered nowhere into poetry. There was yet more of the hexameters, he noticed, and he read on.

"And men too live disguised in the sunlight and never from their birth to their death shalt thou see the mask uplifted. Nay, thou thyself, O Pelops, hast thou seen even once the daemon within thee?”[2]

---

[1] αἰεὶ γὰρ θεοὶ ἀθάνατοι περὶ γαῖαν ἀλῶνται
θνητῶν δ’ ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ δώματα προσβαίνουσι
κρυπτοὶ τοὺς δὲ τίς αὖ προσδέρκεται ὄμμασι κρυπτούς;
εἶτα τί δαιμόνιον τί κενὸν καὶ σχῆμα τίς οἶδε;

There the hexameters ceased and the next moment the physical page reappeared with its native lettering. But sweet, harmonious, clear in his hearing jangled once more the chimes of the phantom hour. And again the number of strokes was eight.

Sturge Maynard rose and waited for some more definite sign. For he divined now that some extraordinary mental state, some unforgettable experience was upon him. His expectation was not deceived. Once more the chimes rang out, but this time it seemed to him as if a woman’s voice were crying to him passionately under cover of that perfectly familiar melody. But were the two phantasmal sounds memories of this English land and birth or was it out of some past existence they challenged him, insisting and appealing, inviting him to remember some poignant hour of a form he had worn and discarded, a name he had answered to and forgotten? Whatever it was, it was near to him, it touched potently his heart-strings. And then immediately following the eighth stroke there came, as if far off, an unmistakable explosion of sound, the report of a modern revolver.

Sturge Maynard left the fireplace and the room, descended the stairs, put on his hat and overcoat, and moved towards the door of his house. He had no clear idea where he would go or what he must do, but whatever it might be, it had to be done. Then it occurred to him that he had forgotten his revolver which was lying in the drawer of his wardrobe. He went up, possessed himself of the weapon, loaded it, put it in his right-hand side pocket, assured himself that the pocket carried his two latchkeys, once more descended the stairs and walked out into one of the densest of London fogs, damp, choking and impenetrable.

He moved through a world that seemed to have no existence

[2] κρυπτοὶ καὶ βροτοὶ ἄνδρες ἐν αὐγαῖς ἡλίου εἰσίν
οὐδὲ τὰ τέγματ’ ἀπωθοῦσιν κρυπτοὶ δὲ θανοῦνται.
καὶ σύ, Πέλοψ, πότε τὸν σὸν ἔτ’ ἔνδον δαίμον’ ἐπεῖδες;

except in memory. There was no speed of traffic. Only an occasional cartman hoarsely announced from time to time the cautious progress of his vehicle. Sturge could not see anything before or around him, — except when he neared the curb and a lamppost strove to loom out on him shadowily or on the other side a spectral fragment of wall brushed his coatsleeve. But he was certain of the pavement under his feet, and he felt he could make no false turn. A surer guide than his senses and memory led him.

He crossed the road, entered the gates of Hyde Park, traversed in a sure and straight line of advance the fogbound invisible open, passed through the Marble Arch, and in Oxford Street, for the first time, hesitated. There were two women who were dear to him, either of whom by her death could desolate half his existence. To whom should he go? Then his mind, or something within it, decided for him. These speculations were otiose. He need not go to his sister Imogen. What possible evil could happen to her in her uncle's well-appointed, well-guarded comfortable home, in the happy round of her life full of things innocently careless and harmlessly beautiful. But Renée! Renée was different.

He pursued his walk in a familiar direction. As he went, it flashed across his memory that she had forbidden him to visit her today. There was some living reminiscence of her past life coming to her, someone she did not care for Sturge to meet, she had said with her usual frank carelessness; he must not come. He had not questioned. Since he first knew her, he had never questioned, and the past of Renée Beauregard was a void even for the man to whom she had surrendered everything. There was room in that void for unusual incidents, supreme perils. He remembered now that her parting clasp had been almost convulsive in its strength and intensity, her speech vibrant with some unexplained emotion. He had been aware of it without observing it, being preoccupied with his passion. Whatever part of his mind had noted it, had confined its possible cause within the limits of the usual, as men are in the habit of doing, ignoring the unusual until it seizes and surprises them.

He reached the square and the house in which she lived, opened the door with one of the latchkeys in his pocket, divested himself of his coat and hat, and directed his steps to the drawingroom. A girl of nineteen or twenty rose, calm and pale, fronting the open doorway. The clutch of her hand on the chair, the rigid forward impulse in her frame were the index of a great emotion and an intense expectation. But her face flushed, the hand and figure relaxed, when she saw her visitor. Renée Beauregard was a Frenchwoman of the South, rich in physical endowment, in nervous vitality, in the élan of her tongue and her spirit. Her exquisite full limbs, her buoyant gait, the mobility of her crimson lips, her smiling dark eyes made great demands on life, on success, on pleasure, on love. But in the invincibly happy flame of the eyes there was at the moment the shadow of a tragic disappointment haunting and disfiguring their natural expression. This was plainly a woman with a past, — and a present. And her nature, if not her fate, demanded a future.

"Sturge!" She took a step towards the door. Sturge walked over to the fireplace and took her hand.

"I forgot your prohibition till I was too near to turn back. And there was the fog; and return was cheerless and you were here!"

"You should not have forgotten!" she said, but she smiled, well-pleased at his coming. Then the dark look reusurped those smiling eyes. "And you must go back. No, not now. In a quarter of an hour. You may stop for quarter of an hour."

She had glanced at the clock, and his eyes followed hers. He saw an ebony-faced timepiece, silver-lettered, solidly-pedestalled, rendering the figure four in parallel strokes, and smiled at the curious tricks that his memory had played him. It was five minutes past six.

"I will go to Imogen's," he said, very deliberately. She looked at him, looked at the clock, then cried impulsively, leaning towards him: "And you will come at eight and dine with me! Rachel shall lay the covers for two," then drew back, as if repenting her invitation.

Eight! Yes, he would dine with her — after he had done his work. That seemed to be the arrangement, — not hers, but whose? The daemon's perhaps, the god's, within or without. They sat talking for a while, and it seemed to him that never had their talk been so commonplace in form or so vibrant with emotion. At twenty past six he rose, took his farewell and moved out to the fog; but she followed him to the door, helped him on with his overcoat, trembling visibly as she did so. And before he went, she embraced and kissed him once, not vehemently, but with a strong quietude and as if some fateful resolution had at that moment been formed in her heart, and expressed itself in her caress.

"I shall be back by eight," he said quietly. He had accepted, but not returned her embrace.

By eight! Yes, and before. But he did not tell her that. He swung through the fog to his uncle's residence, with a light, clear and careless mind, but an intense quiet in his heart. He reached the place, in a very aristocratic neighbourhood, and was invited in by a portly footman. Sir John was out, at the House, but Miss Imogen Maynard was at home. The next hour Sturge passed calmly and lightly enough; for in his sister's everyday attractive personal talk coursing lightly over the surface of life, amusements and theatres, books, music, paintings varied with politics and a shade of politely hinted scandal, even his heart insensibly lost its tension and he slipped back into the usual, forgetting the within in the without.

The next hour and more. It was Imogen Maynard who rose and said:

"Ten minutes to eight, Sturge. I must go and dress. You are sure you won't dine?"

Sturge Maynard looked at the clock and his heart stood still. He bid his sister a hasty adieu, ran down the stairs, clutched his hat and coat and was out in the fog, donning his overcoat as he walked. He made sure of the revolver and the latchkeys, then broke into a run. His great dread was that he might lose the turning in his haste and arrive after the stroke of the hour. But it was difficult to miss it, the only open space for half a mile! And the daemon? was he a spirit of prophecy only? Did he not visit to save?

He turned into Renée's square and, as he strode to the house and ascended the steps, the agitation passed from him and it was with an even pulse and a steady nerve that he turned to the drawingroom door. He had flung aside his hat but not waited to divest himself of the coat. His hand was in the pocket and the butt of the revolver was in his hand.

The door was open and, unusual circumstance, veiled by the Japanese screen. He stood at its edge and looked into the room which was intensely still, but not untenanted — for on the rug before the fireplace, at either end of it, stood Renée Beauregard and a man unknown to Sturge. He looking at her as if waiting for her speech; she calm, pale, resolute in silence, with the heavy burden of her past in her eyes. The stranger's back was half turned to Sturge and only part of his profile was visible, but the Englishman quivered with his hatred even as he looked at him. Was this what he had to do? He took out the revolver and put his finger on the trigger. Then he glanced at the clock, — it wanted four minutes to the hour; and at the stranger again, — in his hand, too, was a revolver and his finger also rested on the trigger. Sturge Maynard smiled.

Then the man's voice was heard. "It has to be then, Idalie!" he said, in a thin, terrible, mournful plaint, "You have decided it. Don't bear any grudge. You know it can't be helped. You have to die."

Sturge remembered that Idalie was Renée's second name, but she had always forbidden him to use it. The thin voice continued, this time with a note of curious excitement in its plaintiveness.

"And you throw it all on me! What does it matter how I got you, what I did afterwards? Everything's allowed to a lover. And I loved you. It's dangerous to play with love, Idalie. You find it now!"

Sturge looked at the man. Danger for her there was none, but great danger for this rigid, thin-voiced assassin, this man whom Sturge Maynard hated with every muscle in his body, with every cell of his brain. It seemed to him that each limb of him greatened and vibrated with the energy of the homicide, with the victorious impulse to slay. There was a fog outside, what a fog! and he could easily dispose of the body. Really that was a good arrangement. God did things very cleverly sometimes. And he laughed in himself at the grimness of his conceit. Yet somehow he believed it. God's work, not his. And yet his, too, preordained — since when? But the doomed voice was going on.

"I give you still a chance, Idalie — always, always a chance. Will you go with me? You've been false to me, false with your body, false with your heart. But I'll forgive. I forgave your desertion, I'll forgive this too. Come with me, Idalie. And if not, — Renée Idalie, it is going to strike eight, and when the hour has done striking, I strike. It's God shoots you with this hand of mine, — the God of Justice, the God of Love. It's both you have offended. Will you come?"

She shook her head. A deadly pallor swept over the man. "It's done then," he cried, "you've done it. You have got to die." He trained the pistol on her and his finger closed on the trigger. Sturge remained motionless. Nothing could happen before the hour struck. That was the moment destined, and no one could outrun Fate by a second. The man went on:

"Don't say it till the clock strikes! There's time till then. When I shoot you, Rachel will run up and I will shoot her. I left the door open so that she might hear the sound. Who else in England knows that I exist? I shall go out — oh, when you are both dead, not before. There's a fog, there's not a soul about, and I shall walk away very quietly. No one will see, no one will hear. God with his fog has blinded and deafened the world. You see it's He or it would not have been so perfectly arranged for me."

Very grimly Sturge Maynard smiled. Men who hated each other might, it seemed, have very similar minds. Perhaps that was why they clashed. Well, if it was God, He was a tragic artist too and knew the poetical effectiveness of dramatic irony! Everything this man reckoned on or had arranged for his deed and his safety, had been or would be helpful to his own executioner! And then the consciousness came upon him that this had all happened before. But not here, not in these English surroundings! A great blur of green came before his eyes, obscuring the clock. Then it leaped on him — green grass, green trees, green-covered rocks, a green sea and on the sward a man face downward, stabbed in the back, over him his murderer, the stiletto fresh-stained with blood. A boat rocked on the waters; it had been arranged for the assassin's escape, and in it there lay a woman, bound. Sturge knew those strange faces very well and remembered how he had lain dead on that sward. It was strange to see it all again in this drawingroom with the fateful modern ebony-faced timepiece seen through the green of Mediterranean trees! But it was going to end very differently this time.

Then the voice of the woman rang out, cold, strong, like the clang of iron. "I will not go," she said, simply. And the hour struck. It struck once, it struck twice, thrice, four times. And then she lifted her eyes and saw Sturge Maynard walking forward from the side of the screen. He was a good shot and there was no chance of his bungling it and killing her. But he would make sure!

The woman in her intensity had summoned up a marvellous self-control, and it did not break now; she neither moved, nor uttered a sound. But a look came into her eyes poignant in its appeal, terrible in its suggestion. For it was a cry for life, a command to murder.

The doomed man was looking at the clock, not at her, still less at any possible danger behind. He looked up as the eighth musical jangle died away and Sturge saw his light, steady, cruel eyes gleaming like those of a beast. He pressed his finger on the trigger.

"It is finished!" cried the man. And as he spoke, Sturge Maynard fired. The room rang with the shot, filled with the smoke. When the smoke cleared, the stranger was seen prostrate on the rug: his head lay at the feet of the woman he had doomed.

There was a running of steps in the passage and the maid Rachel entered, — as the man who lay there had foreseen. She was trembling when she came, but she saw the man on the rug, paused, steadied herself, and smiled. "We must carry it out at once into the fog," she said simply in French. With a simultaneous impulse both she and Sturge approached the corpse. Then Renée, breaking into excited motion, ran to Sturge and putting her hand on his shoulder made as if to push him out of the room.

"I will see to that!" she panted, "Go!"

He turned to her with a smile.

"You must go at once," she reiterated, "For my sake, do not be found in this house. Others besides Rachel may have heard the shot."

But he took her by the wrists, drew her away from the fireplace and set her in a chair.

"We lose time, Monsieur," said Rachel, again.

"It is better to lose time, Rachel," he said, "we will give ten minutes to Fate." And the serving-woman nodded and proceeding to the corpse began to tie up the wound methodically in her apron. The others waited in absolute stillness, Sturge arranging in his mind the explanation he would give, if any had heard the report and broke in on them. But silence and fog persisted around the house.

They took up the body. "If anyone notices, we are carrying a drunken man home," said Sturge. "Carry it carefully; there must be no trail of blood." And so into the English fog they carried out the man who had come living from foreign lands, and laid him down in the public road, far from the house and the square where he had perished. When they returned to the room, Rachel took up the bloodstained rug and apron, sole witnesses of the thing that had been done.

"I will destroy these," she said, "and bring the rug from Madame's room. And then," she said, as simply as before, "Monsieur and Madame will dine."

Renée shuddered and looked at Sturge.

"I remain here," he said, "till the body is found. We are linked henceforth indissolubly and for ever, Idalie." And as he stressed lightly the unwonted name, there was a look in his eyes she dared not oppose.

That night, when Renée had gone to her room, Sturge, sitting over the fire, remembered that he had not told her the strange incident which had brought about one tragedy today and prevented another. When he went into her chamber, she came to him, deeply agitated, and clasped him with violence.

"Oh, Sturge, Sturge!" she cried, "to think that if you had not chanced to come, I should be dead now, taken from you, taken from God's beautiful world!"

Chanced! There is no such thing in this creation as chance, thought Sturge. But who then had given him that mystic warning? Who had put the revolver in his hand? or sent him on a mission of slaughter? Who had made Imogen rise just in time? Who had fired that shot in the drawingroom? The God within? The God without? The Easterns spoke of God in a man. This might well be He. And then there returned to his memory those fierce emotions, the hatred that had surged in him, the impulse and delight of slaughter, the song of exultation that his blood yet sang in his veins, because a man that had lived, was dead and could not return to life again. He remembered, too, the command in Renée's eyes. God in a man? — was God in a man a murderer then? In him? and in her?

"It is to enquire too curiously to think so," he concluded, "but very strangely indeed has He made His world."

Then he told her about the German mystic and the chime of the phantom hour that had brought him to her in the tragic moment of their destinies. And when he spoke of the daemon within, the woman understood better than the man.

The Door at Abelard

CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE of Streadhew lay just under the hill, a collection of brown solid cottages straggling through the pastures, and on the top of the incline Abelard with its gables and antique windows watched the road wind and drop slowly to the roofs of Orringham two miles away. For many centuries the house and the village had looked with an unchanged face on a changing world, and in their old frames housed new men and manners, while Orringham beyond adapted itself and cast off its mediaeval slough. The masters of Abelard lived with the burden of a past which they could not change.

Stephen Abelard of Abelard, the last male of his line, had lived in the house with the old gables for the past twenty years mixing formally in the society of his equals, discharging the activities incidental to his position with a punctilious conscientiousness, but withdrawn in soul from the life around him. That was since the death of his wife in childbirth followed soon afterwards by the fading of the son to give whom she had died. Two daughters, Isabel and Aloÿse, survived. Stephen Abelard did not marry again; he was content that the old line should be continued through the female side, and when his daughter Isabel married Richard Lancaster, the younger son of a neighbouring country family, he stipulated that the husband should first consent to bear the name of his wife's ancestors. This attachment to the old name was the one thing known in the lord of the old house that belonged to the past. For Stephen Abelard, in spite of his spiritual aloofness, was a man forward in thought, with a keen emancipated intellect which neither present nor past dogma could bind, and gifted with a high courage to act according to the light that he had.

A strange series of accidents had helped to bring the old family near to extinction. For the last hundred years no daughter-in-law of the house had been able to survive by many days the birth of her first male child. Girl-children had been born and no harm had happened but some fatality seemed to attend the birth of a son. Stephen's great-grandfather had male issue, Hugh and Walter, and one daughter, Bertha, who died tragically, murdered in her chamber, no one knew by whom. It was after this incident that the fatality seemed to weigh on the house and popular superstition was not slow to connect the fatality with the deed. Hugh Abelard had already a wife and two sons at the time of the occurrence, but Walter was unmarried. One year after the tragic and mysterious death of his sister he brought a bride home to Abelard and in yet another year a son had been born to him. But only seven days after the birth of her child Mary Abelard was found dead in her room, possibly from some unexplained shock to the heart, for she was strong and in good health when she perished, and Walter, unhinged by the death of his young wife, went into foreign lands where he too died. The tongues of the countryside did not hesitate to whisper that he only paid in his affliction the penalty of an undetected crime. Hugh's sons grew up and married, but the same fatality fell upon the unions they had contracted; they died early and their sons did not live to enjoy the estate they successively inherited. Then Walter Abelard's son came with his wife and daughter and took possession. Stephen was born two years later and within three days of his birth his mother had shared the fate of all women who married into the fated house. So strong was the impression made upon Richard Abelard by this fate or this strong recurrent coincidence that when he married again, he would not allow his wife to enter the home of his ancestors. He bought a house in the neighbouring county and lived there till his death from an accident in the hunting-field. After him Stephen reigned, a man modern-minded, full of energy and courage, who returned, scornful of antiquated superstitions, to the old family house, married and had two daughters, and then — well, coincidence insisted and the male child came and the mother, adored of her husband, passed away. But there was no mystery about this death. She died of collapse after childbirth, her life fought for by skilful doctors, watched over by careful attendants, sleeplessly guarded at night by her husband. A coincidence, nothing more.

Therefore Isabel and Richard Lancaster Abelard came fearlessly to live at the fated house. The daughters of the house had been immune from any fatality, and when she became enceinte, no superstitious fears haunted the mind of any among the numerous friends and relatives who loved her for her charm and her gaiety. About three months before the birth of the child could be expected her sister Aloÿse married, not as the Abelards had hitherto done, into the neighbouring families, but, contrary to all precedent, a young foreign doctor settled at Orringham, a man not only foreign, but of Asiatic blood. Popular as Dr. Armand Sieurcaye was in the neighbourhood, the alliance had come with something of a shock to the countryside; for the Abelards, though less wealthy than many, were the oldest of the county families. But neither Abelard nor his daughter were troubled with these prejudices. The young man had powerfully attracted them both and the marriage was as much the choice of the father as of the daughter.

Armand Sieurcaye came from the south of France, and there was only the glossy blackness of his hair and the richer tint of the olive in his face to suggest a non-European origin. His grandfather, son of the mixed alliance of a Maratha Sirdar with the daughter of a French adventurer in the service of Scindia, had been the first to settle in France purchasing an estate in Provence with the riches amassed and hoarded by battle and plunder on Indian soil. Armand was the younger of two sons and had studied medicine at Nancy and then, driven rather by some adventurous strain in his blood than any necessity, sought his fortune abroad. He went first to Bombay, but did little there beyond some curious investigations which interested his keen, sceptical and inquiring mind, but did not help his purse. At Bombay, he met John Lancaster, Richard's brother, and was induced by him to try his fortune in the English county town aided by whatever local influence his friend, plucked by an almost miraculous cure from the grip of a fatal disease, could afford him in gratitude for the saving of his life. In twelve months Armand Sieurcaye had won for himself universal popularity, a lucrative practice, and Aloÿse Abelard.

The old house, bathed in spring sunshine, had little in it of the ominous or weird to Armand Sieurcaye when with his young wife he entered it for a lengthened stay in the month of Isabel's delivery. He was attracted by its old-world quaintness, by the mass of the green ivy smothering the ancient walls, by the heavenward question of its short pointed towers; but there was nothing there to alarm or to daunt. Isabel had hurried to the study to her father, and Armand guided by Richard Lancaster repaired to the room into which the domestics had already carried his belongings.

"Awfully good of you to leave your practice and come," said Lancaster, "It's a relief to have you. Herries is a fool and I'm not used to the worry."

Armand looked at him with some surprise. He had not expected even so much nervousness in his cheerful, vigorous, commonplace brother-in-law.

"Is there any trouble?" he asked lightly, "Isabel seems strong. There can't be any reason for fear."

"Oh, there isn't. But I tell you, I'm not used to the worry," and, then, starting off from the subject, "How do you like your room?"

Armand had not looked at his room, but he looked at it now. It was a comfortable, well-furnished room with nothing apparently unmodern about it except the old oak panelling of the walls and the unusual narrowness and length of the two windows that looked out on the grounds behind the house. His eyes fell on a door in the wall to his right hand.

"What's there?" he asked. "I thought the room was the last at this end of the house."

"I haven't any idea," was the indifferent answer. "It can't be anything more than a balcony or closet."

The door attracted Armand's attention strangely. Of some slighter wood, not of the oak with which Abelard abounded, it was carved with great plainness and struck him as more modern than the rest of the house. Still it was not precisely a modern door. He walked over to it to satisfy his curiosity, but the attempt to turn the handle brought no result.

"Locked?" questioned Lancaster, a little surprised. He too sauntered over and turned the handle in vain.

"I hope it's not a haunted chamber," said Armand, making the useless attempt again. He had spoken carelessly and was not prepared for the unwonted ebullition that followed his words. Richard's face darkened, he struck the floor with his heel, angrily.

"It's a beastly house," he cried. "When old Stephen dies, I'll sell it for a song."

More and more surprised, Armand turned to look closely at his brother-in-law. It might be his fancy which told him that the young man's face was paler than ordinarily and an uneasy restless look leaped from time to time into the shallowness of his light blue eyes. It was certainly his fancy which said that Richard looked as an animal might look when it is aware of some hidden enemy hunting it. He dismissed the imagination immediately, and put away from him the thought of the door.

But it occurred to him again when, returning from a solitary walk in the grounds, he chanced to look up at the angle of the house occupied by his room and the locked closet or balcony.

A corner of wall there did jut out beyond what he judged to be the limit of his room and then curved lightly round and formed a porch supporting a small room that could not have been more than eight feet by twelve in size; over the room a peaked tower. The erection was meant to imitate and harmonise with the older pointed towers of the building, but a slight observation confirmed the Doctor's surmise that here was a later excrescence inharmoniously added for some whim or personal convenience. But the ivy was unusually thick on this side and even covered the great carved and high-arched orifices that all along the length of the erection did duty for windows. It must then be rather in the nature of a closed balcony than a room. It struck him casually how easy it would be for an intruder to climb up the strong thick growths of ivy from outside and enter the house by the balcony. The possibility, no doubt, explained the locked door. Greatly relieved, he knew not why, Armand continued his walk. But he thought of the door idly more than once before nightfall.

That night, Armand Sieurcaye, sleeping by the side of his wife, was awakened by what seemed to him a noise in or outside his room. The lamp was burning low but nothing stirred in the dimness of the room. His eyes fell on the locked door and a disagreeable attraction rivetted them upon it; to his newly-awakened senses there seemed to be something weird and threatening in the plain mass of wood. With a violent effort he flung the fancy from him and sought slumber again; the noise that awakened him was possibly some figment of senses bewildered by sleep. He knew not after how long an interval he again woke, but this time a cold air upon him, and before he opened unwilling eyes, he was aware of the door of his room being softly opened and closed. Still the lamp burned,—the room was empty. Involuntarily his eyes sought the locked door. It was swung back on its hinges, wide open! And if the closed door had alarmed something sensitive and irrational within him, how much ghastlier, more menacing seemed that open rectangle with the pit of darkness beyond!

Cursing his nerves for fools Armand Sieurcaye leaped from the bed, turned up the lamp and, conquering a nervous reluctance the violence of which surprised him, stood, lamp in hand, at the threshold of the darkness beyond. It was, as he had conjectured, a wide balcony walled in so as to form a habitable sitting or sleeping-room in summer, and it seemed as such to have been utilised; for a bare iron bedstead occupied the width of the room near the wall, an old armchair with faded and tarnished cushions stood against the opposite end of the room. But the arched orifices were now heavily curtained with the thick folds of the climbing ivy. Otherwise the room was entirely empty. He decided to look out from these windows into the moonlit world outside.

But as he advanced into the room, he was aware of a growing disorder in his nerves which he could not control. It was not fear, so much as an intense horror and hatred — of what, he could not determine, but, it almost seemed to him, of that bare iron bed, of that faded armchair. In any case, he carefully kept his full distance from both as he crossed the room to the ivied openings and thrusting aside part of those green curtains peered into the night. A great world of dark green flooded with moonlight met his eyes. And then he noticed in the moonlight a man standing in the grounds of Abelard looking up at the balcony with a hand shading his eyes. It was Richard Lancaster Abelard, heir of the old house, he who knew nothing of the door and the balcony. And then the strong descendant of old French and Maratha fighters recoiled as if he had received a blow. He did not look again but hastily crossed the balcony and entered his room casting a glance of loathing as he passed to each side of him, once at the iron bed, once at the disused armchair. He could almost have sworn that a shadowy form lay propped upon shadowy pillows on the old iron bed, that somebody looked at him ironically from the tarnished cushions of the chair.

Wondering at himself Armand put on a dressing gown and sat down in an easy chair. "I must have it out with my nerves," he said, resolutely; "Whoever entered my room and opened the door, will, I feel sure, return to close it; I will wait, I will see him and prove to my nerves what unspeakable superstitious idiots they are. There is nothing strange in Richard Lancaster being out there in the moonlight; no doubt, he could not sleep and was taking a stroll outside to help pass away some sleepless hours. What I saw in him, was an optical effect of the moonlight — nothing more, I tell you, nothing more."

For about half an hour he kept his vigil. As he sat his mind left its present surroundings and turned to the experiments in occultism he had conducted in Bombay. From his childhood he had been a highly imaginative lad with a nervous system almost as sensitive as an animal's. But if Armand Sieurcaye had the nervous temperament of the Asiatic mystic, his brain had been invincibly sceptical not only with the material French scepticism but with the merciless Indian scepticism which, once aroused, is far more obstinate and searching than its grosser European shadow. Refusing to accept secondhand proof, however strong, and aware of his own rich nervous endowment, he had himself experimented in occult science with the double and inconsistent determination to be rigidly fair to the supernatural and allow it to establish itself if it existed, and, secondly, to destroy and disprove it for ever by the very fairness and thoroughness of his experiments. He had been able to establish as undoubtedly existing in himself a fair power of correct presentiment, but against this he had to set a number of baulked presentiments; he therefore dismissed the gift as merely a lively power of divining the trend of events. He was also aware that his personal attractions and repulsions were practically unerring; but, after all, was not this merely the equivalent in man to the instinct which so often warns children and animals of their friends and enemies? It was probable that the adventurous life of his Maratha forefathers, compelled to be always on the alert against violence and treachery, had stamped the instinct deep into the hereditary temperament of their issue. All the rest of the phenomena valued by occultists he had, he thought, proved to be sensory hallucinations or inordinate subconscious cerebral activity.

In the course of his reflections he returned suddenly to his immediate surroundings and, with a start, looked towards the balcony-chamber. The door was closed, that had been open! There it stood shut, plain, dumb, denying that it had ever been anything else. Amazed, Armand leaped to his feet, strode to the door and turned the handle, ignoring a cry within that commanded him to desist. The door yielded not; it was not only closed but locked. Was it possible for any human being to have crossed his room, closed that door and locked it, under his very eyes and yet without his knowledge? Then he remembered the completeness of his absorption and how utterly his mind had withdrawn into itself. “Nothing wonderful in that!” he said. “How often have I been oblivious to time and space and circumstance outside when absorbed in a train of thoughts or in an experiment.” The visitor must have thought him asleep in the easy chair and moved quietly. There was nothing more to be done that night and he returned, baffled, to his slumbers.

The first man he met next morning was Richard Lancaster who greeted him with his usual shallow and cheerful cordiality. There was no trace of yesterday's disturbance in his look or demeanour.

"Slept well?" asked Armand casually, but carefully watching his features.

"Like a top!" answered Richard, heartily. "Didn't raise my head once from the pillow from eleven to seven."

Wondering Armand passed him and entered the library. Stephen Abelard sat deep in the pages of a book; a cup of tea stood untasted beside his elbow. After some ordinary conversation suggested by the book, Armand suddenly questioned his father-in-law:

"By the way, sir, is there a room next to mine? I noticed a locked door between."

Stephen Abelard's eyes narrowed a little and he looked at his questioner before he replied. He had raised the cup of tea to his lips, but he put it down still untasted.

"Disturbed?" he questioned, sharply.

"Not at all," parried Armand. "Why should I be?"

"Why indeed? You don't believe in the supernatural. Who does? But in our nerves and imaginations we are all of us the fools our ancestors made us. I had better tell you." Stephen Abelard began sipping his tea and then pursued with a careful deliberateness. "The room you sleep in was the chamber occupied by the unfortunate girl, Bertha Abelard, with whose name scandal in her life and superstition after her death have been busy. You've heard all that nonsense about the curse on Abelard. I need not repeat the rubbish. But this is true that only two people have slept in the balcony-chamber since her death. One was a guest, and he refused to sleep there after the first night."

"Why?"

"Nervous imaginations! Somebody resenting his presence, somebody in the armchair opposite. What will not men imagine? The other was Hugh Abelard's youngest son and he — "

A shade crossed the face of the master of the house.

"And he — "

"Was found dead in the iron bed the next morning."

Armand Sieurcaye quivered like a horse struck by the lash. He restrained himself.

"Any cause?"

"Failure of the heart. The Abelards are subject to failure of the heart. Might it not have happened equally in any other room? It has so happened, in fact, more than once."

Armand nodded. Hereditary weakness of the heart! It might very well be. But what then was Richard Lancaster or the hallucination of him doing outside in the moonlight?

"Since that death, out of deference to prejudices the balcony is kept locked and opened twice a week only when Roberts takes the key of the door from Isabel and cleans up. Roberts has no nerves. She believes in the ghost, but argues she, 'Miss Bertha won't hurt me; I'm only keeping her quarters clean for her.'"

Armand remembered the stories in circulation in the county. Rumour had charged Walter Abelard with the responsibility for the death of his sister, partly on the ground of subsequent incidents, partly on the impossibility of an outside assassin penetrating so far or, even supposing he entered, committing the deed and effecting his escape without leaving one trace behind. Why, there was the ivy. And even if the ivy were not so thick one hundred years ago, an agile man and a gymnast could easily ascend the porch to the arched orifices and descend again after his work had been done.

"You are interested?" said Abelard, "well, we'll go at once and see the room." And he rang for a servant to bring the key of the ominous chamber.

Armand had by this time almost convinced himself that his nocturnal experience was only a peculiarly vivid and disagreeable dream. He followed Stephen with the expectation, — or was it not the hope? — of finding the room quite other than he had seen it in that uncomfortable experience. As Stephen Abelard opened the door and light overcame its native dimness, the first thing Armand saw was a bare iron bed in the width of the outer wall, the next a faded armchair with tarnished cushions against the inner masonry. The room was dim by reason of the thickness of the ivy choking its arched stone orifices.

No dream then, but a reality! Someone had twice entered his room, once to open, once to shut the door of ill omen. Was it Mrs Roberts, somnambulist, vaguely drawn to the door she alone was accustomed to unlock? But where at night could she get the key? for it was, Stephen had said, with Isabel Abelard. Again, it was as if a blow struck him. For, if the key was with Isabel, only Richard Lancaster could easily have got it from her at night, only he or she could have made that nocturnal entry. And it was Richard Lancaster he had seen under the balcony when he looked out into the moonlight. Was it the heir of the house who had entered, opened the door, gone out to look up at the room from outside and afterwards returned to shut it? But on what conceivable impulse? Was it the memory of a somnambulist returning to Armand's question of the morning? That was a very likely explanation and fitted admirably with all the circumstances. Or was his action in any way linked to those nervous perturbations so new and out of place in this shallow, confident and ordinary nature? That was a circumstance into which the theory did not fit quite so easily. A great uneasiness was growing on Armand Sieurcaye. In a supernatural mystery he did not believe, but he was too practised in life not to believe in natural human mysteries underlying the even surface of things. He knew that men of the most commonplace outside have often belied their appearance by their actions. A presentiment of dangerous and calamitous things was upon him, and he remembered that his presentiments had more often justified themselves than not. But to Stephen Abelard he said nothing; least of all did he say anything to Richard Abelard of that nocturnal outing which he had so glibly denied.

CHAPTER II

Another week had passed by, but Armand's nerves were not reconciled to the door of ill omen that looked nightly at him with the secret of Bertha Abelard's death behind it. Yet nothing farther had happened of an unusual nature. Richard Abelard was often absent and distracted, a thing formerly unknown in him, and his speech was occasionally irritable, but there was nothing out of the ordinary in his action. He walked, smoked, shot, rode, hunted, played billiards and read the light literature that pleased him, without any deviation from his familiar habits. Armand noticed that on some days he was entirely his old self, and then he invariably spoke with great satisfaction of the profound sleep he had enjoyed all night. Sieurcaye finally dismissed the presentiment from his mind. He had accepted the somnambulist theory; it was sleeplessness that was telling on Richard's nerves. The whole mystery received a rational explanation on that simple hypothesis.

Two nights after he arrived at this cheerful conclusion, he woke at night for the first time after the experience of the open door. Every night he had thought of watching for the somnambulist, but, though he had been accustomed all his life to light slumbers, a sleep as profound as that of which Richard Lancaster boasted, glued his head to the pillow. On this particular night his wife was not with him, for, to satisfy a caprice of Isabel's, she was sleeping with her sister in their old nursery. Armand turned on his pillow, noticed with the surprise of a half-sleeping man the absence of his wife, then glanced about the room and observed that the door of his chamber was slightly open. A meaningless detail at first, the circumstance began to awaken a sort of indolent wonder — had Aloÿse come into the room to visit his sleep and gone back to the nursery? Or was it Richard the somnambulist driven by the monomania of the locked room? And then, as if galvanised by a shock of electricity, he sat up in bed, suddenly, violently, and stared at the door with unbelieving eyes. It had come back to him that, before turning into bed, on the spur of some unaccountable impulse, he had locked his room and lain down wondering at his own purposeless action. And there now was the door he had thus secured, open, with the key in the lock, challenging him for an explanation. Had he got up himself in his sleep and opened it? Had he too grown a somnambulist? He remembered the profound slumber, so unusual to him, so similar to Lancaster's, that had surprised him for the last few nights. Then an idea occurred to his rapidly working mind; he got out of bed, went to the inner door and turned the handle. It opened! He looked into the room with the iron bed. There was no one there, only the bed and the armchair. Then he closed the door, walked over to his own door, locked it, put the key under his pillow and got into bed again. His heart was beating a little faster than usual as he lay gazing at the door of Bertha Abelard's death chamber. And then a very simple explanation flashed on him. Baulked by the locked door, Richard had climbed up by the ivy from outside and effected his entry from Bertha's chamber. But Isabel was not with Richard tonight — how could he have got possession of the key? Well, conceivably, Isabel might have left her keys by oversight in her own chamber, or the somnambulist might have entered the nursery and detached what he needed from his wife's chatelaine. But what settled waking idea, what persistent fancy of sleep drove Richard Lancaster to the ominous chamber, forced him to devise entrance against every obstacle and by such forbidden means? Armand shuddered as he remembered the story of Bertha Abelard's death and his own theory of the means by which her assassin had gained entrance.

As he expected, he soon fell asleep. Rising the next morning, his first action was to walk over to the inner door and try it. It was locked! Well, that was natural. Somnambulists were often alert and keen-minded even beyond their waking selves and Richard, foiled again by the locked door, had climbed up once more by the ivy to efface all proof of his nocturnal visit.

Armand contrived that morning to be alone with Isabel in order to ask her where she kept the key of Bertha Abelard's chamber. She turned to him with laughing eyes.

"You are not haunted, Armand? No? It's always with me and the ghost, if she's there, must get through solid wood to invade your room. I keep my chatelaine at night under my pillow."

"You had it there last night?"

"Armand! I am positive our ancestress has visited you. Yes, last night too." And then suddenly, "Why, no, it was not. I put it last night in the box where I kept my doll and my toys. Don't look surprised, Armand. I'm a great baby still in many things and I wanted to have everything last night just as it was when we were children. I was a very careful and jealous little housewife, and before I slept I used always to lock up my chatelaine with my doll and playthings and treasure the tiny key of my box in a locket under my nightgown. I did all that last night. If you have been haunted, I'm not responsible."

"Did you tell anybody what you were going to do?"

"I did not think of it till we went to bed. Only Aloÿse knew."

"Does anybody else know of this habit of your childhood?"

"Only Roberts and papa. They don't remember, probably. I had forgotten it myself till last night. What is puzzling you, Armand?"

"Oh, it is only an idea I had," he replied, and rapidly escaped from farther question to the sitting-room set apart for himself and Aloÿse.

The thing was staggering. Somnambulism did not make one omniscient, and it was impossible that Richard Abelard should have known this arrangement of Isabel's far-off childhood, extracted the key from his sleeping wife's locket, the chatelaine from the box and restored them undiscovered, when his need was finished. The theory involved such a chain of impossibilities and improbabilities that it must be rejected. And then, as always, a solution suggested itself. Richard Abelard must have taken, long ago, the impress of the key and got a duplicate of it made for his own secret use. But if so, what unavowable design, what stealthy manoeuvres must such a subterfuge be intended to serve? What legitimate need could Richard Abelard have of this secret and ominous exit or entry? Was it not Armand's duty to warn Stephen Abelard of proceedings that must conceal in them something abnormal, perilous or even criminal? But there was the danger that Isabel might come to hear of it and receive a shock. Armand decided to wait till after her delivery.

A knock at the door roused him from his thoughts and in response to his invitation Richard Abelard himself entered. He walked up to the fireplace, flung himself into a chair opposite Armand and jerked out abruptly:

"Dr. Armand, you are a dab at medical diagnosis. Can't you tell me what's the matter with me?"

"Name your symptoms."

"You've seen some of them yourself. I've observed you noticing me. But that's nothing. It's the mind."

"What of the mind?"

"Oh, how should I know? Dreams, imaginations, sensations, impulses. Yes, impulses." He grew pale as he repeated the word.

"Can't you be more precise?"

"I can't; the thing's vague." He paused a moment; and then his features altered, a look of deep agony passed over them. "Somebody is hunting me," he cried, "somebody's hunting me."

A great dread and sickness of heart seized upon Armand Sieurcaye as he looked at his brother-in-law.

"Steady!" he cried, "it's a nervous disorder, of course, nothing more. But you are hiding something from me. That won't do."

"Nerves! Don't tell me I'm going mad! Or if I am, prevent it, for Isabel's sake."

"Of course, I'll prevent it. But you have got to be frank with me. I must know everything."

A visible hesitation held Richard for a few seconds, then he said, "I've told all I can think of, all that's definite." Then, suddenly, striking the arm of his chair with his closed hand, "It's this beastly house," he cried; "there's something in it! There's something in it that ought not to be there."

"If you think so, you must leave it till your nerves are restored. Look here, why not take John's yacht and go for a cruise, oh, to America, if you like, — or to Japan. Japan will give you a longer spell of the sea."

"I'll do it," cried Richard Lancaster, "as soon as Isabel's safe through this, I'll go. Thank you, Armand." And with a look of great relief on his face, he rose and left the room.

Armand had not much time to ponder over this singular interview, though certain phrases Richard had used, kept ringing in his brain; for that night the pangs of childbirth came upon Isabel and she was safely delivered of a male child. An heir was born to the dying house of Abelard. The strong health of Isabel Abelard easily shook from it the effects of the strain. There was no danger for her and the child seemed likely to inherit the robust physique of his parents. As for Richard, he was joyous, at ease and seemed to have put from him his idea of a flight from Abelard.

But on the third night after the delivery Armand Sieurcaye had troubled dreams and wandered through strange afflictions; the rustling of a dress haunted him; a pang of terror, a movement of agony seemed to come from someone's heart into his own, and there was a laughter in the air he did not love. And in the grey of the autumn morning, Stephen Abelard with a strange look in his eyes stood by his side.

"Get up, Armand; dress and come. Do not disturb Aloÿse."

In three minutes Armand was outside on the landing where Stephen Abelard was pacing to and fro under the whip of the sorrow that had leaped upon him.

"Isabel is dead," he said briefly.

With a dull brain that refused to think Armand followed the father to the death chamber of his child. The wall lamp was flaring high above the bed. A night-lamp that no one had thought to put out, burned on the toilette-table. In a chair far from the bed Richard Lancaster with his face hidden in his hands sat rocking himself, his body shaken by sobs. When Armand entered, he uncovered his face, cast at him a tragic look from eyes full of tears, and went swaying from the room.

Armand stood at the bedside and looked at the dead girl. As he looked, a pang of fear troubled his heart, for his practised perceptions, familiar with many kinds of death, gave him an appalling intimation. Isabel had not died easily! Then something peculiar in the pose of the head and neck struck his awakened brain. He bent down suddenly, then rose as suddenly, his olive face sallow with some strong emotion, strode to the toilette-table, seized the night-lamp and returning held it to Isabel's neck.

"What is it?" asked Stephen Abelard. One could see that he was holding himself tight to meet a possible shock. Armand carefully put back the lamp where it had stood and returned to the bedside before he answered. In the shock of his discovery he had forgotten his surroundings, forgotten to whom he was about to speak.

"It is a murder," he said, slowly and mechanically.

"Armand!"

"It is a murder," he continued, unheeding the cry of the father, "I cannot be mistaken. And effected by unusual means. There is a spot in the body which has only to be found by the fingers and receive a peculiar pressure and a man dies suddenly, surely, with so light a trace only the eyes of the initiate can discover it — not even a trace, only an indication, but a sure indication. The Japanese wrestlers know the device, but do not impart it except to those who are too self-disciplined to abuse it. That is what has been done here."

Stephen Abelard seized Armand's shoulder with a tense, violent grip. "Armand," he cried, "who besides yourself knows of this means of murder?"

"John Lancaster knows it."

Stephen's hand fell limply from his son-in-law's shoulder. After a time he said in a voice that was again calm, "Armand, my child died of heart-failure as so many of the Abelards have done."

"It is best so," replied Armand Sieurcaye.

"Now go, Armand," continued Stephen quietly, "go and leave me alone with my child."

Armand did not return to his chamber, but went into his sitting-room, lighted a candle and sat, looking at the chair in which Richard Abelard had consulted him only three days ago. John Lancaster, Richard's brother, who alone near Orringham knew of the Japanese secret! What share had John Lancaster, friend of Armand Sieurcaye, in the murder of Isabel Abelard? Was it for his entry that Richard had provided, by the duplicate key, by his strange and perilous manoeuvres with the ivy and the balcony room? But why not open the front door for him or leave unshuttered one of the lower windows, a much easier and less dangerous passage? Then he remembered that the great dog, Brilliant, lay at the bottom of the stairs and would not allow any but an inmate to pass unchallenged. John Lancaster was his friend, his benefactor, but Armand knew the man, a reckless flamboyant profligate capable of the most glorious and self-immolating actions and capable equally of the most cruel and cynical crimes. He remembered, too, how he himself had taught John that peculiar trick of the Japanese art of slaying. In a certain sense he himself was responsible for Isabel's death. How wise were the Easterns in their rigid reticence when they taught only to prepared and disciplined natures the secrets that might be misused to harm mankind! And then his mind travelled to Isabel and her sorrowful end slain in the supreme moment of a woman's joy by the husband she loved. What grim and inexorable Power ruling the world, Fate, Chance, Providence, had singled out for this doom a girl whose whole life had been an innocent shedding of sunshine on all who came near? Providence! He smiled. There were still fools who believed in an overruling Providence, a wise and compassionate God! And then the insoluble problem returned to baffle his mind, what possible motive moved Richard to compass this heartless crime or John to assist him?

All that day of sorrow Richard was absent from the house, and Armand had no chance of probing him. It was late at night, about eleven, that he entered. Armand met him on his way to his room, candle in hand.

"I should like a word with you, Richard," he said.

Richard turned on him, laughing with a terrible gaiety. "No use, Doctor Armand. You could not save me, you see. The thing was too strong. Mark my words, the thing will be too strong even for you." And he strode to his room leaving Armand amazed on the staircase.

Aloÿse had elected to sleep that night with her dead sister's child and Armand once more found himself alone in Bertha Abelard's chamber with no companion except the locked door, accomplice perhaps in the tragedy that had darkened the house. Again his slumbers were troubled and he dreamed always of the locked door open and someone traversing the room on a mission of evil, a work of horror. He woke with a start, his heart in him dull and heavy as lead and full of the conviction, which it called knowledge, that the tragedy was not finished but more crimes mysterious and unnatural were about to pollute the old walls of Abelard. Then his thoughts flew to Aloÿse. He dressed himself hastily and went to the room where she was sleeping. Aloÿse was asleep and the child's nurse slept on a bed some five feet away, but Armand cast only a fleeting glance at the two women, for between the beds was the cradle of Isabel's child and over it was a figure stooping, and as it lifted its face towards the opened door, he saw a face that was and yet was not the face of Richard Lancaster. Richard immediately moved over to the door. As he neared, Armand drew away from it with the first pang of absolute terror in his heart he had ever experienced since his childhood. Richard Lancaster noted the emotion and it seemed to amuse him, for he laughed. And again there was something in the laugh that was not in the laugh of Richard Lancaster or of any human mirth to which Armand Sieurcaye had ever listened. As soon as Richard had left the room, Armand almost ran to the door, locked it and sat down at his wife's bedside shaking with an excitement he could not control. He soon recovered hold of his nerves, but he did not leave the room and its unconscious inmates. He sat there motionless till at four o'clock in the morning a light knock at the door startled him. When he opened it, Stephen Abelard entered. He took Armand's presence as a matter of course and went calmly to the side of the child and began looking down on the heir of his house, the little baby who was all that was left to him of Isabel. When he turned from the cradle, Armand spoke.

"Sir, you must do something about Richard."

Stephen looked at him. "Come to my room, Armand," he said, “We will talk there.” Before following Stephen, Armand woke the nurse and bade her watch over the child. “Lock the door,” he added, “and keep it locked till I return.” As he went through the corridors, he passed Richard’s room. The door was open, but the room absolutely dark; still his practised eyes perceived in the doorway a figure standing which drew back when he looked at it, obviously not the figure of Richard, for it was shorter, slenderer. When he was entering Stephen’s room, it occurred to him that he had unconsciously carried away in his mind the impression that it was the figure of a woman. After the first disagreeable feeling had passed, he shook the absurdity from him; it must have been the dressing-gown that gave him the idea of a woman’s robe. After a brief talk with Stephen, the two were pulling in silence at the cigars they had lighted, when, perhaps half an hour after his leaving the nursery, someone knocked at the door and the nurse appeared and beckoned to Armand Sieurcaye. There was a look of terrible anxiety on her face that brought Armand striding to the door.

“Will you come, sir?” she said, “I don’t know what’s the matter with the child.”

“Did you lock the door?” asked Armand, as they went.

The nurse looked troubled. “I thought I did, though I could not understand why you wanted it; but it seems I can’t have turned the key well. For when I dozed off for two minutes, I woke to find the door open.” Then she paused and added with great hesitation. “And I almost felt, sir, as if I had noticed a woman in the room standing by the cradle, but I was too sleepy to understand. It wasn’t Mrs Sieurcaye, for I had to wake her up afterwards.”

A woman! And the locked door that opened! Armand groaned; he could understand nothing, but he knew what he would find even before he bent with the already awakened and anxious Aloÿse over the dead child who had thus so swiftly followed his mother to the grave. And it was by the same way.

That morning Stephen Abelard spoke to his elder son-in-law. “Richard,” he said, “you will start for your sea-voyage today. Take John’s yacht at Bristol. You need not wait for the funeral nor mind what people will say. If I were you, I'ld have a doctor on board."

Richard Lancaster was very calm and deliberate as he replied, "I had settled that, sir, before you spoke. I'm going on a long journey and I'm going direct, not by Bristol nor in the yacht. As you suggest, I'll not wait for the funeral and I'm past caring what people will say."

"Don't forget the doctor," insisted Stephen.

"The doctor can't come," said Richard, "And he wouldn't like the voyage. I'm not mad, sir, — worse luck!"

The two sons-in-law of Stephen Abelard left the house-steps together, Armand for a stroll in the grounds to steady his heated brain and his shaken nerves, Richard in the direction of the stables.

When Armand was returning to the house, a pale-faced groom ran up to him and pointed in the direction of the great avenue of stately trees before Abelard.

"Mr. Richard's lying there," he faltered, " — shot!"

Armand stood stock-still for a moment, then ran to the spot indicated. Of this last tragedy he had had no presentiment. What was it? What was this maddening and bloody tangle? This death dance of an incomprehensible fate which had struck down mother, father and child in less than thirty hours? No gleam of motive, no shred of coherence illuminated the nightmare. His reason stood helpless at last in the maze. It was the locked door, he thought, that opened and revealed nothing. But his reason insisted. Richard Abelard was mad, and in his madness he had used the device John must have incautiously taught him to slay wife and child; and this last act of self-slaughter was the natural refuge of a disturbed brain made aware by Armand's looks and by Stephen's words of discovery.

Richard Abelard lay dead on the grass by the avenue, shot through the heart and the revolver lay fallen two feet from his outstretched and nerveless hand. Armand, bending to assure himself that life was extinct, caught sight of a small piece of paper lying close to the knee of the dead man. When he rose, he turned to the groom. "Mr. Richard's dead," he said, "go and tell

Mr. Abelard and bring men here to carry him in."

The man reluctantly departed and Armand caught up the paper and put it swiftly into his pocket. It was not till an hour later that he had time to take it out in his parlour and look at it. As he had suspected, it was a brief note in Richard's handwriting, and thus it ran, brief, pointed, tragic, menacing.

"Armand, you knew! But it was not I. God is my Witness, I am not guilty of murder. I can say no more; but in mercy to Aloÿse, look to yourself!"

For a long time Armand Sieurcaye held in his hand the dead man's mysterious warning. Then he flung it into the fire and watched its whiteness blacken, shrivel and turn into ashes.

CHAPTER III

[*The story was abandoned here.*]

Incomplete and Fragmentary Stories

1891–1912

Fictional Jottings

M^{rs} Bolton was one of those sharp and rancid women whose very aspect gives a cultured man the toothache; it recalls vividly the taste of sour grapes. There had perhaps been a time when she was not elderly, but the boldest flight of metaphor would never have imaged her as young. The slanders of her enemies drew a frightful picture of the low-class Gorgon: they compared her chin to a penknife, her lips to a pair of icicles: her smile was a perpetual reminder of vinegar, her voice was like frost against the teeth. The sobriety of history merely records that her face was twin sister to a ferret, her features sharp and if the word may be used without offence gritty: altogether she was an excellent type of that class of crude failures whose mould nature has left unbroken that there may be a scourge for the refined and a pattern for housewifes.

Her face was Nemesis sculptured in marble

In her distress the child of the hothouse spoke the language of nature.

“I never forgive, but I bear no malice when I have requited”

She felt as if she were groping for a coin in the dark

A fire of remembrance burned a forgotten sentence into her brain and wrote it in crimson on her cheeks.

The voiceful hurry of the indicator copied the pattering footfall of the fugitive hours.

His amazement unwound itself in a coil of laughter.

Just as the clouds that steal the sunshine cannot throttle the sunlight as well

Fragment of a Story

A QUIET hilly country on the confines of Bengal after rain. Grey cloud yet banked up the horizon except in the north and sloped over the eastern down-curve in great sheeny ribs brownish and grey like the ribs of a fan. The mango trees by the road with their crowded burden of ruddy or stained-yellow blossom looked moist and quite fresh, the earth discoloured, draggled and limp with the wet, but healed of the dusty thirst and discomfort of many showerless days. The west showed patches of pale bluish steel-grey sky where the veil of cloud was thinnest and the sinking light able to break through; just on the verge one or two of the outlying clouds were ruddy like a dull fire just meaning to go out. The moon must be somewhere eastward, a pale wisp of half-lucid yellow, waiting for the brilliancy to come, but in the east the long dark-ribbed layers ran down with a forbidding thickness. They were the skirts of the retreating storm.

The soldier Rajmohan as he reined in his horse on the top of a rise looked behind him once at the western and once at the southern sky and observed with a contraction of the brow the line of the southern horizon growing a heavy black and glaring up with a lowering threat at the half-cleared zenith.

"A storm brews there" he muttered to himself "and it may break here or it may pass. Either way there is no moonlight for me tonight."

The Devil's Mastiff

THERE had been a heavy fall throughout the whole of that December day. The roads were white and indistinguishable in a thick pall of moonlight and dazzling snow; here and there a drift betrayed the footing. In the sky a bright moon pursued by clouds ran timidly up the ascent of the firmament; great arms of darkness sometimes closed over it; sometimes it emerged and proceeded with its still luminous race, ran, swayed, floated, glided forward intently, unfalteringly. Patrick Curran, treading cautiously the white uncertain flooring of earth, stumbling into snowdrifts, scouting into temporary darkness for his right road, cursed the weather and his fortunes.

"It is not enough," he complained, "that I should be a proscribed fugitive hiding my head in every uncertain refuge from the pursuit of this devil's Cromwell, doomed already to the gallows, owing my life every day to the trembling compassion of my poor father's tenants; it is not enough that I should have lost Alicia and that Luke Walter should have her; but the very moon and the snow and the night are his allies against me. Since God is so hard on me, I wonder why the devil does not come to my help — I would sell my soul to him this moment willingly. But perhaps he too is afraid of Cromwell."

"It is hardly probable," said a voice at his side suddenly.

Patrick Curran turned with a fierce start and clutched at his dagger. He was aware in the darkness of a dim form pacing beside him with a step much quieter and more assured than his own.

"Who are you?" he cried, rigid and menacing.

"A wayfarer like yourself," said the other, "I travel earth as a fugitive."

"From whom or what?" asked Patrick.

"How shall I say?" said the shadow, "Perhaps from my own thoughts, perhaps from a too powerful enemy."

After the discovery of the recent conspiracy to murder Cromwell and restore Charles Stuart, the country was full of Royalist fugitives, hiding by day, travelling by night, in the hope of reaching a port whence they could sail for Ostende or Calais. For the inquisitions of the Republican magistrates were imperative and undiscriminating.

"I would give," he said to himself, "my soul and the rest of my allotted days as a free gift to Satan, if I might once clasp Alicia in my arms and take with me into Hell the warm sense of the joy of her body and if I might see Luke Walter dead before me or be sure he was following me. Oh if I can once be sure of that, let the brown dog of the Dacres leap on me the next moment, I care not."

"You may be sure of it," answered the voice at his side, strangely sweet, yet to Patrick's ear formidable. He turned, thrilling.

"You must be the devil himself," he almost shouted.

"I may be only one who can read your thoughts," said the other in that sweet sinister voice which made the young man fancy sometimes that a woman spoke to him. "And that I can, you will easily judge when I have told you a very little of what I know of you. You are Patrick, the second son of Sir Gerald Curran who got his estate from his wife, Margaret Dacre, his baronetcy from King James and his death from Cromwell who took him prisoner at Worcester and hanged him. You were to have married Lady Alicia Nevil, when the conspiracy of which you were one of the heads as well as the hand destined to strike down the Puritan tyrant, was discovered by the discernment, luck and ruthless skill of Colonel Luke Walter."

The young Cavalier started and uttered a furious imprecation.

"It was he;" said the other, "he has great brain-power and penetration and a resolute genius. It is even possible he may succeed Cromwell, if the God of the Puritans gives him a lease long enough."

"If I have the chance, I will shorten it," cried Patrick Curran.

"Or I;" said the unknown, "for just now I too am a Royalist. But to proceed. You were proclaimed and doomed to a felon's death in your absence; the Earl, implicated in the conspiracy, was compelled as the price of his pardon to betroth his daughter to Luke Walter, and the marriage is fixed for tonight."

"Tonight!" groaned the young man, and he smote his thigh miserably with his hand.

"At the Church of Worndale."

"But will it matter if Luke Walter perishes before he has consummated his nuptials?"

"I promise you that," said the unknown. "It does not suit you that Alicia should marry another. It does not suit me that there should be a strong successor to Cromwell. Charles Stuart is my good friend, and I wish that he should rule England. Therefore, Patrick, it is a bargain."

"Who the devil are you?" cried the young man again, marvelling.

As if to answer the moon peeped out from between two heavy angry masses of black cloud, illumining the earth's intense and inclement whiteness. He saw beside him a young man of remarkable beauty, whose face was perfectly familiar, but his name could not be remembered.

"As for your soul and your life," said the stranger, and as their eyes met, Patrick shuddered, "you need not give them to the devil whether freely or as part of the bargain, for they are already his."

He laughed a laugh of terrible and ominous sweetness, and in a moment Patrick remembered. He knew that laugh, he knew that face. They were his own.

At that moment the moon passed away into the second fragment of cloud. Patrick stood, unable to speak, looking at the dim shadow in front of him. Then it vanished.

It was some time before the young man could command himself sufficiently to pursue his way. He tried to think for a moment that it was John Dacre, the illegitimate son of Sir Gerald by his sister-in-law Matilda Dacre, who resembled Patrick strongly and was his sworn comrade and lover. But he knew it was not John. That was not John's face or John's speech or John's thinking. It must have been a vivid dream or a waking illusion. He walked forward in the darkness, greatly disturbed, but with recovered courage.

Again the moon shone out, this time with a clear gulf of sky just in front of her. Before Patrick the white road stretched long, straight and visible to a great distance and was marked out here by a high snow-covered hedge from the equally white indistinguishable country around.

"Come now, that is better," said Patrick Curran. As he spoke, he saw far off on the road a dark object travelling towards him; he slackened his pace and was minded to turn off the road to avoid it. But it was approaching with phenomenal speed. As it came nearer, he saw that it was only a dog. Again Patrick stood still. A dog! There was nothing in that. It was not what he had feared. But he remembered that singular conversation and the impious prayer that had arisen in his heart about the brown Dog of the Dacres, — the dog which showed itself always when a Dacre was about to die and leaped on him whenever the doom was by violence. He smiled, but a little uncertainly. Then the moonlight seemed to dwell on the swiftly-travelling animal more intensely and he saw that it was brown.

Never had Patrick seen any earthly thing master of such a terrible speed. It ran, it galloped, it bounded, and the wretched man watching the terrific charge of that phantasmal monster, — for it was a gigantic mastiff, — felt his heart stop and his warm youthful blood congeal in his veins. It was now within twenty paces; he felt the huge eyes upon him and knew that it was going to leap. He went down heavily with the ponderous frame of the animal oppressing his breast, its leonine paws on his shoulders, its hot breathing moistening his face. And then there was nothing.

That was the most terrible part of it, to have been borne down physically by a semblance, an unearthly hallucination, a thing that was this moment and the next was not. Patrick struggled to his feet, overcome by a panic terror; his nerves cried to him to run, to travel away quickly from this accursed night and this road of ghastly encounters. But he felt as if hamstrung, helpless, clutched by an intangible destruction. He sat down on the snow, panted and waited.

After a few minutes the blood began to flow more quietly through his veins, the pounding of his heart slackened and the sick agitation of his nerves yielded to a sudden fiery inrush. He leaped furiously to his feet. "The Dog of the Dacres," he cried, "the brown Dog, the Devil's Mastiff! And no doubt it was his master spoke to me in my own semblance. I am doomed, then. But not to the gallows. No, by God, not to the gallows. God's doom and the devil's, since I can resist neither, but not man's, not Cromwell's!" Then he paused. "Tonight!" he cried again. "At Worndale Church! But I will see her once before I go down to Hell. And it may be I shall take Luke Walter with me. It may be that is what the Devil wants of me."

He looked about the landscape and thought he could distinguish the trees that bordered the distant Church of Worndale. That was in front of him. Also in front, but much more to the left, was Trevesham Hall, the home of Alicia Nevil. He began walking rapidly, no longer with his first cautious and doubtful treading, but with a bold reckless stride. And it was noticeable that he no longer stumbled or floundered into snowdrifts. Patrick knew that he had only a few brief inches of his life's road left to his treading; for no man of the Dacre blood had ever lived more than twenty-four hours after the Brown Dog leaped on him. A desperate courage had entered into his veins. He would see [*incomplete*]

The Golden Bird

IT WAS in the forests of Asan that the Golden Bird first flew out from a flower-besieged thicket and fluttered before the dazzled eyes of Luilla. It was in the forests of Asan, — the open and impenetrable, the haunt of the dancers and the untrodden of human feet, coiling place of the cobra and the Python, lair of the lion and the jaguar, formidable retreat of the fleeing antelope, yet also the green home of human safety where a man and a maiden could walk in the moonlit night and hear unconcerned the far-off brool of the kings of the wilderness. It was into the friendly and open places that the golden bird fluttered, but it came no less from the coverts of dread and mystery. From the death and the night it flew out into the sunlight where Luilla was happily straying.

Luilla loved to wander on the verges of danger just where those flower-besieged thickets began and formed for miles together a thorny and tangled rampart full at once of allurement and of menace. She did not venture in, for she had a great fear of the thorns and brambles and a high respect for her radiant beauty, her constant object of worship and the daily delight of all who dwelt for a while on earth labouring the easy and kindly soil on the verges of the forests of Asan. But always she wandered close to the flowery wall and her mind, safe in its volatile incorporeality, strayed like a many-hued butterfly far into the forbidden region which the gods had so carefully secluded. Perhaps secretly she hoped that one day some kingly and leonine head would thrust itself out through the flowers and compel her with a gaze of friendly and majestic invitation or else that the green poisonous head of a serpent, reposing itself on a flower, would scrutinise her out of narrow eyes and express a cunning approval of her beauty. It was not out of fear of the lions and the serpents that Luilla forbore to enter the secret places. She knew she could overcome the most ferocious intentions of any destroyer in the world, four-footed or footless, if only he would give her three minutes before making up his mind to eat or bite her. But neither lion nor serpent strayed out of their appointed haunts. It was the golden bird that first fluttered out from the thickets to Luilla.

Luilla looked at it as it flitted from bough to bough, and her eyes were dazzled and her soul wondered. For the little body of the bird was an inconstant flame of flying and fleeting gold and the wings that opened and fluttered were of living gold and the small shapely head was crested gold and the long graceful quivering tail was feathered trailing gold; all was gold about the bird, except the eyes and they were two jewels of a soft ever-changing colour and sheltered strange looming depths of love and thought in their gentle brilliance. On the bough where it perched, it seemed as if all the soft shaded leaves were suddenly sunlit. For as Luilla accustomed her eyes to the flickering brightness of the golden bird, it hovered at last over a branch, settled and sang. And its voice also was of gold.

The bird sang in its own high secret language; but Luilla's ear understood its thoughts and in Luilla's soul as it thirsted and listened and trembled with delight, the song shaped itself easily into human speech. This then was what the bird sang — the bird that came out of the death and night, sang to Luilla a song of beauty and of delight.

"Luilla! Luilla! Luilla! green and beautiful are the meadows where the children run and pluck the flowers, green and beautiful the pastures where the calm-eyed cattle graze, green and beautiful the cornfields ripening on the village bounds, but greener are the impenetrable thickets of Asan than her open places of life and more beautiful than the meadows and the pastures and the cornfields are the forests of death and night. More ensnaring to some is the danger of the jaguar than the attractive face of a child, more welcome the foot-tracks of the lion as it hunts than the pastures of the cattle, more fair and fruitful the thorn and the wild-briar than the fields full of ripening grain. And this I know that no such flowers bloom in the safety and ease of

Asan's meadows, though they make a thick and divine treading for luxurious feet, as I have seen blooming on the borders of the wild morass, in the heart of the bramble thicket and over the mouth of the serpent's lair. Shall I not take thee, O Luilla, into those woods? Thou shalt pluck the flowers in the forests of night and death, thou shalt lay thy hands on the lion's mane.

"O Luilla! O Luilla! O Luilla!

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

COLLECTED PLAYS AND STORIES comprises all of Sri Aurobindo's dramatic and fictional writings, with the exception of prose dialogues, verse dialogues more in the nature of poems than plays, and translations from Sanskrit drama. Writings in these three categories are published in *Early Cultural Writings*, *Collected Poems*, and *Translations*, volumes 1, 2 and 5 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Collected Plays and Stories is divided into three parts according to type of material. The first part includes the five complete plays; the second, incomplete and fragmentary plays; the third, prose fiction, complete, incomplete and fragmentary. The first two parts are arranged chronologically, from earliest to latest. The third is subdivided into two sections: *Occult Idylls*, a series planned by the author, followed by a section consisting of all other pieces of fiction, arranged chronologically.

COMPLETE PLAYS

The first of these plays was written around 1905, the last in 1915. Only one of them, *Perseus the Deliverer*, was published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime.

The Viziers of Bassora. The manuscript of this play was seized by the police at the time of Sri Aurobindo's arrest in connection with the Alipore Bomb Case in May 1908. It seems to have been written a few years before that, towards the end of the period of his employment in the Baroda State (1893–1906).

Sri Aurobindo never saw the manuscript of *The Viziers* after his arrest, and he is said to have particularly regretted its loss. Once in Pondicherry he tried to reconstruct one of the missing scenes using a partial draft he had with him, but soon abandoned the effort. In March 1952, fifteen months after his passing, the manuscript was handed over to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram by the Government of West Bengal. It was transcribed and in 1959 published in the *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual*, as well as separately.

The source of the plot of *The Viziers of Bassora* is "Nur al-Din Ali and the Damsel Anis al-Jalis", a story told in the *Arabian Nights* (thirty-fourth to thirty-eighth nights). Sri Aurobindo owned in Baroda a multi-volume edition of Richard Burton's translation of the Arabic text (London, 1894), which he considered "as much a classic as the original".

Rodogune. Two complete, independent versions of this play exist. Sri Aurobindo wrote the first one in Baroda between 31 January and 14 February 1906, on the eve of his departure from the state to join the national movement. In May 1908 the notebooks containing his fair copy of *Rodogune*, like the notebook containing *The Viziers of Bassora*, were seized by the police when Sri Aurobindo was arrested. Fortunately, other notebooks remaining in his possession contained much of the penultimate draft of the 1906 version. Basing himself on these passages, he was able to reconstruct the play in Pondicherry around 1912. This version was published in the *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual* and separately in 1958. It supersedes the Baroda version, which was recovered in 1952.

The plot of *Rodogune* derives ultimately from the history of Cleopatra, Queen of Syria, as recounted by such classical historians as Appian, Justin and Josephus. The immediate source probably was *Rodogune* (1645), by the French dramatist Pierre Corneille.

Perseus the Deliverer. Sri Aurobindo wrote this play during the period of his political activity, and its publication history is marked by the uncertainties of that era. A notation from the now-lost manuscript, accidentally set in type, gives 21 June 1906 as the date of the writing or copying of Act III, Scene 1. Sri Aurobindo seems to have intended the play to be published in Baroda, and parts of it were composed there by August of the same year. This plan fell through, however, and the play did not appear until 1907, when it was brought out serially between 30 June and 20 October in the weekly edition of the *Bande Mataram*, a journal of political opinion edited by Sri Aurobindo. The next year a book-edition was printed, but was destroyed by the printer at the time of Sri Aurobindo's arrest. In 1942 the *Bande Mataram* text of *Perseus the Deliverer* — with the exception of three passages published in issues of the journal that were not then available, namely, all of Act II, Scenes 2 and 3, and the end of Act V, Scene 3 — was included in Sri Aurobindo's *Collected Poems and Plays*. Sri Aurobindo revised this text, adding a new ending but ignoring the missing scenes of Act II. (The issues of *Bande Mataram* containing these two scenes were subsequently rediscovered, and in 1955 they were restored to the text.)

The plot of *Perseus the Deliverer* derives of course from the Greek legend of Perseus and Andromeda, the most important surviving classical source of which is the fourth book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Notable among modern retellings of the story are Corneille's *Andromède* (1650) and Charles Kingsley's *Andromeda* (1859), a poem in English hexameters with which Sri Aurobindo was familiar.

Eric. Sri Aurobindo began work on this play in 1910, shortly after his arrival in Pondicherry, and continued intermittently over a period of several years. No complete fair copy of the play survives. The fullest manuscript, a typed copy that contains the last version of Act II, breaks off in the middle of Act IV, Scene 2. Handwritten versions subsequent to the typed copy exist for Acts I and III and part of Act IV. There is only a single draft of Act V. Its interlinear and marginal revisions present unusual textual difficulties.

Eric was first published in 1960 in *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual* and as a separate book. The present text is thoroughly re-edited. As a rule, the last version of each act has been transcribed as far as it goes; where the last version is incomplete, the previous version is used for the remainder of the act. The order in which the last two manuscripts of Acts I and III were written and revised is not entirely clear. The unused versions of these two acts are reproduced in the reference volume (volume 35), along with two partial rewritings of Act IV, Scene 1, which could not be worked into the text of the play.

No specific source of the plot of *Eric* is known. Sri Aurobindo seems to have made free use of names and events from the history of Norway in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, a period that was the subject of much mediaeval Scandinavian literature.

Vasavadutta. This play was written in Pondicherry in 1915. The earliest extant draft is dated thus at the end: "Copied Nov. 2, 1915. Written between 18th & 30th October 1915. Completed 30th October. Pondicherry. Revised in April 1916." The fair copy, used as the text from Act III, Scene 4, to the end, gives details of this revision: "Revised and recopied between April 8th and April 17th 1916." Subsequently, on three or four different occasions, Sri Aurobindo began to rewrite the play, stopping at an earlier point each time. The editors have used the last version of a given passage as far as it goes and then reverted to the previous version.

A typed copy of *Vasavadutta* was prepared for Sri Aurobindo sometime in the late 1930s or early 1940s, and he made a few scattered revisions to it. When its publication was proposed, he demurred, saying it was "too romantic". The play did not appear in print until 1957, when it was published in the *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual* and as a separate book.

As stated by Sri Aurobindo in his author's note, he took the plot of *Vasavadutta* from the *Kathasaritsagara*, an eleventh-century Sanskrit story-cycle written by Somadeva Bhatta.

INCOMPLETE AND FRAGMENTARY PLAYS (1891–1915)

The Witch of Ilni. Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece when he was an undergraduate at Cambridge. The manuscript bears dates ranging between October and December 1891.

The source of the plot of *The Witch of Ilni* is not known, but the play evidently owes much to Milton's *Comus* and similar works.

The House of Brut. Sri Aurobindo wrote this fragment during the early part of his stay in Baroda, probably in 1899.

The idea for *The House of Brut* seems to have come from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* or another chronicle of early Britain.

The Maid in the Mill. This piece was written in Baroda, probably around 1902.

The source of the plot of *The Maid in the Mill* was apparently *The Maid in the Mill* by John Fletcher and William Rowley (1647). The two plays have many characters and situations in common. Certain plays of Shakespeare and Calderón may also have influenced the plot of Sri Aurobindo's play.

The Prince of Edur. Editorial title. Sri Aurobindo wrote the three acts of this incomplete play between 28 January and 1 February 1907, and copied them on 11 and 12 February. He was at that time staying at his family's house in Deoghar, Bihar, during a brief respite from his political activities.

The plot of *The Prince of Edur* is based loosely on the life of Bappa Rawal, the eighth-century Rajput hero. The scene, which includes parts of what is now eastern Gujarat, was familiar to Sri Aurobindo, who was posted in the area while serving as a Baroda state officer.

The Prince of Mathura. Editorial title. This fragment, related in theme to *The Prince of Edur*, was written a few years later, probably in 1909 or 1910.

The Birth of Sin. This fragment, written in the same notebook as *The Prince of Mathura*, must date from the same period, that is, 1909–10. In December 1909 a related piece, also entitled *The Birth of Sin*, was published in the *Karmayogin*, a weekly newspaper edited by Sri Aurobindo. The *Karmayogin* piece is more in the nature of a poem, and was published as such in *Collected Poems and Plays* (1942). (It is included in *Collected Poems*, volume 2 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.) The present draft is structured more as a drama, and is published as such here. The exact relationship between the two texts is not clear. Both obviously owe much to Milton.

Fragment of a Play. This piece was written in Pondicherry sometime around 1915. The plot appears to be based on an episode in the Bhagavata Purana.

STORIES

More than once Sri Aurobindo remarked in conversation that he had written some stories that subsequently were lost. "The white ants have finished them and with them has perished my future fame as a story-teller", he noted ironically in 1939. All his known stories and fragments of fiction are published here in two sections.

Occult Idylls

Sri Aurobindo wrote fair copies of the two pieces published in this section in the same notebook. On the first page he wrote the general title "Occult Idylls".

The Phantom Hour. Sri Aurobindo wrote this, his only complete story, during the early part of his stay in Pondicherry, 1910–12, or perhaps a year or two earlier.

The Door at Abelard. This piece was written around the same time as *The Phantom Hour*, but was never completed.

Incomplete and Fragmentary Stories (1891–1912)

Fictional Jottings. Sri Aurobindo wrote down these lines on two pages of a notebook he used at Cambridge between 1890 and 1892.

Fragment of a Story. Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece around 1904, either in Baroda or while on vacation in Bengal.

The Devil's Mastiff. Nothing is known for certain about the date of this piece, but it seems to belong to the period of "Occult Idylls" and may have been intended for that series. The manuscript was lost after being published in the *Advent* in February 1954.

The Golden Bird. This piece was written in Pondicherry, probably in 1911 or 1912.

PUBLISHING HISTORY

As mentioned above, *Perseus the Deliverer* was published in the weekly *Bande Mataram* in 1907, and in *Collected Poems and Plays* in 1942. All the other pieces in the present volume were brought out posthumously. "Fictional Jottings" and "Fragment of a Story" appear here for the first time. All the texts have been checked against Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts.

Sri Aurobindo

Translations

VOLUME 5
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1999
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Translations

Publisher's Note

Translations comprises all of Sri Aurobindo's translations from Sanskrit, Bengali, Tamil, Greek and Latin into English, with the exception of his translations of Vedic and Upanishadic literature. The Vedic and Upanishadic translations appear in volumes 14–18 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. His translations of some of the Mother's French *Prières et méditations* appear in volume 31, *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*. His translations from Sanskrit into Bengali appear in volume 9, *Writings in Bengali and Sanskrit*.

The contents of the present volume are divided by original language into five parts. The dates of the translations are given in the Note on the Texts. They span more than fifty years, from 1893 to the mid-1940s. Less than half the pieces were published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime; the rest are reproduced from his manuscripts.

CONTENTS

Part One
Translations from Sanskrit

Section One. The Ramayana

Pieces from the Ramayana
- 1. Speech of Dussaruth 5
- 2. An Aryan City 7
- 3. A Mother's Lament 9
- 4. The Wife 11

An Aryan City: Prose Version 23
The Book of the Wild Forest 24
The Defeat of Dhoomraksha 27

Section Two. The Mahabharata

Sabha Parva or Book of the Assembly-Hall
- Canto I: The Building of the Hall 33
- Canto II: The Debated Sacrifice 41
- Canto III: The Slaying of Jerasundh 56

Virata Parva: Fragments from Adhyaya 17 66
Udyoga Parva: Two Renderings of the First Adhaya 67
Udyoga Parva: Passages from Adhyayas 75 and 72 72
The Bhagavad Gita: The First Six Chapters 73
- Appendix I: Opening of Chapter VII 100
- Appendix II: A Later Translation of the Opening of the Gita 101

Vidula 105

Section Three. Kalidasa

Vikramorvasie or The Hero and the Nymph 121
In the Gardens of Vidisha or Malavica and the King: Act I 227
- Appendix: A Fragment from Act II 254

The Birth of the War-God
  Stanzaic Rendering of the Opening of Canto I 257
  Blank Verse Rendering of Canto I 263
  Expanded Version of Canto I and Part of Canto II 271
Notes and Fragments
  Skeleton Notes on the Kumarasambhavam: Canto V 293
  The Line of Raghou: Two Renderings of the Opening 307
  The Cloud Messenger: Fragments from a Lost Translation 309

Section Four. Bhartrihari
The Century of Life 313
Appendix: Prefatory Note on Bhartrihari 368

Section Five. Other Translations from Sanskrit
Opening of the Kiratarjuniya 379
Bhagawat: Skandha I, Adhyaya I 380
Bhavani (Shankaracharya) 383

Part Two
Translations from Bengali

Section One. Vaishnava Devotional Poetry
Radha's Complaint in Absence (Chundidas) 389
Radha's Appeal (Chundidas) 390
Karma: Radha's Complaint (Chundidas) 392
Appeal (Bidyapati) 393
Twenty-two Poems of Bidyapati 394
Selected Poems of Bidyapati 416
Selected Poems of Nidhou 435
Selected Poems of Horo Thacoor 444
Selected Poems of Ganodas 453

Section Two. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee
Hymn to the Mother: Bande Mataram 465
Anandamath: The First Thirteen Chapters 469
  Appendix: A Later Version of Chapters I and II 519

Section Three. Chittaranjan Das

Songs of the Sea 527

Section Four. Disciples and Others

Hymn to India (Dwijendralal Roy) 553
Mother India (Dwijendralal Roy) 555
The Pilot (Atulprasad Sen) 557
Mahalakshmi (Anilbaran Roy) 558
The New Creator (Aruna) 559
Lakshmi (Dilip Kumar Roy) 561
Aspiration: The New Dawn (Dilip Kumar Roy) 562
Farewell Flute (Dilip Kumar Roy) 564
Uma (Dilip Kumar Roy) 565
Faithful (Dilip Kumar Roy) 566
Since thou hast called me (Sahana) 568
A Beauty infinite (Jyotirmayi) 569
At the day-end (Nirodbaran) 570
The King of kings (Nishikanto) 571

Part Three
Translations from Tamil

Andal

Andal: The Vaishnava Poetess 577
To the Cuckoo 579
I Dreamed a Dream 580
Ye Others 581

Nammalwar

Nammalwar: The Supreme Vaishnava Saint and Poet 585
Nammalwar's Hymn of the Golden Age 587
Love-Mad 589

Kulasekhara Alwar

Refuge 593

Tiruvalluvar

Opening of the Kural 597

CONTENTS

Part Four
Translations from Greek

Two Epigrams 601
Opening of the Iliad 602
Opening of the Odyssey 604
Hexameters from Homer 606

Part Five
Translations from Latin

Hexameters from Virgil and Horace 609
Catullus to Lesbia 610

Part One

Translations from Sanskrit

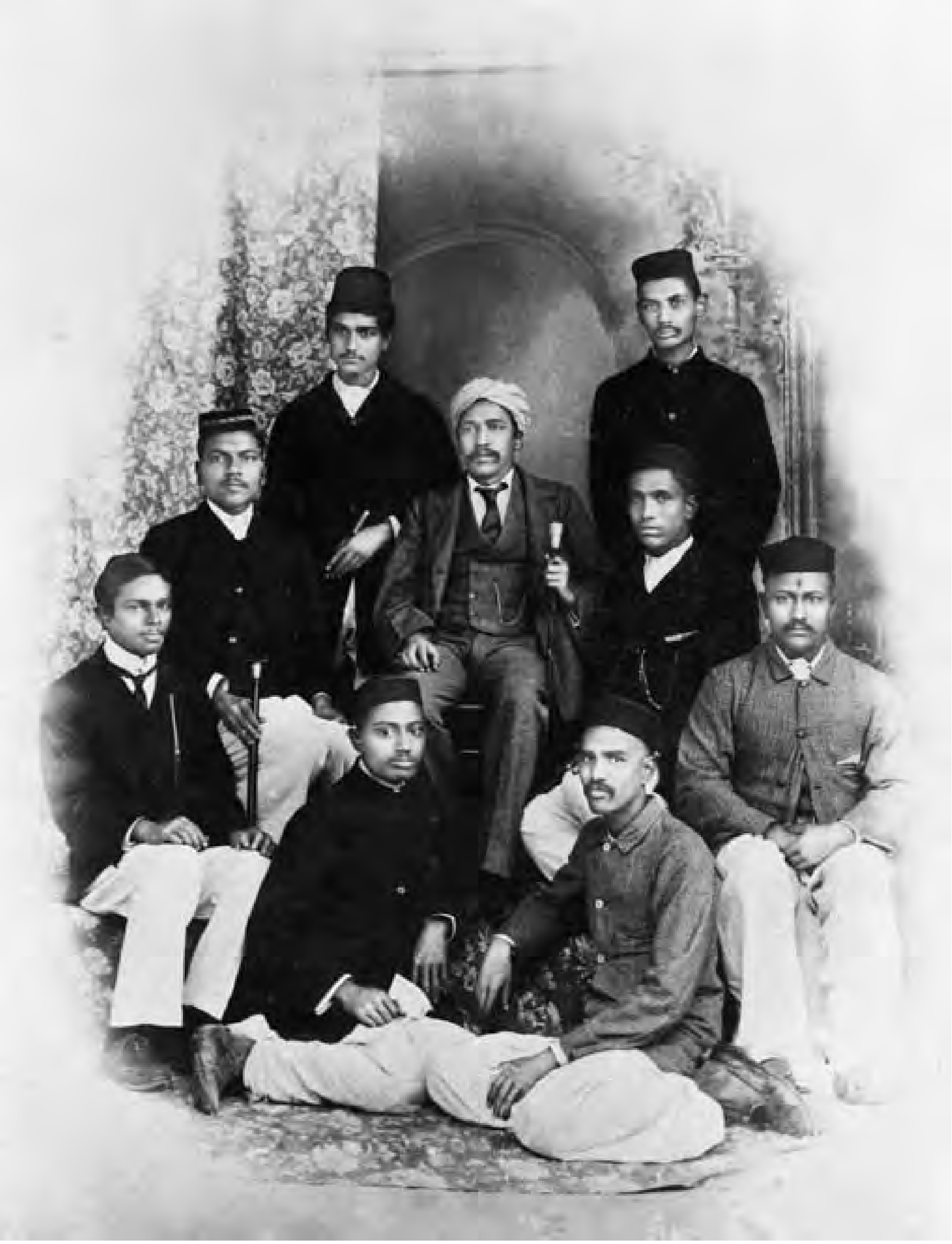

Sri Aurobindo with students of the Baroda College, c. 1906

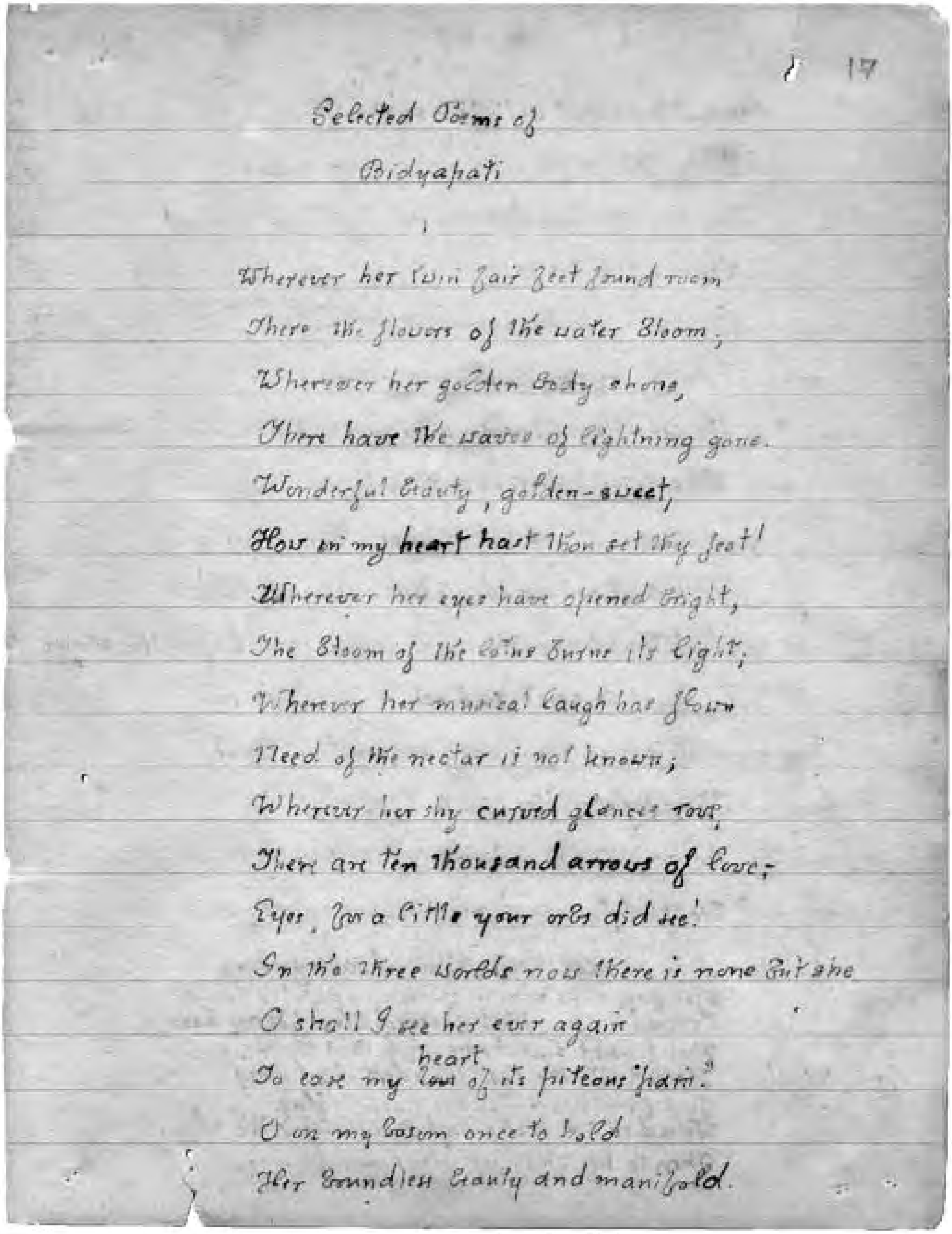

17

Selected Poems of
Bidyapati

1

Wherever her twin fair feet found room
There the flowers of the water bloom;
Wherever her golden body shone,
There have the waves of lightning gone.
Wonderful beauty, golden-sweet,
How on my heart hast thou set thy feet!
Wherever her eyes have opened bright,
The bloom of the lotus burns its light;
Wherever her musical laugh has flown
Need of the nectar is not known;
Wherever her shy curved glances rove,
There are ten thousand arrows of love;
Eyes, for a little your orbs did see!
In the three worlds now there is none but she
O shall I see her ever again
To ease my heart love of its piteous pain?
O on my bosom once to hold
Her boundless beauty and manifold.

The first page of "Selected Poems of Bidyapati"

Section One

The Ramayana

Pieces from the Ramayana

1

Speech of Dussaruth to the assembled States-General of his Empire

Then with a far reverberating sound
As of a cloud in heaven or war-drum's call
Deep-voiced to battle and with echoings
In the wide roof of his majestic voice
That like the resonant surges onward rolled
Moving men's hearts to joy, a King to Kings
He spoke and all they heard him.
"It is known
To you, O princes, how this noblest realm
Was by my fathers ruled, the kings of old
Who went before me, even as one dearest son
Is by his parents cherished; therefore I too
Would happier leave than when my youth assumed
Their burden, mankind, my subjects, and this vast
World-empire of the old Ixvaacou kings.
Lo I have trod in those imperial steps
My fathers left, guarding with sleepless toil
The people while strength was patient in this frame
O'erburdened with the large majestic world.
But now my body broken is and old,
Ageing beneath the shadow of the white
Canopy imperial and outworn with long

Labouring for the good of all mankind.
My people, Nature fails me! I have lived
Thousands of years and many lives of men
And all my worn heart wearies for repose.
Weary am I of bearing up this heavy
Burden austere of the great world, duties
Not sufferable by souls undisciplined:
O folk, to rest from greatness I desire.
Therefore with your august, assembled will,
O powers and O twice-born nations, I
Would share with Rama this great kingdom's crown,
Rama, my warrior son, by kingly birth
And gifts inherited confessed my son,
Rama, a mighty nation's joy. Less fair
Yoked with his favouring constellation bright
The regent moon shall be than Rama's face
When morn upon his crowning smiles. O folk,
Say then shall Luxman's brother be your lord,
Glory's high favourite who empire breathes?
Yea, if the whole vast universe should own
My son for king, it would be kinged indeed
And regal: Lords, of such desirable
Fortune I would possess the mother of men;
Then would I be at peace, at last repose
Transferring to such shoulders Earth. Pronounce
If I have nobly planned, if counselled well;
Grant me your high permissive voices, People,
But if my narrower pleasure, private hope,
Of welfare general the smooth disguise
Have in your censure donned, then let the folk
Themselves advise their monarch or command.
For other is disinterested thought
And by the clash of minds dissimilar
Counsel increases."
                    Then with a deep sound
As when a cloud with rain and thunder armed
Invades the skies, the jewelled peacocks loud

Clamour, assembled monarchs praised their king.
And like a moving echo came the voice
Of the great commons answering them, a thunder
And one exultant roar. Earth seemed to rock
Beneath the noise. Thus by their Emperor high
Admitted to his will great conclave was
Of clergy and of captains and of kings
And of the people of the provinces
And of the people metropolitan. All these
Deliberated and became one mind.
Resolved, they answered then their aged King.

2

An Aryan City

Coshala by the Soroyou, a land
Smiling at heaven, of riches measureless
And corn abounding glad; in that great country
Ayodhya was, the city world-renowned,
Ayodhya by King Manou built, immense.
Twelve yojans long the mighty city lay
Grandiose and wide three yojans. Grandly-spaced
Ayodhya's streets were and the long high-road
Ran through it spaciously with sweet cool flowers
Hourly new-paved and hourly watered wide.
Dussaruth in Ayodhya, as in heaven
Its natural lord, abode, those massive walls
Ruling, and a great people in his name
Felt greater, — door and wall and ponderous arch
And market-places huge. Of every craft
Engines mechanical and tools there thronged
And craftsmen of each guild and manner. High rang
With heralds and sonorous eulogists
The beautiful bright city imperial.

High were her bannered edifices reared,
With theatres and dancing-halls for joy
Of her bright daughters, and sweet-scented parks
Were round and gardens cool. High circling all
The city with disastrous engines stored
In hundreds, the great ramparts like a zone
Of iron spanned in her moated girth immense
Threatening with forts the ancient sky. Defiant
Ayodhya stood, armèd, impregnable,
Inviolable in her virgin walls.
And in her streets was ever large turmoil,
Passing of elephants, the steed and ox,
Mules and rich-laden camels. And through them drove
The powerful barons of the land, great wardens
Of taxes, and from countries near and far
The splendid merchants came much marvelling
To see those orgulous high-builded homes
With jewels curiously fretted, topped
With summer-houses for the joy of girls,
Like some proud city in heaven. Without a gap
On either side as far as eye could reach
Mass upon serried mass the houses rose,
Seven-storied architectures metrical
Upon a level base and made sublime
Splendid Ayodhya octagonally built,
The mother of beautiful women and of gems
A world. Large granaries of rice unhusked
She had and husked rice for the fire, and sweet
Her water, like the cane's delightful juice,
Cool down the throat. And a great voice throbbed of drums,
The tabour and the tambourine, while ever
The lyre with softer rumours intervened.
Nor only was she grandiosely built,
A city without earthly peer, — her sons
Were noble, warriors whose arrows scorned to pierce
The isolated man from friends cut off
Or guided by a sound to smite the alarmed

And crouching fugitive; but with sharp steel
Sought out the lion in his den or grappling
Unarmed they murdered with their mighty hands
The tiger roaring in his trackless woods
Or the mad tuskèd boar. Even such strong arms
Of heroes kept that city and in her midst
Regnant King Dussaruth the nations ruled.

3

A Mother's Lament

"Hadst thou been never born, Rama, my son,
Born for my grief, I had not felt such pain,
A childless woman. For the barren one
Grief of the heart companions, only one,
Complaining, 'I am barren'; this she mourns,
She has no cause for any deeper tears.
But I am inexperienced in delight
And never of my husband's masculine love
Had pleasure, — still I lingered, still endured
Hoping to be acquainted yet with joy.
Therefore full many unlovely words that strove
To break the suffering heart had I to hear
From wives of my husband, I the Queen and highest,
From lesser women. Ah what greater pain
Than this can women have who mourn on earth,
Than this my grief and infinite lament?
O Rama, even at thy side so much
I have endured, and if thou goest hence,
Death is my certain prospect, death alone.
Cruelly neglected, grievously oppressed
I have lived slighted in my husband's house
As though Kaicayie's serving-woman, — nay,
A lesser thing than these. If any honours,

If any follows me, even that man
Hushes when he beholds Kaicayie's son.
How shall I in my misery endure
That bitter mouth intolerable, bear
Her ceaseless petulance. O I have lived
Seventeen years since thou wast born, my son,
O Rama, seventeen long years have lived,
Wearily wishing for an end to grief;
And now this mighty anguish without end!
I have no strength to bear for ever pain;
Nor this worn heart with suffering fatigued
To satisfy the scorn of rivals yields
More tears. Ah how shall I without thy face
Miserably exist, without thy face,
My moon of beauty, miserable days?
Me wretched, who with fasts and weary toils
And dedicated musings reared thee up,
Vainly. Alas, the river's giant banks,
How great they are! and yet when violent rain
Has levelled their tops with water, they descend
In ruin, not like this heart which will not break.
But I perceive death was not made for me,
For me no room in those stupendous realms
Has been discovered; since not even today
As on a mourning hind the lion falls
Death seizes me or to his thicket bears
With his huge leap, — death, ender of all pain.
How livest thou, O hard, O iron heart,
Unbroken? O body, tortured by such grief,
How sinkst thou not all shattered to the earth?
Therefore I know death comes not called — he waits
Inexorably his time. But this I mourn,
My useless vows, gifts, offerings, self-control,
And dire ascetic strenuousness perfected
In passion for a son, — yet all like seed
Fruitless and given to ungrateful soil.
But if death came before his season, if one

By anguish of unbearable heavy grief
Naturally might win him, then today
Would I have hurried to his distant worlds
Of thee deprived, O Rama, O my son.
Why should I vainly live without thine eyes,
Thou moonlight of my soul? No, let me toil
After thee to the savage woods where thou
Must harbour; I will trail these feeble limbs
Behind thy steps as the sick yearning dam
That follows still her ravished young." Thus she
Yearning upon her own beloved son; —
As over her offspring chained a Centauress
Impatient of her anguish deep, so wailed
Cowshalya; for her heart with grief was loud.

4

The Wife

But Sita all the while, unhappy child,
Worshipped propitious gods. Her mind in dreams
August and splendid coronations dwelt
And knew not of that woe. Royal she worshipped,
A princess in her mind and mood, and sat
With expectation thrilled. To whom there came
Rama, downcast and sad, his forehead moist
From inner anguish. Dark with thought and shaken
He entered his august and jubilant halls.
She started from her seat, transfixed, and trembled,
For all the beauty of his face was marred,
Who when he saw his young beloved wife
Endured no longer; all his inner passion
Of tortured pride was opened in his face.
And Sita, shaken, cried aloud, "What grief
Comes in these eyes? Was not today thine hour

When Jupiter, the imperial planet, joins
With Pushya, that high constellation? Why
Art thou then pale, disturbed? Where is thy pomp,
Thy crowning where? No foam-white softness silk
With hundred-shafted canopy o'erhues
Thy kingly head, no fans o'erwave thy face
Like birds that beat their bright wings near a flower;
Minstrel nor orator attends thy steps
To hymn thy greatness, nor are heralds heard
Voicing high stanzas. Who has then forbade
The honeyed curds that Brahmins Veda-wise
Should pour on thy anointed brow, — the throngs
That should behind thee in a glory surge, —
The ministers and leading citizens
And peers and commons of the provinces
And commons metropolitan? Where stays
Thy chariot by four gold-clad horses drawn,
Trampling, magnificent, wide-maned? thy huge
High-omened elephant, a thunder-cloud
Or moving mountain in thy front? thy seat
Enriched with curious gold? Such are the high
Symbols men lead before anointed kings
Through streets flower-crowned. But thou com'st carless, dumb,
Alone. Or if thy coronation still,
Hero, prepares and nations for thee wait,
Wherefore comes this grey face not seen before
In which there is no joy?" Trembling she hushed.
Then answered her the hope of Raghou's line,
"Sita, my sire exiles me to the woods.
O highborn soul, O firm religious mind,
Be strong and hear me. Dussaruth, my sire,
Whose royal word stands as the mountains pledged
To Bharuth's mother boons of old, her choice
In her selected time, who now prefers
Athwart the coronation's sacred pomp
Her just demand; me to the Dundac woods

For fourteen years exiled and in my stead
Bharuth, my brother, royally elect
To this wide empire. Therefore I come, to visit
And clasp thee once, ere to far woods I go.
But thou before King Bharuth speak my name
Seldom; thou knowest great and wealthy men
Are jealous and endure not others' praise.
Speak low and humbly of me when thou speakest,
Observing all his moods; for only thus
Shall man survive against a monarch's brow.
He is a king, therefore to be observed;
Holy, since by a monarch's sacred hands
Anointed to inviolable rule.
Be patient; thou art wise and good. For I
Today begin exile, Sita, today
Leave thee, O Sita. But when I am gone
Into the paths of the ascetics old
Do thou in vows and fasts spend blamelessly
Thy lonely seasons. With the dawn arise
And when thou hast adored the Gods, bow down
Before King Dussaruth, my father, then
Like a dear daughter tend religiously
Cowshalya, my afflicted mother old;
Nor her alone, but all my father's queens
Gratify with sweet love, smiles, blandishments
And filial claspings; — they my mothers are,
Nor than the breasts that suckled me less dear.
But mostly I would have thee show, beloved,
To Shatrughna and Bharuth, my dear brothers,
More than my life-blood dear, a sister's love
And a maternal kindness. Cross not Bharuth
Even slightly in his will. He is thy king,
Monarch of thee and monarch of our house
And all this nation. 'Tis by modest awe
And soft obedience and high toilsome service
That princes are appeased, but being crossed
Most dangerous grow the wrathful hearts of kings

And mischief mean. Monarchs incensed reject
The sons of their own loins who durst oppose
Their mighty policies, and raise, of birth
Though vile, the strong and serviceable man.
Here then obedient dwell unto the King,
Sita; but I into the woods depart."
He ended, but Videha's daughter, she
Whose words were ever soft like one whose life
Is lapped in sweets, now other answer made
In that exceeding anger born of love,
Fierce reprimand and high. "What words are these,
Rama, from thee? What frail unworthy spirit
Converses with me uttering thoughts depraved,
Inglorious, full of ignominy, unmeet
For armed heroical great sons of Kings?
With alien laughter and amazed today
I hear the noblest lips in all the world
Uttering baseness. For father, mother, son,
Brother or son's wife, all their separate deeds
Enjoying their own separate fates pursue.
But the wife is the husband's and she has
Her husband's fate, not any private joy.
Have they said to thee 'Thou art exiled'? Me
That doom includes, me too exiles. For neither
Father nor the sweet son of her own womb
Nor self, nor mother, nor companion dear
Is woman's sanctuary; only her husband
Whether in this world or beyond is hers.
If to the difficult dim forest then,
Rama, this day thou journeyest, I will walk
Before thee, treading down the thorns and sharp
Grasses, smoothing with my torn feet thy way;
And henceforth from my bosom as from a cup
Stale water, jealousy and wrath renounce.
Trust me, take me; for, Rama, in this breast
Sin cannot harbour. Heaven-spacious terraces
Of mansions, the aerial gait of Gods

With leave to walk among those distant stars,
Man's wingèd aspiration or his earth
Of sensuous joys, tempt not a woman's heart:
She chooses at her husband's feet her home.
My father's lap, my mother's knees to me
Were school of morals, Rama; each human law
Of love and service there I learned, nor need
Thy lessons. All things else are wind; I choose
The inaccessible inhuman woods,
The deer's green walk or where the tigers roam,
Life savage with the multitude of beasts,
Dense thickets; there will I dwell in desert ways,
Happier than in my father's lordly house,
A pure-limbed hermitess. How I will tend thee
And watch thy needs, and thinking of no joy
But that warm wifely service and delight
Forget the unneeded world, alone with thee.
We two shall dalliance take in honied groves
And scented springtides. These heroic hands
Can in the forest dangerous protect
Even common men, and will they then not guard
A woman and the noble name of wife?
I go with thee this day, deny who will,
Nor aught shall turn me. Fear not thou lest I
Should burden thee, since gladly I elect
Life upon fruits and roots and still before thee
Shall walk, not faltering with fatigue, eat only
Thy remnants after hunger satisfied,
Nor greater bliss conceive. O I desire
That life, desire to see the large wide lakes,
The cliffs of the great mountains, the dim tarns,
Not frighted since thou art beside me, and visit
Fair waters swan-beset in lovely bloom.
In thy heroic guard my life shall be
A happy wandering among beautiful things.
For I shall bathe in those delightful pools,
And to thy bosom fast-devoted, wooed

By thy great beautiful eyes, yield and experience
On mountains and by rivers large delight.
Thus if a hundred years should pass or many
Millenniums, yet I should not tire nor change.
For wandering so not heaven itself would seem
Desirable, but this were rather heaven.
O Rama, Paradise and thou not there
No Paradise were to my mind; I should
Grow miserable and reject the bliss.
I rather mid the gloomy entangled boughs
And sylvan haunts of elephant and ape,
Clasping my husband's feet, intend to lie
Obedient, glad, and feel about me home."
　　But Rama, though his heart approved her words,
Yielded not to entreaty, for he feared
Her dolour in the desolate wood; therefore
Once more he spoke and kissed her brimming eyes.
"Of a high blood thou comest and thy soul
Turns naturally to duties high. Now too,
O Sita, let thy duty be thy guide;
Elect thy husband's will. Thou shouldst obey,
Sita, my words, who art a woman weak.
The woods are full of hardship, full of peril,
And 'tis thy ease that I command. Nay, nay,
But listen and this forestward resolve
Thou wilt abandon: Love! for I shall speak
Of fears and great discomforts. There is no pleasure
In the vast woodlands drear, but sorrows, toils,
Wretched privations. Thundering from the hills
The waterfalls leap down, and dreadfully
The mountain lions from their caverns roar
Hurting the ear with sound. This is one pain.
Then in vast solitudes the wild beasts sport
Untroubled, but when they behold men, rage
And savage onset move. Unfordable
Great rivers thick with ooze, the python's haunt,
Or turbid with wild elephants, sharp thorns

Beset with pain and tangled creepers close
The thirsty tedious paths impracticable
That echo with the peacock's startling call.
At night thou must with thine own hands break off
The soon-dried leaves, thy only bed, and lay
Thy worn-out limbs fatigued on the hard ground,
And day or night no kindlier food must ask
Than wild fruit shaken from the trees, and fast
Near to the limits of thy fragile life,
And wear the bark of trees for raiment, bind
Thy tresses piled in a neglected knot,
And daily worship with large ceremony
New-coming guests and the high ancient dead
And the great deities, and three times twixt dawn
And evening bathe with sacred accuracy,
And patiently in all things rule observe.
All these are other hardships of the woods.
Nor at thy ease shalt worship, but must offer
The flowers by thine own labour culled, and deck
The altar with observance difficult,
And be content with little and casual food.
Abstinent is their life who roam in woods,
O Mithilan, strenuous, a travail. Hunger
And violent winds and darkness and huge fears
Are their companions. Reptiles of all shapes
Coil numerous where thou walkest, spirited,
Insurgent, and the river-dwelling snakes
That with the river's winding motion go,
Beset thy path, waiting. Fierce scorpions, worms,
Gadflies and gnats continually distress
And the sharp grasses pierce and thorny trees
With an entangled anarchy of boughs
Oppose. O many bodily pains and swift
Terrors the habitants in forests know.
They must expel desire and wrath expel,
Austere of mind, who such discomforts choose,
Nor any fear must feel of fearful things.

Dream not of it, O Sita; nothing good
The mind recalls in that disastrous life
For thee unmeet; only stern miseries
And toils ruthless and many dangers drear."
    Then Sita with the tears upon her face
Made answer very sad and low, "Many
Sorrows and perils of that forest life
Thou hast pronounced, discovered dreadful ills.
O Rama, they are joys if borne for thee,
For thy dear love, O Rama. Tiger or elk,
The savage lion and fierce forest-bull,
Marsh-jaguars and the creatures of the woods
And desolate peaks, will from thy path remove
At unaccustomed beauty terrified.
Fearless shall I go with thee if my elders
Allow, nor they refuse, themselves who feel
That parting from thee, Rama, is a death.
There is no danger! Hero, at thy side
Who shall touch me? Not sovran Indra durst,
Though in his might he master all the Gods,
Assail me with his thunder-bearing hands.
O how can woman from her husband's arms
Divorced exist? Thine own words have revealed,
Rama, its sad impossibility.
Therefore my face is set towards going, for I
Preferring that sweet service of my lord,
Following my husband's feet, surely shall grow
All purified by my exceeding love.
O thou great heart and pure, what joy is there
But thy nearness? To me my husband is
Heaven and God. O even when I am dead,
A bliss to me will be my lord's embrace.
Yea thou who knowst, wilt thou, forgetful grown
Of common joys and sorrows sweetly shared,
The faithful heart reject, reject the love?
Thou carest nothing then for Sita's tears?
Go! poison or the water or the fire

Shall yield me sanctuary, importuning death."
Thus while she varied passionate appeal
And her sweet miserable eyes with tears
Swam over, he her wrath and terror and grief
Strove always to appease. But she alarmed,
Great Janac's daughter, princess Mithilan,
Her woman's pride of love all wounded, shook
From her the solace of his touch and weeping
Assailed indignantly her mighty lord.
"Surely my father erred, great Mithila
Who rules and the Videhas, that he chose
Thee with his line to mate, Rama unworthy,
No man but woman in a male disguise.
What casts thee down, wherefore art thou then sad,
That thou art bent thus basely to forsake
Thy single-hearted wife? Not Savitry
So loved the hero Dyumathsena's son
As I love thee and from my soul adore.
I would not like another woman, shame
Of her great house, turn even in thought from thee
To watch a second face; for where thou goest
My heart follows. 'Tis thou, O shame! 'tis thou
Who thy young wife and pure, thy boyhood's bride
And bosom's sweet companion, like an actor,
Resignst to others. If thy heart so pant
To be his slave for whom thou art oppressed,
Obey him thou, court, flatter, for I will not.
Alas, my husband, leave me not behind,
Forbid me not from exile. Whether harsh
Asceticism in the forest drear
Or Paradise my lot, either is bliss
From thee not parted, Rama. How can I,
Guiding in thy dear steps my feet, grow tired
Though journeying endlessly? as well might one
Weary, who on a bed of pleasure lies.
The bramble-bushes in our common path,
The bladed grasses and the pointed reeds

Shall be as pleasant to me as the touch
Of cotton or of velvet, being with thee.
And when the stormblast rises scattering
The thick dust over me, I, feeling then
My dear one's hand, shall think that I am smeared
With sandal-powder highly-priced. Or when
From grove to grove upon the grass I lie,
In couches how is there more soft delight
Or rugs of brilliant wool? The fruits of trees,
Roots of the earth or leaves, whate'er thou bring,
Be it much or little, being by thy hands
Gathered, I shall account ambrosial food.
I shall not once remember, being with thee,
Father or mother dear or my far home.
Nor shall thy pains by my companionship
Be greatened — doom me not to parting, Rama.
For only where thou art is Heaven; 'tis Hell
Where thou art not. O thou who knowst my love,
If thou canst leave me, poison still is left
To be my comforter. I will not bear
Their yoke who hate thee. And if today I shunned
Swift solace, grief at length would do its work
With torments slow. How shall the broken heart
That once has beaten on thine, absence endure
Ten years and three to these and yet one more?"
So writhing in the fire of grief, she wound
Her body about her husband, fiercely silent,
Or sometimes wailed aloud; as a wild beast
That maddens with the firetipped arrows, such
Her grief ungovernable and like the stream
Of fire from its stony prison freed,
Her quick hot tears, or as when the whole river
From new-culled lilies weeps, — those crystal brooks
Of sorrow poured from her afflicted lids.
And all the moonbright glories of her face
Grew dimmed and her large eyes vacant of joy.
But he revived her with sweet words, "Weep not;

If I could buy all heaven with one tear
Of thine, Sita, I would not pay the price,
My Sita, my beloved. Nor have I grown,
I who have stood like God by nature planted
High above any cause of fear, suddenly
Familiar with alarm. Only I knew not
Thy sweet and resolute courage, and for thee
Dreaded the misery that sad exiles feel.
But since to share my exile and o'erthrow
God first created thee, O Mithilan,
Sooner shall high serenity divorce
From the self-conquering heart, than thou from me
Be parted. Fixed I stand in my resolve
Who follow ancient virtue and the paths
Of the old perfect dead; ever my face
Turns steadfast to that radiant goal, self-vowed
Its sunflower. To the drear wilderness I go.
My father's stainless honour points me on,
His oath that must not fail. This is the old
Religion brought from dateless ages down,
Parents to honour and obey; their will
Should I transgress, I would not wish to live.
For how shall man with homage or with prayer
Approach the distant Deity, yet scorn
A present godhead, father, mother, sage?
In these man's triple objects live, in these
The triple world is bounded, nor than these
Has all wide earth one holier thing. Large eyes,
These therefore let us worship. Truth or gifts,
Or honour or liberal proud sacrifice,
Nought equals the effectual force and pure
Of worship filial done. This all bliss brings,
Compels all gifts, compels harvests and wealth,
Knowledge compels and children. All these joys,
These human boons great filial souls on earth
Recovering here enjoy and in that world
Heaven naturally is theirs. But me whatever,

In the strict path of virtue while he stands,
My father bids, my heart bids that. I go,
But not alone, o'ercome by thy sweet soul's
High courage. O intoxicating eyes,
O faultless limbs, go with me, justify
The wife's proud name, partner in virtue. Love,
Warm from thy great, highblooded lineage old
Thy purpose springing mates with the pure strain
Of Raghou's ancient house. O let thy large
And lovely motion forestward make speed
High ceremonies to absolve. Heaven's joys
Without thee now were beggarly and rude.
Haste then, the Brahmin and the pauper feed
And to their blessings answer jewels. All
Our priceless diamonds and our splendid robes,
Our curious things, our couches and our cars,
The glory and the eye's delight, do them
Renounce, nor let our faithful servants lose
Their worthy portion." Sita of that consent
So hardly won sprang joyous, as on fire,
Disburdened of her wealth, lightly to wing
Into dim wood and wilderness unknown.

An Aryan City

Prose Version

Coshala named, a mighty country there was, swollen and glad; seated on the banks of the Sarayu it abounded in wealth & grain; and there was the city Ayodhya famed throughout the triple world, built by Manu himself, lord of men. Twelve leagues was the beautiful mighty city in its length, three in its breadth; large & clearcut were its streets, and a vast clearcut highroad adorned it that ever was sprinkled with water and strewn freely with flowers. Dasaratha increasing a mighty nation peopled that city, like a king of the gods in his heavens; a town of arched gateways he made it, and wide were the spaces between its shops; full was it of all machines and implements and inhabited by all kinds of craftsmen and frequented by herald and bard, a city beautiful of unsurpassed splendours; lofty were its bannered mansions, crowded was it with hundreds of hundred-slaying engines of war, and in all quarters of the city there were theatres for women and there were gardens and mango-groves and the ramparts formed a girdle round its spacious might; hard was it for the foe to enter, hard to assail, for difficult and deep was the city's moat; filled it was of horses & elephants, cows and camels and asses, crowded with its tributary kings arrived for sacrifice to the gods, rich with merchants from many lands and glorious with palaces built of precious stone high-piled like hills & on the house-tops pleasure-rooms; like Indra's Amarávati Ayodhya seemed.

The Book of the Wild Forest

Then, possessing his soul, Rama entered the great forest, the forest Dandaka with difficulty approachable by men and beheld a circle there of hermitages of ascetic men; a refuge for all living things, with ever well-swept courts and strewn with many forms of beasts and swarming with companies of birds and holy, high & temperate sages graced those homes. The high of energy approached them unstringing first his mighty bow, and they beheld him like a rising moon & with wonder in their looks gazed at the fabric of his beauty and its glory and softness and garbed grace and at Vydehie too with unfalling eyelids they gazed and Lakshmana; for they were things of amazement to these dwellers in the woods. Great-natured sages occupied in doing good to all living things, they made him sit a guest in their leafy home, and burning with splendour of soul like living fires they offered him guest-worship due and presented all things of auspice, full of high gladness in the act, roots, flowers and fruits they gave, yea, all the hermitage they laid at the feet of Rama high-souled and, learned in righteousness, said to him with outstretched upward palms, "For that he is the keeper of the virtue of all this folk, a refuge and a mighty fame, high worship and honour are the King's, and he holds the staff of justice & is reverend to all. Of Indra's self he is the fourth part and protects the people, O seed of Raghu, therefore he enjoys noble & beautiful pleasures and to him men bow down. Thou shouldst protect us, then, dwellers in thy dominions, for whether the city hold thee or the wilderness, still art thou the King and the master of the folk. But we, O King, have laid by the staff of offence, we have put anger from us and the desires of the senses, and 'tis thou must protect us always, ascetics rich in austerity but helpless as children in the womb."

Now when he had taken of their hospitality, Rama towards the rising of the sun took farewell of all those seers and plunged into mere forest scattered through with many beasts of the chase and haunted by the tiger and the bear. There he & Lakshmana following him saw a desolation in the midmost of that wood, for blasted were tree & creeper & bush and water was nowhere to be seen, but the forest was full of the screaming of vultures and rang with the crickets' cry. And walking with Sita there Cacootstha in that haunt of fierce wild beasts beheld the appearance like a mountain peak and heard the thundering roar of an eater of men; deep set were his eyes and huge his face, hideous was he and hideousbellied, horrid, rough and tall, deformed and dreadful to the gaze, and wore a tiger's skin moist with fat and streaked with gore, — a terror to all creatures even as Death the ender when he comes with yawning mouth. Three lions, four tigers, two wolves, ten spotted deer and the huge fat-smeared head of an elephant with its tusks he had stuck upon an iron spit and roared with a mighty sound. As soon as he saw Rama & Lakshmana & Sita Mithilan he ran upon them in sore wrath like Death the ender leaping on the nations, and with a terrible roar that seemed to shake the earth he took Vydehie up in his arms and moved away and said, "You who wear the ascetic's cloth and matted locks, O ye whose lives are short, yet with a wife have you entered Dandak woods and you bear the arrow, sword and bow, how is this that you being anchorites hold your dwelling with a woman's beauty? Workers of unrighteousness, who are ye, evil men, disgrace to the garb of the seer? I Viradha the Rakshasa range armed these tangled woods eating the flesh of the sages. This woman with the noble hips shall be my spouse but as for you, I will drink in battle your sinful blood." Evilsouled Viradha speaking this wickedness Sita heard his haughty speech, alarmed she shook in her apprehension as a plaintain trembles in the stormwind. The son of Raghu seeing the beautiful Sita in Viradha's arms said to Lakshmana, his face drying up with grief, "Behold, O my brother, the daughter of Janak lord of men, my wife of noble life taken into Viradha's arms, the King's daughter highsplendoured and nurtured in utter ease! The thing Kaikayie desired, the thing dear to her that she chose for a gift, how quickly today, O Lakshmana, has it been utterly fulfilled, she whose foresight was not satisfied with the kingdom for her son, but she sent me, the beloved of all beings, to the wild woods. Now today she has her desire, that middle mother of mine. For no worse grief can befall me than that another should touch Vydehie and that my father should perish and my own kingdom be wrested from my hands." So Cacootstha spake, and Lakshmana answered him & his eyes filled with the mist of grief and he panted like a furious snake controlled, "O thou who art like Indra and the protector of this world's creatures, why dost thou afflict thyself as if thou wert one who had himself no protector, even though I am here, the servant of thy will? Today shall the Rakshasa be slain by my angry shaft and earth drink the blood of Viradha dead. The wrath that was born in me against Bharat for his lust of rule, I will loose upon Viradha as the Thunderer hurls his bolt against a hill."

Then Viradha spoke yet again and filled the forest with his voice, "Answer to my questioning, who are ye and whither do ye go?" And Rama answered to the Rakshasa with his mouth of fire, in his pride of strength he answered his questioning and declared his birth in Ikshwaku's line. "Kshatriyas accomplished in virtue know us to be, farers in this forest, but of thee we would know who thou art that rangest Dandak woods." And to Rama of unerring might Viradha made reply, "Java's son am I, Shatahrada was my dam and Viradha am I called by all Rakshasas on earth.

The Defeat of Dhoomraksha

But in their lust of battle shouted loud,
Rejoicing, all the Apes when they beheld
The dreadful Rakshas coming forth to war,
Dhoomraksha. High the din of mellay rose,
Giant and Ape with tree and spear and mace
Smiting each other; for the Giants hewed
Their dire opponents down on every side,
And they too with the trunks of trees bore down
Their monstrous foes and levelled with the dust.
But in their wrath increasing Lanca's hosts
Pierced the invaders; straight their arrows flew
Unswerving, fatal, heron-winged; sharp-knobbed
Their maces smote and dreadful clubs prevailed;
The curious tridents did their work. But torn,
But mangled by the shafts, but pierced with spears
The Apes in act heroic, unalarmed,
Drew boldness from impatience of defeat;
Trees from the earth they plucked, lifted great rocks
And with a dreadful speed, roaring aloud,
Hurling their shouted names behind the blow,
They slew with these the heroes of the isle.
Down fell the Giants crushed and from their mouths
Vomited lifeblood, pounded were by rocks
And with crushed sides collapsed or by ape-teeth
Were mangled, or lay in heaps by trees o'erborne.
Some with sad faces tore their locks in grief,
Bewildered with the smell of blood and death
Some lifeless sank upon the earth. Enraged
Dhoomraksha saw the rout and forward stormed
And made a mighty havoc of the foe,
Crushing to earth their bleeding forms with axe

And javelin and mace oppressed or torn.
Some helpless died, some gave their blood to earth,
Some scattering fled the fierce pursuer's wrath,
Some with torn hearts slept on one side relaxed
On earth's soft bosom, some with entrails plucked
Out of their bodies by the tridents died
Wretchedly. Sweet twanged the bowstrings, lyres of war,
The sobbing of the warriors' breath was time
And with a thunder dull, battle delivered
Its dread orchestral music. In the front
Of all that war Dhoomraksha thundered armed,
Laughing aloud, and with fast-sleeting shafts
Scattered to every wind his foes. At last
The Son of Tempest saw his army's rout
Astonished by Dhoomraksha; wroth he saw
And came, carrying a giant crag he came,
Red-gazing, and with all his father's force
At dire Dhoomraksha's chariot hurled. Alarmed
Dhoomraksha saw the flying boulder come
And rearing up his club from the high car
He leaped. Down crashed the rock and ground the car
To pieces, wheel and flag and pole and yoke
And the forsaken bow. Hanuman too
Abandoning his chariot through the ranks
Opposing strode with havoc; trees unlopped
With all their boughs for mace and club he used.
With shattered heads and bodies oozing blood
The Giants fell before him. Scattering so
The Giant army Hanuman, the Wind's
Tremendous son, took easily in his hands
A mountain's mighty top and ran and strode
Where stood Dhoomraksha. Roaring answer loud
The mighty Giant with his club upreared
Came furiously to meet the advancing foe.
Wrathful the heroes met, and on the head
Of Hanuman the weapon many-spiked
Of dire Dhoomraksha fell; but he the Ape,

Strong in inheritance of might divine,
Not even heeded such a blow, but brought
Right on Dhoomraksha's crown the summit huge
And all his limbs were shattered with the stroke
And like a broken mountain they collapsed
Earthward, o'erwhelmed, in-smitten, prone. The Giants left,
Survivors of that slaughter, fled alarmed
And entered Lanca by the Apes pursued
And butchered as they fled. But from that fight
Victorious, weary, rested Hanuman
Amid his slaughtered foemen and engirt
With the red rivers he had made to flow,
Praised by the host, rejoicing in his wounds.

Section Two

The Mahabharata

Sabha Parva
or Book of the Assembly-Hall

Canto I

The Building of the Hall

And before Krishna's face to great Urjuun
Maia with clasped hands bending; mild and boon
His voice as gratitude's: "Me the strong ire
Had slain of Krishna or the hungry fire
Consumed: by thee I live, O Kuuntie's son:
What shall I do for thy sake?" And Urjuun,
"Paid is thy debt. Go thou and prosper: love
Repays the lover: this our friendship prove."
"Noble thy word and like thyself;" returned
The Titan, "yet in me a fire has burned
Some deed to do for love's sake. He am I,
The Titan architect and poet high,
The maker: something give me to create."
Urjuun replied, "If from the grasp of Fate
Rescued by me thou pray'st, then is the deed
Sufficient, Titan: I will take no meed.
Yet will I not deny thee: for my friend
Do somewhat and thy debt to me shall end."
Then by the Titan questioned Vaasudave
Pondered a while what boon were best to have.
At length he answered: "Let a hall be raised
Peerless, thou great artificer highpraised,—
If thou wilt needs do somewhat high designed,—
For Yudishthere such hall as may thy mind
Imagine. Wonderful the pile shall be,
No mortal man shall copy although he

Labour to grasp it, nor on transient earth
Another equal wonder shall have birth.
Vast let it be. Let human and divine
And the Titanic meet in one design."
Joyful the builder took the word and high
The Pandove's hall he made imperially.
But first the heroes to the King repair,
Just Yudishthere, and all their story there
Tell out: the Titan also they present,
Their living proof of great accomplishment.
Nobly he welcomed was by that just King.
There in high ease, befriended, sojourning
The life of elder gods dethroned of old
The Titan to the Pandove princes told.
Short space for rest took the creative mind
And inly planned and mightily designed
A hall imperial for those mighty ones.
With Krishna then consulting and the sons
Of Pritha on a day of sacred light
All fate-appeasing ceremonies right
He ordered and with rice in sugared milk
Sated the priests, silver and herds and silk.
In energy of genius next he chose
Ten thousand cubits, mapped a mighty close,
Region delightful where divinely sweet
The joy of all the seasons seemed to meet.
Four were the sides, ten thousand cubits all.
This was the measure of the Pandove's hall.
But in the Khandav plain abode in ease
Junnardun mid the reverent ministries
Of the great five: their loves his home renew.
But for his father's sight a yearning grew
And drew him thence. He of the monarch just
And Pritha craved departure. In the dust
His head he lowered at her worshipped feet,
He for the whole world's homage only meet.
Him she embraced and kissed his head. Next he

His sister dear encountered lovingly.
Wet were his eyes as with low words and few
Pregnant and happy, admirably true
He greeted that divine fair girl and heard
Of her sweet eloquence many a tender word
That to her kin should travel; reverent
She bowed her lovely head. And Krishna went
To Draupadie and Dhaum and took of these
Various farewell, — soft words her heart to ease,
But to the priest yielded the man divine
Obeisance just and customary sign.
Thereafter with Urjuun the hero wise
His brothers met and in celestial guise,
Like Indra with the great immortals round,
All rites that to safe journeying redound
Performing, bath and pure ablution made
And worship due with salutation paid,
Garlanded, praying, in rich gems arrayed,
All incenses that breathe beneath the sun
To gods and Brahmans offered. These things done
Departure now was next. Stately he came
Outward and all of venerable name
Who bore the sacred office, had delight
Of fruit and grain yet in the husk and white
Approvèd curds, much wealth; and last the ground
He trod and traced the gyre of blessing round.
So with a fortunate day and fortunate star
And moment in his chariot built for war,
Golden, swiftrushing, with the Bird for sign
And banner, sword and discus, bow divine
And mace round hung, and horses twin of stride,
Sugreve and Shaibya, went the lotus-eyed.
And in his love the monarch Yudishthere
Mounted, Daaruik, the great charioteer,
Put quite aside. Himself he grasped the rein,
Himself he drove the chariot o'er the plain.
And great Urjuuna mounted, seized the white

Windbringer with the golden staff and bright
And called with his strong arm the circling wind:
And Bhema and the princes twin behind
Followed, and citizen and holy priest:
With the horizon the procession ceased.
All these with the far-conquering Krishna wend.
As a high Sage whom his disciples tend,
So for a league they journeyed; then no more
He suffered but Yudishthere's will o'erbore
And forced return; then grappled to his breast
Urjuun belovèd. Greeting well the rest
Religiously the monarch's feet embraced
Govinda, but the Pandove raised and kissed
The head of Krishna beautiful-eyed. "Go then"
He murmured; yet even so the word was vain
Until reunion promised. Hardly at length
He stayed them with entreaty's utmost strength
From following him on foot; so glad has gone
Like Indra thundering to the immortals' town.
But they stood following with the eyes their light
Until he vanished from the paths of sight.
Ev'n then their hearts, though distance now conceals,
Run yet behind his far invisible wheels.
But the swift chariot takes their joy and pride,
Too swift, alas! from eyes unsatisfied
With that dear vision, and reluctant, slow,
In thoughts that still with Krishna's horsehooves go,
Ceasing at last to their own town again
Silent they wend, the lion lords of men.
So entered the immortal Yudishthere
Girt round with friends his glorious city; here
He left them and in bowers for pleasure made
With Draupadie the godlike hero played.
But Krishna, glad of soul, in whirling car
Came speeding to his noble town afar
With Daaruik and the hero Saatyakie.
Swift as the great God's wingèd favourite he

Entered, and all the Yadove lords renowned
Came honouring him, with one the chief and crowned.
And Krishna stayed his father old to greet
And Ahuik and his glorious mother's feet
And Bullaraam, his brother. His own sons
He next embraced and all their little ones.
Last of his elders leave he took and went
To Rookminnie's fair house in glad content.
In Dwarca he; but the great Titan Mai
Still pondered and imagined cunningly
A jewelled brightness in his thought begun,
An audience-hall supreme for Hades' son.
　　So with the conqueror unparalleled,
Urjuun, the Titan now this discourse held.
"To the great hill I go and soon return,
Whose northern peaks from Coilas upward burn.
There when the Titans sacrifice of yore
Intended by the water Windusor,
Rich waste of fine material was left,
Wondrous, of stone a variegated weft
That for the mighty audiencehall was stored
Of Vrishapurvun, the truthspeaking lord.
Thither I wend and make, if yet endure
All that divine material bright and pure,
The Pandove's hall, a glory to behold,
Admirable, set with jewelry and gold
Taking the heart to pleasure. These besides
A cruel mace in Windusor abides,
Massive endurance, studded aureate,
Ponderous, a death of foes, commensurate
With many thousand more in murderous will.
There after slaughter huge of foes it still
Lies by a king relinquished. This believe
For Bheme created as for thee Gandeve.
There too the mighty conch Varunian lies:
Thunders God-given swell its Ocean voice.
Expect these from my hand infallibly."

Thus saying went the Titan hastily
To the northeastern edge of heaven where high
Soars Mainaac hill into the northward sky
From Coilas. Golden soar its ridges large
And noble gems it stores and bright the marge
Of Windusor. The high conceiving Lord,
King of all creatures and by worlds adored,
Here grandiose offerings gave and sacrifice
By hundreds, and with excellent device,
For beauty not to old tradition, made
Pillars of sacrifice with gems inlaid
And monumental temples massed with gold.
Long here enduring Bhogiruth the bold
Through tedious seasons dwelt, yearning to see
Ganges, his selfnamed river Bhaagirothie.
Nor these alone but he, the Argus-eyed
Lord of imperial Sachi, to his side
Victory by sacrifice compelled. Creating
World systems, energy irradiating
He sits here whom the awful ghosts attend,
Shiva, who no beginning has nor end.
Nur and Naraian there and Brahma there
And Hades and the Immoveable repair,—
Revolving when a thousand ages wend,
To absolve with sacrifice the cycle's end.
Here now ambitious of religion gave
Long years his mighty offerings Vaasudave,
Devoutly, and bright temples raised their head,
Memorial columns golden-garlanded,
Unnumbered, multitudinous, immense.
Thither went Maia and recovered thence
Conchshell and mace and for the audiencehall
The old Titanic stone marmoreal.
All mighty wealth the servile giants guard,
The Titan genius gathered and prepared
His famous hall unparalleled, divine,
Where all the jewels of the world combine.

To Bheme he gave that mighty mace, the shell
Godgiven called, whose cry unutterable
When from the great conch's ocean mouth 'tis hurled
Far borne, trembling of creatures fills the world,
To great Urjuuna. But immense the hall
Ten thousand cubits spread its bulk and all
Its sides ten thousand, upon mighty boles
Columnar elevate: nor either rolls
The sun through heaven, moon nor vast fire so bright.
Slaying the sunshine with superior light
It blazed as if aflame, most luminous, white,
Celestial, large, raised like a cloud to soar
Against the heavens whose lustre it o'erbore.
Nor weariness nor sorrow enter might
That wide and noble palace of delight.
Of fair material was it made, the walls
And arches jewelled were of those rich halls.
Such wonder of creative genius won
The World's Designer to comparison.
For neither Brahma's roof nor Vishnu's high
Might equal this for glorious symmetry.
No, not Sudhurma, Indra's council hall,
With Maia's cunning strove. At Maia's call
Eight thousand Helots of the Giant blood
Upbore the pile and dreadful sentries stood
Travellers on wind, hugebodied, horrible,
Shell-eared, far-strikers, with bloodshot eyes and fell.
And in the middle a lotus-lake he made
Unparalleled, white lotuses displayed,
And birds innumerable and all the stems
Of that fair blossom were of beauteous gems
And all the leaves were sapphires: through them rolled
Gold tortoises and wondrous fish of gold.
Marble mosaic was the stair: the wave
Translucent ran its edges fine to lave,
Wrinkled with soft cool winds that over it sped.
A rain of pearl drops on the floor was shed.

And seats from slabs of precious stone combined
The marble banks of that fair water lined.
And all around it ever-flowering trees
Of various race hung dark and huge with ease
Of cool delightful shade, sweet-smelling woods
And quiet waters where the white swan broods
And ducks and waders of the ripples. Sweet
The wind came from them, fragrance in its feet
The lotus gave and lily of the land,
And with its booty the great brothers fanned.
Full fourteen months he laboured: the fifteenth
Saw ready jewelled arch and luminous plinth.
Then only came the Titan and declared
To the just King his mighty hall prepared.
        Ceremony of entrance Yudishthere
Then held. Thousands of Brahmins luscious cheer
Of rice with sugared milk enjoyed wherein
Honey was mingled; flesh besides they win
Of boar and stag and all roots eatable
And fruits and sesamum-rice that tastes full well
And grain of offering and pedary,
Yea, meats of many natures variously
Eaten and chewed, of drinks a vast array;
And robes brought newly from the loom that day
Were given, all possible garlands scented sweetly
To Brahmins from all regions gathering, meetly
Presented, and to each a thousand cows.
O then was air all thunder with their vows:
The din of blessing touched the very skies.
With these the notes of instruments arise
Varied, celestial, and sweet fumes untold.
Before the son of Hades mighty-souled
Wrestlers and mimes made show and those who play
With fencing staves and jongleurs. For that day
He who installed the deities, worshipping,
Was greatest of the Kuurus and a king.
He by his brothers hemmed, high worship done,

With saint and hero for companion,
In that his palace admirably bright,
Like Indra in his heaven, took delight.

CANTO II
The Debated Sacrifice

* * * * * * * * *

* But when Yudishthere had heard
The sage's speech, his heart was moved with sighs.
He coveted Imperial Sacrifice.
All bliss went from him. Only to his thought
The majesty of royal saints was brought
By sacrifice exalted, Paradise
Acquired augustly, and before his eyes
He most was luminous who in heaven shone,
Heaven by sacrificial merit won.
He too that offering would absolve; so now
Receiving reverence with a courteous brow,
The assembly broke, to meditate retiring
On that great sacrifice of his desiring.
Frequent the thought and ever all its length
His mind leaned that way. Yet though huge his strength,
His heroism though admired, the King
Forgot not Right, but pondered how this thing
Might touch the peoples, whether well or ill.
For just was Yudishthere and courted still
His people and with vast, impartial mind
Served all, nor ever from this word declined,
"To each his own; nor shall the King disturb
With wrath or violence Right, but these shall curb."
So was all speech of men one grand acclaim;
The nation as a father trusted him:
No hater had he in his whole realm's bound,

By the sweet name of Enemiless renowned.
And through his gracious government upheld
By Bhema's force and foreign battle quelled
By the two-handed might of great Urjuun;
Sahadave's cultured equity and boon
Necoola's courteous mood to all men shown,
The thriving provinces were void of fear;
Strife was forgotten and each liberal year
The rains were measured to desire; no man
The natural limit of his course outran:
Usury, tillage, rearing, merchandise
Throve with good government and sacrifice
Prospered; rack-renting was not nor unjust
Extortion; from the land was pestilence thrust,
And mad calamity of fire unknown
Became while this just monarch had his own.
Robbers and cheats and royal favourites
Were now not heard of to infringe men's rights
Nor the king's harm nor mutual injury
Intrigue. To yield into his treasury
Their taxes traders came and princes high
On the sixfold pretexts of policy,
Or at Yudishthere's court good grace to win.
Even greedy, passionate, luxurious men
His just rule to the common welfare turned.
He in the glory of all virtues burned,
An all-pervading man, by all adored,—
An emperor and universal lord
Bearing upon his shoulders the whole State.
And from the neatherd to the twice-born great
All in his wide domains that lived and moved,
Him more than father, more than mother loved.
He now his brothers and his ministers
Summoning severally their mind infers
And often with repeated subtle speech
Solicitous questions and requestions each.
All with one cry unanimous advise

To institute Imperial Sacrifice.
"O king," they said, "the man by God designed
Who has acquired the Oceanic mind
Of kingship, not with this bounds his pretence,
But hungers for imperial excellence.
In thee it dwells, high Cowrove; we thy friends
See clear that Fate this sacrifice intends.
To complete heroes it is subject. Men
Who centre chivalry within them, gain
Its sanction when with ancient chants the fires
Are heaped by sages, lords of their desires
Through selfcontrol intense. The serpentine
And all rites other in this one rite twine.
And he who at its end is safely crowned
Is as World Conqueror, is as King renowned.
Puissance is thine, great-armed, and we are thine.
O King, soon then shall Empire crown thy line:
O King, debate no longer; aim thy will
At Sacrifice Imperial." So they still
Advised their King together and apart,
And deep their accents sunk into his heart.
Bold was their speech, rang pleasant to his ear,
Seemed excellent and just, yet Yudishthere
Still pondered though he knew his puissance well.
Again he bade his hardy brothers tell
Their mind and priests high-souled and ministers:
With Dhaumya and Dwypaian too confers,
Wise and deliberate he. "Speak justly, friends,
What happy way my hard desire attends.
Hard is the sacrifice imperial meant
For an imperial mind's accomplishment."
All answered with a seasonable voice:
"Just King, thine is that mind and thou the choice
Of Fate for this high ceremony renowned."
Sweet did the voice of friends and flamens sound:
Yet still he curbed himself and still he thought.
His yearning for the people's welfare wrought

A noble hesitation. Wise the man
Who often will his power and vantage scan,
Who measures means with the expenditure,
Season with place, then acts; his deeds endure.
"Not with my mere resolve the enterprise
Begins and ends of this great sacrifice."
While thus in a strong grasp his thought he held
His mind to Krishna who all beings excelled
Of mortal breed, for surest surety ran,
Krishna, the strong unmeasurable man
Whom Self-born upon earth conjectured he
Because his deeds measured with deity.
"To Krishna's mind all things are penetrable:
His genius knows not the impossible"
Pondered the son of Hades "nor is there
A weight his mighty mind cannot upbear."
On Krishna as on sage and guide his mind
(Who is indeed the guide of all mankind)
He fixed and sent his messenger afar
To Yadove land in a swift-rolling car.
Then sped the rushing wheels with small delay
And reached the gated city Dwaraca,
The gated city where Junnardun dwelt.
Krishna to Yudishthere's desire felt
Answering desire and went with Indrosane
Passing through many lands to Indra-Plain,
Fierily passing with impetuous hooves
To Indraprustha and the men he loves.
With filial soul his brothers Yudishthere
And Bheme received the man without compeer:
But Krishna to his father's sister went
And greeted her with joyous love; then bent
His heart to pleasure with his heart's own friend,
All reverently the courteous twins attend.
But after rest in those bright halls renowned
Yudishthere sought the immortal man and found
At leisure sitting and revealed his need.

"King's Sacrifice I covet, but indeed
Thou knowest not practicable by will alone
Like other rites is this imperial one,
But he in whom all kingly things combine,
He whom all men, all lands to honour join,
A king above all kings, he finds alone
Empire. And now though all my friends are one
To bid me forward, yet do I attend
From thy voice only certainty, O friend.
Some from affection lovingly suppress
Their friend's worst fault and some from selfishness,
Speaking what most will please. Others conceal
Their own good with the name of commonweal.
Such counsel in his need a monarch hath.
But thou art pure of selfish purpose; wrath
And passion know thee not; and thou wilt tell
What shall be solely and supremely well."
        Krishna made answer: "All thy virtues, all
Thy gifts make thee the man imperial.
Thou dost deserve this Sacrifice. Yet well
Though thou mayst know it, one thing will I tell.
When Raama, Jemadugny's son, had slain
The chivalry of earth, those who were fain
To flee, left later issue to inherit
The name of Kshettriya and the regal spirit.
Of these the rule by compact of the clan
Approved thou knowest, and each highborn man
Whate'er and all the kingly multitude
Name themselves subjects of great Ila's brood
And the Ixvaacuu house. Now by increase
The Ixvaacuu Kings and Ilian count no less
Than are a hundred clans. Of all most huge
Yayaaty of the Bhojas, a deluge
Upon the earth in multitude and gift.
To these all chivalry their eyes uplift,
These and their mighty fortunes serve. But now
King Jerasundha lifts his diademed brow

And Ila and Ixvaacuu pale their fires,
O'erwhelmed. He over kings and nations towers;
This way and that way with impetuous hands
Assailing overbears; the middle lands
Inhabits and by division rules the world
Since he in whose sole hand the earth is furled,
Who is first monarch and supreme, may claim,
He and he only, the imperial name.
And him the mighty hero Shishupaal
Owns singly nor disdains his lord to call
But leads his warfare, and, of captains best,
The puissant man and subtle strategist,
Vuccar, the Koruush king, and those two famed
Grew to his side, Hunsa and Dimbhuc named,
Brave men and high of heart; and Corrusus,
Duntvuccar, Meghovaahon, Corobhus,
Great kings; and the wide-ruler of the west,
The Yovun lord upon whose gleaming crest
Burns the strange jewel wonderful, whose might
Is like the boundless Ocean's infinite,
Whose rule Norac obeys and Muruland.
King Bhogadutt owns Jerasundh's command,
Thy father's ancient friend, and more with hand
Serves him than word. He only of the west
And southern end of earth who is possessed,
The hero Kuuntiewurdhun Puurujit
Feels for thee as a tender father might.
Chained by affection to thee is his heart
And by affection in thy weal has part.
To Jerasundh he whom I did not slay
Is gathered, he who must forsooth display
My signs, gives himself out god humanized
And man ideal, and for such is prized
Now in the world, a madman soiled of soul,
The tyrant of the Chédies, whose control
Poundra and Keerat own, a mighty lord,
King of Bengal and by the name adored

Of Poundrian Vaasudave. The Bhoja strong
To whom wide lands, one fourth of all, belong,
Called friend of Indra — he made tameable
Pandya and Cruth and Koyshic by his skill
And science, and his brother Aacritie
Is very Purshuraam in prowess — he,
Even Bheeshmuc, even this high, far-conquering king
To Jerasundh is vowed. We worshipping,
We who implore his favour, we his kin
Are utterly rejected, all our pain
Of benefaction met with sharp contempt,
Benefit with harm returned or evil attempt.
He has forgot his birth, his pride, his name;
Blinded by Jerasundha's burning fame
To him is gone. To him high fortune yields;
Great nations leave their old ancestral fields.
The Bhojas of the North to western plain
Their eighteen clans transplanted, Surasegn,
Shalwa, Petucchur, Kuuntie, Bhudrocar,
Suisthull, Kulind, Sucuitta. All that are
Of the Shalwaian Kings brother or friend,
Are with their leaders gone, nor yet an end:
The Southern Punchaals and in Kuuntie-land
The Eastern Coshalas. Their native north
Abandoning the Mutsyas have gone forth
And from their fear take southern sanctuary:
With them the clan Sunnyustopaad. Lastly
The warrior great Punchaalas terrified
Have left their kingdoms and to every side
Are scattering before Jerasundha's name.
On us the universal tempest came,
When Kunsa furiously crushed of old
The Yadoves: for to Kunsa bad and bold
The son of Brihodruth his daughters gave
Born younger feminine to male Sahadave,
Ustie and Praapthie. In this tie made strong
His royal kin he overpowered; nor long,

Being supreme, ruled prudently, but grew
A tyrant and a fool. Whereupon drew
The Bhoja lords together, those whom tired
His cruelties, and these with me conspired
Seeking a national deliverer.
Therefore I rose and Ahuik's daughter, her
The sweet and slender, gave to Ocroor, — then
Made free from tyranny my countrymen.
With me was Raam, the plougher of the foe;
Our swords laid Kunsa and Sunaaman low.
Scarce was this inbred peril crossed and we
Safe, Jerasundh arose. Then laid their plans
By vast majority the eighteen clans,
That though we fought for ever, though we slew
With mighty blows infallible, o'erthrew
Foe upon foe, three centuries might take wing
Nor yet be slain the armies of the King.
For him and his two men like gods made strong,
Unslayable where the weapons thickest throng;
Hunsa and Dimbhuc styled. These two uniting,
Heroes, and Jerasundh heroic fighting
Might battle with assembled worlds and win;
Such was my thought, nor mine alone has been,
But all the kings this counsel entertain,
O wisest Yudishthere. Now there was slain
By Raam in eight days' battle duelling
One Hunsa truly named, a mighty King.
'Hunsa is slain!' said one to Dimbhuc. Him
Hearing the Jumna's waters overwhelm
Devoted. Without Hunsa here alone
He had not heart to linger, so is gone
His way to death. Of Dimbhuc's death when knew
Hunsa, sacker of cities, he too drew
To the same waves that closed above his friend.
There were they joined in one o'erwhelming end.
This hearing Jerasundha discontent
With empty heart to his own city went.

The King being gone we in all joy again
In Mothura dwelt and our ancestral plain.
But she, the royal princess lotus-eyed,
Went to her father mourning; she, the pride
Of Jerasundh and Kunsa's wife, and cried,
Spurring the mighty Maagudh, weeping: 'Kill
My husband's murderer, O my father,' and still:
'Kill him!' But we minding the old thought planned
With heavy hearts out from our native land,
Son, friend and kinsman, all in fear must flee.
Our endless riches' loose prolixity
Unportable by division we compressed
And with it fared sadly into the west.
The lovely city, fair Cuishusthaly,
With mountains beautiful, our colony
We made, the Ryevut mountains; and up-piled
Ramparts which even the gods in battle wild
Could hardly scale, ramparts which women weak
Might hold — of Vrishny's swords what call to speak?
Five are the leagues our dwelling place extends,
Three are the mountain-shoulders and each ends
An equal space: hundred-gated the town.
Each gate with heroism and renown
Is bolted and has eighteen keys close-bound,
Eighteen strong bows in whom the trumpet's sound
Wakes headlong lust of war. Thousands as many
Our race. Ahuik has hundred sons nor any
Less than a god. And Charudéshna, he
With his dear brother, hero Saatyakie,
Chucrodave, I, the son of Rohinnie,
And Samba and Prodyoumna, seven are we,
Seven strong men; nor other seven more weak,
Cunca and Shuncou, Kuuntie and Someque,
Anadhrishty, Somitinjoy, Critovurm;
Undhuc's two sons besides and the old King: firm
As adamant they, heroes energical.
These are the Vrishny men who lead there, all

Remembering the sweet middle lands we lost.
There we behold that flood of danger crossed
The Maagudh, Jerasundh, the mountain jaws
Impassable behold. There free from cause
Of fear, eastern or northern, Modhou's sons
Dwell glad of safety. Lo, we the mighty ones,
Because King Kunsa married, to the west,
By Jerasundha utterly distressed,
Are fled, and there on Ryevut, hill of kine,
Find sanctuary from danger Magadhine.
Therefore though all imperial gifts and high
Vindicate thee, though o'er earth's chivalry
Thou shouldst be Emperor indeed, nowise
Shalt thou accomplish, King, the Sacrifice
Great Jerasundha living; for he brings
The princes of the earth and all her kings
And Girivraj with mighty prisoners fills
As in a cavern of the lordly hills,
A lion's homestead, slaughtered elephants lie —
So they a hecatomb of royalty
Wait their dire ending; for Magadha's King
A sacrifice of princes purposing,
With fierce asceticism of will adored
Mahadave mighty-minded, Uma's lord.
Conquering he moves towards his purpose, brings
Army on army, kings on battling kings,
Victorious brings and binds and makes of men
His mountain-city a huge cattle-pen.
Us too his puissance drove in strange dismay
To the fair-gated city, Dwaraca.
Therefore if of imperial sacrifice
Thou art ambitious, first, O prince, devise
To rescue all those murdered Kings and slay
King Jerasundha, since thus only may
The instituted sacrifice attain
Its great proportion and immenser plan.
King, I have said; yet as thy deeper mind

Adviseth thee. Only when all's designed,
All reasons weighed, then give me word." "O thou
Art only wise," Yudishthere cried. "Lo now
A word no other heart might soar so high
As utter; yet thy brave sagacity
Plainly hath phrased it; nor like thee on earth
Another sword of counsel shall take birth.
Behold, the earth is full of kings; they still
Each in his house do absolutely their will;
Yet who attains to empire? Nay, the word
Itself is danger. He who has preferred
His enemy's greatness by sad study known,
How shall he late forget and praise his own?
Only who in his foemen's shock not thrown
Wins by ordeal praise, deserves the crown.
This vast and plenteous earth, this mine of gems,
Is from a distance judged, how vast its realms,
Not from the dells. Nor otherwise, O pride
Of Vrishny's seed, man's greatness is espied.
In calm and sweet content is highest bliss,
Mine be the good that springs from chastened peace.
I even with attempt hope not the crown
Of high supremacy to wear. Renown
Girds these and highborn mind; and so they deem
"Lo I or I am warrior and supreme",
Yet if by chance one better prove mid men,
It is but chance who wins the crown and when.
But we by Jerasundha's force alarmed
And all his mighty tyrannies ironarmed
Shun the emprise. O hero, O highstarred
In whose great prowess we have done and dared,
On whose heroic arm our safeties dwell
Yet lo thou fear'st him, deem'st invincible
And where thou fearest, my conceit of strength
Becomes a weakling's dream until at length
I hardly dare to hope by strongest men
This mighty Jerasundha can be slain,

Urjuun or Bheme or Raama or combined.
Thou, Késhove, in all things to me art Mind."
Out Bhema spoke, the strong man eloquent.
"The unstrenuous king, unhardy, unvigilant
Sinks like an anthill; nor the weak-kneed less
Who on a stronger leans his helplessness.
But the unsleeping and resourceful man
With wide and adequate attempt oft can
His mightier enemy vanquish: him though feeble
His wished-for good attends invariable.
Krishna has policy and I have strength
And with our mother's son, Dhonunjoy, length
Assured of victory dwells; we shall assail
Victoriously the Magadhan and quell
As triple fire a victim." Krishna then:
"Often we see that rash unthinking men
Imprudent undertake, nor consequence
Envisage: yet will not his foe dispense
Therefore the one-ideaed and headstrong man.
Now since the virtuous ages first began
Five emperors have been to history known,
Maroutta, Bharut, Yuvanuswa's son,
Great Bhogiruth and Cartoverya old.
By wealth Maroutta conquered, Bharut bold
By armèd strength; Mandhata's victories
Enthroned him and his subtle soul and wise.
By strenuous greatness Cartoverya bent
The world; but Bhogiruth beneficent
Gathered the willing nations to his sway.
Thou purposing like greatness, to one way
Not limited, restor'st the imperial five.
Their various masteries reunited live —
Virtue, high policy, wealth without dearth
And conquest and the rapid grasp at Earth —
And yet avail not to make solely great.
Strong Jerasundha bars thee from thy fate,
Whom not the hundred nations can deter

But with great might he grows an emperor;
The jewel-sceptred Kings to serve him start.
Yet he in his unripe and violent heart
Unsatisfied, assumes the tyrant's part.
He, the first man of men, lays his rude hand
On the anointed monarchs of the land
And pillages. Not one we see exempt.
How then shall feebler king his fall attempt?
Well-nigh a hundred in his sway are whelmed.
With these like cattle cleansed, like cattle hemmed
In Sheva's house, the dreadful Lord of beasts,
Purified as for sacrificial feasts,
Surely life's joy is turned to bitterness,
Not dying like heroes in the battle's press.
Honour is his who in swift battle falls
And best mid swords high death to princes calls.
In battle let us 'gainst the Maagudh thrust,
By battle ignominy repel. To just
Eighty and six the royal victims mount,
Fourteen remain to fill the dire account;
Who being won his horrid violence
No farther pause will brook. Glory immense
He wins, glory most glorious who frustrates
Interposing the tyrant and amates.
Kings shall acclaim him lord inevitably."
But Yudishthere made answer passionately:
"Shall I, ambitious of imperial place,
Krishna, expose in my mad selfishness,
Upbuoyed by naked daring, men to death
Whom most I love? O Krishna, what is breath
To one that's mad and of his eyes bereft?
What joy has he that life to him is left?
These are my eyes, thou Krishna art my mind:
Lo I have come as one who stumbles blind
Upon the trackless Ocean's spuming shore,
Then wakes, so I all confident before
Upon this dreadful man whom even death

Dare not in battle cross. What use is breath
Of hopeless effort? Mischief only can
Result to the too blindly daring man.
Better not undertaken, is my mind
On riper thought, than fruitlessly designed.
Nay, let us leave this purpose; wiser so
Than with eyes open to our death to go.
For all my heart within is broken and slain
Viewing the vast impracticable pain
Of Sacrifice Imperial.” Then replied
To Yudishthere great Partha in the pride
Of wonders selfattained, banner and car,
And palace Titan-built and in the war
Quiver made inexhaustible and great
Unequalled bow. “O King” he said “since Fate
Has given me bow and shafts, a sword like flame,
Great lands and strength, courage, allies and fame,
Yea, such has given as men might covet long
And never win; O King, what more? For strong
Is birth and conquers, cries the theorist
Conversant in deep books; but to my taste
Courage is strongest strength. How helps it then
The uncourageous that heroic men
His fathers were? From uncourageous sires
Who springs a hero, he to glory towers.
That man the name of Kshettriya merits best
Whose soul is ever to the battle drest.
Courage, all gifts denied, ploughs through amain
A sea of foes: courage without in vain
All other gifts conspire; rather all gifts
Courage into a double stature lifts.
But conquest is in three great strengths complete —
Action, capacity, fate: where these three meet,
There conquest comes; nor strengths alone suffice;
Men by neglect forfeit their Paradise.
And this the cause the strong much-hated man
Before his enemies sinks. Hard ’tis to scan

Whether of these flaws strength most fatally,
A spirit poor or an o'erweening eye.
Both are destruction. Kings who highly aim
And court success, must either quite disclaim.
And if by Jerasundha's overthrow,
Rescuing Kings, to Sacrifice we go,
What fairer, what more glorious? Mighty prince,
Deeds unattempted virtue maimed evince.
In us when virtue dwells, why deem'st thou, brother,
A nothingness the children of thy mother?
Easy it is the ochre gown to take
Afterwards, if for holy calmness' sake
We must the hermit virtues imitate.
But here is Empire! here, a royal fate!
Let others quietism's sweets embrace;
We the loud battle seek, the foeman's face."
"In Kuuntie's son and born of Bharut's race
What spirit should dwell, Urjuun's great words express,"
Said Krishna. "And of death we have no light
Whether it comes by day or comes by night;
Nor this of mortal man was ever known
That one by going not to fight has grown
Immortal. Let him then who's man indeed
Clash forth against his foes, yet rule decreed
Of policy forget not: so his mind
Shall live at poise. For when in battle combined
Conduct meets long felicity, then high
Success must come nor two met equally
Equal can issue thence: from clash and strife
Of equals inequality takes life.
But rash impolicy with helplessness
Having joined issue in their mutual stress
Breed ruin huge; equality inglorious
Then doubt engenders, nor are both victorious.
Therefore in skilful conduct putting trust
If with our foe we grapple, fell him we must
As a wild torrent wrestling with a tree

Uproots and hurls it downward to the sea.
'Trying the weak points in thine enemy's mail,
Subtly thine own conceal, then prompt assail;'
So runs the politic maxim of the wise
And to my mind rings just. If we devise
Secret, yet with no spot of treacherous blame,
To penetrate our foeman's house and limb
Grapple with limb, oh, won infallibly then
Our object is. Often one man of men
Pervades the nations like a soul, whose brow
Glory eternal-seeming wears; so now
This lion lord of men; but yet I deem
Shall that eternal vanish like a dream.
In battle slaying him if at the last
By many swords we perish, so 'tis best.
We shall by death the happy skies attain
Saving from tyranny our countrymen."

CANTO III

The Slaying of Jerasundh

Krishna pursued. "Now is the call of Fate:
Fallen is Dimbhuc, fallen Hunsa great;
Kunsa is slain and all his host; the hour
Is sighted when King Jerasundha's power
Must bow to death; yet not in violent war
'Tis conquerable nor all the gods that are,
Nor the embattled Titans overwhelm:
In deadly duel we must vanquish him.
Conduct is mine, strength Bheme's, and in the field
Who is very victory stands here to shield.
We will consume the Maagudh, King, believe,
As three strong fires a sacrifice achieve.
If we three in a lonely place attain

To see him, no doubt is, the King of men
Duel with one of three will undertake,
In pride and strength and greed of glory's sake
Grandiose of heart, duel with Bhema claim
But Bheme great-armed, Bheme strenuous for him
Suffices, even as death that closes all
Sufficient is for the immense world's fall.
King, if my heart thou knowest and if trust
Thou hast in me at all, then as a just
And dear deposit in my hands implied
Bheme and Urjuuna give." And the King cried,
"Achyuta, O Achyuta, never so,
O hero, speak, O slayer of the foe.
Thou art the Pandoves' lord, their refuge thou.
Govinda, all thou speakest I avow
Truth merely; whom thou guidest are not men
Fortune abandons. Nay, already slain
King Jerasundha is, rescued already
Those Kings of earth, and won and greatly ready
Imperial Sacrifice, now that I stand,
O first of men, in thy controlling hand.
Quickly this work to accomplish, be it planned
But prudently; for without you no zest,
No courage I have to live, as one distressed,
One overcome with sickness, who lives on
When life no meaning has but pain alone.
Without the child of Pandu Krishna is none,
Nor possible without Krishna Pritha's son.
By Krishna led unvanquishable are these.
Splendid in strength, strongest of strong men is,
Vricoder: joined and made a third with you,
Famous and noble, nought is he may not do.
Well led the armèd multitudes effect
Great deeds, but led must be by men elect.
Blind and inert mere strength is, all its force
Impetuous but a block. As by that course
Where dips the soil, there water's led and whence

A gap most opens rivermen lead thence
Water, even such is guiding policy.
Therefore, Govinda, in thy hand are we,
Whom the world names its hero famousest
For conduct and in that great science best.
Krishna whose strength is wisdom, counsel, who
Is girded with resource, Krishna must you
Put in your van with action's every need:
So only action's purpose may succeed.
Urjuun by Krishna led, Bheme by Urjuun;
Then conduct, victory, strength, these three triune
Shall grow and conquer, making valour good."
He said, and those three huge in hardihood,
The Vrishny hero and the Pandoves twain,
Went forth to Magadha of happy men.
To Girivraj, the city of the hills,
A nation of the fourfold orders fills,
A prosperous race and glad, they travelled are,
Flushed with high festival and void of care,
A virgin city inviolable in war.
So came they to the city gates where soared
The height by Brihodrutha's sons adored
And all the people, one of peaks that stand,
Delightful hills, Chytyuc, in Magadh land; —
Thither they storming came. There Rishabha,
The eater of forbidden flesh, to slay
Came Brihodruth the King and slew and bound
Three wardrums with its hide whose threatening sound
Far borne through a whole month went echoing.
These in his city placed the Maagudh King.
Covered with dust of glorious blossoms there
The drums hurled oft their thunders through the air.
But now came storming to the Chytyuc wall
The heroes and the wardrums broke and all
Upon the rampart fell as if to smite
The very head of Jerasundha's might:
Chytyuc, the ancient peak enorm, deep-based,

Ever with flowers and fragrance worshipped, vast
And famous, with Titanic force of arm
Assailed and overthrew with loud alarm;
So leaped exulting through no usual gate.
To war with Jerasundh they came, and yet
Weapons of war had none, with their arms merely
Sworded and shielded with the vow austerely
Assumed wherein men enter worldly life,
Snaatucs. A town they saw with riches rife,
Food-mart and flower-mart and populous street,
In all desirable wealth grandly complete.
So went they mid the shops and highroad wide
And from the garland-makers in the pride
Of hostile strength fresh garlands violently
They mastered. Then in bright variety
Of garments manyhued the mighty three
With wreaths and burnished earrings bright aflame
To Jerasundha's lordly dwelling came.
As lions of the Himalaya eye
A cattlepen, so they the palace high.
But on the Maagudh men amazement fell
Seeing those shapes of heroes formidable,
Like elephants in strength, broad-breasted, wide
And great of shoulder and like boles their arms
Of shaal-trees mighty, fit for warlike harms;
Now sandal-smeared and rubbed with aloe-scent.
They through the courts in courage arrogant
Pass sternly, through three crowded courts attain
The royal presence freed from anxious pain.
And the great king arose, for them he judged
Worthy of high guest-offerings, nowise grudged
The water for the feet, the honied curds
And gifts of kine, but with deservèd words
Greeted them crying "Welcome, holy men."
And no word answered him the Pandoves twain.
Then Krishna in their midst, the man of mind,
Said only "King of kings, these two must bind

Silence till midnight hour, envisaging
Their vow. Then will they speak to thee, O King."
So in the chamber sacrificial placed
They sojourned and the King with awe possessed
Returned to his high mansion. But when night
Was deep, went the strong arbiter of fight
To those three twice-born; for his vow preferred
Compelled him, through earth famous, when he heard
Of Snaatuc Brahmins in his city bright
To meet them even in the deep midnight.
And they indeed with strange astonishment
Dismayed him and their garments hue-besprent
Unwonted. As he came the three arose,
The lion men, the victors of their foes.
"Welfare, O King" they cried, and each on each
They looked and scanned the King awaiting speech.
Then to those lords concealed in priestly dress
The King said with his haughty graciousness,
"Sit, holy men." They sat, heroic forms
Blazing with mightier beauty than informs
The fires of sacrifice, when a great king
Sacrifices. And sternly censuring
Disguise and travesty of shape sincere
The conqueror steadfast, "Why come you here,
Not as the Snaatuc, in this transient world
Who takes the household vow, the Brahmin. Curled
Garlands he wears not, smears not sandal paste.
What names are yours who come in flowers dressed,
Upon your mighty arms the bowstring scored
And wearing heroism like a sword,
Yet Brahminhood pretend? Speak truth, whence springs
Your race? Truth is the ornament of kings.
Splitting the Chytyuc peak fiercely you came,
Yet wear a vain disguise to hide a flame
Yourselves reveal. Where no gate was, no path
Allowed, you entered, nor a monarch's wrath
Calamitous feared; and are ye Brahmins? Bright

In speech the Brahmin; speech his only might
And prowess. You whose deeds your caste deny,
What needing come you to my palace high?
And wherefore took you not the offering
To guests observed but scorned Magadha's king?"
Then Krishna in a deep and quiet voice
Replied, adept in words of exquisite choice.
"Brahmins thou deemest us whom duties call
Worldward, but Brahmin, Kshettriya, Vyshya, all
Equal entitled are to Snaatuchood.
Vows personal, vows general, both are good.
But those the Kshettriya's majesty prepare,
To Kshettriyas those belong. Flowers if we wear,
Who decks his aspiration stern with flowers,
The majesty he wins outbraves the hours.
Rightly thou sayest, King, the Kshettriya's might
Speaks from his arm, in words has no delight,
Wild words and many uses not; for God
Set in the arm, its natural abode,
The Kshettriya prowess. Which if thou aspire
To see, surely we will not baulk desire;
Today thou shalt behold it. Nor debate
Of path allowable and door and gate.
No gate is in the house of enemies.
By the plain door a friend's house entered is,
But by no door with ruin impetuous
A foeman's. These are virtue's gates and thus
Enters the self-possessed, right-seeing man.
Nor offering hospitable take we can
In foemen's house with deeds upon our hands.
This is our vow and this eternal stands."
And Jerasundh replied, "Enmity, strife
I can recall not gazing through my life,
Brahmins, with you begun, nor aught that men
Pervert to hatred. Wherefore call you then
A sinless man your enemy? The good
One practice keep, one rule well understood;

And he, the Kshettriya who with causeless blame
Lightly has taxed the innocent, he with maim
Virtue curtails inheriting remorse:
Be he in virtue conversant, in force
A warrior among warriors, if he act
Other than good, has with his own hand hacked
His own felicity here and there his soul
Following the sinner's way shall reach the sinner's goal.
Throughout the triple universe confessed
The Kshettriya virtue, Kshettriya life is best
For nobleness; for goodness. Other rule
They praise not who have learned in virtue's school.
That virtue and that life are mine. Steadfast
Today I stand in them with spirit braced,
Sinless before my people. And ye prate
Madness." Krishna made sterner answer: "Great
Is he who sent us, of a mighty strain
Upbearer, and upon his shoulders lain
The burden of a deed for kindred blood.
From him we come upon thee like a flood.
Sinless dost thou, O Jerasundha, claim
And thou the world's great princes dost o'erwhelm,
Gathered for cruel slaughter? When before
Did kings on good kings tyranny explore?
But thou, a king, hast conquered and subdued,
And Rudra's altar thou wouldst have imbrued
With blood of Kings for victims. On our head
Their piteous blood shall lie which thy hands shed.
For we are virtue's and in her have force
Virtue to bulwark. Giving tyranny course
We share the sin. Not yet the world has seen
That crowning horror, butchery of men.
O man, how couldst thou to a god devise,
To Shancara a human sacrifice?
It is thy blood, thy kind thou levellest
Comparing human natures with the beast.
Is there a man in all the world whose mind

Like thine is violent, like thine is blind?
But this remember, not with the deed man does
There is an end; he reaps from what he sows
And as he planted such the fruit he sees:
Footprints his action left, Fate treads in these.
Therefore 'gainst thee, destroyer of our caste,
We, champions of the miserable oppressed,
For rescue of our kindred men are here
To slay thee. But thou sayest 'What should I fear?
There is no man in all the Kshettriya race
And I am he alone.' Great witlessness
Is thine, O King, and error most unjust.
What Kshettriya has a soul and lives but must
Recall with pride his birth from valiant men?
Who would not by the way of battle then
Enter the doors of Paradise eterne,
Felicitous gates? When paradise to earn
Heroes to war as to a sacrifice
Initiate go, resistless then they rise
Conquering Nature. Véda fathers heaven;
To glory excellent its gates are given;
Austerity masters it. In battle who falls
He most infallibly wins the happy halls.
For what is Indra's heaven, what Paradise?
Heaven in noble deeds and virtue lies.
By these the myriad-sacrificing god
Conquered the Titans and the world bestrode.
And what more excellent way to heaven than strife
With thee? Nor thou by lustiness of life
Deceived and thy huge armies Magadhine
Maddening with strength thy foemen quite disdain.
In many hearts a fire of courage dwells
That equals thine, nay, may be, far excels.
While these are hidden in the hand of fate,
So long thou art supreme, but so long great.
Yes, I will speak it, we, even we, can bear
The brunt of all thy greatness. King, forbear

Pride with thy equals and vain insolence.
O King, why wilt thou with thy son go hence,
With all thy captains and great men below
To Yama's melancholy mansions go?
Were there not kings as great as thou? Who strove
With Brihodruth, Cartoverya, Dumbhodbove,
High Uttara? All they are sunk unmourned,
Great kings and mighty captains; for they scorned
Mightier than they. No Brahmins, learn, are we,
Antagonists of thy supremacy.
Shourian I am and Hrishikésha styled;
These are the Pandove heroes. Brother's child
I to their mother am — Krishna, thy foe.
Take our defiance, King. In battle show
Thy steadfast courage, prince of Magadha,
Or while thou mayst escape. Either this day
Release the captive princes all or die."
Then answered Jerasundha puissantly:
"Not without conquest I collect amain
Princes; who is there penned my walls within
And not in equal battle overthrown?
This is the law and life to Kshettriyas known,
To battle and subdue and work their will
Upon the conquered, Krishna. Owable
Upon God's altar I have gathered these;
And shall I for ignoble fear release,
While yet the Kshettriya blood beats in my veins,
And yet one Kshettriya thought unquenched remains?
Army with battled army, single gage
With single or alone I will engage
With two or three together or one by one."
So spake the King and ordered that his son
Be straight anointed for the kingdom's needs.
Himself must fight with men of dreadful deeds.
And in that hour King Jerasundha sighed
Remembering great captains who had died,
Cowshic and Chitrosane, (but other names

Men gave in converse with worldwide acclaims,
Hunsa and Dimbhuc calling), them that night
Recalled in shadow of the coming fight.
    Then spake the Yadove pure and eloquent
Seeing the monarch upon battle bent.
"With which of three will thy heart battle dare,
O King, or which of us shall now prepare
For battle?" Then that famous royal man,
The Maagudh Jerasundh, with Bhemosane
Chose battle. Wreaths, pigment of augury
Bovine and all auspicious gramary,
Medicaments beside that lighten pain
Or call the fugitive senses back again,
The high priest brought for Jerasundh and read
The word of blessing o'er the monarch's head.

Virata Parva

FRAGMENTS FROM ADHYAYA 17

"Arise! arise! why sleepest thou, Bhemasena, like one that is dead? For how is he other than dead, whose wife a wretch has touched and lives?"

as a queen of beasts
Her sleeping lion in the trackless wood
Or a she elephant her mate, pressed Bhema
All to her bosom. Then as a sweetvoiced lyre
Exultantly to music swooning, grasps
Gandhara's strain, with such a cry the pale
Panchalian called her lord. "Arise, arise,
Why dost thou sleep, O Bhema, like one dead!
Not other than dead is he whose wife the wretch
That touched, yet lives."

Udyoga Parva

TWO RENDERINGS OF THE FIRST ADHYAYA

Let the reciter bow down to Naraian, likewise to Nara the Highest Male, also to our Lady the Muse, thereafter utter the word of Hail!

Vaishampayan continueth.

But the hero Kurus & who clove to them thereafter having performed joyously the marriage of Abhimanyu rested that night and then at dawn went glad to the Assembly-hall of Virata. Now wealthy was that hall of the lord of Matsya with mosaic of gems excellent and perfect jewels, with seats set out, garlanded, perfumed; thither went those great among the kings of men. Then took their seats in front the two high kings Drupada & Virata, old they and honoured of earth's lords, and Rama & Janardan with their father; now by the Panchala king was the hero Shini with the son of Rohinnie, but very near likewise to the Matsya king Janardan & Yudhisthere; and all the sons of Drupada, Bheme, Urjouna and the sons of Madravatie, and Prodyumna & Samba, heroes in the strife, and Abhimanyu with the children of Virata; and all those heroes equal to their fathers in heroism and beauty and strength sat down, the princely boys, sons of Draupadie, on noble seats curious with gold. Thus as those great warriors sat with shining ornaments & shining robes, rich shone that senate of kings like wide heaven with its stainless stars.

"To all of you it is known how Yudhisthere here was conquered by Saubala in the hall of the dicing; by fraud was he conquered and his kingdom torn from him and contract made of exile in the forest; and though infallible in the mellay, though able by force impetuous to conquer the whole earth, yet the sons of Pandu stood by their honour religiously; harsh & austere their vow but for the six years & the seven they kept it, noblest of men, the sons of Pandu; and this the thirteenth year & most difficult they have passed before all your eyes unrecognised; in exile they passed it, the mighty-minded ones, suffering many and intolerable hardships, in the service of strangers, in menial employments, cherishing their desire of the kingdom that belongeth to their lineage. Since this is so, do ye think out somewhat that shall be for the good both of the King, the son of Righteousness, and of Duryodhan, just & glorious and worthy of great Kurus. For Yudhisthere the just would not desire even the kingship of the Gods unjustly, yet would he cling to the lordship of some small village which he might hold with expediency & with justice. For it is known to you kings how by dishonest proceeding his father's kingdom was torn from him by the sons of Dhritarashtra and himself cast into great and unbearable danger; for not in battle did they conquer him by their own prowess, these sons of Dhritarashtra; even so the King with his friends desires the welfare of his wrongers. But what the sons of Pandu with their own hands amassed by conquest crushing the lords of earth that these mighty ones demand, even Kuntie's sons and Madravatie's. But even when they were children, they were sought by various means to be slain of their banded foemen, savage & unrighteous, for greed of their kingdom; yea all this is known to you utterly. Considering therefore their growing greed and the righteousness of Yudhisthere, considering also their close kinship, form you a judgment each man to himself and together. And since these have always clung to truth and loyally observed the contract, if now they are wronged, they may well slay all the sons of Dhritarashtra. And hearing of any wrong done by these in this business their friends would gather round the Pandavas, yea and repel war with war and slay them. If natheless ye deem these too weak in numbers for victory, yet would they all band together and with their friends at last strive to destroy them. Moreover none knoweth the mind of Duryodhan rightly, what he meaneth to do, and what can you decide that shall be the best to set about when you know not the mind of your foeman? Therefore let one go hence, some virtuous, pureminded and careful man such as shall be an able envoy for their appeasement and the gift of half the kingdom to Yudhisthere." This hearing, the just, expedient, sweet & impartial speech of Janardan, the elder brother of him took up the word, O prince, honouring the younger's speech even greatly.

*

So the mighty ones of the Kurus & they of their faction performed joyously the marriage of Abhimanyu, and that night they rested but at dawn fared, pleased of heart, to the Council Hall of Virata. The Hall of the Lord of the Matsyas, opulent, curious with workings of pearl and the best of jewels, with seats disposed, and wreathed with garlands and full of fragrance, thither they fared, the Elders of the Kings of men. And of those that took their seats in the Hall, the first place was for both the Princes of the folk, even Virat & Drupad and those that were aged & revered among the Masters of Earth, and Rama and Janardan with their sire. Next to the King of the Panchalas sat the mighty one of the Shinis with the son of Rohinnie and very nigh to the Matsya King both Janardan and Yudhisthere, and all the sons of Drupad the King, and Bhema and Urjoon, and the sons of Madrie, and Pradyumna and Samba mighty in the battle and with the sons of Virata Abhimanyu. And all those heroes equal to their sires in prowess and beauty and strength, the princes, sons of Draupadie, sat on noble thrones curious with gold. High shone that opulent Place of Kings with the warriors there sitting in glittering ornaments and gleaming robes as heaven shines invaded by the clear bright stars. Then when those mighty ones had done with varied talk of general import they tarried in thought a moment, all those Kings gazing towards Krishna; and talk being over, spurred by the Madhav for business of the sons of Pandu the lion lords assembled hearkened to his word of import mighty and majestic.

Srikrishna spake. "Known is it to you all how Yudhisthere here was conquered by Subala's son in the Hall of Dicing, beaten by fraud, and his kingdom wrested from him and compact made of exile in the forest. Though able to win the Earth by violence yet the sons of Pandu stood firmly in the truth, for truth is their chariot, and for years six & seven all the severity of that vow has been kept by these first of men. And hardest to pass this thirteenth year, lo they have passed it undiscovered before your eyes, bearing intolerable ills, even as they had sworn, — that too is known of you all, — appointed to servile office in a house of strangers, mighty, in their own might, O King, they have won through all. Since so it is, ponder now what may be for the good of the King, the son of Righteousness, and the good of Duryodhan and of the Kurus & the Pandavas, and just also and right and for the honour and glory of all. For Yudhisthere the Just would desire not the kingship of the gods itself if with unrighteousness it came. But to lordship of earth he would aspire though even in some hamlet, so it went with justice and prosperous doing. For it is known to the Kings how his father's kingdom was torn from him by the children of Dhritarashtra and how by that false dealing he fell into great peril and very hard to bear; for neither was the son of Pritha overthrown in battle by the children of Dhritarashtra in the energy of their own might. Yet even so the King and his friends desire that these should not come to hurt; but what the sons of Pandu gathered with their own conquering hands by force done on the lords of land, this these mighty ones seek for, Coonty's sons and the sons of Madry. But all this is known to you aright, how these even when they were children were pursued to slay them with various device by those their foemen, dishonest & fierce and bent to rob them of their realm. Seeing how that greed of theirs is grown and looking to the righteous mind of Yudhisthere and looking also to their kinship form ye your separate minds and an united counsel. For ever have these made truth and honour their delight and wholly have they kept the compact, and now if they have dealing from the others otherwise than in truth and honour, they will slay the assembled children of Dhritarashtra. For when 'tis heard that these have been evilly dealt with by their cousins, the friends of Dhritarashtra's sons will gather to protect the illdoers and they will oppose these with war, and they, opposed with war, will slay them all. And even if 'tis your mind that these by their fewness are not strong for victory, they will band themselves all together with their friends and yet strive for the destruction of the Dhritarashtrians. Neither do we know aright the mind of Duryodhan and what it is that he will do, and unknowing the mind of the foe, what can you decide that would be truly right to start upon? Therefore let one go hence, a man righteous, pure, well born and heedful, a fit envoy, for pacifying of Dhritarashtra's sons and the gift to Yudhisthere of half the kingdom."

Udyoga Parva

Passages from Adhyayas 75 and 72

But the mighty-armed Keshava when he heard these words of Bhema, packed with mildness, words such as those lips had never uttered before, laughing a little, — for it seemed to him like lightness in a mountain or in fire coldness, to him the Showrian, the brother of Rama, the wielder of the bow of horn, — thus he spake to Bhema even as he sat submerged with sudden pity, & woke the heat & flame of him with his words as wind the fire hearteneth.

* * *

But when Sanjaya had departed, thus spake the just king, Yudishthere, to the Dasarhan, the bull of all the Satvatas. "Now is that hour arrived of friends, O lover of thy friends; nor see I any but thee who may deliver us in calamity. For in thee reposing our trust fearlessly we challenge Dhritarashtra's son with his councillors, knowing his arrogance to be but froth. For even as thou protectest the Vrishnis in all their calamities, so too the Pandavas claim thy guardian care; protect us from peril vast."

Krishna sayeth. "Behold me, O great-armed, tell what thou hast to tell, since whatsoever thou sayest, O Bharata, I will do it utterly."

The Bhagavad Gita

THE FIRST SIX CHAPTERS

www.holybooks.com

Chapter I

DHRITARÂSHTRA

In the holy Field, the Field of the Kurus, assembled for the fight, what did my children, O Sunjoy, what did Pandou's sons?

SUNJOY

Then the King, even Duryodhan, when he beheld the Pândav army marshalled in battle array, approached the Master and spoke this word.

"Behold, O Master, this mighty host of the sons of Pandou marshalled by Drupad's son, thy disciple deep of brain. There are heroes and great bowmen equal unto Bheme and Urjoona in war, Yuyudhân and Virâta and Drupad, the mighty car-warrior, Dhristakétou and Chékitâna and Kâshi's heroic king; and Purujit Coontybhoja and Shaivya, lion of men; and Yudhamanyu of mighty deeds, and hero Uttamoujas and Subhadra's son and the sons of Droupady, great warriors all. And they who are our chief and first, them also mark, O best of the twiceborn, — leaders of my army, for the reckoning let me speak their names, thou and Bheeshma and Curna, Cripa & Somitinjoy, Uswutthâman and Vicurna and Somadutta's son, and many other courageous hearts that for me have cast their lives behind them, smiters with various weapons and many arms, and all are expert in war. Weak to its task is this our strength but Bheeshma guards the host; sufficient to its task is yonder strength of the foe & Bhema is their guard. Do ye then each stationed to his work stand up in all the gates of the war and Bheeshma, ever Bheeshma do ye guard, yea all guard him alone."

Then giving joy birth in Duryodhan's heart the Grandsire, elder of the Kurus, thundered loud his warcry's lion roar and blew his conchshell's blare, the man of might. Then conchshell and bugle, trumpet and horn and drum, all suddenly were smitten and blown and a huge and rushing sound arose. Then in their mighty car erect, their car with snowwhite steeds, Mâdhava &

the Pandove blew their divine shells, Hrishikesh on Pânchajanya, on Dévadutta, godgiven, Dhanunjoy blew, and on his great shell from far Bengal blew Bhema Wolfbelly, the man of dreadful deeds, and on Anuntavijoy, boundless Conquest, Yudhisthere, the King, even Coonty's son, and Nacool & Sahodave on Sughosha Far-Sounding and Manipushpaca, Jewel-Flower. And Kâshi's King, that excellent bowman and Shikhandi, that great fighter and Dhristadyoumna and Virât and Sâtyaqy unconquered, and Drupad and the children of Droupady and Subhadra's great-armed son, all these from all sides blew each his separate shell, O lord of earth, that the thunder of them tore the hearts of Dhritarashtra's sons and earth & heaven reechoed with the clamour & the roar. Now as the Ape-bannered, the Pandove, saw the Dhritarashtrians at their warlike posts, so heaved he up his bow and even as the shafts began to fall spake to Hrishikésha this word, O King.

"Right in the midst between either host set thou my car, O unfallen. Let me scan these who stand arrayed & greedy for battle; let me know who must wage war with me in this great holiday of fight. Fain would I see who are these that are here for combat to do in battle the dear will of Dhritarashtra's witless son."

Thus, O Bharata, to Hrishikésha Gudakésha said, who set in the midst between either army the noble car, in front of Bheeshma and Drona and all those kings of earth. "Lo, O Partha," He said, "all these Kurus met in one field." There Partha saw fathers and grandsires stand and teachers & uncles & brothers & sons and grandsons and dear comrades and fathers of wives and hearts' friends, all in either battle opposed. There when the son of Coonty beheld all these dear friends & kindred facing each other in fight, his heart was besieged with utter pity and failed him and he said:

"O Krishna, I behold these kinsmen and friends arrayed in hostile arms and my limbs sink beneath me and my face grows dry, and there are shudderings in my body and my hair stands on end, Gandeva falls from my hand and my very skin is on fire. Yea I cannot stand, my brain whirls and evil omens, O Késhove, meet mine eyes. I can see no blessing for me, having slain my kin in fight. I desire not victory, O Krishna, no nor kingship nor delights. What shall we do with kingship, O Govinda, what with enjoyments, what with life? They for whose sake we desire kingship and enjoyments and delight, lo they all stand in battle against us casting behind them their riches and their lives, our teachers and our fathers and our sons, our grandsires and uncles and the fathers of our wives and our grandsons and our wives' brothers and the kin of our beloved. These though they slay me, O Madhusudan, I would not slay, no not for the empire of heaven and space and hell, much less for this poor earth of ours. Slaying the sons of Dhritarashtra what joy would be left to us, O Janardana? Sin, sin alone would find lodging in us, if we slew these though our adversaries & foes. Therefore we do not right to slay the children of Dhritarashtra and their friends, for how can we be happy, O Madhove, if we slay our kin? Even though these see not, for their hearts are swept away by greed, error done in the ruin of one's house and grievous sin in treachery to natural friends, how shall we not understand and turn back from this sin, we who have eyes, O Janardan, for error done in the ruin of our house? When the family dwindles, the eternal ideals of the race are lost, and when ideals are lost, unrighteousness besets the whole race; in the prevalence of unrighteousness, O Krishna, the women of the race go astray, and when women grow corrupt, bastard confusion is born again; but confusion brings the slayers of their race and the race itself to very hell; for the long line of fathers perishes and the food ceases and the water is given no more. By these their sins who bring their race to perdition, fathers they of bastard confusion, the eternal ideals of the nation and the hearth are overthrown; and for men who have lost the ancient righteousnesses of the race, in hell an eternal habitation is set apart, 'tis told. Alas a dreadful sin have we set ourselves to do, that from greed of lordship and pleasure we have made ready to slay our own kin. Yea even if the sons of Dhritarashtra slay me with their armèd hands, me unarmed and unresisting, it were better & more fortunate for me than this."

Thus spake Urjoona and in the very battle's heart sat down upon his chariot seat and let fall his bow when the arrow was on the string, for his soul was perplexed with grief.

Chapter II

SUNJOY
To him thus besieged with pity and his eyes full & bewildered with crowding tears, to him weak with sorrow Madhusudan spake this word.

KRISHNA
Whence hath this stain of darkness come upon thee in the very crisis & the stress, O Urjoona, this weakness unheavenly, inglorious, beloved of unAryan minds? Fall not into coward impotence, O Partha; not on thee does that sit well; fling from thee the miserable weakness of thy heart; arise, O scourger of thy foes.

URJOONA
How shall I combat Bheeshma in the fight and Drona, O Madhusudan, how shall I smite with arrows those venerable heads? Better were it, not piercing these great and worshipped hearts to eat even a beggar's bread on this our earth; I slay our earthly wealth & bliss when I slay these; bloodstained will be the joys I shall taste. Therefore we know not which of these is better, that we should be victors or that we should be vanquished; for they whom slaying we should have no heart to live, lo they face us in the foeman's van, they are Dhritarashtrians. Pain and unwillingness have swept me from my natural self, my heart is bewildered as to right and wrong; thee then I question. Tell me what would surely be my good, for I am thy disciple; teach me, for in thee I have sought my refuge. I see not what shall banish from me the grief that parcheth up the senses, though I win on earth rich kingship without rival and empire over the very gods in heaven.

SUNJOY
Thus Gudakésha to Hrishikésha; the scourger of his foes said unto Govinda, "I will not fight" and ceased from words. On him thus overcome with weakness in the midmost of either battle, Krishna smiled a little & said:

KRISHNA

Thou grievest for whom thou shouldst not grieve and yet speakest wise-seeming words, but the wise grieve not whether for the dead or for the living. It is not that I was not before, nor thou nor these lords of the folk, nor yet that we all shall not be again hereafter. Even as the embodied spirit passes in this body to boyhood and youth and age, so also it passes away from this body to another; the strong man suffers not his soul to be clouded by this. But the things of material touch, O son of Coonty, which bring cold and warmth, pleasure and pain, they come and they pass; transient are they, these seek to abandon, O Bharata. The man whom these vex not, O lion of men, who is strong and receiveth sorrow & bliss as one, that man is ready for immortality. For that which is not, there is no coming into being and for that which is, there is no ceasing to be; yea of both of these the lookers into truth have seen an end. But That in which all this universe is extended, know to be imperishable; none hath force to bring to nought the One who decays not neither passes away. Finite and transient are these bodies called of the eternal, imperishable and immeasurable embodied Spirit; arise therefore and fight, O seed of Bharat. Who knoweth the Spirit as slayer and who deemeth Him to be slain, both of these discern not: He slayeth not neither is He slain. "He is not born nor dieth ever, nor having once been shall He not be again; He is unborn for ever and perpetual, He is the Ancient One who is not slain with the slaying of the body." He who knoweth Him to be imperishable, eternal, unborn and undecaying, whom doth that man, O Partha, slay or cause to be slain? As a man casteth from him his worn out robes and taketh to him other & new raiment, so the embodied Spirit casteth away its worn out bodies and goeth to other & new casings. Him the sword cleaveth not, Him the fire cannot burn, Him water wetteth not and the hot wind withereth not away; indivisible, unconsumable, unmergible, unwitherable is He. He is for ever & everywhere, constant and moveth not, He is the One Sempiternal Being. If thou knowest Him as such, thou hast no cause to grieve.

And now if yet thou deemest of the Spirit as ever born or ever dying, even so thou hast no cause to grieve for him, O strong-armed. For of that which is born the death is certain, and of that which is dead, the birth is sure; therefore in a thing inevitable thou oughtest not to grieve. Unmanifested in their beginning are creatures, manifested in the middle, O Bharata; they become but unmanifest again at death; what room is here for lamentation? As a Mystery one seeth Him, as a Mystery another speaketh of Him, as a Mystery a third heareth of Him, but even with revelation not one knoweth Him. The embodied One is for ever unslayable in the body of every man, O Bharata, and from Him are all creatures; therefore thou hast no cause for grief. Moreover if thou considerest the law of thine own being, thou oughtest not to tremble, for than battle in a just cause the Kshatriya knows no greater bliss. Happy are the Kshatriyas, O Partha, who win such a battle to their portion; 'tis as though one came past by chance and found the door of Paradise open. Now if thou wilt not wage this just & righteous battle, then hast thou cast from thee thy glory and the law of thy being, and brought sin upon thy head; yea thy shame shall be eternal in the mouth of all creatures, and for one who has been honoured, shame is worse than death. The warriors will think that from fear thou hast ceased from battle, and in their eyes who thought highly of thee, thou shalt be belittled. And thine illwishers will speak of thee many unutterable words, disparaging thy might and thy greatness, than which there is no worse bitterness under the skies. Slain thou shalt conquer heaven, victorious thou shalt enjoy earth for thy kingdom, therefore, O son of Coonty, arise with a heart resolute for war. Make thou thy soul indifferent to pain and pleasure, to gain and loss, to victory & defeat, then gird thyself to the combat; sin shall not touch thee then.

Thus hath been declared to thee the mind that dwells in the way of Sankhya, hearken now to that which dwells in Yoga, to which being wedded thou shalt cast from thee, O Partha, action's binding chain. In this path no step once taken is lost, in this path thou shalt meet with no stumblingblock; even a little of this Law saveth the heart from its great fear. One is the mind of a man that holds fast to its aim, but infinite are their minds and manybranching who have no resolved goal. 'Tis a flowery word they babble, men of little understanding who take delight in the creed of Veda, disputing, saying "There is nought else", their souls full of desires, their hopes bent upon Heaven; but he who hearkeneth to their word that giveth but the fruit of life's actions and is crowded with multifold ritual, aiming only at splendour & enjoyment & lordship, lo it hurrieth away his heart and causeth it to cling to lordship and pleasure and his mind is unfixed to God and cannot set itself on the rock of concentration. The three nature-moods are the stuff of the Vedas, but thou, O Urjoona, rise above the three, high beyond the dualities, steadfast on the plane of the Light; be careless of getting and having, be a man with a soul. As much use as there is in a well, when all the regions are flowing with water, so much is there in all the Vedas to the Brahman who hath the Knowledge. Thou hast a right to action only, to the fruit of action thou hast no manner of right at all; be not motived by the fruits of action, neither to inaction sell thy soul; but put attachment far from thee, O Dhanunjoy, and do thy deeds with a mind in Yoga, awaiting success and failure with an equal heart; for 'tis such equipoise of the soul that is Yoga indeed. For far lower is action than Yoga of the Super-Mind; in the Super-Mind desire thy refuge; for this is a mean and pitiful thing that a man should work for success and rewards. The man whose Super-Mind is in Yoga casteth from him even in this world both righteousness and sin; therefore to Yoga gird thy soul; when thou doest works, Yoga is the one auspicious way. For the wise whose understandings have reached God, cast from them the fruit that is born of their deeds, they are delivered from the fetters of birth, they pass into the sphere where suffering is not, neither any disease. When thy soul shall have voyaged to the other shore over the Chaos of the Great Bewilderment, then shalt thou become careless of the Scripture that is and the Scripture that shalt be, and when the mind that is perplexed and beaten about by the Scripture shall stand fast and motionless in Samadhi, then shalt thou attain Yoga.

URJOONA

What is the speech of him in whom Wisdom hath taken its firm seat, O Késhove, of him who is in Samadhi, he whose thought standeth on the settled understanding, what speaketh he and what are his sittings, and what his goings?

KRISHNA

When a man casteth far away from him, O son of Pritha, all the desires that cling to the mind, when he is self-content in the Self, then is it said of him that the Reason hath taken his seat. He whose soul is not shaken in sorrows and in happiness hungereth not after their delight, he to whom fear and liking and wrath are forgotten things, he is the Sage the thought in whom is settled. He who is in all things without affections whether evil come to him or whether good, who delights not in the pleasure neither hateth the pain, he is the man of an established understanding. As a tortoise gathereth in its limbs from all sides, so when this understanding Spirit gathereth in the senses away from the things in which the senses work, then is the Reason in a man safely seated. By fasting and refraining the objects of passion cease from a man but the desire and the delight in them remain, but when the embodied Spirit hath beheld the Most High, the very desire and delight cease and are no more. For very furious and turbulent are the senses, O son of Coonty, and though a man be Godseeking, though he have the soul that discerneth, they seize upon even his mind and ravish it violently away. Let a man coerce all these and sit fast in Yoga utterly giving himself up to Me; for only when a man has his senses in his grip, is the Reason of him firm in its seat. But when a man thinketh much and often of the things of sense, fondness for them groweth upon him, and from fondness desire & passion are born; and passion's child is wrath; but out of wrath cometh delusion & disturbance of the brain and from delusion cometh confusion of the recording mind and when memory falleth and faileth, the overmind is destroyed, and by the ruin of the overmind the soul goeth to its perdition. When one moveth over the fields of the passions with his senses in the grip of the Self, delivered from likings and dislikings, and when the Spirit itself answers to the helm, a pure serenity becometh his. In that bright gladness of the soul there cometh to him a waning away of all grief; for when a man's heart is like a calm and pure sky, the Thought findeth very quickly its firm foundation. Who hath not Yoga, hath not understanding, who hath not Yoga, hath not infinite and inward contemplation, who thinketh not infinitely and inwardly, hath not peace of soul, and how shall he be happy, whose soul is not at peace? For the mind that followeth the control and working of the senses when they range abroad, hurleth along with it the Thought in the Spirit as the wind hurleth along a ship upon the waters. Therefore it is, O strong-armed, that his reason is firmly based only whose senses are reined in on all sides from the things of their desire.

In the night which is darkness to all creatures, the governed soul is awake & liveth; that in which all creatures wake & live, is night to the eyes of the seer. The waters enter into the vast, full & unmoving ocean and the ocean stirs not nor is troubled, and he into whom all desires even in such wise enter, attaineth unto peace and not the lover of passion. That man who casts away all desires and doeth works without craving, not melting to aught because it is his, not seeing in aught his separate self, attaineth his soul's peace. This is that Godstate, O son of Pritha, to which attaining man is not again bewildered but standing fast in it even in the hour of his ending, mounteth to Cessation in the Eternal.

Chapter III

URJOONA

If indeed to thy mind, Thought is mightier than action, O Janardan, vexer of the host, wherefore then dost thou yoke me to a deed dire & fearful? ’Tis as if thou wouldst bewilder me with mixed and tangled speech, therefore speak decidedly one clear thing which shall guide me to my highest welfare.

KRISHNA

Two are the ways of devotion in this world, already have I declared it to thee, O sinless hero; the devotion of the men of Sankhya is by singleness in knowledge, by singleness in works is the devotion of the men of Yoga. Not by refraining from works shall a man taste actionlessness and not by mere renouncing of the world shall he reach perfection. For verily no man even for a moment remains without doing, since each is made to do whether he will or not by the moods of his essential nature. He who coerceth the organs of action and sitteth remembering in his heart the things in which the senses work, is a man deceived in Spirit, him they call a hypocrite, but he whosoever governeth the senses with his mind, O Urjoona, and entereth on Yoga in works using the organs of action without attachment, is distinguished above all beings. Do thou the works that the law demands of thee, for action is mightier than inaction; yea without works the very maintenance of thy body cannot be. ’Tis by doing works in other spirit than as a sacrifice that this world of creatures falleth into bondage to its works; but do thou practise works as a Sacrifice, O son of Coonty, with a mind free from the yoke of attachment. For with Sacrifice as their companion the Father, of old, created all these peoples and said unto them, “By Sacrifice shall ye beget offspring; lo the chosen joys of your desire, they shall be to you the milk of her udders. Cherish you the gods with sacrifice and the gods shall cherish you in turn; thus by cherishing each other shall ye attain to your highest welfare. Cherished with sacrifice the gods shall bestow on you the joys you most desire and he is no better than a thief who enjoyeth what they give and giveth not to them again." The good who eat the remnants of the Sacrifice are delivered from all their transgressions, but those accursed eat and drink sin who cook their food but for their own selfish bellies. From food all creatures are born and from rain is the birth of food; but rain ariseth from the sacrifice and Sacrifice hath its root in works; works know to be born of the Eternal, for by the imperishable word of the Eternal they were brought into being. Therefore is the Eternal everywhere and in all things; yea He hath His home for ever in the heart of the Sacrifice. This is the Wheel that God hath set going and who goeth not with it, whose days are a wickedness, whose delight & ease are in the senses, O son of Pritha, liveth his life in vain. But for the man whose whole pleasure is in the Self and who satisfies his longing with the Self, yea who is content utterly with the Self, for him there is no needful action. For indeed he hath no end at all to gain by doing neither any by not doing, he hath no dependence for end or aim on any or even this whole world of creatures. Therefore without attachment do ever the work before thee, since by doing works without attachment man reacheth the Highest. 'Twas by works alone that the men of old reached to utter perfection even Junac and the rest. Moreover even if thou lookest to the right government of the world, thou shouldest be doing. What they see their Greatest do, even that the rest of the folk will practise, and the standard that the Best setteth up, the world will surely follow. Behold, O Partha, there is nought at all in the three worlds that I must do, there is nothing I have not or that I yet need to win, and still I move in the path of works. For verily were I not to move sleeplessly in the path of works, lo men follow utterly the way wherein I tread, O son of Pritha, then would all these worlds sink and perish, were I not to do works and I should become the creator of bastard confusion and the slayer of all these creatures. That which the ignorant do with attachment to the work, O Bharata, the wise man should do without attachment, wishing only to keep the world in its traces. Let him not be the cause of division and confusion of mind in the ignorant who are attached to their works, but let him, knowing all, set them to all the works of this world by doing works in Yoga. Lo works are done but by the modes of Nature in her inevitable working, but the Spirit of man is deceived by the sense of separate existence and he sayeth in himself "I, even I am the doer." But he who knoweth to the core how the workings of the modes are parcelled out, believeth that the modes work in and upon the modes, and suffereth not attachment to seize him. Most men are deceived by the modes of Nature, cling to the workings of these modes; these dull brains, these imperfect knowers, let not the perfect knower cause to swerve and stumble. Repose all thy works upon Me and with thy heart spiritually inclined be desireless, be selfless; then arise, fight, O Urjoona, let the fever of thy soul pass from thee. For men who with faith & without carping follow ever this my Word are released, they also, from bondage to their works, but they who carp at and follow not this my word, know of them that all their knowledge is a delusion; their intellect is nought; they are lost men, Urjoona. Lo even the wise man who knoweth can but act according to his own essential nature; for to their nature all creatures come at last and what shall coercing it avail? Only in the field of each & every sense love and hate are there & ever they lie in ambush; let not the Spirit of man fall into their clutches for they are his adversaries in his great journey. Better is it the rule of thy own life ill done than an alien rule well accomplished, yea death in the path of one's own nature is better; it is a fearful and perilous thing to follow the law of another's being.

URJOONA

Who then is this by whom man is impelled that he worketh sin in the world, yea though he will it not, O Varshnéyan, as if forced to it by very violence?

KRISHNA

It is craving, it is wrath, the child of Rajoguna, Mode of Passion. Know him for the Fiend, the Enemy of man's soul here upon earth, a great devourer, a mighty sinner. As a fire engirt with smoke, as a mirror covered with dust, as the unborn child with the caul, so is the universe by him enveloped. By him knowledge is besieged and girt round, O son of Coonty, by this eternal enemy of the wise, this insatiable fire of desire and passion. The senses, the soul and the overmind, these are the places of his session, with these he cloudeth over knowledge and bewildereth the embodied spirit. Therefore in the beginning constrain the senses, O lion of the Bharats, and slay that accursed with the sword of Knowledge and Discernment. High, say the wise, reign the senses, but the heart is higher than they & the overmind is higher than the heart, he who is higher than the overmind, that is He. Thus when thou hast understood Him who is higher than the overmind, slay thy enemy, O strong-armed, even that terrible and invincible one, whose shape is passion.

Chapter IV

KRISHNA

This Yoga I declared to Vivasvân, the Yoga that cannot perish; Vivasvân told it to Manu, Manu to Ixvaacou repeated it. Thus was it handed down from generation to generation and known of the philosopher Kings till in a mighty lapse of time that Yoga was lost, O scourge of thy foemen. This is that ancient Yoga that I today have declared to thee because thou art my worshipper and lover and friend, for 'tis the noblest mystery of all.

URJOONA

Of these latter times is thy birth, O Krishna, of the high ancient time was the birth of Vivasvân; how should I understand aright this thy saying that thou in the beginning declaredst it?

KRISHNA

Many are my births that are past and gone and thine also, Urjoona; all of them I know but thou knowest not, O scourge of thy foemen. Yea, though I be unborn and imperishable Spirit, though I be the Lord of all creatures, yet I resort to my own nature and am born by the power of my Self-Illusion. For whenever and whenever righteousness and justice decline & faint upon the earth, O Bharata, and unrighteousness and injustice arise and flourish, then do I put forth myself; for the salvation of the pure and the destruction of evildoers, to raise up justice and righteousness I am born again from age to age. He who in this sort knoweth aright my divine birth and works, cometh not to rebirth when he leaveth the body, to Me he cometh, Urjoona. Many have sought refuge with me and made themselves full of me, who have risen beyond love and wrath and fear, and they made themselves holy by the austere energisms of knowledge, and became even as Myself. In whatsoever way men come to me, in their own way I accept and love them; utterly do men, O son of Pritha, follow in the path in which I tread. Desiring good success of their works men sacrifice to the gods on earth, for very quickly in the world of men cometh the success that is born of works. By me were the four orders created according unto the division of the workings of the stuff of their nature, know me for their maker and yet neither for doer nor maker who am imperishable. On Me actions leave no stain for I have no craving for their fruit; he who really knows this of me, is not bound by his works. Knowing that in this wise works were done by the ancient seekers after salvation, do thou also do works that were done in old time by the men of old. What is action and what is inaction, as to this the very sages are bewildered; therefore I will declare action unto thee by the knowledge whereof thou shalt be delivered out of evil. For of works thou must understand, of miswork thou must understand, and thou must understand also of inaction; very difficult is the way of works and their mystery. He who in action can see inaction and action in inaction, he is the understanding mind among men; he doeth all works, yet is in Yoga. When the imaginations of desire are shut out from all that a man beginneth & undertaketh, and his works have been burned up in the fires of Knowledge, then it is he that the wise call the truly learned. He hath relinquished attachment to the fruit of his works, is ever satisfied of soul and dependeth not on any outward things; such a man though he engage himself deep in works, yet really *doeth* nothing: — pure of lusts, he is governed in heart and spirit, he has surrendered all sense of belonging, doing actions only with his body he receives no stain of sin: — well-content with the gains that chance & time may bring him, lifted above the plane of the dualities, void of jealousy, receiving success & failure alike as friends, though he do works, yet is he not bound by them: — leaving all heart clingings behind him, a spirit released, a mind safe in its tower of knowledge, performing works for a sacrifice, all his works are swallowed up & vanish.

Brahman is his giving and Brahman is his sacrifice, Brahman casteth Brahman into the fire that is Brahman, by Samadhi of his works in Brahman unto Brahman he goeth. Of the Yogins some make to the natural Gods their session of sacrifice, others offer the sacrifice by the sacrifice into the fire that is Brahman.

And some offer the hearing and all the senses into the fires of selfmastery and some offer sound and the other things of sense into the fires of the senses. And others offer into the Yoga-fire of a controlled Spirit that knowledge hath kindled with her hands all the works of the senses and all the works of vital breathing. And some make the sacrifice of their goods and some make a sacrifice of austerity. Some offer up their Yoga as a sacrifice, others the knowledge of the Veda; lords of askesis are they all, keen in the vow of their undertaking. Some offer the upper breath into the lower and the lower breath into the upper, stopping the passages of the inbreath and outbreath, absorbed in government of Breath that is life; others eating temperately, offer up the breaths into the breaths as into a sacrificial fire. And all these, yea all are wise in sacrifice & by sacrifice the obscuration of sin fades away from them, for they live on the remnants of their Sacrifice deeming it as the food of Gods and pass over into Brahman that is for ever. This world belongeth not to him who doeth not sacrifice, how then shall another, O prince of the Kurus? Thus are many sorts of Sacrifice extended in the mouth of the eternal; know all these to be born of works; so knowing thou shalt find deliverance. Better than the sacrifice that is all of goods is the sacrifice of knowledge, O scourge of thy foemen, for all man's work upon earth accomplisheth itself utterly in Wisdom. This Wisdom thou must learn by prostration and questioning and service, then shall the Knowers, they who have seen the Truth of Existence initiate thee in the Knowledge which when thou hast learnt thou shalt not again fall into delusion, O son of Pandou; by the knowledge thou shalt see all creatures even to the meanest in the Self, therefore in Me. Yea wert thou the vilest and most lewd in sin of all sinners, yet shouldest thou pass over to the other shore of Perversity in the ship of the Knowledge. As a fire when it hath been kindled, O Urjoona, burneth to ashes the fuel of it, even so doth the Fire of the Knowledge burn all a man's works to nothingness. In all the world there is nought that is so great and pure as Wisdom and one who hath been made perfect by Yoga findeth Wisdom in his Self naturally and by the mere lapse of time. The man of faith, the selfdevoted who has bridled his senses, he wins the Knowledge, and when a man has got the Knowledge he attains very quickly to the high and perfect peace. But the ignorant, the man of little faith, the soul full of doubts, these go to perdition; this world is not for the doubting soul, nor the other world, nor any kind of happiness. But he that reposeth all his works in Yoga and cleaveth Doubt asunder with the sharp edge of Knowledge, the man that possesseth his Self, O Dhanunjoy, his works cannot bind. Therefore take up the sword of Knowledge, O Urjoona, and cleave asunder this Doubt that hath made his seat in thy heart, the child of Ignorance, lay fast hold upon Yoga, arise, O seed of Bharat.

Chapter V

URJOONA

Thou declarest the renunciation of works, O Krishna, and again thou declarest Yoga in works. Which one alone of these twain is the better, this tell me clearly to leave no doubt behind.

KRISHNA

Renunciation of works or Yoga in works, both of these make for the soul's highest welfare, but of these two Yoga in works is distinguished above renunciation of works. Know him for the perpetual Sunnyasin, who neither hates nor desires aught, for the mind that rises above the dualities, O strong of arm, is easily and happily released from bondage. It is children who talk of Sankhya & Yoga as distinct & different, not the learned; he who cleaveth wholly to even one of these findeth the fruit of both. To the high heaven whereto the Sankhyas win, the men of Yoga go also, and he who seeth Sankhya and Yoga as one, seeth indeed. But without Yoga, O great of arm, renunciation is very difficult to arrive at and the sage that hath Yoga travelleth very swiftly to God. When a man hath Yoga, the self of him is purified from obscuration, he is master [of] the Self and victor over the senses; he whose Self has become one with the self of all created things, though he do works, can receive no defilement. The Yogin sees the reality of things and thinks "Truly I do nothing at all"; yea when he sees or hears or touches, when he smells and when he tastes, in his going and in his sleeping and in his breathing, whether he talk, whether he put out or take in, whether he close his eyes or open them, still he holds to it, "Lo, 'tis but the senses that move in the fields of the senses." When a man doeth, reposing all his works on the Eternal and abandoning attachment, sin cannot stay on his soul even as water on the leaf of a lotus. With their body, mind and understanding self and with the pure and unaffected senses the Yogins relinquishing attachment do works for the cleansing of the Self. The soul that has Yoga abandons the fruit of its works and gains instead a confident and utter peace, but the soul that has not Yoga clings to the fruit of its works and by the working of desire it falls into bondage. When a man is master of his self and has renounced all works in his heart, then the embodied spirit sitteth at ease in his ninegated city, neither doing nor causing to be done. The Lord createth not works nor the authorship of works for His people neither yoketh He them to the fruits of their works; ’tis the nature in a man that is busy & taketh its course. The Lord taketh to himself the sin of none neither accepteth He the righteousness of any; but Wisdom is clouded over with Nescience and ’tis by this that these living beings fall into delusion. But on all of those who by Knowledge have destroyed the nescience of the Self, Wisdom riseth like the sun and lighteth up that Highest Self of All. Then they perceive Him alone and are Self of Him and to Him consecrated in faith and all for Him, and the revolving wheel clutches them not in any more, because wisdom hath washed them pure of all stain. The Brahmin endowed with learning and modest culture, the cow & the elephant and the very dog and the Pariah, all these the wise regard with equal eyes. Even in this human life they have conquered this creation whose minds have taken root in that divine equality, for the Eternal also is without a defect and He looketh on all his creatures with equal eyes; therefore in the Eternal they have their root. He is not overjoyed when he getteth what is pleasant, he groweth not troubled when he tasteth bitterness, whose reason is firm & steadfast and he subjecteth not himself to delusion but knoweth the Eternal and in him abideth. His soul clings not to the touches of outward things but what happiness he finds, he finds in the Self, therefore his Self is made one in Yoga with Eternal Brahman & the happiness he tastes, does not cease or diminish. For the enjoyments that are born of touch and contact are very wombs of misery, they begin and they end; the wise man taketh no delight in these. For he who even on this earth and before his release from this mortal body hath strength to stand up in the speed and rush of wrath and lust, he hath Yoga, he is the happy man. That man is the Yogin whose bliss is within and his delight & ease are inward and an inner light illumines him & not this outer sun; he goeth to cessation in Eternal Brahman, for he becometh Brahman. Cessation in Brahman falleth to those who are Rishis from whom all stain & darkness have faded away, who have cut doubt away from their hearts and are masters of Self, whose whole delight & work is to do good to all created things. Round the strivers after perfection, round the governed souls, who are delivered from the grip of wrath and desire, lo the Paradise of cessation in Brahman liveth all about them, who have got the knowledge of the Self within. He who shuts out the touches of outward things from his soul and concentrates sight between his eyebrows, making equal the outbreath and the inbreath as they move within the nostrils, master of his sense and mind and reason who utterly desireth salvation and desire and wrath and fear have departed from him for ever, verily he is already a released and delivered soul. He knows me for the One that feasteth on man's sacrifices and austerities, a mighty God who is the friend of every created thing, and knowing he travels to the Peace.

Chapter VI

KRISHNA

Who doeth the works he hath to do but dependeth [not] on the fruit of his works, he is the Sunnyasin and he is the Yogin and not he who lighteth not the daily fire and doeth not the daily ritual. Know this, O Pandava, that the thing which men call renunciation is nothing but Yoga, since no man becometh a Yogin if he hath not renounced the imaginations of the will. Of the sage who has yet to ascend the hill of Yoga, works are the medium, but calm is the medium of him who sitteth already on the hilltops. For when a man has renounced all the imaginings of the will and his heart clings not to his works and clings not to the objects of the senses, that is the true Sunnyasin, that is the sitter on the hilltop of Yoga. Let a man deliver his soul by its own strength & let him not afflict his spirit to weaken it; for a man's self is its own & only friend and its own & only enemy. To that man his self is a friend who has conquered self by the Self, but when he is not in touch with his self, it worketh enmity against him like an outward foe. Now when he has mastered self and is at peace, then the Self of him is utterly at its ease, unaffected by heat & cold, pleasure or pain, imperturbable in honour & disgrace. The Yogi whose soul is satisfied with wisdom and discernment, the immovable sitter on his hilltop and victor over his senses, is called the Yogin who hath the Yoga; and gold and gravel, sand or stone is all to him one substance. He who hath one heart for his lover and his friend and foeman and those who care not for him, who stand midway between liking & hating, for men he should love and men he should hate, yea & even his soul maketh no difference between the saint & the sinner, he is the truly great among men.

In a silent place let the Yogin gird his self to Yoga, solitary, governed in heart & spirit, devote his soul continually without desires, without the sense of belongings. In a pure & holy region let him set up his steady & unchanging seat, neither very high nor very low, with grass of cusha spread and a deerskin thereon, and on that a robe. There with his mind directed to one point, with a rein on the workings of his heart & senses, let him sit on the seat he has made and betake himself to Yoga for the cleansing of the self within. He shall sit steady holding head & neck & body in one line & motionless and he shall keep his gaze fixed on the joining-place of his nostrils so that his eyes shall not wander over the regions; so steadfast in the vow of abstinence & purity with a glad & calm spirit from which fear hath been driven out, with a mind under restraint, with a heart full of Me let him sit in Yoga giving himself utterly to Me. Ever if he yoke himself so to Yoga with a governed heart, the Yogin reacheth that Peace in Me which is entire quietude. Yoga is not for the overeater neither can a man get Yoga by abstaining utterly from food, nor is it for him that is overgiven to sleep nor can one get it by waking always. But when a man eateth his food & giveth his pleasures to God and all his striving in his works & his sleep is for Him & his waking is for Him, Yoga cometh to that man [and] slayeth his sorrows. When the mind is wholly under government & stands well contained in the Self, when all desirable things cannot get the heart to hunger after them, then a man is said to be in Yoga. Even as the flame of a lamp in a windless place moveth not at all, such is the image men have handed down of a Yogin when he practiseth Yoga with his heart under rein. That wherein the conscious heart ceaseth & is blocked in from its workings by constancy in the practice of Yoga, that wherein by the strength of the self the mind of man seeth the Self and is wholly satisfied in the Self, — where this inward Spirit knoweth that extreme & exceeding happiness which is beyond the reach of the senses & which the reason cannot grasp, and it cleaveth to it & moveth not from the truth of things, — that which when a man has won he cannot conceive of any greater gain, to which when he holds he is not moved therefrom even by the most sore poignant grief, that know for a man's divorce from his long wedlock with sorrow, which is called Yoga; resolutely should a man set himself to that Yoga with a heart that will not despond. He must abandon all the longings that are born of the imaginations of the Will nor keep one back for his comfort, he must surround with his mind & force in from their delight the cohort of the senses; so with the understanding self held well within the grasp of Strong-Control he must cabin in the mind into the self and think of nothing at all. Whenever & to whatever side darts away the infirm & restless mind, thou must curb it from its journey to bring it back within the Self & in the Self tame it to obedience — for a high beatitude cometh to such a Yogi whose mind is calmed, whose active nature is tranquillised, who has no sin, who has wholly become Brahman. Easily shall the Yogi who ever thus setteth himself to Yoga put from him the stain of obscuration, easily feel the utter bliss and the touch divine. The soul that is set in Yoga seeth himself in all creatures & all creatures in himself and he hath one heart for all beings that the world containeth. When a man seeth Me everywhere and all the world in Me, I am with him always and he is always with Me, and we are lost to each other never. When a Yogin becometh one with all beings & loveth Me in all creatures, though he live & move in all manner of activities, he liveth & doeth only in Me. For him I deem to be the greatest Yogin, O Urjoona, who looks alike on all beings everywhere as if they were his own self whether it be for happiness or whether it be for pain.

URJOONA

Nay, O Madhusudan, for the restlessness of man's mind I can see no sure abiding in this Yoga of oneheartedness which thou hast spoken. For very restless is the mind, O Krishna, and turbulent and strong and hard of mouth and to rein it in I hold as difficult as to put a bridle upon the wind.

KRISHNA

Surely, O strong of arm, the mind is restless & hard to bridle, but by askesis, O son of Coonty, and by the turning away of the heart from its affections it can be caught & controlled. Very difficult of attainment is Yoga to the ungoverned spirit, so I hold, but when a man governeth himself & striveth by the right means Yoga is not impossible to attain.

URJOONA

When a man hath faith but cannot strive aright & his mind swerveth from Yoga and he attaineth not to success in Yoga, what is the last state of such a man, O Krishna? Doth he lose both this world & that other, doth he perish like a breaking cloud, failing, O strong-armed, to get his immortal seat, losing his way on the path of the Eternal? This doubt of mine must thou solve to its very heart, O Krishna, for I shall not find any other who can destroy this doubt but only thee.

KRISHNA

Partha, neither in this world nor in the other is there for that man any perdition; no man who doeth good, can come to an evil end, O beloved. But to the world of the righteous he goeth and there dwelleth for endless seasons and then is born again, the man fallen from Yoga, in a house of pure and fortunate men. Or else he even cometh to being in the house of the wise men, in a family of Yogins, for such a birth as this in this world is one of the hardest to win. There he getteth touch again with the mind he had in his former body and with that to start him he striveth yet harder after perfection, O delight of the Kurus. For he is seized and hurried forward even by that former habit & askesis of his, though it be without his own will. Even if a man's mind is curious after Yoga, he overpasseth the outer Brahman in the Word. The Yogin earnestly striving is purified of sin; perfected by toil of many births he arriveth at his highest salvation. Greater than the men of askesis is the Yogin and greater I hold him even than the men of Knowledge, and than the men of works he is surely greater, a Yogin therefore shouldst thou be, O Urjoona. And of all that are Yogins I deem to have most Yoga him who with his inner Self taking refuge in Me hath faith in Me & loveth Me & worshippeth.

APPENDIX I

Opening of Chapter VII

KRISHNA

When thou hast cloven to me with thy whole self, O Partha, taking refuge in me & practising Yoga, hearken how then thou shalt know me without doubt and without imperfection. For I will declare to thee without reserve the whole result of Philosophy & Science which when thou hast known there is nought else that is left to be known in this existence. Among many thousands of men hardly one striveth after perfection and of those even that strive & are spiritually whole, hardly one knoweth me without misprision.

APPENDIX II

A Later Translation of the Opening of the Gita

DHRITARASHTRA

In the sacred field, the field of the Kurus met together with will to battle what did my people and the people of the Pandavas, O Sunjaya?

SUNJAYA

When Duryodhana the King saw marshalled the Pandava host, he approached the Teacher and spoke this word.

"Behold, O Teacher, this mighty army of the sons of Pandu marshalled by Drupad's son, thy disciple wise of brain.

Here are heroes, mighty bowmen, equals of Bhima and Arjuna in the fight

Vidula

Vidula

This poem is based on a passage comprising four chapters (Adhyayas) in the Udyog-parva of the Mahabharat. It is not a close translation but a free poetic paraphrase of the subject matter; it follows closely the sequence of the thoughts with occasional rearrangements, translates freely in parts, in others makes some departures or adds, develops and amplifies to bring out fully the underlying spirit and idea. The style of the original is terse, brief, packed and allusive, sometimes knotted into a pregnant obscurity by the drastic economy of word and phrase. It would have been impossible to preserve effectively in English such a style; a looser fullness of expression has been preferred sacrificing the letter to the spirit. The text of a Calcutta edition has been followed throughout. The whole passage with its envoi or self-laudatory close reads like an independent poem dovetailed into the vast epic.

I

Hearken to the ancient converse of which old traditions tell,
Of the youthful Sunjoy with his mother the indomitable
Vidula, the passionate princess, royal in her mood and form,
Fiery-souled, the resolute speaker with her tameless heart of storm,
High her fame in kingly senates where the nations' princes met,
Eloquent and proud and learned, with a soul foreseeing fate.
Conquered by the King of Sindhu, hurled down from his lofty throne,
As he lay unnerved and abject, came she to her warlike son,
Vidula, the passionate princess, and she spoke with burning eyes,
Scourging him with words like flakes of fire, bidding him arise.
"Son", she cried, "no son of mine to make thy mother's heart rejoice!
Hark, thy foemen mock and triumph, yet to live is still thy choice.
Nor thy hero father got thee, nor I bore thee in my womb,

Random changeling from some world of petty souls and coward gloom!
Passionless and abject nature, stripped and void of bold desire,
Nerveless of all masculine endeavour, without force and fire,
Reckon not thy name midst men who liest flinging manhood far.
Rise and bear thy yoke, thou warhorse, neighing for the crash of war!
Make not great thy foemen with thy terrors, panic eyes behind.
Thou, a king's son, canst thou tremble? Be a king indeed in mind,
Soar up like a sudden eagle beating high against the wind.
Out, arise, thou coward! lie not thus upon the ground o'erthrown,
Shorn of pride, thy foes' delight, thy friends' shame, making fruitless moan.
Easily a paltry river with the meagre floods o'erflows,
Easily the fieldmouse with her mite of grain contented goes,
Easily the coward ceases fainting from his great emprise.
Break the serpent's fangs between thy hands and perish, not as dies
Impotent a whining dog, go deathward; but as circles o'er his prey,
But as wheels an angry falcon through the wide and azure day
Watching for his moment, thou in fearless silence wait thy time
Or with resonant and far-voiced challenge waken war sublime.
Wherefore like a dead thing thunder-blasted liest thou on the ground?
Rise, thou coward, seek not slumber while the victors jeer around.
Turn not miserably to thy set, but smiting with the sword
Make the world re-echo! deem that thou wast born to be its lord,
Not with middle place content nor abject; all subjection spurn.
Stand erect, whate'er befall thee, roaring on thy hunters turn.
Blaze out like a firebrand even if for a moment burning high,
Not like the poor fire of husks that smoulders long, afraid to die.
Better is the swift and glorious flame that mounting dies of power,
Not to smoke in squalid blackness, hour on wretched futile hour.
Out to battle, do thy man's work, falter not in high attempt;
So a man is quit before his God and saved from self-contempt.
For the great heart grieves not though he lose the glorious crown of strife,
But he does the work before him holding cheap his body's life.
Show thy prowess, be the hero thou wast born, with flashing glaive
Hew thy way with God before thee to the heaven of the brave.

All the wells that thou hast dug, the beasts that thou hast offered, all
Fame is gone to wrack; thy roots of pleasure cut, the tree must fall.
Eunuch, wherefore dost thou live? if thou must sink, with thy last breath
Seize thy foeman by the thigh and drag him with thee down to death.
Though his roots be cut, the strong man stands up stiff, he sinks not prone.
Mark the warhorse in the battle with the sunken car o'erthrown,
Up he struggles, full of pride and rage. Thou too like him exalt
Thy low fortunes, lift thy great house shamed and ruined through thy fault.
He whose perfect deeds as of a demigod in strength and mind
Make not up the daily talk and glory of amazed mankind,
What is he but one more clod to feed the fire and help the soil?
He is neither man nor woman. Man is he whose fire and toil,
Turned to wealth or turned to wisdom, truth or piety of soul,
Travel through the spacious world renowned from pole to ringing pole,
Or in austere works or knowledge or in valour quick and high
He outdoes his fellow-creatures scaling the immortals' sky.
Be not as the vagrant beggar seeking food from door to door,
Shameless with his skull and rosary wretched handfuls to implore.
Cowardly, ignoble and unfeeling is the life they lead,
Equal to the houseless street-dog whom compassionate hands must feed.
Let not ever son of mine be such an one as all men scorn,
Without throne and without purple, weak, emaciate and forlorn,
Mean and with mean things content and vaunting o'er a little gain.
Such an one his foes delight in, but his friends are joyless men.
We shall perish, exiles from our country, plagued with wretched want,
All obscure who were so glorious, doomed to petty things and scant,
Wandering in loveless places, dreaming at an alien door
Of delightful things and pleasant in our joyous lives of yore.
Death and shame in thee I bore and fondly deemed I had a son.
Better were a woman barren than to bear with labour one
Sluggish, weak and hopeless, without noble wrath and warlike fire.
Sunjoy, Sunjoy, waste not thou thy flame in smoke! Impetuous, dire,

Leap upon thy foes for havoc as a famished lion leaps,
Storming through thy vanquished victors till thou fall on slaughtered heaps.
This is manhood to refuse defeat and insult not to bear.
He who suffers and forgives, who bows his neck the yoke to wear,
Is too weak for man, too base to be a woman. Loiterings
Clog a mounting fortune, low contentment fetters, fear unwings,
And a fainting over-pitiful heart she scorns for her abode.
In thy strength reject these poisons, tread not vile subjection's road.
Make thy man's heart hard like iron to pursue and take thy own.
Out to battle! let not woman's weakness shame thy manhood, son.
Fortune dogs the hero's goings who like Ocean in his pride
Walks through life with puissant footsteps as a lion the hill-side.
Even when he has gone where fate shall lead him, still his people climb
On the wave of his great actions to a joy and strength sublime.
For a King must exile pleasure, turn from safety to waylay
Fortune for his nation like a hunter tracking down his prey.
Wise and fortunate ministers shall help him, thousands share his joy."

But to Vidula, amazed and angry answered swift the boy.
"Where shall be thy bliss, my mother, though the whole wide earth were thine,
If thine eyes of me are vacant? the delight of raiment fine,
Food and gems and rich enjoyments, what were these without thy son?"

But the mother in her surge of passion answered rushing on.
"Be that Hell my foeman's where the loiterer and the coward climb,
Who avoid occasion, murmuring, 'Why today? 'tis not the time.'
May my friends go flocking to that world where the high-crested go,
Who respect the self within them and its noble value know.
But who, stripped of mastery, eat the bitter bread that others give,
Miserable souls and strengthless, is it life that such men live?
Live not with such abject living, be a prince and chief of men.
Let the Brahmins look toward thee even as to the King of Rain
All this world of creatures turns for sustenance with expectant eyes.
Mighty Gods to mightier Indra from their golden thrones arise.

Lo, his hands to whom all creatures for their bliss come crowding fast,
As to a ripe-fruited tree the birds innumerably haste,
And his life indeed is counted, for he reaps the earth with deeds
And on friend and fere and kinsman showers unasked their princely needs, —
Living by his arm's strength, taking only what his hand has won,
Gathering here an earthly glory, shining there like Indra's sun.

II

"Evil is thy state, O Sunjoy; lose the manhood from thy soul
And thou treadst the path of vilest spirits with their Hell for goal.
Shall a warrior born of warriors to whom Heaven gave fire divine,
Spend it not in mighty actions lavish of the God within?
Shall he hug his life for ever? He is then a thief to Heaven;
For to swell the days of earth with glorious deeds that strength was given.
Hear me, Sunjoy! Sindhu's monarch rules in might the conquered folk,
But their hearts bend not before him, they abhor the foreign yoke.
They from weakness sit with minds bewildered, full of hate and grief,
Waiting sullenly a sea of miseries, hopeless of relief.
Gather faithful friends and get thee valiant helpers; through our lands
Working with a fierce persistence, strengthening still thy mighty hands.
Others when they see thy daring shall be stirred to noble strife,
Catch thy fire and rise in strong rebellion, scorning goods and life.
Make with these a close and mighty following, seek the pathless hills,
Regions difficult and strong and sullen passes walled with ills
For the rash invader; there in arms expect the tyrant's hour;
He is not a god to be immortal, not for ever lasts his power.
Knowst thou not the ancient Brahmin with his deep and inward eye
That beholds the ages, told of thee that lowly thou shouldst lie,
Yet again arise and prosper? Victor[1] named, a victor be.
Therefore have I chidden and urged thee, to awake thy destiny.

---

[1] "Sunjoy", Sanskrit *sañjaya*, means "victory".

O my son, believe me, he whose victory brings the common gain
And a nation conquers with him, cannot fail; his goal is plain
And his feet divinely guided, for his steps to Fate belong.
O my son, think this whilst thou art fighting: 'Generations long
Of my fathers walk beside me and a nation's mighty dead
Watch me; for my greatness is their own, my slavery bows their head.'
In this knowledge turn thy thoughts to battle; Sunjoy, draw not back!
Eviller plight is not nor sinfuller, this day's bread to lack
Nor to know from whence shall come the bitter morrow's scanty meal.
It is worse than death of spouse or child such indigence to feel.
That's a grief that strikes and passes, this a long and living death.
In a house of mighty monarchs I derived my earliest breath;
As from ocean into ocean sails a ship in bannered pride,
To a house of mighty monarchs came I in my marriage-tide,
Queen and Empress, filled with joys and blessings, worshipped by my lord,
And my kin rejoiced to see me rich in wealth and jewelled hoard,
Clothed in smooth and splendid raiment, girt with friends and nobly stored.
When thou seest me weak and abject and the weeping of thy wife,
Wilt thou in thy breath take pleasure, wilt thou love thy shameful life?
Wouldst thou see thy household priests and holy teachers leave our side,
Our retainers hopeless of their sustenance who had served thy pride?
In thy proud aspiring actions, son, I lived; if these are past,
Peace can dwell not in my bosom and my heart shall break at last.
Must I then turn back the Brahmin when he sues for gold or lands?
Shame would tear my heart-strings; never, Sunjoy, went with empty hands
From thy father's seat or from thy mother's presence suppliant men.
We were ever all men's refuge; shall we sue to others then?
Life shall leave me rather, I will seek that house of nether calms.
Never will I tread a stranger's floor and live upon his insolent alms.
Lo! we toss in shoreless waters, be the haven to our sail!
Lo! we drown in monstrous billows, be our boat with kindly hail!
Save our hopeless fortunes! We are dead men drawing empty breath,
Be a hero and deliverer, raise us from this living death.

Dare to die, O hero! Where is then the foeman half so strong
As to overcome thy onset? Who would choose to suffer long
Years of sad despondent weakness? sudden death is better far.
Single out their mightiest, let thy fame o'ertop the surge of war.
Indra by the death of Vritra seized the monarchy of Heaven;
Lord of teeming worlds, to him the largest sovereign part is given.
Calling to his armoured foes defiance, lo, the hero proud
Shouts his name across the roar of battle like a lion loud
And he breaks their foremost, and they fall apart like scattered spray,
Till he slays their leader and mightiest winning glory wide as day.
Then his haters' hearts are troubled, then they bow reluctant heads.
For he hurls his life into the battle and on death he treads
Towards victory; all the cowards and the tremblers of the earth
Come with gifts and incense crowding to provide his ease and mirth.
Is it death thou fleest from? Sunjoy, savage is the fall of Kings,
For a wise foe leaves no remnants, hands to stab or fugitive wings.
To be King is heaven, O Sunjoy, sweet as nectar to the lip
Power is to the mighty. Son of Kings, thou holdest in thy grip
Heaven or empire; rush then like a meteor on the vaunting foe!
Reaper in the battle! kinglike lay their armèd thousands low.
Sunjoy, terror of thy foemen, let me see not in thy close
A poor crouching coward girt with weeping friends and shouting foes.
Vail not thou thy crest to be a mock for Sindhu's laughing girls:
Take her highborn damsels for thy handmaids, with her conquered pearls
Wreathe thy queen, be strong and splendid as of yore in youthful pride.
Young and shaped to princely beauty, cultured, to great Kings allied,
Such a man as thou to deviate from thy bold and radiant mood!
Thou to bow thy neck to other yoke than Earth's, for alien food
Speaking sweet to strangers, following with a meek inclinèd head!
If I see thee thus degraded, I shall think my son is dead.
But I know this country's mighty princes and their lordly race
Firmer-rooted than the mountains in eternal kingliness.
In our fathers and forefathers 'twas the same and in our sons
Shall be and their progeny for ever while the Ganges runs.
It was made by God a grandeur! Never prince of the ancient seed,

Never prince who did the deeds of princehood in this land was bred,
Who would crouch and gaze for sustenance, who in fear would bow his neck.
Like a giant tree he has no joints to bend with, though he break;
Break he may, but bends not. If he bows, to holy men in awe
Bows he; if he yields, it is to justice and religion's law,
Not to equal or inferiors: them he holds with sternest hand,
Smiting still the strong ill-doer and the troublers of the land.
Mightily like a maddened elephant through the world he storms abroad
Conquering fate through high adventure, kneeling not to bear the load —
Little recks if he has helpers or stands lonely, dispossessed;
He is what he is and will not alter, lowers not his crest."

III

"Mother, mother stony-natured, ore of pitiless iron black
Heaven collected and together forged thy dreadful heart to make.
Mother mine heroic-minded, high-disdaining common mould,
Dreadful is the warrior code of ethics that our princes hold,
Harsh, devoid of love and sweetness; thou my mother driv'st me on
To the battle like a stranger, like another woman's son!
Am I not thy child? has any other in thy love a part?
Yet thy words are harsh and ruthless. Will it please thy fiery heart
If I lie in battle cold and in my stead thou own the earth?
What were all life's splendour, what were bright and fair things worth?
When thine eyes seek me in vain, will these things soothe their sad desire?"

But the mother answered still with words that breathed her soul of fire.
"Dear my son, for joy or sorrow twofold is the great life's scope,
To be righteous in our actions, to fulfil each human hope.
Private welfare, high religion, both alike should urge thee on.
It has come at last, the mightiest hour of all thy life, O son.

Now if thou shouldst spurn occasion from vile fear or pitifulness,
All thy beauty were dishonoured and thy strength grows thy disgrace.
When dishonour stains thee, should I shape my words to soothe thy mind?
Like a she-mule's were my mother's love, a brutish impulse blind.
Leave the path of fools and cowards, vileness hated by the wise.
Strange the sorcery of affection sealing up this people's eyes!
But not mine! While only thou art noble, art thou dear and loved.
But a graceless son or grandchild by aspiring thoughts unmoved,
Crude and brutish-brained with unformed soul, revolts a father's mind,
Knowing he had all in vain his labour to create his kind.
Shrink not from a noble action, stoop not to unworthy deed!
Vile are they who stoop, they gain not Heaven's doors, nor here succeed.
Kshatriyas on this world were loosed for battle by their Maker high,
Sunjoy, for the strife and victory, and they conquer or they die.
Ever by their doom of Nature to a labour unrevoked
And a fierce hard-hearted action for the people's safety yoked,
Conquering or dying, glorious Indra's radiant world they share:
Yet his heavenly mansions to a warrior's heart are not so dear
As to dare and triumph, as the gust and glory of the strife,
As to set his foes beneath his feet and drink the joy of life.
When the thinking soul of manhood is insulted and oppressed,
Deep he burns with fire for ever and revenge is in his breast,
Till he's strong to hurl disfigured self away and nobly cease
Or to crush the proud wrongdoer; other way is none to peace.
Wilt thou faint for difficulty and sorrow? they but strengthen men.
Even a little pleasure comes not here without a little pain,
Without struggle no delight is and without delight the soul
Cannot live, but ceases like the Ganges in the ocean's roll."

Then King Sunjoy answered, faintly now, but making once more moan.
"Not such counsel thou shouldst give me. Mother, still I am thy son.
Be as dumb men are, my mother, be as dull and joyless things;
Look to pity and softness only, not the iron moods of Kings."

"Greatest were my joy then if thy thoughts like mine grew eagle-eyed.
Thou bidst me to woman's softness? I bid thee to masculine pride.
When the men of Sindhu are not, blotted by thy hands from life,
When thou winnest difficult victory from the clutch of fearful strife,
I shall know thou art my offspring and shall love my son indeed."

But King Sunjoy, "Where have I a single helper in my need?
All alone what man can struggle? Without means who groweth great?
I have neither friends nor treasure; when I view my dreadful state,
Fallen, helpless, wretched, all my sick heart turns from useless toil
As a sinner lost despairs of heaven for a thing so vile.
But, O mother, if thy wisdom find an issue from this net,
Tell me, mother; I may do thy lofty bidding even yet."

"Never scorn thyself for past defeat; be bold and proud of heart.
Fortune goes and comes again; she seeks us only to depart.
Foolish are those careful thinkers who would ponder all their days,
Thinking this and that, and leap not to their crown, ask perfect ways.
Where is in the world an action whose result is wholly sure?
Here uncertainty's the one thing certain. To a noble lure
Man puts forth his manhood, wins and is or dies in the attempt.
They who act not, try not, they are nothing and their crown contempt.
Single is inaction's nature to forego Fate's mighty call:
Double-edged high aspiration wins life's throne or loses all.
Knowing that his life is transient, sure of its uncertainties,
Swift the hero clashing with adversity jostles for increase.
All you who are men, awake and rise and struggle; free and great
Now resolve to be and shrink not from the dangerous face of Fate.
Be you resolute for victory; this shall drag her to your side,
For the iron will takes Fortune captive like a vanquished bride.
Call the gods to bless thy purpose; set the Brahmin's subtle brain
And the nation's princes in thy vanguard; fight! thou shalt attain.
There are angered bold ambitious natures, many a breast
Arrogant and active, there are men insulted and disgraced
By the foreign tyrant, there are soaring spirits that aspire,
Minds of calm courageous wisdom, quiet strengths and souls of fire,
Desperate men with broken fortunes; link thyself to these and dare.

Care not for his giant armies, care not for his tools of war.
With these native flames to help thee, those shall break like piles of cloud
When a mighty storm awakes in heaven and the winds grow loud.
Give them precedence, rise to yield them courtesy, speak them ever fair;
They shall make thee then their leader and for thee shall do and dare.
When the tyrant sees his conquered foeman careless grown of death,
Bent on desperate battle, he will tremble, he will hold his breath
Like a man who sees a Python lashing forward for the grip.
Doubtless he will strive to soothe or tame thee, but if thou escape
His deceit and violence, he will parley, give and take for peace.
So at least there's gained a respite and good terms for thy increase.
Respite and a footing gained, then gather wealth to swell thy force.
Friends and helpers crowd around him who has money and resource,
But the poor man they abandon and they shun his feeble state,
Losing confidence, saying, 'Where are then his means and favouring fate?'
When thy foe shall grow thy helper, cessions new and treaties make,
Then thou'lt understand how easy 'twas to win thy kingdom back.

IV

"Never should a prince and leader bow his haughty head to fear,
Let his fortune be however desperate, death however near.
If his soul grow faint, let him imprison weakness in his heart,
Keep a bold and open countenance and play on a hero's part.
If the leader fear and faint, then all behind him faint and fear.
So a king of men should keep a dauntless look and forehead clear.
Now this nation and this army and the statesmen of the land,
All are torn by different counsels and they part to either hand.
Some affect as yet the foreign tyrant, many leave his side,
Others yet shall leave him, frowning, for his insults and his pride.
Some there are, thy friends who love thee, but they serve and eat his bread,
Weak, though praying for thy welfare, like poor cattle bound and led,

Like a cow that sees her calf tied, so they serve reluctantly,
Yet they sorrow in thy sorrow, weeping as for kin that die.
Some there are whom thou hast loved and honoured, loyal friends of old,
Who believe yet in the nation though its king grow faint and cold.
Yield not to thy fear, O Sunjoy; let not such thy side forsake
Scorning thy poor terrors. Wake for victory, Sunjoy! Warrior, wake!
I have laboured to provoke the will, the strength thy heart within.
All is truth I've uttered and thou knowst it; thy despair was sin.
Know that thou hast still great treasure, know that I have funds concealed,
Mighty stores that I alone know; thou shalt have them for the field.
Know that thou hast numerous secret helpers, friends who wait their hour,
Daring to endure privation and disaster's utmost power.
They shall turn not backward from the battle, they are helpers, friends
Such as daring souls aspirant need for their gigantic ends."
So she spoke with words of varied splendour urging him to dare
Till his gloom and shadow left him and his foolish weak despair.

"O thou strong and resolute speaker, even the feeblest fainting soul
Would put darkness from him, listening, for thy words would make him whole.
I will high uphold my country in its swift precipitous fate,
Having thee to lead me on whose vision past and future wait.
My denial and my silence were but craft; consent deferred
Drew thee on to speak lest I should lose even one inspiring word.
It is sudden nectar to the desolate to find a friend!
Now I rise to smite the foe and cease not till I make an end."
Out he rushed to desperate battle burning in his pride and might,
As a noble warhorse wounded rushes faster to the fight.
Stung with arrows of her speech he did his mother's high command
Driving out the foe and stranger, freeing all the conquered land.

Lo, this strong and famous poem that shall make men gods for might,
Kindling fiery joy of battle. When a King has lost the fight
By his foemen whelmed and broken, let his well-wishers and friends

Read to him this poem. All who need high strength for noble ends,
Let them read it daily; for the warrior hearing turns to flame,
Tramples down a hundred foemen and acquires a deathless name.
And the pregnant woman who shall hear it day by day
Bears a hero or a strong man dowered with strength to help or slay,
Or a soul of grandiose virtues, or a helper of the Light,
Or a glorious giver blazing with the spirit's radiance bright.
But a daughter of high princes and a fighter's wife shall bear
Splendid like a flame and swift and fortunate, strong to dare,
Unapproachable in battle and invincible in war,
Armèd champion of the right, injustice' scourge, some human star.

Section Three

Kalidasa

Vikramorvasie
or
The Hero and the Nymph

Characters

PURURAVAS, son of Budha and Ila, grandson of the Moon, King of the world, reigning at Pratisthana.
MANAVAKA, a Brahmin, the King's jester and companion.
LATAVYA, Chamberlain of the King's seraglio.
CHITRARATH, King of the Gandharvas, musicians of Heaven.

GALAVA PELAVA	disciples of Bharat, Preceptor of the Arts in Heaven.

AYUS, son of Pururavas.
CHARIOTEER of Pururavas.

THE QUEEN AUSHINARIE, wife of Pururavas and daughter of the King of Kashi.
URVASIE, an Apsara or Nymph of Heaven, born from the thigh of Narayan.
NIPUNIKA, the Queen's handmaid.

CHITRALEKHA SAHAJANYA RAMBHA MENAKA	Nymphs of Heaven, companions of Urvasie.

SATYAVATIE, a hermitess.

A HUNTRESS.
GIRLS, attendant on the King; AMAZONS.

Act I

INVOCATION

He in Vedanta by the Wise pronounced
Sole Being, who the upper and under world
Pervading overpasses, whom alone
The name of God describes, here applicable
And pregnant — crippled else of force, to others
Perverted — and the Yogins who aspire
To rise above the human death, break in
Breath, soul and senses passionately seeking
The Immutable, and in their own hearts find, —
He, easily by work and faith and love
Attainable, ordain your heavenly weal.
After the invocation the Actor-Manager speaks.

MANAGER
No need of many words.
He speaks into the greenroom.
Hither, good friend.
The Assistant-Manager enters.

ASSISTANT
Behold me.

MANAGER
Often has the audience seen
Old dramas by our earlier poets staged;
Therefore today a piece as yet unknown
I will present them, Vikram and the Nymph.
Remind our actors then most heedfully
To con their parts, as if on each success
Depended.

ASSISTANT
I shall do so.

He goes.

MANAGER
And now to you,
O noble audience, I bow down and pray,
If not from kindliness to us your friends
And caterers, yet from pride in the high name
That graces this our plot, heedful attention,
Gentles, to Vikramorvasie, the work
Of Kalidasa.

VOICES
Help! O help, help, help!
Whoever is on the side of Heaven, whoever
Has passage through the paths of level air.

MANAGER
What cry is this that breaks upon our prologue
From upper worlds, most like the wail distressed
Of ospreys, sad but sweet as moan of bees
Drunken with honey in deep summer bloom,
Or the low cry of distant cuckoo? or hear I
Women who move on Heaven's azure stage
Splendid with rows of seated Gods, and chant
In airy syllables a liquid sweetness?
(*after some thought*)
Ah, now I have it. She who from the thigh
Of the great tempted sage Narayan sprang
Radiant, Heaven's nymph, divinest Urvasie,
In middle air from great Coilasa's lord
Returning, to the enemies of Heaven
Is prisoner; therefore the sweet multitude
Of Apsaras send forth melodious cry
Of pathos and complaint.

He goes.

The Nymphs of Heaven enter, Rambha, Menaka,
Sahajanya and many others.

NYMPHS

Help, help, O help!
Whoever is on the side of Heaven, whoever
Has passage through the paths of level air.
Pururavas enters suddenly and with speed
in a chariot with his charioteer.

PURURAVAS

Enough of lamentation! I am here,
Ilian Pururavas, from grandiose worship
In Surya's brilliant house returned. To me,
O women! say 'gainst what ye cry for rescue.

RAMBHA

Rescue from Titan violence, O King.

PURURAVAS

And what has Titan violence to you
Immortal done of fault, O Heaven's women?

MENAKA

King, hear us.

PURURAVAS

Speak.

MENAKA

Our sister, our dear sister!
The ornament of Eden and its joy!
Whom Indra by asceticism alarmed
Made use of like a lovely sword to kill
Spiritual longings, the eternal refutation
Of Luxmie's pride of beauty, Urvasie!
Returning from Cuvera's halls, O she

Was met, was taken. Cayshy, that dire Titan,
Who in Hiranyapoor exalts his house,
Beheld her and in great captiving hands
Ravished, Chitralekha and Urvasie.
We saw them captive haled.

PURURAVAS

Say, if you know,
What region of the air received that traitor?

SAHAJANYA

North-east he fled.

PURURAVAS

Therefore expel dismay.
I go to bring you back your loved one, if
Attempt can do it.

RAMBHA

O worthy this of thee!
O from the Lunar splendour truly sprung!

PURURAVAS

Where will you wait my advent, nymphs of Heaven?

NYMPHS

Upon this summit called the Peak of Gold,
O King, we shall expect thee.

PURURAVAS

Charioteer,
Urge on my horses to the far north-east;
Gallop through Heaven like the wind.

CHARIOTEER

’Tis done.

PURURAVAS
O nobly driven! With speed like this I could
O'ertake Heaven's eagle though he fled before me
With tempest in his vans. How much more then
This proud transgressor against Heaven's King!
Look, charioteer, beneath my sudden car
The crumbling thunder-clouds fly up like dust,
And the wheel's desperate rotation seems
To make another set of whirling spokes.
The plumes upon the horses' heads rise tall,
Motionless like a picture, and the wind
Of our tremendous speed has made the flag
From staff to airborne end straight as if pointing.
They go out in their chariot.

RAMBHA
Sisters, the King is gone. Direct we then
Our steps to the appointed summit.

MENAKA
Hasten,
O hasten.

ALL
Hasten, O hasten, come, come, come.
They ascend the hill.

RAMBHA
And O, will he indeed avail to draw
This stab out of our hearts?

MENAKA
Doubt it not, Rambha.

RAMBHA
No, Menaka, for not so easily
Are Titans overthrown, my sister.

MENAKA

Rambha,
Remember this is he whom Heaven's King,
When battle raised its dreadful face, has called
With honour from the middle world of men,
Set in his armèd van, and conquered.

RAMBHA

Here too
I hope that he will conquer.

SAHAJANYA

Joy, sisters, joy!
Look where the chariot of the moon appears,
The Ilian's great deer-banner rushing up
From the horizon. He would not return
With empty hands, sisters. We can rejoice.
All gaze upwards. Pururavas enters in his chariot with his charioteer; Urvasie, her eyes closed in terror, supported on the right arm of Chitralekha.

CHITRALEKHA
Courage, sweet sister, courage.

PURURAVAS

O thou too lovely!
Recall thy soul. The enemies of Heaven
Can injure thee no more; that danger's over.
The Thunderer's puissance still pervades the worlds.
O then uplift these long and lustrous eyes
Like sapphire lilies in a pool when dawn
Comes smiling.

CHITRALEKHA

Why does she not yet, alas!
Recover her sweet reason? Only her sighs
Remind us she is living.

PURURAVAS
Too rudely, lady,
Has thy sweet sister been alarmed. For look!
What tremblings of the heart are here revealed.
Watch the quick rise and fall incessantly
That lift between these large magnificent breasts
The flowers of Eden.

CHITRALEKHA
Sister, O put by
This panic. Fie! thou art no Apsara.

PURURAVAS
Terror will not give up his envied seat
On her luxurious bosom soft as flowers;
The tremors in her raiment's edge and little
Heavings and flutterings between her two breasts
Confess him.
Urvasie begins to recover.
(*with joy*)
Thou art fortunate, Chitralekha!
Thy sister to her own bright nature comes
Once more. So have I seen a glorious night
Delivered out of darkness by the moon,
Nocturnal fire break through with crests of brightness
Its prison of dim smoke. Her beauty, waking
From swoon and almost rescued, to my thoughts
Brings Ganges as I saw her once o'erwhelmed
With roar and ruin of her banks, race wild,
Thickening, then gradually from that turmoil
Grow clear, emerging into golden calm.

CHITRALEKHA
Be glad, my sister, O my Urvasie.
For vanquished are the accursèd Titans, foes
Of the Divine, antagonists of Heaven.

URVASIE (*opening her eyes*)
Vanquished? By Indra then whose soul can see
Across the world.

CHITRALEKHA
Not Indra, but this King
Whose puissance equals Indra.

URVASIE (*looking at Pururavas*)
O Titans,
You did me kindness!

PURURAVAS (*gazing at Urvasie*)
And reason if the nymphs
Tempting Narayan Sage drew back ashamed
When they beheld this wonder from his thigh
Starting. And yet I cannot think of her
Created by a withered hermit cold:
But rather in the process beautiful
Of her creation Heaven's enchanting moon
Took the Creator's place, or very Love
Grown all one amorousness, or else the month
Of honey and its days deep-mined with bloom.
How could an aged anchoret, dull and stale
With poring over Scripture and oblivious
To all this rapture of the senses, build
A thing so lovely?

URVASIE
O my Chitralekha,
Our sisters?

CHITRALEKHA
This great prince who slew our fear
Can tell us.

PURURAVAS

Sad of heart they wait, O beauty!
For with thy sweet ineffugable eyes
Who only once was blessed, even he without thee
Cannot abstain from pining. How then these
Original affections sister-sweet
Rooted in thee?

URVASIE

How courteous is his tongue
And full of noble kindness! Yet what wonder?
Nectar is natural to the moon. O prince,
My heart's in haste to see once more my loved ones.

PURURAVAS

Lo, where upon the Peak of Gold they stand
Gazing towards thy face, and with such eyes
Of rapture as when men behold the moon
Emerging from eclipse.

CHITRALEKHA

O sister, see!

URVASIE (*looking longingly at the King*)

I do and drink in with my eyes my partner
Of grief and pleasure.

CHITRALEKHA (*with a smile; significantly*)

Sister, who is he?

URVASIE

He? Oh! Rambha I meant and all our friends.

RAMBHA

He comes with victory. Urvasie's beside him
And Chitralekha. Now indeed this King
Looks glorious like the moon, when near the twin

Bright asterisms that frame best his light.

MENAKA
In both ways are we blest, our lost dear one
Brought back to us, this noble King returned
Unwounded.

SAHAJANYA
Sister, true. Not easily
Are Titans conquered.

PURURAVAS
Charioteer, descend.
We have arrived the summit.

CHARIOTEER
As the King
Commands.

PURURAVAS
O I am blest in this descent
Upon unevenness. O happy shock
That threw her great hips towards me. All her sweet shoulder
Pressed mine that thrilled and passioned to the touch.

URVASIE (*abashed*)
Move yet a little farther to your side,
Sister.

CHITRALEKHA (*smiling*)
I cannot; there's no room.

RAMBHA
Sisters,
This prince has helped us all. 'Twere only grateful
Should we descend and greet him.

ALL

Let us do it.

They all approach.

PURURAVAS

Stay, charioteer, the rush of hooves that she
Marrying her sweet-browed eagerness with these
May, mingling with their passionate bosoms, clasp
Her dearest, like the glory and bloom of spring
Hastening into the open arms of trees.

NYMPHS

Hail to the King felicitous who comes
With conquest in his wheels.

PURURAVAS

To you, O nymphs,
As fortunate in your sister's rescued arms.

Urvasie descends from the chariot supported on Chitralekha's arm.

URVASIE

O sisters, sisters, take me to your bosoms.

All rush upon her and embrace her.

Closer, O closer! hurt me with your breasts!
I never hoped to see again your sweet
Familiar faces.

RAMBHA

Protect a million ages,
Monarch, all continents and every sea!

Noise within.

CHARIOTEER

My lord, I hear a rumour in the east
And mighty speed of chariots. Lo, one bright
With golden armlet, looming down from Heaven

Like a huge cloud with lightning on its wrist,
Streams towards us.

NYMPHS

Chitrarath! ’tis Chitrarath.

CHITRARATH (*approaches the King with great respect*)
Hail to the Indra-helper! Fortunate
Pururavas, whose prowess is so ample,
Heaven’s King has grown its debtor.

PURURAVAS

The Gandharva!
Welcome, my bosom’s friend.
They clasp each other’s hands.
What happy cause
Of coming?

CHITRARATH
Indra had heard from Narad’s lips
Of Urvasie by Titan Cayshy haled.
He bade us to her rescue. We midway
Heard heavenly bards chanting thy victory,
And hitherward have turned our march. On, friend,
With us to Maghavan and bear before thee
This lovely offering. Great thy service done
To Heaven’s high King; for she who was of old
Narayan’s chief munificence to Indra,
Is now thy gift, Pururavas. Thy arm
Has torn her from a Titan’s grasp.

PURURAVAS

Comrade,
Never repeat it; for if we who are
On Heaven’s side, o’erpower the foes of Heaven,
’Tis Indra’s puissance, not our own. Does not
The echo of the lion’s dangerous roar

Reverberating through the mountain glens
Scatter with sound the elephants? We, O friend,
Are even such echoes.

CHITRARATH
This fits with thy great nature,
For modesty was ever valour's crown.

PURURAVAS
Not now nor hence is't seasonable for me,
Comrade, to meet the King of Sacrifice.
Thou, therefore, to the mighty presence lead
This beauty.

CHITRARATH
As thou wilt. With me to Heaven!

URVASIE (*aside to Chitralekha*)
I have no courage to address my saviour.
Sister, wilt be my voice to him?

CHITRALEKHA (*approaching Pururavas*)
My lord,
Urvasie thus petitions —

PURURAVAS
What commands
The lady?

CHITRALEKHA
She would have thy gracious leave
To bear into her far immortal heavens
The glory of the great Pururavas
And dwell with it as with a sister.

PURURAVAS (*sorrowfully*)
Go then;

But go for longer meeting.

The Gandharvas and Nymphs soar up into the sky.

URVASIE

Sister, stay!
My chain is in this creeper caught. Release it.

CHITRALEKHA (*looking at the King with a smile*)

Oh, yes, indeed, a sad entanglement!
I fear you will not easily be loosed.

URVASIE

Do not mock me, sister. Pray you, untwine it.

CHITRALEKHA

Come, let me try. I'll do my possible
To help you.

She busies herself with the chain.

URVASIE (*smiling*)

Sister, think what thou hast promised
Even afterwards.

PURURAVAS (*aside*)

Creeper, thou dost me friendship;
Thou for one moment holdest from the skies
Her feet desirable. O lids of beauty!
O vision of her half-averted face!

Urvasie, released, looks at the King, then with a sigh at her sisters soaring up into the sky.

CHARIOTEER

O King, thy shaft with the wild voice of storm
Has hurled the Titans in the salt far sea,
Avenging injured Heaven, and now creeps back
Into the quiver, like a mighty snake

Seeking its lair.

PURURAVAS

Therefore bring near the chariot,
While I ascend.

CHARIOTEER

'Tis done.

The King mounts the chariot.

PURURAVAS

Shake loose the reins.

URVASIE (*gazing at the King, with a sigh, aside*)
My benefactor! my deliverer!
Shall I not see thee more?

She goes out with Chitralekha.

PURURAVAS (*looking after Urvasie*)
O Love! O Love!
Thou mak'st men hot for things impossible
And mad for dreams. She soars up to the heavens,
Her father's middle stride, and draws my heart
By force out of my bosom. It goes with her,
Bleeding, as when a wild swan through the sky
Wings far her flight, there dangles in her beak
A dripping fibre from the lotus torn.

They go.

Act II

Scene. — *Park of the King's palace in Pratisthana. — In the background the wings of a great building, near it the gates of the park, near the bounds of the park an arbour and a small artificial hill to the side.*

Manavaka enters.

MANAVAKA

Houp! Houp! I feel like a Brahmin who has had an invitation to dinner; he thinks dinner, talks dinner, looks dinner, his very sneeze has the music of the dinner-bell in it. I am simply bursting with the King's secret. I shall never manage to hold my tongue in that crowd. Solitude's my only safety. So until my friend gets up from the session of affairs, I will wait for him in this precinct of the House of Terraces.

Nipunika enters.

NIPUNIKA

I am bidden by my lady the King's daughter of Kashi, "Nipunika, since my lord came back from doing homage to the Sun, he has had no heart for anything. So just go and learn from his dear friend, the noble Manavaka, what is disturbing his mind." Well and good! but how shall I overreach that rogue, — a Brahmin he calls himself, with the murrain to him! But there! thank Heaven, he can't keep a secret long; 'tis like a dewdrop on a rare blade of grass. Well, I must hunt him out. O! there stands the noble Manavaka, silent and sad like a monkey in a picture. I will accost him. (*approaching*) Salutation to the noble Manavaka!

MANAVAKA

Blessing to your ladyship! (*aside*) Ugh, the very sight of this little rogue of a tiring-woman makes the secret jump at my throat. I shall burst! I shall split! Nipunika, why have you left the singing lesson and where are you off to?

NIPUNIKA
To see my lord the King, by my lady's orders.

MANAVAKA
What are her orders?

NIPUNIKA
Noble sir, this is the Queen's message. "My lord has always been kind and indulgent to me, so that I have become a stranger to grief. He never before disregarded my sorrow" —

MANAVAKA
How? how? has my friend offended her in any way?

NIPUNIKA
Offended? Why, he addressed my lady by the name of a girl for whom he is pining.

MANAVAKA (*aside*)
What, he has let out his own secret? Then why am I agonizing here in vain? (*aloud*) He called her Urvasie?

NIPUNIKA
Yes. Noble Manavaka, who is that Urvasie?

MANAVAKA
Urvasie is the name of a certain Apsara. The sight of her has sent the King mad. He is not only tormenting the life out of my lady, but out of me too with his aversion to everything but moaning.

NIPUNIKA (*aside*)
So! I have stormed the citadel of my master's secret. (*aloud*) What am I to say to the Queen?

MANAVAKA

Nipunika, tell my lady with my humble regards that I am endeavouring my best to divert my friend from this mirage and I will not see her ladyship till it is done.

NIPUNIKA

As your honour commands.

She goes.

BARDS (*within*)

Victory, victory to the King!
The Sun in Heaven for ever labours; wide
His beams dispel the darkness to the verge
Of all this brilliant world. The King too toils,
Rescuing from night and misery and crime
His people. Equal power to these is given
And labour, the King on earth, the Sun in Heaven.

The brilliant Sun in Heaven rests not from toil;
Only at high noon in the middle cusp
And azure vault the great wheels slacken speed
A moment, then resume their way; thou too
In the mid-moment of daylight lay down
Thy care, put by the burden of a crown.

MANAVAKA

Here's my dear friend risen from the session. I will join him.

He goes out, then re-enters with Pururavas.

PURURAVAS (*sighing*)

No sooner seen than in my heart she leaped.
O easy entrance! since the bannered Love
With his unerring shaft had made the breach
Where she came burning in.

MANAVAKA (*aside*)
Alas the poor
King's daughter of Kashi!

PURURAVAS (*looking steadfastly at him*)
Hast thou kept thy trust, —
My secret?

MANAVAKA (*depressed*)
Ah! that daughter of a slave
Has overreached me. Else he would not ask
In just that manner.

PURURAVAS (*alarmed*)
What now? Silence?

MANAVAKA
Why, sir,
It's this, I've padlocked so my tongue that even
To you I could not give a sudden answer.

PURURAVAS
'Tis well. O how shall I beguile desire?

MANAVAKA
Let's to the kitchen.

PURURAVAS
Why, what's there?

MANAVAKA
What's there?
The question! From all quarters gathered in
Succulent sweets and fivefold eatableness,
Music from saucepan and from frying-pan,
The beauty of dinner getting ready. There's
A sweet beguiler to your emptiness!

PURURAVAS (*smiling*)
For you whose heart is in your stomach. I
Am not so readily eased who fixed my soul
Upon what I shall hardly win.

MANAVAKA
Not win?
Why, tell me, came you not within her sight?

PURURAVAS
What comfort is in that?

MANAVAKA
When she has seen you,
How is she hard to win?

PURURAVAS
O your affection
Utters mere partiality.

MANAVAKA
You make me
Desperate to see her. Why, sir, she must be
A nonpareil of grace. Like me perhaps?

PURURAVAS
Who could with words describe each perfect limb
Of that celestial whole? Take her in brief,
O friend, for she is ornament's ornament,
And jewels cannot make her beautiful.
They from her body get their grace. And when
You search the universe for similes,
Her greater beauty drives you to express
Fair things by her, not her by lesser fairness:
So she's perfection's model.

MANAVAKA

No wonder then,
With such a shower of beauty, that you play
The rainbird open-mouthed to let drops glide
Graciously down his own particular gullet.
But whither now?

PURURAVAS

When love grows large with yearning,
He has no sanctuary but solitude.
I pray you, go before me to the park.

MANAVAKA (*aside*)
Oh God, my dinner! There's no help. (*aloud*) This way.
Lo, here the park's green limit. See, my lord,
How this fair garden sends his wooing breeze
To meet his royal guest.

PURURAVAS

O epithet
Most apt. Indeed this zephyr in fond arms
Impregnating with honey spring-creeper
And flattering with his kiss the white May-bloom,
Seems to me like a lover girl-divided
Between affection smooth and eager passion.

MANAVAKA
May like division bless your yearning, sir.
We reach the garden's gate. Enter, my lord.

PURURAVAS
Enter thou first. O! I was blindly sanguine,
By refuge in this flowery solitude
Who thought to heal my pain. As well might swimmer
Hurled onward in a river's violent hands
Oppose that roaring tide, as I make speed
Hither for my relief.

MANAVAKA
And wherefore so?

PURURAVAS
Was passion not enough to torture me,
Still racking the resistless mind with thoughts
Of unattainable delight? But I
Must add the mango-trees' soft opening buds,
And hurt myself with pallid drifting leaves,
And with the busy zephyr wound my soul.

MANAVAKA
Be not so full of grief. For Love himself
Will help you soon to your extreme desire.

PURURAVAS
I seize upon thy word, — the Brahmin's speech
That never can be false!

MANAVAKA
See what a floral
Green loveliness expresses the descent
And rosy incarnation of the spring.
Do you not find it lovely?

PURURAVAS
Friend, I do.
I study it tree by tree and leaf by leaf.
This courbouc's like a woman's rosy nail,
But darkens to the edge; heavy with crimson,
Yon red asoka breaking out of bud
Seems all on fire; and here the cary mounting
Slight dust of pollen on his stamen-ends
Clusters with young sweet bloom. Methinks I see
The infant honeyed soul of spring, half-woman,
Grow warm with bud of youth.

MANAVAKA

This arbour, green,
With blossoms loosened by the shock of bees
Upon a slab of costly stone prepares
With its own hands your cushioned honours. Take
The courtesy.

PURURAVAS

As you will.

MANAVAKA

Here sit at ease.
The sensitive beauty of the creepers lax
Shall glide into your soul and gently steal
The thought of Urvasie.

PURURAVAS

O no, mine eyes
Are spoilt by being indulged in her sweet looks,
And petulantly they reject all feebler
Enchantings, even the lovely embowering bloom
Of these grace-haunted creepers bending down
To draw me with their hands. I am sick for her.
Rather invent some way to my desire.

MANAVAKA

Oh rare! when Indra for Ahalya pined
A cheapjack was his counsellor; you as lucky
Have me for your ally. Mad all! mad all!

PURURAVAS

Not so! affection edging native wit,
Some help it's sure to find for one it loves.

MANAVAKA

Good, I will cogitate. Disturb me not
With your love-moanings.

PURURAVAS (*his right arm throbbing; aside*)
Her face of perfect moonlight
Is all too heavenly for my lips. How canst thou then
Throb expectation in my arm, O Love?
Yet all my heart is suddenly grown glad
As if it had heard the feet of my desire.
He waits hopefully. There enter in the sky
Urvasie and Chitralekha.

CHITRALEKHA
Will you not even tell me where we go?

URVASIE
Sister, when I upon the Peak of Gold
Was stayed from Heaven by the creeper's hands,
You mocked me then. And have you now to ask
Whither it is I go?

CHITRALEKHA
To seek the side
Of King Pururavas you journey then?

URVASIE
Even so shameless is your sister's mind.

CHITRALEKHA
Whom did you send before, what messenger
To him you love?

URVASIE
My heart.

CHITRALEKHA
O yet think well,
Sister; do not be rash.

URVASIE

Love sends me, Love
Compels me. How can I then think?

CHITRALEKHA

To that
I have no answer.

URVASIE

Then take me to him soon.
Only let not our way be such as lies
Within the let of hindrance.

CHITRALEKHA

Fear not that.
Has not the great Preceptor of the Gods
Taught us to wear the crest invincible?
While that is bound, not any he shall dare
Of all the Heaven-opposing faction stretch
An arm of outrage.

URVASIE (*abashed*)

Oh true! my heart forgot.

CHITRALEKHA

Look, sister! For in Ganges' gliding waves
Holier by influx of blue Yamuna,
The palace of the great Pururavas,
Crowning the city with its domes, looks down
As in a glass at its own mighty image.

URVASIE

All Eden to an earthly spot is bound.
But where is he who surely will commiserate
A pining heart?

CHITRALEKHA
This park which seems one country
With Heaven, let us question. See, the King
Expects thee, like the pale new-risen moon
Waiting for moonlight.

URVASIE
How beautiful he is, —
Fairer than when I saw him first!

CHITRALEKHA
'Tis true.
Come, we will go to him.

URVASIE
I will not yet.
Screened in with close invisibility,
I will stand near him, learn what here he talks
Sole with his friend.

CHITRALEKHA
You'll do your will always.

MANAVAKA
Courage! your difficult mistress may be caught,
Two ways.

URVASIE (*jealously*)
O who is she, that happy she,
Being wooed by such a lover, preens herself
And is proud?

CHITRALEKHA
Why do you mock the ways of men
And are a Goddess?

URVASIE
I dare not, sweet, I fear
To learn too suddenly my own misfortune,
If I use heavenly eyes.

MANAVAKA
Listen, you dreamer!
Are you deaf? I tell you I have found a way:

PURURAVAS
Speak on.

MANAVAKA
Woo sleep that marries men with dreams,
Or on a canvas paint in Urvasie
And gaze on her for ever.

URVASIE (*aside*)
O sinking coward heart, now, now revive.

PURURAVAS
And either is impossible. For look!
How can I, with this rankling wound of love,
Call to me sleep who marries men with dreams?
And if I paint the sweetness of her face,
Will not the tears, before it is half done,
Blurring my gaze with mist, blot the dear vision?

CHITRALEKHA
Heardst thou?

URVASIE
I have heard all. It was too little
For my vast greed of love.

MANAVAKA
Well, that's my stock

Of counsel.

PURURAVAS (*sighing*)
Oh me! she knows not my heart's pain,
Or knowing it, with those her heavenly eyes
Scorns my poor passion. Only the arrowed Love
Is gratified tormenting with her bosom
My sad, unsatisfied and pale desire.

CHITRALEKHA
Heardst thou, sister?

URVASIE
He must not think so of me!
I would make answer, sister, but to his face
I have not hardihood. Suffer me then,
To trust to faery birch-leaf mind-created
My longing.

CHITRALEKHA
It is well. Create and write.

Urvasie writes in a passion of timidity and excitement, then throws the leaf between Pururavas and Manavaka.

MANAVAKA
Murder! murder! I'm killed! I'm dead! help! help!
(*looking*)
What's this? a serpent's skin come down to eat me?

PURURAVAS (*looks closely and laughs*)
No serpent's slough, my friend, only a leaf
Of birch-tree with a scroll of writing traced on it.

MANAVAKA
Perhaps the invisible fair Urvasie
Heard you complain and answers.

PURURAVAS

To desire
Nothing can seem impossible.

He takes the leaf and reads it
to himself, then with joy,

O friend,
How happy was your guess!

MANAVAKA

I told you so.
The Brahmin's speech! Read, read! aloud, if it please you.

URVASIE (*aside*)
The Brahmin has his own urbanity!

PURURAVAS
Listen.

MANAVAKA
I am all ears.

PURURAVAS (*reading aloud*)
"My master and my King!
Were I what thy heart thinks and knows me not,
Scorning thy love, would then the soft-winged breeze
Of deathless gardens and the unfading flowers
That strew the beds of Paradise, to me
Feel fire!"

URVASIE
What will he say now?

CHITRALEKHA
What each limb,
That is a drooping lotus-stalk with love,
Has said already.

MANAVAKA

You're consoled, I hope?
Don't tell me what you feel. I've felt the same
When I've been hungry and one popped in on me
With sweetmeats in a tray.

PURURAVAS

Consoled! a word
How weak! I con this speaking of my sweet,
This dear small sentence full of beautiful meaning,
This gospel of her answering love, and feel
Her mouth upon my mouth and her soft eyes
Swimming and large gaze down into my own,
And touch my lifted lids with hers.

URVASIE

O even
Such sweetness feels thy lover.

PURURAVAS

Friend, my finger
Moistening might blot the lines. Do thou then hold
This sweet handwriting of my love.
He gives the leaf to Manavaka.

MANAVAKA

But tell me.
Why does your mistress, having brought to bloom
Your young desire, deny its perfect fruit?

URVASIE

O sister, my heart flutters at the thought
Of going to my lord. While I cajole
And strengthen the poor coward, show yourself,
Go to him, tell him all that I may speak.

CHITRALEKHA

I will.

She becomes visible and approaches the King.

Hail, lord our King.

PURURAVAS (*joyfully*)

O welcome, welcome!

He looks around for Urvasie.

Yet, fair one, as the Yamuna not mixed
With Ganges, to the eye that saw their beauty
Of wedded waters, seems not all so fair,
So thou without thy sister givest not
That double delight.

CHITRALEKHA

First is the cloud's dim legion
Seen in the heavens; afterwards comes the lightning.

MANAVAKA (*aside*)

What! this is not the very Urvasie?
Only the favourite sister of that miracle?

PURURAVAS

Here sit down, fairest.

CHITRALEKHA

Let me first discharge
My duty. Urvasie by me bows down
Her face thus to her monarch's feet, imploring —

PURURAVAS

Rather commanding.

CHITRALEKHA

She whom in Titan hands
Afflicted thou didst pity, thou didst rescue,
Now needs much more thy pity, not by hands

Titan, but crueller violence of love
Oppressed, — the sight of thee her sudden cause.

PURURAVAS
O Chitralekha, her thou tellst me of
Passionate for me. Hast thou not eyes to know
Pururavas in anguish for her sake?
One prayer both pray to Kama, "Iron with iron
Melts in fierce heat; why not my love with me?"

CHITRALEKHA (*returning to Urvasie*)
Come, sister, to your lord. So much his need
Surpasses yours, I am his ambassador.

URVASIE (*becoming visible*)
How unexpectedly hast thou with ease
Forsook me!

CHITRALEKHA (*with a smile*)
In a moment I shall know
Who forsakes whom, sister. But come away
And give due greeting.

Urvasie approaches the King fearfully and bows down, then low and bashfully,

URVASIE
Conquest to the King!

PURURAVAS
I conquer, love, indeed, when thy dear lips
Give greeting to me, vouchsafed to no mortal
But Indra only.

He takes her by both hands and makes her sit down.

MANAVAKA
I am a mighty Brahmin and the friend
Of all earth's lord. O'erlook me not entirely.

Urvasie smiles and bows to him.
Peace follow you and keep you.

MESSENGER OF THE GODS (*cries from within*)
Chitralekha, urge haste on Urvasie.
This day the wardens of the ancient worlds
And the great King of Heaven himself will witness
That piece where all the passions live and move,
Quickened to gracious gesture in the action
Deposed in you by Bharat Sage, O sisters.
All listen, Urvasie sorrowfully.

CHITRALEKHA
Thou hearst the Messenger of Heaven? Take leave,
Sweet, of the King.

URVASIE
I cannot speak!

CHITRALEKHA
My liege,
My sister not being lady of herself
Beseeches your indulgence. She would be
Without a fault before the Gods.

PURURAVAS (*articulating with difficulty*)
Alas!
I must not wish to hinder you when Heaven
Expects your service. Only do not forget
Pururavas.
Urvasie goes with her sister, still looking
backwards towards the King.
O she is gone! my eyes
Have now no cause for sight: they are worthless balls
Without an object.

MANAVAKA

Why, not utterly.

He is about to give the birch-leaf.

There's — Heavens! 'tis gone! it must have drifted down,
While I, being all amazed with Urvasie,
Noticed nothing.

PURURAVAS

What is it thou wouldst say?
There is — ?

MANAVAKA

No need to droop your limbs and pine.
Your Urvasie has to your breast been plucked
With cords of passion, knots that will not slacken
Strive as she may.

PURURAVAS

My soul tells me like comfort.
For as she went, not lady of her limbs
To yield their sweets to me for ever, yet
Her heart, which was her own, in one great sob
From twixt two trembling breasts shaken with sighs
Came panting out. I hear it throb within me.

MANAVAKA (*aside*)

Well, my heart's all a-twitter too. Each moment
I think he is going to mention the damned birch-leaf.

PURURAVAS

With what shall I persuade mine eyes to comfort?
The letter!

MANAVAKA (*searching*)

What! Hullo! It's gone! Come now,
It was no earthly leaf; it must have gone
Flying behind the skirts of Urvasie.

PURURAVAS (*bitterly, in vexation*)
Will you then never leave your idiot trick
Of carelessness? Search for it.

MANAVAKA (*getting up*)
Oh, well! well!
It can't be far. Why, here it is — or here — or here.
While they search, the Queen enters, with her attendants and Nipunika.

AUSHINARIE
Now, maiden, is't true thou tellst me? Sawst thou really
My lord and Manavaka approach the arbour?

NIPUNIKA
I have not told my lady falsehood ever
That she should doubt me.

AUSHINARIE
Well, I will lurk thick-screened
With hanging creepers and surprise what he
Disburdens from his heart in his security.
So I shall know the truth.

NIPUNIKA (*sulkily*)
Well, as you please.
They advance.

AUSHINARIE (*looking ahead*)
What's yonder like a faded rag that lightly
The southern wind guides towards us?

NIPUNIKA
It is a birch-leaf.
There's writing on it; the letters, as it rolls,
Half show their dinted outlines. Look, it has caught
Just on your anklet's spike. I'll lift and read.

She disengages the leaf.

AUSHINARIE
Silently first peruse it; if 'tis nothing
Unfit for me to know, then I will hear.

NIPUNIKA
It is, oh, it must be that very scandal.
Verses they seem and penned by Urvasie,
And to my master. Manavaka's neglect
Has thrown it in our hands.

Laughs.

AUSHINARIE
Tell me the purport.

NIPUNIKA
I'll read the whole. "My master and my King!
Were I what thy heart thinks and knows me not,
Scorning thy love, would then the soft-winged breeze
Of deathless gardens and unfading flowers
That strew the beds of Paradise, to me
Feel fire!"

AUSHINARIE
So! by this dainty love-letter,
He is enamoured then, and of the nymph.

NIPUNIKA
It's plain enough.

They enter the arbour.

MANAVAKA
What's yonder to the wind
Enslaved, that flutters on the parkside rockery?

PURURAVAS (*rising*)

Wind of the south, thou darling of the Spring,
Seize rather on the flowery pollen stored
By months of fragrance, that gold dust of trees.
With this thou mightest perfume all thy wings.
How wilt thou profit, snatching from me, O wind,
My darling's dear handwriting, like a kiss
All love? When thou didst woo thine Anjana,
Surely thou knewest lovers' dying hearts
Are by a hundred little trifles kept,
All slight as this!

NIPUNIKA

See, mistress, see! A search
In progress for the leaf.

AUSHINARIE

Be still.

MANAVAKA

Alas!
I was misled with but a peacock's feather,
Faded, a saffron splendour of decay.

PURURAVAS

In every way I am undone.

AUSHINARIE (*approaching suddenly*)

My lord,
Be not so passionate; here is your dear letter.

PURURAVAS (*confused*)

The Queen! O welcome!

MANAVAKA (*aside*)

Ill come, if 'twere convenient
To tell the truth.

PURURAVAS (*aside*)
What shall I do now, friend,
Or say?

MANAVAKA (*aside*)
Much you will say! A thief red-handed
Caught with his swag!

PURURAVAS (*aside*)
Is this a time for jesting?
(*aloud*)
Madam, it was not this I sought but other,
A record of state, a paper that I dropped.

AUSHINARIE
Oh, you do well to hide your happiness.

MANAVAKA
My lady, hurry on His Majesty's dinner.
When bile accumulates, dinner does the trick.

AUSHINARIE
A noble consolation for his friend
The Brahmin finds! Heardst thou, Nipunika?

MANAVAKA
Why, madam, even a goblin is appeased
By dinner.

PURURAVAS
Fool! by force you'ld prove me guilty.

AUSHINARIE
Not yours the guilt, my lord! I am in fault
Who force my hated and unwelcome face
Upon you. But I go. Nipunika,
Attend me.

She is departing in wrath.

PURURAVAS (*following her*)
Guilty I am. O pardon, pardon!
O look on me more kindly. How can a slave
Be innocent, when whom he should please is angry?
He falls at her feet.

AUSHINARIE (*aside*)
I am not so weak-minded as to value
Such hollow penitence. And yet the terror
Of that remorse I know that I shall feel
If I spurn his kindness, frightens me — but no!
She goes out with Nipunika and attendants.

MANAVAKA
She has rushed off like a torrent full of wrath.
Rise, rise! she's gone.

PURURAVAS (*rising*)
O she did right to spurn me.
Most dulcet words of lovers, sweetest flatteries,
When passion is not there, can find no entrance
To woman's heart; for she knows well the voice
Of real love, but these are stones false-coloured
Rejected by the jeweller's practised eye.

MANAVAKA
This is what you should wish! The eye affected
Brooks not the flaming of a lamp too near.

PURURAVAS
You much misjudge me. Though my heart's gone out
To Urvasie, affection deep I owe
My Queen. But since she scorned my prostrate wooing,
I will have patience till her heart repent.

MANAVAKA

Oh, hang your patience! keep it for home consumption.
Mine's at an end. Have some faint mercy instead
And save a poor starved Brahmin's life. It's time
For bath and dinner! dinner!!

PURURAVAS (*looking upward*)

'Tis noon. The tired
And heated peacock sinks to chill delight
Of water in the tree-encircling channel,
The bee divides a crimson bud and creeps
Into its womb; there merged and safe from fire,
He's lurking. The duck too leaves her blazing pool
And shelters in cold lilies on the bank,
And in yon summer-house weary of heat
The parrot from his cage for water cries.

They go.

Act III

Scene I. — *Hermitage of the Saint Bharat in Heaven. Galava and Pelava.*

GALAVA
Pelava, thee the Sage admitted, happier
Chosen, to that great audience in the house
Of highest Indra, — I meanwhile must watch
The sacred flame; inform my absence. Was
The divine session with the acting pleased?

PELAVA
Of pleased I know not; this I well could see
They sat all lost in that poetic piece
Of Saraswatie, "Luxmie's Choice", — breathlessly
Identified themselves with every mood.
But —

GALAVA
Ah, that but! It opens doors to censure.

PELAVA
Yes, Urvasie was heedless, missed her word.

GALAVA
How? how?

PELAVA
She acted Luxmie; Menaka
Was Varunie; who asking, "Sister, see,
The noble and the beautiful of Heaven,
And Vishnu and the guardians of the worlds.

To whom does thy heart go mid all these glories?" —
Urvasie should have answered "Purushottam",
But from her lips "Pururavas" leaped forth.

GALAVA
Our organs are the slaves of fate and doom!
Was not the great Preceptor angry?

PELAVA
Yes;
He cursed her, but high Indra blessed.

GALAVA
What blessing?

PELAVA
"Since thou hast wronged my teaching and my fame,
For thee no place in Heaven", — so frowned the Sage.
Heaven's monarch marked her when the piece was ended,
Drooping, her sweet face bowed with shame, and said,
With gracious brows, "Since thou hast fixed thy heart
Upon my friend and strong ally in war,
I will do both a kindness. Go to him
And love and serve him as thy lord until
A child is got in thee and he behold
His offspring's face."

GALAVA
O nobly this became
Indra; he knows to value mighty hearts.

PELAVA (*looking at the Sun*)
Look, in our talk if we have not transgressed
Our teacher's hour for bathing. Galava,
We should be at his side.

GALAVA

Let us make haste.

They go out.

Scene II. — *Outside the palace of Pururavas, beneath the House of Gems. The terrace of the House of Gems with a great staircase leading up to it.*

The Chamberlain Latavya enters.

LATAVYA (*sighing*)

All other men when life is green and strong
Marry and toil and get them wealth, then, aging,
Their sons assume the burden, they towards rest
Their laboured faces turn. But us for ever
Service, a keyless dungeon still renewed,
Wears down; and hard that service is which keeps
O'er women ward and on their errands runs.
Now Kashi's daughter, careful of her vow,
Commands me, "I have put from me, Latavya,
The obstinacy of offended love
And wooed my husband through Nipunika.
Thou too entreat him." Therefore I linger here
Waiting till the King's greatness swiftly come,
His vesper worship done. It dims apace.
How beautifully twilight sits and dreams
Upon these palace walls! The peacocks now
Sit on their perches, drowsed with sleep and night,
Like figures hewn in stone. And on the roof
The fluttering pigeons with their pallid wings
Mislead the eye, disguised as rings of smoke
That from the window-ways have floated out
Into the evening. In places flower-bestrewn
The elders of the high seraglio, gentle souls
Of holy manners, set the evening lamps,
Dividing darkness; flames of auspice burn.
The King! I hear the sound of many feet,
Ringed round with torches he appears, his girls
Hold up with young fair arms. O form august
Like Mainak, when as yet the hills had wings,
Moving, and the slim trees along its ridge
Flickered with vermeil shaken blooms. Just here

I'll wait him, in the pathway of his glance.
Enter Pururavas, surrounded by girl attendants carrying torches; with him Manavaka.

PURURAVAS (*aside*)
Day passes with some pale attempt at calm,
For then work walls the mind from the fierce siege
Of ever-present passion. But how shall I
Add movement to the tardy-footed night,
The long void hours by no distraction winged?

LATAVYA (*approaching*)
Long live the King! My lady says, "The moon
Tonight in splendour on the House of Jewels
Rises like a bright face. On the clear terrace,
My husband by my side, I would await
With Rohinie, his heavenly fair delight,
The God's embracings."

PURURAVAS
What the Queen wills, was ever
My law, Latavya.

LATAVYA
So I'll tell my lady.
He goes.

PURURAVAS
Think you in very truth for her vow's sake
My lady makes this motion?

MANAVAKA
Rather I deem
'Tis her remorse she cloaks with holy vows,
Atoning thus for a prostration scorned.

PURURAVAS
O true! the proud and loving hearts of women,
Who have their prostrate dear ones spurned, repenting
Are plagued with sweet accusing memories
Of eyes that ask forgiveness, outstretched hands,
Half-spoken words and touches on their feet
That travel to the heart. Precede me then
To the appointed terrace.

MANAVAKA
Look, my lord,
The crystal stairs roll upward like bright waves
On moonlit Ganges; yonder the terrace sleeps
Wide-bosomed to the cold and lovely eve.

PURURAVAS
Precede me; we'll ascend.
They ascend to the terrace.

MANAVAKA
The moon is surely
Upon the verge of rise; swiftly the east
Empties of darkness, and the horizon seems
All beautiful and brightening like a face.

PURURAVAS
O aptly said! Behind the peak of rise
The hidden moon, pushing black night aside,
Precedes himself with herald lustres. See!
The daughter of the imperial East puts back
The blinding tresses from her eyes, and smiles,
And takes with undimmed face my soul.

MANAVAKA
Hurrah!
The king of the twice-born has risen all white
And round and luscious like a ball of sugar.

PURURAVAS (*smiling*)
A glutton's eloquence is ever haunted
With images of the kitchen.
(*bowing with folded hands*)
Hail, God that rulest
The inactive night! O settler with the sun
For ritual holy, O giver to the Gods
And blessed fathers dead of nectarous wine,
O slayer of the vasty glooms of night,
Whose soul of brightness crowns the Almighty's head,
O moon, all hail! accept thy offspring's prayer.

MANAVAKA
Well now, your grandpapa has heard your vows;
You'll take it from a Brahmin's mouth, through whom
Even he may telepath his message. So,
That's finished. Now sit down and give me a chance
Of being comfortable.

PURURAVAS (*sitting down, then looking at his attendants*)
The moon is risen;
These torches are a vain reiteration
Of brightness. Ladies, rest.

ALL
Our lord commands us.
They go.

PURURAVAS
It is not long before my lady comes.
So, let me, while we yet are lonely here,
Unburden me of my love-ravaged thoughts.

MANAVAKA
They are visible to the blind. Take hope and courage
By thinking of her equal love.

PURURAVAS

I do;
And yet the pain within my heart is great.
For as a mighty river whose vast speed
Stumbles within a narrow pass of huge
And rugged boulders, chides his uncouth bed,
Increasing at each check, even so does love,
His joy of union stinted or deferred,
Rebel and wax a hundredfold in fire.

MANAVAKA

So your love-wasted limbs increase their beauty,
They are a sign you soon will clasp your love.

PURURAVAS

O friend, as you my longing heaviness
Comfort with hopeful words, my arm too speaks
In quick auspicious throbs.

He looks with hope up to the sky.

MANAVAKA

A Brahmin's word!

There enters in the air Chitralekha
with Urvasie in trysting-dress.

URVASIE (*looking at herself*)

Sister, do you not think my trysting-dress,
The dark-blue silk and the few ornaments,
Becomes me vastly? Do you not approve it?

CHITRALEKHA

O inexpressibly! I have no words
To praise it. This I'll say; it makes me wish
I were Pururavas.

URVASIE

Since Love himself

Inspires you, bring me quickly to the dwelling
Of that high beautiful face.

CHITRALEKHA

Look, we draw near.
Your lover's house lifts in stupendous mass,
As it were mountain Coilas, to the clouds.

URVASIE

Look, sister, with the eye of Gods and know
Where is that robber of my heart and what
His occupation?

CHITRALEKHA (*aside, with a smile*)

I will jest with her.

(*aloud*)

I see him. He, in a sweet region made
For love and joy, possesses with desire
The body and the bosom of his love.

URVASIE (*despairingly*)

Happy that woman, whosoe'er she be!

CHITRALEKHA

Why, sweet faint-hearted fool, in whom but thee
Should his thoughts joy?

URVASIE (*with a sigh of relief*)

Alas, my heart perverse
Will doubt.

CHITRALEKHA

Here on the terraced House of Gems
The King is with his friend sole-sitting. Then,
We may approach.

They descend.

PURURAVAS
O friend, the widening night
And pangs of love keep pace in their increase.

URVASIE
Sister, my heart is torn with apprehension
Of what his words might mean. Let us, ourselves
Invisible, hear their unfettered converse.
My fears might then have rest.

CHITRALEKHA
Good.

MANAVAKA
Take the moonbeams
Whose pregnant nectar comforts burning limbs.

PURURAVAS
But my affliction's not remediable
With such faint medicines. Neither smoothest flowers,
Moonlight nor sandal visiting every limb,
Nor necklaces of cool delightful pearl,
Only Heaven's nymph can perfectly expel
With bliss, or else —

URVASIE (*clutching at her bosom with her hand*)
O me! who else? who else?

PURURAVAS
Speech secret full of her unedge my pangs.

URVASIE
Heart that left me to flutter in his hands,
Now art thou for that rashness recompensed!

MANAVAKA
Yes, I too when I cannot get sweet venison

And hunger for it, often beguile my belly
With celebrating all its savoury joys.

PURURAVAS
Your belly-loves, good friend, are always with you
And ready to your gulp.

MANAVAKA
You too shall soon
Possess your love.

PURURAVAS
My friend, I have strange feeling.

CHITRALEKHA
Hearken, insatiable, exacting, hearken,
And be convinced!

MANAVAKA
What feeling?

PURURAVAS
This I feel,
As if this shoulder by her shoulder pressed
In the car's shock bore all my sum of being,
And all this frame besides were only weight
Cumbering the impatient earth.

CHITRALEKHA
Yet you delay!

URVASIE (*suddenly approaching Pururavas*)
O me! sister!

CHITRALEKHA
What is it now?

URVASIE

I am
Before him, and he does not care!

CHITRALEKHA (*smiling*)

O thou,
All passionate unreasoning haste! Thou hast not
Put off as yet invisibility.

VOICE (*within*)

This way, my lady.

All listen, Urvasie and Chitralekha are despondent.

MANAVAKA (*in dismay*)

Hey? The Queen is here?
Keep watch upon your tongue.

PURURAVAS

You first discharge
Your face of conscious guilt.

URVASIE

Sister, what now?

CHITRALEKHA

Be calm. We are unseen. This princess looks
As for a vow arrayed, nor long, if so,
Will tarry.

As she speaks, the Queen and Nipunika enter
with attendants carrying offerings.

AUSHINARIE

How does yonder spotted moon
Flush with new beauty, O Nipunika,
At Rohinie's embracings.

NIPUNIKA

So too with you,
Lady, my lord looks fairer than himself.

MANAVAKA

The Queen, my lord, looks very sweet and gracious,
Either because I know she'll give me sweetmeats
Or 'tis a sign of anger quite renounced,
And from your memory to exile her harshness
She makes her vow an instrument.

PURURAVAS

Good reasons both;

(*smiling*)

Yet to my humble judgment the poor second
Has likelier hue. For she in gracious white
Is clad and sylvanly adorned with flowers,
Her raven tresses spangled with young green
Of sacred grass. All her fair body looks
Gentle and kind, its pomp and pride renounced
For lovely meekness to her lord.

AUSHINARIE (*approaching*)

My husband!

ATTENDANT

Hail to our master!

MANAVAKA

Peace attend my lady.

PURURAVAS

Welcome.

He takes her hand and draws her down on a seat.

URVASIE

By right this lady bears the style

Of Goddess and of Empress, since no whit
Her noble majesty of fairness yields
To Heaven's Queen.

CHITRALEKHA

O bravely said, my sister!
'Twas worthy of a soul where jealous baseness
Ought never harbour.

AUSHINARIE

I have a vow, my lord,
Which at my husband's feet must be absolved.
Bear with me that I trouble you one moment.

PURURAVAS

No, no, it is not trouble, but a kindness.

MANAVAKA

The good trouble that brings me sweetmeats! often,
O often may such trouble vex my belly.

PURURAVAS

What vow is this you would absolve, my own?

Aushinarie looks at Nipunika.

NIPUNIKA

'Tis that women perform to win back kindness
In eyes of one held dear.

PURURAVAS

If this be so,
Vainly hast thou these tender flower-soft limbs
Afflicted with a vow's austerities,
Beloved. Thou suest for favour to thy servant,
Propitiatest who for thy propitiated
All-loving glance is hungry.

URVASIE

Greatly he loves her!

CHITRALEKHA

Why, silly one, whose heart is gone astraying,
Redoubles words of kindness to his wife.
Do you not know so much?

AUSHINARIE (*smiling*)

Not vain my vow,
That to such words of love has moved already
My husband.

MANAVAKA

Stop, my lord, a word well spoken
Is spoilt by any answer.

AUSHINARIE

Girls, the offering
With which I must adore this gentle moonlight
That dreams upon our terrace!

NIPUNIKA

Here, my lady,
Are flowers, here costly scents, all needed things.

AUSHINARIE

Give them to me.

She worships the moonbeams with flowers and perfumes.

Nipunika, present
The sweetmeats of the offering to the Brahmin.

NIPUNIKA

I will, my lady. Noble Manavaka,
Here is for you.

MANAVAKA

Blessings attend thee. May
Thy vow bear fruit nor end.

AUSHINARIE

Now, dear my lord,
Pray you, draw nearer to me.

PURURAVAS

Behold me, love!
What must I do?

Aushinarie worships the King, then bowing down with folded hands,

AUSHINARIE

I, Aushinarie, call
The divine wife and husband, Rohinie
And Mrigalanchhan named the spotted moon,
To witness here my vowed obedient love
To my dear lord. Henceforth whatever woman
My lord shall love and she desire him too,
I will embrace her and as a sister love,
Nor think of jealousy.

URVASIE

I know not wholly
Her drift, and yet her words have made me feel
All pure and full of noble trust.

CHITRALEKHA

Be confident,
Your love will prove all bliss; surely it must
When blessed and sanctioned by this pure, devoted
And noble nature.

MANAVAKA (*aside*)

When from twixt his hands

Fish leaps, cries me the disappointed fisher,
"Go, trout, I spare you. This will be put down
To my account in Heaven."
(*aloud*)
No more but this
You love my friend, your husband, lady?

AUSHINARIE

Dull fool!
I with the death of my own happiness
Would give my husband ease. From this consider
How dearly I love him.

PURURAVAS

Since thou hast power on me
To give me to another or to keep
Thy slave, I have no right to plead. And yet
I am not as thou thinkest me, all lost,
O thou too jealous, to thy love.

AUSHINARIE

My lord,
We will not talk of that. I have fulfilled
My rite, and with observance earned your kindness.
Girls, let us go.

PURURAVAS

Is thus my kindness earned?
I am not kind, not pleased, if now, beloved,
Thou shun and leave me.

AUSHINARIE

Pardon, my lord. I never
Have yet transgressed the rigour of a vow.
Exeunt Queen, Nipunika and attendants.

URVASIE
Wife-lover, uxorious is this King, and yet
I cannot lure my heart away from him.

CHITRALEKHA
Why, what new trick of wilful passion's this?

PURURAVAS (*sitting down*)
The Queen is not far off.

MANAVAKA
Never heed that,
Speak boldly. She has given you up as hopeless.
So doctors leave a patient, when disease
Defies all remedy, to his own sweet guidance.

PURURAVAS
O that my Urvasie —

URVASIE
Today might win
Her one dear wish.

PURURAVAS
From her invisible feet
The lovely sound of anklets on my ear
Would tinkle, or coming stealing from behind
Blind both my eyes with her soft little hands
Like two cool lotuses upon them fallen:
Or, oh, most sweet! descending on this roof
Shaken with dear delicious terrors, lingering
And hanging back, be by her sister drawn
With tender violence, faltering step by step,
Till she lay panting on my knees.

CHITRALEKHA
Go, sister,

And satisfy his wish.

URVASIE

Must I? well then,
I'll pluck up heart and play with him a little.

She becomes visible, steals behind the King and covers his eyes with her hands. Chitralekha puts off her veil of invisibility and makes a sign to Manavaka.

MANAVAKA

Now say, friend, who is this?

PURURAVAS

The hands of beauty.
'Tis that Narayan-born whose limbs are sweetness.

MANAVAKA

How can you guess?

PURURAVAS

What is there here to guess?
My heart tells me. The lily of the night
Needs not to guess it is the moon's cool touch.
She starts not to the sunbeam. 'Tis so with me.
No other woman could but she alone
Heal with her little hands all my sick pining.

Urvasie removes her hands and rises to her feet; then moves a step or two away.

URVASIE

Conquest attend my lord!

PURURAVAS

Welcome, O beauty.

He draws her down beside him.

CHITRALEKHA
Happiness to my brother!

PURURAVAS
Here it sits
Beside me.

URVASIE
Because the Queen has given you to me,
Therefore I dare to take into my arms
Your body like a lover. You shall not think me
Forward.

MANAVAKA
What, set the sun to you on this terrace?

PURURAVAS
O love, if thou my body dost embrace
As seizable, a largess from my Queen,
But whose permission didst thou ask, when thou
Stolest my heart away?

CHITRALEKHA
Brother, she is
Abashed and has no answer. Therefore a moment
Turn to me, grant me one entreaty.

PURURAVAS
Speak.

CHITRALEKHA
When spring is vanished and the torrid heat
Thickens, I must attend the glorious Sun.
Do thou so act that this my Urvasie
Left lonely with thee, shall not miss her Heaven.

MANAVAKA
Why, what is there in Heaven to pine for? There
You do not eat, you do not drink, only
Stare like so many fishes in a row
With wide unblinking eyes.

PURURAVAS
The joys of Heaven
No thought can even outline. Who then shall make
The soul forget which thence has fallen? Of this
Be sure, fair girl, Pururavas is only
Thy sister's slave: no other woman shares
That rule nor can share.

CHITRALEKHA
Brother, this is kind.
Be brave, my Urvasie, and let me go.

URVASIE (*embracing Chitralekha, pathetically*)
Chitralekha, my sister, do not forget me!

CHITRALEKHA (*with a smile*)
Of thee I should entreat that mercy, who
Hast got thy love's embrace.
She bows down to the King and goes.

MANAVAKA
Now nobly, sir,
Are you increased with bliss and your desire's
Accrual.

PURURAVAS
You say well. This is my increase;
Who felt not half so blest when I acquired
The universal sceptre of the world
And sovran footstool touched by jewelled heads
Of tributary monarchs, as today

I feel most happy who have won the right
To touch two little feet and am allowed
To be thy slave and do thy lovely bidding.

URVASIE
I have not words to make a sweeter answer.

PURURAVAS
How does the winning of one loved augment
Sweet contradictions! These are the very rays
Of moonlight burned me late, and now they soothe;
Love's wounding shafts caress the heart like flowers,
Thou being with me; all natural sights and sounds,
Once rude and hurtful, now caressing come
Softly, because of thee in my embrace.

URVASIE
I am to blame that I deprived my lord
So long.

PURURAVAS
Beloved and beautiful, not so!
For happiness arising after pain
Tastes therefore sweeter, as the shady tree
To one perplexed with heat and dust affords
A keener taste of Paradise.

MANAVAKA
We have courted
For a long hour the whole delightfulness
Of moonlight in the evening. It is time
To seek repose.

PURURAVAS
Guide therefore this fair friend
The way her feet must henceforth tread.

MANAVAKA

This way.

PURURAVAS

O love, I have but one wish left.

URVASIE

What wish, my lord?

PURURAVAS

When I had not embraced thee, my desire,
One night in passing seemed a hundred nights;
O now if darkness would extend my joys
To equal length of real hours with this
Sweet face upon my bosom, I were blest.

They go.

Act IV

Scene I. — *The sky near the doors of the sunrise; clouds everywhere. Chitralekha and Sahajanya.*

SAHAJANYA
Dear Chitralekha, like a fading flower
The beauty of thy face all marred reveals
Sorrow of heart. Tell me thy melancholy;
I would be sad with thee.

CHITRALEKHA (*sorrowfully*)
O Sahajanya!
Sister, by rule of our vicissitude,
I serving at the feet of the great Sun
Was troubled at heart for want of Urvasie.

SAHAJANYA
I know your mutual passion of sisterliness.
What after?

CHITRALEKHA
I had heard no news of her
So many days. Then I collected vision
Divine into myself to know of her.
O miserable knowledge!

SAHAJANYA
Sister, sister!
What knowledge of sorrow?

CHITRALEKHA (*still sorrowfully*)
I saw that Urvasie

Taking with her Pururavas and love —
For he had on his ministers imposed
His heavy yoke of kingship — went to sport
Amorously in Gandhamadan green.

SAHAJANYA (*proudly*)
O love is joy indeed, when in such spots
Tasted. And there?

CHITRALEKHA
And there upon the strands
Of heavenly Ganges, one, a lovely child
Of spirits musical, Udayavatie,
Was playing, making little forts of sand;
On her with all his soul the monarch gazed.
This angered Urvasie.

SAHAJANYA
O natural!
Deep passion always is intolerant.
Afterwards?

CHITRALEKHA
She pushed aside her pleading husband,
Perplexed by the Preceptor's curse forgot
The War-God's vow and entered in that grove
Avoidable of women; but no sooner
Had trod its green, most suddenly she was
A creeper rooted to that fatal verge.

SAHAJANYA (*in a voice of grief*)
Now do I know that Fate's indeed a thing
Inexorable, spares no one, when such love
Has such an ending; O all too suddenly!
How must it be then with Pururavas?

CHITRALEKHA

All day and night he passions in that grove
Seeking her. And this cool advent of cloud
That turns even happy hearts to yearning pain,
Will surely kill him.

SAHAJANYA

Sister, not long can grief
Have privilege over such beautiful beings.
Some God will surely pity them, some cause
Unite once more.
(*looking towards the east*)
Come, sister. Our lord the Sun
Is rising in the east. Quick, to our service.

They go.

Scene II. — *Pururavas enters disordered, his eyes fixed on the sky.*

PURURAVAS (*angrily*)
Halt, ruffian, halt! Thou in thy giant arms
Bearest away my Urvasie! He has
Soared up from a great crag into the sky
And wars me, hurling downward bitter rain
Of arrows. With this thunderbolt I smite thee.
He lifts up a clod and runs as to hurl it; then pauses and looks upwards.
(*pathetically*)
Oh me, I am deceived! This was a cloud
Equipped for rain, no proud and lustful fiend,
The rainbow, not a weapon drawn to kill,
Quick-driving showers are these, not sleety rain
Of arrows; and that brilliant line like streak
Of gold upon a touchstone, cloud-inarmed,
I saw, was lightning, not my Urvasie.
(*sorrowfully*)
Where shall I find her now? Where clasp those thighs
Swelling and smooth and white? Perhaps she stands
Invisible to me by heavenly power,
All sullen? But her anger was ever swift
And ended soon. Perhaps into her heavens
She has soared? O no! her heart was soft with love,
And love of me. Nor any fiend adverse
To Heaven had so much strength as to hale her hence
While I looked on. Yet is she gone from me
Invisible, swiftly invisible, —
Whither? O bitter miracle! and yet —
He scans each horizon, then pauses and sighs.
Alas! when fortune turns against a man,
Then sorrow treads on sorrow. There was already
This separation from my love, and hard
Enough to bear; and now the pleasant days,
Guiltless of heat, with advent cool of rain

Must help to slay me.
(*laughing*)
Why do I so tamely
Accept addition to my pangs? For even
The saints confess, "The king controls the seasons";
If it be so, I will command the thunder
Back to his stable.
(*pausing to think*)
No, I must permit
The season unabridged of pomp; the signs
Of storm are now my only majesty;
This sky with lightning gilt and laced becomes
My canopy of splendour, and the trees
Of rain-time waving wide their lavish bloom
Fan me; the sapphire-throated peacocks, voiced
Sweeter for that divorce from heat, are grown
My poets; the mountains are my citizens,
They pour out all their streams to swell my greatness.
But I waste time in idly boasting vain
Glories and lose my love. To my task, to my task!
This grove, this grove should find her.
He moves onward.
And here, O here
Is something to enrage my resolution.
Red-tinged, expanding, wet and full of rain,
These blossom-cups recall to me her eyes
Brimming with angry tears. How shall I trace her,
Or what thing tell me "Here and here she wandered"?
If she had touched with her beloved feet
The rain-drenched forest-sands, there were a line
Of little gracious footprints seen, with lac
Envermeilled, sinking deeper towards the heel
Because o'erburdened by her hips' large glories.
He moves onward.
(*exultantly*)
Oh joy! I see a hint of her. This way
Then went her angry beauty! Lo, her bodice

Bright green as is a parrot's belly, smitten
With crimson drops. It once veiled in her bosom
And paused to show her navel deep as love.
These are her tears that from those angry eyes
Went trickling, stealing scarlet from her lips
To spangle all this green. Doubtless her heaving
Tumult of breasts broke its dear hold and, she
Stumbling in anger, from my heaven it drifted.
I'll gather it to my kisses.
He stoops to it, then sorrowfully,
O my heart!
Only green grass with dragon-wings enamelled!
From whom shall I in all the desolate forest
Have tidings of her, or what creature help me?
Lo, in yon waste of crags the peacock! he
Upon a cool moist rock that breathes of rain
Exults, aspires, his gorgeous mass of plumes
Seized, blown and scattered by the roaring gusts.
Pregnant of shrillness is his outstretched throat,
His look is with the clouds. Him I will question:
Have the bright corners of thine eyes beheld,
O sapphire-throated bird, her, my delight,
My wife, my passion, my sweet grief? Yielding
No answer, he begins his gorgeous dance.
Why should he be so glad of my heart's woe?
I know thee, peacock. Since my cruel loss
Thy plumes that stream in splendour on the wind,
Have not one rival left. For when her heavy
Dark wave of tresses over all the bed
In softness wide magnificently collapsed
On her smooth shoulders massing purple glory
And bright with flowers, she passioning in my arms,
Who then was ravished with thy brilliant plumes,
Vain bird? I question thee not, heartless thing,
That joyest in others' pain.
(*turning away*)
Lo, where, new-fired

With sweet bird-passion by the season cool,
A cuckoo on the plum-tree sits. This race
Is wisest of the families of birds
And learned in love. I'll greet him like himself.
O cuckoo, thou art called the bird of love,
His sweet ambassador, O cuckoo. Thou
Criest and thy delightful voice within
The hearts of lovers like an arrow comes,
Seeks out the anger there and softly kills.
Me also, cuckoo, to my darling bring
Or her to me. What saidst thou? "How could she
Desert thee loving?" Cuckoo, I will tell thee.
Yes, she was angry. Yet I know I never
Gave her least cause. But, cuckoo, dost thou know not
That women love to feel their sovereignty
Over their lovers, nor transgression need
To be angry? How! Dost thou break off, O bird,
Our converse thus abruptly and turn away
To thine own tasks? Alas, 'twas wisely said
That men bear easily the bitter griefs
Which others feel. For all my misery
This bird, my orison disregarding, turns
To attack the plum-tree's ripening fruit as one
Drunken with love his darling's mouth. And yet
I cannot be angry with him. Has he not
The voice of Urvasie? Abide, O bird,
In bliss, though I unhappy hence depart.

He walks on, then stops short and listens.

O Heaven? what do I hear? the anklets' cry
That tell the musical footing of my love?
To right of this long grove 'twas heard. Oh, I
Will run to her.

(*hurrying forward*)

Me miserable! This was
No anklets' cry embraceable with hands,
But moan of swans who seeing the grey wet sky
Grow passionate for Himaloy's distant tarns.

Well, be it so. But ere in far desire
They leap up from this pool, I well might learn
Tidings from them of Urvasie.
(*approaching*)
Listen,
O king of all white fowl that waters breed.
Afterwards to Himaloy wing thy way,
But now the lotus fibres in thy beak
Gathered by thee for provender resign;
Ere long thou shalt resume them. Me, ah, first
From anguish rescue, O majestic swan,
With tidings of my sweet; always high souls
Prefer another's good to selfish aims.
Thou lookest upward to the heavens and sayest,
"I was absorbed with thoughts of Himaloy;
Her have I not observed." O swan, thou liest,
For if she never trod upon thy lake's
Embankment, nor thou sawest her archèd brows,
How couldst thou copy then so perfectly
Her footing full of amorous delight,
Or whence didst steal it? Give me back my love,
Thou robber! Thou hast got her gait and this
Is law that he with whom a part is found
Must to the claimant realise the whole.
(*laughing*)
O yes, thou flyest up, clanging alarm,
"This is the king whose duty is to punish
All thieves like me!" Go then, but I will plunge
Into new hopeful places, seeking love.
Lo, wild-drake with his mate, famed chocrobacque,
Him let me question. O thou wondrous creature,
All saffron and vermilion! Wilt thou then
Not tell me of my love? Oh, sawest thou not
My Goddess laughing like a lovely child
In the bright house of spring? For, wild-drake, thou
Who gettest from the chariot's orb thy name,
I who deprived am of her orbèd hips,

The chariot-warrior great Pururavas,
Encompassed with a thousand armed desires,
Question thee. How! "Who? Who?" thou sayest to me!
This is too much. It is not possible
He should not know me! Bird, I am a king
Of kings, and grandson to the Sun and Moon,
And earth has chosen me for her master. This
Were little. I am the loved of Urvasie!
Still art thou silent? I will taunt him, then
Perhaps he'll speak. Thou, wild-drake, when thy love,
Her body hidden by a lotus-leaf,
Lurks near thee in the pool, deemest her far
And wailest musically to the flowers
A wild deep dirge. Such is thy conjugal
Yearning, thy terror such of even a little
Division from her nearness. Me afflicted,
Me so forlorn thou art averse to bless
With just a little tidings of my love!
Alas, my miserable lot has made
All creatures adverse to me. Let me plunge
Into the deeper wood. Oh no, not yet!
This lotus with the honey-bees inside
Making melodious murmur, keeps me. I
Remember her soft mouth when I have kissed it
Too cruelly, sobbing exquisite complaint.
These too I will implore. Alas, what use?
They will despise me like the others. Yet,
Lest I repent hereafter of my silence,
I'll speak to him. O lotus-wooing bee,
Tell me some rumour of those eyes like wine.
But no, thou hast not seen that wonder. Else
Wouldst thou, O bee, affect the lotus' bloom,
If thou hadst caught the sweetness from her lips
Breathing, whose scent intoxicates the breeze?
I'll leave him. Lo! with his mate an elephant.
His trunk surrounds a nym-tree to uproot.
To him will I, he may some rumour have

Or whisper of my love. But softly! Haste
Will ruin me. Oh, this is not the time!
Now his beloved mate has in her trunk
Just found him broken branches odorous
And sweet as wine with the fresh leaves not long
In bud, new-honied. These let him enjoy.
His meal is over now. I may approach
And ask him. O rut-dripping elephant,
Sole monarch of the herd, has not that moon
With jasmines all a glory in her hair
And limbs of fadeless beauty, carrying
Youth like a banner, whom to see is bliss,
Is madness, fallen in thy far ken, O king?
Oh joy! he trumpets loud and soft as who
Would tell me he has seen indeed my love.
Oh, I am gladdened! More to thee I stand
Attracted, elephant, as like with like.
Sovereign of sovereigns is my title, thou
Art monarch of the kingly elephants,
And this wide freedom of thy fragrant rut
Interminable imitates my own
Vast liberality to suppliant men,
Regally; thou hast in all the herd this mate,
I among loveliest women Urvasie.
In all things art thou like me; only I pray,
O friend, that thou mayst never know the pang,
The loss. Be fortunate, king, farewell! Oh see,
The mountain of the Fragrant Glens appears,
Fair as a dream, with his great plateaus trod
By heavenly feet of women. May it not be,
To this wide vale she too has with her sisters
Brought here her beautiful body full of spring?
Darkness! I cannot see her. Yet by these gleams
Of lightning I may study, I may find.
Ah God! the fruit of guilt is bounded not
With the doer's anguish; this stupendous cloud
Is widowed of the lightning through my sin.

Yet I will leave thee not, O thou huge pile
Of scaling crags, unquestioned. Hear me, answer me!
O mountain, has she entered then the woods,
Love's green estate, — ah, she too utter love!
Her breasts were large like thine, with small sweet space
Between them, and like thine her glorious hips
And smooth fair joints a rapture. Dumb? No answer?
I am too far away, he has not heard me.
Let me draw nearer. Mountain, seen was she,
A woman all bereaved, her every limb
A loveliness, in these delightful woods?

ECHO
Nearer, O nearer! Mountain-seen was she,
A woman all bereaved, her every limb
A loveliness, in these delightful woods.

PURURAVAS
He has answered, answered! O my heart, I draw
Nearer to her! In my own words the hill
Answers thee, O my heart. As joyous tidings
Mayst thou too hear, mountain. She then was seen,
My Urvasie in thy delightful woods?

ECHO
Mountain! mountain! mountain! She then was seen,
My Urvasie in thy delightful woods,
In thy delightful woods, delightful woods.

PURURAVAS
Alas! 'tis Echo mocks me with my voice
Rolling amid the crags and mountain glens.
Out on thee, Echo! Thou hast killed my heart.
O Urvasie! Urvasie! Urvasie!
He falls down and swoons.
(*recovering*)
I am all weary and sad. Oh, let me rest

Beside this mountain river for a moment
And woo the breeze that dances on the waves.
All turbid is this stream with violent rain,
And yet I thrill to see it. For, O, it seems
Just like my angry darling when she went
Frowning — as this does with its little waves, —
A wrathful music in her girdle, — and see!
This string of birds with frightened clangour rise;
She trailed her raiment as the river its foam,
For it loosened with her passion as she moved
With devious feet, all angry, blind with tears,
And often stopped to brood upon her wrongs:
But soon indignantly her stormy speed
Resumed, so tripping, winding goes the stream,
As she did. O most certainly 'tis she,
My sweet quick-tempered darling, suddenly changed
Into a river's form. I will beseech her
And soothe her wounded spirit. Urvasie?
Did I not love thee perfectly? Did not
My speech grow sweetness when I spoke to thee?
And when did my heart anything but hate
To false our love? O what was the slight fault
Thou foundest in thy servant that thou couldst
Desert him, Urvasie, O Urvasie!
She answers not! It is not she, merely
A river. Urvasie would not have left
Pururavas to tryst with Ocean. And now
Since only by refusal to despair
Can bliss at last be won, I will return
Where first she fled from my pursuing eyes.
This couching stag shall give me tidings of her,
Who looks as if he were a splendid glance
Some dark-eyed Dryad had let fall to admire
This budding foliage and this young green beauty
Of grass. But why averts he then his head
As though in loathing? I perceive his reason.
Lo, his fair hind is hasting towards him, stayed

By their young deerling plucking at her teats.
With her his eyes are solely, her with bent
Lithe neck he watches. Ho, thou lord of hind!
Sawst thou not her I love? O stag, I'll tell thee
How thou shouldst know her. Like thine own dear hind
She had large eyes and loving, and like hers
That gaze was beauty. Why does he neglect
My words and only gaze towards his love?
All prosperous creatures slight the unfortunate!
'Tis natural. Then elsewhere let me seek.
I have found her, I have found her! O a hint
And token of her way! This one red drop
Of summer's blood the very codome was,
Though rough with faulty stamens, yet thought worthy
To crown her hair. And thou, asoka red,
Didst watch my slender-waisted when she gave
So cruelly a loving heart to pain.
Why dost thou lie and shake thy windy head?
How couldst thou by her soft foot being untouched
Break out into such bloom of petals stung
And torn by jostling crowds of bees, who swarm
All wild to have thy honey? Ever be blest,
Thou noble trunk. What should this be, bright red,
That blazes in a crevice of the rocks?
For if it were a piece of antelope's flesh
Torn by a lion, 'twould not have this blaze,
This lustre haloing it; nor can it be
A spark pregnant of fire; for all the wood
Is drowned in rain. No, 'tis a gem, a miracle
Of crimson, like the red felicitous flower,
And with one radiant finger of the sun
Laid on it like a claim. Yet I will take it,
For it compels my soul with scarlet longing.
Wherefore? She on whose head it should have burned,
Whose hair all fragrant with the coral-bloom
I loved like Heaven, is lost to me, beyond
Recovery lost to me. Why should I take it

To mar it with my tears?

A VOICE

Reject it not,
My son; this is the jewel Union born
From the red lac that on the marvellous feet
Was brilliant of Himaloy's child, and, soon,
Who bears it is united with his love.

PURURAVAS

Who speaks to me? It is a saint who dwells
In forest like the deer. He first of creatures
Has pitied me. O my lord anchoret,
I thank thee. Thou, O Union, if thou end
My separation, if with that small-waisted
Thou shouldst indeed be proved my Union,
Jewel, I'll use thee for my crown, as Shiva
Upon his forehead wears the crescent moon.
This flowerless creeper! Wherefore do mine eyes
Dwell with its barren grace and my heart yearn
Towards it? And yet, O, not without a cause
Has she enchanted me. There standst thou, creeper,
All slender, thy poor sad leaves are moist with rain,
Thou silent, with no voice of honey-bees
Upon thy drooping boughs; as from thy lord
The season separated, leaving off
Thy habit of bloom. Why, I might think I saw
My passionate darling sitting penitent
With tear-stained face and body unadorned,
Thinking in silence how she spurned my love.
I will embrace thee, creeper, for thou art
Too like my love. Urvasie! all my body
Is thrilled and satisfied of Urvasie!
I feel, I feel her living limbs.
(*despairingly*)
But how
Should I believe it? Everything I deem

A somewhat of my love, next moment turns
To other. Therefore since by touch at least
I find my dear one, I will not separate
Too suddenly mine eyes from sleep.
(*opening his eyes slowly*)
O love,
'Tis thou!
He swoons.

URVASIE
Upraise thy heart, my King, my liege!

PURURAVAS
Dearest, at last I live! O thou hadst plunged me
Into a dark abyss of separation,
And fortunately art thou returned to me,
Like consciousness given back to one long dead.

URVASIE
With inward senses I have watched and felt
Thy whole long agony.

PURURAVAS
With inward senses?
I understand thee not.

URVASIE
I will tell all.
But let my lord excuse my grievous fault,
Who, wretch enslaved by anger, brought to this
My sovereign! Smile on me and pardon me!

PURURAVAS
Never speak of it. Thy clasp is thy forgiveness.
For all my outward senses and my soul
Leap laughing towards thy bosom. Only convince me
How thou couldst live without me such an age.

URVASIE
Hearken. The War-God Skanda, from of old
Virginity eternal vowing, came
To Gandhamadan's bank men call the pure,
And made a law.

PURURAVAS
What law, beloved?

URVASIE
This
That any woman entering these precincts
Becomes at once a creeper. And for limit
Of the great curse, "Without the jewel born
From crimson of my mother's feet can she
Never be woman more." Now I, my lord,
My heart perplexed by the Preceptor's curse,
Forgot the War-God's oath and entered here,
Rejecting thy entreaties, to the wood
Avoidable of women: at the first step,
All suddenly my form was changed. I was
A creeper growing at the wood's wild end.

PURURAVAS
Oh, now intelligible! When from thy breasts
Loosening the whole embrace, the long delight,
I sank back languid, thou wouldst moan for me
Like one divided far. How is it then
Possible that thou shouldst bear patiently
Real distance between us? Lo, this jewel,
As in thy story, gave thee to my arms.
Admonished by a hermit sage I kept it.

URVASIE
The jewel Union! Therefore at thy embrace
I was restored.
She places the jewel gratefully upon her head.

PURURAVAS
Thus stand a while. O fairest,
Thy face, suffused with crimson from this gem
Above thee pouring wide its fire and splendour,
Has all the beauty of a lotus reddening
In early sunlight.

URVASIE
O sweet of speech! remember
That thy high capital awaits thee long.
It may be that the people blame me. Let us,
My own dear lord, return.

PURURAVAS
Let us return.

URVASIE
What wafture will my sovereign choose?

PURURAVAS
O waft me
Nearer the sun and make a cloud our chariot,
While lightning like a streaming banner floats
Now seen, now lost to vision, and the rainbow
With freshness of its glory iridescent
Edges us. In thine arms uplift and waft me,
Beloved, through the wide and liquid air.

They go.

Act V

Scene. — *Outside the King's tents near Pratisthana. In the background the confluence of the rivers Ganges and Yamuna.*
Manavaka alone.

MANAVAKA

After long pleasuring with Urvasie
In Nandan and all woodlands of the Gods,
Our King's at last returned, and he has entered
His city, by the jubilant people met
With splendid greetings, and resumed his toils.
Ah, were he but a father, nothing now
Were wanting to his fullness. This high day
At confluence of great Ganges with the stream
Dark Yamuna, he and his Queen have bathed.
Just now he passed into his tent, and surely
His girls adorn him. I will go exact
My first share of the ointments and the flowers.

MAID (*within lamenting*)

O me unfortunate! the jewel is lost
Accustomed to the noble head of her
Most intimate with the bosom of the King,
His loveliest playmate. I was carrying it
In palm-leaf basket on white cloth of silk;
A vulture doubting this some piece of flesh
Swoops down and soars away with it.

MANAVAKA

Unfortunate!

This was the Union, the crest-jewel, dear
O'er all things to the King. Look where he comes,
His dress half-worn just as he started up
On hearing of his loss. I'll go to him.

He goes.

Then Pururavas enters with his Amazons of the Bactrian Guard and other attendants in great excitement.

PURURAVAS
Huntress! huntress! Where is that robber bird
That snatches his own death? He practises
His first bold pillage in the watchman's house.

HUNTRESS
Yonder, the golden thread within his beak!
Trailing the jewel how he wheels in air
Describing scarlet lines upon the sky!

PURURAVAS
I see him, dangling down the thread of gold
He wheels and dips in rapid circles vast.
The jewel like a whirling firebrand red
Goes round and round and with vermilion rings
Incarnadines the air. What shall we do
To rescue it?

MANAVAKA (*coming up*)
Why do you hesitate to slay him?
He is marked out for death, a criminal.

PURURAVAS
My bow! my bow!

AN AMAZON
I run to bring it!

She goes out.

PURURAVAS

Friend,
I cannot see the bird. Where has it fled?

MANAVAKA
Look! to the southern far horizon wings
The carrion-eating robber.

PURURAVAS (*turns and looks*)
Yes, I see him.
He speeds with the red jewel every way
Branching and shooting light, as 'twere a cluster
Of crimson roses in the southern sky
Or ruby pendant from the lobe of Heaven.
Enter Amazon with the bow.

AMAZON
Sire, I have brought the bow and leathern guard.

PURURAVAS
Too late you bring it. Yon eater of raw flesh
Goes winging far beyond an arrow's range,
And the bright jewel with the distant bird
Blazes like Mars the planet glaring red
Against a wild torn piece of cloud. Who's there?
Noble Latavya!

LATAVYA
Highness?

PURURAVAS

From me command
The chief of the police, at evening, when
Yon wingèd outlaw seeks his homing tree,
That he be hunted out.

LATAVYA
It shall be done.
He goes out.

MANAVAKA
Sit down and rest. What place in all broad earth
This jewel-thief can hide in, shall elude
Your world-wide jurisdiction?

PURURAVAS (*sitting down with Manavaka*)
It was not as a gem
Of lustre that I treasured yonder stone,
Now lost in the bird's beak, but 'twas my Union
And it united me with my dear love.

MANAVAKA
I know it, from your own lips heard the tale.
Chamberlain enters with the jewel and an arrow.

LATAVYA
Behold shot through that robber! Though he fled,
Thy anger darting in pursuit has slain him.
Plumb down he fell with fluttering wings from Heaven
And dropped the jewel bright.
All look at it in surprise.
Ill fate o'ertaking
Much worse offence! My lord, shall not this gem
Be washed in water pure and given — to whom?

PURURAVAS
Huntress, go, see it purified in fire,
Then to its case restore it.

HUNTRESS
As the King wills.
She goes out with the jewel.

PURURAVAS
Noble Latavya, came you not to know
The owner of this arrow?

LATAVYA
Letters there are
Carved on the steel; my eyes grow old and feeble,
I could not read them.

PURURAVAS
Therefore give me the arrow.
I will spell out the writing.
The Chamberlain gives him the arrow and he reads.

LATAVYA
And I will fill my office.
He goes out.

MANAVAKA (*seeing the King lost in thought*)
What do you read there?

PURURAVAS
Hear, Manavaka, hear
The letters of this bowman's name.

MANAVAKA
I'm all
Attention; read.

PURURAVAS
O hearken then and wonder.
(*reading*)
"Ayus, the smiter of his foeman's lives,
The warrior Ilian's son by Urvasie,
This arrow loosed."

MANAVAKA (*with satisfaction*)
Hail, King! now dost thou prosper,
Who hast a son.

PURURAVAS
How should this be? Except
By the great ritual once, never was I
Parted from that beloved; nor have I witnessed
One sign of pregnancy. How could my Goddess
Have borne a son? True, I remember once
For certain days her paps were dark and stained,
And all her fair complexion to the hue
Of that wan creeper paled, and languid-large
Her eyes were. Nothing more.

MANAVAKA
Do not affect
With mortal attributes the living Gods.
For holiness is as a veil to them
Concealing their affections.

PURURAVAS
This is true.
But why should she conceal her motherhood?

MANAVAKA
Plainly, she thought, "If the King sees me old
And matron, he'll be off with some young hussy."

PURURAVAS
No mockery, think it over.

MANAVAKA
Who shall guess
The riddles of the Gods?

Enter Latavya.

LATAVYA

Hail to the King!
A holy dame from Chyavan's hermitage
Leading a boy would see my lord.

PURURAVAS

Latavya,
Admit them instantly.

LATAVYA

As the King wills.
He goes out, then re-enters with Ayus bow in hand and a hermitess.
Come, holy lady, to the King.
They approach the King.

MANAVAKA

How say you,
Should not this noble boy be very he,
The young and high-born archer with whose name
Was lettered yon half-moon of steel that pierced
The vulture? His features imitate my lord's.

PURURAVAS

It must be so. The moment that I saw him,
My eyes became a mist of tears, my spirit
Lightened with joy, and surely 'twas a father
That stirred within my bosom. O Heaven! I lose
Religious calm; shudderings surprise me; I long
To feel him with my limbs, pressed with my love.

LATAVYA (*to the hermitess*)
Here deign to stand.

PURURAVAS

Mother, I bow to thee.

SATYAVATIE
High-natured! may thy line by thee increase!
(*aside*)
Lo, all untold this father knows his son.
(*aloud*)
My child,
Bow down to thy begetter.
Ayus bows down, folding his hands over his bow.

PURURAVAS
Live long, dear son.

AYUS (*aside*)
O how must children on their father's knees
Grown great be melted with a filial sweetness,
When only hearing that this is my father
I feel I love him!

PURURAVAS
Vouchsafe me, reverend lady,
Thy need of coming.

SATYAVATIE
Listen then, O King;
This Ayus at his birth was in my hand
By Urvasie, I know not why, delivered,
A dear deposit. Every perfect rite
And holiness unmaimed that princely boys
Must grow through, Chyavan's self, the mighty Sage,
Performed, and taught him letters, Scripture, arts, —
Last, every warlike science.

PURURAVAS
O fortunate
In such a teacher!

SATYAVATIE

The children fared afield
Today for flowers, dry fuel, sacred grass,
And Ayus faring with them violated
The morals of the hermitage.

PURURAVAS (*in alarm*)

O how?

SATYAVATIE

A vulture with a jag of flesh was merging
Into a tree-top when the boy levelled
His arrow at the bird.

PURURAVAS (*anxiously*)

And then?

SATYAVATIE

And then
The holy Sage, instructed of that slaughter,
Called me and bade, "Give back thy youthful trust
Into his mother's keeping." Therefore, sir,
Let me have audience with the lady.

PURURAVAS

Mother,
Deign to sit down one moment.

The hermitess takes the seat brought for her.

Noble Latavya,
Let Urvasie be summoned.

LATAVYA

It is done.

He goes out.

PURURAVAS

Child of thy mother, come, O come to me!

Let me feel my son! The touch of his own child,
They say, thrills all the father; let me know it.
Gladden me as the moonbeam melts the moonstone.

SATYAVATIE
Go, child, and gratify thy father's heart.
Ayus goes to the King and clasps his feet.

PURURAVAS (*embracing the boy and seating him on his footstool*)
This Brahmin is thy father's friend. Salute him,
And have no fear.

MANAVAKA
Why should he fear? I think
He grew up in the woods and must have seen
A mort of monkeys in the trees.

AYUS (*smiling*)
Hail, father.

MANAVAKA
Peace and prosperity walk with thee ever.
Latavya returns with Urvasie.

LATAVYA
This way, my lady.

URVASIE
Who is this quivered youth
Set on the footstool of the King? Himself
My monarch binds his curls into a crest!
Who should this be so highly favoured?
(*seeing Satyavatie*)
Ah!
Satyavatie beside him tells me; it is
My Ayus. How he has grown!

PURURAVAS (*seeing Urvasie*)
O child, look up.
Lo, she who bore thee, with her whole rapt gaze
Grown mother, her veiled bosom heaving towards thee
And wet with sacred milk!

SATYAVATIE
Rise, son, and greet
Thy parent.
She goes with the boy to Urvasie.

URVASIE
I touch thy feet.

SATYAVATIE
Ever be near
Thy husband's heart.

AYUS
Mother, I bow to thee.

URVASIE
Child, be thy sire's delight. My lord and husband!

PURURAVAS
O welcome to the mother! sit thee here.
He makes her sit beside him.

SATYAVATIE
My daughter, lo, thine Ayus. He has learned
All lore, heroic armour now can wear.
I yield thee back before thy husband's eyes
Thy sacred trust. Discharge me. Each idle moment
Is a religious duty left undone.

URVASIE
It is so long since I beheld you, mother,

I have not satisfied my thirst of you,
And cannot let you go. And yet ’twere wrong
To keep you. Therefore go for further meeting.

PURURAVAS
Say to the Sage, I fall down at his feet.

SATYAVATIE
’Tis well.

AYUS
Are you going to the forest, mother?
Will you not take me with you?

PURURAVAS
Over, son,
Thy studies in the woods. Thou must be now
A man, know the great world.

SATYAVATIE
Child, hear thy father.

AYUS
Then, mother, let me have when he has got
His plumes, my little peacock, Jewel-crest,
Who’ld sleep upon my lap and let me stroke
His crest and pet him.

SATYAVATIE
Surely, I will send him.

URVASIE
Mother, I touch thy feet.

PURURAVAS
I bow to thee,
Mother.

SATYAVATIE

Peace be upon you both, my children.

She goes.

PURURAVAS

O blessed lady! Now am I grown through thee
A glorious father in this boy, our son;
Not Indra, hurler down of cities, more
In his Jayanta of Paulomie born.

Urvasie weeps.

MANAVAKA

Why is my lady suddenly all tears?

PURURAVAS

My own beloved! How art thou full of tears
While I am swayed with the great joy of princes
Who see their line secured? Why do these drops
On these high peaks of beauty raining down,
O sad sweet prodigal, turn thy bright necklace
To repetition vain of costlier pearls?

He wipes the tears from her eyes.

URVASIE

Alas, my lord! I had forgot my doom
In a mother's joy. But now thy utterance
Of that great name of Indra brings to me
Cruel remembrance torturing the heart
Of my sad limit.

PURURAVAS

Tell me, my love, what limit.

URVASIE

O King, my heart held captive in thy hands,
I stood bewildered by the curse; then Indra
Uttered his high command: "When my great soldier,

Earth's monarch, sees the face that keeps his line
Made in thy womb, to Eden thou returnest."
So when I knew my issue, sick with the terror
Of being torn from thee, all hidden haste,
I gave to noble Satyavatie the child,
In Chyavan's forest to be trained. Today
This my beloved son returns to me;
No doubt she thought that he was grown and able
To gratify his father's heart. This then
Is the last hour of that sweet life with thee,
Which goes not farther.

Pururavas swoons.

MANAVAKA

Help, help!

URVASIE

Return to me, my King!

PURURAVAS (*reviving*)

O love, how jealous are the Gods in Heaven
Of human gladness! I was comforted
With getting of a son, — at once this blow!
O small sweet waist, I am divorced from thee!
So has a poplar from one equal cloud
Received the shower that cooled and fire of Heaven
That kills it.

MANAVAKA

O sudden evil out of good!
For I suppose you now will don the bark
And live with hermit trees.

URVASIE

I too unhappy!
For now my King who sees that I no sooner
Behold my son reared up than to my heavens

I soar, will think that I have all my need
And go with glad heart from his side.

PURURAVAS

Beloved,
Do not believe it. How can one be free
To do his will who's subject to a master?
He when he's bid, must cast his heart aside
And dwell in exile from the face he loves.
Therefore obey King Indra. On this thy son
I too my kingdom will repose and dwell
In forests where the antlered peoples roam.

AYUS
My father should not on an untrained steer
Impose the yoke that asks a neck of iron.

PURURAVAS
Child, say not so! The ichorous elephant
Not yet full-grown tames all the trumpetings
Of older rivals; and the young snake's tooth
With energy of virulent poison stored
Strikes deadly. So is it with the ruler born:
His boyish hand inarms the sceptred world.
The force that rises with its task springs not
From years, but is a self and inborn greatness.
Therefore, Latavya!

LATAVYA

Let my lord command me.

PURURAVAS
Direct from me the council to make ready
The coronation of my son.

LATAVYA (*sorrowfully*)

It is

Your will, sire.

He goes out. Suddenly all act as if dazzled.

PURURAVAS

What lightning leaps from cloudless heavens?

URVASIE (*gazing up*)

'Tis the Lord Narad.

PURURAVAS

Narad? Yes, 'tis he.
His hair is matted all a tawny yellow
Like ochre-streaks, his holy thread is white
And brilliant like a digit of the moon.
He looks as if the faery-tree of Heaven
Came moving, shooting twigs all gold, and twinkling
Pearl splendours for its leaves, its tendrils pearl.
Guest-offering for the Sage!

Narad enters: all rise to greet him.

URVASIE

Here is guest-offering.

NARAD

Hail, the great guardian of the middle world!

PURURAVAS

Greeting, Lord Narad.

URVASIE

Lord, I bow to thee.

NARAD

Unsundered live in sweetness conjugal.

PURURAVAS (*aside*)

O that it might be so!

(*aloud to Ayus*)
Child, greet the Sage.

AYUS
Urvaseian Ayus bows down to thee.

NARAD
Live long, be prosperous.

PURURAVAS
Deign to take this seat.
Narad sits, after which all take their seats.
What brings the holy Narad?

NARAD
Hear the message
Of mighty Indra.

PURURAVAS
I listen.

NARAD
Maghavan,
Whose soul can see across the world, to thee
Intending loneliness in woods —

PURURAVAS
Command me.

NARAD
The seers to whom the present, past and future
Are three wide-open pictures, these divulge
Advent of battle and the near uprise
Of Titans warring against Gods. Heaven needs
Thee, her great soldier; thou shouldst not lay down
Thy warlike arms. All thy allotted days
This Urvasie is given thee for wife

And lovely helpmeet.

URVASIE

Oh, a sword is taken
Out of my heart.

PURURAVAS

In all I am Indra's servant.

NARAD

'Tis fitting. Thou for Indra, he for thee,
With interchange of lordly offices.
So sun illumes the fire, fire the great sun
Ekes out with heat and puissance.

He looks up into the sky.

Rambha, descend
And with thee bring the high investiture
Heaven's King has furnished to crown Ayus, heir
Of great Pururavas.

Apsaras enter with the articles of investiture.

NYMPHS

Lo! Holiness,
That store!

NARAD

Set down the boy upon the chair
Of the anointing.

RAMBHA

Come to me, my child.

She seats the boy.

NARAD (*pouring the cruse of holy oil on the boy's head*)
Complete the ritual.

RAMBHA (*after so doing*)
Bow before the Sage,
My child, and touch thy parents' feet.

Ayus obeys.

NARAD
Be happy.

PURURAVAS
Son, be a hero and thy line's upholder.

URVASIE
Son, please thy father.

BARDS (*within*)
Victory to Empire's heir.

Strophe

First the immortal seer of Brahma's kind
And had the soul of Brahma; Atri's then
The Moon his child; and from the Moon again
Sprang Budha-Hermes, moonlike was his mind.
Pururavas was Budha's son and had
Like starry brightness. Be in thee displayed
Thy father's kindly gifts. All things that bless
Mortals, descend in thy surpassing race.

Antistrophe

Thy father like Himaloy highest stands
Of all the high, but thou all steadfast be,
Unchangeable and grandiose like the sea,
Fearless, surrounding Earth with godlike hands.
Let Empire by division brighter shine;
For so the sacred Ganges snow and pine
Favours, yet the same waters she divides
To Ocean and his vast and heaving tides.

NYMPHS (*approaching Urvasie*)
O thou art blest, our sister, in thy son
Crowned heir to Empire, in thy husband blest
From whom thou shalt not part.

URVASIE
My happiness
Is common to you all, sweet sisters: such
Our love was always.
She takes Ayus by the hand.
Come with me, dear child,
To fall down at thy elder mother's feet.

PURURAVAS
Stay yet; we all attend you to the Queen.

NARAD
Thy son's great coronation mindeth me
Of yet another proud investiture, —
Kartikeya crowned by Maghavan, to lead
Heaven's armies.

PURURAVAS
Highly has the King of Heaven
Favoured him, Narad; how should he not be
Most great and fortunate?

NARAD
What more shall Indra do
For King Pururavas?

PURURAVAS
Heaven's King being pleased,
What further can I need? Yet this I'll ask.
He comes forward and speaks towards the audience.
Learning and Fortune, Goddesses that stand
In endless opposition, dwellers rare

Under one roof, in kindly union join
To bless for glory and for ease the good.
This too; may every man find his own good,
And every man be merry of his mind,
And all men in all lands taste all desire.

In the Gardens of Vidisha
or
Malavica and the King

Act I

Dramatis Personae

AGNIMITRA, King in Vidisha.
VAHATAVA, his Minister.
GAUTAMA, the Court jester.
HORODUTTA, Master of the Stage to the King.
GANADASA, Master of the Stage to the Queen.
MAUDGALYA, the King's Chamberlain.

DHARINIE, Queen in Vidisha.
IRAVATIE, a royal princess, wife of Agnimitra.
MALAVICA, daughter of the Prince Madhavsena of Vidurbha, disguised as a maid in waiting on the Queen.
COWSHIQIE, a female anchorite, sister of Madhavsena's Minister.
VOCOOLAVALICA, maid in waiting on the Queen, friend of Malavica.
[COMUDICA, maid in waiting on the Queen, friend of Vocoolavalica.]

Act I

Scene I

Place. Outside the Hall of Music in the Palace grounds.

INVOCATION

The One who is Almighty, He Who showers
Upon His worshippers all wealth, all joy,
Yet wears Himself a hide, nought richer; — Who
With His belovèd is one body and yet
The first of passionless ascetics stands;
Who in His eightfold body bears the world
Yet knows not egoism, may He from you
Dispel the darkness and reveal the light,
The paths of righteousness to reillume.
And after the invocation the Manager speaks.

MANAGER
Here, friend.
Enter his Assistant.

ASSISTANT
Behold me.

MANAGER
Friend, the audience bid me
Stage for this high and jovial feast of Spring
The drama, Malavica and the King,
Plotted by Kalidasa. Therefore begin
The overture.

ASSISTANT
But, Sir, 'tis very strange.
Are there not classics old, are there not works
Of Bhasa and Saumilla, famous plays,
Great Kaviputra's name and more to match
That thus the audience honours, all these scorned,
A living poet's work?

MANAGER
Not well hast thou
Spoken in this nor like a judging man.
For learn, not all that's old is therefore good
Nor must a poem straightway be condemned
Because 'tis new. The critic watches, hears,
Weighs patiently, then judges, but the fool
Follows opinion's beaten track and walks
By others' seeing.

ASSISTANT
Well, Sir, you are the judge.

MANAGER
Haste then, for since with bended head I took
The learnèd audience' will, I have no ease
Till its performance, to which my forward mind
Speeds like yon maiden, Dharinie's attendant,
Light-footed to her royal mistress' will.
Exeunt. Enter Vocoolavalica.

VOCOOLAVALICA
My lady bids me seek out Ganadasa,
Her Master of the Stage, from him to learn
How in the Dance of Double Entendre progresses
Our Malavica, a recent scholar yet
Here in this Hall of Music.
Enter Comudica, a ring in the palm of her hand.
Comudica,

What, have you taken to religion then
That you go sailing past me with an eye
Abstracted, nor one glance for me?

COMUDICA

What, you,
Vocoolavalica? I was absorbed
In the delightful jewel on this ring
Fresh from the jeweller's hands for our great lady.
Look, 'tis a Python-seal.

VOCOOLAVALICA

O heavens, how lovely!
Well might you have no eyes for aught besides.
Your fingers are all blossoming with the jewel!
These rays of light are golden filaments
Just breaking out of bud.

COMUDICA

Sweet, whither bound?

VOCOOLAVALICA

To the Stage-Master. Our lady seeks to know
What sort of pupil Malavica proves,
How quick to learn.

COMUDICA

O tell me, is it true
That Malavica by this study kept
Far from his eye, was by our lord the King
Seen lately?

VOCOOLAVALICA

Seen, but in a picture, — close
Beside my lady.

COMUDICA
How chanced it?

VOCOOLAVALICA
I will tell you.
My lady in the Painting-School was seated
Studying the marvellous colours that enhue
The Master's great design; when suddenly
My lord comes on her.

COMUDICA
Well, what followed?

VOCOOLAVALICA
Greetings;
Then sitting down by her he scanned the painting,
There saw of all the attendants Malavica
Nearest the Queen and asked of her.

COMUDICA
Marked you the words?

VOCOOLAVALICA
"This face the like of which I not remember,
And yet she stands just by you — who is she?"

COMUDICA
Beauty's indeed a magnet to the affections
And seizes at first sight. My lady?

VOCOOLAVALICA
Made
No answer. He in some astonishment
Urged her with questions. Then my lady's sister
The princess Vasouluxmy all in wonder
Breaks out, "Why, brother, this is Malavica!"

COMUDICA
Oh good! How like the child's sweet innocence!
Afterwards?

VOCOOLAVALICA
Why, what else? Since then still more
Is Malavica from the royal eye
Kept close secluded.

COMUDICA
Well, I should not stop you
Upon your errand. I too will to my lady
Carry the ring.

Exit.

VOCOOLAVALICA
Who comes out from the Hall
Of Music? Oh, 'tis Ganadas himself.
I will accost him.

Enter Ganadasa.

GANADASA
Each worker doubtless his own craft exalts
Practised by all his sires before him. Yet not
A mere vain-glory is the drama's praise.
For drama is to the immortal Gods
A sacrifice of beauty visible.
The Almighty in his body most divine
Where Male and Female meet, disparted it
Twixt sweet and terrible. Drama unites
In one fair view the whole conflicting world,
Pictures man's every action, his complex
Emotions infinite makes harmony;
So that each temperament, in its own taste
However various, gathers from the stage,
Rapt with some pleasing echo of itself,
Peculiar pleasure. Thus one self-same art

Meets in their nature's wants most various minds.

VOCOOLAVALICA (*coming forward*)
Obeisance to the noble Ganadasa.

GANADASA
Live long, my child.

VOCOOLAVALICA
My lady sent me here
To ask how Malavica makes progress. Sir,
Does she learn quickly yet?

GANADASA
Tell my lady,
No swifter brain, no apter delicate taste
Has ever studied with me. In one word,
Whate'er emotion to the dance translated
I show the child, that she improving seems
To teach her teacher.

VOCOOLAVALICA (*aside*)
Victory! I foresee
Iravatie already conquered. (*aloud*) Sir,
The pupil gains his every aim of study
Of whom a Master says so much.

GANADASA
Vocoola,
Because such genius is most rare, I ask thee, —
Whence did my lady bring this matchless wonder?

VOCOOLAVALICA
The brother of my lady in a womb
Less noble got, who for my lord commands
His watchful frontier fortress by the stream
Mundaqinie, Verosegn, to his great sister,

For mistresshood and office in the arts
Deemed worthy, sent her.

GANADASA (*aside*)
So rare her form and face,
Her nature too so modest and so noble,
I cannot but conceive that of no mean
Material was composed this beauty. (*aloud*) Child,
I shall be famous by her. The Master's art
Into a brilliant mind projected turns
To power original, as common rain
Dropping into that Ocean-harboured shell
Empearls and grows a rareness.

VOCOOLAVALICA
Where is she now?

GANADASA
Tired with long studying the five parts of gesture
Yonder she rests; enjoying the cool breeze
Against the window that o'erlooks these waters,
There you shall find her.

VOCOOLAVALICA
Sir, will you permit me
To tell her how much you are pleased with her?
Such praise will be a spur indeed.

GANADASA
Go, child,
Embrace your friend. I too will to my house,
Taking the boon of this permitted leisure.

Exeunt.

Scene II

In a room of the Palace the King is seated with the Minister, Vahatava in attendance, Vahatava reading a letter. The attendants at some distance in the background of the stage.

AGNIMITRA
Well, Vahatava, what answers the Vidurbhan?

VAHATAVA
His own destruction.

AGNIMITRA
Let me hear this letter.

VAHATAVA
Thus runs his present missive: — In these terms
Your Highness writes to me, "Prince Madhavsen,
Thy uncle's son, then journeying to my court
For the fulfilment of contracted bonds,
Within thy dungeons lies; for by the way
The governor of thy frontiers leaped on him
And prisoned. Thou, if thou regardest me,
Unbind him with his wife and sister straight."
To which I answer thus, "Your Highness knows
What conduct kings should use to princes born
Their equals. In this quarrel then I look
From your great name for just neutrality.
Touching his sister, she in the quick scuffle
Of capture disappeared, whom to seek out
I shall not want in my endeavours. Yet if
Your Highness wills indeed to free my cousin,
Hear then my only terms. First from your dungeons

The Premier of the Maurya princes loose
And brother of my queen: this done, at once
Are Madhavsena's farther bonds excused."

AGNIMITRA (*angrily*)
How! dares the weakling trade with me in favours?
Knows he himself so little? Vahatava,
Command towards Vidurbha the division
That under Verosegn new-mobilized
Stands prompt to arms. I will exterminate
This man who rises up my enemy.
Vidurbha was my natural foeman first
But now grows such in action.

VAHATAVA
As the King wills.

AGNIMITRA
Nay, Vahatava, but what thinkst thou in this?

VAHATAVA
Your Highness speaks by the strict rule of statecraft.
Then is a foeman easiest to pluck out
When new upon his throne; for then his roots
Have not sunk deep into his people's hearts,
And he is like an infant shooting tree
Loose in its native earth; soon therefore uprooted.

AGNIMITRA
Wise is the Tuntra's author and his word
A gospel; we will seize this plea to set
Our war in motion.

VAHATAVA
I shall so give order.
Exit. The attendants resume their places each in consonance with his office. To them enter Gautama.

GAUTAMA (*aside*)
Now can I tell the King that not in vain
He looked to me for counsel, when he said
"Gautama, know you not some exquisite cunning,
Whereby that face of Malavica by chance
At first beheld and in dumb counterfeit
With the dear life may bless my vision?" By this
I think I have planned somewhat worth the telling.

AGNIMITRA
Here comes my premier in another branch
Of politics.

GAUTAMA
I greet the King.

AGNIMITRA
Be seated.
Well, Gautama? What, was your wisdom's eye
Busy with plan and purpose, has its roving
Caught somewhere any glimpse?

GAUTAMA
Ask me, my lord,
Of your desire's accomplishment.

AGNIMITRA
So soon!

GAUTAMA
I'll tell you in your ear, sir.

AGNIMITRA
Gautama,
Most admirable. Thou hast indeed devised
The cunningest adroitness. Now I dare
To hope for things impossible, since thou

Art of my counsels part. In difficulty
How necessary is a helpful friend;
For when one is befriended, every hindrance
Turns to a nothing. Even so without a lamp
The eye beholds not in night's murky gloom
Its usual objects.

VOICE WITHIN
Enough, enough, thou braggart.
Before the King himself shall be decision
Of less and greater twixt us twain.

AGNIMITRA
Listen!
Here is the flower on your good tree of counsel.

GAUTAMA
Nor will the fruit lag far behind.
Enter the Chamberlain, Maudgalya.

MAUDGALYA
The Premier
Sends word, Sire, that Your Highness' will ere now
Is set in motion. Here besides the great
Stage-Masters, Horodutt and Ganadasa,
Storming with anger, mad with emulation,
Themselves like two incarnate passions, seek
Your Highness' audience.

AGNIMITRA
Admit them instantly.
Exit Maudgalya and re-enter ushering in the Stage-masters.

MAUDGALYA
This way, high sirs, most noble, worthy signiors.

GANADASA

How quelling-awful in its majesty
Is the great brow and aspect of a King.
For nowise unfamiliar is this face
Of Agnimitra, — no, nor stern, but full
Of beauty and kindness; yet with awe I near him.
So Ocean in its vast unresting surge
Stales never, but each changing second brings
New aspects of its grandeur to the eye
That lives with waves, even as this kingly brow
Each time I see it.

HORODUTTA

For 'tis no mortal greatness
But God's own glory in an earthly dwelling.
Thus I, admitted by this janitor
Of princes, led to the foot of his high throne
By one that in his eye and puissance moves,
Feel wordlessly forbidden by his glories
That force me to avert my dazzled gaze.

MAUDGALYA

Here sits my lord; approach him, worthies.

GANADASA AND HORODUTTA

Greeting,
Our sovereign!

AGNIMITRA

O welcome, both! Chairs for these signiors.
What brings into the presence at this hour
Usual to study both the high Stage-Masters?

GANADASA

Sire, hear me. From a great and worshipped Master
My art was studied; I have justified
My genius in the scenic pomps of dance;

The King and Queen approve me.

AGNIMITRA

Surely we know this.

GANADASA

Yet being what I am, I have been taxed,
Insulted, censured by this Horodutta.
"You are not worth the dust upon my shoes"; —
Before the greatest subject in the land
Thus did he scorn me.

HORODUTTA

He first began detraction;
Crying to me, "As well, sir, might your worship
Compete with me as one particular puddle
Equal itself to ocean." Judge, my lord,
Betwixt my art and his as well in science
As in the execution. Than Your Highness
Where can we find a more discerning critic
Or just examiner?

GAUTAMA

A good proposal.

GANADASA

Most excellent. Attend, my lord, and judge.

AGNIMITRA

A moment's patience, gentlemen. The Queen
Might in our verdict tax a partial judgment.
Were it not better then she too should watch
This trial? The most learnèd Cowshiqie
Shall give her aid too.

GAUTAMA

This is well-urged, my lord.

HORODUTTA AND GANADASA

Your Highness' pleasure shall command our patience.

AGNIMITRA

Then go, Maudgalya, tell Her Highness all
That here has chanced and let her come to us
With the holy Mother.

MAUDGALYA

Sire, I go.

Exit and re-enter with the Queen and Cowshiqie.

Approach,
My lady, Dharinie.

DHARINIE

Tell me, Mother,
What think you of this hot and sudden passion
Between the two Stage-Masters?

COWSHIQIE

Idly, daughter,
You fear your side's defeat, since in no point
Is Ganadasa less than his opponent.

DHARINIE

'Tis so, but the King's favour weighs him down
Wresting preeminence to that other.

COWSHIQIE

Forget not
That you too bear the style of Majesty.
Think that you are an Empress. For if fire
From the sun's grace derive his flaming glories,
Night too, the imperial darkness, solemnizes
The moon with splendour.

GAUTAMA

Ware hawk, my lord the King.
Look where the Queen comes and with her our own
Back-scratcher in Love's wrestling-match, the learnèd
Dame Cowshiqie.

AGNIMITRA

I see her. How fair, how noble
My lady shines adorned with holy symbols
And Cowshiqie before her anchorite.
Religion's self incarnate so might move
When high Philosophy comes leading her
Into the hearts of men.

COWSHIQIE

Greeting, Your Highness.

AGNIMITRA

Mother, I greet thee.

COWSHIQIE

Live a hundred years
Blessed with two queens alike in sweet submission
And mothers of heroic births, the Earth
That bears all creatures and the wife who loves thee.

DHARINIE

Victory attend my lord.

AGNIMITRA

Welcome, my Queen.
Pray you, be seated, Mother; in this collision
Of two great masters, it is just that you
Should take the critic's chair.

COWSHIQIE

Your Highness seeks

To laugh at me; for who is the fond man
Would leave the opulent, great metropolis
To test his jewels in some petty village?

AGNIMITRA
No, no, you are the learnèd Cowshiqie.
Then too the Queen and I are both suspect
For partial judges.

GANADASA AND HORODUTTA
It is no more than truth.
Unbiassed is the learnèd Mother's mind;
Her censure by defect and merit swayed
Leaves no reserves behind.

AGNIMITRA
Begin debate then.

COWSHIQIE
The soul of drama in performance lies
And not for tilting theories is a field.
How says my lady?

DHARINIE
If I have any voice,
I say I quite mislike the whole debate.

GANADASA
Her Highness must not dwarf me in her thinkings
Misdeeming me inferior to my equal.

GAUTAMA
Come, come, my lady, do not let us lose
The sport of these great rams butting each other.
Why should they draw their salaries for nothing?

DHARINIE
You always loved a quarrel.

GAUTAMA
Good mouse, no.
Rather I am your only peacemaker.
When two great elephants go mad with strength
And counter, until one of them is beaten,
There's no peace in the forest.

DHARINIE
But surely, Mother,
You have already seen them in performance,
Judged of their action's each particular
And every studied grace of movement.

COWSHIQIE
Surely.

DHARINIE
What else is't then of which yet uninstructed
You need conviction?

COWSHIQIE
This. One man has art,
Another science: performance admirable
Distinguishes the first, but in himself
Is rooted and confined; the other's skill,
Ranging, in swift transmission lightens forth,
At home inert or poor. In both who's perfect,
Him at the head we put of art's instructors.

GAUTAMA
Sirs, you have heard the Mother's argument,
The brief and marrow being this, that judgment
Goes by some visible proof of your instruction.

HORODUTTA
We both consent.

GANADASA
Thus then it stands, my lady.

DHARINIE
Then if a pupil brainless or inapt
Blur in the act the Master's fine instruction,
Reflects the blot upon her teacher?

AGNIMITRA
Madam,
So still 'tis judged.

GANADASA
For who, a block unworthy
Accepting, hews from it a masterpiece,
Shows the quick marrow of his genius.

DHARINIE (*aside*)
What more?
Too much already I give my lord the rein,
Feeding his eagerness with my indulgence.
(*aloud*)
Desist, desist, this is an idle movement
And leads to nothing worth.

GAUTAMA
Well said, my lady.
Come, Ganadasa, eat in peace your sweetmeats
Upon the Muse's day, a safe renown
Enjoying, while you teach our girls the dance.
But in this path of rugged emulation
To stumble's easy and disgrace expects you.
Caution were good.

GANADASA

Indeed my lady's words
Lend themselves to no other fair construction.
To all which hear the just and sole reply.
That man, styled artist, who, of his mere wage
Careful or place established, censure brooks,
Most cowardlike withdrawing from debate,
To whom the noble gains of learning serve
Merely for livelihood, — that man they call
A hawker trafficking in glorious art,
No artist.

DHARINIE

But your pupil, recently
Initiate, just begins to learn. Teaching
Yet inchoate, art of itself not sure
'Tis 'gainst all canons to make public yet.

GANADASA

Even therefore is my strong persistence, lady.

DHARINIE

If it be so, unto the Mother both
Their show of fair instruction make.

COWSHIQIE

This were
Against all rule; for even with a mind
Omniscient in art it were a fault
To mount the judge's seat in camera,
Without assessors: the unaided judgment
Was ever fallible.

DHARINIE (*aside*)

I am awake, fool,
And see, though you would to my waking eyes
Persuade me that I am asleep and blind.

She turns in jealous anger her face from the King.
Agnimitra, motioning to Cowshiqie, points to the Queen.

COWSHIQIE
Though it be moonlike bright, yet turn not thus
Thy face of beauty, child, from eyes that love,
For a nothing. Even o'er their subject lords
Fair women nobly bred use not to wield,
Causeless, a tyrant wrath.

GAUTAMA
Not causeless, lady.
The loyal mind must by whate'er device
Save its own party from defeat. You're lucky,
Good Ganadas, — rescued by woman's wit
Under this fair pretence of wrath! I see,
Good training always can be bettered, sirs,
And tutoring makes perfect.

GANADASA
Listen, lady,
Thus are we construed! Therefore must I deem
Myself cast off, disowned, discharged my place
Who, challenged in debate and confident
To show the skilful transference of my art,
Stand by my lady interdict.
(*rises from his seat as if to go*)

DHARINIE (*aside*)
What help?
(*aloud*)
The Master of his school is autocrat,
His pupils' sovereign. I am dumb.

GANADASA
In vain
Was I so long alarmed then; still I keep

My lady's favour. But since the Queen, my lord,
Has given her sanction, name the scenic plot
Whose rendering into studied dance shall prove
The teacher masterly.

AGNIMITRA
You rule here, Mother.

COWSHIQIE
Something still works within my lady's mind
Yet ireful-unappeased. This gives me pause.

DHARINIE
Apprehend nothing, speak. Always I am
Lady and absolute over mine own household.

AGNIMITRA
O'er these and over me too, dearest lady.

DHARINIE
Come, Mother, speak.

COWSHIQIE
I choose, my lord, the dance
They call the Dance of Double Entendre, complete
In four brief parts of lyric motion. Both
Shall so enact a single argument
And the gradations twixt these two shall best
Be judged of worse or better point by point.

HORODUTTA AND GANADASA
This we approve.

GAUTAMA
Let both your factions then
Make in the Theatre-Hall good scenic show
And when all's ready, send your messenger

To call us, or better the deep tambour's bruit
Shall draw us from our chairs.

HORODUTTA

We shall do so.

Ganadasa looks at the Queen.

DHARINIE (*to Ganadasa*)
Go and prevail! Think me not heart-opposed
Or careless of my Master's victory.

They are about to go.

COWSHIQIE
Stay! More to mark each studious grace of limb,
Movement and beauty, let the characters
Enter, not by their stage apparel cumbered,
But loosely robed as in their natural hours.
I speak this in my office as a judge
To both of you.

HORODUTTA AND GANADASA
We had done this, uncounselled.

Exeunt.

DHARINIE
My lord, my lord, in your affairs of State
Could you but show as deft a management,
As supple a resource, the realm indeed
Would profit!

AGNIMITRA
Let not your swift brain conceive
Misunderstanding merely; not of mine
Is this an acted plot. Ever we see
Equal proficiency in one same art
Breed jealousies emulous of place and justling
Each other's glory.

The sound of a tambour within.

COWSHIQIE

Hark, the overture!
To the deep Peacock-passion modulated
Twixt high and base, the tambour's rolling voice
Its melody half-thundrous measures out
To the exultant mind, that lifts itself
To listen. Hark! The peacocks cry, misled,
With rain-expectant throats upraised to heaven,
Thinking a reboant thunder-cloud's alarum
Is riding on the wind.

AGNIMITRA (*to Dharinie*)

We should be swift
To form the audience, madam.

DHARINIE (*aside*)

How has my lord
Forgot his breeding!

GAUTAMA (*aside*)

Softly ho! Too quick
A gallop and my lady puts the snaffle
Of disappointment on.

AGNIMITRA

I strive for patience,
But the loud tambour thunders haste to me;
It seems the passionate feet of my desire
As it descends to me with armèd tread
Sounding gigantic on the stairs of heaven.

Exeunt.

APPENDIX

A Fragment from Act II

Ganadasa

My lord, the dance we show, epode and ode,
Strophe and antistrophe, in four parts
Of middle time compact — Sarmishta made,
Yayati's wife in the great olden days —
Of which the fourth last act let the Kind Sir
Give all his mind to hear.

Agnimitra

From high respect I owe
The great Stage-master I am all attention.

The Birth of the War-God

EDITORS' NOTE

In the first and third versions of this translation, Sri Aurobindo left some lines or parts of lines blank, apparently with the intention of returning to them later. Such incomplete portions are indicated by square brackets enclosing a blank of appropriate size.

The Birth of the War-God

STANZAIC RENDERING OF THE OPENING OF CANTO I

1

A god mid hills northern Himaloy rears
His snow-piled summits' dizzy majesties,
And in the eastern and the western seas
He bathes his giant sides; lain down appears
Measuring the dreaming earth in an enormous ease.

2

Him, it is told, the living mountains made
A mighty calf of earth, the mother large,
When Meru of that milking had the charge
By Prithu bid; and jewels brilliant-rayed
Were brightly born and herbs on every mountain marge.

3

So is he in his infinite riches dressed
Not all his snows can slay that opulence.
As drowned in luminous floods the mark though dense
On the moon's argent disc, so faints oppressed
One fault mid crowding virtues fading from our sense.

4

Brightness of minerals on his peaks outspread
In their love-sports and in their dances gives
To heavenly nymphs adornment, which when drive
Split clouds across, those broken hues displayed
Like an untimely sunset's magic glories live.

5

Far down the clouds droop to his girdle-waist;
And to his low-hung plateaus' coolness won
The Siddhas in soft shade repose, but run
Soon glittering upwards by wild rain distressed
To unstained summits splendid with the veilless sun.

6

Although unseen the reddened footprints blotted
By the new-fallen snows, the hunters know
The path their prey the mighty lions go;
For pearls from the slain elephants there clotted
Fallen from the hollow claws the dangerous passing show.

7

The birch-leaves on his slopes love-pages turn;
Like spots of age upon the tusky kings
Of liquid metal ink their letterings
Make crimson pages that with passion burn
Where heaven's divine Circes pen heart-moving things.

8

He fills the hollows of his bamboo trees
With the breeze rising from his deep ravines,
Flutes from his rocky mouths as if he means
To be tune giver to the minstrelsies
Of high-voiced Kinnars chanting in his woodland glens.

9

His poplars by the brows of elephants
Shaken and rubbed loose forth their odorous cream;
And the sweet resin pours its trickling stream,
And wind on his high levels burdened pants
With fragrance making all the air a scented dream.

10

His grottoes are love-chambers in the night
For the strong forest-wanderer when he lies
Twined with his love, marrying with hers his sighs
And from the dim banks luminous herbs give light,
Strange oilless lamps to their locked passion's ecstasies.

11

Himaloy's snows in frosted slabs distress
The delicate heels of his maned Kinnaris,
And yet for all that chilly path's unease
They change not their slow motion's swaying grace
[ ]

12

He guards from the pursuing sun far-hid
In his deep caves of gloom the fallen night
Afraid of the day's eyes of brilliant light:
Even on base things and low for refuge fled
High-crested souls shed guardian love and kindly might.

13

The mountain yaks lift up their bushy tails
And with their lashing scatter gleamings round
White as the moonbeams on the rocky ground:
They seem to fan their king, his parallels
Of symbolled monarchy more perfectly to found.

14

There in his glens upon his grottoed floors
When from her limbs is plucked the raiment fine
Of the Kinnar's shamefast love, hanging come in
His concave clouds across the cavern doors;
Chance curtains shielding her bared loveliness divine.

15

Weary with tracking the wild deer for rest
The hunter bares his forehead to the fay
Breezes which sprinkle Ganges' cascade spray
Shaking the cedars on Himaloy's breast,
Gambolling with the proud peacock's gorgeous-plumed array.

16

Circling his mountains in its path below
The sun awakes with upward-glittering wands
What still unplucked by the seven sages' hands
Remains of the bright lotuses that glow
In tarns upon his tops with heaven-kissing strands.

17

Because the Soma plant for sacrifice
He rears and for his mass upbearing earth
The Lord of creatures gave to this great birth
His sacrificial share and ministries
And empire over all the mountains to his worth.

18

Companion of Meru, their high floor,
In equal wedlock he to his mighty bed
The mindborn child of the world-fathers wed,
Mena whose wisdom the deep seers adore,
Stable and wise himself his stable race to spread.

19

Their joys of love were like themselves immense
And its long puissant ecstasies at last
Bore fruit for in her womb a seed was cast;
Bearing the banner of her youth intense
In moving beauty and charm to motherhood she passed.

20

Mainac she bore, the ocean's guest and friend
Upon whose peaks the serpent-women roam,
Dwellers in their unsunned and cavernous home;
Mainac, whose sides though angry Indra rend
Feels not the anguish of the thunder's shock of doom.

The Birth of the War-God

BLANK VERSE RENDERING OF CANTO I

A god concealed in mountain majesty,
Embodied to our cloudy physical sight
In snowy summits and green-gloried slopes,
To northward of the many-rivered land
Measuring the earth in an enormous ease,
Immense Himaloy dwells and in the moan
Of eastern ocean and in western floods
Plunges his giant sides. Him once the hills
Imagined as the mighty calf of earth
When the Wideness milked her udders; gems brilliant-rayed
Were born and herbs on every mountain marge.
So in his infinite riches is he dressed,
Not all his snows can slay his opulence,
And though they chill the feet of heaven, her sons
Forget that fault mid all his crowding gifts,
As faints in luminous floods the gloomy mark
On the moon's argent disk; they choose his vales
For playground, his hill-peaks for divine homes.
Brightness of minerals on his rocks is spread
Which to the Apsaras give adorning hues
In their love-sports and in their dances; flung
On the split clouds their brilliant colours ranged,
Like an untimely sunset's glories live.
Far down the clouds droop to his girdle-waist;
Then by the low-hung plateaus' coolness drawn
The Siddhas in soft shade repose, but flee
Soon upward by wild driving rain distressed
To summits splendid in the veilless sun.
The hunter seeks for traces on his sides,

And though their reddened footprints are expunged
By the new-falling snows, yet can he find
The path his prey the mighty lions go;
For, it is told, pearls from slain elephants
Are clotted, fallen from their hollow claws,
And tell their dangerous passage. When he rests
Tired with the chase and bares to winds his brow,
They come, fay-breezes dancing on the slopes,
Shaking the cedars on Himaloy's breast,
Scattering the peacock's gorgeous-plumed attire,
With spray of Ganges' cascades on their wings
Sprinkling his hair. He makes the grottoed glens
His chambers of desire and in the night
When the strong forest-wanderer is lain
Twined with his love, marrying with hers his sighs,
The luminous herbs from the dim banks around,
Faint oilless lamps, give light to see her joy.
Nor only earthly footsteps tread the grass,
Or mortal love finds there its happy scenes.
The birch-leaves of the hills love-pages are;
Like spots of age upon the tusky kings,
In ink of liquid metals letters strange
Make crimson signs, pages where passion burns
And divine Circes pen heart-moving things.
The Kinnars wander singing in his glades.
He fills the hollows of his bamboo flutes
With the wind rising from his deep ravines,
And with a moaning and melodious sound
Breathes from his rocky mouths as if he meant
To pipe, tune-giver to their minstrelsies.
The delicate heels of the maned Kinnari
Are by his frosted slabs of snow distressed,
Yet for her burden of breasts and heavy hips
Can change not their slow motion's swaying grace
To escape the biting pathway's chill unease.
She too in grottoed caverns lies embraced.
When from her limbs is plucked the raiment fine

Of the Kinnar's shamefast love, then hanging come
The convex clouds across the grotto doors
And make chance curtains against mortal eyes,
Shielding the naked goddess from our sight.
The elephant herds there wander: resinous trees
Shaken and rubbed by their afflicting brows
Loose down their odorous tears in creamy drops;
The winds upon the plateaus burdened pant
And make of all the air a scented dream.
The yaks are there; they lift their bushy tails
And in their lashings scatter gleamings white
As moonbeams shed upon the sleeping hills:
Brightly they seem to fan the mountain king.
He hides in his deep caves the hunted night
Fearful of the day's brilliant eyes. His peaks
Seem to outpeer the lower-circling sun,
Which sends its upward beams as if to wake
Immortal lilies in his tarns unplucked
By the seven sages in their starry march.
Such is Himaloy's greatness, such his strength
That seems to uplift to heaven the earth. He bears
The honey Soma plant upon his heights,
Of godward symbols the exalted source.
He by the Master of sacrifice was crowned
The ancient monarch of a million hills.
In equal rites he to his giant bed
The mind-born child of the world-fathers bore.
The earthly comrade and the help-fellow
Of Meru, their sublime celestial home,
Stable of soul, to make a stable race
Mena he wed whose wisdom seers adored.
Their joy of love was like themselves immense
And in the wide felicitous lapse of time
Its long and puissant ecstasy bore fruit.
Bearing the banner of her unchanged youth
And beauty to charmed motherhood she crossed.
Mainac she bore, the guest of the deep seas,

Upon whose peaks the serpent-women play,
Their jewelled tresses glittering through the gloom,
Race of a cavernous and monstrous world;
There fled when Indra tore the mountains' wings,
His divine essence bore no cruel sign,
Nor felt the anguish of the lightning's bite.
Next to a nobler load her womb gave place;
For Daksha's daughter, Shiva's wife, the Lord
Of Being, in her angry will who left
Her body soulless in her father's hall,
Sought in their mountain home a happier birth,
And by her in a trance profound of joy
Conceived was born of great Himaloy's seed.
Out of the soul unseen the splendid child
Came like success with daring for its sire
And for its mother clear-eyed thought sublime.
Then were the regions subtle with delight,
Soft, pure from cloud and stain; then heaven's shells
Blew sweetly, flowery rain came drifting down,
Earth answered to the rapture of the skies
And all her moving and unmoving life
Felt happiness because the Bride was born.
So this fair mother by this daughter shone,
So that new beauty radiated its beams
As if a land of lapis lazuli
Torn by the thunder's voice shot suddenly forth
A jewelled sprouting from the mother bed.
Parvati was she called, the mountain's child,
When love to love cried answer in her house
And to that sound she turned her lovely face,
But after-days the great maternal name
Of Uma gave. On her as fair she grew
Her father banqueted his sateless look;
He felt himself a lamp fulfilled in light,
Heaven's silent path by Ganges voiceful made,
Or thought made glorious by a perfect word.
Like bees that winging come upon the wind

Among the infinite sweets of honeyed spring
Drawn to the mango-flower's delicious breast,
All eyes sought her. Her little childlike form
Increasing to new curves of loveliness,
She grew like the moon's arc from day to day.
Among her fair companions of delight
She built frail walls of heavenly Ganges' sands
Or ran to seize the tossing ball or pleased
With puppet children her maternal mind,
Absorbed in play, the mother of the worlds.
And easily too to her as if in play
All sciences and wisdoms crowding came
Out of her former life, like swans that haste
In autumn to a sacred river's shores;
They started from her mind as grow at night
Born from some luminous herb its glimmering rays.
To her child-body youth, a charm, arrived
Adorning every limb, a wine of joy
To intoxicate the heart, the eyes that gazed,
Shooting the arrows of love's curving bow.
Even as a painting grows beneath the hand
Of a great master, as the lotus opens
Its petals to the flatteries of the sun,
So into perfect roundness grew her limbs
And opened up sweet colour, form and light.
Her feet limned a red rose at every step
On the enamoured earth; like magic flowers
They moved from spot to spot their petalled bloom;
Her motion studied from the queenly swans
With wanton swaying musically timed
The sweet-voiced anklets' murmurous refrain.
From moulded knee to ankle the supreme
Divinely lessening curve so lovely was
It looked as if on this alone were spent
All her Creator's cunning. Well the rest
Might tax his labour to build half such grace,
Yet was that miracle accomplished. Soft

In roundness, warm in their smooth sweep her thighs
Were without parallel in Nature's work.
The greatness of her hips on which life's girdle
Had found its ample rest deserved already
The lap of divine love where she alone
Might hope one day embosomed by God to lie.
Deep was her navel's hollow where wound in
Above her raiment's knot that tender line
Of down as slight as the dark ray shot up
From the blue jewel central in her zone.
Her waist was like an altar's middle small
And there the triple stair of love was built.
Twin breasts large, lovely, pale with darkened paps
Could not allow the slender lotus thread
A passage, on whose either side there waited
Softer than delicatest flowers the arms
Which Love victorious in defeat would find
His chains to bow down the Eternal's neck.
Her throat adorned the necklace which it wore;
Its sweep and undulation to the breast
Outmatched the gleaming roundness of its gems.
Above all this her marvellous face where met
The golden mother of beauty and delight
At once the graces of her lotus throne
And the soft lustres of the moon. Her smile
Parted the rosy sweetness of her lips
Like a white flower across a ruddy leaf
Or pearls that sever lines of coral. Noble
Her speech dropped nectar from a liquid voice
To which the coïl's call seemed rude and harsh
And sob of smitten lyres a tuneless sound.
She had exchanged with the wild woodland deer
The startled glance of her long lovely eyes
Fluttering like a blue lotus in the wind.
The pencilled long line of her arching brows
Made vain the beauty of Love's bow. Her hair's
Tossed masses put voluptuously to shame

The mane of lions and the drift of clouds.
To clasp all beauty in a little space
He who created all this wondrous world
Had fashioned only her. Throned in her limbs
All possibilities of loveliness
Here crowded to their fair attractive seat
And now the artist eyes that scan all things
Saw every symbol and sweet parallel
Of beauty only realised in her.
Then was he satisfied and loved his work.
The sages ranging at their will the stars
Saw her and knew that this indeed was she
Who must become by love the beautiful half
Of the fair body of the Lord and all
His heart. This from the seers of future things
Her father heard and his high hope renounced
All other but the greatest for her spouse.
She waited like an offering for the fire.
For to compel himself the divine mind
He dared not, but remained like a great soul
Which watches for the destined hour's approach
Curbing the impatience of its godlike hopes.
But he the spirit of the world, forsaken
By that first body of the mother of all
Nor to her second birth yet come, abode
Unwed, ascetic, stern, mid crowded worlds
Alone and passionless and unespoused,
The Master of the animal life absorbed
In dreamings, wandering with his demon hordes
Desireless in the blind desire of things.
At length he ceased; like sculptured marble still
To meditation turned he yoked his spirit;
Clothed in the skins of beasts, with ashes smeared
He sat a silent shape upon the hills.
Below him curved Himadri's slope; a soil
With fragrance of the musk-deer odorous
Was round him, where the awful Splendour mused

Mid cedars sprinkled with the sacred dew
Of Ganges. Softly murmuring their chants
In strains subdued the Kinnar minstrels sang,
On oil-filled slabs among the resinous herbs
His grisly hosts sat down, their bodies stained
With mineral unguents, bark upon their limbs;
Ill-shaped they were and their tremendous hands
Around their ears had wreathed the hillside's flowers.
On the white rocks compact of frozen snow,
His great bull voicing low immortal pride
Pawed with his hoof the argent soil to dust,
Alarmed the bisons fled his gaze; he bellowed
Impatient of the mountain lion's roar.
Concentrating his world-vast energies
Built daily his eternal shape of flame
He who gives all austerities their fruit,
In what impenetrable and deep desire?
And though to him the worship even of gods
Is negligible, worship the mountain gave
And gave his daughter the Great Soul to serve.
Nor though to remote trance near beauty brings
Its lovely danger, was that gift refused.
Surrounded by all sweetness in the world
He can be passionless who is creation's king.
She brought him daily offering of flowers
And holy water morn and noon and eve
And swept the altar of the divine fire
And heaped his altar-seat of sacred grass,
Then bending over his feet her falling locks
Drowned all her soft fatigue of gentle toil
In the cool moonbeams from the Eternal's head.
So had they met on summits of the world
Like the still Spirit and its unwakened force,
Near were they now, yet to each other unknown,
He meditating, she in service bowed.
Closing awhile her vast and shining lids
Fate over them paused suspended on the hills.

The Birth of the War-God

EXPANDED VERSION OF CANTO I
AND PART OF CANTO II

A god concealed in mountain majesty,
Embodied to our cloudy physical sight
In dizzy summits and green-gloried slopes,
Measuring the earth in an enormous ease,
Immense Himaloy dwells and in the moan
Of western waters and in eastern floods
Plunges his hidden spurs. Of such a strength
High-piled, so thousand-crested is his look
That with the scaling greatness of his peaks
He seems to uplift to heaven our prostrate soil.
He mounts from the green luxury of his vales
Ambitious of the skies; naked and lost
The virgin chill immensity of snow
Covers the breathless spirit of his heights.
To snows his savage pines aspire; the birch
And all the hardy brotherhood which climb
Against the angry muttering of the winds,
Challenge the dangerous air in which they live.
He is sated with the silence of the stars:
Lower he dips into life's beauty, far
Below he hears the cascades, now he clothes
His rugged sides the gentle breezes kiss
With soft grass and the gold and silver fern.
Holding upon her breast the hill-god's feet
Earth in her tresses hides his giant knees.
Over lakes of mighty sleep, where fountains lapse,
Dreaming, and by the noise of waterfalls,
In an unspoken solitary joy

He listens to her chant. The distant hills
Imagined him the calf to which she lows
When the wideness milks her udders. Meru is near,
The heavenly unseen height; like visible hints
Of his great subtle growths of peace and joy
Her musing woods arise; gems brilliant-rayed
She bears and herbs on every mountain marge,
Gifts of the mother to her mighty child.
In such warm infinite riches has she dressed
His fire of life, from his cold heights of thought
The great snows cannot slay its opulence.
Though stark they chill the feet of heaven, her sons
Forgive the fault amid a throng of joys.
As faints from our charmed sense in luminous floods
The gloomy stain on the moon's argent disk,
They have forgot his chill severity
In sweetness which escapes from him on life.
For as from passion of some austere soul
Delight and love have stolen to rapturous birth,
From iceborn waters his delicious vales
Are fed. Indulgent like a smile of God,
White grandeurs overlook wild green romance.
He keeps his summits for immortal steps.
The life of man upon his happier slopes
Roams wild and bare and free; the life of gods
Pronely from the unattainable summits climbs
Down the rude greatness of his huge rock-park.
As if rejecting glory of its veils
It leaps out from the subtle gleam of air,
Visible to man by waterfall and glade,
And finds us in the hush of sleeping woods,
And meets us with dim whisperings in the night.
Of their surrounding presence unaware
Chasing the dreadful wanderers of the hill
The hunter seeks for traces on his side;
He though soft-falling innocent snows weep off
The cruelty of their red footprints, finds

The path his prey the mighty lions go.
For glittering pearls from the felled elephants
Lain clotted, dropping from the hollow claws
Betray their dangerous passage. When he sits
Tired of the hunt on a slain poplar's base
And bares to winds the weariness of his brow,
They come, fay-breezes dancing on the slopes,
Scattering the peacock's gorgeous-plumed attire.
Shaking the cedars on Himaloy's breast,
With spray from Ganges' cascades on their wings,
They have kissed the wind-blown tangles of his hair,
Sprinkling their coolness on his soul. He has made
The grottoed glens his chambers of desire,
He has packed their dumbness with his passionate bliss;
Stone witnesses of ecstasy they sleep.
And wonderful luminous herbs from night's dim banks
When the strong forest-wanderer is lain
Twined with his love, marrying with hers his sighs,
Give light to see her joy those thrilled rocks keep
Moved to desire in their stony dreams.
Nor only human footsteps tread the grass
Upon his slopes, nor only mortal love
Finds there the lovely setting of the hills
Amid the broken caverns and the trees,
In the weird moonlight pouring from the clouds
And the clear sunlight glancing from the pines:
A wandering choir, a flash of unseen forms,
Go sweeping sometimes by and leave our hearts
Startled with hintings of a greater life.
The Kinnar passes singing in his glades.
Then stirred to keep some sweetness of their voice,
He fills the hollows of his bamboo stems
With the wind sobbing from the deep ravines
And in a moaning and melodious sound
Breathes from his rocky mouths, as if he meant
To flute, tune-giver to wild minstrelsies.
The delicate heels of the maned Kinnari

Are with his frosted slabs of snow distressed.
But by the large load of her breasts and hips
To escape the biting pathway's chill unease
She is forbidden: she must not break the grace
Of her slow motion's tardy rich appeal.
She too in grottoed caverns lies embraced.
Forced from the shamefast sweetness of her limbs
The subtle raiment leaves her fainting hands
To give her striving beauty to the gaze
Of her eternal lover. But thick clouds
Stoop hastily bowed to the rocky doors
And hang chance curtains against mortal eyes,
Shielding the naked goddess from our sight.
The birch-leaves of his hills love-pages are.
In ink of liquid metals letters strange
We see make crimson signs. They lie in wait
Upon the slopes, pages where passion burns,
The flushed epistles of enamoured gods
Where divine Circes pen heart-moving things.
The Apsaras rhyme out their wayward dance
In glen and valley; or upon brown banks
They lie close-bosomed of colour amorous.
The smooth gold of their limbs by harder hues
Stained curiously makes contrasts bright, to seize
The straying look of some world-lover's eyes,
As when Himaloy's metals flinging back
Upon the hangings of the tawny heavens
From glistened rocks their brilliant colourings
Like an untimely sunset's glories sleep.
Far down the clouds droop to his girdle-waist
Holding the tearful burden of their hearts,
Drifting grey melancholy through the air;
There on the low-hung plateaus' wideness lain
The Siddhas in soft shade repose, or up
Chased by wild driving rain for refuge flee
To summits splendid in the veilless sun.
Earth's mighty animal life has reached his woods.

The lion on Himaloy keeps his lair,
The elephant herds there wander. Oozing trees
Wounded by stormy rubbings of the tuskers' brows
Loose down their odorous tears in creamy drops,
And winds upon the plateau burdened pant
Weaving the air into a scented dream.
The yaks are there; they lift their bushy tails
To lash the breezes and white gleamings leap:
Such candours casting snares for heart and eye,
The moonbeams lie upon the sleeping hills.
Like souls divine who in a sweet excess
All-clasping draw their fallen enemies
To the impartial refuge of their love
Out of the ordered cruelties of life,
He takes to his cavern bosom hunted night.
Afraid of heaven's radiant eyes, crouched up
She cowers in Nature's great subliminal gloom,
A trembling fugitive from the ardent day,
Lest one embrace should change her into light.
Himaloy's peaks outpeer the circling sun.
He with his upstretched brilliant hands awakes
Immortal lilies in the unreached tarns.
Morning has found miraculous blooms unculled
By the seven sages in their starry march.
Such are the grandeurs of Himaloy's soul,
Such are his divine moods; moonlit he bears,
Of godward symbols the exalted source,
The mystic Soma-plant upon his heights.
He by the Father of sacrifice climbs crowned,
Headman and dynast of earth's soaring hills.

These were the scenes in which the Lovers met.
There lonely mused the silent Soul of all,
And to awake him from his boundless trance
Took woman's form the beauty of the world;
Then infinite sweetness bore a living shape;
She made her body perfect for his arms.

With equal rites he to his giant bed
The mind-born child of the world-fathers bore.
Mena, a goddess of devising heart,
Whom for her wisdom brooding seers adored,
The shapers of all living images,
He won to shape in her his stable race.
Their joys of love were like themselves immense.
Then in the wide felicitous lapse of time
The happy tumult of her being tossed
In long and puissant ecstasies bore fruit,
Bearing the banner of her unchanged youth
And beauty to charmed motherhood she crossed.
Mainac she bore, the guest of the deep seas,
Upon whose peaks the serpent-women play,
Race of a cavernous and monstrous world,
With strange eyes gleaming past the glaucous wave,
And jewelled tresses glittering through the foam.
Not that his natural air, who great had grown
Amid the brilliant perils of the sun;
From Indra tearing the great mountains' wings
With which they soared against the threatened sky,
Below the slippery fields the fugitive sank.
His sheltered essence bore no cruel sign,
Nor felt the anguish of the heavenly scars.
They disappointed of that proud desire
Mixed in a larger joy. It took not earth
For narrow base, but forced the heavens down
Into their passion-trance clasped on the couch
Calm and stupendous of the snow-cold heights.
Then to a nobler load her womb gave place.
For Daksha's daughter, Shiva's wife, had left
Her body lifeless in her father's halls
In that proud sacrifice and fatal, she
The undivided mother infinite
Indignant for his severing thought of God.
Now in a trance profound of joy by her
Conceived, she sprang again to livelier birth

To heal the sorrow and the dumb divorce.
Out of the unseen soul the splendid child
Came like bright lightning from the invisible air,
Welcome she came as Fortune to a king
When she is born with daring for her sire
And for her mother policy sublime.
Then was their festival holiday in the world,
Then were the regions subtle with delight:
Heaven's shells blew sweetly through the stainless air
And flowery rain came drifting down; earth thrilled
Back ravished to the rapture of the skies,
And all her moving and unmoving life
Felt happiness because the Bride was born.
So that fair mother by this daughter shone,
So her young beauty radiated its beams
As might a land of lapis lazuli
Torn by the thunder's voice. As from the earth
Tender and green an infant lance of life,
A jewelled sprouting from the mother slab,
The divine child lay on her mother's breast.
They called her Parvati, the mountain child,
When love to love cried answer in the house
And to the sound she turned her lovely face.
A riper day the great maternal name
Of Uma brought. Her father banqueted
Upon her as she grew unsated eyes
And saw his life like a large lamp by her
Fulfilled in light; like heaven's silent path
By Ganges voiceful grown his soul rejoiced;
It flowered like a great and shapeless thought
Suddenly immortal in a perfect word.
Wherever her bright laughing body rolled,
Wherever faltered her sweet tumbling steps,
All eyes were drawn to her like winging bees
Which sailing come upon the wanderer wind
Amid the infinite sweets of honeyed spring
To choose the mango-flower's delicious breast.

Increasing to new curves of loveliness
Fast grew like the moon's arc from day to day
Her childish limbs. Along the wonderful glens
Among her fair companions of delight
Bounding she strayed, or stooped by murmurous waves
To build frail walls on Ganges' heavenly sands,
Or ran to seize the tossing ball, or pleased
With puppet children her maternal mind.
And easily out of that earlier time
All sciences and wisdoms crowding came
Into her growing thoughts like swans that haste
In autumn to a sacred river's shores.
They started from her soul as grow at night
Born from some luminous herb its glimmering rays.
Her mind, her limbs betrayed themselves divine.
Thus she prepared her spirit for mighty life,
Wandering at will in freedom like a deer
On Nature's summits, in enchanted glens,
Absorbed in play, the Mother of the world.

Then youth a charm upon her body came
Adorning every limb, a heady wine
Of joy intoxicating to the heart,
Maddened the eyes that gazed, from every limb
Shot the fine arrows of Love's curving bow.
Her forms into a perfect roundness grew
And opened up sweet colour, grace and light.
So might a painting grow beneath the hand
Of some great master, so a lotus opens
Its bosom to the splendour of the sun.
At every step on the enamoured earth
Her feet threw a red rose, like magic flowers
Moving from spot to spot their petalled bloom.
Her motion from the queenly swans had learned
Its wanton swayings; musically it timed
The sweet-voiced anklets' murmuring refrain.
And falling to that amorous support

From moulded knee to ankle the supreme
Divinely lessening curve so lovely was
It looked as if on this alone were spent
All her Creator's cunning. Well the rest
Might tax his labour to build half such grace!
Yet was that miracle accomplished. Soft
In roundness, warm in their smooth sweep, her thighs
Were without parallel in Nature's work.
The greatness of her hips on which life's girdle
Had found its ample rest, deserved already
The lap of divine love where she alone
Might hope one day embosomed by God to lie.
Deep was her hollowed navel where wound in
Above her raiment's knot the tender line
Of down slighter than that dark beam cast forth
From the blue jewel central in her zone.
Her waist was like an altar's middle and there
A triple stair of love was softly built.
Her twin large breasts were pale with darkened paps,
They would not let the slender lotus-thread
Find passage; on their either side there waited
Tenderer than delicatest flowers the arms
Which Love would make, victorious in defeat,
His chains to bow down the Eternal's neck.
Her throat adorning all the pearls it wore,
With sweep and undulation to the breast
Outmatched the gleaming roundness of its gems.
Crowning all this a marvellous face appeared
In which the lotus found its human bloom
In the soft lustres of the moon. Her smile
Parted the rosy sweetness of her lips
Like candid pearls severing soft coral lines
Or a white flower across a ruddy leaf.
Her speech dropped nectar from a liquid voice
To which the coïl's call seemed rude and harsh
And sob of smitten lyres a tuneless sound.
The startled glance of her long lovely eyes

Stolen from her by the swift woodland deer
Fluttered like a blue lotus in the wind,
And the rich pencilled arching of her brows
Made vain the beauty of love's bow. Her hair's
Dense masses put voluptuously to shame
The mane of lions and the drift of clouds.
He who created all this wondrous world
Weary of scattering his marvels wide,
To see all beauty in a little space
Had fashioned only her. Called to her limbs
All possibilities of loveliness
Had hastened to their fair attractive seats,
And now the artist eyes that scan all things
Saw every symbol and sweet parallel
Of beauty only realised in her.
Then was he satisfied and loved his work.
His sages ranging at their will the stars
Saw her and knew that this indeed was she
Who must become by love the beautiful half
Of the Almighty's body and be all
His heart. This from earth's seers of future things
Himaloy heard and his proud hopes contemned
All other than the greatest for her spouse.
Yet dared he not provoke that dangerous boon
Anticipating its unwakened hour,
But seated in the grandeur of his hills
Like a great soul curbing its giant hopes,
A silent sentinel of destiny,
He watched in mighty calm the wheeling years.
She like an offering waited for the fire,
Prepared by Time for her approaching lord.

But the great Spirit of the world forsaken
By that first body of the Mother of all,
Not to her second birth yet come, abode
In crowded worlds unwed, ascetic, stern,
Alone and passionless and unespoused,

The Master of the animal life absorbed
In dreamings, wandering with his demon hordes,
Desireless in the blind desire of things.
At length like sculptured marble still he paused,
To meditation yoked. With ashes smeared,
Clothed in the skin of beasts [ ]
He sat a silent shape upon the hills.
Below him curved Himadri's slope; a soil
With fragrance of the musk-deer odorous
Was round, and there the awful Splendour mused.
Mid cedars sprinkled with the sacred dew
Of Ganges, softly murmuring their chants
In strains subdued the Kinnar-minstrels sang.
Where oil-filled slabs were clothed in resinous herbs,
His grisly hosts sat down, their bodies stained
With mineral unguents; bark their ill-shaped limbs
Clad [ ] and their tremendous hands
Around their ears had wreathed the hillside's flowers.
On the white rocks compact of frozen snow
His great bull voicing low immortal pride
Pawed with his hoof the argent soil to dust.
Alarmed the bisons fled his gaze; he bellowed
Impatient of the mountain lion's roar.
Concentrating his world-vast energies,
He who gives all austerities their fruits
Built daily his eternal shape of flame,
In what impenetrable and deep desire?
The worship even of gods he reckons not
Who on no creature leans; yet worship still
To satisfy, his awe the mountain paused
And gave his daughter the great Soul to serve.
She brought him daily offerings of flowers
And holy water morn and noon and eve
And swept the altar of the divine fire
And plucking heaped the outspread sacred grass,
Then showering over his feet her falling locks
Drowned all her soft fatigue of gentle toils

In the cool moonbeams from the Eternal's head.
Though to austerity of trance a peril
The touch of beauty, he repelled her not.
Surrounded by all sweetness in the world
He can be passionless in his large mind,
Austere, unmoved, creation's silent king.
So had they met on summits of the world
Like the still Spirit and its unwakened force.
Near were they now, yet to each other unknown,
He meditating, she in service bowed.
Closing awhile her vast and shadowy wings
Fate over them paused suspended on the hills.

CANTO II

But now in spheres above whose motions fixed
Confirm our cyclic steps, a cry arose
Anarchic. Strange disorders threatened Space.
There was a tumult in the calm abodes,
A clash of arms, a thunder of defeat.
Hearing that sound our smaller physical home
Trembled in its pale circuits, fearing soon
The ethereal revolt might touch its stars.
Then were these knots of our toy orbits torn
And like a falling leaf this world might sink
From the high tree mysterious where it hangs
Between that voiceful and this silent flood.
For long a mute indifference had seized
The Soul of all; no more the Mother of forms
By the persuasion of her clinging arms
Bound him to bear the burden of her works.
Therefore with a slow dreadful confidence
Chaos had lifted his gigantic head.
His movement stole, a shadow on the skies,
Out of the dark inconscience where he hides.
Breaking the tread of the eternal dance
Voices were heard life's music shudders at,
Thoughts were abroad no living mind can bear,
Enormous rhythms had disturbed the gods
Of which they knew not the stupendous law,
And taking new amorphous giant shapes
Desires the primal harmonies repel
Fixed dreadful eyes upon their coveted heavens.
Awhile they found no form could clothe their strength,
No spirit who could brook their feet of fire
Gave them his aspirations for their home.
Only in the invisible heart of things
A dread unease and expectation lived,
Which felt immeasurable energies
In huge revolt against the established world.

But now awake to the fierce nether gods
Tarak the Titan rose, and the gods fled
Before him driven in a luminous rout.
Rumours of an unalterable defeat
Astonished heaven. Like a throng of stars
Drifting through night before the clouds of doom
Like golden leaves hunted by dark-winged winds,
They fled back to their old delightful seats,
Nor there found refuge. Bent to a Titan yoke
They suffered, till their scourged defeated thoughts
Turned suppliants to a greater seat above.
There the Self-born who weaves from his deep heart
Harmonious spaces, sits concealed and watches
The inviolable cycles of his soul.
Thither ascending difficult roads of sleep
Those colonists of heaven, the violent strength
Of thunderous Indra flashing in their front,
Climbed up with labour to their mighty source.
But as they neared, but as their yearning reached,
Before them from the eternal secrecy
A Form grew manifest from all their forms.
A great brow seemed to face them everywhere,
Eyes which survey the threads of Space, looked forth,
The lips whose words are Nature's ordinances,
Were visible. Then as at dawn the sun
Smiles upon listless pools and at each smile
A sleeping lotus wakes, so on them shone
That glory and awoke to bloom and life
The drooping beauty of those tarnished gods.
Thus with high voices echoing his word
They hymned their great Creator where he sits
In the mystic lotus, musing out his worlds.
"Pure Spirit who wast before creation woke,
Calm violence, destroyer, gulf of Soul,
One, though divided in thy own conceit,
Brahma we see thee here, who from thy deeps
Of memory rescuest forgotten Time.

We see thee, Yogin, on the solemn snows,
Shiva, withdrawing into thy hush the Word
Which sang the fiat of the speeding stars.
They pass like moths into thy flaming gaze.
We adore thee, Vishnu, whose extended steps
To thee are casual footprints, thy small base
For luminous systems measureless to our mind,
Whose difficult toil thy light and happy smile
Sustains, O wide discoverer of Space.
To thee our adoration, triune Form!
Imagining her triple mood thou gav'st
To thy illimitable Nature play.
When nothing was except thy lonely soul
In the ocean of thy being, then thou sowedst
Thy seed infallible, O Spirit unborn,
And from that seed a million unlike forms
Thou variously hast made. Thy world that moves
And breathes, thy world inconscient and inert,
What are they but a corner of thy life?
Thou hast made them and preservest; if thou slayst
It is thy greatness, Lord. Mysterious source
Of all, from thee we drew this light of mind,
This mighty stirring and these failings dark.
In thee we live, by thee we act thy thoughts.
Thou gav'st thyself a Woman and divine,
Thou grewest twain who wert the formless One,
In one sole body thou wert Lord and Spouse
To found the bliss which by division joins,
Thou bor'st thy being, a Spirit who is Man.
All are thy creatures: in the meeting vast
Of thy swift Nature with thy brilliant Mind,
Thou mad'st thy children, man and beast and god.
Thy days and nights are numberless aeons; when
Thou sleepest, all things sleep, O conscient God;
Thy waking is a birth of countless souls.
Thou art the womb from which all life arose,
But who begot thee? thou the ender of things,

But who has known thy end? Beginningless,
All our beginnings are thy infant powers,
Thou governest their middle and their close,
But over thee where is thy ruler, Lord?
None knoweth this; alone thou knowest thyself.
By thy ineffable identity
Knowledge approaches the unknown. We seek
Discoveries of ourselves in distant things.
When first desire stirred, the seed of mind,
And to existence from the plenary void
Thy seers built the golden bridge of thought,
Out of thy uncreated Ocean's rest
By thy own energy thou sprangest forth.
Thou art thy action's path and thou its law;
Thou art thy own vast ending and its sleep.
The subtle and the dense, the flowing and firm,
The hammered close consistency of things,
The clingings of the atoms, lightness, load,
What are all these things but thy shapes? Things seen
And sensible and things no thought has scanned,
Thou grewest and each pole and contrary
Art equally, O self-created God.
Thou hast become all this at thy desire,
And nothing is impossible in thee;
Creation is the grandeur of thy soul.
The chanting Veda and the threefold voice,
The sacrifice of works, the heavenly fruit,
The all-initiating OM, from thee,
From thee they sprang; out of thy ocean heart
The rhythms of our fathomless words are born.
They name thee Nature, she the mystic law
Of all things done and seen who drives us, mother
And giver of our spirits' seekings, won
In her enormous strength, though won from her.
They know thee Spirit, far above thou dwellest
Pure of achievement, empty of her noise.
Silent spectator of thy infinite stage,

Unmoved in a serene tremendous calm
Thou viewst indifferently the grandiose scene.
O Deity from whom all deities are,
O Father of the sowers of the world,
O Master of the godheads of the law,
Who so supreme but shall find thee above?
Thou art the enjoyer and the sweet enjoyed,
The hunter and the hunted in the worlds,
The food, the eater. O sole knower, sole known,
Sole dreamer! this bright-imaged dream is thou,
Which we pursue in our miraculous minds;
No other thinker is or other thought.
O Lord, we bow, who from thy being came,
To thee in prayer. Is it not thou who prayst,
Spirit transcendent and eternal All?"
Then to the wise in heaven the original Seer,
Maker and poet of the magic spheres,
Shedding a smile in whose benignancy
Some sweet return like pleasant sunlight glowed,
Sent chanting from his fourfold mouth a voice
In which were justified the powers of sound,
"Welcome, you excellent mightinesses of heaven,
Who hold your right by self-supported strengths,
The centuries for your arms. How have you risen
Together in one movement of great Time?
Wherefore bring you your divine faces, robbed
Of their old inborn light and beauty, pale
As stars in winter mists dim-rayed and cold
Swimming through the dumb melancholy of heaven?
Why do I see your powers dejected, frail?
The thunder in the Python-slayer's hand
Flames not exultant, wan its darings droop,
Quelled is the iridescence of its dance.
Its dreadful beauty like a goddess shamed
Shrinks back into its violated pride.
Varoona's unescaped and awful noose
Hangs slack, impuissant, and its ruthless coils

Are a charmed serpent's folds; a child can smite
The whirling lasso snare for Titan strengths.
In Kuver's face there is defeat and pain.
Low as an opulent tree its broken branch
In an insulted sullen majesty
His golden arm hangs down the knotted mace.
Death's lord is wan and his tremendous staff
Writes idly on the soil, the infallible stroke
Is an extinguished terror, a charred line
The awful script no tears could ever erase.
O you pale sun-gods chill and shorn of fire,
How like the vanity of painted suns
You glow, where eyes can set their mortal ray
Daring eternal splendours with their sight.
O fallen rapidities, you lords of speed,
With the resisted torrents' baffled roar
Back on themselves recoil your stormy strengths.
Why come you now like sad and stumbling souls,
Who bounded free and lionlike through heaven?
And you, O Rudras, how the matted towers
Upon your heads sink their dishevelled pride!
Dim hang your moons along the snaky twines,
No longer from your puissant throats your voice
Challenges leonine the peaks of Night.
Who has put down the immortal gods? what foe
Stronger than strength could make eternal puissance vain,
As if beyond imagination amidst
The august immutability of law
Some insolent exception unforeseen
Had set in doubt the order of the stars?
Speak, children, wherefore have ye come to me?
What prayer is silent on your lips? Did I
Not make the circling suns and give to you
My grandiose thoughts to keep? Guardians of life,
Keepers of the inviolable round,
Why come you to me with defeated eyes?
Helpers, stand you in need of help?" He ceased,

And like a rippling lotus lake whose flowers
Stir to a gentle wind, the Thunderer turned
Upon the Seer his thousand eyes of thought,
The Seer who is his greater eye than these;
He is the teacher of the sons of light,
His speech inspired outleaps the labouring mind
And opens truth's mysterious doors to gods.
"Veiling by question thy all-knowing sense,
Lord, thou hast spoken," Brihaspati began,
"The symbol of our sad defeat and fall.
What soul can hide himself from his own source?
Thy vision looks through every eye and sees
Beyond our seeings, thinks in every mind,
Passing our pale peripheries of light.
Tarak the Titan growing in thy smile
As Ocean swells beneath the silent moon,
[ ]
Discouraged from the godhead of his rays
In Tarak's town the Sun dares not to burn
More than can serve to unseal the lotus' eyes
In rippling waters of his garden pools.
The mystic moon yields him its nectarous heart;
Only the crescent upon Shiva's head
Is safe from the desire of his soul.
The violent winds forget their mightier song.
Their breezes through his gardens dare not rush
Afraid to steal the flowers upon its boughs
And only near him sobbingly can pant
A flattering coolness, dreadful brows to fan.
The seasons are forbidden their cycling round;
They walk his garden-keepers and must fill
The branches with chaotic wealth of flowers.
Autumn and spring and summer joining hands
[ ] him with their multitudinous sweets,
Their married fragrances surprise the air.
Ocean his careful servant brings to birth
The ripening jewels for his toys; his mine

Of joy is the inexorable abyss.
The serpent-gods with blazing gems at night
Hold up their hoods to be his living lamps
And even great Indra sends him messengers.
Flowers from the Tree of bounty and of bliss
They bear; to the one fierce and sovereign mind
All his desires the boughs of heaven must give.
But how can kindness win that violent heart?
Only by chastisement it is appeased.
A tyrant grandeur is the Titan soul
And only by destruction and by pain
Feels in the sobs and tears of suffering things
A crude reality of [   ] force.

Notes and Fragments

Skeleton Notes on the Kumarasambhavam

Canto V

तथा समक्षं दहता मनोभवं पिनाकिना भग्नमनोरथा सती ।
निनिन्द रूपं हृदयेन पार्वती प्रियेषु सौभाग्यफला हि चारुता ॥१॥

1. Thus by Pinaka's wielder burning the Mind-born before her eyes baffled of her soul's desire, the Mountain's daughter blamed her own beauty in her heart, for loveliness has then only fruit when it gives happiness in the beloved.

तथा may go either with दहता or भग्नमनोरथा; but it has more point with the latter.

समक्षं. The Avachuri takes singularly जयाविजयाप्रत्यक्षं, i.e. before Jaya & Vijaya, her friends. The point would then be that the humiliation of her beauty was rendered still more poignant by occurring before witnesses. In this case, however, the obscurity caused by the omission of the names would be the grossest of rhetorical faults. समक्षं by itself can mean nothing but "before her (Parvati's) very eyes" अक्ष्णोः समीपं as Mallinatha rightly renders it.

निनिन्द found fault with, censured as defective.

हि. S [*Sukhavabodha-tika*] takes this as the emphatic हि (निश्चितं). It is more appropriate and natural to take it in the usual sense of "for", giving the reason or justification (Mallinatha) for her finding fault with her own beauty.

प्रियेषु loc. of object (विषये) "with regard to those loved"

सौभाग्य. The "felicity" of women consists in the love and welfare of those they love. Here only the first element is intended; so here = प्रियवाल्लभ्यं, the affection of the beloved.

इयेष सा कर्तुमवन्ध्यरूपतां समाधिमास्थाय तपोभिरात्मनः ।
अवाप्यते वा कथमन्यथा द्वयं तथाविधं प्रेम पतिश्च तादृशः ॥ २॥

2. By asceticisms she wished, embracing mind-centred meditation, to make her beauty bear its fruit of love; for how else should these two be won, such love and such a husband?

अवन्ध्यरूपतां literally the "unsterile-beautyness of herself". Notice the extraordinary terseness which Kalidasa has imparted to his style by utilising every element of pithiness the Sanscrit language possesses.

समाधिम्. The bringing (धा) together (सम्) and centring on (आ) a single subject of all the faculties; used technically of the stage of ध्यान, meditation, in which the mind with all the senses gathered into it is centred on God within itself and insensible to outside impressions.

तपोभिः. To translate this word "penances", as is frequently done, is altogether improper. The idea of self-imposed or priest-imposed penalty for sin which the English word contains does not enter even in the slightest degree into the idea of तपः which implies no more than a fierce and strong effort of all the human powers towards any given end. According to Hindu ideas this could only be done to its best effect by conquering the body for the mind; hence the word finally came to be confined to the sense of ascetic practices having this object. See Introduction for the history & philosophy of this word.[1]

वा "or" answering an implied objection. "She had to do this; or (if you say she had not) how else could she succeed?" वा in this use comes to mean "for" in its argumentative, not in its causative or explanatory sense.

अवाप्यते the present in its potential sense.

अन्यथा otherwise, i.e. by any less strenuous means. Cf. Manu quoted by Mallinatha

यद् दुष्करं यद् दुरापं यद् दुर्गं यच्च दुस्तरम्।
तत् सर्वं तपसा प्राप्यं तपो हि दुरतिक्रमम्॥

---

[1] *This Introduction was not written or has not survived. — Ed.*

तथाविधं प्रेम. Anticipating the result of the तपः. The love of Siva for Uma was so great that he made himself "one body with his beloved", one half male, the other female. See Introduction for the Haragauri image.

तादृशः. Mallinatha glosses "i.e. Mrityunjaya; deathconquering (an epithet of Siva). For the two things desired of women are that their husbands should love them and that they should not die before them." This may have been Kalidasa's drift, but it is surely more natural to take तादृश of शिव's qualities & greatness generally; "such a lord as the Almighty Lord of the Universe", तादृशः जगदीशः Kv [*Kumarasambhava-vritti*].

निशम्य चैनां तपसे कृतोद्यमां सुतां गिरीशप्रतिसक्तमानसाम् ।
उवाच मेना परिरभ्य वक्षसा निवारयन्ती महतो मुनिव्रतात् ॥ ३॥

3. But hearing of her daughter soul-compelled towards the Mountain-Lord towards asceticism endeavouring, said Mena to her embracing her to her bosom, forbidding from that great [vow of an] eremite.

C [*Charitravardhana*] gives this verse as क्षेपक ; it could certainly be omitted without loss to the sense but not without great loss to the emotional beauty of the passage.

कृतोद्यमां. उद्यमः here in the sense of उद्योगः, preparatory action or efforts. Apte takes उद्यमः here in the sense of "exertion or perseverance"; the commentary [Kv] of "fixed resolve", the sense in which Apte takes it in the [fifth] sloka. See under that sloka. The word really means "active steps", "active efforts".

मुनिव्रतात् a vow practicable only to a saint.

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥

"Whose mind is not shaken in sorrows, who has banished the craving for delight, who has passed beyond joy & terror & wrath, whose thought is calm & firm, he is called a saint."

Bhagavadgita 2.56.

मनीषिताः सन्ति गृहेषु देवतास्तपः क्व वत्से क्व च तावकं वपुः ।
पदं सहेत भ्रमरस्य पेलवं शिरीषपुष्पं न पुनः पतत्रिणः ॥ ४॥

4. There are gods desired that dwell in homes; O my child, how alien is austerity from this body of thine; the delicate Sirisha flower may bear the footfall of the bee, but not of the wingèd bird.

मनीषिताः formed from मनीषा desire (मन् + इष् + आ) by the application of the passive suffix इतः = desired अभीष्टाः, अभिलषिताः. I do not understand on what principle of grammar the Avachuri followed by Deshpande takes this form as = मनोऽभिलाषदात्र्यः, "desired" taking the sense of "able" or "thought able to fulfil desire". This is but one more instance of the blameable slovenliness of this commentary. Adopting this untenable rendering these commentators further suppose that the gods in the house are to be worshipped by Parvati for the purpose of gaining Siva as her husband. But it is difficult to see how other gods could give her the Supreme, and in any case मनीषिता can only mean "desired", which renders this version impossible. But desired by whom? If by Parvati, we must suppose Mena to imagine her daughter aiming simply at making a good match in the celestial world. The sense will then be "Thou desirest a God in marriage; well, there are gods in our home whom thou canst win by easy adoration, while Siva must be wooed by harsh asceticism in the woods." Or it may signify "desired generally, desired by others", when it will have the force of desirable. This is supported by the later इयं महेन्द्रप्रभृतीनधिश्रियश्चतुर्दिगीशानवमत्य मानिनी & Siva Purana. I prefer therefore the latter interpretation.

गृहेषु. The plural may here be used in the sense of a great mansion. The old Aryan house seems to have [been] many-storied, each storey consisting of several flats; and in the palaces of princes and great nobles, it was composed of several wings and even separate piles of building. The female apartments especially formed a piece apart. Cf. the Siva Purana where Mena says

कुत्र यासि तपः कर्तुं देवाः सन्ति गृहे मम।
तीर्थानि च विचित्राणि सन्ति किं न पितुर्गृहे॥

"Wherefore goest thou forth to practise austerities; gods are there in my house and wondrous holinesses, and are there none in thy father's mansion?" A similar rendering is also favoured by another passage of the same Purana.

इति स्वतनयावाक्यं श्रुत्वा तु पितरौ मुने।
ऊचतुर्दुःखितौ भूत्वा बाष्पगद्गदया गिरा॥
तस्मात् त्वं भक्तियुक्तेन पूजयस्व गृहे शिवं।
उ मा गच्छ वनं घोरं सर्वविघ्नास्पदं सदा॥

It is perhaps a reminiscence of these lines that induces the Avachuri & Deshpande to render "Worship the gods in the house to gain Siva for husband"; but this is incompatible with मनीषिताः. If the Siva Purana then were Kalidasa's authority, we should have no choice as to our interpretation, but I have tried to show that the Siva Purana and not Kalidasa was the borrower. It is possible therefore that the former may in borrowing have misinterpreted गृहेषु and that the word has a strictly plural sense. "There are gods desired that dwell in homes," i.e. not like the undesirable & homeless Siva, who must be sought by austerity in wild woods and desolate mountains. The only objection to this rendering which certainly gives the best & most poetic sense, is that the contrast with Siva is implied and not expressed, while तपः immediately following seems to be opposed to household worship. But Mena under the circumstances would not venture openly to dispraise Siva; implied dispraise therefore is what we should naturally expect. Such suppression of the implied contrast, one term expressed & the other left to be gathered is not in itself unpoetic and might be expected in a work written under the strong influence of the elliptical & suggestive style of the Mahabharata.

The reading गृहेऽपि would of course leave no doubt; it confines us to our first rendering.

क्व . . . क्व. Again the characteristic Sanscrit idiom implying महदन्तरं "a far cry". It is a far cry from your tender body to the harshness of ascetic austerities. Notice again the fine precision, the netteté of Kalidasa's style; there are no epithets with तपः & वपुः, these being sufficiently implied in the contrasting क्व . . . क्व and in the simile that follows.

शिरीषपुष्पं. Cf. the Parvati-Parinaya परुषस्तपोविशेषस्तव पुनरङ्गं शिरीषसुकुमारम्। व्यवसितमेतत्कठिनं पार्वति तद् दुष्करमिति प्रतिभाति, a fine Vyasian couplet. "Harsh is this austerity of thy choosing; thy body again is tender as a Sirisha flower; yet iron firm is thy resolve, O Parvati; a hard thing truly this seemeth." Who is here the borrower, if loan there has been?

पेलवं. The other readings कोमलं & पेशलं are less commendable & not supported by Mallinatha.

पुनः on the other hand, however.

इति ध्रुवेच्छामनुशासती सुतां शशाक मेना न नियन्तुमुद्यमात् ।
क ईप्सितार्थस्थिरनिश्चयं मनः पयश्च निम्नाभिमुखं प्रतीपयेत् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Thus though she urged her, yet could not Mena rein in her daughter's fixed purpose from action; for who can resist a mind steadfastly resolved on the object of its desire or a downward-moving stream?

ध्रुवेच्छाम्. The reading व्रतेच्छाम् is weak & श्रुतेच्छाम् absolutely without force. Neither is noticed by Mallinatha. The point of course is the unspeakable fixity of her resolve and not its object.

नियन्तुमुद्यमात्. The delicate etymological assonance is a fine survival of one of Kalidasa's favourite rhetorical artifices.

उद्यमात्. This word is variously taken in various contexts. S here renders by उत्साह, Apte by "fixed resolve" and Deshpande by "undertaking", whereas Mallinatha consistently renders by उद्योग. It is as well therefore to fix its exact meaning. The root यम् meaning to put under a strain with उद् "up" in an intensive, implies the strain put on the faculties in preparing for or making a great effort. It means therefore "active effort or endeavour" or else "active preparation". In this latter sense Apte quotes गन्तुमुद्यमो विहितः = Preparations to go were taken order for. In sloka 3 the dative तपसे having the same force as an infinitive leads us to prefer this meaning; "effort towards austerity" has no meaning [in] the context. I think in this sloka, it has as Mallinatha perceived, the same sense; Uma is still in the stage of preparation, & is not yet even ready to ask her father's consent. Effort or endeavour would therefore be obviously out of place.

Now these are the only two ascertained senses of उद्यम. The sense of उत्साह or undertaking cannot be established and is not recognised by Apte. That of "perseverance", "fixed resolve" given to it by Kv in sloka 3 and by Apte here, seems to me equally without authority; I believe there is no passage in which उद्यमः occurs where it cannot be rendered by "effort, labour" or preparation. Here moreover M^r^ Apte is obviously wrong, for the sense of "fixed resolve" has already been given by ध्रुवेच्छाम् and Kalidasa is never tautologous, never expresses the same thing twice over in a line. Perhaps he intends us to take his next quotation, from the Punchatuntra, in this sense उद्यमेन हि सिध्यन्ति कार्याणि न मनोरथैः। But the opposite to मनोरथाः desires is obviously not "perseverance" but "effort". "It is by active effort and not by mere desires that accomplishment is reached." For a more detailed discussion of this subject see Excursus.[2]

पयश्च निम्नाभिमुखं water which has set its face towards descent. पयः the general is here obviously used for प्रवाह the particular.

प्रतीपयेत्. The commentaries take in the sense of "turn back", most definitely expressed by S, पश्चात्कश्चालयेत्. Mallinatha recognising that प्रतीपयेत् primarily means प्रतिकूलयेत् oppose, gives that sense & deduces from it प्रतिनिवर्तयेत्. Apte also quotes this passage to establish this sense of प्रतीपय. This of course is taking प्रतीपय = प्रतीपं कृ, प्रतीप being "reverse, inverted", e.g. 2.25 अम्भसामोघसंरोधः प्रतीपगमनादिव (अनुमीयते)। But प्रतीप also & primarily means adverse, hostile, so प्रतीपयति = प्रतीपः भवति be hostile to, oppose. It might possibly be taken in this sense here, without Mallinatha's deduction of "turn back"; the general nature of the proposition justifying the more general sense.

> कदाचिदासन्नसखीमुखेन सा मनोरथज्ञं पितरं मनस्विनी ।
> अयाचतारण्यनिवासमात्मनः फलोदयान्ताय तपःसमाधये ॥ ६ ॥

6. Once she, the clear-minded, by the mouth of her personal friend begged of her father not ignorant of her longing that

---

[2] *This Excursus was not written or has not survived. — Ed.*

she might dwell in the forests there to practise austerity and meditation until she saw fruit of her desire.

कदाचिद् . . . मनस्विनी once, at a certain time. कस्मिंश्चित्काले गते सति says V [*Vatsavyasa*]. It certainly means that; but that is not the precise shade of expression used by Kalidasa. कदाचिद् means "at a certain time", and its full force is brought out by मनस्विनी. The commentators are all astray in their rendering of this word, even Mallinatha rendering स्थिरचित्ता while Avachuri & C give मानिनी & साभिमाना, meaning proud, ambitious which is ludicrously wrong. मनस्वी can mean nothing but wise, intellectual, a thinker. The wisdom of Parvati lay in her choice of a time, hence Kalidasa's use of कदाचिद् which at first seems awkward & vague, but in relation to मनस्विनी takes force & body. The wisdom is farther specified by मनोरथज्ञं. The commentators take this as meaning "knowing of her desire to marry Hara", but this was very old news to Himalaya & there would be no point in recording his knowledge here; V's explanation "for he who does not know the desire, does not give his consent", is inexpressibly feeble. मनोरथ means here not her desire for Siva, but her desire to practise austerity as a means of winning Siva. Parvati wisely waited till the news of this intention had travelled to her father and he had had time to get accustomed to it and think it over. If she had hastily sprung it on him, his tenderness for her might have led him to join Mena in forbidding the step, which would have been fatal to her plans.

आसन्नसखी. The Avachuri absurdly says तटस्थ, a mediating friend. Mallinatha is obviously right आप्तसखी. A friend who is always near one, i.e. a personal or intimate friend. Cf. आसन्नपरिचारिका.

मुख. Mallinatha takes = उपाय by means of her friend & quotes Vishwa मुखं निःसरणे वक्त्रे प्रारम्भोपाययोरपि i.e. मुख means "issue", "face, mouth", also "beginning" and "means, expedient". I do not see why we should not take the ordinary sense here.

तपःसमाधये. Mallinatha says तपोनियमार्थम्, and the commentators generally follow him. Apte also takes समाधि = penance (meaning, of course, austerity), religious obligation (?), devotion to penance. I fail to see why we should foist this sense on समाधिः. There is none of the passages quoted by Apte in support of it which cannot be as well or better translated by concentration. Here we may take as a dwandwa compound "austerity & concentration" or even better in accordance with sloka 2 तपोभिः समाधये concentration to be gained by austerities. See Excursus.

अयाचत only Atmane having the middle sense "to ask for oneself". Notice the skilful use of compounds in this verse getting its full value out of this element of the language, without overdoing it like Bhavabhuti & other late writers.

अथानुरूपाभिनिवेशतोषिणा कृताभ्यनुज्ञा गुरुणा गरीयसा ।
प्रजासु पश्चात्प्रथितं तदाख्यया जगाम गौरीशिखरं शिखण्डिमत् ॥ ७॥

7. Then by her graver parent permitted, for pleased was he at a passion so worthy of her, she went to the peacockhaunted peak of the White Mother, famed afterwards among the peoples by her name.

अभिनिवेश is anything that takes possession of the mind or the nature, "passion", "engrossing resolve". The first seems to me more appropriate here.

शिखण्डिमत्. V considers this merely an ornamental epithet, expressing the beauty of the hill; but ornamental epithets find little place in the कुमारसंभव. Mallinatha explains "not full of wild beasts of prey", which is forced & difficult to reconcile with विरोधिसत्त्वोज्झितपूर्वमत्सरं in sloka 17. The Avachuri is characteristically inane; it says "Peacocks are without attachment (सङ्ग = attachment to worldly objects), the sight of attachment breaks समाधि"; I have reared peacocks myself and I can assure the reader that they have as much "attachment" as any other creature.

I believe that this is a very beautiful and delicate allusion to the destined fruit of Uma's journey & consummation of the poem, the birth of the कुमार, Skanda being always associated with the peacock. Kalidasa thus skilfully introduces a beautifying epithet without allowing it to be otiose.

विमुच्य सा हारमहार्यनिश्चया विलोलयष्टिप्रविलुप्तचन्दनम् ।
बबन्ध बालारुणबभ्रु वल्कलं पयोधरोत्सेधविशीर्णसंहति ॥ ८॥

8. In her irremovable resolve she put off the necklace whose restless string had rubbed off the sandal smeared and fastened on the bark tawny red like the young dawn though ever her high-swelling breasts rent its firm compactness.

विलोलयष्टि etc. The meaning conveyed is that the movements of the necklace had already rubbed off the sandal paste from her breasts which otherwise she would have had to refuse herself as being a piece of luxury incompatible with तपः. Some of the commentators take यष्टि as meaning "her slender figure"; "the necklace which owing to the restlessness of her slender body had rubbed off the sandalpaste." But to take विलोलयष्टि = यष्टिविलोलता (चञ्चलाङ्गतया A) is very awkward and in any case it is extremely doubtful whether यष्टिः by itself could mean अङ्गयष्टिः. I should therefore reject this rendering which as far as significance goes one might perhaps prefer. If we take यष्टि in this sense, it is better to adopt the reading अहार्यनिश्चयाविलोलयष्टिः, understand not विलोलयष्टिः with J [*Jinasamudrasuri*] for that would be merely an ornamental epithet, but अविलोलयष्टिः "She put off her necklace, having rubbed off the sandalpaste, and her slender body forgot its swayings" i.e. the amorous beauty of motion attributed by the Kalidasian poets to beautiful women. प्रविलुप्तचन्दनं will be in this rendering an adverbial compound. The reading however has little authority.

बालारुणबभ्रु. Mallinatha curiously translates अरुण by अर्क sun; but अरुण means "dawn" and not "sun"; moreover the young sun is not tawny red unless seen through mist.

पयोधर [etc.] lit. "whose compactness is rent by the loftiness of her breasts". The Avachuri is even more amazingly foolish than usual on this line. It construes अहार्यनिश्चया by आहारं त्यक्त्वा "abandoning food", a rendering which makes one suspect the sanity of the commentator, and पयोधरोत्सेधविशीर्णसंहति by मेघोदयेन विस्तारितः समवायो यस्य, the close composition of which is spread out by the rising of the clouds; perhaps an unequalled instance of perverted scholastic ingenuity, though Mallinatha's interpretation of the Dingnagian stanza in the Meghadut runs it close. It is needless to say that उत्सेध & विशीर्ण will not bear the strained meanings put on them and that even if they could, Kalidasa's fine taste in the choice of words would never have employed such out-of-the-way expressions; he would have said plainly उदय and विस्तीर्ण. The sense arrived at by these unnecessary violences is the most prosaic, pointless and inept possible.

यथा प्रसिद्धैर्मधुरं शिरोरुहैर्जटाभिरप्येवमभूत्तदाननम् ।
न षट्पदश्रेणिभिरेव पङ्कजं सशैवलासङ्गमपि प्रकाशते ॥ ९ ॥

9. Even as her face was sweet with its fair-adorned tresses, so was it even with the ascetic's tangled crown; not set with lines of bees alone the lotus has splendour but also coated with moss.

प्रसिद्धैः. [C] strangely takes "famous". The meaning of course is "dressed & adorned" as opposed to the neglected जटा. प्रसिद्धौ ख्यातभूषितौ (Amara) "प्रसिद्ध means 'famous' or 'adorned'."

न षट्पदश्रेणिभिरेव. एव = alone, in its limiting sense.

Note the implied comparison, a favourite form in Sanscrit classic poetry.

प्रतिक्षणं सा कृतरोमविक्रियां व्रताय मौञ्जीं त्रिगुणां बभार याम् ।
अकारि तत्पूर्वनिबद्धया तया सरागमस्या रसनागुणास्पदम् ॥ १० ॥

10. The triple-plaited girdle of rough grass she wore — for her vow she wore it though every moment it caused discomfort, now first tied on reddened the seat of her zone.

कृतरोमविक्रियां. The turning of the hair on the body is used by the concrete Sanscrit for the sense of discomfort caused by the contact of anything rough & uncomfortable. The same symptom also denotes in other circumstances great sensuous delight.

व्रताय, here व्रतार्थम् with a view to her vow, for the sake of her vow.

अकारि the Passive aorist; notice this tendency of later Sanscrit towards passive constructions in past time, prevalent in prose (see the Punchatuntra passim) & breaking its way occasionally into poetry. The ripe & mature style of the Kumarasambhava especially shows this tendency to approximate to prose construction. So also कृतोऽक्षसूत्रप्रणयी तया करः.

> विसृष्टरागादधरान्निवर्तितः स्तनाङ्गरागारुणिताच्च कन्दुकात् ।
> कुशाङ्कुरादानपरिक्षताङ्गुलिः कृतोऽक्षसूत्रप्रणयी तया करः ॥ ११ ॥

11. Her hand ceased from her lip from which the colouring was effaced and the ball all reddened with her breasts' vermilion and, its fingers wounded with the plucking of kusha grass, she made it a lover of the rosary.

निवर्तितः. Deshpande singularly supposes that this may mean formerly, i.e. always kept away from. Such a rendering, if possible, would be wholly out of place & meaningless. The difficulty as regards the first line is avoided by supposing it meant that her lip was naturally too red to need artificial colouring or that her maidens did the colouring for her. This is most jejune and artificial, nor has such a detail the slightest appropriateness in the context. As regards the ball it is explained that her hand was too tender to play with it!! This is not only jejune, it is laughable. Kalidasa could never have perpetrated such an absurd conceit. Even if there were no other objections the absence of a word indicating past time would dispose of the rendering; for निवर्तितः is the causal of वृत् with नि. Now the simple निवृत्तः means "cessation from प्रवृत्ति, i.e. from any habit of mind, practice or course of action; turning away from something it had been turned to". निवर्तितः therefore obviously means "caused to cease from, turned from". It cannot possibly have the sense of "never busied with"; but means "ceasing to be busy with". Kalidasa is speaking in these stanzas of Uma putting off all her former girlish habits for those appropriate to asceticism; to suppose that he brings in matter foreign to the idea in hand is to suppose that he is not Kalidasa. And to interpret "She never used to colour her lips or play at ball and she now plucked kusha-grass and counted a rosary" introduces such foreign matter, substitutes non-sequence for sequence and ruins the balanced Kalidasian structure of these stanzas. Such commenting falls well under

Mallinatha's vigorous censure that the Muse of Kalidasa swoons to death under the weight of bad commentaries.

The poet's meaning is plain. Her hand no longer as before was employed in colouring her lip, she had put that away from her; neither did it play with the ball all reddened with the vermilion of her breast; for both the vermilion was banished from her breast and the ball from her hand; it was only used now to pluck kusha grass & count the rosary.

स्तनाङ्गरागाद्. Resolve the compound स्तन + अङ्गरागाद् the body-colour of the breast. For the toilette of women in Kalidasa's time see Appendix.[3]

अक्षसूत्र. String of beads, rosary. The use of the rosary, to this day a Hindu practice with devotees & pious women, is thus more than 2000 years old. The use of the rosary among the Roman Catholics is an unmistakeable sign of Hindu influence, as with the Hindus it has a distinct meaning, with the Christians none. See Excursus.

महार्हशय्यापरिवर्तनच्युतैः स्वकेशपुष्पैरपि या स्म दूयते ।
अशेत सा बाहुलतोपधायिनी निषेदुषी स्थण्डिल एव केवले ॥ १२ ॥

12. She who would be tormented by the flowers shaken from her own hair by her tumbling on some costliest couch, now lay with her fair soft arm for pillow sunk on the bare altar-ground.

पुष्पैरपि. Like the lady of the fairytale who was discovered to be a princess and no maidservant when she could not sleep all night for the pain of a single flower which had been surreptitiously introduced into her bed.

बाहुलतोपधायिनी. The appropriateness of the creeperlike arm rests in the rounded softness & supple willowy grace of the arm; it is the Indian creeper and not the English be it remembered, that is intended. There is therefore no idea of slenderness.

उपधायिनी. This is the verbal adjective (cf. दायिनी) from धा & उप in the sense of "lay upon", so lie upon. उपधाय वामभुजमशयिषि

---

[3] *This Appendix was not written or has not survived. — Ed.*

Dk [*Dashakumaracharita*] 111, lay pillowed on her left arm. For the full form cf. Shak. 4 वामहस्तोपहितवदना (quoted by Apte) & numerous other instances.

निषेदुषी. S strangely construes "slept sitting on the bare ground". It is obvious that she could not at the same time sleep sitting & sleep with her arm as a pillow; if we are to render निषेदुषी = उपविष्टा we must take with D following Mallinatha "slept pillowed on her arm and sat on the bare ground"; but this is not justified by the Sanscrit, the word being a participle & not as it then should be a finite tense like अशेत with or without च. Moreover the idea of sitting is foreign to the contrast between her former bed and her present, & therefore would not be introduced by Kalidasa. We must take निषद् in its primary sense of "sink down", "recline"; it implies entire recumbence & is opposed to परिवर्तन in the first line. "She who was formerly restless on softest couches, now lay restfully on the hard bare ground."

स्थण्डिले . . . केवले. केवले means without any covering, not merely of grass as some have it, but of either grass or any sheet or coverlet. The स्थण्डिल is the वेदिका, a level & bare platform of earth used as sacred ground for sacrifice.

एव emphatic.

पुनर्ग्रहीतुं नियमस्थया तया द्वयेऽपि निक्षेप इवार्पितं द्वयम् ।
लतासु तन्वीषु विलासचेष्टितं विलोलदृष्टं हरिणाङ्गनासु च ॥ १३ ॥

13. She while busied in her vow seemed to lay by as a deposit for after resuming her duet (of graces) in a duet (of forms), in the slender creepers her amorous movements & her wantoning glance in the hinds.

पुनर्ग्रहीतुं. Notice the strict supine use which is the proper function of the infinitive in Sanscrit. It has of course the dative force = पुनर्ग्रहणाय.

द्वयेऽपि द्वयं. The pair in the pair. अपि is here little more than emphatic.

निक्षेप. A deposit on trust.

The Line of Raghou

Two Renderings of the Opening

To the Two whose beings are involved together like word with sense for the boon of needed word and sense, to the Parents of the World I bow, the God above all Gods, the Goddess Mountainborn.

Of little substance is my genius, mighty is the race that sprang from the Sun, yet would I fondly launch in my poor raft over the impassable sea.

Dull of wit, yet seeking the poet's crown of glory I shall win for my meed mockery alone, like a dwarf in his greed lifting up arms for the high fruit that is a giant's prize.

And yet I have an access into that mighty race, even through the door of song the ancient bards have made, such access as has the thread into some gem that the point of adamant has thrid.

Therefore though slender my wealth of words, yet shall I speak of the Raghous' royal line, to that rashness by their high virtues urged that have come to my ear.

They who were perfect from their birth, whose effort ceased only with success, lords of earth to the ocean's edge, whose chariots' path aspired into the sky;

They of faultless sacrifices, they of the suppliants honoured to the limit of desire, punishing like the offence and to the moment vigilant.

Only to give they gathered wealth, only for truth they ruled their speech, only for glory they went forth to the fight, only for offspring they lit the household fire.

Embracers in childhood of knowledge, seekers in youth after joy, followers in old age of the anchoret's path, they in death through God-union their bodies left.

Let only good minds listen to my song, for by the clear intellect alone is the good severed from the bad; 'tis in the fire we discern of gold, that it is pure or that it is soiled. 1–10.

*

For mastery of word & sense I bow to the Pair closewedded as word to sense, the parents of the world, the Mountain's child and the Mighty Lord. Wide is the gulf between the race born of the Sun and a mind thus scantily stored! I am one that in his infatuation would cross in a raft the difficult ocean. Dull of wit, yet aspiring to poetic glory I shall expose myself to mockery like a dwarf who in his greed lifts up his arms to a fruit meant only for the giant's grasp. Yet into the story of this race a door of speech has been made by the inspired minds of old and through that I can enter as a thread can pass through a gem which the diamond's point has bored. Therefore this tale of the Raghus, the kings pure from their birth, they who left not work till work's fruit appeared, they who were masters of earth to the ocean's bound & their chariots journeyed even to the heavens, ever according to the ordinance they offered to the sacrificial flame and honoured ever the suppliant with his whole desire, they meted the punishment of the guilty by his offence, their eyes were wakeful to the hour, riches they gathered only to give and spoke little that they might speak nought but truth & conquered only for glory, were householders only to prolong the race, in childhood students of knowledge, in youth seekers after enjoyment, in old age pursuers of the sage's path & in their end left by Yoga their bodies, — the tale of this line I will tell though meagre my wealth of speech, for I am impelled to this rashness by their virtues that have touched my ear. The wise should lend ear to it who are cause that good is discerned from bad, for it is by fire that the purity of gold is marked or else the darkness of its alloy.

The Cloud Messenger

Fragments from a Lost Translation

                                        the hills of mist
Golden, the dwelling place of Faery kings,
        And mansions by unearthly moonlight kissed: —
For one dwells there whose brow with the young moon
        Lightens as with a marvellous amethyst —

*

Of Tripour slain in lovely dances joined
        And linkèd troops the Oreads of the hill
Are singing and inspired with rushing wind
        Sweet is the noise of bamboos fluting shrill;
Thou thundering in the mountain-glens with cry
        Of drums shouldst the sublime orchestra fill.

*

Dark like the cloudy foot of highest God
        When starting from the dwarf-shape world-immense
With Titan-quelling step through heaven he strode.

*

        For death and birth keep not their mystic round
In Ullaca; there from the deathless trees
        The blossom lapses never to the ground
But lives for ever garrulous with bees
        All honey-drunk — nor yet its sweets resign.
For ever in their girdling companies. . . .

*

A flickering line of fireflies seen in sleep.

*

Her scarlet mouth is a ripe fruit and red.

*

Sole like a widowed bird when all the nests
Are making.

Section Four

Bhartrihari

The Century of Life

The Nitishataka of Bhartrihari
freely rendered into English verse

www.holybooks.com

I had at first entitled the translation "The Century of Morals", but the Sanskrit word Niti has a more complex sense. It includes also policy and worldly wisdom, the rule of successful as well as the law of ideal conduct and gives scope for observation of all the turns and forces determining the movement of human character and action.

The Shataka or "century" should normally comprise a hundred epigrams, but the number that has come down to us is considerably more. The excess is probably due to accretion and the mistaken ascription to Bhartrihari of verses not of his making but cast in his spirit and manner.

SRI AUROBINDO

Invocation

To the calm Light inviolable all hail
Whom Time divides not, nor Space measures, One,
Boundless and Absolute who Is alone,
The eternal vast I Am immutable!

On Fools and Folly

Love's Folly

She with whom all my thoughts dwell, is averse, —
    She loves another. He whom she desires
Turns to a fairer face. Another worse
    For me afflicted is with deeper fires.
Fie on my love and me and him and her!
Fie most on Love, this madness' minister!

The Middle Sort

Easily shalt thou the ignorant appease;
    The wise more easily is satisfied;
    But one who builds his raw and foolish pride
On a little lore not God himself can please.

Obstinacy in Folly

Go, with strong violence thy jewel tear
    From the fierce alligator's yawning jaws;
Swim the wild surges when they lash the air
    Billow on billow thundering without pause;
Or set an angry serpent in thy hair
For garland! Sooner shalt thou gain their ruth
Than conquer the fool's obstinate heart with truth.

On the Same

Nay, thou wilt find sweet oil in the sea-sands,
Press them but firmly in thy strenuous hands:
The desert-born mirage shall slake thy thirst,
Or wandering through the earth thou shalt be first
To find the horns of hares, who thinkst to school
With reason the prejudgments of the fool.

Obstinacy in Vice

Yea, wouldst thou task thy muscles then the dread
Strength of the mammoth to constrain with thread?
Canst thou the diamond's adamant heart disclose
With the sweet edge and sharpness of a rose?
With a poor drop of honey wondrously
Wilt thou make sweetness of the wide salt sea?
Who dreamst with sugared perfect words to gain
The unhonest to the ways of noble men!

Folly's Wisdom

One cloak on ignorance absolutely fits;
    Justly if worn, some grace is even lent;
Silence in sessions of the learned sits
    On the fool's brow like a bright ornament.

A Little Knowledge

When I was with a little knowledge cursed,
Like a mad elephant I stormed about
And thought myself all-knowing. But when deep-versed
Rich minds some portion of their wealth disbursed
My poverty to raise, then for a lout
And dunce I knew myself, and the insolence went
Out from me like a fever violent.

Pride of Littleness

The dog upon a meatless bone and lank,
Horrible, stinking, vile, with spittle wet,
Feasts and with heaven's nectar gives it rank.
Then though the ambrosial God should by him stand,
He is not awed nor feels how base his fate,
But keeps his ghastly gettings more in hand.
The little nature deems its small things great
And virtue scorns and strength and noble state.

Facilis Descensus

In highest heavens the Ganges' course began;
From Shiva's loftiest brow to the white snows
She tumbles, nor on the cold summits can,
But headlong seeks the valley and the rose.
Thence downward still the heaven-born waters ran.

Say not, "Is this that Ganges? can her place
Be now so low?" Rather when man at all
From heavenly reason swerves, he sinks from grace
Swiftly. A thousand voices downward call,
A thousand doors are opened to his fall.

The Great Incurable

For all ill things there is a cure; the fire's
Red spleen cool water shall at once appease,
And noontide's urgent rays the sunshade tires,
And there are spells for poison, and disease
Finds in the leech's careful drugs its ease.

The raging elephant yet feels the goad,
And the dull ass and obstinate bullock rule
Cudgel and stick and force upon their road.
For one sole plague no cure is found — the fool.

Bodies without Mind

Some minds there are to Art and Beauty dead,
Music and poetry on whose dull ear
Fall barren. Horns grace not their brutish head,
Tails too they lack, yet is their beasthood clear.
That Heaven ordained not upon grass their feasts,
Good fortune is this for the other beasts.

The Human Herd

Whose days to neither charity nor thought
Are given, nor holy deeds nor virtues prized,
Nor learning, such to cumber earth were brought.
How in the human world as men disguised
This herd walk grazing, higher things unsought!

A Choice

Better were this, to roam in deserts wild,
    On difficult mountains and by desolate pools,
A savage life with wild beasts reconciled,
    Than Paradise itself mated with fools.

On Wisdom

Poets and Princes

Unhonoured in a State when poets dwell
    Whose fames range wider than its strong-winged birds,
Whose utterance is for grace adorable
    Of chosen speech and art of noble words,
Whose wisdom hundreds come to hear and tell;
The world that nation's chief for dullness blames,
    For poets without wealth are rich and kings:
    When values low depreciate costly things,
'Tis the appraiser's shame and not the gem's.

True Wealth

Knowledge is truest wealth, not this which dies, —
    It cherishes a strange deep peace within
Unutterably, nor the robber's eyes
    Ever shall find it out; to give it is gain,
It then grows most when parted with, and poured
With sleepless hand fills gloriously its lord.
Worlds perish may, Knowledge survives their fall;
This wise men cherish; O Kings, your pride recall,
You have but wealth, they inner royalty
Of lordliest wisdom. Who with these shall vie?

The Man of Knowledge

Scorn not the man of knowledge to whose eyes
  The secrets of the world have been revealed!
Thou canst not hold his spirit from the skies
  By fortune light nor all that earth can yield.
The furious tusker with new dark rut stained
Were sooner by a lotus-thread detained.

Fate and Wisdom

What can the extreme wrath of hostile Fate?
  The swan that floats in the cool lotus-wood
  She from his pleasant mansion can exclude.
His fame remains, in food adulterate[1]
Who could the better choose, the worse discern.
Fate cannot touch glory that mind can earn.

The Real Ornament

It is not armlets that adorn a man,
  Nor necklaces all crammed with moonbright pearls,
  Nor baths, nor ointments, nor arrangèd curls.
'Tis art of excellent speech that only can
Adorn him: jewels perish, garlands fade;
This only abides and glitters undecayed.

---

[1] The swan was supposed to have the power of separating milk from water, when the two were mixed.

The Praises of Knowledge

Knowledge is nobler beauty in a man
Than features: ’tis his hidden hoard of price;
This the long roll of Masters first began;
Pleasure it brings, just fame and constant bliss,
And is a helping friend in foreign lands,
And is a very god with puissant hands.
Knowledge, not wealth in great men is adored,
Nor better than a beast the mind unstored.

Comparisons

Men cherish burning anger in their hearts,
Yet look without to find if they have foes.
Who sweet forbearance has, requires no arts
Of speech; persuading silently he goes.

Why fear the snake when in thy kindness bask
Men evil, or a fire while kinsmen jar
Burning thy house! From heaven no medicines ask
To heal a troubled mind, where true friends are.

Nor seek for ornaments, noble modest shame
Being with thee, nor for wealth when wisdom’s by.
Who needs a kingdom when his mind can claim
A golden realm in sweetest poetry?

Worldly Wisdom

Have mercy for all men, for thy own race
Have kindness, for the cunning cunning have,
Affection for the good, and politic ways
For princes: for thy foes a spirit brave,
Patience for elders, candour for the wise:
Have skilful ways to steal out women's hearts.
Who shine here, masters in these social arts,
In them the human scheme deep-rooted lies.

Good Company

Company of good men is a very soil
Of plenty, yielding all high things to man.
The dull weight of stupidity it can
Lift from the mind and cleanse of falsehood vile,
Sprinkling truth's fragrance sweet upon the speech;
And it can point out greatness' rising path,
And drive out sinful lust and drive out wrath,
And a calm gladness to the senses teach;
Glory that to the very stars would climb,
Can give thee, conquering thy heart and time.

The Conquests of Sovereign Poetry

Who are the conquerors? Not mere lords of land,
But kingly poets, whose high victories
Are perfect works; men's hearts at their command
Are wholly; at their will the passions rise.
Glory their body is, which Death's pale fear
Afflicts not, nor abhorrèd Age comes near.

Rarities

Whatever most the soul on earth desires,
    Are rarities, as, a virtuous son; a wife
Who wholly loves; Fortune that never tires;
    A friend whose sweet affection waters life;
A master pleased; servants that ne'er deceive;
A charming form; a mind no sorrows grieve;
    A mouth in wisdom proved that makes not strife.
These to his favourites being pleased allows
Hari, of whom the world grows amorous.

The Universal Religion

All varying Scriptures that the earth divide,
Have yet one common rule that need o'erride
Dogma nor rite, nor any creed offend;
All to their heavens by one sole path intend.
'Tis this: — Abstain from slaughter; others' wealth
To covet cease, and in thy speech no stealth
Of falsehood harbour; give in season due
According to thy power; from ribald view
Or word keep far of woman, wife or maid;
Be mild obedience to thy elders paid;
Dam longing like a river; each act beneath
Show mercy and kindness to all things that breathe.

Great and Meaner Spirits

Some from high action through base fear refrain;
The path is difficult, the way not plain.
Others more noble to begin are stayed
By a few failures. Great spirits undismayed
Abandon never what once to do they swore.
Baffled and beaten back they spring once more,
Buffeted and borne down, rise up again
And, full of wounds, come on like iron men.

The Narrow Way

Kind to be, yet immutably be just;
    To find all baser act too hard to do, —
Yea, though not doing shatter our life to dust; —
    Contempt that will not to the evil sue;
Not to the friend that's poor our need to state;
    Baffled by fortune still erect to stand;
Being small to tread in footprints of the great;
    Who for weak men such rugged path has planned,
Harder to tread than edge of this sharp brand?

On Pride and Heroism

Lion-Heart

The manèd lion, first of kingly names,
Magnanimous and famed, though worn with age,
Wasted with hunger, blunted his keen edge
And low the splendid spirit in him flames,
Not therefore will with wretched grass assuage
His famished pangs as graze the deer and bull.
Rather his dying breath collects desire,
Leaping once more from shattered brows to pull
Of the great tuskèd elephants mad with ire
His sovereign banquet fierce and masterful.

The Way of the Lion

The dog with a poor bone is satisfied,
Meatless, with bits of fat and sinew greased,
Nor is his hunger with such remnants eased.
Not so the kingly lion in his pride!
He lets the jackal go grazed by his claw
And slays the tuskèd kings. Such Nature's law;
Each being pitches his high appetite
At even with his courage and his might.

A Contrast

The dog may servile fawn upon the hand
    That feeds him, with his tail at wag, nor pain
In crouching and his abject rollings bland
    With upward face and belly all in vain:
The elephant to countless flatteries
Returns a quiet look in steadfast eyes.

The Wheel of Life

The world goes round and, as returns the wheel,
    All things that die must yet again be born:
    His birth is birth indeed by whose return
His race and country grandeur's summits scale.

Aut Caesar aut Nullus

Two fates alone strong haughty minds endure,
    Of worth convinced; — on the world's forehead proud
    Singly to bloom exalted o'er the crowd,
Or wither in the wilderness obscure.

Magnanimity

My brother, exalt thyself though in o'erthrow!
Five noble planets through these spaces roll,
Jupiter is of them; — not on these he leaps,
Rahu,[1] the immortal demon of eclipse,
In his high magnanimity of soul.

Smit with God's thunders only his head he keeps,
Yet seizes in his brief and gloomy hour
Of vengeance the great luminous kings of heaven,
Day's Lord and the light to whom night's soul is given;
He scorns to strive with things of lesser power.

The Motion of Giants

On his wide hood as on a painted shield
Bears up the rangèd worlds, Infinite, the Snake;
Him in the giant midmost of his back
The eternal Tortoise brooks, whom the great field
Of vague and travelling waters ceaselessly
Encompass with the proud unfathomed sea.
O easy mights and marvellous of the great,
Whose simplest action is yet vast with fate!

---

[1] Rahu, the Titan, stole or seized part of the nectar which rose from the world-ocean at the churning by the Gods and Titans and was appropriated by the Gods. For this violence he was smitten in two by the discus of Vishnu; but as he had drunk the nectar, he remains immortal and seeks always to revenge himself by swallowing the Sun and Moon who had detected his theft. The Tortoise mentioned in the next epigram upheld the mountain Mandar, which was the stick of the churning. The Great Snake Ananta was the rope of the churning, he on whose hood the earth now rests.

Mainak

O child of the immortal mountains hoar,
  Mainak,[2] far better had this been to bear
The bleeding wings that furious Indra tore,
The thunder's scars that with disastrous roar
  Vomiting lightnings made the heavens one flare, —
Not, not this refuge in the cool wide sea
While all thy suffering people cried to thee.

Noble Resentment

The crystal hath no sense disgrace to know,
  Yet blazes angry when the sun's feet rouse;
  Shall man the high-spirited, the orgulous,
Brook insult vile from fellow or from foe?

Age and Genius

Nature, not age is the high spirit's cause
  That burns in mighty hearts and genius high.
Lo, on the rutting elephant's tuskèd jaws
  The infant lion leaps invincibly.

---

[2] The mountains had formerly wings and could move about, — to the great inconvenience of everybody: Indra, attacked by them, smote off their wings with the thunderbolt. Mainak, son of Himalaya, took refuge in the sea.

On Wealth

The Prayer to Mammon

Cast birth into the nether Hell; let all
The useless tribe of talents farther fall;
Throw virtue headlong from a rock and turn
High nobleness into the fire to burn;
The heroic heart let some swift thunder rive,
Our enemy that hinders us to live;
Wealth let us only keep; this one thing less,
All those become as weeds and emptiness.

A Miracle

Behold a wonder mid the sons of men!
 The man is undiminished he we knew,
Unmaimed his organs and his senses keen
 Even as of old, his actions no-wise new,
Voice, tone and words the same we heard before,
The brain's resistless march too as of yore;
Only the flattering heat of wealth is gone,
And lo! the whole man changed, his praises done.

Wealth the Sorcerer

He who has wealth, has birth; gold who can spill,
Is scholar, doctor, critic, what you will;
For who has golden coin, has golden tongue,
Is glorious, gracious, beautiful and young;
All virtues, talents, fames to gold repair
And lodge in gold leaving the poor man bare.

Two Kinds of Loss

These things are deaths, ill-counsel ruining kings,
    The son by fondling spoiled, by him the race,
Attachment, to the sage's heart that clings,
    And natural goodness marred by company base,
The Brahman by scant study unbrahminised,
    Sweet shame by wine o'erthrown, by wandering long
Affection waning, friendship true unprized,
    Tillage uncared, good fortune follies wrong;
But wealth in double way men may reject,
Nobly by giving, poorly by neglect.

The Triple Way of Wealth

Three final roads wealth takes and only three,
To give, enjoy or lose it utterly:
And his whose miser hand to give is slow
Nor yet enjoys, the worst third way shall go.

The Beauty of Giving

Be not a miser of thy strength and store;
Oft in a wounded grace more beauty is.
The jewel which the careful gravers score;
The sweet fair girl-wife broken with bridal bliss,
The rut-worn tusker, the autumnal stream
With its long beaches dry and slender flood;
The hero wreathed with victory's diadem,
Adorned with wounds and glorious with his blood;
The moon's last disc; rich men of their bright dross,
By gifts disburdened, fairer shine by loss.

Circumstance

There is no absoluteness in objects. See
This indigent man aspire as to a prize
To handfuls of mere barley-bread! yet he
A few days past, fed full with luxuries,
Held for a trifle earth and all her skies.
Not in themselves are objects great or small,
But circumstance works on the elastic mind,
To widen or contract. The view is all,
And by our inner state the world's defined.

Advice to a King

He fosters, King, the calf who milks the cow,
And thou who takest of the wide earth tax,
Foster the people; with laborious brow
And sleepless vigil strive till nought it lacks.
Then shall the earth become thy faery tree
Of plenty, pleasure, fame, felicity.

Policy

Often she lies, wears sometimes brow of truth,
    Kind sometimes, sometimes ravening-merciless;
    Now open-handed, full of bounty and grace,
And now a harpy; now sweet honey and ruth
Flows from her tongue, now menace harsh or stern;
    This moment with a bottomless desire
    She gathers millions in, the next will tire, —
Endless expense takes prodigally its turn.
Thus like a harlot changes momently
In princes the chameleon Policy.

The Uses of High Standing

Men highly placed by six good gifts are high.
The first is noble liberality;
The second, power that swift obedience brings;
Service to holy men and holy things
Comes next; then fame; protection then of friends;
Pleasure in pleasant things the great list ends.
Whose rising with these six is unallied,
What seeks he by a mighty prince's side?

Remonstrance with the Suppliant

What the Creator on thy forehead traced
As on a plate of bronze indelibly,
Expect that much or little, worst or best,
Wherever thou dwell, nobly or wretchedly,
Since thou shalt not have less, though full of pain
In deserts waterless mid savage men
Thou wander sole; nor on Olympus hoar
Ranked amid mighty Gods shalt thou have more.

Therefore be royal-hearted still and bold,
O man, nor thy proud crest in vain abase
Cringing to rich men for their gathered gold.
From the small well or ocean fathomless
The jar draws equally what it can hold.

The Rainlark to the Cloud

You opulent clouds that in high heavens ride,
Is't fame you seek? but surely all men know
To you the darting rainlarks homage owe!
Hold you then back your showers, because your pride
By our low suings must be gratified?

To the Rainlark

O rainlark, rainlark, flitting near the cloud,
Attentive hear, winged friend, a friendly word.
All vapours are not like, the heavens that shroud
Darkening; some drench the earth for noble fruit,
Some are vain thunderers wandering by with bruit:
Sue not to each thou seest then, O bird;
If humbly entreat thou must, let few have heard.

On the Wicked

Evil Nature

A heart unpitying, brawling vain and rude,
An eye to others' wives and wealth inclined,
Impatience of true friends and of the good, —
These things are self-born in the evil mind.

The Human Cobra

Avoid the evil man with learning crowned.
Lo, the dread cobra, all his hood a gem
Of glory, yet he crawls upon the ground.
Fearst thou him less for that bright diadem?

Virtue and Slander

A spiritless dull block call modesty;
Love of long fasts and holy vows must be
Mere shows, yon pure heart but a Pharisee,
The world-renouncing sage a fool; the high
World-conquering hero's taxed with cruelty.
This sweet word's baseness, that great orator
A windbag, and the great spirit furious pride,
And calm patience an impotent weakness poor.
Thus the base-natured all high things deride.
Judged by the slanderous tongue, the uncandid eyes,
What brightest virtue turns not blackest vice?

Realities

Greed if thou hast, thou art of sin secure:
    Being treacherous, of what heinous fault hast need?
No distant temple wants whose soul is pure:
    Heart's truth is more than penance, vow or creed.
With natural goodness, why mere virtues pile?
    The soul being great, a royal crown were poor;
Good books thou hast, rubies were surplus vile;
    When shame has pierced the heart, can death do more?

Seven Griefs

Seven griefs are as seven daggers in my heart, —
    To see a lake without its lilied bloom,
The moon grow beggared of her radiant part,
    Sweet woman's beauty fade towards the tomb,
A noble hug his wealth, a good man gone
    Down in the press of miseries, a fair
    And vacant face when knowledge is not there,
A base man standing by a monarch's throne.

The Friendship of Tyrants

Tyrants have neither kin nor lover. Fire
    Accepts the rich man's offerings; at the end
Shall these then slake its wrathful swift desire?
    Nay, let him touch it! It will spare its friend!

The Hard Lot of the Courtier

Hard is the courtier's lot who fain would please.
Being silent, "Lo the dumb man!" they gibe; if speech
Eloquent edge his wit, "He seeks to teach,
The chatterer!" else, "Hark to his flatteries!"
Rude, if he sit near; far, — "What want of ease!"
Enduring insult, "Coward!"; if he spurn
The injurer, "Surely a spawn of parents base!"
Such service is in courts, whose laws to learn
Wise sages are perplexed, or tread its ways.

The Upstart

Yea, how this high sun burns that was so low,
Enlightening with his favours all things base!
Hating all good, with chainless licence vile
Of those his filthy deeds makes arrogant show
Obscurely engendered in his unseen days
Ere sudden fortune raised from miry soil.
No virtue now, genius nor merit's safe
From vulture eyes that at all cleanness chafe.

Two Kinds of Friendship

Like shadows of the afternoon and morn
Friendship in good men is and in the base;
All vast the lewd man's in its first embrace,
But lessens and wears away; the other's, born
A dwarfish thing, grows giantlike apace.

Natural Enmities

Trust not thy innocence, nor say, "No foe
    I have the world through;" other is the world.
The deer's content with simple grass, yet bow
    Of hunter fears; the fisher's net is hurled
To catch the water's innocents; his high
    And simple life contented leads the good,
Yet by the evil heart insatiably
    With causeless hatred finds himself pursued.

On Virtue

Description of the Virtuous

Homage to him who keeps his heart a book
　　For stainless matters, prone others' gifts to prize
And nearness of the good; whose faithful look
　　Rejoices in his own dear wife; whose eyes
Are humble to the Master good and wise;

A passion high for learning, noble fear
　　Of public shame who feels; treasures the still
Sweet love of God; to self no minister,
　　But schools that ravener to his lordlier will,
Far from the evil herd on virtue's hill.

The Noble Nature

Eloquence in the assembly; in the field
　　The puissant act, the lion's heart; proud looks
Unshaken in defeat, but modest-kind
　　Mercy when victory comes; passionate for books
High love of learning; thoughts to fame inclined; —
These things are natural to the noble mind.

The High and Difficult Road

To give in secret as beneath a shroud;
    To honour all who to thy threshold come;
    Do good by stealth and of thy deeds be dumb,
But of another's noble acts be proud
And vaunt them in the senate and the crowd;
To keep low minds in fortune's arrogant day;
    To speak of foemen without scorn or rage;
What finger appointed first this roughest way
    Of virtue narrower than the falchion's edge?

Adornment

The hand needs not a bracelet for its pride,
    High liberality its greatness is;
The head no crown wants to show deified,
    Fallen at the Master's feet it best doth please.
Truth-speaking makes the face more bright to shine;
    Deep musing is the glory of the gaze;
Strength and not gold in conquering arms divine
    Triumphs; calm purity the heart arrays.
Nature's great men have these for wealth and gem;
Riches they need not, nor a diadem.

The Softness and Hardness of the Noble

Being fortunate, how the noble heart grows soft
    As lilies! But in calamity's rude shocks
    Rugged and high like a wild mountain's rocks
It fronts the thunders, granite piled aloft.

The Power of Company

Behold the water's way, — on iron red
When it falls hissing, not a trace remains,
Yet 'tis the same that on the lotus shines,
A dewy thing like pearls, — yea, pearl indeed
Turns when the oyster-shell receives and heaven
To those rain-bringing stars their hour has given.
High virtue, vice or inconspicuous mean
'Tis company that moulds in things or men.

The Three Blessings

He is a son whose noble deeds and high
His loving father's heart rejoice;
She is a wife whose only jewellery
Is her dear husband's joy and bliss;
He the true friend whose actions are the same
In peaceful days or hours of bale and shame;
These three who wins, finds earth his Paradise.

The Ways of the Good

Who would not honour good men and revere
Whose loftiness by modesty is shown,
Whose merits not by their own vaunts appear,
Best in their constant praise of others known,
And for another's good each power to brace
To passionate effort is their selfishness?

Hark to their garrulous slanderer's gurge of blame
Foaming with censure violent and rude!
Yet they revile not back, but put to shame
By their sweet patience and calm fortitude.
Such are their marvellous moods, their noble ways,
Whom men delight to honour and to praise.

Wealth of Kindness

Then is the ear adorned when it inclines
To wisdom; giving bracelets rich exceeds;
So the beneficent heart's deep-storèd mines
Are worked for ore of sweet compassionate deeds,
And with that gold the very body shines.

The Good Friend

Thus is the good friend pictured by the pens
Of good men: — still with gentle hand he turns
From sin and shame his friend, to noble gains
Still spurs him on; deep in his heart inurns
His secret errors, blares his parts abroad,
Gives at his need, nor takes the traitor's road
Leaving with facile wings when fortune spurns.

The Nature of Beneficence

Freely the sun gives all his beams to wake
The lotus slumbering in the darkened lake;
The moon unasked expends her gentle light,
Wooing to bloom her lily of the night;
Unasked the cloud its watery burden gives.
The noble nature in beneficence lives;
Unsought, unsued, not asking kindness back
Does good in secret for that good's sole sake.

The Abomination of Wickedness

Rare are the hearts that for another's joy
    Fling from them self and hope of their own bliss;
Himself unhurt for others' good to try
    Man's impulse and his common nature is:
But they who for their poor and selfish aims
Hurt others, are but fiends with human names.
Who hurt their brother men themselves unhelped,
What they are, we know not, nor what horror whelped.

Water and Milk

By water and sweet milk example Love.
    Milk all its sweetness to the water gives,
    For in one wedded self their friendship lives;
And when hot pangs the one to anguish move,
    The other immolates itself to fire.
To steal his friend's grief is a friend's desire.

He seeing his friend's hard state is minded too
    To seek the flame; but happily again
    Wedded to him is eased of all his pain.
This friendship is, one heart that's shared by two.

Altruism Oceanic

Here Vishnu sleeps, here find his foes their rest;
    The hills have taken refuge, serried lie
Their armies in deep Ocean's sheltering breast;
The clouds of doom are of his heart possessed,
    He harbours nether fire whence he must die.
Cherisher of all in vast equality,
Lo, the wide strong sublime and patient sea!

The Aryan Ethic

Hear the whole Gospel and the Law thereto: —
    Speak truth, and in wise company abide;
    Slay lust, thine enemy; abandon pride;
Patience and sweet forgiveness to thee woo;
Set not in sin thy pleasure, but in God;
Follow the path high feet before thee trod;

Give honour to the honourable; conceal
    Thy virtues with a pudent veil of shame,
    Yet cherish to the end a stainless fame;
Speak sweetness to thy haters and their weal
Pursue; show pity to unhappy men,
Lift up the fallen, heal the sufferer's pain.

The Altruist

How rare is he who for his fellows cares!
His mind, speech, body all are as pure jars
Full of his soul's sweet nectar; so he goes
Filling the world with rows on shining rows
Of selfless actions ranked like the great stars.

He loves man so that he in others' hearts
Finding an atom even of noble parts
Builds it into a mountain and thereon
His soul grows radiant like a flower full-blown;
Others are praised, *his* mind with pleasure starts.

Mountain Moloy

Legends of golden hills the fancy please,
    But though they were real silver and solid gold,
Yet are the trees they foster only trees.
    Moloy shall have my vote with whom, 'tis told,
Harbouring the linden, pine and basest thorn
Ennobled turn to scent and earth adorn.

On Firmness

Gods

Cease never from the work thou hast begun
    Till thou accomplish; such the great gods be,
Nor paused for gems unknown beneath the sun,
    Nor feared for the huge poisons of the sea,
Then only ceased when nectar's self was won.

The Man of High Action

Happiness is nothing, sorrow nothing. He
    Recks not of these whom his clear thoughts impel
To action, whether little and miserably
    He fare on roots or softly dine and well,
Whether bare ground receive his sleep or bed
With smoothest pillows ease his pensive head,
    Whether in rags or heavenly robes he dwell.

Ornaments

What is an ornament? Courtesy in high place,
Speech temperate in the hero, innocence
In high philosophers, and wrathlessness
In hermits, and in riches noble expense.
Sincerity and honest meaning plain
Save outward holiness, mercy the strong
Adorns and modesty most learned men;
One grace to every station can belong.
Cause of all other gems, of all is blent
Virtue, the universal ornament.

The Immutable Courage

If men praise thee, O man, 'tis well; nor ill,
If they condemn. Let fortune curst or boon
Enter thy doors or leave them as she will.
Though death expect thee ere yon sinking moon
Vanish or wait till unborn stars give light,
The firm high soul remains immutable,
Nor by one step will deviate from the right.

The Ball

Lo, as a ball that, by the player's palm
Smit downward, falls but to again rebound,
So the high virtuous man hurled to the ground
Bends not to fortune long his spirit calm.

Work and Idleness

Their bitterest enemy in their bodies pent
Men cherish, idleness. Be in thy breast
The tireless gust of work thy mighty guest,
Man's ceaseless helper, whose great aid once lent
Thy strength shall fail not, nor thy head be bent.

The Self-Reliance of the Wise

The tree once pruned shall seek again the skies,
The moon in heaven waning wax once more:
Wise men grieve not nor vex their soul with sighs
Though the world tread them down with savage roar;
Knowing their strength, they husband it to rise.

On Fate

Fate Masters the Gods

Brihuspathy[1] his path of vantage shows,
    The red disastrous thunder leaves his hand
Obedient, the high Gods in burning rows
His battled armies make, high heaven's his fort,
Iravath swings his huge trunk for his sport,
    The Almighty's guardian favours over him stand; —
That Indra with these strengths, this lordship proud
Is broken by his foes in battle loud.
Come then, bow down to Fate. Alas, the vain
Heroisms, virtues, toils of glorious man!

A Parable of Fate

A serpent in a basket crushed despaired,
    His organs all with hunger weak and worn,
While patiently at night the mouse prepared
    A hole in that self basket. Ere the morn
By his own industry, such Nature's law,
The patient labourer fills the serpent's maw.
He with that food replenished, by the way
    The mouse had made, escaped. O world, behold
The mighty master of thy sad decay
    And fortunate rising, Fate, the godhead old.

---

[1] Brihuspathy is counsellor to Indra, the King of Heaven, and spiritual guide of the Gods. Iravath is Indra's elephant.

Fate and Freewill

“The actions of our former life control
    This life’s sweet fruit or bitter; even the high
    Intellect follows where these point its eye.”
All this is true, — O yet, be wise of soul,
Think ere thou act, thou who wouldst reach the goal.

Ill Luck

A bald man, goes the story, when the noon
Beat his plagued brows into a fiery swoon,
Desiring dimness and cool place was led
By subtle Fate into a high palm’s shade.
There where he shelter hoped, a giant fruit
Crashed on his pate and broke with horrid bruit.
Wherever the unfortunate hides his head,
Grief and disaster in his footprints tread.

Fate Masters All

I saw the brilliant moon eclipsed, the sun
    Baulked darkly of his radiant pilgrimage,
And halter-bound the forest’s mighty one,
    The iron-coiled huge python in a cage;
Then saw the wise skilled brain a pauper, and said
“Fate only is strong whose hand on all is laid.”

The Follies of Fate

Sometimes the gods build up a very man
Whom genius, virtue, glory crowd to bless,
And Earth with him adorned grows measureless.
Then if death early spoil that noble plan,
Ah, blind stupidity of Fate that throws
From her brow the jewel, from her breast the rose!

The Script of Fate

When on the desert-bramble's boughs you find
Leafage nor flower, blame not the bounteous Spring!
Is it the sun's fault if the owlet blind
Sees not by day so radiant-bright a thing?
Though down the rainlark's throat no sweet drops flow,
Yet for his falling showers the high cloud praise.
What Fate has written in power upon the brow,
Where is the hand so mighty it shall rase?

On Karma[1]

Action be Man's God

Whom shall men worship? The high Gods? But they
　　Suffer fate's masteries, enjoy and rue.
Whom shall men worship? Fate's stern godhead? Nay,
　　Fate is no godhead. Many fruits or few
Their actions bring to men, — that settled price
She but deals out, a steward dumb, precise.
Let action be man's God, o'er whom even Fate
Can rule not, nor his puissance abrogate.

The Might of Works

Bow ye to Karma who with puissant hand
Like a vast potter all the universe planned,
Shut the Creator in and bade him work
In the dim-glinting womb and luminous murk;
By whom impelled high Vishnu hurled to earth
Travels his tenfold depths and whorls of birth;
Who leading mighty Rudra by the hand
Compels to wander strange from land to land, —
A vagrant begging with a skull for bowl

---

[1] There is a distinction, not always strictly observed, between Fate and Karma. Karma is the principle of Action in the universe with its stream of cause and infallible effect, and for man the sum of his past actions whose results reveal themselves not at once, but in the dispensation of Time, partly in this life, mostly in lives to come. Fate seems a more mysterious power imposing itself on men, despite all their will and endeavour, from outside them and above — *daivam*, a power from the Gods.

And suppliant palms, who is yet the world's high Soul.
Lo, through the skies for ever this great Sun
Wheels circling round and round by Karma spun.

Karma

It is not beauty's charm nor lineage high,
It is not virtue, wisdom, industry,
Service, nor careful arduous toil that can
Bring forth the fruits of his desire to man;
Old merit mind's strong asceticism had stored
Returns to him with blessing or a sword,
His own past deeds that flower soon or late
Each in its season on the tree of Fate.

Protection from behind the Veil

Safe is the man good deeds forgotten claim,
    In pathless deserts or in dangerous war
Or by armed foes enringed; sea and fierce flame
    May threaten, death's door waiting swing ajar;
Slumbering or careless though his foemen find,
Yea, though they seize him, though they smite or bind,
On ocean wild or on the cliff's edge sheer
His deeds walk by his side and guard from fear;
Through death and birth they bore him and are here.

The Strength of Simple Goodness

Toiler ascetic, who with passionate breath
Swellest huge holinesses, — vain thy faith!
Good act adore, the simple goddess plain,
Who gives the fruit thou seekest with such pain.
Her touch can turn the lewd man into a saint,
Inimitably her quiet magic lent
Change fools to sages and hidden mysteries show
Beyond eye's reach or brain's attempt to know,
Fierce enemies become friends and poisons ill
Transform in a moment to nectar at her will.

Foresight and Violence

Good be the act or faulty, its result
    The wise man painfully forecasting first
Then does; who in mere heedless force exult,
    Passionate and violent, taste a fruit accursed.
The Fury keeps till death her baleful course
And blights their life, tormenting with remorse.

Misuse of Life

This noble earth, this place for glorious deeds
The ill-starred man who reaching nowise heeds,
Nor turns his soul to energy austere,
With little things content or idlesse drear, —
He is like one who gets an emerald pot
To bake him oil-cakes on a fire made hot
With scented woods, or who with golden share
For sorry birthwort ploughs a fertile fair
Sweet soil, or cuts rich camphor piece by piece
To make a hedge for fennel. Not for this
In the high human form he walks great earth
After much labour getting goodliest birth.

Fixed Fate

Dive if thou wilt into the huge deep sea,
        The inaccessible far mountains climb,
Vanquish thy foes in battle fierily,
        All arts and every science, prose and rhyme,
Tillage and trade in one mind bring to dwell, —
        Yea, rise to highest effort, ways invent
And like a bird the skies immeasurable
        Voyage; all this thou mayst, but not compel
What was not to be, nor what was prevent.

Flowers from a Hidden Root

With store of noble deeds who here arrives,
    Finds on this earth his well-earned Paradise.
    The lonely forest grows his kingly town
Of splendour, every man has friendly eyes
    Seeing him, or the wide earth for his crown
Is mined with gems and with rich plenty thrives.
This high fate is his meed of former lives.

Miscellaneous Verses

Definitions

What is clear profit? Meeting with good men.
    A malady? Of incompetent minds the spell.
What is a loss? Occasion given in vain.
    True skill of life? With heavenward thoughts to dwell.
A hero? The heart that is o'er passion lord.
    A mistress? She to loving service sworn.
Best wealth? Wisdom. True happiness? The sward
    Of one's own country, life where it was born.
A kingdom? Swift obedience fruitful found
At the low word from hearts of all around.

A Rarity

Rich in sweet loving words, in harshness poor,
    From blame of others' lives averse, content
    With one dear wife and so heart-opulent,
Candid and kindly, like an open door,
Some here and there are found on teeming earth;
Her fairest ornament is their quiet worth.

The Flame of the Soul

Insulted, wronged, oppressed the unshaken mind,
Treasuring its strength, insurgent its high will,
Towers always, though beat fiercely down to hell.
The torch is to the inglorious soil declined,
Its flame burns upward and unconquered still.

The Conqueror

That man whose soul bright beauty cannot pierce
With love's sweet burning javelins from her eyes,
Nor sorrow torture his heart, nor passions fierce
Miserably over his senses tyrannize,
Conquers the world by his high-seated will,
The man well-balanced, noble, wise and still.

The Hero's Touch

Touched by one hero's tread, how vibrating
Earth starts as if sun-visited, ablaze,
Vast, wonderful, young! Man's colourless petty days
Bloom suddenly and seem a grandiose thing.

The Power of Goodness

The bloom of natural goodness like a flower
Is Nature's darling, all her creatures prize,
And on whose body's stock its fragrant power
Blossoms, all fiercest things can humanise.
For him red fire becomes like water pale and cool,
For him heaven-threatening Ocean sinks into a pool
Of quiet azure; for him the lion's heart
Tames its dire hungers to be like the hind's,
And the fell snake unsoothed by music's art
Upon his brows in floral wreaths he binds.
Poisons for him to nectar change; impassable hills
Droop, gentle slopes; strong blessings grow from ruthless ills.

Truth

Dear as his own sweet mother to the man
Of truth his word is, dear as his heart's blood.
Truth, 'tis the mother of his soul's great brood,
High modesty and virtue's lordly clan.
Exceeding pure of heart as to a youth
His mother, and like a mother to him cleaves
This sweet proud goddess. Rather life he leaves
And happiness puts away, not divine Truth.
Others clasp some dear vice, gold, woman, wine;
He keeps for Truth his passion fiery and fine.

Woman's Heart

More hard the heart of woman is to seize
Than an unreal mirrored face, more hard
Her moods to follow than on mountains barred
With rocks that skirt a dreadful precipice
A dangerous luring pathway near the skies.

And transient is her frail exacting love
Like dew that on some lotus' petal lies.
As with rich fatal shoots an upas-grove,
Woman with faults is born, with faults she grows.
Thorns are her nature, but her face the rose.

Fame's Sufficiency

"Victory is his on earth or Paradise,
The high heart slain in battle face to face."
Let be your empire and your golden skies;
For him enough that friends and foemen praise
And with fame's rumour in his ears he dies.

Magnanimity

The world teems miracles, breeds grandest things,
But Rahu of all most marvellous and great
Or the vast Boar on white tusks delicate
Like buds who bears up Earth, else Chaos rings.
Rahu, cleft, trunkless, deathless, passionate,
Leaps on his foeman and can overbear,
A miracle, then, greater miracle, spare.

Man Infinite

Earth is hemmed in with Ocean's vaster moan;
    The world of waters flows not infinitely;
A high unwearied traveller, the Sun
    Maps out the limits of the vaulted sky.
On every creature born a seal is set
With limits budded in, kept separate.
Only man's soul looks out with luminous eyes
Upon the worlds illimitably wise.

The Proud Soul's Choice

But one God to worship, hermit Shiv or puissant Vishnu high;
But one friend to clasp, the first of men or proud Philosophy;
But one home to live in, Earth's imperial city or the wild;
But one wife to kiss, Earth's sweetest face or Nature, God's own child.
Either in your world the mightiest or my desert solitary.

The Waverer

Seven mountains, eight proud elephants, the Snake,
    The Tortoise help to bear this Earth on high,
Yet is she troubled, yet her members shake!
    Symbol of minds impure, perplexed and wry.
Though constant be the strife and claim, the goal
Escapes the sin-driven and the doubting soul.

Gaster Anaides

Nay, is there any in this world who soon
Comes not to heel, his mouth being filled with food?
The inanimate tabour, lo, with flour well-glued
Begins with sweeter voice its song to croon.

The Rarity of the Altruist

Low minds enough there are who only care
To fill their lusts with pleasure, maws with food.
Where shall we find him, the high soul and rare
To whom the good of others is his good?
First of the saints is he, first of the wise.

The Red Mare of the Ocean drinks the seas
Her own insatiable fire to feed;
The cloud for greater ends exacts his need,
The parching heats to cool, Earth's pain to ease.
Wealth's sole good is to heal the unhappy's sighs.

Statesman and Poet

How like are these whose labour does not cease,
    Statesman and poet, in their several cares;
Anxious their task, no work of splendid ease!
    One ranges far for costly words, prepares
Pure forms and violence popular disdains,
    The voice of rare assemblies strives to find,
Slowly adds phrase to noble phrase and means
    Each line around the human heart to wind.

The statesman seeks the nation's wealth from far;
    Not to the easy way of violence prone
He puts from him the brutal clang of war
    And seeks a better kind dominion,
To please the just in their assemblies high,
    Slowly to build his careful steps between
The noble lines of linkèd policy, —
    He shapes his acts a nation's heart to win.
Their burden and their toil make these two kin.

The Words of the Wise

Serve thou the wise and good, covet their speech
    Although to trivial daily things it keeps.
    Their casual thoughts are foam from solemn deeps;
Their passing words make Scripture, Science; rich,
Though seeming poor, their common actions teach.

Noblesse Oblige

If some day by some chance God thought this good
    And lilies were abolished from the earth,
    Would yet the swan like fowls of baser birth
Scatter a stinking dunghill for his food?

The Roots of Enjoyment

That at thy door proud-necked the high-foaming steeds
    Prance spirited and stamp in pride the ground
    And the huge elephants stand, their temple's bound
    Broken with rut, like slumbrous mountains round, —
That in harmonious concert fluted reeds,
    The harp's sweet moan, the tabour and the drum
    And conch-shell in their married moments come
    Waking at dawn in thy imperial dome, —
Thy pride, thy riches, thy full-sated needs,
    That like a king of gods thou dwellst on earth, —
    From duties high-fulfilled these joys had birth;
    All pleasant things washes to men of worth
The accumulated surge of righteous deeds.

Natural Qualities

Three things are faithful to their place decreed, —
Its splendour as of blood in the lotus red,
Kind actions, of the noble nature part,
And in bad men a cold and cruel heart.

Death, not Vileness

Better to a dire verge by foemen borne,
O man, thy perishable body dashed
Upon some ragged beach by Ocean lashed,
Hurled on the rocks with bleeding limbs and torn;

Better thy hand on the dire cobra's tooth
Sharp-venomed or to anguish in the fire,
Not at the baser bidding of desire
Thy heart's high virtue lost and natural truth.

Man's Will

Renounce thy vain attempt, presumptuous man,
Who thinkst and labourest long impossibly
That the great heart for misery falter can:
Fruitless thy hope that cruel fall to see.
Dull soul! these are not petty transient hills,
Himalay and Mahendra and the rest,
Nor your poor oceans, their fixed course and wills
That yield by the last cataclysm oppressed.
Man's will his shattered world can long survive:
When all has perished, it can dare to live.

The Splendid Harlot

Victory's a harlot full of glorious lust
Who seeks the hero's breast with wounds deep-scored,
Hate's passionate dints like love's! So when the sword
Has ploughed its field, leap there she feels she must.

Fate

Lo, the moon who gives to healing herbs their virtue, nectar's home,
Food immortalising, — every wise physician's radiant Som,[1]
Even him consumption seizes in its cruel clinging arms.
Then be ready! Fate takes all her toll and heeds not gifts nor charms.

The Transience of Worldly Rewards

Your gleaming palaces of brilliant stone,
    Your bright-limbed girls for grace and passion made,
Your visible glory of dominion,
    Your sceptre and wide canopy displayed,
These things you hold, but with what labour won
    Weaving with arduous toil a transient thread
Of shining deeds on careful virtue spun!
    Which easily broken, all at once is sped;
As when in lover's amorous war undone
    A pearl-string, on all sides the bright pearls shed
Collapse and vanish from the unremembering sun.

---

[1] Soma, the moon, god of the immortalising nectar, the Vedic Soma-wine.

APPENDIX

Prefatory Note on Bhartrihari

BHARTRIHARI'S Century of Morals (Nitishataka), a series of poetical epigrams or rather *sentences* upon human life and conduct grouped loosely round a few central ideas, stands as the first of three similar works by one Master. Another Century touches with a heavy hand Sringar, sexual attraction; the third expresses with admirable beauty of form and intensity of feeling the sentiment of Vairagya, World-disgust, which, before & since Buddha, has figured so largely in Indian life. In a striking but quite superficial manner these brief stanzas remind us of the Greek epigram in the most masterly hands: Mimnermus, Simonides; but their spirit and the law of their internal structure relate them rather to a type of literature peculiarly Asiatic.

Classical Sanscrit literature, as a whole, is governed by an inner stress of spirit which urges it to a sort of lucid density of literary structure; in style a careful blending of curious richness with concentrated force and directness of expression, in thought and matter a crowded vividness and pregnant lucidity. The poet used one of the infinite harmonic variations of the four-lined stanza with which our classical prosody teems, or else the couplet called Arya, noble verse; and within these narrow limits he sought to give vividly some beautiful single picture, some great or apposite thought, some fine-edged sentiment. If a picture, it might be crowded with felicitous detail; if a thought, with pregnant suggestion; if a sentiment, with happy shades

Sri Aurobindo wrote this essay to serve as a preface to his translation of Bhartrihari's Nitishataka, called by him first "The Century of Morals" and later "The Century of Life". When he published the translation in 1924, he substituted the translator's note reproduced on page 314 for this more elaborate prefatory note, which is reproduced here as an appendix.

of feeling; but the whole must be perfectly lucid and firm in its unity. If these qualities were successfully achieved, the result was a Subhashita, a thing well said and therefore memorable. Sometimes the Subhashita clarified into a simple epigram, sometimes it overcharged itself with curious felicities, but the true type lay between the extremes. Similar tendencies are noticeable in the best Indian artwork in ivory, wood and metal, and even enter its architecture with that spirit which passed into the Moguls and informing new shapes of loveliness created the Taj. Many a small Hindu temple is a visible Subhashita in stone. In India of the classical times the tendency was so strong that poems of considerable magnitude like Kalidasa's Race of Raghou or Magha's Slaying of Shishupala are for the most part built up of stanzas on this model; in others there are whole passages which are merely a succession of Subhashitas, so that the account of a battle or a city scene affects us like a picture gallery and a great speech moves past in a pomp of high-crested armoured thoughts. A successful Subhashita of the highest type is for all the world as if some great ironclad sailing solitary on the limitless ocean were to turn its arc-light on a passing object; in the brilliant concentrated flood of lustre a small vessel is revealed; we see the masts, funnel, rails, decks, the guns in their positions, men standing on the deck, an officer on the bridge, every detail clear in the strange artificial lustre; next moment the light is shut off and the scene, relapsing into darkness, is yet left bitten in on the brain. There is the same instantaneous concentration of vision, the same carefully-created luminousness and crowded lucidity of separate detail in the clear-cut unity of the picture.

But the Subhashita is not peculiar to India, it pervades Asia. The most characteristic verse of China and Japan is confined to this style; it seems to have overmastered Arabian poetry; that it is common in Persian the Rubaiyat of Omar and the writings of Hafiz and Sadi would appear to indicate. In India itself we find the basis of the style in some of the Upanishads, although the structure there is more flexible and flowing, not yet trained to the armoured compactness of classic diction. Subsequently the only class of writing which the spirit of the Subhashita did not invade, was that great mass of epic and religious literature which made its appeal to the many and not to the cultured few. In the Mahabharat, Ramayan and the Puranas we have the grand natural stream of Hindu poetry flowing abundantly through plain and valley, not embanked and bunded by the engineer.

Kalidasa and Bhartrihari are the two mightiest masters of the characteristic classical style as it was at its best, before it degenerated into over-curiosity. Tradition tells us they were contemporaries. It is even said that Bhartrihari was an elder brother of Vikramaditya, Kalidasa's patron, — not of course Harsha of the sixth century to whom European scholarship has transferred the distinction, but the half-mythical founder of Malava power in the first century before Christ. To account for the succession of a younger brother, the old and common story of the fruit that changed hands till it returned disastrously to the first giver, is saddled on the great moralist. King Bhartrihari understood that his beloved wife was unfaithful to him, and, overwhelmed by the shock, fell wholly under the influence of Vairagya, abandoned his crown to Vikrama and sought the forest in the garb of an anchorite. The second stanza of the Century of Morals commemorates the unhappy discovery. But the epigram has no business in that place and it is doubtful whether it has a personal application; the story itself is an evident fiction. On the other hand the notion of some European scholars that Bhartrihari was a mere compiler of other people's Subhashitas, is not much better inspired. Undoubtedly, spurious verses were introduced and a few bear the mark of their extraneous origin; but I think no one who has acquired a feeling for Sanscrit style or is readily responsive to the subtle spirit in poetry can fail to perceive that the majority are by one master-craftsman. The question is for those to decide who have learned to feel the shades of beauty and peculiarities of tinge in words (a quite different thing from shades of meaning and peculiarities of use) and to regard them not as verbal counters or grammatical formations but as living things. Without this subtle taste for words the finer personal elements of style, those which do not depend on general principles of structure, cannot be well-appreciated. There are collections of Subhashitas in plenty, but the style of Bhartrihari is a distinct style and the personality of Bhartrihari is a distinct personality. There is nothing of that infinite variety of tone, note, personal attitude — I do not refer to mere shiftings of standpoint and inconsistencies of opinion — which stamp a collection; there is one characteristic tone, a note strong and unmistakeable, the persistent self-repetition of an individual manner. All is mint of a single mind.

Bhartrihari's Centuries are important to us as the finished expression of a thoroughly typical Aryan personality in the most splendid epoch of Indian culture. The most splendid, not the best; for the vigorous culture mirrored in the epics has been left behind; the nobly pure, strong and humane civilisation which produced Buddha gives way to a civilisation a little less humane, much less masculine, infinitely less pure, yet richer, more variously coloured, more delightful to the taste and senses; the millennium of philosophy and heroism yields to the millennium of luxury and art. Of the new civilisation Kalidasa is the perfect and many-sided representative; he had the receptive, alchemistic imagination of the great world-poets, Shakespeare, Homer and Valmekie, and everything that was in his world he received into that alembic with a deep creative delight and transmuted into forms and sounds of magical beauty. Bhartrihari's was a narrower mind and intenser personality. He represents his age in those aspects which powerfully touched his own individual life and character, but to others, not having catholicity of moral temper, he could not respond. He was evidently a Kshatriya; for all his poetry breathes that proud, grandiose, arrogantly noble spirit of the old magnanimous Indian aristocracy, extreme in its self-assertion, equally extreme in its self-abnegation, which made the ancient Hindu people one of the three or four great peoples of antiquity. The savour of the Kshatriya spirit in Bhartrihari is of the most personal, intimate kind, not the purely poetic and appreciative delight of Kalidasa. It is with him grain of character, not mere mental impression. It expresses itself even in his Vairagya by the fiery and ardent, almost fierce spirit which inspires his asceticism, — how different from the fine quietism of the Brahmin!

But the Century of World-disgust, although it contains some of his best poetry, is not to us his most characteristic and interesting work; we find that rather in the Century of Morals.

This Century is an admirable, if incomplete poetic rendering of the great stock of morality which our old writers summarised in the one word Arya, — Aryan, noble. The word Arya has been thought to correspond very closely to the English idea of a gentleman, — inaccurately, for its conception is larger and more profound in moral content. Arya and Anarya correspond in their order of ideas partly to the totality indicated by the word, *gentleman*, and its opposite, partly to the conceptions knightly and unknightly, partly to the qualities suggested in an English mind by the expressions English and unEnglish as applied to conduct. The Aryan man is he who observes in spirit and letter the received code of a national morality which included the higher niceties of etiquette, the bold and chivalrous temper of a knightly and martial aristocracy, the general obligations of truth, honour and high feeling, and, crowning all, such great ideals of the Vedic and Buddhistic religion, — sweetness, forbearance, forgiveness, charity, self-conquest, calm, self-forgetfulness, self-immolation — as had entered deeply into the national imagination.

The ideas of the Century of Morals are not in themselves extraordinary, nor does Bhartrihari, though he had a full share of the fine culture of his age, appear to have risen in intellectual originality beyond the average level; it is the personality which appears in the Centuries that is striking. Bhartrihari is, as Matthew Arnold would have said, in the grand style. He has the true heroic turn of mind and turn of speech; he breathes a large and puissant atmosphere. High-spirited, high-minded, high of temper, keen in his sympathies, admiring courage, firmness and daring aspiration above all things, thrilling to impulses of humanity, kindliness and self-sacrifice in spite of his rugged strength, dowered with a trenchant power of scorn and sombre irony, and occasionally of stern invective, but sweetening this masculine severity of character with varied culture and the old high Indian worship of knowledge, goodness and wisdom, such is the man who emerges from the one hundred and odd verses of the Shataka. The milder and more feminine shades of the Aryan ideal he does not so clearly typify. We have often occasion to ask ourselves, What manner of men did the old Aryan discipline, uniting with the new Helleno-Asiatic culture, succeed in producing? Bhartrihari is at least one type of its products.

And yet in the end a doubt breaks in. Was he altogether of his age? Was he not born in an alien time and an evil day? He would have been better at home, one fancies, with the more masculine temper depicted in the Mahabharata. Certainly he ended in disgust and fled for refuge to ascetic imaginations not wholly characteristic of his time. He had lived the life of courts, was perhaps an official of high standing and seems to have experienced fully the affronts, uncertainties, distastes to which such a career has always been exposed. From the beginning stray utterances point to a growing dissatisfaction and in the end there comes the poignant cry of a thwarted life. When we read the Century of Passion, we seem to come near the root of his malady. As in the earlier Century he has subdued to the law of poetical form the ethical aspects of life, so now will he deal with the delight of the senses; but how little of real delight there is in this misnamed Century of Passion! Bhartrihari is no real lover, certainly; but neither is he a genuine voluptuary. Of that keen-edged honey-laden delight in the joy of the senses and the emotions which thrills through every line of Kalidasa's Cloud, there is no faintest trace. Urged into voluptuous experience by fashion and habit, this high and stern nature had no real vocation for the life of the senses; in this respect, and who shall say in how many others, he was out of harmony with the moral atmosphere of his times, and at last turned from it all to cry aloud the holy name of Shiva by the waters of the pure and ancient river, the river Ganges, while he waited impatiently for the great release.... But this too was not his vocation. He had too much defiance, fire, self-will for the ascetic. To have fallen in the forefront of ancient heroic battle or to have consummated himself in some grandiose act of self-sacrifice, this would have been his life's fitting fulfilment, the true end of Bhartrihari.

The edition followed in the main is that of Mr. Telang in the Bombay Sanscrit Series. The accepted order of the verses, although it admits a few gross errors and misplacements, has nevertheless been preserved. All the Miscellaneous Epigrams at the end have been omitted from the rendering;[1] and three others, the 90th which has crept in from the Shakuntala of Kalidasa, the 104th which is an inferior version of an earlier epigram and the 18th which has come down to us in a hopelessly corrupt condition. The 27th epigram occurs in the Mudrarakshasa but has been admitted as it is entirely in Bhartrihari's spirit and manner and may have been copied into the play. Some other verses which do not bear internal evidence of Bhartrihari's authorship in their style and spirit, have yet been given the benefit of the doubt.

The principle of translation followed has been to preserve faithfully the thought, spirit and images of the original, but otherwise to take the full licence of a poetical rendering. In translation from one European tongue into another a careful literalness may not be out of place, for the genius, sentence structure and turns of thought of European languages are not very dissimilar; they belong to one family. But the gulf between Sanscrit and English in these respects is very wide, and any attempt at close verbal rendering would be disastrous. I have made no attempt to render the distinctive features of Bhartrihari's style; on the contrary I have accepted the necessity of substituting for the severity & compact massiveness of Sanscrit diction which must necessarily vanish in translation, the greater richness & colour preferred by the English tongue. Nor have I attempted to preserve the peculiar qualities of the Subhashita; Bhartrihari's often crowded couplets and quatrains have been perforce dissolved into a looser and freer style and in the process have sometimes expanded to considerable dimensions. Lines of cunningly wrought gold have had to be beaten out into some tenuity. Otherwise the finer associations & suggestions of the original would have been lost or blurred. I hold it more pardonable in poetical translation to unstring the language than to dwarf the spirit and mutilate the thought. For in poetry it is not the verbal substance that we seek from the report or rendering of foreign masterpieces; we desire rather the spiritual substance, the soul of the poet & the soul of his poetry. We cannot hear the sounds & rhythms loved & admired by his countrymen and contemporaries; but we ask for as many as we can recover of the responses & echoes which that ancient music set vibrating in the heavens of their thought.

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo included a series of "Miscellaneous Verses" in the final translation. — Ed.*

Section Five

Other Translations from Sanskrit

Opening of the Kiratarjuniya

1. Appointed to know the dealings of the Kurus' lord with his people, conduct guardian of his fortune, the forest ranger garbed with the marks of the Brahmacharin came to Yudishthira in Dwaita wood.

2. Having made his salutation he turned to declare — and his heart hurt him not — to the enjoyer of the earth, earth conquered by his rival, for wellwishers desire not to speak pleasant falsehood.

Bhagawat

SKANDHA I, ADHYAYA I

1. On Him we fix our thoughts from whom are birth and being and death, who knoweth the chain of things and their separate truth, King and Free, who [to] the earliest seer disclosed the Veda through his heart, which even illuminated minds find hard to understand,

In whom like interchange of water, earth and light the triple creation stands free from falsehood, for by His inherent lustre He casts out always the glamour of the worlds, — to Him we turn, that Highest Truth of things.

2. Here shall ye find highest religion in which all trickery has been eschewed, here the one substantial thing that is utterly true, that hearts free from jealousy and wickedness may know, that is a fountain of blessing and peace, that is an uprooting of the threefold sorrow of the world,

In this holy Bhagawat that the great Thinker has made. When by its power even others can imprison the Lord in their hearts so soon, the fulfilled in nature who love to hear it shall seize Him the moment that they hear.

3. This is the fruit fallen from the tree of Veda which giveth men every desire, — come, all you that are lovers of God on the earth and sensible to His delight, drink from the mouth of Shuka the Bhagawat's delightful juice into which wine of immortality has been poured, drink and drink again until the end of things.

4. In Naimisha, field of the Timeless Lord, the sages, Shaunaka and the rest, sat down to millennial sacrifice for the bringing of the kingdom of heaven.

5. And one day at dawn the Wise Ones having cast their offerings into the eater of the sacrifice asked with eagerness of the Suta as welcomed in their midst he sat.

6. By thee, O pure of blemish, have the Traditions and Histories been studied, by thee recited, which are institutes of the Way of life,
7. Those that the Lord Badarayan knoweth, chief of the Veda Wise; and the other sages to whom these low things and those high are known.
8. Thou knowest it all, O gracious one, in its essential truth by Vyasa's grace; verily, to the loving disciple the Masters will tell even the secret thing.
9. What thou, O long of life, hast distinguished decisively in this book and in that to be utterly the best for men, we would have thee announce to us.
10. For thou knowest, O cultured soul, that usually in this age of the Kali men are short of days, poor in spirit, poor in sense, poor in fate, assailed by ills,
11. And numerous are the scriptures that have to be studied, full of multitudinous laws of conduct and divided into many parts, — therefore drawing out from them by thy thought whatever is the essence of all these, tell us as to men of faith that which makes the soul clear and glad.
12. And, O Suta, since thou knowest for what purpose the Lord, the Prince of the Satwatas was born to Vasudeva in Devaki's womb,
13. Be pleased to narrate it to our expectant ears, — whose descent into mortal life is for the bliss and increase of created things;
14. Whose name if one fallen into the dread whirl uttereth aloud even without his will, at once he is delivered therefrom, — the name of which Fear itself is afraid;
15. By dependence on whom, O Suta, the seers that follow the way of Peace purify by their first touch, but the waters of the mystic stream only after the soul has bathed in them often and long.
16. For who that longeth after purity would not listen to the glory destroying Kali's darkness of that divine Lord whose actions are adored by souls of virtuous fame?
17. Tell us, for we believe, his noble deeds hymned by illumined

seers when by reason of His world-sport He manifests His aspects in the world.

18. Then tell us the blessed incarnations of Hari when the Lord of Creation ordereth variously at His unfettered pleasure and by the play of His own Glamour, His sport in human forms.

19. We are not satiated however often we hear the mightiness of that most glorious Being, for at every step sweetness is added to sweetness for those who can feel its beauty when they hear.

20. High were the heroic deeds Keshava did with Rama for His aid and beyond mortal strength, for this was the hidden Lord disguised as a man.

21. Because we knew that Kali had come upon the world, we in this region holy to Vishnu have sat down to long sacrifice & leisure vast have we to hear of the Lord.

22. It is Providence then that has shown thee to us who desire to cross safe over the difficult Kali, destroyer of the purer energy in men, as appears a sudden pilot to those who would voyage through the difficult sea.

23. Say, when the Master of the Yoga, full of holiness, Krishna, armour of the Dharma, passed to His Divine Summit, with whom did the Dharma take sanctuary then?

Bhavani

(*From a Sanskrit Hymn of Shankaracharya*)

Father nor mother, daughter nor son are mine,
I obey no master, served am I by none,
Learning or means I have not, wife nor kin;
My refuge thou, Bhavani, thou alone!

Charity I have not learned, Yoga nor trance,
Mantra nor hymn nor Tantra have I known,
Worship nor dedication's covenants:
My refuge thou, Bhavani, thou alone!

Virtue is not mine nor holy pilgrimage,
Salvation or world's joy I have never won,
Devotion I have not, Mother, no vows I pledge:
My refuge thou, Bhavani, thou alone!

Part Two

Translations from Bengali

Section One

Vaishnava Devotional Poetry

Radha's Complaint in Absence

(*Imitated from the Bengali of Chundidas*)

O heart, my heart, a heavy pain is thine!
What land is that where none doth know
Love's cruel name nor any word of sin?
My heart, there let us go.

Friend of my soul, who then has called love sweet?
Laughing I called from heavenly spheres
The sweet love close; he came with flying feet
And turned my life to tears.

What highborn girl, exiling virgin pride,
Has wooed love to her with a laugh?
His fires shall burn her as in harvest-tide
The mowers burn the chaff.

O heart, my heart, merry thy sweet youth ran
In fields where no love was; thy breath
Is anguish, since his cruel reign began.
What other cure but death?

Radha's Appeal

(*Imitated from the Bengali of Chundidas*)

O love, what more shall I, shall Radha speak,
Since mortal words are weak?
In life, in death,
In being and in breath
No other lord but thee can Radha seek.

About thy feet the mighty net is wound
Wherein my soul they bound;
Myself resigned
To servitude my mind;
My heart than thine no sweeter slavery found.

I, Radha, thought; through the three worlds my gaze
I sent in wild amaze;
I was alone.
None called me "Radha!", none;
I saw no hand to clasp, no friendly face.

I sought my father's house; my father's sight
Was empty of delight;
No tender friend
Her loving voice would lend;
My cry came back unanswered from the night.

Therefore to this sweet sanctuary I brought
My chilled and shuddering thought.
Ah, suffer, sweet,
To thy most faultless feet
That I should cling unchid; ah, spurn me not!

Spurn me not, dear, from thy beloved breast,
A woman weak, unblest.
Thus let me cling,
Thus, thus about my king
And thus remain caressing and caressed.

I, Radha, thought; without my life's sweet lord,
— Strike now thy mightiest chord —
I had no power
To live one simple hour;
His absence slew my soul as with a sword.

If one brief moment steal thee from mine eyes,
My heart within me dies.
As girls who keep
The treasures of the deep,
I string thee round my neck and on my bosom prize.

Karma

(*Radha's Complaint*)

Love, but my words are vain as air!
In my sweet joyous youth, a heart untried,
Thou tookst me in Love's sudden snare,
Thou wouldst not let me in my home abide.

And now I have nought else to try,
But I will make my soul one strong desire
And into Ocean leaping die:
So shall my heart be cooled of all its fire.

Die and be born to life again
As Nanda's son, the joy of Braja's girls,
And I will make thee Radha then,
A laughing child's face set with lovely curls.

Then I will love thee and then leave;
Under the codome's boughs when thou goest by
Bound to the water morn or eve,
Lean on that tree fluting melodiously.

Thou shalt hear me and fall at sight
Under my charm; my voice shall wholly move
Thy simple girl's heart to delight;
Then shalt thou know the bitterness of love.

(*From an old Bengali poem*)

Appeal

Thy youth is but a noon, of night take heed,—
A noon that is a fragment of a day,
And the swift eve all sweet things bears away,
All sweet things and all bitter, rose and weed.
For others' bliss who lives, he lives indeed.

But thou art pitiful and ruth shouldst know.
I bid thee trifle not with fatal love,
But save our pride and dear one, O my dove,
And heaven and earth and the nether world below
Shall only with thy praises peopled grow.

Life is a bliss that cannot long abide,
But while thou livest, love. For love the sky
Was founded, earth upheaved from the deep cry
Of waters, and by love is sweetly tied
The golden cordage of our youth and pride.

(*Suggested by an old Bengali poem*)

Twenty-two Poems of Bidyapati

1

Childhood and youth each other are nearing;
Her two eyes their office yield to the hearing.
Her speech has learned sweet maiden craft
And low not as of old she laughed
Her laughter murmurs. A moon on earth
Is dawning into perfect birth.
Mirror in hand she apparels her now
And asks of her sweet girl-comrades to show
What love is and what love does
And all shamed delight that sweet love owes.
And often she sits by herself and sees
Smiling with bliss her breasts' increase,
Her own milk-breasts that, plums at first,
Now into golden oranges burst.
Day by day Love's vernal dreams
Expand her lovely blossoming limbs.
Maadhuv, I saw a marvellous flower
Of girls; childhood and youth one power,
One presence grown in one body fair.
Foolish maiden, not thus declare
The oneness of these contraries.
Rather the two were yoked, say the wise.

2

Day by day her milk-breasts drew splendour,
Wider her hips grew, her middle more slender.
Love has enlarged her childlike gaze.
Yea, all grace of childhood and childhood's ways
Fall from their thrones and take sweet flight.
Her breasts before were plums of light,
Golden oranges next and then
As bodiless Love made bloom with pain
Of increase her body day by day,
Pomegranate seedcities were they.
Their fair maturities now begin,
Now are they fruits-of-opulence twin.
Maadhuv, I sought thy lovely lady,
Bathing I found her in woodland shady.
Coiled on her heart but not to drape
Her thin dress clung to her lovely shape.
Blest were his eyes who had seen her thus
And his whole life made felicitous.
Over her bosom her great hair floods
With curls divine two golden gods.
True love must his be, O youth, who would play,
Her darling and joy, with this beautiful may.

3

Now and again a sidelong look
Along her lashes its shy curve took.
Now and again her thin white dress
O'erlies like dust all her loveliness.
Now she laughs divine and clear
And her pearly teeth like stars appear,
And now to hide in her robe make shift.
For a little her startled feet run swift
But soon that bounding gait subsides
And she in maiden gravity glides.
Love's scholar she and newly set
To his first lesson and alphabet.
Where her bosom's buds are hardly seen
Now she draws fast her robe to screen,
Now careless leaves. In her limbs divine
Child and woman meet and twine.
Nor mark I yet whether older she
Of girlhood or younger of infancy.
Beautiful Krishna, youth in her
Its childhood begins, these signs declare.

4

Childhood and youth, maiden, are met
And strife twixt their armèd powers is set.
Now her ordered locks she dresses,
Now scattering loosens a storm of tresses.
Sometimes she covers her body fair,
Sometimes the golden limbs are bare
In childhood's naked innocence.
And childhood's steadfast eyes with a sense
Of girlhood a little waver now
And her bosom is stained where the flowers grow.
Her light uncertain feet now tell
The uncertain heart and variable.
Love is awake but his eyes are shut.
O Krishna, flower of lovers, put
In thy heart patience, for surely she
Shall be brought at last and given to thee.

5

Playing she plays not, so newly shy
She may not brook the passing eye.
Looking she looks not lest surmise
Laugh from her own girl-comrades' eyes.
Hearken, O hearken, Maadhuv, to me.
Just is the case I bring to thee.
Radha today these eyes beheld;
A maid she is unparalleled.
O her face and its lovely lights!
O looks that ravish, O charm that invites!
Flower of ruby with lotus grows
In her vermeil lips that exceed the rose;
And with honey have snared her large twin eyes
Two shapes of bees that may not rise;
And her brow's arch is as tho' left slack
Love's own bow in hue were black.
Saith the envoy girl whose words I teach
"The bloom of her limbs surpasseth speech."

6

In elders' eyes she brooks not stay,
Half-clad no more her body but alway
She covers her most maidenly.
Yet with young girls when bideth she
Knowing her ripened child and budding may
They plague her with sweet mockery.
Maadhuv, for thee I wooed the sight
Of this fair flower; whom some delight
Child to call, but most agree
That woman's morning bloom has she.
When of Love's rites she hears and lovers' play
She turns her downcast eyes another way,
O but her ears drink greedily.
Should with more words one tease her shame,
With tears and angry smiles she utters blame.
Who is wise in love alone knoweth
The ways of a girl, the poet saith.

7

A little and a little now
See the bright bud half-open blow.
Her swift and wilful feet grown wise
Yield their rudderless gait to the eyes.
Ever her hand to her bosom's dress
Clings to control its waywardness.
Afraid to utter her shy, hushed thought
Her comrade-girls she questions not.
Maadhuv, how shall faltering word
Her sweet and twilight age record?
Love, even Love, beholding her
In his own bonds her captive were.
Nay but the lord of all desire
Her heart's precincts raising higher
Has set for passion's sacred duty
Altars of surpassing beauty.
Love's speech her listening heart doth stop
As the hunter's song the antelope.
Two powers dispute this beauteous prize.
Nought one deems gained while aught there is
To gain, nor the other failure owns
While yet he holds to his golden thrones.
Still with sweet violence she clings
To her loved childhood's parting wings.

8

Childhood is fled and youth in its seat;
Not light as of old her wandering feet,
Yet are Love's glorious envoys two
Seeing her eyes her errands do.
In secret dawns each lovely smile
And laughter low with maiden guile.
Her hand each moment plucks her dress
Its fluttering treasons to repress.
And all the low speech of her lips
From a modest head and drooping slips.
Her heavy hips have now replaced
The old lost pride of her rounded waist.

Thus I decide her doubtful state,
Conclusion sweet of sweet debate.
Thine is this fair decision's fruit
Judgment to give and execute.
I, Bidyapati, love's lights bring
To lady Lochima and the King.

9

As the swan sails, so moved she
Then when her face was lost to me.
As she went, O she turned, she looked, she smiled.
Ah arrows made of Love's own flower,
O sweet magician! faery power!
No mortal maid but an enchantress wild.

Her arms, those sweet twin lovelinesses,
Clasped, bent in languorous self-caresses,
Enhaloed had the lustres of her face.
Her fingers slim for champaks taking,
Love to delicious worship waking
A moon of autumn with such flowers did bless.

Her careless breasts, (O happy lover!)
Their rich defence but half did cover
Because of haste when the light robe was worn.
As tho' by winds that overpower
Clouds in the season of storm and shower,
The hills of heaven thro' a dim veil made morn.

Vision delightful! shall again
I ease with you my life's deep pain?
Ah! shall again division's boundaries break?
The henna that her feet enrosèd
Was fire wherein my heart enclosèd
Did burn and all my limbs to burn did make.

O lovely maiden, hear the speech
These numbers murmur each to each.
My soul since then no ease, no quiet knows.
Ah! shall I ever, fortune, meet her,
The woman than all women sweeter,
The jewel of all beauties that earth owes?

10

I have seen a girl no words can measure,
On golden tendrils proudly borne a face,
A spotless moon, a snowy treasure.
Her eyes two lotuses with unguent shaded,
Were play-grounds of sweet loving thought,
Or fluttering, captive birds in a net embedded
Of that dark unguent solely wrought.
Her heavy hills of milk a necklace richer
Of elephant pearls did touch and gleam —
Love sprinkling from her throat, that brimful pitcher,
On golden images heaven's stream.
Fortunate were he who by Proyaga's waters
Long sacrificing might avail
At last to win her. Lover of Gocool's daughters!
Darling of Gocool! true thy tale.

11

When the hour of twilight its period kept
The damsel out from her dwelling stepped.
Like flashes in a new-born cloud that battling crept,
Golden, a beauty dire.

A highborn maiden, a little child,
Woven of flowers and fragrance she smiled.
How with a little sight should hope be reconciled?
Love but increased his fire.

Her small sweet body of pale gold made
That shining gold thro' her robe displayed,
The forest lion yields to her slender middle; swayed
Glances much love must earn.

A soft smile burned on her lips and she
With a smile and a look did murder me.
Lord of the five Bengals, may longer life with thee
Starlike eternal burn.

12

A shining grace the damsel's face to her laughter and speech
doth lend,
As tho' the sweet full moon of autumn heaven's nectar rained.
A jewel of women with beauty more than human,
I saw her gait of lion state ungracèd nought nor common.
Her middle than the lion's slender is,
Her body soft as lotuses;
It seemed a branch with weight breaking of her breasts
pomegranate.
Yea and her lovely eyes being with blackness dressed
Were unstained lotuses enamoured bees invest.
The lover beautiful seeing sweet Radha's grace
Breaketh his longing heart with passionate distress.

13

The moonwhite maiden from her bath
Passing I saw from a woodland path.
From all sweet things she stolen had
Beauty in one fair girl arrayed.
Her tresses that her small hands wrung
A shower of faery water flung
As tho' a fan of beauty whirled
Carcanets with gems impearled.
Her wet curls wearing wondrous grace
Like bees besieged her lotus face
For all that honey wild with lust.
The water from her sweet eyes thrust
Yet left them reddened, as in the ooze
Petals of lotus with ceruse.
Heavy with water her thin robe
Defined each bright and milky globe;
Like golden apples gleamed her breasts
On which the happy hoarfrost rests.
So the robe clung as if it said
"Soon will she leave me and love be dead,
Nor ever once shall I attain
Such exquisite delight again."
So the robe thought, as well appears,
And therefore sorrowed, showering tears.

14

Beauty stood bathing in the river
When I beheld her — Love's whole quiver
Pierced my heart with fivefold fire.
Her curls flung back from the face of my desire
Rained great tears as tho' the night
Stood by and wept in fear of the moon's light.
To every limb her wet robe kissed and clung.
Had even the sage been there
His heart had burned, even his grown young
Seeing through her dress her marvellous limbs made bare.
Her fair twin breasts were river-birds
Whose language is three amorous words.
It seemed that pitying heaven had to one shore
Brought the sweet lovers thence to part no more.
Yet she I deem in such alarm
Held them fast bound within one golden arm,
As if some noise should startle the sweet pair
And they take flight from her.
O amorous boy, be not afraid —
For youth like thine heaven gave this wondrous maid.

15

O happy day that to mine eyes betrayed
Bathing the beautiful maid!
Drops like a carcanet of pearls
Fell from her cloud of showering curls.
Her lifted hands did harshly press
The lingering water from her face
That wore new luminousness
As tho' a golden mirror were made clean.
Therewith her robe fell to her lovely feet
And naked breasts revealed their beauties twin,
Like golden cups that seemed reversely set.
The lapse her robe's one bond undid
And naked made what yet lay hid.
O Mithil lyre,
This is the apex of desire.

16

Beautiful Rai, the flower-like maid
Risen from the river where she played
Saw under down-cast lids and shy
The lovely boy, dark Krishna named.
A highborn child with face afraid
Before her elders and eyes ashamed
She might not gaze as she went by.
O subtle is that beautiful girl!
She left the gracious troop behind;
With half-turned face and half-declined
From far in front full sweet her call.
She broke her carcanet of pearl
And let the precious seedlings fall.
"O friends, my broken carcanet."
Each girl her lovely hand did set
Stooping to find the scattered grain.
Meanwhile the damsel's eyes full fain,
Like birds that on white moonbeams feed,
Of Krishna's shape took amorous heed.
Divine the nectar that she drained,
O Krishna, from thy cheeks of light.
Yea, each of each had honied sight.
Thus gazing girl and boy extend
Love's boundaries seen by none but me
The poet, sweet Bidyapati.

17

Ah how shall I her lovely body express?
Fair things how many Nature in her blended,
    Mine own eyes saw ere my lips praise.

Her twin fair feet were lordly leaves of summer,
    Her gait vied with the forest's best.
Upon two golden trees a lion slender,
    Thereover the hills of heaven placed.

And on the hills two lotuses were budding
    That stemless kept their gracious hours.
In shape of pearl-drops strung heaven's stream descended,
    Therefore not withered those sweet flowers.

Her teeth pomegranate-seeds on lips of ruby,
    The sun and moon on either side,
Her hair eclipse, but coming never nearer
    Hid not at all their golden pride.

The cuckoo's speech, the antelope's eyes has Radha,
    And Love has in her glances thrones —
Upon two lotuses two bees that hover
    And sip their honey: these she owns

The spring's five children. O delicious maiden,
    Not the wide worlds her second know,
To Sheva Singha Ruupnaraian my music
    And lady Lochima doth show.

18

When the young warm Love her heart doth fill
Where is the let stays woman's will?
Alone to set forth lightly she dares,
Path or pathless not Radha who cares.
She has left her pearlèd carcanet
Her breast's high towers that hamperèd.
The bracelets fair on her wrists that shone
All by the path has the young girl thrown.
Anklets gemmed on her feet did glow,
She has thrown them far the lighter to go.
The gloom is thick and heavy the night,
But Love to her eyes makes darkness light.
Her every step new perils doth prove,
She has pierced thro' all with the sword of Love.
Her passionate heart the poet knows.
Another like her not the wide world shows.

19

"'Tis night and very timid my little love.
How long ere I see her hither swanlike move!
        Dread serpents fill with fear the way;
What perils those soft beloved feet waylay.
        Providence, I lay her at thy feet;
Scatheless keep she the tryst, my own, my sweet.
        The sky is thick and mired the earth,
Perils wide-strewn: ah me, what fears have birth.
        Thick darkness are the quarters ten.
The feet stumble, nought clear the eyes may gain.
        She comes! With timid backward glances
Every creature's heart how she entrances!
        A girl she is of human grace,
Yet wears all heaven stolen in her face."
        For high-born women to be o'erborne
By love endure; all other check they scorn.

20

The best of the year has come, the Spring,
Of the six seasons one season king;
And now with all his tribes the bee
Runs to the creeper spring-honey.
The sun's rays come of boyish age,
The day-describing sun, his page,
A sceptre of gold the saffron-bloom
And the young leaves a crowning-room.
Gold-flowers of champak o'er him stand,
The umbrellaed symbol of command;
The cary-buds a crown do set
And before him sings a court-poet,
The Indian cuckoo to whom is given
The sweetest note of all the seven.
Peacocks dance and for instrument
Murmur of bees, while sacrament
Of blessing and all priestly words
Brahmins recite, the twice-born birds.
Pollen, the flying dust of flowers,
His canopy above him towers,
His favourite the southern breeze,
Jasmine of youth and Tuscan-trees
His battle-flag. The season of dew,
Seeing sweet blossoms-of-bliss renew,
Seven-leaf and boughs that fragrance loves
And kingshook and the climbing cloves,
Seven things of bloom together, flees
Nor waits the perfumed shock of these.
Spring's army too the chill estate
Of the dew-season annihilate —
Invading honey-bees — and make
Secure the lilies of the lake.
And these being saved yield them a home
In their own soft, new-petalled bloom.
In Brindabun anew is mirth

For the restorèd bloom of earth.
These are the season's sweets and these
The essence of the Spring's increase.

21

In the spring moonlight the lord of love
Thro' the amorous revel's maze doth move;
The crown of love love's raptures proves,
For Radha his amorous darling moves,
Radha, the ruby of ravishing girls
With him bathed in love's moonlight whirls.
And all the merry maidens with rapture
Dancing together the light winds capture,
And the bracelets speak with a ravishing cry,
And the murmur of waist-bells rises high —
Meanwhile rapture-waking string
Ripest of strains the sonata of Spring,
That lover and lord of love-languid notes
With tired delight in throbbing throats.
And rumours of violin and bow
And the mighty Queen's-harp mingle and flow,
And Radha's ravisher makes sweet measure
With the flute, that musical voice of pleasure.
Bidyapati's genius richly wove
For King Ruupnaraian this rhythm of love.

22

Hark how round goes the instruments' sound!
With the sweet love wild
Of Gocool's child
She danceth mistress of the fair arts sixty-four.
And her hands rhyme keeping time,
Her smitten hands that still the fall restore.

And the tabors keep melody deep
And the heavy thrum
Of the measured drum
And anklets' running cry their own slim music loving.
The waist bells sprinkle their silver tinkle
And bracelets gold that gems do hold;
Loud is the instruments' din to madness moving.

And harps begin and the violin
And the five vessels
Where melody swells
Thro' all the gamut move and various moods express.
And over and under the twydrum's thunder,
With whose noise the vessels five mix and embrace.

From loosened tresses that toil undresses
And floating whirls
On the shoulders of girls
The jasmine garlands' buds sprinkle the vernal night.
Ah revels of Spring! with powerless wing
These verses grieve not reaching your delight.

Selected Poems of Bidyapati

1

Wherever her twin fair feet found room
There the flowers of the water bloom;
Wherever her golden body shone,
There have the waves of lightning gone.
Wonderful beauty, golden-sweet,
How in my heart hast thou set thy feet!
Wherever her eyes have opened bright,
The bloom of the lotus burns its light;
Wherever her musical laugh has flown
Need of the nectar is not known;
Wherever her shy curved glances rove,
There are ten thousand arrows of love;
Eyes, for a little your orbs did see!
In the three worlds now there is none but she.
O shall I see her ever again
To ease my heart of its piteous pain?
O on my bosom once to hold
Her boundless beauty and manifold.

2

Why fell her face upon my sight,
That is a lovelier moon in light,
Since but for one poor moment she
With her sweet eyes emparadised me?
Surely it was to slay my soul
That under her long lashes stole
The cruel grace of that transient look.
Desire laid hands upon her breasts
And there my poor heart clinging rests:
Love new-born its office took.
My ears yet wait upon her words;
Her murmurs dwell like cagèd birds.
I strive to part; my feet refuse.
The net of sweet desires is loose,
Yet thence my body will not move,
Faint with the sudden hands of Love.

3

Sweet and strange as ’t were a dream,
I have seen a vision gleam.
Lotus-flowers were his feet
Bearing moons a carcanet.
Rounded thighs and ankles smooth
Towered of the glorious youth,
And continual lightnings drape,
So I dreamed, that faultless shape.
Dark Calindie, by thy stream
Slowly went he in my dream.
And I dreamed of boughs that shone
With a row of moons thereon,
Fingers fair like young leaves born
With a rosy light of morn.
Flower-of-coral bloom his lips,
Over which Love’s parrot peeps,
And his eyes like wild birds wake
And each curl’s a little snake
Stung me. Twice I looked and then
With a sweet and sudden pain
Maddened. Ah, what Power is this
For a look can slay with bliss?
Even so leaps, O my dove,
Into the heart made for him, Love.

4

Ah who has built this girl of nectarous face?
        Ah who this matchless beauteous dove?
        An omen and a bounteous boon of love,
A garland of triumphant grace.

O glorious countenance and O shaded deep
        Delicious eyes for purple extolled,
        You dark-winged flutterers in that lily of gold
The splendour of the snake who keep!

Thy tendrilled down's a snake, to drink cool winds
        That from thy harbouring navel stirred
        But by the fancied bill of emperor-bird
Cowed to thy breast's hill-cavern winds.

The strong five-missiled Love with arrows three
        The three worlds conquered; two remained
        Which to thine eyes some cruel Fate did lend
To slay poor lovers' hearts with thee.

5

I saw not to the heart's desire.
Beautiful friend, that sight was fire
Of lightning and like lightning went:
My heart with the bright bolt was rent.
Her dim white robe like hoar-frost thin
Half from the shoulder had fallen in.
Her beautiful mouth half-smiled and half
A glance from under her lids did laugh.
Half-naked shone her breasts' sweet globes,
And half lay shadowy in her robes.
O then this bitter love and new!
Her body was of honey hue.
Her breasts, those cups of wondrous gold,
Love like a bodice did enfold;
The bodiless Love with subtle plan
To seize and hold the heart of man
With flowery cords his beauteous net
In the guise of a girl's breasts had set.
Her teeth, a row of pearls, did meet
Her moving lips and sweet, O sweet
As liquid honey her delicate speech.
Within me burned a pain like fire!
Mine eyes dwelt with her, yet could not reach,
Gazing, the bottom of desire.

6

Caanou to see I had desire,
Caanou seen, my life grew fire.
Thenceforth deep down, ah, foolish I,
In a great sea of love I lie.
Hardly I know, a girl and weak,
What these words mean my heart would speak.
Only my tears for ever rain,
Only my soul burns in its pain.
Ah wherefore, friend, did mine eyes see,
Friend of my bosom, thoughtlessly?
When a little mirth was all I planned,
I have given my life into another's hand.

I know not what this lovely thief
Did to me in that moment brief.
Surely such craft none yet possessed!
He robbed my heart out of its nest
Only with seeing, and gone is he
Taking my poor heart far from me.
And ah! his eyes did then express
Such tenderness, such tenderness,
The more I labour to forget
My very soul remembers it.
Mourn not, sweet girl, for thy heart's sake;
Who took thy heart, thyself at last shall take.

7

Lotus bosom, lotus feet,
Justify, I charge thee, sweet!
Knowing the true love thou hast won
Wilt thou not love back, lovely one?
Love in true hearts gold surpasses.
To the fire golden masses
Double price and beauty owe.
Loves by trial greater grow.
Love, my sweet, 's a wondrous thing
Imperishable in suffering.
Break it, but it will not break.
Love, like fibres of the lake,
Thrives on torture; beaten, grows;
Bleeding, thrills to sweeter rose.
Not from every elephant
Pearldrops ooze iridescent,
Not from all lips accents fall
Melodious as the cuckoo's call.
Every season is not Spring,
Every man love's perfect king,
Nor all women the world through
Always lovely, always true.
This is love, as sweet as rare;
Wilt thou spurn it, vainly fair?

8

How shall I tell of Caanou's beauty bright?
Men will believe it a vision of the night.

As lightning was his saffron garment blown
Over the beautiful cloud-limbs half-shown.

His coal-black curls assumed with regal grace
A peacock's plume above that moonlike face.

And such a fragrance fierce the mad wind wafts
Love wakes and trembles for his flowery shafts.

Yea, what shall words do, friend? Love's whole estate
Exhausted was that wonder to create.

9

Low on her radiant forehead shone
A star of the bright vermilion.
        O marvellous face! O shining maid!
Moonlight and sunlight drawn together
Met in a heaven of golden weather,
        While the massèd midnight hung afraid
        Behind in her burden of great dark hair.
O woman of moonlight rarer than Nature's!
O delicate body! O wonderful features!
        Whence did Fate build you with effort made fair?
The buds of her flowerlike breasts between
Her robe's white folds were a little seen.
The snows may cover the high bright hill,
Hidden it is not, strive as you will.

From her darkened eyes her shy look roving
        On lids love-troubled tenderly burned
Like the purple lilies winds were moving
        By the weight of a bee overturned.
Hearken, O girl, to Bidyapati
        And the lyre made sweet in the year's sweet end.
To Lochima, lady of Mithila city,
        And Sheva Singha the King, his friend.

10

The manèd steeds in the mountain glens for fear
Of these thy locks, O maiden, hide.
The moon at thy face from the high heaven doth peer
And thy voice alarms the cuckoo's pride.
Thy gait has driven the swan to the forest-mere
And the wild-deer flee thy large eyes' light.
Ah beautiful girl, why mute then to my love?
Lo, fear of thee all these to flight doth move;
Whom dost thou fear then, maiden bright?

The lotus-buds in the water closed reside
Thy paps being lovelier and the flame
Absorbs the pitcher and in air abide
The pomegranate and quince at thy breasts' sweet name.
Yea, Sheve doth swallow poison and in ooze
The golden lotus-stalk, lo, shuns
Thine arm and the new leaves shake these hands to see.
But ah! my weary lips refuse,
O'erstrained with honey-sweet comparisons,
All images to tell love taught to me.

11

Hide now thy face, O darling white,
Hide it well with thy robe's delight;
For the king has heard that one the moon
Has stolen and his sentinels soon
At each house stationed and each again,
Damsel beloved, will thee detain.
Laugh not thy lightning, O nectarous face!
Low and few from their sweet home press
The accents of that lyric voice.
Thy teeth make starlight, maiden choice!
And on the brow of the highborn girl
A vermeil drop and a shimmering pearl.
Hearken good counsel, beautiful maid;
Even in a dream be not afraid,
Spots has the moon, no beauty clear,
Stainèd is she, thou stainless, dear.

12

She looked on me a little, then
A little smile her lips o'erran
As though a moonbeam making bright
The darkness of the blessed night;
And from her eyes a lustrous glance
Fell shy and tenderly askance,
As though blue heaven's infinities
Were grown a sudden swarm of bees.
I know not whose she is, being fair:
I know she has my soul with her.
With a sweet fear as to deny
Her virgin soul to the honey-fly
That in the lotus' womb did play,
With startled feet and hurried look
The beauteous damsel went her way,
But with the hasty motion shook
The robe from her warm breasts of gold
Like lotus-flowers the heart to hold.
Half-hid, yet naked half, they seemed
To speak aloud the bliss they dreamed.
O sweet, O young desire! the dart
Of secret love leaves out no heart.

13

Upon a thorn when the flowers bloom,
Poor bee athirst for the rich perfume,
Cruel thy thirst, yet thou mayst not drink.
Upon the jasmine's honied brink
Lo the bee hovers and will have
Heart's pleasure nor cares his life to save.
O Radha, flower of honey, have pity
And grant thy lover's sad entreaty,
Pilgrim of honey thy lover, nor more
In maiden pride thy nectarous store
Deny. Alas! in thy rich bloom
The thirsty bee finds never a room.
O jasmine, save thy honey breast
He has forsworn all other rest.
On thee the sin, beautiful Rai,
Of the poor bee's death will surely lie.
O from thy lips the sweet boon give
Of heaven's honey and he will live.

14

A new Brindabun I see
And renewed each barren tree,
New flowers are blooming.
And another Spring is; new
Southern breezes chase the dew
With new bees roaming
And the sweet boy of Gocool strays
In new and freshly-blossoming ways.
The groves upon Calindie's shore
With his tender beauty bloom
Whose fresh-disturbèd heart brims o'er
With wild new-born loves o'ercome.

And the new, sweet cary-buds
Are wild with honey in the woods;
New birds are singing:
And the young girls wild with love
Run delighted to the grove,
New hearts bringing.
For young the heir of Gocool is
And young his passionate mistresses.
Meetings new and fresh love-rites,
Lights of ever-fresh desire,
Sports ever-new and new delights
Set Bidyapati's heart on fire.

15

Season of honey when sweets combine,
Honey-bees line upon line,
From sweet blossoms honied feet,
Honied blossoms and honey sweet.
O sweet is Brindabun today
And sweeter than these our Lord of May,
His maiden-train the sweets of earth,
Honey-girls with laughter and mirth,
Sports of love and dear delight
When instruments honey-sweet unite
Their sounds soul-moving, and sweet, O sweet
The smitten hands and the pacing feet.
Sweet the swaying dancer whirls,
Honied the movement of dancing girls,
And sweet as honey the love-song rings —
Sweet Bidyapati honey sings.

16

O friend, my friend, has pain a farther bound
Which sounds can utter, for which words are found?

Fiercely the flute's breath through me ran and thrilled,
My body with sweet dreadful sound was filled.

By violence that brooks not of control
The cruel music enters all my soul.

Then every limb enamoured swoons with shame
And every thought is wrapped in utter flame.

Yea, all my labouring body mightily
Was filled and panted with sweet agony.

I dared not lift my eyes. My elders spoke
Around me when that wave of passion broke,

And such a languor through my being crept,
My very robe no more its office kept.

With slow feet on their careful steps intent
Panting into the inner house I went.

Even yet I tremble from the peril past,
So fierce a charm the flute upon me cast.

17

Still in the highways wake nor dream
The citizens and with beam on beam
Moonlight clings to the universe.
New is her love, not to coerce
Nor lull, and yet with tremors she
The luminous wakeful night doth see.
What shifts will love on maids impose!
In a boy's dress to the tryst she goes.
She has loosened showering her ordered hair
New-fastened in a crest to wear;
The cloth of her body she doth treasure
About her in another measure
And since her bounteous breasts disdain
The robe's light government, she has ta'en
Over her heart an instrument.
In such guise to the grove she went
And in such guise met in the grove:
Her when he saw, the flower of love
Knew not though seen his darling bright,—
He doubted in his heart's despite.
Only when those dear limbs he touches
Her sweet identity he vouches.
What then befell? Sweet Love the rather
How many mirthful things did father!

18

O life is sweet but youth more bright.
O life, it is youth and youth is delight.
And what is youth if it be not this,
Love, true love, and love's long kiss?
Love that the noble heart conceives
Will leave thee never till life leaves.
Every day the moons increase,
Every day love greater is.
Of all girl-lovers thou art crown,
Caanou of youth the sole renown.
When hardest holiest deeds accrue,
Meet in this world two lovers true.
Stolen love, how sweet it is!
Two brief words its only keys;
Murmur but these and thou shalt hold
Secret delights a thousandfold.
So true a lover all wide earth
To another such gave never birth,
And Braja's hearts with love are wild
Of the noble gracious child.
Haste to thy king, sweet, pay him duty
Of thy loving heart and beauty.

19

Angry beauty, be not loth!
I will swear a holy oath.
On thy garland's serpent fold,
On thy sacred breasts of gold
Here I lay my yearning hand.

If I leave thee, if I touch
Other lady of delight,
Let this snake my bosom bite.
If thou deem my error such,
Be thy malice on me spent
In many an amorous punishment.
Bind my body with thine arms,
Scourge my limbs with pretty harms,
Press my panting heart with weight
Of thy sweet breasts passionate,
In thy labouring bosom deep
Night and day thy prisoner keep.
Punishments like these demand
Love's sweet sins from love's sweet hand.

Selected Poems of Nidhou

1

Eyes of the hind, you are my jailors, sweetest;
My heart with the hind's frightened motion fleetest
        In terror strange would flee,
But find no issue, sweet; for thy quick smiling,
Thy tresses like a net with threads beguiling
        Detain it utterly.

I am afraid of thy great eyes and well-like,
I am afraid of thy small ears and shell-like,
        And everything in thee.
Comfort my fainting heart with soft assurance
And soon it will grow tame and love its durance,
        Hearing such melody.

2

Line not with these dark rings thy bright eyes ever!
    Such keen shafts are enough to slay unaided;
To tip the barbs with venom why endeavour?
    O then no heart could live thy glance invaded.

Why any live wouldst thou have explanation?
Three powers have thine eyes of grievous passion.
    The first is poison making them death's portal,
The second wine of strong intoxication;
    The third is nectar that makes gods immortal.

3

If the heart's hope were never satisfied,
Then no man could for long his life retain.
The cloud to which the impatient rain-lark cried
Contents at last the suffering bird with rain
And bids him not to thirst for ever.

And see the lamp with the moth flitting near it;
A little forward and he swells the fire.
But he invites that end and does not fear it,
Gladly he burns himself at love's desire.
In bliss to die is his endeavour.

4

What else have I to give thee? I have yielded
My heart at thy discretion,
And is there than the heart a closer-shielded
Reluctant sweet possession?
Dear, if thou know of such as yet ungiven,
I will not grudge but yielding think it heaven.

5

My eyes are lost in thine as in great rivers,
My soul is in their depths of beauty drownèd.
Love in thine eyes three sacred streams delivers,
Whose waves with crests of rushing speed are crownèd.

The wind of love has stirred thy fluttering lashes,
The tide of love heaves in thy sweet emotion;
My beating heart feels as it seaward washes
Billows of passion rush a stormy ocean.

6

Sweet, gaze not always on thine own face in the mirror,
Lest looking so on thine own wondrous beauty,
Thou lose the habit of thy queenly duty
And thy poor subject quite forget.
Well may I fear such fatal error,
Since they who always on their own wealth look,
Grow misers and to spend it cannot brook,
Lest thou like these grow miser of thy beauty, sweet.

7

Why gazing in the glass I stand nor move
As rapt in bliss, hast thou not then divined?
Because thy home is in my eyes, dear love
And gazing there I gaze on thee enshrined.
And therefore must my face seen in the glass
In beauty my own former face surpass.
Thine own eyes, sweet suspecter, long have known
I love my beauty for their sake alone.

8

He whom I woo makes with me no abiding;
He whom I shun parts not for all my chiding.
Absence I quite contemn; he loves nor loves me;
Union my life is; ever he deceives me.

9

Cease, clouds of autumn, cease to roll;
Your thunders slay a poor girl's soul.
Love of my heart, in distant lands thou roamest.

The musical rich sound of rain
But touching me, ah, turns to pain.
Love of my heart, in distant lands thou roamest.

The pleasant daylight brings delay
Of added infelicity
Because of one face far away,
Grief of heart where joy should be.
Love of my heart, in distant lands thou roamest.

The glorious lightning as it burns
Goes shuddering through my body faint
And my sad eyes remembrance turns
Into moist fountains of complaint.
Love of my heart, in distant lands thou roamest.

Cease, clouds of autumn, cease to roll;
Your thunders slay a poor girl's soul.
Love of my heart, in distant lands thou roamest.

10

The Spring is here, sweet friend, the Spring is here
And all his captains brings to make me moan.
How many dreadful armèd things appear
One by one.

The cuckoo of his black bands captain is,
The full moon marshals his white companies.

The nectared moon grows poisonous as a snake;
A venomed arrow is the murmuring bee.
The cuckoo's cunning note my heart doth break
Utterly.

11

Ere I had taken half my will of joy,
Why hast thou, Night, with cruel swiftness ceased?
To slay a woman's heart with sad annoy,
O ruddy Dawn, thou openest in the east.
The whispering world begins in dawn's red shining,
Nor will Night stay one hour for lovers' pining.
Ere love is done, must Dawn our love discover?

Ah why should lovers' blissful meeting
Mix so soon with parting's sorrow?
On happy night come heavy morrow?
Night will not stay for love's entreating.
Ere love was done, ah me! the night was over.

12

Nay, though thy absence was a tardy fire,
Yet in such meeting is a worse derision;
For never yet the passionate eyes' desire
Drew comfort from such momentary vision.
Who ever heard of great heats soon expended,
Huge fire with a little burning ended?

13

I said in anger, "When next time he prays,
I will be sullen and repulse his charms."
Ah me! but when I saw my lover's face,
I quite forgot and rushed into his arms.

Mine eyes said, "We will joy in him no longer;
Vainly let him entreat nor pardon crave."
He came, nor pardon asked; my bonds grew stronger,
I am become more helplessly his slave.

14

Ah sweet, thou hast not understood my love, —
This is my grief, thou hast not understood.
Else would my heart's pain thy compassion move,
Who in my heart persistest like heart's blood.
When I am dead, then wilt thou pity prove
And with thy sorrow on deaf ears intrude?
This is my grief, thou hast not understood.

15

How much thou didst entreat! with what sweet wooing
Thou hast bewitched my soul to love thee!
Now when I've loved thee to my own undoing,
O marvel! all my piteous tears and suing
To bless me with thy presence cannot move thee.

Would I, if I had known ere all was over,
Have given my heart for thy sole pleasure?
So sweet thy words, I fell in love with loving
And gave my heart, the very roots removing.
How could I know that thy love had a measure?

16

How could I know that he was waiting only
For an excuse to leave me?
I was so sure he loved me, not one lonely
Suspicion came to grieve me.

But now a small offence his pretext making
He has buried Love and left me;
Blithely has gone, his whole will of me taking,
Having of bliss bereft me.

Too well he knows my grief of heart, not caring
Tho' it break through his disdain.
I sit forsaken, all my beauty wearing
But as a crown of pain.

17

Into the hollow of whose hand my heart
I gave once, surely thinking him my lover,
How shall I now forget him? by what art
My captive soul recover?

I took Love's graver up and slow portrayed
His beauty on my soul with lingering care.
How shall the etching from its background fade,
Burnt in so deeply there?

"He has forgotten thee, forget him thou;"
All say to me, "a vain thing is regret."
Ah yes, that day when death is on my brow,
I shall indeed forget.

18

Hast thou remembered me at last, my own
And therefore come after so many days?
When man has once drained love and elsewhere flown,
Does he return to the forgotten face?
Therefore I think by error thou hast come,
Or else a passing pity led thee home.

19

I did not dream, O love, that I
Would ever have thee back again.
The sunflower drooping hopelessly
Expects no sun to end her pain.

I did not dream my lord would show
Favour to his poor slave-girl more,
That I should mix my eyes as now
With the dear eyes I panted for.

I did not dream my huge desire
Would be filled full and grief be over,
But burning in love's bitter fire
With hopeless longing for my lover,

One thought alone possessed thy slave,
"Lord of my life, where art thou gone?
Wilt thou not come that life to save?"
Dumbly this thought and this alone.

20

In true sweet love what more than utter bliss is,
He only knows who is himself true lover.
As moonbird seeks the moon, she seeks his kisses,
Liberal of nectar he yearns down above her.

Selected Poems of Horo Thacoor

1

(The soul beset by God wishes to surrender itself.)

Who is this with smearèd limbs
    Of sandal wreathed with forest blossom?
For a beauty in him gleams
    Earth bears not on her mortal bosom.

He his hair with bloom has crowned,
    And many bees come murmuring, swarming.
Who is he that with sweet sound
    Arrests our feet, our hearts alarming?

Daily came I to the river,
    Daily passed these boughs of blessing,
But beneath their shadow never
    Saw such beauty heart-caressing.

Like a cloud yet moist with rain
    His hue is, robe of masquerader.
Ah, a girl's soul out to win
    Outposts here what amorous raider?

Ankle over ankle lays
    And moonbeams from his feet make glamour;
When he moves, at every pace
    His body's sweets Love's self enamour.

A strange wish usurps my mind;
    My youth, my beauty, ah, life even
At his feet if I resigned
    Were not that rich surrender heaven?

2

(The soul catching a reflection of God's face in the river of the world, is enchanted with its beauty.)

Lolita, say
What is this strange, sweet thing I watch today,
Fixed lightning in the water's quiet dreaming?

Lolita, none
Disturb a single wave here, even one!
Great is her sin who blots the vision gleaming.

Lolita, see
What glimmers in the wave so wondrously?
Of Crishna's limbs it has each passionate motion.

Lolita, then
To lure my soul comes that dark rose of men
In a shadow's form, and witch with strange emotion?

Lolita, daily
To bring sweet water home we troop here gaily,
But never yet saw in the waves such beauty.

Lolita, tell me
Why do so many strange sweet thoughts assail me,
As moonbloom petals to the moon pay duty?

Lolita, may
This be the moon eclipsed that fain would stay
In the clear water being from heaven effacèd?

Lolita, no
The moon is to the lotus bright a foe;
But this! my heart leaps forward to embrace it.

3

(The same)

Look, Lolita, the stream one loves so
And water brings each day!
But what is this strange light that moves so,
In Jamouna today?

What is it shining, heaving, glimmering,
Is it a flower or face
Thus shimmering with the water's shimmering
And swaying as it sways?

Is it a lotus darkly blooming
In Jamouna's clear stream?
What else the depths opaque illuming
Could with such beauty claim?

Is it his shadow whom dark-burning
In sudden bloom we see
When with our brimming jars returning
We pass the tamal-tree?

Is there in upper heavens or under
A moon that's dark of hue?
By daylight does that moon of wonder
Its mystic dawn renew?

4

(The soul recognizes the Eternal for whom it has failed in its earthly conventional duties and incurred the censure of the world.)

I know him by the eyes all hearts that ravish,
For who is there beside him?
O honey grace of amorous sweetness lavish!

I know him by his dark compelling beauty;
Once only having spied him
For him I stained my honour, scorned my duty.

I know him by his feet of moonbeam brightness;
Because for their sake purely
I live and move, my name is taxed with lightness.

Ah now I know him surely.

5

(The soul finds that the Eternal is attracted to other than itself and grows jealous.)

O fondly hast thou loved, thyself deceiving,
    But he thou lovest truth nor kindness keeps;
His tryst thou servest, disappointed, grieving, —
    He on another's lovelier bosom sleeps.

With Chundra's sweets he honeys out the hours.
    If thou believe not, come and thou wilt find him
In night's pale close upon a bed of flowers,
    Thy Shyama with those alien arms to bind him.

For I have seen her languid swooning charms
    And I have seen his burning lovely youth,
Bound breast to breast with close entwining arms
    And mouth upon inseparable mouth.

6

(The Eternal departing from the soul to his kingdom of action and its duties, the latter bemoans its loneliness.)

What are these wheels whose sudden thunder
Alarms the ear with ominous noise?
Who brought this chariot to tread under
Gocool, our Paradise?
Watching the wheels our hearts are rent asunder.

Alas! and why is Crishna standing
With Ocroor in the moving car?
To Mothura is he then wending,
To Mothura afar,
The anguish in our eyes not understanding?

What fault, what fault in Radha finding
Hast thou forsaken her who loved thee,
Her tears upon thy feet not minding?
Once surely they had moved thee!
O Radha's lord, what fault in Radha finding?

But Shyama, dost thou recollect not,
That we have left all for thy sake?
Of other thought, of other love we recked not,
Labouring thy love to wake.
Thy love's the only thought our minds reject not.

Hast thou forgot how we came running
At midnight when the moon was full,
Called by thy flute's enamoured crooning,
Musician beautiful,
Shame and reproach for thy sake never shunning?

To please thee was our sole endeavour,
To love thee was our sole delight;
This was our sin; for this, O lover,
Dost thou desert us quite?
Is it therefore thou forsakest us for ever?

Ah why should I forbid thee so?
To Mothura let the wheels move thee,
To Mothura if thy heart go,
For the sad souls that love thee,
That thou art happy is enough to know.

But O with laughing face half-willing,
With eyes that half a glance bestow
Once only our sad eyes beguiling
Look backward ere thou go,
On Braja's neatherdess once only smiling.

One last look all our life through burning,
One last look of our dear delight
And then to watch the great wheels turning
Until they pass from sight,
Hopeless to see those well-loved feet returning.

All riches that we had, alone
Thou wast, therefore forlorn we languish;
From empty breasts we make our moan.
Our souls with the last anguish
Smiting in careless beauty thou art gone!

7

(The soul longs for reunion with God, without whom the sweetnesses of love and life are vain.)

All day and night in lonely anguish wasting
    The heart's wish to the lips unceasing comes, —
"O that I had a bird's wings to go hasting
        Where that dark wanderer roams!
I should behold the flute on loved lips resting."

Where shall I find him, joy in his sweet kisses?
    How shall I hope my love's feet to embrace?
O void is home and vain affection's bliss is
        Without the one loved face.
Crishna who has nor home nor kindred misses.

Selected Poems of Ganodas

1

(The soul, as yet divided from the Eternal, yet having caught a glimpse of his intoxicating beauty, grows passionate in remembrance and swoons with the sensuous expectation of union.)

O beauty meant all hearts to move!
O body made for girls to kiss!
In every limb an idol of love,
A spring of passion and of bliss.

The eyes that once his beauty see,
Poor eyes! can never turn away.
The heart follows him ceaselessly
Like a wild beast behind its prey.

Not to be touched those limbs, alas!
They are another's nest of joy.
But ah their natural loveliness!
Ah God, the dark, the wonderful boy!

His graceful sportive motion sweet
Is as an ornament to earth,
And from his lovely pacing feet
Beauties impossible take birth.

Catching one look not long nor sure,
One look of casual glory shed,
How many noble maidens pure
Lay down on love as on a bed.

The heart within the heart deep hid
He ravishes; almost in play
One looks, — ere falling of the lid,
Her heart has gone with him away!

Oh if his eyes wake such sweet pain
That even sleep will not forget,
What dreadful sweetness waits me when
Body and passionate body meet?

2

(The human Spirit has undertaken with Nature its nurse to cross the deep river of life in the frail and ragged boat of the human mind and senses; storms arising, it flings itself in terror at the feet of the divine boatman and offers itself to him as the price of safety.)

Ah nurse, what will become of us? This old
    And weary, battered boat,
No iron its decrepit planks to hold,
    Hardly it keeps afloat.

The solemn deep unquiet awful river
    Fathomless, secret, past
All plummet with a wind begins to quiver;
    The storm arises fast.

Jamouna leaps into the boat uplifting
    A cry of conquering waves;
The boat is tossed, the boat is whirled; the shifting
    Large billows part like graves.

The boat hurls down with the mad current fleeing,
    Ah pity, oarsman sweet,
I lay myself for payment, body and being
    Abandoned at thy feet.

3

(The Eternal replies that the beauty of human souls has driven out all care for or art of guidance in the phenomenal world and unless the latter reveal themselves naked of earthly desires and gratify his passion, they must sink in the Ocean of life.)

In vain my hands bale out the waves inleaping,
The boat is drowning, drowning;
A storm comes over the great river sweeping;
Huge billows rise up frowning.

The rudder from my hand is wrenched in shivers,
Death stares in all his starkness.
The boat is tossed and whirled, and the great river's
Far banks plunge into darkness.

What can I do? Jamouna's rising, surging
To take us to her clasp,
And the fierce rush of waters hurries urging
The rudder from my grasp.

Never I knew till now, nor any word in
The mouths of men foretold
That a girl's beauty was too great a burden
For one poor boat to hold.

Come, make you bare, throw off your robes, each maiden;
Your naked beauties bring,
Lighten your bodies of their sweets o'erladen;
Then I'll resume rowing.

Girls, you have made me drunk with milk and sweetness,
You have bewitched my soul.
My eyes can judge no more the wind's fierce fleetness,
Nor watch the waters roll.

They are fixed in you, they are tangled in your tresses,
They will never turn again.
Where I should see the waves, I see your faces,
Your bosoms, not the rain.

You will not let me live, you are my haters,
Your eyes have caused my death.
I feel the boat sink down in the mad waters,
Down, down the waves beneath.

4

She. For love of thee I gave all life's best treasures.
He. For love of thee I left my princely pleasures.
She. For love of thee I roam in woodland ways.
He. For love of thee the snowwhite kine I graze.
She. For love of thee I don the robe of blue.
He. For love of thee I wear thy golden hue.
She. For love of thee my spotless name was stained.
He. For love of thee my father was disdained.
She. Thy love has changed my whole world into thee.
He. Thy love has doomed mine eyes one face to see.
She. Save love of thee no thought my sense can move.
He. Thee, thee I cherish and thy perfect love.

5

(The divine Soul pities, stays and comforts the human, which is set to toil in the heat and dust of life by its lord the world and its elders, the laws and ways of the world.)

Neatherdess, my star!
What has led to fields so far
The loveliest face and limbs ever created?
Love's heart cries out beholding all
Thy potent beauty natural;
The world is with thy robe intoxicated.

Rest by me a space,
I will fan thy lovely face,
Lest the sun gaze on it with too much nearness.
Alas, thy little rosy feet,
How canst thou walk upon them, sweet?
My body aches to see their tired fairness.

Elders stone of heart!
They have sent to the mart
Far-distant in their callous greed of earning.
How shall thy own lord long avoid
Lightning whose breast of softness void
Endured to send thee through this heat and burning?

Thy soft cheeks that burn
Laughing shyly thou dost turn
Away still, all thy shamefast bosom veiling.
This is no way to sell, sweet maid!
When such divine saleswomen trade,
Honey-sweet words help best their rich retailing.

6

(The divine Soul besets the human as it fares upon the business of life, adorned and beautiful and exacts dues of love.)

Beautiful Radha, Caanou dost thou see not
Toll-keeper here, that thou wouldst pass by stealth;
But I have caught thee fast and thou shalt go not
Until thou give me toll of all thy wealth.

First thine eyes' unguent, then thy star vermilion,
For these a million kisses I extort,
Upon thy bosom's vest I fix two million
And the stringed pearls that with thy bosom sport.

For bracelets fine to these thy small wrists clinging
And jewelled belt three million kisses say,
This red lac on thy feet and anklets bringing
Four million thou hast doomed thy lips to pay.

These thy king asks nor will one jot recall;
These yield me patiently in law's due course
Or here amidst thy damsels from thy small
Red mouth I will extort my dues by force.

7

(The human soul, in a moment of rapt excitement when the robe of sense has fallen from it, is surprised and seized by the vision of the Eternal.)

I will lay bare my heart's whole flame,
To thee, heart's sister, yea the whole.
The darkhued limbs I saw in dream,
To these I have given my body and soul.

It was a night of wildest showers;
Ever incessant and amain
The heavens thundered through the hours,
Outside was pattering of the rain.

Exulting in the lightning's gleams,
Joyous, I lay down on my bed;
The dress had fallen from my limbs,
I slept with rumours overhead.

The peacocks in the treetops high
Between their gorgeous dances shrilled,
The cuckoo cried exultantly,
The frogs were clamorous in the field;

And ever with insistent chime
The bird of rumour shrieking fled
Amidst the rain; at such a time
A vision stood beside my bed.

He moved like fire into my soul,
The love of him became a part
Of being, and oh his whispers stole
Murmuring in and filled my heart.

His loving ways, his tender wiles,
The hearts that feel, ah me! so burn
That maidens pure with happy smiles
From shame and peace and honour turn.

The lustre of his looks effaced
The moon, of many lovely moods
He is the master; on his breast
There was a wreath of jasmine buds.

Holding my feet, down on the bed
He sat; my breasts were fluttering birds;
His hands upon my limbs he laid,
He bought me for his slave with words.

O me his eyebrows curved like bows!
O me his panther body bright!
Love from his sidelong glances goes
And takes girls prisoner at sight.

He speaks with little magic smiles
That force a girl's heart from her breast.
How many sweet ways he beguiles,
I know; they cannot be expressed.

Burning he tore me from my bed
And to his passionate bosom clutched;
I could not speak a word; he said
Nothing, his lips and my lips touched.

My body almost swooned away
And from my heart went fear and shame
And maiden pride; panting I lay
And felt him round me like a flame.

Section Two

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

Hymn to the Mother

Bande Mataram

Mother, I bow to thee!
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Cool with thy winds of delight,
Dark fields waving, Mother of might,
Mother free.
Glory of moonlight dreams
Over thy branches and lordly streams, —
Clad in thy blossoming trees,
Mother, giver of ease,
Laughing low and sweet!
Mother, I kiss thy feet,
Speaker sweet and low!
Mother, to thee I bow.

Who hath said thou art weak in thy lands,
When the swords flash out in twice seventy million hands
And seventy million voices roar
Thy dreadful name from shore to shore?
With many strengths who art mighty and stored,
To thee I call, Mother and Lord!
Thou who savest, arise and save!
To her I cry who ever her foemen drave
Back from plain and sea
And shook herself free.

Thou art wisdom, thou art law,
Thou our heart, our soul, our breath,

Thou the love divine, the awe
In our hearts that conquers death.
Thine the strength that nerves the arm,
Thine the beauty, thine the charm.
Every image made divine
In our temples is but thine.

Thou art Durga, Lady and Queen,
With her hands that strike and her swords of sheen,
Thou art Lakshmi lotus-throned,
And the Muse a hundred-toned.
Pure and perfect without peer,
Mother, lend thine ear.
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Dark of hue, O candid-fair
In thy soul, with jewelled hair
And thy glorious smile divine,
Loveliest of all earthly lands,
Showering wealth from well-stored hands!
Mother, mother mine!
Mother sweet, I bow to thee,
Mother great and free!

Bande Mataram

(*Translation in Prose*)

I bow to thee, Mother,
richly-watered, richly-fruited,
cool with the winds of the south,
dark with the crops of the harvests,
the Mother!
Her nights rejoicing in the glory of the moonlight,
her lands clothed beautifully with her trees in flowering bloom,
sweet of laughter, sweet of speech,
the Mother, giver of boons, giver of bliss!

Terrible with the clamorous shout of seventy million throats,
and the sharpness of swords raised in twice seventy million hands,
who sayeth to thee, Mother, that thou art weak?
Holder of multitudinous strength,
I bow to her who saves,
to her who drives from her the armies of her foemen,
the Mother!

Thou art knowledge, thou art conduct,
thou our heart, thou our soul,
for thou art the life in our body.
In the arm thou art might, O Mother,
in the heart, O Mother, thou art love and faith,
it is thy image we raise in every temple.

For thou art Durga holding her ten weapons of war,

Translator's Note. It is difficult to translate the National Anthem of Bengal into verse in another language owing to its unique union of sweetness, simple directness and high poetic force. All attempts in this direction have been failures. In order, therefore, to bring the reader unacquainted with Bengali nearer to the exact force of the original, I give the translation in prose line by line.

Kamala at play in the lotuses
and Speech, the goddess, giver of all lore,
to thee I bow!
I bow to thee, goddess of wealth,
pure and peerless,
richly-watered, richly-fruited,
the Mother!
I bow to thee, Mother,
dark-hued, candid,
sweetly smiling, jewelled and adorned,
the holder of wealth, the lady of plenty,
the Mother!

Anandamath

THE FIRST THIRTEEN CHAPTERS

Prologue

A WIDE interminable forest. Most of the trees are *sals*, but other kinds are not wanting. Treetop mingling with treetop, foliage melting into foliage, the interminable lines progress; without crevice, without gap, without even a way for the light to enter, league after league and again league after league the boundless ocean of leaves advances, tossing wave upon wave in the wind. Underneath, thick darkness; even at midday the light is dim and uncertain; a seat of terrific gloom. There the foot of man never treads; there except the illimitable rustle of the leaves and the cry of wild beasts and birds, no sound is heard.

In this interminable, impenetrable wilderness of blind gloom, it is night. The hour is midnight and a very dark midnight; even outside the woodland it is dark and nothing can be seen. Within the forest the piles of gloom are like the darkness in the womb of the earth itself.

Bird and beast are utterly and motionlessly still. What hundreds of thousands, what millions of birds, beasts, insects, flying things have their dwelling within that forest, but not one is giving forth a sound. Rather the darkness is within the imagination, but inconceivable is that noiseless stillness of the ever-murmurous, ever noise-filled earth. In that limitless empty forest, in the solid darkness of that midnight, in that unimaginable silence there was a sound, "Shall the desire of my heart ever be fulfilled?"

After that sound the forest reaches sank again into stillness. Who would have said then that a human sound had been heard in those wilds? A little while after, the sound came again, again the voice of man rang forth troubling the hush, "Shall the desire of my heart ever be fulfilled?"

Three times the wide sea of darkness was thus shaken. Then the answer came, "What is the stake put down?"

The first voice replied, “I have staked my life and all its riches.”

The echo answered, “Life! it is a small thing which all can sacrifice.”

“What else is there? What more can I give?”

This was the answer, “Thy soul’s worship.”

Chapter I

IT WAS a summer day of the Bengali year 1176. The glare and heat of the sun lay very heavy on the village of Padchinha. The village was crowded with houses, yet there was not a man to be seen. Line upon line of shops in the bazaar, row upon row of booths in the mart, hundreds of earthen houses interspersed with stone mansions high and low in every quarter. But today all was silent. In the bazaar the shops are closed, and where the shopkeeper has fled no man can tell. It is market day today, but in the mart there is no buying and selling. It is the beggars' day but the beggars are not out. The weaver has shut up his loom and lies weeping in his house; the trader has forgotten his traffic and weeps with his infant in his lap; the givers have left giving and the teachers closed their schools; the very infant, it would seem, has no longer heart to cry aloud. No wayfarers are to be seen in the highways, no bathers in the lake, no human forms at door and threshold, no birds in the trees, no cattle in the pastures, only in the burning-ground dog and jackal crowd. In that crowded desolation of houses one huge building whose great fluted pillars could be seen from afar, rose glorious as the peak of a hill. And yet where was the glory? The doors were shut, the house empty of the concourse of men, hushed and voiceless, difficult even to the entry of the wind. In a room within this dwelling where even noon was a darkness, in that darkness, like a pair of lilies flowering in the midnight, a wedded couple sat in thought. Straight in front of them stood Famine.

The harvest of the year 1174 had been poor, consequently in the year 1175 rice was a little dear; the people suffered, but the Government exacted its revenues to the last fraction of a farthing. As a result of this careful reckoning the poor began to eat only once a day. The rains in 1175 were copious and people thought Heaven had taken pity on the land. Joyously once more the herdsman sang his ditty in the fields, the tiller's wife again began to tease her husband for a silver bracelet. Suddenly in the month of Aswin Heaven turned away its face. In Aswin and Kartik not a drop of rain fell; the grain in the fields withered and turned to straw as it stood. Wherever an ear or two flourished, the officials bought it for the troops. The people no longer had anything to eat. First they stinted themselves of one meal in the day, then even from their single meal they rose with half-filled stomachs, next the two meal-times became two fasts. The little harvest reaped in Chaitra was not enough to fill the hungry mouths. But Mahomed Reza Khan, who was in charge of the revenues, thought fit to show himself off as a loyal servant and immediately enhanced the taxes by ten per cent. Throughout Bengal arose a clamour of great weeping.

First, people began to live by begging, but afterwards who could give alms? They began to fast. Next they fell into the clutch of disease. The cow was sold, plough and yoke were sold, the seed-rice was eaten, hearth and home were sold, land and goods were sold. Next they began to sell their girls. After that they began to sell their boys. After that they began to sell their wives. Next girl, boy, or wife, — who would buy? Purchasers there were none, only sellers. For want of food men began to eat the leaves of trees, they began to eat grass, they began to eat weeds. The lower castes and the forest men began devouring dogs, mice and cats. Many fled, but those who fled only reached some foreign land to die of starvation. Those who remained ate uneatables or subsisted without food till disease took hold of them and they died.

Disease had its day, — fever, cholera, consumption, smallpox. The virulence of smallpox was especially great. In every house men began to perish of the disease. There was none to give water to his fellow, none who would touch him, none to treat the sick. Men would not turn to care for each other's sufferings, nor was there any to take up the corpse from where it lay. Beautiful bodies lay rotting in wealthy mansions. For where once the smallpox made its entry, the dwellers fled from the house and abandoned the sick man in their fear.

Mohendra Singha was a man of great wealth in the village of Padchinha, but today rich and poor were on one level. In this time of crowding afflictions his relatives, friends, servants, maidservants had all been seized by disease and gone from him. Some had died, some had fled. In that once peopled household there was only himself, his wife and one infant girl. This was the couple of whom I spoke.

The wife, Kalyani, gave up thinking and went to the cowshed to milk the cow; then she warmed the milk, fed her child and went again to give the cow its grass and water. When she returned from her task Mohendra said, "How long can we go on in this way?"

"Not long;" answered Kalyani, "as long as we can. So long as possible I will keep things going, afterwards you and the girl can go to the town."

Mohendra. "If we have to go to the town at the end, why should I inflict all this trouble on you at all? Come, let us go at once."

After much arguing and contention between husband and wife, Kalyani said, "Will there be any particular advantage in going to the town?"

Mohendra. "Very possibly that place too is as empty of men and empty of means of subsistence as we are here."

Kalyani. "If you go to Murshidabad, Cassimbazar or Calcutta, you may save your life. It is in every way best to leave this place."

Mohendra answered, "This house has been full for many years of the gathered wealth of generations. All this will be looted by thieves!"

Kalyani. "If thieves come to loot it, shall we two be able to protect the treasure? If life is not saved who will be there to enjoy? Come, let us shut up the whole place this moment and go. If we survive, we can come back and enjoy what remains."

"Will you be able to do the journey on foot?" asked Mohendra. "The palanquin-bearers are all dead. As for cart or carriage, where there are bullocks there is no driver and where there is a driver there are no bullocks."

Kalyani. "Oh, I shall be able to walk, do not fear."

In her heart she thought, even if she fell and died on the way, these two at least would be saved.

The next day at dawn the two took some money with them, locked up room and door, let loose the cattle, took the child in their arms and set out for the capital. At the time of starting Mohendra said, "The road is very difficult, at every step dacoits and highwaymen are hovering about, it is not well to go empty-handed." So saying Mohendra returned to the house and took from it musket, shot, and powder.

When she saw the weapon, Kalyani said, "Since you have remembered to take arms with you, hold Sukumari for a moment and I too will bring a weapon with me." With the words she put her daughter into Mohendra's arms and in her turn entered the house.

Mohendra called after her, "Why, what weapon can you take with you?"

As she came, Kalyani hid a small casket of poison in her dress. Fearing what fate might befall her in these days of misfortune, she had already procured and kept the poison with her.

It was the month of Jyaistha, a savage heat, the earth as if aflame, the wind scattering fire, the sky like a canopy of heated copper, the dust of the road like sparks of fire. Kalyani began to perspire profusely. Now resting under the shade of a babla-tree, now sitting in the shelter of a date-palm, drinking the muddy water of dried ponds, with great difficulty she journeyed forward. The girl was in Mohendra's arms and sometimes he fanned her with his robe. Once the two refreshed themselves, seated under the boughs of a creeper-covered tree flowering with odorous blooms and dark-hued with dense shade-giving foliage. Mohendra wondered to see Kalyani's endurance under fatigue. He drenched his robe with water from a neighbouring pool and sprinkled it on his and Kalyani's face, forehead, hands and feet.

Kalyani was a little cooled and refreshed, but both of them were distressed with great hunger. That could be borne, but the hunger and thirst of their child could not be endured, so they resumed their march. Swimming through those waves of fire they arrived before evening at an inn. Mohendra had cherished a great hope that on reaching the inn he would be able to give cool water to his wife and child to drink and food to save their lives. But he met with a great disappointment. There was not a man in the inn. Big rooms were lying empty, the men had all fled. Mohendra after looking about the place made his wife and daughter lie down in one of the rooms. He began to call from outside in a loud voice, but got no answer. Then Mohendra said to Kalyani, "Will you have a little courage and stay here alone? If there is a cow to be found in this region, may Sri Krishna have pity on us and I shall bring you some milk." He took an earthen waterjar in his hand and went out. A number of such jars were lying about the place.

Chapter II

MOHENDRA departed. Left alone with no one near her but a little girl, Kalyani in that solitary and unpeopled place, in that almost pitch-dark cottage began to study closely every side. Great fear was upon her. No one anywhere, no sound of human existence to be heard, only the howling of the dogs and the jackals. She regretted letting her husband go, — hunger and thirst might after all have been borne a little longer. She thought of shutting all the doors and sitting in the security of the closed house. But not a single door had either panel or bolt. As she was thus gazing in every direction suddenly something in the doorway that faced her caught her eye, something like a shadow. It seemed to her to have the shape of a man and yet not to be human. Something utterly dried up and withered, something like a very black, a naked and terrifying human shape had come and was standing at the door. After a little while the shadow seemed to lift a hand, — with the long withered finger of a long withered hand, all skin and bone, it seemed to make a motion of summons to someone outside. Kalyani's heart dried up in her with fear. Then just such another shadow, withered, black, tall, naked, came and stood by the side of the first. Then another came and yet another came. Many came, — slowly, noiselessly they began to enter the room. The room with its almost blind darkness grew dreadful as a midnight burning-ground. All those corpselike figures gathered round Kalyani and her daughter. Kalyani almost swooned away. Then the black withered men seized and lifted up the woman and the girl, carried them out of the house and entered into a jungle across the open fields.

A few minutes afterwards Mohendra arrived with the milk in the waterjar. He found the whole place empty. Hither and thither he searched, often called aloud his daughter's name and at last even his wife's. There was no answer, he could find no trace of his wife and child.

Chapter III

IT WAS a very beautiful woodland in which the robbers set down Kalyani. There was no light, no eye to see the loveliness, — the beauty of the wood remained invisible like the beauty of soul in a poor man's heart. There might be no food in the country, but there was wealth of flowers in the woodland; so thick was the fragrance that even in that darkness one seemed to be conscious of a light. On a clear spot in the middle covered with soft grass the thieves set down Kalyani and her child and themselves sat around them. Then they began to debate what to do with them, for what ornaments Kalyani had with her were already in their possession. One group was very busy with the division of this booty. But when the ornaments had been divided, one of the robbers said, "What are we to do with gold and silver? Someone give me a handful of rice in exchange for an ornament; I am tortured with hunger, I have eaten today nothing but the leaves of trees." No sooner had one so spoken than all echoed him and a clamour arose. "Give us rice, give us rice, we do not want gold and silver!" The leader tried to quiet them, but no one listened to him. Gradually high words began to be exchanged, abuse flowed freely, a fight became imminent. Everyone in a rage pelted the leader with his whole allotment of ornaments. He also struck one or two and this brought all of them upon him striking at him in a general assault. The robber captain was emaciated and ill with starvation, one or two blows laid him prostrate and lifeless. Then one in that hungry, wrathful, excited, maddened troop of plunderers cried out, "We have eaten the flesh of dogs and jackals and now we are racked with hunger; come, friends, let us feast today on this rascal." Then all began to shout aloud "Glory to Kali! Bom Kali!! today we will eat human flesh." And with this cry those black emaciated corpselike figures began to shout with laughter and dance and clap their hands in the congenial darkness. One of them set about lighting a fire to roast the body of the leader. He gathered dried creepers, wood and grass, struck flint and iron and set light to the collected fuel. As the fire burned up a little, the dark green foliage of the trees that were neighbours to the spot, mango, lemon, jackfruit and palm, tamarind and date, were lit up faintly with the flames. Here the leaves seemed ablaze, there the grass brightened in the light; in some places the darkness only became more crass and deep. When the fire was ready, one began to drag the corpse by the leg and was about to throw it on the fire, but another intervened and said "Drop it! stop, stop! if it is on the grand meat that we must keep ourselves alive today, then why the tough and juiceless flesh of this old fellow? We shall eat what we have looted and brought with us today. Come along, there is that tender girl, let us roast and eat her." Another said "Roast anything you like, my good fellow, but roast it; I can stand this hunger no longer." Then all gazed greedily towards the place where Kalyani and her daughter had lain. They saw the place empty; neither child nor mother was there. Kalyani had seen her opportunity when the robbers were disputing, taken her daughter into her arms, put the child's mouth to her breast and fled into the wood. Aware of the escape of their prey, the ghostlike ruffian crew ran in every direction with a cry of "Kill, kill". In certain conditions man is no better than a ferocious wild beast.

Chapter IV

THE DARKNESS of the wood was very deep and Kalyani could not find her way. In the thickly-woven entanglement of trees, creepers and thorns there was no path at the best of times and on that there came this impenetrable darkness. Separating the branches and creepers, pushing through thorn and briar Kalyani began to make her way into the thickness of the wood. The thorns pierced the child's skin and she cried from time to time; and at that the shouts of the pursuing robbers rose higher. In this way with torn and bleeding body, Kalyani made far progress into the woodland. After a little while the moon rose. Until then there was some slight confidence in Kalyani's mind that in the darkness the robbers would not be able to find her and after a brief and fruitless search would desist from the pursuit, but, now that the moon had risen, that confidence left her. The moon, as it mounted into the sky, shed its light on the woodland tops and the darkness within was suffused with it. The darkness brightened, and here and there, through gaps, the outer luminousness found its way inside and peeped into the thickets. The higher the moon mounted, the more the light penetrated into the reaches of foliage, the deeper all the shadows took refuge in the thicker parts of the forest. Kalyani too with her child hid herself farther and farther in where the shadows retreated. And now the robbers shouted higher and began to come running from all sides, and the child in her terror wept louder. Kalyani then gave up the struggle and made no farther attempt to escape. She sat down with the girl on her lap on a grassy thornless spot at the foot of a great tree and called repeatedly "Where art Thou? Thou whom I worship daily, to whom daily I bow down, in reliance on whom I had the strength to penetrate into this forest, where art Thou, O Madhusudan?" At this time, what with fear, the deep emotion of spiritual love and worship and the lassitude of hunger and thirst, Kalyani gradually lost sense of her outward surroundings and became full of an inward consciousness in which she was aware of a heavenly voice singing in mid-air,

"O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!
O Gopal, O Govinda, O Mukunda, O Shauri!
O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!"

Kalyani had heard from her childhood, in the recitation of the Puranas, that the sages of Paradise roam the world on the paths of the sky, crying aloud to the music of the harp the name of Hari. That imagination took shape in her mind and she began to see with the inner vision a mighty ascetic, harp in hand, whitebodied, whitehaired, whitebearded, whiterobed, tall of stature, singing in the path of the azure heavens,

"O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!"

Gradually the song grew nearer, louder she heard the words,

"O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!"

Then still nearer, still clearer,

"O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!"

At last over Kalyani's head the chant rang echoing in the woodland,

"O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!"

Then Kalyani opened her eyes. In the half-lustrous moonbeams suffused and shadowed with the darkness of the forest, she saw in front of her that whitebodied, whitehaired, whitebearded, whiterobed image of a sage. Dreamily all her consciousness centred on the vision. Kalyani thought to bow down to it, but she could not perform the salutation; even as she bent her head, all consciousness left her and she lay fallen supine on the ground.

Chapter V

IN A huge tract of ground in the forest there was a great monastery engirt with ruined masses of stone. Archaeologists would tell us that this was formerly a monastic retreat of the Buddhists and afterwards became a Hindu monastery. Its rows of edifices were two-storeyed; in between were temples and in front a meeting-hall. Almost all these buildings were surrounded with a wall and so densely hidden with the trees of the forest that, even at daytime and at a short distance from the place, none could divine the presence of a human habitation here. The buildings were broken in many places, but by daylight one could see that the whole place had been recently repaired. A glance showed that man had made his dwelling in this profound and inaccessible wilderness. It was in a room in this monastery, where a great log was blazing, that Kalyani first returned to consciousness and beheld in front of her that whitebodied, whiterobed Great One. Kalyani began once more to gaze on him with eyes large with wonder, for even now memory did not return to her. Then the Mighty One of Kalyani's vision spoke to her, "My child, this is a habitation of the Gods, here have no apprehension. I have a little milk, drink it and then I will talk with you."

At first Kalyani could understand nothing, then, as by degrees her mind recovered some firm foundation, she threw the hem of her robe round her neck and made an obeisance at the Great One's feet. He replied with a blessing and brought out from another room a sweet-smelling earthen pot in which he warmed some milk at the blazing fire. When the milk was warm he gave it to Kalyani and said, "My child, give some to your daughter to drink and then drink some yourself, afterwards you can talk." Kalyani, with joy in her heart, began to administer the milk to her daughter. The unknown then said to her, "While I am absent, have no anxiety," and left the temple. After a while he returned from outside and saw that Kalyani had finished giving the milk to her child, but had herself drunk nothing; the milk was almost as it was at first, very little had been used. "My child," said the unknown, "you have not drunk the milk; I am going out again, and until you drink I will not return."

The sage-like personage was again leaving the room, when Kalyani once more made him an obeisance and stood before him with folded hands.

"What is it you wish to say?" asked the recluse.

Then Kalyani replied, "Do not command me to drink the milk, there is an obstacle. I will not drink it."

The recluse answered in a voice full of compassion, "Tell me what is the obstacle; I am a forest-dwelling ascetic, you are my daughter; what can you have to say which you will not tell me? When I carried you unconscious from the forest, you then seemed to me as if you had been sadly distressed with thirst and hunger; if you do not eat and drink, how can you live?"

Kalyani answered, the tears dropping from her eyes, "You are a god and I will tell you. My husband remains still fasting and until I meet him again or hear of his tasting food, how can I eat?"

The ascetic asked, "Where is your husband?"

"I do not know," said Kalyani, "the robbers stole me away after he had gone out in search of milk." Then the ascetic by question after question elicited all the information about Kalyani and her husband. Kalyani did not indeed utter her husband's name, — she could not; but the other information the ascetic received about him was sufficient for him to understand. He asked her, "Then you are Mohendra Singha's wife?" Kalyani, in silence and with bowed head, began to heap wood on the fire at which the milk had been warmed. Then the ascetic said, "Do what I tell you, drink the milk; I am bringing you news of your husband. Unless you drink the milk, I will not go." Kalyani asked, "Is there a little water anywhere here?" The ascetic pointed to a jar of water. Kalyani made a cup of her hands, the ascetic filled it with water; then Kalyani, approaching her hands with the water in them to the ascetic's feet, said "Please put the dust of your feet in the water." When the ascetic had touched the water with his foot, Kalyani drank it and said, "I have drunk nectar of the gods, do not tell me to eat or drink anything else; until I have news of my husband I will take nothing else." The ascetic answered, "Abide without fear in this temple. I am going in search of your husband."

Chapter VI

IT WAS far on in the night and the moon rode high overhead. It was not the full moon and its brilliance was not so keen. An uncertain light, confused with shadowy hints of darkness, lay over an open common of immense extent, the two extremities of which could not be seen in that pale lustre. This plain affected the mind like something illimitable and desert, a very abode of fear. Through it there ran the road between Murshidabad and Calcutta.

On the road-side was a small hill which bore upon it a goodly number of mango-trees. The tree-tops glimmered and trembled with a sibilant rustle in the moonlight, and their shadows too, black upon the blackness of the rocks, shook and quivered. The ascetic climbed to the top of the hill and there in rigid silence listened, but for what he listened, it is not easy to say; for, in that great plain that seemed as vast as infinity, there was not a sound except the murmurous rustle of the trees. At one spot there is a great jungle near the foot of the hill, — the hill above, the high road below, the jungle between. I do not know what sound met his ear from the jungle, but it was in that direction the ascetic went. Entering into the denseness of the growth he saw in the forest, under the darkness of the branches at the foot of long rows of trees, men sitting, — men tall of stature, black of hue, armed; their burnished weapons glittered fierily in the moonlight where it fell through gaps in the woodland leafage. Two hundred such armed men were sitting there, not one uttering a single word. The ascetic went slowly into their midst and made some signal, but not a man rose, none spoke, none made a sound. He passed in front of all, looking at each as he went, scanning every face in the gloom, as if he were seeking someone he could not find. In his search he recognised one, touched him and made a sign, at which the other instantly rose. The ascetic took him to a distance and they stood and talked apart. The man was young; his handsome face wore a thick black moustache and beard; his frame was full of strength; his whole presence beautiful and attractive. He wore an ochre-coloured robe and on all his limbs the fairness and sweetness of sandal was smeared. The Brahmacharin said to him, "Bhavananda, have you any news of Mohendra Singha?"

Bhavananda answered, "Mohendra Singha and his wife and child left their house today; on the way, at the inn — "

At this point the ascetic interrupted him, "I know what happened at the inn. Who did it?"

"Village rustics, I imagine. Just now the peasants of all the villages have turned dacoits from compulsion of hunger. And who is not a dacoit nowadays? Today we also have looted and eaten. Two maunds of rice belonging to the Chief of Police were on its way; we took and consecrated it to a devotee's dinner."

The ascetic laughed and said, "I have rescued his wife and child from the thieves. I have just left them in the monastery. Now it is your charge to find out Mohendra and deliver his wife and daughter into his keeping. Jivananda's presence here will be sufficient for the success of today's business."

Bhavananda undertook the mission and the ascetic departed elsewhere.

Chapter VII

MOHENDRA rose from the floor of the inn where he was sitting, for nothing could be gained by sitting there and thinking over his loss. He started in the direction of the town with the idea of taking the help of the officials in the search for his wife and child. After journeying for some distance he saw in the road a number of bullock-carts surrounded by a great company of sepoys.

In the Bengali year 1175 the province of Bengal had not become subject to British administration. The English were then the revenue officials of Bengal. They collected the taxes due to the treasury, but up to that time they had not taken upon themselves the burden of protecting the life and property of the Bengali people. The burden they had accepted was to take the country's money; the responsibility of protecting life and property lay upon that despicable traitor and disgrace to humanity, Mirzafar. Mirzafar was incapable of protecting even himself; it was not likely that he would or could protect the people of Bengal. Mirzafar took opium and slept; the English raked in the rupees and wrote despatches; as for the people of Bengal they wept and went to destruction.

The taxes of the province were therefore the due of the English, but the burden of administration was on the Nawab. Wherever the English themselves collected the taxes due to them, they had appointed a collector, but the revenue collected went to Calcutta. People might die of starvation, but the collection of their monies did not stop for a moment. However, very much could not be collected: for if Mother Earth does not yield wealth, no one can create wealth out of nothing. Be that as it may, the little that could be collected, had been made into cartloads and was on its way to the Company's treasury at Calcutta in charge of a military escort. At this time there was great danger from dacoits, so fifty armed sepoys marched with fixed bayonets, ranked before and behind the carts. Their captain was an English soldier who went on horseback in the rear of the force. On account of the heat the sepoys did not march by day but only by night. As they marched, Mohendra's progress was stopped by the treasure carts and this military array. Mohendra, seeing his way barred by sepoys and carts, stood at the side of the road; but as the sepoys still jostled him in passing, holding this to be no fit time for debate, he went and stood at the edge of the jungle by the road.

Then a sepoy said in Hindustani, "See, there's a dacoit making off." The sight of the gun in Mohendra's hand confirmed this belief. He went for Mohendra, caught hold of his neck and, with the salutation "Rogue! thief!" suddenly gave him a blow of the fist and wrested the gun from his hand. Mohendra, empty-handed, merely returned the blow. Needless to say, Mohendra was something more than a little angry, and the worthy sepoy reeled with the blow and went down stunned on the road. Upon that, three or four sepoys came up, took hold of Mohendra and, dragging him forcibly to the commander, told the Saheb, "This man has killed one of the sepoys." The Saheb was smoking and a little bewildered with strong drink; he replied, "Catch hold of the rogue and marry him." The soldiers did not understand how they were to marry an armed highwayman, but in the hope that, with the passing of the intoxication, the Saheb would change his mind and the marriage would not be forced on them, three or four sepoys bound Mohendra hand and foot with the halters of the cart bullocks and lifted him into the cart. Mohendra saw that it would be vain to use force against so many, and, even if he could effect his escape by force, what was the use? Mohendra was depressed and sorrowful with grief for his wife and child and had no desire for life. The sepoys bound Mohendra securely to the wheel of the cart. Then with a slow and heavy stride the escort proceeded on its march.

Chapter VIII

POSSESSED of the ascetic's command, Bhavananda, softly crying the name of Hari, went in the direction of the inn where Mohendra had been sitting; for he thought it likely that there he would get a clue to Mohendra's whereabouts.

At that time the present roads made by the English were not in existence. In order to come to Calcutta from the district towns, one had to travel by the marvellous roads laid down by the Mogul emperors. On his way from Padchinha to the town, Mohendra had been travelling from south to north, and it was therefore that he met the soldiers on the way. The direction Bhavananda had to take from the Hill of Palms towards the inn, was also from south to north; necessarily, he too on his way fell in with the sepoys in charge of the treasure. Like Mohendra, he stood aside to let them pass. Now, for one thing, the soldiers naturally believed that the dacoits would be sure to attempt the plunder of this despatch of treasure, and on that apprehension came the arrest of a dacoit in the very highway. When they saw Bhavananda too standing aside in the night-time, they inevitably concluded that here was another dacoit. Accordingly, they seized him on the spot.

Bhavananda smiled softly and said, "Why so, my good fellow?"

"Rogue!" answered a sepoy, "you are a robber."

"You can very well see I am an ascetic wearing the yellow robe. Is this the appearance of a robber?"

"There are plenty of rascally ascetics and Sannyasins who rob," retorted the sepoy, and he began to push and drag Bhavananda. Bhavananda's eyes flashed in the darkness, but he only said very humbly, "Good master, let me know your commands."

The sepoy was pleased at Bhavananda's politeness and said, "Here, rascal, take this load and carry it," and he clapped a bundle on Bhavananda's head. Then another of the sepoys said to the first, "No, he will run away; tie up the rascal on the cart where the other rogue is bound." Bhavananda grew curious to know who was the man they had bound; he threw away the bundle on his head and administered a slap on the cheek to the soldier who had put it there. In consequence, the sepoys bound Bhavananda, lifted him on to the cart and flung him down near Mohendra. Bhavananda at once recognised Mohendra Singha.

The sepoys again marched on, carelessly and with noise, and the creaking of the cartwheels recommenced. Then, softly and in a voice audible only to Mohendra, Bhavananda said, "Mohendra Singha, I know you and am here to give you help. There is no need for you to know just at present who I am. Do very carefully what I tell you. Put the rope that ties your hands on the wheel of the cart."

Mohendra, though astonished, carried out Bhavananda's suggestion without a word. Moving a little towards the cartwheel under cover of darkness, he placed the rope that tied his hands so as to just touch the wheel. The rope was gradually cut through by the friction of the wheel. Then he cut the rope on his feet by the same means. As soon as he was free of his bonds, by Bhavananda's advice he lay inert on the cart. Bhavananda also severed his bonds by the same device. Both lay utterly still and motionless.

The path of the soldiers took them precisely by the road where the Brahmacharin had stood in the highway near the jungle and gazed round him. As soon as they arrived near the hill, they saw under it, on the top of a mound, a man standing. Catching sight of his dark figure silhouetted against the moonlit azure sky, the havildar said, "There is another of the rogues; catch him and bring here: he shall carry a load."

At that a soldier went to catch the man, but, though he saw the fellow coming to lay hold on him, the watcher stood firm; he did not stir. When the soldier laid hands on him, he said nothing. When he was brought as a prisoner to the havildar, even then he said nothing. The havildar ordered a load to be put on his head; a soldier put the load in place, he took it on his head. Then the havildar turned away and started marching with the cart. At this moment a pistol shot rang suddenly out and the havildar, pierced through the head, fell on the road and breathed his last. A soldier shouted, "This rascal has shot the havildar," and seized the luggage-bearer's hand. The bearer had still the pistol in his grasp. He threw the load from him and struck the soldier on the head with the butt of his pistol; the man's head broke and he dropped farther proceedings. Then with a cry of "Hari! Hari! Hari!" two hundred armed men surrounded the soldiery. The men were at that moment awaiting the arrival of their English captain, who, thinking the dacoits were on him, came swiftly up to the cart and gave the order to form a square; for an Englishman's intoxication vanishes at the touch of danger. The sepoys immediately formed into a square facing four ways and at a farther command of their captain lifted their guns in act to fire. At this critical moment someone wrested suddenly the Englishman's sword from his belt and with one blow severed his head from his body. With the rolling of the Englishman's head from his shoulders the unspoken command to fire was silenced for ever. All looked and saw a man standing on the cart, sword in hand, shouting loud the cry of "Hari, Hari" and calling "Kill, kill the soldiers." It was Bhavananda.

The sudden sight of their captain headless and the failure of any officer to give the command for defensive action kept the soldiers for a few moments passive and appalled. The daring assailants took advantage of this opportunity to slay and wound many, reach the carts and take possession of the money chests. The soldiers lost courage, accepted defeat and took to flight.

Then the man who had stood on the mound and afterwards assumed the chief leadership of the attack, came to Bhavananda. After a mutual embrace Bhavananda said, "Brother Jivananda, it was to good purpose that you took the vow of our brotherhood." "Bhavananda," replied Jivananda, "justified be your name." Jivananda was charged with the office of arranging for the removal of the plundered treasure to its proper place and he swiftly departed with his following. Bhavananda alone remained standing on the field of action.

Chapter IX

MOHENDRA had descended from the cart, wrested a weapon from one of the sepoys and made ready to join in the fight. But at this moment it came home clearly to him that these men were robbers and the plunder of the treasure the object of their attack on the soldiery. In obedience to this idea he stood away from the scene of the fight, for to help the robbers meant to be a partner in their ill-doing. Then he flung the sword away and was slowly leaving the place when Bhavananda came and stood near him. Mohendra said to him, "Tell me, who are you?"

Bhavananda replied, "What need have you to know that?"

"I have a need" said Mohendra. "You have done me today a very great service."

"I hardly thought you realized it;" said Bhavananda, "you had a weapon in your hand and yet you stood apart. A land-holder are you, and that's a man good at being the death of milk and ghee, but when work has to be done, an ape."

Before Bhavananda had well finished his tirade, Mohendra answered with contempt and disgust, "But this is bad work,—a robbery!"

"Robbery or not," retorted Bhavananda, "we have done you some little service and are willing to do you a little more."

"You have done me some service, I own," said Mohendra, "but what new service can you do me? And at a dacoit's hands I am better unhelped than helped."

"Whether you accept our proffered service or not," said Bhavananda, "depends on your own choice. If you do choose to take it, come with me. I will bring you where you can meet your wife and child."

Mohendra turned and stood still. "What is that?" he cried.

Bhavananda walked on without any reply, and Mohendra had no choice but to walk on with him, wondering in his heart what new kind of robbers were these.

Chapter X

SILENTLY in the moonlit night the two crossed the open country. Mohendra was silent, sorrowful, full of pride, but also a little curious.

Suddenly Bhavananda's whole aspect changed. No longer was he the ascetic, serious of aspect, calm of mood; no longer the skilful fighter, the heroic figure of the man who had beheaded the English captain with the sweep of a sword; no longer had he that aspect with which even now he had proudly rebuked Mohendra. It was as if the sight of that beauty of plain and forest, river and numerous streams, all the moonlit peaceful earth, had stirred his heart with a great gladness; it was as if Ocean were laughing in the moonbeams. Bhavananda became smiling, eloquent, courteous of speech. He grew very eager to talk and made many efforts to open a conversation, but Mohendra would not speak. Then Bhavananda, having no other resource, began to sing to himself.

"Mother, I bow to thee!
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Cool with thy winds of delight,
Dark fields waving, Mother of might,
Mother free!"

The song astonished Mohendra and he could understand nothing of it. Who might be this richly watered, richly fruited Mother, cool with delightful winds and dark with the harvests? "What Mother?" he asked.

Bhavananda without any answer continued his song.

"Glory of moonlight dreams
Over thy beaches and lordly streams;

Clad in thy blossoming trees,
Mother, giver of ease,
Laughing low and sweet!
Mother, I kiss thy feet,
Speaker sweet and low!
Mother, to thee I bow."

Mohendra said, "That is the country, it is not the Mother."

Bhavananda replied, "We recognize no other Mother. 'Mother and Motherland is more than heaven itself.' We say the motherland is our mother. We have neither mother nor father nor brother nor friend, wife nor son nor house nor home. We have her alone, the richly-watered, richly-fruited, cool with delightful winds, rich with harvests — "

Then Mohendra understood and said, "Sing it again." Bhavananda sang once more.

Mother, I bow to thee!
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Cool with thy winds of delight,
Dark fields waving, Mother of might,
Mother free.
Glory of moonlight dreams
Over thy beaches and lordly streams;
Clad in thy blossoming trees,
Mother, giver of ease,
Laughing low and sweet!
Mother, I kiss thy feet,
Speaker sweet and low!
Mother, to thee I bow.

Who hath said thou art weak in thy lands,
When the swords flash out in seventy million hands
And seventy million voices roar
Thy dreadful name from shore to shore?
With many strengths who art mighty and stored,
To thee I call, Mother and Lord!

Thou who savest, arise and save!
To her I cry who ever her foemen drave
Back from plain and sea
And shook herself free.

Thou art wisdom, thou art law,
Thou our heart, our soul, our breath,
Thou the love divine, the awe
In our hearts that conquers death.
Thine the strength that nerves the arm,
Thine the beauty, thine the charm.
Every image made divine
In our temples is but thine.
Thou art Durga, Lady and Queen,
With her hands that strike and her swords of sheen,
Thou art Lakshmi lotus-throned,
And the Muse a hundred-toned.

Pure and perfect, without peer,
Mother, lend thine ear.
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Dark of hue, O candid-fair
In thy soul, with jewelled hair
And thy glorious smile divine,
Loveliest of all earthly lands,
Showering wealth from well-stored hands!
Mother, mother mine!
Mother sweet, I bow to thee,
Mother great and free!

Mohendra saw the robber as he sang shedding tears. In wonder he asked, “Who are you?”

Bhavananda replied, “We are the Children.”

“What is meant by the Children?” asked Mohendra. “Whose children are you?”

Bhavananda replied, “The children of the Mother.”

"Good;" said Mohendra, "do the children worship their mother with theft and looting? What kind of filial piety is that?"

"We do not thieve and loot," answered Bhavananda.

"Why, just now you plundered the carts."

"Is that theft and looting? Whose money did we plunder?"

"Why, the ruler's."

"The ruler's! What right has he to the money, that he should take it?"

"It is his royal share of the wealth of the country."

"Who rules and does not protect his kingdom, is he a ruler at all?"

"I see you will be blown one day from the cannon's mouth by the sepoys."

"I have seen your rascal sepoys more than once: I dealt with some today too."

"Oh, that was not a real experience of them; one day you will get it."

"Suppose it is so, a man can only die once."

"But what profit is there in going out of one's way to die?"

"Mohendra Singha," said Bhavananda, "I had a kind of idea that you were a man worth the name, but now I see you are what all the rest of them are, merely the death of ghee and milk. Look you, the snake crawls on the ground and is the lowest of living things, but put your foot on the snake's neck and even he will rise with lifted hood. Can nothing overthrow your patience then? Look at all the countries you know, Magadh, Mithila, Kashi, Kanchi, Delhi, Cashmere, in what other country do men from starvation eat grass? eat thorns? eat the earth white ants have gathered? eat the creepers of the forest? where else are men forced to eat dogs and jackals, yes, even the bodies of the dead? where else can men have no ease of heart because of fear for the money in their chests, the household gods on their sacred seats, the young women in their homes, the unborn children in the women's wombs? Ay, here they rip open the womb and tear out the child. In every country the relation with the ruler is that of protector and protected, but what protection do our Mussulman rulers give us? Our religion is destroyed, our caste defiled, our honour polluted, our family honour shamed and now our very lives are going the same way. Unless we drive out these vice-besodden longbeards, the Hinduism of the Hindu is doomed."

"How will you drive them out?" asked Mohendra.

"By blows."

"You will drive them out single-handed? With one slap, I suppose."

The robber sang:

> "Who hath said thou art weak in thy lands,
> When the swords flash out in seventy million hands
> And seventy million voices roar
> Thy dreadful name from shore to shore?"

"But" said Mohendra, "I see you are alone."

"Why, just now you saw two hundred men."

"Are they all Children?"

"They are all Children."

"How many more are there of them?"

"Thousands like these, and by degrees there will be yet more!"

"Even if there were ten or twenty thousand, will you be able with that number to take the throne from the Mussulman?"

"What army had the English at Plassey?"

"Can Englishmen and Bengalis be compared?"

"Why not? What does physical strength matter? Greater physical strength will not make the bullet fly farther."

"Then," asked Mohendra, "why is there such a difference between an Englishman and a Mussulman?"

"Take this first;" said Bhavananda, "an Englishman will not run away even from the certainty of death. A Mussulman runs as soon as he perspires and roams in search of a glass of sherbet. Next take this, that the Englishman has tenacity; if he takes up a thing, he carries it through. "Don't care" is a Mussulman's motto. He is giving his life for a hire, and yet the soldiers don't get their pay. Then the last thing is courage. A cannon ball can fall only in one place, not in ten; so there is no necessity for two hundred men to run from one cannon ball. But one cannon ball will send a Mussulman with his whole clan running, while a whole clan of cannon balls will not put even a solitary Englishman to flight."

"Have you all these virtues?" asked Mohendra.

"No," said Bhavananda, "but virtues don't fall from the nearest tree. You have to practise them."

"Do you practise them?"

"Do you not see we are sannyasins? It is for this practice that we have made renunciation. When our work is done, when our training is complete, we shall again become householders. We also have wives and daughters."

"You have abandoned all those ties, but have you been able to overcome Maya?"

"The Children are not allowed to speak falsely and I will not make a lying boast to you. Who has the strength to conquer Maya? When a man says, 'I have conquered Maya', either he never had any feeling or he is making a vain boast. We have not conquered Maya, we are only keeping our vow. Will you be one of the Children?"

"Until I get news of my wife and daughter, I cannot say anything."

"Come then, you shall see your wife and child."

The two went on their way; and Bhavananda began again to sing Bande Mataram.

Mohendra had a good voice and was a little proficient in singing and fond of it; therefore he joined in the song, and found that as he sang the tears came into his eyes. Then Mohendra said, "If I have not to abandon my wife and daughter, then initiate me into this vow."

"Whoever" answered Bhavananda, "takes this vow, must abandon wife and child. If you take this vow, you cannot be allowed to meet your wife and daughter. Suitable arrangements will be made for their protection, but until the vow is crowned with success, to look upon their faces is forbidden."

"I will not take your vow," answered Mohendra.

Chapter XI

THE DAY had dawned. That unpeopled forest, so long dark and silent, now grew full of light, blissful with the cooing and calling of the birds. In that delightful dawn, that joyous forest, that "Monastery of Bliss" Satyananda, seated on a deerskin, was performing his morning devotions. Jivananda sat near. It was at such a time that Bhavananda appeared with Mohendra Singha behind. The ascetic without a word continued his devotions and no one ventured to utter a sound. When the devotions were finished, Bhavananda and Jivananda saluted him and with humility seated themselves after taking the dust of his feet. Then Satyananda beckoned to Bhavananda and took him outside. What conversation took place between them, we do not know, but on the return of the two into the temple the ascetic, with compassion and laughter in his countenance, said to Mohendra, "My son, I have been greatly distressed by your misfortune; it was only by the grace of the Friend of the poor and miserable that I was able to rescue your wife and daughter last night." The ascetic then told Mohendra the story of Kalyani's rescue and said at the end, "Come, let me take you where they are."

The ascetic in front, Mohendra behind entered into the inner precincts of the temple. Mohendra beheld a wide and lofty hall. Even in this cheerful dawn, glad with the youth of the morning, when the neighbouring groves glittered in the sunshine as if set and studded with diamonds, in this great room there was almost a gloom as of night. Mohendra could not at first see what was in the room, but by gazing and gazing and still gazing he was able to distinguish a huge image of the four-armed Vishnu, bearing the shell, the discus, the club, the lotus-blossom, adorned with the jewel Coustoobh on his breast; in front the discus called Sudarshan, the Beautiful, seemed visibly to be whirling round.

Two huge headless images representing Madhu and Kaitabh were painted before the figure, as if bathed in their own blood. On the left stood Lakshmi with flowing locks garlanded with wreaths of hundred-petalled lotuses, as if distressed with fear. On the right stood Saraswati surrounded by books, musical instruments, the incarnate strains and symphonies of music. On Vishnu's lap sat an image of enchanting beauty, lovelier than Lakshmi and Saraswati, more splendid with opulence and lordship. The Gandharva and Kinnara and God and elf and giant paid her homage. The ascetic asked Mohendra in a voice of deep solemnity and awe, "Can you see all?" "Yes" replied Mohendra.

"Have you seen what is in the lap of Vishnu?" asked the ascetic.

"Yes," answered Mohendra, "who is she?"

"It is the Mother."

"What mother?"

"She whose children we are," replied the ascetic.

"Who is she?"

"In time you will recognise her. Cry 'Hail to the Mother!' Now come, you shall see."

The ascetic took Mohendra into another room. There he saw an image of Jagaddhatri, Protectress of the world, wonderful, perfect, rich with every ornament. "Who is she?" asked Mohendra.

The Brahmacharin replied, "The Mother as she was."

"What is that?" asked Mohendra.

"She trampled underfoot the elephants of the forest and all wild beasts and in the haunt of the wild beasts she erected her lotus throne. She was covered with every ornament, full of laughter and beauty. She was in hue like the young sun, splendid with all opulence and empire. Bow down to the Mother."

Mohendra saluted reverently the image of the Motherland as the protectress of the world. The Brahmacharin then showed him a dark underground passage and said, "Come by this way." Mohendra with some alarm followed him. In a dark room in the bowels of the earth an insufficient light entered from some unperceived outlet. By that faint light he saw an image of Kali.

The Brahmacharin said, “Look on the Mother as she now is.”

Mohendra said in fear, “It is Kali.”

“Yes, Kali enveloped in darkness, full of blackness and gloom. She is stripped of all, therefore naked. Today the whole country is a burial ground, therefore is the Mother garlanded with skulls. Her own God she tramples under her feet. Alas, my Mother!”

The tears began to stream from the ascetic’s eyes.

“Why,” asked Mohendra, “has she in her hands the club and the skull?”

“We are the Children, we have only just given weapons into our Mother’s hands. Cry ‘Hail to the Mother!’”

Mohendra said “Bande Mataram” and bowed down to Kali.

The ascetic said “Come by this way”, and began to ascend another underground passage. Suddenly the rays of the morning sun shone in their eyes and from every side the sweet-voiced family of birds shrilled in song. In a wide temple built in stone of marble they saw a beautifully fashioned image of the Ten-armed Goddess made in gold, laughing and radiant in the light of the early sun. The ascetic saluted the image and said, “This is the Mother as she shall be. Her ten arms are extended towards the ten regions and they bear many a force imaged in her manifold weapons; her enemies are trampled under her feet and the lion on which her foot rests, is busy destroying the foe. Behold her, with the regions for her arms,” — as he spoke, Satyananda began to sob, — “with the regions for her arms, wielder of manifold weapons, trampler down of her foes, with the lion-heart for the steed of her riding; on her right Lakshmi as Prosperity, on her left Speech, giver of learning and science, Kartikeya with her as Strength, Ganesh as Success. Come, let us both bow down to the Mother.” Both with lifted faces and folded hands began to cry with one voice, “O auspicious with all well-omened things, O thou ever propitious, who effectest all desire, O refuge of men, three-eyed and fair of hue, O Energy of Narayan, salutation to thee.”

The two men bowed down with awe and love, and when they rose, Mohendra asked in a broken voice, "When shall I see this image of the Mother?" "When all the Mother's sons" replied the Brahmacharin, "learn to call the Mother by that name, on that day the Mother will be gracious to us."

Suddenly Mohendra asked, "Where are my wife and daughter?"

"Come" said the ascetic, "you shall see them."

"I wish to see them once and say farewell."

"Why should you say farewell?"

"I shall take up this mighty vow."

"Where will you send them to?"

Mohendra thought for a little and then said, "There is no one in my house and I have no other place. Yet in this time of famine, what other place can I find?"

"Go out of the temple," said the ascetic, "by the way by which you came here. At the door of the temple you will see your wife and child. Up to this moment Kalyani has eaten nothing. You will find articles of food in the place where they are sitting. When you have made her eat, do whatever you please; at present you will not again meet any of us. If this mind of yours holds, at the proper time I shall show myself to you."

Then suddenly by some path unknown the ascetic vanished from the place. Mohendra went forth by the way pointed out to him and saw Kalyani with her daughter sitting in the court of meeting.

Satyananda on his side descended by another underground passage into a secret cellar under the earth. There Jivananda and Bhavananda sat counting rupees and arranging them in piles. In that room gold, silver, copper, diamonds, coral, pearls were arrayed in heaps. It was the money looted on the previous night they were arranging. Satyananda, as he entered the room, said, "Jivananda, Mohendra will come to us. If he comes, it will be a great advantage to the Children, for in that case the wealth accumulated in his family from generation to generation will be devoted to the Mother's service. But so long as he is not body and soul devoted to the Mother, do not take him into the order. As soon as the work you have in hand is completed, follow him at various times and when you see it is the proper season, bring him to the temple of Vishnu. And in season or out of season protect their lives. For even as the punishment of the wicked is the duty of the Children, so is the protection of the good equally their duty.”

Chapter XII

IT WAS after much tribulation that Mohendra and Kalyani met again. Kalyani flung herself down and wept, Mohendra wept even more than she. The weeping over, there was much ado of wiping the eyes, for as often as the eyes were wiped, the tears began to come again. But when at last the tears had ceased to come, the thought of food occurred to Kalyani. She asked Mohendra to partake of the food which the ascetic's followers had kept with her. In this time of famine there was no chance of ordinary food and vegetables, but whatever there was in the country, was to be had in plenty among the Children. That forest was inaccessible to ordinary men. Wherever there was a tree with fruit upon it, famishing men stripped it of what it bore, but none other than the Children had access to the fruit of the trees in this impenetrable wilderness. For this reason the ascetic's followers had been able to bring for Kalyani plenty of forest fruits and some milk. In the property of the Sannyasin were included a number of cows. At Kalyani's request, Mohendra first took some food, afterwards Kalyani sat apart and ate something of what he had left. She gave some of the milk to her child and kept the rest to feed her with again. Then both of them, overcome with sleep, took rest for a while. When they woke, they began to discuss where they should go next. "We left home" said Kalyani "in fear of danger and misfortune, but I now see there are greater dangers and misfortunes abroad than at home. Come then, let us return to our own house." That also was Mohendra's intention. It was his wish to keep Kalyani at home under the care of some suitable guardian and take upon himself this beautiful, pure and divine vow of service to the Mother. Therefore he gave his consent very readily. The husband and wife, rested from fatigue, took their daughter in their arms and set forth in the direction of Padchinha.

But what way led to Padchinha, they could not at all make out in that thick and difficult forest. They had thought that once they could find the way out of the wood, they would be able to find the road. But now they could not find the way out of the wood itself. After long wandering in the thickets, their circlings began to bring them round to the monastery once more, no way of exit could be found. In front of them they saw an unknown ascetic in the dress of a Vaishnav Gosain, who stood in the path and laughed at them. Mohendra, in some irritation, said to him, "What are you laughing at, Gosain?"

"How did you enter the forest?" asked the Gosain.

"Well, we have entered it, it does not matter how."

"Then, when you have entered, how is it you cannot get out again?" So saying, the ascetic resumed his laughter.

"Since you laugh," said Mohendra, much provoked, "I presume you can yourself get out?"

"Follow me," said the Vaishnav, "I will show you the way. You must undoubtedly have entered the forest in the company of some one of the ascetics. No one else knows the way either into or out of the forest."

On this Mohendra asked, "Are you one of the Children?"

"I am" answered the Vaishnav. "Come with me. It is to show you the way that I am standing here."

"What is your name?" asked Mohendra.

"My name" replied the Vaishnav "is Dhirananda Goswami."

Dhirananda proceeded in front, Mohendra and Kalyani followed. Dhirananda took them out of the forest by a very difficult path and again plunged back among the trees.

On leaving the forest one came after a little to a common with trees. To one side of it there was the highway running along the forest, and in one place a little river flowed out of the woodland with a murmuring sound. Its water was very clear, but dark like a thick cloud. On either bank beautiful dark-green trees of many kinds threw their shadow over the river and in their branches birds of different families sat and gave forth their various notes. Those notes too were sweet and mingled with the sweet cadence of the stream. With a similar harmony the shadow of the trees agreed and mingled with the colour of the stream. Kalyani sat under a tree on the bank and bade her husband sit near. Mohendra sat down, and she took her child from her husband's lap into her own. Kalyani held her husband's hand in hers and for some time sat in silence, then she asked, "Today I see that you are very melancholy. The calamity that was on us, we have escaped; why then are you so sad?"

Mohendra answered with a deep sigh, "I am no longer my own man, and what I am to do, I cannot understand."

"Why?" asked Kalyani.

"Hear what happened to me after I lost you," said Mohendra, and he gave a detailed account of all that had happened to him.

Kalyani said, "I too have suffered greatly and gone through many misadventures. It will be of no advantage to you to hear it. I cannot say how I managed to sleep in such exceeding misadventure, but today in the early hours of the morning I fell asleep, and in my sleep I saw a dream. I saw — I cannot say by what force of previous good works I went there, — but I saw myself in a region of wonder, where there was no solid Earth, but only light, a very soft sweet light as if of a cool lustre broken by clouds. There was no human being there, only luminous forms, no noise, only a sound as if of sweet song and music at a great distance. Myriads of flowers seemed to be ever newly in bloom, for the scent of them was there, jasmines of many kinds and other sweet-smelling blossoms. There in a place high over all, the cynosure of all, one seemed to be sitting, like a dark blue hill that has grown bright as fire and burns softly from within. A great fiery crown was on his head, his arms seemed to be four. Those who sat at either side of him, I could not recognize, but I think they were women in their forms, but so full of beauty, light and fragrance that every time I gazed in that direction, my senses were perplexed, I could not fix my gaze nor see who they were. In front of the Four-Armed another woman's form seemed to be standing. She too was luminous, but surrounded by clouds so that the light could not well manifest itself; it could only be dimly realised that one in the form of a woman wept, one full of heart's distress, one worn and thin, but beautiful exceedingly. It seemed to me that a soft fragrant wind carried me along, pushing me as with waves, till it brought me to the foot of the Four-Armed's throne. It seemed to me that the worn and cloud-besieged woman pointed to me and said, 'This is she, for whose sake Mohendra will not come to my bosom.' Then there was a sound like the sweet clear music of a flute; it seemed that the Four-Armed said to me, 'Leave your husband and come to Me. This is your Mother, your husband will serve her; but if you stay at your husband's side, that service cannot be given. Come away to Me.' I wept and said, 'How shall I come, leaving my husband?' Then the flutelike voice came again, 'I am husband, father, mother, son, daughter; come to Me.' I do not remember what I said. Then I woke." Kalyani spoke and was again silent.

Mohendra also, astonished, amazed, alarmed, kept silence. Overhead the doyel began its clamour, the papia flooded heaven with its voice, the call of the cuckoo set the regions echoing, the bhringaraj made the grove quiver with its sweet cry. At their feet the stream murmured softly between its banks. The wind carried to them the soft fragrance of the woodland flowers. In places bits of sunlight glittered on the waves of the rivulet. Somewhere palm-leaves rustled in the slow wind. Far off a blue range of mountains met the eye. For a long time they remained silent in delight. Then Kalyani again asked, "What are you thinking?"

"I am thinking what I should do. The dream is nothing but a thought of fear, it is born of itself in the mind and of itself it disappears, — a bubble from the waking life. Come, let us go home."

"Go where God bids you," said Kalyani and put her child in her husband's lap.

Mohendra took his daughter in his lap and said, "And you, — where will you go?"

Kalyani, covering her eyes with her hands and pressing her forehead between them, answered, "I too will go where God has bid me."

Mohendra started and said, “Where is that? How will you go?”

Kalyani showed him the small box of poison.

Mohendra said in astonishment, “What, you will take poison?”

“I meant to take it, but — ” Kalyani became silent and began to think. Mohendra kept his gaze on her face and every moment seemed to him a year, but when he saw that she did not complete her unfinished words, he asked, “But what? What were you going to say?”

“I meant to take it, but leaving you behind, leaving Sukumari behind, I have no wish to go to Paradise itself. I will not die.”

With the words Kalyani set down the box on the earth. Then the two began to talk of the past and future and became absorbed in their talk. Taking advantage of their absorption the child in her play took up the box of poison. Neither of them observed it.

Sukumari thought, “This is a very fine toy.” She held it in her left hand and slapped it well with her right, put it in her right, and slapped it with her left. Then she began pulling at it with both hands. As a result the box opened and the pill fell out.

Sukumari saw the little pill fall on her father’s cloth and took it for another toy. She threw the box away and pounced on the pill.

How it was that Sukumari had not put the box into her mouth, it is hard to say, but she made no delay in respect of the pill. “Eat it as soon as you get it;” — Sukumari crammed the pill into her mouth. At that moment her mother’s attention was attracted to her.

“What has she eaten? What has she eaten?” cried Kalyani, and she thrust her finger into the child’s mouth. Then both saw that the box of poison was lying empty. Then Sukumari, thinking that here was another game, clenched her teeth, — only a few had just come out, — and smiled in her mother’s face. By this time the taste of the poison-pill must have begun to feel bitter in the mouth, for a little after she loosened the clench of her teeth of herself and Kalyani took out the pill and threw it away. The child began to cry.

The pill fell on the ground. Kalyani dipped the loose end of her robe in the stream and poured the water into her daughter's mouth. In a tone of pitiful anxiety she asked Mohendra, "Has a little of it gone down her throat?"

It is the worst that comes first to a parent's mind, — the greater the love, the greater the fear. Mohendra had not seen how large the pill was before, but now, after taking the pill into his hand and scrutinising it for some time, he said, "I think she has sucked in a good deal of it."

Necessarily, Kalyani adopted Mohendra's belief. For a long time she too held the pill in her hand and examined it. Meanwhile the child, owing to the little she had swallowed, became a little indisposed; she grew restless, cried, at last grew a little dull and feeble. Then Kalyani said to her husband, "What more? Sukumari has gone the way God called me to go. I too must follow her."

And with the words Kalyani put the pill into her mouth and in a moment had swallowed it.

Mohendra cried out, "What have you done, Kalyani, what have you done?"

Kalyani returned no answer, but taking the dust of her husband's feet on her head, only said, "Lord and Master, words will only multiply words. I take farewell."

But Mohendra cried out again, "Kalyani, what have you done?" and began to weep aloud. Then Kalyani said in a very soft voice, "I have done well. You might otherwise neglect the work given you by Heaven for the sake of so worthless a thing as a woman. See, I was transgressing a divine command, therefore my child has been taken from me. If I disregarded it farther, you too might go."

Mohendra replied with tears, "I could have kept you somewhere and come back, — when our work had been accomplished, I could have again been happy with you. Kalyani, my all! Why have you done this thing? You have cut from me the hand by whose strength I could have held the sword. What am I without you?"

"Where could you have taken me? Where is there any place? Mother, father, friends, all in this terrible time of calamity have perished. In whose house is there any place for us, where is the road we can travel, where will you take me? I am a burden hanging on your neck. I have done well to die. Give me this blessing that when I have gone to that luminous world, I may again see you." With the words Kalyani again took the dust of her husband's feet and placed it on her head. Mohendra made no reply, but once more began to weep. Kalyani again spoke; — her voice was very soft, very sweet, very tender, as she again said, "Consider who has the strength to transgress what God has willed. He has laid his command on me to go; could I stay, if I would? If I had not died of my own will, inevitably someone else would have slain me. I do well to die. Perform with your whole strength the vow you have undertaken, it will create a force of well-doing by which I shall attain heaven and both of us together will enjoy celestial bliss to all eternity."

Meanwhile the little girl threw up the milk she had drunk and recovered, — the small amount of poison that she had swallowed, was not fatal. But at that time Mohendra's mind was not turned in that direction. He put his daughter in Kalyani's lap and closely embracing both of them began to weep incessantly. Then it seemed that in the midst of the forest a soft yet thunder-deep sound arose, —

"O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!
O Gopal, O Govinda, O Mukunda, O Shauri!"

By that time the poison had begun to act on Kalyani, her consciousness was being somewhat taken from her; in her half-unconscious condition she seemed to herself to hear the words ringing out in the marvellous flutelike voice she had heard in the Vaikuntha of her dream.

"O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!
O Gopal, O Govinda, O Mukunda, O Shauri!"

Then Kalyani in her semi-unconsciousness began to sing in a voice sweeter than any Apsara's,

“O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!”

She cried to Mohendra, “Say,

‘O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!’”

Deeply moved by the sweet voice that rose from the forest and the sweet voice of Kalyani and in the grief of his heart thinking “God is my only helper,” Mohendra called aloud,

“O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!”

Then from all sides the sound arose,

“O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!”

Then it seemed as if the very birds in the trees were singing,

“O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!”

It seemed as if the murmurs of the river repeated,

“O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!”

Then Mohendra, forgetting his grief and affliction and full of ecstasy, sang in one voice with Kalyani,

“O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!”

From the forest the cry seemed to rise in chorus with their song,

“O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!”

Kalyani's voice became fainter and fainter, but still she cried,

“O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!”

Then by degrees her voice grew hushed, no sound came from her lips, her eyes closed, her body grew cold, and Mohendra understood that Kalyani had departed to Vaikuntha with the cry of “O Hari, O Murari” on her lips. Then Mohendra began to call out loudly like one frantic, making the forest quiver, startling the birds and beasts,

"O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!"

At that time one came and, embracing him closely, began to call with him in a voice as loud as his,

"O Hari, O Murari, O foe of Kaitabh and Madhu!"

Then in that glory of the Infinite, in that boundless forest, before the body of her who now travelled the eternal way, the two sang the name of Eternal God. The birds and beasts were voiceless, the earth full of a miraculous beauty, — the fitting temple for this highest anthem. Satyananda sat down with Mohendra in his arms.

Chapter XIII

MEANWHILE there was a great commotion in the high road in the capital. The noise went abroad that Sannyasins had plundered the revenue that was being despatched from the royal treasury to Calcutta. Then by order of the Government sepoys and spearmen sped on all sides to seize Sannyasins. Now at that time in that famine-stricken country there was no great number of real Sannyasins; for these ascetics live upon alms, and when people themselves get nothing to eat, there is not likely to be anyone to give alms to the mendicant. Therefore all the genuine ascetics had fled from the pinch of hunger to the country about Benares and Prayag. Only the Children wore the robe of the Sannyasin when they willed, abandoned it when abandonment was needed. Now too, many, seeing trouble abroad, left the dress of the ascetic. For this reason the hungry retainers of power, unable to find a Sannyasin anywhere, could only break the waterjars and cooking-pots of the householders and return with their empty bellies only half-filled. Satyananda alone would at no time leave his saffron robe.

At the moment when on the bank of that dark and murmurous rivulet, on the borders of the high road, at the foot of the tree on the water's verge, Kalyani lay still and Mohendra and Satyananda in each other's embrace were calling on God with streaming eyes, Jamadar Nazir-ud-din and his sepoys arrived at the spot. Forthwith he put his hand on Satyananda's throat and said, "Here is a rascal of a Sannyasin." Immediately another seized Mohendra; for a man who consorts with Sannyasins, must necessarily be a Sannyasin. A third hero was about to arrest the dead body of Kalyani where it lay at length on the grass. Then he saw that it was the corpse of a woman and very possibly might not be a Sannyasin, and did not proceed with the arrest. On the same reasoning they left the little girl alone. Then without colloquy of any kind they bound the two prisoners and marched them off. The corpse of Kalyani and her little daughter remained lying unprotected at the foot of the tree.

Mohendra was at first almost senseless with the oppression of grief and the frenzy of divine love; he could not understand what was toward or what had happened and made no objection to being bound; but when they had gone a few paces, he awoke to the fact that they were being led away in bonds. Immediately it occurred to him that Kalyani's corpse was left lying without funeral rites, that his little daughter was left lying, and that even now wild beasts might devour them, he wrenched his hands apart by sheer force and with the one wrench tore his bonds apart. With one kick he sent the Jamadar sprawling to the ground and fell upon one of the sepoys; but the other three seized him from three sides and once more overpowered and rendered him helpless. Then Mohendra in the wretchedness of his grief said to the Brahmacharin Satyananda, "If only you had helped me a little, I would have slain these five miscreants." "What strength is there" answered Satyananda, "in this aged body of mine, — except Him on whom I was calling, I have no other strength. Do not struggle against the inevitable. We shall not be able to overpower these five men. Come, let us see where they will take us. The Lord will be our protection in all things." Then both of them without farther attempt at escape followed the soldiers. When they had gone a little distance, Satyananda asked the sepoys, "My good fellows, I am in the habit of calling on the name of Hari; is there any objection to my calling on His name?" The Jamadar thought Satyananda to be a simple and inoffensive man, and he said, "Call away, I won't stop you. You are an old Brahmacharin and I think there will be an order for your discharge; this ruffian will be hanged." Then the Brahmacharin began softly to sing,

With the lingering wind in her tresses,
Where the stream its banks caresses,
There is one in the woodland, a woman and fair.
Arise, O thou hero, let speed

Be swift in thy feet to her need;
For the child who is there
Is full of sorrow and weeping and care.

On arriving in the city they were taken to the Chief of Police, who sent word to the Government and put the Brahmacharin and Mohendra for the time into confinement. That was a dreadful prison, for it was seldom that he who entered came out, because there was no one to judge. It was not the British jail with which we are familiar — at that time there was not the British system of justice. Those were the days of no procedure, these are the days of procedure. Compare the two!

APPENDIX

A Later Version of Chapters I and II

CHAPTER I

It was the summer of the Bengali year 1176. The village of Podchinha lay oppressed under a tyrannous heat of the midsummer sun. The village was packed with houses, but people were nowhere to be seen. Rows of shops in the bazaar, rows of booths in the market place, hundreds of clay houses in every quarter with here and there high and low terraced mansions; but today all was silent. In the bazaar the shops were shut; the shopkeepers had fled, one knows not where. It was market-day, but the market was not in swing, — begging-day, but the beggars were not out. The weaver had stopped his loom and lay weeping to one side of his cottage; the trader had ceased to ply his trade and sat weeping with his infant child in his lap; the giver had ceased to give; the teacher had shut up his school; even the little children had no force or courage left to cry. No passers-by were to be seen in the highway, no bathers in the lake, no human figures at the house-doors; there was not a bird in the trees, not a cow in the pasture; only in the burning-ground the dog and the jackal were abroad. One huge building whose great fluted pillars could be seen from far off bore a brave appearance as of a mountain peak arising out of this wilderness of houses. But today its splendour was a void thing, its doors shut, its rooms empty of human concourse, all its voices hushed, entry difficult even to the breezes. In a room within this building there was darkness at midday and in the darkness like twin flowers blooming in the night a young couple, husband and wife, were sitting plunged in thought. And in front of them sat the spectre of Famine.

The harvest of 1174 had not been good; so in 1175 rice was dear and the people suffered, but the Government exacted the taxes to the last fraction of a farthing. The poor paid and ate only once a day. But in 1175 there was good rain and the people thought that Heaven had taken pity on them. The herdsman began again to sing in his gladness in the meadow, and the peasant's wife to tease her husband for a silver armlet. But suddenly in the month of Aswin Heaven turned away its face. Not a drop of rain fell through all Aswin and Kartik. In the fields the stalks dried up and became mere straw and wherever a field or two had borne its crop the officials bought it up for the troops. The people had nothing to eat. At first they fasted at one of their two meal-times, then they began to eat one half-meal a day, then to fast both morning & evening. Whatever little crop there was in the month of Chaitra never reached their mouths. But Mahomed Reza Khan, who controlled the collection of the Revenues and thought that he could now show himself a very Sarafraz, increased at one leap the taxes by ten percent. Throughout Bengal a great noise of weeping arose.

People first took to begging, but soon there was no one to give alms. They began to fast; disease attacked them. They sold their cows, they sold plough and tool, they sold their seed, sold their houses, sold their plots of land. Then they began to sell their girls, then their boys, then their wives. In the end there was no one to buy wife, boy or girl. All were sellers; buyer there was none. For want of other food, men began to eat the leaves of trees, to eat grass, to eat weeds. The low classes & the wild people devoured dogs, rats and cats. Many fled the country. Those who fled perished of starvation in other lands; those who remained living upon uneatable things or not eating at all, began to fall ill and die of various maladies.

Disease had its high day; fever, cholera, consumption, small-pox raged. Small-pox was especially prevalent; there were deaths in almost every house. No one would give water to the sick, no one would touch, no one would treat the disease or tend the sufferer; when he died there was no one to dispose of the corpse; the bodies of the beautiful lay rotting uncared-for in their terraced mansions. For into whatever house the small-pox made its entry the inhabitants fled from it in terror abandoning the sick to their fate.

Mahendra Singh was one of the richest men in the village of Podchinha, but today rich and poor were on one & the same level. In this time of misery and disease his relatives and dependants, his serving-men, his serving-women, all were gone. Some had perished, others had fled. In all that populous household there was now left only his wife and himself and an infant daughter. It was they who were sitting in the darkened chamber.

The wife Kalyani rose from her reflections, went into the cowshed and herself milked the cow. Then she warmed the milk, gave her child to drink and went again to give grass & water to the cow. When she came back, Mahendra said, "How long can this go on?"

She answered "Not long, but let us continue as long as we can. Till then I will manage to keep things going; afterwards do you take the child to the town."

"If we must go in the end, why should I put you through all this trouble? Let us rather go now."

The two debated the question for a long time.

Kalyani asked, "Is there anything really to be gained by going?"

"Who knows? Perhaps the town is as solitary as this village and as empty of all means of subsistence."

"If we go to Murshidabad, Cassimbazaar or Calcutta, we may live. No, there is every reason why we should leave this place."

Mahendra replied, "This house has long been full of the stored up wealth of generations. All will be plundered by thieves."

"If they came to plunder now, could we two prevent them? Unless we live, who will there be to make use of this wealth? Come, let us at once shut up everything and go. If we live, then we can return and again enjoy life and riches."

Mahendra asked her, "Will you be able to walk all that way? The palanquin bearers are dead; where there are bullocks, there is no cartman; where there is a cartman, bullocks are not to be had."

"That need not trouble you; I shall walk."

In her heart she had resolved that if need be, she would fall down and die by the wayside, but these two must live.

Next day at dawn they took some money with them, locked all the doors, loosed the cows, took their child in their arms and started for the capital. At the time of starting Mahendra said "It is a difficult road and at every step of it robbers are wandering in search of their prey; it is well to go armed." He returned into the house and came back with gun, powder and bullets.

Kalyani, when she saw the gun, said to her husband, "Since you have thought of it, take Sukumari for a moment. I too will have a weapon with me." With this she put her daughter into Mahendra's arms and entered the house, Mahendra calling after her in surprise, "Why, what weapon can you carry?"

It was a little box of poison that Kalyani hid in her dress as she came. She had been provided for some time with this arm against any ill fate that might befall her in these days of adversity.

It was the month of Jyestha, and the heat was fierce & pitiless; the earth burned as with fire, the wind scattered its flaming breath, the sky was like a canopy of heated bronze, the dust of the road like sparks of flame. Kalyani began to perspire and walked on with difficulty and suffering; she sat down sometimes under a babul tree, sometimes in the shade of a date palm, sometimes she drank the muddy water of a dried-up pond. Mahendra carried the child in his arms and fanned it from time to time. Once they rested in the shade of a creeper-hung tree richly coloured with dark green leaves and fragrant with sweet-scented flowers. Mahendra wondered at Kalyani's power of endurance. He wet his robe and sprinkled water from a neighbouring pool on his own & Kalyani's face, feet and forehead.

Kalyani was a little refreshed, but both husband & wife were tortured with hunger. Their own hunger could be borne, but not the hunger & thirst of their child, so they began again to travel forward and making their way through the waves of fire arrived before evening at a hamlet. Mahendra was full of hope, for he expected that here he would find cool water to unparch the throats of his wife and daughter and food to sustain their lives. But no, there was not a man in the place. Large houses lay empty; all the inhabitants had fled. After searching here & there for a while Mahendra made his wife and child lie down in a room while he himself went out and began to call loudly. There was no answer. Then he said to Kalyani, "Be brave and remain here alone by yourself, I will go and if there is a cow in the place, if Srikrishna takes compassion on us, bring some milk for us to drink." So saying, he took up an earthen waterpot in his hand, — there were a great many lying there, — and sallied out.

CHAPTER II

When Mahendra had gone, Kalyani, left alone with her little girl, in that solitary place, in that gloomy cottage, began to gaze around her and a growing terror took hold of her mind. No one anywhere, no human sound, only the cry of the dog & the jackal. She began to think, "Why did I let him go, we might have well borne the pangs of hunger and thirst a little longer." Then she thought to rise & shut all the doors, but not a single doorway had shutter or bar. As she was thus gazing fearfully around her, she saw something like a shadow in the doorway opposite. It looked like a man's form but hardly seemed to be human. Yet it was something like a man, withered, wasted, black, terrible that had come & stood in the doorway. A little while and the shadow seemed to raise an arm; a very long withered arm, all skin and bone, appeared to be beckoning to someone with its long withered fingers. Kalyani's heart in her dried up with fear. Then another such shadow, withered, black, tall, naked came and stood beside the first. Then another and another joined them, how many others. Slowly, silently they began to enter the room, the gloom-haunted cottage grew terrible as a midnight burning-ground. Those corpse-like phantom-like figures entered & stood in a circle round Kalyani and she half-swooned with her terror. Then the black emaciated men seized & lifted up the woman and her child and took them up out of the house, across the open fields into the thickness of a wood.

A few moments afterwards Mahendra returned carrying milk in the waterpot. He saw no one in the cottage; he searched here & there, he called first his daughter, & at last his wife by name, but he received no answer, found no trace.

Section Three

Chittaranjan Das

Songs of the Sea

I

O thou unhoped-for elusive wonder of the skies,
    Stand still one moment! I will lead thee and bind
    With music to the chambers of my mind.
Behold how calm today this sea before me lies
    And quivering with what tremulous heart of dreams
    In the pale glimmer of the faint moonbeams.
If thou at last art come indeed, O mystery, stay
Woven by song into my heart-beats from this day.

Stand, goddess, yet! Into this anthem of the seas
    With the pure strain of my full voiceless heart
    Some rhythm of the rhythmless, some part
Of thee I would weave today, with living harmonies
    Peopling the solitude I am within.
    Wilt thou not here abide on that vast scene,
Thou whose vague raiment edged with dream haunts us and flees,
Fulfilled in an eternal quiet like this sea's?

II

I lean to thee a listening ear
And thy immense refrain I hear,
O Ocean circled with the lights of morn.
What word is it thou singst? what tune
My heart is filled with, and it soon
Must overflow? What mystical unborn
Spirit is singing in thy white foam-caves?
What voice turns heaven to music from thy waves?

III

Long gazing on this dawn and restless sea,
My heart is moved with a strange minstrelsy.
Tranquil and full and slow that music's sound
Or a chant pitiful, tender and profound.
At times its passing fills my heart with tears.
Maddened it runs and maddening him who hears.
What spirit lives and laughs and weeps in thee?
What thought is here that cries eternally?
I know not, but a trembling sweet and strong
Has taken my every limb touched by thy song,
O infinite Voice, O Soul that callst to me,
As I look on this luminous dawn and on the sea!

IV

The flute of dawn has rung out on the sea,
And in a holiday of festal glee
The radiant sunbeams dally and happily stream:
How on thy body they wallow, laugh and gleam!
Flowers blown in song on a bright welter cast!
The riches of sunlight quiver along thy vast
Sweet tumult, kindle the world thy chantings hold,
Or, rocking, for thy feet are chains of gold.
Now has thy cry become a bird of sound,
And on the wings, the throbbing breast around
A dream of gold is smeared; in my heart's skies
The beautiful vagrant making springtide flies.
There wings the floating mighty creature, joys
Threading and lights, a glory and a voice.

V

Upon what bosom shall I lay my bliss
Or whom enrich with all my welling tears,
The unguessed joy, the grief that nameless is
And will not be denied? All checks they pierce.
The riches of my bliss have broken in bloom,
And all my sorrow seeks melodious room.
How have they made of all my secret hours
A kingdom of strange singing in groves of flowers!
A mystic wind, a nameless trouble keeps
My spirit. All the load of my heart's deeps
Where shall I rest, moved to thy passionate play,
O Ocean, upon this thy festal day?

VI

Dawn has become to me a golden fold
Of shining dreams, hearing thy potent cry.
A marvel chant on every wave is rolled,
And sky and wind repeat one melody.
What hast thou done? My mind has grown a lyre
Whose many hundred strings thy tones inspire;
Thy touch, thy hand have made it eternally
A refrain of thy pride and majesty.

VII

Behold, the perfect-gloried dawn has come
Far-floating from eternity her home.
Her limbs are clad in silver light of dreams,
Her brilliant influence on the water streams,
And in that argent flood to one white theme
Are gathering all the hues and threads of dream.
Tricked with her fire the heavens richly fill;
To an eternal chant the winds are still;
And all thy bosom's deep unquiet taken
Thou hast wrung out and into melody shaken,
And all the sounds that stirred the earth so long
Are called into a wordless trance of song.
O minstrel of infinity! What world
Soundless has known that music? What ether curled
In voiceless sleep? Where are those notes withdrawn?
Into the hush of what eternal dawn?

VIII

I have no art of speech, no charm of song,
    Rhythm nor measure nor the lyric pace.
No words alluring to my skill belong.
    Now in me thought's free termless heavens efface
Limit and mark; upon my spirit is thrown
The shadow of infinity alone.

I at thy voice in brilliant dawn or eve
    Have felt strange formless words within my mind.
Then my heart's doors wide to thy cry I leave
    And in thy chant I seek myself and find.
Now some few hymns of that dim union sweet
Have filled my soul. I bring them to thy feet.

IX

All day within me only one music rings.
I have become a lyre of helpless strings,
And I am but a horn for thee to wind,
O vast musician! Take me, all thy mind
In light, in gloom, by day, by night express.
Into me, minstrel, breathe thy mightiness.
On solitary shores, in lonely skies,
In night's huge sieges when the winds blow wild,
In many a lovely land of mysteries,
In many a shadowy realm, or where a child,
Dawn, bright and young, sweet unripe thoughts conceives,
Or through the indifferent calm desireless eves,
In magic night and magic light of thee,
Play on thy instrument, O Soul, O Sea.

X

What is this play thou playest with my life?
How hast thou parted lids mind held so stiff
Against the vision, that like a bud shut long
My mind has opened only to thy song,
And all my life lies like a yearning flower
Hued, perfumed, quivering in thy murmurous power,
And all my days are grown an infinite strain
Of music sung by thee, O shoreless main?

XI

My heart wings restless with this music's pain,
Bird of some wonderful harmonious reign:
No time, no place it meets, touches no end,
But rests and flies in melody contained.
Song's boundless regions have no isle preferred,
Its depths no plummet moment yet has found.
Memories and strange deep silences are heard
Here in thy solitude of shoreless sound.
Thou melody fathomless! O sea where floats
Song timeless! What were these immortal notes
To which my heart could silently disclose
The hidden petals of the eternal rose?

XII

O painter, thou thy marvellous art didst use
In green and pearl and blue and countless hues
To make this pattern of myriad flowers untold,
Passions of azure, miracles of gold.
My eyes had hunger for form's mysteries
And wandered in vision upon colour's seas.
Paint out these hues! draw darkness like a brush
Over these tired eyelids! blind me, hush!
Ah, not for visible delight I long!
My soul enchanted only by thy song
I will swim out upon thy waves of sound,
O Voice, and sink into thee for ever drowned.
Then shall I pass into thy hymn, O sea.
There shall be nothing else to eternity.
The universe shall but to sound belong,
And Time and Space shall tremble into song.

XIII

O now today like a too brilliant dream
    What is this that thy floating heart reveals
In the full moon's intense wide-flowing beam?
    What infinite peace from thy calm moonlight steals
Waking my breast to this unchecked delight?
What melody moves thee in the luminous night?

What shadow of a dream from lives long past
    Returns into thy ancient heart, O sea?
What bygone virtue comes fulfilled at last?
    What dead illusion paints this dream on thee?
A hundred glimmering memories break like flowers
On waves of moonlight in my life's still hours.

It seems as if a hundred lives' joy, fears
And burden of their laughter and their tears
Today came round me and incessantly
Sang to my soul their anthem in this sea.
A million lives today have met in one
And float on dream a single flower alone.

XIV

The day is filled with clouds and dusk and grey.
    Wave sobbing falls on wave; there flowers, there rocks
    A pain unquiet in their broken shocks.
Trembling there moans a large lament today.
The heavens are filled with dusk and sad and grey.

An endless outcry fills my soul today.
    Is't joy? is't pain? Are these the depths of love!
    Troubled, restless, peering with wild crests above,
What is it cries, what yearns in thee this day,
O heart? Thy heavens are full of dusk and grey.

XV

Today the heavens are sealed with clouds and blind,
A leaping madman comes the pathless wind,
The rains of deluge flee, a storm-tossed shade,
Over thy breast of gloom. Loud and dismayed
Thy lost enormous chant rolls purposeless
Seeking its end in an unregioned space.
O come, thou great mad sea, O surging come!
My breast defenceless mates thy dolorous foam.
Darkness the heavens, the wind doom's signal breath,
I shall float on through thee or sink in death.

XVI

This is not now the lyre's melodious stream,
These are not now the blossoming groves of dream,
But Rudra's torrent comes with pitiless play:
The world sinks down as on its last wild day.
The fathomless depths leap up to mix the sky;
Winds of destruction's sport walk tenebrously.
Masses of driving death go chanting by,
The dreadful laughters of eternity.
No lightning cleaves the night thy thunders fill;
Thy wounded bosom pours out clamour and wail;
The myriad serpents of infinitude
Their countless hoods above thy waves extrude.
I hear mid the loud stormwinds and the night
A voice arise of terror infinite;
Death's shoutings in a darkness without shore
Join like a million Titans' hungry roar.

XVII

When thy enormous wind has filled my breast,
Torn sail and broken rudder shall have rest.
My soul shall refugeless, a sinking boat,
Go down in thy fierce seas nor wish to float.
I under thy brow of great destruction's frown
In the eternal darkness shall lie down
Upon that other coast remote and dumb.
Though in the image of death today thou come,
My heart keeps open for thee thy house, this breast.
O king, O sea, enter and dwell and rest.

XVIII

O high stark Death, ascetic proud and free,
Draw back thy trident of eternity:
Leave, leave my days their natural life and death
Reclined in the heart's grove, lulled with music's breath.
The lotus of creation, like a rhyme
Trembling with its own joy and sorrow, long
On the harmonious ocean of old Time
Has floated, heaven above the infinite song.
O great last death of all, leave yet to stay
Or pass, to fade or bloom my little day.

XIX

O loud blind conqueror, stay thy furious car,
Lay down thy arrow. Evening from afar
Comes pacing with her smooth and noiseless step
And dusk pale light of quiet in heavens of sleep.
Stay then thy chariot, rest! O tired with strife!
O wearied soul of death! conqueror of life!
Vain was thy war, O Lord, my soul to win;
Myself was giving myself without that pain.
Now I will light the evening lamps for thee,
My soul with vesper hymns thy fane shall be,
And I will spread a cool couch for thy sleep
And at thy feet calm's holy water keep.
What need, to conquer me, hadst thou to strive,
Who only longed unasked myself to give?

XX

Thou hast come back, O Lord! this soul, thy sky,
Looks glad on flowers and fruits and ecstasy:
Ceased has thy song of death, thy call of pain,
Life settles on thy lips and lids again.
Once more I look upon thy joyous dawn
And the links of rapture twixt our hearts are drawn.
My heart leans out to hear thy song. Ah, when
Thy voice calls, all its buds shall open then,
While mid the touch of breezes wrapped in flowers
Cry under lyric heavens the harmonious hours.

XXI

The light of the young dawn round every limb
Sweeps over thee as golden billows may;
Out every moment glimmers some new dream.
Thou in a swing of gold hast sat at play.
Like a great king thou robest thyself, O sea,
And pourst thy love in waves of precious gold,
Like a young royal lover lavishly
Chasing my heart with wealth through every fold.
And I to thee a youthful soul have brought
Full of the dawn to lay it at thy feet.
A wreath of lilies gold my hands have wrought,
For thy rich golden neck a carcanet.
We two together bound shall lie and gleam
Golden with dawn in solitudes of dream.

XXII

O today in heaven there rings high a mournful strain,
Till our empty hearts beat slow and of ending fain.
Mournful moans the cloud, mournfully and loud
Kissing ocean, roaming heaven in vain
Hear the winds complain!
And today with lost desire
Sobs my spirit like a lyre
Wakened to complain.
For it seeks a want it cannot name,
Aching with a viewless flame
Knows not how to rest nor where to flee,
Only wailing knows and pain.
Towards the clouds it soars up fitfully,
Lured it knows not where nor why:
Singing only from the soul
Songs of bitter dole!
Neither rhythm keeps nor cry
Of saving measure, fitfully
Wailing out its shapeless pain.
They have filled the heavens and filled my soul,
Songs of weeping wild and bitter dole,
Chants of utter pain.

XXIII

Sleep, sleep through clouded moons, O sea, at last
Under a lonely sky; the eyelids close
Wearied of song. Held are the regions fast;
Mute in the hushed and luminous world repose.

I sit upon thy hither shore, O main,
My gaze is on thy face. Yet sleep, O sleep!
My heart is trembling with a soundless strain,
My soul is watching by thy slumber deep.

When shall I know thee who thou art, O friend?
When wilt thou wake? with what grand paean vast?
Lo, I will wait for thee. Thou at the end
Stretch out thy arms in some dim eve at last.

XXIV

Where have I seen thee? where have clasped thy hand?
When gazed into thy eyes? what distant time
Saw our first converse? what forgotten land?
Sangst thou? or was thy laughter heard sublime?

Then was the soul so full of deepest pains?
Were then the eyes so ready with their tears?
Such thoughts, such griefs, so many sobbing strains
Played on our soul-strings in those distant years?

Then didst thou take me to thy bosom wide
Like a kind friend with close-encircling arm?
Did all my thoughts into thy nature glide
Led out by love as with a whispered charm?

All I remember not, but this alone,
My heart joined thine in some past age or clime;
Because thy touch has never from me gone,
I float to thee across eternal Time.

I think, in a strange secret trysting-place
We too shall meet at last and recognise,
Where day weds night in some enchanted space,
All the old love awakening in our eyes.

XXV

None is awake in all the world but I;
While the sun hesitated, I upstood
And met thee in a grandiose secrecy
To lave my soul in thy majestic flood.

Be outward songs the outward nature's part!
These are for all and all their tones may hear.
There is a strain that fills the secret heart:
Reveal that music to my listening ear.

Therefore, O sea, O friend, I came alone,
That I might hear that rapture or that moan.

XXVI

The sun has not yet risen. Luring night
Shelters thee still as with a robe of love.
Calm are thy lips, thy eyes have tranquil light,
Whether thou sleep or dream or wake or move.

In the last trance of darkness visible
How beautiful and calm thy gaze, O sea!
My speech, my song have suddenly grown still
In this enamoured twilight's ecstasy.

Am I not as thy brother younger born?
Then sometimes turn a loving gaze, O sea.
The song that shakes thy bosom night and morn
Bid echo sometimes, Ocean, even in me.

XXVII

The sunbeams fall and kiss thy lips and gleam
Calm and profound like thy own majesty.
How all my million golden flowers of dream
Out of my soul thou hast drawn utterly,
And these thou wearest as a garland now;
I stand with empty hands upon thy shore.
Sing me one chant of thine! Ah, let it flow
And endless nectar and my soul explore
With echoes and with lights, and turn thy gaze
For ever and for ever on my days,
And from today, O Ocean without strand,
Thy song I'll sing, wandering from land to land.

XXVIII

Nay, nay, let be! O not today that sound
Before these multitudes, but what all can hear!
These robed for joy have come thy margin round;
Draw close their hearts to thine, give dance and cheer.

But when the midnight broods on thee again,
These happy laughters sunk upon thy swell,
The world shall close in song about us twain
And darkness shall stand there as sentinel.

Thou shalt sing out one chant, a different song
From me return; we shall together lie
In infinite gladness while ambrosial, long,
Thy thunders drown me in their harmony.

When thickest night shall hold again thy shore,
We two shall meet in song and join once more.

XXIX

How many aeons hast thou flowed like this,
The torture of this music in thy heart?
World-maddening melodies that stormed heart to kiss
After what cycles from thy surge still part,
Recalling endless ages,
Regretting countless lives?

Birthless and endless, bearing from the first
Eternal wailing thou sweepst on, O sea.
What hunger sobs in thee? what vehement thirst?
What tireless anguish moans implacably?
Moans many a thousand ages,
Moans many a million lives.

O friend cursed thus through the unending years!
O my unquiet ocean all of tears!
        Yet 'tis to thee that leaving all I come,
        As always came I to my real home
And always shall come in the endless years,
                Parted through endless ages,
                Met in unnumbered lives.

XXX

What years, what clime, what dim and distant shore
Beheld our meeting first? What thundrous roar
Or low sweet plaint of music first had bound
In what eternal seats of what vast sound?
What heart of mighty singing devious-souled,
What mystery of beaten time controlled?
The spirit of what nameless tune could bring
Our births to oneness from their wandering?
From some huge soul's beginningless infinity
Our waters side by side began their course, O sea.
How often our lives have parted been since then!
How often have our two hearts met again!
Thou floatst, O friend, for ever to that Vast;
I float on thy chant only to the last.

XXXI

My sleepless midnight thou hast filled indeed
 With seas of song, O King of minstrelsy.
What pomps of sound through the thick night proceed!
 What surf, what surge of thunders rolls over me!
My eyes, my face are covered with thee, O main,
My heart sunk down beneath thy echo-plain.
My soul like a flower offered to the storm
Trembles. What wild great song without a form
Burdened with all the joys a heart can feel,
Torn with all agonies no joy can heal,
Rolls through this darkness? Nothing do I see,
Only a rumour and infinity
I feel upon my bosom lay its weight,
A clamouring vague vastness increate.
A hundred strains left voiceless to the ear,
A thousand silences of song I hear.
Of universal sound the wordless tongue
That in each voice and cry is hidden deep,
The heart unsung of all songs ever sung
Comes to me through the veils of death and sleep.

XXXII

Lighting small lamps and in a little room
I played and poorly hummed a trivial theme;
With the lamp's rays on my soul's half-lit gloom
I traced the image of a bounded dream.
Thee I had quite forgotten, Ocean vast:
Well did my dream-bound little play-room please,
An idly-plaited wreath before me placed,
Holding my petty lamp, content, at ease.
Then with thy solemn thunders didst thou call
Chanting eternity in thy deep strain;
Thy huge rebuke shook all my nature, all
The narrow coasts of thought sank crumbling in.
Collapsed that play-room and that lamp was quenched.
I stood in Ocean's thunders washed and drenched.

XXXIII

Evening has not descended yet, fast sets the sun;
Darkness and light together seize on thee as one.
Gazing upon thy luminous dusk the clouds float by,
The charmed wind o'er thy troubled lights sings murmuringly.
Upon this undark darkness and enchanted light
Heaven wondering gazes down, a silence infinite.
O Ocean, travelling what uncertain shadowy reign
Singst thou a song of sadness and a hampered strain?
To what vast problem hast thou found no answer yet?
With what sad doubt are thy steps burdened, pilgrim great?
With life and death what converse dost thou hold today?
What lyre has broken in thy hands? what pains dismay?
All darkness earth endures, all light that reaches life
Pour on my being, Ocean, from thy soul's huge strife.
My soul too grows a trembling shadow mid these shades.
What hope is here or truth? What fear? What lie invades?

XXXIV

In this hushed evening on thy billows grey
Where swells thy chant or whither flows today?
To what far dimness is revealed thy cry?
Thou for my soul prepar'st what ministry?
The conch-shell's sound for vesper worship blown
Is now within my heart thy evening tone;
With frankincense as at a holy tide
Like a dim temple I am purified.
Deep-souled and saved from passion and desire,
To whom then does thy solemn song aspire,
Vast worshipper? whose rites dost thou prepare?
Towards whom holdst thou my soul, a lamp of prayer?
What rhythmic hymn of power dost thou repeat?
Initiate me, Ocean calm, complete
My heart of worship with thy mystic word:
Let all my soul with one wide prayer be stirred.

XXXV

Evening has fallen upon the world; its fitting tone,
O sea, thy quiet bosom gives, making dim moan,
And that wide solemn murmur, passion's ceasing flow,
Becomes a chant of silence for our souls their depths to know.
Thy garrulous waves have sunk to sleep upon thy breast,
The unquiet winds have been persuaded now to rest,
In heaven there is no moon nor star: void ancient space
Settles on all things in its solemn measurelessness.
Is there no last desire left in thy mind today?
Is love then finished for thee? Has life done its play?
Therefore in this illusionless grey twilight lost
Thou plungest down into thyself, unmoved, untossed.
I too will veil myself within my being deep:
Thou when thy musing's done, call me out of my sleep.

XXXVI

The great heavens have no voice, the world is lying still:
Thou too hast spoken no word awhile, O illimitable.
The evening rains down on thee its calm influences,
Thou liest a motionless flood of purity and peace;
Thy song fallen silent in the first pale cave of night,
Keeps thy heart secret, murmuring with dumb joy of light.
My petty house of pain and pleasure sinks unshaped
In thy vast body by a tranced delight enwrapped:
All Nature floats to thee like a lotus still and sweet,
And Death and Time have paused arrested at thy feet.
Some mighty Yogin keeps his posture on my breast,
Collected, unbreathing, mute, with lids of moveless rest.
The light of Him I have seen, Himself I reach not. O sea,
Silent I'll wait; make me one formless soul with thee.

XXXVII

O by long prayer, by hard attempt have bloomed two flowers, thy eyes!
Swimming with adoration they possess the skies,
And from thy love-intoxicated hymns there start
On tossing waves these new sonatas of the heart.
Heaven falters with the frequent, deep and solemn sound,
The world is gazing as when the great Dance went round.
A horn is blown and cymbals clash upon the Void:
So deep a tabor never to earth's music was allied.
The free winged winds of dawn in their ecstatic dance
Are circling round my soul and seek it with their hands,
The cry of hymns of rapture in my soul's abode
Has entered, flowers of longing bloom from me towards God.
My heart is mad for God today. Though my heart's bliss
Find or not find, sink down or float, — this, only this!
O soul-fulfiller, O adorer, sing for ever
New chants! live still for God-love and divine endeavour.

XXXVIII

Here there is light, — is it darkness on thy farther shore?
Thither my heart upon thy waters ferry o'er.
    Something there rings from that far space;
    I know not what its strains express,
Whether 'tis light that sings or darkness cries upon thy shore.
    There will I go, my eyes shall see,
    My soul shall hear unfalteringly
Anthems of light or strains of darkness on that farther shore.
    The songs of this side all are known,
    My heart has cherished every tone;
Of these I'll weave remembered garlands on thy far-off shore.
Take me, O mighty sea, across thy long dividing roar.

XXXIX

Burns on that other shore the mystic light
That never was lit here by eve or dawn?
Is't there, the song eternal, infinite,
None ever heard from earthly instruments drawn?
Sits there then any like myself who yearns
Thirsting for unknown touches on the soul?
Is't there, the heart's dream? unsurpassable burns
Thy shadowy self we seek, there bright and whole?
My thirst is great, O mighty One! deep, deep
The thirst is in my heart unsatisfied.
Ah, drown me in thy dumb unfathomed sleep
Or carry to that ungrasped other side.
Will not my hope's dream there be held at last?
My barren soul grow kingly, rich and vast?

XL

This shore and that shore, — I am tired, they pall.
Where thou art shoreless, take me from it all.
My spirit goes floating and can find oppressed
In thy unbanked immensity only rest.
Thick darkness falls upon my outer part,
A lonely stillness grips the labouring heart,
Dumb weeping with no tears to ease the eyes.
I am mad for thee, O king of mysteries.
Have I not sought thee on a million streams,
And wheresoever the voice of music dreams,
In wondrous lights and sealing shadows caught,
And every night and every day have sought?
Pilot eternal, friend unknown embraced,
O, take me to thy shoreless self at last.

Section Four

Disciples and Others

Hymn to India

India, my India, where first human eyes awoke to heavenly light,
All Asia's holy place of pilgrimage, great Motherland of might!
World-mother, first giver to humankind of philosophy and sacred lore,
Knowledge thou gav'st to man, God-love, works, art, religion's opened door.

India, my India, who dare call thee a thing for pity's grace today?
Mother of wisdom, worship, works, nurse of the spirit's inward ray!

To thy race, O India, God himself once sang the Song of Songs divine,
Upon thy dust Gouranga danced and drank God-love's mysterious wine,
Here the Sannyasin Son of Kings lit up compassion's deathless sun,
The youthful Yogin, Shankar, taught thy gospel: "I and He are one."

India, my India, who dare call thee a thing for pity's grace today?
Mother of wisdom, worship, works, nurse of the spirit's inward ray!

Art thou not she, that India, where the Aryan Rishis chanted high
The Veda's deep and dateless hymns and are we not their progeny?
Armed with that great tradition we shall walk the earth with heads unbowed:
O Mother, those who bear that glorious past may well be brave and proud.

India, my India, who dare call thee a thing for pity's grace today?
Mother of wisdom, worship, works, nurse of the spirit's inward ray!

O even with all that grandeur dwarfed or turned to bitter loss and maim,
How shall we mourn who are thy children and can vaunt thy mighty name?
Before us still there floats the ideal of those splendid days of gold:
A new world in our vision wakes, Love's India we shall rise to mould.

India, my India, who dare call thee a thing for pity's grace today?
Mother of wisdom, worship, works, nurse of the spirit's inward ray!

DWIJENDRALAL ROY

Mother India

1

Mother India, when Thou rosest from the depths of oceans hoary,
Love and joy burst forth unbounded, life acclaimed Thee in Thy glory;
Darkness fled before Thy splendour, light its radiant flag unfurled.
All acclaimed Thee, "Hail, O Mother! Fosterer, Saviour of the world!"
Earth became thrice-blessed by the rose of beauty of Thy feet;
Blithe, she chanted: "Hail, World-Charmer! Hail, World-Mother!
Thee I greet."

2

Damp from ocean's kiss Thy raiment, from its waves still drip Thy tresses.
Greatness spans Thy brow, and flower-like lucent-pure Thy smiling face is.
Sun and moon and stars go dancing through the vastness of Thy spaces,
While below mid ocean's thunders foam of waves Thy feet embraces.
Earth became thrice-blessed with the rose of beauty of Thy feet;
Blithe, she chanted: "Hail, World-Charmer! Hail, World-Mother!
Thee I greet."

3

On Thy brow the snow's corona, round Thy knees leaps ocean's spray;
Ganges, Indus, Brahmaputra, — pearlstrings for Thy bosom's play!
There in desert places dire and bright and bare in heat Thou blazest,
There mid garnered world-flung riches with Thy golden smile amazest.
Earth became thrice-blessed with the rose of beauty of Thy feet;
Blithe, she chanted: "Hail, World-Charmer! Hail, World-Mother!
Thee I greet."

4

Through the void Thy winds sweep clamouring mighty, tireless, huge of wing,
Or Thy feet adored caressing low and long bird-murmurs sing.
Race of wild clouds thunder-hurling with their deluge-seas of rain,
Laughter of Thy groves and woodlands drunk with fragrance, flowery-fain!
Earth became thrice-blessed with the rose of beauty of Thy feet;
Blithe, she chanted: "Hail, World-Charmer! Hail, Earth-Mother! Thee I greet."

5

Peace surrounds men from Thy bosom, Thy sweet voice love's blessing throws;
By Thy hand are fed earth's millions, from Thy feet salvation flows.
Deep Thy joy is in Thy children, deep Thy suffering's tragic night,
Mother India, great World-Mother! O World-Saviour, World's Delight!
Earth became thrice-blessed by the rose of beauty of Thy feet;
Blithe, she chanted: "Hail, World-Charmer! Hail, Earth-Mother! Thee I greet."

DWIJENDRALAL ROY

The Pilot

In the dark without end
Who art Thou, O Friend?
      I am led as if by a hand:
But cannot see,
Nor reach to Thee,
      Nothing can understand.

To my eyes is given no light,
All seems everlasting night
      Thou only my comrade there,
            Helping my plight:
To rout the gloom
Thy star-lamp relume—
      Thy splendid vision reveal.

Pierced by the thorns of pain,
I ask again and again:
      "To what far alien realm
            This hard path?" but in vain!
Once let me hear,
Love's lips grown near,
      Whisper to my appeal.

If Thou art here by my side,
In this heart-lost darkness wide
      Stretch out Thy hand
            My weary soul to guide.
Though infirm my clasp,
Loosen not Thy grasp:
      Hold me fast through woe and weal.

ATULPRASAD SEN

Mahalakshmi

In lotus-groves Thy spirit roves: where shall I find a seat for Thee?
To Thy feet's tread — feet dawn-rose red — opening, my heart Thy throne shall be.
All things unlovely hurt Thy soul:
I would become a stainless whole:
O World's delight! All-beauty's might! unmoving house Thy grace in me.
An arid heart Thou canst not bear:
It is Thy will love's bonds to wear:
Then by Thy sweetness' magic completeness make me Thy love's eternal sea.

ANILBARAN ROY

The New Creator

You rose in India, O glorious in contemplation, O Sun,
Illuminator of the vast ocean of life,
Clarioning the new Path of an unstumbling progression.
You have dug up the immense, sombre bedrock of the earth's
ignorance,
And sought to unite in eternal marriage the devotion of the heart
And the Force of life.

We bow to you, Sri Aurobindo, O Sun of the New Age,
Bringer of the New Light!
May India, irradiated by your rays, become the Light-house of the
world!

To the country which, by losing its soul-mission, had lost the rhythm
Of its life's advance,
And was darkened and blinded by the gloom of the ages,
To point the inward way and reduce all obstacles to subservient aids,
You have brought the message of the night's end,
O divine Ambidexter, wisdom-bright!

We bow to you, Sri Aurobindo, O Sun of the New Age,
Bringer of the New Light!
May India, irradiated by your rays, become the Light-house of the
world!

The dust of your feet turned the prison into a temple,
Your lofty ideal has lifted the nation's life to a sublime aim,
Your accomplishment has brought to our door
the supreme treasure of Supermanhood,
Your feet faltered not even when the heart of the world trembled.

We bow to you, Sri Aurobindo, O Sun of the New Age,
Bringer of the New Light!
May India, irradiated by your rays, become the Light-house of the world!

You have made humanity hear the message, the great Truth
which none has ever uttered:
That man's birth-right is not only to freedom from slavery,
but to eternal divinity.
You have proclaimed: The whole earth shall march forward
with India in the van;
India will set the example and the earth will follow her ideal.

We bow to you, Sri Aurobindo, O Sun of the New Age,
Bringer of the New Light!
May India, irradiated by your rays, become the Light-house of the world!

ARUNA

Lakshmi

At the mobile passion of thy tread the cold snows faint and fail,
Hued by thy magic touches shimmering glow the horizons pale.
The heavens thrill with thy appeal, earth's grey moods break
and die;
In nectarous sound thou lav'st men's hearts with thy voice of
Eternity.
All that was bowed and rapt lifting clasped hands out of pain
and night,
How hast thou filled with murmuring ecstasy, made proud and
bright!
Thou hast chosen the grateful earth for thy own in her hour of
anguish and strife,
Surprised by thy rapid feet of joy, O Beloved of the Master of
Life.

DILIP KUMAR ROY

Aspiration

(The New Dawn)

The rays of the sun clothe the blue heaven with beauty;
the dark masses of the Night are driven far.
There breaks from the lyre of the dawn a song of light and felicity,
and the soul in its groves responds with quivering hope.

One whose hem trails over the dancing crests of the waters,
and touches them to ripples of musical laughter,
Comes chanted by the orient in hymns of worship,
and twilight on its glimmering tambour beats dance-time to the note-play of the rays.

She whose absence kept Night starved and afraid in its shadows,
a vibrant murmur now are her steps on the horizon:
As in a saddle of sunrise the heart of tameless aspiration
rides to its meeting with this Queen of Light.

One who descends in her golden chariot to the garden ways of earth to create her many rhythms of life,
her every voice now hails in a long cry of welcome:
The flowers toss on the swings of delight;
the goal beacons, the pathless riddle is dispelled for ever.

Loud sings the shining Charioteer, “Look up, O wayfarer; vanquished is the gloom of ages:
the high tops are agleam with sheen of the jewelry of sunlight.
The impediments are shattered, the bonds are broken;
Day’s trumpets of victory blare the defeat of Darkness.

Ravine and lightless desert
    are fertile with rain of light, O Pilgrim;
Earth's dust and gravel are transmuted into the glory of the lotus.
    For the Dawn-Goddess has come, her hand of boon
        carrying fulfilment."

DILIP KUMAR ROY

Farewell Flute

A flute of farewell calls and calls,
 Farewell to earthly things:
But when shall I the message learn
 That high-voiced music sings?

Earth's pleasures come like scented winds,
 Invite a mortal clasp:
I seek to keep them in my clutch,
 Captives of a vain grasp!

How shall thy nectar fill this cup,
 Brimming with passion's wine?
Only when the turn of day is done
 Thy starry lamps can shine.

Ever to the eager cry of hope
 Re-echoes the heart's lyre,
Will it answer to thy Song of songs
 That climbs beyond desire?

Arise now in my shadowy soul
 And let it sing farewell
To the near glow, the intimate voice,
 Familiar conch and bell!

For little lights I crave no more,
 Now shall I silently
Turn toward my heaven and greater home:
 Thy far Eternity.

DILIP KUMAR ROY

Uma

O thou inspired by a far effulgence,
Adored of some distant Sun gold-bright,
O luminous face on the edge of darkness
Agleam with strange and viewless light!

A spark from thy vision's scintillations
Has kindled the earth to passionate dreams,
And the gloom of ages sinks defeated
By the revel and splendour of thy beams.

In this little courtyard Earth thy rivers
Have made to bloom heaven's many-rayed flowers,
And, throned on thy lion meditation,
Thou slayest with a sign the Titan powers.

Thou art rapt in unsleeping adoration
And a thousand thorn-wounds are forgot;
Thy hunger is for the unseizable,
And for thee the near and sure are not.

Thy mind is affianced to lonely seeking,
And it puts by the joy these poor worlds hoard,
And to house a cry of infinite dreaming
Thy lips repeat the formless Word.

O beautiful, blest, immaculate,
My heart falls down at thy feet of sheen,
O Huntress of the Impossible,
O Priestess of the light unseen!

DILIP KUMAR ROY

Faithful

Let leap, O Mother, Thy lightning-fire:
The prisoned soul cries out for Thee.
Let youth's blue dream in the Blue aspire
To Thy crystal-song of eternity.
The dungeon-walls that stifle the heart
Throw down: oh, let Thy avalanche-dart
Its thrill to our pilgrim life impart:
Come with the voice of Thy hurtling sea.
Open life's floodgates with Thy Fire:
The soul, clay's hostage, cries for Thee.

Beloved, I know Thy summit-psalm —
A fecund pledge of Deep to Deep:
I know that Thy Beauty's beckoning calm
Makes courage, answering, overleap
Despond's abysmal gulf below,
And stamp on its brow Thy golden glow,
Earth's eyeless caverns overflow
With Thy liberating gleam: we reap
The harvest of Thy summit-psalm —
Its fecund pledge of Deep to Deep.

Let sunrise bugle blare and cleave
The coward clouds which woo the Night.
Flower-grace Incarnate! help me weave
Thy amaranthine dream's delight.
Make listless life-blood feel Thy call,
Tingle to dare, defy the fall.
The earth-plane's cherished joys now pall,
I long to climb Thy dangerous height:
Unsheathe Thy dazzling sun-sword — cleave
The moaning clouds which woo the Night.

I am the elect of Thy scatheless Light:
    Let faith unfading keep soul-ground.
Let Thy trumpet call to Thy fiery flight,
    In Thy sun-campaign to face death-wound.
In a flash Thy blinding loveliness
With Thy Promise of Peak descends to bless,
Thy morning's legions slay Night's distress,
    In Thy diamond-sheen life's glory is found:
I am vowed to Thy zenith of flawless light —
    Faith vibrant keeps my soul's wide ground.

DILIP KUMAR ROY

Since thou hast called me

Since thou hast called me, see that I
Go not from thee, — surrounding me stand.
In thy own love's diviner way
Make me too love thee without end.

My fathomless blackness hast thou cleft
With thy infinity of light,
Then waken in my mortal voice
Thy music of illumined sight.

Make me thy eternal journey's mate,
Tying my life around thy feet.
Let thy own hand my boat unmoor,
Sailing the world thy self to meet.

Fill full of thee my day and night,
Let all my being mingle with thine
And every tremor of my soul
Echo thy Flute of flutes divine.

Come in thy chariot, Charioteer,
And drive me whither thou wouldst go.
All within me and all my acts
Make luminous with surrender's glow.

SAHANA

A Beauty infinite

A Beauty infinite, an unborn Power
On Time's vast forehead drew her mystic line,
An unseen Radiance filled the primal hour, —
First script, creation's early rapture-wine.
Lightning in Night the eternal moment wrote.
Her lone eyes bathed in hue of loveliness
Saw on a flaming stream a single boat
Follow through dawn some great Sun's orbit-trace.
The Dawn-world flashed — torn was the heart of Night.
Why came then Dawn here with her cloud and surge?
Darkness erased the hint of new-born Light, —
Till suddenly quivered above the pilgrim Urge,
Its flower-car washed blood-red. Smile of the Moon,
And, held in her hand, a Sun-flute's golden croon!

JYOTIRMAYI

At the day-end

At the day-end behold the Golden Daughter of Imaginations —
She sits alone under the Tree of Life —
A form of the Truth of Being has risen before her rocking there
like a lake
And on it is her unwinking gaze. But from the unfathomed
Abyss where it was buried, upsurges
A tale of lamentation, a torrent-lightning passion,
A melancholy held fixed in the flowing blood of the veins, —
A curse thrown from a throat of light.
The rivers of a wind that has lost its perfumes are bearing away
On their waves the Mantra-rays that were her ornaments
Into the blue self-born sea of a silent Dawn;
The ceaseless vibration-scroll of a hidden Sun
Creates within her, where all is a magic incantation,
A picture of the transcendent Mystery; — that luminous laughter
Is like the voice of a gold-fretted flute flowing from the inmost
heart of the Creator.

NIRODBARAN

The King of kings

The King of kings has made you a king,
Your sceptre gave, your throne of gold,
Men and fair maids for retinue,
Your swords of sheen, your warriors bold,
Your crown, your flag, your victor-pomps,
High elephants and steeds of pride,
The wise to counsel, the strong to serve,
And queens of beauty at your side.

To me He gave His alms of grace,
My little wallet full of songs,
His azure heavens for my robe,
His earth, my seat, to me belongs.
My sleeping room is His wide world,
Planet and star for bulb and lamp:
The King of kings who beggared me
Walks by my side, a comrade tramp.

NISHIKANTO

Part Three

Translations from Tamil

Andal

Andal

The Vaishnava Poetess

PREOCCUPIED from the earliest times with divine knowledge and religious aspiration the Indian mind has turned all forms of human life and emotion and all the phenomena of the universe into symbols and means by which the embodied soul may strive after and grasp the Supreme. Indian devotion has especially seized upon the most intimate human relations and made them stepping-stones to the supra-human. God the Guru, God the Master, God the Friend, God the Mother, God the Child, God the Self, each of these experiences — for to us they are more than merely ideas, — it has carried to its extreme possibilities. But none of them has it pursued, embraced, sung with a more exultant passion of intimate realisation than the yearning for God the Lover, God the Beloved. It would seem as if this passionate human symbol were the natural culminating-point for the mounting flame of the soul's devotion: for it is found wherever that devotion has entered into the most secret shrine of the inner temple. We meet it in Islamic poetry; certain experiences of the Christian mystics repeat the forms and images with which we are familiar in the East, but usually with a certain timorousness foreign to the Eastern temperament. For the devotee who has once had this intense experience it is that which admits to the most profound and hidden mystery of the universe; for him the heart has the key of the last secret.

The work of a great Bengali poet has recently reintroduced this idea to the European mind, which has so much lost the memory of its old religious traditions as to welcome and wonder at it as a novel form of mystic self-expression. On the contrary it is ancient enough, like all things natural and eternal in the human soul. In Bengal a whole period of national poetry has been dominated by this single strain and it has inspired a religion and a philosophy. And in the Vaishnavism of the far South, in the songs of the Tamil Alwars we find it again in another form, giving a powerful and original turn to the images of our old classic poetry; for there it has been sung out by the rapt heart of a woman to the Heart of the Universe.

The Tamil word, Alwar, means one who has drowned, lost himself in the sea of the divine being. Among these canonised saints of Southern Vaishnavism ranks Vishnuchitta, Yogin and poet, of Villipattan in the land of the Pandyas. He is termed *Perialwar*, the great Alwar. A tradition, which we need not believe, places him in the ninety-eighth year of the Kaliyuga. But these divine singers are ancient enough, since they precede the great saint and philosopher Ramanuja whose personality and teaching were the last flower of the long-growing Vaishnava tradition. Since his time Southern Vaishnavism has been a fixed creed and a system rather than a creator of new spiritual greatnesses.

The poetess Andal was the foster-daughter of Vishnuchitta, found by him, it is said, a new-born child under the sacred tulsi-plant. We know little of Andal except what we can gather from a few legends, some of them richly beautiful and symbolic. Most of Vishnuchitta's poems have the infancy and boyhood of Krishna for their subject. Andal, brought up in that atmosphere, cast into the mould of her life what her foster-father had sung in inspired hymns. Her own poetry — we may suppose that she passed early into the Light towards which she yearned, for it is small in bulk, — is entirely occupied with her passion for the divine Being. It is said that she went through a symbolic marriage with Sri Ranganatha, Vishnu in his temple at Srirangam, and disappeared into the image of her Lord. This tradition probably conceals some actual fact, for Andal's marriage with the Lord is still celebrated annually with considerable pomp and ceremony.

We give below a translation of three of Andal's poems.

To the Cuckoo

O Cuckoo that peckest at the blossomed flower of honey-dripping champaka and, inebriate, pipest forth the melodious notes, be seated in thy ease and with thy babblings, which are yet no babblings, call out for the coming of my Lord of the Venkata hill. For He, the pure one, bearing in his left hand the white summoning conch shows me not his form. But He has invaded my heart; and while I pine and sigh for his love, He looks on indifferent as if it were all a play.

I feel as if my bones had melted away and my long javelin eyes have not closed their lids for these many days. I am tossed on the waves of the sea of pain without finding the boat that is named the Lord of the highest realm. Even thou must know, O Cuckoo, the pain we feel when we are parted from those whom we love. He whose pennon bears the emblem of the golden eagle, call out for his coming, O bird.

I am a slave of Him whose stride has measured the worlds. And now because He is harsh to me, how strange that this south-wind and these moonbeams should tear my flesh, enfeebling me. But thou, O Cuckoo, that ever livest in this garden of mine, it is not meet that thou shouldst pain me also. Indeed I shall drive thee out if He who reposes on the waters of life come not to me by thy songs today.

I Dreamed a Dream

I dreamed a dream, O friend.

The wedding was fixed for the morrow. And He, the Lion, Madhava, the young Bull whom they call the master of radiances, He came into the hall of wedding decorated with luxuriant palms.

I dreamed a dream, O friend.

And the throng of the Gods was there with Indra, the Mind Divine, at their head. And in the shrine they declared me bride and clad me in a new robe of affirmation. And Inner Force is the name of the goddess who adorned me with the garland of the wedding.

I dreamed a dream, O friend.

There were beatings of the drum and blowings of the conch; and under the canopy hung heavily with strings of pearls He came, my lover and my lord, the vanquisher of the demon Madhu and grasped me by the hand.

I dreamed a dream, O friend.

Those whose voices are blest, they sang the Vedic songs. The holy grass was laid. The sun was established. And He who was puissant like a war-elephant in its rage, He seized my hand and we paced round the Flame.

Ye Others

Ye others cannot conceive of the love that I bear to Krishna. And your warnings to me are vain like the pleadings of the deaf and mute. The Boy who left his mother's home and was reared by a different mother, — Oh, take me forth to his city of Mathura where He won the field without fighting the battle and leave me there.

Of no further avail is modesty. For all the neighbours have known of this fully. Would ye really heal me of this ailing and restore me to my pristine state? Then know ye this illness will go if I see Him, the maker of illusions, the youthful one who measured the world. Should you really wish to save me, then take me forth to his home in the hamlet of the cowherds and leave me there.

The rumour is already spread over the land that I fled with Him and went the lonely way, leaving all of you behind — my parents, relations and friends. The tongue of scandal ye can hardly silence now. And He, the deceiver, is haunting me with his forms. Oh, take me forth at midnight to the door of the Cowherd named Bliss who owns this son, the maker of havoc, this mocker, this pitiless player; and leave me there.

Oh, grieve not ye, my mothers. Others know little of this strange malady of mine. He whose hue is that of the blue sea, a certain youth called Krishna — the gentle caress of his hand can heal me, for his Yoga is sure and proved.

On the bank of the waters he ascended the kadamba tree and he leaped to his dance on the hood of the snake, the dance that killed the snake. Oh, take me forth to the bank of that lake and leave me there.

There is a parrot here in this cage of mine that ever calls out his name, saying "Govinda, Govinda". In anger I chide it and refuse to feed it. "O Thou" it then cries, in its highest pitch, "O Thou who hast measured the worlds." I tell you, my people, if ye really would avoid the top of scandal in all this wide country, if still ye would guard your weal and your good fame, then take me forth to his city of Dwaraka of high mansions and decorated turrets; and leave me there.

Nammalwar

Nammalwar

The Supreme Vaishnava Saint and Poet

MARAN, renowned as Nammalwar ("Our Saint") among the Vaishnavas and the greatest of their saints and poets, was born in a small town called Kuruhur, in the southernmost region of the Tamil country — Tiru-nel-veli (Tinnevelly). His father, Kari, was a petty prince who paid tribute to the Pandyan King of Madura. We have no means of ascertaining the date of the Alwar's birth, as the traditional account is untrustworthy and full of inconsistencies. We are told that the infant was mute for several years after his birth. Nammalwar renounced the world early in life and spent his time singing and meditating on God under the shade of a tamarind tree by the side of the village temple.

It was under this tree that he was first seen by his disciple, the Alwar Madhura-kavi, — for the latter also is numbered among the great Twelve, "lost in the sea of Divine Love". Tradition says that while Madhura-kavi was wandering in North India as a pilgrim, one night a strange light appeared to him in the sky and travelled towards the South. Doubtful at first what significance this phenomenon might have for him, its repetition during three consecutive nights convinced him that it was a divine summons and where this luminous sign led he must follow. Night after night he journeyed southwards till the guiding light came to Kuruhur and there disappeared. Learning of Nammalwar's spiritual greatness he thought that it was to him that the light had been leading him. But when he came to him, he found him absorbed in deep meditation with his eyes fast closed and although he waited for hours the Samadhi did not break until he took up a large stone and struck it against the ground violently. At the noise Nammalwar opened his eyes, but still remained silent. Madhura-kavi then put to him the following enigmatical question, "If the little one (the soul) is born into the dead thing (Matter)[1] what will the little one eat and where will the little one lie?" to which Nammalwar replied in an equally enigmatic style, "That will it eat and there will it lie."

Subsequently Nammalwar permitted his disciple to live with him and it was Madhura-kavi who wrote down his songs as they were composed. Nammalwar died in his thirty-fifth year, but he has achieved so great a reputation that the Vaishnavas account him an incarnation of Vishnu himself, while others are only the mace, discus, conch etc. of the Deity.

From the philosophical and spiritual point of view, his poetry ranks among the highest in Tamil literature. But in point of literary excellence, there is a great inequality; for while some songs touch the level of the loftiest world-poets, others, even though rich in rhythm and expression, fall much below the poet's capacity. In his great work known as the Tiru-vay-moli (the Sacred Utterance) which contains more than a thousand stanzas, he has touched all the phases of the life divine and given expression to all forms of spiritual experience. The pure and passionless Reason, the direct perception in the high solar realm of Truth itself, the ecstatic and sometimes poignant love that leaps into being at the vision of the "Beauty of God's face", the final Triumph where unity is achieved and "I and my Father are one" — all these are uttered in his simple and flowing lines with a strength that is full of tenderness and truth.

The lines which we translate below are a fair specimen of the great Alwar's poetry; but it has suffered considerably in the translation, — indeed the genius of the Tamil tongue hardly permits of an effective rendering, so utterly divergent is it from that of the English language.

---

[1] The form of the question reminds one of Epictetus' definition of man, "Thou art a little soul carrying about a corpse." Some of our readers may be familiar with Swinburne's adaptation of the saying, "A little soul for a little bears up the corpse which is man."

Nammalwar's Hymn of the Golden Age

'Tis glory, glory, glory! For Life's hard curse has expired; swept out are Pain and Hell, and Death has nought to do here. Mark ye, the Iron Age shall end. For we have seen the hosts of Vishnu; richly do they enter in and chant His praise and dance and thrive. (1)

We have seen, we have seen, we have seen — seen things full sweet for our eyes. Come, all ye lovers of God, let us shout and dance for joy with oft-made surrenderings. Wide do they roam on earth singing songs and dancing, the hosts of Krishna who wears the cool and beautiful Tulsi, the desire of the Bees. (2)

The Iron Age shall change. It shall fade, it shall pass away. The gods shall be in our midst. The mighty Golden Age shall hold the earth and the flood of the highest Bliss shall swell. For the hosts of our dark-hued Lord, dark-hued like the cloud, dark-hued like the sea, widely they enter in, singing songs, and everywhere they have seized on their stations. (3)

The hosts of our Lord who reclines on the sea of Vastness, behold them thronging hither. Meseems they will tear up all these weeds of grasping cults. And varied songs do they sing, our Lord's own hosts, as they dance falling, sitting, standing, marching, leaping, bending. (4)

And many are the wondrous sights that strike mine eyes. As by magic have Vishnu's hosts come in and firmly placed themselves everywhere. Nor doubt it, ye fiends and demons, if, born such be in our midst, take heed! ye shall never escape. For the Spirit of Time will slay and fling you away. (5)

These hosts of the Lord of the Discus, they are here to free this earth of the devourers of Life, Disease and Hunger and vengeful Hate and all other things of evil. And sweet are their songs as they leap and dance extending wide over earth. Go forth, ye lovers of God and meet these hosts divine; with right minds serve them and live. (6)

The Gods that ye fix in your minds, in His name do they grant you deliverance. Even thus to immortality did the sage Markanda attain. I mean no offence to any, but there is no other God but Krishna. And let all your sacrifices be to them who are but His forms. (7)

His forms he has placed as Gods to receive and taste the offerings that are brought in sacrifices in all the various worlds. He our divine Sovereign on whose mole-marked bosom the goddess Lakshmi rests — His hosts are singing sweetly and deign to increase on earth. O men, approach them, serve and live. (8)

Go forth and live by serving our Lord, the deathless One. With your tongues chant ye the hymns, the sacred Riks of the Veda, nor err in the laws of wisdom. Oh, rich has become this earth in the blessed ones and the faithful who serve them with flowers and incense and sandal and water. (9)

In all these rising worlds they have thronged and wide they spread, those beauteous forms of Krishna — the unclad Rudra is there, Indra, Brahma, all. The Iron Age shall cease to be — do ye but unite and serve these. (10)

Love-Mad

The Realisation of God in all things by the Vision of Divine Love

> The poetic image used in the following verses is characteristically Indian. The mother of a love-stricken girl (symbolising the human soul yearning to merge into the Godhead) is complaining to her friends of the sad plight of her child whom love for Krishna has rendered "mad" — the effect of the "madness" being that in all things she is able to see nothing but forms of Krishna, the ultimate Spirit of the universe.

Seated, she caresses Earth and cries "This Earth is Vishnu's;"
Salutes the sky and bids us "behold the Heaven He ruleth;"
Or standing with tear-filled eyes cries aloud "O sea-hued Lord!"
All helpless am I, my friends, my child He has rendered mad. (1)

Or joining her hands she fancies "the Sea where my Lord reposes!"
Or hailing the ruddy Sun she cries: "Yes, this is His form,"
Languid, she bursts into tears and mutters Narayan's name.
I am dazed at the things she is doing, my gazelle, my child shaped god-like. (2)

Knowing, she embraces red Fire, is scorched and cries "O Deathless!"
And she hugs the Wind; "'Tis my own Govinda," she tells us.
She smells of the honied Tulsi, my gazelle-like child. Ah me!
How many the pranks she plays for my sinful eyes to behold. (3)

The rising moon she showeth, "'Tis the shining gem-hued Krishna!"
Or, eyeing the standing hill, she cries: "O come, high Vishnu!"
It rains; and she dances and cries out "He hath come, the God of my love!"
O the mad conceits He hath given to my tender, dear one! (4)

The soft-limbed calf she embraces, for "Such did Krishna tend,"
And follows the gliding serpent, explaining "That is His couch."
I know not where this will end, this folly's play in my sweet one
Afflicted, ay, for my sins, by Him, the Divine Magician. (5)

Where tumblers dance with their pots, she runs and cries "Govinda;"
At the charming notes of a flute she faints, for "Krishna, He playeth."
When cowherd dames bring butter, she is sure it was tasted by Him, —
So mad for the Lord who sucked out the Demoness' life through her bosom! (6)

In rising madness she raves, "All worlds are by Krishna made"
And she runs after folk ash-smeared; forsooth, they serve high Vishnu!
Or she looks at the fragrant Tulsi and claims Narayan's garland.
She is ever for Vishnu, my darling, or in, or out of her wits. (7)

And in all your wealthy princes she but sees the Lord of Lakshmi.
At the sight of beautiful colours, she cries, "O my Lord world-scanning!"
And all the shrines in the land, to her, are shrines of Vishnu.
In awe and in love, unceasing, she adores the feet of that Wizard. (8)

All Gods and saints are Krishna — Devourer of infinite Space!
And the huge, dark clouds are Krishna; all fain would she fly to reach them.
Or the kine, they graze on the meadow and thither she runs to find Him.
The Lord of Illusions, He makes my dear one pant and rave. (9)

Languid she stares around her or gazes afar into space;
She sweats and with eyes full of tears she sighs and faints away;
Rising, she speaks but His name and cries, "Do come, O Lord."
Ah, what shall I do with my poor child o'erwhelmed by this maddest love? (10)

Kulasekhara Alwar

Refuge

(Translated from the Tamil verses of
Kulasekhara Alwar, the Chera king and saint)

Though thou shouldst not spare me the anguish of the world, yet I have no refuge but thy feet. O Lord of the City of the wise begirt by gardens full of sweet flowers, if, in a keen-edged wrath, the mother cast off the babe, what can it do but cry for the mother's love? I am like that babe. (1)

If the man whom she loves subject her to contumely, the high-born wife still clings to him; for he is her chosen lord. And I, too, O Lord of the City of the wise whose walls reach up to Heaven, I will ever praise thy victorious feet, even if thou shouldst leave me unprotected. (2)

Reject me, O Lord, and I will yet hold on to thee, not knowing another prop. O Lord of the City of the wise encircled by green fields with their glancing fish, the rightful king may cause much pain to his country's heart, not looking at things with his own eyes, but still the country trusts in him. I am like that country. (3)

The sufferer loves the wise physician even when his flesh is cut and burnt. O Lord of the City of the wise, let thy Illusion inflict on me an endless pain, I will yet remain thy servant, I will yet look up to thy feet. (4)

O Lord of the City of the wise, who didst slay the strong and cruel Beast, ah, where shall I fly for refuge, if I leave thy feet? On the tossing sea the bird leaves the mast of the ship, he flies to all sides but no shore is visible, and he again returns to the mast. I am like that bird. (5)

Let Fire himself assail with its heat the lotus-flower, it will blossom to none but the Sun. Even if thou shouldst refrain from healing its pain, my heart can be melted by nothing else as by thy unlimited beauty. (6)

The Rain may forget the fields, but the fields will ever be thirsting for its coming. O Lord of the City of the wise, what care I whether thou heal my wound or no, my heart shall ever be thine. (7)

The rivers course down through many lands but must yield themselves to the Sea, they cannot flow back. O sea-hued Lord of the City of the wise, even so must I ever be drawn to thy resplendent glory. (8)

Illusory Power ever seeks him who seeketh thee not, not seeking thy lasting Might. O Lord of the City of the wise whose discus flashes like the lightning, I must ever seek thee, who am thy servant. (9)

Tiruvalluvar

Opening of the Kural

1

1. Alpha of all letters the first,
Of the worlds the original Godhead the beginning.

2. What fruit is by learning, if thou adore not
The beautiful feet of the Master of luminous wisdom?

3. When man has reached the majestic feet of him whose walk is on flowers,
Long upon earth is his living.

4. Not to the feet arriving of the one with whom none can compare,
Hard from the heart to dislodge is its sorrow.

5. Not to the feet of the Seer, to the sea of righteousness coming,
Hard to swim is this different ocean.

6. When man has come to the feet of him who has neither want nor unwanting,
Nowhere for him is affliction.

7. Night of our stumbling twixt virtue and sin not for him, is
The soul on the glorious day of God's reality singing.

8. In the truth of his acts who has cast out the objects five from the gates of the senses,
Straight if thou stand, long shall be thy fullness of living.

9. Some are who cross the giant ocean of birth; but he shall not cross it
Who has touched not the feet of the Godhead.

10. Lo, in a sense unillumined no virtue is, vainly is lifted
The head that fell not at the feet of the eightfold in Power, the Godhead.

2

Rain

1. If the heavens remain dry, to the gods here in Nature
How shall be given the splendour of worship?

2. If the heavens do not their work, in this wide world
Giving is finished, austerity ended.

3. The world cannot live without its waters,
Nor conduct be at all without the rains from heaven.

4. If quite the skies refuse their gift, through this wide world
Famine shall do its worst with these creatures.

5. If one drop from heaven falls not, here
Hardly shalt thou see one head of green grass peering.

Part Four

Translations from Greek

Two Epigrams

On a Satyr and Sleeping Love

Me whom the purple mead that Bromius owns
And girdles rent of amorous girls did please,
Now the inspired and curious hand decrees
That waked quick life in these quiescent stones,
To yield thee water pure. Thou lest the sleep
Yon perilous boy unchain, more softly creep.

PLATO

A Rose of Women

Now lilies blow upon the windy height,
Now flowers the pansy kissed by tender rain,
Narcissus builds his house of self-delight
And Love's own fairest flower blooms again;
Vainly your gems, O meadows, you recall;
One simple girl breathes sweeter than you all.

MELEAGER

Opening of the Iliad

Sing to me, Muse, of the wrath of Achilles Pelidean,
Murderous, bringing a million woes on the men of Achaea;
Many the mighty souls whom it drove down headlong to Hades,
Souls of heroes and made of their bodies booty for vultures,
Dogs and all birds; so the will of Zeus was wholly accomplished
Even from the moment when they two parted in strife and in anger,
Peleus' glorious son and the monarch of men Agamemnon.
Which of the gods was it set them to conflict and quarrel disastrous?
Leto's son from the seed of Zeus; he wroth with their monarch
Roused in the ranks an evil pest and the peoples perished.
For he insulted Chryses, priest and master of prayer,
Atreus' son, when he came to the swift ships of the Achaeans
Hoping release for his daughter, bringing a limitless ransom
While in his hands were the chaplets of great far-hurtling Apollo
Twined on a sceptre of gold and entreated all the Achaeans.
"Atreus' son and all you highgreaved armèd Achaeans;
You may the gods grant, they who dwell in your lofty Olympus,
Priam's city to sack and safely to reach your firesides.
Only my child beloved may you loose to me taking this ransom,
Holding in awe great Zeus' son far-hurtling Apollo."
Then all there rumoured approval, the other Achaeans,
Deeming the priest to revere and take that glorious ransom,
But Agamemnon it pleased not; the heart of him angered,
Evilly rather he sent him and hard was his word upon him.
"Let me not find thee again, old man, by our ships of the Ocean
Either lingering now or afterwards ever returning,
Lest the sceptre avail thee not, no nor the great God's chaplets.
Her will I not release; before that age shall o'ertake her
There in our dwelling in Argos far from the land of her fathers
Going about her loom, ascending my couch at nightfall.

Hence with thee, rouse me not, safer shalt thou return then homeward."
So he spake and the old man feared him and heeded his bidding.
Voiceless along the shore by the myriad cry of the waters
Slowly he went; but deeply he prayed as he paced to the distance,
Prayed to the Lord Apollo, child of Leto the golden.

Opening of the Odyssey

Sing to me, Muse, of the man many-counselled who far through the world's ways
Wandering was tossed after Troya he sacked, the divine stronghold,
Many cities of men he beheld, learned the minds of their dwellers,
Many the woes in his soul he suffered driven on the waters,
Fending from fate his life and the homeward course of his comrades.
Them even so he saved not for all his desire and his striving;
Who by their own infatuate madness piteously perished,
Fools in their hearts! for they slew the herds the deity pastured,
Helios high-climbing; but he from them reft their return and the daylight.
Sing to us also of these things, goddess, daughter of heaven.
Now all the rest who had fled from death and sudden destruction
Safe dwelt at home, from the war escaped and the swallowing ocean:
He alone far was kept from his fatherland, far from his consort,
Long by the nymph divine, the sea-born goddess, Calypso,
Stayed in her hollow caves; for she yearned to keep him her husband.
Yet when the year came at last in the rolling gyre of the seasons
When in the web of their wills the gods spun out his returning
Homeward to Ithaca, — there too he found not release from his labour,
In his own land with his loved ones, — all the immortals had pity
Save Poseidon alone; but he with implacable anger
Moved against godlike Odysseus before his return to his country.
Now was he gone to the land of the Aethiopes, nations far-distant, —
They who to either hand divided, remotest of mortals,
Dwell where the high-climbing Helios sets and where he arises;
There of bulls and of rams the slaughtered hecatomb tasting
He by the banquet seated rejoiced; but the other immortals
Sat in the halls of Zeus Olympian; the throng of them seated,
First led the word the father divine of men and immortals;
For in his heart had the memory risen of noble Aegisthus

Whom in his halls Orestes, the famed Agamemnonid, slaughtered;
Him in his heart recalling he spoke mid the assembled immortals:
"Out on it! how are the gods ever vainly accused by earth's creatures!
Still they say that from us they have miseries; they rather always
By their own folly and madness draw on them woes we have willed not.
Even as now Aegisthus, violating Fate, from Atrides
Took his wedded wife and slew her husband returning,
Knowing the violent end; for we warned him before, we sent him
Hermes charged with our message, the far-scanning slayer of Argus,
Neither the hero to smite nor wed the wife of Atrides,
Since from Orestes a vengeance shall be, the Atreid offspring,
When to his youth he shall come and desire the soil of his country.
Yet not for all his words would the infatuate heart of Aegisthus
Heed that friendly voice; now all in a mass has been paid for."
Answered then to Zeus the goddess grey-eyed Athene.
"Father of ours, thou son of Cronus, highest of the regnant,
He indeed and utterly fell by a fitting destruction:
So too perish all who dare like deeds among mortals.
But for a far better man my heart burns, clear-eyed Odysseus
Who, ill-fated, far from his loved ones suffers and sorrows
Hemmed in the island girt by the waves, in the navel of ocean,
Where in her dwelling mid woods and caves a goddess inhabits,
Daughter of Atlas whose baleful heart knows all the abysses
Fathomless, vast of the sea and the pillars high on his shoulders
In his huge strength he upbears that part the earth and the heavens;
Atlas' daughter keeps in that island the unhappy Odysseus.
Always soft are her words and crafty and thus she beguiles him.
So perhaps he shall cease from thought of his land; but Odysseus
Yearns to see even the distant smoke of his country upleaping.
Death he desires. And even in thee, O Olympian, my father,
Never thy heart turns one moment to pity, nor dost thou remember
How by the ships of the Argives he wrought the sacrifice pleasing
Oft in wide-wayed Troya. What wrath gainst the wronged keeps thy bosom?

Hexameters from Homer

Down he fell with a thud and his armour clangoured upon him.

*

Down from the peaks of Olympus he went, wrath vexing his
heart-strings.

*

Down from the peaks of Olympus she went impetuously darting.

*

Silent he walked by the shore of the many-rumoured Ocean.

Part Five

Translations from Latin

Hexameters from Virgil and Horace

Horse-hooves trampled the crumbling plain with a four-footed gallop.

*

Fiercer griefs you have suffered; to these too God will give ending.

VIRGIL

Him shall not copious eloquence leave nor clearness and order.

HORACE

Catullus to Lesbia

O my Lesbia, let us live for loving.
Suns can set and return to light the morrow,
We, when once has sunk down the light of living, —
One long night we must sleep, and sleep for ever.
Give me kisses a thousand and then a hundred,
One more thousand again, again a hundred,
Many thousands of kisses give and hundreds,
Kisses numberless like to sands on sea-shores,
Burning Libya's sands in far Cyrene.
Close confound the thousands and mix the hundreds
Lest some envious Fate or eye discover
The long reckoning of our love and kisses.

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

Fluent in English from his childhood, Sri Aurobindo mastered five other languages — French, Latin, Greek, Sanskrit and Bengali — and learned something of seven others — Italian, German, Spanish, Hindi/Hindustani, Gujarati, Marathi and Tamil. On numerous occasions over a period of half a century he translated works and passages written in several of these languages.

The present volume contains all Sri Aurobindo's translations from Sanskrit, Bengali, Tamil, Greek and Latin into English, with the exception of his translations from the Rig Veda and the Upanishads. (His Vedic and Upanishadic translations are published in volumes 14–18 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.) Sri Aurobindo's translations of some of the Mother's French *Prières et méditations* appear in *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*, volume 31 of THE COMPLETE WORKS. His translations of Sanskrit texts into Bengali are published in *Writings in Bengali and Sanskrit*, volume 9 of THE COMPLETE WORKS. Several of his other works incorporate translations. *Essays on the Gita* (volume 19), for instance, contains translations and paraphrases of many passages from the Bhagavad Gita. (The present volume contains an early literary translation of the Gita's opening chapters.)

The editors have arranged the contents of the present volume in five parts according to source-language. The pieces are published as Sri Aurobindo translated them, even if his ordering does not agree with the usual order of the original text.

PART ONE: TRANSLATIONS FROM SANSKRIT

Sri Aurobindo began to learn Sanskrit as an Indian Civil Service probationer at Cambridge between 1890 and 1892. He continued his studies while working as an administrative officer and professor in the Baroda state between 1893 and 1906. During this period he translated most of the pieces making up this part. His rendering of *Vidula* dates from the period of his political activity (1906–10); some shorter pieces, mostly incomplete, date from his years in Pondicherry (1910–50).

Section One. The Ramayana

Pieces from the Ramayana. Sri Aurobindo translated these four passages sometime around 1900 under the heading "Pieces from the Ramaian". They have been reproduced in the order of their occurrence in his notebook. The Sanskrit sources of the passages are as follows: "Speech of Dussaruth to the assembled States-General of his Empire", Ayodhya Kanda, Sarga 2. 1–20; "An Aryan City", Bala Kanda, Sarga 5. 5–22; "A Mother's Lament", Ayodhya Kanda, Sarga 20. 36–55; "The Wife", Ayodhya Kanda, Sargas 26–30.

An Aryan City: Prose Version. Editorial title. Translated around 1912. Bala Kanda, Sarga 5. 5–15. This translation covers most of the same ground as the verse translation in "Pieces from the Ramayana", which was done around a decade earlier.

The Book of the Wild Forest. Translated around 1912. Aranya Kanda, Sargas 1. 1–21, 2. 1–25, 3. 1–5.

The Defeat of Dhoomraksha. Translated around 1913. Yuddha Kanda, Sarga 52.

Section Two. The Mahabharata

Sabha Parva or Book of the Assembly-Hall. According to notations in the manuscript, Sri Aurobindo worked on this translation between 18 March and 18 April 1893. (He returned to India after passing more than thirteen years in England on 6 February 1893.) His original plan was to translate much of the Parva in twelve "cantos". On the first page of the manuscript, under the heading "Translation / of / the Mahabhaarut / Sabhâ Purva / or Book of the Assembly-Hall", he wrote an outline of the proposed work:

Part I. The Book of the Sacrifice

Canto I	The Building of the Hall.
Canto II.	The Debated Sacrifice
Canto III.	The Slaying of Jeresundh.

Canto IV.	The Conquest of the World.
Canto V.	The Interrupted Meedgiving
Canto VI	The Slaying of Shishupaal.

Part II. The Book of Gambling

Canto VII	The Grief of Duryodhun
Canto VIII	The Bringing of Yudishthere
Canto IX.	The Throwing of the Dice
Canto X	The Oppression of Drowpadie
Canto XI.	The Last Throwing of the Dice
Canto XII.	The Exile of the Pandoves

The division of the Parva into twelve cantos is Sri Aurobindo's own and does not correspond to any divisions in the Sanskrit text.

Sri Aurobindo abandoned this project before completion, leaving translations, in places rather rough, of only two cantos and part of a third. The first canto consists of Adhyayas 1–3 and part of Adhyaya 4, the second of Adhyayas 13–16 and part of 17, and the third of Adhyayas 20–22 and part of 23. (These are the Adhyaya numbers in the popular Gita Press edition [Gorakhpur], which corresponds reasonably well to the edition used by Sri Aurobindo for this translation. The corresponding Adhyayas in the Critical Edition [Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute] are 1–4, 12–16 and 18–21.)

While revising his translation Sri Aurobindo wrote alternative versions of several passages. The editors have reproduced the later version whenever it was sufficiently well worked out for use; if not, they have reverted to the original version. Sri Aurobindo numbered the lines of his first versions of the three cantos, but did not revise the numbers after adding new lines.

Virata Parva: Fragments from Adhyaya 17. These two fragments were written on a single page of a notebook that can be dated to around 1898. The shorter, prose version covers part of the Sanskrit passage that is translated in the longer, poetic version, namely Virata Parva 17. 13–15 in the Gita Press edition or 16. 7–9 in the Critical Edition.

Udyoga Parva: Two Renderings of the First Adhyaya. The two versions of Adhyaya 1 of the Udyoga Parva were done separately around 1902 and 1906. Neither is quite complete. The first version omits Shlokas 8 and 9; the second omits the last verse.

Udyoga Parva: Passages from Adhyayas 75 and 72. These fragments from Adhyayas 75 and 72 (73 and 70 in the Critical Edition) of the Udyoga Parva were translated in this order around 1902. They occupy a page of the notebook containing the essay "Notes on the Mahabharata" (see *Early Cultural Writings*, volume 1 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO). The first passage covers the first three Shlokas of Adhyaya 75 (the remainder of this Adhyaya is translated in "Notes on the Mahabharata"). The second passage covers Shlokas 1–5 of Adhyaya 72.

The Bhagavad Gita: The First Six Chapters. Sri Aurobindo translated these chapters of the Bhagavad Gita sometime around 1902. He used a text of the Gita published in Calcutta in 1301 Bengali era (1894–95), jotting down English renderings of a few verses in the book itself before translating the first six chapters in a notebook. A translation of the first three verses of the seventh chapter is reproduced in Appendix I from marginal notations in his copy of the book. Appendix II is a much later translation of the first three and a half verses of the Gita, found in a notebook used by Sri Aurobindo in 1927.

Vidula. This translation first appeared in the weekly *Bande Mataram* on 9 June 1907 under the title "The Mother to her Son". The following note by Sri Aurobindo was printed above the text:

> (There are few more interesting passages in the Mahabharat than the conversation of Vidula with her son. It comes into the main poem as an exhortation from Kunti to Yudhisthir to give up the weak spirit of submission, moderation, prudence, and fight like a true warrior and Kshatriya for right and justice and his own. But the poem bears internal evidence of having been written by a patriotic poet to stir his countrymen to revolt against the yoke of the foreigner. Sanjay, prince and leader of an Aryan people, has been defeated by the King of Sindhu and his Kingdom is in the possession of the invader. The fact of the King of Sindhu or the country around the Indus being named as the invader shows that the poet must have had in his mind one of the aggressive foreign powers, whether Persia,

> Graeco-Bactria, Parthia or the Scythians, which took possession one after the other of these regions and made them the base for inroads upon the North-West. The poet seeks to fire the spirit of the conquered and subject people and impel them to throw off the hated subjection. He personifies in Vidula the spirit of the motherland speaking to her degenerate son and striving to awaken in him the inherited Aryan manhood and the Kshatriya's preference of death to servitude.)

Almost thirty-five years later Sri Aurobindo revised his translation for publication in *Collected Poems and Plays* (1942). At that time he struck out the above note and wrote the one reproduced on page 105.

Section Three. Kalidasa

Between 1898 and around 1903 Sri Aurobindo wrote several chapters of a planned critical study of the works of Kalidasa, the master of classical Sanskrit poetry. During the same period he translated two complete works by the poet — the *Meghaduta* and the *Vikramorvashiya* — as well as parts of three others — the *Malavikagnimitra*, the *Kumarasambhava* and the *Raghuvansha*. A number of years later, in Pondicherry, he returned to Kalidasa, producing three different versions of the opening of the *Kumarasambhava*.

The editors reproduce these translations in the following order: first, the only surviving complete translation; next, the two that include at least one major section of the original text; and finally, notes and fragments.

Vikramorvasie or The Hero and the Nymph. Sri Aurobindo began this translation of Kalidasa's second drama, the *Vikramorvashiya*, sometime around 1898. He had apparently completed it by around 1902, when he wrote an essay on the characters of the play. (This essay, "Vikramorvasie: The Characters", is published in *Early Cultural Writings*, volume 1 of THE COMPLETE WORKS.) Probably in 1911 Sri Aurobindo's translation was published by R. Chatterjee (presumably Ramananda Chatterjee, editor of the *Prabasi* and *Modern Review*) at the Kuntaline Press, Calcutta. A second edition was brought out in 1941 by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry; the next year the text was included in the same publisher's *Collected Poems and Plays*.

In the Gardens of Vidisha or Malavica and the King: Act I. Sri Aurobindo wrote this partial translation of Kalidasa's *Malavikagnimitra* in Baroda, probably around 1900–02. A fragment from the beginning of Act II, translated at the same time, is published here in an appendix.

The Birth of the War-God. Around 1916–18, Sri Aurobindo made three separate translations of parts of the first two cantos of Kalidasa's epic *Kumarasambhava* under the title *The Birth of the War-God*. The first rendering, which breaks off after the twentieth verse, is in rhymed stanzas. The second rendering is a translation of the first canto in blank verse; verses 7–16 were translated in a different order from the original. The third, expanded version includes several long passages that do not correspond to anything in Kalidasa's epic. It may thus be considered practically an independent poem by Sri Aurobindo.

Notes and Fragments

Skeleton Notes on the Kumarasambhavam: Canto V. Around 1900–02, while still living in Baroda, Sri Aurobindo produced this annotated literal translation of the beginning of the fifth canto of Kalidasa's epic. In it he cited the glosses of various commentators. These citations make it clear that he used the edition of Shankar Ganesh Deshpande: *The Kumara-Sambhava of Kâlidâsa (I–VI.) With the commentary of Mallinâtha* (Poona, 1887).

The Line of Raghou: Two Renderings of the Opening. Sri Aurobindo translated the first ten verses of Kalidasa's *Raghuvansha* independently on two different occasions, first in Baroda sometime around 1900–05 (he headed this translation "Raghuvansa") and later in Pondicherry around 1912 (he headed this translation "The Line of Raghou / Canto I").

The Cloud Messenger: Fragments from a Lost Translation. Sri Aurobindo translated the entire *Meghaduta* sometime around 1900. A decade later, while living in Pondicherry under the surveillance of the British police, he entrusted the translation to a friend, who (according to the received story) put it in a bamboo cylinder and buried it. When the cylinder was unearthed, it was discovered that the translation had been devoured by white ants. The only passages to survive are the ones

Sri Aurobindo quoted in his essay "On Translating Kalidasa" and in a letter to his brother Manmohan Ghose that was typed for use as a preface to the poem *Love and Death*. These passages are reproduced here in the order in which they occur in Kalidasa's poem.

Section Four. Bhartrihari

The Century of Life. Sri Aurobindo began this translation of the *Niti Shataka* of Bhartrihari (sixth to seventh century) while in Baroda. He seems to have been referring to it when he spoke, in a letter to his uncle dated 15 August 1902, of "my MS of verse translations from Sanskrit". Some of the epigrams were first published in the *Baroda College Miscellany*, presumably during the years he was a professor of English there (1898–1901 and 1905–06). A few others were published in the *Karmayogin* on 19 March 1910 and in the *Arya* in December 1917 and November 1918. The complete translation was preserved in the form of a forty-page typescript, preceded by an eight-page "Prefatory Note" (see below). In 1924 the translation was published by the Shama'a Publishing House, Madras.

Appendix: Prefatory Note on Bhartrihari. The typed manuscript of Sri Aurobindo's translation of *The Century of Life*, then called "The Century of Morals", included this "prefatory note" on the poet and his work. When Sri Aurobindo published *The Century of Life* in 1924, he discarded this note in favour of the brief translator's note published here on page 314.

Section Five. Other Translations from Sanskrit

Opening of the Kiratarjuniya. Sri Aurobindo read the masterwork of the seventh-century poet Bharavi during the early part of his stay in Pondicherry. He wrote a literal translation of the first two Shlokas of the poem in the top margin of the first page of the book. This evidently was intended as an aid in his study of the poem and not as an attempt at literary translation.

Bhagawat: Skandha I, Adhyaya I. This translation of the first Adhyaya of the Bhagavata Purana was written in Pondicherry around 1912.

Bhavani. Sri Aurobindo's translation of the opening of this hymn, attributed to the eighth-century Vedantic philosopher and commentator Shankaracharya, is dated 28 March 1941.

PART TWO: TRANSLATIONS FROM BENGALI

Although born in Bengal of Bengali parents, Sri Aurobindo did not begin to learn the Bengali language until he was a young man. As a child he spoke only English and Hindustani. His father, then an ardent anglophile, did not allow Bengali to be spoken at home. When he was seven, Aurobindo was taken to England, where he remained for the next thirteen years. Selected for the Indian Civil Service and assigned to Bengal, he began the study of Bengali at Cambridge. Rejected from the service in 1892, he obtained employment in the state of Baroda, where he continued his Bengali studies. At this time he translated a number of songs by devotional poets who wrote in Bengali or the related language of Maithili. Between 1906 and 1910 he lived in Bengal, where he mastered Bengali well enough to edit a weekly journal in that language. At that time he translated part of a novel by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. Later, in Pondicherry, he translated a few examples of contemporary Bengali poetry.

Section One. Vaishnava Devotional Poetry

Radha's Complaint in Absence. Sri Aurobindo published this "imitation" of a poem by Chandidasa (late fourteenth to early fifteenth century) in *Songs to Myrtilla* (c. 1898), his first collection of poems.

Radha's Appeal. This "imitation" from Chandidasa was also published in *Songs to Myrtilla*.

Karma: Radha's Complaint. This free rendering of a poem by Chandidasa first appeared in *Ahana and Other Poems* (Pondicherry: The Modern Press, 1915).

Appeal. This English poem is based in part on a song ("*Divas til ādh . . .* ") in Vidyapati's *Padavali* (see the next item). The first stanza of the English follows Vidyapati's text fairly closely; the two stanzas that follow are Sri Aurobindo's own invention. It was first published in *Ahana and Other Poems*.

Twenty-two Poems of Bidyapati. Vidyapati (fourteenth to fifteenth century; pronounced "Bidyapati" in Bengali and so spelled by Sri Aurobindo) wrote in Maithili, a language spoken in north-east Bihar and Nepal, which is closely related to Bengali and other languages of eastern India. Mediaeval Maithili in particular is close to mediaeval Bengali, and Bengali scholars consider Vidyapati one of the creators of their own literature. Sri Aurobindo read Vidyapati's *Padavali* as part of his study of early Bengali literature. (He used the text reproduced in an edition of *Prachin Kabir Granthabali* [Anthology of the Old Poets] published in Calcutta in 1304 Bengali era [1897–98].) Around 1898 Sri Aurobindo began to translate poems from the *Padavali* into English verse. He entitled his first selection, "Ten Poems translated from Bidyapati". Later, in the same notebook, he added twenty-four more. Some years later he selected twelve of these thirty-four translations for inclusion in his "Selected Poems of Bidyapati" (see below). The twenty-two poems that he did not select are published together here under an editorial title similar to the title of his first selection of ten.

Sri Aurobindo gave titles to drafts of four of the poems in this series (13: "Radha"; 14: "After the bath"; 15: "Radha bathing"; 16: "Love's Stratagem") and three of the "Selected Poems of Bidyapati" (2: "Enchantment"; 12: "The Look"; 13: "The Bee & the Jasmine"). He wrote more than one version of some of the translations included in this section. Versions that differ significantly from the ones chosen for publication here are reproduced in the reference volume (volume 35). As Sri Aurobindo did not finalise his arrangement of these twenty-two poems, they are published in the order in which they occur in *Prachin Kabir Granthabali.*

Selected Poems of Bidyapati. Around 1900 Sri Aurobindo selected nineteen of his translations from Vidyapati (twelve of which had been drafted in the notebook mentioned in the previous note), and arranged them in an order that emphasises the dialogue between Radha and Krishna.

Selected Poems of Nidhou. Sri Aurobindo translated these twenty poems by the Bengali poet Ramnidhi Gupta (1741–1839), known as Nidhu Babu, sometime around 1900, using the same notebook he had used for "Selected Poems of Bidyapati". He seems to have used texts of Nidhu Babu's poems published in an edition of the collection *Rasa*

Bhandar (Calcutta, 1306 Bengali era [1899–1900]). He numbered his translations and then revised the order by changing the numbers in pencil. The editors have followed the revised arrangement.

Selected Poems of Horo Thacoor. Sri Aurobindo translated these seven poems by Harekrishna Dirghangi (1738–1813), known as Haru Thakur, around the same time as the selections from Nidhu Babu (see above), writing his fair copies in the same notebook. His source seems to have been *Rasa Bhandar* (see above). The notes above the texts are his own glosses.

Selected Poems of Ganodas. Sri Aurobindo translated these seven poems by the sixteenth-century poet Jnanadas (whose name he spelled "Ganodas", as it is pronounced in Bengali) around the same time, and in the same notebook, as his selections from Nidhu Babu and Haru Thakur. His text appears to have been the *Prachin Kabir Granthabali* (see above under "Twenty-two Poems of Bidyapati"). The glosses are his own.

Section Two. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

Hymn to the Mother: Bande Mataram. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838–94) inserted his song "Bande Mataram" in the tenth chapter of his novel *Anandamath*. During the Swadeshi movement (1905–12) the song became a national anthem and its opening words — "Bande Mataram" ("I bow to the Motherland") — a sort of battle cry. In the course of translating the first part of the novel (see below), Sri Aurobindo rendered the song in English verse, adding, in a footnote, a more literal prose translation. First published in the *Karmayogin* on 20 November 1909, the two renderings later were reproduced in *Rishi Bunkim Chandra* (1923), a pamphlet containing also an essay of the same name.

Anandamath: The First Thirteen Chapters. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's novel *Anandamath* (The Abbey of Bliss) was first published in 1882. A quarter-century later it gained great popularity as the source of the song "Bande Mataram" and as a masked revolutionary statement. A translation of the Prologue and the first thirteen chapters of Part I of the novel were published in the *Karmayogin* between between August 1909 and February 1910 over the name Aurobindo Ghose (Sri

Aurobindo). The chapters contain a number of unidiomatic expressions that make one wonder whether he was solely responsible for the translation. During the 1940s, a full translation of *Anandamath* was published by the Basumati Sahitya Mandir, Calcutta. A note to this edition states: "Up to 15th Chapter of Part I translated by Sree Aurobindo. Subsequent pages translated by Sree Barindra Kumar Ghosh." Chapters fourteen and fifteen were certainly not translated by Sri Aurobindo, and are not included here.

Sometime during the early period of his stay in Pondicherry (1910–14), Sri Aurobindo made a handwritten translation of the first two chapters of *Anandamath*, apparently without reference to the *Karmayogin* version. This translation is published here in an appendix.

Section Three. Chittaranjan Das

Songs of the Sea. Sri Aurobindo met Chittaranjan Das (1870–1925) while both were students in England. Two decades later Das successfully defended Sri Aurobindo from the charge of conspiracy to wage war against the King in the Alipore Bomb Case (1909–10). In 1913, learning that Sri Aurobindo was in financial need, Das offered him Rs. 1000 in exchange for a translation of Das's book of poems, *Sagar-Sangit* (Sea-Songs). Sri Aurobindo agreed and completed the translation, which eventually was published, along with Das's prose translation, by Ganesh and Co., Madras, around 1923. Twenty-five years later Sri Aurobindo wrote of his rendering:

> I was not . . . self-moved to translate this work, however beautiful I found it; I might even be accused of having written the translation as a pot-boiler, for Das knowing my impecunious and precarious situation at Pondicherry offered me Rs. 1,000 for the work. Nevertheless I tried to give his beautiful Bengali lines as excellent a shape of English poetry as I could manage.

Section Four. Disciples and Others

During the 1930s a number of Sri Aurobindo's disciples wrote poems that they submitted to him for comment and criticism. On eleven occasions he translated or thoroughly revised translations of poems in Bengali that had been sent to him in this way. During the same decade he translated three songs by Dwijendralal Roy and Atulprasad Sen. These fourteen translations are arranged here in the order of the poets' birth. Most were informal efforts; only "Hymn to India" and "Mahalakshmi" were revised for publication.

Hymn to India, by Dwijendralal Roy (1863–1913). Roy, a well-known playwright, was the father of Dilip Kumar Roy, a disciple of Sri Aurobindo (see below). Sri Aurobindo translated his *Bharata Stotra* on 16 February 1941. The next month the translation was published in the *Modern Review*, Calcutta, under the title "Hymn to India". A year later it was reproduced in Sri Aurobindo's *Collected Poems and Plays* under the title "Mother India". The editors have reverted to the *Modern Review* title (a literal translation of the original Bengali title) to avoid confusion with the next piece.

Mother India, by Dwijendralal Roy. In 1932 Sri Aurobindo thoroughly revised a translation by Mrs. Frieda Hanswirth Dass, a Swiss friend of Dilip Kumar Roy's, of Dwijendralal's song *Bharatabarsha*. Sri Aurobindo later wrote of this version as "my translation". Early typed copies of it are entitled "Mother India".

The Pilot, by Atulprasad Sen (1871–1934). Sen, a noted songwriter and singer, was a friend of Dilip Kumar Roy's. Dilip seems to have sent Sri Aurobindo a copy of this song, probably accompanied by his own or another's English translation, sometime during the 1930s. He later marked a typed copy of the present translation "by Sri Aurobindo".

Mahalakshmi, by Anilbaran Roy (1890–1974). In November 1935, Sri Aurobindo wrote of this translation (which he had apparently just completed):

> Anilbaran's song is best rendered by an Elizabethan simplicity and intensity with as little artifice of metre and diction as possible. I have tried to do it in that way.

The translation was first published, under the title "The Mother", in *Gitasri*, a book of Bengali songs by Dilip Kumar Roy and Nishikanto. It was reprinted, under the title "Mahalakshmi", in Sri Aurobindo's *Collected Poems and Plays* (1942).

The New Creator, by Aruna (1895–1993).

Lakshmi, by Dilip Kumar Roy (1897–1980). Sri Aurobindo's handwritten copy of this translation is entitled "Mahalakshmi". It was published under the title "Lakshmi" in the poet's collection *Anami* (Calcutta, c. 1934), and under the name "Mahalakshmi" in his collection *Eyes of Light* (Bombay, 1948). In both books Sri Aurobindo was identified as the translator. The editors have used the title "Lakshmi" to distinguish this translation from the translation of Anilbaran Roy's poem (see above).

Aspiration: The New Dawn, by Dilip Kumar Roy. A copy of this translation in Sri Aurobindo's own hand exists. It was published in the poet's *Anami* (c. 1934). The poet later wrote that it "was originally translated by my own humble self in free verse which Sri Aurobindo corrected and revised later".

Farewell Flute, by Dilip Kumar Roy. This translation was published in the poet's *Eyes of Light* in 1948. There the translator was identified as Sri Aurobindo.

Uma, by Dilip Kumar Roy. Sri Aurobindo based this translation on one by K. C. Sen. Apropos of his work, he wrote:

> Khitish Sen's translation is far from bad, but it is not perfect either and uses too many oft-heard locutions without bringing in the touch of magic that would save them. Besides, his metre, in spite of his trying to lighten it, is one of the common and obvious metres which are almost proof against subtlety of movement. It may be mathematically more equivalent to yours, but there is an underrunning lilt of celestial dance in your rhythm which he tries to get but, because of the limitations of the metre, cannot manage. I think my iambic-anapaestic choice is better fitted to catch the dance-lilt and keep it.

Two typed copies of Sri Aurobindo's translation exist, one entitled "Uma" and the other "Gouri". In the margin of one, D. K. Roy wrote: "This can be taken as Sri Aurobindo's translation. 99% is his."

Faithful, by Dilip Kumar Roy. The poet wrote of this translation: "The English version is a free rendering from the Bengali original by Dilip Kumar and corrected by Sri Aurobindo practically 90%."

Since thou hast called me, by Sahana (1897–1990). An early typed copy of this poem is marked: “translated from Sahana’s song by Sri Aurobindo. 13-2-’41.”

A Beauty infinite, by Jyotirmayi (c. 1902 – ?) The poet’s sonnet was written on 2 January 1937 and submitted to Sri Aurobindo the next day. On 14 January Sri Aurobindo wrote this translation, prefacing it with the following remark: “I am inserting an attempt to put in English verse Jyoti’s sonnet translated by Nolini [Kanta Gupta].”

At the day-end, by Nirodbaran (born 1903). The poet’s sonnet was submitted to Sri Aurobindo on 17 February 1937. Sri Aurobindo wrote his translation as part of his reply of the next day. He prefaced it with the remark: “Well, let us put it in English — without trying to be too literal, turning the phrases to suit the Eng. language. If there are any mistakes of rendering they can be adjusted.”

The King of kings, by Nishikanto (1909 – 1973). An early typed copy of this translation is marked: “Translated by Sri Aurobindo from Nishikanto’s song. 7.2.1941.”

PART THREE: TRANSLATIONS FROM TAMIL

In connection with his research into the “origins of Aryan speech”, Sri Aurobindo made a brief study of Tamil in Pondicherry around 1910 – 12. A few years later the celebrated poet Subramania Bharati, who like Sri Aurobindo was a political refugee in the French colony, introduced Sri Aurobindo to the works of the mediaeval Vaishnava saints known as *alwars*, helping him translate some of their poems into English, and providing him with material to enable him to write prefatory essays on the poets. Bharati also may have helped Sri Aurobindo in his translations from the *Kural*.

Andal. Andal lived during the eighth century. Sri Aurobindo’s translations of three of her poems — “To the Cuckoo”, “I Dreamed a Dream”, and “Ye Others” — were published in the *Arya* in May 1915. They were preceded by the essay reproduced here.

Nammalwar. Maran, known as Nammalwar, lived during the ninth century. Sri Aurobindo’s translations of his “Hymn of the Golden Age”, and “Love-Mad”, along with an essay on the poet, were published in the *Arya* in July and September 1915.

Kulasekhara Alwar. Kulasekhara Alwar reigned in the Chera kingdom of south India during the eighth century. Sri Aurobindo's translation of his "Refuge" was published in the *Arya* in November 1915.
Tiruvalluvar. Composed by the poet Tiruvalluvar sometime during the early centuries of the Christian era, the *Kural* consists of 1330 verse aphorisms on the main aspects of life — ethical, practical and sensuous — divided into three parts made up of chapters of ten verses each. Around 1919, Sri Aurobindo translated the first chapter (in a different order from the original) and five aphorisms from the second chapter.

PART FOUR: TRANSLATIONS FROM GREEK

Sri Aurobindo began the study of Greek at St Paul's School, London. After winning a classical scholarship with the best Greek papers the examiner had ever seen, he continued his studies at King's College, Cambridge. He wrote the translations of Greek epigrams reproduced here in England or Baroda. The translations from Homer were done later, in Baroda and Pondicherry.

Two Epigrams. Sri Aurobindo's translations of these epigrams attributed to Plato (fifth to fourth century B.C.) and Meleager (first century B.C.) were published in *Songs to Myrtilla* (c. 1898).
Opening of the Iliad. Sri Aurobindo translated these lines from the Iliad in Baroda around 1901.
Opening of the Odyssey. Sri Aurobindo translated these lines from the Odyssey in Pondicherry around 1913. His manuscript is headed "Odyssey Book I".
Hexameters from Homer. These translations of four lines from the Iliad were written, below the original Greek lines, in a note-pad used by Sri Aurobindo in 1946 mainly for passages of his epic, *Savitri*. In a letter dictated in that year, he quoted these lines in a slightly different form to illustrate the use of repetition in the Homeric style.

PART FIVE: TRANSLATIONS FROM LATIN

Sri Aurobindo began the study of Latin in Manchester before entering school. He continued his studies at St Paul's and at King's College, Cambridge. He did the translations reproduced here in Pondicherry in the 1930s and 1940s.

Hexameters from Virgil and Horace. Sri Aurobindo translated these three lines from the works of Virgil and Horace (both first century B.C.) in Pondicherry during the 1930s, using the same hexametric metre as the originals. The first line is a conflation of two lines from Virgil's *Aeneid*, Book 8, line 596 and Book 11, 875. The second line is also from the *Aeneid*, Book 1, line 199. The last is line 41 of Horace's *Ars Poetica*.

Catullus to Lesbia. Sri Aurobindo translated this lyric by the Latin poet Catullus (first century B.C.) in Pondicherry around 1942. Two versions of the translation exist among his manuscripts. The one reproduced here is the more developed.

PUBLISHING HISTORY

As mentioned above, the following works were published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime: the three poems by Chandidasa and "Appeal" (c. 1898 and 1915); *Vidula* (in *Bande Mataram* in 1907); *Vikramorvasie or The Hero and the Nymph* (Calcutta, 1911; Pondicherry, 1941); *The Century of Life* (Madras, 1924); *Bande Mataram* and the chapters of *Anandamath* (1909 and subsequently); *Songs of the Sea* (Madras, 1923); Bengali poems by "Disciples and Others" (1934–1948); the selections from the Alwars (1914–15); and the Greek lyrics (c. 1898). Most of these works were reproduced in *Collected Poems and Plays* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1942). Most of the other translations appeared in books or journals between 1950 and 1970. All known translations were collected for the first time in *Translations* (Pondicherry, 1972). The present volume contains a few translations that have not previously been printed. All the texts have been checked against Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts and books and periodicals published during his lifetime.

Bande Mataram

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 6 and 7
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2002
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Bande Mataram

Political Writings and Speeches

1890–1908

Publisher's Note

These volumes include Sri Aurobindo's surviving political writings and speeches from the years 1890 to 1908. His political writings and speeches from the years after 1908 are published in *Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910*, volume 8 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

The present volumes consist primarily of articles originally published in the nationalist newspaper *Bande Mataram* between August 1906 and May 1908. None of the articles that Sri Aurobindo and his colleagues contributed to the *Bande Mataram* were signed. The 353 articles published here have been ascribed to Sri Aurobindo by the editors for a variety of reasons. For 56 of them there exists documentary evidence that establishes his authorship conclusively; 107 others may be assigned to him with considerable confidence; the other 190 are more likely to be by him than by any other *Bande Mataram* writer. Details on the materials and methodology of the selection are given in the Note on the Texts.

These volumes also include political articles written by Sri Aurobindo before the start of the *Bande Mataram*, speeches delivered by him between 1907 and 1908, articles from manuscripts of that period that he did not publish during his lifetime, and an interview of 1908. Many of these writings were not prepared by Sri Aurobindo for publication; several were left in an unfinished state. Editorial problems arising from illegibility, etc., are indicated by means of the system explained in the Guide to Editorial Notation on the next page.

Guide to Editorial Notation

Some of the contents of this volume were never prepared by Sri Aurobindo for publication. They have been transcribed from manuscripts or printed texts that present a variety of textual difficulties. As far as possible the editors have indicated these problems by means of the notation shown below.

Notation	**Textual Problem**
[. . .]	Illegible word(s), one group of three spaced dots for each presumed word.
[.......]	Word(s) lost through damage to the manuscript or printed text (at the beginning of a piece, indicates that a page or pages of the original have been lost).
[word]	Word(s) omitted by the author or else lost through damage to the manuscript or printed text that are required by grammar or sense; used also to expand abbreviations.
[*note*]	Situations requiring textual explication; all such information is printed in italics.

CONTENTS

Part One
Writings and a Resolution 1890–1906

India Renascent 3
India and the British Parliament 7
New Lamps for Old 11
At the Turn of the Century 63
Old Moore for 1901 64
The Congress Movement 65
Fragment for a Pamphlet 67
Unity: An open letter 68
The Proposed Reconstruction of Bengal 70
On the Bengali and the Mahratta 73
Bhawani Mandir 75
Ethics East and West 93
Resolution at a Swadeshi Meeting 96
A Sample-Room for Swadeshi Articles 97
On the Barisal Proclamation 100

Part Two
Bande Mataram under the Editorship of Bipin Chandra Pal
6 August–15 October 1906

Darkness in *Light* 20.8.06 109
Our Rip Van Winkles 20.8.06 109
Indians Abroad 20.8.06 110
Officials on the Fall of Fuller 20.8.06 111
Cow Killing: An Englishman's Amusements in Jalpaiguri 20.8.06 111
Schools for Slaves 27.8.06 113
By the Way 27.8.06 113

CONTENTS

The *Mirror* and Mr. Tilak	28.8.06	116
Leaders in Council	28.8.06	118
Loyalty and Disloyalty in East Bengal	30.8.06	119
By the Way	30.8.06	123
Lessons at Jamalpur	1.9.06	126
By the Way	1.9.06	127
By the Way	3.9.06	129
Partition and Petition	4.9.06	131
English Enterprise and Swadeshi	4.9.06	132
Sir Frederick Lely on Sir Bampfylde Fuller	4.9.06	133
Jamalpur	4.9.06	134
By the Way	4.9.06	134
The *Times* on Congress Reforms	8.9.06	137
By the Way	8.9.06	140
The Pro-Petition Plot	10.9.06	143
Socialist and Imperialist	10.9.06	148
The *Sanjibani* on Mr. Tilak	10.9.06	148
Secret Tactics	10.9.06	149
By the Way	10.9.06	151
A Savage Sentence	11.9.06	153
The Question of the Hour	11.9.06	153
A Criticism	11.9.06	154
By the Way	11.9.06	154
The Old Policy and the New	12.9.06	157
Is a Conflict Necessary?	12.9.06	159
The Charge of Vilification	12.9.06	160
Autocratic Trickery	12.9.06	160
By the Way	12.9.06	161
Strange Speculations	13.9.06	163
The *Statesman* under Inspiration	13.9.06	164
A Disingenuous Defence	14.9.06	165
Last Friday's Folly	17.9.06	167
Stop-gap Won't Do	17.9.06	170
By the Way	17.9.06	170
Is Mendicancy Successful?	18.9.06	173
By the Way	18.9.06	175

By the Way 20.9.06 178
By the Way 1.10.06 182
By the Way 11.10.06 185

Part Three
Bande Mataram under the Editorship of Sri Aurobindo
24 October 1906 – 27 May 1907

The Famine near Calcutta 29.10.06 189
Statesman's Sympathy Brand 29.10.06 190
By the Way. News from Nowhere 29.10.06 191
The *Statesman's* Voice of Warning 30.10.06 193
Sir Andrew Fraser 30.10.06 196
By the Way. Necessity Is the Mother of Invention 30.10.06 197
Articles Published in the *Bande Mataram* in November and December 1906 199
The Man of the Past and the Man of the Future 26.12.06 201
The Results of the Congress 31.12.06 205
Yet There Is Method in It 25.2.07 209
Mr. Gokhale's Disloyalty 28.2.07 211
The Comilla Incident 15.3.07 213
British Protection or Self-Protection 18.3.07 219
The Berhampur Conference 29.3.07 224
The President of the Berhampur Conference 2.4.07 228
Peace and the Autocrats 3.4.07 231
Many Delusions 5.4.07 236
By the Way. Refelections of Srinath Paul, Rai Bahadoor, on the Present Discontents 5.4.07 239
Omissions and Commissions at Berhampur 6.4.07 244
The Writing on the Wall 8.4.07 248
A Nil-admirari Admirer 9.4.07 252
Pherozshahi at Surat 10.4.07 253
A Last Word 10.4.07 256

The Situation in East Bengal 11.4.07 258
The Doctrine of Passive Resistance 11–23.4.07 263
I. Introduction 265
II. Its Object 270
III. Its Necessity 275
IV. Its Methods 281
V. Its Obligations 287
VI. Its Limits 293
VII. Conclusions 298
The Proverbial Offspring 12.4.07 304
By the Way 12.4.07 304
By the Way 13.4.07 308
The Old Year 16.4.07 311
Rishi Bankim Chandra 16.4.07 315
A Vilifier on Vilification 17.4.07 320
By the Way. A Mouse in a Flutter 17.4.07 321
Simple, Not Rigorous 18.4.07 324
British Interests and British Conscience 18.4.07 324
A Recommendation 18.4.07 325
An Ineffectual Sedition Clause 19.4.07 327
The *Englishman* as a Statesman 19.4.07 329
The Gospel according to Surendranath 22.4.07 331
A Man of Second Sight 23.4.07 335
Passive Resistance in the Punjab 23.4.07 337
By the Way 24.4.07 339
Bureaucracy at Jamalpur 25.4.07 344
Anglo-Indian Blunderers 25.4.07 346
The Leverage of Faith 25.4.07 346
Graduated Boycott 26.4.07 349
Instinctive Loyalty 26.4.07 352
Nationalism, Not Extremism 26.4.07 353
Shall India Be Free? The Loyalist Gospel 27.4.07 357
The Mask Is Off 27.4.07 359
Shall India Be Free? National Development and Foreign Rule 29.4.07 361
Shall India Be Free? 30.4.07 367

CONTENTS

Moonshine for Bombay Consumption 1.5.07 370
The *Reformer* on Moderation 1.5.07 370
Shall India Be Free? Unity and British Rule 2.5.07 372
Extremism in the *Bengalee* 3.5.07 377
Hare or Another 3.5.07 380
Look on This Picture, Then on That 6.5.07 381
Curzonism for the University 8.5.07 385
Incompetence or Connivance 8.5.07 388
Soldiers and Assaults 8.5.07 390
By the Way 9.5.07 392
Lala Lajpat Rai Deported 10.5.07 395
The Crisis 11.5.07 396
Lala Lajpat Rai 11.5.07 399
Government by Panic 13.5.07 400
In Praise of the Government 13.5.07 402
The Bagbazar Meeting 14.5.07 404
A Treacherous Stab 14.5.07 407
How to Meet the Ordinance 15.5.07 409
Mr. Morley's Pronouncement 16.5.07 412
The *Bengalee* on the Risley Circular 16.5.07 415
What Does Mr. Hare Mean? 16.5.07 416
Not to the Andamans! 16.5.07 417
The *Statesman* Unmasks 17.5.07 419
Sui Generis 17.5.07 422
The *Statesman* on Mr. Mudholkar 20.5.07 424
The Government Plan of Campaign 22.5.07 428
The Nawab's Message 22.5.07 432
And Still It Moves 23.5.07 433
British Generosity 23.5.07 436
An Irish Example 24.5.07 439
The East Bengal Disturbances 25.5.07 441
Newmania 25.5.07 445
The Gilded Sham Again 27.5.07 446
National Volunteers 27.5.07 447

Part Four
Bande Mataram under the Editorship of Sri Aurobindo
28 May – 22 December 1907

The True Meaning of the Risley Circular 28.5.07 453
Cool Courage and Not Blood-and-Thunder Speeches 28.5.07 457
The Effect of Petitionary Politics 29.5.07 459
The Sobhabazar Shaktipuja 29.5.07 459
The Ordinance and After 30.5.07 461
A Lost Opportunity 30.5.07 464
The *Daily News* and Its Needs 30.5.07 465
Common Sense in an Unexpected Quarter 30.5.07 465
Drifting Away 30.5.07 466
The Question of the Hour 1.6.07 469
Regulated Independence 4.6.07 473
A Consistent *Patriot* 4.6.07 476
Holding on to a Titbit 4.6.07 477
Wanted, a Policy 5.6.07 478
Preparing the Explosion 5.6.07 481
A Statement 6.6.07 483
Law and Order 6.6.07 485
Defying the Circular 7.6.07 487
By the Way. When Shall We Three Meet Again? 7.6.07 489
The Strength of the Idea 8.6.07 493
Comic Opera Reforms 8.6.07 496
Paradoxical Advice 8.6.07 498
An Out-of-Date Reformer 12.6.07 500
The Sphinx 14.6.07 504
Slow but Sure 17.6.07 506
The Rawalpindi Sufferers 18.6.07 508
Look on This Picture and Then on That 18.6.07 510
The Main Feeder of Patriotism 19.6.07 511
Concerted Action 20.6.07 514
The Bengal Government's Letter 20.6.07 515

CONTENTS

British Justice	21.6.07	517
The Moral of the Coconada Strike	21.6.07	520
The *Statesman* on Shooting	21.6.07	521
Mr. A. Chaudhuri's Policy	22.6.07	523
A Current Dodge	22.6.07	527
More about British Justice	24.6.07	528
Morleyism Analysed	25.6.07	533
Political or Non-Political	25.6.07	538
Hare Street Logic	25.6.07	539
The Tanjore Students' Resolution	26.6.07	541
The *Statesman* on Mr. Chaudhuri	26.6.07	542
"Legitimate Patriotism"	27.6.07	544
Khulna Oppressions	27.6.07	546
The Secret Springs of Morleyism	28.6.07	548
A Danger to the State	28.6.07	551
The New Thought. Personal Rule and Freedom of Speech and Writing	28.6.07	552
The Secret of the Swaraj Movement	29.6.07	557
Passive Resistance in France	29.6.07	559
By the Way	29.6.07	561
Stand Fast	1.7.07	565
The Acclamation of the House	2.7.07	566
Perishing Prestige	2.7.07	569
A Congress Committee Mystery	2.7.07	570
Europe and Asia	3.7.07	572
Press Prosecutions	4.7.07	577
Try Again	5.7.07	581
A Curious Procedure	9.7.07	582
Association and Dissociation	9.7.07	583
English Obduracy and Its Reason	11.7.07	584
Industrial India	11.7.07	587
From Phantom to Reality	13.7.07	589
Audi Alteram Partem	13.7.07	591
Swadeshi in Education	13.7.07	592
Boycott and After	15.7.07	594
In Honour of Hyde and Humphreys	16.7.07	597

Angelic Murmurs	18.7.07	599
A Plague o' Both Your Houses	19.7.07	601
The Khulna Comedy	20.7.07	604
A Noble Example	20.7.07	607
The Korean Crisis	22.7.07	609
One More for the Altar	25.7.07	610
Srijut Bhupendranath	26.7.07	612
The Issue	29.7.07	616
District Conference at Hughly	30.7.07	620
Bureaucratic Alarms	30.7.07	620
The 7th of August	6.8.07	622
The *Indian Patriot* on Ourselves	6.8.07	625
Our Rulers and Boycott	7.8.07	626
Tonight's Illumination	7.8.07	628
Our First Anniversary	7.8.07	629
To Organise	10.8.07	630
Statutory Distinction	10.8.07	632
Marionettes and Others	12.8.07	633
A Compliment and Some Misconceptions	12.8.07	634
Pal on the Brain	12.8.07	635
Phrases by Fraser	13.8.07	637
To Organise Boycott	17.8.07	638
The Foundations of Nationality	17.8.07	640
Barbarities at Rawalpindi	20.8.07	644
The High Court Miracles	20.8.07	646
The *Times* Romancist	20.8.07	649
A Malicious Persistence	21.8.07	651
In Melancholy Vein	23.8.07	653
Advice to National College Students [Speech]	23.8.07	655
Sankaritola's Apologia	24.8.07	658
Our False Friends	26.8.07	662
Repression and Unity	27.8.07	664
The Three Unities of Sankaritola	31.8.07	666
Eastern Renascence	3.9.07	670
The Martyrdom of Bipin Chandra	12.9.07	672
Sacrifice and Redemption	14.9.07	676

CONTENTS

The Un-Hindu Spirit of Caste Rigidity	20.9.07	679
Caste and Democracy	21.9.07	682
Bande Mataram Prosecution	25.9.07	686
Pioneer or *Hindu Patriot*?	25.9.07	690
The Chowringhee Pecksniff and Ourselves	26.9.07	692
The *Statesman* in Retreat	28.9.07	696
The Khulna Appeal	28.9.07	700
A Culpable Inaccuracy	4.10.07	701
Novel Ways to Peace	5.10.07	702
"Armenian Horrors"	5.10.07	703
The Vanity of Reaction	7.10.07	705
The Price of a Friend	7.10.07	709
A New Literary Departure	7.10.07	710
Protected Hooliganism — A Parallel	8.10.07	712
Mr. Keir Hardie and India	8.10.07	716
The Shadow of the Ordinance in Calcutta	11.10.07	718
The Nagpur Affair and True Unity	23.10.07	720
The Nagpur Imbroglio	29.10.07	723
English Democracy Shown Up	31.10.07	727
Difficulties at Nagpur	4.11.07	732
Mr. Tilak and the Presidentship	5.11.07	736
Nagpur and Loyalist Methods	16.11.07	740
The Life of Nationalism	16.11.07	744
By the Way. In Praise of Honest John	18.11.07	751
Bureaucratic Policy	19.11.07	757
About Unity	2.12.07	762
Personality or Principle?	3.12.07	765
More about Unity	4.12.07	768
By the Way	5.12.07	771
Caste and Representation	6.12.07	777
About Unmistakable Terms	12.12.07	781
The Surat Congress	13.12.07	786
Misrepresentations about Midnapore	13.12.07	788
Reasons of Secession	14.12.07	790
The Awakening of Gujerat	17.12.07	795
"Capturing the Congress"	18.12.07	799

Lala Lajpat Rai's Refusal 18.12.07 801
The Delegates' Fund 18.12.07 802

Part Five
Speeches
22 December 1907 – 1 February 1908

Our Experiences in Bengal 13.1.08 807
National Education 15.1.08 810
The Present Situation 19.1.08 818
The Meaning of Swaraj 24.1.08 833
Swadeshi and Boycott 26.1.08 837
Bande Mataram 29.1.08 845
The Aims of the Nationalist Party 30.1.08 847
Our Work in the Future 31.1.08 855
Commercial and Educational Swarajya 1.2.08 861

Part Six
***Bande Mataram* under the Editorship of Sri Aurobindo**
with Speeches Delivered during the Same Period
6 February – 3 May 1908

Revolutions and Leadership 6.2.08 867
Speeches at Pabna 12 – 13.2.08 871
Swaraj 18.2.08 873
The Future of the Movement 19.2.08 877
Work and Ideal 20.2.08 879
By the Way 20.2.08 881
The Latest Sedition Trial 21.2.08 883
Boycott and British Capital 21.2.08 885
Unofficial Commissions 21.2.08 886
The Soul and India's Mission 21.2.08 887
The Glory of God in Man 22.2.08 891
A National University 24.2.08 894
Mustafa Kamal Pasha 3.3.08 897

CONTENTS

A Great Opportunity 4.3.08 900
Swaraj and the Coming Anarchy 5.3.08 903
The Village and the Nation 7.3.08 907
Welcome to the Prophet of Nationalism 10.3.08 911
The Voice of the Martyrs 11.3.08 915
Constitution-making 11.3.08 917
What Committee? 11.3.08 918
An Opportunity Lost 11.3.08 919
A Victim of Bureaucracy 11.3.08 920
A Great Message 12.3.08 921
The Tuticorin Victory 13.3.08 924
Perpetuate the Split! 14.3.08 927
Loyalty to Order 14.3.08 928
Asiatic Democracy 16.3.08 929
Charter or No Charter 16.3.08 932
The Warning from Madras 17.3.08 935
The Need of the Moment 19.3.08 937
Unity by Co-operation 20.3.08 941
The Early Indian Polity 20.3.08 943
The Fund for Sj. Pal 21.3.08 947
The Weapon of Secession 23.3.08 951
Sleeping Sirkar and Waking People 23.3.08 955
Anti-Swadeshi in Madras 23.3.08 956
Exclusion or Unity? 24.3.08 958
How the Riot Was Made 24.3.08 962
Oligarchy or Democracy? 25.3.08 964
Freedom of Speech 26.3.08 969
Tomorrow’s Meeting 27.3.08 973
Well Done, Chidambaram! 27.3.08 975
The Anti-Swadeshi Campaign 27.3.08 976
Spirituality and Nationalism 28.3.08 977
The Struggle in Madras 30.3.08 980
A Misunderstanding 30.3.08 983
The Next Step 31.3.08 985
India and the Mongolian 1.4.08 988
Religion and the Bureaucracy 1.4.08 992

CONTENTS

The Milk of Putana 1.4.08 993
Swadeshi Cases and Counsel 2.4.08 995
The Question of the President 3.4.08 996
The Utility of Ideals 3.4.08 1000
Speech at Panti's Math 3.4.08 1002
Convention and Conference 4.4.08 1003
By the Way 4.4.08 1006
The Constitution of the Subjects Committee 6.4.08 1009
The New Ideal 7.4.08 1014
The Asiatic Role 9.4.08 1019
Love Me or Die 9.4.08 1022
The Work Before Us 10.4.08 1024
Campbell-Bannerman Retires 10.4.08 1026
United Congress [Speech] 10.4.08 1028
The Demand of the Mother 11.4.08 1030
Baruipur Speech 12.4.08 1034
Peace and Exclusion 13.4.08 1038
Indian Resurgence and Europe 14.4.08 1039
Om Shantih 14.4.08 1041
Conventionalist and Nationalist 18.4.08 1043
Palli Samiti [Speech] 20.4.08 1047
The Future and the Nationalists 22.4.08 1052
The Wheat and the Chaff 23.4.08 1056
Party and the Country 24.4.08 1061
The *Bengalee* Facing Both Ways 24.4.08 1064
The One Thing Needful 25.4.08 1066
New Conditions 29.4.08 1070
Whom to Believe? 29.4.08 1072
By the Way. The Parable of Sati 29.4.08 1073
Leaders and a Conscience 30.4.08 1078
An Ostrich in Colootola 30.4.08 1078
By the Way 30.4.08 1079
Nationalist Differences 2.5.08 1084
Ideals Face to Face 2.5.08 1085

Part Seven
Writings from Manuscripts 1907 – 1908

The Bourgeois and the Samurai 1091
The New Nationalism 1109
The Mother and the Nation 1114
The Morality of Boycott 1117
A Fragment 1122

Appendixes

Appendix One
Incomplete Drafts of Three Articles

Draft of the Conclusion of "Nagpur and Loyalist Methods" 1125
Draft of the Opening of "In Praise of Honest John" 1125
Incomplete Draft of an Unpublished Article 1129

Appendix Two
Writings and Jottings Connected with the
Bande Mataram 1906 – 1908

"Bande Mataram" Printers & Publishers, Limited. 1131
Draft of a Prospectus of 1907 1133
Notes and Memos 1134

Appendix Three
Nationalist Party Documents 1141

Appendix Four
A Birthday Interview 1145

Note on the Texts 1147

Sri Aurobindo in Calcutta on 23 August 1907, before giving the "Advice to National College Students" talk.

Part One

Writings and a Resolution

1890 – 1906

All the pieces in this part predate the launch of the *Bande Mataram*. Sri Aurobindo wrote the first one in Cambridge in 1890 – 92 and the last one in Baroda at the end of 1905 or the beginning of 1906 — a few months before he came to Calcutta to join the national movement.

Only four of these pieces were published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. "India and the British Parliament" and *New Lamps for Old* appeared in the Bombay newspaper *Indu Prakash* in 1893 – 94; *Bhawani Mandir* was issued as a pamphlet in 1905; the resolution of 1905 was published, in Marathi translation, in the newspaper *Kesari*. The other ten pieces are reproduced from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts. He left most of them in an unfinished state; two of them lack their opening page or pages.

India Renascent

The patriot who passes judgment on a great movement in an era of change and turmoil, should be very confident that he has something worth saying before he ventures to speak; but if he can really put some new aspect on a momentous question or emphasize any side of it that has not been clearly understood, it [is] his bounden duty however obscure he may be to ventilate [it.]

The commonplace that India is in transition has of late been strongly impressed on us by certain English empiricists; they have devoted whole articles and pamphlets to marshal proofs and enumerate instances in support of this proposition

It is time that an Indian who has devoted his best thoughts and aspirations to the service of his country, should have in his turn a patient hearing

India is indeed a snake who has rejected her outworn winter weeds

Jottings from a notebook used by Sri Aurobindo at Cambridge in 1891 and 1892.

New Lamps for Old

with

India and the British Parliament

The nine articles comprising *New Lamps for Old* were published in the *Indu Prakash* of Bombay from 7 August 1893 to 6 March 1894. A preliminary article, “India and the British Parliament”, was published in the same newspaper on 26 June 1893.

India and the British Parliament

A great critic has pronounced that the aim of all truly helpful criticism is to see the object as it really is. The Press is the sole contemporary critic of politics, and according as its judgments are sound or unsound, the people whose political ideas it forms, will be likely to prosper or fail. It is therefore somewhat unfortunate that the tendency of journalists should be to see the object not as it really is, but as they would like it to be. In a country like England this may not greatly matter; but in India, whose destinies are in the balance, and at a time when a straw might turn the scale, it is of the gravest importance that no delusion, however specious or agreeable, should be allowed to exist. Yet in the face of this necessity, the Indian Press seems eager to accept even the flimsiest excuse for deluding itself.

If we want a striking example of this, we need only turn to the recent vote in the House of Commons on the subject of simultaneous examinations for the Civil Service of India. On this occasion a chorus of jubilant paeans arose from the Press, resembling nothing so much as the joyful chorus of ducks when the monsoon arrives. Had then some political monsoon arrived raining down justice and happiness on this parched and perishing country? What was the fountain-head from which this torrent of dithyrambs derived its being? Was it a solemn and deliberate pronouncement by the assembled representatives of the English nation that the time was now come to do justice to India? Was it a resolution gravely arrived at in a full House, that the cruel burden of taxation which has exhausted our strength, must be alleviated without delay? Or was it a responsible pledge by a person in authority that the high-sounding promises of '58 should at last become something more than a beautiful chimera? No, it was simply a chance vote snatched by a dexterous minority from a meagre and listless House. As a fine tactical success it reflects every credit on the acuteness and *savoir faire* of our friends in Parliament, but no more expresses the real feeling of the English people than a decree of the Chinese Emperor would express it.

The vote was by no means a mandate of the British Parliament, as some have sonorously phrased it; it was merely a pious opinion. It will have to meet not only the bitter antagonism of the Indian Government, but the opposition, open or veiled, of a vast majority in the Commons. How then can it possibly be enforced? Can our handful of philo-Indian members help to eject a Government that will not ratify its empty triumph? It would be too absurd even to dream of such a thing: and even if any of them were so impossibly rash, their constituencies would quickly teach them that they were sent to Parliament to support Mr. Gladstone and not to do justice to India. The vote is nothing but a tactical advantage; and yet on this flimsy basis we have chosen to erect the most imposing castles in the air. Yet if this were an isolated instance of blindness, it might be allowed to pass without comment; but it is only one more example of a grave illusion that possesses the Indian mind. We constantly find it asserted that the English are a just people and only require our case to be clearly stated in order to redress our grievances. It is more than time that some voice should be raised — even though it may be the voice of one crying in the wilderness — to tell the Press and the public that this is a grave and injurious delusion, which must be expunged from our minds if we would see things as they really are.

The English are not, as they are fond of representing themselves, a people panting to do justice to all whom they have to govern. They are not an incarnation of justice, neither are they an embodiment of morality; but of all nations they are the most sentimental: hence it is that they like to think themselves, and to be thought by others, a just people and a moral people. It is true that in the dull comedy which we call English politics, Truth and Justice — written in large letters — cover the whole of the poster, but in the actual enactment of the play these characters have very little indeed to do. It was certainly not by appealing to the English sense of justice that the Irish people have come within reach of obtaining some measure of redress for their grievances. Mr. Parnell was enabled to force Mr. Gladstone's hand solely because he had built up a strong party with a purely Irish policy: but we unfortunately have neither a Parnell nor a party with a purely Indian policy. We have Mr. Naoroji and Sir W. Wedderburn, both staunch friends of India; we have Mr. Swift McNeill, true son of a high souled and chivalrous race; we have Mr. Mclaren, Mr. Paul and many others pledged to champion the Congress movement: but well nigh all these are Liberal members who must give their support to Mr. Gladstone, whether he is inclined to do justice to India or no. It is evident that if we wish to obtain any real justice from the British Parliament we must secure the pledges not of individual Liberals but of the responsible heads of the party, and that is just what we are least likely to obtain. For we must remember that within the last 20 years the immense personal influence of Mr. Gladstone has been leavening and indeed remoulding English political life; and the tendency of that influence has been to convert politics into a huge market where statesmen chaffer for votes. In this political bazaar we have no current coin to buy justice from the great salesman, and if he is inclined to give the commodity gratis, he will jeopardise many of the voters he has already in his hand. What lever have we then by which we can alter the entire fuse of English opinion on Indian matters? It is clear that we have none.

Moreover the lessons of experience do not differ from the lessons of common sense. After years of constant effort and agitation a bill was brought forward in Parliament professing to remodel the Legislative Councils. This bill was nothing short of an insult to the people of India. We had asked for wheaten bread, and we got in its place a loaf made of plaster-of-Paris and when Mr. Schwann proposed that the genuine article should be supplied, Mr. Gladstone assured him on his honour as a politician that the Executive authority would do its best to make plaster-of-Paris taste exactly like wheat. With this assurance Mr. Schwann and the Indian people were quite satisfied. Happy Indian people! And yet now that the loaf has actually reached their hands, they seem a little inclined to quarrel with the gift: they have even complained that the proportion of plaster in its composition is extravagantly large. Nevertheless we still go on appealing to the English sense of justice.

The simple truth of the matter is that we shall not get from the British Parliament anything better than nominal redress, or at the most a petty and tinkering legislation. This is no doubt a very disagreeable truth to the sanguine among us who believe that India can be renovated in a day, but we shall gain nothing by shutting our eyes to it. Rather we shall lose: for the more we linger in the wrong path, the further we shall wander from our real and legitimate goal. If we are indeed to renovate our country, we must no longer hold out supplicating hands to the English Parliament, like an infant crying to its nurse for a toy, but must recognise the hard truth that every nation must beat out its own path to salvation with pain and difficulty, and not rely on the tutelage of another. It is not within the scope of the present article to point out how this may be done. But until we recognise these simple truths, half of our efforts will fail — as they are now failing — through misdirection and want of real insight.

New Lamps for Old – I

If the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into a ditch? So or nearly so runs an apophthegm of the Galilean prophet, whose name has run over the four quarters of the globe. Of all those pithy comments on human life, which more than anything else made his teaching effective, this is perhaps the one which goes home deepest and admits of the most frequent use. But very few Indians will be found to admit — certainly I myself two years ago would not have admitted, — that it can truthfully be applied to the National Congress. Yet that it can be so applied, — nay, that no judicious mind can honestly pronounce any other verdict on its action, — is the first thing I must prove, if these articles are to have any *raison d'être*. I am quite aware that in doing this my motive and my prudence may be called into question. I am not ignorant that I am about to censure a body which to many of my countrymen seems the mightiest outcome of our new national life; to some a precious urn in which are guarded our brightest and noblest hopes; to others a guiding star which shall lead us through the encircling gloom to a far distant paradise: and if I were not fully confident that this fixed idea of ours is a snare and a delusion, likely to have the most pernicious effects, I should simply have suppressed my own doubts and remained silent. As it is, I am fully confident, and even hope to bring over one or two of my countrymen to my own way of thinking, or, if that be not possible, at any rate to induce them to think a little more deeply than they have done.

I know also that I shall stir the bile of those good people who are so enamoured of the British Constitution that they cannot like anyone who is not a partisan. "What!" they will say "you pretend to be a patriot yourself, and you set yourself with a light heart to attack a body of patriots, which has no reason at all for existing except patriotism, — nay, which is the efflorescence, the crown, the summit and coping-stone of patriotism? How wickedly inconsistent all this is! If you are really a friend to New India, why do you go about to break up our splendid unanimity? The Congress has not yet existed for two lustres; and in that brief space of time has achieved miracles. And even if it has faults, as every institution, however excellent it may be, must have its faults, have you any plausible reason for telling our weakness in the streets of Gath, and so taking our enemies into the secret?" Now, if I were a strong and self-reliant man, I should of course go in the way I had chosen without paying much attention to these murmurers, but being, as I am, exceedingly nervous and afraid of offending anyone, I wish to stand well, even with those who admire the British Constitution. I shall therefore find it necessary to explain at some length the attitude which I should like all thinking men to adopt towards the Congress.

And first, let me say that I am not much moved by one argument which may possibly be urged against me. The Congress, it will be said, has achieved miracles, and in common gratitude we ought not to expose it to any sort of harsh or malevolent criticism. Let us grant for the moment that the Congress has achieved miracles for us. Certainly, if it has done that, we ought to hold it for ever in our grateful memory; but if our gratitude goes beyond this, it at once incurs the charge of fatuity. This is the difference between a man and an institution; a great man who has done great things for his country, demands from us our reverence, and however he may fall short in his after-life, a great and high-hearted nation — and no nation was ever justly called great that was not high-hearted — will not lay rude hands on him to dethrone him from his place in their hearts. But an institution is a very different thing, it was made for the use and not at all for the worship of man, and it can only lay claim to respect so long as its beneficent action remains not a memory of the past, but a thing of the present. We cannot afford to raise any institution to the rank of a fetish. To do so would be simply to become the slaves of our own machinery. However I will at once admit that if an institution has really done miracles for us, — and miracles which are not mere conjuring tricks, but of a deep and solemn import to the nation, — and if it is still doing and likely yet to do miracles for us, then without doubt it may lay claim to a certain immunity from criticism. But I am not disposed to admit that all this is true of the Congress.

It is within the recollection of most of us to how giddy an eminence this body was raised, on how prodigious a wave of enthusiasm, against how immense a weight of resisting winds. So sudden was it all that it must have been difficult, I may almost say impossible, even for a strong man to keep his head and not follow with the shouting crowd. How shall we find words vivid enough to describe the fervour of those morning hopes, the April splendour of that wonderful enthusiasm? The Congress was to us all that is to man most dear, most high and most sacred; a well of living water in deserts more than Saharan, a proud banner in the battle of Liberty, and a holy temple of concord where the races met and mingled. It was certainly the nucleus or thrice-distilled essence of the novel modes of thought among us; and if we took it for more than it really was, — if we took it for our pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night; if we worshipped it as the morning-star of our liberty; if we thought of old myths, of the trumpets that shook down Jericho or the brazen serpent that healed the plague, and nourished fond and secret hopes that the Congress would prove all this and more than this; — surely our infatuation is to be passed by gently as inevitable in that environment rather than censured as unnatural or presuming.

If then anyone tells me that the Congress was itself a miracle, if in nothing else, at any rate in the enthusiasm of which it was the centre, I do not know that I shall take the trouble to disagree with him; but if he goes on and tells me that the Congress has achieved miracles, I shall certainly take leave to deny the truth of his statement. It appears to me that the most signal successes of this body were not miracles at all, but simply the natural outcome of its constitution and policy. I suppose that in the sphere of active politics its greatest success is to be found in the enlargement of the Legislative Councils. Well, that was perhaps a miracle in its way. In England a very common trick is to put one ring under a hat and produce in another part of the room what appears to be the same ring and is really one exactly like it — except perhaps for the superscription. Just such a miracle is this which the Congress has so triumphantly achieved. Another conjuring trick, and perhaps a cleverer one, was the snatch vote about Simultaneous Examinations, which owed its success to the sentimentalism of a few members of Parliament, the self-seeking of others and the carelessness of the rest. But these, however much we may praise them for cleverness, are, as I hope to show later on, of no really deep and solemn import to the nation, but simply conjuring tricks and nothing more. Over the rest of our political action the only epitaph we can write is "Failure." Even in the first flush of enthusiasm the more deep-thinking among us were perhaps a little troubled by certain small things about the Congress, which did not seem altogether right. The barefaced hypocrisy of our enthusiasm for the Queen-Empress, — an old lady so called by way of courtesy, but about whom few Indians can really know or care anything — could serve no purpose but to expose us to the derision of our ill-wishers. There was too a little too much talk about the blessings of British rule, and the inscrutable Providence which has laid us in the maternal, or more properly the step-maternal bosom of just and benevolent England. Yet more appalling was the general timidity of the Congress, its glossing over of hard names, its disinclination to tell the direct truth, its fear of too deeply displeasing our masters. But in our then state of mind we were disposed to pass over all this as amiable weaknesses which would wear off with time. Two still grosser errors were pardoned as natural and almost inadvertent mistakes. It was true that we went out of our way to flatter Mr. Gladstone, a statesman who is not only quite unprincipled and in no way to be relied upon, but whose intervention in an Indian debate has always been of the worst omen to our cause. But then, we argued, people who had not been to England, could not be expected to discern the character of this astute and plausible man. We did more than flatter Mr. Gladstone; we actually condescended to flatter "General" Booth, a vulgar imposter, a convicted charlatan, who has enriched himself by trading on the sentimental emotions of the English middle-class. But here too, we thought, the Congress has perhaps made the common mistake of confounding wealth with merit, and has really taken the "General" for quite a respectable person. In the first flush of enthusiasm, I say, such excuses and such toleration were possible and even natural, but in the moment of disillusionment it will not do for us to flatter ourselves in this way any longer. Those amiable weaknesses we were then disposed to pass over very lightly have not at all worn off with time, but have rather grown into an ingrained habit; and the tendency to grosser errors has grown not only into a habit, but into a policy. In its broader aspects the failure of the Congress is still clearer. The walls of the Anglo-Indian Jericho stand yet without a breach, and the dark spectre of Penury draws her robe over the land in greater volume and with an ampler sweep.

New Lamps for Old – II

But after all my present business is not with negative criticism. I want rather to ascertain what the Congress has really done, and whether it is so much as to condemn all patriots to an Eleusinian silence about its faults. My own genuine opinion was expressed, perhaps with too much exuberance of diction, — but then the ghost of ancient enthusiasm was nudging my elbow — when I described the Congress as a well of living water, a standard in the battle, and a holy temple of concord. It is a well of living water in the sense that we drink from it assurance of a living political energy in the country, and without that assurance perhaps the most advanced among us might not have been so advanced: for it is only one or two strong and individual minds, who can flourish without a sympathetic environment. I am therefore justified in describing the Congress as a well of living water; but I have also described it as the standard under which we have fought; and by that I mean a living emblem of our cause the tired and war-worn soldier in the mellay can look up to and draw from time to time fresh funds of hope and vigour. Such, and such only, is the purpose of a banner. One does not like to say that what must surely be apparent even to a rude intelligence, has been beyond the reach of intellects trained at our Universities and in the liberal professions. Yet it is a fact that we have entirely ignored what a casual inspection ought at once to have told us, that the Congress is altogether too unwieldy a body for any sort of executive work, and must solely be regarded as a convenient alembic, in which the formulae of our aspirations may be refined into clear and accurate expression. Not content with using a banner as a banner, we have actually caught up the staff of it with a view to breaking our enemy's heads. So blind a misuse must take away at least a third part of its virtue from the Congress, and if we are at all to recover the loss, we must recognize the limits of its utility as well as emend the device upon it.

The Congress has been, then, a well of living water and a standard in the battle of liberty; but besides these it has been something which is very much better than either of them, good as they too undoubtedly are; it has been to our divergent races and creeds a temple, or perhaps I should be more correct in saying a school of concord. In other words the necessities of the political movement initiated by the Congress have brought into one place and for a common purpose all sorts and conditions of men, and so by smoothing away the harsher discrepancies between them has created a certain modicum of sympathy between classes that were more or less at variance. Here, and not in its political action, must we look for any direct and really important achievement; and even here the actual advance has as a rule been absurdly exaggerated. Popular orators like Mr. Pherozshah Mehta, who carry the methods of the bar into politics, are very fond of telling people that the Congress has habituated us to act together. Well, that is not quite correct: there is not the slightest evidence to show that we have at all learned to act together; the one lesson we have learned is to talk together, and that is a rather different thing. Here then we have in my opinion the sum of all these capacities, in which the Congress has to any appreciable extent promoted the really high and intimate interests of the country. Can it then be said that in these lines the Congress has had such entirely beneficial effects as to put the gag on all harsher criticism? I do not think that it can be properly so said. I admit that the Congress has promoted a certain modicum of concord among us; but I am not prepared to admit that on this line of action its outcome has been at all complete and satisfying. Not only has the concord it tends to create been very partial, but the sort of people who have been included in its beneficent action, do not extend beyond certain fixed and narrow limits. The great mass of the people have not been appreciably touched by that healing principle, which to do the Congress justice has very widely permeated the middle class. All this would still leave us without sufficient grounds to censure the Congress at all severely, if only it were clear that its present line of action was tending to increase the force and scope of its beneficence: but in fact the very contrary appears. We need no soothsayer to augur that, unless its entire policy be remodelled, its power for good, even in the narrow circle of its present influence, will prove to have been already exploited. One sphere still remains to it; it is still our only grand assurance of a living political energy in the country: but even this well of living water must in the end be poisoned or dried up, if the inner political energy of which it is the outward assurance remains as poor and bounded as we now find it to be. If then it is true that the action of the Congress has only been of really high import on one or two lines, that even on those lines the actual result has been petty and imperfect, and that in all its other aspects we can pronounce no verdict on it but failure, then it is quite clear that we shall get no good by big talk about the splendid unanimity at the back of the Congress. A splendid unanimity in failure may be a very magnificent thing in its way, but in our present exigencies it is an unanimity really not worth having. But perhaps the Congress enthusiast will take refuge in stinging reproaches about my readiness to publish our weakness to the enemy. Well, even if he does I can assure him that however stinging his reproaches may be, I shall not feel at all stung by them. I leave that for those honest people who imagine that, when they have got the Civil Service and other lucrative posts for themselves, the Indian question will be satisfactorily settled. Our actual enemy is not any force exterior to ourselves, but our own crying weaknesses, our cowardice, our selfishness, our hypocrisy, our purblind sentimentalism. I really cannot see why we should rage so furiously against the Anglo-Indians and call them by all manner of opprobrious epithets. I grant that they are rude and arrogant, that they govern badly, that they are devoid of any great or generous emotion, that their conduct is that of a small coterie of masters surrounded by a nation of Helots. But to say all this is simply to say that they are very commonplace men put into a quite unique position. Certainly it would be very grand and noble, if they were to smother all thought of their own peculiar interests, and aim henceforth, not at their own promotion, not at their own enrichment, but at the sole good of the Indian people. But such conduct is what we have no right to expect save from men of the most exalted and chivalrous character; and the sort of people England sends out to us are not as a rule exalted and chivalrous, but are usually the very reverse of that. They are really very ordinary men,—and not only ordinary men, but ordinary Englishmen—types of the middle class or Philistines, in the graphic English phrase, with the narrow hearts and commercial habit of mind peculiar to that sort of people. It is something very like folly to quarrel with them for not transgressing the law of their own nature. If we were not so dazzled by the artificial glare of English prestige, we should at once acknowledge that these men are really not worth being angry with: and if it is idle to be angry with them, it is still more unprofitable to rate their opinion of us at more than a straw's value. Our appeal, the appeal of every high-souled and self-respecting nation, ought not to be to the opinion of the Anglo-Indians, no, nor yet to the British sense of justice, but to our own reviving sense of manhood, to our own sincere fellow-feeling—so far as it can be called sincere—with the silent and suffering people of India. I am sure that eventually the nobler part of us will prevail,—that when we no longer obey the dictates of a veiled self-interest, but return to the profession of a large and genuine patriotism, when we cease to hanker after the soiled crumbs which England may cast to us from her table, then it will be to that sense of manhood, to that sincere fellow-feeling that we shall finally and forcibly appeal. All this, it will be said, may be very true or very plausible, but it is after all made up of unsupported assertions. I quite admit that it is more or less so, nor did I at all intend that it should be otherwise; the proof and support of those assertions is a matter for patient development and wholly beside my present purpose. I have been thus elaborate with one sole end in view. I wish even the blindest enthusiast to recognise that I have not ventured to speak without carefully weighing those important considerations that might have induced me to remain silent. I trust that after this laboured preface even those most hostile to my views will not accuse me of having undertaken anything lightly or rashly. In my own opinion

I should not have been to blame even if I had spoken without this painful hesitation. If the Congress cannot really face the light of a free and serious criticism, then the sooner it hides its face the better. For nine years it has been exempt from the ordeal; we have been content to worship it with that implicit trust which all religions demand, but which sooner or later leads them to disaster and defeat. Certainly we had this excuse that the stress of battle is not the time when a soldier can stop to criticize his weapon: he has simply to turn it to the best use of which it is capable. So long as India rang with turbulent voices of complaint and agitation, so long as the air was filled with the turmoil of an angry controversy between governors and governed, so long we could have little leisure or quiet thought and reflection. But now all is different; the necessity for conflict is no longer so urgent and has even given place to a noticeable languor and passivity, varied only by perfunctory public meetings. Now therefore, while the great agitation that once filled this vast peninsula with rumours of change, is content to occupy an obscure corner of English politics it will be well for all of us who are capable of reflection, to sit down for a moment and think. The hour seems to have come when the Congress must encounter that searching criticism which sooner or later arrives to all mortal things; and if it is so, to keep our eyes shut will be worse than idle. The only good we shall get by it is to point with a fresh example the aphorism with which I set out. "If the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into a ditch?"

New Lamps for Old – III

> "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting."

> "The little that is done seems nothing when we look forward and see how much we have yet to do."

Thus far I have been making a circuit, in my disinclination to collide too abruptly with the prepossessions of my countrymen and now that I am compelled to handle my subject more intimately and with a firmer grasp, nothing but my deliberate conviction that it is quite imperative for someone to speak out, has at all persuaded me to continue. I have at the very outset to make distinct the grounds on which I charge the Congress with inadequacy. In the process I find myself bound to say many things that cannot fail to draw obloquy upon me: I shall be compelled to outrage many susceptibilities; compelled to advance many unacceptable ideas; compelled, — worst of all, — to stroke the wrong way many powerful persons, who are wont to be pampered with unstinted flattery and worship. But at all risks the thing must be done, and since it is on me that the choice has fallen, I can only proceed in the best fashion at my command and with what boldness I may. I say, of the Congress, then, this, — that its aims are mistaken, that the spirit in which it proceeds towards their accomplishment is not a spirit of sincerity and whole-heartedness, and that the methods it has chosen are not the right methods, and the leaders in whom it trusts, not the right sort of men to be leaders; — in brief, that we are at present the blind led, if not by the blind, at any rate by the one-eyed.

To begin with, I should a little while ago have had no hesitation in saying that the National Congress was not really national and had not in any way attempted to become *national*. But that was before I became a student of Mr. Pherozshah Mehta's speeches. Now to deal with this vexed subject, one must tread on very burning ground, and I shall make no apology for treading with great care and circumspection. The subject is wrapped in so thick a dust of controversy, and legal wits have been so busy drawing subtle distinctions about it, that a word which was once perfectly straightforward and simple, has become almost as difficult as the Law itself. It is therefore incumbent on me to explain what I wish to imply, when I say that the Congress is not really national. Now I do not at all mean to re-echo the Anglo-Indian catchword about the Hindus and Mahomedans. Like most catchwords it is without much force, and has been still farther stripped of meaning by the policy of the Congress. The Mahomedans have been as largely represented on that body as any reasonable community could desire, and their susceptibilities, far from being denied respect, have always been most assiduously soothed and flattered. It is entirely futile then to take up the Anglo-Indian refrain; but this at least I should have imagined, that in an era when democracy and similar big words slide so glibly from our tongues, a body like the Congress, which represents not the mass of the population, but a single and very limited class, could not honestly be called national. It is perfectly true that the House of Commons represents not the English nation, but simply the English aristocracy and middle class and yet is none the less national. But the House of Commons is a body legally constituted and empowered to speak and act for the nation, while the Congress is self-created: and it is not justifiable for a self-created body representing only a single and limited class to call itself national. It would be just as absurd if the Liberal party, because it allows within its limits all sorts and conditions of men, were to hold annual meetings and call itself the English National Congress. When therefore I said that the Congress was not really national, I simply meant that it did not represent the mass of the population.

But Mr. Pherozshah Mehta will have nothing to do with this sense of the word. In his very remarkable and instructive Presidential address at Calcutta, he argued that the Congress could justly arrogate this epithet without having any direct support from the proletariate; and he went on to explain his argument with the profound subtlety expected from an experienced advocate. "It is because the masses are still unable to articulate definite political demands that the functions and duty devolve upon their educated and enlightened compatriots to feel, to understand and to interpret their grievances and requirements, and to suggest and indicate how these can best be redressed and met." This formidable sentence is, by the way, typical of Mr. Mehta's style, and reveals the secret of his oratory, which like all great inventions is exceedingly simple: it is merely to say the same thing twice over in different words. But its more noteworthy feature is the idea implied that because the Congress professes to discharge this duty, it may justly call itself national. Nor is this all; Calcutta comes to the help of Bombay in the person of Mr. Manmohan Ghose, who repeats and elucidates Mr. Mehta's idea. The Congress, he says, asserting the rights of that body to speak for the masses, represents the thinking portion of the Indian people, whose duty it is to guide the ignorant, and this in his opinion sufficiently justifies the Congress in calling itself national. To differ from a successful barrister and citizen, a man held in high honour by every graduate in India, and above all a future member of the Viceroy's Council, would never have been a very easy task for a timid man like myself. But when he is reinforced by so respectable and weighty a citizen as Mr. Manmohan Ghose, I really cannot find the courage to persevere. I shall therefore amend the obnoxious phrase and declare that the National Congress may be as national as you please, but it is not a popular body and has not in any way attempted to become a popular body.

But at this point someone a little less learned than Mr. Pherozshah Mehta may interfere and ask how it can be true that the Congress is not a popular body. I can only point his attention to a previous statement of mine that the Congress represents not the mass of the population, but a single and limited class. No doubt the Congress tried very hard in the beginning to believe that it really represented the mass of the population, but if it has not already abandoned, it ought now at least to abandon the pretension as quite untenable. And indeed when Mr. Pherozshah Mehta and Mr. Manmohan Ghose have admitted this patent fact — not as delegates only, but as officials of the Congress — and have even gone so far as to explain the fact away, it is hardly requisite for me to combat the fallacy. But perhaps the enquirer not yet satisfied, may go on to ask what is that single and limited class which I imagine the Congress to represent. Here it may be of help to us to refer again to the speeches of the Congress leaders and more especially to the talented men from whom I have already quoted. In his able official address Mr. Manmohan Ghose asks himself this very question and answers that the Congress represents the thinking portion of the Indian people. "The delegates present here today" he goes on "are the chosen representatives of that section of the Indian people who have learnt to think, and whose number is daily increasing with marvellous rapidity." Perhaps Mr. Ghose is a little too facile in his use of the word "thinking". So much at the mercy of their instincts and prejudices are the generality of mankind, that we hazard a very high estimate when we call even one man out of ten thousand a thinking man. But evidently by the thinking portion Mr. Ghose would like to indicate the class to which he himself belongs; I mean those of us who have got some little idea of the machinery of English politics and are eager to import it into India along with cheap Liverpool cloths, shoddy Brummagem wares, and other useful and necessary things which have killed the fine and genuine textures. If this is a true interpretation he is perfectly correct in what he says. For it is really from this class that the Congress movement draws its origin, its support and its most enthusiastic votaries. And if I were asked to describe their class by a single name, I should not hesitate to call it our new middle class. For here too English goods have driven out native goods: our society has lost its old landmarks and is being demarcated on the English model. But of all the brand new articles we have imported, inconceivably the most important is that large class of people — journalists, barristers, doctors, officials, graduates and traders — who have grown up and are increasing with prurient rapidity under the aegis of the British rule: and this class I call the middle class: for, when we are so proud of our imported English goods, it would be absurd, when we want labels for them, not to import their English names as well. Besides this name which I have chosen is really a more accurate description than phrases like "thinking men" or "the educated class" which are merely expressions of our own boundless vanity and self-conceit. However largely we may choose to indulge in vague rhetoric about the all-pervading influence of the Congress, no one can honestly doubt that here is the constituency from which it is really empowered. There is indeed a small contingent of aristocrats and a smaller contingent of the more well-to-do ryots: but these are only two flying-wheels in the great middle-class machine. The fetish-worshipper may declare as loudly as he pleases, that it represents all sorts and conditions of people, just as the Anglo-Indians used to insist that it represented no one but the Bengali Babu. Facts have been too strong for the Anglo-Indian and they will be too strong in the end for the fetish-worshipper. Partisans on either side can in no way alter the clear and immutable truth — these words were put on paper long before the recent disturbances in Bombay and certainly without any suspicion that the prophecy I then hazarded would be fortified by so apt and striking a comment. Facts are already beginning to speak in a very clear and unambiguous voice. How long will the Congress sit like careless Belshazzar, at the feast of mutual admiration? Already the decree has gone out against it; already even the eyes that are dim can discern, — for has it not been written in blood? — the first pregnant phrase of the handwriting upon the wall. "God has numbered the kingdom and finished it." Surely after so rough a lesson, we shall not wait to unseal our eyes and unstop our ears, until the unseen finger moves on and writes the second and sterner sentence. "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting." Or must we sit idle with folded hands and only bestir ourselves when the short hour of grace is past and the kingdom given to another more worthy than we?

New Lamps for Old – IV

I repeat then with renewed confidence, but still with a strong desire to conciliate Mr. Pherozshah Mehta, that the Congress fails, because it has never been, and has made no honest endeavour to be, a popular body empowered by the fiat of the Indian people in its entirety. But for all that I have not managed to bring my view into coincidence with Mr. Mehta's. It is true he is not invincibly reluctant to concede the limits, which hedge in the Congress action and restrict its output of energy; but he is quite averse to the dictum that by not transgressing the middle-class pale the Congress has condemned itself, as a saving power, to insignificance and ultimate sterility. The bounded scope of its potency and the subdued tone which it affects, are, he opines, precisely what our actual emergencies of the moment imperatively demand; wider activity and a more intense emphasis would be in his view highly unadvisable and even injurious and besides it does not at all signify whether we are fortified by popular sympathy or are not; for is not Mr. Pherozshah Mehta there with all the enlightenment of India at his back to plead temperately — temperately, mind you; we are nothing if not temperate — for just and remedial legislation on behalf of a patient and suffering people? In plain words a line of argument is adopted amounting to this: — "The Congress movement is nothing if not a grand suit-at-law, best described as the case of India *vs.* Anglo-India, in which the ultimate tribunal is the British sense of justice, and Pherozshah Mehta, Mr. Umesh Chandra Bonnerji and the other eminent leaders of the bar are counsel for the complainant. Well then when so many experienced advocates have bound themselves to find pleas for him, would it not be highly rash and inopportune for the client to insist on conducting his own complaint?" Now it is abundantly clear that, judged as it stands, this line of argument, though adroit beyond cavil and instinct with legal ingenuity, will nevertheless not answer. I am not going to deny that Mr. Pherozshah Mehta and the enlightenment of India, such as it is, are pleading, undoubtedly with temperance and perhaps with sincerity, for something or other, which for want of a more exact description, we may call remedial legislation. But so far there has been nothing at all to prevent me from denying that the analogy of the law-court holds; this sort of vicarious effort may be highly advantageous in judicial matters, but it is not, I would submit, at all adequate to express the reviving energies of a great people. The argument, I say, is not complete in itself, or to use a vernacular phrase, it will not walk; it badly wants a crutch to lean upon. Mr. Mehta is clever enough to see that and his legal acumen has taken him exactly to the very store where or not at all he must discover an efficient crutch. So he goes straight to history, correctly surmising that the experience of European races is all that we, a people new to modern problems, can find to warn or counsel us, and he tells us that this sort of vicarious effort has invariably been the original step towards progress: or, to put it in his own rhetorical way, "History teaches us that such has been the law of widening progress in all ages and all countries, notably in England itself." Here then is the argument complete, crutch and all; and so adroit is it that in Congress propaganda it has become a phrase of common parlance, and is now in fact the stereotyped line of defence. Certainly, if he is accurate in his historical data, Mr. Mehta has amply proved his case; but in spite of all his adroitness, I suspect that his trend towards double-shotted phrases has led him into a serious difficulty. "In all ages and all countries" is a very big expression, and Mr. Mehta will be exceedingly lucky if it will stand a close scrutiny. But Mr. Manmohan Ghose at least is a sober speaker; and if we have deserted his smooth but perhaps rather tedious manner for a more brilliant style of oratory, now at any rate, when the specious orator fails us, we may well return to the rational disputant. But we shall be agreeably disappointed to find that this vivid statement about the teaching of History is Mr. Ghose's own legitimate offspring and not the coinage of Mr. Mehta's heated fancy: indeed, the latter has done nothing but convey it bodily into his own address. “History teaches us” says Mr. Ghose “that in all ages and all countries it is the thinking classes who have led the unthinking, and in the present state of our society we are bound not only to think for ourselves, but also to think for those who are still too ignorant to exercise that important function.” When we find the intellectual princes of the nation light-heartedly propagating such gross inaccuracies, we are really tempted to inquire if high education is after all of any use. History teaches us! Why, these gentlemen can never have studied any history at all except that of England. Would they be ignorant otherwise that mainly to that country, if not to that country alone, their statement applies, but that about most ages and most countries it is hopelessly inaccurate? Absurd as the statement is, its career has been neither limited nor obscure. Shot in the first instance from Mr. Ghose’s regulation smoothbore, it then served as a bullet in Mr. Pherozshah’s patent new double-barrelled rifle, and has ultimately turned out the stock ammunition of the Congress against that particular line upon which I have initially ventured. Here then the argument has culminated in a most important issue; for supposing this line of defence to be adequate, the gravest indictment I have to urge against the Congress goes at once to the ground. It will therefore be advisable to scrutinize Mr. Ghose’s light-hearted statement; and if the policy he advocates is actually stamped with the genuine consensus of all peoples in all ages, then we shall very readily admit that there is no reason why the masses should not be left in their political apathy. But if it is quite otherwise and we cannot discover more than one precedent of importance, then Mr. Ghose and the Congress chairmen will not make us dance to their music, charm they never so wisely, and we shall be slow to admit even the one precedent we have got without a very narrow scrutiny. If then we are bent upon adopting England as our exemplar, we shall certainly imitate the progress of the glacier rather than the progress of the torrent. From Runnymede to the Hull riots is a far cry; yet these seven centuries have done less to change partially the political and social exterior of England, than five short years to change entirely the political and social exterior of her immediate neighbour. But if Mr. Ghose's dogmatic utterance is true of England, I imagine it does not apply with equal force to other climes and other eras. For example, is it at all true of France? Rather we know that the first step of that fortunate country towards progress was not through any decent and orderly expansion, but through a purification by blood and fire. It was not a convocation of respectable citizens, but the vast and ignorant proletariate, that emerged from a prolonged and almost coeval apathy and blotted out in five terrible years the accumulated oppression of thirteen centuries. And if the example of France is not sufficient to deprive Mr. Ghose's statement of force, let us divert our eyes to Ireland, where the ancient and world-wide quarrel between Celt and Teuton is still pending. Is it at all true that the initiators of Irish resistance to England were a body of successful lawyers, remarkable only for a power of shallow rhetoric, and deputed by the sort of men that are turned out at Trinity College, Dublin? At any rate that is not what History tells us. We do not read that the Irish leaders annually assembled to declaim glib orations, eulogistic of British rule and timidly suggestive of certain flaws in its unparalleled excellence, nor did they suggest as a panacea for Irish miseries, that they should be given more posts and an ampler career in the British service. I rather fancy Turlough O'Neill and his compeers were a different sort of men from that. But then it is hardly fair perhaps to cite as an example a disreputable people never prolific of graduates and hence incapable of properly appreciating the extraordinary blessings which British rule gives out so liberally wherever it goes. Certainly men who preferred action to long speeches and appealed, by the only method available in that strenuous epoch, not to the British sense of justice but to their own sense of manhood, are not at all the sort of people we have either the will or the power to imitate. Well then let us return to our own orderly and eloquent era. But here too, just as the main strength of that ancient strenuous protest resided in the Irish populace led by the princes of their class, so the principal force of the modern subtler protest resides in the Irish peasantry led by the recognized chiefs of an united people. I might go on and cull instances from Italy and America but to elaborate the matter further would be to insult the understanding of my readers. It will be sufficient to remind them that the two grand instances of ancient history point to an exactly similar conclusion. In Athens and in Rome the first political quarrel is a distinct issue between the man of the people and a limited, perhaps an alien, aristocracy. The force behind Cleisthenes and the constituency that empowered Tiberius Gracchus were not a narrow middle class, but the people with its ancient wrongs and centuries of patient endurance.

If then, as we are compelled to infer, Mr. Mehta's statement is entirely inaccurate of remoter ages and in modern times accurate of one country alone, we shall conclude that whatever other proof he may find for his lame argument, that crutch at least is too large and must go to the ground. But Mr. Mehta, too acute and experienced a pleader to be disheartened by any initial failure, will no doubt pick up his crutch again and whittle it down to the appropriate size. It may be quite correct, he will perhaps tell me, that his statement applies with appreciable force to England and to England alone but when all is said, it does not eventually matter. In allowing that his statement does generally apply to England, I have admitted everything he seriously wants me to admit, for England is after all that country which has best prospered in its aspirations after progress, and must therefore be the grand political exemplar of every nation animated by a like spirit, and it must be peculiarly and beyond dispute such for India in her present critical stage of renascence. I am quite aware that in the eyes of that growing community which Mr. Ghose is pleased to call the thinking class, these plausible assertions are only the elementary axioms of political science. But however confidently such statements are put before me, I am not at all sure that they are entirely correct. I have not quite made up my mind that England is indeed that country which has best prospered in its aspirations after progress and I am as yet unconvinced that it will eventually turn out at all a desirable exemplar for every nation aspiring to progress, or even for its peculiar pupil, renascent India. I shall therefore feel more disposed to probe the matter to the bottom than to acknowledge a very disputable thesis as in any way self-evident. To this end it is requisite closely to inquire what has actually been the main outcome of English political effort, and whether it is of a nature to justify any implicit reliance on English methods or exact imitation of English models.

New Lamps for Old – V

We have then to appreciate the actual conditions of English progress, in their sound no less than their unsound aspects: and it will be to our convenience to have ready some rough formulae by which we may handle the subject in an intelligible way. To this problem Mr. Surendranath Banerji, a man who with all his striking merits, has never evinced any power of calm and serious thought, proffers a very grandiloquent and heart-stirring solution. "We rely" he has said "on the liberty-loving instincts of the greatest representative assembly in the world, the palladium of English Liberty, the sanctuary of the free and brave, the British House of Commons" and at this inspiriting discharge of oratory there was, we are told, nor do we wonder at it — a responding volley of loud and protracted applause. Now when Mr. Banerji chooses to lash himself into an oratorical frenzy and stir us with his sounding rhetoric, it is really impracticable for anything human to stand up and oppose him: and though I may hereafter tone down his oriental colouring to something nearer the hue of truth, yet it does not at present serve my purpose to take up arms against a sea of eloquence. I would rather admit at once the grain of sound fact at the core of all this than strip off the costly integuments with which Mr. Banerji's elaborate Fancy chooses to invest it. But when Mr. Banerji's words no longer reverberate in your ears, you may have leisure to listen to a quieter, more serious voice, now unhappily hushed in the grave, — the voice of Matthew Arnold, himself an Englishman and genuine lover of his country, but for all that a man who thought deeply and spoke sanely. And where according to this sane and powerful intellect shall we come across the really noteworthy outcome of English effort? We shall best see it, he tells us, not in any palladium or sanctuary, not in the greatest representative assembly in the world, but in an aristocracy materialized, a middle class vulgarised and a lower class brutalized: and no clear-sighted student of England will be insensible to the just felicity with which he has hit off the social tendencies prevailing in that country. Here then we have ready rough formulae by which we may, at the lowest, baldly outline the duplicate aspect of modern England: for now that we have admitted Mr. Banerji's phrase as symbolic of the healthy outcome creditable to English effort, we can hardly be shy of admitting Matthew Arnold's phrase as symbolic of the morbid outcome discreditable to it. But it is still open to us to evince a reasonable doubt whether there is any way of reconciling two items so mutually destructive: for it does seem paradoxical to rate the produces of institutions so highly lauded and so universally copied at a low grade in the social ladder. But this apparent paradox may easily be a vital truth; and in establishing that, as I hope to establish it, I shall have incidentally to moot another and wider theorem. I would urge that our entire political philosophy is rooted in shallow earth, so much so indeed that without repudiation or radical change we cannot arrive at an attitude of mind healthily conducive to just and clear thinking. I am conscious that the argument has hitherto been rather intangible and moved too largely among wide abstract principles. Such a method is by its nature less keenly attractive to the general readers than a close and lively handling of current politics, but it is required for an adequate development of my case, and I must entreat indulgence a step or two further, before I lay any grasp on the hard concrete details of our actual political effort.

Now the high value at which Mr. Mehta appraises history as our sole available record of human experience in the mass will clearly be endorsed by every thoughtful and judicious mind. But to sustain it at that high level of utility, we must not indulge in hasty deductions based on a very partial scrutiny, but must group correctly and digest in a candid spirit such data as we can bring within our compass. If we observe this precept, we shall not easily coincide with his opinion that European progress has been of a single texture. We shall rather be convinced that there run through it two principles of motion distinct in nature and adverse in event, the trend of whose divergence may be roundly expressed as advance in one direction through political methods and in another direction through social methods. But as the use of these time-worn epithets might well promote misconception and drag us into side-issues, I will attempt a more delicate handling and solicit that close attention without which so remote and elusive a subject cannot come home to the mind with proper force and clearness.

In bringing abstractions home to the human intelligence, it is perhaps best to dispel by means of near and concrete specimens that sense of remoteness which we shrink from in what is at all intangible. Hence I shall attempt to differentiate by living instances the two principles which I suggest as the main motors of progress. The broad cast of national thought in England prevalent from very early times, may not inappropriately stand for the sort of progress that runs after a political prize. The striking fact of English history — the fact that dwarfs all others — is, without doubt, the regular development from certain primordial seeds and the continuous branching out, foliation and efflorescence of the institution which Mr. Banerji has justly termed the greatest representative assembly in the world. This is highly typical of the English school of thought and the exaggerated emphasis it lays on the mould and working of institutions. However supreme in the domain of practical life, however gifted with commercial vigour and expansive energy, the English mind with its short range of vision, its too little of delicacy and exactness, its inability to go beyond what it actually sees, is wholly unfit for any nice appraisal of cause and effect. It is without vision, logic, the spirit of curiosity, and hence it has not any habit of entertaining clear and high ideals, any audacity of experiment, any power of finding just methods nicely adopted to produce the exact effect intended: — it is without speculative temerity and the scientific spirit, and hence it cannot project great political theories nor argue justly from effect to cause. All these incapacities have forced the English mind into a certain mould of thought and expression. Limited to the visible and material, they have put their whole force into mechanical invention; void of curiosity, they have hazarded just so much experiment and no more, as was necessary to suit existing institutions to their immediate wants; inexact, they have never cared in these alterations to get at more than an approximation to the exact effect intended; illogical and without subtlety, they have trusted implicitly to the political machines, for whose invention they have a peculiar genius, and never cared to utilize mightier forces and a subtler method. Nor is this all: in their defect of speculative imagination, they are unable to get beyond what they themselves have experienced, what they themselves have effected. Hence, being unscientific and apt to impute every power to machinery, they compare certain sets of machines, and postulating certain effects from them, argue that as this of their own invention has been attended by results of the highest value, it is therefore of an unique excellence and conserves in any and every climate its efficiency and durability. And they do not simply flaunt this opinion in the face of reason, but, by their stupendous material success and vast expansion, they have managed to convince a world apt to be impressed by externals, that it is correct, and even obviously correct. Yet it is quite clear that this opinion, carefully analysed, reduces itself to a logical absurdity. By its rigid emphasizing of a single element it slurs over others of equal or superior importance: it takes no account of a high or low quality in the raw material, of variant circumstances, of incompatibilities arising from national temperament, and other forces which no philosophical observer will omit from his calculations. In fact it reduces itself to the statement, that, given good machinery, then no matter what quality of material is passed through it, the eventual fabric will be infallibly of the most superior sort. If the Indian intellect had been nourished on any but English food, I should be content with stating the idea in this its simplest form, and spare myself a laborious exegesis; but I do not forget that I am addressing minds formed by purely English influences and therefore capable of admitting the rooted English prejudice that what is logically absurd, may be practically true. At present however I will simply state the motive principle of progress exemplified by England as a careful requisition and high appraisal of sound machinery in preference to a scientific social development.

But if we carry our glance across the English Channel, we shall witness a very different and more animating spectacle. Gifted with a lighter, subtler and clearer mind than their insular neighbours, the French people have moved irresistibly towards a social and not a political development. It is true that French orators and statesmen, incapacitated by their national character from originating fit political ideals, have adopted a set of institutions curiously blended from English and American manufactures; but the best blood, the highest thought, the real grandeur of the nation does not reside in the Senate or in the Chamber of Deputies; it resides in the artistic and municipal forces of Parisian life, in the firm settled executive, in the great vehement heart of the French populace — and that has ever beaten most highly in unison with the grand ideas of Equality and Fraternity, since they were first enounced on the banner of the great and terrible Republic. Hence though by the indiscreet choice of a machine, they have been compelled to copy the working of English machinery and concede an undue importance to politics, yet the ideals which have genuinely influenced the spirit which has most deeply permeated their national life are widely different from that alien spirit, from those borrowed ideals. I have said that the French mind is clearer, subtler, lighter than the English. In that clarity they have discerned that without high qualities in the raw material excellence of machinery will not suffice to create a sound and durable national character, — that it may indeed develop a strong, energetic and capable temper, but that the fabric will not combine fineness with strength, will not resist permanently the wear and tear of time and the rending force of social problems: — through that subtlety they divined that not by the mechanic working of institutions, but by the delicate and almost unseen moulding of a fine, lucid and invigorating atmosphere, could a robust and highly-wrought social temper be developed: — and through that lightness they chose not the fierce, sharp air of English individualism, but the bright influence of art and letters, of happiness, a wide and liberal culture, and the firm consequent cohesion of their racial and social elements. To put all this briefly, the second school of thought I would indicate to my readers, is the preference of a fine development of social character and a wide diffusion of happiness to the mechanic development of a sound political machinery. Here then as indicated by these grand examples we have our two principal motors of progress; a careful requisition, for the sake of evolving an energetic national character and high level of capacity, of a sound political machinery; and the ardent, yet rational pursuit, for its own sake, of a sound and highly-wrought social temper.

It may be worth while here to develop a point I have broadly suggested, that with these distinct lines of feeling accord distinct types of racial character. The social ideal is naturally limited to peoples distinguished by a rare social gift and an unbounded receptivity for novel ideas along with a large amount of practical capacity. The ancient Athenian, preeminent for lightness of temper and lucidity of thought, was content with the simplest and most nakedly logical machinery, and principally sought to base political life on equality, a wide diffusion of culture, and a large and just social principle. Moreover, as the subtlest and hence the most efficient way of conserving the high calibre of his national character, he chose the infusion of light, gaiety and happiness into the common life of the people. Clear in thought and felicitous in action, he pursued an ideal strictly consonant with his natural temper and rigidly exclusive of the anomalous: and so highly did he attain, that the quick, shifting, eager Athenian life, with its movement and colour, its happy buoyancy, its rapid genius, or, as the Attic poet beautifully phrases it, walking delicately through a fine and lucid air, has become the admiration and envy of posterior ages. The modern Frenchman closely allied by his clear habit of mind to the old Athenian, himself lucid in thought, light in temper and not without a supreme felicity of method in practical things, evinces much the same sentiments, pursues much the same ideals. He too has a happily-adjusted executive machinery, elaborated indeed to fit the needs of a modern community, but pervaded by a thoroughly clear and logical spirit. He also has a passionate craving for equality and a large and just social principle, and prefers to conserve the high calibre of his national character by the infusion of light, gaiety and happiness into the common life of the people. And he too has so far compassed his ideal that a consensus of competent observers have pronounced France certainly the happiest, and, taken in the mass, the most civilized of modern countries. But to the Englishman or American, intellect, lucidity, happiness are not of primary importance: they strike him in the light of luxuries rather than necessities. It is the useful citizen, the adroit man of business, the laborious worker, whom he commends with the warmest emphasis and copies with the most respectful emulation. Such a cast of mind being entirely incompatible with social success, he directs his whole active powers into the grosser sphere of commerce and politics, where practical energy, unpurified by thought, may struggle forward to some vulgar and limited goal. To put it in a concrete form Paris may be said to revolve around the Theatre, the Municipal Council and the French Academy, London looks rather to the House of Commons and New York to the Stock Exchange. I trust that I have now clearly elucidated the exact and intimate nature of those two distinct principles on which progress may be said to move. It now remains to gauge the practical effect of either policy as history indicates them to us. We in India, or at any rate those races among us which are in the van of every forward movement, are far more nearly allied to the French and Athenian than to the Anglo-Saxon, but owing to the accident of British domination, our intellects have been carefully nurtured on a purely English diet. Hence we do not care to purchase an outfit of political ideas properly adjusted to our natural temper and urgent requirements, but must eke out our scanty wardrobe with the cast-off rags and threadbare leavings of our English Masters and this incongruous apparel we display with a pompous self-approval which no unfriendly murmurs, no unkind allusions are allowed to trouble. Absurd as all this is, its visible outcome is clearly a grave misfortune. Prompted by our English instruction we have deputed to a mere machine so arduous a business as the remoulding of our entire destinies, needing as it does patient and delicate manual adjustment and a constant supervising vigilance — and this to a machine not efficient and carefully pieced together but clumsy and made on a rude and cheap model. So long as this temper prevails, we shall never realise how utterly it is beyond the power of even an excellent machine to renovate an effete and impoverished national character and how palpably requisite to commence from within and not depend on any exterior agency. Such a retrospect as I propose will therefore be of peculiar value, if it at all induces us to acknowledge that it is a vital error, simply because we have invented a clumsy machine, to rest on our oars and imagine that expenditure of energy in other directions is at present superfluous.

New Lamps for Old – VI

That this intimate organic treatment of which I speak is really indispensable, will be clearly established by the annals of ancient Rome. The Romans were a nation quite unique in the composition and general style of their character; along with a predilection for practical energy, a purely material habit of mind, and an indifference to orderly and logical methods which suggest a strong affinity to the Anglo-Saxon temperament, they possessed a robust and clear perception, and a strong practical contempt for methods pronounced by hard experience to be ineffectual, which are entirely un-English and allied rather to the clarity and impatience of the Gaul. Moreover their whole character was moulded in a grand style, such as has not been witnessed by any prior or succeeding age — so much so that the striking description by which the Greek ambassador expressed the temper of the Roman Senate, might with equal justice be transferred to the entire people. They were a nation of Kings: that is to say, they possessed the gift of handling the high things of life in a grand and imposing style, and with a success, an astonishing sureness of touch, only possible to a natural tact in government and a just, I may say a royal instinct for affairs. Yet this grand, imperial nation, even while it was most felicitous abroad in the manner and spirit in which it dealt with foreign peoples, was at home convulsed to a surprising extent by the worst forms of internal disorder: — and all for the want of that clear, sane ideal which has so highly promoted the domestic happiness of France and Athens. At first, indeed, the Romans inexpert in political methods, were inclined to repose an implicit trust in machinery, just as the English have been inclined from the primary stages of their development, and just as we are led to do by the contagious influence of the Anglomaniac disease. They hoped by the sole and mechanic action of certain highly lauded institutions to remove the disorders with which the Roman body politic was ailing. And though at Rome no less than among ourselves, the social condition of the poor filled up the reform posters and a consequent amelioration was loudly trumpeted by the popular leaders, yet the genuine force of the movement was disposed, as is the genuine force of the present Congress movement, to the minimising of purely political inequality. But when the coveted institutions were in full swing, a sense gradually dawned on the people that the middle class had the sole enjoyment of any profit accruing from the change, as indeed it is always to the middle class alone that any profit accrues from the elimination of merely political inequality; but the great Roman populace untouched by the change for which they had sacrificed their ease and expended their best and highest energies, felt themselves pushed from misery to misery and broke out again in a wild storm of rebellion. But to maintain a stark persistence in unreason, to repose an unmoved confidence in the bounded potency of a mechanic formula, proved ineffectual by the cogent logic of hard experience, they had no thought, or if they had the thought, they being a genuinely practical race, and not like the English, straining after practicality, had not the disposition. Hence that mighty struggle was fought out with perplexed watchwords, amid wild alarms and rumours of battle and in a confused medley of blood, terror and unspeakable desolation. In that horror of great darkness, the Roman world crashed on from ruin to ruin, until the strong hand of Caesar stayed its descent to poise it on the stable foundation of a sane and vigilant policy rigorously enforced by the fixed will of a single despotic ruler. But the grand secret of his success and the success of those puissant autocrats who inherited his genius and his ideals, was the clear perception attained to by them that only by social equality and the healing action of a firm despotism, could the disorders of Rome be permanently eradicated. Maligned as they have been by those who suffered from their astuteness and calm strength of will, the final verdict of posterity will laud in them that terrible intensity of purpose and even that iron indifference to personal suffering, which they evinced in forcing the Caesarian policy to its bitter but salutary end. The main lesson for us however is the pregnant conclusion that the Romans, to whom we cannot deny the supreme rank in the sphere of practical success, by attempting a cure through external and mechanic appliances entailed on themselves untold misery, untold disorder, and only by a thorough organic treatment restored the sanity, peace, settled government and calm felicity of an entire world.

But perhaps Mr. Mehta will tell me "What have we to do with the ancient Romans, we who have an entirely modern environment and suffer from disorders peculiar to ourselves?" Well, the connection is not perhaps so remote as Mr. Mehta imagines: I will not however press that point, but rather appeal to the instance of two great European nations, who also have an entirely modern environment and suffer or have suffered from very similar maladies — and so end my long excursion into the domain of abstract ideas.

As the living instances most nearly suggesting the diversity of impulse and method, which is my present subject, I have had occasion to draw a comparison between these two peoples, whom, by a singular caprice of antithesis, chance has put into close physical proximity, but nature has sundered as far as the poles in genius, temper and ideals. Whatever healthy and conservative effects accrue from the close pursuit of either principle, whatever morbid and deleterious effects accrue from the close pursuit of either principle, will be seen operating to the best advantage in the social and political organism of these two nations. The healthy effects of the one impulse we shall find among those striking English qualities which at once catch the eye, insatiable enterprise, an energetic and pushing spirit, a vigorous tendency towards expansion, a high capacity for political administration, and an orderly process of government; the morbid effects are social degradation and an entire absence of the cohesive principle. The better qualities have no doubt grown by breathing the atmosphere of individualism and been trained up by the habit of working under settled and roughly convenient forms; but after all is said, the original high qualities of the raw material enter very largely into the credit side of the account. Even were it not so, we are not likely, tutored by English instruction, to undervalue or to slur over the successful and imposing aspect of English attainment. Hence it will be more profitable for us, always keeping the bright side in view, to concentrate our attention on the unsounder aspects which we do not care to learn, or if we have learned, are in the habit of carefully forgetting. We may perhaps realize the nature of that unsounder aspect, if we amplify Matthew Arnold's phrase: — an aristocracy no longer possessed of the imposing nobility of mind, the proud sense of honour, the striking preeminence of faculty, which are the saving graces — nay, which are the very life-breath of an aristocracy; debased moreover by the pursuit, through concession to all that is gross and ignoble in the English mind, of gross and ignoble ends: — a middle class inaccessible to the influence of high and refining ideas, and prone to rate everything even in the noblest departments of life, at a commercial valuation: — and a lower class equally without any germ of high ideas, nay, without any ideas high or low; degraded in their worst failure to the crudest forms of vice, pauperism and crime, and in their highest attainment restricted to a life of unintelligent work relieved by brutalising pleasures. And indeed the most alarming symptoms are here; for it may be said of the aristocracy that the workings of the Time-Spirit have made a genuine aristocracy obsolete and impracticable, and of the middle class, that, however successful and confident, it is in fact doomed; its empire is passing away from it: but with the whole trend of humanity shaping towards democracy and socialism, on the calibre and civilisation of the lower class depends the future of the entire race. And we have seen what sort of lower class England, with all her splendid success, has been able to evolve — in calibre debased, in civilisation nil. And after seeing what England has produced by her empiricism, her culture of a raw energy, her exaltation of a political method not founded on reason, we must see what France has produced by her steady, logical pursuit of a fine social ideal: it is the Paris *ouvrier* with his firmness of grasp on affairs, his sanity, his height of mind, his clear, direct ways of life and thought, — it is the French peasant with his ready tact, his power of quiet and sensible conversation, located in an enjoyable corner of life, small it may be, but with plenty of room for wholesome work and plenty of room for refreshing gaiety. There we have the strong side of France, a lucid social atmosphere, a firm executive rationally directed to insure a clearly conceived purpose, a high level of character and refinement pervading all classes and a scheme of society bestowing a fair chance of happiness on the low as well as the high. But if France is strong in the sphere of England's weakness, she is no less weak in the sphere of England's strength. Along with and militating against her social happiness, we have to reckon constant political disorder and instability, an alarming defect of expansive vigour, and entire failure in the handling of general politics. France, unable to conceive and work out a proper political machinery, has been reduced to copy with slight variations the English model and import a set of machinery well suited to the old English temper, but now unsuited even to the English and still more to the vehement French character. Passionate, sensitive, loquacious, fond of dispute and apt to be blown away by gusts of feeling, the Gaul is wholly unfit for that heavy decorum, that orderly process of debate, that power of combining anomalies, which still exist to a great extent in England, but which even there must eventually grow impossible. Hence the vehement French nation after a brief experience of each alien manufacture has grown intensely impatient and shipped it back without superfluous ceremony to its original home. Here is the latent root of that disheartening failure which has attended France in all her brief and feverish attempts to discover a stable basis of political advance, — of that intense consequent disgust, that scornful aversion to politics which has led thinking France to rate it as an indecent harlequin-show in which no serious man will care to meddle. But if this were all, a superficial observer might balance a defect and merit on one side by an answering merit and defect on the other, and conclude that the account was clear; but social status is not the only department of success in which England compares unfavourably with France. There is her fatal incoherency, her want of political cohesion, her want of social cohesion. A Breton, a Basque, a Provençal, though no less alien in blood to the mass of the French people than the Irish, the Welsh, the Scotch to the mass of the English people, would repel with alarm and abhorrence the mere thought of impairing the fine solidarity, the homogeneity of sentiment, which the possession of an agreeable social life has developed in France. And we cannot sufficiently admire the supreme virtue of that fine social development and large diffusion of general happiness, which has conserved for France in the midst of fearful political calamities her splendid cohesiveness as a nation and as a community. In England on the other hand we see the sorry spectacle of a great empire lying at the mercy of disintegrating influences, because the component races have neither been properly merged in the whole nor persuaded by the offer of a high level of happiness to value the benefits of solidarity. And if France by her injudicious choice of mechanism, her political incapacity, her refusal to put her best blood into politics, has involved herself in fearful political calamities, no less has England by her exclusive pursuit of machinery, her social incompetence, her prejudice against a rational equality, her excessive individualism, entered on an era of fearful social calamities. It is a suggestive fact that the alienation of sympathy, the strong antipathetic feelings of Labour towards Capital, are nowhere so marked, the quarrel between them is nowhere so violent, sustained and ferocious as in the two countries which are proudest of their institutions and have most systematically neglected their social development — England and America. It is not therefore unreasonable to conclude — and had I space and leisure, I should be tempted to show that every circumstance tends to fortify the conclusion and convert it into a certainty — that this social neglect is the prime cause of the fearful array of social calamities, whose first impact has already burst on those proud and successful countries. But enough has been said, and to discuss the matter exhaustively would unduly defer the point of more direct importance for ourselves; — I mean the ominous connection which these truths have with the actual conditions of politics and society in India.

New Lamps for Old – VII

I am not ignorant that to practical men all I have written will prove beyond measure unpalatable. Strongly inimical as they are to thought in politics, they will detect in it an offensive redolence of dilettantism, perhaps scout it as a foolish waste of power, or if a good thing at all a good thing for a treatise on general politics, a good thing out of place. To what end these remote instances, what pertinence in these political metaphysics? I venture however to suggest that it is just this gleaning from general politics, this survey and digestion of human experience in the mass that we at the present moment most imperatively want. No one will deny, — no one at least in that considerable class to whose address my present remarks are directed, — that for us, and even for those of us who have a strong affection for oriental things and believe that there is in them a great deal that is beautiful, a great deal that is serviceable, a great deal that is worth keeping, the most important objective is and must inevitably be the admission into India of Occidental ideas, methods and culture: even if we are ambitious to conserve what is sound and beneficial in our indigenous civilization, we can only do so by assisting very largely the influx of Occidentalism. But at the same time we have a perfect right to insist, and every sagacious man will take pains to insist, that the process of introduction shall not be as hitherto rash and ignorant, that it shall be judicious, discriminating. We are to have what the West can give us, because what the West can give us is just the thing and the only thing that will rescue us from our present appalling condition of intellectual and moral decay, but we are not to take it haphazard and in a lump; rather we shall find it expedient to select the very best that is thought and known in Europe, and to import even that with the changes and reservations which our diverse conditions may be found to dictate. Otherwise instead of a simply ameliorating influence, we shall have chaos annexed to chaos, the vices and calamities of the West superimposed on the vices and calamities of the East.

No one has such advantages, no one is so powerful to discourage, minimise and even to prevent the intrusion of what is mischievous, to encourage, promote and even to ensure the admission of what is salutary, than an educated and vigorous national assembly standing for the best thought and the best energy in the country, and standing for it not in a formal parliamentary way, but by the spontaneous impulse and election of the people. Patrons of the Congress are never tired of giving us to understand that their much lauded idol does stand for all that is best in the country and that it stands for them precisely in the way I have described. If that is so, it is not a little remarkable that far from regulating judiciously the importation of Occidental wares we have actually been at pains to import an inferior in preference to a superior quality, and in a condition not the most apt but the most inapt for consumption in India. Yet that this has been so far the net result of our political commerce with the West, will be very apparent to anyone who chooses to think. National character being like human nature, maimed and imperfect, it was not surprising, not unnatural that a nation should commit one or other of various errors. We need not marvel if England, overconfident in her material success and the practical value of her institutions has concerned herself too little with social development and set small store by the discreet management of her masses: nor must we hold French judgment cheap because in the pursuit of social felicity and the pride of her magnificent cohesion France has failed in her choice of apparatus and courted political insecurity and disaster. But there are limits even to human fallibility and to combine two errors so distinct would be, one imagines, a miracle of incompetence. Facts however are always giving the lie to our imaginations; and it is a fact that we by a combination of errors so eccentric as almost to savour of felicity, are achieving this prodigious *tour de force*. Servile in imitation with a peculiar Indian servility we have swallowed down in a lump our English diet and especially that singular paradox about the unique value of machinery: but we have not the stuff in us to originate a really effective instrument for ourselves. Hence the Congress, a very reputable body, I hasten to admit, teeming with grave citizens and really quite flush of lawyers, but for all that meagre in the scope of its utility and wholly unequal to the functions it ought to exercise. There we have laid the foundations, as the French laid the foundations, of political incompetence, political failure; and of a more fatal incompetence, a more disastrous failure, because the French have at least originality, thought, resourcefulness, while we are vainglorious, shallow, mentally impotent: and as if this error were not enough for us, we have permitted ourselves to lose all sense of proportion, and to evolve an inordinate self-content, an exaggerated idea of our culture, our capacity, our importance. Hence we choose to rate our own political increase higher than social perfection or the advancement, intellectual and economical, of that vast unhappy proletariate about which everybody talks and nobody cares. We blandly assent when Mr. Pherozshah in the generous heat of his temperate and carefully restricted patriotism, assures us after his genial manner that the awakening of the masses from their ignorance and misery is entirely unimportant and any expenditure of energy in that direction entirely premature. There we have laid the foundation, as England laid the foundation, of social collapse, of social calamities. We have sown the wind and we must not complain if we reap the whirlwind. Under such circumstances it cannot be superfluous or a waste of power to review in the light of the critical reason that part of human experience most nearly connected by its nature with our own immediate difficulties. It is rather our main business and the best occupation not of dilettantes but of minds gifted with insight, seriousness, original power. So much indeed is it our main business that according as it is executed or neglected, we must pronounce a verdict of adequacy or inadequacy on our recent political thought: and we have seen that it is hopelessly inadequate, that all our efforts repose on a body organically infirm to the verge of impotence and are in their scheme as in their practice selfishly frigid to social development and the awakening of the masses.

Here then we have got a little nearer to just and adequate comprehension. At any rate I hope to have enforced on my readers the precise and intrinsic meaning of that count in my indictment which censures the Congress as a body not popular and not honestly desirous of a popular character — in fact as a middle-class organ selfish and disingenuous in its public action and hollow in its professions of a large and disinterested patriotism. I hope to have convinced them that this is a solid charge and a charge entirely damaging to their character for wisdom and public spirit. Above all I hope to have persuaded Mr. Pherozshah Mehta, or at least the eidolon of that great man, the shadow of him which walks through these pages, that our national effort must contract a social and popular tendency before it can hope to be great or fruitful. But then Mr. Pherozshah is a lawyer: he has, enormously developed in him, that forensic instinct which prompts men to fight out a cause which they know to be unsound, to fight it out to the last gasp, not because it is just or noble but because it is theirs; and in the spirit of that forensic tradition he may conceivably undertake to answer me somewhat as follows. "Material success and a great representative assembly are boons of so immense a magnitude, so stupendous an importance that even if we purchase them at the cost of a more acute disintegration, a more appalling social decadence, the rate will not be any too exorbitant. Let us exactly imitate English success by an exact imitation of English models and then there will be plenty of time to deal with these questions which you invest with fictitious importance." Monstrous as the theorem is, profound as is the mental darkness which pervades it, it summarises not unfairly the defence put forward by the promoters and well-wishers of the Congress.

On us as the self-elected envoys of a new evangel there rests a heavy responsibility, assumed by our own will, but which once assumed we can no longer repudiate or discard; a responsibility which promises us immortal credit, if performed with sincerity and wisdom, but saddled with ignominy to ourselves and disaster to our country, if we discharge it in another spirit and another manner. To meet that responsibility we have no height, no sincerity of character, no depth of emotion, no charity, no seriousness of intellect. Yet it is only a sentimentalist, we are told, who will bid us raise, purify and transform ourselves so that we may be in some measure worthy of the high and solemn duties we have bound ourselves to perform! The proletariate among us is sunk in ignorance and overwhelmed with distress. But with that distressed and ignorant proletariate, — now that the middle class is proved deficient in sincerity, power and judgment, — with that proletariate resides, whether we like it or not, our sole assurance of hope, our sole chance in the future. Yet he is set down as a vain theorist and a dreamy trifler who would raise it from its ignorance and distress. The one thing needful we are to suppose, the one thing worthy of a great and statesmanlike soul is to enlarge the Legislative Councils, until they are big enough to hold Mr. Pherozshah M. Mehta, and other geniuses of an immoderate bulk. To play with baubles is our ambition, not to deal with grave questions in a spirit of serious energy. But while we are playing with baubles, with our Legislative Councils, our Simultaneous Examinations, our ingenious schemes for separating the judicial from the executive functions, — while we, I say, are finessing about trifles, the waters of the great deep are being stirred and that surging chaos of the primitive man over which our civilized societies are superimposed on a thin crust of convention, is being strangely and ominously agitated. Already a red danger-signal has shot up from Prabhas-Patan, and sped across the country, speaking with a rude eloquence of strange things beneath the fair surface of our renascent, enlightened India: yet no sooner was the signal seen than it was forgotten. Perhaps the religious complexion of these occurrences has lulled our fears; but when turbulence has once become habitual in a people, it is only folly that will reckon on its preserving the original complexion. A few more taxes, a few more rash interferences of Government, a few more stages of starvation, and the turbulence that is now religious will become social. I am speaking to that class which Mr. Manmohan Ghose has called the thinking portion of the Indian community: well, let these thinking gentlemen carry their thoughtful intellects a hundred years back. Let them recollect what causes led from the religious madness of St. Bartholomew to the social madness of the Reign of Terror. Let them enumerate if their memory serves them, the salient features and symptoms which the wise man detected many years before the event to be the sure precursors of some terrible catastrophe; and let them discover, if they can, any of those symptoms which is absent from the phenomena of our disease. With us it rests — if indeed it is not too late — with our sincerity, our foresight, our promptness of thought and action, that the hideous parallel shall not be followed up by a sequel as awful, as bloody and more purely disastrous. Theorist, and trifler though I may be called, I again assert as our first and holiest duty, the elevation and enlightenment of the proletariate: I again call on those nobler spirits among us who are working erroneously, it may be, but with incipient or growing sincerity and nobleness of mind, to divert their strenuous effort from the promotion of narrow class-interests, from silly squabbles about offices and salaried positions, from a philanthropy laudable in itself and worthy of rational pursuit, but meagre in the range of its benevolence and ineffectual towards promoting the nearest interests of the nation, into that vaster channel through which alone the healing waters may be conducted to the lips of their ailing and tortured country.

New Lamps for Old – VIII

Poverty of organic conception and unintelligence of the deeper facts of our environment are the inherent vices I have hitherto imputed to the Congress and the burgess-body of which it is the political nucleus. But I have not done enough when I have done that. Perversion or error in the philosophy of our aim does indeed point to a serious defect of the political reason, but it is not incompatible with a nearer apprehension and happier management of surface facts; and if we had been so far apprehensive and dexterous, that would have been an output of native directness and force on which we might reasonably felicitate ourselves. For directness and force are an inalienable ancestral inheritance handed down by vigorous forefathers, and where they are, the political reason which comes of liberal culture and ancient experience, may be waited for with a certain patient hopefulness. But it is to be feared that our performance up to date does not give room for so comforting an assurance. Is it not rather the fact that our whole range of thought and action has been pervaded by a stamp of unreality and helplessness, a straining after achievement for which we have not the proper stamina and an entire misconception of facts as well as of natural laws? To be convinced of this we have only to interrogate recent events, not confiding in their outward face as the shallow and self-contented do, but getting to the heart of them, making sure of their hidden secret, their deeper reality. Indeed it will not hurt any of us to put out of sight for a moment those vain and fantastic chimeras about Simon de Montfort and the gradual evolution of an Indian Parliament, with which certain politicians are fond of amusing us, and look things straight in the face. We must resolutely hold fast to the primary fact that right and effective action can only ensue upon a right understanding of ourselves in relation to our environment. For by reflection or instinct to get a clear insight into our position and by dexterity to make the most of it, that is the whole secret of politics, and that is just what we have failed to do. Let us see whether we cannot get some adequate sense of what our position really is: after that we shall be more in the way to hit closely the exact point at which we have failed.

Whatever theatrical attitude it may suit our vanity to adopt, we are not, as we pretend to be, the embodiment of the country's power, intelligence and worth: neither are we disinterested patriots striving in all purity and unselfishness towards an issue irreproachable before God. These are absurd pretensions which only detract from the moral height of our nature and can serve no great or serious end. We may gain a poor and evanescent advantage by this sort of hypocrisy, but we lose in candour and clearness of intellect, we lose in sincerity which is another name for strength. If we would only indulge less our bias towards moral ostentation and care more to train ourselves in a healthy robustness and simple candour, it would really advantage us not only in character, but in power; and it would have this good effect, that we should no longer throw dust into our own eyes; we should be better fitted to see ourselves as a critic of human society would see us, better able to get that clear insight into our own position, which is one condition of genuine success. No, we are not and cannot be a body of disinterested patriots. Life being, as science tells us, an affirmation of one's self, any aggregate mass of humanity must inevitably strive to emerge and affirm its own essence, must by the law of its own nature aspire towards life, aspire towards expansion, aspire towards the perfecting of its potential strength in the free air of political recognition and the full light of political predominance. That is just what has been happening in India. In us the Indian burgess or middle-class emerges from obscurity, perhaps from nothingness, and strives between a strong and unfeeling bureaucracy and an inert and imbecile proletariate to possess itself of rank, consideration and power. Against that striving it is futile to protest; one might as well quarrel with the law of gravitation; but though our striving must be inherently selfish, we can at least make some small effort to keep it as little selfish as possible, to make it, as far as may be, run in harness with the grand central interests of the nation at large. So much at least those of us who have a broad human affection for our country as distinct from ourselves, have a right to expect.

Thus emergent, thus ambitious, it was our business by whatever circumstances we were environed, to seize hold of those circumstances and make ourselves masters of them. The initial difficulties were great. A young and just emergent body without experience of government, without experience even of resistance to government, consequently without inherited tact, needs a teacher or a Messiah to initiate it in the art of politics. In England the burgess was taught almost insensibly by the nobility; in France he found a Messiah in the great Napoleon. We had no Napoleon, but we had a nobility. Europeans, when the spirit moves them to brag of their superiority over us Asiatics, are in the habit of saying that the West is progressive, the East stationary. That is a little too comprehensive. England and France are no doubt eminently progressive, but there are other countries of Europe which have not been equally forward. America is a democratic country which has not progressed: Russia is a despotic country which has not progressed: in Italy, Spain, Germany even progress has been factitious and slow. Nevertheless, though the vulgar wording of the boast may be loose and careless, yet it does express a very real superiority. The nations of the West are not all progressive, true; but they are all in that state which is the first condition of progress, a state, I mean, of fluidity, but of fluidity within limits, fluidity on a stable and normal basis. If no spirit of thought or emotion moves on the face of the waters, they become as foul and stagnant as in the most conservative parts of Asia, but a very slight wind will set them flowing. In most Asiatic countries, — I do not speak of India — one might almost imagine a hurricane blowing without any perceptible effect. Accordingly in Europe the transition of power from the noble to the burgess has been natural and inevitable. In India, just as naturally and inevitably, the administration remained with the noble. The old Hindu mechanism of society and government certainly did prescribe limits, certainly had a basis that was stable and normal; but it was too rigid, too stationary: it bound down the burgess and held him in his place by an iron weight of custom and religious ordinance. The regime that overthrew and succeeded it, the Mussulman regime, was mediaeval in character, fluid certainly, indeed in a perpetual state of flux, but never able to shake off the curse of instability, never in a position to prescribe limits, never stable, never normal. In such a society the qualities which make for survival, are valour, dexterity, initiative, swiftness, a robust immorality, qualities native to an aristocracy and to nations moulded by an aristocracy, native also to certain races, but even in those nations, even in those races, alien to the ordinary spirit of the burgess. His ponderous movements, his fumbling, his cold timidity, his decent scrupulousness have been fatal to his pretensions, at times inimical to his existence. Accordingly in India he has been submerged, scarcely existent. Great affairs and the high qualities they nourish have rested in the hand of the noble. We had then our nobility, our class trained and experienced in government and affairs: but to them unhappily we could not possibly look for guidance or even for co-operation. At the period of our emergence they were lethargic, effete, moribund, partially sunk in themselves; and even if any of the old energy had survived their fall, the world in which they moved was too new and strange, the transition to it had been too sudden and confounding to admit of their assimilating themselves so as to move with ease and success under novel conditions. The old nobility was quite as helpless from decay and dotage, as we from youthful inexperience. It was foreign energy that had pushed aside the old outworn machinery, it was an alien government that had by policy and self-will hurried us into a new and quite unfamiliar world. Would that government, politic and self-willed as it was, help us to an activity that might, nay, that must turn eventually to their personal detriment? Certainly they had the power but quite as certainly they had not the will. No doubt Anglo-Indians have very little right to speak of us as bitterly as they are in the habit of doing. By setting themselves to compel our social elements into a state of fluidity, and for that purpose not only putting in motion organic forces but bringing direct pressure to bear, by strictly enforcing system and order so as to lay down fixed limits and a normal basis, within which the fluid elements might settle into new forms, they in fact made themselves responsible for us and lost the right to blame anyone but themselves for what might ensue. They are in the unlucky position of responsibility for a state of things which they abhor and certainly had no intention of bringing about. The force which they had in mind to construct was a body of grave, loyal and conservative citizens, educated but without ideas, a body created by and having a stake in the present order, and therefore attached to its continuance, a power in the land certainly, but a power for order, for permanence, not a power for disturbance and unrest. In such an enterprise they were bound to fail and they failed egregiously. Sir Edwin Arnold when he found out that it was a grievous mistake to occidentalize us, forgot, no doubt, for the moment his role as the preacher and poetaster of self-abnegation, and spoke as an ordinary mundane being, the prophet of a worldly and selfish class: but if we accept his words in that sense, there can be no doubt that he was perfectly right. Anglo-Indians had never seriously brought themselves to believe that we are in blood and disposition a genuine Aryan community. They chose to regard our history as a jungle of meaningless facts, and could not understand that we were not malleable dead matter, but men with Occidental impulses in our blood, not virgin material to be wrought into any shape they preferred, but animate beings with a principle of life in us and certain, if subjected to the same causes, placed in the same light and air as European communities, to exhibit effects precisely similar and shape ourselves rather than be shaped. They proposed to construct a tank for their own service and comfort; they did not know that they were breaking up the fountains of the great deep. There, stated shortly, is the whole sense of their policy and conduct. The habit, set in vogue by rhetoricians of Macaulay's type, of making large professions of benevolence invested with an air of high grandiosity, has become so much a second nature with them, that I will not ask if they are sincere when they make them: but it is a rhetorical habit and nothing more. We who are not interested in keeping up the fiction, may just as well pierce through it to the fact. If they had seen things as they really are, they would have been wisely inactive: but they wanted a submissive and attached population, and they thought they had hit on the best way of getting what they wanted. In this confidence, if there was a great deal of delusion, there was also something of truth. But we must not be surprised or indignant if the Anglo-Indians, when they saw their confidence so rudely dashed and themselves confronted, not with submission and attachment but with a body eager, pushing, recriminative, pushing for recognition, pushing for power, covetous above all of that authority which they had come to regard as their private and peculiar possession,—there is no cause for surprise or resentment, if they cared little for the grain of success in their bushelful of failure, and regarded us with those feelings of alarm, distrust and hatred which Frankenstein experienced when having hoped to make a man, he saw a monster. Their conduct was too natural to be censured. I do not say that magnanimity would not have been better, more dignified, more politic. But who expects magnanimity from bureaucracy? The old nobility then were almost extinct and had moreover no power to help us: the bureaucracy had not the will. Yet it was from their ranks that the Messiah came.

New Lamps for Old – IX

The Civilian Order, which accounts itself, and no doubt justly, the informing spirit of Anglo-India, is credited in this country with quite an extraordinary degree of ability and merit, so much so that many believe it to have come down to us direct from heaven. And it is perhaps on this basis that in their dealings with Indians, — whom being moulded of a clay entirely terrestrial, one naturally supposes to be an inferior order of creatures, — they permit themselves a very liberal tinge of presumption and arrogance. Without disputing their celestial origin, one may perhaps be suffered to hint that eyes unaffected by the Indian sun, will be hard put to it to discover the pervading soul of magnificence and princeliness in the moral and intellectual style of these demigods. The fact is indeed all the other way. The general run of the Service suffers by being recruited through the medium of Competitive Examination: its tone is a little vulgar, its character a little raw, its achievement a little second-rate. Harsh critics have indeed said more than this; nay, has not one of themselves, has not Mr. Rudyard Kipling, a blameless Anglo-Indian, spoken, and spoken with distressing emphasis to the same effect? They have said that it moves in an atmosphere of unspeakable boorishness and mediocrity. That is certainly strong language and I would not for a moment be thought to endorse it; but there is, as I say, just a small sediment of truth at the bottom which may tend to excuse, if not to justify, this harsh and unfriendly criticism. And when one knows the stuff of which the Service is made, one ceases to wonder at it. A shallow schoolboy stepping from a cramming establishment to the command of high and difficult affairs, can hardly be expected to give us anything magnificent or princely. Still less can it be expected when the sons of small tradesmen are suddenly promoted from the counter to govern great provinces. Not that I have any fastidious prejudice against small tradesmen. I simply mean that the best education men of that class can get in England, does not adequately qualify a raw youth to rule over millions of his fellow-beings. Bad in training, void of culture, in instruction poor, it is in plain truth a sort of education that leaves him with all his original imperfections on his head, unmannerly, uncultivated, unintelligent. But in the Civil Service, with all its vices and shortcomings, one does find, as perhaps one does not find elsewhere, rare and exalted souls detached from the failings of their order, who exhibit the qualities of the race in a very striking way; not geniuses certainly, but swift and robust personalities, rhetorically powerful, direct, forcible, endowed to a surprising extent with the energy and self-confidence which are the heirlooms of their nation; men in short who give us England — and by England I mean the whole Anglo-Celtic race — on her really high and admirable side. Many of these are Irish or Caledonian; others are English gentlemen of good blood and position, trained at the great public schools, who still preserve that fine flavour of character, scholarship and power, which was once a common possession in England, but threatens under the present dispensation to become sparse or extinct. Others again are veterans of the old Anglo-Indian school, moulded in the larger traditions and sounder discipline of a strong and successful art who still keep some vestiges of the grand old Company days, still have something of a great and noble spirit, something of an adequate sense how high are the affairs they have to deal with and how serious the position they are privileged to hold. It was one of these, one endowed with all their good gifts, it was Mr. Allan Hume, a man acute and vigorous, happy in action and in speech persuasive, an ideal leader, who prompted, it may be by his own humane and lofty feelings, it may be by a more earthly desire of present and historic fame, took us by the hand and guided us with astonishing skill on our arduous venture towards preeminence and power. Mr. Hume, I have said, had all the qualities that go to make a fine leader in action. If only he had added to these the crowning gifts, reflectiveness, ideas, a comprehensive largeness of vision! Governing force, that splendid distinction inherited by England from her old Norman barons, governing force and the noble gifts that go along with it, are great things in their way, but they are not the whole of politics. Ideas, reflection, the political reason count for quite as much, are quite as essential. But on these, though individual Englishmen, men like Bolingbroke, Arnold, Burke, have had them preeminently, the race has always kept a very inadequate hold: and Mr. Hume is distinguished from his countrymen, not by the description of his merits, but by their degree. His original conception, I cannot help thinking, was narrow and impolitic.

He must have known, none better, what immense calamities may often be ripening under a petty and serene outside. He must have been aware, none better, when the fierce pain of hunger and oppression cuts to the bone what awful elemental passions may start to life in the mildest, the most docile proletariates. Yet he chose practically to ignore his knowledge; he conceived it as his business to remove a merely political inequality, and strove to uplift the burgess into a merely isolated predominance. That the burgess should strive towards predominance, nay, that for a brief while he should have it, is only just, only natural: the mischief of it was that in Mr. Hume's formation the proletariate remained for any practical purpose a piece off the board. Yet the proletariate is, as I have striven to show, the real key of the situation. Torpid he is and immobile; he is nothing of an actual force, but he is a very great potential force, and whoever succeeds in understanding and eliciting his strength, becomes by the very fact master of the future. Our situation is indeed complex and difficult beyond any that has ever been imagined by the human intellect; but if there is one thing clear in it, it is that the right and fruitful policy for the burgess, the only policy that has any chance of eventual success, is to base his cause upon an adroit management of the proletariate. He must awaken and organize the entire power of the country and thus multiply infinitely his volume and significance, the better to attain a supremacy as much social as political. Thus and thus only will he attain to his legitimate station, not an egoist class living for itself and in itself, but the crown of the nation and its head.

But Mr. Hume saw things in a different light, and let me confess out of hand, that once he had got a clear conception of his business, he proceeded in it with astonishing rapidity, sureness and tact. The clear-cut ease and strong simplicity of his movements were almost Roman; no crude tentatives, no infelicitous bungling, but always a happy trick of hitting the right nail on the head and that at the first blow. Roman too was his principle of advancing to a great object by solid and consecutive gradations. To begin by accustoming the burgess as well as his adversaries to his own corporate reality, to proceed by a definitive statement of his case to the Vice-regal Government, and for a final throw to make a vehement and powerful appeal to the English Parliament, an appeal that should be financed by the entire resources of middle-class India and carried through its stages with an iron heart and an obdurate resolution, expending moreover infinite energy, — so and so only could the dubious road Mr. Hume was treading, lead to anything but bathos and anticlimax. Nothing could be happier than the way in which the initial steps were made out. To be particularly obstreperous about his merits and his wrongs is certainly the likeliest way for a man to get a solid idea of his own importance and make an unpleasant impression on his ill-wishers. And for that purpose, for a blowing of trumpets in concert, for a self-assertion persistent, bold and clamorous, the Congress, however incapable in other directions may be pronounced perfectly competent; nay, it was the ideal thing. The second step was more difficult. He had to frame somehow a wording of our case at once bold and cautious, so as to hit Anglo-India in its weak place, yet properly sauced so as not to offend the palate, grown fastidious and epicurean, of the British House of Commons. Delicate as was the task he managed it with indubitable adroitness and a certain success. We may perhaps get at the inner sense of what happened, if we imagine Mr. Hume giving this sort of ultimatum to the Government. “The Indian burgess for whose education you have provided but whose patrimony you sequestrated and are woefully mismanaging, having now come to years of discretion, demands an account of your stewardship and the future management of his own estate. To compromise, if you are so good as to meet us half-way, we are not unready, but on any other hypothesis our appeal lies at once to the tribunal of the British Parliament. You will observe our process is perfectly constitutional." The sting of the scorpion lay as usual in its tail. Mr. Hume knew well the magic power of that word over Englishmen. With a German garrison it would have been naught; they would quickly have silenced with bayonets and prohibitive decrees any insolence of that sort. With French republicans it would have been naught; they would either have powerfully put it aside or frankly acceded to it. But the English are a nation of political jurists, and any claim franked by the epithet "constitutional" they are bound by the very law of their being to respect or at any rate appear to respect. The common run of Anglo-Indians, blinded as selfishness always does blind people, might in their tremulous rage and panic vomit charges of sedition and shout for open war; but a Government of political jurists pledged to an occidentalizing policy could not do so without making nonsense of its past. Moreover a Government vice-regal in constitution cannot easily forget that it may have to run the gauntlet of adverse comment from authorities at home. But if they could not put us down with the strong hand or meet our delegates with a *non possumus*, they were not therefore going to concede to us any solid fraction of our demands. It is the ineradicable vice of the English nature that it can never be clear or direct. It recoils from simplicity as from a snake. It must shuffle, it must turn in on itself, it must preserve cherished fictions intact. And supposing unpleasant results to be threatened, it escapes from them through a labyrinth of unworthy and transparent subterfuges. Our rulers are unfortunately average Englishmen, Englishmen, that is to say, who are not in the habit of rising superior to themselves; and if they were uncandid, if they were tortuously hostile we may be indignant, but we cannot be surprised. Mr. Hume at any rate saw quite clearly that nothing was to be expected, perhaps he had never seriously expected anything, from that quarter. He had already instituted with really admirable promptitude, the primary stages of his appeal to the British Parliament.

At the Turn of the Century

The last century of the second millennium after Christ has begun; of the twenty centuries it seems the most full of incalculable possibilities & to open the widest door on destiny. The mind of humanity feels it is conscious of a voice of a distant advancing Ocean and a sound as of the wings of a mighty archangel flying towards the world, but whether to empty the vials of the wrath of God or to declare a new gospel of peace upon earth and goodwill unto men, is as yet dark to our understanding.

Jottings from a notebook.

Old Moore for 1901

Opening months of year	political trouble & agitation for France
	Eastern question to be revived
Feb. & March	Indian affairs cause anxiety
May	Recrudescence of troubles in Ireland
June	Anarchism rampant & Spanish King in danger from insidious foes
July	Numerous & startling catastrophes
	Widespread disaster in the East
Autumn	Plague & Famine in India
	Holland assumes diplomatic & dangerous attitude
	Under ill advice its rulers may suffer reverse
November	Revival of sedition & turbulence in India & Egypt
December	insurrections, revolts & seditions the order of the day

Jottings from a notebook: These "predictions" are based on those found in the 1901 edition of Old Moore's Almanack, *published in London.*

The Congress Movement

With the opening of the twentieth century there is visible in India — visible at least to a trained political observer who is accustomed to divine the flux & change of inner forces from the slight signs that are the first faintly heard footsteps of the future & does not limit himself to the imposing & external features which are often merely the landmarks of the past — a remarkable & most vital change in the feeling and thought habit of our nation or at least of those classes in it whose thought & action most tells on the future. The lifestream of our national existence is taking a massive swerve towards a far other ocean than the direction of its flow hitherto had ever presaged. If I say that the Congress movement has spent itself, I shall be reminded of the Ahmedabad Congress, the success of the Industrial Exhibition and the newborn enthusiasm of Gujerat. Are these, it may be said, symptoms of decline & weakness? The declining forces of a bygone impetus touching a field which it had not yet affected, assume thereby some resemblance to their first youthful vigour but must not on that account be mistaken for the great working vitality of youth & manhood. The political activity of the nation gathering itself into the form of the Congress rose for some time with noise and a triumphant surging impetus until like a wave as it culminates breaking upon rocks, it dashed itself against the hard facts of human nature & the elementary conditions of successful political action which the Congress leaders had never grasped or had chosen to ignore; there it stopped and now there is throughout the country the languor, the weakness, the tendency to break up & discohere of the retiring wave. But behind & under cover of this failure & falling back there has been slowly & silently gathering another & vaster wave the first

An incomplete essay written sometime after the Ahmedabad Congress (December 1902).

voices of which are now being heard, the crests of whose foam are just mounting here & there into view. Soon it will push aside or assimilate its broken forerunner, occupy the sea and ride on surging and shouting to its predestined failure or triumph. By the succession of such waves shall our national life move forward to its great & inevitable goal.

For us of the new age, who are to mount on the rising slope of the wave even if we do not live to ride on its crest, the first necessity is to understand the career of our predecessor, the principle of its life and the source of its weakness. I have said that the Congress movement broke itself on the hard facts of human nature [*incomplete*]

Fragment for a Pamphlet

Having in an organisation of this kind a ready and efficient instrument of work, it remains to consider on what lines the energy of the nation may best expend itself. Strength and unity are our objective; ceaseless and self-reliant labour is our motive power; education, organisation and self-help are our road. It is moreover a triple strength we shall have to seek, strength mental, strength material and strength moral. Now it is not the object of this pamphlet to lay down rigidly or in detail the lines on which our movement ought to proceed; that is a question beyond the scope of any single intellect; it is for the united thought of the nation to decide. But the main principles and divergent branches which national energy is bound to take if it would do its work thoroughly may well be very briefly specified. To improve the mental force of the race will be our first object; and for this we need that we ourselves should think, more deeply, as well as that we should [*incomplete*]

An undated fragment from a notebook.

Unity

An open letter to those
who despair of their Country

To the sons of our mother Bharat who disclaim their sonhood, to the children of languor and selfishness, to the wooers of safety & ease, to the fathers of despair and death — greeting.

To those who impugning the holiness of their Mother refuse to lift her out of danger lest they defile their own spotless hands, to those who call on her to purify herself before they will save her from the imminent & already descending sword of Death, — greeting.

Lastly to those who love & perhaps have striven for her but having now grown themselves faint and hopeless bid others to despair and cease, — to them also greeting.

Brothers, — for whether unwise friends or selfish enemies of my Mother, you are still her children, — there is a common voice among you spreading dismay and weakness in the hearts of the people; for you say to each other and to all who would speak to you of their country, “Let us leave these things and look to our daily bread; this nation must perish but let us at least and our children try to live while live we can. We are fallen and depraved and our sins grow upon us day by day; we suffer & are oppressed and oppression increases with every setting of the sun; we are weak and languid and our weakness grows weaker and our languor more languid every time the sun rises in the east. We are sick and broken; we are idle and cowardly; we perish every year from famine and plague; disease decimates us, with every decade poverty annihilates family after family; where there

An incomplete essay from the period before the partition of Bengal.

were a hundred in one house, there are now ten; where there was once a flourishing village, the leopard and the jackal will soon inhabit. God is adverse to us and ourselves our worst enemies; we are decaying from within and smitten from without. The sword has been taken out of our hands and the bread is being taken out of our mouths. Worst of all we are disunited beyond hope of union and without union we must ere long perish. It may be five decades or it may be ten, but very soon this great and ancient nation will have perished from the face of the earth and the negro or the Malay will inherit the homes of our fathers & till the fields to glut the pockets & serve the pleasure of the Englishman or the Russian. Meanwhile it is well that the Congress should meet once a year & deceive the country with an appearance of life; that there should be posts for the children of the soil with enough salary to keep a few from starving, that a soulless education should suck the vigour & sweetness out of body & heart & brain of our children while flattering them with the vain lie that they are educated & enlightened; for so shall the nation die peacefully of a sort of euthanasia lapped in lies & comforted with delusions and not violently & in a whirlwind of horror and a great darkness of fear & suffering."

With such Siren song do you slay the hearts of those who have still force and courage to strive against Fate and would rescue our Mother out of the hands of destruction. Yet I would willingly believe that matricides though you are, it is in ignorance. Come therefore, let us reason calmly together.

Is it indeed [*incomplete*]

The Proposed Reconstruction of Bengal

Partition or Annihilation?

In the excitement & clamour that has followed the revolutionary proposal of Lord Curzon's Government to break Bengal into pieces, there is some danger of the new question being treated only in its superficial aspects and the grave & startling national peril for which it is the preparation being either entirely missed or put out of sight. On a perusal of the telegrams which pour in from Eastern Bengal one is struck with the fact that they mainly deal with certain obvious & present results of the measure, not one of which is really vital. The contention repeatedly harped on that Assam is entirely different to us in race, language, manners etc. is in the first place not altogether true, and even if true, is very bad political strategy. In these days when the whole tendency of a reactionary Government is to emphasize old points of division & create new ones, it should plainly be the policy of the national movement to ignore points of division and to emphasize old and create new points of contact and union. The Assamese possess the same racial substratum as ourselves though the higher strata may be less profoundly Aryanised and their language is a branch of Bengali which but for an artificial diversion would have merged into the main stream of Bengali speech. Why then should we affront our brothers in Assam and play the game of our opponents by declaring them outcast from our sympathies? The loss by Eastern Bengal of a seat on the Legislative Council is again the loss of a delusion and does not really concern its true national welfare. Even separation from the Calcutta High Court if it should come about, means very little now that the

An incomplete essay written during an early stage of the agitation against the partition of Bengal, probably in 1904.

High Court has definitely ceased to protect the liberties of the people and become an informal department of the Government. The dislocation of trade caused by its diversion from Calcutta to Chittagong might be a calamity of the first magnitude to Calcutta but its evil effects on Eastern Bengal would, the enemy might well argue, be of a very temporary character. The transfer of advanced provinces to a backward Government is, no doubt, in itself a vital objection to the measure but can be at once met by elevating the new province to the dignity of a Lieutenant-Governorship with a Legislative Council and a Chief Court. Indeed by this very simple though costly contrivance the Government can meet every practical objection of a political nature that has been urged against their proposal. There are signs which seem to indicate that this is the expedient to which Government will eventually resort and under the cover of it affect an even more extended amputation than it was at first convenient to announce; for Rajshahi as well as Faridpur & Backergunge,, are it appears also to be cut away from us. There would remain the violation of Bengali sentiment and the social disturbance and mortal inconvenience to innumerable individuals which must inevitably accompany such a disruption of old ties & interests and severance from the grand centre of Bengali life. But our sentiments the Government can very well afford to ignore and the disturbance and inconvenience they may politely regret as deplorable incidents indeed but after all minor & temporary compared with the great and permanent administrative necessities to be satisfied. Will then the people of Eastern Bengal finally, seeing the Government determined, pocket the bribe of a separate Lieutenant-Governorship, a Legislative Council and High Court and accept this violent revolution in our national life? Or will Western Bengal submit to lose Eastern Bengal on such terms? If not, then to nerve them for the struggle their refusal will involve they must rely on something deeper than sentiment, something more potent than social & personal interests, they must have the clear & indelible consciousness of the truth that this measure is no mere administrative proposal but a blow straight at the heart of the nation. The failure to voice clearly this, the true & vital side of the question can arise only from want of moral courage or from that fatal inability to pass beyond superficialities & details & understand in their fulness deep truths & grand issues in politics, which has made our political life for the last fifty years so miserably barren and ineffective. That it springs largely if not altogether from the latter is evidenced by the amazing apathy which allows Western Bengal to sit with folded hands and allow Eastern Bengal to struggle alone and unaided. Eastern Bengal is menaced with absorption into a backward province and therefore struggles; Western Bengal is menaced with no such calamity and can therefore sit lolling on its pillows, hookah-pipe in hand, waiting to see what happens; this apparently is how the question is envisaged by a race which considers itself the most intelligent and quick witted in the world. That it is something far other than this, that the danger involved is far more urgent and appalling, is what I shall try to point out in this article.

Unfortunately, to do this is impossible without treading on Lord Curzon's corns and indeed on the tenderest of all the crop. We have recently been permitted to know that our great Viceroy particularly objects to the imputation of motives to his Government — and not unnaturally; for Lord Curzon is a vain man loving praise & sensitive to dislike & censure; more than that, he is a statesman of unusual genius who is following a subtle and daring policy on which immense issues hang and it is naturally disturbing him to find that there are wits in India as subtle as his own which can perceive something at least of the goal at which he is aiming. But in this particular instance he has only himself & Mr. Risley to thank, if his motives have been discovered — or let us say, misinterpreted. The extraordinary farrago of discursive ineptitudes which has been put forward [*incomplete*]

On the Bengali and the Mahratta

The relation of the Bengalis to other races of India
  Bengali & Mahratta
    creation & concentration
    traditions. weight of
    intellectual basis. Rajput. Islam. Bihar.
    resulting unerringness of tendency as illustrated by vernacular literature, preparatory light for religious & social reconstruction. tendency towards science & industry — failure in education & physical training.
  In England or India?
  Necessity of provincial before national development
  Literary reconstruction. Academy, its duties.
  Religious reconstruction
  Social reconstruction
  Educational reconstruction
  Science & Industry
  Political Reconstruction — the masses
  Elements in Bengal, Prince, pleader & peasant
  Possible expansion of Bengal

In England or India?
Prior necessity of Provincial Union... let the Bengalis & Mahrattas organize themselves & spread their influence over the rest of India.
the genius of the Bengalis is at present original, creative, moving towards development & acquisition, the genius of the Mahrattas critical, conservative, standing in the concentration of what it has already developed & acquired.
Mahratta activity has been the most brilliant passage in our

Jottings on a loose sheet of paper; date uncertain.

history since the fall of Prithvi Raj & we may well look back to it with pride & admiration but it is to be feared that it did not proceed upon a sufficiently intellectual basis. Had the movement of thought & intelligence expressed in the writings of Ramdas, Tukaram, Moropunt been allowed first to fulfil itself & the Mahratta development refrained from transferring itself too hastily into the sphere of political action, the result might have been more sure, more lasting.

The Bengali is not weighted in the race by traditions inconsistent with present necessities.

That we should all act together, is a fine thing, but the question still remains what will that action come to? When all the limbs are themselves too weak & incoherent to effect anything, it is cold comfort to be told that they are learning to cohere with one another. Let them cohere among themselves first.

In a struggle between a strong Gov^{t} & an organized nation, when that struggle is put to the arbitration of armed force, all the chances are with the Gov^{t}, & in nine cases out of ten it is morally sure of victory, but where the struggle is decided by the clash of social & intellectual agencies & under conditions of law, the relations are exactly reversed, & indeed they are more than reversed.

The India of today may be presented under the image of the Greek biga [*incomplete*]

Bhawani Mandir

This pamphlet, unsigned but certainly by Sri Aurobindo, was issued in 1905.

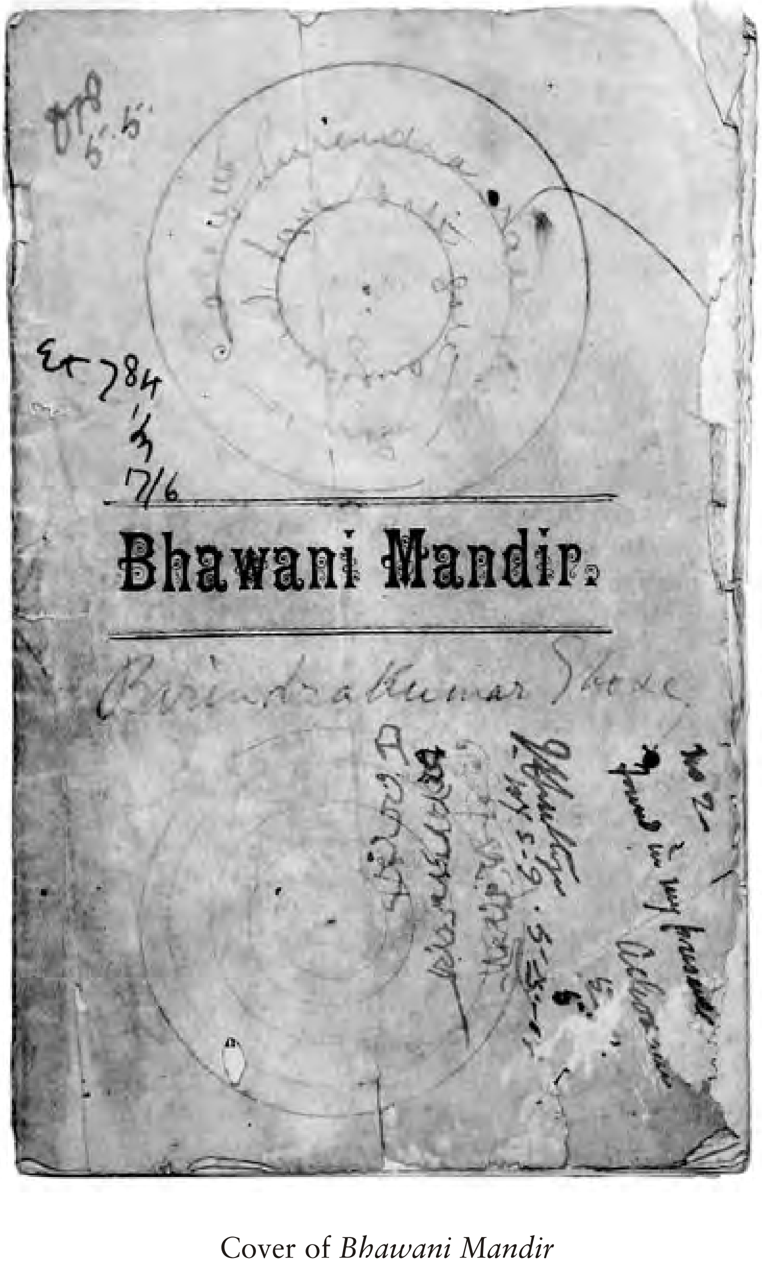

Ex 784

7/6

Bhawani Mandir.

Barindrakumar Ghose

No 2 found in my presence

Cover of *Bhawani Mandir*

This copy of the pamphlet was put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Case (1908–09). Note the signature of Barindrakumar Ghose (Sri Aurobindo's brother and the chief accused in the case), police and court indentification numbers, and other markings.

OM
Namas Chandikayai.

A temple is to be erected and consecrated to Bhawani, the mother, among the hills. To all the children of the mother, the call is sent forth to help in the sacred work.

WHO IS BHAWANI?

Who is Bhawani, the mother, and why should we erect a temple to Her?

BHAWANI IS THE INFINITE ENERGY.

In the unending revolutions of the world, as the wheel of the Eternal turns mightily in its courses, the Infinite Energy which streams forth from the Eternal and sets the wheel to work, looms up in the vision of man in various aspects and infinite forms. Each aspect creates and marks an age. Sometimes She is Love, sometimes She is Knowledge, sometimes She is Renunciation, sometimes She is Pity. This Infinite Energy is Bhawani. She also is Durga, She is Kali, She is Radha the Beloved, She is Lakshmi. She is our Mother and the Creatress of us all.

BHAWANI IS SHAKTI.

In the present age, the Mother is manifested as the mother of Strength. She is pure Shakti.

THE WHOLE WORLD IS GROWING FULL OF THE MOTHER AS SHAKTI.

Let us raise our eyes and cast them upon the world around us. Wherever we turn our gaze, huge masses of strength rise before our vision, tremendous, swift and inexorable forces, gigantic figures of energy, terrible sweeping columns of force. All is growing large and strong. The Shakti of war, the Shakti of wealth, the Shakti of Science are tenfold more mighty and colossal, a hundredfold more fierce, rapid and busy in their activity, a thousandfold more prolific in resources, weapons and instruments than ever before in recorded history. Everywhere the Mother is at work; from Her mighty and shaping hands enormous forms of Rakshasas, Asuras, Devas are leaping forth into the arena of the world. We have seen the slow but mighty rise of great empires in the West, we have seen the swift, irresistible and impetuous bounding into life of Japan. Some are Mleccha Shaktis clouded in their strength, black or blood-crimson with *tamas* or *rajas*, others are Arya Shaktis, bathed in a pure flame of renunciation and utter self-sacrifice: but all are the Mother in Her new phase, remoulding, creating. She is pouring Her spirit into the old; She is whirling into life the new.

WE IN INDIA FAIL IN ALL THINGS FOR WANT OF SHAKTI.

But in India the breath moves slowly, the afflatus is long in coming. India, the ancient mother, is indeed striving to be reborn, striving with agony and tears, but she strives in vain. What ails her, she, who is after all so vast and might be so strong? There is surely some enormous defect, something vital is wanting in us; nor is it difficult to lay our finger on the spot. We have all things else, but we are empty of strength, void of energy. We have abandoned Shakti and are therefore abandoned by Shakti. The Mother is not in our hearts, in our brains, in our arms.

The wish to be reborn we have in abundance, there is no deficiency there. How many attempts have been made, how many movements have been begun, in religion, in society, in politics! But the same fate has overtaken or is preparing to overtake them all. They flourish for a moment, then the impulse wanes, the fire dies out, and if they endure, it is only as empty shells, forms from which the Brahma has gone or in which it lies overpowered with *tamas* and inert. Our beginnings are mighty, but they have neither sequel nor fruit.

Now we are beginning in another direction; we have started a great industrial movement which is to enrich and regenerate an impoverished land. Untaught by experience, we do not perceive that this movement must go the way of all the others, unless we first seek the one essential thing, unless we acquire strength.

OUR KNOWLEDGE IS A DEAD THING FOR WANT OF SHAKTI.

Is it knowledge that is wanting? We Indians born and bred in a country where Jnana has been stored and accumulated since the race began, bear about in us the inherited gains of many thousands of years. Great giants of knowledge rise among us even today to add to the store. Our capacity has not shrunk, the edge of our intellect has not been dulled or blunted, its receptivity and flexibility are as varied as of old. But it is a dead knowledge, a burden under which we are bowed, a poison which is corroding us rather than as it should be a staff to support our feet, and a weapon in our hands; for this is the nature of all great things that when they are not used or are ill used, they turn upon the bearer and destroy him.

Our knowledge then, weighed down with a heavy load of *tamas*, lies under the curse of impotence and inertia. We choose to fancy indeed, now-a-days, that if we acquire Science, all will be well. Let us first ask ourselves what we have done with the knowledge we already possess, or what have those, who have already acquired Science, been able to do for India. Imitative and incapable of initiative, we have striven to copy the methods of England, and we had not the strength: we would now copy the methods of the Japanese, a still more energetic people; are we likely to succeed any better? The mighty force of knowledge which European Science bestows is a weapon for the hands of a giant, it is the mace of Bheemsen: what can a weakling do with it but crush himself in the attempt to wield it?

OUR BHAKTI CANNOT LIVE AND WORK FOR WANT OF SHAKTI.

Is it love, enthusiasm, Bhakti that is wanting? These are ingrained in the Indian nature, but in the absence of Shakti we cannot concentrate, we cannot direct, we cannot even preserve it. Bhakti is the leaping flame, Shakti is the fuel. If the fuel is scanty how long can the fire endure?

When the strong nature, enlightened by knowledge, disciplined and given a giant's strength by Karma, lifts itself up in love and adoration to God, that is the Bhakti which endures and keeps the soul for ever united with the Divine. But the weak nature is too feeble to bear the impetus of so mighty a thing as perfect Bhakti; he is lifted up for a moment, then the flame soars up to Heaven, leaving him behind exhausted and even weaker than before. Every movement of any kind of which enthusiasm and adoration are the life, must fail and soon burn itself out so long as the human material from which it proceeds is frail and light in substance.

INDIA THEREFORE NEEDS SHAKTI ALONE.

The deeper we look, the more we shall be convinced that the one thing wanting, which we must strive to acquire before all others, is strength — strength physical, strength mental, strength moral, but above all strength spiritual which is the one inexhaustible and imperishable source of all the others. If we have strength, everything else will be added to us easily and naturally. In the absence of strength we are like men in a dream who have hands but cannot seize or strike, who have feet but cannot run.

INDIA, GROWN OLD AND DECREPIT IN WILL, HAS TO BE REBORN.

Whenever we strive to do anything, after the first rush of enthusiasm is spent, a paralysing helplessness seizes upon us. We often see in the cases of old men full of years and experience that the very excess of knowledge seems to have frozen their powers of action and their powers of will. When a great feeling or a great need overtakes them and it is necessary to carry out its promptings in action, they hesitate, ponder, discuss, make tentative efforts and abandon them or wait for the safest and easiest way to suggest itself, instead of taking the most direct; thus the time when it was possible and necessary to act passes away. Our race has grown just such an old man with stores of knowledge, with ability to feel and desire, but paralysed by simple sluggishness, senile timidity, senile feebleness. If India is to survive, she must be made young again. Rushing and billowing streams of energy must be poured into her; her soul must become, as it was in the old times, like the surges, vast, puissant, calm or turbulent at will, an ocean of action or of force.

INDIA CAN BE REBORN.

Many of us utterly overcome by *tamas*, the dark and heavy demon of inertia, are saying now-a-days that it is impossible; that India is decayed, bloodless and lifeless, too weak ever to recover; that our race is doomed to extinction. It is a foolish and idle saying. No man or nation need be weak unless *he* chooses, no man or nation need perish unless *he* deliberately chooses extinction.

WHAT IS A NATION? THE SHAKTI OF ITS MILLIONS.

For what is a nation? What is our mother-country? It is not a piece of earth, nor a figure of speech, nor a fiction of the mind. It is a mighty Shakti, composed of the Shaktis of all the millions of units that make up the nation, just as Bhawani Mahisha-Mardini sprang into being from the Shaktis of all the millions of gods assembled in one mass of force and welded into unity. The Shakti we call India, Bhawani Bharati, is the living unity of the Shaktis of three hundred millions of people; but she is inactive, imprisoned in the magic circle of *tamas*, the self-indulgent inertia and ignorance of her sons. To get rid of *tamas* we have but to wake the Brahma within.

IT IS OUR OWN CHOICE WHETHER WE CREATE A NATION OR PERISH.

What is it that so many thousands of holy men, Sadhus and Sannyasis, have preached to us silently by their lives? What was the message that radiated from the personality of Bhagawan Ramkrishna Paramhansa? What was it that formed the kernel of the eloquence with which the lionlike heart of Vivekananda sought to shake the world? It is this that in every one of these three hundred millions of men from the Raja on his throne to the coolie at his labour, from the Brahmin absorbed in his *sandhya* to the Pariah walking shunned of men, GOD LIVETH. We are all gods and creators, because the energy of God is within us and all life is creation; not only the making of new forms is creation, but preservation is creation, destruction itself is creation. It rests with us what we shall create; for we are not, unless we choose, puppets dominated by Fate and Maya: we are facets and manifestations of Almighty Power.

INDIA MUST BE REBORN, BECAUSE HER REBIRTH IS DEMANDED BY THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD.

India cannot perish, our race cannot become extinct, because among all the divisions of mankind it is to India that is reserved the highest and the most splendid destiny, the most essential to the future of the human race. It is *she* who must send forth from herself the future religion of the entire world, the Eternal religion which is to harmonise all religion, science and philosophies and make mankind one soul. In the sphere of morality, likewise, it is her mission to purge barbarism (mlecchahood) out of humanity and to *aryanise* the world. In order to do this, she must first re-aryanise herself.

It was to initiate this great work, the greatest and most wonderful work ever given to a race, that Bhagawan Ramkrishna came and Vivekananda preached. If the work does not progress as it once promised to do, it is because we have once again allowed the terrible cloud of *tamas* to settle down on our souls

— fear, doubt, hesitation, sluggishness. We have taken, some of us, the Bhakti which poured forth from the one and the Jnana given us by the other, but from the lack of Shakti, from the lack of Karma, we have not been able to make our Bhakti a living thing. May we yet remember that it was Kali, who is Bhawani mother of strength, whom Ramkrishna worshipped and with whom he became one.

But the destiny of India will not wait on the *falterings* and failings of individuals; the mother demands that men shall arise to institute her worship and make it universal.

TO GET STRENGTH WE MUST ADORE THE MOTHER OF STRENGTH.

Strength then and again strength and yet more strength is the need of our race. But if it is strength we desire, how shall we gain it if we do not adore the Mother of strength? She demands worship not for Her own sake, but in order that She may help us and give Herself to us. This is no fantastic idea, no superstition but the ordinary law of the universe. The gods cannot, if they would, give themselves unasked. Even the Eternal comes not unaware upon man. Every devotee knows by experience that we must turn to Him and desire and adore Him before the Divine Spirit pours in its ineffable beauty and ecstasy upon the soul. What is true of the Eternal, is true also of Her who goes forth from Him.

RELIGION THE TRUE PATH.

Those who, possessed with western ideas, look askance at any return to the old sources of energy may well consider a few fundamental facts.

THE EXAMPLE OF JAPAN.

I. There is no instance in history of a more marvellous and sudden up-surging of strength in a nation than modern Japan. All sorts of theories had been started to account for the uprising, but now intellectual Japanese are telling us what were the fountains of that mighty awakening, the sources of that inexhaustible strength. They were drawn from religion. It was the Vedantic teachings of Oyomei and the recovery of *Shintoism* with its worship of the national Shakti of Japan in the image and person of the Mikado that enabled the little island empire to wield the stupendous weapons of western knowledge and science as lightly and invincibly as Arjun wielded the Gandiv.

INDIA'S GREATER NEED OF SPIRITUAL REGENERATION.

II. India's need of drawing from the fountains of religion is far greater than was ever Japan's; for the Japanese had only to revitalise and perfect a strength that already existed. We have to create strength where it did not exist before; we have to change our natures, and become new men with new hearts, to be born again. There is no scientific process, no machinery for that. Strength can only be created by drawing it from the internal and inexhaustible reservoirs of the Spirit, from that Adya-Shakti of the Eternal which is the fountain of all new existence. To be born again means nothing but to revive the Brahma within us, and that is a spiritual process, — no effort of the body or the intellect can compass it.

RELIGION THE PATH NATURAL TO THE NATIONAL MIND.

III. All great awakenings in India, all her periods of mightiest and most varied vigour have drawn their vitality from the fountainheads of some deep religious awakening. Wherever the religious awakening has been complete and grand, the national energy it has created has been gigantic and puissant; wherever the religious movement has been narrow or incomplete, the national movement has been broken, imperfect or temporary. The persistence of this phenomenon is proof that it is ingrained in the temperament of the race. If you try other and foreign methods, we shall either gain our end with tedious slowness, painfully and imperfectly, or we shall not attain it at all. Why abandon the plain way which God and the Mother have marked out for you to choose faint and devious paths of your own treading?

THE SPIRIT WITHIN IS THE TRUE SOURCE OF STRENGTH.

IV. The Brahma within, the one and indivisible ocean of spiritual force is that from which all life material and mental is drawn. This is beginning to be as much recognised by leading western thinkers as it was from the old days by the East. If it be so, then spiritual energy is the source of all other strength. *There* are the fathomless fountain-heads, the deep and inexhaustible sources. The shallow surface springs are easier to reach, but they soon run dry. Why not then go deep instead of scratching the surface? The result will repay the labour.

THREE THINGS NEEDFUL.

We need three things answering to three fundamental laws.

I. BHAKTI — THE TEMPLE OF THE MOTHER.

We cannot get strength unless we adore the Mother of strength.

We will therefore build a temple to the white Bhawani, the mother of strength, the *Mother* of *India*; and we will build it in a place far from the contamination of modern cities and as yet little trodden by man, in a high and pure air steeped in calm and energy. This temple will be the centre from which Her worship is to flow over the whole country; for there worshipped among the hills, She will pass like fire into the brains and hearts of Her worshippers. This also is what the Mother has commanded.

II. KARMA — A NEW ORDER OF BRAHMACHARINS.

Adoration will be dead and ineffective unless it is transmuted into Karma.

We will therefore have a *math* with a new Order of Karma-Yogins attached to the temple, men who have renounced all in order to work for the Mother. Some may, if they choose, be complete Sannyasins, most will be Brahmacharins who will return to the *grihasthasram* when their allotted work is finished; but all must accept renunciation.

WHY? FOR TWO REASONS: —

(1) Because it is only in proportion as we put from us the pre-occupation of bodily desires and interests, the sensual gratifications, lusts, longings, indolences of the material world, that we can return to the ocean of spiritual force within us.

(2) Because for the development of Shakti, entire concentration is necessary; the mind must be devoted entirely to its aim as a spear is hurled to its mark; if other cares and longings distract the mind, the spear will be carried out from its straight course and miss the target. We need a nucleus of men in whom the Shakti is developed to its uttermost extent, in whom it fills every corner of the personality and overflows to fertilise the earth. These, having the fire of Bhawani in their hearts and brains, will go forth and carry the flame to every nook and cranny of our land.

III. JNANA — THE GREAT MESSAGE.

Bhakti and Karma cannot be perfect and enduring unless they are based upon Jnana.

The Brahmacharins of the Order will therefore be taught to fill their souls with knowledge and base their work upon it as upon a rock. What shall be the basis of their knowledge? What but the great *so-aham*, the mighty formula of the Vedanta, the ancient gospel which has yet to reach the heart of the nation, the knowledge which when vivified by Karma and Bhakti delivers man out of all fear and all weakness.

स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ।

THE MESSAGE OF THE MOTHER.

When, therefore, you ask who is Bhawani the mother, She herself answers you, “I am the Infinite Energy which streams forth from the Eternal in the world and Eternal in yourselves. I am the Mother of the Universe, the Mother of the Worlds, and for you who are children of the Sacred land, *aryabhumi*, made of her clay and reared by her sun and winds, I am Bhawani Bharati, Mother of India.”

Then if you ask why we should erect a temple to Bhawani the mother, hear Her answer, “Because I have commanded it and because by making a centre for the future religion, you will be furthering the immediate will of the Eternal and storing up merit which will make you strong in this life and great in another. You will be helping to create a nation, to consolidate an age, to *aryanise* a world. And that nation is your own, that age is the age of yourselves and your children, that world is no fragment of land bounded by seas and hills, but the whole earth with her teeming millions.”

Come then, hearken to the call of the Mother. She is already in our hearts waiting to manifest Herself, waiting to be worshipped, — inactive because the God in us is concealed by *tamas*, troubled by Her inactivity, sorrowful because Her children will not call on Her to help them. You who feel Her stirring within you, fling off the black veil of self, break down the imprisoning walls of indolence, help Her each as you feel impelled, with your bodies or with your intellect or with your speech or with your wealth or with your prayers and worship, each man according to his capacity. Draw not back, for against those who were called and heard Her not, She may well be wroth in the day of Her coming; but to those who help Her advent even a little, how radiant with beauty and kindness will be the face of their Mother!

APPENDIX.

The work and rules of the new Order of Sannyasis will be somewhat as follows

GENERAL RULES.

1. All who undertake the life of Brahmacharya for the Mother, will have to vow themselves to Her service for *four* years, after which they will be free to continue the work or return to family life.

2. All money received by them in the Mother's name will go to the Mother's Service. For themselves they will be allowed to receive shelter and their meals, when necessary, and nothing more.

3. Whatever they may earn for themselves, e.g. by the publication of books etc., they must give at least half of it to the service of the Mother.

4. They will observe entire obedience to the Head of the Order and his one or two assistants in all things connected with the work or with their religious life.

5. They will observe strictly the discipline and rules of *achar* and purity, bodily and mental, prescribed by the Heads of the Order.

6. They will be given periods for rest or for religious improvement during which they will stop at the *math*, but the greater part of the year they will spend in work outside. This rule will apply to all except the few necessary for the service of the Temple and those required for the central direction of the work.

7. There will be no gradations of rank among the workers and none must seek for distinction or mere personal fame, but practise strength and self-effacement.

II. WORK FOR THE PEOPLE.

8. Their chief work will be that of mass instruction and help to the poor and ignorant.

9. This they will strive to effect in various ways —

    1. Lectures and demonstrations suited to an uneducated intelligence.
    2. Classes and nightly schools.
    3. Religious teachings.
    4. Nursing the sick.
    5. Conducting works of charity.
    6. Whatever other good work their hands may find to do and the Order approves.

III. WORKS FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS.

10. They will undertake, according as they may be directed, various works of public utility in the big towns and elsewhere connected especially with the education and religious life and instruction of the middle classes, as well as with other public needs.

IV. WORK WITH THE WEALTHY CLASSES.

11. They will approach the zamindars, landholders and rich men generally, and endeavour —

    1. To promote sympathy between the zamindars and the peasants and heal all discords.
    2. To create the link of a single and living religious spirit and a common passion for one great ideal between all classes.
    3. To turn the minds of rich men to works of public beneficence and charity to those in their neighbourhood independent of the hope of reward and official distinction.

V. GENERAL WORK FOR THE COUNTRY.

12. As soon as funds permit, some will be sent to foreign

countries to study lucrative arts and manufactures.

13. They will be as Sannyasis during their period of study, never losing hold of their habits of purity and self-abnegation.

14. On their return they will establish with the aid of the Order, factories and workshops, still living the life of Sannyasis and devoting all their profits to the sending of more and more such students to foreign countries.

15. Others will be sent to travel through various countries on foot, inspiring by their lives, behaviour and conversation, sympathy and love for the Indian people in the European nations and preparing the way for their acceptance of Aryan ideals.

After the erection and consecration of the Temple, the development of the work of the Order will be pushed on as rapidly as possible or as the support and sympathy of the public allows. With the blessing of the Mother this will not fail us.

Ethics East and West

[..... if the] natural disparity which is so confidently asserted by Europeans and reasserted in echo by not a few Anglicised or revolted Hindus, be a truth and not a fiction of racial pride, the national movement in India becomes a blunder and a solecism. For this movement proceeds on two assertions which the European position directly traverses, the natural equality of the Asiatic to the European, which justifies us in aspiring to liberty and the control of our own destinies and the immense superiority of our own religion, ethics and social ideals to the Western. In traffic with the West we seek only to import the scientific knowledge, the mechanical apparatus of war and communication and the method of efficient organisation in Government which have made it so eminently formidable, but we wish to bar out, if may be, all that disease of the intellect & social constitution born of individualistic materialism which makes it so eminently miserable. If we are right, our spiritual and moral strength without which material greatness cannot endure lies in the use and development of our own religion and ideals. Otherwise, our whole aspiration is an unhealthy dream and there is no reason in Nature why we should not remain for ever the subjects and servants of European races with an occasional change of masters as our sole relief in the long monotony of servitude. It is therefore essential for us to know the truth. In the following pages I have sought to provide the materials for a correct judgment, aiming chiefly at a right presentation of the spirit and truth of our ancient philosophy, religion and ethics, which have hitherto been presented to the world by European expositors who show at every step their imperfect and often

A fragment from the opening of a proposed work of political philosophy.

utterly erroneous understanding of what they pretend to explain. It is necessary to understand aright before we praise or condemn; and the ethical aspect of Hinduism is like everything Hindu so much a part and a thing of itself that it is only those of whose blood & bone it has become a part who can be trusted to put it before others from a right perspective and in the true proportions. Only then can the issue between the East and West be justly decided.

CHAPTER I
THE ETHICAL BASIS IN EUROPE

Morality is like all else in this world of perceptions, phenomenal in its nature; it is neither eternal nor unchanging, but depends on two things, that in which it lives & moves and the conditions that surround & work upon its receptacle. It is true that certain virtues, purity, humanity, truth, self-sacrifice are at present vaguely recognized as moral standards by all civilized peoples; but they were not recognized at all times & places in the past and there is no guarantee that they will be recognized at all times and places in the future. Moreover the definite meaning and extent of these names and the limits within which men are willing to honour them in practical life, varies immensely in different countries. The standard of morality is determined not by the profession of the community, but by the actual though unwritten code of actions which the community as a whole strives to practise and which, even if it does not succeed in attaining, it honestly approves & honours in those who do attain it. Indeed the extraordinary variations & flat contradiction of the ethical standard as determined by place and time, has become so much a commonplace that it is hardly worth while to dwell upon it. The no less extraordinary variations and flat contradictions of the ethical standard as practised in the same place and the same time, have not received so much attention, and yet they are of even greater psychological value.

Determined by time and place. All things move indeed in space and time and are to a certain extent conditioned by them;

but they are not determined by these mental abstractions. The determining forces are always two, the adhara or receptacle or field and the conditions which act on the receptacle. The field of morality is triple, the individual, the collective mind of the community, race, nation or body of nations that profess it and the collective mind of all humanity, the latter attaining especial importance in these days when all parts of the world are in some sort of touch with each other. The conditions which act on it are the various physical and other influences which have acted or are now acting on the individual and collective mind and most of all its spiritual history.

Resolution at a Swadeshi Meeting

[*The first resolution of the meeting, proposed by Nagar Seth Haribhakti, was: "Kaka Joshi started the Swadeshi movement, but due to several reasons it became lifeless. Now however it is more alive than ever as a result of the life-giving medicine the Bengali physicians have given it."*]

The second resolution was proposed by Principal Aravind Ghose. It ran: "Kaka Joshi's efforts proved unsuccessful because the conditions were not favourable at that time. The present wave of support for the movement is very strong, and we should make comprehensive efforts to prevent the wave from receding. We must ensure that the movement is sustained." Such was the content of the second resolution put forward by Principal Ghose in his fluent English. The resolution was seconded by Seth Chimanlal Samal Becharwala in Gujarati, and by Rao Bahadur Sarangapani.

A resolution proposed at a Swadeshi meeting in Baroda on 24 September 1905. The text was published in Marathi in the Kesari *(Poona) on 3 October 1905. This English text has been retranslated from the Marathi.*

A Sample-Room for Swadeshi Articles

Objects

1. I propose that a permanent sample-room should be maintained by the Baroda Industrial Association in its own offices, fulfilling the following purposes

(1) an ocular demonstration to the public and the merchants of the number and kind of goods they can have from their own country;

(2) a standing advertisement of Swadeshi articles procurable in the local market;

(3) a register of information available to all interested in the industrial development of the country.

Means of providing the Sample-room at a minimum expense

2. The sample-room should be begun on a modest scale and gradually enlarged in its scope. The Sub-Committee should see that no means of saving expense should be spared consistently with the usefulness of the institution.

3. The saving of expense may be effected in various ways.

In the first place the Committee should at first confine itself only to those articles which are in daily or common use and therefore essential to the needs or comfort of the general population.

4. Having fixed on the kind of articles to which it will limit itself, the Committee will first inquire what goods, e.g. clothes etc. can be had through the local merchants and obtain samples from them gratis. As the sample-room will be in its

An incomplete proposal to establish a place in Baroda where Swadeshi products could be exhibited; undated but certainly 1905 or 1906.

secondary character a free advertisement for the merchants, they will probably be glad enough to seize the opportunity.

5. Again the Committee should draw up a circular (typewritten) stating the objects of the sample-room, pointing out that it will be a free advertisement introducing all goods sent there to the local market, and inviting manufacturers to send samples. This announcement may also be made in the local papers as well as one or two widely circulated journals outside. The circular may, if necessary, be franked by responsible persons holding good positions in order to assure the manufacturers etc. of the *bona-fides* of the institution. If so assured, they will probably be quite willing to secure an advertisement by sending their samples gratis; for it must be remembered that the goods will be mostly of a common order and therefore cheap.

6. Still farther to lighten the burden, the Association may approach the authorities to make an exception as to *Jakat* in the case of articles sent for the sample-room and certified by responsible officers of the Association.

7. In the case of samples required which are not sent by the manufacturer on the general invitation, a special request may be made to him to afford this facility to the Association.

8. Only in case these methods fail, the Committee will be entitled in case of necessity to purchase samples. In this way the cost of providing the sample-room will be kept at a minimum.

9. It will be the business of the Information Committee to see that the sample-room is kept up to date.

10. Outside the limits laid down in Para 3, the Committee will gladly accept samples but will not buy them.

11. This rule however should not prevent the extension of the scope of the sample-room when funds & opportunity permit.

Establishment

12. The establishment of the sample-room should consist of at least one clerk and one servant.

N.B. The undersigned hopes after some time (if the scheme be adopted) to provide a clerk either gratis or for a minimum pay covering only his food and lodging, but until then or failing this, he is ready to pay at least Rs 12 monthly for the purpose.

13. The sample-room will remain constantly under the inspection of the General Secretaries and especially of the Secretary for the Information Committee.

Means for the Better Fulfilment of the First Object

14. For the better fulfilment of object (1) in Para 1, the samples should be carefully classified by the Committee and arranged on a clear system, labels & numbers with the descriptive name of the article, its ordinary price and place of production affixed.

(2) Any considerable changes in price may occasionally be entered, but the Committee will not hold itself responsible for accuracy in this respect.

Means for the ditto of the Second Object

15. For the better fulfilment of object (2) the following arrangement may be made

A small placard may be affixed to goods procurable [*incomplete*]

On the Barisal Proclamation

[.....] nettle firmly in the hope that prompt measures might crash if not root out the growing evil. With a Fraser and a Fuller holding the bureaucratic sceptre there could be little doubt which of the two alternatives would recommend itself to the authorities. Sir Andrew Fraser, hampered with the traditions of legality and bureaucratic formalism, has begun cautiously, thundering loudly but sparing the lightning flash. Mr. Fuller, violent, rude & truculent in character and accustomed to the autocracy of a non-regulated province, has rushed like a mad bull at the obnoxious object; his violence may or may not temporarily defeat itself by compelling the Government of India or the Secretary of State to intervene, but even should this happen it will make little difference. The policy of repression is a necessity to the Government and will only be foregone, if the national leaders on their side desist from the new Nationalism.

This being the situation, what must be the attitude of the nation in the face of this crisis in its destinies? The result of the first violent collision between the opposing armies of despotism and liberty, has not been encouraging to the lovers of freedom. No Bengali can read the account of the interview between Mr. Fuller and the Barisal leaders, without a blush of shame for himself and his nation. A headstrong and violent man, presuming insufferably on the high position to which an inscrutable Providence has suffered him to climb, summons the leaders of a spirited community, men of culture, worth and dignity, strong in the trust and support of the people, and after subjecting them to insults of an unprecedented grossness compels them at the point of the bludgeon to withdraw a public appeal which their position

This essay was written after an incident that took place in Barisal, east Bengal, on 7 November 1905. Its first page or pages are not available.

as leaders had made it their mere duty to publish and circulate. What ought these men to have done in reply? Surely they should have repelled the insults with a calm and simple dignity, or if that would not serve, with a self-assertion as haughty, if less violent than the self-assertion of the unmannerly official before them, and to the demand for the withdrawal of their appeal they should have returned a plain and quiet negative. And if as a result Mr. Fuller were immediately to send them to the prison, or the whipping post, or the gallows itself, what difference would that make to their duty as public men & national leaders? But the Barisal leaders instead submitted as meekly as rebuked & beaten schoolboys to a hectoring pedagogue cane in hand. The citizens of Rungpur showed at least a firmer spirit.

Nevertheless the Barisal leaders have strong excuses for their failure of nerve. Decades of selfish ease & comfort, of subservience to officialdom, of traditional meekness & docility have taken the strong fibre out of the middle-class Bengali and left him a mass of mere softness and pliability. Out of such material champions of liberty cannot be made in a single day, nor has the national movement as yet reached that stage of high pressure surcharged with electricity & fiery vitality when weaklings are turned into giants and the timid into martyrs & heroes. Confronted with the formidable & frowning aspect of Mr. Fuller, deafened with the thunders of this self-important Godling, cut off from the accustomed inspiration of cheering crowds, what wonder if the citizens of Barisal were browbeaten, [. . .] & cowed into submission.

Moreover, the Calcutta leaders are not without blame for their failure of courage. It should never have been left to an out of the way township like Barisal to issue the proclamations which have awaked the Fullerian thunders; that was the duty of the leaders of the nation in the metropolis. A small locality cannot be strong enough to fight the battles of the nation unaided, and if local leaders feel themselves in the critical moment, too weak & isolated to resist violent oppression, they are to be more pitied than blamed. We are suffering for our defective organisation. Had the Calcutta chiefs organized these local

Committees throughout the land before the Partition became an accomplished fact, had Barisal felt that it had not only the enthusiasm but the organized strength of the nation behind it, the present situation would have soon been made impossible.

Enough of the past; let us turn to our duty in the future. The one thing that would be impossible and intolerable is any kind of submission to the Fullerian policy. Whatever form of public activity has been stopped by the threat of the Gurkha rifles, must be recontinued. If the Barisal proclamation has been withdrawn, it must be reissued and this time not by the Barisal leaders to their district but by the national leaders in Calcutta to every district, town and village whether in West, East or North Bengal & in order to constitute the Barisal committees, let Babu Surendranath Banerji go down in person aided by M^r. A. Chowdhury & Babu Bipin Chundra Pal, who, if summoned by M^r. Fuller or any Government official, shall refuse to have any dealings with them, until the former shall have publicly apologised for his disgraceful & ungentlemanly conduct and given guarantees against its recurrence. We will see whether even M^r. Fuller in his madness, will dare to touch these sacred heads guarded as they are by the love & trust of a nation of 40 millions. And if to punish this popular self-assertion, the rifles of England's mercenaries be indeed called into play, if Indian blood be shed, with those who shed it shall rest the guilt and on those who commanded it shall fall the Divine Vengeance. It will not come to that, for Heaven has not as yet deprived the British Government so utterly of its reason as to command or the British nation as to condone such an outrage. But the possibility of it should have no terrors for men vindicating their legal rights & the small measure of freedom the laws have allowed to them. The words Bande Mataram must be written — printed, would be better, — on every door in Barisal. Public meetings must be held as before & if they are dispersed by the police, the people must assemble in every compound where there is room for even fifty people to stand and record an oath never to submit or crouch down before the oppressor.

The actions of M^r. Fuller have throughout been characterized by the most cynical violence & disregard of legality. Illegally he has terrorised the people of Barisal, illegally he has abolished the right of public meeting, illegally he has banned the singing of the national anthem and sent emissaries to erase its opening words from the doors of private houses, illegally he has forbidden organisation for a lawful object. Let the authorities remember this, that when a Government breaks the Law, by their very act the people are absolved from the obligation of obeying the Law. But let the people on their side so long as they are permitted to do so abstain from aggressive violence, let them study carefully to put their oppressors always in the wrong; but from no legitimate kind of passive resistance should they shrink. This much their Mother demands from them. For what use to cry day and night Adoration to the Mother, if we have not the courage to suffer for the Mother?

It is a sweet & noble thing to die for motherland; and if that supreme happiness be denied to us, it is no small privilege to suffer illegal violence, arbitrary imprisonment & cruel oppression for her sake.

Part Two

Bande Mataram

under the Editorship of Bipin Chandra Pal

6 August – 15 October 1906

The *Bande Mataram* was launched by Bipin Chandra Pal in August 1906. Pal and other members of the group then known as the New Party or Nationalist Party, but since then generally referred to as the Extremist Party, had been intending to bring out their own English-language newspaper since the end of 1905. Eventually, acting on his own and "with only 500 rupees in his pocket", Pal had the first issue of the paper printed on 6 August 1906. The same day he left Calcutta for a tour of East Bengal. Before going, he asked Sri Aurobindo, who was about to become principal of the Bengal National College, to contribute articles regularly. Sri Aurobindo agreed and for the next two months was one of the *Bande Mataram*'s principal writers.

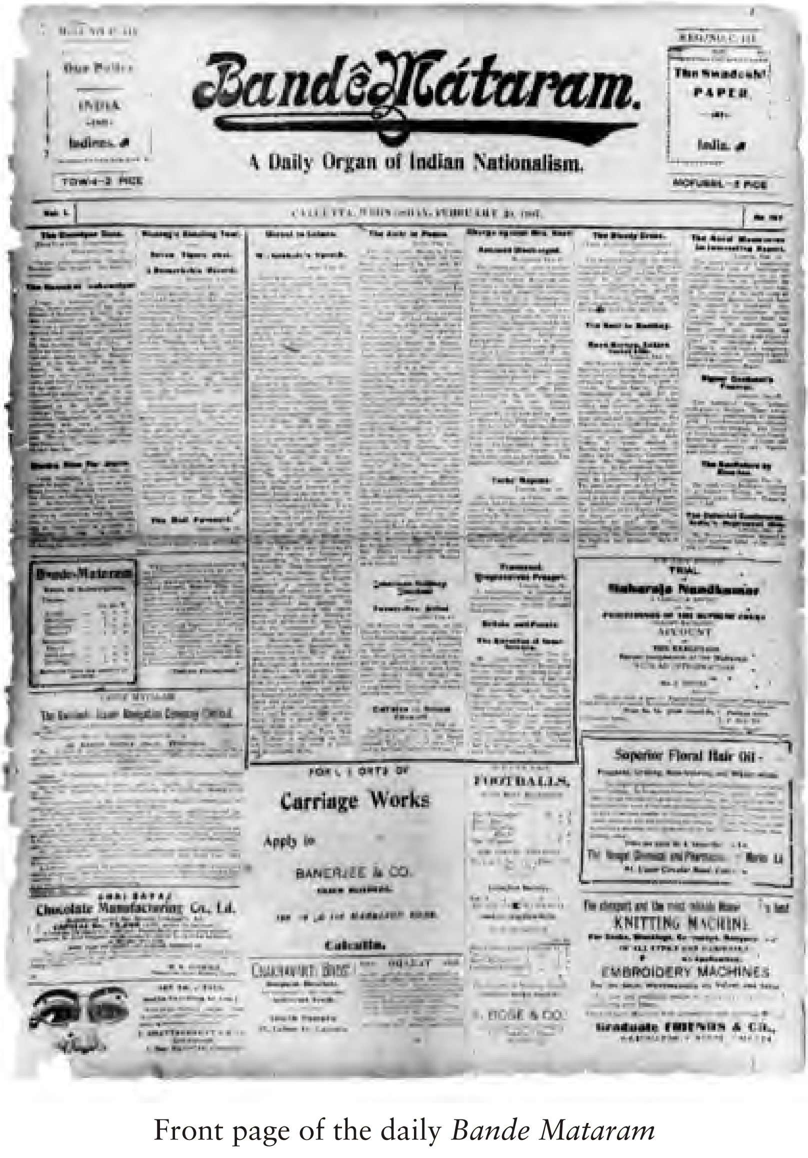

Our Policy
INDIA
—for—
Indians.

TOWN—2 PICE

Bandê Mátaram.

A Daily Organ of Indian Nationalism.

The Swadeshi
PAPER
—for—
India.

MOFUSSIL—3 PICE

TRIAL
Maharaja Nundkumar

Superior Floral Hair Oil

Chocolate Manufacturing Co., Ld.

Carriage Works
Apply to
BANERJEE & CO.
Calcutta.

FOOTBALLS,

KNITTING MACHINE
EMBROIDERY MACHINES

Front page of the daily *Bande Mataram*

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 20th, 1906 }

Darkness in *Light*

We regret to find our contemporary *Light* surpassing the most moderate of the moderatists in the timidity of its aspirations. "What the most ambitious of Indians have dared to hope for is that a day may come, *it may be a century hence*, when in the domestic affairs of their country they will enjoy some measure of freedom from autocratic control." Here is an inspiring ideal indeed! Hail, Holy Light! thou art indeed a fit candle to illumine a somnolent constitutionalist's repose!

Our Rip Van Winkles

The development of sounder political ideas and the birth and growth of a new national energy has been so swift and wonderful that it is not surprising to find a number of our older politicians quite left behind by the rising tide. Stranded on their desert islands of antiquated political ideas, they look forlornly over the heaving tumult around them and strive piteously to imagine themselves still in their old carefully sheltered arena of mimic political strife and safe, cheap, and profitable patriotism. But the walls of the arena have been washed away, its very ground is being obliterated, and a new world of stern reality and unsparing struggle is rapidly taking its place. In the fierce heat of that conflict all shams must wither away and all empty dreams be dissolved. The issue has been fairly put between the Indian people and the alien bureaucracy. "Destroy or thou shalt be destroyed," and the issue will have to be fought out, not "it may be a century hence," but now, in the next two or three decades.

We cannot leave the problem for posterity to settle nor shift our proper burdens on to the shoulders of our grandchildren. But our Rip Van Winkles persist in talking and writing as if Partition and Boycott and Sir Bampfylde Fuller had never been.

Indians Abroad

India to hand this mail laments the exclusion of Indians from the representative system on which the new constitution in the Transvaal is to be based and plaintively recalls the professions and promises of the British Government at the time of the Boer war. The saintly simplicity of *India* grows daily more and more wearisome to us. Everybody who knew anything at all about politics understood at the time that those professions were merely a diplomatic move and the promises made were never meant to be carried out. We see no reason to lament what was always foreseen. What we do regret and blame is the spirit of Indians in the Transvaal who seek escape from the oppression they suffer under by ignoble methods similar in spirit to those practised by the constitutionalists in this country. The more the Transvaal Indians are kicked and insulted, the more loyal they seem to become. After their splendid services in the Transvaal war had been rewarded by the grossest ingratitude, they had no business to offer their services again in the recent Natal rebellion. By their act they associated themselves with the colonists in their oppression of the natives of the country and have only themselves to thank if they also are oppressed by the same narrow and arrogant colonial spirit. Their eagerness to dissociate themselves from the Africans is shown in Dr. Abdurrahman's letter quoted by *India*. All such methods are as useless as they are unworthy. So long as the Indian nation at home does not build itself into a strong and self-governing people, they can expect nothing from Englishmen in their colonies except oppression and contumely.

Officials on the Fall of Fuller

The seriousness of the blow which has fallen on the bureaucracy by the downfall of Shayesta Khan can be measured by the spite and fury which it has excited in such public organs of officialdom as the *Englishman* and the *Pioneer*. The letter of I.C.S. to the *Pioneer* which we extract in another column is a more direct and very striking indication of the feelings which it has aroused especially among the colleagues of the deposed proconsul. The Anglo-Indian press has for the most part grasped the fact that the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller was a victory for the popular forces in Eastern Bengal. Had the new province allowed itself to be crushed by the repressive fury of Shayesta Khan or answered it only with petitions, like a sheep bleating under the knife of the butcher, bureaucracy would have triumphed. But determined repression met by determined resistance finally made Sir Bampfylde's position untenable. Neither Lord Minto who from the first supported the Fullerian policy nor Mr. Morley who has done his best to shield and protect the petty tyrant in his worst vagaries, deserves the angry recriminations with which they are being assailed. They have both acted in the interests of the bureaucracy and if they have made an error of judgment in throwing Sir Bampfylde to the wolves, it is because the choice put before them was a choice of errors. By maintaining their lieutenant they would have helped the revolutionary forces in the country to grow; by sacrificing him they have given fresh vigour and self-confidence to the people in their resistance to the Partition. There comes a time in all such struggles when whatever the Government may do, it cannot fail to weaken itself and strengthen the people. Such a time has come in India and all the rage of Anglo-India cannot alter the inevitable march of destiny.

Cow Killing: An Englishman's Amusements in Jalpaiguri

A correspondent writes to us from Jalpaiguri; — "An Englishman, a forester, at Jalpaiguri has shot three cows, one of them belonging to the school Head Pandit. The open garden of the forester is near certain bungalows adjoining the school, and it appears that the cows strayed into the garden, whereupon the Saheb calmly proceeded to shoot them. This he did laughing and in spite of the remonstrance of another Englishman, his friend. On the Head Pandit consulting his neighbours, he was told to consider himself lucky that it was the cows and not he whom the Saheb elected to shoot. Perceiving the force of this remark and apprehensive about his service, the Pandit has swallowed and is trying to digest the loss and the mortification. I hear that when the bodies of the cows were being taken away, the Saheb was dancing with exultation."

We publish the above extraordinary story of wanton oppression with reservation, but Anglo-Indian vagaries of the kind are too common for us quite to disbelieve it. If it is a fact, we trust the sufferer will think better of it and seek redress; the fear of swift punishment is the only motive force that can keep these vagaries in check and every Indian who submits is partly guilty of the insults and oppressions inflicted on his fellow countrymen.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 27th, 1906 }

Schools for Slaves

Mr. John Morley from his seat in Parliament professes Liberal principles as the guiding star of the Government of India; in India itself the various Governments openly and deliberately enforce reaction. The head master of the Thana High School punished certain students for forming a Debating Club in which they discussed Swadeshi. Several of the guardians insisted on their boys vindicating their natural rights, whereupon the head master promptly suspended them. The guardians, following strict constitutionalist principles, appealed to the Bombay Government; but as was to be expected the Government upheld the head master's decision. In the course of its judgment the Government lays down the principle that in all Government and Government-aided schools the head master (in other words the Government) is to have full control over the conduct of the pupils out of as well as in the school premises and school hours. Conduct, be it remembered, includes political talk and opinions. A more nakedly tyrannical usurpation of authority it would be difficult to imagine. One thing is clear; that there is no longer any room in the Government schools for any but slaves and the sons of slaves.

By the Way

It is sad to watch the steady intellectual degeneration of our once vigorous contemporary the *Indian Mirror*. Commenting on the formation of Labour Unions, the *Mirror* advises the promoters to make the *suppression* of strikes the principal object of their efforts! Certainly, the strike is the last weapon in the hands of labour and should not be used as the first. But the idea of organising Labour Unions to suppress strikes, is a masterpiece of unconscious humour. We shall next hear that Mahomedan Educational Conferences should be organised to discourage Mahomedan education, that the anti-circular boys should make it their chief object to put down picketing, and perhaps that a League is being formed with Babu Narendranath Sen at its head to "suppress" the *Indian Mirror*.

*

We do not think the amazing timidity of our political leaders can be paralleled in any other country in the world. Is a National Congress established? Its object, one would think, must be to concentrate the strength of the nation and fight its way to power. Oh by no means, it is only to advise and assist the Government! Is a National Council of Education instituted? Of course, it has arisen to rival and replace the alien-ruled University. Not at all; not at all; it is meant not to stand in opposition to but to supplement the old University! Does Labour rise in its strength and band itself into formidable combinations? Their work will be, then, to resist the greed and heartlessness of Capital and vindicate the claims of the toiler to just treatment and a man's wages for a man's work. O God forbid! These Unions are rather meant to suppress strikes and establish kindly relations between the employers and the employed! Are we, after all, one wonders sometimes, a nation of cowards and old women?

*

The excuse usually urged for these pitiful insincerities is that it is all diplomacy. The diplomacy of grown-up children! The diplomacy of the ostrich hiding its head in the sand? What a poor idea these "leaders" must have formed of the political intelligence of the British Government and of Englishmen generally, if they think they can be deceived by such puerile evasions. Bureaucracy and Anglo-India take advantage of these professions and laugh in their sleeves. Meanwhile the country loses the inspiration of great ideals, the exaltation of frank and glorious conflict, the divine impulse that only comes to those who know they are battling bravely and openly for the freedom of their country, not to men who cringe to the enemy and lie and palter with their consciences.

Truth and bold straight dealing we believe to be not only our noblest but our wisest policy in our struggle with the alien. Our leaders have no faith in the nation; they believe it is weak and impotent, and shufflings, evasions and shallow insincerities are the weapons of the weak. We, for our part, believe in the immense strength of the nation and demand that our leaders shall bring us face to face with the enemy. Still if they must have diplomacy let them give some diplomacy worth the name. If the shades of Cavour and Bismarck have leisure to listen to such senilities, what a smile of immortal contempt must pass over their lips as they watch the "diplomacy" of our leaders!

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 28th, 1906 }

The *Mirror* and Mr. Tilak

The *Indian Mirror*, which is now the chief ally of Government among the Congress organs in Bengal, has chosen, naturally enough, to fall foul of Mr. Tilak. Our contemporary, it appears, has heard that some people propose to put forward Mr. Tilak's name as President of the next Congress, and it hastens to point out how extremely distasteful the idea is to all thoughtful and enlightened men, that is to say, to all whose views agree with the *Mirror*'s. Mr. Tilak, we learn, has seriously offended our contemporary by giving honour to Mr. Bhopatkar on his release from jail; his speeches on the occasion of the Shivaji festival were displeasing to the thoughtful and enlightened men who congregate in the office of the *Indian Mirror*; and to sum up the whole matter, he is a man of extreme views and without "tact". *Ergo*, he is no fit man for the presidential chair of the Congress.

It is interesting to learn on this unimpeachable authority what are the qualifications which the moderate and loyalist mind demands in a President of the "National" Congress. It is not, apparently, the acknowledged leader of one of the greatest Indian races who can aspire to that post; it is a man of "tact", — one, in other words, who does not like to offend the authorities. It is not the great protagonist and champion of Swadeshi in Western India; it is a man of moderate views: one, let us say, who dare not look Truth in the face and speak out boldly what he thinks. It is not the one man whom the whole Hindu community in Western India delights to honour, from Peshawar to Kolhapur and from Bombay to our own borders; it is one who will not talk about Shivaji and Bhavani — only about Mahatmas. It is not the man who has suffered and denied himself for his country's sake and never abased his courage nor bowed his head under the most crushing persecution; it is one who by refusing to honour similar courage in others, dishonours the country for which they have suffered.

If this is the creed of our contemporary and those whose opinions it "mirrors", it is not the creed of the country at large. With the exception of a fast-dwindling minority of Anglophiles the whole of India has learned to honour the name of the great Mahratta leader and patriot. His social and religious views may not agree with those of the "enlightened", but we have yet to learn that the Congress platform is sacred to advanced social reformers, that the profession of the Hindu religion is a bar to leadership in its ranks. Mr. Tilak's only other offence is the courage and boldness of his views and his sturdiness in holding by them. He has dared to go to jail and honour those who follow his example, — the bold bad man! And yet we seem to have somehow or other a dim recollection of a venerable Congress leader named Babu Narendranath Sen figuring prominently at a meeting in which men and boys who had gone to jail for resisting the Government, were honoured and saluted as national heroes. Evidently we have been under an error! Evidently our contemporary is at heart a favourer of the doctrine of self-help and action. It is talking and writing against the Government that he condemns, but to act against the Government, rebellion against constituted authorities has Babu Narendranath's full approval. Wearing the outward guise of a loyalist, he is at heart revolutionary. Otherwise would he have presided at the 7th of August celebration and countenanced the raising of the national flag? Now, at last, we understand the policy of the *Mirror*.

Whether loyalism likes it or not, Mr. Tilak is now the leader of the Deccan, a man whom twenty millions look up to as their chief and head. If Mr. Mehta is the "uncrowned King" of Bombay City, Mr. Tilak is the uncrowned King of all Maharashtra. The attempt to exclude such a man from his rightful place and influence in the counsels of the nation, can only recoil on its authors.

Leaders in Council

The conference held in the Land-holders Association on Sunday seems to have been very select in its composition, the organisers confining themselves mostly to staunch congressmen or those who might be supposed to hold fast by Congress views. It must have been a disagreeable surprise to them to find that even in this small circle a strong opposition was offered to the renewal of a petitioning policy. Babu Motilal Ghose could not be excluded and the views of this veteran leader on the question of action *versus* resolution are well-known. But Babu Motilal was backed up by strong voices from the Mofussil, and we understand that it was only by the old plea of its being the very last time, that the conference was persuaded to agree to something in the shape of a memorial. We know that "last time" well. It was the very last time on the occasion of the Town Hall; it was the very last time at Barisal; and now again this long-lived old friend of ours crops up like the clown of the pantomime with his eternal smirk and his eternal "Here I am." Our leaders resemble English theatrical managers, when their audiences grow small. They declare that today is the last night of the piece; next day it becomes the very last night; then it is absolutely the last night, and so on till it is absolutely quite the very very last, last night of all. Meanwhile audiences increase and the shillings pour in.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 30th, 1906 }

Loyalty and Disloyalty in East Bengal

The *Englishman* and those who are evidently anxious to set the machinery of relentless state prosecutions against the leaders of the present national movement in this province, need not take so much trouble to prove that there is considerable disaffection and disloyalty in East Bengal which ought at once to be put down with a strong hand. Our contemporary must be far more simple-minded than what one should expect him to be, judging both from his general education and experience and his position as an intelligent observer and critic of current affairs, if he ever thought that there could be any real affection and loyalty to an alien despotism, such as the present Government in this country undoubtedly is, in the minds of the subject populations in India. Lord Curzon once declared that though differing in colour and culture, the Indians were as much human as the Britishers, and had the same sentiments and susceptibilities that the British people had. If the *Englishman* and his friends believe in this common humanity of the Indian, they have simply to place themselves mentally in the position of their "native fellow-subjects", to realise the kind of affection and loyalty for the present Government that can ever be felt by the people of this country. Indeed, loyalty as a feeling of personal love and regard for the sovereign is an extinct virtue in civilisation, and, if it is not found in countries where the sovereign belongs to the people, and lives and stands among them as the head of their State and the fountain of all social honour, and where the people always participate in his glory, his magnificence and his wealth, — each according to his status and qualification, — how much more rare must it be in a country like India whose sovereign belongs to a distant country and an alien race, who professes an alien religion, who is not related to the people by any ties of tradition or past historic associations, and in the glories and prerogatives of whose throne, as well as in the wealth and magnificence of whose empire, these people have neither lot nor part. To believe the barest possibility of any true loyalty in India is really to take the Indians to be very much less than human. But, in truth, nobody ever honestly believed in it. Loyalty has ever been a mere convenient tie in this country — convenient to the ruler because the reputation for profound loyalty of the Indian people keeps foreign enemies away; convenient to the ruled because like charity it covereth a multitude of political sins. But in truth no one ever really believed in this much-proclaimed virtue. No Englishman ever honestly believed in the truth of it. No Indian ever cherished it honestly himself. Both the rulers and the ruled have been playing at blind man's buff all these years with this great civic virtue, each seeking to make some political capital out of it.

That the British Government in India never set a two-pence value on the loyalty of their Indian subjects, — though they are always anxious to proclaim it from the housetops, as a magnificent charm to keep away the evil-eye — is proved by the entire history of their past transactions with us. The Arms Act surely does not prove England's faith in India's loyalty. The Frenchman, the German, the American, nay, even the Negro and the Hottentot, — indeed every foreigner can possess arms and bear them in India without a licence; the man who belongs to the country and who is most interested in its prosperity and peace, alone cannot do so. The systematic exclusion of the people of the land, however qualified they may be, from all positions of exceptional trust and responsibility in what ought, by the law of God and nature alike, to be their own Government, surely does not prove that English statesmen ever honestly believed in the allegiance of the Indian people to their rule. The methods of state-regulated education, which carefully eschew every training or text book or instruction that is calculated to quicken any genuine love of freedom or any noble patriotism in the pupils; the extreme anxiety of the authorities to train the youths of this country in habits of gentleness and subordination, while in their own country every form of manliness and even rowdyism as long as it does not strike against the very soul of social and civic orders are not only tolerated, but frequently encouraged by the leaders of public opinion and the custodians of public morals; the denial of the commonest right of free citizenship, — the right of free participation in public meetings having for their object the reform of the Administration, — to the commonest of public servants; the crusade against every form of patriotic efforts on the part of the people, such as are calculated to inspire them with devotion to their nation, all these go distinctly to prove at what value the much proclaimed loyalty of the people of this country is really rated by their foreign masters. The fact really is that loyalty in the sense in which the term is usually used, — either in the old sense of loving attachment to the person or throne of the sovereign, or even in the new and higher sense of devotion to the State which reveals and realises the highest civic ideals and aspirations of the subjects, — cannot naturally exist or grow in a country that is subject to the domination of another. No Englishman therefore honestly believes in it in India, however much he may be anxious to conjure it up in times of trouble or difficulty as a saving magic working for his safety and salvation. Loyalty, in the general acceptance of the term, has been a mere myth in British India; and the *Englishman* need not be at so much pains to disprove the presence of a thing in East Bengal that had never as yet existed in any part of the country subject to British rule. Disloyalty is want of loyalty, and there cannot be anywhere an absence of a thing, — as a new fact, — where that thing had never existed before.

But if loyalty is not possible in India in its present condition of servitude, what then is the secret of that unquestioning obedience to the authority of the present alien Government in the country, which alone makes it easy and possible for them to rule so vast a population with such slender means? The answer is plain and obvious: it is not affection, neither is it disaffection, both of which are active sentiments, but mere indifference, mere listlessness, the fatuous fatalism of the Hindu and the

Mahomedan populations of India that keeps them so easily under British subjection. Not loyalty, not allegiance, but mere passive acquiescence, — that is the word which sums up the real attitude of the Indian people towards their foreign master and the outlandish civic order they have established in the country. This acquiescence is due to a general belief — now rapidly being undermined and destroyed by the open excesses and repressions of recent administrations — in the benevolence of the British despotism, itself the result of a strange hypnotic spell that British politicians and statesmen of the earlier generations had cast over the people. If by loyalty is meant this passive acquiescence to the existing civic order in the country, there is still considerable loyalty in the country, though the events of the past five or six years have done much to disturb even this passive sentiment in the people.

But there has always been another kind of loyalty also in this country, and that species of loyalty exists still among us, both in East Bengal and West Bengal, though it has been subjected during the last eight or nine months to a strain which would kill it altogether in any other country, and most of all in that country to which the *Englishman* himself belongs, and this kind of loyalty will last as long as the Government and those whose views the *Englishman* represents, do not themselves destroy it with their own hand. Loyalty in the radical sense of the term, derived from *lex* — law, and meaning obedience to law — has always been a cordial characteristic of our people; and in this sense people have always been loyal in this country. This loyalty — this extreme regard for law of the Indian population — has been the strongest bulwark of the present foreign despotism in this country. We are still loyal, as we have been in the past, in the sense of law-abiding. Had we not been loyal in this, the truest sense of the term, the history of British administration in every part of India would have to be very differently written indeed. In fact the *Englishman* ought not to forget that it is this extreme loyalty of the people that saved the situation created in Barisal and elsewhere by the lawless excesses of the executive Government during the last nine or ten months. Had our people been less law-abiding than they are, the whole country would have long ago been completely given over to riots and mob-rule, which it would tax the entire strength and resources of the Government to grapple with and conquer. The lawless excesses of the Executive and the Police in East Bengal during the last eight or nine months, are matters of common knowledge; and the *Englishman* knows it full well that there is no other country in the world where such wanton oppression and injustice would have been so quietly borne by the people as these have been borne in the New Province. To attribute this to the cowardice of the people would be an act of fatal folly on the part of the Government or their advisers. East Bengal, at least, has never been noted for such cowardice. It is not fear, but self-restraint due to considerations of larger and higher interests, and the command of their leaders that kept East Bengal so quiet under all these enormities during the last nine or ten months. But this loyalty also seems apparently to be giving way now, for it is useless to conceal the fact that a grim determination has gradually grown among the people to no longer suffer any illegal excesses, in the way they have been suffered so long. But even in this new spirit of resistance in the people there is no lack of regard for law, for this new determination means not to outrage but to protect the honour and dignity of the law itself, when both are openly outraged by those whose duty it is to protect them. If this be disloyalty, we freely admit this disloyalty exists, and is growing to great proportions in every part of the country; and the threats of the *Englishman* or the setting of the sedition-law in motion will not kill, but only increase this disloyalty the more.

By the Way

Diogenes in the *Statesman* indulges himself in a paragraph of grave advice to the "self-constituted" leaders of the Indian labour movement. For a philosopher, our friend takes singularly little trouble to understand the opponents' case. Neither Mr. A. K. Ghose nor Mr. Aswini Banerji nor any of their assistants proposes, so far as we know, to benefit labour by getting rid of English capital. What they do propose, is to get rid of the exceedingly unjust conditions under which Indian labour has to sweat in order to enrich alien capitalists. And by the way, as it were, they also propose to get rid of the habit of coarse insult and brutal speech which Englishmen have accustomed themselves to indulge in when dealing with "low-class" Indians.

Are the leaders of Indian labour self-constituted? One would imagine that men whom Indian workers naturally turn to in difficulty and who can organise in a few weeks so large an affair as the Railway Union, have vindicated their claim to be the national leaders of Labour. At any rate their constituents have very enthusiastically ratified their "self-constituted" authority. But perhaps Diogenes has been converted from cynicism to Vedanta, and sees no difference between the self of the railway employees and the self of Mr. A. K. Ghose. Still, the tub from which he holds forth is a small one, and he should not cumber one-sixth of his space with such cumber.

The rift between the Labourites and the Liberals grows daily wider. The alliance was never natural and cannot in its nature be permanent. But official Liberaldom will be foolish indeed if it declares war on Labour at the present juncture. The Socialistic element in England is quite strong enough to turn the Liberal triumph of 1905 into a serious disaster at the next elections. Nor are the Labourites likely to be frightened by Ministerial menaces. Mr. Winston Churchill and the Master of Elibank may thunder from their high official Olympus, but Mr. Keir Hardie will go on his way unscathed and unmoved. He knows that the future is with Socialism and he can afford to despise the temporary and imperfect fruits which a Liberal alliance promises.

For us English politics have small personal interest. From the Conservatives we can expect nothing but open oppression, from the Liberals, nothing but insincere professions and fraudulent concessions, — shadows calling themselves substance. Can we hope better things from Labour? Many whose judgment we respect, think that there is a real ally — that the friendship of Labour for India is sincere and disinterested. For the present, yes.

But when Labour becomes a power and sits on front benches we fear that it will be as intolerant and oppressive as Conservatism itself. Australia is a Labour Commonwealth, and we know the attitude of the Australian working-man to Indians and Asiatics generally. India's hope lies not in English Liberalism or Labour, but in her own strong heart and giant limbs. Titaness, who by thy mere attempt to rise can burst these Lilliputian bonds, why shouldst thou clamour feebly for help to these pigmies over the sea?

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 1st, 1906 }

Lessons at Jamalpur

The incidents at Jamalpur are in many ways a sign of the times. They reveal to us, first and foremost, as many incidents of the Swadeshi movement have revealed to us, the great reservoir of potential strength which the Congress movement has for so long a time left untapped. The true policy of the Congress movement should have been from the beginning to gather together under its flag all the elements of strength that exist in this huge country. The Brahmin Pandit and the Mahomedan Maulavi, the caste organisation and the trade-union, the labourer and the artisan, the coolie at his work and the peasant in his field, none of these should have been left out of the sphere of our activities. For each is a strength, a unit of force; and in politics the victory is to the side which can marshal the largest and most closely serried number of such units and handle them most skilfully, not to those who can bring forward the best arguments or talk the most eloquently.

But the Congress started from the beginning with a misconception of the most elementary facts of politics and with its eyes turned towards the British Government and away from the people. To flaunt its moderation and reasonableness before approving English eyes, to avoid giving offence to British sentiments, to do nothing that would provoke a real conflict, this was its chief preoccupation. It concerned itself with such things as Simultaneous Examinations, Exchange Compensation, with the details of administration and the intricacies of finance: it presumed to give the Government advice on its military policy, and it passed omnibus resolutions covering the whole field of Indian affairs. All the time it had nothing behind it that could be called strength, no tangible reason why the British Government should respect and give form to its irresponsible criticisms. The Government on its side took the measure of the Congress and acted accordingly.

Under the stimulus of an intolerable wrong, Bengal in the fervour of the Swadeshi movement parted company with the old ideals and began to seek for its own strength. It has found it in the people. But the awakening of this strength immediately brought the whole movement into collision with British interests, and the true nature of the Englishman, when his interests are threatened, revealed itself. The Swadeshi threatened British trade and immediately an unholy alliance was formed between the magistracy, the non-officials and the pious missionaries of Christ, to crush the new movement by every form of prosecution and harassment. The Trade Union movement threatens the tyranny of British Capital over Indian Labour, and at once British Capital responds by unprovoked lockouts, illegal dismissals and finally by "volleys of gunshot". The struggle is bound to increase in its intensity and the prospect it opens, is one which only the most courageous can face. But for us there is no choice. The faith in British justice has crumbled into the dust. Nothing can again restore it. Go back we cannot, halt we cannot, go on we must. It will be well for us if our leaders recognize the situation and instead of hesitation and timidity which will not help them, meet it with clear eyes and an undaunted spirit.

By the Way

There is a limit to everything. There is also a limit to hero-worship and to self-laudation. It seems to us that limit was passed in the extraordinary proceedings of the Pandits' meeting which deified Babu Surendranath Banerji, and in the undignified effusion of the report which appeared in Babu Surendranath's own paper the *Bengalee*. A regular "*abhishek*" ceremony seems to have been performed and the assembled Brahmins paid him regal honours as if he had been the just and truthful Yudhishthira at the Rajasuya sacrifice. If Babu Surendranath wishes to be the king of independent Bengal, he should surely conquer his kingdom first and then enjoy it. Even Caesar refused the crown thrice; but Surendra Babu has no scruples. He accepted his coronation with effusive tearfulness; in the touching language of the *Bengalee*, "his mighty voice shook and he got choky".

*

But the thing passes a joke. Whatever differences of opinion we may have with Babu Surendranath, we have always recognized him as the leader of Bengal, the one man among us whose name is a spell to sway the hearts of millions. We do not like to see him making himself publicly ridiculous, for, by doing so, he makes the whole of Bengal ridiculous. Such performances are rather likely to diminish his prestige than increase it. But ever since the rise of a party which questions his methods and ideals, Surendra Babu has shown an uneasy desire to have his personal leadership proclaimed on the housetops and an almost hysteric tendency towards self-praise. The indecorous comparisons of himself with Christ and Gauranga, the tone of his Barisal speech and this coronation ceremony are indications which make us uneasy for our veteran leader. He should remember the last days of Keshab Chandra Sen and avoid a similar debacle.

*

It is time that public opinion should forbid this habit of self-laudation in our leaders. The Mahratta leaders have a much keener sense of the decorum and seriousness which public life demands. Recently a movement was set on foot in the Deccan to celebrate Mr. Tilak's birthday and pay to the great Mahratta leader almost the same honours as are paid to the memory of Shivaji in the Shivaji Utsav. The whole of Maharashtra prepared to go mad with a frenzy of hero-worship when everything was brought to a sudden end by prompt and imperative prohibition from Mr. Tilak himself. This entire absence of self-seeking and self-advertisement is one of the most characteristic features of Mr. Tilak's public conduct. We hope it will become a more general standard if not of character, at least of public etiquette throughout India.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 3rd, 1906 }

By the Way

The *Bengalee* publishes an apologetic explanation of the Kamboliatola ceremony on which we passed a few strictures, more in sorrow than in anger, the other day. The defence seems to be that Babu Surendranath Banerji was bediademed neither with a crown of gems nor a crown of thorns, but only a harmless chaplet of flowers. Moreover, the ceremony was not in the nature of an *abhishek* or coronation but a *shanti-sechan* or homage of hearts from Bengal's assembled Pundits. We do not think the explanation betters things in any way. In whatever way we look at it, the whole affair was a piece of childishness which could have no object but to minister to personal vanity.

This same silly chaplet, it appears, represented the crown of success and might be likened to the laurel crown of the ancient Roman. Visions arise before us of our only leader wrapped majestically in an ancient toga and accepting on the Capitol the laurel crown that shall shield his head from the lightnings. But who is the hostile deity against whom the muttered *mantras* of the Brahmins were invoked to shield the head of our Surendra Caesar? Sir Jupiter Fuller is gone and no other Thunderer takes his place. We repeat, the whole affair was silly in the extreme and we hope it will not be repeated.

*

Mr. A. K. Ghose has gone to Jamalpur. That is well. Such affairs as the sanguinary outrage at Jamalpur demand that our strongest man should be himself on the spot, and Mr. A. K. Ghose has proved himself a leader of men, the greater because, unaided by supreme powers of oratory, he has by mere honest work and organizing power become the voice and the head of thousands of men.

*

The Anti-Circular Society is selling the clothes of the late Romakanta Roy as mementos of the deceased patriot for the Famine Fund. The object is good, but the method shows an amazing want of decorum. Romakanta was a young man of fervent patriotism but quiet and unostentatious in his nature. Is it right to hold up his memory to ridicule by this piece of absurd commercial sentimentalism? Hero worship in Bengal takes strange disguises.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 4th, 1906 }

Partition and Petition

There seems to be a recrudescence of the old and decadent praying mood once again in certain quarters, and attempts, we understand, are being made to induce the leaders of public opinion in the mofussil to join the Calcutta clique for sending a fresh representation to the Secretary of State for India, for the revocation or modification of the Partition of Bengal. The recent reply of the British Prime Minister to a question put to him by Mr. O'Donnell seems to be partly responsible for this recrudescence, which, we understand however, is mainly due to wire-pulling from Palace Chambers. Some of our own countrymen now in England also seem to be playing into the hands of our Parliamentary friends, who are clearly anxious to help their own Government out of a very uncomfortable and undignified position in which the present agitation in Bengal has clearly placed them. Similar hopes were held out by some of our British friends, about six months ago, and it was in consequence of these that people were induced to join the last Town Hall demonstration against Partition; and it was practically stipulated that that would be our last prayer on this subject to the Government. The same game, however, is going to be played over again. We do not know if a Town Hall meeting will be convened for this purpose; but advices from England seem to hold that no public meeting would at all be necessary, a carefully drawn-up petition, signed by a few leading men, and submitted, not through the local Government, because the matter affects two Provinces, and the Government of any of these would not be competent to receive it, but through the Government of India, would equally serve the purpose; as the Government in England is said to be favourably inclined to a reconsideration of the Partition, and a representation from Calcutta would be very helpful at this moment.

We have no doubt that it will be so; but why, in the name of commonest political wisdom, we ask, should we be so anxious to offer this help to the Government that is clearly seeking an honourable means of retreat from a very difficult and untenable position wherein its own perversity and folly have placed it? We are all anxious to have the Partition revoked, but we are so anxious not because Partition actually works irreparable ill to the country, for the ends of the authors of this evil measure have been completely frustrated already, and the political life of Bengal which it was their avowed intention to weaken or kill, has been made almost infinitely stronger than it ever was before or could possibly be in the near future, — by this very Partition itself. The outraged sentiments of the country have found relief in the consciousness of a new power among the people. Outrages wound only because they are a proof of the weakness and incapacity of the outraged; if this weakness is not felt, and this incapacity fails to be established, the wound also ceases to exist. This has happened in Bengal, and more particularly in East Bengal in connection with this Partition outrage; and there is a growing indifference in the country as regards the fate of this measure. People have found a larger and a more profitable object for their public life. They have commenced to grow into a vivid consciousness of their own strength; and they are, accordingly, growing more and more indifferent to what the Government may or may not do, either in regard to this or to any other matter. They know and feel that their fate lies in their own hands, and in the hands of God, who guides the destinies both of individuals and nations.

English Enterprise and Swadeshi

The Anglo-Indian papers are nowadays repeatedly referring to the Jamalpur Railway workshop as a Swadeshi enterprise. The use of the word throws a good deal of light on the meaning of that Swadeshi which our benevolent Government so unctuously professes. The Jamalpur workshop does nothing for India beyond employing a number of coolies who are ill-paid and therefore underfed and a staff of Bengali clerks. It adds nothing appreciable to Indian wealth, on the contrary it diminishes it. All that can be said is that instead of taking 100 per cent of the profits out of India, it takes 90 per cent. This is precisely the meaning of Government Swadeshi — to provide a field for English capital, English skilled work in India and employ Indian labour, not out of desire for India's good, but because it is cheap. If the Government really desired India's good, it would provide for the training of educated Indians so that such work as is done in Jamalpur, might be executed by Indian brains and with Indian capital as well as by Indian hands. But we do not ask the Government to give us such training. It would be foolish to expect a foreign Government to injure the trade of its own nation in India. We must provide for our own training ourselves.

Sir Frederick Lely on Sir Bampfylde Fuller

Sir Frederick Lely's was a name well known in Gujerat and nowhere else in India. He has now earned a cheap notoriety for himself by holding forth in the *Times* on Sir Bampfylde Fuller's dismissal. Sir Frederick is full of dismal forebodings on the effect of this dismissal, which has evidently shaken the foundations of British rule in India. One cannot help reflecting how weak, in that case, those foundations must be! Sir Frederick adorns his lamentations with an imaginative reference to people's tongues being cut out for speaking against Brahmins some short period before this particular Heaven-born's sacred boot soles hallowed the streets of Bombay! Evidently, Sir Frederick is brooding regretfully on the impossibility of adorning Belvedere with the tongues of Babu Surendranath Banerji and Babu Bipin Chandra Pal, red sacrifices to the stability of British rule. That might certainly simplify the task of Government, — or it might not.

Jamalpur

Our correspondent's report from Jamalpur gives the sober facts of the situation and clears away the mist of misrepresentation and wild rumour with which the Anglo-Indian journals have sought to obscure the incident. From the beginning the English version has been an attempt to throw the whole blame on the workmen by charging them with rioting before the gunshots. Their version has varied from day to day. With the exception of one or two minor details, the opposite version has been throughout clear, consistent and rational. There will of course be the usual cases and counter-cases and diametrically opposite statements sworn to in evidence. But we have ceased to take any interest in these futile legal proceedings. An Englishman assaulting an Indian may be innocent or guilty, but, as he cannot be punished, it does not matter an atom whether he is innocent or guilty. The fight has to be fought out to the end and the resort to law is no more than a persistent superstition.

By the Way

The wailings of the *Englishman* for Sir Bampfylde Fuller do not cease. The Rachel of Hare Street mourns for the darling of her heart and will not be comforted. We wish our contemporary would realise that the rest of the world are heartily sick of this daily ululation. Deeply as we sympathise with his grief we cannot help thinking that it is indecently prolonged. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit, rest!

*

The *Englishman* makes, after his fashion, a curious use of the severe criticism on Babu Surendranath's Shanti-Sechan which have appeared in the Bengali press. He thinks that it means the "repudiation" of Surendra Babu and the abandonment of the Partition Agitation. Prodigious! Apparently the *Englishman* has yet to learn that the movement in Bengal was not created by any single man and does not depend on any single man. It is a great natural upheaval and the leaders are no more than so many corks tossing on the surface of a whirlpool. If one or more goes down, what does it matter to the whirlpool?

*

It is amusing to find Babu Bipin Chandra Pal represented as a fanatical worshipper of Surendra Babu. "When Babu Bipin Chandra finds it in his heart to condemn the editor of the *Bengalee*," cries the *Englishman*, "then indeed all is over." *Shabash*! The humours of Hare Street are mending.

*

There is another kind of humour which pervades the columns of the *Indian Mirror*, but it is not so pleasing as the *Englishman*'s. The *Mirror* poses as a Nationalist organ, but its paragraphs and articles often breathe Anglo-Indian inspiration. Its comments on the official version of the Shantipur case are an instance. It even goes so far as to call on the Railway authorities to punish the "Bengali Stationmaster" because Mr. Carlyle complains of his conduct in the matter. We had to look twice at the top of the sheet before we could persuade ourselves that it was not an Anglo-Indian sheet we were reading.

*

Still worse is the paragraph on the Jamalpur affair. The *Mirror* calls on the promoters of the Railway Union not to do anything which will provoke the feelings of the workmen to a white heat. We had thought it was the gunshots of the European railway officials which had done that work. But no; in the eyes of the *Mirror* that seems to have been a harmless act. It is Mr. A. K. Ghose and Babu Premtosh Bose who are to blame. Yet the editor of this paper is one of our "leaders".

*

The *Mirror* farther gives hospitality to an amusing utterance of Kumar Kshitendra Deb, that renowned statesman who is standing for the Bengal Legislative Council. This Kumar first carefully differentiates true Swadeshi from false, the true being the kind of Swadeshi which allows Kumars and others to become Legislative Councillors, the false the kind of Swadeshi which doesn't. All this is to prevent misunderstanding about his views which he innocently imagines that the public are anxious to learn. We think our Kumar is rather ungrateful to the "false" Swadeshi, but for which he would have had rather less chance of becoming Legislative Councillor than the man in the moon. The worthy Kumar has no sympathy with martyrs naturally enough. We want, apparently, not martyrs but men who are determined to attain a position. No, thank you, Kumar, we have had too many of that kind already; the little change to martyrs will do no harm.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 8th, 1906 }

The *Times* on Congress Reforms

The pronouncement of the *Times* on the proposal of the Congress for a further reform and expansion of the Indian Councils is significant for the thoroughness with which the futility and impossibility of the entire Congress ideal is exposed by the writer. Mr. Gokhale took great pains last year in his address as President of the Congress to point out, in detail, how the present Council of the Indian Viceroy might be remodelled, without disturbing the present position of the Government. His idea is that the elected members of the Viceregal Council may well be increased from five to twelve, of whom two shall be elected by the Chamber of Commerce and the representative of some important industry, and ten by the different Provinces. The two representatives of commerce and industry will, Mr. Gokhale opined, be Europeans, as there shall be 10 Indian members elected to the Council, out of 25, the total strength of that body; and even if they voted together they would be in a permanent and absolute minority; and the only effect of any vote they might give against the Government would be a moral effect. This is Mr. Gokhale's position and programme; and neither the *Times* nor, we are afraid, anybody else outside the ranks of those who hold that everything that is unreal and moderate is the product of sound statesmanship, clearly sees what the gain either to the people or to the Government will be from the acceptance of this wise and cautious counsel. The ten Indian members will form HM's permanent Opposition in India: that is all; but a permanent Opposition has all the evils of irresponsible criticism without the advantages of a real Opposition which can some day hope to be the Government, and whom this possibility always makes sober and responsible. "The policy proposed by the Congress," says the *Times*, "is a policy for bringing the Government into disrepute without the safeguards which all popular constitutions provide; it is a policy for generating steam without the precaution of supplying safety-valves;" and the justice of this criticism cannot be honestly denied.

If Mr. Gokhale's programme does not guarantee any benefit to the Government, neither is it likely to confer any benefit on the people except, of course, on a handful of men who shall enjoy the luxury of being Hon'bles and get enlarged opportunities of recommending their friends, relatives and proteges for office under the Government. The people will take little interest in these Council-elections, because they will soon find out — as they have already done in Bengal — that the elected members cannot carry any popular measure successfully through the Council or oppose effectively even the most mischievous ones. Mr. Gokhale is not only anxious to keep the elected members perpetually in the minority, but though he wants them to be vested with the right of moving amendments on the Budget, the Viceroy must have the right of vetoing them even if they are carried. The fact is, there is absolutely no seriousness about the whole thing. It is all to be a mere child's play. Or, Mr. Gokhale thinks, perhaps, that by gradually securing these so-called rights, he will ultimately get real constitutional rights and privileges from his British masters, but he forgets that these masters have never in the past done anything that has directly affected their interests and status as a sovereign power, nor will they do any such thing in the future, unless, of course, they are compelled to do it, by apprehensions of some great loss or danger. As for the idea that this so-called reform in the Legislative Council will, in any way, make for popular freedom by educating the people, that also is evidently without any reasonable justification for its success; for, as the *Times* very justly points out, Mr. Gokhale's programme has no room for any real political education for the people. To quote it in full: —

"Nor is the policy one which offers any substantial advantage to the people of India; it gives them increased opportunities of criticism but no increase of responsibility; it does nothing to give the people that education in politics which is essential if . . . they are now for the first time to have some share in the management of their own affairs. By the scheme under consideration the leaders of Indian opinion would not acquire that sense of responsibility which necessarily comes to men who expect that they will shortly be in power themselves; they are to have opportunities for finding fault with the Government but they will never have to make their words good; they can with a light heart demand a reduction of taxation or denounce the Government for not putting a stop to famines, because they know that they can never themselves be called upon to prove that these reforms are practicable. It is the prospect of office which sobers and restrains a European Opposition! Is it wise to assume that Indian politicians will be moderate and without this restraint?"

And the justice of this criticism who will deny? Mr. Gokhale's programme if accepted by Government, can have only one effect on the growth of public opinion and political life in India: it will prove the utter futility of any half-measures like these to secure real and substantial rights for the people. Such an education through failure, was needed twenty-five years ago, when people still had faith in British shibboleths or had confidence in British character and British policy; it is absolutely needless and involves sheer waste of time and energy that have much greater calls on them for more substantial and urgent work now, — today when the people have already commenced to realise that their future must be shaped by themselves, without any help from their British masters, and indeed in spite of the most violent opposition that will, naturally, be offered by them. Mr. Gokhale's creed and his policy are anachronisms in the India of 1906; the one stands absolutely discredited with the people, the other is declared unwise and impracticable by the Government. The Congress must give these up, or continue as an effete anachronism in the country, or possibly turn by the logic of this creed and this policy, into a loyalist opposition to all true and forceful popular movement and propaganda in India. Can we afford to allow an institution that we have all served so faithfully all these years, and that may at once become an organised institution of popular deliberation and effective public life, to grow effete and useless? Much less can we afford to place it in the hands of the enemies of popular freedom. That is the question before the country now. The coming Congress in Calcutta will perhaps decide this question. Friends of popular freedom should understand this and gather their forces accordingly for saving the Congress from both these calamities.

By the Way

The *Mirror* complains piteously that the country is in the hands of extremists on one side and ultra-moderates on the other, while the voices of sitters on the fence like the *Indian Mirror* go totally unheard. It is hard on our contemporary. But he should realise that a time has come in the history of the nation when men must take one side or the other, if they wish to count for anything in the making of the future. To preside at a boycott meeting and disparage the boycott, is a course which the politician concerned may reconcile with his own conscience, but it is not likely to increase the weight of his influence with his countrymen.

*

We are surprised to see the *Pioneer* join in the extraordinary *can-can* which the *Englishman* has been performing ever since the Fuller dismissal. We were accustomed to regard the *Pioneer* as a sober and well-conducted journal, though its political views are no less pernicious than the *Englishman*'s; but it is surpassing Hare Street itself in journalistic high-kicks. "Beware, beware, Bengalis," it shouts, "if you rebel, we will exterminate you with fire and sword, we will outdo the atrocities we committed during the Mutiny; we are tigers, we are tigers! look at our claws." All this is very bloody indeed and paints the *Pioneer* red. But it does seem as if Anglo-India had gone clean mad. Such a pitiful exhibition will not increase the respect of the subject race for its rulers.

*

The *Indian Mirror* comes out with an article on the selfishness of Indian patriots. According to this self-satisfied critic Mr. T. Palit and the *Indian Mirror* are the only unselfish men in Bengal. Rajas Subodh Mallik and Brajendra Kishore of Gauripur are notoriety-hunters who have chosen to pay heavily in cash and land for the titles of Raja and Maharaja. Babu Shishir Kumar Ghose is a humbug who poses as an Avatar; Babu Surendranath Banerji is a humbug who poses as a Martyr; there is a third patriotic humbug somewhere who poses as a Hero, — we cannot fix this gentleman at present. The country does not want these gentlemen at all; it wants people who can dare and die for their country. Whether this dying is to come about by fire and sword, and the claws of the British tiger, as the *Pioneer* threatens, or by influenza, cholera or fright, is not clear. We gather, however, that Mr. Palit and Babu Narendranath Sen have entered into a league to dare and die for their country, and we rejoice to hear it. While waiting for this glorious consummation, we would suggest to the latter that he might expect his martyrdom with more meekness, and, secondly, that if he has to attack people, he might just as well cross his t's and dot his i's instead of employing the method of half-veiled allusions. It is a method which some people might call cowardly.

*

The *Englishman* still pegs away at his portentous discovery of a secret society with the romantic name *Sonar Bangla*. His knowledge about it increases every day. It is not a Chinsurah society, it appears, but a Calcutta affair which is especially active in Mymensingh. This ubiquitous monster seems to be under the direction of Tibetans; probably the Tashi Lama formed it when he came to Calcutta. For it appears that the word "Golden" is a piece of Oriental symbolism and is employed by the Tibetans to signify men who are sworn to die for this or that purpose.

As a matter of fact, the word *sonar* is an ordinary Bengali term of pride and affection, no more mystic or symbolic than Shakespeare's "golden lads and girls". The *Englishman* seems determined to supply the absence of a good comic paper in Calcutta. Apparently its descent to anna-price has not increased its circulation.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 10th, 1906 }

The Pro-Petition Plot

It is impossible, we think, to condemn too strongly the attempt that is being made, by means of confidential circulars from Calcutta, to get up a fresh memorial to the Secretary of State for India, for the revocation or modification of the Partition of Bengal. We are strongly opposed, it is well known, to sending any fresh memorial on this subject, but this general objection apart, the methods that have been adopted to get up this new memorial are open to very serious objection, and it is to these that we desire to call public attention today. A telegraphic message was received in Comilla about the middle of last month from one of the Calcutta leaders asking the local leaders to send a delegate to a Conference that was proposed to be held on some urgent matters the following Sunday. What these urgent matters were was left to the imagination of the addressees to discover for themselves. Comilla strongly objected to be worked upon in this mysterious, if not masterly way from Calcutta, and wired back asking for definite and detailed information. No wire, we understand, was received in reply, but about a week later, just a few hours before the time fixed for the Conference, a printed letter, marked confidential, was received by Babu Ananga Mohan Ghosh, from the *Bengalee* office, containing excerpts from certain letters secured from London, which suggested that a fresh memorial should be sent to the Secretary of State for India for a reconsideration of the Partition of Bengal. One of these extracts said: — "What appeared *absolutely hopeless* four weeks ago appears *hopeful* now. There are indications that the Cabinet are willing to reconsider the Partition Question on its merits. There are indications that in due time the question, if properly urged, will be reopened. I am not at liberty to speak about Conferences I had just before leaving London. All that I can tell you is to advise you to have an influential and representative meeting, say, early in September, to adopt a strong, well-reasoned memorial, suggesting alternative schemes of Partition based on racial and linguistic grounds, and to submit it to the Secretary of State through the Indian Government. Bengal has worked splendidly during the last 11 months, — Bengal will have to work a little longer, — not hysterically, but rationally and strongly, — making it clear that she will not accept the present Partition. I believe redress is at hand."

Later on the writer, after quoting Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's reply to Mr. O'Donnell, modified his previous advice regarding public meeting and said — "On second thought a simple memorial seems to be enough if influentially signed — a meeting is unnecessary."

This letter came from a high authority. But it is clear on the face of it that that high authority was playing into the hands of the Liberals interested in India. The enforced retirement of Sir B. Fuller was a distinct confession on the part of the Government of the failure of the policy which prompted the Partition scheme, and which subsequently came to be so closely associated with the late Lieutenant-Governor of East Bengal and Assam. This failure is distinctly due to the resistful attitude that has been assumed by the people of late, and in view of the complications with which the Government is threatened by the present anti-Partition and boycott agitation in Bengal, the authorities in England, as well as in this country, are evidently anxious to get out of the unpleasant and risky position wherein their own perversity has placed them. To do this honourably and without any loss of prestige, they want a plea for reopening the discussion of Mr. Morley's settled fact, and a fresh memorial from Bengal would find them this plea. This, it seems clear, is the meaning of the excerpts quoted by us above from the London letter, on the strength of which the Calcutta leaders want a fresh memorial to be got up. They might make the attempt, there is no reason why, if they are convinced that it is their duty to send a fresh memorial, they should not make this attempt. But what we object to is the secretiveness of the whole thing. Why have they tried to keep this new proposal from the public? Why should they arrogate to themselves the right of deciding, in consultation with a handful of men, as to what should be done in this matter? The Conference held in the Landholders' Association should have been an open Conference. But even at this closed Conference, the general opinion, if the reports that have reached us be correct, was decidedly against sending any fresh petition or memorial. It is said that Babu Motilal Ghose and others were distinctly opposed to the idea; and the words petition and memorial had to be dropped under pressure of this general opinion, especially among the mofussil delegates; all that was conceded by the Conference was that some suggestions might be sent. We do not know if the questions of the channel through which the suggestions were to be sent was raised at all. But whatever was decided by the Conference we find that a secret attempt is being made to send not suggestions, but a live, real memorial again to the Secretary of State for India on the Partition question. We do not respect official secrets, when public interests demand it, but widely publish them, and there is no reason why we should respect non-official secrets when their publication is called for in the interests of the public good. We, therefore, make no apology for publishing the following letter that has been addressed from the *Bengalee* Office, to the leaders of public opinion in the mofussil: —

Confidential

Bengalee Office.
70, Colootola Street, Calcutta.
29th August, 1906.

My dear ——,

At a Conference held in the Rooms of the Landholders' Association on Sunday last, at which several delegates from the mofussil were present, it was resolved to submit a representation to the Secretary of State for reviewing the Partition of Bengal. It was agreed that the representation, if possible, should be forwarded early in September. The representation is being drawn up, and in the meantime I beg you will forward to the *Bengalee* Office as many signatures (including of course the signatures of the leading inhabitants in your District). The representation would ask for Bengal (old and new Province) being placed under a Governor and Council, or in the alternative, the Bengali-speaking population being placed under one and the same administration. I beg you will consider the matter as very urgent.

Yours sincerely,

It is clear thus, that a secret memorial is being got up to be sent again to the Indian State Secretary; and as this memorial will clearly be sent in the name and on behalf of the public, the public have just cause for complaint that in regard to such a vital question of policy they should have been left so entirely in the dark. There was a time when the people in general took really little or no interest in public questions of this kind; and in those days the getting up of such memorials in consultation with a few lawyers in the different districts, might have been justified; because they were about the only persons who took any interest in these public and political questions. The present Swadeshi agitation has, however, changed all this. We have called up the real nation out of its ancient slumber, and the masses have commenced to take a keen and possibly a more earnest interest in public questions than even the so-called educated classes. They have joined our meetings in their thousands and their tens of thousands, and have taken, during the last twelve months, an intelligent interest in our movements. What right have we now to ignore them in such momentous matters as the submission of a fresh memorial to the Secretary of State, which may radically change the face of the whole agitation? The tactics adopted by the Calcutta clique seem, therefore, to be absolutely vicious. They strike at the very root of those principles of Democracy upon which the national movement in India and especially in Bengal is professedly based. Democracy must have its leaders, and the leaders must exercise the right of guiding and shaping the opinions and activities of the Democracy. But to guide, to train, to shape and to control public opinion and public activities is one thing but to ignore or suppress the views and sentiments of the public is another. It is the autocrat alone who does or attempts to do so. And this pernicious autocratic tendency in the leaders of Bengal must at once be knocked relentlessly on the head, if the present movement is to realise the high promise that is in it. The old leaders in Calcutta and those who dance in the mofussil to their tune, must be made to understand this distinctly that they will not be permitted to speak and act in the name of the public without fully and frankly taking that public into their confidence in regard to all important public questions. Signs are not, indeed, wanting that the people will not suffer the tyrannies of their own leaders more patiently than they are prepared to suffer those of their foreign masters. The Comilla Resolution on this very subject of sending a fresh memorial to Government is significant as we pointed out yesterday. A similar Resolution, published in our telegraphic columns last Wednesday, has been adopted at a gathering of 20,000 men at Chittagong, in spite of the attempt made by some people to refer the matter to the local leaders. The question was asked whether a larger vote could be taken on this topic at any meeting of the local Association, and it was frankly answered in the negative. There were many men at this gathering who had come from the villages, and they all seemed clearly flattered by the fact that they were given such an opportunity of expressing their views on so important a matter, and this sense of satisfaction is a distinct guarantee of their future interest in public questions. Henceforth they will not look on our movements with their old listlessness and indifference. Is this a small gain? Are we to neglect such a result for small favours from the Government? What even if the Partition continues, if only we can arouse a real interest in the masses in our public and political agitations? If the masses once awake from their present torpor, they will be able to undo a thousand evil and obstructive measures like the Partition of Bengal. True statesmanship would prefer this quickening of public life and public spirit in the people to the revocation, as a favour, of even the most obnoxious and pernicious Government measure. But autocracy whether in the Government or in the governed, has no eye for the people; and it is, therefore, the greatest enemy of human progress everywhere, and should be ruthlessly exposed and knocked on the head by those who care for the advancement of the people and for their civic salvation.

Socialist and Imperialist

Mr. Hyndman having appeared in print with one of his occasional strong diatribes against bureaucratic misgovernment in India, Mr. Theodore Morrison promptly takes up the cudgels against him. One need not quarrel with Mr. Morrison's discovery that there were great famines in India before the English came. Everyone knows that. What Mr. Hyndman contends is that India has been so impoverished by bureaucratic misrule, not a year passes without famine or acute distress prevailing in some part of the country. That is a position which is inexpugnable, and no burrowing in ancient history will overthrow it. Mr. Morrison thinks that Mr. Hyndman is playing into the hands of the reactionists. Whence this tender solicitude for reform on the part of the Aligarh Imperialist?

The *Sanjibani* on Mr. Tilak

The *Sanjibani* pronounces in its last issue against Mr. Tilak, on the ground that he is unpopular. But unpopular with whom? With a certain section of the old Congress leaders. Is then unpopularity with a section to be a bar against filling the Presidential chair? If so, the circle of choice will become extremely limited; for just as there are some leaders who are unpopular with the ultra-moderate section, there are others who are unpopular with the advanced section. Mr. Gokhale, for instance, is by no means popular in his own country, the Deccan, especially since his notorious apology. His support of the boycott, qualified though it be, has somewhat rehabilitated him in the eyes of many, but he is still strongly distrusted by great numbers. Yet none dreamed of opposing his selection to the Presidential chair on the mere ground of a partial unpopularity. If, however, the Congress leaders are going to publicly proclaim such a principle, it will be applied freely on both sides and the treasured "unanimity" of the Congress will disappear.

Secret Tactics

The telegram from our correspondent in Mymensingh, which we publish in another column, is extremely significant. It is now an open secret throughout the country that the Swadeshi movement has developed two distinct parties in the country. One of these desires to use Boycott as a political weapon merely in order to force on the annulment of the Partition and there finish; its quarrel with the bureaucracy is a passing quarrel and it is ready to be again hand in glove with the Government as soon as its turn is served; it still desires to sit on the Legislative Councils, figure on the Municipalities and carry on politics by meetings and petitions. The other party will be satisfied with nothing less than absolute control over our own affairs and is not willing to help the Government to put off the inevitable day when that demand must be conceded; it is therefore opposed to any co-operation with the Government or to the adoption of a suppliant attitude in our relations to the Government; it desires the Boycott as a necessary part of our economic self-development and by no means to be relinquished even if the Partition be rescinded. Here are definite issues which have to be fought out until some definite settlement is reached. We desire the issue to be fought out on a fair field, each party seeking the suffrages of the country and attempting to educate the great mass of public opinion to its views. Unfortunately, the Leaders of the older school are not willing to give this fair field. They prefer to adopt a Machiavellian strategy working in the darkness and by diplomatic strokes and secret *coup d'état*. They do not wish to work with the prominent and most militant members of the new school on the Reception Committee, they will not admit the country to their councils for fear the strength of the new school might increase, and they attempt to follow the example of the Fuller Government, to prevent them from holding public meetings. Recently the new school have put forward Mr. Tilak as the fittest name for the Presidentship, and the country has already begun to respond to the suggestion. The old leaders cannot publicly confess their reasons for not desiring Mr. Tilak, but they seem to be attempting cleverly to get out of the difficulty by bringing Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji over from England. We should have thought the Grand Old Man of India was a name too universally revered to be made the stalking-horse of a party move. But quite apart from this aspect of the question, we would draw attention to the indecorous and backstairs manner in which this important step is being made. It is the work of the Reception Committee to propose a President for the Congress; but the old leaders have been carefully avoiding any meeting of the Reception Committee and are meanwhile making all arrangements for the Congress and Exhibition secretly, unconstitutionally, and among a small clique. Had the name of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji been proposed constitutionally in the Reception Committee, all would have been well; as it is, the most venerable name in India is in danger of being associated with a party stratagem carried through by unconstitutional means. Meanwhile, there is no reason why the meetings for Mr. Tilak's Presidentship should not be proceeded with; until the Reception Committee meets and Mr. Naoroji accepts an invitation from them the question remains open. But the attitude of the old leaders shows a settled determination to exclude the new school from public life. If that be so, the present year will mark a struggle for the support of the country and the control of the Congress which, however long it may last, can only have one end.

By the Way

The *Indian Mirror* sympathises with the strikers, but is quite opposed to the strike. Workmen should not combine to get their rights; they must, like good slaves, appeal to the gracious generosity of their masters! The spirit of the serf which governed our agitation in pre-Swadeshi days, still disports itself in the columns of the *Mirror*, naked and unashamed.

*

We confess the pother the Anglo-Indian press has raised over the matter, has surprised us. A certain amount of ridicule we expected, but that the Kamboliatola affair should be magnified into sedition and by people calling themselves sane! We are informed, though we can hardly credit it, that Hare Street has been at the expense of telegraphing columns of matter on the subject to England, apparently in order to convince the British public that Bengal has revolted and chosen a King. Verily, the dog-star rages.

*

Hare Street, having failed to impress the public with that fire-breathing seditious monster of Chinsurah, "Golden Bengal", turns sniffing round, nose to earth, for a fresh trail, and finds it in our own columns. We also, it appears, no less than Babu Surendranath and "Golden Bengal" have declared "open war" against King Edward VII; we wish to get rid of "British control". Beside this the manifesto of "Golden Bengal" fades into insignificance. That Indians should openly express their aspiration to govern themselves and yet remain out of jail is a clear sign that the British Empire is coming to an end.

*

The *Statesman* has at last come to the rescue anent the moral belabouring of Babu Surendranath Banerji for his Shanti-Sechan indiscretion. The *Statesman* sees two dangers looming through the dust which has been kicked up over the affair. One is that the ignorant peasantry may imagine a King has been crowned in India to whom they must give their allegiance. We confess, this alarming idea never occurred to us; and when we spoke of Surendra Babu as King of independent Bengal, we thought we were indulging in a harmless jest. The *Statesman* has opened our eyes. It is an alluring idea and captivates our imagination. But what has happened to our sober-minded contemporary? Has the madness of the *Englishman* infested even him that he should see such alarming visions?

*

The other danger is that the Anglo-Indian journals in their wild career may discredit constitutional agitation and play into the hands of the extremists. The extraordinary demoralisation of the Anglo-Indian press has indeed been painfully evident throughout the affair; but the *Statesman* does not see his friend's point of view. To Hare Street Babu Surendranath Banerji is not a moderate and constitutional leader, but a dangerous and fiery red revolutionist charging full tilt at British supremacy in India, with other revolutionists more or less scarlet in colour rushing on before or behind him. Hare Street has gone mad and, as is natural to a distracted John Bull, sees everything red. Sedition to the right of him, sedition to the left of him, sedition before and behind him, and through it all the *Englishman* like a heroic Light Brigade, charges in for King and motherland.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 11th, 1906 }

A Savage Sentence

We hope that an appeal will be preferred against the barbarous sentence passed on one Bipin Behari Modak for throwing acid, — so it is alleged, — in the face of an unpopular non-striker in the Howrah Office. To us the evidence on the defence side seems to be exceedingly strong nor can we discover any motive for the attack on the part of a man who had no connection of any kind with the strike. But then it was a strike case, and strike, in magisterial eyes, means Swadeshi and Swadeshi means sedition. So by a strict chain of judicial logic the accused is not only convicted but meted out a savage and merciless punishment. Whatever may be the fact as to this particular prosecution, it is certain that a taint of Swadeshi in any case seems to double and treble the guilt in the eyes of the magistracy. The spirit of Sir Bampfylde Fuller has not left the country with his body.

The Question of the Hour

There is every sign that the issue on which the future of the national movement depends, will soon become very acute. Babu Bhupendranath Bose has put it with great frankness when he says that we must act in association with and not in opposition to the Government. In other words, the whole spirit which has governed the national movement, must be changed and we must go back to the policy of pre-Swadeshi days. This then is the issue before us. We declared a war of passive resistance against the bureaucracy on the 7th of August; and we understood that the struggle was not to end till such a regime as Lord Curzon's should be rendered for ever impossible in the future. Are we now to declare peace and alliance with the bureaucracy and blot out the last twelve months from our history? Babu Ananda Chandra Roy made the proposal a little while ago; a much more considerable politician makes it today. It is for the country to judge.

A Criticism

Babu Naresh Chandra Sen Gupta, at a meeting of the Students' Union, made certain remarks upon the new party and the old. The spirit of the remarks was good, but the information on which they were based seems to be remarkably one-sided. He said, for instance: "The old leaders never forgot to take counsel with the new party; but the new party had spurned the old men." When, may we ask, except at Barisal where the new school was in a majority, did the old leaders take counsel with the new? Since then it has been the deliberate policy of the old leaders to exclude the new party from their counsels and some influential men among them have even declared that they will not work with the principal men of that party. We do not pretend to dictate to the old leaders or to the Congress or to any other public body; we wish to have an opportunity of pressing our views on the Congress as the views of increasing numbers in the country. The future is ours and we are content to conquer it by degrees. But the determination of the old leaders is to give us no foothold in the present. A great and growing school of politics cannot consent to be treated in such cavalier fashion.

By the Way

Babu Bhupendranath Bose has, it appears, been writing to the Mofussil laying down the policy of the nation. Babu Bhupendranath is not going to allow Mr. Tilak to be President, because the said Tilak does not know navigation. Babu Bhupendranath is going to telegraph to Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji asking him to dance to Babu Bhupendranath's fiddling. Babu Bhupendranath is not going to allow the nation to act in opposition to the Government. Babu Bhupendranath as a loyal Legislative Councillor, will compel the people to act in association with the bureaucracy. Long live Babu Bhupendranath Bose, ally of England and Dictator of Bengal!

It is very natural for the Comilla people to enquire whether this remarkable pronouncement is Babu Bhupendranath's own particular balloon, or Babu Surendranath Banerji also is tempting the airy heights in his company. The mysteries of the secret conclave which attempts to direct the destinies of the national movement are carefully veiled from profane eyes, but it is generally understood that Babu Bhupendranath wields there a marvellous influence, the source of which it is difficult to understand. He is a successful attorney, a conspicuous figure in Calcutta society, a man of the world gifted with consummate business ability, a member of the Bengal Legislative Council, who aspires, it is believed, to the cool heights of Simla. In all this there is nothing which gives him a claim to lead in a great patriotic upheaval. Yet he is the power behind the throne.

*

Curiously yoked is this grey leader with the flying mane, thunderous neigh and stamping hooves of our great veteran war-steed. The one would gallop on with the national chariot, the other hangs back. The eye of the one is thrown forward, his ear pricks to the noise of the battle, his heart is in the future with the destiny of his nation. The eye of the other is cast backward, his ear pricks to the dulcet voices of Minto and Morley, his heart is in the past, in the august peace of the Legislative Council. But it is the slow horse that sets the pace. And hence we have Babu Bhupendranath Bose figuring as President-maker and policy-maker to His Majesty the lately awakened Democracy of Bengal.

*

The question is, will the people sanction the appointment of

Babu Bhupendranath by himself to this important office? To the spirit of autocracy and government from behind the curtain, we shall always be opposed whether in the bureaucracy or in our own leaders. But if there is to be an autocrat, let him at least be one whose heart is wholly with the people.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 12th, 1906 }

The Old Policy and the New

Babu Bhupendranath Bose has issued a manifesto of his views in the *Bengalee*, in which he explains his letter to the Secretary of the People's Association at Comilla. That document, it seems, was a private letter, although it was obviously intended to produce a public effect, *viz.* to prevent the nomination of Mr. Tilak and to counteract the effect of Babu Bipin Chandra Pal's meeting and speeches in Comilla. However, we have now an authoritative statement of Babu Bhupendranath's "policy", and no further misunderstanding is possible. This policy is precisely what we expected; it might have been penned in the pre-Partition and pre-Swadeshi days and amounts simply to the old Congress programme. We are to solicit Government help and favours as before, to oppose its measures when they are bad, and, when they are very bad, to support this opposition "with the vital energy of the entire nation". But we are not to attempt to stand apart from the Government; we are not fit (because we have castes!) to stand among the self-governing countries of the world. We must therefore accept our subjection and wait for the golden days when we are thoroughly Europeanised, before we make any attempt to assert our national existence. At the same time, we may work out our own salvation in industrial matters, by such enterprises as the Banga Lakshmi Mill, in social matters by the abolition of caste, and even in educational matters by — but no, Babu Bhupendranath Bose has never been a friend of the National University idea. Such, when stripped of all verbiage, is the programme which Babu Bhupendranath sets before us, and since, in spite of his modest disclaimer, he has a commanding influence in determining the active policy of our leaders, his programme may be taken as the ultimate programme of his party.

We should like to know what Babu Bhupendranath precisely means by opposition to Government schemes. Except in extreme cases, so far as we understand him, he is opposed to bringing the vital energy of the nation to bear on the Government; and the only alternative policy is one of prayer and petition. It has been demonstrated repeatedly that prayer and petition have no appreciable influence on the British Government and that whatever slight influence it might have once had, has faded into nullity. It is only when the nation, finding its prayers and petitions rejected, begins to manifest its strength that the British Government inclines its ear and is graciously pleased to withdraw a circular, to dismiss a Fuller or to consider whether it can unsettle a settled fact. But Babu Bhupendranath argues that we cannot bring "the vital energies of the nation" to support opposition to any and every measure of Government. We are quite at one with him; but we cannot follow him in the strangely illogical conclusion he draws from this premise. He concludes from it that our right course is to trust to the broken weapon of remonstrance and futile petition in all but exceptional cases like the Partition. We conclude that our right course is not to waste unnecessary time over smaller matters, but to go to the root of the matter, the control over finance and legislation which is the basis of self-government and the first step towards autonomy.

The proposal of the old party is to use the great outburst of national strength which the Partition has evoked, in order to get the Partition rescinded, and then to put it back in the cupboard until again wanted. Such a policy will be absolutely suicidal. These outbursts can only come once or twice in a century; they cannot be evoked and ruled at the will of any leader, be he Surendranath Banerji or even a greater than Surendranath. Nor would such frequent outbursts benefit the country, but would rather, like frequent occasions of fever, weaken the nation and render it finally listless and strengthless. The problem for statesmanship at this moment is to organise and utilise the energy which has been awakened for an object of the first importance to our national development. The withdrawal of the Partition by itself will not improve the position of our race with regard to its rulers nor leave it one whit better than before Lord Curzon's regime. Even if the present Government were overflowing with liberal kindness, it cannot last for ever, and there is nothing to prevent another Imperialist Viceroy backed by an Imperialist Government from perpetrating measures as injurious to the interests and sentiments of the nation. The only genuine guarantee against this contingency is the control by the nation of its own destinies, and to secure an effective instalment of this control, should be the first aim of all our political action. No British Government will willingly concede anything in the nature of effective control. It can only be wrested from them by concentrating "the vital energies of the entire nation" into opposition to the Government and admitting of no truce until the desired end is secured. This is the kernel of the new party's policy and it differs entirely from Babu Bhupendranath's meaningless and futile programme.

Is a Conflict Necessary?

The old leaders are now telling the country that there is no need of a conflict as their ideals are identical with those of the new party, and it is only the latter who are heating themselves into a passion about nothing. The other day, Babu Naresh Chandra Sen Gupta in perfect good faith, accepted this statement and declared it to the assembled students. But yesterday we learned that Babu Bhupendranath Bose insists on our working in association with the Government and not in opposition! This is emphatically not the ideal of the new party, for we are opposed to any accommodation with the Government which precedes or dispenses with the concession of effective self-government to the Indian people. We shall shortly make a succinct and definitive statement of our programme and demands; and if there is really no difference of ideals, if the whole quarrel is a misunderstanding and the old leaders are prepared not only to profess but to carry out those ideals in co-operation with the new party, the conflict will die a natural death. But it should be realised that without sincerity and frank openness no attempt at an understanding can be successful or worth making.

The Charge of Vilification

A charge which is being freely hurled against the new party is that they, or at least an active section of them, indulge in "vile abuse" of the old leaders. We do not care to deny that some of our writers and speakers are unsparing and outspoken in their attacks on individual leaders and that sometimes the bounds are passed. But this is a common incident of any political controversy under modern conditions. Both sides are guilty of such excesses. The correspondence to which the *Bengalee* has been recently giving a large part of its space is often of a poisonous virulence and an almost absurd violence of misrepresentation and the chief vernacular organ of the old party has no better claims to "respectability" in this respect than the most outspoken exponent of a more extreme policy. It is merely party passion which tries to ascribe all the violence and vilification to one side. These are inevitable concomitants of a party conflict and it will not do for either side to affect a sanctimonious spotlessness of demeanour; for the affectation will not bear scrutiny.

Autocratic Trickery

It is announced that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has accepted Babu Bhupendranath's offer of the Presidentship of the National Congress at Calcutta. No one was likely to oppose Mr. Naoroji as a President and had the proposal been brought forward constitutionally in the Reception Committee the supporters of Mr. Tilak would have consented to postpone his name till the next year. But the Secret Cabal which is managing affairs in defiance of all rule and practice, were determined to score a party success and to use Mr. Naoroji, without his knowledge, as a tool for their ignoble purpose. They would face the supporters of Mr. Tilak with an accomplished fact, which they must either accept or incur the odium of opposing an universally respected name. They have followed a similar method with regard to the Exhibition which they have practically sold to the Government for a price. In this way, the Reception Committee is being turned into a farce and when they allow it to meet, it will find itself without occupation as all its functions have been performed for it behind its back. It becomes therefore the imperative duty of all who have any desire for national control over the national assembly to demand a settled elective constitution not only for the Congress but for every Congress body and law for its procedure which the leaders shall not be allowed to violate unless they are prepared to face a public impeachment from the platform of the Congress.

By the Way

The *Englishman* has been making all sorts of remarkable discoveries recently; its activity in this field is stupendous. Recently, it discovered the respectability of the Congress. Yesterday, it suddenly found out that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji is an angel. A comparative angel, of course, but still an angel. He is pardoned all his wild and whirling speeches, his fiery denunciations of British rule, his immeasured expressions of condemnation; for will he not keep out Mr. Tilak from the Presidential chair of the Calcutta Congress? Why is it that the very name of this man, with his quiet manner of speech, his unobtrusive simplicity and integrity, his absence of noisy and pushing "patriotism", is such a terror to Moderate and Anglo-Indian alike? Far more tactful and measured in speech than Mr. Naoroji, the idea of him yet causes them an ague. It is because he is the one man among us who sees clearly and acts. The man of action in the Presidential chair of the Congress! The Anglo-Indian envisages the idea and sees in it the very image of his doom. Of course, it is the appearance of that wild new species, the "extremist", that is responsible for Mr. Naoroji's angelic transfiguration. There is a delightful flexibility about this word "extremist". It is imbued with a thoroughly progressive spirit and never stands still. Once quite within the memory of man, Babu Surendranath Banerji was an "extremist" but his scarlet coat is growing quite a dull and faded pink in these latter times. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji was once denounced as a blatant extremist — that was the day before yesterday. But now that Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma and his Home Rulers raise their wild heads above the terrified horizon, Mr. Naoroji is on a fair way to being admitted into the sacred fold of the "statesman-like" and "moderate". A still worse species of fire-breathing monster has recently turned up in the Bengal extremist. And we look forward with blissful hope to the day when the *Englishman* will learn to respect the "notorious Bipin Chandra Pal" and embrace him tearfully as the sole remaining bulwark against more anarchic monsters than himself. The upshot is, that India progresses.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 13th, 1906 }

Strange Speculations

The *Statesman*, not content with lecturing the Bengali leaders, opens its news columns to curious speculations about the President of the next Congress. It is apparently not quite satisfied with Mr. Naoroji, — a natural sentiment, since, whatever the moderates profess, Mr. Naoroji is not one of them, though he may not go the whole way with the advanced school. Accordingly, the name of Nawab Sayyed Mohammed is thrust forward, — because he is a Mahomedan. The idea that the election of a Mahomedan President will conciliate the anti-Congress Mahomedans, is a futility which has been repeatedly exposed by experience. Mr. Rasul's presidentship at Barisal has not conciliated the following of the Nawab of Dacca; such nominations can only gratify those Mahomedans who are already for the Congress. The question this year for the Congress is, Swadeshi or no Swadeshi, Boycott or no Boycott, and no minor considerations can be admitted. A still more extraordinary piece of information is that Punjab will put up Lala Lajpat Rai against Mr. Tilak! We know, on the contrary, that Punjab is for Mr. Tilak and that Lala Lajpat Rai is the last man to countenance opposition to Mr. Tilak. In itself the candidature of Lala Lajpat Rai would not be unwelcome to the new party. He is one of those men who act, more than they talk, a man with a splendid record of solid patriotic work behind him and to him above all other belongs the credit of building up the Arya Samaj into the most powerful and practically effective organisation in the country. Were both Mr. Tilak and Mr. Naoroji to decline the Presidentship, Lala Lajpat Rai's would be the only other possible candidature.

The *Statesman* under Inspiration

An obviously inspired article appears in the *Statesman* in which a gallant attempt is made to misrepresent the issues before the country. It tries to convey the idea that the "extremists" have set up Mr. Tilak in opposition to Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji. As everybody is aware, it was not until Mr. Tilak's name was already put prominently before the country that the "moderate section", seeing no other way of avoiding the issue, bethought themselves of Mr. Naoroji. On the issue of representation or no representation our contemporary affects to be in doubt as to the position of the new party, and it discovers that the Bengali people are no longer unanimous against the Partition. How then can Mr. Morley reconsider the question? Need we inform the *Statesman* that the Bengali people are as unanimous against the Partition as they ever were and always will be? We do not doubt Mr. Morley's ability to find excuses for evading a concession which he has never meant to yield, unless his hand is forced. But the movement for a new representation is not only a contravention of the understanding which had existed among all parties since the last Town Hall meeting, but it was hatched in secret and engineered in secret. The country was not taken into confidence as to the motives or justification for this important departure. Had the old leaders acted straightforwardly in the matter and shown overwhelmingly strong reasons for the step, the leaders of the new party, although opposed on principle to the submission of new prayers and entreaties, might not have refused to countenance a strong and dignified representation which did not sacrifice in any degree the policy of Swadeshi and Boycott. Since they would not adopt this straightforward course, it is fair to conclude that the case for a new representation was too weak to be publicly presented. We have therefore every right to appeal to the country to maintain the policy hitherto successful. Tighten the grip of the Boycott, let both parties unite to give a new impetus to the Swadeshi; paralyse the two-headed administration of Bengal by every legitimate means of passive resistance — and the Partition will inevitably be rescinded or modified.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 14th, 1906 }

A Disingenuous Defence

The strictures which the extraordinary announcement made at Bhagalpur by Babu Surendranath Banerji has aroused, have compelled the *Bengalee* to offer a sort of apology or explanation for the unconstitutional action of the leaders. It was distinctly stated at Bhagalpur that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji had accepted the Presidentship of the Congress. It follows therefore that the Presidentship was unconstitutionally offered to Mr. Naoroji by one or two individuals behind the back of the Reception Committee. It is now explained that Mr. Naoroji simply wired his willingness to accept the Presidentship offered to him. On this theory the offer was a private suggestion of individuals and the individuals made a public announcement of their private suggestion and its private acceptance, in order to compromise the Reception Committee and force its hands. The explanation therefore does not exculpate the authors of this stratagem; it only makes their action more disingenuous and tricky. No individual has any right to take privately the consent of Mr. Naoroji or another, as if the Presidentship depended on his choice. Until the Reception Committee has decided to whom it will offer the function, all that individuals, be they never so much leaders, have the authority to do is to put forward name or names for recommendation by the Committee. It is only after the Committee has made its decision that the person selected can be asked whether he is willing to accept the offer. If it is thought necessary to make sure of this beforehand, that also can only be done with the sanction or by the direction of the Committee. The fact that the *Bengalee* should have advanced such a puerile quibble to justify the conduct of Babu Bhupendranath is a proof that these "constitutional" leaders have no conception whatever of what constitutional action means. The plea that it had long been known Mr. Naoroji was coming to India and it was therefore thought fit to ask him to preside at the Congress, is one which will command no credit. When did this "fitness" occur to men who were proposing Harnam Singh and Mudholkar and everybody and anybody, but never Mr. Naoroji; although "it was known" that he was coming to India? Not until Mr. Tilak's name was before the country and they saw that none of the mediocrities they had suggested could weigh in the scale with the great Maratha leader. Not by these sophisms will the Calcutta autocrats escape the discredit of their actions.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 17th, 1906 }

Last Friday's Folly

Even at the risk of being branded as social reactionaries, we must, we feel, enter our protest against the notions and ideals that lay, evidently, under the so-called national dinner, celebrated at the Albert Hall on Friday last. The function, in itself, was too insignificant to deserve any notice. Two hundred and fifty men and boys meeting and dining together in public, regardless of caste-restrictions and old orthodoxy, is not even a new thing in Calcutta Society. Hindus and Mahomedans had dined publicly in Calcutta, on special occasions, before now. Dinners had repeatedly been given at the India Club in honour of prominent members in which members of all castes and creeds joined. Subscription dinners had been organised in honour of prominent public men, even outside that Club, the last one being less than two years old, when the friends of Sir Henry Cotton met him at a dinner at the Calcutta Town Hall. Babu Narendranath Sen organised a public dinner some years back, to celebrate the birthday of Buddha, where people of all castes and more than one creed, sat down on mats and dined together on simple *loochie* and *dal*. These dinners had all been publicly announced and publicly reported; but no one cared to publicly condemn them. Had last Friday's dinner been associated with some specific public function, or been held in honour of any particular public men, no one would have, we believe, taken any serious notice of it. The folly of it lay in the idea that interdining was a necessary condition of nation building in India; and it deserves condemnation for propounding the foolish and suicidal ideal that social and religious differences must first of all be destroyed before India can ever hope to realise her own true civic life.

This is the Anglo-Indian and the British idea. It is the main plea upon which the present despotism supports and justifies itself. It is the plea upon which even our own old-school patriots proclaim the fatal doctrine that India is not, and will never for a very long period be, fitted for self-government, and, therefore, the strong hand of the foreigner must be over her, to prevent her various castes and creeds flying at each others' throats, and thus falling a prey to some other and infinitely worse foreign yoke, if the present one is removed; and that, therefore, the highest political wisdom demands that we should, as long as there are diversities of creeds and castes among us, cultivate with care the present servitude, trying to make it easy to bear for the nation, and profitable for the individual, by adopting the policy of "association with and opposition to the Government". This plea must be knocked on the head, therefore, before we can expect to make out a reasonable case for that propaganda of national freedom and autonomy which has been taken up by the new party in the country.

Those who say that caste and religious differences must first of all be destroyed before India can ever rise to the status of a nation, have very hazy and confused notions regarding the character and constitution of that nation. Our history has been different in many respects from the history of other peoples. The composition of the Indian people has been unique in all the world. Nations grew in the past by the accretion and assimilation of different tribes. This is an earlier process. But India has not been a mere meeting place of tribes, but a meeting place of grown up nations with developed social and religious lines of their own, and with original castes and types of cultures peculiar to them. The character and composition of the coming Indian nation, therefore, will differ very materially from those of the European nations, the process of unification among whom took place at a much earlier and comparatively more nebular stage of their growth. This is a fact which our old school politicians and social reformers do not seem as yet to have had any time to think of, and we are not hopeful that even now, after it is pointed out to them, in the plainest language possible, they will have the patience to do so and recognise this essential peculiarity of our infant national life. The nation-idea in India will realise itself, in all its departments, along what may be called federal lines, — it will be a union of different nationalities, each preserving its own specific elements both of organisation and ideal, each communicating to the others what they lack in either thought or character, and all moving together towards one universal end, both in civic and social life, progressively realising that end along its own historic and traditional lines, and thus indefinitely drawing near to each other, without, for an equally indefinite period, actually losing themselves in any one particular form of that life, whether old or new. The Mahomedan, the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Christian in India will not have to cease to be Mahomedan, Hindu, Buddhist, or Christian, in any sense of the term, for uniting into one great and puissant Indian nation. Devotion to one's own ideals and institutions, with toleration and respect for the ideals and institutions of other sections of the community, and an ardent love and affection for the common civic life and ideal of all — these are what must be cultivated by us now, for the building up of the real Indian nation. To try to build it up in any other way will be impossible, whether that way be the way of the Brahmo, the Christian, or the propagandist Mahomedan. To make any attempt along any of these lines, will not make for but work against national unity; and the reckless men who organised this so-called national dinner will, if they persist in their folly, instead of bringing the different races and religions together, only help to arouse the opposition of orthodoxy everywhere, and drive the great forces that range always with orthodoxy to an attitude of open hostility to the great national movement, and bring about a reaction that will seek to accentuate those very differences and tighten those very bonds of caste and custom which in their unphilosophic and unscientific zeal they are trying by these wrong and obtrusive methods to obliterate and loosen. It is in this view that we condemn the folly that was perpetrated on Friday last under the name of a National Dinner.

Stop-gap Won't Do

Even *India* has sometimes a ray of light in the midst of its twilight obscurity and crass lack of insight. Thus saith the organ of the Cottons and Wedderburns: "Mr. Morley will not be Secretary of State for India for ever and a day. So long as he is at the helm, the prow of the ship will be set in the right direction. But what will happen when his controlling hand is removed?" Precisely so, Mr. Morley may set the prow in the right direction, but it is perfectly evident from his public statements that he is not prepared to travel fast or far; on the contrary he is utterly against any decision and effective treatment of the intolerable situation in India. He is simply going to repeat an experiment which has failed and is out of date. We shall therefore gain little during his lease of power — and afterwards? Who shall secure us against another Curzonian reaction? We therefore say that an instalment of effective self-government is the one thing which the Congress should insist on because it is the one thing which will make reaction impossible. We farther contend that an effective instalment of self-government not only ought to be but must inevitably be the first step towards complete autonomy. For the statement of these plain and indisputable truths we must, forsooth, be dubbed "seditionists" and "extremists", not only by Anglo-Indian papers for whose opinion we do not care a straw, but by Indian journals professing to be nationalist. There could not be a greater evidence of the dull servility of attitude, the fear of truth and the unworthy timidity which has become ingrained in our habits of mind by long acquiescence in servitude. If these things are sedition, then we are undoubtedly seditious and will persist in our sedition till the end of the chapter.

By the Way

The *Bengalee* came out on Sunday with an extraordinary leader in which it appeals to its opponents to sink all personal differences and unite in one common cause. The better to further this desirable end it kicks them severely all round so as to bring them into a reasonable state of mind. The opponents of the *Bengalee* are all actuated by base personal motives; their organs of opinion are upstart journals trying to create a sensation; their championing of advanced political principles is a trick of the trade, etc. etc. And *therefore* the *Bengalee* appeals to them to be friendly, toe the line and follow faithfully in the wake of Babu Surendranath Banerji. Does our contemporary really think that this is the sort of appeal which is likely to heal the breach?

*

The praise and approval of the Anglo-Indian papers, says the *Bengalee* wisely, is a sure sign that we are on the wrong road. Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung. On this principle, we ought to go on our way rejoicing. If there is one pleasing feature of the present situation, it is the remarkable unanimity with which the Anglo-Indian Press has greeted our appearance in the field with a shriek of denunciation and called on Heaven and Earth and the Government and the Moderates to league together and crush us out of existence. *Statesman* and *Englishman*, *Times* and *Pioneer*, all their discordant notes meet in one concord on this grand swelling theme. The "moderate" papers of all shades, pro-Government or advocates of association with Government or advocates of association-cum-opposition, have all risen to the call. The *Hindu Patriot* rejoices at our lack of influence, the *Mirror* threatens us with the prison and the scaffold, the *Bengalee* mutters about upstart journals and warns people against the morass which is the inevitable goal, in its opinion, of a forward policy. Well, well, well! Here is an extraordinary and most inexplicable clamour about an upstart journal and a party without influence or following in the country.

*

The *Statesman* is taking its cue from the *Mirror* and is growing very truculent and minatory. It is not going to give us any quarter, this merciless "Friend of India", but will abolish, expunge and blot us out of existence in no time. It will not consent to support Indian aspirations unless we consent to perform *harakiri*. It will advise its friend Mr. Morley to make no concession, no, not even increase the number of our Legislative Honourables, until even the very scent of a "sedition" can no longer be sniffed in the Indian breezes.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 18th, 1906 }

Is Mendicancy Successful?

An apologia for the mendicant policy has recently appeared in the columns of the *Bengalee*. The heads of the defence practically reduce themselves to two or three arguments.

1. The policy of petitioning was recommended by Raja Rammohan Roy, has been pursued consistently since then and has been eminently successful — at least whatever political gains have been ours in the last century, have been won by this policy.

2. Supposing this contention to be lost, there remains another. Mere petitioning is bad, but when the petition is backed by the will of the community, resolved to gain its object by every legitimate means, it is not mendicancy but an assertion of a natural right.

3. Even if a petitioning policy be bad in principle, politics has nothing to do with principles, but must be governed by expediency, and not only general expediency, but the expediency of particular cases.

4. Then there is the *argumentum ad hominem*. The Dumaists petition, the Irish petition; why should not we?

We believe this is a fair summary of our contemporary's contentions.

We are not concerned to deny the antiquity of the petitioning policy, nor its illustrious origin. Raja Rammohan Roy was a great man in the first rank of active genius and set flowing a stream of tendencies which have transformed our national life. But what was the only possible policy for him in his times and without a century of experience behind him, is neither the only policy nor the best policy for us at the present juncture. We join issue with our contemporary on his contention that whatever we have gained politically has been due to petitioning. It appears to us to show a shallow appreciation of political forces and an entire inability to understand the fundamental facts which underlie outward appearances. When the sepoys had conquered India for the English, choice lay before the British, either to hold the country by force and repression, or to keep it as long as possible by purchasing the co-operation of a small class of the people who would be educated so entirely on Western lines as to lose their separate individuality and their sympathy with the mass of the nation. An essential part of this policy which became dominant owing to the strong personalities of Macaulay, Bentinck and others, was to yield certain minor rights to the small educated class, and concede the larger rights as slowly as possible and only in answer to growing pressure. This policy was not undertaken as the result of our petitions or our wishes, but deliberately and on strong grounds. India was a huge country with a huge people strange and unknown to their rulers. To hold it for ever was then considered by most statesmen a chimerical idea; even to govern it and keep it tranquil for a time was not feasible without the sympathy and co-operation of the people themselves. It was therefore the potential strength of the people and not the wishes of a few educated men, which was the true determining cause of the scanty political gains we so much delight in. Since then the spirit of the British people and their statesmen has entirely changed, — so changed that even a Radical statesman like Mr. Morley brushes aside the expressed "will of the community" with a few abrupt and cavalier phrases. Why is this? Precisely because we have been foolish enough to follow a purely mendicant policy and to betray our own weakness. If we had not instituted the National Congress we might have continued in the old way for some time longer, getting small and mutilated privileges whenever a strong Liberal Viceroy happened to come over. But the singularly ineffective policy and inert nature of the Congress revealed to British statesmen — or so they thought, — the imbecility and impotence of our nation. A period of repression, ever increasing in its insolence and cynical contempt for our feelings, has been the result. And now that a Liberal Government of unprecedented strength comes into power, we find that the gains we can expect will be of the most unsubstantial and illusory kind and that we are not to get any guarantee against their being withdrawn by another reactionary Viceroy after a few years. It is perfectly clear therefore that the policy of mendicancy will no longer serve. After all, cries the *Bengalee*, we have only failed in the case of the Partition. We have failed in everything of importance for these many years, measure after measure has been driven over our prostrate heads and the longed-for Liberal Government flouts us with a few grudging concessions in mere symptomatic cases of oppression. The long black list of reactionary measures remains and will remain unrepealed. We do not care to deny that in small matters petitioning may bring us a trivial concession here or a slight abatement of oppression there; even there we shall fail in nine cases and win in one. But nothing important, nothing lasting, nothing affecting the vital questions which most closely concern us, can be hoped for from mere mendicancy. To the contention of antiquity and success, therefore, our answer is that this antique policy has not succeeded in the long run, but utterly failed, and that the time has come for a stronger and more effective policy to take its place. To the other contentions of the *Bengalee* we shall reply in their proper order. This which is the true basis of the petitionary philosophy, has neither reason nor fact to support it.

By the Way

The *Englishman* is at it again. His fiery imagination has winged its way over rivers and hills and is now disporting itself on airy pinions over far Sylhet. We learn from our contemporary that the British Government has been subverted in Sylhet, which is now being governed by a number of schoolboys who — horrible to relate — are learning the use of deadly *lathi*. This startling resolution is the result of Babu Bipin Chandra Pal's recent visit to Sylhet. To crown these calamities, it appears that Golden Bengal is circulating its seditious pamphlets broadcast. Its irrepressible emissaries seem not to have despaired even of converting the Magistrate to their views, for even he is in possession of a copy. We have, however, news later than the *Englishman*'s. We have been informed from a reliable source that the Sylhet Republic has been declared and that Babu Bipin Chandra Pal is to be its first President.

*

The *Englishman* graciously accedes to the request of a correspondent who prays this "much-esteemed journal to accommodate the following lines". There are some gems from the delicious production which the accommodating *Englishman* has accommodated. "We should always beg the Government and not fight it for favours." Fighting for favours is distinctly good; but there is better behind. "It is impossible for us to obtain rights and privileges by fulminating acrimonious invectives on the Government and making the Anglo-Indian rulers the butt-end of mendacious persiflage and anathema." Shade of Jabberjee! The junior members of the Bar Library will enjoy this elegant description of themselves. "For ought I know most of the educated men are opposed to the despicable spread-eagleism of a coterie of raw youths, who having adopted European costumes and rendered their upper lips destitute of "knightly growth", give themselves all the airs of a learned Theban and range themselves against the British Government." This is a sentence which we would not willingly let die and we would suggest to the raw youths with the destitute upper lips that they might sit in council and devise means to preserve a literary gem which will immortalise them no less than the brilliant author. How infinitely superior is the true Jabberjee to the mock imitation. Even the author of the letter to Mr. Morley must hide his diminished head before this outburst.

*

"This attitude of the Extremists merely exposes their Boeotian stupidity. Let them lay to it, that if they do not yet refrain from the obnoxious procedure, they are sure to come to grief." We will lay to it, S. M. After such a scintillation of Attic wit and rumbling of Homeric thunder, our Boeotian stupidity finds itself irremediably reduced to Laconic silence. Truly, there seems to be some fearful and wonderful wild fowl in the ranks of the moderationists.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 20th, 1906 }

By the Way

The *Statesman* and the *Indian Mirror* appear to have entered into a Holy Alliance for the suppression of the extremists. The basis of this great political combination seems to be mutual admiration of the most effusive and affectionate kind. *Mirror* assures *Statesman* that he is a noble Anglo-Indian and a true and tried Friend of India; *Statesman* quotes *Mirror*'s solemn lucubrations by the yard. It only needs the *Hindu Patriot* to join the league and complete the Triple Alliance. An Anglo-Indian paper, a Government journal masking under the disguise of an Indian daily, and the exponent of the most pale and watery school of "patriotism", would make a beautiful symphony in whites and greys. Such an alliance is most desirable: it would be a thing of artistic beauty and a joy for ever — and it would not hurt the new party.

*

We were a little surprised to find the *Bengalee* lending itself to the campaign. It chooses to insinuate that while the methods of the old party are extremely proper, sober and legal, those of the new party are outside the bounds of the law. In what respect, pray? We advocate boycott and picketing, but that is a gospel of which Babu Surendranath Banerji has constituted himself in the past the chief *panda*. We advocate abstention from Legislative Councils and other Government bodies, but so do the old leaders strongly recommend it — to East Bengal. We advocate the assertion by the people of their right to carry on the agitation in every lawful way, — but so did the old leaders at Barisal. We advocate abstention from all association with the

Government, but such abstention has not yet been forbidden by law. We advocate the substitution of Indian agency and Indian energy in every department of life for our old state of dependency on foreign agency and energy. We advocate an organised system of self-development guided by a Council with regard to Bengal and an open democratic constitution for the Congress instead of the secret unconstitutional manipulations of a few leaders. We advocate finally, autonomy as the ideal and goal of our endeavours. Where is the illegality, if you please?

*

To listen to these excited people one would imagine we were calling on the teeming millions of India to rise in their wrath, fall upon the noble Anglo-Indian friends of the *Mirror* and with teeth, nails and claws drive them pell-mell into the Indian Ocean. All these imputations have, of course, a definite object and the excitement is a calculated passion. On one side to discredit our party with the timid and cautious, on the other to draw the attention of the bureaucracy and secure for us free lodgings from a paternal Government, seems to be the objective. Of neither contingency are we afraid; the new policy is not for those who tremble or who prefer their own safety and ease to the service of their country, and the fear of the Government we renounced long ago and have forgotten what it means. It is no use trying to awaken that dead feeling in our nature. We shall go on our way steadily and persistently, careless of defeat or victory, indifferent to attack or suffering, until we have built up such a nucleus of force and courage in India as will compel both moderate and official to yield to the demands of the people. But always within the bounds of the law, if you please, our friend of Colootola. We are a law-abiding people, even when we are extremists.

*

We have been severely attacked more than once for splitting up the country into two factions and thus marring the majestic unity of the national movement. We have already given our answer to that charge. Already before the Swadeshi movement the divergence of ideals had begun to declare itself and in several parts of India strong sections had grown up who were already dissatisfied with mendicancy and with the haphazard formation and methods of the Congress. Until recently the only course which seemed left to men of this persuasion was to hold entirely aloof from the Congress or else to attend it without taking any prominent part in its deliberations. But at the present time the aspect of things has greatly changed. The party predominates in the Deccan, is extremely strong in the Punjab and a force to be reckoned with in Bengal. It numbers among its leaders and adherents many men of ability, energy and culture, some of whom have done good service in the past and others are obviously among the chief workers of the future. They have a definite ideal which is not the ideal of the older leaders and definite methods by which they hope to arrive at their ideal. It is idle to expect that a party so constituted will any longer consent to be excluded from political life or from the deliberations of the Congress through which it may exercise a general influence over the country. The old party is anxious that we should take up the position of an insignificant "extremist" party, tolerated perhaps and sometimes made use of to frighten the Government into concessions, but not recognised. "Exist, if you please, but do not interfere with or oppose us," is their cry, "and do not try to assert yourselves in the Congress." Such a demand is ridiculous in the extreme. When there is a definite difference as to ideals and methods, it is too much to expect of any growing party that it shall not use every means to educate the people to their views and organise such opinion as has declared itself on their side. Nor is it reasonable to demand a considerable part of the educated community to banish itself from Congress or only attend as a mute and inert element. If the Congress is really a national body, it must admit all opinions and give them free facility for expressing their views and urging their measures. If, on the other hand, it is merely a gathering of moderates, it has no right to pose as a national body. The argument usually urged that the Congress has been built up by a certain class of people and with certain ideas and that therefore it should remain in the same hands and under the domination of the same ideas, is one which has no value whatever, unless we are to accept the Congress merely as a society for the cultivation of good relations with the Government. If it is a national assembly, it must answer to changes of national feeling and progress with the progress of the nation. We shall therefore persist in disseminating our ideas with the utmost energy of which we are capable and in organising the opinion of the country wherever we have turned it in the desired direction, for action and for the prevalence of our ideals. The only question that remains, is the question of united action. It is certainly desirable, if it can be brought about, that the action of the whole country in certain important matters should be united. But the very first condition of such unity is that all important sections of opinion should have the chance of expressing its views and championing its own proposals, before the united action to be taken is decided by a majority. It is for this reason that we demand an elective constitution and a Council honestly representing all sections, so that real unity may be possible and not the false unity which is all the old party clamours for. Their plan for united action is simply to boycott the new party and impose silence on it under penalty of "suppression". So long as they persist in that spirit, united action will remain impossible.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 1st, 1906 }

By the Way

To the onlooker the duel between the *Statesman* and the *Englishman* is extremely amusing. The interests of Anglo-India are safe in the hands of both; only they differ as to the extent to which the alien yoke should be made light. The *Englishman* advocates an open and straightforward course — to make the Indians feel that they are a conquered people — as helpless in the hands of the conquerors as was the dwarf of the story in the iron grip of the giant. The *Statesman*, on the other hand, wants to cover the heels of British boots with soft velvet. We, for ourselves, prefer an open course to a crooked policy.

*

The fun of the thing is that from consideration of methods they have descended to personalities. The *Englishman* credits the *Statesman* with the instinct to follow Mr. Surendranath Banerji with doglike fidelity. To this the *Statesman* replies — "Strange as it may appear to the *Englishman*, we are in the habit of forming our own opinions and of expressing them without any extraneous assistance — even from the Bar Library, or elsewhere. Mr. Banerji has certainly not done us the honour of tendering his help, nor have we found it necessary to invite it." We take our contemporary at his word. But we may be permitted to ask our contemporary if the paragraph about the *New India* to which we referred the other day was not written under some extraneous inspiration, — white or brown? Next, our Chowringhee contemporary boasts of his independent policy and fearless proclamation of it. "In order", says our contemporary, "to attain a wide circulation and a position of influence, it is not enough to follow the example which this journal set a quarter of a century ago by reducing its price to an anna. If the *Englishman* is ever again to become a force in journalism it must copy the *Statesman* in matters of greater importance than the mere cost of its daily issue. It must learn to have an honest and independent policy and to proclaim it fearlessly." And our contemporary seems to think that men's lapses like their civil claims are barred by limitation, or he has a very conveniently short memory, or how could he otherwise so soon forget the dangerous position he was placed in at the time of the Rent Bill controversy and the way out he found by removing Mr. Riach, the responsible editor?

*

After all we do not despair. There is yet some hope left for our contemporary, for he can still understand that — "it is possible for a newspaper, as for an individual, to err at times and honestly to advocate views which may be mistaken."

*

The *Indian Mirror* has, after all, found one good point in the armour of the "extremists", they will not stand any humbug, says our ancient contemporary; and no one will dare question the truth of his opinion, for he speaks clearly from personal experience.

*

Babu Surendranath Banerji is reported to have advised the youthful students of Bally "to keep themselves within the limits of law and never, in their excitement, run into excesses but always to serve their motherland with unflinching devotion, through *good report and evil*," and the old leader is right, because latest experience shows that Indian publicists and patriots have good reason to stand in fear of reports.

*

The *Indian Mirror* is surprised that we are resting on our oars when the Congress-bark should be fast sailing. The light that the *Mirror* is reflecting is both dim and antiquated in these days of radium and X-rays. Our information is that the "recognised" leaders are making arrangements for the Congress, though even the *Mirror* has not been taken into their confidence.

*

The old saw was that a mountain in labour produced a mouse. But the modern saw is that the Indian politicians in labour produce speeches and interviews. Somehow the information has leaked out that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's recent visit to England has not been much of a success. Now Sir William Wedderburn comes to the rescue of the Bombay patriot and says that the Hon'ble gentleman had a series of interviews with eminent British politicians from the Prime Minister down to 150 pro-Indian MPs. Achievement indeed!

*

"Star to star vibrates light" — is there also a similar responsiveness between mind and matter, or else why should there be so fearful a tremor in mother earth, keeping time, as it were, to the nervous tremors of the bold British and the timid Indian heart, at the present Indian unrest in Bengal caused by *Sonar Bangla* and the Shanti-Sechan?

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 11th, 1906 }

By the Way

Emerson and original sin have never as yet gone together. But Principal Herambachandra Moitra has achieved the impossible. Lecturing to a Bombay congregation on a Wednesday he solemnly declared that "even children themselves are not free from sin," and on the following Sunday discoursed on "Emerson". Poor sage of Concord!

*

Calcutta is going to have a Tower of Silence for the Parsis. The *Patrika* would, however, seem to hold that it is more needed by our own patriots. They evidently permit writing in that dreadful place.

*

A "veteran" laments the decay of manners among the people of this country, in the hospitable columns of the *Pioneer*. There was a time, only forty years ago, when on the approach of a European, Indian lads would cry "Gora ata Gora ata" and skid. When the same class of lads now "pass a European with a cigarette between their lips and stare him calmly in the face," and a "large number of natives salaam with their left hands" the world, or the British Empire, which means the same thing, must be nearing its end.

*

Bengal politicians seem determined to maintain the ancient reputation of the nation for its logical acumen and subtlety. The Barisal Conference resolved *not* to send any prayer or petition to

Government; when the Conference was forcibly dispersed, the leaders sent a wire to the Viceroy on the ground that a telegram was surely not a petition. They have resolved not to approach the Lieutenant-Governors of the partitioned Provinces with any prayer or address, but may still draw their Honours' "serious attention" to various matters, public and personal, including the gift of a Deputy Magistracy to their sons. Surely a cosy place in the Executive Service is *not* a membership of the Legislative Council.

*

There is considerable indignation among the true "Friends of India" both in England and in this country, at the "political oration" delivered by Mr. Manmatha Chandra Mallik at the recent Tyabji memorial meeting in London. After this we shall be told that it would be sinful to discourse on religion at a commemoration service in honour of a Lord Bishop of Canterbury or to speak on science at a memorial meeting of a President of the British Association. We think at the recent Tyabji-Bose meeting in London, Babu Romesh Chandra Dutt must have discoursed, therefore, on the greatness of Islam, and Sir Henry Cotton on the saving grace of Brahmo-Theology. We anxiously await full reports of their speeches.

Part Three

Bande Mataram

under the Editorship of Sri Aurobindo

24 October 1906 – 27 May 1907

In October 1906 a joint-stock company, the Bande Mataram Printers and Publishers, Limited, was established in order to put the finances of the *Bande Mataram* on a secure basis. (A prospectus announcing the formation of the company is printed as the first piece in Appendix Two.) The company directors appointed Sri Aurobindo and Bipin Chandra Pal as joint editors of the newspaper. Soon afterwards Pal withdrew, leaving Sri Aurobindo in full charge of the *Bande Mataram*'s editorial policy. No issue of the newspaper appeared between 16 and 23 October 1906. Most issues printed between 24 October and 31 December have been lost. A list of some of the articles in the missing issues is reproduced on pages 199 – 200.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 29th, 1906 }

The Famine near Calcutta

The heartrending accounts of the famine received from Diamond Harbour by the *Statesman*, of which we print the latest elsewhere, ought to be [...........] for those who think [.................] best and the present [.......................] Government we could possibly have in India. Yet it is nothing compared to the grisly and terrible shape that Famine can take when it is in earnest. That grim occasional visitor of ours has, under the economical effects of the present rule, ceased to be occasional and taken up her home in our midst. But Bengal has not yet seen her unveiled face, and those of us who have seen the great famine on the other side of India, those terrible bare fields void of all but death, the fair ploughlands stripped of crops and of cattle, the dreadful corpses on roadside and field that had once been kindly living men and women, the listless moving skeletons who should have been merry children, — they most fervently of all will pray that no such sight will ever be repeated in their own province. Yet even what is happening is terrible enough. Miss Gillbert cries out against the cold indifference and heartless economy of the relief officer but that also is not new to those who saw the famine of 1899. We cannot expect more from the bureaucracy than a businesslike official relief; they are not our flesh and blood that they should feel for us as brothers. They will not admit famine until they are compelled and even then will organize relief with efficiency indeed but without bowels of feeling and with a cold businesslike economy. Nor can we expect them to fix the price of grain or prevent export, as the now deposed Holkar did in Indore to save his people. What we can expect from them, they do; to expect more would be folly. Meanwhile what are we doing ourselves? We have collected small sums of money through scattered agencies and distributed them to the stricken districts, we have made some attempt to send rice at cheap rates; but it is all so inadequate. It is the old, old lesson. There is the thought, there is the will, but there is not the organization. In Barisal there is organization and the famine has been manfully fought. In another part of the new province a still more efficient organization of the educated community kept down the price of food and saved the district. But why are these merely scattered exceptions! Because we have depended for all things on the bureaucracy and made no attempt to organize ourselves as a race to deal with our own problems.

Statesman's Sympathy Brand

The design of the extended New Market was an achievement on which Mr. MacCabe, the Chief Engineer of the Corporation was congratulated by an Anglo-Indian contemporary. But Mr. MacCabe wrote to say that he was an engineer and not an architect and the credit of the design should be given not to him but to his Indian Assistant, Mr. Cavasjee. No sooner was the fact revealed that the work was done by an Indian than the *Statesman* recognised that the design was a replica which had for its original the Crawford Market in Bombay. This startling revelation has consoled our sympathetic contemporary and repaired the wounded vanity of Anglo-India. We cannot sufficiently admire the connoisseurs who delight in the peculiar flavour of the *Statesman*'s friendly sympathy towards Indians.

By the Way

News from Nowhere

(From our correspondent)

The Punjab journal, *Light*, has suggested that in order to safeguard the Congress the Standing Committee should be empowered to expel from the Congress ranks any uncomfortable and undesirable delegate, by three-fourths majority and with reasons given. This statesmanlike proposal has attracted great attention in Bombay and a meeting was held in Mr. D. E. Watcha's office yesterday to consider and give effect to it. Sir Pherozshah Mehta, resplendent with eternal youth, took the chair. After some discussion the proposal was passed and declared, on the spot, a fundamental law of the Congress constitution. It was decided, however, that the Bombay Committee alone should enjoy the power, Sir Pherozshah pointing out that Bombay was the only safe, loyal and moderate city in India and would remain so as long as he (Sir Pherozshah) was its uncrowned King. It was suggested, but timidly and in an awestruck whisper, that even Sir Pherozshah might not live for ever but the great man answered, *"L'état? c'est moi"* and *"après moi le déluge"* (The State? I am the State, and after me the deluge). As no one present happened to know French, this argument was considered unanswerable. An amendment to the effect that Madras and the United Provinces might also be given the power, under proper safeguards and restrictions, was overwhelmingly defeated, the majority being composed of Sir Pherozshah Mehta and the minority of all the other members present. It was next proposed that Mr. B. G. Tilak should be the first person declared disqualified from becoming a Congress delegate. A member present had the temerity to suggest that this proceeding would hurt the Congress and not Mr. Tilak. He was augustly commanded by the chairman to shut up, but as he still persisted the members rose in a body, hustled him out of the room, propelled him downstairs and then returned to their seats fatigued but with a consciousness of duty done. After this the proscription of Lala Lajpat was proposed and carried *nem. con.* Babu Bipin Chandra Pal was the last name suggested and carried uproariously, the members voting twice in their enthusiasm. The reasons alleged for these proscriptions have not been fully ascertained. Mr. Tilak was disqualified because he has been to jail and has no tact, Babu Bipin Chandra Pal because he is Babu Bipin Chandra Pal; I am unable to discover the precise reason alleged in Lala Lajpat Rai's case, but I believe it was because he was not Mr. Alfred Nundy. After the other members had left, Sir Pherozshah and Mr. Watcha constituted themselves into a public meeting, reconstituted the Standing Committee and elected fifty delegates for the Calcutta Congress.

*

There is little other fresh news from this quarter. The announcement of Mr. Morley's intended reforms in the *Pioneer* has created great excitement and it is understood that several petitions have reached Lord Minto protesting against the selection of a Gurkha prince and suggesting the petitioners' superior claims. Nawabzada Nasurullah Khan of Sachin and Nawab Salimullah of Dacca are among the claimants. It is also understood that Mr. K. G. Gupta has sent in his pretensions through the Bengal Government, but for this I cannot vouch. Much alarm has been created in royalist and moderate circles by the persistent attempts of Mr. Tilak to bring the merchants and mill-owners into the Swadeshi movement. The weather here is sultry but not thunderous. Fireworks are frequent.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 30th, 1906 }

The *Statesman's* Voice of Warning

The *Statesman* has been sadly uneasy and troubled ever since the appearance of the new party as a force in politics. Probably, it feels its secure and comfortable position as a [......] and worshipped patron of the Indian people threatened by the emergence of an obdurate and unpatronisable element. And it is at a loss how to deal with this unexampled situation. Sometimes fatherly, sometimes magisterial, now menacing, now superiorly argumentative, now solemnly exhortatory, this father Prospero tries to conjure the unwelcome spirit back to the [...........]. Dissatisfied with the result, it has called in an *ojha* all the way from England. The warning of the liberal M. P. which the *Statesman* introduces with a flourish of trumpets contains at least one salutary truth which our countrymen would do well to take to heart. We are in the habit of attaching an absurdly exaggerated importance to Sir William Wedderburn and Sir Henry Cotton and the small group of so-called friends of India who figure so largely in the news sent over to this country. But in England these men do not figure largely. There is not one of them who can command the house or even get by his eloquence a decent number of members to listen to him; there is not one who has any influence with the Liberal Ministry; there is not one who can get a hearing from the country. Anyone who knows intimately the working of politics in England, will realise that such a group can get no substantial measure carried through the house. For practical purposes a single Bradlaugh would be worth the whole clan of them. The interest which the British press has recently been showing in India was not brought about by this insignificant clique, it is the Swadeshi, the boycott, the violent unrest in Bengal which have compelled the lordly Briton [..] his [......]. There is only one process which can rouse him from his comfortable prosperous sleep and that is to prod him continually in the ribs, there is only one way to make him feed his cow as well as milk her and that is for the cow to kick over the pail and refuse to be milked. Flattery may please the Briton and it always delights him to play the lordly and generous patron, but he will take good care never to purchase this pleasure by the sacrifice of any substantial interest. For he is above all things a practical man of business. Tears and prayers do not move him, for he finds them [......] and contemptible. Abuse has not any lasting effect on him, for it wounds his self-respect without hurting his interests or awaking his fears. But the strong determined man who can make himself permanently unpleasant and ever dangerous, awakes his respect and seems to him a force to be reckoned with; in any tussle of interests he will try to cajole and outwit him, he will try to intimidate, bully and coerce him but, failing, he will finally concede what is wanted, shake hands and make friends. This is the simple psychology of the Briton which the Congress agitation has throughout ignored. Our agitation has been a wonderful feminine mixture of flattery, abuse, tears and entreaties; it is only from that we are trying the effects of strength and determination. For thirty years we have used the weapons of women; now, very late in the day, we are trying to use the weapons of men.

The *Statesman*'s Liberal M.P. warns us against [............] change of trend. He [............] John Bull to us as a bull indeed, good-natured and magnanimous when unprovoked but chafing at any red rag of sedition and capable of showing a very nasty temper. We do not think he is right when he attributes Mr. Morley's refusal to unsettle the Partition to irritation at the methods employed in Bengal: for Mr. Morley himself gave quite a contrary reason; and though he did not probably reveal the more important reasons at the back of his mind, we do not suppose Mr. Morley would tell an unnecessary lie. But in the rest of his analysis, he may not be far from the truth. We cannot, however, draw the same lesson from the fact he alleges. "England is angry at your contumacy," cries the *Statesman*, "you, her once timid and obedient slaves; mend your ways then, before you are whipped; run and kiss the feet of Lord Minto." On the contrary, we say, persist without wavering in the course you have adopted. The generosity of John Bull when unprovoked is a passive generosity; it will give you ease if you [......] liberty; it will give you small privileges if you prefer these to the one great privilege of becoming a free nation; but it will expect in return the persistent drain of your wealth and manhood. On the other hand his chafing and nasty tempers are excellent signs. They mean that, for the first time, he has come to think the Indian problem a serious thing which demands handling; and we can predict how he will try to handle it. The Government will set themselves against the new school and the new methods and try to repress them by coercion; they will harass the organs of the new party; they will strike at the new method wherever they raise their head too aggressively. But on the other side they will make quiet advances to the old school of politics. They have already laid their hands on the Exhibition by the offer of a small bribe and, if the precedent unconstitutionally created by our leaders in Calcutta is condoned and repeated in future years, the Exhibition will be officialized. They will try also, by slower stages, to officialize the Congress. To most of our readers this may seem a startling and improbable prediction, but let them watch events and wait. The Legislative Councils will be "reformed"; the Congress, if purged of its "extremist" elements, will be recognized as a loyal and legitimate body, its views often consulted and its minor prayers often granted. The higher prizes or the services and the law will be more often given to Indians. Every effort will be made to gild the chains. But the essentials of autocratic rule, absolute control over legislation, over the executive, over the finances, will in no way be relaxed except under dire necessity. This is the traditional policy of Great Britain when faced with such a situation as now exists in India and it is the policy we may expect to see in play for the next few years if Mr. Morley remains at the India Office. How far it will succeed, will depend on the growth of the forward party which is determined to be satisfied with no concessions that will not give the people control over the essentials of Government. Only when John Bull fails to cajole and coerce will he finally come to terms unless indeed the Gods drive him mad and then neither the method of prayers nor the method of passive resistance will avail with him.

Sir Andrew Fraser

We are assured by the *Hindu Patriot* which has always played the part [of a] demi-official organ of Sir Andrew Fraser's Government, that Sir Andrew "has not the remotest idea of laying down the reins of his office before time" — and like the old man in the *Arabian Nights* he will, in spite of the repeated snubs he has received from his official superiors, continue to embarrass us for two more years. It matters little who rules the province. The policy of the bureaucracy is fixed and one individual in charge of the administrative machinery is as good as another. But the remarks of the *Hindu Patriot* are rather painfully amusing. The *Patriot* would not have taken any notice of the rumoured resignation of its patron "if our silence was not being widely construed as indicating the truth of the report". This is how the *Patriot* shamelessly proclaims to the world generally (and to Native chiefs and office-seekers specially) its close connection with the head of Government. Old Haris Chandra *Patriot* — "This is all remains of thee!" We are told by this connoisseur of sound administration "that its interests are safe in the hands of Sir Andrew Fraser." At least the interests of the *Patriot* are. We are next assured that Sir Andrew "loves the people, and the people love him". Sir Andrew may love the people, — he must love the post and the pay to come back after repeated rebuffs. But why talk of the people's love for him? The people cannot love a civilian who was made a Lieutenant-Governor because he had undertaken to support the partition of the Province. And the less the officialised *Patriot* talks of the people the better for all concerned. Since the dawn of the Sarvadhicary ascendancy it has been the aim and ambition of the *Patriot* to please Anglo-Indian officialdom. The weekly was converted into a daily to satisfy the literary fecundity of a Secretary and the way in which the *Patriot* behaved when the Victoria Memorial site was being discussed was a novel departure from that fixity of principles which alone can make people attach any value to the opinions of a paper. And a revaluation of property properly appropriated by Government for the purposes of a lunatic asylum should be enough to make additions to the existing "aristocracy".

By the Way

Necessity Is the Mother of Invention

Archimedes is said to have set his inventive genius to work at the bidding of the Tyrant of Syracuse. When King Henry VIII was in a hurry to marry Anne Boleyne he is said to have addressed the following instructions to Lord Rochford: — "Take this doctor (Thomas Cranmer of Cambridge) to your country-house and there give him a study and no end of books to prove that I can marry your daughter." Such is the history of many an invention.

*

The *London Times* and the *Pioneer* of Allahabad seem to have received a commission from the Government of India to take occasional excursions into the region of History and Political Economy to prove that the foreign despotism in India cannot but make for the good of the people. The other day, we pointed out in these columns that the Allahabad Oracle has stumbled upon some economic and scientific theories to show that our complaint about the drain of wealth is only midsummer madness. He is perhaps still prosecuting his researches vigorously and will perhaps someday take us by surprise with inventions equally startling.

*

Now is the turn for the *Times* of London. The Thunderer from his superior heights has let fall his thunder against our economic fallacies. He has enunciated the great truth that the impoverishment of a people has nothing to do with the cost of Government in their country. A Government may be a veritable leech but that is no reason why the people should be poor. The spirit of Ruskin is perhaps trembling in his place in heaven at this latest discovery of the orthodox school of economists. However close to the skin the shears may be applied, the lamb should not bleat. Heavy taxes need not matter much to the people, it is the manner of spending them that makes all the difference. Now, as it is admitted on all hands that the hard-earned money of the people has got them an efficient white administration, they have got their money's worth; and no sensible man can sympathise with their womanish complaints about impoverishment as the necessary result of a foreign domination.

*

It is the inherent defects of the industrial organisation of the country to which should be set down the poor output of wealth which is no doubt an indisputable fact. Instead of clamour against the expensive Government and the home charges, let your industries be directed by knowledge and intelligence and there will be plenty in the land.

*

We are thankful to the *Times* for such a simple solution of the poverty problem in India. The *Times* has, however, his misgivings about the capitalist organisation of the European type and have even some good words for those that obtain in our country. It is a strange logical performance, this article of the *Times*. It starts with one proposition and a few lines down we come across its contradiction. In this labyrinth of novel economic theories and their contradictions the poverty-stricken ryot has to find his way out. But there is some amusement to be had in watching the intellectual gymnastics performed by English publicists in their endeavour to justify the foreign despotism.

Articles Published in *Bande Mataram* in November and December 1906

The Ideal

1. Bande Mataram	Nov 1. 1906
2. Prologue of Anandamath	do

Mr. John Morley & his Policy

1. The Settled Fact Again	Nov 2. 1906

Mendicancy

1. By the Way	Nov 1. 1906
2. By the Way	Nov 5. 1906
3. Mr. Gokhale's Vision	Nov 13. 1906

The Two Schools

1. Dissensions (omitting last para)	Nov 9. 06

British Blessings

1. The Price of Peace	Nov 13. 1906

Self Help etc.

1. Self Depreciation	Nov 16. 1906

No issue of the Bande Mataram *survives for the period 30 October – 26 December 1906. Sri Aurobindo noted down the titles of some articles published during these months in a pocket notebook. These articles presumably were written by him. Only one of the articles on his list, "The Results of the Congress" (30 December 1907), has survived.*

The New Spirit

1. The New Spirit	Nov 19. 1906

Miscellaneous

1. A Scotch Sneer and Some Reflections	Dec 3. 06
2. Swadeshi Shakespeare	Dec 8. 06
3. do	Dec 24. 06
4. Welcome to Mr. Naoroji	Dec 24. 06

India's Mission

1. Mark of Low Civilisation	Dec 7. 1906

Swadeshi-Boycott

1. Swadeshi and Boycott	Dec 10. 1906

The Congress

1. The Results of the Congress	Dec 30. 1906

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 26th, 1906 }

The Man of the Past and the Man of the Future

Two men of the moment stand conspicuously before the eyes of the public in connection with the present session of the National Congress. The advent of these two men close upon each other is full of meaning for us at the present juncture. Both of them are sincere patriots, both have done what work lay in them for their people and for the land that bore them; both are men of indomitable perseverance and high ability; but there the resemblance ends. One of them worn and aged, bowed down with the burden of half a century's toils and labours, comes to us as the man of the past, reminding us of a generation that is passing away, ideals that have lost their charm, methods that have been found to be futile, an energy and hope once buoyant and full of life but which now live on only in a wearied and decrepit old age phantomlike, still babbling exploded generalities and dead formulas. The other comes with his face to the morning, a giant of strength and courage bearing on his unbowed shoulders the mighty burden of our future. We do not know yet what will be the nature of Mr. Dadabhai's Presidential speech; it may contain Pisgah sights of the future, to a great extent it is likely to be the swan song of the dying past. From Mr. Tilak we expect no great speech and no sensational pronouncement, his very presence is more powerful than the greatest declamations; for it is not as an orator he stands prominent in spite of his clear incisive utterances, nor as a writer in spite of the immense influence which as the editor of the *Kesari* he exercises on the political ideal of Maharashtra, but as the man who knows what has to be done and does it, knows what has to be organized and organizes it, knows what has to be resisted and resists it. He is preeminently the man who acts, and action is to be the note of our future political energies.

Mr. Dadabhai on the other hand is the man who remonstrates; all his life has been spent in one energetic and unceasing remonstrance through books, through public speeches, through letters and writings in public print. Remonstrance, not action, was the note of our political energies in the past. Action was, according to the old gospel, the prerogative of the Government whether in India or in Great Britain and our only duty was to urge them to act justly and not unjustly, in our interests and not in their own. We expected them to be angels and remonstrated with them when they proved to be merely men; this spur of that remonstrance, it was hoped, would prick them or at least the home-bred of Englishmen to justify the angelic hues in which they had painted themselves, for our benefit. To the young generation these hopes nowadays seem so incredibly futile that they are tempted to wonder how men of ability and education, many of whom had studied something at least of history, could ever have cherished them. But when Mr. Naoroji began his career nothing more real and solid was possible. The falling in pieces of the Maratha Confederacy and the overthrow of the Sikh power had left the Punjab and the Deccan stupefied and apathetic; the rest of India was politically exhausted and inert. In such circumstances it was inevitable that the task of reviving the life of the nation should fall into the hands of a small class of men educated in English schools and in English ways of thinking. It was the one great service these men did to our country, that they accustomed us to hope once more and live politically. It was our misfortune rather than their fault that the hopes they proclaimed were delusive and the life they imparted meagre and superficial. Destitute of political experience they could not avoid basing their political creed on theories and ideals rather than upon facts; without any education but what the rulers chose to impart they had no choice but to borrow their theories and ideas from their English teachers; confined to English books and influence, cut off from the wide wholesome atmosphere of the world's culture they were obliged to accept Englishmen at their own valuation. They were for the most part men of talent and ability; and it requires more than talent and ability; it needs the eye of genius to dispense with the necessity of experience and see truth with a single intuitive glance.

The ideas on which our agitation in the nineteenth century proceeded were therefore fantastic and unfounded; its methods were unsuited to the realities of political life in this country, its spirit and aim were so purely Westernized as to preclude the possibility of seizing on the whole people and creating a new national life. The energy expended on it was therefore small, limited both in intensity and area; and the results it brought about were not even commensurate with the little energy expended. But two things were gained — the renewal of political activity in the country and of political experience. A renewed life might have been brought about in other ways and with greater power and reality; but for experience that long wandering in the desert of unrealities and futilities was probably indispensable. However that may be, Mr. Naoroji was among the small knot of able men who first set in motion the new political activities of the country. And one thing distinguished him above most of his fellows that while they wasted themselves on things petty and unreal, he seized on one great fact and enforced it in season and out of season on all who could be got to listen, — the terrible poverty of India and its rapid increase under British rule. It was necessary that a persistent voice should din this into the ears of the people; for what with the incessant pratings about British peace, British justice and the blessings of British rule on the one side and the clamour for Legislative Councils, Simultaneous Examinations, High Education and similar shams on the other, this one central all-important reality was in danger of being smothered out of sight. It was necessary for the nation but to realise its increasing poverty under British rule; only then could it take the next step and take to heart the fact that British rule and increasing poverty stood in the relation of cause and effect; last of all comes the inevitable conclusion that the effect could only be cured by the removal of the cause, in other words by the substitution of autonomy in place of a British or British-controlled Government. Mr. Naoroji's was the persistent voice that compelled the nation to realise the first two of these fundamental truths; Mr. Romesh Dutt and others powerfully assisted the result, but it was Mr. Naoroji who first forced the question of Indian poverty into prominence, and for this India owes him a debt of gratitude deeper than that due to any other of our older politicians dead or living. It is true that he has not been able to proclaim the third of the three connected truths consistently and frankly; especially have those of his utterances which were meant for purely Indian consumption, been marred by the desire to qualify, moderate and even conceal a plain fact, which though it was necessary, it might yet be dangerous to proclaim. Nevertheless it is something that a man of his age and traditions should at least have frankly declared that freedom from foreign rule must needs be the only governing ideal of Indian politics. The man who is responsible for that declaration ought to be no Moderate. His heart at least should be with us. That in India and in the Presidential chair of the Congress his voice also will be for us we cannot so confidently forecast. If it is, his venerable sanction will be a support to our efforts; if not, his reticence or opposition will be no hindrance to our final triumph. For that which Time and Fate intend, no utterances of individuals however venerable or esteemed, can delay or alter.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 31st, 1906 }

The Results of the Congress

The great Calcutta Congress, the centre of so many hopes and fears, is over. Of the various antagonistic or contending forces which are now being hurled together into that Medea's cauldron of confused and ever fiercer struggle out of which a free and regenerated India is to arise, each one had its own acute fears and fervent hopes for the results of this year's Congress. Anglo-India and Tory England feared that the Extremists might capture the assembly; they hoped that a split would be created, and, as a result, the Congress either come to an end and land itself in the limbo of forgotten and abortive things or else, by the expulsion of the new life and the new spirit from its midst, sink into the condition of a dead-alive ineffectual body associated with the Government and opposing it now and then only for form's sake. Liberal England represented by the Cottons and Wedderburns hoped that the unsustaining and empty concessions Mr. Morley is dangling before the eyes of the Moderate leaders might bring back the Congress entirely into its old paths and the new spirit be killed by the show of kindness. It feared that the National Assembly might see through the deception and publicly demand that there should be either substantial concessions or none at all. In India itself the Moderates feared that the forward party in Bengal might force through the Congress strong resolutions on Boycott and other alarming matters or else avenge their failure by wrecking the Congress itself, but they hoped that by an imposing show of ex-Presidents on the platform, by the reverence due to the age and services of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, by the dominant personality of the lion of the Bombay Corporation, by the strong contingents from Bombay city, Gujerat and other provinces still unswept by new brooms, by the use of tactics and straining in their favour all the advantages of an indefinite and nebulous constitution, they would quell the Extremists, prevent the bringing forward of the Boycott and keep absolute control of the Congress. The forward party hoped to leave the impress of the new thought and life on the Congress of 1906, to get entire self-government recognised as the ideal of the Congress and Swadeshi and Boycott as the means, and to obtain a public recognition of the new ideas in the Presidential address, but they feared that the realisation of such considerable results would be too much to hope for in a single year and a fierce and prolonged struggle would be needed to overcome the combined forces of conservatism, timidity, self-distrust and self-interest, which have amalgamated into the loyalist Moderate party. Such was the state of mind of the conflicting parties when the Calcutta Congress was opened on the 26th.

Today on the 30th, we can look back and count our gains and losses. The hopes of Anglo-India have been utterly falsified and the Anglo-Indian journals cannot conceal their rage and disappointment. The loudest in fury is our dear old perfervid *Englishman* which cries out in hollow tones of menace that if the Congress tolerates Boycott, the Congress itself will not be tolerated. The hopes and fears of Liberal England have been only partially fulfilled and partially falsified; the Congress has definitely demanded colonial self-government and it has accepted the offered concessions of Mr. Morley only as steps towards that irreducible demand; the new spirit, instead of being killed by kindness, has declared in no uncertain voice its determination to live. The fears of the Moderates have been falsified; no strongly worded resolutions have been passed: neither has the Congress been wrecked by the rapid development of contending parties in our midst. Their hopes too have been falsified. Nothing was more remarkable in the present Congress than its anti-autocratic temper and the fiery energy with which it repudiated any attempt to be dictated to by the authority of recognised leaders. Charges of want of reverence and of rowdyism have been freely brought against this year's Congress. To the first charge we answer that the reverence has been transferred from persons to the ideal of the motherland; it is no longer Pherozshah Mehta or even Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji who can impose silence and acquiescence on the delegates of the nation by their presence and authority, for the delegates feel that they owe a deeper reverence and a higher duty to their country. Henceforth the leaders can only deserve reverence by acting in the spirit of the chief servants of their country and not in the spirit of masters and dictators. This change is one of the most genuine signs of political progress which we have observed in our midst. The charge of rowdyism merely means that the Congress, instead of a dead unanimity and mechanical cheers, has this time shown lively signs of real interest and real feeling. It is ridiculous to contend that in a national assembly the members should confine themselves to signs of approval only and conceal their disapproval; in no public assembly in the world, having a political nature, is any such rule observed; and the mother of Parliaments itself is in the habit of expressing its disapproval with far greater vehemence than was done in this year's Congress. It was due to this growth of deep feeling and of the spirit of independence that the spells on which the Moderate leaders had depended, failed of their power to charm. The lion of the Bombay Corporation found that a mightier lion than himself had been aroused in Bengal, — the people.

For ourselves, what have we to reckon as lost or gained? No strongly worded resolutions have been pressed and we are glad that none have been passed, for we believe in strong action and not in strong words. But our hopes have been realised, our contentions recognised if not always precisely in the form we desired or with as much clearness and precision as we ourselves would have used, yet definitely enough for all practical purposes. The Congress has declared self-government on colonial lines to be its demand from the British Government and this is only a somewhat meaningless paraphrase of autonomy or complete self-government. The Congress has recognised the legitimacy of the Boycott movement as practical in Bengal without limitation or reservation and in such terms that any other province which feels itself called upon to resort to this weapon in order to vindicate its rights, need not hesitate to take it up. The Congress has recognised the Swadeshi movement in its entirety including the adoption of a system of self-protection by the people; within the scope of its resolution it has found room for the idea of self-help, the principle of self-sacrifice and the policy of the gradual exclusion of foreign goods. The Congress has recognised the necessity of National Education. The Congress has recognised the necessity of a Constitution and adopted one as a tentative measure for a year, which, crude, meagre and imperfect as it is, depends only on our own efforts to develop by degrees into a working constitution worthy of a national assembly. All that the forward party has fought for, has in substance been conceded, except only the practice of recommending certain measures which depend on the Government for their realisation; but this was not a reform on which we laid any stress for this particular session. We were prepared to give the old weakness of the Congress plenty of time to die out if we could get realities recognised. Only in one particular have we been disappointed and that is the President's address. But even here the closing address with which Mr. Naoroji dissolved the Congress, has made amends for the deficiencies of his opening speech. He once more declared self-government, Swaraj, as in an inspired moment he termed it, to be our one ideal and called upon the young men to achieve it. The work of the older men had been done in preparing a generation which were determined to have this great ideal and nothing less; the work of making the ideal a reality, lies with us. We accept Mr. Naoroji's call and to carry out his last injunctions will devote our lives and, if necessary, sacrifice them.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, February 25th, 1907 }

Yet There Is Method in It

The "Moderate" Indian politician aspires to be an Imperial citizen. His ambition has at last been screwed up to the point of seeking equality with his "colonial brother". His loyalty draws him towards the Empire and his politics draws him towards self-government and the resultant is self-government within the Empire. Colonies have been granted self-government within the Empire and it logically follows that if the Indians try, try and try again they too will gain their end because nothing is impossible to perseverance. Thus two birds will be killed with one stone. The ruling people, whose immense power can be turned against us any moment if they happen to be irritated, will be pleased with our desire not to break away from the Empire and, at the same time, the spirit of independence which is constantly urging us to demand a greater and greater measure of self-government will have its full play. Such a compromise, such a smooth scheme of accommodating comprehensiveness is being welcomed everywhere as suddenly revealed to a political prophet who is going the round of the country with the inviting message, "Come to me, all ye that are heavy-laden and I shall give rest unto you."

The talk of this colonial self-government or self-government within the Empire at a time they are going to have an Imperial conference of the Colonial Prime Ministers and have condescended to admit a representative of India to the same may very well entrap the unwary, specially when it comes from a personage who is said to have explained to the Secretary of State all that India needs in a five-minute interview. But the pretension of the frog to rank as a quadruped of the elephant class with the mere expression of a pious wish should receive a heavy shock on learning from Reuter that either Mr. Morley or his nominee will represent India at the coming Colonial Conference. This is quite in keeping with the system of representation that India enjoys. This is a further extension of the sham which we see here in the local Legislative Councils. This is but the continuation of the farce which is known as the Local Board or Municipal Board representation.

It is a favourable sign that when some leading moderate politicians are trying fresh and big doses of poppy on our people for the offence of giving a slight indication of self-consciousness, these smart shocks for regaining self-possession are coming of themselves. The spurious politics that has so long lived only on the delusion of the people has very nearly been found out and thus elaborate preparations are going on to give it a fresh lease of life. But when the gods want to destroy a thing no human efforts can avail. Mendicancy is no longer consistent with the stand-up position the Indians have taken up. The beggar knows only begging and bullying but his day-dreams surpass even those of Alanschar. The imposing ideal of self-government within the Empire with which begging politics has been making its last attempt to catch the fancy of the people will hardly survive such disenchanting strokes as the representation of India on the Colonial Conference by the Secretary of State himself or his own nominee.

If India is to be India, if her civilisation is to retain its distinctive stamp and extend its spiritual conquests for the benefit of the world at large it must be propped up with the strength of her own people.

To include India in a federation of colonies and the motherland is madness without method. The patriotism that wishes the country to lose itself within an Empire which justifies its name by its conquest — the colonies being no portion of the Empire in its strict sense — is also madness without method. But to talk of absolute independence and autonomy — though this be madness, yet there is method in it.

Bande Mataram

CALCUTTA, February 28th, 1907

Mr. Gokhale's Disloyalty

Dear *Bande Mataram*,

You may reasonably ask me where I had been so long. My answer is that seeing the Extremists fare very well at the last Congress I thought I had some claim to a well-earned repose. When all India kindly took to my views and fought for them in the National Assembly I thought I could suspend my activity for a time.

But with Mr. Gokhale stumping the country to recover the lost ground and the *Bengalee* taking the brief of the all-powerful executive I cannot be a silent spectator of the cold-blooded deposition of Demos.

The Aga Khan too has entered the lists. Alarmed at the Extremists' talk of freedom from British control, the combined wit and wisdom of the country is making a dead set at this crazy class so that prudence and good sense may once more prevail in the land. The normal calm and the much-coveted peace has to a certain extent been restored to the country and what little of unrest still exists will pass away as soon as Mr. Gokhale will say "Amen."

Unlike the grave-diggers of Ophelia Mr. Gokhale wants to make the extinction of British autocracy in India quite an unchristian procedure. Here lies the Empire, good; here stands India, good; if India goes to this Empire and prays for its death, it is will she, nill she, she prays for something bad; but if the Empire comes to her and kills itself, she kills not the Empire: argal she is not guilty of disloyalty.

The Extremists want to bring the Empire to themselves, and not themselves to go to the Empire. What is more Christian and loyal? To make the Empire part with us as friends or to provoke it with childish demands of colonial self-government or self-government within the Empire?

Besides, does not Mr. Gokhale know the fable that by mere buzzing about the head of a Bull or even settling himself upon his head the gnat cannot at all inconvenience him, but though small it is by stinging only that he can arouse his attention.

In vain is Mr. Gokhale trying conclusions with people who have tried their remedies times without number and found them wanting.

Mr. Gokhale's patriotism is based on truth — he paints us as we are and warns us against the danger of too strong a stimulus in this our exceptionally weak condition.

Here he is like a wise physician who knows his patient.

But Mr. Gokhale being such an educated and enlightened reformer, with supreme contempt for Indian prejudices, superstitions and idolatry, should be the last man to trust to mere prayer and petition for the recovery of his patient.

When the Scotch asked the King of England to appoint a day of prayer and fasting for abating the fury of cholera when it raged there a few years back, the authorities in England pooh-poohed the idea and told them to attend to the recommendations of sanitary science.

Should not Mr. Gokhale be true to himself and ask the people to attend to the recommendations of political science excluding altogether from their programme the superstition of prayer? More in my next.

Yours sincerely,
By the Way

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 15th, 1907 }

The Comilla Incident

The Comilla affair remains, after everybody has said his say, obscured by the usual tangle of contradictions. The Hindu version presents a number of allegations, — specific, detailed and categorical, — of attacks on Hindus, making up in the mass a serious picture of a mofussil town given over for days to an outbreak of brutal lawlessness on the part of one section of the Mahomedan community, a Magistrate quiescent and sympathetically tolerant of the rioters, and the final resort by the Hindu community to drastic measures of self-defence on the continued refusal of British authority to do its duty as the guardian of law and order. A Mahomedan report belittled the accounts of Mahomedan violence and presented picturesque and vivid details of Hindu aggressiveness; but as this version has since been repudiated, we have to turn to the official account for the other side of the picture. But the official account — well, the value of official statements is an understood thing all the world over. Is it not a political byword in England itself that no rumour or irresponsible statement should be believed until it had been officially denied? The official version of the Comilla incident published on the 9th March is hard to beat as a specimen of its class — it is a most amazingly unskilful production over which suppression of truth and suggestion of falsehood are written large and palpable; but it presents a beautiful and artistic picture of wanton and murderous Hindu violence, comparative Mahomedan moderation, and fatherly British care brooding dove-eyed and maternal-winged over its irreconcilably quarrelsome step-children.

If anyone should think our characterisation of this historical document too sweeping, we invite him to a careful study both of what it says and what it does not say. It commences with the statement that "a series of anti-Partition meetings were recently held here *without incident* and on 6th March Nawab Salimullah arrived from Dacca to hold counter-meetings." The insertion of the words "without incident" is admirable. It implies that there was violent irritation between Hindus and Mahomedans on the Partition question and the latter might have been expected to show their irritation by "incidents", — especially when the "inflammatory" speeches of Babu Bipin Chandra Pal and other firebrands are taken into account, — but they very considerately refrained. Thus Mahomedan moderation is contrasted with the Hindu aggressiveness which is presently to be related, and the way paved for throwing the whole responsibility on the anti-Partition agitation and aggressive Swadeshism. Then we are informed as a positive fact that a brick was thrown at the Nawab's procession and brooms held up in derision. "This led to some disturbance and a cloth shop was *entered* but not looted and two prostitutes' houses robbed." Let us pause over this delightful sentence. The outrageous assaults by the rioters which the Hindu accounts carefully specify, are all hidden away and glossed over under the mild and gentlemanly phrase "some disturbance"; the only specific instances which the Commissioner will acknowledge are the cloth-shop "incident" and the "incident" of the two prostitutes. But after all, what occurred in the cloth-shop? It was merely "entered", — admirable word! — the rioters were far too polite, honourable and considerate to loot it. They simply entered for the sheer joy of entering and perhaps of gazing ecstatically on bales of Swadeshi cloth! They also "entered" the houses of two prostitutes, but in this instance indemnified themselves for their trouble; still, the people robbed were merely prostitutes! It is thus suggested that the disturbance was of the most trifling character and the only sufferers a shopkeeper and two prostitutes; in fact, the whole thing was little more than an amiable frolic. Of the violent maltreatment not only of students and shopkeepers but of pleaders and other respectable citizens, of the forcible invasion of private houses and the attempts to break into or, let us say, "enter" women's apartments, there is not a word.

After this day of "entries" there is a blank in the official record until the next evening when "the Nawab's Secretary, a Parsi, was attacked *while walking alone* and severely beaten with lathis by some Hindus." The provocation alleged to have been given by Mr. Cursetji is carefully omitted, and we are asked to believe that an inoffensive Parsi gentleman out for an innocent and healthful evening walk was waylaid, when alone, and severely beaten because he happened to be the Nawab's Private Secretary. And the evening and the morning were the second day. On the third all was again quiet till that dangerous time, the evening, when an "unlicensed Mahomedan procession", greatly daring, took the air like Mr. Cursetji before them, apparently with the innocuous object of relieving their feelings and exercising their lungs shouting Allah-ho-Akbar. This explains a great deal; evidently the bands of hooligans ranging the streets and attacking people and "entering" houses were in reality "no such matter" except in vivid Hindu imaginations; they were merely "unlicensed Mahomedan processions" on innocent shouting intent. Some unknown person, however, fired upon this procession and killed a Mahomedan baker; and there, inexplicably enough, matters ended for the day. The shot, however, had a powerful effect upon the authorities; it seems to have stirred them up to some faint remembrance of the elementary duties of a civilised administration. Accordingly our martial Commissioner telegraphed, like Kuropatkin, for "reinforcements", and pending their arrival sent for the Mahomedan Sardars and Mullahs and "enlisted" their influence to keep the peace. In the name of reason and logic, why? The account shows that all the violence and lawlessness, if we except the trifling affairs of the unlooted shop and the looted prostitutes, proceeded from the Hindus. The Mahomedans, it seems, kept perfectly quiet until the night of this third day, when the only incidents were again of a trifling character; a man riding on the step of a carriage was "struck"; a Hindu peon was "struck", nothing more. We are ourselves "struck" by the mildness of the methods employed by these rioters; they do not break into houses, they merely "enter" them; they do not severely beat anyone as Mr. Cursetji was "severely beaten" by the Hindus; they merely "strike" a man or two in playful sort. Under the circumstances it is surely the leaders of the Hindu community who should have been enlisted "to keep the peace" — say, as special constables. However, in the end, the reinforcements arrived and the Commissioner busied himself in the fatherly British way, "inquiring personally into all allegations and endeavouring to bring the leaders of both parties together". On this touching scene the official curtain falls. Who shall say after this that "divide and rule" is the policy of the British bureaucracy in India?

We have said enough to expose thoroughly this ridiculous account of a very serious affair. It is the production not of an impartial official keeping the peace between two communities, but of a partisan in a political fight who looks upon the anti-Swadeshi Mahomedans as allies "enlisted" on the side of the bureaucracy. In order to understand the affair we have to read into the official account all that it carefully omits; and for this we must fall back on the Hindu version of the incident. What seems to have happened, is clear enough in outline, whatever doubt there may be as to details. The popular cause was making immense strides in Comilla and the magnificent success of the District Conference had afforded a proof which could not be ignored. The redoubtable Nawab Salimullah of Dacca considered it his duty to his patron, the Assam Government, to stem the tide of nationalism in Tipperah. Accordingly he marched Comillawards with his lieutenants and entered the town in conquering pomp. That he ordered the sack of the conquered city, is probably no more than the suspicion natural to excited imaginations; but it is certain that his coming was immediately responsible for the riots. His whole history since he was shoved into prominence by his Anglo-Indian patrons, has been one long campaign against the Hindus with attempts to excite the passions and class selfishness of the Mahomedans and inflame them into permanent hostility to their Hindu fellow-countrymen. It is only within the territorial limits of the Nawab's influence that there has been any serious friction between Hindus and Mahomedans on the Swadeshi and Partition questions; but so far as it has gone, its immediate results have been not only friction but outbreaks of violence and lawlessness either in small as at Serajgunge or on a large scale as in Mymensingh. It is not therefore surprising that while the Conference at Comilla and the recent Swadeshi meetings came off without "incident", the Nawab should no sooner have set his foot in Comilla than a reign of violence and lawlessness began. At the same time it is probable that the suddenness of the outbreak was due to some immediate exciting cause. The brick story bears a suspicious resemblance to the incident which set Sir Bampfylde and his Gurkhas rioting officially at Barisal; but it is likely enough that a few individuals may have shown their feelings towards the Nawab in an offensive way. However that may be, it seems certain that the more rowdy elements of the Mahomedan population broke into lawless riot, attacked Hindus wherever they found them, broke into shops and private houses and brutally assaulted students, pleaders and other respectable Hindus, attempting even in some cases to enter the women's apartments.

Once begun, the affair followed familiar lines. As in Mymensingh, it commenced with an orgy of lawlessness on the part of ignorant low-class Mahomedans inflamed by the Nawab's anti-Hindu campaign. As in Mymensingh, local authorities would not at first interfere, although appealed to by Hindu gentlemen, and confined themselves to academic arguments as to the genesis of the outrages. As in Mymensingh, the Hindus, taken by surprise and denied the protection of the law, fell first into a panic and only afterwards rallied and began to organise self-defence. At Comilla, however, they seemed to have acted with greater promptitude and energy. The disturbances continued for three days at least; but by that time the Hindus had picked themselves together, the women were removed to a safe place where they could be guarded by bands of volunteers and the whole community stood on the defensive. Two or three collisions seem to have taken place, in one of which, possibly, Mr. Cursetji was roughly handled, in another a Mahomedan shot dead. By this time the

Commissioner had realised that the policy of non-interference adopted by the British authorities, was leading to serious results which they cannot have anticipated. The military police were telegraphed for and other measures taken which came at least three days too late, since the mischief had been thoroughly done.

Divested of exaggeration and rumour, we fancy the actual facts will be found to amount to something like the above. We do not for a moment believe that the Hindus took aggressive action without serious and even unbearable provocation, any more than we believe that the riot was planned or ordered beforehand by the anti-Swadeshi section of the Mahomedans. We trust that the usual mistake of instituting cases and countercases will be avoided. If the Comilla nationalists wish the facts of the case to be known let them draw up a statement of their version with the evidence of the persons assaulted for the enlightenment of public opinion. The time ought to be now past, in Eastern Bengal at least, when appeal to the British courts could be either a remedy or a solace.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 18th, 1907 }

British Protection or Self-Protection

There are two superstitions which have driven such deep root into the mind of our people that even where the new spirit is strongest, they still hold their own. One is the habit of appealing to British courts of justice; the other is the reliance upon the British executive for our protection. The frequent recurrence of incidents such as the Mymensingh and Comilla disturbances will have its use if it drives into our minds the truth that in the struggle we have begun we cannot and ought not to expect protection from our natural adversaries. It is perfectly true that one of the main preoccupations of the executive mind has been the maintenance of order and quiet in the country, because a certain kind of tranquillity was essential to the preservation of an alien bureaucratic control. This was the secret of the barbarous system of punishments which make the Indian Penal Code a triumph of civilised savagery; of the licence and the blind support allowed by the Magistracy to a phenomenally corrupt and oppressive Police; of the doctrine of no conviction no promotion, which is the gospel of the Anglo-Indian executive, holding it better that a hundred innocent should suffer than one crime be recorded as unpunished. This was the reason of the severity with which turbulent offences have always been repressed, of the iniquitous and oppressive system of punitive Police and of the undeclared but well-understood Police rule that any villager of strong physique, skill with weapons and active habits should be entered in the list of bad characters. By a rigid application of these principles the bureaucracy have succeeded in creating the kind of tranquillity they require. The Romans created a desert and called the result peace; the British in India have destroyed the spirit and manhood of the people and call the result law and order. It is true, on the other hand, that there have been exceptions to the promptness and severity with which turbulence of any kind is usually dealt with; and the most notable is the supineness and dilatoriness, habitually shown by the authorities, in dealing with outbreaks of Mahomedan fanaticism and the gingerly fashion in which repression in such cases is enforced. Fear is undoubtedly at the root of this weakness. The bureaucracy are never tired of impressing the irresistible might of British supremacy on the subject populations; but in their own hearts they are aware that that supremacy is insecure and without root in the soil; the general upheaval of any deep-seated and elemental passion in the hearts of the people might easily shatter that supremacy as so many others have been shattered before it. The one passion which in past times has been proved capable of so upheaving the national consciousness in India is religious feeling; and outraged religious feeling is therefore the one thing which the bureaucracy dreads and the slightest sign of which turns their courage into nervousness or panic and their strength into paralysed weakness. The alarm which the Swadeshi movement created was due to this abiding terror; for in the Swadeshi movement for the first time patriotism became a national religion, the name of the motherland was invested with divine sacredness and her service espoused with religious fervour and enthusiasm. In its alarm Anglo-India turned for help to that turbulent Mahomedan fanaticism which they had so dreaded; hoping to drive out poison by poison, they menaced the insurgent religion of patriotism with the arming of Mahomedan prejudices against what its enemies declared to be an essentially Hindu movement. The first fruits of this policy we have seen at Mymensingh, Serajgunge and Comilla. It was a desperate and dangerous and might easily prove a fatal expedient; but with panic-stricken men the fear of the lesser danger is easily swallowed in the terror of the greater.

It should not therefore be difficult to see that the demand for official protection in such affairs as the Comilla riots is as unpractical as it is illogical. The object of modern civilised Governments in preserving tranquillity is to protect the citizen not only in the peaceful pursuit of his legitimate occupations but in the public activities and ambitions natural to a free people; the Government exists for the citizen, not the citizen for the Government. But the bureaucracy in India is only half-modern and semi-civilised. In India the individual, — for there is no citizen, — exists for the Government; and the object in preserving tranquillity is not the protection of the citizen but the security of the Government. The security of the individual, such as it is, is only a result and not an object. But the security of the Government, if by Government we understand the present irresponsible bureaucratic control, is directly threatened by the Swadeshi movement; for the declared object of that movement is Swaraj, which means the entire elimination of that control. To ask the bureaucracy, therefore, to protect us in our struggle for Swaraj is to ask it to assist in its own destruction.

This plain truth is obviously recognised by the officials of the Shillong Government. The attitude taken up by the Magistrates of Mymensingh and Comilla, was identically the same; they saw no necessity for interfering; the Hindus by their Swadeshi agitation had brought the Mahomedan storm upon themselves and must take the consequences. The unexpressed inference is plain enough. The bureaucratic "constitution", under which we are asked to carry on "constitutional" Government, assures us British peace and security only so long as we are not Swadeshi. The moment we become Swadeshi, British peace and security, so far as we are concerned, automatically come to an end, and we are liable to have our heads broken, our men assaulted, our women insulted and our property plundered without there being any call for British authority to interfere. The same logic underlies the imputation of the responsibility for the riot to Babu Bipin Chandra Pal's inflammatory eloquence, which was made, we believe, in both instances and in this last has received the support of the loyalist press. Whom or what did Bipin Babu inflame? Not the Mahomedans to attack the Hindus certainly, — that would be too preposterous a statement for even an Anglo-Indian Magistrate to make, — but all Indians, Hindus and Mahomedans alike, to work enthusiastically for Swadeshi and Swaraj. By raising the cry of Swadeshi and Swaraj, then, we forfeit the protection of the law.

Stated so nakedly, the reasoning sounds absurd; but, in the light of certain practical considerations we can perfectly appreciate the standpoint of these bureaucrats. Arguing as philosophers, they would be wrong; but arguing as bureaucrats and rulers of a subject people, their position is practical and logical. The establishment of Swaraj means the elimination of the British bureaucrat. Can we ask the British bureaucrat to make it safe and easy for us to eliminate him? Swadeshi is a direct attack on that exploitation of India by the British merchant which is the first and principal reason of the obstinate maintenance of bureaucratic control. The trade came to India as the pioneer of the flag; and the bureaucrat may reasonably fear that if the trade is driven out, the flag will leave in the wake of the trade. With that fear in his mind, even apart from his natural racial sympathies, can we ask him to facilitate the expulsion of the trade? On the contrary, the official representative of the British shopkeeper is morally bound, be he Viceroy, Lieutenant-Governor, Secretary of State or be he a mere common District Magistrate, to put down Swadeshi by the best means in his power. Sir Bampfylde thought violence and intimidation, Gurkha police and Regulation *lathis* the very best means; Mr. Morley believes Swadeshi can be more easily smothered with soft pillows than banged to death with a hard cudgel. The means differ; the end is the same. At present the bureaucracy have two strings to their bow — general Morleyism with the aid of the loyalist Mehtaite element among the Parsis and Hindus; and occasional Fullerism with the aid of the Salimullahi party among the Mahomedans. With the growth of the new spirit and the disappearance of a few antiquated but still commanding personalities, the former will lose its natural support and the latter will be left in possession of the field. But we know by this time that Salimullahism means a repetition of the outbreaks of Mymensingh, Serajgunge and Comilla, and the attitude of the Comilla heaven-born will be the attitude of most heaven-borns wherever these outbreaks recur. It is urgently necessary therefore that we should shake off the superstitious habit of praying for protection to the British authorities and look for help to the only true, political divinity, the national strength which is within ourselves. If we are to do this effectually, we must organise physical education all over the country and train up the rising generation not only in the moral strength and courage for which Swadeshism has given us the materials, but in physical strength and courage and the habit of rising immediately and boldly to the height of even the greatest emergency. That strength we must train in every citizen of the newly-created nation so that for our private protection we may not be at the mercy of a police efficient only for harassment, whose appearance on the scene after a crime means only a fresh and worse calamity to the peaceful householder, but each household may be a protection to itself and when help is needed, be able to count on its neighbour. And the strength of the individuals we must carefully organise for purposes of national defence, so that there may be no further fear of Comilla tumults or official Gurkha riots disturbing our steady and rapid advance to national freedom. It is high time we abandoned the fat and comfortable selfish middle-class training we give to our youth and make a nearer approach to the physical and moral education of our old Kshatriyas or the Japanese Samurai.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 29th, 1907 }

The Berhampur Conference

The Conference which meets at Berhampur tomorrow is the most important that has been yet held in Bengal, for its deliberations are fraught with issues of supreme importance to the future of the country. A heavy responsibility rests upon the delegates who have been sent to Berhampur from all parts of Bengal. For this is the first Provincial Conference after the historic twenty-second session of the Congress at Calcutta. At that session the policy of self-development and self-help was incorporated as an integral part of the political programme by the representatives of the whole nation, the policy of passive resistance was declared legitimate under circumstances which cover the whole of India, and it was decided that a constitution or working organisation should be created for the promotion throughout the year of the programme fixed by the Congress for the whole nation and by the Provinces for themselves. It rests upon the Berhampur Conference to see that proper provision is made for this executive work. We expect the delegates to realise the seriousness of the task that has been put in their hands and to appoint a Provincial Council which will command the confidence of the whole of Bengal and prove by its very composition that an earnest attempt will be made to harmonise all parties in working out so much of the national programme as has been assented to by all. Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education, — these are the three planks upon which all can take their stand. We do not disguise from ourselves the fact that on the last two of these questions there are very serious differences of opinion between the two schools now dividing public opinion. In the matter of Boycott, the difference has been one of greater or less thoroughness in practice and of the ultimate goal; but the necessity of Boycott has been recognised by all and there is no reason why any section should refuse to take part in the measures by which it can be made effective. National Education is regarded by one school as an educational experiment to be carried on side by side with Government education, — by the other as a great national cause, the progress of which is to culminate in a truly national system replacing or absorbing the Government schools and colleges. Nevertheless, the spread of the movement has been recognised as desirable by all and there is therefore no reason why measures with that view should not be concerted with general approval. We trust therefore that the delegates at Berhampur will give a mandate to the newly-formed council to organise Swadeshi and Boycott in a practical manner and devise means by which they can be rendered stringent and effective and to see that national schools be established in every district and national support be given to the Council of Education. If they fail to do this, they will have done considerably less than their duty.

But the duty of the delegates does not begin and end with arranging for the execution of the national programme as laid down by the Congress. The Congress deals only with accomplished facts. It set its seal of sanction on National Education and Swadeshi and legitimised the Boycott for all India in recognition of work which had already been commenced in Bengal. But there are other fields in which self-development and self-help are urgently necessary; and it remains for each province to initiate action in each of them successively according to its own circumstances and under the pressure of its own needs. Both the policy of self-help and the Boycott policy have taken shape as a national policy in Bengal as a result of the exceptional trend of events in our province. They are now travelling all over India. Swadeshi has been universally recognised, Boycott is a fact in Maharashtra as well as in Bengal and is now being publicly advocated in the North and in Madras. But Bengal cannot pause till the rest of India comes up with her, — she must still lead the way even if it be many miles in front. The very initiative she has taken will inevitably sweep her on, whether she wills it or not;

for that exceptional trend of events which has carried her along, is nothing but the impulsion of a Divine Hand which is shaping through her the way of salvation for all India. That impulsion is not likely to cease; it is already pointing us to fresh departures. Since the Congress met, three new necessities have presented themselves for Bengal, — the necessity of National Arbitration Courts, the necessity of organised self-protection and the necessity of prevention of famine by self-help. The second of these is the one which we should, in our opinion, take immediately in hand; for it is likely to be urgently needed in the near future and in its absence the national movement will remain deficient in the first element of strength and its defencelessness will perpetually invite attack. If we are to proceed with the work of the nation in peace, we must immediately turn our attention to organising self-protection all over Bengal. The immediate need of the prevention of famine may be met by the suspension of grain-export of which the *Bangabasi* has made itself the champion; but this policy will have to be supplemented and regulated by permanent measures of a far-reaching kind. At present a Resolution approving of export suspension as a temporary measure urgently needed, ought to be sufficient. We do not suppose we need apprehend much difference of opinion on this head. The anti-national superstition of free trade ought to have perished out of Bengal by this time; for a subject nation self-preservation must be the first and dominating principle of its political economy. Neither should there be any opposition to the proposal for Arbitration Courts. Arbitration as a means of diminishing the curse of litigation has been advocated by the Congress and the only difference now is that instead of asking for it from an alien Government which fattens upon the very litigation that impoverishes us, we resolve to establish it for ourselves. We fear, however, that there may be serious difficulty in getting the all-important proposal of self-protection accepted. The attitude of the Moderate leaders in the Comilla matter was of evil omen.

We hope nevertheless that the delegates of the new school will strain every nerve to get these necessary items added to the working programme for the year. By choosing a place where the new spirit has not made headway and by fixing a date which will make it difficult for the East Bengal delegates to arrive in time, the managers of the Conference will probably have secured a large Moderate majority. We are not sorry that this should be so; for it will give us an opportunity of observing how the advantage gained by this tactical trickery will be used. The present Conference will decide whether the two parties can still hope to work together on the basis of the compromise arrived at in December, or whether, as in Japan, a determined fight for the possession of the national mind and guidance of national action is to precede the great work of emancipation. We shall willingly accept either alternative. If we can work together the work will be more rapid in the beginning and smoother; if, on the contrary, we have to settle our differences first, the work will be more energetic and more rapid in the end. Whatever the result, the forward party stands to win.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 2nd, 1907 }

The President of the Berhampur Conference

When the Moderate caucus which arranges our Congresses and Conferences selected Srijut Deepnarain Singh to preside at Berhampur, they thought, no doubt, that they had hit upon a doubly suitable choice. As a young man and one known to be an ardent patriot he would not disgust Bengal by an ultra-moderate pronouncement; as a Zamindar he might be expected to have the fear of the Government before his eyes and to avoid giving open support to the ideas and programme of the New School. It was this latter apprehension, we believe, that lay at the root of the dissatisfaction expressed by some of ourselves at the choice. For our part we shared neither the hopes of the Moderates nor the fears of our own party. We happen to know something of Srijut Deepnarain Singh by report when he was in England and we could not believe that so much fire, sincerity and ardour had been quenched in so short a time or even subdued by his position as a rich man and a Zamindar. We confidently expected from him a pronouncement worthy of the occasion and we have not been disappointed. The spirit of true nationalism underlies his address as reported in substance; the programme of the New School, so far as it has yet taken concrete shape either in practice or in immediate urgency, has been accepted and the declaration for Boycott is satisfactorily clear and unmistakable. By bringing Srijut Deepnarain forward, it is probable that a real service will have been done to Bihar which is in bad need of men who can understand the drift of the times and direct the political activities of the province towards the future instead of trying to keep them clamped to a dead and rotting past. Bihar has a future of its own as a Hindi-speaking sub-race of our nationality; and in that United States of India, which the prophetic vision of the President has forecast, it will have its individual station. But in order to carry weight in that Union Bihar must take up its destinies and become an active force in the general movement towards independence. Whether the Biharis are wise in desiring administrative separation from Bengal under the present bureaucracy, it is difficult to say. For our own part, we are inclined to doubt whether Bihar is as yet quite strong enough to stand by itself unassociated with Bengal or the United Provinces in resistance to a bureaucratic oppression; but if the Biharis generally think themselves strong enough and desire to stand apart, we should be the last, professing the principles we do, to oppose the idea. Administrative arrangements have ceased to be of vital importance. But the attempt which has been made in recent times to estrange the Biharis from the Bengalis in spirit, is a more serious matter. There can be no ground of quarrel between the two peoples except such as arises from the unholy passion for Government service, places and favours; and this ignoble cause of dissension the new spirit will, we hope, destroy before long by making place and service a brand of dishonour rather than of distinction. Judging from Srijut Deepnarain's address we seem to have in him a Bihari of spirit, judgment and intellectual ability who has already grasped the future in anticipation and is likely to model the activities of his province in accordance with that larger vision and not under the stress of petty and evanescent interests. No province can advance under a more unerring guide or shape its activities to the demands of a more infallible ideal than this vision of an India united in its variety. Regional and communal individualities and activities cannot be blotted out from this vast country, but they can be harmonised into a dominating unity.

For the rest, it is curious to note how invariably the manoeuvres of the Moderates turned against themselves. This is indeed inevitable, for when Fate is against men, their likeliest measures and best-concerted combinations act to their own detriment. Dadabhai Naoroji was made President in order to dish the Extremists; yet it was this Moderate President who gave us the cry of Swaraj which the Extremists have made their own and which is stirring the blood of the nation to great actions and great ideals. Madras and the United Provinces were declared to be unanimous against Boycott in order to prevent the Boycott Resolution from passing through the Congress; but the only result has been to raise a storm of Extremism in South and North alike and set the cry of Boycott ringing from one end of India to the other. The shamelessly arbitrary action of the Moderate caucus at Allahabad has done more to kill the old and help the new than the free admission of the Boycotters could possibly have done. The selection at the last moment of Srijut Deepnarain as President in the hope of a "safe" address, — just as Berhampur was selected as a "safe" place — only resulted in a fresh testimony to the growth of the new ideas. How long will you try with these two-penny half-penny brooms of party manoeuvring to sweep back the ocean?

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 3rd, 1907 }

Peace and the Autocrats

Ever since the differences of opinion which are now agitating the whole country declared themselves in the formation of two distinct parties in Bengal, there has been a class of politicians among us who are never tired of ingeminating peace, peace, deploring every collision between the contending schools and entreating all to lay aside their differences and work for the country. It is all very plausible to the ear and easily imposes on the average unthinking mind. Union, concord, work for the country are all moving and sacred words and must command respect — when they are not misused. But what is it that these politicians ask us to do in the name of union, concord and work for the country? They ask us to sacrifice or stifle our convictions and silence the promptings of conscience in order to follow leaders whom we believe to have lost touch with the spirit of the times and "work together unitedly" in a line of action which we believe to be ruinous to the country. The demand has been made quite nakedly by enthusiastic adherents of Babu Surendranath Banerji that we should all follow the leaders blindly even when we disapprove of what they think, say and do. A more presumptuous demand or one more destructive of all political morality and honesty could not be made. There is such a thing as a political conscience, even if its existence is not recognised by the editor of the *Bengalee*; and expediency is not what that veracious journal declares it to be, the sole god of politics, but a subordinate guide, itself determined by higher considerations.

Of course, many of those who cry out for peace at any price, do not perceive all that is implied in their demand. Is it not possible, they argue, to have differences of opinion and yet work together? We should be the last to deny it. The whole system of party politics, for example, depends on the subordination of minor differences by those who are agreed on main and vital points. So long therefore as the differences are minor and either essentially or for the moment immaterial, there is no reason why there should not be complete unity for all practical purposes; but the moment vital differences arise, parties and party struggle become inevitable. The men of peace and unity are never weary of throwing Japan and England in our faces; but they seem not to have read the history of the countries which they offer us as our examples. Have they never heard of the struggle between Federalists and Imperialists in Japan or of the civil strife between Federalists and Unionists which preceded and made the way clear for her marvellous development? It was the time when American guns had broken open the gates of the country and she was in considerable danger from foreign aggression; yet this was the moment chosen by the most patriotic Japanese for a bitter party struggle attended by mutual assassination and ending in civil slaughter. And what was the point at issue? Simply, whether Shogun or Mikado should be leader and sovereign in Japan. Our wise men would have advised the Japanese to give up their differences and work together under the Shogun because he was "the recognised leader"; but the patriots of Japan knew that the question of Shogun or Mikado involved vital issues which must be settled at any cost; so with one hand they fended off the common enemy while with the other they fought out the question among themselves. This is the only solution to the difficulty which has arisen in India, — to present an united front to bureaucratic attacks while fighting out the question among ourselves. For this amount of concord one condition is absolutely required, that neither party shall call in the common enemy to injure or crush the other. There must be no suppression of telegrams defending a leader of one party from official imputations, no attempt by editorial paragraphs to implicate him as an instigator of disorder, no assistance at viceregal interviews in which the bureaucracy is invited to take strong measures against his propaganda.

If it is argued that the differences dividing us are not vital, we entirely disagree. We are all agreed on one point, that the continuance of unmitigated bureaucratic despotism is ruinous to the country and a change is required; but beyond this point there is more difference than agreement. The new party is composed of various elements and there are minor differences of opinion and even of method among them; but they are all agreed in one unanimous determination to put an end to despotism, mitigated or unmitigated, and replace it by a free, modern and national Government. The old party is also composed of various elements, — ultra-loyalist, loyalist, ultra-moderate, moderate, and even semi-demi-extremist, — but they are all agreed on this main attitude, that while they aspire to colonial self-government they will put up with mitigated despotism for another century or two if vigorous petitioning will bring them nothing better. Here is a vital difference of ideal, aim and spirit; and it is necessarily accompanied by a vital difference in method. The new party is agreed on a policy of self-help and the organisation at least of passive resistance. The old party is agreed upon nothing except the sacred right of petitioning. Sir Pherozshah Mehta and the Bombay Moderates would confine our politics within those holy limits. Pundit Madan Mohan and the United Provinces Moderates are willing to add a moderate and inoffensive spice of self-help, Babu Surendranath and the Bengal Moderates will even admit passive resistance within narrow limits and for a special and temporary purpose. But the difference of all from the new party remains.

Where there are such serious differences and men wish to follow different paths, no lasting composition is possible. The party struggle must go on until the country has definitely accepted one or other of the alternative ideals and methods. Temporary working compromises are alone possible, and the soundness of even such compromises is conditional, firstly, on the candour and whole-heartedness with which they are undertaken on both sides, and secondly, on the carrying on of the party struggle strictly within the rules of the game. The present bitterness of the struggle is largely due to the disregard of these elementary conditions. National Education is an accepted part of the political programme in Bengal; yet all the best known and most influential of the Moderate leaders are either practically indifferent or passively hostile to the progress of the movement. Boycott is the cry of both parties within Bengal; yet the Moderate leaders did not hesitate to stultify the Boycott movement by the support they gave to the Swadeshi-Bideshi Exhibition. Moreover, our experience has hitherto been that the Moderates look on any compromise in the light of a clever manoeuvre to dish the Extremists or a temporary convenience to stave off unpleasant opposition for the moment.

The second condition is equally disregarded. So long as it is sought to suppress the new spirit by autocratic methods or dishonest manoeuvres, there can be no talk of peace or unity. The conduct of Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya and his caucus at Allahabad has been both autocratic and dishonest. The delegates elected at the Railway Theatre were elected according to methods that have always been held valid by the Congress and there has never before been any question of the right of gentlemen nominated by a large public meeting to sit in Congress or Conference. Yet the Pundit and his crew chose by autocratic Resolutions of a temporary Committee which had received no power to alter the Congress constitution, to disallow the nominees of the Railway Theatre meeting! Even the British bureaucracy itself would have blushed to perpetrate so cynical and shameless a piece of autocracy. But these autocratic democrats had not even the courage of their autocracy. They tried first to exclude the elected of the people on the ridiculous plea that Mayo Hall would only hold a certain number and therefore — mark the logic of Moderatism! — this certain number must be composed of Malaviya Moderates and the Railway Theatre Forwards excluded; but they found that this trick would not serve. They then bolstered up their autocracy by the excuse that Allahabad must not be over-represented at the Conference. This excuse was a palpable trick since under the present rules it is impossible to prevent the place of the Conference from being over-represented. As a matter of fact among the few delegates who attended, Allahabad had an overwhelming majority. No sane man can expect concord and compromise between the parties while such trickery is considered a legitimate party manoeuvre. The penalty this time has been the failure of the Allahabad Conference. The penalty next time, unless the caucus learn wisdom, may be open war and the holding of two separate Conferences in the same province.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 5th, 1907 }

Many Delusions

In a country where subjection has long become a habit of the public mind, there will always be a tendency to shrink from the realities of the position and to hunt for roundabout, safe and peaceful paths to national regeneration. Servitude is painful and intolerable, servitude is killing the nation by inches, servitude must be got rid of, true; but the pains and evils of servitude seem almost more tolerable to a good many people than the sharp, salutary pangs of a resolute struggle for liberty. Hence the not uncommon cry, "The violent and frequently bloody methods followed by other nations are not suited to a gentle, spiritual and law-abiding people; we will vindicate our intellectual originality and spiritual superiority by inventing new methods of regeneration much more gentlemanly and civilised." The result is a hydra-brood of delusions, two springing up where one is killed. The old gospel of salvation by prayer was based on the belief in the spiritual superiority of the British people, — an illusion which future generations will look back upon with an amazed incredulity. God answers prayer and the British people are godlike in their nature; so why should we despair? Even now there are prominent politicians who say and perhaps believe that although there is no historical example of a nation liberated by petition and prayer, yet the book of history is not closed and there is no reason why so liberal and noble a nation as the British should not open a new and unprecedented chapter; a miracle which never happened before in the world's records may very well be worked for the sole and particular benefit of India! The petitionary delusion, however, though not yet killed, has been scotched; its lease of life is not for long.

Another delusion of which Babu Narendranath Sen of the *Indian Mirror*, and the cultured and eloquent lady whom the Mahatmas have placed at the head of the new Theosophist Church, are the principal exponents, asks us to seek our regeneration through religion; only when we have become religiously and morally fit, can we hope to be politically free. In spite of the confusion of ideas which underlies this theory, it is one which has a natural charm for a religiously-minded people. Nevertheless it is as much a thing in the air as the petitionary delusion. If by religion is meant the *nivritti-marga* it is an absurdity to talk of politics and religion in the same breath; for it is the path of the few, — the saints and the elect — to whom there is no I nor thou, no mine or thine, and therefore no my country or thy country. But if we are asked to perfect our religious development in the *pravritti-marga*, then it is obvious that politics is as much a part of *pravritti-marga* as any other activity, and there is no rationality in asking us to practise religion and morality first and politics afterwards; for politics is itself a large part of religion and morality. We acknowledge that nothing is likely to become an universal and master impulse in India which is not identified with religion. The obvious course is to recognise that politics is religion and infuse it with the spirit of religion; for that is the true patriotism which sees God as the Mother in our country, God as Shakti in the mass of our countrymen, and religiously devotes itself to their service and their liberation from present sufferings and servitude. We do not acknowledge that a nation of slaves who acquiesce in their subjection can become morally fit for freedom; one day of slavery robs a man of half his manhood, and while the yoke remains, he cannot compass a perfect and rounded moral development. Under a light and qualified subjection, he may indeed develop in certain directions; but in what direction are we asked to develop? In the morality of the slave, the Shudra, whose *dharma* is humility, contentment, service, obedience? In the morality of the merchant whose *dharma* is to amass riches by honesty and enterprise and spend them with liberal philanthropy? In the morality of the Brahmin whose *dharma* is to prepare himself for the *nivritti-marga* by learning and holy exercises, to forgive injuries and accept honour or insult, wrong and injustice, with a calm and untroubled mind? It is obvious that we may develop far on these lines without coming at all nearer to moral fitness for freedom. Politics is the work of the Kshatriya and it is the virtues of the Kshatriya we must develop if we are to be morally fit for freedom. But the first virtue of the Kshatriya is not to bow his neck to an unjust yoke but to protect his weak and suffering countrymen against the oppressor and welcome death in a just and righteous battle.

A third delusion to which the over-intellectualised are subject is the belief in salvation by industrialism. One great danger of the commercial aspect of the Swadeshi movement is that many of our young men may be misled into thinking that their true mission is to go abroad, study industries and return to enrich themselves and their country. We would warn them against this pernicious error. This work is an admirable work and a necessary part of the great national *yajna* which we have instituted; but it is only a part and not even the chief part. Those who have never studied Japanese history, are fond of telling our young men that Japan owes her greatness to her commercial and industrial expansion and call on them to go and do likewise. Commercial and industrial expansion are often accompaniments and results of political liberty and greatness, — never their cause. Yet the opposite belief is held by many who should have been capable of wiser discrimination. We find it in the truly marvellous address of Srinath Paul Rai Bahadoor at Berhampur; there is a wonderful contrast between the canine gospel of submissive loyalty preached in the first part of the address and the rampageously self-assertive gospel of economic independence preached in its tail-end. "Whatever the advantages of political advancement, they sink into insignificance when compared with the blessings which industrial prosperity brings in its train," — such is the gospel according to Srinath Paul Rai Bahadoor. It is so far shared by many less loyal people that they consider industrial prosperity as prior to and the cause of political advancement. The idea is that we must be rich before we can struggle for freedom. History does not bear out this peculiar delusion. It is the poor peoples who have been most passionately attached to liberty, while there are many examples to show that nothing more easily leads to national death and decay than a prosperous servitude. We are particularly thankful that British rule has not, like the Roman, given us industrial prosperity in exchange for political independence; for in that case our fate would have been that of the ancient peoples of Gaul and Britain who, buying civilisation and prosperity with the loss of their freemanhood, fell a prey to the Goth and Saxon and entered into a long helotage from which it took them a thousand years to escape. We must strive indeed for economic independence, because the despotism that rules us is half-mercantile, half-military, and by mortally wounding the lower mercantile half we may considerably disable the upper; at least we shall remove half the inducement England now has for keeping us in absolute subjection. But we should never forget that politics is a work for the Kshatriya and it is not by the virtues and methods of the Vaishya that we shall finally win our independence.

By the Way

Reflections of Srinath Paul, Rai Bahadoor, on the Present Discontents

(The Address of a Perspiring Chairman Rendered Faithfully into the Ordinary English Vernacular.)

Councillors, friends, Rai Bahadoors and others,
Gentlemen all, my bold and moderate brothers!
This Conference's revolutionary course
(By revolution, sirs, I mean of course
The year's, — not anything wicked and Extremist;)
Has brought us here, and like a skilful chemist
Mixed well together our victorious batches
Bearing triumphant scars and famous scratches
Of a year's desperate fight. Behold, the glooms

Are over! See, our conquering Suren comes!
Dream not that when I talk of scars and fighting,
I really mean King Edward to go smiting
And bundle dear Sir Andrew out of Ind.
Nothing, nothing like that is in the wind.
Ah no! what has not Britain done for us?
Were we not savage, naked, barbarous?
Has she not snatched and raised us from the mire?
Taught us to dress, eat, talk, write, sneeze, perspire,
Like Europeans, giving civilisation
To this poor ignorant degraded nation?
Was not our India full of cuts and knocks?
'Twas Britain saved us from those hideous shocks.
No matter if our poor of hunger die,
Us she gave peace and ease and property.
Were't not for Clive, Dalhausie, Curzon, all,
You never would have heard of Srinath Paul.
But is this then good cause we should not meet,
Kiss their benevolent and booted feet,
Remonstrate mildly, praise and pray and cry,
"Have sympathy, great Minto, or we die"?
If he'll not hear, let then our humble oration
Travel with Gokhale to the British nation.
To be industrious, prayerful, tearful, meek
Is the sole end for which we meet this week.
Yet are there men, misunderstanding whites,
Who much misconstrue these our holy rites
Deeming it a bad criminal consultation
How best to free — O horrid thought! — our nation,
And send the English packing bag and baggage,
Polo and hockey stick, each scrap of luggage.
They think we are rank and file and proletariat
Fit to be throttled with the hangman's lariat.
Fie, sirs! that we should be confused with the mob,
We who with Viceroys and great men hobnob!
To be mistook, — Oh faugh! for the mere people,
Things that eat common food and water tipple,

Mere men, mere flesh and blood! — we, the elect,
The aristocracy of intellect
To be thus levelled with the stinking crowd!
No, sirs, I dare pronounce it very loud,
We are the sober, moderate wise men, needing
Scope only to be famed for light and leading,
Full of co-operative amorous loyalty
To Minto, Morley and Britannic Royalty.
O some there are impatient and too wild,
To that Curzonian lash unreconciled,
Repudiate with violence unchancy
Our gospel proud of futile mendicancy.
Strange that they can't perceive the utility
And nobleness of absolute futility!
O sirs, be moderate, patient, persevering;
Shun, shun the extremists and their horrid sneering.
O sirs, from loyalty budge not an inch;
What if your masters love your throats to pinch?
It's pure affection. Even if they kick,
Is that sufficient reason to feel sick?
No, though they thrash and cudgel, kick and beat,
Cling like the devil to their sacred feet!
Where are we? Is this the French Revolution
Infects our sacred Ind with its pollution?
Is Minto Louis? Kitchener Duke Broglie?
Away, away with revolutionary folly!
What, is this France or Russia? Are we men,
Servitude to reject and bonds disdain?
No, we are loyal, good religious dogs,
Born for delightful kicks and pleasant shogs.
It is a canine gospel that I preach.
Be dogs, be dogs, and learn to love the switch.
Whatever the result, be loyal still
To Minto, Morley and their mighty will.
Be loyal still, my prosperous countrymen,
Nor heed the moaning of the million's pain.
For serfdom in our very bones is bred,

And our religion teaches us to dread, —
Shivaji's creed and Pratap's though it be, —
More than the very devil disloyalty.
O constitutionally agitate your tails
And see whether that agitation fails.
The course of true love never did run smooth!
Morley will still relent, — that gracious youth.
Beg for new Legislative Councils, sirs,
Or any blessed thing your mind prefers.
The Shah's agreeable, why not the British?
Then there's Mysore — Great Scott! I feel quite skittish.
Local self-government we'll beg that's now
A farce, — (I'm getting quite extreme, I vow!)
And many other things. Prayers let us patter;
Whether we get them or not, can't really matter.
But one thing let me tell you, countrymen,
That clubs a boon and blessing are to men,
Where white with black and black can mix with white
And share a particoloured deep delight.
Great thanks we owe then, loyalists, to "Max",
Who his capacious brain the first did tax.
Behold the great result! Apollo Paean!
The holy club, the Indo-European!
Approach, approach the holy precincts, come
And chat with Risley of affairs at home;
With Fraser arm-in-arm like friends we'll walk,
To Luson and to Lee familiarly talk.
Mind! trousers and a hat. They keep good whiskey
And we shall feel particularly frisky.
As for Comilla, it was sad and bad,
But Minto's sympathy o'er that fell raid
Dropped like the gentle dew from heaven to heal;
No longer for our injured kin we feel.
And now think not of politics too much.
Three days or four is quite enough for such.
Much better done to store substantial honey
Of commerce, taste the joys that roll in money.

Be rich, my friends! who cares then to be free
In hard uncomfortable liberty?
Of boycott talk but not of Swaraj, sirs,
And if of independence you'ld discourse,
Let it of economic independence be.
For that the law proscribes no penalty,
Nor will your gentle hearts grow faint and sick
At shadow of the fell policeman's stick.
What folly to disturb our comfort fatty
And cudgelled be with regulation *lathi*?
Such the reflections, sirs — Well, let it drop.
Don't hiss so much, dear friends! for here I stop.

BY THE WAY

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 6th, 1907 }

Omissions and Commissions at Berhampur

The spirit of mendicancy has not been given much play in the proceedings of the Berhampur Conference and so far this year marks a distinctive advance. Last year's Conference was totally exceptional; and there could be no certainty that the victory, then won for reason and patriotism, would be permanent, for the mendicant spirit fled from the Conference Pandal before Kemp's cudgels and the triumph of the gospel of self-help was accomplished in an atmosphere of such excitement that even the chill blood of a Legislative Councillor was heated into seditious utterance. The very moment after the dispersal of the Conference the mendicant nature reasserted itself, justifying the maxim of the ancients, "Drive out Nature with a pitchfork (or a regulation *lathi*), yet it will come back at the gallop." But since then Nationalist sentiment in Bengal has grown immensely in volume; and although the Conference was held in a Moderate centre, in the peaceful and untroubled atmosphere of West Bengal, no positive mendicancy was permitted. There were, indeed, certain features of the Conference which we cannot view with approval. Last year the right of raising the cry of the Motherland wherever even two or three of her sons might meet, whether in public places or private, was asserted by the whole body of delegates in spite of police cudgels; this year the right was surrendered because Babu Baikunthanath Sen had pledged his personal honour to a foreign bureaucrat that there would be no breach of the peace. Since this plea was accepted by the delegates, we must take it that all Bengal has acknowledged the shouting of "Bande Mataram" in the streets to be a breach of the peace! Here is a victory for the bureaucracy. And yet the Chairman of the Reception Committee was not ashamed to include in his rotund rhetorical phrases congratulations on our triumph and our scars of victory. The private and personal honour of Babu Baikunthanath was set in the balance against the public honour of the delegates of Bengal, and the latter kicked the beam. It will be said that the position of Babu Baikunthanath as host precluded the delegates from doing anything which would compromise that estimable gentleman. We deny that Babu Baikunthanath stood in the position of host to the Conference, whatever may have been his relation to individual delegates; in any case the representatives of Bengal went to Berhampur not to eat good dinners and interchange kindly social courtesies, but simply and solely to do their duty by the country. We deny the right of any individual, whatever his position, to pledge a whole nation to a course inconsistent with courage and with honour. But the leaders seem to have accepted the plea with alacrity as a good excuse for avoiding a repetition of Barisal. "For such another field they dreaded worse than death." The incident shows the persistence of that want of backbone which is still the curse of our politics. In any other country the very fact that the delegates had been assaulted at one Conference for asserting a right, would have been held an imperative reason for reasserting that right at every succeeding Conference, till it was admitted. Unless we can show the same firmness, we may as well give up the idea of passive resistance for good and all.

Several of the Resolutions seem to us unnecessary in substance and others invertebrate in phrasing. We have no faith whatever in the Judicial and Executive separation nostrum; we do not believe that it will really remedy the evil which it is designed to meet. So long as the executive and judiciary are both in the pay of the same irresponsible and despotic authority, they will for the most part be actuated by the same spirit and act in unison; the relief given will only be in individual cases. Even that much relief we cannot be sure of; for the moment the functions are separated, it will become an imperious need for the bureaucracy to tighten their hold on the judiciary, and, with all the power in their hands, they will not find the task difficult. Already the High Court itself has long ceased to be the "palladium of justice and liberty" against bureaucratic vagaries, and the unanimity of the two Services is likely to be intensified by the so-called reform. It is quite possible that the separation will make things worse rather than better. One reform and one alone can secure us from executive oppression and that is to make the people of this country paymasters and controllers of both executive and judiciary. No patchwork in any direction will be of any avail. What for instance is the use of clamouring about the Road Cess when we know perfectly well that it was levied not for roads and other district purposes but as a plausible means of circumventing the Permanent Settlement? No one can deny that it is admirably fulfilling the purpose for which it was levied. It is absurd to think that the bureaucracy will be anxious to open out the country any further than is necessary for military and administrative purposes and for the greater facility of exploitation by the foreign trader and capitalist. The needs and convenience of the people are not and can never be a determining factor in their expenditure. For the same reason they cannot be expected to look to sanitation beyond the limit necessary in order to safeguard the health of Europeans and avoid in the world's eyes manifest self-betrayal as an inefficient, reactionary and uncivilised administration. Really to secure the public health and effectually combat the plagues that are rapidly destroying our vitality, swelling the death-rate and diminishing the birth-rate, would demand an amount of co-operation with the people for which they will never be willing to pay the price.

With the exception of these minor triflings and of one glaring omission beside which all its omissions and commissions fade into insignificance, the work of the Conference has on the whole been satisfactory. It is well that it has sanctioned the taking up of sanitation measures by popular agency; it is well that it has dealt with the question of arbitration and that it has approved of measures for grappling with the urgent question of scarcity and famine. But in failing utterly to understand and meet the situation created by the disturbances in East Bengal, the Conference has shown a want of courage and statesmanship which is without excuse, — we wish we could say that it was without parallel. We shall deal with this subject separately as its importance demands.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 8th, 1907 }

The Writing on the Wall

When things violent or fearful take place let no one be alarmed or discouraged — they also are "His goings forth". That there will be only the piping time of peace and we shall sing of the cuckoo and the spring is expecting something unnatural. An individual or a nation cannot rise to its full height except through trouble and stress. The stone block patiently submits to hammering, cutting and chiselling to be made into the statue which pleases the eye and gladdens the soul. If it could feel it certainly would say, "How dearly I have to pay for the beautiful transformation." This is the inexorable law of nature. Nature has not yet been known to relent in this respect. If you want to get anything grand and beautiful out of her you must go through the process through which a piece of stone passes before it is endowed with shape, beauty and meaning. The fertilising river rolls down stones, breaks through the impediments, rends asunder the surface of the earth before it bears on its bosom the argosies and crowns the bordering lands with plenty. Those who cannot look this sternness of nature in the face are not destined for things good, noble and high. If you want to grovel in the dust, indolence, ease and ignoble peace may do, but if climbing up the heights of glory is your ambition learn to encounter difficulties and dangers manfully. This is apt to be ignored and ridiculed as a copybook maxim. But it bears repetition times without number and when either an individual or a nation sets about anything earnestly it should start fully impressed with the truth of this copybook commonplace. The truth cannot be confirmed enough and thus the threats of the Anglo-Indian Press have hardly any terror for us.

The Anglo-Indian Press whenever they find that their arguments are seen through, that what is at the back of their minds is at once discovered, that their professions and protestations are taken at their worth, fall to using threats and throw out dark hints as if the people do not know that they cannot regain their independence without a fearful struggle. The Anglo-Indian Press are really nervous at our getting at the truth about political salvation and their arguments about our weakness and incompetency backed by the opinion of the moderate school of politicians in the country are systematically alternated with the arguments of fire and sword. When they cannot coax us into acquiescing in servitude, they want to argue us into it and failing that too, they brandish the sword. The *London Times*, its namesake in Bombay, the *Pioneer*, the *Englishman*, all tried to win over the Congress suddenly changing their attitude of supreme contempt towards the National Assembly of a quarter of a century's standing. But as soon as the news that the extremist programme found favour with the 22nd National Congress was flashed across the seas the "Thunderer" at once cabled to us that India was won by the sword and will in the last resort be held by the sword. Since then these Anglo-Indian journals are trying both mild and violent ways. The more the desire for independence seems to be in evidence, the more the signs of the times point to that direction, the more they gnash their teeth, tear their hair and beat their breast. At every fresh proof of reawakening more blood is sent to their eyes and head. Their conduct gives the lie direct to the vaunted profession that the English people are everywhere the upholders, the representatives, the leaders of the two great interests of a people — Freedom and Justice. The demand of the Egyptian General Assembly has only provoked their laughter. The granting of a constitution to Persia is according to them a move in the wrong direction. They have given the Amir a taste of the flirtation of Western civilisation. They want to retain their spell over those whom they have already enthralled and are ever in quest of fresh victims. Surrender your life, your liberty, your birth-rights to the English nation, go on ministering to their comforts and pleasures and you are credited with common sense, prudence, intelligence and all other mental equipments. But if you think of making any strides in the direction of manhood — if you take it into your head to hold your own in the conflict of interests — if you show the least sign of walking with your head erect you are damned wretches fit for the jail gallows because it has been settled once for all in the wise dispensations of Providence, that you are to sow and they are to reap, that you are to buy and they are to sell, that you are to be killed and they are to kill, that you are to be deprived of arms while they are to be in their full possession, that you will use arms for nefarious purposes, while they will wield them to defend themselves. What else can these ridiculous effusions of the Calcutta *Englishman* mean?

"Diligent students of newspapers in this part of the world can hardly fail to have been struck by the fact that fire-arms are now being frequently used in the commission of crime. They have been produced in the case of riots, and within a few days no less than three cases have been reported of persons shot dead by others who ordinarily should not have been in the possession of rifles or guns. When a Maharaja, *particularly a friend of Europeans and officials*, is shot from behind a hedge and the Police Superintendent of a District has a bullet whistling over his head, the time has come to enquire by what means criminal or fanatical persons on this side of India manage to possess themselves of fire-arms. Recent cases in the Police Court show that it is by no means impossible for transfers of revolvers and the like to take place by private sale. Any unscrupulous or indigent European can sell a weapon to an Indian without the police being aware of the fact (how can they be aware?) and the question arises whether the punishment for a breach of this kind of the Arms Act should not be made absolutely deterrent. Further, as witness the case at Garden Reach, burglars and thieves are learning when they break into a house, that the most valuable property in it are not jewels or money, but guns, rifles, and revolvers. The latter have even been stolen from so secure a place as Fort William. All this points to the fact that a demand for weapons has suddenly arisen in Bengal. One would naturally like to know why. Some people will find no hesitation in accepting the reply that the demand has been caused by those Bengali newspapers and other preachers of sedition who proclaim that the people of this country ought to perfect themselves in military exercises and the use of arms. *Bande Mataram* yesterday boldly said that Indians must develop the virtues of the Kshatriya, the warrior caste. 'The first virtue of the Kshatriya is not to bow his neck to an unjust yoke but to protect his weak and suffering countrymen against the oppressor and welcome death in a just and righteous battle.' This kind of stuff, of course, is often harmless; but when we consider the lengths to which the boycotters have already gone, is it too much to suppose that some fanatics will go to some trouble in providing themselves with arms even if their courage halts there?"

But we reiterate with all the emphasis we can command that the Kshatriya of old must again take his rightful position in our social polity to discharge the first and foremost duty of defending its interests. The brain is impotent without the right arm of strength. India is now conscious of this long-forgotten truth. And the hand must hold up-to-date arms. And where the arms cannot be procured in a fair way people are driven to underhand methods, not to kill their own men as the *Englishman* designedly insinuates but to protect their life and limb, home and hearth, as they had to do at Comilla, as they will shortly have to do at Mymensingh. An awakened nation consults its necessity and proceeds to the invention. The song that nerves the nation's heart is in itself a deed. That song may lead to persecution but as the *Punjabee* has said, "Today we are in the firing line, but our recruits are at our back — ready to take our places the moment we drop down." This music can no longer be silenced and keeping time with it the coming Kshatriya is forging his thunder regardless of the fretting and fuming of the *Englishman*. The writings on the wall are getting distinct and the *Englishman* knows no peace.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 9th, 1907 }

A Nil-admirari Admirer

The splendid speech of Srinath Paul has at last found an admirer in the nil-admirari editor of the *Indian Nation.* What is more wonderful still is that the veteran cynic who had up to now directed all his energies in running down Surendranath has now suddenly discovered that "Surendranath is the most prominent man on this side of the country."

The poor President of the Conference, who had committed the unpardonable sin of differing from the omniscient editor of the *Indian Nation* in his ideas of nationalism, has come in for a liberal share of abuse.

He does not understand the difference in the ideals of the two parties; he fails to find wherein Mr. Tilak's nationalism differs from that of Mr. Gokhale. He fancies he had been cherishing and nursing the national spirit — and this disgust at the very name of the nation is the result. Even Homer nods; and the wise editor of the *Indian Nation* and his other compatriots have to be told that the supreme test of nationalism is a belief in the future of the nation and a love for it — with all its weaknesses.

As for the scurrility of the New Party organs we beg to remind this English scholar that even the genial smile of Addison cut the offending section of the public to the bone.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 10th, 1907 }

Pherozshahi at Surat

The methods of Moderate autocrats are as instructive as they are peculiar. The account of the characteristic proceedings of Sir Pherozshah Mehta at the Surat Conference, which we published in yesterday's correspondence columns, bears a strong family likeness to the ways of the Provincial Congress autocrats all India over. The selection of a subservient President who will call white black at dictatorial bidding; the open scorn of public opinion; the disregard of justice, of fair play, of constitutional practice and procedure, of equality of all before recognised law and rule, and of every other principle essential to a self-governing body; the arrogant claim on account of past "services" to assert private wishes, opinions, conveniences, as superior to the wishes, opinions and conveniences of the people's delegates; these are common and universal characteristics in the procedure of our autocratic democrats. The difference is merely in personal temperament and manner of expression. "The State? I am the State!" cried Louis XIV. "The country? I am the country!" cries Sir Pherozshah Mehta or Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya or Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar, as the case may be. Only, as his personality is more robust, so is Sir Pherozshah's dictatorial arrogance more public, open and contemptuous than that of his compeers in less favoured Provinces. If the popular cause is to make any progress, if we are to show ourselves worthy of the self-government we claim, this strong-handed autocracy must itself be put down with the strong hand. As Mr. Tilak pointed out at Kolhapur, the object of the national movement is not to replace foreign autocrats by the Swadeshi article, but to replace an irresponsible bureaucracy by popular self-government.

The most extraordinary of Sir Pherozshah's freaks at Surat was not his treatment of Sir Bhalchandra as if the President of the Conference were his tame cat, — for what else was the Knight of the Umbrella, pushed into a position to which he has no claims of any kind? Nor was it his exclusion of the Aundh Commission from consideration by the Conference; it is part of the orthodox Congress "nationalism" to exclude the Princes and Chiefs of India from consideration as if they were not an important part of the nation, and to leave them without sympathy or support to the tender mercies of the Foreign Office. Nor was it his turning the Conference into a tool for ventilating his personal grievances against Bombay officialdom. It was his action with regard to the question of National Education.

Let us consider one by one the pleas by which he managed to exclude this all-important Resolution from the deliberations of the Conference. They show the peculiar mental texture of our leaders and their crude notions of the politics which they profess. The first plea is that the Resolutions of the Congress are not binding upon the Conference. What then is the necessity or purpose of the Congress? As we understand it, the Resolutions of the Congress embody the opinions and aspirations of the united people of India; they put forward the minimum reforms which that people are agreed to demand from the Government or to effect for themselves. A Provincial Conference can go beyond these minimum reforms if the circumstances of the Province or the general opinion of the public demand it; it cannot diminish, ignore or go behind them without dissociating itself from the programme approved by the nation and breaking up all chances of an united advance. If these are not the relations of Congress and Conference, will Sir Pherozshah inform us what are the true relations? If the Conference does not exist in order to carry forward the national programme with whatever additions the Province may find necessary for its own purposes, does it then exist only in order to record the decrees and opinions of a few Provincial leaders?

The second plea was that Sir Pherozshah Mehta could not understand the meaning of National Education. At Ahmedabad, we remember, the Swadeshi Resolution was disallowed in the Subjects Committee because Sir Pherozshah Mehta would not know where he could get his broadcloth, if it were passed! The nation was not to resolve on helping forward its commercial independence, because Sir Pherozshah Mehta preferred broadcloth to any other wear. And now the people of Bombay are not to educate themselves on national lines because Sir Pherozshah Mehta does not know what a nation means nor what nationalism means nor, in fact, anything except what Sir Pherozshah Mehta means.

When, on a vote of the Subjects Committee, the Resolution was declared by the President to be lost, it seems to have been the opinion of a large body of the delegates that this was a misdeclaration. The obvious course was, under such circumstances, a count of votes by tellers on each side. But Sir Pherozshah was ready with his third plea that this would be to question the veracity of the President. We cannot too strongly insist that politics is not a social drawing-room for the interchange of courtly amenities. Where there is a question of constitutional right, to bring in personal arguments of this kind is to show that you have not grasped the elementary principles of democratic politics. The very first of these principles is that law rules and not persons, — the person is only an instrument of the law. The President or Chairman of a body sits there to keep order and see that law and rule are observed, — he does not sit there to make his own will the law. If therefore there is any question of a miscount, it is his bounden duty to see that immediate measures are taken to satisfy both parties as to its correctness and it is the natural right of the members to demand such a count. That right ought not to be waived in deference to the tender delicacy of a Chairman's self-love, nor has he or his friends any right to talk nonsense about his veracity being questioned or himself being insulted. Such mouthings show either a guilty conscience which cannot face public scrutiny or an entire moral unfitness for leadership in any constitutional proceedings.

We regret that the delegates at Surat did not insist on their rights. Sir Pherozshah Mehta came to Calcutta, prepared to do at the Congress precisely what he has now been doing at the Conference; but he found a spirit awakened in Bengal before which a hundred Pherozshahs are as mere chaff before the wind. It is a spirit which will tolerate no dictation except from the nation and from the laws which the nation imposes on itself. The progress of the National cause depends on the awakening of that spirit throughout India. Let there be only one dictator — the People.

A Last Word

We publish in another column a letter from Srijut Kamini Kumar Chanda on the incidents of the Berhampur Conference, which is the last communication on the subject we shall allow in our columns. We quite agree that it would have been better if this unfortunate wrangle could have been avoided. Since, however, the veracity of our reporter had been impugned, we were bound to give him full opportunity of defending himself in his own fashion. We think his veracity has been vindicated by all impartial witnesses and our own inquiries have led us to the conclusion that the report was substantially correct in all important particulars and there is no point on which his statements have been disproved. Differences of impression on minor points will always exist among different observers of the same incident. Some, for instance, think that Mr. A. Chaudhuri raised his point about *New India* before the meeting was formally dissolved; others think it was after. The point is immaterial; the real question is — was Mr. Chaudhuri justified in raising the matter at all on such an occasion? We do not associate ourselves with the strong epithets which our reporter in his self-justification has applied to such incidents trifling as they were. Mr. Chaudhuri's action, for instance, was out of place; that is all. We see nothing to object to in his original report, which was an ordinary account, half-picturesque, half-humorous such as would be taken for granted in the Press of any other country.

Srijut Kamini Kumar takes us to task for quarrelling over such trifling personalities when there are such great questions to be fought out. We beg to point out that we have not quarrelled over them, but have simply given room for our reporter to vindicate his truthfulness as prominently as it had been impugned. So much protection every journal owes to its employees, so long as it is convinced of their *bona fides*. As to the good or bad taste shown in publishing these details that is a matter of opinion. Such accounts are published as a matter of course in the journals of every country where politics are a real part of life and an universal subject of interest; but in this country our public men are unused to criticism and as thin-skinned as women. We do not think their delicate and refined sensitiveness is a plant whose growth we have any call to encourage.

The question of the secrecy of the Subjects Committee proceedings is another matter altogether. This secrecy is never observed in practice; on the contrary, in the absence of free and healthy publicity, partial and altogether misleading reports are circulated which delude public opinion. If secrecy is to be observed, it must be done wholly and completely, by the mouth as well as by the pen. Even so, we should not have cared to break the pseudo-secrecy of these sittings if they had not been made the field for unconstitutional proceedings of every sort. In the twilight of the Subjects Committee every kind of breach of rule and irregularity and all sorts of tactics are employed to get a party advantage; and then in the public function the results are decorously passed in the full light of day as the unanimous opinion of the Congress or Conference. If we keep silence on these expedients which is what the caucus managers desire, they will continue to flourish unchecked; for it is only by exposure that abuses can be killed. We do not believe in shrouding discussions on public matters in secrecy; but if the constitutional practice of public bodies is strictly observed in these sittings, and free public discussion is allowed on matters of great importance in open Congress, then the secrecy of the Subjects Committee may become a fact and not a convenient fiction; but not till then. But in our view the simple expedient is to throw open the Subjects Committee proceedings to public view and all irregularities and personal outbreaks will receive a wholesome check.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 11th, 1907 }

The Situation in East Bengal

While commenting on the proceedings of the Berhampur Conference, we expressed our opinion that the leaders had been guilty of the most serious deficiency in statesmanship and courage in failing to understand and meet the situation created by the occurrences in Tipperah. Leadership in this country has hitherto gone with the fluent tongue, the sonorous voice, skill in dialectics and acute adroitness in legal draftsmanship. The leader has not been called upon to understand the great and urgent national needs or to meet the calls of a dangerous crisis. In the opposition-cum-co-operation theory these were functions of the alien Government, and the only duty of the popular leaders was to advise or remonstrate and look on at the results. The present position in Bengal is full of the uncertainty and confusion of a transition period when circumstances have changed and demand new qualities, new ideas and a new spirit in the people's chiefs; but the leadership still remains in the hands of the old type of politicians. This would not have mattered if the old leaders had been men of genius gifted with the adaptability to suit themselves to the new circumstances, the vision to grasp them and the courage to act. But none of these qualities seems to be possessed either by Babu Surendranath, the one man of genius among the older leaders, or by Mr. Gokhale, the one man of real political ability, much less by the lesser heads. The country has still to seek for leaders who shall be worthy of the new age.

The Comilla affair has revealed beyond all possible doubt the heart of the new situation. It ought now to be plain to the meanest intelligence that a struggle has begun between two great forces which must go on till one or the other is crushed or driven to surrender. Any attempt to disguise the fact is the merest futility. Our Moderate leaders thought when Fuller had been driven out of the country and Morley had taken up the reins of Government, the struggle need no longer be a struggle and could again be reduced to the proportions of a public debate between the Congress and the Government. Now again, they thought, a pleasant reversion to the old opposition-cum-co-operation politics may be gradually engineered. But the forces of reaction, opposed to us, understand politics better; they have seen that the fire of the new spirit is not a momentary blaze to be kindled and quenched at the will of individuals, but the beginning of an immense conflagration. Their policy is as astute as might be expected in such past masters of the art of politics. It is evidently to isolate the struggle and fight it out in East Bengal; to oppose and put down the new spirit after it had taken hold of the whole nation would be a task so difficult as to be a practical impossibility; to meet it in a single part of the country and crush it before it had time to spread effectively over all India, is obviously the wisest course. It is part of the policy also to attack it by localities even in the affected area and not as a whole, to destroy it before the defence has organised itself; and to use as instruments the Salimullahi sect of Mahomedans, while the Police confine themselves to keeping the ring.

The leaders may say that they thought the Comilla incident an unwelcome and deplorable outbreak which had happily been closed whether by the "secret" efforts of Babu Surendranath Banerji or by other less miraculous means. That they did think so, is probable and nothing could more damningly convict them of want of insight and even the smallest measure of political wisdom than such an inexcusable blunder. It was perfectly obvious that, as Comilla had not been the first incident of the kind, so also it would not be the last. Before the Conference met the disturbance at Mogra Hat was already in full course; and the details, reported in Babu Surendranath Banerji's own paper, were of the most glaringly unmistakable character. At Comilla there had been an outbreak of anti-national hooliganism coincident with the Nawab's visit; the authorities had practically refused to help the Hindus and had only interfered when the Hindus were getting the upper hand; and even then, the arrest and punishment of a few rioters was so casually and lightly done as to be absolutely useless for any deterrent effect while the might of the bureaucracy was centred upon the prosecution of alleged Hindu culprits in the shooting case.

Nevertheless the Comilla incident ended in a national victory. At Mogra Hat measures were taken to prevent a repetition of that victory. A Mahomedan Police official seems to have acted practically as the captain of the rioters; the Subdivisional Officer tried to deprive the Hindus of the means of self-defence; attempts were made to prevent organisation of defence by volunteers; a Police force held the station to exclude help from outside for the Hindus, leaving the Mahomedan rioters a clear field for their operations. Finally when in spite of all these obstructions the Hindus were again getting the upper hand, the higher authorities appeared on the scene, the disturbance was quelled, and arrests and prosecutions of Hindus are now in full swing. This is the substance of the account given by the correspondents of the *Bengalee* and the *Patrika*, and not yet denied. If after this the leaders are still unable to understand the situation, the sooner they give up their leadership and attend to their spiritual salvation, the better for themselves and the country.

The situation in East Bengal puts three important questions to any intelligent leadership. Is East Bengal to be left alone to fight out the battle of nationalism while the rest of the country looks calmly on? Is reaction to be allowed to persecute local and disorganised forces of nationalism or is mutual defence to be organised? What measures are to be taken to prevent the efforts of the officials to give the matter the appearance of a Hindu-Mahomedan quarrel? What answer have the leaders to give to these questions? At Berhampur two measures only were taken, — an empty and halting Resolution of "sympathy" and a flamboyant call for a Defence Fund, to be utilised for we know not what purpose. It is not money that East Bengal needs, but practical assistance, guidance and leadership. These the leaders have proved themselves unable or unwilling to give. They will say perhaps that they have secured the "sympathy" of Lord Minto as well as of the Conference, and nothing further is necessary! It does not matter a jot whether the local officials are or are not acting on their own initiative in their singular attitude in East Bengal. The sympathy of Lord Minto has not prevented the repetition of the disturbances, and we have no confidence that it will prevent further repetitions which are now threatening. For effectiveness it seems to be on a par with the sympathy of the Berhampur Conference. The people can expect no protection from the alien bureaucracy which is interested in the extinction of nationalism. They can expect, it appears, neither help nor guidance from their own leaders. They are left alone to find out their own salvation. Be it so, then. Ourselves we will protect ourselves; unled and unassisted pave for the country its hope and its future.

The Doctrine of Passive Resistance

The seven chapters making up this work appeared in the *Bande Mataram* between 11 and 23 April 1907. They were published under the heading “THE NEW THOUGHT: The Doctrine of Passive Resistance”.

I

Introduction

In a series of articles, published in this paper soon after the Calcutta session of the Congress, we sought to indicate our view both of the ideal which the Congress had adopted, the ideal of Swaraj or self-government as it exists in the United Kingdom or the Colonies, and of the possible lines of policy by which that ideal might be attained. There are, we pointed out, only three possible policies; petitioning, an unprecedented way of attempting a nation's liberty, which cannot possibly succeed except under conditions which have not yet existed among human beings; self-development and self-help; and the old orthodox historical method of organised resistance to the existing form of government. We acknowledged that the policy of self-development which the New party had forced to the front, was itself a novel departure under the circumstances of modern India. Self-development of an independent nation is one thing; self-development from a state of servitude under an alien and despotic rule without the forcible or peaceful removal of that rule as an indispensable preliminary, is quite another. No national self-development is possible without the support of *rajshakti*, organized political strength, commanding, and whenever necessary compelling general allegiance and obedience. A caste may develop, a particular community may develop by its own efforts supported by a strong social organization; a nation cannot. Industrially, socially, educationally there can be no genuine progress carrying the whole nation forward, unless there is a central force representing either the best thought and energy of the country or else the majority of its citizens and able to enforce the views and decisions of the nation on all its constituent members. Because Japan had such a central authority, she was able in thirty years to face Europe as an equal; because we in India neither had such an authority nor tried to develop it, but supported each tottering step by clinging to the step-motherly apron strings of a foreign Government, our record of more than seventy years has not been equal to one year of Japan. We have fumbled through the nineteenth century, prattling of enlightenment and national regeneration; and the result has been not national progress, but national confusion and weakness. Individuals here and there might emancipate themselves and come to greatness; particular communities might show a partial and one-sided development, for a time only; but the nation instead of progressing, sank into a very slough of weakness, helplessness and despondency. Political freedom is the life-breath of a nation; to attempt social reform, educational reform, industrial expansion, the moral improvement of the race without aiming first and foremost at political freedom, is the very height of ignorance and futility. Such attempts are foredoomed to disappointment and failure; yet when the disappointment and failure come, we choose to attribute them to some radical defect in the national character, as if the nation were at fault and not its wise men who would not or could not understand the first elementary conditions of success. The primary requisite for national progress, national reform, is the free habit of free and healthy national thought and action which is impossible in a state of servitude. The second is the organization of the national will in a strong central authority.

How impossible it is to carry out efficiently any large national object in the absence of this authority was shown by the fate of the Boycott in Bengal. It is idle to disguise from ourselves that the Boycott is not as yet effective except spasmodically and in patches. Yet to carry through the Boycott was a solemn national decision which has not been reversed but rather repeatedly confirmed. Never indeed has the national will been so generally and unmistakeably declared; but for the want of a central authority to work for the necessary conditions, to support by its ubiquitous presence the weak and irresolute and to coerce the refractory, it has not been properly carried out. For the same reason national education languishes. For the same reason every attempt at large national action has failed. It is idle to talk of self-development unless we first evolve a suitable central authority or Government which all will or must accept. The Japanese perceived this at a very early stage and leaving aside all other matters, devoted their first energies to the creation of such an authority in the person of the Mikado and his Government, holding it cheaply purchased even at the price of temporary internal discord and civil slaughter. We also must develop a central authority, which shall be a popular Government in fact though not in name. But Japan was independent; we have to establish a popular authority which will exist side by side and in rivalry with a despotic foreign bureaucracy — no ordinary rough-riding despotism, but quiet, pervasive and subtle, one that has fastened its grip on every detail of our national life and will not easily be persuaded to let go, even in the least degree, its octopus-like hold. This popular authority will have to dispute every part of our national life and activity, one by one, step by step, with the intruding force to the extreme point of entire emancipation from alien control. This and no less than this is the task before us. A Moderate critic characterised it at the time as an unheroic programme; but to us it seems so heroic that we frankly acknowledge its novelty and audacity and the uncertainty of success. For success depends on the presence of several very rare conditions. It demands in the first place a country for its field of action in which the people are more powerfully swayed by the fear of social excommunication and the general censure of their fellows than by the written law. It demands a country where the capacity for extreme self-denial is part of the national character or for centuries has taken a prominent place in the national discipline. These conditions exist in India. But it requires also an iron endurance, tenacity, doggedness far above anything that is needed for the more usual military revolt or sanguinary revolution. These qualities we have not as yet developed at least in Bengal; but they are easily generated by suffering and necessity and hardened into permanence by a prolonged struggle with superior power. There is nothing like a strong pressure from above to harden and concentrate what lies below — always provided that the superior pressure is not such as to crush the substance on which it is acting. The last requisite therefore for the success of the policy of self-development against the pressure of foreign rule is that the bureaucracy will so far respect its former traditions and professions as not to interfere finally with any course of action of the popular authority which does not itself try violently to subvert the connection of the British Empire with India. It is extremely doubtful whether this last condition will be satisfied. It is easy to see how the bureaucracy might put a summary end to National Education or an effective check on industrial expansion or do away arbitrarily with popular Arbitration Courts. It is easy to see how the temptation to resort to Russian methods on a much larger and effective scale than that of mere Fullerism might prove too strong for a privileged class which felt power slipping from its hold. We therefore said in our previous articles that we must carry on the attempt at self-development as long as we were permitted. What would be our next recourse if it were no longer permitted it is too early to discuss.

The attempt at self-development by self-help is absolutely necessary for our national salvation, whether we can carry it peacefully to the end or not. In no other way can we get rid of the fatal dependence, passivity and helplessness in which a century of all-pervasive British control has confirmed us. To recover the habit of independent motion and independent action is the first necessity. It was for this reason that after extreme provocation and full conviction of the hopelessness otherwise of inducing any change of policy in the older politicians, the leaders of the new school decided to form an independent party and place their views as an independent programme before the country. Their action, though much blamed at the time, has been thoroughly justified by results. The National Congress has not indeed broken with the old petitioning traditions, but it has admitted the new policy as an essential part of the national programme. Swadeshi and National Education have been recognized, and, in all probability, Arbitration will be given its proper prominence at the next session; Boycott has been admitted as permissible in principle to all parts of India though the recommendation to extend it in practice as an integral part of the national policy was not pressed. It only remained to develop the central authority which will execute the national policy and evolve with time into a popular Government. It was for this object that the New party determined not to be satisfied with any further evasion of the constitution question, though they did not press for the adoption of their own particular scheme. It is for this object that a Central National Committee has been formed; that Conferences are being held in various districts and sub-divisions and committees created; that the Provincial Conferences are expected to appoint a Provincial Committee for all Bengal. The mere creation of these Committees will not provide us with our central authority, nor will they be really effective for the purpose until the new spirit and the new views are paramount in the whole country. But it is the first step which costs and the first step has been taken.

So far, well; but the opposition of the bureaucracy to the national self-development must be taken into account. Opposition, not necessarily final and violent, will undoubtedly be offered; and we have not as yet considered the organization of any means by which it can be effectually met. Obviously we shall have to fall back on the third policy of organised resistance, and have only to decide what form the resistance should take, passive or active, defensive or aggressive. It is well known that the New party long ago formulated and all Bengal has in theory accepted, the doctrine of passive, or, as it might be more comprehensively termed, defensive resistance. We have therefore not only to organize a central authority, not only to take up all branches of our national life into our hands, but in order to meet bureaucratic opposition and to compel the alien control to remove its hold on us, if not at once, then tentacle by tentacle we must organize defensive resistance.

II

Its Object

Organized resistance to an existing form of government may be undertaken either for the vindication of national liberty, or in order to substitute one form of government for another, or to remove particular objectionable features in the existing system without any entire or radical alteration of the whole, or simply for the redress of particular grievances. Our political agitation in the nineteenth century was entirely confined to the smaller and narrower objects. To replace an oppressive land revenue system by the security of a Permanent Settlement, to mitigate executive tyranny by the separation of judicial from executive functions, to diminish the drain on the country naturally resulting from foreign rule by more liberal employment of Indians in the services — to these half-way houses our wise men and political seers directed our steps, with this limited ideal they confined the rising hopes and imaginations of a mighty people reawakening after a great downfall. Their political inexperience prevented them from realising that these measures on which we have misspent half a century of unavailing effort, were not only paltry and partial in their scope but in their nature ineffective. A Permanent Settlement can always be evaded by a spendthrift Government bent on increasing its resources and unchecked by any system of popular control; there is no limit to the possible number of cesses and local taxes by which the Settlement could be practically violated without any direct infringement of its provisions. The mere deprivation of judicial functions will not disarm executive tyranny so long as both executive and judiciary are mainly white and subservient to a central authority irresponsible, alien and bureaucratic; for the central authority can always tighten its grip on the judiciary of which it is the controller and paymaster and habituate it to a consistent support of executive action. Nor will Simultaneous Examinations and the liberal appointment of Indians mend the matter; for an Englishman serves the Government as a member of the same ruling race and can afford to be occasionally independent; but the Indian civilian is a serf masquerading as a heaven-born and can only deserve favour and promotion by his zeal in fastening the yoke heavier upon his fellow-countrymen. As a rule the foreign Government can rely on the "native" civilian to be more zealously oppressive than even the average Anglo-Indian official. Neither would the panacea of Simultaneous Examinations really put an end to the burden of the drain. The Congress insistence on the Home Charges for a long time obscured the real accusation against British rule; for it substituted a particular grievance for a radical and congenital evil implied in the very existence of British control. The huge price India has to pay England for the inestimable privilege of being ruled by Englishmen is a small thing compared with the murderous drain by which we purchase the more exquisite privilege of being exploited by British capital. The diminution of the Home Charges will not prevent the gradual death by bleeding of which exploitation is the true and abiding cause. Thus, even for the partial objects they were intended to secure, the measures for which we petitioned and clamoured in the last century were hopelessly ineffective. So was it with all the Congress nostrums; they were palliatives which could not even be counted upon to palliate; the radical evil, uncured, would only be driven from one seat in the body politic to take refuge in others where it would soon declare its presence by equally troublesome symptoms. The only true cure for a bad and oppressive financial system is to give the control over taxation to the people whose money pays for the needs of Government. The only effective way of putting an end to executive tyranny is to make the people and not an irresponsible Government the controller and paymaster of both executive and judiciary. The only possible method of stopping the drain is to establish a popular government which may be relied on to foster and protect Indian commerce and Indian industry conducted by Indian capital and employing Indian labour. This is the object which the new politics, the politics of the twentieth century, places before the people of India in their resistance to the present system of government, — not tinkerings and palliatives but the substitution for the autocratic bureaucracy which at present misgoverns us of a free constitutional and democratic system of government and the entire removal of foreign control in order to make way for perfect national liberty.

The redress of particular grievances and the reformation of particular objectionable features in a system of government are sufficient objects for organized resistance only when the Government is indigenous and all classes have a recognised place in the political scheme of the State. They are not and cannot be a sufficient object in countries like Russia and India where the laws are made and administered by a handful of men, and a vast population, educated and uneducated alike, have no political right or duty except the duty of obedience and the right to assist in confirming their own servitude. They are still less a sufficient object when the despotic oligarchy is alien by race and has not even a permanent home in the country, for in that case the Government cannot be relied on to look after the general interests of the country, as in nations ruled by indigenous despotisms; on the contrary, they are bound to place the interests of their own country and their own race first and foremost. Organized resistance in subject nations which mean to live and not die, can have no less an object than an entire and radical change of the system of government; only by becoming responsible to the people and drawn from the people can the Government be turned into a protector instead of an oppressor. But if the subject nation desires not a provincial existence and a maimed development but the full, vigorous and noble realization of its national existence, even a change in the system of government will not be enough; it must aim not only at a national Government responsible to the people but at a free national Government unhampered even in the least degree by foreign control.

It is not surprising that our politicians of the nineteenth century could not realize these elementary truths of modern politics. They had no national experience behind them of politics under modern conditions; they had no teachers except English books and English liberal "sympathisers" and "friends of India".

Schooled by British patrons, trained to the fixed idea of English superiority and Indian inferiority their imaginations could not embrace the idea of national liberty and perhaps they did not even desire it at heart preferring the comfortable ease which at that time still seemed possible in a servitude under British protection to the struggles and sacrifices of a hard and difficult independence. Taught to take their political lessons solely from the example of England and ignoring or not valuing the historical experience of the rest of the world, they could not even conceive of a truly popular and democratic Government in India except as the slow result of the development of centuries, progress broadening down from precedent to precedent. They could not then understand that the experience of an independent nation is not valid to guide a subject nation, unless and until the subject nation throws off the yoke and itself becomes independent. They could not realize that the slow, painful and ultra-cautious development, necessary in mediaeval and semi-mediaeval conditions when no experience of a stable popular Government had been gained, need not be repeated in the days of the steamship, railway and telegraph, when stable democratic systems are part of the world's secured and permanent heritage. The instructive spectacle of Asiatic nations demanding and receiving constitutional and parliamentary government as the price of a few years' struggle and civil turmoil, had not then been offered to the world. But even if the idea of such happenings had occurred to the more sanguine spirits, they would have been prevented from putting it into words by their inability to discover any means towards its fulfilment. Their whole political outlook was bounded by the lessons of English history, and in English history they found only two methods of politics, — the slow method of agitation and the swift decisive method of open struggle and revolt. Unaccustomed to independent political thinking they did not notice the significant fact that the method of agitation only became effective in England when the people had already gained a powerful voice in the Government. In order to secure that voice they had been compelled to resort no less than three times to the method of open struggle and revolt. Blind to the significance of this fact, our nineteenth century politicians clung to the method of agitation, obstinately hoping against all experience and reason that it would somehow serve their purpose. From any idea of open struggle with the bureaucracy they shrank with terror and a sense of paralysis. Dominated by the idea of the overwhelming might of Britain and the abject weakness of India, their want of courage and faith in the nation, their rooted distrust of the national character, disbelief in Indian patriotism and blindness to the possibility of true political strength and virtue in the people, precluded them from discovering the rough and narrow way to salvation. Herein lies the superiority of the new school that they have an indomitable courage and faith in the nation and the people. By the strength of that courage and faith they have not only been able to enforce on the mind of the country a higher ideal but perceive an effective means to the realization of that ideal. By the strength of that courage and faith they have made such immense strides in the course of a few months. By the strength of that courage and faith they will dominate the future.

The new methods were first tried in the great Swadeshi outburst of the last two years, — blindly, crudely, without leading and organization, but still with amazing results. The moving cause was a particular grievance, the Partition of Bengal; and to the removal of the particular grievance, pettiest and narrowest of all political objects, our old leaders strove hard to confine the use of this new and mighty weapon. But the popular instinct was true to itself and would have none of it. At a bound we passed therefore from mere particular grievances, however serious and intolerable, to the use of passive resistance as a means of cure for the basest and evilest feature of the present system, — the bleeding to death of a country by foreign exploitation. And from that stage we are steadily advancing, under the guidance of such able political thinking as modern India has not before seen and with the rising tide of popular opinion at our back, to the one true object of all resistance, passive or active, aggressive or defensive, — the creation of a free popular Government and the vindication of Indian liberty.

III

Its Necessity

We have defined, so far, the occasion and the ultimate object of the passive resistance we preach. It is the only effective means, except actual armed revolt, by which the organized strength of the nation, gathering to a powerful central authority and guided by the principle of self-development and self-help, can wrest the control of our national life from the grip of an alien bureaucracy, and thus, developing into a free popular Government, naturally replace the bureaucracy it extrudes until the process culminates in a self-governed India, liberated from foreign control. The mere effort at self-development, unaided by some kind of resistance, will not materially help us towards our goal. Merely by developing national schools and colleges we shall not induce or force the bureaucracy to give up to us the control of education. Merely by attempting to expand some of our trades and industries, we shall not drive out the British exploiter or take from the British Government its sovereign power of regulating, checking or killing the growth of Swadeshi industries by the imposition of judicious taxes and duties and other methods always open to the controller of a country's finance and legislation. Still less shall we be able by that harmless means to get for ourselves the control of taxation and expenditure. Nor shall we, merely by establishing our own arbitration courts, oblige the alien control to give up the elaborate and lucrative system of civil and criminal judicature which at once emasculates the nation and makes it pay heavily for its own emasculation. In none of these matters is the bureaucracy likely to budge an inch from its secure position unless it is forcibly persuaded. The control of the young mind in its most impressionable period is of vital importance to the continuance of the hypnotic spell by which alone the foreign domination manages to subsist; the exploitation of the country is the chief reason for its existence; the control of the judiciary is one of its chief instruments of repression. None of these things can it yield up without bringing itself nearer to its doom. It is only by organized national resistance, passive or aggressive, that we can make our self-development effectual. For if the self-help movement only succeeds in bringing about some modification of educational methods, some readjustment of the balance of trade, some alleviation of the curse of litigation, then, whatever else it may have succeeded in doing, it will have failed of its main object. The new school at least have not advocated the policy of self-development merely out of a disinterested ardour for moral improvement or under the spur of an inoffensive philanthropic patriotism. This attitude they leave to saints and philosophers, — saints like the editor of the *Indian Mirror* or philosophers like the ardent Indian Liberals who sit at the feet of Mr. John Morley. They for their part speak and write frankly as politicians aiming at a definite and urgent political object by a way which shall be reasonably rapid and yet permanent in its results. We may have our own educational theories; but we advocate national education not as an educational experiment or to subserve any theory, but as the only way to secure truly national and patriotic control and discipline for the mind of the country in its malleable youth. We desire industrial expansion, but Swadeshi without boycott, — non-political Swadeshi, Lord Minto's "honest" Swadeshi — has no attractions for us, since we know that it can bring no safe and permanent national gain; that can only be secured by the industrial and fiscal independence of the Indian nation. Our immediate problem as a nation is not how to be intellectual and well-informed or how to be rich and industrious, but how to stave off imminent national death, how to put an end to the white peril, how to assert ourselves and live. It is for this reason that whatever minor differences there may be between different exponents of the new spirit, they are all agreed on the immediate necessity of an organized national resistance to the state of things which is crushing us out of existence as a nation and on the one goal of that resistance, — freedom.

Organized national resistance to existing conditions, whether directed against the system of government as such or against some particular feature of it, has three courses open to it. It may attempt to make administration under existing conditions impossible by an organized passive resistance. This was the policy initiated by the genius of Parnell when by the plan of campaign he prevented the payment of rents in Ireland and by persistent obstruction hampered the transaction of any but Irish business in Westminster. It may attempt to make administration under existing conditions impossible by an organized aggressive resistance in the shape of an untiring and implacable campaign of assassination and a confused welter of riots, strikes and agrarian risings all over the country. This is the spectacle we have all watched with such eager interest in Russia. We have seen the most absolute autocrat and the most powerful and ruthless bureaucracy in the world still in unimpaired possession of all the most effective means of repression, yet beaten to the knees by the determined resistance of an unarmed nation. It has mistakenly been said that the summoning of the Duma was a triumph for passive resistance. But the series of strikes on a gigantic scale which figured so largely in the final stages of the struggle was only one feature of that widespread, desperate and unappeasable anarchy which led to the first triumph of Russian liberty. Against such an anarchy the mightiest and best-organised Government must necessarily feel helpless; its repression would demand a systematic and prolonged course of massacre on a colossal scale the prospect of which would have paralysed the vigour of the most ruthless and energetic despotism even of mediaeval times. Only by concessions and compromises could such a resistance be overcome. The third course open to an oppressed nation is that of armed revolt, which instead of bringing existing conditions to an end by making their continuance impossible sweeps them bodily out of existence. This is the old time-honoured method which the oppressed or enslaved have always adopted by preference in the past and will always adopt in the future if they see any chance of success; for it is the readiest and swiftest, the most thorough in its results, and demands the least powers of endurance and suffering and the smallest and briefest sacrifices.

The choice by a subject nation of the means it will use for vindicating its liberty, is best determined by the circumstances of its servitude. The present circumstances in India seem to point to passive resistance as our most natural and suitable weapon. We would not for a moment be understood to base this conclusion upon any condemnation of other methods as in all circumstances criminal and unjustifiable. It is the common habit of established Governments and especially those which are themselves oppressors, to brand all violent methods in subject peoples and communities as criminal and wicked. When you have disarmed your slaves and legalised the infliction of bonds, stripes and death on any one of them, man, woman or child, who may dare to speak or to act against you, it is natural and convenient to try and lay a moral as well as a legal ban on any attempt to answer violence by violence, the knout by the revolver, the prison by riot or agrarian rising, the gallows by the dynamite bomb. But no nation yet has listened to the cant of the oppressor when itself put to the test, and the general conscience of humanity approves the refusal. Under certain circumstances a civil struggle becomes in reality a battle and the morality of war is different from the morality of peace. To shrink from bloodshed and violence under such circumstances is a weakness deserving as severe a rebuke as Srikrishna addressed to Arjuna when he shrank from the colossal civil slaughter on the field of Kurukshetra. Liberty is the life-breath of a nation; and when the life is attacked, when it is sought to suppress all chance of breathing by violent pressure, any and every means of self-preservation becomes right and justifiable, — just as it is lawful for a man who is being strangled to rid himself of the pressure on his throat by any means in his power. It is the nature of the pressure which determines the nature of the resistance. Where, as in Russia, the denial of liberty is enforced by legalised murder and outrage, or, as in Ireland formerly, by brutal coercion, the answer of violence to violence is justified and inevitable. Where the need for immediate liberty is urgent and it is a present question of national life or death on the instant, revolt is the only course. But where the oppression is legal and subtle in its methods and respects life, liberty and property and there is still breathing time, the circumstances demand that we should make the experiment of a method of resolute but peaceful resistance which while less bold and aggressive than other methods, calls for perhaps as much heroism of a kind and certainly more universal endurance and suffering. In other methods, a daring minority purchase with their blood the freedom of the millions; but for passive resistance it is necessary that all should share in the struggle and the privation.

This peculiar character of passive resistance is one reason why it has found favour with the thinkers of the New party. There are certain moral qualities necessary to self-government which have become atrophied by long disuse in our people and can only be restored either by the healthy air of a free national life in which alone they can permanently thrive or by their vigorous exercise in the intensity of a national struggle for freedom. If by any possibility the nation can start its career of freedom with a fully developed unity and strength, it will certainly have a better chance of immediate greatness hereafter. Passive resistance affords the best possible training for these qualities. Something also is due to our friends, the enemy. We have ourselves made them reactionary and oppressive and deserved the Government we possess. The reason why even a radical opportunist like Mr. Morley refuses us self-government is not that he does not believe in India's fitness for self-government, but that he does not believe in India's determination to be free; on the contrary, the whole experience of the past shows that we have not been in earnest in our demand for self-government. We should put our determination beyond a doubt and thereby give England a chance of redeeming her ancient promises, made when her rule was still precarious and unstable. For the rest, circumstances still favour the case of passive resistance. In spite of occasional Fullerism the bureaucracy has not yet made up its mind to a Russian system of repression. It is true that for India also it is now a question of national life or death. Morally and materially she has been brought to the verge of exhaustion and decay by the bureaucratic rule and any farther acquiescence in servitude will result in that death-sleep of centuries from which a nation, if it ever awakes at all, wakes emaciated, feeble and unable to resume its true rank in the list of the peoples. But there is still time to try the effect of an united and unflinching pressure of passive resistance. The resistance, if it is to be of any use, must be united and unflinching. If from any timidity or selfishness or any mistaken ideas of caution and moderation our Moderate patriots succeed in breaking the unity and weakening the force of the resistance, the movement will fail and India will sink into those last depths of degradation when only desperate remedies will be of any utility. The advocates of self-development and defensive resistance are no extremists but are trying to give the country its last chance of escaping the necessity of extremism. Defensive resistance is the sole alternative to that ordeal of sanguinary violence on both sides through which all other countries, not excepting the Moderates' exemplar England, have been compelled to pass, only at last "embracing Liberty over a heap of corpses".

IV

Its Methods

The essential difference between passive or defensive and active or aggressive resistance is this, that while the method of the aggressive resister is to do something by which he can bring about positive harm to the Government, the method of the passive resister is to abstain from doing something by which he would be helping the Government. The object in both cases is the same, — to force the hands of the Government; the line of attack is different. The passive method is especially suitable to countries where the Government depends mainly for the continuance of its administration on the voluntary help and acquiescence of the subject people. The first principle of passive resistance, therefore, which the new school have placed in the forefront of their programme, is to make administration under present conditions impossible by an organized refusal to do anything which shall help either British commerce in the exploitation of the country or British officialdom in the administration of it, — unless and until the conditions are changed in the manner and to the extent demanded by the people. This attitude is summed up in the one word, Boycott. If we consider the various departments of the administration one by one, we can easily see how administration in each can be rendered impossible by successfully organized refusal of assistance. We are dissatisfied with the fiscal and economical conditions of British rule in India, with the foreign exploitation of the country, the continual bleeding of its resources, the chronic famine and rapid impoverishment which result, the refusal of the Government to protect the people and their industries. Accordingly, we refuse to help the process of exploitation and impoverishment in our capacity as consumers, we refuse henceforth to purchase foreign and especially British goods or to condone their purchase by others. By an organised and relentless boycott of British goods, we propose to render the farther exploitation of the country impossible. We are dissatisfied also with the conditions under which education is imparted in this country, its calculated poverty and insufficiency, its anti-national character, its subordination to the Government and the use made of that subordination for the discouragement of patriotism and the inculcation of loyalty. Accordingly we refuse to send our boys to Government schools or to schools aided and controlled by the Government; if this educational boycott is general and well-organized, the educational administration of the country will be rendered impossible and the control of its youthful minds pass out of the hands of the foreigner. We are dissatisfied with the administration of justice, the ruinous costliness of the civil side, the brutal rigour of its criminal penalties and procedure, its partiality, its frequent subordination to political objects. We refuse accordingly to have any resort to the alien courts of justice, and by an organised judicial boycott propose to make the bureaucratic administration of justice impossible while these conditions continue. Finally, we disapprove of the executive administration, its arbitrariness, its meddling and inquisitorial character, its thoroughness of repression, its misuse of the police for the repression instead of the protection of the people. We refuse, accordingly, to go to the executive for help or advice or protection or to tolerate any paternal interference in our public activities, and by an organized boycott of the executive propose to reduce executive control and interference to a mere skeleton of its former self. The bureaucracy depends for the success of its administration on the help of the few and the acquiescence of the many. If the few refused to help, if Indians no longer consented to teach in Government schools or work in Government offices, or serve the alien as police, the administration could not continue for a day. We will suppose the bureaucracy able to fill their places by Eurasians, aliens or traitors; even then the refusal of the many to acquiesce, by the simple process of no longer resorting to Government schools, courts of justice or magistrates' cutcherries, would put an end to administration.

Such is the nature of passive resistance as preached by the new school in India. It is at once clear that self-development and such a scheme of passive resistance are supplementary and necessary to each other. If we refuse to supply our needs from foreign sources we must obviously supply them ourselves; we cannot have the industrial boycott without Swadeshi and the expansion of indigenous industries. If we decline to enter the alien courts of justice, we must have arbitration courts of our own to settle our disputes and differences. If we do not send our boys to schools owned or controlled by the Government, we must have schools of our own in which they may receive a thorough and national education. If we do not go for protection to the executive, we must have a system of self-protection and mutual protection of our own. Just as Swadeshi is the natural accompaniment of an industrial boycott, so also arbitration stands in the same relation to a judicial boycott, national education to an educational boycott, a league of mutual defence to an executive boycott. From this close union of self-help with passive resistance it also follows that the new politics do not contemplate the organisation of passive resistance as a temporary measure for partial ends. It is not to be dropped as soon as the Government undertakes the protection of indigenous industries, reforms its system of education, improves its courts of justice and moderates its executive rigour and ubiquity, but only when the control of all these functions is vested in a free, constitutional and popular Government. We have learned by bitter experience that an alien and irresponsible bureaucracy cannot be relied upon to abstain from rescinding its reforms when convenient or to manage even a reformed administration in the interests of the people.

The possibilities of passive resistance are not exhausted by the refusal of assistance to the administration. In Europe its more usual weapon is the refusal to pay taxes. The strenuous political instinct of European races teaches them to aim a direct blow at the most vital part of the administration rather than to undermine it by slower and more gradual means. The payment of taxes is the most direct assistance given by the community to the administration and the most visible symbol of acquiescence and approval. To refuse payment is at once the most emphatic protest possible short of taking up arms and the sort of attack which the administration will feel immediately and keenly and must therefore parry at once either by conciliation or by methods of repression which will give greater vitality and intensity to the opposition. The refusal to pay taxes is a natural and logical result of the attitude of passive resistance. A boycott of Government schools, for example, may be successful and national schools substituted; but the administration continues to exact from the people a certain amount of revenue for the purposes of education, and is not likely to relinquish its claims; the people will therefore have doubly to tax themselves in order to maintain national education and also to maintain the Government system by which they no longer profit. Under such circumstances the refusal to pay for an education of which they entirely disapprove, comes as a natural consequence. This was the form of resistance offered by the Dissenters in England to the Education Act of the last Conservative Government. The refusal to pay rents was the backbone of the Irish Plan of Campaign. The refusal to pay taxes levied by an Imperial Government in which they had no voice or share, was the last form of resistance offered by the American colonists previous to taking up arms. Ultimately, in case of the persistent refusal of the administration to listen to reason, the refusal to pay taxes is the strongest and final form of passive resistance.

This stronger sort of passive resistance has not been included by the new party in its immediate programme, and for valid reasons. In the first place, all the precedents for this form of resistance were accompanied by certain conditions which do not as yet obtain in India. In the Irish instance, the refusal was not to pay Government taxes but to pay rents to a landlord class who represented an unjust and impoverishing land system maintained in force by a foreign power against the wishes of the people; but in India the foreign bureaucracy has usurped the functions of the landlord, except in Bengal where a refusal to pay rents would injure not a landlord-class supported by the alien but a section of our own countrymen who have been intolerably harassed, depressed and burdened by bureaucratic policy and bureaucratic exactions and fully sympathise, for the most part, with the national movement. In all other parts of India the refusal to pay rents would be a refusal to pay a Government tax. This, as we have said, is the strongest, the final form of passive resistance, and differs from the method of political boycott which involves no breach of legal obligation or direct defiance of administrative authority. No man can be legally punished for using none but Swadeshi articles or persuading others to follow his example or for sending his boys to a National in preference to a Government school, or for settling his differences with others out of court, or for defending his person and property or helping to defend the person and property of his neighbours against criminal attack. If the administration interferes with the people in the exercise of these legitimate rights, it invites and compels defiance of its authority and for what may follow the rulers and not the people are responsible. But the refusal to pay taxes is a breach of legal obligation and a direct defiance of administrative authority precisely of that kind which the administration can least afford to neglect and must either conciliate or crush. In a free country, the attempt at repression would probably go no farther than the forcible collection of the payments refused by legal distraint; but in a subject country the bureaucracy, feeling itself vitally threatened, would naturally supplement this legal process by determined prosecution and persecution of the advocates of the policy and its adherents, and, in all probability, by extreme military and police violence. The refusal to pay taxes would, therefore, inevitably bring about the last desperate struggle between the forces of national aspiration and alien repression. It would be in the nature of an ultimatum from the people to the Government.

The case of the English Dissenters, although it was a refusal to pay taxes, differed materially from ours. The object of their passive resistance was not to bring the Government to its knees, but to generate so strong a feeling in the country that the Conservative Government would be ignominiously brushed out of office at the next elections. They had the all-powerful weapon of the vote and could meet and overthrow injustice at the polling-station. In India we are very differently circumstanced. The resistance of the American colonists offers a nearer parallel. Like ourselves the Americans met oppression with the weapon of boycott. They were not wholly dependent on England and had their own legislatures in local affairs; so they had no occasion to extend the boycott to all departments of national life nor to attempt a general policy of national self-development. Their boycott was limited to British goods. They had however to go beyond the boycott and refuse to pay the taxes imposed on them against their will; but when they offered the ultimatum to the mother country they were prepared to follow it up, if necessary, and did finally follow it up by a declaration of independence, supported by armed revolt. Here again there is a material difference from Indian conditions. An ultimatum should never be presented unless one is prepared to follow it up to its last consequences. Moreover, in a vast country like India, any such general conflict with dominant authority as is involved in a no-taxes policy, needs for its success a close organization linking province to province and district to district and a powerful central authority representing the single will of the whole nation which could alone fight on equal terms the final struggle of defensive resistance with bureaucratic repression. Such an organization and authority has not yet been developed. The new politics, therefore, confines itself for the time to the policy of lawful abstention from any kind of co-operation with the Government, — the policy of boycott which is capable of gradual extension, leaving to the bureaucracy the onus of forcing on a more direct, sudden and dangerous struggle. Its principle at present is not “no representation, no taxation,” but “no control, no assistance”.

V

Its Obligations

In the early days of the new movement it was declared, in a very catching phrase, by a politician who has now turned his back on the doctrine which made him famous, that a subject nation has no politics. And it was commonly said that we as a subject nation should altogether ignore the Government and turn our attention to emancipation by self-help and self-development. This was the self-development principle carried to its extreme conclusions, and it is not surprising that phrases so trenchant and absolute should have given rise to some misunderstanding. It was even charged against us by Sir Pherozshah Mehta and other robust exponents of the opposition-cum-co-operation theory that we were advocating non-resistance and submission to political wrong and injustice! Much water has flowed under the bridges since then, and now we are being charged, in deputations to the Viceroy and elsewhere, with the opposite offence of inflaming and fomenting disturbance and rebellion. Yet our policy remains essentially the same, — not to ignore such a patent and very troublesome fact as the alien bureaucracy, for that was never our policy, but to have nothing to do with it, in the way either of assistance or acquiescence. Far from preaching non-resistance, it has now become abundantly clear that our determination not to submit to political wrong and injustice was far deeper and sterner than that of our critics. The method of opposition differed, of course. The Moderate method of resistance was verbal only — prayer, petition and protest; the method we proposed was practical, — boycott. But, as we have pointed out, our new method, though more concrete, was in itself quite as legal and peaceful as the old. It is no offence by law to abstain from Government schools or Government courts of justice or the help and protection of a fatherly executive or the use of British goods; nor is it illegal to persuade others to join in our abstention.

At the same time this legality is neither in itself an essential condition of passive resistance generally, nor can we count upon its continuance as an actual condition of passive resistance as it is to be understood and practised in India. The passive resister in other countries has always been prepared to break an unjust and oppressive law whenever necessary and to take the legal consequences, as the non-Conformists in England did when they refused to pay the education rate or as Hampden did when he refused to pay ship-money. Even under present conditions in India there is at least one direction in which, it appears, many of us are already breaking what Anglo-Indian courts have determined to be the law. The law relating to sedition and the law relating to the offence of causing racial enmity are so admirably vague in their terms that there is nothing which can escape from their capacious embrace. It appears from the *Punjabee* case that it is a crime under bureaucratic rule to say that Europeans hold Indian life cheaply, although this is a fact which case after case has proved and although British justice has confirmed this cheap valuation of our lives by the leniency of its sentences on European murderers; nay, it is a crime to impute such failings to British justice or to say even that departmental enquiries into "accidents" of this kind cannot be trusted, although this is a conviction in which, as everyone is aware, the whole country is practically unanimous as the result of repeated experiences. All this is not crime indeed when we do it in order to draw the attention of the bureaucracy in the vain hope of getting the grievance redressed. But if our motive is to draw the attention of the people and enlighten them on the actual or inevitable results of irresponsible rule by aliens and the dominance of a single community, we are criminals, we are guilty of breaking the law of the alien. Yet to break the law in this respect is the duty of every self-respecting publicist who is of our way of thinking. It is our duty to drive home to the public mind the congenital and incurable evils of the present system of government so that they may insist on its being swept away in order to make room for a more healthy and natural state of things. It is our duty also to press upon the people the hopelessness of appealing to the bureaucracy to reform itself and the uselessness of any partial measures. No publicist of the new school holding such views ought to mar his reputation for candour and honesty by the pretence of drawing the attention of Government with a view to redress the grievance. If the alien laws have declared it illegal for him to do his duty unless he lowers himself by covering it with a futile and obvious lie, he must still do his duty, however illegal, in the strength of his manhood; and if the bureaucracy decide to send him to prison for the breach of law, to prison he must willingly and, if he is worth his salt, rejoicingly go. The new spirit will not suffer any individual aspiring to speak or act on behalf of the people to palter with the obligation of high truthfulness and unflinching courage without which no one has a claim to lead or instruct his fellow-countrymen.

If this penalty of sedition is at present the chief danger which the adherent or exponent of passive resistance runs under the law, yet there is no surety that it will continue to be unaccompanied by similar or more serious perils. The making of the laws is at present in the hands of our political adversaries and there is nothing to prevent them from using this power in any way they like, however iniquitous or tyrannical, — nothing except their fear of public reprobation outside and national resistance within India. At present they hope by the seductive allurements of Morleyism to smother the infant strength of the national spirit in its cradle; but as that hope is dissipated and the doctrine of passive resistance takes more and more concrete and organized form, the temptation to use the enormously powerful weapon which the unhampered facility of legislation puts in their hands, will become irresistible. The passive resister must therefore take up his creed with the certainty of having to suffer for it. If, for instance, the bureaucracy should make abstention from Government schools or teaching without Government licence a penal offence, he must continue to abstain or teach and take the legal consequences. Or if they forbid the action of arbitration courts other than those sanctioned by Government, he must yet continue to act on such courts or have recourse to them without considering the peril to which he exposes himself. And so throughout the whole range of action covered by the new politics. A law imposed by a people on itself has a binding force which cannot be ignored except under extreme necessity: a law imposed from outside has no such moral sanction; its claim to obedience must rest on coercive force or on its own equitable and beneficial character and not on the source from which it proceeds. If it is unjust and oppressive, it may become a duty to disobey it and quietly endure the punishment which the law has provided for its violation. For passive resistance aims at making a law unworkable by general and organized disobedience and so procuring its recall; it does not try, like aggressive resistance, to destroy the law by destroying the power which made and supports the law. It is therefore the first canon of passive resistance that to break an unjust coercive law is not only justifiable but, under given circumstances, a duty.

Legislation, however, is not the only weapon in the hands of the bureaucracy. They may try, without legislation, by executive action, to bring opposition under the terms of the law and the lash of its penalties. This may be done either by twisting a perfectly legal act into a criminal offence or misdemeanour with the aid of the ready perjuries of the police or by executive order or ukase making illegal an action which had previously been allowed. We have had plenty of experience of both these contrivances during the course of the Swadeshi movement. To persuade an intending purchaser not to buy British cloth is no offence; but if, between a police employed to put down Swadeshi and a shopkeeper injured by it, enough evidence can be concocted to twist persuasion into compulsion, the boycotter can easily be punished without having committed any offence. Executive orders are an even more easily-handled weapon. The issuing of an ukase asks for no more trouble than the penning of a few lines by a clerk and the more or less legible signature of a District Magistrate; and *hey presto*! that brief magical abracadabra of despotism has turned an action which five minutes ago was legitimate and inoffensive into a crime or misdemeanour punishable in property or person. Whether it is the simple utterance of "Bande Mataram" in the streets or an august assemblage of all that is most distinguished, able and respected in the country, one stroke of a mere District Magistrate's omnipotent pen is enough to make them illegalities and turn the elect of the nation into disorderly and riotous budmashes to be dispersed by police cudgels. To hope for any legal redress is futile; for the power of the executive to issue ukases is perfectly vague and therefore practically illimitable, and wherever there is a doubt, it can be brought within the one all-sufficient formula, — "It was done by the Magistrate in exercise of the discretion given him for preserving the peace." The formula can cover any ukase or any action, however arbitrary; and what British Judge can refuse his support to a British Magistrate in that preservation of peace which is as necessary to the authority and safety of the Judge as to that of the Magistrate? But equally is it impossible for the representatives of popular aspirations to submit to such paralysing exercise of an irresponsible and unlimited authority. This has been universally recognized in Bengal. Executive authority was defied by all Bengal when its representatives, with Babu Surendranath Banerji at their head, escorted their President through the streets of Barisal with the forbidden cry of "Bande Mataram." If the dispersal of the Conference was not resisted, it was not from respect for executive authority but purely for reasons of political strategy. Immediately afterwards the right of public meeting was asserted in defiance of executive ukase by the Moderate leaders near Barisal itself and by prominent politicians of the new school in East Bengal. The second canon of the doctrine of passive resistance has therefore been accepted by politicians of both schools — that to resist an unjust coercive order or interference is not only justifiable but, under given circumstances, a duty.

Finally, we must be prepared for opposition not only from our natural but from unnatural adversaries, — not only from bureaucrat and Anglo-Indian, but from the more self-seeking and treacherous of our own countrymen. In a rebellion such treachery is of small importance, since in the end it is the superior fate or the superior force which triumphs; but in a campaign of passive resistance the evil example, if unpunished, may be disastrous and eat fatally into the enthusiastic passion and serried unity indispensable to such a movement. It is therefore necessary to mete out the heaviest penalty open to us in such cases — the penalty of social excommunication. We are not in favour of this weapon being lightly used; but its employment, where the national will in a vital matter is deliberately disregarded, becomes essential. Such disregard amounts to siding in matters of life and death against your own country and people and helping in their destruction or enslavement, — a crime which in Free States is punished with the extreme penalty due to treason. When, for instance, all Bengal staked its future upon the boycott and specified three foreign articles, — salt, sugar and cloth, — as to be religiously avoided, anyone purchasing foreign salt or foreign sugar or foreign cloth became guilty of treason to the nation and laid himself open to the penalty of social boycott. Wherever passive resistance has been accepted, the necessity of the social boycott has been recognized as its natural concomitant. "Boycott foreign goods and boycott those who use foreign goods," — the advice of Mr. Subramaniya Aiyar to his countrymen in Madras, — must be accepted by all who are in earnest. For without this boycott of persons the boycott of things cannot be effective; without the social boycott no national authority depending purely on moral pressure can get its decrees effectively executed; and without effective boycott enforced by a strong national authority the new policy cannot succeed. But the only possible alternatives to the new policy are either despotism tempered by petitions or aggressive resistance. We must therefore admit a third canon of the doctrine of passive resistance, that social boycott is legitimate and indispensable as against persons guilty of treason to the nation.

VI

Its Limits

The three canons of the doctrine of passive resistance are in reality three necessities which must, whether we like it or not, be accepted in theory and executed in practice, if passive resistance is to have any chance of success. Passive resisters, both as individuals and in the mass, must always be prepared to break an unjust coercive law and take the legal consequence; for if they shrink from this obligation, the bureaucracy can at once make passive resistance impossible simply by adding a few more enactments to their book of statutes. A resistance which can so easily be snuffed out of being is not worth making. For the same reason they must be prepared to disobey an unjust and coercive executive order, whether general or particular; for nothing would be simpler than to put down by a few months' coercion a resistance too weak to face the consequences of refusing submission to Government by ukase. They must be prepared to boycott persons guilty of deliberate disobedience to the national will in vital matters because, if they do not, the example of unpunished treason will tend to be repeated and destroy by a kind of dry rot the enthusiastic unity and universality which we have seen to be necessary to the success of passive resistance of the kind we have inaugurated in India. Men in the mass are strong and capable of wonder-working enthusiasms and irresistible movements; but the individual average man is apt to be weak or selfish and, unless he sees that the mass are in deadly earnest and will not tolerate individual treachery, he will usually after the first enthusiasm indulge his weakness or selfishness to the detriment of the community. We have seen this happening almost everywhere where the boycott of foreign goods was not enforced by the boycott of persons buying foreign goods. This is one important reason why the boycott which has maintained itself in East Bengal, is in the West becoming more and more of a failure.

The moment these three unavoidable obligations are put into force, the passive resistance movement will lose its character of inoffensive legality and we shall be in the thick of a struggle which may lead us anywhere. Passive resistance, when it is confined, as at present, to lawful abstention from actions which it lies within our choice as subjects to do or not to do, is of the nature of the strategical movements and large manoeuvrings previous to the meeting of armies in the field; but the enforcement of our three canons brings us to the actual shock of battle. Nevertheless our resistance still retains an essential character of passivity. If the right of public meeting is suspended by Magisterial ukase, we confine ourselves to the practical assertion of the right in defiance of the ukase and, so long as the executive also confines itself to the dispersal of the meeting by the arrest of its conveners and other peaceful and legal measures, we offer no active resistance. We submit to the arrest, though not necessarily to the dispersal, and quietly take the legal consequences. Similarly, if the law forbids us to speak or write the truth as we conceive it our duty to speak it, we persist in doing our duty and submit quietly to whatever punishment the law of sedition or any other law coercive ingenuity may devise, can find to inflict on us. In a peaceful way we act against the law or the executive, but we passively accept the legal consequences.

There is a limit however to passive resistance. So long as the action of the executive is peaceful and within the rules of the fight, the passive resister scrupulously maintains his attitude of passivity, but he is not bound to do so a moment beyond. To submit to illegal or violent methods of coercion, to accept outrage and hooliganism as part of the legal procedure of the country is to be guilty of cowardice, and, by dwarfing national manhood, to sin against the divinity within ourselves and the divinity in our motherland. The moment coercion of this kind is attempted, passive resistance ceases and active resistance becomes a duty. If the instruments of the executive choose to disperse our meeting by breaking the heads of those present, the right of self-defence entitles us not merely to defend our heads but to retaliate on those of the head-breakers. For the myrmidons of the law have ceased then to be guardians of the peace and become breakers of the peace, rioters and not instruments of authority, and their uniform is no longer a bar to the right of self-defence. Nor does it make any difference if the instruments of coercion happen to be the recognized and usual instruments or are unofficial hooligans in alliance or sympathy with the forces of coercion. In both cases active resistance becomes a duty and passive resistance is, for that occasion, suspended. But though no longer passive, it is still a defensive resistance. Nor does resistance pass into the aggressive stage so long as it resists coercive violence in its own kind and confines itself to repelling attack. Even if it takes the offensive it does not by that mere fact become aggressive resistance, unless the amount of aggression exceeds what is necessary to make defence effective. The students of Mymensingh, charged by the police while picketing, kept well within the right of self-defence when they drove the rioters off the field of operations; the gentlemen of Comilla kept well within the rights of self-defence if they attacked either rioters or inciters of riot who either offered, or threatened, or tried to provoke assault. Even the famous shot which woke the authorities from their waking dreams, need not have been an act of aggression if it was fired to save life or a woman's honour or under circumstances of desperation when no other means of defence would have been effective. With the doubtful exception of this shot, supposing it to have been fired unnecessarily, and that other revolver shot which killed Mr. Rand, there has been no instance of aggressive resistance in modern Indian politics.

The new politics, therefore, while it favours passive resistance, does not include meek submission to illegal outrage under that term; it has no intention of overstressing the passivity at the expense of the resistance. Nor is it inclined to be hysterical over a few dozen of broken heads or exalt so simple a matter as a bloody coxcomb into the crown of martyrdom. This sort of hysterical exaggeration was too common in the early days of the movement when everyone who got his crown cracked in a street affray with the police was encouraged to lift up his broken head before the world and cry out, "This is the head of a martyr." The new politics is a serious doctrine and not, like the old, a thing of shows and political theatricals: it demands real sufferings from its adherents, — imprisonment, worldly ruin, death itself, — before it can allow him to assume the rank of a martyr for his country. Passive resistance cannot build up a strong and great nation unless it is masculine, bold and ardent in its spirit and ready at any moment and at the slightest notice to supplement itself with active resistance. We do not want to develop a nation of women who know only how to suffer and not how to strike.

Moreover the new politics must recognise the fact that beyond a certain point passive resistance puts a strain on human endurance which our natures cannot endure. This may come in particular instances where an outrage is too great or the stress of tyranny too unendurable for anyone to stand purely on the defensive; to hit back, to assail and crush the assailant, to vindicate one's manhood becomes an imperious necessity to outraged humanity. Or it may come in the mass when the strain of oppression a whole nation has to meet in its unarmed struggle for liberty, overpasses its powers of endurance. It then becomes the sole choice either to break under the strain and go under or to throw it off with violence. The Spartan soldiers at Plataea endured for some time the missiles of the enemy and saw their comrades falling at their side without any reply because their general had not yet declared it to be the auspicious time for attack; but if the demand on their passive endurance had been too long continued, they must either have broken in disastrous defeat or flung themselves on the enemy in disregard of their leaders' orders. The school of politics which we advocate is not based upon abstractions, formulas and dogmas, but on practical necessities and the teaching of political experience, common sense and the world's history. We have not the slightest wish to put forward passive resistance as an inelastic dogma. We preach defensive resistance mainly passive in its methods at present, but active whenever active resistance is needed; but defensive resistance within the limits imposed by human nature and by the demands of self-respect and the militant spirit of true manhood. If at any time the laws obtaining in India or the executive action of the bureaucracy were to become so oppressive as to render a struggle for liberty on the lines we have indicated, impossible; if after a fair trial given to this method, the object with which we undertook it, proved to be as far off as ever; or if passive resistance should turn out either not feasible or necessarily ineffectual under the conditions of this country, we should be the first to recognize that everything must be reconsidered and that the time for new men and new methods had arrived. We recognize no political object of worship except the divinity in our motherland, no present object of political endeavour except liberty and no method or action as politically good or evil except as it truly helps or hinders our progress towards national emancipation.

VII

Conclusions

To sum up the conclusions at which we have arrived. The object of all our political movements and therefore the sole object with which we advocate passive resistance is Swaraj or national freedom. The latest and most venerable of the older politicians who have sat in the Presidential chair of the Congress, pronounced from that seat of authority Swaraj as the one object of our political endeavour, Swaraj as the only remedy for all our ills, Swaraj as the one demand nothing short of which will satisfy the people of India. Complete self-government as it exists in the United Kingdom or the Colonies, — such was his definition of Swaraj. The Congress has contented itself with demanding self-government as it exists in the Colonies. We of the new school would not pitch our ideal one inch lower than absolute Swaraj, — self-government as it exists in the United Kingdom. We believe that no smaller ideal can inspire national revival or nerve the people of India for the fierce, stubborn and formidable struggle by which alone they can again become a nation. We believe that this newly awakened people, when it has gathered its strength together, neither can nor ought to consent to any relations with England less than that of equals in a confederacy. To be content with the relations of master and dependent or superior and subordinate, would be a mean and pitiful aspiration unworthy of manhood; to strive for anything less than a strong and glorious freedom would be to insult the greatness of our past and the magnificent possibilities of our future.

To the ideal we have at heart there are three paths, possible or impossible. Petitioning, which we have so long followed, we reject as impossible, — the dream of a timid inexperience, the teaching of false friends who hope to keep us in perpetual subjection, foolish to reason, false to experience. Self-development by self-help which we now purpose to follow, is a possible though uncertain path, never yet attempted under such difficulties, but one which must be attempted, if for nothing else yet to get free of the habit of dependence and helplessness, and reawaken and exercise our half-atrophied powers of self-government. Parallel to this attempt and to be practised simultaneously, the policy of organized resistance to the present system of government forms the old traditional way of nations which we also must tread. It is a vain dream to suppose that what other nations have won by struggle and battle, by suffering and tears of blood, we shall be allowed to accomplish easily, without terrible sacrifices, merely by spending the ink of the journalist and petition-framer and the breath of the orator. Petitioning will not bring us one yard nearer to freedom; self-development will not easily be suffered to advance to its goal. For self-development spells the doom of the ruling bureaucratic despotism, which must therefore oppose our progress with all the art and force of which it is the master: without organized resistance we could not take more than a few faltering steps towards self-emancipation. But resistance may be of many kinds, — armed revolt, or aggressive resistance short of armed revolt, or defensive resistance whether passive or active: the circumstances of the country and the nature of the despotism from which it seeks to escape must determine what form of resistance is best justified and most likely to be effective at the time or finally successful.

The Congress has not formally abandoned the petitioning policy; but it is beginning to fall into discredit and gradual disuse, and time will accelerate its inevitable death by atrophy; for it can no longer even carry the little weight it had, since it has no longer the support of an undivided public opinion at its back. The alternative policy of self-development has received a partial recognition; it has been made an integral part of our political activities, but not in its entirety and purity. Self-help has been accepted as supplementary to the help of the very bureaucracy which it is our declared object to undermine and supplant, — self-development as supplementary to development of the nation by its foreign rulers. Passive resistance has not been accepted as a national policy, but in the form of boycott it has been declared legitimate under circumstances which apply to all India.

This is a compromise good enough for the moment, but in which the new school does not mean to allow the country to rest permanently. We desire to put an end to petitioning until such a strength is created in the country that a petition will only be a courteous form of demand. We wish to kill utterly the pernicious delusion that a foreign and adverse interest can be trusted to develop us to its own detriment, and entirely to do away with the foolish and ignoble hankering after help from our natural adversaries. Our attitude to bureaucratic concessions is that of Laocoon: "We fear the Greeks even when they bring us gifts." Our policy is self-development and defensive resistance. But we would extend the policy of self-development to every department of national life; not only Swadeshi and National Education, but national defence, national Arbitration Courts, sanitation, insurance against famine or relief of famine, — whatever our hands find to do or urgently needs doing, we must attempt ourselves and no longer look to the alien to do it for us. And we would universalize and extend the policy of defensive resistance until it ran parallel on every line with our self-development. We would not only buy our own goods, but boycott British goods; not only have our own schools, but boycott Government institutions; not only erect our own Arbitration Courts, but boycott bureaucratic justice; not only organize our own league of defence but have nothing to do with the bureaucratic Executive except when we cannot avoid it. At present even in Bengal where Boycott is universally accepted, it is confined to the boycott of British goods and is aimed at the British merchant and only indirectly at the British bureaucrat. We would aim it directly both at the British merchant and at the British bureaucrat who stands behind and makes possible exploitation by the merchant.

The double policy we propose has three objects before it; — to develop ourselves into a self-governing nation; to protect ourselves against and repel attack and opposition during the work of development; and to press in upon and extrude the foreign agency in each field of activity and so ultimately supplant it.

Our defensive resistance must therefore be mainly passive in the beginning, although with a perpetual readiness to supplement it with active resistance whenever compelled. It must be confined for the present to boycott, and we must avoid giving battle on the crucial question of taxation for the sole reason that a No-Taxes campaign demands a perfect organization and an ultimate preparedness from which we are yet far off. We will attack the resources of the bureaucracy whenever we can do so by simple abstention, as in the case of its immoral abkari revenue; but we do not propose at present to follow European precedents and refuse the payment of taxes legally demanded from us. We desire to keep our resistance within the bounds of law, so long as law does not seek directly to interfere with us and render impossible our progress and the conscientious discharge of our duty to our fellow-countrymen. But if, at any time, laws should be passed with the object of summarily checking our self-development or unduly limiting our rights as men, we must be prepared to break the law and endure the penalty imposed for the breach with the object of making it unworkable as has been done in other countries. We must equally be ready to challenge by our action arbitrary executive coercion, if we do not wish to see our resistance snuffed out by very cheap official extinguishers. Nor must we shrink from boycotting persons as well as things; we must make full though discriminating use of the social boycott against those of our countrymen who seek to baffle the will of the nation in a matter vital to its emancipation, for this is a crime of *lèse-nation* which is far more heinous than the legal offence of *lèse-majesté* and deserves the severest penalty with which the nation can visit traitors.

We advocate, finally, the creation of a strong central authority to carry out the will of the nation, supported by a close and active organization of village, town, district and province. We desire to build up this organisation from the constitution the necessity of which the Congress has recognized and for which it has provided a meagre and imperfect beginning; but if owing to Moderate obstruction this constitution cannot develop or is not allowed to perform its true functions, the organization and the authority must be built up otherwise by the people itself and, if necessary, outside the Congress.

The double policy of self-development and defensive resistance is the common standing-ground of the new spirit all over India. Some may not wish to go beyond its limits, others may look outside it; but so far all are agreed. For ourselves we avow that we advocate passive resistance without wishing to make a dogma of it. In a subject nationality, to win liberty for one's country is the first duty of all, by whatever means, at whatever sacrifice; and this duty must override all other considerations. The work of national emancipation is a great and holy *yajna* of which boycott, Swadeshi, national education and every other activity, great and small, are only major or minor parts. Liberty is the fruit we seek from the sacrifice and the Motherland the goddess to whom we offer it; into the seven leaping tongues of the fire of the *yajna* we must offer all that we are and all that we have, feeding the fire even with our blood and the lives and happiness of our nearest and dearest; for the Motherland is a goddess who loves not a maimed and imperfect sacrifice, and freedom was never won from the gods by a grudging giver. But every great *yajna* has its Rakshasas who strive to baffle the sacrifice, to bespatter it with their own dirt or by guile or violence put out the flame. Passive resistance is an attempt to meet such disturbers by peaceful and self-contained *brahmatej*; but even the greatest Rishis of old could not, when the Rakshasas were fierce and determined, keep up the sacrifice without calling in the bow of the Kshatriya. We should have the bow of the Kshatriya ready for use, though in the background. Politics is especially the business of the Kshatriya, and without Kshatriya strength at its back all political struggle is unavailing.

Vedantism accepts no distinction of true or false religions, but considers only what will lead more or less surely, more or less quickly to *moksha*, spiritual emancipation and the realization of the Divinity within. Our attitude is a political Vedantism. India, free, one and indivisible, is the divine realization to which we move, — emancipation our aim; to that end each nation must practise the political creed which is the most suited to its temperament and circumstances; for that is the best for it which leads most surely and completely to national liberty and national self-realization. But whatever leads only to continued subjection must be spewed out as mere vileness and impurity. Passive resistance may be the final method of salvation in our case or it may be only the preparation for the final *sadhan*. In either case, the sooner we put it into full and perfect practice, the nearer we shall be to national liberty.

Bande Mataram

CALCUTTA, April 12th, 1907

The Proverbial Offspring

The great Mr. Morley has received the Viceroy's dispatch on the question of widening the powers of the Legislative Councils. It is long and important and requires his mature consideration, and he cannot therefore have it discussed in the Parliament. It has been prepared in secret, will be matured in secret, and then the official Minerva will see the light of the day in panoply. It will be born a settled fact. Rejoice, ye Moderates! The millennium is drawing nigh. The heart of Mr. Gokhale must be beating a little faster in anxious expectation. The tiresome voyages across the seas, his fervent appeals to the British public by day and his luminous conversations with Mr. Morley by night, are about to bear fruit. The mountain is in labour and will in due course produce the proverbial offspring.

By the Way

Adversity brings us strange bedfellows, says the poet, but surely it never played so strange a freak as when it brought Babu Surendranath Banerji and Mr. N. N. Ghose under the same political counterpane. Time was when the cynic sneering self-worshipper of Metropolitan College and the flamboyant, brazen-throated Tribune of the people were poles apart in their politics. The Tribune ignored with a splendid scorn the armchair prosings of the Cynic; and the unsuccessful Cynic was always digging his fang of cultured envy into the successful Tribune. How all is changed! Adversity has come upon both; the floods of Extremism are washing over the political world; and the literary recluse who would fain pose as a politician holds out his arm of succour from the select little Ararat to the great man in difficulties. The mouse protecting the lion and Mr. N. N. Ghose championing the great Surendranath against the attacks of Extremists form companion pictures in freaks of natural history. Whatever else Babu Surendranath may be, he is a great man, an orator of genius, a personality which will live in history. And for him to be protected by Mr. N. N. Ghose! Really, really! Of all the humiliations that have recently overtaken our famous Tribune, this is surely the worst.

*

If Mr. N. N. Ghose reminds us of the mouse that saved the lion, he still more forcibly recalls Satan reproving sin. We cull a few choice epithets from this gentle and cultured critic in which he described the new party with his usual sweet and courteous reasonableness. "The men who glorify themselves and singularly enough are glorified by others." "The new school has scarcely anything to distinguish itself except scurrility and factiousness." "Its politics are of the do-nothing sort." "It is moved by the dog-in-the-manger spirit." "It seeks to thrust itself into notoriety by abusing prominent men." "In the new school personal malice often did duty for patriotism." It is amazing with what accuracy the sentences characterise the political attitude of Mr. N. N. Ghose through all the years that he has been trying in vain to get the country to take him seriously as a politician. Irresponsible, captious criticism, abuse of everyone more successful than himself, a do-nothing, fault-finding, factious dog-in-the-manger spirit, self-glorification as the one wise man in India, — this is the compound labelled Mr. N. N. Ghose. Surely those whom he now turns round to rend may well cry, "Physician, heal thyself." We can well understand why he has transferred his attentions from Babu Surendranath to the new party. Envy of others' success is the Alpha and Omega of Mr. N. N. Ghose's politics. When the new party was still struggling for recognition, he extended to it a sort of contemptuous patronage; now that it is recognised as a force, he cannot contain his bitterness and venom.

*

Mr. Ghose is in raptures over Srinath Paul Rai Bahadoor's pompous and wordy address, — the Rai Bahadoor was not successful in commanding approval or respect by his speech, so our only N. N. stands forth as his solitary admirer. Sjt. Deepnarain's splendid address revealed a new personality in our midst, — a man with a brain and a heart, not a cold and shallow joiner of choice literary sentences; it commanded the admiration of all Bengal without distinction of parties. After that it was inevitable that Mr. N. N. Ghose should be unable to find in it anything but words. Again we see the ruling passion at work.

*

But Mr. Ghose has another cause of quarrel with Srijut Deepnarain. Has he not dared to talk of the recent birth of Indian Nationalism in Bengal? What can he mean? Has not Mr. Ghose been editing the *Indian Nation* for years past? What then is this new Indian Nation of which Mr. N. N. Ghose knows nothing or this new nationalism which for the life of him Mr. N. N. Ghose cannot understand? Quite right, O sapient critic! Before you can understand it you must change your nature and get what you never possessed — a *heart* that can feel for the sufferings of your fellow countrymen and beat higher at the prospect of making great sacrifices and facing strong perils for their deliverance.

*

We are really struck by the infinite capacity for not understanding which Mr. Ghose possesses. This is his idea of the new politics. "They have nothing to do. As they mean to ignore the Government, they will not discuss its measures or care to suggest reforms. They are waiting for that political millennium, Swaraj. When Swaraj comes, they will assume functions; in the meantime they must only preach and abuse. A comfortable programme of patriotism." Hardly so comfortable as the armchair from which do-nothing critics criticise do-nothingness. Whether the new school is doing something or nothing, is not for him to judge but for the future. He thinks that national schools and colleges are nothing, that the boycott is worse than nothing, that to awake a new heart and a new spirit in a great and fallen nation is nothing; that to restore the habit of self-dependence and self-defence is nothing. What then is something in the eyes of this great man of action? To do something is to discuss Government measures and "suggest" reforms. We are overwhelmed! We can only apostrophise the editor of the *Nation* as the Greek general apostrophised his victorious adversary, "O thou man of mighty activity!"

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 13th, 1907 }

By the Way

An old and venerable friend of *our* old and venerable friend the *Indian Mirror* weeps bitter tears over Raja Subodh Mallik. Subodh Mallik is a large-hearted and generous man, laments our friend's friend; but he is doing immense harm to himself and his country. Is he not partly responsible for the publication of that pernicious sheet, *Bande Mataram*, which attacks old and venerable gentlemen and old and venerable journals, and refuses to regard politics as a school for society manners? Has he not given a lakh of rupees to the National Council, — an institution for which the *Indian Mirror* cherishes a lively want of sympathy? We call on the young gentleman to repent of his sins, fall weeping on the capacious bosom of the *Indian Mirror* and devote the rest of his possessions to founding a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to obsolete papers and out-of-date politicians.

*

We will admit that much that was said and done at Berhampur on both sides was petulant and wanting in dignity. But was it worse than what happens in European Parliaments and political meetings when men are heated by conflict and passions run high? We trow not. Let us try to be perfectly courteous and superior to other nations by all means; but if we cannot, there is no reason for disingenuous concealment and a mere Pharisaic *pretence* of superiority. The Japanese have an excellent habit of keeping anger out of their speech and reserving all their strength for acts; they will express their disapproval of you with great plainness, indeed, but also with wonderful calmness and politeness. The

Samurai used to rip up his enemy very mercilessly but also very politely; he did it as a duty, not out of passion. But of our emotional, sentimental race, so long accustomed to find its outlet in speech, nothing so heroic can be expected.

*

Still, we think the young men of the New party would do well to follow the example of the Japanese as far as possible. We should be absolutely unsparing in our attack on whatever obstructs the growth of the nation, and never be afraid to call a spade a spade. Excessive good nature, *chakshu lajja* (the desire to be always pleasant and polite), will never do in serious politics. Respect of persons must always give place to truth and conscience; and the demand that we should be silent because of the age or past services of our opponents, is politically immoral and unsound. Open attack, unsparing criticism, the severest satire, the most wounding irony, are all methods perfectly justifiable and indispensable in politics. We have strong things to say; let us say them strongly; we have stern things to do; let us do them sternly. But there is always a danger of strength degenerating into violence and sternness into ferocity, and that should be avoided so far as it is humanly possible.

*

Babu Bhupendranath Bose got little by his attempt to frown down the Government of Bengal in their own den over the bureaucratic temper of their replies to his interpolations. It is to be feared that the Government have little appreciation for the opposition-cum-co-operation gospel which their loyal subject not only preaches but practises with such fidelity and vigour. They like their water without salutary bitters. Babu Bhupendranath, however, insists on dealing with Sir Andrew Fraser like a father, and when he makes wry faces at the medicine, treats him to a painful and public spanking — whereupon Sir Andrew responds with a backhander in Bhupen Babu's fatherly face. The whole affair was most exquisitely ludicrous and futile. But Sir Andrew's was a nasty and stinging backhander!

"The Hon'ble member himself has not infrequently, either on my invitation or of his own motion, discussed with me privately the propriety or wisdom of certain courses of action which he has followed. I have frankly given him my advice. He has sometimes taken it and he has sometimes rejected it. I should have considered it a grave breach of confidence, if, in either case, he had published it and had attributed his line of action to me."

So it appears that often when we have been hanging on the wise words of the popular and democratic leader, the influential adviser of Surendranath, the secret dictator of the Moderate caucus, it was really the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to whom we listened and by whose counsel we were guided. The voice was the voice of Bhupen, but the thought was the thought of Andrew. These be thy gods, O Israel!

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 16th, 1907 }

The Old Year

There are periods in the history of the world when the unseen Power that guides its destinies seems to be filled with a consuming passion for change and a strong impatience of the old. The Great Mother, the Adya Shakti, has resolved to take the nations into Her hand and shape them anew. These are periods of rapid destruction and energetic creation, filled with the sound of cannon and the trampling of armies, the crash of great downfalls and the turmoil of swift and violent revolutions; the world is thrown into the smelting pot and comes out in a new shape and with new features. They are periods when the wisdom of the wise is confounded and the prudence of the prudent turned into a laughing-stock; for it is the day of the prophet, the dreamer, the fanatic and the crusader, — the time of divine revelation when Avatars are born and miracles happen. Such a period was the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth; in such a period we find ourselves at the dawn of this twentieth century, the years of whose infancy have witnessed such wonderful happenings. The result of the earlier disturbance was the birth of a new Europe and the modernisation of the Western world; we are assisting now at the birth of a new Asia and the modernisation of the East. The current started then from distant America but the centre of disturbance was Western and Central Europe. This time there have been three currents, — insurgent nationalism starting from South Africa, Asiatic revival starting from Japan, Eastern democracy starting from Russia; and the centre of disturbance covers a huge zone, all Eastern, Southern and Western Asia, Northern or Asiaticised Africa and Russia which form the semi-Asiatic element in Europe. As the pace of the revolution grows swifter, each new year becomes more eventful than the last and marks a large advance to the final consummation. No year of the new century has been more full of events than 1906–07, our year 1313.

If we look abroad we find the whole affected zone in agitation and new births everywhere. In the Far East the year has not been marked by astonishing events, but the total results have been immense. Within these twelve months China has been educating, training and arming herself with a speed of which the outside world has a very meagre conception. She has sent out a Commission of Observation to the West and decided to develop constitutional Government within the next ten years. She has pushed forward the work of revolutionising her system of education and bringing it into line with modern requirements. She has taken resolutely in hand the task of liberating herself from the curse of opium which has benumbed the energies of her people. She has sent her young men outside in thousands, chiefly to Japan, to be trained for the great work of development. With the help of Japanese instructors she is training herself quietly in war, and science has made an immense advance in the organisation of a disciplined army, and is now busy laying the foundations of an effective navy. In spite of the arrogant protests of British merchants, she has taken her enormous customs revenue into her own hands for national purposes. By her successful diplomacy she has deprived England of the fruits of the unscrupulous, piratical attack upon Tibet and is maintaining her hold on that outpost of the Mongolian world.

Japan during this year has been vigorously pushing on her industrial expansion at home and abroad; she has practically effected the commercial conquest of Manchuria and begun in good earnest the struggle with European trade and her manufactures are invading Europe and America. Her army reorganisation has been so large and thorough as to make the island Empire invincible in her own sphere of activity. A little cloud has sprung up between herself and America, but she has conducted herself with her usual *sang froid*, moderation and calm firmness; and, however far the difficulty may go, we may be sure that she will not come out of it either morally or materially a loser.

In other parts of the Far East there have only been slight indications of coming movements. The troubles in the Philippines are over and America has restored to the inhabitants a certain measure of self-government, which, if used by the Filipinos with energy and discretion, may be turned into an instrument for the recovery of complete independence. Siam has purchased release from humiliating restrictions on her internal sovereignty at the heavy price of a large cession of territory to intruding France; but she is beginning to pay more attention to her naval and military development and it will be well if this means that she has realised the only way to preserve her independence. At present Siam is the one weak point in Mongolian Asia. Otherwise the events of this year show that by the terrible blow she struck at Russia, Japan has arrested the process of European absorption in the Far East.

But the most remarkable feature of the past year is the awakening of the Mahomedan world. In Afghanistan it has seen the inception of a great scheme of National Education which may lay the basis of a State, strong in itself, organised on modern lines and equipped with scientific knowledge and training. Amir Abdur Rahman consolidated Afghanistan; it is evidently the mission of Habibullah, who seems not inferior in statesmanship to his great father, to modernise it. In Persia the year has brought about a peaceful revolution, — the granting of Parliamentary Government by an Asiatic king to his subjects under the mildest passive pressure and the return of national life to Iran. In Egypt it has confronted the usurping rule of England with a nationalist movement, not only stronger and more instructed than that of Arabi Pasha but led by the rightful sovereign of the country. The exhibition of cold-blooded British ferocity at Denshawi has defeated its object, and, instead of appalling the Egyptians into submission, made them more determined and united. It is now only a question of time for this awakening to affect the rest of Islam and check the European as effectually in Western Asia as he has been checked in the East.

In this universal Asiatic movement what part has India to play? What has she done during the year 1313? In India too there has been an immense advance, — an advance so great that we shall not be able to appreciate it properly until its results have worked themselves out. The year began with Barisal; it closes with Comilla. The growing intensity of the struggle in Eastern Bengal can be measured by this single transition, and its meaning is far deeper than appears on the surface. It means that the two forces which must contend for the possession of India's future, — the British bureaucracy and the Indian people, — have at last clashed in actual conflict. Barisal meant passive, martyr-like endurance; Comilla means active, courageous resistance. The fighting is at present only on the far eastern fringe of this great country; but it must, as it grows in intensity, spread westwards. Sparks of the growing conflagration will set fire to Western Bengal, and India is now far too united for the bureaucracy to succeed long in isolating the struggle.

The second feature of the year has been the rapid growth of the Nationalist party. It has in a few months absorbed Eastern Bengal, set Allahabad and the North on fire and is stirring Madras to its depths. In Bengal it has become a distinct and recognised force so powerful in its moral influence that petitioning is practically dead and the whole nation stands committed to a policy of self-development and passive resistance. The Press a few months ago was, with the exception of a few Mahratti weeklies, one journal in the Punjab and the *Sandhya* and *New India* in Calcutta, almost entirely Moderate. The increase of Nationalist journals such as the *Balbharat* and *Andhra Keshari* in Madras, the *Aftab* in the North and ourselves in Calcutta, the appearance of local papers filled with the new spirit, the sudden popularity of a paper like the *Yugantar* and the extent to which the new ideas are infecting journals not avowedly of the new school, are indices of the rapidity with which Nationalism is formulating itself and taking possession of the country.

A third feature of the year has been the growth of National Education. The Bengal National College has not only become an established fact but is rapidly increasing in numbers and has begun to build the foundations of a better system of education. The schools at Rungpur and Dacca already existed at the commencement of the year; but immediately after the Barisal outrage fresh schools at Mymensingh, Kishoregunj, Comilla, Chandpur and Dinajpur were established. Since then there have been further additions, — the Magura School, another in the Jessore District, another at Jalpaiguri as well as a free primary school at Bogra. We understand that there is also a probability of a National School at Chittagong and Noakhali. No mean record for a single year. As was to be expected, most of these schools have grown up in the great centre of Nationalism, East Bengal.

Such is the record of Nationalist advance in India in 1313. It is a record of steady and rapid growth; and the year closes with the starting of a tremendous issue which may carry us far beyond the stage of mere beginnings and preparations. Long ago we heard it prophesied that the year 1907 would see the beginning of the actual struggle for national liberty in India. It would almost seem as if in the turmoil in Tipperah the first blow had been struck.

Rishi Bankim Chandra

There are many who, lamenting the by-gone glories of this great and ancient nation, speak as if the Rishis of old, the inspired creators of thought and civilisation, were a miracle of our heroic age, not to be repeated among degenerate men and in our distressful present. This is an error and thrice an error. Ours is the eternal land, the eternal people, the eternal religion, whose strength, greatness, holiness, may be overclouded but never, even for a moment, utterly cease. The hero, the Rishi, the saint, are the natural fruits of our Indian soil; and there has been no age in which they have not been born. Among the Rishis of the later age we have at last realized that we must include the name of the man who gave us the reviving *mantra* which is creating a new India, the *mantra Bande Mataram*.

The Rishi is different from the saint. His life may not have been distinguished by superior holiness nor his character by an ideal beauty. He is not great by what he was himself but by what he has expressed. A great and vivifying message had to be given to a nation or to humanity; and God has chosen this mouth on which to shape the words of the message. A momentous vision has to be revealed; and it is his eyes which the Almighty first unseals. The message which he has received, the vision which has been vouchsafed to him, he declares to the world with all the strength that is in him, and in one supreme moment of inspiration expresses it in words which have merely to be uttered to stir men's inmost natures, clarify their minds, seize their hearts and impel them to things which would have been impossible to them in their ordinary moments. Those words are the *mantra* which he was born to reveal and of that *mantra* he is the seer.

What is it for which we worship the name of Bankim today? What was his message to us or what the vision which he saw and has helped us to see? He was a great poet, a master of beautiful language and a creator of fair and gracious dream-figures in the world of imagination; but it is not as a poet, stylist or novelist that Bengal does honour to him today. It is probable that the literary critic of the future will reckon "Kopal Kundala", "Bishabriksha" and "Krishna Kant's Will" as his artistic masterpieces, and speak with qualified praise of "Devi Chaudhurani", "Anandamath", "Krishna Charit" or "Dharmatattwa". Yet it is the Bankim of these latter works and not the Bankim of the great creative masterpieces who will rank among the Makers of Modern India. The earlier Bankim was only a poet and stylist — the later Bankim was a seer and nation-builder.

But even as a poet and stylist Bankim did a work of supreme national importance not for the whole of India or only indirectly for the whole of India, but for Bengal which was destined to lead India and be in the vanguard of national development. No nation can grow without finding a fit and satisfying medium of expression for the new self into which it is developing — without a language which shall give permanent shape to its thoughts and feelings and carry every new impulse swiftly and triumphantly into the consciousness of all. It was Bankim's first great service to India that he gave the race which stood in its vanguard such a perfect and satisfying medium. He has been blamed for corrupting the purity of the Bengali tongue; but the pure Bengali of the old poets could have expressed nothing but a conservative and unprogressing Bengal. The race was expanding and changing, and it needed a means of expression capable of change and expansion. He has been blamed also for replacing the high literary Bengali of the Pundits by a mixed popular tongue which was neither the learned language nor good vernacular. But the Bengali of the Pundits would have crushed the growing richness, variety and versatility of the Bengali genius under its stiff inflexible ponderousness. We needed a tongue for other purposes than dignified treatises and erudite lucubrations. We needed a language which should combine the strength, dignity or soft beauty of Sanskrit with the verve and vigour of the vernacular, capable at one end of the utmost vernacular raciness, and at the other of the most sonorous gravity. Bankim divined our need and was inspired to meet it, — he gave us a means by which the soul of Bengal could express itself to itself.

As he had divined the linguistic need of his country's future, so he divined also its political need. He, first of our great publicists, understood the hollowness and inutility of the methods of political agitation which prevailed in his time and exposed it with merciless satire in his "Lokarahasya" and "Kamala Kanta's Daftar". But he was not satisfied merely with destructive criticism, — he had a positive vision of what was needed for the salvation of the country. He saw that the force from above must be met by a mightier reacting force from below, — the strength of repression by an insurgent national strength. He bade us leave the canine method of agitation for the leonine. The Mother of his vision held trenchant steel in her twice seventy million hands and not the bowl of the mendicant. It was the stern gospel of force which he preached under a veil and in images in "Anandamath" and "Devi Chaudhurani". And he had an inspired unerring vision of the moral strength which must be at the back of the physical force. He perceived that the first element of the moral strength must be *tyaga*, complete self-sacrifice for the country and complete self-devotion to the work of liberation. His workers and fighters for the motherland are political *byragees* who have no other thought than their duty to her and have put all else behind them as less dear and less precious and only to be resumed when their work for her is done. Whoever loves self or wife or child or goods more than his country is a poor and imperfect patriot; not by him shall the great work be accomplished. Again, he perceived that the second element of the moral strength needed must be self-discipline and organisation. This truth he expressed in the elaborate training of Devi Chaudhurani for her work, in the strict rules of the Association of the "Anandamath" and in the pictures of perfect organisation which those books contain. Lastly, he perceived that the third element of moral strength must be the infusion of religious feeling into patriotic work. The religion of patriotism, — this is the master idea of Bankim's writings. It is already foreshadowed in "Devi Chaudhurani". In "Dharmatattwa" the idea and in "Krishna Charit" the picture of a perfect and many-sided Karma Yoga is sketched, the crown of which shall be work for one's country and one's kind. In "Anandamath" this idea is the key-note of the whole book and receives its perfect lyrical expression in the great song which has become the national anthem of United India. This is the second great service of Bankim to his country that he pointed out to it the way of salvation and gave it the religion of patriotism. Of the new spirit which is leading the nation to resurgence and independence, he is the inspirer and political *guru*.

The third and supreme service of Bankim to his nation was that he gave us the vision of our Mother. The new intellectual idea of the motherland is not in itself a great driving force; the mere recognition of the desirability of freedom is not an inspiring motive. There are few Indians at present, whether loyalist, moderate or nationalist in their political views, who do not recognize that the country has claims on them or that freedom in the abstract is a desirable thing. But most of us, when it is a question between the claims of the country and other claims, do not in practice prefer the service of the country; and while many may have the wish to see freedom accomplished, few have the will to accomplish it. There are other things which we hold dearer and which we fear to see imperilled either in the struggle for freedom or by its accomplishment. It is not till the motherland reveals herself to the eye of the mind as something more than a stretch of earth or a mass of individuals, it is not till she takes shape as a great Divine and Maternal Power in a form of beauty that can dominate the mind and seize the heart that these petty fears and hopes vanish in the all-absorbing passion for our mother and her service, and the patriotism that works miracles and saves a doomed nation is born. To some men it is given to have that vision and reveal it to others. It was thirty-two years ago that Bankim wrote his great song and few listened; but in a sudden moment of awakening from long delusions the people of Bengal looked round for the truth and in a fated moment somebody sang *Bande Mataram*. The *mantra* had been given and in a single day a whole people had been converted to the religion of patriotism. The Mother had revealed herself. Once that vision has come to a people, there can be no rest, no peace, no farther slumber till the temple has been made ready, the image installed and the sacrifice offered. A great nation which has had that vision can never again be placed under the feet of the conqueror.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 17th, 1907 }

A Vilifier on Vilification

Our Bombay contemporary the *Indu Prakash* is very wroth with the Nationalist party for their want of sweet reasonableness. He accuses them of rowdyism "which would put the East End rowdy to shame," and adds, "Their forte seems to be abuse, vilification, impertinence and superlative silliness, and these are exhibited alternately." It strikes us that the *Indu Prakash* has been guilty of "abuse, vilification, impertinence and superlative silliness" not alternately but in a lump within the brief space of these two sentences. This sort of phraseology is however part of the ordinary Moderate rhetoric which is usually the reverse of moderate in its temper. Unable to meet the Nationalists in argument, they make up for it in invective, denouncing them as "maniacs", "rowdies", "merest school boys". We have already answered the charge of rowdiness and we will only add here that violent personal attack is not confined to one party. But the Moderates have their own methods. They attack individual members of our party behind their backs or else in meetings to which the public are not admitted, like those of the Subjects Committee, but not usually in public. They vilify them in the correspondence columns of their papers and ignore them or only abuse the party generally in the leading articles. This they call the decency and "high dignity of public life". We prefer to call it want of straightforwardness and courage. The *Indu* thinks that personal attacks and violent outbreaks of temper have no part in English politics. This is indeed a holy simplicity; and it is not for nothing that the Bombay journal calls itself *Indu Prakash*, "moonshine". It is true, of course, that English politicians do not carry their political wranglings and acerbities into social life to anything like the extent that the Continental peoples do or we do in India; and this is a most praiseworthy feature of English public life. We do not agree with the *Indu* that the differences which divide us are smaller than those which exist between English parties; but small or great, we agree that they should not generate hatred, if it can be avoided. But if the Moderates are so anxious to avoid the acerbation of feelings, why should they not set the example? Let them avoid autocracy and caucus tactics, frankly recognise the Nationalists as a party whose opinions must be consulted, be conciliatory and constitutional in their procedure; and what the *Indu* misterms "Extremist rowdyism" will die a natural death.

By the Way

A Mouse in a Flutter

Poor Mr. N. N. Ghose! When we dealt with him faithfully in our By the Way column, we did so in the belief that it would do him good; the wounds given by a friend are wholesome though painful. We expected that if we painted him in his true colours, he would recognise the picture, grow ashamed and reform; but it is possible we did wrong to pluck out so cruelly the heart of our Sankaritola Hamlet's mystery. Certainly we did not anticipate that the sight of his own moral lineaments would drive him into such an exhibition of shrieking and gesticulating fury as disfigures the *Indian Nation* of the 15th April. Such self-degradation by a cultured and respectable literary gentleman is very distressing, and we apologise to the public for being the cause of this shocking spectacle. We will devote our column today to soothing down his ruffled plumes. By the way, we assure Mr. Ghose that when we talk of his ruffled plumes we are not thinking of him in his capacity as a mouse at all. We are for a moment imagining him to be a feathered biped — say, a pelican solitary in the wilderness or else, if he prefers it, a turtle-dove cooing to his newly-found mate in Colootola.

*

What is it that Mr. Ghose lays to our charge? In the first place he accuses us of having turned him into a mouse. In the second place he complains that after turning him into a mouse, we should still treat him as a human being. "I am a mouse", he complains; "how can I have an arm of succour or a fully organised heart? I am a mouse, ergo I am neither a politician nor a cynic." We plead not guilty to both charges. We do not profess to have any magical power whatever and when we casually compared our revered contemporary to the mouse in the fable, we had not the least idea that we were using a powerful *mantra* which could double the number of Mr. Ghose's legs and change him into a furtive "rhodent". The rest of our remarks we made under the impression that he was still a human being; why he should so indignantly resent being spoken of as a human being, we fail to understand. No, when we made the allusion, we did not mean to turn Mr. Ghose into a mouse any more than when we compared him to Satan reproving sin we intended to turn him into the devil. But the Principal of the Metropolitan College seems as skilful in mixing other people's metaphors as in mixing his own.

*

If, after this explanation, he still persists in his "mouse I am and mouse I remain" attitude, we cannot help it. The worthy publicist seems to have had mice on his brain recently. The other day he discovered a winged or fluttering species of the rodent; now the mere mention of a mouse has engendered the delusion that he is one himself. We do not believe in the existence of fluttering mice, — but after Mr. Ghose's recent exhibition we can well believe in the existence of a mouse in a flutter. This time he seems to have discovered a new species which he calls "rhodents"! There was much discussion in our office as to this new animal. Some thought it a brilliant invention of the printer's devil; others opined that in his wild excitement the editor's cockney-made pen had dropped an "h"; others held that our Calcutta Hamlet, unlike the Shakespearian, cannot distinguish between a mouse and a rhododendron. A learned Government professor assures us, however, that *rhodon* is Greek for a rose and that Mr. Ghose has found a new species of mouse that not only flutters but flowers, — of which he believes himself to be the only surviving specimen. However that may be, we have learned our lesson and will never compare him to a "rhodent" again. A rose by another name will smell as sweet and a mouse by any other name will gnaw as hard.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 18th, 1907 }

Simple, Not Rigorous

The finale of the *Punjabee* case has converted a tragedy into a farce. The bureaucracy started to crush the new spirit in Punjab by making a severe example of its leading exponent in the Press. They have ended by acerbating public feeling in the Punjab and creating racial hostility — the very offence for which, ostensibly, the *Punjabee* is punished, — without gaining their ends. The ferocious severity of the sentence passed on Srijut Jaswant Rai has defeated its own object. Reduced in length from two years to six months in the Sessions Court, it has in the final appeal been reduced in its nature from rigorous to simple imprisonment. The upshot is that the Government enjoys the honour of entertaining two patriotic Nationalists with an unsolicited hospitality for the next six months. Meanwhile, the tone of the Nationalist Press will not be lowered by one note nor its determination to speak the truth without fear or favour affected even in the smallest degree. But the memory of the original sentence will remain; the gulf between the aliens and the people yawns yet wider. Incidentally the *Punjabee* has been endeared to all India by its boldness and readiness to suffer for the cause; its circulation has been largely increased and its influence more than doubled. Well done, most simple and rigorous bureaucracy!

British Interests and British Conscience

"The demand for popular self-government must be resisted in the interests of Egypt" — this is the *Pioneer*'s verdict on the National Movement in that unhappy land. We can understand why Egyptian aspirations must be stifled in the interests of the "protectors" of Egypt; but to say that this must be done in the interests of the children of the soil is indeed monstrous. The inordinate self-conceit of Englishmen very often betrays them into ludicrous absurdities. The Britisher fancies himself the Heaven-appointed ruler of the universe; and whoever ventures to stand in his way must be a nuisance, a rebel, a traitor. The whole history of Britain is a long struggle for liberty; and even the other day the British Premier could not help exclaiming: "The Duma is dead; long live the Duma." But whenever it is a question of Egypt or India where British interests are at stake, British greed overpowers British conscience and all sorts of monstrous arguments are fabricated to justify the suppression of popular movements. But the history of the British occupation of Egypt which began as a temporary measure and perpetuated itself as a piece of expediency, is quite well known and the world can no longer be deceived by journalistic falsehoods.

A Recommendation

The *Englishman* has arrogated to itself the office of press-censor and has commenced to issue certificates of good conduct to our moderate contemporaries. Those that have not the good fortune to see with it eye to eye are branded as seditious. This is what it wrote in its yesterday's issue: —

"We regret that in a recent issue we confounded the two papers *Swadesh* and *Swaraj*, identifying the politics of the former with those of *Bande Mataram* and other journals of the same bilious tinge. As a matter of fact *Swadesh* is conducted with moderation and ability, and is by no means to be confused with the seditious sheets which are doing so much mischief in this country."

A critic who confounds the names of journals on which he sits in judgment, is a sight for gods and men; and we congratulate our *Swadesh* friend on the testimonial secured from so high a quarter. But is it solicited or unsolicited? The seditious rags may now envy the distinction. But will they be tempted to mend their ways? We would suggest a Kaiser-i-Hind for meritorious journals and recommend the *Indian Mirror* and the *Indian Nation* for the first two medals.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 19th, 1907 }

An Ineffectual Sedition Clause

We commented yesterday on the folly of the Punjab Government in prosecuting the *Punjabee* and the ridiculous and unenviable position in which the practical collapse of that prosecution has landed them. The absolute lack of courage, insight and statesmanship in the Indian Government has been always a subject of wonder to us. The English are an exceedingly able and practical nation, well versed in the art of keeping down subject races at the least expense and with the greatest advantage to themselves. It is passing strange to see such a race floundering about and hopelessly at sea in dealing with the new situation in India. There are three possible policies by which it could be met. We could understand a policy of Russian repression, making full use of the means of coercion their despotic laws and practice keep ready to their hand in order to stamp out the fire of nationalism before it had spread. We could understand a policy of firm repression of disorder and maintenance of British supremacy, coupled with full and generous concessions in the sphere of local and municipal self-government. We could understand a frank association of the people in the Government with provincial Home Rule as its eventual goal. The first policy would be strong and courageous but unwise; for, its only effect on a nation which has a past and remembers it would be to expedite the advent of its future. The second, if immediately undertaken, might be temporarily effective but could not for long satisfy national aspirations. The third is a counsel of perfection to which, fortunately for India's future greatness, Mr. Blair will hardly get his countrymen to listen. Nevertheless, any of these three would be a rational and sensible policy; but the present attitude of the Government is neither. It is an impossible mixture of timid and flabby coercion with insincere, grudging and dilatory conciliation. The Government looses a Fuller on the people and then at the first check withdraws him. It promises a reform and then hesitates and repents and cannot make up its mind to give it either promptly or frankly. It has stored up any number of legal *brahmastras* and *nagapashas* to bind down and destroy opposition, but it has not the courage to use them. It would like to crush the people, but it dare not; it feels it necessary to make concessions, but it will not. This is the way Empires are lost. The only instance of a coherent policy is in East Bengal where the bureaucracy has envisaged the situation as an unarmed rebellion and is treating it on the military principle of isolating the insurgent forces and crushing them with the help of local allies before the opposition can become organised and universal. It is an acute and skilful policy but it needs for its success two conditions — weakness, vacillation and cowardice on the part of the Calcutta leaders and want of tenacity in the strong men of East Bengal. But the situation in East Bengal is only a local symptom. In dealing with the general disease, the Government policy is mere confusion.

We may take its treatment of sedition as an instance. The clause dealing with sedition in the Penal Code is a monument of legal ferocity, but at present of futile ferocity. The offence is that of exciting contempt and hatred against the Government. The Government means the bureaucracy collectively and individually. Anything therefore in the nature of plain statement and strong comment on any foolish or arbitrary conduct on the part of an official or on any unwise or oppressive policy on the part of the Government, Viceregal or Provincial, or on any absurd or odious feature in the bureaucratic system, or any attempt to prove that the present administration is responsible for distress and suffering in India or that bureaucratic rule is doing material and moral injury to the people and the country, falls within the scope of this insane provision. For, such statements, comments and attempts must inevitably provoke contempt and "want of affection" in the people; and the writer cannot help knowing that they will have that effect. Yet these are things that fall within the natural duty of the journalist in every country which is not still in the Dark Ages.

The alternative punishments — the minor, running to two years' rigorous imprisonment, the major, to the utmost penalty short of the gallows, — are of a Russian ferocity. Yet this terrible sword is hung in vain over the head of the Indian journalist; for, mere imprisonment has no longer any terrors for Indian patriotism and really crushing penalties can only be imposed at the risk of driving the people to secret conspiracy and nihilistic forms of protest. The lower grades of the executive and judiciary are not affected by scruples, for they are neither called upon to consider ultimate consequences or exposed to external censure; but the higher one rises in the official scale, the greater is the deterrent effect of the fear of consequences and the fear of the world's censure. This is the reason why ferocious sentences like that on the *Punjabee* are minimised in successive appeals — a phenomenon an Anglo-Indian contemporary notices with great disgust. The clauses 124A and 153A are therefore weapons which the Government cannot effectually utilise and to employ them ineffectually is worse than useless. If the journalist is acquitted, it is a popular victory; if lightly sentenced, public feeling is irritated, not intimidated; if rigorously dealt with, a great impulse is given to the tide of nationalism which will sweep onward till this piece of civilised savagery ceases to pollute the statute-books of a revolutionised and modernised administration.

The *Englishman* as a Statesman

The *Englishman* has a confused and wordy article in yesterday's issue which it considers especially fit "for such a time as this"; but the meaning is a little difficult to disentangle. Our contemporary has a dim perception that there is a "crisis" in the country, the nature of which it is unable to determine; but it is a very terrible sort of crisis, anyway — a monster horrible, shapeless and huge. "When it matures, influences may be shot forth into the country, and possibly also in Asia, if not also back into

Europe through Russia, whose final issues no man can foresee." It acknowledges that there "are some hopes" in the hearts of the people "which it would be fatuous to mock, madness to ignore". So far as we can make out, the *Englishman* has discovered a very original way of respecting and recognising these hopes. It proposes to satisfy them by appointing a large number of non-official Europeans in Mr. Morley's new Legislative Councils along with the Nawab of Dacca and any other equally rare specimens bureaucratic research can discover among the "manlier races of the North who, if they grew turbulent, might prove more troublesome than populations of another class from further South, who, if more effeminate, are also more contented". The meaning of this extraordinarily slipshod rigmarole is that the *Englishman* has been frightened by the disturbances in Lahore which followed on the final conviction of the *Punjabee* and is also a little uneasy at the prospect of unwelcome changes in the Legislative Councils. Hence its unusual and unsuccessful attempt to overcome its customary "fatuity" and "madness". For our part we prefer the *Englishman* fatuous and mad to the *Englishman* trying in vain to be sensible. In its natural state it is at least intelligible.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 22nd, 1907 }

The Gospel according to Surendranath

The appearance of Babu Surendranath Banerji as an exponent of the "New Nationalism" is a phenomenon which shows the spread of the new spirit, but, we fear, nothing more. We congratulate Babu Surendranath on his conversion to the New Nationalism, but we are not sure that we can congratulate the New Nationalism on its convert. Nationalism is, after all, primarily an emotion of the heart and a spiritual attitude and only secondarily an intellectual conviction. Its very foundation is the worship of national liberty as the one political deity and the readiness to consider all things well lost if only freedom is won. "Let my name be blasted," cried Danton, "but let France be saved." "Let my name, life, possessions all go," cries the true Nationalist, "let all that is dear to me perish, but let my country be free." But Babu Surendranath is not prepared to consider the world well lost for liberty. He wishes to drive bargains with God, to buy liberty from Him in the cheapest market, at the smallest possible price. Until now he was the leader of those who desired to reach a qualified liberty by safe and comfortable means. He is now for an unqualified liberty; and since the way to absolute liberty cannot be perfectly safe and comfortable, he wants to make it as safe and comfortable as he can. It is evident that his conversion to the new creed is only a half and half conversion. He has acknowledged the deity, but he is not prepared for the sacrifice. It is always a danger to a new religion when it receives converts from among strong adherents of the old, for they are likely to bring in with them the spirit of the outworn creed and corrupt with it the purity of the new tenets. If leaders of the old school wish to be accepted as exponents of the New Nationalism, they must bring to it not only intellectual assent, but a new and changed heart — a new heart of courage and enthusiastic self-sacrifice, to replace the old heart of selfish timidity and distrust of the national strength.

In the leading article of last Friday's *Bengalee* some very important admissions are made. The unlimited possibilities of the organised national strength of India are acknowledged without reservation. "There is no limit to what they can do. We at any rate would set no limits to their ambition. . . . We want our country to be as great in its own way as other countries are in theirs. And we are determined to secure our rightful place in the federation of humanity by methods which are least wasteful in their nature and would *soonest bring us to the assured destination.*" The federation of humanity is one of those sounding phrases, dear to Babu Surendranath, which have no relation to actualities; but the rightful place of India among the nations, federated or unfederated, is one which cannot admit of any the least restriction on her liberty. And the description of the methods to be used at least rules petitioning out of court; for petitioning is certainly wasteful in its nature and would not bring us soonest, — nor, indeed, at all — to our assured destination. There is more behind. "*Where is the room for compromise in spiritual life?* Nobody has a right to tell us in regard to a question like this, thus far you shall go and no farther. National expansion and self-realisation is a sacred duty which we cannot lay aside at the bidding of any authority above or below. The charter here is a charter from on high and no mundane authority has a right to undo it." All this is admirable. It is true that the writer in the next breath says, "We have no quarrel with anybody who does not stand in our way" — an obvious truism, — and invites the Government "not to block the way", promising it as a reward "a happy and not inglorious transformation at no distant date". But the bureaucracy knows, as well as the writer knows, that transformation is only an euphemism for translation to a better world, and there is not the slightest chance of its listening to this bland invitation. However, the fact stands out that Babu Surendranath has declared for absolute autonomy to be arrived at by methods which among other things, *would soonest bring us to the assured destination.*

Unfortunately the rest of the article is devoted to carefully undoing the effect of the first half. It is practically an attempt to controvert the position which we have taken up in this journal. Our position is that it is imperatively necessary for this nation to enter into an immediate struggle for national liberty which we must win at any cost; that in this struggle we must be inspired and guided by the teachings of history and those glorious examples which show how even nations degraded, enslaved and internally disunited, can rapidly attain to freedom and unity; and that for this purpose the great necessity is to awake in the nation a burning, an irresistible, an unanimous will, to be free. The *Bengalee* denies all these positions. We must win liberty, it holds, not by an immediate struggle but by a long and weary journey; not by heavy sacrifices, but in the spirit of a Banya by grudging, limited and carefully-calculated sacrifices. We are not to be guided by the concrete lessons of history, but by vague and intangible rhetorical generalisations about "our increased knowledge and wisdom, our enlarged affections and interests of the present day". We are to curb our will to be free by a "trained intelligence" which teaches us that we are not a homogenous nation and must therefore tolerate differences.

We will content ourselves at present with pointing out that the *Bengalee*'s answer to us is neither objective nor self-consistent. We have tried to establish our position by definite arguments and appeals to well-known facts of human nature and human experience; the *Bengalee* simply denies our conclusions in general terms without advancing a single definite argument. We can only conclude that our contemporary has no definite arguments to advance. The confusion of his ideas is appalling. We are to choose for the attainment of liberty the method which will bring us soonest to our destination; but we must at the same time insist on making it a long and weary journey. We must have the determination to get liberty "at any cost"; but we must not carry out that determination in practice; no, in practice we must get it not at any cost but at the smallest cost possible.

We must really ask the *Bengalee* to clear up this tangle of ideas and discover some definite arguments before it again asks the Nationalists to confine themselves to realising their ideas in practice and to abstain from "quarrelling with everybody who differs from them". It would be no doubt very gratifying to the *Bengalee* not to be quarrelled with, in other words, to escape from the annoyance of finding its intellectual positions and its methods assailed; but we cannot gratify it. So far as possible, our ideas are being realised in practice wherever Nationalism is strong; but for their full effectiveness they need the whole nation at their back and it is therefore our first duty to convince the nation by exposing pseudo-Nationalism in all its workings.

We shall meet the *Bengalee*'s positions one by one hereafter. Meanwhile we take the liberty of offering one suggestion to Babu Surendranath Banerji. This veteran leader is a declared opportunist, who believes, as he has himself said, in expediency more than in principles. He seeks to lead the nation not by instructing it but by watching its moods and making use of them. Well and good; but even an opportunist leader must keep pace with public opinion, if he does not even go half a step in front of it; he must know which way it is going to leap before the leap is taken, and not follow halting some paces behind. The nation moves forward with rapidity; Babu Surendranath pants ineffectually after it. It is not by such hesitating pronouncements that he can retain the national leadership. The times are revolutionary, and revolutionary times demand men who know their own mind and are determined to make it the mind of the nation.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 23rd, 1907 }

A Man of Second Sight

The tendency not to mince matters is in itself a virtue seldom appreciated by people who in consequence of long subjection cannot rate boldness in any form at its proper value. But to awaken boldness in a nation which has lost the sense of honour and self-respect, has always been the first engrossing effort of those political thinkers who meant to do their duty by the country honestly and sincerely. The capacity to look facts in the face and support a true grasp of the situation by a programme at once bold and heroic, has always met with a belated recognition when fallen nations have begun their first struggle towards emancipation. The charge of being wild and mischievous dreamers, cursed with satanic perversity and a rash haste to mislead and destroy, has invariably been laid at the door of people who tried to initiate great national revivals. The outburst of indignation with which the new school propaganda is being received in some quarters, is therefore perfectly natural. But it is not these unbelievers whom we want to reach and influence. The Pharisees and Philistines will ever dog our footsteps and try their best to dissuade us and to defeat us. They will even try to bring about the persecution of the true patriots; but this too none need fear; for suffering only makes men stronger to bring about the redemption of their country. Timidity at such times is dignified with the name of prudence, moderation and humanitarianism; but it is mere scum and dross which bubbles to the surface; meanwhile the true metal is being purified for use below. The process of purification is always accompanied by such surface impurities, but they only serve to bring truth and sincerity into bold relief. These politicians are intoxicated with the ideal of a prosperous serfdom and cannot realise how it eats into the very vitals of a nation. It is largely because the honour and emoluments of a selfish few, whom the alien bureaucracy seek to humour for victimising the rest, are brought into jeopardy that we hear such hysterical denunciations of the straightforward and fearless efforts of the Nationalists. "Let their conduct be such as not to savour of ingratitude to the benefactors. When we find so many broad-minded Englishmen fighting our cause in and out of Parliament, when we see a Viceroy showing every consideration to our feelings and sentiments, when we see a Secretary of State openly sympathising with our aspirations, when we see the administration of the country shaping itself to modern needs, when we see all these and many more signs of the bright future awaiting us — we should take heart to abandon petty querulous feelings and set ourselves earnestly to the task of self-preparation. Before we aspire to govern our country we must learn to govern our own selves."

Such are the ratiocinations and exhortations of the prophet of the *Indian Mirror.* His powers of vision evidently excel the ability of common men and amount to something more than second sight. He sees Englishmen fighting our cause in and out of Parliament, where the ordinary eye can only see a number of insignificant Members of Parliament asking questions which lead to nothing and advising an oppressed nation to wait in patience for a far-off millennium. He sees a Viceroy showing every consideration to our feelings and sentiments where common beings can only see a policy of insincere conciliation and tentative repression. He sees a Secretary of State openly sympathising with our aspirations where others can only see a Radical Minister professing liberalism and practising hide-bound conservatism. He sees the administration shaping itself to modern needs where we poor mortals can only see an out-of-date and semi-civilized system, refusing to be modernized and reformed. This it is to be an occultist and dabble in white magic! And what does it all come to? That some slight and ineffectual reforms have been vaguely promised, whose only result will be to give a few more individuals the chance of getting name and fame at the expense of the country. The *Mirror* is in terror of losing this chance because of the spread of Nationalism; hence its hysterical appeals and chidings. The country is not likely to be diverted by these selfish and narrow-minded considerations from the mighty movement into which it is casting itself or held back from the great goal of national autonomy.

Passive Resistance in the Punjab

We are glad to find that Passive Resistance is being boldly carried into effect in the Punjab. The recent demonstrations at Lahore which followed the *Punjabee* conviction have evidently come as a shock upon the white population. So long as the political ferment created by the new spirit was mainly confined to Bengal, Anglo-India comforted itself by saying that the Bengalis were an unwarlike race unlikely to cause real trouble. Their main uneasiness was lest the agitation should spread to the martial races of whom alone they are afraid and whom they lose no opportunity of flattering and trying to separate from the Bengalis. Englishmen respect and fear those only who can strike and, being a race without imagination or foresight, they are unable to realise that national character is not immutable or that the Bengalis, who could once fight both on sea and land, might possibly revert to the ancient type and put behind them their acquired timidity and love of ease. Now, however, their fears are being realised. Anglo-Indian journals had already begun to perceive the truth that there is a real unity in India and that "Lahore has become a political suburb of Calcutta." The Lahore demonstrations have carried the conviction home. Accordingly we find the *Englishman* groping about in an intellectual fog in search of such novelties as concession and reform, while in the Punjab itself the panic is taking the form of incipient terrorism. Sirdar Ajit Singh of the Lahore Patriots' Association has been doing admirable work among the masses. His most recent success has been to induce the Jat peasantry to boycott the Government canals as a protest against an iniquitous water-tax.

As a result the Deputy Commissioner in imitation of the Fuller Administration, published this remarkable order, — "Ajit Singh of Lahore is forbidden to address any public meeting in Multan district. If he disobeys, he will be arrested." The only result was that Sirdar Ajit Singh addressed a meeting of 15,000 men in defiance of this ukase and the police stood helplessly by. We pointed out in our last article on Passive Resistance that Government by ukase would always be one of the methods the Government must instinctively resort to in order to snuff out our resistance and that it was the imperative duty of every patriot to resist such arbitrary orders. We are glad to see that the Punjab has promptly taken up the challenge thrown down by the bureaucrat.

Bande Mataram

CALCUTTA, April 24th, 1907

By the Way

The *Englishman* and Mr. N. N. Ghose, faithful brothers-in-arms, were beside themselves with joy last week. What had happened? Had Nationalism by some divine miracle been suddenly blotted out of the land? Had the spirit of Nobokissen appeared to his devotee and admirer and prophesied the eternal continuance of the British domination in India? Or had Mr. N. N. Ghose been at last elected to the Legislative Council? No, but happy signs and omens, prophetic of these desirable events, have appeared in the political heavens. Hence this war-dance of victory in Hare Street and Sankaritola. The great Twin Brethren, the black Aswin and the white, the two heavenly physicians of our political maladies, have laid a joint finger on the national pulse and discovered that the fever of Nationalism is passing away and the patient returning to a healthy state of loyalty and contented servitude.

*

The epoch-making pronouncement of the *Indian Mirror* is the chief source of joy and comfort to these allied powers. The Mahatma of Mott's Lane has waved his wonder-working wand and Nationalism is no more. Narendranath has spoken; the British Empire is saved. It is not surprising that the discoveries made by the *Indian Mirror* should have awakened admiring wonder and delight in Hare Street, for they are certainly such discoveries as are only made once or twice in the course of the ages. The *Mirror* has discovered that all is for the best in the best of all possible Governments. It has detected liberalism in Mr. Morley's Indian policy and a passionate desire for reform in Anglo-India. And to crown all, it has found out that the

Extremists, — those bold, bad, dangerous men, — represent a party which consists only of themselves. This is a discovery worthy of Newton or Kepler and it has naturally filled Hare Street with delighted awe. An ordinary man might ask, of whom else should the party consist? But such criticism would be profane in the face of so much occult knowledge.

*

The *Englishman* sits at the feet of Babu Narendranath Sen like a pupil, with lifted eyes full of childlike wonder and admiration. Mr. N. N. Ghose welcomes his neighbour on equal terms as a fellow-loyalist and fellow-discoverer. For Mr. N. N. Ghose has also been industriously discovering things, not only in natural history but in political science. The other day he discovered the surprising fact that Mr. Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai do not belong to the new school of politics — a discovery which will certainly edify and astonish both the hearers of Lala Lajpat Rai's speeches and the readers of the *Kesari*. He has discovered too that the new school have no "constructive programme" and are do-nothing politicians. Unhappily, this is a discovery which Mr. N. N. Ghose is in the habit of making about his opponents and critics ever since he attacked Shambhunath Mukherji in language of astonishing coarseness; so it lacks the charm of novelty.

*

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* has also become an object of Mr. N. N. Ghose's scientific investigations. He has discovered that this great organ of public opinion is returning to light, — in other words, that it was mad and is becoming sane. We do not precisely know why. The passages quoted from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* merely repeat views which it has been insisting on for a long time past and the programme which it sets before the public is one in which the *Amrita Bazar* and the new school are in entire agreement. In the opinion of Mr. Ghose, however, this programme shows an insufficiently broad view, and he holds out an ominous threat of broadening Srijut Motilal Ghose's intelligence. For the present, however, "we reserve our suggestions" and the *Amrita Bazar* is spared this painful operation. In passing, Mr. Ghose informs a startled world that in regard to constructive works he has his own ideas! Evidently he has a "constructive programme" up his sleeve and is awaiting the dramatic moment for dazzling the world by its appearance. But for how long will he condemn us to hold our breath in awed expectation?

*

The *Amrita Bazar* finds occasion to condemn such effusive receptions as Babu Surendranath received at Rajshahi, and, in doing so, disclaims the charge of envy and jealousy which is usually brought against it when it criticises the moderate leader. Immediately the *Indian Nation* falls on its neck and weeps joyfully, "I too have been accused. Embrace me, my fellow-martyr." We doubt whether our contemporary will quite relish being put on a level with Mr. N. N. Ghose and the *Indian Nation*. Its editor is a recognised political leader and his paper has from early days been a power in the land, read and relished in all parts of India and even in England; but Mr. N. N. Ghose is only Mr. N. N. Ghose and the circulation of his weekly is — well, let us say, confined to the elect.

*

The Hare Street journal has undergone a startling transformation. It is trying to write sympathetically and pretending to have political ideas. This is rather hard on the unfortunate people who are compelled to read its outpourings; for the attempt to make some sense out of its leaders involves an agonising intellectual strain, which one naturally resents because it is not in the day's work. If our contemporary goes on much longer in this strain, we shall all have to go on strike and either petition the Government to pass prohibitive legislation or else organise passive resistance. As a sort of anti-popular Red Indian in war-paint and on the war-path, brandished tomahawk in hand and yelling wild and weird war cries, the *Englishman* is picturesque and amusing. But its new departure makes neither for instruction nor for entertainment.

*

It followed up its great pronouncement, "For such a Time as this" with an almost equally fog-bound leader on "Swaraj". This document begins by entreating us to give up our political aspirations out of respect for the lamented memory of Professor Huxley. After paralysing our wits with this stroke of pathos, the *Englishman*, not to be outdone by the *Mirror* or the *Nation*, announces a political discovery of its own. Our moderate friends, it appears, have been labouring under a serious delusion. The Liberal party cannot give us reform even if it would, but there is one who can and will, and it is — the Government of India! Codlin's the friend, not Short. We congratulate our moderate friends on the delightful choice that is open to them. Minto's the sympathiser, not Morley — Minto will give you Swaraj, — the *Englishman* stands guarantee for it. But after bidding us kowtow to the Government of India because it alone can help or harm us, our contemporary with light-hearted inconsistency declares that our habit of kowtowing to those who can help or harm us, is the chief reason of our unfitness for Swaraj. It seems, on the other hand, that our behaviour is very disrespectful towards those who cannot help or harm us, e.g. Tommies, coolies and the *Englishman*. The Anglo-Indian rules India because of his paternal kindness to the coolie; until we too learn to enquire habitually into the state of the coolie's spleen with our boots and overwhelm him with vigorous and lurid terms of endearment in season and out of season, we shall not be fit for self-government. No wonder the *Mirror* asks us solemnly to lay our hands on our hearts and declare truthfully whether we are morally, mentally and physically fit for self-government. If this is the loyalist test, we answer sorrowfully, "No."

*

Political discoverers are not confined to this side of India. The *Indu* of Bombay is full of impotent wrath against Mr. Morley for prolonging Lord Kitchener's term and gives him a severe journalistic whipping for his misconduct. The *Indu* is extremely anxious, as a good moderate should be, for the safety of the British possessions in India; it has discovered that Lord Kitchener is not a good general and is capable of nothing more heroic than digging up dead Mahdis, so it clamours for a better general who will defend the British Empire more efficiently and spend less over it. Poor Mr. Morley! Even the *Indu* has found him out at last. We cannot expect our contemporary to realise that only in a free and prosperous India can defence be both effective and inexpensive. The present Government has to provide both against aggression from outside and discontent within, and this means a double expenditure. But what is the use of the *Indu*'s shaking its moony fist in Mr. Morley's face and calling the darling of moderatism bad names? Much better were it done to send a petition with two lakhs of signatures for Lord Kitchener's recall, and, having done that, — sit content.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 25th, 1907 }

Bureaucracy at Jamalpur

The most recent accounts of the Jamalpur outrage emphasise the sinister nature of the occurrence and the defects in our own organisation which we must labour to remove. The most disgraceful feature of the riots has been the conduct of the British local official who seems to have deceived and betrayed the Hindus into the hands of the Mahomedan *goondas*. The nature of the attack, its suddenness and completeness, show beyond doubt that it had been carefully planned beforehand and was no casual outbreak either of fanaticism or rowdyism. It is impossible to believe that the Joint Magistrate, responsible for the peace of the country, was totally uninformed of the likelihood of an organised attack which was generally apprehended by the Hindus. Yet it is reported that the local official induced the Hindus to be present at the *mela* by a distinct pledge that they had nothing to fear from the Mahomedans, and then, in violation of his pledge, left them utterly unprotected for brutality and sacrilege to work their will upon them. If he had any inkling of the outbreak which was then in preparation, his action amounted to cynical treachery. Even if he was so imbecile as to be unaware of what was going on in his own jurisdiction, his failure to provide against the possibility of his pledge coming to nothing lays him open to the worst constructions. At the very least he showed a light-hearted disregard for his official obligations and his personal honour. His subsequent action was equally extraordinary. All the accounts agree in saying that the police were quite inactive until the anti-Swadeshists had their fill of plunder and violence and were making for the station. Even then, they confined themselves to depriving them of their *lathis*,

— the mischief being done and further violence superfluous, — and with a paternal indulgence dismissed them to their homes unarrested. The only people arrested were a few of the Hindus who, if they were guilty of anything, can have only been guilty of self-defence. The accounts on which we base these comments are unanimous and have not up to the present moment met with any denial. We can only conclude therefore that, as at Comilla, the local officials looked with sympathy on the rioters as allies in the repression of Swadeshism, and acted accordingly. To stand by while the Mahomedans carry out that violent repression of Swadeshism which the sham Liberalism of the present Government policy forbids them to undertake themselves; to clinch this illegal repression by legal repression in the form of prosecution of respectable Hindus for the crime of self-defence; to strain every nerve to prevent outside help coming to the distressed and maltreated Swadeshists, and finally to save appearances by sending a few of the Mahomedan rioters to prison — a punishment which has no terrors for them, since they are all hooligans and some of them old jailbirds: — such has been the consistent attitude of the local officials. The only new circumstance in the Jamalpur incident has been the assurance given by the local official which amounted to a promise of protection and which alone made the outrage possible. For the last century the British have been dinning into our ears the legend of British justice, British honour, British truth. The belief in the justice of the British nation or of British Magistrates is dead. Generated by liberal professions it has been killed by reactionary practice. The belief in the personal honour and truth of individual Englishmen has somehow managed to survive; but it will not stand such shocks as the East Bengal bureaucrats have managed to administer to it. We would earnestly press upon the people of East Bengal the unwisdom of trusting to official promises or to anything but their own combination, organisation and the strong arm for their protection. We have already pointed out more than once what the Comilla officials took some pains to point out to those who applied to them for protection, that it is folly to raise the cry of Swadeshi and Swaraj and yet to expect protection from the bureaucrats whose monopoly of power the movement threatens.

Anglo-Indian Blunderers

The *Englishman* has its own standing suggestion for the treatment of incidents like the Jamalpur disturbances. The theory is, the riots are the result of Mahomedan indignation at the Swadeshi Boycott; therefore Swadeshi is the cause of the whole trouble; therefore put down Swadeshi with the strong hand. No one knows better than the *Englishman* that the disturbances have been caused by the sinister alliance of Anglo-India with the Nawab of Dacca and his following, contracted to put down Swadeshi by fair means or foul. For our part we should welcome open oppression by the bureaucracy; it would be more honourable at least than local connivance at violence and brutal lawlessness, and it would be a pleasure to meet an open and straightforward opponent. But open or secret, direct or indirect, no measures whatever will succeed in crushing the insurgent national spirit. We wonder whether these complacent bureaucrats and exploiters have any idea of the growing mass of silent exasperation to which the present policy is rapidly giving shape and substance. Possibly, the idea is to force the exasperation to a head and crush it when it breaks into overt action, — the old policy of the English in Ireland. But we would remind these blundering Anglo-Saxon Machiavellis that India is not Ireland; it is easier to unchain the tempest than to decree to it what course it shall take and what it shall spare or what destroy.

The Leverage of Faith

It is said of Guru Nanak that on the eve of his departure from the body he was asked to name a successor to his *gadi*. A great storm was raging at the time — the disturbance of nature synchronising with the passing away of a great spirit. Nanak was then sitting under a tree surrounded by his disciples. It was evening and the

Guru perceiving that his *chelas* badly needed food and drink, asked his sons Shrichand and Lakshichand to go in quest of food. But the sons inherited none of the spiritual qualities of their father; they thought him to be no better than a maniac and were not inclined to take his request seriously; rather they mocked at the idea of a search for food when none could stir out of doors for the wild rain and storm without. Nanak then turned to a devoted disciple who simply enquired where he should go for food and was told that he had only to ask of the tree under which they were then sitting and it would give them all they required. The disciple did Nanak's bidding and, as the story goes, was rewarded with sufficiency of sweetmeats. Nanak went afterwards with his disciples to the riverside and when, on the way, they came across a dead body, he bade his sons partake of this strange food. His sons took the command as conclusive proof of their father's lunacy, but the disciple was prepared to obey unquestioningly and only paused to ask from where to begin, whether from the head or from the foot. Nanak, entirely satisfied with the steadfast faith of his disciple, named him the successor to his *gadi* in preference to his own sons.

It is not given to all to possess this heroic spiritual faith which all religious teachers have insisted on as the first preliminary to any difficult *sadhana*; but the moral underlying it is one which all experience justifies. Faith is the first condition of success in every great undertaking. It is no exaggeration to say that faith moves mountains. It is faith that makes the men of will and thought persevere in spite of apparently insurmountable difficulties. They start with a strong confidence in the ultimate success of a noble undertaking and are therefore never daunted by difficulties, however formidable. Faith is the one predominating characteristic of all great souls. The vision of faith penetrates into the remote future and turns the impossible into the possible. In the region of politics faith is the result of imagination working in the light of history; it takes its stand on reason and experience and aspires into the future from the firm ground of the past. Other nations have risen from the lowest depths of degradation — the weaknesses which prevent us from trying bold and effective remedies were common to all subject nations before us. It is by nerving the nation's heart with inspiring literature and inciting it to struggle for emancipation that freedom has been recovered. For a subject people there is no royal road to emancipation. They must wade to it through struggle, sacrifice, slaughter, if necessary. History suggests no short-cut. Why should it then involve a strain on our faith to believe that if we are only prepared for the necessary sacrifice, we also shall gain the end? Other nations also were weak, disunited and denationalised like ourselves. It is the rallying cry of freedom that combined their scattered units drawing them together with a compelling and magical attraction. Those who would win freedom, must first imbue the people with an overpowering conviction that freedom is the one thing needful. Without a great ideal there can be no great movement. Small baits of material advantages will not nerve them to high endeavour and heroic self-sacrifice; it is only the idea of national freedom and national greatness that has that overmastering appeal. We must not bend the knee to others but try to be worthy of our past — here is an ideal which, if set forth with conviction and power, cannot fail to inspire self-sacrificing action. We need faith above all things, faith in ourselves, faith in the nation, faith in India's destiny. A dozen men rendered invincible by a strong faith in their future have in other times spread the contagion of nationalism to the remotest corner of vast countries. Unbelief is blind — it does not see far ahead, neither stimulates strength nor inspires action. The lack of this faith has kept our moderate politicians tied down to a worn-out ideal which has lost its credibility. No man can lead a rising nation unless he has this faith first of all, that what other great men have done before him he also can do as well, if not better, — that the freedom other nations have won we also can win, if only we have the faith, the will.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 26th, 1907 }

Graduated Boycott

The opponents of the new spirit have discovered that boycott is an illusion. An entire and sweeping boycott, they say, is a moral and physical impossibility; and their infallible economic authority, Mr. Gokhale, has found out that a graduated boycott is an economic impossibility. They point to the failure of the thorough-going boycott in Bengal as a proof of the first assertion; the second, they think, requires no proof, for how can what Mr. Gokhale has said be wrong? This assertion of the impossibility of a graduated boycott is an answer to the reasoning by which Mr. Tilak has supported the movement in Maharashtra. In the first days of the movement Mr. Tilak published a series of vigorous and thoughtful articles in the *Kesari* on boycott as a political Yoga. He advocated the entire exclusion of British goods, the preference of Swadeshi goods at a sacrifice when they were attainable, and, when unattainable, the preference of any foreign goods not produced in the British Empire. To the argument that this programme was not immediately practicable in its completeness, he replied that as in Yoga, so in the boycott, "even a little of this *dharma* saves us from a mighty peril". The mighty peril is the entire starvation of the country by foreign exploiters and its complete and hopeless dependence on aliens for almost all articles of common use. Even a slight immediate diminution of this dependence would be a great national gain and could by degrees be extended until the full boycott policy became an accomplished fact. Mr. Tilak, with his shrewd practical insight, was able to see clearly that immediate and complete success of a thorough-going boycott was not possible in India but that a gradually efficacious boycott would naturally result from a thorough-going boycott campaign. What Mr. Tilak foresaw, is precisely what is happening.

The entire exclusion of British-made goods is the political aspect of the Boycott with which we do not deal in this article. Is it a fact that as an economic weapon a graduated boycott is impossible? Boycott may be graduated in several ways. First, by the gradual growth of the idea of excluding foreign goods a steadily increasing check may be put on the import of particular foreign articles and a corresponding impulse given to the use of the same articles produced in India. A Government by imposing a gradually increasing duty on an import in successive tariffs, may kill it by degrees instead of immediately imposing a prohibitive rate; the growth of the boycott sentiment may automatically exercise the same kind of increasing check. The growth of the sentiment will help on the production of the indigenous article and the increased production of the indigenous article will help on the growth of the sentiment. Thus mutually stimulated, Swadeshi and boycott will advance with equal and ever more rapid steps, until the shrinkage of the foreign import reaches the point where it is no longer profitable to import it. The process can only be checked by insufficiency of capital in the country available or willing to invest itself in Swadeshi manufacture. But the growth of the boycott sentiment will of itself encourage and is encouraging capital to invest in this direction; for so much boycott means so much *sure market* for the Swadeshi article and therefore an increase of capital willing to invest in Swadeshi manufacture. The increased production of the Swadeshi article in its turn means more money in the hands of the mercantile class and of investors in Swadeshi Companies and therefore more capital *available* for investment in Swadeshi manufacture. We fail to see how in this sense an automatically graduated boycott is impossible; on the contrary, it seems to us economically inevitable, provided only the boycott sentiment is increasingly embraced by the people.

Boycott may be graduated in another way. When the boycott was declared in Bengal, it was declared specially against cloth, sugar and salt and only generally against other articles.

It is therefore the imports of English piece-goods, Liverpool salt and, though only to a slight extent, of foreign sugar into Bengal which have suffered. When this specific boycott has been proved effective, it may be extended to other articles. Thus the boycott may be graduated not only in its incidence on particular articles, but in its extent and range. The graduation of a specific boycott may be partly artificial and partly automatic. It is artificial when the leaders of the people preach an economic *jehad* against particular foreign goods and the people accept their decision. But this artificial boycott can only succeed when there is already an incipient industry in the corresponding Swadeshi article or some existing means of supply however partial, which may be stimulated or extended by the boycott. Liverpool salt has been affected because 'Karkach' is available; British piece-goods have been affected because there was already a mill industry and a handloom industry which have been enormously stimulated by the boycott, as is shown by the wholesale return of the weaver class to their trade in Bengal and by the increase in the number of weaving mills and the splendid dividends which the existing concerns are paying. On the other hand the campaign against foreign sugar has not been successful because the proper substitute is not available. Yarns have not been affected because the spinning industry in India is a negligible quantity while the demand for yarn has enormously increased. In time a *jehad* against foreign yarn will become feasible. But the specific boycott may also be automatic when the general sentiment of boycott attacks a particular article for which a substitute exists in the country. To take a small instance, the market for steel trunks sent ready-manufactured from England is decreasing to such an extent that failures of dealers in steel trunks are beginning to be recorded. Here again, we fail to see the impossibility of a graduated boycott. It is quite true that in the very beginning the increase of the stimulated Swadeshi article may not be sufficient to blot out entirely the increase in the import, and the superficial and hasty may proclaim the failure of the boycott. But by the growth of the boycott the increase of the Swadeshi article must progressively swell and the increase of the import must progressively shrink until it is turned into an actual decrease. The fact that the success of the boycott is progressive and not miraculous, need not frighten or disappoint any sensible and determined boycotter. It is true also that the growth of Swadeshi may actually stimulate for a time the import of particular foreign articles, such as machinery or yarns; but the stimulation is temporary and, as soon as part of our growing capital is free and willing to invest in new fields, the graduated boycott will naturally extend itself in these directions sooner than in others.

The theory therefore that a graduated boycott is impossible, seems to us to have no foundation either of facts or of reasoning. Whatever the fate of its use as a political weapon, its success as an economical weapon depends solely on the zeal with which it is preached and the readiness with which it is received by the people.

Instinctive Loyalty

The *Indian Mirror* reflects nothing but its own self when it says: — "Nobody in the country, howsoever absorbed in the dreams of an Indian autonomy, wishes to see the British connection severed and the country left to her fate. This instinctive clinging to some sort of relation with England, in other words, this loyalty to the Crown of England, affords the best ground for optimism about a material improvement in the attitude of the Indian peoples towards their British rulers." There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the *Mirror*'s philosophy. That a country cannot prosper in the true sense of the term unless it be left to its own fate is a truism with all right-thinking men. The publicists of the *Indian Mirror* type have a comfortable gospel of their own revealed to them by a study of their own needs rather than those of the country. No political thinker has as yet sought to controvert the truth that liberty is the essential condition of all-round progress in a nation. Prison life after some time comes to be liked as a matter of habit, — the jailor comes to be respected out of fear of the rod. But to describe such diseased and abnormal sentiments as normal and instinctive is to mistake a slave for a man. It is highly prejudicial to our returning sense of self-respect that papers like the *Indian Mirror* should still be able to preach the gospel of servility.

Nationalism, Not Extremism

It is a curious fact that even after so many months of sustained propaganda and the most clear and definite statements of the new politics, there should still be so much confusion as to the attitude of the Nationalist party and the elementary issues they have raised. This confusion is to some extent due to wilful distortion and deliberate evasion of the true issues. The ultra-loyalist publicists especially, Indian or Anglo-Indian, are obliged to ignore the true position of the party, misnamed Extremists, because they are unable to meet its trenchant and irresistible logic and commonsense. But with the great majority of Indian politicians the misapprehension is genuine. The political teaching of the new school is so novel and disturbing to their settled political ideas, — or rather the conventional, abstract, second-hand formulas which take the place of ideas — that they cannot even grasp its true nature and turn from it with repugnance before they have given themselves time to understand it. The most obstinate of these misapprehensions is the idea that the new politics is a counsel of despair, a mad revolutionary fury induced by Curzonian reaction. We can afford to pass over this misapprehension with contempt, when it is put forward by foolish, prejudiced or conceited critics who are merely trying to bring odium on the movement or to express their enlightened superiority over younger politicians. But when a fair and scrupulous opponent honestly trying to understand the Nationalist position falls into the same error, we are bound to meet it and once more clear our position beyond misapprehension or doubt.

Some friends of ours have thought that we were unnecessarily harsh and even unjust in our criticism of Dr. Rash Behari Ghose's speech in the Supreme Legislative Council. They urge that Dr. Ghose at least presented the Extremist position with great energy, clearness, courage, and did it with the greater effect as one who himself stood outside our party. We have every respect for Dr. Rash Behari Ghose personally; he is perhaps the foremost jurist in India, a scholar and master of the English tongue, a mine of literature in possession of a style of his own, too rich and scholarly to be turned to such everyday uses as a Legislative Council speech. But eminence in law and literature do not necessarily bring with them a grasp of politics. Dr. Ghose has only recently turned his attention to this field and has not been long enough in touch with the actualities of politics to get a real grasp of them. It is therefore natural that he should be misled by names instead of penetrating beyond names to the true aspects of current politics. The ordinary nicknames of Moderate and Extremist do not properly describe the parties which they are used to label; and they are largely responsible for much confusion of ideas as to the real differences between the two schools. Dr. Ghose evidently labours, like many others, under the obsession of the word Extremist. He imagines that the essential difference between the parties is a difference in attitude and in the intensity of feeling. The Extremists, in his view, are men embittered by oppression which makes even wise men mad; full of passionate repining at their "more than Egyptian bondage", exasperated by bureaucratic reaction, despairing of redress at the hands of the British Government or the British nation, they are advocating an extreme attitude and extreme methods in a spirit of desperate impatience. The Extremist propaganda is, therefore, a protest against misgovernment and a movement of despair driving towards revolt. We are unable to accept this statement of the Nationalist position. On the contrary it so successfully represents the new politics to be what they are not, that we choose it as a starting-point for our explanation of what they are.

The new movement is not primarily a protest against bad Government, — it is a protest against the continuance of British control; whether that control is used well or ill, justly or unjustly, is a minor and unessential consideration. It is not born of a disappointed expectation of admission to British citizenship, —

it is born of a conviction that the time has come when India can, should and will become a great, free and united nation. It is not a negative current of destruction, but a positive, constructive impulse towards the making of modern India. It is not a cry of revolt and despair, but a gospel of national faith and hope. Its true description is not Extremism, but Democratic Nationalism.

These are the real issues. There are at present not two parties in India, but three, — the Loyalists, the Moderates and the Nationalists. The Loyalists would be satisfied with good government by British rulers and a limited share in the administration; the Moderates desire self-government within the British Empire, but are willing to wait for it indefinitely; the Nationalists would be satisfied with nothing less than independence whether within the Empire, if that be possible, or outside it; they believe that the nation cannot and ought not to wait but must bestir itself immediately, if it is not to perish as a nation. The Loyalists believe that Indians have not the capacities and qualities necessary for freedom and even if they succeed in developing the necessary fitness, they would do better for themselves and mankind by remaining as a province of the British Empire; any attempt at freedom will, they think, be a revolt against Providence and can bring nothing but disaster on the country. The Loyalist view is that India cannot, should not and will not be a free, great and united nation. The Moderates believe the nation to be too weak and disunited to aim at freedom; they would welcome independence if it came, but they are not convinced that we have or shall have in the measurable future the means or strength to win it or keep it if won. They therefore put forward Colonial Self-Government as their aim and are unwilling to attempt any methods which presuppose strength and cohesion in the nation. The Moderate view is that India may eventually be united, self-governing within limits and prosperous, but not free and great. The Nationalists hold that Indians are as capable of freedom as any subject nation can be and their defects are the result of servitude and can only be removed by the struggle for freedom; that they have the strength, and, if they get the will, can create the means to win independence. They hold that the choice is not between autonomy and provincial Home Rule or between freedom and dependence, but between freedom and national decay and death. They hold, finally, that the past history of our country and the present circumstances are of such a kind that the great unifying tendencies hitherto baffled by insuperable obstacles have at last found the right conditions for success. They believe that the fated hour for Indian unification and freedom has arrived. In brief they are convinced that India should strive to be free, that she can be free and that she will, by the impulse of her past and present, be inevitably driven to the attempt and the attainment of national self-realisation. The Nationalist creed is a gospel of faith and hope.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 27th, 1907 }

SHALL INDIA BE FREE?

The Loyalist Gospel

Liberty is the first requisite for the sound health and vigorous life of a nation. A foreign domination is in itself an unnatural condition, and if permitted, must bring about other unhealthy and unnatural conditions in the subject people which will lead to fatal decay and disorganisation. Foreign rule cannot build up a nation, — only the resistance to foreign rule can weld the discordant elements of a people into an indivisible unity. When a people, predestined to unity, cannot accomplish its destiny, foreign rule is a provision of Nature by which the necessary compelling pressure is applied to drive its jarring parts into concord. The unnatural condition of foreign rule is brought in for a time in order to cure the previous unnatural condition of insufficient cohesiveness; but this can only be done by the resistance of the subject people; for the incentive to unity given by the alien domination consists precisely in the desire to get rid of it; and if this desire is absent, if the people acquiesce, there can be no force making for unity. Foreign rule was therefore made to be resisted; and to acquiesce in it is to defeat the very intention with which Nature created it.

These considerations are not abstract ideas, but the undeniable teaching of history which is the record of the world's experience. Nationalism takes its stand upon this experience and calls upon the people of India not to allow themselves to fall into the acquiescence in subjection which is the death-sleep of nations, but to make that use of the alien domination which Nature intended, — to struggle against it and throw it off for unity, for self-realisation as an independent national organism. In this country, however, there is a class of wise men who regard the rule of the British bureaucracy as a dispensation of Providence, not only to create unity but to preserve it. They preach therefore a gospel of faith in the foreigner, distrust of our countrymen and acquiescence in alien rule as a godsend from on high and an indispensable condition for peace and prosperity. Even those whose hearts rebel against a doctrine so servile, are intellectually so much dominated by it that they cannot embrace Nationalism with their whole heart and try to arrive at a compromise between subjection and independence, — a half-way house between life and death. Their ingenuity discovers an intermediate condition in which the blessings of freedom will be harmoniously wedded with the blessings of subjection; and to this palace in fairyland they have given the name of Colonial Self-Government. If it were not for the existence of this Moderate opinion and its strange particoloured delusions we would not have thought it worth while to go back to first principles and show the falsity of the Loyalist gospel of acquiescence. But the Moderate delusion is really a by-product of the Loyalist delusion; and the parent error must be demolished first, before its offspring can be corrected. The Moderates are a hybrid species, emotionally Nationalist, intellectually Loyalist. It is owing to this double nature that their delusions acquire an infinite power for mischief. People listen to them because they claim to be Nationalist and because a sincere Nationalist feeling not infrequently breaks through the false Loyalist reasoning. Moreover by associating themselves with the Moderates on the same platform the Loyalists are enabled to exercise an influence on public opinion which would otherwise not be accorded to them. The gospel according to Sir Pherozshah Mehta would not have such power for harm if it were not allowed to represent itself as one and the same with the gospel according to Mr. Gokhale.

What then are the original ideas from which the Loyalist gospel proceeds? It has a triple foundation of error. First comes the postulate that disunion and weakness are ingrained characteristics of the Indian people and an outside power is necessary in order to arbitrate, to keep the peace and to protect the country from the menace of the mightier nations that ring us in. Proceeding from this view and supporting it, is the second postulate that there must be an entire levelling down and sweeping away of all differences; aristocrat and peasant, Brahmin and Sudra, Bengali, Punjabi and Mahratta, all must efface their characteristics and differences before any resistance to foreign domination can be attempted, even if such resistance were desirable. The third postulate is that a healthy development is possible under foreign domination and that this healthy development must be first effected before we can dream of freedom or even of becoming a nation. If these three postulates are granted, then the Loyalist creed is unassailable; if they are proved unsound, not only the Loyalist creed but the standpoint of the Moderates ceases to have any basis of firm ground and becomes a thing in the air. The Nationalist contention is that all these three postulates are monuments of political unreason and have no firm foundation either in historical experience or in the facts we see around us or in the nature of things. They are inconsistent with the fundamental nature of foreign domination; they ignore the experience of all other subject nations; they disregard human nature and the conditions of human development in communities. The Loyalist gospel is as untrue as it is ignoble.

The Mask Is Off

The Anglo-Indian journals are trying to assure the public that everything is quiet in Jamalpur under the shadow of the British sword. The accounts that are appearing in various Indian journals put a very different complexion on the situation. It appears, to begin with, that the Gurkhas who were called in to preserve the peace are being allowed in co-operation with local hooligans to break it. The case of image-breaking is being deliberately put off and the whole energy of the executive is devoted to terrorising the Hindus. Several pleaders, a Mukhtar, a Naib of Ramgopalpur and a Superintendent of the Gauripur estate along with other leading gentlemen of Jamalpur have been arrested. "The number of Mahomedan arrests", writes one correspondent, "is simply *nil.*" Comment is hardly necessary. The alliance of the British bureaucracy with hooliganism stands confessed. To take advantage of Mahomedan riots in order to further terrorise by legal proceedings the assaulted Hindus, is the first preoccupation of the local magistrates. We have pointed out already that the procedure is to give scope and room enough for anti-Swadeshi violence and pillage and then to punish the Swadeshists for the crime of self-defence or even simply for the crime of being assaulted. The mask is off.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 29th, 1907 }

SHALL INDIA BE FREE?

National Development and Foreign Rule

In dealing with the Loyalist creed it will be convenient to examine first the general postulate before we can come to those which apply particularly to the conditions of India. The contention is that a healthy development is possible under foreign domination. In this view national independence is a thing of no moment or at least its importance has been grossly exaggerated. Nations can very well do without it; provided they have a good government which keeps the people happy and contented and allows them to develop their economic activities and moral virtues, they need not repine at being ruled by others. For certain nations in certain periods of their development liberty would be disastrous and subjection to foreign rule is the most healthy condition. India, argue the Loyalists, is an example of such a nation in such a period. The first business of its people is to develop their commerce, become educated and enlightened, reform their society and their manners and so grow more and more fit for self-government. In proportion as they become more civilised and more fit, they will receive from their sympathetic, just and discerning rulers an ever-increasing share in the administration of the country until with entire fitness will come entire possession of the status of British citizenship. The idea is that foreign rule is a Providential dispensation or a provision of Nature for training an imperfectly developed people in the methods of civilisation and the arts of self-government. This theory is a modern invention. Ancient and mediaeval Imperialism frankly acknowledged the principle of might is right; the conquering nation considered that its military superiority was in itself a proof that it was meant to rule and the subject nation to obey; liberty, being denied by Providence to the latter, could not be good for it and there was no call on the ruler to concede it either now or hereafter. This was the spirit in which England conquered and governed Ireland by the same methods of cynical treachery and ruthless massacre which in modern times are usually considered to be the monopoly of despotisms like Turkey and Russia. But by the time that England had fastened its hold on India, a change had come over the modern world. The Greek ideas of freedom and democracy had penetrated the European mind and created the great impulse of democratic Nationalism which dominated Europe in the nineteenth century. The idea that despotism of any kind was an offence against humanity, had crystallised into an instinctive feeling, and modern morality and sentiment revolted against the enslavement of nation by nation, of class by class or of man by man. Imperialism had to justify itself to this modern sentiment and could only do so by pretending to be a trustee of liberty, commissioned from on high to civilise the uncivilised and train the untrained until the time had come when the benevolent conqueror had done his work and could unselfishly retire. Such were the professions with which England justified her usurpation of the heritage of the Moghul and dazzled us into acquiescence in servitude by the splendour of her uprightness and generosity. Such was the pretence with which she veiled her annexation of Egypt. These Pharisaic pretensions were especially necessary to British Imperialism because in England the Puritanic middle class had risen to power and imparted to the English temperament a sanctimonious self-righteousness which refused to indulge in injustice and selfish spoliation except under a cloak of virtue, benevolence and unselfish altruism. The genesis of the Loyalist gospel can be found in the need of British Imperialism to justify itself to the liberalised sentiment of the nineteenth century and to the Puritanic middle-class element in the British nation.

The question then arises, has this theory any firmer root? Is it anything more than a convenient theory? Has it any relations with actual facts or with human experience? To answer this question it is necessary to distinguish between three kinds of liberty, which are generally confused together. There is a national liberty or freedom from foreign control; there is an internal liberty or that freedom from the despotism of an individual, a class or a combination of classes to which the name of self-government is properly given; and there is individual liberty or the freedom of the individual from unnecessary and arbitrary restrictions imposed on him either by the society of which he is a part or by the Government, whether that Government be monarchical, democratic, oligarchic or bureaucratic. The question at issue is, then, which, if any, of these three kinds of liberty is essential to the healthy development of national life; or can there be such development without any liberty at all?

The object of national existence, of the formation of men into groups and their tacit agreement to allow themselves to be ruled by an organised instrument of administration which is called the Government, is nothing else than human development in the individual and in the group. The individual, standing alone, cannot develop; he depends on the support and assistance of the group to which he belongs. The group itself cannot develop unless it has an organisation by means of which it not only secures internal peace and order and protection from external attack but also proper conditions which will give free play for the development of its activities and capacities — physical, moral, intellectual. The nation or group is not like the individual who can specialise his development and throw all his energies into one line. The nation must develop military and political greatness and activity, intellectual and aesthetic greatness and activity, commercial greatness and activity, moral sanity and vigour; it cannot sacrifice any of these functions of the organism without making itself unfit for the struggle for life and finally succumbing and perishing under the pressure of more highly organised nations. The purely commercial State like Carthage is broken in the shock with a nation which has developed the military and political as well as the commercial energies. A purely military state like Sparta cannot stand against rivals which to equal military efficiency unite a greater science, intellectual energy and political ability. A purely aesthetic and intellectual state like the Greek colonies in Italy or a purely moral and spiritual community like the empire of Peru are blotted out of existence in the clash with ruder but more vigorous and many-sided organisms. No Government, therefore, can really be good for a nation or serve the purposes of national life and development which does not give full scope for the development of all the national activities, capacities and energies. Foreign rule is unnatural and fatal to a nation precisely because by its very nature it throws itself upon these activities and capacities and crushes them down in the interests of its own continued existence. Even when it does not crush them down violently, it obstructs their growth passively by its very presence. The subject nation becomes dependent, disorganised and loses its powers by atrophy. For this reason national independence is absolutely necessary to national growth. There can be no national development without national liberty.

Individual liberty is necessary to national development, because, if the individual is unduly hampered, the richness of national life suffers and is impoverished. If the individual is given free room to realise himself, to perfect, specialise and enrich his particular powers and attain the full height of his manhood, the variety and rapidity of national progress is immensely increased. In so far as he is fettered and denied scope, the development of the nation is cramped and retarded. A Government which denies scope and liberty to the individual, as all foreign Governments must to a considerable extent deny it, helps to cramp the healthy development of the nation and not to forward it. The development of the individual is and must be an embarrassment to the intruding power unless the numbers are so few that they can be bribed into acquiescence and support by the receipt of honours, employment or other personal advantages. For development creates ambition and nothing is more fatal to the continuance of foreign rule than the growth of ambitions in the subject race which it cannot satisfy. The action of Lord Curzon in introducing the Universities Act was for the British domination in India an act of inevitable necessity, which had to be done some time or other. Its only defect from the Imperialist point of view was that it came too late.

Just as individual liberty is necessary for the richness and variety of national development, so self-government is necessary for its completeness and the full deployment of national strength. If certain classes are dominant and others depressed, the result is that the potential strength of the depressed classes is so much valuable force lost to the sum of national strength. The dominant classes may undoubtedly show a splendid development and may make the nation great and famous in history; but when all is said the strength of the nation is then only the sum of the strength of a few privileged classes. The great weakness of India in the past has been the political depression and nullity of the mass of the population. It was not from the people of India that India was won by Moghul or Briton, but from a small privileged class. On the other hand the strength and success of the Marathas and Sikhs in the eighteenth century was due to the policy of Shivaji and Guru Govind which called the whole nation into the fighting line. They failed only because the Marathas could not preserve the cohesion which Shivaji gave to their national strength or the Sikhs the discipline which Guru Govind gave to the Khalsa. Is it credible that a foreign rule would either knowingly foster or allow the growth of that universal political consciousness in the subject nation which self-government implies? It is obvious that foreign rule can only endure so long as political consciousness can be either stifled by violence or hypnotised into inactivity. The moment the nation becomes politically self-conscious, the doom of the alien predominance is sealed. The bureaucracy which rules us, is not only foreign in origin but external to us, — it holds and draws nourishing sustenance for itself from the subject organism by means of tentacles and feelers thrust out from its body thousands of miles away. Its type in natural history is not the parasite, but the octopus. Self-government would mean the removal of the tentacles and the cessation both of the grip and the sustenance. Foreign rule is naturally opposed to the development of the subject nation as a separate organism, to the growth of its capacity for and practice in self-government, to the development of capacity and ambition of its individuals. To think that a foreign rule will deliberately train us for independence or allow us to train ourselves is to suppose a miracle in nature.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 30th, 1907 }

Shall India Be Free?

We are arguing the impossibility of a healthy national development under foreign rule, — except by reaction against that rule. The foreign domination naturally interferes with and obstructs the functioning of the native organs of development. It is therefore in itself an unnatural and unhealthy condition, a wound, a disease, which must result, unless arrested, in the mortification and rotting to death of the indigenous body politic. If a nation were an artificial product which could be made, then it might be possible for one nation to make another. But a nation cannot be made, — it is an organism which grows under the stress of a principle of life within. We speak indeed of nation-building and of the makers of a nation, but these are only convenient metaphors. The nation-builder, Cavour or Bismarck, is merely the incarnation of a national force which has found its hour and its opportunity, of an inner will which has awakened under the stress of shaping circumstances. A nation is, indeed, the outward expression of a community of sentiment, whether it be the sentiment of a common blood or the sentiment of a common religion or the sentiment of a common interest or any or all of these sentiments combined. Once this sentiment grows strong enough to develop into a will towards unity and to conquer obstacles and make full use of favouring circumstances, the development of the nation becomes inevitable and there is no power which can ultimately triumph against it. But the process, however rapid it may be, is one of growth and not of manufacture. The first impulse of the developing nation is to provide itself with a centre, a means of self-expression and united action, a chief organ or national nerve-centre with subsidiary organs acting under and in harmony with it. If the need of self-protection is its first overpowering need, the organization may be military or semi-military under a single chief or a warlike ruling class; if the pressure from outside is not overpowering or the need of internal development strongly felt, it may take the shape of some form of partial or complete self-government. In either case the community becomes a nation or organic State.

What, then, is the place of foreign rule in such an organic development? The invasion of the body politic by a foreign element must result either in the merging of the alien into the indigenous nationality or in his superimposition on the latter in a precarious position which can only be maintained by coercion or by hypnotizing the subject people into passivity. If the alien and the native-born population are akin in blood and in religion, the fusion will be easy. Even if they are not, yet if the former settles down in the conquered country and makes it his motherland, community of interests will in the end inevitably bring about union. The foreigners become sons of the country by adoption and the sentiment of a common motherland is always a sufficient substitute for the sentiment of a common race-origin. The difficulty of religion may be solved by the conversion of the foreigner to the religion of the people he has conquered, as happened with the ancient invaders of India, or by the conversion of the conquered people to the religion of their rulers, as happened in Persia and other countries conquered by the Arabs. Even if no such general change of creed can be effected, yet the two religions may become habituated to each other and mutually tolerant, or the sentiment of a common interest and a common sonhood of one motherland may overcome the consciousness of religious differences. In all these contingencies there is a fusion, complete or partial; and the nation, though it may be profoundly affected for good or evil, need not be disorganized or lose the power of development. India under Mahomedan rule, though greatly disturbed and thrown into continual ferment and revolution, did not lose its power of organic readjustment and development. Even the final anarchy which preceded the British domination, was not a process of disorganization but an acute crisis, — the attempt of Nature to effect an organic readjustment in the body politic.

Unfortunately the crisis was complicated by the presence and final domination of a foreign body, foreign in blood, foreign in religion, foreign in interest. This body remains superimposed on the native-born population without any roots in the soil. Its presence, so long as it is neither merged in the nation nor dislodged, must make for the disorganization and decay of the subject people. It is possible for a foreign body differing in blood, religion and interest, to amalgamate with the native organism but only on one of two conditions; either the foreign body must cut itself off from its origin and take up its home in the conquered country, — a course which is obviously impossible in the present problem, — or it must assimilate the subject State into the paramount State by the removal of all differences, inequalities, and conflicting interests. We shall point out the insuperable difficulties in the way of any such arrangement which will at once preserve British supremacy and give a free scope to Indian national development. At present there is no likelihood of the intruding force submitting easily to the immense sacrifices which such an assimilation would involve. Yet if no such assimilation takes place, the position of the British bureaucracy in India in no way differs from the position of the Turkish despotism as it existed with regard to the Christian populations of the Balkans previous to their independence or of the Austrians in Lombardy before the Italian Revolution. It is a position which endangers, demoralizes and eventually weakens the ruling nation as Austria and Turkey were demoralized and weakened, and which disorganizes and degrades the subject people. A very brief consideration of the effects of British rule in India will carry this truth home.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 1st, 1907 }

Moonshine for Bombay Consumption

The Calcutta correspondent of the *Indu Prakash* seems to be an adept in fitting his news to the likings of his clientele. He has discovered that the old party and the new are united not against the Government but against the Mahomedans. All are looking to the Government with a reverent expectation of justice from that immaculate source. We do not know who this anti-Mahomedan and pro-Government Calcutta correspondent may be; but we hope the Bombay public will not be deceived by his inventions. If there is one overmastering feeling in Bengal it is indignation with the Government for allowing or countenancing the outrages in the Eastern districts. Even the Loyalist organs are full of expressions of uneasiness and perturbed wonder at the inaction of the authorities while Moderate organs like the *Bengalee* and Moderate leaders like Babu Surendranath Banerji have expressed plainly an adverse view of the action and spirit of the Government. There is no doubt considerable resentment against men like Nawab Salimullah for fomenting the disturbances; but there is no deep-seated resentment against the low-class Mahomedans who are merely the tools of men who themselves keep safely under cover. The fight is not a fight between Hindus and Mahomedans but between the bureaucrats and Swadeshists.

The *Reformer* on Moderation

The *Indian Social Reformer* has discovered that the Moderate programme needs revision. Moderation is defined by this authority as a desire to preserve the British Raj until social reform has accomplished itself, for the reason that an indigenous Government is not likely to favour social reform so much as the present rulers do. The *Reformer* would therefore like the Moderate programme to be modified in order to tally with its own definition of moderation. We presume that, in its view, the Congress instead of demanding Legislative Councils should ask for the forcible marriage of Hindu widows; instead of the separation of the judicial and executive, the separation of reformed wives from unreformed husbands or vice versa; instead of the repeal of the Arms Act, the abolition of the Hindu religion. This introduction of social details into a political programme is a fad of a few enthusiasts and is contrary to all reason. The alteration of the social system to suit present needs is a matter for the general sense of the community and the efforts of individuals. To mix it up with politics in which men of all religious views and various social opinions can join is to confuse issues hopelessly. It is not true that by removing the defects of our social structure we shall automatically become a nation and fit for freedom. If it were so, Burma would be a free nation at present. Nor can we believe that the present system is favourable to social reconstruction or that self-government would be fatal to it. The reverse is the case. Of course, if social reform means the destruction of everything old or Hindu because it is old or Hindu, the continuance of the present political and mental dependence on England and English ideals is much to be desired by the social reformers; for it is gradually destroying all that was good as well as much that was defective in the old society. With this programme of becoming a nation by denationalisation we have no sympathy. But if a healthy social development be aimed at, it is more likely to occur in a free India when the national needs will bring about a natural evolution. Society is not an artificial manufacture to be moulded and remodelled at will, but a growth. If it is to be healthy and strong it must have healthy surroundings and a free atmosphere.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 2nd, 1907 }

SHALL INDIA BE FREE?

Unity and British Rule

It is a common cry in this country that we should effect the unity of its people before we try to be free. There is no cry which is more plausible, none which is more hollow. What is it that we mean when we talk of the necessity of unity? Unity does not mean uniformity and the removal of all differences. There are some people who talk as if unity in religion, for instance, could not be accomplished except by uniformity. But uniformity of religion is a psychical impossibility forbidden by the very nature of the human mind. So long as men differ in intellect, in temperament, in spiritual development, there must be different religions and different sects of the same religion. The Brahmo Samaj was set on foot in India by Rammohan Roy with the belief that this would be the one religion of India which would replace and unite the innumerable sects now dividing our spiritual consciousness. But in a short time this uniting religion was itself rent into three discordant sects, two of which show signs of internal fissure even within their narrow limits; and all these divisions rest not on anything essential but on differences of intellectual constitution, variety of temperament, divergence of the lines of spiritual development. The unity of the Hindu religion cannot be attained by the destruction of the present sects and the substitution of a religion based on the common truths of Hinduism. It can only be effected if there is, first, a common feeling that the sectarian differences are of subordinate importance compared with the community of spiritual truths and discipline as distinct from the spiritual truths and discipline of other religions, and, secondly, a common agreement in valuing and cherishing the Hindu religion in its entirety as a sacred and inalienable possession. This is what fundamentally constitutes the sentiment of unity, whether it be religious, political or social. There must be the sense of a community in something dear and precious which others do not possess; there must be an acute sense of difference from other communities which have no share in our common possession; there must be a supreme determination to cherish, assert and preserve our common possession from disparagement and destruction. But the sentiment of unity is not sufficient to create unity; we require also the practice of unity. Where the sentiment of unity exists and the practice does not, the latter can only be acquired by a common effort to accomplish one great, common and all-absorbing object.

The first question we have to answer is, — can this practical unity be accomplished by acquiescence in foreign rule? Certainly, under foreign rule a peculiar kind of uniformity of condition is attained. Brahmin and Sudra, aristocrat and peasant, Hindu and Mahomedan, all are brought to a certain level of equality by equal inferiority to the ruling class. The differences between them are trifling compared with the enormous difference between all of them and the white race at the top. But this uniformity is of no value for the purposes of national unity, except in so far as the sense of a common inferiority excites a common desire to revolt against and get rid of it. If the foreign superiority is acquiesced in, the result is that the mind becomes taken up with the minor differences and instead of getting nearer to unity disunion is exaggerated. This is precisely what has happened in India under British rule. The sentiment of unity has grown, but in practice we are both socially and politically far more disunited and disorganized than before the British occupation. In the anarchy that followed the decline of the Moghul, the struggle was between the peoples of various localities scrambling for the inheritance of Akbar and Shahjahan. This was not a vital and permanent element of disunion. But the present disorganisation is internal and therefore more likely to reach the vitals of the community.

This disorganisation is the natural and inevitable result of foreign rule. A state which is created by a common descent, real or fictitious, by a common religion or by common interests welding together into one a great number of men or group of men, is a natural organism which so long as it exists has always within it the natural power of revival and development. But as political science has pointed out, a state created by the encampment of a foreign race among a conquered population and supported in the last resort not by any section of the people but by external force, is an inorganic state. The subject population, it has been said, inevitably becomes a disorganised crowd. Consciously or unconsciously the tendency of the intruding body is to break down all the existing organs of national life and to engross all power in itself. The Moghul rule had not this tendency because it immediately naturalised itself in India. British rule has and is forced to have this tendency because it must persist in being an external and intruding presence encamped in the country and not belonging to it. It is doubtful whether there is any example in history of an alien domination which has been so monstrously ubiquitous, inquisitorial and intolerant of any centre of strength in the country other than itself as the British bureaucracy. There were three actual centres of organised strength in pre-British India, — the supreme ruler, Peshwa or Raja or Nawab reposing his strength on the Zamindars or Jagirdars; the Zamindar in his own domain reposing his strength on his retinue and tenants; and the village community independent and self-existent. The first result of the British occupation was to reduce to a nullity the supreme ruler, and this was often done, as in Bengal, by the help of the Zamindars. The next result was the disorganisation of the village community. The third was the steady breaking-up of the power of the Zamindars with the help of a new class which the foreigners created for their own purposes, — the bourgeois or middle class. Unfortunately for the British bureaucracy it had, in order to get the support and assistance of the middle class, to pamper the latter and allow it to grow into a strength and develop organs of its own, such as the Press, the Bar, the University, the Municipalities, District Boards, etc. Finally, the situation with which British statesmen had to deal was this: —

the natural sovereigns of the land helpless and disorganised, the landed aristocracy helpless and disorganised, the peasantry helpless and disorganised, but a middle class growing in strength, pretensions and organisation. British statesmanship, following the instinctive and inevitable trend of an alien domination, set about breaking down the power it had established in order to destroy the sole remaining centre of national strength and possible revival. If this could be done, if the middle class could be either tamed, bribed or limited in its expansion, the disorganisation would be complete. Nothing would be left of the people of India except a disorganised crowd with no centre of strength or means of resistance.

It was in Bengal that the middle class was most developed and self-conscious; and it was in Bengal therefore that a quick succession of shrewd and dangerous blows was dealt at the once useful but now obnoxious class. The last effort to bribe it into quietude was the administration of Lord Ripon. It was now sought to cripple the organs through which this strength was beginning slowly to feel and develop its organic life. The Press was intimidated, the Municipalities officialised, the University officialised and its expansion limited. Finally the Partition sought with one blow to kill the poor remnants of the Zamindar's power and influence and to weaken the middle class of Bengal by dividing it. The suppression of the middle class was the recognised policy of Lord Curzon. After Mr. Morley came to power, it was, we believe, intended to recognise and officialise the Congress itself if possible. Even now it is quite conceivable, in view of the upheaval in Bengal and the Punjab, that an expanded Legislature with the appearance of a representative body but the reality of official control, may be given, not as a concession but as a tactical move. The organs of middle-class political life can only be dangerous so long as they are independent. By taking away their independence they become fresh sources of strength for the Government, — of weakness for the class which strives to find in them its growth and self-expression.

The Partition opened the eyes of the threatened class to the nature of the attack that was being made on it; and the result was a widespread and passionate revolt which has now spread from Bengal to the Punjab and threatens to break out all over India. The struggle is now a struggle for life and death. If the bureaucracy conquers, the middle class will be broken, shattered, perhaps blotted out of existence; if the middle class conquers, the bureaucracy are not for long in the land. Everything depends on the success or failure of the middle class in getting the people to follow it for a common salvation. They may get this support by taking their natural place as awakeners and leaders of the nation; they may get it by the energy and success with which they wage their battle with the bureaucracy. In Eastern Bengal, for instance, the aid of a few Mahomedan aristocrats has enabled the bureaucracy to turn a large section of the Mahomedan masses against the Hindu middle class; and the educated community is fighting with its back to the wall for its very existence. If it succeeds under such desperate circumstances, even the Mahomedan masses will eventually follow its leading.

This process of political disorganisation is not so much a deliberate policy on the part of the foreign bureaucracy, as an instinctive action which it can no more help than the sea can help flowing. The dissolution of the subject organisation into a disorganised crowd is the inevitable working of an alien despotism.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 3rd, 1907 }

Extremism in the *Bengalee*

The *Bengalee*, excited by the news of a second outrage on the Hindu religion at Ambariya in Mymensingh, came out yesterday with a frankly extremist issue. We only wish that we could look on this as anything more than a fit of passing excitement; but the *Bengalee* is hot today and cold tomorrow. Nevertheless, what it says is true, and it is well and pointedly expressed: —

"Fifty years ago, such a revolting outrage, committed upon the religious susceptibilities of Hindus, would have resulted in grave complications and the Government would have left no stone unturned to propitiate the Hindu Chiefs and the Hindu population, and last, though not the least, the Hindu section of the Native Army. Today Government officials openly side, presumably with the approval of the head of the Provincial Administration, with those who break Hindu images, desecrate Hindu temples, plunder the houses and shops of Hindus and ravish Hindu women.

"Is this the sum total of our progress after a century and a half of British rule? Have we, Bengali Hindus, become so craven-hearted, so utterly incapable of self-defence, that the Government no longer thinks it necessary to avoid wounding our tenderest feelings or even to keep up appearances? Verily, a nation gets precisely the kind of treatment it deserves; and it appears that in the opinion of Mr. Hare — so far tacitly endorsed by Lord Minto — a nation of weeping and shrieking women as the Bengalis are regarded by their rulers, deserves only to be trampled underfoot. And recent happenings in the district of Mymensingh show that the Government has taken an exact measure of the Hindus of Bengal. For are they not the embodiment of patience and — propriety? They are too highly educated and reflective, you know, to do anything rashly and the native hue of their resolution is most reasonably and naturally and speedily sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. They may be quite right from their personal standpoint; but national heroes are not usually made of such stuff nor are national interests promoted by the wearers of soft raiment. The worship of Motherland is the sole privilege of those choice spirits who have the heart to incur sacrifice, the hand to execute the mandate of conscience, and the recklessness to hang propriety and prudence."

And the *Bengalee* complains that we do not even lift our little finger to protect our temples, our holy images and even our women from defilement and dishonour. All this is surprising enough in a Moderate organ; if set before anyone without any clue as to its source, it might all be taken as a verbatim extract from the editorial columns of the *Bande Mataram*.

"Is this the sum total of our progress after a century and a half of British rule?" — asks the *Bengalee*. This precisely and nothing else than this is the one inevitable result of British rule. Has it taken our contemporary so long to discover that foreign rule, and especially such a rule as that of the British bureaucracy which demands entire subordination and dependence in the subject people, can have no other effect than to emasculate and degrade? Loyalists may enumerate a hundred blessings of British rule — though, when closely looked at, they turn out to be apples of the Dead Sea which turn to dust and cinders when tasted, — none of them can compensate for the one radical and indispensable loss which accompanies them, the loss of our manhood, of our courage, of our self-respect and habit of initiative. When these are gone, merely the shadow of a man is left; and neither the veneer of Western culture, nor enlightenment, nor position, nor British peace, nor railways, nor telegraphs, nor anything else that God can give or man bestow can compensate for the loss of the very basis of individual and national strength and character. Social reform? What reform can there be of a society of lay figures who pretend to be men? Industrial progress? What will be the use of riches which may be taken from us at any time by the strong hand? Moral and religious improvement? What truth or value have these phrases to men who see their religion outraged before their eyes and whose wives are never safe from dishonour? Get strength first, get independence and all these things will be added unto you. But persist in your foolish moderation, your unseasonable and unreasonable prudence, and another fifty years will find you more degraded than ever, a nation of Greeks with polished intellects and debased souls, body and soul helplessly at the mercy of alien masters.

The *Bengalee* in these fiery paragraphs denounces for the moment prudence and moderation as mere weakness and cowardice. It recommends recklessness and asks us to lift our hands in defence of our temples, our holy images and the honour of our women. This is probably no more than a rhetorical outburst to relieve overcharged feelings. But if there is any seriousness at all in our contemporary's wrath, let him seriously consider what his appeal means. We are to rush to the defence of our temples, our holy images, the honour of our women. But who are "we"? Not surely the people of Eastern Bengal and Northern Bengal, who, outnumbered, overwhelmed, are struggling against overwhelming odds, and, in spite of weak points like Jamalpur, are not acquitting themselves ill. In West Bengal the Hindus are in overwhelming majority; in West Bengal there is a sturdy Hindu lower class; there are thousands of students who throng to Swadeshi meetings and parade at Swadeshi jatras and festivals. But West Bengal is under the spell of Babu Surendranath and his Moderate colleagues. Will Babu Surendranath give the word? Is he prepared to speed the fiery cross? Shall West Bengal pour into the East and North to help our kinsmen, to protect "our temples, our holy images and our women from defilement and dishonour"? If not, this momentary boldness and manliness is no more than a fire of straw which had better not have been kindled. To quote our contemporary, — "The worship of Motherland is the sole privilege of those choice spirits who have the heart to incur sacrifice, the hand to execute the mandate of conscience and the recklessness to hang propriety and prudence."

Hare or Another

Our Moderate contemporaries seem unable to understand that the misgovernment in Eastern Bengal is a natural result of British policy or rather of the peculiar position of the bureaucracy in India. That position can only be maintained either by hypnotising the people or terrorising them. The new spirit is unsealing the eyes of the people and breaking the hypnotic spell of the last century; especially in East Bengal the process of disillusionment has been fairly thorough. The bureaucracy is therefore compelled to fall back on the only other alternative, terrorism. But our Moderate friends will persist in believing that the policy in East Bengal is only the policy of individuals. They are therefore "demanding" the recall of Mr. Hare. "He has eclipsed", says the *Bengalee*, "the record of Aurangzeb as a persecutor of Hindus, without Aurangzeb's excuse of religious zeal. . . . He has made every Hindu hate British rule in the privacy of his heart." But will the recall of Mr. Hare be of any more effect than the recall of Bampfylde Fuller? For our part we had never any illusions on the point. We knew that what Sir Bampfylde began in his fury and heat of rage, Mr. Hare would pursue in cold blood and with silent calculation. Supposing the wish of the *Bengalee*'s heart gratified and Mr. Hare sent home to the enjoyment of his well-earned pension, what then? A third man will come who will carry out the same policy in a different way. It is not Hare or Fuller who determines the policy of the Shillong Government, but the inexorable necessity of the bureaucratic position which drives them into a line of action insane but inevitable. They must either crush the Swadeshi movement or give up their powers wholly or in part to the people; and to the latter course they cannot be persuaded by any means which we have yet employed.

Bande Mataram

CALCUTTA, May 6th, 1907

Look on This Picture, Then on That

Britain, the benevolent, Britain, the mother of Parliaments, Britain, the champion of liberty, Britain, the deliverer of the slave, — such was the sanctified and legendary figure which we have been trained to keep before our eyes from the earliest years of our childhood. Our minds imbued through and through with the colours of that legend, we cherished a faith in the justice and benevolence of Britain more profound, more implicit, more a very part of our beings than the faith of the Christian in Christ or of the Mahomedan in his Prophet. Officials might be oppressive, Viceroys and Lieutenant-Governors reactionary, the Secretary of State obdurate, Parliament indifferent, the British public careless, but our faith was not to be shaken. If Anglo-India was unkind, we wooed the British people in India itself. If the British people failed us, we said that it was because the Conservatives were in power. If a Liberal Secretary showed himself no less obdurate, we set it down to his personal failings and confidently awaited justice from a Liberal Government in which he should have no part. If the most Radical of Radical Secretaries condemned us to age-long subjection to a paternal and absolute bureaucracy, we whispered to the people, "Wait, wait; Britain, the true Britain, the generous, the benevolent, the lover and giver of freedom, is only sleeping; she shall awake again and we shall see her angelic and transfigured beauty." Where precisely was this Britain we believed in, no man could say, but we would not give up our faith. "Credo quia impossibile"; — I believe because it is impossible, had become our political creed. Other countries might be selfish, violent, greedy, tyrannical, unjust; in other countries politics might be a continual readjustment of conflicting interests and clashing strengths. But Britain, the Britain of our dreams, was guided only by the light of truth and justice and reason; high ideals, noble impulses, liberal instincts, these were the sole guides of her political actions, — by the lustre of these bright moral fires she guided her mighty steps through an admiring and worshipping world. That was the dream; and so deeply had it lodged in our imaginations that not only the professed Loyalists, the men of moderation, but even the leading Nationalists, those branded as Extremists, could not altogether shake off its influence. Only recently Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal at Rajamundry told his hearers that those who thought the British Government would crush us if we tried by passive resistance to make administration impossible, held too low an opinion of British character and British civilisation. We fancy Srijut Bipin Chandra watching from the south the welter of official anarchy in East Bengal and the Punjab must have modified to a certain extent his trust in the bearing-power of British high-mindedness. We ourselves, though we had our own views about British character and civilisation, have allowed ourselves to speculate whether it was not just possible that the British bureaucracy might be sufficiently tender of their reputation to avoid extreme, violent and arbitrary measures.

That was the dream. The reality to which we awake, is Rawalpindi and Jamalpur. The events in the Punjab are an instructive lesson in the nature of bureaucratic rule. The Punjab has, since the Mutiny, been a quiet, loyal and patient province; whatever burdens have been laid on it, its people have borne without complaint; whatever oppression might go on, it gave rise to no such clamour and agitation as the least arbitrary act would be met with in Bengal. How have the bureaucracy treated this loyal and quiet people? What fruit have they reaped from their loyalty, the men who saved the British Empire in 1857? Intolerable burdens, insolent treatment, rude oppression. The Anglo-Indian cry is that disloyal Bengal has infected loyal Punjab with the virus of sedition. Undoubtedly, the new spirit which has gone out like a mighty fire from Bengal lighting up the whole of India, has found its most favourable ground in the Punjab; but a fire does not burn without fuel, and where there is the most revolutionary spirit, there, we can always be sure, has been the most oppression. The water tax, the land laws, the Colonisation Act legalising the oppressions and illegalities under which the Punjab landholders and peasantry have groaned, had generated the feeling of an intolerable burden, and when a few fearless men brought to the people the message of self-help, the good tidings that in their own hands lay their own salvation, the men of the Punjab found again their ancient spirit and determined to stand upright in the strength of their manhood. They committed no act of violence, they broke no law. They confined themselves to sending in a statement of their grievances to the Government and passively abstaining from the use of the Canal water so that the bureaucracy might not benefit by an iniquitous tax. The rulers of India know well that if passive resistance is permitted, the artificial fabric of bureaucratic despotism will fall down like the walls of Jericho before mere sound, with the mere breath of a people's revolution. To save the situation, they resorted to the usual device of stifling the voice of the people into silence. On a frivolous pretext they struck at the *Punjabee*. The only result was that the calm resolution of the people received its first tinge of fierce indignation. Then the bureaucracy hurriedly resolved to lop off the tall heads — the policy of the tyrant Tarquin which is always the resort of men without judgment or statesmanship. Lala Hansraj, one of the most revered and beloved of the Punjab leaders, a man grown grey in the quiet and selfless service of his country, Ajit Singh, the nationalist orator, and other men of repute and leading were publicly threatened with prosecution and imprisonment as criminals and an enquiry begun with great pomp and circumstance. Then followed a phenomenon unprecedented, we think, in recent Indian history. For the first time the man in the workshop and the man in the street have risen in revolt for purely political reasons in anger at an attack on purely political leaders. The distinction, which Anglo-India has striven to draw between the 'Babu class' and the people, has in the Punjab ceased to exist. It was probably the panic at this alarming phenomenon which hurried the Punjab Government into an extraordinary *coup d'état*, also unprecedented in recent Indian history. The result is that we have a strange companion picture to that dream of a benevolent and angelic Britain, — a city of unarmed men terrorised by the military, the leaders of the people hurried from their daily avocations to prison, siege-guns pointed at the town, police rifles ready to fire on any group of five men or more to be seen in the street, bail refused to respectable pleaders and barristers from sheer terror of their influence. Look on this picture, then on that!

And what next? It is too early to say. This much only is certain that a new stage begins in the struggle between democracy and bureaucracy, a new chapter opens in the history of the progress of Indian Nationalism.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 8th, 1907 }

Curzonism for the University

At last the Brahmastra which Lord Curzon forged for the stifling of patriotism through the instrumentality of the University, is to be utilised, and utilised to its full capacity. We all remember the particular skirmish in the first Swadeshi struggle in which Sir Bampfylde Fuller fell. Sir Bampfylde insisted on the disaffiliation of the Serajgunge Schools because the teachers and students were publicly taking part in politics. Lord Minto's Government refused to support him in this action because it was inadvisable, having regard to the troubled nature of the times, and Sir Bampfylde had to resign. Whatever stronger motives were behind Lord Minto's action, this was the ostensible occasion for a resignation which practically amounted to a dismissal. Now we find the same Government and the same Lord Minto outfullering Fuller and threatening in much more troubled times against all Government or aided or affiliated Colleges and Schools the action which Sir Bampfylde contemplated against only two.

The circular letter issued to the local Governments "with the object of protecting Higher Education in India" from any connection with politics, is an awkward and clumsily worded document such as we would not have expected from the pen of Sir H. Risley, but it manages to make its object and methods pretty clear. The object is to put a stop to the system of National Volunteers which is growing up throughout Bengal, to use the Universities as an instrument for stifling the growth of political life and incidentally to prevent men of ability and influence in the educational line from becoming a political power. This is how Lord Minto, presumably with the approval of Mr. John Morley, proposes to bring about these objects. The objects of their benevolent and high-minded attention are divided into four classes, schoolboys, college students, schoolmasters, professors, and for each a scientifically varied treatment is carefully prescribed.

For students in high schools, "In the interest of the boys themselves, it is clearly undesirable that they should be distracted from their work by attending political meetings or engaging in any form of political agitation. In the event of such misconduct being persisted in and encouraged or permitted by masters or managing authorities, the offending school can after due warning be dealt with — (a) by the local Government, which has the power of withdrawing any grant-in-aid and of withholding the privilege of competing for scholarships and of receiving scholarship-holders; (b) by the University, which can withdraw recognition from the school, the effect of which is to prevent it from sending up pupils as candidates for matriculation examination." Students in high schools are therefore to be debarred from all political education and brought up on an exclusive diet of Lee-Warner and Empire Day. Attending political meetings, outside school hours, mind you, and, it may be, with the full consent of the guardians, is to be reckoned as misconduct coming within the scope of school discipline. It is to be punished by the disciplining, that is to say, the flogging or expulsion of the boys. But what if the teachers or the managing authorities remember that they are men and not dogs who for a little food from the Government are ready to do its will just or unjust? What if they decline to do the Government's dirty work for it? Then the local magistrate appears on the scene and takes away the grant-in-aid and the privilege of competing for scholarships and of receiving scholarship-holders. But supposing there should still be found a Vidyasagar or two who would contemptuously spurn these bribes and prefer to keep his manhood? For that also this provident circular has provided. The school can be refused recognition, a refusal which will mean exclusion of its students from a college education. For this purpose the local Government will report to the University "which alone is legally competent to inflict the requisite penalty". But if this sole legal authority should decline to act on the report of the local Government? Then, it appears, there is another sole authority which is legally or illegally competent, the Government itself. The report is to be understood not as a report but as an order, and if it is disobeyed, the University "would fail to carry out the educational trust with which the law has invested it, and it would be the duty of the Government to intervene".

The next class is composed of university students. In their case the Government is not prepared to punish them, as a general rule, for merely attending political meetings. We take it that, in special cases, e.g. if it were a meeting addressed by Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal or Syed Haidar Reza or Mr. Tilak, they will not be punished. But if they take an active part in the meeting, then the need for discipline will begin. Any action which will bring undesirable notoriety upon their college, will be sufficient ground for Government interference. Picketing is of course forbidden to the student and so is open violence — such for instance as the defence of his father's house, person and property from Mahomedan *goondas* or of the chastity of his wife, sister or mother from violation by political hooligans.

The schoolmaster is mercifully treated. He is graciously conceded the right of having his own opinions and even of expressing them within limits set by the alien bureaucracy. "If, therefore, the public utterances of a schoolmaster are of such a character as to endanger the orderly development of the boys under his charge by introducing into their immature minds doctrines subversive of their respect for authority and calculated to impair their usefulness as citizens and to hinder their advancement in after life, his proceedings must be held to constitute a dereliction of duty, and may properly be visited with disciplinary action." In plain unofficial English the schoolmaster will be allowed to teach loyalty and subservience, but if he teaches patriotism, he must be suspended, degraded or dismissed. If he takes his pupils or encourages them to go to political meetings, — barring celebrations of the Empire Day, — he will, of course, be dismissed at once. Finally the College Professors, men like Srijuts Surendranath Banerji, Aswini Kumar Dutta, Krishna Kumar

Mitra, are not to be altogether gagged, but their hands are to be bound. "If he diverts his students' minds to political agitation," as Srijut Surendranath has done for decades, "if he encourages them to attend political meetings or personally" conducts them to such meetings, — this is obviously aimed at Srijut Krishna Kumar Mitra and the Anti-Circular Society — "or if he adopts a line of action which disturbs and disorganises the life and work of the College at which he is employed", — whatever this portentous phrase may mean, — the College is to be disaffiliated or the offender expelled.

This ukase out-Russias Russia. Not even in Russia have such systematically drastic measures been taken to discourage political life and patriotic activity among the young. Not even the omnipotent Tsar has dared to issue an ukase so arbitrary, oppressive and inquisitorial. It means that no self-respecting patriot will in future enter or remain in the Government educational service in any position of responsibility; or if he remains, he will not be allowed to remain long. It means that the position of private schools and colleges will become unbearable and they will be compelled to break off connection with the Government University. It means, if there is a grain of self-respect left in the country, that the Government University will perish and a National University be developed. And for this reason we welcome the circular and hope that its provisions will be stringently enforced.

Incompetence or Connivance

The question has been raised whether the action of the officials in Mymensingh amounts to incompetence or connivance. In face of the open partiality of these bureaucrats, their severity to Hindus and leniency to Mahomedans, it seems absurd to ask the question. To arrest the leading local Hindus *en masse* and leave the Mahomedans untouched, although influential local Mahomedans have been publicly charged by name with fomenting riots; to loot houses and cutcherries under the pretence of search with a Mahomedan mob at their back; to institute rigorous enquiry into the wounding of a Mahomedan and none into the death of a Hindu; to turn a deaf ear to appeals for help from threatened Hindus in the villages and delay action till the looting and outrage have been accomplished; to look on inactive in the face of a surging Mahomedan tumult and be on the alert when there is a rumour of Hindu retaliation; — all this is not incompetence, but connivance. We could have understood it, if the authorities had been equally supine and helpless in dealing with Hindus as with Mahomedans, but this is not the case. Compare the action of the Government in the Punjab with that of the Government in Bengal. In the Punjab, because there was a popular riot, all the leading Hindu gentlemen have been arrested on outrageous charges, the town held by cavalry, siege-guns pointed upon it, the police ordered to butcher any group of five to be seen in the streets or public places. If the East Bengal Nawabs and Maulavis had been similarly treated and similar measures taken in Jamalpur, we could have admired the impartial, if ferocious energy of the bureaucracy. Compare again the action in Bengal itself. A rumour is spread that the Hindus would attack the Mahomedan piece-goods shops in Comilla; at once Mr. Lees posts constables and himself stands on guard over the bazaar. A rumour is spread that the Jamalpur accused are coming up with an army of volunteers and the Gurkhas are out to receive them on the station. Compare this with the action against Mahomedan riot. "Armed police have been sent only after the occurrence. The authorities are taking no preventive measures. The Magistrate is sending Gurkhas and constables after everything has been finished." This phenomenon has been more than once repeated. "All shops at Bakshiganj, Mymensingh, have been looted and papers destroyed. The Image of Kali has been broken to pieces;" but "I hear that a regular enquiry is not taking place in the Bakshiganj case. Some of the accused who were arrested, have been let off. First informations have not been taken in all the cases." Or take this suggestive telegram from Rangpur District: "The rowdy Mahomedans of the locality gathered and looted Bakshiganj Bazar and the houses of several

Hindu residents of Charkaseria. Females were outraged. The looting continued *from noon to midnight.*" Looting of Hindus accompanied by outrages on their women may continue from noon to midnight, and no one thinks it his business to interfere; but a few Mahomedan shops were supposed to be threatened and a British Magistrate at once appears on the scene.

Soldiers and Assaults

The *Englishman* has after much deliberation decided to open a fund in aid of the soldiers who the other day attacked an Indian and assaulted him and was fined Rs. 150 by the Magistrate. The appeal for help is made at the fag end of a long article which opens thus: —

"The private soldier in a large Indian town such as Calcutta has many disabilities and not less temptations. The nature of his occupation leaves him a certain amount of leisure, and it is not to be expected that he should be a man of sufficient culture to spend this leisure in literary pursuits. He sallies forth for a walk, during the course of which he is only too frequently the object of undesirable attention of both a quasi-friendly and an openly hostile kind. Our experience of the excellent Mr. Atkins goes to show that he is as a rule an extremely well-behaved man, chivalrous and kindly in his way, and certainly by no means a swaggering, hectoring bully. Yet he inevitably on occasion comes into unpleasant contact with the natives of the country."

Then the Hare Street journal says that petty dealers and hucksters take advantage of the soldier's ignorance of the language and other disabilities and attempt to cheat him, an "attempt which if discovered leads to the most natural resentment on the part of the victim. This resentment may be, in default of the power of vernacular expression, translated into action, but is the soldier to blame?" Certainly not. And as a white man, he has every right to assault the Indian who is, in the words of Kipling, the Banjo Bard of the Empire, no more than "half-devil, half-child". Belonging to a race that makes laws the soldier has the power to take the law into his own hand when dealing with "natives". And the *Englishman* is sure that "his behaviour is as a rule admirable and reflects credit on the man and the service." The man, of course, is worthy of the service. If attempts to cheat are to be punished with blows by the victim, why, Clive should have been the first Englishman to suffer at the hand of Omichand. We are sorry the wisdom of the *Englishman* was not shared by Justice Norris who tried the O'Hara case, nor by Lord Curzon who was constrained to punish an entire regiment for misconduct, nor by the Bengal Government in the matter of the Barrackpur shooting case. But we do not quarrel with the *Englishman* for supporting the soldiers. We are convinced misconduct on their part will not cease till we learn to retaliate. Our duty lies clear before us — to organize measures of self-defence and determine to have tooth for tooth and eye for eye.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 9th, 1907 }

By the Way

The Anglo-Indian Defence Association exists, we believe, in order to take up the cause of Anglo-Indians individually and generally, whether that cause be just or unjust, whether the individual be a good citizen or a criminal pursued by the law. It is not surprising that such a body should also be found championing the Mahomedan hooligans who, for the present, are the good friends, allies and brothers-in-arms of Anglo-India in its fight against Swadeshi. A certain Mr. Garth, said to be a son of the late Sir Richard Garth, Chief Justice and one of the cheap and numerous tribe of "Friends of India", was the oratorical hero of the occasion. This gentleman was delivered in Mango Lane on Monday of a speech which runs to more than a column of insults and misrepresentations against Swadeshi Bengalis. He informed a wondering world that things in East Bengal were quite the opposite of what the Bengali press reported. We do not exactly understand this phrase. Does Mr. Garth mean that it is the Mahomedans who are being plundered, their men wounded and injured, their women outraged, while the officials give their assailants a free hand and are busy repressing any attempt at self-defence? That would be the opposite of what the Bengali papers represent.

*

But Mr. Garth then assures the world — which ought by this time to be quite dumb with awe — that he, Mr. Garth, is quite satisfied of the absolute falsity of the charges against the local officials. He does not pretend — this easily-satisfied Mr. Garth — that there is a single fact or the smallest fragment of evidence to disprove these charges which the officials impugned have not tried and the Anglo-Indian journals have not been able to disprove. No, the inner consciousness, the subliminal self of Mr. Garth has assured the outer barrister in him of the innocence of Messrs. Clarke, Loghman and Co., and they are acquitted. Mr. Garth is equally cocksure that the Mahomedans did not begin any of the recent riots; no, it was the Hindus who went and compelled them to riot and plunder and worse, so anxious were the people of Jamalpur and Dewangunj to bring on themselves the worst outrages and insults. With such brilliant powers of insight and reasoning, Mr. Garth ought to have come much more to the front as a barrister than he has succeeded in doing.

*

The case for the Mahomedans as presented by this brilliant special pleader is that they were goaded to madness. In order to prove his point he makes no bones about falsifying history. The Hindus, he says, tried their hardest to get the Mahomedans to join with them but absolutely failed. When we remember the unanimity of Hindus and Mahomedans at the time of the Partition Agitation, we cannot but admire such fearless lying. Well, the Hindus failed and then they tried intimidation on the poor sellers of bideshi articles, who are all, if you please, — yes, one and all Mahomedans in Mr. Garth's pleasant romance. But still the Mahomedans would not lose their angelic patience, still they would not listen to the pipings of Hare Street. But at last the Hindus began to form bodies of volunteers and learn stick-play and sword-play. This was the last insult which drove the Mahomedans to madness. That Hindus should learn sword-play and stick-play is enough, in Mr. Garth's opinion, to justify outrage, plunder, murder, mutilation, and the violation of women. After this, he says, no wonder the Mahomedans began to ask their leaders, "What is this?" All this tumult and violence, all these Armenian and Bulgarian horrors under British rule, are only the inoffensive, patient, loyal Mahomedan's gentle way of asking his leaders, "What is this?"

*

We have written the above in the very bitterness of our heart. It is clearer than ever that the unspeakable outrages inflicted on the Hindu community have the full moral support of the English in India. Officials allow them, Anglo-Indian papers sympathise with them, Anglo-Indian speakers defend them, and the speeches and writings in which they are defended, are full of intolerable insults to the whole Hindu population of Bengal. Yet we do not cease to buy the *Englishman* and *Empire,* we do not cease to give briefs to Mr. Garth and men of his kidney. We even hear that a prominent Swadeshi leader gave a brief to Mr. Garth the very next day after his speech, presumably as a reward for calling the whole Bengali Bar and Press a pack of liars. If it is so, we deserve every humiliation that can be inflicted on us.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 10th, 1907 }

Lala Lajpat Rai Deported

The sympathetic administration of Mr. Morley has for the present attained its records; — but for the present only. Lala Lajpat Rai has been deported out of British India. The fact is its own comment. The telegram goes on to say that indignation meetings have been forbidden for four days. Indignation meetings? The hour for speeches and fine writing is past. The bureaucracy has thrown down the gauntlet. We take it up. Men of the Punjab! Race of the lion! Show these men who would stamp you into the dust that for one Lajpat they have taken away, a hundred Lajpats will arise in his place. Let them hear a hundred times louder your war-cry — *Jai Hindusthan*!

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 11th, 1907 }

The Crisis

The last action of the Minto-Morley Government has torn every veil from the situation and the policy of the British rulers. Whatever else may be the result of this vigorous attempt to crush Nationalism in the Punjab, it has the merit of clearing the air. We have no farther excuse for mistaking our position or blundering into ineffective policies. The bureaucracy has declared with savage emphasis that it will tolerate a meekly carping loyalism, it will tolerate an ineffective agitation of prayer, protest and petition, but it will not tolerate the new spirit. If the Indian harbours aspirations towards freedom, towards independence, towards self-government in his mind, let him crush them back and keep them close-locked in his heart; for from English Secretary or Anglo-Indian pro-consul, from Conservative or from Liberal they can expect neither concession nor toleration. Indian aspirations and bureaucratic autocracy cannot stall together; one of them must go. The growth of the new spirit had been so long tolerated in Bengal because the rulers, though alarmed at the new portent, could not at once make up their mind whether it was a painted monster or a living and formidable force. Even when its real nature and drift had become manifest, they waited to see whether it was likely to take hold of the people. They were not prepared for the enormous rapidity with which like a sudden conflagration in the American prairies, the new spirit began to rush over the whole of India. By the time they had realised it, it was too late to crush it in Bengal by prosecuting a few papers or striking at a few tall heads. For the new spirit in Bengal does not depend on the presence of a few leaders or the inspiration from one or two great orators. It has embraced the whole educated class with one unquenchable flame. If Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal were deported, and the *Bande Mataram*, *Sandhya* and other Nationalist journals suppressed, the fire would only become silent, pervading, irresistible. A hundred hands would catch the banner of Nationalism as it fell from the hands of the standard-bearer and a hundred fiery spirits rush to fill the place of the fallen leader. In Bengal, therefore, other measures have been adopted. But the moment the bureaucrats were sure that the fire had caught in the Punjab, they hastened to strike, hoping by the suppression of a few persons to suppress the whole movement. The first blow at the *Punjabee* was a disastrous failure. The second has been delivered with extraordinary precautions to ensure its success. The whole might of the British Empire has been summoned to drive it home. The pomp and prestige of its irresistible might, the tramp of its armies and the terror of its guns, the slow mercilessness of its penal law and the swift fury of its arbitrary statutes have all been gathered round two small cities, not to put down a formidable rebellion or effect the capture of dangerous military leaders, but to arrest a few respectable and unwarlike pleaders and barristers. Enveloped with a surge of cavalry under the mouths of British siege-guns, these fortunate individuals, most of whose names were till then hardly known outside their own province, have been hurried to British jails and one eminent pleader whirled out of India with a panic haste. All this pomp and apparatus can evidently have no object but to terrify the new spirit throughout India into quiescence by a display of the irresistible power of Britain. It is an emphatic warning from Mr. Morley and Lord Minto that they will not suffer the Indian to aspire to freedom or to work by peaceful self-help and passive resistance for national autonomy.

In this grave crisis of our destinies let not our people lose their fortitude or suffer stupefaction and depression to seize upon and unnerve their souls. The fight in which we are engaged is not like the wars of old in which when the King or leader fell, the army fled. The King whom we follow to the wars today, is our own Motherland, the sacred and imperishable; the leader of our onward march is the Almighty himself, that element within and without us whom sword cannot slay, nor water drown, nor fire burn, nor exile divide from us, nor a prison confine. Lajpat Rai is nothing, Tilak is nothing, Bipin Pal is nothing! these are but instruments in the mighty Hand that is shaping our destinies and if these go, do you think that God cannot find others to do His will? Lala Lajpat Rai has gone from us, but doubt not that men stronger and greater than he will take his place. For when a living and rising cause is persecuted, this is the sure result that in the place of those whom persecution strikes down, there arise, like the giants from the blood of Raktabij, men who to their own strength add the strength, doubled and quadrupled by death or persecution, of the martyrs for the cause. It was the exiled of Italy, it was the men who languished in Austrian and Bourbon dungeons, it was Poerio and Silvio Pellico and their fellow-sufferers whose collected strength reincarnated in Mazzini and Garibaldi and Cavour to free their country.

Let there be no fainting of heart and no depression, and also let there be no unforeseeing fury, no blindly-striking madness. We are at the beginning of a time of terrible trial. The passage is not to be easy, the crown is not to be cheaply earned. India is going down into the valley of the shadow of death, into a great horror of darkness and suffering. Let us realise that what we are now suffering, is a small part of what we shall have to suffer, and work in that knowledge, with resolution, without hysteria. A fierce and angry spirit is spreading among the people which cries out for violent action and calls upon us to embrace death. We say, let us be prepared for death but work for life, — the life not of our perishable bodies but of our cause and country. Whatever we do, let it be with knowledge and foresight. Let our first and last object be to help on the cause, not to gratify blindly our angry passions. The first need at the present moment is courage, a courage which knows not how to flinch or shrink. The second is self-possession. God is helping us with persecution; we must accept it with joy and use that help, calmly, fearlessly, wisely. On the manner and spirit in which we shall resist and repel outrage and face repression, while not for a moment playing into the hands of the adversary, will depend the immediate success or failure of our mission.

Lala Lajpat Rai

We publish elsewhere the last letter we received from Lala Lajpat Rai previous to his sudden deportation. Great has been the good fortune of the Punjab leader in being selected as the first and noblest victim on the altar of Motherland. But for our part we may be pardoned if we indulge a feeling of regret and grief at the sudden parting from a friend. We have not been acquainted with Lajpat Rai for very long, but even these brief months of acquaintance and increasing friendship have been enough to make us feel the charm of his personality. There was always in Lajpat Rai a singular union of tenderness with strength, of quietness with fervour, a ready sympathy and kindly feeling which could not fail to attract. This sympathy and kindliness is evident in the warm phrases of appreciation he wrote to us. And there is a touch in his subscription to the letter which subsequent events have brought startlingly home to us — "an humble servant of the motherland, Lajpat Rai." Happy is he, for his Mother has accepted his service and given it the highest reward for which a patriot can hope, the privilege of not merely serving but suffering for her. When India raises statues to the heroes and martyrs of her emancipation, it will inscribe on his the simple and earnest phrase which remains behind to us as his modest boast and his sufficient message.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 13th, 1907 }

Government by Panic

One does not know precisely how to take the extraordinary accounts of the charges against Lala Lajpat Rai and the panic among Europeans which have been reaching us from the North. We used to think the English deficient in imagination, but the vivid and fluorescent powers of fancy which this panic has revealed, puts all our preconceived ideas to rout. Not only have the Government given vent to an outburst of poetical fancy beyond all parallel but they have insisted on staging and enacting their dramatic creation in real life. Sir Denzil Ibbetson reminds us of that great aesthetic realist, Nero, who made slaves and prisoners enact the parts of classic tragedy and had them actually stabbed or crucified or torn by real wild beasts to embody his mimic imaginations. Sir Denzil has conceived a splendid melodramatic tragedy called *The Rebellion Forestalled* or *British Empire Saved* and the Punjab Bar have been obliged to play the leading parts. The conception is admirable. An inoffensive pleader sitting among his briefs, to all appearance harmless, unmilitary, civilian, but in reality a masked Tamerlane, Napoleon or Shivaji, full of dark and tremendous schemes; a disarmed and helpless mob of workmen and peasants who are really a dangerous, well-equipped and well-organised army of a hundred thousand Jats capable of overthrowing the British Empire; a widespread and diabolically complex plot on the bursting point, Lahore Fort to be seized and, we presume, Lajpat to be crowned the first Punjabi Emperor of India, — when suddenly, lo and behold! the glorified and splendiferous figure of Sir Denzil Ibbetson appears, hurling lightnings and clothed in majesty, catches up the arch-conspirator in his mighty hand and a motor-car tosses him over the continent to Rangoon or the Andamans, envelops the rebel province in a cloud of cavalry and siege-guns and the British Empire — and incidentally Lahore Fort — is saved. A most admirably dramatic denouement! And to add the right Shakespearian touch of grotesque humour, we are told that this phantom army foreshadows its attack by throwing stones at the gate of Lahore Fort, whose feelings must have been deeply hurt by such contumelious behaviour — either as a sort of chivalrous warning to the garrison or as a symbolic rehearsal of the intended storm!

Are these the imaginations of sane men, or the diseased and distorted phantasmagoria which presents itself to bemused intellects in a Chinese opium-den? If it had been a little more plausible, we might have thought it a Machiavellian invention of Anglo-Indian statesmen to justify their instituting a Russian policy of repression. But a lawyer militarist leading an army of Indian peasants, Lahore Fort to be stormed by an unarmed mob with their fists — or with stones, the British Empire to be overthrown by this extraordinary army — the whole is a wild nightmare of panic-stricken brains. We are told that the Europeans were so panic-stricken, many of them passed the night on the railway platform, ready for flight. The *Civil and Military Gazette* also solemnly affirms that Lajpat Rai was an arch-rebel with a hundred thousand men under his orders and hints pretty plainly that the prompt action of Sir Denzil Ibbetson saved the British from a rebellion. And these are the men who think that they can go on ruling a nation of three hundred millions by mere repression and the terror of the sword, after the moral bases of their supremacy are gone! The great strong successful despots of the world were not men who started at every shadow and took every bush in the darkness for an enemy. Government by panic has never yet been a success and we doubt whether it will be any more successful in India than elsewhere. But here we find panic initiating a policy, bewilderment approving of it and alarm sanctioning it. Not only the Punjab Government, not only the "level-headed" Lord Minto, but even the austere and philosophical Mr. Morley has committed himself to government by panic. It is for us to take full advantage of the mistakes of our political adversaries.

In Praise of the Government

We cannot sufficiently admire the vigorous and unselfish efforts of the British Government to turn all India into a nation of Extremists. We had thought that it would take us long and weary years to convert all our countrymen to the Nationalist creed. Nothing of the kind. The Government of India is determined that our efforts shall not fail or take too long a time to reach fruition. It will not suffer us to preach Nationalism to the people, but in its noble haste and zeal is resolved to preserve the monopoly of the Nationalist propaganda to itself. "Alone I will do it," they have evidently said to themselves, even as Louis XVI said to his people when he resolved to take the work of reform out of the hands of the States General into his own. The Government of India also has resolved to take the work of inculcating Nationalism into its own hands. There is no farther need of the inspiring oratory or compelling logic of a Bipin Chandra, the fine and vigorous lucidity and competent organisation of a Tilak, the attractive charm, self-sacrifice, moral force and steady quiet work of a Lajpat Rai. The Government will brush them aside and take their place. We cannot deny that the methods of the Government far excel our poor efforts. Our methods are long, wordy, weary, and when all is said and done, only half-effective; those of the Government are magnificent, brief, laconic, decisive, triumphantly effective. By its policy of leaving the Mymensingh Mahomedans for weeks together to inflict the utmost horrors of rapine and brigandage on a Hindu population sedulously disarmed and terrorised by official severity, they have convinced the country that the Pax Britannica is an illusion and no peace worth having which is not maintained by our own strength and manhood. By the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai they have destroyed the belief in British justice. By their Resolution for the prohibition of meetings they have convinced everyone that we possess the right of free speech not as a right, not as a possession, but as a temporary and conditional favour depending for its continuance on despotic caprice. We await with confidence fresh developments of this admirable Nationalist propaganda.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 14th, 1907 }

The Bagbazar Meeting

We do not clearly understand what has been gained by the Bagbazar meeting held on Sunday under the auspices of the leading lights of Bengal. There were one or two speeches made which said certain obvious things and there were certain resolutions passed in which we condoled, sympathised, demanded and protested. But when the meeting dispersed, we were not one whit more forward than we had been a few hours before. What we want to know, what the country wants to know, is not what we think — there is no doubt or difference of opinion about that, everybody is thinking the same thing, — but what are we going to do? The right of public meeting is to be allowed to us in future only on sufferance; students of schools are not to be permitted to think about politics; students of colleges, schoolmasters, professors are to be suffered to take interest in politics only so long as they do not do or say anything unpleasant or objectionable to the authorities; Nationalist agitation has been practically forbidden on penalty of arrest, deportation or exposure to police or Mahomedan goondaism. What the Government means to do, is plain enough. It intends to put down Nationalism with the high hand and crush every attempt of the nation to raise its head, every aspiration to breathe, to grow and to live. The question now is, what do we mean to do in reply?

There were four subjects before the meeting on Sunday. The deportation of Lajpat Rai came first in importance, because it shows to what extremes the bureaucracy is prepared to go in order to crush Nationalism. Merely to express indignation and sympathy in answer to such a step, is absurd; it has all the bathos and futility of a foreseen commonplace. Of course we are indignant, of course we sympathise, but what afterwards? Have we no duty to perform except the expression of these very natural, unavoidable and entirely useless emotions? Yes, we *demand* that the charges against Lajpat Rai should be formulated and proved. From whom do we make this demand? In the case of the Natu brothers it was just possible that pressure in Parliament might induce the Government in England to undo what the Government in Bombay had done in a moment of panic. Here there is no such possibility. Mr. Morley has publicly identified himself with this act of arbitrary oppression and his mind is too stiff and rigid with age to change. The deportation of Lajpat Rai is therefore an action for which the Liberal Government has become responsible and, as such, is bound to have the support of almost the whole Liberal party, while it will certainly have the support of the whole Conservative party. Who then is likely to listen to this empty "demand"? We could have understood it, if the demand had been coupled with a resolution that the campaign of Boycott, Swadeshi and Swaraj should be pursued with tenfold vigour, that Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal should be asked to return to Madras and complete his programme with additions and Srijut Surendranath Banerji should proceed at once to the North for the same purpose and should take in Gujerat and the Central Provinces in his return journey, and that meanwhile every nerve should be strained to promote and organise the movement in Bengal. The resolution would then have had a meaning and the nation would have been inspirited to draw fresh resolve and energy from what would otherwise be a national calamity. As it stands, this "demand" rings hollow and savours of empty braggadocio.

The second question before the meeting was the state of things in Eastern Bengal, and here again the meeting dispersed after passing an utterly empty and unpractical resolution. There are various ways in which the situation might be met. It might have been resolved to arrange a meeting with the leading Mahomedans of Bengal and call upon them to dissociate themselves publicly from Nawab Salimullah and take active steps in order to put a stop to the anti-Hindu ferment which its misbegetters are now attempting to spread westward. Or, we might have decided in consultation with the Hindu Zamindars in the east to arrange adequate self-defence at every defensible point of the affected areas and withdraw the Hindu element from villages where they were too few to render a good account of themselves. This would either have compelled the hooligans to throw themselves upon well-defended points and meet the risk of a salutary defeat which they have hitherto avoided, or else left the conflagration to die for want of material to prey upon — unless it turned upon those who had kindled it. But merely to lament the situation and express an astonishment which nobody really feels at the action of the local authorities, is neither helpful nor sincere.

A third subject for consideration was the University Coercion Circular. This was a crucial point; from the way in which it was dealt with, the country could understand how far the sincerity and resolution of its leaders would go. It would perhaps be too much to expect of these gentlemen that they would respond to the insult that has been put upon them by a dignified resolution to sever connection with an enslaved and degraded University and take the education of the country into their own hands. In the present development of public feeling this would be perfectly practicable and we believe it would be welcomed with enthusiasm by the whole of Bengal; but it requires an amount of enthusiasm and courage which we have ceased to expect from the men who lead us. Surely, however, they might at least have definitely assured the public that they would offer a firm passive resistance to the provisions of the Circular and leave the Government, if it dared, to inflict the penalty of disaffiliation with or without the consent of the Senate. Even this was not done. "We protest," and there is an end of the matter.

The same course was followed with regard to the Ordinance restricting the right of public meeting. Under this Ordinance the Government reserves to itself the power of putting an extinguisher on the Nationalist agitation whenever and wherever it pleases. The agitation has been a public one and had nothing in it secret or underground; but if we submit to the Ordinance, it must lose its public character and adopt other methods. Are we prepared to accept this eventuality? We had given up petitioning as proved by experience to be futile and cannot return to it without acknowledging defeat and enslaving India for ever to the bureaucracy. Passive resistance has become our chosen weapon and this it is sought to strike out of our hands. We must, therefore, either oppose an organised passive resistance to this Ordinance, a resistance in which leaders like Srijut Surendranath must court imprisonment and deportation, or we must find other methods. It was light on this question that we expected from Sunday's meeting, but it has left us only darkness visible. It seems to be the policy of our leaders to "protest" — and submit.

A Treacherous Stab

We have seldom read anything more disgraceful, more unpatriotic, more opposed to all ideas of decency than the sneering and ill-natured attack on Lala Lajpat Rai which the *Tribune* has chosen this particular moment to deliver. It is a time when all over India men of all shades of opinion, except the worshippers of the bureaucracy, are putting aside their differences with this modest and self-sacrificing patriot in order to express their unanimous fellow-feeling with him in his hour of trial. It is precisely this moment that the *Tribune* chooses for its stab at Lala Lajpat Rai who is no longer there to speak for himself. If this unseemly conduct is dictated by a desire to dissociate itself from the exiled patriot in order to save its own skin, it can only be characterised as the basest cowardice; if by envy, party spirit and secret jubilation at the removal of a powerful Nationalist, it is indecent and unpatriotic. In ordinary times the *Tribune* was free to criticise and abuse Lajpat Rai and nobody would have cared, but when a man is suffering for his country, no one pretending to be a patriot has a right to vent on him either a private spleen or a dislike on public grounds. We have our own differences with Mr. Gokhale and Srijut Surendranath Banerji, but were either of these leaders to become the objects of official persecution, we should consider ourselves eternally disgraced if we remembered anything but the one fact that he was suffering for the sake of our common Motherland. The sneers of the *Tribune* would not in themselves be worth noticing; it is as an example of the utter want of true patriotism that it calls for condemnation.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 15th, 1907 }

How to Meet the Ordinance

When we come to look at it closely, the new policy of the British Government in India is a real blessing to the country. We find ourselves in unexpected agreement with the Anglo-Indian Press in this matter. The Anglo-Indian Press is full of joy at these departures from pre-established policy and assevers in one chorus though in many keys, *ekam bahudha*, that it is the very best thing the bureaucracy could have done in the interests of its own continued supremacy. We will not question their authority in a matter in which they alone are interested, but we can certainly add that it is the very best thing the bureaucracy could have done in the interests of the country. Lord Minto ought therefore to be a very happy man, for it is not everyone whose actions are so blessed by Fate as to command equal approbation from the *Englishman* and the *Bande Mataram*.

Our reasons for this approval are obvious on the face of it. The great strength of British despotism previous to Lord Curzon's regime was its indirectness. By a singularly happy policy it was able to produce on the subject nations the worst moral and material results of serfdom, while at the same time it never allowed them to realise that they were serfs, but rather fostered in them the delusion that they were admirably governed on the whole by an enlightened and philanthropic people. We pointed out the other day that the relics of this superstition still lingered even in the minds of many thoroughgoing Nationalists of the new school. We did not indeed believe that the bureaucratic Government was a good government or the British people guided in their politics by enlightenment and philanthropy, but many of us believed that there were certain excesses of despotism of which they were not capable and that the worst British administration would not easily betray overt signs of moral kinship with its Russian cousin. We ourselves, although we were prepared for the worst and always took care to warn the people that the worst might soon come, thought sometimes that there was a fair balance of probabilities for and against frank downward Russianism. For such last relics of the old superstitions, for such over-charitable speculation there is no longer any room. The whole country owes a debt of gratitude to Sirdar Ajit Singh and the Bharat Mata section of the Punjab Nationalists for forcing the hands of the bureaucracy and compelling them to change definitely indirect for direct methods of despotism. It has cleared the air, it has dispelled delusions; it has forced us to look without blinking into the face of an iron Necessity.

The question may then be asked, what farther room is there for passive resistance? A Punjab politician is said to have observed, after the arrests of Lala Hansraj and his friends and the first development of violent insanity in the Punjab authorities, "I do not see why the people should go on any longer with open agitation." But, in our opinion, there is still room for passive resistance, if for nothing else than to force the bureaucracy to lay all its cards face upward on the table; the oppression must either be broken or increased so that the iron may enter deeper into the soul of the nation. There is still work and work enough for the martyr, before the hero appears on the scene. Take for instance the Coercion Ukase, the new ordinance to restrict the right of public meeting at the sweet will of the executive. It is obvious that the matter cannot be allowed to rest where it is. We would suggest to the leaders that the right policy to begin with is to ignore the existence of the Ordinance. So far as we understand, the Lieutenant-Governor of Shillong has been empowered to proclaim any area in his jurisdiction, but as yet no area has been proclaimed. This is therefore the proper time for the leaders to go to East Bengal and hold meetings in every District; and those who go, should not be any lesser men but the leaders of the two parties in Bengal themselves. We are inclined to think it was a mistake to recall Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal from Madras at this juncture; but since he has been recalled, it should be for a joint action in East Bengal against the policy of repression. If the bureaucracy lie low, well and good; it will be a moral victory for the people. But the moment any particular area is proclaimed, the leaders should immediately go there and hold the prohibited meetings as a challenge to the validity of the ukase, refusing to disperse except on the application of force by the police or the military. The bureaucracy will then have the choice either of allowing the Ordinance to remain a dead letter or of imprisoning or deporting men the prosecution of whom will so inflame the people all over India as to make administration impossible or of breaking up meetings by force. If they adopt the third alternative, the leaders should then go from place to place and house to house, like political Shankaracharyas, gathering the people together in groups in private houses and compounds and speaking to them in their gates, advising them, organising them. In this way the fire of Nationalism will enter into every nook and cranny of the country and a strength be created far greater than any which monster meetings can engender. How will the bureaucracy meet such a method of propagandism? Will they forbid us to congregate in our own compounds? Will their police enter our houses and force us to shut our gates to the guest and the visitor? Whatever they do, the country will gain. Every fresh object-lesson in bureaucratic methods will be a fresh impulse to the determination to achieve Swaraj and get rid of the curse of subjection. All that is needed to meet the situation, all that we demand of our leaders is a quiet, self-possessed, unflinching courage which neither the fear of imprisonment, nor the menace of deportation, nor the ulterior possibility of worse than deportation can for a moment disturb.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 16th, 1907 }

Mr. Morley's Pronouncement

The attitude assumed by Mr. John Morley in answer to the questions in Parliament about the latest act of mediaeval tyranny, cannot surprise those who have something more than surface knowledge of English politics and English politicians. Those who have been behind the scenes in English political life, know perfectly well that there sincerity is an element which does not exist. Professions, principles, ideals are the tinsel and trappings of the stage; each politician is an actor who has a part to play and plays it, certain set sentiments to mouth and mouths them. But the only reality behind is a mass of interests, personal interests, class interests, party interests, and the ruling principle of action is to "catch votes" and avoid the loss of votes. We have all noticed how persistently the Anglo-Indian Press out here talk of every movement as being artificial and the work of "professional agitators", and how persistently they refuse to credit the popular leaders, even when they are men of high moral worth like Lala Lajpat Rai, with sincerity. We generally put this down to the perverseness and wilful misrepresentation of a reptile press; the real truth is that they are judging us from their knowledge of their own country. They are perfectly well aware that in England politics is a huge piece of humbug; it professes to be a conflict of principles and is really a conflict of more or less sordid interests. They know that in England a sincere politician is a contradiction in terms. They are therefore unable to believe in the existence in India of a sincerity and reality for which their own country offers no precedent. The only exceptions to the general rule of insincerity are the novices in politics — the maiden innocence of whose souls is soon rubbed off by a few Parliamentary sessions,

— and a handful of independent-minded eccentrics who have no chance whatever of rising to influence, much less to office. Occasionally a man of absolute sincerity like Mr. Bradlaugh breaks the record, but that is only once in half a century.

When Mr. John Morley entered politics, he entered as a literary man and austere philosopher and brought the spirit of philosophy into politics. His unbending fidelity to his principles earned him the name of Honest John, and this soubriquet, with the reputation for uprightness of which it was the badge, has survived long after the uprightness itself had perished in the poisoned air of office. No one can be long a Cabinet Minister in England and yet remain a man of unswerving principle. As Indian Secretary, Mr. Morley could not be expected to carry his philosophic principles into the India Office. On the contrary, there were several reasons why he should be even more reactionary than ordinary Secretaries of State. The Secretary of State does not represent India or stand for her interests; he represents England and his first duty is to preserve British supremacy; but Mr. Morley is also one of the foremost exponents of the most arrogant and exclusive type of enlightenment in nineteenth-century Europe, the scientific, rationalist, agnostic, superior type. As such, he was the last man to think well of or understand Asiatics or to regard them as anything but semi-barbarous anachronisms. Moreover, as the *Bengalee*'s London correspondent pointed out this week, he is evidently showing signs of senile decay which is shown partly in his growing ill-temper and intolerance of contradiction, but most in the mental languor which prevents him from questioning or scrutinising the opinions and information served up to him by the India Office. The verbatim fidelity with which he reproduces whatever Anglo-India tutors him to say, is strikingly evidenced by his answers to Messrs. Rutherford and O'Grady. His remarks on the situation in East Bengal might have been taken for an extract from the *Englishman*'s editorials or from the imaginative reports of the special correspondent of the *Empire*.

Mr. Morley makes no attempt to justify the arbitrary action he has sanctioned except on the plea of necessity, the tyrant's plea, which no one in former days would have held up more eloquently to condemnation and ridicule than Mr. Morley himself. He does not tell us why Lala Lajpat Rai was deported or what were the charges against him; probably he does not himself know, but simply accepted the assurance of the able and experienced Denzil and the level-headed Minto that the step was necessary. For they are the men on the spot, and Mr. Morley's conception of his position in the India Office is that he is there to act as a buffer between the men on the spot and adverse criticism. We need not discuss his utterances; they are merely faithful echoes of Anglo-Indian special pleading, in which there is nothing that is new and very little that is true. But the threat which he held out to the Moderate party is worth noting. For some time Mr. Morley and Lord Minto, with whom the Secretary of State rather superfluously assures us that he has an excellent understanding, have been talking big of some wonderful reform that they have up their sleeves and feverishly assuring the world that these fine things are all their very own idea and by no means forced on them by Indian agitation. And now we are told, or rather the Moderate leaders are told, that they will lose these pretty toys if they do not help the bureaucracy to put down "disorder", or, in other words, to put down Nationalism. Mr. Morley offers them a certain administrative reform if they can give up for themselves or can induce their countrymen to give up the aspiration towards freedom. The Anglo-Indian journals all take up the cry and the absolute insincerity of it is sufficiently shown by the fact that even so venomous, reactionary and anti-Indian a print as the *Englishman* proses solemnly on the theme! The object of these threats is manifest. The sudden succession of coercive measures may for a moment have stunned the people, it may for a few days dismay the more timid, but it has certainly created a deep and settled exasperation throughout the country. The dismay is temporary, the exasperation will be permanent. Mr. Morley and Anglo-India hope to take advantage of the moment of dismay in order to half-bribe, half-intimidate the Moderate party into detaching themselves from any opposition to these coercive measures. This is a vain hope. For even to the meanest political intelligence two considerations will at once occur. The first is that there is such a thing as buying a pig in a poke. Even the simplest buyer will want to see the animal before he puts down its price, and even the most confiding Moderate will want to know what is this wonderful reform of Mr. Morley's before he sells the country's future and risks his influence with the people for its sake. But on this point Mr. Morley preserves as studious a silence as on the charges against Lajpat Rai. Again, Mr. Morley and Lord Minto have hinted that their measure is an instalment of self-government, yet Mr. Morley emphatically declares that he will never strip the bureaucracy of any means of repression they possess, however barbarous and antiquated. It is evident therefore that whatever "self-government" may be in store for us, it is a "self-government" in which executive despotism will remain absolutely undiminished and unmodified. We have heard of a despotism tempered by epigrams and a despotism tempered by assassination, but this is the first time we hear of a self-government tempered by deportations. We do not think any section of Indian opinion is likely to rise to this lure. The *Bengalee* has already rejected the one-sided bargain with scorn and even the *Indian Mirror* has received it without enthusiasm. Coerce, if you will, — we welcome coercion, but be sure that it will rank the whole of India against you without distinction of parties.

The *Bengalee* on the Risley Circular

The *Bengalee* yesterday made its pronouncement on the Risley Circular which closes with the following remarks. "If the Government persist in their present career of folly, one of two things must happen. Either the official university will be absolutely supplanted by a comprehensive system of national education or, if that consummation cannot be easily realised, generations of young men will turn their energies and attention to active and practical, as distinguished from academic pursuits. We are not sure that either way the country will be a loser. And we know of no third alternative. One thing that we cannot think of is meek acquiescence. The country will not submit either to this resolution or to any other like it."

There is a certain note of weakness in the conditional way in which this is presented, which somewhat spoils the effect of the declaration. We cannot understand why we should wait to see whether the Government persist in their present career of folly. The policy of the Government in this educational matter is manifestly a deliberate policy undertaken with a definite object and there is no reason to suppose that they will not persist in it. This habit of waiting on the actions of the bureaucracy rests on a weak and mistaken principle. The victory both in war and politics rests with the side which can reply to attack by taking up the aggressive; a continual defence and waiting on the enemy's movements is weakening and demoralising. And why should a comprehensive system of National Education and the turning of young men to active and practical pursuits be mutually exclusive? Surely, increasing attention to technical, commercial and scientific instruction is a necessary part of any sound system of National Education. It is gratifying, however, to find that there is no intention of submitting to this resolution or any other like it. The bureaucracy in their frantic attempts to crush Nationalism, are doing their best to make anything but thoroughgoing Nationalism impossible.

What does Mr. Hare Mean?

Writes the *Indian Mirror*: — "For one full week we have it constantly dinned into our ears that Mr. Hare intends to visit the scenes of disturbance. Yet he has not left Shillong as yet, and disturbances are as rife as ever. What does Mr. Hare mean?"

Even Homer nods; and even Mahatmas are at times slow to understand the significance of events. Our contemporary declines to accept the Jamalpur affairs as a link in a chain that has been forged by people interested in the suppression not so much of Swadeshi and Boycott as of the spirit of Nationalism. The

Harrison Road case might have been a blow aimed at Boycott, for at that time the new spirit had not made itself prominently manifest in Bengal and other parts of India. But the Barisal barbarities left no room for doubt. Then came the Comilla excesses. Are we to believe that the Moslem population of East Bengal has really been deluded into the idea that East Bengal belongs to Salimullah? Are we, again, to believe that the British Government which now sees wraiths even in wreaths of smoke, contemplates with a sense of security, if not with satisfaction also, the growth of this idea in the truculent population of the province and the consequent growth of the influence and power of an ordinary Zamindar? Are we then to believe that the British Government is too weak to check the spread of rowdyism in East Bengal and the distribution of the "red pamphlet"? Then comes the deportation of the Punjab leader by the Government in a manner which reminds one of the conduct of "Cunning old Fury" in *Alice in Wonderland*, who wanted to play the parts of judge and jury to convict the defendant in a case in which he himself was the plaintiff. The crowning act comes from Mr. Morley, once extolled by the Friend of India as the *beau ideal* of a man and a politician, who expresses his determination "not to strip the Government of India of any weapon or law for the suppression of native disorders".

The Jamalpur affairs are only a link in the chain. Accept this view and the whole situation, as well as the attitude of the local officers will be clear. We need no longer fight shy of the real significance of things. Let us take things as they are and face the situation boldly irrespective of consequences to individuals in the discharge of their duties.

Not to the Andamans!

It is evidently with a sigh of relief that the *Indian Mirror* learns the news that Lala Lajpat Rai is to be sent not to the Andamans but to Mandalay. It says: — "Soon after his arrest, it was reported widely that Lala Lajpat Rai was going to be taken to the

Andamans. But instead of being sent to that penal settlement, he has been conveyed as a State prisoner to Mandalay in Upper Burma where there is a large fort. Mandalay is certainly a far better place than the Andamans." To those like us outside the esoteric circle — and they by no means form a microscopic minority — the distinction between the two places, on the present occasion, seems immaterial. Of course it needs no ghost to tell us that Mandalay is not the Andamans. But are not both places equally suited to the requirements of the Government? It was not the intention of the Government to remove Lajpat Rai to a particular place with a view to subject him to a particular kind of climate. In Mandalay in Upper Burma "where there is a large fort", the Punjab leader will not be allowed to do as he likes. The object of the Government in deporting him was to remove him from the scene of his labours and thus attempt to put a stop to his career of usefulness — call it political activity if you like. The first object the Government has succeeded in accomplishing by removing him to Mandalay. And it would have been equally accomplished by removing him to the Andamans. But the second object cannot be accomplished by such a removal. If the people are ready to carry on his work — which since his deportation it has become their sacred duty to do — the object of the Government will be frustrated. The work of an individual often becomes the work of a people, and such work reaches its glorious culmination only when it is taken up by the people at large from whom come the energy and the character of a nation. If the people are prepared to take up his work, then his deportation, which has given them an impetus, will prove but a blessing in disguise.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 17th, 1907 }

The *Statesman* Unmasks

We do not know why the paper which calls itself the Friend of India and usually puts on a sanctimonious mask of Liberalism, should have suddenly allowed its real feelings to betray themselves last Wednesday. Its attitude for some time past has been extremely ambiguous. During the height of the disturbances in East Bengal this Friend of India maintained a rigid silence on Indian affairs and discoursed solemnly day after day on large questions of European policy. Like the Levite it turned its face away from the traveller wounded by thieves and passed by. Since the deportation of Lajpat Rai, it has cared less and less to preserve its tone of affected sympathy until on the 15th it appeared as the apologist of despotism and the mouthpiece not of an idea or of a policy, but of the individual grievances of a self-seeking politician whose influence has waned to nothing because he could not satisfy the new demand for courageous and disinterested patriotism. Professing to be a Liberal paper, the *Statesman* has defended the despotic regulation under which Lala Lajpat Rai was deported, — a regulation opposed to all the fundamental principles of Liberalism; it has defended the Coercion Ordinance as a proof of the leniency and liberalism of bureaucratic rule in India. Calling itself a Friend of India, it has not scrupled to dissociate itself from its brother friends of India, the British Committee of the Congress, and sneer at them as ill-informed nobodies. After throwing the Congress, its principles and its friends overboard in this extraordinary manner, it has still the assurance to pose as the guide, philosopher and friend of the Moderate party and lecture them on the necessity of supporting the Government in its action with regard to Lala Lajpat Rai.

The arguments with which the *Statesman* defends the deportation as a supreme act of Liberalism, are of a remarkable kind. First, deportation "is not really so bad as it sounds", because "the lot of the so-called political exile is considerably happier than that of the criminal in the common jail". Prodigious! A man is arrested without any charge being formulated against him, without trial, without any chance of defending himself, separated suddenly from his family and friends, his country, his work for religion, society and motherland, and relegated to solitary imprisonment in a distant fortress; yet because he is not treated as Mr. Tilak was treated, as a common criminal with the daily harassment and degradation which is part of the criminal's punishment, this remarkable Liberal organ goes into ecstasies over the leniency of the British bureaucracy. Injustice and arbitrary oppression, in its opinion, is an admirable thing so long as it is not accompanied with vindictive personal cruelty. We remember a correspondent of an Anglo-Indian print at the time of Mr. Tilak's sentence calling on the Mahrattas to admire the leniency of the British Government, because it treated him as an ordinary felon instead of impaling him or sawing him to pieces. The *Statesman* writes in the same spirit.

The second plea in defence of deportation is that no act of State is involved in the arrest, it is only a summary dealing under Municipal law. We do not know what to make of this rigmarole or what the *Statesman* understands by Municipal law or by an act of State. Municipal law may mean the laws and rules which govern municipalities, but we presume it is not the Lahore Municipality which deported Lajpat Rai; or it may mean the ordinary laws and regulations by which local authorities arrange for local administration and the preservation of the peace. But here is an extraordinary action, above the ordinary laws, which needs the sanction of the Government of India and the sanction of the Secretary of State, in which a political leader is arrested for mysterious political reasons and deported without trial. Yet this is municipal law, not an act of State! and since it is municipal law, no one need protest against it! Apparently an act of State in the *Statesman*'s opinion is an *illegal* act which there is no statute to cover. Any action however tyrannical, if covered by a statute, ought to be borne without complaint by Indians as an act of great leniency and liberalism. Mark again the friendship of this friend of India and the liberalism of this Liberal.

A third plea is that "the action of the authorities in India, if contrasted with that of the average European Government, is leniency itself." So then, tyranny is quite justifiable if it can cite an example of another tyranny worse than itself! Let us remind the *Statesman* that the French and German bureaucracies are governments supported by the will of the people and that in the measures of stringency they adopt, they have the consent of the people behind them. And what have the police arrangements of Paris and Berlin to do with the punishment of a man without trial, a relic of mediaeval despotism of which no modern and civilised Government offers an example?

The real cause of all this special pleading for despotism is revealed in the latter part of the article. "Moderate men are apt to be pushed aside and their services forgotten by new men who seek to force the pace." "A long apprenticeship to journalism, a weary plodding in the musty by-paths of the law, are the chief or only means by which power and influence can be gained." This is where the shoe pinches. Who is this apprentice to journalism who is being pushed aside by young and extreme journals? Obviously the *Statesman* itself. Who is this weary plodder in the musty by-paths of the law, who claims that only lawyers or, say, only solicitors have any right to be political leaders and whose "fame", if not his "fortune", has been affected by the new movement? It is plain enough now that the motive which so long actuated the *Statesman* was not liberal sentiment or high principles, but its own interest and influence. Since that interest was touched and that influence threatened by the increasing spirit of Swadeshism and self-reliance, the temper of this Friend of ours has been growing worse and worse until he has finally renounced his liberal principles and become a champion of bureaucracy.

The article closes with a curious attack which seems to be directed at Srijut Surendranath Banerji. "Violent speeches, inflammatory writings, a prosecution, a brilliantly unsuccessful defence, paragraphs in all the newspapers, *questions by ill-informed nobodies in the House of Commons*, the jail, the exit, fame and fortune, notoriety, maybe a seat in Parliament — here we have not altogether a fancy picture of the modern Political Rake's progress." This is, we are told, not altogether a fancy picture; in other words, with the exception of the last touch about the possible seat in Parliament, it is taken from life; and to whom can it be applied but Srijut Surendranath? For, obviously, no leader of the new school is meant, since no leader of the new school would aspire to a seat in Parliament. Yet after this ill-natured attack the *Statesman* yesterday had again the face to figure as the patron and counsellor of Srijut Surendranath and advise him to sacrifice his feelings of personal friendship and respect for Lala Lajpat Rai, his principles, his patriotism, his reputation as a political leader and his influence with the people in order to get the approbation of Mr. John Morley and the *Statesman*.

A more complete unmasking could not be imagined. The *Statesman* not only attacks the new school, — that would be nothing new — but turns round and rends his old associates, Srijut Surendranath, the British Committee, the friends of India in Parliament, renounces all liberal ideas and principles, throws off every disguise and stands forth naked and unashamed. We recommend this example of "friendship" to all Bengali customers of the *Statesman*'s heavy goods, and would advise them either to cease patronising a dealer of such doubtful candour or to insist that the goods they get shall be of the pattern they have paid for.

Sui Generis

The *Morning Leader* in casting about for reasons, — let us call them reasons, not excuses — for defending Mr. Morley's Russian policy, has discovered the fact that the case of India is *sui generis*, a thing apart which stands on its merits and to which ordinary principles cannot be applied. The *Morning Leader* need not have taken refuge in Latin in order to hide its embarrassment. All

India, Moderate and Extremist alike, have begun to realise that the principles of Liberalism which are so loudly mouthed about in Westminster and on the hustings, are not meant to be applied to India. They may be applied to England and the Colonies but they are obviously unsuitable to a subject nation where the despotic supremacy of the white man has to be maintained, as it was gained, at the cost of all principles and all morality. Ireland also was *sui generis* once, until by moonlighting, Fenianism, dynamite and Passive Resistance she managed to break down the barrier and place herself on the same level with other nations. Yes, India is a case apart. In England politics is a question of parties. In India politics is a conflict of principles and of mutually destructive forces, — the principle of bureaucracy against the principle of democracy, the alien force of Imperialism against the indigenous force of Nationalism. Our relations with our rulers are not those of protector and protected, but of eater and eaten. As man and the tiger cannot live together in the same circle of habitation, so Indian Nationalism and bureaucratic despotism cannot divide India between them or dwell together in peace. One of them must go.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 20th, 1907 }

The *Statesman* on Mr. Mudholkar

Nothing can be more instructive than the way in which recent events have arrayed all Anglo-Indians, "liberal" or reactionary, on one side and on the other hand brought all Indian politicians, moderate or "extremist", nearer to each other. It shows that the profound division of interests creates an unbridgeable gulf between the aliens in possession and the people of the country in their different degrees of aspiration.

Apparent alliances between Anglo-India and any section of the people, can only be temporary adjustments of self-interest or of policy. When the crucial moment comes, each must return to his own camp and stand in sharply-defined opposition to his recent ally. We have had occasion to comment strongly on the recent unmasking of the *Statesman*. It was emphasised yesterday by the bitter and unscrupulous attack of that paper on Mr. Mudholkar. Mr. Mudholkar is the leading Moderate politician of the Berars, a man almost timid in his caution and one of the chief opponents of the new Nationalism. One would have thought therefore that the *Statesman* would have the decency at least to treat him with some affectation of respect. But Mr. Mudholkar is handled as roughly and hectored and lectured as insolently as if he had been a Tilak or a Bipin Pal. The attack is not only insolent; it is unscrupulous. The *Statesman* does not hesitate to misrepresent Mr. Mudholkar in order to serve its own ends. This is how it distorts Mr. Mudholkar's letter in one instance. "We read at the outset that the theory of provocation is ridiculous and absurd; but in the succeeding sentence Mr. Mudholkar impliedly admits that it was the conduct of a few indiscreet young men that furnished the immediate occasion of the riot.

This, we believe, has now been definitely established." Anyone who takes the trouble to read Mr. Mudholkar's letter will see at once that he does not admit either impliedly or directly that there was provocation. He says, "Assuming *what has yet to be proved*, that the impassioned advocacy of Swadeshi goods by the National Volunteers was distasteful to the Mahomedans, how could it possibly serve as a provocation?" And proceeding with this assumption, he asks in the next sentence how this alleged indiscretion of a few young men at the Mela could produce so fearful a riot? We cannot credit the *Statesman* with sufficient dullness or ignorance of the English language as to suppose that its distortion of Mr. Mudholkar's argument is not deliberate.

And when, may we ask, was it "definitely established" that the indiscretion of a few Volunteers was the cause of the riot? We know that it is so stated by the correspondents of Anglo-Indian papers whose evidence, being mere hearsay, has no value whatever, and we presume that this is what they have been told by the police officials who are accused of complicity in leading the Hindus into a carefully-prepared trap. But the statements of the Hindus who were attacked, stand as yet uncontroverted by independent evidence and unrefuted by any reliable enquiry. The *Statesman*, feeling the weakness of its case, tries to justify the action of the Mahomedan rowdies by saying that there has been a rise of prices round about Jamalpur as the result of the Swadeshi agitation. This is, in the *Statesman*'s view, sufficiently grave provocation! Well, possibly so. There has been, we know, an immense rise of prices all over India owing to the British occupation, to which the present rise of prices is absolutely nothing. Would that, in the *Statesman*'s view, be sufficiently grave provocation for the whole of India to rise in riot or rebellion?

The *Statesman* has no real answer to Mr. Mudholkar's arguments. Its answer to him consists merely of a prolonged charge of exaggerated language. Mr. Mudholkar described the state of things in East Bengal by the words "anarchy, rapine, desecration, bloodshed". These words the *Statesman* stigmatises as "ludicrously inappropriate to the facts". Indeed? The facts are that for the space of several weeks village after village was plundered and property to the value of many lakhs looted; yet this is a state of things which we are not to be allowed to term rapine. During the same time images were destroyed, temples attacked and desecrated, a religious celebration forbidden by armed rowdies; yet all this did not amount to desecration! Life and person were unsafe, numbers of men were hurt, some so seriously as to be sent to the hospital, two or three were brutally murdered, yet the *Statesman* thinks there was no bloodshed. For this space of time life and property and the honour of women were unsafe over a large area, the Hindus had to flee from Jamalpur and in all neighbouring places to organise their own defence, panic and riot and outrage reigned supreme while the constituted authorities busied themselves repressing the community attacked and threatened, leaving a free hand to the rioters; but this is not to be called anarchy! No, all these, says this miraculous Friend of India, were mere ordinary local disturbances *which would scarcely have attracted notice* but for the profoundness of the Pax Britannica. Mark the opinions of your Friend, people of India. The desecration of your temples, the violation of your women, the wholesale plunder of your property are to him things that scarcely deserve to attract notice.

The *Statesman* again rebukes Mr. Mudholkar for exaggerating the riot at Rawalpindi which it holds to be a very ordinary affair, and thinks that because Mr. Mudholkar has exaggerated this and other matters, therefore Indians are unfit to be entrusted with the administration of their own affairs. Yet in the same article the *Statesman* justifies the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai, *even if he were innocent*, because the occurrences in the Punjab were considered by the Government so serious that his removal was a necessity. Here is a consistent Friend of India! But if Mr. Mudholkar's exaggerated ideas of the Rawalpindi disturbances unfit his countrymen for self-government, still more do Sir Denzil Ibbetson's and the *C. M. Gazette*'s yet more exaggerated ideas of the same occurrences show that Englishmen are unfit to rule India.

The only point that the *Statesman* successfully makes against Mr. Mudholkar is when it disproves his belief that such arbitrary and tyrannical proceedings are subversive of the principles of British law. This delusion of the Moderates ought now to be renounced. They have always laboured under the delusion that because the British Government as apart from its local instruments, acts within the law, it is therefore incapable of oppression. On the contrary, as the *Statesman* points out, the British laws give ample room and provide adequate weapons for methods of despotic repression which are often indistinguishable in kind, though less direct and brutal than Russian methods.

None, says the *Statesman* sanctimoniously, has laboured more devotedly than ourselves in the case of India's political emancipation. We have heard legends that have come down to us from the times of our fathers of occasional active help given by the *Statesman* to their constitutional agitation, but we do not know what it has done recently beyond promising reforms which never come and thriving on the support of the Indian public. Certainly this is not enough to entitle it to lecture one of the leaders of public opinion and revile him as a "ranter". We hope that Mr. Mudholkar will learn his lesson, cease to appeal to English rulers and English journals and address himself in future to his own countrymen. Let him join hands with us in training them into a strength which will be a far greater security against "anarchy, rapine, desecration and bloodshed" than the protecting arm of the bureaucracy or the friendship of the *Statesman*.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 22nd, 1907 }

The Government Plan of Campaign

The bureaucracy is developing its campaign against Swadeshism with great rapidity and a really admirable energy and decision. Barisal was naturally the first district to be declared, and now we learn that Dacca, Mymensingh, Faridpur, Pabna, Rungpur and Tipperah, the Habiganj sub-division of the district of Sylhet and the Sudharam Thana in the district of Noakhali have also been proclaimed. Others, no doubt, will follow. All these districts have been selected for the prominence they have taken in the Swadeshi movement. It is significant also that in Bakarganj the proclamation has been attended by a Magisterial order which forbids the carrying of *lathis* and swordsticks between sunrise and sunset and the gathering of men in strength after nightfall. This can have no other effect than to prevent the Swadeshists offering an effective resistance in case of an attack being organised at night under orders from Dacca; for it is not likely that a lawless mob bent upon mischief would pay any heed to the Magisterial ukase. Meanwhile we have seen at Tangail a foreshadowing of the first line of attack on the students under cover of the Risley Circular. The objective of the authorities is clear enough. It is to prevent the promulgation and organisation of the Swadeshi and Swaraj sentiment in Punjab and Bengal. In the promulgation of Swadeshism we have used three great instruments, the Press, the Platform and the students. The Press by itself can only popularise ideas, it cannot impart that motive impulse of deep emotion and enthusiasm which is given by the direct appeal, the personal magnetism of a born speaker. But the work of the Platform in its turn is not sufficient in itself. The motive impulse created by the orator is apt to be evanescent, unless it is confirmed by daily insistence on the note sounded and the inspiring sight of the idea being actually carried into practice by devout and enthusiastic missionaries of the creed. In the Swadeshi agitation this part, the most important and necessary of the three, has been played by the students. It is they who have been the active missionaries of Swadeshism, carrying it into practice with the divine ardour and eagerness of youth, without the reserves of caution, temporising, doubt, half-belief with which colder age would have killed it in its birth; wherever they went, they have created a permanent Swadeshi *atmosphere* in which the tender plant of Nationalism could grow, could put forth leaf and bud, could flower into the religion of patriotism.

The English have a long experience in the art of political agitation and it could not take them long to discover where the strength of the agitation lay. But they were for a long time at a loss how to deal with it without losing their prestige and reputation as a strong and benign Government. They tried experiments and would not carry them out to the end. They took up a policy of direct and violent coercion in a limited area and then, alarmed at the noise and opposition created, dropped it like a hot coal. Next they tried the effect of a general attitude of "sympathy" and calm toleration covering with its specious and ample cloak a great deal of petty local persecution and secret undermining of Swadeshism. Meanwhile they were preparing the ground for an anti-Hindu campaign through the instrumentality of the Mahomedans which was only to be brought into use if the policy of "sympathy" failed. The policy of sympathy did fail and the local authorities were allowed to let loose the Mahomedan mob on the Hindus. Here again there was a failure or a very partial success. The first attempt at Comilla miscarried owing to the high spirit and good organisation of Comilla Swadeshism. The second blow at Jamalpur fell with tremendous effect, but the additional outbreak on the 27th upset the official apple-cart. It went much farther, probably, than was originally intended; for, possibly, the original intention was simply to teach the Swadeshi Hindus a lesson and perhaps to give an excuse for exceptional measures. But the second outbreak went too far. It drove the

Hindus out of Jamalpur, it identified the officials publicly and unmistakably with the hooligans, it lit a fire that spread all over Bengal and created a commotion throughout India; it gave a stupendous impulse to the self-defence movement all over the province; it found a few scattered *akharas* and left the whole Hindu population feverishly drilling and standing on guard. Finally, it threatened to imperil Anglo-Indian trade by prolonging the disturbances into the critical part of the jute season. Moreover, the attempt of the officials to isolate Swarajism in East Bengal had failed. Swarajism had set fire to the Punjab, it had begun to permeate the United Provinces, it was spreading with great rapidity in Madras. Another year and the whole of India would have been submerged.

It was these circumstances, apparently, which led the Government to the resolution of grappling with the Frankenstein monster Lord Curzon had raised and of deploying all the powers and instruments of despotism for its suppression. The panic created by the Rawalpindi disturbance has only led it to unmask its batteries sooner and concentrate all its fire on Swadeshism with greater energy and rapidity than might otherwise have been the case. No direct attempt has yet been made to silence the Press, but we have no doubt it will be done, if the Government find that the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai does not produce a permanent change in its tone. On the other hand, very effective measures have been taken against the Platform. The wholesale arrests in Rawalpindi, the monstrous charges brought against Lala Hansraj and others for no worse offence than being present at a public meeting which happened to be followed in point of time by a riot, the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai are all measures of intimidation against the Platform. Lest these should prove insufficient, the bureaucracy has armed itself with powers which, if carefully used, will put an end to Swadeshi propaganda from the Platform and can in any case crush it by violent and persistent coercion. It is applied, on the familiar principle of localising opposition and crushing it in detail, to East Bengal and Punjab only, but can easily be extended, should occasion arise. Finally, by the Risley Circular it is sought to strike out of the hands of Nationalism its chief strength, the young and rising generation whose political activity in their student days means the creation of a new race of men whom it will be impossible to rule by despotic methods. If we submit, therefore, to these bureaucratic measures it means that the three potent instruments of our movement will be rendered useless for our purposes and Swadeshism is at an end. The bureaucracy will necessarily wait to see how we take its attack. If we submit, they will not incur unnecessary odium by pressing the measures too hard but will hold them *in terrorem* over us and apply them lightly wherever necessary. If we try to carry on the movement, they will carry on the campaign of Russianism to the bitter end, regardless of ulterior consequences, unless the developments are such as to convince them that the Russian method is useless or worse. Meanwhile, as is shown by the deputation of Mr. Beatson Bell to Mymensingh, efforts will be made to get the Mahomedan outbreak under control again, if for nothing else than in the interests of jute. The Anglo-Indian cry of "jute in danger" is one which cannot be ignored. Until the gathering in of the jute, there will probably be no farther Mahomedan turbulence except in sporadic instances. What will happen afterwards, will depend much on the course of events between. We may also expect other attempts besides the mere application of the Risley Circular to take the sting out of the volunteer movement.

Such is the prospect before us. It is high time that we should decide how we are to meet it. Our leaders have evidently abandoned the helm and are merely sitting tight watching the stormy waters roll. So poor is our organisation that even a meeting of mofussil and Calcutta delegates to consider the crisis has not been arranged. There is a talk, we learn from the Friend of India, of an extraordinary All-India Congress at which Mr. Gokhale and some other delegates will meet in Bombay under the aegis of Sir Pherozshah Mehta to protest against these new settled facts. All this will not help us and we must find out our own salvation. We shall devote the next few days to expressing our own opinion of the possibilities before us and we earnestly invite the attention and opinion of our readers upon them, — if they agree with us that there is still room for the open agitation for which we have always stood and which we still advocate.

The Nawab's Message

If the Mahomedan community is to look for a leader, they should turn their eyes not towards the upstarts of Dacca, but to the scion of the historic house of Murshidabad; and if a contradiction is required of the lying and interested statement that the Hindus and Mahomedans have not lived as friends in the land of their birth, we cannot do better than bring into requisition the high-minded pronouncement of the Nawab of Murshidabad on the subject to which we so gladly give publicity elsewhere in our columns. The present rupture artificially created between the two communities is extremely painful to the Nationalists of both and this seasonable gospel of peace and goodwill should direct into the right path the patriotically disposed Mahomedans of the country. The Nawab's message is a convincing proof of the dissociation of all right-thinking Mahomedans from the hired hooliganism to which a number of unscrupulous Mahomedans have most unfortunately and disgracefully lent themselves.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 23rd, 1907 }

And Still It Moves

What is the precise difference which the recent Government measures have made in the conditions of the Swadeshi movement? The first to be considered, because the most dramatic and striking of these measures, is the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai. Has this deportation brought any really new element into the problem? When we began the movement, we were prepared, or at least we professed to be prepared, for the utmost use by the Government of all the weapons the existing law puts in its hand. We were prepared for press-prosecutions, we were prepared to go to jail on false charges, we refused to be appalled by regulation *lathis*, broken heads and Gurkha charges. Whatever use the Bengal Government might make of the repressive laws which stand on its statute books, to whatever advantage the local magistracy might turn their powers of government by ukase, we were prepared for everything, we started with the fixed determination to allow nothing to daunt us. Deportation was also a pre-existing weapon of repression available to the bureaucracy under the existing laws. The difference its use has made, is to bring in, in the place of provincial repression by the local government, imperial repression by the Government of India with the approval of the Secretary of State. It has also replaced the long and uncertain process of trial ending in a punishment of fixed duration by the swift and sudden process of kidnapping and a punishment — no, we apologise to the Friend of India, we should rather say a leniency of uncertain, perhaps life-long duration. One other element it has introduced which patriots have had to face in all other countries, but which falls on our heads for the first time, — the punishment of exile. To speak the truth, this is the one and only terror of deportation to Indian patriots. The Indian mind with its passionate attachment to the very soil of the mother-country, its deep reverent feeling that mother and motherland are more to be cherished than paradise itself, must feel the deprivation with a force which no European race, except perhaps the passionate and emotional Italian, could understand. In jail the floor we tread is at least made of Indian soil; when we exercise in the prison yard, the air that visits our cheeks is Indian air; the pulsation of Indian aspiration, Indian emotion, Indian life, Indian joys and sorrows beats around our prison walls and floods our hearts with the magnetic pervasiveness of which the air of India is more full than that of any other country. The bureaucracy blundered upon an ingenious way of striking us in a very vulnerable point when it hurried Lajpat Rai away to a remote corner of the world among alien men and cut him off from all sight of Indian faces and communion with Indian hearts. But what then? It is but one suffering the more, and the deeper the suffering the greater the glory, the more celestial the reward. We cannot suffer more than Poerio in his Neapolitan dungeon or Silvio Pellico in his Austrian fortress or Mazzini in his lifelong exile. It is with the lifeblood of a nation's best and the unshed tears that well up from the hearts of its strong men that the tree of liberty is watered. The greater the sacrifice, the earlier is its fruit enjoyed.

Yet it cannot be denied that the deportation came as a shock on the Moderates and as a surprise to the Extremists. It was a shock to the Moderates because of the source from which it came. They had never been able to shake off the idea that in the end Mr. John Morley, if not the sympathetic Lord Minto, would come to their help. To renounce that hope would be to reject the very keystone of the Moderate policy and turn their backs for ever on the illusions of thirty years. Even up to the moment almost of the deportation the *Bengalee* was clamouring for the recall of Mr. Hare and confidently expecting that his criminal inactivity in the East Bengal disturbances would be punished by a just and benign Secretary of State. On such high expectations the deportation came as a blow straight in the face and struck the Moderate party dumb and senseless for a moment. The heaviness of the blow it had received can be judged by the sudden violence of the *Indu Prakash* which exceeded in the fierce anger of its utterances any Extremist organ. There is no disguising the fact that the Moderate's occupation is gone. British rule has so unmistakably, finally, irrevocably declared itself as despotism naked and unashamed, a despotism moreover which is firmly resolved to remain despotic, — the fiction of a constitution has been so relentlessly exposed as a sheer mockery and constitutional agitation has thereby been rendered such a patent, elaborate and heartless farce that, although it will continue just as the snake continues to wriggle even after it has been cut into two, it has lost all life and all chance of carrying weight in the country. The temper of the Madras meeting, which a serious and influential paper like the *Madras Standard* asserts to have been composed mainly not of students but of adults, shows what the temper of the nation is likely to be. The deportation therefore has introduced a new element for the Moderate politician. His gods have failed him; the benign hand from which he expected favours, has treated him instead to a whip of scorpions; the face of flowers he worshipped has had its veil torn away and stands revealed as a grinning death's head. Moderation lies wounded to the death. It can no longer exist except as a pretence, an attitude. To the Nationalist the deportation came as a surprise because of the occasion for which it was employed. We knew that the benignant bureaucracy had this weapon in their armoury, that they had used it once and might well use it again; but we thought it had more respect for its prestige and more common sense than to waste it on an insufficient occasion. The Natus were deported because it was suspected that they were behind the Poona assassinations and that the assassinations themselves were part of an elaborate Maratha conspiracy. In the Punjab there was nothing but a riot; for the persistent wild rumours of the disarming of regiments and murder of Europeans have received no confirmation of any kind. Deportation, as directed against the Nationalist movement, was like the magic weapon of Karna which could be used only once with effect; it should therefore have been reserved for a supreme occasion when it might have averted, for the time at least, an incipient mutiny or formidable rebellion. It was used instead in a moment of panic to meet a *fancied* mutiny; it was used not against the formidable and indispensable leader of a great approaching rebellion; but against a boy-orator and a pleader of considerable influence who at the worst was no more than one of the many prophets of revolution. Meant for Arjuna, it has been hurled against Ghatotkach. This misuse deprives it of its utility; for as the *Empire* shrewdly pointed out the other day the trick of deportation cannot be successfully played twice; the second time it will be a direct help to the strong revolutionary forces which are growing in the country. To the Nationalists therefore the menace of deportation does not bring in any new element into the situation, except in so far as it hastens their work or brings the leaders as well as the rank and file to the touchstone of peril where their value will be tested.

The new element of deportation, therefore, so far as it is a new element, merely facilitates the work of Nationalism. There is no reason why it should modify our action in any essential feature. We may be told of course that we cannot afford to imperil the leaders on whom the progress of the movement depends. We answer that the safety of the leaders can only be assured by sacrificing the vitality and force of the movement, a price too heavy to pay; secondly where the will of a higher Power is active in a great upheaval, no individual is indispensable. The movement will not stop in the Punjab because Lajpat Rai is gone or Ajit Singh is hiding. *Eppur si muove*, "and still it moves", to its predestined end.

British Generosity

There is no quality which the British race more persistently arrogates to itself, as if it were their monopoly, than truth and frankness. Yet by a strange ill-luck they have never been able to persuade anybody but themselves that they possess now or ever possessed these high and noble qualities. On the contrary, the epithet "perfidious Albion" in which the French summed up their experience of English character before the present "cordial understanding" and to which they may have to revert when it is over, expresses the general opinion of their fellow-Europeans on the British claim to an unique and superior righteousness. The conviction of British political hypocrisy, large promise-making when it suited them and large promise-breaking now that that suits them, is the final conclusion to which India has been driven on the same subject. There is another quality of which the English are equally proud, their fair-play and generosity to enemies. Here again the world's opinion of them does not coincide with their opinion of themselves. On the contrary, no nation is capable of greater meanness and venomous hatred in its treatment of the enemies and opponents who are so unfortunate as to fall into its hands. The generosity is reserved for those enemies who have beaten them in fight, like Washington, or with whom they have to come to an understanding after an equal struggle, like Botha. But towards others and specially for those who have put them in fear for their national existence or their supremacy or their commerce and then fallen into their power, they observe neither chivalry nor fairness nor truth. It was the British fair-play which in mediaeval times burned Joan of Arc at the stake and then for some centuries vilely slandered her character. It was British fair-play which pursued Napoleon during his lifetime with a campaign of slander and abuse of the most extraordinary vileness and then interned him in St. Helena and embittered his last days by the meanest pettiness and persecution. It was British fair-play which, in the early days of the Boer war avenged Majuba by an astonishing campaign of lies and abuse against the Boers, representing them as a race of dirty, brutal, cunning and uneducated semi-savages. We see the same national characteristic in the shameful vilification in which the Anglo-Indian Press have indulged against the patriot whose influence in the Punjab has put in fear for their empire and their trade. We waive the question whether Lajpat Rai was or was not really guilty from the standpoint of the bureaucracy, whether he was or he was not actively working against the continuance of British rule, as he certainly was actively working against the continuance of irresponsible bureaucratic despotism. But as to the personal character of Lajpat Rai, his personal uprightness, honesty, candour, his earnest diligence in working for the religious, social and political elevation of his country, his unostentatious self-sacrifice, his modest worth, his quiet courage, even his opponents have nothing but praise. Yet it is this man whom the Anglo-Indian papers have been vilifying as a rascally agitator, a braggart, a coward, a "mean specimen of humanity", whose influence was solely due to his having spent money freely on "agitation". We can only salute with reverence this fresh exhibition of British fair-play and generosity. But if the man was such a poor and inconsiderable specimen, how is it that you have treated him as if he were a second Napoleon, thinking even distant Mandalay not remote enough or strong enough to hold the mighty rebel? All this foul-mouthed brutality is a measure of the extraordinary panic into which the ruling race has fallen as the result of what the *Statesman* describes as no worse than a street row or an election fight. The tiger qualities of a ruling race, no doubt!

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 24th, 1907 }

An Irish Example

The refusal of the Irish Parliamentary party under Mr. Redmond's leadership to have anything to do with the sham the Liberal Government has offered them in the place of Home Rule, is a step on which we may congratulate the Irish people. Had they been deluded into swallowing the bait which was devised for them with such unscrupulous skill by Mr. Birrell, they would have committed a false step of the worst kind and seriously compromised the Home Rule Movement. It is much better that Ireland should have to wait longer for any measure of self-government than that she should commit political suicide by accepting Mr. Birrell's Bill. We call it Mr. Birrell's Bill, but in reality it is Sir Antony Macdonnell's and has the stamp of "Liberal" Anglo-Indian upon it. Its object is obviously to kill the Home Rule Movement by kindness, to break up Irish unity and take the sting out of Irish Nationalism by a sham concession skilfully calculated to corrupt the natural leaders of the people. The measure proposed was a sort of bastard cross between a Colonial Parliament and an Indian Legislative Council. Its acceptance would have committed Irish politicians to the abandonment of the policy of Parnell and to co-operation in future with the British Government. The Irish people were openly told that the concession of further self-government would depend on the way in which they used this precious opportunity, in other words on their abandoning passive resistance and their principle of aloofness from Government and its favours and co-operating with it in a mutilated and ineffectual scheme of self-government. What would have been the result, if the Irish people had closed with this very bad bargain? They would not have got Home

Rule which England is determined never to give them unless she has no other choice. The local self-government offered to Ireland would have been extended to Scotland and Wales and when Ireland demanded Home Rule, she would have been told to be satisfied with a measure of self-government which had satisfied the other parts of the United Kingdom. The British Government would by that time have broken the solid phalanx of Irish Nationalism and by the bribe of office, position and influence succeeded in detaching from the cause a great number of the natural leaders of the people, men of intelligence, ability and ambition, whose talents would be used by England in keeping the people contented and combating true Nationalism. In this way the great ideal of an Irish nation for which Emmett died, for which O'Connell and Parnell planned and schemed and which the Sinn Fein movement is making more and more practicable, would either have been entirely frustrated or postponed for another century. Instead of a separate nationality with its own culture, language, government the Irish would have ended by becoming a big English county governed by a magnified and glorified Parish Council. The same kind of bait was offered to the Boers, but that shrewd people resolutely refused to associate themselves with any form of self-government short of absolute colonial self-government. The same kind of bait is promised to the Moderates in India by Honest John and the honest *Statesman*, if they will only consent to dissociate themselves from the new spirit and all its works and betray their country. The *Statesman* says that Mr. Redmond has been forced to the refusal by the necessity of deferring to the Sinn Fein Party in Ireland, and hopes that the Indian Moderates will not commit the same mistake. Our sapient contemporary opines that the Nationalists in India are not really so strong as they seem and that the Moderate leaders, if they desire to betray the country, can do so with impunity, without losing their influence and position. Well, we shall see.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 25th, 1907 }

The East Bengal Disturbances

We have said that the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai brings no new element into the situation beyond hastening the processes of Nationalism and bringing us from a less to a more acute stage of our progress to independence. The second disturbing element has been the culmination of the alliance between Salimullah of Dacca and the bureaucracy in the anarchy and the outrages in the Mymensingh district. These disturbances are now almost over for the time being, though we must take full advantage of the lull allowed to us, so as to put our house in order against a possible recrudescence after the jute season. We should now seriously consider how far these disturbances have altered the situation and what we should do in order to meet these new conditions. We must first notice that neither the disturbances themselves nor their cause are in their nature a new element in the situation. The Salimullahi campaign, the use of Mahomedan budmashes to terrorise Swadeshi Hindus, the official inactivity and sympathy with the lawbreakers, these have all been with us even before. The conclusions we arrived at at the time, the warnings and exhortations we addressed to the people have been proved to the hilt, justified beyond dispute, enforced in red letters of rapine, bloodshed and outrage. Our reading of the situation then was that no serious apprehension of trouble between Hindus and Mahomedans need be entertained except within that tract of country immediately under the influence of Nawab Salimullah, — Mymensingh, Dacca, Tipperah and possibly parts of Pabna. This is precisely what has happened. In Comilla the trouble was stopped before it could do real mischief, by the resolute spirit of the Hindus; in Dacca, in spite of small skirmishes, individual harassment and a minor outbreak or two, it never gathered to a head, because the great strength and early preparations of the Hindus overawed the prime movers and their instruments; Mymensingh alone felt the full force of the storm, while Pabna still hovers on the brink of it. It is not that the Nawab's campaign was not vigorously pursued in other parts. The Red Pamphlet has been ubiquitous throughout Eastern and Northern Bengal; the preachings of the Nawab's Mullahs have been as persistent, as malignant in Barisal, in Calcutta, in every strong centre of Swadeshism. But though there have been alarms and excursions even as far west as Allahabad and Benares, the campaign has for the present signally failed outside the limits of Nawab Salimullah's kingdom. This is a fact to be noted. We do not say that Salimullahism carries no dangers with it of general disruption and disunion between the two communities; an unscrupulous agitation of this kind aided by official backing is always dangerous. But in the rest of the country the blind faith in the Nawab and his Mullahs is absent and other conditions and forces exist which, if properly used by the Nationalists, will permanently counteract the promoters of disunion. Even of themselves, they have been sufficient to prevent the Mahomedans from siding with the self-elected leader against the Swadeshists.

But however limited the area of the disturbances might be, we warned the country that Comilla was not the first and would not be the last of such outbreaks and we called upon it to be ready in time to follow the example of the Comilla Hindus. Moderate politicians, blind leaders of the blind, were rejoicing over the end of the disturbances brought about, they said, by their mysterious efforts — and crying peace, peace where there was no peace. We pointed out that the Comilla affair was not an isolated outbreak, but part of a policy and we knew the men we had to deal with too well to suppose that they would be put off their machinations by a single defeat. Beaten at Comilla, they were certain to try their luck again in Mymensingh. We warned the country also that when the disturbances came, it would be idle to look for protection to the officials and the police. By announcing Swaraj as our ideal we had declared war against the existence of the bureaucracy and we could not expect the bureaucracy to help us by making our efforts to put it out of existence safe and easy. On the contrary the Nawab and his hooligans were, practically if not avowedly, the allies of the bureaucracy in their war against Swadeshism and must therefore command sympathy and helpful inactivity if not actual assistance from their friends. In all these respects our reading of the situation has been proved correct beyond cavil or dispute. The extent to which the Nawab has succeeded in turning the baser passions of the mob to his uses; the extent to which the Anti-Swadeshi army has gone in its outrages, not scrupling even to desecrate temples and violate women; the extent to which the officials carried their connivance with the excesses, an European police official actually leading the mob and the looting being carried on under the eyes of the police; these things were new, but the Salimullahi campaign itself, the use of the hooligans (our Indian Black Hundred), and the sympathy of the officials are elements which are old, of which the country had been warned and against which the leaders of the movement should have provided.

Even the extent to which these things were carried, was due entirely to a feature of the Mymensingh occurrences which we had already warned the country to avoid — the non-resistance of the Hindus of Jamalpur. There are some who say that the recent events in India are a proof of the impracticability of the Nationalist programme. We do not follow the reasoning of these logicians. The Jamalpur incidents and their sequel are a terrible proof of the soundness of the Nationalist ideas and the utter unsoundness of the Moderate theories of our relations with the bureaucracy and the best way of enforcing the Swadeshi propaganda. The people of Comilla followed the Nationalist programme with brilliantly successful results. They boycotted the courts, schools and every other element of the bureaucratic scheme of things and announced their intention of continuing the boycott so long as the Nawab of Dacca was allowed to remain in Comilla — and the Nawab was packed off without ceremony. They met force with force and the hooligan army of Anti-Swadeshism underwent a crushing defeat. On the other hand the people of Jamalpur did everything which the Nationalist programme excludes; they trusted to the promises of the alien, they chose to go to the *mela* unarmed, like defenceless sheep, relying not on their own strong arm but on the protection of the British shepherd. At the order of the alien they laid down the *lathis* they carried for self-defence, at the order of the alien they trooped to the *mela*, from which they had resolved to absent themselves, to be thrashed by Mahomedan cudgels. Then when their sheepish trustfulness had had its reward, that one lesson was not enough; again they trusted to British protection and sent away the volunteers who stood between them and further outrage. And when the second storm came, they could think of nothing better than wholesale flight from the field of battle. Throughout we see the working of the old political superstitions, the old unworkable compromise which tried to oppose the bureaucracy and yet co-operate with it, to combine vigorous opposition with meek submission, to build up a nation under the most adverse circumstances and against the strongest opponents and yet be, first and foremost, docile, peaceful and law-abiding. These superstitions exploded in the explosions at Jamalpur, and the conflagration that followed meant the collapse of a policy.

The hooligan disturbances in East Bengal bring therefore no new elements into the situation, but, like the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai, merely make it more acute and hasten the processes of Nationalism. They create no new conditions, but they have caused certain truths to be newly appreciated. The first is that the Pax Britannica is Maya and, if we mean to be Swadeshists and Swarajists, we must rely in future not on British protection but on self-protection. The second is that, as we have long insisted, our present means of self-defence are inadequate and better means and organisation are a pressing need. The third is the seriousness and true nature of the Mahomedan problem which our older politicians have always tried to belittle or ignore. Anyone who wishes to deal successfully with the crisis in the country, must recognise these three lessons of experience and shape his methods accordingly.

Newmania

Yesterday the Special Correspondent of the *Englishman* finished his shilling shocker in many chapters, *The Dreadful Boy Desperadoes of Dacca* or *The Violent Volunteers of Barisal*. We have had many new things recently, the new Hinduism, the new School, the new Politics, the new Province, the new John Morley and now we have Newmania in the *Englishman*. The peculiarly delirious character of this disease can be easily understood from the Khulna telegram of the Secretary, People's Association. Mr. Newman had published from Barisal a peculiarly blood and thunder incident of the villainous drowning and stabbing of British goods by whiskerless young desperadoes of Khulna. The Magistrate of Khulna seems to have been so far taken in by the life-like vividness of Mr. Newman's style as to take this bit of heroic romancing quite seriously. He actually enquired into the alleged murder and sudden death and naturally found that nothing of the kind had happened. It is clear that we need a special liturgy for India. "From Denzil Ibbetson and deportation, from the stick of the Constable and the gun of the Gurkha, from sunstroke and the *Civil and Military Gazette*, from Pax Britannica and the Nawab of Dacca, from Sir Henry Cotton and Mr. Rees, from Fuller, Morley and Shillong Hare, Good Lord deliver us! From lesser plague and pestilence, from cholera and motor-cars, from measles and moderation, Good Lord deliver us! But most of all from the friendship of the *Statesman* and the ravings of Newmania, Good Lord deliver us!"

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 27th, 1907 }

The Gilded Sham Again

The *Statesman* on Sunday came out with the startling fact that Mr. Morley has "finally formulated a workable scheme giving prominent natives a larger representation on the various bodies having effective control of Indian affairs". This is, we presume, the last and most authoritative of the special cablegrams with which the *Statesman* has been regaling us, for want of more substantial fare, ever since Mr. John Morley became Chief Bureaucrat for India. For, we are told, Mr. Morley will make an important announcement when introducing the Indian budget. We would call the attention of our readers to the wording of this portentous cablegram. There is going to be a larger representation on the bodies having effective control of Indian affairs, viz., the Legislative Councils and, perhaps, the Executive in which "natives" are at present unrepresented. Indians are not to be allowed any control over Indian affairs, they are only to be more largely represented on the bodies which have that control. They are to have a larger voice, but there is to be no guarantee that the voice will be at all effective. The share of Indians in the Government has up to now been *vox et praeterea nihil*, a voice and nothing more, and in the future also it is to be a voice and nothing more. We notice, moreover, that it is not the country, not the people of India which is to be represented, but only "prominent natives". We shall have a few more Gokhales, a few more Bhupendranath Boses, a few more Nawabs of Dacca on the Councils — and there an end. There will be a little manipulation of light and shade, an increase in the number of dark faces, and Mr. Morley and the *Statesman* will triumphantly invite us to rejoice at the "important advance that has been made in the direction of self-government". A hint has been given from another source that there will actually be a non-official majority of elected and nominated members. In other words Mr. Apcar, Mr. Gokhale and the Nawab of Dacca multiplied several times over will form a non-official majority in the Council. Is this the reform for which we are invited to give up Swadeshi, Nationalism and our future? Mr. Morley and the *Statesman* are grievously mistaken if they think that the newly-awakened spirit of Indian Nationalism can any longer be put off with a gilded sham.

National Volunteers

Our Barisal Correspondent seems, like the Khulna Magistrate, to have taken the *Englishman*'s Special Correspondent much too seriously. The fictions of Mr. Newman are too evidently fictions to deserve serious criticism. Whether they are the distortions of a panic-stricken imagination or actual inventions, we need not too closely enquire. They have a certain journalistic effectiveness and they serve the political ends of this paper whose efforts are wholly directed towards urging on the Government to a policy of thoroughgoing repression. Everybody in Bengal knows that previous to the disturbances in East Bengal there was no movement of the kind which has sent Mr. Newman into carefully calculated hysterics. There was a movement for physical training and the institution of *akharas*, which was by no means so widespread or successful as it should have been. There was also a custom which had first grown up in the Congress and naturally extended to Conferences and then to public meetings, of employing the services of young men in making the arrangements and keeping order. It is those only who bore the name of volunteers and they were never a standing organisation, but merely organised themselves for the occasion and broke up when it was over, nor had they any connection with the *akharas*. Finally, there was in the earlier days of the Swadeshi movement great activity among the young men in picketing and other means of moral suasion to enforce the boycott, but except in one or two places this has long fallen into desuetude except for occasional spasmodic attempts. Neither were the picketers ever formed into an organisation or termed volunteers. After the outbursts of anti-Swadeshi violence at Comilla and Jamalpur the young men spontaneously united to present a firm defence against hooligan outrage and this is the terrible phenomenon which has made Mr. Newman delirious. In his ravings he has mixed up all these loose threads and woven out of them a web fearful and wonderful. As a matter of fact hundreds of youths who are taking part in the defence of hearth and home, never entered an *akhara* or handled a lathi before, and are now first realising what they ought to have realised long ago, the necessity of physical exercise and training in self-defence.

With extraordinary ingenuity this imaginative Sherlock Holmes of Anglo-India has discovered that the Anti-Circular Society, the Bande Mataram Sampraday and the Brati-Samity, — harmless and peaceful relics of the first Swadeshi enthusiasm, — are separately and unitedly the organising centre of these terrible volunteers! We only wish our countrymen had shown themselves capable of forming such an organisation, deliberate, well-knit and pervasive. But we have still some way to travel before that becomes possible.

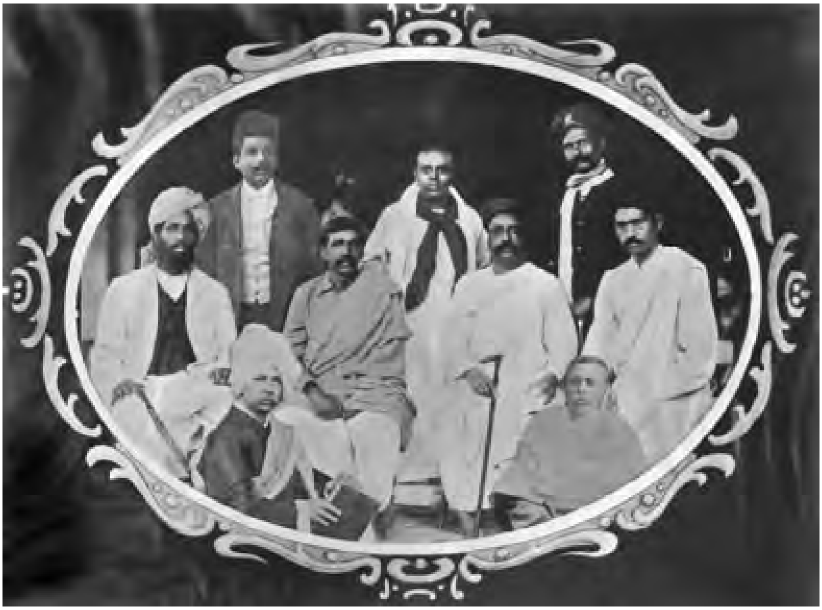

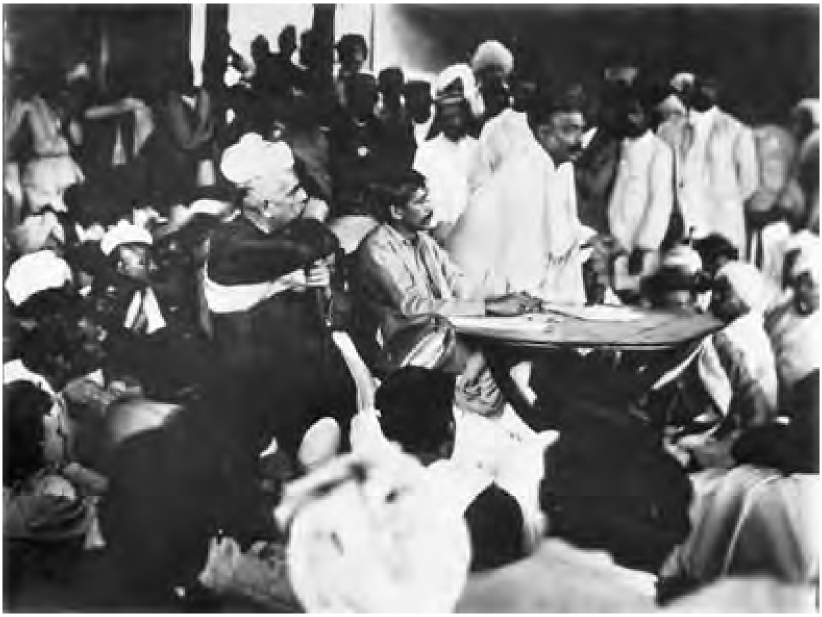

Sri Aurobindo at the Surat Congress, December 1907

In the upper photograph, Sri Aurobindo is seated next to Bal Gangadhar Tilak. In the lower photograph, Sri Aurobindo (seated at the table) is presiding over a Nationalist Party meeting. Tilak (standing) is speaking.

Part Four

Bande Mataram

under the Editorship of Sri Aurobindo

28 May – 22 December 1907

On 2 June 1907 the first issue of the weekly edition of *Bande Mataram* was published. Issued every Sunday, the weekly edition was intended for circulation both in Bengal and in other provinces. It consisted mostly of editorials, articles and news items that had appeared in the daily edition the previous week. Between June and December 1907, Sri Aurobindo remained the principal contributor to and chief editor of the daily as well as the weekly edition.

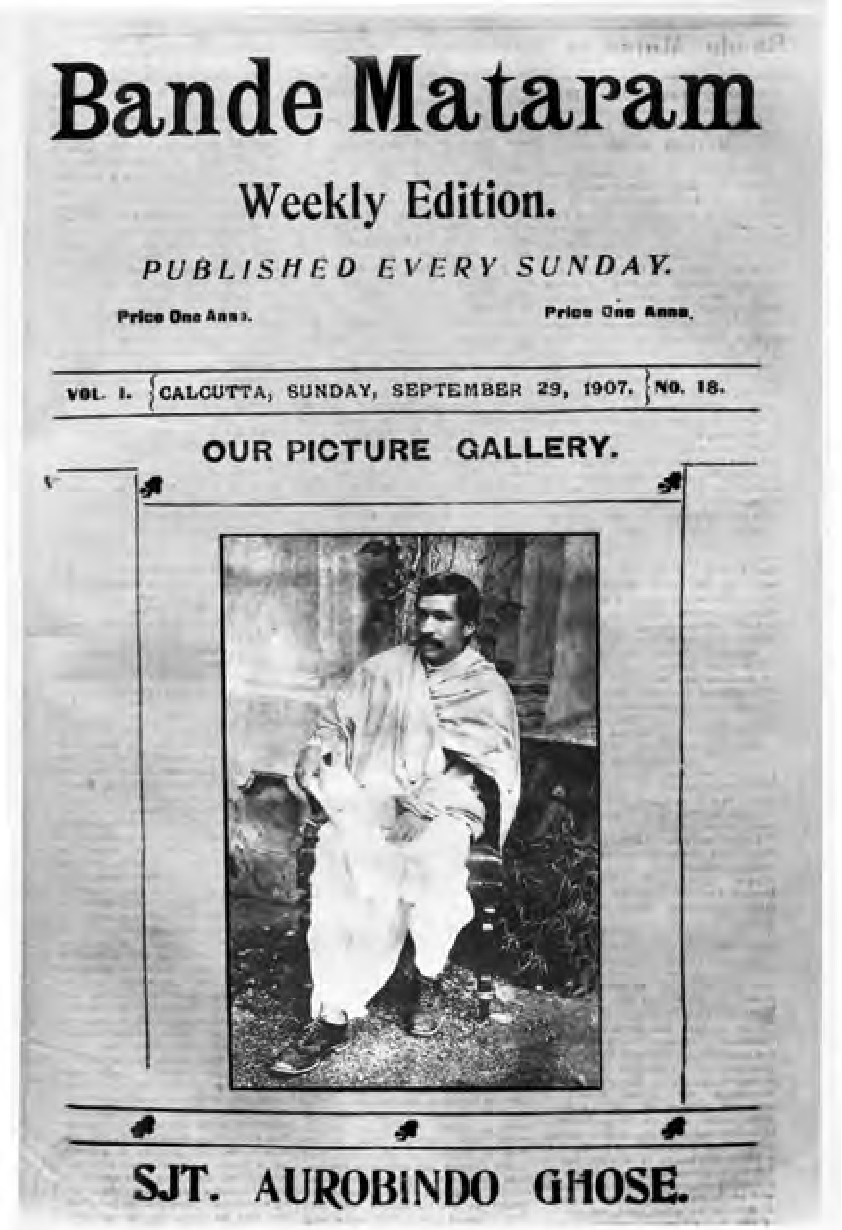

Bande Mataram

Weekly Edition.

PUBLISHED EVERY SUNDAY.

Price One Anna. Price One Anna.

VOL. I. | CALCUTTA, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1907. | NO. 18.

OUR PICTURE GALLERY.

SJT. AUROBINDO GHOSE.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 28th, 1907 }

The True Meaning of the Risley Circular

We have seen that the effect of Lala Lajpat Rai's deportation is solely to bring the struggle between the bureaucracy and the people to a head and the leaders as well as the rank and file into the range of fire. We have also come to the conclusion that the disturbances in Mymensingh create no new problem but rather compel us to face as urgencies certain primary necessities we have too much neglected, — the necessity of no longer relying blindly on the purely hypnotic and illusory protection of the Pax Britannica which may at any moment fail us or be suspended; the necessity of an universal training in the practice of self-defence and a better organisation for mutual assistance; the necessity of recognising and practically grappling with the Mahomedan difficulty. But neither of these occurrences has really made impossible, or even altered the conditions of, our programme of defensive resistance.

The third fresh departure of the Government of India is the Risley Circular. This circular is only a more comprehensive and carefully studied edition of the Carlyle Circular. It brings therefore no unfamiliar element into the problem; but there is this very important difference, that while the Carlyle Circular was a local experiment hastily adopted to meet an urgent difficulty and dropped as soon as it was found difficult to work, the Risley Circular is a deliberate policy adopted by the Supreme Government, with full knowledge of the circumstances and of its possible effects, in the hope of striking at the very root of the Swadeshi movement. Everyone will remember the convulsion created by the Carlyle Circular. Its natural effect would have been to bring about an universal students' strike, and for a few days it seemed as if such a strike would actually take place. Unfortunately the movement immediately affected certain vested interests and the representatives of those interests happened also to be the political leaders to whom the country and the students especially were accustomed to look for guidance. The leading spirits among the young men in Calcutta were still immature and wanting in grit and tenacity; the influence on their minds of their old leaders was very powerful; the new men were comparatively unknown and influenced the course of events rather by the concrete directness of their views, the ardour of their feelings and the fiery energy of their speech and activity than by the weight of their personalities. The older leaders were, therefore, able by a strenuous and united effort of their authority to turn back the impetuous tide and dissipate the enormous motive-power which had been generated. They were too selfish to sacrifice their immediate interests, too blind and wanting in foresight to understand that the immediate loss and difficulty would be repaid tenfold by the inevitable effects of the movement. An universal educational strike at that moment, before the Government had become accustomed to the situation, would infallibly have unnerved the hand of power and brought about an almost immediate reconsideration of the Partition. Whatever the Government may say or do, it cannot afford to lose control of the education of the country; it cannot afford to hand over this immense mass of material, the India of the future, into the hands of the political leaders without the subtle control and check which membership of a Government University exercises, without the opportunity of unstringing the nerves of character and soul which the present system of education provides. The Government must keep its hold on the mind of the young or lose India. The magnitude of their blunder was dimly perceived afterwards by some of the leaders and one or two admitted it in private. We only recall that disastrous episode in order to lay stress on the fact that if again repeated the blunder will be worse than a blunder, it will be an offence against our posterity and a betrayal of the nation's future.

What is the position now? The Risley Circular is a desperate attempt of the bureaucracy not only to recover and confirm its hold on the student population and through them on the future, but to make that hold far more stringent, rigid, ineffugable than it ever was in the past. They do not care very much if certain academical ideas of liberalism or nationalism are imparted to the young by their teachers, but they desire to stop the active habit of patriotism in the young; for they know well that a mere intellectual habit untranslated into action is of no value in after life. The Japanese when they teach Bushido to their boys do not rest content with lectures or a moral catechism; they make them practise Bushido and govern every thought and action of their life by the Bushido ideal. This is the only way of inculcating a quality into a nation, by instilling it practically into the minds of its youth at school and College until it becomes an ingrained, inherent, inherited national quality. This is what we have to do with the modern ideal of patriotism in India. We have to fill the minds of our boys from childhood with the idea of the country, and present them with that idea at every turn and make their whole young life a lesson in the practice of the virtues which afterwards go to make the patriot and the citizen. If we do not attempt this, we may as well give up our desire to create an Indian nation altogether; for without such a discipline nationalism, patriotism, regeneration are mere words and ideas which can never become a part of the very soul of the nation and never therefore a great realised fact. Mere academical teaching of patriotism is of no avail. The professor may lecture every day on Mazzini and Garibaldi and Washington and the student may write themes about Japan and Italy and America without bringing us any nearer to our supreme need, — the entry of the habit of patriotism into our very bone and blood. The Roman Satirist tells us that in the worst times of imperial despotism in Rome the favourite theme of teachers and boys in the schools was liberty and tyrannicide; — but neither liberty nor tyrannicide was practised by the boys when they became men; rather they grew up into submissive slaves of the single world-despot. It is for this reason that the men of the new party have welcomed the active association of our students with political meetings, with the propagation and actual practice of Swadeshi, with the volunteer movement in its various forms, — not, as has been malevolently suggested, out of a turbulent desire to make use of unripe young minds to create anarchy and disorder, but because they see in this political activity in the young the promise of a new generation of Indians who will take patriotism earnestly as a thing to live and die for, not as the pastime of leisure hours. Nobody who believes that such patriotism is the first need of this country can consistently oppose the participation of students in politics. When Indian nationality is a thing realised and the present unnatural conditions have been remedied, then indeed this active participation may be brought under restriction and regulation; for then the inherited habit of patriotism, the atmosphere of a free country and the practice and teaching of the Bushido virtues within the limits of home and school life will be sufficient. But before then to submit to restrictions is to commit national suicide.

If our educated men do not understand this — as, indeed, with our want of direct political experience it is difficult for them to understand it, — our English rulers at least have grasped the situation. Study their circular and you will see what it means. School students are not even to attend political meetings nor school teachers to teach them patriotism. Why? Because at that age the mind is soft and impressionable and what is seen and heard, sinks deep and tends to crystallise not merely into fixed ideas, but into *character*. A teacher may by his personal influence and teachings so surround the minds of his students with the idea of the country, of work for the country, of living and dying for the country, that this will become the dominant idea of their minds and, if associated with any kind of patriotic discipline or teaching in action, the dominant note in their character. The attendance of schoolboys as volunteers at political meetings, their work in the reception and service of men honoured by the country for patriotic service, their active participation in semi-political, semi-religious *utsavas* are all part of such a patriotic discipline. It is this against which the efforts of the bureaucracy are being directed, by the Risley Circular, by the prohibition of the Shivaji *utsava* outside the Deccan, by the attack on our *melas* and other public occasions where such training is possible. For the same reason the *active* participation of College students in political meetings is forbidden. At the age of College students ideas may be modified, the intellect may be powerfully influenced by what they hear and see, but character can only be influenced and modified by action. And it is of *character* in action that the bureaucracy is afraid, not so much of mere ideas, mere speeches, mere writings. Let the College students attend political meetings and *utsavas* — that by itself will not hurt the bureaucracy; but let them not organise or take part in them, for that means the character affected, the habit of political action formed, the first elementary beginnings of service to the country commenced. Picketing and active participation in Swadeshi work is of course still more objectionable from the bureaucratic standpoint. For the same reason, again, College professors are forbidden to influence their students or lead them to political meetings: for that brings in the powerful impetus of leading and example and threatens the bureaucracy with the beginnings of organisation.

The Risley Circular, with its sanctimonious professions of anxiety for the best interests of students and guardians, is in reality a powerful attack on the growing spirit of Nationalism at its most vital point. As such we must understand it and as such resist it.

Cool Courage and Not Blood-and-Thunder Speeches

It seems that our Local Columns Editor yesterday, seeing the name of Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal at the head of the report of the Shaktipuja meeting in Sobhabazar, thought it unnecessary to examine the matter closely. The report can hardly be correct. So far as we are aware, Srijut Bipin Chandra has come to no final conclusion on the question of holding or not holding public meetings in East Bengal at the present moment. The Nationalist leaders in Bengal are in consultation at present on the best way of meeting the new situation and until the opinions of all are known, no definite pronouncement on the matter of the Ordinance is likely to be made. If the report is correct, it appears that a gentleman from Madras got up at the end and made the occasion ridiculous by a blood-and-thunder speech about bombs and the Czar of Russia. We would advise all who have the cause at heart to refrain from such frantic flights of eloquence. The situation is serious enough in all conscience and we need all the statesmanship and courage there is among us to meet it. We must decide on a line of policy which will effectively and resolutely repel the determined onslaught the bureaucracy is making on the movement, while avoiding the mistake of playing into its hands. Cool courage is, as we have said before, the supreme need of the moment; exaggeration and unmeaning talk about bombs and human sacrifices can only weaken the seriousness of our action and hamper the hands of those who are trying to grapple with the problem before us. We would request the public neither to be depressed nor to lose their heads, — of both which contingencies there seems to be some danger, — but to remember that by their handling of the present crisis the people of Bengal will either keep or lose their political lead in the Nationalist movement.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 29th, 1907 }

The Effect of Petitionary Politics

We are glad to notice a ring of boldness and sincerity in all the writings of the *Indu Prakash* relating to the deportation of Lajpat Rai. We hope this tone will be an enduring change for the better. Mr. Gokhale's resort to the Anglo-Indian Press in preference to the Indian, on which its observations are very pertinent, is an example of the very common, almost inevitable effect of petitionary politics on patriotism. That a prominent leader of the Congress party should show such an unseasonable partiality for the Anglo-Indian Press whose recent campaign of misrepresentation and vituperation has been unpardonable in the eyes of every self-respecting Indian, is surprising at the first glance. But, in reality, it is the natural demoralising effect of the association *cum* opposition politics. The very basis of constitutional agitation is a reliance on the foreigner and a habit of appealing to him, which is the reverse side of a distrust and certain contempt for their own people. That this feeling should be, however unconsciously, betrayed by a man of Mr. Gokhale's position and character, is deplorable but inevitable. It is the logical outcome of that moderation and spirit of dependence which our contemporary has been so long preaching without perceiving, apparently, where its own dogmas led.

The Sobhabazar Shaktipuja

We expressed yesterday our doubt whether the report of Bipin Babu's speech as sent in to us by a casual reporter and incautiously admitted into our columns, could possibly be correct. We are now in a position to state that Bipin Babu's remarks have been distorted in the process of summarising. We shall shortly be able to publish an authorised summary of the speech.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 30th, 1907 }

The Ordinance and After

We have pointed out in previous articles what we considered to be the individual effect of three of the measures of repression adopted by the bureaucracy in their fight with the Swadeshi movement. The review has led us to the conclusion that there is so far no new element in the situation beyond, on one hand, the clear and universal conviction that has been carried home to the people of the nature and extent of the resistance which we may expect from the bureaucracy and, on the other, the more urgent necessity of adopting certain measures for national defence and resistance which ought to have been taken before. The conditions of the problem have not been materially changed, but its acuteness has been enhanced. The persecution of Swadeshi leaders and workers is nothing new, but it has increased in scale and in the atrocity of the punishments — and it is being carried out not by local officials but by the Government of India. The attempt to break the back of the movement by restricting the action of students and teachers is nothing new, but it is now being taken up deliberately, systematically, not by a local administration, but by the Government of India. The utilisation by the bureaucracy of Nawab Salimullah and by Nawab Salimullah of hooligans to harass and, if possible, break the Boycott is nothing new, but the extent to which this sinister opposition has been carried and the wide space of country over which it has been attempted, is a new phenomenon. But there is one measure of the Government which is in itself a new phenomenon and seriously affects, if it does not entirely alter the whole situation. This is the Coercion Ordinance directed against public meetings. It would not be true to say that the ordinance was absolutely unforeseen.

We at least had always held it extremely probable if not quite certain, that this and even more violent and crushing methods of coercion would eventually be adopted by the bureaucracy in its struggle for self-preservation. But we did not anticipate so rapid a development of coercive measures, or that they would reach their height, as they threaten to do under a professedly Radical and democratic Government. Not that we ever believed there was any essential difference between Liberals and Conservatives with regard to India, but there was a difference in their professions and we imagined that what the Conservatives would do immediately and without compunction, the Liberals would also do, but with hesitation and some show of reluctance. There has, however, been no slightest sign of reluctance. With alacrity and a light heart they have refused to India that right of free speech and free meeting which their political creed declares to be a common and fundamental right and to deny which is an act of tyranny. Nevertheless, though not expected so soon, the Coercion Ordinance was not a contingency which had altogether been left out of view.

What then is the new condition which it creates? One of immense importance. Up till now our whole programme with unimportant exceptions has fallen well within the law. We have worked against bureaucratic government, we have not worked against the law nor exceeded its restrictions in any of our methods. So careful have we been in this respect that the bureaucracy have been at a loss where to get a hold on the Swadeshi movement without losing their prestige and reputation, and in the end they have been obliged to throw their reputation overboard and allow the agents of their ally, the Nawab of Dacca, to create disorder so as to prepare the way for proclaiming the Swadeshi areas. This desire to keep within the law was not, as some of our disappointed adversaries suggested, born of fear or unwillingness to bear sacrifices for the country — for even without breaking the law many Swadeshi workers had to go to jail or undergo police and Gurkha violence, but part of a well-reasoned policy. To be able to keep within the law gives an immense advantage to a young movement opposed by a strong adversary in possession of all the machinery of legal repression and oppression; for it allows it to grow into adult strength before giving the enemy a sufficient grasp to strangle it while it is yet immature. Moreover, a nation which can show a respect for law even in the first throes of a revolution, has a better chance of enjoying a stable and successful government of its own when its chance comes. Nevertheless legality can never be the first consideration in a struggle of the kind we have entered upon, and if new laws are passed which offend against political ethics, which make our service and duty to our country impossible and to obey which would therefore be an unpatriotic act, they cannot possibly command obedience. Still more is this the case when the measure in question is not a law, but an executive ukase which may yet be prevented from passing into law. This can best be done by a widespread and quiet but determined passive resistance which will make the ukase inoperative without a resort to measures of the most extreme and shameless Russianism. We have not concealed our opinion that this is the course the country ought to adopt in the present juncture, if for no other reason, then because it is our duty as men, as citizens, as patriots.

We recognise, however, that much is yet to be said on the opposite side. The strongest argument against the course we have suggested, is that the bureaucracy evidently desire an immediate struggle. The course of events at Barisal, the recent outrageous insult to a prominent Swadeshi worker and the insolent harassment of the townspeople by the local officials and their underlings, are extremely significant. The attempt to provoke a struggle between the Hindus and Mahomedans culminating in the singular affair of the Barisal night panic which still calls for explanation, has been a failure. It seems that the police are now attempting to force on some demonstration which will give them an excuse for turning Barisal into a second Rawalpindi. The unprovoked blow given by a Gurkha to Srijut Satis Chandra Chatterji was obviously a prearranged affair, leaving the victim the choice between swallowing the insult and an act of retaliation which might have led to an *émeute*.

We think that Srijut Satis Chandra on the whole did well to subordinate his feelings to the good of his country, but the odds were the other way, and the police must have known it. That in case of resistance even of the most passive kind, the police or military would not "hesitate to shoot", is extremely probable from the action of the Punjab authorities and the known attitude of the local officials in East Bengal. Would it then be wise for us, it is argued, to expose ourselves passively to the arrest and deportation of our leaders, the dragooning of our towns and villages, the utmost outrages on men and women and all the violent ills of despotic repression, without any certain gain to the country to set in the opposite balance? The question really turns on the precise strength of the movement at its present stage of growth. If it is already strong enough to bear extreme Russian repression without becoming unnerved and demoralised, the course we have suggested is the best, because it is the boldest. If not, it would be sounder policy perhaps to leave the bureaucracy to its Pyrrhic victory for a while and immediately turn all our energies to giving the movement the necessary strength, — in other words, the necessary organisation of men, money and means which it needs in order to cope with the bureaucracy on equal terms. The choice is between these alternatives.

A Lost Opportunity

The London correspondent of the *Bengalee* has the following: — "It is a sign of the times that one of the yellow evening papers in recording the news of the arrest of Sir George Arbuthnot went on to assure its readers that Sir George has the entire sympathy of the financial community in London and that his arrest at the suite of a 'native' was directly to be attributed to the hostility towards Englishmen engendered by Bengali Babus." The *Englishman* must be biting its fingers with mortification at not having been first in the field with this brilliant idea. If it had only thought of sending its special correspondent to Madras at the time, we might not have had to wait for a London evening paper to shed the light of this brilliant and illumining idea on the Arbuthnot case. We wonder what our friends of Madras will think of this "entire sympathy of the financial community in London" for the Englishman of finance whom they so implicitly trusted and by whom they were so shamefully betrayed. Such sympathy is a sign of the times indeed.

The *Daily News* and Its Needs

The *Indian Daily News* is extremely anxious to make capital out of the report of the Sobhabazar meeting and it lays down with great solemnity the points on which it does or does not want information from us. Since the success of the *C. M. Gazette* in bringing about the *coup d'état* in the Punjab, the whole Anglo-Indian Press seems to be suffering from an epidemic of swelled head. Our remarks on the subject were not to the address of our contemporary or dictated by any desire to enlighten its ignorance, but were meant simply to prevent any mistaken impression being created among our own people that the Nationalist leaders had abandoned passive resistance as the result of the policy of repression or favoured any idea of substituting for it aggressive Nihilism. Since, however, our contemporary is so benevolently anxious about the matter, we hope that yesterday's paragraph will appease his yearnings. Meanwhile we would suggest to him to put himself in communication with a Brahmin pundit and gather some information about the Amabasya and the worship of Raksha Kali.

Common Sense in an Unexpected Quarter

It has given us quite a turn to find the following criticism of Mr. Morley's approaching "reforms" in the columns of *India*. "Tinkering with the Indian administrative machine will no longer avail. A thorough overhauling of its component parts has become imperative and unless the leaders of opinion in India are encouraged to play a part in the work of government in a manner which is altogether denied to them today, the last state of India will be deplorably and ominously worse than the first." Of course *India* is much behind the times in imagining that "encouragement" to the leaders of public opinion will meet the situation. The least that India now demands is the admission of the people of the country to the management of its own affairs. But it is at once surprising and gratifying to find that the organ of Palace Chambers has at last realised the necessity of a complete and revolutionary change in the whole system of administration. It quotes against Mr. Morley an admirable passage of his own writings in which this pregnant observation occurs. "A small and temporary improvement may really be the worst enemy of a great and permanent improvement unless the first is made on the line and in the direction of the second." Precisely so. This is the main reason, even apart from their insufficiency, that any mere administrative reforms are looked upon with suspicion by the Nationalist party. The great and permanent improvement India demands is an entire change of the principles of government in India, and a small and temporary improvement in details, leaving the principles untouched, would not be "on the line and in the direction" of the great improvement called for; it would be its worst enemy. Merely to temper absolute bureaucratic power by providing means for consulting the "leaders of public opinion" is a reform which would be the worst enemy of Indian self-government. We recommend this dictum of Mr. Morley, the philosopher, to Mr. Gokhale and other Moderates.

Drifting Away

Bombay is nearer London than Calcutta; and while Mr. Gokhale during his visit to Calcutta tried to organise a special session of the Congress at Bombay, the people of Bombay are contemplating the holding of the next session of the Congress in London. The *Gujerati* writes: —

"The idea of holding the next session of the Indian National

Congress in London is a good idea. Years ago a similar proposal was put forward. But it was not taken up by congressmen in right earnest. The extremists, who are sure to quote Mr. Morley's reply to the anti-partition memorialists in justification of their opposition to sending any petitions, will be probably also opposed to holding any session of the Congress in London. Excluding this class of Indians, the more thoughtful, sober-minded and responsible section of congressmen who form the majority, will be in favour of the idea, provided financial difficulties could be overcome and the most representative congressmen induced to visit England."

And it asserts that "a successful Congress session in London would be more fruitful especially at a juncture like the present than five sessions held in India". Fruitful in what respect? If our contemporary means fruitful in expenditure, humiliation and loss of self-respect, then we must agree with him. Why should the *National* Congress hold its session in London? The nation does not live in London and the root idea of a *national* movement is opposed to this continual theatrical supplication to the very people who are interested in preventing us from becoming a nation. While our contemporary confidently asserts that a successful session in London would be more "fruitful" than five sessions held in India, we, belonging as we do to that section which Mr. Romesh Dutt during his two hours' presidentship of the Congress saw routed by the Moderates, may be permitted to suggest that one such session will do more injury to the country and the cause than five years without a session of the Congress. The attitude of British statesmen, moreover, is not encouraging even to the Moderates who still think of getting rights marked "Made in Great Britain" in the same consignment with Liverpool salt or Manchester piece-goods. The hand on the dial will be put back if we leave the nation and check the growing spirit of self-help and self-exertion to go and beg for "rights" in England and spend on this fruitless act sums which we badly require for the long-neglected task of national organisation. "The time," says our contemporary, "has come when Congressmen in a body should face the British public." Possibly; but not to "plead the cause of India and her inhabitants in the very metropolis of the Empire". This idea about the British public is a pure superstition. The British public will never interfere with the action of its representatives and kinsmen in India and in the India Office, unless and until it finds itself in danger of losing its Empire in the East. The quarrel has to be fought out between the people of India and the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy and it must be fought out on the soil. To attempt to transfer the field of battle to London will be impracticable and harmful.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 1st, 1907 }

The Question of the Hour

The writer of "A Word of Warning" which we publish today has voiced an opinion which we find to be held by several Nationalists who have the success of the movement sincerely at heart. Our correspondent, however, lays himself open to some misinterpretation when he speaks of "the suicidal folly of an unarmed and disorganised nation trying to measure its strength with that of the best-organised power in the land". The kind of resistance which seems to be suggested here is something in the nature of rebellion and it goes without saying that such resistance for "an unarmed and disorganised nation" would be not merely foolish but physically impossible; an armed revolt without arms is an absurdity. But to measure our strength, in a very different way, with the bureaucracy, however well-organised the latter may be, is the whole purpose and principle of the Nationalist movement. Our position has always been that the potential strength of the people is far greater than the actual strength of the close oligarchy which governs them without regard to their wishes or interests and that this potential strength can only be educated, organised and welded into compactness and coherence by a direct struggle against the antiquated and semi-mediaeval system with which the country is still cursed in this twentieth century, when all other nations "from China to Peru" are busy modernising and humanising their governments and institutions. In the actual course of the struggle questions will always arise as between rigid applications of principle and concessions to policy and between the contending claims of sheer courage and courage tempered by calculation. We must remember that throughout the movement the immense advance we have made, is due to the enthusiasm for a great principle and the boldness, — in the opinion of many an almost foolhardy boldness, — with which we have met every fresh crisis. When the whole of Bengal flung itself into a passionate struggle with the bureaucracy, it was not from any consciousness of strength, for neither the people nor the rulers had any idea of the latent possibilities of political strength in the country. It was in a moment of uncalculating anger that Bengal took up the policy a few daring spirits suggested and was amazed to find that in doing so it had discovered itself and begun a new era of Indian history. The real point at issue now is whether it will or will not be wise to make a frontal in preference to a flank attack on the coercion ukase. We have defied an ukase before, but it was then the ukase of local officialdom and of doubtful legality. The present ukase is the deliberate act of the Government of India and the Secretary of State, and its legality is as undoubted as its political immorality. The question therefore is whether we shall persist in carrying on our movement rigidly within the pale of the law, however oppressive the law may be, or follow the example of the Irish and the English Nonconformists by passive resistance to the law itself with a view to bringing about its repeal. The answer really hangs upon the possible next move of the bureaucracy and our preparedness to meet it. If the bureaucrats try to break our resistance as at Rawalpindi by wholesale arrest, deportation and police and military violence, as well as the still more questionable methods we have seen in operation in East Bengal, shall we still be able to persist, and, if not, what will be our next course? This is the question which has given pause for a moment to the active prosecution of the Nationalist campaign, since it involves a serious issue of policy which must be settled before concerted action can take place. For if the ukase is to be passively resisted, the opposition must be offered in concert and ubiquitously. A sporadic resistance will be ineffectual and give the advantage to our adversaries.

We again repeat that in our opinion the boldest course is the best. If we thought, as the Anglo-Indian papers affect to think, that the movement was the result of our own efforts, a mere human creation, we might be of a different opinion. But throughout we have been conscious that our own efforts and the impulse given or the work done by leading men, whether Moderates or Extremists, have been so small, petty and inefficient that they are absolutely insufficient to explain the extraordinary results. The machinery has been absurdly inadequate, the organisation nil, the means at our disposal pitiably small, the real workers few and mostly obscure, and yet the Indian world has stood amazed and the Anglo-Indian aghast at the vast and incommensurate results of an apparatus so inefficient. We believe, therefore, that Divine Power is behind the movement, that the *Zeitgeist*, the Time-Spirit, is at work to bring about a mighty movement of which the world at the present juncture has need, that that movement is the resurgence of Asia and that the resurgence of India is not only a necessary part of the larger movement but its central need, that India is the keystone of the arch, the chief inheritress of the common Asiatic destiny. The Mongolian world, preserving the old strong and reposeful civilisation of early Asia, flanks her on the right and has already arisen. The Mahomedan world, preserving the aggressive and militant civilisation of Islam, flanks her on the left and in Egypt, in Arabia, in Persia, is struggling to arise. In India the two civilisations meet, she is the link between them and must find the note of harmony which will reconcile them and recreate a common Asiatic civilisation. Viewing the movement in this larger light we believe that as its progress and development has been in the past, so it will be in the future above ordinary human calculations, with only one thing certain about it, that no external force can frustrate it and no internal intrigue divert. Neither John Morley nor Denzil Ibbetson nor Nawab Salimullah, neither false friend nor open enemy, nor even our own mistakes and weakness can come in its way, but rather they are unconsciously helping it on and working for it. In this belief we are willing to take any risk and meet any expense of our blood and our labour for the great end. To husband our men or our resources and try to buy liberty in the cheapest market, would be a false and foolish economy. Lajpat Rai has been swallowed up in the maelstrom and hundreds more will follow him, but their disappearance will make no difference either to the strength of the movement or its velocity. Still it will move.

But, subject to this confidence and readiness to throw our all into the gulf, we recognise the necessity of relying on our human judgment to guide us in perplexity, leaving it to the Power behind to make our mistakes as useful, perhaps more useful to the final success than our wiser judgments. On one thing only we must lay fast hold, on the triple unity of Swadeshi, Boycott and Swaraj. These must be pursued with unremitting energy, and so long as we hold fast to them, we cannot go far wrong.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 4th, 1907 }

Regulated Independence

Never before were the utter helplessness and the deplorable demoralisation of the Native Princes of India more clearly demonstrated than at the present moment when our political ideas and ideals are undergoing such a change. Writes the *Daily News*: — "It is gratifying to learn that some of the Native States are following in the wake of the Government of India for the suppression of sedition, if not political agitation altogether. News comes from Srinagar that His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir is about to issue a proclamation warning his subjects against the pitfalls of the so-called nationalist agitation. We do not doubt that his brother rulers in the Punjab will emulate so good an example." Some of us were at a loss to understand the cause of the *Daily News*'s jubilation. Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code runs as follows: — "Whoever by words either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards His Majesty or the Government established by law in British India, shall be punished with transportation for life." So sedition in Kashmir is not sedition in British India; and by the attempts of the Kashmir durbar to suppress sedition one naturally understood attempts to suppress the endeavours of Kashmir subjects to bring into hatred and contempt or excite or attempt to excite disaffection towards the Kashmir durbar. But the Proclamation removed our doubt. We are asked to believe that the Maharaja of Kashmir, with a wonderful tact for self-effacement, was anxious only to protect the Government established by law in British India. The Maharaja's tender solicitude for the safety of the Power which had sold Kashmir to his ancestor and had, only the other day, condemned him unheard, was amazing indeed. But the matter did not end here. Following close upon the issuing of the Proclamation a durbar was held in Kashmir. Sir Francis Younghusband made a speech and the thanks of the British Government were conveyed to the Maharaja. The Maharaja, we are told, was so greatly affected that he could hardly find words to express his feelings, which is hardly wonderful considering the circumstances. He was able only to say that the tradition of his house was one of loyalty to the British Government. "This," says the *Hindu Patriot*, "is as it should be."

We cannot understand the logic of the "oldest native paper in India". Why should it be so? Did not the founder of the Kashmir house pay a very heavy price for Kashmir! True to a disgraceful understanding with the British Government, of which both parties ought to have been ashamed, Golab Singh — to quote Sir Thomas Holdich, — "deserted his Sikh masters and paid for Kashmir with money looted from the Lahore treasury". So it was only "give and take".

But these pathetic and miraculous happenings appear more intelligible — and less pathetic — when we realise that though the voice is the voice of Jacob, the hands are the hands of Esau. And this fact becomes patent when we find that Kashmir does not present an isolated instance of such zeal on the part of Native Chiefs to safeguard the interests of the bureaucracy. If Kashmir can be made useful to suppress sedition, the Maharaja of Coochbehar can at least help in putting down the boycott. On the occasion of the distribution of prizes to the students of the Jenkins School the Maharaja of Coochbehar said that "schoolboys were ciphers in politics", and warned them against the danger of rushing into the whirlpool of politics, or joining in any political movement. Boys must read and play and ought never to concern themselves with matters beyond their grasp, and about which, on account of their age and inexperience, they have not the capacity to form sound, mature and correct opinions. With Swadeshism His Highness declared his full sympathy but he "was totally, entirely and absolutely against boycott".

If anything approaching the boycott movement was seen in his territory His Highness gave in clear, emphatic and unequivocal language to understand that he would adopt very stringent measures to put it down. It is a pity that it should have been made necessary for the Maharaja to be so clear, emphatic and unequivocal and we can only extend to him our heart-felt sympathy.

But we cannot hold these Indian princes responsible for all they do or say. Their so-called independence is nothing more than a mere name. Though Lord Curzon called them his "colleagues and partners in the task of Indian administration" the truth was better expressed by Lord Dufferin who characterised the independence enjoyed by them as a "regulated independence", regulated by whom and to what extent it is superfluous to say. The incubus of the British Resident is always there. And the results of his intervention — often disastrous to the Chiefs — were thus summed up by the Gaekwar of Baroda in the *Nineteenth Century* in 1901 — "Uncertainty and want of confidence in the indigenous Government is promoted. The influence of the Raja, which is indispensable for the individuality of the States, is thereby impaired. The ruler being discouraged slackens his interest in the continuity of his own policy." Then, of course, there are the annual visitations to relieve the States of their superfluous wealth and prove to the people that their Chief is no better than a pigmy before the vicegerent of the King of England.

The attitude now taken by these Chiefs towards the spirit of Nationalism that is re-creating India, shows merely the degree to which the bureaucracy is determined directly and indirectly to stamp out the spirit. They have greater advantages in the States than in their own territory, for they can make the measures more thoroughgoing and rigorous than in British India and they can at the same time, through the Anglo-Indian Press, point to this rigour as a proof of the superior liberalism of British bureaucracy as compared with a native rule. This is indeed killing two birds with one stone.

A Consistent *Patriot*

Even Homer nods, and even the *Hindu Patriot* makes slips at times. Referring to the endeavours of the Kashmir Durbar to suppress "sedition" the *Patriot* wrote on the 22nd May: —

"The Maharaja of Kashmir's demonstration of fidelity is worthy of note. After upsetting the old law of the State against European settlements and earning thanks from the Masonic brotherhood for the great concession made to them, His Highness is extirpating from his dominions all sorts of 'undesirables' in a right autocratic spirit. But his brother chiefs do not seem ready to follow his noble example, and excepting the 'enlightened' Maharaja of Mysore, they may not care to do so. The Maharaja of Kashmir however is in right earnest. He has prohibited public and even private meetings of a revolutionary character, and is the pet of the bureaucracy for playing this sort of masterly activity."

But this attempt to imbibe the spirit of the age, perhaps, got a rude shaking from some quarter and the *Patriot* seized the first opportunity to rectify its "mistake". On the 30th it again referred to the subject and remarked: —

"The Maharaja of Kashmir's loyalty and anti-sedition measures have elicited from the Viceroy a tribute of warm appreciation. A grand durbar was held at Srinagar to proclaim the Viceroy's message of thanks. Sir Francis Younghusband, late of the Tibet Mission, delivered a sombre sermon bristling with references to the efforts of the Maharaja to keep down sedition, and overflowing with advice and good words which no doubt went straight and deep into His Highness' heart and found a comfortable lodgment there. The Maharaja was so greatly affected that he could hardly find words to give vent to his feelings. He was able only to say that the tradition of his house was loyalty to the British Government. This is as it should be."

This indeed is as it should be. And it reminds us of the *Hindu Patriot*'s sudden change of opinion in the matter of the site for the proposed Victoria Memorial Hall and other instances of the remarkable versatility and impressionability of this great organ of private opinion.

Holding on to a Titbit

When the Anglo-Indian Press has got a hold or thinks it has got a hold upon an opponent, it holds on to it like grim death. This peculiarity is shared by its pets and proteges. Sometime ago a vernacular paper in Maharashtra published an alleged interview with Mr. Gokhale in which that carefully moderate politician was actually represented as using expressions which might be taken for an incitement to rebellion. Mr. Gokhale repudiated the interview but the Nawab of Dacca and his Secretary of Comilla fame still persist in calmly ignoring the repudiation and attributing expressions to Mr. Gokhale which he never used. A similar spirit is being shown with regard to Srijut Bipin Pal's repudiation of the Shaktipuja report. The *Englishman*, flattered probably by being preferred to the *Daily News*, was gracious enough, in a paragraph full of the most outrageous and insufferable impertinence, to acknowledge that Bipin Babu should not be held responsible for the "sins of the *Bande Mataram*". Yesterday, however, it published lengthy letters in which its correspondents still insisted on this vicarious punishment. The *Daily News* also seems to have been piqued by not being noticed and tries to belittle the effect of Bipin Babu's disclaimer. It even proposes to extend the principle of vicarious punishment much farther and make Bipin Babu responsible for the alleged utterances of a Madrasi speaker whom it gratuitously assumes to be his "associate". We presume the Anglo-Indian journals consider themselves superior to the ordinary etiquette in such matters as observed in other countries; otherwise we should have imagined that a disclaimer by a public man of unauthorized reports of his utterances ought to be regarded as final. Whatever responsibility remains for the publication, now rests entirely on the *Bande Mataram* whose shoulders are quite broad enough to bear its own burdens unassisted. We have made our own explanation to the Indian public in this matter and we are quite indifferent whether Anglo-India official or unofficial is satisfied with it or not.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 5th, 1907 }

Wanted, a Policy

A silence has fallen on the country since the inauguration of a new repressive policy by the bureaucracy, a silence broken only by Coconada riots on one side and talk of a special Congress session on the other. Srijut Surendranath Banerji has gone to Simultala to think over the situation and other leaders are thinking over it wherever they happen to find themselves. The only gentleman in authority who has come forward publicly with a policy is Srijut Bhupendranath Bose and we are grieved to find that the country has received this honourable and legislative gentleman's proposals with the supreme contempt of neglect. It is natural that our adversaries should exult over this silence and point to it as an evidence of complete demoralisation, and it is natural that those of us who are not in constant touch with the mofussil should also feel the silence burdensome and talk of demoralisation. We do not believe that the country is demoralised. On the contrary we believe that circumstances have taken an extremely favourable turn. There is, to begin with, an immense revolution of opinion all over Bengal which has brought all but the inveterate loyalists to understand the situation and face realities. Secondly if our information from the mofussil is correct, the people, the rank and file, are by no means cowed down, but rather from every part we hear news of men girding themselves for real work, now that the outer expression of our feelings is hampered and our hopes and aspirations driven in upon themselves. We are especially glad to find in West Bengal, so long apathetic, new stirrings of life and resolution. Nevertheless, in a certain small section there is undoubtedly bewilderment, hesitation and something like panic and we would be glad to believe that these feelings are not shared by any of our leaders or at least by those who have hitherto arrogated to themselves leadership and the credit for all the work that has been done. One cannot help thinking that they are, some of them, in the predicament of the Homeric heroes; — "They feared to take the challenge, to refuse it they were ashamed."

If they are not demoralised, if their hearts and hopes are as high as ever, they should take some trouble to show it. On the other hand, if they are demoralised, if they are suffering from sinkings and searchings of the heart, they ought to take some trouble to hide it. The words of the *Mahabharata* apply with particular force.

> "Never should a prince and leader bow his haughty head to fear,
> Let his fortune be however desperate, death however near.
> If his soul grow faint, let him imprison weakness in his heart,
> Keep a bold and open countenance and play on a hero's part.
> If the leader fear and faint, then all behind him faint and fear.
> So a king of men should keep a dauntless look and forehead clear."

What the country wants is a pronouncement of policy — it need not be a detailed or indiscreet pronouncement but at least a lead is wanted. The bureaucracy has altered its front and changed its plan of campaign. Will it be enough to modify our old policy to meet a new but surely not unexpected situation or will it be necessary for us also to change our plan of campaign? One thing at least is certain, we in Bengal have no intention of giving up Swaraj, no intention of giving up Swadeshi, no intention of giving up Boycott; to this the Bhupendranaths and the others must make up their mind. If any leader tries to lower this triple banner of the cause, he forfeits his reputation and his position from that date. The country has no intention of withdrawing from a single essential position that has once been occupied.

Although we can make no claims to leadership, we have, as a responsible organ of public opinion, the duty of laying our views before the people and we have not failed to do so to the best of our ability. The policy we advocate now is the policy we have always advocated, the policy of the organisation of Swaraj and passive resistance. To push forward Swadeshi, to push forward National Education, to take up Arbitration in earnest and for the effective working of this positive side to create what we have not up till now created except in certain districts, — a compact, well-managed, earnest organisation; on the other hand, to follow a rational, effective and steady system of Boycott, and passively to oppose Government repression at every turn, to disregard the Risley Circular, to disregard the bureaucratic intimidation of the Press, to disregard or circumvent if we cannot disregard the Coercion Ordinance, to meet with silent contempt the danger of deportation and the threat of imprisonment; this is the policy we would favour if there are men in Bengal bold enough and steadfast enough to carry it out. Doubtless there are other dangers more serious than any that have yet threatened us, but if we lower the tone of the movement on account of anticipated calamities which may never happen, we may stand charged before posterity with the crime of sacrificing the future to vain and timid imaginations. Here again the wisdom of Vidula has a word in season for us; "Make not great thy foeman by thy terrors, panic eyes behind." The bureaucracy will use every method to kill the movement, guile as well as terrorism; they will try to bribe us with remedial measures as well as to bludgeon us with ordinances; they will wave the sword at us whenever we make the slightest movement and use it on occasion. Our future depends on our surmounting both inducement and intimidation. Let us take possible dangers into consideration, by all means, and provide against them, never run our heads against them wantonly and without occasion; but to be turned from our path by possible dangers is neither true manhood nor true prudence. The path to Swaraj can never be safe. Over sharp rocks and through thick brambles lies the way to that towering and glorious summit where dwells the Goddess of our worship, our goddess Liberty. Shall we dare to aspire to reach her and yet hope to accomplish that journey perilous with unhurt bodies and untorn feet? Mark the way; as you go it is red and caked with the blood of those who have climbed before us to the summit. And if that sight appals you, look up and forget it in the glory of the face that smiles upon us from the peak.

Preparing the Explosion

The Simla Government has again opened wide its mouth of thunder and another Resolution has issued from its capacious jaws. This time, as we had expected, it is aimed at the Press. The Resolution is full of sound and fury signifying little. It has been decided to institute, if necessary, a campaign against the liberty of the Press and throttle it as effectually as the liberty of speech has been throttled by the Coercion Ordinance. But the Simla Government seems to be ashamed of having to do all this repressive work with its own viceregal hands and therefore it gracefully retires behind the curtain and asks the local governments to take the stage. That is all. At the same time the Press is a necessity to the foreign rulers and the Platform is not; they are therefore unwilling, we take it, to apply the same absolute gag to the Press as they have applied to the Platform. They are trying first the effectiveness of the threat of prosecution. "Look, there is the policeman Andrew, (or the policeman Denzil, as the case may be). Mind you, behave yourself. He has orders to run you in if you don't." This is a fair translation into vernacular English of Sir Herbert Risley's latest literary effort. We hardly think it will have much effect on the tone of the Press, unless our publicists are cursed with a much greater timidity than we give them credit for. A crop of Press prosecutions may therefore be confidently expected. If that is not sufficient, other measures will be used. And when they have silenced the Press and the Platform, Anglo-India will no doubt exult over its victory and avow wonderingly how easy it was to quell this absurd agitation. There is not enough statesmanship among these heaven-born rulers to perceive that they are playing into the hands of the most revolutionary section of opinion in India. Ajit Singh in his exile may rejoice, for his work is being done for him far more effectually than he could have done it himself. National feeling is like certain explosives which need resistance in order to be effective; unresisted they explode harmlessly and mildly into the air, but resisted, repressed and confined they become devastating forces and annihilate the substance that resists and confines them.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 6th, 1907 }

A Statement

Mr. John Morley has committed himself in the House of Commons to a trenchant and unqualified statement that the whole blame for the disturbances in East Bengal lies upon the Hindus who, by a violent and obstreperous boycott attended with coercion and physical force, have irritated the Mahomedans into revolt. Whether Mr. Morley made this statement out of a sweet trustfulness in the man on the spot or relying upon his philosophical judgment and innate powers of reasoning does not concern us at all. Everyone knows that the statement is untrue. The boycott was no doubt the final cause of the hooliganism in the East just as the Russian revolutionary movement was the final cause of the excesses of the Black Hundred, but it was in no way the immediate and efficient cause. It was the final cause in this sense that its first success compelled Sir Bampfylde Fuller to look about for a counteracting influence and he found it in the Nawab of Dacca and the use that could be made of the Nawab's position to help on a breach between the Mahomedans and Hindus. That is the whole and sole connection of boycott with the Mymensingh disturbances. The rest followed by a natural course of evolution. Sir Bampfylde favoured the Mahomedans and depressed the Hindus, the Nawab excited his co-religionists against their fellow-countrymen. There was no concealment about this policy, no pretences. Sir Bampfylde Fuller openly declared that of his two wives the Mahomedan was his favourite and his favouritism was gross, open, palpable. He flourished it in the face of the public instead of concealing it. The Nawab of Dacca has also openly preached to his co-religionists about the wrongs they have suffered at the hands of the Hindus and called upon them to separate themselves from that evil and injurious connexion. There has been no concealment whatever about his anti-Hindu campaign. After the disappearance of Sir Bampfylde from the scene of his exploits, the philo-Mahomedanism of the Shillong Government was no longer openly flourished in the face of the public but it was steadily continued in practice. The alliance of Anglo-India with the Nawab was from the beginning made the most of by the *Englishman* which for some time carried on a very active philo-Mahomedan and anti-Hindu crusade in its columns and did its best to stir up enmity between the two communities. So there came the first Mymensingh disturbances, the Comilla riots and finally the supreme conflagration that started from Jamalpur. That conflagration was brought about by Maulavis preaching outrage and plunder in the name of the Nawab of Dacca and the Government, an imputation which the Nawab of Dacca has made no attempt to repudiate, though, it is said, he has been challenged to do so in answer to his hollow professions of a desire to bring about amity between the two communities, while the Shillong Government has repudiated it only tardily and indirectly if at all, and only after the full mischief had been done. In all the incitements urged by the Maulavis and by the authors of the notorious Red Pamphlet, there has been no mention of a violent enforcement of the boycott on the Mahomedans, neither has any such connexion been established by any of the judicial proceedings which have hitherto been concluded. The theory of Mr. John Morley is therefore a dead thing and of no farther interest to any human being.

Of course the bureaucracy will go on playing with the bones of this dead scarecrow; it will wage war on Swadeshism on the plea that it leads to disorder; but that is only because, like all bureaucracies, it is sublimely indifferent to reason and fact and public opinion. It has served its turn by the fiction which it foisted through the mouth of Honest John on a loudly applauding though somewhat befogged House of Commons and it does not care even if the fiction is disproved a thousand times over. It will go on acting as if the fiction were a fact. We do not see therefore the utility of the statement which a majority of the Bengal leaders have published and which we hear is to be telegraphed or has been telegraphed to England. If the object is to set ourselves right in the opinion of the world, well, that is an innocent amusement. If it is to convince Mr. John Morley, it is a futility. It is absurd to suppose that Mr. John Morley at his age is going to allow himself to be convinced. He is far too old and wise to admit inconvenient facts. The statement contains a number of facts which all Bengal knows, which all India is sure to believe and all officialdom sure to deny. Beyond that the statement, a very able one in its way, merely encourages the consumption of stationery, patronises a printing-press, startles the Empire and enriches the Telegraph Office. Was it worth while?

Law and Order

The Government of India is up and doing to restore law and order in the land. What is this law? What is this order which seems to have disappeared from our midst and which the bureaucracy is calling back with deportation and prosecution and almost daily ordinances and ukases? The Britisher's word is law, his very presence and existence in the land a signal for the suppression and suspension of manly or patriotic activities. Reconciliation with foreign despotism is perfect order. Doing the Britisher's bidding is law. It is the height of impertinence to be begging and asking. It is criminal to insist on the undoing of bureaucratic actions. To cry "Thy will be done" is loyalty and patriotism. To wish for our eternal serfdom is prudence and peacefulness. To think ourselves irremediably unfit is wisdom and moderation. To imagine ourselves a nation is madness. To love our country is superstition. To work for its emancipation is treason. To harbour any such sentiment is sedition. Thus the new nationalism is subversive of law and order, religion and morality, justice and fair play, obedience and discipline. The law again is that some shall sow and others reap, that some shall buy and others sell, that some shall bleed and others fatten, that some shall order and others obey, that some shall rule and others submit, that some shall teach and others learn. The new nationalism with its boycott and Swadeshi, national education and Swaraj, seeks to invert this order and needs to be put down. It is here in our non-conformity to the bureaucratic conceptions of our duties that law and order have been disturbed and not in Eastern Bengal and Rawalpindi as they have been trying to make out. There were riots before this more fearful and far-reaching in their consequence but not followed by such systematic repression supported by everyone from the Secretary of State to the commonest civilian.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 7th, 1907 }

Defying the Circular

It will not be long now before the Colleges open and the students begin to return to Calcutta; the moment they come the struggle for the possession of the youth of the country must begin. The bureaucracy has thrown out the challenge and there is every sign that it will be taken up. Men of all parties, except the party of Mr. N. N. Ghose which, as it consists of only one man, need not concern us, are agreed that to acquiesce in the Circular is out of the question. If there is any difference of opinion, it is as to the best method of defying it, and that is not a matter of primary importance. For our own part, we have expressed ourselves in favour of an educational strike, because that is the most straightforward, the most masculine and the most aggressive form of passive resistance of which the occasion allows. We hold that in order to rise the nation must get into the habit of offering challenges rather than receiving them and when it is behind, it must take the swiftest and most direct form of demonstration open to it. Passive resistance can be carried on in an inert and passive spirit of mechanical reaction against pressure from above, or it may be carried on in an active and creative spirit, it may take the initiative instead of being driven; it may assail the citadels of the enemy instead of merely defending its own. What India needs especially at this moment is the aggressive virtues, the spirit of soaring idealism, bold creation, fearless resistance, courageous attack; of the passive tamasic spirit of inertia we have already too much. We need to cultivate another training and temperament, another habit of mind. We would apply to the present situation the vigorous motto of Danton, that what we need, what we should learn above all things is to dare and again to dare and still to dare.

Nevertheless we recognise that to leap at once from an overpoweringly tamasic condition of mind into the rajasic, the active, restless, bold and creative, is not easy for a nation and if we cannot have the best method, we will accept the second best, so long as the principle of resistance is maintained. A general defiance of the Circular will obviously make it unworkable, unless the Government is prepared to disaffiliate schools and Colleges freely and give up its control of education. It is possible, of course, that they may do so in the hope of bringing the country to its knees by drawing home the conviction that it cannot take in hand its own education. But this will be a dangerous game to play; for the only thing that is needed to make the institution of a widespread and comprehensive system of national education possible and indeed eminently practicable, is the generation of an enthusiasm such as was beginning to gather force after the Carlyle Circular. A stern and bitter struggle between the people and the bureaucracy is the one thing that is likely to generate such an enthusiasm. National education is by no means impracticable or even difficult, it needs nothing but a resolute enthusiasm in the country and the courage to take a leap into the unknown. This courage is common in individuals but not in nations, least of all in subject nations; and yet when the fire is lit, it is perhaps subject nations more than any other which are found ready to take the leap.

We do not believe the bureaucracy will be willing to drive matters to such a crisis. It is more likely that they will use the Circular to harass the opposition and overcome our resistance by instituting measures of petty persecution wherever they can do it without upheaving the whole foundation of the educational system in Bengal. All that is demanded from us is therefore a persistent resolution to make the Circular unworkable regardless of loss and sacrifice. We must take every opportunity of challenging the Circular and testing the resolution of the bureaucracy and the campaign must be carried on simultaneously all over Bengal, if not in other parts of India as well. But it is Calcutta which must give the signal. Indeed, Calcutta has already given the signal. Meetings have been held in which teachers and students have attended and taken an active part; more meetings of the kind will be held and when the Colleges reopen, there must be a general defiance of the ukase. Once Calcutta leads the way, East Bengal will respond and West Bengal follow the general example. The Risley Circular must go the way of its predecessor.

By the Way

When Shall We Three Meet Again?

The *Statesman*, which seems now to be the mouthpiece of the bureaucracy, published a semi-official communique to the effect that prosecutions are being launched against three of the journals in Bengal which have been the most violent in their recent utterances. This pleasant news opens the way to a most interesting line of speculation and we would suggest that one of our contemporaries, say, the *Sandhya*, might start a plebiscite or a prize-competition for the correct list of the fortunate victims. The prize would of course be given to the competitor who got the right names in the right order. It would be interesting to know whether the impressions of the people and of the Bengal Government tallied on this knotty question. If we ourselves are to be one of the recipients of this Government distinction, we must petition the authorities beforehand — even at the sacrifice of our principles — that the three editors may be allowed to share the same cell and assist each other at the same oakum picking or other exhilarating occupation in store for us, so that we may support each other "under the burden of an honour into which we were not born". Always provided that the editor of the *Indian Nation* is not one of the three.

*

The *Empire* is very much hurt that the Indian papers have not taken any notice of the Viceroy's magnanimous though somewhat belated refusal to sanction the Punjab Colonisation Bill.

Our contemporary thinks that we kept silent out of pure cussedness. This is unkind. Could not our dear white brother — or our dear green brother, we should say — realise that there were other reasons, honourable or natural, for this unanimous hush. It might have been out of sheer awe, it might have been out of a choked emotion. Some scruples of delicacy, some feelings of the "sorrow rather than anger" sort, perhaps even excessive loyalty may have stopped the flow of utterance. For instance, supposing in the rush of our gratitude one were to let slip unpleasant hints about the relation between the Rawalpindi row and the Viceroy's sudden and stupendous magnanimity! Who would like to hurt our sympathetic Viceroy's feelings by such ungracious truths! Or again supposing the Bengal papers were contrasting silently events in the Punjab and Bengal? They do present a remarkable contrast. In Bengal we have agitated for two years — first with repeated petitions, with countless protest meetings, with innumerable wails and entreaties from press and platform; but that could not help us, insult and ridicule were our only gain. Then we tried every lawful means of concrete protest, every kind of passive resistance within the law to show that we were in earnest. Result, — nil. But in Punjab they petitioned and protested only for a few weeks and then — went for Europeans, their persons, their property and everything connected with them. Result — the water tax postponed, the Colonisation Bill cancelled. Of course, as loyal subjects such as the *Empire* wants us to be we must regard the contrast with sorrow rather than with anger. But if we were publicly to mention these matters, might not our feelings and even our motives be misunderstood? Might it not even happen that Police-Constable Andrew would run us in, under his new-old powers for sedition? And how could a loyal Press expose itself to such misunderstanding? The *Empire* will surely agree with us, on reflection, that silence was best.

*

It is a new and gratifying feature of present-day politics to find the *Englishman* reporting Bengali meetings in the Calcutta squares with a full appreciation of their importance. The meeting in College Square at which Srijut Krishna Kumar Mitra presided has been favoured as well as Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal's meeting at Beadon Square. As to the accuracy of the reports we have our doubts, for the Bengali gentleman who reports for our contemporary is afflicted with the idea that he is very humorous, and there is nothing so fatal to accuracy as a sense of humour. We would not object to this amiable delusion, or the particular style of the reporter's wit, if it did not so persistently recall to us the imperial citizen of the British metropolis out on a spree who thinks it a huge joke to tickle his fellow citizens with a peacock's feather or to comment on their possession of hair or the origin of their headgear with other light and cutting sarcasms. However, we note with satisfaction that teachers and students attended the meeting, that a teacher presided, another spoke and a student seconded a resolution. We too await with interest the action of the authorities in the matter.

*

Our venerable friend the *Indian Mirror* has solemnly assured us that it should be understood that no Government, Conservative or Liberal, will countenance violent methods, such as the Extremists have hitherto employed. For this surprising information, drawn no doubt from occult sources, much thanks. But still we cannot help inquiring, who the devil ever asked them to? No one in his senses, or out of them, either, ever dreamed of calling upon any Englishman to support the Extremist policy. We note with interest that the *Mirror* considers Boycott, Passive Resistance, National Education, Arbitration and physical training to be "violent" methods. On the other hand we find Srijut Narendra Nath Sen's signature affixed to the recently-issued statement in which the use of violent methods in Bengal is denied. Hail, holy light, divine reflective *Mirror*!

*

The breathless speed with which the *Statesman* is legislating and administering the affairs of the nation, makes one's head whirl. One day the Simla Government, no doubt laying heads together with Mr. John Morley, issues a notice handing the Press over to the tender mercies of the local administrations, but with a rider that this is in the nature of a warning to the Press to behave itself and the effect will be watched before action is taken. After watching the effect for the space of twenty-four hours the *Statesman* issues an order from Darjeeling to prosecute any three papers out of the long list of English and vernacular publications in Bengal, the selection to be made on the principle of the loudest first. Before the Press has recovered from this shock, while everybody from the *Englishman* down to the *Mihir Sudhakar* is brooding over his past sins and preparing for the arrival of the police with handcuffs, while even the *Mirror* and the *Nation* are trying to banish uncomfortable memories of an indiscreet article or two on the Jamalpur outrages, lo and behold, the *Statesman* in its Viceregal Council at Simla is forging a new Act which shall provide for the gagging of the Press without the trouble of a prosecution. We know that these are the days of the electric tram and the motor car, and telepathy and wireless telegraphy, but really this is overdoing it. A little slower, please.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 8th, 1907 }

The Strength of the Idea

The mistake which despots, benevolent or malevolent, have been making ever since organised states came into existence and which, it seems, they will go on making to the end of the chapter, is that they overestimate their coercive power, which is physical and material and therefore palpable, and underestimate the power and vitality of ideas and sentiments. A feeling or a thought, Nationalism, Democracy, the aspiration towards liberty, cannot be estimated in the terms of concrete power, in so many fighting men, so many armed police, so many guns, so many prisons, such and such laws, ukases, and executive powers. But such feelings and thoughts are more powerful than fighting men and guns and prisons and laws and ukases. Their beginnings are feeble, their end is mighty. But of despotic repression the beginnings are mighty, the end is feeble. Thought is always greater than armies, more lasting than the most powerful and best-organised despotisms. It was a thought that overthrew the despotism of centuries in France and revolutionised Europe. It was a mere sentiment against which the irresistible might of the Spanish armies and the organised cruelty of Spanish repression were shattered in the Netherlands, which brought to nought the administrative genius, the military power, the stubborn will of Aurangzeb, which loosened the iron grip of Austria on Italy. In all such instances the physical power and organisation behind the insurgent idea are ridiculously small, the repressive force so overwhelmingly, impossibly strong that all reasonable, prudent, moderate minds see the utter folly of resistance and stigmatise the attempt of the idea to rise as an act of almost criminal insanity. But the man with the idea is not reasonable, not prudent, not moderate. He is an extremist, a fanatic. He knows that his idea is bound to conquer, he knows that the man possessed with it is more formidable, even with his naked hands, than the prison and the gibbet, the armed men and the murderous cannon. He knows that in the fight with brute force the spirit, the idea is bound to conquer. The Roman Empire is no more, but the Christianity which it thought to crush, possesses half the globe, covering "regions Caesar never knew". The Jew, whom the whole world persecuted, survived by the strength of an idea and now sits in the high places of the world, playing with nations as a chessplayer with his pieces. He knows too that his own life and the lives of others are of no value, that they are mere dust in the balance compared with the life of his idea. The idea or sentiment is at first confined to a few men whom their neighbours and countrymen ridicule as lunatics or hare-brained enthusiasts. But it spreads and gathers adherents who catch the fire of the first missionaries and creates its own preachers and then its workers who try to carry out its teachings in circumstances of almost paralysing difficulty. The attempt to work brings them into conflict with the established power which the idea threatens and there is persecution. The idea creates its martyrs. And in martyrdom there is an incalculable spiritual magnetism which works miracles. A whole nation, a whole world catches the fire which burned in a few hearts; the soil which has drunk the blood of the martyr imbibes with it a sort of divine madness which it breathes into the heart of all its children, until there is but one overmastering idea, one imperishable resolution in the minds of all beside which all other hopes and interests fade into insignificance and until it is fulfilled, there can be no peace or rest for the land or its rulers. It is at this moment that the idea begins to create its heroes and fighters, whose numbers and courage defeat only multiplies and confirms until the idea militant has become the idea triumphant. Such is the history of the idea, so invariable in its broad lines that it is evidently the working of a natural law.

But the despot will not recognise this superiority, the teachings of history have no meaning for him. He is dazzled by the pomp and splendour of his own power, infatuated with the sense of his own irresistible strength. Naturally, for the signs and proofs of his own power are visible, palpable, in his camps and armaments, in the crores and millions which his tax-gatherers wring out of the helpless masses, in the tremendous array of cannon and implements of war which fill his numerous arsenals, in the compact and swiftly-working organisation of his administration, in the prisons into which he hurls his opponents, in the fortresses and places of exile to which he can hurry the men of the idea. He is deceived also by the temporary triumph of his repressive measures. He strikes out with his mailed hand and surging multitudes are scattered like chaff with a single blow; he hurls his thunderbolts from the citadels of his strength and ease and the clamour of a continent sinks into a deathlike hush; or he swings the rebels by rows from his gibbets or mows them down by the hundred with his mitrailleuse and then stands alone erect amidst the ruin he has made and thinks, "The trouble is over, there is nothing more to fear. My rule will endure for ever; God will not remember what I have done or take account of the blood that I have spilled." And he does not know that the fiat has gone out against him, "Thou fool! this night shall thy soul be required of thee." For to the Power that rules the world one day is the same as fifty years. The time lies in His choice, but now or afterwards the triumph of the idea is assured, for it is He who has sent it into men's minds that His purposes may be fulfilled.

The story is so old, so often repeated that it is a wonder the delusion should still persist and repeat itself. Each despotic rule after the other thinks, "Oh, the circumstances in my case are quite different, I am a different thing from any yet recorded in history, stronger, more virtuous and moral, better organised. I am God's favourite and can never come to harm." And so the old drama is staged again and acted till it reaches the old catastrophe. The historic madness has now overtaken the British nation in the height of its worldwide power and material greatness. In Egypt, in India, in Ireland the most Radical Government of modern times is bracing itself to a policy of repression. It thinks

England has only to stamp her foot and all the trouble will be over. Yet only consider how many ideas are arising which find in British despotism their chief antagonist. The idea of a free and self-centred Ireland has been reborn and the souls of Fitzgerald and Emmett are reincarnating. The idea of a free Egypt and the Pan-Islamic idea have joined hands in the land of the Pharaohs. The idea of a free and united India has been born and arrived at full stature in the land of the Rishis, and the spiritual force of a great civilisation of which the world has need, is gathering at its back. Will England crush these ideas with ukases and coercion laws? Will she even kill them with maxims and siege-guns? But the eyes of the wise men have been sealed so that they should not see and their minds bewildered so that they should not understand. Destiny will take its appointed course until the fated end.

Comic Opera Reforms

Mr. Morley has made his pronouncement and a long-expectant world may now go about its ordinary business with the satisfactory conviction that the conditions of political life in India will be precisely the same as before. We know now what are the much-talked-of reforms which are to pave the way for self-government under an absolute and personal rule and to quiet Indian discontent. Let us take them one by one, these precious and inestimable boons. They are three in number, a trinity of marvels; an advisory Council of Notables, enlarged Legislative and Provincial Councils, admission of one or two Indians to the India Council.

An advisory Council of Notables — we can see it in our mind's eye. The Nawab of Dacca, the Maharaja of Darbhanga, the Maharajas of Coochbehar and Kashmir, the Raja of Nabha, Sir Harnam Singh, a few other Rajas and Maharajas (*not* including the Maharaja of Baroda), Dr. Rash Behari Ghose, Mr. Justice Mukherji, a goodly number of non-official Europeans, the knight of the umbrella from Bombay, etc. etc. with Mr.

Gokhale bringing up the tail as the least dangerous of those whom Mr. Morley felt that he must reluctantly call "our enemies". And what will the business of this illustrious assembly be? It will find out what the opinion of the country is (on which the members will be better authorities no doubt than a highly inconvenient Press) and inform the Government; they will also find out the meaning of the Government (if that be humanly possible) and inform the country. We suppose it would be seditious to laugh at a Secretary of State, for is he not part of the Government established by law? So we will merely say that the right place for this truly comic Council of Notables with its yet more comic functions is an opera by Gilbert and Sullivan and not an India seething with discontent and convulsed by the throes of an incipient revolution.

As to the "enlarged" Legislative Councils, we can say little. Mr. Morley does not enlighten us as to their composition but he has explicitly said that the official majority will be maintained — a piece of information, by the way, which the *Bengalee*'s "Own Correspondents" forget to cable out to Colootola. That is enough for it means that the Legislative Councils are to be precisely what they were before, only bigger. The people are not to be given any effective control or check on the management of their own affairs. We had gilded shams before; they will be bigger shams with more gilt on them, but still shams and nothing but shams.

Finally, Mr. Morley says that the time has come when it will be really quite safe to have an Indian or even two (what reckless daring!) on the India Council. Really? A year or two ago, we suppose, it would have been very dangerous, — indeed, brought the Empire down with a sudden crash. So Mr. Romesh Dutt and Justice Amir Ali's expectations may at last be satisfied and we shall have two Indian tongues in the Council of India. We wish them luck; but for all the use they will be to India, they might just as well be in Timbuctoo or the Andamans. Indeed they would probably be of much more use in the Andamans.

We find it impossible to discuss Mr. Morley's reforms seriously, they are so impossibly burlesque and farcical. Yet they have their serious aspect. They show that the British despotism, like all despotisms in the same predicament, is making the time-honoured, ineffectual effort to evade a settlement of the real question by throwing belated and now unacceptable sops to Demogorgon. We shall return to this aspect of the subject hereafter.

Paradoxical Advice

Mr. G. C. Bose, principal and proprietor of the Bangabasi College, has published a short signed article in the *Bangabasi* in which he sets forth very emphatically what he considers to be the duty of the students and their guardians in this critical moment. Mr. Bose is an educationist pure and simple who has never mixed himself up in politics, unlike another well-known principal whose weekly incursions into politics are more remarkable for their manner than for their matter. If therefore Mr. Bose had confined himself to the educational aspect of the question and the extent to which students may permissibly interest themselves in politics, we should have had nothing to say. Unfortunately Mr. Bose has allowed himself to be tempted by the prevailing political atmosphere outside his true province. He refrains from discussing the merits of the Risley Circular and merely advises the public to leave no stone unturned to get the circular withdrawn but to refrain scrupulously from defying it while it is in force. This is very much like telling us to leave no stone unturned to get our dinner cooked but at the same time refrain scrupulously from lighting a fire. Everyone, even the veriest political tyro, can see that if we submit to the circular it will remain with us in perpetuity; no amount of representations such as it is now proposed to send to the Government, will get the circular recalled. Our only chance of getting rid of it is to make it a dead letter by a general refusal to abide by it. Mr. Bose represents a vested interest which will be seriously inconvenienced by an educational strike or a general refusal to abide by the circular and we fear the natural anxiety to avoid this inconvenience has blinded him to this very simple political fact. But will the student class listen to Mr. Bose's dulcet pipings? The wave of Nationalism in the land is surely not so spent, but will rise the higher for the obstacles thrown in the way of its advance.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 12th, 1907 }

An Out-of-Date Reformer

Time was and that time was not more than two years ago and indeed even less, when the reforms which Mr. Morley has announced would have been received in India by many with enthusiasm, by others with considerable satisfaction as an important concession to public feeling and a move, however small, in the right direction. Today they have been received by some with scorn and ridicule, by others with bitterness and dissatisfaction, even by the most loyal with a cold and qualified recognition. Never has an important pronouncement of policy by a famous and once honoured statesman of whom much had been expected, delivered moreover under the most dramatic circumstances possible and as a solution of a trying and critical problem, fallen so utterly flat on the audience which it was intended to impress. The outside world amazed at a change so sudden and radical may well ask what are its causes. The true cause is, of course, the revolution which has been worked in Indian opinion and Indian feeling in these two years. British Liberalism stands where it was and refuses to move forward. Indian opinion has advanced with enormous strides to a position far in front. The British Liberal has perhaps, from his standpoint, some reason for complaint. He had formed a sort of agreement with the section of Indian opinion which then dominated Indian politics. On our side we were to assure him of the permanence of the British control, to acknowledge our present unfitness for self-government and to accept perpetual subordination and dependence as an arrangement of Providence. On his side he has engaged to give us progressive alleviations of our subject condition, gradually increasing compensations for the renunciation of our national future; these he was prepared to concede to us by slow degrees according to his own convenience and ability. Nor was the prospect denied to India of becoming after the lapse of many centuries a trusted servant of England or even something very like an adopted son. The bargain was one-sided, but the political leaders had an overpowering sense of their own weakness, of the superior excellence of British civilisation, and of the unshakable might of Britain. They had too a profound trust in the justice of England and the genuineness of English Liberalism. They believed that the Liberal offers of small rights and privileges were made not as a bargain or out of a shrewd calculation of advantages and disadvantages, but from the sense of justice and from a true sympathy with liberal aspirations all over the world. They were therefore ready to take gratefully and contentedly whatever small mercies were conceded to them.

Now the spirit of the people has changed. From a timid and easily satisfied dependence on the alien they have passed at once to a passionate and determined assertion of their separate national existence and a demand for an immediate recognition of their right to control their own affairs. It is not surprising that the old Friends of India should be alarmed and indignant at the change or that they should call upon the older leaders whom they know and think they can influence, to drive the Extremists out of their councils, return to their old allegiance and observe the terms of the contract. “We are where we were, we still offer you the same terms;” they cry, “you shall have your reforms, but on the old conditions, the permanence of British control, the repression of all turbulent aspirations, dissociation from the forces of disorder and revolution.” So they cry to the Moderate leaders to turn back and retrace their steps, and by main force to bring back India with them to the standpoint of twenty years ago. It is a vain cry. If the Moderate leaders wished to go back, they would have to go back alone as men without a following, lost leaders, prophets whose power had passed out of them. The force which has swept the country forward is a force no man has created and which no man can control. As well ask a man who has become adult to return to the age of childhood as India to go back to the standpoint it has left irrecoverably behind.

The British Government is like Tarquin with the Sibyl; the terms it has refused will no longer be offered to it. It might have purchased contentment, a new lease of Indian confidence and a long spell of ease at a very small price only three or four years ago. Now at a price ten times as high it will be able to purchase at the most a short truce in a war which must be fought to the end. Mr. Morley recognised this fact when with an indiscreet frankness he referred to the educated class in India as "our enemies". A long era of repression and reaction culminating in Curzonism has opened the eyes of the Indian people. They have learnt that not only were the reforms of Liberal Viceroys and Governments small and ineffective in themselves, but that they were held on a precarious tenure. Mr. Morley or another might give "rights" and "privileges" of a dubious character, but the power of Liberalism in modern England is apt to be brief and succeeded by long periods of pure Imperialism in which those rights and privileges will surely be taken away or nullified. They have discovered also that the support they might expect from Liberalism is of a very limited and meagre nature and that, when in office, Liberal and Conservative are for India synonymous terms. The struggle which began with the Partition has generated a new ideal and a newborn Nationalism has sprung in a few days almost to its full stature. There was no chance therefore that any reform would be acceptable which did not ensure popular control, make reactionary legislation by despotic Viceroys impossible and open the way to Swaraj. And even if Mr. Morley's reforms had had any chance of being acceptable, it was ruined by the series of repressive measures which preceded them. Reforms simultaneous and compatible with the deportation of popular leaders, the prosecution of popular journals, the persecution of students and teachers and the prohibition of public meetings were of so patent a hollowness that the most moderate and loyal were compelled to receive them with a bitter scepticism. And as if to drive the moral home, the speech in which the reforming statesman introduced his measures was couched in the sour and autocratic spirit of a reactionary bureaucrat contemptuously doling out sops to the rabble to an accompaniment of hardly-veiled menace and insult. Mr. Morley has been unanimously complimented by the Liberal Press in England on his courage in coupling repression with reforms, kicks with bread-crumbs. For ourselves we are struck by his singular want of sagacity and of even an elementary knowledge of human nature and the feelings which govern great masses of men. As well might we call the policy of a Louis XVI or a Czar Nicholas courageous. The courage may or may not be there, but there can be no doubt of the unwisdom.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 14th, 1907 }

The Sphinx

Sir Henry Cotton has developed a sudden love for Lala Lajpat Rai. Though he has, like all Anglo-Indians — official or ex-official, — condemned and condemned unheard Ajit Singh, his love for Lajpat Rai knows no abating. He asked Mr. Morley to confirm his statement of the 6th June, that Lajpat Rai's speeches had greatly dominated sedition in India and had been published broadcast, even on the floor of the House. The statement shows that Mr. Morley thinks he knows more about Indian affairs than we Indians do; and his reference, obviously, was to Members of the Parliament like Sir Henry Cotton who tease the Secretary of State for India with inconvenient questions about Indian subjects. With characteristic conceit Mr. Morley replied that he should be very unlikely to make a statement without providing himself with fair and reasonable confirmation. It was surely such "fair and reasonable confirmation" that enabled him, the other day, to make an assertion about the proposed Victoria Memorial Hall which even the perverse ingenuity of the Anglo-Indian Press could not support. And it was surely such fair and reasonable confirmation that made him beat a retreat on the present occasion with the sage remark that nothing would be more injudicious than to lay the facts on the table. Only deeds of darkness need be afraid of light. And people may be pardoned if they dare suspect that the fair and reasonable confirmation was as real as Mr. Morley's reforms so often advertised by himself as well as by the *Statesman*. Next when Mr. Mackarness asked whether it was intended to formulate a definite legal charge against Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh and also what the length of their banishment and confinement would be, Mr. Morley said that he was unable at present to state the intentions of the Government of India. It seems that as far as questions on matters Indian are concerned the British House of Commons is as good as the Indian Legislative Councils. The reason is not far to seek. The British public have absolute faith in the infallibility of the "man on the spot" in India to maintain India for their benefit and they are ready and willing to give them a free hand in their dealings with the people of the country. Had it been otherwise — had the British taxpayer been guided by considerations other than those of advantage to Great Britain to take an intelligent interest in Indian affairs the Sphinx would have found himself bound to speak. Yet to these people our deluded Moderate friends must go and spend the money of poverty-stricken India in the vain attempt to "educate" them — with a view to get political rights and privileges! What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 17th, 1907 }

Slow but Sure

Commenting on Mr. Morley's Budget Speech the *Statesman* remarks — "It is to be hoped that the new concessions will be received in no carping spirit, and that there will be a resolute determination to make the best of them. Under English rule, wherever it is found, reforms are almost invariably slow and gradual. England abhors a revolution, or even the logical working out of a principle — unless it be very gradually. It proceeds by compromises and half-measures. But this cautious policy has been justified by results. The advance, if slow, is sure, and a persistent well-reasoned agitation seldom fails to achieve its end. An example of the success which rewards perseverance is to be found in Mr. Morley's announcement that a Committee has been appointed to examine the distribution of the costs of the Indian Army as between the War Office and the Indian taxpayer."

So the Indian is asked to accept the so-called concessions in no carping spirit, not to demand more like Oliver Twist but to remember that beggars must not be choosers. But why should Englishmen interested in India be so anxious to confer concessions on Indians who in their present self-respecting mood are not likely to appreciate the generosity of the donors? New India — the India that has showed itself prepared to suffer sacrifices and brave dangers for political rights — has rejected as obsolete the methods of mendicant agitation and it is too late in the day to try to delude it with gilded toys and useless tinsel. Why waste your energy in granting "concessions" when none is wanted? After imparting this sage advice the *Statesman* proceeds to present a prose rendering of Tennyson's well-known description of England as the land

"Where Freedom slowly broadens down
From precedent to precedent".

In the case of countries conquered by England "reforms" slowly broaden down from Circulars to Ordinances. The bond is tightened and the lingering sparks of the spirit of self-help sought to be extinguished. It is useless to argue, for John Bull is — as our Friend admits — never logical. Yet we are advised to wait and suffer in silence till the millennium arrives and in the meantime to feel grateful for chance droppings from the basket of the bureaucracy. Let no Indian ask the inconvenient question — How long are we to wait? For that will be sheer impudence not to be brooked.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 18th, 1907 }

The Rawalpindi Sufferers

The bureaucracy which has decided upon coercion as the most effective means of crushing the growing national spirit in India must necessarily turn the machinery of judicial administration also to its advantage. We have observed on previous occasions that a certain portion of the positive laws enacted by the British Government has been designed not so much to secure the rights and interests of the people as to repress their free manhood. There is a popular saying that almost every action of a man can be construed as an offence according to the Penal Code. This attempt to penalise many natural human activities in a conquered country, should have long ago convinced us of the true spirit of official-made British law but we instead have lived in a Fool's Paradise and run for safety to the institutions and professions of the foreigner, obstinately blind to the manner in which they illustrate the British genius for "ruling" subject races. Where the ordinary law does not cover all the conceivable offences against the interests of the foreigner ordinances and ukases can easily be invented to put a stop to undesirable activities as we have lately seen. Thus the bureaucratic machinery grinds slow or grinds fast, but grinding is its object. In the ordinary course of things we do not become immediately conscious of its baneful consequence; but when the bureaucracy is face to face with an adverse force or interest it at once sets itself to the work of repression with all its demoralising consequences. Viewed in this light what is being described as unprecedented and "humanity-staggering" police violence and police licence in the alleged Rawalpindi riot case, is no more than natural and expected. The tales of police oppression while inducing the most whole-hearted sympathy with the noble sufferers have not the least feature of novelty in them. The *Patrika* is very much affected by the severe distress of the alleged rioters now on their trial; and moved by softer feelings, it has appealed to Lord Minto who according to our contemporary is "goodness personified" to come to their rescue. The *Patrika* is no doubt actuated by the very best of motives but our contemporary should remember that such nervousness while doing no good to the sufferers is demoralising to our firmness and high spirit. So far as the accused are concerned the die is cast. Suffer they must; their only care now must be so to suffer that their martyrdom may be a strength and inspiration to their countrymen. If their heroic and manful conduct during the trial and their readiness to face the grim sequel of a conviction puts courage into other hearts, then only will it be said that they have not suffered in vain. Otherwise there is not much on the credit side of the account. The duty of the publicist at such a time, is to seek to brace the nerves of the martyrs and not to take away from the merit of their service to the country by any advocacy humiliating in form or abject in spirit. The public attitude at such a time reacts on that of the sufferer and if we give way to weakness at the report of their sufferings, we set them a bad example. We also have been moved and not merely by feelings of grief and pity, at the dim, but only too sinister and significant hints of what is going on behind the decent show of a fair and public trial.

But this is not a time when we should give vent to feminine emotions. To try to rouse pity in the rulers is as unprofitable as it is unworthy of our manhood and of our cause and in these rough and still only superficially civilised descendants of the old sea-robbers it can only excite a deep contempt towards us and increase their arrogance. If we must show our grief and pity let it be in substantial help to the victims or their relatives. If we must pray, let it be not to the goodness personified of any "sympathetic" repressor, but to the goodness unpersonified of the Power that makes and breaks kings and viceroys, empires and dominations. Let us pray to Him to give our brothers in Rawalpindi a stout and cheerful heart and a steadfast courage so that in the hour of their trial they may do nothing common or mean upon that memorable scene, and that we too, if our turn comes to suffer such things or worse for our country, may so bear ourselves that our country may profit by our sufferings. This is the only prayer that befits us in this hour of the new birth of our nation. For all that the country suffers now or will suffer hereafter are but the natural birth-pangs of a free and regenerated India.

Look on This Picture and Then on That

The telegram sent us by our Mymensingh Correspondent about the decision in the case of the author of the notorious "Red Pamphlet" is significant. It is rumoured that Ibrahim has been let off on signing a personal recognizance bond for rupees one thousand, and nobody knows where the trial took place. If the rumour is true, then one is to understand that a downright vilifier of the Hindus who has attempted to outrage all that is considered sacred by the Hindus in Hindusthan and has put a premium on violence and lawlessness, has committed no serious offence. On the other hand in the case of Maulavi Liakat Hussain application for an adjournment was granted only on the Maulavi having furnished two sureties for Rs. 5,000 each and a personal security for Rs. 10,000. And we all know that Maulavi Liakat Hussain preached union between Hindus and Mahomedans and always expressed himself against the policy of sowing the seeds of discord between the followers of the two great religions in India. What is more it is not known if Ibrahim is himself worth Rs. 1,000 while the gentlemen who have stood sureties for Maulavi Liakat Hussain are worth much more than Rs. 10,000. The sharpness of the contrast makes comments superfluous.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 19th, 1907 }

The Main Feeder of Patriotism

There are many people who admit the superiority of Eastern civilisation, who recognise its humanitarian and socialistic aspect, who are not blind to its predominating feature of spirituality, who admire the absence of a militant Materialism in it, who praise the way in which it has balanced the interests of the different classes in the society, who are conscious how much attention it gives to the higher needs of humanity. But still patriotism is not a living and moving impulse with them. Apart from the natural attachment which every man has to his country, its literature, its traditions, its customs and usages, patriotism has an additional stimulus in the acknowledged excellence of a national civilisation. If Britons love England with all her faults, why should we fail to love India whose faults were whittled down to an irreducible minimum till foreign conquests threw the whole society out of gear? But instead of being dominated by the natural ambition of carrying the banner of such a civilisation all over the world, we are unable to maintain its integrity in its own native home. This is betraying a trust. This is unworthiness of the worst type. We have not been able to add anything to this precious bequest; on the contrary we have been keeping ourselves and generations yet unborn from a full enjoyment of their lawful heritage. For Eastern civilisation though it is not dead, though it is a living force, is yet a submerged force, and that not because it has no intrinsic merit but because it has been transmitted to a class of people devoid of a love for things their own. It seems as if they have no past to guide, instruct or inspire them. They are beginning, as it were, with a clean slate and what is worse, a foreign poetaster is calling upon his countrymen to take charge of them as "half devil, half child". Is not the humiliation sufficient to disturb our self-complacency?

We make no appeal in the name of any material benefit. No desire for earthly gain can nerve a people to such superhuman activity as the eager hope of maintaining their greatness and glory. We must first realise that we are great and glorious, that we are proud and noble, and it is through voluntary prostration that we are being stamped into the dust. No material ideal of riches and prosperity has ever made a nation. But when the sense of honour has been touched, when the consciousness of greatness has been reawakened, then and then only have the scattered units of a fallen nation clustered round one mighty moral force.

What is now considered by political thinkers to be the chief incentive to conquest? What is the meaning of the imperial sentiment which is "now dominating every English breast"? "If we ask ourselves," says one writer, "seriously the question why we glory in the magnitude of our empire, it may be answered: partly because we think it adds to our riches, partly because we enjoy the sense of power and dominion, partly because we cling to old traditions and remember the great deeds of history; but beyond and above all these elements of satisfaction we feel that throughout the whole British empire we enforce those ideas of justice, personal freedom and religious toleration which are the results of the constitutional struggles of centuries." We are not concerned here with the discussion whether the Britisher's boast is well or ill-founded, but rightly or wrongly this sentiment has taken possession of him and he is invincible under its influence. For we find the same explanation in Mill. Sidgwick also in his *Elements of Politics* harps on the same strain. "Besides the material advantages," he says, "there are legitimate sentimental satisfactions derived from justifiable conquest which must be taken into account. Such are the justifiable pride which the cultivated members of a civilised community feel in the beneficent exercise of dominion and in the performance by their nation of the noble task of spreading the highest kind of civilisation, and a more intense though less elevated satisfaction — inseparable from patriotic sentiment — in the spread of the special type of civilisation distinctive of their nation, communicated through its language and literature, and through the tendency to catch its tastes and imitate its customs which its prolonged rule, specially if, on the whole, beneficent, is likely to cause in a continually increasing degree."

Thus, according to Sidgwick, physical expansion proceeds from a desire for spiritual expansion and history also supports the assertion. But why should not India then be the first power in the world? Who else has the undisputed right to extend spiritual sway over the world? This was Swami Vivekananda's plan of campaign. India can once more be made conscious of her greatness by an overmastering sense of the greatness of her spirituality. This sense of greatness is the main feeder of all patriotism. This only can put an end to all self-depreciation and generate a burning desire to recover the lost ground.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 20th, 1907 }

Concerted Action

We publish in another column a letter from a correspondent signing himself "Organised Co-operation", in which a very elaborate plan is sketched out for ascertaining the opinion of the nation and following out in unison the programme arrived at. The scheme is, we fear, more elaborate than practicable. If the suggestion originally put forward by the Nationalists of the creation of Congress electorates had been adopted, such a plebiscite might have been possible; as it is, the necessary machinery does not exist. Moreover, such an all-India plebiscite covering the whole field of politics, even if it were possible, would neither be useful nor necessary. The national programme has already been fixed by the Calcutta Congress and there is no need of a further plebiscite to decide it; in Bengal at least it has been universally accepted, with additions, and reaffirmed by the District Conferences and District Committees appointed to carry it out. Our correspondent seems to have misapprehended the nature and object of a plebiscite. A plebiscite can only be on a single definite and supreme issue, the decision of which is so important that the ordinary representative assemblies cannot undertake the responsibility of a final decision. A plebiscite on a whole programme is an impossibility. Neither would it be binding. Bengal, for instance, is practically unanimous for Boycott. If the majority of votes went against Boycott, would Bengal accept the decision and tamely submit to repression? Or if the majority were for Boycott, would Bombay City agree to carry out the decision? We sympathise with the hankering for united action but united action is only possible in so much of the programme as all are agreed upon; it is not possible in those matters on which opinion is still widely divided.

The Bengal Government's Letter

The *Statesman* has recently become a confirmed sensation-monger and treats the public continually to its thick-coming opium visions. It has recently brought out a sensational statement about Government proceedings against the Nationalist Press in which a Bengal Government letter to three Calcutta journals received almost a fortnight ago, the recent Police raid on the Keshab Press, the *Bande Mataram*'s posters and some luxuriant imaginings of the *Statesman*'s own riotous fancy have been mingled together in wild confusion. We were one of the recipients of the Bengal Government's letter, and if we have not written on the subject, it is simply because the letter was marked confidential. Now, however, that the matter has got abroad, we may as well correct certain inaccuracies which have appeared not only in the *Statesman*'s bit of romancing, but in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*'s correction. It is entirely untrue that on Monday afternoon or any other afternoon, evening or morning "a notice was served upon the proprietors, editor, manager and printer of this paper to the effect that proceedings would be adopted against them under section 124A and the other sections dealing with seditious publications, unless they moderated their tone". On Saturday before last, if our memory serves us, we received a communication from the Bengal Government addressed to the Editor, *Bande Mataram*, in which we were informed that the Lieutenant-Governor had had under consideration certain articles (not specified) recently published in our paper "the language of which was a direct incitement to violence and breach of the peace". This sort of language the Bengal Government was determined to put a stop to, but before taking action they were gracious enough to give us a warning to mend our ways. That is all. It is not true either that a conference was held with the directors or that the manager interviewed the legal advisers of the Company in connection with the notice. No such conference or interview was held for the simple reason that none was necessary. The Editorial Department is solely responsible for the policy of the paper and they have no need to consult lawyers about their duty to the public. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* is therefore wrongly informed when it says that legal opinion has been taken and given in the matter. It is true that legal opinion is being taken by the Company, but it is on a point of law which arose previous to the receipt of the Bengal Government's letter and is entirely unconnected with it. The *Statesman* has also absurdly distorted the "proceedings against the *Yugantar* and *Nabasakti*". No proceedings have been instituted. The police while searching the Keshab Press for manuscripts in connection with the pamphlet *Sonar Bangla* — which has, by the way, no connection with the Hare Street mare's nest — stumbled on the forms of the *Yugantar* then being printed. The Keshab Press is being proceeded against, but it is doubtful whether anything will be done to the *Yugantar*, as the printing of a paper in part or whole at another press in emergency is so common an occurrence that, even if it be a technical offence, which is not certain, to prosecute it would be purely vindictive. In any case the *Yugantar* business is not, as the *Statesman* represents, the first step in a campaign against the Nationalist Press. Our own position is very simple. The articles to which the Bengal Government refers, are, we presume, those in which we called upon the Hindus to defend their temples and their women from insult and outrage. Every Hindu paper at the time did the same, even the *Indian Mirror* and the *Indian Nation*, and we do not think we did anything more than our plain duty to our countrymen. The Lieutenant-Governor, however, takes exception not to the purport of our articles but to their language — which was less violent than what English papers would have used if a similar campaign of outrage on European women had been in progress. Be that as it may, the occasion has passed and until it is repeated, the question of complying or not complying with the warning does not arise. We merely note it and pass on.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 21st, 1907 }

British Justice

There has been much to edify and instruct in the recent antics of the bureaucracy and, in the light of the object lessons they present, the people of India have been revising old ideas and outworn superstitions with a healthy rapidity. The belief in British liberalism, in the freedom of the Press, in the freedom of the platform, in the Pax Britannica, in the political honesty of Mr. John Morley and many other cherished shibboleths have departed into the limbo of forgotten follies. But the greatest fall of all has been the fall of the belief in the imperturbable impartiality of British justice. There are two kinds of strain which no empire, however firmly bound in triple and quadruple bands of steel, can long bear; the strain of a burden of taxation which the people no longer find bearable and the strain of a series of perversions of justice which destroy all faith in the motives of the governing authorities. Justice and protection between man and man, between community and community, between rulers and ruled is the main object for which States exist, for which men submit to the restrictions of the law and to an equitable assessment of the expenses of the machinery which provides for protection and justice. But if the assessment of the expenses is grossly unjust, if the expenses themselves are exorbitantly high, if the revenue is spent on ways of which the taxpayers do not approve, then protection and justice are bought at a price which is not worth paying. And if in addition the protection is denied and the justice withheld, then the very object of the existence of a State ceases to be satisfied and from that moment the governing power, unless it can retrace its steps, is doomed by the inevitable operation of nature.

The bureaucrats who misgovern us at the present moment have totally forgotten these simple truths. Otherwise we would not have witnessed such scandalous scenes as are now being enacted at Rawalpindi or the gross infringements of equity and justice which are of frequent occurrence in Bengal. The amazing incidents of the Rawalpindi riot case are such as have hardly been paralleled in British India. The refusal of bail, which was the first scandal, has evidently become a part of bureaucratic policy. It is a sound principle of procedure that bail should not be refused except under exceptional conditions, such as the probability of the accused absconding, otherwise in a protracted case an innocent man may suffer seriously for the sole offence of being accused. In the Rawalpindi case there was not the least possibility of men like Lala Hansraj, Gurdas Ram or Janaki Nath absconding from justice and the apprehension of further riots in a city commanded by siege-guns and crowded with military was a contemptible and hollow pretence. Yet without hearing the case, on the mere statement of the prosecuting officials, the Chief Court of the Punjab, supposed to be the highest repository of impartial British Justice, prejudged the accused, declared them guilty and refused bail. This is British law and British justice! Again in the course of the present trial, although it was proved beyond dispute that the prisoners were suffering terribly in health as the result of a detention in which they are being deliberately subjected to unnecessary discomfort and privation, although, if there was ever any shadow of justification for the refusal of bail, even that shadow had by this time utterly vanished, yet on the strength of the airy persiflage of a Civil Surgeon the relief to which they were entitled was refused. This gentleman held the view that the sufferings of the accused were not due to their detention and seems to be of the opinion that men of means and gentle nurture are rather in the habit of shedding several pounds of flesh off and on without apparent cause. And so the unfortunate martyrs, for the crime of being patriots, are punished with a long term of imprisonment before any offence has been proved against them. This too is British law and British justice. From the point of view of the executive it may no doubt be said that since the accused have to be punished whether they are guilty or innocent, it does not much matter whether their punishment begins before or after their conviction. That is good reasoning from the point of view of a bureaucratic executive, but not from that of a judicial authority. The refusal of bail to the Rawalpindi pleaders is one of the most deadly of the many wounds which the bureaucracy have been recently dealing to their own moral prestige and reputation for justice. The same spirit has been shown in the refusal of bail to Pindi Das, editor of *India*, and to Lala Dinanath of the *Hindustan.* In the latter case there is absolutely no excuse whatever for the refusal, except the vindictive fury of bureaucratic persecution which will omit no means however petty and base to make its opponents suffer.

But the most glaringly, paradoxically unsound case of all has occurred in our own midst. Srijut Girindranath Sen received at the hands of British justice a sentence of monstrous severity for a trifling offence. This same British justice being moved to set aside the conviction and sentence, was graciously pleased to give the accused a chance of disproving the offence, but at the same time, in the plenitude of its justice and wisdom, refused to give him bail. In other words it admitted that the accused might be innocent, but at the same time decided that he must undergo a monstrously disproportionate punishment for a trifling offence of which it was admittedly doubtful whether he ever committed it! And then when the punishment had been served out, British justice lent a gracious and leisurely ear and admitted that this Swadeshi Volunteer Captain was very probably innocent, but as he had suffered punishment for his innocence, it was not necessary to go any further into the matter. This too is British law and British justice. If all this does not convince the Indian people that the British sense of justice is most marvellous and unique and *sui generis* and without any peer or parallel in the world, it must indeed be hard-hearted and dull of soul. For our part we are ready to acclaim British justice with hymns of adoration and praise. Hail, thou ineffable, incomprehensible, indescribable, unspeakable British Justice! Hail, thou transcendent mystery. *Tubhyam bhuyistham nama uktim vidhema.*

The Moral of the Coconada Strike

That the weapon of passive resistance is sometimes a match even for sword and bayonet, not to speak of milder instruments of repression, is being evidenced in the strike of the shipping coolies at Coconada. We may have to resort to this means of protest for some time to come until the Britishers so far forget themselves as to begin firing on strikers and boycotters — a contingency for which the country should now learn to be prepared. If the despot still entertains some doubt as to the working of the time-spirit, it should be set at rest by the instinctive resort of the Coconada coolies to a wholesale strike as an effective protest against the arrest of some of their own people for alleged participation in a riot. The drafting of the military and the punitive police to the locality has perhaps strengthened their firmness. The *Englishman* while alarmed at this unexpected combination among the lower class, hopes that the strike is not political in its character. This comfortable deduction has provoked a sort of subdued laughter from the Madras *Hindu*. Events alone make men wise. The opinion that is today punished and ridiculed as mere heresy, has its ratification tomorrow in experience. Our moderate contemporary now sees eye to eye with the Nationalists when it says, “If once the lower classes of the people begin to know and feel their real strength and power, it will be difficult to predict the results that would follow. No prudent administrator would, in our opinion, tempt the bringing into play of the capacity for combination which the lower strata of people have. They cannot be cowed down into submission with half the ease and celerity with which the educated classes can be brought down by the display of military strength.” The whole plan of Nationalist campaign rests on the basis of this potential strength of the people which does not require for its reawakening years of mass education as is contended by the

Moderates, but only tangible instances of bureaucratic highhandedness. Education in the ordinarily accepted sense is not a very effective means of national regeneration, as the *Hindu* itself admits. The responsiveness of untampered and unsophisticated nature, its want of calculation and its speedy decision have to be turned to advantage.

Thus the Coconada strike comes handy with its moral to dispel another of our superstitions.

The *Statesman* on Shooting

While Mr. John Morley was being cross-examined by the Nationalist and Labour members in Parliament and was answering in his usual style of Demigod *plus* Aristides the Just *plus* Louis XIV of France *plus* the Archangel Gabriel, the tiger qualities of an imperial race suddenly awoke in the breast of Sir Howard Vincent and roared out, "Why not shoot Lajpat Rai?" In that single trenchant sentence the warlike Knight gave a sudden illuminating expression to the heart's desire of all Anglo-India and two-thirds of England. It was not decorous, it was not politic, but it was frank and sincere. Yesterday the Friend of India noticed the incident with great sympathy for Sir Howard Vincent's feelings, but it could not altogether approve of applying his panacea just at present. The Friend, however, looks forward to a day when the shooting will begin; it invites the attention of the Indian reactionaries — whoever they may be — to this bloodcurdling Howard Vincent war-whoop and warns them that this is the prospect before them if a Tory Government comes into power while the present unrest continues. By its Indian reactionaries the Friend probably means not Nawab Salimullah and the *Mihir Sudhakar*, but the Democratic Nationalist party in India; for the Friendly language must be usually interpreted by contraries, and it is quite natural for one who calls the *Statesman* a Friend of India to call democracy and nationalism reactionary. Let us assure the Friend however that the Nationalist party have from the beginning envisaged the possibility of the shooting being started; they did not need a Howard Vincent to open their eyes to it. The defenders of the established order of things have attempted almost every form of Russian repression except the taking of life. Deportation, condemnation without trial, punishment before conviction, flogging, the gagging of press and platform, police hooliganism, the employment of a Black Hundred, brutal personal persecution in jail and *hajat*, have all been attempted though not as yet on the Russian scale. When all these methods have been found ineffective, it is quite possible that the order "do not hesitate to shoot" may go out; already in the Punjab the threat has been used to prevent public meetings. The Friend of India is greatly mistaken if he thinks that his menaces will have any better effect than his abuse and cajolings: it is a wild dream for him to hope that any power can make Indian Nationalism fall down and kiss the feet of Archangel John.

Mr. A. Chaudhuri's Policy

Mr. Ashutosh Chaudhuri has used the opportunity given to him by his selection for the chair of the Pabna Conference to make a personal pronouncement of policy. This is the second time that Mr. Chaudhuri has had an opportunity of this kind, the first being the Provincial conference at Burdwan. On that occasion he made a pronouncement which indicated a new departure in politics and created some flutter in the Congress dovecotes. It would not be accurate to say that the Burdwan pronunciamento influenced the course of affairs; the propounder of the new policy, if such it could be called, had not sufficient weight of personality to become the leader of a new party, nor was his policy either definite enough or sound enough to attract a following. But it had a certain importance. It was the immature self-expression of ideas and forces which had been gathering head in the country and groping about for means of entry into the ordinary channels of political action and expression. It was rather the prophecy of a new turn in Indian politics than itself a policy already understood and matured. The prophet himself was perhaps the one who least understood his own prophecy. The confusion of his ideas was shown soon afterwards by his identifying himself with the old current of Congress politics and thus turning his back on the two main positions in his Burdwan speech, the repudiation of mendicant politics and the dictum that a subject nation has no politics. He left it to others to develop the political ideas he had dimly and imperfectly outlined and give them a definite shape embodied in a clear political programme. Still more forcibly is this lack of comprehension evidenced by Mr. Chaudhuri's attempt to revert, with modifications, to his

Burdwan ideas even after the momentous changes of the last three years. He has once more reverted to his dictum that a subject nation has no politics; he once more proposes that we should give up our political agitation; once more he puts forward self-help as a substitute. When he spoke at Burdwan, industrial expansion was the idea of the day and Mr. Chaudhuri offered it to us as a substitute for political mendicancy. Today Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education are the ideas of the day and Mr. Chaudhuri offers them as a substitute for the struggle for Swaraj.

We do not wish to overrate the importance of Mr. Chaudhuri's pronouncements. Mr. Chaudhuri is not a political leader with a distinct following in the country who are likely to carry out his ideas. He is a sort of Rosebery of Bengal politics, a brilliant, cultured amateur, who catches up certain thoughts or tendencies that are in the air and gives them a more or less striking expression, but he has not the qualities of a politician — robustness, backbone, the ability to will a certain course of action and the courage to carry it out. He has intellectual sensitiveness, but not intellectual consistency. Suave, affable, pliable, essentially an amiable and cultured gentleman, he is unfit for the rough and tumble of political life, especially in a revolutionary period; no man who shrinks from struggle or is appalled by the thought of aggression can hope to seize and lead the wild forces that are rising to the surface in twentieth-century India. But this very knack of catching up however partially the moods of the moment gives a certain interest to Mr. Chaudhuri's pronouncements which make them worth examining.

When Mr. Chaudhuri at Burdwan pronounced against the mendicant policy he was voicing two distinct and various currents of political tendency. The opprobrious term of mendicancy was applied to the old Congress school of politics not because remonstrance and protest are in themselves wrong and degrading, but because in the circumstances of modern India a policy of prayer, petition and protest without the sanction of a great irresistible national force at its back was bound to pauperise the energy of the nation and to accustom it to a degrading dependence. It was not only a waste of energy but a sapping of energy, and it was ruinous to manhood and self-respect. But the recognition of this fact only led to another problem. If we did not sue to others for help, we must help ourselves; if we did not depend on the alien's mercies, we must depend on our own strength. But how was that strength to be educated? Again, when we had decided that a subject nation has no politics, what then? Were we to renounce the birthrights inherent in our manhood and leave the field to the bureaucratic despotism or were we to resolve to cease to be a subject nation so that we might recover the right and possibility of political life and activity? There were two currents of political thought growing up in the country. One, thoughtful, philosophic, idealistic, dreamed of ignoring the terrible burden that was crushing us to death, of turning away from politics and educating our strength in the village and township, developing our resources, our social, economic, religious life regardless of the intrusive alien; it thought of inaugurating a new revolution such as the world had never yet seen, a moral, peaceful revolution, actively developing ourselves but only passively resisting the adversary. But there was another current submerged as yet, but actively working underneath, which tended in another direction, — a sprinkling of men in whom one fiery conviction replaced the cultured broodings of philosophy and one grim resolve took the place of political reasoning. The conviction was that subjection was the one curse which withered and blighted all our national activities, that so long as that curse was not removed it was a vain dream to expect our national activities to develop themselves successfully and that only by struggle could our strength be educated to action and victory. The resolve was to rise and fight and fall and again rise and fight and fall waging the battle for ever until this once great and free nation should again be great and free. It was this last current which boiled up to the surface in the first vehemence of the anti-Partition agitation, flung out the challenge of boycott and plunged the Bengali nation into a struggle with the bureaucracy which must now be fought out till the end.

All were carried away in the tide of that great upheaval;

but it is needless to say that this was not what the advocates of self-help pure and simple had contemplated, Mr. Chaudhuri least of all. He very early identified himself with the small knot of older leaders who from time to time struggled with the tide and tried to turn it back; but until now the tide was too strong for them. For a moment, however, the rush has been checked by superhuman efforts of repression on the part of the panic-stricken bureaucracy and it is natural that those who were not with their whole heart and conviction for the struggle for Swaraj, should begin to revert to their old ideas, to long to give up the struggle, to retreat into the fancied security of their fortress of unpolitical Swadeshism and a policy of self-help which seeks to ignore the unignorable. The tendency is to cry, "The old policy is a failure, the Briton has revealed his true nature; the new policy is a failure, we have not strength to meet the giant power of the bureaucracy; let them have the field, let us quietly pursue our own salvation in the peaceful Ashrams of Swadeshism and self-help." Mr. Ashutosh Chaudhuri with his keen intellectual sensitiveness has felt this tendency in the air and given it expression. It is a beautiful and pathetic dream. We will develop our manufacture, boycott foreign goods, of course in a quite friendly and non-political spirit, and England will look quietly on while its trade is being ruined! We will ignore the Government and build up our own centres of strength in spite of it, a Government the whole principle and condition of whose existence is that there shall be no centre of strength in the country except itself! Mr. Chaudhuri's policy would be an excellent one if he could only remove two factors from the political problem, first, Indian Nationalism, secondly, the British Government. And how does he propose to remove them? By shutting his eyes to their existence. Ignore the Government, dissociate yourselves from the men of violence — and the thing is done. Such is the political wisdom of Mr. Ashutosh Chaudhuri.

A Current Dodge

Referring to the transfer to other places of Mr. Barneville and Maulavi Faizuddin Hossein who tried cases of looting in Jamalpur and recorded as their opinion that the riots were not provoked by Hindu boycotters and National volunteers, even the *Hindu Patriot* which has never been friendly to the Nationalist movement writes —

"Transferring judges and magistrates whose decisions differ from the settled policy or preconceived views of the Executive officials, is a current dodge whereby the ends of justice are sought to be subordinated to political or other considerations. And this is but another very forcible illustration of the evils of the combination of Judicial and Executive functions, and it also explains the reason why there is so much opposition to the separation of the duties. All the same however, we may frankly observe here that any attempt to destroy the integrity of the law-courts will deepen the anxiety which is being manifested on all sides. It is the proverbial impartiality of British justice which is prized more than anything else."

But this current dodge is played not by the local executive officials but by the higher bureaucracy and need not be an argument in favour of the separation of Judicial and Executive functions. Our contemporary's attempt to smother facts in a profusion of side-issues cannot deceive those who can read between the lines. We must congratulate him all the same on this sudden flash of intelligent outspokenness. But our contemporary need not feel anxious about "the proverbial impartiality of British justice". The proverb is badly in need of a change. And as we said yesterday when referring to many cherished shibboleths of the people departing into the limbo of forgotten follies, the greatest fall has been the fall of the belief in the imperturbable impartiality of British justice. The transfer of Mr. Barneville and the Maulavi is only another count in the indictment.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 24th, 1907 }

More about British Justice

We commented the other day on the policy of refusing bail which has recently been adopted by the bureaucracy in a spirit of petty vindictiveness and the scandalous manner in which men accused of political offences are being punished before conviction. Of course it is all under the law, but that only proves the contention we have always advanced that the criminal law in this country on which our rulers pride themselves, is barbarous, oppressive and semi-mediaeval in its spirit and that its provisions are governed far more by the principle of repressing the spirit of the people than by the principle of protecting the citizen. Moreover, in all judicial administration there are two elements, the letter of the law on one side, a humane and equitable practice on the other. To suspend the latter in favour of the former shows an oppressive and tyrannical spirit. The letter of the law enables the Government to appeal against any and every acquittal in a criminal case; equitable practice forbids it to take advantage of this barbarous provision except in important cases where it is convinced there has been a serious miscarriage of justice. But the first principle of bureaucratic rule in India is repression, to crush the spirit of the people and keep them down with the strong hand. Every acquittal is therefore considered by the executive a defeat to Government prestige and resented. Unless therefore there is a strong and independent High Court, the habit of appealing against acquittals is bound to become a standing feature of British justice. But the idea of a strong and independent High Court is becoming more and more a legend of the past. Future generations will be as sceptical of the possibility of its ever having existed as the modern world is of the existence of gnomes and fairies.

There is another equitable practice which has been violated with the most cynical openness in the Rawalpindi trial. It is a sound principle of legal procedure that the accused should not be hampered in his defence but on the contrary should receive every legitimate facility. The unjust judge who denies proper facilities of defence to a man whose life or liberty, honour or reputation is imperilled by an accusation which may be false or mistaken, the hanging judge whose diseased brain and morbid temperament are consumed with the desire to have the accused convicted, are survivals of mediaeval barbarity. Such men are the lineal descendants of Jeffreys and Torquemada. In England such men are rarities upon the Bench; in India especially among Civilian Magistrates and Judges, they are not uncommon. In England the prosecuting Counsel will seldom throw unnecessary difficulties in the way of the defence, in India it is too common for the prosecuting Counsel to regard the defence as an enemy to be beaten down and out-manoeuvred by any means which the technicalities of the law leave open to him. For the atmosphere is different. The spirit of bureaucracy in all countries tends to be narrow, hard and domineering, but in a country where a small alien element subsists in a huge native mass partly by the maintenance of a hypnotic illusion, partly by a cold legal repressive severity, ubiquitous and watchful to crush down every least unit of strength in the indigenous population, this temper is immensely heightened and exaggerated. Everybody knows that in the local administration of the law in this country conviction, not impartial justice, is the object. A Subordinate Magistrate is rated not by the soundness of his judgments but by the percentage of convictions to the total number of cases he has tried, and it is by this test that he is promoted. In that single fact we find the true and fundamental tendency of British justice in India.

When such is the spirit even in the ordinary administration of the law, it can easily be imagined to what lengths this spirit of semi-mediaeval barbarity is likely to be carried when political considerations are imported. To get justice in a Swadeshi case is nowadays almost impossible; even in the High Court only one or two judges have managed to keep a judicial frame of mind in relation to political cases. This is of course natural and inevitable. A struggle is going on between the ruling bureaucracy and the people of the country, and every judge or magistrate is a servant of the bureaucracy, generally a member of it and very often himself one of the caste and race whose monopoly of power is threatened. In his eyes the accused in a political case is not an ordinary accused but a rebel prisoner of war; he may not be guilty of the offence with which he is charged, but he is guilty of Swadeshism, he is guilty of being an opponent of the Government established by law. His punishment is therefore desirable in the interests of the ruling class and in the judge's own interests as a servant and member of that class. The judge is really a party to the case. It is not to be expected that in such circumstances any facilities will be allowed to the defence beyond what the letter of the law and bare decency require. A few magistrates may rise superior to these considerations, but the majority cannot be reasonably asked to do so. They are after all human beings — and Englishmen.

Still there is a limit, there is something due to decency, and at Rawalpindi it seems to us that the limit has been overpassed and the dues have been denied. We have nothing to say as to the guilt or the innocence of the men under trial. We will assume that they are guilty, we will assume that their conviction is a thing settled. But still until the trial is over, they are in law regarded as men who are possibly innocent and should be allowed ordinary facilities to prove their innocence. One of the principal safeguards of accused innocents in India is the necessity of identification under stringent rules which prevent collusion between the police and the witnesses. In the Rawalpindi trial it has been repeatedly stated that the identification has been a scandalous farce; the prisoners have been under police custody all the time and have been repeatedly shown to the witnesses in the jail, and as if this were not enough, the police in Court are allowed to make signs to the witnesses so that they may be sure to identify the right persons. These statements have not been denied. They may be true or they may be false; but when such statements are advanced by the defence, it is the duty of an impartial judge to inquire into them and take every precaution against the barest possibility of such practices. Piteous complaints have been made by several of the accused of police violence and cruelty in *hajat*. Into this also no inquiry has been made and the only answer the unfortunate men have received is a rough and uncivil command to keep silence.

If this were all, it would be scandalous enough, but the recent developments have been still more staggering. A hooligan crusade has been started against the pleaders for the defence, so shamelessly persistent and open as to drive them to throw up their briefs. Sirdar Beant Singh's house has been invaded, himself and his brother brutally assaulted, his ladies' apartments entered and an ornament snatched from the person of his wife. While these brutal outrages were being committed, the police remained quiet in their *thana* which is in the same compound as the Sirdar's house and made no attempt to give assistance, nor do we hear of any attempt to trace and punish the miscreants. The houses of other defence pleaders have been exposed to a campaign of theft and pilfering and none of them is safe against a repetition of the kind of intimidation which has been used against Beant Singh. All India has drawn its own conclusions from these singular occurrences, for indeed, the conclusions are not difficult to draw.

But the crowning scandal of all was the treatment of the witness Abdullah. It is possible that seditious speeches were delivered by the accused, but it is certain that the amazing literal unanimity of the witnesses has created, rightly or wrongly, an impression that their evidence was given according to police dictation. When, therefore, a Mahomedan witness actually declared in the witness box that his first evidence has been given under fear of the police, it was obvious that the whole foundation of the prosecution case was threatened; for the example of recantation might easily be followed. Then ensued a scene which we hope, for the credit of humanity at large, has never had a parallel in recent judicial history. Immediately the prosecuting counsel leaps up and demands that this inconvenient witness be at once prosecuted for perjury and handed over to the tender mercies of the police against whom he has given evidence; immediately the judge complies with this amazing demand; immediately the unfortunate witness is hustled out of court into the grip of the police. It is not surprising that the miserable Abdullah should recant his recantation and balance his charge against the police by a charge against the leading pleader for the defence. And this too is British law and British justice. Nay, it is the climax, the apex, the acme, the culminating point which British justice has reached in this too fortunate country. After all, the British Empire must be saved at any cost.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 25th, 1907 }

Morleyism Analysed

The fuller reports of Mr. Morley's speech to hand by mail do not in any essential point alter the impression that was produced by *Reuter*'s summary. The whole of the speech turns upon a single sentence as its pivot — the statement that British rule will continue, ought to continue and must continue. Mr. Morley does not say for ever, but that is understood. It follows that if the continuance of British rule on any terms is the fundamental necessity, any and every means used for its preservation is legitimate. Compared with that supreme necessity justice does not matter, humanity does not matter, truth does not matter, morality may be trampled on, the laws of God may be defied. The principles of Liberalism, though they may have been professed a thousand times over, must be discarded by the English rulers of India as inapplicable to a country of "300 millions of people, composite, heterogeneous, of different races with different histories and different faiths". All these things weigh as dust in the balance against the one supreme necessity. If the continuance of British rule seems to be threatened by any popular activity however legitimate, resort must be had to any weapon, no matter of what nature, in order to put down that activity. Reasons of State, "the tyrant's plea, necessity", must be held to be of supreme authority and to override all other considerations. Mr. Morley admits that the plea is a dangerous one, but sedition is still more dangerous. The danger of the reason of State is that it can cover and will inevitably be stretched to cover the repetition of "dangers, mischiefs and iniquities in our olden history and, perhaps, in our present history"; in other words Mr. Morley's reasoning in favour of the present "iniquities" in India can equally well be used to justify every utmost atrocity, cruelty, vileness with which tyrants ancient or modern have attempted to put down opposition to their sovereign will. Wholesale deportation, arbitrary imprisonment, massacre, outrage, police anarchy, torture of prisoners, every familiar feature of Russian repression, can be brought under the head of weapons necessary to combat sedition and can be justified by the plea of State necessity. This is the danger of reason of State, a danger that recent events in India and especially current events in the Punjab show to be by no means so remote as we might have some months ago imagined. But the danger of sedition is the cessation of British rule. And in the opinion of Mr. Morley, supported by an almost unanimous consensus of British opinion, the reenactment by a British government of the iniquities and atrocities of ancient and modern tyranny are preferable to the cessation of British rule; it is better to take the risk of these than to take the risk of losing the absolute control of Britain over India. This is Mr. Morley's argument, approved by Conservative and Radical alike. No, we are not distorting or exaggerating. There it is, plump and plain, in the speech of the great British Radical, the Liberal philosopher, the panegyrist of Burke and Gladstone. It is the last word of England to India on the great issue of Indian self-government.

What does Mr. Morley mean by British rule? Not the British connexion, not the continuance of India as a self-governing unit in a federation of free peoples which shall be called the British Empire. No, Mr. Morley is quite as hostile to the Moderate ideal of self-government on colonial lines, modified Swaraj, as to the Nationalist ideal of Swaraj pure and simple. The educated minority in India have the presumption to think themselves capable of working the government of the country as smoothly as the heaven-born Briton himself, but Mr. Morley is persuaded that they would not work it for a week. This is final. If after a hundred years of English education and no inconsiderable training in the subordinate conduct of the bureaucratic machinery of government, the educated class are not fit to be entrusted even by gradual stages with the supreme government of Indian affairs, then they will never be fit. And we must remember that the policy of the rulers henceforth will be to control and restrict and not to encourage or promote the spread of education of the higher sort. From our own point of view, we may put it more strongly and say that if a hundred years of dependence and foreign control have so immensely impaired that governing capacity of the Indian races which they showed with such splendid results for the last three thousand years, then another century will absolutely and for ever destroy it. Mr. Morley is therefore logically justified in reiterating his conviction that personal and absolute foreign control must be the leading feature of Indian administration to the very end of time. This is what Mr. Morley means by the continuance of British rule, he means the continuance of a personal and absolute British control pervading the administration of affairs in every department, in other words, a bureaucratic despotism strongly flavoured by the independent personal omnipotence of local governors and local officials. The problem which former British statesmen professed to have before them was the problem of gradually training and associating the Indians in an European system of government until they were fit to take over absolute control of affairs and allow their patrons and protectors to withdraw. This problem does not any longer trouble the peace of British statesmen; on the contrary it is definitely and for ever disclaimed and put aside as a chimera — or a pretence. British rule in India will continue, ought to continue and must continue. What then is the problem which is troubling Mr. Morley? The problem is "the difficulty of combining personal government in our dependency with the rights of free speech and free meeting". Personal government, absolute government, despotism, that is the supreme necessity which must be continued for ever even at the sacrifice of morality, justice and every other consideration. Subject to that necessity Mr. Morley proposes to allow a certain amount of free speech if that be possible. Free speech was harmless so long as the Indian people had not set their heart on self-government; but now that they are resolved to have nothing short of self-government, free speech means seditious speech, and sedition is not consistent with the continuance of the absolute and personal British control. How then can free speech and British despotism be combined? How can fire and water occupy the same space? That is the problem, which Mr. Morley refuses to believe insoluble, and he solves it by proclaiming the areas where free speech has been chiefly employed, — and by establishing an Advisory Council of Notables.

It may be asked, if the continuance of absolute government is the whole policy of British statesmanship, why does Mr. Morley trouble himself about free speech at all or propose any reforms? That question can be easily answered by a consideration of the suggested reforms. The first of these reforms is a Council of Notables. Mr. Morley has told us what is the object of this body; it is to be a sort of medium of communication between the Government and the people. Of course Mr. Morley is quite mistaken in supposing that such a body can really serve the object he has in view, but we are concerned for the present not with the sufficiency of the means he is devising for his object, but with the object itself. The second reform is an expansion of the Legislative Councils and greater facilities to the elected members for the expression of their views; in other words the object of the expanded Legislative Councils is to keep the Government in India in touch with the views of the educated class. The third reform is the admission of Indian members to the India Council, and it is obvious that here again the object is that these Indian members should keep the Government in England in touch with the opinions of educated India, just as the elected members of the Legislative Councils are to keep the Government in India in touch with the same opinion. The fourth reform is the decentralisation of the administration so that each local official may become an independent local despot. The object is clearly defined; first, to give him greater opportunities of being in touch with the people, secondly, to give him a greater power of personal despotic control within his own jurisdiction unhampered by the interference of higher authorities. All the reforms have one single object, one governing idea, — an absolute personal despotic British control *in touch with the people*. That is Mr. Morley's policy.

The object of keeping in touch with the people and knowing their opinions is not to redress their grievances, still less to allow their opinions any control over the administration. The object is quite different. A despotism out of touch with the people is a despotism continually in danger; ignorant of the currents of opinion, ignorant of the half-visible activities among its subjects, ignorant of the perils gathering in the vast obscurity, it must one day be suddenly surprised and perhaps overthrown by the unforeseen outburst of activities and dangers it had not anticipated. It is in order to avoid these dangers that Mr. Morley wishes to employ various means of keeping in touch with public opinion and its manifestations. He talks in his speech of the necessity of the rulers putting themselves in the skins of the ruled, in other words, of thoroughly understanding their thoughts, feelings and point of view. This does not mean that they shall rule India according to the sentiments, views and wishes of the Indian people. The whole conduct of Mr. Morley and the whole trend of his utterances show that he means the opinions of the Government to prevail without regard to Indian opinions and sentiments. The rulers are to understand the ruled so that they may know how their measures are likely to affect the minds of the latter, how opposition can best be persuaded or *samjaoed* into quiescence and how, if persuasion is useless, it can most swiftly and successfully be crushed. Through the Council of Notables, the Legislative Councils and the Indian members of the India Council, the Government will come to know the ideas, views and feelings of the people; through the two former bodies they will try to present unpopular measures in such a way as to coax, cajole, delude or intimidate public opinion into a quiet acceptance. If they cannot do this, then through the decentralised local officers they can keep in touch with the popular temper, learn its manifestations and activities and successfully and promptly put down opposition by local measures, if possible, otherwise by imperial rescripts, laws and ordinances and every possible weapon of despotic repression.

We have analysed Mr. Morley's speech at length, because people in India have not the habit of following the turns of British parliamentary eloquence or reading between the lines of the speech of a Cabinet Minister. They are therefore likely to miss its true bearings and fail to understand the policy it enunciates. Read by an eye accustomed to the reservations and implications by which a British Minister makes himself intelligible without committing himself unnecessarily, Mr. Morley's speech is an admirably clear, connected, logical and, let us add, unusually and amazingly frank expression of a very straightforward and coherent policy. To maintain in India an absolute rule as rigid as any Czar's, to keep that rule in close touch with the currents of Indian sentiment, opinion and activity and to crush any active opposition by an immediate resort to the ordinary weapons of despotism, ordinances, deportations, prosecutions and a swift and ruthless terrorism, this is Morleyism as explained by its author.

Political or Non-Political

We are glad to see that both at Jessore and Pabna the foolish idea of excluding politics from a political conference has been entirely abandoned. The attempt to parcel off our national progress into water-tight compartments, the attempts especially to put off political activity and political development to a far-distant area is, when not dictated by weakness or cowardice, a narrow, one-sided and short-sighted attempt. In one sense everything that concerns the welfare of the *polis*, the state or community, is political. Education, social reconstruction, sanitation, industrial expansion, all these are a necessary part of politics; but the most important part of all is that to which the term politics is especially applied, the organisation of the state and its independence; for on these all the others depend. Just as an organism must first live and then attend to other wants and must therefore give the highest importance to the preservation of life, so also a state or nation must first win or maintain an organised independence, otherwise it will find itself baffled in all its attempts to satisfy its other wants. Swadeshi, Boycott, Arbitration, National Education, are all doomed to failure if pursued separately and for their own sake; but as part of a single co-ordinated attempt to attain an organised independence they are the necessity of the present time. They are merely component parts of Swaraj, which is made of all of them put together and harmonised into a single whole. It is mere ostrich politics to pretend to give up Swaraj, and confine oneself to its parts for their own sake. By such an attempt we may succeed in deceiving ourselves; we shall certainly not deceive anybody else.

Hare Street Logic

The *Englishman* has found out a new reason for refusing self-government to Indians on the plea of unfitness. Their unfitness for self-government is shown by their unanimity in demanding self-government. Our contemporary arrives at this conclusion in a way peculiar to himself. Mr. S. M. Mitra, that great and solitary admirer of Anglo-India and all its works, has recently discovered that Mr. R. C. Dutt in his green and callow days held views diametrically opposed to those of his ripe and reflective manhood — views entirely in agreement with official opinion. Now that officials should be unanimous and Mr. Dutt along with them, the *Englishman* thinks quite right and proper; but that Indian politicians should be unanimous and Mr. Dutt along with them is disgraceful and reprehensible. How is it, asks the Hare Street Sir Oracle, that Indians are all agreed about Permanent Settlement and other political questions. It shows they do not think independently about politics and people who do not think independently about politics cannot be fit for self-government. We will ask the *Englishman* one question. If the *Englishman*, the *Daily News* and the *Statesman* were all laid flat on their backs and subjected to the torture called *peine forte et dure*, if, for instance, the Nawab of Dacca were dumped down on the *Englishman*'s chest and Mr. Curshetji upon his master and the Nawab's Maulavi, one after the other added to the heap, and if Mr. N. N. Ghose were similarly seated on the editor of the *Statesman* and Mr. Narendranath Sen on Mr. N. N.

Ghose and Pandit Kaliprasanna Kabyabisharad were piled upon Mr. Sen like Pelion upon Ossa, and the editor of the *Daily News* were similarly treated; then if under this pressure these three jarring powers were to become suddenly unanimous and struck out an appeal to have this loving burden or some of it taken off their chests, — would that prove their inability to think independently? India is suffering economically and politically from the *peine forte et dure* and it is only to be expected that we should be unanimous in requesting that it should be stopped or reduced. But then the *Englishman* is so hard to please. If we differ among ourselves, he cries, "Look, look, you cannot agree among yourselves, and yet you ask for self-government." When we do agree among ourselves he shouts,"Look, look, you cannot disagree among yourselves, and yet you ask for self-government." It is a case of heads I win, tails you lose.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 26th, 1907 }

The Tanjore Students' Resolution

At a meeting of the Tanjore students a resolution was passed exhorting the students and guardians at Rajamundry "to lose no time in starting a National College free from the shackles of the Government". Thus we find Madras students realising the situation better than the students in Bengal who played so prominent a part in the agitation that followed the Partition of Bengal. We have all realised that the education the Government prescribes for our young men is not calculated to help in developing the manhood of the nation. The system of education that prevailed before the passing of the Universities Act was bad enough. But this education as deformed by the provisions of the Act was a direct attempt to stem the tide of political progress in India and produce men minus a backbone. Now that we have realised that to help the growing race consciousness in India we must have a system of education consistent with the traditions of the people and calculated to foster that spirit of Nationalism which alone can make a nation great, it is the duty of every Indian to help the inauguration of such a system of education and place it on a firm footing. The duty becomes all the more sacred in the face of the powerful opposition that such a system of education is sure to encounter at the hands of the bureaucracy whose interests are likely to be injured by it. It is only the unanimous support of the country that can make such an opposition fruitless. And it is a significant sign of the times that students all over the country are realising it. We are sure it will not be long before the whole country is on fire with a desire to strengthen the national system of education that has been inaugurated and the impending struggle against the Risley

Circular will be the precursor of even a greater movement which will make National Education in India an accomplished success.

The *Statesman* on Mr. Chaudhuri

The *Statesman* is naturally delighted with Mr. A. Chaudhuri's declaration in favour of leaving politics out of our programme. Here at least, cries the Friend of India, is a leader after our own heart. No doubt it would be extremely convenient for the Friend of India and its countrymen if Indians did give up their political aspirations and leave Anglo-India in undisputed possession of the field, but we do not think the friendly yearnings of the *Statesman* are likely to be gratified. Mr. Chaudhuri's message fell flat even in his own Pabna. At the same time our contemporary seems hardly to have taken the trouble to understand the speech of his new protege. He fastens on the powerful indictment of the present system of education which is the most striking portion of Mr. Chaudhuri's address, and warmly approves of it. But he mildly rebukes the speaker for pinning his hopes on the new system of National Education which is gradually spreading throughout Bengal and advises him to transfer his affections to the old University. National Education will be a failure, says the Chowringhee prophet; Indians are too selfish and unpatriotic to make it a success. What then is to be done? Why, give up agitating for political reform since our agitation is so obviously a failure and begin agitating for educational reform. It is a luminous idea. After having wasted a century begging the British Government to reform their administration, we are to waste another century begging them to reform their educational system, — with equal futility. The Government cannot give us a reformed and modern system of education for obvious reasons. It would mean the growth of highly trained specialists who would immediately demand to be employed in preference to aliens, and either the bread of so many Europeans would be taken out of their mouths or there would be a fresh cause of discontent. It would equip Indians to oust the white man from his lucrative monopoly of commerce and trade and kill British trade in India by the development of indigenous industries. It would mean the transformation of our people into a highly-trained and well-equipped nation who would certainly not submit to Mr. Morley's personal and absolute British control. Anything short of this would not meet Mr. Chaudhuri's ideal; but anything like this the bureaucracy could not give us without committing suicide. The *Statesman* has not, as we said, cared to understand Mr. Chaudhuri. He is for dropping politics but he is also for self-help and denounces mendicancy. We fear the *Statesman* will have to look farther for its ideal Bengali leader. Why not try Sankaritola?

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 27th, 1907 }

"Legitimate Patriotism"

Lord Minto has given us the historic expression "honest Swadeshi", and it was reserved for an Anglo-Indian publicist to startle the English-knowing world by an equally significant expression, "legitimate patriotism". Honesty, legitimacy and other kindred words of the English vocabulary are being newly interpreted by the Anglo-Indian bureaucrats and publicists. The natural sentiments and aspirations of men are to be regulated according to their convenience and notions.

If you give preference to the indigenous products of the country and ask your friends, relatives and countrymen to do the same, you are dishonest. This is stretching the meaning of honesty to suit the moral sense of our alien and benevolent despots. Today we hear from another Anglo-Indian Sir Oracle, the *Daily News* of Calcutta, that there is such a thing as legitimate patriotism. We have looked up the dictionaries to profit by the enlightenment so kindly vouchsafed to us, but we have failed in our efforts. According to Webster, patriotism covers all activities to zealously guard the *authority* and interests of one's country and we are at a loss to understand how what the Indians have hitherto done or proposed to do to ensure the authority and interests of their country can be stigmatised as illegitimate. We on the contrary believe, and that according to the best authority, that the patriotism which has hitherto wrested from Mr. Morley only an expanded Council with an official majority and a comic advisory Board of Notables, falls far short of the standard of lexicographers. Patriotism will never rest satisfied till it has recovered the authority of the country, however much the Anglo-Indians try to twist its meaning and implication.

If it is patriotic for an Englishman to say, as their greatest poet has said, that this England never did nor shall lie at the proud feet of a conqueror, why should it be unpatriotic and seditious for an Indian to give expression to a similar sentiment? If it is highly patriotic for a Roman "to die in defence of his father's ashes and the temples of his gods", why should it be madness and senseless folly for an Indian to be stirred by a similar impulse? If "self-defence is the bulwark of all rights", as Lord Byron has said, why should an Indian journalist be charged with an attempt to incite to violence when he asks his countrymen of East Bengal to defend the honour of their women at any cost? If Campbell is right in saying that virtue is the spouse of liberty, why should an Indian be exposed to the menace of siege-guns when entering on a legitimate and lawful struggle for the recovery of his lost freedom? If each noble aim repressed by long control expires at last or feebly mans the soul, why should not our countrymen benefit by the advice of Goldsmith and begin to chafe at the attempt to prolong this alien control? If Tennyson is justified in taking a pride in his country which freemen till, which sober-suited Freedom chose, where girt with friends or foes a man may speak the thing he will, where freedom slowly broadens down from precedent to precedent, why should it be criminal on the part of an Indian to imagine a similar future for the land of his birth? It will not do to fling in our face the mockery of glittering generalities or blazing ubiquities of natural right with which they ridiculed the Declaration of Independence by the American colonists in 1776. Man cannot escape the influence of these glittering generalities and blazing ubiquities; the literatures of peoples who struggled for independence in former ages have always abounded with them and the awakened East must also talk in the same language. When some mighty sentiments dominate the human breast, they give rise to language which runs the risk of being scouted as mere platitude, they give rise to activities and demonstrations which are in danger of being traced to illegitimate sources. The students of Rajamundry wore "Bande Mataram" badges, shouted "Bande Mataram" in the streets, gave a grand reception to a Nationalist speaker, formed themselves into a Balabharat Samiti and the *Daily News* thinks all these to be the outcome of a patriotism hardly legitimate. What is then legitimate patriotism, pray? Our contemporary has given us no light on the point. We suppose it means a blind loyalty to the alien government, a helpless acquiescence in its most despotic measures, bowing our knee to every Anglo-Indian, especially to the dicta of the Editor of the *Indian Daily News* and the *Englishman.* If we do not accept the ethics of the British and Anglo-Indian press which calls the present patriotic movement immoral and ascribes it to the want of moral training in our schools and colleges, we may be guilty according to Anglo-Indian jurisprudence but the higher tribunal to whom alone all oppressed peoples look up, knows their hearts and shapes their destinies accordingly.

Khulna Oppressions

What is the reason of the extraordinary activity of Government oppression in the Khulna District. At the present rate Khulna promises to be the Barisal of West Bengal. A District Conference forbidden and held, a prosecution for sedition against a leading pleader and influential citizen of the chief town of the District, a prosecution of a local Nationalist paper, a summons to all the leading men of a Sub-divisional town to show cause why they should not be bound down because they intend to hold a Conference, this is no bad record in the course of a few weeks. Of course the reason for this official *jehad* against Swadeshi in Khulna is precisely the same as the reason for the *jehad* in Barisal. Barisal has been selected for the most wanton and disgraceful series of oppressions solely because it is *the* district in East Bengal which is best organized for the work of Swadeshi and self-help. It is to break down the organization of Nationalism that the bureaucracy is now struggling with all the resources that a system of arbitrary, absolute, personal rule places at their disposal. Khulna is the first district in West Bengal which has set itself heart and soul to the work of organizing Swadeshi and

Swaraj and Khulna suffers accordingly. This is the real reason of the attempts made by the Khulna officials to stop or punish the holding of Conferences. These District and Sub-divisional Conferences are especially dreaded by the bureaucracy because they know them to be the first step towards organization. We welcome the oppressions in Khulna because they mean the beginning of a true awakening in West Bengal. After its splendidly successful Conference Jessore ought to organize itself as Khulna has been doing. The Twenty-four Parganas and Midnapore will soon follow and as the organization spreads, the oppression will go with it and with the oppression will come the awakening.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 28th, 1907 }

The Secret Springs of Morleyism

The apostasy of John Morley has come as a surprise and a scandal to that numerous class of believers in British professions who looked upon him as an *avatar* of the spirit of philosophic Liberalism. To those who had studied the man at closer quarters there was no disappointment and no surprise. As the *Kesari* pointed out in the early days of his administration, the new Secretary of State might be a philosopher and defend human liberties in his books, but in the India Office he was bound to be a British statesman first of all and defend the continuance of British supremacy in India. But apart from this the whole temper of Mr. Morley's mind and the cast of his opinions made it quite certain that he would never be able to sympathise with the aspirations of our people and their claims to self-government and autonomy. It is true that Mr. Morley talks about the necessity of sympathy as the mainspring of Indian administration, but what is the nature of this sympathy? What Mr. Morley calls sympathy is not really sympathy but the patronising benevolence of the master possessed of absolute powers of life and death who is generous enough to give his bondslave as much education as is good for him: in the process of that education he tries to be as indulgent as possible while reserving his right to scourge him occasionally for his own good and of course to appropriate all the profits of his labour for the master's own purse. The object of the education given to the slave is not to fit him for freedom but to make him a more useful servant and one whose appearance and manners shall reflect credit on the master. Needless to say, this is not sympathy but a very undesirable form of arrogance and selfishness masquerading as benevolence. True sympathy means "putting oneself in another's skin", understanding and appreciating his view of things, his feelings, hopes and aspirations and feeling his struggles and sufferings as one's own. This is the true liberal sentiment, the true liberal enthusiasm which men like Mr. Hyndman feel but which is extremely rare in the so-called Liberal party. Mr. Morley never had this sentiment and enthusiasm, he had only a cold philosophic conviction of the truth of the Liberal view of politics. This conviction depended on a keen intellectual appreciation of the materialistic, agnostic, scientific enlightenment of modern Europe and the governing ideas of the nineteenth century. But the very keenness of this appreciation makes it utterly impossible for Mr. Morley and men like him to understand and sympathise with Asiatics. To them Asia is a home of monstrous religions, barbarous despotisms, grotesque superstitions and a primitive morality. That this half-civilised continent contains peoples as capable of self-government as any European race is a thing which they cannot persuade themselves to believe, Japan notwithstanding. Japan has shown that Asiatic civilisation is equal and in some important respects superior to European, needing only to be modernised and equipped with the mental and material processes invented by European science. She has proved that the capacity Asiatics have shown in organising society and politics under old conditions can be diverted with admirable results to the reorganisation of society and politics under modern conditions. But to minds of the Morley type Japan only presents itself as a freak or an inexplicable exception. The world of Liberalism and enlightenment to which alone liberal philosophy is applicable and in which alone liberal institutions can flourish, is the world of Europe and America which has inherited the legacy of Rome and Greece, of Christianity and rationalistic thought and science. Asia stands outside that charmed enclosure.

That this is the mental attitude of Mr. John Morley is shown by the use which he has made of a certain passage from Mill: "Government by a dominant country is as legitimate as any other if it is one which in the existing state of the civilisation of the subject people most facilitates their transition to our state of civilisation." Now, it is obvious that the case which Mill had in mind was that of a civilisation so inferior that the people possessing it had no capacity to raise themselves or to assimilate for themselves the essentials of a new organization and must be gradually trained up by foreigners; his dictum can have no reference to a great and living civilization like the civilizations of China, Japan and India which have understood and practised organization and self-adaptation to surrounding circumstances for thousands of years and have developed a highly intellectual and ingenious people quick to understand, to imitate and to improve. Japan has reorganized herself without the blessings of foreign rule, China is doing the same, and there is no reason to suppose that there is any constitutional defect in the Indian people which would prevent them from following the example if the alien incubus were removed. In none of these cases would foreign rule facilitate the transition to a modern organization of politics and society; in India it has distinctly retarded it. But the very fact that Mr. Morley applies Mill's dictum to India shows his inability to appreciate Asiatic civilization, character and capacity. He cannot and will not believe that Asiatics can ever be on a level with Europeans or capable of equalling and surpassing them in their own arts and sciences. His view of them is the view of Rudyard Kipling; they are the white man's burden, the lower races, half devil and half child. This attitude of Mr. Morley's is the ingrained, unalterable European sentiment. The rise of Japan is to the European a thing monstrous, incredible, unrealisable; he makes friends with the monster because he has seen its strength, but in his secret heart he chafes and rages against it as a thing intolerable and out of nature. He is prepared to use any and every means to crush Asiatic aspirations. Morality and humanity are meant to be employed in dealing with Asiatics just as much but no more than in dealing with the animal creation. There can be no European respect for Asiatics, no sympathy between them except the "sympathy" of the master for the slave, no peace except that which is won and maintained by the Asiatic sword. East is East and West is West and divided they shall remain; their temporary contact is decreed from time to time so that each may take from the other's civilisation, but the interchange does not bring them nearer to each other. Those who like Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar think that because Europe will take much of India's religion and philosophy, therefore she will learn to love and respect the Indian people, forget that Europe adopted a modified Judaism as her religion, yet hated, despised and horribly persecuted the Jews. European prejudice will always refuse to regard Asiatics as anything but an inferior race and European selfishness will always deny their fitness to enjoy the rights of men until the inevitable happens and Asia once more spews Europe out of her mouth.

A Danger to the State

Mr. Morley has declared from his high archangel's seat that Lajpat Rai was a danger to the State. We wonder what Mr. Morley means by the State. The biographer of Burke must certainly know enough of political science to be aware that a temporary and forcible subjugation of three hundred millions of people by a handful of alien bureaucrats does not constitute an organized state. It is an unnatural condition which can only last so long as the diseases of the body politic engendered by it do not become critical. The people of India, thrilled with new ideas and aspirations, reawakened to self-knowledge and bent on ensuring the continuity in development of their ancient civilization, cannot see their way to assimilate themselves to the alien handful. They demand that the system of government shall be so rearranged that an organized State may again be constituted in India. The leaders in that attempt are the hope of the future State and a danger only to the morbid and unnatural bureaucratic cancer which prevents its growth. Lajpat Rai, says Mr. Morley, may have devoted his time and means to religious and social reforms, but he could not therefore expect immunity for the actions which render him a danger to the State. Now, Lajpat Rai devoted himself to politics in the very same spirit as he devoted himself to religious and social reform. His whole aim was to assist the healthy and free development of this ancient nation and its distinctive civilization. If he subordinated his social and religious activity for the time being to the political, it was from the conviction that the causes of his country's sufferings are political. If he erred, he has erred in company with Mr. Morley. It was the present hope of Anglo-India who tried to refute Professor Seeley and show that the striking amount of happiness which America began to enjoy after her secession from the British Empire was the consequence of that secession. Independence, Mr. Morley argued, not only put the Americans on their mettle, but it left them with fresh views, with a temper of unbounded adaptability, with an infinite readiness to try experiments and free room to indulge it as largely as ever they pleased. Independence alone, he held, and Mr. Chaudhuri and others of his way of thinking should take note of it, can give a stimulus to all the nonpolitical forces which make for the happiness of man. Australia and Canada cannot approach the United States in vigour, originality and spirit, because their national life is circumscribed and provincial. If, therefore, Lajpat Rai devoted himself to the political regeneration of his country and the attainment of autonomy, he was merely carrying out in practice Mr. Morley's political teachings. Why, then, does the teacher turn round and deport his pupil?

The New Thought

Personal Rule and Freedom of Speech and Writing

Mr. John Morley is reported to have delivered himself of the following fatuity: "One of the most difficult experiments ever tried in human history was whether we could carry on personal government along with free speech and free right of public meeting", and he was cheered by the House. He might as well have said, "We are carrying on in India the most difficult experiment of hunting with the hounds and running with the hare", and no doubt he would have been applauded with the same enthusiasm. The average member of Parliament is gifted with no remarkable powers of understanding, and such intelligence as they possess is never drawn upon in elucidation of matters Indian; and as there is a well-understood agreement between the two front benches that no real measure of liberty is to be given to India, the Secretary of State has a most enviable opportunity of saying anything he may please within the strict limits of such agreement about freedom of speech and similar topics, without the least fear of provoking any serious hostile criticism, and Mr. Morley has certainly taken his occasion by both hands.

Any power or privilege in order to deserve the title "free" must be based on the authority of an independent people possessing the supreme and ultimate power of control over its own government. It is this fundamental fact of self-government that must be their origin and sanction, and it is only in this sense that terms like "freedom of conscience" or "freedom of speech" are understood in the countries that actually enjoy them. Their "freedoms" are the concrete expressions, the sacred symbols of the popular will that has realised its sovereignty, and constitute the inviolable limitations under which the executive must work. They stand inaccessibly superior to the needs or wishes of those who actually carry on the government of the country, whose tenure of power primarily rests on their unquestioned submission to the sovereign will and freedom of the people as whose servants they administer. Take the situation in England during the late Boer War as an instance. Throughout that war the Pro-Boers carried on their propaganda all over the country without the least let or hindrance from the Cabinet or the administrative authorities, however much they might have desired to coerce them into silence. John Morley himself was the most outspoken exponent of those who sympathised with the Boers and denounced the war, but no ukase could reach him nor any Emergency Act hurry him out of England.

But when the right of spontaneous articulation comes as a gift from a foreign despotism with no limits on the power of its Executive, instead of proceeding from the consent and conviction of the people governed, it becomes then a mere licence strictly similar in kind to any other of the species, for example, a licence issued by the Excise Department. It is held during pleasure, the giving and the taking of it having not the least reference to the people's wishes. In fact the word "right" has no meaning in a subject country. A right can only be where the people are free, and signifies some inalienable incident of citizenship, the recognition of which is an absolute obligation on the Government. The things that masquerade in a country like India under the name of rights, are only concessions of might qualified by prudence and what is conceded in the prudential exercise of despotic power will be withdrawn out of the same consideration, the people remaining equally helpless before and after. The proclamation that is now brooding in a death-like hush over the Punjab and East Bengal is the amplest confirmation of the foregoing lines and disposes finally of the sickening cant of John Morley about the coexistence of free speech and personal rule. The freedom of a subject race is only the freedom to starve and die, all the rest of its existence being on sufferance from those who govern.

The pseudosophies of the Radical philosopher who now rules our destinies, bear however some ugly results. They give in the first place a splendid opportunity to unblushing journals like the *Times* for insolent dissertations on the enlightened and democratic character of the Government that England has founded in the Orient and for illusory comparisons between the Indian Government and any other Government that might have possibly been established in this country if England had not come to bless her with her beneficent rule, the result of which is to place India in an entirely false light before the civilised world. They also fill the Briton, endowed by Nature with more than the ordinary mortal's share of pride, with an intoxicating sense of exultation as he thinks of the noble work his countrymen are carrying on in India. But far worse than all this is the poison they instil into the minds of those immoderate lovers of England in general, and John Morley in particular, who are known as Moderates amongst us, hereby constantly borrowing from the language of English constitutionalism in order to designate the gewgaws given them by the Government. They have gradually deluded themselves into the belief that Indians possess like Englishmen the real incidents of citizenship and such belief hardens into a dogma when Mr. Morley lends it his sanction. The Queen's Proclamation becomes in the borrowed phraseology of the Moderate the Magna Charta of India; the indulgence granted to a subject people to ventilate their grievances is transmuted by the same jugglery of language into freedom of speech and writing; his membership of a helpless Dependency he must persist in describing as the citizenship of the Empire. No matter that the whole world laughs at him in utter contempt and calls him a fool. There are two things that his English education and his reading of Morley have not given him — the sense of history and the sense of humour. And when a proclamation descends like thunder and shatters all his pretentious nonsense to slivers, he clings nevertheless to his illusion and blames the Extremist for having brought on the catastrophe by his foolhardiness. He weeps and wails because he has lost his primary right of citizenship, without a moment's thought on the fact that he has neither rights nor citizenship, and that such things cannot be taken away by a Government. He has read in the history of free countries, but read in vain, that right and citizenship have behind them a sacred tradition of sacrifice, even to the shedding of blood, on a loyal adequate recognition of which their Government is founded. The Moderate does not see that what has been withdrawn from him by the proclamation is no such right as he pretends to have had, but the mere opportunity conceded by the master to the helot to pour forth his unavailing complaint. He confuses sufferance with freedom, the favour of a foreign despotism with the right of citizenship, and his ambition is to win liberty by a whimper. Unless he relearns History and undeceives himself, he will always remain unfit for freedom, a hindrance to his country, a mere dupe of Morleyism, the subject of utter scorn for the nations that are free. What he adores as liberty is a sorry, sordid, delusive mask, not the high-throned, stern, exacting Goddess whose one incessant, unambiguous demand resounds through History and ever pierces across the night of time to the heart of the Indian who would worship her — "*Main bhukha hun, main bhukha hun.*"

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, June 29th, 1907 }

The Secret of the Swaraj Movement

The paragraphist of *Capital* in the course of a denunciation full of venom and adorned with one or two choice bits of Billingsgate, describes Swaraj as a far-off divine event to be made possible by our being gradually educated to it under the guidance of the beneficent aliens. We need not trouble about the choleric effusions with a daily output of which Anglo-Indian writers nowadays provide their readers. But apart from the natural unhinging of the reason for which the prospect of loss of power and prestige or of trade is responsible, there is a plentiful lack of appreciation of the nature of the movement, its causes and probable effects not only on the part of the ruling class but of the majority of our educated people. We can understand the ruling class doing their very best to crush the movement out of self-interest. But it is none the less our duty to return good for evil and try our best to enlighten their intellectual haziness. It is from the want of a true perception of the nature of the movement that much of the misunderstanding and irritation has proceeded. And in trying to present it in its true bearing we have not been guided by any individual notions of our own but the decisions and findings of master-minds on the success of all spiritual movements.

Why do men at all turn their backs on old ideas and betake themselves to revolutionary ones? How come these ideas to rise up and fill the whole air? Why do they command acceptance notwithstanding much that seems unseemly, alarming and often even preposterous about them? The answer is that in spite of any defects there may be, even if they are marred by self-contradiction, shallowness or elements of real danger, such ideas fit the crisis. They are seized on by virtue of an instinct of national self-preservation. The evil elements in them, if any, work themselves out in infinite mischief. The true elements in them save a country by firing men with social hope and patriotic faith, and the good done is well worth having even at the price of much harm and ruin. M. Taine gives the same explanation of the success of Rousseau and Voltaire in influencing the minds of the French people, though there were Montesquieu with a sort of historic method, Turgot and the school of the economists and, what is more, seventy thousand of the secular clergy and sixty thousand of the regular clergy, ever proclaiming by life or exhortation ideas of peace, submission and a kingdom not of this world.

At certain critical moments in history men come out from the narrow and confined track of their daily life and comprehend in one wide vision the whole situation; the august face of their destiny is suddenly unveiled to their eyes: in the sublimity of their emotion they seem to have a foretaste of their future and at least discern some of its features. Naturally these features are precisely those which their age and their race happen to be in a condition to understand. The point of view put forward is the only one under which the multitude can place themselves. There is pronounced the unique word, heroic or tender, enthusiastic or tranquillising: the only word that the heart and the intelligence of the time would consent to hearken to; the only one adapted to the deep-growing wants, the long-gathered aspirations, the hereditary faculties.

It might seem strange if it were not so consonant with past examples, that a man like Mr. Morley who has so heartily admired the discernment of Taine about the secret of the great movements of human history and explained and elaborated it as clearly as possible, should look upon the present happenings in India as mere effervescence due to accidental causes that will instantaneously subside at the mere frown of a mortal man however powerful. We have explained how this has happened in the particular case of Mr. Morley. A mind clouded by national self-interest and perverted by European prejudices and contempt for

Asiatics forbids him to use his reasoning powers on India as he would have used them in the case of an European country similarly circumstanced. Otherwise he would have perhaps understood that the same laws govern and explain all human movements whether among Europeans or Asiatics. The working of the human mind, the correlation of causes and effects, the ups and downs in the life of a nation are never isolated phenomena defying the scientist's attempt to systematise, co-ordinate and generalise. The movement in India, like all other movements in history, has life and vitality in it and its root deep in the very nature of things and events. It is not artificially got up, no movement of the kind can be; it has not been engineered by a Lajpat Rai or an Ajit Singh: it does not proceed from mere discontent or "disloyalty": it is no aberration or monstrosity. It has the uniformity, the identity of manifestations in widely-separated regions, the similarity of thought, motive and expression which belong to great, sudden, spontaneous movements, to divine events.

India was a centre of human prosperity and a fountain of light when there was still darkness and savagery on the face of the major portion of the earth and she has not gone into an eternal eclipse. The over-shadowing influence cannot last for ever, it is a temporary obscuration from which the sun of her destiny is soon to emerge. This is the law of Nature and divine dispensation, and, amidst the noise and dust and smoke of that confused struggle of myriad opinions and misunderstandings which mark a revolution, the one thing essential which should never be forgotten by those who have once had the strength and clarity of vision to perceive through the clamour and confusion this guiding star of hope and truth.

Passive Resistance in France

The curious struggle in the South of France which is being waged between the vine-growing population of the South and the Government in Paris, has not yet come to a conclusion. The leaders have surrendered, but their following seems to be still defiant.

The cause of the pother seems to be hardly proportionate to the results. The wine-trade in the south of France is on the decline because the French people are taking to other and cheaper beverages, and the vine-growers demand State protection and encouragement for their industry, which the French Government has not denied but has been somewhat dilatory in arranging. The population of southern France are hot, excitable, unstable and, being all more or less affected — for the vine is *the* chief produce there — have been exasperated by the neglect into something like rebellion. This is all that from this distance one can understand. The interest of the outbreak for us lies in the fact that it began with a huge passive resistance movement very much on the lines we have advocated in India, the object being to paralyze the Government and the chief weapon the voluntary resignation of the Municipalities which are indispensable instruments of administration in France. Unfortunately a fair chance was not given to the experiment which should have been one of the most interesting in human history. With the arrival of the Military the movement passed into a queer amalgam of passive resistance, military mutiny and popular revolt; the leaders took fright, surrendered or bolted to Paris, wept at the feet of ministers and returned to advise their followers to weep and surrender along with them. The whole business is somewhat farcical and extremely French. At any rate the hot French nature, impatient and incapable of endurance, found it impossible to continue the experiment. Perhaps passive resistance is in itself too much not only for French nature but for human nature generally; perhaps it is always bound to pass into active resistance. But this cannot be decided until it is given a fair trial by a more politic, patient and enduring race than the Frenchmen of the south. Meanwhile we note that the French Government has hastily passed the more urgent clauses of the Bill for assisting the wine industry. So the demonstrators have got the immediate thing that they wanted — just as the Punjabi agriculturists did.

By the Way

The Newmaniac is abroad again. He has been to Chandpur, in the flesh or in spirit, and the result is a fresh attack of delirium newmans. He has discovered a Babu Kingdom in Barisal and a phantom army of *secret* National Volunteers. To the unsophisticated unaided eye there are no National Volunteers; the red shirt, the dreadful yellow turban, the awe-inspiring anti-regulation *lathi* all have disappeared, but the detective ability of the Newmaniac is not to be baffled or bamboozled. He can still discover the National Volunteer by the one thing left to him — the now world-renowned or at least *Times*-renowned "insolent stare". Wherever there is a National Volunteer there is an insolent stare, and wherever there is an insolent stare there is a National Volunteer. The Newmaniac is down on that stare like a flash of lightning; he has come out with a new description of it and its accompaniments, very picturesque and painful. "The man stands with his legs apart and his hands behind his back, and looks at you unblinking, the very picture of insolent defiance. *Gradually the eyes become bloodshot, and the face puffs out a little, then the lips twitch and the teeth are bared*, and as you pass, the man either spits on the ground, or laughs a kind of snarling laugh, a mixture of contempt and triumph." Isn't that a wonderful bit of delirium newmans, gorgeously and grotesquely horrible? We sympathise with the Newmaniac in his lament that he is gripped by the law he himself has made and held back from going for this apoplectic nightmare. We are glad to learn that the authorities are going to take an immediate action on the Newmaniac's complaint. We learn by telegram from Simla that the Legal Member has drawn up for the Viceroy's approval the following notes for a Draft Bill to amend the Indian Penal Code.

Note for additional sections (draft)
to the Indian Penal Code.

1. Whoever, being a native-born subject of His Majesty the King-Emperor, shall be observed to separate or suspected of

separating his nether limbs when he is in the presence or within the vision actual or potential of an European, shall be guilty of a seditious offence henceforth to be known as breach of the legs, and may be bound over in personal securities of not less than Rs. 10,000 to keep his legs together for six months or a year according to the discretion of the trying Magistrate.

EXPLANATIONS

a. The expression "in the presence or within the vision" shall be held to apply to any distance of not more than four hundred yards to the right, to the left, before or behind the accused.

b. The word "European" in this and the following sections shall be understood as including Australians and Americans as well as natives of India of a white complexion and European descent and Imperial Anglo-Indians, but it shall not be held to cover the Nawab of Dacca. Provided that nothing in this section shall debar the Governor-General in Council from extending the section to the Nawab of Dacca by a special ordinance for a given period in case of emergency.

c. It shall not be incumbent on the prosecution in cases under this or the following sections to prove that any European was actually on the scene of the separation; it will be enough to prove that an European might have been there or that the accused had reason to believe that an European was or might, could, should or would be within 400 yards of him.

d. It shall be a sufficient defence to prove that the legs in question were already separated, with or without any necessity, before it was possible for the accused to know or believe that an European was, might, could, should or would be within the legal distance, and that the error was rectified within three seconds of his becoming aware of the presence.

e. If it be proved that the crural separation was directed against or in view of the presence of the European, no motive or necessity or plea of urgency shall be admitted in justification or mitigation of the offence.

2. Whoever, being a native-born subject etc., puts his hands behind his back, or joins them over his stomach, or pats his stomach, or twirls his moustache, or touches his nose, or twiddles

his thumbs, or uses any other gesture which is or may or can be or might, could, should or would be considered offensive, seditious, libellous, mutinous or rebellious, in the presence etc. of an European, shall be guilty of a seditious publication and liable to prosecution and punishment under section 124a.

3. Whoever, being a native-born etc., is observed to look or suspected of looking with unblinking eyes at an European shall be guilty of breach of the peace and liable to rigorous imprisonment for six months, with or without fine.

EXPLANATIONS

a. It shall not be an offence under this section to look with unblinking eyes at the back of an European or at his legs or at his stomach or at any other portion of his anatomy except his face.

b. It shall not be a sufficient defence under this section to prove that the accused blinked once, twice or thrice during the commission of the offence. The blinking must be continuous, as when one is looking at the sun.

4. Whoever, being a native-born etc., is observed to suffer or suspected of suffering from epilepsy or apoplexy at the sight of an European, shall be guilty of seditious apoplexy and liable to seven years' rigorous imprisonment which shall include two years' solitary confinement.

EXPLANATIONS

a. The following symptoms shall be held when found together, to constitute the offence of seditious apoplexy, viz. eyes bloodshot, face puffed out, lips twitching and teeth bared.

b. It shall be a sufficient defence under this section to show that the accused was suffering from eye-disease or a cold in the head, or that his teeth naturally and unavoidably project, or that he suffers from a nervous labial disorder, or that he was frightened out of his wits, or that he mistook the European for a lunatic or a special correspondent of the *Englishman*.

5. Whoever, being a native-born etc., by accident or intention forgets to retain his saliva in the presence etc. of an European, shall be guilty of seditious spitting and liable to two years' rigorous imprisonment or in the alternative, to transportation for life.

6. Whoever, being a native-born etc., is observed to laugh or is suspected of laughing a kind of snarling laugh or snarling a kind of laughing snarl in the presence etc. of an European shall be guilty of seditious cachinnation and liable to be bound over to keep the peace (which shall include abstention from inaudible as well as audible laughing or snarling) for six months or a year according to the discretion of the trying Magistrate.

EXPLANATIONS

a. An ordinary or average or pure, simple, uncomplicated domestic laugh shall not count as an offence under this section.

b. A pure, peaceable or innocent snarl directed at the weather or any other inanimate and non-European object and guiltless of either contempt or triumph except for or over the said inanimate object, shall not be an offence under this section.

c. As it is impossible for the offence to be precisely defined, the complainant shall be asked to reproduce in the witness-box the said snarl or laugh as he saw or imagined it and the nearest available canine being shall be held up by his side and induced to snarl and if there is any resemblance between the two performances, the offence shall be considered proved.

N.B. With this exception no corroborative evidence will be required in cases under these sections; the unsupported testimony of the complainant or the belief of the trying Magistrate shall be considered sufficient.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 1st, 1907 }

Stand Fast

A temporary lull in the policy of repression adopted by the bureaucracy in dealing with Bengal has ceased and the surging waves are once again threatening to engulf the province. At Bagerhat the Subdivisional Conference will not be allowed to meet. At Barisal the worst scenes enacted during the early days of Fullerism are being repeated. Honour is not safe in East Bengal, nor is the person. And a fresh outburst of repressive measures is likely to take place in West Bengal as the result of Sir Andrew Fraser's visit to Simla. And Mr. Newman of the *Englishman* is persistently pressing the Government "to arrest and report (deport?) certain persons and shut up certain printing presses in Calcutta". The reason is not far to seek. Now is the time to book orders for the Puja season. Swadeshi must be crushed now or the British capitalists' opportunity to reap a golden harvest will be lost, — for full one year at least. Last year we said the same thing, and this year we can easily see through the trick. Let us then be prepared for a fresh outburst of Fullerism in United Bengal and organize our resources to withstand it. Let us stand fast as the rock which resists the billow and the sky, determined to do our duty according to the lights granted us, — to live for the regeneration of the country and die, if need be, for the cause. Repressive measures will only add to our endeavours to serve the cause unmindful of consequences — trials and tortures will only make us firm in our determination. It is always darkest before dawn. And if we only persist, and now is the time for us to do so, the darkness that envelops the country now will in no time disappear before the dawning day that will illumine not only India but the entire East.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 2nd, 1907 }

The Acclamation of the House

A great deal is being made in the Anglo-Indian press of the unanimous appreciation with which the House of Commons received Mr. Morley's speech on the Budget. The discovery that superior culture has not destroyed the primitive savage in the Anglo-Saxon, has been welcomed with fierce gratification. One English paper writes: — "It was a healthy sign to which the attention of native sedition-mongers may be usefully directed that the House of Commons which gave an appreciative reception to the speech of the Secretary of State showed impatience at the captious and mischievous vapourings of Mr. C. J. O'Donnell." Well, but why draw attention to it? We have been arguing the same thing from the very beginning of our propaganda. We were among the first to point out to a too credulous nation that the friends of India in Parliament represented nobody but themselves. It was one of the principal items on the destructive side of the Nationalist programme, to prove the delusiveness of the prevalent faith in the ultimate sense of justice of the British people. If the House of Commons saves us the trouble of farther argument and itself conclusively proves the soundness of our reasoning, we accept its assistance with gratitude but without surprise. We may draw the attention of our monitor in return to an equally healthy sign in India. Nobody now, at least in Bengal, ventures in public to advocate an appeal to the bureaucracy or to the people in England for the redress of our grievances. There may not be agreement as to the best means of gathering strength by self-help but the hope of gaining rights and privileges by what is known as constitutional agitation has been given up by one and all. It is a faded superstition which has no longer any hold on the Indian mind. To warn us that the highly illiberal speech of Mr. Morley struck a responsive chord in every bosom in the House, is therefore labour wasted. As nobody now looks with wistful eyes to that quarter, it is immaterial what they think or do. They may go into ecstasies over the speech of Morley, or they may gnash their teeth at the vapourings of O'Donnell; we in India are no longer affected by their frown or by their smile. The sympathy of people beyond the seas is no longer our guiding star and what happens at Westminster is no concern of ours. We have to improvise our own means of meeting the Regulation *lathi* and other bureaucratic means of repression and we neither hope for nor desire its mitigation.

If it were possible for anyone to re-evoke that dead phantom of a phantom, British sympathy, we should not be grateful to him for constraining our unbound spirit into bonds again. The legend of British sympathy misled us for a century and now that the phantasm has of itself ceased to haunt us, let no one try to juggle and deceive us again with the *mantras* of that modern black art. Both Mr. Morley's speech and its effect on the British people are, we repeat, matters of supreme indifference to us, and the British and Anglo-Indian journals who want to frighten us into our old mendicant attitude by trumpeting the "sensible and resolute speech" of Mr. Morley and the appreciation it received in the House, merely show that they have no true conception of the Nationalist movement. The mind of our people has at last attained a certain amount of freedom. Faith in unrealities no longer clogs its progress. The Budget speech admirably exposed the true relation between England and India and betrayed the hollowness of the so-called liberal professions which have so long exerted their poisonous influence on the unsophisticated Indian mind, displaced as it was from its own orbit by an unnational education. Mr. Morley's outspokenness was welcome to the House? Well, it was tenfold more welcome to his "enemies" in India. Mr. Lalmohan Ghose in one of his more recent speeches, has said: "Dazzled by the meretricious glitter of a tawdry imperialism, conspicuous members of Parliament are now trying to sponge from their slate the teachings of men like Gladstone and Bright." It was reserved for Mr. Morley to tell all India what some of us had perceived long ago, that those teachings were never meant to be carried out in practice.

Whoever is a scourge of India must naturally be a demigod to the British people. The political instinct of a free people long accustomed to the international struggle for life, shrewd, commercial, practical, is not likely to be misled by humanitarian generalities as the politically inexperienced middle class in India have been misled; they have always felt that the man who trod down India under a mailed heel and crushed Indian manhood and aspiration was serving their own interests.

The sequel to the trial of Warren Hastings is an excellent example of this dominant instinct. Twenty-seven years after the impeachment, sixteen years after the death of Burke had left his orations as a classic to English literature, — a scene was enacted in the House of Commons similar in spirit to the unanimous acclamation of Mr. Morley's speech. Warren Hastings — an old man of eighty — appeared at the bar to give evidence in connection with the renewal of the East India charter. He was received with acclamations, a chair was ordered for him, and when he retired the members rose and uncovered. The political instinct of the people perceived that this man, ruthless and monstrous tyrant though he had been, had consolidated for them a political empire and a basis of commercial supremacy, and the means by which this great work had been accomplished, were sanctified by the result. The scourge of India, a recital of whose misdeeds had 27 years before made some of Burke's listeners swoon with horror, was honoured as a hero and god, and biographies and histories have been written by the score to justify his action and exalt him to the skies. When therefore Mr. Morley declared his intention of preserving the Empire Hastings had consolidated, by any means however unjust or tyrannical, is it any wonder that an English House of Commons should recognise in him a worthy successor of Hastings and accord to him an unanimous applause?

Perishing Prestige

Some time back a retired Anglo-Indian wrote a letter on the unrest in the Punjab in the *Times*. He said: "Many English officials live for weeks and months absolutely alone among Indians, far from others of their race, and their comfort and their safety are dependent on the prestige of the English name and on the good will of the cultivators for their English rulers." Mr. Newman the travelling editor of the *Englishman* has taken the cue from this gentleman and improved upon him. Writing on Mr. Crabbe's murder he comments: "It may be said that the solitary murder of a European committed evidently by a desperate man who would have killed anybody who interfered with him, has no bearing at all on the general political situation in this province. In one way of course it has not, but the non-official view is that the crime would not have occurred but for the fact that the European has entirely lost his prestige here." It is to maintain this lost prestige that Regulation lathis and bayonets have been sent to Eastern Bengal. But this prestige must be weak indeed to require more support. Threats cannot keep prestige intact when it has not the power to maintain itself nor can oppression ensure its safety. The origin of their prestige is not likely to touch the popular imagination and it cannot hope to hold its own when the people realise their own position in the land that is theirs. No amount of brandishing of the rusty sword will be able to take India back to the days gone by. The tide of progress cannot be turned back and the race-consciousness once awakened cannot be suppressed. The old superstitions must fall away and disappear and the English in India can no longer hope to effect a return to the old ways. It is the old vain attempt to turn back the wheel of Time and bring back the "good" old past that has gone for ever.

A Congress Committee Mystery

When the All-India Congress Committee was appointed last December, we had no great hopes of its being of much utility either as a political instrument or an ornament, and when names were being juggled within the Pandal, we did not consider the matter of supreme interest. Nevertheless, the names of a few men of advanced opinions did find their way into the Bengal list. Men like Srijuts Motilal Ghose, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aswini Kumar Dutta and A. Rasul sitting side by side with Messrs. Tilak and Khaparde would form a leaven which, however small, might easily season the mass of the Committee and would at any rate prevent it from being a mere phonograph to repeat the decisions of the Dictator of Bombay. Recently there has been much talk of a meeting of the All India Committee. Mr. Gokhale took an active interest in the idea and a sitting was actually arranged for June 30 to consider the crisis in India. There was nothing to object to in that; it seemed right and reasonable that the Committee should at least appear to justify its existence. But then comes in the peculiar feature of this Committee which turns it from a straightforward body, of politicians elected by the people and observing the ordinary rules of business, into a Tibetan mystery. Certain gentlemen in Calcutta of more or less moderate views and irreproachable political respectability received notice of the meeting but other less favoured members of the Committee *were utterly unaware that the meeting was to be held at all.* A few days before the date fixed they were astonished to receive private letters from Bombay side assuming that they knew of it and would not fail to be present on the occasion. Neither Mr. Rasul nor Moti Babu nor Bipin Babu had received any notice from the proper quarters. Since then the meeting has been postponed and for the present all's well that ends well. But we should like to ask one or two questions. Is it possible that the conveners in Bombay did not know the addresses of the Nationalist members? — did not know for instance, that Mr. Rasul was a Barrister-at-law, or Sj. Motilal Ghose edited a not altogether unknown journal called the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* or Srijut Bipin Chandra was connected with a weekly called *New India* of which also even Bombay worthies must at least have heard. Or was it merely an amiable bit of "diplomatic tactics" such as it has been our privilege to witness on occasions? We heard that Mr. Gokhale had given up the idea because he could not get the Bengal leaders to agree — though we are not aware that he made any very strenuous efforts to bring about an agreement. Is it possible that it was only intended to call those of them this time who *could* agree? On the whole we are inclined to be charitable; no doubt the conveners thought that the Nationalist members would be likely to acquaint each other and the Committee might economise the public money in stamps; or else they may have published the date of meeting in some Bombay paper and left it to these gentlemen to take note — if they had the good luck to read it; or perhaps they knew all along that the sitting would not come off and did not like to trouble them. In any case we hope that this time they will be more formal and less kind. The members in question are none of them millionaires and cannot afford, on the strength of a newspaper notice, to take a trip to Bombay — and find the meeting postponed.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 3rd, 1907 }

Europe and Asia

The London correspondent of a contemporary quotes, with the apposite change of a word, some verses from a poem by Wilfrid Blunt which so admirably express the basic motive of the Nationalist movement in India that we reproduce it here. It is often represented by our opponents that the cry for Swaraj is a mere senseless cry for freedom without any recognition of the responsibilities of freedom. This is not so. Those who have followed the exposition of the Nationalist ideal in *Bande Mataram* know well that we advocate the struggle for Swaraj, first, because Liberty is in itself a necessity of national life and therefore worth striving for for its own sake; secondly, because Liberty is the first indispensable condition of national development intellectual, moral, industrial, political (we do not say it is the only condition) and therefore worth striving for for India's sake; thirdly, because in the next great stage of human progress it is not a material but a spiritual, moral and psychical advance that has to be made and for this a free Asia and in Asia a free India must take the lead, and Liberty is therefore worth striving for for the world's sake. India must have Swaraj in order to live; she must have Swaraj in order to live well and happily; she must have Swaraj in order to live for the world, not as a slave for the material and political benefit of a single purse-proud and selfish nation, but as a free people for the spiritual and intellectual benefit of the human race.

The verses quoted are from a poem called "The Wind and the Whirlwind", addressed to England. England, by her oppression of the Asiatic peoples under her sway, by her selfish and ruthless exploitation of their wealth, by her refusal to allow them the chance of national life and free development, is sowing the wind, and she will reap the whirlwind in the loss of her Empire, perhaps in national decay and death.

“Truth yet shall triumph in a world of justice;
This is of faith. I swear it. East and West
The law of Man’s progression shall accomplish
Even this last great marvel with the rest.

Thou wouldst not further it. Thou canst not hinder.
If thou shalt learn in time, thou yet shalt live.
But God shall ease thy hand of thy dominion
And give to these the rights thou wouldst not give.

The nations of the East have left their childhood.
Thou art grown old. Their manhood is to come;
And they shall carry on Earth’s high tradition
Through the long ages when thy lips are dumb,

Till all shall be wrought out. O lands of weeping,
Lands watered by the rivers of old Time,
Ganges and Indus and the streams of Eden,
Yours is the future of the world’s sublime.

Yours was the fount of man’s first inspiration,
The well of wisdom whence he earliest drew.
And yours shall be the floodtime of his reason,
The means of strength which shall his strength renew.

The wisdom of the West is but a madness,
The fret of shallow waters in their bed.
Yours is the flow, the fulness of man’s patience,
The ocean of God’s rest inherited.

And thou, too, India, mourner of the nations,
Though thou hast died today in all men’s sight,
And though upon thy cross with thieves thou hangest,
Yet shall thy wrong be justified in right.”

The view of the East as just emerging from its childhood and the West as old and senile, is contrary to received ideas, but there is a deep truth underlying it. The East is more ancient by many thousands of years than the West, but a greater length of years does not necessarily imply a more advanced age. The years which would mean only childhood to a long-lived species would bring old age and death to more ephemeral stocks. Asia is long-lived, Europe brief and ephemeral. Asia is in everything hugely-mapped, immense and grandiose in its motions, and its life-periods are measured accordingly. Europe lives by centuries, Asia by millenniums. Europe is parcelled out in nations, Asia in civilisations. The whole of Europe forms only one civilisation with a common, derived and largely second-hand culture; Asia supports three civilisations, each of them original and of the soil. Everything in Europe is small, rapid and short-lived; she has not the secret of immortality. Greece, the chief source of her civilisation, matured in two or three centuries, flourished for another two, and two more were sufficient for her decline and death. How few in years are the modern European nations, yet Spain is already dead, Austria death-stricken and suffering from gangrene and disintegration, France overtaken by a mortal and incurable malady, England already affected by the initial processes of decay. Germany and America alone show any signs of a healthy and developing manhood. In the place which is left vacant by the decline of the European nations Asia young, strong and vigorous, dowered with the gift of immortality and the secret of self-transmutation, is preparing to step forward and possess the future. She alone can teach the world the secret of immortality which she possesses and in order that she may do so, she must reign.

Asia has been described by the Europeans as decrepit; they will find to their amazement and dismay that she is rather emerging into her age of robust and perfect manhood. It is true that she reached ages ago heights of science, philosophy, civilisation which Europe is now toilfully trying to reach and that afterwards there was a slackening down, loss and disturbance from which she is only now recovering, but there was no decay or decline. It was rather the disturbance, the temporary arrest, disorganization and derangement which marks the transition from boyhood to manhood. Her mighty civilizations, her great philosophies, her acute scientific observations and intuitions were the toys and games of her yet immature and imperfect powers, the light and easy play of a child-giant, and form merely a slight index of the far greater things she will accomplish in the coming days of her ripe strength and maturity. What she did, she did by the activity of intuition and imagination, the first free penetrating sympathy of a mind fresh from the divine source of life. She will now learn the scientific method of the adult and senescent West and apply it with a far greater force and ability to lines of development in which Europe is a bungler and novice.

The wisdom of the West is but a madness,
  The fret of shallow waters in their bed.

This shallowness proceeds from the fact that the West has developed materially and on the surface, but has not sought for strength and permanence in the deeper roots of life of which our outer activity is only a partial manifestation. The fundamental difference between East and West has been exemplified more than once in recent times. What European nation could have changed its whole political, social and economic machinery in a few years like Japan, with so little trouble, with such thoroughness and science, with the minimum of disturbance to its national economy? The phenomenon is so alien to European nature and European experience that even to this day Western observers have been unable to understand it. Japan is a "weird" nation, that is all the conclusion they can come to on the subject. What European nation again would deal so swiftly, directly and earnestly with its own national vices as the Chinese are dealing with the opium vice in China? The very idea that China really meant it, was incredible to English observers. And well it might be, for one can imagine what would be the fate of any such attempt to deal with the national vice of drunkenness in England. If India is unable to show such signal triumphs, it is because she has been disorganized by the merciless pressure of the alien rule and all her centres of strength and action destroyed or disabled. Yet even so, she has shown and is still showing signs of a prolonged and unconquerable vitality such as no nation subject for an equally long time has evinced since history began. It is this moral strength, this ability to go to the roots, this gift of diving down into the depths of self and drawing out the miraculous powers of the Will, this command over one's own soul which is the secret of Asia. And he who is in possession of his soul, the Scripture assures us, shall become the master of the world.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 4th, 1907 }

Press Prosecutions

The Bureaucracy has at last commenced its attack on the so-called freedom of the Press in Bengal. Intolerance of free speech and writings is the sure index not only of unenlightened mediaevalism in the existing Government, but of its rottenness and instability. Our old Hindu regime allowed the utmost freedom of speech and Manu lays it down that when in a time of stress and trouble people take to speaking unpleasant things about the sovereign, it is the height of folly on his part to stop their mouths by punishing the free expression of their feelings. Our ancient law-giver has not thought it necessary to support his dictum by reasons because its wisdom is obvious to the most ordinary common sense. The tendency towards repression in a government proceeds from a consciousness of instability or unsoundness in the foundation of its authority. If on the contrary the ruler is sure that his authority is based on a just title and exercised in the interests of the people, he will never be anxious to live in an air-tight compartment secure from the influence of any disturbing element. No just Government, no beneficent Empire can be overthrown by a campaign of misrepresentation, however extensive and well-organized. The logic of facts is always superior to any other logic. If the people have enough to eat, if they can clothe themselves decently, if they can walk in their own country with heads erect, if they are not frequent victims to the highhandedness of the ruling class, if their comfort, convenience and self-respect are not interfered with in their homes and in their journeyings, if honest efforts are made by the rulers to prevent plague and famine or to bring about those conditions of general well-being which arm all well-administered countries against such visitations, no eloquence or rhetoric can alienate the popular affection from such a beneficent administration. If the British people and their representatives, both in England and India, are so confident that their administration is the very best that can be given to India under the present circumstances, it is surprising that they should apprehend mischief from "enemies" against whom they are so well secured by the intrinsic merit of their rule.

Of course when Manu wrote he had in view the natural princes and rulers of the people whose authority was rooted in the soil and their existence a benefit and not a scourge to the country. But the British claim that their rule is superior to any the country has ever known since the dawn of time, a natural substitute for the normal condition of liberty and a condition of things which is destined to perpetuate itself in nature. Such a rule can surely not be so loosely rooted that the "vapouring" of agitators can blow it out of the soil or the helplessness of an unarmed people endanger its security.

The natural and legitimate method by which a modern government meets sedition, is to present the strong defence of an impeccable administration to its attacks. If there are weak points, they must be so few or of such minor importance that even to the most ignorant eye or the most ill-informed understanding they will appear insignificant compared with the benevolent policy and beneficent working in the large, of the system assailed. If there is misrepresentation, the administration has its own organs or its own supporters who can meet the assailants with their own weapons in the Press and on the platform. The agitator's eye may in a fine frenzy roll from earth to heaven, but it cannot discover anything there which does not exist; or if it does, he can easily be convicted of falsehood or perversion of truth. Writing and speech are not the monopoly of agitators. If Surendranath and Bipin Chandra can stump the mofussil, have not the Government their heaven-born and earth-born agents who can put their measures in the most attractive light and inculcate loyalty by their admonitions — if they cannot do it by their actions? If the *Bande Mataram, Patrika* or *Bengalee* vex the soul of benevolent despotism by their writings, have not the bureaucracy such authoritative, able and reliable supporters as the *Pioneer*, the *Englishman* or the *Times of India* in English and the organs of their ally Salimullah in the vernacular to undo the mischief?

To meet the peaceful instruments of Press and platform with imprisonment and persecution or with swords and guns, is a confession not merely of despotism but of weakness. It is a confession of guilt. To dethrone reason, wisdom, truth and justice and substitute brute force in their place is to appeal from the twentieth century to the Middle Ages, to confess oneself a stumbling-block in the way of human progress and an enemy of Heaven, and to array all the silent forces of civilisation, enlightenment and progress, the justice of Heaven and the sure working of irresistible nature in one formidable league to bring about one's ultimate downfall. When the ruler, beaten in the fair fight of argument, eloquence and reason, throws his sword into one scale, it will not be long before God throws His into the other. The purpose of the ages is not going to be frustrated by section 108A or the destinies of the nations stopped in their inevitable march because Manchester cotton-spinners want a market for their wares. Prosecute free speech, deny the heart of a nation its utterance; but will you stop the fire of a volcano by covering over its crater? The fire is elemental and comes up from an inexhaustible reservoir of flame in the depths. The battle of freedom begins with the pen and the tongue, but its instruments do not end with these two; and when has the coercing of pen and tongue ever put an end to the battle? Men can be depressed or subdued, but ideas cannot. The enemy of the despot is not a man, but the patriotic sentiment in men which is immortal and which can neither be hanged nor deported. The doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, their inalienable rights, their claim that the Government should exist for them and by them, will always find an unfailing succession of exponents. Rulers have always forgotten this lesson of history in the intoxication of power but it is always they who have suffered for it. Men are born with the instinct of freedom and they can never acquiesce for ever in the loss of freedom, even if necessity has compelled them to forgo it for a while or guile or violence deprived them of it. No amount of coercion or repression will make them renounce the memory or avert their eyes from the vision. Rather coercion is the surest way to make them feel its loss and desire it with passion and with resolution.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 5th, 1907 }

Try Again

The announcement "authoritatively" made by the *Hindu Patriot* that the Ranchi College modified scheme has been finally sanctioned by the Government of India, reminds us of how the example of a spider succeeding on the seventh attempt to fix its web in the proper place resuscitated the drooping ambition of Robert the Bruce. In the present case too the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal has, through sheer perseverance, succeeded in making the Government of India accept his proposal and thus relieve the revenues of Bengal of an unnecessary superfluity. The policy of the Government seems to have undergone a sea-change. Even Sir Alexander Mackenzie protested against the Government of India appropriating the surpluses. Referring to the Quinquennial Contract he said, "The provincial sheep is thrown on its back and shorn of its wool, and then left to shiver in the cold till its fleece grows again." And here the triumph of tenacity indicates the adoption of a policy which advocates spending — profitably or unprofitably — of surpluses, so as to give the Government renewed opportunities to tax the people and thus cripple their resources further. We ourselves have no interest in these things; and if we cannot feel "glad" like the *Hindu Patriot*, we cannot also feel indignant like the *Bengalee* or sorry like the *Patrika*. The education that the Government imparts is bad in quality and worse in spirit; it is ruinous to the intellect, the physique and the morale of the race and the money spent on it is worse than wasted. But then over such misuse of their money the people have no control, and till they secure such control, it is useless to protest from the Press or the platform. The root of the evil lies deeper and to remove it we must go to the root. Mere lopping of branches will not do.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 9th, 1907 }

A Curious Procedure

That the bureaucracy and its instruments should look with disfavour on the *Bande Mataram* and dread the increase of its circulation, is only to be expected; but the means by which they combat its diffusion are sometimes of a peculiar, if characteristic kind. An up-country agent writes to us: "The police and the Government officials are obstructing us much. They are threatening the servants with punishment and imprisonment, if they sell the *Bande Mataram* paper, because the paper writes against Government. So the poor illiterate people of this place are afraid of selling them." We are often advised to keep our agitation within the limits of law; we would suggest that the bureaucrats might show us the example. If in order to prevent the growth of an infant Nationalism and its new-born exponent, an all-powerful bureaucracy is compelled to stoop to such petty persecution and intimidate people from a peaceful avocation by the illegal menaces of their underlings, the as yet weak and disorganized people of this country may surely be excused if they are sometimes carried beyond the precise limits of moral suasion in struggling against the most powerfully organized commerce in the world backed by the whole administrative strength, the police, magistracy and troops of the British Indian Empire. As to the paltry meanness of such obstructions, we say nothing; "melancholy meanness" and bureaucracy have always gone hand in hand in all climes and ages.

Association and Dissociation

The Maharaja of Darbhanga has dissociated himself from the "extremists" and Hare Street is wild with delight. But really, what else did the *Englishman* expect? A great landholder of the Maharaja's position is hardly more of a free agent than the ruler of a "protected" State. He is so exposed to official pressure and has so much to lose that it would indeed be miraculous if he did not insist in season and out of season on his loyalty. If the Maharaja had been a declared Nationalist and suddenly recanted, we could have understood the joy of Anglo-India over the sheep that was lost and again is found. But he has on the contrary been always avowedly loyal, moderate and platonically patriotic. In fact we believe the speech of Darbhanga marks rather a setback to Anglo-Indian hopes than an incident over which there need be any exultation. Recently there was a secret conclave of high dignitaries in the Maharaja's house, at which there were some strange planetary conjunctions, Sirish Sarvadhicari of the *Hindu Patriot* sitting cheek by jowl with Srijut Surendranath Banerji to consult on the situation. At this meeting of opposites it was proposed, we believe, to issue a loyal manifesto after the fashion set by the Punjab. But owing to the opposition of the popular leaders who would not hear of such a betrayal and self-degradation the proposal fell through. We do not know how far the report is true, but if the proposal was made and failed, a personal declaration must obviously have been resorted to by the Maharaja when the hope of finding companions in sin had to be renounced. The Maharaja is to be pitied for having to dissociate himself from his countrymen in this crisis of their destinies.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 11th, 1907 }

English Obduracy and Its Reason

We seriously invite our Moderate friends to ask themselves for a reason as to why Englishmen should invariably meet all their demands for political reforms with the one unalterable answer that they are not fit to receive them. Why should John Morley whose writings and sayings are so instinct with an ardent love of liberty, so lightly flout their prayer for some concessions of a democratic nature? He not only denies the Indians the least measure of liberty, but shuts the door of any possible hope abruptly in their face by telling them that as long as his imagination can travel into futurity so long must India remain under personal rule. In his last Budget speech also he took the opportunity to reiterate his faith in the efficacy of personal rule for India and even went a step further and indulged in the paternal prophecy that if the English left India today, she would plunge back into rapine, bloodshed and chaos within a week. Naturally a Secretary of State who entertains such a low opinion of the Indian character would consider it the maximum of human folly to give Indians any control over the government of their country. And the opinion of Mr. Morley only too truly represents that of the general body of the Europeans who have ever come into contact with India or thought about the problem she presents before humanity. The question is why should they all have arrived at this poor estimate of the Indian's political capability? The answer, however, is not far to seek; we have only ourselves to thank for this cosmopolitan contempt into which we have brought our country. The European remains today essentially as he was in the time of Aristotle, "a political animal". His nature has retained throughout history its ingrained and inalienable political bent; polity has played the greatest part in the moulding of his life and destiny; the ideas that have irresistibly moved him to heroic strivings, passionate hopes or death-defying sufferings have been mainly those of independence, freedom, liberty; the greatest names in his history are those of political heroes or governors; the one call that has ever sung truly in his ears and commanded his unquestioning obedience is the call to the service of his country; the courting of death for the fulfilment or the upholding of the above ideas has been as natural to him as breathing; the history of his country is the history of the increasing consummation of those ideas, in which faith and intellect have filled a subsidiary place. Such is the European by constitution. To him India is an insoluble riddle. How a country of three hundred million men can consent to be governed by a handful of foreigners he simply cannot understand. He thinks of the Indian as a member of a sub-human race, outside the pale of his privileges, his code of morality, his civilisation. And that new-fangled specimen of the Indian race, the educated Indian, only intensifies his contempt. That a man who has been nurtured on the literature of England, and has read the history of Europe, can still have failed to be touched by the European ideal, to be visited by an insatiable longing for liberty, and can continue, on the other hand, in a life of contented acquiescence in foreign rule, and feel happy and proud merely to serve under it and ensure its continuation, strikes the native of Europe as a most monstrous mockery, as some unimaginable and unaccountable perversion of human nature. He gradually gets to believe that whatever may be the excellence of his domestic life or the greatness of his philosophy, the Indian is by birth fit only to be a slave, and education succeeds in perfecting him only in the art of slavery. And as slavery means to the European the permanent extinction of all the nobler possibilities that lie before man, servile India ceases altogether to engage his least consideration or enlist his sympathy; let her alone with her slave's philosophy and art, thinks he, she can be of no service to the future of the human race.

And the politics and politicians of India heighten further his convictions about the lowering nature and effect of slavery, and the impossibility of India ever lifting herself to the level of civilised humanity. Her politics are the slave's politics whose method is prayer and petition and whose resentment or disapproval can find expression only in weeping and sobbing. And rebuff merely urges the Indian politician to greater efforts of supplication and to higher feats of wailing. And by such persistent mendicancy alone he aspires to win his country's liberty — liberty to which Europe has wilfully waded her way through a welter of blood after her struggles of centuries. No, cries the irritated European, India can never be fit to govern herself. This is the secret of John Morley's point-blank refusal to satisfy Moderate aspirations; he has thrown to them a plaything or two, for they deserve nothing better. And because Mr. Morley loves and prizes liberty more highly than the average man, therefore has he been the more intolerant of the Moderate's pretensions, the more merciless in felling to the ground all his cherished delusions based on his inverted conception of liberty. The Partition of Bengal Mr. Morley admits to be a wrong, but he will not undo it because it is a settled fact; in other words, in dealing with dependent India he refuses to observe the rules of political morality which he has himself so clearly enunciated; in enunciating them, he would say, he had in contemplation only the rights and obligations that arise between one free people and another, and not the relationship between a ruling race and their abjectly servile subjects. All his other pronouncements point to the same moral. And have we not heard of the common English labourer who on being harangued eloquently by a Moderate missionary about Indian grievances asked him bluntly if he was really relating the true state of affairs, and on being answered in the affirmative told the missionary without much ceremony that a people who could submit to such wrongs and could think of nothing better than the sending of representatives to England to plead for their removal, fully deserved to be ruled by an arbitrary despotism? Unknowingly perhaps he was summarising the verdict of the civilised world on Indian politics. The money-making middle class in England say the same thing, and further strengthen their argument with the interesting inquiry, "What is to become of our boys if we leave the management of India in your hands?" The man from the Continent or America asks plainly, "How can the whole three hundred million of you be kept under by 70,000 tommies?"

Ought not all this to give our Moderate friends furiously to think? We can appreciate the humanity of their desire to emancipate the country without dragging her through the red horror of a revolution. But let them reconsider how best to achieve this end. Surely their failure to obtain anything worth having after thirty years of patient supplication culminating in the supreme tragedy of the refusal of John Morley, the one man of whom they had expected more than of any other — even to listen to their prayers with any seriousness, ought to impel them to some introspective inquiry regarding the soundness of their political faith. We also invite their thoughts to the changing attitude of England and of the whole world towards India since the declaration of the Boycott and the rise of the new party. We conjure the Moderate to spend his best and sincerest thoughts on these two most vital topics; and once he has begun to *think*, we know the days of his creed are numbered, and there can be but one party in India, the Nationalists.

Industrial India

The *Englishman* has the following — "Unfortunately for the Eastern artisan the present age is one devoted to mechanical contrivance. The handloom has given place to the power loom, the worker in metal has been displaced by the huge factories which deal in a very wholesale way with tons of metal and most complicated machinery. The consequence has been that Indian industry has been crushed by the superior strength of its European competitors, and the country has now practically no resource save agriculture. This is regrettable for at least two reasons. Agriculture depending on the seasons, does not afford a stable basis for national prosperity. The absence of native manufacturing enterprise tends to dull the minds of the whole people. Hence we miss here the keenness to take advantage of opportunity, the readiness of industrial resource, which are characteristic of other countries." So far we agree with the *Englishman*. But the *Englishman* is discreetly silent about the causes of this regrettable state of affairs. The reader of Indian history cannot be ignorant of the fact that England's policy has been to crush Indian industries and thus convert her to the position of a producer of raw materials to be worked up beyond the seas. And a "defective education" alone is not responsible for the shyness of Indian capital. However, we too admit that the system of education, stamped with official approval, is responsible for much of our woe as it engenders a spirit of helpless dependence and sense of inferiority and discourages in Indians the confidence in one's own ability which is essential to enterprise. It is exactly for this reason that India has realised the necessity of a system of national education which will have the same effects in India that such a system had in Germany. And we are sure the awakened spirit of nationalism, when it receives the powerful stimulus of a system of national education, will make the people self-reliant and able to bring about India's industrial regeneration without the hollow sympathy and deceptive help of aliens.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 13th, 1907 }

From Phantom to Reality

The action of the omnipotent and irresponsible executive in obstructing District Conferences alike in the proclaimed and unproclaimed areas of Bengal ought to carry home to every mind, however persistent in self-deception, the absurdity of vaunting the rights and privileges of a subject people. There is a taunt writ large over these ukases and it is this: "Fools and self-deceivers who think that rights can be held as the gift of a superior! Nothing is a right till it has been purchased by sacrifices as great as the aspiration is high. You were allowed to speak and pass resolutions so long as speeches and resolutions were all; but now that you are breaking the tacit contract by turning your movement into a serious thing, we order you to be silent and disperse." Maya dies hard. Illusion is the chief obstacle to salvation, man clings to illusions by a natural impulse; but to rid oneself of them is the beginning of wisdom. Illusions have long stood in the way of our political salvation and the lingering faith of our prominent men in persistent constitutional agitation even when the alien bureaucracy stands completely unmasked before our eyes, is an illustration of the obstinate cherishing of illusions. The Magistrate prohibits the holding of the District Conference at Khulna. The High Court is moved and the illegal ukase is precipitately withdrawn: but the withdrawal was merely a change of tactics. A bureaucracy never lacks pretexts to harass the undesirables. The promoters of the Conference are now on their trial for making seditious speeches in the Conference.

At Faridpur a local leader whose faith in the ultimate good sense of the autocratic rulers has outlived even the recent violent strain, arranged for a District Conference on a grand scale notwithstanding the protests of a section of the public against holding meetings with permission from the Police. As the recent District Conferences, though compromising our self-respect to a certain extent, have at last been justified by their results, we have preferred not to press the point of honour. We have submitted to the Ordinance by not holding meetings; Faridpur and Pabna carry their weakness a little further, that is all. And on the whole it was well that the attempt to hold the Conference was made. For the Faridpur leaders adopted to a certain extent the Nationalist programme and have, as a consequence, come in conflict with the bureaucracy. The prohibitory ukase of the Magistrate of Faridpur leaves no doubt as to the attitude of the bureaucracy towards opposition in any form. They demand a tame acquiescence in their arbitrary regulations and are determined to put down any expression of adverse opinion under the pretext of preventing the spread of disaffection and the disturbance of public tranquillity. Is further explicitness wanted? Cultivate the art of "wooing", hold meetings to issue loyalist manifestos or celebrate the Empire Day, but if you are audacious enough to express your discontent, the British truncheon is ready for you. This is the whole meaning of these ukases; this is the moral repeatedly inculcated through the various prohibitory circulars. As the old superstitions have still their hold on some minds, we welcome the repetition of such browbeating. But in the meantime we must not fail to turn them to account. If we are not capable of offering any active opposition to the encroachment on our natural rights, the intensified sense of wrong should at least give a healthy direction to the patriotic efforts of all. From such continued rebuffs we should draw the energy and inspiration to work out our national well-being on independent lines. Every fresh blow should impart a greater impetus to the Boycott, to National Education, to the organisation of discontent, with a view to leaving the aliens severely alone. But hitherto our Moderate friends have rather been anxious to ram their heads more vigorously against the stone wall of bureaucracy than to learn by their failure the necessity of taking our own road. They still persist in trying to resurrect the dead phantom of British sympathy and good will. Henceforth they should seek rather the resurrection of our own national strength and greatness. When Lord Curzon aimed his first blow at self-government by giving his seal of approval to the Calcutta Municipal Bill, the *Pratibasi* published a cartoon exposing the unsubstantial nature of our rights and privileges. The Calcutta Municipality was represented as a shrouded corpse surrounded by weeping relatives to whom a *padre* with the physiognomy of Sir John Woodburn soothingly remarked, "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." It drew forth from the *Pioneer* the following retort: "The quaint conceit might have been rounded off by some hope of future resurrection." This false hope which the bureaucracy till now sedulously fostered, has been a curse to the country. Privileges granted as favours have no true life in them; they are mere illusions and what is the use of striving for the fitful return of ghosts who are again bound to disappear? Let maya pass out of us, let the illusions die; let us turn with clear eyes and sane minds from these pale and alien phantoms to the true reality of our Mother as she rises from the living death of a century, and in her seek our only strength and our sufficient inspiration.

Audi Alteram Partem

Our Nagpur correspondent has taken us sharply to task for allowing ourselves to believe that the publication of the pamphlet *Audi Alteram Partem* indicated a desire on the part of the Loyalists to leave backstairs tactics for the open field of fair and honest controversy. We drew our first information from the *Mahratta* and naturally inferred that the pamphlet was intended for public circulation, nor is there anything in the printed copy which has come into our hands to show the contrary. We presume, however, that our correspondent is well informed and that we were mistaken. By the invitation to hear the other side is evidently meant that only one side should be heard and that too in camera. We shall take an early opportunity of answering this secret manifesto of Nagpur Loyalism.

Swadeshi in Education

There is an interesting article in the *Modern Review* on Swadeshi in Education, interesting not only because of the subject and its importance, or of the undoubted thought and ability which have been devoted to the subject, but also and still more because of the limitations of the present education to which it bears striking evidence. The mind trained by the present system of education, even when it is somewhat above the average, is almost invariably deficient in practicality and the robustness to shake off cherished superstitions and face and recognise facts. The attempt at Swadeshi Education under the official Universities has been made both in Calcutta and under peculiarly favourable circumstances at Poona. At Poona an immense amount of self-sacrifice went to the making of the New English School and the Ferguson College, and some of the best intellects and noblest hearts in the Deccan devoted themselves to the work. Yet the end was failure. The Ferguson College is in no way superior to any other institution in the Bombay University, although also in no way inferior. Its education is the same vicious and defective education — utterly unsuited to modern needs, academic, scrappy, unscientific, unpractical, unideal. It takes aid from the officials, submits to their dictation and excludes politics at their bidding. Yet the proposal of the *Modern Review* writer is merely to concentrate the best intellects of the country in the Poona Institution in order to make it “an Indian College superior to any existing College”, and he summarily dismisses the idea of a National University merely on the score of expense. We fail to see how this will meet the problem or how such an institution can really deserve the name of Swadeshi in Education. Swadeshi in Education does not mean teaching by Indian professors only or even management by Indians only. It means an education suited to the temperament and needs of the people, fitted to build up a nation equipped for life under modern conditions, and absolutely controlled by Indians. The proposed Model College might avail itself of the services of Drs. Bose and Ray and Ziauddin, but they would after all have to teach on the lines and up to the standard of the Bombay University and submit entirely to the rules and orders of the Bombay Government as conveyed through an officialised Senate and Syndicate. We should still be confined within the vicious circle of which the writer complains. We should be no nearer "taking the higher education of this country into our own hands and ceasing to look to Englishmen for help" than we were thirty years ago. Independence is the first condition and any scheme which disregards it is doomed to failure.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 15th, 1907 }

Boycott and After

The twentieth century dawned on a rising flood of renascent humanity surging over Asia's easternmost borders. The first report of it reached the astonished world in the victorious thunder of Japan. And it spread onward, this resurgent wave of human spirit, swiftly, irresistibly, overflooding in a sweeping embrace China, India, Persia and the farther West. India received the ablution of the holy waters singing her sacred hymn *Bande Mataram* that filled the spaces of heaven with joyous echoes heard of the Gods as of old, and the nations of the earth listened to the song of unfree India and knew what it was — a voice in the chorus of Asiatic liberty. The unpremeditated and spontaneous declaration of the Boycott was the declaration of the country's recovery to life from its death-swoon of centuries, of her determination to live her own life — not for a master, but for herself and for the world. All was changed. Patriotism, the half-understood catchword of platform oratory, passed out of its confinement into the heart of the people — the priest and the prince and the peasant alike — giving to each that power of sacrifice which has now translated itself according to the confessions of the *Times* into the concrete fact of 42 million yards less of English cotton goods. And the demonstration of the sixteenth of October joined in by the Hindu and the Mahomedan, the Buddhist, the Jain and the Sikh, the police and the people, through the mystic compulsion of an instinctive fraternity, was the enchanting prevision of the India to be.

Such a vision is vouchsafed only to the man or the nation that stands on the threshold of emancipation; it came to the Rishi filling him with the immortal longing to be one with the

Divine, to the mediaeval monk penetrating him with the lifelong love of Christ, and it has ever come at the mature moment to the down-trodden peoples of the earth revealing to them in a flash the mission and the destination of their life. It remains but a moment, but those that have seen it can never forget or rest; they pursue the glory, even while it seems to recede into the distance, over the even and uneven walks of life, past the smiles of the tempter, through the prison-gate and exit, on through the jaws of death. Its effect on the individual is immediate, on a whole nation necessarily spread over a longer time during which the seer of it bears its message to him who has not seen. But the progress of the pursuit none can arrest till the vision is reached, realised and reinstalled in all the beauty of its first appearance. Ever since the Partition day, India has pressed on this path; the boycott of foreign goods, the return of the weaver to his loom, the dissociation of the people from the Government, the strikes, the deluge of meetings all over the land, the insulting of the National leaders, the breaking up of the Barisal Conference, the dismissal of Fuller, the appointment of Hare, the persecution of boys, the dismissal of the school-masters who loved liberty more than money, the foundation of the National Council of Education, of National schools, the institution of technical education, the insolvency of dealers in Bideshi goods, the social excommunication of anti-boycotters, the unbidden repetitions of the Rakhi-day fast, the passing of the Swadeshi resolution by the Congress, the prosecution of the Punjabis, the Rawalpindi riot, the Mahomedan rowdyism in East Bengal, the loan to Salimullah, Newmania, the changed and respectful attitude of Anglo-Indians towards Indians, the deportation of Lajpat and Ajit Singh, the proclamation, the unmasking of English liberalism, the awakening of Madras, the prosecutions at Rajamundry and Coconada, the continuing prosecutions in the Punjab and Bengal, the admission by the *Times* of the success of the Boycott, the throwing of 150,000 English labourers out of employment and the necessity of easing overstocked markets, are some of the landmarks of the country's progress. Before her now lies the valley of the shadow of death full of trials and unknown perils and temptations, but the light that leads her cannot fail; the inspiration of the Power that gives her strength is irresistible, superior to death; she will go on till the fulfilment of the vision of the 16th of October. There is a Divinity that has been shaping her ends — no mere might of man, for nothing but the renovating touch of Divinity can account for the difference between now and then, between the days before and after the Boycott.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 16th, 1907 }

In Honour of Hyde and Humphreys

In contrast with the extraordinary row that is being made by the Anglo-Indian Press over the police libel case it is instructive to set the judgment in the Delhi sweeper's case. In one case a Calcutta journal makes imputations which it could not prove against the immaculate Police and damages whatever reputation had already remained undamaged by their own efficiency, integrity and self-denying devotion to duty; and it is mulcted in a few thousands for the offence. In the other an Englishman carries his conception of the white man's burden and his benevolent sympathy for the race in whose interests he is unselfishly toiling under the Indian sun, so far as to kick an Indian to death. For this reassertion of British prestige he is fined Rs. 50 by a fellow white, who is equally conscious of the burden and equally flowing over with the milk of Morleyesque sympathy, but who has also to consider the health of Delhi which was threatened by the sweepers' strike. We do not know who killed Ganga Uriya; we do know who killed the Delhi sweeper. The Indian murderer, if he had been caught, would have been hanged; the English manslaughterer has to pay Rs. 50 to the Government treasury, which may be regarded either as the price which the bureaucracy puts on Indian life or a sort of tax on the luxurious amusement of rupturing Indian spleens. We are surprised by the way that the Anglo-Indian Defence Association has not as yet moved in the matter or made any protest against making a poor man pay so heavily for his amusements. For our part, we would not for a moment be thought to suggest that Hyde ought to have been punished for his crime; that would be a monstrous and seditious proposal, and if we made it, we have no doubt we would be immediately run in for causing enmity between the races. No, our object in writing is to suggest that now the Clive memorial idea has been dropped, statues may be raised instead to Hyde and Humphreys in a conspicuous part of the Maidan: for if Clive was the founder of the Empire, Hyde and Humphreys are among its defenders. For Indians the moral of such incidents is the old one, "To be weak is miserable."

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 18th, 1907 }

Angelic Murmurs

There could hardly be a more moving instance of self-denying benevolence than the occasional anxiety of Anglo-Indian journals to point out the defects of Congress methods and teach us how to make our propaganda a success. The success of the Congress movement would mean the loss of all political and commercial preponderance to these grave mentors, but that is nothing to them. They *will* be benevolent. Buddha and Christ were not in it with these saintly Britishers. The *Pioneer* is the most persistent of these paper angels. It has recently been discoursing on Indian members of Parliament and Friends of India in Parliament. The enthusiastic anticipations of a millennium which the election of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji to Parliament excited in the Congress bosom have yielded to sad disillusionment, and the *Pioneer* regrets it, for the presence of Indian members in the House would do no harm to the bureaucracy and it might help to prolong Indian delusions. Apparently it was all Mr. Naoroji's fault that no more Indian members are elected. He would keep harping on Indian grievances, a thing no British constituency could be expected to stand. The *Pioneer* then points out that the Congress has been particularly unfortunate in attracting eccentrics and faddists to its side, while it has repelled great and rising statesmen like Mr. Rees. Omitting the *Pioneer*'s little joke about Mr. Rees who would be more in place in a broad farce or musical comedy at the Gaiety than in the House, there is truth in the *Pioneer*'s remarks. The Friends of India are men without weight or influence in English political life; for no man of importance would risk his career by going against the prominent British interests which would be offended by a support of

India's claims to self-government. Finally our benevolent mentor warns us against any alliance with the Irish Nationalists, for that would bring the hostility of Britain upon us. Henceforth, therefore, the Congress has no excuse for not succeeding in its campaign in England. It has only to avoid bringing up Indian grievances in the House, to enlist the co-operation of those who are thorough-going champions of bureaucratic absolutism and to shun the assistance of the only party which has some community of interest with India, and we shall romp in winners next morning. The Angel of the *Pioneer* office has spoken.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 19th, 1907 }

A Plague o' Both Your Houses

The mellay between the Anglo-Indian Press and the Bengal Government over the dead body of Ganga Uriya shows no sign of diminishing in intensity. The indignation meeting which was foreshadowed by the *Daily News* is, we are told, to come off in the Town Hall. We can have no possible objection so long as our only share in this civil strife is to look on as interested spectators and shout "Charge, Fraser, charge! On, Digby, on!" according as our sympathies are enlisted on one side or the other by the merits of the case or our personal predilections or the gallant bearing of the high and mighty combatants. But it becomes a serious matter when we are asked to join in as allies of Anglo-India and ourselves take a share in the chances of battle. Some of our public men are deceiving themselves into the notion that we ought to make common cause with our natural enemies in this struggle. We should have thought that the reasons against this suicidal course were too plain to even need formulating; but then many of our countrymen allow the over-subtlety of their brains acting in a complete void of political experience to cheat them into strangely foolish courses.

The claim for Indian support to the Anglo-Indians in the Police libel case rests on the assumption that both communities are alike citizens of the same state with the same rights and disabilities on the whole and therefore equally interested in preserving those rights or removing those disabilities. If this were true, we should freely admit the desirability of supporting our fellow citizens against bureaucratic injustice. We do not indeed consider that the *Daily News* has been unjustly mulcted, if justice and law be identical and convertible terms. The judgment of Justice

Chitty seems to us to be a fair and judicial application of the law on the subject to the particular case. But then a large part of the law in India is unjust, repressive and even monstrously severe, and it is to the interest of the people, if they cannot get these laws altered, at least to insist on seeing that they are administered not in the letter but under the modifying influence of the spirit of equity. The Anglo-Indians are therefore justified in challenging the action of the Government and the spirit in which the case has been engineered and decided. But unfortunately, this which would be the whole matter in a free country, is a very small part of it in India. What is it that Anglo-India is fighting for? What is it that we shall be helping to establish if we support her? It is not the independence of the Press, it is not the common rights of the citizen. Anglo-India is a determined enemy of the freedom of the Indian Press, she is always howling for the repression of free speech in matters political and for savage punishments to be meted out to Indian speakers and journalists; and even in non-political matters, if it were only Indian journals that were being prosecuted, she would not care a button or stir a finger to help them. Anglo-India is equally a determined opponent of the rights of citizens being extended to Indians, a consistent supporter of despotic and personal rule. And she is so because she has felt confident that the Press repression and administrative coercion she advocated would not be applied against her, rather she would herself be the power behind the throne. This confidence has received a rude and startling shock. Hence her rage and outcry, hence this howling of wolves for the blood of Sir Andrew Fraser. What Anglo-India is fighting for is the independence of the Anglo-Indian Press, and that only as part of the Anglo-Indian supremacy. She is fighting for her exemption from the laws and the administrative severity which she desires to see savagely applied to us. She is fighting against her being put on the same level as her Indian fellow-subjects. Is this an object in which we can support her? She wishes us to support her in vindicating her independence and supremacy which she will use in binding the chains tighter on ourselves. Are we going to be such idiots as to help her in her game?

The spirit in which Anglo-India is fighting has hardly been concealed. The *Daily News* has frankly said that despotism is necessary as against the people of India, but that it is limited as against men of English birth by the ultimate supremacy of the English people of whom, it is hinted, the Anglo-Indians are a part. The question is not so easy as all that. The supreme power, the sovereignty, maker of the laws and above the laws, in India is the conjoint power of the British Parliament and the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, the latter receiving its authority from the former, but in practice exercising the whole sovereignty. Every sovereign, however, rests his sovereignty on some support in the country or outside it, and our sovereign the bureaucracy rests on the support, for extraordinary occasions, of the people of England and for ordinary purposes on that of the Indian police and army and the Anglo-Indian community. If the Indian police and military revolt or are unable to maintain the sovereign, a life and death crisis supervenes and the British army has to be called in to restore the balance. But ordinarily the Indian police and military and especially the former are of supreme importance, much more so than the unofficial Anglo-Indians who can only give a valuable but not indispensable moral support. In order therefore to secure and make the most of its chief support, the sovereign bureaucracy must itself support the police even against Anglo-India. But Anglo-India is not satisfied with this position; she puts a high value on her support and desires to share the sovereignty informally, through the Press and the Chambers of Commerce. This is a natural desire, but why should we help her to attain it? If the bureaucracy is supreme, we suffer, but if the weight of a triumphant and dominant Anglo-India is added to the weight of the bureaucracy we shall be oppressed indeed. Our business is to develop our own strength so that we may get the sovereignty for ourselves and not help either of our enemies to our own hurt. A plague o' both our houses is the only sensible attitude for us in the question between the Government and the Anglo-Indian community which the Police Libel Case has raised.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 20th, 1907 }

The Khulna Comedy

The result of a political case is always a foregone conclusion in this country in the present era of anti-Swadeshi repression, for the object of the proceedings is not to detect and punish crime but to put down Swadeshi under the forms of law. Whether the accused is innocent or guilty of the particular charge it has been thought convenient to formulate against him, is a matter of very trifling importance. Neither the people nor the bureaucracy really accept a conviction as proof of any offence against the law. Indeed it is more or less a matter of caprice or convenience whether one offence or another is selected. When the crime is not chosen with a view to the punishment it is desired to inflict, or the greater ease of securing evidence, or the necessity of convicting when there is no evidence, the problem is probably determined by the sense of humour of the prosecuting Magistrate or by an aesthetic perception of the fitness of things. Generally the Swadeshi worker is charged with sedition or assault or breach of the peace or wishing to break the peace or thinking of doing something which somebody in authority pretends to believe likely to break the peace but he might just as well be charged with burglary or abduction or with contempt of the Magistrate's *khansamah* or with the Bengal stare or the Coconada grimace. The main object is to send him to prison or bind him over not to do any work for Swadeshi for six months or a year, and the pretext is a mere bagatelle. The real point is not whether the accused is innocent or guilty of the particular offence but whether he is innocent or guilty of Swadeshi, whether he is innocent or guilty of patriotism, whether he is innocent or guilty of Nationalism. For this reason no disgrace attaches to conviction, rather it is the passport to fame, honour and public esteem. The prosecution is a farce, the defence is a farce, and the judgment is the most exquisite farce of all. The bureaucracy go through the farce because they cling to the shadow of moral prestige even when the substance of it is gone: they like to adopt Russian methods, but they do not like them to be called Russian and still hug the delusion that by going through the legal forms of which Justice makes use they can cover the nakedness of their tyranny with the rags of law. The accused go through the farce with the sole object of so managing the defence as to dispel even the last shadow of the old moral prestige and to expose the nakedness of bureaucratic oppression more and more. It is a political fight with the law-courts for its scene.

In no recent political case except Rawalpindi has the veil of law been so ridiculously thin as in the Khulna case. Partly, no doubt, this is due to the personal gifts of the prosecuting Magistrate who decided the case. Mr. Asanuddin Ahmed is a very distinguished man. The greatest and most successful achievement of his life was to be a fellow-collegian of Lord Curzon. But he has other sufficiently respectable if less gorgeous claims to distinction. Arithmetic, logic, English and Law are his chief fortes. His mastery over figures is so great that arithmetic is his slave and not his master; it is even said that he can assess a man at Rs. 90 one day and bring him down 200 per cent in estimation the other. It is whispered that it was not only for a masterly general incompetence but also for this special gift that he was transferred to Khulna. His triumphant dealings with logic were admirably exampled by the original syllogism which he presented to the startled organisers of the District Conference. "I, Asanuddin, am the District Magistrate; the District Magistrate is the representative of the district; ergo, I, Asanuddin, am the one and only representative of the district. Now only a representative of the district has a right to hold a District Conference or to do anything in the name of the district, or to use any expression in which the word district occurs; I, Asanuddin, am the sole and only representative of the district; ergo, I, Asanuddin, have the sole and only right to call a District Conference." Mr. Ahmed's

English is the delight of the judges of the High Court, who are believed to spend sleepless nights in trying to make out the meaning of his judgments. In one case at least, it is said, a distinguished judge had to confess with sorrow and humiliation that he could make nothing of the English of the learned Magistrate and after reading the judgment in the present case we can well believe the story. As for his knowledge of law, the best praise we can give it is that it is on a level with his knowledge of, say, English. Such was the brilliant creature who appointed himself prosecutor, jury and judge in the Khulna sedition case.

Under such auspices the conduct of the case was sure to be distinguished by a peculiarly effulgent brilliancy. In order to prove that Venibhushan Rai talked sedition it was thought necessary to prove how many volunteers were present at the Conference. This is a fair example of the kind of evidence on which the case was decided and which the great Asanuddin declared to be particularly relevant. Beyond evidence of this stamp there was no proof against the accused except the evidence of police officers unsupported by any verbatim report, while on the other side were the statements of the respectable pleaders, the verbatim copy of the speech and a whole mass of unshaken testimony. But our one and only Asanuddin declared that the evidence of respectable men was not to be believed because they *were* respectable and graduates of the Calcutta University and partakers in the Conference; the police apparently were the only disinterested and truthful people in Khulna. But the most remarkable dictum of this remarkable man was that when one is charged with sedition it is not necessary to prove the use of any particular seditious utterances; it is quite enough for the Magistrate to come to the conclusion that something untoward might, could or should have happened as the result of the accused having made a speech. In fact, it is hardly necessary under the section as interpreted by Daniels of this kind, to prove anything against the accused; the only thing necessary is that the Magistrate should think it better for convenience official or unofficial that he should be bound over. The section answers the same purpose in minor cases which the regulation of 1818 answers in the case of more powerful opponents of irresponsible despotism.

The Khulna case has been from the point of view of Justice an undress rehearsal of the usual bureaucratic comedy; from the point of view of Mr. Asanuddin Ahmed it has been a brilliant exhibition of his superhuman power of acting folly and talking nonsense; from the point of view of Srijut Venibhushan Rai it has been a triumph greater than any legal victory, a public certificate of patriotism, courage and sincerity, an accolade of knighthood and nobility in the service of the motherland.

A Noble Example

The proprietors of the Ahmedabad Fine Mills have been doing substantial work not only for the industrial progress of the country but for Indian unity. At the First Industrial Conference held at Benares in December, 1905, Dewan Bahadur Ambalal Sakerlal Desai promised on behalf of this firm that they would undertake to train Indian students in the art of weaving free of charge in their mill. Since then no less than thirty students have started for Ahmedabad and are there receiving instruction, some in weaving and some in spinning and Mechanical Engineering. Another leading mill in the country offered to teach weaving through a six months' course for a fee of no less than one thousand rupees; the Ahmedabad Mill has undertaken it as a labour of love. The students will be taken through a three years' course, and if any of them wants to be specially trained as an expert he will have to stay on for a longer period. The proprietors are willing to take a fresh batch of students, but as they want to make sure that the students trained by them should not suffer from lack of employment and as no fresh mills are being started in Bengal, they have for the present stopped taking in fresh students. The capitalists of Bengal should take note of this and now that there will be no lack of trained experts should see that their expert knowledge is not wasted simply because there are no enterprising capitalists to utilise them. The whole country, and specially Bengal, owes a deep debt of gratitude to the authorities of the Ahmedabad Fine Mills, and most of all to the weaving master, Mr. Keshub Lall Mansukram Mehta, not only for their generous and patriotic work, but also for the almost paternal care they are bestowing on the young men placed under their charge.

We remember in this connection that Mr. Giridhari Lal, Government Pleader, Delhi, also promised at the same Conference that he would undertake to make provision for teaching the art of spinning free of charge to Indian students in a certain cotton mill. We have not heard if this offer also has been taken advantage of, like the above, by intending students, and should be glad to have further information on the subject.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 22nd, 1907 }

The Korean Crisis

The chorus of jubilation with which the English Press receives news of any danger to the last shred of independence of any ancient people is characteristic. The Koreans cannot see their way to acquiesce in Japanese rule, ergo, they are arch-intriguers. Europe in her present temper seems to be the most uncompromising enemy of the liberty of all peoples except her own. The disturbances that have followed the deputation to the Hague, the meeting of the Korean troops, and the active participation of the populace in the same, seem to have filled Europe with a grim gratification at the prospect of Korea being placed permanently under the heel of Japan. Europe is a worshipper of success, and we need not wonder if she is glad to see an Eastern power taking a leaf out of her book, in threatening the liberty of nations.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 25th, 1907 }

One More for the Altar

Srijut Bhupendranath Dutt has been sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment for telling the truth with too much emphasis. As to that we have nothing to say, for it is a necessary part of the struggle between Anglo-Indian bureaucracy and Indian democracy. The bureaucracy has all the material power in its hands and it must necessarily struggle to preserve its unjust and immoral monopoly of power by the means which material strength places in its hands, by the infliction of suffering on the bodies of its opponents and on their minds, so far as they allow the suffering of the body to affect the mind, by forcible interference with the outward expression of their feelings, by intimidation and a show of brute power and force. But if the bureaucracy has all the material power in its hands, the democracy has all the spiritual power, the power and force of martyrdom, of unflinching courage, of self-immolation for an idea. Spiritual power in the present creates material power in the future and for this reason we always find that if it is material force which dominates the present, it is spiritual which moulds and takes possession of the future. The despot in all ages can lay bonds and stripes and death on our body; his power is only limited by his will, for law is an instrument forged by himself and which he can turn to his own uses and morality is a thing which he regards not at all, or if he affects to regard it, he is cunning enough to throw a veil of words over his actions and mislead the distant and ill-informed opinion which is all he cares for. But if the despot can lay on the body the utmost ills of the scourge and the rack and the sword, if he can directly or indirectly plunder the goods of those who resist him and seek to crush them by wounding them in their dearest point of honour, the enthusiast for liberty can also turn suffering into strength, bonds into a glorious emancipation and death into the seed of a splendid and beneficent life. He can refuse to allow the tortures of the body to affect the calm and illumined strength of his soul where it sits, a Divine Being in the white radiance of its own self-existent bliss, rejoicing in all the glorious manifestations of its Will, rejoicing in its pleasures, rejoicing in its anguish, rejoicing in victory, rejoicing in defeat, rejoicing in life, rejoicing in death. For we in India who are enthusiasts for liberty, fight for no selfish lure, for no mere material freedom, for no mere economic predominance, but for our national right to that large freedom and noble life without which no spiritual emancipation is possible; for it is not among an enslaved, degraded and perishing people that the Rishis and great spirits can long continue to be born. And since the spiritual life of India is the first necessity of the world's future, we fight not only for our own political and spiritual freedom but for the spiritual emancipation of the human race. With such a glorious cause to battle for, there ought to be no craven weakness among us, no flinching, no cowardly evasion of the consequences of our action. It is a mistake to whine when we are smitten, as if we had hoped to achieve liberty without suffering. To meet persecution with indifference, to take punishment quietly as a matter of course, with erect head and undimmed eyes, this is the spirit in which we must conquer.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 26th, 1907 }

Srijut Bhupendranath

At the meeting held day before yesterday in the College Square to express sympathy with the editor of the *Yugantar* and congratulate him on his good fortune in being so signally chosen out to suffer for the Motherland, it was pointed out that Srijut Bhupendranath had initiated a new departure in the struggle with the bureaucracy. He is the first who standing in the dock, called to account by the alien under alien-made law for preaching the gospel of Indian freedom to his countrymen, has refused to acknowledge any responsibility to the alien bureaucracy. It is extremely important that the real meaning of the attitude of the accused should not be mistaken, for it has undoubtedly been obscured by the shape into which it was put under the influence of others more accustomed to legal notions and legal phraseology than to the plain utterance of the heart. The accused was strongly represented, Srijuts Ashutosh Chaudhuri, Aswini Banerji, Chittaranjan Das and A. K. Ghose appearing for him in the case, and had he chosen, as he did not choose, to make a sensational trial of the *Yugantar* case and win for himself popular notoriety, he could easily have done so. We think, however, it might have been better if Srijut Bhupendranath had rejected even this brilliant legal assistance and relied on the frank and straightforward utterance which wells up from the depths of a strong and abiding feeling and profound intellectual conviction. The over-careful language of legality, guiding its feet with delicate scrupulousness among a million traps and pitfalls and intent only upon avoiding a stumble, that is one thing; the clear bold speech of the patriot speaking straight to his countrymen's hearts, enamoured of martyrdom, exalted with the passionate realisation of sacred liberty, that is quite another. Bhupendranath's statement was a political declaration, not a legal formula, and it should so have been expressed. Unfortunately it was toned down into legal form and lost half its force. In the original statement drawn up under the instructions of the accused he had declared sans phrase, "I have done what I considered my duty to my country" and ended by saying, "I do not wish to make any farther statement or *to take any part in the case*." This was clear enough; the editor of *Yugantar*, consistent with the views he had publicly professed, refused to do anything which would seem to be an acknowledgement of responsibility to the codified caprice or selfishness of the small handful of alien officials who call themselves the Government established by law. He had written with his eye not on the limitations imposed by the Penal Code, but on the needs of his country. This responsibility was to his countrymen, not to a group of English officials. To plead before a Court constituted by the bureaucracy, was to admit his responsibility to aliens and deny his responsibility to his countrymen.

Unfortunately the edge of the utterance was blunted by the verbal alterations made by the pleader, who looked on the statement with the eyes of the lawyer, not of the politician. The calm and dignified appeal to the duty his country demanded of him was marred by the legal plea of good faith; the patriot's refusal to take part in a trial before the very authority it was his whole mission to displace, was modified into a legal abstention from any further "action" in an ordinary undefended trial. Later in the day a worse thing happened. Srijut Ashutosh Chaudhuri has been severely criticised for the remarks with which he accompanied his refusal to give any address. It is fair to state that he does not seem to have been accurately reported. We are informed that he prefaced his remarks by saying that as his client had refused to plead, he had no *locus standi* in the case; whatever he said, was therefore not spoken in the name of Srijut Bhupendranath, but merely expressed his own opinion. We are also informed that he did not say that the accused had placed himself in the Magistrate's hands, but simply that the case was now in the

Magistrate's hands and Counsel had no farther concern in the matter. Nevertheless, Mr. Chaudhuri's intervention was unfortunate, as it has led to the obscuring of the true spirit of the statement, so much so that Srijut Bhupendranath was considering whether he should not make an additional statement in order to make clear his position but was advised that the opportunity had passed. The proposed statement was to the following effect, "I do not wish any address to be delivered by Counsel on my behalf. I have refused to plead not because I wish to withdraw a single word of what I have written or acknowledge the justice of any sentence that may be passed on me, but for an opposite reason. I have written what everyone knows to be true and what is in the minds of all my countrymen, but I was aware that in doing so I would have no chance of justice in the British Courts. I do not think it consistent with the views I have always preached to plead before them."

The justice of which there was no chance, was of course, not justice according to the letter of the alien law, but moral justice. When Mr. Aswini Banerji declared that the accused neither pleaded guilty nor not guilty, but simply declared that he had done no wrong, the Magistrate asked whether he meant legal wrong or moral wrong and certain empty-headed people in the audience laughed. But it is no laughing matter to a rule which has no roots in the soil, when there comes to be a recognized opposition, recognized equally by rulers and ruled, between the laws it enforces and the obligations of morality, when an action savagely punished by authority is recognized as morally inoffensive or praiseworthy. It means that the whole basis of the rule has become rotten, that it has neither a material nor a moral foundation.

Srijut Bhupendranath's attitude was dignified and consistent. His duty to his country, the interests of her future, of her very life, demanded that he should preach the gospel of independence. But the duty to our country, the interests of our country can be no justification before the law of the alien. Rather the interests of the rulers being diametrically opposed to the interests of the ruled, those who try to promote the latter are natural enemies of the former and punishable by the alien law. To hope for justice therefore in political cases where one of the parties is the judge, is irrational and to plead justification to those against whom one's action was directed, an inconsistency and a degradation. It was open to the accused to plead not in order to defend himself, but to make his position clear to the world at large. But not even to this would Bhupendranath condescend. He refused to do anything which could be construed into an acknowledgement of responsibility for his political actions to an established authority ruling and resolved to continue ruling without the consent of the Indian people.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 29th, 1907 }

The Issue

The bureaucracy as usual has overreached itself in instituting a case under the sedition clause against the editor of the *Yugantar.* The *Punjabee* prosecution did untold harm to their prestige and helped to shatter the not overabundant remnants of their moral ascendancy; its work was negative and destructive. But the *Yugantar* prosecution has been a positive gain to the national cause; it has begun the positive work of building up the moral ascendancy of the people which is to replace that of the alien and nullify his mere material superiority. This momentous result the editor of *Yugantar* has brought about by his masterly inactivity. His refusal to plead has been worth many sensational trials. It has produced an enormous effect on the public mind all over India, not only as an individual instance of moral courage and readiness to suffer quietly and simply, without ostentation and self-advertisement, as a matter of course and one's plain duty to the country, but as the first practical application in the face of persecution of the sheer uncompromising spirit of Swarajism. For the first time a man has been found who can say to the power of alien Imperialism, "With all thy pomp of empire and splendour and dominion, with all thy boast of invincibility and mastery irresistible, with all thy wealth of men and money and guns and cannon, with all thy strength of the law and strength of the sword, with all thy power to confine, to torture or to slay the body, yet for me, for the spirit, the real man in me, thou art not. Thou art only a phase, a phenomenon, a passing illusion, and the only lasting realities are my Mother and my freedom."

It is well that we should understand the real issue which is not primarily one of law or of political forms and institutions, but a spiritual issue on which all others depend and from which they arise. The question is not whether one Bhupendranath Dutt published matter which he knew to be likely to bring the Government established by law, to wit certain mediocrities in Belvedere, Darjeeling, Shillong or Simla who collectively call themselves the Government of Bengal or of India, into contempt or hatred, or to encourage a desire to resist or subvert their lawful authority. If that were all, we might argue the question whether what he did was wise or what he wrote was true or mistaken, legal or illegal. As it is, these things do not matter even to the value of a broken cowrie. The real issue for us Nationalists is something quite different and infinitely more vital. It is this, "Is India free?" — not even "Shall India be free?" but, is India free and am I as an Indian free or a serf bound to the service, the behest or the forced guidance of something outside and alien to myself and mine, something which is anatman, not myself? Am I, are my people part of humanity, the select and chosen temple of the Brahman, and entitled therefore to grow straight in the strength of our own spirit, free and with head erect before mankind, or are we a herd of cattle to live and work for others? Are we to live our own life or only a life prescribed and circumscribed for us by something outside ourselves? Are we to guide our own destinies or are we to have no destiny at all except nullity, except death? For it is nonsense to talk of other people guiding our destinies, that is only an euphemism for killing our destinies altogether; it is nonsense to talk of others giving us enlightenment, civilisation, political training, for the enlightenment that is given and not acquired brings not light but confusion, the civilisation that is imposed from outside kills a nation instead of invigorating it, and the training which is not acquired by our own experience and effort incapacitates and does not make efficient. The issue of freedom is therefore the only issue. All other issues are merely delusion and Maya, all other talk is the talk of men that sleep or are in intellectual and moral bondage.

We Nationalists declare that man is for ever and inalienably free and that we too are, both individually as Indian men and collectively as an Indian nation, for ever and inalienably free. As freemen we will speak the thing that seems right to us without caring what others may do to our bodies to punish us for being freemen, as freemen we will do what we think good for our country, as freemen we will educate ourselves in our own schools, settle our differences by our own arbitrators, sell and buy our own goods, build up our own character, our own civilisation, our own national destinies. Your schools, your administration, your Law Courts, your manufactured articles, your Legislative Councils, your Ordinances and sedition laws are to us things alien and unreal, and we eschew them as Maya, as anatman. If men and nations are for ever and inalienably free, then bondage is an illusion, the rule of one nation over another is against natural law and therefore a falsehood, and falsehoods can only endure so long as the Truth refuses to recognise itself. The princes of Bengal at the time of Plassey did not realise that we could save ourselves, they thought that something outside would save us. We were not enslaved by Clive, for not even a thousand Clives could have had strength enough to enslave us, we were enslaved by our own delusions, by the false conviction of weakness. And the moment we get the full conviction of our strength, the conviction that we are for ever and inalienably free, and that nobody but ourselves can either take or keep from us that inalienable and priceless possession, from that moment freedom is assured. So long as we go on crying, "We are unfit, we are unfit", or even doubt our fitness, so long we shall make and keep ourselves unfit. It is only the conviction of fitness for freedom and the practice of freedom that makes and keeps men fit for freedom. To create that conviction, to encourage and make habitual that practice is the whole aim of the new movement. Nationalism is the gospel of inalienable freedom, Boycott is the practice of freedom. To break the Boycott and to stop the preaching of Nationalism is the whole object of the bureaucracy. The *Times* saw this when it singled out the writings of *Bande Mataram* and *Yugantar*, the speeches of Bipin Chandra Pal and his like and, above all, the Boycott as the root of all evil. Behind all technicalities this is the true and only issue in these sedition cases. The Nationalists declare that Indians are for ever and inalienably freemen and vindicate their right to preach this gospel; Mr. Morley and the bureaucrats tell us we are for ever and inalienably the property of England and would pursue our preaching as a crime. Who or what shall reconcile this fundamental and irreconcilable opposition?

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, July 30th, 1907 }

District Conference at Hughly

We are glad to hear that arrangements have been made for holding a District Conference at Hughly, some time in September next. Hughly, as some earnest workers of the District complain, has not been much stirred by the new impulses. A District Conference, whether held or prohibited, has everywhere been instrumental in giving an impetus to the Swadeshi cause. We are thoroughly confident that Hughly, which claims now the best intellects of Bengal, will rise equal to the occasion and recover the lost ground by imparting a swifter pace to their patriotic activities.

Bureaucratic Alarms

We would call the especial attention of our readers to the interesting communication from a Bhagalpur correspondent in another column. The exaggerated praise which was showered by the Bhagalpur vendors of loyalty on officials who had little or nothing to do with the actual fight with the plague, is an example of the value of these addresses. It is of course impossible for the address-mongers not to have known the real facts, but truth is not a commodity which one can profitably offer to the official dispensers of posts and titles. There are three kinds of composition which are exempted from the moral obligation of truthfulness, an epitaph, a loyalist address and an official statement. The description given of the work of the Ramakrishna Mission is admirable and touching, but such deeds we take as a matter of course and the least we can expect from those whose lives have been shaped by Ramakrishna and Vivekananda; it would be surprising if those who have touched the hem of the garments of divinity should not themselves have something in them of the divine. But the most significant part of the communication is the remarkable statement about the alarm of the police at the work of the Mission. That alarm is a pregnant comment on the nature of the bureaucratic domination in India. We have more than once pointed out that an alien rule without roots in the soil cannot possibly tolerate the growth of any strength or manliness or nobility in the subject people, and must inevitably try to crush, curb or render ineffective any actual or possible centre of strength around which it is remotely possible for the national self-consciousness to crystallize. Hence the alarm and suspicion which a movement like the Ramakrishna Mission, utterly divorced from politics as it is, awakes in the rulers. "Here are *men*, here are people who can feel work and dare for their suffering countrymen. If this manhood should prove catching? if it should even grow common and turn into channels directly dangerous to me? if these men should win a commanding influence by their good works and use it against me?" Such are the guilty suspicions which the bureaucrat is tortured with, and no movement however innocent can escape them. So he first bids his police spy out and give him full reports of these dangerous characters, dangerous because of their very nobility, and by police oppression, surveillance and harassment he will, when he thinks necessary, try to grind down, wear away and gradually efface the thing he fears. In the beginning of the *Yugantar* case one young man who was questioned by the police wished to take upon himself the responsibility for the incriminating articles, but the inquiring officer told him, "Whatever you may say, you will not save Bhupen Dutt; the mere fact that he is Swami Vivekananda's brother will be enough to send him to prison."

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 6th, 1907 }

The 7th of August

The approaching celebration of the 7th of August has a double importance this year, for it has not only its general and permanent importance as the commemoration of our declaration of independence, but an occasional though none the less urgent importance as an opportunity of reaffirming our separate national existence against the arbitrary and futile attempt of the bureaucracy to reaffirm and perpetuate a vanishing despotism. The 7th of August will be recognised in the future as a far more important date to the building up of the nation than the 16th October. On the 16th October the threatened unity of Bengal was asserted against the disingenuous and dangerous attack engineered by Lord Curzon; and since it is on the solidarity of its regional and race units that the greater Pan-Indian unity can alone be firmly founded, the 16th October must always be a holy day in the Indian calendar. But on the 7th of August Bengal discovered for India the idea of Indian independence as a living reality and not a distant Utopia, on the 7th of August she consecrated herself to the realisation of that supreme ideal by the declaration of the Boycott. The time has not come yet when the full meaning of that declaration can be understood; even the whole of Bengal has not yet understood, much less the whole of India. But the light is coming; partly by the efforts of the preachers of the light, still more by the efforts of the enemies of the light, it is coming: and in the dim wide glimmer of the mighty dawn we can see the vast slow surge of Indian life quickening under the breath of a stupendous wind, we can discern the angry fringes of the tide casting themselves far beyond the old low level, we can almost hear the roar of the surf hurling itself on the flimsy barriers it had once accepted as an iron and eternal boundary. The waters are at last alive with the breath of God, the flood which is to overwhelm the world has begun.

The 7th of August was India's Independence Day. A big word, it may be said, far too grandiose for the little that was accomplished. To those who judge only by the gross material event it may seem so, but to those who look beneath and watch the course of events as they shape themselves in the soul of a nation, the phrase will not seem one whit too excessive. It is the soul within us that decides, that makes our history, that determines Fate, and the material nature, material events only shape themselves under the limitations of Space and Time to give an outward body and realisation to the decisions of the soul. The day of a nation's independence is not the day when the administrative changes are made which complete the outward realisation of its independence but the day when it realises in its soul that it is free and must be free. For it is the self-sufficing separateness of a nation that is its independence, and when that separateness is realised and recorded as a determined thing in ourselves, the outward realisation is only a question of time. The seventh of August was the birthday of Indian Nationalism, and Indian Nationalism, as we pointed out the other day, means two things, the self-consecration to the gospel of national freedom and the practice of independence. Boycott is the practice of independence. When therefore we declared the Boycott on the seventh of August, it was no mere economical revolt we were instituting, but the practice of national independence; for the attempt to be separate and self-sufficient economically must bring with it the attempt to be free in every other function of a nation's life; for these functions are all mutually interdependent. August 7th is therefore the day when Indian Nationalism was born, when India discovered to her soul her own freedom, when we set our feet irrevocably on the only path to unity, the only path to self-realisation. On that day the foundation-stone of the new Indian nationality was laid.

Let us then celebrate the day in a spirit and after a fashion suitable to its great and glorious meaning. Let it be a reconsecration of the whole of Bengal to the new spirit and the new life, a purification of heart and mind to make it the undivided possession and the consecrated temple and habitation of the Mother. And secondly let it be a calm, brave and masculine reaffirmation of our independent existence. The bureaucracy has flung itself with savage fury on the new activities of our national life; it has attempted to trample on and break to pieces under its armed heel our economical boycott; it has made the service of the motherland penal in her young men; it has visited with the prison and deportation the preaching of Nationalism by the elder men. The 7th of August must be an emphatic answer to these persecutions and prohibitions. The Boycott must be reaffirmed and this time in its purity and simplicity as the national policy to which all are committed. The Risley Circular must be definitely and unmistakably challenged and negatived in action. Let there be a procession of students led by those venerable leaders of Bengal who are also professors of the Government University. And let us see afterwards what the bureaucracy can do and what it dare do to the men who refuse to give up their lifelong and sacred occupation at an alien bidding and to the youths who refuse to abstain from initiation in the same sacred service out of sordid hopes and fears.

But most of all the day should be a day of rejoicing and a day of consecration. The whole Indian part of the town should be illumined in honour of the divine birth which saw the light two years ago. And along with the outer illumination it should be a day of the illumination of hearts. It is the sacrament of our religion that can alone give the perfect and effective blessing to our movement, and the celebration of this great day will not be complete until every Indian makes it a sacred observance, worshipping God in his own way, the Hindu in his temple, the Brahmo in his mandir, the Mahomedan in his mosque, to consecrate himself anew on that day to the service of that single and omnipresent Deity through the task He has set to the whole nation, the upbuilding of Indian nationality by self-sacrifice for the motherland.

The *Indian Patriot* on Ourselves

We gave in full yesterday the article of the *Indian Patriot* in which our contemporary criticised the action of the Bengal Government in searching the *Bande Mataram* office as a preliminary, it is presumed, to a prosecution under the sedition clause. We thank our contemporary for his sympathy, but we are bound to say that he does not seem to have entirely grasped the political gospel preached by *Bande Mataram*. The *Patriot* seems to be under the impression that it is a gospel of violent despair. Because England has refused to hear our prayers and melt at our tears, therefore we advocate an appeal to force. But this is not and has never been our attitude. Those who are at present responsible for the policy of this paper were never believers in the old gospel of mendicancy and at no time in their lives were associated with Congress politics; they publicly opposed the Congress propaganda as futile and doomed to failure at a time when the country at large was full of a touching but ignorant faith in prayers and resolutions and British justice. Despair and disappointment therefore could not possibly be the root of their policy. It is rather a settled, reasoned and calm conviction we have always held, but for which the country was not ripe until it had gone through a wholesome experience of disillusionment. Neither is our teaching a mere gospel of brute force. We preach on the contrary a great idea in the strength of which we are confident of victory. All that we contend is that we must reach the realisation of that idea in the same way as other nations by utter self-devotion, by self-immolation, by bitter struggle and terrible sacrifices, and that we cannot hope and ought not to wish to have liberty given us at less than its eternal and inevitable price.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 7th, 1907 }

Our Rulers and Boycott

It is often paradoxically urged that every step or policy which does not conduce to good feeling between the rulers and the ruled, the exploiters and the exploited, should be eschewed as both immoral and impolitical. And because Boycott certainly is not intended as a soothing potion for the rulers, there are some men of an unctuous humanity who look on it with alarm and distrust. We should love our country, they say, but should not allow that love to generate hatred against other nationalities; we should prefer our own manufactures and try to improve and extend them, but to eschew foreign goods is damnable. No nation, so runs the cant, can thrive on hatred and ill will, — though from the facts of History one might much more cogently argue that no nation has ever yet in its international relations thriven on love and philosophy and cosmopolitanism. These copybook maxims are, of course, meant for the especial benefit of the under-dog in the struggle. They are sometimes trotted out for the benefit of the rulers, but that is merely as a literary exercise or to fill up the orthodox amount of space required for the leading articles. Nobody seriously expects the English in India to forego any of the manifold and material advantages that are bound up with their despotic possession of the country, merely out of a philanthropic tenderness for the feelings, affections or interests of the ruled. Nobody really expects them to help the development of indigenous industry at the expense of British commerce merely because the millions of India are starving and ground down with poverty and miserable and discontented. Nobody sincerely thinks that they are going to part with an atom of their arbitrary and absolute power merely because our abject and servile condition awakes in our people anger and a settled bitterness and ill-feeling. No, it is only the down-trodden and suffering people of India who are expected to refrain from following the straight line of their national interest and welfare out of a noble and sensitive unwillingness to excite hatred and strife.

We have repeatedly said that Boycott is not a gospel of hatred. It is simply an assertion of our independence, our national separateness. But neither do we pretend that we can ask the rulers to overflow with feelings of benevolence for the Boycott or to regard it with kindly neutrality. Boycott has come among us not to bring peace but a sword. And this was inevitable. Until now the discontent, the ill-will, the suffering were all on one side. When one side is depressed, miserable, suffering, while the other thrives and prospers by means of that misery and suffering, when one side is denied the use of its capacities and the satisfaction of its aspirations, and the other grows great and glorious and robust by the exercise of the usurped opportunities it has taken from its neighbour, there must be resentment, there must be antagonism and therefore strife and ill-will and anger. No amount of pious and ethical exhortation will prevent it. When a just equality is denied, when the possibility of equal opportunities and equal accomplishment is rigidly excluded, there can be no real love and good feeling except such as exists between man and some of the lower animals. If there is insensibility on one side and indulgent masterfulness on the other, there can be an insulting patronage and a degrading loyalty, but these are animal emotions rather than the higher ethical feelings. It is only where liberty and a just equality are established that true good feeling can reign. Those who deny liberty have no right to appeal to the higher feelings or to morality at all, for they are trying to perpetuate for their own selfish ends an essentially immoral condition of things. So long as liberty is denied, there must be the hatred which the slave always cherishes for his master, and when the attempt to throw off the yoke comes, there must be the yet bitterer hatred which the master feels for his revolted slave. The denial of liberty is therefore doubly and trebly immoral and restoration of liberty the first condition of peace and good-will. There has been good feeling between Austria and a free Italy, but between Austria dominant and Italy enslaved it was impossible.

The English have long been boycotting us in our own country. They boycotted our industries out of existence, they boycotted our noblest capacities into atrophy by denying us any share in the higher activities of national life, they boycotted us in the management of our affairs, in the defence of our country, in the making of its laws. And India impoverished, degraded, demoralized, did not look with love upon the spoiler. Now the Boycott has commenced upon the other side, but it is not an act of retaliation merely; it is much more an unravelling of the English web, a retracing of the steps towards perdition which we were forced or induced to take. Shall we continue our course to perdition, shall we refuse to retrace our steps because it cannot be done without strife and ill-feeling, because it must temporarily result in a growth of enmity between class and class? Shall we consent to lie for ever stifled in the fatal web because the unweaving of it must enrage the master of the web? No, the curse of alien domination must be worked out, the doom which compels it to create hatred in its making and hatred in its unmaking. When natural relations have been restored, England and India may stand side by side as equals, comrades and allies in the world's work, but until that is done, it is hypocrisy or folly to suppose that we can escape God's law which makes strife the straight rough way to peace and enmity the father of union. Every redeemer or redeeming force has always been compelled to say in the first stages of his mission, "I come to bring among you not peace but a sword."

Tonight's Illumination

We have been asked to intimate to the public that illuminations will be a part of the celebration today. We hope that every householder will illuminate his house as a sign of rejoicing on the birthday of Nationalism.

Our First Anniversary

The *Bande Mataram* has completed the first year of its existence. It was started on the 6th of August last year and its anniversary falls strictly on that date. But it is only in the fitness of things that the organ of Indian Nationalism should choose the birthday of Nationalism in the country for the purpose of observing its anniversary. The 7th of August, therefore, has another importance to the Nationalists of Bengal who brought into existence their accredited journal just in time to hail that historic date. We shall only be telling the truth if we notice here that the birth of our paper took place under the most favourable auspices. It came into being in answer to an imperative public need and not to satisfy any private ambition or personal whim; it was born in a great and critical hour for the whole nation and has a message to deliver which nothing on earth can prevent it from delivering. The *Bande Mataram* has been before the public for a year and it has, we believe, rendered a tolerably fair account of itself. It claims that it has given expression to the will of the people and sketched their ideals and aspirations with the greatest amount of fidelity. It is for this reason that it has received a splendid reception in almost all the provinces of India. The amount of support it has got in the first year of its existence surpasses all previous records in Indian journalism. The political ideal of the people has changed, the desire for freedom is a force to be reckoned with and if anybody has any doubt on the point, success of the *Bande Mataram* should set it at rest. Our constituents are aware of the difficulties in our way and we hope they will stand by us till we shall have fulfilled our mission.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 10th, 1907 }

To Organise

Srijut Surendranath Banerji in his remarkable speech in College Square, the other day, observed that what the country now needed was not oratory but statesmanship, for the only effective answer to bureaucratic repression is the organisation of the whole strength of the country to carry out its national ideal in spite of all repression. We think the veteran leader has gauged the situation very accurately, but we confess we do not see at present where the statesmanship is to come from which is to carry out the difficult, arduous and delicate task before us. What we have done hitherto we have done without leadership, almost without clear purpose, under an inspiring and impelling force which we must necessarily think divine. Where that force has visibly guided us, we have done astonishing things: but at the same time there has been much confusion, one-sidedness and incoherence in our work. And now that a powerful and organised Government has set itself in grim earnest to destroy our movement, it is imperative that we too should organise and make our whole potential strength effective for self-defence. The divine guidance will only be continued to us if we show ourselves in our strength and wisdom worthy of it. But it cannot be denied that the first effect of the repression has been to disorganise our work. Since it began, there has been no concerted and coherent action, every man has done what seemed good in his own eyes or else remained inactive. The result has been much weakness, supineness and ineffectiveness. Barisal fights for its own hand to maintain the boycott. The *Yugantar* attacked carries on a heroic struggle with the bureaucracy with what stray assistance, individual generosity or patriotism may offer it. But organised resistance, organised persistence even there is none.

This unsatisfactory condition of things is traceable to one main cause. All Bengal is heartily agreed in Swadeshi and professedly all are agreed on the necessity of industrial boycott. But a majority of the older leaders, trained in another school of politics, cannot adapt themselves to the new state of things, they cannot even throw themselves heartily into the only measures which can make the industrial boycott crushingly effective, and they are out of sympathy with the wider developments of boycott which are becoming indispensable if we are to meet the bureaucratic attack with full success. They object personally to the new men and decline to work in co-operation with them. The new men, on the other hand, who have immensely increased their following and influence in the country, are not in possession of the machinery of Congress and Conference, are in fact zealously excluded from it by the present possessors and have but small following among the richer men who might provide the sinews of war. They are moreover prevented, by a natural unwillingness to hopelessly divide the nation, from organising a machinery of their own. Yet to talk of organising the nation while excluding the new men is absurd. If the older party have the greater solidity and resources, the younger men have the lion's share of the energy and driving force, they divide the great middle class and are no longer there in a hopeless minority, but are gathering adherents all over the country (even in Madras they commanded one third of the votes at the last Conference) and they exercise an overwhelming empire over the minds of the rising generation. To organise the nation means to make all its elements of strength efficient for a single clear and well-understood work under the leadership of a recognised central force. To exclude such important forces as these we have described, means simply to leave the nation unorganised.

The country is in need of a statesman, yes: but what kind of statesman? He must be a man thoroughly steeped in the gospel of Nationalism, with a clear and fearless recognition of the goal to which we are moving, with a dauntless courage to aim consciously, steadily, indomitably towards it, with a consummate skill to mask his movements and aims when necessary and to move boldly and openly when necessary, and, last but not least, with an overmastering magnetic power and tact to lead and use and combine men of all kinds and opinions. Such a leader might organise the nation to some purpose, but those who shrink from following where their hearts and intellects lead them or who from party feelings or personal dislike or jealousy try to exclude powerful forces from the common national work cannot claim the name of statesman. It is an encouraging sign of the times that Surendranath is coming more and more into sympathy with thorough-going Nationalism, but will he have the courage and magnanimity to hold out his hand to the new men, and if he does will he be able to retain the loyalty of his principal followers? If not, he will never be able to carry out the task he has declared to be the one and supreme need of the nation.

Statutory Distinction

Mr. Morley is opposed to ensuring by a statute the presence of at least two Indians on the India Council. The very idea that there should be any "statutory distinction" between class and class is repulsive to his fine sense of political equality. Of course, it is only Statutory distinctions that he objects to: to real and practical distinctions there is no objection whatever. Mr. Morley is a philosopher, and so long as there is no philosophical and theoretic distinction, it does not matter a bit if there is no practical equality: for principles are universal, but their application is to be confined to Europe. Such is Morleyesque liberalism, that queer combination of autocracy, selfishness, repression and "sympathy". Mr. Morley also negatived the proposal to limit the number of retired civilians on the India Council; for, he said, that would defeat the very object of the Council. Of course, for the whole object of the Council is to prime the Secretary of State with the narrow and reactionary views of hide-bound officialism, and to have other elements largely represented would defeat that object. Right, very Liberal Mr. Morley!

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 12th, 1907 }

Marionettes and Others

The *Englishman* is naturally making the most of the Loyal Manifesto, but that most is miserably little. The unspontaneous character of the effusion has been emphasized by the difficulties and vicissitudes which it had to go through before it saw the light. Conceived in the Black and White Club, begotten, it is said, by Sir Andrew Fraser on the brain of Mr. Blair, the first attempt at delivery with Sjt. Pradyot Kumar Tagore as midwife ended in an abortion. Even the second time with an older and more experienced hand at work the pains of parturition were excessive. Not a single leader of the people or prominent political man signed the absurdity, even the most moderate declaring that no man with any sense of self-respect could sign such a document. Of the few Zamindars who have a real political sense and some position in politics, only one has signed and he, we believe, under the mistaken impression that the objectionable portions had been omitted. There are only two or three solid signatures, if we measure solidity by brains or public influence and not by wealth. Some of the signatories have obviously signed from fear of the consequences of refusal, others belong to that type of people found in every country who consider it their duty to bow their knees before the powers that be whenever required. Their loyalty is uncaused and unconditioned. It knows no ebb and flow, it is a constant quantity and can be manifested at the bidding of a superior person. These people are so well drilled and disciplined in loyalty that the master has simply to look at and down hangs the head, the hands automatically join and every limb falls into its fitting posture of humility. This dancing to the pipe is a natural phenomenon without any particular meaning.

So this loyal manifesto of the Bengal landholders has excited less interest than even a bear-dance or the performance of a clown. There are professional and mechanical genuflexions with less significance than the automatic movements of marionettes. They think that the bureaucracy has made them and can unmake them at any moment, and the very instinct of self-preservation forces them to their knees. The surprising thing is that so able a political race as the English should think they can make anything substantial out of an advantage so unreal.

A Compliment and Some Misconceptions

We extract in another column the opinions and interpretations of the London *Times* anent the *Bande Mataram*. It is gratifying to find the Thunderer so deeply impressed with the ability with which this journal is written and edited, even though the object of this generous appreciation be to point us out as the tallest oak of all on which the lightning may most fitly descend. But we feel bound to correct certain misapprehensions into which the *Times* has too readily fallen. It suits the *Times* to pretend that the Nationalist movement in India is a pure outcome of racial hatred and that the creation and fomentation of that hatred is the sole method of Indian agitators and the one object of their speeches and writings. But Nationalism is no more a mere ebullition of race hatred in India than it was in Italy in the last century. Our motives and our objects are at least as lofty and noble as those of Mazzini or of Garibaldi whose centenary the *Times* was hymning with such fervour a few days ago. The restoration of our country to her separate existence as a nation among the nations, her exaltation to a greatness, splendour, strength, magnificence equalling and surpassing her ancient glories is the goal of our endeavours: and we have undertaken this arduous task in which we as individuals risk everything, ease, wealth, liberty, life itself it may be, not out of hatred and hostility to other nations but in the firm conviction that we are working as much in the interests of all humanity including England herself as in those of our own posterity and nation. That the struggle to realise our ideal must bring with it temporary strife, misunderstanding, hostility, disturbance, that in short, it is bound to be a struggle and not the billing and cooing of political doves, we have never attempted to deny. We believe that the rule of three hundred millions of Indians by an alien bureaucracy not responsible to the nation is a system unnatural, intrinsically bad and inevitably oppressive, and we do not pretend that we can convince our people of its undesirability without irritating the bureaucracy on one side and generating a strong dislike of the existing system on the other. But our object is constructive and not destructive, to build up our own nation and not to destroy another. If England chooses to feel aggrieved by our nation-building, and obstruct it by unjust, violent or despotic means, it is she who is the aggressor and guilty of exciting hatred and ill-feeling. Her action may be natural, may be inevitable, but the responsibility rests on her, not on Indian Nationalism.

Pal on the Brain

We have commented on one misconception of the *Times* about ourselves which it perhaps could not help, so necessary was the error to justify its own position, but it has perpetrated another which seems wilful, — unless it is the result of monomania. The Thunderer seems to have Srijut Bipin Chandra on the brain; it sees him gigantically reflected in every manifestation of Nationalism and is rapidly constructing him into a sinister Antichrist of British rule. So it insists on identifying him with the *Bande Mataram* and will take no denial. Somebody has been pointing out to it that Bipin Babu severed his connection with the paper nine months ago, and this is how the *Times* disposes of the attempt to dissipate its cherished delusions: "Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal has nominally ceased to edit the paper, but there can be no question that he is the dominating force behind its policy and comments, which are stated with a literary ability rare in the Anglo-native Press." The *Times* is evidently not going to be deceived. The literary ability with which the *Bande Mataram* states its views is rare in the "Anglo-native" Press but it is known that Bipin Pal has a rare literary ability, therefore it is unquestionably Bipin Pal and no other who really edits and writes in the *Bande Mataram*. There seems to be a flaw somewhere in the Thunderer's logic, and we do not think the Bengal Government in its recent affectionate enquiries has come to the same conclusion. Bipin Babu has his own sufficient portion of anti-bureaucratic original sin without being burdened with ours. The *Times* should realise that almost the whole literary ability of Young Bengal is behind the movement of which we are the daily expression, so that the ability and literary excellence of our paper is not to be wondered at.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 13th, 1907 }

Phrases by Fraser

Sir Andrew Fraser has been receiving addresses from his loyal subjects of West Bengal and oratorising in answer. He has, among other things, discovered a surprising amity between the Hindus and Mahomedans in Burdwan and his prophetic eye foresees a splendid future for the capital city of the allied and friendly Principality of Maharaja Bijoy Chand on the basis of this amity. The object of giving this uncalled-for prominence to the old and natural relations between the two communities is of course to convey the idea that they are anomalous, surprising and quite different from the normal relations in the rest of Bengal. Before the Boycott movement this refrain was only occasionally employed by Anglo-India, but since, it has become the constant burden of their song. It is labour lost, however. After the Jamalpur exposure nobody except Mr. Morley can be got to believe really that the partial breach between the communities is the result of the Boycott. We all know how and by what agencies it was created and fostered. Sir Andrew however has made another and far more startling discovery, — he has discerned the quality of enlightened public spirit in the Maharaja of Burdwan. The natural wonder and excitement awakened by this remarkable find fades away when one realises that what Sir Andrew means by enlightenment is that luminous quality of spirit which enables a presumably respectable gentleman to sign without a qualm or twinge a manifesto accusing his own countrymen, ready-made for him by an English pen. Nevertheless it is comforting to find that the relations between the Principality of Burdwan and the British Empire are still amicable and untroubled as ever. While such compliments can be bandied about between these high and mighty powers, the peace of nations is assured.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 17th, 1907 }

To Organise Boycott

That boycott is the central question of Indian politics is now a generally recognised fact, recognised openly or tacitly by its supporters and its opponents alike. The Anglo-Indian papers are busy trying to make out that it is a chimera and a failure: the executive are straining every nerve to crush it by magisterial interference, by police *zulum*, by prosecution of newspapers and all the familiar machinery of repressive despotism: the friends of the alien among ourselves are reiterating that the movement is a foolish affair and that no nation ever was made by boycott. If boycott had really been an impossibility or a failure, it is obvious that all this elaborate machinery would not have been brought into play to crush it. On the contrary it has become a very substantial reality, a very palpable success, and now stands out, as we have said, as the central and all-important question of Indian politics. Those who say that no nation was ever made by boycott, do not know what they are talking about, do not understand what boycott is, do not know the teachings of history. Boycott is much more than a mere economical device, it is a rediscovery of national self-respect, a declaration of national separateness: it is the first practical assertion of independence and has therefore in most of the national uprisings of modern times been the forerunner of the struggle for independence. The American struggle with England began in an enthusiastic and determined boycott of British goods enforced by much the same methods as the Indian boycott but with a much more stringent

The exact dates of the two articles published here under "August 17th" are uncertain. They appeared in the daily edition on 14, 15 or 17 August. All these issues have been lost. The articles were reprinted in the weekly edition on 18 August.

and effective organisation. The Italian uprising of 1848 was heralded by the boycott of Austrian cigarettes and the tobacco riots in Milan. The boycott was the indispensable weapon of the Parnell movement in Ireland, and boycott and Swadeshi are the leading cries of Sinn Fein. The first practical effect of the resurgence of China was the boycott of American goods as an assertion of China's long down-trodden self-respect against the brutal and insolent dealings of the Americans towards Chinese immigrants. In India also boycott began as an assertion of national self-respect, and continued as a declared and practical enforcement of national separateness, liberty, independence and self-dependence. "We will no longer tamely bear injury and insult, we will no longer traffic and huckster with others for broken fragments of rights and privileges; we are free, we are separate, we are sufficient to ourselves for our own salvation," that was what boycott meant and what its enemies have understood it to mean: its economical aspect is only an aspect.

The economical boycott has been on the whole an immense success, — not indeed in every respect, for the crusade against foreign sugar has not diminished the import, though it may have checked to some extent the natural increase of the import, and the Tarpur sugar factory is, we understand, in danger of failing because people will not buy the dearer Swadeshi sugar, — an example of the futility of "honest" Swadeshi unsupported by a self-sacrificing boycott: but enormous reductions have been made in the import not only of cotton goods but of all kinds of wearing apparel, and salt has been appreciably affected. But now the whole weight of bureaucratic power is being brought to bear in order to shatter the boycott, and if we intend to save it we must oppose the organised force of the bureaucracy by the organised will of the people. What the unorganised will of the people could do, it has done: it has indeed effected miracles. But no statesman will rely on the perpetual continuation of a miracle, he will seek to counteract weaknesses, to take full advantage of every element of strength and to bring into action new elements of strength: he will in short utilize every available means towards the one great national end. Srijut Surendranath has said well that we must answer the campaign of repression by organising the country. And the readiest way to organise the country is to organise boycott.

The chief weakness of the movement has been the want of co-ordinated action. We have left everything to personal and local enthusiasm. The consequence is that while in East Bengal the boycott is a fact, in West Bengal it is an idea. There is some Swadeshi in West Bengal, there is no boycott. Moreover Bengal has not brought its united influence to bear upon the other provinces in order to make the boycott universal. The whole force of this vast country is a force which no government could permanently resist. But this force has not been brought to bear on the struggle, Bengal and Punjab have been left to fight out their battles unaided, without the active sympathy of the rest of India. This must be altered, the rest of India must be converted and we must not rest till we have secured a mandate from the Congress for an universal boycott of British goods. Meanwhile we must bring West Bengal into a line with East Bengal, and for that purpose we must have a stringent and effective organisation. We need not go far for the system which will be most effective. We have only to apply or adapt to the circumstances of the country the methods used by the American boycotters against England. How this can be done we propose to discuss in another article.

The Foundations of Nationality

Mr. N. N. Ghose of the *Indian Nation* has some name in this country as an educated and even a learned man. He himself does not conceal his opinion that he is almost if not quite the only well-educated man in India and is perpetually asking the acknowledged exponents of public opinion on the Nationalist side what educational qualifications they possess which would justify them in advising or instructing their countrymen in politics. At one time it is the conductors of *Bande Mataram* who are put to the question; at another it is so able a political thinker and orator as Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal whose speeches and writings have extorted the reluctant admiration of our bitterest opponents in England; at another it is the editor of *Yugantar* who is apostrophied as an ill-educated adolescent — a paper every single issue of which evidences more knowledge, reading and power of thought and expression than the whole year's output of the *Indian Nation*. In the latest issue of his weekly Mr. Ghose has penned an article on the prospects of Nationality in India — which he thinks to be very bad indeed — and in trying to support his thesis by examples from history he has perpetrated such astonishing blunders, of so gross and elementary a character, that one wonders what ill-educated adolescent usurped the editorial chair usually occupied by the Principal of the Metropolitan College. We will give only a few samples of Mr. Ghose's historical knowledge. The unification of the Italian republics into a nation, he says, was not so much the effect as the cause of Italian independence. We leave for the moment the truth of the statement which is contrary to the facts of history; but we should like to know what on earth our universal critic means by his Italian republics? There were republics in mediaeval Italy, but we did not know that Naples and Sicily were republics under King Bomba, or Rome under the Popes, or Tuscany under the Grand Duke, or Lombardy under the Austrians, or Sardinia and Piedmont under the descendants of Victor Amadeus. Then again Mr. Ghose has "observed" that the different States of Greece developed a national unity as soon as they had a common enemy in the Persian. Really? We had always thought that the one outstanding fact of Greek history was the utter inability of these states to develop national unity at all, the sentiment of Panhellenism never having a look-in against the separatist spirit of the city-states. And then he tells us that the provinces and states of ancient Italy (whatever that may mean) also readily united into a great national state in the presence of a foreign enemy. Yet those foolish historians tell us that Italy was united not at all willingly by the Roman sword and the Carthaginian invasion simply tested the solidity of the Roman structure; it certainly did not create it. But it would be a wearisome task to hunt down all the errors with which the article is packed. We think that after this Mr. N. N. Ghose had better stop questioning other people about their qualifications for instructing the people and examine his own.

But in spite of his historical blunders he has succeeded in giving expression to a very common error which troubles many patriotic people and unnerves their faith and weakens the quality of their patriotism: "Let it be distinctly remembered and never forgotten that the essential conditions of a nationality are unity of language, unity of religion and life, unity of race." And because there is diversity of race, religion and language in India he thinks that there is no possibility of creating a nationality in this country. This is a very common stumbling-block, but is there any reality in it? Rather we find that every nationality has been formed not because of, but in spite of, diversity of race or religion or language, and not unoften in spite of the co-existence of all these diversities. The *Indian Nation* has itself admitted that the English nation has been built out of various races, but he has not stated the full complexity of the British nation. He has not observed that to this day the races which came later into the British nationality keep their distinct individuality even now and that one of them clings to its language tenaciously. He has carefully omitted the striking example of Switzerland where distinct racial strains speaking three different languages and, later, professing different religions coalesced into and persisted as one nation without sacrificing a single one of these diversities. In France three different languages are spoken, in America the candidates for the White House address the nation in fourteen languages, Austria is a congeries of races and languages, the divisions in Russia are hardly less acute. That unity in race, religion or language is essential to nationality is an idea which will not bear examination. Such elements of unity are very helpful to the growth of a nationality, but they are not essential and will not even of themselves assure its growth. The Roman Empire though it created a common language, a common religion and life, and did its best to crush out racial diversities under the heavy weight of its uniform system failed to make one great nation.

If these are not essential elements of nationality, what, it may be asked, are the essential elements? We answer that there are certain essential conditions, geographical unity, a common past, a powerful common interest impelling towards unity and certain favourable political conditions which enable the impulse to realise itself in an organised government expressing the nationality and perpetuating its single and united existence. This may be provided by a part of the nation, a race or community, uniting the others under its leadership or domination, or by an united resistance to a common pressure from outside or within. A common enthusiasm coalescing with a common interest is the most powerful fosterer of nationality. We believe that the necessary elements are present in India, we believe that the time has come and that by a common resistance to a common pressure in the shape of the boycott, inspired by a common enthusiasm and ideal, that united nationality for which the whole history of India has been a preparation, will be speedily and mightily accomplished.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 20th, 1907 }

Barbarities at Rawalpindi

The process of terrorism that is going on at Rawalpindi in the name of administering justice is too open and transparent to require any unravelling. Of course, everyone who takes politics seriously thought that the British law and administration would at once reveal their true nature if the people were to enter on a real struggle for self-improvement and the repression that is being resorted to in the Punjab under the pretext of trial has caused no surprise to those with whom the work for the nation's future is a duty demanding enormous self-sacrifice. But the series of episodes connected with the Rawalpindi trial in which humanity has been outraged and decency defied should nevertheless be taken to heart by the people. They demand an adequate response of stern and resolute work as an atonement and recompense for the sufferings of these martyrs. No patriot would shrink even from the agonies to which the accused are being subjected during the course of their trial at Rawalpindi if he could at least faintly hope from the attitude of his countrymen that they would carry on the patriotic work undaunted and with a greater amount of determination and energy. The man of faith no doubt is never depressed. His faith is always his stay and support. But the martyrdom becomes easier if there is the prospect of some immediate benefit to the country resulting from his sufferings.

From the very beginning of the Rawalpindi trial, the bureaucratic law seems to have been whetted against the alleged offenders. The refusal of bail to the accused amongst whom

The exact dates of the articles published here under "August 20th" are uncertain. They appeared in the daily edition on 19 or 20 August. These issues have been lost. The articles were reprinted in the weekly edition on 25 August.

there are men of unquestioned respectability and integrity testifies to the petty vindictiveness of the judiciary which ostensibly exists to diminish crimes and not to exasperate people into their perpetration. The ill-treatment of the accused can without the least exaggeration be characterised as wanton cruelty. The accused after their experience of the British law courts will find it difficult to distinguish a judge from a mediaeval executioner. The Judge could not be moved to the most elementary feeling of humanity when the accused were overwhelmed by the most painful domestic calamities. One man was not allowed to see his dying son till he actually expired and was past all help or need of help. This ferocity on the part of a tribunal, whose special study should be to abstain from writing the least punishment on a man till his guilt has been fairly established is a violation of the first principle of justice and turns a court of law into a torture chamber. A judge should not lack firmness in repressing crime but to pursue an alleged offender with implacable wrath from the moment of his arrest is an exhibition of vindictiveness and not of due judicial austerity. The trial has now extended over nearly two months and the sickening details of inhumanity practised upon the accused continue to be as distressing as ever.

Lala Hansraj and two or three others of his position have been detained in the prison without any justification. They are not the men who can even think of shirking the consequences of their patriotic actions under an alien rule. But why antedate their punishment from the very time of their arrest. They are not men accustomed to privations and they have all been showing signs of failing health during this pretty long period of police custody. They have already served out a term of punishment disproportionate to the nature of their alleged offence. It is a brand new feature of British justice to go on with the trial of men stretched on their sick-bed in the court room. Our latest telegram from Rawalpindi says that on the 16th Lala Hansraj was shaking with fever and ague on a string cot borrowed from a constable. The internal pain was so intense that tears ran down his cheeks though he tried to be firm and cheerful and pretended that something had fallen into his eyes.

We need not multiply the details of the prisoners' sufferings. We have already sampled the treatment which the Pindi martyrs are receiving at the hands of the judiciary. We expect no mitigation of their sufferings. The alleged offence of rousing people to a spirit of active resistance perhaps justifies these barbarities in the eyes of the ruling class. They are innocent of all compunction and are calmly watching the effect on the people. The *Englishman* once opined that even the suspected offence of inciting to a riot excuses the most monstrous treatment of the offenders. But we believe their lesson will not be lost on our own countrymen. The heavy price that these men are paying for merely inducing the spirit of self-assertion in us should nerve others to greater and greater sacrifices in the service of the motherland.

The High Court Miracles

The situation in Bengal is one of a very peculiar kind and of extraordinary interest. There is a deep and widespread unrest in the country; a movement has commenced which the bureaucracy holds to be fraught with serious danger certainly to the British monopoly of commercial exploitation, possibly to the supremacy of British officialdom. In order to save these threatened citadels the bureaucrats in the Punjab and Eastern Bengal have embarked on a policy of thorough-going repression in which the practically unlimited and arbitrary power of an autocratic executive is backed up and confirmed by a zealous judiciary. The union of these two forces is essential to the success of the bureaucratic plan of campaign: for the strength of the bureaucratic position lies in the fact that all the powers of legislation and administration are centred unreservedly and without limitation in its hands. It controls the men by whom the law and the executive administration are carried out, for it not only exercises all the patronage of both services, but wields immense disciplinary powers. It can appoint and favour such men as are likely to do its will and it can punish with substantial marks of its displeasure those who disregard its interests or do not act according to its expectations. In an hour of crisis like the present when there is a powerful movement undisguisedly directed against the continued supremacy of the present ruling community in all its aspects, this concentration of all powers against the insurgence of the subject people is of the most vital importance. The executive must have a free hand to deal with the opposition of the demos without being hampered by inconvenient and trammelling considerations of legal procedure and the narrow limits of legality. But in a fight with an acute and intelligent people, a nation of born lawyers, this is only possible on condition that the judiciary are willing to support and confirm the actions of the executive unhesitatingly and without a qualm. These conditions have been secured in East Bengal and still more completely in the Punjab. But there is one weak point, the Achilles' heel in the otherwise invulnerable constitution of the bureaucracy, and that is the High Court of Bengal. The oldest and most venerable institution of British rule, with the most honourable traditions of integrity and independence maintained by a series of judges learned in the law, trained to the love of justice and equity and a calm judicial habit of mind, the High Court had become a thing cherished and valued, a refuge to the oppressed, a guarantee of eventual relief against executive vagaries. It had therefore attracted an almost superstitious reverence and was the chief moral asset of British rule. But the inevitable tendency of bureaucratic rule when threatened by the increasing self-assertion of the people, began eventually to affect the High Court. It is true that the High Court is independent of the executive authorities, but it is under the control of the Chief Justice, and by the simple device of securing a Chief Justice of weak personality and multiplying civilian judges of the right kind the institution can easily be converted into a source of strength to the bureaucracy instead of a source of weakness. Since the beginning of the reactionary policy which followed the Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, this has been the increasing tendency of the High Court and the trust and reverence of the people has decreased proportionately, and the hold of British rule on their imaginations has decreased with it.

We have always held that British justice as between Indians and Europeans or in cases in which the bureaucracy was judge, jury and accuser, must obviously and inevitably be a farce unless and until human nature ceases to have any resemblance to its present self. Neither had we any of that enthusiastic admiration for British law and its administration which was not so very long ago the fashion among Indians of the educated class. On the contrary we were compelled to regard its procedure as costly, dilatory and often calculated to defeat justice, its penal system repressive and its punishments savage and barbarous with the cold civilised brutality of a half-baked incomplete civilisation. Our respect for the High Court was tempered by a perception of the ease with which it could be captured by the bureaucracy for its own ends. We have therefore always decried the old moribund belief in the excellence of the British courts and the tendency to run to them for protection in all cases of oppression and injustice. Have the recent transactions in the High Court proved us wrong? They have certainly proved that there are still Judges Indian and English who can rise above the depressing atmosphere and lowered traditions of this once venerated institution and equal the distinguished record of those strong fearless Judges who have now become a memory, almost a legend of the past. There has been nothing like the series of important decisions given in a few days by Justices Mitter and Fletcher since the seven Bishops were acquitted. The bold opposition of the sense of justice and respect for law to the interests of an irritated and determined government in a time of great political unrest and disturbance, is an episode which history will love to record. But is it more than an episode? We apprehend it is the last flaring up of the old fire previous to extinction. The executive will surely take care not to repeat the error by which a fearless, just and religious Hindu lawyer has been placed on the Criminal Bench side by side with a young barrister Judge fresh from England and still full of the uncorrupted moral temper natural in a free country. The bureaucracy has blundered in its management of the High Court, but the power to utilize it is still in its hands and will no doubt be better handled in the near future than in the past. Let us not be unduly elated by the victory in the High Court: great as it has been, its causes are transient and its tenure insecure.

The *Times* Romancist

The London *Times* has developed a new Newmaniac all to itself. The original Newmaniac of Calcutta had the National Volunteers for his special monomania: the *Times* specimen seems to have got the Arya Samaj on his brain. In a long and elaborate article he has traced the genesis of this dangerous group, its control over the bourgeoisie, its deadly seditious attempts to make use of the masses, and the final extinction of the rebellious movement by the strong and masterly policy of Sir Denzil Ibbetson. All this reads well as the romance of history, but when it is given us as a serious attempt to account for the situation in the Punjab, we begin to see what a plentiful lack of wisdom and knowledge governs us in India. For we may be sure that the diet of lies which the *Times* correspondent serves up as a dainty dish for the British public, is merely a daintily-seasoned version of the official view in the Punjab. It is not to be questioned that the present struggle is a contest between the intellectuals of India who are recruited mainly from the middle class, and the alien officials. In the struggle the former are attempting to range all classes under the common banner of liberty and Indian resurgence, just as the same class has done in Russia, and there is nothing in the aim or the movement which is illegitimate or immoral. If there is any immorality, it is surely on the side of the ruling class which is fighting for monopoly and privilege while the bourgeoisie are fighting for their own self-preservation and the life and expansion of their race and nation. The *Times* correspondent speaks acutely enough when he says that the middle class are trying to make their will the will of the nation and the object of the bureaucracy must be to prevent that consummation. But when the writer begins to trace all evil to the Arya Samaj, he at once passes into the regions of romance. No doubt the lion's share of the political spirit and genius in the Punjab belongs to the Aryas, but that is the result of the manliness of the creed preached by Dayananda and the admirable working power, self-sacrifice and gift of organisation which the Samaj has fostered among its members. But self-sacrifice, energy, organisation are precisely what most terrify the panic-stricken Anglo-Indian, and nothing will convince him that where these are, there is not a dangerous conspiracy against the British Raj. We may tell this new Newmaniac that if there were such a serious and skilfully engineered movement as the one he affects to describe, — well, the special correspondent of the *Times* would not be touring at his ease and writing nonsense at the present moment. Whatever has happened in India has been the result of great spontaneous forces without organisation or even conscious purpose: those who have seen where they were going, have been a small minority.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 21st, 1907 }

A Malicious Persistence

The persistence of the *Englishman*'s attack on Justice Mitter in connection with the Bloomfield Murder Case is worthy of the traditions of Hare Street. The *Englishman* is perhaps the only Anglo-Indian paper in Calcutta which has a rigidly settled and consistent policy. Others allow themselves to be swayed sometimes by feeling and by calm dispassionate reason, and yield perhaps to some gust of generous feeling or suffer the sense of justice or fair play to overcome the dictates of class interest or policy, but Hare Street is above such weaknesses. Not much brains or political knowledge or discernment is needed to guide its policy, for it is simple and elementary in the extreme. A violent and venomous opposition to every Indian aspiration, to every claim to equality or even to ordinary justice, is the sole, simple and sufficient principle which guides it unerringly through the maze of politics. Legally the excited correspondents who pour out their fury and panic in its sympathetic pages, have not a leg to stand on. Some of them have made clumsy attempts to argue the point of agitation. The attempt is absurd. The position taken by the Judges is unassailable. Intention cannot be argued from the results of an action, but from the nature of the actions and utterances of the doer and from the probable consequences of his act as they may be reasonably supposed to have presented themselves to his mind. Now the actions of the assailants in this case were not such as to raise any certainty of their intention to kill. Men have been beaten by numbers and savagely beaten without being left dead, but have at most had to spend more or less time in hospital recovering from their injuries. The cessation of the beating as soon as the victim fell down, the words of the assailants as they ran away and several other circumstances seem to show that this was the result they aimed at, and the cumulative effect of these indications is very great. At any rate, in the face of such strong considerations in favour of the more lenient view, and in the absence of any positive evidence that the accused premeditated the assault, much less the manslaughter, any Judge knowing his business would feel himself bound to give them the benefit of the doubt so long as the principle of refusing to convict on a mere probability of guilt remains a fundamental principle of law. We can say without any fear of contradiction that the *Englishman* would not have a word to say against the Judgment if it had been any other than an European who had died: and if it had been an Indian done to death by an Englishman, Hare Street would have yelled itself hoarse over the brutal severity of the sentences. The position taken up is that because an Englishman was killed, somebody ought to have been hanged and all who were not hanged transported for life: otherwise the life of planters in the mofussil cannot be safe. Possibly, but the safety of European life in the mofussil is an extrajudicial consideration with which the Judges of the High Court, or any judges for the matter of that, are not concerned. Their sole business is to do justice, without any regard to the political consequences. The safety of European life is a question for the executive or for the political authorities. If the planters have made themselves so fiercely hated or the bureaucrats have by their policy rendered Europeans such an eyesore to the Indian masses that the latter are ready to murder them without serious provocation and can only be restrained by savage and iniquitous sentences in the law courts, it is for the planters and the bureaucrats to mend their ways and ease the tension: they cannot expect just and upright men to stain their consciences for their sake.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 23rd, 1907 }

In Melancholy Vein

The *Englishman* is in melancholy mood. Swaraj and Justice Saroda Charan Mitter have been too much for our gentle contemporary's nerves, and he is full of sorrow and care-worn longings. He wants "to wipe out an unpleasant world and create a new and beautiful one to live in," where there is no Swaraj, and no High Courts, and no diminishing cotton imports, and no Anglo-Indian editors to telegraph home denying his blood-curdling visions, and the agitator is not abroad. He wants "like the Hindu ascetic considering all this as Maya to retire into existence of solid imagination". We shall find it hard to believe that there is any lack of imagination in Hare Street existence, but this new-born desire to turn the imagination from the gaseous into the solid state is a hopeful sign. Our contemporary anticipates all sorts of curious and pleasing results from his new departure, and even breaks out into irregular blank verse in his ecstasy. "Then comes again the care-free heart of youth, the lines of trouble fade from the face, the empty pocket, like that of Virgil's traveller, becomes a cause for song, or like that of the schoolboy, a hoarding place for curious and assorted treasure." We are sorry to hear that the *Englishman*'s pocket is empty, but we think he goes too far in expecting people to write poetry about his diminishing sale and circulation. As for his alternative hope, the *Englishman*'s pocket whether empty of cash or not, is full enough of Golden Bengal Mare's nests, Newmaniac effusions and other curious and assorted treasure. Finally our contemporary announces his intention of dismissing "mean-souled malice" — of the *Statesman* and *Empire* and others — with a "vacant stare" — which is evidently preferable to the Barisal stare. Our contemporary wishes to practise the art of detachment as a substitute for furlough and hypophosphites. We would suggest to him that it might be better to take the furlough and the hypophosphites — especially the furlough — to restore his scattered system, and try the detachment as an additional sedative. That, to adapt the language of the Abbotabad Magistrate, will be the best for the *Englishman* and will satisfy everybody else in India.

Advice to National College Students

I have been told that you wish me to speak a few words of advice to you. But in these days I feel that young men can very often give better advice than we older people can give. Nor must you ask me to express the feelings which your actions, the way in which you have shown your affection towards me, have given rise to in my breast. It is impossible to express them. You all know that I have resigned my post. In the meeting you held yesterday I see that you expressed sympathy with me in what you call my present troubles. I don't know whether I should call them troubles at all, for the experience that I am going to undergo was long foreseen as inevitable in the discharge of the mission that I have taken up from my childhood, and I am approaching it without regret. What I want to be assured of is not so much that you feel sympathy for me in my troubles, but that you have sympathy for the cause in serving which I have to undergo what you call my troubles. If I know that the rising generation have taken up this cause, that wherever I go, I go leaving behind others to carry on my work, I shall go without the least regret. I take it that whatever respect you have shown to me today was shown not to me, not merely even to the principal, but to your country, to the Mother in me, because what little I have done has been done for her, and the slight suffering that I am going to endure will be endured for her sake. Taking your sympathy in that light I can feel that if I am incapacitated from carrying on my work, there will be so many others left behind me. One other cause of rejoicing for me is to find that practically all my countrymen have the same fellow-feeling for me and for the same reason as yourselves. The unanimity with which all classes have expressed their sympathy for me and even offered help at

Talk given at the Bengal National College on 23 August 1907. Text published in the Dawn and Dawn Society's Magazine *in September 1907.*

the moment of my trial, is a cause for rejoicing, and for the same reason. For I am nothing, what I have done is nothing. I have earned this fellow-feeling because of serving the cause which all my countrymen have at heart.

The only piece of advice that I can give you now is — carry out the work, the mission, for which this college was created. I have no doubt that all of you have realised by this time what this mission means. When we established this college, and left other occupations, other chances of life, to devote our lives to this institution, we did so because we hoped to see in it the foundation, the nucleus, of a nation, of the new India which is to begin its career after this night of sorrow and trouble, on that day of glory and greatness when India will work for the world. What we want here is not merely to give you a little information, not merely to open to you careers for earning a livelihood, but to build up sons for the motherland to work and to suffer for her. That is why we started this college and that is the work to which I want you to devote yourselves in future. What has been insufficiently and imperfectly begun by us, it is for you to complete and lead to perfection. When I come back I wish to see some of you becoming rich, rich not for yourselves but that you may enrich the Mother with your riches. I wish to see some of you becoming great, great not for your own sakes, not that you may satisfy your own vanity, but great for her, to make India great, to enable her to stand up with head erect among the nations of the earth, as she did in days of yore when the world looked up to her for light. Even those who will remain poor and obscure, I want to see their very poverty and obscurity devoted to the motherland. There are times in a nation's history when Providence places before it one work, one aim, to which everything else, however high and noble in itself, has to be sacrificed. Such a time has now arrived for our motherland when nothing is dearer than her service, when everything else is to be directed to that end. If you will study, study for her sake; train yourselves body and mind and soul for her service. You will earn your living that you may live for her sake. You will go abroad to foreign lands that you may bring back knowledge with which you may do service to her. Work that she may prosper. Suffer that she may rejoice. All is contained in that one single advice. My last word to you is that if you have sympathy for me, I hope to see it not merely as a personal feeling, but as a sympathy with what I am working for. I want to see this sympathy translated into work so that when in future I shall look upon your career of glorious activity I may have the pride of remembering that I did something to prepare and begin it.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 24th, 1907 }

Sankaritola's Apologia

The omniscient editor of the *Indian Nation* exposed himself last week to a well-deserved castigation at our hands by trespassing into history, of which he evidently knows less than a fifth form school-boy in an English public school. We gave him his deserts, but were careful to couch our criticism, however deservedly severe, in perfectly courteous language. We find, however, that the courtesy was thrown away on the most hysterically foul-mouthed publicist in the whole Indian Press. The late Shambhunath Mukherji ironically described Mr. N. N. Ghose as a thundering cataract of law: he might more aptly have described him as a thundering cataract of Billingsgate. He has attempted to answer our criticism in this week's *Indian Nation*, but the answer is so much befouled with an almost maniacal virulence of abuse that most of our friends have advised us to ignore his frenzies and never again give him the notoriety he desires by noticing him in our columns. It is true that the *Indian Nation* addresses itself to a microscopic audience and expresses the personal vanities, selfishness, jealousies of a single man, but so long as it enjoys a false reputation for learning and wisdom even with a limited circle or trades on that reputation to attack and discredit the national movement, it is our duty to expose its pretensions, and we shall not be deterred by any abuse, however foul.

Mr. N. N. Ghose's reply falls into three parts, of which one consists merely of rancorous vituperation, another of a feeble attempt to wriggle out of the uncomfortable position he has got into by his failure to consult a few historical primers before writing, and the third is a restatement of his opinions about nationality formulated this time in the shape of general ideas without any basis either of historical fact or of Metropolitan College fiction. As to the abuse we can only say that it might have been more skilfully done. At least it might have been more coherent. The aggrieved sage of Sankaritola picks out from all the *Bande Mataram* writers Srijut Aurobindo Ghose for the object of his wrath and among other elegant terms of abuse calls him a prig and a *Graeculus esuriens*. To those who may not be such accomplished Latin scholars as the Principal of the Metropolitan College, we may explain that the last expression means a starving and greedy scholar who is prepared to commit any vileness for the sake of earning a livelihood. We will not stop to ask whether this description applies to Srijut Aurobindo Ghose or to a Principal who daily exhorts his students to subordinate honour, high feeling and patriotism to the supreme consideration of bread and himself practises the lofty philosophy he preaches. We will only ask Mr. Ghose whether a man can be at once a prig and an *esurient Greekling*. Srijut Aurobindo Ghose may be one or the other or neither, but he can hardly be both. Either Mr. N. N. Ghose's knowledge of Latin is as distinguished and correct as his knowledge of history, or else he is so ignorant of English as to be even ignorant what the word prig means. We can understand his being in a rage at the merciless exposure of his pretended scholarship, but that does not excuse his incoherence: nor is it a sufficient reason for what was once a fair counterfeit of a gentleman and a scholar turning himself into the image of a spitting and swearing tom-cat. And with that we leave Mr. N. N. Ghose the fishwife and pass on to Mr. N. N. Ghose the historian.

He does not try to justify his blunders, — that would be hopeless — but he does try to excuse them. He practically admits that his Italian republics are a blunder and that he was thinking of the Middle Ages when he was writing of the nineteenth century. But he pleads that Burke uses the word commonwealth in the sense of state and therefore Mr. N. N. Ghose can use the word republic in the same sense. This is Metropolitan College logic and Metropolitan College knowledge of English. Does Mr. Ghose really think that republic and commonwealth mean the same thing precisely or that Burke would have talked of the Russian republic when he meant the Russian monarchy? But, says Mr. Ghose, it does not matter, as I was not talking about forms of government. But if Mr. Ghose in his class was to talk about adjectives when he meant nouns, would it be an excuse to say that he was not talking about the difference between various parts of speech? His defence of his other blunders is still more amusing.

Says the Oracle: "To combat our proposition about ancient Greece an academic commonplace is trotted out, namely, that the people of Greece never developed a Panhellenic sentiment." Really this is enough to take one's breath away. Mr. Ghose told us last week that the Greeks became an united nation under the pressure of the Persian invasion: this week he coolly tells us that it is an academic commonplace that the Greeks never even developed a Panhellenic sentiment. We certainly never said anything of the sort. The Greeks, as any tyro in history knows, did develop a Panhellenic sentiment but it was never strong enough — and that was all we said — to unite them into a nation. But Mr. Ghose flounders still deeper into the mire in the next sentences. "What does it signify whether they did or not? The whole question is, could the Greek states have been set against one another? Athens and Sparta, for instance, against each other? And if not, why not?" Really, Mr. Ghose, really now! Is it possible you do not know that soon after the Persian invasion which you say made Greece an united nation, Athens and Sparta were at each other's throats and the whole of the Greek world by land and sea turned into one vast battlefield on which the Hellenic cities engaged in a murderous internecine strife? What would we think of a "scholar" who pretended to know Indian history and yet asserted that the Hindus became an united nation under the pressure of the Mahomedan invasion and that it was impossible to set the Hindu states against each other, Mewar and Amber for instance? Yet this is precisely the blunder Mr. Ghose has committed with respect to Greek history. But he pleads bitterly that his facts are no doubt all wrong, but the conclusions he bases on them are right. What do facts matter? It is only Mr. N. N. Ghose's opinions which matter.

Mr. Ghose accuses us of incapacity to understand the substance of his article. We quite admit that it is difficult to understand the mystic wisdom of a sage who asserts that the soundness of his premises has nothing to do with the soundness of his conclusions. Mr. Ghose stated certain facts as supporting a conclusion otherwise unsupported. We have proved that his facts are all childish blunders. He must therefore accept one of the two horns of a dilemma; either his facts had nothing to do with his "truism" or his "truism" itself is an error. But we had another object in view in exposing the pretentious sciolism of this arrogant publicist. Our business with him is not so much to disprove his opinions as to convince the few who still believe in him of the hollowness of his pretensions. It was for this reason that we dwelt on his blunders last week and have done the same this week, — in order to show that this gentleman who claims a monopoly of culture and wisdom in India, is a half educated shallow man whose boasted mastery of the English language even is imperfect and who in other subjects, such as history and politics, is an ignoramus pretending to knowledge.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 26th, 1907 }

Our False Friends

The *Englishman* has been warning us against our false friends. We have been asked to avert our eyes from those Indian delegates who have asked the socialistic Conference at Stuttgart to liberate one-fifth of the human race from serfdom. The *Englishman* unblushingly calls these Indian delegates our enemies and perhaps points to himself as our only friend, guide and philosopher. With the *Englishman* for our friend, and the *Civil and Military Gazette* for our ally and the rest of the Anglo-Indian Press for our well-wishers it is no doubt sinful to long for a change for the paradise of universal brotherhood. India is the freest of lands, retorts the Hare Street journal to the misrepresentation of our false friends in the above socialistic Conference. Here under British rule the people enjoy religious freedom, they are allowed to stick to their absurd social customs, they are not denied food, clothing and luxuries. What is there wanting to their freedom the *Englishman* is at a loss to discover. Does our contemporary seriously desire enlightenment on the point? Or is he indulging in a bit of Hare Street humour at our expense? Is it owing to this freedom of which we are the enviable possessors that he himself as well as his prototype in Lahore enjoy the monopoly of pouring daily vile abuses on us with perfect safety and immunity? Is it due to this freedom that we are threatened with imprisonment for republishing the articles of the *Yugantar* and they are supported and patronised for the very same offence? Is it for this enviable freedom that some innocent men of Comilla were very near being hanged and transported without a shred of evidence against them? Is it in consequence of this freedom that a highly respectable accused at Rawalpindi is taking his trial on a sick-bed? Is it in the exercise of their rights as free citizens of the British Empire that Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh have been deported without even the mention of the charge against them? This freedom is perhaps responsible for the banishment of an Arya Samajist from his country though the trying magistrate has declared him quite innocent of the charge brought against him. Is it a tangible demonstration of our freedom that we cannot keep our food grains for our own use even when there is a terrible famine in the land? Is it because we are free to think and act that the Partition of Bengal has been carried out in the teeth of an unanimous and protracted opposition? The disarming of a whole people is another incontrovertible evidence of their freedom. They are not allowed the use of arms because they are free. Their manhood is repressed because they are free. They are converted into so many harmless cattle because their Mothercountry is the freest of all countries! If we had even a jot of freedom the *Englishman* could not have flung in our face such a mocking statement. The world has come to know of India's true condition, and these interested and shameless perversions of truth can deceive nobody.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 27th, 1907 }

Repression and Unity

One of the most encouraging signs of the present times is the effect of repression in bringing together men of all views who have the future welfare and greatness of their country at heart. At this time last year the great fight between the old and new parties was just beginning to pass from the stage of loose occasional skirmishes into a close and prolonged struggle. The emergence of Nationalism as a self-conscious force determined to take shape and fight for the domination of the national mind was indicated by the appearance of the *Bande Mataram* as the first out-and-out Nationalist daily in the English tongue published in India. For the first time a gospel of undiluted Nationalism without any mitigating admixture of prudent concealment or diplomatic reservation was poured daily into the ears of the educated class in India. At first the *Bande Mataram* and the cause it came to champion had to make a hard fight for existence and for a voice in the country, and in the struggle which culminated in the last session of the Congress, many hard words were used on both sides, strong animosities aroused and what seemed incurable misunderstandings engendered. Those times are now fading into a half-remembered past. The second year of the paper's existence has begun with a prosecution for sedition, but circumstances have so changed that in its hour of trial it has the sympathy of the whole of Bengal at its back. We note with satisfaction and gratitude that all classes of men, rich and poor, all shades of opinion, moderate or extremist, the purveyors of ready-made loyalty alone excepted, have given us a sympathy and support which is not merely emotional. This growing unity is mainly due to the action of the bureaucracy in attempting to put down by force a movement which has now taken possession of the nation's heart beyond the possibility of dislodgment. This is the last and crowning blessing of British rule.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, August 31^{st}, 1907 }

The Three Unities of Sankaritola

Mr. N. N. Ghose has again attempted to answer us in his issue of the 26th August. As usual the bulk of his answer is composed of irrelevant abuse, but we are glad to note that except towards the end where his passion of spite and wounded vanity has broken out in a furious yell of hatred, he has tried to curb his natural inclination to couch the logic of Billingsgate in the language of the gutter. We pointed out that Mr. N. N. Ghose's "historical facts" — which he had brought forward to prove his theory that Nationality was possible everywhere except in India, — were all blunders of which a schoolboy would have been ashamed, and we drew the inevitable conclusion that the sage of Sankaritola was an ignoramus in history. That was exceedingly plain language, no doubt, but it was relevant to the issue. A man who knows nothing about history, has no business to argue from history and foist on the public conclusions drawn from his own imagination or from others and distorted in the borrowing under the disingenuous pretence that they are the "laws of national growth" as ascertained from an accurate study of the world's past experience. And what is Mr. N. N. Ghose's answer? His answer is that Srijut Aurobindo Ghose is a coward and had not courage to ride a horse and that he would never have been a patriot if he had not failed in the Indian Civil Service. Even if that be true, — and we can hardly blame the Principal of the Metropolitan College for judging others by his own standard of courage and patriotism — we do not see how it helps his case or goes to prove that his bad premises do not vitiate his conclusions or that Nationality is impossible in India. The question is not whether Srijut Aurobindo Ghose is a coward and a self-seeker but whether Mr. N. N. Ghose is wrong in his facts and in his conclusions. With regard to the facts he has practically admitted defeat. He admits that he is an ignoramus, he admits that the depths of his ignorance have been proved to be unfathomable. We can therefore leave him alone in the future and confine ourselves to his opinions. An ignoramus who pretends to a monopoly of knowledge and wisdom, and is always questioning other people about their educational qualifications, makes himself offensive and deserves to be exposed but an ignoramus who confesses that he is an ignoramus is harmless and even an object of kindly pity.

Mr. Ghose argues that though his facts were wrong, that does not prove that his conclusions were not right. Perhaps not, but it at least creates a presumption in that direction. We shall however leave his self-justification on this point for future treatment and deal with the more substantial issues he has raised in his defence.

Mr. N. N. Ghose's position — and we notice it only because it is the position of better men than he — is contained in the following luminous sentence: "The bookish politician is not able to cite a single instance where a nation was made by boycott or under any conditions other than the unities we have more than once referred to." Here there are two propositions, one, that boycott never made a nation, the other that in every case of the building up of a nationality there have been present as indispensable conditions and the only causes of the growth of nationality Mr. Ghose's three precious unities, — viz., a single language, a single race, a single religion. A more shallow, ignorant and unfounded brace of assertions it would be difficult to imagine. We pointed out in the first article in which we condescended to notice Mr. Ghose's flounderings, several instances of nations which have been welded into unity and maintained their unity without possessing a single one of these indispensable "unities". As for unity of race there is not a single one of the European nations which is not a compound of several races except, possibly, the Scandinavian peoples. In England up to the present day the Celtic races preserve their separateness and distinct individuality: in

Austria there are a superfluity of different races and languages: Russia is a congeries of peoples: Italy was built up out of various races and even after the accomplishment of national unity the Gallo-Lombard of the North and the Latins, Oscans, Umbrians, Tuscans of the Centre find it difficult to understand and live with the Graeco-Italians of the South: in Germany the Prussian, the Slav, the Pole, and the South German are of different race-types and temperaments: in Spain the Iberian, the Goth and the Moor have mingled their blood: in France there are the Breton, still a distinct race, the Provencal and the Frank as well as the Celts of the Centre and the Aquitanian, each with noticeable marks of their separate origin: in Switzerland there are three races speaking three different languages. Does Mr. N. N. Ghose want any more instances? We can give him plenty if he does. If he had even the most insignificant knowledge of common facts, he would not have needed our assistance to enlighten him on the subject. Everyone knows, except the Sankaritola sage, that race and nationality are two totally different things which have no necessary relation to each other, since one depends upon common descent while the other is a geographical and political unity. One might just as well say that different chemical elements cannot combine into a single substance as that different races cannot combine into a single nation. There is no such irreconcilable divergence between the races in India as to make their union an impossibility. If we turn to unity of language we find a respectable number of nations which do not speak a single language. Three languages are spoken in Switzerland, the same number in France, while Welsh holds its own in Great Britain. Unity of language, therefore, is not necessary to nationality, only the recognition of one prevalent language as the State language is required. If America, needing to be addressed in fourteen languages by her would-be Presidents is a nation, if the Swiss speaking three different languages on equal terms are a nation, what reason is there that the people of India should not federate into a single political unity? As for the religious difficulty, it is an old bogey. We do not deny the difficulty created by the divisions between the Mahomedans and Hindus, but it is idle to say that the difficulty is insuperable. If the spirit of nationalism conquered the much fiercer intolerance of the religious struggles in Europe after the reformation, it is not irrational to hope as much for India in the twentieth century. We have not seen in Mr. N. N. Ghose's polemics a single argument or favourable instance for his pretentious theory of the three unities of nationalism. We do not deny that it would be a great help to us if we had a single language or professed a single religion. But we do deny that these "unities", still less the unity of race, are indispensable. There is no warrant for such a view in history or in reason.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 3rd, 1907 }

Eastern Renascence

When the mailed fist of young Japan was striking blow after blow at the huge Russian bear our benevolent rulers who were secretly dismayed and astonished tried to put on a smiling face as best they could and persuade us into the belief that Japan was only an exception which proved the rule of Eastern worthlessness. Somehow or other, however, inconvenient facts cropped up to challenge their favourite theory and Persia and even Afghanistan began to raise their heads. Even China threw away her phial of laudanum and opened her eyes to the rays of the rising sun. Our honest Anglo-Indian Press tried to ignore this ugly fact as long as it could; but now with a deep sigh it has to confess that the Eastern nations have secured a fresh lease of life and have begun in right earnest to set their houses in order. Here is an extract published by the *Pioneer* from a circular issued by the Chinese authorities:

"Those who are able to promote agricultural enterprises, mechanical arts and handicrafts, trade and mines or any other kind of business, or aid merchants to subscribe capital for industrial enterprises, and succeed in them — such officials or gentry who have worked to such an end, will be rewarded by the Throne to an extraordinary degree. Should anyone be able to show that he has succeeded in starting a manufactory or industrial work with a capital of over ten million taels, where the workmen number several thousand, such persons will be even more greatly rewarded — even to the extent of being raised to the peerage."

Japan joined in the race of commercial enterprise later than India and outstripped her in no time and now China, where there are no "honest Swadeshi" officials to let loose mercenary

Gurkha bands to crush all spirit of enterprise, may very well be expected to do the same. Here in India we lag behind and lose the race not because the other Eastern nations are naturally more gifted than we are but because there is that benevolent despotism which like a leaden extinguisher puts out all the fire of our genius. There is scarcely a word of encouragement, and in fact there cannot be; but of repression and Swadeshi cases there are plenty.

But the Time-spirit is abroad, and out of the extinguisher leaps forth the tongues of fire that will at no distant date set all obstacles ablaze. The nations of the East will rear up their heads and India will be herself again. Repression will only enhance the glory of her victory and help in putting her in the vanguard of nations.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 12th, 1907 }

The Martyrdom of Bipin Chandra

We have felt considerable delicacy hitherto in writing on the prosecution of Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal for refusing to take the oath in the *Bande Mataram* case, as that prosecution has arisen directly out of our own. In fact all the more important events of recent occurrence in Calcutta have been so closely connected, directly or indirectly, with this case that we have been practically compelled to keep our lips closed on current public affairs. The imprisonment of the Nationalist orator and propagandist, the most prominent public figure of the New Party in Bengal, is nevertheless a matter of capital importance on which we cannot remain silent. Without touching on the relations of this affair with the *Bande Mataram* case we shall say what we have to say on the political aspect of the vindictive sentence passed by the third Presidency Magistrate, an obscure servant of the bureaucracy, on the man with a great and historic mission whom the strange incongruous humour of Fate brought before his petty judgment-seat.

Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal has been condemned to six months' simple imprisonment, the maximum penalty permitted by the law for the crime of possessing a conscience. Mr. Hume asked for a conviction on the ground that Bipin Babu had baulked the prosecution in the *Bande Mataram* case. Apart from the large assumption involved in the assertion that his evidence would have materially assisted the prosecution this appears to us a singular plea for a lawyer to put forward. It has not yet been made a crime punishable under the Penal Code to baulk a Government prosecution and if it was the intention to draw the Magistrate's attention to the political bearings of the case, it was at least maladroit to allow the suggestion to be palpable. We will take it, however, that the Magistrate sentenced Bipin Babu for a breach of the law which the defendant did not deny, not for an action of which there was no evidence and which is not an offence under the law. What then was Bipin Babu's offence? Certainly it was not that he carried the policy of Boycott beyond the limits of legality and preferred adhesion to his own political programme before the dictates of the alien's law. That would have been an action which, however pardonable or praiseworthy in the eyes of patriots engaged in a life and death struggle with the bureaucracy, must necessarily figure as a serious offence in the eyes of the bureaucracy itself and we could hardly quarrel with its servant for trying to serve the interests of his employers by the infliction of a severe punishment. But it was distinctly declared by Bipin Babu that it was not as a boycotter, not with the political intention of making the working of the bureaucratic law-courts impossible that he declined to give evidence or take the oath. The boycott in Bengal has not yet been extended in practice to the law courts, and even in theory it is proposed to extend it only to voluntary resort to the protection of the alien authorities and not to cases in which one is compelled to them by a warrant or a summons. A few men like Bhupendranath Dutt who have realised freedom in their souls and refuse to be bound by any limitations of an alien making, may decline to have anything to do with the law which the nation had no hand in framing and the courts over which the nation has no control, but this has not yet become the accepted policy of the New Party and there was no moral compulsion on its leader to make any such refusal. If it had been an ordinary case of crime, he would not have refused to give evidence. It was, in fact, as an individual case of conscience that he regarded the question. In his first statement Bipin Babu declared that it was the duty of a citizen to refuse to take any part in such cases which are manifestly unjust and injurious to society and the peace of the country. In his later statement the expression about the duty of the citizen was, wisely we think, dropped: for we in India are not citizens and having no rights of citizenship cannot be saddled with any duties of citizenship.

The members of a subject nation absolutely destitute of any inalienable rights cannot have any moral obligations as citizens: they can only have moral obligations as patriots and subject to their patriotic obligations, as members of a social order. If therefore we recognise any obligation to respect and obey the law, it is not as citizens but as members of the social order who are interested in its maintenance and in the maintenance of peace and order so long as and no longer than that order and peace do not militate against the well-being of the society instead of promoting it. The moment obedience to the law involves a wound to society, the individual is brought face to face with a difficult case of conscience.

It was in such a difficult situation that Bipin Babu found himself. He was called on to associate himself as a prosecution witness with a political policy carried on under the forms of law, a policy which he considered fatal to the well-being and peace of the nation, but which he had no means of challenging except by the passive protest of refusing to perform the function required of him. He had to obey either the dictates of his conscience or the requirements of the law and he held the imperative command of his conscience a more sacred and binding law than the Penal Code. The law had a right to assert itself by inflicting on him a nominal or slight penalty, it had no right to punish a man vindictively for obeying his conscience. The Magistrate thought perhaps that he was serving the interests of the present system and ensuring its stability by putting Bipin Pal in prison for six months, but what has he really done? Merely made people believe that the bureaucracy is so savage in its repression, so enamoured of power, that for its sake it will not even allow a man to possess a conscience, that an honest and reluctant protest on the part of a distinguished and honourable man against a misuse of the law will be punished by it with eager severity if it happens to conflict with its own interests or its repressive policy.

The country will not suffer by the incarceration of this great orator and writer, this spokesman and prophet of Nationalism, nor will Bipin Chandra himself suffer by it. He has risen ten times as high as he was before in the estimation of his countrymen: if there are any among them who disliked or distrusted him, they have been silenced, for good we hope, by his manly, straightforward and conscientious stand for the right as he understood it. He will come out of prison with his power and influence doubled, and Nationalism has already become the stronger for his self-immolation. Posterity will judge between him and the petty tribunal which has treated his honourable scruples as a crime.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 14th, 1907 }

Sacrifice and Redemption

The abiding attributes of humanity, those that have endured through time's changes and have redeemed man's nature from the mortality of the flesh, have behind them a tradition of sacrifice. There is not a single ideal in the world that has been able to secure permanence in human thought without striking root in a soil manured with the martyr's blood and growing in its initial stages through an atmosphere charged with human sorrow and suffering. Mankind has been mercilessly exacting of those unto whom it has rendered its worship and unquestioning obedience; it has refused with a tragic persistency to accord its allegiance to the faith or the feeling whose prophets and preachers were not ready to go through the sacrifices that the nature of the hostile circumstances demanded, exile, durance or death. Not mere conviction, but courage of conviction that dares to stare death in the face has been the secret of those passions and emotions that are immortally human. Love of man or love of God, love of knowledge or love of the Motherland, each and every one has had to pass through the inevitable test. And it is this indispensability of sacrifice to the success of a cause that constitutes at once the tragedy and the triumph of life — tragedy, because it means the passing away of those spirits whom the world can ill spare, triumph, because it demonstrates the innate superiority of human nature to death, because it brings the human mind face to face with its immortal spirit that transcends more the agonies of the mortal flesh. The sight of the man who makes light of sufferings, even of death, for the sake of an idea or a faith, turns the thoughts of his fellowmen to that for which he thus suffers. Surely there is something in the ideal for which a man can readily suffer and die, is the first prompting of their heart. And provided there is truth and reality in the martyr's creed, the future of its cause is assured. That which is true has always exercised a mystic compulsion over men; wedded to sacrifice it has never failed to win their active adherence.

He who seeks to fill India with the Nationalist faith must first recognise this supreme necessity of sacrifice. The truth that he inculcates has had its martyrs in every country of the world and it cannot be otherwise in India. Everything that he asks of the nation requires sacrifice, and in order that the nation that has been under subjection for centuries may awaken to the truth of his idea, to the greatness of his faith, he must be the first to set the example. If those Indians who have been incessantly insisting on Liberty as the one essential condition of the country's salvation are ready and able to overcome the difficulties and undergo the sacrifices in which such insistence must necessarily involve them, then there is every chance of the country taking up the Nationalist creed. The mere logical superiority of Nationalism to Moderation cannot be reasonably expected to revolutionise Indian politics; that superiority must be supplemented by the full measure of personal sacrifices on the part of the exponents of the new faith. The Nationalists have been dwelling on two propositions mainly, namely, that freedom is the primary necessity of the country, and that freedom can be won only by struggle and sacrifice. The time is now come for them to make good their words; they must convince the country that they are willing to struggle and sacrifice for the sake of the faith that they ask their fellowmen to embrace. The hour of trial has arrived, let them stand firm.

Every act of sacrifice that the Nationalist now performs in fulfilment of his mission will advance his cause by bounds. It will bring home to his countrymen the reality of Nationalism over and against the unreality of Moderation. It will show up the true character of the Anglo-Indian Absolutism, its implacable enmity to truth and its moral inferiority to those who have the strength to preach and practise what is true in the face of the worst it can do. We know on which side the people's sympathy and appreciation will then be.

The calm and heroic acceptance of punishment at the hands of the bureaucracy by Bhupendranath, Basanta, and Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal is full of happy augury; let others press on the way they have gone. The day of which the Nationalist dreams can then never be distant.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 20th, 1907 }

The Un-Hindu Spirit of Caste Rigidity

The *Bengalee* reports Srijut Bal Gangadhar Tilak to have made a definite pronouncement on the caste system. "The prevailing idea of social inequality is working immense evil", says the Nationalist leader of the Deccan. This pronouncement is only natural from an earnest Hindu and a sincere Nationalist like Srijut Tilak. The baser ideas underlying the degenerate perversions of the original caste system, the mental attitude which bases them on a false foundation of caste, pride and arrogance, of a divinely ordained superiority depending on the accident of birth, of a fixed and intolerant inequality, are inconsistent with the supreme teaching, the basic spirit of Hinduism which sees the one invariable and indivisible Divinity in every individual being. Nationalism is simply the passionate aspiration for the realisation of that Divine Unity in the nation, a unity in which all the component individuals, however various and apparently unequal their functions as political, social or economic factors, are yet really and fundamentally one and equal. In the ideal of Nationalism which India will set before the world, there will be an essential equality between man and man, between caste and caste, between class and class, all being as Mr. Tilak has pointed out different but equal and united parts of the Virat Purusha as realised in the nation. The insistent preaching of our religion and the work of the Indian Nationalist is to bring home to every one of his countrymen this ideal of their country's religion and philosophy. We are intolerant of autocracy because it is the denial in politics of this essential equality, we object to the modern distortion of the caste system because it is the denial in society of the same essential equality. While we insist on reorganising the nation into a democratic unity politically, we recognise that the same principle of reorganisation ought to and inevitably will assert itself socially; even if, as our opponents choose to imagine, we are desirous of confining its working to politics, our attempts will be fruitless, for the principle once realised in politics must inevitably assert itself in society. No monopoly racial or hereditary can form part of the Nationalist's scheme of the future, his dream of the day for the advent of which he is striving and struggling.

The caste system was once productive of good, and as a fact has been a necessary phase of human progress through which all the civilizations of the world have had to pass. The autocratic form of government has similarly had its use in the development of the world's polity, for there was certainly a time when it was the only kind of political organisation that made the preservation of society possible. The Nationalist does not quarrel with the past, but he insists on its transformation, the transformation of individual or class autocracy into the autocracy, self-rule or Swaraj, of the nation and of the fixed, hereditary, anti-democratic caste-organisation into the pliable, self-adapting, democratic distribution of function at which socialism aims. In the present absolutism in politics and the present narrow caste-organisation in society he finds a negation of that equality which his religion enjoins. Both must be transformed. The historic problem that the present attitude of Indian Nationalism at once brings to the mind, as to how a caste-governed society could co-exist with a democratic religion and philosophy, we do not propose to consider here today. We only point out that Indian Nationalism must by its inherent tendencies move towards the removal of unreasoning and arbitrary distinctions and inequalities. Ah! he will say, this is exactly what we Englishmen have been telling you all these years. You must get rid of your caste before you can have democracy. There is just a little flaw in this advice of the Anglo-Indian monitors, it puts the cart before the horse, and that is the reason why we have always refused to act upon it.

It does not require much expenditure of thought to find out that the only way to rid the human mind of abuses and superstitions is through a transformation of spirit and not merely of machinery. We must educate every Indian, man, woman and child, in the ideals of our religion and philosophy before we can rationally expect our society to reshape itself in the full and perfect spirit of the Vedantic gospel of equality. We dwell on this commonsense idea here at the risk of being guilty of repetition. Education on a national scale is an indispensable precondition of our social amelioration. And because such education is impossible except through the aid of state-finance, therefore, even if there were no other reason, the Nationalist must emphasise the immediate need of political freedom without which Indians cannot obtain the necessary control over their money. So long as we are under an alien bureaucracy, we cannot have the funds needed for the purpose of an adequate national education, and what little education we are given falls far short of the Nationalist ideal, being mainly concerned with the fostering of a spirit of sordid contentment with things that be. Apart from the question of the cultivation of those virtues which only come in the wake of liberty, apart from the question of reorganisation of the country, if we were to look into the problem in its purely social aspect, even then we are confronted with the primary need of political emancipation as the condition precedent of further fruitful activity.

The Nationalist has been putting the main stress on the necessity of political freedom almost to the exclusion of the other needs of the nation, not because he is not alive to the vital importance of those needs of economic renovation, of education, of social transformation, but because he knows that in order that his ideal of equality may be brought to its fullest fruition, he must first bring about the political freedom and federation of his country.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 21st, 1907 }

Caste and Democracy

We fear our correspondent who has criticised on another page the consistency of our views on caste, has hardly taken any trouble to understand the real drift of our articles. His attitude seems to be that we must be either entirely for caste as it at present exists or entirely against the institution and condemn it root and branch in the style of the ordinary unthinking social reformer. Because on the one hand we protested against the ignorant abuse of the institution often indulged in simply because it is different in form and spirit from European institutions, and on the other hand emphasized the perversions of its form and spirit and the necessity of its transformation in the pure spirit of Hinduism, our correspondent imagines that we are inconsistent and guilty of adopting successively two different and incompatible attitudes. Our position is perfectly clear and straightforward. Caste was originally an arrangement for the distribution of functions in society, just as much as class in Europe, but the principle on which the distribution was based in India was peculiar to this country. The civilisation of Europe has always been preponderatingly material and the division of classes was material in its principles and material in its objects, but our civilisation has always been preponderatingly spiritual and moral, and caste division in India had a spiritual object and a spiritual and moral basis. The division of classes in Europe had its root in a distribution of powers and rights and developed and still develops through a struggle of conflicting interests; its aim was merely the organisation of society for its own sake and mainly indeed for its economic convenience. The division of castes in India was conceived as a distribution of duties. A man's caste depended on his *dharma*, his spiritual, moral and practical duties, and his *dharma* depended on his *swabhava*, his temperament and inborn nature. A Brahmin was a Brahmin not by mere birth, but because he discharged the duty of preserving the spiritual and intellectual elevation of the race, and he had to cultivate the spiritual temperament and acquire the spiritual training which could alone qualify him for the task. The Kshatriya was a Kshatriya not merely because he was the son of warriors and princes, but because he discharged the duty of protecting the country and preserving the high courage and manhood of the nation, and he had to cultivate the princely temperament and acquire the strong and lofty Samurai training which alone fitted him for his duties. So it was with the Vaishya whose function was to amass wealth for the race and the Sudra who discharged the humbler duties of service without which the other castes could not perform their share of labour for the common good. This was what we meant when we said that caste was a socialistic institution. No doubt there was a gradation of social respect which placed the function of the Brahmin at the summit and the function of the Sudra at the base, but this inequality was accidental, external, *vyavaharika*. Essentially there was, between the devout Brahmin and the devout Sudra, no inequality in the single Virat Purusha of which each was a necessary part. Chokha Mela, the Maratha Pariah, became the guru of Brahmins proud of their caste purity; the Chandala taught Shankaracharya: for the Brahman was revealed in the body of the Pariah and in the Chandala there was the utter presence of Shiva the Almighty. Heredity entered into caste divisions, and in the light of the conclusions of modern knowledge who shall say erroneously? But it entered into it as a subordinate element. For Hindu civilisation being spiritual based its institutions on spiritual and moral foundations and subordinated the material elements and material considerations. Caste therefore was not only an institution which ought to be immune from the cheap second-hand denunciations so long in fashion, but a supreme necessity without which Hindu civilisation could not have developed its distinctive character or worked out its unique mission.

But to recognise this is not to debar ourselves from pointing out its later perversions and desiring its transformation. It is the nature of human institutions to degenerate, to lose their vitality, and decay, and the first sign of decay is the loss of flexibility and oblivion of the essential spirit in which they were conceived. The spirit is permanent, the body changes; and a body which refuses to change must die. The spirit expresses itself in many ways while itself remaining essentially the same, but the body must change to suit its changing environments if it wishes to live. There is no doubt that the institution of caste degenerated. It ceased to be determined by spiritual qualifications which, once essential, have now come to be subordinate and even immaterial and is determined by the purely material tests of occupation and birth. By this change it has set itself against the fundamental tendency of Hinduism which is to insist on the spiritual and subordinate the material and thus lost most of its meaning. The spirit of caste arrogance, exclusiveness and superiority came to dominate it instead of the spirit of duty, and the change weakened the nation and helped to reduce us to our present condition. It is these perversions which we wish to see set right. The institution must transform itself so as to fulfil its essential and permanent object under the changed conditions of modern times. If it refuses to change, it will become a mere social survival and crumble to pieces. If it transforms itself, it will yet play a great part in the fulfilment of civilisation.

Our correspondent accuses us of attempting to corrupt society with the intrusion of the European idea of Socialism. Socialism is not an European idea, it is essentially Asiatic and especially Indian. What is called Socialism in Europe, is the old Asiatic attempt to effect a permanent solution of the economic problem of society which will give man leisure and peace to develop undisturbed his higher self. Without Socialism democracy would remain a tendency that never reached its fulfilment, a rule of the masses by a small aristocratic or monied class with the consent and votes of the masses, or a tyranny of the artisan classes over the rest. Socialistic democracy is the only true democracy, for without it we cannot get the equalised and harmonised distribution of functions, each part of the community existing for the good of all and not struggling for its own separate interests, which will give humanity as a whole the necessary conditions in which it can turn its best energies to its higher development. To realise those conditions is also the aim of Hindu civilisation and the original intention of caste. The fulfilment of Hinduism is the fulfilment of the highest tendencies of human civilisation and it must include in its sweep the most vital impulses of modern life. It will include democracy and Socialism also, purifying them, raising them above the excessive stress on the economic adjustments which are the means, and teaching them to fix their eyes more constantly and clearly on the moral, intellectual and spiritual perfection of mankind which is the end.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 25th, 1907 }

Bande Mataram Prosecution

The prosecution of the *Bande Mataram*, the most important of the numerous Press prosecutions recently instituted by the bureaucracy, commenced with a flourish of trumpets, eagerly watched by a hopeful Anglo-Indian Press, has ended in the most complete and dismal fiasco such as no Indian Government has ever had to experience before in a sedition case. The failure has not been the result of any lukewarmness or half-heartedness in the conduct of the prosecution or any unwillingness to convict on the part of the trying Magistrate. The Police left no stone unturned to get a particular man convicted, the Standing Counsel did not hesitate to press every possible point and make the most of every stray scrap or faint shadow of evidence against the accused, the Magistrate was a Civilian Magistrate whose leanings have never been concealed, the same who gave two years to the *Yugantar* Printer, who sent Bipin Pal before a subservient Bengali Magistrate with a plain hint to give him a heavy punishment, who sentenced Sushil Kumar to fifteen stripes, who brushed aside the evidence of barristers in favour of Police testimony, and every paragraph of whose judgment in the present case shows that he would readily have dealt out a handsome term of hard labour if the evidence had afforded him the slightest justification for a conviction. All the winning cards in the game are in the hands of the bureaucracy in such a trial. They can command the best legal knowledge in the country, they have a detective and secret service system which for political purposes is popularly supposed to be second only in its elaborateness to the Russian, they have their own servants sitting on the bench to try a case in which they are deeply interested, there is no trouble about juries who might be unwilling to convict, the Police have unlimited powers of search and can even turn the Post Office into a branch of the detective department, their methods of discovering witnesses are various and effective; yet with all this they were unable to bring forward a single scrap of convincing evidence to prove that the particular man they were bent on running down was the Editor. The Magistrate in his judgment and the affectionate Friend of India in Chowringhee in his comments have drawn from this failure the lesson that the laws against the freedom of the Press should be made more stringent. An ordinary unilluminated intelligence would have come rather to the conclusion that the executive authorities would do well to reform their method of instituting proceedings in a political trial.

The one important lesson of the *Bande Mataram* case is the light which it throws on the spirit in which the bureaucracy have been instituting the political prosecutions and persecutions which have latterly seemed to be their only reason of existence. This spirit has been exposed in a lurid and sensational manner in the Comilla case when an innocent man with difficulty escaped the gallows to which a political prosecution had condemned him. But in the *Bande Mataram* case also there has been a less sensational though sufficient exposure of the same sinister spirit. What has been the whole meaning and aim of this prosecution? Certainly not an honest impartial desire to vindicate outraged law and check without personal animus or any purely political aim a wanton tendency to disturb the public tranquillity, which would be the only excuse for a sedition prosecution. It has been an obvious attempt to crush a particular paper and a particular individual. The bureaucracy has sought to cripple or silence the *Bande Mataram* because it has been preaching with extraordinary success a political creed which was dangerous to the continuance of bureaucratic absolutism and was threatening to become a centre of strength round which many Nationalistic forces might gather. It has sought to single out and silence a particular individual because it chose to think that he was, as the Friend of India expresses it, the master mind behind the policy of the paper. If we are challenged to justify this assertion, it will be sufficient to point to the conduct of this case from its very inception. The *Bande Mataram* has been for over a year attacking without fear and without disguise the present system of government and advocating a radical and revolutionary change. It has advocated that change on grounds of historical experience, the first principles of politics and the necessity of national self-preservation. It has not minced matters or sought to conceal revolutionary aspirations under the veil of moderate professions or ambiguous phraseology. It has not concealed its opinion that the bureaucracy cannot be expected to transform itself, that the people of India and not the people of England must save India, and that we cannot hope for any boons but must wrest what we desire by strong national combination from unwilling hands. Hundreds of articles have appeared in the paper in this vein and the bureaucrats had only to pick and choose. But they have not attacked one of these articles, nor did their counsel venture to cite even a single one of them to prove seditious intention. The fact is that, however dangerous such a propaganda may be to an absolutist handful desiring to perpetuate their irresponsible rule, no government pretending to call itself civilised can prosecute it as seditious without forfeiting all claim to the last vestige of the world's respect. But though the paper could not be characterised as seditious, it was highly inconvenient, and there was a growing clamour which extended even to the cloudy home of the Thunderer in London, for its prosecution and, if possible, suppression. And so watch is kept to find the paper tripping over some trifle, for which it can be hauled up and got into trouble on a side issue. What is the matter for which the *Bande Mataram* was prosecuted? A reprint of the official translations of certain articles from a vernacular paper, translations issued as part of a case in the law-courts and reproduced as such, — that is one count; and an insignificant correspondence which does not even profess to give voice to the policy of the paper, — that is the second and third; and there is no other. The *Yugantar* was prosecuted on articles expressing its essential policy; the *Sandhya* has been proceeded against on articles expressing its views on important matters; but it was sought to crush the *Bande*

Mataram partly for a technical offence and partly on a side-issue. So eagerly, so carelessly is the casual chance given snatched at that the executive do not even trouble to know what is the article on which action is being taken; they give sanction to prosecute on an advertisement in the right-hand corner of the paper, and but for the compassionate correction vouchsafed by an officer of the Company the mistake would have had to be rectified in the course of the trial itself. Sanction is given to prosecute a nameless Editor and the police at once proceed to ask for a warrant against Aurobindo Ghose. It is in evidence that they had nothing better to go on than hearsay. But they had no hesitation in immediately pouncing on one particular writer of the *Bande Mataram* without possessing the least scrap of evidence against him. Obviously they cannot have done this without instructions. It was popularly believed that Srijut Aurobindo Ghose was all in all on the *Bande Mataram* staff, that all the best articles were written by him, that he gave the tone of the paper and that it could not last without him. Why did the police take a body-warrant against Aurobindo Ghose to the office and why, having taken it, did they not arrest him? Obviously they took it because they thought that they would find plenty of evidence against him in the search, and they did not execute it because they found that not a scrap of proof rewarded their efforts. After that there was a pause till Anukul Mukherji testimony was secured, and on that flimsy evidence the trial was started. Had it been honestly intended to deal only with the Editor, whoever he might turn out to be, the proceedings against Aurobindo Ghose would have been given up, but the police made no secret of the fact that it was this one man who was wanted and that no other, whatever the evidence against him, would be thought worth capture. Even when the case for the prosecution was complete without any evidence fit to raise more than a flimsy presumption the Standing Counsel would not give up, but in an outrageous address in which he rode roughshod over the higher traditions of his office, pressed weak points and wrested ambiguous evidence to get the charge framed. And after Anukul had broken down in cross-examination and made admissions fatal to their case, still the prosecution struggled for a verdict. And with what result? Even a civilian Magistrate willing to support the prestige of the Government had more sense of law and justice than the bureaucracy and its advisers and was able to see that a man could not be sent to two years' rigorous imprisonment without any shadow of evidence. Their prey escaped them; the Manager who seems to have been arrested on spec and tried without even any pretence that there was any evidence against him was acquitted, and only an unfortunate Printer who knew no English and had no notion what all the pother was about, was sent to prison for a few months to vindicate the much-damaged majesty of the almighty bureaucracy.

Pioneer or *Hindu Patriot*?

Here is a precious paragraph from the *Patriot*! —

"THE following Press *communique* has been issued: 'There is no truth whatever in the rumour that questions affecting the Permanent Settlement in Bengal are under the consideration of Government. It would not have been thought necessary to take any notice of the absurd reports in circulation, but for the numerous references to the matter which have appeared in the Press.' What says now the 'official *Pioneer*?"'

We can well understand the chagrin of the *Hindu Patriot* at the *Pioneer* being still recognised as the organ of Anglo-Indian officialdom. For who is there so ignorant of things as not to know that since the assumption of the reins of the Bengal Government by Sir Andrew Fraser the *Hindu Patriot* has conveniently combined the functions of the apologist in ordinary to the Bengal Government with those of the organ of the British Indian Association; and like the clever equestrian in the circus arena the Editor of the paper has been riding the two horses simultaneously? Let the future historian of our own times note that it was he who accompanied, though suffering from high fever, Sir Andrew Fraser to Bombay when the latter went to England on leave; and it was he again who fell ill when accompanying

Sir Lancelot Hare to Shillong. He should further note that this amiable Editor is now at Darjeeling, no doubt busy advising the Bengal Government on matters political.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 26th, 1907 }

The Chowringhee Pecksniff and Ourselves

The collapse of the *Bande Mataram* prosecution and acquittal of Srijut Aurobindo Ghose, which have been welcomed with relief and joy by our countrymen all over India, are naturally gall and wormwood to the opponents of Indian Nationalism; but to none has the fiasco caused bitterer disappointment than to the Friend of India in Chowringhee. Sharing the common but mistaken impression that our paper depends on the writings of one man for its continued existence, the *Statesman* had evidently hoped that with the incarceration of Srijut Aurobindo Ghose the one paper in Bengal which it fears and which has ruthlessly exposed the falsehood and duplicity of its sanctimonious Liberalism, would be removed out of its path. It cannot conceal its chagrin and mortification at the disappointment of its cherished hopes, and as a *pis aller*, it tries to discredit the *Bande Mataram* and informs our subscribers that they ought not to support us any longer because it has been proved that we are either guilty of having put forward a false defence or of the unpardonable immorality of having an editorial staff instead of a single Editor. The tone and method of this attack are worthy of this unctuous and mealy-mouthed Pecksniff of Anglo-Indian journalism. It unscrupulously supports its malicious insinuations by calling the witnesses summoned by the prosecution "defence witnesses" as if the accused had put men into the witness-box to tell a false story: and it shelters itself from the charge of libel by the use of 'if's and 'or's. Yet it has the impudence to claim a superior sense of honour for English pamphleteers and editors! "The great English political writers", it says, "have never been afraid to own their handiwork and we cannot recall a single instance in which an English pamphleteer or Editor has endeavoured to evade the law by raising technical difficulties as to his share of responsibility." There are three separate insinuations in this carefully written sentence; first, it is hinted that Srijut Aurobindo Ghose was the real writer of the correspondence, "Politics for Indians", but falsely denied his handiwork; secondly that he was the responsible Editor of the paper and his denial of responsibility was "technical" and untrue; thirdly, that any writer for the paper was morally bound to accept responsibility for anything that might appear in the paper as a part of the political propaganda in which he was engaged and Aurobindo Ghose, knowing himself to be so bound, evaded his responsibility out of fear. Certainly the writer of this article need not disown his handiwork or evade his responsibility, for he has brought the art of safe slander to its utmost possible perfection.

We have no hesitation in saying that if we had invented a system of divided responsibility with the object of baffling a possible bureaucratic prosecution, we should have been entirely within our rights. In England a publicist or propagandist has always had the advantage of being tried by a jury of his own peers and in all but rare cases enjoyed every reasonable chance of a fair trial, but the reverse is the case in countries circumstanced as India is circumstanced today. Where the whole armoury of an absolute power is arrayed against him, the Judge a servant of his prosecutor, the law an instrument specially designed for his suppression, the wealth and power of a despotic executive and the activity of a not over-scrupulous police his pursuers, and his only supporters are his own patriotism and the sympathy of his people, the Nationalist is entitled to use any means for his own self-defence which will not be inconsistent with his mission nor injure his claim to national sympathy and support. He owes no moral obligation of quixotic candour to antagonists who themselves recognise no moral obligation in their struggle with him. Whatever he owes, is to his people and the mission he has to discharge. If he will serve his country best by leaping into the fire, that is his duty; if self-defence is more to the interests of the country and the cause, no other consideration ought to weigh with him. The primary object of the Nationalist organs must be to keep up their propaganda until it is rendered physically impossible by the growing severity of bureaucratic enactments. Bhupendranath and Basanta deliberately exposed themselves to the worst effects of bureaucratic wrath in order to give an example to the country of heroic self-sacrifice and a living demonstration of the spirit of Swarajism; but they did it in the full confidence that the *Yugantar* would continue undaunted and unchanged in the course it conceived to be its duty to the nation. Had they exposed themselves with the knowledge that their disappearance would have meant the death of the paper, their action would have been heroic but foolish, an outburst of patriotic sentiment but not an act of patriotic wisdom. To allow the voice of Nationalism to be silenced would be to play into the hands of the adversary to whom we owe no duty. The gospel of Nationalism has to be preached with unflinching candour, but Nationalist organs will be perfectly within their rights if they protect their writers so long as it is humanly possible to protect them and so prolong their own career of propagandist usefulness.

No such arrangement was made in the case of the *Bande Mataram*. Had we intended to protect ourselves, we would have done it by the simple and convenient Japanese device of a jail editor. The device imputed to us would be neither illegal nor immoral, but it would be cumbrous and unsafe. It is perfectly true that it throws great difficulties in the way of the prosecution, but it is equally obvious that it leaves the bureaucracy free to single out anyone they choose for harassment and does not protect him at all, since the police have only to be clever enough in their choice of witnesses and the arrangement of the evidence, and the accused, whether really responsible or not, is doomed. Everybody can feel that if Anukul Mukherji had had more backbone and lied more cleverly in the cross-examination, Srijut Aurobindo Ghose would now be a convict in the Central Jail. Had we thought of putting forward a false defence, we could have done it very effectively by producing an Editor on the spot. There were at least three men on the staff who were anxious to immolate themselves in this manner, and it was only prevented by the refusal of the accused to accept any such sacrifice and by the singular conduct of the prosecution in calling the officers of the Company as their witnesses. The moment Srijut Sailendranath Ghose entered the witness box, there was no course left open to the defence but to take their stand on the facts as elicited by the prosecution. For a member of the staff to come forward and by a splendid falsehood take upon himself the responsibility of the matter complained of, if not of the whole editorial function, would have been morally permissible; but it was obviously impossible for the Secretary of the Company to perjure himself by fixing a non-existent responsibility on any particular individual. The one defect in the conduct of the defence was that the circumstances which brought about the state of things described by the Secretary, were not elicited in cross-examination. When we come to deal with the facts of the case in detail, we shall mend that deficiency and our readers will see that the evolution of that arrangement was natural and even inevitable.

In the diatribe of the Chowringhee Pecksniff against us there is one bit of Pecksniffian logic which we fail to appreciate. He seems to think that a paper cannot be respectable unless it has a single autocratic Editor and that the readers of a paper not so blessed must be disreputable. Why, pray? We had always thought that what one man could do in the way of management, could be done as well by a board or committee of men acting in unison and with one clearly understood policy; we used even to think that such conjoint management was in politics the characteristic of democratic times. But Chowringhee liberalism evidently thinks no arrangement respectable which does not involve absolute control by a single master-mind. It argues that the *Bande Mataram* policy being the joint product of several minds must be the result of distracted counsels, since only an autocrat can think clearly. After that we can hardly be surprised at the affection of the Friend of India for absolutism and absolutist methods or the support it has given to the new Grand Mogul who now governs India on mediaeval principles from Westminster.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, September 28th, 1907 }

The *Statesman* in Retreat

The strong censures which the *Statesman*'s article on the *Bande Mataram* case has called forth from the Bengali Press in Calcutta, have forced that journal to enter into some explanation of its conduct. While professing to stand by every word it had written, it manages under cover of the plea that it has been misunderstood, to unsay much that it had said. The article was on the face of it a malignant attack on the *Bande Mataram*, an attempt to create the impression that this paper was either a journal managed on a dishonest, disreputable and impossible principle or else that its staff were a gang of liars and cowards with an Editor who made a false or practically false defence in order to avoid the responsibility for his political propaganda. We were told that from this dilemma there was no possible escape. The *Statesman* has now considerably altered its tone. In order that we may not be accused of wilfully misinterpreting our very Liberal contemporary, we will give his explanation of his own meaning in his own words and answer him point by point. "We maintained", he says, "that there had been in essence a miscarriage of justice in the *Bande Mataram* case, since the trial had resulted in the conviction of the Printer, whereas the real offender — the author of the article or articles complained of — was not brought to book. We pointed out in the next place, that in England the person really responsible for the articles could readily have been found, for no attempt would have been made to evade the issue on the divided liability principle adopted in the *Bande Mataram* office, still less to make a scapegoat of an ignorant workman. We maintained lastly that unless every public journal had a responsible head of some sort, the liberty of the

Press would degenerate into a licence under which no institution of organised society, no man's reputation would be safe."

We do not for a moment deny that there was a very serious miscarriage of justice in the *Bande Mataram* case, but we are certainly astonished at the malignity of the *Statesman* in trying to fasten the responsibility for the Printer's conviction on the *Bande Mataram* or on the other accused. It writes as if it were we who took out a warrant against the Printer, knowing him to be nothing but an ignorant workman, or who sentenced him to three months' rigorous imprisonment in spite of the evidence that he knew nothing of the matter and could not have had any criminal knowledge or intention, or as if we had asked the Printer to take any responsibility upon himself for the articles. Does the Friend of India find anywhere in the records of the case or out of them either that any of the accused tried to shield himself by putting the responsibility on the Printer? The blame for the miscarriage of justice must rest on the unjust British law which makes an ignorant workman responsible, on the bureaucrats who sanctioned his prosecution and on the Magistrate who sentenced him, and the attempt to fasten it on our shoulders is as grotesque as it is malicious. The *Statesman* is, farther, much exercised because the real author of the offending article has escaped punishment, but this is not a calamity over which we can affect to be greatly grieved. After all, miscarriages of justice, whether in the shape of the conviction of innocent Indians or the immunity from punishment of European criminals, are not so rare in this country that society will be shattered to pieces because the writer of a chance letter disagreeable to the sacred feelings of the bureaucracy has not been sent to turn the oil-mill for a couple of years. "In England the person really responsible for the article could readily have been found." If the real writer is meant, we deny this altogether. In England it would be absolutely impossible to discover the true writer of an unsigned article, for it is not considered binding on him to come forward even if another suffers for his offence or his indiscretion; and when the *Statesman* claims a chivalrous sense of honour for English writers political or other and asserts that they always come forward to claim their handiwork it is trading on the ignorance of English life which is prevalent in this country. If, on the other hand, the Editor is meant, we would advise our contemporary to study the history of the English Press more minutely. He will find that English editors have not always been so enamoured of legal penalties as to forego any opportunity of evading responsibility which the law allowed them. We will admit that ordinarily in England there is a single responsible head of some kind, though he is not always the writer of the articles, but this is not the case in every country nor with every newspaper, and we cannot admit that any such arrangement is necessary in the interests of society. When the *Statesman* says that no man's reputation is safe unless every paper has its one responsible head, it is talking and knows that it is talking pure nonsense. A man who thinks himself libelled has always his remedy in civil law and it cannot matter to him whether he gets his damages from the actual writer of the libellous matter or from the proprietor or from a company or syndicate owning the paper. Was Mr. Lever's reputation unsafe because his damages were paid by the Harmsworth Trust and not by the actual libeller? If the proprietor happens to be a corporate body, the aggrieved person is no doubt deprived of the vindictive pleasure of sending his critic to prison, but we hardly think it can be said that society is mortally wounded by his loss. But of course what the *Statesman* is really troubled about is the safety of the bureaucratic groups who administer the country at present and whom it dignifies and disguises by describing as "institutions of organised society". This anxiety of the *Statesman*'s is rather humorous. The bureaucracy has armed itself with such liberal powers of repression that a journalist attacking it is like a man with no better weapon than a pebble assailing a Goliath panoplied from head to foot, armed with a repeating rifle and supported by howitzers and maxim guns. For a backer of the giant to complain because the unarmed assailant throws his pebble from behind a bush or wall is, to say the least of it, a trifle incongruous.

The gravamen of the *Statesman*'s charge, however, lies in the question it triumphantly posits at the end of its rejoinder as a final settler for its critics. The impugned "articles in the *Bande Mataram* must have been written by someone; is it courageous and honourable conduct on the part of their unknown author, this precious 'patriot', that he should elect to remain in hiding and let a poor unfortunate Printer go to jail in place of himself?" And our contemporary asks its critics either to affirm that it is right for a journalist to allow an innocent man to suffer in his place, — or else be silent. We admit our contemporary's luminous suggestion that someone must have written the article "Politics for Indians" and the better to clear up the confusion of his ideas we will add that the someone must have been either a member of the staff or an outside correspondent. The evidence showed that he must have been the latter, and, if so, his conduct in not coming forward was in accordance with those traditions of English journalism by which the *Statesman* sets such store. It may not have been ethically the most heroic or exalted conduct possible, but it does not lie in the mouth of an Englishman to question it. And we presume that the *Statesman* will not seriously suggest that it was our duty, even if we had recorded the name, to peach against a correspondent in order to save our own man, or that such a betrayal would have been either courageous or honourable. If, on the other hand, the real writer were a journalist on the staff, he must have been someone other than Aurobindo Ghose to whom no one in his senses would attribute such a half-baked effusion. He would then be one who was not accused and could only take the responsibility by giving evidence against himself as a witness for the defence. No Englishman in a similar situation would have done it unless actually put in the witness box, but for an Indian patriot, we admit, it would have been the natural course if the Printer could have been saved by his self-devotion but it is perfectly obvious that the Printer would still have been liable under the statute and got his three months. The imputation made by the *Statesman* is not true in fact, as it was an outside contributor who wrote the article, but even were it otherwise, it is absurd in theory. It was the bureaucracy and the Magistrate who made a scapegoat of the Printer and not the *Bande Mataram* or anyone on its staff.

The *Statesman* is intelligent enough to understand this without having it pointed out and malice alone prompted its dishonest attempt to discredit us.

The Khulna Appeal

Yesterday we published the appeal of the Khulna National School Committee for funds to assist in the capital outlay necessary to establish the institution on a sound footing according to the requirements of the system formulated by the National Council of Education. The Khulna School is the first of its kind started in pursuance of the national policy by a district organisation formed in accordance with the scheme of organisation foreshadowed at the last Congress. But Khulna is a poor district and the few rich men it possesses are absentees who care little to benefit the locality and the people from whom they draw their means of luxury. The district has also been unfortunate in being exposed to an especial share of the storms of official wrath and persecution ever since the holding of the District Conference. The expenditure necessitated by these persecutions and prosecutions has farther restricted the sum which might have been otherwise set apart for the School. Khulna is therefore entitled to especial consideration from the patriotic public and we hope the appeal will meet with an ungrudging response.

A Culpable Inaccuracy

The *Empire* has never been particularly famous for the accuracy of its news and reports, but there is surely a limit somewhere; and that limit is overpassed when a false statement is made which is likely to prejudice a public man with a charge of sedition already hanging over him. We state on good authority that the assertion in the *Empire* report to the effect that Wednesday's meeting in Beadon Square was called by Mr. Aswini Kumar Banerji is entirely unfounded. Mr. Banerji is not likely to disown any public action he has really taken, however obnoxious to the powers that be; but he had nothing to do with this particular meeting and was neither a convener, a speaker nor a spectator.

Bande Mataram

CALCUTTA, October 5th, 1907

Novel Ways to Peace

We learn from the *Empire* that on Wednesday evening the *paharawallas* got completely out of hand and that a number of them afterwards traversed the streets indulging in looting, destruction of property and assault. We are farther told by our contemporary that the moment the peace was broken, the budmash element asserted itself. And the *Empire* winds up with a genial and smiling prophecy to the effect that the atmosphere will be more or less disturbed for a month (that is till the Puja is over and the European merchants have been able to get their consignments through) and there will be considerable bloodletting over the business; at the end of that period, we are told, the relations between the Government and the people, especially the Extremists, will be substantially improved, because the latter will have fully realised by then what Calcutta would be like if the British Government were actually "overthrown". We rather fancy the *Empire* has carefully forgotten to include two very important and indeed essential considerations in its amiable prosings on the orgy of hooliganism and police outrage to which the unarmed Bengalis have been subjected in the interests of foreign trade. The first is that if the present bureaucratic government were to be, let us not say "overthrown" but to be driven to retire in dudgeon from the scene, the Arms Act would deal with them and the people would very soon have the means as well as the will to defend themselves. The second is that the police in a free India would be compelled to protect the citizens instead of supplementing the deficiencies of the hooligans. It is easy to wrench all means of self-defence out of the hands of people, savagely repress all attempts at mutual protection, leave them to the mercy of the turbulent classes, allowing even the police whom we pay to protect the peace to "get completely out of hand" and loot unpunished, and then taunt the victims with their inability to defend themselves and the necessity of an alien and irresponsible third party for keeping the peace. The argument has worn thin and can no longer serve its purpose. The *Empire* errs grievously in thinking that police violence and hooliganism are the royal road to peace and conciliation. Jamalpur has not pacified and conciliated, East Bengal and the Chitpur outrages will not pacify and conciliate Calcutta. The only result will be to more fiercely embitter the struggle. One other result there may indeed be, — to eventually dethrone the Nationalist leaders and destroy their control over the van of the movement as the control of the Moderates has already been destroyed; for as the exasperation increases their attempts to regulate the movement will be resented and themselves condemned as cowards and moderates at heart. But who will fill the vacant place? Police Commissioner Halliday or Mr. Blair, does the *Empire* think? Or prophets of desperation beside whom Bipin Chandra Pal will shine like an angel of loyalty in the eyes of Anglo-India? Yes, the bureaucrats and their underlings are doing much to break down the creed of passive resistance which we have promulgated and to prove our policy impossible. But will passive resistance be replaced by quiescence? If so, we have much misread history. The immediate future looks dark and gloomy, a chaos the end of which no man can foresee. But whatever God does is good and still our cry to our Mother is the same, "Though thou slay us, yet will we trust in thee."

"Armenian Horrors"

It has been pointed out to us that the tone of our reporter's account of Thursday's doings was hardly in consonance with the creed and the spirit of which the *Bande Mataram* is the exponent. The facts reported are not materially different from those attested by other Indian dailies, but there is too much hysterical and lachrymose exaggeration of phrase in describing them. As it is no part of our policy to conceal our own lapses, we will at once admit that there is truth in the complaint. To talk of Armenian horrors in such a connection is the rhetoric of an excited Moderate disappointed in his reliance on European humanity and "superior" civilization, not of a sturdy Nationalist organ which has always foreseen the possibility of this and worse things as the price we shall have to pay for liberty. We withdraw therefore this and all similar expressions. Calcutta has as yet suffered nothing like what East Bengal has suffered, to say nothing of Armenia and Bulgaria. We are as yet only at the beginning of our journey and have not gone down into the valley of death through which our way lies to the promised land. It will not do to whine or shriek over some shops looted and men robbed and beaten or even over a few corpses of our countrymen floating in the Ganges, if the report be true, — this and far worse than this we shall have to meet with a calm brow and a brave heart. Not merely in goods and money but with the blood from our hearts we shall have to pay for the sins of our forefathers.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 7th, 1907 }

The Vanity of Reaction

The devices of reactionary absolutism have a curious family resemblance all the world over. Reaction is never intelligent and never imaginative. Limited to the narrow horizon of its own selfish interests, committed to the preservation of the impossible and the resuscitation of corrupt systems and dead forms it has neither the vision to understand and measure the forces that have been new born to replace it, nor the wisdom to treat and compromise with the strength of Demogorgon while yet unripe so as to prolong its hour of rule for a little, — the only grace that Heaven allows to doomed institutions and forfeited powers. Like Kansa of old, it seeks to confirm its failing grip on the world by murderous guile and violence or like the Jupiter of *Prometheus Unbound* gropes for safety through vain diplomacies and the martyrdom of the champions of suffering humanity. Poor in invention except in the cunning variation of savage tortures or petty brutalities, it reiterates the old worn-out spells, the once-potent lies which had been powerful to prolong the death-sleep of the peoples and sees not that the mumbling of its incantations only awakes the scorn and rage of strong men indignant that such deceptive bonds should so long have availed to bind their strength. Barren of resources it blindly persists in the old stupid violences that can hurt and enrage but cannot kill, the old menaces and outbursts of barbarous rage that have lost their power to intimidate an incensed and stubborn people, and will not realize that every blow evokes a mightier reaction, that every missile of death it hurls is returning with fearful rapidity upon the thrower, that the chains with which it binds the limbs of the nation's martyrs are so much iron which the nation will forge into weapons against its oppressors, that the blood it sheds is so much water of life to foster the young plant of liberty, that, when sentence has been passed upon men or class or institution, every device invented for safety becomes an instrument for destruction and the fiercer the attempts to escape, the swifter the motion straight towards doom. Through the clanking of the chains of its prisoners, through the cries of its victims, through the red mist of blood and torture and suffering which it seeks to set between itself and God and blind His vengeance and baffle His decrees, still there rings the ancient sentence of Fate. "In Gokul He groweth still from day to day, Who thee shall slay." The genius, the wisdom, the strength of the servants of Reaction turns naturally to their opposites, and posterity wonders that such wise men should have been so blind, that such giants should have been slain by the throwing of a pebble, that so much energy of strong action and cunning speech should have been of no more avail than the staggerings and babblings of a drunkard in his cups. For they have set their strength and wit against God's will, and it is His ironic decree that their wisdom shall be baffled by children and the weak hand of a woman shall be enough to shatter their might.

Men had once deemed of England that she was not as other peoples and that the lessons of history would be reversed by the unselfish glories of her rule, and the weakness of human nature would be belied by the splendour of her generosity and the candour of her enthusiasm. For the English are a great and wonderful people. It is true that her statesmen and soldiers slew and murdered and ravished in Ireland so that the Celt might remain quiet under her iron heel, — but they planned and fought for the freedom of nations subject to other domination than her own. It is true that they have taken the bread out of the Indian's mouth that her own children might be filled and seek to turn her dark-skinned subjects everywhere into helots of her commerce and trade, — but they paid down hard cash that her West Indian Negro might be free. It is true that her politicians deny the institutions of liberty to her own subjects, but she has been the examplar of a bourgeois liberty and a limited democracy to the whole world. Other nations turned, it was thought, but one side of themselves to the gaze, the side of national self-seeking and grasping land-hunger. England had two sides, and the one which dazzled men was very bright. And now all the world is watching what England will do now that the same problem is once more set for her which every nation has failed to solve, whether she will tread the same path of futile bloodshed, violence and defiance of irresistible decrees which other nations have trod before her or be wise in her generation as she was wise when her own children rose against her in Canada, as she has once more been wise after her hour of blood-thirst and madness in the Transvaal. The selfish fury of Anglo-India is answering for her, the greed of her merchants and capitalists is pushing her on into the abyss. Still her rulers have qualms, hesitations, fears, still they dare not utterly set their own law and the law of God at defiance. At the last moment a palsy overtakes their hands, a relenting works in their souls. After their long torture the Rawalpindi prisoners are free; Nibaran has hardly escaped from the gallows by a strange mercy of Fate; here and there the monotonous roll of repression is brightened by occasional acquittals, by stray glimpses of justice if not of forbearance. But the Anglo-Indian bureaucrats have set out on the slippery path where futile ferocity and vain blood guiltiness hurry down the car of empire to sink in the sea of shame and blood below. Seldom and by a miracle can the wheels that have once gone some way down by that slope be retarded and stopped.

What is it that you seek, rulers who are eager to confuse the interests of a handful of white administrators with the welfare of humanity, or what is it that you dream, traders who think that God made this India of ours only as a market for your merchandise? This great and ancient nation was once the fountain of human light, the apex of human civilisation, the examplar of courage and humanity, the perfection of good government and settled society, the mother of all religions, the teacher of all wisdom and philosophy. It has suffered much at the hands of inferior civilisations and more savage peoples; it has gone down into the shadow of night and tasted often of the bitterness of death. Its pride has been trampled into the dust and its glory has departed. Hunger and misery and despair have become the masters of this fair soil, these noble hills, these ancient rivers, these cities whose life-story goes back into prehistoric night. But do you think that therefore God has utterly abandoned us and given us up for ever to be a mere convenience for the West, the helots of its commerce, and the feeders of its luxury and pride? We are still God's chosen people and all our calamities have been but a discipline of suffering, because for the great mission before us prosperity was not sufficient, adversity had also its training; to taste the glory of power and beneficence and joy was not sufficient, the knowledge of weakness and torture and humiliation was also needed; it was not enough that we should be able to fill the role of the merciful sage and the beneficent king, we had also to experience in our own persons the feelings of the outcaste and the slave. But now that lesson is learned, and the time for our resurgence is come. And no power shall stay that uprising and no opposing interest shall deny us the right to live, to be ourselves, to set our seal once more upon the world. Every race and people that oppressed us even in our evening and our midnight has been broken into pieces and their glory turned into a legend of the past. Yet you venture to hope that in the hour of our morning you will be able to draw back the veil of night once more over our land as if to read you a lesson. God has lighted the fire in a quarter where you least feared it and it is beginning to eat up your commerce and threaten your ease. He has raised up the people you despised as weaklings and cowards, a people of clerks and babblers and slaves and set you to break their insurgent spirit and trample them into the dust if you can. And you cannot. You have tried every means except absolute massacre and you have failed. And now what will you do? Will you learn the lesson before it is too late or will you sink your Empire in the mire of shame where other nations have gone who had not the excuse of the knowledge of liberty and the teachings of the past? For us, for you, today everything is trembling in the balance, and it is not for us who have but reacted passively to your action, it is for you to decide.

The Price of a Friend

Recent events are daily putting a greater and greater strain on the sweet and cordial relation of the Friend of India with her people. It is no doubt hard to part when friends are dear, perhaps it will cost a sigh, a tear. Under the circumstances the poet's advice is to steal away and choose one's own time. But the Friend of India is giving us warning after warning that it will cease to be our friend unless we consent to do its bidding. When the people do not much mind the sundering of this tie the Friend should be prepared for the inevitable and devise some means for avoiding the heart-wrench which the sudden severance of such a long-standing connection must necessarily cause. The Friend so fondly hoped that the Moderates compared with whom the Extremists are "a mere drop in the ocean" would ever remain docile and teachable, sit at its feet for all time and hang on its lips with the attention and reverence they show to their spiritual preceptors. But this sudden change in their attitude has come to our friend as a surprise. The Moderates are now most indecently and openly hobnobbing with the Extremists. When a prominent Extremist goes to jail the Moderates stand by him, nay shed tears over his unjust incarceration. When an Extremist newspaper is prosecuted and the bureaucracy fails to spot the real offender on account of its having been conducted under an arrangement which, whatever its merit, lacks the fairness and candour of delivering the management at once into the hands of the enemy whenever so required, the Moderates do not realise the enormity of the latter's offence and what is more resent the Friend of India's pious demand that the conductors of the paper should have thrust their neck down the wolf's throat. This ill-advised obstinacy the friend can hardly excuse and we quite understand its righteous indignation. There is time yet for the Moderates to come round, go on their knees before their justly offended friend and sign a pledge to go back to his guidance. This the friend demands and hopes that the Moderates will accede to it. The friend also reaffirms his claim to their allegiance and that is his persistent support of their "just aspirations". It is by their unjust aspirations that they have forfeited the sympathy of this precious friend. There cannot be a greater iniquity than the attempt at self-realisation; justice and equity demand that one nation should for ever be in the leading strings of another. Whoever wants to alter this most reasonable and fair arrangement must be shunned and expelled from the Congress and all other institutions which desire the countenance of the *Statesman*. The friend also contends that though the constitutional method has not hitherto paid, that does not mean that it will never pay. Even if it does not pay at all, the Moderates have no business to rub shoulders with the Extremists; for in that case they stand to lose the most valuable thing they possess, the friendship of the Friend of India.

A New Literary Departure

We have received from the publisher Srijut Abinash Chandra Bhattacharya, a small volume in Bengali, entitled *Bartaman Rananiti* or "The Modern Science of War". The book is a small manual which seeks to describe for the benefit of those who, like the people of Bengal under the beneficent Pax Britannica, are entirely unacquainted with the subject, the nature and use of modern weapons, the meaning of military terms, the uses and distribution of the various limbs of a modern army, the broad principles of strategy and tactics, and the nature and principles of guerilla warfare. These are freely illustrated by detailed references to the latest modern wars, the Boer and the Russo-Japanese, in the first of which many new developments were brought to light or tested and in the second corrected by the experience of a greater field of warfare and more normal conditions. The book is a new departure in Bengali literature and one which shows the new trend of the national mind. In the old days of a narrow life and confined aspirations, we were satisfied with the production of romantic poetry and novels varied by occasional excursions into academic philosophy and criticism. Nowadays the heart of the nation is rising to higher things; history, the patriotic dramas, political writings, songs of national aspiration, draughts from the fountain of our ancient living religion and thought are almost the sole literature which command a hearing. There are signs also that books recording the results of modern science and the organisation of modern life in war and peace will ensure a ready sale if there are writers who can give the public exactly what they want. The new-born nation is eagerly seeking after its development and organization and anything which will help it and widen its sphere of useful knowledge, will deserve and gain its attention. Two years ago this small volume would have fallen still-born from the Press, today we have no doubt it will be eagerly sought after. It is perfectly true that no practical use can be made of its contents at the moment; but the will and desire of thousands creates its own field and when the spirit of a nation demands any sphere of activity material events are shaped by that demand in ways that at the time seem to be the wild dreams of an unbridled imagination. Our business is to prepare ourselves by all kinds of knowledge and action for the life of a nation, by knowledge and action when both are immediately permitted us, by knowledge alone for action which, though not permitted now, is a necessary part of the future nation's perfect development. When the earnest soul prepares itself by what Sadhana is possible to it, however imperfect, God in his own good time prepares the field and the opportunity for perfect Sadhana and complete attainment.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 8th, 1907 }

Protected Hooliganism — A Parallel

We do not, as a rule, take excursions into foreign politics or like our special friend, the *Statesman*, fix an abstracted eye on the affairs of Germany and Russia while India is being convulsed with conflict and turmoil, but the struggles of Nationalism in other countries, especially in Asiatic or semi-Asiatic countries, have their interest for us and often present a close and informing parallel. Despotic reaction is always the same in all countries and all ages and uses the same methods. One of these methods is for the police to use the disorderly and dangerous elements of society in order to put down the better elements whom the repression of noble aspirations has brought into conflict with the instruments of despotism. In badly-governed countries like Russia, Turkey and India, the line of demarcation is very small between the police and the habitual criminal, the *budmash*, the hooligan whom it is their nominal duty to repress. The necessity of pampering the police so that they may be the faithful instruments of a small, unpopular and insecure ruling class in coercing and breaking the spirit of the great mass of the people, inevitably removes all moral restraint, the ever-present sense of duty, the fear of punishment and the abiding consciousness of being servants and not masters of the people, which can alone prevent such dangerous though necessary powers as those wielded by the police from becoming a curse instead of a protection to society. The almost universal habit of unpunished extortion and corruption, the free indulgence in insolence and brutality which are the hallmark of a serviceable Indian police, are not peculiar to them, but common to all despotically governed countries. Such a police naturally become the patrons and protectors of the *budmash* element.

They keep it in control and punish individuals so far as suits their own purposes, so far, that is to say, as is necessary to keep the hooligan in terror and make him feel that the police is his master but if the hooligan is subservient and willing to pay for impunity, the police will wink at his anti-social pursuits and his particular offences and get the innocent punished the better to screen their proteges. These are facts of such common knowledge in India that they hardly repay repetition except in order to drive home a truth it has taken our politicians a long time to realise, — that no amount of commissions and paper reforms and new methods of recruitment and readjustments of the scale of pay will destroy or even mitigate the evil which is constitutional, congenital, ingrained, in the very system of government now obtaining in India and cannot be mended or ended unless that system of government is itself mended or ended. Our present point, however, is that in countries where such relations obtain between the police and the habitual criminal, the latter can become a very useful instrument in dealing with political discontent, when the police itself is unable to cope with people, or for political reasons, it is thought advisable to screen partially or wholly their use of violent and illegal means of repression, or even when diplomatic considerations make it necessary that there should be a riot or tumult so that nationalism may be discredited or an excuse provided for benevolent intervention or philanthropic annexation or the other devices to which civilized international piracy has nowadays recourse.

The most complete examples of this protected hooliganism are, of course, to be found in Russia, but the specimens occasionally produced by the Indian police are, perhaps, of a superior make and more artistic finish. A still more remarkable and successful specimen, however has been recently revealed to us in Wilfrid Blunt's remarkable book on the Secret History of English Occupation of Egypt. We shall have occasion to return upon the curious revelations made in this book as to the sinister and Machiavellian methods by which an Anglo-Indian official trained in the arts of government as practised in India, brought about the great act of piracy on the banks of the

Nile, the characteristic part played by John Morley, that honest broker of injustice and oppression, in forcing foreign domination on Egypt, and the many striking lessons which the history of Nationalism in Egypt has for the new-born Nationalism in India. We confine ourselves at present to quoting the pointed remarks of historians in the *Indian Review* for September on the revelations of Wilfrid Blunt. Speaking of the riot which was made an excuse for British intervention he says: —

"There, it is clearly brought home to the unbiassed readers' mind how Arabi was innocent of the premeditated Alexandrian riot, how Omar Pasha Lufte was the chief culprit, and how the gendarmerie and the police had deliberately purchased beforehand and distributed a large quantity of naboots or lathis to the lowest class of Arabs and Bedouins. The evidence of unofficial and disinterested eyewitnesses has been also recorded to show that knives and bayonets which the police had supplied were the instruments by which people were killed. Ten European doctors who had examined the dead bodies at the hospital averred in their report that all the wounds were inflicted either by the lathis or the knives and the bayonets which were the arms of the police, and yet, strange to say, no proceedings had been taken against the police who took an active part in the riots, under the direct orders of the police prefect, killing many a Christian." Mr. Blunt proves how Arabi Pasha was entirely guiltless in the matter, for while the riots raged most furiously there was "the utter absence in the streets of the soldiers of the regular troops," who alone were under the command of that personage. The evidence of one Mr. Hewat, an English accountant, is exceedingly corroborative. He had "no hesitation in saying that instead of suppressing the riot," this police "did all in its power to increase it and their conduct on the occasion was most barbarous, violent and fanatical." And there is the personal testimony of so eminent a person of commercial reputation as the late Mr. Stephen Ralli of the great house of Ralli Brothers. "To show the treachery of the authorities one has only to know the following — the street disturbance began at 3 o'clock, the policeman doing the most of the killing, until past 7 o'clock." But enough of these gruesome details.

They remind us of the part the Indian police has taken now and again in past years in promoting riots, suborning witnesses and perjuring themselves with impunity. The strangest part, however, of this deplorable affair is the persistent manner in which Earl Granville, the foreign minister, under the inspiration of the two men on the spot, endeavoured by hook or by crook, to fasten on Arabi Pasha the responsibility of the bloodshed caused by the riot when impartial European witnesses had testified that it was the police and the gendarmerie alone who had previously arranged for the affray and distributed staves and arms, and had actually done the butchering. Says Mr. Blunt: "The English Government apparently only gave the idea of a preconcerted and deliberate massacre on the impossibility being forced on them of connecting Arabi with that event." This phase of the incident, too, is not unfamiliar to Indian people, namely, how the authorities have in the past strained every nerve to screen the actual instigators and wrong doers, namely, the police, and foist upon innocent men the origin of riots. But the dismal analogy does not end here. There is even a third fact which also has its counterpart in the experience of Indians. Mr. Blunt remarks: "The fact that no telegrams or messages between the Governor, Omar Lufti, and the Khedive, between the Khedive and Sir E. Malet, or between the Admiral and Sir E. Malet and the English Consulate, which must have been passing continually while the riots were proceeding, have been produced, is highly suspicious and requires explanation." Have not Indians, too, been highly suspicious of the absence of important telegrams in Blue-books published months after the occurrence of events by Parliament under "responsible" Ministers so-called? Blue-books in general never do contain letters and documents which are of a character to incriminate officials and reflect on the conduct and action of the highest authorities themselves.

The parallel drawn so ably by historians, to which fresh point is lent by the disturbances in Calcutta, ends here. Protected hooliganism succeeded in Egypt because the circumstances were different and the Nationalism of the Egyptians at that time of a less robust and less exalted type. If it is tried in India, it cannot succeed. The Egyptian nationalists made the mistake of trying to accomplish their ends by diplomacy, by reliance upon European support and, when that failed them, by a military struggle between their armed force and the British intruders, without first awakening the people and inspiring them with the passion for liberty which can alone give a long-subject nation the strength to endure and survive, to thrive on disaster and overcome defeat. The work of Mazzini must be done before the work of Cavour and Garibaldi can begin. In India the awakening has come, the passion for liberty is abroad, and we have the satisfaction of knowing that the fire we have kindled is unquenchable and the impetus given is one against which no human power can stand. In Egypt Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. John Morley and their allies had only to create an excuse for armed interference and to crush a feeble military resistance in order that their nefarious work might be done. But to coerce indignation and resistance of a whole people is a more difficult task than to win battles, for here it is not the engines of war, but the engines of the spirit which decide the conflict, and when the motive power on one side comes from Heaven itself while the source is merely human, the task of despotism becomes an impossibility.

Mr. Keir Hardie and India

The visit of Mr. Keir Hardie to Bengal, so much feared by the English papers, has come and gone and the reactionist Press have taken care that it should create the right sort of sensation in England so that whatever he may tell of the carefully-hidden truth about the "unrest" in India may be discredited beforehand. We have been watching these manoeuvres with some amusement, mingled with a kind of admiration for the sheer bare-faced impudence of the lies which these amiable gentry are administering so liberally to a willing British public. Anything is good enough for British consumption, and accordingly Anglo-India sets itself no limits in the grossness and incredibility of the inventions it circulates. Mr. Hardie's presence is responsible for the riots, for the Union Jute Mills strike, for every development of the political struggle which has occurred since the formidable Labourite set foot on Indian soil. We shall hardly be surprised if we see it next asserted in the *Englishman* and then telegraphed by the *Englishman*'s faithful Reuter that the boldness of Brahmabandhab Upadhyay's statement in the dock was caused by the expectation of Keir Hardie's visit or that some dim prophetic anticipation of it moved Basanta Bhattacharjee when he faced the terrors of British law. We are ready to give Anglo-India credit for very great lengths of denseness, ignorance and folly, but it is hard to believe that they cannot realise the change which has come over Indian political life and still think that the words or presence of an Englishman can ever again influence the minds of the people even in an ordinary way much less in the fabulous fashion which Newmania concocts. Anglo-India feared that if the truth travelled to England, the campaign of repression might be stopped and measures of conciliation adopted. For ourselves we never entertained any such fear. It is not ignorance of the truth, but their own self-interest as a nation which determines the attitude of all English parties, not excluding the Labourites. The interest of the monied classes is bound up with the continuance of arbitrary British domination, and for that domination Liberal as well as Tory will fight tooth and nail. As for the Labour party, it will support that domination if they think it is to the interest of the working classes; otherwise they will oppose it. We have met and talked with Mr. Keir Hardie and we found him a strong, shrewd-witted man possessed of a great deal of clear common sense. He is a Labourite and a Socialist. As a Labourite he will do whatever he thinks best in the interests of Labour; as a Socialist, the interests of whose creed are bound up with the progress of internationalism, he may take Indian questions with a greater sincerity than the Cottons and Wedderburns. But as we said before in our article on Mr. Keir Hardie, to suppose that he can do anything for us is a delusion. India like other countries, must work out her salvation for herself, and the less she trusts to foreign help, the swifter will be her deliverance.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 11th, 1907 }

The Shadow of the Ordinance in Calcutta

The latest move of the bureaucrats to hamper the Swadeshi-boycott in Calcutta is one that has long been foreseen. The riots in Shyambazar had a double utility, to intimidate the people into giving up the boycott and to put an end to the meetings in the public squares which bore periodical witness of the quick and continued heart-beats of the great movement. The first object has not been served; on the contrary, popular exasperation has manifested itself in a more thorough-going resort to the weapon of boycott and the chances of a large sale of foreign goods, which were before the riots fairly good, are now, we believe, nil. The police and their *goondas* failed also to intimidate the student and middle-class population of Calcutta who showed a far more sustained courage than an ordinary European mob would have shown if placed at a similar disadvantage. But although the riots have not frightened the people of Calcutta into cessation from public meetings, they have afforded an excuse for taking advantage of the unlimited and irresponsible powers provided for the coercion of the people by an alien-made law. In so far they have served their end. Meetings have been prohibited in Calcutta in any public place, and the bureaucrats no doubt hope that this will cripple the boycott and spoil the celebration of the Partition day. Such is the wisdom of bureaucrats! The obvious answer to this proclamation is to celebrate the rites of Partition day with greater solemnity than ever, to meet in large private courts and compounds, instead of the public squares, to take organized and stringent measures for the social boycott of all who take a scrap of British goods in future and for the leaders to denounce and end any kind of co-operation with or recognition of the bureaucrats who are responsible for these continued outrages on public sentiment. We look to see this done and if the leaders are not ready to do it, it is for the people to make their voice heard in that sense with no uncertain utterance. It is useless to go on glossing over the issue; the time has come when it should be clearly recognised that any act of compromise with the bureaucrats in Bengal is an act of treason to the people and their aspirations. Whoever is not utterly for the Mother and for the Mother alone, is, however unconsciously, working against her, no matter how high his reputation for patriotism may stand, no matter how great his services in the past have been. His good intentions will but pave the way to the hell of her continued servitude.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 23rd, 1907 }

The Nagpur Affair and True Unity

The Nagpur Nationalists are now being run down in every quarter for having failed to work in unison with the Moderates. The cause of rupture as disclosed by the *Indian Social Reformer*, a hostile critic of the Nationalist party, will convince every right-thinking man that the Nationalists had ample provocation for what is being denounced as a highly reprehensible conduct on their part. They had a Nationalist majority in the Executive Committee and the Moderates were arranging for a fresh meeting of the Reception Committee to alter this state of things. This unconstitutional step led to the subsequent unpleasant development. It is very difficult to disentangle the truth from the apparently exaggerated reports of "Nationalist rowdyism" of which so much has been heard of late. But we have a suspicion that it is the wonted game of the Moderates to have it all their own way and then to try to discredit the opponents by making them responsible to the country for the disunion and dissension in the camp. Why do they not adopt a straightforward course from the very beginning? It is they who stand in the way of a united India by denying a fair representation to those who hold advanced political views. They always want the Nationalists to compromise their principle by an appeal in the name of unity. But their selfishness and autocracy never allow them to reflect on the true way of achieving unity.

There is a cant phrase which is always on our lips in season and out of season, and it is the cry for unity. We call it a cant phrase because those who use it, have not the slightest conception of what they mean when they use it, but simply employ it as an effective formula to discourage independence in thought and progressiveness in action. It is not the reality of united thought and action which they desire, it is merely the appearance of unity. "Do not let the Englishman think we are not entirely at one on any and every question," that is the bottom idea underlying this formula. It is a habit of mind born of the spirit of dependence and weakness. It is a fosterer of falsehood and encourages cowardice and insincerity. "Be your views what they may, suppress them, for they will spoil our unity; swallow your principles, they will spoil our unity; do not battle for what you think to be the right, it will spoil our unity; leave necessary things undone, for the attempt to do them will spoil our unity"; this is the cry. The prevalence of a dead and lifeless unity is the true index of national degradation, quite as much as the prevalence of a living unity is the index of national greatness. So long as India was asleep and only talking in its dreams, a show of unity was possible, but the moment it awoke and began to live, this show was bound to be broken. So long as mendicancy was our method and ideal, the show was necessary, for a family of beggars must not vary in its statements or in the nature of its request to the prospective patron; they must cringe and whine in a single key. Under other circumstances, the maintenance of the show becomes of less paramount importance.

There is another idea underlying the cry for unity and it is the utterly erroneous impression that nations have never been able to liberate themselves and do great deeds unless they were entirely and flawlessly united within. History supplies no justification for this specious theory. On the contrary when a nation is living at high pressure and feelings are at white heat, opinions and actions are bound to diverge far more strongly than at other times. In the strenuous times before the American War of Independence, the colony was divided into a powerful minority who were wholly for England, a great hesitating majority who were eager for internal autonomy but unwilling to use extreme methods, and a small but vigorous minority of extremists with men like John Adams at their head who pushed the country into revolt and created a nation. The history of the Italian revolution tells the same story. We are fond of quoting the instance of

Japan, pointing to its magnificent unity and crying shame on ourselves for falling below that glorious standard; but those of us who talk most of Japan often betray a sovereign ignorance of its history. Nowhere was there a more keen, determined and murderous struggle between parties than in Japan in the days of its preparation, and the struggle was not over the ultimate ideal or object — the freedom and greatness of Japan, on which all parties were agreed — but on questions of method and internal organisation. Until that question as between the moderate Shogun party and the extremist Mikado party had been settled, it was felt by all that the approach to the ultimate ideal of all could not be seriously attempted.

True national unity is the unity of self-dedication to the country when the liberty and greatness of our motherland is the paramount consideration to which all others must be subordinated. In India at the present hour there are three conflicting ideals; one party sets the maintenance of British supremacy above all other considerations; another would maintain that supremacy in a modified form; a third aspires to make India a free and autonomous nation, connected with England, if it may be, but not dependent on her. Until one of these conflicting ideals is accepted by the majority of the nation, it is idle to make a show of unity. That was possible formerly because the ideal of a modified British supremacy was the prevailing ideal, but now that new hopes and resolves are entering the national consciousness, these must either be crushed or prevail, before true unity of a regenerated nation can replace the false unity of acquiescence in servitude.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 29th, 1907 }

The Nagpur Imbroglio

It is difficult to get authentic and undisputed news of the Nagpur imbroglio, but if report is to be believed, there is a better chance than before of a satisfactory working compromise. It is in every way desirable that the present difficulties should be smoothed over if that can be done without any sacrifice of essential principle, and for any such compromise it is essential for both sides to recognise that while they may and should fight stubbornly for their principles both outside and inside the Congress, yet the National Assembly itself is not the monopoly of either. A great deal of clamour has been raised by the Moderates of Nagpur and Bombay over the outbursts of excited popular feeling in which a few Loyalists were roughly handled, and use has been freely made of them to obscure the real issue. It is well therefore that this incident, which we must all regret, should be understood in its true light. The Moderate majority on the Nagpur Reception Committee happens to be a factitious majority and most of the members take no sustained interest in the Committee work while the Nationalist minority are alert and active. At the meeting which elected the Executive Committee the Moderates did not attend except in small numbers and a strong Nationalist majority was elected. The inconveniences of this tactical defeat were very soon felt by the Moderate party and after a fashion to which they are unfortunately too much addicted, they tried to remedy their original error by riding roughshod over procedure and the unwritten law that guides the conduct of all public bodies. Mr. Chitnavis, one of the Secretaries, called on his own initiative a fresh meeting to elect a new Executive in which the Moderates should predominate. Dr. Munje, also a Secretary, was perfectly within his rights in opposing the bare-faced illegality of this unconstitutional procedure and refusing to allow the meeting to be held. Meanwhile great popular excitement had been created and there was a strong feeling of indignation among the students and people in general against the Moderate aristocrats of Nagpur and when they issued from the abortive meeting, they were angrily received by the crowd waiting outside and handled in a very rough and unseemly manner. This was certainly regrettable, but it is absurd to make the Nationalist leaders in Nagpur responsible for the outburst. All that they did was to baffle a very discreditable attempt to defy all constitutional procedure and public decorum in the interests of party trickery, and in doing so they were entirely right.

A persistent attempt has also been made to prejudice the Nagpur Nationalists in the eyes of the country and obscure the real question by grossly misrepresenting their action with regard to the issue about the Presidentship. By the rule formulated at last year's Congress — a rule we have always considered foolish and unworkable — the local Reception Committee has to elect the President for the year by a three-fourths majority, and, if they cannot do so, the decision rests with the All-India Congress Committee. This arrangement is admirably conceived for swelling the Congress funds on the one hand and for defeating public opinion on the other. The Reception Committee is not an elected or representative body but is constituted on a money basis, as anyone who can pay twenty-five rupees or get another to pay it for him can have his name enrolled as a member. Whichever side has the longer purse can secure the election of the President of its choice. Such an election is no more likely to represent public opinion than Mr. Morley's Council of Notables is likely to represent it. Like the Council of Notables it will represent the opinion of the monied aristocracy, the men of position and purse, the men "with a stake in the country". Nevertheless the rule is there and so long as it stands, it must be observed. The position in Nagpur as in the Deccan is this, that the Loyalist Moderate party is composed of the wealthy, successful and high-placed men, the retired officials, the Rai Sahebs and Rai Bahadurs, the comfortable professional men and those who pride themselves on their English education and Western enlightenment and look down with contempt on the ignorant masses. On the other hand the young men and the poorer middle class form the bulk of the Nationalist party, although it contains a minority of the wealthier men. The lines of divergence are therefore somewhat different from those in Bengal and the gulf between the two parties wider both in opinion and in spirit. In Bombay or Nagpur it would be perfectly impossible for a man like Sj. Surendranath Banerji to be a leader of the Moderates; he would be looked on with suspicion, continually checked, snubbed, thrust into the shadow and eventually forced out of the camp.

The struggle over the Presidentship in Nagpur followed lines necessitated by the character of the two parties. The Moderates relied on the length of their purse, the Nationalists appealed to the people. A few Moderates of wealth advanced money and filled the Reception Committee with men of their persuasion, who were therefore in a sense paid to vote for any President proposed by their wealthy patrons. The Nationalists on the other hand created a Nationalist organisation or Rashtriya Mandali and invited all who were willing to become members of the Reception Committee *on condition that Mr. Tilak became President* to send in the requisite sum, not to the Reception Committee but to the Rashtriya Mandali. Eventually it was found that though the total sum raised by the Nationalists was much larger than that contributed by the Moderate magnates, yet the votes it represented fell short of three-fourths. It was decided, therefore, after paying in the sums sent in unconditionally to the Congress funds, to devote the rest to some Nationalist purpose, preferably the creation of a National School in Nagpur. This decision has been deliberately misrepresented as a perversion of Congress funds and a refusal on the part of the Nationalist party to contribute their share of the Congress expenses. The money was expressly sent in on the condition and with the proviso that the contributors would become members of the Reception Committee *only* if there was a certainty of Mr. Tilak's being elected, and for this reason it was sent in to the Rashtriya Mandali and not to the Congress Committee as the latter could not accept conditional contributions. In the disposal of these monies therefore, Mr. Tilak not having been elected, the Congress has no concern whatever and the Moderate party less than none; it is a matter entirely between the Nationalist organisation and its contributors. Yet it is on these and similarly flimsy pretexts that the Moderate magnates have withdrawn from the Reception Committee.

A compromise can now be arrived at only on condition that the present constitution of the Executive Committee is not interfered with and that the Congress session will be duly held at Nagpur. To transfer the Congress to Madras or any other centre for the convenience of the Moderate party while there are men willing to hold it in Nagpur would mean a definite and final split in the Congress camp which would turn the Congress into a Rump of Loyalists and Moderates possibly with a Nationalist Assembly standing in opposition to it. The All-India Committee is not likely to force on such an undesirable consummation. Whoever may or may not retire himself from the Reception Committee, the body itself remains and is the only one constitutionally capable of holding the session this year. On the other hand the rule of the three-fourths majority remains and if Mr. Tilak's followers cannot secure this for their nominee, the Nationalists cannot lower themselves by attempting to secure his election by any unfair or unconstitutional means. They may also meet the Moderates halfway by raising further funds as their share of the Congress expenditure. If Mr. Tilak is not elected, it does not matter to us, in the absence of Lala Lajpat Rai, whether Dr. Rash Behari Ghose or any other figurehead graces the Presidential seat, and this need not be a cause of further quarrel. On the basis of Dr. Ghose's election and the *status quo* in other respects a compromise ought not to be impossible, and at the present juncture it is undoubtedly desirable. We hope that good sense and not party feeling will prevail.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, October 31st, 1907 }

English Democracy Shown Up

Scratch an Englishman and you will find an Anglo-Indian, — this is what we said in these columns sometime ago. The Anglophilous Indian enthusiast who goes to England saturated with the old Congress poison of a morbid faith in the native generosity of English character, in the innate amenability of Englishmen to reason and persuasion regarding matters Indian, is doomed to a very rude awakening. He has not to stay long in the country before he finds every Englishman he may come across turning a deaf ear to his story of grievance and injustice. He is no doubt loudly applauded and called a "true Briton" when he declaims against the tyranny in Russia, but is invariably called "ungrateful" if he happens to tell home truths about England's dominion in Hindustan. He meets with the same callous disapprobation from all Englishmen alike, from the Liberal whose motto is "Government with consent" just as much as from the Tory whose principle avowedly is "let things be." On the Indian question the Englishman will tell you his position is that of a "patriot", not of a "partisan". Imperialism is far above party; every Englishman therefore is an Imperialist when he is thinking of the Indian question, he has then ceased to be either a Liberal or a Conservative. To this rule there are some exceptions, a few old ladies here and there (who however hardly count in politics yet), and some truly noble men who hold humanity far higher than Imperialism. These men certainly frankly admit that England's arbitrary and tyrannous tenure of power in India is a standing libel on herself, a gross violation of those political principles which she proclaims from the housetops to the whole of Europe. The voice of such men however is hardly heard in the Councils of the Empire, and if ever heard, contemptuously ignored.

The hasty, hideous, indecent, savage yell that has been raised by the whole of the English Press against Mr. Keir Hardie because he has dared to tell the truth about the present situation in this country is a striking confirmation of what we have said above, and what we stated before in the *Bande Mataram*. We must not commit the mistake of supposing that the English Press is indignant because it doubts the truth of Mr. Hardie's statements against the Indian Government; not that at all; they know very well, one and all of that yelling throng, that every word of what he has said is true, and that Reuter has wired a grossly mendacious version of his statements; but they are full of wrath because the leader of the Independent Labour Party has told the unvarnished truth respecting the character of the rule that England has established here. They are bursting with rage because their long and unscrupulously kept-up fiction of a just and benevolent Indian rule has been exposed in all its ugliness at last by one who happens to be an *Englishman*, (oh, the sting of it!) and an Englishman of power and prestige too, who easily has the ear of the civilised world. He is a traitor, shout the impious fraternity of the British Press, because he has the nobleness of mind, the honesty of conviction, to be able to tell the truth against his own country when he finds it attempting without a blush to perpetuate an outrage upon humanity. He is no longer a statesman because he could not deliberately suppress a truth in consideration of the reasons of state, which in the present instance means, in the interest of the sickening British lie — repeated *ad nauseam* before Europe and America — that England governs India for the benefit of the Indians. The paper which so often contains articles from the pen of Sir Henry Cotton joins in this infamous chorus of denunciation no less than the *Daily News* which always so overflows with the pure milk of undiluted Liberalism, that is to say British Liberalism.

Let us hope this at least will serve to open wide the eyes of those of our countrymen who are still troubled now and then with the visitings of their old faith in England. England *will not* give us anything unless we can force her to her knees, this is the only moral to which the present outrageous clamour of the English Press points. We may present our case with as much eloquence, logic and precision as we please; they in England will always brush our representations insolently aside as mere "Babu rodomontade". If an Englishman with a disengaged mind has the courage to take up our cause, and tell the world the most elementary facts about the wrong England is doing us, his voice is drowned in the roar of the ruling nation whose one aim is mercilessly to exploit India and let the rest of the world know as little about their real Indian policy as possible, and even to deceive it whenever opportunity offers. How humane it sounded, how extremely Christian, when Lord Lansdowne declared in the House of Lords with that supreme unction of which Englishmen alone are capable, that one of *the* motives of the war with the Boers was the righting of the grievous wrongs to which "our *Indian fellow-subjects* were forced to submit in the Transvaal". That grandiose declaration was not without its effect in the international world, though we know only too well that the Transvaal Indians live under infinitely more humiliating conditions now than they ever did under the Government of Paul Kruger. And one need not feel surprised if one hears an Englishman, even at the present day, repeating the pronouncement of Lord Lansdowne in all solemnity in order to prove England's constant anxiety and watchfulness on behalf of her Indian subjects.

There can hardly be any doubt that the Press has been shamelessly encouraged in its campaign of foul misrepresentation against Mr. Keir Hardie by Mr. Morley's speech at Arbroath. The philosopher-Secretary betrayed not a little ruffling of his philosophic calm in his undisguisedly hostile and somewhat petulant references to Mr. Keir Hardie's opinion that India should be given the same autonomy that is enjoyed by Canada. The wonderful allegory of the fur-coat, though hardly giving us an encouraging indication of any power of imagination or perception, of any historical insight, of any sense of humour or relevancy on the part of its author, certainly furnishes abundant proof of his ill-natured impatience of the generous ideal that the labour leader cherishes for the people of this country.

But, after all, we perhaps do the Indian Secretary an injustice in charging him with lack of historical insight; in one sense, it may be said, he shows an abundance of it. For we learn from Reuter, that "he paid a tribute to the courage, patience and fidelity of the House of Commons, from which he augured that the democracies were going to show their capacity to tackle difficult and complicated problems." The one remarkable feature of European democracies from the days of Athens to those of England, has throughout been that whilst they always most jealously keep vigil over the integrity of their own republican constitution, they revel at the same time in the despotic sway of unlimited power over the peoples they conquer. This is strictly true of the Pagan republics of Hellas and Rome as well as of the Christian communes and country-states of Mediaeval and Modern Europe. The ideal that has shaped the polity of Europe is always consciously or unconsciously Hellenic and not Hebraic; the Christian ideal of human brotherhood the European is apt to regard as part of the privilege of his citizenship, is not to be extended to a conquered people. This is strictly true, the Christian missions and missionaries of Europe notwithstanding. In other words Christian Europe flings her Christianity aside in her treatment of those who have had the misfortune to come under her rule; these she looks upon as Athens and Rome did on their subject peoples. Mr. Morley whilst congratulating the English democracy on the determination they have shown to keep their Indian Empire their own, might very well have been feeling the secret glow of an historic enthusiasm in insensibly thinking of similar figures in ancient and modern European history extolling their countrymen on similar occasions.

What we meant by taxing him with want of historic perception was that he has betrayed a sad ignorance of Asiatic history. Asia has never embraced an ideal without universalising it. To profess the Christian faith and persist in confining the Christian ideal of human brotherhood to one's own nation strikes the Asiatic as a monstrous hypocrisy. Nor, as we have had occasion to remark before, has an ideal had to win its way to the heart of the Orient through a welter of its martyrs' blood, as has been the case with all kinds of ideals in Europe. This is the secret of the willingness and readiness with which the monarchies of Asia are democratising the constitutions of their country. The period of English History dating from 1066 and ending with 1832, the Shah of Persia has had the magnanimity to summarise into a few years of Persian History. It is therefore that the average Indian who has studied England's history and literature feels so extremely perplexed, and is just now beginning to feel indignant at her strenuous and persistent refusal to give India that liberty which she has so prized all through her history.

England, on the other hand, and quite consistently enough, thinks she is rightly acting in withholding from the Indian the citizenship of the British Empire, for in so doing she is strictly in the wake of European tradition, and has the full justification of history as she has known and understood it. And consequently John Morley hastens to remind Indians of the "weary steps" necessary before they can attain liberty, the weary steps that the countries of Europe have had to traverse before they secured it.

We fully understand the import of the latest speech of the Indian Secretary, and of the latest outburst of the British democracy — India will only have liberty when she has the strength, physical and moral, to wrench it from the selfish grasp of the ruling country.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, November 4th, 1907 }

Difficulties at Nagpur

The difficulties experienced at Nagpur in bringing about the compromise which at one time seemed on the point of being effected, do not strike a mind outside the whirlpool of local excitement and controversy as either obvious or insurmountable; yet it is evident that so much importance is being attached to them as to seriously imperil the chance of a Congress session being held at all this year. It is imperative that some decision should be arrived at in the course of the next few days either one way or the other. Both sides lay the blame of the failure to arrive at an agreement on its opponents. The Nationalists say that the Moderate party will not accept any reasonable terms and the Moderates charge the Nationalists with backing out of the compromise on the question of the money subscribed to the Rashtriya Mandali. It appears that the Nationalists are willing to co-operate if Srijut Surendranath Banerji be nominated as President in lieu of Mr. Tilak. The reasons for this proposal and its rejection are not far to seek. Sj. Surendranath is recognised all over India as the acknowledged leader of one of the two great parties in Bengal, a man with a great name and a great following in the country and, what is more important from the Nationalist standpoint, one who, whatever vagaries his ideas of policy may lead him into, is believed to be a thorough-going Boycotter and Swadeshist and in no sense a Government man. Dr. Rash Behari Ghose on the other hand is a dark horse in politics. All that the rest of India knows of him is that he is a distinguished jurist, the Chairman of last year's Reception Committee and — a Legislative Councillor. None of these titles to distinction is sufficient to justify his being suddenly put forward as President of the National Congress; for the time has passed away, not to return, when appointment to the Legislative Councils, provincial or imperial, was sufficient to raise a successful man of intellectual distinction or social influence not before politically notable, to the position of a leader or at least a sort of Congress grandee entitled to the respect of the common herd. A seat on the Legislative Council is nowadays an obstacle and not a help to leadership, a cause of distrust and not of trust: the man to whom the bureaucracy lends ear is not one whom the people can trust and follow, and one who consents to sit in a Council where he is not listened to and can command no influence, has not the self-respect and backbone which are necessary to a popular leader — in days of stress and struggle. To us Nationalists a seat on the Council is not merely an obstacle but an absolute bar to popular leadership, for it means that the man has one foot in the enemy's camp and one in the people's. It is easy to understand therefore why the Nagpur Nationalists are opposed to the idea of Dr. Ghose's Presidentship, specially as his political views are not understood nor has he, like Mr. Gokhale, a record of past services and self-sacrifice to set against the disqualification of a seat on the Legislative Council. Nor is it difficult to understand why the Moderates of Nagpur have shied at the idea of Srijut Surendranath's Presidentship. The Moderatism of Western India is much more Loyalist than Moderate, unlike that of Bengal, where except in the case of a small minority Moderatism wears loyalty more or less loosely as a sort of cloak or garment of respectability than as an essential part of its politics. This tendency is exaggerated in places like the Central Provinces where before the Nationalist upheaval the pulse of political life beat dull and slow. For a Moderate of the Nagpur Rai Bahadur type to be asked to take Surendranath as a substitute for Tilak is as if they were asked to exchange Satan for Beelzebub; both are to them, as to the *Englishman*, devils of Extremism, one only less objectionable than the other.

But the rights of this question are so simple that there is no excuse for allowing the Congress to break up over it. If the Moderates want Dr. Rash Behari Ghose or any other Loyalist or

Legislative Councillor as President they must be satisfied with their three-fourths majority on the Reception Committee and pay the bulk of the expenses of the session. If they desire a larger co-operation on the part of the Nationalists, they should meet them halfway by accepting the nomination of Surendranath or any other President acceptable to both parties as a compromise. And if they will take neither course, they should leave it to the Nationalists to arrange for the holding of the Congress with Mr. Tilak as President. But for them to insist on the Rashtriya Mandali funds, raised on the clear understanding that they should only be devoted to Congress purposes if Mr. Tilak were nominated President, being given into their hands to hold a Congress with a Loyalist President in the chair is a preposterously childish and unreasoning obstinacy. We cannot understand how the Rashtriya Mandali could take this step even if they wished, since it would be a distinct contravention of the condition on which the money was given and a misuse of public money. Yet it is because the Rashtriya Mandali will not comply with this unreasonable demand that the Moderates of Nagpur seem to have given the coup de grâce to the Nagpur session. The plea of the fear of schoolboy rowdyism is plainly disingenuous, for these gentlemen were willing to face that terrible danger provided the Nationalists paid in their funds to the Reception Committee and accepted their nominee as President; these therefore are the real points on which the Moderate party is unwilling to compromise and the plea of rowdyism is only a convenient if undignified excuse to cover an untenable position. For our part we do not think the question of the Presidentship need be made a cause of final cleavage. Dr. Rash Behari Ghose is pledged like most public men in Bengal to Swadeshi and Boycott and this is still the most important issue before the Congress. If therefore the Loyalists can still be got to listen to reason in the matter of the Rashtriya Mandali funds, we think the Nationalists might give way on this point to avoid a national scandal. If on the other hand the Rai Sahebs and Rai Bahadurs are obdurate, it is time for Nationalists all over the country to consult together as to the course they will follow in the two possible contingencies of no session being held or of the Moderate party deciding to hold the Congress in another province. The situation in the country is a critical one and it is our action with regard both to the bureaucracy and the Congress at this juncture that will chiefly determine the course of the future.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, November 5th, 1907 }

Mr. Tilak and the Presidentship

While writing of the Nagpur imbroglio we have touched very lightly on the question of Mr. Tilak's Presidentship, the dispute over which was the beginning and real cause of the discord at Nagpur. We regard this issue as one of immense importance and shall today try to make clear our position in the matter and the reasons why we attach such a supreme importance to it. The Bombay Moderates with their usual skill in the use of their one strong weapon, misrepresentation, have been writing and speaking as if the question of Mr. Tilak's election to the President's chair were a personal issue; they blame Mr. Tilak for not withdrawing from the field, talk of us as Tilakites and assume throughout that we are fighting for a man and not for a principle. If it were a personal matter, Mr. Tilak who has always been an unselfish and unassuming patriot, always averse to pushing himself or to figuring personally more than was necessary for his work, always a strong fighter for the success of his ideas and methods but never for his own hand, would be the first to obviate all discord by withdrawing. But it is not a personal matter and Mr. Tilak has not himself come forward as a candidate for the Presidentship. His name was put forward last year by the Bengal Nationalists without consulting him and was again put forward this year as the embodiment of a principle. This being so, Mr. Tilak has no voice in the matter except as an individual member of the Nationalist party, and is not entitled to withdraw his name except with the consent of his party. In fact his personal right of accepting or refusing the Presidentship can only arise when and if it is offered him by the local Reception Committee or the All-India Committee. That the Moderates should not be able to understand this is natural; their conception of a leader and the Nationalist conception of a leader are as the poles asunder. Mr. Tilak by his past career, his unequalled abilities and capacity for leadership, his splendid courage and self-sacrifice, his services to the cause and the disinterestedness and devotion with which he used his influence, is naturally the most prominent of the Nationalist leaders, and our party looks up to his experience, skill, cool acuteness and moral strength for guidance on great occasions like the Congress session when it has to act as a single body. But our idea of a leader is not and will never be one whom we have to follow as an individual for his own sake, whether he is right or wrong; we follow him only so long as he is faithful to the principles of Nationalism and is ready to fight its battles in accordance with the collective will of the party.

The question was first raised last year in Bengal when at a meeting of the Nationalists in Calcutta it was decided to suggest to the country the name of Mr. Tilak as President of the Calcutta Congress and in accordance with this decision Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal, who was then touring in the Mofussil, was communicated with and asked to bring the question forward and take the sense of the public upon it in Eastern Bengal. We have never concealed the fact that this was deliberately done in order to throw down the gauntlet publicly to Loyalism, Anti-Swadeshism, Moderatism and every other *ism* which seeks to bring in foreign considerations and alloy or weaken the pure and uncompromising Nationalist creed. The nomination of Mr. Tilak was a crucial point as between the two parties, for three separate reasons. At that time the country was divided between the Swadeshists on principle and the Anti-Swadeshists — or, let us say, "honest" Swadeshists of the Mehta-Watcha type and still more sharply between Boycotters and those who trembled at the very name of Boycott. From this point of view, the attempt to secure Mr. Tilak's nomination was an attempt on our part to have the Swadeshi-Boycott propaganda recognised on the Congress platform. Secondly, there was and still is a small ring of Congress officials who treat the Congress as their own private property, decide in secret conclave what it shall do or not do, and hand round the Presidentship among themselves and the occasional newcomers admitted to their ranks from the Legislative Councils, except when a live M.P. can be secured from England or a Mahomedan had to be nominated to demonstrate Hindu-Musulman unity. The second object of the attempt to get Mr. Tilak nominated was to break through this oligarchic ring and establish the true nature of the Congress as no mere machinery to be engineered by a few wealthy or successful proprietors, but a popular assembly in which the will of the people must prevail. Thirdly, the opposition to Mr. Tilak and the attempt to force him always into the background arose largely from the feeling that Mr. Tilak's views and personality are objectionable to the bureaucracy and that the nomination of a public man once convicted of sedition would deprive the Congress and, what was more important to Loyalists and leading men of the Congress, of all chance of Government favour. But these very reasons which made the name of Mr. Tilak an offence and a stumbling-block to the Loyalists, imposed upon the Nationalist party the duty of bringing forward Mr. Tilak's name year after year until he is elected. Leadership in the Congress must no longer be regarded as a convenient and profitable road to appointments on the Bench and in the Government Councils but as a post of danger and a position of service to the people and it must depend on service done and suffering endured for the cause and not in the slightest degree on bureaucratic approval, and the national movement must be recognised as a sacred cause which exists in its own right and cannot consent to be regulated by the smiles and frowns of the bureaucracy which it is its first object to displace. These are the principles for which our party are contending when they insist on Mr. Tilak's nomination and they are principles which are essential to the Nationalist position and are as living today as they were last year. The question of Mr. Tilak's Presidentship will be always with us until it is finally set at rest by his election, for until then we shall pass it year after year.

But so far as the Nagpur session is concerned, the question no longer exists. The attempt to make this question wholly responsible for the difficulty is disingenuous and the demand that Mr. Tilak should throw over his own party by a gratuitous refusal to be President if ever he is asked, so as to reassure irreconcilable Loyalists in their fears, is absolutely preposterous. The Nagpur Nationalists have put his name forward and they alone are competent to withdraw it. But such withdrawal is not necessary. They have failed to secure the necessary three-fourths majority and they can therefore no longer insist on his name unless they are asked to hold the Congress with their own funds. They are willing to withdraw in a body from the Reception Committee if the Moderates so desire; they are willing to co-operate on lines both definite and reasonable; and they are willing, if called upon, to hold the Congress with any Moderate President in the chair if the funds in Mr. Dixit's hands are paid in. But they are not willing to misappropriate public money for the Congress funds and they are not willing to walk into the Loyalist trap by an admission of any personal responsibility for the disturbances that have taken place, in the shape of a guarantee that no disturbance of any kind shall take place at the time of the Congress. Such a guarantee can only be given by those who were responsible for the rowdyism or instigated it, and this unwarrantable charge has already been emphatically denied by the leading Nationalists; to ask them to give a guarantee is to ask them to admit what they have already denied. If therefore the Moderates insist on these preposterous conditions, the public will know whom they have to blame.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, November 16th, 1907 }

Nagpur and Loyalist Methods

The decision of the All-India Congress Committee, holding its session appropriately enough not in any place of meeting suitable to its character as a public body but in "Sir Pherozshah Mehta's bungalow", has put the crown on one of the most discreditable intrigues of which even Bombay Loyalism is capable. We held our peace about the real meaning of the Nagpur affair so long as there was the remotest possibility of the sense of shame and decency reawakening among even a section of the Nagpur Loyalists, lest a too trenchant exposure of the whole intrigue might imperil that slender chance. Now that the die is cast, it is time for us to speak our minds. From the whole course of the Loyalist manoeuvres in Nagpur since the strength of the Nationalist party in the Central Provinces became apparent, it was quite evident that from the first the Loyalists had made up their minds under inspiration from Bombay to prevent the holding of the Congress at Nagpur. To effect this object they were prepared to bring about a public scandal of the most shameful kind and bring discredit on the Congress if only their party might win a tactical advantage and, as the chief Moderate organ in Bombay frankly put it, keep the Congress out of the hands of the Extremists. It was in order to keep the Congress out of the hands of the Extremists that the session was originally arranged to be held at Nagpur and the prior claims of the Punjab ignored. For Nagpur was then supposed to be a sleepy hollow of politics, a happy-hunting-ground of Rai Bahadurs and Government pets and tame patriots with the official collar round their necks, where there was no fear of Mr. Tilak's nomination becoming even a remote possibility and Sir

Pherozshah Mehta might safely hope to retrieve the crushing blow his dictatorship had received at Calcutta. The Congress cabal had, unfortunately for themselves, reckoned without the fiery energy and indomitable self-confidence which have always been the characteristics of Nationalism in every country and every age of its emergence. The Nationalists of the Berar and Central Provinces took the work of proselytisation in hand and as the result of several tours undertaken by leading members of the party from town to town and village to village the sleepy hollow awoke to life, a great revolution of opinion was effected and Nationalism became in a few months a power to be reckoned with. It soon appeared that in Nagpur there was on one side the small body of wealthy, respectable and successful elders with their dependents, hangers-on and satellites and on the other side, behind a growing body of true patriots among the men of name and standing, the great bulk of the young men and the poorer middle class. When a trial of strength came over the question of Mr. Tilak's nomination the Loyalists could muster a large body of votes on the Reception Committee only by the wealthy men paying for the admission of their dependents and hangers-on, while even so against the Rs. 21,000 they could muster, the Rashtriya Mandali was able to show a total of more than Rs. 30,000, representing what would have been a substantial majority of votes if the rule of a three-fourths majority had not been in force. It thus became apparent that the Nationalist party might easily command a majority of the local delegates and, since the place of session was within easy reach of Bengal and a strong body of Nationalist votes from the North, from Madras and from the Deccan might be expected, Loyalism was evidently in danger of a serious reverse compared with which its experiences at Calcutta might sink into insignificance. Nor was the outlook made rosier by the fact that there was on the Nagpur Executive Committee an active Nationalist majority led by a strong and fearless stalwart. It had become imperative, if the primary object of Loyalist politics, "to keep the Congress out of the hands of the Extremists" and so avoid a rupture with the bureaucracy, was not to be hopelessly frustrated, either to drive the Extremists out of the Executive Committee and turn it into a convenient instrument for Sir Pherozshah Mehta's masterly manoeuvres or to transfer the Congress to a less central and thoroughly Loyalist locality where the Dictator's will could reign supreme.

From this point onward the hand of the great wire-puller behind the scenes can be observed in all the developments on the Nagpur stage. Left to themselves there is little doubt that the two local parties would have come to some understanding; nor can it be for a moment supposed that the audacious and high-handed attempt at a shamelessly unconstitutional *coup d'état* on the 22nd September was conceived in the brain of so harmless and insignificant a personality as Mr. Chitnavis. The attempt to expel Dr. Munje and his Nationalist colleagues from the Executive Committee was a failure because leonine tactics require a leonine personality to carry them through and Mr. Chitnavis was trying to wear the giant's robe without possessing the bulk and sinews of the giant. But their failure and the disturbance that followed it served the alternative plan of the Loyalists. That disturbance was obviously not engineered by the Nationalist leaders since, their point having been gained, it could serve no purpose whatever and on the contrary might do them harm, as it was bound to give and did give the Loyalists a handle for discrediting the Nationalists and stood them in good stead as a convenient and always serviceable pretext for breaking the Nagpur session if every other trumped-up excuse should fail. The same guiding hand is seen in the skill with which the very success of the Rashtriya Mandali was turned to the uses of the intrigue by the preposterous and cynical demand that the condition under which money had been paid into it should be disregarded and a breach of faith with the public committed. Neither can we regard seriously the much advertised visits of Moderate leaders to Nagpur to effect a reconciliation, followed as they were by ostentatiously sorrowful and misleading telegrams to the effect that both sides refused to accept any compromise while the simple truth was that the Nationalists in their eagerness to have the session at Nagpur were making every time larger and larger concessions and it was the Loyalists who throughout showed themselves intractable. It is not to be believed that if such influential peacemakers had been in earnest, the Nagpur Loyalists would have showed this spirit of inflexibility; it was obviously not a local product but made in Bombay, and all these attempts at conciliation were simply meant to prepare the public mind for the transfer to Surat which had already been decided on by the mastermind in Bombay. Meanwhile the wires were pulled at Surat and Madras and the Surat respectables and Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar and his Mahajan Sabha danced to the skilful manipulation. We do not believe the Madras offer was anything but a feint, for Madras is much too near to Bengal and there is already a strong Nationalist party in the northern parts of that province; but to have only the single offer from Surat would have been to leave the whole intrigue too bare to the public eye. Our belief is confirmed by the Bombay correspondent of the *Bengalee* who openly says that Madras was not chosen because there were men in Madras pledged to Extremist views. Finally, the last act of the farce supplies the key to all that has gone before. An informal and unofficial representation from a minority of the Reception Committee is precipitately seized upon by the All-India Congress Committee, a meeting is announced not at Nagpur where the members might have gone into the matter on the spot and arranged a working compromise, but in Bombay and at Sir Pherozshah Mehta's bungalow, as if the Committee and the Congress itself were Sir Pherozshah's personal movable property; and instead of calling for a report of the Reception Committee or taking cognisance of the fact that there were citizens of Nagpur willing and able to reconstitute the Committee and hold the session as arranged at Calcutta, the Moderate majority records a predetermined decision to transfer Sir Pherozshah's movable property to Surat at a safe distance from Bengal where the Loyalist position is as yet unbreached and there is no time for the Nationalists to instruct public opinion before the holding of the session.

The intrigue is now complete, to the huge delight of the *Englishman*, and officialdom is full of hope that Sir Pherozshah will this year save the British Empire. For the Nationalists it should be a spur to redoubled efforts to spread their creed into every corner of the country so that Loyalism may nowhere find a secure resting place for its foot-soles. As to the Surat Pherozshah Congress it would be the logical course for us regarding the decision of the All-India Committee meeting as a misuse of the powers of that body, to abstain and allow the Loyalists to hold a purely Moderate Congress of their own. The other alternative is to arrange forthwith the organisation of Nationalist propaganda in Gujerat and make full use of the opportunity such as it is which the session will provide. In either case a conference of our party is necessary, for, in view of the bureaucratic campaign on one side and the danger of a retrograde step on the part of the Congress on the other, the times are critical and concerted action imperative.

The Life of Nationalism

For all great movements, for all ideas that have a destiny before them, there are four seasons of life-development. There is first a season of secret or quasi-secret growth when the world knows nothing of this momentous birth which time has engendered, when the peoples of the earth persist in the old order of things with the settled conviction that that order has yet many centuries of life before it, when Krishna is growing from infancy to youth in Gokul among the obscure and the despised and the weak ones of the earth and Kansa knows not his enemy and, however he may be troubled by vague apprehensions and old prophecies and new presentiments, yet on the whole comforts himself with the thought of his great and invincible power and his mighty allies and by long impunity has almost come to think himself immortal. Then there comes the leaping of the great name to light, the sudden coming from Gokul to Mathura, the amazement, alarm and fury of the doomed powers and greatnesses, the delight of the oppressed who waited for a deliverer, the guile and violence of the tyrant and his frantic attempts to reverse the decrees of fate and slay the young deity, — as if that godhead could pass from the world with its work undone. This is the second period, of emergence, of the struggle of the idea to live, of furious persecution, of miraculous persistence and survival, when the old world looks with alarm and horror on this new and portentous force, and in the midst of wild worship and enthusiasm, of fierce hatred and frantic persecution, of bitter denunciation and angry disparagement, assisted by its friends, still better assisted by its foes, the new idea, fed with the blood of its children, thriving on torture, magnified by martyrdom, aggrandized by defeat, increases and lifts its head higher and higher into the heavens and spreads its arms wider and wider to embrace the earth until the world is full of its indomitable presence and loud with the clamour of its million voices and powers and dominations are crushed between its fingers or hasten to make peace and compromise with it that they may be allowed to live. That is its third period, the season of triumph when the tyrant meets face to face the man of his own blood and sprung from seed of his own fostering who is to destroy him, and in the moment when he thinks to slay his enemy feels the grasp of the avenger on his hair and the sword of doom in his heart. Last is the season of rule and fulfilment, the life of Krishna at Dwaraka, when the victorious idea lives out its potent and unhindered existence, works its will with a world which has become in its hands as clay in the hands of the potter, creates what it has to create, teaches what it has to teach, until its own time comes and with the arrow of Age, the hunter, in its heel it gives up its body and returns to the great source of all power and energy from which it came.

But in its second period, the season of ordeal and persecution, only the children of grace for whom the gospel is preached are able to see that vision of its glory. The world admires and hates and doubts, but will not believe. The enemies of the idea have sworn to give it short shrift. They promulgate an ordinance to the effect that it shall not dare to live, and pass a law that it shall be dumb on pain of imprisonment and death, and add a byelaw that whoever has power and authority in any part of the land shall seek out the first-born and the young children of the idea and put them to the sword. As in the early days of the Christian Church, so always zealous persecutors carry on an inquisition in house and school and market to know who favour the new doctrine; they "breathe out threatenings and slaughters against the disciples of the Lord" and "make havoc of the Church, entering into every house, and haling men and women commit them to prison". The instruments of death are furbished up, the rack and thumbscrew and old engines of torture which had been rusting in the lumber-room of the past are brought out, and the gallows is made ready and the scaffold raised. Even of the nation to which the gospel is preached, the rich men and the high-priests and pundits and people of weight and authority receive its doctrine with anger, fear and contempt; — anger, because it threatens their position of comfortable authority amongst men; fear, because they see it grow with an inexplicable portentous rapidity and know that its advent means a time of upheaval, turmoil and bloodshed very disturbing to the digestions, property and peace of mind of the wealthy and "enlightened few"; contempt, because its enthusiasms are unintelligible to their worldly wisdom, its gigantic promises incredible to their cautious scepticism and its inspired teachings an offence and a scandal to their narrow systems of expediency and pedantic wisdom of the schools. They condemn it, therefore, as a violent and pernicious madness, belittle it as a troublesome but insignificant sect, get their learned men to argue it or their jesters to ridicule it out of existence, or even accuse its apostles before the tribunal of alien rulers, Pontius Pilate, a Felix or a Festus, as "pestilent fellows and movers of sedition throughout the nation". But in spite of all and largely because of all the persecution, denunciation and disparagement the idea gathers strength and increases; there are strange and great conversions, baptisms of whole multitudes and eager embracings of martyrdom, and the reasonings of the wise and learned are no more heeded and the prisons of the ruler overflow to no purpose and the gallows bears its ghastly burden fruitlessly and the sword of the powerful drips blood in vain. For the idea is

God's deputy and life and death, victory and defeat, joy and suffering have become its servants and cannot help ministering to its divine purpose.

The idea of Indian Nationalism is in the second season of its life history. The Moderate legend of its origin is that it was the child of Lord Curzon begotten upon despair and brought safely to birth by the skilful midwifery of Sir Bampfylde. Nationalism was never a gospel of despair nor did it owe its birth to oppression. It is no true account of it to say that because Lord Curzon favoured reaction, a section of the Congress party lost faith in England and turned Extremist, and it is vain political trickery to tell the bureaucrats in their councils that it was their frown which created Extremism and the renewal of their smiles will kill it. The fixed illusion of these Moderate gospellers is that the national life of India is merely a fluid mirror reflecting the moods of the bureaucracy, sunny and serene when they are in a good humour and stormy and troubled when they are out of temper, that it can have no independent existence, no self-determined character of its own which the favour of the bureaucracy cannot influence and its anger cannot disturb. But Nationalism was not born of persecution and cannot be killed by the cessation of persecution. Long before the advent of Curzonism and Fullerism, while the Congress was beslavering the present absolutist bureaucracy with fulsome praise as a good and beneficent government marred by a few serious defects, while it was singing hymns of loyalty and descanting on the blessings of British rule, Nationalism was already born and a slowly-growing force. It was not born and did not grow in the Congress Pandal, nor in the Bombay Presidency Association, nor in the councils of the wise economists and learned reformers, nor in the brains of the Mehtas and Gokhales, nor in the tongues of the Surendranaths and Lalmohans, nor under the hat and coat of the denationalised ape of English speech and manners. It was born like Krishna in the prison-house, in the hearts of men to whom India under the good and beneficent government of absolutism seemed an intolerable dungeon, to whom the blessings of an alien despotic rule were hardly more acceptable than the plagues of Egypt, who regarded the comfort, safety and ease of the Pax Britannica, — an ease and safety not earned by our own efforts and vigilance but purchased by the slow loss of every element of manhood and every field of independent activity among us, — as more fatal to the life of the people than the *poosta* of the Moguls, with whom a few seats in the Council or on the Bench and right of entry into the Civil Service and a free Press and platform could not weigh against the starvation of the rack-rented millions, the drain of our life-blood, the atrophy of our energies and the disintegration of our national character and ideals; who looked beyond the temporary ease and opportunities of a few merchants, clerks and successful professional men to the lasting pauperism and degradation of a great and ancient people. And Nationalism grew as Krishna grew who ripened to strength and knowledge, not in the courts of princes and the schools of the Brahmins but in the obscure and despised homes of the poor and ignorant. In the cave of the Sannyasin, under the garb of the Fakir, in the hearts of young men and boys many of whom could not speak a word of English but all of whom could work and dare and sacrifice for the Mother, in the life of men of education and parts who had received the *mantra* and put from them the desire of wealth and honours to teach and labour so that the good religion might spread, there Nationalism grew slowly to its strength, unheeded and unnoticed, until in its good time it came to Bengal, the destined place of its self-manifestation and for three years, unheeded and unnoticed, spread over the country, gathering in every place the few who were capable of the vision and waiting for the time that would surely come when oppression would begin in earnest and the people look round them for some way of deliverance.

For that an absolute rule will one day begin to coerce and trample on the subject population is an inevitable law of nature which none can escape. The master with full power of life and death over his servant can only be gracious so long as he is either afraid of his slave or else sure that the slave will continue willing, obedient and humble in his servitude and not transgress the limits of the freedom allowed him by his master. But if the serf begins to assert himself, to insist on the indulgence conceded to him as on a right, to rebel against occasional harshnesses, to wag his tongue with too insolent a licence and disobey imperative orders, then it is not in human nature for the master to refrain from calling for the scourge and the fetters. And if the slave resists the application of the scourge and the imposition of the fetters, it becomes a matter of life and death for the master to enforce his orders and put down the mutiny. Oppression was therefore inevitable, and oppression was necessary that the people as a whole might be disposed to accept Nationalism, but Nationalism was not born of oppression. The oppressions and slaughters committed by Kansa upon the Yadavas did not give birth to Krishna but they were needed that the people of Mathura might look for the deliverer and accept him when he came. To hope that conciliation will kill Nationalism is to mistake entirely the birth, nature and workings of the new force, nor will either the debating skill of Mr. Gokhale nor all Dr. Ghose's army of literary quotations and allusions convince Englishmen that any such hope can be admitted for a moment. For Englishmen are political animals with centuries of political experience in their blood, and though they possess little logic and less wisdom, yet in such matters they have an instinct which is often surer than reason or logic. They know that what is belittled as Extremism is really Nationalism and Nationalism has never been killed by conciliation; concessions it will only take as new weapons in its fight for complete victory and unabridged dominion. We desire our countrymen on their side to cultivate a corresponding instinct and cherish an invincible faith. There are some who fear that conciliation or policy may unstring the new movement and others who fear that persecution may crush it. Let them have a robuster faith in the destinies of their race. As neither the milk of Putana nor the hoofs of the demon could destroy the infant Krishna, so neither Riponism nor Poona prosecutions could check the growth of Nationalism while yet it was an indistinct force; and as neither Kansa's wiles nor his *vishakanyas* nor his mad elephants nor his wrestlers could kill Krishna revealed in Mathura, so neither a revival of Riponism nor the poison of discord sown by bureaucratic allurements, nor Fullerism plus hooliganism, nor prosecution under cover of legal statutes can slay Nationalism now that it has entered the arena. Nationalism is an *avatara* and cannot be slain. Nationalism is a divinely appointed *shakti* of the Eternal and must do its God-given work before it returns to the bosom of the Universal Energy from which it came.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, November 18th, 1907 }

By the Way

In Praise of Honest John

Mr. John Morley is a very great man, a very remarkable and exceptional man. I have been reading his Arbroath speech again and my admiration for him has risen to such a boiling point that I am at last obliged to let it bubble over into the columns of the *Bande Mataram*. Mr. Morley rises above the ordinary ruck of mortals in three very important respects; first, he is a literary man; secondly, he is a philosopher; thirdly, he is a politician. This would not matter much if he kept his literature, politics and philosophy apart in fairly water-tight compartments; but he doesn't. He has not only doubled his parts, he has trebled them; he is not merely a literary philosopher and philosophic litterateur, he is a literary philosopher-politician. Now this is a superlative combination; God cannot better it and the devil does not want to. For if an ordinary man steals, he steals and there are no more bones made about it; he gets caught and is sent to prison, or he is not caught and goes on his way rejoicing. In either case the matter is a simple one without any artistic possibilities. But if a literary philosopher steals he steals on the basis of the great and eternal verities and in the choicest English.

*

And so all along the line. An ordinary man may be illogical and silly and everybody realises that he is illogical and silly; but the literary man when he goes about the same business will be brilliantly foolish and convincingly illogical while the philosopher will be logically illogical and talk nonsense according to the strictest rules of philosophical reasoning. An ordinary man may turn his back on his principles and he will be called a turncoat, or he may break all the commandments and he will be punished by the law and society, — unless of course he is an American millionaire or a member of the ruling race in India; — but the literary philosopher will reconcile his principles with his conduct by an appeal to a fur-coat or a syllogism from a pair of jack-boots; he will abrogate all the commandments on the strength of a solar topee. A politician again will lie and people will take it as a matter of course, especially if he is in office, but a literary philosopher-politician will easily prove to you that when he is most a liar, then he is most truthful and when he is juggling most cynically with truth and principle, then he most deserves the name of Honest John; and he will do it in such well-turned periods that one must indeed have a very bad ear for the rhythm of a sentence before one can quarrel with his logic. Oh yes, a literary philosopher-politician is the choicest work of God, — when he is not the most effective instrument in the hands of the Prince of Darkness. For the Prince of Darkness is not only a gentleman as Shakespeare discovered, but a gentleman of artistic perceptions who knows a fine and carefully-worked tool when he sees it and loves to handle it with the best dexterity and grace of which he is capable.

*

Of course it is not his speeches alone for which I admire John Morley. I admire him for what he has done almost as much as for the way in which he has done it. He is not so great a man as his master Gladstone who was the biggest opportunist and most adroit political gambler democracy has yet engendered and yet persuaded himself and the world that he was an enthusiast and a man of high religious principle. But Gladstone was a genius and his old henchman is only a man of talent. Still Mr. Morley has done the best of which he is capable and that is not a poor best. He has served the devil in the name of God with signal success on two occasions. The first was when he championed the cause of the financiers in Egypt, the men who gamble with the destinies of nations, who make money out of the groans of the people and coin into gold the blood of patriots and the tears of widows and orphans, — when abusing his influence as a journalist, he lied to the British public about Arabi and urged on Gladstone to crush the movement of democratic and humanitarian Nationalism in Egypt, the movement in which all that is noble, humane and gracious in Islam sought fulfilment and a small field on earth for the fine flowering of a new Mahomedan civilisation. The second is now when he is trying in the sordid interests of British capital to crush the resurgent life of India and baffle the attempt of the children of Vedanta to recover their own country for the development of a revivified Indian civilisation. The two foulest crimes against the future of humanity of which any statesman in recent times could possibly have been guilty, have been engineered under the name and by the advocacy of honest John Morley. Truly, Satan knows his own and sees to it that they do not their great work negligently.

*

Mr. Morley is a great bookman, a great democrat, a great exponent of principles. No man better fitted than he to prove that when the noblest human movements are being suppressed by imprisonment and the sword, it is done in the interests of humanity; that when a people struggling to live is trampled down by repression, pushed back by the use of the Gurkha and the hooligan, the prison walls and the whipping-post into the hell of misery, famine and starvation, the black pit of insult, ignominy and bonds from which it had dared to hope for an escape, the motive of the oppressor finds its root in a very agony of conscientiousness and it is with a sobbing and bleeding heart that he presses his heel on the people's throat for their own good; that the ruthless exploitation and starvation of a country by foreign leeches is one of the best services that can be done to mankind, the international crimes of the great captains of finance a supreme work of civilisation and the brutal and selfish immolation of nations to Mammon an acceptable offering on the altar of the indwelling God in humanity. But these things have been done and said before; they are the usual blasphemous cant of nineteenth century devil-worship formulated when Commerce began to take the place once nominally allowed to Christ and the ledger became Europe's Bible. Mr. Morley does it with more authority than others, but his own particular and original faculty lies in the direction I indicated when drawing the distinction between the ordinary man and the extraordinary Morley. What he has done has been after all on the initiative of others; what he has said about it is his own, and nothing more his own than the admirably brilliant and inconsequential phrases in which he has justified wickedness to an admiring nation.

*

Man has been defined sometimes as a political animal and sometimes as a reasoning animal, but he has become still more pre-eminently a literary animal. He is a political animal who has always made a triumphant mess of politics, a reasoning animal whose continual occupation it is to make a system out of his blunders, a literary animal who is always the slave of a phrase and not the least so when the phrase means nothing. The power of the phrase on humanity has never been sufficiently considered. The phrase is in the nostrils of the vast unruly mass of mankind like the ring in the nose of a camel. It can be led by the phrasemaker wherever he wishes to lead it. And the only distinction between the sage and the sophist is that the phrases of the sage mean something while the phrases of the sophist only seem to mean something. Now Mr. Morley is an adept in the making of phrases which seem to mean something.

*

Take for instance his phrase "My anchor holds." Mr. Morley complains that he who has served Liberalism so long and so well, is not allowed to be illiberal when he likes, that when he amuses himself with a little reaction he is charged with deserting his principles! "It is true, gentlemen," says Mr. Morley, "that I am doing things which are neither liberal nor democratic; but, then, my anchor holds. Yes, gentlemen, I dare to believe that my anchor holds." So might a clergyman detected in immorality explain himself to his parishioners, "It is true I have preached all my life continence and chastity, yet been found in very awkward circumstances; but what then? My anchor holds. Yes, dear brethren in Christ, I dare to believe that my anchor holds." So might Robespierre have justified himself for the Reign of Terror, "It is true, Frenchmen, that I have always condemned capital punishment as itself a crime, yet am judicially massacring my countrymen without pause or pity; but my anchor holds. Yes, citizens, I dare to believe that my anchor holds." So argues Mr. Morley and all England applauds in a thousand newspapers and acquits him of political sin.

But of course Mr. Morley's crowning mercy is the phrase about the fur coat. It is true that the simile about the coat is not new in the English language; for a man who abandons his principles has always been said to turn his coat; but never has that profitable manoeuvre been justified in so excellently literary and philosophic a fashion before. Mr. Morley has given us the philosophy of the turncoat. "Principles", he has said in effect, "are not a light by which you can guide your steps in all circumstances, but a coat which is worn for comfort and convenience. In Canada, which is cold, you have to wear a fur coat, there is no help for it; in Egypt which is hot, you can change it for thin alpaca; in India where it is very hot indeed, you need not wear a coat at all; the natives of the country did not before we came and we should not encourage them to go in for such an uncomfortable luxury. It is just so with principles, democratic and other." The reasoning is excellent and of a very wide application. For instance it may be wrong in England to convict a political opponent for political reasons of an offence of which you know him to be innocent and on evidence you know to be false, or to sentence a man to be hanged for a murder which you are quite aware somebody else committed, or to disregard the plainest evidence and allow a bestial ravisher to go free because he happens to be a hog with a white skin, but it is absurd to suppose that such principles can keep in the heat of the Indian sun. It is difficult to know what iniquity reasoning of this sort would not cover. "I thoroughly believe in the ten Commandments," Caesar Borgia might have said in his full career of political poisonings and strangulations, "but they may do very well in one country and age without applying at all to another. They suited Palestine, but mediaeval Italy is not Palestine. Principles are a matter of chronology and climate, and it would be highly unphilosophical and unpractical of me to be guided by them as if I were Christ or Moses. So I shall go on poisoning and strangling for the good of myself and Italy and leave 'impatient idealists' to their irresponsible chatter. Still I am a Christian and the nephew of a pope, so my anchor holds, yes, my anchor holds."

*

Mr. Morley's fur coat is one of the most comprehensive garments ever discovered. All the tribe of high-aiming tyrants and patriotic pirates and able political scoundrels and intelligent turncoats that the world has produced, he gathers together and covers up their sins and keeps them snug and comforted against the cold blasts of censure blowing from a too logical and narrow-minded world, all in the shelter of a single fur coat. And the British conscience too, that wondrous production of a humorous Creator, seeking justification for the career of cynical violence its representatives have entered on in India, rejoices in Mr. Morley's fur coat and snuggles with a contented chuckle into its ample folds. Am I wrong in saying that Honest John is a wonder-worker of the mightiest and that Aaron's magic rod was a Brummagem fraud compared with Mr. Morley's phrases? *Vivat* John Morley!

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, November 19th, 1907 }

Bureaucratic Policy

The policy of the bureaucracy at the present moment would be a curious study to any dispassionate observer of politics. It is not an unmixed and fearless policy of repression, yet the repression, wherever entered on, is as thoroughgoing, ruthless and without scruple as the most virulent advocate of the strong hand could desire. It is not a policy of frank and wise concession, though concessions of a kind are fitfully made with no very apparent rhyme or reason. A Coercion Act is put upon the Statute-book of the most thoroughly Russian severity; it is supposed to be passed in hot haste to meet a crisis of an exceptional kind and to be urgently and imperatively demanded by the Chief Bureaucrats of three provinces who decline to be responsible otherwise for the preservation of peace and the British rule within their respective jurisdictions; yet when it has been passed, it is only applied to a single district in the whole of India. The protests of Moderate politicians against the deportations and their urgent pleas for the release of the prisoners in Mandalay are brushed aside with contempt, yet the very next news is that Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh are released and on their way homeward. Simla, vowing it will ne'er consent, has consented. On the other hand Liakat Hussain is pursued with relentless severity, a politically-minded High Court Bench discharges with a contemptuous impatience the appeals brought before it in political cases, and the wholesale persecutions of young men in the mofussil centres and the campaign against the Nationalist Press does not relax. The official explanation given by the *Englishman* is that the Extremists have collapsed, Sir Pherozshah Mehta is once more master of the situation, the Moderate party has come suddenly by its own and the Government recognising its own victory and the victory of its friends, is willing and can afford to be generous. With all respect to Hare Street we will offer another explanation which we think will be found nearer to the mark.

The policy of the Anglo-Indian bureaucrats has always been checked by their strong sense of the weakness of their position in India. They know perfectly well that if the whole population of India gets to be infected by the enthusiastic beliefs and insurgent spirit of Nationalism, their present absolute sway over the country will at once become an impossibility. They know that the almost universal conversion of the educated class to Nationalism is a contingency of the near future and that Nationalism having once taken possession of the educated class must immediately proceed to invade the masses; such a consummation is sure to be immensely hastened by a policy of unflinching repression which will alienate the whole educated community. The bureaucracy have indeed no love for the educated class, and the policy dearest to their hearts would be to create in the masses a counterpoise to the intellectuals, such as another bureaucracy once hoped to create in Russia. It is not likely that they will fix any permanent hope, still less their main hope, on the policy of setting Hindu and Mahomedan by the ears by an unstinted pampering of the latter community, however thoroughly they may have resorted to that expedient in the terror of the moment; for by doing so they will not only help to weld the Hindu population into a homogeneous whole, but they will be creating a new and dangerous power in the country in a Mahomedan community excited by new hopes and eager to recover their old ascendency. On the other hand, the masses under present circumstances are not easily accessible to a foreign and unsympathetic handful of aliens chiefly known to them through a corrupt, brutal and cruelly oppressive police, while the work of educating them into loyalty will take a long time and may be no less a failure in the end than the old plan of creating a permanently loyal middle class as a support to foreign rule against the regrets of the aristocracy and the possible fanaticism of the masses. Awaiting therefore the launching and success of their experiment with the masses the bureaucrats would like to keep the more pliable portion of the educated classes as long as possible in their own hands and set them against Nationalism. But they are not prepared to purchase this support at the sacrifice of any least fragment of their absolute authority and irresponsible power; they are only willing to appease the rising unrest by sham concessions or any temporary and isolated step which will not affect their prestige or their authority. The difficulty is that with the exception of the Loyalist section of the Moderate party led by men like Sir Pherozshah Mehta, no one would be satisfied with apparent concessions sufficient only to meet the claims of the wealthier upper ten of the educated community to titles, honour and position; the more advanced section which places patriotism before loyalty demands in addition such a substantial concession as would in their opinion pave the way for complete self-government in the future; but this the bureaucracy are not prepared to concede. Yet the Loyalists are precisely those whose support is least worth having. Really strong in commercial centres like Bombay and Surat, wearing an appearance only of strength, in other parts where Nationalism has not yet put forth a strength, it is a waning force constitutionally prone to inertia and incapable of exciting enthusiasm.

Such is the position which the bureaucrats have to face, and once we realise it their policy becomes quite coherent and intelligible. They have to be prepared against the possibility of the flood of Nationalism submerging the whole country in spite of all the dams they may erect, and for this reason they are arming themselves with extraordinary powers which will enable them to check its future expansion and crush it where it has already established itself. At the present moment they hope to get it under without persisting in a general repression which would drive the whole educated community into the Nationalist camp. They have got Bipin Pal and Liakat under lock and key, Brahmabandhab is dead, Aswini Dutta may be paralysed by a rigorous enforcement of the new Act in Bakarganj, and of all the more powerful Nationalist speakers and writers one or two only have so far escaped the attack made upon them. The bureaucracy may well hope that the back of the movement is broken and relax their legal thumbscrew, at least until they have seen what Sir Pherozshah can do at Surat. Any fresh development of Nationalism they are prepared to meet by ruthless repression. Wherever they see it spreading itself by open propaganda, they will forthwith apply the Gagging Act; wherever it spreads by its own force without the aid of the platform they will attack it through the young men as at Rangpur, Dinajpur, Dacca and Midnapore, and whatever leader or active propagandist comes forward, they will find some pretext to thrust into prison. Meanwhile they will pursue their policy of isolating the movement, locally by crushing it where it is bold and vehement while they will play with and indulge it for a time where it is milder and more cautious, politically by setting all other forces in the country against it.

This is their second line of defence, to find for themselves as many points of support as possible against Indian Nationalism amongst the Indians themselves. Their first hope is in the Mahomedans whom they will encourage enough to buy their hostility to the Hindus, but not enough to make them really powerful or give an impetus to a Mahomedan revival. Their second hope is in the landed aristocracy whom they broke and ground into the dust with the aid of the newly created middle class and would now call in in their turn to help in crushing that very middle class grown too powerful for its creator. Their third hope is in the masses whom they expect to dominate partly by a carefully conceived primary education, partly by decentralising their administration sufficiently to give the District Officer direct touch with and autocratic control over the peasantry and partly by creating in officially controlled Panchayats instruments of check and supervision among the masses themselves. Their fourth point of support is in the Loyalist-cum-Moderate party in the Congress. It is to keep the way open for a reconciliation with that party that Lajpat Rai has been released, the Gagging Act kept in abeyance outside Bakarganj and overtures made in the demi-official Press, notably in such foul-mouthed revilers of all educated India as the *C. M. Gazette* and the *Englishman* to the more sensible and sober elements in the Congress. The word has gone round to rally the Moderates to the Government and that party is notified by act and word that if they will accept the olive branch, be even temporarily satisfied with Mr. Morley's reforms and dissociate themselves from Boycott, Swaraj and Extremism, the bureaucracy will not confound them in one common ruin with the Extremists, but on the contrary give them its paternal blessing and a fair number of new playthings.

Such is the complete Minto-Morley policy as it now stands developed, and nobody will deny that, subject to the incurable defects of the bureaucratic position in India and the overruling decrees of Providence, it is a well-planned and skilful policy. The question is, "What chance has it of success? and what should be the line taken by the Nationalist party to frustrate this curious mixture of force and guile?" That is the chief problem to which we have now to turn our attention.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 2nd, 1907 }

About Unity

Our esteemed contemporary, the *Bengalee*, has recently been reading us eloquent sermons on the uses and advantages of unity. We confess we cannot follow our contemporary's argument. We gave utterance to the very obvious and, we thought, undeniable sentiment that unity is a means and not an end in itself. But the *Bengalee* asserts, and it has now got the strong authority of Mr. Myron Phelps to back it, that unity is an end in itself and not a means, but it seems to us that neither our contemporary nor his authority has anything but their *ipse dixit* to prove their assertion. We have great respect for Mr. Myron Phelps who is evidently a sincere well-wisher of our nation, but it does seem to us that he is forgetting the history of his own country when he asserts that unity is an end in itself. The end his countrymen aimed at during their quarrel with England was certainly not unity but independence, and to the attainment of that end there was a strong loyalist minority opposed and unfriendly. Even among the American Liberals the democratic Extremists were a minority while the greater number would have been glad to combine submission to the English crown with American liberty. It was the fiery vehemence and energy of the Extremists aided by the intensity of popular indignation which hurried the Moderate majority into the Boycott and the same force which plunged them half against their will into war with the suzerain and into ultimate democracy. The same thing has happened in India, for there is not the slightest doubt that the Moderates have been carried at the fiery chariot-wheels of Extremism into the perpetuation of the Boycott and the angry struggle between people and bureaucracy from which they would have gladly withdrawn and more than once made motions to withdraw, if left to themselves.

We insist that the end of national action is the acquisition and maintenance of national independence and greatness, and unity is only a means to that end. Moreover, political unity which is an essential condition of independence differs from unity of ideas and methods which are not essential. Political unity can be prepared by men of all parts of the country joining in a common struggle for the creation of a single national government, but the other unity is only possible if the whole nation is inspired by one spirit and one idea. The *Bengalee* thinks there is substantially such an unity between, say, Sir Pherozshah Mehta, Srijut Surendranath Banerji and Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal; but we have our doubts. Surendra wants Colonial Self-government, Pherozshah would be hugely pleased with something infinitely less; Bipin Chandra wants absolute autonomy. Where is the unity? If Colonial Self-government for India, that political monstrosity, means anything, it means a hampered and provincial autonomy; the Nationalists strive for a complete and international autonomy, and if our contemporary thinks that is a small or merely academic difference, we cannot compliment him on his knowledge either of history or politics. We will admit however for the sake of argument that our aim is identical, though in one case frankly expressed and in the other hidden under a veil, but that our methods are different. How then can there be that unity of action for which the *Bengalee* so sonorously but hazily pleads? Unity of action along with and unaffected by difference of methods is a kind of unity which we do not understand, and we rather suspect it is a chimaera from the land of confused ideas very much on a par with the "Colonial Self-government for India" of our friends or Mr. Morley's wonderful reconciliation of a free Press and Platform with an autocratic government. If one party has petitioning for its method and another rejects it for passive resistance, how can there be unity of action? Or if one party insists on association with and opposition to the bureaucracy (another twy-natured and self-contradictory figment from dreamland) and the other repudiates the association, how can there be united action? If united action is at all possible in Bengal, it is because the Moderate party in Bengal has ceased to be wagged by its loyalist tail and is now following the lead of its small but advanced head which is in sympathy with many of the Nationalist ideas though it is not prepared to carry them to their complete and logical end with the thoroughness and audacity which true Nationalism requires. The Moderates have given up for the present the policy of mendicancy, they have given their adherence to the programme of passive resistance though only in part. So far therefore as the methods of the two parties agree, united action is possible, though difference of fundamental ideas and difference of spirit make it impossible for that concord to be real and wholehearted, even if personal misunderstandings and dislikes did not stand in the way. But it is only in Bengal that even so much unity is possible, though there is a tendency in that direction in Madras. In the rest of India Moderatism is in its public professions and actions frankly loyalist and is quite prepared to eject the Nationalists from the Congress so far as it can be done with safety to itself. The Nagpur affair and the action of the All-India Congress Committee prove that beyond doubt. Where then is the basis of unity? For that matter, the Bengal Moderates while they sing dulcetly to us the praises of unity, have invariably joined heartily in Loyalist attempts to suppress the voice of Nationalism in the Congress. They were, we are convinced, consenting parties to the unconstitutional political trickery by which Sir Pherozshah transferred the meeting place of the Congress to one of his own pocket boroughs. Again we ask, on what ground can we meet for heartily united action? We have our work to do and cannot wait for ever on sweet words and professions used as a veil for secret — well, shall we say, diplomacy? We are ourselves anxious to carry the support of our Moderate countrymen with us in our struggles, but their friendship must first become less of the "I love you and kick you downstairs" kind than it is at present. Sincerity has great healing properties and without it professions are a poor salve for old sores.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 3rd, 1907 }

Personality or Principle?

Our contemporary, the *Punjabee*, has in its last issue a balanced and carefully impartial comment on the Congress trouble and the action of the All-India Congress Committee, or rather of Sir Pherozshah Mehta in the exercise of his role of Congress Lion and Dictator. There is one remark of our contemporary's, however, which seems to us unfair to the Nationalist party and with which therefore we feel bound to join issue. He censures the Nagpur Nationalists for forcing on a division in the camp over a personal question like the election of Mr. Tilak as President. The question of the Presidentship is, in his opinion, not only a purely personal issue but also extremely trivial, as the President has no function of importance and a democratic body like the Congress ought not to make a vital issue out of a nomination to a purely honorific post. We have already given our reasons for originally raising and still persisting in this question and we again assert that we are not swayed in the slightest degree by personal questions. It will not raise Mr. Tilak in our eyes if he becomes President, it will not lower him in our eyes if he is never nominated. To a certain extent the Presidentship is a position of honour, and so far as it is so, a man of ability and reputation, an acknowledged leader and moulder of opinion who has suffered courageously for the country is entitled to that honour. But that is not the position we take. The Presidentship is in our view much more a position of responsibility and service. We cannot agree that it is of no importance who is chosen to fill the chair, even if the Congress be a democratic body, which, as at present constituted and conducted, it is not. In no democratic assembly is the choice of the President, whether he be a virtual ruler, as in America, or only a moderator, as in France, a question of no importance. Our Congress is not as yet either a deliberative or a legislative body, but even so the Presidentship is a function of considerable importance. The President is the embodiment to all observers of the dignity and personality of that year's session and as such his address, though it may not be binding on the whole body, is an utterance of great weight and is or ought to be largely indicative of the national temper and policy. The Congress shows the importance it attaches to his address by devoting the first day to it, an arrangement which, if the address has no weight or value as a manifesto of Congress views and policy, is an absurd and reprehensible waste of time. Besides, the President is a moderator of debate in the Subjects Committee, and of rule and decorum in the public sitting. When divided views are before the national gathering it depends on him whether all sides shall get a fair hearing and a chance of impressing their views on the Congress. We raised the question of Mr. Tilak's Presidentship at a time when Swadeshi was the question before the country partly in order that the most powerful Swadeshi worker in the country might pronounce for Swadeshi from the President's chair and the Congress by electing him might show its sympathy with the movement. We made no secret of our object at the time and it was certainly not of a personal nature. But there was a second point at issue which was in the minds of all though it was never formulated, and this too was a point of principle, viz. that the Congress should not in any of its actions be influenced by the desire of bureaucratic favour or the fear of bureaucratic displeasure, that it should declare its complete independence as a body which looked to the people alone and not to the bureaucracy. This could not be better done than by the election of a great man and leader who was not a persona grata with the bureaucrats and had undergone sentence of imprisonment for the crime of patriotism. That is the real difficulty in the way of the Moderates' accepting Mr. Tilak and it is equally the reason why the Nationalists refuse to give up their point. An apparently personal question often conceals one of essential principle, even when the person is not as in this case a great patriot and leader. It was not for profligate John Wilkes that the people of Middlesex fought in the eighteenth century but for the liberty of the Press which was attacked in his person. We too fight not for honour to be done to a man however great and noble, but for the liberty of the Congress from all shadow of bureaucratic influence and its new-creation as an independent, popular and democratic assembly.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 4th, 1907 }

More about Unity

The *Bengalee* has again returned to the charge about unity. The line of argument adopted by our contemporary savours strongly of the peculiar style of political thinking which underlay all our movements in the last century. The old school of politics was chiefly remarkable for a blithe indifference to facts and an extraordinary predilection for vague abstractions which could not possibly apply to the conditions with which our political action had to deal. The nineteenth-century Indian politician never cared to study history, but used a ready-made and high-sounding philosophy of politics based chiefly on the circumstances and conditions of modern English politics which had no validity at all for India. The result of this divorce from real life was a tendency to use words without caring to consider their real practical meaning. We find the *Bengalee* in its article learnedly repeating these old mistakes. It builds wordy arguments from the terms of modern Science without grasping the true facts and hard realities of life, without a knowledge of which the terms cannot be correctly applied. It argues from evolution that progress is an ever-increasing unity of ever-developing parts, that therefore progress is nothing but unity, freedom is nothing but unity, greatness is nothing but unity, ergo unity is not a means but an end, not an important or necessary help to arriving at progress, freedom and greatness but itself at once progress, freedom and greatness. This is merely playing with words. The question is, what is this unity which the *Bengalee* makes so much of and which it asks us to prefer to our principles and in its name to join in action which we believe to be harmful to the country? If our contemporary means political unity, the formation of all the communities and races in the country into a single political organism with a common centre of life, that is certainly, as we have already admitted, a necessary condition of independence and greatness; but it is a thing of the future which is impossible so long as the centre of life in the country is alien and external, and all we can do towards it is to unite people of all communities and races in one common struggle to replace the alien and external centre of political life by an indigenous and internal centre in the national organism itself.

Very good, but the question still remains, by what method can that result be attained? We believe the methods proposed by the Loyalists to be futile and injurious, we understand their aim to be not the independence of the national organism, but an impossible scheme of two centres of political life controlling the country at the same time of which the alien shall be supreme and yet the indigenous shall be free! What the *Bengalee* asks of us is to disregard this vital difference of opinion and aim and be united, — in what? In aiming at an object which we believe to be absurd, by means which we believe to be futile. It does not matter, says the *Bengalee*, in what we are united, so long as we are united; for unity is progress, unity is freedom and greatness. So that if we are united in petitioning we are by the very fact of that unity free and great! The error of the *Bengalee*'s argument is that it confuses political unity, which is a necessary condition of independence, with unity of opinion and action, which is an immense help if the opinion and the action are in the right direction, but certainly not indispensable. It is not true that unity, even political unity, is identical with freedom, for a nation may be united in bondage or united in submission to a foreign and absolutist rule. Still less is it true that unity in following the wrong road is the true means to the goal, much less the goal itself. We tried to prove from history that nations had been made free not by a scrupulous pursuit of unanimity or of unity in action but by faith, energy and courage in a number of its more energetic sons carrying away the bulk of the nation into a strenuous effort to reach a great ideal. For the sake of brevity we gave one instance where we might have given a dozen. The *Bengalee*, however, like all Moderate politicians, will have nothing to do with history or at least with the facts of history. History, it says in effect, is a record of human error, and the methods of which it tells us, involve great waste. So we in India are to invent something brand new, an ingenious and carefully calculated method of revolution which will bring us freedom and greatness without any waste, without any risk, by a minimum expenditure of trouble, disturbance and sacrifice. We fear it has left out of consideration the fact that waste also is one of Nature's methods, indeed that what we call waste is one of the most subtle parts of her economy. No man or nation that refused to venture hugely like a gambler for huge ends ever arrived at freedom, none who has not been prodigal of his best has ever risen to greatness, and what has been in the past will be in the future; for human nature and the laws of human action remain the same, and cannot be new-shaped in Colootola. Politics is for the Kshatriya and in the Kshatriya spirit alone can freedom and greatness be attained, not by the spirit of the Baniya trying to buy freedom in the cheapest market and beat down the demands of Fate to a miser's niggard price. That which other nations have paid for freedom we also must pay, the path they have followed we also must follow. And if you will not learn from history, you will have to be taught by a harsher teacher the same lesson — and taught perhaps at a much more tremendous price than that which you stigmatise as waste. We Nationalists have no desire to break the Congress or to part company with our less forward countrymen, but we have our path to follow and our work to do, and if you will not allow us a place in the assembly you call National, we will make one for ourselves out of it and around it, until one day you will find us knocking at your doors with the nation at our back and in the name of an authority even you will not dare to deny.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 5th, 1907 }

By the Way

The Scots who had not with Wallace bled but emigrated from the land of Bruce and his spider to exploit and "administer" spider fashion the land of Shivaji and Pratap, met again this year for their great national feed. The menu began with relishes and proceeded through the wedded delights of ice-pudding and liqueurs to a regale of confidences and confessions by Sir Harvey Adamson which was perhaps the most enjoyable dish of the evening. The inventive Briton has discovered the great truth that out of the fulness of the stomach the heart speaketh and the result is that great British institution, the after-dinner speech. So the clans gathered and Sir Harvey of the clan of the sons of Adam spoke from "beneath the spreading antlers of a Monarch of the Glen" (so at least the *Englishman* dropping into poetry in its fervour assured us in sonorous blank verse) and behold! even as was the state of his stomach, so was the speech of Sir Harvey full-stomached and packed with choice titbits, comfortable, placid and well-pleased.

*

Of course Sir Harvey talked of the unrest, but his speech was eminently restful; it had all the large benevolence, sweet reasonableness and placid self-satisfaction of a man who had legislated as he had dined, wisely and well. It reeked of the olives and turtle soup and bannocks o' barley meal, it had the generous flavour of the liqueurs and the champagne. He first assured the assembled clans that the unrest was not purely a seditious movement nor an anti-partition movement, — Sir Harvey has found out that, and we congratulate him on his statesmanlike perspicuity. But he has found out other things too. He has not only found out what the unrest is not, he has also found out what it is. It is simply this, that the educated classes are learning to realise their own position and to aspire to "a larger share" in the government of their own country. Now at last we see this luminous reading of the situation has shed a flood of light on Mr. Morley's policy. The educated classes want their present share in the government enlarged. Most natural, most laudable! A benevolent Minto, a Radical Morley are not the men to stand in the way of such admirable aspirations. The present share of the people in the government of their own country is nothing; they want more of it: very good, we will give them a larger share of nothing. The Legislative Council is a nothing; go to, we will enlarge that nothing; we will add fresh nothings in the shape of an Advisory Council of not-ables to assist the educated class in doing nothing and lest the burden of such an arduous task should be too heavy for their educated shoulders we will give them upon the Councils plenty of capable helpers some of whom have been doing nothing all their lives and ought by now to be experts. If after that the educated class does not feel satisfied in its aspirations, if it does not feel as full-fed and happy as Sir Harvey after his haggis, well, they are ungrateful brutes and there is an end of it.

*

Unkind people have said that the intention of the Government was not to satisfy the aspirations of the educated class but to exclude them from the Councils under the cover of a misnamed "reforms". Sir Harvey is naturally shocked at so gross an imputation against his benevolent Government. All that the Government desires is to make the representation of the lawyers and educated men a "fair" representation. It does not want to exclude educated men, but only to swamp them with zamindars, Mahomedans and Europeans; and it does not want to "suppress the middle class" but only to reduce them to a nullity. And this because they will not have "what is scornfully known in the East as a vakil-ridden country". It was evidently the generosity of the champagne that made Sir Harvey expand all India into the East. We are not aware that the vakil class as it exists in India is to be found anywhere except in India. It is the happy result of British rule in this favoured land that the nation now consists of a huge mass of starving peasants, a small body of dumb Government servants, and sweated office clerks, a landed aristocracy habitually overawed, fleeced and for the most part well advanced on the road to ruin, a sprinkling of prosperous middlemen and as the only independent class a handful of lawyers, journalists and schoolmasters. That is what Sir Harvey calls a vakil-ridden country. We have heard the expression Vakil-Raj, but we have not heard it used "scornfully" except by Anglo-Indians. But no doubt when he talks of the East, Sir Harvey means himself and his brother Scots out to make money in the East, just as by Indian trade is always meant Anglo-Indian trade and by Indian prosperity the prosperity of Anglo-India. This is a sort of official slang which has become a recognised idiom of the English language. Anglo-India is equal to India, India is equal to the East, therefore Anglo-India is the East. The Anglo-Indian has mastered the practice of the Vedanta, for he sees himself as the whole world, and the whole world in himself; why should he then make any bones about attributing his own sentiments to a whole continent?

*

The Government, we are gratified to learn, has no intention of stemming the flowing tide. It wants instead to cut a new channel for the tide and divert it into a lake of not-ables where it will cease from its flowing and be at rest. As for the old channel of Swadeshi and Swaraj, it will be carefully stopped up with a strong composite of sedition laws, Gurkhas and regulation lathis. But meanwhile what does the tide itself think about this neat little plan? Well, says Sir Harvey, Moderate politicians are delighted, but the native press dissatisfied. We had to look twice at this remarkable assertion to make sure that the champagne (or was it good old Scotch) which Sir Harvey had drunk to the health of the unrest, had not missed its way and wandered into our eyes instead of Sir Harvey's legislative cranium. All the native papers then are Extremist organs! What all, Sir Harvey? The *Bengalee* no less than the *Bande Mataram*, the *Indu Prakash* in the same boat with the *Kesari*? All Extremists, for have not all expressed dissatisfaction with reforms which would have been received two years ago with an unanimous shriek of infantine delight? Who then can be Moderates? Sir Harvey was right after all. It is the virus of Extremism which has entered secretly into the unsophisticated Congress mind and taught it to ask for something more than its long-cherished baubles. But in that case who are the Moderate politicians who are satisfied with the new playthings? Why, of course, Mr. Malabari and the Maharaja of Burdwan and Nawab of Dacca. For at this rate even Sir Pherozshah is suspected of Extremism.

*

Sir Harvey has much to say about sedition and what he says is very interesting. He explains what sedition is and the explanation is of course authoritative, since it comes from the Law Member. First, the preaching of active rebellion against the British Government. To that of course there can be no objection. Whoever preaches an armed rebellion, does it with the gaol and gallows before his eyes, and is not likely to complain if he is punished. Secondly, efforts to reduce the native army from its allegiance, and then we get a remarkable sentence. "The Government has been publicly charged with instigation of dacoity and sacrilege" etc. As we all know a charge was made by the whole press, Moderate, Extremist and Loyalist, against local officials, of having given a free hand to Mahomedan hooliganism, and the charge was never refuted and now Sir Harvey identifies the Government with these officials and lays down the law that whoever brings a charge against any official is guilty of sedition! "I and my Father in Simla are one," the local official may now say, "and he who blasphemeth against me blasphemeth against him." Secondly the Government has been charged with "propagating famine and plague". We note therefore that it is sedition to say that the economic conditions created and perpetuated by the present system of government are responsible for famine and poverty and the diseases which thrive on poverty! Thirdly, the Government is seditiously charged with draining the resources of India for the benefit of England. So it is sedition too to talk of the drain or refer to Lord Curzon and his luminous remarks about administration and exploitation! These are, it seems, "turgid accusations which are made to sell and do not influence sober-minded men". So Mr. R. C. Dutt is not a sober-minded man, nor Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, nor Mr. Gokhale, nor even the knighted Bombay Lion. They are all turgid seditionists whose utterances are "made to sell". One wonders who and where the devil are these sober-minded men of Sir Harvey's whom he warrants immune from turgidity, and again one has to fall back on Mr. B. M. Malabari, the Maharaja of Burdwan and the Nawab of Dacca. O blest and sainted trio.

*

Of course Sir Harvey is strong on the seditious press, in other words, the organs of anti-bureaucratic Nationalism. Our newspapers are "of a low class", their editors have "discovered that sedition is a commercial success" and so write, it is suggested, what they do not believe because it sells. Fudge, Sir Harvey! If you could be transformed from a perorating official Scot into the manager of a Nationalist newspaper for the first year or two of its existence, you would "discover" at what tremendous pecuniary and personal sacrifice these papers have been established and maintained. If Sir Harvey knew anything about the conditions of life in the land he is helping to misgovern, he would know that an Indian newspaper, unless it is long established, and sometimes even then, can command immense influence and yet be commercially no more than able to pay its way, especially when on principle it debars itself from taking all but Swadeshi advertisements. Fudge, Sir Harvey! The Nationalists are not shopkeepers trading in the misery of the millions; they are men like Upadhyay and Bipin Pal and numbers more who have put from them all the ordinary chances of life to devote themselves to a cause, and in the few instances in which a Nationalist journal has been run at a profit, the income has gone to Swadeshi work and the maintenance of workers and not into the pockets of the proprietors, while in almost every case men of education and ability have foregone their salary or half starved on a pittance in order to relieve the burden of the struggling journal. These are your editors of low newspapers, traders in sedition, "interested agitators", men without sense of responsibility or "matured understanding". You say the thing which is not, and know it, a licensed slanderer of men a corner of whose brains has a richer content than your whole Scotch skull and whose shoes you are unworthy to touch.

*

It is refreshing to learn that Sir Harvey thinks he has got under one chief means of sedition, the platform, by his gagging ordinance turned into law. He has stiffened it, he says, into a tap which can be turned on wherever his vigilant eye sees a travelling spark of sedition, so on that side the British Empire and the profits of the clans are safe. But against the press he has not been able to find an equally effective extinguisher. The Government were apparently equal to the manufacture, but they want to try those tools they have before forging others that we know not of. The British public also might turn nasty if there were too rapid a succession of such stiffenings and Morley might find the fur coat an insufficient protection against the cold biting blasts of his friends' ingratitude. So Sir Harvey means to try a few more prosecutions first. But if Kingsford's pills prove ineffective, well, then Sir Harvey, in spite of the British public and Mr. Morley's sufferings, will be the first to recommend the smothering of the patient who refuses to be cured. After that the orator passed off into complaints about his bearer and praises of whiskey and soda and other subjects too sacred to touch. And so on the note of "whiskey in moderation" Sir Harvey closed his historic speech. And the British Empire knew itself safe.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 6th, 1907 }

Caste and Representation

The policy of the bureaucracy in the face of the national movement, so far as it is anything more than crude repression, is a policy of makeshifts and dodges, and, though skilful in a way, it shows throughout an extraordinary ignorance of the country they rule. The latest brilliant device is an attempt to reshuffle the constituent elements of Indian politics and sort them out afresh on the basis not only of creed, but of caste. The *Pioneer* has come out with an article in its best style of businesslike gravity, in which it settles the basis on which representation should be given to India. For two years of unrest have brought us so far that Anglo-India is awakened to the necessity of giving some kind of representation to the Indians, and petty details of administrative reform, the demand for which was then considered as much a crying for the moon as the cry for Swaraj nowadays, are fast coming into the range of "practical politics". Great are the virtues of unrest! Of course it is only representation and not representative government which Anglo-India is bending itself to think within the range of possibility; for government means control and control is the last thing which they will consent to yield to us. When Viceroys and Law Members talk of giving us a larger share in the government of our country, they mean of course not control but what they call a voice, and they will take good care that this voice shall be *vox et praeterea nihil*, a voice and nothing more. But even a voice may be a serious inconvenience to an absolute government and pains are therefore to be taken to substitute an echo for a voice, an echo of bureaucratic whisperings for the living utterance of a nation. In the representative institutions which the bureaucracy are likely to give us, it is the drone of many notables and the mechanical squeaking of officially manipulated puppets that we shall hear, and this, the world will be told, is the voice of the Indian people.

But Anglo-Indian statesmanship will not rest satisfied with reducing the ineffective voice with which they desire to delude our aspirations, to the character of a flat and foolish echo; they will farther make every arrangement to turn it into a source of fresh weakness to the growing nationality instead of a source of strength. They began of course, long ago, the attempt to make capital of the religious diversities of Indian society and recently the policy of setting the Mahomedans as a counterpoise to the Hindus has been openly adopted. In the new Legislative Councils the Mahomedans are to have representation not as children of the soil, an integral portion of one Indian people, but as a politically distinct and hostile interest which will, it is hoped, outweigh or at least nullify the Hindus. The bureaucratic Machiavels have not realised that the conditions of the new struggle which has begun, are of so different a kind from any yet known in British India that the Mahomedans cannot be turned into an effective tool in the hands of the bureaucracy without becoming at the same time a danger to the artisan of discord who uses them. For the field of the struggle is not nowadays in Simla or on the floor of the House of Commons or on any lists where outside opinion can have a decisive or even a material influence. It is not a voice which they have to set against a voice or a show which they have to outface with a better show, but a force which they will have to call into being to oppose a force. The Hindus have become self-conscious, they have heard a voice that cries to them, “Arise from the dead, live and follow me,” and they are irresistibly growing into a living and powerful political force. Unless the Mahomedans can be built up also into a self-conscious, living and powerful political force, their assistance to the rulers will be a mere handful of dust in the balance. But the moment they become a living and self-conscious power the doom of bureaucracy will be sealed. For no self-conscious community aware of its strength and separate life will consent to go on pulling chestnuts out of the fire for

Anglo-Indian Machiavels. Even if they do not coalesce with the Hindus, they will certainly demand a share of the power which they maintain. Not in that direction lies any permanent hope of salvation for the absolute power of the bureaucracy. Perhaps the more thinking part of Anglo-India perceives this truth, hence the desire to find additional points of support and other principles of discord by which Indian Nationality can be hopelessly divided and cut to pieces in the making.

Of course the *Pioneer* does not avow the real object of this scheme for creating and perpetuating as political entities divisions which every healthful political organism progresses by subordinating and discharging of all political significance; but it is obvious enough. If it were possible for the bureaucracy to turn the social divisions of the community into political divisions, there could be no more fatal instrument of political disorganisation, and just as a natural indigenous rule finds its safety in better political organisation, so an unnatural alien rule finds its safety in disorganisation of what it preys upon. If it can, it destroys all centres of political organisation except itself; otherwise it tries to create unnatural centres whose action will hamper and distract the organic growth. Caste with the proper safeguards is an admirable means of social organisation and conservation, but it has not and should not be allowed to have any political meaning. In India with the exception of Maharashtra it has had no political meaning at all. In the old times it was different. All the executive power and functions of war and politics were in the hands of the Kshatriyas for the good reasons that the whole work of war and protection of the country from internal and external disorder was assigned by society to them, and classes which did not give of their blood to preserve the peace and freedom of their country could not claim a direct control of administration. The Brahmin legislated, but legislation was then a religious function which implied no political power or position, and the people at large exercised only an indirect control by the pressure of a public opinion which no ruler could afford to neglect. Afterwards when Chandragupta and Asoka had created the tradition of a powerful absolutism with a strong bureaucratic organisation to support it, things changed, but not in the direction of a polity based on caste. On the contrary all classes, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sudra, could and did rise to any position of political power, even the throne itself, and except in Rajasthan where the Kshatriya ideals and institutions were preserved, caste came to count less rather than more in politics as time went on. All the great nation-builders have ignored caste as a political factor and it was only when the national spirit of the Mahrattas declined after Panipat that a cleavage on the lines of caste took place which is still a slight danger to Nationalism in the South. It is curious to find the British rulers who have done their best to undermine caste as a social institution now dreaming of perpetuating and using it as a political instrument. We do not think they will make much by this move. The centripetal impulse in Hindu society is already too strong and with most of us political division by castes is too foreign to our habits of thought to take root. The very idea of making a constituency of Bengal Kayasthas or Bengal Brahmins is absurd. Only where certain classes are much depressed and submerged a temporary strife may be created, but the onward sweep of the national movement, profoundly democratic as it is, will lift these classes to a nobler function in society and give them prizes which a Government post or title cannot hope to rival. If we listened to our Loyalists and continued to depend on alien favours and look on them as the crown of our political life, then indeed discord might be sown and castes learn to view themselves as distinct and hostile political interests, but against the force of the national movement such devices will array themselves in vain; its democratic and unifying spirit will make light of all such feeble attempts to divide.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 12th, 1907 }

About Unmistakable Terms

We answered yesterday in general terms the claim advanced in the columns of the *Bengalee* to implicit and blind obedience from all Bengalis to the Calcutta Moderate leaders and to any local representatives of loyalty and moderation whom they may be pleased to erect to the gaze of an adoring public. But the *Bengalee*'s article contained also certain passages which demand more direct and plain-spoken answer and this today we will give. The *Bengalee*, not contented with its arrogant demand for submission, goes on to declare that the Nationalists, because they refuse this claim, are traitors to their country, that the men who opposed Mr. Chitnavis' autocracy at Nagpur or Sir Pherozshah's at Calcutta or Mr. K. B. Dutt's at Midnapore are rowdies and the Nationalist leaders, Mr. Tilak and Mr. Khaparde in the West or Srijuts Bipin Pal, Aurobindo Ghose or Brahmabandhab Upadhyay in Calcutta have been abettors of rowdies, and it calls on the whole country to speak out in unmistakable terms against us. Unmistakable terms? Well, then let us have an understanding about terms, to begin with. What is the definition of a traitor to his country? Are men traitors who have exposed themselves to persecution, imprisonment and harassment for the sake of their country? Are those traitors who have made large sacrifices and devoted themselves to the cause of the Motherland? Or are those young men traitors who have stood in the forefront of the battle of boycott, braving the full fury of the bureaucrats and their police, and but for whom the boycott agitation would have flagged and perished after the first six months of excitement? The *Bengalee* says they are: for they may have done all these things, and yet if they oppose Mr. K. B. Dutt or Srijut Surendranath, they are traitors to their country. On the other hand, have not those rather the complexion of traitors who are ready to call in police assistance against their countrymen in a Swadeshi conference although there has been no riot or violence, who boast that the police are in their hands and they can get all arrested who oppose them, who are ready to forget all the oppression from Barisal till now and call in Magistrates and police superintendents to the place of honour in national meetings, who are ready to take the *lathis* out of the hands of volunteers to please a District official? Or those, to take other examples, who wrote with brilliant success to Anglo-Indian papers to get Mr. Tilak prosecuted at the time of the Poona murders? Or those who pointed out Lala Lajpat Rai to the bureaucracy as the man to strike at when the Punjab was in a ferment over the Colonisation Bill? But, by the *Bengalee*'s reasoning, men may be the moral descendants of Mir Jafar and Jagat Seth and yet be excellent patriots so long as they obey Moderate leaders and respect age and authority.

The second term we want to see so defined as to be unmistakable, is the term "leaders". The *Bengalee* calls for discipline and submission to leadership, but who are the leaders to whom we are to yield this unquestioning military obedience? What is the qualification in Mr. K. B. Dutt of Midnapore, for instance, by virtue of which we are called upon to sacrifice for his sake our national self-respect, our convictions, and our natural right to a free exercise of our individual reason and conscience? The *Bengalee* talks of age, but it is preposterous to set up age by itself as the claim to leadership in politics; nor did the Moderate leaders themselves show an overwhelming deference to age when they were themselves younger and more ardent. Respect for age as a part of social discipline we can understand, but leadership by seniority is a new doctrine. Then again the *Bengalee* talks of authority. What authority? The authority of social position, wealth, professional success? Are we to obey Mr. K. B. Dutt because he is the leader of the Midnapore bar just as the East Bengal Mahomedans obey Salimullah because he is the Nawab of Dacca? We decline to accept any such law of obedience. Authority is always a delegated power which does not rest in the individual but proceeds to him from a definite source and returns to that source. Official authority proceeds from an organised government executing the law which can both delegate its power to individuals and take them away again as it pleases. In popular movements the people are the only source from which authority can proceed. The people follow a leader because he best interprets their ideas, aims and feelings or because he shows himself the best fitted to organize and lead the popular forces to the realisation of popular aspirations and ideals, and the moment their confidence is shaken, the moment they begin to think he does not represent their best ideas and aspirations or that his methods of leadership are mistaken the authority begins to depart out of him. There can be no other kind of authority in democratic politics, nor can popular leadership be self-constituted. Those who demand military obedience to self-constituted leaders are not preparing self-government but killing it, striking at its very roots. If what the Moderate leaders want is to replace bureaucracy not by popular self-government but by the government of particular persons or classes, if they want the movement to be not democratic but oligarchic or plutocratic, let them say so clearly, in God's name, and let us have done with this juggling with words, and henceforward on both sides "speak in unmistakable terms".

Finally, while we are about defining terms, let us know when a man becomes President of a Conference or Congress session. The *Bengalee* says, "The attempt that was made to heckle the President and to bring into contempt his position as the head of the Conference was unique in the history of our Conferences and Congresses. We never witnessed in the whole course of our public life a proceeding . . . so derogatory to the authority of the President." The "heckling" took place before Mr. K. B. Dutt was elected, when the President's chair was vacant. Are we then to suppose that a man becomes President before he is elected? It is curious that Mr. K. B. Dutt himself made this unwarrantable claim when the trouble first began. By custom the Reception Committee designates a President but the decision of the Committee has no binding force on the delegates of the Conference who have always the power to elect anyone else whom they may prefer and not till a public confirmation by the votes of the delegates, has the President designated by the Reception Committee any authority or tenure of office. Until then he is merely a public man nominated for a particular function and the public have every right to "heckle" him so as to be sure that he will properly represent them before they give him their votes. Because till now this right has not been enforced, it does not follow that the public has forfeited its right, nor are we bound by "traditions" which mean simply the absence of lively popular interest and have no sanction in any reasonable principle of procedure.

The *Bengalee* sets up discipline as the one requisite of a popular movement and to back up its proposition it is so ill-advised as to quote the example of Parnell and his solid Irish phalanx. The choice of this example shows a singular ignorance of English politics. Before Parnell's advent, the Irish party in Parliament was a moderate party of Irish Liberals of very much the same nature as the old Congress party before the Boycott. It was balanced in Ireland by a revolutionary organisation using the most violent means employed by secret societies. When Parnell first appeared on the scene, his first action was to revolt against the leader of the Irish party and make a party of his own. Consisting at first of a mere handful it soon captured the whole of Ireland and created the solid phalanx. But what was the secret of Parnell's success? Parnell, unlike our Moderate leaders, did not dwarf the ideal of a national movement but always held the absolute independence of his country as the goal: he made it a fixed principle to accept no half-way house between independence and subjection short of an Irish Parliament with independent powers, he suffered no man to enter his party who did not pledge himself to refuse all office, honour or emolument from the alien government and he showed his people a better way of agitation than mere dependence on England on one side and secret outrage on the other, — the way of passive resistance, obstruction in Parliament and refusal of rent in the country. Only so could Parnell succeed in creating the solid phalanx, and when it was broken, it was by the folly of his adherents who receded from his principles and sacrificed their leader at the bidding of an English statesman. If Srijut Surendranath wishes to have the country solid behind him, he must be a Parnell first and not shrink from a Parnellite policy and ideals. Only clear principles and unambiguous conduct can secure implicit obedience.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 13th, 1907 }

The Surat Congress

When the All-India Congress Committee first betrayed its charge and degraded itself from the position of a high arbiter and guide in all national affairs to that of a party machine subservient to a single political tactician, we said that there were but two courses open to us, either to refuse to accept a party trick engineered in defiance of justice, decency and all the common rules of public procedure and to hold our own Congress at Nagpur, or to go in force to Surat and, if we could not swamp the Congress, at least to show that into whatever farthest nook or corner of India Sir Pherozshah Mehta might fly for refuge, he could not get rid of the presence of Nationalism, to fling ourselves at once on Gujerat and organize Nationalism there, so that the Loyalist's chosen haven of refuge might become another place of shipwreck. In any case, we said, we must have a Conference of Nationalists this year and organise Nationalism all over the country. We have not concealed our opinion that the session at Nagpur would be the preferable course, as being both the most logical and the manliest and involving the least waste of energy now and in future. But such a course was out of the question unless all could agree upon it, and this was not found possible. Especially when Mr. Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai, fresh from his exile, were in favour of attending the Surat session, there could be no further question of our course. It has been decided, then, to attend the Surat Congress in what force we can muster at this short notice and do our best to hold the ground we have gained, as well as to see that certain questions which were held over last year are not held over again. A Nationalist Conference has also been arranged by the efforts of the Nationalists at Surat and arrangements will be made for Nationalist delegates, a ticket of one rupee being issued to each delegate for the recovery of expenses.

We call upon Nationalists in Calcutta and the Mofussil, who are at all desirous of the spread of Nationalist principles and Nationalist practice all over India, to make ready at whatever inconvenience and, if they find it humanly possible, go to Surat to support the Nationalist cause. We are aware of the tremendous difficulties in our way. Surat is far-distant, the expenses of such a journey are almost prohibitive, for only a small percentage of our party are men of means, and the time for preparation is almost nil. And yet we must go. What is a Nationalist good for if he cannot make up by his enthusiasm and energy for his other deficiencies, if he cannot make nothing of difficulties and turn the impossible into the possible? It is to sweep away difficulties and to strike the word impossible out of the Indian's dictionary that our party has arisen. The leaders of the Deccan call us; Lala Lajpat Rai, a name now made sacred to us all, is waiting to see the first fruit of his sufferings in the increase of patriots wedded to the principles for professing and practising which he has suffered, and the people of Gujerat are waiting eagerly for our advent. If Bengal goes there in force it will, we believe, set flowing such a tide of Nationalism as neither bureaucrats nor Bombay Loyalists are prepared to believe possible. The Christmas concessions given by the Railway companies reduce the expense to a minimum and for those who travel by the intermediate, Rs. 75 at the outside should be enough. For we are going not as holiday sightseers making a national occasion an excuse for a Christmas jaunt and we do not demand comfort on the way or luxuries when we arrive. We must go as poor men whose wealth is our love for our Motherland, as missionaries taking nothing with them but the barest expenses of the way, as pilgrims travelling to our Mother's temple. We have a great work to do and cannot afford to be negligent and half-hearted. Be sure that this year, 1907, is a turning-point of our destinies and do not imagine that the session of the Surat Congress will be as the sessions of other years. Let us fear to miss by absenting ourselves the chance of helping to put in one of the keystones of the house we are building for our Mother's dwelling in the future, the house of her salvation, the house of Swaraj.

Misrepresentations about Midnapore

A correspondent has written to the *Bengalee* denying the truth of certain statements in the *Bande Mataram*'s account of the Midnapore Conference which the *Bengalee* characterises as misrepresentations. We are willing to be corrected in any points of fact where we may have made a mistake, but the correspondent in question is either ill-informed or is ignoring facts.

(1) He says that the Magistrate was not invited but came to the meeting apprehending a row. We ask, who gave the Magistrate the information that there was likelihood of a row? Who wrote the letter which the Magistrate declared to be Mr. K. B. Dutt's and which was in Mr. K. B. Dutt's handwriting? What was the object of the letter if not to invite the presence of the Magistrate and the police to overawe Mr. K. B. Dutt's opponents? It is possible that none formally invited the officials. Why then were the volunteers informed that the Magistrate was coming and they must give up their lathis? It is entirely untrue that the "rowdiness of a section of the meeting nearly culminated in a disturbance," in the sense of a resort to violence. There was plenty of shouting and confusion, but never any likelihood or the appearance of a likelihood of a resort to violence. The only violence was the assault on a delegate by the Moderates on the second day.

(2) The statement about the bomb-incident, by which is apparently meant the attempt by unknown persons to wreck the Lieutenant-Governor's special seems to have been an afterthought. The incident was not known in Midnapore till Sunday evening and not a word was breathed about it by Mr. K. B. Dutt as a reason for putting by the volunteers' lathis. It is not true that the Captain of Volunteers was sent for by the Magistrate and readily yielded. The Captain was sent to the Magistrate,

doubtless at the latter's request, and made to resign because he could give no assurance about the lathis. Not a single volunteer gave up his lathi, nor was there any prohibition of lathis in the Magistrate's orders forbidding processions.

(3) It matters little by what stages the enthronement of the Police Superintendent was prepared. The fact remains that he was given the central chair on the platform to which only a distinguished guest invited by the Committee or a visitor whom the whole country respects is entitled. It is a fact that the President frequently turned to confer with him when there was disorder and on at least one occasion made use of his presence to threaten his opponents, declaring that he would see that law was enforced. All this, it seems, was only common courtesy. It may be so; we as "rowdies" cannot be expected to understand Moderate courtesy but it seems to us that such courtesy is an insult to the whole nation.

(4) Mr. Dutt was certainly understood by many of the delegates to say that those who would not obey him as chairman (before he was elected President) might go out. It is possible that he may have been misunderstood or has forgotten it, and we do not care to press the point, as its only importance was an incident throwing light on his temper and attitude. As for the correspondent's nonsense about discretion and valour, we did not know that it needed so much valour to leave the presence of K. B. Dutt, the Bold. The delegates were restrained by other Nationalists from leaving the Pandal and it was certainly discretion to allow another chance to the President designate before taking the serious step of secession.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 14th, 1907 }

Reasons of Secession

We have now placed all the facts of the Midnapore Conference before the public and the reasons which made a Nationalist secession inevitable are sufficiently obvious. The Loyalist legend that the Nationalists came prepared to break up the Conference by force, but were either baffled, say some authorities, by the "mingled tact and firmness" of Mr. K. B. Dutt, or overawed, say others, by the presence of the President's bureaucratic friends and allies, and in their rage and disappointment seceded and held a separate meeting, is too contemptible a lie to be treated seriously. "Why should they secede? What was the necessity of a second Conference?" ask our opponents with a holy simplicity. "Did we not pass the same resolutions? Was not a translation of the President's marvellous address offered to the audience? What does it matter if the President broke his word? As for the interpretation of Swaraj as colonial self-government it is an unimportant matter, a prejudged matter; no Conference pretending to be a branch of the Congress organisation has any right to pass a resolution for Swaraj pure and simple and no responsible politician can support such a resolution. The Police Superintendent? Well, he was there only to see that the train-wrecking outrage was not repeated by the Nationalists in the Conference Pandal!"

Let us clear the matter of this jungle of irrelevancies. It was not over the resolutions passed by the Moderate Subjects Committee and Conference that the secession took place. When the Moderates saw that they had succeeded in disgusting and tiring out their opponents and had the field themselves they quietly adjourned to the Bailey Hall and held their own Committee and passed their own resolutions; — this is a favourite trick with this party which they perform in the full confidence that their opponents will in the end acquiesce in the accomplished fact for the sake of "unity". We are informed that two resolutions were seriously modified in Committee at the command of the President, but whether these modifications stood or repentance came with the morning, does not matter: for the resolutions were not the cause of the secession. The question of the language in which the President's speech should be delivered was a detail on which the Mofussil delegates felt strongly and it is obvious that if these Conferences are to serve the purpose for which they are created, the vernacular must be the medium employed. It is absurd to have the President's speech in English and then to patch up matters by offering a translation, when the audience is already wearied out by listening to a long address in a foreign tongue which they do not understand. If Mr. K. B. Dutt had to address all India, though no one asked him to, he could have delivered a lecture in the British Indian Association or published a pamphlet or written an article in the *Bengalee*; the Conference Pandal was not the place for his dissertation. But in any case the question of language was not a determining cause of the secession. Again we do not think it a light thing that a gentleman who fills the important and dignified position of the President of a District Conference, should, after he has been nominated without opposition on the strength of a clear promise, go back upon his word and yet cling to his post. Honour is not a light thing, a public undertaking is not a light thing, and that the President did promise, has been testified to by honest Moderates as well as Nationalists who were present on the occasion. But the seceders did not take this ground for secession, for they had consented, on the strength of Srijut Surendranath's qualified assurance, to the election which, once made, could not be unmade. As to Swaraj, we do not think it an unimportant matter, nor can we see that a District or Provincial Conference is debarred from passing a resolution in its favour; for by this rule several District Conferences, including the Bhola Conference, presided over by Srijut Ambikacharan Majumdar, have forfeited their right to be considered branches of the Congress organization. But we will let that too go, for it was not to pass a resolution on unqualified Swaraj that a second Conference was held. The secession took place because of the arbitrary conduct of the President supported by his party in evading the right of the whole body of delegates to express its opinion effectively on disputed matters and because of the use made by him of his alliance with the Police to support his arbitrary authority.

The emergence of two distinct parties in Indian politics has altered the whole nature of our political problems and our political activity and it is absolutely necessary that the constitution, methods and procedure of the Congress and the subordinate bodies should be constructed accordingly. Formerly it mattered nothing how the Congress was conducted, because there was no overt difference of opinion and whatever the Congress chiefs did or thought good was accepted without question or murmur. If there were dissentients they were easily silenced. But now there are two distinct parties with different ideals, different methods of work, a different spirit and standpoint, each struggling to get the ear of the country and the control of our public activities. It is clear that if these two parties are to live together in the Congress, there must be some procedure which both can recognise as just, some means of determining their relative strength and giving each a means of influencing the course of Congress work in proportion to its strength. This can be done by constituting the Subjects Committee so that each party shall be represented according to the strength it can muster or by allowing each section of the delegates to choose by vote its own representatives; the representatives of both sides can come to an agreement in Committee on disputed points and where agreement is impossible, the majority of votes will decide the matter, subject always to an inalienable right of appeal by amendment to the whole body of delegates. With such rules of procedure there would be no reason why two parties should not exist side by side and the deliberations of the Congress and Conferences be conducted with decorum, order and dignity. But if one side refuses to acknowledge the existence of the other, if it tries, when it cannot ignore it, to put it down by bullying or by the personal authority of its own leaders, and when even that is not possible by what it calls a combination of tact and firmness but the other side calls a mixture of trickery and arbitrariness, when it keeps procedure vague and disregards the rules common to all public assemblies, then to live together seems almost impossible. This is the reason why the fight over the nomination of the President is so unnecessarily bitter. One side feels that it cannot allow the election of a Nationalist President because that would mean official recognition of the right of the other to share in influencing and guiding the Congress work. The other side feels that a Moderate President will simply be an instrument for Moderate tactics, not an impartial speaker of the House. He will rule Nationalist proposals and amendments out of order, refuse to take the sense of the House when called upon and by other arbitrary exercise of his authority serve his party. The rowdiness of which the Moderates complain is simply the clamorous persistence which is the sole means left to the other party to compel justice and a hearing. All this the Nationalists have again and again endured in the hope that by sheer persistence they might get their existence recognised and such rules formulated as would permit of differences being automatically settled. But when the Moderates go so far as to call in a third party is to weigh down the balance in their favour and that third party the common enemy, the bureaucrat and his police, the limit of sufferance is over-passed and nothing is left but to separate before difference of opinion degenerates into civil war. This was the stage which by the grace of Mr. K. B. Dutt was reached at Midnapore. We bring no charge against the Calcutta leaders except that of supporting a man instead of considering the interests of the country; we prefer to believe that they had nothing to do with the underhand methods of their local lieutenant; but the support they rendered him made him impervious to reason and left the Nationalists no recourse but secession. The Nationalist Conference, the Nationalist organisation is now an accomplished fact. If the local Moderates come to their senses a *modus vivendi* may in future be found, but in any case our Conference and Association will remain and work. Midnapore has taken the initiative in giving Nationalism an organised shape and form.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 17th, 1907 }

The Awakening of Gujerat

When the word of the Eternal has gone abroad, when the spirit moves over the waters and the waters stir and life begins to form, then it is a law that all energies are forced to direct themselves consciously or unconsciously, willingly or against their will, to the one supreme work of the time, the formation of the new manifest and organised life which is in process of creation. So now when the waters of a people's life are stirred and the formation of a great organic Indian state and nation has begun, the same law holds. All that the adversaries of the movement have done whether they have tried to repress or tried to conciliate, has helped what they sought to destroy and swelled the volume and strength or purified as by fire the forces of Nationalism. So also the efforts of those among ourselves who are afraid of the new movement or distrustful of it to check the pace and bring back the nation's energies into the old grooves, have only helped to increase the vehemence of the National desire to move forward. When Sir Pherozshah Mehta juggled the Congress into Surat, he thought he was preparing a death-blow for Nationalism: he was only preparing the way for a Nationalist awakening in Gujerat. Nationalism depends for its success on the awakening and organizing of the whole strength of the nation; it is therefore vitally important for Nationalism that the politically backward classes should be awakened and brought into the current of political life; the great mass of orthodox Hinduism which was hardly even touched by the old Congress movement, the great slumbering mass of Islam which has remained politically inert throughout the last century, the shopkeepers, the artisan class, the immense body of illiterate and ignorant peasantry, the submerged classes, even the wild tribes and races still outside the pale of Hindu civilisation, Nationalism can afford to neglect and omit none. It rejoices to see any sign of life where there was no life before, even if the first manifestations should seem to be ill-regulated or misguided. It is not afraid of Pan-Islamism or of any signs of the growth of a separate Mahomedan self-consciousness but rather welcomes them. It is not startled by the spectacle of a submerged class like the Namasudras demanding things which are, under existing circumstances, impracticable from Hindu society. When a community sues for separate rights from the bureaucracy, that is a sign not of life but of stagnant dependence which is death, but when it seeks a larger place in the national existence and it tries to feel its own existence and its own strength, it is a true sign of life, and what Nationalism asks is for life first and above all things; life, life and still more life, is its cry. Let us by every means get rid of the pall of death which stifled us, let us dispel first the passivity, quiescence, the unspeakable oppression of inertia which has so long been our curse; that is the first and imperative need. As with backward communities, so with backward provinces. It is vitally important to Nationalism that these should awake. Bihar, Orissa, the Central Provinces, Gujerat, Sindh must take their place in the advancing surge of Indian political life, must prepare themselves for a high rank in the future federated strength of India. We welcome any signs that the awakening has begun. It is for instance a cause of gratification that Orissa is beginning to feel its separate consciousness, and to attempt to grow into an organised life under a capable and high-spirited leader, although we consider his political attitude mistaken and believe that he is laying up for himself bitter disappointment and disillusionment in the future. But when the inevitable disappointment and disillusionment come, then will the new political consciousness, the new organized life of Orissa become an immense addition of strength to the forces of Nationalism. Yet it remains true that the only way these provinces can make up for lost time and bring themselves up swiftly to the level of the more advanced races, is by throwing themselves whole-heartedly into the full tide of Nationalism, and we do not know that we ought not to thank

Sir Pherozshah for giving us a unique chance to light the fire in Gujerat.

The Gujeratis have only recently been touched by the tide of political life. Largely split up into Native States large and small and only partially under the direct rule of the bureaucracy, immersed in commerce and fairly prosperous until the last great famine swept over the once smiling and fertile province destroying life, human and animal, by the million they had slumbered politically while the rest of India was accustoming itself to some kind of political activity. It was at the Ahmedabad Congress that Gujerat was for the first time moved to a political enthusiasm, an awakening perhaps helped on by the association of a thoroughly Swadeshi Exhibition with the session of the Congress and the inclusion, however timid and half-hearted, of industrial revival in our political programme. Then came the outburst of the Swadeshi by which Gujerat, unlike some of the other politically backward provinces, was profoundly affected. The ground has been prepared and Nationalist sentiment has already spread among the educated Gujeratis. The Surat Congress provides an opportunity to give a fresh and victorious impulse which will make Gujerat Nationalism a powerful working and organized force. The importance of winning Gujerat to the Nationalist cause is great. The Gujeratis labour as the Bengalis did until the present awakening under a reproach of timidity and excessive love of peace and safety. The truth probably is that so far as the reproach has any foundation either in Bengal or Gujerat, the defect was due not so much to any constitutional cowardice as to indolence born of climate and a too fertile soil and to the prevalence of the peaceful and emotional religion of Chaitanya and Vallabhacharya. Be that as it may, Bengal under the awakening touch of Nationalism has wiped out that reproach for ever and there is no reason why Gujerat stirred by the same influences, awakened to the same energy, should not emulate her example and take like her a foremost place in the battle of Swaraj. We must not forget that she also has great traditions of old, traditions of learning, traditions of religion, traditions of courage and heroism. Gujerat was once part of the Rajput circle and her princes fought on equal terms with Mahmud of Ghazni. Her people form valuable and indispensable material for the building of the Indian nation. The savoir-faire, the keen-witted ability and political instinct of her Brahmins, the thrift and industry of her merchants, the robust vigour and common sense of her Patidars, the physique and soldierly qualities of her Kathis and Rajputs, the strong raw human material of her northern and southern hills, are so many elements of strength which Nationalism must seize and weld into a great national force. Even if Sir Pherozshah Mehta overwhelms us with numbers at Surat, even if we cannot carry a single proposition in the Congress Pandal, yet if we can give this great impulse to Gujerat and organize our scattered forces for a great march forward, all the energy, all the expenditure we can devote to this session at Surat will be amply rewarded. It is not merely or chiefly by victories in the Congress but by victories in the country that we must record the progress of Nationalism.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, December 18th, 1907 }

"Capturing the Congress"

We have asked the Nationalists all over India to muster strong at Surat during the Congress session. It is believed in some quarters that we intend to march upon the Congress and re-enact a Pride's Purge. Another insinuation is that we form a band of vain, petulant upstarts who delight in wrecking and breaking for its own sake. The *Bengalee* calls upon the people to repudiate these traitors, and the *Tribune* of Lahore, the *Indu Prakash* and *Social Reformer* of Bombay, the *Indian People* of Allahabad have by this time swelled that cry. The principle that underlay our attempt to get Lajpat elected to the Presidential chair has not been appreciated by the *Punjabee*, the *Hindu* and even Lala Lajpat Rai himself. Capital is being made of this fact and unworthy motives attributed to the Nationalists. Our enemies have got a splendid opportunity to discredit the Nationalist movement by saying that even those who are avowedly sympathetic towards the propaganda cannot support all its senseless manifestation. The emergence of a new school of thought, their vigorous and menacing activity and enthusiasm have always made the votaries of established order uneasy and vindictive. In the frenzied anxiety to retain all power, in a paralysing fear of change they raise a terrible clamour and try to play upon the timidity and the spirit of routine of the unthinking people. They cry for the blood of the new messengers without even patiently listening to their message. Even master-minds succumb to this weakness. When Dr. Price delivered his eloquent sermon on the great impetus given to national freedom by the revolutionary propaganda in France, Burke became quite unnerved and was so much carried away by an unreasonable fear as to wreck his own reputation as a sedate and practical statesman by setting to work to write that hysterical diatribe against the French Revolution which even his admirers could not help regretting.

It is no wonder therefore that the Nationalists should be assailed with the most unjustifiable vehemence in their attempt to awaken and organise the people and to shift the centre of power and authority to them. But while the Nationalists should pursue their line of action with unabated zeal they are also to consider, in view of the fierce and vindictive opposition which they have provoked not only from the bureaucracy but also a section of their own countrymen, whether they should not work in their own way without coming into collusion with those whose ideals and methods of work render any concerted action hardly possible. We invite the Nationalists to Surat not so much to capture the Congress by violence, as our enemies maliciously put it, but to see that the Nationalist sentiment and Nationalist programme find their place in the deliberations and finally prevail. Many of us think that the Nationalists cannot pull on with the Moderates and Loyalists who determined to baffle their patriotic activities to democratise the Congress by a cobweb of malicious misrepresentation and vilification. The Nationalists indulge in no vague charges against the Moderates. They expose their high-handedness with an unequivocal statement of facts. But these people do not meet us on the charges brought against them but try to evade the real issue by irrelevant and senseless denunciations. Under the circumstances some of us thought it wiser and easier for the Nationalists to have an organ of their own, without giving the Moderates and Loyalists a chance of misrepresenting and vilifying them. The experience of the Midnapore Conference shows that the delegates young and old all smart under the autocracy of the old workers, which is leading many to think a separatist movement preferable to a perpetual friction. But for the present we must put all such thoughts from us. It has been decided to continue the attempt to fight out the battle of Nationalism in the Congress Pandal until at last a majority of the delegates declare for our views. To that end we must now devote all our energies.

Lala Lajpat Rai's Refusal

The refusal of Lala Lajpat Rai to accept nomination to the Presidentship of the Congress as against Dr. Rash Behari Ghose has given great cause for rejoicing to the Moderates and to Anglo-Indian journals like the *Empire*. The refusal is natural enough, for when a man who has not been nominated is under such circumstances pressed for a reply to the question whether he will accept nomination or not, he is put into a delicate position in which he must either appear to be wanting in modesty or give away his supporters. This was the dilemma in which the Loyalists have placed Lala Lajpat Rai. Evidently, he has been persuaded to think that he was being asked to stand against Dr. Rash Behari Ghose and that the proposal of the Nationalists was intended as a personal honour to himself. Needless to say, the Nationalists have not asked Lajpat Rai to stand as a candidate. The step they have taken is simply to ask from Dr. Rash Behari Ghose the magnanimity to withdraw and leave the field clear so that a great principle might be vindicated in the most striking way of which the circumstances admitted. Had Dr. Ghose shown that magnanimity there would have been no necessity for Lajpat Rai to be asked to stand as a candidate; the unanimous will of the country would have called him to the Presidential chair. Our proposal was not meant as an invitation to do honour to a particular individual, nor, great as is our personal regard for Lajpat Rai, was it dictated by personal affection. We look upon him as the embodiment of an ideal and his nomination as the nation's answer to the repressions of the bureaucracy. Lala Lajpat Rai, out of feelings which we respect, has declined to give us that opportunity. We are sorry to have lost it, but glad at least that of the two men put forward one should have shown the magnanimity to which the other has not been able to rise.

The Delegates' Fund

Many who are desirous of contributing to the Delegates' Fund, have addressed enquiries to us about the manner in which it is to be disposed of. The object of the fund is to send to Surat a number of delegates with uncompromising views and of an uncompromising spirit who will see to it, so far as lies in their power, that the Congress at Surat shall make no backward step but, if possible, move a step further towards associating itself with the new life of the country. We hope that no attempt will be made to take any backward step, but we know that there is a reactionary element in the Congress which would be only too glad to recede, and if by negligence we give them their opportunity, the responsibility for any backsliding will be ours. We hope also that Bengal will present a solid front against any reaction, but we have no right to be sure of it, and only if there is the strong moral backing of a number of delegates who will not compromise with their principles or allow respect of persons or utter persuasion or browbeating to sway them from their firm position, can we expect the Bengal leaders to stand fast against the pressure that may be brought to bear on them. The delegates who will be assisted out of the fund must therefore pledge themselves to stand firm for Boycott as a general principle for the Swadeshi resolution as it was framed last year, for National Education and Arbitration as prominent planks in the Congress platform and to do their best to see that the Congress takes up the cause of the Transvaal Indians, rejects Mr. Morley's reforms or any other sham and simulacrum of self-government and takes a sensible step forward in the direction of national organisation. The precise proposals which will be pressed upon the Subjects Committee will be formulated after due discussion in the Nationalist Conference which meets on the 24th at Surat, but these are the broad lines on which we propose to frame them. We may mention finally that all we propose to give out of the fund is assistance; no single delegate will be given all his expenses to and from or at Surat. If it should be decided to propose constitutional changes in the direction of democratising the Congress, our delegates will support such proposals. Those, therefore, who contribute to the Fund should understand that they are contributing to send delegates who will support progress and to save the National Assembly from the danger of a disastrous and ignominious relapse into the past methods and ideas which the nation is fast outgrowing and which Bengal has altogether renounced.

Part Five

Speeches

22 December 1907 – 1 February 1908

On 21 December 1907, Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta to attend the Surat session of the Indian National Congress. The next day he addressed a meeting in Nagpur. After the violent break-up of the Congress he passed a few days in Baroda, and then visited a number of cities in Maharashtra at the invitation of Nationalist colleagues. In all of these places he gave speeches, most of which have been preserved in one form or another. See the next page for details.

All told, Sri Aurobindo delivered fourteen speeches in Maharashtra between 22 December 1907 and 1 February 1908. Reports of eleven of them survive. Two were published in the *Bande Mataram* shortly after their delivery. Another was published in the *Mahratta*, an English weekly newspaper. Five others are known only by means of Marathi translations, while three exist only in the form of summaries or transcriptions made by the British police. There are no surviving reports of the remaining three speeches.

22 December 1907	Nagpur	Police report
12 January 1908	Poona	No known report
13 January	Poona	English report
15 January	Bombay	Marathi report
19 January	Bombay	English report
24 January	Nasik	Marathi report
25 January	Nasik	Police report
26 January	Dhulia	Police report
27 January	Akola	No known report
28 January	Amravati	No known report
29 January	Amravati	English report
30 January	Nagpur	Marathi report
31 January	Nagpur	Marathi report
1 February	Nagpur	Marathi report

In the following pages, nine reports are reproduced. Only the two published in *Bande Mataram* may be considered adequate representations of Sri Aurobindo's words. The other reports are expressed in language that is sometimes awkward or defective; they have been edited to a greater or lesser extent to make them more clear and readable.

Our Experiences in Bengal

Babu Aurobindo Ghose paid a flying visit to Poona last week. On Monday evening he delivered an address in the Gaekwar's Wada, under the presidency of Mr. Annasaheb Patwardhan, and told his Poona audience how the new thought and the new movement spread all over Bengal and how the Bengalis were able to do things which were never before thought possible in that province. He referred to the eventful year 1907 and the repressive policy of the Government and observed that though the Government measures of repression were rather severe and fierce when compared with our old experience, they were certainly not as fierce or as severe as those adopted by Governments in other countries. He spoke of the doubting, negative temperament of some of our leaders who always questioned, "Why are you going to do all this? Why are you going so far and so fast? Show us the force on which you rely! Where is the strength? Have you the strength?", as soon as a new thing was proposed to be done.

The lecturer said that he was a superstitious man and always believed that the people would do anything successfully when they really undertook to do it. He told his audience how the Congress movement, though originally very strong in Bengal, had failed to give satisfaction to the people as the methods adopted by the Congress were proved to be fruitless, how the old method of petitioning was not only considered futile but harmful, how the people had grown apathetic and despondent and how this despondent and apathetic mood of the people was converted into an active mood by the repressive measures of Lord Curzon. The Calcutta Municipal Bill was the first of these measures. The Universities Act, passed in spite of universal

Delivered in Poona 13 January 1908. Text (third-person report) published in the Mahratta *(Poona) on 19 January.*

protest, was the next. Last came the Partition of Bengal and this stroke went right through the heart of every Bengali. They at first tried petitions, prayers, meetings, resolutions and protests, but soon found their uselessness. Something had to be done and the Swadeshi movement, which had received no attention when it was first introduced in Bengal, now gained fresh strength. The cry of boycott was first raised in Kishoregunj, in Mymensingh and then in Magura in the district of Jessore, from where it was taken up in Calcutta. The Chinese boycott of American goods had succeeded and the Calcutta people accepted the idea of boycott as excellent. The Calcutta leaders, however, first proclaimed it "impossible". They asked, "Where is the strength of character or the economic strength to do all this?" They considered Swadeshi impossible and boycott still more so. They had no faith in the capacity of their countrymen and said that the movement would fail and those who attempted to spread it would become the laughing-stock of all. But people did not listen to this advice; they said they would try and see if the movement would succeed. The current of public opinion grew so strong that the leaders ultimately had to give their consent to the new movement. They accepted Swadeshi but wanted to have recourse to boycott only for six months to see if the Partition would be withdrawn. The people wanted the boycott to continue and refused to believe that they were too weak for the purpose. They refused to be hypnotised and to consider themselves cowards. It was Swami Vivekananda who preached this doctrine to his countrymen. This was believed by the new party.

Young men and old worked for the movement. The young men took up the work of picketing and sold Swadeshi goods at cost price. When the Government began to check the students and prevent them from helping the new movement they left the Government schools and demanded National schools for their education. In this way the first National school came into existence in Rangpur. Then there arose a necessity for a National University. In this connection also the leaders would not join the new movement and some of the proprietors of private colleges stood against this idea. Yet the people showed sympathy; the liberality of some supplied funds, and the leaders had to give their consent. Bengalis were thought incapable of real and earnest work and it was thought that they would not be prepared for self-sacrifice of any kind. Bengali people were taken to be cowards. This idea had become part of the English literature and was taught to them in schools. The result was that the Bengalis themselves began to believe that they were cowards, that their ancestors were cowards and that their sons and grandsons would all be cowards. But there were men who were not political atheists. They believed in the strength of the nation and were confident that a nation of cowards would be converted into a nation of heroes. That is the difference between a Nationalist and a Moderate; a Nationalist has firm faith in the strength of his people, while a Moderate has only moderate faith or no faith at all. The new thought made Bengali youths strong; they exposed themselves to the attacks of the police and the wrath of the Government, and they were prepared for jail. One of the youths connected with the paper *Yugantar* actually complained that the paper did not publish sufficiently violent articles. Such daring and enthusiasm could now be seen in Bengali youths. The new spirit or Nationalist spirit is an unshakable and absolute confidence in the strength of the nation. People have to take leaps into the dark, for reason is unable to show the way. You must take courage in hand and work. When the work regarding National education was commenced, it was a leap in the dark, but it succeeded.

The lecturer remarked that provinces other than Bengal were in some respects superior to Bengal and therefore ought to be able to do what Bengal succeeded in doing. He said, "We are seeing the light before us, we are walking on God's way, we are going to our ultimate goal surely and swiftly; nothing will daunt us, we welcome ordeals because they make us strong. 'Do as we have done' is the message of Bengal to the whole of India." In concluding his speech the great Bengali editor said that if the whole of India works unitedly, confidently and enthusiastically for the nation, it is sure to reach its goal and attain greatness, prosperity and freedom.

National Education

National Education is a vast subject. When I was told about the topic I did not quite realise its implications at first, but when I started thinking about it I understood its importance. The difficulties about the concept of National Education that are encountered here do not exist in Bengal. Here in the Bombay Province, the meaning of the term "National Education" is not clear to many. National Education, with its specific connotation, is suspect and men of wisdom dismiss it. In Bengal, on the other hand, the need to explain the concept does not even arise. There may be people in favour of it or against it, but National Education is something taken by them as a given fact, as something they have experienced. There is no need in Bengal to explain or discuss it in order to convince people about the sense it carries. But in the Bombay Province, it has only a verbal implication at the moment; it has not yet gone beyond mere talk, and that may be the reason why people are suspicious of it.

Someone here told me that he does not understand what National Education means exactly. Someone else wondered whether there can be anything like National Education at all, particularly in the context of teaching, say, mathematics; he was at a loss to see how this could be called "national". The Honourable Mr. Gokhale does not say that he has failed to understand the meaning of the term "National Education", but it is obvious that he has not really grasped its significance. At the National Congress held in Calcutta, a resolution on National Education was passed unanimously. Unfortunately, since the Congress at Surat did not take place, it could not be introduced there. Mr. Gokhale made certain modifications to the resolution

Delivered in Girgaum, Bombay, on 15 January 1908. Text published in Marathi translation in 1908. Retranslated into English by the editors.

on National Education passed in Calcutta. In his opinion, these modifications are not of much importance. But my opinion is exactly the opposite. Perhaps Mr. Gokhale is not fully aware of the true situation in Bengal with regard to National Education. The word "national" appears in this resolution three times and there is no doubt that it has been done with a certain intention. The alteration suggested by Mr. Gokhale does not speak of National Education; instead it introduces terms such as "independent system of education". That term has a different connotation and it does not really convey what we mean by the phrase "National Education". The Subjects Committee at Calcutta introduced the word "national" three times. It is not for nothing that this was done. National Education must be imparted in a national spirit: this was the resolution passed at Calcutta, and not a single word of it should be altered or dropped.

National Education must be on national lines and under national control. Why do we have to qualify the term "education" by calling it "national"? This question is asked by many. These people maintain that we are not a nation to begin with. According to their thinking, what we call a nation is an imaginary thing, not a reality. In India, they say, there are thousands of castes and subcastes, countless sects and subsects, and any number of religious creeds with differences of opinion and practice; in that case the use of the word "national" in the Indian situation becomes meaningless. But these people do not really understand what is meant by a nation. They suggest that a nation can only come into existence when these castes and creeds are abolished. But this line of argument — that we will have a nation only when everyone in the country has the same religion and there is only one caste — is a fallacious one, for religion and caste are not permanent aspects of a nation. Other people argue that although India is a vast country geographically, still it cannot be termed a nation. But we view it differently. To us, by its very geography the country appears to be quite distinct from other countries, and that itself gives it a certain national character. Italy stands out in the same way, separate from her surroundings, and in thirty years it became an independent nation. The inner and outer body of India, the customs, culture and religion of its people, have an independent character different from those of the rest of the world. It has its foundations in the ancient past.

Those who oppose our view contend that India was never a nation. Let us see then what we mean by the word "nation". When we say that National Education should be imparted, it implies that we need not throw away our traditional background and introduce completely new ideas and ideals. When we look at the history of the country, we find that at one time we had a system of National Education. Look at our philosophy: what is in the individual is also in the universal. A nation is a living entity, full of consciousness; it is not something made up or fabricated. A living nation is always growing; it must grow, it must attain ever loftier heights. This may happen after a thousand years or in the next twenty years, but happen it must.

Our personality, our constitution is made up of three parts. We have three types of body, gross, subtle and causal. In the same way the nation has three bodies. According to our philosophy it is not only the outward appearance, the gross body, that makes a complete man. All three bodies have to be taken into account; only then can we get some understanding of him. As with a man, so with a nation. To think about our nation is first to think about our physical motherland. Stretching from the Himalayas in the north to Kanyakumari in the south, its boundaries are formed by the seas on the east and west. Ganga, Jamuna, Narmada, Krishna, Godavari flow here unceasingly; here are ancient cities, tall and imposing temples, artistically designed palatial homes. Such is the part of this earth we call India. It is this picture, this figure that comes to us when we speak of our nation. This is the gross body of our nation. Bankim Chandra's song *Bande Mataram* describes this aspect very beautifully. Thirty-three crores of people live on this land with their joys and sorrows, their good and bad desires: they are all part of its subtle body. Then there are aspects of the country which may undergo changes in the course of time, yet always remain in the body, in seed-state, as permanent as the atom; they are always present there and, being the origin, it is out of them that the future takes shape. This is the causal body of the nation.

But this is not enough. According to our scriptures, when we think of a man we think not only of his present condition but also of his past and future. The same is true of a country. When we speak of the rivers, mountains and cities of our country, we have in mind not only the present, not at all. What we speak of is a history of five thousand years. When we speak of Delhi and Agra, does not the image of Delhi as it was during Emperor Akbar's time stand before your mind's eye? That is why, in speaking of the nation, we should recall the great achievements of our ancestors; then Shivaji, Asoka and Akbar at once become an integral part of our nationhood. So too the ancient Rishis. This is taken for granted. If we look at Japan, we see that the Japanese people never forget their ancestors who offered their lives as a sacrifice for the sake of their country. This sense of sacrifice is always present in the Japanese blood. When a warrior fights for his country, he recalls those sacrifices. This is something we must learn from Japan. We must learn from the Japanese how to honour our ancestors and evoke the spirit of Nationalism by remembering them. Whatever you do today, you are doing not for your own sake but to pay the debt you owe to them. This you must never forget. Not only your ancestors — the generations to come are also an organic component of your nation. When we envision an Indian nation, it should be along these lines. We should not be carried away by Western advances or cowed by their achievements. What we need is a wide, engaging vision of our nation and of nationalism; our action must match that vision and as a result our nation will produce great philosophers, statesmen, warriors and commanders. I don't say this will happen today, but surely it will happen in the future.

The term "nation" is meaningful and significant; it has not been coined for political convenience. In Bengal, while formulating the concept of National Education, we have kept before us this grand idea of the nation. Let us see how the details have been worked out in consonance with this lofty and noble concept. We shall take the simple subject of geography as an illustration.

Imagine how this subject is presently taught in Government and private schools! The students are told about such-and-such a country with so many districts, with their District Officers and so forth; this is the kind of information imparted in geography classes. But how is it useful? When we teach geography in Bengal according to the ideas of National Education, we teach it in a different way. First we tell the children that India is our Motherland; in this way we make them aware of the gross body of the nation. We tell them about our rivers, Ganga, Jamuna, Narmada, etc., and what these rivers mean, not merely where they flow. In our national schools, when we teach the children about Maharashtra we describe the land in which Shivaji lived. Speaking about Punjab, we tell the children about the Punjab of Ranjit Singh. Speaking about the geography of the Himalayas, we teach them how the land of the Himalayas has become holy because of its Rishis. We also teach the geography of other nations, but what we impart to them is its importance in the context of our country.

As with geography, so the history of the country is taught to the students of Bengal in a national context. We do not attach much importance to how many kings have ruled the country, which king came to power in which year and how long his reign lasted or the date when the Battle of Plassey was fought. What we teach, rather, is how in ancient times the Aryans formed the nation, how today's Marathas became Marathas, how the Bengalis became Bengalis, how the Punjabis became Punjabis. Once the students have understood these things clearly, it does not matter if they fail to know the year of the Battle of Plassey. In short, we believe that true history is not really taught through the present-day Government's method of teaching.

In our national schools in Bengal, as with geography and history, so we teach philosophy based on the national system of education. We explain to the students in our national colleges in what regard our philosophy is greater and more comprehensive than other philosophies in the world. In Government schools the degree-holders know what Schopenhauer has to say, but they have hardly any knowledge of the spiritual foundations of our own thought. It should also be seen that whatever philosophy the students learn in colleges, they should try to put into practice.

Not that the system of National Education we have started is altogether new; it was started long ago by our forefathers. Through this system Shivaji's greatness will remain eternal, Asoka's fame and Akbar's glory will spread across the earth and the grandeur and majesty of our ancient Rishis will be made known throughout the world. From our National Education programmes, nothing useful or worthwhile is discarded.

This kind of national teaching is not provided in Government schools. In those schools the tender minds of our students are overburdened with the European way of thinking. But European thought and the European way of life are quite different from our thought and our way of life. It is true, of course, that when we speak of the development of our own country, we cannot ignore the progress of modern Europe. In our reforms we must certainly include it; whatever is acceptable must be adapted suitably by us. But we have to guard against damaging our foundation in the process. We must make use of Western science as Japan did, but in implementing its ideas we must not be blind to the achievements of our forefathers. For example, in Government medical colleges the students remain unaware of our Ayurvedic science, though there are many occult and valuable truths behind it, to which the Western system has no access. This is not to assert that whatever is ours, is always the best.

In the field of politics we have a lot to learn from the West. The democratic system of government is one thing we must learn from the Europeans. In providing National Education, we do not isolate the students from the political field; in fact we give them first-hand experience of the democratic system of government by making them work alongside us. Simply concerning ourselves with industry or commerce is not enough, and that is exactly what we tell them. No country can rise to its height merely on the basis of trade and commerce. We learn from history that those nations which grew on the strength of trade alone, have perished. Europe pays special attention to formulating policies for the development and growth of its industry and commerce. Yet in our programme of National Education we do impart practical knowledge to our students. In our schools the students learn about science in depth and not just superficially. And they are taught many vocational subjects, such as carpentry and smithy, along with science. The result is that when a student comes out of our schools, he does not find it difficult to earn a monthly wage of twenty-five or thirty rupees.

While imparting such a National Education in a national way, we place special emphasis on creating a future Indian nation. In planning our system of National Education we have to take into account various other systems of education. Principal Paranjape may speak of mathematics alone, but surely that is not enough. The one thought that impels us to provide National Education is this: When will this Indian nation occupy a place in the company of other nations? When will it be great among other nations in the world? Our learned and accomplished people must be great as people in other countries are great. This is always in our mind.

In our schools we give education up to the fifth standard in the mother-tongue of the students; teaching the children through English is harmful. Some people object to the use of Indian languages, saying that our languages do not have an adequate vocabulary for teaching certain subjects. But our answer is simple: first experience it. The seventh standard in our national schools is equivalent to the intermediate courses conducted by the universities. In our colleges we conduct a four-year course. A college student usually studies a single subject and for that purpose special emphasis is given to the use of the English language. In spite of that, English is not given primary importance in the syllabus of our system of National Education; it has the status of a second language.

A student must be able to stand on his own. It is not the objective of National Education to make somebody else carry him on his shoulders. The student must support himself and not look helplessly to others. Self-reliance is the basic principle we diligently try to impart to a student. This is how we have been working in Bengal. We have absolutely no expectation of help from the Government in our endeavour. On the contrary, with Government support our nationalist enthusiasm will disappear.

Perhaps Mr. Gokhale will now understand and appreciate just what we mean by National Education. This may also make it clear why we intended to put a specific resolution about National Education before the National Congress Committee at Surat. What has been done in Bengal I have put before you. If you wish to see for yourselves, you are welcome. Those who have doubts in their minds, those who think that National Education is an impossibility, we challenge you to witness its achievements in Bengal. Come and confirm it for yourselves. National Education in a national way and under national control is what we have started in Bengal. In this work three zamindars have helped us greatly. Raja Subodh Chandra Mallik donated a lakh of rupees, the Maharaja of Mymensingh three lakhs and a zamindar from Gauripur five lakhs. When they offered these donations, they put the condition that they would take back the entire sum if we should accept even a single paisa from the Government. The reason is that when the Government spends money on education, it does so with the specific intention of creating a certain attitude in the minds of the students. That attitude is nothing but loyalty to the Government. Besides, the Government has the intention of introducing public reforms primarily to prove its own good governance.

The Present Situation

My fellow countrymen, Mr. Ranade has said that there is no President here, but that God Himself is our President. I accept that remark in the most reverent spirit, and before addressing you, I ask Him first to inspire me. I have been asked to speak on the "Needs of the Present Situation". What is the present situation? What is the situation of this country today? Just as I was coming in, this paper (*showing a copy of the* Bande Mataram *newspaper*) was put into my hands, and looking at the first page of it, I saw two items of news. "The 'Yugantar' Trial, Judgment delivered, the Printer convicted and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment." The other is "Another Newspaper Prosecution, The 'Nabasakti' Office sacked and searched, Printer let out on a bail of Rs. 10,000." This is the situation of the country today. Do you realise what I mean? There is a creed in India today which calls itself Nationalism, a creed which has come to you from Bengal. This is a creed which many of you have accepted, and you accepted it when you called yourselves Nationalists. Have you realised, have you yet realised what that means? Have you realised what it is that you have taken in hand? Or is it that you have merely accepted it in the pride of a superior intellectual conviction? You call yourselves Nationalists. What is Nationalism? Nationalism is not a mere political programme; Nationalism is a religion that has come from God; Nationalism is a creed in which you shall have to live. Let no man dare to call himself a Nationalist if he does so merely with a sort of intellectual pride, thinking that he is more patriotic, thinking that he is something higher than those who do not call themselves by that name. If you are going to be a Nationalist, if

Delivered in Bombay on 19 January 1908. Text published in the Mahratta *(Poona) on 2 February and in the weekly edition of the* Bande Mataram *on 23 February.*

you are going to assent to this religion of Nationalism, you must do it in the religious spirit. You must remember that you are the instrument of God for the salvation of your own country. You must live as the instruments of God.

What is this that has happened in Bengal? You call yourselves Nationalists, but when this happens to you, what will you do? This thing is happening daily in Bengal, because, in Bengal, Nationalism has come to the people as a religion, and it has been accepted as a religion. But certain forces which are against that religion are trying to crush its rising strength. It always happens when a new religion is preached, when God is going to be born in the people, that such forces rise with all their weapons in their hands to crush this religion. In Bengal too a new religion, a religion divine and sattwic has been preached, and this religion they are trying with all the weapons at their command to crush. By what strength are we in Bengal able to survive? Nationalism has not been crushed. Nationalism is not going to be crushed. Nationalism survives in the strength of God and it is not possible to crush it, whatever weapons are brought against it. Nationalism is immortal; Nationalism cannot die, because it is no human thing. It is God who is working in Bengal. God cannot be killed, God cannot be sent to jail. When these things happen among you, I say to you solemnly, what will you do? Will you do as they do in Bengal? (*Cries of "Yes"*) Don't lightly say "Yes." It is a solemn thing. And suppose that God puts you this question, how will you answer it? Have you got a real faith? Or is it merely a political aspiration? Is it merely a larger kind of selfishness? Or is it merely that you wish to be free to oppress others, as you are being oppressed? Do you hold your political creed from a higher source? Is it God that is born in you? Have you realised that you are merely the instruments of God, that your bodies are not your own? You are merely instruments of God for the work of the Almighty. Have you realised that? If you have realised that, then you are truly Nationalists; then alone will you be able to restore this great nation. In Bengal it has been realised clearly by some, more clearly by others, but it has been realised and you on this side of the country must also realise it;

then there will be a blessing on our work, and this great nation will rise again and become once more what it was in the days of its spiritual greatness. (*Applause*) You are the instruments of God to save the light, to save the spirit of India from lasting obscuration and abasement.

Let me tell you what it is that has happened in Bengal. You all know what Bengal used to be; you all know that "Bengali" used to be a term of reproach among the nations; when people spoke of Bengal, with what feelings did they speak of it? Was it with feelings of respect? Was it with feelings of admiration? You know very well what people of other countries used to say of the Bengali. You know well what you yourselves used to say of the Bengali. Do you think that now? If anybody had told you that Bengal would come forward as the saviour of India, how many of you would have believed it? You would have said, "No. The saviour of India cannot be Bengal; it may be Maharashtra; it may be Punjab; but it will not be Bengal; the idea is absurd." What has happened then? What has caused this change? What has made the Bengali so different from his old self? One thing has happened in Bengal, and it is this, that Bengal is learning to believe. Bengal was once drunk with the wine of European civilisation and with the purely intellectual teaching that it received from the West. It began to see all things, to judge all things through the imperfect instrumentality of the intellect. When it was so, Bengal became atheistic, it became a land of doubters and cynics. But still in Bengal there was an element of strength. Whatever the Bengali believed, if he believed at all — many do not believe — but if he believed at all, there was one thing about the Bengali, that he lived what he believed. If he was a Brahmo, or if he was a social reformer, no matter whether what he believed was true or not, but if he believed, he lived that belief. If he believed that one thing was necessary for the salvation of the country, if he believed that a thing was true and that it should be done, he did not stop to think about it. He would not stop to consider from all intellectual standpoints whether the truth in it was merely an ideal and to balance whether he would do honestly what he believed or whether he could hold the belief intellectually without living it, but without regard to consequences to himself, he went and did what he believed. And if he was not a Brahmo, if he was an orthodox Hindu, still if he really believed what the Hindu shastras taught then he never hesitated to drive even his dearest away, rather than aid by his weakness in corrupting society. He never hesitated to enforce what he believed to the uttermost without thinking of the consequences to himself.

Well, what was the one saving element in the Bengali nature? The Bengali has the faculty of belief. Belief is not a mere intellectual process, belief is not a mere persuasion of the mind, belief is something that is in our heart, and what you believe, you must do, because belief is from God. It is to the heart that God speaks, it is in the heart that God resides. This saved the Bengali. Because of this capacity of belief, we were chosen as the people who were to save India, the people who were to stand foremost, the people who must suffer for their belief, the people who must meet everything in the faith that God was with them and that God is in them. Such a people need not be politically strong, it need not be a people sound in physique, it need not be a people of the highest intellectual standing. It must be a people who can believe. In Bengal there came a flood of religious truth. Certain men were born, men whom the educated world would not have recognised if that belief, if that God within them had not been there to open their eyes, men whose lives were very different from what our education, our Western education, taught us to admire. One of them, the man who had the greatest influence and has done the most to regenerate Bengal, could not read and write a single word. He was a man who had been what they call absolutely useless to the world. But he had this one divine faculty in him, that he had more than faith and had realised God. He was a man who lived what many would call the life of a madman, a man without intellectual training, a man without any outward sign of culture or civilisation, a man who lived on the alms of others, such a man as the English-educated Indian would ordinarily talk of as one useless to society; even if he does not call him a bane to society, he will call him useless to society.

He will say, "This man is ignorant. What does he know? What can he teach me who have received from the West all that it can teach?" But God knew what he was doing. He sent that man to Bengal and set him in the temple of Dakshineshwar in Calcutta, and from North and South and East and West, the educated men, men who were the pride of the university, who had studied all that Europe can teach, came to fall at the feet of this ascetic. The work of salvation, the work of raising India was begun.

Consider the men who are really leading the movement. One thing I will ask you to observe and that is that there are very few who have not been touched by the touch of the sadhu. If you ask who influenced Babu Bipin Chandra Pal, it was a sadhu. Among other men who lead in Bengal is the man who started this paper which is being prosecuted. He is also one of the leading men. You may not know his name here, but he is well-known throughout Bengal, and he had done much to forward this movement (*Cries of "Bande Mataram"*); he is a man who has lived the life of a sadhu, and taken his inspiration and strength from that only source from which inspiration and strength can come. I spoke to you the other day about national education, and I spoke of a man who had given his life to that work, the man who really organised the National College in Calcutta, and that man also is a disciple of a sannyasin, that man also though he lives in the world lives like a sannyasin, and if you take the young workers in Bengal, men that have come forward to do the work of God, what will you find? What is their strength? What is the strength which enables them to bear all the obstacles that come in their way and to resist all the oppression that threatens them? Let me speak a word to you about that. There is a certain section of thought in India which regards Nationalism as "madness". The men who think like that are men of great intellectual ability, men who have studied deeply, who have studied economics, who have studied history, men who are entitled to respect, men from whom you would naturally accept leading and guidance, and they say that Nationalism will ruin the country. What is it that makes them talk like this? Many of them are patriots, many of them are thoroughly sincere and honest, many of them desire the good of the country. What is it that is wanting in them? This is wanting. They are men who have lived in the pure intellect only and they look at things purely from the intellectual standpoint. What does the intellect think? What must it tell you if you also consult the intellect merely? Here is a work that you have undertaken, a work so gigantic, so stupendous, the means for which are so poor, the resistance to which will be so strong, so organised, so disciplined, so well-equipped with all the weapons that science can supply, with all the strength that human power and authority can give, and what means have you with which to carry out this tremendous work of yours? If you look at it intellectually, and these men look at it from the intellectual standpoint, it is hopeless. Here are these men who are being prosecuted. How are they going to resist? They cannot resist. They have to go straight to jail. Well, these gentlemen argue and they are arguing straight from the intellect, they ask, "How long will you be able to resist like that? How long will this passive resistance work? All your leaders, all your strong men will be sent to jail, you will be crushed, and not only will you be crushed, the nation will be completely crushed." If you argue from the intellect, this seems to be true. I cannot tell you of any material weapon with which you will meet those who are commissioned to resist your creed of Nationalism when you try to live it. If you ask what material weapons we have got, I must tell you that material weapons may help you no doubt but if you rely wholly upon material weapons, then what they say is perfectly true, that Nationalism is a madness.

Of course there is another side to it. If you say that Nationalism cannot avail, then again I ask the intellect of these people, what will avail? Intellectually speaking, speaking from the Moderates' standpoint, what will avail? What do they rely upon? They rely upon a foreign force in the country. If you do not rely upon God, if you do not rely upon something mightier than material strength, then you will have to depend solely upon what others can give. There are men who think that what God cannot give for the salvation of India, the British Government will give. What you cannot expect from God, you are going to expect from the British Government. Your expectation is vain. Their interests are not yours, their interests are very different from yours, and they will do what their interests tell them. You cannot expect anything else. What then does this intellectual process lead you to? This intellectual process, if it is used honestly, if it is followed to the very end, leads you to despair. It leads you to death. You have nothing which can help you, because you have no material strength at present which the adversary cannot crush, and the adversary will certainly not be so foolish as to help you, or to allow you to develop the necessary strength unmolested. What then is the conclusion? The only conclusion is that there is nothing to be done. The only conclusion is that this country is doomed. That is the conclusion to which this intellectual process will lead you.

I was speaking at Poona on this subject, and I told them of my experience in Bengal. When I went to Bengal three or four years before the Swadeshi movement was born, to see what was the hope of revival, what was the political condition of the people, and whether there was the possibility of a real movement, what I found there was that the prevailing mood was apathy and despair. People had believed that regeneration could only come from outside, that another nation would take us by the hand and lift us up and that we have nothing to do for ourselves. Now that belief has been thoroughly broken. They had come to realise that help cannot come from this source, and then they had nothing to rely upon. Their intellects could not tell them of any other source from which help could come, and the result was that apathy and despair spread everywhere, and most of the workers who were really honest with themselves were saying that there was no help for this nation and that we were doomed. Well, this state of despair was the best thing that could have happened for Bengal, for it meant that the intellect had done its best, that the intellect had done all that was possible for it, and that the work of the unaided intellect in Bengal was finished. The intellect having nothing to offer but despair became quiescent, and when the intellect ceased to work, the heart of Bengal was open and ready to receive the voice of God whenever

He should speak. When the message came at last, Bengal was ready to receive it and she received it in a single moment, and in a single moment the whole nation rose, the whole nation lifted itself out of delusions and out of despair, and it was by this sudden rising, by this sudden awakening from dream that Bengal found the way of salvation and declared to all India that eternal life, immortality and not lasting degradation was our fate. (*Applause*) Bengal lived in that faith. She felt a mightier truth than any that earth can give, because she held that faith from God and was able to live in that faith.

Then that happened which always happens when God brings other forces to fight against the strength which He Himself has inspired. Because it is always necessary for the divinely appointed strength to grow by suffering; without suffering, without the lesson of selflessness, without the moral force of self-sacrifice, God within us cannot grow. Sri Krishna cannot grow to manhood unless he is called upon to work for others, unless the Asuric forces of the world are about him and work against him and make him feel his strength. Therefore in Bengal there came a time, after the first outbreak of triumphant hope, when all the material forces that can be brought to bear against Nationalism were gradually brought into play, and the question was asked of Bengal, "Can you suffer? Can you survive?" The young men of Bengal who had rushed forward in the frenzy of the moment, in the inspiration of the new gospel they had received, rushed forward rejoicing in the new-found strength and expecting to bear down all obstacles that came in their way, were now called upon to suffer. They were called upon to bear the crown, not of victory, but of martyrdom. They had to learn the real nature of their new strength. It was not their own strength, but it was the force which was working through them, and they had to learn to be the instruments of that force.

What is it that we have learned then? What is the need of the situation of which I am to tell you today? It is not a political programme. I have spoken to you about many things. I have written about many things, about Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education, Arbitration and other subjects. But there was one truth that I have always tried, and those who have worked with me have also tried to lay down as the foundation stone of all that we preached. It is not by any mere political programme, not by National Education alone, not by Swadeshi alone, not by Boycott alone, that this country can be saved. Swadeshi by itself may merely lead to a little more material prosperity, and when it does, you might lose sight of the real thing you sought to do in the glamour of wealth, in the attraction of wealth and in the desire to keep it safe. In other subject countries also, there was material development; under the Roman Empire there was material development, there was industrial progress, but industrial progress and material development did not bring life to the nation. When the hour of trial came, it was found that these nations which had been developing industrially, which had been developing materially, were not alive. No, they were dead and at a touch from outside they crumbled to pieces. So, do not think that it is any particular programme or any particular method which is the need of the situation. These are merely ways of working; they are merely particular concrete lines upon which the spirit of God is working in a nation, but they are not in themselves the one thing needful.

What is the one thing needful? What is it that has helped the older men who have gone to prison? What is it that has been their strength, that has enabled them to stand against all temptations and against all dangers and obstacles? They have had one and all of them consciously or unconsciously one overmastering idea, one idea which nothing can shake, and this was the idea that there is a great power at work to help India, and that we are doing what it bids us. Often they do not understand what they are doing. They do not always realise who guides or where he will guide them; but they have this conviction within, not in the intellect but in the heart, that the power that is guiding them is invincible, that it is almighty, that it is an immortal and irresistible power and that it will do its work. They have nothing to do. They have simply to obey that power. They have simply to go where it leads them. They have only to speak the words that it tells them to speak, and to do the thing that it tells them to do. If the finger points them to prison, to the prison they go. Whatever it bids them to endure, they gladly endure. They do not know how that enduring will help, and the worldly-wise people may tell them that it is impolitic, that by doing this they will be wasting the strength of the country, they will be throwing the best workers away, they are not saving up the forces of the country. But we know that the forces of the country are other than outside forces. There is only one force, and for that force, I am not necessary, you are not necessary, he is not necessary. Neither myself nor another, nor Bipin Chandra Pal, nor all these workers who have gone to prison. None of them is necessary. Let them be thrown as so much waste substance, the country will not suffer. God is doing everything. We are not doing anything. What He bids us suffer, we suffer because the suffering is necessary to give others strength. When He throws us away, He does so because we are no longer required. If things become worse, we shall have not only to go to jail, but give up our lives and if those who seem to stand in front or to be absolutely indispensable are called upon to throw their bodies away, we shall then know that that also is wanted, that this is a work that God has asked us to do, and that in the place of those who are thrown away, God will bring many more. He Himself is behind us. He Himself is the worker and the work. (*Applause*) He is immortal in the hearts of His people. Faith then is what we have in Bengal. Some of us may not have it consciously; some may not call it by that particular name. As I said, we have developed intellectuality, we have developed it notably and we are still much dominated by it. Many have come to this belief through the longing to live for their countrymen, to suffer for their countrymen, because God is not only here in me, He is within all of you; it is God whom I love, it is God for whom I wish to suffer. (*Applause*) In that way many have come to do what God bade them do and He knows which way to lead a man. When it is His will, He will lead him aright.

Another thing, which is only another name for faith, is selflessness. This movement in Bengal, this movement of Nationalism is not guided by any self-interest, not at the heart of it. Whatever there may be in some minds, it is not, at the heart of it, a political self-interest that we are pursuing. It is a religion which we are trying to live. It is a religion by which we are trying to realise God in the nation, in our fellow-countrymen. We are trying to realise Him in the three hundred millions of our people. We are trying, some of us consciously, some of us unconsciously, we are trying to live not for our own interests, but to work and to die for others. When a young worker in Bengal has to go to jail, when he is asked to suffer, he does not feel any pang in that suffering, he does not fear suffering. He goes forward with joy. He says, "The hour of my consecration has come, and I have to thank God now that the time for laying myself on His altar has arrived and that I have been chosen to suffer for the good of my countrymen. This is the hour of my greatest joy and the fulfilment of my life." (*Loud applause*) This is the second aspect of our religion, and is the absolute denial of the idea of one's separate self, and the finding of one's higher eternal Self in the three hundred millions of people in whom God Himself lives.

The third thing, which is again another name for faith and selflessness, is courage. When you believe in God, when you believe that God is guiding you, believe that God is doing all and that you are doing nothing, what is there to fear? How can you fear when it is your creed, when it is your religion, to throw yourself away, to throw your money, your body, your life and all that you have, away for others? What is it that you have to fear? There is nothing to fear. Even when you are called before the tribunals of this world, you can face them with courage. Because your very religion means that you have courage. Because it is not you, it is something within you. What can all these tribunals, what can all the powers of the world do to that which is within you, that Immortal, that Unborn and Undying One, whom the sword cannot pierce, whom the fire cannot burn, whom the water cannot drown? Him the jail cannot confine and the gallows cannot end. What is there that you can fear when you are conscious of Him who is within you? Courage is then a necessity, courage is natural and courage is inevitable. If you rely upon other forces, supposing that you are a Nationalist in the European sense, meaning in a purely materialistic sense, that is to say, if you want to replace the dominion of the foreigner by the dominion of somebody else, it is a purely material change; it is not a religion, it is not that you feel for the three hundred millions of your countrymen, that you want to raise them up, that you want to make them all free and happy. It is not that, but you have got some idea that your nation is different from another nation and that these people are outsiders and that you ought to be ruling in their place. What you want is not freedom for your countrymen, but you want to replace the rule of others by yours. If you go in that spirit, what will happen when a time of trial comes? Will you have courage? Will you face it? You will see that is merely an intellectual conviction that you have, that is merely a reason which your outer mind suggests to you. Well, when it comes to be put to the test, what will your mind say to you? What will your intellect say to you? It will tell you, "It is all very well to work for the country, but, in the meanwhile, I am going to die, or at least to be given a great deal of trouble, and when the fruit is reaped, I shall not be there to enjoy it. How can I bear all this suffering for a dream?" You have this house of yours, you have this property, you have so many things which will be attacked, and so you say, "That is not the way for me." If you have not the divine strength of faith and unselfishness, you will not be able to escape from other attachments, you will not like to bear affliction simply for the sake of a change by which you will not profit. How can courage come from such a source? But when you have a higher idea, when you have realised that you have nothing, that you are nothing and that the three hundred millions of people of this country are God in the nation, something which cannot be measured by so much land, or by so much money, or by so many lives, you will then realise that it is something immortal, that the idea for which you are working is something immortal and that it is an immortal power which is working in you. All other attachments are nothing. Every other consideration disappears from your mind, and, as I said, there is no need to cultivate courage. You are led on by that power. You are protected through life and death by One who survives.

In the very hour of death, you feel your immortality. In the hour of your worst sufferings, you feel you are invincible.

Now I have told you that these three things are the need of the present situation, because, as I said, the situation is this: You have undertaken a work, you have committed yourselves to something which seems to be materially impossible. You have undertaken a work which will raise the mightiest enemies whom the earth can bring forward. As in the ancient time, when the Avatars came, there were also born the mightiest Daityas and Asuras to face the Avatars, so it always is. You may be sure that if you embrace this religion of Nationalism, you will have to meet such tremendous forces as no mere material power can resist. The hour of trial is not distant, the hour of trial is already upon you. What will be the use of your intellectual conviction? What will be the use of your outward enthusiasm? What will be the use of your shouting "Bande Mataram"? What will be the use of all the mere outward show when the hour of trial comes? Put yourselves in the place of those people who are suffering in Bengal, and think whether they have the strength, and whether, if it comes to you, you have the strength to meet it. With what strength shall we meet it? How can we work invincibly? How can we meet it and survive? Can you answer that question? I have tried to show you that not by your material strength can you meet it. Have you the other strength in you? Have you realised what Nationalism is? Have you realised that it is a religion that you are embracing? If you have, then call yourselves Nationalists; and when you have called yourselves Nationalists, then try to live your Nationalism. Try to realise the strength within you, try to bring it forward so that everything you do may be not your own doing, but the doing of that Truth within you. Try so that every hour that you live shall be enlightened by that presence, that every thought of yours shall be inspired from that one fountain of inspiration, that every faculty and quality in you may be placed at the service of that immortal power within you. Then you will not say, as I have heard so many of you say, that people are so slow to take up this idea, that people are so slow to work, that you have no fit leaders, and that all your great men tell you a different thing and none of them is ready to come forward to guide you in the path that is pointed out. You will have no complaints to make against others, because then you will not need any leader. The leader is within yourselves. If you can only find Him and listen to His voice, then you will not find that people will not listen to you, because there will be a voice within the people which will make itself heard. That voice and that strength is within you. If you feel it within yourselves, if you live in its presence, if it has become yourselves, then you will find that one word from you will awake an answering voice in others, that the creed which you preach will spread and will be received by all and that it will not be very long, as in Bengal it has not been very long, it has not taken a century or fifty years, it has only taken three years to change the whole nation, to give it a new spirit and a new heart and to put it in front of all the Indian races. From Bengal has come the creed of Nationalism, and from Bengal has come the example of Nationalism. Bengal which was the least respected and the most looked down on of all the Indian races for its weakness has within these three years changed so much, simply because the men there who were called to receive God within themselves were able to receive Him, were able to bear, to suffer and to live in that Power, and by living in that Power, they were able to give it out. And so in three years the whole race of Bengal has been changed, and you are obliged to ask in wonder, "What is going on in Bengal?" You see a movement which no obstacle can stop, you see a great development which no power can resist, you see the birth of the Avatar in the nation, and if you have received God within you, if you have received that Power within you, you will see that God will change the rest of India in even a much shorter time, because the Power has already gone forth, and is declaring itself, and when once declared, it will continue its work with ever greater and greater rapidity. It will continue its work with the matured force of Divinity until the whole world sees and until the whole world understands Him, until Sri Krishna who has now hid Himself in Gokul, who is now among the poor and despised of the earth, who is now among the cow-herds of Brindaban, will reveal Himself, will declare the Godhead, and the whole nation will rise, the whole people of this great country will rise, filled with divine power, filled with the inspiration of the Almighty, and no power on earth shall resist it, and no danger or difficulty shall stop it in its onward course. (*Loud and continued applause*) Because God is there, and it is His Mission, and He has something for us to do. He has a work for His great and ancient nation. Therefore He has been born again to do it, therefore He is revealing Himself in you, not that you may be like other nations, not that you may rise merely by human strength to trample underfoot the weaker peoples, but because something must come out from you which is to save the whole world. That something is what the ancient Rishis knew and revealed, and that is to be known and revealed again today, it has to be revealed to the whole world, and in order that He may reveal Himself, you must first realise Him in yourselves, you must shape your lives, you must shape the life of this great nation so that it may be fit to reveal Him and then your task will be done, and you will realise that what you are doing today is no mere political uprising, no mere political change, but that you have been called upon to do God's work. (*Loud and continued applause*)

The Meaning of Swaraj

Thank you for the welcome you have accorded me, which I do not deserve, because whatever I do is not done by me of my own accord. My actions are dictated by God. I am simply an instrument in His hands. The welcome should, therefore, be presented to Him and not to me. Let us thank Him.

I have hitherto been a writer and not an orator, but circumstances forced me to try my hand at oratory. I have not fixed the subject of my speech, but at the request of some friends I will speak to you on Swaraj. Unfortunately I am not accustomed to make speeches and may deviate from the subject. Within the past two or three years, either by a stroke of fortune or by divine inspiration, a new movement or, in other words, power has been created in our country, but the goal to be attained was vague until last year when the old patriot Dadabhai Naoroji in his Presidential address at the National Congress in Calcutta said, "We must have Swaraj on the lines granted to Canada and Australia, which is our sole aim." The true definition of Swaraj was given by Dadabhai Naoroji in his speech after the session of the Congress. Swaraj means administration of affairs in a country by her own people on their own strength in accordance with the welfare of the people without even nominal suzerainty, which is the object which we wish to attain. We had forgotten it for a time and feared to speak about it. We were far away from the truth and we had forgotten it, and on that account we have been reduced to a bad condition. If we do not acquaint ourselves with the object in view, viz., Swaraj, I am afraid we, thirty crores of people, will become extinct. The people of Maharashtra must

Delivered in Nasik on 24 January 1908. Text published in Marathi translation in the Nasik Vritta *the next day. Retranslated into English and included in the Bombay Presidency Police* Abstract of Intelligence.

have some recollection of Swaraj, because a century ago you represented it.

Swaraj is life, it is nectar and salvation. Swaraj in a nation is the breath of life. Without breath of life a man is dead. So also without Swaraj a nation is dead. Swaraj being the life of a nation it is essential for it. History shows the fate of nations without Swaraj. In ancient times the Romans had extended their sovereignty over many countries as England has done at present, and under their sovereignty the people of other countries enjoyed as we are now enjoying all the comforts of a peaceful reign. Their lives and properties were all secure as ours are, but in spite of all this, it was said that the people under the sway of the Roman Empire came to grief with its downfall, and were harassed by savage people. The reason is, they had no Swaraj. After a lapse of centuries they stood on their own legs and established for themselves Swaraj and became happy. It is for this reason that Swaraj is essentially needed, and is to be gained by our own exertions. If it is gained otherwise, which is impossible, it cannot last long for want of strength in us. One way of gaining it is to implore the sovereign, who holds our realm, but he won't give it. Unfortunately there still exists a party of men who still cling to the idea that we shall obtain Swaraj by asking for it, which is to be regretted. This party thinks that we are not capable of managing our own affairs, that we are being trained in that direction and that our benign English Government will extend Swaraj to us by degrees. But they do not understand that it is against human nature — Indians excepted. The English value the importance of India. Its possession gives them status. If they once allow India to slip from their grasp, they will become a nonentity. Under such circumstances it is silly to say that the English will train us and entrust us with Swaraj. By reposing confidence in the English people we are already reduced to a miserable condition and in the end will become extinct. Another way of obtaining Swaraj is to seek aid from a neighbouring nation. But this means jumping from the frying-pan into the fire. No matter from whom we seek assistance their own interests will first be considered. We should, therefore, acquire it by our own efforts.

The question therefore arises as to how we should do it. We do not possess Swaraj nor have we the power to retain it. The answer is, we cannot master the art of swimming unless we struggle in the water. We should, therefore, be prepared to undergo hardships in the struggle for Swaraj, as there is no other alternative. We want Swaraj, which means independence, but independence cannot be had unless we are independent. As God created us independent we should be full of inspirations. With full faith in God we should preach independence through the length and breadth of the country and a beginning should be made to impart national education. The English erred in the beginning in spreading their education, which they now regret, and on this account Lord Curzon adopted a new policy. People should take into their own hands judicial and executive work. They should get their disputes settled by arbitration. Look at the change which has been wrought during the past two years by the Swadeshi movement and boycott. With these two measures we are bound to obtain good results. We, Bengalis, have adopted all these measures and have been successful. If these measures are universally adopted, we shall have more than half of Swaraj in our hands. The opposition will not sleep over it. It's all known in England. Our idea of the struggle for Swaraj is that it is the commandment of God, which we must obey. To oppose it is not in our power. That Bengalis inspired with this idea do not fear fine, incarceration, deportation or the extreme penalty of the law, is a well-known fact. If a Bengali lad is punished in connection with the Swadeshi movement, he smiles and says it does not matter much; we have gone another step in the direction of our goal.

O inhabitants of Maharashtra, since you and Bengalis are stirring to attain one end and as we are all sons of Aryabhumi, let us all jointly set ourselves to the task of bringing about a state of things in accordance with the commandment of God. We, Bengalis, depend upon you because the sons of Maharashtra were brave soldiers a short while ago. You enjoyed Swaraj when you were harassed by Mahomedans. A similar commandment was conveyed to you through Tukaram, Ramdas and others, and in obedience to this commandment all Marathas joined. Shivaji, the warrior, came from you, and Swaraj was established in Maharashtra. The poor were rescued from molestation by the wicked and the country prospered. The present state of affairs is similar. The present agitation is not the creation of man. It is divine inspiration. It is the commandment of God. Human beings are the instruments to carry it out. There must be unity among us and we are getting united. If we, thirty crores of people, unite with a firm resolution for the sake of truth, the commandment of God and His will will be done and the foe will share the fate of the mountain of ashes which disappeared with a strong current of wind. We are all God's creatures, and if all from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin) are brought together, it will be seen that our country is just as big as it is described in our *kavyas*. If we, imbued with this idea, become united with a firm resolution to obey the commandment of God, I feel sure we shall gain our Swaraj in twenty years. It won't take centuries as our enemies, the Anglo-Indians, imagine, nor will it take half a century as predicted by our Moderates. We, the Bengalis, whom the English consider effeminate, have commenced our work and we shall, by the grace of God, prove ourselves to be the sons of brave men in the eyes of the world.

Swadeshi and Boycott

Mr. Gadre and fellow countrymen,

There are four subjects which usually form the subject matter of a Nationalist's speech. They are, first, Swadeshi; second, boycott; third, Swaraj; and fourth, national education. Swadeshi is the method, the way, the road by which the nation advances. Boycott is only the other side of Swadeshi, and both the Swadeshi and the boycott movements are actually encouraged in principle in the greater part of this country. National education is the training of the mind and heart of the younger generation. Swaraj is the goal of our national life. Our political efforts are directed to Swadeshi, boycott, Swaraj and national education, which have been recognised by all in Bengal.

Today I wish to speak to you about two of these subjects because they go together. Swadeshi and boycott, as we understand them in Bengal, have been put as a single expression. There is no difference of opinion in Bengal as regards Swadeshi and boycott. Both parties entirely agree that boycott is an essential part of political progress. When we speak of Swadeshi, we ought clearly to understand the meaning of the word. Swadeshi is the preference for articles produced by Indian labour in India itself. The use and consumption of such articles defines the Swadeshi movement. When we speak of boycott, it is generally understood that boycott is the determination to exclude foreign products, the determination not to use articles of foreign manufacture.

Now the meaning of Swadeshi and boycott, as we Nationalists understand them, is wider and larger than Swadeshi and boycott as defined by others, owing to the commercial and industrial circumstances of the country. There are three kinds

Delivered in Dhulia on 26 January 1908. Text noted down in shorthand and later typed by a police agent. This transcription was submitted as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial (1908-09).

of Swadeshi. When Swadeshi was first started in Bengal, Lord Minto said at the Commercial Exhibition in Calcutta that he approved of Swadeshi. Our Swadeshi, according to Lord Minto, is the determination to encourage Indian manufacture and the use of Indian goods when they are as good as English manufactures and can be got at a cheaper price. That is the economic principle preached by English economists. Lord Minto says that if Swadeshi excludes the goods of other countries it ceases to be an honest attempt for the industry of this country. There is another kind of Swadeshi which is more developed. We shall encourage Indian labour, Indian manufacture, Indian articles, preferring our own goods by giving them a little stimulus. This idea of Swadeshi brings in the principle of preference and protection. The third kind of Swadeshi adopts the principle of using our own Indian manufactures, our own Indian goods, and not using foreign articles if Indian articles can be had. These are the three kinds of Swadeshi and the third kind of Swadeshi absolutely depends upon the boycott.

Boycott, it is objected, brings in an element of hatred, political struggle and of political animosity. Boycott has a double aspect. There is a commercial boycott which is used as a political weapon. It is not open to the charge that it brings in animosity, hatred and political struggle. The management of our own country is not in our hands. It is in the hands of a people whose trade interests are opposed to ours. The management is in the hands of a people who have adopted the doctrine of free trade, an unalterable principle which they are not going to sacrifice for any reason. It is the principle of free trade which has been unanimously adopted by Englishmen. They want free trade. England gets every advantage of free trade. But other countries cannot accept the principle of free trade. This is not an expression of political hatred of one nation to another. Boycott is not an expression of political hatred but a means of self-defence. The Governments of countries such as France and America declare that they will not use English tea. We want tea produced and developed in our own country; therefore we want to pass a law that no English tea is to be brought in unless it pays a heavy duty.

But the Government in India is not in our hands and it is not for our protection. Therefore the only remedy, the only weapon is to boycott foreign goods. We are simply following the same policy as other Governments. We will not use the manufactured articles of Manchester. We want to develop the cotton industry in India. The whole of India will be employed for producing our own goods. We shall not use Manchester goods at all; we shall use goods produced and manufactured in our country. The object of the boycott of foreign goods is self-protection. When boycott comes by an effort of a nation and by an effort of its people, it protects the trade of the country. Every nation has a right to protect its life from starvation and famine, just as everyone is entitled to the right of self-defence. It is the exercise of a natural right which no one can prevent. It is allowed by the principles of political economy and there is no law and there can be no law to prevent this. This is a perfectly legitimate duty allowed by the law and sanctioned by the principles of political economy. There is nothing to be afraid of, if we follow these principles.

There is another aspect of boycott — the political aspect. Certain people think that commercial boycott is not possible and is contrary to the principles of economy, but that boycott can be used as a political weapon. Mr. Gokhale holds that opinion and he strongly supported the principle of boycott at the Benares Congress. He said that the boycott of all foreign goods is not possible, but he thought that this political boycott will be effective in bringing a redress of certain grievances of our country.

This political use of boycott has special relation to the Partition of Bengal. It is proved that in Bengal boycott was first declared as a protest against the Partition; it was declared when there was a great agitation in Bengal. Meetings were held to protest against the Partition; petitions were presented but with no success. When there was no remedy left, somebody suggested that boycott would be very good and the whole of Bengal accepted boycott. It was accepted by leaders who were of all political opinions. Meetings were held and the leaders of the Moderate parties accepted it as a political weapon, as a means of bringing pressure upon the British Government to annul the Partition. Everything had failed, our petitions and protests were not heard, so we wanted to bring pressure upon the British people. We thought that boycott was the only pressure which told upon the pockets and material interests of England. This was the idea which was approved by all in Bengal, and boycott was first adopted in Bengal for a period of six months as a form of political agitation. If it was successful, boycott would become a prominent part of our political activity. But since the British public might feel that after six months we would give up, a sort of proviso was attached: we would boycott British goods until the Partition was rescinded. But when the leaders signed and returned the paper, that proviso was crossed out and they all took oath without limit of time or proviso. What induced them? Why should they strike out the proviso? The reason was that we in Bengal held that boycott was not really a political weapon, but was something wider and deeper. It was about national activity, which had nothing to do with the Partition. Partition was an exciting cause. It was merely the blow which opened our eyes suddenly. It induced the people enthusiastically, unanimously to seize upon the boycott.

I have told you that Swadeshi and boycott are the road, the way which leads to the goal. Swadeshi and boycott are the way to the goal of Swaraj. There has been much discussion about the definition of Swaraj. Swaraj has been defined as self-government. It has been defined by Dadabhai Naoroji as a self-governing colony. In our view, self-government is merely one aspect of Swaraj. We believe that India itself is entirely a separate nation. As a nation it is not part of the Anglo-Saxons. When we speak of Swaraj we mean the principle of national life independent of any form of government. The word Swaraj is not a new word but an old one. It is as old as literature and civilisation. The meaning of Swaraj, in our ancient literature, is the spiritual condition of the soul which attains to Mukti. When the soul is independent of everything but itself, when it exists in the joy of its light and greatness, when it is Mukta, that is Swaraj. According to our ancient philosophy, *sarvam paravasham duhkham sarvam* *atmavasham sukham*: All dependence upon others is misery; all dependence upon ourselves is bliss. This is the fundamental truth. To get rid of Maya, bondage, is the ideal of our ancient religion. It is the sole object of human existence, human life.

Let us apply the word Swaraj to national life. The national soul desires a reformed life. The national self is our Swaraj. The national self magnifies the national soul, that is, the soul of three hundred millions. The history of the world teaches us that when a nation is dependent it begins to decay, it begins to lose its power; it loses its strength, it loses its manhood and lastly it is broken to pieces and becomes weak and helpless. This is what history teaches us and what reason tells us. Our nation does not depend upon itself but depends upon others; therefore it is in an unsound, unhealthy and diseased condition. The end of a disease is death and if the nation consents to that disease it will decay and death is certain. Before the Swadeshi movement was started, we were in a state of perfect dependence. Even now, the entire management of our country is in the hands of foreigners; we have become absolutely like Fakirs; we have become dependent upon foreign food and guidance. The management of India is entirely directed by others; we have to look to a foreign nation for our life. The whole life of India would come to a standstill if our food ran short. Sugar, salt and such articles of daily use would be cut off; we would be reduced to a condition never seen before in the history of our country. We have now to look to a foreign nation for our ideals, for what is right and wrong, for the best things to learn. By a foreign way of living, by a foreign education we have sought to cease to be Indians, to adopt a new way of life. That was the condition and tendency before the Swadeshi movement was started. Now the boycott is not essentially a political movement, it is a movement of old times; it is the movement to recover the freedom of a nation, a national life; it is the desire to live for ourselves. That is the meaning of Swaraj; that is called Swadeshi. It is an intellectual change, it is a spiritual change, it is a political change. National independence is Swaraj. Swadeshi is that which belongs to our own country. When applied to industry and commerce it means the preference for our own articles produced by Indian labour and the exclusion of articles produced by the labour of foreign people.

National education: — The object of our educational movement is to establish self-government in India. It is an education which shall create Indians, not Englishmen, citizens of the Indian nation; this will prolong the life of India. It means gradually giving up schools and colleges under foreign control, the objects of which are directed by a foreign element. The schools and colleges in which we are taught give us an education which does not develop our intellectual capacity. Education in English schools and colleges has cut us off from our ancient strength; it is an education which does not fit our ancient strength. The education we receive is narrow, meagre and incomplete. We want to establish an education of our own in India.

New movements in Bengal are slowly coming forward one by one. The movement in Bengal took the idea of boycott and applied it to foreign education. Our education is based on Swadeshi. It seeks to establish an educational system which springs from our ancient system so that we do not ruin ourselves, pecuniarily, morally and intellectually, as well as physically. There is also a movement of arbitration, a movement to establish arbitration courts to settle disputes among ourselves, instead of going to law-courts managed under foreign laws. We seek to settle disputes among ourselves in preference to the present costly system, which is doing harm to our nation. Both these movements seek to develop our national energies and the habit of independence; that is the real meaning of Swadeshi as we understand it in Bengal.

I am addressing you in the English language. I am an Indian. You are all Indians. I am trying to preach to the nation certain ideas which will bring prosperity to our country. I got my education in England, and so I can express my thoughts best in English. It shows how unnatural was our life which existed in the nineteenth century. When I speak in English, a foreign language, a certain number will understand me, a certain number will partly understand and a certain number will not understand at all. Those who speak in a foreign language, are not really able to throw themselves out in that language because that language is not their own. There are some people in Bengal who speak no other language than English; this shows how unnatural our way of life has become. This is the result of foreign dependence. Now in Bengal, after the Swadeshi movement, if a speaker rises to speak, he has to speak in Bengali. If he begins in any other language, he is commanded by the audience to speak in Bengali. We are Swadeshi, we want you to speak in Swadeshi language, we want our things Swadeshi; we want that which belongs to us. We want to boycott the things which do not belong to our country. We don't want foreign government, we want a state of independence. By our medium of expression we shall also be Swadeshi or Bideshi. When we understand the principle of Swadeshi, then we will come to understand what boycott means. It is not hatred; it is not animosity against foreign rulers; it is the other side of Swadeshi.

If you want to realise yourselves, seek for yourselves. If you realise the Atman, the real self, you realise the Anatman the not-self. We don't want anything which is Anatman, and that is boycott. This principle applies to a nation. We have to recover our national independence and for that we want our nation realised. We want to realise our nationalism. It is boycott which leads to national self-realisation, and it is the ideal of Swaraj. It is neither wrong nor illegal but a perfectly legitimate movement, a movement which no law can deny. The ideal of Swaraj is not an ideal which the law can prevent; there can be no human law to prevent it. If you have your own schools and not those that are managed by foreign control, it is not illegal. If I preach to you to boycott foreign schools, there is nothing unlawful in it. You should not go to foreign law-courts. If I preach to you to help your own countrymen, to take your own measures to supply water to your villages, there is nothing illegal or immoral. There is nothing in the word boycott that you need be afraid of. There are people who seek to stop this movement because it affects their interests. We preach passive resistance in Bengal. Whatever obstacles are thrown in your way, whatever sufferings are inflicted on you, remove those obstacles, bear those sufferings, bear the affliction and go on with your movement, go on with your activities with all your energy. You young men must live for nationalism. In order to preach passive resistance let nothing stop you. Keep your resolution; never mind the obstacles. Never mind the stumbles and pitfalls that will come in your way. Welcome joy or sorrow, welcome victory or defeat.

If you have not the courage of self-sacrifice, then do not talk of Swadeshi. If you don't want to sacrifice, if you want to lie in your armchairs and you think you can save your nation thereby, then you have no right to come forward. It is no use your coming in numbers. Swadeshi, boycott, Swaraj and national education are not at all immoral, illegal or unnatural. The national movement is such that you will live to save your own country. You are asked to save your nation of three hundred million people and you are asked to live a Swadeshi life, not for yourselves but for your country. I ask you to be Swadeshi. Try to buy Swadeshi goods. I ask you to mould your life on Swadeshi. Live for your Swadeshi and die for your Swadeshi.

Bande Mataram

Sj. Aurobindo said that he was exceedingly pleased to know that the song ["Bande Mataram"] had become so popular in all parts of India, and that it was being so repeatedly sung. He said that he would make this national anthem the subject of his speech. The song, he said, was not only a national anthem as the European nations look upon their own, but one replete with mighty power, being a sacred mantra, revealed to us by the author of *Anandamath*, who might be called an inspired rishi. He described the manner in which the mantra had been revealed to Bankim Chandra, probably by a sannyasi under whose teaching he was. He said that the mantra was not an invention, but a revivification of the old mantra which became extinct so to speak by the treachery of one Navakisan. The mantra of Bankim Chandra was not appreciated in his own day and he predicted that there would come a time when the whole of India would resound with the singing of the song, and the word of the prophet was miraculously fulfilled. The meaning of the song was not understood then because there was no patriotism, except such as consisted in making India the shadow of England and other countries, which dazzled the sight of the sons of this our motherland with their glory and opulence. The so-called patriots of that time might have been the well-wishers of India but not certainly ones who loved her. One who loved his mother never looked to her defects, never disregarded her as an ignorant, superstitious, degraded and decrepit woman. The speaker then unfolded the meaning of the song. As with the individual, so with the nation, there were three bodies or Koshas, the Sthula, Sukshma and Karana Shariras. In this way the speaker went

Delivered in Amravati on 29 January 1908. Text (third-person report) published as a news item in the Bande Mataram *on 5 February 1908.*

on clearing up the hidden meaning of the song. The manner in which he treated of love and devotion was exceedingly touching and the audience sat before him like dumb statues, not knowing where they were or whether they were listening to a prophet revealing to them the higher mysteries of life. He then concluded with a most pathetic appeal to true patriotism and exhorted the audience to love the motherland and sacrifice everything to bring about her salvation.

The Aims of the Nationalist Party

My dear countrymen, when I stopped here on my way to Surat I spoke a few words to you. The Congress had not taken place then. I merely pointed out the course our line of action should take at the Surat Congress. The motives and hopes with which we went to Surat were unfortunately not realised. But we are helpless in the matter. Several partisan papers have already begun to pass remarks such as "The Nationalist party assembled at Surat solely with the purpose of breaking up the Congress", "It did not want the Congress", and "It had a premeditated intention of wrecking it." But I ask you, What advantage would the Nationalist party derive from destroying the Congress? The Nationalist party wanted the Congress; we required it for the purpose of disseminating our nationalist views. What would we gain by breaking it up?

Several letters have appeared about the Congress from many leaders of the old party. One of them has remarked that the Bengal Nationalists received from their headquarters a wire to the following effect: "Break up the Congress if everything else fails." We were greatly surprised to hear that such a telegram had been received. Nationalism has no headquarters in any one town. It is neither at Calcutta nor at Poona; it is spread all over the nation. The whole nation is the seat of Nationalism. Since this is so, we have to ask the Moderates what is meant by the expression "headquarters at Calcutta". Who sent that wire? The leaders of the Nationalist party in Bengal — our leaders — are the very headquarters of Nationalism. From this standpoint, which of our headquarters had been left behind? If we regard the leaders as the headquarters, one of them is at Buxar at present

Delivered in Nagpur on 30 January 1908. This and the next two speeches were translated into Marathi and published as a pamphlet. The Marathi texts were later retranslated into English and reproduced in a Government of India Home Department file.

and the other was at Surat! No such telegram was received by the Nationalist party. The above statement is entirely false. The Nationalist party did not want to wreck the Congress and it never did. I do not blame anyone. But I ask, What were we to gain by wrecking the Congress? It was not the case that Government would have been displeased if we severed our connection with the other party by wrecking the Congress. Where did we get the desire to rally round the British flag by cutting off our connection with the other party? If we consider the three issues raised in the debate of this year's Congress, it will be possible to decide who was responsible for the wrecking of the Congress.

Every member of any public institution started and managed by the people of any civilised nation is given full liberty to offer his opinion on any question, in accordance with the universally acknowledged rules of all public institutions. No president has the authority to suppress this liberty — this natural right of every member of society. The president is merely a servant of the meeting formed by the coming together of the people who appoint him. There are rules to regulate his conduct. No president should break these rules. He cannot stifle freedom of speech and liberty of opinion. When such is the universally acknowledged rule, who then tried to snatch away the rights of a member? Was it the Nationalist party or the other party? Who transgressed the universally accepted rule of meetings by not allowing the leader of our party to speak, though timely notice was given by him? Did we do this? Those who say that we went to the Congress with the intention of wrecking it should think over this question.

Another important thing is that the Congress is an institution belonging to all Indians — to all the well-wishers of the nation. Whoever exerts himself for the good of the nation ought to get a place in this institution. Whoever has to push forward the cart of the nation, whoever is desirous of procuring happiness and as much liberty as is possible for his country to get, ought to be able to enter this institution. The ideal of one may be less exalted, while that of another more exalted, and that of the third most exalted. But since "the good of the nation" is the common object of all, everyone ought to be included in that institution.

One party may defeat the other on the strength of a majority of votes and establish its own superiority. If the other party has any stamina or mettle, it will live and fight. But none should try to drive away any party from the institution by taking advantage of a local majority formed according to his own wishes. It is clear that the other party had the majority at Surat. Was it not the attempt of the Moderate party to drive the Nationalist party out of the Congress from next year by taking advantage of this local majority? Why should the opinion of one party that such is the particular goal of our nation be fastened on to the other party? It is not that the ultimate aim of our political agitation should be one and the same for all. One may be in advance of the other. Was it not a fact that in the resolution of this year's constitution they were going to fasten on the Nationalist party a "final goal" which was unacceptable to it? It is a mockery of the opinions of the Nationalists to make them sign a paper containing false principles of Nationalism which are not acceptable to them. Who has the right to thrust his own idea of the "final goal" upon others and, if they do not consent, to drive them out of the meeting? Mr. Gokhale knew that one particular party did not accept as the final goal partial Swarajya and slow reform. Still, in the draft he had prepared of the constitution, he tried to thrust the final goal of one particular party upon another and to drive out the latter from the Congress. The meaning of the new rule made by Mr. Gokhale was "Accept a certain final goal, otherwise you have no place in the Congress and out you go." I ask those who say that our intention was to wreck the Congress, Is it not necessary to include people of different views in the National Congress? Was it not the intention of the other party to drive out of the Congress those whose final goal is different from that of Mr. Gokhale, but who still belong to that party which has national well-being at heart? Only those resolutions that are universally acceptable or acceptable to many will be passed. But none should attempt to forcibly eject another because his views do not tally with his own. Did the Nationalist party make any such attempt? Who were intolerant towards those who held views different from their own? To whom did the presence of another party become unbearable in the Congress, the Moderates or the Extremists? This trick of driving out the opposite party was played by the Moderates and not by the Extremists. This being so, did the Nationalist party break up the National Congress?

The third important question is with regard to the retrogression of the Congress. We, the Nationalists, went to Surat to help the Congress progress by means of spiritedness, steadiness, and self-reliance. Our desire was, and is, that the fixed determination — the austere vow — which the Bengali nation has resolved upon in its helplessness might spread to other provinces as well, and the people of those provinces might help us in our contest. Our ambition was to get tangible help from other provinces in our peaceful but determined contest. But we found all but one of the subjects omitted from this year's resolutions published in the name of the Reception Committee. These were subjects for which we fought zealously in the Calcutta Congress. What then of pushing the Congress forward? We became anxious to see whether it would remain where it was. Subjects were entirely omitted, and we cannot say whether they were introduced subsequently after making sweeping changes in them and rendering them vague whenever an objection from the Nationalists was anticipated, or whether the subjects which were thus mutilated and with the names suppressed were put in from the beginning. But on the list which was sent to Bombay on the 25th December 1907, but which was given to us on the 26th, that is, after the opening of the Congress, we found the subjects greatly mutilated.

Mr. Gokhale states that the changes they introduced in the resolutions of last year were merely trivial and verbal and were made to make the meaning clear and to put them in better language. It is surprising to find that a man like Mr. Gokhale says so! The resolution of Swarajya was passed last year at Calcutta. I have already told you how the final goal, which was clearly laid down in that resolution, has been rendered doubtful and insignificant by the introduction of the Creed resolution by Mr. Gokhale. The resolution about Swadeshi was also found greatly pruned down. What great efforts the Nationalists had to make last year simply to introduce the words "even at some sacrifice"! By the introduction of these words the compromise was effected last year. These words were acceptable to both parties. Mr. Gokhale says they were inadvertently omitted. We could not reconcile with the past history of these words the fact of their omission by mistake or forgetfulness by Mr. Gokhale. Last year, when the people of both parties had assembled to settle their differences of opinion, I also had the opportunity to be present. Mr. Tilak, Aswini Babu and myself were the three representatives for our side. The opposite side was represented by Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Madan Mohan Malaviya. After a discussion among us five it was settled to add the words "even at some sacrifice". We could never believe that these words, which had been purposely put in, were omitted inadvertently. It cannot be said that we are doing an injustice to Mr. Gokhale if we infer, by looking at the radical changes made to the second resolution, that the words had been purposely omitted. How do we know that Mr. Gokhale, one of the General Secretaries, could not find out from the files of any newspaper the correct resolution? It is true that we did not think that Mr. Gokhale might forget the words even though they were introduced in the committee of the above-mentioned five persons.

Mr. Gokhale made such sweeping changes as would destroy the meaning of the boycott resolution and make the weapon of boycott adopted by the Bengalis appear to apply only to English-made goods. The boycott movement inaugurated in Bengal has a wider significance than the boycott of British goods resorted to in Bengal. Taking the word "movement" to mean activity, Babu Bipin Chandra Pal expressed the hope before last year's Congress that the boycott movement would travel from one point to another, from one village to another, and from one province to another. Was it not the intention of Mr. Gokhale to cripple this resolution by altering its meaning? Even a superficial observer can see that the agitation in Bengal was not confined to British goods. When Government proclaimed the Partition, we distinctly informed Government that this Partition was not acceptable to us. We adopted a universal boycott, which showed our disapproval of the Partition. It is known throughout India that our boycott means passive resistance. If the boycott was with regard to English goods only, then why have honourable and spirited Bengali gentlemen resigned their seats in the Councils? Were the boycott in Bengal confined to goods only, were it merely a commercial boycott, where was the necessity of boycotting Government schools? It is true that Bengal has boycotted English goods. But that was merely a subsidiary part of the all-pervading boycott. One thing must be borne in mind here, that the boycott of foreign goods is merely a commercial one, while that which is applied to English goods is of a political nature. There is no necessity of applying these political weapons to any other country besides Britain. Why should we take revenge upon America or Germany for the oppression caused to us by the people of Britain? The reason we do not buy or will not in future buy German or American goods is in order to increase Indian trades and industries. But there is a political reason besides this for the boycott of British goods; it is to make the brethren of our oppressors feel the pinch.

The boycott adopted by Bengal is of a different type, its scope and its extent are far-reaching. The meaning of our boycott is that we should not be of any help to Government in its administration carried on by unjust and uncontrolled authority. This is so plain that it could be seen by anyone possessing eyes. Mr. Gokhale knew that we had started such a boycott. He purposely tried to create the impression that the Bengal boycott was directed against English goods only. Or his intention might have been to show that the Surat Congress at least accepted Bengal's boycott to that extent. The changes that were made in last year's resolution were very important and of a retrograde nature, from the standpoint of the Bengal Nationalists at least. And yet Mr. Gokhale says that the changes introduced were merely trivial and verbal. To him the changes may be very trivial, but it is impossible for the Bengal Nationalists to regard them as such. We did not at all like the flimsy picture drawn by Mr. Gokhale of the all-pervading boycott for the spread of which we — particularly the people of Eastern Bengal — had to suffer so much. Boys received stripes, many of them suffered physical pangs in jail, and several others gave up everything. We did not like Mr. Gokhale's intention of giving a commercial appearance to our boycott. We fought zealously in order to secure sincere sympathy and suffered prosecutions, and this mode of passive resistance received support from the National Congress last year. By taking away that support, Mr. Gokhale rendered the resolution ineffectual; yet in the face of this open attempt, he says that the changes made were merely verbal.

He substituted the words "independent system" for the more important words "on national lines and under national control" in the resolution on national education. Mr. Gokhale says that the word "national" occurred thrice in the resolution and this did not sound well, so the changes in the wording were made. Mr. Gokhale is a scholar of English, but we see a particular motive in repeating the word "national" thrice. An independent system of education may include education imparted by semi-government schools or colleges which receive government aid. But the words "on national lines" and "under national control" appeared to Mr. Gokhale as meaningless and superfluous, so he corrected the bad English sentence by putting it in good English in order to obtain some elegance of expression. There would have been no harm done, except slightly lowering Mr. Gokhale's reputation for knowledge of English, if he had allowed the bad English to stand, as he knew that the Nationalist party would be displeased, and actually was displeased, at the change of language — this trivial verbal change made solely with a view to improving the elegance of style. The object of the Congress is not to enable men to write English correctly and elegantly. If slightly bad language would satisfy all, what harm would there be in allowing it to stand? It would be regarding the Nationalist party as ignorant and dull-headed to say that such a material change in the resolution would be accepted by it as merely verbal.

These three questions are before those who say that our intention was to wreck the Congress. Who tried to destroy unconstitutionally the rights of members to speak? The Nationalist party? Who made the ignoble attempt to drop out or drive out people of a particular opinion from the Congress by making rules partial to the constitutional party? The Nationalist party? Whose desire was it to put back the Congress by making changes in the resolutions passed universally on the strength of a local majority? The Nationalist party? These are important points. This year's fight in the Congress was between the ordinary people and unrestricted authority. It was a fight for principle in one way. How is it possible to put up with the arbitrariness of some people in a Congress which itself passes resolutions against the oppression of Government? The confusion that took place in the Congress was due to the peculiar circumstances of this year. It is not the fault of Mr. Tilak or of the Nationalist party. Whether there will be compromise or not, whether it will be possible to have any, will be decided by time alone. Our Nationalist party has to perform a very great task in the future. There are mountains of obstacles and difficulties in the way. Immense troubles will have to be suffered, hard work will have to be done and everything will have to be sacrificed; a great many will have to sacrifice their lives, then only will we be able to obtain that which is our final and exalted goal, the realisation of all happiness, the final achievement of all that is to be achieved and the desired object of all — Swarajya.

I shall speak tomorrow on what is to be done in the future.

Our Work in the Future

My countrymen, those who have minutely observed with open eyes the agitation started two years ago, must have been convinced that the wonderful force of this agitation, this revolution in ideas, and these extreme changes in behaviour must have the support of some unseen wonderful supernatural and divine force. This movement is not an ordinary one, its regulator and leader is certainly not a human being, and it has the support of the best force in the universe. All the revolutions in the world have been brought about by this wonderful force. Some extraordinary superhuman strength has suddenly become visible in the nation. Those people — a handful of madmen — who started this agitation were insignificant beings. This agitation was not started by very experienced leaders. Now those leaders have had to fall in with the current. Along this current of agitation started by obscure men many a great leader is now being carried. Within the last two years a public awakening which had not been created for centuries has been produced by this agitation. Those who took part in it were not necessarily learned men. They were ordinary men like others. They committed mistakes and blunders, but the wonderful thing is that the progress of the movement, instead of being retarded by these mistakes, went on increasing unimpeded. In short, the full vigour of this movement cannot be comprehended by us poor human creatures. Some ordinary people, by getting up on this wave of awakening, have attained an exalted position and become objects of adoration of the entire nation by means of their earnestness, burning patriotism, unparalleled self-sacrifice and devotion to duty.

The force of this movement was not diminished by the inflamed anger of the other party, by dissensions among ourselves,

Delivered in Nagpur on 31 January 1908.

by the slanderings of back-biters, by the treachery of those who reveal the secrets of the house and who are guilty of incest with their Mother. This awakening is shoving away everything that comes in its way like the current of a river that sweeps away everything. Many wonderful religious revolutions have taken place in the different nations of this earth. This is also one of that sort. This revolution is taking place in the political atmosphere. This is the beginning of the political enhancement of a nation. The Indian community, by taking its seat on this current, is proving itself an instrument for the carrying out of God's wishes and is fulfilling His command naturally. There is no doubt that this commotion in the interior of the community will surely bring about some divine work. This agitation is certainly not propelled by human will. We went to Surat with a particular motive. We went to the Congress in order to propagate our views and doctrines. But there something different happened. The other party assembled there with the same purpose, but they were also disappointed! How can we say that this sudden split has not been brought about by God's design for the good of the nation? Impossible to fathom are the motives of God and inscrutable is His Lila. Unity is wanted, unity is essential. Is it God's intention to regenerate the nation by means of this split? Perhaps so, who can say? That a compromise should be effected between the two parties is the desire of all. Who can say what is going to happen in the future?

The work which has to be performed by the Nationalist party hereafter is very formidable. The strength and vitality of our party will be tested today. The strength of our party will be tried now. We ought to ascertain today exactly the nature of the work we have undertaken, our destination, the obstacles and pitfalls in the way, the weaknesses we possess, and the course we should adopt. Our dissensions were merely intellectual discussions till now. We required them to infuse life into the body of the nation, — our strength was limited, and we expended it in our debates. Nobody estimated correctly what strength we, our nation, possessed. None attempted to concentrate this power. Many do not yet believe in the existence of this power and are not convinced; many people are whisked about; for this reason the two factions have cropped up. May it not be God's intention to get the work done through our party and through it alone? May it not be God's desire to find out the extent of our powers? The present time is not for slow progress. It is one of great quickness, extreme briskness and progress. Everyone should rush forward at this moment. Courage is wanted. Daring is required. Boldness is necessary. A writer at the time of the French Revolution said, "There is nothing to be dreaded. Run forward with firm devotion, go on, rush on, push on!" In Germany and Japan there was such a rapid progress. Perhaps our attempts to bring about compromise may prove fruitless. We ought, therefore, to settle on what we have to gain or obtain.

The way of the Moderates, the former devotees of the Congress, was different. They did not intend to change entirely the present arrangement of Government. They did not want to progress. They wanted to make changes in the existing system of government. They did not require courage. But by their method the accomplishment of the object did not take place. It is impossible to obtain your rights. Simple good government cannot allay the thirst for Swarajya. If we were to throw our political responsibility, our political duty upon others, it would be nothing but political death to us. That would be the greatest calamity. Those who care for their safety and comfort ought not to place their feet on our path. We do not want those who spare themselves. How can you procure a kingdom in the possession of foreigners through their kindness? Your interests and theirs are entirely different. Why should those who have give by bits? Government will not give us the true rights of Swarajya even by degrees. It is afraid that if some rights are given, more will be demanded. To say that we shall compel Government to give us our rights is as dangerous as to cherish an ambition for absolute Swarajya. We must adopt whatever remedies other nations of the world adopted to attain Swarajya, having regard to the present conditions. A final goal such as the colonial form of Swarajya is both inconvenient and vague. The effect of the agitation is also partial and indistinct. If the final goal is very high, exalted and inspiring, then only will the workers be filled with enthusiasm and activity. Hence we ought to have a high ideal before us. We have to travel towards this ideal of absolute Swarajya. We are often ridiculed that a desire for Swarajya is nothing but a dream, a castle in the air, because our community has become weak, sapless, deranged and rickety. Where in our community is that courage which is required for the performance of such a great work, that capacity, that self-sacrifice and those material or spiritual remedies? Some people advise that because the achievement of Swarajya is beyond human strength, we must wait for some centuries and work before we are able to speak of Swarajya; but no nation ever came into prominence by helping a foreign government. Lessons of independence must be learnt only in the school of liberty. If we wait for centuries the weakness of our nation will increase. We cannot afford to wait. If you want to acquire Swarajya, try for it now; otherwise give up the name Swarajya once for all.

The present agitation in India sprang up suddenly in Bengal. It has entirely changed the whole face of Bengal. There is an inspiration created in the heart of everyone by divine prompting. It must be a divine arrangement; otherwise how could such a superhuman work be achieved within two years by the agitation carried on by a few obscure men? Perhaps you may not have examined carefully the agitation in Bengal. It was started by a few people first. People used to regard these originators as madmen. But these very madmen spread Swadeshism, preached boycott and established gymnasiums. This spread the conflagration of the agitation everywhere. The young generation assisted the movement; the whole of Bengal became alive and pricked up its ears. The leaders had no faith in boycott, yet they could not hold their own against the current of public opinion. They joined the boycott movement. Government officers were terrified. They began their repressive policy in order to break the bones of agitation.

Students were the first to bear the brunt of the oppression and it was they who strenuously pushed on the sale of Swadeshi goods. Fines were imposed upon them for this. They were punished and even were rusticated; but since they did not want to give up their Swadeshi vows, they left the schools. National schools had to be started. They were opened at Rangpur, Dacca and other places. The National Council of Education of Bengal was established. As soon as the necessity was felt, the schools were started without much help or materials. Though there are no funds, no school buildings, no furniture, yet, through the help of the Bengali nation, all these institutions are in a flourishing condition.

People are suffering immense troubles, undergoing imprisonments and whipping. Till now the people regarded the Bengali nation as impotent. The opinion of a certain English gentleman is that the Bengalis are well-versed in education and every individual among them is intellectual and dutiful, but from the political standpoint they are lifeless; they cannot do anything. But since the Swadeshi movement began this condition has changed. The difference between speaking and actually doing has disappeared. All the patriots are, as it were, one person and are moved by the same thoughts. Our younger generation seems to have lost regard for their lives. The example of Maulavi Liakat Hussain is not the only one. There are many such examples. Maulavi Liakat Hussain does not even know Bengali properly. But the endeavours and self-sacrifice made by this brave and noble-minded person are indescribable! There are three prosecutions pending against him at present. He not only accepted with a smile three years' imprisonment recently inflicted on him, but expressed his obligation to the Magistrate for having afforded him an opportunity to serve his country! He has gone to jail perhaps never to return again. The story of the *Yugantar* newspaper is very wonderful. No sooner was one editor sentenced to one year's imprisonment than another took his place. The moment the second man was prosecuted and sentenced, a third one came forward and willingly accepted the responsibility of editorship, in spite of the warning of the Magistrate! He was followed by a fourth person and thus the paper was continued. Whenever any editor was punished, his great concern was for the future issue of the paper; he did not think of his wife and children first. In this way the *Yugantar* still continues. And so the Bengalis are sacrificing their self-interest and their all in accordance with the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita: "Thy business is with the action only, never with its fruits."

The Nationalist party in Bengal did not shrink at all. Italy was merely a name before in the geography of the world. It became a mighty nation in the course of twenty years. The same thing is going on in Bengal. The divine splendour of Bengali youths is clearly shining forth. The divine element has manifested itself. As soon as Government removes one, one hundred others take his place. Every Bengali patriot feels inclined to sacrifice his own self for the good of thirty crores of people. This idea ought to spread throughout the country. The misery of the Indian nation must be looked upon as the misery of everyone, and the pleasure of the nation must be regarded by him as his own. One ought to feel pride in bearing pain and anguish. To suffer such pangs is to repay one's debt to the nation.

Nations do not prosper without self-sacrifice. None should turn back like a woman from repaying his debt to the nation. We do not want laziness, legerdemain or acting. Matured circumspection, limited and carefully adopted remedies will not do; one should rush forth. The self-respect of the nation is our religion, self-sacrifice is our only action or duty. We ought to give proper scope for the divine qualities in us to shine forth. Trifling emotions ought to be given up. Do not be afraid even if you are required to die. Do not retreat; bear pain for the sake of the nation. God is your support. If you do this, the Indian nation will, in an instant, get back its former splendour and glory. It will take its place at the side of the independent nations of the world; it will educate other nations; it will shed the lustre of true knowledge, and it will inculcate the principles of Vedanta. Our nation will come forward to benefit the human race and the whole world. Before it the whole world will tremble! But when? Only when we all are prepared to repay our debt to the nation.

Commercial and Educational Swarajya

My countrymen, I am greatly obliged to you for the reception you have given me. This is not respect paid to me, but to our motherland through me as medium. The people of whatever place I have been in have shown a wonderful enthusiasm, which clearly proves that national sentiments are enkindled in their bosoms. The thought of what we were two years ago, what things were liked by the people then, and what a change has taken place in the mental condition is very encouraging.

From the time the Swadeshi movement was started by the Bengalis, we notice an exalted and self-sacrificing spirit in the conduct of the people. It is not that there was no Swadeshi movement before. Rich Bengalis had started Swadeshi companies before the said agitation; as soon as these companies came into existence the European companies began to cause loss to them by reducing their own rates, and in the end they began to request people to take their (English) goods free. That earnestness for Swadeshi, that particular resolve to buy nothing but Swadeshi goods, however dear, did not exist then. For want of support of the national awakening, the Swadeshi trades did not thrive then. People have accepted Swadeshism in total disregard of the quality and price of the Swadeshi goods because of the awakening of the national life everywhere in the shape of the Swadeshi and boycott movements started on account of the Partition of Bengal. Though the rates of the Swadeshi navigation companies were two or three times greater than those of the foreign companies, yet the former were patronised by the patriots. This is due to the development of the new force.

It is well known to all what efforts were made by the young men of Bengal. It is they who worked for the boycott. They

Delivered in Nagpur on 1 February 1908.

purchased Swadeshi cloth and sold it at cost price without taking any profit from the villagers in the mofussil. If at that time the Bombay merchants and mill-owners and the Marwaris of Calcutta had co-operated with us sincerely, the Swadeshi and boycott movements would have been in a different condition to-day. The mill-owners of Bombay took advantage of the Swadeshi movement and enhanced their rates, thus putting impediments in our way and compelling us to buy the same goods dearly. We had to work hard to command the market, because our Marwari brethren did not give up their profession as brokers and continued to sell English goods.

It is very necessary to boycott English goods. Did not the English boycott your goods? A hundred years ago, your trades and industries were in a flourishing condition and your goods, after satisfying the demands of the whole of India, used to be exported to other countries. But by making all sorts of crooked laws, they managed to shut out your goods from our markets and, on the contrary, afforded all sorts of facilities enabling the foreign merchants to flood the market with their own goods. Our Marwari brethren ought to have understood this. They purposely or through obstinacy born of ignorance caused a loss to the country, so God has punished them for it. All-powerful God brought down calamity on them, considering that those who acted against the interests of His children will never come to their senses unless they are punished. The Marwaris are mostly Jains. Government has taken possession of Parswanath Hill, and on the spot where people used to flock for worship, there will be bungalows erected in which there will be dancing and *tamashas*, and the eating and drinking of prohibited foods and drinks. What does Government care for the entreaties, petitions and deputations of the Jains? God must have designed this to serve as an eye-opener to these Marwaris and to show them how much regard those English have for their welfare — the English for whose benefit the Marwaris acted treacherously towards their own people. The Marwaris ought to take a lesson from the calamity and be prepared to act in accordance with God's design.

See what the foreigners are doing. See what troubles thousands of your brethren who have gone to Africa to attain a commercial balance by making up the commercial loss sustained in India are suffering. Very oppressive and inhuman laws are inflicted upon them, they are being treated like beasts, and devilish attempts are in progress to destroy their commercial superiority here. It is therefore necessary to take in our hands all the trades and industries, and our rich people should gird up their loins for the same purpose. We ought to change the ways or methods of expenditure. These attempts to secure commercial Swarajya must be vigorously carried out. There will be difficulties and losses in attaining this, but it cannot be helped. Such troubles must be suffered until the demerits of the nation are exhausted.

There ought to be institutions started in order to impress these ideas on the minds of the young. It is a good sign that attempts are being made to start schools for national training in our Bengal and in your town. Many such institutions are coming into existence at several places in Bengal. We do not want the unnecessary parrot-like education which wastes away the strength and intellect of our young men. It is much better to have a harmonious combination of self-protection and patriotism, but we do not want even for one moment that poisonous education imparted to our children which has a blighting effect on the ideas of political morality and national greatness by creating a hankering in them for the subordinate posts under Government in order to earn their livelihood. Education should be imparted on national lines and under national control. True national education consists in awakening in one's mind the highest ideas of national activity, which make one forget oneself and feel that he does not exist separately from his country. The expressions "national lines" and "national control" are very important, and therefore we insisted on having them in the resolution of the National Congress. It is not possible to have national education without the help of the rich and the learned men. If the money of the wealthy is utilised in this direction, it will be very well spent. All should work heartily in order to secure a future generation that is sturdy — both physically and mentally. This wave of political ideas ought to reach the remotest, unknown regions of the country. There is no good in looking back. When you secure commercial Swarajya and educational Swarajya, then the way to political Swarajya will be easy.

Part Six

Bande Mataram

under the Editorship of Sri Aurobindo

with Speeches Delivered during the Same Period

6 February – 3 May 1908

After returning from Maharashtra in February 1908, Sri Aurobindo resumed his duties as chief editorial writer of the *Bande Mataram*. He wrote regularly for the journal over the next three months; during the same period he was occasionally called on to deliver speeches in Calcutta and other places in Bengal. Some of these speeches were published in the *Bande Mataram*. They are reproduced here at the date of their delivery and not the date of publication.

On 2 May 1908 Sri Aurobindo was arrested in connection with the revolutionary activities of his brother Barindrakumar Ghose and others. He remained in Alipore jail from 5 May 1908 to 6 May 1909, when he was acquitted and released. The *Bande Mataram*, edited during his imprisonment by his colleagues, ceased publication in October 1908, when it was suppressed by the British government under the provisions of the Press Act of 1908.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, February 6th, 1908 }

Revolutions and Leadership

Among many of those who are our leaders, there is a feeling of resentment against Nationalists because there is so little recognition of their past services, so strong a disposition to find fault with their actions and question their authority. It is asked of us whether we are going to upset all authority, disregard discipline and overthrow the natural pre-eminence of men who have long worked for their country. This question is the expression of an inevitable feeling of personal pique forced from them by the sense of exasperation which the loss of prestige and power cannot fail to create. If we answer this question at all, it is because it takes its stand on points of general importance instead of appearing in its native character of personal feeling. The authority of a political leader depends on his capacity to feel and express the sentiments of the people who follow him; it does not reside in himself. He holds his position because he is a representative man, not because he is such-and-such an individual. To take the position that because he has led in the past therefore his word must be law so long as he lives, is to ignore the root principles of political life. His past services can only give him the claim to be regarded as a leader in preference to others so long as he voices the sentiments of the people and keeps pace with the tendencies of the time. The moment he tries to misuse his position in order to impose his own will upon the people instead of making their will his own, he forfeits all claim to respect. If he has fallen behind the times, his only course is to stand aside; but to demand that because he is there and wishes to remain, the march of the world shall wait upon his fears and hesitations is to make a claim against which the reason and conscience of humanity rebels.

What the Moderate leaders ask is that the immense revolution which has begun in India, shall ask for their permission before it chooses its course or rolls forward to its great goal. Like so many Canutes they set their chairs, Presidential or other, on the margin of the tide of Nationalism and looking over the stormy waters command them to respect their thrones and stay the upsurging wrath of their billows so that their robes may not be drenched by the spray. It is a vain and fantastic demand. This tide was not created by any human power, nor can any man impose on it a limit or a bourne. As well ask the thunderbolt to respect the tallest oaks or the avalanche to regulate the line of its descent so that ourselves may go safe, as ask this tremendous revolution to obey the will of the insignificant individuals whom chance has lifted to a momentary eminence. Nationalism is itself no creation of individuals and can have no respect for persons. It is a force which God has created, and from Him it has received only one command, to advance and advance and ever advance until He bids it stop, because its appointed mission is done. It advances, inexorably, blindly, unknowing how it advances, in obedience to a Power which it cannot gainsay, and everything which stands in its way, man or institution, will be swept away or ground into powder beneath its weight. Ancient sanctity, supreme authority, bygone popularity, nothing will serve as a plea.

It is not the fault of the avalanche if it sweeps away human life by its irresistible and unwilled advance; nor can it be imputed as moral obliquity to the thunderbolt that the oak of a thousand years stood precisely where its burning hand was laid. Not only the old leaders but any of the new men whom the tide has tossed up for a moment on the crest of its surges, must pay the penalty of imagining that he can control the ocean and impose on it his personal likes and desires. These are times of revolution when tomorrow casts aside the fame, popularity and pomp of today. The man whose carriage is today dragged through great cities by shouting thousands amid cries of “Bande Mataram” and showers of garlands, will tomorrow be disregarded, perhaps hissed and forbidden to speak. So it has always been and none can prevent it. How can such-and-such a barrister, editor, professor whom his personal talents have brought forward for a time, say to Revolution, “Thou shalt be my servant” or to Chaos, “I will use thee as the materials of my personal aggrandisement”? As the pace of the movement is accelerated, the number of those who are left behind will increase. Men who are now acclaimed as Extremists, leaders of the forward movement, preachers of Nationalism and embodiments of the popular feeling will tomorrow find themselves left behind, cast aside, a living monument of the vanity of personal ambition. The old leaders claim eternal leadership because they have rendered services — some few eloquent speeches or well-written petitions, to wit; but before we are much older, those who are serving their country by personal suffering and self-sacrifice will find that they too must not presume on their services. Only the self-abnegation which effaces the idea of self altogether and follows the course of the revolution with a childlike belief that God is the leader and what He does is for the best, will be able to continue working for the country. Such men are not led by personal ambition and cannot therefore be deterred from following the will of God by personal loss of any kind.

Revolutions are incalculable in their goings and absolutely uncontrollable. The sea flows and who shall tell it how it is to flow? The wind blows and what human wisdom can regulate its motions? The will of Divine Wisdom is the sole law of revolutions and we have no right to consider ourselves as anything but mere agents chosen by that Wisdom. When our work is done, we should realise it and feel glad that we have been permitted to do so much. Is it not enough reward for the greatest services that we can do, if our names are recorded in History among those who helped by their work or their speech or better, by the mute service of their sufferings to prepare the great and free India that will be? Nay, is it not enough if unnamed and unrecorded except in the Books of God, we go down to the grave with the consciousness that our finger too was laid on the great Car and may have helped, however imperceptibly, to push it forward? This talk of services is a poor thing after all. Do we serve the

Mother for a reward or do God's work for hire? The patriot lives for his country because he must; he dies for her because she demands it. That is all.

Speeches at Pabna

[1]

The subject of National Education, which has been recognised by the Indian National Congress as one of the main planks in its platform, received a further impetus in this year's Bengal Provincial Conference which was held in Pabna in the second week of February last. The resolution on the subject adopted by this year's conference has been a considerable advance upon those adopted at the previous years' conferences by the addition of the phrase "to establish and maintain National Schools throughout the country" in the following wording of the resolution: —

"That in the opinion of this conference steps should be taken for promoting a system of education, literary, scientific and technical, suited to the requirements of the country on national lines under national control and to establish and maintain national schools throughout the country."

The resolution was moved by Srijukta Aurobindo Ghose, B.A. (Cantab) of the Bengal National College in a short but inspiring speech. He said that national education was a work which had already been accomplished and was already visible in a concrete shape to the eyes of the people. There was the Bengal National College at Calcutta and there were about 25 secondary National Schools at work in the mofussil under the direction of the National Council of Education. There were besides some three hundred primary National Schools, all seeking the aid of the Council, which in its turn should be more liberally supported by the whole of Bengal in order to enable it to do its sacred work. The National Schools will train and send out workers who will devote themselves completely to the service of the country and raise her once more to the old position of glory which she once occupied in the scale of nations.

---

[1] *Resolution moved at the Bengal Provincial Conference of the Indian National Congress at Pabna on 12 February 1908. Report published in* The Dawn and Dawn Society's Magazine *in April 1908.*

[2]

Srijukta Aurobindo Ghose pointed out that the University system was defective in its aims and methods intended only to serve the purposes of the Government, not the requirements of the country. It turned out machines for administrative and professional work, not men. The national system of education was intended to create a nation. It must produce men with all their faculties trained, full of patriotism, and mentally, morally, physically the equals of the men of any other nation.

[2] Delivered at an educational conference at Pabna on 13 February 1908. Report published in the Bande Mataram *of 17 February.*

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, February 18th, 1908 }

Swaraj

Nationalism was filled at the Pabna Conference with a new spirit unlike anything yet known to us. Whatever resolutions were passed or steps taken, were taken in a spirit of practical utility, which has been hitherto absent from our Congresses and Conferences. We have hitherto been engaged in dispute about ideals and methods. We are confident that the country, at least Bengal, has now reached a stage when this dispute is no longer necessary. Whatever we may say out of policy or fear, the whole nation is now at one. Swaraj is the only goal which the heart of Bengal recognises, Swaraj without any limitation or reservation. Even the President in his second and closing speech was so much moved by the spirit in the air that he forgot the feeling of caution which obliged him in his opening address to deprecate ambitious ideals, and out of the gladness of his heart there burst from him a flood of inspiring eloquence which made the whole audience astir with feelings of impassioned aspiration. Swaraj was the theme of his eloquence and to anyone listening carefully it was evident that Swaraj unlimited and without reservation, was the ideal enthroned in the heart of the poet. Even Surendranath or those who voted for colonial Swaraj knew well in their heart of hearts that their ideal was not the ideal of the nation. Long habit and apprehension were the only obstacles in their way which prevented them from throwing themselves into the current. But the rest of the audience were visibly moved by the passionate eloquence which flowed from the lips of Rabindranath. What matters it what resolutions may be passed or rejected? Swaraj is no longer a mere word, no longer an ideal distant and impossible; for the heart of Bengal has seized upon it, and the intellect of Bengal has acknowledged it. We hold no brief for anyone, but we believe that Srijut Manoranjan Guha was an inspired speaker when he told the Conference never to lose sight of God in the movement. Mighty aspirations are in the heart of the people and he is false to the inspiration within him who tries to dwarf them. Let us work practically at the smallest details, but let us never forget that the work is not for its own sake but for the sake of Swaraj. We shall be false to our inspiration if we forget the goal in the details; we shall condemn ourselves to the fate of the man who in the eagerness of picking up pebbles on the seashore threw away the alchemic stone which God had for a moment given into his hands. Swaraj is the alchemic stone, the *parash-pathar*, and we have it in our hands. It will turn to gold everything we touch. Village samitis are good, not for the sake of village samitis but for the sake of Swaraj. Boycott is good, not for the sake of Boycott but for the sake of Swaraj. Swadeshi is good, not for the sake of Swadeshi but for the sake of Swaraj. Arbitration is good, not for the sake of arbitration but for the sake of Swaraj. If we forget Swaraj and win anything else we shall be like the seeker whose belt was turned indeed to gold but the stone of alchemy was lost to him for ever.

Never should we forget that but for the hope of Swaraj we should never have done what we have done during the last three years. No lesser hope, no ideal of inferior grandeur could have nerved us to the tremendous efforts, the great sacrifices, the indomitable persistence in the face of persecution which has made these three years ever memorable as the birth-time of a nation. Who could have borne what we have borne for the sake of some petty object? No good can result from denying what God has revealed to us. When Peter denied his master, half of his virtue went out of him. Let not our people have to repent as Peter had to repent, and shed tears of bitter sorrow because the divinity has been expelled by their own folly from their bosom. When a light has been revealed folly alone will try to shut it out behind a screen. When a mighty power has entered into the heart, madness alone can wish to forfeit it. Swaraj is the direct revelation of God to this people, — not mere political freedom but a freedom vast and entire, freedom of the individual, freedom of the community, freedom of the nation; spiritual freedom, social freedom, political freedom. Spiritual freedom the ancient Rishis had already declared to us; social freedom was part of the message of Buddha, Chaitanya, Nanak and Kabir and the saints of Maharashtra; political freedom is the last word of the triune gospel. Without political freedom the soul of man is crippled. Only a few mighty spirits can rise above their surroundings, but the ordinary man is a slave of his surroundings and if those be mean, servile and degraded, he himself will be mean, servile and degraded. Social freedom can only be born where the soul of man is large, free and generous, not enslaved to petty aims and thoughts. Social freedom is not a result of social machinery but of the freedom of the human intellect and the nobility of the human soul. A man who follows petty ends cannot feel his brotherhood with his fellows, for he is always striving to raise himself above them and assert petty superiorities. If caste makes him superior or money makes him superior, he will hug to his bosom the distinctions of caste or the distinctions of wealth. If political freedom is absent, the community has no great ends to follow and the individual is confined within a narrow circuit in which the superiority of caste, wealth or class is the only ambition which he can cherish. If political freedom opens to him a wider horizon, he forgets the lesser ambitions. Moreover a slave can never be noble and broad-minded. He cannot forget himself in the service of his fellows for he is already a slave and service is the badge of his degradation, not a willing self-devotion. When man is thus degraded, it is idle to think that society can be free.

So too spiritual freedom can never be the lot of many in a land of slaves. A few may follow the path of the Yogin and rise above their surroundings, but the mass of men cannot ever take the first step towards spiritual salvation. We do not believe that the path of salvation lies in selfishness. If the mass of men around us is miserable, fallen, degraded, how can the seeker after God be indifferent to the condition of his brothers? Compassion to all creatures is the condition of sainthood, and the perfect Yogin is he who is *sarvabhutahite ratah*, whose mind is full of the will to do good to all creatures. When a man shuts his heart to the cries of sufferings around him, when he is content that his fellow-men should be sorrowful, oppressed, sacrificed to the greed of others, he is making his own way to salvation full of difficulties and stumbling-blocks. He is forgetting that God is not only in himself but in all these millions. And for those who have not the strength, spiritual freedom in political servitude is a sheer impossibility. When India was free, thousands of men set their feet in the stairs of heaven, but as the night deepened and the sun of liberty withdrew its rays, the spiritual force inborn in every Indian heart became weaker and weaker until now it burns so faintly that aliens have taken upon themselves the role of spiritual teachers, and the people chosen by God have to sit at the feet of the men from whose ancestry the light was hidden. God has set apart India as the eternal fountain-head of holy spirituality, and He will never suffer that fountain to run dry. Therefore Swaraj has been revealed to us. By our political freedom we shall once more recover our spiritual freedom. Once more in the land of the saints and sages will burn up the fire of the ancient Yoga and the hearts of her people will be lifted up into the neighbourhood of the Eternal.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, February 19th, 1908 }

The Future of the Movement

When a great people rises from the dust, what *mantra* is the *sanjivani mantra* or what power is the resurrecting force of its resurgence? In India there are two great *mantras*, the *mantra* of "Bande Mataram" which is the public and universal cry of awakened love of Motherland, and there is another more secret and mystic which is not yet revealed. The *mantra* of "Bande Mataram" is a *mantra* once before given to the world by the Sannyasins of the Vindhya hills. It was lost by the treachery of our own countrymen because the nation was not then ripe for resurgence and a premature awakening would have brought about a speedy downfall. But when in the great earthquake of 1897 there was a voice heard by the Sannyasins, and they were conscious of the decree of God that India should rise again, the *mantra* was again revealed to the world. It was echoed in the hearts of the people, and when the cry had ripened in silence in a few great hearts, the whole nation became conscious of the revelation. Who imagined when the people of Bengal rose in 1905 against the Partition that that was the beginning of a great upheaval? It is a passing tempest, said the wise men of England, let it go over our heads and we will wait. But the tempest did not pass, nor the thunders cease. So there was a reconsideration of policy and the wise men said, — The people of Bengal are easily cowed down, and we will try whether force cannot do what patience has failed to do. When Sir Bampfylde Fuller met Lord Curzon at Agra, this was the policy agreed on between them — to hammer the Bengalis into quietude. But Sir Bampfylde Fuller has gone and the movement remains. Hare too will go, and many will go, but the movement will remain. The regulation *lathi*, the Police truncheon, the threat of the Gurkha rifle are as straws in the wind before the Divine breath of God. Human power is mere weakness when measured with the will of the Eternal. So the movement will continue. It is now time to look deeper into it and know its fountain sources. So long we were content with the superficial aspects, but the time has come for God to reveal Himself, and the powers of the world to look on in amazement at His wonderful workings. When we left Pabna we knew that He was at work to unite the Bengali race. We hope yet to see that He is at work to unite the Indian people. When the Convention Committee meets at Allahabad, it will be seen whether it is His will to unite the parties into a single whole or to separate them from each other, so that the work of salvation may be hastened by the energy of the Nationalist party being separated from the steadiness of the Moderates. Whatever may happen, it is His will. We look forward to the Easter meeting for light on what He intends. If the Moderate leaders of Bengal are wise, they will realise that Bengal at least is destined to become predominatingly Nationalist, that it is her mission to lead and force the rest of India to follow. Whoever tries to prevent her from fulfilling that mission, is setting himself against the decrees of God and will be blown away like stubble before the tempest.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, February 20th, 1908 }

Work and Ideal

We are being advised by many nowadays not to quarrel over ideals but to attend to the work lying nearest to our hands. We must not talk of faith and hope, or revel in Utopian visions but run to the nearest scene of work, be one of the drudging millions, try to improve their lot and set ourselves to the task of mitigating human sufferings. The old villages are so many pictures of desolation and distress, they are the hot-beds of malaria, the sepulchres of our greatness; so go to them and try to reinstate our tutelary angel in his ancient seat. Or we must erect mills, start small industries, educate the masses, do philanthropic work and not talk of free or united India until this is done. When the spade work has not yet begun, why talk of a fine superstructure and create difficulties in the way of solid and substantial work? You have not yet put the plough to your land, why quarrel over the prospective produce and sow seeds of dissension amongst yourselves before you have sown the seed that is to yield any good to the country? The buoyant Nationalism of the day is sought to be repressed by such timid truisms and guarded amenities with which our advisers justify their placid course of life. They want us to take note of our limitations, our environment and not to tempt the country to the skies with wings so heavily weighed down. Common sense, it is said, should be our guide and not imagination.

All this is well, and we would be the last to deny the necessity of the work so much insisted upon. But the work is nothing without the ideal, and will be fruitless if divorced from its inspiring force. Which is common sense? To tread the right path or to avoid it because it promises to be thorny? Which is common sense? To mislead ourselves or to speak the truth and do the right? The uplifting of a nation cannot be accomplished by a few diplomatic politicians. The spirit to serve, the spirit to work, the spirit to suffer must be roused. Men in their ordinary utilitarian course of life do not feel called upon to serve anyone except themselves.

The daily duties are engrossing enough for the average man. His own individual prospects in life generally become his sole concern. He is propelled by the inertia of his own individual needs, and if any other sort of work is expected of him a different and more intense force must be continuously applied to him to produce the necessary energy. Or, in other words, we must continuously appeal to his better nature, we must evoke the spiritual in him, we must call forth his moral enthusiasm.

These may not be human nature's daily food, they may not be necessary for our daily life, they may not have their use in the ordinary selfish pursuits, but they are essential for working a change in our social or political life. Buddha only preached and lived a holy life, Christ only preached and lived a holy life, Shankara only preached and lived a holy life, and they have each worked a mighty revolution in the history of the world. Inspiration is real work. Let the truly inspiring word be uttered and it will breathe life into dry bones. Let the inspiring life be lived and it will produce workers by thousands. England draws her inspiration from the names of Shakespeare and Milton, Mill and Bacon, Nelson and Wellington. They did not visit the sickroom, they did not do philanthropic work in the parishes, they did not work spinning jennies in Manchester, they did not produce cutlery in Sheffield, but theirs are the names which have made nationhood possible in England, which have supplied work and enterprise with its motive and sustaining force. England is commercially great because Adam Smith gave her the secret of free-trade. England is politically great because her national ideals have been bold and high, not because of her parish work and municipalities. He was no fool or Utopian who wished to be the maker of songs for his country rather than its law giver. Wolfe had Gray's "Elegy" recited to him on his death-bed, and said he would rather be the author of these lines than the captor of Quebec. These are the utterances of great workers and heroes, they have given the greatest credit to the givers of ideas and ideals, because they have felt in their own life where the inspiration for work comes from. Work without ideals is a false gospel.

By the Way

Notables

When we wrote of the days of ancient greatness, we did not think that we were about to witness the singular spectacle of a Hindu society professing to restore the purity of the old religion bowing down at the throne of Minto, who could recognize in the Lords of today the Rajas and Maharajas of modern India, the sons of the great Kshatriya blood? Minto and Morley are the representatives of Yavana and Saka of old. Did the princes of ancient India go out of their way to kneel before their throne? Was that the glory of Hinduism? Or are we witnessing a revival of the days when Asoka ruled over the Asiatic peoples? The Bharat Dharma Mahamandal aim at the revival of Hinduism but they are working for its final extinction.

Minto Worship

When we speak of the Notables bowing at the feet of Minto, we are aware that we shall lay ourselves open to the charge of disloyalty. Well, that is a charge we have never been anxious to avoid. When sedition is found in all we write, then it is no advantage picking and choosing our expressions. But we have one thing to say. Who made Lord Minto ruler of India? Not the hand of any earthly power but the decree of God, and if the Hindu people bow down before Minto, it is only as the Viceroy of God. Is that the logic of the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal? If so, it is a logic based on outward facts, not on the inner truths. God is today manifesting himself again, but where? Not in the glory of England, which is on the wane, but in the resurgence of Asia.

Minto-Morley

Minto is an archangel of peace, says Romesh Chandra Dutt; Morley an archangel of benevolence. With so many archangels to look after us, we are unfortunate indeed if we cannot be happy. Poor India!

Within and Without

Romesh Chandra Dutt is a statesman according to his own idea of himself and statesmen are always looking out for their fellows. Romesh Chandra with his large-hearted appreciation of the ruling qualities of the British race, Surendranath with his unswerving loyalty, Narendranath with his gratitude are, one would imagine, so many pillars of British rule. What about Romesh Chandra's letters to Lord Curzon, Surendranath's boycott or Narendranath's secret hopes of Theosophical rule of Mahatmas? Whoever says one thing with his lips and another in his heart, can never hope to help his country.

Truth and Falsehood

When we are on the subject, let us be frank. Truth is the rock on which the world is built. *Satyena tishthate jagat*. Falsehood can never be the true source of strength. When falsehood is at the root of a movement, that movement is doomed to failure. Diplomacy can only help a movement if the movement proceeds upon truth. To make diplomacy the root-principle is to contravene the laws of existence.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, February 21st, 1908 }

The Latest Sedition Trial

We do not generally concern ourselves with the results of trials in bureaucratic law-courts. The law that is now recognised by the civilised world is the will of a people. The law that is really binding on a people is the mature deliberation of its own representatives as to the proper wont and scope of individual activity in relation to the common weal. Law if it is to be beneficial to society cannot be divorced from the truths established by science, on the contrary it derives its binding force from being based on them. That a bureaucratic law is not so much meant to ensure social well-being but designed for restricting even a legitimate freedom of action sanctioned by science has been amply illustrated in the judgment of the Police Magistrate of Calcutta in the *Nabasakti* case. The Magistrate was confronted with the difficulty that neither common sense nor jurisprudence can penalise the preaching of a political truth. The strange syllogism with which he has sought to bring the preaching of an ideal within the purview of the bureaucratic law is ridiculous to the extreme. The Magistrate in his judgment does not seem even to know his own mind. In the earlier part of his judgment he talks as if the preaching of independence as an ideal were in itself sedition. "To my mind," he says in powerful magisterial fashion, "the meaning and intention of this article admit of no doubt whatever. The writer is advocating independence and the article is seditious." Later on he has misgivings. Glimpses of a common sense buried deep away under long habits of reading political necessity into judicial interpretation seem to visit the official mind:

"The ideal of national independence is one which appeals to Englishmen with very strong force, and it is one which when reasonably and temperately expressed will always meet with a great deal of sympathy. There is undoubtedly at the present day, a growing belief amongst men of liberal and statesmanlike views that India will at a future date attain this national independence. Moreover it is an object with which the use of force need not be associated at all for it is an object attainable by constitutional means. I believe therefore that no Liberal Government would ever take serious exception to the temperate expression of the ideal."

The only fault to be found with this expression of a commonsense view of things is that the Magistrate seems to lay down the proposition that it depends on the feelings and views of Englishmen whether the preaching of independence is seditious or not. That is so in practice, no doubt, but judicially it is a strange principle of interpretation. On this ground, clearly stated by the Magistrate, that the preaching of national independence is not in itself seditious and does not become seditious unless coupled with excitations to revolt or violence or with matter tending to bring the Government into hatred or contempt, — the Printer of the *Nabasakti* was entitled to an acquittal. But the Magistrate immediately afterwards falls back from light into a thick fog in which he flounders helplessly for some way of unsaying what he has said.

"An Indian writer, however, who holds up national independence as an immediate panacea for the wrongs of his countrymen, is a mere visionary, and it is most unfortunate that so much of the political writing in Bengali newspapers should be the crude product of ignorant and ill-trained minds." And he goes on to say that the accused had published articles of this description and coupled them with others inciting to violence. Therefore he is convicted of sedition. Are we then to understand that the Printer is found guilty of sedition not because he advocated independence but because he advocated independence in an ignorant and ill-trained manner and his article was a crude product? If an article is to be declared seditious merely because it does not please the literary taste of a Police Court Magistrate, a new terror will be added to the law of sedition. Or are we to understand that the article is not seditious, is quite innocent, since to preach independence is not seditious, but it is declared seditious because other articles in the paper which contain nothing about independence, are violent in tone? So far as we can see from the judgment of this learned Magistrate, the article in question is not seditious, though it may or may not be "a crude product"; the other articles are not seditious though they may come under some other section of the Penal Code than 124A, and in any case they are not the subject matter of the charge. But because one article preaches independence and another which has no connection with it is written in a violent tone, therefore the first non-seditious article is transmuted into sedition by some strange magisterial alchemy. We come out of the reading of this judgment with a bewildered brain and only one clearly grasped idea, viz., that whether what we write is seditious or not, depends not on the law, but on the state of "public opinion" in England and Anglo-India, and on the intellectual vagaries of a Magistrate who cannot even misinterpret the law consistently. And after all that is "all we know or need to know" on the subject of the law of sedition.

Boycott and British Capital

We published yesterday a communicated article on the economic danger of excepting from the Boycott British manufactures produced on Indian soil. The note of warning which the writer strikes is one which was long ago raised by Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal on similar grounds. The danger of an invasion of our market by British capital on a gigantic scale, the transference of Manchester to the banks of the Hughly is not a danger of the immediate moment. But in the future, if the pressure of a spreading Boycott and the growth of Indian industry on English trade with India becomes a strangling pressure, the first economic result would inevitably be the migration of English capital to this country to compete under more favourable circumstances. This however presupposes that the conditions in favour of British capital as against Indian remain as good as they have been in the past. There are, however, strong considerations on the other side. There is first the natural reluctance of capital to leave its own nest where it is safest unless it is sure of compensating gains. There is the fact that a wholesale migration of a great manufacture to a distant country is conceivable in theory, but hardly practicable and certainly unprecedented. Most powerful obstacle of all is the comparative insecurity of Indian soil to British capital. The possibility that England's rule in India may some day cease either by invasion from outside, convulsion from within or a peaceful departure, must always be present to the eye of so timid an entity as capital, and so long as the present unrest and the exploitation of it by enterprising journalists continues, we need not fear wholesale industrial invasion; but the unrest is likely to last so long as the bureaucracy maintain their present uncompromising attitude and Indian democracy does not come by its own. On economic grounds, we fancy the danger from Anglo-Indian manufactures is not pressing. Boycott on political grounds is a different matter. So far at least the sentiment of the country has been for condoning the advantage to British capital for the sake of the advantage to Indian labour.

Unofficial Commissions

The self-appointed Unofficial Commission consisting of Srijuts Bhupendranath Bose and U. N. Mukherji has issued its report and findings on the Police hooliganism at Mymensingh. The report is interesting reading and we appreciate the trouble taken by these gentlemen out of purely patriotic motives, but when all is done we are compelled to ask, *Cui bono*? What is the utility of these so-called commissions, whom do they benefit and how do they help either to mend such illegal outrages as have been committed or to prevent their recurrence in future? As commissions they are open to the objection that two eminent gentlemen travelling to Mymensingh to interview the victims of outrage, do not form a Commission, since there is no recognized or unrecognized power in the country which has commissioned them and is prepared to take action on their report. As a judicial proceeding, their enquiry is open to the objection that the findings are given on the unsifted statements of one side only. As a collection of facts from the personal statements of sufferers and eyewitnesses, the report is indeed invaluable. But still what purpose does it serve? The country did not need this report to believe the statements of our own countrymen in preference to those of the Police or the officials, and in all other ways the action of these two public-spirited gentlemen is entirely infructuous. It is the old idea of placing our grievances — before whom? The tribunal of British justice is discredited and the tribunal of Indian patriotism not yet erected. Meanwhile outrages of the Mymensingh type are likely to remain a standing feature of the present struggle between darkness and light, liberty and absolutism, until Democracy arises and in no uncertain language forbids them.

The Soul and India's Mission

Wind and Water

Wind and water are always types of the human soul in our literature. Wind is so light a substance that we cannot grasp it, water so fluid that we cannot seize it. When the soul is in a state of lightness and fluidity, it is then that it is compared to wind and water. When it is hard and rigid, then it is a stone. Wind and water are the light and fluid soul, stone the hard and rigid. Soul is variable and not easily distinguished from the European description of mind. Such a description may seem fanciful but it is true. Whoever has practised *pranayama* knows that sometimes the breath is as light and fluid as wind or water, sometimes as hard and rigid as stone. This changefulness of the soul is the true reason for Maya. If the soul were not changeable, it would be too much akin to the Brahman, — but because it is changeable, it lays itself open to the influence of Maya.

Light

Light is an emanation from the sun, but the sun is itself an emanation from God. When it is full of Him, then it is full of light. So the ancient Rishis used to say that He was in the sun. *Yo'sau purushah*, etc. But this was only a manner of speaking. When the sun is full of God's presence, it is full of light and heat, when it is empty of Him, the light and heat are withdrawn. So too the human soul is like the sun. When it is full of light and heat, it is said to be alive, when the light and heat are withdrawn, it is said to die. But this too is only a manner of speaking. The soul is imperishable. When the body feels the presence of God within, it is conscious of life, but when the light and heat of His presence are withdrawn it ceases to become active and conscious. This is called death. There is no hard and fast line to be drawn between life and death. The one is only the positive, the other the negative of God's presence.

Body and Soul

Soul is a presence, body a piece of Maya. When the body is full of the presence of the soul it lives, but when the soul withdraws from it, it dies. In other words, the soul while in the body feels a sense of imprisonment which ceases as soon as the body falls from it. This is the work of Maya who lives by creating the sense of restriction in the illimitable and free Brahman. Maya is the negative quality of Brahman making for darkness, Vidya, the positive quality making for light. They subsist together in the soul, and sometimes one prevails, sometimes the other. When Maya prevails, the soul thinks itself bound, when Vidya prevails, it thinks itself free. But there is no bondage. So too when a people feels itself bound and subject it acquiesces in its bondage, but the moment a light from God is sent into it and the prophet of God is commissioned from on high, the nation wonders at its blindness and wakes to the sense of its inalienable freedom.

Immortality

Death, we have said, is a mere phase. There is no death, only the change from bondage to freedom. Death of the body is the first release from physical bondage, death of the soul the last release from spiritual bondage. The soul does not really die, but merely shakes off the false sense of separateness from Brahman. Who then will fear death? Death is no enemy, no King of Horrors, but a friend who opens the gates of Heaven to the aspiring soul. Heaven is a myth in the opinion of modern science, but if Heaven means eternal happiness then Heaven is no myth. It is the state of the soul released from Maya, rejoicing in the sense of its own illimitable being; and those attain it who are in this world able to rise above the self to the knowledge of the higher self either by Yoga or by selfless action for the sake of others.

Heaven awaits the patriot who dies for his country, the saint who passes from this life with the thought of God in his heart, the soldier who flings his life away at the bidding of his nation, all who can put the thought of self away from them.

Rest

When the soul is at rest, peace unutterable becomes its possession. How is rest to be attained? By the thought of Brahman. Whoever thinks of Him at the time of death, passes into Him. Not the mere act of intellectual cognition, but the thought which dwells in the heart. The heart is the meeting place of God and the Soul. When the two meet then all action ceases, and rest becomes the possession of the soul. Whoever wishes to realise this truth must try to seek God in his heart. If he can find Him there, he will experience rest.

Final Cessation

Nirvana is the goal of the soul's progress. Nirvana is the cessation of all phenomenal activity. Saints and sages are agreed in all religions on this one common truth, that so long as the phenomenal world is present to the soul, there can be no communion with God. Whoever imagines that by communion with the phenomenal world he can reach God, is committing error, for the two are incompatible. The West is full of interest in phenomena, and it is for this reason that no great religion has ever come out of the West. Asia on the other hand is full of interest in Brahman and she is therefore the cradle of every great religion. Christianity, Mahomedanism, Buddhism and the creeds of China and Japan are all offshoots of one great and eternal religion of which India has the keeping.

India's Mission

So with India rests the future of the world. Whenever she is aroused from her sleep, she gives forth some wonderful shining ray of light to the world which is enough to illuminate the nations. Others live for centuries on what is to her the thought of a moment. God gave to her the book of Ancient Wisdom and bade her keep it sealed in her heart, until the time should come for it to be opened. Sometimes a page or a chapter is revealed, sometimes only a single sentence. Such sentences have been the inspiration of ages and fed humanity for many hundreds of years. So too when India sleeps, materialism grows apace and the light is covered up in darkness. But when materialism thinks herself about to triumph, lo and behold! a light rushes out from the East and where is Materialism? Returned to her native night.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, February 22nd, 1908 }

The Glory of God in Man

Whoever is still under the influence of intellectual pride, is shocked when people depreciate the reason as the supreme guide. He asks how is it possible for a man of culture to depreciate the reason and exalt some extraneous influence like that which people call God? But these doubters are under the influence of European materialism which tries to confine man to his material portion and deny him the possibility of a divine origin and a divine destiny. When Europe left Christianity to the monk and the ascetic and forgot the teachings of the Galilean, she exposed herself to a terrible fate which will yet overtake her. God in man is the whole revelation and the whole of religion. What Christianity taught dimly, Hinduism made plain to the intellect in Vedanta. When India remembers the teaching she received from Shankaracharya, Ramanuja and Madhva, when she realises what Sri Ramakrishna came to reveal, then she will rise. Her very life is Vedanta.

If anyone thinks that we are merely intellectual beings, he is not a Hindu. Hinduism leaves the glorification of intellectuality to those who have never seen God. She is commissioned by Him to speak only of His greatness and majesty and she has so spoken for thousands of years. When we first received a European education, we allowed ourselves to be misled by the light of science. Science is a light within a limited room, not the sun which illumines the world. The Apara Vidya is the sum of science but there is a higher Vidya, a mightier knowledge. When we are under the influence of the lower knowledge, we imagine that we are doing everything and try to reason out the situation we find ourselves in, as if our intellect were sovereign and omnipotent.

But this is an attitude of delusion and Maya. Whoever has once felt the glory of God within him can never again believe that the intellect is supreme. There is a higher voice, there is a more unfailing oracle. It is in the heart where God resides. He works through the brain, but the brain is only one of His instruments. Whatever the brain may plan, the heart knows first and whoever can go beyond the brain to the heart, will hear the voice of the Eternal. This is what Srijut Aurobindo Ghose said in his Bombay speech. But our contemporary, the *Indian Patriot*, has lamented his downfall from the high pedestal of culture he once occupied. Our contemporary has forgotten the teachings of Vivekananda which were once so powerful in Madras. What does he think was the cause of the great awakening in Bengal?

When Lord Curzon thought to rend Bengal asunder, he deprived her of all her old pride and reliance upon her intellectual superiority. She had thought to set her wits against British power and believed that the intellect of her sons would be a match for the clumsy brains of the English statesmen. Lord Curzon showed her that Power is too direct and invincible to be outwitted. The brains of Bengal did their best to cope with him and they failed. No course remained to Bengal which her intellect could suggest. But when she was utterly reduced to despair, the time came for her own power to awake and set itself against that of the foreigner. She flung aside the devices of the Greek and took on herself the majesty of Roman strength and valour. When she declared the Boycott, she did so without calculation, without reckoning chances, without planning how the Boycott could succeed. She simply declared it. Was the intellect at work when she declared it? Was it her leaders who planned it as a means of bringing the British to their knees?

Everybody knows that it was not so. It was Kishoregunj, it was Magura, the obscure villages and towns of East Bengal which first declared the Boycott. What brain planned it, what voice first uttered it, history will never be able to discover. None planned it, but it was in the heart of the nation and God revealed it. If human brains had thought over the matter, Boycott would never have been declared. Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal is the most powerful brain at present at work in Bengal, but Srijut Bipin Chandra has himself often related that he was opposed to the Boycott in its inception, because his intellect refused to assent to the economic possibility of Boycott. So with all the men who were then the recognised brains and voices of Bengal. Only the nation had Boycott in their hearts and the heart of Bengal refused to be silenced by its brain. So Boycott was declared. Had the *Indian Patriot* been the mouthpiece of Bengal it would have asked for a plan of operations. But what plan of operations could have been given? So we see from this one great example what Srijut Aurobindo Ghose meant when he said that it was God's work and not man's. If the *Indian Patriot* can show us who planned the Boycott, or how it has been guided to success by human intellect, we will accept his view of things. Meanwhile, we shall take leave to approve of the view expressed by Srijut Aurobindo Ghose. God is behind this movement and He does not need anyone to tell Him how to bring it to success. He will see to that Himself. Whatever plans we may make, we shall find quite useless when the time for action comes. Revolutions are always full of surprises, and whoever thinks he can play chess with a revolution will soon find how terrible is the grasp of God and how insignificant the human reason before the whirlwind of His breath. That man only is likely to dominate the chances of a revolution, who makes no plans but preserves his heart pure for the will of God to declare itself. The great rule of life is to have no schemes but one unalterable purpose. If the will is fixed on the purpose it sets itself to accomplish, then circumstances will suggest the right course; but the schemer finds himself always tripped up by the unexpected.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, February 24th, 1908 }

A National University

The idea of a National University is one of the ideas which have formulated themselves in the national consciousness and become part of the immediate destiny of a people. It is a seed which is sown and must come to its fruition, because the future demands it and the heart of the nation is in accord with the demand. The process of its increase may be rapid or it may be slow, and when the first beginnings are made, there may be many errors and false starts, but like a stream gathering volume as it flows, the movement will grow in force and certainty, the vision of those responsible for its execution will grow clearer, and their hands will be helped in unexpected ways until the purpose of God is worked out and the idea shapes itself into an accomplished reality. But it is necessary that those who are the custodians of the precious trust, should guard it with a jealous care and protect its purity and first high aim from being sullied or lowered.

There have been many attempts before the present movement to rescue education in India from subservience to foreign and petty ends, and to establish colleges and schools maintained and controlled by Indians which would give an education superior to the Government-controlled education. The City College, the Ferguson College and others started with this aim but they are now monuments of a frustrated idea. In every case they have fallen to the state of ordinary institutions, replicas of the Government model, without a separate mission or nobler reason for existence. And they have so fallen because their promoters could not understand or forgot that the first condition of success was independence — an independence jealously preserved and absolute. In other words there can be no national education without national control.

A certain measure of success has been secured by two institutions of a later birth, the Benares Hindu College and the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College. These are successful institutions, but isolated. They have not developed into centres of a network of schools affiliated to them and forming one corporate body. They have not in themselves the makings of Universities. So far as they give religious teaching they are a wholesome departure from the barren official form of education, but that is only one part of education on national lines. National education cannot be defined briefly in one or two sentences, but we may describe it tentatively as the education which starting with the past and making full use of the present builds up a great nation. Whoever wishes to cut off the nation from its past, is no friend of our national growth. Whoever fails to take advantage of the present is losing us the battle of life. We must therefore save for India all that she has stored up of knowledge, character and noble thought in her immemorial past. We must acquire for her the best knowledge that Europe can give her and assimilate it to her own peculiar type of national temperament. We must introduce the best methods of teaching humanity has developed, whether modern or ancient. And all these we must harmonise into a system which will be impregnated with the spirit of self-reliance so as to build up men and not machines — national men, able men, men fit to carve out a career for themselves by their own brain power and resource, fit to meet the shocks of life and breast the waves of adventure. So shall the Indian people cease to sleep and become once more a people of heroes, patriots, originators, so shall it become a nation and no longer a disorganised mass of men.

National education must therefore be on national lines and under national control. This necessity is the very essence of its being. No one who has not grasped it, can hope to build up a National University. Mrs. Besant has recently begun a campaign in favour of national education and in a recent speech has outlined her idea of a National University. We have every respect for this great orator and organiser, but we are bound to point out that an university organised by Mrs. Besant will not be a National University. In the first place the future University must be one built up by the brain and organising power of India's own sons. It shall never be said that the first National University in India was the creation of a foreigner and that the children of the Mother were content to follow and imitate but could not lead and originate. Such a charge would be fatal to the very object of the University. Secondly, Mrs. Besant has forgotten that the basis of a National University has already been laid. The National Council of Education in Bengal has already commenced the great work on lines which have only to be filled in, and their work has received the blessing of God and increases. But Mrs. Besant has omitted to make any mention of their work and speaks as if she intended to have the Benares College as the basis of the National University. But the Benares College has shown itself unfit for so huge a task. It has been obliged to rely on foreign funds and to court Government patronage. Even the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College is a more robust growth, for it has been built up by the munificent self-sacrifice of the Arya Samaj. No institution which cannot rely on the people of India for its support and build itself up without official support or patronage, can be considered to have established its capacity of developing into a National University. Finally, Mrs. Besant shows by her scheme that she is not in possession of the true secret of the movement. She wants a Charter from England. We are aware that she talks of organising the University with the help of Indian talent and keeping it as a preserve for Indian control, but when she asks for a Charter it is evident that she has not realised what national control implies. No Government will give a Charter which excludes them from all control. There may be no provision for control in the Charter itself, but the power that gives the Charter can at any moment insist on seeing that the University merits the Charter. Once this constructive possibility of control is allowed to overshadow the infant institution, goodbye to its utility, its greatness, its future. It will follow the way of other schools and colleges and become a fruitless idea, a monument of wasted energy and frustrated hopes.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 3rd, 1908 }

Mustafa Kamal Pasha

We published yesterday among our selections a full account of the life and death of Mustafa Kamal Pasha, the great Nationalist leader in Egypt, who has regenerated Nationalism in his motherland and will be remembered in history as the chief among the creators of modern Egypt. The early death of this extraordinary man will be a blow to the movement, but we must remember what we are apt to forget that the life-work of a great man often does not begin till he dies. While the body fetters the activities of the spirit within, his work is limited in its scope and imperfect in its intensity, but when the material shackles are struck off by the friendly hand of death then the spirit ranges abroad in perfect freedom and the sudden and startling rapidity with which its work develops, forms a theme for the amazement and admiration of posterity. Whatever else Mustafa Kamal may have been, he was a sincere and enthusiastic patriot. When he left Egypt to help the cause of his country in foreign countries, he was welcomed even in England by those who had the generosity to appreciate patriotism; but the moment it appeared that his work was beginning to bear practical fruit in Egypt itself, a storm of misrepresentation began to beat about his devoted head which has not even yet ceased. He was denounced as an intriguer, a paid tool of the Khedive, a Turcophil emissary of the Sultan. But Egypt felt the heart of a patriot in his writings and his speeches and her people responded to his call. The steady growth of the Nationalist party has been mainly the work of Mustafa Kamal. It attained its consummation in the meeting of the reorganized Nationalist party when he was on the brink of the grave and his last self-forgetful service to his country was the speech which he rose from his death-bed to deliver upon that memorable occasion.

The programme of the Nationalist party in Egypt has some resemblances to that of the Indian Nationalists. Its object is the independence of Egypt, its method is the appeal to the self-consciousness of the nation, and its reliance is on the help which God always gives to the cause of righteousness when it is pursued in a lofty and disinterested spirit. In his earlier career Mustafa relied too much on foreign sympathy and he persisted till the end in clinging to the hope of some assistance, moral if not material, from the foreign powers financially interested in Egypt. But his trust in this chance of outward help never extended to the folly of expecting British statesmen to co-operate of deliberate purpose in hastening the day of Egypt's liberation. He was a statesman as well as a prophet of Nationalism. If he relied too much on foreign sympathy, it was because the national sentiment in Egypt was as yet local and he trusted in the moral support of other countries to prevent England from putting it down with the strong hand before it had become sufficiently self-conscious to survive oppression. The Sultan stood between Egypt and complete annexation to England, and therefore he always persisted in laying stress on the suzerainty of the Sultan. The religious solidarity of Islam was a moral asset in his favour and he insisted on this solidarity but never suffered it for a moment to interfere with the distinct existence of Egyptian nationality. The cause of nationality was his first object; the rest merely helps and supports. Towards the end of his career as the sentiment of nationality grew more and more self-conscious and self-reliant in his countrymen he too came to perceive in its fullness the truth that Egypt must rely on herself first and not on others. Foreign help can only be safe and beneficial if the nation has already grown strong enough to rely mainly on itself for its own separate existence.

Mustafa Kamal was a man of the type of Mazzini in one respect, his intense idealism and lofty idea of cosmopolitan unity embracing national independence. It is this idealism which will keep Egypt alive and secure the immortality of the Nationalist movement. When a movement for independence begins with diplomacy and Machiavellianism, it is doomed to failure as the Carbonari movement failed in Italy. God is not with it. It does not rely on the eternal principles of truth and virtue, but on the finite strength of human intellect and human means and to that finite strength God leaves it. When that strength comes to its limits, there is nothing left, and failure is final. But when a movement takes its stand on truth and justice, then it appeals to God Himself and He will see to it that the trust reposed in Him is not falsified. Failures may come but they will be only fresh incentives to purer and nobler effort. An immortal power will stand behind the movement and death will be afraid to come near it. Its leaders may be snatched away by the hand of death, hurried into exile or imprisonment, given to the hand of the executioner, but fresh leaders will arise. Its means may change from time to time, it may pass through ever-new phases and sometimes men may fail to recognize it as the same old movement, but God is within it always as its eternal and undying Self and it lasts till it receives its consummation.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 4th, 1908 }

A Great Opportunity

The release of Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal will take place in a few days and the bureaucracy is undoubtedly looking with anxiety to see what kind of reception the people give to this great leader and propagandist after his six months' incarceration for conscience' sake. They will do their best to prevent by a surreptitious release any expression of public feeling either at the jail doors or at the station, but it does not matter whether or not we welcome him at the precise moment and place of his release, so long as the heart of the people goes out unmistakably in some mighty demonstration of feeling. That Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal is one of our most powerful workers on the platform and the press, is a fact which even his opponents have acknowledged. That his services to the country have been of an incalculable value, few will care to gainsay. Among a large section of his countrymen he is recognized as the prophet of a great political creed. Whenever men of his type fall under the displeasure of the powers that be, they return to the field of work with greater vigour and a fresh vitality, for theirs is a mission which thrives upon oppression and gains by exile and imprisonment. Srijut Bipin Chandra also will come out of prison like a giant refreshed and renew his labour for his nation. But if his incarceration had been a source of strength to himself, has it or has it not been a source of strength to his country? This is the question which we must answer on the 9th of March. In what terms shall we answer it? Are we to confess that the cunning policy of mingled repression and occasional forbearance has had its effect? There are some among us who advise caution and look with fear on such demonstrations as likely to provoke fresh persecution, as if it were the outward ebullitions of sentiment and not the fact of national aspiration which it is sought to repress. Shall we by an imperfect welcome to this great tribune of the people show that these counsels of imprudent prudence have weight with us? Shall we not rather make the occasion one of universal rejoicing all over the country so that all may feel that the pulse of the movement is not slower, that the heart of this people beats as high as before the incarceration of their well-loved apostle and teacher?

How then are we to welcome Bipin Chandra Pal back to the scene of his labours? By illuminations, by processions, by rejoicing of every kind. We would have every town and village where the nation is awake write his welcome in letters of fire on balcony and roof of their dwellings not only in Bengal but in Madras, in Maharashtra, in the Punjab, wherever Nationalism is alive and the name of the Mother is honoured. We invite our countrymen all over India to become one with Bengal in the act of a rejoicing which is not for a man but for the cause he has served. Let us also arrange to lead him in procession from his house after his return to a place of public meeting with such pomp and ceremony as befits one who returns from a great victory to his native land; for the jail is a place of exile and the prisoner released is a soldier who has waged a great moral conflict for his country and returns triumphant carrying with him his unblemished patriotism and the unlowered flag of his courage as the trophies of the fight. And in the place of assembly let all parties unite to do him honour so that the return of this Nationalist leader may be the best answer to those who rejoice in our dissensions and seek in them the safety which they cannot hope for from the justice of their bureaucratic rule or the righteousness of their absolutist cause. And if in addition every considerable society of workers and patriots expresses separately its appreciation and respect, the welcome will be worthy of the occasion, and a great opportunity for fresh national inspiration and the upwelling of a living enthusiasm will have been nobly used. Whoever thinks that this is a time for nourishing old grudges or remembering past feuds, is wanting in patriotism and insight. The hour is one of growing national unity and there is in the heart of the people a desire to have done with barren dispute and set themselves to the sacred work to which this generation has been called. Whoever stops now to weigh and consider whether he is at one with Bipin Chandra in the views of which he is the chief exponent or can entirely appreciate the reasons of his refusal to give evidence, is allowing trifles to obscure the greatness of the thing which Bipin Chandra for the moment represents. It is not the man or the action which will be honoured by a public demonstration. The man is nothing but the cause is everything. The action is nothing, but the sacrament of suffering is everything. This sacrament of suffering has been in this instance the privilege not of the rank and file of the national army but of a great leader and captain, whose name is honoured in every part of India. Such an occasion is one of rare occurrence, for it is usually the private soldiers who are food for powder and the leaders stand out of range for the better safety of the work. Yet when one is struck down, it is a matter for national rejoicing, that so illustrious a name has been added to the roll of those who have been chosen to give proofs of the noblest patriotism and courage.

We therefore invite all to join in this demonstration. We do not wish this occasion to be marred by the memories of past dissension but to be ennobled by the growing hope of a great united movement forward in the future. In the person of Bipin Chandra let the present impulse towards a better understanding find a consummation which all the world cannot fail to understand. Let it be the seal of the reconciliation which began at Pabna, and the beginning of united action for the better organisation of the work to which all Bengal without distinction of parties is now irrevocably pledged.

Bande Mataram

CALCUTTA, March 5th, 1908

Swaraj and the Coming Anarchy

Whoever tries to read the signs of the time, will be no little perplexed at first by their complexity. The beginnings of a great revolution which is destined to change the whole political, social, and economic life of a great country, are always full of ebb and flow, perplexing by the multitude of details and their continual interaction. The struggle going on at Tuticorin exemplifies this remarkable diversity and intermingling of numerous tendencies each of which would in ordinary times be a separate movement. Society is full of anomalies which clash and jostle together in an inextricable chaos of progress and reaction; economic India is in the throes of a violent transition from the old mediaeval basis of life to the modern; politics is at a parting of the ways. All these various and independent activities of the Indian body politic unite into a huge and confused movement of which the main impulse is political and the others are largely inspired, if not motived, by the passions which are at the root of the political upheaval. Great issues of economics wear the guise of a political conflict; immense political aspirations become mixed up with a purely industrial struggle between indigenous labour and foreign capital. So also in society the old reform movement which was a separate and ineffectual attempt to transform our society according to European ideas, has given place to disquiet and aspiration in the society itself. So long the educated men of the upper castes debated among themselves about the better ordering of society, and outside Bengal and the Punjab it was no better than an academic dispute on the Social Conference platform or between the reforming and orthodox Press. Even in Bengal and the Punjab, the movement was sectional, a revolt of a small minority of the educated few, and did not touch the heart of the people. So far as society as a whole was affected, it was by the new environments of the nineteenth century bringing an irresistible pressure to bear on its outworks, and sometimes by the force of economical necessity born of the modern conditions of India under British rule. The change was from outside and therefore injurious rather than beneficial, for an organism is doomed which, incapable of changing from within, answers only to the pressure of environment. But this immobile state of Hindu society has now begun to pass away and we see the beginning of a profound and incalculable life in the heart of the great organism. Yesterday we hardly needed to reckon with the lower strata of society in our political life; today they are beginning to live, to move, to have a dim inarticulate hope and to grope for air and room. That is a sign of coming social revolution in which neither the conservative forces of society nor the liberal sympathies of the educated few will have much voice. The forces that are being unprisoned, will upheave the whole of our society with a volcanic force and the shape it will take after the eruption is over, does not depend on the wishes or the wisdom of men. These social stirrings also are mingling with the political unrest to increase the confusion. The question of the Namasudras in Bengal has become a political as well as a social problem and in other parts of the country also the line between politics and social questions is threatened with obliteration.

The future is not in our hands. When so huge a problem stares us in the face, we become conscious of the limits of human discernment and wisdom. We at once feel that the motions of humanity are determined by forces and not by individuals and that the intellect and experience of statesmen are merely instruments in the hands of the Power which manifests itself in those great incalculable forces. In ordinary times, we are apt to forget this and to account for all that happens as the result of this statesman's foresight or that genius' dynamic personality. But in times like the present we find it less easy to shut our eyes to the truth. We do not affect to believe, therefore, that we can discover any solution of these great problems or any sure line of policy by which the tangled issues of so immense a movement can be kept free from the possibility of inextricable anarchy in the near future. Anarchy will come. This peaceful and inert nation is going to be rudely awakened from a century of passivity and flung into a world-shaking turmoil out of which it will come transformed, strengthened and purified. There is a chaos which is the result of inertia and the prelude of death, and this was the state of India during the last century. The British peace of the last fifty years was like the quiet green grass and flowers covering the corruption of a sepulchre. There is another chaos which is the violent reassertion of life and it is this chaos into which India is being hurried today. We cannot repine at the change, but are rather ready to welcome the pangs which help the storm which purifies, the destruction which renovates.

One thing only we are sure of, and one thing we wear as a life-belt which will buoy us up on the waves of the chaos that is coming on the land. This is the fixed and unalterable faith in an overruling Purpose which is raising India once more from the dead, the fixed and unalterable intention to fight for the renovation of her ancient life and glory. Swaraj is the life-belt, Swaraj the pilot, Swaraj the star of guidance. If a great social revolution is necessary, it is because the ideal of Swaraj cannot be accomplished by a nation bound to forms which are no longer expressive of the ancient and immutable Self of India. She must change the rags of the past so that her beauty may be readorned. She must alter her bodily appearance so that her soul may be newly expressed. We need not fear that any change will turn her into a second-hand Europe. Her individuality is too mighty for such a degradation, her soul too calm and self-sufficient for such a surrender. If again an economical revolution is inevitable, it is because the fine but narrow edifice of her old industrial life will not allow of Swaraj in commerce and industry. The industrial energies of a free and perfect national life demand a mightier scope and wider channels. Neither need we fear that the economic revolution will land us in the same diseased and disordered state of society as now offends the nobler feelings of humanity in Europe. India can never so far forget the teaching which is her life and the secret of her immortality as to become a replica of the organized selfishness, cruelty and greed which is dignified in the West by the name of Industry. She will create her own conditions, find out the secret of order which Socialism in vain struggles to find and teach the peoples of the earth once more how to harmonize the world and the spirit.

If we realise this truth, if we perceive in all that is happening a great and momentous transformation necessary not only for us but for the whole world, we shall fling ourselves without fear or misgivings into the times which are upon us. India is the *guru* of the nations, the physician of the human soul in its profounder maladies; she is destined once more to new-mould the life of the world and restore the peace of the human spirit. But Swaraj is the necessary condition of her work and before she can do the work, she must fulfil the condition.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 7th, 1908 }

The Village and the Nation

We wrote yesterday of the necessity of going back to the land if the Bengali Hindu is to keep his place in the country and escape the fate of those who divorce themselves from the root of life, the soil. But there is another aspect of the question which is also of immense importance. The old organization of the Indian village was self-sufficient, self-centred, autonomous and exclusive. These little units of life existed to themselves, each a miniature world of its own petty interests and activities, like a system of planets united to each other indeed by an unconscious force but each absorbed in its own life and careless of the other. It was a life beautifully simple, healthy, rounded and perfect, a delight to the poet and the lover of humanity. If perfect simplicity of life, freedom from economic evils, from moral degradation, from the strife, faction and fury of town populations, from revolution and turmoil, from vice and crime on a large scale are the objects of social organization, then the village communities of India were ideal forms of social organization. Many look back to them with regret and even British administrators who were instrumental in destroying them have wished that they could be revived. So valuable indeed were the elements of social welfare which they secured to the nation, that they have persisted through all changes and revolutions as they were thousands of years ago when the Aryan first occupied the land. Nor can it be denied that they have kept the nation alive. Whatever social evils or political diseases might corrupt the body politic, these little cells of national life supplied a constant source of soundness and purity which helped to prevent final disintegration. But if we owe national permanence to these village organizations, it cannot be denied that they have stood in the way of national unity.

Wherever a nation has been formed, in the modern sense, it has been at the expense of smaller units. The whole history of national growth is the record of a long struggle to establish a central unity by subduing the tendency of smaller units to live to themselves. The ancient polity of Greece was the self-realisation of the city as an unit sufficient to itself while the deme or village was obliged to sacrifice its separate existence to the greater unity of the city-state. Because the Greeks could not find it in their hearts to break the beautiful and perfect mould of their self-sufficient city life, they could never weld themselves into a nation. So again it was not till the Romans had subdued the tendency of the Italian cities to live to themselves, that the first European nation was created. In mediaeval times the city-state tried to reassert itself in the Municipalities of France and Germany and municipal freedom had to be blotted out by an absolute monarchy before national unity was realised. Whenever a smaller or different unity, whether it be that of the province, the church or the feudal fief, tends to live for itself, it is an obstacle to national unity and has to be either broken up or subordinated if the nation is to fulfil its unity. Ancient India could not build itself into a single united nation, not because of caste or social differences as the European writers assert, — caste and class have existed in nations which achieved a faultless national unity, — but because the old polity of the Hindus allowed the village to live to itself, the clan to live to itself, the province or smaller race-unit to live to itself. The village, sufficient to itself, took no interest in the great wars and revolutions which affected only the ruling clans of the kingdom including it in its territorial jurisdiction. The Kshatriya clans fought and married and made peace among themselves, and were the only political units out of which a nation might have been built. But the clan too was so attached to its separate existence that it was not till the clans were destroyed on the battlefield of Kurukshetra that larger national units could be built out of their ruins. Small kingdoms took their place based on provincial or racial divisions and until the inrush of foreign peoples an attempt was in progress to build them into one nation by the superimposition of a single imperial authority. Many causes prevented the success of the attempt, and the provincial unit has always remained the highest expression of the nation-building tendencies in India. One cause perhaps more than any other contributed to the failure of the centripetal tendency to attain self-fulfilment, and that was the persistence of the village community which prevented the people, the real nation, from taking any part in the great struggles out of which a nation should have emerged. In other countries the people had to take part in the triumphs, disasters and failures of their rulers either as citizens or at least as soldiers, but in India they were left to their little isolated republics with no farther interest than the payment of a settled tax in return for protection by the supreme power. This was the true cause of the failure of India to achieve a distinct organized and self-conscious nationality. It is worthy of notice that the Indian race in which the national idea attained its most conscious expression and most nearly attained realization, was the Mahratta people who drew their strength from the village democracies and brought them to interest themselves in the struggle for national independence. If the Mahrattas had been able to rise above the idea of provincial or racial separateness, they would have established a permanent empire and neither of the Wellesleys could have broken their power by diplomacy or in the field. The British, historians have told us, conquered India in a fit of absence of mind. In a fit of absence of mind also they destroyed the separate life of our village communities and, by thus removing the greatest obstacle in the way of national development, prepared the irresistible movement towards national unity which now fills them with dismay. The provinces have been brought together, the village has been destroyed. It only remains for the people to fulfil their destiny.

We are now turning our eyes again to the village under the stress of an instinct of self-preservation and part of our programme is to recreate village organization. In doing so we must always remember that the village can be so organized as to prove a serious obstacle to national cohesion. One or two of our leading publicists have sometimes expressed themselves as if our salvation lay in the village and not in the larger organization of the nation. Swaraj has been sometimes interpreted as a return to the old conditions of self-sufficient village life leaving the imperial authority to itself, to tax and pass laws as it pleased — ignored because it is too strong to be destroyed. Even those who see the futility of ignoring Government which seeks to destroy every centre of strength, however minute, except itself, sometimes insist on the village as the secret of our life and ask us to give up our ambitious strivings after national Swaraj and realise it first in the village. Such counsel is dangerous, even if it were possible to follow it. Nothing should be allowed to distract us from the mighty ideal of Swaraj, national and pan-Indian. This is no alien or exotic ideal, it is merely the conscious attempt to fulfil the great centripetal tendency which has pervaded the grandiose millenniums of her history, to complete the work which Srikrishna began, which Chandragupta and Asoka and the Gupta Kings continued, which Akbar almost brought to realisation, for which Shivaji was born and Bajirao fought and planned. The organization of our villages is an indispensable work to which we must immediately set our hands, but we must be careful so to organize them as to make them feel that they are imperfect parts of a single national unity, and dependent at every turn on the co-operation first of the district, secondly of the province, and finally of the nation. The day of the independent village or group of villages has gone and must not be revived; the nation demands its hour of fulfilment and seeks to gather the village life of its rural population into a mighty, single and compact democratic nationality. We must make the nation what the village community was of old, self-sufficient, self-centred, autonomous and exclusive — the ideal of national Swaraj.

Bande Mataram

CALCUTTA, March 10th, 1908

Welcome to the Prophet of Nationalism

Today Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal is due in Calcutta, a free man once more until it shall please irresponsible Magistrates and easily-twisted laws to repeat his seclusion from the work which God has given him to do. A true leader of men today in India holds his liberty as a light thing to be lost at a moment's notice; when he chooses to defend himself he does so with the knowledge that no skill of defence but the choice of his prosecutors is the arbiter of the trial, no soundness of the law in his favour, but the convenience of those who employ and pay his judge, determines whether he goes free or incurs the honourable pains of martyrdom — brief or long according to the caprice or policy of his political adversaries. To one who loves his country above all things, life in India today is as insecure as in the worst days of despotic caprice and arbitrariness from which British benevolence is fabled to have rescued us; he walks about under the constant sense of an insecurity which is the condition of his labours, not knowing whether the next day will not see him under arrest with the practical certainty of a sentence already fixed and waiting only the idle formalities of a nominal trial for its confirmation. The price of safety, if he desires it, is the sacrifice of his soul, to be silent when God has bidden him to speak, to refrain from action which his duty and conscience call on him to perform. Bureaucracy sometimes promises him safety for the moment at an apparently lighter price, the loss of personal self-respect and honour. It does not, as it once did, call upon him to fall down and worship it, it does not demand affection from its opponents; but it is content to barter acquittal for an apology. Recantation was the alternative which the old persecutors of

Christianity and the Christian persecutors of Jews and heretics offered to those whom they threatened with the cross and the arena, with the rack and the fire, and it was offered for the same reason that it is offered today to the political martyr. The force with which the old religious persecutors had to struggle was a moral force which fought tyranny not with material weapons but with the weapons of the spirit and it was by intimidating the spirit and breaking the moral force of the resistance that they hoped to destroy the movement which they feared.

Recantation meant a diminution of the moral force of the movement, so much to the credit of the tyrant, to the loss of the cause. Today also it is a great religious movement disguised for the moment in a political and Western garb with which the bureaucracy is faced and the weapons which it uses are the weapons of the spirit, the force which makes it formidable is a spiritual force. We have nothing to oppose to the immense material engines of the bureaucracy except the exalted faith, the unflinching courage, the unswerving devotion to principle which has been so strangely, suddenly born in the hearts of this generation of young men in Bengal. There lies the true strength of Nationalism and the enemies of Nationalism instinctively feel it. They are concerned therefore not so much to crush the inadequate and rudimentary material means which the movement has so far generated but to destroy the moral force which makes it a power. They are willing to forego the satisfaction of vindictiveness if they can secure the solid advantage of an apology or recantation of some kind such as would fatally injure the moral force of at least one champion of Nationalism and by cumulative examples beat down the enthusiastic self-confidence of the nation. Once or twice they have succeeded, but these solitary instances of weakness have been a beacon-light of warning to the country and the stern resolution not to flinch has been strengthened by the perception of the incalculable harm a single instance of recantation can do to the whole cause. On the other hand everyone who can say to the bureaucratic tempter, “Get thee behind me, Satan,” is scoring a victory for the cause of his country.

Yet there are signs that the counsels of prudence and the wisdom of the diplomat are beginning to gain upon us, we are growing wise in our generation and calculate the harm that can be done to the success of the movement by rashness or the advantages to be gained by a little care and economy of life or suffering. The exaltation of the movement is in danger of being lowered by an accommodating spirit. We have referred before to this growing danger and we are led to dwell on it by a perception of the relaxation in popular enthusiasm and fire which is apparent in Bengal. Now that Bipin Chandra is coming out of prison, we look to his triumphant oratory, the Pythian inspiration of his matchless eloquence to reawaken the spirit of lofty idealism, of unflinching devotion to principle which it was his mission to confirm if not awaken, and which is now more evident in Madras where his influence is the chief inspiring force than in Bengal, the home of Nationalism. The voice of the prophet will once more be free to speak to our hearts, the voice through which God has more than once spoken. We shall remember once more that the movement is a spiritual movement for prophets, martyrs and heroes to inspire, help and lead, not for diplomats and pinchbeck Machiavels; we shall realise that the spirit of India reawakened is the life of the movement and not a borrowed Western patriotism; we shall shrink once more from accommodation and paltering with the high call of our conscience as a fatal concession to the adversary and feel again that only by perfect faith, perfect self-sacrifice, perfect courage can we generate that Brahmatej in the nation which will raise up the Kshatriya spirit to protect it. Without this Brahmatej, this spiritual force in our midst, all else will be vain; Swadeshi will cease, National Education fail, the great hopes and schemes now forming in our midst disappear like idle wreaths of smoke and the whole movement stain the pages of history as an abortive and premature impulse, a great chance of freedom lost because the body of the nation was not strong enough and the soul of the nation was not pure enough to sustain the tremendous inrush of spiritual force which had suddenly come upon it. Bipin Chandra stands before India as the exponent of the spiritual force of the movement, its pure "Indianity", its high devotion to principle; this has been the kernel of his teaching, the secret of the almost miraculous force which often breathed from his eloquence. To give this message was the work particularly chosen for him. We need that message to be repeated in yet mightier language and with more convincing logic; the voice has been too long silent, the word of inspiration wanting. We welcome back today not Bipin Chandra Pal, but the speaker of a God-given message; not the man but the voice of the Gospel of Nationalism. He comes to us purified by an act of self-immolation, with a soul deepened by long hours of solitude and self-communion to repeat the word of hope and inspiration, to call us once more to the task of national self-realisation. Welcome to him and thrice welcome.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 11th, 1908 }

The Voice of the Martyrs

We are now rejoicing over the release of Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal, but who among us is prepared to forget that so many have suffered for the country not less or more than he, and are still suffering? Yesterday when we welcomed the great orator, the man of high thoughts and inspired eloquence, the prophet of new ideas to his people, our thoughts went for a while to those who are now in British prisons, to Bhupen, to Basanta, to the Editor of the Barisal *Hitaishi* and the Rangpur *Vartabaha*, to the aged Maulavi spending the last years of his noble life in the severities of a criminal jail, to our fellow martyrs of East Bengal, to the few who are suffering in other provinces. For what are these men suffering? What was the hope that stirred them to face all rather than be unworthy of the light that had dawned in their hearts? No petty object fired their soul, no small or partial relief was the hope in which they were strong. It was the star of Swaraj that shone upon them from the darkness of the night into which they willingly departed, it is the light of Swaraj which creates a glory of effulgence in the squalid surroundings of the jail and makes each hour of enforced labour a sacrament and an offering on the most sacred of earthly altars. Today let us remember these brothers of ours even as yesterday was devoted to the joy of welcoming our beloved leader back to our midst. Today let us recall what it is that they expect from us; forgetting for a while our selfish preoccupations, our little fears, our petty ambitions, let us identify ourselves in heart with these nobler spirits whom it is our privilege to call fellow-countrymen, and ask ourselves whether we are really working to bring about the great ideal for which they have immolated themselves. Who is there who can really say that his work is worthy of these heroic martyrs? Prometheus chained to the rock and gnawed by the vulture's beak endured in the strong hope of man's final deliverance from the tyrant powers of the middle-heaven who sought to keep him from his divine destiny; but the human race for whom he suffered forgot Prometheus, forgot the dazzling hope to which his life had pointed them and, involved in petty cares and mean ambitions, allowed their champion to suffer in vain and their destiny to call them to no purpose. We, like the woman whom Christ censured, the careful, prudent woman of the world, are busied with many things, but forget the one thing needful. We are waiting to see whether the Congress will be revived or not, or we are watching the progress of Swadeshi with self-satisfaction, or we are anxious for this or that National School, while the fight for Swaraj seems to have ceased or passed away from us into worthier hands. Madras has taken up the *herol* out of our hands, and today it is over Tuticorin that the gods of the Mahabharata hover in their aerial cars watching the chances of the fight which is to bring back the glorious days of old. Gallant Chidambaram, brave Padmanabha, intrepid Shiva defying the threats of exile and imprisonment, fighting for the masses, for the nation, for the preparation of Swaraj, these are now in the forefront, the men of the future, the bearers of the standard. The spirit of active heroism and self-immolation has travelled southward. In Bengal the spirit of passive endurance is all that seems to remain and the bold initiative, the fiery spirit that panted to advance is dead or sleeping. "Work, there is no need to aspire; labour for small things and the great will come in some future generation", is the spirit which seems to be in the ascendant. But the voices of the martyrs from their cells cry to us in a different key, "Work, but aspire, so that your work may be true to the call you have heard and which we have obeyed; labour for great things first and the small will come of themselves. Cherish the might of the spirit, the nobility of the ideal, the grandeur of the dream; the spirit will create the material it needs, the ideal will bring the real to its body and self-expression, the dream is the stuff out of which the waking world will be created. It was the strength of the spirit which stood with us before the alien tribunal, it was the force of the ideal which led us to the altar of sacrifice, it is the splendour of the dream which supports us through the dreary months and years of our martyrdom. For these are the truth and the divinity within the movement."

Constitution-making

Schemes for the constitution of the Congress are now being drawn up in various quarters but we fear that some important and indeed essential points are being lost sight of by the framers. A constitution may be drawn up with one of two motives, either to suit the convenience of a party or to assure the orderly and harmonious procedure of a representative assembly in which conflicting opinions are to be allowed free entrance. In the former case the country at large is not interested in the result, for a party organization is free to make the arrangements most suitable to itself. But if the Congress is to be a Congress of all opinions and not of one section only, the Constitution must be so drafted as to remove the causes of quarrel which led up to the Surat fiasco. One of these was the conflict between authority and freedom in the proceedings of the session. The Moderates stand for official authority, the Nationalists for the freedom of debate and the rights of the delegate as a popular representative. The conflict between the Chairman of the Reception Committee and Mr. Tilak was on the issue whether the authority of the President or Chairman is absolute and autocratic or whether the individual delegate has a right to be heard according to the rules observed in all free assemblies and to appeal to the full assembly if his right is unjustly denied. The Moderates desire to establish a sort of official oligarchy in the Congress; the leaders, officially recognised in previous years, must be implicitly obeyed; the voice of the President is to be absolute and final irrespective of the validity of his decision or the rights of free discussion. The Nationalists contend that the President is a servant of the Congress and not its master: his function is to administer the rules of debate and not to make his own will and pleasure the law. There can be no doubt which attitude is in consonance with the practice of free peoples, the spirit of modern politics and the principles of democracy. Mr. Tilak has established his position by his articles in the *Kesari* and *Mahratta* with the most crushing completeness and there is no possible answer to the array of authorities, precedents and sound argument which he has marshalled in those pieces of perfect political reasoning unrivalled in their force and clearness of exposition. Whoever wishes to draft a constitution for the Congress must take this great issue into consideration and lay down clearly, first the powers of the President and their limits, secondly the proper procedure with regard to the Subjects Committee, and thirdly, the rights of the delegates in full Congress as against the President and the Subjects Committee. We propose to take up this question of the constitution and deal with it at length, for it is a subject of immense importance and it is essential that those who handle it should try to grasp the principles involved. We wish to take the Congress seriously as a body which may and ought to form a seed out of which the future Indian Parliament must grow, and not a sham representative assembly meant for passing exigencies the constitution of which can be settled offhand.

What Committee?

There are signs that the compromise arrived at at Pabna will be ignored by the Moderates at Allahabad. We have received a communication from two leading gentlemen of Barisal enclosing a draft constitution for the Congress which seems to be a reply to another draft forwarded in the name of some Calcutta Committee. This is described in the forwarding letter as a committee of "our leaders". If it is the Calcutta Committee of the Surat Convention, it should have made its origin and nature clear while forwarding its views to the Mofussil. We are entirely unaware of any general Committee having been formed of the leaders in Calcutta which can speak authoritatively to

Bengal, or of any draft constitution prepared by the common consent of Bengal's foremost men. The Convention Calcutta Committee met in secret and seem to have issued their draft in secret to a select few in the Mofussil. The Mofussil gentlemen who sent their draft appear to be under the impression that the leaders of the Nationalist party are in the know. We must remind them that there are two Committees, one appointed by the Moderate Convention at Surat, the other by a meeting of the delegates pledged to the four Calcutta resolutions. No attempt to arrogate to the Convention Committee the sole inheritance of the Congress can succeed; and if the people of Bengal desire union on the lines of the Pabna resolution they must insist either on the All-India Congress Committee being entrusted with the work of reviving the Congress or on both the Surat Committees uniting to arrange the lines on which the Congress shall be reconstructed. A section has no right to lay down a law by which the whole will be bound and if they persist in the attempt they will be only inviting a permanent secession.

An Opportunity Lost

The return of Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal is one of those events which has a national importance and we had hoped that all party feelings would have been forgotten in the unanimous desire to welcome one who has suffered in the struggle for freedom. A few conspicuous names have been absent from the list of those who have joined in the reception and the raising of a fund for the recognition of the great services done by Srijut Bipin Chandra to the cause. Thus an opportunity has been lost for drawing the parties together and hastening the time when Bengal will stand, as it is one day bound to stand, a solid mass of united national strength. At Pabna the will of the nation was unmistakably declared. So far as we have been able to influence the course of events, we have tried to do so in the spirit of the reconciliation brought about at Pabna. We have tried to emphasize points of agreement, ignore points of difference, and so act that no excuse could be suggested by our action for any cleavage or breaking apart, and we have persevered in spite of the restiveness of many who were unwilling to see the purity of Nationalism imperilled by any accommodation with a less forward spirit. We still hope that those of the Moderate leaders who are unwilling to act in the spirit of the Pabna Conference will perceive the unwisdom of their course.

A Victim of Bureaucracy

We publish today a brief account of Lala Gurdas Ram Sawhny and the circumstances which led up to his death from a correspondent intimate with the deceased barrister. It will be seen that the utterly unnecessary and unwarranted incarceration was the cause of his death, as Lala Gurdas Ram was rapidly recovering when the fury of a panic-stricken bureaucracy selected him as one of the objects of its vindictive wrath. It was an irony of fate which brought in to examine the dead man the same brutal Civil Surgeon who had certified to the authorities that imprisonment would not be injurious to the prisoners, but rather beneficial. This official medico had certified that there was nothing so much the matter with Gurdas Ram's heart as to justify his being let out on bail. Gurdas Ram has proved by his death the inaccuracy as well as the brutal levity of the report. But the Punjab Government must no doubt be well-pleased with itself and Sir Denzil Ibbetson on his way to the eternal judgment-seat may at least know that a necessary witness has received the summons before him and gone in front.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 12th, 1908 }

A Great Message

The stupendous success of the reception to Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal, a success which outdid all previous occasions of the kind, was a convincing proof of the popular feeling and left no doubt in the minds of those who saw it that the nation is alive. We have always believed that God is at work in the hearts of the people to effect His mighty purpose. When Sj. Bipin Chandra spoke at College Square in answer to the welcome he received from the people of Calcutta, the same deep conviction breathed from his lips and expressed itself in words of an inspired fervour. "The man is nothing, the personality is nought, and it is a vain egoism to think that we are doing anything. There is One in whose hands we are instruments and puppets, One who directs all our motions." This is the conviction that the Prophet of Nationalism has brought with him from his deep self-communing in the solitude of the cell to which the enemies of Nationalism had consigned him. They sent him there in the hope of silencing for a while the mighty and inspiring voice which had stirred the heart of India and created a revolution in sentiment and opinion. But they were mere instruments in the hand of One who is ordering all things so that Asia may move steadily to its resurgence. He it was who secluded Bipin Chandra for a while from the stir and movement of the outside world so that his heart might be forced in on itself and lie open to the new thought which the nation must now learn, so that Nationalism may enter on a new chapter of its history. No farther progress, no new development is possible until the divine nature of the movement is thoroughly understood by those who have been selected to lead it. The one thing which can bring it to nought and drag this nation back into servitude is selfishness, weakness and egoism in those who are entrusted severally with different departments of the work which has to be done so that Swaraj may be fulfilled. It has therefore been made an indispensable condition of the success of the movement that those who lead it shall learn this lesson that it is God's movement and not theirs, that, as Bipin Chandra declared in his speech at College Square, the men are nothing, there is One who directs and controls all their movements. In the stir and clamour of the political struggle, in the clash of factions with their petty meannesses and paltry rancours, with the voice of thousands shouting acclamations to him as the creator of the movement, even so powerful a mind as Bipin Chandra's would have been led away and another might have been added to the mighty minds and strong personalities whom egoism has stopped short in their work for India and through India for the world. Therefore he was removed for a while from the busy scene which was so largely filled with his great personality and far-sounding eloquence, removed by a means which man would never have dreamed of, by a chain of petty circumstances which seemed mere fortuity so that for six months his soul might be alone with itself and he might take stock of his personal strength and weakness and realize that his strength was not his own but God's, his eloquence was not his own but God's, his fruitful, strong and subtle brain was not his own but God's. When we heard him on Tuesday avow the struggle in his soul and its deep consequence, we felt once more convinced of the divine workings. All great teachers have to go through this hour of lonely self-communion and deep mental travail in order that they may learn the nature of their commission and whence it proceeds. It is only after this hour has come to them that their mission really begins, and all that went before was merely a preparation for that hour; for they must feel the power within them before they can realise who gave them the power. Bipin Chandra went to prison, the leader of a section and the spokesman of a party; but if he lives in the revelation he has received in his sojourn in the desert, he will be in future something far greater, and become the prophet and inspirer of a nation consecrated to that mission by a power whose wisdom will lead him and whose strength will protect throughout the struggle that lies in front. Others, we hope, will realize the meaning of the words which fell from him in his first utterance after his return. There are many powerful spirits now in the ranks of Nationalism who have also their share of the work, some of whom are still under the influence of egoism and believe that by their own skill, courage and ability they will bring the movement to a success. Unless they learn the lesson which Bipin Chandra has learned, they will be in danger of misleading the people and themselves being withdrawn from the field as unfit instruments. To them as to all this country it was a great and necessary message that the foremost man among us has delivered as the word that God spoke to him in the silence of his prison.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 13th, 1908 }

The Tuticorin Victory

The success of passive resistance at Tuticorin ought to be an encouragement to those who have begun to distrust the power of the new weapon which is so eminently suited to the Asiatic temperament. When the Boycott was declared in Bengal the whole of the energy of the people was thrown into the attempt to get the Partition repealed and if that concentration of effort had been continued the Partition would by this time have become an unsettled fact; but for two different reasons the attempt to unsettle the Partition was unstrung and the energy diverted to a different goal. In the first place a great thought entered into the heart of the people and displaced the petty indignation against an administrative measure which was the immediate cause of the Boycott. Swaraj displaced the idea of a mere administrative unity and Swaraj is too mighty an object to be effected by a single and limited means. Secondly, the first magnificent unity of the movement was lost. The Mahomedans, lured by specious promises, broke away from the ranks and within the circle of the leaders themselves a division arose between those who believed in Swaraj pure and unadulterated and those whom policy or caution dissuaded from so mighty an aspiration. For passive resistance to succeed unity, perseverance and thoroughness are the first requisites. Because this unity, perseverance and thoroughness existed in Tuticorin, the great battle fought over the Coral Mill has ended in a great and indeed absolutely sweeping victory for the people. Every claim made by the strikers has been conceded and British capital has had to submit to the humiliation of an unconditional surrender. Nationalism may well take pride in the gallant leaders who have by their cool and unflinching courage brought about this splendid vindication of Nationalist teaching. When men like Chidambaram, Padmanabha and Shiva are ready to undergo exile or imprisonment so that a handful of mill coolies may get justice and easier conditions of livelihood, a bond has been created between the educated class and the masses which is the first great step towards Swaraj.

There has been only one other instance of a victory as complete for passive resistance against the might of a great Government. We refer to the struggle in the Transvaal which was carried on with equal unity, perseverance and thoroughness to a success less absolutely unconditional but even more striking from the strength and stubbornness of the enemy it had to overcome. We publish in another column a letter from a brother in the Transvaal on the subject. The conditions of political struggle in the Transvaal are different, the objects less vast than those of the movement in India. The Transvaal Indians demand only the ordinary rights of human beings in modern civilized society, the right to live, the right to trade, to be treated like human beings and not like cattle. In India which is our own country, our aspirations have a larger sweep and our methods must be more varied and strenuous. Moreover, in the Transvaal the Asiatics form a small and distinct community in a foreign and hostile environment and can more easily rise above petty differences of creed and caste, opinion and interest; but in this vast continent with its huge population of thirty crores and its complex tangle of diversities the task is more difficult, even as the prize of success is more splendid. The unity will be longer in coming, the perseverance more difficult to maintain, the thoroughness less perfect; but the might of three hundred millions welded into a single force will be a potency so gigantic that the imagination fails to put a limit to the final results of the movement now in its infancy.

Meanwhile, the lesson of Tuticorin, the lesson of the Transvaal is one which needs to be learnt and put frequently into practice. We should lose no opportunity of letting our strength grow by practice. There have been many labour struggles in Bengal, but with the exception of the Printers' strike none has ended in a victory for Indian labour against British capital. Either the unity among the operatives was defective or the support of the public was absent or the perseverance and thoroughness of the strike was marred by hesitations, individual submissions, partial concessions. The Tuticorin strike is a perfect example of what an isolated labour revolt should be. The operatives must act with one will and speak with one voice, never letting the temptation of individual interest or individual relief get the better of the corporate aim in which lies the whole strength of a labour combination, and the educated community must give both moral and financial support with an ungrudging and untiring enthusiasm till the victory is won, realising that every victory for Indian labour is a victory for the nation and every defeat a defeat to the movement. The Tuticorin leaders must be given the whole credit for the unequalled skill and courage with which the fight was conducted and still more for the complete realization of the true inwardness of the Nationalist gospel which made them identify the interests of the whole Indian nation with the wrongs and grievances of the labourers in the Coral Mill.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 14th, 1908 }

Perpetuate the Split!

The Mehtaist Press in Western India seems to be unable to make up its mind for a compromise or against a compromise. It cannot conceal its repugnance to the idea of giving up its darling scheme of excluding the Nationalists from the Congress or the creed which Mr. Gokhale had so skilfully drawn up for that purpose. On the other hand the Pabna Conference has filled it with dismay, for it perceives a force in Bengal which may prove strong enough to separate the Bengal Moderate leaders from the ranks of pure Moderatism in this crucial matter. It is curious that while trying to throw the whole blame of the Surat fiasco on the Nationalists, the Bombay Moderates have never concealed the fact that it was their intention to jockey the Nationalists out of the Congress. Their chief organ openly declared that it had been the Moderate plan to get rid of passive resistance and other Extremist heresies which had been read into the Calcutta resolution by the Extremists. The *Gujerati* is equally plain about the creed, its object is to get rid of the spectre of Swaraj by exorcism and the creed is the magic formula which is to drive Swaraj and Swarajists out of the National Assembly. Mr. R. C. Dutt has declared that the split was a consummation much to be desired and must be perpetuated and the *Gujerati* heartily endorses the sentiment. The Pabna Conference, it contends, was a got-up affair arranged by Mr. Tilak, and so its opinion has no value. The Mahomedans and Parsis will join the movement if the Nationalists are driven out and the British public and British Government are, according to Babu Bhupendranath Bose, an excellent authority, deeply interested in seeing the creed preserved. For all these reasons let the creed be preserved. We wonder whether these cogent reasons will confirm the wavering allegiance of Srijut Surendranath Banerji and his followers and keep them in the Mehtaist fold! They ought at least to show unprejudiced people all over the country who were really desirous of the split and with what motives it was engineered.

Loyalty to Order

The action of the Bharat Dharma Mandal in presenting themselves before the Viceroy as representatives of Hindu society and offering their loyalty and the post of defender of the Hindu faith has been so severely criticised by the vernacular Press in Calcutta that it would be unkindness to add a final stroke. We cannot refrain, however, from reminding the Mahamandal that the foundations of Hinduism are truth and manhood, *esha dharmah sanatanah*. Hinduism is no sect or dogmatic creed, no bundle of formulas, no set of social rules, but a mighty, eternal and universal truth. It has learned the secret of preparing man's soul for the divine consummation of identity with the infinite existence of God; rules of life and formulas of belief are only sacred and useful when they help that great preparation. And the first rule of life is that man must live the highest life of which he is capable, overcoming selfishness, overcoming fear, overcoming the temptation to palter with truth in order to earn earthly favours. The first formula of belief is *satyannasti paro dharmah*, there is no higher law of conduct than truth. We leave it to the conscience of the Mahamandal to decide how much of truth and manhood there was in their demonstration of loyalty and their ridiculous appeal to a representative of Western materialism and practical atheism to defend Hinduism and its institutions.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 16th, 1908 }

Asiatic Democracy

Asia is not Europe and never will be Europe. The political ideals of the West are not the mainspring of the political movements in the East, and those who do not realise this great truth, are mistaken; for they suppose that the history of Europe is a sure and certain guide to India in her political development. A great deal of the political history of Europe will be repeated in Asia, no doubt; democracy has travelled from the East to the West in the shape of Christianity, and after a long struggle with the feudal instincts of the Germanic races has returned to Asia transformed and in a new body. But when Asia takes back democracy into herself she will first transmute it in her own temperament and make it once more Asiatic. Christianity was an assertion of human equality in the spirit, a great assertion of the unity of the divine spirit in man, which did not seek to overthrow the established systems of government and society but to inform them with the spirit of human brotherhood and unity. It was greatly hampered in this work by the fact that the European races were in a state of transition from the old Aryan civilization of Greece and Rome to one less advanced and enlightened. The German nations were wedded to a military civilisation which was wholly inconsistent with the ideals of Christianity, and the new religion in their hands became a thing quite unrecognizable to the Asiatic mind which had engendered it. When Mahomedanism appeared, Christianity vanished out of Asia, because it had lost its meaning. Mahomed tried to re-establish the Asiatic gospel of human equality in the spirit. All men are equal in Islam, whatever their social position or political power, nor is any man debarred from the full development of his manhood by his birth or low original station in life. All men are brothers in Islam and the bond of religious unity overrides all other divisions and differences. But Islam also was limited and imperfect, because it confined the ideal of brotherhood and equality to the limits of a single creed, and was farther deflected from its true path by the rude and undeveloped races which it drew into its embrace. Another revelation of the old truth is needed.

India from ancient times had received the gospel of Vedanta which sought to establish the divine unity of man in spirit; but in order to secure an ordered society in which she could develop her spiritual insight and perfect her civilization, she had invented the system of caste which by corruptions and departures from caste ideals came to be an obstacle to the fulfilment in society of the Vedantic ideal. From the time of Buddha to that of the saints of Maharashtra every great religious awakening has sought to restore the ancient meaning of Hinduism and reduce caste to its original subordinate importance as a social convenience, to exorcise the spirit of caste pride and restore that of brotherhood and the eternal principles of love and justice in society. But the feudal spirit had taken possession of India and the feudal spirit is wedded to inequality and the pride of caste.

When the feudal system was broken in Europe by the rise of the middle class, the ideals of Christianity began to emerge once more to light, but by this time the Christian Church had itself become feudalized, and the curious spectacle presents itself of Christian ideals struggling to establish themselves by the destruction of the very institution which had been created to preserve Christianity. When the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity were declared at the time of the French Revolution and mankind demanded that society should recognise them as the foundation of its structure, they were associated with a fierce revolt against the relics of feudalism and against the travesty of the Christian religion which had become an integral part of that feudalism. This was the weakness of European democracy and the source of its failure. It took as its motive the rights of man and not the *dharma* of humanity; it appealed to the selfishness of the lower classes against the pride of the upper; it made hatred and internecine war the permanent allies of Christian ideals and wrought an inextricable confusion which is the modern malady of Europe. It was in vain that the genius of Mazzini rediscovered the heart of Christianity and sought to remodel European ideas; the French Revolution had become the starting point of European democracy and coloured the European mind. Now that democracy has returned to Asia, its cradle and home, it will be purged of its foreign elements and restored to its original purity. The movements of the nineteenth century in India were European movements, they were coloured with the hues of the West. Instead of seeking for strength in the spirit, they adopted the machinery and motives of Europe, the appeal to the rights of humanity or the equality of social status and an impossible dead level which Nature has always refused to allow. Mingled with these false gospels was a strain of hatred and bitterness, which showed itself in the condemnation of Brahminical priestcraft, the hostility to Hinduism and the ignorant breaking away from the hallowed traditions of the past. What was true and eternal in that past was likened to what was false or transitory, and the nation was in danger of losing its soul by an insensate surrender to the aberrations of European materialism. Not in this spirit was India intended to receive the mighty opportunity which the impact of Europe gave to her. When the danger was greatest, a number of great spirits were sent to stem the tide flowing in from the West and recall her to her mission; for, if she had gone astray the world would have gone astray with her.

Her mission is to point back humanity to the true source of human liberty, human equality, human brotherhood. When man is free in spirit, all other freedom is at his command; for the Free is the Lord who cannot be bound. When he is liberated from delusion, he perceives the divine equality of the world which fulfils itself through love and justice, and this perception transfuses itself into the law of government and society. When he has perceived this divine equality, he is brother to the whole world, and in whatever position he is placed he serves all men as his brothers by the law of love, by the law of justice. When this perception becomes the basis of religion, of philosophy, of social speculation and political aspiration, then will liberty, equality and fraternity take their place in the structure of society and the Satya Yuga return. This is the Asiatic reading of democracy which India must rediscover for herself before she can give it to the world. It is the *dharma* of every man to be free in soul, bound to service not by compulsion but by love; to be equal in spirit, apportioned his place in society by his capacity to serve society, not by the interested selfishness of others; to be in harmonious relations with his brother men, linked to them by mutual love and service, not by shackles of servitude, or the relations of the exploiter and the exploited, the eater and the eaten. It has been said that democracy is based on the rights of man; it has been replied that it should rather take its stand on the duties of man; but both rights and duties are European ideas. Dharma is the Indian conception in which rights and duties lose the artificial antagonism created by a view of the world which makes selfishness the root of action, and regain their deep and eternal unity. Dharma is the basis of democracy which Asia must recognise, for in this lies the distinction between the soul of Asia and the soul of Europe. Through Dharma the Asiatic evolution fulfils itself; this is her secret.

Charter or No Charter

We have already said what we had to say on Mrs. Besant's idea of a National University. In her speech on Education delivered at the Corinthian Theatre, she referred again to the subject of the Charter and invited the National Council of Education to get a Royal Charter to confer degrees. She gave the instance of the English Universities which have got such a Charter from the King, but "it did not follow that those Universities were under Government control, the Charter being but a guarantee for the education which the University undertook to give". It is surprising that so acute an intellect as Mrs. Besant should not perceive the fallacy of appealing to English precedents. An arrangement which works in England for the benefit of the country, may easily be worked in India to its disadvantage, for the simple reason that in India the interests of the governing bureaucracy and the people are not identical, while in England the people and the Government are one. Socialistic State control may work well in England, in India it means the control of public business in the interests of a small and alien caste. So with the proposed Charter. Mrs. Besant gives away her case when she admits that the Charter is a guarantee for the education given in the University. Certainly, the authority having the guarantee has the right to see that the guarantee is not abused and that the education is up to a standard consistent with the dignity of a Royal Charter. This means at least potential State control. In England the control is not exercised, because no public interest can be served by interfering with the work of the educational experts who conduct these Universities, but if the Universities were to fall very much behind in their educational standard, it is conceivable that the potential right of interference might be exercised. If the National Council of Education were to get a Royal Charter, this potential right of interference would be in the hands of the authority issuing the Charter, in other words with the King, which means, for India, with the Secretary of State, which again means with the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy; and we know how that bureaucracy would be likely to use the power. At any moment the Council might have to face the alternative of either accepting practical control by officialdom or sacrificing the Charter; this would mean a crisis which might wreck the new education altogether. Quite apart, therefore, from the sacrifice of that principle of robust independence and faith in its own future which is its true strength, the Council would be guilty of an impolitic step, if it accepted, much more if it asked for a Charter. The latter idea is indeed inconceivable. The exclusion of the Council's students from the learned professions means only exclusion from the Government service and the Law, and it is more wholesome for the new institution to be removed from these temptations till it is strong enough to make these professions seek for its students instead of its students seeking for them. The hankering after a Charter is born of weakness and deficient faith; it will be no gain to National Education and may easily be fatal to it.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 17th, 1908 }

The Warning from Madras

The outbreak at Tinnevelly is significant as a warning both to the authorities and to the leaders of the popular party. For the bureaucracy, if they have eyes to see or ears to hear, it should be an index of the fierceness of the fire which is burning underneath a thin crust of patience and sufferance and may at any moment lead to a general conflagration. Whence does this fire come or what does it signify? It is a suddenly blazing fire of straw, say the bureaucrats, kindled by the hands of mischievous agitators; it means nothing except that the authors of the mischief must be vigorously repressed. Even if this were true, it is at least a subject which might well cause reflection in minds not blinded by selfish infatuation why it is so easily kindled, why it blazes out so fiercely and in so many places far apart from each other. Some years ago agitators might have spoken themselves hoarse and yet there would have been no such upsurging of the population of a whole city in reckless revolt against established authority. Still more significant is the defiant spirit of the people which neither the imprisonment of the leaders, nor the shots of the military could quell, but rather lashed into fiercer rage. This is no light fire of straw, but a jet of volcanic fire from the depths, and that has never in the world's history been conquered by repression. Cover it up, trample it down, it may seem to sink for a moment, but that is only because part of the imprisoned flame has escaped; every day of repression gives it a greater volume and prepares a mightier explosion. To the popular leaders it is a warning of the necessity to put their house in order, to provide a settled leading and so much organization as is possible so that the movement may arrive at a consciousness of ordered strength. At Tuticorin it was the inspiring voices, the cheerful and confident faces, the strong and calm example of their leaders in which the people felt their strength and enabled them also to act with a restrained enthusiasm and a settled courage. The removal of that inspiring, yet quieting force, led inevitably to the resort to violence which has startled the whole country by its devastating fierceness, — though at the same time it was mild enough compared with what an European mob would have done at a similar pitch of excitement. Throughout the country the same fire is burning or beginning to burn and where it has gathered force, it can only be calm and restrained so long as it feels either that it is well led or that it is developing an ordered strength. Any weakness, any failure of a serious kind on the part of the leaders will be the signal for storms before which the 'unrest' so alarming to English politicians will prove a mere bagatelle. It is only conscious strength, it is only organized courage that can afford to be calm and patient. This is not the time to be inventing creeds and constitutions which a year or two will tear into shreds, but to recognize facts, to put ourselves in touch with the present and make ourselves strong to control the future.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 19th, 1908 }

The Need of the Moment

All that we do and attempt proceeds from faith, and if we are deficient in faith nothing can be accomplished. When we are deficient in faith our work begins to flag and failure is frequent; but if we have faith things are done for us. No great work has ever been done without this essential courage. Misled by egoism, we believe that we are working, that the results of what we do are our creation, and when anything has to be done we ask ourselves whether we have the strength, the means, the requisite qualities, but in reality all work is done by the will of God and when faith in Him is the mainspring of our actions, success is inevitable. Sometimes we wish a thing very intensely and our wish is accomplished. The wish was in fact a prayer, and all sincere prayer receives its answer. It need not be consciously addressed to God, because prayer is not a form of words but an aspiration. If we aspire, we pray. But the aspiration must be absolutely unselfish, not alloyed by the thought of petty advantages or lower aims if it is to succeed. When we mingle self with our aspirations, we weaken to that extent the strength of the prayer and the success is proportionately less.

*

Whoever believes in God, rises above his lower self; for God is the true self of the Universe and of everything within the Universe. When we rely upon our lower self, we are left to that lower self, and succeed or fail according to our strength of body or intellect under the law of our past life and actions. There

The exact date of the article published here under "March 19th" is uncertain. It appeared in the daily edition on 18 or 19 March. Both these issues have been lost. The article was reprinted in the weekly edition on 22 March.

is one law for the lower self and another for the higher. The lower self is in bondage to its past; the higher is lord of the past, the present and the future. So the will of the lower self is born of *ahankara* and limited by *ahankara*, but the will of the higher self is beyond *ahankara* and cannot be limited by it. It is omnipotent. But so long as it works through the body, it works under the laws of time, space and causality, and we have to wait for its fulfilment till the time is ready, the environment prepared, the immediate causes brought about. The will once at work infallibly brings about the necessary conditions; all we have to do is to allow it to work.

*

Apply this great psychological law to what is happening in India. The aspiration towards freedom has for some time been working in some hearts, but they relied on their own strength for the creation of the necessary conditions and they failed. Of those who worked, some gave up the work, others persisted, a few resorted to *tapasya*, the effort to wake in themselves a higher Power to which they might call for help. The *tapasya* of those last had its effect unknown to themselves, for they were pouring out a selfless aspiration into the world and the necessary conditions began to be created. When these conditions were far advanced, the second class who worked on began to think that it was the result of their efforts, but the secret springs were hidden from them. They were merely the instruments through which the purer aspiration of their old friends fulfilled itself.

*

If the conditions of success are to be yet more rapidly brought about, it must be by yet more of the lovers of freedom withdrawing themselves from the effort to work through the lower self. The aspiration of these strong souls purified from self will create fresh workers in the field, infuse the great desire for freedom in the heart of the nation and hasten the growth of the necessary material strength.

*

What is needed now is a band of spiritual workers whose *tapasya* will be devoted to the liberation of India for the service of humanity. The few associations already started have taken another turn and devoted themselves to special and fragmentary work. We need an institution in which under the guidance of highly spiritual men workers will be trained for every field, workers for self-defence, workers for arbitration, for sanitation, for famine relief, for every species of work which is needed to bring about the necessary conditions for the organisation of Swaraj. If the country is to be free, it must first organize itself so as to be able to maintain its freedom. The winning of freedom is an easy task, the keeping of it is less easy. The first needs only one tremendous effort in which all the energies of the country must be concentrated; the second requires an united, organized and settled strength. If these two conditions are satisfied, nothing more is needed, for all else is detail and will inevitably follow. For the first condition the requisite is a mighty selfless faith and aspiration filling the hearts of men as in the day of Mazzini. For the second India, which has no Piedmont to work out her salvation, requires to organize her scattered strengths into a single and irresistible whole.

*

For both these ends an institution of the kind we have named is essential. The force of a great stream of aspiration must be poured over the country, which will sweep away as in a flood the hesitations, the selfishnesses, the fears, the self-distrust, the want of fervour and the want of faith which stand in the way of the spread of the great national awakening of 1905. A mightier fountain of the spirit must be prepared from which this stream of aspiration can be poured to fertilise the heart of the nation. When this is done, the aspiration towards liberty will become universal and India be ready for the great effort.

*

The organization of Swaraj can only be effected by a host of selfless workers who will make it their sole life-work. It cannot be done by men whose best energies and time are given up to the work of earning their daily bread and only the feeble remnant to their country. The work is enormous, the time is short, but the workers are few. One institution is required which will train and support men to help those who are now labouring under great disadvantages to organize education, to build up the life of the villages, to spread the habit of arbitration, to help the people in time of famine and sickness, to preach Swadeshi. These workers must be selfless, free from the desire to lead or shine, devoted to the work for the country's sake, absolutely obedient yet full of energy. They must breathe the strength of the spirit, of selfless faith and aspiration derived from the spiritual guides of the institution. The material is ready and even plentiful, but the factory which will make use of the material has yet to be set on foot. When the man comes, who is commissioned by God to do it, we must be ready to recognize him.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 20th, 1908 }

Unity by Co-operation

Of all the little bodies which we are trying to build up for the regeneration of the country, those are the true centres of strength which come nearest to the ideal of love and justice, which bind their members together in a close and affectionate unity, which form a league of brotherhood and mutual help, which without attempting to absorb all into themselves are always ready to come to the assistance of similar societies and of everyone who is in need of help. The country is a large one, the difficulties of organization are enormous, and no single organization can hope to monopolise the work. What we need is not a single all-embracing organization, but a number of smaller ones harmoniously co-operating together, free from jealousy, willing to give the first place to the others, provided the work progresses. The various Samitis which have sprung into existence in Calcutta are all doing good work, as has been shown by the success of the Ardhodaya Yog arrangements, and they form a source of energy, little units of strength which are bound to become the basis of the future organization of the country. But these Samitis are at present disconnected and without a connecting bond. They join together when some great occasion calls for their united action, but they again fall apart as soon as the call is over, and pursue their isolated path. What is needed now is a machinery which will keep them in touch with each other without permitting any mutual interference; each unit should be independent in its work and its constitution, but the leaders should be in constant communication so that all the Samitis may be cognizant of each other's work and ready to help whenever help is needed. Moreover when occasion calls for united action the leaders should be in a position to take advantage of each other's help without loss of time; they should feel that they can immediately lay their hands on the strength they stand in need of and apply it at the right place and moment. If this can be done, the recent success at the Ardhodaya Yog will be a starting-point for the better organization of the country and for the beginning of a series of similar successes which will gradually make the nation feel the source of strength within itself and learn to utilise it in every department of activity. We are apt to get each absorbed in his own little sphere of action, to set an exaggerated value upon it and try to carry it out by our own unaided and isolated strength, so that the work progresses slowly, is partial, limited and halting in its success and carried on under crushing difficulties which interfere with its perfection and usefulness. There are several Nationalist journals which are doing each in its own line a great work for the country, but they are working in an isolated fashion, each absorbed in its own struggle to survive, each exposed to attack from the same powerful adversary, yet careless of the other, — a condition of things which gives enormous advantages to the enemy who is already powerful enough to crush them and would have crushed them long ago if there had not been a greater Power which willed that these little flickering lights should not be extinguished. During the Nationalist Conference at Surat it was decided to set on foot a Press Conference for the better preservation of and mutual assistance and constant communication between the papers which are struggling under heart-breaking difficulties, with the constant threat of prosecution hanging over them, to keep the lamp of hope and faith burning in the temple of the Mother. No further step has been taken in this direction, at least in Bengal, and it is time that it should be taken up in earnest and a Conference of the Nationalist Press in Calcutta arranged by which that Press should become a common body associated for mutual assistance and support. A typical instance of the difficulties which result from the absence of such a Conference is the temporary disappearance of *New India* while Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal was in jail. That disappearance should never have been allowed; as a point of honour, if nothing else, the paper should have been maintained at any cost; but there was no common body, no common action. Each organ of Nationalism was struggling with its own difficulties, absorbed in itself and oblivious of the advantages of co-operation.

There are many other departments of work which are suffering from the same want of co-operation between the workers, and it is unnecessary to enumerate them. Each of them should be organised separately on the basis not of an impossible centralisation, but of harmonious co-operation. When each is united within itself, the higher unity for which we are hoping will naturally come into existence. That organization will be most vital, lasting and sound which comes as a natural growth, developing in answer to growing needs and formed by the closer union of units which have grown up independently and preserved their separate life within the general unity. Life is organic because it evolves from the separate to the united, from the individual to the group, from the cell to the organism, and what we require in India is political life, not a manufactured unity. All our previous attempts at union have been failures because we did not recognize this law of growth.

The Early Indian Polity

The principle of popular rule is the possession of the reins of government by the mass of the people, but by the possession is not intended necessarily the actual exercise of administration. When the people are able to approve or to disapprove of any action of the Government with the certainty that such approval or disapproval will be absolutely effective, the spirit of democracy is present even if the body is not evolved. India in her ancient polity possessed this spirit of democracy. Like all Aryan nations she started with the three great divisions of the body politic, King, Lords and Commons, which have been the sources of the various forms of government evolved by the modern nations. In the period of the Mahabharata we find that the King is merely the head of the race, possessed of executive power but with no right to legislate and even in the exercise of his executive functions unable to transgress by a hair's breadth the laws which are the sum of the customs of the race. Even within this limited scope he cannot act in any important matter without consulting the chief men of the race who are usually the elders and warriors; often he is a cipher, a dignified President, an ornamental feature of the polity which is in the hands of the nobles. His position is that of first among equals, not that of an absolute prince or supreme ruler. We find this conception of kingship continued till the present day in the Rajput States; at Udaipur, for instance, no alienation of land can take place without the signature of all the nobles; although the Maharaja is the head of the State, the sacred descendant of the Sun, his power is a delegated authority. The rule of the King is hereditary, but only so long as he is approved of by the people. A tyrannical king can be resisted, an unfit heir can be put aside on the representation of the Commons. This idea of kingship is the old Aryan idea, it is limited monarchy and not the type of despotism which is called by the Western writers Oriental, though it existed for centuries in Europe and has never been universal in Asia.

The Council of Chiefs is a feature of Indian polity universal in the time of the Mahabharata. That great poem is full of accounts of the meetings of these Councils and some of the most memorable striking events of the story are there transacted. The Udyoga Parva especially gives detailed accounts of the transactions of these Council meetings with the speeches of the princely orators. The King sits as President, hears both sides and seems to decide partly on his own responsibility, partly according to the general sense of the assembly. The opinion of the Council was not decided by votes, an invention of the Greeks, but as in the older Aryan systems, was taken individually from each Councillor. The King was the final arbiter and responsible for the decision, except in nations like the Yadavas where he seems to have been little more than an ornamental head of an aristocratic polity.

Finally, the Commons in the Mahabharata are not represented by any assembly, because the times are evidently a period of war and revolution in which the military caste had gained an abnormal preponderance. The opinion of the people expresses itself in public demonstrations of spontaneous character, but does not seem to have weighed with the proud and self-confident nobles who ruled them. This feature of the Mahabharata is obviously peculiar to the times, for we find that the Buddhist records preserve to us the true form of ancient Indian polity. The nations among whom Buddha lived were free communities in which the people assembled as in Greek and Italian States to decide their own affairs. A still more striking instance of the political existence of the Commons is to be found in the Ramayana. We are told that on the occasion of the association of Rama as Yuvaraj in the government, Dasaratha summoned a sort of States General of the Realm to which delegates of the different provinces and various orders, religious, military and popular were summoned in order to give their sanction to the act of the King. A speech from the throne is delivered in which the King states the reasons for his act, solicits the approval of his people and in case of their refusal of sanction, asks them to meet the situation by a counter-proposal of their own. The assembly then meets "separately and together", in other words, the various Orders of the Realm consult first among themselves and then together and decide to give their sanction to the King's proposal.

The growth of large States in India was fatal to the continuance of the democratic element in the constitution. The idea of representation had not yet been developed, and without the principle of representation democracy is impossible in a large State. The Greeks were obliged to part with their cherished liberty as soon as large States began to enter into the Hellenic world; the Romans were obliged to change their august and cherished institutions for the most absolute form of monarchy as soon as they had become a great Empire; and democracy disappeared from the world until the slow development of the principle of representation enabled the spirit of democracy to find a new body in which it could be reborn. The contact with Greek and Persian absolutism seems to have developed in India the idea of the divinity of Kinghood which had always been a part of the Aryan system; but while the Aryan King was divine because he was the incarnate life of the race, the new idea saw a divinity in the person of the King as an individual, — a conception which favoured the growth of absolutism. The monarchy of Chandragupta and Asoka seems to have been of the new type, copied perhaps from the Hellenistic empires, in which the nobles and the commons have disappeared and a single individual rules with absolute power through the instrumentality of officials. The Hindu King, however, never became a despot like the Caesars, he never grasped the power of legislation but remained the executor of laws over which he had no control nor could he ignore the opinion of the people. When most absolute, he has existed only to secure the order and welfare of society, and has never enjoyed immunity from resistance or the right to disregard the representations of his subjects. The pure absolutist type of monarchy entered India with the Mahomedans who had taken it from Europe and Persia and it has never been accepted in its purity by the Hindu temperament.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 21st, 1908 }

The Fund for Sj. Pal

The question of a fund for Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal was raised at first in a private way and without the idea of a public appeal, but as soon as it was suggested to the leaders of the Nationalist party, they rejected the idea of any action which would seem like an appeal to the private charity of the friends, admirers and sympathisers of Srijut Bipin Chandra. They resolved to ask the public for funds to present to Srijut Pal as a recognition of his services to the country, well knowing that he would insist on the money being utilised for further service to his country instead of for his own personal benefit. Nevertheless certain friends and fellow-workers are under the impression that the purse will be a personal gift to the Nationalist leader to be used for his personal benefit, and they have questioned the suitability of the form which the appreciation of his services has taken. Among others Sj. Rabindranath Tagore while associating himself with the appeal wrote to us suggesting that the question of the advisability of introducing this European form of material recognition into the more spiritual atmosphere of India might be publicly discussed in our columns. The question is an important one and since it is likely to recur as our political life develops, it is as well to clear the air from the beginning.

The principle of rewarding distinguished public services by material forms of recognition as well as by honours and titles is common to East and West; not only so but rank and title were usually associated with the gift of an estate or *jagir* to support the expenditure suitable to the rank and the dignity of the title. Sometimes gifts of land were given by the State without any fresh rank or title either as a reward or as a security for future service. In modern times the State has no land to give and the only material appreciation it can show of great merit or distinguished services is either a pension or annuity for the former or a vote of money for the latter. An annuity serves the purpose of securing a man of ability against want and enabling him to devote himself entirely to the work which has procured him the recognition and therefore serves the purpose of securing the future services to the community once guaranteed by the State gift of land. The vote of money on the other hand is usually given to a distinguished man who is above want and is a substitute for the *jagir* of feudal times. No European soldier or statesman, however great his position, his rank or his wealth, would consider it a degradation to accept such a gift from the nation.

In India the State is not the people, and the servants of the people are likely to fall under the displeasure of the State to be persecuted and even ruined by official wrath rather than to enjoy honours, dignities and rewards at its hands. It is therefore the duty of the people to show its own appreciation of their services, not because they demand such recognition, but as a duty to itself and an assertion of its own dignity and claims. Many of those who suffer for its sake are ruined by the persecution of the bureaucrats and leave their families to want or even to destitution, and in such cases the people are bound to come to their assistance. Such funds as the Basanta Bhattacharjee Fund belong to this category, and there can be no question about their fitness, nor can any blot come to the honour of the recipient by his acceptance. But public vote of money to a leader falls under a different head and introduces new questions of propriety. There can be no question either of the right of the public to offer such a substantial mark of recognition or of this right under certain circumstances becoming a duty; and until the new movement there would have been no question of the propriety of a public leader accepting such a gift; for in those days the standard was a Western standard and whatever was held right and honourable by the Western standard, was necessarily right and honourable in Indian politics. But the new movement has abolished the

Western standard and returns to national ideals and principles. The first question is whether the public ought to be allowed to give a purse, the second whether the leader should accept it. To the first question the answer is that the purse takes the place of the feudal *jagir* which either secures the services of ability by placing it above want or is meant as a substantial recognition of past services. The public is entitled to adopt this form because there is no other, except such titles and honours as have been given by common consent to men like Raja Subodh Chandra Mallik or the brilliant but passing honour of a public reception. But this right is limited by the obligation not to demoralise the people's servants, not to stain the purity of their motives or lower the high ideal of self-sacrifice and self-effacement which is growing up in our midst. The new servant of the people is a different type from the old political leader. He is as often as not a man who is poor, without resources, pursued by difficulties in his private life, yet is debarred from devoting himself to earning his private bread except by such occupations as are themselves an act of service to the people. This poverty, this indigence is the glory of the man and his great honour. Such an ideal, like that of the Brahmin, is a possession of great price which should not be lightly thrown away. If the presentation of a purse destroys it, then this form of recognition should be eschewed. But how then is the public to mark its sense of appreciation, to put something in the balance against the material injuries which the bureaucracy have it in their power to inflict just as they are able to outweigh the moral stigma of the jail or legal condemnation by marks of their love and admiration? The solution lies in such rare instances as that of Sj. Bipin Chandra in the public exercising its right and leaving it to the representative of the New Spirit to deal with their gift in the new spirit. We expect the people of India to show by the substantial nature of the purse their high appreciation of the services of the great Nationalist leader, of his noble self-immolation and of the oppressive nature of the monstrous sentence which was inflicted on him. They may safely leave it to Sj. Bipin Chandra to make such a disposition of their gift as will effect the purpose for which it was given and yet preserve the ideal purity of the standards which he himself has done so much to bring into public favour and acceptance.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 23rd, 1908 }

The Weapon of Secession

There has been much talk recently of drawing up a constitution for the Congress, but even if we are able to decide the question of the constitution, the next step before us will be to carry it out. To think that a paper constitution will help to bring about peace between the parties, is to ignore the fact that men are swayed by feelings and not by machinery. Paper constitutions have always failed to effect their object, except when they are in harmony with the feeling of the nation and express the actual situation in their arrangements. Whatever constitution we may draw up must be one which will suit the conditions of the country and meet the difficulties of the present crisis. We propose to go into the question from time to time and deal with the chief points which in our opinion ought to be decided in order to form a real starting-point for the fresh life of the Congress. The first and initially essential question is the object of the Congress, the function which it proposes to discharge and the aim which it sets before itself. We agree with the Moderates that this is the first point on which a clear understanding is necessary, but we do not follow them in their contention that the decision of this question need imply the exclusion of all who differ from the precise terms in which it is decided. The Congress is an expression of the life of the nation and the will and aspiration of the nation must decide the function and object of the Congress; but that will and aspiration are not immutable; they develop, change, progress, and it is always the function of the dissentient minority to stand for that potential development and progress without which life is impossible. The exclusion of the minority by a rigid shibboleth means the perpetuation in the Congress of a state of things which may correspond for the moment to the desire of the nation, but may cease so to correspond in a few years. It means the conversion of a national assembly into a party caucus.

The function of the Congress has hitherto been to pass inoperative resolutions, its aim to influence British opinion. Needless to say, the originators were men of ability and wide views, and they had an ulterior object in instituting this body and giving it the shape it took. The situation in India as they envisaged it, resembled that of the patricians and plebeians in Rome; for they accepted the permanence of British control almost as a law of Nature though they were anxious to alter its conditions. A caste of white patricians arrogated the control of the State in all its functions and effected an inborn social superiority accompanied not only by an intolerable arrogance and aloofness but often by actual brutality; yet it was the indigenous mass that supplied the sinews of war and did the substantial work which secured the peaceful and efficient conduct of the administration. The political and social grievances were farther accentuated by the economical sufferings of the proletariat, which were largely caused by the selfish policy of the ruling caste. Yet there was no legal or constitutional means of redress, the people had no votes, no means of checking directly or indirectly either executive or legislature, no power over the purse. The only force at their command was the vague strength of public opinion. The object of the Indian leaders, like that of the Roman plebeians, was to give a definite form to that public opinion, — focus it, as it is commonly expressed, — and, secondly, to make that definitely formulated opinion effective. In each case a new body was formed within the State which served the purpose of formulating popular sentiment with a view to bring pressure on the ruling caste and bring about a change in political conditions. But while the Roman comitia became a new sovereign assembly in the State, existing side by side with the already recognised organs of Government, invested with full legislative powers, governing by means of plebiscites or resolutions of the people and appointing magistrates of its own who were empowered to exercise a check on every action legislative, executive or fiscal of the Government, the Congress has remained from beginning to end a nullity. The difference lay partly in the conditions, partly in the means employed.

The originators of the Congress had undoubtedly before them an object very similar to that of their Roman prototypes. The Congress has sometimes been described as His Majesty's permanent Opposition; but the aim of the originators was to make it something less futile than a mere meeting of powerless critics; they certainly hoped that the plebiscites or resolutions of the Congress would eventually come to have a sovereign force and translate themselves almost automatically into laws. But they took no sufficient notice of the immense difference in the conditions of a struggle for popular rights which is introduced by the foreign character of the ruling caste. There can always be an accommodation between the contending factions or classes within the same nationality, even though the accommodation may not come till after a severe and even violent struggle, but when the ruling caste is a caste of foreigners, it is unlikely to give up its powers on any lesser compulsion than the alternative of extinction and will often prefer extinction to surrender. Even when the Congress leaders discovered that the bureaucracy was implacable and irreconcilable, they did not lay their hands on the right source of strength. The bureaucracy in India is in itself weak and powerless; it subsists greatly by the acquiescence and support of the people, partly by the existence behind it of the strength of the British Empire. The Congress leaders saw only the second source of its strength and sought to cut it off by depriving the bureaucracy of the moral support of the British public. Their initial miscalculation pursued them. They forgot that the British justice to which they appealed was foreign justice, the justice of alien to alien, of self-satisfied and arrogant masters to discontented dependents with whom they have no bonds of blood, culture, religion or social life. Justice might be on their side, but nature and self-interest were against them. Therefore they failed.

The real strength of their position lay in the other source of bureaucratic security, the acquiescence and support of the people. As at Rome, so in India the ruling caste cannot last for a moment except by this aid and acquiescence of the plebeian mass and when the plebeian leaders found their rulers deaf to the opinions and loudly-expressed feelings of the oppressed populace, they discovered an infallible weapon, a Brahmastra of peaceful political struggle, the weapon of secession. They gave the patricians notice that they would cease to give their aid and acquiescence to the patrician rule and would form a new city over against Rome. In India, by force of a similar situation, we rediscovered this weapon of secession. For boycott is nothing but this secession; we threaten to secede industrially, educationally, politically, to refuse our aid and acquiescence to the maintenance of British exploitation and British education and British administration in India, and build ourselves a new city, a State within the State by creating our own industries, our own schools and colleges, our own instruments of justice and protection, our own network of public, executive and administrative bodies throughout the realm. Only while it was enough for the Romans to threaten, we have to carry out our threat before the weapon can be effective, because our ruling caste, being foreign, will certainly refuse to recognise the Congress as a sovereign body whether existing side by side with the present organs of government or replacing them until it has such a position as an actual fact; they will recognise only the realised aspiration, not the distant possibility. The party of peaceful secession of thoroughgoing passive resistance does not forget that besides the support and acquiescence of the people the bureaucracy have another source of strength in the military force of the British Empire. They are often accused of forgetting it, but they realise it fully, only they also realise that this weapon of secession, of boycott and self-help, is the only chance which yet remained of a peaceful solution of the problem, — and they are willing to make full use of that chance.

The question of the function of the Congress hinges upon this acceptance or rejection of this weapon. Whatever be the aim of the Congress, whether it be Swaraj or Colonial self-government or administrative reform, it cannot be brought about by inoperative resolutions, it can only be brought about by pressure; and the only means of pressure in our hands is the threat or the practice of boycott or secession. If the function of the Congress is merely to focus public opinion, it need do nothing but pass resolutions and a few slight changes of procedure will be sufficient. But if its function is to pass effective resolutions, if it is not only to focus public opinion but to collect and centralize national strength it will have to use the weapon of secession to organize a State within the State, and for that purpose the body will have not only to be readjusted but gradually reconstructed.

Sleeping Sirkar and Waking People

In commenting on the helplessness of the frontier Hindus, the Afridi raids and the callous indifference of the British authorities, the *Punjabee* reports the conversation between the old Chowdhury of a raided village and a high officer of the district. "Were you awake or asleep when the raiders came in?" asked the belated Heaven-born. "Sir," was the old man's reply, "we were all asleep, for we thought our great Sirkar was wide awake. Had we known the Sirkar had gone to sleep, we would have, in that case, taken care to keep awake." The reply carried with it a lesson which lies at the very root of all stable government. The king is king because he tries to please his people; he rules not by right of strength and power which are given to him by God to help him in his duties, but by service, — because he gives protection, because he deals justice, because he helps his people in their wants and in their sorrows. That is the ideal on which kingship is based, and when the ruler wilfully falls short of the ideal, he is punished first by demoralisation, last by loss of the strength and power which are not his but delegated. The British are in India because they had a certain mission to perform; but the condition of their tenure was justice, protection and sympathy, and if their rule has lasted for these hundred years, it was because some of them tried to satisfy the condition. Unfortunately for them, they allowed commercial greed to overcome their kingly instincts and the punishment of demoralisation has come upon them in full measure. Their sympathy exists only in Mr. John Morley's stock of liberal cant phrases, their justice is no longer believed in and their protection is now following the other virtues. Protection is vested in a corrupt and oppressive police of which the ruler of a great Province does not feel ashamed to be greeted as the friend and protector. Protection takes the form of making Afridi raids an excuse for military practice on the frontier and then quietly allowing the raids to continue. The other kingly qualities, provident wisdom, calm courage, the instinct for the right action and the right moment are already decayed. Only the power and the strength remain and that will disappear when the people are compelled to feel their own strength. The strength of God in the people has slumbered because they "thought that the great Sirkar was awake", but they find, like the old Punjabi, that the Sirkar is asleep and it is time for them to awake. Self-protection, not the protection of military exercises in the frontier; self-protection, not the curse of a police enquiry — when this ideal wakes in the heart of the people, what will become of mere power and strength which has no office left but selfishness and self-aggrandisement? How long will it be before it is withdrawn as the strength of Arjuna was withdrawn when Krishna went from him; as the strength of Ravana was withdrawn when Rama beheld the Power of God protecting the Rakshasa in her arms, and prayed to the Mother?

Anti-Swadeshi in Madras

The *Madras Standard* has undoubtedly hit the right nail on the head when it derives the Tinnevelly disturbances from the establishment of the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company and the attempt to throw difficulties in the way of its success. The struggle generated an acute feeling on both sides and when the commercial war extended itself and the people took sides with Indian labour against British capital in the affair of the Coral Mills, the patience of the English officials gave way and they rushed to the help of their mercantile caste-fellows, misusing the sacred seal of justice and the strong arm of power as instruments to maintain their trade supremacy. This unjust and unwarrantable action has been responsible for the riots and the corpses of dead men lying with their gaping wounds uncared for in Tinnevelly streets, — uncared for but not forgotten in the book of divine reckoning. Nations as well as individuals are subject to the law of Karma, and in the present political and industrial revolt British rule in India is paying for the commercial rapacity which impelled it to prefer trade returns to justice and kingly duty and use its political power to turn India from a land of fabulous wealth into a nation of starving millions. The payment has only just begun — for these karmic debts are usually repaid with compound interest.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 24th, 1908 }

Exclusion or Unity?

We dealt yesterday with the question of the function of the Congress, whether it should be merely to focus public opinion and proceed no farther or to gather up the life of the nation and deploy its strength in a struggle for national self-assertion.

When this question is decided the next which arises is that of the aim towards which the Congress is to work. If its function is merely to focus public opinion, its aim can only be to submit grievances to the Government for redress, to beg for privileges and to petition for favours. It will then admit the absolute authority of the bureaucracy and fulfil the purpose of collective petitioning instead of leaving each individual class or community to approach the omnipotent seat of power by itself. The absolute rule of the Moguls admitted this right of petition; it recognized no status in the applicant; it offered no promise of justice, but decided according to the will of the sovereign. The position of the Congress in that case is no better than that of the suitor at the justice seat of Akbar or Aurangzeb. To ask without strength, to aspire without effort, to submit if refused by the sovereign power, will be the limit of its duties. The negation of national life which this attitude implies, is too reactionary to have a chance of acceptance. If the few who cling to these mediaeval notions desire to keep the Congress to a role so beggarly, they must, when they enter the Congress Pandal, leave the nation outside. For a time by raising party cries and confusing issues they may get the bulk of the Moderate party to follow them, but the moment they show their hand there will be a second split and they will be left alone with a handful of well-to-do men on the Congress platform.

The function of the Congress must obviously be to gather the life of the nation together for the purpose of national self-assertion. The question which divides us is as to the nature and extent of that self-assertion. Whether we are to carry the self-assertion to its logical conclusion or to stop halfway, whether we are to separate ourselves from association with the Government or combine association with opposition, whether we are to use boycott as a local protest against a local grievance or a grand universal means of establishing a State within the State, these are the points at issue between the Moderate party and the Nationalists. The Nationalists desire Swaraj, the Moderates desire Colonial self-government. The Nationalists wish to exclude all petitionary resolutions, all, that is to say, which depend on the will of the bureaucracy for their execution and not on our own exertions; they would keep the deliberative side of the Congress for ascertaining the sense of the nation as to the work which should be done and the principles which should govern it, and would add a working or executive side to review the work already done, settle the future programme and supervise its execution. The Moderates wish to keep the petitionary side of the Congress as its chief function, but to admit a certain amount of self-help as a subordinate feature. Finally the Nationalists proclaim the boycott as a movement of secession by which the nation can gradually withdraw itself from association with a control in which it has no voice or share and assert its own and separate life; the Moderates will not have a boycott *movement* at any price and are prepared only to admit a commercial boycott as temporary local action to bring about the redress of local grievances. The minor questions which divide the parties have no importance by themselves and would not give any trouble if there were not acute feeling engendered by these important differences of opinion or principle.

The importance of these differences cannot be denied and ought not to be belittled. We cannot agree with those who try to smooth over difficulties by saying that they do not exist or that there are no parties. This evasion of great political issues, this attempt to slink away from disagreeable facts and shirk the inevitable is likely to discourage the growth of a robust political sense in the people. Peoples with a sound political instinct always take care to recognise and give their proper importance to great issues; they welcome keen discussion and even contention and eager struggle over them, but they do not allow these differences to override the sense of national unity or the struggle of parties to degenerate into a war of factions. This is the only sound way to deal with the difficulty, not by the principle of exclusion, not by breaking apart into sectional bodies and destroying the chance of a regular progression towards a single coherent and self-conscious political life, but by the principle of inclusion, by admitting differences of opinion, regulating procedure and accepting the result. The Nationalists are not in favour of Colonial self-government as an ultimate ideal, but they accepted the resolution on self-government as an expression of the immediate aim of the Congress at Calcutta, because they knew that the bulk of the nation was not yet prepared to accept Swaraj as an immediate purpose. They are in favour of boycott as an universal movement throughout India, but they accepted its restriction to Bengal because other provinces were not yet ready to declare in favour of boycott. They are always ready in principle to accept the decision of the Congress for the time being, reserving the right to get that decision altered in the future. The severity of the struggle at Surat was due to the attempt to use a local majority in order to effect a revolution in the Congress constitution, which would turn it into a Moderate Congress and exclude the Nationalist element altogether. They took strong exception to any use of this local majority for altering the mutual composition arrived at by common consent at Calcutta, and decided to record their protest by opposing on all contested points beginning from the election of the President, but they had no intention of seceding even if the Calcutta resolutions were dropped or modified; they would simply have strained every nerve to get the wrong redressed at the next session. This attitude which was clear from the speech and action of the Nationalist leaders throughout, has been obscured by the cry raised against them of wrecking the Congress and the falsehoods which not only attributed the whole blame of the second day's disturbance to them but represented it as preconceived by them and deliberately planned. The Nationalist party recognises only one sufficient ground for secession, a resolution, constitution or procedure expressly or practically excluding them from the pale of the Congress. Temporary withdrawal as a protest, not against the nature of the resolutions passed but against unconstitutional procedure, stands on a different footing and has been often practised, by the Punjab, for instance, when it abstained for several years from the Congress because of the arbitrary refusal to allow the question of the constitution to be dealt with or properly raised.

This we hold to be the only possible attitude if an organised political unity is to be achieved. Full right of discussion, free use of every legitimate means of protest, but not secession on account of opinions. The Moderate party outside Bengal is, at present, keen for separation. It holds the view, loudly preached by the Bombay papers, that if certain resolutions are passed, if a certain colour is given to the proceedings of the body or to agitation carried on by any section of its members in the country, they are not only entitled but bound to withdraw if they are in the minority or to expel the Nationalists if they are in the majority. They seem to base this view on two grounds, first, that they cannot allow opinions not their own to be expressed in Congress resolutions, secondly, that such opinions or political association with those who hold them, will discredit Congress in the eyes of the Government. The first presupposes either a claim to hold the Congress as their personal property or an intolerance which is inconsistent with the essential conditions of a self-governing body; the second, either a dependence on bureaucratic in place of public opinion which is also incompatible with the spirit of self-government or an implied right of control by bureaucratic influence which no patriot will admit. We assert the right of the Congress to determine its own aims, functions, aspirations, constitution; we do not admit the right of any party sitting in convention to determine them for the Congress. If the Moderates desire to have the creed of the Congress fixed, they must get it done by the Congress, which is alone competent to decide the question, and must not couple it with a proviso of exclusion against those who cannot subscribe to every article of the creed. The ideal of the Congress may be complete self-government or it may be partial, its methods may be petitionary or they may be self-assertive. That is a question not of constitution but of the balance of opinion. The only constitutional question to be decided in connection with the determination of the aim or ideal is whether those who pitch their ideal either higher or lower than the precise key settled at a particular session are to be excluded in future or admitted, whether the Congress is to be a stationary and sectional body or comprehensiveness is to be aimed at and progress and movement to be allowed.

How the Riot Was Made

The statement of the Public Prosecutor that the cause of the Tinnevelly riots was that Mr. Chidambaram Pillai was remanded to custody and that Mr. Pillai had himself quelled a disturbance which was likely to take place at Tuticorin station, is only additional and independent evidence to support a self-evident fact. The best way to bring about a riot, if the authorities want one, is to remove the leaders when public feeling is at white heat. It serves to bring the excitement to exploding point and yet remove those who can alone prevent the explosion or give it a legitimate channel of escape. No intelligent leader in India, Moderate or Nationalist, would use his influence to precipitate a collision between the authorities and the people on the physical plane in which the people can only act with a temporary strength while the bureaucracy can exercise a settled and at present irresistible pressure. In the moral struggle where determination, unity and self-sacrifice on the one side can outweigh organized power and the prestige of authority on the other, the people hold the winning cards. Mr. Pillai and his helpers fought the good fight at Tuticorin in this knowledge and restrained all violence while they encouraged the people to assert their manhood and test their unity by passive resistance. The statement in some Anglo-Indian papers that the strike was accompanied by rowdyism seems to be the usual baseless fabrication. The people were strong, but perfectly orderly and calm. It was only after the removal of the restraining influence of the leaders that they broke out into violence. The fact is significant for the popular leaders also, as we have already pointed out; it shows the necessity of a democratic organization which will prevent the removal of the one or two strong men from bringing about an outburst or a collapse.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 25th, 1908 }

Oligarchy or Democracy?

Apart from questions of aim and method a fruitful source of discord between the two parties has been the divergence of views with regard to the spirit of the Congress, whether it is to be the Congress of the few or the Congress of the many. This divergence has been chiefly operative in bringing about struggles over the election of the President and his method of conducting the proceedings, over the selection of the Subjects Committee and the rights of the delegates to express their opinion and use every means to make it operative. One side demands implicit obedience to the authority of the President and a small circle of leaders, the other claims that the President is only a servant of the Congress with a delegated and limited power, that the Congress is supreme and no small circle of leaders has a right to dictate to it, and that the obscurest delegate is by his very position equal in rights and status to the most distinguished men in the country. One side tries to form a Subjects Committee of the leading men in each province, the other tries to enforce the right of the delegates to make their own unhampered choice. One side wishes the Congress to register obediently the resolutions framed for it by wiser heads, the other claims a sovereign dignity and activity for the whole body and the utmost latitude of debate on all important questions. This difference of spirit has been the cause of even more discord and bitterness than the difference of aims and methods, and the most difficult and debatable points in the Congress Constitution will be those into which this issue enters.

In the early days of the world, political development was the result of the needs of the civic organism; in modern times it is powerfully swayed by ideas, and often the idea creates the need. English education has brought in the idea of democracy, of the sovereign right and power of the people, and a predilection for the forms of a democratic assembly. When therefore the Congress was instituted, the originators tried to cast it in the democratic mould, to clothe it in democratic forms. But the idea by itself cannot become operative, it must first create a corresponding need. The Congress, therefore, while democratic in theory, was in reality a close oligarchy of the most primitive type. Claiming to realise in obedience to the most developed modern ideas the course of modern democratic development, it really followed in obedience to the actual political conditions of the country a course of primitive development very like in its essential features to the primitive constitutions of early times when democracy was unconsciously evolving. There was no electorate which could make the principle of election operative, no political vitality or habit of political thought in the people to put life into the forms of a democratic assembly, no battle of opinions which could hammer out the complete mould of a great deliberative assembly from the rough and shapeless mass called the Congress.

Nominally, the Congress was a sort of imitation Parliament and its delegates were supposed to be elected by the people and representatives of the people; in reality, there was no electorate to represent and the forms of election degenerated into a farce; five people often meeting to elect a hundred out of whom those only attended the Congress session who had time and leisure. In effect, therefore, the Congress was not a modern Parliament but a popular assembly like the old Aryan assemblies in which the whole body of the citizens could attend and all did attend who had the inclination and the leisure. But while the old Aryan assembly was actually the mustering of the citizens, the Congress was rather like those early federal assemblies held in a central place in which as many as could attended from distant places and the bulk of the gathering was made up of local citizens. The peculiarity of the Congress has been the failure to provide against the preponderance of the local majority except by the habit of aiming at unanimity in its resolutions. This flaw in the foundation has been largely responsible for the final tumbling to pieces of the structure. Nominally again, the resolutions of the Congress were passed by the vote of the assembled delegates, as in a democratic chamber; in reality, the delegates did not vote at all but, like the primitive assemblies, simply accepted by acclamation resolutions ready-prepared for them by a few influential men sitting in secret council. Nominally the President was elected by the Congress and presided over the proceedings according to recognised rules of debate, but in reality he was chosen out of and by the small oligarchical circle which ruled the Congress, effected their decisions and carried out their will. His authority over the proceedings was unfettered by any written rules; the custom and the precedents of the assembly were the sole guide and these were interpreted by him according to the convenience of the Congress oligarchs. Thus the pretence of a modern democratic assembly reduced itself in practice to the reality of an oligarchy. A small circle meeting in secret called the Congress, decided its place of meeting, fixed its policy, framed its resolutions, selected its officers, governed its proceedings and took the opinion of the assembly by acclamation. The assembly listened to the speakers selected by the oligarchs and passed by acclamation the resolutions they had framed. The President was simply a temporary chief of the oligarchs and not the real head of a democratic assembly. In all these respects the Congress reproduced with extraordinary fidelity the essential features of a primitive Greek ecclesia or the Roman comitia in the most oligarchical period.

The first attempt to democratise the Congress was the creation of the Subjects Committee, as a sort of temporary Senate or Council which should prepare the business of the Congress. It was an unconscious reproduction of the Greek *boule* or preliminary Council which had similar functions; but it failed to democratise the Congress, it only widened the basis of the Congress oligarchy. It was supposed to be elected by the assembly but was really selected by the oligarchs whose nominations were accepted by the Congress. The Subjects Committee meetings were indeed the scene of frequent encounters between the oligarchs and the free-lances who represented a growing strain of popular discontent; but there was no popular party which these men could set against the prestige of the old leaders, and they themselves were usually young and ambitious men who soon passed into the charmed circle and became its chief supports. Those of a robuster type, a Tilak or a Bipin Pal, were held at arm's length and, having no organized following, were unable to prevail.

Another direction in which the incipient democratic tendency sought to fulfil itself was in the demand for a fixed and written constitution for the Congress. Unwritten law administered by a coterie, class or caste, has always been a strength to oligarchy, and we find in early times that the first demand of infant democracy is for the codification of law and a fixed and written constitution. We have ourselves experienced in the last two years what a powerful weapon in the hands of the Congress oligarchy has been this absence of a written constitution, law and procedure for the Congress. The demand for a written constitution early manifested itself and led for some time to an actual secession of a whole Province from the Congress, but the privilege of administering the body without fixed or written restrictions was too highly valued by the official clique to be lightly parted with, and by procrastination and masterly inaction they succeeded in baffling the growing demand.

To democratise the Congress was in fact impossible without a popular awakening and widening of the political consciousness. Democracy is impossible without a demos, a people politically awake and active, and it was only in the upheaval of 1905 that the rudiments of such a demos began to form. The Nationalist party which sprang out of that upheaval, showed its character by the democratic nature of its demands and the increasing tendency to democracy in its own composition. It demanded that the President should be elected according to popular sentiment and not by a coterie, that the Subjects Committee should be elected in due form and not nominated by a coterie, that the President and the Congress official circles should act constitutionally and not at their caprice or convenience, that the constitution should be reduced to writing, that the full assembly of delegates should be in fact as well as in theory the sovereign body and that the rights of discussion, amendment and rejection of resolutions should be allowed to be put in practice. In brief, they claimed that the theoretically democratic Congress should become democratic in effect and reality. The keenness of the struggle not only in the Congress but outside it, has been largely if not principally due to this onslaught on the charmed oligarchical circle and the determination of the latter to preserve their position at any cost. At Midnapore for instance the struggle was over this issue, and not over any serious difference of opinion. And though the issue at Surat was much larger and complicated, it is significant that the battle was joined over a question of constitutional procedure, and it was on a claim of the official oligarchy to override the constitutional rights of a delegate that the Surat Congress broke up in admired disorder. Oligarchy or democracy, authority or freedom are the issue, and no settlement can work which does not decide the question whether the Congress is to remain a mute assembly swayed by a handful of men or a democratic body of as modern a development as the political conditions of the country will allow.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 26th, 1908 }

Freedom of Speech

The questions in Parliament about the change of the existing law and Mr. Morley's answers seem to point to a coming repressive measure intended to suppress the small amount of free speech still existing in India. The rights of free speech and free meeting were once reckoned among the priceless blessings which British rule had brought to India. Nowadays one can with difficulty put oneself back into the frame of mind which made such a conception possible. The entire dependence on British protection, the childlike faith in the machinery of European civilisation, the inability to perceive facts or distinguish words from realities, the facile contentment with the liberties of the slave to which that conception testified, are happily growing obsolete. They persist in the survivors of the old generation and in those of the present generation who cannot open themselves to new ideas, but are dead in the minds of those who will be the future people of India. In the course of another fifty years men will look back to the times when such ideas were possible in the same spirit that the nineteenth century looked back to the Middle Ages, as a period of absolute ignorance and darkness when the national mind and consciousness were in a state of total eclipse. The blessings of British rule have all been weighed in the balance and found wanting. The Pax Britannica is now seen to be the cause of our loss of manliness and power of self-defence, a peace of death and torpor, security to starve in, the ease of the grave. British law has been found to be a fruitful source of demoralisation, an engine to destroy ancient houses, beggar wealthy families and drain the poor of their little competence. British education has denationalised the educated community, laid waste the fertile soil of the Indian intellect, suppressed originality and invention, created a gulf between the classes and the masses and done its best to kill that spirituality which is the soul of India. The petty privileges which British statecraft has thrown to us as morsels from the rich repast of liberty, have pauperised us politically, preserved all that was low, weak and dependent in our political temperament and discouraged the old robust manhood of our forefathers. Every Municipal or District Board has been a nursery of dependence and pampered slavery, and the right of public meeting and freedom of the Press only served to complete this demoralisation, while at the same time cheating us into the belief that we were free.

The ancient Romans had a class of slaves born in the family and pampered in their childhood by their masters who were called *vernae* and enjoyed a peculiar position of mingled licence and subjection. They were allowed to speak with the most unbounded licence, to abuse their masters, to play tricks sometimes of a most injurious character and were yet indulged — so long as the master was in a good humour; let the master's temper turn sour or break into passion and the lash was called into requisition. The freedom of speech enjoyed by us under the bureaucratic rule has been precisely of this kind. It depended on the will of a despotic administration, and at any moment it could be withdrawn or abridged, at any moment the lash of the law could be brought down on the back of the critic. This freedom of speech was worse than the Russian censorship; for in Russia the editor laboured under no delusion, he knew that freedom of speech was not his, and if he wrote against the administration, it was at his own risk; there was no pretence, no dissimulation on either side. But our freedom of speech has demoralised us, fostered an ignoble mixture of servility and licence, of cringing and impudence, which are the very temperament of the slave. We were extravagantly pleased with the slightest boons conceded to us and poured out our feelings with fulsome gratitude, or we grew furious at favours withheld and abused the withholders in the same key. Our public expressions were full of evasions, falsehoods, flatteries of British rule coupled with venomous and damaging attacks on that which in the same breath we lauded to the skies. A habit of cowardly insincerity became ingrained in us, which was fatal to the soundness of the heart, an insincerity which refused to be confined to our relations with the rulers and pursued us into our relations with our own countrymen. The same dry rot of insincerity vitiated all our public action and even our private lives, making a farce of our politics, a comedy of our social reform, and turning us from men into masks. The strenuous attempt to live what we believed, which was the result of the ancient Indian discipline, left the educated class altogether and a gulf was placed between our practice and our professions, so that the heart of India began to beat slower and slower and seemed likely to stop.

It was the proud privilege of the Nationalist party to strike at the root of this terrible evil. From the first outburst of the Swadeshi movement, their speakers and writers decided to be no longer masks but men, to speak and write the truth that was in their minds, the feeling that was in their hearts without disguise, without equivocation, as free men vindicating their freedom, — a freedom not bestowed but inborn. The poison passed out of the national system and the blood began to circulate freely in our veins. Once more we stood up as men and not as gibbering spectres of a vanished humanity. The attitude of the *Sandhya* and *Yugantar*, consistently maintained in the dock, stood for a revival of Indian sincerity, truthfulness, manliness, fearlessness; it was the resurgence of the Arya, the ideal of honour and quiet manhood which made our forefathers great. But when the prosecutions failed to crush the papers for which the martyrs offered themselves as a sacrifice, the cry was raised that they were being sacrificed by designing men who kept themselves in the background. The persistence of the same tone and the same writings showed that those who maintained the spirit of the paper were untouched, and it was obvious that only by putting them under lock and key, could the journal itself be snuffed out. So the threat of a change in the law which would hunt out the real culprits, has been persistently held before our eyes, and, if disregarded, may be carried out. The threat is an empty one, because no change of law can find out those whom the nation is determined to save, lest the light of truth be prematurely put under eclipse. Only by the abrogation of all law, by an arbitrary measure extinguishing the freedom of speech altogether can these journals be snuffed out of being by the hand of Power. Such a measure may at any moment be hurried through the Legislative Council, and the fear of it troubles our Moderate friends and sometimes finds expression in objurgations against our past indiscretions or our policy of protecting our writers and contributors coupled with more or less bland invitations to commit suicide so that their journals may survive. But the existence of one paper which does not shrink from expression of the heart and mind of the nation is of a higher value than that of many journals which fill their columns with insincerities and platitudes. The freedom of speech which the Moderate party are so anxious to save from extinction is a badge of slavery, a poison to the national health, a perpetuation of servitude, and it is better that it should be extinguished than that the recovered freedom of a nation's soul should cease. God will find out a way to spread the movement, even as it was found out in Russia, if the bureaucracy are so ill advised as to gag the Press. This voice is abroad and what law shall prevail against it?

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 27th, 1908 }

Tomorrow's Meeting

The great opportunity of Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal's return has been utilised for a demonstration such as Calcutta has not yet witnessed, but the occasion will not be perfect unless the public complete their homage to the soul of Nationalism by coming in their thousands to hear him at the Federation Hall Ground on Saturday when the congratulations of the country will be given to him on his return to the great work he has yet to accomplish. He has returned with a double strength, a position of impregnable security in the hearts of his countrymen and a new conception of his work which is precisely what is needed for its fulfilment. On Saturday we expect to hear his first deliberate utterance after his imprisonment. As a leader of the Nationalist party, he has spoken before, but he will speak now as a voice of prophecy, a thinker whose thoughts do not proceed from himself but are guided from within.

Tomorrow the life of Nationalism will resume its mighty current. Since Bipin Chandra went to prison, it has been half deprived of its old impetuous flow, wandering amid shoals and quicksands, distracted by cross-currents, uncertain whither its course was bound. The constant inspiration of his thoughts was wanting, the impetus of his presence ceased to move the springs of Nationalist endeavour. Tomorrow he resumes his place at the post of honour, the standard-bearer of the cause, the great voice of its heart, the beacon light of its enthusiasm. We were in a semi-darkness while that light was absent, uncertain and bewildered as to our course while that voice was silent and the standard was held by weaker hands, the post of honour filled by untried champions.

When the Federation Hall Ground is filled and overflowing tomorrow, we shall realise how great was the loss of his presence, how weak we were in the absence of the man with a mission; for each of the men who stand before the country today has a work set for him to do and which he alone can do aright. It is the mission of Bipin Chandra to lead the thought of the movement, to inspire it with his utterances, to keep the fire of its enthusiasm burning, while others carry out the detail work, education, propaganda, Swadeshi, arbitration, self-defence or whatever other things may be given to their hands to do. From Bengal the ideas of the new age must proceed, from Bengal must come the life of the movement, its high sense of principle, its fearless courage, its greatness, its broadness of view and keenness of vision. From Bengal the stream must flow, which will cleanse India of her impurities. If the work is to be well done, each man must recognize his proper work and do it. The clash of conflicting egoisms, the desire to monopolise, the pride of success must disappear from our midst and be replaced by our intense self-effacement, an enthusiasm of sacrifice, an exalted conception of the high Power at work and the constant sense that we are only His instruments. It is for this reason that we have recently laid stress on this great truth; no advance can be made, no mighty success obtained unless we are able to perceive the divinity of the movement, realise the necessity of subordinating ourselves, overcome the tendency to break into cliques and cabals and apportion to each his allotted portion in the one united work. If anyone tries to outstep his sphere and appropriate the work of others, there will be confusion, disturbance of harmony and temporary failure. The only way to avoid it is for all to realise that the work is not theirs, that their right is only to a portion, that no man is indispensable and only so long as he acts within his own province and on the lines laid down for him by his capacities, his inspiration and his circumstances, is he even useful. This harmony is necessary for the rapid progress of the movement. If each man knows his place and keeps to it, the harmony is possible. All the discords, the quarrels, the failures which have marred our work have been due to the desire of leadership, the obstinacy of prepossessions, the arrogance of egoism which wishes to claim the ownership of God's work.

Bipin Chandra's place has been marked out for him by his powers of oratory, his knowledge of politics, his enthusiasm and unconquerable vitality of hope and confidence, his unequalled power to excite and inspire. The awakening of Madras is the sign-manual of the Almighty upon his mission. He has only to be true to himself and the cause to complete that stupendous beginning and send the same stream of life beating through the atrophied veins of all India, till one unanimous voice, one tremendous impulse works from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from Assam to Bombay and the whole country, molten into a burning mass of enthusiasm, is finally fused in one and ready to be hardened into steel of perfect temper, beaten into shape and fined to perfect sharpness by the workmanship divine, so that it may be a weapon in the hands of the Most High to slay ignorance and barbarism throughout the world.

Well Done, Chidambaram!

A true feeling of comradeship is the salt of political life; it binds men together and is the cement of all associated action. When a political leader is prepared to suffer for the sake of his followers, when a man, famous and adored by the public, is ready to remain in jail rather than leave his friends and fellow-workers behind, it is a sign that political life in India is becoming a reality. Srijut Chidambaram Pillai has shown throughout the Tuticorin affair a loftiness of character, a practical energy united with high moral idealism which show that he is a true Nationalist. His refusal to accept release on bail if his fellow-workers were left behind, is one more count in the reckoning. Nationalism is or ought to be not merely a political creed but a religious aspiration and a moral attitude. Its business is to build up Indian character by educating it to heroic self-sacrifice and magnificent ambitions, to restore the tone of nobility which it has lost and bring back the ideals of the ancient Aryan gentleman. The qualities of courage, frankness, love and justice are the stuff of which a Nationalist should be made. All honour to Chidambaram Pillai for having shown us the first complete example of an Aryan reborn, and all honour to Madras which has produced such a man.

The Anti-Swadeshi Campaign

The official campaign against the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company is now drawing to a head. The enquiries made by Sub-Collector Ashe as to the list of shareholders are sufficiently ominous, while the case against the Tuticorin lawyers is an almost undisguised attempt to ruin the Company by making it practically illegal to farther its interests. All India is looking on with interest to see the end of this campaign. If it succeeds, we shall know that the peaceful development of Swadeshi is impossible under British rule. Whatever disguises the local bureaucracy may try to throw over the issue, there is no man in India who has not understood the issue.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 28th, 1908 }

Spirituality and Nationalism

Mankind have a natural inclination to hero-worship and the great men who have done wonders for human civilisation will always be the inspiration of future ages. We are Hindus and naturally spiritual in our temperament, because the work which we have to do for humanity is a work which no other nation can accomplish, the spiritualisation of the race; so the men whom we worship are those who have helped the spiritual progress of mankind. Without being sceptical no spiritual progress is possible, for blind adoration is only the first stage in the spiritual development of the soul. We are wont to be spiritually sceptical, to hesitate to acknowledge to ourselves anything we have not actually experienced by the process of silent communion with God, so that the great sages of antiquity were as sceptical as any modern rationalist. They did away with all preconceived notions drawn from the religion of the Vedas, plunged into the void of absolute scepticism and tried to find there the Truth. They doubted everything, the evidence of the senses, the reality of the world, the reality of their own existence, and even the reality of God. This scepticism reached its culmination in the teachings of Buddha, who would admit nothing, presuppose nothing, declare nothing dogmatically, and insisted only on self-discipline, self-communion, self-realisation as the only way to escape from the entanglement of the intellect and the senses. When scepticism had reached its height, the time had come for spirituality to assert itself and establish the reality of the world as a manifestation of the spirit, the secret of the confusion created by the senses, the magnificent possibilities of man and the ineffable beatitude of God. This is the work whose consummation Sri

Ramakrishna came to begin and all the development of the previous two thousand years and more since Buddha appeared has been a preparation for the harmonization of spiritual teaching and experience by the *avatar* of Dakshineshwar.

The long ages of discipline which India underwent, are now drawing to an end. A great light is dawning on the East, a light whose first heralding glimpses are already seen on the horizon; a new day is about to break, so glorious that even the last of the *avatars* cannot be sufficient to explain it, although without him it would not have come. The perfect expression of Hindu spirituality was the signal for the resurgence of the East. Mankind has long been experimenting with various kinds of thought, different principles of ethics, strange dreams of a perfection to be gained by material means, impossible millenniums and humanitarian hopes. Nowhere has it succeeded in realising the ultimate secret of life. Nowhere has it found satisfaction. No scheme of society or politics has helped it to escape from the necessity of sorrow, poverty, strife, dissatisfaction from which it strives for an outlet; for whoever is trying to find one by material means must inevitably fail. The East alone has some knowledge of the truth, the East alone can teach the West, the East alone can save mankind. Through all these ages Asia has been seeking for a light within, and whenever she has been blessed with a glimpse of what she seeks a great religion has been born, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, Mahomedanism with all their countless sects. But the grand workshop of spiritual experiment, the laboratory of the soul has been India, where thousands of great spirits have been born in every generation who were content to work quietly in their own souls, perfect their knowledge, hand down the results of their experiments to a few disciples and leave the rest to others to complete. They did not hasten to proselytise, were in no way eager to proclaim themselves, but merely added their quota of experience and returned to the source from which they had come. The immense reservoir of spiritual energy stored up by the self-repression was the condition of this birth of *avatars*, of men so full of God that they could not be satisfied with silent bliss, but poured it out on the world, not with the idea of proselytising but because they wished to communicate their own ecstasy of realisation to others who were fit to receive it either by previous *tapasya* or by the purity of their desires. Of all these souls Sri Ramakrishna was the last and greatest, for while others felt God in a single or limited aspect, he felt Him in His illimitable unity as the sum of an illimitable variety. In him the spiritual experiences of the millions of saints who had gone before were renewed and united. Sri Ramakrishna gave to India the final message of Hinduism to the world. A new era dates from his birth, an era in which the peoples of the earth will be lifted for a while into communion with God and spirituality become the dominant note of human life. What Christianity failed to do, what Mahomedanism strove to accomplish in times as yet unripe, what Buddhism half-accomplished for a brief period and among a limited number of men, Hinduism as summed up in the life of Sri Ramakrishna has to attempt for all the world. This is the reason of India's resurgence, this is why God has breathed life into her once more, why great souls are at work to bring about her salvation, why a sudden change is coming over the hearts of her sons. The movement of which the first outbreak was political, will end in a spiritual consummation.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 30th, 1908 }

The Struggle in Madras

The new spirit of spiritual and political regeneration which is today becoming the passion of the country, has arrived at a crisis of its destinies. All movements are exposed to persecution, because the powers that be are afraid of the consequences which may result from their sudden success and cannot shake off the delusion that they have the strength to suppress them. When Kansa heard that Krishna was to be born to slay him, he tried to prevent the fulfilment of God's will by killing His instrument, as if the power which warned him of approaching doom had not the strength to enforce the doom. So too, when the vague prophecies of a Messiah reached the ears of Herod and he heard that Christ was born in Bethlehem, the fear of his earthly dominion passing into the hands of another drove him to massacre all the children of the Jews in order to avoid his fancied doom. These examples are a parable of the eternal blindness of men when face to face with movements divinely inspired which threaten or seem to threaten their temporal dominion. The bureaucracy are here to be replaced when their work is over, and if they had been able to put aside their selfish interests, and were really capable of governing India and India's interests as they have so long professed, they would have recognized in the upheaval of 1905 the signal of their approaching dismissal from their task, and made the way smooth for a peaceful transference of power to the people, thus securing a glorious euthanasia which would have been remembered in history as an unique example of self-denial and far-seeing statesmanship. But human nature is too feeble to arise to such heights of wisdom and self-abnegation except in those rare instances when the divine breath enters into a nation and lifts it to a pitch of enthusiasm which ordinary human weakness cannot support.

The persecution of Swadeshism which is now reaching the most shameless lengths in Madras, is a sure sign that God has withdrawn Himself from the British bureaucracy and intends their rapid fall. Injustice is an invitation to death and prepares His advent. The moment the desire to do justice disappears from a ruling class, the moment it ceases even to respect the show of justice, from that moment its days are numbered. The cynical disregard of all decorum with which the shows of law are being used to crush the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in Tuticorin will exasperate the whole of the mercantile community in the country. It will convince those who still dream that industrial development is possible without political power, of their mistake. The Marwaris are already alienated, the whole Jain community seething with an indignation too deep-rooted for words. The Tuticorin reign of terror directed against the one Swadeshi enterprise which can prevent all the rest from being rendered futile by the refusal of British steam services to help the carriage of Swadeshi goods, has begun to shake the complaisant acquiescence of the commercial classes in bureaucratic absolutism. The collapse of the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company will mean that from Cape Comorin to Budaricashram the cry will go forth of "Swadeshi in Danger" with the result that the whole nation will awaken to the necessity of uniting in one desperate struggle to force the bureaucracy to surrender its monopoly of power. Swadeshi is now the dream and hope of all India. Loyalist, Moderate, Nationalist, all are at one on this point, all are agreed, that without Swadeshi there is no hope for the people of India. When it becomes evident that the bureaucracy is bent on destroying the only means by which Swadeshi can be secure of its existence, the greatest supporter of the present Government will feel that his choice lies between loyalty to his country and the hope of her resurgence on the one hand and loyalty to the bureaucracy and the destruction of his people and his motherland on the other.

When Srijut Chidambaram Pillai set himself to the task of establishing a Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company between Tuticorin and Colombo, he was taking a step which meant the beginning of the end for the British commercial monopoly in India. There are three departments of Swadeshi which have to be developed in order to make India commercially independent, first, the creation of manufactures, secondly, the retail supply, thirdly, the security of carriage from the place of manufacture to the place of supply. Of all these the third is the most essential, because the others are bound to lead a precarious existence if all the means of carriage are in the hands of the enemies of Swadeshi. The difficulties experienced in East Bengal by those who tried to import Swadeshi goods from Calcutta in the face of the control of the railway and the steam services by hostile interests, are only a slight foretaste of the paralysing obstacles which will be thrown in our way the moment it is seen that Swadeshi has got the upper hand. The only remedy for this state of things is for the people of the country to organize steamer services both by sea and by river, so that all carriage by water at least may be in their hands. The carriage by land cannot come into our hands without a political revolution, but if we hold the waterways, we shall not only hold an important part of the system of communications but be able to use our possession of it as a weapon against British trade if the railway is utilized against us. The instinct of the country had seized on this truth and the organization of Swadeshi steam services has been one of the first and most successful outcomes of the new movement. The Chittagong Company and Tuticorin Company have both been a phenomenal success and, owing to the spirit of self-sacrificing patriotism which has awakened in the hearts of the people, they have been able to beat their British rivals without entering into a war of rates, for the British steamers charging extravagantly low rates have been unable to command as much custom as the dearer Swadeshi services. A network of Companies holding the water carriage from Rangoon to Karachi and the Persian Gulf would soon have come into existence and the waterways of East Bengal would have been covered with boats plying from town to town in the ownership of Swadeshi concerns. If the Swadeshi

Steam Navigation Company is crushed, this fair prospect will be ruined and all hope of commercial independence disappear for ever. The bureaucracy well know the tremendous importance of the issue at stake and have sacrificed everything, honour, justice, decency, to the one all-important chance of success. We also must awaken to the necessity of saving Swadeshi in this hour of danger. The time is a critical one and it is as if Providence had determined to test the spirit of the people and see whether it was strong enough to deserve assistance. The Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company was on the point of crushing its British rival, if the bureaucracy had not interfered; it is now on the point of being crushed itself unless the people interfere. The people have the power to save it by blotting out its rival. If the merchants refuse in a body to ship by the alien service, if the people refuse to tread its decks no amount of bureaucratic help, no amount of magisterial injustice and police tyranny can save it from the doom it deserves. We look to the Nationalists of Madras to see that this is done. The British jails are not large enough to hold the whole population of Tinnevelly district; let every man follow the noble example of Chidambaram Pillai and, for the rest, let God decide.

A Misunderstanding

We have noticed a paragraph in the last issue of *Basumati* which may lead to some misunderstanding in the public mind and needs therefore to be corrected. The *Basumati* practically charges the National Council with disregarding the claims of Srijut Aurobindo Ghose to reoccupy the post of Principal and Srijut Satish Chandra Mukherji, who has done so much to organize the College, with clinging to the post to the exclusion of his colleague. We are able to state the real facts. Srijut Aurobindo Ghose left the College when he was implicated in the *Bande Mataram* sedition trial and a conviction seemed, from the temper of the authorities, to be a foregone conclusion. He expressed in his letter of resignation a readiness to rejoin his duties at some future date if the Council thought his services required. After his acquittal the Executive Committee at an early date passed a resolution appointing Srijut Aurobindo Ghose a Professor of History and Political Science in the College, but as the result of a special request from Srijut Aurobindo himself to the Secretary to excuse him from the onerous duties of a Principal which he had neither the time nor, as he himself thought, the necessary capacity to discharge, the post of Principal was not included in the reappointment. Srijut Satish Chandra Mukherji had no hand or voice in the matter; he had taken the post of Principal with reluctance and holds it now as a duty until it pleases the Executive Committee to relieve him. Many groundless rumours have been afloat from time to time about the National College, and it is a pity that they should be printed without previous verification. Srijut Aurobindo Ghose sent in his resignation spontaneously, and would certainly not have returned if, as it was at one time persistently rumoured, he had been compelled to retire; and his return as Professor and not as Principal was also due to his own unwillingness to accept the latter charge. Neither the National Council nor anyone else can be held responsible in either case.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, March 31st, 1908 }

The Next Step

The condition of the poorer classes in this country is a subject which has till now been too much neglected, but can be neglected no longer if the blessing of God is to remain with our movement. The increasing poverty of the masses has been the subject of innumerable pamphlets, speeches and newspaper articles, but we are apt to think our duty done when we have proved that the poverty problem is there; we leave the solution to the future and forget that by the time the solution comes, the masses will have sunk into a condition of decay from which it will take the nation many decades to recover. We have been accustomed to deal only with the economical side of this poverty, but there is a moral side which is even more important. The Indian peasantry have always been distinguished from the less civilized masses of Europe by their superior piety, gentleness, sobriety, purity, thrift and native intelligence. They are now being brutalized by unexampled oppression; attracted to the liquor shops which a benevolent Government liberally supplies, bestialized by the example of an increasingly immoral aristocracy and gradually driven to the same habits of looseness and brutality which disgrace the European proletariats. This degeneration is proceeding with an alarming rapidity. In some parts of the country it has gone so far that recovery seems impossible. We have heard of districts in which the peasantry are so far reduced to poverty by the exactions of Zamindars, planters and police that the sturdier classes among them are taking to highway robbery and dacoity as the only possible means of livelihood. We have heard of villages where the liquor shop and the prostitute, institutions unknown twenty-five years ago, have now the mastery of the poorest villagers. Many of the villages in West Bengal are now well supplied with these essentials of Western civilization. The people ground down between the upper millstone of the indigo planter and the nether millstone of the Zamindar, are growing full of despair and look to violence as their only remedy. These conditions of the worst districts tend to become general and unless something is done to stem the tide of evil, it will sweep away the soul of India in its turbid current and leave only a shapeless monstrosity of all that is worst in human nature.

We are convinced, of course, that India is destined to rise again, we await with confidence the coming of the *avatar* of strength who will follow the *avatar* of love, but in order that He may come, we must prepare the atmosphere, purify it by our own deeds of love, strength and humanitarian self-sacrifice. The educated classes are now the repositories of the hope of resurgence; it is in them that the spirit has entered, to them the masses look for guidance. Their duty is to be worthy of their mission, to bring hope, strength and light into the lives of their downtrodden countrymen. We have so far been occupied with Swadeshi as the economical means of saving the people: we must now set ourselves to the restoration of the moral tone of the nation by ourselves setting an example of mercy, justice, self-denial, helpfulness and patient work for the people. The work is one for the young. It was they who made the Swadeshi movement a success and ensured its permanence; they also must set themselves to the task which now calls us and go to the succour of their suffering countrymen, point their spirits to the help which is to come, support them in their present sufferings, relieve them so far as possible and bind the educated class and the masses together by the golden bond of love and service. This is the next step in the development of the present movement. Swadeshi is fairly begun and will now go on of its own impetus; but when the work of which we speak is taken in hand, Swadeshi will receive a fresh impetus which will make it so irresistible that all the tyranny of the officials, all the police oppression, every obstacle and hindrance which man can interpose will be swept away like so much chaff, and all Bengal become the fortress of

Swadeshi, its temple and its domain. This is the work to which the finger of God has been pointing us from the beginning of the present year by the success of the Ardhodaya Yog organization, by the call to the village which was the dominant note of the Pabna Conference, by signs and omens of many kinds which those who keep their eyes open will easily understand. We have now Samitis for spreading Swadeshi, Samitis for physical culture and self-defence, Samitis for the organization of meetings, festivals and other great occasions. All these are good, but we want now Samitis for giving help and light to the masses. The Anushilan Samiti has given a right direction to its activities when it undertook Famine Relief, but Famine Relief is a temporary work, one which needs an immense fund to be really effective, and only a united body of the leading men of Bengal could successfully cope with it. What our Samitis can do is to take up the work which we have indicated as a permanent part of their duties, put themselves in touch with the people, lead them to hope, inspire them with the spirit of self-help, organise them and make them ready for the coming of the *avatar*.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 1st, 1908 }

India and the Mongolian

When Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal in his speech at the Federation Ground was speaking of the possibility of China and Japan overthrowing European civilisation, how many of the audience understood or appreciated the great issues of which he spoke? We have lost the faculty of great ideas, of large outlooks, of that instinct which divines the great motions of the world. This huge country, this mighty continent once full of the clash of tremendous forces, stirring with high exploits and gigantic ambitions, loud with the voices of the outside world, has become a petty parish; the palace of the Aryan Emperors is now the hut of a crouching slave, small in his ideas, mean in his aspirations, his head sunk, his eyes downcast, so that he cannot see the heavens above him or the magnificent earth around. If one speaks to him of his mighty possibilities, of great deeds that he yet shall do, or seeks to remind him that he is the descendant of kings, he takes the speaker for a madman talking vain things and a derisive smile of pity is his only reply. We hold it to be the greatest injury of all that England has done us, that she has thus degraded our soul and dwarfed our imagination. It is only by the grace of God that a reawakening has come, that we are once more becoming conscious of our divine inheritance and the grandiose possibilities of our future.

Of all the minds that have stirred to the breath of God among us, refreshed themselves from the fountain of strength and inspiration and risen to their full height and stature, Srijut Bipin Chandra's is the most penetrating, the most alive to the thoughts that are filling the modern world, the first to divine the future and prophesy the movements of God in the nation. While others were the slaves of Western ideals, his mind first caught the meaning of the sudden arising of India, first proclaimed the spiritual character of the movement, first discovered that it was not only the body but the soul of India that was awaking from the sleep of the ages. On Saturday when he spoke of India as the saviour of Europe, he again gave expression to a prophetic thought, again looked with more than human insight into the future. The truth was not one which his hearers could grasp; many must have gone away scoffing, few could have appreciated the luminous penetration of insight which lay behind the thought of the speaker. The awakening of Asia is the fact of the twentieth century, and in that awakening the lead has been given to the Mongolian races of the Far East. In the genius, the patriotic spirit, the quick imitative faculty of Japan; in the grand deliberation, the patient thoroughness, the irresistible organization of China, Providence found the necessary material force which would meet the European with his own weapons and outdo him in that science, strength and ability which are his peculiar pride. The political instinct of the European races has enabled them to understand the purpose of the Almighty in the awakening of the Mongol. A terror is in their hearts, a palsy has come upon their strength, and with blanched lips they watch every movement of the two Eastern giants, each wondering when his turn will come to feel the sword of the Mikado or what will happen when China, the Titan of the world, shall have completed her quiet, steady, imperturbable preparation. The vision of a China organized, equipped, full of the clang of war and the tramp of armed men, preparing to surge forth westwards is the nightmare of their dreams. And another terror of economic invasion, of the Mongol swamping Europe with cheap labour and stifling the industries of Europe adds a fresh poignancy to the apprehensions which convulse the West. Hence the panic in America, in Australia, in Africa, the savage haste to expel the Asiatic at any cost before the military strength of China is sufficiently developed to demand entrance for her subjects with the sword emphasizing her demand. This is the Yellow Peril, and every European knows in his heart of hearts that it is only a question of the time necessary for his vision to translate itself into the waking world. But one thing the European has not yet perceived and that is that the Mongolian is no wild adventurer to go filibustering to Australia or bombard with his siege-guns San Francisco or New York before Asia is free. The first blow given by the Mongolian fell upon Russia because she stood across the Asiatic continent barring the westward surge of his destiny. The second blow will fall on England because she holds India.

The position of India makes her the key of Asia. She divides the Pagan Far East from the Mahomedan West, and is their meeting-place. From her alone can proceed a force of union, a starting-point of comprehension, a reconciliation of Mahomedanism and Paganism. Her freedom is necessary to the unity of Asia. Geographically, she occupies an impregnable position of strength commanding the East of Asia as well as the West, from which as from a secure fortress she can strike the nations of the Persian or the Chinese world. Such a position held by an European Power means a perpetual menace to the safety of Asia. It will therefore be the first great enterprise of a Chino-Japanese alliance to eject the English from India, and hold her in the interests of Asiatic freedom and Asiatic unity. This necessity of India's position is one which neither the English nor the Mongolian can escape. No treaties, no attempts to reconcile conflicting interests will stand against the secret and inexorable necessity which forces nations to follow not the dictates of prudence or diplomacy, but the fiat of their environment. When the inevitable happens and the Chinese armies knock at the Himalayan gates of India and Japanese fleets appear before Bombay harbour, by what strength will England oppose this gigantic combination? Her armies which took two years to overcome the opposition of forty thousand untrained farmers in the Transvaal? Her fleets which have never fought a battle with a trained foe since Trafalgar? They will be broken to pieces by the science and skill of the Mongolian. And the key of Asia will pass into Mongolian hands and the strength of India, the Sikh and the Rajput and the Mahratta, the force of Mahomedan valour and the rising energy of new nations in Bengal and Madras will all be at the service and under the guidance of the Mongolian who will not fail to use them as England has failed, letting them run to waste, but will hammer them into a sword of strength for the fulfilment of his mission, the extrusion of the European from Asia, Africa, Australia, the smiting down of European pride, the humiliation of Western statecraft, power and civilisation and its subordination to the lead of the dominant Asiatic.

The doom is drawing very near and the awakening of Bengal has come just in time to give India a chance of recovering her freedom of action. If she strains every nerve to use the chance, if she is able to develop her self-consciousness, her unity, her warlike instincts, her industrial independence, she will be in a position to assert her own will, to offer herself as an ally and not an instrument, it may be even, as Bipin Babu suggested, to mediate between the civilisation of Europe and Asia, both of them so necessary to human development. Two great obstacles stand in her way. The blindness of the bureaucracy which is straining every nerve to crush the Indian renascence in the vain hope that it can continue to rule, is the least of the two. Far more formidable is the greater though more excusable blindness of the people themselves who still persist in connecting their future with the rule of England. Our Moderate politicians refuse to allow their minds to shake off the delusion that the British rule is a dispensation of Providence and meant to endure. All their thoughts of the future assume that the present is perpetual, that what is, will be. As one long in darkness cannot see the light when it enters suddenly his prison, so our people even when the dawn has come, cannot believe that it is really daybreak. They persist in assuming that the night will continue and are content with merely turning a little in bed instead of rising and swiftly accoutring themselves for the work of the day. The warning which Srijut Bipin Chandra addressed to the British people, is also a warning to the people of India. British rule can only continue in India, if India is willing that it should continue and strong enough to defend it against all comers. If a rejuvenated India decides to be free, it depends on the present action of the bureaucracy whether free India will be a friend of England and a mediator between Europe and the triumphant Mongol or an ally of the latter in the approaching Armageddon. Even if the movement in India is crushed, it will not be England that will reap the fruit of her crime in strangling an infant Nationality. She will before long be swept out of India by the Mongolian broom and the latent forces which she refused to utilize will be used against her by a bolder and more skilful statesmanship. The people of India too will have to reap the fruits of their present Karma. On them far more than on the bureaucracy it depends whether they will meet the coming Mongolian as a destined slave and instrument, an ally or an equal whose voice shall override all others in determining the fate of the world.

Religion and the Bureaucracy

The measure of the panic into which the new movement has thrown the bureaucracy can be taken from its interference with the religious life of the people. Time was when the rulers shrank from any interference with religion lest it should arouse what they were pleased to call the fanaticism of the people. But one ghost drives out another, and the old fear of fanaticism has given place to the greater fear of the new Nationalism, just as the fear of the Mahomedans has given place to the more tangible terror of the resurgent Hindu community. The expulsion of a religious preacher from Travancore is significant of the direction in which the fears of the bureaucracy are tending. That this act of tyranny was not the work of the Maharaja goes without saying, since no Hindu prince would dream of interfering with the religion of his subjects. The dictation of the Resident is the only explanation of this political act. Whatever activity may help the growth of national spirit or foster self-respect in the people, is now suspect to the rulers and will be stopped wherever possible, impeded where direct prohibition cannot be exercised. The famine relief work of Lala Lajpat Rai is being interfered with as seditious, and the religious preaching of the Madras Brahmin has been vetoed because it calls on the people to revive the spiritual glories of ancient India. The struggle will soon overpass the political limits; for the next stage in Swadeshi will be a return of the nation to its old spirituality and active habit of philanthropy with the revival of the nation as its motive. When the bureaucracy interferes with this development as it will be driven to interfere by the instinct of self-preservation, as it has already begun to interfere, the true struggle will begin, the *avatar* will be ready to manifest himself and the end will come.

The Milk of Putana

A spirit of conciliation is evident in some of the recent acts of the bureaucracy, such as the separation of Judicial and Executive of which Sir Harvey Adamson has given the details in his speech in Council. The policy of Sir Sydenham Clarke in Bombay is of the same type, and from the Mofussil we hear of politician Magistrates who are busy re-establishing the use of foreign articles by skilful exhibitions of sympathy attended with intimidating of Swadeshists carried out through the instrumentality of Indian subordinates on whom the whole blame is thrown. This is the milk of Putana by which Kansa hoped to poison the infant Krishna. The modern Kansa comes of a shopkeeping breed and is careful only to let the infant have as much of the milk and no more as will do his business for him. The separation of Judicial and Executive functions, the pet scheme of the old mendicancy, will be carried out only in a district or two of Eastern Bengal as an experiment. The policy of Sir Sydenham Clarke has confined itself to sweet words and abstention from repression, and the milk of Mr. Morley's sympathy is limited to so much as can be bottled for use in a Council of Notables. So too the politician Magistrates take care to do nothing except occasionally rescind oppressive orders which they have already issued in the names of their Indian subordinates. Their policy is to throttle Swadeshi with one hand while stroking the District paternally on the head with the other. What shall we do with this milk of Putana?

Sri Krishna drained the breasts of Putana and killed her, and if the bureaucracy begins giving real concessions, that will be its fate. But this watered milk of Morleyan sympathy is a different matter. To drink it is to weaken ourselves and help the adversary.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 2nd, 1908 }

Swadeshi Cases and Counsel

We have received a letter from Tinnevelly requesting the aid of a Bengali barrister to defend the Tuticorin lawyers who are now being prosecuted before the Magistrate. There ought to be no difficulty in procuring a good counsel from Calcutta, for the Bengal Bar has shown a consistent patriotism and self-sacrifice in Swadeshi cases. At the same time it is doubtful whether in most cases the money spent on securing counsel from outside is not wasted. In political cases the connection is usually a foregone conclusion. In the rare cases where a conscientious judge acquits on appeal, the local bar is quite equal to the presentation of the case. In other cases the services of counsel are a luxury rather than a necessity. Rarely one of the giants of the Bar may by sheer force of genius wring an acquittal out of a reluctant Magistrate as Mr. Byomkesh Chakravarty did in the *Bande Mataram* case, but even Mr. Chakravarty was unable to save the accused in the *Hindustan* case, and a lesser man has no chance whatever. The Madras meeting did well in devoting its fund to the maintenance of the families of martyrs rather than wasting it in a fruitless defence.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 3rd, 1908 }

The Question of the President

The union of the two parties in the Congress is now in sight. If the Convention Committee which is about to meet at Allahabad, will be guided by the country and not by the single will of one masterful and obstinate personality, the reconciliation of the parties is certain. When this desirable consummation is brought about, the next step will be the formation of a Constitution under which a harmonious working may be possible. We have already formulated what in our opinion should be the principles of the Constitution; the basis should be democratic and not oligarchic, the scope of the Congress should be widened so as to embrace actual work, the aim left indeterminate. It is the function of this body to gather around it the strength of the nation, and no creed should be promulgated which would have the result of excluding any section of the people.

Taking these principles as our starting-point we shall proceed to discuss the chief questions which must be settled in order to ensure harmonious working between the two parties. The first issue which will present itself is the choice of a President. In his speech at the Federation Ground, Sj. Bipin Chandra Pal threw out a suggestion which he thought might obviate the difficulties which now attend the choice of a President. The present method of election is wholly unsatisfactory. A Reception Committee formed on the basis of wealth, not of democratic election is the primary authority; and the choice of the President is determined by a three-fourths majority which it is under present circumstances impossible to secure. Failing this impossibility, the All-India Congress Committee proceeds to nominate a President who may be the choice not of the country but of a party, and the nomination is confirmed by the consent of the Congress which the Moderates declare to be a mere formality of election not implying any right of the delegates to withhold their consent or reverse the decision of the Committee. This method of election is about the most irrational, undemocratic and perversely unconstitutional which can be imagined. The whole value of a democratic constitution lies in the relation of the parts of the commonwealth to each other on the basis of a definite delegation of power by the people to its officials, magistrates or governing bodies. The present system eliminates the sovereignty of the people altogether; it sets up an irresponsible body temporarily created for a different purpose as the primary authority and creates in the All-India Committee a power of final election which makes it independent of the people.

Srijut Bipin Chandra proposes to leave the election of the President to the Reception Committee, permitting the anomaly to continue for the sake of peace; but the voice of the people is not to be entirely silent. Inoperative in the election, it finds its opportunity in the criticism of the President's address which is to be open to discussion and amendment like the King's Speech in Parliament. This right of criticism and amendment will act as a check on the party proclivities of the President and tend to bring his speech to the colourless nature of a pronouncement embracing what the whole nation is agreed upon and omitting the points of difference which still divide men's minds. It is possible that an obstinate President might face the disagreeable certainty of a division on his address, in which case the check would not work; but this would be too unlikely a possibility to be a serious drawback to Sj. Bipin Chandra's proposal. The defect in it as a complete solution lies elsewhere. It provides against the misuse of the Presidential chair to deliver a party pronouncement wounding to the susceptibilities of a part of the audience, but it does not provide against the misuse of the Presidential authority to prevent the passing of resolutions disagreeable to the party to which the President for the year happens to belong. This can be done, however, without altering Bipin Babu's suggestion.

There are two aspects of the Presidential position. In one he is the spokesman of the nation issuing a manifesto on its behalf with regard to the questions of the day. The Moderate party usually tries to belittle this aspect by the contention that the President's speech binds no one but himself. If that is so, then he has no right to take up a whole day of the brief time available for work with utterances and opinions which are of no conceivable importance to the country or the world at large. Either the President's speech is a national manifesto and should be denuded of its party character, or it is a personal expression of opinion and should be either eliminated altogether or reduced to the brief proportions of an acknowledgement of the honour done to him in his election, so that the Congress may at once proceed to real business. In that case the President will become a speaker of the House and nothing more, which he is at present, but only in his second and subordinate capacity. In this secondary capacity he is master of the deliberations of the Congress and can, if he so wishes, try to rule out of court or declare as lost without division any proposal or amendment which is displeasing to his party. Indeed, as everybody knows, it is this which has been at the root of all the bitterness that has gathered round the question and which led to the fracas at Surat. It will not therefore be enough to provide against the party character of the address, it is still more necessary to provide against the party use of the President's authority. In the House of Commons the Speaker is a non-party man whose sole business is to interpret impartially the rules of the House, and, if we are to avoid the repetition of such scenes as took place at Surat, the President of the Congress must be compelled to assume the same character. The difficulties in the way are two: first, the absence of any well-understood rules of procedure in the Congress; secondly, the absence of a strong public opinion which would unanimously resent the misuse of his authority whatever party might be benefited. If the now unwritten procedure of the Congress is reduced to writing and provision made for the right of delegates to lay their views in due form before the Congress, the first difficulty may be got rid of, and a very necessary step taken in the democratisation of the Congress. But the interpretation of the rules is always liable to misuse, as all free countries have found, and the only safeguard against it is a strong sense of the supreme importance of free discussion which will override party feeling and discourage the temptation to acquiesce in anything which will bring about a party victory. To develop such a feeling will take time. In the meanwhile such checks should be devised as would both deter the President from misusing his authority and foster the growth of a public sentiment such as governs the proceedings of free assemblies in free countries. Mr. Tilak at the Surat Congress appealed to the Congress against the decision of the Chairman of the Reception Committee disallowing his notice for the adjournment of the election of the President. This right which is inherent in every free assembly, ought to be specifically recognized. We cannot find a better means of checking any tendency to abuse authority than the knowledge that an appeal lies against one's decision to the whole assembly of the delegates, nor any stronger incentive to the growth of the public sentiment we desire to create than the knowledge that the final responsibility for dishonest party tactics will rest on the whole body of the delegates. If these precautions are added to the suggestion of Srijut Bipin Chandra the difficulties at present arising out of the anomalous election of the President will largely disappear. At the same time, the anomaly remains and if we overlook it for the present for the sake of peace, it should be clearly recognised that the present system can only be a temporary device pending the growth of a definite electorate in the country which can take over the function of electing the President.

The suggestions we put forward therefore are that the President should be elected by a bare majority of the Reception Committee or, failing a clear majority in favour of one name over all others combined, by the All-India Congress Committee; that the President take his seat the moment the Congress sits, before the Chairman of the Reception Committee begins his address of welcome; that the address of the President after delivery be open to formal discussion, in other words, that the Congress be asked to accept the address and that the right of amendment be permitted; that the President be governed by definite rules of procedure, and that his decision be subject to an appeal to the whole House.

The Utility of Ideals

We notice that a correspondent of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, finding himself out of his depth at the Federation Ground Meeting, rather plaintively asks Bipin Babu to come down from the heights of philosophy and talk to the people of Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education. The correspondent seems to us at fault as to the bearings of the present situation. If Bipin Chandra were an ordinary political leader and the present time an ordinary political epoch, his complaint would have been justified. But we are in the first stages of a great revolution having its root in ideas, a revolution at least as far-reaching in its consequences as that which ushered in the nineteenth century, and of that revolution Bipin Chandra is a prophet. To ask such a man to confine himself to particular measures and questions of immediate political interest is as if one were to have asked Mazzini to forget his great teachings which revivified Italy, and confine himself to the questions of the day in Rome or Sardinia. Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education are merely aspects, phases, expressions of the great ideas which Bipin Chandra preaches. There is nothing new to be said about them, they have simply to be carried out. But the ideas which underlie them, the ideas of Indian resurgence, of the spiritualisation of the world through India, of the great awakening of the East and its ideals are of an infinite application like the ideas of fraternity, liberty, equality which were preached in the French Revolution until every man had them on his lips and in his heart. The prophet of the movement must repeat these ideas and popularise them until they are on the lips and in the heart of every man, so that they may act with the same dynamical force as the ideas of the eighteenth century acted in France. To say that such teachings are too visionary for the average Indian mind is to forget that this is the country of Vedanta where the most ignorant have some idea of abstract truths which the European mind is too weak to cope with. If the movement is to be vitalised, it will not be by preoccupation with details but by the execution of details in the light of the living truths for which they merely seek to provide suitable conditions of fulfilment.

Speech at Panti's Math

Aurobindo Ghose proposed the second resolution, which was to express sympathy for Chidambaram Pillai and other leaders of the Tinnevelly riot at Madras and thanking them for the bravery they have shown in defending the cause of Swadeshi. He hinted at the oppression of the European merchants backed by the bureaucracy in putting down the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company, which they could not do by any lawful means. He ended by saying that there is no longer time for speaking or writing for the Motherland, but now is the time when the brain is to be prepared for devising plans, the body for working hard and the hand for fighting out the country's cause.

Delivered at Panti's Math, Calcutta, on 3 April 1908. Noted down by a police agent and submitted as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Case (1908–09).

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 4th, 1908 }

Convention and Conference

When the leaders of the Moderate party meet at Allahabad, they will be on their trial before India and all the world. They have done much in the past for the country. Whatever we may think of the views they hold or the methods dear to them, they are the survivors of a generation which woke the nation from political apathy and helped to break the spell which British success had thrown upon the hearts of the people. They turned a critical eye on things which had been taken for granted, British peace, British justice, British freedom. Even while they lauded, they criticised, and the habit of fault-finding which they turned into a weapon of political warfare, helped to break the hypnotic power of the bureaucratic domination. This was no small or unimportant result for so abjectly prostrate a generation as the one into which they were born. If the nation is passing out of their hands, it is largely on account of the change in the popular mind which they brought about by their ceaseless attacks on the bureaucracy. But if they did so much to raise the nation, the political influence which they acquired by their services was an ample recompense. They are now losing that influence; the minds of the rising generation are widening to receive ideas which they have chosen to oppose, to envisage hopes which they are anxious to discourage, to attempt enterprises with which they are either unwilling or afraid to associate themselves. The Surat Congress failed because they desired to throw an insuperable barrier across the path of the onward march of the rising generation, because they hoped to confine the future to the formulas of the present and leave the mould of their ideas as the rigid form out of which the nation would not be permitted to grow.

The Convention is an attempt to drag back the Congress out of the twentieth century into the nineteenth. It is as much a futile piece of reaction as Mr. Morley's Council of Notables. The same exclusive, oligarchical spirit of the past trying to dominate the future, of the few with wealth, position and fame for their title claiming the monopoly of political life, animates the idea of the Convention. Perhaps if the Convention becomes a living fact, it may, who knows, be accepted by Mr. Morley as the basis for his Council of Notables? But if the Moderates of Bombay would welcome such a consummation, the Bengal leaders ought to know that the attempt to separate the Congress from the life of the people will be disastrous to the future of the movement for which Bengal stands. If they associate themselves with any such attempt to bring back the country to the footstool of the bureaucracy, they will have given the last blow to their influence and popularity. They may remain Notables, they will cease to be popular leaders. The resolution of the Pabna Conference which was accepted by them leaves them no ground to stand upon if they associate themselves with the Bombay attempt to turn back the wheels of time and put an end to the natural evolution of the Congress. The Convention was the creation of Sir Pherozshah Mehta who will leave no stone unturned to save his offspring when the Convention Committee meets at Allahabad; it will be seen whether the fear of Sir Pherozshah Mehta or the fear of the country is strongest in the hearts of the Moderate leaders. They are still, it seems, undecided as to their course, a dangerous condition of mind since the powerful will of Sir Pherozshah is likely to carry all before it, if it is not met by a settled determination to give effect to the plainly expressed wishes of the people.

Whatever happens at the Convention the leaders of the Moderate party will be held responsible for the result. If the Congress breaks asunder for good, the blame will rest on them and they will no longer be able to throw it upon the Nationalists who have since the break-up at Surat laid themselves open to the charge of weakness and cowardice rather than stand in the way of reconciliation. From the first meeting of the Nationalist Conference after the fracas on the second day of the session to the present moment the attitude of the party has been accommodating to a fault. They allowed the Moderates to score a seeming triumph at Pabna rather than allow a second split. At Poona in their stronghold they invited the co-operation of the Moderates at Dhulia, they even consented to the question of the Boycott being allowed to stand over, unless otherwise decided by the Provincial Conference, rather than forfeit Moderate co-operation. The public utterances of Nationalist papers and Nationalist speakers from the speech of Mr. Tilak after the fracas to the latest speeches at the Poona Conference have all been pervaded by the thought of reconciliation, the anxiety for union. The Nationalists make no stipulation except that no creed shall be imposed on the Congress from outside, no action be taken which implies that the Convention is the arbiter of the destinies of the Congress and that no constitution or change of policy shall be drawn up by anyone as binding on the Congress before the Congress itself decided on its future course. This is an attitude to which no one can take reasonable exception. The Nationalists also appointed a Committee after the fiasco, but the instructions issued to this Committee were merely to watch the results of the split, to see that a reconciliation be effected and only in the last resort to take up the work of the Congress where it had broken off, if no accommodation proved possible. The Committee has therefore taken no action beyond watching the course of events and exercising the influence of its authorised officials to bring about such resolutions as would help the reconciliation of the parties. It depends entirely on the result of the meeting at Allahabad whether the Committee is to assert its existence or quietly allow itself to cease when the main object for which it came into being has been accomplished. Convention and Conference are both mere party organisations and if either of them affects to be the Congress, it will be guilty of a parricidal action leading to the death of the parent body.

By the Way

The annual meeting of the European and Anglo-Indian Defence Association took place last Monday without the world being any the worse for the calamity. There were speeches and there was a report. Each of the orations was in the usual key of solemnity and the Association conducted itself with imperturbable seriousness — a feat of muscular self-control which should be put down to its credit. A sense of humour is an obstacle to success in life and the British nation has always avoided or controlled it, especially since the union with Scotland. It is, indeed, since the Scotchman became a member of the British nation that the great development of England as an Empire has taken place. Now the Anglo-Indian Defence Association hails largely from beyond the Tweed.

*

The first speaker who took the affairs of the Empire under his patronage, was a certain Mr. Lockhart Smith. He gave some firm but kindly advice to the leaders of Indian thought as to the best way of managing their business forgetting that his time would have been more usefully employed in minding his own. It appears that the unrest was a natural and healthy aspiration of the people, but all the same it created a natural and healthy alarm in the manly breasts of the Anglo-Indian Defence Association and it is a good thing that it has quieted down to some extent. Unfortunately the position is still far from clear or satisfactory to Mr. Lockhart Smith. This healthy unrest is still too healthily restless for Mr. Smith's nerves. He therefore calls upon the leaders of Indian thought to rise to the occasion and handle the situation with a statesmanlike reposefulness. They must learn to be quietly unquiet, restfully restless, humbly aspiring, meekly bold. If they are restless in their unrest, the Government will "put back the hands of the clock", to the great inconvenience of old Father Time. Perhaps Mr. Lockhart Smith is in the habit of putting back the hands of the clock in his office so as to give his clerks a longer spell of work; otherwise we cannot understand his sublime confidence in the effectiveness of this trick with the clock or his evident belief that it will stop the march of Time.

*

On the whole the advice of Mr. Smith may be summed up as an appeal to spare his nerves. The Viceroy will recognise the position "as clear and satisfactory" if the leaders are content to 'aspire' without being over-anxious to get their aspirations realized. We have no doubt he will.

*

After Mr. Lockhart Smith had locked up his heart from farther speech, there was a shower of Sparkes. Mr. H. W. S. Sparkes chose the unrest for the theme of his eloquence. Every sentence in the report of his speech is a scintillating piece of brilliance. He said, "If the wishes of the people of India, the Extremists, who are thinking of driving the British out of India were granted, they would be the first to go down on their bended knees and ask the Government to stay back and dictate any terms they liked." That the people of India are all Extremists, is the first proposition we gather from this remarkable prophecy, that they all want to drive the British out of India is the second. It appears that their wishes are going to be granted, but whether by God or John Morley the prophet does not inform us. At some psychological stage of the process of eviction — after the wishes have been granted and the British have been driven out of India, — the Government and Mr. Sparkes are to be intercepted on the Apollo Bunder by a deputation of Bipin Pal, Tilak and Khaparde on bended knees asking them to stay back on any terms rather than deprive India of their beatific presence. This is the first spark.

*

The second spark is of a somewhat fuliginous character. Mr. Sparkes hastened to disclaim this remarkable prophecy, it is his foster-child and not his own only begotten son. "These were not his own views, but of the Bengalis and men who never mixed in politics." They are the views, it seems, of two classes of men, first, of the Bengalis, then, of men who never mixed in politics; and the opinion of the latter on a political question is no doubt exceptionally valuable. But if this is the opinion of the Bengalis, who then are the people of India who are all Extremists and want to drive the British out in order to have the luxury of asking them back on their bended knees? There seems to be a confusion of Sparkes somewhere.

*

It appears that "the Indians are trying to be registered as a nation of the world, but they were fools if they thought that that time had come." Here is another brilliant classification, but we do not quite grasp the distinction between a nation of the world and a nation not of the world. It seems to savour of German metaphysics and is too deep for us. Anyway, we observe that Mr. Sparkes differs from the Transvaal authorities, he will not allow Indians to register themselves in the book of the world. What, not even their thumb impressions, Mr. Sparkes?

*

"The Partition wounded the people of Bengal to the quick but Mr. Morley had done well in refusing to reopen that question." This was the last fitting coruscation of Sparkes, and yet neither the Ganges nor the Maidan was ablaze. After this Mr. Summons with his blood-curdling references to the train-wrecking incident and the Allen affair fell quite flat. He discovered a distinct attempt made to shield the wrong-doers. This is a charge against the police to which we invite the prompt attention of Sir Andrew Fraser. Mr. Summons ought to be called upon either to substantiate his allegation against the Lieutenant-Governor's friends or withdraw it.

Such was the feast of fancy and the flow of soul which came off last Monday. The end of this once potent Association threatens to be as pitiful as that of the Roman way — which began in massive dignity and ended in a bog.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 6th, 1908 }

The Constitution of the Subjects Committee

When we first wrote of the Constitution we pointed out the importance of the Subjects Committee as the first approach towards the democratisation of the Congress. The whole assembly of delegates is too large and too loose a body to discuss what resolutions shall be placed before it or what particular form of words should be used. This has necessarily to be done by a smaller body. But before the Subjects Committee came into existence these questions were decided irresponsibly by a small cabal of leaders in secret. When the first difference arose between the old leaders and younger men the prospect of a difference of opinion on the platform of the Congress was sufficient to bring about the substitution of a Committee for the cabal. It was a step forward but a very small step. The Committee was nominated by the cabal, not elected by the Congress, with the result that only those who were likely to be subservient to the cabal, their satellites, their mofussil lieutenants or others who were too prominent to be ignored, became members of the Committee. The change widened the basis of the oligarchy, it did not introduce a democratic principle. The Committee met to consent to what the leaders proposed, the Congress met to consent to what the Committee suggested. Freedom of discussion was restricted in the Committee by the autocratic intervention of dominant members of the cabal, in the Congress it was tabooed as a violation of unity.

In any future constitution of the Congress the election of the Subjects Committee must be regulated by the principles of democratic representation, not of oligarchic nomination. The state of things during the last two years has been one of transition, the leaders attempting to dictate their choice to the delegates, the delegates attempting to force theirs on the leaders, and the formation of the Subjects Committee has been invariably the occasion of scenes of tumult, confusion and chaos which were painful to all lovers of orderly procedure. The only remedy is the frank acceptance of the principle of democratic representation. At Surat when the Bengali delegates were electing their representatives on the Subjects Committee, Srijut Surendranath Banerji let fall a remarkable expression of sentiment which explains the difficulty felt by the leaders in frankly accepting the principle of district or divisional election which can alone ensure that the Subjects Committee will represent the will of the country. "If the delegates are allowed to elect their representatives," he said, "the best men will not be chosen." The aristocratic nature of the objection was a surprise to many of the delegates, for it contains the very essence of the oligarchical spirit. The distrust of the people, the sense of aristocratic superiority, the confidence of superior wisdom which it conveyed are the stamp of this spirit in all ages. The best men are the men of position, rank, status, the men with a stake in the country, the men who have succeeded and are on the top of the ladder, and these have a right to lead by virtue of their position apart from the will of the people. The party of privilege in all ages have posed as the superior people, the monopolists of wisdom, the *optimates* or best men, the *boni* or good people. The party opposed to them are the ignorant, the pestilent demagogues, the crazy fanatics, the men without stake or substance who wish to create a revolution in order to benefit themselves. If democratic election is allowed, these men will be elected in increasing numbers and shoulder out their betters. This spirit of oligarchical exclusiveness is the secret of all the friction which has been evident and the scenes of anger, strife and disorder, the frequent outbreaks of popular indignation which have marked the Conferences and Congresses since the birth of the democratic spirit. The Congress oligarchs, unwilling to allow that spirit to assert itself, are yet unable to disavow openly the principles of democracy in the name of which they demand from the bureaucracy rights and privileges which they themselves refuse to the rank and file of their own followers. The conflict goes on behind the scenes and the outbreaks in the Conference or Congress are rare and the results of a growing impatience of the evasions, tricks, shufflings by which the leaders try to hold an untenable position. They can neither disown democracy nor frankly accept it. They are eager to keep up its forms, determined to exclude its spirit. We shall not dwell farther on this aspect of the question, for the democratic spirit cannot be permanently repressed or baffled by evasions. That the constitution must be based on democratic principles is one of the axioms with which we have started. The Subjects Committee is the brain of the Congress and must be democratised if the Congress itself is to be democratic. Otherwise we shall have a repetition of the scenes which we are all anxious to avoid. An oligarchical Subjects Committee preparing resolutions which have to be repeatedly challenged in the full house, is an unworkable arrangement. The delegates must be made to feel that the Committee is really representative of their wishes and opinions and the inclination to scan with suspicion the Subjects Committee's resolutions and amend them in full house, will then disappear.

The election of the members of the Committee is at present no election at all, but a scramble for the membership. It must be reduced to order and rule by a serious, settled and deliberate form of election. The representatives of each division in a province must be allowed to sit separately and vote their choice of representatives for their own division, the names must be written down by a temporary secretary and handed in to the Secretary for the Province who will read out the full list of names to the assembled delegates of the Province. These names should be sent in to the Secretaries of the Congress who will put in the full list as soon as the President's address is over. In this way the business of forming the Subjects Committee can be done quietly, timely and thoroughly. No objection should be allowed from one division against the choice of another division or from one Province against the choice of another Province.

But the method of election is not the only obstacle in the way of full correspondence between the will of the Subjects Committee and the will of the Congress. The method of discussion in the Committee is at present hampered by irregularities which often prevent the real sense of the Committee from being properly ascertained. It is only when a strong and conscientious President acquainted with the forms of discussion in a free country sits in the chair, that the proceedings of the Committee are worthy of itself. These irregularities arise partly from ignorance of the rules of debate, partly from over-eagerness to make points and score tactical successes. The only remedy is for the rules of discussion to be formalized, made known to each member and rigidly enforced by the President. When this is done, the habit of orderly discussion will gradually create a public sentiment against excess of party spirit. Finally, the secrecy of the sitting is a feature which ought not to be continued. It is undemocratic in its origin, fosters irresponsibility and helps to create misunderstanding and facilitate crooked methods. There is no reason why our discussions should not be carried out in the full light of day, since we have nothing to conceal; on the contrary, the knowledge of the discussion in the Subjects Committee will serve the same end as the publicity of Parliamentary discussions in free countries. It will keep up a living interest in the people, educate the public mind to deal with political questions in a graver and more responsible spirit, accustom the representatives of the people to feel that they are speaking and acting with the eye of all India upon them and train the country to prepare itself the habits of mind, speech and action which are necessary for the success of representative government. Secrecy is the enemy of good government, but it is still more fatal to self-government. Publicity is the very breath of life to democratic institutions.

These then are the changes which we would suggest for the democratisation of the Subjects Committee — the members to be elected by the divisions of each Province by a regular and orderly method, the discussions of the Committee to be regulated by fixed rules of procedure and the sitting to be thrown open to the Press and the public or at least to the delegates. When these changes have been effected, the foundations of representative government in India will have been laid, for it is only out of the Congress that representative institutions can arise in India. The Congress is the seed and only by the proper development of the seed can the life of the tree be ensured.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 7th, 1908 }

The New Ideal

The need of a great ideal was never more keenly felt than it is in India at the present day. Nowhere have so many weaknesses combined to stand in the way of a nation in the whole range of history. Nowhere have the rulers reduced their subjects to so complete, pervading and abject a material helplessness. When the Mogul ruled, he ruled as a soldier and a conqueror, in the pride of his strength, in the confidence of his invincible greatness, the lord of the peoples by natural right of his imperial character and warlike strength and skill. He stooped to no meanness, hedged himself in with no army of spies, entered into no relations with foreign powers, but, grandiose and triumphant, sat on the throne of a continent like Indra on his heavenly seat, master of his world because there was none strong enough to dispute it with him. He trusted his subjects, gave them positions of power and responsibility, used their brain and arm to preserve his conquests and by the royalty of that trust and noble pride in his own ability to stand by his innate strength, was able to hold India for over a century until Aurangzeb forgot the *kuladharma* of his house and by distrust, tyranny and meanness lost for his descendants the splendid heritage of his forefathers. The present domination is a rule of shopkeepers who are at the same time bureaucrats, a combination of the worst possible qualities for imperial Government. The shopkeeper rules by deceit, the bureaucrat by the use of red tape. The shopkeeper by melancholy meanness alienates the subject population, the bureaucrat by soulless rigidity deprives the administration of life and human sympathy. The shopkeeper uses his position of authority to push his wares and fleece his subjects, the bureaucrat forgets his duty and loses his royal character in his mercantile greed. The shopkeeper becomes a pocket Machiavel, the bureaucrat a gigantic retail trader. By this confusion of *dharmas*, *varnashankara* is born in high places and the nation first and the rulers afterwards go to perdition. This is what has happened in India under the present regime. The bureaucracy has ruled in the spirit of a mercantile power, holding its position by aid of mercenaries, afraid of its subjects, with no confidence in its destiny, with no trust even in the mercenaries who support it, piling up gold with one hand, with the other holding a borrowed sword over the head of a fallen people. It has sought its strength not in the mission with which God had entrusted it, nor in the greatness of England, her mastery of the ocean, her pride of unconquered prowess, her just and sympathetic principle of government, but in the weakness of the people. The strength of England has been held as a threat in the background, not as a source of quiet and unostentatious self-confidence which enable the rulers to be generous as well as just. The liberal principles of English rule have been chanted as a sort of magic *mantra* to hypnotise the nation into willing subjection, not used as a living principle of government. What have been the real sources of bureaucratic strength? An arms act, a corrupt and oppressive police, an army of spies, a mercenary military force officered by Englishmen, a people emasculated, kept ignorant, out of the world's life, poor, intimidated, abjectly under the thumb of the police constable or the provincial prefect. Such a principle of rule cannot endure. It contradicts the law of God and offends the reason of man; it is as unprofitable as it is selfish and heartless.

The nation which has passed through a century of such a misgovernment must necessarily have degenerated. The bureaucracy has taken care to destroy every centre of strength not subservient to itself. A nation politically disorganised, a nation morally corrupted, intellectually pauperised, physically broken and stunted is the result of a hundred years of British rule, the account which England can give before God of the trust which He placed in her hands. The condition of the people is the one answer to all the songs of praise which the bureaucrats sing of their rule, which the people of England chorus with such a smug self-satisfaction and which even foreign peoples echo in the tune of admiration and praise. But for us the people who have suffered, the victims of the miserable misuse which bureaucrats have made of the noblest opportunity God ever gave to a nation, the song has no longer any charm, the *mantra* has lost its hypnotic force, the spell has ceased to work. While we could we deceived ourselves, but we can deceive ourselves no longer. Pain is a terrible disillusioner and the pangs which had come upon us were those of approaching dissolution. It was at the last moment, when further delay would have meant death, that a higher than earthly physician administered through a proud viceroy the potent poison of Partition and saved the life of India. The treatment of the disease has been drastic and will continue to be drastic. There are those who dream of mild remedies, whose beautiful souls will not bear to think of the fierceness of strife, hatred and agony which a revolution implies; but strong poisons are the only salvation in desperate diseases and we fear that without these poisons India will not easily or ever recover from the fatal and consuming disease which has overtaken her.

What will support her under the stress of the agony she will have to undergo? What strength will help her to shake off the weaknesses which have crowded in on her? How will she raise herself from the dust whom a thousand shackles bind down? Only the strength of a superhuman ideal, only the gigantic force of a superhuman will, only the vehemence of an effort which transcends all that man has done and approaches divinity. Where will she find that strength, that force, that vehemence? In herself. We have seen Ramamurti, the modern Bhimasen, lie motionless, resistant, with a superhuman force of will power acting through the muscles while two carts loaded with men are driven over his body. India must undergo an ordeal of passive endurance far more terrible without relaxing a single fibre of her frame. We have seen Ramamurti break over his chest a strong iron chain tightened round his whole body and break it by the sheer force of will working through the body. India must work a similar deliverance for herself by the same inner force. It is not by strength of body that Ramamurti accomplishes his feats, for he is not stronger than many athletes who could never do what he does daily, but by faith and will. India has in herself a faith of superhuman virtue to accomplish miracles, to deliver herself out of irrefragable bondage, to bring God down upon earth. She has a secret of will power which no other nation possesses. All she needs to rouse in her that faith, that will, is an ideal which will induce her to make the effort. That ideal is now being preached by Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal in every speech he delivers and never has it been delivered with such beauty of expression, such a passion of earnestness and pathos, such a sublimity of feeling as at Uttarpara on Sunday when he addressed a meeting of the people in the compound of the Uttarpara Library. The ideal is that of humanity in God, of God in humanity, the ancient ideal of the *sanatana dharma* but applied as it has never been applied before to the problem of politics and the work of national revival. To realise that ideal, to impart it to the world is the mission of India. She has evolved a religion which embraces all that the heart, the brain, the practical faculty of man can desire but she has not yet applied it to the problems of modern politics. This therefore is the work which she has still to do before she can help humanity; the necessity of this mission is the justification for her resurgence, the great incentive of saving herself to save mankind is the native power which will give her the force, the strength, the vehemence which can alone enable her to realise her destiny. No lesser ideal will help her through the stress of the terrible ordeal which she will in a few years be called to face. No hope less pure will save her from the demoralisation which follows revolutionary strife, the growth of passions, a violent selfishness, sanguinary hatred, insufferable licence, the disruption of moralities, the resurgence of the tiger in man which a great revolution is apt to foster. Srijut Bipin Chandra speaks under an inspiration which he himself is unable to resist. The public wish to hear him on Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education, — the old subjects of his unparalleled eloquence, — and he himself may desire to speak on them, but the voice of a prophet is not his own to speak the thing he will, but another's to speak the thing he must. India needed the gospel of Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education to nerve her to her first effort, but now that she is drawing nearer to the valley of the shadow of Death she needs a still mightier inspiration, a still more enthusiastic and all-conquering faith. The people have not yet understood, but the power to understand is in them, and if any voice can awake that power, it is Bipin Chandra's.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 9th, 1908 }

The Asiatic Role

The genius of the Hindu is not for pure action, but for thought and aspiration realized in action, the spirit premeditating before the body obeys the inward command. The life of the Hindu is inward and his outward life aims only at reproducing the motions of his spirit. This intimate relation of his thought and his actions is the secret of his perpetual vitality. His outward life, like that of other nations, is subject to growth and decay, to periods of greatness and periods of decline, but while other nations have a limit and a term, he has none. Whenever death claims his portion, the Hindu race takes refuge in the source of all immortality, plunges itself into the fountain of spirit and comes out renewed for a fresh term of existence. The elixir of national life has been discovered by India alone. This immortality, this great secret of life, she has treasured up for thousands of years, until the world was fit to receive it. The time has now come for her to impart it to the other nations, who are now on the verge of decadence and death. The peoples of Europe have carried material life to its farthest expression, the science of bodily existence has been perfected, but they are suffering from diseases which their science is powerless to cure. England with her practical intelligence, France with her clear logical brain, Germany with her speculative genius, Russia with her emotional force, America with her commercial energy have done what they could for human development, but each has reached the limit of her peculiar capacity. Something is wanting which Europe cannot supply. It is at this juncture that Asia has awakened because the world needed her. Asia is the custodian of the world's peace of mind, the physician of the maladies which Europe generates. She is commissioned to rise from time to time from her ages of self-communion, self-sufficiency, self-absorption and rule the world for a season so that the world may come and sit at her feet to learn the secrets she alone has to give. When the restless spirit of Europe has added a new phase of discovery to the evolution of the science of material life, has regulated politics, rebased society, remodelled law, rediscovered science, the spirit of Asia, calm, contemplative, self-possessed, takes possession of Europe's discovery and corrects its exaggerations, its aberrations by the intuition, the spiritual light she alone can turn upon the world. When Greek and Roman had exhausted themselves, the Arab went out from his desert to take up their unfinished task, revivify the civilisation of the old world and impart the profounder impulses of Asia to the pursuit of knowledge. Asia has always initiated, Europe completed. The strength of Europe is in details, the strength of Asia in synthesis. When Europe has perfected the details of life or thought, she is unable to harmonize them into a perfect symphony and she falls into intellectual heresies, practical extravagances which contradict the facts of life, the limits of human nature and the ultimate truths of existence. It is therefore the office of Asia to take up the work of human evolution when Europe comes to a standstill and loses itself in a clash of vain speculations, barren experiments and helpless struggles to escape from the consequences of her own mistakes. Such a time has now come in the world's history.

In former ages India was a sort of hermitage of thought and peace apart from the world. Separated from the rest of humanity by her peculiar geographical conformation, she worked out her own problems and thought out the secrets of existence as in a quiet *ashram* from which the noise of the world was shut out. Her thoughts flashed out over Asia and created civilisations, her sons were the bearers of light to the peoples; philosophies based themselves on stray fragments of her infinite wisdom; sciences arose from the waste of her intellectual production. When the barrier was broken and nations began to surge through the Himalayan gates, the peace of India departed. She passed through centuries of struggle, of ferment in which the civilisations born of her random thoughts returned to her developed and insistent, seeking to impose themselves on the mighty mother of them all. To her they were the reminiscences of her old intellectual experiments laid aside and forgotten. She took them up, rethought them in a new light and once more made them part of herself. So she dealt with the Greek, so with the Scythian, so with Islam, so now she will deal with the great brood of her returning children, with Christianity, with Buddhism, with European science and materialism, with the fresh speculations born of the world's renewed contact with the source of thought in this ancient cradle of religion, science and philosophy. The vast amount of new matter which she has to absorb, is unprecedented in her history, but to her it is child's play. Her all-embracing intellect, her penetrating intuition, her invincible originality are equal to greater tasks. The period of passivity when she listened to the voices of the outside world is over. No longer will she be content merely to receive and reproduce, even to receive and improve. The genius of Japan lies in imitation and improvement, that of India in origination. The contributions of outside peoples she can only accept as rough material for her immense creative faculty. It was the mission of England to bring this rough material to India, but in the arrogance of her material success she presumed to take upon herself the role of a teacher and treated the Indian people partly as an infant to be instructed, partly as a serf to be schooled to labour for its lords. The farce is played out. England's mission in India is over and it is time for her to recognise the limit of the lease given to her. When it was God's will that she should possess India, the world was amazed at the miraculous ease of the conquest and gave all the credit to the unparalleled genius and virtues of the English people, a fiction which England was not slow to encourage and on which she has traded for over a century. The real truth is suggested in the famous saying that England conquered India in a fit of absence of mind, which is only another way of saying that she did not conquer it at all. It was placed in her hands without her realising what was being done or how it was being done. The necessary conditions were created for her, her path made easy, the instruments given into her hands. The men who worked for her were of comparatively small intellectual stature and with few exceptions did not make and could not have made any mark in European history where no special Providence was at work to supplement the deficiencies of the instruments. The subjugation of India is explicable neither in the ability of the men whose names figure as the protagonists nor in the superior genius of the conquering nation nor in the weakness of the conquered peoples. It is one of the standing miracles of history. In other words, it was one of those cases in which a particular mission was assigned to a people not otherwise superior to the rest of the world and a special *faustitas* or decreed good fortune set to watch over the fulfilment of the mission. Her mission once over, the angel of the Lord who stood by England in her task and removed opponents and difficulties with the waving of his hand, will no longer shield her. She will stay so long as the destinies of India need her and not a day longer, for it is not by her own strength that she came or is still here, and it is not by her own strength that she can remain. The resurgence of India is begun, it will accomplish itself with her help, if she will, without it if she does not, against it if she opposes.

Love Me or Die

The Editor of the Urdu *Swarajya* has been warned to refrain from seditious writings. The Magistrate in conveying the warning unctuously remarked that "the Government never dissuades righteous criticism, it is only a disaffectionate feeling that it wants to check." The heart of the bureaucracy is evidently in the right place; it is so anxious to be loved that it is ready to chop off the head of anyone who refuses to love it. The bureaucracy has sometimes been compared by editors with exuberant pens to the Emperor Nero, a comparison which it has resented by putting the writer in prison; but it is written in history that Nero suffered precisely from this amiable weakness. He wanted to be loved and anyone who had a "disaffectionate feeling" for him or criticised "unrighteously" his character or his flute-playing or his poetry or his acting, was in instant danger of being taught affection by the sword. Nero also did not want to dissuade "righteous" criticism, but then the judge of the righteousness of the criticism was Nero himself. The love-sick despot is a more difficult kind of animal to tackle than the more ferocious species. "Obey me or perish" is the attitude of the latter, and it is one which can be appreciated if not admired. But "love me or die" is a principle of government to which human nature cannot so easily accustom itself. It is too ethereal for the grossness of our base terrestrial composition.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 10th, 1908 }

The Work Before Us

The little that we have done is the first faint shadowing forth of our future activities, nothing more. If we are content with what we have done, even that little will disappear, the movement will be abortive and the country fall back into its former condition. It is therefore necessary to give a new impetus to the movement everywhere, and now that Srijut Bipin Chandra is out of prison, the necessary will no doubt be done. The first work is to revive courage in the hearts of the people. The effect of the recent repression has been not to crush the movement, but to discourage its outward activity. This discouragement must be removed. We cannot allow the movement to be driven inward and become an affair of secret societies and terrorism as it will inevitably become if the outward expression of it is stopped. The next work is to give a stronger impetus to the boycott, so that the little that we have gained may become the starting-point for fresh victories; the organisation of boycott is the first work to which we should set our hands. The third thing to be done is to spread National Education. A serious effort must be made to take in hand the raising of funds for this branch of national activity, so that the National Council may be in a position both to effect the complete organisation of its scientific, technical and other sides and to extend aid to the increasing number of schools which are springing up all over the country. It is also necessary to bring the existing primary schools under the Council; for this is a work of great importance, and until it is done, the foundations of the new educational edifice will not be secure, since it is the primary schools in which the bulk of the people are educated. If the present institutions will not come into the new system, the country must be covered with a network of new primary schools on national lines, such as the one which is now being projected at Uttarpara, — schools giving a primary literary education along with such technical instruction as will enable the students to earn a livelihood as small artisans. If this is done, the public will flock into the national institutions and the old primary schools will perish.

So much is necessary for the completion of the work for which we have already laid a foundation, but the time has come when we should start actively on fresh lines. The most important of these is arbitration, which will, if successfully carried out, form the basis of our future self-government. Education will give us the necessary training of mind and character for self-government, arbitration will provide a practical field in which our capacities can be tested. In some parts the work has already been begun and with remarkable success, but it is necessary to lay the foundations all over Bengal. The difficulties that lie in its way are not so insuperable as they at first appear; if the lawyer class can be provided with a means of living by the arbitration system, their passive opposition, which is the only real obstacle to be dreaded, can be removed. The existing courts will provide careers for those who wish to earn large fortunes in the legal line, but the host of small practitioners in the mofussil are those who will be affected by the spread of arbitration and some provision must be made in our arbitration schemes by which their field, if restricted, may not be entirely destroyed. This subject is one which demands detailed treatment and it will be the theme of a future article. At present we wish only to emphasize its great importance.

When we have laid the foundations of arbitration, our work is not finished; the positive side of it only has been done. There is another side less palpable, but even more important, and it is the destructive or negative side, the removal of old prepossessions, false beliefs, false ideals from the mind of the people. So long as the least little of faith in the bureaucracy remains in the lowest class of our population, the conditions of success are not complete. The bureaucracy is itself doing much to destroy the ancient faith in its philanthropy, integrity and high motive which was the source of its strength, but this is chiefly in the educated class and the landed aristocracy, both of which, whatever the outward professions, fear or self-interest may dictate, are now thoroughly alienated. The only work which remains to be done so far as these classes are concerned, is to generate faith in the nation; for so far as moderatism still prevails, it is not owing to faith in the bureaucracy but to distrust in the nation. The lower classes have still to be inoculated with the spirit of self-help, separation from the alien and confidence in their own countrymen. To some extent the work has been done, the seed has been sown; Swadeshi is the seedbed of this spirit of self-reliance, this sense of separateness and, at least among the Hindu community, Swadeshi is deeply rooted in all classes. But this seed has yet to fructify and spring up. The only way in which this can be done is to destroy the barriers between the educated class and the peasantry which English education has created, to restore the old unity of society by mutual service, by love, by self-identification with the mass of our countrymen. The volunteer movement, now in a rudimentary state, has to be developed and perfected so as to form the bridge of communication between the heart of the people and the brain of the educated community. Our propaganda among the masses must consist less in the teaching of ideas than in teaching by acts, less in intellectual conviction than in the appeal to the heart and to the imagination. No time should be lost in taking this work in hand, the days are passing by with great swiftness and bringing us nearer and nearer to the final struggle when the people and the bureaucracy will stand face to face. On that day the masses will weigh down the scale and decide victory or defeat.

Campbell-Bannerman Retires

The resignation of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman leaves things for India just where they were, but it is of some importance for

England, as it is not unlikely that the transference of leadership to a man of Mr. Asquith's cold, hard and unsympathetic Whiggism may lead to an early disruption of the Liberal majority. For India, of course, that event would mean little or nothing; a Hamilton to a Fowler and a Morley to a Brodrick succeeds, and the only difference made by the retirement of the quondam friend, philosopher and guide of Moderatism into the cool shades of Opposition, will be that we are now suffering from repression with sympathy and will then suffer from repression without sympathy. On the whole we prefer the latter brand; it is more genuine and invigorating.

United Congress

Bipin Chandra Pal moved a five-point resolution setting forth the lines under which the Congress may be revived. The resolution was seconded by Sj. Chittaranjan Das, after which two other men spoke. Sj. Aurobindo Ghose rose up last. He admitted having a hand in drafting the resolution but denied the charge of inconsistency on the ground that this new movement, as it is divinely decreed, cannot proceed on the basis of strict consistency of individual conduct from any individual standpoint. The breaking up of the Congress at Surat was God's will and if it can meet again on a basis of union that would also come from His will. If, again, all our efforts at union fail and the New party be compelled to face troubles and persecutions, that should also be taken as a divinely appointed destiny. We shall not be eager for compromise to avoid trouble and persecution, as sufferings are welcome if it be God's will that we should suffer, that our Mother India would be saved. But in the meantime, we are a democratic party. At Pabna, at Dhulia and other places, people wanted a united Congress and it is our duty to try for it if no vital principle is sacrificed to gain that end. This was the speaker's apology for the attempt at union, though, as he said, his hopes were not high about the success of the attempt. The Congress broke up not over personalities, but over certain definite issues which were (1) irregularities in the election of the President, (2) the attempt from certain quarters to take advantage of the local majority to recede from the four Calcutta resolutions, (3) the attempt to impose a creed by the help of a local majority with a view to exclude a large and growing party. Under the circumstances it was necessary to oppose the whole thing tooth and nail. Mr.

Speech delivered at Panti's Math, Calcutta, on 10 April 1908. Text (third-person report) published as a news item in the weekly edition of the Bande Mataram *on 12 April.*

Tilak moved an amendment to have a Congress Continuation Committee and then to proceed with the election of the President. The other party did not give him any opportunity to carry the amendment and declared the President to be unanimously elected, though many still hold that the election was not valid as the whole Congress could not express any opinion on it. But how to carry out the opinion of the people? We are ready to condone this irregularity if a united Congress is to be held on the basis of the Calcutta resolutions. If the other party does not accept, the responsibility of breaking up the Congress and having a party institution in its place will be on their shoulders. Our position is: let us work on our different party lines through our own institutions, but at the same time let us have the united Congress of the whole people.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 11th, 1908 }

The Demand of the Mother

We have lost the faculty of religious fervour in Bengal and are now trying to recover it through the passion for the country, by self-sacrifice, by labour for our fellow-countrymen, by absorption in the idea of the country. When a nation is on the verge of losing the source of its vitality, it tries to recover it by the first means which the environment offers, whether that environment be favourable or not. Bengal has always lived by its emotions; the brain of India, as it has been called, is also the heart of India. The loss of emotional power, of belief, of enthusiasm would dry up the sources from which she derives her strength. The country of Nyaya is also the country of Chaitanya who himself was born in the height of the intellectual development of Bengal as its fine flower and most perfect expression. If now she tries to recover her enthusiasm and perfect power of self-abandonment, it must be through a means which her new environment provides. This new environment has been responsible for the loss of her springs of vitality; it had turned the Bengalis into a sceptical people prone to swear at and disbelieve in everything great, noble and inspiring. The recovery of her old spirit of enthusiastic faith and aspiration has come about through the sense of political unity which had been slowly developing in the heart of the people as the result of the new environment. That which had supplied the poison, supplied also the cure. If she is to complete the restoration to her true self, the first requisite is that the enthusiasm, the idealism of the new movement should be kept alive. The perfect sense of self-abandonment which Chaitanya felt for Hari, must be felt by Bengal for the Mother. Then only will Bengal be herself and able to fulfil the destiny to which after so many centuries of preparation she has been called.

The great religions of the world have all laid stress on self-abandonment as the source of salvation and the law applies not only to spiritual salvation but to the destinies of a people. Self-abandonment will alone give salvation. He who loses his life, shall keep it, and the life of the individual must be the sacrifice for the life of the nation. When the people of Bengal are able to rise to the full height and depth of this idea they will find the secret of success which till now has escaped them. It is not by patriotic desires that a nation can be liberated, it is not by patriotic work that a nation can be built. For every stone that is added to the national edifice, a life must be given. It is not talk of Swaraj that can bring Swaraj but it is the living of Swaraj by each man among us that will compel Swaraj to come. The kingdom of Heaven is within you; free India is no piece of wood or stone that can be carved into the likeness of a nation but lives in the hearts of those who desire her, and out of these she must be created. We must first ourselves be free in heart before our country can be free. "There is no British jail which can hold me," said the great Upadhyay before his death, and he died to prove the truth of his words; but his words are true for all of us that aspire to liberate our Mother, whether we prove it by our lives or by our death. When her sons have learned to be free in themselves, free in prison, free under the yoke which they seek to remove, free in life, free in death, when the text of Upadhyay's words will receive their illuminating commentary in the actions of a people, then the chains will fall off of themselves and outward circumstances be forced to obey the law of our inward life.

How then can we live Swaraj? By abandonment of the idea of self and its replacement by the idea of the nation. As Chaitanya ceased to be Nimai Pandit and became Krishna, became Radha, became Balaram, so every one of us must cease to cherish his separate life and live in the nation. The hope of national regeneration must absorb our minds as the idea of salvation absorbs the minds of the *mumukshu*. Our *tyaga* must be as complete as the *tyaga* of the nameless ascetic. Our passion to see the face of our free and glorified Mother must be as devouring a madness as the passion of Chaitanya to see the face of Sri Krishna. Our sacrifice for the country must be as enthusiastic and complete as that of Jagai and Madhai who left the rule of a kingdom to follow the *sankirtan* of Gauranga. Our offerings on the altar must be as wildly liberal, as remorselessly complete as that of Carthaginian parents who passed their children through the fire to Moloch. If any reservation mars the completeness of our self-abandonment, if any bargaining abridges the fullness of our sacrifice, if any doubt mars the strength of our faith and enthusiasm, if any thought of self pollutes the sanctity of our love, then the Mother will not be satisfied and will continue to withhold her presence. We call her to come, but the call has not yet gone out of the bottom of our hearts. The Mother's feet are on the threshold, but she waits to hear the true cry, the cry that rushes out from the heart, before she will enter. We are still hesitating between ourselves and the country; we would give one anna to the service of the Mother and keep fifteen for ourselves, our wives, our children, our property, our fame and reputation, our safety, our ease. The Mother asks all before she will give herself. Not until Surath Raja offered the blood of his veins did the Mother appear to him and ask him to choose his boon. Not until Shivaji was ready to offer his head at the feet of the Mother, did Bhavani in visible form stay his hand and give him the command to free his people. Those who have freed nations, have first passed through the agony of utter renunciation before their efforts were crowned with success, and those who aspire to free India, will first have to pay the price which the Mother demands. The schemes by which we seek to prepare the nation, the scheme of industrial regeneration, the scheme of educational regeneration, the scheme of political regeneration through self-help are subordinate features of the deeper regeneration which the country must go through before it can be free. The Mother asks us for no schemes, no plans, no methods. She herself will provide the schemes, the plans, the methods better than any that we can devise. She asks us for our hearts, our lives, nothing less, nothing more. Swadeshi, National Education, the attempt to organise Swaraj are only so many opportunities for self-surrender to her. She will look to see not how much we have tried for Swadeshi, how wisely we have planned for Swaraj, how successfully we have organised education, but how much of ourselves we have given, how much of our substance, how much of our labour, how much of our ease, how much of our safety, how much of our lives. Regeneration is literally rebirth and rebirth comes not by the intellect, not by the fullness of the purse, not by policy, not by change of machinery, but by the getting of a new heart by throwing away all that we were into the fire of sacrifice and being reborn in the Mother. Self-abandonment is the demand made upon us. She asks of us, “How many will live for me? How many will die for me?” and awaits our answer.

Baruipur Speech

Sj. Shyamsunder Chakravarti having finished his speech, Srijut Aurobindo Ghose rose to address the audience. He began with an apology for being under the necessity of addressing a Bengali audience in a foreign tongue, specially by one like himself who had devoted his life for the Swadeshi movement. He pointed out that through a foreign system of education developing foreign tastes and tendencies he had been denationalised like his country and like his country again he is now trying to renationalise himself.

Next he referred to the comparative want of the Swadeshi spirit in West Bengal to which Shyamsunder Babu made very polite reference, himself coming from East Bengal. But Sj. Ghose as he belonged to West Bengal had no hesitation in admitting the drawback. This superiority of East Bengal he attributed solely to its privilege of suffering of late from the regulation *lathis* and imprisonment administered by the alien bureaucracy. He offered the same explanation of the increase of the strength of boycott in Calcutta after the disturbances at the Beadon Square of which the police were the sole authors. The speaker dilated on the great efficacy of suffering in rousing the spirit from slumber by a reference to the parable of two birds in the Upanishads so often referred to by the late Swami Vivekananda. The parable relates that there was a big tree with many sweet and bitter fruits and two birds sat on the tree, one on the top of it and the other at a lower part. The latter bird looking upwards sees the other in all his glory and richness of plumage and is at times enamoured of him and feels that he is no other than his own highest self. But at other moments when he tastes the sweet fruits of the tree he is

Delivered in Baruipur, Bengal, on 12 April 1908. Text (third-person report) published as a news item in the Bande Mataram *on 17 April.*

so much taken up with their sweetness that he quite forgets his dear and beloved companion. After a while there comes the turn of bitter fruits, the unpleasant taste of which breaks off the spell and he looks at his brilliant companion again. This is evidently a parable concerning the salvation of individual souls who when they enjoy the sweets of the world forget to look upwards to the Paramatma who is really none else than their own highest self, and when they forget themselves in this way through the *maya* of this world, bitterness comes to dispel the *maya* and revive the true self-consciousness.

The parable is equally applicable to national *mukti*. We in India fell under the influence of the foreigners' *maya* which completely possessed our souls. It was the *maya* of the alien rule, the alien civilisation, the powers and capacities of the alien people who happen to rule over us. These were as if so many shackles that put our physical, intellectual and moral life in bondage. We went to school with the aliens, we allowed the aliens to teach us and draw our minds away from all that was great and good in us. We considered ourselves unfit for self-government and political life, we looked to England as our exemplar and took her as our saviour. And all this was *maya* and bondage. When this *maya* once got its hold on us, put on us shackle after shackle, we had fallen into bondage of the mind by their education, commercial bondage, political bondage, etc., and we believed ourselves to be helpless without them. We helped them to destroy what life there was in India. We were under the protection of their police and we know now what protection they have given us. Nay, we ourselves became the instruments of our bondage. We Bengalis entered the services of foreigners. We brought in the foreigners and established their rule. Fallen as we were, we needed others to protect us, to teach us and even to feed us. So utterly was our self-dependence destroyed that we were unable to fulfil every function of human life.

It is only through repression and suffering that this *maya* can be dispelled, and the bitter fruit of Partition of Bengal administered by Lord Curzon dispelled the illusion. We looked up and saw that the brilliant bird sitting above was none else but ourselves, our real and actual selves. Thus we found Swaraj within ourselves and saw that it was in our hands to discover and to realise it.

Some people tell us that we have not the strength to stand upon our own legs without the help of the aliens and we should therefore work in co-operation with and also in opposition to them. But can you depend on God and *maya* at the same time? In proportion as you depend on others the bondage of *maya* will be upon you. The first thing that a nation must do is to realise the true freedom that lies within and it is only when you understand that free within is free without, you will be really free. It is for this reason that we preach the gospel of unqualified Swaraj and it is for this that Bhupen and Upadhyay refused to plead before the alien court. Upadhyay saw the necessity of realising Swaraj within us and hence he gave himself up to it. He said that he was free and the Britishers could not bind him; his death is a parable to our nation. There is no power so great that can make India subject; when we will say this, God will make us free. Herein lies the true significance of national education, boycott, Swadeshi, arbitration. Do not be afraid of obstacles in your path, it does not matter how great the forces are that stand in your way, God commands you to be free and you must be free. We ask you to give up the school under the control of the foreign bureaucracy and point out to you national education, we ask you to keep away from the legal system which prevails in your country as it is a source of financial and moral downfall — another link in the chain of *maya*. Do not suffer in bondage and *maya*. Leave this *maya* alone and come away. Don't think that anything is impossible when miracles are being worked out on every side. If you are true to yourself there is nothing to be afraid of. There is nothing unattainable by truth, love and faith. This is your whole gospel which will work out miracles. Never indulge in equivocations for your ease and safety. Do not invite weakness, stand upright. The light of Swadeshi is growing brighter through every attempt to crush it. People say there is no unity among us. How to create unity? Only through the call of our Mother and the voice of all her sons and not by any other unreal means. The voice is yet weak but it is growing. The might of God is already revealed among us, its work is spreading over the country. Even in West Bengal it is working in Uttarpara and Baruipur. It is not our work but that of something mightier that compels us to go on until all bondage is swept away and India stands free before the world.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 13th, 1908 }

Peace and Exclusion

The *Bengalee* has a knack of crying "Peace, peace", when not peace but a tactical advantage is in its heart. It has been appealing to us to refrain from party attacks and recriminations while it carries out its policy of excluding the Nationalist party from the Congress unmolested. The singular nature of this demand has attracted bitter comment and given cause for irritation as well as amusement in the minds of our friends of the Nationalist party, but it is nothing new on our contemporary's part. Ever since the struggle began between the parties, the *Bengalee* has adopted the role of angel of peace in its editorial columns while opening its correspondence columns to the most violent and personal attack on its opponents and has been the champion of a party whose first principle has been to ignore Nationalism when possible, intrigue against it in secret when occasion was favourable and openly exclude it by unconstitutional trickery when secret means would no longer serve. Srijut Surendranath Banerji is the declared editor of this paper and the public connect it and his actions together. We understand that Srijut Surendranath is sincerely anxious for peace and we are ready to take the hand offered to us if it is given in frankness, but he will pardon us for our plain speaking when we say that the past tactics of his paper and his party have not been such as to inspire us with overabundant confidence. It is by his actions that men judge a party leader and not by his public professions whether on the platform, in print or in private conversation.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 14th, 1908 }

Indian Resurgence and Europe

In many of the European countries in which democracy is at present not fully developed, the monarchy and the people are still in a position of armed neutrality with regard to each other. The people look with distrust on the ruler, the ruler with fear and antipathy on the people. If the ruler takes a step in the direction of absolutism the bomb is ready in the hands of the people to put an end to his life. If the people seem to be inclined towards Republicanism or Socialism the whole energies of the ruler are bent towards the discovery of some means by which the tide of democracy can be kept in check or turned back. When we look to democratic countries we find a similar attitude between capital and labour, property and poverty. Distrust is the atmosphere of modern politics, mutual suspicion and hatred the secret spring of action. Under the fair outside of its material civilisation, a deep-seated moral disease is at work eating into the vitals of European society of which a thousand symptoms strike the eye, from the extreme of bomb-throwing Anarchism to the other extreme of Tolstoy's Utopianism. Is India to be infected with the disease? The present conditions of government in this country are full of the germs of the Occidental malady, and if India is to escape from it, it must be, first, by getting rid of these conditions and, secondly, by seeking refuge in its own superior civilisation. The work of Nationalism is therefore twofold. It has to win Swaraj for India so that the present unhealthy conditions of political life, full of the germs of that social and political phthisis which is overtaking Europe, may be entirely and radically cured, and it has to ensure that the Swaraj it brings about shall be a Swadeshi Swaraj and not an importation of the European article. It is for this reason that the movement for Swaraj found its first expression in an outburst of Swadeshi sentiment which directed itself not merely against foreign goods, but against foreign habits, foreign dress and manners, foreign education, and sought to bring the people back to their own civilization. It was the instinctive protest of Nature against the malady that was eating its way into the national system and threatening to corrupt its blood and disturb the soundness of its organs. If there were some irrational features in the revolt of the people against foreign things, it was the violence of the malady which necessitated the violence of the reaction. The late Upadhyay was the type and champion of this feature of the national movement. He was never weary of harping on the necessity of stripping from ourselves every rag of borrowed European thought and habits and becoming intensely, uncompromisingly Indian. When we put aside all the mannerisms of that strong personality and seek its kernel, we find that this was his message and the meaning of his life. After himself going through all the phases of Europeanised thought and religion, he returned like his country with a violent rebound to the religion, the thoughts, the habits and the speech of his forefathers. It is the spirit of old Bengal which incarnated itself in him, with the strength, courage, passionate adherence to conviction which was the temperament of old Bengal and which modern Bengal had for a period lost. His declaration in Court and his death put a seal upon the meaning of his life and left his name stamped indelibly on the pages of history as a saint and martyr of the new faith. It washed out all human weakness and impurity with the wave of a great spiritual act of devotion and renunciation and left the soul of the man only for posterity to cherish. We have to take up his work and incorporate the essence of it into the accomplished heritage of the nation.

The return to ourselves is the cardinal feature of the national movement. It is national not only in the sense of political self-assertion against the domination of foreigners, but in the sense of a return upon our old national individuality. It is significant that all those who are out of touch with this feature of the movement, are losing their position at its head, while those who keep in its forefront are being more and more suffused with the spirit of "Indianity" and overcome with the spell of India, the magic of her thought and civilisation, the overpowering touch of her religion. The highest qualities of head and heart cannot keep the lead for men who have not the saving grace of openness to this passion for India as she was, is and will be. On the other hand men perhaps of inferior calibre are likely to do better work for the country, who have the power to respond. The secret of this peculiar feature of the movement is to be found in its essential nature and in the purpose which God intends it to serve. If India follows in the footsteps of Europe, accepts her political ideals, social system, economic principles, she will be overcome with the same maladies. Such a consummation is neither for the good of India nor for the good of Europe. If India becomes an intellectual province of Europe, she will never attain to her natural greatness or fulfil the possibilities within her. *Paradharmo bhayavahah*, to accept the *dharma* of another is perilous; it deprives the man or the nation of its secret of life and vitality and substitutes an unnatural and stunted growth for the free, large and organic development of Nature. Whenever a nation has given up the purpose of its existence, it has been at the cost of its growth. India must remain India if she is to fulfil her destiny. Nor will Europe profit by grafting her civilisation on India, for if India, who is the distinct physician of Europe's maladies, herself falls into the clutch of the disease, the disease will remain uncured and incurable and European civilisation will perish as it perished when Rome declined, first by dry rot within itself and last by irruption from without. The success of the national movement, both as a political and as a spiritual movement, is necessary for India and still more necessary for Europe. The whole world is interested in seeing that India becomes free so that India may become herself.

Om Shantih

The impending promotion of John Morley, the philosopher, to the House of Lords is one of the crimes of present day politics. The Radical philosopher, the biographer of Voltaire and Rousseau, the admired bookman of heterodoxy, is to end his days in that privileged preserve of all that is antiquated, anomalous, conservative and unprogressive, that standing negation of democratic principles, that survival of old-world privilege, the House of Lords. Honest John is to end his days as Lord John. It is a fitting reward for the work he has done as Secretary of State for India, the apostasy, the turning of his back on every principle for which he had stood in his books and speeches, the unctuous upholding of tyranny, the final consummation of the self-righteous Pharisee of liberty, the unrepentant oppressor of a rising nationality and a great resurgent civilisation. The culmination suits the beginning as a gargoyle suits a Gothic building; for the life of John Morley is a mass of contradictions, the profession of liberalism running hand in hand with the practice of a bastard Imperialism which did the work of Satan while it mouthed liberal Scripture to justify its sins. Mr. John Morley, the principal spurrer-on of Gladstone when Egypt was enslaved, the Chief Secretary whom the Irish feared and distrusted, the Secretary of State who has begun in India what no Tory statesman could have lightly undertaken, the attempt to stifle Indian aspirations by sheer force and put back the clock of progress from the nineteenth century into the Middle Ages, could not find a fitter heaven in which to spend his old age than the House of Lords. If anything could add to the just felicity of his translation, it is that there will be no Cottons and Rutherfords to vex his honest soul with irreverent questions. Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 18th, 1908 }

Conventionalist and Nationalist

If we look to the pros and cons of the controversy between Conventionalists and Nationalists, we shall be placed in a better position to understand the real aim of the Moderates in putting the barrier of a creed between themselves and the people. In the first place a part of the quarrel is over ultimate ideals; the Conventionalists are for the declaration of Colonial Self-Government as the goal of our efforts, the Nationalists for Swaraj without any qualification. Whatever the rights of the controversy, the ideal of the Conventionalists has been accepted in the form of a resolution by the Congress, and as a resolution but not a binding creed it has been submitted to by the Nationalists because it was the will of the majority. A creed is a matter of belief and conscience, a resolution a matter of policy; — and while no conscientious man will accept a creed which he does not believe, he can always submit as a good citizen to the will of the majority in matters of temporary policy. We are not concerned at present with the question whether such submission is imperative in all cases. It is sufficient that the Nationalists while preserving the liberty of every free mind to propagate their own doctrines and get them enforced wherever possible, have submitted to the Colonial Self-Government resolution as a part of the compromise unanimously arrived at in Calcutta. What need was there then of foisting a creed on the Congress? The object of the creed is to exclude the Nationalists, but the exclusion of the Nationalists is itself motived by an ulterior object. It is urged on behalf of the Moderates that it is impossible for them to work with the Nationalists because they are too violent and unruly to be members of an orderly assembly, but this is a plea too flimsy to bear scrutiny. If the Nationalists are sometimes unruly, it is because they are forced to urge their opinions on the Congress when they are deliberately ignored and throttled by the misuse of official authority to secure party ends. If the Nationalists are unruly, the Moderates are autocratic, and it is the autocratic misuse of power which creates the unruliness. Nor is unruliness in a party any good reason for breaking up a great National Assembly and excluding a powerful force from what professes to be the centre of national growth and strength. It is evident that a far more powerful motive is behind the policy of the Conventionalists, and that motive is fear and self-interest. Some are frank enough to confess it, but to put a plausible colour of patriotism on their deeper motives pretend that the Congress will be throttled or that by association with men of violent views and actions their work for posterity is hampered and spoiled. In other words, so long as they do not obey the orders of the *Englishman*, the *Madras Mail* and the *Times of India*, and dissociate themselves from the new movement and Nationalism they will not enjoy the confidence of the bureaucracy or be allowed to approach them with statesmanlike petitions and co-operate with them in the work of prolonging the subjection of their countrymen to foreign absolutism. This loss of position and prestige with the bureaucracy is the ruling motive with the Bombay Moderates, the fear of being involved in the persecution to which the Nationalists willingly expose themselves, is the dominant thought among the respectabilities of Bengal. Another powerful incentive to the hope of getting rid of the Nationalist opposition to their monopoly of influence and control in the country itself when the Nationalists are isolated for the fury of the bureaucracy to wreak on them its vengeance for the awakening of India. "The Nationalists are using us as a shield," the cry goes, "and we refused to be used, in that unheroic capacity." Whether the Nationalists have or have not the courage to face the full fury of bureaucratic persecution and the strength to survive it is a question which will probably be decided before another year is out. The Moderates at any rate imagine that they cannot and rejoice over the pleasant expectation of seeing this over-energetic and inconveniently independent party being crushed out of existence by the common adversary of all. It is the spirit of Mir Jafar, the politics of Jagat Sheth repeating themselves in their spiritual descendants.

That these ignoble, but perfectly human and intelligible motives are behind the Conventionalist separatism is further evidenced by the attempt to whittle away the resolution on National Education by the removal of the expression on national lines and national control in order to make it a colourless approval of a mere academic departure. Mr. Gokhale placed his justification in his ardent passion for elegant English, but the resolutions of the Congress are not such literary masterpieces that this particular one should have evoked the dead and gone schoolmaster in Mr. Gokhale's breast. It is clear that the desire of the former was to get rid of the idea of nationality from the resolution, because the aspiration towards nationality is offensive to the bureaucracy and to avoid offence to the bureaucracy is, according to Moderate politics, the first condition of political activity in India. The change of a word for the sake of literary elegance was not surely so essential that the Moderates had to prefer breaking the Congress to breaking the rules of English rhetoric. The opposition to the boycott resolution as originally framed has no root except in fear. No Indian in his heart of hearts can fail to sympathise with the boycott even when he has not the patriotism or the selflessness to practise it himself; for boycott is the first expression of our national individuality, the first condition for the success of Swadeshi and the standing evidence of national revival. But the boycott is as a red rag to John Bull and the Moderate therefore is anxious to throw away the red rag or at least put it in his pocket so long as he is in the same field with the bull. "Wore horns" is the whole significance of the opposition to boycott, whatever economical or political excuses may be put forward by way of apology. The separatist policy is a policy of fear, selfishness and spite.

Is it possible for a policy of this kind to be a force in the country or for a party actuated by such motives to keep the peoples in its hands?

Strength against weakness, life against death, aspiration against self-distrust, self-immolation against self-preservation, — this is the real issue between Conventionalist and Nationalist, and it cannot be doubted which will survive.

Palli Samiti

The resolution on which I have been asked to speak is from one point of view the most important of all that this conference has passed. As one of the speakers has already said, the village Samiti is the seed of Swaraj. What is Swaraj but the organization of the independent life of the country into centres of strength which grow out of its conditions and answer to its needs, so as to make a single and organic whole? When a nation is in a natural condition, growing from within and existing from within and in its own strength, then it develops its own centres and correlates them according to its own needs. But as soon as for any reason this natural condition is interrupted and a foreign organism establishes itself in and dominates in the country, then that foreign body draws to itself all the sources of nourishment and the natural centres, deprived of their sustenance, fail and disappear. It is for this reason that foreign rule can never be for the good of a nation, never work for its true progress and life, but must always work towards its disintegration and death. This is no new discovery, no recently invented theory of ours, but an ascertained truth of political science as taught in Europe by Europeans to Europeans. It is there laid down that foreign rule is inorganic and therefore tends to disintegrate the subject body politic by destroying its proper organs and centres of life. If a subject nation is ever to recover and survive, it can only be by reversing the process and reestablishing its own organic centres of life and strength. We in India had our own instruments of life and growth; we had the self-dependent village; we had the Zamindar as the link between the village units and the central governing body and the central governing body itself was one

Speech delivered in Kishoregunj, east Bengal, on 20 April 1908. Text published in the weekly edition of the Bande Mataram *on 26 April.*

in which the heart of the nation beat. All these have been either destroyed or crippled by the intrusion of the foreign organism. If we are to survive as a nation we must restore the centres of strength which are natural and necessary to our growth, and the first of these, the basis of all the rest, the old foundation of Indian life and secret of Indian vitality was the self-dependent and self-sufficient village organism. If we are to organize Swaraj we must base it on the village. But we must at the same time take care to avoid the mistake which did much in the past to retard our national growth. The village must not in our new national life be isolated as well as self-sufficient, but must feel itself bound up with the life of its neighbouring units, living with them in a common group for common purposes. Each group again must feel itself part of the life of the district, living in the district unity, so each district must not be engrossed in its own separate existence but feel itself a subordinate part of the single life of the province, and the province in its turn of the single life of the country. Such is the plan of reconstruction we have taken in hand, but to make it a healthy growth and not an artificial construction we must begin at the bottom and work up to the apex. The village is the cell of the national body and the cell-life must be healthy and developed for the national body to be healthy and developed. Swaraj begins from the village.

Take another point of view. Swaraj is the organization of national self-help, national self-dependence. As soon as the foreign organism begins to dominate the body politic, it compels the whole body to look to it as the centre of its activities and neglect its own organs of action till these become atrophied. We in India allowed this tendency of alien domination to affect us so powerfully that we have absolutely lost the habit and for some time had lost the desire of independent activity and became so dependent and inert that there can be found no example of such helplessness and subservience in history. The whole of our national life was swallowed up by this dependence. Swaraj will only be possible if this habit of subservience is removed and replaced by a habit of self-help. We must take back our life into our own hands and the change must be immediate, complete and drastic. It is no use employing half-measures, for the disease is radical and the cure must be radical also. Our aim must be to revolutionize our habits and leave absolutely no corner of our life and activities in which the habit of dependence is allowed to linger or find refuge for its insidious and destructive workings; education, commerce, industry, the administration of justice among ourselves, protection, sanitation, public works, one by one we must take them all back into our hands. Here again the village Samiti is an indispensable instrument, for as this resolution declares, the village Samiti is not to be a mere council for deliberation, but a strong organ of executive work. It is to set up village schools in which our children will grow up as good citizens and patriots to live for their country and not for themselves or for the privilege of a dependent life in a dependent nation. It is to take up the work of arbitration by which we shall recover control of the administration of justice, of self-protection, of village sanitation, of small local public works, so that the life of the village may again be self-reliant and self-sufficient, free from the habit of dependence rooted in the soil. Self-help and self-dependence, the first conditions of Swaraj, depend for their organisation on the village Samiti.

Another essential condition of Swaraj is that we should awaken the political sense of the masses. There may have been a time in history when it was enough that a few classes, the ruling classes, the learned classes, at most the trading classes should be awake. But the organisation of the modern nation depends on the awakening of the political sense in the mass. This is the age of the people, the million, the democracy. If any nation wishes to survive in the modern struggle, if it wishes to recover or maintain Swaraj, it must awaken the people and bring them into the conscious life of the nation, so that every man may feel that in the nation he lives, with the prosperity of the nation he prospers, in the freedom of the nation he is free. This work again depends on the village Samiti. Unless we organise the united life of the village we cannot bridge over the gulf between the educated and the masses. It is here that their lives meet and that they can feel unity. The work of the village

Samiti will be to make the masses feel Swaraj in the village, Swaraj in the group of villages, Swaraj in the district, Swaraj in the nation. They cannot immediately rise to the conception of Swaraj in the nation, they must be trained to it through the perception of Swaraj in the village. The political education of the masses is impossible unless you organise the village Samiti.

Swaraj, finally, is impossible without unity. But the unity we need for Swaraj is not a unity of opinion, a unity of speech, a unity of intellectual conviction. Unity is of the heart and springs from love. The foreign organism which has been living on us, lives by the absence of this love, by division, and it perpetuates the condition of its existence by making us look to it as the centre of our lives and away from our Mother and her children. It has set Hindu and Mahomedan at variance by means of this outward outlook; for by regarding it as the fountain of life, however, we are led to look away from our brothers and yearn for what the alien strength can give us. The Hindu first fell a prey to this lure and it was the Mahomedan who was then feared and held down. Now that the Hindu is estranged, the same lure is held out to the Mahomedan and the brother communities kept estranged because they look to the foreigner for the source of prosperity and honours and not to their own Mother. Again, in the old days we did not hear of this distress of the scarcity of water from which the country is suffering now so acutely. It did not exist and could not exist because there was love and the habit of mutual assistance which springs from love. The Zamindar felt that he was one with his tenants and could not justify his existence if they were suffering, so his first thought was to meet their wants and remove their disabilities. But now that we look to a foreign source for everything, this love for our countrymen, this habit of mutual assistance, this sense of mutual duty has disappeared. Each man is for himself and if anything is to be done for our brothers, there is the Government to do it and it is no concern of ours. This drying up of the springs of mutual affection is the cause which needs most to be removed and the village Samiti is again the first condition of a better state of things. It will destroy the aloofness, the separateness of our lives and bring us back the sense of community, the habit of mutual assistance and mutual beneficence. It will take up the want of water and remove it. It will introduce arbitration courts and, by healing our family feuds and individual discords, restore the lost sense of brotherhood. It will seek out the sick and give them medical relief. It will meet the want of an organization for famine relief. It will give justice, it will give protection and when all are thus working for the good of all, the old unity of our lives will be restored, the basis of Swaraj will have been laid in the tie which binds together the hearts of our people.

This is therefore no empty resolution, it is the practice of Swaraj to which you are vowing yourselves. Bengal is the leader of Indian regeneration, in Bengal its problems must be worked out and all Bengal is agreed in this — whatever division there may be among us — that the recovery of our self-dependent national life is the aim and end of our national movement. If you are really lovers of Swaraj, if you are not merely swayed by a blind feeling, a cry, but are prepared to work out Swaraj, then the measure of your sincerity shall be judged by the extent to which you carry out this resolution. Before the necessity of these village Samitis was realised there was some excuse for negligence, but now that the whole of Bengal is awakened to the necessity, there is none. You have assembled here from Kishoregunj, from all quarters of the Mymensingh District and on behalf of the people of Mymensingh are about to pass this resolution. If by this time next year you have not practically given effect to it, we shall understand that your desire for Swaraj is a thing not of the heart but of the lips or of the intellect at most. But if by that time Mymensingh is covered with village Samitis in full action, then we shall know that one district at least in Bengal has realised the conditions of Swaraj and when one district has solved the problem, it is only a question of time when over all Bengal and over all India, Swaraj will be realised.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 22nd, 1908 }

The Future and the Nationalists

Whatever view we take of the present situation, the first duty of every Nationalist is to take care that the great principles of Nationalism are not infringed by any concession to the party of fear and self-interest which would imperil the future of the movement and the destiny of the nation. All the articles we have written on the Convention have been the expression of a momentary policy dictated by the great and almost universal desire in the country that a split should be avoided. But we should never forget that policy is subordinate to principle. As a democratic party, it is our duty to bow to the will of the majority in all matters which do not break the mould of Nationalism to serve the interests of a moment. Unity is at present a means and not an end in itself. As we have often pointed out, unanimity is not unity but merely an affectation of unity. There is an idea in many minds that our salvation lies in the removal of all differences, religious, social and political, but we may wait for many millenniums before such an utopia can be reached in this world. Differences of religion, social status and political opinion there must be. Unanimity is a condition only possible to a nation whose heart is numbed and whose intellect has ceased to be active; for diversity is the very condition of activity, its cause and again its result. No one can deny that the differences of opinion which have arisen among us are largely responsible for the extraordinary political activity which has kept India astir for the last two years and set the whole world looking towards the banks of the Ganges in eager expectation of a new birth among the nations. On the other hand the activity itself has emphasized and increased the differences of opinion both between the parties and in the parties themselves. The only thing we have to see to is that this diversity is not allowed to break up the nation into warring factions, and we are therefore anxious to save, if possible, the Congress from extinction, because the Congress at present is the only ground of unity in diversity, the only field where all can meet to diverge and again meet without loss of principle or violence to conscience. It is a centre into which the different streams of thought and activity in the country can flow and mix with each other, to again separate and work in their own channels till the time to meet and intercommunicate again arrives. The Congress, therefore, provides the point of unity which prevents the diversity of our political activities from dissolving our political life into so many disconnected units.

Unity, as we have said, is a means and not an end. To agree is easy if we are willing to sacrifice our principles, but such agreement is not unity; it is sacrificing the soul of the nation so that an artificial appearance of unanimity may be preserved. No unity can be desirable which is inconsistent with growth or with the march of the people towards the realization of their great destiny. Growth is the object, unity only one of the means, and if the means can only be had on condition of sacrificing the object, the means and not the object must be sacrificed. If the Convention refuses to associate with the Nationalists except on condition of the latter sacrificing their principles and stultifying their intellectual convictions, the demand for unity can no longer be pressed on the Nationalist party, which will then be free to take its own course without reference to anything but its own principles and the exigencies of its propaganda. We have done our best to carry out the demand of the people for unity; the refusal comes from the other side and there the responsibility will rest. If the country desires unity, it is for the country to enforce it by refusing to countenance a body claiming to be the Congress and yet taking its stand on the negation of unity. The Nationalists cannot sit as beggars at the doors of the Convention waiting till the doors be opened to them. They are the builders of Indian nationality, the inheritors of the future, and their work calls them. If the Convention wants at any time in the near future to retrace its steps and become one with the Nationalists, it knows the conditions, but time will increase the difficulty of reunion and the conditions will change as the sacrifices made by the Nationalists for the sake of their cause become greater and their work advances. It is time for us to turn from the attempt to patch up matters with men who are pledged to disruption and concern ourselves with our own proper work.

That work is too heavy for us already, and it will become still more difficult under the new circumstances with an enemy in the house as well as an enemy outside. If we are to face the task with any hope of success, it must be with a much stricter organisation, a general closing up of our ranks and the creation of instruments for united work and mutual co-operation. We have hitherto been able to work in a scattered and desultory fashion because we were able to use the Congress organisations brought into existence by the demand for practical work and to take part in and give our stamp to existing bodies. The Convention's new District Associations will consist only of men pledged to the creed. Wherever an Association refuses to be bound by the creed, it will be excluded from the Conventionalist Congress and regarded as a Nationalist body. Under these circumstances the country's demand for unity will become impossible of fulfilment and rival organizations will spring into existence in every province and every district, one pledged to association with the bureaucracy, the other to boycott and self-help. If these bodies admit both parties, they will stand apart from any existing organization. Such a state of things can only be temporary, but it is for a time inevitable if the Convention constitution is carried out. The Nationalists are bound to protect themselves from the attempt to exclude them from political life by organizing themselves in such a way that they may become a force in the country which neither bureaucrats nor Loyalists can either ignore or think it an easy task to crush. Organization, therefore, will be the first difficulty to overcome. When once we have succeeded in organizing our at present scattered forces, the spirit of progress once awake will work for us and through us giving us greater and greater following and strength till the work of building up the nation becomes so evidently ours that the whole country will range itself under our standard. Then and only then will that unity become possible which can create a nation.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 23rd, 1908 }

The Wheat and the Chaff

The result of the Convention meeting at Allahabad is now certain and it seems that after a brief struggle Sir Pherozshah has prevailed. We have done much for reunion, and have striven in vain. The personality of Sir Pherozshah Mehta and the votes of his Bombay henchmen have overborne the feeble patriotism and wavering will of the Bengal Moderates and their Punjab supporters. The Convention has thrown in its lot with Minto and Morley and sacrificed the country at the altar of the bureaucracy and as the Bengal leaders have not dissociated themselves from the Convention we must hold that the entire Moderate party have agreed to betray the mandate of their country and the future of their people. For a brief moment God placed the destiny of India in their hands and gave them a free choice whether they would serve Him or self, the country or the bureaucracy. They have chosen, and chosen the worse course. They too have made the great refusal. Whatever may happen henceforth, they must be reckoned as servants of the alien bureaucrat disguised as patriots to deceive and mislead the people, enemies of Nationalism, foes of Indian independence who prefer the service of a foreign domination to the perils of a struggle for freedom. They have refused to serve the Mother with an undivided heart, they have placed the alien on the throne of her future and dared to think that she will accept a left hand and inferior chair at the side of his seat of empire. Let them serve the master they have chosen and find what wages he will give them for their service. No Nationalist henceforth can consent to seek reconciliation with them or clasp the hand that has sold the country for a foreign hire. A cleavage has been made between those who will suffer for their country and those who have declared that they will have no share in those sufferings, no part or lot in the great struggle of the future. It is well. We need waste no farther time in seeking a union with the men who before Surat had resolved on a disruption motived by the desire of bureaucratic favour and the fear of bureaucratic displeasure. The day of compromises is past. Frank, clear and unmistakable let the great issue stand for the country to decide as between the lovers of freedom and the lovers of servitude, between the men who palter with the demand of the Mother for whole-hearted service and those who have given all to her, between the politicians and the martyrs, between the advocates of a contradiction and the preachers of the unadorned Truth. On the one side the cry is "For India and freedom", on the other "For India and the bureaucracy". Whichever appeals to its heart and its intellect, the country will choose. Of the Conventionalists let us speak no farther. If any of them have it in them to repent, let them repent soon, for the hour of grace that is given them will be short and the punishment swift. Into the secrets of their hearts we cannot pry, and it may be that there are some of them whose will only half consented to the betrayal or whose intellectual clarity was too small to understand what they were doing. But man's fate is determined by his acts which produce mechanically their inevitable result and they must share the fortune of those with whom they have cast in their lot. Before the world is much older, they will see the fruits of their work and rejoice over them if they can.

For Nationalism a new era begins with the 19th of April 1908. The sharp division that it has created between the two parties will bring the strength of Nationalism, the sincerity of its followers and the validity of its principles to the fiercest test that any cause can undergo. Only that cause is God-created, entrusted with a mission, sure of victory which can stand by itself in a solitude, absolute and supreme, without visible shield or sword, exposed to all that the powers of the world can do to slay it, and yet survive. The powers of the world are the servants of God commissioned to test the purity of His workers, their faith, their courage, their self-devotion, His angels of destruction who put forth their whole strength to uproot the infant faith and scatter its followers, so that the wheat may be sifted from the chaff, the true believers from the half believers, and the new religion grow by suffering to its intended stature. Every religion therefore has to begin with a period of persecution. The religion of Nationalism is already far on in this period and the retreat of the Conventionalists from the field of battle, their distinct repudiation of the new movement and its works, is the first fruit of the persecution. So much chaff has been sifted from the wheat, so many stones have been rejected by the great Builder from His material for the house He is building for our Mother. As time goes on, the test will be fiercer, the sifting more violent and the heavier part of the chaff, if any remains, will follow the lighter. Only the heart that is free from fear, the spirit that is full of faith, the soul that is passionate for realization will remain for the final test and the last purification. To men of doubtful views and undecided opinions the crisis precipitated by the decision of the Convention Committee will prove a cruel embarrassment. To all who have an emotional preference for the new ideas without a clear understanding of their supreme and urgent necessity, to all who understand the new ideas with their intellects only but have them not in their hearts, to all who, while loving and understanding the new ideas, have not faith to put aside the cloaks of prudence and dissimulation or courage to avow their faith openly before the world, the position is one of great perplexity. God is a hard master and will not be served by halves. All evasions, all subterfuges He cuts away and puts the question plain and loud; and before all mankind, before the friend ready to cut the ties of friendship asunder, before the enemy standing ready with lifted sword to slay the servants of God as soon as they confess their faith, it has to be answered: "Who is on the Lord's side?" Not once, not twice, but always that question is being put and the answer exacted. If you are unwilling to answer, either you do not believe that it is God's work you are doing and are therefore unfit for it, or you have insufficient faith in His power to get His work done without the help of your diplomacy and cunning, or you are unwilling to meet any plain risks in His service. To serve God under a cover is easy, to stipulate for safety in doing the work is natural to frail human nature, to sympathise and applaud is cheap; but the work demands sterner stuff in the men who will do it and insists on complete service, fearless service and honest service. The waverer must make up his mind either to answer God's question or to give up the work. There is plenty for him to do in a cheap, safe and easy way if he cannot face the risks of self-devotion. He can hold Conferences, enrol himself as a member of the Convention's District Associations, open funds for national purposes, pass resolutions, sign petitions, hold patriotic interviews with Magistrates, Commissioners, Lieutenant-Governors, Governors and even perhaps with a live Viceroy; he can, if he is a barrister, plead in Swadeshi cases; he can take shares in profitable Swadeshi investments and boast himself a great Swadeshi worker, a captain of industry, a solid patriot; he can do real good to the country without peril to himself by subscribing to help National Education. In these and other ways he can satisfy his secret proclivities for the service of his country. But the days when this easy service could pass for Nationalism are numbered.

The work now before us is of the sternest kind and requires men of an unflinching sternness to carry it out. The hero, the martyr, the man of iron will and iron heart, the grim fighter whose tough nerves defeat cannot tire out nor danger relax, the born leader in action, the man who cannot sleep or rest while his country is enslaved, the priest of Kali who can tear his heart out of his body and offer it as a bleeding sacrifice on the Mother's altar, the heart of fire and the tongue of flame whose lightest word is an inspiration to self-sacrifice or a spur to action, for these the time is coming, the call will soon go forth. They are already here in the silence, in the darkness slowly maturing themselves, training the muscles of the will, tightening the strings of the heart so that they may be ready when the call comes. Whoever feels the power of service within him, let him make sure of himself while there is yet time; for the present is an hour of easy probation, of light tests in which the punishment of failure is also light, but whoever fails in the day that be coming, will be thrown away not into the rubbish heap as the Conventionalists will be thrown, but into the fire of a great burning. For all who now declare themselves Nationalists the tests will be far severer than that before which the place-hunter, the title-hunter, the popularity-hunter, the politician of mixed motives and crooked ways, the trimmer, the light speaker and ready swearer of the old politics have paled and recoiled so early and so easily. The profession of Nationalism should not be lightly made but with a full sense of what it means and involves. The privilege of taking it is attended with severe pains and penalties for those who take it lightly. If we are few, it matters little, but it is of supreme importance that the stuff of which we are made should be sound. What the Mother needs is hard clear steel for her sword, hard massive granite for her fortress, wood that will not break for the handle of her bow, tough substance and true for the axle of her chariot. For the battle is near and the trumpet ready for the signal.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 24th, 1908 }

Party and the Country

The uses of party are a secret known only to free nations which value their freedom above all other things. Men of free minds and free habits are too strong of soul to be the slaves of their party feelings and too robust of mind to submit to any demand for the sacrifice of their principles on the altar of expediency. It is only in a servile nation unaccustomed to the habits of freemen that party becomes a master and not an instrument. The strength of mind to rise above personal feeling, the breadth of view which is prepared to tolerate the views of others while fighting resolutely, even aggressively, for one's own, the generosity of sentiment which can clasp the hand of an opponent so long as the claims of patriotism are satisfied, these are qualities that do not grow in the barren soil of servitude or flourish in its vitiated atmosphere. The pains of wounded vanity are as strong in slaves as in children; the pride which will not forgive defeat, the malice which broods over an affront for ever, the narrowness which does not allow good in an opponent or honesty in his opinions, while arrogating all virtues for oneself and one's party, these are the growth of the unhealthy air of slavery. So long as these are present, party is a curse because it becomes faction. And without party self-government is impossible.

The growth of parties immediately before the Swadeshi movement was one of the signs of an approaching awakening in the national mind. When the intellect is stirred and feelings become sincere and acute, parties arise, each passionate for its opinions, eager to carry them out, full of enthusiasm for an imagined ideal. The air becomes vibrant with life, the full blast of hope and endeavour fills the sails of destiny and through a sea sometimes stormy and never quite placid the ship of a nation's fate plunges forward to its destination. A political life in which there are no parties is political stagnation, death-in-life. It means that the intellect of the nation is torpid, its feelings feeble and flaccid, its aspirations untouched with passion of sincerity, fervour of hope unawakened, love of the country an inoperative sentiment confined to the intellect only and not yet close to the heart. The patriot is consumed with the passion to serve his country, to make her great, free or splendid. His brain is full of plans for the fulfilment of his hopes and he seeks helpers and followers to bring it about, while he tries to disabuse the country of ideas which he believes injurious to his plans. A Mazzini planning the republican freedom of Italy creates the party of New Italy, a Garibaldi filled with the same hope but bent on freedom first and republicanism afterwards forms his Legion of Red Shirts and holds the balance of parties, a Cavour full of grandiose schemes of a Kingdom of Italy leads the old monarchical sentiment of Piedmont and all that gathers round it. These parties fear and distrust each other, but all have one clear and unmistakable purpose, the freedom of Italy, and work for it, each doing something towards the common end which the others could not have done. Thus the purpose of God works itself out and not the purpose of Mazzini, or the purpose of Garibaldi, or the purpose of Cavour. Parties are necessary but they must have a common end overriding their specific differences, the freedom, greatness and splendour of their motherland. Only one party is inexcusable, inadmissible, not to be parleyed with, the party which is against freedom, the party which seeks to perpetuate national slavery.

In India today there are in appearance two parties at issue over the destiny of the country. One puts Swaraj as its goal, the other a modified freedom under the supreme control of a paramount and protecting Britain. Men of both parties try to show that their party is that of the true patriots, the other a faction fatal to the best interests of the country; both claim the lead of the country, the true right to be the representatives of its feelings and in possession of the future. If they were equally patriotic, this opposition would work for the good of the country and not for evil. If both were equally bent on the freedom of their country, they would supply each other's deficiencies, do each what the other is unfit to do and by their mutual rivalry work out the salvation of their country. The Moderate party contains a certain number of men who are really patriotic and desire the freedom of their country, whatever they may think it prudent to profess in public. If these men formed the whole or the bulk of their party, the present strife of parties would be an unmixed blessing, but unfortunately for the country there is a large and powerful element which is of a very different stamp. The representatives of this clique are the true movers of the Convention and their aims are hardly disguised. They do not believe in the capacity of their people for self-government or in the desirability of freedom for India and, if they subscribe to the formula of self-government, it is avowedly as a distant millennium which is to be kept outside the pale of practical politics. Their political aims are bounded by such changes in the existing system of administration as will give them and their class a greater share in the bureaucratic administration and a safe, easy and profitable road to position, popularity and honours. Patriotism is with them no ideal, no overmastering passion, no duty, but an instrument for advancing certain interests and gaining certain advantages. These men are Loyalists of a baser type, who desire the continuance of the British absolutism out of self-interest and not from any love of it or conviction of its goodness and utility. It is these men who have brought about the Surat fiasco, the Convention, the creed and the Allahabad constitution, and the Surendranaths and Gokhales have been tools in their hands. Conventionalism is a factor in our politics which makes for reaction, a revolt against the new ideas and a direct negation of our future. As such it will serve the ends of bureaucracy, tighten the chain and militate against progress; it can never be a factor helping towards our liberation. If the Bengal Moderates cling to the Convention they too will be no longer a factor in the work of liberation but an enemy and an obstacle like the Italian Moderates who clung to the Austrian domination as necessary to Italy. They are forfeiting their future when they deny the future of their country. If parties are to arise henceforth it must be among those who are the advocates of freedom and workers for freedom, for they alone can differ without faction and work together for a common end on different lines. Those who make the negation of the country's future the test of admission to their counsels, will themselves be excluded from the counsels of the Power that is shaping that future. Without them, for they are too feeble to be reckoned as an opposing force, that which they deny will accomplish itself.

The *Bengalee* Facing Both Ways

We confess we cannot understand the position taken up by the *Bengalee* in the paragraph we quote on another page. The Bengal Moderates at the Convention tried partially but not completely to carry out the country's mandate, but when they were outvoted, they made no protest and have not separated themselves from the action of the Convention. We take it therefore that when the Moderate Convention under the usurped name of the Congress meets at Surat in December, they will take part in it with Dr. Rash Behari Ghose at their head. If so, they sever themselves from the country and forfeit their political future in Bengal, but their position is intelligible. The *Bengalee*, however, talks of reconciliation and the Convention in one breath. It trusts that the path of reconciliation is not yet definitely closed, although the Convention to which Srijut Surendranath belongs has definitely enough adopted an exclusion clause and is going to summon a new-born Congress of its own. It is even bold enough to say that the resolution of the Convention does not preclude reconciliation. We find it difficult to command words which will properly characterize the audacity of this assertion. Does the *Bengalee* imagine that the Nationalists are going to accept a Congress called by the Convention, a Constitution framed by a handful of gentlemen meeting at Allahabad and a creed or "statement of objects" which contradict their fundamental principles? Its appeal to the country to bring about an united Congress stands convicted, coming after such a sentence, as a piece of meaningless vapidity. The *Bengalee* evidently wants to cling to the Convention and yet pose as a champion of reconciliation, but this double attitude will not serve. It cannot both have its Convention cake and eat it.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 25th, 1908 }

The One Thing Needful

A sort of atavism is at work in the Indian consciousness at the present moment which is drawing it back into the spirit of the fathers of the race who laid the foundations of our being thousands of years ago. Perhaps as a reaction from the excessively outward direction which our life had taken since the European invasion, the spirit of the race has taken refuge in the sources of its past and begun to bathe in the fountains of its being. A reversion such as this is the sole cure for national decay. Every nation has certain sources of vitality which have made it what it is and can always, if drawn upon in time, protect it from disintegration. The secret of its life is to be found in the recesses of its own being.

The root of the past is the source from which the future draws its sap and if the tree is to be saved it must constantly draw from that source for sustenance. The root may be fed from outside, but that food will have to be assimilated and turned to sap in the root before it can nourish the trunk. All nations therefore when they receive anything from outside steep it first in their own individuality before it can form part of their culture and national life. India has always done this with all outside forces which sought to find entry into her silent and meditative being. She has suffused them with her peculiar individuality so completely that their foreign origin is no longer recognizable. If she had done the same with European civilization, she would have been the first Asiatic nation to rise and show the way to her congeners. But at the time when Europe forced itself upon her, her political life was at its nadir. Exhausted by the long struggle to substitute a new centre of national life for the effete

Mogul, she was too weak and void of energy to bring her once robust individuality to bear upon the alien thought of the West. She allowed it to enter her being whole and undigested. The result was a rapid disintegration of her own individuality and a hastening of the process of decay which had set in as a result of the prolonged anarchy of the post-Mogul period. If there had been no reaction, the process would have been soon over and, whatever race finally occupied India, it would not have been the Indian race. For that race would have slowly perished as the Greek, when he parted with the springs of his life, perished and gave way to the Slav, or as the Egyptian perished and gave way to the Berber. This fate has been averted, because a great wave of reaction passed over the country and sent a stream of the old life and thought of India beating into the veins of the country and brought it to bear on the foreign matter which was eating up the body of the nation. That process of assimilation has just begun and its effects will not be palpable for many years to come. It will first effect its purpose on the political life of the people, then on its society, last on its literature, thought and speech. The effect on the political life is already visible, but it cannot fulfil itself until the political power is in the hands of the people. No political change can work itself out until the forces of change have taken possession of the government, because it is through the government that the functions of political life work. This is their organ and there can be no other. The possession of the Government by the people is therefore the first condition of Indian regeneration. Until this is attained, nothing else can be attained. The new forces will no doubt work quietly on society and on literature, but in an imperfect fashion from which no great results can be anticipated.

Society lives by the proper harmony of its parts and bases that harmony on the centre of power in which the whole community is summed up, the State. If the State is diseased, the community cannot be healthy. If the State is foreign and inorganic, the community cannot live an organic life. If the State be hostile, the community is doomed. The first want of a subject people is the possession of the State, without which it can neither be socially sound nor intellectually great. It was for this reason that Mazzini whose natural tendencies were literary and poetic, turned away from literature and denied his abilities their natural expression with the memorable words, "The art of Italy will flourish on our graves." No great work can be done by a community which is diseased at the centre or deprived of a centre. The hope of social reform divorced from political freedom, unless by social reform we mean the aping of European habits of life and social ideas, is an illogical hope which ignores the nature of social life and the conditions of its well-being. All expectation of moral regeneration which leaves freedom out of the count is a dream. First freedom, then regeneration. This is a truism which we have been obliged to dwell on because there are still remnants of the first delusive teachings which have done so much harm to India by trying to realise social reform without providing the element in which alone any reform is possible.

To recover possession of the State is therefore the first business of the awakened Indian consciousness. If this is so, then it is obvious that the political liberation of India cannot be put off to a distant date as a thing which can be worked out at leisure, with the slow pace of the snail, by creeping degrees of senile caution. It must be done now. It is the first condition of life which must be satisfied if the nation is to survive. On this the whole energies of the people must be concentrated and no other will-o'-the-wisp of social reform, moral regeneration, educational improvement ought to be allowed to interfere with the stupendous, single-souled effort which can alone effect the political salvation of the country. No reasonable reformer ought to be put out by the demand for the precedence being given to political salvation, because it is obvious that the political resurgence of the nation involves and necessitates a regeneration of the society by the great change of spirit and environment which it will bring about. When the whole life of the nation is full of the spirit of freedom and it lives in the great life of the world, then only can the work of the reformer be successful. The preoccupation with politics which seized Bengal after the Partition was a healthy symptom. Recently there has been a tendency in some quarters to revive the old dissipation of energies, to put social reform first, education first or moral regeneration first, and leave freedom to result from these. The mistake should be checked before it gains ground. Whatever reform, social, moral or educational, is necessary to bring about freedom, the effort of the whole people to bring about freedom will automatically effect. More is impossible until freedom itself is attained. No attempt to effect social reform for its own sake has any chance of success, because it will at once reawaken the old bitter struggle between the past and the present which baffled the efforts of the reformers. What the nation needs, it will carry out by the force of its necessity; but it is vain to expect it to dissipate its energies on what is for the moment superfluous. First we must live, afterwards we can learn to live well. The effort to survive must for some years command all our energies and absorb all our time.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 29th, 1908 }

New Conditions

A great deal of the work done by us during the last three years has been of a purely preparatory character. The preparation of the national mind was the first necessity. All that the old school of politics did was to prepare the way for the new thought by giving a full trial to the delusions that then possessed the people and demonstrating their complete futility. Since the awakening of the nation to the misdirection of its energies a fresh delusion has taken possession for a time of the national mind, and this is the idea that a great revolution can be worked out without the sacrifices of which history tells in the case of other nations. There is a general shrinking from the full danger of the struggle, a wish to try by how few sacrifices the work can be accomplished and at how cheap a cost the priceless boon of liberty can be purchased. This reluctance to enter on the real struggle was a necessary and salutary stage of the movement, because the nation, after the long pauperisation of its energies and enervation of its character by a hundred years of dependence and mendicancy, would have been unequal to the sacrifices the real struggle demands. A fresh stage is at hand in which this reluctance can no longer be indulged. A nation cannot afford to haggle with Providence or to buy liberty in the cheapest market from the Dispenser of human fate. The sooner the struggle now commences, the sooner the fate of India is fought out between the forces of progress and reaction, the better for India and for the world. Delay will only waste our strength and give opportunities to the enemy. A band of men is needed who can give up everything for their country, whose sole thought and occupation shall be the stimulation of the movement by whatever means the moment suggests or opportunity allows. If such a band can be got together, then only will real work as distinct from the work of preparation be possible; for the salvation of a country cannot be the work of our leisure moments, the product of our superfluous energy or the result of a selfish life in which the country comes in only for the leavings. Devoted servants of India are needed who will ask for no reward, no ease, no superfluities, but only their bare maintenance and a roof over their heads to enable them to work for her. This attitude of utter self-abandonment is the first condition of success. *Sannyasa*, utter and inexorable, *tyaga*, unreserved and pitiless, *mumukshutwa*, burning and insatiable, must be the stamp of the true servant of India. Academical knowledge, power of debate, laborious study of problems, the habit of ease and luxury at home and slow and tentative work abroad, the attitude of patience and leisurely self-preparation are not for this era or for this country. An immense and incalculable revolution is at hand and its instruments must be themselves immense in their aspiration, uncalculating in their self-immolation. A sacrifice of which the mightiest *yajna* of old can only be a feeble type and far-off shadow, has to be instituted and the victims of that sacrifice are ourselves, our lives, our property, our hopes, our ambitions, all that is personal and not of God, all that is devoted to our own service and taken from the service of the country. The greatest must fall as victims before the God of the sacrifice is satisfied. Whoever is afraid for himself, afraid for his property, afraid for his kith and kin, afraid for his vanity, self-interest, glory, ease or liberty, had better stand aside from the sacrifice, for at any time the call may come to him to lay down all these upon the altar. If he then refuses, his fate will be worse than that of the fugitive who prefers safety to the struggle, for he will be a recusant doomed to suffer without reward and fall without glory.

The times are thickening already with the shadow of a great darkness. The destruction of the Congress, begun at Surat and accomplished at Allahabad, is the prelude for the outburst of the storm that has long been brewing. Great issues were involved in that historic struggle at Surat of which none of the actors were aware. Only posterity looking back with awe on the sequel, will date the commencement of the real world-shaking earthquake from that slight ruffling of the untroubled surface of the soil. The forces that sent that slight quiver of the earth to the surface are hidden as yet from the eye of contemporary politics or only dimly guessed by a few, but within a brief period they will have declared themselves to the amazement of those who thought that they were only playing a clever tactical game with the lifeless figures of a puppet show. The grim forces that have been moving under the surface will now find the field open to them by the shattering of the keystone of the old political edifice. The efforts of the two parties to replace the Congress by new bodies of a party character are not likely to prosper, for the Moderate Convention will fade into nothingness by its inherent want of vitality, while the Congress of the Nationalists, whatever its destiny, will not be the old Congress but a new and incalculable force, the product of a revolution and perhaps its plaything. The disappearance of the old Congress announces the end of the preparatory stage of the movement, the beginning of a clash of forces whose first full shock will produce chaos. The fair hopes of an orderly and peaceful evolution of self-government, which the first energies of the new movement had fostered, are gone for ever. Revolution, bare and grim, is preparing her battlefield, mowing down the centres of order which were evolving a new cosmos and building up the materials of a gigantic downfall and a mighty new-creation. We could have wished it otherwise, but God's will be done.

Whom to Believe?

The account of the Conference given by the Lucknow *Advocate* which we quote elsewhere makes curious reading. If we are to believe this apparently well-informed source, the reports of the great fight made by the Bengal Moderates are a tissue of exaggerations. There was no fight at all over the question of creed or objects, and indeed the difference of name is so trivial that the legend of this stout fight over a shadow has little verisimilitude. About the question of the subscription to the creed the only difference between the Bengal-Punjab party and the Bombay-United Provinces party was whether it should be obligatory to sign the creed or sufficient to swear verbally to it. *That the clause should be binding and express acceptance obligatory as a condition of admission to the Congress, both parties were agreed.* What becomes then of the story of Surendranath's gallant battle for the freedom of election and freedom of conscience in the Congress? It seems that the whole Committee was solid for exclusion. The other point of difference was whether there should be a new Congress called by the Convention or the adjourned Congress resummoned by Dr. Rash Behari Ghose. As this adjourned Congress would in any case be saddled with the creed and the Convention constitution, it would be in effect a new Congress. This subject of quarrel, too, like the others, turns out to be a distinction without a difference. According to the *Advocate*, then, Surendranath's party and the Mehta party were in entire agreement, only the Bengal members wanted to call the same things by other names. Not a creed but a statement of objects binding on every delegate; not a written subscription but a verbal oath of allegiance; not a new Congress without the Nationalists, but the old Congress without the Nationalists. If we are to believe the *Advocate*, the Bengal Moderates only succeeded in showing themselves consummate hypocrites and fencers with words. If this account be a libel on them, it should, we think, be authoritatively contradicted. Otherwise the public will form their own conclusions.

By the Way

The Parable of Sati

Daksha, the great Prajapati, had a daughter, named Sati, whom he loved beyond all his children, and the Rishis wedded her to

Mahadeva, the great lord of the Universe. The choice of the Rishis was not pleasing to Daksha, because he was unable to see in Mahadeva anything but a houseless ascetic wandering with the beasts of the field and the demons of the night, a beggar's bowl in his hand, his body smeared with ashes, a tiger's skin for his only robe. His scorn increased the more he came to know of his son-in-law, a bhang-eating lazy ne'er-do-well with no ascertainable means of livelihood, no home, no property, no degree or other educational qualification, no stake in the world. He cursed the Rishis for fools and evil counsellors, visionaries who saw in this pauper with his bowl and his matted hair the Master of the World. So when he had to offer a great sacrifice, he sent invitations to all the Gods, but deliberately excluded his son-in-law. The result was disastrous. Sati, full of grief and indignation at the affront to her lord, gave up her body and disappeared from mortal ken. Then came Mahadeva in his wrath, the mighty One, the destroyer of Universes, and broke Daksha's sacrifice to pieces and shattered the hall of sacrifice and slew Daksha in his hall.

*

There was a Daksha too in India which was called the Indian National Congress. Like Daksha it was a great figure, a Prajapati with numerous offspring, full of dignity, sobriety, wisdom, and much esteemed by the gods. This Daksha too had a daughter whom he loved, the young Indian Nation. When the time for her marriage came, she chose for herself the bridegroom offered to her by the Rishis who declared him to be Mahadeva, the Destiny of India and her fated Lord. It was at sacred Benares that she first saw Mahadeva face to face and betrothed herself to him, but the marriage took place at Calcutta with a fourfold mantra, Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education, as the sacred formula of union. The marriage did not please Daksha, but the Rishis were importunate and Sati firm, so he was compelled to give way. He cursed the Rishis freely. "What manner of husband is this they have given to my Sati? A homeless beggar, wild and half crazy with the bhang he has drunk, wandering on the hills in company with the wild beasts and the demons, without culture, enlightenment and education, rude in speech, rough in manners, ill-clad, destitute, with no past, no present and no future! Yet these fanatics call him the Master of the World, an embodiment of the Almighty, and what not!” So he hid his grief and wrath but determined to be revenged. For Mahadeva the Mighty, the Destiny of India, had long wandered in the wilderness with a beggar’s bowl in his hand, poor and destitute, an ascetic smeared with ashes and clad in a tiger’s skin, with no home in which he could lay down his head. And when he came to the marriage, it was in fearsome guise and in evil company, drunk with the bhang of a wild inspiration, shouting “Bombom Bande Mataram” at the top of his mighty voice, disreputable in appearance and unfit to associate with polite and cultured gentlemen such as Daksha had hitherto made his friends, poor, shaggy, ill-clad, with no visible means of existence and no tangible prospects in the future; and his companions were a wild company of *lathi*-bearing National Volunteers and other disquieting phantasms quite out of place in Daksha’s tastefully got-up and elegant marriage pandal. How could Daksha realize that in this uncouth figure was the Destroyer and Creator of an Universe, One who held the fate of India and of the world in his hands? The Rishis only knew it and they were called visionaries and fanatics for their pains.

*

Daksha prepared a great annual sacrifice in the year after the marriage and held it with much pomp, but he determined to exclude Mahadeva the Mighty from the sacrifice and so framed the rules of admission that the undesirable son-in-law might keep away in future. The result is known to everybody. The Destiny of India, whom Daksha tried to exclude, came in wrath and knocked at the gates of the hall of sacrifice and when Daksha’s hired men tried to beat him back, he broke into the hall and shattered the sacrifice and slew Daksha in his hall.

*

The story goes that Mahadeva, entreated on behalf of Daksha, restored him to life, but when the head of Daksha was sought for it could not be found, and so a goat's head was incontinently clapped on the unfortunate Prajapati's shoulders. When the modern Daksha died, there was a similar desire to revive him but the head could not be found. Some said it was lost, others argued in more legal language that it was *functus officio*. Accordingly these wise men found a goat's head which they called a creed and stuck it on the shoulders of Daksha and put life into his trunk and swore that this goat-headed legless anomaly should in future be called Daksha. Unfortunately they made the whole thing more grotesque by clapping on the goat's head the wrong way, so that its face was turned backward and, when the crippled monster tried to shove itself along, its progress was retrogression and its advance a retreat. For its eyes were turned to the past and not to the future.

*

Meanwhile, Mahadeva the Mighty wandered over the world carrying the dead body of Sati on his head, dancing a wild dance of ruin which shook the world to its foundations. For Sati had left her old body and men said she was dead. But she was not dead, only withdrawn from the eyes of men, and the Gods clove the body of Sati into pieces so that it was scattered all over India. Which thing is also a parable; for after the death of the Congress the unity of India, which was the daughter of the Congress, must break up into factions and groups. The Convention is already developing parties and in the wild times that are coming the Nationalists also will break up into parties, some of which will make the present designation of extremism as applied to us look an absurdity, and the political life of India will become an anarchy. But not for ever. For Sati will be born again, on the high mountains of mighty endeavour, colossal aspiration, unparalleled self-sacrifice she will be born again, in a better and more beautiful body, and by terrible *tapasya* she will meet Mahadeva once more and be wedded to him in nobler fashion, with kinder auguries, for a happier and greater future. For this thing is written in the book of God and nothing can prevent it, that Sati shall wed Mahadeva, that the national life of India shall meet and possess its divine and mighty destiny.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, April 30th, 1908 }

Leaders and a Conscience

We find it difficult not to sympathise with one passage at least on Mr. Khare's letter to the Dhulia Reception Committee. "Moreover," he says, "I don't know who the leaders are. I for instance cannot specify any such, nor can I give my conscience into the keeping of anyone." We cannot follow Mr. Khare in his ultra-judicial ignorance of the personality of the party leaders, and it is certainly hard on Sir Pherozshah and Mr. Gokhale that a new recruit should so bluntly express his inability to specify them as leaders. But the concluding sentiment is unexceptionable and we think the Dhulia Reception Committee made a mistake in calling on the leaders to unite instead of referring, as the Pabna Conference did, to a definite authority. The time has gone by when a few leaders could play a quiet game among themselves with the destinies of the country. Mr. Khare was once taken for a Nationalist of a sort, and we are glad that he preserves in his new camp so much at least of Nationalist robustness as to keep possession of his own conscience. We Nationalists too, like Mr. Khare, decline to give our conscience into the keeping of anyone, be it a leader, or a knot of leaders, or the whole Congress itself in session assembled. For this precise reason we refuse to sign or verbally swear to any creed imposed on us from outside.

An Ostrich in Colootola

Srijut Surendranath's organ is very anxious for union, we wish it were equally passionate for truth. The country has begun to speak out about the Convention and at Dhulia and Chittagong references have been made to the Convention and opinions expressed for an united Congress on the old lines which are of the utmost significance. The *Bengalee* seems to have received precisely the same telegram as we have received from Dhulia and it marks it as sent by its own correspondent. Yet the merciless manner in which it has dealt with the telegram of its own correspondent is amusing and instructive. The speech of the Dhulia President breaks off abruptly in our contemporary's telegram with a blessing on the National Schools and all the rest of the weighty and trenchant remarks about the Convention and the Continuation Committee are boycotted. But is anything gained by burking facts or burying one's head in the sand in this ostrich fashion? It is an old Moderate habit but one which does not improve with age.

By the Way

Colootola Conjures

There are some who believe that passion and conviction are the sign of want of culture. If the language of poetry is used by a political writer, it shows lack of balance. The use of imagination, the presence of inspiration, the full expression of feeling are violent and indecorous. Whatever the depth of emotion felt, whatever the inspiring character of the vision seen, the emotion must be banished, the inspiration killed, otherwise wisdom takes flight. If our politics had been left to these gentlemen, it would have remained the decorous pastime of lawyers and sober educationists, a sort of half-forensic, half-academic debate with the bureaucracy on the merits of its rule. Sobriety, moderation, wisdom would have been satisfied and the nation killed by a surfeit of gentlemanly decorum. Unluckily for the *Bengalee* and its ilk, the days of "modest and sober and mostly unreadable prose", of Colootola "common sense", of the "healthy mind" which was too healthy to think and too sound to be sincere, are gone. The great passions which move mankind, the rude forces which shake the world, the majestic visions which bring life to dead nations have once more become part of our national existence, and in vain Colootola waves its conjuring rod of bad logic, inconsistent sentiment and sober imbecility to quell the phantasms. They are not to be quelled.

Common Sense and Revolutions

The *Bengalee* is scornful of our prophetic visions. The man of common sense who cannot see what lies before his nose, naturally considers the man who can see a prophet or a visionary. Before the French Revolution many travellers visited France, but only one or two were able to see that there existed in the quiet of that country all the conditions that have in history preceded great revolutions. The men who perceived it were not prophets but merely observers, gifted with sympathy and insight. They were, in fact, men of *uncommon* sense. The *Bengalee* and its like are unable to conceive that anything great can happen in India. Formerly it believed that we should go on for several centuries prosing about our political grievances in an ineffective debating society called the National Congress. Even now it believes that the country will remain obedient to the call of what it terms sobriety, and that fate will wait upon the prudence and fears of a few respectable and wealthy gentlemen in Calcutta and Bombay. Its idea of our future is that we should become a big outlying parish of England, and of the means, that we should peddle for ever with the details of a bureaucratic administration.

Pace and Solidarity

It is impossible for such minds, — if minds they can be called, — to perceive that what is happening is the first stage of a revolution or that the condition of keeping the wilder forces of revolution in harness was the solidarity of the movement. Once that solidarity has been broken, it is the wildest and most rapid forces which will set the pace; there will be no mean resultant of all the forces producing a swift and yet ordered advance. The solidarity of the movement depends on the existence of an united Congress in which the Moderates and Nationalists should form the brake and the motive energy respectively. But the united Congress has been suffocated with a creed at Allahabad, and with it the solidarity of the movement and the check on the fiercer forces which have recently given evidences of their existence, will disappear. That means if not "the approaching end of the world", at least the end of that state of the Indian world in which Surendranaths can perorate, Mehtas brew mischief and Colootola daily enjoy its robust digestion of its own sober and modest prose.

*

The *Bengalee* pretends that the Congress, even after Allahabad, is only collapsed and not dead. Its recipe for reviving the patient is that Dr. Ghose should resummon the adjourned Congress. Great Rash Behari has only to send forth his almighty voice, accompanied by a telling literary joke and an appropriate quotation, has only to say with his inimitable gesture and facial expression, "Let there be an united Congress", and, behold, an united Congress! And Mr. Khare's resolution calling a new Congress does not preclude, it seems, Dr. Ghose from resummoning the adjourned Congress! This is the finished product of Colootola's common sense and the healthy mind that flourishes only at Barrackpur.

*

The Voice of Colootola has been lashed into a rage by our article on the Wheat and the Chaff. Unable to wound itself, it engages a correspondent to do the work for it. The exposure of Moderate policy which that article made has irritated this gentleman into an outburst of spleen too bitter to be contained, and he foams at the mouth in his fury. "Why should the Nationalists arrogate the right to instruct their elders? What have they done? Who are they? We are the leaders of the people and they are only self-styled leaders. What right have they to be an independent party? They are cowards who dare not act except behind the veil of the Moderates, and are angry because that veil is being withdrawn. Their leaders are ungrateful scoundrels to abuse the party of the barristers who saved them from jail." So the friend of Colootola.

*

A good deal of this epic rage would have been saved if the irate correspondent had taken the trouble to understand the article before writing about it. What we have written about the Moderates, we have written, and we do not withdraw one syllable of it. Their action at Allahabad was a betrayal of the country dictated by fear and self-interest. Among those who took part in it, there are prominent men who no more believe in Colonial self-government for India than they believe in the man in the moon. The part they played is especially reprehensible. Others are anxious to put themselves right with the bureaucratic government and hardly take the trouble to conceal their motives. The few who were sincere both in their profession of the creed and in their belief that it is necessary for the country, are too insignificant to be reckoned.

*

What the *Bengalee*'s friend in need has not understood is the latter part of the article in which we pointed out that the amateur kind of Nationalism which has hitherto been the order of the day will no longer serve. The real workers are yet to come. This part of the homily in which, by the way, the reference to the barristers occurred was addressed to our own party and if anyone has any right to take umbrage at it, it is the Nationalists, barristers or others, and not pseudo-Nationalists like our Colootola critic. The steel for the Mother's sword of which we spoke is not the present Nationalist party as he imagines, but the rising generation of young men. They are the wheat which will remain. Of the present Nationalist party much will be winnowed away in the fiercer tests that are coming and rejected as chaff, only a small residue remaining. We do not know whether it was want of patience or want of English which prevented our critic from seeing the drift of the article — probably a combination of these lamentable wants — but if he will take the trouble to reread it with the help of a tutor, he may even yet understand. We did not condemn pleading in Swadeshi cases or taking shares in Swadeshi concerns any more than we condemned subscribing to National School funds. We said that these were safe and petty forms of patriotism and those who could not go beyond them were not the stuff of which the future will be built. And that is, after all, only a truism. Our whole lives are what is demanded of us and not a bit of our leisure or a mite from our purse.

Bande Mataram

{ CALCUTTA, May 2nd, 1908 }

Nationalist Differences

A great deal of capital is being made by the Moderate Press of the difference of attitude between Bengal and Maharashtra Nationalism over the acceptance of the creed. The Mahratta Nationalists are many of them willing to sign the creed on the understanding that it is not put forward as an ultimate aim of Indian political effort. The Bengal Nationalists, with one or two exceptions, are determined to have nothing to do with the creed on any conditions, so long as it is put forward as a creed at all or as a clause of exclusion. They take this attitude, on three grounds, first, because they believe the creed to be irrational and impracticable, secondly, because it is opposed to the doctrines they have always publicly professed, and thirdly, because they consider no Congress session has the right to bind down individual delegates or future sessions to a particular statement of belief or precise definition of objects which would limit the aspirations of a people. To sign it would be against their reason, against their conscience and against their rights. The Mahrattas take a different standpoint. Mr. Tilak at the Nationalist Conference in Surat declared that absolute autonomy must be the ultimate goal of our efforts, but a partial autonomy may be a halfway house, the former being then the ideal of the party, the latter a practical and immediate aim of present-day politics. From this standpoint the original draft in Mr. Gokhale's Constitution which described Colonial self-government as an ultimate goal was objectionable, but the statement of self-government in the Empire

The exact date of the articles published here under "May 2nd" is uncertain. They appeared in the daily edition of 1 or 2 May. Both these issues have been lost. The articles were reprinted in the weekly edition of 3 May.

as an immediate goal was permissible. When the Convention was first held at Surat, many of the Nationalist delegates from Maharashtra saw no objection to signing the creed as it stood, and some of them went to the Pandal and offered to sign but were turned away. It was because the Bengal delegates refused to sign that the party as a whole did not appear at the Pandal to resume the struggle for progress. The position taken up by Mr. Tilak and the Mahrattas has not altered. They object to binding down the future by a creed, but they would not object to signing a statement putting self-government within the Empire as an immediate object if such signature be necessary for unity; they refuse however to associate themselves with any creed, clause or subscription which would have the result of excluding a large section of the Progressive party. There are and always will be minor differences of opinion among the Nationalists, but they are united on three cardinal principles: 1. That nothing short of absolute autonomy can permanently satisfy Indian aspiration; 2. That prayer, petition and protest can never be an effective method of political agitation; 3. That passive resistance and self-help can alone advance the country at the present stage.

Ideals Face to Face

A new ordeal always brings with it a new awakening. The ordeal of Partition brought with it a great industrial awakening with politics as its undercurrent, a sort of economico-political self-realisation. All that such an awakening could do for the political future of the country has now been done. The ordeal of the Risley Circular brought with it a great educational awakening with politics as its impulse, a sort of politico-educational self-realisation. The ordeal of the Congress split will also bring with it a fresh awakening. This time the awakening will be political with a religious undercurrent. It is time that the nation rose above Swadeshi to Swaraj. It is time that it left the path of self-realisation through disguises and side-issues and flung itself frankly and wholly into the attempt to win Swaraj. The Surat split took place over the side-issue of the President's election, but the Convention's attitude has brushed away all side-issues and brought to the front the question of Swaraj. The future success of the Nationalist party depends on the boldness with which it takes up the real point at issue and affirms its beliefs. If it hedges, then the Convention will have a sort of sanction for its attitude which will give it a moral force otherwise entirely lacking to its action. The ideal of unqualified Swaraj has a charm for the national mind which is irresistible if it is put before it in the national way by minds imbued with Indian feeling and free from the gross taint of Western materialism. Swaraj as a sort of European ideal, political liberty for the sake of political self-assertion, will not awaken India. Swaraj as the fulfilment of the ancient life of India under modern conditions, the return of the Satyayuga of national greatness, the resumption by her of her great role of teacher and guide, self-liberation of the people for the final fulfilment of the Vedantic ideal in politics, this is the true Swaraj for India. Of all the proud nations of the West there is an end determined. When their limited special work for mankind is done they must decay and disappear. But the function of India is to supply the world with a perennial source of light and renovation. Whenever the first play of energy is exhausted and earth grows old and weary, full of materialism, racked with problems she cannot solve, the function of India is to restore the youth of mankind and assure it of immortality. She sends forth a light from her bosom which floods the earth and the heavens, and mankind bathes in it like St. George in the well of life and recovers strength, hope and vitality for its long pilgrimage. Such a time is now at hand. The world needs India and needs her free. The work she has to do now is to organize life in the terms of Vedanta, and that is a work she cannot do while overshadowed by a foreign power and a foreign civilisation. She cannot do it without taking the management of her own life into her own hands. She must live her own life and not the life of a part or subordinate in a foreign Empire.

All political ideals must have relation to the temperament and past history of the race. The genius of India is separate from that of any other race in the world, and perhaps there is no race in the world whose temperament, culture and ideals are so foreign to her own as those of the practical, hard-headed, Pharisaic, shopkeeping Anglo-Saxon. The culture of the Anglo-Saxon is the very antipodes of Indian culture. The temper of the Anglo-Saxon is the very reverse of the Indian temper. His ideals are of the earth, earthy. His institutions are without warmth, sympathy, human feeling, rigid and accurate like his machinery, meant for immediate and practical gains. The reading of democracy which he has adopted and is trying to introduce first in the colonies because the mother country is still too much shackled by the past, is the most sordid possible, centred on material aims and void of generous idealism. In such a civilisation, as part of such an Empire, India can have no future. If she is to model herself on the Anglo-Saxon type she must first kill everything in her which is her own. If she is to be a province of the British Empire, part of its life, sharing its institutions, governed by its policy, the fate of Greece under Roman dominion will surely be hers. She may share the privileges and obligations of British citizenship, — though the proud Briton who excludes the Indian from his colonies and treats him as a lower creature, will perish rather than concede such an equality, — but she will lose her Indian birthright. She will have to pass a sponge over her past and obliterate it from her life, even if she preserves the empty records of it in her schools. The degradation of a great nation, by the loss of her individuality, her past and her independent future, to the position of a subordinate satellite in a foreign system, is the ideal of the Convention. It is sheer political atheism, the negation of all that we were, are and hope to be. The return of India on her eternal self, the restoration of her splendour, greatness, triumphant Asiatic supremacy is the ideal of Nationalism. Is it doubtful which ideal will be more acceptable to the nation, that which calls on it to murder its instincts, sacrifice its future and deny its past for the advantage of an inglorious security, or that which asks it to fulfil itself by the strenuous reassertion of all that is noble and puissant in the blood it draws from such an heroic ancestry as no other nation can boast?

The ideal creates the means of attaining the ideal, if it is itself true and rooted in the destiny of the race. All that can be said for the Convention's ideal is that it saves the professor of the ideal from the wrath of the bureaucracy. Otherwise it is as grotesquely out of proportion to the strength of the people who profess it as any which the Nationalist can uphold. It has no exciting virtue of divine enthusiasm which can inspire to heroic effort and enable a fallen nation to shake off its weakness, turn cowards into heroes and selfish men into self-denying martyrs of the cause, and yet the effort it demands for realisation is as heroic as anything which the Nationalist expects from the people. The pride of race, the pride of empire, the pride of colour are the three invincible barriers which stand between it and its realisation. What force have the Conventionalists to set against these? Tears and supplications, appeals to British justice and British generosity — nothing else. They are not serious in their ideal and do not really hold it but flaunt it as a counterpoise to the Nationalist ideal so that the country may be deceived into thinking they have an aim and a policy. They have none. A false ideal is always a veil for something else, and the Convention creed is with some a veil for secret hopes of liberty which they dare not avow and with others a veil for the absence of any aim except the hope of securing a few peddling reforms in the existing system of administration.

The future is with the Nationalist ideal because there is no other. But the danger is that the false shadow of an ideal which is now being put forward as a reality will be accepted as a convenient instrument for self-protection against the anger of the bureaucracy. The temptation it holds out is one to which all new faiths are exposed, that which was the chief danger of Christianity in the days of persecution, to which, for a fleeting moment, Mahomed is said to have succumbed when harassed by the Koraish, the temptation of securing a respite from persecution by a false profession which, masking itself as a harmless piece of diplomacy, will really be a fatal stab at the very heart of the new religion. This temptation must be religiously eschewed and the true issue boldly proclaimed if Nationalism is to fulfil its divinely-appointed mission.

Part Seven

Writings from Manuscripts

1907 – 1908

The pieces in this part were written by Sri Aurobindo during the period of publication of the *Bande Mataram*, but were not published by him in the *Bande Mataram* or anywhere else. They are reproduced here from his manuscripts. The first two pieces consist of separate passages that were never linked together to make a finished article.

The Bourgeois and the Samurai

Two oriental nations have come powerfully under the influence of Western ideas and felt the impact of European civilization during the nineteenth century, India and Japan. The results have been very different. The smaller nation has become one of the mightiest Powers in the modern world, the larger in spite of far greater potential strength, a more original culture, a more ancient and splendid past and a far higher mission in the world, remains a weak, distracted, subject & famine-stricken people politically, economically, morally & intellectually dependent on the foreigner and unable to realise its great possibilities. It is commonly said that this is because Japan has assimilated Western Science and organization and even in many respects excelled its teachers; India has failed in this all-important task of assimilation. If we go a step farther back and insist on asking why this is so, we shall be told it is because Japan has "reformed" herself and got rid of ideas & institutions unsuited to modern times; while India clings obstinately to so much that is outworn and effete. Even if we waive aside the question whether the old Indian ideals are unfit to survive or whether all our institutions are really bad in themselves or unadaptable to modern conditions, still the explanation itself has to be explained. Why has Japan so admirably transformed herself? why has the attempt at transformation in India been a failure? The solution of problems of this kind has to be sought not in abstractions, not in machinery, but in men. It is the spirit in man which moulds his fate; it is the spirit of a nation which determines its history

Describe the type of human character which prevails in a nation during a given period of its life under given conditions, and it is possible to predict in outline what the general history of the nation must be during that period. In Japan the dominant Japanese type had been moulded by the shaping processes of an admirable culture and when the Western impact came, Japan remained faithful to her ancient spirit; she merely took over certain forms of European social & political organization necessary to complete her culture under modern conditions and poured into these forms the old potent dynamic spirit of Japan, the spirit of the Samurai. It is the Samurai type which has been dominant in that country during the nineteenth century. In India the mass of the nation has remained dormant; European culture has had upon it a powerful disintegrating and destructive influence, but has been powerless to reconstruct or revivify. But in the upper strata a new type has been evolved to serve the necessities and interests of the foreign rulers, a type which is not Indian, but foreign — and in almost all our social, political, educational, literary & religious activities the spirit of this new & foreign graft has predominated & determined the extent & quality of our progress. This type is the bourgeois. In India, the bourgeois, in Japan, the Samurai; in this single difference is comprised the whole contrasted histories of the two nations during the nineteenth century.

What is the bourgeois? For the word is unknown in India, though the thing is so prominent. The bourgeois is the average contented middle class citizen who is in all countries much the same in his fundamental character & habits of thought, in spite of pronounced racial differences in temperament & self-expression. He is a man of facile sentiments and skindeep personality; generally "enlightened" but not inconveniently illuminated. In love with his life, his ease and above all things his comforts, he prescribes the secure maintenance of these precious possessions as the first indispensable condition of all action in politics and society; whatever tends to disturb or destroy them, he condemns as foolish, harebrained, dangerous or fanatical, according to the degree of its intensity and is ready to repress by any means in his power. In the conduct of public movements he has an exaggerated worship for external order, moderation and decorum and hates over-earnestness and over-strenuousness. Not that he objects to plenty of mild & innocuous excitement; but it must be innocuous and calculated not to have a disturbing effect on the things he most cherishes. He has ideals and likes to talk of justice, liberty, reform, enlightenment and all similar abstractions; he likes too to see them reigning and progressing around him decorously and with their proper limitations. He wishes to have them maintained, if they already exist, but in moderation and with moderation; if they do not exist, the craving for them should be, in his opinion, a lively but still well-regulated fire, not permitted to interfere with the safety, comfort and decorum of life, — the means adopted towards acquiring them should be also moderate and decorous and as far as may be safe and comfortable. An occasional sacrifice of money, leisure and other precious things for their sake, he is always ready to meet; he has a keen zest for the reputation such sacrifices bring him and still more for the comfortable sense of personal righteousness which they foster. The bourgeois is the man of good sense and enlightenment, the man of moderation, the man of peace and orderliness, the man in every way "respectable", who is the mainstay of all well-ordered societies. As a private man he is respectable; that is to say, his character is generally good, and when his character is not, his reputation is; he is all decorous in his virtues, decent in the indulgence of his vices or at least in their concealment, often absolutely honest, almost always as honest as an enlightened self-interest will permit. His purse is well filled or at any rate not indecently empty; he is a good earner, a conscientious worker, a thoroughly safe & reliable citizen.[1] But this admirable creature has his defects and limitations. For great adventures, tremendous enterprises, lofty achievements, the storm and stress of mighty & eventful periods in national activity, he is unfit. These things are for the heroes, the martyrs, the criminals, the enthusiasts, the degenerates, geniuses, the men of exaggerated virtue, exaggerated ability, exaggerated ideas. He enjoys the fruit of their work when it is done, but while it is doing, he opposes and hinders more often than helps. For he looks on great ideals as dreams and on vehement enthusiasms as harebrained folly; he distrusts everything new & disturbing, everything that has not been done before or is not sanctioned by success & the accomplished fact; revolt is to him a madness & revolution a nightmare. Fiery self-annihilating enthusiasm, noble fanaticism, relentless & heroic pursuit of an object, the original brain that brings what is distant & ungrasped into the boundaries of reality, the dynamic Will and genius which makes the impossible possible; these things he understands as matters of history and honours them in the famous dead or in those who have succeeded; but in living & yet striving men they inspire him with distrust and repulsion. He will tell you that these things are not to be found in the present generation; but if confronted with the living originator, he will condemn him as a learned idiot; face to face with the living hero, he will decry him as a dangerous madman, — unless & until he sees on the head of either the crown of success & assured reputation.

---

[1] *The following sentence was written in the top margin of the manuscript. Its place of insertion was not marked, but it presumably was meant to be inserted here*:

Of course there are exceptions, instances of successful & respected blackguardism, but these are the small minority.

He values also the things of the mind in a leisurely comfortable way as adorning and setting off his enlightened ease and competence. A little art, a little poetry, a little religion, a little scholarship, a little philosophy, all these are excellent ingredients in life, and give an air of decorous refinement to his surroundings. They must not be carried too far or interfere with the great object of life which is to earn money, clothe and feed one's family, educate one's sons to the high pitch of the B.A. degree or the respectable eminence of the M.A., marry one's daughters decently, rank high in service or the professions, stand well in the eye of general opinion and live & die decorously, creditably and respectably. Anything disturbing to these high duties, anything exaggerated, intense, unusual is not palatable to the bourgeois. He shrugs his shoulders over it and brushes it aside with the one word, "mad", or eccentric.[2]

(Such is the bourgeois and it was the bourgeois of the mildest & most inefficient type who reigned in India in the nineteenth century. It was the bourgeois which University education tended, perhaps sought to evolve; it was the bourgeois which the political social conditions moulded and brought to the front. In India the bourgeois; in Japan the Samurai, that one enormous difference explains the difference in the histories of the two countries during the second half of the last century.)[3]

It is undoubtedly this type which has dominated us in the nineteenth century. Of course the really great names, those that will live in history as creators & originators are men who went beyond this type; either they belonged to, but exceeded it or they departed from it. But the average, the determining type was the bourgeois. In Senate & Syndicate, in Legislative Council & District Board or Municipal Corporation, in Congress & Conference, in the services & professions, even in literature & scholarship, even in religion he was everywhere with his well-regulated mind, his unambitious ideals, his snug little corner of culture, his "education" and "enlightenment", his comfortable patriotism, his comfortable enlightenment, his easy solution of the old problem how to serve both God & Mammon, yet offend neither, his self-satisfaction, his decorous honesty, his smug respectability. Society was made after his model, politics moulded in his image, education confined within his limits, literature & religion stamped with the seal of the bourgeois.

The bourgeois as a distinct & well-evolved entity is an entirely modern product in India, he is the creation of British policy, English education, Western civilization. Ancient India, mediaeval India were not a favourable soil for his growth. The spirit of ancient India was aristocratic; its thought & life moulded in the cast of a high & proud nobility, an extreme & lofty strenuousness. The very best in thought, the very best in action, the very best in character, the very best in literature & art, the very best in religion and all the world well lost if only this very best might be attained, such was the spirit of ancient India. The Brahmin who devoted himself to poverty & crushed down every desire in the wholehearted pursuit of knowledge & religious self-discipline; the Kshatriya who, hurling his life joyously into the shock of chivalrous battle, held life, wife, children, possessions, ease, happiness as mere dust in the balance compared with honour & the Kshatriya dharma, the preservation of self-respect, the protection of the weak, the noble fulfilment of princely duty; the Vaishya, who toiling all his life to amass riches, poured them out as soon as amassed in self-forgetting philanthropy holding himself the mere steward & not the possessor of his wealth; the Shudra who gave himself up loyally to humble service, faithfully devoting his life to his dharma, however low, in preference to self-advancement & ambition; these were the social ideals of the age.

---

[2] *The following sentence was written in the top margin of the manuscript. Its place of insertion was not marked*:

Such a type may give stability to a society; it cannot reform or revolutionize it. Such a type may make the politics of a nation safe, decorous and reputable. It cannot make that nation great or free.

[3] *Sri Aurobindo placed parenthesis marks on both sides of this paragraph after writing it. He seems to have intended to move it elsewhere. –Ed.*

The imagination of the Indian tended as has been well said to the grand & enormous in thought and morals. The great formative images of legend & literature to the likeness with which his childhood was encouraged to develop & which his manhood most cherished were of an extreme & lofty type. He saw Harischundra give up all that life held precious & dear rather than that his lips should utter a lie or his plighted word be broken. He saw Prahlada buried under mountains, whelmed in the seas, tortured by the poison of a thousand venomous serpents, yet calmly true to his faith. He saw Buddha give up his royal state, wealth, luxury, wife, child & parents so that mankind might be saved. He saw Shivi hew the flesh from his own limbs to save one small dove from the pursuing falcon; Karna tear his own body with a smile for the joy of making a gift; Duryodhan refuse to yield one inch of earth without noble resistance & warlike struggle. He saw Sita face exile, hardship, privation & danger in the eagerness of wifely love & duty, Savitri rescue by her devotion her husband back from the visible grip of death. These were the classical Indian types. These were the ideals into the mould of which the minds of men & women were trained to grow. The sense-conquering thought of the philosopher, the magnificent achievements of the hero, the stupendous renunciations of the Sannyasin, [the] unbounded liberality of the man of wealth, everything was exaggeration, extreme, filled with an epic inspiration, a world-defying enthusiasm. The bourgeois though he existed in the rough of course, as in all civilized societies he must exist, had no real chance of evolution; on such a height with so rare an atmosphere, he could not grow; where such tempests of self-devotion blew habitually, his warm comfortable personality could not expand.

The conditions of mediaeval India suited him little better, — the continual clash of arms, the unceasing stir & splendour & strenuousness of life, the fierceness of the struggle and the magnificence of the achievement, the ceaseless tearing down & building up which resulted from Mahomedan irruption and the action & reaction of foreign & indigenous forces, formed surroundings too restless & too flamboyant. Life under the Moguls was splendid, rich & luxurious, but it was not safe & comfortable. Magnificent possibilities were open to all men whatever their birth or station but magnificent abilities and an unshaken nerve & courage were needed to grasp them or to keep what had been grasped. There was no demand for the stable & easy virtues of the bourgeois. In the times of stress and anarchy which accompanied the disintegration of mediaeval India, the conditions were yet more unfavourable; character and morals shared in the general disintegration, but ability & courage were even more in demand than before and for the bourgeois there was no place vacant. (The men who figured in the revolutions in Bengal, the Deccan, the Punjab & the North were often, like their European allies & antagonists, men of evil character, self-seeking, unscrupulous & Machiavellian, but they were at least men.) It was not till mediaeval India breathed its last in the convulsions of 1857 that entirely new conditions reigned and an entirely new culture prevailed with an undisputed sway wholly favourable to the rapid development of the bourgeois type and wholly discouraging to the development of any other.

This emergence and domination of the bourgeois was a rapid transformation, not unparalleled in history, for something of the same kind seems to have happened in the provinces of the Roman Empire under the Caesars, but astonishing in a people whose past history & temperament had been so supremely unPhilistine. That a society which had only a few decades ago prostrated itself before the naked ascetic and the penniless Brahmin, should now wear the monied man and the official as the tilak on its forehead, was indeed a marvellous revolution. But given the new conditions, nothing else could have happened. British rule necessitated the growth of the bourgeois, British policy fostered it, and the plant grew so swiftly because a forcing-house had been created for his rapid cultivation and the soil was kept suitably shallow and the air made warm and humid for his needs. It was as in the ancient world when the nations accepted peace, civilisation and a common language at the cost of national decay, the death of their manhood and final extinction or agelong slavery. The Pax Britannica was his parent and an easy servitude nursed him into maturity.

For the first need of the bourgeois is a guaranteed and perfect security for his person, property and pursuits. Peace, comfort and safety are the very breath of his nostrils. But he gravitates to a peace for whose preservation he is not called on to wear armour and wield the sword, a comfort he has not to purchase by the discomfort of standing sentinel over his liberties, or a safety his own alertness and courage must protect from the resurgence of old dangers. The bourgeois in arms is not the true animal; the purity of his breed is sullied by something of the virtues and defects of the soldier. He must enjoy the fruits of peace and security he has not earned, without responsibility for their maintenance or fear of their loss. Such conditions he found in almost unparallelled perfection in British India. He was asked to stand as the head of a disarmed and dependent society, secured from external disturbance & tied down to a rigid internal tranquillity by the deprivation of all functions except those of breadwinner and taxpayer and to vouch himself to the world by a respectable but not remarkable education and achievement as the visible proof of England's civilising mission in India. Such conditions were to the bourgeois as the moisture & warmth of the hothouse to the orchid. He grew in them, rank & luxurious.

Then again, for his perfection and dominance, the society he lives in must honour his peculiar qualities above all others and the substantial rewards and covetable distinctions of life [be] reserved for them chiefly or for them alone. The British rule gave him this honour, showered on him these rewards & distinctions, and Indian society, more & more moulded by British ideas, followed as a society almost inevitably follows the lead of the rulers. Under the new dispensation of Providence there was no call for the high qualities of old, the Aryan or noble virtues which, whatever else failed or perished, had persisted in Indian character for thousands of years, since first the chariots rolled on the hitherside of the Indus. What need for the Rajpoot's courage, the robust manhood, the noble pride of the Kshatriya, when heroic and unselfish England claimed the right of shedding her blood for the safety of the land? What room for the gifts of large initiative, comprehensive foresight, wise aspiration which make the statesman, when a Bentinck or a Mayo, a Dufferin or a Curzon were ready & eager to take & keep the heavy burdens of Government out of the hands of the children of the soil? The princely spirit, the eagle's vision, the lion's heart, these were things that might be buried away with the memories of the great Indian rulers of the past. Happy India, civilised and cared for by human seraphs from over the sea, had no farther need for them. So from sheer inanition, from want of light, room and air, the Kshatriya died out of the soil which had first produced him and the bourgeois took his place. But if room was none for the soldier & the statesman, little could be found for the Brahmin, the sage or the Sannyasin. British rule had no need for scholars, it wanted clerks; British policy welcomed the pedant but feared, even when it honoured, the thinker, for the strong mind might pierce through shows to the truth and the deep thought teach the people to embrace great ideals and live and die for them; British education flung contempt on the Sannyasin as an idler and charlatan, and pointed with admiration to the strenous seeker for worldly goods and success as the finest work of the creator. So Vyasa & Valmekie were forgotten for weavers of idle tales and Smiles and Sir Arthur Helps took their place as an instructor of youth, the gospel of Philistinism in its naked crudeness was beaten into the minds of our children when most malleable. Thus Ramdas was following Shivaji into the limbo of the unreturning past. And if God had not meant otherwise for our nation, the Sannyasin would have become an extinct type, Yoga been classed among dead superstitions with witchcraft & alchemy and Vedanta sent the way of Pythagoras & Plato. Nor was the old Vaishya type needed by the new dispensation. The Indian mechanician, engineer, architect, artist, craftsman got notice of dismissal; for to develop the industrial life of the country was no part of England's business in India. As she had taken the functions of government and war into her own hands, so she would take that of production. Whatever India needed, beneficent England with her generous system of free trade would supply and the Indian might sit at ease under his palm tree or, gladly singing, till his fields, rejoicing that Heaven had sent him a ruling nation so greedy to do him good. What was wanted was not Indian artisans or Indian captains of industry, but plenty of small shopkeepers and big middlemen to help conquer & keep India as a milch cow for British trade & British capital.

Thus all the great types which are nurtured on war, politics, thought, spirituality, activity & enterprise, the outgrowths of a vigorous and healthy national existence, the high fruits of humanity who are the very energy of life to a community, were discouraged and tended to disappear and in their place there was an enormous demand for the bourgeois qualities. The safe, respectable man, satisfied with ease and not ambitions of command, content with contemporary repute and not hankering after immortality, the superficial man who unable to think profoundly could yet pose among his peers as intellectual, who getting no true culture, wore a specious appearance of education, who guiltless of a single true sacrifice for his country, yet bulked large as a patriot, found an undisputed field open to him. The rewards of life now depended on certain outward signs of merit which were purely conventional. An University degree, knowledge of English, possession of a post in Government service or a professional diploma, a Government title, European clothes or a sleek dress and appearance, a big house full of English furniture, these were the badges by which Society recognized its chosen. These signs were all purely conventional. The degree did not necessarily denote a good education nor the knowledge of English a wide culture or successful living into new ideas, nor the Government post administrative capacity, nor the diploma special fitness for the profession, nor the title any merit in the holder, nor the big house or fine dress a mastery of the art of social life, nor the English clothes, European grit, science and enterprise. They were merely counters borrowed from Europe, but universally taken, as they are not usually taken in Europe or any living nation, as a sufficient substitute for the reality. Wealth, success, and certain outward signs of a facile respectability had become to our new civilised & refined society the supreme tests of the man.

All these were conditions unusually favourable to a rank luxuriance of the bourgeois type, which thrives upon superficiality and lives by convention. The soil was suitably shallow, the atmosphere sufficiently warm & humid. The circumstances of our national life & the unique character of our education hastened & perfected the growth. Both were characterized by the false appearance of breadth covering an almost miraculous superficiality. Our old Indian life was secluded, but lofty & intense, like a pine-tree on the mountain-tops, like a tropical island in unvisited seas; our new life parted with the loftiness & intensity when it lost the isolation, but it boasted in vain of an added breadth, for it was really more provincial & narrow than the old, which had at least given room for the development of all our human faculties. The news of the world's life poured in on us through the foreign telegrams & papers, we read English books, we talked about economics and politics, science & history, enlightenment & education, Rousseau, Mill, Bentham, Burke, and used the language of a life that was not ours, in the vain belief that so we became cosmopolitans and men of enlightenment.

Yet all the time India was as much & more outside the great life of the world than it was in the days of Mahomad Tughlak or Bahadur Shah. The number of men in educated India who had any vital conception or any real understanding & mastery of the great currents of life, thought & motive which sway the vast world outside, was always wonderfully small. It could not be otherwise; for the life of that world was not our life, nor was our life any part of the world's, any more than the days of a prisoner in a gaol or reformatory are part of the free activity of society. The thunder of great wars, the grand collision and struggle of world-moving ideas and mighty interests, the swift & strong currents of scientific discovery and discussion, the intellectual change & stir, the huge & feverish pulsation of commercial competition from China to Peru, all this was to us as the scenes in the street to a man watching from his prison bars. We might take a deep & excited interest, we might almost persuade ourselves by the vividness of our interest that we were part of the scene, but if a voice within cried to us, "Out, out, you too into the battle & the struggle and the joy & stir of this great world's life," the cold iron of the window-bars and the hard stone of the prison walls stood between. The jailer might not jingle his keys obtrusively nor the warder flourish his baton, but we knew well they were there. And we really believed in the bland promise that if we conducted ourselves well, we should some day get tickets of leave. We read & thought but did not live what we read & thought. So our existence grew ever more artificial and unreal. The fighter and the thinker in us dwindled & the bourgeois flourished and grew.

Contentment with an artificial existence, the habit of playing with counters as if they were true coin of life, made the old rich flood of vitality, strong character, noble aspiration, excellent achievement run ever shallower & thinner in our veins. So we accepted and made the best of an ignoble ease.

Our education too had just the same pride in a false show of breadth and the same confined and narrow scope. In our schools & colleges we were set to remember many things, but learned nothing. We had no real mastery of English literature, though we read Milton & Burke and quoted Byron & Shelley, nor of history though we talked about Magna Charta & Runnymede, nor of philosophy though we could mispronounce the names of most of the German philosophers, nor science though we used its name daily, nor even of our own thought & civilisation though its discussion filled columns of our periodicals. We knew little & knew it badly. And even we could not profit by the little we knew for advance, for origination; even those who struggled to a wider knowledge proved barren soil. The springs of originality were fast growing atrophied by our unnatural existence. The great men among us who strove to originate were the spiritual children of an older time who still drew sap from the roots of our ancient culture and had the energy of the Mogul times in their blood. But their success was not commensurate with their genius & with each generation these grew rarer & rarer. The sap soon began to run dry, the energy to dwindle away. Worse than the narrowness & inefficiency, was the unreality of our culture. Our brains were as full of liberty as our lives were empty of it. We read and talked so much of political rights that we never so much as realized that we had none to call our own. The very sights & sounds, the description of which formed the staple of our daily reading, were such as most of us would at no time see or hear. We learned science without observation of the objects of science, words & not the things which they symbolised, literature by rote, philosophy as a lesson to be got by heart, not as a guide to truth or a light shed on existence. We read of and believed in English economy, while we lived under Indian conditions, and worshipped the free trade which was starving us to death as a nation. We professed notions of equality, and separated ourselves from the people, of democracy, and were the servants of absolutism. We pattered off speeches & essays about social reform, yet had no idea of the nature of a society. We looked to sources of strength and inspiration we could not reach and left those untapped which were ours by possession and inheritance. We knew so little of life that we expected others who lived on our service to prepare our freedom, so little of history that we thought reform could precede liberty, so little of science that we believed an organism could be reshaped from outside. We were ruled by shopkeepers and consented enthusiastically to think of them as angels. We affected virtues we were given no opportunity of assimilating and lost those our fathers had handed down to us. All this in perfect good faith, in the full belief that we were Europeanising ourselves, and moving rapidly toward political, social, economical, moral, intellectual progress. The consummation of our political progress was a Congress which yearly passed resolutions it had no power to put in practice, statesmen whose highest function was to ask questions which need not even be answered, councillors who would have been surprised if they had been consulted, politicians who did not even know that a Right never lives until it has a Might to support it. Socially we have initiated a feeble attempt to revivify the very basis of our society by a few petty mechanical changes instead of a spiritual renovation which could alone be equal to so high a task; economically, we attained great success in destroying our industries and enslaving ourselves to the British trader; morally, we successfully compassed the disintegration of the old moral ideas & habits and substituted for them a superficial respectability; intellectually, we prided ourselves [on] the tricking out of our minds in a few leavings, scraps and strays of European thought at the sacrifice of an immense and eternal heritage. Never was an education more remote from all that education truly denotes; instead of giving the keys to the vast mass of modern knowledge, or creating rich soil for the qualities that conquer circumstance & survive, they made the mind swallow a heterogeneous jumble of mainly useless information; trained a tame parrot to live in a cage & talk of the joys of the forest. British rule, Britain's civilizing mission in India has been the record success in history in the hypnosis of a nation. It persuaded us to live in a death of the will & its activities, taking a series of hallucinations for real things and creating in ourselves the condition of morbid weakness the hypnotist desired, until the Master of a mightier hypnosis laid His finger on India's eyes and cried "Awake." Then only the spell was broken, the slumbering mind realised itself and the dead soul lived again.

But the education which was poison to all true elements of national strength and greatness, was meat & drink to the bourgeois. The bourgeois delights in convention, because truth is too hard a taskmaster and makes too severe a demand on character, energy & intellect. He craves superficiality, a shallow soil to grow in. For to attain depth requires time & energy which would have to be unprofitably diverted from his chief business of making his individual way in the world. He cannot give up his life to his country, but if she will be grateful for a few of his leisure hours, he will give in those limits ungrudging service & preen himself on his public virtues. Prodigal charity would be uncomfortable & unwise, but if he can earn applause by parting with a fraction of his superfluities, he is always ready for the sacrifice. Deep scholarship would unfit him for his part in life, but if figuring in learned societies or writing a few articles and essays, an occasional book guiltless of uncomfortable originality, or a learned compilation prepared under his superintendence and issued in his name will make him a man of letters, he will court & prize that easily-earned reputation. The effort to remould society and rebuild the nation is too huge and perilous a task for a comfortable citizen, but he is quite prepared to condemn old & inconvenient institutions & superstitions and lend his hand to a few changes which will make social life more pleasant and comfortable. Superficiality, unreality of thought & deed thus became the stamp of all our activities.

Those who say that the new spirit in India which, before nascent & concealed, started to conscious life in the Swadeshi agitation and has taken Swadeshi, Swaraj and Self-help as its motto, is nothing new but a natural development of the old, are minds blinded by the habits of thought of the past century. The new Nationalism is the very antithesis, the complete and vehement negation of the old. The old movement sought to make a wider circle of activity, freer living-room and a more comfortable and eminent position for the bourgeois, to prolong the unnatural & evil conditions of which the subject nations died under the civilizing rule of Rome and which British rule has recreated for India; the new seeks to replace the bourgeois by the Samurai and to shatter the prison house which the nineteenth century made for our mother and build anew a palace for her glory, a garden for her pleasure, a free domain for her freedom & her pride. The old looked only to the power & interests of the educated, enlightened middle class, and shrank from the ignorant, the uneducated, the livers in the past, the outer unilluminated barbarian, drawing aside the hem of its robes lest it should touch impurity. The new overleaps every barrier; it calls to the clerk at his counter, the trader in his shop, the peasant at his plough; it summons the Brahmin from his temple and takes the hand [of] the Chandala in his degradation; it seeks out the student in his College, the schoolboy at his books, it touches the very child in its mother's arms & the secluded zenana has thrilled to its voice; its eye searches the jungle for the Santal and travels the hills for the wild tribes of the mountains. It cares nothing for age or sex or caste or wealth or education or respectability; it mocks at the talk of a stake in the country; it spurns aside the demand for a property qualification or a certificate of literacy. It speaks to the illiterate or the man in the street in such rude vigorous language as he best understands, to youth & the enthusiast in accents of poetry, in language of fire, to the thinker in the terms of philosophy and logic, to the Hindu it repeats the name of Kali, to the Mahomedan it spurs to action for the glory of Islam. It cries to all to come forth, to help in God's work & remake a nation, each with what his creed or his culture, his strength, his manhood or his genius can give to the new nationality. The only qualification it asks for is a body made in the womb of an Indian mother, a heart that can feel for India, a brain that can think and plan for her greatness, a tongue that can adore her name or hands that can fight in her quarrel. The old shunned sacrifice & suffering, the new rushes to embrace it. The old gave a wide berth to the jail and the rods & scourges of Power; the new walks straight to meet them. The old shuddered at the idea of revolution; the new is ready to set the whole country in turmoil for the sake of an idea. The old bent the knee to Caesar and presented him a list of grievances; the new leaves his presence or dragged back to it, stands erect and defies him in the midst of his legions.

The initial condition of recovering our liberty meant a peril and a gigantic struggle from the very possibility of which we averted our eyes in a panic of bourgeois terror. It was safer & easier to cheat ourselves into believing in a contradiction and living a lie. Yet nothing could be more fatal, more insidiously destructive to the roots of manhood. It is far better to fall and bleed for ever in a hopeless but unremitting struggle than to drink of that draught of death and lethe. A people true to itself, a race that hopes to live, will not comfort itself and sap its manhood by the opiate of empty formulas and specious falsehoods; it will prefer eternal suffering & disaster. For in truth, as our old thinkers used always to insist, the whole universe stands; truth is the root and condition of life and to believe a lie, to live in a lie, is to deliver oneself to disease and death. The belief that a subject nation can acquiesce in subjection and yet make true & vital progress, growing to strength in its chains, is a lie. The idea that mitigations of subjection constitute freedom or prepare a race for freedom or that anything but the exercise of liberty fits man for liberty, is another lie. The teaching that peace and security are more important and vital to man than liberty is a third lie. Yet all these lies and many others we believed in, hugged to our hearts and made the law of our thoughts throughout the nineteenth century. The result was stagnation, or a progress in weakness and disintegration.

The doctrine that social & commercial progress must precede or will of themselves bring about political strength & liberty, is a fourth & very dangerous lie; for a nation is no aggregate of separable functions, but a harmony of functions, of which government and political arrangement is the oldest, most central and most vital and determines the others.

Our only hope of resurgence was in some such great unsealing of the eyes to the Maya in which we existed and the discovery of some effective mantra, some strong spiritual impulse which should have the power to renovate us from within. For good or for evil the middle class now leads in India, and whatever saving impulse comes to the nation, must come from the middle class, whatever upward movement begins, it must initiate and lead.

But for that to happen the middle class must by a miracle be transfigured and lifted above itself; the natural breeding ground of the bourgeois, it must become the breeding ground of the Samurai. It must cease in fact to be a middle class and turn itself into an aristocracy, an aristocracy not of birth or landed possessions, not of intellect, not of wealth and commercial enterprise, but of character and action. India must recover her faculty for self-sacrifice, courage and high aspiration. Such a transformation is the work which has been set before itself by the new Nationalism; this is at the back of all its enthusiasm, audacity & turbulence and provides the explanation of all that has shocked and alarmed the wise men and the elders in the movement in Bengal. The new Nationalism is a creed, but it is more than a creed; it is a method, but more than a method. The new Nationalism is an attempt at a spiritual transformation of the nineteenth century Indian; it is a notice of dismissal or at least of suspension to the bourgeois and all his ideas and ways and works, a call for men who will dare & do impossibilities, the men of extremes, the men of faith, the prophets, the martyrs, the crusaders, the [. . .] & rebels, the desperate venturers and reckless doers, the initiators of revolutions. It is the rebirth in India of the Kshatriya, the Samurai.

The New Nationalism

What is Extremism?

The nicknames of party warfare have often passed into the accepted terminology used by serious politicians and perpetuated by history, and it is possible that the same immortality may await the designations of Moderate and Extremist by which the two parties now contending for the mind of the nation are commonly known. The forward party

The Heart of Nationalism

Nationalism; but what is Nationalism? The word has only recently begun to figure as an ordinary term of our politics and it has been brought into vogue by the new, forward or extreme party which, casting about for a convenient description of themselves, selected the name as the only one covering in a word their temper and their gospel. For there is a great deal in a name in spite of Shakespeare. A name attached to a political party or school of thought not only serves to show the temper and point of view of the giver, but it helps greatly to colour contemporary ideas about the party it seeks to exalt or disparage. The advanced men whom Anglo-Indian and Moderate unite in branding as Extremists, have always repudiated the misleading designation. At first they preferred to call themselves the New School; they now claim the style of Nationalists; a claim which has been angrily objected to on the ground that the rest of the Congress party are as good Nationalists as the forward party. This

The New Nationalism, I said in a former article, in this Review, is a negation of the old bourgeois ideals of the nineteenth century. It is an attempt to relegate the dominant bourgeois in us to his old obscurity, to transform the bourgeois into the Samurai and through him to extend the workings of the Samurai spirit to the whole nation. Or to put it more broadly, it is an attempt to create a new nation in India by reviving in spirit & action ancient Indian character, the strong, great and lofty spirit of old Aryavarta, and setting it to use and mould the methods and materials of modernity for the freedom, greatness and well-being of a historic and immortal people. This is not, I am well aware, a description under which the ordinary Congress politician will recognize what he prefers to disparage as Extremism, but it will be well understood by those who are constant readers of the Nationalist journals in Bengal, whether the Bande Mataram or New India or vernacular journals like the Yugantar, the Nabasakti or the Sandhya.[1] Whatever their differences of temper, tone or style, however the methods they recommend may differ in detail, they are united by a common faith and a common spirit; a common faith in India, not in an Anglicised and transmogrified nation unrecognizable as Indians, but in India of the immemorial past, India of the clouded but fateful present, India leonine, mighty, crowned with her imperial diadem of the future; a common spirit of enthusiasm, hope, the desire to dare and do all things so that our vision of her future may be fulfilled greatly and soon. This is the heart of Nationalism. The ordinary Congress politician's ideas of Nationalism are associated with heated discussions in Committee and Congress, altercations at public meetings, unsparing criticisms of successful and eminent respectabilities, sedition trials, National Volunteers, East Bengal disturbances, Rawalpindi riots. To him the Nationalist is nothing more than an "Extremist", a violent, unreasonable, uncomfortable being whom some malign power has raised up to disturb with his

---

[1] *The following sentence was written in the top margin of the manuscript page; its place of insertion was not marked:*

Nationalism existed in India before it became definite and articulate in Bengal, but it is Bengal that gave it a philosophy, a faith, a method, a *mantra* and a battle-cry.

Swaraj and Boycott, his lawlessness & his lathies the respectable ease and safety of Congress politics. He finds him increasing in numbers & influence with an alarming rapidity which it is convenient to deny but impossible to ignore. (It is the bourgeois view of the type destined to push him aside & supplant him and like all such views born of a panic fear & hatred, it is a caricature and not a description.)[2] He has no clear idea of the aim and drift of Extremism. He imagines it to be our object to drive out the English and make India free by Boycott and the lathie, and, having thus erected a scarecrow to chuck stones at, he thinks himself entitled to dismiss the new party in his mind as a crowd of enthusiastic lunatics who talk nonsense and advocate impossibilities.

Nationalism cannot be so easily dismissed. A force which has shaken the whole of India, trampled the traditions of a century into a refuse of irrecoverable fragments and set the mightiest of modern Empires groping in a panic for weapons strong enough to meet a new and surprising danger, must have some secret of strength and therefore of truth in it which is worth knowing. To get at the heart of Nationalism we must first clear away some of the misconceptions with which its realities have been clouded. We must know what Nationalism is not before we ask what it is.

Extremism in the sense of unreasoning violence of spirit and the preference of desperate methods, because they are desperate, is not the heart of Nationalism. The Nationalist is no advocate of lawlessness for its own sake, on the contrary he has a deeper respect for the essence of law than anyone else, because the building up of a nation is his objective and he knows well that without a profound reverence for law national life cannot persist and attain a sound and healthy development. But he qualifies his respect for legality by the proviso that the law he is called upon to obey is the law of the nation, an outgrowth of its organic existence and part of its own accepted system of government.

---

[2] *Sri Aurobindo placed parenthesis marks on both sides of this sentence during revision. He apparently intended to move it elsewhere and to join the sentences before and after with a "but". — Ed.*

A law imposed from outside can command only the interested obedience of those whose chief demand from life is the safety of their persons and property or the timid obedience of those who understand the danger of breaking the law. The claim made by it is an utilitarian, not a moral claim. Farther the Nationalist never loses sight of the truth that law was made for man and not man for the law. Its chief function and reason for existence is to safeguard and foster the growth and happy flowering into strength and health of national life and a law which does not subserve this end or which opposes and contradicts this end, however rigidly it may enforce peace, order and security, forfeits its claim to respect and obedience. Nationalism refuses to accept Law as a fetish or peace and security as an aim in themselves; the only idol of its worship is Nationality and the only aim in itself it recognizes is the freedom, power and well-being of the nation. It will not prefer violent or strenuous methods simply because they are violent or strenuous, but neither will it cling to mild and peaceful methods simply because they are mild and peaceful. It asks of a method whether it is effective for its purpose, whether it is worthy of a great people struggling to be, whether it is educative of national strength and activity, and these things ascertained, it asks nothing farther. He does not love anarchy and suffering, but if anarchy and suffering are the necessary passage to the great consummation he seeks, he is ready to bear them himself, to expose others to them, till the end is reached. He will embrace suffering as a lover and clasp the hand of Anarchy like that of a trusted friend, — if so it must be; for it is not his temper to take the inevitable grudgingly or to serve or struggle with half a heart. If that is Extremism and fanaticism, he is an Extremist and a fanatic; but not for their own sake, not out of a disordered love for anarchy and turmoil, not in madness & desperation, but out of a reasoned conviction and courageous acceptance of the natural laws that demand this sacrifice in return for so great a promise. The same natural law by which a man who aspires to reach a difficult height, must clamber up the steep rocks and risk life and limb in arduous places, has decreed that men who desire to live as freemen in a free country must not refuse to be ready to pay toll for freedom with their own blood and the blood of their children, and still more the nation which seeks to grow out of subjection into liberty, must consent first to manure the soil with the tears of its women and the bodies of its sons. The Nationalist knows what he asks from Fate and he knows the price that Fate asks from him in return. Knowing it, he is ready to drag down the nation with him into the valley of the shadow of Death, dark with night and mist and storm, sown thick and crude with perils of strange monsters and perils of morass and fire and flood, holding all danger & misery as nothing because beyond the valleys are the mountains of Beulah where the nation shall enjoy eternal life. He is ready to lead the chosen people into the desert for its long wanderings, though he knows that often in the bitterness of its sufferings it will murmur and rebel against his leadership and raise its hand to stone him to death as the author of its misery, for he knows that beyond is the promised land flowing with milk and honey which the Divine Voice has told him that those who are faithful, will reach and possess. If he embraces Anarchy, it is as the way to good government. If he does not shrink from disorder and violent struggle, it is because without that disorder there can be no security and without that struggle no peace, except the security of decay and the peace of death. If he has sometimes to disregard the law of man, it is to obey the dictates of his conscience and the law of God.

The Mother and the Nation

We have lost the faculty of religious fervour in Bengal and are trying now to recover it through the passion for the country by self-sacrifice, by labour for our fellow-countrymen, by absorption in the idea of the country. When a nation is on the verge of losing the source of its vitality, it tries to recover it by the first means which the environment offers, whether it be favourable to it or not. Bengal has always lived by its emotions; the brain of India, as it has been called, is also the heart of India. The loss of emotional power, of belief, of expansiveness of feeling would dry up the sources from which she derives her strength. The country of Nyaya is also the country of Chaitanya, who himself was born in the height of the intellectual development of Bengal as its fine flower and most perfect expression.

The land of Chaitanya is also the chosen home of the Mother and in Bengal she has set her everlasting seat. Immeasurable ages will pass, revolutions shake the land, religions come and go, but so long as the Ganges flows through the plains of the delta, so long shall the Mother sit enthroned in Bengal as sovereign and saviour. New forms she will take, new aspects of power or beauty, but the soul of her Motherhood will live unchanged and call to her sons to adore her. In the new age she has taken to herself a new form, she has come to us with a fresh face of beauty the full sweetness of which we have not yet grasped. When Bankim discovered the *mantra* Bande Mataram and the song wrote itself out through his pen, he felt that he had been divinely inspired, but the people heard his song and felt nothing. “Wait” said the prophet, “wait for thirty years and all India will know the value of the song I have written.” The thirty years have passed and Bengal has heard; her ears have suddenly been opened to a voice to which she had been deaf and her heart filled with a light to which she had been blind. The Mother of the hymn is no new goddess, but the same whom we have always worshipped; only she has put off the world-form in which she was familiar to us, she has assumed a human shape of less terrible aspect, less fierce and devastating power to attract her children back to her bosom.

What is a nation? We have studied in the schools of the West and learned to ape the thoughts and language of the West forgetting our own deeper ideas and truer speech, and to the West the nation is the country, so much land containing so many millions of men who speak one speech and live one political life owing allegiance to a single governing power of its own choosing. When the European wishes to feel a living emotion for his country, he personifies the land he lives in, tries to feel that a heart beats in the brute earth and worships a vague abstraction of his own intellect. The Indian idea of nationality ought to be truer and deeper. The philosophy of our forefathers looked through the gross body of things and discovered a subtle body within, looked through that and found yet another more deeply hidden, and within the third body discovered the Source of life and form, seated for ever, unchanging and imperishable. What is true of the individual object, is true also of the general and universal. What is true of the man, is true also of the nation. The country, the land is only the outward body of the nation, its *annamaya kosh*, or gross physical body; the mass of people, the life of millions who occupy and vivify the body of the nation with their presence, is the *pranamaya kosh*, the life-body of the nation. These two are the gross body, the physical manifestation of the Mother. Within the gross body is a subtler body, the thoughts, the literature, the philosophy, the mental and emotional activities, the sum of hopes, pleasures, aspirations, fulfilments, the civilisation and culture, which make up the *sukshma sharir* of the nation. This is as much a part of the Mother's life as the outward existence which is visible to the physical eyes. This subtle life of the nation again springs from a deeper existence in the causal body of the nation, the peculiar temperament which it has developed out of its ages of experience and which makes it distinct from others. These three are the bodies of the Mother, but within them all is the Source of her life, immortal and unchanging, of which every nation is merely one manifestation, the universal Narayan, One in the Many of whom we are all the children.

When, therefore, we speak of a nation, we mean the separate life of the millions who people the country, but we mean also a separate culture and civilisation, a peculiar national temperament which has become too deeply rooted to be altered and in all these we discover a manifestation of God in national life which is living, sacred and adorable. It is this which we speak of as the Mother. The millions are born and die; we who are here today, will not be here tomorrow, but the Mother has been living for thousands of years and will live for yet more thousands when we have passed away.

The Morality of Boycott

Ages ago there was a priest of Baal who thought himself commissioned by the god to kill all who did not bow the knee to him. All men, terrified by the power and ferocity of the priest, bowed down before the idol and pretended to be his servants; and the few who refused, had to take refuge in hills and deserts. At last a deliverer came and slew the priest and the world had rest. The slayer was blamed by those who placed religion in quietude and put passivity forward as the ideal ethics, but the world looked on him as an incarnation of God.

* * * *

A certain class of minds shrink from aggressiveness as if it were a sin. Their temperament forbids them to feel the delight of battle and they look on what they cannot understand as something monstrous and sinful. "Heal hate by love, drive out injustice by justice, slay sin by righteousness" is their cry. Love is a sacred name, but it is easier to speak of love than to love. The love which drives out hate, is a divine quality of which only one man in a thousand is capable. A saint full of love for all mankind possesses it, a philanthropist consumed with the desire to heal the miseries of the race possesses it, but the mass of mankind do not and cannot rise to that height. Politics is concerned with masses of mankind and not with individuals. To ask masses of mankind to act as saints, to rise to the height of divine love and practise it in relation to their adversaries or oppressors, is to ignore human nature. It is to set a premium on injustice and violence by paralysing the hand of the deliverer when raised to strike. The Gita is the best answer to those who shrink from battle as a sin and aggression as a lowering of morality.

* * * *

A poet of sweetness and love who has done much to awaken Bengal, has written deprecating the boycott as an act of hate. The saintliness of spirit which he would see brought into politics is the reflex of his own personality colouring the political ideals of a sattwic race. But in reality the boycott is not an act of hate. It is an act of self-defence, of aggression for the sake of self-preservation. To call it an act of hate is to say that a man who is being slowly murdered, is not justified in striking out at his murderer. To tell that man that he must desist from using the first effective weapon that comes to his hand because the blow would be an act of hate, is precisely on a par with this deprecation of boycott. Doubtless the self-defender is not precisely actuated by feelings of holy sweetness towards his assailant, but to expect so much from human nature is impracticable. Certain religions demand it, but they have never been practised to the letter by their followers.

* * * *

Hinduism recognizes human nature and makes no such impossible demand. It sets one ideal for the saint, another for the man of action, a third for the trader, a fourth for the serf. To prescribe the same ideal for all is to bring about *varnasankara*, the confusion of duties, and destroy society and the race. If we are content to be serfs, then indeed boycott is a sin for us, not because it is a violation of love, but because it is a violation of the Sudra's duty of obedience and contentment. Politics is the field of the Kshatriya and the morality of the Kshatriya ought to govern our political actions. To impose on politics the Brahminical duty of saintly sufferance, is to preach *varnasankara*.

* * * *

Love has a place in politics, but it is the love for one's country, for one's countrymen, for the glory, greatness and happiness of the race, the divine *ananda* of self-immolation for one's fellows, the ecstasy of relieving their sufferings, the joy of seeing one's blood flow for country and freedom, the bliss of union in death with the fathers of the race. The feeling of almost physical delight in the touch of the mother soil, of the winds that blow from Indian seas, of the rivers that stream from Indian hills, in the sight of Indian surroundings, Indian men, Indian women, Indian children, in the hearing of Indian speech, music, poetry, in the familiar sights, sounds, habits, dress, manners of our Indian life, this is the physical root of that love. The pride in our past, the pain of our present, the passion for the future are its trunk and branches. Self-sacrifice, self-forgetfulness, great service and high endurance for the country are its fruit. And the sap which keeps it alive is the realisation of the Motherhood of God in the country, the vision of the Mother, the knowledge of the Mother, the perpetual contemplation, adoration and service of the Mother.

* * * *

Other love than this is foreign to the motives of political action. Between nation and nation there is justice, partiality, chivalry, duty but not love. All love is either individual, or for the self in the race or for the self in mankind. It may exist between individuals of different races, but the love of one race for another is a thing foreign to nature. When, therefore, the boycott as declared by the Indian race against the British is stigmatised for want of love, the charge is bad psychology as well as bad morality. It is interest warring against interest, and hatred is directed not really against the race but against the adverse interest. If the British exploitation were to cease tomorrow, the hatred against the British race would disappear in a moment. A partial *adhyaropa* makes the ignorant for the moment see in the exploiters and not in the exploitation the receptacle of the hostile feeling. But like all Maya it is an unreal and fleeting sentiment and is not shared by those who think. Not hatred against foreigners, but antipathy to the evils of foreign exploitation is the true root of boycott.

* * * *

If hatred is demoralising, it is also stimulating. The web of life has been made a mingled strain of good and evil and God works

His ends through the evil as well as through the good. Let us discharge our minds of hate, but let us not deprecate a great and necessary movement because in the inevitable course of human nature, it has engendered feelings of hostility and hatred. If hatred came, it was necessary that it should come as a stimulus, as a means of awakening. When *tamas*, inertia, torpor have benumbed a nation, the strongest forms of *rajas* are necessary to break the spell, and there is no form of *rajas* so strong as hatred. Through *rajas* we rise to *sattwa*, and for the Indian temperament, the transition does not take long. Already the element of hatred is giving place to the clear conception of love for the Mother as the spring of our political actions.

* * * *

Another question is the use of violence in the furtherance of boycott. This is, in our view, purely a matter of policy and expediency. An act of violence brings us into conflict with the law and such a conflict may be inexpedient for a race circumstanced like ours. But the moral question does not arise. The argument that to use violence is to interfere with personal liberty involves a singular misunderstanding of the very nature of politics. The whole of politics is an interference with personal liberty. Law is such an interference, Protection is such an interference, the rule which makes the will of the majority prevail is such an interference. The right to prevent such use of personal liberty as will injure the interests of the race, is the fundamental law of society. From this point of view the nation is only using its primary right when it restrains the individual from buying or selling foreign goods.

* * * *

It may be argued that peaceful compulsion is one thing and violent compulsion another. Social boycott may be justifiable, but not the burning or drowning of British goods. The latter method, we reply, is illegal and therefore may be inexpedient, but it is not morally unjustifiable. The morality of the Kshatriya justifies violence in times of war, and boycott is a war. Nobody blames the Americans for throwing British tea into Boston harbour, nor can anybody blame similar action in India on moral grounds. It is reprehensible from the point of view of law, of social peace and order, not of political morality. It has been eschewed by us because it is unwise and carries the battle on to a ground where we are comparatively weak, from a ground where we are strong. Under other circumstances we might have followed the American precedent, and if we had done so, historians and moralists would have applauded, not censured.

* * * *

Justice and righteousness are the atmosphere of political morality, but the justice and righteousness of the fighter, not of the priest. Aggression is unjust only when unprovoked, violence unrighteous when used wantonly or for unrighteous ends. It is a barren philosophy which applies a mechanical rule to all actions, or takes a word and tries to fit all human life into it. The sword of the warrior is as necessary to the fulfilment of justice and righteousness as the holiness of the saint. Ramdas is not complete without Shivaji. To maintain justice and prevent the strong from despoiling and the weak from being oppressed is the function for which the Kshatriya was created. Therefore, says Sri Krishna in the Mahabharat, God created battle and armour, the sword, the bow and the dagger.

A Fragment

Mankind is of a less terrestrial mould than some would have him to be. He has an element of the divine which the practical politician ignores. The practical politician looks to the position at the moment and imagines that he has taken everything into consideration. He has indeed studied the surface and the immediate surroundings, but he has missed what lies beyond material vision. He has left out of account the divine, the incalculable in man, that element which upsets the calculations of the schemer and disconcerts the wisdom of the diplomat.

Appendixes

These appendixes comprise materials written by Sri Aurobindo, mostly by hand, between 1906 and 1908. The first one contains incomplete drafts of three articles, two of which were later published in the *Bande Mataram*. The second one contains writings and jottings related to the organisation and running of the newspaper, the third, organisational material for a proposed independent Nationalist Party, and the fourth, an interview of 1908.

APPENDIX ONE

Incomplete Drafts of Three Articles

Draft of the Conclusion of "Nagpur and Loyalist Methods"

(see pages 742–43)

[.....] whether they will or will not recognize this unconstitutional decision to transfer the place of session arrived at on an unofficial representation and while there were still citizens of Nagpur[,] members of the Reception Committee willing & able to carry out the resolution of the Calcutta Congress to hold the next session at Nagpur. If we do not, we have two courses open to us, either to separate from the dictator-ridden Congress altogether and hold a Nationalist Conference at Nagpur or to leave the Loyalists to a purely Moderate Congress at Surat and according as they act, decide our future course. In any case we think there should be a council of leading men of our party at Nagpur in December to confer on our future action, for in view of the bureaucratic campaign & the danger of a retrograde step on the part of the Congress the times are critical for the Nationalist movement and concerted action is imperative.

Draft of the Opening of "In Praise of Honest John"

(see pages 751–54)

The onslaught of the bureaucracy on the Nationalists of Bengal has to a certain extent found the

There is no more common question on men's lips nowadays than the question which is naturally suggested by our apparent inability to answer the attacks of a bureaucracy armed with all the weapons of the law and not overscrupulous as to their use, the question "What shall we do?" The bureaucracy is determined to crush the movement. It has no qualms, no scruples; for has not Mr. Morley, the great Radical philosopher, justified anything and everything they may do by the immortal dictum that the eternal principles which apply to Britain or Ireland or Canada are not eternal & need not exist in India? The analogy of the fur coat need not stop with political conduct, it may be extended to moral conduct. For

Mr. John Morley is a very great man, a very remarkable and exceptional man. I have been reading his Arbroath speech again and my admiration for him has risen to boiling point, so that I am at last obliged to let it bubble over into the columns of the Bande Mataram. Mr. Morley differs from ordinary mortals in three very important respects; first, he is a literary man; secondly, he is a philosopher, thirdly he is a politician. This would not matter much if he kept his literature, philosophy & politics apart; but he doesn't. He is a literary philosopher or a philosophic litterateur; better than this he is a literary philosopher-politician. This is a superlative combination; God cannot better it & the devil does not want to. For if an ordinary man steals, he steals and no more bones are made about it; he gets caught and is sent to prison, or he is not and goes on his way rejoicing; in either case the matter is a simple one without any artistic possibilities; but if a literary philosopher steals, he steals on the basis of the great & eternal verities and in the choicest and most poetical English. An ordinary man may be illogical and silly and everybody realizes that he is illogical and silly. But the philosopher is logically illogical and talks nonsense according to the strictest rules of philosophical reasoning, and the literary man will be brilliantly foolish and illogically convincing. An ordinary man may turn his back on his principles and he will be called a turncoat, or break all the commandments and be punished by the law & society, unless, of course, he is a millionaire or a member of the ruling race in India — but the literary philosopher will reconcile his principles and his conduct by an appeal to a fur-coat or a syllogism from a pair of Northampton boots. He will abrogate all the ten commandments on the strength of a solar topi.

A politician again will lie and people will perceive it and take it as a matter of course; but a literary philosopher politician will easily prove to you that when he is most a liar, then he is most truthful and when he is juggling most cynically with truth & principle, then he most deserves the name of Honest John; and he will do it in such well turned periods that one must have a very bad ear for the rhythm of sentences to quarrel with his logic. Oh yes, a literary philosopher politician is the choicest work of Heaven, when he is not the most splendid instrument in the hands of the Prince of Darkness. For the Prince of Darkness is not only a gentlemen, as Shakespeare discovered, but a gentlemen of artistic perceptions who knows a fine and carefully-worked tool when he sees it and loves to handle it with the best dexterity and grace of which he is capable.

There are other reasons for which I admire Mr. John Morley. I admire him for what he has done not only for the way in which he has done it. It is true he is not so great a man as his master Gladstone, who was the biggest opportunist and most adroit political gambler democracy has till now engendered and yet persuaded the world that he was an enthusiast and a man of high religious feeling and principle. But Gladstone was a genius and his old henchman is only a man of talent. Still Mr. Morley has done the best of which he is capable and that is by no means a poor best. He has served the devil in the name of God with signal success on two occasions. The first was when he championed the cause of the financiers in Egypt, the men who gamble with the destinies of nations, who make money out of the groans of the people and coin into gold the blood of patriots and the tears of widows & when, abusing his position as an influential journalist, he lied to the British public about Arabi and urged on Gladstone to crush the movement of democratic and humanitarian Nationalism in Egypt, that movement in which all that is noble, humane and gracious in Islam sought to find fulfilment and a small field on earth for the fine flowering of a new Mahomedan civilisation. The second is now when he is trying in the sordid interests of British capital to crush the resurgent life of India and baffle the attempt of the children of Vedanta to recover their own country for the development of a revivified Indian civilisation. The two foulest crimes against the future of humanity which any statesman in recent times could possibly have committed have been engineered under the name and by the advocacy of Mr John Morley. Truly, Satan knows his own and sees to it that they do not their great work negligently.

Mr Morley is a great bookman, a great democrat, a great exponent of principles. No man better fitted than he to prove that when great human movements are being suppressed by the sword and the prison, it is done in the interests of humanity; that when a people struggling to live is trampled down by repression, pushed back by the use of the Goorkha and the hooligan, the warder's lash & the whipping post into the hell of misery & famine & starvation, of insult & ignominy & bondage from which it dared to hope for an escape, the motive of the oppressor finds its root in a very agony of conscientiousness, and it is with a sobbing & bleeding heart that he presses his heel on the people's throat for their own good; that the ruthless exploitation and starvation of a country by foreign leeches is one of the best services that can be done to mankind; the international crimes of the great captains of finance a work of civilisation and the brutal & selfish immolation of nations to Mammon an acceptable offering on the altar of the indwelling God in humanity. But these things have been said & done before; they are the usual & blasphemous cant of nineteenth-century devilworship formulated when Commerce began to take the place once nominally allowed to Christ and the ledger became Europe's Bible. Mr Morley does it with more authority than others, but his own particular original faculty lies in the direction we indicated when we drew the distinction between the ordinary man & the extraordinary Morley. What he has done has been, after all, largely on the initiative of others; what he has said about it, is his own, and nothing more his own than the admirably brilliant & inconsequential phrases in which he has justified wickedness to an admiring nation.

Incomplete Draft of an Unpublished Article

It is always useful to inquire into the inner psychology of common & vulgar types. Their very crudeness and coarseness is an advantage, because we see in them in the rough and laid bare to a surface analysis the secret motives which in the higher evolutions of the type are too self-conscious & self-concealing to be easily detected. It is not easy to detect at first the common Britishness, if we may be allowed the word, of two men so different, at such opposite poles of human evolution as Mr. John Morley, the litterateur, politician, philosopher & fine perfection of the most serious & sober British culture, and the vulgar Newmaniac, the loud, ranting, blustering, impudently lying Yahoo of Hare Street. And yet it is by understanding the Newmaniac that we shall best understand not only John Morley but his whole race and understand too that the policy which Morley accepted from the first to the wonder & dismay of his Indian worshippers, was the only policy he or any other Englishman could have accepted. It is the common Briton in each which forms the bond of sympathy between the Newmaniac & Mr. John Morley and makes them think so wonderfully alike. That is the only answer which we can give to the question why Englishmen professing to be just, beneficent & all that is noble & unique, have so readily accepted a mingled policy of brutal repression and false conciliation in India — because it is the nature of the beast. The Britisher may wish to be or at least to seem just, noble, generous, humane, beneficent; but what is the use? "To their nature all things at the last return, and what shall coercing it avail?"

APPENDIX TWO

Writings and Jottings Connected with the *Bande Mataram*

1906 – 1908

The pieces in this appendix deal with the formation of the Bande Mataram Printers and Publishers, Limited, or with the finances, management and production of the *Bande Mataram* newspaper. All but one of them are reproduced from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts. The exception, the first piece, is a printed version of the original prospectus of the Bande Mataram Printers and Publishers, Limited (1906), which in all likelihood was written by Sri Aurobindo and which was signed by him and eight others.

"Bande Mataram" Printers & Publishers, Limited.

A Limited Liability Company has been formed, called the Bande Mataram Limited, which will take over the daily journal *Bande Mataram* and conduct it on a permanent and organized basis.

This journal was started as the exponent of a new political ideal and the mouthpiece of a growing school of thought. Established at first by individuals and on a small scale it has already in the single month of its existence made a great reputation and promises to be a power in the land. It has not only a standing in Bengal itself, but is daily expected and read with eagerness in other parts of India. When once placed on a carefully prepared and permanent foundation it cannot fail to be financially a success and politically a power. The very opposition it has received in many quarters shows that it is the representative of a force which has been waiting for a daily means of self-expression and, once possessed of that necessary weapon, can no longer be ignored.

But in order that *Bande Mataram* may fulfil its possibilities, it is desirable for all who are of its way of thinking, to unite and make it a success. No paper can be a great public organ which expresses merely the ideas of the few. Any party or school of thought which wishes to be strong and influential, must join in strengthening the mouthpiece of its common ideas. *Bande Mataram* is designed to be the organ of the most advanced school of nationalism in India. It will endeavour to propagate the gospels of self-help and self-respect. It will oppose the habit of mendicant petitioning and inert dependence on the Government. It will advocate the creation of a new basis for the Congress, definitely democratic in its nature, instead of the loose and ineffective constitution it now possesses. It will endeavour to rally into one great force all those who are desirous of organizing the nation for work and not for mere agitation and petitioning. Its ideal will be Swadeshi in all things, — Swadeshi in politics, Swadeshi in commerce and industry, Swadeshi in education.

Another distinguishing feature of *Bande Mataram* will be that it is not the property or organ of a single individual, but the voice of a party. Many writers of ability, will be on the staff. Besides Srijuktas Bipin Chandra Pal and Arabindo Ghose, Srijut Chitta Ranjan Das, Srijut Rajat Nath Ray, Srijut Hemendra Prasad Ghose, Srijut Syam Sunder Chakrabarti, Srijut Bijoy Chandra Chatterjee and others will be regular contributors to its columns. We hope also to get eminent men from other provinces to correspond with the paper. A good Mofussil correspondence will be organized, and arrangements will be made for correspondents in other parts of the world. The execution of this scheme needs time and general support from the public. It will be gradually developed and in a few months perfected.

The Company has been floated with a capital of Rs. 50,000 with option to increase to Rs. 1,00,000 and at present Rs. 21,000 is the money promised and another Rs. 29,000 will be placed on the market. Each share is worth Rs. 10. The shares have been purposely put at a low figure so that all who belong to the school of thought which *Bande Mataram* represents may take a personal interest. Anyone who wishes to subscribe more liberally to its support may do so by buying a large number of shares.

All applications for shares with remittances should be sent to Raja Subodh Chandra Mullik of 12, Wellington Square, Calcutta.

Subodh Chandra Mullik.
Chitta Ranjan Das.
Aurobindo Ghose.
Sarat Chandra Sen.
Sundari Mohan Das.
Surendra Nath Halder.
Hemendra Prasad Ghose.
Bipin Chandra Pal.
Rajat Nath Ray.
Bijoy Chandra Chatterjee.
Syam Sunder Chakrabarti.

Draft of a Prospectus of 1907

The Bande Mataram Publishers and Printers Company have now been conducting the daily paper Bande Mataram for a full year and are now in a position to approach the public with an offer of shares on which a dividend for the next year is practically assured. So long as the paper was carried on at a loss and its future ill-assured, the Company had to invite the public to invest in it rather as a patriotic undertaking which deserved support than as a promising business enterprise; but the paper is now self-supporting and in a short time at the present rate of increase will be a paying concern, provided the capital required is subscribed. The following statement will show the present financial condition and give some basis for forming an opinion as to future prospects.

No. of Shareholders.	66	
Amount of Shares already subscribed.		7,000
Loans advanced on condition of repayment by the raising of shares		18,000
Outstanding liabilities.		9,000
Liabilities to be converted into shares		1,500
Farther outlay necessary for Press & Type		1,000
		35,500[1]
Full amount of maximum Capital in Shares		50,000
Amount of Capital to be raised in order to stand clear		27,000
Amount of Shares the Company has still the power to raise		43,000
Budget of Monthly Expenses sanctioned by the Directors		[*no entry*]

Notes and Memos

[1]

I. Srijut Aurobindo Ghose is appointed Managing Director with full powers subject to the following provisions: —

1. The Budget to be fixed by the Directors, which he shall not exceed.

2. All appointments, dismissals, increments etc. to be in the power of the Directors only, but power of provisional appointments, degradations etc. is given to the Managing Director subject to sanction by the Directors at their next meeting.

3. When the Secretary and other officials or members of the Committee of Management are not in agreement, the orders of the Managing Director will be final.

II. The Managing Director shall be assisted by a Committee of Management consisting of four persons including the Secretary, the work to be distributed among them according to the following Departments.

---

[1] *The total was summed before the last entry (Rs. 1000) was added. — Ed.*

1. Cash and Disbursements and general assistance to the Managing Director, especially in the matter of seeing that the books are regularly written up. NCM [Nirod Chandra Mullik]

2. Finance — i.e. Advertisements, Cash Sales, Subscriptions (V.P.P.) and generally whatever relates to the income of the paper. HPG [Hemendra Prasad Ghose]

3. Editorial — i.e. the arrangements for work and the improvement of the paper. The responsibility for the matter does not go with this charge, as that can only be undertaken by a Managing Editor. SSC [Shyam Sunder Chakravarti]

4. General Correspondence and Press, with Dispatch, Stores, etc. Secretary

Srijut Benoy Banerji shall exercise general supervision with the Secretary over the General Department, and be given whatever assistance he may require for any duties he may find it impossible to discharge in person.

The Managing Director shall have power to alter the distribution of work whenever he finds it working defectively.

III. The Budget is fixed at Rs. 4500 a month, according to the scheme drawn up by Srijut Prakash Chandra Dutt subject to the modifications subsequently made. It shall not on any account be exceeded until the paper becomes profitable, when the Managing Director will draw up a fresh scheme for the improvement of the paper. The reductions under the scheme shall be effected by the 24th February.

IV. Payments to the staff are to be made for the present out of the Rs. 500 received for shares with whatever comes in by way of daily realizations. No other money from shares is to be utilized henceforth for current expenditure but all strictly credited to Capital Account. The Rs. 500 abovementioned will be repaid to this account by instalments from the daily realizations.

V. Disbursements must be made according to the fixed rules. There shall be separate accounts for Capital Account, Paper, Establishment and general expenses, Daily Expenditure. The daily realizations shall be divided under these heads and only enough for the fourth item kept in the Office, the rest being paid into the bank. Whatever old bills have to be paid subsequent to the 24th February must be paid out of capital account except such as properly belong to the current month. When unexpected liabilities have to be met, an attempt should be made to raise shares to meet them.

VI. Srijut Girija Sundar Chukrabarti shall be appointed travelling Agent for the collection of shares, subscriptions etc. and asked to complete his Bombay tour as soon as possible so as to proceed to East Bengal for shares. Other agents shall be appointed on the commission system in Madras, Bombay and C. P. and Berar.

[2]

Budget

1. Money to be immediately paid for the scheme to be possible

Schroder	Rs. 1000 at least.
Dickinson	Rs. 1000.
Type	Rs. 1000.
Establishment	Rs. 2000 at least.

2. Arrears of work to be brought up and new system begun — yet no increase of establishment possible.
3. System of four accounts to be introduced rigidly as soon as 1 is solved.
4. List of old liabilities.

1. Cash sale going down. How to remedy this? Causes of decrease.
2. Advertisements difficult to procure unless paper is boomed and cash sale & circulation increase.
3. Subscriptions.

1. Editorial matter insufficient. More hands required for articles etc. but fresh expenditure impossible.
2. News almost nil, more expenditure on telegrams, etc. necessary, but impossible. Reporters to be engaged but this means fresh expenditure.
3. Correspondent arrangements.
4. Working of Editorial Department — especially editing of Reports and Telegrams. Present staff seems unable to do it.

---

1. Correspondence.
2. Despatch horribly bad, how to improve it?
3. Stores — daily check.
4. Stocktaking.
5. Press. Another Press absolutely necessary but no money.

[3]

Elliot

Rs. 50 paid on account of pay, not case.

Rs. 20 paid by C. R. Das to E. through our office. He says we have nothing to do with that, but must pay it separately.

[4]

Selections	A. Ghose
Correspondence	Editor
Reports & Telegrams etc.	S. Chuckerbutty

[5]

Englishman
Bengalee
Amritabazar
Empire (Mallik's)

1. Two copies of the above three papers absolutely necessary.

Statesman & *Daily News* one copy for the present, whenever necessary another may be bought.

2. Bengalee & Amritabazar to be specially compared with our paper so as (1) to make sure that we are not fallen unnecessarily behindhand, (2) to see that full use is made of items we cannot secure.

3. Mofussil papers — to see that they are made fuller use of.
See whether they all come.

[6]

Morning. 8 – 12
Selections. Local items from other papers.
Afternoon. 11 – 6
Correspondence. 3d page
Early Telegrams.
Local — from 3 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. sometimes at evening.
Evening
Police Court Reports, between 5 & 7.
High Court — generally 9 p.m.
Later Telegrams.

Communication with Correspondents.

Two Daks.	1.30	Page 2 changed, Telegrams & Locals
	5.0 pm	Page 2 changed. Page 3 & 4 not changed Page 5 locals changed, telegrams Page 6 & 7 slightly changed.

Leading Article —	12 noon.	Filing of Extra Copies.
Paras up to	6 p.m.	
Extraordinary up to	9 p.m.	

Suresh.	Morning.	from 7 to 11.	Selection. Pages 2, 6 & 7.
	Afternoon	from 11 to 7.	Correspondence. Mofussil Notes. 3d page.

Kristo Babu
Evening. from 4 to 8.30
Suresh

Telegrams etc. 1st page. Local.
Reports. }
Telegrams }
Swinton's Reports to be carefully pruned.

—

those which can be got from the Empire, not to be taken from Swinton

—

Police Court Reports & High Court Reports to be properly edited.

—

Arrangements to be made for reports of meetings etc.

Night. from 8.30 to 2.

[7]

Proofreading

A dictionary wanted.

7–11. Selections.
Anucul 11–7.
Mukunda 4–12.
Manindra 9–2.

Selections. Page 2 & 7.
First proofs are seen by Anucul
final do [ditto]

Page 1.3.6.4 (Editorials)
1st proof. Mukunda
2d proof. Gokul Babu (final)

Page 4 (reports etc.) & Page 5.

1st proof by Mukunda & the rest by Manindra &
Night Editor
2d proof (final) by Manindra.

2.6. leading articles
1 column paragraph daily.
By the Way. once.
Edit once.
After Editorials

Sporting
money market
High Court Board
Commercial
(from Gazettes & Capital etc.).
Ask Basanta Ray to give daily rates.
Empire & Englishman

APPENDIX THREE

Nationalist Party Documents

The two pieces in this appendix are reproduced from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts. Both are sketches of a proposed reorganisation of the Nationalist Party around the time of the Surat Congress (December 1907).

[1]

SUGGESTED RULES OF BUSINESS FOR THE CONGRESS

SUBJECTS COMMITTEE: —

1. Each of the six Provinces, namely, Bengal, Bombay, Madras, United Provinces, The Punjab and the Central Provinces shall return Members to the Subjects Committee as follows: —

Bengal & Assam	20.
Bombay	15.
Madras	15.
United Provinces	15.
Punjab	10.
Central Provinces	10.

2. No subject shall be brought up for discussion at the Congress unless it should have been previously discussed in the Subjects Committee.

VOTING: —

3. For the purpose of voting on any proposition that is brought before the Congress, the delegates of each Province shall elect 170 Representatives distributed among the six Provinces as follows: —

Bengal	40.
Bombay	30.
Madras	30.
United Provinces	30.
Punjab	20.
Central Provinces	20.

The method of election shall be the same as in the case of the Members of the Subjects Committee.

4. None but such Representatives shall be entitled to vote on any proposition that may come up before the Congress.

5. Any proposition for which the majority of the Representatives vote shall be deemed to be carried by the Congress, provided that if the Representatives of any two Provinces unanimously vote against any proposition, the same shall be dropped.

6. Election of Subjects Committee and Representatives. For the purpose of electing Members of the Subjects Committee and Representatives, each Province shall be sub-divided into Electoral Divisions each to return a fixed number of Electors. For the present the Delegates from each District of a Province attending shall meet and elect one person from among themselves to act as the Elector of that District and the capital City of each Province may be allowed to elect 5 Electors from among the Delegates representing that City.

7. The Electors of each Province shall meet separately before the session of the Congress opens and elect the Members of the Subjects Committee and the Representatives from among themselves by a majority of votes. The Voting shall be by ballot

and each Elector shall put down in writing the names of the Members not exceeding the appointed number whom he may desire to be the Members of the Subjects Committee and Representatives for his Province. For this purpose each Elector shall receive a printed form to be supplied by the Secretaries.

PRESIDENT: —

8. The Reception Committee of the Province where the Congress is being held shall have the right by majority of Votes to nominate the President of the Congress for that year and such nomination shall be accepted by the Congress unless negatived by a three-fourths majority of the Representatives.

9. The President shall preside over the Session of the Congress and control the conduct of business.

10. Every Representative shall have the right to bring forward any proposition for discussion before the Congress or to move any amendment to any proposition under discussion, provided in the first case he should have given 12 hours' previous notice in writing to the General Secretaries to enable them to bring it up before the Subjects Committee for discussion and provided in the second case he should have given an hour's previous notice in writing to the President.

11. On each contested proposition the votes of the Representatives shall be counted by the President appointing if necessary Tellers one from each side and either by the Representatives dividing or the President calling out each Representative by name and recording his vote.

12. The Members of the Subjects Committee shall meet once every day and oftener if necessary and frame the Resolutions to be brought up before the Congress on that or the following day and the Secretaries shall place a printed copy of such Resolutions in the hands of each Representative at least two hours before the time fixed for the Meeting of the Congress that day.

13. The Subjects Committee shall select from among the general body of Delegates the speakers on each Resolution. In the case of amendments the Representative moving the amendment shall have the right to select his seconder and after an amendment has been seconded the mover of the original proposition shall have the right of reply or he may select any other person to reply on his behalf.

14. Where possible, the Representatives shall have a conspicuous portion of the Pandal reserved for them to facilitate voting and counting of votes.

[2]

A Council or Working Committee of 2 only from each province

Bengal — Aurobindo Ghose
Motilal Ghose
Aswini Dutt

Bombay

Panjab

U.P.

A Provincial Committee of 15 only

District Committees

Village Panchayets.

A National Fund.

Bande Mataram, as party organ.

Arbitration Courts

National Schools, Primary Especially

Swadeshi & Boycott.

APPENDIX FOUR

A Birthday Interview

Sri Aurobindo gave this interview to a newspaper correspondent in the Alipore Magistrate's Court on 15 August 1908.

An Interview

Ever since the commencement of the trial until Saturday [15 August 1908] Arabindo has preserved a stolid lethargic demeanour.

From the first day's hearing to the thirty-sixth, he has occupied one bench, his eyes immovably fixed on the floor, totally indifferent to the unfolding issues of the case.

The Arabindo of Saturday was, however, quite another being. His personality, hitherto grave and prepossessed, had been metamorphosised into one of sprightliness and sunniness. The cause of all this jollification, as Arabindo explained, was to a certain extent remarkable. "In the first place," he explained, "today is my birthday; and we are celebrating it as best we can under the circumstances. I was born on the 15th August 1872, and on that anniversary in 1906 the National College opened its doors to teach among other things, the principles of Swadeshism. It was either the day before or the day after my birthday, 1907," he continued waxing warm with the subject "that I was arrested in connection with the first 'Bande Mataram' sedition case. And more remarkable still my birthday is round again today and the Magistrate has given a definite assurance that he will commit on the evidence given in this, a case not of sedition but revolution.

"Besides all this my brother [Barindra][1] is threatened on my birthday to be charged with abetment of murder in the Mozufferpore affair, besides having to stand his trial for conspiracy.

---

[1] *MS* Birendro

These are what I call a remarkable string of coincidences," he added with a smile.

"Are we getting tired of this protracted trial you ask? Well, to be candid we are, although we don't mind it in the least. As a matter of fact it is useless pumping witnesses about my supposed editorship of the 'Bande Mataram.' I certainly have edited the 'Bande Mataram,' but this I only did on different occasions when Bepin Babu first edited it, and I will state now once and for all I never, never did occupy its editorial chair. I must also deny that I fathered the many brilliant leaders that have appeared in that paper. I certainly did write some of them, but I cannot claim the authorship of the best of them. I wish I could," he added with a twinkle.

Arabindo's facetious parting shot to the "frequenter" was: "You can add to those coincidences the fact that I shall be very probably coming back from the Andamans on my birthday next year."

Note on the Texts

BANDE MATARAM: POLITICAL WRITINGS AND SPEECHES 1890–1908 includes all of Sri Aurobindo's surviving political writings and speeches from the years before his arrest in May 1908. Political writings and speeches from the period after his imprisonment are published in *Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910*, volume 8 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

The bulk of the present volumes consists of articles published in the newspaper *Bande Mataram* in 1906, 1907 and 1908. They also include writings and a resolution from before the *Bande Mataram* period, speeches delivered during that period, writings from that period not published during the author's lifetime and, in four appendixes, writings and jottings connected with the *Bande Mataram*, documents relating to the organisation of the Nationalist Party, and an interview.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Sri Aurobindo became interested in the problem of Indian independence while still a student in England. He once wrote, correcting a statement by a biographer:

> At the age of eleven Aurobindo had already received strongly the impression that a period of general upheaval and great revolutionary changes was coming in the world and he himself was destined to play a part in it. His attention was now drawn to India and this feeling was soon canalised into the idea of the liberation of his own country.

At Cambridge University, between 1890 and 1892, Sri Aurobindo gave a number of "revolutionary speeches" before the "Indian Majlis", a student club. These speeches have unfortunately been lost. The only record of his political thinking at this time are some jottings he wrote in a notebook under the heading "India Renascent" (page 3).

Returning to India in February 1893, Sri Aurobindo took up work in the Princely State of Baroda. Later that same year, he began to contribute articles on the Indian National Congress to the *Indu Prakash* of Bombay. These proved to be too outspoken for the proprietor of this newspaper. Compelled to tone them down, Sri Aurobindo soon lost interest in the project. For the next twelve years he published nothing on Indian politics. During this interval he wrote a few unfinished articles in his notebooks, which were not published until after his passing. In 1905, as the agitation against the partition of Bengal began to pick up steam, he again saw an opening for serious political journalism. Around this time he wrote and had printed two or three pamphlets, one of which, *Bhawani Mandir*, survives. All available political writings from the pre-1906 period are published in Part One of these volumes.

In February 1906, Sri Aurobindo left his job in Baroda and settled in Calcutta. Even before then he had made contact with the advanced nationalists of Bengal, who had begun to split off from the established group, whom they called "Moderates". The advanced group, who called themselves the New Party or Nationalists, but were called by their opponents "Extremists", wanted to make the Indian National Congress a dynamic political organisation with an aggressive policy. All the Indian-owned English-language dailies of Calcutta were in the control of men of moderate if not loyalist views. From the end of 1905, the Nationalists discussed the desirability of starting their own English daily; but nothing was done until August 1906, when Bipin Chandra Pal, the most important Nationalist leader of Bengal, launched the *Bande Mataram*. Its first issue appeared on 6 August 1906. That same day, Pal left on a political tour. Before his departure from Calcutta, he asked Sri Aurobindo to contribute articles to the new newspaper. Sri Aurobindo agreed, and from that time until his arrest two years later, he was one of the chief *Bande Mataram* writers.

Pal had started *Bande Mataram* "with only Rs 500 in his pocket". Not surprisingly, the paper was soon in financial trouble. At Sri Aurobindo's suggestion, it was reorganised in October 1906 as a joint-stock company. At that time, he and Pal were named co-editors. A few weeks later, Pal was forced to leave by Sri Aurobindo's supporters, who wanted to put forward a more openly revolutionary programme.

Sri Aurobindo later wrote that he "would not have consented to this departure, for he regarded the qualities of Pal as a great asset to the *Bande Mataram*". He was "perhaps the best and most original political thinker in the country, an excellent writer and a magnificent orator: but the separation was effected behind Sri Aurobindo's back when he was convalescing from a dangerous attack of fever". In any event, from the moment Sri Aurobindo returned to work, he "controlled the policy of the *Bande Mataram* along with that of the party in Bengal". Although never financially stable, the *Bande Mataram* was a success, and in June 1907, a weekly edition was begun. This consisted almost entirely of matter reprinted from the daily edition. Articles written by Sri Aurobindo while the *Bande Mataram* was under Pal's editorship are published in Part Two; articles written while it was under Sri Aurobindo's editorship and before the weekly edition started are published in Part Three; articles written during the first seven months after the start of the weekly are published in Part Four.

At the end of December 1907, Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta to attend the Surat session of the Indian National Congress. Before and after the session, he delivered a number of speeches in different cities. Many of these survive in one form or another. Transcripts of nine of them are published in Part Five.

Sri Aurobindo returned to Calcutta in February 1908 and resumed the editorship of the *Bande Mataram*. At the same time he addressed meetings in Calcutta and other parts of Bengal. This writing and speaking continued until 2 May 1908, when he was arrested and put on trial in what became known as the Alipore Bomb Case. His writings and speeches from February to May 1908 are published in Part Six. Sri Aurobindo remained in jail until May 1909, when he was acquitted and released. During his imprisonment the *Bande Mataram* was suppressed by the British government under the provisions of the Press Act of 1908.

At the time of Sri Aurobindo's arrest, a number of documents were seized from his house. Among them were several articles on politics that he had written in 1907 and 1908 but never offered for publication. Some of these were used as evidence in the Alipore trial and later found their way into print. These writings are reproduced directly from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts in Part Seven.

Only a few manuscripts of *Bande Mataram* articles survive; these are published in Appendix One. Nine memoranda or notes dealing with the newspaper's management and promotion are reproduced in Appendix Two, while two documents dealing with Nationalist party politics are reproduced in Appendix Three. Appendix Four consists of an interview given by Sri Aurobindo during the preliminary trial of the Alipore Bomb Case.

THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE ARTICLES

The *Bande Mataram* was a complete daily newspaper with the usual features: news, editorials, advertisements, etc. Most of its news was taken from other Calcutta papers (see Appendix Two, 5). The originality of the *Bande Mataram* lay in the articles printed on its editorial page. These were of four main kinds: (1) "leaders" or political editorials of some length; (2) "paras", shorter pieces dealing with various topics, often citing and discussing leaders printed in other newspapers; (3) columns written in a personal, sometimes humorous style, under headings like "By the Way"; (4) articles on a variety of topics that were signed or marked "communicated".

None of the articles in categories (1) to (3) were signed. Nationalist writers in British India were subject to prosecution for sedition, a crime carrying a maximum sentence of transportation for life. If the articles were left unsigned, the only person liable to prosecution was the registered printer of the paper. Many such printers (often not the actual printers of the paper) were convicted and sentenced to longer or shorter periods of imprisonment.

At least seven men wrote articles published anonymously in the editorial columns of the *Bande Mataram*: Bipin Chandra Pal, Sri Aurobindo, Hemendra Prasad Ghose, Shyam Sunder Chakravarti, Bijoy C. Chatterjee, Satish Mukherji and Upendranath Banerji. The following is known about the connection of these men with the paper:

Bipin Chandra Pal. The founder of *Bande Mataram*, Pal was its editor-in-chief between 6 August and 12 October 1906. (During most of this period he was away from Calcutta, but he often sent in articles.) On 12 October Pal was named joint-editor along with Sri Aurobindo. Between November 1906 and April 1908 he had no connection with the paper and contributed no articles.

Sri Aurobindo (*Aurobindo Ghose*). Soon after joining the *Bande Mataram* in August 1906, Sri Aurobindo became its most important writer. On 12 October he was appointed joint-editor with B. C. Pal, and in November became editor-in-chief.[1] He remained in charge of the policy of the paper until his arrest on 2 May 1908.

Hemendra Prasad Ghose. He joined the staff of the *Bande Mataram* on 5 September 1906 and became an important writer, working on and off until the paper's demise in 1908.

Shyam Sunder Chakravarti. After the departure of Pal in November 1906, Shyam Sunder became *Bande Mataram's* second most important writer. Hemendra Prasad wrote of him in his diary: "Suffice it to say — he is an engine." The number of articles that were written by him appears to be substantial. His contribution to the success and influence of the *Bande Mataram* has not been adequately recognised.

Bijoy C. Chatterjee. There is no evidence of his connection with the paper before January 1908. After that, he became one of its major writers.

Satish Chandra Mukherji. Head of the National Council of Education and editor of the *Dawn*, Satish Chandra had little time to write for the *Bande Mataram*. According to Hemendra Prasad, he contributed a few articles, which were invariably accepted.

Upendranath Banerji. A member of Barindra Kumar Ghose's revolutionary group, Upendranath joined the *Bande Mataram* around December 1906. He also wrote for the Bengali paper *Yugantar*. From mid-1907 he was kept busy by revolutionary work.

It is known that Sri Aurobindo was the leading writer for the *Bande Mataram* from November 1906 to May 1908, except when he was absent from Calcutta. During such periods, he later wrote, "it was Shyam Sundar who wrote most of the *Bande Mataram* editorials, those excepted which were sent by Sri Aurobindo from Deoghar." For information on Sri Aurobindo's presence in or absence from Calcutta, see Table 1 on page 1153.

---

[1] As a matter of policy the name of the editor-in-chief was not printed after the departure of Bipin Chandra Pal. Once, in November 1906, Sri Aurobindo's name was printed on the first page as "editor", but this lapse was not repeated. Sri Aurobindo is referred to as editor-in-chief in Hemendra Prasad Ghose's contemporary diary and in an article published by Bipin Chandra Pal in 1932.

SELECTION OF ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THE PRESENT VOLUMES

In the present volumes are published all editorial articles from surviving issues of the *Bande Mataram* that the editors believe were written by Sri Aurobindo. Since the articles were not signed, the selection was necessarily a matter of editorial judgment. In making their choice, the editors have based themselves on (1) documentary evidence, (2) internal evidence, (3) the opinions of other authorities.

(1) Documentary Evidence

Primary documents consulted consist of (a) eyewitness evidence concerning the presence in or absence from Calcutta of Sri Aurobindo and other *Bande Mataram* writers; (b) statements and other evidence by participants concerning the authorship of the articles in general or of particular pieces.[2]

Relevant data available in these documents are presented in the text and tables on pages 1153 to 1157.

---

[2] Primary documents consulted include:

Bagchee, Moni. Letter dated 23 November 1971, listing a few articles known by him to be by his father-in-law Shyam Sunder Chakravarti. Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives.

Banerji, Upendranath. List of articles said by him to be by Sri Aurobindo, compiled in 1939. Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives.

Deb, Suresh Chandra. 1949. "When He Was a Political Leader", *Calcutta Municipal Gazette* 50, 20 August, pp. viii – ix.

——. 1950. "Sri Aurobindo as I Knew Him: Some Reminiscences of His Political Days", *Mother India* 2 (15 August).

Ghose, Hemendra Prasad. Diary 1906 – 1908. Jadavpur University Library.

——. 1949. "Reminiscences of Aurobindo Ghose", *Orient Illustrated Weekly* 13 (27 February), pp. 11 – 12, 10.

——. 1949. *Aurobindo: Prophet of Patriotism*. Calcutta: A. K. Mitra.

Pal, Bipin Chandra. 1907. *The New Spirit*. Calcutta: Sinha, Sarvadhikar & Co.

——. c. 1910. "Aurobindo Ghose". In *Leaders of the National Movement in Bengal*. London: n.p.

——. 1932. "My Prison Experiences", *Liberty* [Calcutta daily] (2 June).

Sri Aurobindo. Manuscripts of various dates in Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives.

——. 1972. *On Himself*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust.

Chronological Data

Sri Aurobindo joined the *Bande Mataram* a day or two after 6 August 1906, and continued to contribute to it until his arrest on 2 May 1908. Between these two dates he was several times absent from Calcutta and at least twice was incapacitated by illness. (During his absences from Calcutta he occasionally sent in articles for publication.) The following table presents all that is known from contemporary documents about his presence in or absence from Calcutta and periods of illness between August 1906 and May 1908.[3]

Table 1. Chronology

1906	August – October	In Calcutta and writing regularly
	November	Seriously ill the whole month, writes little or nothing
	16 – 25 December	In Deoghar, Bihar, for rest and recuperation
1907	1 – 10 January	Ill in Calcutta
	11(?) Jan. – 8 Apr.	In Deoghar
	24 Oct. – 1 Dec.	In Deoghar; after 8 April in Calcutta except as noted below
	6 – 10(?) Dec.	In Midnapore, for the district conference
	21 December	Leaves Calcutta to attend the Surat Congress
1908	5 February	Returns to Calcutta after delivering speeches in a number of places in Maharashtra
	10 – 15(?) Feb.	In Pabna, East Bengal, for the provincial conference
	17 – 20 April	In Kishoregung, East Bengal, for a political meeting
	2 May	Arrested and imprisoned

---

[3] Due to want of space, information on the presence in or absence from Calcutta of other *Bande Mataram* writers is not given in this chronology. Some information is given in the list of writers on pages 1150 – 51.

Documents by Participants

Only two handwritten drafts of *Bande Mataram* articles written by Sri Aurobindo survive. (These are identified in Table 2 as “SA draft”. They are published in Appendix One.) He made a list of articles he had written in one of his notebooks. Unfortunately only one of these articles survives (“SA NB” in the table). The only other contemporary document providing information on authorship of *Bande Mataram* articles is the diary of Hemendra Prasad Ghose (“HPG diary” in the table). During the 1940s, Sri Aurobindo was shown transcripts of 37 articles published in the weekly *Bande Mataram*. He identified 26 of them as his (“SA list” in the table). Around the same time, while correcting manuscripts of books or articles dealing with his own life and works or while preparing editions of his works, he provided information that establishes his authorship of a few *Bande Mataram* articles (“SA MSS” in the table). In 1939 Upendranath Banerji examined articles in issues of the daily *Bande Mataram* published between March and June 1907. He assigned 21 of them to Sri Aurobindo (“UB list” in the table). In 1949, in a booklet and an article on Sri Aurobindo, Hemendra Prasad Ghose discussed a few articles by Sri Aurobindo (“HPG 1949”).[4]

It should be noted that none of these attempts at ascription was systematic or comprehensive. Only a fraction of the surviving articles was dealt with. None of the participants considered articles published before February 1907 or after January 1908. Each individual dealt with articles in an even narrower range of dates. The earliest article Sri Aurobindo was shown was dated 18 March 1907, the latest, 25 November 1907. He was only shown articles that had been published in the weekly edition. Upendranath Banerji considered only articles published between March and June 1907. Hemendra Prasad Ghose mentioned only about twenty articles in his diary and fewer in his publications. In no case was his purpose in mentioning them to clarify questions of authorship. Several of the articles he mentioned are short and unimportant.

---

[4] See list of sources in footnote 1 for bibliographical information. Bipin Chandra Pal and Shyam Sunder Chakarvarti never identified any articles as being written by Sri Aurobindo. However, Pal did publish certain articles as his own, and Shyam Sunder told his son-in-law, the writer Moni Bagchee, that certain *Bande Mataram* articles were his.

It should also be noted that none of the methods of identification was foolproof. Most of the documents date from twenty or more years after the period. The "lists" of Sri Aurobindo and Upendranath Banerji were compiled more than thirty years after the publication of the articles. Neither of them made a careful study of the articles they were shown. It is quite possible that mistakes of ascription occurred. One article definitely written by Hemendra Prasad (he mentioned it in his diary the day it was published) was later included in Sri Aurobindo's and Upendranath's lists of articles written by Sri Aurobindo.[5] Another article ascribed to Sri Aurobindo by Upendranath Banerji is clearly not by Sri Aurobindo and has not been published in this book.[6] Several articles on the list of those identified by Sri Aurobindo seem, on the basis of content and style, to be by another writer. They have nevertheless been given the benefit of the doubt and included in the present collection.[7]

Table 2. Articles Ascribed by Participants to Sri Aurobindo

Date	*Title of Article*	*Source*
31.12.06	The Results of the Congress	SA NB
15.03.07	The Comilla Incident	HPG diary
18.03.07	British Protection or Self-Protection	SA list; UB list
03.04.07	Peace and the Autocrats	SA list; UB list
05.04.07	Many Delusions	UB list
05.04.07	Reflections of Srinath Paul, Rai Bahadoor, on the Present Discontents	SA MSS; HPG 1949

---

[5] The article in question is "Bankim Chandra (1893–1894)", published as Sri Aurobindo's in the *Supplement* to the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (vol. 27, pp. 351–55). Both Sri Aurobindo and Upendranath apparently assumed that this article was a continuation of Sri Aurobindo's "Rishi Bankim Chandra", which had been published the previous week. If they had carefully read Hemendra Prasad's poorly written, academic article, it would have been obvious to them that it could never have been written by Sri Aurobindo.

[6] The article in question is "No Common Ideal", published as Sri Aurobindo's in the *Supplement* to the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library.

[7] A number of articles that seem overall to be by a writer other than Sri Aurobindo have openings that are very much in Sri Aurobindo's style. It is possible that Sri Aurobindo, as editor-in-chief, rewrote the opening but let the body of the article stand. If later only the opening was read out to him, he might well have identified the article as his.

06.04.07	Omissions and Commissions at Behrampur	UB list
08.04.07	The Writing on the Wall	UB list
11-23.04.07	The Doctrine of Passive Resistance (seven articles)	SA MSS; UB list; HPG 1949
12.04.07	By the Way	HPG 1949
13.04.07	By the Way	HPG 1949
16.04.07	Rishi Bankim Chandra	SA MSS; UB list
17.04.07	By the Way. A Mouse in a Flutter	HPG 1949
22.04.07	The Gospel According to Surendranath	SA list; UB list
23.04.07	A Man of Second Sight	SA list; UB list
26.04.07	Graduated Boycott	SA list; UB list
26.04.07	Nationalism, Not Extremism	SA list; UB list
27.04.07	Shall India Be Free? The Loyalist Gospel	SA list; UB list
29.04.07	Shall India Be Free? National Development and Foreign Rule	SA list; UB list
30.04.07	Shall India Be Free?	SA list; UB list
02.05.07	Shall India Be Free? Unity and British Rule	SA MSS
10.05.07	Lala Lajpat Rai Deported	HPG 1949
16.05.07	Mr. Morley's Pronouncement	UB list
25.05.07	Newmania	HPG 1949
28.05.07	Cool Courage and Not Blood-and-Thunder Speeches	HPG diary
29.05.07	The Sobhabazar Shaktipuja	HPG diary
30.05.07	The *Daily News* and Its Needs	HPG diary
04.06.07	Regulated Independence	SA list
05.06.07	Wanted, a Policy	SA list
08.06.07	The Strength of the Idea	SA list
19.06.07	The Main Feeder of Patriotism	SA list
03.07.07	Europe and Asia	SA list
11.07.07	English Obduracy and Its Reason	SA list
15.07.07	Boycott and After	SA list
29.07.07	The Issue	SA list
07.08.07	Our First Anniversary	HPG 1949

17.08.07	The Foundations of Nationality	SA MSS
24.08.07	Sankaritola's Apologia	SA MSS
31.08.07	The Three Unities of Sankaritola	SA MSS
20.09.07	The Un-Hindu Spirit of Caste Rigidity	SA list
21.09.07	Caste and Democracy	SA list
23.10.07	The Nagpur Affair and True Unity	SA list
29.10.07	The Nagpur Imbroglio	SA list
02.11.07	How to Meet the Inevitable Repression	SA list
05.11.07	Mr. Tilak and the Presidentship	SA list
16.11.07	Nagpur and Loyalist Methods	SA draft
16.11.07	The Life of Nationalism	SA list
18.11.07	By the Way. In Praise of Honest John	SA draft
19.11.07	Bureaucratic Policy	SA list
05.12.07	By the Way	HPG 1949

(2) Internal Evidence

Only fifty-six articles are listed in the above table. Sri Aurobindo unquestionably wrote many more. It is clear from the publications of B. C. Pal, Hemendra Prasad Ghose and Suresh Deb cited in footnote 2 that Sri Aurobindo was the principal writer for *Bande Mataram* between August 1906 and April 1908. During this period some 630 issues of *Bande Mataram* were published. It may be assumed that Sri Aurobindo contributed articles to most issues that came out while he was in Calcutta and in good health.

Since none of *Bande Mataram*'s editorial articles were signed, and only a few can be assigned to an author by means of the available documentary evidence, the question of the authorship of the rest, in particular the question of which of them were written by Sri Aurobindo, can only be decided by reference to the articles themselves. In selecting the articles to be included in this volume, the editors have taken the following factors into consideration:

Views. As editor-in-chief, Sri Aurobindo did not impose uniformity of opinion on the various *Bande Mataram* writers; their political views were however generally consistent. All agreed on basic matters of policy such as Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education.

They differed occasionally on subordinate issues such as village uplift, caste, etc. Articles that express opinions at variance with Sri Aurobindo's known views on such matters are assumed to have been written by others.

Approach and tone. Articles by writers other than Sri Aurobindo sometimes contain reasoned arguments concerning the legitimacy of India's political demands, or appeals to the better feelings of the British public. Sri Aurobindo rarely took this approach. He once wrote, speaking of himself in the third person: "As a politician it was part of Sri Aurobindo's principles never to appeal to the British people; that he would have considered as part of the mendicant policy."

Personal references. The editorial tone adopted by the *Bande Mataram* writers was generally impersonal. However they occasionally made passing references to persons and events they had seen themselves. References to English university life and the Baroda state sometimes suggest that the article in question was written by Sri Aurobindo.

Citations. Articles known to be by Shyam Sunder Chakravarti and Hemendra Prasad Ghose often contain long quotations from or allusions to certain British prose writers (Mill, Macaulay) and poets (Shakespeare, Milton). Sri Aurobindo's articles contain few quotations but occasional allusions to a wide range of Biblical, classical, European and Indian literary works.

Clichés. Writings known to be by Hemendra Prasad Ghose and other members of the *Bande Mataram*'s staff often contain clichés and other outworn expressions. The presence of such expressions is a sign that the article was not written by Sri Aurobindo.

English grammar and usage. Articles by writers other than Sri Aurobindo sometimes contain obvious errors in grammar and usage. Articles by Sri Aurobindo contain few or none.

Style. Sri Aurobindo's style can generally be recognised even if its attributes cannot be enumerated. In deciding whether a certain article is in Sri Aurobindo's style, the editors have relied on their subjective judgment, informed by a close familiarity with Sri Aurobindo's writings of all periods. They have had to keep in mind, however, a fact noted by Sri Aurobindo — that "Shyam Sundar [Chakravarti] caught up some imitation" of his style, "and many could not distinguish between their writings". He also noted, in an essay written some years before the start of the *Bande Mataram*, that it is difficult if not impossible to distinguish a given prose style from a good imitation of it:

> In an English literary periodical it was recently observed that a certain Oxford professor who had studied Stevenson like a classic, attempted to apportion to Stevenson & Lloyd Osbourne their respective work in the Wrecker, but his apportionment turned out [to] be hopelessly erroneous. To this the obvious answer is that the Wrecker is a prose work and not poetry. There was no prose style ever written that a skilful hand could not reproduce as accurately as a practised forger reproduces a signature.

The editors have made every effort to distinguish pieces actually written by Sri Aurobindo from those written in an imitation of his style. They acknowledge that such judgments are not infallible.

(3) The Opinions of Other Authorities

Attempts have been made by other scholars to determine the authorship of *Bande Mataram* articles. The editors of the present edition have consulted all available works in which articles are ascribed to Sri Aurobindo or to others.[8] They also benefited from the research and opinions of the editors of *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings – I* (1972), Jayantilal Parekh and Sanat Kumar Banerji.

Taking into consideration the documentary and internal evidence and the authoritative opinions available to them, the editors of the present volume have made their own list of 353 articles they believe were written by Sri Aurobindo. These may be placed in three categories: (1) 56 articles for which there is documentary evidence of Sri Aurobindo's authorship; (2) 102 articles which, given the weight of internal evidence and/or authoritative opinions, may be assigned to Sri Aurobindo with a high degree of confidence; (3) 195 articles, for which there is no such weight of evidence, but which the editors believe should be assigned to Sri Aurobindo rather than to any other *Bande Mataram* writer. The 56 articles in the first category are listed in Table 2 above. The 102 in the second are listed in Table 3 below. The remaining articles are not listed, but may be determined by process of elimination from the complete list of articles in the Table of Contents (Parts Two, Three, Four and Six).

---

[8] The principal works consulted are:

Mookerjee, Amalendu Prasad. 1974. *Social and Political Ideals of Bipin Chandra Pal.* Calcutta: Minerva Associates.

——. 1975. Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives.

Mukherjee, Haridas, and Uma Mukherjee. 1957. *"Bande Mataram" and Indian Nationalism.* Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay.

——. 1958. *Sri Aurobindo's Political Thought.* Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya.

——. 1964. *Sri Aurobindo and the New Thought in Indian Politics.* Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay.

——. 1994. Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives.

The articles listed in the following table are those for which there is no documentary proof of Sri Aurobindo's authorship, but which the editors believe, with a high degree of confidence, to be his work. These 102 articles, together with the 56 listed in Table 2, constitute that portion of the extant articles of *Bande Mataram* that can confidently be regarded as the work of Sri Aurobindo.

Table 3. Articles that Can Be Ascribed to Sri Aurobindo with a High Degree of Confidence

20.08.06	Indians Abroad
27.08.06	By the Way
28.08.06	The *Mirror* and Mr. Tilak
30.08.06	By the Way
01.09.06	By the Way
12.09.06	The Charge of Vilification
12.09.06	Autocratic Trickery
13.09.06	Strange Speculations
13.09.06	The *Statesman* under Inspiration
14.09.06	A Disingenuous Defence
17.09.06	Stop-gap Won't Do
17.09.06	By the Way
18.09.06	Is Mendicancy Successful?
18.09.06	By the Way
20.09.06	By the Way
28.02.07	Mr. Gokhale's Disloyalty
02.04.07	The President of the Berhampur Conference
10.04.07	Pherozshahi at Surat
16.04.07	The Old Year
17.04.07	A Vilifier on Vilification
24.04.07	By the Way
25.04.07	The Leverage of Faith
11.05.07	The Crisis
13.05.07	Government by Panic
15.05.07	How to Meet the Ordinance

16.05.07	What Does Mr. Hare Mean?
16.05.07	Not to the Andamans!
17.05.07	The *Statesman* Unmasks
17.05.07	Sui Generis
20.05.07	The *Statesman* on Mr. Mudholkar
23.05.07	And Still It Moves
23.05.07	British Generosity
24.05.07	An Irish Example
25.05.07	The East Bengal Disturbances
27.05.07	The Gilded Sham Again
27.05.07	National Volunteers
28.05.07	The True Meaning of the Risley Circular
30.05.07	The Ordinance and After
01.06.07	The Question of the Hour
05.06.07	Preparing the Explosion
07.06.07	Defying the Circular
21.06.07	British Justice
21.06.07	The *Statesman* on Shooting
22.06.07	A Current Dodge
24.06.07	More about British Justice
25.06.07	Morleyism Analysed
28.06.07	Personal Rule and Freedom of Speech and Writing
29.06.07	By the Way
25.07.07	One More for the Altar
26.07.07	Srijut Bhupendranath
06.08.07	The 7th of August
06.08.07	The *Indian Patriot* on Ourselves
06.08.07	Our Rulers and Boycott
10.08.07	To Organise
12.08.07	A Compliment and Some Misconceptions
12.08.07	Pal on the Brain
18.08.07	To Organise Boycott
20.08.07	The *Times* Romancist
23.08.07	In Melancholy Vein
12.09.07	The Martyrdom of Bipin Chandra
25.09.07	*Bande Mataram* Prosecution
26.09.07	The Chowringhee Pecksniff and Ourselves
28.09.07	The *Statesman* in Retreat
05.10.07	Novel Ways to Peace
05.10.07	Armenian Horrors
07.10.07	A New Literary Departure
08.10.07	Protected Hooliganism — A Parallel
08.10.07	Mr. Keir Hardie and India
02.12.07	About Unity
04.12.07	More about Unity
06.12.07	Caste and Representation
12.12.07	About Unmistakable Terms
13.12.07	The Surat Congress
17.12.07	The Awakening of Gujerat
18.12.07	Lala Lajpat Rai's Refusal
21.02.08	The Soul and India's Mission
04.03.08	A Great Opportunity
05.03.08	Swaraj and the Coming Anarchy
07.03.08	The Village and the Nation
10.03.08	Welcome to the Prophet of Nationalism
12.03.08	A Great Message
16.03.08	Asiatic Democracy
19.03.08	The Need of the Moment
20.03.08	The Early Indian Polity
30.03.08	The Struggle in Madras

30.03.08	A Misunderstanding
01.04.08	India and the Mongolian
03.04.08	The Question of the President
04.04.08	Convention and Conference
06.04.08	The Constitution of the Subjects Committee
09.04.08	The Asiatic Role
10.04.08	The Work Before Us
10.04.08	Campbell-Bannerman Retires
11.04.08	The Demand of the Mother
13.04.08	Peace and Exclusion
14.04.08	Indian Resurgence and Europe
22.04.08	The Future and the Nationalists
23.04.08	The Wheat and the Chaff
24.04.08	Party and the Country
25.04.08	The One Thing Needful
29.04.08	New Conditions
29.04.08	By the Way. The Parable of Sati

Around 1300 unsigned political writings were published in surviving issues of the daily and weekly editions of the *Bande Mataram* between 20 August 1906 and 3 May 1908. The editors have examined all of them, and assigned 353 to Sri Aurobindo. If 300 articles are subtracted from the total as having been published while Sri Aurobindo was ill or away from Calcutta, the portion assigned to him comes to about one-third. Given that there were generally no more than three full-time editorial writers working for the *Bande Mataram*, the number of articles assigned by the editors to Sri Aurobindo does not appear to be excessive.

The editors concede that they may have missed some articles written by Sri Aurobindo and that some of those they have assigned to him may have been written by others. In one sense, however, all the editorials published in the *Bande Mataram* between mid-October 1906 and May 1908 may be said to have his stamp on them. As the Nationalist leader Jitendra Lal Bannerji wrote in 1909:

> From the very first, the hand of the master was visible in the writings of the "Bande-Mataram", and that master the world tacitly agreed to accept as Aravinda Ghosh. And yet it will be a mistake to suppose that Aravinda did all or even much of the writing for the new paper. He was assisted in this undertaking by a fine band of co-adjutors, chief among whom must be mentioned Babu Shyam Sundar Chakravarti. . . . In one respect, however, the judgment of the public was sure

> and unerring. Whoever the actual contributor to the "Bande-Mataram" might be — the soul, the genius of the paper was Aravinda. The pen might be that of Shyam Sundar or who not — the world did not care about it; but the voice was the voice of Aravinda Ghosh: his the clear clarion notes calling men to heroic and strenuous self-sacrifice; his the unswerving, unfaltering faith in the high destinies of his race; his the passionate resolve to devote life, fame, fortune, all to the service of the Mother.[9]

THE FILE OF THE *BANDE MATARAM*

There are several breaks in the sequence of articles published here as Sri Aurobindo's. Some of these breaks are due, as noted above, to periods of illness or absence from Calcutta. Most of the others are due to gaps in the file of the *Bande Mataram*.

The *Bande Mataram* was published continuously from August 1906 to October 1908. (Sri Aurobindo was connected with the paper only until his arrest in May 1908.) Only a single file of the daily edition survives.[10] Many issues are missing from it. Of the 540 issues of the daily *Bande Mataram* that appear to have been printed between 6 August 1906 (when Sri Aurobindo joined) and 2 May 1908 (when he was arrested),[11] only 371 complete issues survive. This is roughly two-thirds of the issues that were printed during the period of Sri Aurobindo's connection with the newspaper.[12]

---

[9] Jitendra Lal Bannerji. "Aravinda Ghosh — A Study", *Modern Review* 6 (November 1909): 483–84.

[10] Formerly in the possession of the Prabartak Sangha of Chandernagore, this file was donated to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives in 1978. Microfilm copies are available from the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

[11] Because the file is incomplete and the numbering of issues was neither complete nor consistent, it is impossible to determine exactly how many issues were printed. To arrive at the figure 540, we have counted every weekday between 6 August 1906 and 2 May 1908, and subtracted dates where there is documentary evidence that no issue was brought out.

[12] Two articles printed in these volumes — "The Results of the Congress" (31 December 1906) and "Look on This Picture, Then on That" (6 May 1907) — are not found in the surviving file of the *Bande Mataram*. They have been reproduced from *Sri Aurobindo and the New Thought in Indian Politics* (see footnote 8).

The first volume of the weekly edition of the *Bande Mataram* consisted of fifty-one issues. All of these survive. Forty-eight of them came out during the period of Sri Aurobindo's connection with the paper. The weekly edition consisted almost entirely of matter reprinted from the daily edition. Certain articles found in the weekly but not in any surviving issue of the daily evidently were printed in issues of the daily that have been lost.

The following month-by-month table will give some idea of places where the file of the daily *Bande Mataram* is deficient. It will be seen that most of the missing issues are from the first seven months of the newspaper's existence. Note that one cannot always be certain whether the issue for a given date lacks because no issue was printed or because none was preserved.

Table 4. Completeness of the File of the Daily *Bande Mataram*

Year	*Month*	*Summary of Missing Issues*
1906	August	No issue survives before that of 20 August; only five issues survive for the rest of the month.
	September	Only twelve issues survive.
	October	Eleven issues survive up to 16 October; no issue was printed between then and 22 October; only four issues survive for the rest of the month.
	November	No issue survives.
	December	Only one complete issue survives. One incomplete issue (lacking editorial page) also survives.
1907	January	Only one complete issue survives.
	February	No issue is available before that of 13 February; nine issues survive for the rest of the month.
	March	Issues for seven dates are lacking; for one of them perhaps no issue was printed.
	April	The issue for one date is lacking; the issue for one date is incomplete.
	May	Issues for three dates are lacking; the issue for one date is incomplete.

	June	Issues for three dates are lacking; the issue for one is incomplete.
	July	Issues for two dates are lacking; for one of them perhaps no issue was printed.
	August	Issues for eleven dates are lacking.
	September	Issues for four dates are lacking.
	October	No issue was printed between 15 and 19 October (Puja holidays); issues for four other dates are lacking; the issue for one date is incomplete.
	November	Issues for five dates are lacking; issues for two dates are incomplete.
	December	Issues for seven dates are lacking; for one of them perhaps no issue was printed.
1908	January	Issues for four dates are lacking.
	February	Issues for two dates are lacking.
	March	Issues for four dates are lacking; the issue for one date is incomplete.
	April	Issues for five dates are lacking.
	May	The issue of 1 May is incomplete; the issue of 2 May is lacking.

NOTES ON SPECIFIC PIECES

Part One. Writings and a Resolution 1890–1906

All the pieces in this part were written before the start of the *Bande Mataram* in August 1906. Many of them were not completed or published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime.

India Renascent. 1890–92. Written in a notebook used by Sri Aurobindo at Cambridge.

New Lamps for Old with **India and the British Parliament**

The ten articles comprising "India and the British Parliament" and *New Lamps for Old* were published anonymously in the *Indu Prakash*, a Marathi–English weekly newspaper of Bombay, in 1893 and 1894. Sri Aurobindo wrote these articles on the invitation of K. G.

Deshpande, the editor of the English section of the journal, whom he had known at Cambridge. “The first two articles”, Sri Aurobindo later noted,

> made a sensation and frightened [Mahadev Govind] Ranade and other Congress leaders. Ranade warned the proprietor of the paper that, if this went on, he would surely be prosecuted for sedition. Accordingly the original plan of the series had to be dropped at the proprietor’s instance. Deshpande requested Sri Aurobindo to continue in a modified tone and he reluctantly consented, but felt no farther interest and the articles were published at long intervals and finally dropped of themselves altogether.

“India and the British Parliament”. Published in *Indu Prakash* on 26 June 1893. Under the heading was printed “Communicated” (i.e., from a special correspondent). In the next issue of the newspaper, 3 July 1893, the editor (presumably K. G. Deshpande) referred to the essay in the following paragraph, also headed “India and the British Parliament”:

> Under this heading we had a communication from a very able writer in our last issue. Our readers must have been struck with the tone and conclusions of that article. We shall be very happy to receive any communication from our readers on the subject. Meanwhile we are trying to get a series of articles on the question and the one implied therein as to where we are drifting and in what direction our political work should lie. The last article [i.e. “India and the British Parliament”] will thus be a kind of trumpet note.

New Lamps for Old. The promised series began on 7 August 1893. Below the first instalment was published the following editorial note:

> We promised our readers some time back a series of articles on our present Political Progress by an extremely able and keen observer of the present times. We are very much pleased to give our readers the first instalment of that series. The title under which these views appear is “New lamps for old” which is very suggestive though a metaphorical one. The preface will take

> us over to the next issue. The views therein contained are not those that are commonly held by our Politicians, and for this reason they are very important. We have been long convinced that our efforts in Political Progress are not sustained, but are lacking in vigour. Hypocrisy has been the besetting sin of our Political agitation. Oblique vision is the fashion. True, matter of fact, honest criticism is very badly needed. Our institutions have no strong foundation and are in hourly danger of falling down. Under these circumstances it was idle — nay, criminal, — to remain silent while our whole energy in Political Progress was spent in a wrong direction. The questions at issue are momentous. It is the making or unmaking of a nation. We have therefore secured a gentleman of great literary talents, of liberal culture and considerable English experience, well versed in the art of writing and willing, at great personal inconvenience and probable misrepresentation, to give out his views in no uncertain voice, and, we may be allowed to add, in a style and diction peculiarly his own. We bespeak our readers' most careful and constant perusal on his behalf and assure them that they will find in those articles matter that will set them thinking and steel their patriotic souls.

The eight remaining articles of the series appeared on the following dates: 2) 21 August 1893; 3) 28 August 1893; 4) 18 September 1893; 5) 30 October 1893; 6) 13 November 1893; 7) 4 December 1893; 8) 5 February 1894; 9) 6 March 1894.

At the Turn of the Century. Editorial title. Circa 1900. This piece evidently was written towards the beginning of the first year of the century. First published, along with the next piece, in *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* in 1983.

Old Moore for 1901. Circa 1901. "Old Moore's Almanack" (known also as *Vox Stellarum*) was an English almanac first brought out by Francis Moore in 1700. Along with the usual information found in almanacs — the time of the rising and setting of the sun and moon, etc. — Old Moore's provided "predictions of coming events . . . by a notable astrologer of the nineteenth century". Old Moore's of 1901 contained a column of predictions for each month of the year. Basing himself on these predictions, Sri Aurobindo wrote, in his own words, summaries of what he thought would be the year's most significant developments. First published, along with the preceding piece, in *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* in 1983.

The Congress Movement. Editorial title. Circa 1903 (the Ahmedabad Congress, mentioned in passing in the piece, was held in December 1902). First published in *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* in 1983.

Fragment for a Pamphlet. Editorial title. Circa 1901–5. Sri Aurobindo wrote this fragment in a notebook he first used in Baroda around 1901. It is impossible to determine the exact date of the piece. First published in *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings–I* in 1972.

Unity: An open letter to those who despair of their Country. 1901–3. Written in a Baroda notebook, probably after the preceding piece, and almost certainly before "The Proposed Reconstruction of Bengal" (see below). First published in *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings–I* in 1972.

The Proposed Reconstruction of Bengal: Partition or Annihilation. Circa 1904. This piece was written during an early stage of the agitation against the partition of Bengal, after the original announcement of December 1903 but before the full list of districts to be taken from Bengal and combined with Assam had been announced. First published in *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings–I* in 1972.

On the Bengali and the Mahratta: Notes. Editorial title. 1902–6. Written on a sheet of paper that was among those seized by the police when Sri Aurobindo was arrested in May 1908. The sheet was put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial and subsequently reproduced in a government file containing transcripts of documentary evidence.[13] Published here for the first time in a book of Sri Aurobindo's writings.

Bhawani Mandir. 1905. This famous pamphlet was written by Sri Aurobindo not long before August 1905, when a copy was received by a British official in Broach (a town not far from Baroda) and reported to the government (J. C. Ker, *Political Trouble in India*, 1917, pp. 33–34). It was used as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial, and later cited in the Rowlatt Report (1919). Rediscovered after independence among the Alipore Bomb Trial papers, it was reproduced in the *Hindusthan Standard* in October 1956 and later in various publications of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. Of the genesis of the pamphlet, Sri Aurobindo wrote: "*Bhawani Mandir* was written by Sri Aurobindo but it was more Barin's idea than his." Barindra Kumar Ghose, Sri Aurobindo's younger brother, actually went to central India to choose a site for the Temple to the Mother (Bhawani Mandir). Sri Aurobindo continued, "The idea of Bhawani Mandir simply lapsed of itself. Sri Aurobindo thought no more about it, but Barin who clung to the idea tried to establish something like it on a small scale in the Manicktala Garden." The present text has been checked against a copy of the original pamphlet.

---

[13] This file was later reproduced in *Terrorism in Bengal: A Collection of Documents*, volume 4 (Calcutta: Government of West Bengal, 1995), pp. 647–749.

Ethics East and West. Editorial title. Circa 1902–6. There is no positive evidence by which this fragment might be dated. The handwriting is that of the Baroda period. It was seized when Sri Aurobindo's house was searched in May 1908, put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial, and reproduced in a government file containing transcripts of documentary evidence and later in *Terrorism in Bengal* (see footnote 13). Published here for the first time in a book of Sri Aurobindo's writings.

Resolution at a Swadeshi Meeting. Sri Aurobindo proposed this resolution at a Swadeshi meeting held in Baroda on 24 September 1905. A report of the meeting, which included Sri Aurobindo's resolution, was published in Marathi in the *Kesari* of Poona on 3 October 1905. It has been retranslated into English by the editors of the present volume.

A Sample-Room for Swadeshi Articles. Editorial title. 1905–6. Sri Aurobindo wrote two drafts of this proposal sometime before he left Baroda in February 1906. The manuscript was seized and put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial, and subsequently reproduced in a government file containing transcripts of documentary evidence and later in *Terrorism in Bengal* (see footnote 13). The present text has been compiled by collating the fair-copy and rough draft, which have both undergone some damage since 1908, with the sometimes defective text reproduced in *Terrorism in Bengal*.

On the Barisal Proclamation. Editorial title. November 1905 or shortly thereafter. On 7 November 1905, Aswini Kumar Dutta and other Nationalist leaders of Barisal issued a proclamation in which they urged the people of the district to support the Swadeshi movement. A short while later Bampfylde Fuller, the Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam, summoned Dutta and the others and demanded that they withdraw the proclamation. A day or two later, they sent a letter to Fuller's private secretary informing him that as Fuller was of the opinion that the proclamation contained "certain expressions that may tend to lead people to commit breaches of the peace, we withdraw the same". The district magistrate thereupon issued a notification that the leaders "had withdrawn the appeal because they had understood that the appeal was seditious and provocative of breaches of the peace". It was apparently after receiving news of this misleading notification (which ultimately caused the district magistrate to be fined for defamation) that Sri Aurobindo wrote this article. Its first pages are not available. They had been torn out of the notebook in which it was written even before it was produced as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial.

Part Two. *Bande Mataram* under the Editorship of Bipin Chandra Pal: 6 August – 15 October 1906

The articles published in this section all appeared in *Bande Mataram* on the dates given. They are not dealt with separately here.

Part Three. *Bande Mataram* under the Editorship of Sri Aurobindo: 24 October 1906 – 27 May 1907

The articles published in this section all appeared in *Bande Mataram* on the dates given. Most issues published between November 1906 and February 1907 have been lost. Sri Aurobindo certainly wrote many articles during this period. In one of his notebooks he made lists of certain articles, presumably those written by him, classified under subject headings. These lists are reproduced on pages 199 – 200. (It will be noted that an article in one of the surviving issues, "The Man of the Past and the Man of the Future", is not among those listed by Sri Aurobindo. The editors nevertheless consider this article to be Sri Aurobindo's on the basis of internal evidence.)

The Doctrine of Passive Resistance. This seven-part series of articles was published in the *Bande Mataram* on the following dates: 1) 11 April 1907; 2) 12 April 1907; 3) 13 April 1907; 4) 17 April 1907; 5) 18 and 19 April 1907; 6) 20 April 1907; 7) 23 April 1907. All but the last were published under the dual heading: "THE NEW THOUGHT: THE DOCTRINE OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE". The editors have published the series in a single sequence since it comprises a single work with a single connected argument. It is probable that the series was completed before the first instalment was published. In all likelihood it was written in Deoghar, where Sri Aurobindo stayed from the beginning of January until the beginning of April 1907.

It is certain that the series was written by Sri Aurobindo. It was identified as his by Hemendra Prasad Ghose and Upendranath Banerji, as well as by Sri Aurobindo himself. When it was brought to his attention that a writer had ascribed the series to Bipin Chandra Pal, Sri Aurobindo wrote:

> I was the writer of the series of articles on "Passive Resistance" published in April 1907 to which reference has been made. . . . I planned several series of this kind for the *Bande Mataram* and at least three were published of which "Passive Resistance" was one.

Another of these series apparently was "Shall India Be Free?", which also appeared under the heading "THE NEW THOUGHT". Four articles of this series were published between 27 April and 2 May 1907. The third series was apparently the one referred to in the first sentence of the first instalment of *The Doctrine of Passive Resistance*: "In a series of articles, published in this paper soon after the Calcutta session of the Congress [December 1906], we sought to indicate our view both of the ideal which the Congress had adopted . . . and of the possible lines of policy by which that ideal might be attained." Unfortunately, this series has not survived, since almost all of the issues of the *Bande Mataram* from the two months following the Calcutta Congress have been lost.

Reflections of Srinath Paul, Rai Bahadoor, on the Present Discontents. Published in the *Bande Mataram* on 5 April 1907. A number of satirical poems were printed on the editorial pages of the *Bande Mataram*. According to Sri Aurobindo, these "were the work of Shyam Sundar

Chakravarti". There is, however, one exception. In his coverage of the Berhampore Conference (30 March–1 April 1907), Hemendra Prasad Ghose devoted a paragraph to the speech of the chairman of the Reception Committee, a Moderate named Srinath Paul. Hemendra Prasad wrote that Paul's loyalist utterances "provoked the audience to drown his words in hisses", and that he finished his address "perspiring and short of breath" (*Bande Mataram*, 2 April 1907).[14] After reading Hemendra Prasad's report, Sri Aurobindo, who was then in Deoghar, wrote this take-off on Paul's address. Thirty-five years later he remembered the piece while the book *Collected Poems and Plays* was being compiled. He wrote then to his secretary that he had published in the weekly *Bande Mataram* not only the play *Perseus the Deliverer* and the translation *Vidula*, but also "a political satire in verse purporting to be the report of the Reception Committee Chairman at a Moderate Conference". The piece could not be located at that time because it had been published not in the weekly but in the daily edition, which was not then available. It is being reproduced here for the first time since 1907. It should be noted that Sri Aurobindo mentioned this verse satire and no other. There is no reason to believe that the long satirical verse-play *The Slaying of Congress* was written by him.

Rishi Bankim Chandra. Published in the *Bande Mataram* on 16 April 1907. In 1923 it was reprinted as a pamphlet entitled *Rishi Bunkim Chandra* by the Prabartak Publishing House, Chandernagore. In 1940 a slightly revised version was included in the booklet *Bankim–Tilak–Dayananda*, published by the Arya Publishing House, Calcutta. In the present volume, the text is reprinted as it appeared in the *Bande Mataram*.

Part Four. *Bande Mataram* under the Editorship of Sri Aurobindo: 28 May–22 December 1907

The first issue of the weekly edition of the *Bande Mataram* appeared on Sunday, 2 June 1907. The weekly edition consisted almost entirely of articles and other features that had been published in the daily edition during the preceding week. It was intended for people in Calcutta who did not buy the daily, and for circulation in the outlying districts of Bengal and in other provinces. Some articles published in issues of the daily that have been lost are preserved only in the weekly edition.

---

[14] Hemendra Prasad told the story of the origin of this piece in "Reminiscences of Aurobindo Ghose" (see footnote 2).

The articles published in this part are not dealt with separately here. They all appeared in the *Bande Mataram* daily edition (and sometimes also in the weekly edition) on the date indicated. (If an article was first published in a now-missing issue of the daily edition, its exact date can be determined if only one issue of the week is missing. Otherwise, there are two or more possible dates.) The following is known about the one speech included in this part:

Advice to National College Students. This speech was delivered at the Bengal National College, Calcutta, on 23 August 1907. On 2 August, learning that he was about to be arrested for sedition, and wishing to spare the Bengal National College any embarrassment, Sri Aurobindo resigned the post of principal of that institution. Then, according to the *Dawn and Dawn Society's Magazine* (September 1907):

> On the 22nd August last the students and teachers of the Bengal National College in meeting assembled expressed their heartfelt appreciation of the eminent qualities as a teacher, of Srijut Aurobindo Ghose, their late beloved Principal, and recorded their deep regret at his resignation on the 2nd of August, 1907, of the high office which he had filled with such conspicuous ability and so much personal sacrifice during the first year of the existence of the college. They also expressed heartfelt sympathy with him in his present troubles in connection with his prosecution on the alleged charge of publishing certain seditious articles in the *Bande Mataram*. It was further resolved that a photograph of the late principal be taken to be hung up in the college hall. Accordingly the next day Srijukta Aurobindo Ghose was invited to come over to the college premises to be photographed. [*The report here describes his reception by the students.*] The teachers then requested him on behalf of the boys to speak to them a few words of advice. In response to the desire of the boys to hear from him he delivered in a voice choked with emotion a soul-stirring address of which we proceed to give the substance: —

The text of the speech was reproduced in *Two Lectures of Sriyut Aravinda Ghose, B.A. (Cantab.)* (Bombay, 1908), and was reprinted in *Speeches of Aurobindo Ghose* from the first edition (1922).

Part Five. Speeches: 22 December 1907 – 1 February 1908

During a trip to and from western India in the winter of 1907 – 8, Sri Aurobindo delivered at least fourteen speeches. Three of them were preserved in the form of transcripts published shortly afterwards in different newspapers, three others in the form of police reports in English, and five in the form of transcripts made first in Marathi by friends or police agents and subsequently retranslated into English. No transcripts of the other three speeches are known to exist.

Reports of nine of the fourteen speeches are reproduced in this part. Only two of them — those published in the *Bande Mataram* — may be considered reasonably adequate representations of his words. The other transcripts were recorded in language that is awkward or defective in one way or another. These have been edited to a greater or lesser extent to make them more clear and readable.

Our Experiences in Bengal. Speech delivered in Poona on 13 January 1908 at Gaikwad Wada, the residence of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, at whose invitation Sri Aurobindo had come to the Maharashtrian city. The text reproduced here was first printed on 19 January in the *Mahratta* (Poona), an English newspaper with which Tilak was connected. Another transcript, longer but employing more defective English, was published in the *Daily Telegraph and Deccan Herald* on 15 January. The *Deccan Herald* version was included in the *Supplement* to the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library in 1972 and subsequently in Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches*. The *Mahratta* version is reproduced here for the first time in a book.

National Education. Speech delivered on 15 January 1908 in Girgaum, Bombay. A translation in Marathi was published in the *Kesari* on 21 January. This was retranslated into English by a police agent and published in the Bombay Native Paper Report (a police intelligence report) in 1908. This English text was included in the *Supplement* to the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library in 1973, and subsequently in Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches*. The present text has been retranslated by the editors from a Marathi report.

The Present Situation. Speech delivered at Mahajan Wadi, Bombay, on 19 January 1908. A transcript was published in the *Mahratta* on 2 February 1908. That text was revised by Sri Aurobindo and reprinted in the weekly *Bande Mataram* on 23 February. Subsequently it appeared in *Two Lectures of Sriyut Aravinda Ghose, B.A. (Cantab.)* (1908) and elsewhere. It has formed part of Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches* from the first edition (1922).

The Meaning of Swaraj. Speech delivered in Nasik on 24 January 1908. A translation in Marathi was published the next day in the Nasik *Vritta*. This text was retranslated into English by a police agent and published in the Bombay Presidency Police *Abstract of Intelligence*, vol. 21, no. 6, of 1908. That English text was reproduced in *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* in 1977, and subsequently in Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches*.

Swadeshi and Boycott. Speech delivered in Dhulia on 26 January 1908. Notes were taken on the spot by a police agent, who later had a fair copy typed. This transcript is extensive but deficient in terms of English usage and grammar. (The most obvious defects have been corrected in the present text.) The notes and typed transcript were put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial. Reproduced here for the first time.

Bande Mataram. Speech delivered in Amravati, Maharashtra, on 29 January 1908. A third-person text was published as a news item in the daily *Bande Mataram* on 5 February 1908. It has formed part of Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches* from the first editon (1922).

The Aims of the Nationalist Party. Speech delivered at the Venkatesh Theatre, Nagpur, on 30 January 1908. Marathi translations of this and the two speeches that follow were published in Nagpur soon after the event. Those texts were subsequently retranslated into defective English and printed in Government of India Political Home (Special) File 195-A, and reproduced in National Archives of India History of the Freedom Movement Papers, Region IV & V, file 94. From there they were reproduced in *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* in 1980, and subsequently in Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches*.

Our Work in the Future. Speech delivered at the Venkatesh Theatre, Nagpur, on 31 January 1908. See the note to “The Aims of the Nationalist Party”.

Commercial and Educational Swarajya. Speech delivered at the Itwari Bazar, Nagpur, on 1 February 1908. See the note to “The Aims of the Nationalist Party”.

Part Six. *Bande Mataram* under the Editorship of Sri Aurobindo: 6 February – 2 May 1908, with Speeches Delivered during the Same Period

The articles published in this section all appeared in *Bande Mataram* on the dates indicated. They are not dealt with separately here.

Speeches in Part Six

Speeches at Pabna. “Resolution at Bengal Provincial Conference” was moved at the Pabna session of the Provincial Conference on 12 February 1908. A report was published in the *Dawn and Dawn Society's Magazine* in April 1908. This was included (with an incorrect date) in the 1993 edition of Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches*. “Speech at the National Education Conference” was delivered at a public meeting in Pabna on 13 February 1908. A report was published in the *Bande Mataram* daily on 17 February 1908, and reproduced (in a slightly shortened form) in the *Dawn and Dawn Society's Magazine* in April. That text was reproduced in Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches* in 1993. In the present volume, the *Bande Mataram* text is reproduced.

Speech at Panti's Math. Delivered at Panti's Math, an open space in north Calcutta, on 3 April 1908. This brief transcript was noted down by a police agent and put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial. The last sentence was considered one of the most damaging things Sri Aurobindo said in his recorded speeches.

United Congress. Speech delivered at Panti's Math, Calcutta, on 10 April 1908. A third-person report was published as a news item in the weekly *Bande Mataram* on 12 April. Reproduced in Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches* from the first editon (1922).

Baruipur Speech. Delivered in Baruipur, Bengal, on 12 April 1908. A third-person transcript was published as a news item in the daily

Bande Mataram on 17 April. Reproduced in Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches* from the first editon (1922).

Palli Samiti. Speech delivered at a conference in Kishoregunj, Eastern Bengal and Assam, on 20 April 1908. A transcript was published in the weekly *Bande Mataram* on 26 April. Reproduced in Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches* from the first editon (1922).

Part Seven. Writings from Manuscripts 1907–1908

All the pieces in this part were written while the *Bande Mataram* was being published but did not appear in it. All were seized by the police when Sri Aurobindo was arrested on 2 May 1908, and put in as evidence against him by the prosecution. Court transcriptions of two of the pieces were reproduced in a journal in 1909. After Sri Aurobindo's passing, the original manuscripts of all five of the pieces were recovered. The texts in the present volume have been transcribed from these manuscripts.

The Bourgeois and the Samurai. Editorial title. 1906–7. This article was intended not for the *Bande Mataram*, but for a certain "Review", presumably *The Modern Review* or another monthly journal. The notebook containing the manuscript was seized in May 1908 and never seen by Sri Aurobindo again. Four years after his passing, it and several other notebooks were rediscovered and restored to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The text was transcribed and published in *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* in 1978. It is complete in that it has a beginning, a middle and an end, but it was never prepared by the author for publication. As a result certain passages were not fully worked into the text. These passages have been inserted by the editors either in the text itself (if the point of insertion was sufficiently clear) or in footnotes.

The New Nationalism. Editorial title. Late 1907 or early 1908. The present text follows the manuscript exactly. Sri Aurobindo first wrote, on separate pages, two incomplete paragraphs, each with a heading meant to be the title of the piece. Then, on a third page, he began again, this time without any heading. As neither of the existing headings was selected as the final title, the editors have placed a general editorial title above them both. The "former article, in this Review" referred to in the first complete paragraph is undoubtedly “The Bourgeois and the Samurai”. The text of “The New Nationalism” was put in as evidence by the prosecution in the Alipore Bomb Trial. In the beginning of 1909 this piece and “The Morality of Boycott” (see below) were reproduced from the court transcripts by *Swaraj*, a fortnightly review published from London by Bipin Chandra Pal. The London text was later reproduced in the *Hindusthan Standard* and elsewhere.

The Mother and the Nation. Editorial title. 1907 or 1908. Put in as evidence by the prosecution in the Alipore Bomb Trial. Published here for the first time.

The Morality of Boycott. 1908. This essay was found in Sri Aurobindo’s room at the time of his arrest on 2 May 1908. This circumstance suggests that it was meant to be published in the next or a forthcoming issue of *Bande Mataram*. It was transcribed and put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial, and reproduced from the court transcript in London in 1909 (see the note to “The New Nationalism”), and later in *Selections from the Bande Mataram* (see under Publication History below), in the *Hindusthan Standard*, and a number of other places. “A Fragment” (see the next note) has always been published as part of “The Morality of Boycott”, but it seems to be the incomplete opening of a separate piece.

A Fragment. 1908. This piece was found along with “The Morality of Boycott” at the time of Sri Aurobindo’s arrest in May 1908. It was apparently written at the same time but left unfinished.

Appendixes

The pieces in the first three appendixes were written during the period of publication of the *Bande Mataram*. Appendix Four comprises an interview given by Sri Aurobindo while he was under trial in the Alipore Bomb Case.

Appendix One. Incomplete Drafts of Three Articles

Among the papers seized from Sri Aurobindo’s house at the time of his arrest on 2 May 1908 are two sheets containing partial drafts of two *Bande Mataram* articles: “Nagpur and Loyalist Methods” (16

November 1907) and "By the Way. In Praise of Honest John"(18 November 1907). These are the only handwritten drafts of matter for the *Bande Mataram* that still exist. Also on 2 May 1908 a separate sheet was seized that contained a partial draft of another article on John Morley that was never published. The contents of these sheets are reproduced here for the first time.

Appendix Two. Writings and Jottings Connected with the *Bande Mataram* 1906–1908

These writings all deal with the organisation, finance, printing and promotion of the *Bande Mataram*. Written by Sri Aurobindo between 1906 and 1908, they show that he took an active interest in every aspect of the newspaper's production.

"Bande Mataram" Printers & Publishers, Limited. This prospectus was first published in the *Bande Mataram* on 1 October 1906, or perhaps earlier (many issues from this period are missing), and reproduced thereafter in several issues of the journal. The joint-stock company it describes was Sri Aurobindo's idea, and it is probable that he was the author of all or most of this text. It was signed by him and ten other prominent Nationalists. On 14 October, the *Bande Mataram* company was registered with the government. After that date the text of the prospectus was altered to reflect this fact.

Draft of a Prospectus of 1907. This text was written by Sri Aurobindo in his own hand on a loose sheet of paper. It is an incomplete draft of a prospectus for the Bande Mataram Publishers and Printers Company, offering shares to the public for their financial as well as their patriotic value. The text must have been written late in 1907, "a full year" after the Bande Mataram began to appear under the aegis of the company.

Notes and Memos. These seven pieces were written by Sri Aurobindo in notebooks or on loose sheets of paper between 1906 and 1908. They were among the papers seized by the police at the time of his arrest in May 1908, and were put in as evidence against him in the Alipore Bomb Trial.

[1] A draft memorandum on the budget and management of *Bande Mataram*, setting forth the powers of the Managing Director (Sri Aurobindo) and the subordinate officers and staff members. Date uncertain.

[2] A note on the budget and management of *Bande Mataram*. Written on a loose sheet found inserted in one of Sri Aurobindo's notebooks.

[3] A note on payments to be made. Found jotted down in one of Sri Aurobindo's notebooks.

[4] A note on editorial work, setting forth the areas of responsibility of Sri Aurobindo, the "Editor", and Shyam Sunder Chakravarti (here spelled Chuckerbutty).

[5] A note on the use of Calcutta newspapers. The *Englishman*, *Bengalee*, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *Empire*, *Statesman* and *Daily News* were newspapers of Calcutta. Lacking its own reporters and the wherewithal to subscribe to the wire services, the *Bande Mataram* lifted most of its news from its rivals.

[6] A schedule of office work, giving the filing times for the different features, etc.

[7] A proposed schedule of *Bande Mataram*'s proofreading routine. The "Anucul" mentioned is apparently Anucul Mukherjee, who was recruited by the police to testify against Sri Aurobindo in the *Bande Mataram* sedition case (August – September 1907). The document may thus be dated to the period before the trial.

Appendix Three: Nationalist Party Documents

In 1907 and 1908, Sri Aurobindo was one of the leaders of the "Nationalist Party", one of two factions within the Indian National Congress. (The Nationalists were called "Extremists" by the members of the rival faction, whom the Extremists referred to as Moderates. As foreseen by Sri Aurobindo in "The New Nationalism" [p. 1109], these "nicknames of party warfare have . . . passed into the accepted terminology used by serious politicians and perpetuated by history", and it is by the nicknames that the parties are known today.) The two documents reproduced in this appendix were written by Sri Aurobindo as part of his effort to reform the existing Congress organisation or else to found a separate Nationalist Congress. They were among the papers seized by the police when his room was searched at the time of his arrest in May 1908. They are published here for the first time.

Letters and telegrams written by Sri Aurobindo as leader of the Nationalist Party of Bengal are published in *On Himself*.

[1] **Suggested Rules of Business for the Congress**. 1907–8. This typewritten document contains one or two small corrections in ink that seem to be in Sri Aurobindo's handwriting. This, and the fact that it was found in Sri Aurobindo's room, makes it likely that it was his work. He was among those who believed that the Congress ought to have a written constitution and rules of procedure. The present document is an attempt, from the Nationalist side, to formulate such a set of rules.
[2] **Proposed Organisation of Separate Nationalist Party**. The Nationalist and Moderate factions of the Indian National Congress split apart at the Surat Congress (December 1907). Around the time of the split, Sri Aurobindo was making plans to form a separate Nationalist Party, which would have its own branches and meet separately from the Moderate-dominated Congress. This document is an incomplete sketch of the organisation that such a separate Nationalist Party might have.

Appendix Four. An Interview

Sri Aurobindo gave this informal interview to a correspondent of the *Empire*, a Calcutta daily, on 15 August 1908, his thirty-sixth birthday. At that time he and a number of others were being tried in the Alipore Magistrate's Court in what became known as the Alipore Bomb Trial.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

All the *Bande Mataram* articles reproduced in this volume first appeared in the newspaper on the dates indicated. After its demise, two collections of *Bande Mataram* articles, some of which were written by Sri Aurobindo, were published. The Vande Mataram Press, Poona, issued three volumes entitled *The Bande Mataram* in 1909 (this collection was quickly proscribed by the British government). The Swaraj Publishing House, Benares, published *Selections from the Bande Mataram* in 1922.

In 1957, 1958 and 1964 a number of *Bande Mataram* articles ascribed to Sri Aurobindo were published by Professors Haridas and Uma Mukherjee in three volumes: *"Bande Mataram" and Indian Nationalism*, *Sri Aurobindo's Political Thought*, and *Sri Aurobindo and the New Thought in Indian Politics* (see footnote 8 for bibliographical details). The selection of the articles was the work of the Mukherjees, assisted in the first two volumes by Hemendra Prasad Ghose.

The seven articles making up *The Doctrine of Passive Resistance* were published as a booklet by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1948 and subsequently. In 1965 the same publisher brought out a selection of thirty-four articles thought to be by Sri Aurobindo in another booklet entitled *On Nationalism*. A new selection of fifty-six articles was brought out in 1996 as Part Three of the second edition of *On Nationalism*.

Two of Sri Aurobindo's speeches were printed in Bombay in 1908 as *Two Lectures of Sriyut Aravinda Ghose, B. A. (Cantab.)*. These and other speeches were subsequently reproduced in various collections in English and in Marathi and Gujarati translation. In 1922 six speeches from the *Bande Mataram* period, along with six from the *Karmayogin* period (1909–10) and "An Open Letter to My Countrymen" (1909), were published by the Prabartak Publishing House, Chandernagore, as *Speeches of Aurobindo Ghose*. This book was reproduced by the Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, in 1948 under the shortened title *Speeches*, and by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, in 1952. In the fourth edition, brought out by the same publisher in 1969, another open letter, "To My Countrymen", was included. More additions were made to the fifth (1974) and sixth (1993) editions.

In 1972 an attempt was made to publish all *Bande Mataram* articles written by Sri Aurobindo, all speeches delivered by him during the *Bande Mataram* period, and all available political writings from his manuscripts under the title *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings–I*. This book was reprinted in 1973 and 1995.

The present volume corresponds largely to *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings–I*. The selection of the articles has been completely redone, but it does not differ greatly from the selection made for the 1972 volume. All available manuscript writings and speeches have been included, several of them appearing here for the first time in a book.

Karmayogin

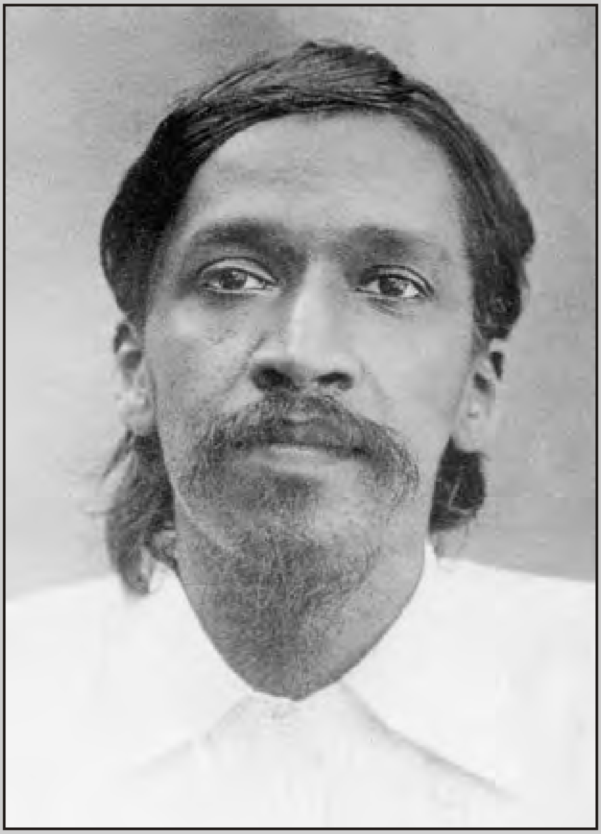

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 8
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1997
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Karmayogin

Political Writings and Speeches

1909 – 1910

Sri Aurobindo in the Alipur Jail, 1909

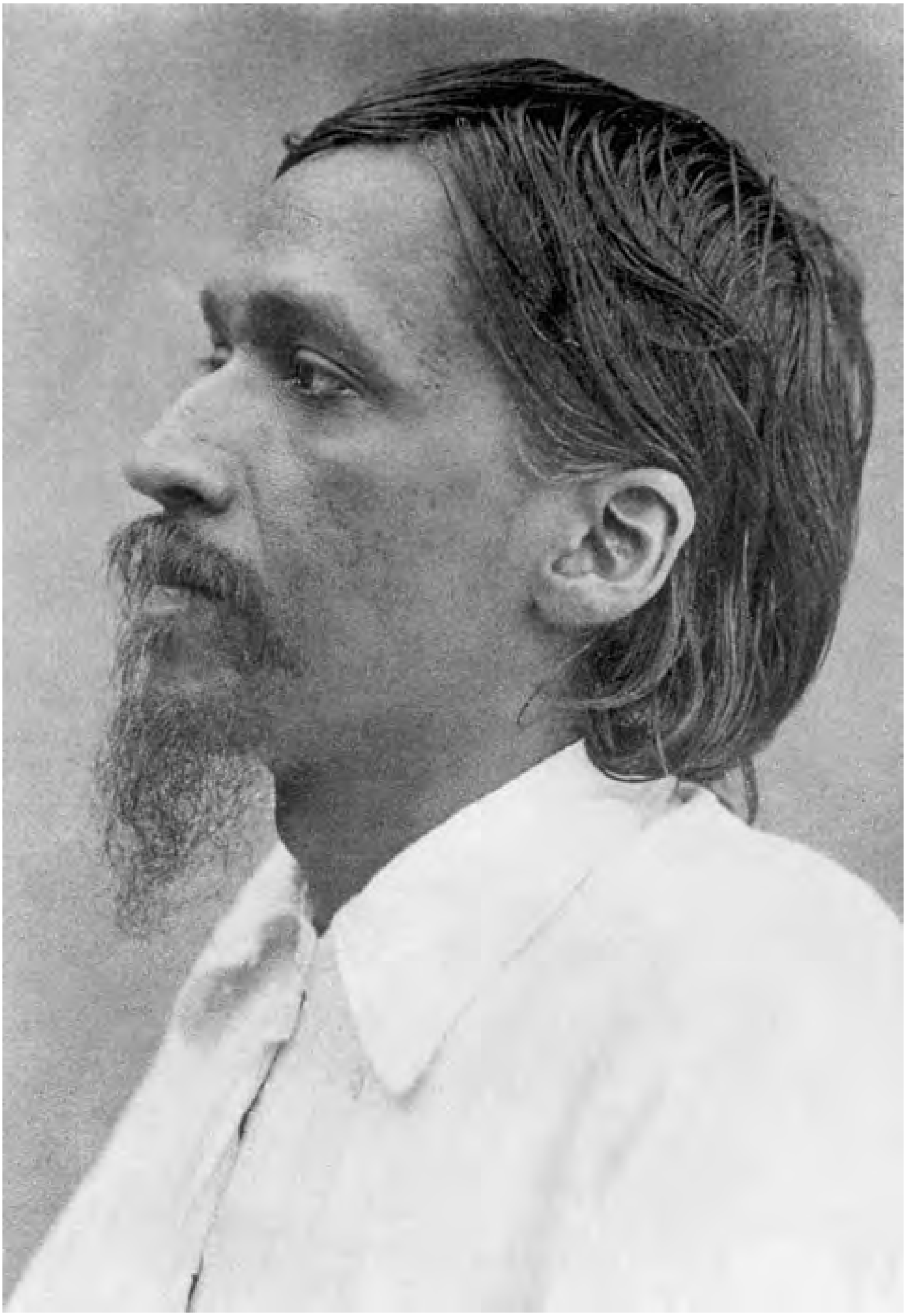

Sri Aurobindo in the Alipur Jail, 1909

Publisher's Note

Sri Aurobindo launched the *Karmayogin*, "A Weekly Review of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.," on 19 June 1909, six weeks after his release from jail on conclusion of the Alipore Bomb Trial. Between then and February 1910, when he left Calcutta, he edited this journal, writing most of its contents himself. In addition to articles on political and related matters, the *Karmayogin* contained essays on philosophy, yoga, education, art and literature, as well as translations and poetry. The political articles are published in this volume, the other items are listed at the end of the *Karmayogin* issue they appeared in. A table at the end of the volume shows where these other items are published in THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Sri Aurobindo delivered a number of speeches between May and October 1909. Texts of some of them were published in the *Karmayogin* and other journals. Others were preserved only in notes jotted down by police agents. The speeches are published in this volume according to date of delivery and not of publication.

Some of the articles included in this volume were published in booklets brought out between 1918 and 1923 and later reprinted. When a revised edition of one of these booklets was published in 1937, a disciple of Sri Aurobindo's wrote a review of it that he sent to Sri Aurobindo for approval. Sri Aurobindo's response gives some idea of his attitude at that time towards his earlier writings:

> Yes, I have seen it [the disciple's review], but I don't think it can be published in its present form as it prolongs the political Aurobindo of that time into the Sri Aurobindo of the present time. You even assert that I have "thoroughly" revised the book and these articles

> are an index of my latest views on the burning problems of the day and there has been no change in my views in 27 years (which would surely be proof [of] a rather unprogressive mind). How do you get all that? My spiritual consciousness and knowledge at that time was as nothing to what it is now — how would the change leave my view of politics and life unmodified altogether? There has been no such thorough revision; I have left the book as it was, because it would be useless to modify what was written so long ago — the same as with Yoga and its objects [*The Yoga and Its Objects*]. Anyway the review would almost amount to a proclamation of my present political views — while on the contrary I have been careful to pronounce nothing — no views whatever on political questions for the last I don't know how many years.

The bulk of the contents of the present volume was first published in book-form in 1972 as *Karmayogin: Early Political Writings — II*, volume 2 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. The text of the present edition, the first with the title *Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910*, has been checked against the *Karmayogin* journal and the sources of the speeches and revised articles.

CONTENTS

Uttarpara Speech, 30 May 1909 3
Beadon Square Speech – 1, 13 June 1909 13

KARMAYOGIN NO. 1, 19 JUNE 1909

Ourselves 18
The Ideal of the Karmayogin 23
"Swaraj" and the Musulmans 29
Jhalakati Speech, 19 June 1909 33
Bakarganj Speech, 23 June 1909 43
Khulna Speech, 25 June 1909 48

KARMAYOGIN NO. 2, 26 JUNE 1909

Facts and Opinions

- The Message of India 54
- Lord Honest John 55
- The Failure of Europe 56
- British Fears 57
- The Journalistic War Council 58
- Forgotten Eventualities 59
- National Vitality 59

The Awakening Soul of India 61
The Right of Association (Speech), 27 June 1909 67

KARMAYOGIN NO. 3, 3 JULY 1909

Opinion and Comments

- The Highest Synthesis 84
- Faith and Analysis 85
- Mature Deliberation 86
- The Importance of the Individual 87
- The Fatalism of Action 88
- God's Ways 89
- Adequate Value 89
- Expediency and Nationalism 90

A Task Unaccomplished 92
Mr. Mackarness' Bill 96
Kumartuli Speech, 11 July 1909 100

KARMAYOGIN NO. 4, 17 JULY 1909

Facts and Opinions

An Unequal Fight 108
God and His Universe 109
The Scientific Position 109
Force Universal or Individual 110
Faith and Deliberation 111
Our "Inconsistencies" 113
Good out of Evil 113
Loss of Courage 114
Intuitive Reason 115
Exit Bibhishan 116
College Square Speech – 1, 18 July 1909 122

KARMAYOGIN NO. 5, 24 JULY 1909

Facts and Opinions

The Indiscretions of Sir Edward 127
The Demand for Co-operation 128
What Co-operation? 129
Sir Edward's Menace 130
The Personal Result 131
A One-sided Proposal 132
The Only Remedy 133
The *Bengalee* and Ourselves 133
God and Man 134
Ourselves 136
The Doctrine of Sacrifice 137

KARMAYOGIN NO. 6, 31 JULY 1909

Facts and Opinions

The Spirit in Asia 142
The Persian Revolution 142

Persia's Difficulties 143
The New Men in Persia 143
Madanlal Dhingra 144
Press Garbage in England 145
Shyamji Krishnavarma 145
Nervous Anglo-India 146
The Recoil of Karma 147
Liberty or Empire 148
An Open Letter to My Countrymen 150

KARMAYOGIN NO. 7, 7 AUGUST 1909

Facts and Opinions

The Police Bill 161
The Political Motive 162
A Hint from Dinajpur 163
The Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company 164
A Swadeshi Enterprise 164
Youth and the Bureaucracy 166

KARMAYOGIN NO. 8, 14 AUGUST 1909

Facts and Opinions

The *Englishman* on Boycott 171
Social Boycott 172
National or Anti-national 173
The Boycott Celebration 174
A Birthday Talk, 15 August 1909 178

KARMAYOGIN NO. 9, 21 AUGUST 1909

Facts and Opinions

Srijut Surendranath Banerji's Return 179
A False Step 180
A London Congress 181
The Power that Uplifts 183

CONTENTS

KARMAYOGIN NO. 10, 28 AUGUST 1909

Facts and Comments

The Cretan Difficulty 189
Greece and Turkey 191
Spain and the Moor 191
The London Congress 192
Political Prisoners 194
An Official Freak 195
Soham Gita 196
Bengal and the Congress 197

KARMAYOGIN NO. 11, 4 SEPTEMBER 1909

Facts and Comments

The Kaul Judgment 203
The Implications in the Judgment 205
The Social Boycott 206
The Law and the Nationalist 207
The Hughly Resolutions 209
Bengal Provincial Conference, Hughly – 1909 215
Speech at the Hughly Conference, 6 September 1909 223

KARMAYOGIN NO. 12, 11 SEPTEMBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

Impatient Idealists 225
The Question of Fitness 226
Public Disorder and Unfitness 227
The Hughly Conference 230

KARMAYOGIN NO. 13, 18 SEPTEMBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

The Two Programmes 234
The Reforms 235
The Limitations of the Act 237
Shall We Accept the Partition? 238

KARMAYOGIN NO. 14, 25 SEPTEMBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

  - The Convention President 240
  - Presidential Autocracy 242
  - Mr. Lalmohan Ghose 243
- The Past and the Future 244

KARMAYOGIN NO. 15, 2 OCTOBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

  - The Rump Presidential Election 250
  - Nation-stuff in Morocco 251
  - Cook versus Peary 252
- Nationalist Organisation 254
- An Extraordinary Prohibition 261

KARMAYOGIN NO. 16, 9 OCTOBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

  - The Apostasy of the National Council 264
  - The Progress of China 265
  - Partition Day 267
- Nationalist Work in England 268
- College Square Speech – 2, 10 October 1909 274
- Bhawanipur Speech, 13 October 1909 276
- Beadon Square Speech – 2, 16 October 1909 279

KARMAYOGIN NO. 17, 16 OCTOBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

  - Gokhale's Apologia 280
  - The People's Proclamation 282
  - The Anushilan Samiti 283
  - The National Fund 284
- Union Day 285

KARMAYOGIN NO. 18, 6 NOVEMBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

  - Mahomedan Representation 287
  - The Growth of Turkey 289

China Enters 290
The Patiala Arrests 291
The Daulatpur Dacoity 293
Place and Patriotism 293
The Dying Race 294
The Death of Señor Ferrer 295
The Budget 295
A Great Opportunity 296
Buddha's Ashes 297
Students and Politics 297
The Assassination of Prince Ito 299
The Hindu Sabha 302

KARMAYOGIN NO. 19, 13 NOVEMBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

House Searches 307
Social Reform and Politics 308
The Deoghar Sadhu 310
The Great Election 311

KARMAYOGIN NO. 20, 20 NOVEMBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

A Hint of Change 317
Pretentious Shams 319
The Municipalities and Reform 319
Police Unrest in the Punjab 320
The Reformed Councils 322

KARMAYOGIN NO. 21, 27 NOVEMBER 1909

Facts and Opinions

The Bomb Case and Anglo-India 327
The Nadiya President's Speech 328
Mr. Macdonald's Visit 329
The Alipur Judgment 331

KARMAYOGIN NO. 22, 4 DECEMBER 1909
Facts and Opinions
    The Lieutenant-Governor's Mercy 334
    An Ominous Presage 335
    Chowringhee Humour 337
    The Last Resort 337

KARMAYOGIN NO. 23, 11 DECEMBER 1909
Facts and Opinions
    The United Congress 340
    The Spirit of the Negotiations 342
    A Salutary Rejection 342
    The English Revolution 343
    Aristocratic Quibbling 345
The Transvaal Indians 347

KARMAYOGIN NO. 24, 18 DECEMBER 1909
Facts and Opinions
    Sir Pherozshah's Resignation 351
    The Council Elections 352
    British Unfitness for Liberty 353
    The Lahore Convention 354
The Moderate Manifesto 356

KARMAYOGIN NO. 25, 25 DECEMBER 1909
Facts and Opinions
    The United Congress Negotiations 362
    A New Sophism 364
    Futile Espionage 365
    Convention Voyagers 366
Creed and Constitution 367
To My Countrymen 372

KARMAYOGIN NO. 26, 1 JANUARY 1910
Facts and Opinions
    The Perishing Convention 377
    The Convention President's Address 378

The Alleged Breach of Faith 380
The Nasik Murder 381
Transvaal and Bengal 383
Our Cheap Edition 384
National Education 385

KARMAYOGIN NO. 27, 8 JANUARY 1910

Facts and Opinions

Sir Edward Baker's Admissions 390
Calcutta and Mofussil 391
The Non-Official Majority 393
Sir Louis Dane on Terrorism 394
The Menace of Deportation 395
A Practicable Boycott 396

KARMAYOGIN NO. 28, 15 JANUARY 1910

Facts and Opinions

The Patiala Case 402
The Arya Samaj and Politics 403
The Arya Disclaimer 404
What Is Sedition? 405
A Thing that Happened 408

KARMAYOGIN NO. 29, 22 JANUARY 1910

Facts and Opinions

Lajpat Rai's Letters 413
A Nervous Samaj 414
The Banerji Vigilance Committees 415
Postal Precautions 416
Detective Wiles 417
The New Policy 419

KARMAYOGIN NO. 30, 29 JANUARY 1910

Facts and Opinions

The High Court Assassination 425
Anglo-Indian Prescriptions 426
House Search 428

The Elections 429

The Viceroy's Speech 431

KARMAYOGIN NO. 31, 5 FEBRUARY 1910

Facts and Opinions

The Party of Revolution 434

Its Growth 435

Its Extent 436

Ourselves 437

The Necessity of the Situation 439

The Elections 445

KARMAYOGIN NO. 32, 12 FEBRUARY 1910

Passing Thoughts

Vedantic Art 448

Asceticism and Enjoyment 449

Aliens in Ancient India 450

The Scholarship of Mr. Risley 451

Anarchism 451

The Gita and Terrorism 452

KARMAYOGIN NO. 33, 19 FEBRUARY 1910

Passing Thoughts

The Bhagalpur Literary Conference 454

Life and Institutions 455

Indian Conservatism 456

Samaj and Shastra 457

Revolution 457

KARMAYOGIN NO. 37, 19 MARCH 1910

Sj. Aurobindo Ghose 461

KARMAYOGIN NO. 38, 26 MARCH 1910

In Either Case 462

APPENDIX — *Karmayogin* Writings in Other Volumes of the Complete Works 467

REGISTERED NO. C532.

SUBSCRIPTION RUPEES 5.

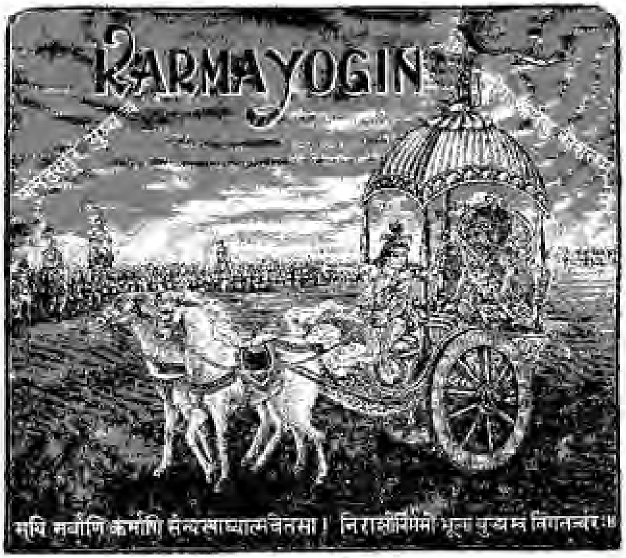
KARMAYOGIN
मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा। निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः॥

SINGLE COPY ANNAS 2.

A WEEKLY REVIEW

OF

National Religion, Literature, Science,
Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. | SATURDAY 7th AUGUST 1909. | No. 7.

Contributors:—SJ.. AUROBINDO GHOSE AND OTHERS

OFFICE:—14 SHAM BAZAR STREET,
CALCUTTA.

Uttarpara Speech

WHEN I was asked to speak to you at the annual meeting of your *sabha*, it was my intention to say a few words about the subject chosen for today, — the subject of the Hindu religion. I do not know now whether I shall fulfil that intention; for as I sat here, there came into my mind a word that I have to speak to you, a word that I have to speak to the whole of the Indian Nation. It was spoken first to myself in jail and I have come out of jail to speak it to my people.

It was more than a year ago that I came here last. When I came I was not alone; one of the mightiest prophets of Nationalism sat by my side. It was he who then came out of the seclusion to which God had sent him, so that in the silence and solitude of his cell he might hear the word that He had to say. It was he that you came in your hundreds to welcome. Now he is far away, separated from us by thousands of miles. Others whom I was accustomed to find working beside me are absent. The storm that swept over the country has scattered them far and wide. It is I this time who have spent one year in seclusion, and now that I come out I find all changed. One who always sat by my side and was associated in my work is a prisoner in Burma; another is in the north rotting in detention. I looked round when I came out, I looked round for those to whom I had been accustomed to look for counsel and inspiration. I did not find them. There was more than that. When I went to jail, the whole country was alive with the cry of Bande Mataram, alive with the hope of a nation, the hope of millions of men who had newly risen out of degradation. When I came out of jail I listened for that

Delivered at Uttarpara, Bengal, on 30 May 1909. Text published in the Bengalee*, an English-language newspaper of Calcutta, on 1 June; thoroughly revised by Sri Aurobindo and republished in the* Karmayogin *on 19 and 26 June.*

cry, but there was instead a silence. A hush had fallen on the country and men seemed bewildered; for instead of God's bright heaven full of the vision of the future that had been before us, there seemed to be overhead a leaden sky from which human thunders and lightnings rained. No man seemed to know which way to move, and from all sides came the question, "What shall we do next? What is there that we can do?" I too did not know which way to move, I too did not know what was next to be done. But one thing I knew, that as it was the Almighty Power of God which had raised that cry, that hope, so it was the same power which had sent down that silence. He who was in the shouting and the movement was also in the pause and the hush. He has sent it upon us, so that the nation might draw back for a moment and look into itself and know His will. I have not been disheartened by that silence, because I had been made familiar with silence in my prison and because I knew it was in the pause and the hush that I had myself learned this lesson through the long year of my detention. When Bipin Chandra Pal came out of jail, he came with a message, and it was an inspired message. I remember the speech he made here. It was a speech not so much political as religious in its bearing and intention. He spoke of his realisation in jail, of God within us all, of the Lord within the nation, and in his subsequent speeches also he spoke of a greater than ordinary force in the movement and a greater than ordinary purpose before it. Now I also meet you again, I also come out of jail, and again it is you of Uttarpara who are the first to welcome me, not at a political meeting but at a meeting of a society for the protection of our religion. That message which Bipin Chandra Pal received in Buxar jail, God gave to me in Alipore. That knowledge He gave to me day after day during my twelve months of imprisonment and it is that which He has commanded me to speak to you now that I have come out.

I knew I would come out. The year of detention was meant only for a year of seclusion and of training. How could anyone hold me in jail longer than was necessary for God's purpose? He had given me a word to speak and a work to do, and until that word was spoken I knew that no human power could hush me, until that work was done no human power could stop God's instrument, however weak that instrument might be or however small. Now that I have come out, even in these few minutes, a word has been suggested to me which I had no wish to speak. The thing I had in my mind He has thrown from it and what I speak is under an impulse and a compulsion.

When I was arrested and hurried to the Lal Bazar hajat I was shaken in faith for a while, for I could not look into the heart of His intention. Therefore I faltered for a moment and cried out in my heart to Him, "What is this that has happened to me? I believed that I had a mission to work for the people of my country and until that work was done, I should have Thy protection. Why then am I here and on such a charge?" A day passed and a second day and a third, when a voice came to me from within, "Wait and see." Then I grew calm and waited. I was taken from Lal Bazar to Alipore and was placed for one month in a solitary cell apart from men. There I waited day and night for the voice of God within me, to know what He had to say to me, to learn what I had to do. In this seclusion the earliest realisation, the first lesson came to me. I remembered then that a month or more before my arrest, a call had come to me to put aside all activity, to go into seclusion and to look into myself, so that I might enter into closer communion with Him. I was weak and could not accept the call. My work was very dear to me and in the pride of my heart I thought that unless I was there, it would suffer or even fail and cease; therefore I would not leave it. It seemed to me that He spoke to me again and said, "The bonds you had not strength to break, I have broken for you, because it is not my will nor was it ever my intention that that should continue. I have another thing for you to do and it is for that I have brought you here, to teach you what you could not learn for yourself and to train you for my work." Then He placed the Gita in my hands. His strength entered into me and I was able to do the *sadhan* of the Gita. I was not only to understand intellectually but to realise what Srikrishna demanded of Arjuna and what He demands of those who aspire to do His work, to be free from repulsion and desire, to do work for Him without the demand for fruit, to renounce self-will and become a passive and faithful instrument in His hands, to have an equal heart for high and low, friend and opponent, success and failure, yet not to do His work negligently. I realised what the Hindu religion meant. We speak often of the Hindu religion, of the Sanatana Dharma, but few of us really know what that religion is. Other religions are preponderatingly religions of faith and profession, but the Sanatana Dharma is life itself; it is a thing that has not so much to be believed as lived. This is the *dharma* that for the salvation of humanity was cherished in the seclusion of this peninsula from of old. It is to give this religion that India is rising. She does not rise as other countries do, for self or when she is strong, to trample on the weak. She is rising to shed the eternal light entrusted to her over the world. India has always existed for humanity and not for herself and it is for humanity and not for herself that she must be great.

Therefore this was the next thing He pointed out to me, — He made me realise the central truth of the Hindu religion. He turned the hearts of my jailers to me and they spoke to the Englishman in charge of the jail, "He is suffering in his confinement; let him at least walk outside his cell for half an hour in the morning and in the evening." So it was arranged, and it was while I was walking that His strength again entered into me. I looked at the jail that secluded me from men and it was no longer by its high walls that I was imprisoned; no, it was Vasudeva who surrounded me. I walked under the branches of the tree in front of my cell, but it was not the tree, I knew it was Vasudeva, it was Srikrishna whom I saw standing there and holding over me His shade. I looked at the bars of my cell, the very grating that did duty for a door and again I saw Vasudeva. It was Narayana who was guarding and standing sentry over me. Or I lay on the coarse blankets that were given me for a couch and felt the arms of Srikrishna around me, the arms of my Friend and Lover. This was the first use of the deeper vision He gave me. I looked at the prisoners in the jail, the thieves, the murderers, the swindlers, and as I looked at them I saw Vasudeva, it was Narayana whom I found in these darkened souls and misused bodies. Amongst these thieves and dacoits there were many who put me to shame by their sympathy, their kindness, the humanity triumphant over such adverse circumstances. One I saw among them especially who seemed to me a saint, a peasant of my nation who did not know how to read and write, an alleged dacoit sentenced to ten years' rigorous imprisonment, one of those whom we look down upon in our Pharisaical pride of class as *chhotalok*. Once more He spoke to me and said, "Behold the people among whom I have sent you to do a little of my work. This is the nature of the nation I am raising up and the reason why I raise them."

When the case opened in the lower court and we were brought before the Magistrate I was followed by the same insight. He said to me, "When you were cast into jail, did not your heart fail and did you not cry out to me, where is Thy protection? Look now at the Magistrate, look now at the Prosecuting Counsel." I looked and it was not the Magistrate whom I saw, it was Vasudeva, it was Narayana who was sitting there on the bench. I looked at the Prosecuting Counsel and it was not the Counsel for the prosecution that I saw; it was Srikrishna who sat there, it was my Lover and Friend who sat there and smiled. "Now do you fear?" He said, "I am in all men and I overrule their actions and their words. My protection is still with you and you shall not fear. This case which is brought against you, leave it in my hands. It is not for you. It was not for the trial that I brought you here but for something else. The case itself is only a means for my work and nothing more." Afterwards when the trial opened in the Sessions Court, I began to write many instructions for my Counsel as to what was false in the evidence against me and on what points the witnesses might be cross-examined. Then something happened which I had not expected. The arrangements which had been made for my defence were suddenly changed and another Counsel stood there to defend me. He came unexpectedly, — a friend of mine, but I did not know he was coming. You have all heard the name of the man who put away from him all other thoughts and abandoned all his practice, who sat up half the night day after day for months and broke his health to save me, — Srijut Chittaranjan Das. When I saw him, I was satisfied, but I still thought it necessary to write instructions. Then all that was put from me and I had the message from within, "This is the man who will save you from the snares put around your feet. Put aside those papers. It is not you who will instruct him. I will instruct him." From that time I did not of myself speak a word to my Counsel about the case or give a single instruction and if ever I was asked a question, I always found that my answer did not help the case. I had left it to him and he took it entirely into his hands, with what result you know. I knew all along what He meant for me, for I heard it again and again, always I listened to the voice within: "I am guiding, therefore fear not. Turn to your own work for which I have brought you to jail and when you come out, remember never to fear, never to hesitate. Remember that it is I who am doing this, not you nor any other. Therefore whatever clouds may come, whatever dangers and sufferings, whatever difficulties, whatever impossibilities, there is nothing impossible, nothing difficult. I am in the nation and its uprising and I am Vasudeva, I am Narayana, and what I will, shall be, not what others will. What I choose to bring about, no human power can stay."

Meanwhile He had brought me out of solitude and placed me among those who had been accused along with me. You have spoken much today of my self-sacrifice and devotion to my country. I have heard that kind of speech ever since I came out of jail, but I hear it with embarrassment, with something of pain. For I know my weakness, I am a prey to my own faults and backslidings. I was not blind to them before and when they all rose up against me in seclusion, I felt them utterly. I knew then that I the man was a mass of weakness, a faulty and imperfect instrument, strong only when a higher strength entered into me. Then I found myself among these young men and in many of them I discovered a mighty courage, a power of self-effacement in comparison with which I was simply nothing. I saw one or two who were not only superior to me in force and character, — very many were that, — but in the promise of that intellectual ability on which I prided myself. He said to me, "This is the young generation, the new and mighty nation that is arising at my command. They are greater than yourself. What have you to fear? If you stood aside or slept, the work would still be done. If you were cast aside tomorrow, here are the young men who will take up your work and do it more mightily than you have ever done. You have only got some strength from me to speak a word to this nation which will help to raise it." This was the next thing He told me.

Then a thing happened suddenly and in a moment I was hurried away to the seclusion of a solitary cell. What happened to me during that period I am not impelled to say, but only this that day after day, He showed me His wonders and made me realise the utter truth of the Hindu religion. I had had many doubts before. I was brought up in England amongst foreign ideas and an atmosphere entirely foreign. About many things in Hinduism I had once been inclined to believe that it was all imagination; that there was much of dream in it, much that was delusion and *maya*. But now day after day I realised in the mind, I realised in the heart, I realised in the body the truths of the Hindu religion. They became living experiences to me, and things were opened to me which no material science could explain. When I first approached Him, it was not entirely in the spirit of the Bhakta, it was not entirely in the spirit of the Jnani. I came to Him long ago in Baroda some years before the Swadeshi began and I was drawn into the public field.

When I approached God at that time, I hardly had a living faith in Him. The agnostic was in me, the atheist was in me, the sceptic was in me and I was not absolutely sure that there was a God at all. I did not feel His presence. Yet something drew me to the truth of the Vedas, the truth of the Gita, the truth of the Hindu religion. I felt there must be a mighty truth somewhere in this Yoga, a mighty truth in this religion based on the Vedanta. So when I turned to the Yoga and resolved to practise it and find out if my idea was right, I did it in this spirit and with this prayer to Him, "If Thou art, then Thou knowest my heart. Thou knowest that I do not ask for Mukti, I do not ask for anything which others ask for. I ask only for strength to uplift this nation, I ask only to be allowed to live and work for this people whom I love and to whom I pray that I may devote my life." I strove long for the realisation of Yoga and at last to some extent I had it, but in what I most desired, I was not satisfied. Then in the seclusion of the jail, of the solitary cell I asked for it again. I said, "Give me Thy *adesh*. I do not know what work to do or how to do it. Give me a message." In the communion of Yoga two messages came. The first message said, "I have given you a work and it is to help to uplift this nation. Before long the time will come when you will have to go out of jail; for it is not my will that this time either you should be convicted or that you should pass the time as others have to do, in suffering for their country. I have called you to work, and that is the *adesh* for which you have asked. I give you the *adesh* to go forth and do my work." The second message came and it said, "Something has been shown to you in this year of seclusion, something about which you had your doubts and it is the truth of the Hindu religion. It is this religion that I am raising up before the world, it is this that I have perfected and developed through the *rishis*, saints and *avatars*, and now it is going forth to do my work among the nations. I am raising up this nation to send forth my word. This is the Sanatana Dharma, this is the eternal religion which you did not really know before, but which I have now revealed to you. The agnostic and the sceptic in you have been answered, for I have given you proofs within and without you, physical and subjective, which have satisfied you. When you go forth, speak to your nation always this word that it is for the Sanatana Dharma that they arise, it is for the world and not for themselves that they arise. I am giving them freedom for the service of the world. When therefore it is said that India shall rise, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall rise. When it is said that India shall be great, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall be great. When it is said that India shall expand and extend herself, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall expand and extend itself over the world. It is for the *dharma* and by the *dharma* that India exists. To magnify the religion means to magnify the country. I have shown you that I am everywhere and in all men and in all things, that I am in this movement and I am not only working in those who are striving for the country but I am working also in those who oppose them and stand in their path. I am working in everybody and whatever men may think or do they can do nothing but help on my purpose. They also are doing my work; they are not my enemies but my instruments. In all your actions you are moving forward without knowing which way you move. You mean to do one thing and you do another. You aim at a result and your efforts subserve one that is different or contrary. It is Shakti that has gone forth and entered into the people. Since long ago I have been preparing this uprising and now the time has come and it is I who will lead it to its fulfilment."

This then is what I have to say to you. The name of your society is "Society for the Protection of Religion". Well, the protection of the religion, the protection and upraising before the world of the Hindu religion, that is the work before us. But what is the Hindu religion? What is this religion which we call Sanatana, eternal? It is the Hindu religion only because the Hindu nation has kept it, because in this peninsula it grew up in the seclusion of the sea and the Himalayas, because in this sacred and ancient land it was given as a charge to the Aryan race to preserve through the ages. But it is not circumscribed by the confines of a single country, it does not belong peculiarly and for ever to a bounded part of the world. That which we call the Hindu religion is really the eternal religion, because it is the universal religion which embraces all others. If a religion is not universal, it cannot be eternal. A narrow religion, a sectarian religion, an exclusive religion can live only for a limited time and a limited purpose. This is the one religion that can triumph over materialism by including and anticipating the discoveries of science and the speculations of philosophy. It is the one religion which impresses on mankind the closeness of God to us and embraces in its compass all the possible means by which man can approach God. It is the one religion which insists every moment on the truth which all religions acknowledge, that He is in all men and all things and that in Him we move and have our being. It is the one religion which enables us not only to understand and believe this truth but to realise it with every part of our being. It is the one religion which shows the world what the world is, that it is the *lila* of Vasudeva. It is the one religion which shows us how we can best play our part in that *lila*, its subtlest laws and its noblest rules. It is the one religion which does not separate life in any smallest detail from religion, which knows what immortality is and has utterly removed from us the reality of death.

This is the word that has been put into my mouth to speak to you today. What I intended to speak has been put away from me, and beyond what is given to me I have nothing to say. It is only the word that is put into me that I can speak to you. That word is now finished. I spoke once before with this force in me and I said then that this movement is not a political movement and that nationalism is not politics but a religion, a creed, a faith. I say it again today, but I put it in another way. I say no longer that nationalism is a creed, a religion, a faith; I say that it is the Sanatana Dharma which for us is nationalism. This Hindu nation was born with the Sanatana Dharma, with it it moves and with it it grows. When the Sanatana Dharma declines, then the nation declines, and if the Sanatana Dharma were capable of perishing, with the Sanatana Dharma it would perish. The Sanatana Dharma, that is nationalism. This is the message that I have to speak to you.

Beadon Square Speech – 1

IN SPITE of the foul weather a large number of people assembled on Sunday afternoon at Beadon Square where a big Swadeshi meeting was held under the presidency of Babu Ramananda Chatterji, Editor of the *Prabasi*. Several speakers addressed the meeting. We publish below an authorised version of Mr. Aurobindo Ghose's speech delivered at that meeting.

Sj. Aurobindo Ghose said that when in jail he had been told that the country was demoralised by the repression. He could not believe it then, because his experience of the movement had been very different. He had always found that when Swadeshi was flagging or the Boycott beginning to relax, it only needed an act of repression on the part of the authorities to give it redoubled vigour. It seemed to him then impossible that the deportations would have a different effect. When nine of the most active and devoted workers for the country had been suddenly hurried away from their homes without any fault on their part, without the Government being able to formulate a single definite charge against them, surely the Boycott instead of decreasing would grow tenfold more intense. And what after all was the repression? Some people sent to prison, some deported, a number of house-searches, a few repressive enactments, limiting the liberty of the press and the platform. This was nothing compared with the price other nations had paid for their liberty. They also would have to suffer much more than this before they could make any appreciable advance towards their goal. This was God's law; it was not the rulers who demanded the price, it was God who demanded it. It was his law that a fallen nation should not be allowed

Delivered at Beadon Square, Calcutta, on 13 June 1909. Text published in the Bengalee *on 15 June and reproduced in the* Karmayogin *on 19 June.*

to rise without infinite suffering and mighty effort. That was the price it had to pay for its previous lapses from national duty.

The speaker did not think that there was any real demoralisation. There might be a hesitation among the richer and more vulnerable parts of the community to hold conferences or meetings or give public expression to their views and feelings. He did not measure the strength of the movement by the number of meetings or of people present at the meetings. He measured it by the strength and indomitable obstinacy of feeling and purpose in the hearts of the people. Their first duty was to keep firm hold on their ideal and perform steadfastly the vows they had made before God and the nation. The rulers were never tired of saying that we should get self-government when we were fit. Fitness meant national capacity and strength was the basis of capacity. That was what Lord Morley really meant when he asked himself repeatedly whether this was a real uprising of the nation or a passing excitement. He meant, was it a movement with real strength in it, a movement with elemental force enough in it to resist and survive? That experiment was now being made. They must not expect substantial gains at so small a cost.

He had heard vaguely of the reforms when in prison; he had heard them ecstatically described. He was surprised to hear that description. He had been in England for fourteen years and knew something of the English people and their politics. He could not believe that England or any European people would give substantial reforms after so short an agitation and so scanty a proof of national strength. It was not the fault of the British people, it was a law of politics that they, who have, should be unwilling to yield what they have until they had fully tested the determination of the subject people and even then they would only give just as much as they could not help giving. When he came out, he found what these reforms were. The so-called introduction of the elective principle was a sham and the power given was nothing. For the rest, it was a measure arranged with a skill which did credit to the diplomacy of British statesmen so that we should lose and they gain. It would diminish the political power of the educated class which was the brain and backbone of the nation, it would sow discord among the various communities. This was not a real reform but reaction. They would have to go much further in suffering and self-sacrifice before they could hope for anything substantial. They must hold firm in their determination and keep the Swadeshi unimpaired and by that he meant the determination to assert their national individuality in every branch of national activity.

There was one thing that might be said, how could we expand the Swadeshi if all our methods were taken out of our hands? That could easily be done by the Government. The authorities in this country had absolute and irresponsible power. It had practically been admitted by a responsible member of the Liberal Government that the liberty of no subject of the British Crown was safe in this country if the Government of India took it into its head that he was dangerous or inconvenient, if it were informed by the police who had distinguished themselves at Midnapore or by information as tainted — the perjurers, forgers, informers, approvers, for what other information could they have, circumstanced as they were by their own choice in this country, — that such and such men had been seditious or were becoming seditious or might be seditious or that their presence in their homes was dangerous to the peace of mind of the C.I.D. Against such information there was no safety even for the greatest men in the country, the purest in life, the most blameless and inoffensive in their public activity.

Then there was this sunset regulation. It appeared that we were peaceful citizens until sunset, but after sunset we turned into desperate characters, — well, he was told, even half an hour before sunset; apparently even the sun could not be entirely trusted to keep us straight. We had, it seems, stones in our pockets to throw at the police and some of us, perhaps, dangle bombs in our chaddars. How was this prohibition brought about? Merely by a little expenditure of ink in the Political Department. It would be quite easy to extend it further and prevent public meetings. It was being enforced on us that our so-called liberties were merely Maya. We believed in them for a time and acted on the belief; then one fine morning we wake up and look around for them but they are not there. In reality they never were there; they were Maya, illusions; this was the reason why not only could we not accept reforms which did not mean real control, but some of us did not believe even in that. We doubted not only the sham control but the sham of the reforms themselves, but still control was the minimum on which all were agreed. The question remained, if all our liberties were taken away, what were we to do? Even that would not stop the movement. Christ said to the disciples who expected a material kingdom on the spot, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." To them too he might say, "The kingdom of Swaraj is within you."

Let them win and keep that kingdom of Swaraj, the sense of the national separateness and individuality, the faith in its greatness and future, the feeling of God within ourselves and in the nation, the determination to devote every thought and action to his service. Here no coercion or repression could interfere; here there was no press law or sunset regulation. And it was a law of the psychology of men and nations that the Brahman once awakened within must manifest itself without and nothing could eventually prevent that manifestation. Moreover, their methods were borrowed from England. England gave them and encouraged their use when it was inoffensive to her, but the moment they were used so as to conflict with British interests and to expand national life and strength, they were taken away. But the Indians were a nation apart; they were not dependent on these methods. They had a wonderful power of managing things without definite means. Long before the Press came into existence or telegraph wires, the nation had a means of spreading news from one end of the country to another with electrical rapidity — a Press too impalpable to be touched. They had the power of enforcing the public will without any fixed organisation, of associating without an association — without even the European refuge of a secret association. The spirit was what mattered, if the spirit were there, the movement would find out its own channels; for after all it was the power of God manifested in the movement which would command its own means and create its own channels. They must have the firm faith that India must rise and be great and that everything that happened, every difficulty, every reverse must help and further their end. The trend was upward and the time of decline was over. The morning was at hand and once the light had shown itself, it could never be night again. The dawn would soon be complete and the sun rise over the horizon. The sun of India's destiny would rise and fill all India with its light and overflow India and overflow Asia and overflow the world. Every hour, every moment could only bring them nearer to the brightness of the day that God had decreed.

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 19th JUNE 1909 { No. 1

Ourselves

THE *KARMAYOGIN* comes into the field to fulfil a function which an increasing tendency in the country demands. The life of the nation which once flowed in a broad and single stream has long been severed into a number of separate meagre and shallow channels. The two main floods have followed the paths of religion and politics, but they have flowed separately. Our political activity has crept in a channel cut for it by European or Europeanised minds; it tended always to a superficial wideness, but was deficient in depth and volume. The national genius, originality, individuality poured itself into religion while our politics were imitative and unreal. Yet without a living political activity national life cannot, under modern circumstances, survive. So also there has been a stream of social life, more and more muddied and disturbed, seeking to get clearness, depth, largeness, freedom, but always failing and increasing in weakness or distraction. There was a stream too of industrial life, faint and thin, the poor survival of the old vigorous Indian artistic and industrial capacity murdered by unjust laws and an unscrupulous trade policy. All these ran in disconnected channels, sluggish, scattered and ineffectual. The tendency is now for these streams to unite again into one mighty invincible and grandiose flood. To assist that tendency, to give voice and definiteness to the deeper aspirations now forming obscurely within the national consciousness is the chosen work of the *Karmayogin*.

There is no national life perfect or sound without the *chaturvarnya*. The life of the nation must contain within itself the life of the Brahmin, — spirituality, knowledge, learning, high and pure ethical aspiration and endeavour; the life of the Kshatriya, — manhood and strength moral and physical, the love of battle, the thirst for glory, the sense of honour, chivalry, self-devotion, generosity, grandeur of soul; the life of the Vaishya, — trade, industry, thrift, prosperity, benevolence, philanthropy; the life of the Shudra, — honesty, simplicity, labour, religious and quiet service to the nation even in the humblest position and the most insignificant kind of work. The cause of India's decline was the practical disappearance of the Kshatriya and the dwindling of the Vaishya. The whole political history of India since the tyranny of the Nandas has been an attempt to resuscitate or replace the Kshatriya. But the attempt was only partially successful. The Vaishya held his own for a long time, indeed, until the British advent by which he has almost been extinguished.

When the *chaturvarnya* disappears, there comes *varnasankara*, utter confusion of the great types which keep a nation vigorous and sound. The Kshatriya dwindled, the Vaishya dwindled, the Brahmin and Shudra were left. The inevitable tendency was for the Brahmin type to disappear and the first sign of his disappearance was utter degeneracy, the tendency to lose himself and while keeping some outward signs of the Brahmin to gravitate towards Shudrahood. In the Kaliyuga the Shudra is powerful and attracts into himself the less vigorous Brahmin, as the earth attracts purer but smaller bodies, and the Brahmatej, the spiritual force of the latter, already diminished, dwindles to nothingness. For the Satyayuga to return, we must get back the Brahmatej and make it general. For the Brahmatej is the basis of all the rest and in the Satyayuga all men have it more or less and by it the nation lives and is great.

All this is, let us say, a parable. It is more than a parable, it is a great truth. But our educated class have become so unfamiliar with the deeper knowledge of their forefathers that it has to be translated into modern European terms before they can understand it. For it is the European ideas alone that are real to them and the great truths of Indian thought seem to them mere metaphors, allegories and mystic parables. So well has British education done its fatal denationalising work in India.

The Brahmin stands for religion, science, scholarship and the higher morality; the Kshatriya for war, politics and administration; the Vaishya for the trades, professions and industries; the Shudra for labour and service. It is only when these four great departments of human activity are all in a robust and flourishing condition that the nation is sound and great. When any of these disappear or suffer, it is bad for the body politic. And the two highest are the least easy to be spared. If they survive in full strength, they can provide themselves with the two others, but if either the Kshatriya or the Brahmin go, if either the political force or the spiritual force of a nation is lost, that nation is doomed unless it can revive or replace the missing strength. And of the two the Brahmin is the most important. He can always create the Kshatriya, spiritual force can always raise up material force to defend it. But if the Brahmin becomes the Shudra, then the lower instinct of the serf and the labourer becomes all in all, the instinct to serve and seek a living as the one supreme object of life, the instinct to accept safety as a compensation for lost greatness and inglorious ease and dependence in place of the ardours of high aspiration for the nation and the individual. When spirituality is lost all is lost. This is the fate from which we have narrowly escaped by the resurgence of the soul of India in Nationalism.

But that resurgence is not yet complete. There is the sentiment of Indianism, there is not yet the knowledge. There is a vague idea, there is no definite conception or deep insight. We have yet to know ourselves, what we were, are and may be; what we did in the past and what we are capable of doing in the future; our history and our mission. This is the first and most important work which the *Karmayogin* sets for itself, to popularise this knowledge. The Vedanta or Sufism, the temple or the mosque, Nanak and Kabir and Ramdas, Chaitanya or Guru Govind, Brahmin and Kayastha and Namasudra, whatever national asset we have, indigenous or acclimatised, it will seek to make known, to put in its right place and appreciate. And the second thing is how to use these assets so as to swell the sum of national life and produce the future. It is easy to appraise their relations to the past; it is more difficult to give them their place in the future. The third thing is to know the outside world and its relation to us and how to deal with it. That is the problem which we find at present the most difficult and insistent, but its solution depends on the solution of the others.

We have said that Brahmatej is the thing we need most of all and first of all. In one sense, that means the pre-eminence of religion; but after all, what the Europeans mean by religion is not Brahmatej; which is rather spirituality, the force and energy of thought and action arising from communion with or self-surrender to that within us which rules the world. In that sense we shall use it. This force and energy can be directed to any purpose God desires for us; it is sufficient to knowledge, love or service; it is good for the liberation of an individual soul, the building of a nation or the turning of a tool. It works from within, it works in the power of God, it works with superhuman energy. The re-awakening of that force in three hundred millions of men by the means which our past has placed in our hands, that is our object.

The European is proud of his success in divorcing religion from life. Religion, he says, is all very well in its place, but it has nothing to do with politics or science or commerce, which it spoils by its intrusion; it is meant only for Sundays when, if one is English, one puts on black clothes and tries to feel good, and if one is continental, one puts the rest of the week away and amuses oneself. In reality, the European has not succeeded in getting rid of religion from his life. It is coming back in Socialism, in the Anarchism of Bakunin and Tolstoy, in many other *isms*; and in whatever form it comes, it insists on engrossing the whole of life, moulding the whole of society and politics under the law of idealistic aspiration. It does not use the word God or grasp the idea, but it sees God in humanity. What the European understood by religion, had to be got rid of and put out of life, but real religion, spirituality, idealism, altruism, self-devotion, the hunger after perfection, is the whole destiny of humanity and cannot be got rid of. After all God *does* exist and if He exists, you cannot shove Him into a corner and say: "That is your place, and, as for the world and life, it belongs to us." He pervades and returns. Every age of denial is only a preparation for a larger and more comprehensive affirmation.

The *Karmayogin* will be more of a national review than a weekly newspaper. We shall notice current events only as they evidence, help, affect or resist the growth of national life and the development of the soul of the nation. Political and social problems we shall deal with from this standpoint, seeking first their spiritual roots and inner causes and then proceeding to measures and remedies. In a similar spirit we shall deal with all sources of national strength in the past and in the present, seeking to bring them home to all comprehensions and make them applicable to our life, dynamic and not static, creative and not merely preservative. For if there is no creation, there must be disintegration; if there is no advance and victory, there must be recoil and defeat.

The Ideal of the Karmayogin

A NATION is building in India today before the eyes of the world so swiftly, so palpably that all can watch the process and those who have sympathy and intuition distinguish the forces at work, the materials in use, the lines of the divine architecture. This nation is not a new race raw from the workshop of Nature or created by modern circumstances. One of the oldest races and greatest civilisations on this earth, the most indomitable in vitality, the most fecund in greatness, the deepest in life, the most wonderful in potentiality, after taking into itself numerous sources of strength from foreign strains of blood and other types of human civilisation, is now seeking to lift itself for good into an organised national unity. Formerly a congeries of kindred nations with a single life and a single culture, always by the law of this essential oneness tending to unity, always by its excess of fecundity engendering fresh diversities and divisions, it has never yet been able to overcome permanently the almost insuperable obstacles to the organisation of a continent. The time has now come when those obstacles can be overcome. The attempt which our race has been making throughout its long history, it will now make under entirely new circumstances. A keen observer would predict its success because the only important obstacles have been or are in the process of being removed. But we go farther and believe that it is sure to succeed because the freedom, unity and greatness of India have now become necessary to the world. This is the faith in which the *Karmayogin* puts its hand to the work and will persist in it, refusing to be discouraged by difficulties however immense and apparently insuperable. We believe that God is with us and in that faith we shall conquer. We believe that humanity needs us and it is the love and service of humanity, of our country, of the race, of our religion that will purify our heart and inspire our action in the struggle.

The task we set before ourselves is not mechanical but moral and spiritual. We aim not at the alteration of a form of government but at the building up of a nation. Of that task politics is a part, but only a part. We shall devote ourselves not to politics alone, nor to social questions alone, nor to theology or philosophy or literature or science by themselves, but we include all these in one entity which we believe to be all-important, the *dharma*, the national religion which we also believe to be universal. There is a mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience of which India has always been destined to be guardian, exemplar and missionary. This is the *sanatana dharma*, the eternal religion. Under the stress of alien impacts she has largely lost hold not of the structure of that *dharma*, but of its living reality. For the religion of India is nothing if it is not lived. It has to be applied not only to life, but to the whole of life; its spirit has to enter into and mould our society, our politics, our literature, our science, our individual character, affections and aspirations. To understand the heart of this *dharma*, to experience it as a truth, to feel the high emotions to which it rises and to express and execute it in life is what we understand by Karmayoga. We believe that it is to make the *yoga* the ideal of human life that India rises today; by the *yoga* she will get the strength to realise her freedom, unity and greatness, by the *yoga* she will keep the strength to preserve it. It is a spiritual revolution we foresee and the material is only its shadow and reflex.

The European sets great store by machinery. He seeks to renovate humanity by schemes of society and systems of government; he hopes to bring about the millennium by an act of Parliament. Machinery is of great importance, but only as a working means for the spirit within, the force behind. The nineteenth century in India aspired to political emancipation, social renovation, religious vision and rebirth, but it failed because it adopted Western motives and methods, ignored the spirit, history and destiny of our race and thought that by taking over

European education, European machinery, European organisation and equipment we should reproduce in ourselves European prosperity, energy and progress. We of the twentieth century reject the aims, ideals and methods of the Anglicised nineteenth precisely because we accept its experience. We refuse to make an idol of the present; we look before and after, backward to the mighty history of our race, forward to the grandiose destiny for which that history has prepared it.

We do not believe that our political salvation can be attained by enlargement of Councils, introduction of the elective principle, colonial self-government or any other formula of European politics. We do not deny the use of some of these things as instruments, as weapons in a political struggle, but we deny their sufficiency whether as instruments or ideals and look beyond to an end which they do not serve except in a trifling degree. They might be sufficient if it were our ultimate destiny to be an outlying province of the British Empire or a dependent adjunct of European civilisation. That is a future which we do not think it worth making any sacrifice to accomplish. We believe on the other hand that India is destined to work out her own independent life and civilisation, to stand in the forefront of the world and solve the political, social, economical and moral problems which Europe has failed to solve, yet the pursuit of whose solution and the feverish passage in that pursuit from experiment to experiment, from failure to failure she calls her progress. Our means must be as great as our ends and the strength to discover and use the means so as to attain the end can only be found by seeking the eternal source of strength in ourselves.

We do not believe that by changing the machinery so as to make our society the ape of Europe we shall effect social renovation. Widow-remarriage, substitution of class for caste, adult marriage, intermarriages, interdining and the other nostrums of the social reformer are mechanical changes which, whatever their merits or demerits, cannot by themselves save the soul of the nation alive or stay the course of degradation and decline. It is the spirit alone that saves, and only by becoming great and free in heart can we become socially and politically great and free.

We do not believe that by multiplying new sects limited within the narrower and inferior ideas of religion imported from the West or by creating organisations for the perpetuation of the mere dress and body of Hinduism we can recover our spiritual health, energy and greatness. The world moves through an indispensable interregnum of free thought and materialism to a new synthesis of religious thought and experience, a new religious world-life free from intolerance, yet full of faith and fervour, accepting all forms of religion because it has an unshakable faith in the One. The religion which embraces Science and faith, Theism, Christianity, Mahomedanism and Buddhism and yet is none of these, is that to which the World-Spirit moves. In our own, which is the most sceptical and the most believing of all, the most sceptical because it has questioned and experimented the most, the most believing because it has the deepest experience and the most varied and positive spiritual knowledge, — that wider Hinduism which is not a dogma or combination of dogmas but a law of life, which is not a social framework but the spirit of a past and future social evolution, which rejects nothing but insists on testing and experiencing everything and when tested and experienced turning it to the soul's uses, in this Hinduism we find the basis of the future world-religion. This *sanatana dharma* has many scriptures, Veda, Vedanta, Gita, Upanishad, Darshana, Purana, Tantra, nor could it reject the Bible or the Koran; but its real, most authoritative scripture is in the heart in which the Eternal has His dwelling. It is in our inner spiritual experiences that we shall find the proof and source of the world's Scriptures, the law of knowledge, love and conduct, the basis and inspiration of Karmayoga.

Our aim will therefore be to help in building up India for the sake of humanity — this is the spirit of the Nationalism which we profess and follow. We say to humanity, "The time has come when you must take the great step and rise out of a material existence into the higher, deeper and wider life towards which humanity moves. The problems which have troubled mankind can only be solved by conquering the kingdom within, not by harnessing the forces of Nature to the service of comfort and luxury, but by mastering the forces of the intellect and the spirit, by vindicating the freedom of man within as well as without and by conquering from within external Nature. For that work the resurgence of Asia is necessary, therefore Asia rises. For that work the freedom and greatness of India is essential, therefore she claims her destined freedom and greatness, and it is to the interest of all humanity, not excluding England, that she should wholly establish her claim."

We say to the nation, "It is God's will that we should be ourselves and not Europe. We have sought to regain life by following the law of another being than our own. We must return and seek the sources of life and strength within ourselves. We must know our past and recover it for the purposes of our future. Our business is to realise ourselves first and to mould everything to the law of India's eternal life and nature. It will therefore be the object of the *Karmayogin* to read the heart of our religion, our society, our philosophy, politics, literature, art, jurisprudence, science, thought, everything that was and is ours, so that we may be able to say to ourselves and our nation, 'This is our *dharma*.' We shall review European civilisation entirely from the standpoint of Indian thought and knowledge and seek to throw off from us the dominating stamp of the Occident; what we have to take from the West we shall take as Indians. And the *dharma* once discovered we shall strive our utmost not only to profess but to live, in our individual actions, in our social life, in our political endeavours."

We say to the individual and especially to the young who are now arising to do India's work, the world's work, God's work, "You cannot cherish these ideals, still less can you fulfil them if you subject your minds to European ideas or look at life from the material standpoint. Materially you are nothing, spiritually you are everything. It is only the Indian who can believe everything, dare everything, sacrifice everything. First therefore become Indians. Recover the patrimony of your forefathers. Recover the Aryan thought, the Aryan discipline, the Aryan character, the

Aryan life. Recover the Vedanta, the Gita, the Yoga. Recover them not only in intellect or sentiment but in your lives. Live them and you will be great and strong, mighty, invincible and fearless. Neither life nor death will have any terrors for you. Difficulty and impossibility will vanish from your vocabularies. For it is in the spirit that strength is eternal and you must win back the kingdom of yourselves, the inner Swaraj, before you can win back your outer empire. There the Mother dwells and She waits for worship that She may give strength. Believe in Her, serve Her, lose your wills in Hers, your egoism in the greater ego of the country, your separate selfishness in the service of humanity. Recover the source of all strength in yourselves and all else will be added to you, social soundness, intellectual pre-eminence, political freedom, the mastery of human thought, the hegemony of the world."

"Swaraj" and the Musulmans

WE EXTRACT in our columns this week the comments of Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal's organ, *Swaraj*, on the Government's pro-Mahomedan policy and its possible effects in the future. We are glad to see this great Nationalist again expressing his views with his usual originality and fine political insight. We do not ourselves understand the utility of such a campaign as Srijut Bipin Chandra is carrying on in England. In politics quite as much as in ordinary conduct the rule of *desh-kal-patra*, the right place, the right time and the right person, conditions the value and the effectiveness of the work. For Bipin Babu's mission there could not be a worse place than England, a worse time than the present and a worse audience than the British people. What is the prophet of self-help and dissociation doing in England? Or what kind of message is this that he carries to the British public, "We do not welcome your favours, we reject your help and sympathy and will have no political association with you until Swaraj is ours, — and therefore I am here speaking to you and publishing my views to a British audience in London"? We can only suppose that Bipin Babu does really imagine he can produce some kind of effect worth having, moral if not substantial, upon the ruling nation, and if so what does it portend? Is Saul also among the prophets? Does Bipin too stand in the doorway of Britannia?

The first three or four issues of *Swaraj* disappointed our expectations. A sense of the unreality of his position seemed to haunt the writer and robbed his writing of the former strength and close touch with the subject. It was the old views, the familiar thought, the well-known manner, but it neither convinced, illuminated nor inspired. This month's *Swaraj* is more confident and effective, although the thing still seems to be in the air. The passage extracted and the admirable character-sketch of Srijut

Shyamsunder Chakravarti are the best things in the issue. Bipin Babu seems to have recovered the copious vein of thought, the subtle and flexible reasoning, the just and original view of his subject which made one wait with impatience for every fresh number of *New India*. His attitude towards the Reform scheme and the Mahomedan demand for a separate electorate is the attitude which has consistently been adopted by the Nationalist party in Bengal towards the Hindu-Mahomedan question in ordinary politics. We do not fear Mahomedan opposition; so long as it is the honest Swadeshi article and not manufactured in Shillong and Simla, we welcome it as a sign of life and aspiration. We do not shun, we desire the awakening of Islam in India even if its first crude efforts are misdirected against ourselves; for all strength, all energy, all action is grist to the mill of the nation-builder. In that faith we are ready, when the time comes for us to meet in the political field, to exchange with the Musulman, just as he chooses, the firm clasp of the brother or the resolute grip of the wrestler.

That time has not yet come. There is absolutely no reason why the electoral question should create bad blood between the two communities, for if we leave aside the limited number who still hunger after loaves and fishes or nurse dead delusions, the reforms have no living interest for the Hindu. His field of energy lies elsewhere than in the enlarged pretences of British Liberalism. His business is to find out his own strength and prepare it for a great future, and the less he meddles with unreal politics and nerveless activities, the better for the nation. The Mahomedan has not progressed so far. He has to taste the sweets of political privilege and find them turn to ashes in his mouth. He has to formulate demands, rejoice at promises, fume at betrayals, until he thoroughly discovers the falsity and impossibility of his hopes. His progress is likely to be much swifter than ours has been in the past, for he gets the advantage if not of our experience, at least of the ideas now in the air and of the more bracing and stimulating atmosphere. He is more likely to demand than to crave, and his disillusionment must necessarily be the speedier. And it is then that he too will seek the strength in himself and touch the true springs of self-development. Our best policy is to leave the Mahomedan representatives on the councils to work out their destiny face to face with the bureaucracy, with no weightier Hindu counterpoise than the effete politicians, the time-servers and the self-seekers.

Of one thing we may be certain, that Hindu-Mahomedan unity cannot be effected by political adjustments or Congress flatteries. It must be sought deeper down, in the heart and the mind, for where the causes of disunion are, there the remedies must be sought. We shall do well in trying to solve the problem to remember that misunderstanding is the most fruitful cause of our differences, that love compels love and that strength conciliates the strong. We must strive to remove the causes of misunderstanding by a better mutual knowledge and sympathy; we must extend the unfaltering love of the patriot to our Musulman brother, remembering always that in him too Narayana dwells and to him too our Mother has given a permanent place in her bosom; but we must cease to approach him falsely or flatter out of a selfish weakness and cowardice. We believe this to be the only practical way of dealing with the difficulty. As a political question the Hindu-Mahomedan problem does not interest us at all, as a national problem it is of supreme importance. We shall make it a main part of our work to place Mahomed and Islam in a new light before our readers, to spread juster views of Mahomedan history and civilisation, to appreciate the Musulman's place in our national development and the means of harmonising his communal life with our own, not ignoring the difficulties that stand in our way but making the most of the possibilities of brotherhood and mutual understanding. Intellectual sympathy can only draw together, the sympathy of the heart can alone unite. But the one is a good preparation for the other.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Karmayoga
The Isha Upanishad

Jhalakati Speech

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN, delegates and people of Barisal and Bakarganj: —

I have first to express to you my personal gratitude for the kindly reception you have accorded to me. For a year I have been secluded from the fellowship and brotherly embrace of my fellow-countrymen. To me, therefore, the kindliness of your welcome must awake much keener feelings than would have been the case in other circumstances. Especially is it a cause of rejoicing to me to have that welcome in Barisal. When I come to this District, when I come to this soil of Bakarganj which has been made sacred and ever memorable in the history of this country — I come to no ordinary place. When I come to Barisal, I come to a chosen temple of the Mother — I come to a sacred *pithasthan* of the national spirit — I come to the birth-place and field of work of Aswini Kumar Dutta.

It is now the fourth year since I came to Barisal first on the occasion of the Provincial Conference. Three years have passed since then — they have been years of storm and stress to the country, — they have been years during which history has been making, during which the people of India have been undergoing a process of rebirth. Many things have happened in these years, especially in the last few months. One sign of what has been happening in the past is this empty chair (*pointing to the chair upon which Aswini Kumar's photo was placed*). One aspect of these years has been a series of repressions. They have been years in which the country has had to undergo the sufferings

Delivered at Jhalakati, Bakarganj District, Eastern Bengal and Assam, on 19 June 1909. Text published in the Bengalee *on 27 June and reproduced in the* Karmayogin *on 3 July. Another version, taken down by police agents and reproduced in a Government of Bengal confidential file, appears in the last volume of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

and sacrifices which repression involves. Barisal has had its full share of these sufferings. They had begun even before I last came among you. You had then the regulation lathi of the Police and the Gurkha visitation. After that there have been other forms of coercion. In this very town of Jhalakati you had to pay a punitive police tax. It was a punitive tax, punitive not of any offence of which you have been guilty, — for you have been guilty of none. In Barisal, there was no disturbance, no breach of the law. On the contrary, you have always been patient and self-restrained — you have always kept within the four corners of the law. What you have been punished for was your patriotism — you were punished for your Swadeshism — you were punished for your successful organisation of boycott. That tax was borne by the mahajans of Jhalakati with the readiness and uncomplaining endurance of large-hearted patriotism.

And now there have come the deportations. You have been called to endure the exile of those who have been dearest to you, who stood for all that was patriotic and noble in the district. Of the deportations Barisal has had more than its full share. Of those deported three are sons of this district. The man whose name will live for ever on the lips of his countrymen as one of the great names of the age — one of the makers of the new nation — Aswini Kumar Dutta has been taken away from you. His active and devoted lieutenant has been taken away from you. That warm-hearted patriot whom I am proud to have had the privilege of calling my personal friend — Manoranjan Guha — has been taken away from you. Why have they been exiled? What was their offence? Can anyone in Barisal name a single action — can anyone of those who have sent him into exile name definitely any single action which Aswini Kumar Dutta has committed, of which the highest and noblest man might not be proud? Can anyone name a single action of Krishna Kumar Mitra's which would be derogatory to the reputation of the highest in the land? There have indeed been charges, — vague charges, shameless charges, — made. The law under which they have been exiled requires no charge. The law under which they have been exiled has been impugned in Parliament as an antiquated and anomalous Regulation, utterly out of place and unfit to be used in modern times. When it was so attacked and its use by the Government of India challenged, Lord Morley, the man who rules India with absolute sway and stands or should stand to us as the incarnation of British statesmanship, made an answer which was not the answer of a statesman but of an attorney. "The law," he said, "is as good a law as any on the Statute Book." What is meant — what does Lord Morley mean — by a "good law"? In a certain sense every law is a good law which is passed by an established authority. If there were a law which made Swadeshi illegal, by which to buy a Swadeshi cloth would become a criminal action punishable by a legal tribunal — there have been such laws in the past — and if that were enacted by the Legislative Council, it would be in Lord Morley's sense of the word as good a law as any upon the Statute Book. But would it be a good law in the true sense or a travesty of law and justice? Lord Morley says it is a good law. We say it is a lawless law, — a dishonest law, — a law that is, in any real sense of the word, no law at all. For what is its substance and purpose? It provides that when you cannot bring any charge against a man which can be supported by proofs — and when you have no evidence which would stand for a moment before a court of justice, in any legal tribunal — when you have nothing against him except that his existence is inconvenient to you, then you need not advance any charge, you need not bring any evidence, you are at liberty to remove him from his home, from his friends, from his legitimate activities and intern him for the rest of his life in a jail. This is the law which is as good a law as any on the Statute Book! But what does its presence on the Statute Book mean? It means that under certain circumstances or whenever an absolute authority chooses, there is no law in the land for any subject of the British Crown — no safety for the liberty of the person.

It is under this law that nine of the most devoted workers for the country have been exiled, some of whose names are household words in India and incompatible with any imputation of evil. When the authorities were pressed in Parliament for an account of the reasons for their action they would not bring and refused to bring any definite accusation. Once indeed under the pressure of cross-examination a charge was advanced, — wild, vague and baseless. It was said in effect that these men were instigators and paymasters of anarchy and bloodshed. What was the authority under which such a charge was made? How was it that this monstrous falsehood was allowed to proceed from the mouths of His Majesty's Ministers and pollute the atmosphere of the House of Commons? Is there a man in his senses who will believe that Aswini Kumar Dutta was the instigator and paymaster of anarchy and bloodshed or that Krishna Kumar Mitra was the instigator and paymaster of anarchy and bloodshed, — men whose names were synonymous with righteousness of action and nobility of purpose and whose whole lives were the embodiment of uprightness, candour and fair and open living before all men? We have been told that it was not only on police evidence that they were exiled. That was not what was said at the beginning. At first it was on police information that the deportations were justified and any attempt to impugn that authority was resented. But now that police information has been shown to be false and unreliable, it is said that there was other than police information to justify the action of the authorities. We know what that information must have been. I will not make any sweeping charge against a whole body of men without exception. I know that even among the police there are men who are upright and observe truth and honesty in their dealings. I have met such men and honoured them. But we know what the atmosphere of that department is, we know what the generality of police officers are and how little reliance can be placed upon them. Of the value of police information Midnapore is the standing and conclusive proof. Besides this police information what else can there have been? Obviously the information on which the police has relied in certain of these cases — the evidence of the hired perjurer and forger, of the approver who to save himself from a baseless charge makes allegations yet more unfounded against others and scatters mud on the most spotless reputations in the land. If there were any other source besides this, we know too what that must have been. There are a sprinkling of Vibhishans among us,

— men who for their own ends are willing to tell any lie that they think will please the authorities or injure their personal enemies. But if the Government in this country have upon such information believed that the lives of Aswini Kumar Dutta and Krishna Kumar Mitra are a mere mask and not the pure and spotless lives we have known, then we must indeed say, "What an amount of folly and ignorance rules at the present moment in this unhappy country."

Well, we have had many other forms of repression besides these deportations. We have had charges of sedition, charges of dacoity and violence, brought against the young men who are the hope of our country — charges such as those which we have seen breaking down and vanishing into nothing when tested by a high and impartial tribunal. This is the nature of the repression we have been called upon to suffer. It has been so engineered by the underlings of the Government that it strikes automatically at those who are most energetic, most devoted, most self-denying in the service of the mother country. It addresses itself to the physical signs, the outward manifestations of our national life, and seeks by suppressing them to put an end to that national life and movement. But it is a strange idea, a foolish idea, which men have, indeed, always cherished under such circumstances, but which has been disproved over and over again in history, to think that a nation which has once risen, — once has been called up by the voice of God to rise, — will be stopped by mere physical repression. It has never so happened in the history of a nation, nor will it so happen in the history of India. Storm has swept over us today. I saw it come. I saw the striding of the storm-blast and the rush of the rain and as I saw it an idea came to me. What is this storm that is so mighty and sweeps with such fury upon us? And I said in my heart, "It is God who rides abroad on the wings of the hurricane, — it is the might and force of the Lord that manifested itself and His almighty hands that seized and shook the roof so violently over our heads today." A storm like this has swept also our national life. That too was the manifestation of the Almighty. We were building an edifice to be the temple of our Mother's worship — were rearing her a new and fair mansion, a palace fit for her dwelling. It was then that He came down upon us. He flung Himself upon the building we had raised. He shook the roof with His mighty hands and part of the building was displaced and ruined. Why has He done this? Repression is nothing but the hammer of God that is beating us into shape so that we may be moulded into a mighty nation and an instrument for His work in the world. We are iron upon His anvil and the blows are showering upon us not to destroy but to re-create. Without suffering there can be no strength, — without sacrifice there can be no growth. It is not in vain that Aswini Kumar has been taken from his people. It is not in vain that Krishna Kumar Mitra has been taken from us and is rotting in Agra Jail. It is not in vain that all Maharashtra mourns for Tilak at Mandalay. It is He, not any other, who has taken them and His ways are not the ways of men, but He is all-wise. He knows better than we do what is needful for us. He has taken Aswini Kumar Dutta away from Barisal. Is the movement dead? Is Swadeshi dead? The rulers of the country in their scanty wisdom have thought that by lopping off the heads the movement will cease. They do not know that great as he is, Aswini Kumar Dutta is not the leader of this movement, that Tilak is not the leader, — God is the leader. They do not know that the storm that has been sweeping over the country was not sent by them, but by Him for His own great purposes. And the same strength that was manifested in the storm today and in the storm of calamity that has passed over the country — the same strength is in us.

And if they are mighty to afflict, we are mighty to endure. We are no ordinary race. We are a people ancient as our hills and rivers and we have behind us a history of manifold greatness, not surpassed by any other race. We are the descendants of those who performed tapasya and underwent unheard-of austerities for the sake of spiritual gain and of their own will submitted to all the sufferings of which humanity is capable. We are the children of those mothers who ascended with a smile the funeral pyre that they might follow their husbands to another world. We are a people to whom suffering is welcome and who have a spiritual strength within them, greater than any physical force. We are a people in whom God has chosen to manifest Himself more than any other at many great moments of our history. It is because God has chosen to manifest Himself and has entered into the hearts of His people that we are rising again as a nation. Therefore it matters not even if those who are greatest and most loved are taken away. I trust in God's mercy and believe that they will soon be restored to us. But even if they don't come again still the movement will not cease. It will move forward irresistibly until God's will in it is fulfilled. He fulfils His purposes inevitably and this too He will fulfil. Those who are taken from us must after all some day pass away. We are strong in their strength. We have worked in their inspiration. But in the inevitable course of nature they will pass from us and there must be others who will take their places. He has taken them away from us for a little in order that in their absence we might feel that it was not really in their strength that we were strong, in their inspiration that we worked but that a Higher Force was working in them and when they are removed, can still work in the hearts of the people. When they pass away others will arise or even if no great men stand forth to lead, still the soul of this people will be great with the force of God within and do the work. This it is that He seeks to teach us by these separations — by these calamities. The men are gone. The movement has not ceased. The National School at Jhalakati was started one month after the deportation of Aswini Kumar Dutta; that is a patent sign that the movement is not, as our rulers would ignorantly have it, got up by eloquent agitators. The movement goes on by the force of nature; it works as force of nature works and goes inevitably on, whatever obstacle comes in the way.

What is it that this movement seeks, not according to the wild chimeras born of unreasoning fear but in its real aim and purpose? What is it that we seek? We seek the fulfilment of our life as a nation. This is what the word Swaraj, which is a bug-bear and terror to the Europeans, really means. When they hear it, they are full of unreasoning terrors. They think Swaraj is independence, it is freedom and that means that the people are going to rise against them in rebellion, that means there are bombs behind every bush, that every volunteer who gives food to his famine-stricken countrymen or nurses the cholera-stricken, is a possible rebel and dacoit. Swaraj is not the Colonial form of Government nor any form of Government. It means the fulfilment of our national life. That is what we seek, that is why God has sent us into the world to fulfil Him by fulfilling ourselves in our individual life, in the family, in the community, in the nation, in humanity. That is why He has sent us into the world and it is this fulfilment that we demand; for this fulfilment is life and to depart from it is to perish. Our object, our claim is that we shall not perish as a nation, but live as a nation. Any authority that goes against this object will dash itself against the eternal throne of justice — it will dash itself against the laws of nature which are the laws of God, and be broken to pieces.

This then is our object and by what means do we seek it? We seek it by feeling our separateness and pushing forward our individual self-fulfilment by what we call Swadeshi — Swadeshi in commerce and manufacture, in politics, in education, in law and administration, in every branch of national activity. No doubt this means independence, it means freedom; but it does not mean rebellion. There are some who fear to use the word "freedom", but I have always used the word because it has been the *mantra* of my life to aspire towards the freedom of my nation. And when I was last in jail I clung to that *mantra*; and through the mouth of my counsel I used this word persistently. What he said for me — and it was said not only on my behalf, but on behalf of all who cherish this ideal, — was this: If to aspire to independence and preach freedom is a crime you may cast me into jail and there bind me with chains. If to preach freedom is a crime then I am a criminal and let me be punished. But freedom does not mean the use of violence — it does not mean bombs; it is the fulfilment of our separate national existence. If there is any authority mad enough to declare that Swadeshism, national education, arbitration, association for improvement of our physique, is illegal, it is not stamping out anarchism; it is on the contrary establishing a worse anarchism from above. It sets itself against the law of God that gives to every nation its primary rights. The judge in the Alipore case said that the aspiration after independence and the preaching of the ideal of independence was a thing no Englishman could condemn. But if you say that the aspiration after independence is a thing none can condemn and yet put down by force the only peaceful means of securing independence, you are really declaring that it is the practice of independence which you will not tolerate. Because a few have gone mad and broken the law you have chosen to brand a whole people, to condemn a nation and to suppress a whole national movement. With that we have nothing to do. We have no voice in the government of our country; and the laws and their administration are things in which you don't allow us to have any concern. But one thing is in our own power; — our courage and devotion are in our power, our sacrifice, our suffering are in our power. That you cannot take away from us, and so long as you cannot take that from us you can do nothing. Your repression cannot for ever continue, for it will bring anarchy into the country. You will not be able to continue your administration if this repression remains permanent. Your government will become disorganised; the trade you are using such means to save will languish and capital be frightened from the country.

We have therefore only to suffer. We have only to be strong and enduring. All this machinery of coercion, all this repression, will then be in vain. That is the only virtue that is needed. We shall never lose our fortitude, our courage, our endurance. There are some who think that by lowering our heads the country will escape repression. That is not my opinion. It is by looking the storm in the face and meeting it with a high courage, fortitude and endurance that the nation can be saved. It is that which the Mother demands from us, — which God demands from us. He sent the storm yesterday and it carried the roof away. He sent it today with greater violence and it seized the roof to remove it. But today the roof remained. This is what He demands of us. — "I have sent my storms upon you, so that you may feel and train your strength. If you have suffered by them, if something has been broken, it does not matter, so long as you learn the lesson that it is for strength I make you suffer and always for strength." What did the volunteers do today when they flung themselves in crowds on the roof and braved the fury of the hurricane and by main strength held down the roof over their heads? That is the lesson that all must learn and especially the young men of Bengal and India. The storm may come down on us again and with greater violence. Then remember this, brave its fury, feel your strength, train your strength in the struggle with the violence of the wind, and by that strength hold down the roof over the temple of the Mother.

Bakarganj Speech

I HAVE spent the earlier part of my life in a foreign country from my very childhood, and even of the time which I have spent in India, the greater part of it has been spent by me on the other side of India where my mother tongue is not known, and therefore although I have learned the language like a foreigner and I am able to understand it and write in it, I am unable, I have not the hardihood, to get up and deliver a speech in Bengali.

The repression and the reforms are the two sides of the political situation that the authorities in this country and in England present to us today. That policy has been initiated by one of the chief statesmen of England, one famous for his liberal views and professions, one from whom at the inception of his career as Secretary of State for India much had been expected. Lord Morley stands at the head of the administration in India, clad with legal and absolute power; he is far away from us like the gods in heaven, and we do not see him. And just as we do not see the gods in heaven but are obliged to imagine them in a figure, so we are compelled to imagine Lord Morley in a sort of figure, and the figure in which he presents himself to us is rather a peculiar one. Just as our gods sometimes carry weapons in their hands and sometimes they carry in one hand the *khadga* and in another hand the *varabhaya*, so Lord Morley presents himself to us with a *khadga* in one hand and the *varabhaya* in another, and he invites us to consider him in this image. From the beginning there has been this double aspect in him. He has, so to speak, spoken in two voices from the beginning. One voice at the beginning said "sympathy", while the other voice

Delivered at Bakarganj, Eastern Bengal and Assam, on 23 June 1909. Text noted down by police agents and reproduced in a Government of Bengal confidential file.

said "settled fact"; one voice speaks of reforms and elective representation, and the other voice speaks of the necessity of preserving absolute government in India to all time. First of all he has given you, with a great flourish it has been announced that he was going to give, and he has given, a non-official majority in the Legislative Council; he has given an elective system, he has given to a certain extent the power of voting in the Council, voting on Government measures. On the face of it these seem very large concessions; it seems that a very substantial measure of self-government has been given; that is the tone in which the English papers have been writing today; they say that this reform is a great constitutional change and that it opens a new era in India. But when we examine them carefully, it somehow comes to seem that these reforms of Lord Morley are, like his professions of Liberalism and Radicalism, more for show than for use.

This system which Lord Morley has given us is marred by two very serious defects. One of them is this very fact that the elected members will be in the minority, the nominated non-officials and the officials being in the majority; and the second is that an entirely non-democratic principle has been adopted in this elective system, the principle of one community being specially represented.

The Government of India is faced today by a fact which they cannot overlook, a fact which is by no means pleasant to the vested interests which they represent, but at the same time a fact which cannot be ignored, and that is, that the people of India have awakened, are more and more awakening, that they have developed a real political life, and that the demands they make are demands which can no longer be safely left out of the question. There is the problem before the Government, "What to do with this new state of things?" There were two courses open to them — one of frank repression and the other course was the course of frank conciliation, either to stamp out this new life in the people or to recognise it; to recognise it as an inevitable force which must have its way, however gradually. The Government were unable to accept either of these alternative policies. They have tried to mix them, and in trying to mix them they have adopted the principle of pressing down the movement with one hand and with the other hand trying to circumvent it. "You demand a popular assembly, you demand self-government. Well, we give you a measure of self-government, an enlarged and important Legislative Council, but in giving we try so to arrange the forces that the nation instead of being stronger may be weaker. Your strength is in the educated classes, your strength is more in the Hindu element in the nation than in the Mohammedan element, because they have not as yet awakened as the Hindu element has awakened. Well, let us remember our ancient policy of divide and rule, let us depress the forces which make for strength and raise up the force which is as yet weak and set up one force against the other, so that it may never be possible for us to be faced in the Legislative Council by a united majority representing the Indian people and demanding things which we are determined never to give."

Obviously when two forces stand against each other equally determined in two opposite directions, the people can only effect their aim by pressure upon the Government. That is a known fact everywhere, which every political system recognises, for which every political system has to provide. In every reasonable system of government there is always some provision made for the pressure of the people upon the Government to make itself felt. If no such provision is made, then the condition of that country is bound to be unsound, then there are bound to be elements of danger and unrest which no amount of coercion can remove, because the attempt to remove them by coercion is an attempt to destroy the laws of nature, and the laws of nature refuse to be destroyed and conducted. We have no means to make the pressure of the people felt upon the Government. The only means which we have discovered, the only means which we can use without bringing on a violent conflict, without leading to breaches of the law on both sides and bringing things to the arbitrament of physical force, have been the means which we call passive resistance and specially the means of the boycott. Therefore just as we have said that the boycott is a settled fact because the Partition of Bengal is not rescinded and it shall remain so until it is rescinded, so we must say that the boycott must remain a settled fact because we are allowed no real control over the Government.

For the time the Government have succeeded in separating two of the largest communities in India; they have succeeded in drawing away the Mohammedans because of their want of education and enlightenment and of political experience which allows them to be led away by promises that are meant for the ear, by promises of concessions which the Government cannot give without destroying their own ends. For a time until the Mohammedans by bitter experience see the falseness of their hopes and the falseness of the political means which they are being induced to adopt, until then it will be difficult for the two communities to draw together and to stand united for the realisation of their common interest.

These are times of great change, times when old landmarks are being upset, when submerged forces are rising, and just as we deal promptly or linger over the solution of these problems, our progress will be rapid or slow, sound or broken. The educated class in India leads, but it must never allow itself to be isolated. It has done great things; it has commenced a mighty work, but it cannot accomplish these things, it cannot carry that work to completion by its own united efforts. The hostile force has recognised that this educated class is the backbone of India and their whole effort is directed towards isolating it. We must refuse to be isolated, we must recognise where our difficulties are, what it is that stands in the way of our becoming a nation and set ourselves immediately to the solution of that problem.

The problem is put to us one by one, to each nation one by one, and here in Bengal it is being put to us, and He has driven it home. He has made it perfectly clear by the events of the last few years. He has shown us the possibility of strength within us, and then He has shown us where the danger, the weakness lies. He is pointing out to us how it is that we may become strong. On us it lies, on the educated class in Bengal, because Bengal leads, and what Bengal does today the rest of India will do tomorrow;

it specially lies upon us, the educated class in Bengal, to answer the question which God has put to us, and according as we answer, on it depends how this movement will progress, what route it will take, and whether it will lead to a swift and sudden salvation or whether, after so many centuries of tribulation and suffering, there is still a long period of tribulation and suffering before us. God has put the question to us, and with us entirely it lies to answer.

Khulna Speech

GENTLEMEN, today I will speak a few words on the Gita. The main object of that philosophy is found in the Vedanta, which is the basis of Hindu thought and life, and according to the Vedanta, life is dominated by *maya* or *avidya*. We are driven into action because we are ignorant of our true selves, of the true nature of the world. We identify ourselves with our bodies, our desires, our sorrows, and not our spirits. We lose ourselves in our happiness, griefs and pleasures.

By these motives we are driven into action. This life is a chain of bondage which keeps us revolving. We are surrounded on all sides by forces which we cannot control. As man has a perpetual desire for freedom, he is driven by forces he cannot control. Under the influence of these forces within or without, action takes place. The object of Hindu philosophy is to make man no longer a slave, but to escape from bondage and to make human beings free. Hindu philosophy tries to go into the root of things. What is the real beginning of *maya*? . . . . Whatever we may try, from the nature of the world we cannot escape from bondage. There is a knowledge, by attaining which we can become free.

In the Gita we find that Srikrishna unites the Vedanta philosophy with the philosophy of Sankhya. Modern science denies that man has a soul. Science considers only the laws of nature. It regards nature as material, and man as merely a product of nature. It says man is a creation of natural forces. All his actions are results of fixed laws, and he has no freedom. According to the Sankhya, man has a soul and is essentially the Purusha

Delivered at Khulna, Bengal, on 25 June 1909. Noted down by police agents and reproduced in a Government of Bengal confidential file. A note preceding the report of the speech says that "about three-fourths of it have been taken down". The text needed emendation in many places.

and not matter. The spirit does not act. The soul is calm and motionless. Prakriti is always shifting and changing, and under her influence all actions take place. Prakriti acts.

Man can only free himself by recognising that he is the Purusha. Srikrishna adopts this theory of Sankhya in the Gita, and he also adopts the philosophy of Vedanta. He says that man has an immortal soul, but there is also a universal soul. Man is merely part of God. He is merely a part of something that is eternal, infinite, omniscient and omnipotent. This eternal power is what really exists, and in all that we see, hear, feel, it is He alone who exists. It is He alone whom we feel and see. Parameshwara builds up this world by His *maya*. He is the master of the great illusion which we call *maya*. This He made to express Himself, the One. All these things around us are transitory. Within us is that which cannot change, which is eternally free and happy. If man feels himself miserable, it is because he in his ignorance allows himself to be dominated by egoism (*ahankara*). He thinks that he is all. He does not realise that God is the master of this *lila*. He thinks that it is I who act, I who am the lord of my body, and because he thinks so, he is bound by his action. By these forces he is driven from birth to birth. The great illusion is that this body which he inhabits is himself; next he identifies himself with the mind and thinks it is I who think, see and feel. In reality, according to the Gita, God is within the heart of every creature.

The second thing you have to recognise is that you are only a part of Him, who is eternal, omniscient and omnipotent.

His first answer to Arjuna is that the feeling which has come upon him is not the pure feeling. It is a feeling of egoism. Still Arjuna does not understand how that can be.

How can it be my *dharma* to kill my own brothers and relations? How can it be to slaughter my nation and house? Srikrishna answers according to the spirit of Hindu ideas. He says that it is your *dharma*, because you are a Kshatriya. This is a *dharma* of a particular kind. The duty of the Kshatriya is not the same as that of the Brahmin, and that of the Shudra is not equal to that of the Kshatriya. If a Shudra adopts the *dharma* of a Brahmin, he brings about the confusion of all laws and leads to the destruction and not to the betterment of mankind. It is nature which teaches you your own *dharma*. This is your *dharma*. If you shrink from upholding the cause of virtue, truth and justice, out of a feeling which is inconsistent, you are guilty, you bring in confusion, you encourage yourself to give up your duty.

Still Arjuna is not satisfied. Srikrishna goes still deeper. He says that the whole of our life is determined by *maya* which is of three kinds — *sattwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. Their nature is this. *Sattwa* leads to knowledge, *rajas* leads to action, and *tamas* leads to inaction and ignorance. These are the qualities of nature which govern the world. The *swabhava* which leads you to work is determined by the three *gunas*. Action is determined by *swabhava*. All action leads to bondage and is full of defects. What you call virtue or virtues, they have defects in themselves. The virtue of Brahmins is a great virtue. You shall not kill. This is what *ahinsa* means. If the virtue of *ahinsa* comes to the Kshatriya, if you say I will not kill, there is no one to protect the country. The happiness of the people will be broken down. Injustice and lawlessness will reign. The virtue becomes a source of misery, and you become instrumental in bringing misery and conflict to the people. Your duty to your family seems to conflict with your duty to society, that of society to the nation, and that of the nation to mankind. How shall we follow the path which leads to salvation? It is difficult to say what is right and what is wrong. How to decide it then? There is one way: do action in *yoga*, and then you rise above ignorance, and sin cannot touch you, and you rise above all that hampers you and binds you.

What is *yoga*? Not a certain process. When we think of *yoga*, we think of a man who shuts himself up in a cave and subjects himself to certain practices. He frees himself from all bondage. But Srikrishna uses *yoga* in a different sense. He says: Do action in *yoga*. The first element is *samata*. *Samata* means you shall look with equal eyes upon happiness and misfortune, praise and blame, honour and dishonour, and success and failure. You shall regard none of these, but with a calm and unshaken mind you should proceed with the work which you are given to do, unshaken by the praise or censure of the world. The man who has this *samata* has no friends and no enemies. He looks upon all with equal feelings, because he has knowledge, because he has looked into himself, then out into the world. He finds himself everywhere and all in himself. He finds himself in all because God is in all. Whether he looks at the high or low, he sees no difference and sees that in every creature there is Narayana. He sees that he is only an *ansha* of one who is in every particle of matter. If there be any differences, they are only temporary and outward. He is only that through which Vasudeva carries on his *lila*. He is not anxious to know what will happen tomorrow, because the action is not guided by laws. The man who has communion with God has no reason to be guided by laws, because he knows God is alone and all. He is not troubled by the fruits of his action. "You have the right to action, to work, but not to the fruit. Work and leave the result to me. Those men whom you shrink from slaying are already slain. These men would all perish. Therefore the fruit is already obtained beforehand by me. Your anxiety for the result is ignorance." The destiny of the world is fixed. When a man has to do anything he must know that the fruits are with God. Man is to do what God wills.

Yoga means freedom from *dwandwa*. The Yogin is free from the bondage of pleasure and pain, of anger and hatred and attachment, of liking and disliking, because he looks with equal eyes on all. He does not shrink from misfortune or misery, happiness or unhappiness. He rises above the bondage of the body, because no man can give him pleasure or pain, because he has his own source of strength, of delight and happiness. This is the freedom which the Gita says the *yoga* gives, the freedom which we ordinarily mean by *mukti*. This is the freedom which the Gita promises. He says if you act in *yoga*, you rise above grief and pain, even above all things. You are free from fear or sin, because you do not act for yourself. You do not act because you will get pleasure, but for the sake of God; that is how you are to reach *yoga*. If you wish to be happy, you must give up all your works to God. You must do all your work for His sake, and therefore sin does not touch you. It is only because of selfishness that sin touches you. If you realise that Narayana is in all, it follows that you lose the smaller, the individual limited self. You look to wider things. You see yourself in the family, in the community, race, humanity, and all things in the world. You forget yourself altogether. You work for the race and others, for mankind. It is not God's work when you follow after your selfishness. The Gita says: "Your welfare is God's business." If you work for Him you have no fear, because God stretches out His hand of mercy to you. It is to that which the *yoga* leads. The teaching of the Gita, if it is followed, delivers you from all possibility of sin, of sorrow. He says: "Take refuge in me. I shall free you from all evil. Do everything as a sacrifice to me." That is the goal towards which you move. The name of Hari will free you from all evil.

This is the way in which Srikrishna has solved the problem put by Arjuna. Arjuna says: "It is my duty to fight for justice, it is my duty as a Kshatriya not to turn from Dharmayuddha, but I am perplexed, because the consequences will be so terrible. The people I am to slay are dear to me. How can I kill them?" Krishna says: "There is no doubt an apparent conflict of duties, but that is the nature of life. Life is itself a problem, a very entangled thread, which it is impossible to undo. But it is I who do all these things, I who am leading you to the fulfilment of your duties. Leave it to me. If you do your duty, it is a thing which I am bringing about. You are not doing it from selfishness. It is a thing necessary for my purpose. It is a thing which is decreed, already done, but it is now to be effected in the material world. Whatever happens, it happens for the best. I now give you my knowledge, the key to *yoga*. I remove the veil of ignorance from you. I give you the meaning of *yoga*." In the Gita Srikrishna gives certain rules by which a man may hold communion with God.

The Gita says that man is not a bundle of outward cares and griefs, of things that do not last. Man is a garment which is put off from time to time, but there is within us something which is omniscient and eternal and cannot be drowned.

Srikrishna gave Arjuna the *divya chakshu*, with which he saw the Vishwarupa. He now sees Vasudeva everywhere. He sees within him things that cannot be seen by the mysteries of science. With this knowledge comes to him that force.

How can I act, yet be free from bondage? The Gita says that the man who has knowledge has to do exactly what other men do. He has to live as a man in his family, race and nation. But there is a difference which is internal and not external. By the internal difference he acts in communion with God; others act in pursuance of their desires. He knows by experience how a man can act when he is free from desire. This force of action is the force of God Himself. He is not troubled by the result of action; he gets eternal bliss.

This is the whole teaching of the Gita. It is *yoga* which gives utter perfection in action. The man who works for God is not shaken by doubts.

The teaching of the Gita is a teaching for life, and not a teaching for the life of a closet. It is a teaching which means perfection of action. It makes man great. It gives him the utter strength, the utter bliss which is the goal of life in the world.

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 26th JUNE 1909 { No. 2

Facts and Opinions

The Message of India

The ground gained by the Vedantic propaganda in the West, may be measured by the growing insight in the occasional utterances of well-informed and intellectual Europeans on the subject. A certain Mrs. Leighton Cleather speaking to the Oriental circle of the Lyceum Club in London on the message of India has indicated the mission of India with great justness and insight. We need not follow Mrs. Cleather into her dissertation on the Kshatriyas, whom for some mysterious reason she insists on calling the Red Rajputs, but it is true that the first knowledge of Vedantic truth and the Rajayoga was the possession of the Kshatriyas till Janaka, Ajatashatru and others gave it to the Brahmins. But the real issues of this historical fact are inevitably missed by the lecturer. She is on a surer ground when she continues, "India's message to the world today she considered to be the realisation of the life beyond material forms. The East has taken for granted the reality of the invisible and has no fear. The recognition of the soul in ourselves and others leads to the recognition of the universal soul and the great word of the Upanishads: 'This soul which is the self of all that is, this is the real, this the self, that thou art.' Modern civilisation has lost sight of the fundamental law of self-sacrifice as conditioning man's evolution."

We have here, very briefly put, the triple message of India, psychical, spiritual and moral. India believes in and has the key to a psychical world within man and without him which is the source and basis of the material. This it is which Europe is beginning dimly to discover. She has caught glimpses of the world beyond the gates, her hands are fumbling for the key but she has not yet found it. Immortality proved and admitted, it becomes easier to believe in God. The spiritual message is that the universal self is one and that our souls are not only brothers, not only of one substance and nature, but live in and move towards an essential oneness. It follows that Love is the highest law and that to which evolution must move. Ananda, joy and delight, are the object of the *lila* and the fulfilment of love is the height of joy and delight. Self-sacrifice is therefore the fundamental law. Sacrifice, says the Gita, is the law by which the Father of all in the beginning conditioned the world, and all ethics, all conduct, all life is a sacrifice willed or unconscious. The beginning of ethical knowledge is to realise this and make the conscious sacrifice of one's own individual desires. It is an inferior and semi-savage morality which gives up only to gain and makes selfishness the basis of ethics. To give up one's small individual self and find the larger self in others, in the nation, in humanity, in God, that is the law of Vedanta. That is India's message. Only she must not be content with sending it, she must rise up and live it before all the world so that it may be proved a possible law of conduct both for men and nations.

Lord Honest John

On the converse side a passage from Mr. Algernon Cecil's "Six Oxford Thinkers" is instructive. He dwells on the self-contradictory and ironic close of John Morley's life. "He the philosophic Liberal, the ardent advocate of Home Rule, the persistent foe of war and coercion, is closing his fine record of public service with a coronet on his head as the ruler of India, of the child of Clive and Warren Hastings, of the creature of strife and fraud; as one might say, a benevolent despot in an absolute constitution imposed and administered by an alien race." We in India are sure of the despotism but have some doubts about the benevolence. Nor can we accept the phrase, absolute constitution, as anything but an oxymoron, a "witty folly", a happy and ironical contradiction in terms. But for the rest the implied criticism is just.

The Failure of Europe

Mr. Cecil sees in this ending of Honest John as Lord Morley the failure of Liberalism; and it must be remembered that the failure of Liberalism means the abandonment of the gospel of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity as a thing unlivable, and that again means the moral bankruptcy of Europe. "Liberalism in any intelligible sense cannot last another generation. In a score of years the strange adventure on which the nations of Europe embarked in 1789 will be concluded, and we shall revert, doubtless with many and formidable changes, to an earlier type. The principles of unchecked individual liberty and unrestricted competition have, to use the ancient phrase, been tried in the balance and found wanting. The golden dreams which so lately cheated the anxious eyes of men have tarnished with time. Their splendour has proved illusive and they have gone the way of other philosophies down a road upon which there is no returning. The old aristocrats have been swept away and some malicious spirit has given us new ones bathed in the most material sort of golden splendour. And Misery, Vice and Discontent stalk among the drudges of society much as they did before." Mr. Cecil like most Europeans sees that European liberalism has failed but like most Europeans utterly misses the real reason of the failure. The principles of 1789 were not false, but they were falsely stated and selfishly executed. Europe had not the spiritual strength, nor the moral force to carry them out. She was too selfish, too short-sighted, too materialistic and ignorant. She deserved to fail and could not but fail. It is left for Asia and especially for India to reconstruct the world.

British Fears

The genesis of the Imperial Press Conference is to be found in that feeling of insecurity which is driving England to seek allies on the Continent and gather round her the children of her loins beyond the seas. During the better part of the nineteenth century after her triumph over Napoleon and her amazing expansion in India, she felt too strong to need extraneous assistance. Mistress of the seas, enormously wealthy, monopolist almost of the world's commerce, she followed on the Continent a policy of splendid isolation broken only by the ill-starred alliance with the third Napoleon. She fought for her own hand everywhere and felt strong enough to conquer. Her Colonies she regarded only as a nuisance. They were a moral asset, probably, but hardly a material. They assisted her in no way, they excluded her commerce by tariffs, they took her protection without payment and yet exacted internal independence with an inordinate and querulous jealousy of her interference and unwillingness to allow even the slightest iota of British control to mar the perfection of their autonomy. But a change has come over the spirit of her dream. Mighty powers have arisen in the world, young, ardent, ambitious, rapidly expanding, magnificently equipped, moving with the sureness and swiftness of material forces towards empire and aggrandisement. Their armies are gigantic forces against which England's would be as helpless as a boy in the hands of a Titan. Their wealth increases. They are beating England out of the chosen fields of her commercial expansion, and it is only by bringing out all the reserves of her old energy that she can just keep a first place; worst of all, their navies grow and if they cannot keep pace with hers in numbers, equal it in efficiency. On the other hand India, her passive source of wealth, strength and prestige, is struggling in her turn to exclude British commerce and assert autonomy without British control. England is uneasy; she cannot slumber at night for thinking of her precarious future. To her excited imagination German airships fill the skies and the myriad tramp of the Teuton is heard already marching on London, while huge conspiracies spring up like mushrooms in India and evade the eager grasp of the Police with a diabolical skill which leaves behind only arrests and persecution of innocent men, hard judicial comments, a discredited C.I.D. and a desperate weeping *Englishman*. One can no longer recognise the strong, stolid, practical, invincible Britisher in the emotional, hysterical, excitable, panic-stricken race dancing to the tune of its newly liberated imagination.

The Journalistic War Council

It is not surprising under such circumstances that leading Englishmen should call a Press Conference and turn it into a War Council full of such themes as military conscription and naval expansion and always looking out of the corner of its eye at Imperial Federation. The aid and backing of the Colonies has now become a necessity to British imagination. England seeks an American alliance and hungers after the unity of the Anglo-Saxon world, but there are hostile elements in America which militate against that dream. Parting with her old friends of the Triple Alliance she embraces France, her ancient and traditional enemy; she courts her bug-bear Russia and many of her publicists are ready to excuse and condone the most savage, merciless and inhuman system of tyranny in the world provided she gets a friend in need. But these are uncertain and transitory supports, while the Colonies are bound by ties of blood and interest. The objective of the Press Conference is therefore the Colonies, the union of the English throughout the Empire. And although Srijut Surendranath has been led to the gathering in gilded fetters and is "the most picturesque figure" in the Conference, that is all he is, a picture, even if a speaking picture, — nothing else. For the rest it is Anglo-India that has been called to the great journalistic War Council, not India. The real India has no place there. We wish Srijut Surendranath could have realised it. It might have prevented him from indulging in rhetorical hyperboles about "the wise and conciliatory policy of Lord Morley" — forgetful of the nine deportees, forgetful of the many good and true men in jail for Swadeshi, forgetful of Midnapore and all it typifies.

Forgotten Eventualities

It is strange that British statesmanship should be blind to certain possibilities which will follow from their new Colonial policy. Among the first results of the new idea has been the federation of Australia and the federation of South Africa. The former event is not of such importance to the world as the latter. The referendum in Natal is indeed an event of the first significance, but what it portends is the rise of a new and vigorous nation, perhaps a new empire in South Africa, — certainly not the consolidation of the British Empire. Great organisms like these tend inevitably to separate existence. The one thing that stands in the way is the present inability of these organisms to defend their separate existence. Australia lies under the outstretched sword of Japan to say nothing of the subtler, less apparent but more ominous menace of Germany. Canada is kept to England by the contiguity of a powerful, well-organised and expanding foreign State. South Africa on the other hand is occupied by a strong military race with a stubborn love of independence in its very blood. In the last war it has become aware of its supreme military capacity but also of its inability to hold its freedom without a navy. Yet the main cry of England now is that the Colonies should organise military and naval defence in order to lighten the burden of England and help her in her wars! They are not satisfied with the contribution of a Dreadnought. They want an Australian navy, a South African navy. Surely, God has sealed up the eyes and wits of these Imperialistic statesmen. They have eyes but they cannot see; they have minds but they are allowed only to misuse them.

National Vitality

Nothing is stranger than the difference presented by Europe and Asia in the matter of national vitality. European nations seem to have a brief date, a life-term vigorous but soon exhausted; Asiatic races persist and survive. It was not so in old times. Not only Greece and Rome perished, Assyria, Chaldea, Phoenicia are also written in the book of the Dead. But the difference now seems well-established. France is a visibly dying nation, Spain seems to have lost the power of revival, Italy and Greece have been lifted up by great efforts and sacrifices but show a weak vitality, the Anglo-Saxon race is beginning everywhere to recede and dwindle. On the other hand in Asia life pulsates victoriously. Japan has risen at one bound to the first rank of nations; China untouched by her calamities renovates her huge national life. The effect on India of an accumulation of almost all the conditions which bring about national death, has been a new lease of life and a great dynamic impulse. Of the Mahomedan races, not a single one is decadent. Persia rises from her weakness full of youthful enthusiasm and courage though not yet of capacity. Arabia in her deserts surges with life. Egypt after her calamities is undergoing new birth; as far as Morocco the stir of life is seen. And today Turkey, the sick man, has suddenly risen up vigorous and whole. What is the source of this difference? Is it not in this that Asia has developed her spirituality and Europe has turned from it? Europe has always tended to live more in matter and in the body than within; and matter when not inert is always changing; the body is bound to perish. The high pressure at which Europe lives only tends to disintegrate the body more rapidly when the spiritual sources within are not resorted to for stability.

The Awakening Soul of India

NO NATIONAL awakening is really vital and enduring which confines itself to a single field. It is when the soul awakens that a nation is really alive, and the life will then manifest itself in all the manifold forms of activity in which man seeks to express the strength and the delight of the expansive spirit within. It is for *ananda* that the world exists; for joy that the Self puts Himself into the great and serious game of life; and the joy which He sees is the joy of various self-expression. For this reason it is that no two men are alike, no two nations are alike. Each has its own separate nature over and above the common nature of humanity and it is not only the common human impulses and activities but the satisfaction and development of its own separate character and capacities that a nation demands. Denied that satisfaction and development, it perishes. By two tests, therefore, the vitality of a national movement can be judged. If it is imitative, imported, artificial, then, whatever temporary success it may have, the nation is moving towards self-sterilisation and death; even so the nations of ancient Europe perished when they gave up their own individuality as the price of Roman civilisation, Roman peace, Roman prosperity. If, on the other hand, the peculiar individuality of a race stamps itself on the movement in its every part and seizes on every new development as a means of self-expression, then the nation wakes, lives and grows and whatever the revolutions and changes of political, social or intellectual forms and institutions, it is assured of its survival and aggrandisement.

The nineteenth century in India was imitative, self-forgetful, artificial. It aimed at a successful reproduction of Europe in India, forgetting the deep saying of the Gita — "Better the law of one's own being though it be badly done than an alien *dharma* well-followed; death in one's *dharma* is better, it is a dangerous thing to follow the law of another's nature." For death in one's own *dharma* brings new birth, success in an alien path means only successful suicide. If we had succeeded in Europeanising ourselves we would have lost for ever our spiritual capacity, our intellectual force, our national elasticity and power of self-renovation. That tragedy has been enacted more than once in history, only the worst and most mournful example of all would have been added. Had the whole activity of the country been of the derivative and alien kind, that result would have supervened. But the life-breath of the nation still moved in the religious movements of Bengal and the Punjab, in the political aspirations of Maharashtra and in the literary activity of Bengal. Even here it was an undercurrent, the peculiar temperament and vitality of India struggling for self-preservation under a load of foreign ideas and foreign forms, and it was not till in the struggle between these two elements the balance turned in the favour of the national *dharma* that the salvation of India was assured. The resistance of the conservative element in Hinduism, tamasic, inert, ignorant, uncreative though it was, saved the country by preventing an even more rapid and thorough disintegration than actually took place and by giving respite and time for the persistent national self to emerge and find itself. It was in religion first that the soul of India awoke and triumphed. There were always indications, always great forerunners, but it was when the flower of the educated youth of Calcutta bowed down at the feet of an illiterate Hindu ascetic, a self-illuminated ecstatic and "mystic" without a single trace or touch of the alien thought or education upon him that the battle was won. The going forth of Vivekananda, marked out by the Master as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake not only to survive but to conquer. Afterwards when the awakening was complete a section of the nationalist movement turned in imagination to a reconstruction of the recent pre-British past in all its details. This could not be. Inertia, the refusal to expand and alter, is what our philosophy calls *tamas*, and an excess of *tamas* tends to disintegration and disappearance. Aggression is necessary for self-preservation and when a force ceases to conquer, it ceases to live — that which remains stationary and stands merely on the defensive, that which retires into and keeps within its own *kot* or base, as the now defunct *Sandhya* used graphically to put it, is doomed to defeat, diminution and final elimination from the living things of this world. Hinduism has always been pliable and aggressive; it has thrown itself on the attacking force, carried its positions, plundered its treasures, made its own everything of value it had and ended either in wholly annexing it or driving it out by rendering its further continuation in the country purposeless and therefore impossible. Whenever it has stood on the defensive, it has contracted within narrower limits and shown temporary signs of decay.

Once the soul of the nation was awake in religion, it was only a matter of time and opportunity for it to throw itself on all spiritual and intellectual activities in the national existence and take possession of them. The outburst of anti-European feeling which followed on the Partition gave the required opportunity. Anger, vindictiveness and antipathy are not in themselves laudable feelings, but God uses them for His purposes and brings good out of evil. They drove listlessness and apathy away and replaced them by energy and a powerful emotion; and that energy and emotion were seized upon by the national self and turned to the uses of the future. The anger against Europeans, the vengeful turning upon their commerce and its productions, the antipathy to everything associated with them engendered a powerful stream of tendency turning away from the immediate Anglicised past, and the spirit which had already declared itself in our religious life entered in by this broad doorway into politics, and substituted a positive powerful yearning towards the national past, a still more mighty and dynamic yearning towards a truly national future. The Indian spirit has not yet conquered the whole field of our politics in actuality, but it is there victoriously in sentiment; the rest is a matter of time, and everything which is now happening in politics, is helping to prepare for its true and potent expression. The future is now assured. Religion and politics, the two most effective and vital expressions of the nation's self having been nationalised, the rest will follow in due course. The needs of our religious and political life are now vital and real forces and it is these needs which will reconstruct our society, recreate and remould our industrial and commercial life and found a new and victorious art, literature, science and philosophy which will be not European but Indian.

The impulse is already working in Bengali art and literature. The need of self-expression for the national spirit in politics suddenly brought back Bengali literature to its essential and eternal self and it was in our recent national songs that this self-realisation came. The lyric and the lyrical spirit, the spirit of simple, direct and poignant expression, of deep, passionate, straightforward emotion, of a frank and exalted enthusiasm, the dominant note of love and Bhakti of a mingled sweetness and strength, the potent intellect dominated by the self-illuminated heart, a mystical exaltation of feeling and spiritual insight expressing itself with a plain concreteness and practicality — this is the soul of Bengal. All our literature, in order to be wholly alive, must start from this base and whatever variations it may indulge in, never lose touch with it. In Bengal, again, the national spirit is seeking to satisfy itself in art and, for the first time since the decline of the Moguls, a new school of national art is developing itself, the school of which Abanindranath Tagore is the founder and master. It is still troubled by the foreign though Asiatic influence from which its master started, and has something of an exotic appearance, but the development and self-emancipation of the national self from this temporary domination can already be watched and followed. There again, it is the spirit of Bengal that expresses itself. The attempt to express in form and limit something of that which is formless and illimitable is the attempt of Indian art. The Greeks, aiming at a smaller and more easily attainable end, achieved a more perfect success. Their instinct for physical form was greater than ours, our instinct for psychic shape and colour was superior. Our future art must solve the problem of expressing the soul in the object, the great Indian aim, while achieving anew the triumphant combination of perfect interpretative form and colour. No Indian has so strong an instinct for form as the Bengali. In addition to the innate Vedantism of all Indian races, he has an all-powerful impulse towards delicacy, grace and strength, and it is these qualities to which the new school of art has instinctively turned in its first inception. Unable to find a perfect model in the scanty relics of old Indian art, it was only natural that it should turn to Japan for help, for delicacy and grace are there triumphant. But Japan has not the secret of expressing the deepest soul in the object, it has not the aim. And the Bengali spirit means more than the union of delicacy, grace and strength; it has the lyrical mystic impulse; it has the passion for clarity and concreteness and as in our literature, so in our art we see these tendencies emerging — an emotion of beauty, a nameless sweetness and spirituality pervading the clear line and form. Here too it is the free spirit of the nation beginning to emancipate itself from the foreign limitations and shackles.

No department of our life can escape this great regenerating and reconstructing force. There is not the slightest doubt that our society will have to undergo a reconstruction which may amount to revolution, but it will not be for Europeanisation as the average reformer blindly hopes, but for a greater and more perfect realisation of the national spirit in society. Not individual selfishness and mutually consuming struggle but love and the binding of individuals into a single inseparable life is the national impulse. It sought to fulfil itself in the past by the bond of blood in the joint family, by the bond of a partial communism in the village system, by the bond of birth and a corporate sense of honour in the caste. It may seek a more perfect and spiritual bond in the future. In commerce also so long as we follow the European spirit and European model, the individual competitive selfishness, the bond of mere interest in the joint-stock company or that worst and most dangerous development of co-operative Capitalism, the giant octopus-like Trust and Syndicate, we shall never succeed in rebuilding a healthy industrial life. It is not these bonds which can weld Indians together. India moves to a deeper and greater life than the world has yet imagined possible and it is when she has found the secret of expressing herself in these various activities that her industrial and social life will become strong and expansive.

Nationalism has been hitherto largely a revolt against the tendency to shape ourselves into the mould of Europe; but it must also be on its guard against any tendency to cling to every detail that has been Indian. That has not been the spirit of Hinduism in the past, there is no reason why it should be so in the future. In all life there are three elements, the fixed and permanent spirit, the developing yet constant soul and the brittle changeable body. The spirit we cannot change, we can only obscure or lose; the soul must not be rashly meddled with, must neither be tortured into a shape alien to it, nor obstructed in its free expansion; and the body must be used as a means, not over-cherished as a thing valuable for its own sake. We will sacrifice no ancient form to an unreasoning love of change, we will keep none which the national spirit desires to replace by one that is a still better and truer expression of the undying soul of the nation.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Man — Slave or Free?
The Kena Upanishad

The Right of Association

MY FRIEND Pandit Gispati Kavyatirtha has somewhat shirked today his duty as it was set down for him in the programme and left it to me. I hope you will not mind if I depart a little from the suggestion he has made to me. I would like, instead of assuming the role of a preacher and telling you your duties which you know well enough yourselves, to take, if you will allow me, a somewhat wider subject, not unconnected with it but of a wider range. In addressing you today I wish to say a few words about the general right of association especially as we have practised and are trying to practise it in India today. I choose this subject for two reasons, first, because it is germane to the nature of the meeting we are holding, and secondly, because we have seen arbitrary hands laid upon that right of association which is everywhere cherished as a sign and safeguard of liberty and means of development of a common life.

There are three rights which are particularly cherished by free nations. In a nation the sovereign powers of Government may be enjoyed by the few or the many, but there are three things to which the people in European countries cling, which they persistently claim and after which, if they have them not, they always aspire. These are first, the right of a free Press, secondly, the right of free public meeting, and thirdly, the right of association. There is a particular reason why they cling to these three as inherent rights which they claim as sacred and with which authority has no right to interfere. The right of free speech ensures to the people the power which is the greatest

Speech delivered at Howrah, Bengal, on 27 June 1909. Text published in the Bengalee *on 29 June; thoroughly revised by Sri Aurobindo and republished in three issues of the* Karmayogin *in July and August.*

means for self-development, and that is the power of spreading the idea. According to our philosophy it is the idea which is building up the world. It is the idea which expresses itself in matter and takes to itself bodies. This is true also in the life of humanity; it is true in politics, in the progress and life of a nation. It is the idea which shapes material institutions. It is the idea which builds up and destroys administrations and Governments. Therefore the idea is a mighty force, even when it has no physical power behind it, even when it is not equipped with means, even when it has not organised itself in institutions and associations. Even then the idea moves freely abroad through the minds of thousands of men and becomes a mighty force. It is a power which by the very fact of being impalpable assumes all the greater potency and produces all the more stupendous results. Therefore the right of free speech is cherished because it gives the idea free movement, it gives the nation that power which ensures its future development, which ensures success in any struggle for national life, however stripped it may be of means and instruments. It is enough that the idea is there and that the idea lives and circulates. Then the idea materialises itself, finds means and instruments, conquers all obstacles and goes on developing until it is expressed and established in permanent and victorious forms.

This right of free speech takes the form first of a free Press. It is the Press which on its paper wings carries the idea abroad from city to city, from province to province until a whole continent is bound together by the links of one common aspiration. The right of public meeting brings men together. That is another force. They meet together on a common ground, moved by a common impulse, and as they stand or sit together in their thousands, the force of the idea within moves them by the magnetism of crowds. It moves from one to another till the hidden shakti, the mighty force within, stirred by the words thrown out from the platform travels from heart to heart and masses of men are not only moved by a common feeling and common aspiration, but by the force of that magnetism prepared to act and fulfil the idea. Then comes the right of association, the third of these popular rights.

Given the common aspiration, common idea, common enthusiasm and common wish to act, it gives the instrument which binds men to strive towards the common object by common and associated actions; the bonds of brotherhood grow, energy increases, the idea begins to materialise itself to work in practical affairs and that which was yesterday merely an idea, merely a word thrown out by the eloquence of the orator, becomes a question of practical politics. It becomes work for it begins to work and fulfil itself. Therefore the people prize these rights, consider them a valuable asset, cling to and cherish and will not easily sacrifice them. Therefore they resent the arbitrary interference which takes from them what they consider indispensable for the preparation of national life.

Association is the mightiest thing in humanity; it is the instrument by which humanity moves, it is the means by which it grows, it is the power by which it progresses towards its final development. There are three ideas which are of supreme moment to human life and have become the watchwords of humanity. Three words have the power of remoulding nations and Governments, liberty, equality and fraternity. These words cast forth into being from the great stir and movement of the eighteenth century continue to act on men because they point to the ultimate goal towards which human evolution ever moves. This liberty to which we progress is liberation out of a state of bondage. We move from a state of bondage to an original liberty. This is what our own religion teaches. This is what our own philosophy suggests as the goal towards which we move, *mukti* or *moksha*. We are bound in the beginning by a lapse from pre-existent freedom, we strive to shake off the bonds, we move forward and forward until we have achieved the ultimate emancipation, that utter freedom of the soul, of the body, of the whole man, that utter freedom from all bondage towards which humanity is always aspiring. We in India have found a mighty freedom within ourselves, our brother-men in Europe have worked towards freedom without. We have been moving on parallel lines towards the same end. They have found out the way to external freedom. We have found out the way to internal freedom. We meet and give to each other what we have gained. We have learned from them to aspire after external as they will learn from us to aspire after internal freedom.

Equality is the second term in the triple gospel. It is a thing which mankind has never accomplished. From inequality and through inequality we move, but it is to equality. Our religion, our philosophy set equality forward as the essential condition of emancipation. All religions send us this message in a different form but it is one message. Christianity says we are all brothers, children of one God. Mohammedanism says we are the subjects and servants of one Allah, we are all equal in the sight of God. Hinduism says there is one without a second. In the high and the low, in the Brahmin and the Shudra, in the saint and the sinner, there is one Narayana, one God and he is the soul of all men. Not until you have realised Him, known Narayana in all, and the Brahmin and the Shudra, the high and the low, the saint and the sinner are equal in your eyes, then and not until then you have knowledge, you have freedom, until then you are bound and ignorant. The equality which Europe has got is external political equality. She is now trying to achieve social equality. Nowadays their hard-earned political liberty is beginning to pall a little upon the people of Europe because they have found it does not give perfect well-being or happiness and it is barren of the sweetness of brotherhood. There is not fraternity in this liberty. It is merely a political liberty. They have not either the liberty within or the full equality or the fraternity. So they are turning a little from what they have and they say increasingly, "Let us have equality, let us have the second term of the gospel towards which we strive." Therefore socialism is growing in Europe. Europe is now trying to achieve external equality as the second term of the gospel of mankind, the universal ideal. I have said that equality is an ideal even with us but we have not tried to achieve it without. Still we have learned from them to strive after political equality and in return for what they have given us we shall lead them to the secret of the equality within.

Again there is fraternity. It is the last term of the gospel. It is the most difficult to achieve, still it is a thing towards which all religions call and human aspirations rise. There is discord in life, but mankind yearns for peace and love. This is the reason why the gospels which preach brotherhood spread quickly and excite passionate attachment. This was the reason of the rapid spread of Christianity. This was the reason of Buddhism's rapid spread in this country and throughout Asia. This is the essence of humanitarianism, the modern gospel of love for mankind. None of us have achieved our ideals, but human society has always attempted an imperfect and limited fulfilment of them. It is the nature, the *dharma* of humanity that it should be unwilling to stand alone. Every man seeks the brotherhood of his fellow and we can only live by fraternity with others. Through all its differences and discords humanity is striving to become one.

In India in the ancient times we had many kinds of association, for our life was much more complex and developed than it became afterwards. We had our political associations, we had our commercial associations, our educational, our religious associations. As in Europe, so in India men united together for many interests and worked in association for common ideals. But by the inroads of invasion and calamity our life became broken and disintegrated. Still, though we lost much, we had our characteristic forms in which we strove to achieve that ideal of association and unity. In our society we had organised a common village life. It was a one and single village life in which every man felt himself to be something, a part of a single organism. We had the joint family by which we tried to establish the principle of association in our family life. We have not in our social developments followed the path which Europe has followed. We have never tended to break into scattered units. The principle of association, the attempt to organise brotherhood was dominant in our life. We had the organisation of caste of which nowadays we hear such bitter complaints. It had no doubt many and possibly inherent defects, but it was an attempt, however imperfect, to base society upon the principle of association, the principle of closely organising a common life founded on common ideas, common feelings, common tendencies, a common moral discipline and sense of corporate honour. Then we had an institution which in its form was peculiar to India, which helped to bind men together in close brotherhood who had a common guru or the initiation into a common religious fraternity. All these we had. Then the impact of Europe came upon us and one by one these institutions began to be broken. Our village life is a thing of the past. The village has lost its community, it has lost its ideals, it has lost that mutual cordiality and binding together by an intimate common life which held it up and made its life sweet and wholesome. Everywhere we see in the village moral deterioration and material decay. Our joint family has been broken. We are scattering into broken units and brother no longer looks upon brother. There is no longer the bond of love which once held us together, because the old ties and habit of association are being broken up. Our caste has lost its reality. The life has gone from within it and it is no longer an institution which helps towards unity, a common life or any kind of brotherhood. For once the idea is broken, the ideal within which is the principle of life is impaired, the form breaks up and nothing can keep it together. Therefore we find all these things perishing.

Well, we have been losing these things which were part of our associated life. But on the other hand we looked at the civilised nations of the West who are rushing upon us and breaking our society to pieces, and we saw that in those nations there were other centres of association, other means of uniting together. However imperfectly we began to seize upon them and try to use them, our life in the nineteenth century was a weak and feeble life. It had no ideals, no mighty impulses behind to drive or uplift it. It was bewildered and broken by the forces that came upon it; it did not know how to move and in what direction to move. It tried to take whatever it could from the life of the rulers. It strove to take their political associations and develop that principle of association. But our political associations had a feeble life bound together only by a few common interests which by ineffective means they tried to establish or protect. Political association among us led to very little action, for it was an association which looked mainly to others for help and did not look to the sources of strength within. These and other kinds of associations which we then tried to form tended mainly in one direction. They were institutions for the exchange of thought, associations for the spread of knowledge, by which we instinctively but imperfectly tried to encourage and express the growing idea that was within us. This was the one real value of most of our political associations. Then there came the flood of national life, the mighty awakening which appeared first in Bengal. The principle of association began to take a new form, it began to assume a new life. It no longer remained a feeble instrument for the expression of the growing idea within us, it began to become an instrument indeed. It began to become a power. How did this new kind of association grow and to what objects did it address itself? The movement was not planned by any human brain, it was not foreseen by any human foresight. It came of itself, it came as a flood comes, as a storm comes. There had been slow preparations which we did not institute or understand. These preparations were mainly among the young men, the rising generation, the hope of India. There the spirit first awoke. At first it was not what we would call an association; it was only a temporary union of young men for a temporary cause. They called themselves by a name which has since become terrible to many of our friends of the Anglo-Indian Press. They called themselves volunteers. For what did they volunteer? They volunteered for service to the representatives of the nation who came together to deliberate for the good of the people. This is how it first came, as an idea of service, the idea of service to those who worked for the motherland. Out of that grew the idea of service to the Mother. That was the first stage and the root from which it grew into our political life. Then there was another stream which rose elsewhere and joined the first. Our Anglo-Indian brothers to whom we owe so much and in so many ways, did us this service also that they always scoffed at us as weaklings, men who were doomed to perpetual slavery and had always been a race of slaves because the people of Bengal had no martial gift, because they are not physically strong, because whoever chooses to strike them can strike and expect no blow in return. Therefore they were unfit for self-government, therefore they must remain slaves for ever.

Our Anglo-Indian friends do not proclaim that theory now. They have changed their tone. For the spirit of the nation could bear the perpetual reproach no longer, the awakening Brahman within our young men could bear it no longer. Associations grew up for physical exercise and the art of self-defence and grew into those Samitis which you have seen flourishing and recently suppressed. We were determined to wash the blemish away. If this was the blemish, to be weak, if this was the source of our degradation we determined to remove it. We said, "In spite of our physical weakness we have a strength within us which will remove our defects. We will be a race of brave and strong men. And that we may be so, we will establish everywhere these associations for physical exercise." That, one would think, was an innocent object and had nothing in it which anyone could look upon with suspicion. In fact we never thought that we should be looked upon with suspicion. It is the Europeans who have trumpeted physical culture as a most valuable national asset, the thing in which the English-speaking nations have pre-eminently excelled and which was the cause of their success and energy. That was the second seed of association.

There was a third seed and it was the thing for which our hearts yearned, the impulse towards brotherhood. A new kind of association came into being. That was the association which stood by labour and service and self-sacrifice, whose object of existence was to help the poor and nurse the sick. That was the flowering out of the Hindu religion. That was what Swami Vivekananda preached. That was what Aswini Kumar Dutta strove to bring into organised existence. That was what the Ramakrishna Mission, the Little Brothers of the Poor at Barisal tried to effect. This was the third way in which the new association established itself, the third seed of union, the third stream of tendency seeking fulfilment. All these streams of tendency came together, they united themselves and have been in their broad united purifying current the glory of our national life for the last three years. These Samitis of young men by labour, by toil for the country, worship of the motherland held themselves together and spread the habit of association and the growth of brotherhood over the land. That is their spirit and ideal and that the way in which these associations have been established.

These are the associations which have now been crushed out of existence under a charge which cannot be and has not been maintained, a charge which has been disproved over and over again. It is a monstrous charge. The charge is that these associations are associations of hatred and violence, associations for rebellion and dacoity. That is the charge under which these associations have been suppressed. I have come recently back from Barisal. While I was there I heard and read something of the work of the young men's association in Barisal, the association called the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti which with its network covered the whole district of Bakarganj. This association grew out of a much smaller association started by Aswini Kumar Dutta called the Little Brothers of the Poor. What was the work commenced by these Little Brothers of the Poor? When epidemic broke out, when cholera appeared in all its virulence, the young men of the Barisal Brajamohan College went out in bands. They nursed the sick, they took charge of those who had been abandoned, they took up in their arms those whom they found lying on the roadside. They were not deterred in those moments by the prejudice of caste or by the difference of creed. The orthodox Brahmin took up in his bosom and nursed the Mohammedan and the Namasudra. They did not mind the epidemic or fear to catch the contagion. They took up and nursed them as brother nurses brother and thus they rescued many from the grasp of death. Aswini Kumar Dutta is in exile. How did he establish that influence which caused him to be thought dangerous? By philanthropy, by service. While ordinary colleges under the control of the Government were mere soulless machines where they cram a few packets of useless knowledge into the brain of the student, Aswini Kumar breathed his own lofty and noble soul into the Brajamohan College and made it an engine indeed out of which men were turned, in which hearts and souls were formed. He breathed his noble qualities into the young men who grew up in the cherishing warmth and sunlight of his influence. He made his college an institution which in the essentials of education was a model for any educational institution in the world. This is how he built up his influence among the educated class. They followed him because he had shaped their souls between his hands. It is therefore that they loved him, it is therefore that they saw no fault in him. His influence among the common people was built up by love, service and philanthropy. It was out of the seed he planted that the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti grew.

What was the work of this Samiti, the existence of which could no longer be tolerated in the interests of the peace and safety of the Empire? First of all it continued with that blessed work which the Little Brothers of the Poor had begun, nursing, serving, saving the poor, the sick and the suffering. They made it their ideal to see that there was no sick man or sick woman of however low a class or depressed a caste, of whom it could be said that they went unhelped in their sickness in the Bakarganj District. That was the first crime the association committed.

The second crime was this. These young men went from house to house seeking out the suffering and the hungry when famine broke out in the country. To those who were patiently famishing they brought succour, but they did more. There were many people who belonged to the respectable classes on whom the hand of famine was laid. They would not go for help to the relief works; they would not complain and show their misery to the world. The young men of Barisal sought out these cases and secretly, without injuring the feelings of the suffering, they gave help and saved men and women from starvation. This was the second crime of the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti.

Then there was another. The social life of Bengal is full of discord and quarrels. Brother quarrels with brother and quarrels with bitter hatred. They carry their feud to the law-courts; they sin against the Mother in themselves and in others; they sow the seed of lasting enmity and hatred between their families. And beyond this there is the ruin, the impoverishment of persistent litigation. The young men of the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti said, "This should not be tolerated any more. We will settle their differences, we will make peace between brother and brother. We will say to our people, 'If there is any dispute let us try to settle it first. If you are dissatisfied with our decision you can always go to the law-courts; but let us try first.'" They tried, and hundreds of cases were settled out of court and hundreds of these seeds of enmity and hatred were destroyed. Peace and love and brotherhood began to increase in the land. This was their third crime.

Their fourth offence is a great crime nowadays. These young men had the hardihood to organise and help the progress of Swadeshi in the land. There was no violence. By love, by persuasion, by moral pressure, by appeals to the Samaj and the interests of the country, they did this work. They helped the growth of our industries; they helped it by organising the condition for their growth, the only condition in which these infant, these feeble and languishing industries can grow, the general determination to take our own goods and not the goods of others, to give preference to our Mother and not to any stranger. In no other district of Bengal, in no other part of India was Swadeshi so well organised, so perfectly organised, so peacefully and quietly organised as in Barisal. That was the last and worst crime they committed. For these crimes they have been proclaimed, they have been forbidden to exist. This Swadesh Bandhab Samiti carried organisation to a perfection which was not realised in other districts because it is not every district which can have an Aswini Kumar Dutta or a Satis Chandra Chatterji. But the same impulse was there, the same tendencies were there. I do not know any single society of the kind in Bengal which has not made some attempt to help the people in times of famine or to bring succour to the sick and suffering or to remove quarrels and discord as well as to help the growth of Swadeshi by organising that exclusive preference to which we have given the name of boycott. These were general offences, common crimes.

But there was another thing that led to the suppression. This was an association that had that very dangerous and lethal weapon called the lathi. The use of the lathi as a means of self-defence was openly taught and acquired, and if that was not enough there was the imagination of a very highly imaginative police which saw hidden behind the lathi the bomb. Now nobody ever saw the bombs. But the police were quite equal to the occasion; they thought there might be bombs. And what if there were not? Their imagination was quite equal to realising any bomb that could not be materialised, — in baithakkhanas and elsewhere. The police suspected that the lathi was the father of the bomb. Their procedure was simple with the simplicity of the highest detective genius. When they heard of a respectable-sized dacoity, they immediately began to reason it out. They said, "Now why are there so many dacoities in the land? Obviously the lathi fathered the bomb and the bomb fathers the dacoities. Who have lathis? The Samitis. Therefore it is proved. The Samitis are the dacoits." Our efficient police have always shown a wonderful ability. Generally when a dacoity is committed, the police are nowhere near. They have not altered that; that golden rule still obtains. They are not to be found when the dacoity takes place. They only come up when the dacoity is long over and say, "Well, this is the work of the National volunteers." They look round to see what is the nearest Samiti and, if they find any which has been especially active in furthering Swadeshi, they say, "Here is the Samiti." And if there is anyone who was somewhat active in connection with the work of the Samiti, they say at once, "Well, here is the man." And if he is a boy of any age from twelve upwards, so much the better. The man or boy is instantly arrested and put into hajat. After rotting there some days or weeks, the police can get no evidence and the man has to be released. That does not frighten the courageous police; they immediately arrest the next likely person belonging to the Samiti. So they go on persevering until they lose all hope of finding or creating evidence. Sometimes they persist, and members of the Samitis, sometimes mere boys, have to rot in hajat until the case goes up to a court of justice and the judge looks at the case and after he has patiently heard it out has to ask, "Well, but where is the evidence?"

Formerly, you may remember, those of you who have lived in the villages, that wherever there was any man in a village who was physically strong the police wrote down his name in the black book of budmashes. He was at once put down as an undesirable. That was the theory, that a man who is physically strong must be a hooligan. Physical development was thus stamped out of our villages and the physique of our villagers began to deteriorate until this movement of Akharas and Samitis came into existence to rescue the nation from absolute physical deterioration and decay. But this was an immortal idea in the mind of our police and it successfully effected transmigration. It took this form, that these Samitis encourage physical education, they encourage lathi-play, therefore they must be the nurseries of violence and dacoity and factories of bombs. Our rulers seem to have accepted this idea of the police. So perhaps this is the crime these Samitis have committed. Nothing has been proved of all this easy theorizing. It is yet to be known when and where the bomb has been associated with the work of the Samitis in Eastern Bengal. There was indeed a great dacoity in Eastern Bengal and the theory was started that it was done by one of the Samitis, but even our able detective police were unable to prove any association in that case. They did catch hold of some young men apparently on principle. There is a confidential rule, — it is confidential but the public have come to know of it, — that "somebody must be punished for the day's work." That was the circular of a Lieutenant-Governor of this province and the police no doubt thought it ought to be observed faithfully. So they caught hold of some likely men and the people so charged were about to be "punished for the day's work"; but fortunately for them a judge sat upon the High Court Bench who remembered that there was such a thing as law and another thing called evidence, things whose existence was in danger of being forgotten in this country. He applied the law, he insisted on having the evidence, and you all know the result.

These associations, then, which were the expression of our growing national life and the growing feeling of brotherhood among us, did such work as I have described, and these were the ways, guiltless of any offence in the eyes of the law, in which they did their work. Still they have been suppressed not because they were criminal, but because their existence was inconvenient. It has always been the case that when established institutions of government were unwilling to move with the times, they have looked with suspicion upon the right of association and the right of free speech, they have discouraged the right of a free Press and the right of public meeting. By destroying these instruments they have thought to arrest the progress which they did not love. This policy has never permanently succeeded, yet it is faithfully repeated with that singular stupidity which seems natural to the human race. The sword of Damocles hangs over our Press. It is nominally free, but we never know when even that simulacrum of freedom may not be taken from it. There is a law of sedition so beautifully vague and comprehensive that no one knows when he is committing sedition and when he is not. There is a law against the preaching of violence which enables a Magistrate whenever he chooses to imagine that your article advocates violence, to seize your machine. The press is taken away and of course the case goes up to the High Court, but by that time the paper suffers so much that it becomes difficult or impossible for it to rear its head again. There is a notification by which, as I pointed out in Beadon Square the other day, a meeting becomes peaceful or criminal not according to the objects or to the behaviour of the people assembled but according as the sun is up or the sun is down. There is a law of proclamation by which our right of association can be taken from us whenever they please by a stroke of the pen. The British people have certain traditions, they have certain ways of thinking and fixed ideas of which they cannot entirely get rid. It is for that reason they have not yet passed a law entirely and expressly suppressing the freedom of the Press or the right of public meeting. But even that may come. What should we do under these circumstances? We see the sword of Damocles hanging lower and lower over our heads. Our association may be declared criminal and illegal at any moment. The executive can any moment it pleases confiscate our press. We ourselves are liable to be arrested and harassed at any moment without evidence, "on suspicion", by an irresponsible and apparently unpunishable police. Under whatever difficulties and whatever restrictions may be put upon us, we must of course go on. But the restrictions may be greater in future. The sword is hanging lower and lower over our heads. Still we cannot stop in our work. The force within us cannot be baulked, the call cannot be denied. Whatever penalty be inflicted on us for the crime of patriotism, whatever peril we may have to face in the fulfilment of our duty to our nation, we must go on, we must carry on the country's work.

After all what is an association? An association is not a thing which cannot exist unless we have a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary. An association is not a thing which cannot meet unless it has its fixed meeting place. Association is a thing which depends upon the feeling and the force within us. Association means unity, association means brotherhood, association means binding together in one common work. Where there is life, where there is self-sacrifice, where there is disinterested and unselfish toil, where there are these things within us, the work cannot stop. It cannot stop even if there be one man who is at all risks prepared to carry it on. It is only after all the question of working, it is not a question of the means for work. It is simply a question of working together in common in one way or in another. It is a matter of asking each other from time to time what work there is to be performed today and what is the best way of performing it, what are the best means of helping our countrymen, what work we shall have to do tomorrow or the day after and having settled that to do it at the appointed time and in the appointed way. That is what I mean when I say that it is a question of working and not of means. It is not that these things cannot be done except by the forms which our European education has taught us to value. Whatever may be the difficulties we can go on with the work. The association that we shall have will be the association of brothers who are united heart to heart, of fellow-workers joined hand-in-hand in a common labour, the association of those who have a common motherland. It is the association of the whole country, to which every son of India and every son of Bengal ought by the duty of his birth to belong, an association which no force can break up, the association of a unity which grows closer day by day, of an impulse that comes from on high and has drawn us together in order that we might realise brotherhood, in order that the Indian nation may be united and united not merely in the European way, not merely by the common self-interest, but united by love for the common country, united by the ideal of brotherhood, united by the feeling that we are all sons of one common Mother who is also the manifestation of God in a united humanity. That is the association which has been coming into being, and has not been destroyed, since the movement came into existence. This is the mighty association, which unites the people of West Bengal with the people of East and North Bengal and defies partition, because it embraces every son of the land, — *bhai bhai ek thain*, or brother and brother massed inseparably together. This is the ideal that is abroad and is waking more and more consciously within us. It is not merely a common self-interest. It awakens God within us and says, "You are all one, you are all brothers. There is one place in which you all meet and that is your common Mother. That is not merely the soil. That is not merely a division of land but it is a living thing. It is the Mother in whom you move and have your being. Realise God in the nation, realise God in your brother, realise God in a wide human association." This is the ideal by which humanity is moved all over the world, the ideal which is the *dharma* of the Kaliyuga, and it is the ideal of love and service which the young men of Bengal so thoroughly realised, love and service to your brothers, love and service to your Mother and this is the association we are forming, the great association of the people of Bengal and of the whole people of India. It increases and will grow for ever in spite of all the obstacles that rise in its way. When the spirit of Aswini Kumar Dutta comes into every leader of the people and the nation becomes one great Swadesh Bandhab Samiti, then it will be accomplished.

This is for ever our national ideal and in its strength our nation will rise whatever law they make; our nation will rise and live by the force of the law of its own being. For the fiat of God has gone out to the Indian nation, "Unite, be free, be one, be great."

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 3rd JULY 1909 { No. 3

Opinion and Comments

The Highest Synthesis

In the *Bengalee*'s issue of the 29th June there is a very interesting article on Nationalism and Expediency, which seems to us to call for some comment. The object of the article is to modify or water the strong wine of Nationalism by a dash of expediency. Nationalism is a faith, the writer admits; he even goes much further than we are prepared to go and claims for Nationalism that it is the highest of all syntheses. This is a conclusion we are not prepared to accept; it is, we know, the highest which European thought has arrived at so far as that thought has expressed itself in the actual life and ideals of the average European. In Positivism Europe has attempted to arrive at a higher synthesis, the synthesis of humanity; and Socialism and philosophical Anarchism, the Anarchism of Tolstoy and Spencer, have even envisaged the application of the higher intellectual synthesis to life. In India we do not recognise the nation as the highest synthesis to which we can rise. There is a higher synthesis, humanity; beyond that there is a still higher synthesis, this living, suffering, aspiring world of creatures, the synthesis of Buddhism; there is a highest of all, the synthesis of God, and that is the Hindu synthesis, the synthesis of Vedanta. With us today Nationalism is our immediate practical faith and gospel not because it is the highest possible synthesis, but because it must be realised in life if we are to have the chance of realising the others. We must live as a nation before we can live in humanity. It is for this reason that Nationalist thinkers have always urged the necessity of realising our separateness from other nations and living to ourselves for the present, not in order to shut out humanity, but that we may get that individual strength, unity and wholeness which will help us to live as a nation for humanity. A man must be strong and free in himself before he can live usefully for others, so must a nation. But that does not justify us in forgetting the ultimate aim of evolution. God in the nation becomes the realisation of the first moment to us because the nation is the chosen means or condition through which we rise to the higher synthesis, God in humanity, God in all creatures, God in Himself and ourself.

Faith and Analysis

Because Nationalism is the highest synthesis, it is more than a mere faith, says the *Bengalee*, it embodies an analysis, however unconscious or even inadequate, of the actual forces and conditions of life. We do not quite understand our contemporary's philosophy. An unconscious analysis is a contradiction in terms. There may be a vague and ill-expressed weighing of things in the rough, but that is not analysis. Analysis is in its nature a deliberate intellectual process; the other is merely a perception of things separately or together but without analysis. And analysis is not inconsistent with faith, but must accompany it unless the faith is merely superstition. Every faith is to a certain extent rational, it has its own analysis and synthesis by which it seeks to establish itself intellectually; so has Nationalism. What the *Bengalee* means is apparently that our faith ought not to exceed our observation; in other words, we ought to calculate the forces for and against us and if the favourable forces are weak and the unfavourable strong, we ought to move with caution and hesitation. Now that is a very different question which has nothing to do with the philosophical aspect of Nationalism but with the policy of the moment. Our position is that Nationalism is our faith, our *dharma*, and its realisation the duty which lies before the country at the present moment. If so, it is a thing which must be done and from which we cannot turn merely because the forces are against us. If we rely on an analysis of forces, what is it we arrive at? It was only yesterday that there was a series of articles in the *Bengalee* which sought to establish the proposition that the Hindus on whom the burden of the movement has fallen are a doomed and perishing race. The writer arrived at that conclusion by patient and exhaustive analysis. What else does analysis show us? It shows us one of the most powerful Governments in the world determined not to part with its absolute control and aided for the present by a large part of one of the chief communities in India. On the other side a people unequipped, unorganised, without means or resources, divided within itself, a considerable portion of it inert, and even in the educated class a part of it unsympathetic, afraid, insisting on caution and prudence. Shall we then turn from our work? Shall we deny God? Rationality demands that we should. And if we do not, it is simply because it would be to deny God, because we have "mere" faith, because we believe that God is within us, a spiritual force strong enough to overcome all physical obstacles, weaknesses, disabilities, that God is in the movement, that He is its leader and guides it, that we belong to the world and the future and are not a spent and dying force. This faith we hold because we understand the processes by which He works and can therefore see good in evil, light in the darkness, a preparation for victory in defeat, a new life in the apparent process of disintegration.

Mature Deliberation

That the movement is from God has been apparent in its history. Our contemporary does not believe that God created and leads the movement, he thinks that Srijut Surendranath Banerji created it and leads it. Only so can we explain the extraordinary statement, "every step that has been taken in construction has been preceded by mature deliberation". Is this so? Was the Swadeshi movement preceded by mature deliberation? Everybody knows that it was scouted by our leaders and, if it had been again proposed to them a month before it suddenly seized the country, would still have been scouted. It came as a flood comes and swept away everybody in its mighty current. Was the Boycott preceded by mature deliberation? Everybody knows how it came, advocated by obscure mofussil towns, propagated by a Calcutta vernacular newspaper, forced on leaders who shrank from it with misgivings, accepted it with tremors and even then would only have used it for a short time as a means of pressure to get the Partition reversed. Everybody knows how it spread over Bengal with the impetuosity of a cyclone. Was the National Education movement preceded by mature deliberation? It came suddenly, it came unexpectedly, unwelcome to many and still damned with a halfhearted support by the leaders of the country. This is what we mean by saying that God is in the movement and leads it. It is a greater than human force, incalculable, sudden and impetuous, which has swept over the country shattering and recreating, transforming cowards into heroes, lovers of ease into martyrs, self-seekers into self-sacrificers, changing in a few years the whole outlook, temper and character of a nation.

The Importance of the Individual

It is not surprising that with these ideas the *Bengalee* should deprecate the call for continued courage and self-sacrifice which has been made by Srijut Aurobindo Ghose in his speech at Jhalakati, for to that speech the article is a controversial answer. The cry for expediency resolves itself into an argument for individual prudence on the part of the leaders. “It seems to us to be a fatal idea that for the progress of the nation individuals are not necessary or that particular individuals are not more necessary than other individuals.” And the writer asks whether an organ is justified in cutting itself off for the sake of the organism, and immediately answers his own question partially by saying, yes, when the interests of the organism require it. The metaphor is a false one; for the individual is not an organ, he is simply an atom, and atoms not only can be replaced but are daily replaced, and the replacement is necessary for the continued life of the organism. In times of stress or revolution the replacement is more rapid, that is all. Whatever the importance of particular individuals, — and the importance of men like Sj. Aswini Kumar Dutta or Sj. Krishna Kumar Mitra is not denied by any man in his senses and was not denied but dwelt upon by the speaker at Jhalakati, — they are not necessary, in the sense that God does not depend upon them for the execution of His purposes. Our contemporary does not expressly deny God's existence or His omnipotence or His providence, and if he accepts them, he is debarred from insisting that God cannot save India without Sj. Surendranath Banerji or Sj. Aswini Kumar Dutta, that He is unable to remove them and find other instruments or that their deportation or disappearance will defer the fulfilment of His purposes to future centuries.

The Fatalism of Action

Our contemporary does however seem to doubt these qualities in the Ruler of all. He holds it to be a fatal doctrine "that we are none of us necessary, that everything that is happening or can happen is for the best, that God is seeking His fulfilment in inscrutable ways, that He will Himself lead the country when our prominent men are removed from the arena." This, he says, is fatalism, and by flinging the word fatalism at Srijut Aurobindo, he thinks he has damned his position. The word fatalism means usually a resigned passivity, and certainly any leader who preached such a gospel would be injuring the country. That would be indeed a fatal doctrine. But our contemporary admits that it is a fatalism of action and not of inaction he is censuring, he blames the speaker for advocating too much action and not too little. All that the "fatalism" censured means is a firm faith in the love and wisdom of God and a belief based on past experience that as it is His purpose to raise up India, therefore everything that happens or can happen just now will tend to the fulfilment of His purpose. In other words, there is now an upward tendency in the nation with an immense force behind it and, in such conditions, it is part of human experience that the force makes use of every event to assist the progress of the tendency until its contribution to human development is fulfilled. That is the idea of Kala or the Zeitgeist working, and, put religiously, it means that God being Supreme Wisdom uses everything for His supreme purposes and out of evil cometh good. This is true of our private life as every man of spiritual insight can testify; he can name and estimate the particular good which has come out of every apparent evil in his life. The same truth applies to the life of the nation.

God's Ways

When it is said that God's ways are inscrutable, it is simply meant that man's reason, on which the *Bengalee* lays so much stress, is not always sufficient to estimate at the time the object He has in a particular dispensation of calamity or defeat. It seems to be nothing but calamity and defeat and it is only afterwards that the light of reason looking backwards is able by the illumination of subsequent events to understand His doings. Therefore we must have faith and an invincible faith or else the calamities will be too great for our courage and endurance. Is this a false doctrine or a fatal doctrine? Will the country be injured by it or helped by it? Srijut Aurobindo never said that God would step in to fill the place of Srijut Aswini Dutta or others removed from the arena. His position was that God has been driving on the movement from the beginning and was always the leader when they were with us and remains the leader when they are taken from us.

Adequate Value

The *Bengalee* insists however that individual life is quite as sacred *for its own purposes* as national life for its higher purposes, that the nation must get *adequate value* for each sacrifice that the individuals make, and that great men must protect themselves from danger because their removal at a critical moment may mean incalculable injury. We deny that individual life is as sacred as national life; the smaller cannot be so sacred as the greater, self cannot be so sacred as others, and to say that it is quite as sacred for its own purposes is to deify selfishness. Our lives are useful only in proportion as they help others by example or action or tend to fulfil God in man. It is not true that my ease is sacred, my safety is sacred, or my self-interest is sacred. This if anything is "a fatal doctrine". We do not deny that sacrifice cannot be an end to itself; no one is so foolish as to advance any such proposition. But when the *Bengalee* argues that the individual must demand adequate value for every sacrifice he makes on the national altar, it shows a complete inability to appreciate the nature of sacrifice and the laws of politics. If we had acted in this Bania spirit, we should never have got beyond the point at which we stood four years ago. It is by unhesitating, wholehearted and princely sacrifices that nations effect their liberty. It has always been so in the past and the laws of nature have not altered and will not alter to suit the calculating prudence of individuals. A great man is valuable to the nation and he should guard himself but only so far as he can do so without demoralising his followers, ceasing from the battle or abdicating his right to leadership. He should never forget that he leads and the nation looks up to him as a fountain of steadfastness, unselfish service and courage. Expediency means national expediency, not individual expediency. Even so it must be the larger expediency which makes great sacrifices and faces great risks to secure great ends. Statesmanship is not summed up in the words prudence and caution, it has a place for strength and courage.

Expediency and Nationalism

We have met the arguments of the *Bengalee* at some length because we hold the teaching in this article to be perilous in its tendencies. There is plenty of selfishness, prudence, hesitating calculation in the country, plenty of fear and demoralisation in the older generation. There is no need to take thought and labour for increasing it. Steadfastness, courage, a calm and high spirit are what we now need, wisdom to plan and act, not prudence to abstain from action. Nationalism tempered by expediency is like the French despotism tempered by epigrams. The epigrams undermined the despotism, the expediency is likely to undermine and in some quarters is visibly undermining the Nationalism. More "incalculable injury" is likely to be done by teaching of this kind at this juncture than by the removal of any great man, however pre-eminent and inspiring his greatness.

A Task Unaccomplished

THERE is no question so vital to the future of this nation as the spirit in which we are to set about the regeneration of our national life. Either India is rising again to fulfil the function for which her past national life and development seem to have prepared her, a leader of thought and faith, a defender of spiritual truth and experience destined to correct the conclusions of materialistic Science by the higher Science of which she has the secret and in that power to influence the world's civilisation, or she is rising as a faithful pupil of Europe, a follower of methods and ideas borrowed from the West, a copyist of English politics and society. In the one case her aspiration must be great, her faith unshakable, her efforts and sacrifices such as to command the admiration of the world; in the other no such greatness of soul is needed or possible; — a cautious, slow and gradual progress involving no extraordinary effort and no unusual sacrifices is sufficient for an end so small. In the one case her destiny is to be a great nation remoulding and leading the civilisation of the world, in the other it is to be a subordinate part of the British Empire sharing in the social life, the political privileges, the intellectual ideals and attainments of the Anglo-Celtic race. These are the two ideals before us, and an ideal is not mere breath, it is a thing compelling which determines the spirit of our action and often fixes the method. No policy can be successful which does not take into view the end to be attained and the amount and nature of the effort needed to effect it. The leader of industry who enters on a commercial enterprise, first looks at the magnitude of his field and intended output and equips himself with capital and plant accordingly, and even if he cannot commence at once on the scale of his ideal he holds it in view himself, puts it before the public in issuing his prospectus and estimating the capital necessary, and all the practical steps he takes are conceived in the light of his original aspiration and ordered towards its achievement. So it is with the political ventures of a nation. To place before himself a great object and then to shrink in the name of expediency from the expenditure and sacrifice called for in its pursuit is not prudence but ineptitude. If you will be prudent, be prudent from the beginning. Fix your object low and creep towards it. But if you fix your object in the skies, it will not do to crawl on the ground and because your eyes are sometimes lifted towards the ideal imagine you are progressing while you murmur to those behind, "Yes, yes, our ideal is in the skies because that is the place for ideals, but we are on the ground and the ground is our proper place of motion. Let us creep, let us creep." Such inconsistency will only dishearten the nation, unnerve its strength and confuse its intelligence. You must either bring down your ideal to the ground or find wings or aeroplane to lift you to the skies. There is no middle course.

We believe that this nation is one which has developed itself in the past on spiritual lines under the inspiration of a destiny which is now coming to fulfilment. The peculiar seclusion in which it was able to develop its individual temperament, knowledge and ideas; — the manner in which the streams of the world poured in upon and were absorbed by the calm ocean of Indian spiritual life, recalling the great image in the Gita, — even as the waters flow into the great tranquil and immeasurable ocean, and the ocean is not perturbed; — the persistence with which peculiar and original forms of society, religion and philosophical thought were protected from disintegration up till the destined moment; — the deferring of that disintegration until the whole world outside had arrived at the point when the great Indian ideal which these forms enshrined could embrace all that it yet needed for its perfect self-expression, and be itself embraced by an age starved by materialism and yearning for a higher knowledge; — the sudden return of India upon itself at a time when all that was peculiarly Indian seemed to wear upon it the irrevocable death-sentence passed on all things that in the human evolution are no longer needed; — the miraculous uprising and transformation of weakness into strength brought about by that return; — all this seems to us to be not fortuitous and accidental but inevitable and preordained in the decrees of an over-ruling Providence. The rationalist looks on such beliefs and aspirations as mysticism and jargon. When confronted with the truths of Hinduism, the experience of deep thinkers and the choice spirits of the race through thousands of years, he shouts "Mysticism, mysticism!" and thinks he has conquered. To him there is order, development, progress, evolution, enlightenment in the history of Europe, but the past of India is an unsightly mass of superstition and ignorance best torn out of the book of human life. These thousands of years of our thought and aspiration are a period of the least importance to us and the true history of our progress only begins with the advent of European education! The rest is a confused nightmare or a mere barren lapse of time preparing nothing and leading to nothing. This tone is still vocal in the organs of the now declining school of the nineteenth century some of which preserve their influence in the provinces where the balance in the struggle between the past and the future has not inclined decidedly in favour of the latter. In Bengal it is still represented by an undercurrent of the old weakness and the old want of faith which struggles occasionally to establish itself by a false appearance of philosophical weight and wisdom. It cannot really believe that this is a movement with a divine force within and a mighty future before it. The only force it sees is the resentment against the Partition which in its view is enough to explain everything that has happened, the only future it envisages is reform and the reversal of the Partition. Recently, however, the gospel of Nationalism has made so much way that the organs of this school in Bengal have accepted many of its conclusions and their writings are coloured by its leading ideas. But the fundamental idea of the movement as a divine manifestation purposing to raise up the nation not only for its own fulfilment in India but for the work and service of the world and therefore sure of its fulfilment, therefore independent of individuals and superior to vicissitudes and difficulties, is one which they cannot yet grasp. It is a sentiment which has been growing upon us as the movement progressed, but it has not yet been sufficiently put forward by the organs of Nationalism itself, partly because the old idea of separating religion from politics lingered, partly because the human aspects of the Nationalist faith had to be established before we could rise to the divine. But that divine aspect has to be established if we are to have the faith and greatness of soul which can alone help us in the tremendous developments the signs of the time portend. There is plenty of weakness still lingering in the land and we cannot allow it to take shelter under the cry of expediency and rationality and seek to kill the faith and force that has been born in the hearts of the young. The *Karmayogin* has taken its stand on the rock of religion and its first object will be to combat these reactionary tendencies and lead the nation forward into the fuller light for which the *Bande Mataram* and other organs of the new faith only prepared. The gospel of Nationalism has not yet been fully preached; its most inspiring tenets have yet to be established not only by the eloquence of the orator and inspiration of the prophet but by the arguments of the logician, the appeal to experience of the statesman and the harmonising generalisations of the scientist.

Mr. Mackarness' Bill

WE FIND in *India* to hand by mail last week the full text of Mr. Mackarness' speech in introducing the Bill by which he proposes to amend the Regulation of 1818 and safeguard the liberties of the subject in India. We are by no means enamoured of the step which Mr. Mackarness has taken. We could have understood a proposal to abolish the regulation entirely and disclaim the necessity or permissibility of coercion in India. This would be a sound Liberal position to take, but it would not have the slightest chance of success in England and would be no more than an emphatic form of protest not expected or intended to go farther. British Liberalism is and has always been self-regarding, liberal at home, hankering after benevolent despotism and its inevitable consummation in dependencies. To ask Liberal England to give up the use of coercion in emergencies would be to ask it to contradict a deep-rooted instinct. We could have understood, again, a Bill which while leaving the Government powers of an extraordinary nature to deport the subject, under careful safeguards, in unusual and well-defined circumstances and for no more than a fixed period, would yet leave the aggrieved subject an opportunity after his release of vindicating his character and, if it appeared that he had been deported unwarrantably and without due inquiry or in spite of complete innocence, of obtaining fitting compensation. Such an act would meet both the considerations of State and the considerations of justice. It would leave the Government ample power in emergencies but would take from it the freedom to deport out of caprice, panic or unscrupulous reactionism. Deportation would then be a rare act of State necessity, not an autocratic *lettre de cachet* used to bolster up injustice or crush all opposition to the continuance of autocratic absolutism. Mr. Mackarness' Bill seems to us to leave the essence of deportation just where it was before. The changes made are purely palliative and palliative not of the unjust, irritating and odious character of the measure but of the apparent monstrosity of deporting a man without even letting him or his friends or the world know what charge lay against him or whether any charge lay against him. It is this which gives an ultra-Russian character to the Regulation and makes the Liberal conscience queasy. The proposed changes are a salve to that conscience, not a benefit to the victim of deportation. It makes his position, if anything, worse. It is bad to be punished without any charge, it is worse to be punished on a charge which you are debarred to all time from disproving.

There are three changes which the Bill contemplates. Instead of being able to confine a man until farther orders the Viceroy has to renew his sanction every three months, a change which may have some deterrent effect on a Viceroy with a Liberal conscience but to others will mean merely a quarterly expenditure of a drop of ink and a few strokes of the pen. Another and more important change is the provision that, to qualify for deportation, "a British subject must be reasonably suspected of having been guilty of treasonable practices or of a crime punishable by law, being an act of violence or intimidation and tending to interfere with or disturb the maintenance of law and order". "That" thinks Mr. Mackarness "insures in the first place that a man must have been guilty of some definite offence. At any rate it is intended to provide for that." Unfortunately the intention is all, there is no real provision for carrying it out, except the clause that the warrant shall contain a definite statement of the character of the crime. How will this clause help the alleged intention of the Bill? It is only the character of the crime that has to be defined and, if the authorities relying on a Mazarul Haq or a Rakhal Laha frame a charge say against Srijut Surendranath Banerji of waging war or abetting or conspiring to wage war or financing unlawful assemblies and incontinently deport him, would the Liberal conscience be satisfied? Or would it be possible for the Moderate leader to meet this charge, however definite in character? It is evident that to carry out the "intention" of the Bill it would be necessary to name the specific act or acts which constitute the offence and the time and circumstances of commission, for it is only a precise accusation that can be met. Even if the charge be precise in its terms, Mr. Mackarness' Bill provides no redress to the deportee. All that he can do is to submit a "representation" to the officials who have deported him. Those who know the ways of the bureaucrat can tell beforehand the inevitable answer to such representations, "The Government have considered your representation and see no cause to alter the conclusions they had arrived at upon sufficient and reliable information." So the deportation will stand, the charge will stand and the last condition of the deportee will be worse than his first. The only advantage the Bill will secure is the greater opportunities for effective heckling in the House of Commons if facts can be secured which throw doubt on the charge; but the Government has always the answer that its evidence is reliable and conclusive but for reasons of State policy it is not advisable to disclose either its nature or its sources, and the relics of the Liberal conscience will be satisfied. As things stand the deportations have made even some Imperialistic consciences uneasy and that advantage will be lost under the new Bill.

Mr. Mackarness has admitted that the regulations are absolutely hateful and he would prefer to propose their entire abolition if such a proposal had any chance of acceptance by a British House of Commons. His amendments will not make them less hateful, they will only make them less calmly absurd. That is a gain to the Government, not to us or to justice. The only provisions that would make deportation a reasonable though still autocratic measure of State would be to allow the Viceroy to deport a person, stating the charge against him, for a period of not more than six months and oblige the Government to provide the deportee on release with full particulars as to the nature of the information on which he was deported, so that he might seek redress against malicious slander by individuals or, if it were considered impolitic to disclose the sources of information, for wanton and arbitrary imprisonment by the authorities. The measure would still be oppressive but it would then give some chance to an aggrieved and innocent man, so long as a sense of justice and some tradition of independence still linger in the higher tribunals of the land. Such a measure would have been a moderate measure and would have left the essential absolutism of Government in India unchanged. But even to this the Bill does not rise. It is noticeable that the only Irish Nationalist whose name was on the Bill repudiated it as soon as he heard Mr. Mackarness' speech, on the ground that he had been under the impression that the Bill went much farther than was now stated. The other names were those of British Liberals or Conservatives. This is significant of the difference between the sympathy we may expect even from conscientious English Liberals and the real fellow-feeling of a Nationalist who has himself known what it is to live under the conditions of bureaucratic coercion. Mr. Mackarness has fought the cause of the deportees in the spirit of genuine Liberalism, but his Bill is a concession to that watery British substitute for it which is only Imperialism afraid of its convictions.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Yoga and Human Evolution
The Katha Upanishad I.1

Kumartuli Speech

BABU Aurobindo Ghose rose amidst loud cheers and said that when he consented to attend the meeting, he never thought that he would make any speech. In fact, he was asked by the organisers of the meeting simply to be present there. He was told that it would be sufficient if he came and took his seat there. Now he found his name among the speakers. The Chairman of the meeting, whose invitation was always an order, had called upon him to speak.

He had two reasons as to why he ought not to speak. The first was that since he was again at liberty to address his countrymen he had made a good many speeches and he had exhausted everything that he had to say and he did not like to be always repeating the same thing from the platform. He was not an orator and what he spoke was only in the hope that some of the things he might say might go to the hearts of his countrymen and that he might see some effect of his speeches in their action. Merely to come again and again to the platform and the table was not a thing he liked. Therefore he preferred to see what his countrymen did.

Another reason was that unfortunately he was unable to address them in their mother language and therefore he always felt averse to inflict an English speech on a Bengali audience.

That evening he wished to speak only a few words because he owed an explanation to his friends. The form that his activities had taken after he had come from jail had disappointed a great many.

There was first a great friend of his own and India's who lived in Hare Street — (*laughter*) — and he was very much

Delivered at Kumartuli Park, Calcutta, on 11 July 1909. Text published in the Bengalee *on 13 July and reproduced in the* Karmayogin *on 14 August.*

disappointed by the form of his (the speaker's) activities. So great was this friend's anxiety for the Indians that that anxiety had cost him Rs. 15,000. (*A voice: "Another Rs. 7,500 as costs."*) In his anxiety to help the Indians he followed the ancient maxim that truth meant only whatever was for the good of others. Unfortunately the judge would not take that large view of the matter. And so our friend was silently suffering. (*A voice: "Passive resistance." Laughter*) His friend said that he had heard that Sj. Aurobindo Ghose had promised to devote himself to literature and religion, and it was strange that Mr. Ghose should go to Jhalakati and make speeches on Swadeshi and boycott.

He (the speaker) was devoting himself to literature and religion. He was writing as he wrote before on Swaraj and Swadeshi, and that was a form of literature. He was speaking on Swaraj and Swadeshi and that was part of his religion. (*Cheers*)

Another quarter he had disappointed was the police. (*Laughter*) He had received a message from them saying that he was opening his mouth too much. He gave an interview to a press representative and told him something mainly about the food and accommodation in the Government Hotel at Alipore. (*Laughter*) He was immediately informed that that was a great indiscretion on his part and that it would bring trouble on him. When he went to Jhalakati the attentions of the police pursued him. They told the Barisal people and the local merchants that if he (the speaker) was taken there the District Conference would be stopped. They got the answer that that was not in the people's hands, but the coming of Aurobindo Ghose was in their hands and Aurobindo Babu would come whatever the consequences to the Conference. And the Conference did take place. After his return he was again informed that he was qualifying for deportation — his fault was that he was appearing too much in public meetings. Some of the best loved workers in the country had already been deported and the first reason alleged was that they had been financing assassination and troubling the peace of the country. When the Government in Parliament were heckled out of that position, it escaped as if by accident from one of the members that one very important reason for the deportation was that the deportees had taken part in the Swadeshi agitation. This was borne out by the suggestion he had received, and it seemed that it was by supporting the Swadeshi that they laid themselves open to deportation. Now, he had an unfortunate temper and it was that he did not like to be intimidated. Intimidation only made him persist in doing his duty more obstinately, and if he spoke today, it was partly because of that friendly suggestion.

There were other friends who were nearer to us than those he had mentioned, but they also were dissatisfied with his activities. There was, for instance, a friend in Madras (*The Indian Patriot*) who invited him to give up politics and become a Sannyasi. This anxiety for his spiritual welfare somewhat surprised him at the time, but he was yet more surprised by the persistence of his friend's anxiety. One reason for suggesting inactivity to him was that he was imperilling his safety. That was a very singular reason to put before a public man for shirking his duty.

Another reason for his Madras friend's advice was that he (the speaker) was speaking against the reforms. It appeared that he (the speaker) was guilty of a great error in throwing a doubt on the reality of the reforms. Whenever any offer was made to the country by the officials, it was a habit of his to look at it a little closely. It was a part of English politeness, and also a principle of their commerce that when a present was given or an article sold it was put in a very beautiful case and its appearance made very attractive. But his long residence in England had led him to know that there were a kind of goods, called Brummagem goods, and that was a synonym for shoddy. He looked into the reforms and they seemed to him to belong to that class. Then there was another point. He was a little jealous of gifts from that quarter because the interests of the people and the officials were not the same. The position was such that if reforms gave any increase and enlargement of the people's rights or rather a beginning in that direction — for at present the people had no real right or share in the government — any beginning of the kind meant a shrinking of bureaucratic powers. It was not likely that the officials would readily give up any power to which they cling. Therefore when reform was offered he always asked himself how far that was a real beginning of self-government or how far it was something given to them to draw their attention from their real path to salvation. It seemed to him that the reforms give them not the slightest real share in the government of the country, but instead they would merely throw an apple of fresh discord among them. They would only be a cause of fresh strife and want of unity. Those who are led away by the reforms would not only diminish the powers of this country but lead others into the wrong path.

Only two or three days ago, his fears were confirmed. Certain utterances had come from one from whom they were least expected — one who had served and made sacrifices for the country. He said that those who spread the gospel of Swaraj were madmen outside the lunatic asylum and those who preached passive resistance as a means of gaining Swaraj were liars who did not speak out their real thoughts to save their skin; he invited the country to denounce them as enemies of the country and of its progress and justified all that the Government had done by saying that the only attitude the Government could take was stern and heartless repression.

Well, if it were true that only fear made them take to passive resistance, if they flinched now from the boycott because some had been deported, if they ceased to proclaim the ideal of Swaraj, if they ceased to preach the boycott, then only it would be true that they had adopted an ideal that they could not reach and proclaimed means of reaching it in which they did not believe, because they were anxious to save their skin.

He had heard many warnings recently that those who persisted in public agitation would be deported. For himself, and he was not a model of courage, residence for the best part of a year in a solitary cell had been an experience which took away all the terrors of deportation. (*Cheers*) If he had ever had any fears, the kindness of the authorities in giving him that experience had cured him of them. (*Laughter*) He had found that with the ideal of Swaraj to uphold and the *mantra* of "Bande Mataram" in the heart, there was nothing so very terrible in jail or deportation. That was the first thing he would like to impress on them as the result of his experience. Imprisonment in a righteous cause was not so terrible as it seemed, suffering was not so difficult to bear as our anticipations made it out. The prize to which they aspired was the greatest to which a nation could aspire and if a price was asked of them, they ought not to shrink from paying it.

He was not afraid of deportations and imprisonment but he was afraid of the hand which patted them on the back and the voice that soothed. The mixed policy of repression and kindness was the thing he feared most. The whip was still there uplifted though it was not just now falling upon them, but the other hand was held out to stroke the head and soothe. This offer of conciliation in one hand and the pressure of repression in the other might have the effect of slackening their efforts and bewildering their intelligence. They must not forget that nine of their most devoted workers were rotting in British jails under the name of deportation. What was the meaning of conciliation when men like Aswini Kumar Dutta, Krishna Kumar Mitra and others were taken away from them and not restored? What kind of conciliation was this which was offered us while this great wrong remained unremedied? Who could trust such a conciliation?

Let them not forget what they had set out to do when they declared the boycott. They had determined to undo the Partition of Bengal. The Partition still remained. So long as that remained, should they listen to the soothing voice? Should they give up the boycott or slacken the boycott? They had determined to revive the industries of their country. They had determined to save their countrymen from chronic starvation, but that had not yet been accomplished. Should they leave the boycott or slacken the boycott while it remained unaccomplished? Would the reforms save the country from that chronic starvation? When famine came the Government opened relief works as soon as its local officials could bring themselves to acknowledge that there was a famine in the land. That saved a number of lives, but it did not save us from the misery, the mortality, the thousands of ruined homes. That did not strike at the root of the chronic starvation and famine; Swadeshi and boycott alone could strike at the root. So long as the exploitation of the country by foreign trade remained, would they injure their country by giving up or slackening the boycott? Would they be faithful to the country if under such circumstances they were ready to listen to the soothing voice? If they did that, it would be because they could not bear the sufferings and pay the price of raising up their country and they would prove themselves unworthy of the freedom to which they aspired. The time was a critical one and when the question was once more put to them they must always be ready to answer.

The 7th of August was very near. It was the birthday of the boycott, the birthday of the new spirit in India.

It was not much they had to do. Only once more to utter the sacred *mantra* of "Bande Mataram", once more to declare that India was not lifeless, that Bengal was faithful to the vow she had made. He waited to see what would happen on that date in Bengal, whether they would attend in their hundreds or in their thousands or in their tens of thousands. It was Bengal on which the burden of the struggle fell because she first had preached the Gospel and she first had had the courage to bear suffering for the Gospel. Therefore God had given them the privilege to bear the greater part of the suffering. By so doing He had shown a great love towards Bengal. The fate of India was with the Bengalis. As they answered the question put to them, the future would be determined. It was not the first time the question had been put or the last time it would be put, for it was not the crisis of a moment but a protracted struggle. The question was with them always and every moment their responsibility for answering it in the right sense remained with them. But especially on such a day as the 7th of August the responsibility was great. He waited to see what would be the answer to the question.

But even if the response were less than he expected, even if the demoralisation he had heard of were real and there were a shrinkage in the numbers that attended, that would not discourage him.

So long as in this country there were a few who had the courage of their faith, so long as there were even a few who were ready to proclaim their faith and live it, there was no fear for the ultimate triumph of the faithful.

It is described in the Christian Bible how the cult of the true faith was almost extinguished by persecution and all Israel turned from Jehovah to foreign idols, and even the chief prophet of the faith thought himself alone and hid his head. God called to him to go forth and strive with the priests of Baal. "Always," He said, "in the nation I have chosen there are some who confess me and now too in this nation there are seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So always in this Bengal which God had chosen there would always be several thousands who would be true to the faith and never bow the knee to false gods. If the voices that proclaimed it were silenced, if the organisers were taken away, others would rise in their place; if those were taken, still others would come, if few, yet faithful. Some would always be left who would not be afraid to utter the name of their Mother. Some would still preserve the faith and preach the Gospel; theirs was the blood of Raktabij. (*Laughter and cheers*) For their action sprang from no passing or material interest but from something that was imperishable and perennial. It was something which the fire could not burn and the sword could not kill, the winds of repression could not wither and all the waters could not drown. For all that there was a great importance in the nation's response on the 7th of August. On our action now it depended whether salvation came swiftly or were put off and the struggle and suffering prolonged for decades.

On their fidelity to Swadeshi, to boycott, to passive resistance rested the hope of a peaceful and spiritual salvation. On that it depended whether India would give the example unprecedented in history of a revolution worked out by moral force and peaceful pressure. For on the 7th August the strength of the nation would be measured, not the numerical strength, but the moral strength which was greater than anything physical. He appealed to the audience to see that no one of the thousands assembled remained absent on that day.

They must remember that it was a day of worship and consecration, when the Mother looked upon her assembled children. She would ask on this 7th of August how many were faithful to her and whether after her centuries of affliction she had still years of suffering to endure, or by the love and strength of her children might expect the approaching hour of her felicity. If they were unfaithful now let them remember to whom they would be unfaithful, — to themselves, to their vows, to the future of their country, to God, to their Mother.

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 17th JULY 1909 { No. 4

Facts and Opinions

An Unequal Fight

Our controversy with the *Bengalee* is like a conflict between denizens of two different elements. Not only has our contemporary the advantage of prompt reply, but he has such a giant's gulp for formulas, such a magnificent and victorious method of dealing with great fundamental questions in a few sentences, such a generous faculty for clouding a definite point with sounding generalisations that he leaves us weak and gasping for breath. However in our own feeble way we shall try to deal with the several points he has raised. Their importance must be our excuse for the length of our reply. One great difficulty in our way is that our contemporary for the convenience of his argument chooses to attribute to us the most ridiculous opinions born out of his own prolific brain and generous facility in reading whatever he chooses into other people's minds. He thinks, for instance, that by seeing a special manifestation of Divine Power and Grace in a particular movement we mean to shut God out from all others. This is a fair sample of the "inconsistencies" which the *Bengalee* is always finding in his own brain and projecting into ours. If we have to guard ourselves at every point against such gratuitous misconceptions, argument becomes impossible. Neither space nor patience will allow of it.

God and His Universe

The *Bengalee* takes as its fundamental position that God is Absolute, Eternal and Universal in all movements and not limited to any particular. Very true, but a vague statement of abstract truth like this leads nowhere beyond itself. What are the concrete implications in this generalisation? God is not only the Absolute, Eternal and Universal in His own essence, but He manifests in the relative, transient and particular. The Absolute is an aspect of Him necessary for philosophical completeness; but if He were only Absolute, then this phenomenal world would be only Maya, God *akarta* and all action purely illusory. If He were only Eternal we might regard this world as something not full of Him, but a separate creation which may or may not be subject to His immediate action. It is because He is the Universal that the clarified vision sees Him in every being and every activity. As the Absolute He stands behind every relative, as the Eternal He supports every transient and assures the permanence of the sum of phenomena; as the Universal He manifests Himself in every particular.

The Scientific Position

Still, there is the question, how does He manifest Himself? There is a school which holds that He has once for all manifested Himself in certain eternal and universal laws and has no other connection with the universe. This was the attitude definitely taken by the *Indian Social Reformer* when it ridiculed Sj. Aurobindo Ghose's Uttarpara speech. God does not speak to men through their inner selves in Yoga or otherwise, there is no way of communion between Him and humanity, there is no special action of His power or grace anywhere. He speaks to men only through His laws; in other words, He does not speak to them at all. He does not act personally, He acts through His laws; in other words, He does not act at all, His laws act. This is an intelligible position and it contains the whole real quarrel between Science and Religion. Science does not as yet recognise God. Taking its stand on the material senses and logical argument from external phenomena it demands proof before it will admit His existence. It sees plenty of proof of Shakti, of Prakriti, of Nature; it sees none of the Purusha or any room for His existence. If He exists at all, it must be as an Impersonal Being immanent in but different from Force and Energy and Himself inactive; but even of this there is no proof. Religion holds that God is not only impersonal but personal, not only Purusha but Prakriti, not only Being but Shakti; He is all. For the proof of its position Religion appeals to something higher than logic or the senses, to spiritual experience and the direct knowledge drawn from the secret discipline it has developed in most parts of the world.

Force Universal or Individual

It is not clear whether our contemporary recognises any personality in its Universal God or only recognises Him in all movements as natural Law. We hold that He manifests Himself in particulars not as Law, which is only a generalisation of the methods by which He acts, but as Shakti working for the Purusha. He puts Himself as force, energy, motive-power into every particular. It is perfectly true that every particular contains Him, but there are differences in the force of His manifestation. This is obvious in individuals. The strength of every particular individual is the strength of God and not his own, because every particular strength is merely a part of the universal force and it is really the universal force and not the individual strength that is acting. But in living beings, when consciousness has become separate, the individual is allowed to suppose himself to be strong in his own strength. He is not really so. God gave the strength and He can take it away. He gave it power to act and He can baffle its action of the fruits the individual sought and turn it to quite other results. This is so common an experience that we do not see how any man with the power of introspection can deny it. Only at ordinary times, when things seem to be moving according to our calculations, we forget it, but on certain occasions He manifests Himself with such force either in events or in our own actions that unless we are blinded by egoism or by infatuation we are compelled to perceive the universality of the force that is acting and the insignificance of the individual. So also there are particular movements in particular epochs in which the Divine Force manifests itself with supreme power shattering all human calculations, making a mock of the prudence of the careful statesman and the scheming politician, falsifying the prognostications of the scientific analyser and advancing with a vehemence and velocity which is obviously the manifestation of a higher than human force. The intellectual man afterwards tries to trace the reasons for the movement and lay bare the forces that made it possible, but at the time he is utterly at fault, his wisdom is falsified at every step and his science serves him not. These are the times when we say God is in the movement, He is its leader and it must fulfil itself however impossible it may be for man to see the means by which it will succeed.

Faith and Deliberation

The next point is the question of mature deliberation. The *Bengalee* here tries to avoid confession of its error by altering the meaning of language. The mature deliberation of which it spoke applies only to particular acts and, even then, it was not one man or a dozen but the whole self-conscious part of the country which took part in these mature deliberations. The facts do not square with this modified assertion. The majority even of the particular steps taken in pursuance of the ideas which swept over the country were not taken in pursuance of mature deliberation but were the result in some men of a faith which defied deliberation and in others of a yielding to the necessity of the movement. The National Council of Education came into existence because Sj. Subodh Chandra Mallik planked down a lakh of rupees and was followed by the zamindar of Gauripur, an act of faith, because the Rangpur schoolboys and their guardians refused to go back on their action in leaving the Government school and established a school of their own, also an act of faith, and because some leading men of the country recognised that something must be done on the spot to prevent the honour of the nation being tarnished by abandonment of this heroic forlorn hope while others thought it a good opportunity to materialise their educational crotchets. Was this mature deliberation or a compound of faith, idealism and risky experiment? The Boycott came into existence because of the wrath of the people against the Partition and the vehement advocacy of a Calcutta paper which, supported by this general wrath, bore down the hesitations of the thinkers, the politicians and the economists. Almost every step towards Swadeshi, every National school established was an act of faith in the permanence of the movement, a faith not justified by previous experience. These were acts of boldness, often of rashness, not of mature deliberation. Mature deliberation implies that having consulted the lessons of past experience and weighed the probabilities of the future and the possibilities of the present, we take the step which seems most prudent and likely to bring about sure results. The Bombay mill-owners deliberated maturely when they said, "This movement born of a moment's indignation will pass like the rest; go to, let us raise our prices and make hay while the sun shines." The leaders deliberated maturely when they said, "The rush towards National Education will not last and if encouraged it will mean the destruction of private institutions and the payment of a double tax for education." So they stopped the students' strike, withheld their moral support and by this mature deliberation put, like the Bombay mill-owners, almost insuperable obstacles in the way of the movement. It was the unconsciously prepared forces in the country that made their way in spite of and not because of the mature deliberation. It was a minority convinced of the principles of self-help and passive resistance, full of faith, careless of obstacles, believing in the force of ideas, and not the whole self-conscious portion of the country, which mainly contributed, by its eloquence, logic, consistency, self-sacrifice and the impact of its energy on the maturely-deliberating majority, to the permanence of the movement. These are the facts.

As for the conclusion from them we never made the absurd statement evolved out of the *Bengalee*'s imagination that God is everywhere except in the conscious and deliberate activities of men. What we say and hold to is that the Divine force manifests itself specially when it effects mighty and irresistible movements which even the ignorance and egoism of man is obliged to recognise as exceeding and baffling his limited wisdom and his limited strength.

Our "Inconsistencies"

A third point is the proposition that out of evil cometh good and that everything that happens or can happen is for the best. Here our contemporary finds an inconsistency, for did we not say that *just now* everything works for the upraising of India because there is an upward trend which all forces assist. "Curiously enough," he says, "the writer thinks the two propositions identical." Curiously enough, we do. We say that just now India is being raised up and everything tends to God's purpose in raising her up, even calamity, even evil, even error. He uses them for His purpose and out of evil bringeth good. We said "just now", because it is not true that God has always raised up India and always there has been an upward trend; sometimes He has cast her down, sometimes there has been a downward trend. Even that was for the good of India and the world as we shall take occasion to show. Where then is the limitation or the inconsistency? The limitation in the phrase "just now" applies to the upward trend, to the particular instance and not to the principle that out of evil cometh good, which is universal and absolute.

Good out of Evil

It is strange to find a philosopher like our contemporary parading in this twentieth century the ancient and hollow platitude that such a doctrine, however true, ought not to be applied to individual conduct because it will abrogate morality and personal responsibility. This is a strange answer, too, to an argument which simply sought to confirm the faith and endurance of our people in calamity by the belief that our confidence in our future was not mistaken and that these calamities were necessary for God's high purpose. The evil we spoke of was not moral evil, but misfortune and calamity. But we do not shrink from the doctrine that sin also is turned to His purposes and, so far as that goes, we do not see how such a doctrine abrogates morality. The wisdom and love of God in turning our evil into His good does not absolve us of our moral responsibility. Our contemporary shows this want of connection between the two positions himself when he asks whether one should not in that case play the traitor in order to assist the progress of the tendency. The gibe shows up the absurdity not of our faith but of his argument. Our selfish or sinful acts, our persistence in ignorance or perversity are for the best in this obvious sense that God makes out of them excellent material for the work He is about, which always tends to the good of humanity. The persecution of Christianity by the powers of the ancient world was utterly evil, but it was for the best; without it there could not have been that noble reaction of sublime and exalted suffering which finally permeated the human mind with the impulse of sacrifice for high ideals, and by introducing a mental soil fit for the growth of altruism sowed the seeds of love, sweetness and humanity in that hard selfish lust-ridden European world. The *Bengalee* no doubt would have counselled the Christian martyrs not to be so rash and unreasoning but to demand from God a balance of profit and loss for each individual sacrifice and only after mature deliberation decide whether to obey the voice of God in their conscience or offer flowers to Venus and divine homage to Nero.

Loss of Courage

But the question of self-sacrifice needs separate handling and we have not the space to deal with it in this issue as its importance deserves. The *Bengalee* counters our suggestion about the superfluity of prudence and the instinct of self-preservation at the present moment by the assertion that there is an excess of unreasoning rashness. That is a question of standpoint and vocabulary. But when the *Bengalee* goes on to say that when evil results ensue from their imprudence the rash and unreasoning lose heart and become unbelievers, we have a right to ask to whom the allusion is directed. In the young, the forward, the men stigmatised by the *Bengalee* as rash and unreasoning we find no loss of courage or faith but only a hesitation on what lines to proceed now that the old means have been broken by repressive laws. Among the older men we do indeed find a spirit of depression for which we blame those who in the face of the repressions drew in their horns out of mature deliberation and allowed silence and inactivity to fall on the country. But these were never men of faith. We who believe in God's dispensations have not lost heart, we have not become unbelievers. Our cry is as loud as before for Swaraj and Swadeshi; our hearts beat as high.

Intuitive Reason

However there is hope for our contemporary. He has admitted in his idea of rationality the place of the intuitive reason, and it is precisely the intuitive reason, speaking oftenest in the present stage of human development through the inspiration that wells up from the heart, which is the basis of faith and exceeds the limits of the logical intellect. For this is the highest form of faith when the intuitive reason speaks to the heart, captures the emotions and is supported by reflection. This is the faith that moves mountains and there is nothing higher and more powerful except the yet deeper inner knowledge.

Exit Bibhishan

MR. GOPAL Krishna Gokhale has for long been the veiled prophet of Bombay. His course was so ambiguous, his sympathies so divided and self-contradictory that some have not hesitated to call him a masked Extremist. He has played with Boycott, "that criminal agitation"; he has gone so far in passive resistance as to advocate refusal of the payment of taxes. Eloquent spokesman of the people in the Legislative Council, luminous and ineffective debater scattering his periods in vain in that august void, he has been at once the admired of the people and the spoilt darling of the *Times of India*, the trusted counsellor of John Morley and a leader of the party of Colonial self-government. For some time the victim of his own false step during the troubles in Poona he was distrusted by the people, favoured by the authorities, some of whom are said to have canvassed for him in the electoral fight between him and Mr. Tilak. The charge of cowardice which he now hurls against his opponents was fixed on his own forehead by popular resentment. So difficult was his position that he refrained for some years from speech on the platform of the Congress. But his star triumphed. His own opponents held out to him the hand of amity and re-established him in the universal confidence of the people. Gifted, though barren of creative originality, a shrewd critic, a splendid debater, a good economist and statistician, with the halo of self-sacrifice for the country over his forehead enringed with the more mundane halo of Legislative Councillorship, petted by the Government, loved by the people, he enjoyed a position almost unique in recent political life. He was not indeed a prophet honoured in his own country and black looks and black words were thrown at him by those who distrusted him, but throughout the rest of India his name stood high and defied assailants.

In his recent speech at Poona the veiled prophet has unveiled himself. The leader of the people in this strange and attractive double figure is under sentence of elimination and the budding Indian Finance Minister has spoken. The speech has caused confusion and searchings of the heart among the eager patriots of the Bengal Moderate school, rejoicing in the ranks of Anglo-India. The *Bengalee* labours to defend the popular cause without injuring the popular leader, the *Statesman* rejoices and holds up the speech even as Lord Morley held up the certificate to him as the Saviour of India for the confusion of rebels in Parliament and outside it. Covered by a reprobation of the London murders it is a sweeping, a damning philippic against the work of the last four years and a call to the country to recede to the position occupied by us previous to 1905. It is a forcible justification of repression and a call to Government and people to crush the lovers and preachers of independence. The time at which it comes lends it incalculable significance. The Morleyan policy of crushing the new spirit and rallying the Moderates has now received publicly the imprimatur of the leading Moderate of western India and that which was suspected by some, prophesied by others at the time of the Surat Congress, the alliance of Bombay Moderatism with officialdom against the new Nationalism, an alliance prepared by the Surat sitting, cemented by subsequent events, confirmed by the Madras Convention, is now unmasked and publicly ratified.

The most odious part of the Poona speech is that in which Mr. Gokhale justifies Government repression and attempts to establish by argument what Mr. Norton failed to establish by evidence, the theory that Nationalism and Terrorism are essentially one and under the cloak of passive resistance, Nationalism is a conspiracy to wage war against the King. This proposition he seeks to establish by implication with that skill of the debater for which he is justly famous. By taking the London murders as the subject-matter for the exordium of a speech directed against the forward party he introduces the element of prejudice from the very outset. After reviewing past political activities he takes up the clue he had thus skilfully thrown down and pursues it.

In his view, the ideal of independence was the beginning of all evil. The ideal of independence is an insane ideal; the men who hold it even as an ultimate goal, Tilak, Chidambaram, Aswini Kumar, Manoranjan, Bipin Chandra, Aurobindo, are madmen outside the lunatic asylum. Not only is it an insane ideal, it is a criminal ideal. "It should be plain to the weakest understanding that *towards the idea of independence the Government could adopt only one attitude*, *that of stern and relentless repression*, for these ideas *were bound to lead to violence* and as a matter of fact they had, *as they could all see*, resulted in violence." Farther, in order to leave no loophole of escape for his political opponents, he proceeds to assert that they were well aware of this truth and preached the gospel of independence knowing that it was a gospel of violence and "physical conflict with the Government". We again quote the words of the reported speech. "Some of their friends were in the habit of saying that their plan was to achieve independence by merely peaceful means, by a general resort to passive resistance. The speaker felt bound to say that such talk was ridiculous nonsense and *was a mere cloak used by these men to save their own skins*." In other words we are charged with having contemplated violence such as we all see, *viz.*, the murders in London and the assassinations in Bengal, as inevitable effects of our propaganda, and physical conflict with the Government, in other words rebellion, as the only possible means of achieving independence. We are charged with preaching this gospel of violence and rebellion while publicly professing passive resistance, with the sole motive of cowardly anxiety for our personal safety. The accusation is emphatic, sweeping, and allows of no exception. All the men of the Nationalist party revered by the people are included in the anathema, branded as lunatics and cowards, and the country is called upon to denounce them as corruptors and perturbers of youth and the enemies of progress and the best interests of the people.

Mr. Gokhale stops short of finding fault with European countries for being free and clinging to their freedom. He is good enough not to uphold subjection as the best thing possible for a nation, and we must be grateful to him for stopping short of the gospel of the *Englishman* whose abusive style he has borrowed. But man is progressive and it may be that Mr. Gokhale before he finishes his prosperous career, will reach the Hare Street beatitudes. At present he adopts the philosophy of his ally and teacher, Lord Morley, and wraps himself in the Canadian fur coat. The love of independence may be a virtue in Europe, it is crime and lunacy in India. Acquiescence in subjection is weakness and unmanliness in non-Indians, in this favoured country it is the only path to salvation. In the West the apostles of liberty have been prophets when they succeeded, martyrs when they failed; in this country they are corruptors and perturbers of youth, enemies of progress and their country. Mendicancy, euphoniously named co-operation, can bring about colonial self-government in India *although* there is no precedent in history, but passive resistance, although, when most imperfectly applied and hampered by terrorism from above and below, it gave the seed of free institutions to Russia, cannot bring about independence in India even if it be applied thoroughly and combined with self-help, *because* there is no precedent in history. As has often been pointed out by Nationalist writers, both mendicancy and self-help plus passive resistance are new methods in history; both are therefore experiments; but while mendicancy is an isolated experiment which has been fully tried, failed thoroughly and fallen into discredit, self-help and passive resistance are methods to which modern nations are more and more turning, but they have been as yet tried only slightly and locally. It must be admitted that in India, so tried, their only result so far has been the Morley reforms. But was it not Mr. Gokhale who to defend mendicancy declared that the book of history was not closed and why should not a new chapter be written? But the book is only open to the sacred hands of the Bombay Moderate; to the Nationalist it seems to be closed. But according to Mr. Gokhale we ought in any case to acquiesce because England has not done so badly in India as she might have done. His argument is kin to the Anglo-Indian logic which calls upon us to be contented and loyal because England is not Russia and repression here is never so savage as repression there; as if a serf were asked to be contented with serfdom because his master is kind or else his whip does not lacerate so fiercely as the other master's next door. Mr. Gokhale cannot be ignorant that our ideal of independence has nothing to do with the badness or goodness of the present Government in its own kind. We object to the present system because it is a bureaucracy, always the most narrow and unprogressive kind of Government, because it is composed of aliens, not Indians, and subject to alien control, and most essentially because it is based on a foreign will imposed from outside and not on the free choice and organic development of the nation.

We might go on to expose the other inconsistencies and sophistries of Mr. Gokhale's speech. We might well challenge the strangeness of a sweeping and general charge of cowardice against the nation's leaders proceeding from the "broken reed" of Poona. But we are more concerned with the significance of his attitude than with the hollowness of his arguments. Lord Morley the other day quoted Mr. Gokhale's eulogium of the Asquith Government, saviours of India from chaos, as a sufficient answer to the critics of deportation. There was some indignation against Lord Morley for his disingenuousness in suppressing Mr. Gokhale's condemnation of the deportations; but it now appears that the British statesman did not make the mistake of quoting Mr. Gokhale without being sure of the thoroughness of the latter's support. As if in answer to the critics of Lord Morley Mr. Gokhale hastens to justify the deportations by his emphatic approval of stern and relentless repression as the only possible attitude for the Government towards the ideal of independence even when its achievement is sought through peaceful means. Mr. Gokhale's phrase is bold and thorough; it includes every possible weapon of which the Government may avail itself in the future and every possible use of the weapons which it holds at present. On the strength of Mr. Gokhale's panegyric Lord Morley mocked at Mr. Mackarness and his supporters as more Indian than the Indians. We may well quote him again and apply the same ridicule, the ridicule of the autocrat, to Mr. Beachcroft, the Alipur judge, who acquitted an avowed apostle of the ideal of independence. Mr. Gokhale, at least, has become more English than the English. A British judge, certainly not in sympathy with Indian unrest, expressly admits the possibility of peaceful passive resistance and the blamelessness of the ideal of independence. A leader of Indian Liberalism denounces that ideal as necessarily insane and criminal and the advocates of passive resistance as lunatics and hypocritical cowards, and calls for the denunciation of them as enemies of their country and their removal by stern and relentless repression. Such are the ironies born of co-operation. It is well that we should know who are our enemies even if they be of our own household. Till now many of us regarded Mr. Gokhale as a brother with whom we had our own private differences, but he has himself by calling for the official sword to exterminate us removed that error. He publishes himself now as the righteous Bibhishan who, with the Sugrives, Angads and Hanumans of Madras and Allahabad, has gone to join the Avatar of Radical absolutism in the India Office, and ourselves as the Rakshasa to be destroyed by this new Holy Alliance. Even this formidable conjunction does not alarm us. At any rate Bibhishan has gone out of Lanka, and Bibhishans are always more dangerous there than in the camp of the adversary.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Yoga and Hypnotism
Two Pictures

College Square Speech – 1

I THANK you for the kindly welcome that you have accorded to me. The time fixed by the law for the breaking up of the meeting is also at hand, and I am afraid I have disappointed one or two speakers by getting up so soon. But there is just one word that has to be spoken today.

Recently a speech has been made in the Bengal Legislative Council by the Lieutenant-Governor of this province, a speech which I think is one of the most unfortunate and most amazing that have ever been delivered by a ruler in his position. The occasion of the speech was a reference to certain murders that have recently been committed in London. Those murders have been committed by a young man with whom there has been no proof that any other man in India or in England is connected, no proof that any conspiracy has been behind him. Not only so but the Police in London have declared that so far as their evidence goes they find that the murder was dictated by personal and not political motives. That crime is still the subject of a trial which has not been closed. Was this the time, — was this the occasion for the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to rise from his seat in the Legislative Council and practically associate the whole country with and make the whole country responsible for the crime of a single isolated youth in London? Not only so, but the Lieutenant-Governor, in referring to the crime, said that there had been plenty of denunciations in this country but those denunciations did not go far. And he wanted from us one thing more and that was co-operation. He wants co-operation from the whole community. He further saddled his request with the threat that if this co-operation were not

Delivered at College Square, Calcutta, on 18 July 1909. Text published in the Bengalee *on 20 July and reproduced in the* Karmayogin *on 24 July.*

obtained, steps would have to be taken in which there would be no room for nice discrimination between the innocent and the guilty.

The murders that have been committed in Bengal have been sufficiently proved by the failure of case after case to be the acts of isolated individuals. There has been only a single instance which is still *sub judice*, and even if it were fully established, it would only prove that the crime was done in one case by a small group of men. Under such circumstances what is the co-operation that the L.-G. demands from us? He will not be satisfied if we denounce and dissociate ourselves from the crime. He wants co-operation. It is at least desirable that he should name and describe the co-operation he insists on before he carries out the remarkable threat with which he has sought to enforce his demand. There has been much talk recently, in a wider sense, of co-operation. Now, gentlemen, we are a people who demand self-government. We have a government in which we are not at all associated and over which we have no control. What is the co-operation a government of this kind can really demand from us? It can only demand from us obedience to the law, co-operation in keeping the law and observing peace and order. What further co-operation can they expect from us? Even in the matter which the L.-G. has mentioned, we are at a loss to see how a people circumstanced like ourselves can help him.

Still I have a proposal to make. I think there is only one way by which these unfortunate occurrences can be stopped. The ruler of Bengal in his speech spoke in approval of a certain speech made by Mr. Gokhale at Poona recently. In that speech Mr. Gokhale declared that the ideal of independence was an ideal which no sane man could hold. He said that it was impossible to achieve independence by peaceful means and the people who advocate the peaceful methods of passive resistance are men who, out of cowardice, do not speak out the thought that is in their heart. That idea of Mr. Gokhale's has been contradicted beforehand by the Sessions Judge of Alipore and even an Anglo-Indian paper was obliged to say that Mr. Gokhale's justification of the repressions on the ground that stern and relentless repression was the only possible attitude the Government could adopt towards the ideal of independence was absurd because the ideals and the thoughts of a nation could not be punished. This was a very dangerous teaching which Mr. Gokhale introduced into his speech, that the ideal of independence — whether we call it Swaraj or autonomy or Colonial Self-Government, because these two things in a country circumstanced like India meant in practice the same (*loud applause*), — cannot be achieved by peaceful means. Mr. Gokhale knows or ought to know that this ideal which he decries is deeply-rooted in the minds of thousands of people and cannot be driven out. He has told the ardent hearts which cherish this ideal of independence and are determined to strive towards it that their ideal can only be achieved by violent means. If any doctrine can be dangerous, if any teacher can be said to have uttered words dangerous to the peace of the country, it is Mr. Gokhale himself. (*Loud cheers*) We have told the people that there is a peaceful means of achieving independence in whatever form we aspire to it. We have said that by self-help, by passive resistance we can achieve it. We have told the young men of our country, "Build up your own industries, build up your own schools and colleges, settle your own disputes. You are always told that you are not fit for self-government. Show by example that you are fit to govern yourselves, show it by developing self-government through self-help and not by depending upon others."

There is a second limb to that policy and it is passive resistance. Passive resistance means two things. It means first that in certain matters we shall not co-operate with the Government of this country until it gives us what we consider our rights. Secondly, if we are persecuted, if the plough of repression is passed over us, we shall meet it not by violence, but by suffering, by passive resistance, by lawful means. We have not said to our young men, "when you are repressed, retaliate;" we have said, "suffer." Now we are told that by doing so we are encouragers of sedition and anarchism. We have been told by Anglo-Indian papers that by speaking in Beadon Square and other places on patriotism and the duty of suffering we encourage sedition. We are told that in preaching passive resistance we are encouraging the people to violate law and order and are fostering violence and rebellion. The contrary is the truth. We are showing the people of this country in passive resistance the only way in which they can satisfy their legitimate aspiration without breaking the law and without resorting to violence. This is the only way we can find to co-operate in maintaining peace and order.

The co-operation we expect from the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and from the Government of this country in return is that they will respect the primary rights of the people of this country, they will respect the right of public meeting and the right of a free press and the right of free association. If they co-operate so far then we can assure them that this movement will advance on peaceful lines and the thing which troubles them will cease for ever. But the L.-G. says that measures will be passed which will observe no nice discrimination between the innocent and the guilty. A more cynical statement has seldom issued from a ruler in the position of Sir Edward Baker. If the threat is carried out, who will be the gainers? I do not deny that it may for a time stop our public activities. It may force the school of peaceful self-development and passive resistance to desist for a while from its activities at least in their present form. But who will gain by it? Not the Government, neither Mr. Gokhale and his school of passive co-operation. It is the very terrorists, the very anarchists, whom you wish to put down, who will gain by it. It will remove from the people their one hope, but it will give the terrorists a fresh incentive and it will teach the violent hearts, the undisciplined and ardent minds a very dangerous lesson that there is no peaceful way to the fulfilment of their aspirations and the consequence will be such as one trembles to contemplate. I trust the threat will never be carried out. I trust that the Government will be ruled by wise counsels and consider the matter more carefully. There are ominous signs and it seems as if measures were about to be passed which will put an end to the right of public meeting and the public expression of our feelings. But I trust that wiser counsels will yet prevail.

The Government should remember that it stands dissociated from the people by its very constitution. If it wants co-operation it cannot get the co-operation which is simply another name for passive obedience. That is the doctrine which is being taught today, the doctrine of the divine right of officials and the obligation on the people of passive obedience. That is a doctrine which no modern nation can accept. No modern nation can accept the extinction of its legitimate and natural hopes. Co-operation can only be given if the Government which is now alien becomes our own, if the people have a share in it, not merely in name, not merely by the right of talk in the legislative council, not merely by apparent concessions, but by getting some measure of control in the matter of legislation, in the expenditure of the taxes they are called on to pay for the maintenance of the administration, if, in short, they can be given some starting-point from which in future the Government of the country can be developed into a Government of the people. That is the only condition upon which the co-operation, of which we hear so much nowadays, can be given. Without it co-operation is a satire, it is a parody. It is the co-operation in which one side acts and the other side merely says "yes" which is demanded of us. We cannot give our sanction to such co-operation. So long as even that little of substantial self-government is not conceded to us, we have no choice but to cleave firmly to passive resistance as the only peaceful path to the realisation of our legitimate aspirations. We cannot sacrifice our country. We cannot give up the ideal that is dear to our heart. We cannot sacrifice our Mother. If you take away our primary rights all that is left for us is passive resistance and peacefully to suffer, peacefully to refuse the parody of co-operation which we are asked to give.

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 24th JULY 1909 { No. 5

Facts and Opinions

The Indiscretions of Sir Edward

The speech of Sir Edward Baker in the Bengal Council last week was one of those indiscretions which statesmen occasionally commit and invariably repent, but which live in their results long after the immediate occasion has been forgotten. The speech is a mass of indiscretions from beginning to end. Its first error was to rise to the bait of Mr. Madhusudan Das' grotesquely violent speech on the London murders and assume a political significance in the act of the young man Dhingra. The theory of a conspiracy behind this act is, we believe, generally rejected in England. It is not supported by a scrap of evidence and is repudiated by the London police, a much more skilful detective body than any we have in India and, needless to say, much more reliable in the matter of scrupulousness and integrity. It is the opinion of the London police that the act was dictated by personal resentment and not by political motives. It is not enough to urge in answer that the young man who committed this ruthless act himself alleges political motives. His family insist that he is a sort of neurotic maniac, and it is a matter of common knowledge that natures so disturbed often catch at tendencies in the air to give a fictitious dignity and sensational interest to actions really dictated by the exaggerated feelings common to these nervous disorders. Madanlal Dhingra evidently considered that Sir William Curzon-Wyllie was his personal enemy trying to alienate his family and interfere with his personal freedom and dignity. To an ordinary man these ideas would not have occurred or, if they had occurred, would not have excited homicidal feelings. But in disturbed minds such exaggerated emotions and their resultant acts are only too common. Unless and until something fresh transpires, no one has a right to assume that the murder was a political assassination, much less the overt act of a political conspiracy. Anglo-Indian papers of the virulent type whose utterances are distorted by fear and hatred of Indian aspirations, may assume that of which there is no proof, — nothing better can be expected of them. But for the ruler of a province not only to make the assumption publicly but to base upon it a threat of an unprecedented character against a whole nation is an indiscretion which passes measure.

The Demand for Co-operation

The second crying indiscretion in Sir Edward's speech is the extraordinary demand for co-operation which he makes upon the people of this country. It is natural that a Government should desire co-operation on the part of the people and under normal circumstances it is not necessary to ask for it; it is spontaneously given. The circumstances in India are not normal. When a Government expects co-operation, it is because it either represents the nation or is in the habit of consulting its wishes. The Government in India does not represent the nation, and in Bengal at least it has distinctly set itself against its wishes. It has driven the Partition through against the most passionate and universal agitation the country has ever witnessed. It has set itself to baffle the Swadeshi-Boycott agitation. It has adopted against that movement all but the ultimate measures of repression. Nine deportations including in their scope several of the most respected and blameless leaders of the people stand to their debit account unredressed. Even in giving the new reforms, inconclusive and in some of their circumstances detrimental to the best interests of the country, it has been anxious to let it be known that it is not yielding to the wishes of the people but acting on its own autocratic motion. Against such a system and principle of administration the people of this country have no remedy except the refusal of co-operation and even that has been done only within the smallest limits possible. Under such circumstances it is indeed a grotesque attitude for the ruler of Bengal to get up from his seat in the Council and not only request co-operation but demand it on pain of indiscriminate penalties such as only an autocratic government can inflict on the people under its control, and this with the full understanding that none of the grievances of the people are to be redressed. The meaning of co-operation is not passive obedience, it implies that the Government shall rule according to the wishes of the people and the people work in unison with the Government for the maintenance of their common interests. By advancing the demand in the way he has advanced it, Sir Edward Baker has made the position of his Government worse and not better.

What Co-operation?

The delusion under which the Government labours that the Terrorist activities have a great organisation at their back, is the source of its most fatal mistakes. Everyone who knows anything of this country is aware that this theory is a fabrication. If it were a fact, the conspiracy would by this time have been exposed and destroyed. The assassinations have in all instances, except the yet doubtful Maniktola conspiracy now under judicial consideration, been the act of isolated individuals, and even in the Maniktola instance, if we accept the finding of the Sessions Court, it has been shown by judicial investigation that the group of young men was small and so secret in their operations that only a few even of those who lived in their headquarters knew anything of the contemplated terrorism. Under such circumstances we fail to see either any justification for so passionate a call for co-operation or any possibility of an answer from the public. All that the public can do is to express disapprobation of the methods used by these isolated youths. It cannot turn itself into a huge Criminal Investigation Department to ferret out the half-dozen men here and there who possibly contemplate assassination and leave its other occupations and duties after the pattern of the police who in many quarters are so busy with suppressing fancied Swadeshi outrages that real outrage and dacoity go unpunished. We do not suppose that Sir Edward Baker himself would make such a demand, but if he has any other co-operation in view it would be well if he would define it before he proceeds with his strenuous proposal to strike out right and left at the innocent and the guilty without discrimination. On the other hand the Anglo-Indian papers are at no loss for the definite method of co-operation which they demand from the country on peril of "stern and relentless repression". They demand that we shall cease to practise or to preach patriotism and patriotic self-sacrifice and submit unconditionally to the eternally unalterable absolutism which is the only system of government Lord Morley will tolerate in India. That demand has only to be mentioned to be scouted.

Sir Edward's Menace

The final indiscretion of Sir Edward Baker was also the worst. We do not think we have ever heard before of an official in Sir Edward's responsible position uttering such a menace as issued from the head of this province on an occasion and in a place where his responsibility should have been specially remembered. We have heard of autocrats threatening contumacious opponents with condign punishment, but even an autocrat of the fiercest and most absolute kind does not threaten the people with the punishment of the innocent. The thing is done habitually — in Russia; it has been done recently in Bengal; but it is always on the supposition that the man punished is guilty. Even in the deportations the Government has been eager to impress the world with the idea that although it is unable to face a court of justice with the "information, not evidence" which is its excuse, it had ample grounds for its belief in the guilt of the deportees. Sir Edward Baker is the first ruler to declare with cynical openness that if he is not gratified in his demands, he will not care whether he strikes the innocent or the guilty. By doing so he has dealt an almost fatal blow at the prestige of the Government. If this novel principle of administration is applied, in what will the Government that terrorises from above be superior to the dynamiter who terrorises from below? Will not this be the negation of all law, justice and government? Does it not mean the reign of lawless force and that worst consummation of all, Anarchy from above struggling with Anarchy from below? The Government which denies the first principle of settled society, not only sanctions but introduces anarchy. It is thus that established authority creates violent revolutions. They abolish by persecution all the forces, leaders, advocates of peaceful and rapid progress and by their own will set themselves face to face with an enemy who cannot so be abolished. Terrorism thrives on administrative violence and injustice; that is the only atmosphere in which it can thrive and grow. It sometimes follows the example of indiscriminate violence from above; it sometimes, though very rarely, sets it from below. But the power above which follows the example from below is on the way to committing suicide. It has consented to the abrogation of the one principle which is the life-breath of settled governments.

The Personal Result

Sir Edward Baker came into office with the reputation of a liberal ruler anxious to appease unrest. Till now he has maintained it in spite of the ominous pronouncement he made, when introducing measures of repression, about the insufficiency of the weapons with which the Government was arming itself. But by his latest pronouncement, contradicting as it does the first principles not only of Liberalism but of all wise Conservatism all over the world, he has gone far to justify those who were doubtful of his genuine sympathy with the people. Probably he did not himself realise what a wound he was giving to his own reputation and with it to his chances of carrying any portion of the people with him.

A One-sided Proposal

A writer in the *Indian World* has been holding out the olive branch to the advanced Nationalist party and inviting them into the fold of the body which now calls itself the Congress. The terms of this desirable conciliation seem to us a little peculiar. The Nationalists are to give up all their contentions and in return the Bombay coterie may graciously give up their personal dislike of working with the Nationalist leaders. This is gracious but a little unconvincing. The only difficulty the mediator sees in the way is the constitutional point raised by a section of the Moderates against the arbitrary action of the Committee of the Convention in passing a constitution and forcing it on the delegates without submission to freely elected delegates sitting in a session of the Congress itself. The mediator proposes to get round the objection by the Bombay coterie agreeing to pass the Constitution en bloc through the Congress provided an undertaking is given by the Nationalists that they will accept bodily the whole of the Constitution and make no opposition to any of its provisions! A very remarkable proviso! The writer assumes that the Nationalists have accepted the Constitution bodily and are willing to sign the creed. We think he is in error in his assumptions. The Nationalists are not likely to give any undertaking which will abrogate their constitutional right to make their own proposals about the Constitution at the beginning or to suggest amendments to it hereafter. They will sign no creed, as it is against their principles to make the Congress a sectional body and they refuse to bind themselves to regard colonial self-government as the ultimate goal of our national development. Whatever resolutions are passed by a properly constituted Congress they will accept as the temporary opinion of the majority while reserving the right, which all minorities reserve, of preaching their own convictions. They refuse to regard the Madras Convention or the contemplated Lahore Convention as a sitting of the Congress or its resolutions as the will of the country. The position taken, that the Bombay coterie are in possession of the Congress and it is theirs to admit the Nationalists or not at their pleasure is one we cannot recognise. If there is to be a united Congress it must resume its life at the point where the Calcutta session broke off. All that has happened in between is a time of interregnum.

The Only Remedy

The attempt to reunite the parties on such lines is foredoomed to failure. Nor is it likely that even if the Nationalists were entirely accommodating there would be any chance of union. The attitude of Mr. Gokhale is conclusive on this point. Not only has he definitely separated himself and his school from the advocates of Swaraj and passive resistance but he has denounced them as enemies of the country and handed them over to the "stern and relentless repression" of the authorities. The *Tribune* calls on Bengal to give up the boycott on the ground that it is no longer sanctioned by the "Congress" as it chooses to call a body which even the whole of the Moderate party were unable to join. The only remedy for the situation is for those who desire unity to rebuild the National Assembly from the bottom on the basis of provincial unity and abstention from any mutilated body Moderate or Nationalist, however august the name under which it masks its unrepresentative character, so long as it professes to speak for the nation and yet refuses to admit freely its elected representatives.

The *Bengalee* and Ourselves

The *Bengalee* has answered our facts and opinions with its facts and comments. Unfortunately we find in our contemporary's answer all comment and no fact. For the most part he is busy trying to prove that we were really inconsistent and contradictory, or, if he misunderstood us, it was due to our uninstructed use of language. In the first place we did not expressly say that we saw God in everything and only specially in special movements. Of course we did not. As we pointed out we could not be always guarding ourselves against gratuitous misconceptions, and the omnipresence of God is such an obvious fact that it has not to be expressly stated. It is curious that our contemporary's powerful intelligence seems still unable to grasp the point about leadership. If the movement were the result of human calculation or guided by human calculation, or even if every constructive step were the result of mature deliberation, there would be no point in insisting that the movement was created and led (we beg pardon, we mean specially created and led,) by God and not by human wisdom. We pointed out that none of these statements could be advanced in the face of the facts, and our contemporary has not been able to meet our arguments; he has simply restated his previous unsupported assumption. Secondly, we were unfortunate enough to use in one place the word "His" where our contemporary thinks we should have used the word "that". With all submission we think our language was perfectly clear. We said His purpose and we meant His purpose, the purpose of raising up India. Then again we were unfortunate enough to indulge in an ironical repetition of our contemporary's phrase "mere" faith, within commas inverted and our contemporary with portentous seriousness insists on taking this as our own epithet and seriously meant. We have pointed out that in our idea of faith it includes the logical analysing reason, it includes experience and exceeds it. It exceeds logical reason because it uses the higher intuitive reason; it exceeds experience because experience often gives the balance of its support to one conclusion where faith using intuition inclines to the opposite conclusion.

God and Man

Our contemporary does not understand why we wrote of God and the universal force or why we insisted on the special manifestation of the Divine Force as opposed to its veiled workings through human egoism. We did so because we had to oppose the excess of that very egoism. We have not risen to the heights of Monism from which he scoffs benignly at our dualism. It may be the final truth that there is nothing but God, but for the purposes of life we have to recognise that there is a dualism in the underlying unity. It profits nothing to say, for instance, "The Divine Force wrote two columns of Facts and Comments the other day in the *Bengalee*." God reveals Himself not only in the individual where He is veiled by ignorance and egoism, but in Himself. When the *Bengalee* sees no alternative to man's self-conscious action except unconscious action, it is under the influence of European materialism which sees only conscious creatures in an unconscious inanimate Nature. The Divine Force is not unconscious but conscious and intelligent and to see Him as a conscious power only in men is to deny Him altogether. When again our contemporary uses a misapplication of the truth of Adwaita to justify the deifying of his own reason, he is encouraging practical atheism while taking the divine name in vain. God manifests Himself in everything, He manifests Himself in our reason, therefore let us forget God and rely on our own human calculations. That is the train of argument. What is the use of relying on God? let us look to our own safety. What is the use of being brave in the hour of peril? If our leader goes, the movement stops. *Mam anusmara yudhya cha*, is the motto of the Karmayogin. God manifests Himself in the individual partially, but He stands behind the progress of the world wholly. We are bound to use our own intellects, we cannot help it if we would, but we must remember that it is a limited intellect and be prepared for the failure of our schemes and plans, for calamity, for defeat, without making these things an excuse for abandoning His work, laying our principles on the shelf or sending out a cry to discourage steadfastness and self-sacrifice. Our plans may fail, God's purpose cannot. That is why we laid so much stress on the fact that this has been a movement which, as the man in the street would say, has led itself, in which individuals have been instruments and not the real shapers and leaders. We have faith and we believe in the great rule of life in the Gita, "Remember me and fight." We believe in the mighty word of assurance to the bhakta, *Macchittah sarvadurgani matprasadat tarishyasi*, "If thou reposest thy heart and mind in Me by My grace thou shalt pass safe through all difficulties and dangers." We believe that the Yoga of the Gita will play a large part in the uplifting of the nation, and this attitude is the first condition of the Yoga of the Gita. When anybody tries to discourage our people in this attitude, we are bound to enter the lists against him. We recognise that to argue with those who have only opinions but no realisation is a hopeless task, since it is only by entering into communion with the Infinite and seeing the Divine Force in all that one can be intellectually sure of its conscious action. But at least we can try to remove the philosophical delusions and confusions which mislead men from the right path and veil European materialism under generalities drawn from Vedanta.

Ourselves

In our third issue we wrote, "On account of the inconvenience of the printing press there has been some irregularity in the publication of the second and the third issues of the paper. With a view to remove this difficulty we are making better arrangements for printing the paper. The next issue of *Karmayogin* will be published on Saturday the 17th instant instead of on Saturday the 10th." The publication of the next issue was, consequently, delayed. We are glad to be in a position to inform our readers that better arrangements have been made, and henceforth the *Karmayogin* will be regularly published, and our readers will be able to detect an improvement in the get-up of the paper. The unusual and unexpected demand for the paper necessitates the reprinting of the back numbers. We shall be glad to know the issue or issues each subscriber would want. We would take this opportunity of saying that we have no connection with the Bengali *Karmayogin* to be published from Uttarpara. It is an independent paper with which we have no connection. The conductors of the paper have only our permission to publish Bengali translations of articles appearing in the *Karmayogin*.

The Doctrine of Sacrifice

THE GENIUS of self-sacrifice is not common to all nations and to all individuals; it is rare and precious, it is the flowering of mankind's ethical growth, the evidence of our gradual rise from the self-regarding animal to the selfless divinity. A man capable of self-sacrifice, whatever his other sins, has left the animal behind him; he has the stuff in him of a future and higher humanity. A nation capable of a national act of self-sacrifice ensures its future.

Self-sacrifice involuntary or veiled by forms of selfishness is, however, the condition of our existence. It has been a gradual growth in humanity. The first sacrifices are always selfish — they involve the sacrifice of others for one's own advancement. The first step forward is taken by the instinct of animal love in the mother who is ready to sacrifice her life for the young, by the instinct of protection in the male who is ready to sacrifice his life for his mate. The growth of this instinct is the sign of an enlargement in the conception of the self. So long as there is identification of self only with one's own body and its desires, the state of the *jiva* is unprogressive and animal. It is only when the self enlarges to include the mate and the children that advancement becomes possible. This is the first human state, but the animal lingers in it in the view of the wife and children as chattels and possessions meant for one's own pleasure, strength, dignity, comfort. The family even so viewed becomes the basis of civilisation, because it makes social life possible. But the real development of the god in man does not begin until the family becomes so much dearer than the life of the body that a man is ready to sacrifice himself for it and give up his ease or even his life for its welfare or its protection. To give up one's ease for the family, that is a state which most men have attained; to give up one's life for the honour of the wife or the safety of the home is an act of a higher nature of which man is capable in individuals, in classes, but not in the mass. Beyond the family comes the community and the next step in the enlargement of the self is when the identification with the self in the body and the self in the family gives way to the identification with the self in the community. To recognise that the community has a larger claim on a man than his family is the first condition of the advance to the social condition. It corresponds to the growth of the tribe out of the patriarchal family and to the perfection of those communal institutions of which our village community was a type. Here again, to be always prepared to sacrifice the family interest to the larger interest of the community must be the first condition of communal life and to give one's life for the safety of the community, the act of divinity which marks the consummation of the enlarging self in the communal idea. The next enlargement is to the self in the nation. The evolution of the nation is the growth which is most important now to humanity, because human selfishness, family selfishness, class selfishness having still deep roots in the past must learn to efface themselves in the larger national self in order that the God in humanity may grow. Therefore it is that Nationalism is the *dharma* of the age, and God reveals himself to us in our common Mother. The first attempts to form a nationality were the Greek city, the Semitic or Mongolian monarchy, the Celtic clan, the Aryan *kula* or *jati*. It was the mixture of all these ideas which went to the formation of the mediaeval nation and evolved the modern peoples. Here again, it is the readiness to sacrifice self-interest, family interest, class interest to the larger national interest which is the condition of humanity's fulfilment in the nation and to die for its welfare or safety is the supreme act of self-consummation in the larger national ego. There is a yet higher fulfilment for which only a few individuals have shown themselves ready, the enlargement of the self to include all humanity. A step forward has been taken in this direction by the self-immolation of a few to humanitarian ideals, but to sacrifice the interests of the nation to the larger interest of humanity is an act of which humanity in the mass is not yet capable. God prepares, but He does not hasten the ripening of the fruit before its season. A time will come when this also will be possible, but the time is not yet. Nor would it be well for humanity if it came before the other and lesser identification were complete; for that would necessitate retrogression in order to secure the step which has been omitted. The advance of humanity is a steady progress and there is no great gain in rushing positions far ahead, while important points in the rear are uncaptured.

The national ego may easily mean nothing more than collective selfishness. I may be ready to sacrifice money and ease for the country in order to secure my wealth, fame or position and property which depend upon her security and greatness. I may be ready to sacrifice these and more for her because of the safety of the home and the hearth which her safety ensures. I may be ready to sacrifice much for her because her greatness, wealth, ease mean the greatness, wealth, ease of my community or my class. Or I may be ready to sacrifice everything to secure her greatness because of my pride in her and my desire to see my nation dominant and imperial. All these are forms of selfishness pursuing man into the wider life which is meant to assist in liberating him from selfishness. The curse of capitalism, the curse of Imperialism which afflict modern nations are due to this insistence. It is the source of that pride, insolence and injustice which affect a nation in its prosperity and by that fatal progression which the Greeks with their acute sense for these things so clearly demarcated, it leads from prosperity to insolence and outrage and from insolence and outrage to that *ate*, that blind infatuation, which is God's instrument for the destruction of men and nations. There is only one remedy for this pursuing evil and it is to regard the nation as a necessary unit but no more in a common humanity.

There are two stages in the life of a nation, first, when it is forming itself or new-forming itself, secondly, when it is formed, organised and powerful. The first is the stage when Nationalism makes rightly its greatest demands on the individual, in the second it should abate its demands and, having satisfied, should preserve itself in Cosmopolitanism somewhat as the individual preserves itself in the family, the family in the class, the class in the nation, not destroying itself needlessly but recognising a larger interest. In the struggles of a subject nation to realise its separate existence, the larger interest can only be viewed in prospect and as a higher inspiration to a broadminded and generous patriotism. No sacrifice of the nation to the larger interest is possible, for the nation must exist before it can sacrifice its interests for a higher good.

We are at present in the first or formative stage, and in this stage the demand of Nationalism is imperative. It is only by the sacrifices of the individual, the family and the class to the supreme object of building up the nation that under such adverse circumstances Nationalism can secure the first conditions for its existence. Every act of the new Nationalism has been a call for suffering and self-sacrifice. Swadeshi was such a call, arbitration was such a call, national education was such a call, above all, passive resistance was such a call. None of these things can be secured except by a general readiness to sacrifice the individual and the family to the interests of the nation. Nowadays a new call is visibly forming, the call on the higher classes to sacrifice their privileges and prejudices, as the Japanese Samurai did, for the raising up of the lower. The spread of a general spirit of ungrudging self-sacrifice is the indispensable prelude to the creation of the Indian nation. This truth is not only evident from the very nature of the movement we have initiated, but it is borne out by the tests of history and experience to which we have been recently asked to refer in each individual case before the act of sacrifice is decided. It is by the appeal to history and experience that the Nationalist party has convinced the intellect, just as by its inspiring ideals and readiness to suffer, it has carried with it the heart of the nation. The demand that we should in every individual case go into a review of the whole question is excessive and impossible. It is enough if we are generally convinced of the utility and necessity of sacrifice and feel the individual call. It must be remembered that we cannot argue from the condition of a people formed, free and prospering to that of a people subject, struggling and miserable. In the first case the individual is not called to frequent acts of self-sacrifice, but only to those regularly demanded by the nation and to a general readiness for especial sacrifice in case of necessity, but in the second the necessity is a constant quantity. Nor is it a sound principle to demand in such circumstances an adequate value for every individual act of courage and self-denial. It would indeed be singular for the individuals of a subject nation asked for the price of their liberty to say to the Dispenser of Karma, “You shall give me so much in return for every individual sacrifice and we must know your terms beforehand. We will not trust you to the extent of a single pice worth of result for our sufferings.” Not by such men or such a spirit have subject nations been delivered.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Greatness of the Individual

KARMAYOGIN
A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 31st JULY 1909 { No. 6

Facts and Opinions

The Spirit in Asia

A spirit moves abroad in the world today upsetting kingdoms and raising up new principalities and powers the workings of which are marked by a swiftness and ubiquity new in history. In place of the slow developments and uncertain results of the past we have a quickness and thoroughness which destroy in an hour and remould in a decade. It is noteworthy that these rapid motions are mostly discernible in Asiatic peoples.

The Persian Revolution

The Persian Revolution has settled with a swiftness and decisiveness second only to the movement of Turkey the constitutional struggle in Iran between a reactionary Shah and a rejuvenated, eager and ardent nation. The weak and unstable promise-breaker at Teheran has fallen, mourned by a sympathetic Anglo-India but by no one else in the world. Since the late Shah under the pressure of passive resistance yielded a constitution to his people, the young Nationalism of Persia has been attempting to force or persuade his son to keep the oaths with which he started his reign. Some deeds of blood on both sides, some sharp encounters have attended the process but the price paid has been comparatively small. Like other Asiatic States in a similar process of transformation Persia has rejected the theoretic charms of a republic; she has set up a prince who is young enough to be trained to the habits of a constitutional monarch before he takes up the authority of kingship. In this we see the political wisdom, self-restraint and instinct for the right thing to be done which is natural to ancient nations who, though they have grown young again, are not raw and violent peoples new to political thought and experiment.

Persia's Difficulties

A great and difficult task lies before the newly-risen nation. No other people is so difficultly circumstanced as the Persians. Weak in herself, long a stranger to good government, military strength and discipline, financial soundness and internal efficiency, Persia has to evolve all these under the instant menace from north and south of two of the greatest European empires. The threat of Russia to act herself if the new government does not instantly guarantee security on its borders, a threat made on the morrow of a violent *coup d'état* and before there has been time for the Regency to cope with any of the immediate difficulties surrounding it, is typical of the kind of peril which this proximity is likely to produce. Self-restraint and patience towards these doubtful friends and unbounded energy and decision within are the only qualities by which the statesmen of Persia can surmount the difficulties in their path and satisfy the claims posterity makes upon them. The internal reorganisation of Persia and the swift development of military strength are the first needs. Till then Persia must bear and forbear.

The New Men in Persia

It is worthy of notice that Sipahidar and Sardar Assad, the Bakhtyari leader, who have effected this revolution, are men who in their youth have studied in Europe. They should know the springs of European politics and thoroughly understand the way in which European Powers have to be dealt with as well as the necessities and conditions of internal reorganisation. The problem for all Asiatic peoples is the preservation of their national individuality and existence while equipping themselves with the weapons of the modern struggle for survival. A deep study of European politics, a strong feeling for Asiatic institutions and ideals, a selfless patriotism and immense faith, courage and self-restraint are the qualities essential to their leaders in these critical times. It is reassuring to find Persians high in praise of the self-denying and lofty character of the new Regent. In the absence of a patriotic King like the Mikado such a man alone can form the centre of national reconstruction.

Madanlal Dhingra

Madanlal Dhingra pays the inevitable and foreseen penalty of his crime. We have no wish whatever to load the memory of this unfortunate young man with curses and denunciations. Rather we hope that in his last moments he will be able to look back in a calm spirit on his act and with a mind enlightened by the near approach of death prepare his soul for the great transit. No man but he can say what were the real motives for his deed. If personal resentment and exaggerated emotions were the cause of his crime, a realisation of the true nature of the offence may yet help the soul in its future career. If on the other hand a random patriotism was at its back, we have little hope that reflection will induce him to change his views. Minds imbued with these ideas are the despair of the statesman and the political thinker. They follow their bent with a remorseless firmness which defies alike the arrows of the reasoner and the terrors of a violent death. He must in that case go forth to reap the fruits in other bodies and new circumstances. Here his country remains behind to bear the consequences of his act.

Press Garbage in England

It is at least gratifying to find that the theory of conspiracy is exploded except in the minds of Anglo-Indian papers and perhaps of a few Anglo-Indian statesmen and officials. Not a single circumstance has justified the wild suspicions and wilder inventions which journals like the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express* poured thick upon the world in the first few days that followed the occurrence. These strange fictions are still travelling to us by mail. The most extraordinary of them is perhaps that launched by a certain gentleman who is bold enough to give his name, upon the *World*. It seems that long ago the redoubtable Krishnavarma in a moment of benign and expansive frankness selected this gentleman and revealed to him the details of a gigantic plot he has been elaborating for the last eight years with a view to the murder wholesale and retail of Anglo-Indian officials. If the story were true, Krishnavarma's confidant ought certainly to have been put in the dock as an accessory before the crime on the ground of criminal concealment. These romances sound ridiculous enough now that we read them three weeks afterwards when the excitement of the hour has passed, but the harm this kind of journalism can do was sufficiently proved at the time of the Chinese disturbances and the trouble which preceded the Boer War. That these daily voidings of impudent falsehood and fabrication should be eagerly swallowed by thousands shows the rapid deterioration of British dignity and sobriety.

Shyamji Krishnavarma

The exaggerated view of Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma as an arch conspirator of malign subtlety and power who has long been inculcating terrorist opinions among young men and building up a secret society, is one which none can accept who has any knowledge of this gentleman's past career. Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma is an earnest, vehement and outspoken idealist passionately attached to his own views and intolerant of all who oppose them. He first went to England to breathe the atmosphere of a free country where he could speak as well as think as he chose. He was then a strong constitutionalist and his chief intellectual preoccupations were Herbert Spencer, Home Rule and the position of the Native States. When the new movement flooded India it carried Mr. Krishnavarma forward with it. He became an ardent Nationalist, a confirmed passive resister with an idealistic aversion to violent methods and a strong conviction that, whatever might be the case with other countries, India would neither need nor resort to them. His conversion to Terrorism is quite recent and has astonished most those who knew him best. We know that Sj. Bipin Pal went to England with the confident expectation of finding full sympathy and co-operation from the editor of the *Indian Sociologist*. The quarrel between the two resulting from the change in Mr. Krishnavarma's views is a matter of public knowledge. We refuse therefore to believe that Mr. Krishnavarma has been a plotter of assassination and secret disseminator of Terrorism or that the India House is a centre for the propagation and fulfilment of the ideas he has himself ventilated in the *Times*.

Nervous Anglo-India

Time was when Srijut Surendranath Banerji was held by nervous Anglo-India to be the crowned King of an insurgent Bengal, a very pestilent fellow flooding the country with sedition and rebellion. The whirligig of Time brings round with it strange revenges and at this moment Srijut Surendranath is returning to India acclaimed by English Conservatives as a pillar of the British Empire, India's representative with a mighty organisation behind him pledged to loyalty, co-operation and the support of Morleyan reform. After Surendranath, Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal, reputed editor of *Bande Mataram* and author of the great Madras speeches, loomed as the arch-plotter of revolution and the chief danger to the Empire. The same Bipin Chandra is now a peaceful and unsuspected journalist and lecturer in London acquitted, we hope, of all wish to be the Ravana destined to shake the British Kailas. But Anglo-India needs a bogeyman and by a few letters to the *Times* Mr. Krishnavarma has leaped into that eminent but unenviable position. Who knows? In another year or two even he may be considered a harmless if inconvenient idealist. What is it, one wonders, that has turned the firm, phlegmatic Briton into a nervous quaking old woman in love with imaginative terrors? Is it democracy? Is it the new sensationalist Press run by Harmsworth and Company? The phenomenon is inexplicable, but it is to be feared it is going to be permanent.

The Recoil of Karma

There is a general law that Karma rebounds upon the doer. Associated in Hindu philosophy mainly with the individual and the theory of rebirth, this truth has also been recognised as equally applicable on other lines to the present life and to the destiny of nations. The Karma of the British people in India has been of a mixed quality. So far as it has opened the gates of Western knowledge to the people of this country it has been good and in return the thought and knowledge of India has poured back upon Europe to return the gift with overmeasure. Had they in addition consciously raised up and educated the whole people, all the fruits of that good Karma would have gone to England. But the education they have given is bad, meagre and restricted to the few, and their sympathy for the people has been formal and deficient. In consequence the main flood of the new thought and knowledge has been diverted to America, the giant of the future, which alone of the nations has shown an active and practical sympathy and understanding of our nation. British Karma in India has been bad in so far as it has destroyed our industries and arrested our national development. This Karma is also beginning to recoil, patently in Boycott and unrest, much more subtly in the growing demoralisation of British politics. Already the jealous love of liberty is beginning to wane in the upper classes in England, political thinkers are emerging who announce the failure of democracy, the doctrine of the rule of the strong man is gaining ground and the temptation to strengthen the executive at the expense of the liberty of the citizen is proving too powerful even for a Radical Government. It seems impossible that even a veiled despotism or a virtual oligarchy should ever again rule in England, yet stranger things have happened in history. The change may come by the growth of Socialism and the seizure of the doctrine of State despotism by masterful and ambitious minds to cloak a usurpation the ancient and known forms of which would not be tolerated, just as the Caesars, while avoiding the detested name and form of kingship, yet ruled Rome under the harmless titles of Princeps and Imperator, first man of the state and general, far more despotically than Tarquin could have done. Under whatever disguises the change may steal upon the people, one thing is certain that if Lord Morley and the Anglo-Indian proconsuls succeed in perpetuating absolutism in India, it will recoil from India to reconquer England. The Nationalists of this country are fighting not only for the liberties of India but for the liberties of England.

Liberty or Empire

It is an ancient and perpetually recurring choice which is now being offered to the British people, the choice between liberty and empire. The two are incompatible except by the substitution of a free federation for a dominion. Rome was offered the choice. She won an empire and lost her liberty. External expansion has always been accompanied by a concentration of internal power in King or oligarchy. Athens, the only people who attempted to be imperial and despotic abroad and democratic at home, broke down in the attempt. In English history also we find that the great expansion in the eighteenth century led to the reactionary rule of the third George and it was not till England after the severe lesson in America adopted her present colonial system that expansion and democracy went hand in hand. That system was not an imperial system but a loose collection of free states only nominally united by the British Crown. The Indian problem is the test of British Liberalism. The colonial system as it stands cannot obtain between two States which are not mother and daughter. The one would not tolerate it, the other would not be content with it. But if England can bring herself to extend in a different form the principle of a collection of free States to India, she may keep her position in the world and her liberty together. Despotic empire and liberty she cannot keep; she must either yield up absolutism abroad or renounce liberty at home.

An Open Letter to My Countrymen

THE POSITION of a public man who does his duty in India today, is too precarious to permit of his being sure of the morrow. I have recently come out of a year's seclusion from work for my country on a charge which there was not a scrap of reliable evidence to support, but my acquittal is no security either against the trumping up of a fresh accusation or the arbitrary law of deportation which dispenses with the inconvenient formality of a charge and the still more inconvenient necessity of producing evidence. Especially with the hounds of the Anglo-Indian Press barking at our heels and continually clamouring for Government to remove every man who dares to raise his voice to speak of patriotism and its duties, the liberty of the person is held on a tenure which is worse than precarious. Rumour is strong that a case for my deportation has been submitted to the Government by the Calcutta Police and neither the tranquillity of the country nor the scrupulous legality of our procedure is a guarantee against the contingency of the all-powerful fiat of the Government watchdogs silencing scruples on the part of those who advise at Simla. Under such circumstances I have thought it well to address this letter to my countrymen, and especially to those who profess the principles of the Nationalist party, on the needs of the present and the policy of the future. In case of my deportation it may help to guide some who would be uncertain of their course of action, and, if I do not return from it, it may stand as my last political will and testament to my countrymen.

The situation of the Nationalist party is difficult but not impossible. The idea of some that the party is extinct because its leaders are sentenced or deported, is an error which comes of looking only at the surface. The party is there, not less powerful and pervading than before, but in want of a policy and a leader. The first it may find, the second only God can give it. All great movements wait for their God-sent leader, the willing channel of His force, and only when he comes, move forward triumphantly to their fulfilment. The men who have led hitherto have been strong men of high gifts and commanding genius, great enough to be the protagonists of any other movement, but even they were not sufficient to fulfil one which is the chief current of a worldwide revolution. Therefore the Nationalist party, custodians of the future, must wait for the man who is to come, calm in the midst of calamity, hopeful under defeat, sure of eventual emergence and triumph and always mindful of the responsibility which they owe not only to their Indian posterity but to the world.

Meanwhile the difficulties of our situation ask for bold yet wary walking. The strength of our position is moral, not material. The whole of the physical strength in the country belongs to the established authority which our success would, so far as its present form is concerned, abolish by transforming it out of all possibility of recognition. It is natural that it should use all its physical strength to prevent, so long as it can, that transformation. The whole of the moral strength of the country is with us. Justice is with us, nature is with us, the law of God which is higher than any human justifies our action, youth is for us, the future is ours. On that moral strength we must rely for our survival and eventual success. We must not be tempted by any rash impatience into abandoning the ground on which we are strong and venturing on the ground on which we are weak. Our ideal is an ideal which no law can condemn; our chosen methods are such that no modern Government can expressly declare them illegal without forfeiting its claim to be considered a civilised administration. To that ideal and to those methods we must firmly adhere and rely on them alone for our eventual success. A respect for the law is a necessary quality for endurance as a nation and it has always been a marked characteristic of the Indian people. We must therefore scrupulously observe the law while taking every advantage both of the protection it gives and the latitude it still leaves for pushing forward our cause and our propaganda. With the stray assassinations which have troubled the country we have no concern, and, having once clearly and firmly dissociated ourselves from them, we need notice them no farther. They are the rank and noxious fruit of a rank and noxious policy and until the authors of that policy turn from their errors, no human power can prevent the poison-tree from bearing according to its kind. We who have no voice either in determining the laws or their administration, are helpless in the matter. To deportation and proclamation, the favourite instruments of men incapable of a wise and strong rule, we can only oppose a steady and fearless adherence to the propagandism and practice of a lawful policy and a noble ideal.

Our ideal is that of Swaraj or absolute autonomy free from foreign control. We claim the right of every nation to live its own life by its own energies according to its own nature and ideals. We reject the claim of aliens to force upon us a civilisation inferior to our own or to keep us out of our inheritance on the untenable ground of a superior fitness. While admitting the stains and defects which long subjection has induced upon our native capacity and energy, we are conscious of that capacity and energy reviving in us. We point to the unexampled national vigour which has preserved the people of this country through centuries of calamity and defeat, to the great actions of our forefathers continued even to the other day, to the many men of intellect and character such as no other nation in a subject condition has been able to produce, and we say that a people capable of such unheard-of vitality is not one which can be put down as a nation of children and incapables. We are in no way inferior to our forefathers. We have brains, we have courage, we have an infinite and various national capacity. All we need is a field and an opportunity. That field and opportunity can only be provided by a national government, a free society and a great Indian culture. So long as these are not conceded to us, we can have no other use for our brains, courage and capacity than to struggle unceasingly to achieve them.

Our ideal of Swaraj involves no hatred of any other nation nor of the administration which is now established by law in this country. We find a bureaucratic administration, we wish to make it democratic; we find an alien government, we wish to make it indigenous; we find a foreign control, we wish to render it Indian. They lie who say that this aspiration necessitates hatred and violence. Our ideal of patriotism proceeds on the basis of love and brotherhood and it looks beyond the unity of the nation and envisages the ultimate unity of mankind. But it is a unity of brothers, equals and freemen that we seek, not the unity of master and serf, of devourer and devoured. We demand the realisation of our corporate existence as a distinct race and nation because that is the only way in which the ultimate brotherhood of humanity can be achieved, not by blotting out individual peoples and effacing outward distinctions, but by removing the internal obstacles to unity, the causes of hatred, malice and misunderstanding. A struggle for our rights does not involve hatred of those who mistakenly deny them. It only involves a determination to suffer and strive, to speak the truth boldly and without respect of persons, to use every lawful means of pressure and every source of moral strength in order to establish ourselves and disestablish that which denies the law of progress.

Our methods are those of self-help and passive resistance. To unite and organise ourselves in order to show our efficiency by the way in which we can develop our industries, settle our individual disputes, keep order and peace on public occasions, attend to questions of sanitation, help the sick and suffering, relieve the famine-stricken, work out our intellectual, technical and physical education, evolve a Government of our own for our own internal affairs so far as that could be done without disobeying the law or questioning the legal authority of the bureaucratic administration, this was the policy publicly and frankly adopted by the Nationalist party. In Bengal we had advanced so far as to afford distinct proof of our capacity in almost all these respects and the evolution of a strong united and well-organised Bengal had become a near and certain prospect. The internal troubles which came to a head at Surat and the repressive policy initiated immediately afterwards, culminating in the destruction of our organisations and the effective intimidation of Swadeshi workers and sympathisers by official underlings, have both been serious checks to our progress and seem for the moment to have postponed the realisation of our hopes to a distant future. The check is temporary. Courage and sane statesmanship in our leaders is all that is wanted to restore the courage and the confidence of the people and evolve new methods of organisation which will not come into conflict even with the repressive laws.

The policy of passive resistance was evolved partly as the necessary complement of self-help, partly as a means of putting pressure on the Government. The essence of this policy is the refusal of co-operation so long as we are not admitted to a substantial share and an effective control in legislation, finance and administration. Just as "No representation, no taxation" was the watchword of American constitutional agitation in the eighteenth century, so "No control, no co-operation" should be the watchword of our lawful agitation — for constitution we have none, — in the twentieth. We sum up this refusal of co-operation in the convenient word "Boycott", refusal of co-operation in the industrial exploitation of our country, in education, in government, in judicial administration, in the details of official intercourse. Necessarily, we have not made that refusal of co-operation complete and uncompromising, but we hold it as a method to be enlarged and pushed farther according as the necessity for moral pressure becomes greater and more urgent. This is one aspect of the policy. Another is the necessity of boycott to help our own nascent energies in the field of self-help. Boycott of foreign goods is a necessary condition for the encouragement of Swadeshi industries, boycott of Government schools is a necessary condition for the growth of national education, boycott of British courts is a necessary condition for the spread of arbitration. The only question is the extent and conditions of the boycott and that must be determined by the circumstances of the particular problem in each case. The general spirit of passive resistance has first to be raised, afterwards it can be organised, regulated and, where necessary, limited.

The first obstacle to our evolution is the internal dispute which has for the moment wrecked the Congress and left in its place the hollow and mutilated simulacrum of a National Assembly which met last year at Madras and, deprived though it is of the support of the most eminent local leaders, purposes to meet again at Lahore. It is a grievous error to suppose that this dispute hung only on personal questions and differences of a trifling importance. As happens inevitably in such popular contests, personal questions and differences of minor importance intervened to perplex and embitter the strife, but the real questions in debate were those which involved the whole future development of the spirit and form of self-government in this country. Were that spirit and form to be democratic or oligarchic? Were they to be constitutional in procedure or governed by arbitrary and individual choice and discretion? Was the movement to be progressive and national or conservative and parochial in its aims, policy and spirit? These were the real issues. The Nationalist party stood for democracy, constitutionalism and progress. The Moderate party, governed by an exaggerated respect for old and esteemed leaders, helped, without clearly understanding what they did, those who stood for oligarchy, arbitrary procedure and an almost reactionary conservatism. Personal idiosyncracies, preferences, aversions settled like a thick cloud over the contest, the combatants on both sides flung themselves on every point of difference material or immaterial as a pretext or a weapon, the tactics of party warfare were freely used and, finally, the deliberate obstinacy of a few Moderate leaders in avoiding discussion of the points of difference and the unruly ardour of the younger men on both sides led to the violent scenes at Surat and the break-up of the Congress. If the question is ever to be settled to the advantage of national progress, the personal and minor differences must be banished from the field and the real issues plainly and dispassionately considered.

The questions of particular importance which divide the parties, are the exact form of Swaraj to be held forward as an ideal, the policy of passive resistance and the form of certain resolutions. The last is a question to be decided by the Congress itself and all that the Nationalists demand is that discussion shall not be burked and that they shall not be debarred from their constitutional right of placing their views before the National Assembly. On the other points, they cannot sacrifice their ideal or their policy, but their contention is that these differences ought not in a free deliberative assembly to stand in the way of united progress. The Swaraj matter can easily be settled by the substitution of "full and complete self-government" for "self-government on Colonial lines" in the Swaraj resolution. The difference as to passive resistance hinges at present on the Boycott resolution which the Nationalist party — and in this they are supported by a large body of Moderate opinion, — cannot consent to sacrifice. But here also they are willing to submit the question to the arbitrament of a freely elected Congress, though they refuse to recognise a close and limited Subjects Committee as the final authority. It will be seen therefore that the real question throughout is constitutional. The body which at present calls itself the Congress, has adopted a constitution which is close, exclusive, undemocratic and so framed as to limit the free election of delegates by the people. It limits itself by proposing a number of articles of faith in a particular form of words to every intending delegate before he can take his seat; it aims at the election of delegates only by select bodies and associations instead of the direct election of the people; it excuses many from the chances of election and gives them an undue weight in the disposal of the affairs of the assembly. These and similar provisions no democratic party can accept. A Nationalist Conference or a Moderate Convention may so guard its integrity, but the Congress is and must be a National Assembly admitting freely all who are duly elected by the people. The proposed passing of this reactionary constitution by a body already limited under its provisions will not cure the constitutional defect. It is only a Congress elected on the old lines that can determine the future provisions for its constitution and procedure with any hope of universal acceptance.

It is not therefore by any manipulation of the Convention Congress that a solution of the problem can be brought about, but by the Provincial Conferences empowering the leaders of both parties to meet in Committee and provide for an arrangement which will heal differences and enable the Congress to work smoothly and freely in the future. If there is a minority who refuse to associate themselves with any such attempt, the majority will be justified by the mandate of the Provinces in disregarding them and meeting to carry out the popular wish. Once the lines are settled they can be submitted to the free choice of a freely elected Congress for acceptance, rejection or modification. This will restore a Congress on sound constitutional lines in which the bitter experience of the past may be relied on to prevent those mistakes of obstinacy and passion which prevented a solution of the problem at Surat.

Outside the Congress the chances of united working are more complete than within it. There are only two questions which are likely either to trouble harmony or hamper action. The first is the question of the acceptance or rejection of the present reforms introducing, as they do, no element of popular control nor any fresh constitutional principle except the unsound principle of privileged representation for a single community. This involves the wider question of co-operation. It is generally supposed that the Nationalist party is committed to the persistent and uncompromising refusal of co-operation until they get the full concession of Swaraj. Nationalist publicists have not cared to combat this error explicitly because they were more anxious to get their ideal accepted and the spirit of passive resistance and complete self-help popularised than to discuss a question which was not then a part of practical politics. But it is obvious that a party advancing such a proposition would be a party of doctrinaires and idealists, not of practical thinkers and workers. The Nationalist principle is the principle of "No control, no co-operation." Since all control has been refused and so long as all control is refused, the Nationalist party preaches the refusal of co-operation as complete as we can make it. But it is evident that if, for instance, the power of imposing protective duties were given to a popular and elective body, no serious political party would prefer persistence in commercial boycott to the use of the powers conceded. Or if education were similarly made free of official control and entrusted to a popular body, as Lord Reay once thought of entrusting it, no sensible politician would ask the nation to boycott that education. Or if the courts were manned by Indian judges and made responsible not to the Executive but to a Minister representing the people, arbitration would immediately take its place as a supplementary aid to the regular courts. So also the refusal to co-operate in an administration which excludes the people from an effective voice does not involve a refusal to co-operate in an administration of which the people are an effective part. The refusal of autocratic gifts does not involve a refusal to take up popular rights inalienably secured to the people. It is on the contrary with the object of compelling the concession of the various elements of Swaraj by peaceful moral pressure and in the absence of such concessions developing our own institutions to the gradual extrusion and final supplanting of bureaucratic institutions that the policy of self-help and passive resistance was started. This acceptance of popular rights does not imply the abandonment of the ideal of complete autonomy or of the use of passive resistance in case of any future arbitrary interference with the rights of the people. It implies only the use of partial Swaraj as a step and means towards complete Swaraj. Where the Nationalists definitely and decisively part company with an influential section of the Moderates is in refusing to accept any petty or illusory concession which will draw away our aspirations from their unalterable ideal or delude the people into thinking they have secured real rights.

Another question is that of cleaving to and enforcing the Boycott. In Bengal, even if there are some who are timid or reactionary enough to shrink from the word or the thing, the general feeling in its favour is emphatic and practically unanimous. But it is time now to consider seriously the question of regulating the boycott. Nationalists have always demurred to the proviso "as far as possible" in the Swadeshi resolution on account of the large loophole its vagueness left to the hesitating and the lukewarm, and they have preferred the form "at a sacrifice". But it will now be well if we face the concrete problems of the boycott.

While we must keep it absolute wherever Swadeshi articles are procurable as also in respect to pure luxuries with which we can dispense, we must recognise that there are necessities of life and business for which we have still to go to foreign countries. The public ought to be guided as to the choice of the countries which we shall favour in the purchase of these articles, — necessarily they must be countries sympathetic to Indian aspirations, — and those which we shall exclude. The failure to deal with this question is largely responsible for the laxity of our political boycott and our consequent failure to get the Partition rescinded. There are also other questions, such as the attempt of shopkeepers and merchants to pass off foreign goods wholesale as Swadeshi, which must be taken up at once if the movement is not to suffer a serious setback.

A final difficulty remains, — by what organisation are we to carry on the movement even when these questions are settled? The Nationalist programme was to build up a great deliberative and executive organisation on the basis of a reconstituted Congress, and this scheme still remains the only feasible means of organising the country. Even if a united Congress cannot be secured, the provinces ought to organise themselves separately, and perhaps this may prove to be the only possible way of restoring the Congress, by reconstituting it from the bottom. Even the District organisations, however, cannot work effectively without hands, and these we had provided for in the Sabhas and Samitis of young men which sprang up on all sides and were just succeeding in forming an efficient network of organisation all over Bengal. These are now being suppressed by administrative order. It becomes a question whether we cannot replace them by a loose and elusive organisation of young men in groups ordering each its own work by common agreement and working hand in hand, but without a rigid or definite organisation. I throw out the suggestion for consideration by the leaders of thought and action in the provinces where unity seems at all feasible.

This then is the situation as it presents itself to me. The policy I suggest to the Nationalist party may briefly be summed up as follows: —

1. Persistence with a strict regard to law in a peaceful policy of self-help and passive resistance.
2. The regulation of our attitude towards the Government by the principle of “No control, no co-operation.”
3. A rapprochement with the Moderate party wherever possible and the reconstitution of a united Congress.
4. The regulation of the Boycott movement so as to make both the political and the economic boycott effective.
5. The organisation of the Provinces if not of the whole country according to our original programme.
6. A system of co-operation which will not contravene the law and will yet enable workers to proceed with the work of self-help and national efficiency, if not quite so effectively as before, yet with energy and success.

AUROBINDO GHOSE

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Kalidasa’s Seasons I: Its Authenticity
The Katha Upanishad I.2

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 7th AUGUST 1909 { No. 7

Facts and Opinions

The Police Bill

The Police Bill has passed the Committee and next week, it is rumoured, will be made law. It is a provision for giving absolute power to the Police Commissioner and his underlings. It is true that the power is limited in time in certain respects, but so long as it lasts it is arbitrary, absolute, without checks and, practically, without appeal. We hear that the present Police Commissioner resents any proposal to put a check on his absolute power as a personal insult. If so, he is in good company, for he only follows the example of that great philosopher and democratic statesman, Lord Morley, who resents democratic criticism of his measures and actions as a crime and sacrilege and a petty amendment of the present provisions for the deportation of inconvenient persons as a vote of censure. The spirit of absolutism fostered by arbitrary government in India is not only swallowing up the old British virtues in India itself but encroaching on the free spirit of England. The powers of prohibition, regulation and arrest provided for in the Bill will exalt Mr. Halliday into the Czar of Calcutta. It is noticeable that any man may be arrested for the breach of any law by any policeman without a warrant and be sentenced to a fine of a hundred rupees or, for certain political offences among others, to a month's hard labour. Any meeting can be stopped for a week at the sweet will and discretion of an individual. The provisions for search and entry of the police into houses and so-called public places are so ample as to give a power of inquisition and domiciliary visit second only to the Russian. Even boardings, messes and private lodging-houses are liable to entry at any hour and on any pretext. And by an inspired improvement on the stringent Bombay Act no action of the police, however vexatious, unwarranted and malicious, can be punished unless the aggrieved party can prove bad faith, a condition which in nine cases out of ten of malicious harassment is impossible of satisfaction. It is a sound principle that where a citizen has been causelessly harassed, the burden of proving good faith rests on the harasser. An opposite proviso means the destruction of the liberty of the person. No man's personal freedom and dignity will henceforth be safe for a moment from the whims of the lowest policeman in the street. The authorities may say that this is not the purposed object of the Bill. We have nothing to do with the intention of the framers, we have to do only with the provisions of the law itself, and it is enough if all these things are rendered possible under the provisions. To make bad laws and plead good intentions is an old evasion of weak and violent rulers.

The Political Motive

That there is a political motive behind the Bill, any child can see and to conceal it only the most flimsy precautions have been taken. The prohibition of public meetings can have no reference to any but Swadeshi meetings, the reference to objectionable cries is obviously aimed at the national cry of Bande Mataram and the power of harassing under the pretext of regulating public processions and meetings can have no objective but the revived meetings and processions which have shown that the national movement was not dead but only suspended. Other provisions of the Bill may be dictated by the sole object of strengthening the hands, already overstrong, of the Calcutta Police in keeping order, but the nature and wording of these provisions coupled with the amazingly comprehensive definition of "public place" leave us no option but to see the obvious political motive behind. It is possible for the Police Commissioner under these provisions to paralyse every legitimate form of public activity in the city of Calcutta. It is no use sheltering under the provisions of the Bombay Act. The Bombay Act has been used to paralyse public activity of a kind inconvenient to the Government in that city. What, moreover, was the necessity of suddenly resorting to the stringency of the Bombay Act at this particular juncture? It is not alleged that any of the meetings or processions recently organised were disorderly or led to disturbance or public inconvenience. The only fresh emergency was the political.

A Hint from Dinajpur

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* notices a case from Dinajpur which may give a few hints to Sir Edward Baker if he really wants or is wanted to establish police autocracy in Calcutta. Mr. Garlick there justified the caning of witnesses and accused by the police as a necessary "method of examination" without which the administration of justice in this country cannot be carried on. He says, "I dare say the police frequently quicken the witness' answers with a cut from their riding canes. Such methods of examination are no doubt to be deprecated but without them I do not suppose the police would get any information at all." The case will come up before the High Court and we await with interest the view that authority will take of this novel legal dictum. Meanwhile why should not Sir Edward Baker take time by the forelock and, after a now familiar method, validate such "methods" beforehand by a clause in his Police Bill empowering any policeman to cut with a cane any citizen whom he may fancy guilty of breaking any law so as to persuade him to desist? Of course the said policeman will not be liable to punishment unless it can be proved that he cut in bad faith.

The Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company

We publish elsewhere an appeal from the promoters of the enterprise which first encouraged Indian energy and capital into the new path many are now preparing to follow. This Company, as the pioneer, had to face all the difficulties of a novel enterprise of considerable magnitude and it has suffered more than others from competition supported by official sympathy. To Nationalists it will be sufficient to recall the name of Chidambaram Pillai, condemned to a long term of imprisonment on the strength of police reports, and the plucky struggle made by the Company against overwhelming odds. The Company represents an output of patriotic effort and self-sacrifice such as no other has behind it and it would be a public disgrace if its appeal went unheard.

A Swadeshi Enterprise

One of the great weaknesses of the Swadeshi movement at present is the ease with which, under the stress of necessity, we admit articles as Swadeshi which are to all intents and purposes foreign. It is always therefore an encouraging sign when a real Swadeshi enterprise is started which liberates us from the necessity of such humiliating compromises, especially when they affect articles of daily necessity. We take for an instance what we choose to call Swadeshi umbrellas although these are Swadeshi only so far as the labour of fitting the parts together is concerned. Sirdar Rajmachikar of Poona and his brother have done a service to Swadeshi by starting a factory in which all the parts except the iron ribs and stretchers are either made in the factory or, in the matter of the cloth, procured from Poona and Bombay mills. The only drawback is the high prices of these articles compared with the cheapness of the fractionally Swadeshi umbrellas. This we believe, is largely due to the high prices of the cloth produced from the Bombay mills, but the people of Bombay and Poona are taking these umbrellas by the thousand in spite of the difference. We hope Bengal will be as patriotic in this small but important matter. The prices will come down as soon as a sufficient market is created. Meanwhile we must take the Swadeshi article at a sacrifice as we have pledged ourselves to do by any number of vows and resolutions. To replace foreign by indigenous in the objects of daily use is the very life-breath of Swadeshi.

Youth and the Bureaucracy

SIR EDWARD Baker is usually a polite and careful man and a diplomatic official. It is not his fault if the policy he is called upon to carry through is one void of statesmanship and contradictory of all the experience of history. Neither is it his fault if he lacks the necessary weight in the counsels of the Government to make his own ideas prevail. He carries out an odious task with as much courtesy and discretion as the nature of the task will permit and, if we have had to criticise severely the amazing indiscretion foreign to his usual habits which he was guilty of on a recent occasion, it was with a recognition of the fact that he must have forgotten himself and spoken on the spur of the moment. But as the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy is now constituted, Sir Edward's personal superiority to his two predecessors is of no earthly use to us. We acknowledge the politeness and self-restraint of the wording in his recent advertisement to the educational authorities and the public at large of the inadvisability of allowing students to mix in the approaching Boycott celebration. But his reserve of language cannot succeed in blinding the public, still less the parties addressed, to the real nature of this promulgation. To parties circumstanced like the authorities of the Bengal Colleges official or private it is one of those hints which do not differ from orders. The whole Calcutta University has been placed under the heel of the Executive authority and no amount of writhing or wry faces will save Principals and Professors from the humiliating necessities proper to this servile and degraded position. They have sold themselves for lucre and they must eat the bitter bread of their self-chosen servitude. If they are asked to do the spy's office or to be the instruments for imposing on young men of education and respectability restrictions unexampled outside Russia, it is not theirs to reject the demand instantly as freemen would indignantly reject such degrading proposals. They must remember that the affiliation of their colleges and the grants which alone can enable them to satisfy the arduous conditions of affiliation depend on the fiat of those who make the demand. These things are in the bond. For the rest, the unwisdom of the wise men and the imprudence of the prudent who stopped the students' strike is becoming more and more apparent. Prudence and wisdom for the proprietors of private schools, for the country it was the worst imprudence and unwisdom. It has turned the training ground of our youth into a means of restraining the progress of our people and denying them that liberty which the other nations of the world enjoy. A university in which the representatives of academic culture are only allowed to keep their position on condition of forfeiting their self-respect and the pen of the pedagogue supplements the baton of the policeman, is no longer worth keeping.

But there are other considerations affecting a wider circle than the educational world, which arise immediately out of this notice. Ever since the beginning of this movement the opponents of progress have with an admirable instinct hit upon the misleading and intimidation of the youth of this country as the best means of thwarting the movement. Their direct attempts having failed, they are now trying to keep down the rising spirit of young India by objurgations addressed to the guardians and by playing on their selfishness and fears. Once the National Education movement was thwarted of its natural course and triumphant success by the leaders, it was easy for the bureaucrats to enforce this policy by gathering up all the authority of the Universities into their hands and using it as a political lever. The loss of education and a career, — this was the menace which they held over the guardians and young men of the country and by the continual flourishing of this weapon they have succeeded in putting back for a while the hour of our national fulfilment. The unwholesome and dangerous effects of denying the aspirations of youth a peaceful outlet, as dangerous to the government as they are unwholesome to the country, the arbiters of official policy in spite of their experience are too blind to realise. Bad leadership, bad because marred by selfishness and timidity, has aided the political experience and insight of the English rulers in inflicting upon the cause a check which still works to hamper us in our progress. We do not propose to waste space by answering the sophistries which our opponents advance to cover their interested suggestions. It is enough to say in answer that in all civilised countries young men are freely permitted to take part in politics and their want of interest in the chief national activity would be considered a mark of degeneration. It is not the arguments of adversaries but their own personal and class interests which actuate those among us who at the bidding of Anglo-Indians official or unofficial deter our young men from attending public meetings or mixing in the national movement. To these also we can say nothing. Men who can prefer the selfish gratification of their transitory individual needs and interests to the good of the nation are not needed in the new age that is coming. They are there only to exhaust a degraded and backward type which the world and the nation are intended soon to outgrow. If some of them still pose as men of weight and leading, it is only for a moment. They will vanish and the whole earth heave a sigh of relief that that type at least is gone for ever.

But to the young men of Bengal we have a word to say. The future belongs to the young. It is a young and new world which is now under process of development and it is the young who must create it. But it is also a world of truth, courage, justice, lofty aspiration and straightforward fulfilment which we seek to create. For the coward, for the self-seeker, for the talker who goes forward at the beginning and afterwards leaves his fellows in the lurch there is no place in the future of this movement. A brave, frank, clean-hearted, courageous and aspiring youth is the only foundation on which the future nation can be built. This seventh of August in this year 1909 is not an ordinary occasion. It is a test, a winnowing-fan, a separator of the wheat and the chaff. Because it is so, Sir Edward Baker has been inspired by an overruling Providence to publish his notification and the authorities of colleges to act according to their kind. The question is put not to these but to the young men who are asked under pain of academical penalties to abstain from an activity which is both their right and their duty. Let them remember that they disobey no law of the land and no provision of morality if they attend the celebration of the new nation's birthday. They will only disobey what professes to be an exercise of school discipline, but is nothing of the kind. It does not fall within the province of a schoolmaster to dictate what shall be the political opinions or activities of his pupils, nor are College professors concerned with what their students may do outside the precincts of College and hostel in the hours of their lawful liberty, so long as there is no infringement of law or morality. The attempt is a usurpation of the rightful authority of guardians or, in the case of those who have come of age, of their right to govern their own personal action. There only remains the question of self-interest. That is a point we leave to their hearts and consciences, whether they shall prefer their own interests or their country's. But if once they decide for the nobler part, let them stand by the choice they have made. God does not want falterers and flinchers for his work, nor does he want unstable enthusiasts who cannot maintain the energy of their first movements. Secondly, let them not only stand by their choice but stand by their comrades. Unless they develop the corporate spirit and the sense of honour which refuses to save oneself by the sacrifice of one's comrades in action when that sacrifice can be averted by standing together, they will not be fit for the work they will have to do when they are a little older. Whatever they do let them do as a body, whatever they suffer let them suffer as a body, leaving out the coward and the falterer but, once they are compact, never losing or allowing anything to break that compactness. If they can act in this spirit, heeding no unpatriotic counsels from whatever source they come, then let them follow their duty and their conscience, but let them do nothing in a light even if fervent enthusiasm, moving forward without due consideration and then showing a weakness unworthy of the nation to which they belong and the work to which they have been called.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Kalidasa's Seasons II: The Substance of the Poem
The Katha Upanishad I.3
Anandamath: Prologue

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 14th AUGUST 1909 { No. 8

Facts and Opinions

The *Englishman* on Boycott

The speech of Sj. Bhupendranath Bose at the boycott celebration and the Open Letter of Sj. Aurobindo Ghose have put the *Englishman* in a difficulty. It has been the habit of this paper to lay stress on any facts or suggestions real or imaginary which it could interpret as pointing to violence and so persistently damn the movement as one not only revolutionary in the magnitude of the changes at which it aims but violently revolutionary in its purposed methods. The speech and the open letter have cut this imaginary ground away from under its feet. As a matter of fact there is nothing new in the attitude of either the Moderate or the Nationalist leader. What they say now they have said always. The Moderate party have always been in favour of constitutional methods which, whatever be the precise meaning of that phrase in a country where no constitution exists, must certainly exclude illegality and violence. The Nationalists on their side have always, while repudiating the principle that men are under all circumstances bound to obey unjust or injurious laws imposed without national consent, advocated observance of the law in the circumstances of India both on grounds of policy and in the interests of sound national development. Passive resistance to arbitrary edicts and proclamations in order to assert civic rights, test illegal ukases or compel their recall is not breach of the law but a recognised weapon in the defence of civic liberty. Yet the *Englishman* chooses to save its face by imagining a change of front in the Boycott policy. There is no change. The Boycott has always been a movement within the law and such it remains. If there have been some individual excesses, that no more detracts from the legality of the movement than the excesses of individual strikers would affect the legality of a strike. The *Englishman* is full of anxiety as to the best way to meet the imagined change of front. With great sapiency it suggests to the Government the free use of deportation, for which it has been for some time clamouring in vain, and threatens the boycotters with an anti-boycott. One does not quite see how this mighty movement could be engineered. If a boycott of Indians by Englishmen is suggested, we would remind our contemporary that in life in this country Indians might conceivably do without Englishmen but Englishmen cannot do without Indians. That is precisely the strength of our position. The misfortune is that we ourselves still fail to realise it.

Social Boycott

It seems to be especially the Boycott President's able defence of social boycott as opposed to violent constraint that has alarmed the *Englishman*. Here also there is nothing new. The social boycott is a weapon absolutely necessary for the enforcement of the popular will in this matter, the power of using fiscal law for the same purpose being in the hands of authorities who have been publicly declared by Lord Curzon to be active parties in British exploitation of the resources of India. It means the coercion of a very small minority by a huge majority in the interests of the whole nation; it consists merely in a passive abstinence from all countenance to the offender, — sending him to Coventry, in the English phrase; it is effective and, if properly applied, instantaneously effective; it involves, as the *Englishman* has been obliged to see, no violence, no disregard of public order, no breach of the peace. The only weapon the *Englishman* can find against it is deportation, and after all you cannot deport a whole town, village or community. The Nationalist party have always struggled for and often obtained the recognition of the social boycott at various District Conferences and it has been freely and effectively applied in all parts, though mostly in East Bengal. It is gratifying to find the most moderate of Bengal Moderate leaders supporting and justifying it in a carefully prepared and responsible utterance on an occasion of the utmost public importance.

National or Anti-national

We have long noticed with the deepest disapprobation and indignation the equivocal conduct of the National Council authorities with regard to matters of great national importance, but we have held our peace from unwillingness to hurt an institution established with such high hopes and apparently destined to play an important part in the development of the nation. We can hold our peace no longer. The action of the authorities in forbidding their students to attend a national festival commemorating the inception of the movement by which the College and Council were created, — a prohibition extended by them to the mofussil schools, — is only the crowning act of a policy by which they are betraying the trust reposed in them by the nation, contradicting the very object of the institution and utterly ruining a great and salutary movement. They imagine that by being more servile than the most servile of the ordinary institutions and flaunting their high academical purpose they will save themselves from official repression and yet keep the support of the people. They are wrong. Already there is such deep dissatisfaction with the Council that the mofussil schools are dying of inanition and people are turning away from the new education as differing in no essential from the old. If the authorities persist in their evil course, the public mind will write Anti-national instead of National over their signboard in Bow Bazaar and their schools be left empty of students. We shall return to this subject in a future issue.

The Boycott Celebration

A NATIONAL festival is the symbol of the national vitality. All outward action depends eventually on the accepted ideas and imaginations of the doer. As these are, so is his aspiration; and although it is not true that as is his aspiration, so is his action, yet it is true that as is his aspiration, so will his action more and more tend to be. If it is the idea that finally expresses itself in all material forms, actions, institutions and consummations, it is the imagination that draws the idea out, suggests the shape and gives the creative impulse. Hence the importance of celebrations like the Seventh of August, especially in the first movements of a great national resurgence. A time may come when the living meaning may pass out of a solemnity or anniversary and leave it a dead form which only the persistence of habit preserves, but that cannot happen until the underlying idea is realised and the imaginative impulse towards creation has victoriously justified itself and exhausted its sources of satisfaction. The ideas which the boycott celebration holds as its roots and the imaginations to which it appeals are not yet even partially satisfied and, until they have confirmed themselves in victorious action and are perpetuated in lasting forms and institutions, it is of the first importance that this great festival should be celebrated in some form or other and, as far as possible, in the form it originally took. There is a meaning in the imaginative conservatism which refuses to part with the cherished pomps and even the little details of show and brightness which have always been associated with this day, the procession, the places, the meeting, the flags, music, songs, the vow, the resolution. Any laxness in these minutiae would show a fainting of the imagination which clings to the festival and its underlying ideas and a carelessness in the heart about those emotions without which the idea by itself is always inoperative. This appeal to the imagination and nourishing of the emotions is especially necessary when the outward circumstances are widely different from the cherished hopes and imaginations and the speedy advent of the longed-for future seems to the reason distant or improbable. That is why importance is attached in all countries to ceremonies and festivals. There are many of us who are inclined to speak with contempt of speeches and shows, and there was a time when we too in our impatience of the mere babbler were inclined to echo the cry for silent work. A juster knowledge of human psychology has led us to modify our view on that head. Man is not by nature a silent animal nor in the mass is he capable of work without frequent interchange of speech. Talk is necessary to him, emotion is necessary to him, imagination is necessary to him; without these he cannot be induced to action. This constitutes the supreme importance of the right of free speech and free meeting; this also constitutes the justification of symbolical holidays and festivals. Speech and writing are necessary to the acceptance and spread of the idea without which there can be no incentive to action. Ceremonies help the imagination and encourage it to see in the concrete that which cannot be immediately realised. It was out of the gurge and welter of an infinite oratory, thousand-throated journalism, endless ceremonies, processions, national festivals that the appallingly strenuous action of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic age in France arose to reconstitute society and transform Europe. Let us not therefore despise these mighty instruments. God has created them and the natural human love for them for very great and abiding purposes. Even in these few years the Ganapati and Shivaji festivals, instituted by the far-seeing human sympathy and democratic instinct of Mr. Tilak, have done much to reawaken and solidify the national feeling of Maharashtra, and we can all feel what a stimulus to the growth and permanence of the movement we have found in the celebrations of the 7th August and the 16th October. They are to us what sacred days are to the ordinary religions. The individual religious man can do without them, collective religion cannot. These are the sacred days in the religion of Nationalism, the worship of God the Mother.

The 16th October is the idea of unity, the worship of the Mother one and indivisible. The 7th of August is the idea of separateness, the worship of the Mother free, strong and glorious. Both these ideas are as yet ideas merely, realised in our faith and aspiration by the shaping imagination, not yet materialised in the world of concrete fact. This, according to our Vedantic ideas, is how the world and things whether in general or particular come into being. They exist first in seed form in the silent and unexpressed idea, in a world of deep sleep where there is as yet no action of thought or deed, only the inert, inoperative idea. Shiva the white and pure, the ascetic, the still, contemplative Yogin holds them in himself as Prajna, the Wise One, God ideal. But Shiva is *tamasic* and *rajas* is necessary to induce motion before things can exist. The thing has next to sprout out of the seed and take a volatile and unfixed shape in the psychic world where it waits for a material birth. Here Brahma, the flaming, shapeless and many-shaped, holds them in his brilliant vibrating medium of active imagination and thought and by his daughter Vach, the Goddess Speech eldest-born of the world, puts them into shape and body as Hiranyagarbha, God imaginative and therefore creative. Last they take permanent shape and abide in some material body, form, organism. Vishnu there holds them in his fixed and visible cosmos as Virat, God practical, until the divine imagination wearies of them and Shiva as destroyer draws them back again, their outward form disintegrated and their supporting imaginations dead, into the seed-state from which they emerged. For a long time the idea of unity, the idea of a strong national self-expression were merely sleeping and inoperative ideas held as sounding words rather than possibilities. Still the repetition of the words like the repetition even mechanical of a powerful mantra, began to awaken the divine force latent in the idea and, however feebly, it began to stir. But it was not till the 16th of October and the 7th of August that these ideas seized on the faith and imagination of the people and took shape, volatile and unfixed but still shape, as a living aspiration. The day of material realisation is yet distant. Moving to unity we are still divided by external and internal agencies. Moving towards strength and freedom we are still subject to external force and internal weakness. But this we have gained that the purpose and imagination of unity and strength is rooted in the hearts and minds of a great and the most vigorous portion of the young generation, inheritors of the future, beyond the power of force or sophistry to remove. Having secured so much we can go on in the confidence that, whatever now happens to the pioneers, Hiranyagarbha has taken the new ideas into his protection and when that has once happened Virat must inevitably fulfil them.

It is a short-sighted and superficial outlook which sees in the 16th October only the day of mourning for the partition of Bengal or in the 7th August only a commemoration of the Boycott. The Boycott is a symbol, the mourning a symbol. When the weapon of Boycott has done its work, we shall lay it aside, but the 7th August we shall not lay aside, for it is our sacred Day of Awakening. When the Partition is rescinded, we shall cease to go into annual mourning, but the 16th October will not fall into oblivion or desuetude, for it is our sacred Day of the Worship of the Indivisible Mother. These are the imaginations, these the mighty and creative thoughts and aspirations which we seek to foster by these celebrations. Therefore we regard the holding of the Boycott Day as a national duty. Let those who scoff at it and talk of the necessity of silent *sadhana*, for we have heard of such, be warned how they desecrate sacred words by using them as a convenient cant and try, out of selfish and infidel fears, to thwart in the minds of the young the work which by these celebrations God has been doing.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Kalidasa's Seasons III: Its Poetic Value
The Katha Upanishad II.1
Anandamath I
Suprabhat: A Review

A Birthday Talk

IN MY childhood before the full development of my faculties, I became conscious of a strong impulse in me. I did not realise what it was then, but it grew stronger and stronger as I gained in years till all the weakness of my childhood, fear, selfishness, etc., vanished from my mind. From the day of my return to the mother country, the impulse is surging forth in great force, and my set purpose and devotion are becoming more confirmed with the trials and oppressions to which I am subjected. When some divine power by the grace of God manifests itself in a human being any efforts to develop it give a new force to the national life. You will have to sacrifice yourself at the feet of your Mother. You should, therefore, devote yourself with firm faith and whole heart to her service. Service of our motherland is our highest duty at this moment. This must be our duty in this iron age. It is now the time for us to conserve our energy. Do not be impatient, do not despair. Do not lose faith. The present fatigue and inactivity are natural; you will find instances of them in the history of every nation. Everyone must store up energy. Be prepared with fresh hope and vigour for the worship of the Mother. Divine power has infused this nation with a new power. This power will exalt the nation one day.

Delivered at Sri Aurobindo's residence in Calcutta on 15 August 1909, his thirty-seventh birthday. Text in Bengali published in Bharat Mitra *on 21 August; subsequently translated into English and published in a police intelligence report.*

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 21st AUGUST 1909 { No. 9

Facts and Opinions

Srijut Surendranath Banerji's Return

The veteran leader of Moderate Bengal has returned from his oratorical triumphs in the land of our rulers. The ovations of praise and applause which appreciative audiences and newspaper critics of all shades of opinion have heaped upon him, were thoroughly deserved. Never has the great oratorical gift with which Srijut Surendranath is so splendidly endowed, been displayed to such faultless advantage as in these the crowning efforts of his old age. The usual defect of his oratory, an excess of language and rhetoric over substantial force, a defect which also limited Gladstone's oratory and made it the glory of an hour instead of an abiding possession to humanity, was absent from these speeches in England. For the first time the orator rose to the full height of a great and sound eloquence strong in matter as in style. With the statesman's part in the speeches we do not wholly agree. Nevertheless it must be accounted as righteousness to Srijut Surendranath that he enforced the Moderate Nationalist view of things, — a very different view from Mr. Gokhale's which is certainly not Nationalism and hardly even strong enough to be called Moderatism, — to its utmost limits and did not leave the English public under the vain delusion that some paltry tinkerings with the Legislative

Councils would satisfy the aspirations of an awakened India. His first speeches accepting the reforms were great blunders which might have done infinite harm, but his later utterances, however equivocal on this point, did much to redress the balance. We await with interest Sj. Surendranath's action in this matter. In our view the one policy for us is "No control, no co-operation," and in this we believe we are supported not only by the whole mass of advanced Nationalist opinion but by a great body of Moderates. The danger is that the older Moderates, trained in a much less exacting system of political agitation, may attempt to enforce the demand for control only in speech while in action conceding co-operation without control and thus giving away for some fancied and worthless advantage the vital position of the new movement. The reforms give no control, therefore the reforms must be rejected. Co-operation is our only asset, the only thing we can offer in exchange for control, the only thing by withholding which we can by pressure bring about the cession of control. It would be the height of political folly to give away our only asset for nothing.

A False Step

Sj. Surendranath's maladroit reference to the outrages when speaking at Bombay was a false step which he has since made some attempt to recover. However it be put, it was maladroit and unnecessary. Any promise of co-operation in this respect implies an admission that we have the power to prevent these incidents and are therefore to some extent responsible either for bringing them about or for not stopping them before. It echoes the indiscretion by which Sir Edward Baker sought to make a whole nation responsible for these acts of recklessness and excuses the vindictive and headstrong utterances in which Mr. Gokhale tried to protect his own party and invoke the fiercest repression against his Nationalist countrymen. The isolated instances of assassination during the last year or more have been the reaction, deplorable enough, against the insane policy of indiscriminate police rule and repression which was started and progressively increased in the recent stages of the movement. Not by a single word or expression ought any public man to allow the responsibility to be shifted from the right quarter and to rest in the slightest degree on the people who had no part in them, no power to detect and stop the inflamed and resolute secret assassin and no authority given them by which they can bring about the removal of the real causes of the symptom. To dissociate oneself is a different matter. That should be done clearly, firmly and once for all.

A London Congress

It is a pity that his oratorical triumphs in England seem to have blinded Sj. Surendranath to their small utility to the country. So far has he been led away by the slight and transient effect he has produced on the surface of the public mind in England that he is attempting to revive the old and futile idea of a Congress in London. Whether he will prevail on his fellow-Conventionalists to perpetrate this huge waste of money, we cannot say. The break-up of the Congress and the "stern and relentless repression" of the Nationalist party has delivered the old Congress Conservatives from the fear of public opinion. Needless to say, no so-called Congress held under such circumstances will be representative of the people. It is the old love of striking theatrical effects addressed to an English audience as patrons that has been revived in Sj. Surendranath by his visit. We notice that the dead cant about the faith in the sense of justice of the Government and the British democracy once more reappears in the columns of the *Bengalee*. All these are bad signs. What is it that the Moderate Leader proposes to effect by this expenditure of money which might be so much better used in the country itself? We fail to see how a meeting of forty or fifty Indians, however eminent and respectable, prosing about Indian grievances and the sense of justice of the British democracy or the immaculate Liberalism of Lord Morley can do any lasting service to the cause of India in England. Even if this could be turned into a really imposing theatricality, the effect of such shows in European countries is merely a nine days' wonder unless they are followed up. It is natural that an orator should overrate the effect of oratory, but Sj. Surendranath is surely aware that the greatest speeches or series of speeches unconnected with its own interests now produce on the blasé British public only the effect of a passing ripple which is immediately effaced by the next that follows. Either therefore his proposal means only some temporary theatricals and waste of money or he must persuade our people to resume the old abandoned policy and carry on a perennial campaign in England for the "education" of the British Public. Only as part of such a campaign had the proposal of a London Congress ever any meaning or justification. But even in its best days the Congress leaders could never produce enough men, money and energy for so stupendous a work, and it is doubly impossible now that the old policy is discredited. Certainly, if Sj. Surendranath thinks that the newly awakened energies of India are going to follow him in throwing themselves into this channel, he is grievously mistaken. Not all his prestige and influence can put back the hands of the clock so utterly. The Indian movement has really to deal not with the British democracy, which is an almost negligible factor in Indian affairs, but with the politicians in Parliament, His Majesty's ministers and the powerful influence in England of the official and commercial English out here. These are hard-headed and obstinate forces which, so far as they can at all rise out of the narrow groove of class interests or racial pride and prejudice, can only be influenced by one consideration, the best way to preserve the Empire in India. Even in the minds of Sir Henry Cotton and Mr. Mackarness that cannot fail to be a dominant consideration. If any educational work has to be done in England, it is to convince these classes that it is only by the concession of control that the co-operation of the Indian people can be secured. And that work is best done from India.

The Power that Uplifts

OF ALL the great actors who were in the forefront of the Italian Revolution, Mazzini and Cavour were the most essential to Italian regeneration. Of the two Mazzini was undoubtedly the greater. Cavour was the statesman and organiser, Mazzini the prophet and creator. Mazzini was busy with the great and eternal ideas which move masses of men in all countries and various ages, Cavour with the temporary needs and circumstances of modern Italy. The one was an acute brain, the other a mighty soul. Cavour belongs to Italy, Mazzini to all humanity. Cavour was the man of the hour, Mazzini is the citizen of Eternity. But the work of Mazzini could not have been immediately crowned with success if there had been no Cavour. The work of Cavour would equally have been impossible but for Mazzini. Mazzini summed up the soul of all humanity, the idea of its past and the inspiration of its future in Italian forms and gave life to the dead. At his breath the dead bones clothed themselves with flesh and the wilderness of poisonous brambles blossomed with the rose. Mazzini found Italy corrupt, demoralised, treacherous, immoral, selfish, wholly divided and incapable of union; he gave her the impulse of a mighty hope, a lofty spirituality, an intellectual impulse which despising sophistry and misleading detail went straight to the core of things and fastened on the one or two necessities, an ideal to live and die for and the strength to live and die for it. This was all he did, but it was enough. Cavour brought the old Italian statesmanship, diplomacy, practicality and placed it at the service of the great ideal of liberty and unity which Mazzini had made the overmastering passion of the millions. Yet these two deliverers and lovers of Italy never understood each other. Mazzini hated Cavour as a dishonest trickster and Machiavellian, Cavour scorned Mazzini as a fanatic and dangerous fire-brand. It is easy to assign superficial and obvious causes for the undying misunderstanding and to say that the monarchist and practical statesman and the utopian and democrat were bound to misunderstand and perpetually distrust and dislike each other. But there was a deeper cause.

The one thing which Mazzini most hated and from which he strove to deliver the hearts and imaginations of the young men of Italy was what he summed up in the word Machiavellianism. The Machiavellian is the man of pure intellect without imagination who, while not intellectually dead to great objects, does not make them an ideal but regards them from the point of view of concrete interests and is prepared to use in effecting them every means which can be suggested by human cunning or put into motion by unscrupulous force. Italian patriotism previous to the advent of Mazzini was cast in this Machiavellian mould. The Carbonari movement which was Italy's first attempt to live was permeated with it. Mazzini lifted up the country from this low and ineffective level and gave it the only force which can justify the hope of revival, the force of the spirit within, the strength to disregard immediate interests and surrounding circumstances and, carried away by the passion for an ideal, trusting oneself to the impetus and increasing velocity of the force it creates, to scorn ideas of impossibility and improbability and to fling life, goods and happiness away on the cast of dice already clogged against one by adverse Fortune and unfavourable circumstance. The spiritual force within not only creates the future but creates the materials for the future. It is not limited to the existing materials either in their nature or in their quantity. It can transform bad material into good material, insufficient means into abundant means.

It was a deep consciousness of this great truth that gave Mazzini the strength to create modern Italy. His eyes were always fixed on the mind and heart of the nation, very little on the external or internal circumstances of Italy. He was not a statesman but he had a more than statesmanlike insight. His plan of a series of petty, local and necessarily abortive insurrections strikes the ordinary practical man as the very negation of common sense and political wisdom. It seems almost as futile as the idea of some wild brains, if indeed the idea be really cherished, that by random assassinations the freedom of this country can be vindicated. There is, however, a radical difference. Mazzini knew well what he was about. His eyes were fixed on the heart of the nation and as the physician of the Italian malady his business was not with the ultimate and perfect result but with the creation of conditions favourable to complete cure and resurgence. He knew final success was impossible without the creation of a force that could not be commanded for some time to come. But he also knew that even that force could not succeed without a great spiritual and moral strength behind its action and informing its aspirations. It was this strength he sought to create. The spiritual force he created by the promulgation of the mighty and uplifting ideas which pervade his writings and of which *Young Italy* was the organ.

But moral force cannot be confirmed merely by ideas, it can only be forged and tempered in the workshop of action. And it was the habit of action, the habit of strength, daring and initiative which Mazzini sought to recreate in the torpid heart and sluggish limbs of Italy. And with it he sought to establish the sublime Roman spirit of utter self-sacrifice and self-abnegation, contempt of difficulty and apparent impossibility and iron insensibility to defeat. For his purpose the very hopelessness of the enterprises he set on foot was more favourable than more possible essays. And when others and sometimes his own heart reproached him with flinging away so many young and promising lives into the bloody trench of his petty yet impossible endeavours, the faith and wisdom in him upheld him in the face of every discouragement. Because he had that superhuman strength, he was permitted to uplift Italy. Had it been God's purpose that Italy should become swiftly one of the greater European powers, he would have been permitted to free her also. He would have done it in a different way from Cavour's, — after a much longer lapse of time, with a much more terrible and bloody expense of human life but without purchasing Italy's freedom in the French market by the bribe of Savoy and Nice and with such a divine output of spiritual and moral force as would have sustained his country for centuries and fulfilled his grandiose dream of an Italy spiritually, intellectually and politically leading Europe.

The work was given to Cavour precisely because he was a lesser man. Mazzini saw in him the revival of Machiavellianism and the frustration of his own moral work. He was wrong, but not wholly wrong. The temper and methods of Cavour were predominatingly Machiavellian. He resumed that element in Italian character and gave it a triumphant expression. Like the Carbonari he weighed forces, gave a high place to concrete material interests, attempted great but not impossible objects and by means which were bold but not heroic, used diplomacy, temporising and shuffling with a force of which they were incapable and unlike them did not shrink from material sacrifices. He succeeded where they failed, not merely because he was a great statesman, but because he had learned to cherish the unity and freedom of Italy not as mere national interests but as engrossing ideals. The passion greater than a man's love for child and wife which he put into these aspirations and the emotional fervour with which he invested his Liberal ideal of a free Church in a free State, measure the spiritual gulf between himself and the purely Machiavellian Carbonari. It was this that gave him the force to attempt greatly and to cast all on the hazard of a single die. He had therefore the inspiration of a part of the Mazzinian gospel and he used the force which Mazzini created. Without it he would have been helpless. It was not Cavour who saved Italy, it was the force of resurgent Italy working through Cavour.

History often misrepresents and it formerly represented the later part of the Revolution as entirely engineered by his statecraft, but it is now recognised that more than once in the greatest matters Cavour planned one way and the great Artificer of nations planned in another. But Cavour had the greatest gift of a statesman, to recognise that events were wiser than himself and throwing aside his attachment to the success of his own schemes to see and use the advantages of a situation he had not foreseen. This gift Mazzini, the fanatic and doctrinaire, almost entirely lacked. Still the success of Cavour prolonged in the Italian character and political action some of the lower qualities of the long-enslaved nation and is responsible for the reverses, retardations and deep-seated maladies which keep back Italy from the fulfilment of her greatness. Mazzini, with his superior diagnosis of the national disease and his surgeon's pitilessness, would have probed deeper, intensified and prolonged the agony but made a radical cure.

The circumstances in India forbid the use of the same means as the Italians used. But the general psychological laws which govern nations in their rise, greatness, decline and resurgence are always the same. The freedom we seek in India may be different in its circumstances from Italian freedom, the means to be used are certainly different, but the principle is the same. The old patriotism of the nineteenth century in India was petty, unscrupulous, weak, full of insincerities, concealment, shufflings, concerned with small material interests, not with great ideals, though not averse to looking intellectually and from far-off at great objects. It had neither inspiration nor truth nor statesmanship. Nationalism has done part of the work of a Mazzini by awakening a great spiritual force in the country and giving the new generation great ideals, a wide horizon of hope and aspiration, an intense faith and energy. It has sought like Mazzini to raise up the moral condition of the nation to the height of love, strength, self-sacrifice, constancy under defeat, unwearied and undaunted perseverance, the habit of individual and organised action, self-reliance and indomitable enterprise; but it has rejected the old methods of insurrectionary violence and replaced them by self-help and passive resistance.

That work is not yet complete and only when it is complete will it be possible for a strength to be generated in the country which the past represented by the bureaucracy will consent to recognise as the representative of the future and to abdicate in its favour by a gradual cession of powers. It is our hope that as the work has begun, so it will continue in the spirit of Nationalism and not only the political circumstances of India be changed but her deeper diseases be cured and by a full evocation of her immense stores of moral and spiritual strength that be accomplished for India which Mazzini could not accomplish for Italy, to place her in the head and forefront of the new world whose birth-throes are now beginning to convulse the Earth.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Katha Upanishad II.2
Anandamath I (continued)

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 28th AUGUST 1909 { No. 10

Facts and Comments

The Cretan Difficulty

Foreign affairs are as a rule lightly and unsubstantially dealt with by Indian journals. This is partly due to want of the necessary information, partly to the parochial habit of mind encouraged by a cabined and subject national life which cannot enlarge its imagination outside the sphere of those immediate and daily events directly touching ourselves. And yet the happenings of today in Asia, Europe and Africa are of great moment to the future of India and full of encouragement and stimulus to the spirit of Nationalism. The recent events in Turkey are an instance. It is not the methods of the Young Turks which have any lesson for India. The circumstances are too dissimilar to warrant any fanciful theories of that kind. It is rather the character of the party of freedom which bears a lesson to all struggling nationalities. The dominant qualities of the democratic leaders — and these are the qualities they have imparted to the movement, — are strength, manhood, a bold heart, a clear brain, a virile efficiency. The Government they have established has been showing these qualities to the full in its treatment of the Cretan difficulty. It has shown that free Turkey, while not rashly oblivious of the circumstances created by an unfortunate past, will not tolerate any attempt to be treated as Sultan Abdul Hamid suffered himself to be treated. Sultan Abdul Hamid, afraid of his subjects, afraid of the world, afraid even of his spies and informers, followed the weak and cowardly policy of a dishonest, intriguing and evasive Machiavellianism. He conducted that policy with a certain skill and statecraft in details which eventually evoked admiration, but it could neither save Turkey from ignominy and weakness nor permanently protect a throne based upon cruelty, falsehood and despicable meanness. All that it did, for Satan must be given his due, was to stave off a final disruption of Turkey and expulsion of the Ottoman from Europe. But true freedom is always conscious of strength and knows that it is better to perish than to live for a short while longer at the cost of continual insult, degradation and weakness. The first efforts of the new Government have been to save what remained of the outskirts of Turkish empire in Europe, the suzerainty in Crete, the supreme control in Macedonia. Their diplomacy has been strong, outspoken and fearless. It did not flinch nor in any way draw back a step or lower its tone until it forced Greece to a satisfactory attitude and obliged the Powers to baffle the tortuous Greek methods by lowering the Greek flag in Canea. It has quietly ignored the attempt of the Powers to interfere even by a suggestion in the direct question between itself and Greece; for we read that Turkey is not going to give any formal answer to the Powers' Note recommending pacific counsels as that Note did not call for any reply. It has been supported by the newly liberated nation by means of a Boycott which would have alarmed into reason a stronger Government than that of Athens. And as strength, when firm and able, can never be ignored, it has secured the sympathy of the Powers in the shape of concessions which would never have been yielded to a weak or overcautious Government. Strength attracts strength; firm and clear-minded courage commands success and respect; strong and straight dealing can dispense with the methods of dissimulation and intrigue. All these are signs of character and it is only character that can give freedom and greatness to nations.

Greece and Turkey

It is not to be imagined, however, that this is the closing chapter. The question between Greece and Turkey will have eventually to be fought out by the sword. It is true that the immediate question is for the moment settled and the rent in the Cretan patchwork mended. But that patchwork is not of a kind to last. The Greek Government is not likely to give up its methods in Crete, the Christian population their desire for union with Athens or the present Cretan administration their secret sympathy with and support of these aspirations. It would have been a simpler matter if the population of the island had been wholly Christian, but there is a Mahomedan population also which is as eagerly attached to the Turkish connection as the others are desirous of the Greek. The ancient history of Crete supports the sentiment of Greek unity, its later history the sentiment of imperial Ottoman greatness. And apart from Crete, there are inevitable sources of quarrel in Macedonia. Some day the Powers will have to stand aside and allow these natural enemies to settle the question in the only possible way. The result of such non-intervention in an armed struggle could not be doubtful. The Mongolian is a stronger spirit than the Slav, the Musulman a greater dynamic force than the Christian, and it is only ignorance and absolutism that has for the time depressed the Turk. The disparity between the Turk and the Greek is abysmal. The former is a soldier and statesman, the latter a merchant and intriguer. A war between two such Powers with none to intervene would speedily end with the Turk not only in occupation of Thessaly but entering Athens.

Spain and the Moor

Another corner of the Asiatic world — for Northern Africa is thoroughly Asianised if not Asiatic, — is convulsed with struggles which may well precede another resurgence. There was a time when the Moor held Spain and gave civilisation to semi-barbarous Europe. The revolution of the wheel has now gone to its utmost length and finds the Spaniard invading Morocco. But this invasion does not seem to promise any Spanish expansion in Africa. With infinite difficulty and at the cost of a bloody émeute in Spain King Alfonso's Government have landed a considerable army in Morocco and yet with all that force can only just protect their communications and stand facing the formidable country where the stubborn Kabyle tribesmen await the invader. There the army is hung up for the present, unwilling to retreat and afraid to advance, and the Spanish General has again sent to Spain for reinforcements, a feat of military strategy at which he seems to be exceptionally skilful. If the men of the mountains are fortunate enough to have a leader with a head on his shoulders, the circumstances augur a reverse for Spain as decisive and perhaps more sanguinary than the Italian overthrow in Abyssinia. Meanwhile King Alfonso has sacrificed all his youthful popularity by this ill-omened war and the bloody severity which has temporarily saved his throne. And with the popularity of the young King has gone the friendship of the Spanish nation for England, for the Spaniards accuse that friendship of the origination of these troubles and the British Government as the selfish instigators of the intervention in Morocco.

The London Congress

Since we made our remarks on the proposal of a Congress session in London, we have seen two reasons urged for this reactionary step. It is necessary, it seems, to prevent judgment going against us in England by default and also to win the sympathy of the civilised world. The former argument we have already answered in our last issue. Neither the speeches of a famous orator nor the conjoint speeches of many less famous will win for us the support of the British people for claims which go directly against their interests. Only a prolonged and steady campaign in England all the year round for several years can make any impression of a real and lasting kind and even that impression cannot in the nature of things be sufficient for the purpose. Those who are on the side of Indian interests must always be in the minority and will always be denounced by the majority as allies of the enemies of English interests. Even now that is increasingly the attitude of the public towards Mr. Mackarness and his supporters and we do not think Sj. Surendranath's eloquence has changed matters. Already the most prominent critics of Lord Morley and his policy of repression have received intimation from their constituents of their serious displeasure and are in danger of losing their seats at the next election. This is in itself a sufficient refutation of the fable that speeches and Congresses in England can change an ignorant British public into informed and enthusiastic supporters of Indian self-government. It is only political necessity and the practical recognition that change is inevitable which can convert the statesmen of England. As for the opinion of the civilised world, we do not despise it as a moral force. But its practical effect is so little as to be almost nil. In a constitutional question between the present Government in India and the people we do not see what can be the place or mode of operation of the world's opinion or sympathy. An academical approval of our aims can be of no help to us. Nor is the sympathy of the world likely to be excited beyond such academical approval unless the Government faithfully imitates the Russian precedent in dealing with popular aspirations. Even then it is not likely to tell on the action of the Government concerned which will certainly resent foreign interference in its dealings with its own subjects. The impotence of the civilised world was strikingly shown in the crisis of Russian despotism and at the time of the Boer War. Even were it otherwise, a London session of the Congress would only awaken a passing interest. In that respect the visit of Swami Vivekananda to America and the subsequent work of those who followed him did more for India than a hundred London Congresses could effect. That is the true way of awaking sympathy, — by showing ourselves to the nations as a people with a great past and ancient civilisation who still possess something of the genius and character of our forefathers, have still something to give the world and therefore deserve freedom, — by proof of our manliness and fitness, not by mendicancy.

Political Prisoners

We extract elsewhere some very telling criticisms from the pen of the well-known positivist Mr. Frederic Harrison on the treatment of political prisoners. This is a subject on which a Nationalist writer is naturally somewhat shy of dilating, as any stress on the brutality and callousness of the treatment to which not only convicted but undertrial prisoners of gentle birth and breeding are sometimes subjected in Indian jails, might be misinterpreted by our opponents as an unwillingness to face the penalties which repressive legislation inflicts on those who cherish great aspirations for their race and country. But two instances have occurred recently which compel attention. One is the death of the convicted prisoner Ashok Nandi of consumption brought on by exposure and neglect during fever in the undertrial period of the Alipur Case. We exonerate from blame the jail authorities who were exceptionally humane men and would have been glad to deal humanely with the prisoners. But their blamelessness only brings out the barbarity of a system which allows of the confinement of a delicate ailing lad in a punishment cell exposed night after night to the dews and cold of an unhealthy season, and that without his having committed any fault or shown anything but the mildest and most docile of characters. The other case is that of Mr. Achyutrao Kolhatkar of Nagpur, editor of the *Deshsevak*, a gentleman of distinguished education, ability and character, who was convicted for the publication in his paper of the reports of Sj. Aurobindo Ghose's speeches delivered at a time when Mr. Kolhatkar was absent from Nagpur. The Sessions Judge of Alipur declared on the police reports of these speeches that so far from being seditious or violent they told in favour of the speaker and not against him. We find it difficult to believe that the newspaper report of speeches from which the police could extract nothing that was not in the speaker's favour, could be at all seditious. Be that as it may, Mr. Kolhatkar was convicted and perhaps, according to the "strong man" code of ethics, forfeited claim to generous treatment by his refusal to apologise. We have heard rumours of treatment being meted out to him which can only be described as studied brutality and the evidence of eye-witnesses who have seen the condition to which he was reduced, do not encourage us to reject these reports as fabrications. Finally, the refusal of the Central Provinces Government to face independent medical inspection and so dispose of the serious allegations publicly preferred put a very ugly aspect on this case. If the allegations are true, they amount to a treatment which would evoke the loudest indignation and reprobation in England if applied under the same circumstances in another country. But we cherish little hope of redress. The prison system of the European nations is only a refined and systematised savagery perpetuating the methods of ancient and mediaeval barbarity in forms that do not at once shock the eye. Besides, the account of the recent starvation strike of the Suffragettes has shown what callous and brutal treatment can be inflicted by English officials in England itself even on women, and women of education, good birth, position and culture, guilty only of political obstruction and disorderliness. Yet this is the civilisation for which we are asked to sacrifice the inheritance of our forefathers!

An Official Freak

We suppose in a bureaucracy it is inevitable that officials should be masters and be able to inflict inconvenience and loss on the citizen without any means of redress. Last Monday the publication of a new weekly named *Dharma*, edited by Aurobindo Ghose, was due and had been widely announced. The issue was ready and the printer duly attended the Police Court to declare his responsibility for printing and publishing the periodical. Except under very unusual circumstances this is a mere formality and one would have thought no difficulty could intervene, but nothing could persuade the Court Official to refrain from delaying the acceptance till the next day. It was pointed out that this would entail unnecessary inconvenience and perhaps considerable financial loss, but that naturally did not concern him as he was the master of the public and not their servant. The next day a variation of the same vexatious procedure was repeated. It was whispered, we do not know with what truth, that the first delay was for the Criminal Investigation Department to have time to find out whether the printer had been convicted in any sedition case. If so it was a futile delay. There is no concealment of the responsibility with regard to this paper. The name of the editor and proprietor was openly given and the printer was there to accept his responsibility. This does not look like intended sedition. If there were any doubt the required information could easily have been gained from the Manager of the paper who was present and would no doubt have been glad to save delay and loss by stating the printer's antecedents. It was not likely that he would conceal a conviction as that would be a thing impossible to suppress. But then, if officialdom were to acquire a common sense, the laws of Nature would be sadly contravened and it is better to inflict loss on individuals than to upset a law of Nature.

Soham Gita

Every Bengali is familiar with the name of Shyamakanta Banerji the famous athlete and tiger-tamer but it may not be known to all that after leaving the worldly life and turning to the life of the ascetic, this pioneer of the cult of physical strength and courage in Bengal has taken the name of Soham Swami and is dwelling in a hermitage in the Himalayas at Nainital. The Swami has now published a philosophical poem in his mother tongue called the *Soham Gita*. The deep truths of the Vedanta viewed from the standpoint of the Adwaitavadin and the spiritual experiences of the Jnani who has had realisation of *dhyan* and *samadhi* are here developed in simple verse and language. We shall deal with the work in a more detailed review in a later issue.

Bengal and the Congress

THE DISSENSIONS in the Congress have been a severe test of the capacity of the Indian people to act politically under modern conditions. The first necessary element of democratic politics is difference of opinion, robust, frank, avowed, firmly and passionately held, and the first test of political capacity in a democratic nation is to bear these differences of opinion, however strong and even vehement, without disruption. In a monarchy differences of opinion are either stifled by an all-powerful absolute will or subordinated and kept in check by the supreme kingly arbiter; in an aristocracy the jealousy of a close body discourages free opinion and its free expression; in a bureaucracy stereotyped habits of action and method lead to a fixed and inelastic way of thinking and difference of opinion, when tolerated, is kept by the exigencies of administration private and largely ineffective. It is democracy alone that demands free divergence of opinion in politics and open propagandism and debate as the very breath of its nostrils. The tendency to democracy creates freedom of speech and thought and these in their turn hasten the advent of democracy. All attempts to silence by force or evasion important differences of opinion are anti-democratic and though they do not necessarily show an incapacity for government, do show an incapacity for democratic politics. The democratic tendency in humanity is and has long been pressing forward victoriously to self-fulfilment and the modern attempt of the banded forces of autocracy, bureaucracy, plutocracy and theocracy to turn its march can only result in its growing stronger by the check and urging forward with greater impetuosity to its goal. It is therefore the democratic tendency and the democratic capacity which must be accepted and shown by any nation which aspires to go forward and be among the leaders of the world. In the matter of the Congress it is only Bengal, so far, that has shown the democratic capacity of being able to meet and discuss and to a certain extent work together in spite of grave and even fundamental differences. To a large extent this is due to the fact that all parties in Bengal have some common ground. Just as the different parties in a well-organised country, even when they differ in everything else, have this foundation of union and common tolerance that all are desirous of the freedom, greatness and sound internal condition and development of their nation, so we in Bengal are all agreed in holding the development of a well-organised, self-sufficient and self-governing people as the immediate and ultimate object of all our politics. This is only to say that Bengal has attained earlier than other provinces to political perception and sound political instincts. There are forces of disruption in Bengal as everywhere else, but it says much for the capacity and insight of the mass of the educated class that these forces have been overborne and Bengal preserves her unity. The credit is due much more to the people themselves than to the leaders on either side, and this itself is the healthiest sign of all and the guarantee of democratic development. When the people are wiser than their leaders and wise men, the democratic future of a country is assured. Men of great gifts and strong character are often carried away by their eager perceptions and at such moments it is the sound common sense of a capable democracy that sets right the balance. It was this common sense that saved the situation after Surat. The people had the instinct to desire unity and the good sense to see that unity was not possible or, if possible, was not worth having by the sacrifice of the movement which Bengal had initiated. That such an unthinkable repudiation would have been the first result of surrender to the Convention leaders of Bombay and Madras, has been sufficiently proved by the determined rejection of the Boycott resolution at the meeting of the Convention last December. The Pabna resolution for a United Congress was therefore so framed as to leave the Convention Committee a door open for reconciliation. They rejected the opportunity on a constitutional technicality of a purely verbal character and of doubtful validity and proceeded to show the honesty of this sudden passion for scrupulous constitutional procedure when they imposed a constitution on the body they chose to call the Congress without allowing it to be submitted for acceptance or amendment by that body. The resolution at Hughly ought to be differently framed so as not only to make a United Congress possible but to bring it about so far as Bengal can help towards that consummation.

In Bengal there are three classes of opinion as to the best way of meeting the difficulty. There is a small section of the Moderate party which desires the Convention Congress to stand and the Nationalists to be excluded. There are two courses open to this minority. They may insist on the Bengal Provincial Conference and the District Committees accepting the body created by the Congress Committee as the real Congress and on their loyally following the rules and the instructions of this Congress and its Provincial Committee. If that were accepted the Bengal Provincial Conference would become a Moderate organisation and, while commercial Swadeshi would be preserved, the Boycott would disappear from the avowed programme of Bengal. But we do not think anyone will have the hardihood to make this proposal in so many terms and, if any ventured so far, it would be without any chance of popular acceptance. A more probable course is for this minority to agree to a vague and easily evaded resolution which they will have no intention of accepting as a guide to conduct and to oppose the passing of any more definite resolution on the ground that Bengal ought to preserve its own integrity and leave the rest of India to its divisions. The object they would aim at is to leave the Convention and its Committees to figure as the real Congress and Congress Committees and themselves be free to join them without popular disapproval. But the inevitable consequence would be that the Nationalists will be compelled to erect another body which would represent their interests. The erection of a rival National Congress at Nagpur last year was prevented by the Government, fortunately, we think, for no such body could really claim to be a National Assembly any more than the Convention can justly claim that character. But if a United Congress proves impossible, the Nationalists cannot allow the Convention unchallenged to delude the world by pretending to voice authoritatively the sense of the Indian nation.

A second section of opinion is that of advanced Moderates and among these we find two ways of thinking. Some lay stress on the unconstitutional conduct of the Convention Committee in forcing their constitution on the Madras Convention without submitting it to discussion and seemed to think that by passing it through the next sitting the constitutional defect will be cured. They seem to forget that it will be a Congress elected under this unconstitutional constitution to which the question will be submitted. In effect, therefore, a body unconstitutionally elected will sit to validate the unlawful law under which it was born and so cure its own unconstitutional character without getting rid of the initial and incurable defect which prevents it from sitting at all. The constitutional difficulty will not be met and the political difficulty will remain as serious as ever, for the Nationalists would still be excluded and the menace to our unity in Bengal would increase every year. Others of the advanced Moderates see more clearly and can understand that only a freely elected Congress, as freely elected as the Hughly Conference will be, can accept this constitution or form any other. Any resolution passed on this subject must therefore contemplate a freely elected session and the submission to it of any constitution proposed or drafted for the better organisation of Congress procedure and Congress affairs.

The third section of opinion is that of the Nationalist party. Immediately after the fracas at Surat, on the same day indeed, the party became acutely sensible of the nature of the catastrophe which had occurred and its first step was to take an attitude which might leave the way open to reconciliation; and this attitude they maintained at all the subsequent Conferences where they were either represented or dominant. We do not agree with Lala Lajpat Rai's suggestion that the Congress should always remain in the hands of the Moderates; a popular body must remain either in the hands of the party which numerically predominates or be run by a joint body representing them proportionately to their numbers. But the Nationalists would not deny the name of Congress to a body merely because its administration was in the hands of a single party. They refuse it because that body by a constitution passed without right or authority excludes a powerful section of opinion in the country and pretends to be a National Congress when it is really a party organisation. If the Convention were to consent to a free election and a free constitution, the Nationalist party would not allow a matter of nomenclature, however important, to stand in the way of reunion. But the Convention constitution is not free. It is in the first place a close oligarchical constitution seeking to limit the right of election to a few privileged bodies affiliated to itself. Even if this reactionary limitation were to be confirmed by a freely elected Congress the Nationalists would have no cause of complaint, for they would still be free to organise a party institution which would spread the knowledge and appreciation of democratic principles and get this limitation abrogated from within the Congress itself. But the Constitution is also not free in virtue of the eligibility to delegateship being limited to those who can sign a declaration of faith specially designed to exclude the advanced school of patriotism. This limitation is vital. A national Assembly cannot bind itself by any creed but the creed of patriotism which is understood and which it would be futile to express. The Nationalist party cannot accept the limitation of delegateship by an exclusive creed. They would not seek to bind it by their own creed, still less can they accept a creed which contravenes their avowed principles. The Congress may always pass a resolution expressing its aims and objects. That is merely the opinion of the majority and can always be changed if the minority becomes the majority. But a personal subscription to views one does not hold is unthinkable to any man of honour and probity. These are the three parties and their views. The election of a free Congress is the only possible way to their final reconciliation, the omission of the creed the only condition of the continuance of a United Congress. It is for the good sense of the people at large to decide between these conflicting views and determine what is best for Bengal and the nation.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Katha Upanishad II.3
Anandamath II, III

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 4th SEPTEMBER 1909 { No. 11

Facts and Comments

The Kaul Judgment

The Kaul Boycott case which has attracted some comment in the Press is one which ought to be drawn more prominently into public notice. The Settlement Patwary of Kaul together with four leading Banias, two Zamindars and a Brahmin of the place were charged by the police with having held a Boycott meeting which endangered the peace of the town. It is alleged that they agreed to impose a penalty upon all persons using foreign sugar after a certain date and a heavier fine on anyone importing the commodity. It does not appear that there was any complaint from a single person in the neighbourhood as to any such meeting being held, still less to their being inconvenienced or stopped in their avocations by any action or threatened action on the part of the defendants. But on the ipse dixit of the complaining constable the defendants were found guilty and bound over to keep the peace. The defendants themselves denied the meeting and alleged that they took no part in politics and were guiltless of any religious objection to foreign sugar. In itself the case appears to be a judicial vagary of the worst kind. But the remarkable pronouncements of the Sub-divisional Officer of Kaithal on the juristic aspects of the case make it of more than local importance.

Mr. Garett in his judgment starts a very surprising metaphysical argument by drawing a nice distinction between illegal, non-legal and wrongful acts. Illegal acts are those against which the law provides a penalty either by criminal or civil action. Non-legal acts are those which are contrary to public policy but are left to social opinion to discourage. Wrongful acts, according to Mr. Garett, are those which, being neither illegal nor non-legal, are yet abhorrent to the moral sense of men of reason. We do not know if this remarkable definition of wrongful acts will be supported by lawyers. But Mr. Garett farther improves on these distinctions by assevering on the strength of an Irish judgment that a perfectly legal action becomes illegal when it is done by many persons in combination, provided anyone can show that his interests as an individual or as one of a class are aimed at or necessarily injured. In order that we may not be accused of misrepresenting the learned Sub-divisional Officer we quote the words of the judgment. "Without quoting chapter, verse and date I call to mind the judgment of the late Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, I believe, Baron Rolleston, in what is known as the Baker's Case. In that case it was held that the baker had a cause of action against the farmers of the village in which he established a bakery because they combined to boycott his bakery by each establishing a kitchen for the preparation of the bread for themselves and their servants, their motive being simply a difference on political grounds. The Irish farmers did not go so far as the defendants are said to have gone in this case, and they in nowise interfered with the baker personally. The illegality of their action consisted in their combining to do an act which if done separately would have been legal. The learned Judge observed to the effect that whereas a single man may be left to work out his own salvation when opposed by an individual, he could claim protection from a combination. In that case there were no proposals to inflict fines or outcaste, yet the act was held illegal. It is very certain therefore that an act which in violence far outstrips that, is, if not illegal, at least wrongful."

The Implications in the Judgment

That is the judgment. It is obvious that these remarkable dicta have very wide implications and, if upheld, make every combination harmful to personal or class interests impossible under the law. That has been for some time the tendency of magisterial decisions in India. Every action for instance which may be objectionable to a number of Mahomedans is now liable to be forbidden because it is likely to lead to a breach of the peace, and one is dimly beginning to wonder whether the day may not yet come when worship in Hindu temples may be forbidden on that valid ground. Under Mr. Garett's dictum it seems to depend purely on the bias of the judge what action will or will not be allowed by the law. A teetotal judge may easily penalise a party of men going into a public house to drink, because it is an action abhorrent to his moral sense as a man of reason. And certainly it would not be unarguable that such a combined action might very easily lead to a breach of the peace, much more easily than the meeting of a few hundred or thousand men on the Boycott day. By his other dictum every caste decision forbidding a breach of caste rules is a punishable act, every trade strike is a punishable act, every National School Committee is liable to an action under the law for injuring the interests of the local Government school, every big concern aiming at the extinction in a locality of the retail shopkeeper and the capture of his business commits a wrongful act, or an illegal act, it is not clear which; all Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education movements are objectionable. The Tariff Reform movement itself is only saved by being directed against men outside the country, even if it is so saved, for after all it affects adversely the middlemen who bring in foreign manufactures. Even if, driven beyond endurance by my dhobi's delays, I combine with some friends to open and patronise a laundry, I can be stopped by a magisterial sympathiser with the rights of the individual. If this is Irish law, all we can say is that it is very Irish indeed and we do not yearn to have it imported into India. The object of the learned Magistrate was no doubt to aim a blow at the Swadeshi movement which is probably abhorrent to his moral sense as a man of reason. The Sessions Judge has refused to interfere with the discretion of the executive, but there is more here concerned than the discretion of the executive. There is a very original and far-reaching elucidation of the law behind the executive discretion. We hope that the victimised citizens of Kaul will carry their appeal higher and get a more authoritative pronouncement on the juristic philosophy of the learned Mr. Garett.

The Social Boycott

The reason why we have drawn so much attention to this case, is its intimate connection with the question of social boycott. We are advocates of this weapon not in all cases, but in circumstances where milder expedients are impotent to prevent a wound to the body social or body politic by refractory or conscienceless individuals who wish to enjoy all the benefits of social existence while disregarding the vital necessities of the society. We are aware of the grave consequences of the misuse of the social boycott to prevent the legitimate exercise by the individual of his free reason and honest conviction. We therefore advocate it only in very serious instances where the whole community is attacked in a vital point and is practically at one in resenting the act as fatally injurious to it. For instance when the turbulent Mahomedans of Eastern Bengal made an organised attack on the property of Hindus and on the honour of Hindu women, the Hindu community of East Bengal would have been perfectly justified in boycotting Mahomedans as servants. Similarly, now that the educated classes of the Hindu community are at one in the belief that the Swadeshi movement supported by Boycott is necessary to the economical existence of their community, to say nothing of the whole nation, they are justified in refusing to have any dealings with those who out of personal and selfish motives deal a blow at that movement by persisting in the purchase of foreign articles. The use of this weapon of self-defence by Hindu castes became hurtful because it was applied without discrimination and not always with honesty. Had it been confined to cases of gross moral depravity destructive of social order, there would have been no revolt against it. The penalising of the pursuit of education in foreign countries and similar blunders recoiled on the caste system and it is notable that communities with a strong democratic common sense like the Mahrattas have even while adhering to orthodox religion avoided the worst of these errors. But the misuse of a necessary instrument is no argument against its necessary and discriminating use. We hold the use of this instrument, not in all cases but in the most heinous, to be legitimate in protecting the life of the nation.

The Law and the Nationalist

There are several points connected with the national movement in which the law is in a state of dangerous uncertainty. The exact limit of sedition is one of them, the matter of social boycott is another. We believe that social boycott involving no violence or direct coercion is perfectly legal but it is certain that not only the Anglo-Indian community at large but a portion of the judiciary would be glad to find it illegal. Any doubt on such subjects ought to be removed, for although ignorance is in itself no excuse in law, it ought to be a defence when it is created by the uncertainties of the law itself. We think the Nationalists ought to take every opportunity of testing the extent of the liberties still allowed to us in the ordinary course of the law. We are aware that a section of Nationalist opinion has held that our principle of Swadeshi Boycott ought to debar us from taking any part in any legal proceedings whatever. While many of us had openly expressed our admiration for the heroic stoicism with which this principle has been adhered to in many cases, we have not held it binding on any except those fine consciences to whom it appealed nor would we allow it to guide our own action. We hold that no Nationalist should resort to the British Courts under the present political conditions as against a brother Nationalist or in any circumstances which give him a real choice. If he is dragged to the criminal or civil courts by others he is entitled to defend himself to the end by all the means that the law provides. If arbitration is refused in a case where his interests are attacked, he is absolved from the self-denying obligation, or if the law of the land compels him as a landholder or propertied or business man to protect himself by certain legal forms, it is obvious that he cannot deny himself that protection without imperilling work or wealth necessary to the nation. The same overriding rule of necessity which compels us to exclude machinery and other instruments of education, work and production from the Boycott, limits the application of the arbitration principle and the abstention from British Courts. Formerly we were content to go our way in doubtful cases, such as the limits of the law of sedition, putting our own interpretation and taking the consequences of a too elastic reading of the law. We even held ourselves justified in the case of unjust and arbitrary laws in breaking them not by violence but peacefully and passively, as the Dissenters did in England, so as to get them either tested or altered. This we still hold to be morally and politically justifiable. But the outbreak of Terrorism compels us to restrict our circle of passive resistance lest even by the most peaceful rejection of unjust laws we should seem to be encouraging lawlessness and disorder. Still, if we are to observe the law scrupulously, just or unjust, we must know what the law is, and now that there is a man at the head of judicial administration who knows the law and tries to keep to it, we ought to take advantage of this now unusual circumstance and use every opportunity to fix the legal position of our movement and its methods.

The Hughly Resolutions

WE PUBLISH in this issue the draft resolutions of the Hughly Reception Committee which have reached our hands in a printed form. Formerly our information had been that the Committee had based its resolutions on the Pabna Conference resolutions and preserved them in the spirit if not in the letter. We regret to find that this information was erroneous. While appreciating the labours of the Committee we cannot pretend to be satisfied at the result. The letter of the Pabna resolutions has been preserved in a few cases and their manly and dignified character contrasts strangely with the company in which they are found, but for the most part the mass of the resolutions represent an attempt to go back to the tone of appeal, prayer and protest which Bengal had decided to give up until the concession of real control should impart to these forms the sense of power which can alone save them from the stamp of a futile mendicancy. The phrasing also of these draft resolutions seems to us to be defective. The pronouncements of opinion of a public assembly of this standing ought to be free from an undignified effusiveness, prolixity or argumentativeness. Whatever argument is needed beyond what is barely necessary for an adequate expression of the assembly's opinion on the subject in hand, should be reserved for the speeches. That too is the proper place for enthusiasm, eloquence and rhetoric. To import those elements into the resolutions themselves is to import into the assembly's pronouncements an appearance of immaturity and inexperienced youthfulness not conducive to its dignity in the eyes of those who are accustomed to the serious handling of weighty affairs. Two of the resolutions, quite apart from other objections, travel beyond the scope of the assembly by their local character. The proper place for such resolutions is the District Conference and the mere fact of the larger assembly being held in a particular district does not change the character of the Conference whose business is to express the opinion and guide the public activities of the people of Bengal in matters affecting the country and the province as a whole. These resolutions deal with particular local interests of the people of Hughly and the riparian towns and districts on the banks of the Ganges. If the Conference is to handle local matters, there is no reason why they should ignore similar wants and necessities in the districts of East Bengal. Finally, there are two questions of national importance in which the Nationalist party holds views connected with a distinct policy and on which it is necessary to know the opinion of the country, and in these two matters the resolutions of the Committee do not satisfy us. The resolution on the Reforms contains a parenthesis which is unwarranted by the facts and will have the effect of committing the people of Bengal to the acceptance of the Reforms with all their vital imperfections and disastrous tendencies. The resolution on the Congress, while unexceptionable in sentiment, has the vital defect of not dealing with the crucial questions at issue or showing a way to the realisation of the desirable consummation advocated. At Pabna there was a distinct means pointed out and, since that has been rendered null and void, the people of Bengal must take other means as definite and more decisive to see that their wishes are no longer ignored. To call on the leaders is to express merely a pious wish and the time has gone by when in this matter the action can be left to the discretion of the leaders. They may ignore the resolution in their action or say that they could find no means of carrying out the wishes of the Conference.

In view of these defects the Nationalist party in Calcutta have drawn up a number of draft resolutions and amendments of the Reception Committee's draft which they propose to bring forward before the Subjects Committee. We hold it imperative that in these matters there should be no unnecessary secrecy or hole and corner action. We have nothing to conceal either from the Government, the people or those whose opinions may differ from ours. Our propaganda is open, frank and democratic. The actual details of action, when action is in our hands, are best discussed in Cabinets and private Committees, but in a people striving to be free and democratic deliberation must be public and policy openly and fully expressed. Unfortunately, the late period at which we were able to procure a copy of the draft resolutions and the necessity of immediate action have made it impossible to circulate the draft in time to receive the opinions of Mofussil Nationalists or even to consult all who are in Calcutta. We have however sent copies to the Mofussil and hope that the delegates will be ready with any suggestions they may have to make when they meet at Hughly. The want of a Nationalist daily at this time is being severely felt; we have to do what we can with the means at our disposal.

The alterations made in the Committee's draft have been dictated by the considerations above stated. We have thought it right to adhere to the decision arrived at by us at Pabna to clear our politics of all that is low and humiliating in tone and substance and to make self-reliance, self-respect and a manly expression of opinion the cast of our public resolutions. There are certain matters in which the ultimate decision rests with the Government and yet in which the people are bound to express their opinion, but so long as they have no recognised instrument through which they can bring their weight to bear in these matters, all they can do is to place their opinion on record and leave to the Government the responsibility of ignoring the opinion of a whole province. The expression of opinion is addressed to the people of this province and of the whole country; it is their sympathy and moral support we seek and we do not wish to appeal to an authority which is not bound to listen to or consider our appeals and protests and with whom even the reception of public resolutions by great bodies representing whole populations is a matter of rare condescension and favour. When we have a direct and effective share in administration, then will be the time to submit representation and protest to a Government which will be partly ours. In our draft resolutions everything expressing this attitude of appeal and unavailing objurgation has been rigorously excluded and in only one instance we have followed the precedent of the Pabna Conference in making a demand, not because we expect it to be fruitful but to mark a strong sense of the serious breach of a definite promise with which the authorities have long been charged and the nonfulfilment of an elementary obligation binding on all Governments popular or democratic which ranks along with the preservation of order and the defence of the country from foreign invasion. We were somewhat opposed to the making even of this demand at the time of the Pabna Conference, but now that the authorities profess a willingness to reform the administration and claim co-operation on our part, it is advisable to emphasise the serious failings which make co-operation under present conditions impossible and to indicate the conditions which can alone make co-operation of a real kind possible to the people. The draft resolutions on Councils Reform, local self-government and the improvement of judicial administration have the latter purpose in view. Purely local resolutions we propose to omit. We have restored in our draft the Pabna resolution on the Boycott; we do not see any sufficient reason for departing from the Pabna wording whether to lower the tone or to enter into an unnecessary justification of the legitimate character of the Boycott which a body like the Conference long committed to the movement ought to take for granted. We have omitted the first clause of the Education Resolution for the same reasons which motived its exclusion at Pabna and especially because we look with suspicion on mass education entirely under official control. If primary education is placed under free District Boards, there will be no farther objection; otherwise we must confine ourselves to the effective extension of National Education to the primary stage. We totally reject the resolution on the Terrorist outrages which no Bengal Conference ought to pass after the speech of the Lieutenant Governor which still stands on record and has not been withdrawn. Sir Edward Baker distinctly declared that the Government has no farther use for mere denunciations of the outrages however fervently worded and he has thrown on the whole country the responsibility for the cessation of the assassinations or their continuance. The suitable course for the Conference is to dissociate itself in a dignified manner from all forms of violence and quietly remind the authorities that the atmosphere in which the worst forms of political crime can alone exist is of their creation and the means of eradicating them in their hands. The people are helpless spectators of this miserable strife and the Conference has no right to pass any resolution which would even by implication admit their responsibility.

There remain the questions of Reform and the Congress. On the former we have already stated the attitude of the Nationalist party which is not irreconcilable on the point but refuses to countenance any reform which does not begin the concession of self-government. Especially is it impossible for us to accept a measure which introduces permanent elements of discord and maims the growing national sentiment by perpetuating divisions, to say nothing of the false and vicious principles, destructive of democratic development on which it is based. The reform ensures us nothing but an increase in the number of nominated and elected members and a non-official, not an elective, majority. It also holds out to us a promise of ampler discussion, interpellation and division. But the rules for formation of electorates, election and the conduct of business as well as the admissibility of particular elections and an unqualified power of veto are all in the hands of the authorities. There might be an increase of moral weight behind a popular opinion or protest, but equally there might be an increase of moral weight behind the Government if they can succeed in passing anti-national measures by a majority of members, official, nominated and elected from convenient electorates, as approved by a majority in a reformed Council. In any case we would not think so doubtful and trivial a concession worth accepting, — for gratitude for concessions implies acceptance of the concessions, — and when it is practically an inducement for consenting to the permanent mutilation of the body politic and offered without amnesty, cessation of repressive measures or release of the deportees it is binding on the Nationalist delegates to stand or fall by the rejection of the measure.

In the matter of a united Congress we have pointed out that it is imperatively necessary to provide a means by which the desired union can be brought about. The difficulties in the way of union are two, the creed and the Constitution. The Constitution of the body now calling itself the Congress has been framed and imposed on it without consulting even that body and it is well known that many members of the Moderate party refuse to join a body constituted by a means which, even if it were not ultra vires, would be as arbitrary as the most arbitrary action of which even Lord Curzon's Government was ever guilty. The Nationalists on their part insist that they cannot be called on to accept a Constitution of many clauses of which they disapprove and which was imposed on a body from which they were specially excluded. The call on them to join a body which insists on their forswearing their fundamental principles before they enter, is still more absurd. Therefore a freely elected Congress constituted on the old lines is the only solution and the Conference must decide that point if it is serious in its desire. Our draft resolution provides a means by which negotiations can be carried on by Bengal with the other provincial leaders and the organisers of what is called the Lahore Congress and, in case of unanimity proving impossible, for the assembling of a real united Congress on the initiative of Bengal in co-operation with all who desire union. We admit that the success of the plan depends on its acceptance by the Bengal Moderates, but we believe it was substantially this idea which the deported Moderate leader Sj. Krishna Kumar Mitra was trying to get carried out when he was arrested. We see no reason why Bengal Moderates should object to it. At any rate this is the Nationalist proposal.

In addition to these amendments and substitutions we have appended two additional resolutions to which there ought to be no objection. One of them is in the Pabna list and we do not know why it should be omitted.

APPENDIX

Bengal Provincial Conference
Hughly – 1909

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS	NATIONALIST DRAFT RESOLUTIONS
I. That this Conference places on record its profound feelings of regret and sorrow at the death of Lord Ripon who has justly been called the father of local self-government in India and whose policy of justice and righteousness will for ever enshrine his memory in the hearts of the people of this country. This Conference also urges that immediate steps should be taken to perpetuate his memory.	I. That this Conference places on record its sorrow at the death of Lord Ripon who was an earnest and sincere sympathiser with Indian aspirations and did much for the cause of local self-government.
II. (a) That this Conference is of opinion that the system of Government obtaining in the self-governing British Colonies should be extended to India. (b) That while expressing its gratefulness to the Government for the concessions made in the recent Reform Scheme, this Conference records its firm conviction that no reform will ensure the happiness and contentment of the people unless it gives them a direct control over the finances of the country.	II. (a) As in the Committee's draft. (b) That this Conference emphatically condemns the principle of separate electorates on sectarian lines and of special privileges for one community which it is intended to introduce into the Reform Scheme and is farther of the opinion that no reform will be acceptable to the country which does not concede to the people a direct and substantial control over finance and legislation. The rest to be omitted.

The draft resolutions in the left column were written by the Moderate Congress leaders. The Nationalist draft resolutions were written by Sri Aurobindo.

(c) That this Conference is further of opinion that any undue favour in the matter of representation in the Councils which may be shown to any particular community cannot fail to encourage sectarianism in the different communities and to create dissensions and political troubles amongst them. (d) That this Conference also urges the Government to publish the rules framed in accordance with Lord Morley's Scheme before they are finally adopted.	
III. (a) That this Conference declines to accept the Partition of Bengal as a settled fact or question and resolves to continue the agitation against it with a view to its reversal or modification. (b) That in this connection this Conference appeals to the Government of India to act in the spirit of His Majesty's assurance in his recent message that the rectification of errors has ever been one of the guiding principles of British Government in India.	III. As in the Committee's draft but clause (b) to be omitted.
IV. That this Conference urges the people to continue the Boycott of foreign goods which is, in its opinion, a perfectly legitimate movement and is calculated to promote the political as well as industrial and economic welfare of the country.	IV. That this Conference accords its fullest support to the Boycott movement and recommends its farther extension both as a political weapon and as a measure of economic protection. N.B. This is the Pabna resolution.
V. That this Conference urges upon the country the necessity of using Swadeshi articles in preference to foreign, even at a sacrifice, and developing the resources of the country.	V. As in the Reception Committee's draft.

VI. That this Conference places on record its emphatic and unqualified condemnation of the detestable outrages and deeds of violence which have been recently committed and is of opinion that such acts will retard the progress of the country.	VI. That this Conference looks with strong disapproval on all methods of violence and holds that the furtherance of the national movement should be effected by peaceful and legitimate means, and it warns the authorities that the policy of repression stimulates terrorist activity and the best way to paralyse it is to restore normal conditions.
VII. (a) That this Conference records its emphatic protest against the repressive measures adopted by the Government and especially against the deportation of nine Bengali gentlemen without trial or charge and further protests against the persistent refusal of the Government to furnish any information regarding the charges against them and to give them an opportunity of exculpating themselves. This Conference considers the immediate release of the deportees as absolutely necessary in the interests of justice and fair-play. (b) That having regard to the grave risk of injustice involved in Government action based upon *ex parte* and untested informations and to the penal laws of the country, this Conference urges upon the Government the repeal of the Bengal Regulation III of 1818.	VII. That this Conference emphatically condemns the repressive measures adopted by the Government and especially the deportation of nine Bengali gentlemen without trial or charge and considers their immediate release and the repeal of the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 as the only way to assuage the profound discontent created by these measures.
VIII. That having regard to the prevalence of Cholera, Malaria and Smallpox in the province throughout the year and the abnormal death rate as disclosed in the last Sanitary Report of Bengal, this Conference urges the Government as well as the	VIII. That inasmuch as the Government has failed hitherto to redeem its pledges with regard to the application of the Road Cess for the purposes originally intended and has not fulfilled its duties with regard to the improvement of sani-

people to adopt amongst others the following measures: — (1) The sinking of wells and the excavation and reservation of tanks in the villages for purely drinking purposes. (2) The draining of the rural areas. (3) The clearing of jungle in the inhabited areas of towns and villages. (4) The prevention of noxious discharges from septic tanks into the River Hughly which form the principal cause of Cholera in the riparian towns and villages on both banks of the said river.	tation in rural areas, the Conference demands the fulfilment of this duty and the organisation of adequate measures for the provision of good drinking water, medical aid and proper drainage of the country. N.B. This is the Pabna resolution with some verbal modifications.
IX. That this Conference recommends — (a) That all local self-governing bodies and Panchayats should, without further delay, be vested with powers to elect their own Chairman. (b) That the principle of representation should be extended to village Union Committees and Panchayats. (c) That the Union Committees should be vested with powers to initiate and carry on measures for the sanitary improvement of the areas within their jurisdiction and that grants of money should be made to them for that purpose.	IX. That this Conference is of opinion that local self-governing bodies including Panchayats and Village Union Committees should be entirely elected on the principle of popular representation and freed from official control and that Village Union Committees should be vested with powers and provided with the necessary funds to carry on sanitary improvements.
X. (a) That this Conference urges the Government to take immediate action on their circular on free primary education issued about three years ago and invites their attention to the fact that the grants in aid of technical and scientific education are not at all commensurate with the needs of the country.	X. That in the opinion of this Conference steps should be taken for promoting a system of education literary, technical and scientific suited to the requirements of the country on national lines and under national control and maintaining national schools throughout the country. Clause (a) is omitted.

(b) That in view of the recent educational policy of the Government which has practically closed the doors of the University against many students of the province and the necessity of organising a system of literary, scientific, technical and industrial education suited to the requirements of the country, this Conference urges the people to take steps to establish educational institutions throughout the country on national lines and under national control.	
XI. (a) That, while recording its satisfaction at the recognition by the Government of India of the principle of separation of Judicial from Executive functions, this Conference regrets that effect has not yet been given to it. (b) That this Conference is of opinion that the only effective method of reforming the Police is to separate the Judicial from the Executive functions and that no scheme for such separation will be successful unless all the Judicial Officers are placed under the direct control and supervision of the High Court. (c) That this Conference is further of opinion that for the better administration of Civil and Criminal justice in the country, the District and Sessions Judges should be recruited from among the ranks of the legal profession.	XI. That this Conference is of opinion that the separation of judicial from executive functions, which has been recognised in principle, should be forthwith put into effect and all judicial officers placed under the direct control and supervision of the High Court and that provision should be made in the scheme for the District and Sessions Judges being appointed in future from the ranks of the legal profession in this country.
XII. That this Conference enters a strong protest against the Calcutta Police Bill which is an uncalled for measure of an absolutely retrograde	XII. As in the Committee's draft except that in place of "enters a strong protest against" should be put "strongly condemns".

character and which will restrict the freedom of action of the people in Calcutta and will subject them to unscrupulous harassments.	
XIII. (a) That in view of the large surplus under the head of Stamp Revenue and the growing poverty of the people, this Conference urges upon the Government the necessity of reducing the Court fees levied for the institution of suits and complaints. (b) That having regard to the ruinous expenses of litigation in Courts of law, this Conference is of opinion that arbitration Courts should be established throughout the country.	XIII. Omit clause (a), otherwise as in the Committee's draft.
XIV. That with a view to mitigate the hardship arising from chronic high prices of food stuffs, this Conference urges on the District Associations the necessity of establishing Co-operative Banks and Stores with Dharmagolas throughout the country.	XIV. As in the Committee's draft.
XV. That in view of the ravages of wild animals and the frequent dacoities in the towns and villages, this Conference appeals to the Government to repeal the Arms Act.	XV. That in view of the ravages of wild animals and frequent dacoities in the towns and villages against which there is no adequate protection, this Conference is of opinion that the Arms Act should be repealed or radically modified.
XVI. That this Conference views with apprehension the decrease in the normal growth of the Bengali Hindu population and hereby appoints a Committee consisting of the following gentlemen to ascertain the causes which have led to this state of things and to suggest what steps should be taken to prevent it.	XVI. As in the Committee's draft.

XVII. That this Conference, while sympathising with the Indian residents of South Africa in their struggle for equal rights and privileges with the White population and admiring their firm attitude, places on record its deep sense of indignation at the gross wrongs inflicted on them and suggests the adoption of Boycott of Colonial and British goods by other Provinces of India by way of protest and retaliation.	XVII. As in the Committee's draft, except that after "firm attitude" should be inserted "and heroic sufferings".
XVIII. That having regard to the gradual diminution of commons or pasture land for cattle, this Conference urges the Government and the people specially the land-holding classes to adopt measures for the protection and preservation of cows and oxen.	XVIII. As in the Committee's draft, except that the words "the Government and" should be omitted.
XIX. That this Conference is of opinion that the Government grants of money for drainage and irrigation purposes in Bengal which is essentially an agricultural Province are lamentably inadequate for its needs and urges the Government to take the following steps at an early date: — 1. The dredging of the Bhagirathi. 2. The immediate adoption of the measures recommended by Mr. Horn and other expert engineers for the prevention of the annual floods in the Arambagh Sub-division by the overflow water of the Begua Breach. 3. The draining of the Kadua Math in the Amta basin in the District of Howrah.	XIX. Omit
XX. That in the present situation of the country united action being highly	XX. That this Conference considers a United Congress imperatively

desirable, this Conference earnestly appeals to the leaders to bring about a compromise between the two wings of the Indian Nationalist party and to arrange for holding a United Congress.	necessary in the interests of the country and believes that the best way to bring about union is to hold a session elected as in all Congresses up to 1906, to which any future arrangements for the procedure of the Congress shall be submitted. (b) That in this view it appoints the following Committee to confer on behalf of the province with the organisers of the meeting at Lahore and with other provincial leaders for the holding of such a session and it farther empowers the Committee in case of necessity to propose and arrange for this session being held in Calcutta in co-operation with all who are desirous of union.
XXI. That with a view to inaugurate a vigorous system of self-help and voluntary work for the redress of their grievances, this Conference urges the people to organise village Committees, Sub-Divisional Associations and District Associations.	XXI. As in the Committee's draft, omitting only the words "and voluntary work for the redress of their grievances". Additional Resolutions. 1. That this Conference is of opinion that two of the most necessary and important classes of enterprise from the point of view of our commercial development are (1) Swadeshi Banks and (2) Steam Navigation Companies to control the waterways of Bengal, and urges on the country the necessity of initiating and supporting such enterprises, and it expresses its appreciation of the efforts of those who have already undertaken work of this kind. 2. That the Conference is of opinion that physical training be encouraged by all means to infuse greater manliness in the younger generation and make them capable of self-protection and self-defence.

Speech at the Hughly Conference

AUROBINDO Ghose spoke to Resolution No. IV — "that this conference urges the people to continue the boycott of foreign goods inaugurated on August 7th 1905, which is, in its opinion, a perfectly legitimate movement and is calculated to promote the political as well as the industrial and economical welfare of the country."

Moulvi Dedar Bux moved and Sasankajiban Roy seconded it.

Aurobindo Ghose said: —

Mr. President and Members: — I desire to say two words before I say anything further — I entreat you to hear me out without expressing or giving any sign either of approval or dissent; I pray you to hear me in perfect silence. This is a resolution which nobody can oppose. It is not my intention to bring any amendment with regard to it, but I have simply to make a brief statement without argument of any kind from the standpoint of myself and those who are of the same way of thinking as myself. You are aware that we have a certain theory of politics, a certain view with regard to political action in this country. We hold that as we have no effective share in the administration of this country, and our position is such that there is no means of having even our prayers and petitions listened to, therefore the only effective course for us to take is, as far as possible, to withhold our co-operation from the Government, until they give us some effective control over the administration and some constitutional means by which we can bring the voice of the people and the weight of public opinion to bear upon the management

Delivered at the Bengal Provincial Conference, held at Hughly, Bengal, on 6 September 1909. Report published in the Bengalee *on 7 September and reproduced in a Government of India Home Department file.*

of the affairs of this country. We hold that in these circumstances we ought to put forward the interests of the country partly by a movement of self-help and so far as we have power to deal with the Government by means of passive resistance, peaceably and within the law. And this passive resistance we do not wish to confine merely to commercial boycott. We hold that it can and should be extended to other kinds of boycott. ("*Hear*, *hear*") We don't hold that it should be done with absolute thoroughness but so far as is possible and rational and so far as is wise in the interests of the country. Last year at Pabna a resolution was passed which gave room for our view of politics and it was our intention to press this resolution upon the Subjects Committee. But we found that by pressing the point on the Committee the hope of a United Congress and the unity of Bengal and this Provincial Conference might be seriously imperilled. Now we are extremely anxious for the unity of the Congress. We are anxious we should throw no obstacle in the way of any hope of union, therefore we have decided not to press that amendment in the Subjects Committee, nor to bring forward our full amendment with regard to the reforms. At the same time we want it to be clearly understood that in taking this course we are not for a moment receding from the policy and line we have taken up, and we consider for obvious reasons that it is absolutely necessary for us, especially at this time, to make it clear that we have not receded so far as the resolution goes. We thoroughly support it. But at the same time we wish it to be understood that we keep our position and we adhere to our policy of a boycott — of a boycott movement without any qualification, as a measure of policy for this country, as a political weapon, and as a measure of economical protection. ("*Bande Mataram.*")

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 11th SEPTEMBER 1909 { No. 12

Facts and Opinions

Impatient Idealists

The President of the Hughly Conference, in reference to the formal statement by Sj. Aurobindo Ghose of the adherence of the Nationalist party to the policy of self-help and passive resistance in spite of their concessions to the Moderate minority, advised the party of the future under the name of impatient idealists to wait. The reproach of idealism has always been brought against those who work with their eye on the future by the politicians wise in their own estimation who look only to the present. The reproach of impatience is levelled with equal ease and readiness against those who in great and critical times have the strength and skill to build with rapidity the foundations or the structure of the future. The advice to wait is valueless unless we know what it is that we have to wait for and why it is compulsory on us to put off the effort which might be made at the present. If we can progress quickly there must be adequate reasons given us for preferring to progress slowly or to stand still. We have not yet heard those adequate reasons. As far as we have gone, the only reason we have been able to find is that the fears and hesitations of our Moderate countrymen stand in our way. The whole Asiatic world is moving forward with enormous rapidity. In Persia, in Turkey, in Japan the impatient idealists have by means suited to the conditions of the country effected the freedom and are now busy building up the dignity and strength of their motherland. Constitutional Government has been everywhere established or is being prepared for consciously and with a steady eye to its establishment in the immediate future. Even in Russia a Duma has been established with however restricted an electorate. Of all the great nations of the world India alone is bidden to wait. It is bidden by Lord Morley and Anglo-India to wait for ever. It is bidden by its own leaders to wait till the rulers are induced by prayers and petitions to concede a constitutional government and we have been told by those rulers when that will be — never. We have been told not by conservative statesmen but by the chief teacher of Radicalism and democracy. Under the circumstances, which is the more unpractical and idealistic, the impatience of the Nationalist or the supine and trustful patience of the President of the Hughly Conference?

The Question of Fitness

It is possible the President had his eye on the question of fitness or unfitness which is the stock sophistry of the opponents of progress. One of the delegates strangely enough selected the occasion of moving the colonial self-government resolution for airing this effete fallacy. The storm of disapprobation which his lapse evoked proves that in Bengal at least that superstition is dead in the minds of the people, and it is well, for no nation can live which at the bidding of foreigners consents to despise itself and distrust its capacities. We freely admit that no nation can be fit for liberty unless it is free, none can be wholly capable of self-government until it governs itself. We freely admit that if we were given self-government we should commit mistakes which we would have to rectify, as has been done even by nations which were old in the exercise of free and self-governing functions. We freely admit that the liberated nation would have to face many and most serious problems even as Turkey and Persia have to face such problems today, as Japan had to face them in the period of its own revolution. But to argue from these propositions to the refusal of self-government is to use a sophistry which can only impose on the minds of children. In the nineteenth century owing to a stupefying education we had contracted the trustfulness, naivety and incapacity to think for itself of the childish intellect and we swallowed whole the sophisms which were administered to us. But we have thrown off that spell and if the impatient idealists of the Nationalist party had done nothing else for their country this would be sufficient justification for their existence that they have made a clean sweep of all this garbage and purified the intellect and the morale of the nation. It is enough if the capacity is there in the race and if we can show by our action that it is not dead. This we have shown by organised successful and national action under circumstances of unprecedented difficulty. If the success is now jeopardised, it is because of the temporary revival of the weaknesses of our nineteenth century politics and the desire to fall back into safe and easy methods in spite of their unfruitfulness. That is a weakness which is not shared by the whole nation, but is only temporarily suffered because a situation of unprecedented difficulty has been created in which it was not easy to see our way and in the silence that was unfortunately allowed to fall on the country and deepen the uncertainty, the forces of reaction found their opportunity. In times of difficulty to stop still for a long time is a cardinal error, the best way is to move slowly forward, warily watching each step but never faltering. Action solves the difficulties which action creates. Inaction can only paralyse and slay.

Public Disorder and Unfitness

A favourite device of the opponents of progress is to point to the frequent ebullitions of tumult and excitement which have recently found their way into our political life and argue from them to our unfitness.

In the mouths of our own countrymen the use of this argument arises partly from political prejudice but still more from inexperience of political life and the unexamined acceptance of

Anglo-Indian sophistries. But in the mouths of Englishmen this kind of language cannot be free from the charge of hypocrisy. They know well of the much worse things that are done in political life in the West and accepted as an inevitable feature of party excitement. The rough horseplay of public meetings which is a familiar feature of excited times in England, would not be tolerated by the more self-disciplined Indian people. As for really serious disturbance the worst things of that kind which have happened in India occurred at Surat when Sj. Surendranath Banerji was refused a hearing and on the next day when Mr. Tilak was threatened on the platform by the sticks and chairs of Surat loyalists and the Mahratta delegates charged and after a free fight cleared the platform. The refusal to hear a speaker by dint of continuous clamour, hisses and outcries is of such frequent occurrence in England that it would indeed be a strange argument which would infer from such occurrences the unfitness of the English race for self-government. We may instance the University meeting at which Mr. Balfour was once refused a hearing and at the end of an inaudible speech two undergraduates dressed as girls danced up to the platform and gracefully offered the Conservative statesman a garland of shoes which was smilingly accepted. As for the storming of platforms and turning out of the speakers and organisers, that also is a recognised and not altogether infrequent possibility of political life in England. A case remarkable for its sequel happened at Edinburgh when a faith-healer attempted to speak against Medicine and the undergraduates forced their way in, attacked and wounded the police, smashed all the chairs, hurled a ruined piano from the platform and hooted the discreetly absent orator in his hotel and challenged him to come out with his speech. On complaint the Chancellor of the University declared his approval of this riot and in a court of law the students were acquitted on the plea of justification. It may well be said that such a view of what is permissible in political life ought not to be introduced into India, but it is the worst hypocrisy for the citizens of a country where such things not only happen but are tolerated and sometimes approved by public opinion, to turn up the whites of their eyes at Indian disorderliness and argue from it to the unfitness of the race for democratic politics. And it must be remembered that worse things happen on the Continent, free fights occurring even in august legislatures, yet it has not been made an argument for the English people going over to the Continent to govern the unfit and inferior European races.

The Hughly Conference

THE CHANCES of politics are in reality the hidden guidance of a Power whose workings do not reveal themselves easily even to the most practised eye. It is difficult therefore to say whether the successful conclusion of the Provincial Conference at Hughly without the often threatened breach between the parties, will really result in the furtherance of the object for which the Nationalists consented to waive the reaffirmation of the policy formulated at Pabna and refrained from using the preponderance which the general sentiment of the great majority of the delegates gave them at Hughly. If things go by the counting of heads, as is the rule in democratic politics, the Nationalist sentiment commands the greater part of Bengal. But in leaders of recognised weight, established reputation and political standing the party is necessarily inferior to the Moderates, both because it is a younger force very recently emerged and because its leaders have been scattered by a repression which has aimed at the tall heads of the party. There is also a large body of sentiment in the Mofussil which is Nationalist at heart but does not always venture to be Nationalist in action because of the difficulties in the way of the Nationalist programme and the respect due to the elder leaders. On the other hand among the young men who command the future, Moderatism is dead and what takes its place is a Nationalism which loves rather to act than to think, because it has not yet accustomed itself to the atmosphere of strenuous political thought. In fact the spirit of Nationalism and its objects are becoming universal but its methods, though preferred, are not always adhered to and its thought has not everywhere penetrated below the surface.

The possibility or otherwise of united action was the governing thought throughout the Conference. The tendency to break to pieces was very prominent in the first day's proceedings and was fostered by certain incidents slight in themselves but each of which was in the existing state of feeling a quite possible pretext for disruption. It was from an observation of the proceedings of the first day that either party offered its programme of action for the second. The Nationalist party intended to put forward a formal protest against any acceptance of the reforms in however slight a degree, to press the Pabna resolution on the Boycott and above all to insist on the Conference taking some definite step which would either materialise the chances of a United Congress or once for all show that union was impossible. The Moderate leaders came determined on four things, not to allow any resolution recognising general passive resistance, not to allow any resolution amounting to an absolute refusal of the Reforms, not to allow any resolution debarring delegates from Bengal from joining the Lahore Convention in case of that body rejecting union and not to consent even to the bringing forward of any amendment or proposal of a pronounced nationalist character in the Conference. On all these points it was made quite evident that if the Nationalists pressed their points the Conference would be broken up by the secession of the Moderate leaders. In all these disputed matters, therefore, the Nationalists gave way and adhered only to their main point of securing some definite step in relation to the holding of a united Congress.

It is necessary to explain this action on the part of our party, for in his speech on the Boycott resolution Sj. Aurobindo Ghose purposely refrained from stating more than the bare facts in order that nothing he might say should lead to excitement or anything which could be an excuse for friction. It is not that the Nationalist party is not willing or able to stand by itself if that proves inevitable and seems the best course in the interests of Nationalism and the future of the country. But it has always been the ideal of the Nationalists to make of the Congress a great and living body deliberative in the manner of free assemblies which consider from various points of view what is best for the country and decide by majority or, whenever possible, unanimously, the parties holding together not by identity of views but by one common aim and interest and the combined freedom and restraint of a constitution which provides for the free expression of opinion under fair and impartial rules. They seek also a centre for the country's strength which can give authority to a network of organisation systematising the work of the nation. They seek in other words a centre of deliberation and a centre of order and authority which can take charge of national progress. To seek this centre outside the long established body to which the nation has looked as the pivot of its political activities would have been a waste of material already half-prepared for the purpose. In attempting to convert this instrument to its proper uses they may have committed errors of over-eagerness and passionate impatience, the ordinary faults of a party of progress still young and energetic, but the errors on the other side were yet greater. The errors of life and progress are more exuberant and striking but less fatal than the errors of decay and reaction. However that be, in the attempt the instrument itself was broken, but it is capable of being mended if the past errors on both sides can be got rid of, and it is the duty of the Nationalist party to give a fair chance to the forces that make for the preservation of this old and honoured institution. This is the more incumbent on them as the sense of the country is in favour of an attempt to restore unity. A democratic party is bound to give the utmost weight to the general sense of the country in a matter of such primary importance.

It remains to be seen whether the great concessions made by the party will bear any fruit. The situation is not wholly encouraging. The position taken by the Moderate leaders that the Nationalists even if they are in a majority, must not try to enforce resolutions which travel beyond the limits of common agreement and unanimity and must allow resolutions to pass which are contrary to their principle and policy on pain of a Moderate secession may be tolerated for some time; but how long can a growing sentiment and ideal representing the future consent to be restrained within such iron limits? And if such be the basis of union proposed, it is obvious that the Congress will be a united Congress only in name and the attendance of the Nationalists perfunctory or useless. If on the other hand the resolutions of the Congress are recognised as the opinion of the majority leaving the minority perfect freedom to bring in their own resolutions when they have converted the mass of public opinion to their views, the unity will be real and living. We were never in favour of shams. It is only righteousness that exalts a nation and righteousness means going straight; nothing can long endure which is based upon unreality and hollowness. If therefore there is any union it must be one which recognises that there are two parties in the country and that each has a right not only to exist but to make itself felt. This is a right we have not refused to the Moderate party when we were in the majority; if they refuse it to us, then the talk of unity must cease and Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Mr. Gokhale must have their way.

This is the position from the Nationalist point of view. We hope that the largeness of the sacrifice made will not, in view of the slightness of the chance in favour of which everything else was thrown overboard, create any dissatisfaction in the party. All shades of Nationalist opinion were represented at Hughly and they consented to be guided in the matter by Srijut Aurobindo Ghose on whom the responsibility of leadership fell in the absence of older colleagues who have been temporarily or permanently removed from the field. The Nationalist party is in practical possession of the heart and mind of Bengal. It is strongly supported in other parts of India and controls Maharashtra. It is growing in strength, energy and wisdom. It surely inherits the future. Under such circumstances it can afford to wait.

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 18th SEPTEMBER 1909 { No. 13

Facts and Opinions

The Two Programmes

There could hardly be a more striking contrast than the pronounced dissimilarity between the resolutions passed at the Hughly Provincial Conference under the pressure of the Moderate leaders' threat to dissociate themselves from the proceedings if the Pabna resolutions were reaffirmed and the resolutions passed at the enthusiastic and successful District Conference held last Saturday and Sunday in the Surma Valley. They are severally the reaffirmation of two different programmes, the advanced Moderate programme of a section of opinion in West Bengal supported by Faridpur in the East and a sprinkling of individuals in some of the large towns and the Nationalist programme as advanced by East Bengal and a great section of opinion in the West. The advanced Moderate programme contemplates Colonial self-government as a distant and ultimate goal, advocates commercial boycott of foreign goods, contemplates National education as an educational experiment supported practically by some, in theory only by others, and regards self-help as a pendant and subordinate to so-called constitutional agitation, in other words, the acceptance of everything the Government does subject to protest, criticism and, when necessary, invective. This is the theory of co-operation plus opposition, opposition in words, co-operation in practice. It has to be seen how far the reassertion of this policy, for some time discredited, will go in its results and what is the underlying motive of the Moderate leaders in insisting on the reassertion at this particular moment when the Partition, deportations, coercive laws are in full operation and not a single one of our grievances redressed. The Nationalist programme asserts autonomy as the right of all nations, advocates the use of every legitimate and peaceful means towards its establishment whether swift or gradual, and especially favours the use of self-help to train and organise the nation for self-government and of passive resistance to confirm and defend the measures of self-help and to bring pressure on the bureaucracy to yield a substantial measure of self-government. The defect of the Nationalist party is not in energy or organisation, for it has a superior capacity in these respects to its opponents, but in means and the present weight of its personalities. It is only by effective, persistent and organised work with what means it has at its disposal that the party can make up for this inferiority. That organisation must now be taken definitely in hand. It is doubtful whether the frail hope of a United Congress will ever take shape as a materialised fact, and even if it does, it is likely to be under such circumstances that the Nationalists would be ill-advised to put their main energy into Congress work until they have so all-pervading and solid a strength in the country as to make it possible for them to assert themselves without any peril to the united progress of the nation. They must vindicate the superiority of their programme by its effectual execution and result, leaving the Moderates for the present to the raptures of their rapprochement with the bureaucracy.

The Reforms

An argument advanced in favour of the Reforms is that, however ineffectual and illusory the expansion of the Legislative Councils may be — and the illusory nature of that expansion cannot be seriously denied, — still there is included in the Reform Scheme a measure of local self-government generous, complete and effective, which is well worth acceptance. We are by no means certain how far a substantial measure of local self-government is really contemplated by the Government. It was originally proposed, we believe, to form local self-governing bodies elected by the people and uncontrolled by any official chairman. But many things were originally proposed which seem to have little chance of taking shape as ultimate actualities. We are not aware how far the measure will be carried out, what limitation may be put upon it or whether the control of the official chairman will not be replaced by a higher and more distant but eventually more effective control. We shall have to be thoroughly assured on these points before we can allow that any measure of local self-government included in the measure can outweigh the nugatory character of the main change in the instruments of government. Unless the local self-government is complete and ungrudging, it may be a convenient measure and to a slight extent strengthen the educated class in the mofussils, but it cannot be a vital measure or even one of the first importance among changes of administrative structure. In any case it cannot outweigh, however full it may be, the disastrous character of the principle of separate electorates introduced by Lord Morley, intentionally or unintentionally, as the thin end of a wedge which, when driven well home, will break our growing nationality into a hundred jarring pieces. Only by standing aloof from the new councils can this destruction be avoided. This is the point on which we feel bound to lay stress again and again because it is the one vital and effective thing in the new measure, all the rest is mere frippery and meaningless decoration. It would be a poor statesmanship which bought a small and temporary gain by throwing away the future of the nation and the hope of a united India, and posterity will have reason to curse the memory of any popular leader who for the sake either of more gilt on the "gilded shams" or even for a real measure of local self-government, induces the nation to accept the reforms with the separate electorate and special privileges for one community as an essential feature.

The Limitations of the Act

There is another point in this connection which destroys the little value that might possibly have attached to the argument from Lord Morley's intentions about local self-government. One peruses the Act in vain for a guarantee of any measure of reform which may be conceded under it to the people except the number of elected and nominated members in the Councils. Everything else, literally everything else, is left to the discretion of Anglo-Indian officialdom. No doubt the present Secretary of State will have the ultimate decision as to the rules of election, nomination, formation of electorates, acceptance or rejection by the Government of elected members, veto, division, interpellation etc., and he may decide to put the felt on thickly and copiously. But even if this be done, not one of these things will be assured to us, not one of them but may be reversed by subsequent Viceroys and Secretaries of State without infringing the meagre provisions of this Act. As for local self-government we fail to find any guarantee either for its introduction or, if introduced, — as, no doubt, Lord Morley will have some slight respect even yet for his own reputation, — for its retention in the future. What is to prevent a future Alexander Mackenzie in the Viceregal seat from so altering any measure that may be given as to render it nugatory and what is to prevent a future Curzon in the India Office from confirming this step rearwards? So far as we have been able to find, nothing at all. We are just where we were before, with concessions granted by arbitrary condescension which may be withdrawn at any moment by arbitrary arrogance. Well may Lord Morley say that this is not a measure of self-government and, if he thought it were, he would not concede the measure. The Nationalist party is not opposed to all acceptance of reform; it would welcome and support a measure which would really concede even a minimum of control and provide a means for future expansion while perpetually guaranteeing the small amount conceded; but a measure by which no control is given, no step taken is guaranteed as to permanence and no provision is made for future expansion is one which no thinking man would care to have even apart from other defects, and no practical politician will look at for a moment when coupled with provisions disastrous to the future of the nation.

Shall We Accept the Partition?

This may sound a startling proposition to a nation which is perpetually reaffirming its decision never to accept the settled fact. But it rises definitely upon the question of accepting the reforms. We cannot conceal from ourselves the staringly patent fact that if we accept the reforms, we accept the Partition. The new changes are partly meant to confirm the division which every English statesman declares it to be essential to British prestige to perpetuate, and if the older leaders of West Bengal accept the reforms and stand for Sir Edward Baker's Council or allow their followers to stand for it, the sooner the partition resolution is deleted from the proceedings of Provincial and District conferences and the celebration of the 16th October discontinued, the better for our national honesty and sincerity. If the West Bengal leaders, who under the pressure of public opinion gave up their seats on the old Council and the idea of becoming Honourables in future, join the reformed Council in Calcutta, there is nothing to prevent the East Bengal leaders from joining Sir Lancelot Hare's Council in the capital of the New Province. If that happens, where will the Anti-Partition agitation be and where the solemn vow of unity? To solemnly meet once a year and declare that we will never, never accept what we have accepted, would be a farce too hypocritical for the conscience of the most cynical or the intelligence of the most deluded to tolerate. Any revival of the fiction that it is East Bengal which has been partitioned from West Bengal and therefore there is no obligation on the West Bengal leaders to boycott the Councils while the East Bengal leaders are so bound, will not be suffered. But the Moderates have definitely and rigidly excluded political boycott from their programme; yet what is the abstention from the Councils but a political boycott? If they carry this exclusion to its logical result and accept the reformed Councils, that is the end of the Anti-Partition agitation. Lord Morley's policy will be entirely successful and Mr. Gokhale may still more loudly acclaim him as the saviour of India from a state of anarchy and chaos.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Process of Evolution

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 25th SEPTEMBER 1909 { No. 14

Facts and Opinions

The Convention President

The nomination of Sir Pherozshah Mehta as the President of the three men's Convention at Lahore is not an event that is of any direct interest to Nationalists. Just as the three tailors of Tooley Street represented themselves as the British public, so the three egregious mediocrities of the Punjab pose as the people of their province and, in defiance of the great weight of opinion among the leading men and the still stronger force of feeling among the people against the holding of a Convention Congress at Lahore, are inviting the representatives of the Moderate party to a session of what is still called, even under these discouraging circumstances, the Indian National Congress. It is of small importance to us whom these three gentlemen elect as their President. The nomination was indeed a foregone conclusion. Sir Pherozshah Mehta, having got rid of his Nationalist adversaries, now rules the Convention with as absolute a sway as he ruled the Corporation before the European element combined against him and showed that, servile as Bombay respectability might be to the Corporation lion, it was still more servile to the ruling class. Indirectly, however, the election is of some importance to Bengal owing to the desire of the people of this province for a United Congress. It is no longer a secret that in Bengal

Moderate circles the feeling against Sir Pherozshah is almost as strong as it is in the Nationalist party. It has even been threatened that, if Sir Pherozshah becomes the President, Bengal will not attend the session at Lahore. This has since been qualified by the proviso that Bengal as a province will not attend, although some individuals may overcome their feelings or their scruples. Bengal as a province would in no case attend the sitting of a mutilated Congress. Even the whole Moderate party were not likely to attend unless their objections on the score of constitutional procedure were properly considered. All that the threat can mean is that, even of those who would otherwise have gone, most will not attend. This is, after all, a feeble menace. Neither Sj. Surendranath nor Sj. Bhupendranath nor the Chaudhuri brothers are likely to forego attendance, and, for all practical purposes, these gentlemen are the Moderate party in Bengal. If the Bengal leaders do go to Lahore, they are certain to obey meekly the dictates of Sir Pherozshah Mehta; for there is not one of them who has sufficient strength of character to stand up to the roarings of the Bombay lion. They were in the habit of obeying him even when he had no official authority, and it can well be imagined how the strong, arrogant and overbearing man will demean himself as President, and how utterly impossible it will be even to suggest, either in Subjects Committee or in full meeting, any idea which will not be wholly palatable to the autocrat. Sj. Surendranath Banerji at Hughly advanced the strangely reactionary conception of the President of a Congress or Conference as by right not less absolute than the Czar of all the Russias, bound by no law and no principle and entitled to exact from the Conference or Congress implicit obedience to his most arbitrary and unconstitutional whims and caprices. This absolutist conception is likely to be carried out to the letter at the Lahore Convention. If ever there was any hope that the Lahore session of the Convention might be utilised for bringing about a United Congress, that has now disappeared. The hope was cherished by some, but it was from the first an idle expectation. A firm combination of all, whether Moderates or Nationalists, who are in favour of union, and the holding of a freely elected

Congress at Calcutta was all along the only chance of bringing about union.

Presidential Autocracy

The conception of the President as a Russian autocrat and the assembly as the slave of his whims is one which is foreign to free and democratic institutions, and would, if enforced, make all true discussion impossible and put in the hands of the party in possession of the official machinery an irresistible weapon for stifling the opinions of its opponents. It is a conception against which the Nationalist party have struggled from the beginning and will struggle to the end. The ruling of the President is final on all points of order, but only so long as he governs the proceedings of the body according to the recognised rules of debate. He cannot dictate the exclusion of resolutions or amendments which do not seem to him rational or expedient, but must always base his action on reasons of procedure and not on reasons of state. The moment he asserts his individual caprice or predilection, he lays himself open to an appeal to the whole assembly or even, in very extreme cases, to an impeachment of his action by a vote of censure from the delegates. It has been erroneously alleged that the Speaker of the House of Commons sways the House with an absolute control. The Speaker is as much bound by the rules of the House as any member; he is the repository of the rules and administers an old and recognised procedure, elaborate and rigid in detail, which he cannot transgress, nor has any Speaker been known to transgress it. Some have been suspected of administering the rules, wherever they left discretion to the Speaker, with a partiality for one party, but even this has been rare, and it was always the rules of procedure that were administered, not personal whim or caprice. As the present Speaker pointed out recently in his evidence before a public Commission, there is a recognised means by which the conduct of the Speaker can be called in question by the House. It would be strange if it were otherwise. The framers of the British Constitution, who so jealously guarded every loophole by which autocracy might creep into any part of the system, were not likely to leave such a glaring defect of freedom uncorrected, if it had ever existed.

Mr. Lalmohan Ghose

The death of Mr. Lalmohan Ghose removes from the scene a distinguished figure commemorative of the past rather than representative of any living force in the present. His interventions in politics have for many years past been of great rarity and, since the Calcutta Congress, had entirely ceased. It cannot therefore be said that his demise leaves a gap in the ranks of our active workers. He was the survivor of a generation talented in politics rather than great, and, among them, he was one of the few who could lay claim to the possession of real genius. That genius was literary, oratorical and forensic rather than political but as these were the gifts which then commanded success in the political arena, he ought to have stood forward far ahead of the mass of his contemporaries. It was the lack of steadiness and persistence common enough in men of brilliant gifts, which kept him back in the race. His brother Mr. Manmohan Ghose, a much less variously and richly gifted intellect but a stronger character, commanded by the possession of these very qualities a much weightier influence and a more highly and widely honoured name. In eloquence we doubt whether any orator of the past or present generation has possessed the same felicity of style and charm of manner and elocution. Mr. Gokhale has something of the same debating gift, but it is marred by the dryness of his delivery and the colourlessness of his manner. Mr. Lalmohan Ghose possessed the requisite warmth, glow and agreeableness of speech and manner without those defects of excess and exaggeration which sometimes mar Bengali oratory. We hope that his literary remains will be published, especially the translation of the Meghnad Badh, which, from such capable hands, ought to introduce favourably a Bengali masterpiece to a wider than Indian audience.

The Past and the Future

OUR CONTEMPORARY, the *Statesman*, notices in an unusually self-restrained article the recent brochure republished by Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy from the *Modern Review* under the title, "The Message of the East". We have not the work before us but, from our memory of the articles and our knowledge of our distinguished countryman's views, we do not think the *Statesman* has quite caught the spirit of the writer. Dr. Coomaraswamy is above all a lover of art and beauty and the ancient thought and greatness of India, but he is also, and as a result of this deep love and appreciation, an ardent Nationalist. Writing as an artist, he calls attention to the debased aesthetic ideas and tastes which the ugly and sordid commercialism of the West has introduced into the mind of a nation once distinguished for its superior beauty and grandeur of conception and for the extent to which it suffused the whole of life with the forces of the intellect and the spirit. He laments the persistence of a servile imitation of English ideas, English methods, English machinery and production even in the new Nationalism. And he reminds his readers that nations cannot be made by politics and economics alone, but that art also has a great and still unrecognised claim. The main drift of his writing is to censure the low imitative un-Indian and bourgeois ideals of our national activity in the nineteenth century and to recall our minds to the cardinal fact that, if India is to arise and be great as a nation, it is not by imitating the methods and institutions of English politics and commerce, but by carrying her own civilisation, purified of the weaknesses that have overtaken it, to a much higher and mightier fulfilment than any that it has reached in the past. Our mission is to outdistance, lead and instruct Europe, not merely to imitate and learn from her. Dr. Coomaraswamy speaks of art, but it is certain that a man of his wide culture would not exclude, and we know he does not exclude, thought, literature and religion from the forces that must uplift our nation and are necessary to its future. To recover Indian thought, Indian character, Indian perceptions, Indian energy, Indian greatness, and to solve the problems that perplex the world in an Indian spirit and from the Indian standpoint, this, in our view, is the mission of Nationalism. We agree with Dr. Coomaraswamy that an exclusive preoccupation with politics and economics is likely to dwarf our growth and prevent the flowering of originality and energy. We have to return to the fountainheads of our ancient religion, philosophy, art and literature and pour the revivifying influences of our immemorial Aryan spirit and ideals into our political and economic development. This is the ideal the *Karmayogin* holds before it, and our outlook and Dr. Coomaraswamy's do not substantially differ. But in judging our present activities we cannot look, as he does, from a purely artistic and idealistic standpoint, but must act and write in the spirit of a practical idealism.

The debasement of our mind, character and tastes by a grossly commercial, materialistic and insufficient European education is a fact on which the young Nationalism has always insisted. The practical destruction of our artistic perceptions and the plastic skill and fineness of eye and hand which once gave our productions pre-eminence, distinction and mastery of the European markets, is also a thing accomplished. Most vital of all, the spiritual and intellectual divorce from the past which the present schools and universities have effected, has beggared the nation of the originality, high aspiration and forceful energy which can alone make a nation free and great. To reverse the process and recover what we have lost, is undoubtedly the first object to which we ought to devote ourselves. And as the loss of originality, aspiration and energy was the most vital of all these losses, so their recovery should be our first and most important objective. The primary aim of the prophets of Nationalism was to rid the nation of the idea that the future was limited by the circumstances of the present, that because temporary causes had brought us low and made us weak, low therefore must be our aims and weak our methods. They pointed the mind of the people to a great and splendid destiny, not in some distant millennium but in the comparatively near future, and fired the hearts of the young men with a burning desire to realise the apocalyptic vision. As a justification of what might otherwise have seemed a dream and as an inexhaustible source of energy and inspiration, they pointed persistently to the great achievements and grandiose civilisation of our forefathers and called on the rising generation to recover their lost spiritual and intellectual heritage. It cannot be denied that this double effort to realise the past and the future has been the distinguishing temperament and the chief uplifting force in the movement, and it cannot be denied that it is bringing back to our young men originality, aspiration and energy. By this force the character, temper and action of the Bengali has been altered beyond recognition in a few years. To raise the mind, character and tastes of the people, to recover the ancient nobility of temper, the strong Aryan character and the high Aryan outlook, the perceptions which made earthly life beautiful and wonderful, and the magnificent spiritual experiences, realisations and aspirations which made us the deepest-hearted, deepest-thoughted and most delicately profound in life of all the peoples of the earth, is the task next in importance and urgency. We had hoped by means of National Education to effect this great object as well as to restore to our youth the intellectual heritage of the nation and build up on that basis a yet greater culture in the future. We must admit that the instrument which we cherished and for which such sacrifices were made, has proved insufficient and threatens, in unfit hands, to lose its promise of fulfilment and be diverted to lower ends. But the movement is greater than its instruments. We must strive to prevent the destruction of that which we have created and, in the meanwhile, build up a centre of culture, freer and more perfect, which will either permeate the other with itself or replace it if destroyed. Finally, the artistic awakening has been commenced by that young, living and energetic school which has gathered round the Master and originator, Sj. Abanindranath Tagore. The impulse which this school is giving, its inspired artistic recovery of the past, its intuitive anticipations of the future, have to be popularised and made a national possession.

Dr. Coomaraswamy complains of the survivals of the past in the preparations for the future. But no movement, however vigorous, can throw off in a few years the effects of a whole century. We must remember also why the degradation and denationalisation, "the mighty evil in our souls" of which the writer complains, came into being. A painful but necessary work had to be done, and because the English nation were the fittest instrument for His purpose, God led them all over those thousands of miles of alien Ocean, gave strength to their hearts and subtlety to their brains, and set them up in India to do His work, which they have been doing faithfully, if blindly, ever since and are doing at the present moment. The spirit and ideals of India had come to be confined in a mould which, however beautiful, was too narrow and slender to bear the mighty burden of our future. When that happens, the mould has to be broken and even the ideal lost for a while, in order to be recovered free of constraint and limitation. We have to recover the Aryan spirit and ideal and keep it intact but enshrined in new forms and more expansive institutions. We have to treasure jealously everything in our social structure, manners, institutions, which is of permanent value, essential to our spirit or helpful to the future; but we must not cabin the expanding and aggressive spirit of India in temporary forms which are the creation of the last few hundred years. That would be a vain and disastrous endeavour. The mould is broken; we must remould in larger outlines and with a richer content. For the work of destruction England was best fitted by her stubborn individuality and by that very commercialism and materialism which made her the antitype in temper and culture of the race she governed. She was chosen too for the unrivalled efficiency and skill with which she has organised an individualistic and materialistic democracy. We had to come to close quarters with that democratic organisation, draw it into ourselves and absorb the democratic spirit and methods so that we might rise beyond them. Our half-aristocratic half-theocratic feudalism had to be broken, in order that the democratic spirit of the Vedanta might be released and, by absorbing all that is needed of the aristocratic and theocratic culture, create for the Indian race a new and powerful political and social organisation. We have to learn and use the democratic principle and methods of Europe, in order that hereafter we may build up something more suited to our past and to the future of humanity. We have to throw away the individualism and materialism and keep the democracy. We have to solve for the human race the problem of harmonising and spiritualising its impulses towards liberty, equality and fraternity. In order that we may fulfil our mission we must be masters in our own home. It is out of no hostility to the English people, no race hatred that we seek absolute autonomy, but because it is the first condition of our developing our national self and realising our destiny. It is for this reason that the engrossing political preoccupation came upon us; and we cannot give up or tone down our political movement until the lesson of democratic self-government is learned and the first condition of national self-fulfilment realised. For another reason also England was chosen, because she had organised the competitive system of commerce, with its bitter and murderous struggle for existence, in the most skilful, discreet and successful fashion. We had to feel the full weight of that system and learn the literal meaning of this industrial realisation of Darwinism. It has been written large for us in ghastly letters of famine, chronic starvation and misery and a decreasing population. We have risen at last, entered into the battle and with the Boycott for a weapon, are striking at the throat of British commerce even as it struck at ours, first by protection and then by free trade. Again it is not out of hatred that we strike, but out of self-preservation. We must conquer in that battle if we are to live. We cannot arrest our development of industry and commerce while waiting for a new commercial system to develop or for beauty and art to reconquer the world. As in politics so in commerce, we must learn and master the European methods in order that we may eventually rise above them. The crude commercial Swadeshi, which Dr. Coomaraswamy finds so distasteful and disappointing, is as integral a part of the national awakening as the movement towards Swaraj or as the new School of Art. If this crude Swadeshi were to collapse and the national movement towards autonomy come to nothing, the artistic renascence he has praised so highly, would wither and sink with the drying up of the soil in which it was planted. A nation need not be luxuriously wealthy in order to be profoundly artistic, but it must have a certain amount of well-being, a national culture and, above all, hope and ardour, if it is to maintain a national art based on a widespread development of artistic perception and faculty. Moreover, aesthetic arts and crafts cannot live against the onrush of cheap and vulgar manufactures under the conditions of the modern social structure. Industry can only become again beautiful if poverty and the struggle for life are eliminated from society and the co-operative State and commune organised as the fruit of a great moral and spiritual uplifting of humanity. We hold such an uplifting and reorganisation as part of India's mission. But to do her work she must live. Therefore the economical preoccupation has been added to the political. We perceive the salvation of the country not in parting with either of these, but in adding to them a religious and moral preoccupation. On the basis of that religious and moral awakening the preoccupation of art and fine culture will be added and firmly based. There are many who perceive the necessity of the religious and moral regeneration, who are inclined to turn from the prosaic details of politics and commerce and regret that any guide and teacher of the nation should stoop to mingle in them. That is a grievous error. The men who would lead India must be catholic and many-sided. When the Avatar comes, we like to believe that he will be not only the religious guide, but the political leader, the great educationist, the regenerator of society, the captain of co-operative industry, with the soul of the poet, scholar and artist. He will be in short the summary and grand type of the future Indian nation which is rising to reshape and lead the world.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Anandamath IV

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 2nd OCTOBER 1909 { No. 15

Facts and Opinions

The Rump Presidential Election

The Lahore Special Correspondent of the *Rashtra Mat* telegraphs to his paper a story of the proceedings at the Presidential election for the Rump Congress at Lahore, which, if correct, sheds a singular light on the proceedings of the valiant Three who are defending the bridge of conciliation and alliance between the bureaucracy and the Moderates which now goes by the name of the Indian National Congress. According to this correspondent, the account of Sir Pherozshah's election cabled from Lahore is incorrect and garbled. What really happened was that eighteen gentlemen assembled at Lahore as the Reception Committee, of whom more than half were employees of Mr. Harkissen Lal's various commercial ventures. This independent majority voted plump for Mr. Harkissen Lal's candidate, Sir Pherozshah, but the rest were strong and firm for Sj. Surendranath Banerji. This revolt in the camp led to much anxiety and confusion and great efforts were made to bring back the insurgents to their allegiance, but in vain. If this account is correct, no criticism can be too strong for the misrepresentation which suppressed the facts of the election. Was it not circulated that Sir Pherozshah would not accept the Presidentship unless it were offered unanimously? A strenuous attempt was made to save the face of the Dictator by representing in the Lahore cables that the nomination of Sj. Surendranath by the Bengal Convention Committee was only a suggestion in a private letter. But even then, what of Burma? What of this remarkable division in the toy committee itself at Lahore? We imagine that the Lion will put his dignity in his pocket or in his mane or any other hiding place that may be handy and accept the Presidentship; and if he does, we also imagine that he will roar discreetly at Lahore about the touching and unanimous confidence placed in him and the imperative voice of the whole country calling him to fill this great and responsible position of a Rump President! We have a suggestion for our highly esteemed Lion. Why not save his dignity and effect his object by appointing some lieutenant like Mr. Watcha as President? In that case Sir Pherozshah would be as much President in fact as if he enjoyed the doubtful and mutilated honours of the Rump Presidentship.

Nation-stuff in Morocco

The Powers of Europe are highly indignant at the tortures and mutilations practised by Mulai Hamid on his vanquished rival, El Roghi, and his captured adherents. There is no doubt that the savage outbreak of mediaeval and African savagery of which the Moorish Sultan has been guilty, is revolting and deprives him personally of all claim to sympathy; but European moral indignation in the matter seems to us to be out of place when we remember the tortures practised by American troops on Filipinos (to say nothing of the ghastly details of lynching in the Southern States), and the unbridled atrocities of the European armies in China. Be that as it may, we come across a remarkable account, extracted in the *Indian Daily News*, of the stuff of which the Moorish people are made. The narrator is Belton, the Englishman who commanded the Sultan's army and has resigned his post as a protest against the Sultan's primitive method of treating political prisoners. Death and mutilation seem to have been the punishments inflicted. Belton narrates that twenty officers of El Roghi had their right hands cut off and then seared, according to the barbarous old surgical fashion, in a cauldron of boiling oil, to stop the bleeding. Not from one of these men, reports the English soldier with wonder, did there come, all the time, a single whimper. And he goes on to tell how one of them, after the mutilation, quietly walked over to the fire where the cauldron was boiling, and, while his stump was being plunged in the boiling liquid, lighted from the flame with the utmost serenity a cigarette he held in his hand. Whatever may be the present backwardness of the Moors and the averseness to light of their tribes, there is the stuff of a strong, warlike and princely nation in the land which gave birth to these iron men. If ever the wave of Egyptian Neo-Islam and Mahomedan Nationalism sweeps across Morocco, Europe will have to reckon with no mean or contemptible people in the North West of Africa.

Cook versus Peary

It is with a somewhat sardonic sense of humour that we in India, whom that eminently truthful diplomat, Lord Curzon, once had the boldness to lecture on our mendacity and the superior truth of the Occidental, have watched the vulgar squabble between Dr. Cook and Commander Peary about the discovery of the North Pole. Long ago, most of the romance and mystery had gone out of the search for the Pole. The quest, though still extremely difficult and even perilous to an incautious adventurer, had no longer the charm of those gigantic dangers which met and slew the old explorers. It was known besides that little was likely to reward the man who succeeded, and there was small chance of anything but ice and cold being discovered at the North Pole. What little of the interesting and poetic was left in the idea, has now gone out of it for ever, and only a sense of nausea is left behind, as the controversy develops and leaves one with a feeling that it would have been better if the goal of so many heroic sacrifices had been left undiscovered for all time, rather than that it should have been discovered in this way. The spectacle of two distinguished explorers, one, we suppose from his title, an American naval officer and the other a savant not unknown to fame, hurling at each other such epithets as liar and faker, accusing each other of vile and dishonourable conduct, advancing evidence that when examined melts into thin air, citing witnesses who, when questioned, give them the lie, while all Europe and America join and take sides in the disgusting wrangle, is one that ought to give pause to the blindest admirer of Western civilisation and believer in Western superiority. We certainly will not imitate the general run of European writers who, arguing smugly from temporary, local or individual circumstances, talk, in the style of self-satisfied arrogance, of Oriental barbarity, Oriental treachery and mendacity, Oriental unscrupulousness; we will not say that the continents of Europe and America are peopled by nations of highly civilised liars, imposters and fakers of evidence without any sense of truth, honour or dignity, although we have as good cause as any Western critic of Asia; but at any rate the legend of European superiority and the inferior morals of the Asiatic has, by this time, been so badly damaged that we think even the *Englishman* might think twice before it bases its opposition to national aspirations on the pretensions of the Pharisee. It is evident that we are as good as the Europeans; we think we are in most respects better; we certainly could not be worse.

Nationalist Organisation

THE TIME has now come when it is imperative in the interests of the Nationalist party that its forces should be organised for united deliberation and effective work. A great deal depends on the care and foresight with which the character and methods of the organisation are elaborated at the beginning, for any mistake now may mean trouble and temporary disorganisation hereafter. It is not the easy problem of providing instruments for the working of a set of political ideas in a country where political thought has always been clear and definite and no repressive laws or police harassment can be directed against the dissemination of just political ideals and lawful political activities. We have to face the jealousy, suspicion and hostility of an all-powerful vested interest which it is our avowed object to replace by Indian agencies, the opposition, not always over-nice in its methods, of a rich and influential section of our own countrymen, and the vagueness of thought and indecisiveness of action common to the great bulk of our people even when they have been deeply touched by Nationalist sentiment and ideals. To form a centre of order, clear, full and powerful thought, swift effectiveness, free and orderly deliberation, disciplined and well-planned action must be the object of any organisation that we shall form. Two sets of qualities which ought not to be but often are conflicting, are needed for success: resolute courage and a frank and faithful adherence to principle on the one side and wariness and policy on the other.

The first mistake we have to avoid is the tendency to perpetuate or imitate old institutions or lines of action which are growing out of date. The Nationalist party is a young and progressive force born of tendencies, aims and necessities which were foreign to the nineteenth century, and, being a party of the future and not of the immediate past, it must look, in all it does and creates, not to the past but to the future. There are still in the party the relics of the old desire to raise up a rival Congress and assert our claim to be part legatees of the institution which came to a violent end at Surat. Our claim stands and, if a real Congress is again erected, it must be with the Nationalists within it and not excluded. The strength of the demand in the country for a United Congress is a sufficient vindication of the claim. But if we try still farther to enforce it by holding a rival session and calling it the Congress, we shall take an ill-advised step calculated to weaken us instead of developing our strength. A technical justification may be advanced by inviting men of all shades of opinion to such a session, but as a matter of fact none are likely to attend a session summoned by pronounced Nationalists unless they are pronounced Nationalists themselves. A United Congress can be effectively summoned only if we are able to effect a combination of Nationalists, advanced Moderates and that large section of opinion which, without having pronounced views, are eager to revive a public body in which all opinions can meet and work together for the good of the country. Such a combination would soon reduce Sir Pherozshah's Rump Congress to the lifeless and meagre phantasm which it must in any case become with the lapse of time and the open development of the Mehta-Morley alliance. But to create another Rump Congress on the Nationalist side would be to confound confusion yet worse without any compensating gain. It would moreover throw on the shoulders of the Nationalists a portion of the blame for perpetuating the split, which now rests entirely on the other side.

If a Nationalist Rump Congress is inadvisable and inconsistent with the dignity of the Nationalist party and its aversion to mere catchwords and shams, an imitation of the forms and working of the old Congress is also inadvisable. We were never satisfied with those forms and that working. The three days' show, the excessively festal aspect of the occasion, the monstrous preponderance of speech and resolution-passing over action and work, the want of true democratic rule and order, the weary waste of formal oratory without any practical use or object, the incapacity of the assembly for grappling with the real problems of our national existence and progress, the anxiety to avoid public discussion which is the life-breath of democratic politics, these and many other defects made the Congress in our view an instrument ill-made, wasteful of money and energy and the centre of a false conception of political deliberation and action. If we imitate the Congress, we shall contract all the faults of the Congress. Neither can we get any help from the proceedings of the Nationalist Conference which met at Surat; for that was a loose and informal body which only considered certain immediate questions and emergencies arising out of the Surat session. Yet a centre of deliberation and the consideration of past progress and future policy is essential to the building of the Nationalist party into an effective force conscious of and controlling its mission and activities. We shall indicate briefly the main principles on which we think the organisation of such a body should be based.

The first question is of the scope and object of the institution. In the first place, we must avoid the mistake of making it a festival or a show occasion intended to excite enthusiasm and propagate sentiment. That was a function which the Indian National Congress had, perhaps inevitably, to perform, but a body which tries to be at once a deliberative assembly and a national festival, must inevitably tend to establish the theatrical and holiday character at the expense of the practical and deliberative. National festivals and days of ceremony are the best means of creating enthusiasm and sentiment; that is the function of occasions like the 7th August and the 16th October, the Shivaji Utsav and similar celebrations. We must resolutely eschew all vestiges of the old festival aspect of our political bodies and make our assembly a severely practical and matter-of-fact body. Secondly, we must clearly recognise that a body meeting once a year cannot be an effective centre of actual yearlong work; it can only be an instrument for deliberation and the determination of policy and a centre of reference for whose consideration and adjudgment the actually accomplished work of the year may, in its main features and the sum of its fulfilment, be submitted. The practical work must be done by quite different organisations, provincial and local, carrying out the policy fixed by the deliberative body but differently constituted; for, as the object of an executive body is entirely different from the object of a deliberative body, so its constitution, rules and procedure must be entirely different. In fact our All-India body must be not a Congress or Conference even, but a Council, and since in spite of Shakespeare and Sj. Baikunthanath Sen, there is much in a name and it largely helps to determine our attitude towards the thing, let us call our body not the Nationalist Congress, Convention or Conference, but the Nationalist Council.

If the body is to be a Council, its dimensions must be of such a character as to be manageable and allow of effective discussion in the short time at our disposal. A spectacular Congress or Conference gains by numbers, a Council is hampered by them. Therefore the maximum number of delegates must be fixed and apportioned to the different parts of the nation according to their numbers. Secondly, in the proceedings themselves all elements of useless ornament and redundance must be purged out, such as the long Presidential Speech, the Reception Committee Chairman's speech and the division of the proceedings into the secret and effective Subjects Committee sittings and the public display of oratory in the full assembly. The first two features are obviously useless for our purpose and a mere waste of valuable time. With the disappearance of the spectacular aspect usually associated with our public bodies, the reason for the mere display of oratory also disappears. The only other utility of the double sitting is that the full assembly forms a Court of Appeal from the decision of the Subjects Committee and an opportunity to the minority for publicly dissenting from any decision by a majority which they might otherwise be supposed to have endorsed. The necessity for the first function arises from the imperfectly representative character of the Subjects Committee, as it is at present elected; the necessity for the second function from the absence of publicity in its proceedings. If the whole Council sits as Subjects Committee, the necessity for the Court of Appeal or the public assertion of dissent will not occur. The only justification for the existence of the Subjects Committee in our present political bodies is their unwieldy proportions, the only reason for its secrecy the attempt to conceal all difficulties in the way of coming to a unanimous conclusion; and neither of these reasons will have any existence in a Nationalist Council. The subjects can be fixed by a small executive body existing throughout the year, which will be in charge of all questions that may arise in connection with the Council, subject to approval or censure by the Council itself at its annual meeting. The resolutions on these subjects can be formed in the Council and additional resolutions can be brought forward, if the Council approves. All unnecessary oratory should be avoided and resolutions formulating policy of a standing character can be first got out of the way by a formal motion of them from the Chair. After this preliminary, the Council can go into Committee to consider, approve or amend the report of progress made by the Secretaries for the past year, and, on the second day, resolutions demanding debate and deliberation may be discussed in full Council.

The next question is the procedure and constitution. We desire no autocratic President, no oligarchy of ex-Presidents and long-established officials, no looseness of procedure putting a premium on party trickery and unfair rulings. The only body of officials will be two general secretaries and two secretaries for each province, forming the executive body of the Council, who will be for the most part recorders of provincial work and summoners of the Council and will have no power to direct or control its procedure. Instead of an autocratic and influential President we should have a Chairman who will not intervene in the discussion with his views, but confine himself to guiding the deliberations as an administrator of fixed rules of procedure which he will not have the power to depart from, modify or amplify. He must therefore be, like the Speaker of the House of Commons, not an active and prominent leader who cannot be spared from the discussion, but a man of some position in the party whose probity and fairness can be universally trusted.

The last question is that of the electorate. We throw out the suggestion that, in the first place, we should cease to be bound by the British provincial units which are the creation of historical circumstances connected with the gradual conquest of India by the English traders, and have no correspondence with the natural divisions of the people, and should adopt divisions which will be favourable to the working out of the Nationalist policy. And since the main work of the party will have to be done through the vernacular, the most natural and convenient divisions will be those of the half dozen or more great literary languages, minor or dialectal tongues of inferior vitality being thrown under the great vernaculars to which they geographically or by kinship belong. It was the programme of the Nationalist party in Bengal to create a register of voters throughout the country, who could form a real electorate. Such a conception would have been impracticable in the old days when the people at large took no active part in politics; it was fast approaching the region of practicability when the repressions broke the natural course of our national development and introduced elements of arbitrary interference from above and a feeble and sporadic Terrorist reaction from below, the after-swell of which still disturbs the country. Sj. Bipin Chandra Pal has written advocating the creation of a register of Nationalists, as a basis for organisation. This is, no doubt, the only sound basis for a thoroughly democratic organisation, but so long as the after-swell lasts and the tempest may return, so long as police misrule does not give way to the complete restoration of law and order, a register of Nationalists would only be a register of victims for investigators of the Lalmohan and Mazarul Haq type to harass with arrests, house-searches, binding down under securities, prosecutions with no evidence or tainted evidence, and the other weapons which Criminal Procedure and Penal Code supply, and against which there can be no sufficient redress under an autocratic regime not responsible to any popular body, leaning on the police rather than on the people and master of the judiciary. In these circumstances we can only create convenient limited electorates for the election of our council delegates, awaiting a more favourable condition of things for democratising the base of our structure.

On these principles we can establish a deliberative body which will give shape, centrality and consistency to Nationalist propaganda and work all over the country. We invite the attention of the leading Nationalist workers throughout India to our suggestion. The proposal has been made to hold a meeting of Nationalists at Calcutta at which a definite scheme and rules may be submitted and, as far as possible, adopted in action so that the work may not be delayed. No United Congress is possible this year, and if or when it comes, the existence of our body which is avowedly a party organisation will not interfere with our joining it.

An Extraordinary Prohibition

PANDIT Bhoje Dutt of Agra has been in our midst for some time, and none had hitherto imagined that he was a political agitator or his preachings dangerous to the public peace. We all knew him as secretary of the Suddhi Samaj, a religious body having for its object the re-admission of converts from Hinduism into the fold of the religion and also, we believe, the admission of converts to Hinduism from other religions into Hindu society with the full status of Hindus. The society has been working for some time with signal success and no breach of the law or the peace. Yet the other day Mr. Swinhoe thought fit to prohibit the Pandit from lecturing in Calcutta and the public from attending his lectures for the space of two months. We reproduce the order as it affords singularly clear proof of the contention, always advanced by Nationalists, that under the present system such public liberty as we enjoy, is not an ensured right but an insecure concession, based not on status but on permission, and therefore not, properly speaking, a liberty at all. It runs: —

"Whereas it has been made to appear to me by evidence adduced before me that Pandit Bhoje Dutt, political agitator and Editor of the vernacular paper 'Musafir Arya', Agra, has arrived in Calcutta and intends to lecture in the Albert Hall in Calcutta this evening at 8 p.m. on the subject of 'Musulman logonke barkhilaf' *i.e.* against the interests of Mahomedans: —

And whereas I am satisfied that such lecturing or preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt at any place or in any building in Calcutta may lead to a serious disturbance of the public tranquillity and rioting which will be a source of danger to human life and public safety: —

And whereas I am satisfied that the immediate prevention of such lecturing and preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt within the town of Calcutta is necessary in the interests of human life and safety and in order to prevent any riot or affray, I do hereby under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code order and direct the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt to refrain from delivering any lecture or preaching or holding or taking part in any meeting within the town of Calcutta, and I hereby direct the public generally to refrain from attending or taking part in any lecture or preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt and to refrain from attending or taking any part in any meeting or meetings held by or on behalf of the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt in the town of Calcutta and I farther direct that this order shall remain in force for a period of two months from the date thereof.

Given under my hand and seal of this court dated the 25th September 1909."

The value of the evidence which so easily satisfied Mr. Swinhoe may be judged from its inaccuracy and triviality. Pandit Bhoje Dutt is not a political agitator, but a religious preacher and social reformer; the proposed lecture had nothing to do with the Mahomedans and was upon the Hindu Puranas, and there was no breach of peace or any approach to a breach of the peace at Monghyr. So much for the accuracy. Secondly, Mr. Swinhoe ought to have known that, although a lecture may be against the interests of the Mahomedans, "Against the interests of the Mahomedans" cannot be the title or subject of a lecture, and we can only suppose that this satisfactory witness was a badly-educated detective or informer who either did not know his own meaning or could not make it clear to Mr. Swinhoe. Nor is it alleged that the preaching in Monghyr resulted in a breach of the peace, only that it nearly so resulted. On such incorrect and flimsy evidence, given *ex parte* and without any opportunity to the lecturer to expose its falsity, a magistrate is able and willing to deprive a citizen of his civic rights for two months and hamper a legitimate movement. If, after proper enquiry, the Magistrate had found that there was likely to be anything inflammatory in the lecture, he could have stopped the speaker from giving that or any similar lecture, but, even so, there would be no ground for a prolonged denial of civic rights. Farther, it is not enough that a lecture should be against the interests of any community, for there may be such a thing as legitimate opposition of interests; the conversion of Hindus to Mahomedanism is against the interest of Hindus and the conversion of Mahomedans to Hinduism is against the interest of Mahomedans, but neither religion can, on that ground, be denied the right of proselytisation. If it be argued that wherever the exercise of legitimate rights may lead to a breach of the peace, that exercise may be stopped, we say that this is a most dangerous principle, since it would be enough for any section of the community to break or threaten to break the peace to stop others from the exercise of their legitimate rights. On such grounds Mr. Asquith should be debarred from holding any meeting because the suffragettes climb walls and throw stones wherever he goes! Such a principle simply means putting a premium upon lawlessness. In other countries the indiscreet use of powers by Magistrates is restrained by public opinion but in India there is no such safeguard.

(Since the above was in type, the Police have undertaken to prove their statements, and the facts stated above must be taken as Pandit Bhoje Dutt's side of the case. Our general criticisms of the policy of the order remain unaffected. The chance now given to the Police to substantiate their case ought to have been given to the Pandit before the order was passed. — EDITOR)

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Anandamath V
Indian Art and an Old Classic

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 9th OCTOBER 1909 { No. 16

Facts and Opinions

The Apostasy of the National Council

We have received an open letter from some teachers of the Rangpur National school in which they warn the President of the National Council of Education of the evil effects likely to ensue from the recent National Risley Circular and protest strongly against the policy underlying it. For reasons of space we are unable to publish the letter. The signatories point out that the movement took its birth in the boycott movement and was from the first, closely associated with it in nature and sympathy, that the participation of young men in the national awakening has been one of the chief causes of its rapid progress and success and that the new policy of the Council not only divorces education from the life of the country, but destroys the sympathy and support of the most progressive elements in the nation. It is also pointed out that the donation made by Raja Subodh Mallik, from which the practicability of the movement took its beginning, and the sacrifices made by the teachers and students of the first established schools were intimately connected with the revolt against the Risley Circular, and yet the same circular is repeated in a more stringent form by the Council itself. There were two conditions attached to Raja Subodh Chandra's gift: the first that the maintenance of the Rangpur and Dacca schools, which were created to give shelter to students who persisted in taking part in politics in spite of all prohibitions, should be assisted out of his donation, and second that no form of Government control should be submitted to by the Council. It would be mere hypocrisy to deny that the issue of the prohibitory telegrams by the Secretary was the result of the Government circular previous to the seventh of August. We do not know by what morality or law of honour the Council clings to the donation while infringing in the spirit its most vital condition. Perhaps these things also, no less than courage and sincerity, are considered unessential in this new "national" education. We notice that Sj. Hirendranath Dutt at Dacca seems to have openly proclaimed the abjuration of all connection with politics as part of the duty of a "National" school. We must therefore take the divorce of the National Council from the national movement as part of a deliberate and permanent policy, and not, as it might otherwise have been imagined, a temporary aberration due largely to the fact that the President and the most active of the two Secretaries are members of Legislative Councils and therefore parts of the Government which is supposed to have no control over the institution. All that we can now expect of the Council is to be a centre of scientific and technical education; it can no longer be a workshop in which national spirit and energy are to be forged and shaped.

The Progress of China

A recent article in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* gives a picture of the enormous educational progress made by China in a few years. In the short time since the Boxer troubles China has revolutionised her educational system, established a network of modern schools of all ranks, provided for a thorough modern education for her princes and nobles, and added to the intellectual education a thorough grounding in military knowledge and the habits of the soldier, so that, when the process is complete, the whole Chinese people will be a nation trained in arms whom the greatest combination of powers will not care to touch. On another side of national development, a railway has just been opened which has been entirely constructed and will be run by Chinese. When the process of education is well forward, it is intended by the Chinese Government to transform itself into a constitutional and Parliamentary government, and in its programme this great automatic revolution has been fixed to come off in another eight years. No other race but the Chinese, trained by the Confucian system to habits of minute method, perfect organisation and steady seriousness in all things great and small, could thus calmly map out a stupendous political, social and educational change, as if it were the programme of a ceremonial function, and carry it out with thoroughness and efficiency. Once the Chinese have made up their minds to this revolution, they are likely to carry it out with the greatest possible completeness, businesslike method, effective organisation, and the least possible waste and friction. In the history of China, no less than the history of Japan, we are likely to see the enormous value of national will-power using the moral outcome of a great and ancient discipline, even while breaking the temporary mould in which that discipline had cast society, thought and government. We in India have an ancient discipline much more powerful than the Chinese or Japanese; but where is the centre of sovereignty in India which will direct the national will-power to the right use of that discipline? Where even is the centre of national endeavour which will make up for the absence of such a Government? We have a Government manned by aliens, out of touch with and contemptuous of the sources of national strength and culture; we have an education empty of them which seeks to replace our ancient discipline by a foreign strength, instead of recovering and invigorating our own culture and turning it to modern uses; we have leaders trained in the foreign discipline who do not know or believe in the force that would, if made use of, revolutionise India more swiftly and mightily than Japan was or China is being revolutionised. It is this and not internal division or the drag of old and unsuitable conditions that makes the work in India more difficult than in any other Asiatic country.

Partition Day

Partition Day comes round again on the 16th October. Last year, executive caprice prevented the day from being celebrated with all its accustomed ceremonies; this year, there is not likely to be a similar interference, and we trust that all the usual circumstances of the occasion will be observed without any abridgment. On the 7th of August the official organisers were afraid to start the procession from the College Square; now that Sj. Surendranath is with us, we trust that no such unworthy considerations will be allowed to mar the fullness and imposing nature of this feature. From no other centre in Calcutta is an effective procession at all probable, and it was seen last August that the only result of trying to change it was to break up the procession and mar its effect. The two most essential features, however, of the Partition Day are the Rakhi Bandhan and the reading of the National Proclamation; it is above all a day of the declaration of Bengal's indivisible unity and these two functions are for that reason the very kernel of the observances. It is unfortunate that the celebration should coincide this year with the Puja sales, as this may interfere with the closing of the shops, which is the most salient sign of protest against the dismemberment. We hope the official organisers are taking steps to counteract this unfavourable factor.

Nationalist Work in England

WE PUBLISH in this issue an article by Sj. Bipin Chandra Pal in which he suggests the necessity of a Nationalist agency or bureau in England, and states the reasoning which has led him to modify the views formerly held by the whole party on the inutility of work in England under the present political conditions. Bipin Babu has been busy, ever since his departure from India, in work of this kind and it goes without saying that he would not have engaged in it or persisted in it under discouraging circumstances, if it had not been borne in on him that it was advisable and necessary. At the same time, rightly or wrongly, the majority of our party still believe in the concentration of work into the effort to elicit and organise the latent strength of the nation, and cannot believe that work in England at present is anything but hopeless and a waste of money and energy. We freely admit that under certain circumstances an agency in England might become indispensable. That would certainly be the case if an elective body with substantial but limited powers were established in India and serious differences of opinion were to arise between the Government and the popular representatives. But such a state of things is yet remote, and the reformed councils will certainly not be such a body. At present, what will such a bureau or agency do for the country? Bipin Babu suggests that it may supply the British public with correct information so as to stem the tide of unscrupulous or prejudiced misinformation pouring into England through Reuter and other Anglo-Indian sources, and that, if the British public get correct information, they will at once put a stop to the policy of repression. We confess, our impression is the reverse, — that however correct the information we supply, the British public as a whole — we do not speak of just and open-minded individuals, — will still prefer to put confidence in the misstatements of their own countrymen rather than in the true statements of what they believe to be an inferior race indebted to them for any element of civilisation it may now possess. Our impression is that even a correct idea of the facts would not necessarily lead to a correct appreciation and policy based on those facts; — many political and psychological factors would interfere.

If we are to change our opinion, it must be either as the result of new experience showing the effect of agitation in England or of new reasoning correcting the imperfections of our old premises and conclusions. The only fact that seems to be in favour of a readjustment of our views, is the energetic campaign in Parliament of Mr. Mackarness and his friends for the release of the deportees. It is alleged that, but for the untoward incident of the Curzon-Wyllie murder, some if not all the deportees would by this time have been released. We have our doubts about this conclusion. Sir Henry Cotton and some of his colleagues were always ever-hopeful about the effect of their pressure, and their expectations were more than once disappointed. No ministerial pronouncement ever lent any colour to their idea that the release was imminent when the assassination happened. All that the Government had promised, was to consider the question of the deportees' farther detention, in the usual course, on the presentation of the six-monthly report, a consideration usual without any Parliamentary agitation. The discomfort of the questions was, no doubt, great and the long-established sentiment of many Liberals and not a few Conservatives was offended by the long detention of public men without a trial. But this in itself, though it strewed the path of the deporters with thorns instead of its being, as they would have liked, strewn with roses, would not, by itself, have secured the release of the deportees. Even if it had, the release of one or two or more of the deportees would not have removed the policy of repression. Only the repeal of the Act could have done that, and it must have been followed by the eradication of executive illegalities and police harassment as well as of the readiness of Government to pass repressive legislation, before the real obstacles in the way of peaceful progress could be removed. Would an agency in England seriously help towards such a consummation, — that is the question. It means the diversion of money and effort, and we must see a reasonable chance of a return before we embark on it.

Bipin Babu urges that it will, and bases his conception on a certain reading of the British character and policy which we hesitate to endorse in its entirety. It is quite true that we have heard of certain irresponsible Englishmen longing for a violent outbreak on the part of the people, which would give them an excuse for equally violent measures to crush Indian aspirations for ever. But we do not believe for a moment, that some of the responsible officials, — and that we believe is all Bipin Babu implies, — cherished the same idea. We think that all Government officials have regarded the outbreak of Terrorism, small though it was, with alarm and the utmost anxiety to get rid of it, and indeed we believe the institution of organised repression to have been the result of an ignorant and unreasoning alarm which hugely exaggerated the dimensions and meaning of the outbreak, as well as wholly misunderstood the drift of the Nationalist movement. We take exception also to Bipin Babu's suggestion of the bully in the British character being responsible for the repressions, as if it were something peculiar to the British race. What Bipin Babu wishes to indicate by this phrase, the readiness to use repression and what are erroneously called strong measures, to intimidate a popular movement, is a tendency which belongs not to British character especially but to human nature, and should be considered the result not of character but of the position. The Government in India favour repression because it seems the only way of getting over what they regard as a dangerous movement, without concessions which mean the immediate or gradual cessation of their absolute paramountcy. It is a case of incompatible interests, and until both parties can be brought to a modus vivendi, such it will remain. How is that incompatibility to be surmounted, for, at first sight, it seems to be an insurmountable obstacle. Bipin Babu relies on the enlightened self-interest of the British people and to a certain extent on their civilised conscience. We think we may as well leave the civilised conscience out of the reckoning for the present. The civilised conscience is a remarkably queer and capricious quantity, on which, frankly, we place no reliance whatever. It is very sensitive to breaches of principle by others and very indignant when the same breaches of principle are questioned in its own conduct. It sees the mote in other eyes; it is obstinately unaware of the beam in its own. It is always criticising other nations, but it ignores or is furious at criticism of its own. It has fits of sensitiveness in which it makes large resolutions, but it can never be trusted to persist in them contrary to its own interests. This civilised conscience is not peculiar to the British people, but belongs in a greater or less degree to every European nation with the possible exception of Russia. We prefer infinitely to rely, if we have to rely on anything, on the sense of enlightened self-interest. Here also we differ from Bipin Babu. He argues as if the British were a thoughtful and clear-minded people, and only needed the data to be correctly placed before them in order to understand their interests correctly. This is far from the truth about British character. The English are, or were, a people with a rough practical common sense and business-like regularity and efficiency which, coupled with a mighty thew and sinew and a bulldog tenacity and courage, have carried them through all dangers and difficulties and made them one of the first peoples of the globe. They have had men of unsurpassed thought-power and clearness of view and purpose, but the race is not thoughtful and clear-minded; on the contrary on all questions requiring thought, intelligence and sympathy they are amazingly muddle-headed and can only learn by knocking their shins against hard and rough facts. When this first happens, they swear profusely, rub their shins and try to kick the obstacle out of the way. If it consents to be kicked out of the path, they go on their way rejoicing; otherwise, after hurting their shins repeatedly they begin to respect the obstacle, stop swearing and kicking, and negotiate with it. In this process, familiar to all who have to do with Englishmen from the point of view of conflicting interests, there is much rough practical sense but little thought and intelligence. It is on this conception of the British character that the Nationalist party has hitherto proceeded. The hard fact of a continued and increasing Boycott, an indomitable national movement, a steady passive resistance, have been the obstacles they have sought to present to the British desire for an absolute lordship. We must prevent these obstacles from being kicked out of the way by repression, but the way to achieve that end is to show a tenacity and courage and a power of efficiency rivalling the British, and not to make an appeal to the conscience and clear common sense of the British public. We could only imagine such an appeal having an effect in the as yet improbable circumstance of a Liberal Government with a small majority dependent for its existence on a powerful Socialist and Independent Labour party. Even if this should be the result of the approaching general elections, the appeal could not have effect unless the hard facts were there in strong evidence in India itself. Our whole effort should be devoted to establishing these hard facts in a much more efficient and thorough way than we have hitherto done, and the only way is for the Nationalist party to establish its separate existence, clear from the drag of Moderatism on the one side and disturbance by ill-instructed outbreaks of Terrorism on the other, and erect itself into a living, compact and working force in India.

One day the Government in India will be obliged to come to the Nationalist party, which it is now trying to destroy, for help in bringing about a satisfactory settlement of the quarrel between the bureaucracy and the people. But that will not be till they have exhausted their hopes of achieving the same end on their own terms by playing on the weaknesses of the Moderate party. If the country were to follow the Moderate lead and content itself with the paltry and undesirable measure of reform now proposed, the progress of India towards self-government would be indefinitely postponed. The Nationalist party therefore, while showing all willingness to coalesce with the Moderates in the Congress on reasonable terms, must jealously guard their separate individuality and existence and decline to enter the Congress on terms which would make them an inoperative force and perpetuate the misbegotten creature of the Allahabad Convention Committee under the name of the Congress. Nor should they be drawn into experiments in England which are, at present, of doubtful value or none.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Brain of India I
Anandamath VI

College Square Speech – 2

MR. AUROBINDO Ghose next rose amid loud cheers and cries of "Bande Mataram". He said that the meeting was the last they could hold before the Partition Day, which was approaching, and so he could speak a few words about that illustrious day which should be observed with great national enthusiasm. The 16th October had become a memorable day, not only in the history of India, but in that of the world. The 7th of August was the day of the awakening of the nation and the 16th October was the day when that awakened nation publicly declared its individuality and indestructible vitality. A time might come when the future generation would have an occasion to celebrate that day as one of national rejoicing. The speaker then dwelt upon the several aspects of Partition Day, when Bengal was split up, and said he did not recognise the separation and would not do so. It was on that day that they declared through the leaders of the nation, and by a national proclamation, that the unity of Bengal remained intact and that there was no power strong enough to break it. He explained the true meaning of the Swadeshi and boycott movements and went on to say that they should have a separate existence. They had a past and a future and should assert their individuality. He emphasised the fact that every country in the world was more or less Swadeshi. So Bengal must learn the value of self-help. The Partition Day should also be associated with national determination to revive the commerce and industry of the country and to regain that prosperity which once prevailed in India. Bengal must remain united.

Mr. Ghose proceeded to say that the national movement was

Delivered at College Square, Calcutta, on 10 October 1909. Text published in the Times of India *(Bombay) on 11 October.*

beset with manifold difficulties. Holding up before the audience a piece of Manchester cloth, stamped with the words "Bande Mataram", he exclaimed that the great cause was suffering on account of certain unprincipled men who were trying to assail the Swadeshi movement from all sides. The speaker had learned with great sorrow that foreign cloths were still pouring into the market and having a large sale. The more the difficulties in the way, he declared, the stronger would the movement be. He concluded his address by asking his countrymen to observe the 16th of October with due mourning.

Bhawanipur Speech

GENTLEMEN, — The time before us is extremely short. There are other speakers who will address you and the sun is now hastening down to its set. Therefore I hope you will excuse me if what I have to say to you is very briefly said. We meet here preliminary to the holding of the anniversary of the Partition. Babu Lalit Mohan Das has told you the significance of that day. Let me add this, that the 16th October has become one of the chief landmarks of our year, and not only the chief landmark of our year but the landmark of the progress of our movement — a movement of the progress of Swadeshi and boycott which we undertook in the year when the Partition was effected. We see on that day how far it has progressed, or if it has receded, how far it has receded. We are carrying on that movement at the present time under the greatest difficulties possible. Every kind of obstruction is being thrown in our way. You know very well what efforts have been made to mar the attendance at the meeting. It is supposed that the meeting is mainly composed of students, a delusion which the authorities cannot get rid of and therefore strenuous efforts are made to prevent students of our colleges from joining any political meeting and pressure is brought to bear upon the authorities of colleges to dismiss from their employment any professor who joins in the political life of his country. Yesterday the news was published of the suppression of another Samiti, the Anushilan Samiti. We all know what the Anushilan Samiti is. We all know that it is one of those Samitis which has the least to do with politics. It is one of the most self-restrained and self-denying of all the associations and confined itself to perfectly harmless activities, to improve

Delivered at Bhawanipur, Calcutta, on 13 October 1909. Text published in the Bengalee *on 15 October.*

the physique of the nation, to give relief in time of famine, to help their countrymen on occasions like the recent Ardhoday Yog. This was the kind of work which this Samiti did. Suddenly the Government has found out that with the existence of this society it is impossible to carry on the administration of the law. Our associations have been suppressed and we are carrying on this Swadeshi movement without organisation, without proper instrument and without proper equipment. We have to face any number of temptations, we have to face any number of obstacles, we have to face also intimidation. In spite of all that, we cling to the movement and we go on with it.

The one message we can give to you, under such circumstances, is the message to hold firm. If you cannot progress see that you have not receded. Hold firm to the Swadeshi, hold firm to your refusal to the recognition of the Partition, hold firm to the national movement which is uplifting India. Let not any act of yours individually or collectively make you guilty in the eye of posterity in this critical hour of the destinies of India. Remember this, whether we look to our own efforts to raise the nation or whether we look to our rulers, that nothing can be done by the weak and so nothing is given to the weak. Remember the people of England do not understand weakness. They only understand strength. Remember this that they do not understand those who aspire to a height and yet flinch. They only understand resolution, steadfastness and determination. Even if you look from that standpoint the only message that the leader of the people can give to you is always to hold firm. If we look higher, if we look to the deeper significance of this movement, remember that whenever a subject nation arises it is by the will of God. If only we are true and hold firm, everything in this God-given movement will help towards the goal. As favourable circumstances help us so also will unfavourable circumstances help us. Temptation is necessary to maintain the moral fibre of the nation, both to maintain and to strengthen it. Resistance to obstacles is necessary to train its capacity to resistance, refusal to yield to intimidation necessary to attain that strength and courage without which no nation can rise, or if it rises to maintain itself in the great struggle which pervades this world. Therefore, whatever happens to us, once we have started let us carry it forward. If we are defeated it is in order to learn how to conquer. If we are suppressed it is in order to learn how to rise irresistibly; and if we for a moment recoil, it is in order that we may be led forward more swiftly and further on. Therefore I trust that even with all these obstacles and even in spite of various rumours we hear on this 16th of October, the landmark of our progress, we will show that we have not receded one step but progressed. Even if it is not so, let us remember the enormous difficulties that we have to face. Let us remember the power that led us on. Whatever happens let us have faith and courage — faith that looks beyond all momentary obstacles and reverses and sees the goal that God has set before us, and the courage that never flinches for a moment but moves forward calmly, wisely, but strongly and irresistibly to that goal.

Beadon Square Speech – 2

THEN amidst fresh cheers and renewed and prolonged shouts of "Bande Mataram" in came Babu Aurobindo Ghose and the inevitable rush for *rakhi bandhan* ensued for a few minutes. Babu Aurobindo also spoke a few words in Bengali. He said that he was unwilling to speak in a foreign tongue on such a sacred occasion. He was not, on the other hand, accustomed to speak in his mother tongue. But he would only say one thing, viz., that the *rakhi bandhan* was not only a bond of thread but it was the semblance of another tie. It was the sign of uniting the hearts of millions of people of United Bengal. The *rakhi* might be removed in a day or two but that sacred bond of hearts would remain firm through all ages. There was no power on earth which could untie that sacred knot — it was a national bond. They had taken oath. They should stick to it, God helping.

Delivered at Beadon Square, Calcutta, on 16 October 1909, the fourth anniversary of the effectuation of the Partition of Bengal. Report published in the Bengalee *on 17 October.*

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 16th OCTOBER 1909 { No. 17

Facts and Opinions

Gokhale's Apologia

We do not think we need waste much space on the arguments of the recent speech in which Mr. Gokhale has attempted to reconcile the contradictory utterances in which his speeches have lately abounded. Vibhishan's utterances are of little importance nowadays to anyone except the Government and Anglo-India, who are naturally disposed to make the most of his defection from the cause of the people. Justice Chandavarkar, who long ago gave up the cause of his country for a judgeship and whose present political opinions can be estimated from his remarks in the Swaraj case, grandiloquently condemned the "vilification" to which Mr. Gokhale has been exposed, and declared that condemnation from such quarters was the greatest compliment a man like his protege could have. Of course the worthy judge could not foresee that the *Englishman* would hail the first Servant of India as a brand plucked from the burning and compliment him on being the only righteous and right-thinking man among Indian politicians, — which is after all a little hard on Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Mr. Harkissen Lal. But in the same report that enshrines Mr. Chandavarkar's semi-official rhetoric, we have it that the Commissioner of Police and his deputy were present to support the speaker with their moral influence and loudly applauded his sentiments. Surely this was a yet greater compliment to Mr. Gokhale, — the greatest he could receive. And if we suppose, with the Bombay Judge, that the condemnation of his countrymen is an honour for which the erstwhile popular leader eagerly pants, surely the support and loud applause of the two highest police officials in the land, — and one of them his old friend, Mr. Vincent, of whom he must have pleasant memories connected with his famous apology to the British army, — must have been yet dearer to the statesman's heart. Only three things are noteworthy in the speech itself. Mr. Gokhale fervently declares that it is not only the duty of every Indian to shun religiously all aspirations towards independence, but also to rush to the defence of the Government when it is attacked. This explains Mr. Gokhale's recent speeches. It is a pity that he awoke to the sense of his duty so late; otherwise, not being overburdened by a sense of consistency he might have rushed to the help of the Government against himself when he was loudly advocating political Boycott and even outdistancing the most extreme Nationalist by suggesting the refusal of payment of taxes. The second thing we note, is the remarkable statement that, even if we try to use peaceful methods, the Government will not long allow them to retain their peaceful character. This can mean only that the Government will deliberately force the advocates of Indian freedom to use violent means by persecuting the use of lawful and peaceful methods. We had recently to dissent from a much more limited suggestion by Sj. Bipin Pal, but an aspersion of this kind from Mr. Gokhale, not on officials but on the Government whom he is supporting so thoroughly in their policy, is amazing. Truly, Mr. Gokhale hardly seems to know what discretion means. In the same way he tried to teach the young men of India, among whom he admits that the gospel of independence has gained immense ground, that violence was the only road to the realisation of their cherished ideal. Finally, we find Mr. Gokhale appealing to the people of this country to give up their ideals from personal self-interest and the danger of harassment and martyrdom which attends the profession and pursuit of the new politics. Truly has a mighty teacher arisen in

India! We could have passed by an argument based on the doubt whether our course was right and helpful to the country, but this sordid appeal to the lowest motives in humanity, selfishness and cowardice, makes one's gorge rise. And this is the man who claims, we hear, to have preceded the Nationalists as a prophet of self-sacrifice and the cult of the motherland. Well may we echo the cry of the Israelite malcontents, "These be thy gods, O Israel!"

The People's Proclamation

In our last issue we commented on the importance and significance of the People's Proclamation as part of the celebration of the 16th October. It is a curious irony of Fate that, immediately afterwards, it should have been deliberately decided by our leaders to drop the Proclamation from the proceedings. We do not know in what particular quarter of that quaking morass of fears and apprehensions which is called the mind of our leaders, or in answer to what particular touch the tremor arose which has manifested itself in this amazing excision. The mutilated copy of last year's circular which is disgraced by this act of inexplicable backsliding and timidity, comes out under the signatures of Sjts. Surendranath Banerji, Motilal Ghose and Rai Jotindranath Chaudhuri. We are certainly astonished to find Moti Babu's name under such a document and we can only assume that it was inserted without getting his consent or that consent was asked and given by telegraph from Deoghar without his being informed of the omission. Originally, there was another honoured name in that place, but the gentleman who bore it declined to sign unless the omission was rectified, and Moti Babu's name seems to have been thrust in at the last moment in order to fill up the gap, — a proceeding not very complimentary to one of the first living names in Bengal. Nor do we quite understand how Rai Jotindranath Chaudhuri induced himself to be a consenting party to the omission, if indeed he knew of it. Be that as it may, the Nationalist leaders will do their duty in opposing this act of culpable weakness. But we are curious to know how the people will take it. Their attitude will be some sign of the present altitude of the political thermometer. The tone and temper of the movement showed a distinct rise till the Hughly Conference, subsequently it seems to have been sinking. And no wonder, with such leadership. Even a nation of strong men led by the weak, blind or selfish, becomes easily infected with the vices of its leaders, and the strength of Bengal though immensely increased, is not yet the perfect and tempered steel that it must become, hard as adamant and light in the lifting.

The Anushilan Samiti

The proclamation of the Anushilan Samiti in Calcutta is one of the most autocratic and unjustifiable acts that the bureaucracy have yet committed. The Calcutta Samiti has distinguished itself, since the beginning of its career, by the rigidity with which it has enforced its rule of not mixing as an association with current politics and confining itself to such activities as were not only unobjectionable, but of such a nature that even the most autocratic Government, provided it had the least sympathy with the moral and physical improvement of its subjects, must wholly approve. Its original and main motive has been the improvement of the physique in the race, and there has been no instance in which the Samiti has gone beyond its function as a physical training institution or tried to use the improved physique for any combined purpose. Beyond this the main activities have been turned to the help of the Police and the public on such occasions as the Ardhoday Yog, to the organisation of famine relief, in which the Samiti has done splendid work, and recently to other action recommended by the Government itself. We believe it has even to a certain extent enjoyed the approbation of high European officials. It is indeed an ironical comment on the demand for co-operation that the only great association born of the new movement which has shown any anxiety to depart from a line of strict independent activity and co-operate with the Government, should have been selected, at this time of peace and quiet, for proclamation on the extraordinary ground that it interferes in some undefined and mysterious way with the administration of the law. Advocates of co-operation, take note. Meanwhile what can the man in the street conclude except that the Government is determined to allow no organisation to exist among the Bengalis which has the least trace in it of self-help, training and patriotic effort? For no explanation is vouchsafed of this arbitrary act. In an august and awful silence the gods of Belvedere hurl their omnipotent paper thunderbolts, careless of what mere men may think, confident in their self-arrogated attributes of omnipotence, omniscience and omni-benevolence, a divine, irresistible and irresponsible mystery.

The National Fund

We have received a letter from Mr. A. C. Sen of Delhi in which he recommends that the National Fund should be utilised for a Swadeshi Museum. The necessity of such an institution has been engaging our attention for some time, and no one can dispute the immense advantages that will accrue from it; but the institution, if properly conceived and managed, needs only a small initial fund for its support in the first stages of its existence and will soon become self-supporting. It is quite unnecessary to divert to it a large sum like the National Fund. Meanwhile, if we allow divided counsels to obtain as to the disposal of the fund, the only result will be that it will remain where it is, useless and unused. We note that the opposition to the proposal unanimously passed at Hughly emanates from a few individuals whose justification for professing to speak in the name of the subscribers is not yet clear, — the Anglo-Indian papers who are interested in preventing the erection of the hall, and, among Indian papers, the *Hindu Patriot*, the *Indian Mirror*, and the *Indian Nation*, all of them papers of a very limited circulation and opposed to the national movement in its most vital features. We are not aware that any organ of the popular party, Moderate or Nationalist, has opposed the sense of the country as formulated in Sj. Surendranath Banerji's resolution at Hughly.

Union Day

THE 16TH of October is generally known as the Partition Day, and it is inevitable that, so long as the administrative division stands, this feature should be emphasised. Especially now that the Reforms threaten to make the division in our administrative lives permanent and real, a mournful significance attaches to the celebration this year. It is possible that, before the day comes round again, the fatal complaisance and weakness of leaders and people may have effected the division between East and West Bengal which the hand of Lord Curzon attempted in vain. The Reform drives in the thin end of the wedge, the rulers know how to trust to time and national cowardice and inertia to do the rest. But if we can overcome the temptation as we overcame the intimidation, the 16th of October will take its place among the national festivals of the future under the name of Union Day.

The unity of Bengal was almost complete when Lord Curzon struck his blow; but there were defects, little fissures which might under untoward circumstances develop into great and increasing cracks. Lord Curzon's blow devised in a spirit of Machiavellian statesmanship, but delivered in a fit of unstatesmanlike haste and fury, instead of splitting asunder, soldered Bengali unity into a perfect whole. Bengal one and indivisible came into existence on the 16th of October. The indivisibility has yet to be confirmed by withstanding the covert and subtle pressure of the reformed Councils, but, even if for a moment there is backsliding, the young hold the future and in their hearts Bengal is one and indivisible.

The unity of India has been slowly prepared by the pressure from above and the creation of a reaction from below. It is only by that reaction giving birth to a self-conscious democracy aspirant towards oneness and freedom and reliant on its own manhood, that the dream of a United India can be materialised. The publication of the People's Proclamation on the 16th was the first self-conscious utterance of such a democracy, as yet imperfect and inchoate but aware of its separate existence and conscious of its potential strength. That democracy is now alive in Bengal and Maharashtra, it is struggling to get existence in Punjab and Madras and, to a slighter extent, in the other provinces. When it is fully awake all over India, the unity of the whole country will be within sight. On the 16th of October, in the People's Proclamation, the first condition of a United India was created.

There is yet another unity which is as yet only dimly symbolised in the ceremony of the Rakhi, a unity which cannot come into being until a perfect comradeship in aspiration, in struggle, in suffering shall have been created throughout the length and breadth of the land, — the unity in national comradeship of the children of one mighty Mother, whatever their class or condition, — Indian fraternity based on Indian liberty and Indian equality.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Revival of Indian Art
The Brain of India II
Anandamath VII, VIII

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 6th NOVEMBER 1909 { No. 18

Facts and Opinions

Mahomedan Representation

The question of separate representation for the Mahomedan community is one of those momentous issues raised in haste by a statesman unable to appreciate the forces with which he is dealing, which bear fruit no man expected and least of all the ill-advised Frankenstein who was first responsible for its creation. The common belief among Hindus is that the Government have decided to depress the Hindu element in the Indian people by raising the Mahomedan element, and ensure a perpetual preponderance in their own favour by leaning on a Mahomedan vote purchased by a system of preference. The denials of high-placed officials, who declare that it is only out of a careful consideration for the rights and interests of minorities that they have made special Mahomedan representation an essential feature of the Reform Scheme, have not convinced a single Hindu mind; for the obvious retort is that it is only one minority which is specially cared for and this special care is extended to it even in provinces where it is in a large majority. No provision at all has been made for the safeguarding of Hindu minorities, for the Parsis, the Sikhs, the Christians and other sections which may reasonably declare that they too are Indians and citizens of the Empire no less than the Mahomedans. The workings of this belief in the mind of the premier community in India cannot at present be gauged. It is not till the details of the Reform Scheme are published, the elections over, the councils working and the preponderance of the pro-government vote visible, that those workings can assume a definite shape. At present irritation, heart-burning, a sullen gloom and a growing resolve to assert and organise their separate existence and work for their own hand are the first results of the separatist policy. How far Sir Pherozshah and his valiant band will be able to fight this growing discontent, remains to be seen. It is quite possible that the pro-Mahomedanism of the Reform Scheme may lead to a Hindu upheaval all over India, as fervent and momentous as the convulsion in Bengal, Madras and Maharashtra which followed Lord Curzon's Partition blunder. How far it will advantage the Mahomedans to be in active opposition to an irritated and revolted Hindu community throughout the country they live in, is a question for Mahomedans to consider. A certain section with Syed Hyder Reza at their head, have considered it and are against the separate representation altogether. Another section represented by Mr. Ali Imam are for a compromise between the full Moslem demand for separate electorates and the Hindu demand for equal treatment of all communities. Unfortunately, this compromise is merely the Government scheme which Hindu sentiment has almost unanimously condemned as unfair and partial. The only section of Hindus in its favour is the dwindling minority which follows the great Twin Brethren of Bombay; and the support given by Mr. Gokhale and Sir Pherozshah to the separate representation idea is likely to cost them their influence with the moderate Hindu community everywhere outside the narrow radius of their personal influence. A third section rejoicing in the leadership of Mr. Amir Ali, are the irreconcilables of militant Islam aspiring to hold India under the British aegis as heirs of the Mogul and keepers of the gateway of India. The Reform Scheme is the second act of insanity which has germinated from the unsound policy of the bureaucracy. It will cast all India into the melting pot and complete the work of the Partition. Our own attitude is clear. We will have no part or lot in reforms which give no popular majority, no substantive control, no opportunity for Indian capacity and statesmanship, no seed of democratic expansion. We will not for a moment accept separate electorates or separate representation, not because we are opposed to a large Mahomedan influence in popular assemblies when they come, but because we will be no party to a distinction which recognises Hindu and Mahomedan as permanently separate political units and thus precludes the growth of a single and indivisible Indian nation. We oppose any such attempt at division whether it comes from an embarrassed Government seeking for political support or from an embittered Hindu community allowing the passions of the moment to obscure their vision of the future.

The Growth of Turkey

The article on young Turkey and its military strength, extracted in our columns this week from the *Indian Daily News*, is one of great interest. Behind the deprecation of Turkish Chauvinism and Militarism we hear the first note of European alarm at the rise of a second Asiatic Power able to strike as well as to defend its honour and integrity against European aggression. The fact that it is the army in Turkey which stands for free institutions, is the greatest guarantee that could be given of the permanence of the new Turkey, for it assures a time of internal quiet while the country goes through the delicate and dangerous process of readjusting its whole machinery and ways of public thought and action from the habits of an irresponsible autocratic administration to those which suit free institutions and democratic ideas. No doubt, the support of the army veils a Dictatorship. But that is an inevitable stage in a great and sudden transition of this kind, and suits Asiatic countries, however perilous it may have been in other times to European countries when men could not be trusted not to misuse power for their own purposes to the detriment of their country. In Europe the present high standard of public spirit, duty and honour was the slow creation of free institutions. To Asiatics, not yet corrupted, as many of us in India have been, by the worst part of European individualism and an unnatural education divorced from morality and patriotism, a high standard of public spirit, duty and honour comes with the first awakenings of a freer life; for the Asiatic discipline has always been largely one of self-effacement, the subordination of the individual to a community and the scrupulous adhesion to principle at the cost of personal predilection and happiness. As in Turkey now, so in Japan, it was a few strong men who, winning control of the country by the strength of great ideas backed by the sword, right supported by might, held the land safe and quiet while they revolutionised the ideas and institutions of the whole nation, forged a strength by sea and land no enemy could despise and secured from the gratitude of their race for their wisdom, selflessness and high nobility of purpose that implicit following which at first they compelled by force. The complaint that the young Turks ignore the necessity of civil reorganisation, commerce and education is a complaint without wisdom, if not without knowledge. The circumstances of Turkey demand that the first attention of her statesmen should be given to military and naval efficiency. The Revolution plucked her from the verge of an abyss of disintegration. The desperate diplomacy and cunning of Sultan Abdul Hamid had stayed her long on that verge, but she was beginning to slip slowly over when the stronger hand of Mahmud Shevket Pasha seized her and drew her back. Even so, the deposition of the cunning and skilful diplomatist of Yildiz Palace might have been the signal for a general spoliation of Turkey. Austria began a rush for the Balkans, Greece tried to hurry a crisis in Crete. The shaking of the Turkish sword in the face of the Greek and the rapid and efficient reorganisation of army and navy against Europe were both vitally necessary to the safety of the Empire. They were the calculated steps not of Chauvinism but of a defensive statesmanship.

China Enters

The circle of constitutionally governed Asiatic countries increases. To Turkey, Persia and Japan, China is added. Towards the close of the ten years set apart in the Chinese programme for the preparation of self-government, the Chinese Government has kept its promise to grant a constitution. Provincial Assemblies have been established, are working and have shown their reality and independence by opposing Government demands. The electoral basis of an Imperial Assembly has been provided. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the steady, resolute, methodical Chinese, with their unrivalled genius for organisation, will make a success of the constitutional experiment. In all Asia now, with the exception of Siam and Afghanistan, the only countries which are denied a constitutional Government are those which have not vindicated their national freedom. Even in Afghanistan the first ineffective stirrings of life have been seen and will grow to something formidable before many years are over. We wonder whether Lord Morley and his advisers really believe that when they are surrounded by a free and democratic Asia, the great Indian race can be kept in a state of tutelage and snail-paced advancement, much less put off to a future age in the dim mists of a millennial futurity to which the penetrating vision of the noble and Radical Lord cannot pierce. The worst opponents of Indian freedom know well what this Asiatic constitutionalism means, and therefore the *Englishman* struggles, in the face of continual disappointment, to foresee the speedy collapse of Nationalism and Parliamentary Government in Persia, Turkey and even Japan as the inevitable fate of an institution foreign to the Asiatic genius, which is popularly supposed to recoil from freedom and hug most lovingly the heaviest chains.

The Patiala Arrests

For some time past the Native States of Rajputana and Punjab have been vying with each other in promulgations and legislations of a drastic character against sedition and conspiracy. The object of these edicts seems to be to stifle all agitation or semblance of any political thought and activity that may be directed against the existing state of things not in the States themselves but in British India. Otherwise, it is impossible to account for the Draconian severity of the language and substance of these ukases or the foolish thoroughness of some of the measures adopted, such as the prohibition of entry even to colourless papers like the *Bengalee*. The exponents of Anglo-Indian opinion point triumphantly to these measures both as a proof of aristocratic loyalty to British officialdom and as an index of the severity with which the agitation would be visited if, instead of the misplaced leniency of British bureaucrats, we were exposed to the ruthlessness of an indigenous government. As every Indian knows, these self-gratulations are insincere and meaningless. The majority of Native States are wholly under the thumb of the Resident and, with the exception of one or two independent princes, like the Gaekwar, neither Maharaja nor Council of Administration can call their souls their own. On all this comes the commotion in Patiala. The Patiala conspiracy has yet to be proved to be more real than the Midnapur specimen. But, if all is true that is being asserted in the Punjab press as to the refusal of the most ordinary privileges of defence to the numerous accused and the amazing and successful defiance of High Court orders by Mr. Warburton, the police are not going the best way to convince the public opinion on this point. The facts stated amount to a gross and shameless denial of justice. We do not blame the young Maharaja for his inability to interfere in favour of the oppressed victims of police rule. We know how helpless the princes are in the face of an Anglo-Indian Resident or employee and we wholly discredit the newspaper assertion that these strange proceedings were initiated or are willingly countenanced by him. It was first asserted that — as usual! — the police had full evidence and information in their hands. The present delay and sufferings entailed prove sufficiently that they had nothing of the kind — again, as usual. The arrested Arya Samajists may be innocent or guilty, but the procedure used against them would be tolerated in no country where law and equity were supreme.

The Daulatpur Dacoity

The extraordinary story from Daulatpur of a dacoity by young men of good family, sons of Government servants, is the strangest that has yet been handled by the detective ability of a very active police — more active, if not successful, we are afraid, in cases of this kind than those in which the dacoits are of a less interesting character. The details as first published read more like a somewhat gruesome comic opera, than anything else. Dacoits who wear gold watches and gold spectacles on their hazardous expeditions, dacoits who talk English so as to give a clue to their identity, dacoits who turn up at a railway station wearing gold watches, barefooted and stained with mud, dacoits who carry in their pockets bloodcurdling oaths neatly written out for the police to read in case they are caught, are creatures of so novel and eccentric a character that they must have either come out of a farcical opera or escaped from the nearest lunatic asylum. The later accounts modify some of the more startling features of the first, but until the story for the prosecution is laid before the Courts, thoroughly known and thoroughly tested, sensational headlines and graphic details are apt to mislead.

Place and Patriotism

The elevation of Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar to the Bench some short time ago was the occasion for some comments from the Moderate Press highly eulogistic of the man and the choice. Mr. Aiyar was a successful lawyer and a capable man and we have no doubt his elevation was justified. But the curious habit of ultra-Moderate politicians gravitating to the Bench is a survival of those idyllic times when a judgeship or a seat in the Legislative Council was the natural goal of the political leader who rose by opposing the Government. This harmony between place and patriotism, opposition and preferment was natural to those times for whose return the lovers of the peaceful past sigh in vain. Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar belonged to the old school and his final consummation is natural and laudable. But our object in writing is not so much to praise Mr. Aiyar as to suggest to the Government that, if they would similarly promote Sir Pherozshah Mehta, they would be rewarding a loyal champion and at the same time conferring a boon on the country. Farther, if only done in time, it might save the Convention from going to pieces.

The Dying Race

Dr. U. N. Mukherji recently published a very interesting brochure in which he tried to prove that the Hindus were a dying race and would do well to imitate the social freedom and equality of the still increasing Mahomedans. Srijut Kishorilal Sarcar has gone one better and proves to us by equally cogent statistics that not only the Hindus but the Mahomedans are a dying race, — even if the Hindus be in some places a little more rapid in the race for extinction than the followers of Islam. With all respect to the earnestness of these two gentlemen we think it would have been well if they had been less strenuous in their discouraging interpretations and chosen a less positive title. The real truth is that, owing to an immense transition being effected under peculiarly unfavourable conditions, both communities, but chiefly the more progressive Hindu, are in a critical stage in which various deep-seated maladies have come to the surface, with effects of an inevitable though lamentable character. None of these maladies is mortal and the race is not dying. But the knife of the surgeon is needed and it is to the remedy rather than the diagnosis that attention should be pointedly directed. The mere decline in the rate of increase is in itself nothing. It is a phenomenon which one now sees becoming more and more marked all the world over and it is only countries backward in development and education which keep up the old rate of increase. The unfit tend to multiply, the fit to be limited in propagation. This is an abnormal state of things which indicates something wrong in modern civilisation. But, whatever the malady is, it is not peculiar to Hindus or to India, but a worldwide disease.

The Death of Señor Ferrer

The extraordinary commotion in Europe over the execution of the enthusiast and idealist Ferrer, — a judicial murder committed by Court Martial, — has revealed a force in Europe with which statesmen and Governments will have very soon to deal on pain of extinction. We have no sympathy with the philosophy or practice of Anarchism, holding, as we do, that the Anarchist philosophy is some millenniums ahead of the present possible evolution of humanity and the Anarchist practice some millenniums behind. But Señor Francisco Ferrer was no mere Anarchist. He was a man of high enthusiasms and ideas, engaged, at great sacrifice and, as it turns out, risk to himself, in freeing the Spanish mind by education from the fetters of that bigoted Clericalism which has been the ruin of Spain. For a man of this kind — a man of eminent culture and unstained character, the friend and fellow worker of distinguished men all over the occidental world, — to be shot without any reputable evidence by a military tribunal regardless of universal protest, was an outrage on civilisation and an insult to European culture. Such an incident, however, might have happened formerly with no result but a few indignant articles in the Continental Liberal Press. This time it has awakened a demonstration all over the Western world which is, we think, unprecedented in history. The solidarity and deep feeling in that demonstration means that the huge inert Leviathan, on whose patient back the aristocratic and middle class of Europe have built the structure of their polity and society, is about to move. When he really uplifts his giant bulk, what will become of the structure? Will it not tumble into pieces off his back and be swallowed up in the waters of a worldwide revolution?

The Budget

It is curious that England which was, a little while ago, the most conservative and individualistic of nations, the least forward in the race towards socialism, should now be the foremost. The socialistic Radical, the forerunner of insurgent Leviathan, is in the Cabinet and has framed a Budget. The Budget is the pivot on which English progress has turned from the beginning. The power of the purse in the hands of the Commons has been the chief lever for the gradual erection of a limited democracy. The same power is now being used for the gradual introduction of a modified socialism, and, by a curious provision of Fate, seems destined to be also the occasion for the final destruction of one at least of the two remaining restrictions on democracy, the veto of the Lords and the limitation of the suffrage. The Lords were bound to oppose the Budget, for the triumph of socialism means the destruction of the aristocracy. The Lords, therefore, have either to fight or to fall; and the pathos of their situation is that, in all probability, the choice is not theirs and that, whether they fight or not, they cannot but fall. The Lords have only continued to exist because they were discreet enough to lie low and give a minimum of trouble. As for the limitation of the suffrage, it is not at all unlikely that the daring and unscrupulous campaign of the suffragettes may end in the concession of universal suffrage. For, if women are given the vote, the proletariate will not be content to remain without it. They too can lift crowbars and hammers and break glass roofs!

A Great Opportunity

The end of the great struggle between the last representative of European autocracy and the insurgent Demos, is not yet. At present the Czar holds the winning cards. The mismanagement of the Revolution by a people unaccustomed to political action has put advantages into his hands to which he has no right. But it is significant that the revolution still smoulders. As Carlyle wrote of the French Revolution, it is unquenchable and cannot be stamped down, for the fire-spouts that burst out are no slight surface conflagration but the flames of the pit of Tophet. Murder and hatred rising from below to strike at murder and tyranny striking from above, that is the Russian Revolution. Had another man than a Romanoff, the race obstinate and unteachable, sat on the throne at St. Petersburg, the victory of the autocracy after such imminent and deadly peril would have been surely used to prevent, by healing measures and perfectly spontaneous concessions, a repetition of the sanguinary struggle. It is probably the last opportunity Fate will concede to the Czar Nicholas and it is a great opportunity. But he will not take it and in the shadow forces are again gathering which are likely in the end to destroy him. The Czarina is sleepless in deadly anxiety for the safety of her child; the Czar, leaving her behind, enters Italy and is guarded by an army. In Russia the Ministry balances itself on the top of a frail edifice crowning the volcano that still sputters below. One wonders why they should think it worth their while to bolster up sanguinary injustice for a season at so huge a cost.

Buddha's Ashes

Again the powers that be have committed a blunder. If any of the wise men who weave the tangled web of Anglo-Indian statesmanship at Simla, had a little common sense to salt their superior wisdom, they would never have allowed the strong feeling against the removal of Buddha's ashes to vent itself so long in public expression without an assurance at least of favourable consideration. We have waited long for that simple and natural act of statesmanship, but in vain. It is such a trivial matter in itself, concession would be so graceful, natural and easy; yet the harm done by perverseness and churlishness is so immense! We wonder whether our official Governors ever think. It is very easy. What would they feel if the bones of a great Englishman, say, the Duke of Wellington, were so treated! But the diseased attachment to prestige and the reputation of an assured wisdom and an inflexible power have sealed up the eyes of those in high places.

Students and Politics

All India and especially Bengal owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Hasan Imam for his strong, manly and sensible remarks on the vexed question of students and politics as President of the Beharee Students Conference at Gaya. Contrast this honest utterance and robust recognition of unalterable facts with the fencings, refinements and unreal distinctions of Mr. Gokhale's utterance. The difference is between a man with an eye and a clear practical sense and a mere intellectual, a man of books and words and borrowed thoughts, proud of his gift of speech and subtlety of logic, but unable to penetrate a fact even when he sees it. With Mr. Hasan Imam a strong personal force enters the field of politics.

The Assassination of Prince Ito

A GREAT man has fallen, perhaps the greatest force in the field of political action that the nineteenth century produced, the maker of Japan, the conqueror of Russia, the mighty one who first asserted Asia's superiority over Europe in Europe's own field of glory and changed in a few years the world's future. Some would say that such a death for such a man was a tragedy. We hold otherwise. Even such a death should such a man have died, in harness, fighting for his country's expansion and greatness, by the swift death in action which, our scriptures tell us, carry the hero's soul straight to the felicity of heaven. The man who in his youth lived in imminent deadly peril from the swords of his countrymen because he dared to move forward by new paths to his God-given task, dies in his old age by a foreign hand because, at the expense of justice and a nation's freedom, he still moved forward in the path of his duty. It is a difficult choice that is given to men of action in a world where love, strength and justice are not yet harmonised, and he who chooses in sincerity and acts thoroughly, whether he has chosen well or ill, gathers *punya* for himself in this world and the next. Then he was building a nation and he lived to do his work, for his death would not have profited. He was building an Empire when he died and by his death that Empire will be established. The soul of a great man, fulfilled in development but cut off in the midst of his work, enters into his following or his nation and works on a far wider scale than was possible to him in the body. Korea will gain nothing by this rash and untimely act, the greatest error in tactics it could have committed. The Japanese is the last man on earth to be deterred from his ambition or his duty by the fear of death, and the only result of this blow will be to harden Japan to her task. She has science, organisation, efficiency, ruthlessness, and she will grind the soul out of Korea until it is indistinguishable from Japan. That is the only way to perpetuate a conquest, to kill the soul of the subject nation, and the Japanese know it. A subject nation struggling for freedom must always attract Indian sympathy, but the Koreans have not the strength of soul to attain freedom. Instead of seeking the force to rise in their own manhood, they have always committed the unpardonable sin against Asiatic integrity of striving to call in a European power against a brother Asiatic. The Koreans have right on their side, but do not know how to awaken might to vindicate the right. The Japanese cause is wrong from the standpoint of a higher morality than the merely patriotic, but they believe intensely in their religion of patriotic duty and put all their might into its observance. It is not difficult to predict with which side the victory will lie.

Prince Hirobumi Ito was the typical man of his nation, as well as its greatest statesman and leader. He went ahead of it for a while only to raise it to his level. He had all its virtues in overflowing measure and a full share of its defects and vices. Absolutely selfless in public affairs, quiet, unassuming, keeping himself in the background unless duty called him into prominence, calm, self-controlled, patient, swift, energetic, methodical, incapable of fear, wholly devoted to the nation — such is the Japanese, and such was Ito. As a private man he had the Japanese defects. Even in public affairs, he had something of the narrowness, unscrupulousness in method and preference of success to justice of the insular and imperial Japanese type. Added to these common characteristics of his people he had a genius equal to that of any statesman in history. The eye that read the hearts of men, the mouth sealed to rigid secrecy, the rare, calm and effective speech, the brain that could embrace a civilisation at a glance and take all that was needed for his purpose, the swift and yet careful intellect that could divine, choose and arrange, the power of study, the genius of invention, the talent of application, a diplomacy open-minded but never vacillating, a tireless capacity for work, — all these he had on so grand a scale that to change the world's history was to him a by-no-means stupendous labour. And he had the ancient Asiatic gift of self-effacement. In Europe a genius of such colossal proportions would have filled the world with the mighty bruit of his personality; but Ito worked in silence and in the shade, covering his steps, and it was only by the results of his work that the world knew him. Like many modern Japanese, Ito was a sceptic. His country was the God of his worship to whom he dedicated his life, for whom he lived and in whose service he died. Such was this great Vibhuti, who came down to earth in a petty family, an Eastern island clan, a nation apart and far behind in the world's progress, and in forty years created a nation's greatness, founded an Empire, changed a civilisation and prepared the liberation of a continent. His death was worthy of his life. For there are only two deaths which are really great and carry a soul to the highest heaven, to die in self-forgetting action, in battle, by assassination, on the scaffold for others, for one's country or for the right, and to die as the Yogin dies, by his own will, free of death and disease, departing into that from which he came. To Ito, the sceptic, the patriot, the divine worker, the death of the selfless hero was given.

The Hindu Sabha

AN INDICATION of the immense changes which are coming over our country, is the sudden leaping into being of new movements and organisations which are, by their very existence, evidence of revolutions in public feeling and omens of the future. The dead bones live indeed and the long sleep of the ages is broken. The Moslem League was indicative of much, the Hindu Sabha is indicative of yet more. The Nationalist party, while in entire disagreement with the immediate objects and spirit of the League, welcomed its birth as a sign of renovated political life in the Mahomedan community. But the Mahomedan community was always coherent, united and separately self-conscious. The strength of Islam lay in its unity and cohesion, the fruit of a long discipline in equality and brotherhood, the strength of the Hindu in flexibility, progressiveness, elasticity, a divination of necessary changes, broad ideas, growing aspirations, the fruit of a long discipline in intellectual and moral sensitiveness. The Moslem League meant that the Mahomedan was awakening to the need of change, the growth of aspiration in the world around him, — not yet to the broad ideas modern life demanded. The Hindu Sabha means that the Hindu is awakening to the need of unity and cohesion.

Does it mean more? Does it indicate a larger statesmanship, quicker impulse to action, a greater capacity for the unity and cohesion it seeks? Is the Hindu Sabha a novel body, with the power in it to effect a great object never before accomplished, the effective union of all shades of Hindu opinion from the lax Anglicised Agnostic, Hindu in nothing but birth and blood, to the intense and narrow worshipper of the institutes of Raghunandan? Or is it merely an ineffectual aspiration, like the old Congress, capable of creating a general sympathy and oneness of aim, but not of practical purpose and effective organisation? There are only two things strong enough to unite Hinduism, a new spiritual impulse based on Vedanta, the essential oneness of man, the transience and utilitarian character of institutions, the lofty ideals of brotherhood, freedom, equality, and a recognition of the great mission and mighty future of the Hindu spiritual ideas and discipline and of the Indian race, — or else a political impulse strong enough to unite Hindus together for the preservation and advancement of their community. The Hindu Sabha could not have come into being but for the great national movement which awakened the national spirit, the sense of past greatness, the divination of a mighty future, transforming the whole spirit and character of the educated community. But we fear that in its immediate inception and work it leans for its hope of success on a lower and less powerful motive — rivalry with Mahomedan pretensions and a desire to put the mass and force of a united Hinduism against the intensity of a Mahomedan self-assertion supported by official patronage and Anglo-Indian favour. Alarm and resentment at the pro-Mahomedan policy underlying the Reform Scheme and dissatisfaction with the Bombay conventionists for their suicidal support of the Government policy entered largely into the universal support given by Punjab Hindus to the new body and its great initial success. Mortification at the success of Mahomedans in securing Anglo-Indian sympathy and favour and the exclusion of Hindus from those blissful privileges figured largely in the speech of Sir Pratul Chandra Chatterji who was hailed as the natural leader of Punjab Hinduism. These are not good omens. It is not by rivalry for Anglo-Indian favour, it is not by quarrelling for the loaves and fishes of British administration that Hinduism can rise into a united and effective force. If the Hindu Sabha takes its anchor on these petty aspirations or if it founds any part of its strength on political emulation with the Mahomedans, it will be impossible for the Nationalist party to join in a movement which would otherwise have their full sympathy and eager support.

Lala Lajpat Rai struck a higher note, that of Hindu nationalism as a necessary preliminary to a greater Indian Nationality. We distrust this ideal. Not that we are blind to facts, — not that we do not recognise Hindu-Mahomedan rivalry as a legacy of the past enhanced and not diminished by British ascendancy, a thing that has to be faced and worked out either by mutual concession or by a struggle between nationalism and separatism. But we do not understand Hindu nationalism as a possibility under modern conditions. Hindu nationalism had a meaning in the times of Shivaji and Ramdas, when the object of national revival was to overthrow a Mahomedan domination which, once tending to Indian unity and toleration, had become oppressive and disruptive. It was possible because India was then a world to itself and the existence of two geographical units entirely Hindu, Maharashtra and Rajputana, provided it with a basis. It was necessary because the misuse of their domination by the Mahomedan element was fatal to India's future and had to be punished and corrected by the resurgence and domination of the Hindu. And because it was possible and necessary, it came into being. But under modern conditions India can only exist as a whole. A nation depends for its existence on geographical separateness and geographical compactness, on having a distinct and separate country. The existence of this geographical separateness is sure in the end to bear down all differences of race, language, religion, history. It has done so in Great Britain, in Switzerland, in Germany. It will do so in India. But geographical compactness is also necessary. In other words, the *desh* or country must be so compact that mutual communication and the organisation of a central government becomes easy or, at least, not prohibitively difficult. The absence of such compactness is the reason why great Empires are sure in the end to fall to pieces; they cannot get the support of that immortal and indestructible national self which can alone ensure permanence. This difficulty stands in the way of British Imperial Federation and is so great that any temporary success of that specious aspiration will surely result in the speedy disruption of the Empire. In addition, there must be a uniting force strong enough to take advantage of the geographical compactness and separateness, — either a wise and skilfully organised government with a persistent tradition of beneficence, impartiality and oneness with the nation, or else a living national sense insisting on its separate inviolability and self-realisation. The secret of Roman success was in the organisation of such a government; even so, it failed, for want of geographical compactness, to create a world-wide Roman nationality. The failure of the British rule to root itself lies in its inability to become one with the nation either by the effacement of our national individuality or by the renunciation of its own separate pride and self-interest. These things are therefore necessary to Indian nationality, geographical separateness, geographical compactness and a living national spirit. The first was always ours and made India a people apart from the earliest times. The second we have attained by British rule. The third has just sprung into existence.

But the country, the *swadesh*, which must be the base and fundament of our nationality, is India, a country where Mahomedan and Hindu live intermingled and side by side. What geographical base can a Hindu nationality possess? Maharashtra and Rajasthan are no longer separate geographical units but merely provincial divisions of a single country. The very first requisite of a Hindu nationalism is wanting. The Mahomedans base their separateness and their refusal to regard themselves as Indians first and Mahomedans afterwards on the existence of great Mahomedan nations to which they feel themselves more akin, in spite of our common birth and blood, than to us. Hindus have no such resource. For good or evil, they are bound to the soil and to the soil alone. They cannot deny their Mother, neither can they mutilate her. Our ideal therefore is an Indian Nationalism, largely Hindu in its spirit and traditions, because the Hindu made the land and the people and persists, by the greatness of his past, his civilisation and his culture and his invincible virility, in holding it, but wide enough also to include the Moslem and his culture and traditions and absorb them into itself. It is possible that the Mahomedan may not recognise the inevitable future and may prefer to throw himself into the opposite scale. If so, the Hindu, with what little Mahomedan help he may get, must win Swaraj both for himself and the Mahomedan in spite of that resistance. There is a sufficient force and manhood in us to do a greater and more difficult task than that, but we lack unity, brotherhood, intensity of single action among ourselves. It is to the creation of that unity, brotherhood and intensity that the Hindu Sabha should direct its whole efforts. Otherwise we must reject it as a disruptive and not a creative agency.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Brain of India III
Invitation (poem)

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 13th NOVEMBER 1909 { No. 19

Facts and Opinions

House Searches

One wonders what would happen in any European country if the police as a recompense for their utter inefficiency and detective incapacity were armed with the power, and allowed to use it freely, of raiding the houses of respectable citizens, ransacking the property of absent occupants and leaving it unsafe and unprotected, carrying off the business books of Presses, newspapers and other commercial concerns, the private letters of individuals, books publicly sold and procurable in every bookshop, violating the sanctity of correspondence between wife and husband, searching the persons of ladies of the house even though it be by female hands, and trampling on the sanctity of the home, the dignity of the person and the self-respect which every race worthy of existence holds to be dearer than life itself. And all this in spite of the fact, exemplified a hundred times over, that these inquisitions are wholly infructuous and can serve no purpose but harassment and exasperation. Usually the searches are undertaken, if we do not err, on the vague information of disreputable hirelings used as spies and informers, the statements of lying approvers eager to save their own skins by jeopardising innocent men, and confessions to the police of arrested prisoners made either for the same purpose or dictated by a morbid vanity and light-headed braggadocio which invents facts and details in order to give dignity to petty crime and magnitude to small and foolish undertakings. The ludicrously irrelevant and useless nature of the articles which are usually the sole reward of this odious activity are its sufficient condemnation. Even if the widespread conspiracy dreamed of by the authorities were a fact, is it conceivable that respectable men, knowing the police to be on the alert, would risk liberty and property by storing bombs, looted ornaments or treasonous correspondence in their houses? We are aware that the right of house search is a necessary weapon in the hands of authority for the suppression of crime, but it was never meant that this should be misused in order to supply the place of detective ability in the Police. House searches are unwarrantable unless the information on which they proceed is precise, reliable and highly probable. Judging from results not one of these epithets can be applied to the numerous searches which are now becoming a standing feature of life in Bengal. And if the search of the persons of ladies is to become another common feature of these domiciliary visits, we fear that the patience of a people jealously sensitive on these matters will not long endure the strain. Surely, the higher authorities ought to have sufficient good sense to draw the inevitable conclusion from experience, perceive the limitations of this weapon and, if not for the possible evil consequence of creating still greater disaffection, yet for its barren inutility, renounce its excessive use.

Social Reform and Politics

There are two methods of progress, two impelling motives from which great changes and far-reaching reforms can be effected. One is the struggle of selfish interests between man and man, class and class, working out progress by ignoble strife, the forced compromise and convenient barter of the lower kind of politics. The other is the impulse and clash of mighty ideas, noble aspirations, great national or humanitarian aims, the things which inspire mankind in its upward march and create empires and nations. Both are freely used by the Master of the world in His careful providence and various economy. Often they are intermingled. But it cannot be doubted which is most healthful to the individual, the nation and the race. The social result worked out by a bitter and selfish struggle between upper class and lower class, Labour and Capital, is one thing; the harmony created by a mighty enthusiasm, such as led the aristocracy of Japan to lay down their exclusive privileges and, without reserve, call upon the masses to come up and share their high culture, their seats of might and their ennobling traditions, is quite another. Hindu society in the mofussil is now bitterly divided, and tends more and more to be convulsed, by the new aspirations of the lower castes and the inability of the higher to decide how they will meet the demand. It is a bad sign that the action of both sides tends more and more to be selfish and narrow, political in the worst sense of the word. To barter help in Swadeshi or faithfulness to Hinduism for social privileges, or to bribe the masses to Swadeshism by petty and calculated concessions will tend neither to the genuineness of the Swadeshi sentiment, nor the strength of the national movement, nor the dignity and purity of our religion. It is an evil and foreign principle which has entered into our system, one of the many evil results of our disastrous contact with European civilisation at a time of national weakness and disintegration and our attempt to assimilate it without first vindicating our inner liberty and establishing ourselves as free agents. A great social revolution in this ancient society ought only to come as the fruit of a mighty national, humanitarian and religious impulse. The fault of the present state of things rests largely with the waning insight and statesmanship of the Brahmins. Formerly, they would not have been wanting either in concerted action, largeness of view or skilfulness of device. It was not their wont to stand still in an inert and impossible conservatism but to recognise circumstances and meet them without sacrificing the essence of their religion or the basic principles of Hindu society.

The Deoghar Sadhu

Recently some of the Bengali papers have contained detailed information of the feat of a Sadhu who buried himself for some days not, as in the well-known Punjab case, giving up his outward consciousness and entering into the jada samadhi or inert inner existence, but in full possession of his outer senses and conversing at times from his living tomb with visitors outside. The correspondent of the *Bengalee* tells us that the local people were dissatisfied with the Sadhu because the peculiar power he evinced was unattended by any moral elevation or true ascetic qualities. It is a general delusion that the power thus shown is a very great and almost supernatural siddhi and ought to be in the possession only of very highly developed souls. A false Indian tradition is partly responsible for the error; partly, it is due to the supreme ignorance of the deeper secrets of our being which belongs to the limited and self-satisfied materialistic Science of Europe now dominant in our midst. There is nothing wonderful in the feat of the Deoghar Sadhu, which was the result of the conquest of the breath, pranayam, achieved by certain physical and mental processes and not necessarily dependent on moral or spiritual progress. The kumbhak or retention of the prana, dispensing with the process of inbreathing and outbreathing, is the final achievement of the process and the kumbhak can, when thoroughly conquered, be continued for an indefinite period. Given the power of kumbhak, it is obvious that one can stay under water or earth or in a room hermetically sealed for as long as the state continues. The power of stopping the heart-beats, dispensing with the process of breathing, and other of the outworks of Yogic knowledge and achievement are being slowly established in order to break down the exclusive pride of European Science and prepare for a new order of knowledge and a greater science to which its dogmatic narrowness is bitterly and scornfully opposed.

The Great Election

IT IS not often that we care to dwell at length on the incidents of English politics in which, as a rule, India is not concerned nor affected by the results. A Brodrick to a Hamilton, a Morley to a Brodrick succeeds, and the sublime continuity of British policy, continuous in nothing else but this one determination to maintain absolutism in India, takes care that India shall have no reason to interest herself in Imperial affairs. The present crisis in England, however, is so momentous and its results so incalculable that it is impossible to say that India will not be affected by its gigantic issues. The importance of the election turns not upon the issues of the Budget, though these are of no small magnitude, but upon the great constitutional question of the House of Lords and its veto. The veto of the House of Lords is the drag on the Parliamentary locomotive. It is the one obstacle that stands between England and a peaceful revolution. It is true that this veto has been exercised very sparingly and only when the Liberals have introduced measures of a revolutionary character or containing clauses which meant a too rapid subversion of ancient landmarks and safeguards; but this is precisely the use in the British Constitution of the otherwise useless, ineffective and somnolent Upper House. It has used the veto if not with perfect wisdom, yet with a moderation and an eye to its own safety that betokened at least a perfect discretion. In spite of this reserve the obstruction offered by the Lords to Liberal measures and their complacent acceptance of Conservative legislation has become more and more exasperating to the Liberal party and has often threatened a collision which was averted either by the submission of the Lords or the support of its obstructive policy by the electors at the polls. So long as the social preponderance of the aristocracy and the possession of land and wealth, on which that preponderance rested, was not touched, the Lords have submitted to the gradual loss of political preponderance and the slow advance of England from an aristocratic to a middle-class rule and even from a middle-class rule to a limited democracy, limited by the existence of the Lords themselves and the restriction of the franchise. A new force, a fatal solvent of established institutions, has entered European politics with the steady slow irresistible advance of Socialism, and England, long exempt from the working of this great tide of idealistic thought, is being more and more swiftly undermined, its cherished ideals sapped, its administrative and social structure threatened by the wash of the advancing waters. The uneasiness engendered in the more richly propertied classes by this advance of the destroyer has come to a head as a result of the provisions of the Budget by which the land, emblem and guarantee of English Conservatism, of the inviolability of private property and the survival of the old world society in its most vital features, has been subjected to substantial taxation. The innovation creates a probability of continual nibbling until under the impulse of a growing Socialism, land is nationalised, its proprietors bought out, and aristocracy destroyed. The Lords have either to resist the process in its first step or make up their minds to gradual extinction.

The question for the Upper House is how they will resist. It is open to them either to reject the Budget altogether — a measure of too drastic severity, — to throw out the Land clauses, — a device which will expose the Peers to the charge of violating the unwritten Constitution for the selfish purpose of saving their own pockets and throwing the burden of taxation on the middle class and the working men, — or to amend the Budget so as to lighten the land taxes and deprive them of their more inoffensive features. The last device has the disadvantage of being no more than a palliative, while it amounts to as serious a breach of the financial privilege of the House of Commons as the others. The omens point to a rejection of the bill by the Peers, but we doubt whether they will care to incur the odium of so disturbing the finances of the country. In all probability they will amend and leave to the Ministry the responsibility of dissolving Parliament with no Budget sanctioned and the insecurity to the taxpayers resulting from this unprecedented and anomalous situation. The burden of choice will then fall upon the Commons, who must either submit to the destruction of the first and most essential safeguard of popular liberty in England, the popular control of taxation and the Exchequer, or take up the challenge given by the Peers. The first course is unthinkable. No Liberal Ministry especially, would care to go down to posterity as having betrayed the people of England and the future of democracy by such a sacrifice of the palladium of British liberty. Mr. Asquith may either dissolve as soon as the Lords refuse to withdraw their amendments or he may ask the King to create a number of Liberal Peers large enough to swamp the Conservative majority in the Lords, or he may at once bring in a bill for the limitation of the veto of the Upper House and dissolve upon it so as to raise definitely the question of the veto as the one real issue before the electors. The first course has this great disadvantage, that the real issues may be covered over by the clamour of the Conservative party against the socialistic trend of the new taxation and by the cry of Tariff Reform. By dint of repeated iteration the Conservatives have created an impression in many minds that the present Ministry is deeply tinged with Socialism and the Budget a deliberate attack on property. The effect this cry is having on the mind of the wealthier classes is shown by the number of defections in the Liberal ranks, — not so many, however, as might have been expected, — and the diminution of the Liberal vote at the bye-elections. The Budget opens the door to Socialism, but is in none of its provisions Socialistic, the only real novelty of importance being the land taxes which have their counterpart in countries the reverse of Socialistic. The Ministry is itself a curious conglomeration of Moderates, Radicals, and extreme Radicals, but there is not a single Socialist in its ranks and many of its members are avowedly anti-Socialistic in their temper and opinions. Nevertheless, the cry is having its effect on the susceptible British elector and, unless it is met, will imperil a great number of Liberal seats. The cry of Tariff Reform has its charm for a certain number of working men, but is not in itself so formidable as the catchword of Property in Danger. To dissolve upon the rejection of the Budget will have the effect of preventing a clear issue from being raised and confusing the public mind by the entanglement of three separate questions, Socialism and the Budget, Free Trade or Tariff Reform, and the veto of the House of Lords. The Ministry have everything to lose, the Opposition everything to gain by this confusion of issues.

The second device is being urged upon the Prime Minister by some of his supporters who are rather shortsighted politicians than men with the outlook of the statesman. The temporary difficulty would no doubt be surmounted, but it is a matter of unfailing experience that Liberal Peers so created gravitate in a very short time to Conservatism. If these Peers had to be actually created, the Liberal Ministry would very soon be face to face again with a similar situation, and the drastic remedy of doubling the bulk of the House of Lords could not be repeated ad infinitum. On the other hand, if the Peers yielded in order to avoid so great an indignity to their rank and order, they would do so under the most rigorous compulsion and be all the more eager to hamper and distress their victors in less vital matters. Mr. Asquith would avoid a particular difficulty, but only to perpetuate the great stumbling-block of all Liberal Ministries, a permanently Conservative Upper House. On the other hand he has a chance, if he boldly seizes on this issue, of avoiding a fight on the weaker points of the Budget, of forcing to the forefront a great constitutional issue in which everything liberal or even truly conservative in England ought to be on his side, and destroying at one blow and forever this perpetual thorn in the side of Liberalism and obstacle to radical legislation.

The drastic device of swamping the Lords with newly created Liberal Peers will be too much needed shortly to be thrown away now. When in the new Parliament, the bill for the limitation of the Peers' veto has been carried through the Commons, it will have to be carried through the Lords as well before it can receive the King's sanction and become law, and, since the Lords as they are will not consent to their own nullification, it is only by the swamping device that this great resolution can be effected. The only question is whether the bill should be brought in before or postponed till after the election. To bring in the bill before, pass it formally through the Commons without permitting much debate and immediately dissolve for a mandate from the country, would be the boldest but also the best policy for the Ministers. It would definitely raise the question as the one issue of the election and, if confined to the limitation and not the destruction of the veto, — so as to avoid the charge of destroying the constitution, — would rally the whole force of Liberalism behind Mr. Asquith. We do not know whether the course has suggested itself to the tacticians of the party, but it seems to us that it gives the only chance of a really effective and victorious electioneering campaign.

With all this, what are the chances of a Liberal victory? Very small, unless the Labour-Socialist vote is conciliated. The great feature of the recent bye-elections has been the repeated splitting of the democratic vote between Labourite and Liberal, the substantiality of the Labour vote and the consequent defeat of the Ministerial candidate and return of the Conservative in spite of a democratic majority in the constituency. For the Socialist party this is the right policy, by their independent attitude on an occasion of such vital importance to convince the Liberals that they cannot hope to exist as a power without coming to terms with the Socialist vote. But for the Liberals to accept a triangular contest would be sheer suicide. It would mean either a Conservative majority, not in the country — for the pendulum has not swung back so far — but in the House, or a Conservative Ministry with the Irish Nationalists holding the balance of power. It would be well worth Mr. Asquith's while to give the Socialist-Labour faction the 80 seats they hope to win, on condition of holding the other Liberal seats secure from competition. But an accommodation of this kind would mean an alliance with Socialism, as well as with Ireland, and some very drastic social legislation in the next Parliament. It is difficult to gauge the weight of the Moderate element in the Cabinet, and it may be strong enough to face defeat rather than permit such an alliance.

We have dealt with this subject and its issues at length, partly in order to draw the attention of our readers to the issues and methods of a great and critical election in a democratic country. The introduction of democratic institutions in India, more genuine than the present Reform Scheme, cannot be long delayed, and it will be well for those of us who think to study their working in the European country which serves as a model to others. But beyond this aspect of the elections, there is a deeper interest to us Indians in the great constitutional struggle now at hand. The abolition or limitation of the Lords' veto is a question of supreme importance to the Indian politician. When the time comes, — and it is coming surely, — that popular assemblies have to be established in India, the veto of the Lords will be the one instrument that reaction will use to stay reform for a long season. It is that instrument which has baffled Irish Nationalism. If it continues to exist, it will baffle Indian Nationalism also. Although, therefore, Liberal and Conservative are one in their attitude towards India, every Indian patriot must watch with keen interest the result of the struggle and desire, not the success of the departing Ministry, but victory for the destroyers of the Lords' veto.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Brain of India IV
Anandamath VIII (continued)
Who? (poem)

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 20th NOVEMBER 1909 { No. 20

Facts and Opinions

A Hint of Change

The end of our long waiting for the advent of strength into the hearts and minds of the people may yet be distant, but one sign of an approaching change is growing more and more manifest, the intense yearning for a field, an outlet, a path open to the pent-up activities of an awakened nation. Arising from long sleep and torpor, the nation threw itself with energy into a field of activity which seemed immeasurably vast and full of a glorious promise. One would have said that no one could stop that mighty outpouring of enthusiasm, unselfishness and heaven-aspiring force. But there was a flaw, a source of weakness. Our past defects, hesitations, timidities, weaknesses, vices, arrogance, light-headedness, selfishness, scepticism, inconsistency, our readiness to succumb to difficulties, to despair at the first check, — all these things were in us, trampled down by the inrush of higher feelings and a greater and nobler energy, but not thrown out, not utterly replaced. The nation had entered headlong into a wonderful sadhana, but without knowledge, without the deliberate sankalpa, the requisite diksha. It was the only way it could be begun. But the sadhak has to have chittashuddhi before he can attain realisation; he must cleanse his bosom of much perilous stuff. That cleansing is done partly by replacing the lower feelings by the higher, cowardice by courage, hatred by love, weakness by strength, partly by working out the evil in imagination or action and rejecting it as it comes up into the mind or the life. It was the first process that took place in the beginning of the movement, it is the second that is now in progress. In the first years of the movement a nation of cowards became heroes, sceptics became blind believers, the light-minded full of serious purpose, men eaten up by selfishness martyrs and ascetics, waverers full of tenacity, the low, loose and immoral inspired by a high and generous idealism and purity. But the work was not complete. In the groundwork of the new nation the old evil stuff lingered, and therefore God trampled our work to pieces in order to have it out, so that it might be seen, recognised and rejected. It was that work the repressions and reforms have come to do, and it is almost done. Had we gone on in our first victorious rush, unhampered and undefeated, we would have entered the kingdom of Swaraj with an imperfect national character, full of temporarily repressed vices which would have come to the surface as soon as the great stimulus of a successful struggle had been removed, and the last state of the nation might have been worse than its first; at any rate there would have been infinite troubles, reverses and disasters for the liberated nation, such as are in store for a nation like Persia where the struggle for freedom has not been sufficiently intense, arduous and complicated in its features to purify the people and build its character. It is well to have done with our troubles, reverses and defeats before the end is gained, so that we may enter our kingdom pure and strong. We ought now to be able to recognise what it was that has made us fail in the hour of trial; for there can be no doubt that we have partially failed. To recognise the defects is to reject them, and with the will to rise, will come the means which will help to raise us. The spirit of the nation is rising again. Only it must be clearly recognised that the old outlets are not the right ones. Solid and thorough work, self-discipline by means of noble and orderly action, this is the path by which we shall arrive at a higher national character and evolution.

Pretentious Shams

In an unguarded moment our friend and India's, the *Statesman* of Chowringhee, has for once blurted out the truth. While, in common with other Anglo-Indian papers, it descants in strains of dithyrambic eloquence on the magnitude of the reforms the Government in its deep, wise and impossibly sagacious generosity has given and this thrice blessed country has been privileged to receive, it inadvertently admits that the Legislative Councils, as they hitherto existed, were pretentious shams. As we point out in our article this week, the new Councils differ in no way from the old except in being more pretentious. The old were shams because they gave no control to the people while affecting to listen and give consideration to the popular voice, which was, as a matter of fact, only heard to be ignored, — except in very occasional instances which only accentuated the sense of dependence on the caprice of the official governors. The new Councils are of precisely the same character, and the only differences of importance are the non-official majority — so carefully arranged as to secure a permanent popular minority, — the increased number of the elected members, and the facilities given for debate. With a permanent popular minority and the denial of all control, this is mere heaping of gilt on the surface of the toy. The Indian papers have recognised the nugatory character of the reforms and the tone of cold dissatisfaction in their comments is very marked. When the Councils begin to work, even the Moderates will realise that the new Councils are not only void of any true principle of popular representation and control, but injurious to the interests of the people.

The Municipalities and Reform

Under the new conditions, the Municipalities and District Boards form a substantial part of the electorate and return a certain proportion of the members. We do not think we exaggerate when we say that the only chance of any really independent popular representatives entering the new Councils is provided by these bodies. The University member or one or two of the landholders may occasionally assert independence, but the chances, at present, are in favour of their belonging to that type of representatives who are satisfied if they can pose as representatives of the nation by merely refusing to agree with the Government in all the details of their policy and measures. The one chance of a robust and healthy opposition lies in the election of independent men by the Municipalities and, to a lesser extent, by the District Boards. They will, however, be in a hopeless minority and will always be liable to disqualification by any of the engines provided for that purpose in the rules, if they support their opposition in the Council by agitation in the country. And we have yet to see what changes will be made in the District Boards and Municipalities under the new policy. Great hopes have been entertained that, whatever may be done in the Councils, the Municipalities will be made really free and popular bodies, and, we remember, that expectation was urged at the Hughly Conference as a reason for not rejecting the reforms. We doubt whether this expectation will be any more fruitful than the hopes of a great advance towards popular institutions in the reform of the Councils. Under the new scheme the Municipalities are the only weak point in the Government armour, and we rather fancy the Government will follow the policy of thorough and mend that point as well. Time will show whether we or the Moderates are right. So far we have always been right in these matters and they have always been wrong, the new Councils being only the latest of numerous instances during the last few years.

Police Unrest in the Punjab

The action of some of the statesmen of this country seems to be guided by the principle that the best way to bring about a particular object is to try and promote its opposite. They certainly desire the political unrest to cease, but their action seems to be carefully calculated to prolong it. No more irritating action could have been taken in the present state of the public mind than the persistence in sedition-hunting which is being practised on a large scale in the Punjab. There is not the least sign of trouble or violence or even widespread agitation of any kind in that province. The causes which excited agitation and violence formerly were purely local and, with the removal of the cause, the effect, as it was bound to do, disappeared. Since then, the Punjab has been profoundly quiet, and the opposition to the Convention Congress and the convocation of the Hindu Sabha, presided over by so inoffensive a personage as Sir Pratul Chandra Chatterji, were the only signs of life it gave. We wonder, is it the first-mentioned activity which has led to the raids, searches and arrests? The almost universal opposition to a body which has faithfully excluded the Nationalists and enjoys the support and patronage of Mr. Gokhale, may seem to the authorities a certain sign of widespread seditious feeling in the land. Is it by stirring up sedition with a police pole that the Punjab bureaucrats think they can get rid of unrest?

The Reformed Councils

THE GREAT measure which is to carry down the name of Lord Morley to distant ages as the inaugurator of a new age in India, — so at least all the Anglo-Indian papers and not a few of the Moderates tell us, — is now before us in all its details. The mountains have again been in labour, and the mouse they have produced this time is enormous in size and worthy of the august mountains that produced him, but not the less ridiculous for all that. What is it that this much-trumpeted scheme gives to a people which is not inferior in education or intellectual calibre to the Turk, the Persian and the Chinese who already enjoy or are in sight of full self-government? There are four elements which have always to be considered in a change of this kind, first, the nature of the electorate, second, the composition of the body itself, thirdly, the freedom of election, fourthly, the scope, functions and powers of the assemblies. There is not one of these points in which the people have really gained, there is hardly one of them in which they are not worse off than under the old system.

What change has been made in the electorates? Except that they have been increased in number, we do not see that there has been any real change at all, and an increase in number is of no value in itself, but only if the number of elected members represent a force sufficient to give the people its proper weight in the legislation and administration of the country. We shall show under the third head that we have gained nothing in this direction. On the other hand not only class, as was formerly the case, but creed has been made the basis of representation and, therefore, unless the Hindus have the strength of mind to boycott a system which creates a distinction insulting as well as injurious to the community, this measure, while giving us not an atom of self-government, will be a potent engine for dividing the nation into two hostile interests and barring the way towards the unity of India. Formerly, there were only two classes in India, the superior European and the inferior Indian; now there will be three, the supreme European, the superior Mahomedan and the inferior Hindu. This is loss number one, and it is no small one, to the Mahomedan no less than the Hindu. The official of course gains.

Even if there is no democratic or even semi-democratic basis of election — merely small established bodies which can in no sense be called the people, — something might be gained if the Councils were so composed as to give a preponderance or powerful voice to independent elected representatives. That is what the Councils profess to do and that is why so much parade is made of the non-official majority. What are the facts? In the Viceroy's Council there are to be thirty-five avowedly Government members, twenty-eight being officials and seven nominated. Of the twenty-five elected members eleven will be sent from the new Councils all over India; as we shall show from the Bengal examples, these Councils will contain a predominant pro-Government vote even among the non-official members and their representatives will be therefore pro-Government men. That makes forty-six reliable votes for the Government. Of the remaining fourteen three will be Europeans who will naturally side with the Government; that makes forty-nine. Of the remaining eleven five will be specially elected Mahomedan representatives and, as under the new system the Mahomedans are a favoured class depending for the continuance of that favour on good behaviour, that means another five reliable votes for the Government, which makes fifty-four. Of the remaining six all are representatives of the landholding class who dare not be too independent, — although they will no doubt oppose in small matters, which they can do with impunity as there is not the slightest chance of the Government being defeated. The consequence will be that on the Viceroy's Council there is not any reasonable chance of there being a single independent member representing the people. This startling result of the Reforms may not seem at first credible, but if our argument is carefully followed, it will establish itself. No doubt, one or two men like Mr. Gokhale, Sir Pherozshah Mehta or Dr. Rash Behari Ghose will be admitted by permission, but that privilege we had on better terms under the old system.

Let us pass to the Bengal Councils and establish our position. In East Bengal there will be twenty-two nominated and two specially nominated against eighteen elected members establishing at once a standing Government majority of six. Of the eighteen who might oppose, there will be four members who in the nature of things are bound to be Europeans and four specially elected Mahomedan members, which at once raises the reliable Government vote to thirty-two; five representatives of District and Local Boards, who, from the preponderance of Mahomedans on those bodies, are bound to be Mahomedans, two representatives of landholders of whom one at least is likely to be a Mahomedan and the other, being a landholder, cannot afford to be too independent. There remain three members of Municipal bodies who are all likely to be independent, if the elections are not interfered with by indirect pressure. Therefore, out of forty-two members only three are likely to be independent members. It is needless to point out that the representative of the non-official members on the Viceroy's Council is sure to be a pro-Government man.

We pass on to West Bengal where things ought to be better. Here there are twenty-two nominated against twenty-six elected members, giving at first sight a non-Government majority of four. But we have to subtract from the apparent majority and add to the apparent minority four members from European or predominatingly European constituencies, four Mahomedan members and the member for the University, now practically a department of the Government. That gives a Government vote of thirty-one and a possible opposition vote of seventeen. Of these again five are representatives of the landholders who cannot be independent to any notable extent and of whom only one or two are likely to be independent at all. There are, therefore, only twelve votes of which we can have any hope, the representatives of the Boards and Municipalities. Here also the independent section of the community is hopelessly ineffective in numbers. Only four of these will be representatives of Bengal and this is one of the most joyous results of the policy of partition and deportation plus co-operation which is the basis of the new measure. Here again the chances of an independent representative being returned to the Viceroy's Council are small on paper, nil in reality.

When we come to the freedom of the electors in choosing their representatives, we find restrictions so astonishing as at once to expose the spirit and purpose of these reforms. The Boards and Municipalities which alone represent in a faint degree the people are debarred from electing anyone not a member of these bodies. Thus at one blow it is rendered impossible for a popular leader like Sj. Motilal Ghose, unless the Government choose to nominate him, to be on these amazing Councils. Farther, anyone dismissed from Government service, e.g. Sj. Surendranath, sentenced at any time to imprisonment or transportation, e.g. Mr. Tilak, or bound down, e.g. mofussil leaders like Sj. Anath Bandhu Guha or Sj. Hardayal Nag, the leading men of Mymensingh and Chandpur respectively, or declared by the authorities to be of undesirable antecedents, e.g. Lala Lajpat Rai, Sj. Aswini Kumar Dutta, Sj. Krishna Kumar Mitra and all Nationalists and agitators generally, are ipso facto incapable of representing the people under these exquisite reforms.

After all this it may seem a waste of time to go into the question of the scope, functions and powers of the Councils. They may briefly be summed up by saying that the Councils have no scope and no powers, and that they have also no functions except to talk, but by no means freely and no longer at large. We certainly do not object to the rule that no member shall talk for more than fifteen minutes at a stretch; our only regret is that the maximum could not be fifteen seconds. But since to talk inconclusively and ask questions which need not be answered unless the Government likes, is the only activity allowed to the august councillors, it seems like adding injury to insult to hedge in this windy privilege with so many restrictions. The restrictions placed on the putting of interpellations would rule out of order half the questions in the House of Commons. It is curious how carefully the Government has guarded itself against anything which might inconvenience it or put it into a corner. Even to ask any question about the conduct or character of persons except in their official or public capacity, is banned, so that, for instance, if an official misconducts himself in a flagrant manner, so long as he can say that he has done it in his private capacity, the Government cannot be questioned as to the truth of the matter or its intentions with regard to the peccant individual. With a little legal ingenuity we think there is hardly any question, not of the baldest and most insignificant character, which could not be brought under the restricting clauses. And, to crown all, the President is given the power of disallowing any question on the ground that it will inconvenience the State, in other words himself and his Government, and he may disallow any supplementary questions without any reason whatever! Any resolution may be disallowed for a similar reason or absence of reason. When we add that Native States are held sacrosanct from discussion, the Military similarly safeguarded, and that no value need be attached to the resolutions of the Council on the Financial Statement and no resolutions at all can be proposed or passed on the Budget, we think we have said all that is necessary to paint in its true colours the glorious liberality of this most wonderful and unheard-of reform. We heartily congratulate Lord Morley, Lord Minto and their advisers on the skill with which the whole thing has been framed, the Moderates on the glorious price for which one or two of their leaders have sold the popular cause, the Hindus on their humiliation and the country generally on the disillusionment, we hope the final disillusionment, which these Councils, when they meet, will bring about far more successfully than could have been done by any Nationalist propaganda.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The National Value of Art I
Anandamath IX, X
An Image (poem)

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 27th NOVEMBER 1909 { No. 21

Facts and Opinions

The Bomb Case and Anglo-India

The comments of the Anglo-Indian papers on the result of the appeal in the Alipur case are neither particularly edifying nor do they tend to remove the impression shared by us with many thoughtful Englishmen that the imperial race is being seriously demoralised by empire. From the *Englishman* we expect nothing better, and in fact we are agreeably surprised at the comparative harmlessness of its triumphant article on the day after the judgment. Its reference to the nonsense about there being no sedition in India and no party of Revolution leaves our withers unwrung. We ourselves belong to a party of peaceful revolution, for it is a rapid revolution in the system of Government in India which is the aim of our political efforts, and it is idle to object to us that there have been no peaceful revolutions and cannot be. History gives the lie to that statement, whether it proceeds from Mr. Gokhale or from Anglo-India. We have also always admitted that there is a Terrorist party, for bombs are not thrown without hands and men are not shot for political reasons unless there is Terrorism in the background. All we have contended, — and our contention is not overthrown by the judgment in the Alipur appeal, which merely proves that the conspiracy was not childish, and by no means that it was a big or widespread organisation, — is that the attempt of the Anglo-Indian papers to blacken the whole movement, and especially the whole Nationalist party, is either an erroneous or an unscrupulous attempt, and the disposition of the police to arrest every young Swadeshi worker as a rebel and a dacoit is foolish, wrong-headed, often dishonest, and may easily become fatal to the chances of a peaceful solution of the dispute between the Government and the people. The *Englishman*, however, represents a lower grade of intellect and refinement to which these considerations are not likely to present themselves. The average respectable Englishman is better represented by the *Statesman*, and the one dominating note in the *Statesman* is that of regret that the Courts had to go through the ordinary procedure of the law and could not effect a swift, dramatic and terror-striking vindication of the inviolability of the British Government. One would have thought that a nation with the legal and political traditions of the English people would have been glad that the procedure of law had been preserved, the chances of error minimised and the State still safeguarded; and that no ground had been given for a charge of differentiating between a political and an ordinary trial to the prejudice of the accused. It is evident, however, that the type of Englishman demoralised by empire and absolute power considers that, in political cases, the Law Courts should not occupy themselves with finding out the truth, but be used as a political instrument for vengeance and striking terror into political opponents.

The Nadiya President's Speech

We congratulate Mr. Aswini Banerji on the able and vigorous speech delivered by him as the President of the Nadiya Conference. He took up an attitude which was at once manly and free from excess or violence. For ourselves the first point we turned to was the pronouncement on the Reforms. We do not think the judgment of the country on this ill-conceived measure could have been put with greater truth and force than in the periods of good-humoured contempt and irony, scathing yet in perfectly good taste, in which Mr. Banerji disposed of the claims of the Reform Scheme to be a measure of popular self-government. If all public men take the same attitude, the day of a true measure of popular control will be much nearer than if we affect a qualified satisfaction with this political bauble. As Mr. Banerji forcibly pointed out, it does not provide for a popular electorate, it does not admit of the election of popular leaders, it does not create a non-Government majority, or, as we would add, even the reasonable possibility of a strong opposition on essential points. What has the country to do with a reformed Council stripped of these essentials? The jo-hookums, the self-seekers, the nonentities who wish to take advantage of the exclusion of distinguished and leading names in order to enjoy, at the expense of the country's interests, the kudos and substantial advantages of a seat on the Councils will scramble for the newly-created heaven; that is the kind of co-operation which the Government will get from the non-Musulman part of the nation under this scheme. The country remains sullen and dissatisfied.

Mr. Macdonald's Visit

The tour undertaken by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald in India has been cut short by the call from England summoning him home to take his part in the great struggle which is the beginning of the end of Conservative and semi-aristocratic England. In the peaceful revolution which that struggle presages and in which it must sooner or later culminate, Mr. Macdonald's party stands to be the final winners. It is the semi-Socialistic Radical element in the Ministry attracted toward the Labour party to which the precipitation of this inevitable struggle is due. The Labour party is now predominatingly Socialistic and is purging itself of the old individualistic leaven which looked forward to no higher ideal than an eight-hours day, Old Age pensions and Trade Union politics. The Labour members, Messrs. Burt and Fenwick, who represent this old-world element, have received notice to quit from the Labour organisations which helped them into Parliament and much nonsense of a kind familiar to ourselves is being talked about the ingratitude of Labour to these veterans. The only justification for the existence of these gentlemen in Parliament is that they stand for the new insurgent demos and, if they cannot keep pace with the advancing sentiment of the people who keep them in Parliament, their duty is to retire, and the ingratitude is theirs if they try to hamper the progress of their lifelong supporters by fighting the representatives of the new aspirations in the interests of a middle-class party. Mr. Macdonald belongs to the new thought, but he is, we believe, one of those who would hasten slowly to the goal. He has not the rugged personality of Mr. Keir Hardie, but combines in himself, in a way Mr. Hardie scarcely does, the old culture and the new spirit. He has as broad a sympathy and as penetrating an intelligence as Mr. Nevinson, but not the latter's quick intensity. Nevertheless, behind the slow consideration and calm thoughtfulness of his manner, one detects hidden iron and the concealed roughness of the force that has come to destroy and to build, some hint of the rugged outlines of Demogorgon, the claws of Narasingha. For every man is not only himself, he is that which he represents. Mr. Macdonald has been reserved and cautious during his visit and has spoken out only on the Reforms and Reuter, nor have his remarks on these subjects passed the limits of what any sincere Liberal would hold to be a moderate statement of the truth. Mr. Macdonald is one who does not speak out the whole of himself, he is a politician born, and born politicians do not care to outpace by too great a stride the speedily accomplishable fact. Whatever wider vistas they may see beyond, they prefer to move steadily towards them rather than to speak of them. So far as an Englishman can help India, and that under present circumstances is hardly at all, he certainly wishes to help. It is not his fault that the blindness of his countrymen and the conditions of the problem in India make men like him, perforce, little better than sympathetic spectators of the passionate struggle between established privilege and a nation in the making that the world watches now in India.

The Alipur Judgment

THE JUDGMENT of the Appeal Court in the Alipur Case has resulted in the reduction of sentences to a greater or less extent in all but two notable instances, and on the other hand, the maintenance of the finding of the Lower Court in all but six cases, on five of which there is a difference of opinion between the Chief Justice and Justice Carnduff. So long as these cases are still *sub judice*, we reserve our general comments on the trial. At present we can only offer a few remarks on special features of the judgment. The acquittal of the Maratha, Hari Balkrishna Kane, must give universal satisfaction, as his conviction in the absence of any evidence in the least establishing his guilt would have been a gross miscarriage of justice. The rejection of Section 121 and the consequent elimination of the death sentences is also a result on which the Government and the country may both be congratulated. Even in the case of actual political assassins the infliction of the death sentences, however legally justifiable, is bad policy. Death sentences for political crimes only provide martyrs to a revolutionary cause, nerve the violent to fresh acts of vengeance and terrorism, and create through the liberation of the spirits of the dead men a psychical force making for further unrest and those passions of political revolt and fierceness to which they were attached in life. The prolongation of terrorism is undesirable in the interests of the country; for, so long as young men are attached to these methods of violence, the efforts of a more orderly though not less strenuous Nationalism to organise and spread itself must be seriously hampered. We are glad to note that the Chief Justice has in no case condemned an accused on the evidence of the watch-witnesses alone. Such evidence is always suspect in the eyes of the people of this country and the gross blunders, if they were no worse, committed by several of the police witnesses in this case deprive their identifications of all evidential value. Once the confessions were admitted as entirely voluntary and entirely true, the fate of the confessing prisoners and of those directly implicated by them as active members of the society was a foregone conclusion. The conviction of an accused on such a serious charge when there is no clear incriminating evidence against him except the confessions of others, is no doubt permissible under ordinary jurisprudence when these confessions create a moral certainty in the mind of the judge; but if this rule sometimes prevents the escape of the guilty, it not seldom lends itself to the punishment of the innocent. Of more importance, however, and the one serious flaw we are disposed to find in the Chief Justice's judgment, is the exaggerated importance attached to familiarity and intimacy between the leaders of the conspiracy and those whose guilt was open to doubt. When there is a secret conspiracy, it is inevitable that there should be numbers of men intimately associated with the members, perhaps even cooperating with them in surface political action, who are yet in entire ignorance of the close and dangerous proceedings of their friends. It was a recognition of this obvious fact that largely governed Mr. Beachcroft's findings; but we cannot help feeling that neither he nor the Appeal Court, ignorant, like all Englishmen, of the actual workings of the National Movement, have given sufficient weight to this consideration. As a result, the benefit of the doubt has not been extended where it should have been extended. Already it was a general conviction in the public mind that one innocent man had been convicted and succumbed to the rigours of jail life, while two are hopelessly condemned to the brutal and brutifying punishments by which European society avenges itself on the breakers of its laws, — we refer to the Kabiraj brothers found by Mr. Beachcroft to be innocent of conspiracy and therefore presumably innocent tools of conspirators. There is an uneasy sense that some at least have been added to the list by the judgment in appeal. Even if it be so, however, the judges have done their best, and the European legal system has always been a lottery by which it is easy, without any fault on the part of the judge, for the guilty to escape and the innocent to suffer. It is perhaps one of the necessary risks of joining in Nationalist movements to be liable to be confounded in one fate with secret conspirators who happen to be associates in social or legitimate political relations, and when the C.I.D. throws its nets with a generous wideness, we ought not to whine if such accidents bring us into the meshes. The State must be preserved at any cost. In any case, the whole country must be grateful to Sir Lawrence Jenkins for the courtesy, patience and fairness with which he has heard the case and given every facility to the defence, an attitude which might with advantage be copied by certain civilian judges in and outside the High Court and even by certain Judges, not civilians, in other provinces.

Other Writings by Sri Aurobindo in this Issue

Stead and the Spirits
The National Value of Art II
Anandamath X (continued)

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 4th DECEMBER 1909 { No. 22

Facts and Opinions

The Lieutenant-Governor's Mercy

The outcry of the Moderates against the exclusion of their best men has led to certain concessions by which apparently the Government hope to minimise or obviate the formidable opposition that is slowly gathering head against the new Councils. These concessions remove not a single objectionable principle from the Bill. They are evidently designed to facilitate the admission into the Council of the two men in Bengal whose opposition may prove most harmful to the chances of the exceedingly skilful Chinese puzzle called the Councils Regulations, by which the consummate tacticians of Simla hope to preserve full control for the authorities while earning the credit of a liberal and popular reform. The modification by which men who have served three years on a Municipality become eligible even if they are no longer on any such body at the time of election, seems specially designed to admit Sj. Bhupendranath Bose who, with all the other well-known men of Bengal, was excluded by the careful provisions of the Scheme. But to have placated Sj. Bhupendranath and at the same time disqualified the greater Moderate leader would obviously have been an infructuous concession. Accordingly, we are now given to understand that the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased to intimate to the most powerful man in Bengal that, if he stands for election, the disqualification under which he has been placed, will be waived as a special concession in his favour! We do not know what were the feelings of Sj. Surendranath when he was informed that this back-door had been opened to him by the indulgence of the bureaucracy to its dismissed servant. But to us the permission seems to be more humiliating and injurious than the original exclusion, — to Bengal, if not to Surendranath personally. As things stand, he cannot make use of the concession without forfeiting his already much-imperilled popularity and putting himself uselessly into a ridiculous and undignified position. If he stood now, the whole country would believe that his dissatisfaction with the Reforms was due to his personal exclusion and not to the vicious principles of the Scheme. He would enter not in his own right, but by the grace and mercy of the bureaucracy of whom he has been the lifelong opponent. And to what end? To stand isolated or with a handful of ineffective votes against a solid phalanx of officials, Government nominees, Europeans, Mahomedans and lukewarm waverers or reactionaries. Sj. Surendranath gains nothing for himself or the country by entering the Councils on these shameful terms; he gains everything by holding aloof and standing out for better conditions.

An Ominous Presage

The *Indian Daily News* nowadays plays the *Statesman's* abandoned role of the Friend of India. This journal has been recently harping on the necessity of the reform of the Municipalities and throwing out suggestions of the lines on which those reforms should be framed. We cannot imagine anything more ominous, more fatal to the little of self-government that we possess, than these suggested reforms. We pointed out in our article on the Reforms that under this scheme the Municipalities were the only weak point in the Government's armour and we hazarded a prophecy that the Government would follow the policy of thorough and mend this vulnerable part. This is precisely what our Anglo-Indian "friend" earnestly and repeatedly calls on them to do without farther delay. The principle to be enforced is that same false, vicious and antidemocratic principle of the representation of separate interests which has made the new Reforms a blow straight at the heart of progress instead of an important step in progressive development. It is true that the *Daily News* deprecates separate electorates and advocates official control veiled and occasional instead of official control insistent, naked and unashamed. But we know perfectly well that official control veiled and occasional, as in the universities, can be made as potent and effective a weapon for the suppression of independent action as official control direct and habitual. And if the European, the Mahomedan and the landlord are to predominate in the Municipalities as in the reformed Councils and the representation of the "professional classes" carefully restricted, we do not care whether it is done by separate electorates or by some other equally careful manipulation of the electoral lists. The result will be the same. The *Daily News* seems to be inspired in its anxiety for reform by two lofty motives, the predominance of the European vote, wealthy but small in numbers, and the distinction of the predominance of the professional men who, under present circumstances, can alone represent educated India. On the Councils the non-official European representation is small, not in proportion to the numbers of its constituency, but in its comparative voting power, yet this class is on the whole satisfied, because it not only gets what it knows to be disproportionately large representation but can be sure of the co-operation of the official in farthering its interests. On the Municipalities, if the direct official control disappears, it will be necessary for the European vote to be dominant so as to prevent a combination of other elements from pushing other interests to the detriment of European privilege or monopoly. The distinction which this journal, in common with other Anglo-Indian papers, draws between men with a real stake in the country and educated men, who apparently because of their education have none, sheds a flood of light on the kind of friendship which it cherishes for the people of this country.

Chowringhee Humour

The *Statesman* as a friend was intolerable; as a humorist it is hardly less difficult to bear. There was an elephantine attempt at sardonic humour in a recent article in which it weightily urged the educated community to overlook defects and take full and generous advantage of the great opportunity from the benefits of which they have been excluded. That is the peculiar humour of these reforms. They are a Barmecide's feast, gorgeous dishes and silver covers with only unsubstantial air inside, and even from that chameleon's feast the educated classes are carefully excluded, except in a pitifully infinitesimal degree. Yet the Anglo-Indian papers are indignantly remonstrating with the educated classes for not crowding to the table where there are no seats for them and feasting themselves fat on the dainty invisible meats which others are so eager to partake of. It may be asked why others are so anxious for these aerial privileges. Well, that is because it is only the educated classes who are really hungry for substantial political food, the others are eager to see and handle the gorgeous dishes and the silver covers, to say nothing of the kudos of having dined at so rich a house and its material advantages to the individual. But the educated Hindus have had a surfeit of specious outsides and are learning to merge the interests of the individual in the good of the nation.

The Last Resort

The resort to boycott is becoming instinctive in men's blood; not only in India but everywhere, men confronted by opposition of a nature which renders it impossible to deal with it effectively, take to boycott with an admirable spontaneity. The rapid spread of this ancient Indian device since China and India applied it for the first time on the gigantic Asiatic scale, is a sign of the times. We can naturally understand the feeling of discomfort which leads the Anglo-Indian papers to deprecate this move on the part of the Moderates. It is true that the reported agreement to boycott the Councils has been denied by representatives of

Moderate opinion, but, whether a formal resolution to the effect was recorded or not at the momentous meeting in the Indian Association's rooms, it is this policy which the Moderates are following, for the excellent reason that there is no other. As they pathetically complain, it is not they who have boycotted the Government but the Government which has boycotted them. That is not, of course, literally true. Sj. Ambikacharan Majumdar who has refused to stand as a candidate, is eligible under the Government rules; the disabilities in the way of Sjs. Bhupendranath and Surendranath have been waived or removed. But this the Government has taken care to ensure, that if they enter, and evidently the Government desires that they should enter, it shall be as grandiose nonentities, stripped of all powerful backing, individual voices and nothing more. Co-operation on such conditions would be the end of the Moderate party in Bengal and the absolute destruction of the Moderates is an event, which, we confess, we could not contemplate with equanimity. We need a party which will form a convenient channel through which the Government can glide gradually down the path of concession until events have educated our bureaucracy to the point of recognising the necessity of negotiation with the Nationalists. We are therefore glad that the Government has made it imperative on the Moderates to answer boycott with boycott. We have expressed our admiration of the skill with which the Reform Regulations have been framed, but it is the skill of the keen-eyed but limited tactician cleverly manipulating forces for a small immediate gain, not of the far-seeing political strategist. On the contrary, the framers have flung away supports which they ought to have secured and secured others which are either weak or unreliable. The nonentities who are scrambling for a seat in the Council cannot hold the fort for them; the support of the landholders is lacking in sincerity and they are, besides, a force the bureaucracy themselves have stripped ruthlessly of their ancient strength and leadership, which cannot now be recovered by a seat on the Councils; the Musulmans have suddenly been raised by the amazingly shortsighted policy of Lord Morley into an eager, ambitious and pushing political force which will demand a higher and ever higher price for its support. On the other hand the Moderates have been humiliated in the sight of all India and made a general laughing stock, and the entire Hindu community, always the mightiest in potentiality in the land and now growing conscious of its might, has been put far on the way to becoming a permanent and embittered opposition. O wonders of Anglo-Indian statesmanship!

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Men that Pass
The National Value of Art III

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 11th DECEMBER 1909 { No. 23

Facts and Opinions

The United Congress

The controversy which has arisen between the *Bengalee* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* on the subject of a united Congress does not strike us as likely to help towards the solution of this difficult question. We should ourselves have preferred to hold silence until the negotiations now proceeding between representatives of both sides in Calcutta are brought to a definite conclusion either for success or failure. But certain of the positions taken up by the *Bengalee* cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged. Our contemporary refers to the meeting in the *Amrita Bazar* Office last year as an All India Conference. He ought to know perfectly well that it was nothing of the kind. The Mahratta Nationalists were extremely anxious for a settlement and they approached the Bengal Moderates to that end through the mediation of Sj. Motilal Ghose. The terms arrived at were so humiliating that, although they gave way rather than imperil the success of the negotiations, it was with great difficulty they could bring themselves to consent, and Bengal Nationalism has never accepted the surrender on the subject of the creed. At the Hughly Conference, when the four Nationalist members of the Committee were named, great anxiety was expressed by the delegates that men should be chosen who would not repeat this surrender. If the meeting in Bagbazar last year were an All India Conference, how is it that Bombay Moderatism refused to have anything to do with its resolutions, or that Sj. Surendranath and his following did not consider themselves bound by the decision to which they were a party and joined the Madras Congress? It was an attempt at negotiation and nothing more and, having fallen through, binds nobody. The *Bengalee* says that unless the Nationalists sign the creed, a United Congress is impossible, since no one shall be admitted to the Congress who is not satisfied with self-government within the Empire and constitutional means of agitation. This seems to us to be an indirect attempt at intimidating us by hinting that, if we do not join the Moderates on their own terms, we shall be declaring ourselves seditionists and anarchists. That is a method of bringing about unity which we think the Bengal Moderates had better leave to their friends in Bombay and Punjab; it will not work in Bengal. If by constitutional means is meant acquiescence in the Reforms, — that is the only constitution given to us, — we decline to join in using constitutional means. If peaceful means are intended, we do not know that any party advocating public political action is in favour of any but peaceful means. Nor is it a question of adhesion to or secession from the British Empire. That is an ultimate action which is too far off to form a question of practical politics or a subject of difference. The dispute is one of ideal, whether we shall aim at being a province of England or a separate nation on an equality with her carrying on our ancient Asiatic development under modern conditions. Whether such separateness and equality can be effected without breaking the English connection is a question which can only be decided by the final attempt at adjustment between Indian and British interests. We Nationalists lay stress on the ideal, which is a matter of principle, and not on the form it takes, which is a matter of expediency and detail. As far as the United Congress is concerned, the Nationalists are willing to accept the self-government of the provincial type as the object of the Congress and to make no attempt to disturb this provision until India becomes unanimous for a change, but any attempt to make them sign a creed which violates their conscience will be resisted. There can be no farther weakening on that point, and if the Moderates demand that we shall lay down our principles on the altar to Sir Pherozshah Mehta before they will admit fellowship with us then farther negotiations are useless. Disunion must take its course.

The Spirit of the Negotiations

Both the *Bengalee* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* seem to us to misunderstand the spirit of the negotiations which are proceeding. The *Patrika* harps on the inconsistency of the Moderate leaders negotiating on one side and at the same time holding a meeting to send delegates to the Three Men's Congress at Lahore. There is no such condition underlying the negotiations. At Hughly Sj. Surendranath expressly reserved his liberty to attend Sir Pherozshah's Congress and there is no reason why he should not do so if he thinks that his duty or his best policy. Nor do the Nationalists ask the Bengal Moderates to refrain, though they will naturally put their own interpretation on an alliance based on the pusillanimous surrender of the Boycott Resolution. On the other hand the *Bengalee* is quite mistaken in thinking that what the Nationalists seek is admission to the Convention or that they feel themselves under any necessity to go cap in hand to Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Mr. Gokhale. On the contrary they distinctly state that the Convention is not the Congress, but they recognise that as a mere matter of convenience the reparation of its errors by the Convention is the readiest method of bringing about a compromise and they are therefore willing to take the status quo as a basis for negotiations. They recognise no obligation to conform submissively to that basis or approach the Bombay leaders as the arbiters of their destiny.

A Salutary Rejection

We draw the attention of all weak-kneed Nationalists to the ban placed by the Bombay Government on the candidature of the distinguished and able Poona Nationalist, Mr. N. C. Kelkar. Mahratta Nationalism has never been so robustly uncompromising as the Bengal school in its refusal of co-operation in the absence of control, and Mr. Kelkar, though a sincere and ardent Nationalist, a friend and constant fellow-worker of Mr. Tilak, has always preserved an independent line in this matter and considered himself at liberty to help the cause of the country on bodies controlled by the Government. It greatly helps our cause that the Government should so emphatically set its face against any mistaken diplomacy of this kind. Mr. Kelkar's only specific offence against eligibility was a sentence of fine and two months' imprisonment for contempt of court, and that is short of the time required for ineligibility. Sj. Surendranath, who was, by the way, sentenced to six months for a still graver contempt, has been specially exempted, unasked, by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal from another disability. It is obvious therefore that Mr. Kelkar's real offence was his Nationalist views and his friendship with Mr. Tilak. We hope that all compromising Nationalists will take the lesson of this rebuff to heart. The object of the Government is to rally the Mahomedans and the Moderates and isolate the Nationalists. No doubt they mean by the Moderates the Loyalist section of that party, but they are evidently wishful not to entirely alienate the Nationalist Moderates, if they can do so while excluding them from all real weight on the Councils. But by what reasoning any Nationalist can imagine that he will escape the operation of the excluding clauses, we are at a loss to understand. We may also ask our Mahratta brothers what advantage they have gained by being less rigid than ourselves. They are, if anything, more rigorously persecuted than we are in Bengal. Weakness of any kind does not pay in dealing with the Briton.

The English Revolution

The note of revolution which was struck with resounding force by Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Winston Churchill in the quarrel with the Lords, is now ringing louder in England and has been taken up in soberer but not less emphatic tones by Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey. There can be no doubt that there was dissension in the Cabinet over the Budget and that the concessions made by the Government in the process of passing it were forced upon Mr. Lloyd George and certainly not to the taste of that fiery and uncompromising Celt. But the reactionary attempt of the House of Lords to control finance, has evidently closed up the ranks by driving the Moderates over to the cause of revolution. It is evidently felt by the Liberals that, with an Upper Chamber more and more shamelessly and constantly a mere tool of the Conservative leaders, it is impossible for any Liberal Government to accept office unless it has a mandate to end or mend the Lords. We cannot believe that a similar feeling will not actuate the great mass of Liberals all over Great Britain and heal all differences. Already the Labour Executive has decided to make the victory easier for the Government by not dividing the forward vote in a considerable number of constituencies and we have no doubt this is the outward sign of a secret compact between the Labour party and the Liberals by which the return of a powerful Socialist party has been secured. Even the extreme Socialists, who usually are against all dealing with the middle class and whose motto is "A plague on both your houses", are calling on the Socialists of all shades to support the Government in abolishing the House of Lords. If Mr. Asquith had followed the line we suggested as possible in a previous number and introduced a moderate but effective bill for nullifying the Lords' veto, he would certainly have gained a number of Moderate votes which will now be denied to him, but it is doubtful whether the gain of the entire Socialist vote, secured by keeping himself free to end the House of Lords, is not, in the present condition of English politics, a compensation far exceeding the loss. Already Tariff Reform is receding into the background and promises to be a subordinate issue. The battle is over the constitutional, not the fiscal issue. By their anxiety to bring Unionist Labour candidates into the field and the eager talk of Conservative leaders about the necessity of reforming the Lords, the party of reaction show that they perfectly understand from what quarters disaster threatens. Now that the Liberal party is pledged to destroy the Lords' veto, the English Revolution is assured and it will be not a middle class but a Socialist and Labour revolution. This result is assured whether the Liberals win or lose in the present battle. One campaign does not decide the fortunes of such a war.

Aristocratic Quibbling

When we speculated that the Lords would be more likely to amend the Budget and leave their opponents the onus of throwing the finances of the whole country into confusion, we underestimated the want of wit of which this highly venerable but somewhat brainless House is capable. This want of wit has shown itself in an unseasonable and wholly futile excess of refined cunning. The House of Lords felt that its great weakness, when its conduct went before the country for its verdict, would be the odium of its unconstitutional attempt to interfere with the control of the finances by the people. To mend the unconstitutional appearance of their act, they have taken up this position, that they have no right to amend but they have the right to reject the Budget. It appears to be a right which they have sometimes been unwise enough to claim, but never unwise enough to enforce. The aristocratic hairsplitter who discovered this quibble, seems to have forgotten that, however pleasing the distinction may be to his ingenuity, the mass of the voters will not care one straw to examine fine distinctions which claim the whole and disclaim the part. They will simply say that the right of rejection means the right of baffling the representatives of the people and paralysing finance. The other device of the Lords is to avoid the appearance of disputing the people's right by putting the rejection in the form of a referendum to the people, a procedure which the British constitution does not include in itself and which is entirely new. Unfortunately they have made too much noise about the woes of the Dukes and Mr. Balfour has made the damaging admission that it is only the liquor and the land clauses to which he objects, so that it is too late to pretend that it is anxiety for the liberties of the people and not solicitude for their own pockets and the pockets of their allies, the publicans, that has dictated their action. The indecent crowding of Lords who never before attended a single sitting, to reject the Budget, was also a tactical error. On the whole the action of the House of Lords has greatly helped Mr. Asquith and we may await with some confidence the result of a struggle in which India is deeply interested.

The Transvaal Indians

THE VISIT of Mr. Polak has excited once more a closer interest in the Transvaal question and associations are being formed for the agitation of the question. It will therefore be opportune to consider the practical aspect of the struggle in the Transvaal and the possibility of help from India. There can be no two opinions outside South Africa, and possibly Hare Street, as to the moral aspects of the question; for it must be remembered that the Indians in the Transvaal are not claiming any political rights, but merely treatment as human beings first, and, next, equality before the law. It is open to the South Africans to exclude Indians altogether, but, once they are admitted, they are morally bound to refrain from a treatment of them which is an extreme and unpardonable outrage on humanity. To degrade any part of the human race to the level of cattle is in the present stage of progress an insult and an offence to the whole of mankind. It would be equally reprehensible to whatever race the humanity so degraded belonged, but the fact that these men are Indians has made their sufferings a national question to us and a standing reproach to the British people who, out of selfish fear of offending their own kith and kin, allow this outrage to be committed on their own subjects whom they have deprived of all means of self-protection. The great glory of the Transvaal Indians is that while men under such circumstances have always sunk into the condition to which they have been condemned and needed others to help them out of the mire, these sons of Bharatavarsha, inheritors of an unexampled moral and spiritual tradition, have vindicated the superiority of the Indian people and its civilisation to all other peoples in the globe and all other civilisations by the spirit in which they have refused to recognise the dominance of brute force over the human soul. Stripped of all means of resistance, a helpless handful in a foreign land, unaided by India, put off with empty professions of sympathy by English statesmen, they, ignored by humanity, are fighting humanity's battle in the pure strength of the spirit, with no weapon but the moral force of their voluntary sufferings and utter self-sacrifice. Mr. Polak has well said that the Indian nation is being built up in South Africa. The phrase is true in this sense that the supreme example of the moral and spiritual strength which must be behind the formation of the new nation, has been shown first not in India but in South Africa. The passive resistance which we had not the courage and unselfishness to carry out in India, they have carried to the utmost in the Transvaal under far more arduous circumstances, with far less right to hope for success. Whether they win or lose in the struggle, they have contributed far more than their share to the future greatness of their country.

We must consider their chances of success, and though we do not wish to speak words of discouragement, it will not do to hide from ourselves the enormous difficulties in the way. For success, either the Government in England must interfere and compel the Transvaal to do right, or the Transvaal must be stirred by shame and by the interest of the poorer part of the Boer community to reverse the laws, or the Indian Government must intervene to protect its subjects. The first course is unthinkable. It would mean a quarrel with the newly conciliated Transvaal, the marring of the work of which the Liberal Government is justly proud, and a resentment in South Africa which the English ministry will not face for the sake of all India, much less of a handful of Indian coolies and shopkeepers. The poorer Boers will be only inconvenienced, not seriously hurt by the extinction of the Indian shopkeeper, and, in any case, they are not a class who are wont to act politically. The Transvaal Government is not likely to yield to any sense of shame. The Boers are a stark race, stubborn to the death, and the grit they showed in the face of the British Empire, they are also likely to show in this very minor trouble. Nor are they likely to have forgotten the action of the Indians who rewarded the comparative leniency of the Boer Government previous to the war by helping actively in the British attack on the liberty of the Transvaal. With their slow minds and tenacious memories they are a people not swift to forget and forgive; we do not rely greatly on their present professions of friendship to the Power that took from them their freedom, and they are wholly unlikely to put from their minds the unpardonable intrusion of the Indian residents into a quarrel in which they had no concern or status.

There remains the Indian Government, and what can the Indian Government do? It can forbid, as has been suggested, Indian cooly recruitment for Natal. This would undoubtedly be a great blow to the planters and they would throw their whole influence into the Indian scale. But, on the other hand, the mass of the Natal whites are full of race prejudice and their desire is for that impossible dream, a white South Africa. A more effective measure would be the suspension of trade relations by the boycott of Colonial goods and the cessation of the importation of Indian raw materials into South Africa. But that is a step which will never be taken. Even if the Indian Government were willing to use any and every means, the decision does not rest with them but with the Government in England, which will not consent to offending the colonies. The Indian Government would no doubt like to see an end of the situation in the Transvaal as it weakens such moral hold as they still have over India, and they would prefer a favourable termination because the return of ruined Indians from the Transvaal will bring home a mass of bitterness, burning sense of wrong and standing discontent trained in the most strenuous methods of passive resistance. And many of them are Mahomedans.

The one favourable factor in favour of the Transvaal Indians is their own spiritual force and the chance of its altering the conditions by sheer moral weight. It is India's duty to aid them by financial succour which they sorely need and the rich men of the country can easily afford, by the heartening effect of public and frequently expressed moral sympathy and by educating the whole people of India literate and illiterate in an accurate knowledge of what is happening in the Transvaal. This is the only help India can give to her children over the seas so long as she is not master of her own destinies.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The National Value of Art IV
Anandamath XI
The Birth of Sin (poem)

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 18th DECEMBER 1909 { No. 24

Facts and Opinions

Sir Pherozshah's Resignation

The resignation of Sir Pherozshah Mehta took all India by surprise. It was as much a cause of astonishment to his faithful friends and henchmen as to the outside world. The speculation and bewilderment have been increased by the solemn mystery in which the Dictator of the Convention has shrouded his reasons for a step so suddenly and painfully embarrassing to the body he created and now rules and protects. A multitude of reasons have been severally alleged for this sudden move in the game by ingenious speculators, but they seem mostly to be figments of the imagination. It was an ingenious guess that Sir Pherozshah has been appointed, as a reward for his great services to the Government, on the India Council and could, therefore, take no farther part in party politics. But until the appointment, if real, is announced, such self-denial is not obligatory, and surely Lord Morley would be quite willing to give his choice ten days' grace in order that he might pilot through this crisis in its fortunes a body so useful to the Government as the Convention that is striving this year to meet at Lahore. We ourselves lean to the idea that it is the complications ensuing on the unmasking of the Reforms that are chiefly responsible for the move. The Reforms are exasperating to Hindu sentiment, destructive to popular interests and a blow even to the Loyalist Hindus who were loudest in acclaiming the advent of the millennium. The Bombay leaders cannot accept the Reforms without exasperating the people or refuse them without offending the Government. They are in that embarrassing position which is vulgarly called being in a cleft stick. It is not surprising in a tactician of Sir Pherozshah's eminence that, at such a critical juncture, he should prefer to guide the deliberations of the Lahore Convention from behind the veil rather than stand forward and become personally responsible for whatever he may think it necessary to compel the Convention to do. The Bengal Conventionists are already in danger of drifting away from the moorings and the new Regulations have, we believe, created the imminence of another dissension among the remaining faithful. The resignation of Sir Pherozshah makes it easier for the Bengal Moderates to attend the Lahore Congress, and that may not have been absent from the thoughts of the master tactician. But we never thought that Sir Pherozshah would care so much for the co-operation of the Bengalis as to allow Srijut Surendranath to be President, as certain sanguine gentlemen in Bengal seem to have expected. Failing Sir Pherozshah and Mr. Gokhale, who for obvious reasons cannot be put forward so soon after the Benares Presidentship, Mr. Madan Mohan Malaviya was evidently the man, and we find accordingly that he has been designated for the succession by the obedient coterie at Bombay. We await with interest the upshot of this very attractive entanglement and the method by which the Convention will try to wriggle out of the very difficult hole into which Lord Morley has thrust it.

The Council Elections

The elections for the Reformed Councils, so far as they have proceeded, entirely justify the description of the new bodies which we gave in our article on the Reforms. The elections for the United Provinces give a fair sample of the results which are sure to obtain all over India. With the exception of two or three gentlemen of the type of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, there is none on the Council to represent the educated wealthy, much less the people at large; all the rest are Europeans, Mahomedans and grandees. It is a Council of Notables, not a reformed Legislative Council representing both the Government and the people. In Bengal two gentlemen have been elected who represent the most lukewarm element in the popular party, for Sj. Baikunthanath Sen and Mr. K. B. Dutt stand not for the new movement in Bengal so much as for the old antiquated Congress politics which Bengal, even in its Moderate element, has left far behind. Behar sends one independent man in Mr. Deepnarain Singh. All the rest are of the dignified classes who either have no patriotic feelings or dare not express them. It is possible that Sir Edward Baker, in order to remove the stigma of unrepresentative subserviency from his Council, may try to nominate two or three who will help to keep Sj. Baikunthanath and his friend in countenance, but that purely personal grace will not mend matters. The Bengal Council is likely to be an even more select and unrepresentative body than we expected. We counted the District Boards as possible constituencies for representatives of opposition and independent opinion, but, for the most part, they might almost as well have been preserves for the aristocracy. In East Bengal it is evident that the Councils will be a Mahomedan and European body.

British Unfitness for Liberty

By all Anglo-Indian papers it was triumphantly announced as a conclusive proof of the unfitness of the Indian people for self-government that the Surat Congress should have been broken up by the storming of the platform when passions were highly excited and relations between parties at breaking-point. Every ordinary sign of excitement at a public meeting is telegraphed to England under some such graphic title as "Uproarious proceedings at the Provincial Conference". But if rowdyism is a sign of unfitness for liberty, there is no country so unfit as England itself and logically, as lovers of England, our Anglo-Indian friends ought to pray that Germany, which knows how to sternly stop such disturbances, or Russia, which knows how to punish them, should take charge of England and teach her people respect for law and order. The excitement of the great revolutionary struggle now proceeding in England has already in these few days induced such lawlessness and disorder that it is becoming almost impossible for Conservative speakers to command a public hearing. At first it was the Liberal Minister, Mr. Ure, whose meetings were systematically interrupted and broken up by organised Conservative rowdyism. Since then the Radicals have retaliated with much greater effect, first, with "good-humoured" interruption, then with more formidable tumult and, finally, we see the temper rising to absolute ferocity. Not only do we read in one telegram of four Conservative meetings which were of a disorderly nature, while Lord Kesteven and Lord Harris were refused a hearing, but the windows at Mr. Ure's last meeting were broken with a battering-ram and several of his audience were cut; and the other day a Conservative meeting was broken up, the agent left senseless by his assailants and the candidate only saved by a skilful flight. Nor were the worst excesses of which our young men were accused in the prosecution of the Boycott and picketing, anywhere near the violence and recklessness of which Englishwomen have been systematically guilty during the last few months. Clearly it is time that a more capable nation conquered and took charge of England.

The Lahore Convention

The prospects of the Lahore Convention seem to be exceedingly clouded. In the matter of the Presidentship the fiat has gone forth from Bombay that Pandit Madan Mohan shall be President and, unless the dissatisfaction with the Mehta leadership has extended itself to the subservient Congress Committees, it is likely that the Bombay nomination will give the lead to the rest of the Conventionist coteries, excepting perhaps Burma and Bengal. The Convention is now at a critical stage of its destinies. Disowned by the Punjab, troubled by strained relations between Bombay and Bengal, it has received the crowning blow from the Government which supports it; its policy has been discredited before the country and once more it has been proved to a disgusted people that the methods of the Conventionists lead to nothing but rebuffs, humiliation and political retrogression in the name of reform. If this body is to survive, there is need of a strong hand and skilful guidance, otherwise the present session is likely to be the last. Already the Convention is becoming the refuge of an out-of-date and vanishing coterie who no longer command the confidence of the country. By its very constitution the Convention has cut itself off from the people and a few men meeting in conclave elect the delegates in the name of an indifferent or hostile public. The dying past in vain strives to entrench itself in this insecure and crumbling fortress. Every day will serve to undermine it more and more and the Nationalists are content to let time and inevitable tendency do their work for them. Only by a radical self-purification and change of policy can the Convention hope to survive.

The Moderate Manifesto

THE PRACTICAL exclusion of the educated classes, other than Mahomedans, landholders and titled grandees, from the new Councils and the preference of Mahomedans to Hindus has rung the death-knell of the old Moderate politics in India. If the Moderate party is to survive, it has to shift its base and alter its tactics. If its leaders ignore the strong dissatisfaction and disillusionment felt by educated Hindus all over India or if they tamely acquiesce in a reform which seems to have been deliberately framed in order to transfer political preponderance from Hindus to Mahomedans and from the representatives of the educated class to the landed aristocracy, they will very soon find themselves leaders without a following. The Moderate party at present is held together merely by the prestige and personal influence of the small secret Junta of influential men who lead it, not by any settled convictions or intelligent policy. The personalities of Mr. Gokhale and Sir Pherozshah Mehta in Bombay, of Sj. Surendranath Banerji and Sj. Bhupendranath Bose in Bengal, of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in the United Provinces, of Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar in Madras constitute Moderatism in their respective provinces. What these old and respected leaders decide in their close and secret deliberations is accepted, no longer without cavilling, but still with a somewhat reluctant acquiescence by their party. But the public mind has now been too deeply stirred for the leaders to ignore the opinion of the country. The resignation by Sir Pherozshah Mehta of his Presidentship of the Lahore Convention following so soon after the publication of the Regulations, the speech of Mr. Gokhale at the Deccan Sabha and the manifesto issued by the Calcutta Moderates are the first signs of the embarrassment felt by the heads of the party. There can be no doubt that they have allowed themselves to be tools in the hands of the officials and were not prepared for being thrown overboard as the sole recompense.

The speech of Mr. Gokhale shows the line along which the Bombay Moderate leaders desire to pilot their followers. It is the line chalked out for them by Lord Minto and other Anglo-Indian advisers. A great deal of feeling has been created against Mr. Gokhale throughout the country by his justification of the "stern and relentless" measures employed by the Government against the Nationalist party and the Boycott movement and by the Bombay Government's use of the new repressive legislation to crush a personal adversary in Mr. Gokhale's interests. The Moderate leader has with a belated adroitness used the disqualification of the Nationalist, Mr. N. C. Kelkar, to rehabilitate himself, if that be possible, by championing the cause of a political opponent. We do not know whether Mahratta sentiment will be shallow enough to be misled by this manoeuvre. The disqualification of Mr. Kelkar is an incident we welcome as a gain to our cause. On the other hand, apart from the empty formula of protest and a formal recognition of the sentiment of the country against the defects of the measure, the speech is merely a repetition of Lord Minto's appeal to give this vicious, injurious and insulting measure a fair chance, — on the very shadowy possibility to which the Moderate leaders still profess to cling, that all this alloy will be changed to pure gold in the next three years. Mr. Gokhale is still the political henchman of Lord Minto and echoes his sentiments with a pathetic fidelity.

The manifesto of the Moderate leaders in Calcutta is of more importance. The Bengal veterans have not yet lost caste by publicly turning against their countrymen and approving Government repression; they still keep some touch with public sentiment and have not yielded body and soul to the rallying call of Lord Morley. Even so fervid an anti-Nationalist as Dr. Rash Behari Ghose, to the great discontent and surprise of the *Englishman*, has signed the document. The manifesto shows a clear sense of the shortcomings of the measure of reform which was acclaimed with such gratitude by these same able politicians when the skeleton had not been filled in with its present generous padding. It is to be regretted that a false note has been struck by the reference to the modification of one clause and the complaint that the "relief" thus afforded was insignificant and many distinguished men would still be barred out of the Council. Are the distinguished men of Bengal paupers cringing for personal doles that this kind of language should be used or this kind of argument advanced? We cannot congratulate the framer of the manifesto either on the form or the matter of this unhappy sentence. The recognition of class and creed as a basis of representation, the exclusion of popular interests in favour of the dignified elements in the community, the illusory nature of the non-official majority, the limitation of the functions of the Councils to criticism without control and the denial of freedom of election are the real gravamen of the charges against Lord Morley's measure, and the barring out of certain distinguished men is a mere incident which can certainly be used in newspaper articles and speeches as an indication of motive, but ought not to have been introduced into a grave document of this nature. The effective representation of the people, the preservation of sound democratic principles of representation in the formation of the electorates and freedom of election are the objects disinterested and patriotic men should hold before them, not the privilege of entry into the Councils for distinguished men.

But while the manifesto contains a full and exhaustive statement of the objections to the Reform, it is silent as the grave with regard to the practical methods which the Moderate leaders propose to adopt in order to bring about real reform. Will they follow the Bombay lead? Will they strike out a line of their own? At the close of the manifesto there is a pious expression of indomitable hope characteristic of the Moderate party, the party of obstinate illusions; the signatories, it seems, do not despair of the Government seeing the error of their ways and modifying the regulations so as to restore Lord Morley's original scheme. There is something heroic in this desperate absence of despair. It reminds us of the most heroic passage in Roman history when, after the massacre of Cannae, the beaten general and cause of the disaster returned an almost solitary fugitive to Rome, preferring flight to a soldier's death, and the whole Roman senate came out to meet him and thank him that he had not despaired of his country. What is it that the Moderate leaders hope? Do they hope that the regulations will be so modified as to admit all the distinguished men whom they are interested in seeing at their back in the Councils? Or do they hope that the fundamental defects we have enumerated will be removed by a sort of spontaneous repentance and confession of original sin on the part of the Government? If so, what other basis have they for their incurable hopefulness except the faculty of the chameleon for living on unsubstantial air? The modifications of which they speak are not modifications, but a radical alteration of the whole spirit and details of the measure.

We also do not despair of a wholesome change in the attitude of the Government, but we do not believe in political miracles. There is no progress in politics except by the play of cause and effect, and if we want a particular effect, we must first create the suitable and effective cause. The only cause that can bring about so radical a change in the attitude of the Government is the failure of this misbegotten scheme and the necessity of substituting one better conceived and more liberal. And the only way to bring about the failure and the consequent necessity is to focus the whole opposition of the Hindu interest and the popular interest, with whatever Mahomedan assistance we can get, in a movement of abstention from the present Councils and an active agitation by effective means for the recognition of the great democratic principles that have been ignored and the formation of a new scheme after consultation with the popular leaders. This, it seems to us, is a legitimate sphere of activity for a strong and self-respecting Moderate party. But if they stultify themselves by accepting in any way a measure designed to reduce them to nullity or impotence, they will commit suicide. Their empty protests against the defects of the Bill will be recognised as meaningless, for they will have deprived themselves of their only leverage for remedying the defects. The country has no room any longer for a party of mere sanguine expectancy and helpless dependence on the will of superior power. Moderatism at present is a mass of ill-defined aspirations, ungrounded hopes and helpless methods leading to perpetual and repeated disappointment, increasing weakness and deepening self-discontent. No party vowed to these uninspiring methods and depressing experiences can hope to survive at a time when political life is becoming more and more vivid and real. The Moderates must give up their vague unpracticality and adopt a definite aim, a distinct programme, effective methods.

We do not know whether the Moderate leaders could ever bring themselves so far as to stand out for a real measure of control as distinguished from a wider power of criticism. But there is no reason why they should not make up their minds to fight for a popular electorate based on education, exclusive of class and religious distinctions, free election and an elective majority, and refuse to be satisfied with less. In that case, the Nationalist party would represent a more advanced force standing out for a measure of effective control and a democratic electorate based on literacy, in addition to the Moderate demands. If, on the other hand, the Moderates would also accept control as a necessary factor of any political settlement, Moderate and Nationalist would again come into line and stand on a common platform, the only distinction being that one party would accept the settlement as a satisfactory solution for the present, while the other would regard it merely as an instrument for developing autonomy. But while the exclusory clauses of the Moderate Convention's Constitution remain, this drawing together is not possible, or, if it were possible, could not be sincere and effective. Those clauses are a sign and pledge of the Mehta-

Morley alliance and ratify the policy of which Mr. Gokhale's Poona speech was the expression, the policy of rallying the Moderates to the Government's support and crushing the Nationalists.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The National Value of Art V
Anandamath XI (continued)
Epiphany (poem)

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 25th DECEMBER 1909 { No. 25

Facts and Opinions

The United Congress Negotiations

The persistence of the *Bengalee* in shielding Moderate obstinacy under cover of an appeal to the wholly inconclusive proceedings of the private Conference in the *Amrita Bazar* Office last year shows both the paucity of possible arguments for the Moderate position and the readiness of its chief organ to ignore facts of which it has been reminded more than once and which it cannot deny. The difference between the conference last year and the recent negotiations is radical. That conference was between Conventionists and non-Conventionists, the recent negotiations were between Moderates and Nationalists. The *Amrita Bazar* Office Conference was an attempt made by certain leaders in Bengal and Maharashtra to secure admission for the Nationalists to the Convention. The United Congress Committee was confined to Bengal and sat to consider whether Bengal Moderates and Nationalists could not agree together before inviting the Conventionists of other provinces to accept the terms offered by United Bengal. Last year's Conference was a confabulation of leading men representing their own opinions only, this year's negotiations were conducted by men elected for the purpose by the Provincial Conference representing the whole of Bengal. At the Conference in Bagbazar it was the middle section of opinion, neither Moderate nor Nationalist, of which Sj. Motilal Ghose, Rai Jotindranath Chaudhuri, and some of the older leaders in the Mofussil are the most influential members, which engineered a compromise in the absence of the Nationalist leaders. Sj. Tilak was a prisoner in Mandalay jail, Sj. Aurobindo Ghose under trial at Alipur, Sj. Khaparde and Sj. Bipin Chandra Pal absent in England. The compromise was reluctantly accepted by many of the Nationalists present, — as we have ascertained by correspondence with some of the chief Nationalists who attended, — and only because it was pressed on them that these were the only terms on which the Moderate party would admit of the idea of union. It was not accepted at all by the Bengal Nationalists and it has been recently admitted by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* that letters were received from the Mofussil repudiating the surrender on the question of the creed. How is it that the *Bengalee* persists in ignoring these facts? The compromise was rejected by the Moderates themselves, Bombay refusing utterly to recognise the four Calcutta resolutions as a possible part of any treaty, and this was recognised by the Moderates this year; for at the first meeting of the United Congress Committee it was distinctly intimated to the Nationalist members that the four resolutions must not be pressed as a condition of union. In other words the one concession for which some of the leading Nationalists induced themselves to waive their rooted objections to constitution and creed, is expunged and the Nationalists are expected to be bound by a rejected compromise by which the Moderates refuse to be bound. They are expected to adhere to the concessions they made last year, while the only concession made to them is withdrawn. This fact is quite sufficient by itself to put the *Bengalee*'s argument out of court. We repeat that the recent negotiations had nothing to do with last year's abortive compromise, rejected as it was by both parties immediately after it was made. Their sole object was to ascertain whether the Moderates would accept substantial concessions from the Nationalists without asking the latter to sacrifice their conscience and their principles. Apparently they are not. Therefore union is impossible.

A New Sophism

Another and very singular argument is advanced by the *Bengalee* which evinces a similar disregard of facts and of the real significance of facts. It is alleged that both sides in Bengal are agreed as to the four resolutions, that the creed is part of the four resolutions, that the creed was accepted by the Nationalists at Pabna and therefore they ought not to object to sign it as a condition of entering the Congress. In the first place, if the four resolutions are to be so binding on the Nationalists that they must be ready to sign one of them at the call of the Moderates, then they must be made equally binding on the Moderates and we call on them to sign a declaration of acceptance of the Boycott as a condition of entry into a United Congress. Just as the Moderates from Bombay accepted the Boycott resolution at Calcutta in deference to the weight of public opinion, so we accepted the Colonial self-government resolution as the opinion of the majority and are no more bound to subscribe to it personally than Sir Pherozshah Mehta is bound to subscribe to the Boycott. The four resolutions merely framed a compromise between the two political schools, not a declaration of Nationalist faith. As for Bengal, it is well known that the whole of Bengal does not accept Colonial self-government as the ultimate goal of political aspiration. At Pabna it was only to avoid a discussion dangerous to unity that the Nationalists contented themselves, in spite of the majority they had, with placing their dissent on record through the mouth of Sj. Manoranjan Guha. The *Bengalee* cannot have forgotten that incident. It was revived again at Hughly when the Moderates insisted on whittling down the Boycott to a mere commercial measure as a price of their adherence to the Conference and Sj. Aurobindo Ghose desired to bring forward an amendment, which he would subsequently withdraw, in order to mark that the Nationalists did not accept the resolution as the opinion of the country. The Moderate leaders threatened to withdraw if this was done and Sj. Aurobindo Ghose was requested to confine himself to the precedent established by Sj. Manoranjan Guha at Pabna. He then distinctly expressed his doubt whether this would be sufficient to make the Nationalist attitude clear to the country and the advantage taken of our complaisance by the *Bengalee* to misrepresent the Nationalist attitude at Pabna shows that his apprehensions were perfectly justified. If this is the light in which the Moderates choose to put the Nationalist willingness to compromise, it may be necessary at the next Conference for our party not only to move an amendment but to put it to the vote regardless of Moderate threats of secession.

Futile Espionage

We wonder whether it is really impossible to maintain a great Empire without demoralising oneself and the country by means of an unworthy system of espionage. Since the initiation of the Swadeshi movement the army of spies and informers have grown as plentiful as insects round a bright light. Formerly men of some distinction had the honour of being watched in their houses, dogged in their goings, honoured by the private inspection of their correspondence. But nowadays it is enough to be suspected of patriotism to have the inefficient hirelings of the Police, if not the worthy guardians of the Law themselves, sticking like burs to one's heels. Is anything gained by these excessive and no doubt costly precautions? If we are to judge by the sorry specimens who have besieged us for the last six months, a more incapable creature than the ordinary Indian spy does not exist. He has an engaging simplicity of artifice which at once betrays his savoury vocation, and if he does not carry "spy" written legibly on his forehead, as a multitude of them do, he is so transparent in his methods that he might just as well be labelled, "Due at Royd Street." Nor do we quite see what is gained by watching a man's house or his office with an open brazenness. The office of the *Dharma* has recently been favoured with the loitering of watchers who spend their days gazing lovingly at the building and making affectionate and importunate enquiries as to the movements and habits of the editor. This open love-making strikes us as a little indecent; it would be better done behind a veil. And what do the authorities hope to gain by these unique researches? Do they hope to see either bombs or packets of sedition being carried into the building? Or is a leader of public agitation likely to convert his newspaper office or his house into an open resort of secret conspirators? Even a bureaucracy ought to credit its political opponents with some little common sense, even if they cannot credit them with honesty of motive and frankness of action.

Convention Voyagers

We understand that some seven or eight faithful hearts are meditating the journey to Lahore to assist Mr. Madan Mohan Malaviya in carrying out Sir Pherozshah's orders. We wish them a good voyage and a speedy repentance. One wonders, by the way, where the delegates of the Convention are going to start up from at the last moment. We watch in vain for the news of numerous elections all over the country. Secret conclaves, hushed-up quarrels, sittings with silent visitors, and, finally, secret elections seem to be the best features of convention politics! Or are the delegates ashamed of publishing their names?

Creed and Constitution

THE ATTEMPT to bring about the unity of the two parties in Bengal as a preliminary to the holding of a United Congress has split on the twin rocks of creed and constitution. We will place before the country as succinctly as possible the issues which were posited during the negotiations and state clearly the Nationalist attitude, leaving it to Bengal to judge between us and the upholders of the Convention's creed and constitution. We ask our countrymen to consider whether the concessions we made were not large and substantial and the single concession offered to us worthless and nugatory, whether the reservations we made were not justifiable and necessary, except on the view that principles are of no value in politics, and, if they come to the conclusion that the proposals we made were fair and moderate, we ask them to absolve us of all responsibility for the failure of the negotiations.

The terms offered by the Moderate party were based on a compromise framed at the *Amrita Bazar* Office last year which has since been rejected by the Moderates in one of its most important features, namely, the insistence on the acceptance of the four Calcutta resolutions as an indispensable condition of union. The Moderate proposal was that the Nationalists should sign the creed unconditionally and accept the Conventionist constitution, but that the Bombay leaders should be asked to consent to the formation of a Committee this year at Lahore to revise the Constitution and pass it as revised at the next session. The terms of the revision would naturally be left to that Committee and if it were equally composed of Nationalists and Moderates, there would have been some value in the concession. But by a rule of the Moderate constitution all Associations not of three years' standing would be debarred from sending delegates. The formation of the Nationalists into a distinct party was only completed in the year 1906, that is precisely three years ago, and the rule was evidently framed in order to help in making impossible the election of Nationalist delegates. At the time the rule was framed there was not and could not be any association of our party with the requisite qualification, and such bodies as would have been qualified now, have mostly perished in the storm of repression which broke on the Nationalists after the unnatural alliance between coercive conciliation and an Indian progressive party previous to the Surat Congress, — an alliance not then declared, but sufficiently proved by the conduct and utterances of Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Mr. Gokhale then and after. It is evident, therefore, that if we accepted the Moderate constitution apart from its utter illegality, we should be consenting to our own exclusion by an electoral device worthy of Lord Morley himself, even though the front door might be nominally open to us. Only an insignificant number of Nationalists would be able to qualify as delegates and the Revision Committee would be a Moderate Committee and the revision a mere modification of unessential details. The concession therefore was nugatory, as illusory as the Reforms offered to us by bureaucratic benignity. On the other hand, the Nationalists were expected to sign a creed which they could not uphold as their own conscientious belief, to recognise an unconstitutional constitution and to leave the four resolutions to the chances of a Moderate Subjects Committee and the possible prohibition of their amendments by a Mehta or Malaviya.

The Nationalist members of the Committee rejected these impossible demands and submitted proposals of their own on each of the three main points at issue. They consented to accept the first Article of the Moderate Constitution which declared the objects of the Congress to be self-government and the acquisition of the rights of British citizenship; they refused to accept the second Article which requires every representative elected by the people to subscribe personally to these objects as a precondition of entering the pandal as a delegate. They refused to accept the Constitution as a Constitution, but they consented to accept it as a set of provisional rules allowed by mutual agreement to govern Congress proceedings until a real Constitution was passed next year, provided that the rule limiting the right of election to Associations of three years' standing which accepted the creed, should be made inoperative by the same mutual agreement. They agreed not to press the four resolutions as a precondition of union, provided they received an assurance that they should not be debarred from bringing them in the Subjects Committee and, if necessary, in the Congress itself. The Moderates rejected the proposal; they demanded unconditional acceptance and subscription to the creed as the indispensable basis of union. Yet the Nationalists had really conceded everything which the other party could reasonably expect. They accepted a limited self-government as the object of the Congress, although they refused to accept it as their own, they accepted the Moderate Constitution with the exception of one subclause which meant the exclusion of Nationalist delegates; and made no farther stipulation that it should be changed in any way previous to being passed as the real legal Constitution of the Congress; they consented to leave over the question of the four resolutions, reserving only their constitutional right to move them in Subjects Committee and in Congress. We ask, could anything have been fairer, more generous, more thoroughly pervaded by the desire to bring about unity even at the cost of substantial, indeed immense concessions?

Our attitude with regard to the creed has been consistent throughout. We accepted the Colonial self-government resolution at Calcutta in 1906 because we saw that it was the opinion of the majority. We accepted it at Pabna and Hughly because it was the opinion of an influential minority whom we did not wish to alienate. If we had been asked to subscribe to it as a creed or even as the objects of the Congress in 1906, we should have at once and emphatically refused. At Pabna the Moderates did not venture to demand any such subscription from the delegates, they did not ask it at Hughly. They knew very well that the demand would have been indignantly repudiated by Bengal. We now go farther and consent to accept it as the objects of the Congress, to be only altered when all India wishes to alter it, for that is the provision in the Moderate Constitution. We propose to accept it and adhere to it in the same spirit, either as the opinion of the majority or as a necessary concession to secure the adhesion of an influential minority. It is a political accommodation, nothing else. To consent to Article II, which is a clause of exclusion limiting popular election, is a very different matter. The Moderate argument was that it is not a creed we are asked to sign, but merely a declaration of acceptance of the objects of the Congress and that it need not in any way limit or modify our speech and action except for the few hours spent in the Congress pandal. Apart from the very doubtful political honesty of such a distinction, we do not believe that it is the view of the creed held in other parts of India and in practice it could not work. The District Associations and the political Associations electing delegates to the Congress are expected by the Moderate Constitution to subscribe to the Congress creed or statement of objects and, if they utter or allow their prominent members to utter sentiments or pass resolutions inconsistent with it, the Congress would have a right to feel embarrassed and stigmatise the departure as double dealing. This is the reason why we have always opposed the limitation of the aims or beliefs of the Congress by any hard and fast rule. We would oppose it even if the creed were a declaration of the Nationalist faith. Such a limitation deprives the Congress of its free and representative character, it hampers aspiration and public opinion, it puts a premium on political hypocrisy. Even if we allow the argument of the Bengal Moderates, our fundamental objection to Article II is not removed. It is an exclusory clause, it limits the right of the people to elect any representative they choose, it sets up an authority over the electorate in the same way as the exclusory clauses of the Government Reform Councils Regulations, it is a sort of Congress Test Act arbitrary and undemocratic. The true democratic principle is that the man elected by the people must be recognised as a delegate, whatever his opinions. We shall always oppose any restriction of the freedom of election by the Government; how can we consistently do so, if we recognise a restriction in a popular assembly of our own making? And if this principle of exclusion is once admitted, where is it to stop? What guarantees us against the future introduction of a new clause demanding the signing of a declaration renouncing Boycott and passive resistance as a precondition of entrance into the pandal?

It will be seen therefore that from whatever point of view it is taken, the refusal to accept Article II of the Convention rules was not only reasonable, but the Nationalists could not have taken any other course without committing political and moral suicide. The reasonableness of our position on the two other points is self-evident and need not be argued. The refusal of these liberal concessions even by the Bengal Moderates shows that the holding of a united Congress is impossible. The argument that the Convention cannot accept such terms, only shows that the Convention can never be the basis of a united Congress and that, while it exists, a united Congress is out of the question. Before, therefore, any farther steps can be taken in that direction, we must await the collapse of the Convention which we believe to be not far distant. The Nationalist party have stated the terms on which alone they will consent to a compromise, and they will not lower them, neither will they renew negotiations until either the Convention is dead and buried or the Moderate leaders give up their attachment to the Convention creed and constitution.

To My Countrymen

TWO DECISIVE incidents have happened which make it compulsory on the Nationalist party to abandon their attitude of reserve and expectancy and once more assume their legitimate place in the struggle for Indian liberties. The Reforms, so long trumpeted as the beginning of a new era of constitutional progress in India, have been thoroughly revealed to the public intelligence by the publication of the Councils Regulations and the results of the elections showing the inevitable nature and composition of the new Councils. The negotiations for the union of Moderates and Nationalists in a United Congress have failed owing to the insistence of the former on the Nationalists subscribing to a Moderate profession of faith.

The survival of Moderate politics in India depended on two factors, the genuineness and success of the promised Reforms and the use made by the Conventionists of the opportunity given them by the practical suppression of Nationalist public activity. The field was clear for them to establish the effectiveness of the Moderate policy and the living force of the Moderate party. Had the Reforms been a genuine initiation of constitutional progress, the Moderate tactics might have received some justification from events. Or had the Moderates given proof of the power of carrying on a robust and vigorous agitation for popular rights, their strength and vitality as a political force might have been established, even if their effectiveness had been disproved. The Reforms have shown that nothing can be expected from persistence in Moderate politics except retrogression, disappointment and humiliation. The experience of the last year has shown that, without the Nationalists at their back, the Moderates are impotent for opposition and robust agitation. The political life of India in their hands has languished and fallen silent.

By the incontrovertible logic of events it has appeared that the success and vigour of the great movement inaugurated in 1905 was due to the union of Moderate and Nationalist on the platform of self-help and passive resistance. It was in order to provide an opportunity for the reestablishment of this union, broken at Surat, that the Nationalists gathered in force at Hughly in order to secure some basis and means of negotiation which might lead to united effort. The hand which we held out, has been rejected. The policy of Lord Morley has been to rally the Moderates and coerce the Nationalists; the policy of the Moderate party led by Mr. Gokhale and Sir Pherozshah Mehta has been to play into the hands of that policy and give it free course and a chance of success. This alliance has failed of its object; the beggarly reward the Moderates have received, has been confined to the smallest and least popular elements in their party. But the rejection of the alliance with their own countrymen by the insistence on creed and constitution shows that the Moderates mean to persist in their course even when all motive and political justification for it have disappeared. Discomfited and humiliated by the Government, they can still find no way to retrieve their position nor any clear and rational course to suggest to the Indian people whom they misled into a misunderstanding of the very limited promises held out by Lord Morley.

Separated from the great volume of Nationalist feeling in the country, wilfully shutting its doors to popularity and strength by the formation of electorates as close and limited as those of the Reformed Councils, self-doomed to persistence in a policy which has led to signal disaster, the Convention is destined to perish of inanition and popular indifference, dislike and opposition. If the Nationalists stand back any longer, either the national movement will disappear or the void created will be filled by a sinister and violent activity. Neither result can be tolerated by men desirous of their country's development and freedom.

The period of waiting is over. We have two things made clear to us, first, that the future of the nation is in our hands, and, secondly, that from the Moderate party we can expect no cordial co-operation in building it. Whatever we do, we must do ourselves, in our own strength and courage. Let us then take up the work God has given us, like courageous, steadfast and patriotic men willing to sacrifice greatly and venture greatly because the mission also is great. If there are any unnerved by the fear of repression, let them stand aside. If there are any who think that by flattering Anglo-India or coquetting with English Liberalism they can dispense with the need of effort and the inevitability of peril, let them stand aside. If there are any who are ready to be satisfied with mean gains or unsubstantial concessions, let them stand aside. But all who deserve the name of Nationalists, must now come forward and take up their burden.

The fear of the law is for those who break the law. Our aims are great and honourable, free from stain or reproach, our methods are peaceful, though resolute and strenuous. We shall not break the law and, therefore, we need not fear the law. But if a corrupt police, unscrupulous officials or a partial judiciary make use of the honourable publicity of our political methods to harass the men who stand in front by illegal ukases, suborned and perjured evidence or unjust decisions, shall we shrink from the toll that we have to pay on our march to freedom? Shall we cower behind a petty secrecy or a dishonourable inactivity? We must have our associations, our organisations, our means of propaganda, and, if these are suppressed by arbitrary proclamations, we shall have done our duty by our motherland and not on us will rest any responsibility for the madness which crushes down open and lawful political activity in order to give a desperate and sullen nation into the hands of those fiercely enthusiastic and unscrupulous forces that have arisen among us inside and outside India. So long as any loophole is left for peaceful effort, we will not renounce the struggle. If the conditions are made difficult and almost impossible, can they be worse than those our countrymen have to contend against in the Transvaal? Or shall we, the flower of Indian culture and education, show less capacity and self-devotion than the coolies and shopkeepers who are there rejoicing to suffer for the honour of their nation and the welfare of their community?

What is it for which we strive? The perfect self-fulfilment of India and the independence which is the condition of self-fulfilment are our ultimate goal. In the meanwhile such imperfect self-development and such incomplete self-government as are possible in less favourable circumstances, must be attained as a preliminary to the more distant realisation. What we seek is to evolve self-government either through our own institutions or through those provided for us by the law of the land. No such evolution is possible by the latter means without some measure of administrative control. We demand, therefore, not the monstrous and misbegotten scheme which has just been brought into being, but a measure of reform based upon those democratic principles which are ignored in Lord Morley's Reforms, — a literate electorate without distinction of creed, nationality or caste, freedom of election unhampered by exclusory clauses, an effective voice in legislation and finance and some check upon an arbitrary executive. We demand also the gradual devolution of executive government out of the hands of the bureaucracy into those of the people. Until these demands are granted, we shall use the pressure of that refusal of co-operation which is termed passive resistance. We shall exercise that pressure within the limits allowed us by the law, but apart from that limitation the extent to which we shall use it, depends on expediency and the amount of resistance we have to overcome.

On our own side we have great and pressing problems to solve. National education languishes for want of moral stimulus, financial support, and emancipated brains keen and bold enough to grapple with the difficulties that hamper its organisation and progress. The movement of arbitration, successful in its inception, has been dropped as a result of repression. The Swadeshi-Boycott movement still moves by its own impetus, but its forward march has no longer the rapidity and organised irresistibility of forceful purpose which once swept it forward. Social problems are pressing upon us which we can no longer ignore. We must take up the organisation of knowledge in our country, neglected throughout the last century. We must free our social and economic development from the incubus of the litigious resort to the ruinously expensive British Courts. We must once more seek to push forward the movement toward economic self-sufficiency, industrial independence.

These are the objects for which we have to organise the national strength of India. On us falls the burden, in us alone there is the moral ardour, faith and readiness for sacrifice which can attempt and go far to accomplish the task. But the first requisite is the organisation of the Nationalist party. I invite that party in all the great centres of the country to take up the work and assist the leaders who will shortly meet to consider steps for the initiation of Nationalist activity. It is desirable to establish a Nationalist Council and hold a meeting of the body in March or April of the next year. It is necessary also to establish Nationalist Associations throughout the country. When we have done this, we shall be able to formulate our programme and assume our proper place in the political life of India.

AUROBINDO GHOSE

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The National Value of Art VI

KARMAYOGIN
A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 1st JANUARY 1910 { No. 26

Facts and Opinions

The Perishing Convention

The Convention has met at Lahore and the fact that it could meet at all, has been hailed as a great triumph by the Anglo-Indian Press. But the success of this misbegotten body in avoiding immediate extinction has only served to show the marks of decay in every part of its being, and the loud chorus of eulogies streaming up from Anglo-India will not help to prolong its days. The miserable paucity of its numbers, the absence of great ovations to its leaders, the surroundings of stifling coldness, indifference and disapproval in the midst of which its orators perorated and resolved, have been too striking to be concealed. Even the *Statesman*, which is anxious to pass off this fiasco as a signal triumph for Moderatism and dwells on the enthusiasm and earnestness in the Bradlaugh Hall, — an enthusiasm and earnestness other reporters were unable to discover, — is obliged to admit the smallness of the circle to which these creditable feelings were confined. To this body calling itself the Indian National Congress how many delegates did the Indian nation send? The magnificent total of three hundred. From Bengal Sjs. Surendranath, Bhupendranath and A. Chaudhuri with less than half-a-dozen followers enriched Lahore with their presence; Madras could muster only twelve; the Central Provinces sent so few that the reporters are ashamed to mention the number. The United Provinces sent, according to the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*'s correspondent, about thirty; the Bombay number is not mentioned, but even the *Statesman* does not go beyond eighty; the rest came from the Punjab. Even the Anglo-Indian champion of Conventionism, estimating largely and on the basis of hopes and expectations, cannot raise the total to four hundred. The same paper takes refuge in the "huge concourse" of spectators, but, when it comes to actual facts, the huge concourse melts away into some hundreds of spectators, an estimate supported by the statement in the *Bengalee* that there were considerably more spectators than delegates. It is admitted that Bradlaugh Hall which cannot seat more than three thousand was far from being filled, the *Statesman* observing two wings of the Hall to be quite empty and other accounts reporting the Hall to be half empty. An allowance of some thousand spectators to watch the performances of the gallant three hundred in this Thermopylae of Moderatism, will be as liberal as the facts will allow. Could there be more damning evidence of the unpopularity of this pretentious body of well-to-do oligarchs electing themselves semi-secretly in close electorates of a handful of men and yet daring to call themselves the nation's Congress? The farce is almost over. The falsity of their pretensions has been shown up signally. The Convention will not dare again to meet in the Punjab; it will not come to Bengal; Nagpur, Amraoti and the Maharashtra are barred to it; and if the attendance from Madras is any sign, it will not be easy for it to command a following or an audience again in the Southern Presidency. What remains to Conventionism? Bombay city, Gujerat and the United Provinces are still open to them for a season. The abstention of a disgusted nation has passed sentence of death on this parody of the Indian National Congress.

The Convention President's Address

The most remarkable feature of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's address is not what he said, but what he omitted to say. If the accounts telegraphed can be trusted, he said nothing about self-government, nothing about Swadeshi, — the Boycott, of course, the Convention has boycotted, — nothing about the Bengal deportees, only a few words about the Transvaal. The speech was really a speech about the Reforms and every other great question of Indian politics was ignored or neglected. The attitude of the Convention on the Reforms is marked by that open insincerity which is the hallmark of Moderate politics. The Convention resolution is made up of two parts, an ecstatic tribute of praise and gratitude to the two Lords Morley and Minto, for their earnest and "arduous" endeavours, (note the grotesque absurdity of the language), in extending to the people of this country a "fairly liberal" measure of constitutional reform, and a detailed and damning indictment of the measure for restrictions and provisions which are "excessive and unfair", "unjust, invidious and humiliating", "arbitrary and unreasonable", and for the "general distrust" of the educated classes and the "ineffective and unreal" composition of the non-official majority. If there is any meaning in language, the second part of the resolution gives the lie direct to the first. The language used is far stronger than any the *Karmayogin* has ever permitted itself to employ in its condemnation of the Reforms and, if the condemnation is at all justified by facts, the Reforms are a reactionary and not a progressive piece of legislation. And yet who is the chief mouthpiece of the Convention and the most damaging critic of the Reforms? A gentleman who has set the seal of approval on Lord Morley's measure by entering the Council of his province as an elected member. Actions speak more strongly than words, and the Government of India care little for criticism in detail so long as they get acceptation of the whole. From the Viceroy down to the obscurest Anglo-Indian scribbler the appeal to the Moderates is to criticise details hereafter, if they choose, but to accept the Reforms, the perpetual division of the two Indian communities, the humiliation of the Hindus, the extrusion of the educated classes from their old leading position, the denial of the only true basis of self-government, — to let, as the *Indian Daily News* persuasively puts it, bygones be bygones. Anglo-India pats Moderatism on the back and says in effect: "What if we have kicked you downstairs? Can't you be a good fellow and sit quietly on the bottom step until we take it in our heads to pull you up a little farther?" And Moderatism must comply if it wishes to be tolerated.

The Alleged Breach of Faith

The Moderate critics are never tired of harping on the difference between Lord Morley's scheme and the Regulations and alleging or hinting that promises have been made to the ear which have been broken in the act. The *Statesman* very naturally resents the implied charge of breach of faith. We do not know what private hopes the Secretary of State may have held out to Mr. Gokhale or Sj. Surendranath Banerji, but, judging from Lord Morley's public utterances, we do not think the charge of a breach of faith can be for a moment sustained. He has never pretended that his reform was the granting of a democratic constitution or the first step towards Parliamentary self-government. On the contrary he distinctly stated that if he had thought his measure to be anything of the kind he would have immediately withdrawn it. All that he promised was a scheme by which Indian public opinion could be more liberally consulted, and there were from the beginning distinct indications that the Government would put its own meaning on the phrase and draw a distinction between Indian opinion and Indian educated opinion. If the Moderates chose to interpret this limited concession as the granting of a constitution and a new Magna Charta, neither Lord Morley nor Lord Minto are to blame for a deliberate and gratuitous self-deception and deception of the people. The complaint that the non-official majority is ineffective and unreal, means simply that it is not a popular majority. We do not think the Government ever promised a popular majority; they promised a non-official majority and they have given it. If the Moderates chose to believe that the Government would go out of its way to make the non-official majority a popular one, they have themselves to thank for this pitiful self-delusion, against which the Nationalists have been warning the country for some time past. The truth is that they have been utterly worsted in their diplomatic relations with British Liberalism and they are now trying to exculpate themselves before the public by throwing the blame on their allies. No English statesman can be condemned for trying to get the best of a diplomatic bargain of this kind; the loser must blame his own folly, not the good faith of the other party. Did not the Bengal Moderates recently propose a similar bargain to the Nationalists in the United Congress Committee's negotiations? And, if the Nationalists had been fools enough to agree, would they have been justified afterwards in quarrelling with the good faith of the Moderates merely because they themselves had chosen to enter the Convention on conditions which would have meant hopeless ineffectiveness in that body and political suicide outside? If infants in diplomacy choose to cherish an obstinate admiration for their own Machiavellian cleverness or mere bookmen who do not understand the A.B.C. of practical politics, elect to play the game with past masters of political statecraft, the result is a foregone conclusion. We have exposed over and over again the hollowness of the pretensions of this measure to figure as a great step forward in Indian administration or the beginning of a new progressive era in Indian politics, but we did not need the publication of the Regulations to open our eyes to this hollowness. Lord Morley's own statements, the nature of things and of humanity and the clauses of the Reform Bill itself were a sufficient guide to anyone with even an elementary knowledge of politics.

The Nasik Murder

The tale of assassinations is evidently not at an end; and it is difficult to believe that it will be until a more normal condition of things has been restored. The sporadic and occasional character of these regrettable incidents is sufficient to prove that they are not the work of a widespread Terrorist organisation, but of individuals or small groups raw in organisation and irresolute in action. The Anglo-Indian superstition of a great Revolutionary organisation like the Russian Revolutionary Committee is a romantic delusion. The facts are entirely inconsistent with it. What we see is that, where there is sporadic repression of a severe kind on the part of the authorities, there is sporadic retaliation on the part of a few youthful conspirators, perfectly random in its aim and objective. The Nasik murder is an act of terrorist reprisal for the dangerously severe sentence passed on the revolutionary versifier Savarkar. It is natural that there should have been many meetings in Maharashtra to denounce the assassination, but such denunciations do not carry us very far. They have no effect whatever on the minds of the men who are convinced that to slay and be slain is their duty to their country. The disease is one that can only be dealt with by removing its roots, not by denouncing its symptoms. The Anglo-Indian papers find the root in our criticism of Government action and policy and suggest the silencing of the Press as the best means of removing the root. If the Government believe in this antiquated diagnosis, they may certainly try the expedient suggested. Our idea is that it will only drive the roots deeper. We have ourselves, while strongly opposing and criticising the actions and policy of the bureaucracy, abstained from commenting on specific acts of repression, as we had no wish to inflame public feeling; but to silence Nationalism means to help Terrorism. Our view is that the only way to get rid of the disease is to disprove Mr. Gokhale's baneful teaching that violence is the only means of securing independence, to give the people hope in a peaceful and effective means of progress towards that ideal, which is now the openly or secretly cherished ideal of every Indian, and to that end to organise peaceful opposition and progress within the law. If the Government can retrace their steps and remove the ban from lawful passive resistance and self-help and the Nationalist party, while holding its ultimate political aim, will define its immediate objective within limits which a Radical Government can hereafter consider, we believe politics in India will assume a normal course under normal conditions. We propose to do our part; we will see whether the Government think it worth their while to respond. They ought to be able to understand by this time that Nationalism and not Moderatism is the effective political force in India.

Transvaal and Bengal

There are two crying grievances which have done more than anything else to embitter popular feeling against the authorities and in both cases the populations most directly affected have resorted to passive resistance as the only remedy open to them. The first is the gross and systematic oppression now being practised on the Indians in the Transvaal, the other the repression of national aspirations towards unity and self-development in Bengal, typified by Partition and Deportation. Nothing can be more inconsistent than the attitude taken by the Moderate Convention towards these two questions. They have telegraphed their sympathy with the heroic passive resistance of the Transvaal Indians; they have shown their sympathy with Bengal by boycotting our boycott. Eighteen thousand rupees were promised for the Transvaal Indians in the one scene of enthusiasm which relieved the depressed dullness of the proceedings, and although we have little hope that this spasmodic activity will be followed up by steady support, it is better than nothing. On the other hand the Bengal questions were left to be moved by Bengalis, the Partition to Sj. Bhupendranath, the Deportations to Mr. A. Chaudhuri. A deputation was appointed by the Convention to proceed to lay the question of Partition once more before Lord Morley; and of whom, think you, the deputation is to consist? Sj. Surendranath Banerji and Sj. Bhupendranath Bose. Not a single Moderate deputy is forthcoming from the whole of India to support Bengal even to this extent in its bitter and arduous struggle. Yet men are not ashamed to go from Bengal as self-elected delegates to a Convention which has disowned and dishonoured Bengal and which Bengal has disowned.

Our Cheap Edition

The difficulty felt by many students and educated men of small means in buying the *Karmayogin* at its ordinary price of two annas, has been so much pressed on our attention that we have found it necessary to bring out a cheaper edition at one anna a copy. It is not an easy thing in this country to establish a weekly review of this standard written in English, and it has therefore been necessary for us at the outset to place a price on the paper which should ensure its being self-supporting even with a limited circulation. The *Karmayogin*, however, is now sufficiently successful to allow of a concession of this kind being made without financial injury. The subscribers to the dearer edition will be compensated by the superior get-up and paper, while the cheaper edition will remove the grievance of the large number who have hitherto been debarred from reading the review by their scanty means.

National Education

FROM the beginning of the national movement, in spite of its enthusiasm, force, innate greatness, a defect has made itself apparent, a fatality of insufficient effectiveness has pursued it, which showed that there was a serious flaw somewhere in this brilliant opening of a new era. The nature of that flaw has been made manifest by the period of trial in which, for a time, the real force which made for success has been temporarily withdrawn, so that the weaknesses still inherent in the nation might be discovered and removed. The great flaw was the attempt to combine the new with the old, to subject the conduct of the resurgence of India to the aged, the cautious, the hesitating, men out of sympathy with the spirit of the new age, unable to grasp the needs of the future, afraid to apply the bold and radical methods which could alone transform the nation, sweep out the rottenness in our former corrupt nature and, by purifying Bengal, purify India. It is now apparent that it was the Nationalist element which by its energy, courage, boldness of thought, readiness to accept the conditions of progress, gave the movement its force and vitality. Wherever that force has been withdrawn, the movement has collapsed. The older men have shown themselves utterly unable either to supply the moral force that would sustain the forward march of the nation or the brain-power to grapple with national problems. In Swadeshi the force of sentiment supplied, and the persistence of the great mass of silent nationalism in resisting any attempt to draw back from boycott has preserved, the movement to prefer indigenous and boycott foreign goods, but the withdrawal of active Nationalist endeavour has resulted in the stoppage of progress. Swadeshi maintains itself, it no longer advances. National Education languishes because the active force has been withdrawn from it; it does not absolutely perish because a certain amount of Nationalist self-devotion has entrenched itself in this last stronghold and holds it against great odds under the most discouraging circumstances. A certain amount only, — because part of the active enthusiasm and self-sacrifice which created the movement, has been deliberately extruded from it in obedience to fear or even baser motives, part has abandoned it in disgust at the degeneration of the system in incapable hands and the rest is now finding its self-devotion baffled and deprived of the chance of success by the same incapacity and weakness at headquarters.

The National Council of Education, as it is at present composed, has convicted itself of entire incapacity whether to grasp the meaning of the movement or to preserve or create the conditions of its success. To the majority of the members it is merely an interesting academical experiment in which they can embody some of their pet hobbies or satisfy a general vague dissatisfaction with the established University system. To others the only valuable part of it is the technical instruction given in its workshops. The two or three who at all regard it as part of a great national movement, are unnerved by fear, scepticism and distrust and, by introducing the principles of Chanakya into its public policy, are depriving it of the first condition of its continued existence. It is folly to expect that the nation at large will either pay heavily or make great sacrifices merely to support an interesting academic experiment, still less to allow a few learned men to spoil the intellectual development of the race by indulging their hobbies at the public expense. That the people will not support a mere technical education divorced from that general humanistic training which is essential to national culture, has been sufficiently proved by the failure of Mr. Palit's Technical College to command adequate financial support. Unless this movement is carried on, as it was undertaken, as part of a great movement of national resurgence, unless it is made, visibly to all, a nursery of patriotism and a mighty instrument of national culture, it cannot succeed. It is foolish to expect men to make great sacrifices while discouraging their hope and enthusiasm.

It is not intellectual recognition of duty that compels sustained self-sacrifice in masses of men; it is hope, it is the lofty ardour of a great cause, it is the enthusiasm of a noble and courageous effort. It is amazing that men calling themselves educated and presuming to dabble with public movements should be blind to the fact that the success or failure of National Education is intimately bound up with and, indeed, entirely depends upon the fortunes of the great resurgence which gave it birth. They seem to labour under the delusion that it was an academical and not a national impulse which induced men to support this great effort, and they seek to save the institution from a premature death by exiling from it the enthusiasm that made it possible. They cannot ignore the service done by that enthusiasm, but they regard it merely as the ladder by which they climbed and are busy trying to kick it down. They are really shutting off the steam, yet expect the locomotive to go on.

The successful organisation of the Bengal National College in Calcutta was the work of its able and enthusiastic Superintendent aided by a body of young and self-sacrificing workers. The National Council which nominally controlled, in reality only hampered it; all that the Council contributed to the system, was its defects. The schools in the Mofussil were created by the enthusiasm of the Nationalist party, the propaganda of its leaders and the ardent self-devotion of little bands of workers who gave their self-sacrifice and enthusiasm to lay the foundations. The Nationalist Council has never lifted a single finger to help the Mofussil schools beyond doling out unsubstantial grants to maintain them merely as necessary feeders of the Calcutta institution. But unless a movement of this kind is supported by wise organisation and energetic propagandism emanating from an active central authority, it must soon sink under the weight of unsolved problems, unsurmounted difficulties and unamended defects. The curriculum of the Council is extraordinarily elaborate and expensive, and involves a great outlay for the formation of library, laboratory and workshops, and, arranged as it is on the vicious Western system of driving many subjects at a time into the growing intellect, is slow, cumbrous, a strain on the mind of the students, wasteful of time, impossible without an unusual number of good teachers. The financial problem created is one of crushing difficulty, yet the Council think they have done their duty when they have created the problem and do not seem even to dream that there is any call on them to solve it. Even for the Calcutta College in whose maintenance they are more keenly interested, they can only make feeble and spasmodic efforts when, as annually happens, there is a deficit in the budget. The academical problem of teaching so many subjects in so short a time without outdoing the exploits of the Calcutta University as a brain-killing and life-shortening machine, does not seem to occur to these lofty and secluded minds. They are content with creating the problem and maintaining it by their system of examinations. Even if funds were forthcoming, there would still be the necessity of providing a regular and plentiful supply of teachers trained in an entirely new system of instruction. This urgent problem the Council has systematically ignored, and not even the elementary steps of establishing a Teachers' Training Class in Calcutta and issuing a series of suitable books in the vernacular has been attempted. The only problems which the Council seems willing to grapple with are, first, the problem of supporting National Education without incurring the wrath of the officials and, secondly, the problem of evading the spirit of the clause which forbids it to subject itself to any form of Government control, while observing the letter so as to prevent the invalidation of its endowments.

But if the National Council is content to fail in its duty, the country cannot be content to allow this great educational enterprise to perish. We do not know how or by whom the Council is elected. It seems to have followed the example of so many bodies in India which have started as democratic institutions and ended as close corporations self-electing and self-elected. But if it is impossible to alter the component character of this body and put into it keener blood and clearer brains, some other centre of effort must be created which will undertake to grapple with the problems of National Education, the supply of trained and self-devoted teachers and of books which will guide them in the imparting of knowledge on new lines, the reawakening of interest, hope and enthusiasm in the country, the provision of the necessary funds to the mofussil schools, the forcing on the Council by the pressure of public opinion of a more rational and a more national system of teaching. But the first condition of success is the reawakening of the national movement all along the line, and this can only be done by the organisation and resolute activity of the Nationalist party.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Stead and Maskelyne
Anandamath XII

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 8th JANUARY 1910 { No. 27

Facts and Opinions

Sir Edward Baker's Admissions

Of all the present rulers of India Sir Edward Baker is the only one who really puts any value on public opinion. He has committed indiscretions of a startling character, he has loyally carried out a policy with which he can have no heartfelt sympathy, but his anxiety to conciliate public opinion even under these adverse circumstances betrays the uneasiness of a man who knows the force of that power even in a subject country and feels that the ruling class are not going the best way to carry that opinion with them. While all the other provincial Governors have confined their inaugural speeches to the most empty platitudes, he alone has sought to speak as a man would who feels the difficulties of a perplexing situation. But we do not think he has helped the Government by his speech. It is in fact a series of damaging admissions. He admits that the exclusion of the Calcutta men by the restrictions attending Municipal election is deliberate, and he cannot be ignorant that this means the exclusion of the leading brains and the most influential personalities in the country. He admits that the Government have taken care to preclude the chance of being face to face with a numerically strong and robust opposition in the Council. If so, the Councils are not a mirror of the political forces in the country, not a free popular assembly, but a carefully limited council of notables friendly to the existing state of things. Whether the Government are to blame or not for guarding their interests by this manipulation of electorates, is quite another question. All we say is that they have so guarded themselves and, as a result, these Councils may be the kind of advisory body the Government want, they are not the popular assemblies, mirrors of public opinion and instruments of rapid political development, which the people want. Sir Edward Baker says that no Government can be expected to run the risk of putting itself into a permanent minority, — such a state of things cannot be allowed for a day. We quite agree. That is what we have been telling the people for a very long time. Unfortunately, very different hopes and expectations were raised in the minds of Moderate politicians and communicated by them to the people at large. If the eulogies of the Reform Scheme and the benevolent intentions of Government had been couched in less glowing language, with less of misleading fervour, the present disappointment, irritation and revolt would have been avoided. It is much the best thing for a Government circumstanced like ours to be quite frank and say from the beginning, "This much we mean to give; farther you must not expect us to go."

Calcutta and Mofussil

The point which Sir Edward Baker, in common with all Anglo-Indian publicists, makes of the distinction between Calcutta and the Mofussil, is quite justifiable if the Councils are to be only a superior edition of the local Municipalities out of all relation with the political actualities of the country. It is an indisputable fact that a great deal of the best in the life of Bengal gravitates towards the capital and the Partition of Bengal has made no difference in this powerful tendency. Calcutta is to Bengal what Paris is to France. It is from Calcutta that Bengal takes its opinions, its inspirations, its leaders, its tone, its programme of action. One very important reason of this almost inalienable leadership is the greater independence which men enjoy in Calcutta, another is the higher organisation of life, resources, activity in this great centre of humanity. So long as these causes exist, the supremacy of Calcutta will remain. The object of the electoral rules is to destroy the supremacy of the Calcutta men, whose independence and freedom of speech and action are distasteful to the instincts of the dominant bureaucrat. The attempt to decentralise the political life of Bengal is not new. In the earlier days of the new movement the Nationalist leaders made strenuous appeals to the Mofussil centres to liberate themselves from Calcutta domination and become equal partners in a better organised provincial activity. They thought it possible then because, in the first surge of the movement, the Mofussil centres in East Bengal had developed a young political vitality and independence far in excess of the old vitality and independence of Calcutta. But even in these favourable circumstances it was found that, though the districts far outran the capital in the swiftness and thoroughness of their activity, they always waited for an intellectual initiative and sanction from the leaders in Calcutta. Barisal under Sj. Aswini Kumar Dutta was the exception. What the people themselves could not accomplish under the most favourable circumstances, the Government is not likely to effect merely by excluding the Calcutta leaders from the Council. The very conditions of the problem forbid it. They can only disturb the present equilibrium by making political life in the Mofussil as free and well-organised as the life of Calcutta. By their own action they have destroyed such freedom and organisation as had been created. Nor can they make their Councils the instrument of so vital a change unless they also make them the centre of the political life of Bengal. This they can only do by a large literate electorate, free elections and effectiveness of the popular vote. But, at present, that is not what the bureaucrats desire. They do not desire a free and vigorous political life evenly distributed throughout the country, — that is the Nationalist ideal. They desire to foster a faint political life confined to the dignified and subservient elements in the country while killing the independent popular life, which finds its centre in this city, by an official boycott. They forget that artificial means are helpless against natural forces.

The Non-Official Majority

Sir Edward complains strongly of the attribution of motives to the Government in the matter of the non-official majority. He argues in effect that the non-official majority cannot be described as unreal or a sham merely because the electorates are so arranged as to return a majority of men favourable to Government. The majority is a non-official majority, but it is not a popular majority. Sir Edward answers that it was never intended to be a popular majority. It was meant only to represent the "honest" public opinion which is capable in most things of seeing eye to eye with the Government; all the rest of public opinion is not honest and therefore unfit for representation. A most delightful specimen of bureaucratic logic! The plain question rising above all sophisms is this, is the Government aware or is it not that the great body of educated opinion in India demand a change in the system of Government involving popular control in the administration, a change which Lord Morley, with all Anglo-India to echo him, has declared impossible? If the Government doubts it, dare they take a plebiscite of literate opinion on the question? They dare not, because they know what the result will be. Is not this knowledge the reason for so manipulating the electorates that they shall mainly represent special interests easily influenced by the Government and not the mass of the literate population? We do not charge the Government with a breach of faith or a departure from their original promises. We do say that the Reforms are purely a diplomatic move to strengthen the Government and weaken the popular interest. Sir Edward stigmatises the popular sentiment which sees an opposition of interest all along the line between the bureaucracy and the people, as dishonest and unfit for self-government. What of the very fundamental opposition of interest we have pointed out? It is easy to fling epithets; it is not so easy to disprove facts. We do not wish to be unfair to anyone and we acknowledge that Sir Edward Baker has shown a liberality of purpose far superior to that of any other provincial ruler. If there were a chance of any of the Councils being a genuine popular assembly, Sir Edward's creation would have the best chance. But it is not that and cannot be. If he is satisfied with its present composition, his admiration is not shared by the people of this country. He says in effect that it is quite as dignified as any previous Council. We agree, even more so. But it is not dignity to which popular sentiment is advancing, it is democracy. If the Councils do not provide a channel for the advance of that sentiment, it will seek other means of self-accomplishment.

Sir Louis Dane on Terrorism

The amazing lecture given by the Satrap of the Punjab to the Maharaja of Darbhanga and the other gentlemen who were ill-advised enough to approach him with their expressions of loyalty and of abhorrence at the Nasik murder, is a sample of the kind of thing Moderate politicians may expect when they approach the bureaucracy with their "co-operation". What it is precisely that the various Satraps want of their long-suffering allies, we cannot conjecture. Some seem to want, like Sir George Clarke, the entire cessation of political agitation, because the political agitator is the spiritual granduncle of the political assassin. Others seem to want the entire Indian community to leave their ordinary avocations and turn detectives, in order to supply the deficiencies of that costly police force through which the bureaucracy governs the country. But Sir Louis Dane's diatribe seems difficult to account for except on the supposition that he is a disciple of Hare Street and believes that the whole population of India, from the Maharaja of Darbhanga to the grocer and the shoemaker, know the personality, intentions, plans and secret operations of the Terrorists and conceal them from the Government out of innate cussedness or invincible sympathy with the assassins. It is difficult to have patience with the insensate folly which persists in these delusions and, by lumping all political agitation into one category, does its best to bring about the calamity which it imagines. The fewer rulers like Sir Louis there are in this country, the better for the nation and the Government; for they are the best allies that Terrorism has.

The Menace of Deportation

Once more rumours of deportation are rife, proceeding this time from those pillars of authority, the police. It seems that these gentlemen have bruited it abroad that twenty-four men prominent and unprominent are within the next six or seven days to be deported from Bengal, and so successfully has the noise of the coming *coup d'état* been circulated that the rumour of it comes to us from a distant corner of Behar. It appears that the name of Sj. Aurobindo Ghose crowns the police list of those who are to be spirited away to the bureaucratic Bastilles. The offence for which this inclusion is made, is, apparently, that he criticises the Government, by which we presume it is meant that he publicly opposes the Reforms. It is difficult to judge how much value is to be attached to the rumour, but we presume that at least a proposal has been made. If we are not mistaken, this will make the third time that the deportation of the Nationalist leader has been proposed by the persistence of the police. The third time is supposed to be lucky, and let us hope it will be the last. The Government ought to make up its mind one way or the other, and the country should know, whether they will or will not tolerate opposition within the law; and this will decide it. Meanwhile, why does the thunderbolt linger? Or is there again a hitch in London?

A Practicable Boycott

BOYCOTT is an ideal, like freedom; it means independence in industry and commerce, as freedom means independence in administration, legislation and finance. But it is not always possible to accomplish the whole of the ideal by the first effort towards it. So long as we cherish the ideal whole and unbroken, we are at liberty to consult the demands of practicability and realise it, not at one rush, but by successive approximations, each being the vantage-ground for a fresh rush forward. This does not imply slow progress, the leisurely and gentlemanlike spreading out of the struggle for freedom through five or six centuries in order to avoid the perils of the struggle; it is rather the necessary condition of rapid progress. The force of the hunger for the whole ideal, of impatience with half realisations must remain behind, but the means of each advance must be secured by that which went before.

When the boycott movement first began, it was the opinion of Mr. Tilak and other Nationalist leaders that the exclusion of foreign goods should be directed against British products first of all. The immediate exclusion of all foreign goods was obviously impracticable. But very soon it became evident that the voice of the whole nation in Bengal and Maharashtra was for the more comprehensive movement, and the leaders wisely put aside their own opinion and made themselves simply executors of the national will. Wisely, because at such times there is something divinely inspired in the motions of the national mind which exceeds the human wisdom and statecraft of the individual. It was and remains true that the exclusion of all foreign goods is an impracticable measure in the present economical condition of India. But the comprehensive boycott movement was necessary, — first, in order that the ideal might be stamped deep into the consciousness of the people; and that has been done by the very acts of repression which were largely designed, as admitted by Mr. Hobhouse, to crush the Swadeshi Boycott movement; — secondly, in order that the idea of India's separate and self-sufficient existence as a nation might thoroughly replace the habit of dependence and contented economical servitude which English education and the effacement of political life had induced. That work also is done. The idea of Swadeshi has entered into the very marrow of our thought and feeling. It is therefore time now to consider the practical measures by which boycott may be made gradually and steadily successful.

Boycott is essentially a form of voluntary protection and it cannot do more than protection does towards the creation of industries. Protection serves two ends; it prevents the infant industry from being strangled in its weak unestablished state by full-grown and powerful competitors, it gives a stimulus to it by assuring it a market. It cannot supply the place of enterprise, business capacity, naturally favourable conditions. It can however mitigate the incidence of natural conditions, not entirely but comparatively unfavourable, by throwing a countervailing disadvantage into the scale of the more favourably circumstanced competing country. This is the limit of the utility of protection; it is also the limit of the utility of boycott. What boycott could do for the cloth industry, it has done, but for the producer to lean entirely on boycott and expect it to take the place of business enterprise, energy, capacity, the improvement of his goods, is to lay a burden on the national spirit which it is neither possible nor desirable that it should bear. The nation agrees to purchase an inferior indigenous article in place of a superior foreign article, not with the intention that the producer should be excused the necessity of improvement and should be able to force the inferior article on us to all eternity, but solely to give him time to improve his methods, his processes, his machinery, his dexterity in spite of the competition of his superior rival. It saves him from extinction, it gives him a period of grace; he must use it to reach and outdistance the excellence of his rival's methods and production, and if he neglects this duty he does it at his peril and it is not open to him to cry out against the want of patriotism in the people because they withdraw a support which he has abused. The nation, again, agrees to deny itself necessaries or restrict the quantity of its purchase, not with the intention of permanently lowering its standard of comfort and living a barer and more meagre life, but in order to give time for capital and enterprise to increase the supply, so that eventually the wants of the nation may be supplied from within. If it is found that there is not an expansion of industry commensurate with the self-denial in the nation and that only a few businessmen are exploiting the national sentiment for their own personal profit, it is idle to expect the boycott to survive. We have noticed signs of a most unhealthy spirit of mutual trade jealousy among Swadeshi mill-owners, who seem to be under the impression that they are natural rivals for the patronage of the consumer. No single Indian producer can monopolise the supply necessary for national consumption, nor can even the whole body of Indian producers combined, at present, meet the demand. One Indian mill-owner gets nothing by the decline of another; on the contrary, his prosperity is bound up in the prosperity of all other Indian mills; for the maintenance of the boycott, which saved the mill industry at a crisis of its destinies, depends on the increased supply of Swadeshi cloth. Instead of attempting to rise by pressing each other down, it would be far better for the Indian producers to follow the example of English manufacturers and combine for the welfare of the national industry.

The first condition of a successful boycott, therefore, is the organisation of national industry with a view, first, to the improvement and extension of that which exists, secondly, to the opening up of new lines of enterprise. This is largely a work for the producer himself, but there is one duty which the leaders of the national movement can perform and that is to organise information. The nature of the industries that can be profitably opened in India, the unfavourable circumstances, the favourable, the means of obviating or mitigating the former, utilising and improving the latter, the conditions of success, the cost of outlay and management, this is the information that capital and enterprise need; the Swadeshi articles that can be procured, the place of their manufacture, their price, quality and supply, this is the information needed by the consumer. To organise all this information would be to give a great stimulus to the advance of Swadeshi.

The second condition of a successful boycott is the organisation of supply. It is not possible for everyone to hunt Swadeshi articles to their source and purchase them. There must be a supplying agency which brings the goods to a near and convenient market and, as far as possible, to the doors of the people. The difficulty of supply is grievously felt in many parts of Bengal; but there is no one whose duty it is to consider the difficulty and meet it. Swadeshi is in danger of being stifled under the mass of spurious goods, foreign masking as indigenous, which the dishonest methods of European commerce pour into the country. There is no one to consider the problem of baffling this flank attack and devise methods of assuring the consumer that he gets the article which he wants. The organisation of a genuine and sufficient supply is the second condition of a practicable boycott.

These measures will help the growth of Swadeshi, but by themselves they can only partially serve the wider national aim which is the heart of the great movement commenced in 1905, the industrial independence of the Indian people. There is no doubt that the great mass of the Indian people cherish this aspiration and would willingly follow any practicable means of bringing it into the list of accomplished ideals. Previous to the great movement in Bengal this idea had been twice put into motion and produced a certain result, but the idea then was absolute abstention from all purchase of articles not genuinely Indian. Such a self-denial may be possible for the individual, it is not possible for great masses of men. The good sense of the nation therefore qualified the vow of abstinence by the proviso that it should be "as far as possible". This, however, is a vague and fluid phrase. It has to be made precise if the movement is to advance from its purely idealistic character and put on the garb of practicability. Some attempt has been made to define it. The boycott of cloth, salt and sugar was made absolute; machinery, medicines, objects of art and literature were exempted. But this was largely an empirical division based neither on a consideration of immediate possibility, nor on a reasoned policy. As a matter of fact the boycott of foreign sugar has hopelessly broken down, the boycott of cloth has had a partial success qualified by the necessity of taking yarn for Swadeshi cloth from England. A more practical definition is necessary.

The first principle we would suggest is to make a clear division between articles of necessity, interpreting the word in a broad sense, and articles of luxury and to have an absolute interdict of the latter unless they are of indigenous manufacture. The first reason for the interdict is that many articles of luxury are produced in India, but find it difficult to maintain themselves because they depend on the patronage of the rich, who are wedded to European vulgarity and want of taste in the appointments of their life. The poorer classes cannot indulge in luxuries; the middle class, in the present condition of the country, should not. An organised preference of Swadeshi arts and crafts by the rich would revive and stimulate a great source of national wealth and reopen a field of national capacity. Articles of necessity can be divided into those indispensable for life and a decent existence and those necessary for our work and business. In the former we can always prefer an inferior but usable indigenous article, in the latter no such self-denying ordinance can be imposed. I cannot be called upon to use an article or implement which cripples my business or puts me at a serious disadvantage with my competitor, merely because it is produced in the country, just as in my own home I cannot be called upon to use a pen which will not write, a lamp which will not give light, a cup which cracks and breaks after a few days' use. But if the home article is usable or if the business implement is only slightly inferior to its foreign rival, then it would be unpatriotic and a violation of the boycott oath to prefer the foreign to the indigenous production. On these lines we believe a rational and workable meaning could be put on the proviso "as far as possible" which would not put too great a strain on human nature and could yet form the basis of an effective and practical protection of Indian industry. A similar concession would have to be made in the case of Swadeshi articles which are too dear for the purse of the poorer classes, but there is no reason why the richer members of the community should not extend their protection to those industries which are compelled for the present to exceed greatly the foreign cost of production and yet have a future before them.

It will be evident therefore that, however far we may carry the boycott individually, there are limits which the mass of men cannot exceed. A considerable number of foreign articles must be purchased even for home consumption, still more for work and business. The question is, cannot this inevitable resort to the foreigner be so regulated as to assist materially the progress of the boycott and prepare the future industrial independence of the nation? This is the subject we propose to consider in our next issue.

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 15th JANUARY 1910 { No. 28

Facts and Opinions

The Patiala Case

The Patiala case has developed a real objective, which is the destruction of the Arya Samaj, the men arrested being merely pawns in the game. The speech of the Counsel for the prosecution, Mr. Grey, in no way sets out an ordinary case against individuals, nor is there any passage in it which gives any light as to particular evidence against the persons on their trial, but from beginning to end it is an arraignment of the Arya Samaj as a body whose whole object, semi-open rather than secret, is the subversion of British rule. Mr. Norton, taking advantage of the presence of Sj. Aurobindo Ghose in the dock, attempted to build up in the Alipur case an elaborate indictment of the whole national movement as a gigantic conspiracy, but he did not neglect the individual cases and made some attempt to conceal the extrajudicial object of his oratory by a continual reference to actual evidence, relevant or irrelevant, in the case. Mr. Grey has not given himself that trouble. The political character of his advocacy is open and avowed. But he follows his Calcutta precursor in the ludicrous jumps of his logic from trivial premises to gigantically incongruous conclusions, in his heroic attempt to make bricks out of straw. His chief arguments are that the Arya Samajists read the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Punjabee*,

— to say nothing of the long defunct *Bande Mataram*, — and that some of the prominent members of the Arya Samaj are politicians and yet remain members of the Arya Samaj. The perfectly general interpretations by Swami Dayananda of the Vedic view of politics, are the basis of his attack, and even the vehement character of the great reformer's polemics against other religions, the orthodox Hindu included, are pressed into the service of this unique argument. And all this is used to prejudice men under trial on a serious charge. Mr. Norton trifled with the traditions of the British bar by his pressing of trivial and doubtful evidence against the accused in the Alipur case, but it seems to us that Mr. Grey has departed still farther from those lofty traditions. And what if the Patiala Court decides that the Arya Samaj is a seditious body, seditious in origin, seditious in intention, seditious in action? Will the Government proscribe as an illegal association this wealthy, powerful and highly organised community containing more than half the brains and activity of the Punjab? Already the charge has been made that by giving special privileges to the Mahomedans, the Government have abandoned definitely the principle of religious neutrality on which their rule has hitherto been founded. The present Governor of the Punjab is possibly capable of such a step, — after the whitewashing of the Police in the Gulab Bano case and his speech to the Loyalist deputation, we can believe him capable of any rash and headstrong step. Fortunately, there is little likelihood that Mr. Grey's oratory will be any more effective than Mr. Norton's.

The Arya Samaj and Politics

We have received a communication from a member of the Samaj in which he puts to us certain pointed questions relating to the aims, character and works of the Samaj and of its founder's teachings. We have not that direct and firsthand knowledge which would enable us to answer these questions with any authority. But on the general question our views are known. Aryaism is not an independent religion. It is avowedly an attempt to revive the Vedic religion in its pristine purity. The Vedic religion is a national religion, and it embraces in its scope all the various activities of the national life. Swami Dayananda as a restorer of Vedicism included the theory of politics in his scope and revealed the intensely national character of the Hindu religion and morality. His work was avowedly a work of national regeneration. In dealing with the theory of politics as based on the Vedic religion he had naturally to include the truth that independence is the true and normal condition of a nation and all lapse into subjection must be a sin and degeneration, temporary in its nature. No man can deny this great truth. Freedom is the goal of humanity and Aryaism was in its nature a gospel of freedom, individual freedom, social freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom in all things, and the accomplishment of such an all-pervading liberation cannot come about without bringing national freedom in its train. If to perceive these truths of Vedism and of nature is to be political and seditious, then Swami Dayananda's teaching was political and seditious and the religion he preached may be stigmatised as political and seditious. But if sedition be limited to its proper meaning, an attempt by illegal and violent means to bring about the fall of the established authority or prepare by word or action lawless opposition and revolution, then there is no sedition in the Swami's preaching or in the belief and actions of the Arya Samaj. They use the perfectly legitimate means of strengthening the national life at all points and their objective is national regeneration through an active and free religion, not political revolution. Individual members may be Loyalists, Moderates, Nationalists, even Terrorists, but a religious body is not responsible for the political opinions of its individual members. The religious teaching of Swami Dayananda was inspired by national motives, not political; and the aims of the Arya Samaj are national, not political.

The Arya Disclaimer

The leaders of the Arya Samaj have issued a manifesto disclaiming the political motives attributed to them by the Counsel for the Prosecution in his extraordinary opening address at Patiala. But is there any use in these repeated disclaimers? To a certain type of official mind, not in the minority in this country, every movement, body, organ of opinion or centre of activity that makes for national strength, efficiency or manhood is by that very fact suspect and indeed self-convicted as seditious and its very existence a crime to be punished by the law. The Governor of the Punjab is either himself an official of this class or swayed by advisers of that temper. Under such circumstances it is enough to issue once for all a strong and dignified repudiation of the charge and then proceed calmly with the great work the Samaj has undertaken, serenely strong and unperturbed in good fortune or evil fortune, good report or evil report, confident in God's grace and the spiritual force communicated by the founder. This is the only course worthy of a manly community professing a robust and virile religion. Anxious repetition of unheeded disclaimers seems to us undignified and futile.

What Is Sedition?

The question, what is sedition, one of those Chinese puzzles which it seems impossible to solve, nevertheless presses for solution. In Nagpur it has been established that to laugh at the holder of a Government title is sedition. In the Swaraj Case Justice Chandavarkar has declared it to be the law that to condemn terrorism in strong language and trace it to its source is sedition. At Patiala it is contended that to read the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Punjabee* is sedition. We are not quite sure that at Patiala the prosecuting counsel did not hint that to bring Christianity or Mahomedanism into contempt or hatred is sedition. And we have these remarkable cases in the Punjab, where to translate Seeley's *Expansion of England* or Mr. Bryan's opinion of British rule in India seems to have a fair chance of being established as sedition. Mr. Stead's *Review of Reviews* is now known to be a seditious publication. We are not sure, either, that the *Indian Daily News* is not even worse, for it is continually trying to bring the police, who are an indispensable part of the Government established by law, into contempt and hatred, and the incorrigible persistence of its efforts is sufficient proof of motive, if not of conspiracy. Now one of the charges against a Punjab accused is that he wrote impugning the character of the subordinate police service — just like the *Indian Daily News* or Sir Andrew Fraser. We would suggest that Sir Andrew Fraser should be arrested in England and brought here to answer to the outraged police for the remarks passed by the Police Commission. The reasoning is perfectly fair. Any strong criticism, especially if it is persistent, lowers the reputation of the Government and creates in people a tendency to belittle, that is to say, have a contempt for authority established by law. It is still worse if the Government is accused of injustice, say, in the matter of the deportations or the Gulab Bano case; for that inevitably creates hatred. Therefore strong criticism of the Government is sedition. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and *Punjabee* strongly criticise the Government. Therefore they are seditious papers and their readers seditious conspirators. Every official is a member of the Government established by law; therefore to criticise strongly an official or a policeman, still more, officials or policemen as a class, is sedition. Christianity is the religion of the Government established by law; to criticise Christianity is to bring Christians into contempt; the Government are Christians; therefore to criticise Christianity is to bring the Government established by law into contempt. That is sedition. Therefore to criticise Christianity is sedition. To say that repression fosters Terrorism may be true, but it is seditious. To suggest a Press censorship, seriously or ironically, is to bring the administration of the law of sedition into contempt, that is, to bring the administrators into contempt; and the administrators are the Government established by law. Therefore Mr. Stead's Open Letter to Lord Morley is seditious. We are almost afraid to go on, lest, finally, we should end by proving that the *Englishman* itself is an intolerably seditious rag, — for does it not try to bring Sir Edward Baker and the Government generally into contempt by intimating genially that they are liars, idiots and good-for-nothing weaklings, — in connection with the Reforms and their unwillingness to put the whole population of India into prison? Would it not save trouble to prohibit speech or writing in India altogether?

A Thing that Happened

IT IS not the policy of the *Karmayogin* to dwell on incidents whether of the present administration of the country or of the relations between the ruling caste and the people. To criticise persistently the frequent instances of highhandedness and maladministration inevitable under a regime like the present does not lead to the redress of grievances; all that it does is to create a prejudice against the reigning bureaucracy. The basis of our claim to Swaraj is not that the English bureaucracy is a bad or tyrannical Government; a bureaucracy is always inclined to be arrogant, self-sufficient, self-righteous and unsympathetic, to ignore the abuses with which it abounds, and a bureaucracy foreign and irresponsible to the people is likely to exhibit these characteristics in an exaggerated form. But even if we were ruled by a bureaucracy of angels, we should still lay claim to Swaraj and move towards national self-sufficiency and independence. On the same principle we do not notice or lay stress on the collisions between Englishmen and Indians which are an inevitable result of the anomalous and unnatural relations existing between the races. It is the relations themselves we seek to alter from the root instead of dealing with the symptoms. But the incident at Goalundo detailed in this week's *Dharma* is one which the country has to take notice of, unless we are to suppose that the movement of 1905 was the last flaring up of national strength and spirit previous to extinction and that the extinction has now come. We have received a letter from the sufferer translated into English, it is from his own account that we summarise the facts.

A Brahmin Pandit with the title of Kavyatirtha, ignorant of English, was proceeding with two Bengali ladies from Mymensingh to Calcutta on Sunday the 2nd January by the Kaligunge mail steamer, and reached Goalundo at 11 o'clock at night, too late to catch the Calcutta train. He and some other passengers decided to spend the night in the steamer. While he was going down to look after his luggage, a European came up to him, caught his wrapper, twisted it tightly round his neck and said in Hindustani, "Who are you?" Getting no answer to his request for an explanation except the repetition of the question, he replied that he was a passenger. Thereupon without farther parley the Englishman proceeded to drag the unresisting Pandit to another steamer lying alongside. On the way the latter appealed to the sub-agent of the Steamer Company, a certain Sarat Babu, but, after a word from the Saheb, was told that he must accompany the aggressor to the Company's agent, with a name which the Pandit caught as Joyce. It was not, however, to the Agent, but into a first-class cabin where there were three other Europeans and two English women, that the Brahmin was dragged and the door closed behind him. No sooner was he in the hands of this company than he was charged with having abused the Englishman whom he had never seen before in his life, and a savage blow dealt him in the left eye which cut the skin and set blood flowing freely. Blows after blows were rained on head and body, the head being cruelly battered, the lips cut open and some of the teeth loosened. His appeals for mercy were answered by a shower of kicks with booted feet on his head and the English women joined in the pastime by beating him furiously on the thigh with a dog chain. The unfortunate Bengali was by this time sick, stunned and almost senseless with the beating. The pain of the blows falling on his already bruised and battered head was intense and the iron chain drew blood with each cut. Fortunately he happened to fall against the door and it flew open. With difficulty he managed to crawl to the staircase; but at this moment the Englishman drew a revolver and, pointing it at him, cried out "Shala, I will shoot you." In terror of his life the Brahmin managed anyhow to plunge down the stairs and dropped almost senseless at the bottom. His eyes were clotted with blood, but he caught a glimpse of Sarat Babu coming near him with a European whom he conjectured to be the Agent Mr. Joyce. A few words were spoken between the two. Afterwards Sarat Babu returned and told the Pandit that he could expect no redress from the Company, but he might bring a criminal suit if he cared to do so. The farther happenings of that night need not be entered into, except to note the extraordinary conduct of the Company's officers who almost immediately separated the two steamers and took the Kaligunge mail into midstream where they kept it until the Europeans had escaped in their steamer to Naraingunge. It was only possible to discover from the luggage labels that they belonged to a jute factory in Nakail near Aralia. There were some Bengali passengers present, including a pleader from Jessore and an employee of the Sealdah District Superintendent's Audit office but, though they sympathised with and cared for their compatriot after he had escaped with his life, there was none to assist him at the moment of the outrage, nor could even the piteous cries of the ladies awake a spark of resolution anywhere in those present. The Samitis of young men are disbanded, the cry of Bande Mataram has sunk to rest, and royally-minded individuals like the perpetrators of this murderous assault can finish their imperial pastime unhindered.

We feel a great difficulty in dealing with this case. We are not in the habit of dealing in violent language, yet to write coolly of it is a little difficult. And if we describe the assault as an infamous atrocity or describe these English gentlemen and ladies as cowardly ruffians and fiendish assassins, we have to recollect that such phrases are properly applied to Indian Terrorists and we may be prosecuted under Sec. 153A if we apply them to Europeans who, after all, did nothing but amuse themselves. Moreover, any indication of the proper deserts of these people, however carefully expressed, might expose us to forfeiture of our Press and prosecution under the new laws. If we point out that such things seem to happen with impunity under the present conditions in India, Sec. 124A is lying in wait, ready to trip us up, and the Andamans or twenty years' hard labour with handcuffs and fetters loom before our uneasy apprehensions. We do not know whether, considering how the Sedition law is being interpreted in Bombay, Nagpur and the Punjab, even mentioning this incident may not bring us within its provisions. It is impossible, however, to pass it over in silence, and we proceed, therefore, to make a few observations, treading amid the pitfalls of the law as carefully as we can.

First, we have a word to the Government of East Bengal. It is very busy dealing with romantic dacoities, shapeless conspiracies, vague shadows of Terrorism, Arms Act Cases, meetings of Reform Councils overstocked with landholders and Mahomedans. We do not know whether it has any time or interest to spare for little sordid unromantic incidents of this kind. If it has any spare time, it might do worse in its own interests than glance once at that night's doings at Goalundo. It is obviously impossible to appeal to the law. Even if the identity of the assailants were fixed, the culprits would at once bring a trumped-up countercharge, say, of robbery, dacoity, Anarchism or any handy accusation, and the word of a hundred Bengalis, of whatever position or honourable antecedents, would not weigh with any but an exceptional Judge, against that of a single Englishman, whatever his antecedents or education. The only probable result would be to add a term of imprisonment to the Pandit's misfortunes. Even to reveal his name might expose him to the gentle mercies of the local Police in his District. All we can do, therefore, is to advertise the Shillong Government of what has happened and give them the chance of action.

Then, we have one word to say to the nation. The assault was motiveless and seems to have been committed merely because the Pandit was a Bengali and the Europeans felt in the mood to hammer a Bengali, perhaps out of the race-hatred which organs like the *Englishman* are busy fomenting with perfect impunity. There is no other explanation of the facts. The thing has happened and we wish to say at once that nothing in our remarks must be held to mean that we advise retaliation. But incidents like these never happen to a brave, patriotic and self-respecting nation; they happen only to those who cower and fear and, by their character, justify men who think themselves entitled to treat them like slaves. When the Bengalis showed themselves in the first ardour of 1905 a brave, patriotic and self-respecting nation, these incidents ceased to happen. If they are now reviving with features of a studied atrocity absent from similar brutalities in the past, it must be because we are ceasing to deserve those appellations. The nation is cowering in silence under the terror of repressive laws, all symptoms of national life are discouraged by the leaders and the elders as dangerous and untimely. Those who dare to speak words of hope and courage to the people, are denounced by your vernacular journals, shut out by carefully devised creeds and regulations from the body you still call the National Congress, boycotted by some of your District Conferences. If the Government see anarchists and dacoits in every bush, you see deportations and house-searches in every lal-pagri. You cower in your homes, speak your opinions in hushed whispers, allow the national spirit to die out and your Mother to go down again into the black pit from which we raised her. And this incident at Goalundo is the first ominous warning God gives you of the inevitable result.

There is only one way to uphold a nation's honour and to compel outrages upon it to cease automatically, — and that is to show that we are a nation and not a herd. If by any means within the law, the perpetrators of this outrage can be made to feel that Bengalis cannot be half-battered to death with impunity, it should doubtless be done. But no personal anger, no violent language or violent actions are needed. The reawakening of the national spirit ready to act fearlessly and blamelessly — for self-defence and prevention of a crime are blameless, — on every emergency great or small, will of itself be sufficient.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Anandamath XII (continued)

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 22nd JANUARY 1910 { No. 29

Facts and Opinions

Lajpat Rai's Letters

The case of Parmanand, the Arya Samaj teacher, whom with a singular pusillanimity the D.A.V. College authorities have dismissed before anything was proved against him, has been of more than usual interest because of the parade with which Lajpat Rai's letters to him were brought forward. The letters were innocent enough on the face of them, but prejudice and suspicion were deliberately manufactured out of the connection with Krishnavarma, the expression "revolutionary", the use of the word "boys", and an anticipation of the agrarian outbreak in connection with the Punjab Government's ill-advised land legislation. The bubble has been speedily pricked by the simple statement of facts in the *Punjabee* and by Lajpat Rai's own evidence. That Lajpat Rai was acquainted with Shyamji Krishnavarma when he was in England, was known already; so were many men who worked with him, Sir Henry Cotton among others, when he was only an enthusiastic Home Ruler and violently opposed to violence. The project of a Nationalist Servants of India Society well-equipped with a library and other appointments for political education was well advertised and known to the whole country previous to the first deportations. The anticipation of the agrarian outbreak in the letter expresses an apprehension, not a desire, and merely shows that Lajpat Rai was uneasy at the rate at which the discontent was swelling and feared that it might lead to an outbreak prematurely forestalling the use of a peaceful pressure on the Government. It is remarkable how throughout his career the honesty and consistency of Lala Lajpat Rai's adherence to a peaceful but strenuous Nationalism has been vindicated at every step, and this last revelation of his private and even secret letters is an ordeal of fire out of which he has triumphantly emerged with his consistency and his innocence wholly established.

A Nervous Samaj

It is with great regret that we find ourselves compelled to enlarge on the hint we gave in our last issue and comment adversely on the methods by which the Arya Samaj is attempting to save itself from the displeasure of the Government. It is well that it should have disclaimed sedition and repudiated the charge of being not a religious but a political body. But to run nervously to all and sundry for a testimonial of respectability, to sue for a certificate of loyalty to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and express gratitude for an ungracious, ambiguous and minatory letter of reply, to prejudge by dismissal a man whose guilt has yet to be proved, are actions which show that Swami Dayananda's religion may have emancipated the intellects of the leading Samajists but has done little to elevate their character. We must also express our amazement at the action of the Samaj in accepting the resignation by Lala Lajpat Rai of his offices on the various governing bodies of the Samaj. There are two men who are the glory of the Samaj and by whose adherence and prominence it commands the respect and admiration of all India, Lala Lajpat Rai and Lala Munshiram. By its action with regard to the former, the Samaj will lose heavily, it has already lost heavily, in public estimation. In his generous anxiety for the body to which he has devoted the greater part of his lifework, Lala Lajpat Rai offered to it the chance of freeing itself from the attacks its enemies founded upon his connection with it. It was an offer which he was bound to make, but the Samaj ought to have refused. Lajpat Rai's only offence is that he has worked and suffered for his country. By its action the Samaj has announced to the whole world that no man must dare to feel and act, however blamelessly, for his country if he wishes to be recognised by the Samaj. If so, Aryaism will perish from the face of India and leave no trace behind. The world has no use any longer for religious bodies which exclude courage, manliness, generosity, justice and patriotism from their moral practice.

The Banerji Vigilance Committees

The novel departure initiated by the fertile mind of Srijut Surendranath Banerji at Barrackpur in the creation of Vigilance Committees to check the nocturnal lovers of bomb and bullet practice on the E.B.S.R. has created great interest and amusement among his countrymen. There are many who are ungenerous enough to attribute this anti-Anarchical zeal less to loyalty and a noble "co-operative" instinct than to the fact that our great leader has himself to travel daily over the zone of danger. Even if it were so, the sneer is ungenerous. We all love our lives, we have all to travel occasionally by the E.B.S.R. in first or second class and we cannot ignore the fact that random bullets and explosive cocoanuts are not respecters of persons and, if they find the head even of a Nationalist leader in the way, will not be polite enough to walk round it. We shall all therefore be grateful to our old man eloquent, if he can ensure our common safety. But for ourselves, we do not see how he can effect his laudable object. It would be possible for Srijut Surendranath and the other estimable burgesses of Barrackpur to patrol the railway at night, but the weather is still cold, sleep is pleasant, bullets and cocoanuts perilous missiles, and, if anything happens, the police are quite capable of suspecting and arresting the too vigilant patrons of the public peace. One might revive the "National Volunteers" for the purpose; but the Samitis are disbanded, students forbidden to take part in politics or do anything that would interfere with their studies. They are not likely to be enthusiastic for this kind of volunteer work under these conditions. And, if such organisations were created, it would be more likely to alarm than gratify a suspicious and nervous Government which might see in it a disingenuous device for reviving the proclaimed Samitis. The only other resource is for these novel vigilance men to turn detectives, discover the Terrorists and give information to the police, which they can only do by becoming agents provocateurs and so worming themselves into the confidence of their quarry. That is a kind of dirty work no Indian gentleman is likely to undertake even with the prospect of vindicating his loyalty, escaping house-searches and deportation and earning the encomiums of the *Englishman*.

Postal Precautions

Sj. Aurobindo Ghose has recently received an anonymous letter giving him the momentous information that a certain Gopal Chandra Ray of the C.I.D. with several assistants is busy watching 6 College Square and the Post Office and copying all the letters and postcards that come in his name without exception. Sj. Aurobindo has not the honour of the noble Gopal's acquaintance, nor is he even aware whether this gentleman has any corporeal existence. The letter may be a hoax; or it may be sent by one of the "assistants", weary to death of copying letters and postcards and of the inclement and uncomfortable business of an open air watch fanned by the breezes of Goldighi in this season. It does not matter to the gentleman honoured by these attentions whether the whole police force occupy Goldighi for inquisitorial purposes or whether numerous editions of his correspondence are turned out for the use of posterity by the disinterested labours of the C.I.D. Still, he has suggested to us certain proposals to be placed before the Government in this connection and we proceed to make them. In the first place, for the sake of humanity, a comfortable stall might be put up in the Square for the vigilant cow-keeper and his herd whence they could watch more happily and quite as effectively. Secondly, if the Government would kindly instruct the Post Office not to lose one-tenth of Aurobindo Babu's letters after copying them and delay the greater part of the others, there would probably be no harm done to the Empire. Thirdly, Sj. Aurobindo Ghose begs us to inform the authorities that he was never greatly in the habit of writing letters before and, after the exposure of his private correspondence with his friends and family by the prosecution in the Alipur case, he has almost dropped the practice, except in urgent matters of business. It is possible, therefore, for this part of the investigation to be carried on very cheaply, and the Government must not be deceived by any representations on part of Gopal or others that a big staff is wanted. Further, we are instructed to inform all intending correspondents of the above-mentioned facts so that they may not be disturbed or anxious about Sj. Aurobindo's health if they get no answer to their letters. Secondly, it would be advisable for them, when writing to him, to forward a copy of the letter to the Secretary to the Bengal Government or to Mr. Denham of the C.I.D. Thirdly, if any one wishes to send by post specimens of bombs, revolvers, or anything explosive or picric, or plans and estimates for a conspiracy or insurrection great or small, he had better send it either by hand or through the editors of the *Statesman* or *Englishman*. No reply need be expected.

Detective Wiles

While we are on this subject, we might suggest to the C.I.D. to train up a few spies and informers, send them for the completion of their education to France and then appoint them as teachers in the College in India. Just now they do their work very clumsily. We may instance the case of a Eurasian or European gentleman rejoicing in an Irish name or alias and a false address, who left his card on Sj. Aurobindo Ghose and then opened fire with a letter requesting the loan of a revolver, brand new and serviceable, without which the Irish gentleman could not live any longer. Neither is it a good opening for acquaintance to come for financial help to a man known to be himself the possessor of a very small income. To request advice how to serve the country or to become religious is a more plausible opening, but it ought to be followed up and sustained plausibly. Even the wearing of the saffron robe need not be a passport to effusive friendship, unless there is something behind, and not always even then. We may also refer to the romantic story of the Dead Letter Office return published the other day by Sj. Prabhaschandra Deb in the *Hitabadi*. This precious script was curiously enough addressed to Grey Street, without any number, in Prabhas Babu's handwriting and with his signature so exactly reproduced as to defy discrimination even by an expert. As both Prabhas Babu and the police are well aware that there is now no connection between Sj. Aurobindo and any number in Grey Street, it was obviously the writer's intention that it should go to the Dead Letter Office and from there to the C.I.D. Prabhas Babu's suggestion was not, as the *Hitabadi* reported, to send it to the Calcutta Police for inquiry, but to return it to the Dead Letter Office. Sj. Aurobindo preferred to consign it to the waste paper basket as a more fitting repository. We cannot imagine any earthly use in these clumsy devices. Even Mr. Norton would find it difficult to make anything of a forgery, however exact, more hopelessly suspicious even than the "sweets" letter.

The New Policy

A POLICY of conciliation, a policy of trust in the people, a policy liberal, progressive, sure if slow, — that was the forecast made by the Moderate astrologers when the Reform comet sailed into our startled heavens. The prophets and augurs of the Anglo-Indian Press friendly to Moderate India — friendly on condition of our giving up all aspirations that go beyond the Reforms — prophesied high, loud and often to the same purpose, and if, like the Roman augurs, they winked and smiled mysteriously at each other when they met, the outside world was not supposed to know anything of their private opinions. Even the disillusionment caused by the publication of the Councils Rules has not prevented this party of wise and able politicians from supporting by participation the Reforms which they condemned, and belauding the intention of the Anglo-Indian reformers while swearing dismally and violently at their practice. Bad as it is, we must co-operate so as to make the best of the new measure. To make the best of a bad measure is to make it a success and so prevent or delay the coming of a better. This at least is our idea of the matter, but we belong to a party not of wise and able politicians who take the full profit of that which they condemn as disastrous and injurious, but of men who have the misfortune still to believe in logic, principle and experience. To be logical is to be a mere theorist, to cling to principle is to be a doctrinaire and to be guided by experience, the world's and our own, is to be unpractical. Only those whose theory is confused and practice self-contradictory and haphazard, can be wise politicians and capable of guiding the country aright. From this standpoint the proclamation of all India as seditious is, doubtless, the first step in the new policy, the policy of conciliation and liberalism. It is the sign-manual of the great reformer, Lord Morley, upon his work, the loud-tongued harbinger of the golden Age.

No particular motive can be alleged for this sudden proclamation, nor is any alleged. The people are left to speculate in the dark as to the mystic motives of Lords Minto and Morley in this remarkable step forward, or to get what light and comfort they can from the speculations of our Anglo-Indian friends and advisers, who seem to be as much in the dark as ourselves and can only profess their blind religious faith in the necessity and beneficence of the measure and appeal to all patriotic Indians to co-operate in coercing the national movement into silence. If India had been full of meetings of a seditious or doubtful nature, the necessity of the measure could have been established. Even if the national life were pulsating swiftly though blamelessly, its "aetiology", — if we may use a word which may possibly be condemned by Mr. Petman or Mr. Grey as seditious, — could have been understood, though not its necessity. But at present, with the exception of an occasional scantily attended meeting in the Calcutta squares, the only political meetings held are those in which abhorrence of Terrorism is expressed or Vigilance Committees of leading citizens organised to patrol the E.B.S.R. at night even in this chilly weather, and those in which the Deccan Sabha drinks deep of the political sermons and homilies of Lord Morley's personal friend, Mr. Gokhale. Was it to stop these that the proclamation of all India became necessary?

It has been freely alleged that the prevalence of bombs and Terrorism in Bombay, Punjab and Bengal is the justification of the measure, on the ground that open sedition leads to secret assassination, Nationalism to Terrorism. It is obvious that to attempt to meet secret conspiracy by prohibiting public agitation is a remedy open to the charge of absurdity. The secret conspirator rejoices in silence, the Terrorist finds his opportunity in darkness. Is not the liberty of free speech and free writing denied to the Russian people by more rigorous penalties, a more effective espionage, a far more absolute police rule than any that can be attempted in India? Yet where do the bomb and the revolver, the Terrorist and the secret conspirator flourish more than in Russia? The conspirator has his own means of propaganda which the law finds it difficult to touch. The argument, however, is that it is only in an atmosphere of dissatisfaction, disaffection and sedition that the propaganda of the conspirator can be effective, and Nationalism creates that atmosphere. Criticism of the Government leads to dissatisfaction with the Government, dissatisfaction leads to the aspiration for a better form of Government, aspiration of this kind when baulked leads to disaffection, disaffection leads to secret conspiracy and assassination. Therefore stop all means of criticising the Government and the first cause being removed, the final effect will disappear. That this is the actual train of reasoning, conscious or unconscious, in the minds of those who advise, initiate or approve a policy of repression is beyond doubt. It is evident in all they say or write.

Unfortunately the statement of the premises in this chain is incomplete and the conclusion is therefore vitiated. The first premise may be granted at once. In a country well satisfied with its lot, a nation at ease and aware of prosperity and progress, the propaganda of the secret conspirator must necessarily fail. In India itself, if we are to believe the *Times*, secret societies have existed for upwards of forty or fifty years. How is it that they had no success and no one was aware of their existence until the reaction after Lord Ripon's regime culminated in the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon? Dissatisfaction is not created by public criticism, it is created by the adverse facts on which public criticism fastens, and it crystallises either in public criticism or in secret discontent. The public criticism creates public agitation, the secret discontent creates secret conspiracy. Both are born of the same circumstances, but the lines of development are entirely different, nor is there much sympathy between them. The public agitator dreads the secret conspirator, the secret conspirator despises the public agitator, even when they are moving towards the same end. The man most detested and denounced by the Indian revolutionary organisations now active at Paris, Geneva and Berlin, is Sj. Bipin Chandra Pal, the prophet and first preacher of passive resistance. Yet the object of both is almost identical, the Nationalist agitator insisting on perfect autonomy, the revolutionist on separation, both being merely different forms of independence. The question for the authorities is whether they will try to ignore or silence the public criticism or remove the cause of dissatisfaction. If they ignore without silencing public criticism, the dissatisfaction grows in volume until it becomes the aspiration for a better form of Government. They must then either satisfy that aspiration or silence it, they can no longer ignore it. This game of ignoring the obvious is, like the first crude attempt of Nationalism in India to ignore the Government, foredoomed to failure; it only postpones and intensifies the problem, it does not get rid of it. Yet this was the policy long followed by the Indian Government towards the Congress movement. On the other hand, they may silence the public criticism or trample on it. If they trample on it, the aspiration becomes disaffection not necessarily to the sovereign, but to the form and system of Government then obtaining, with a cry for absolute transformation. This was what happened in India in 1905. Trampling on public opinion without silencing its expression is mere madness; it leads to the genesis of great revolutionary movements, injures the Government, endangers public peace and order, and helps nobody. This method does not even postpone the necessity of a solution, it hastens it by intensifying the problem to breaking-point. Yet this was the policy of Lord Curzon. He not only permitted the expression of public discontent, but he fostered it by arguing with and trying to persuade it; yet he invariably trampled on the thing he permitted. It is statesmanship of this kind which ruins empires and destroys great nations. There is another kind of policy, and that is to play with the monster of discontent, to chide it, whip it and yet throw it sops while taking advantage of the monster's preoccupation with the sop to wind the chain round its neck tighter and tighter. This is also bad policy. The whip enrages, the sop does not soothe but irritates, the tightening of the chain only shortens the distance between the tamer and the brute; — for the difficulty is that, the tamer has to hold the chain, he cannot tie it to something else and get out of springing distance.

Eventually, either discontent has to be satisfied or silenced. If it is satisfied, the whole difficulty disappears and perfectly amicable relations are restored. That was the policy pursued by England with regard to its colonies after the severe lesson learned in America, with the result that the bond between the colonies and Great Britain still defies the efforts of Time and Circumstance to loosen or snap them. But if discontent is not to be satisfied, the question then for the ruler is whether he prefers it to crystallise in public agitation and peaceful but possibly effective resistance, or in secret conspiracy, terrorism and eventually armed insurrection. It must be one of the two, for to expect an immense impulse like the national impulse to sink to rest without being either crushed or satisfied, is to expect impossible miracles. The Anglo-Indian appeal to the political leaders to be satisfied and cease from agitation is a singularly foolish and futile one. If the political leaders were to comply, even the most popular and trusted of them, they would cease to be leaders the next day. The dwindling numbers that attend the Convention sittings are a signal proof of this very obvious fact; that diminution has been effected, it must be remembered, without public agitation, without any organisation or activity of the Nationalist party, by the mere operation of a law of Nature. The aspiration, however created, is there and it is a fire mounting out of the bowels of the earth, which no man's hand can extinguish. The political leaders know that they cannot quench it, if they would; the Government thinks it can. And the method it seems to favour, if the extension of the Seditious Meetings Act and the prosecutions of papers and publications or their leaders all over India are any sign, is to silence public criticism.

If our view of the question is right, it is evident that to paralyse public agitation is to foster Terrorism, and we can only suppose that the Government think Terrorism easier to deal with than public agitation. This seems to us a grievous error. If experience shows anything, it is that Terrorism is never extinguished except by the removal of its causes. The difference between Terrorism and open rebellion is that open rebellion often effects its object, but can easily be crushed, while Terrorism does not effect its object, but cannot be crushed. The only thing that Terrorism can do is to compel the Government to satisfy partially the more moderate demands of peaceful agitation as the lesser of two evils, and this is a result which the Terrorist looks on with contempt. He is always extreme and fanatical and will not be satisfied with anything less than immediate freedom gained by violence. He is confident of his result, he is passionately and intolerantly attached to his method. Irish Terrorism only disappeared because of the expectation of Home Rule by the alliance with British Liberalism; Russian Terrorism is still kept alive by the impotence of the Duma; Anarchism flourishes because the Governments of Europe have not found any way of circumventing it. Terrorism may perish of inanition; coercion is its food and its fuel.

The policy now being followed by Lord Minto's Government has neither immediate justification nor ultimate wisdom. It is the old futile round which reluctant authority has always trod when unable to reconcile itself to inevitable concession. It is a wasteful, ruinous and futile process. For if the Government were to declare tomorrow that it would no longer tolerate public opposition and deport all the leaders of public and peaceful agitation in the country, it would only stimulate more formidable and unscrupulous forces and substitute a violent, dangerous and agonising process for one which, even if a little painful, is helpful, economical and constructive.

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 29th JANUARY 1910 { No. 30

Facts and Opinions

The High Court Assassination

The startling assassination of Deputy Superintendent Shams-ul-Alam on Monday in the precincts of the High Court, publicly, in daylight, under the eyes of many and in a crowded building, breaks the silence which had settled on the country, in a fashion which all will deplore. The deceased officer was perhaps the ablest, most energetic and most zealous member of the Bengal detective force. It was his misfortune that he took the leading part not only in the Alipur Bomb Case in which he zealously and untiringly assisted the Crown solicitors, but in the investigation of the Haludbari and Netra dacoities. The nature of his duties exposed him to the resentment of the small Terrorist bodies whose continued existence in Bengal is proved by this last daring and reckless crime. Under such circumstances a man carries his life in his hand and it seems only a matter of time when it will be struck from him. We have no doubt that the Government will suitably recognise his services by a handsome provision for his family. As for the crime itself, it is one of the boldest of the many bold acts of violence for which the Terrorists have been responsible. We wish we could agree with some of our contemporaries that the perpetrators of these deplorable outrages are dastards and cowards; for, if it were so, Terrorism would be a thing to be abhorred, but not feared. On the contrary, the Indian Terrorist seems to be usually a man fanatical in his determination and daring, to prefer public places and crowded buildings for his field and to scorn secrecy and a fair chance of escape. It is this remarkable feature which has distinguished alike the crimes at Nasik, London, Calcutta, to say nothing of the assassination of Gossain in jail. With such men it is difficult to deal. Neither fear nor reasoning, disapprobation nor isolation can have any effect on them. Nor will the Government of this country allow us to use what we believe to be the only effective means of combating the spread of the virus among the people. All we can do is to sit with folded hands and listen to the senseless objurgations of the Anglo-Indian Press, waiting for a time when the peaceful expression and organisation of our national aspirations will no longer be penalised. It is then that Terrorism will vanish from the country and the nightmare be as if it never had been.

Anglo-Indian Prescriptions

The Anglo-Indian papers publish their usual senseless prescriptions for the cure of the evil. The *Englishman* informs us that it is at last tired of these outrages and asks in a tone full of genuine weariness when the Government will take the steps which Hare Street has always been advising. It seems to us that the Government have gone fairly far in that direction. The only remaining steps are to silence the Press entirely, abolish the necessity of investigation and trial and deport every public man in India. And when by removing everything and everyone that still encourages the people to persevere in peaceful political agitation, Russia has been reproduced in India and all is hushed except the noise of the endless duel between the omnipotent policeman and the secret assassin, the *Englishman* will be satisfied, — but the country will not be at peace. The *Indian Daily News* more sensibly suggests police activity in detecting secret organisations, — although its remarks would have sounded better without an implied prejudgment of the Nasik case. If the police were to employ the sound detective methods employed in England and France, it would take them a little longer to effect a coup, but there would be some chance of real success. It is not by indiscriminate arrests, harassing house-searches undertaken on the word of informers paid so much for each piece of information true or false, and interminable detention of undertrial prisoners in jail that these formidable secret societies will be uprooted. Such processes are more likely to swell their numbers and add to their strength. The *Statesman* is particularly wroth with the people of this country for their objection to police methods and goes so far as to lay the blame for the murder of Shams-ul-Alam on these objections. If we had only submitted cheerfully to police harassment, all this would not have happened! The bitter ineptitude of our contemporary grows daily more pronounced and takes more and more refuge in ridiculously inconsequent arguments. Is it the objectionable methods or our objections to them that are to blame? We may safely say that, whatever influences may have been at work in the mind of the assassin, the occasional criticisms of vexatious house-search in the Bengali journals had nothing to do with his action. The *Statesman* does not scruple, like other Anglo-Indian papers, to question the sincerity of the condemnations of Terrorist outrage which are nowadays universal throughout the country, and to support its insinuations it has to go as far back as the Gossain murder and the demonstrations that followed it. Those demonstrations were not an approval of Terrorism as a policy, but an outburst of gratitude to the man who removed a dangerous and reckless perjurer whose evil breath was scattering ruin and peril over innocent homes and noble and blameless heads throughout Bengal. We do not praise or justify that outburst, — for murder is murder, whatever its motives, — but it is not fair to give it a complexion other than the one it really wore. If it had really been true that a whole nation approved of Terrorism and supported the assassin by secret or open sympathy, it would be a more damning indictment of British statesmanship in India than any seditious pen could have framed. The Chowringhee paper's libellous insinuation that the secret societies are not secret and their members are known to the public, has only to be mentioned in order to show the spirit of this gratuitous adviser of the Indian people. Nor can one peruse without a smile the suggestion that the Hindu community should use the weapon of social ostracism against the Terrorists. Whom are we to outcaste, the hanged or transported assassin, or his innocent relatives?

House Search

While we are on the subject we may as well make explicit the rationale of our objection to house search as it is used in Bengal. No citizen can object to the legitimate and necessary use of house search as an aid to the detection of crime; it is only to its misuse that objection can be made. We say that it is misuse to harass a man and his family merely because the police have a suspicion against him which they cannot establish or find any ground of evidence for — on the remote chance of finding incriminating correspondence or arms in his possession. It is a misuse to take this step on the information of characterless paid informers whose advantage it is to invent false clues so as to justify their existence and earn their living. It is a misuse to farther harass the householder by carrying off from his house half his library and his whole family correspondence and every other article to which the police take a fancy and which are often returned to him after infinite trouble and in a hopelessly damaged condition. A house search is never undertaken in civilised countries except on information of the truth of which there is moral certainty or such a strong probability as to justify this extreme step. To find out the truth of an information without immediately turning a household upside down on the chance of its veracity is not an impossible feat for detective ability in countries where all statements are not taken for gospel truth merely because they issue from the sacred lips of a policeman, and where police perjury or forgery is sure of swift punishment. Where a detective force is put on its mettle by being expected to prove every statement and take the consequences of illegal methods, they do manage to detect crime very effectively, while the chances of the innocent suffering are greatly minimised. In other countries there are or have been Anarchist outrages, Terrorist propaganda, secret societies, but nowhere, except in Russia, are such methods used as are considered quite ordinary in India, nor, if used, would they be tolerated by the European citizen. If the police would confine themselves to legitimate detective activity, they would receive the full support of the public and the occasional trouble of a house search, caused by the existence of a suspected relative or dependent, would be patiently borne, — though it is absurd of the *Statesman* to expect a householder to be cheerful under such untoward circumstances. This is the rationale of our views in the matter, and we do not think there is anything in them either unreasonable, obstructive or inconsistent with civic duty.

The Elections

The Elections at the time of writing seem to point to the return of a Liberal Ministry dependent first on Labour, then on Irish votes for its very existence. At the end of last week after being long in a slight minority, the combined Liberal-Labour party exceeded the Conservatives by 14, but the Liberal vote, apart from the Labour representatives, was still well behind the Unionist numbers. The vicissitudes of this crisis have been utterly unlike those of any previous election. Instead of an even ebb and flow such as we find on former occasions, well-distributed all over the country, we see the United Kingdom ranged into two adverse parties on a great revolutionary issue, according to geographical, almost racial distribution. Wales, Scotland and the North are for the new age, the Centre and the South for the past. In the Southern, Midland and Eastern counties the Unionists have achieved a tremendous victory and we think there is hardly a constituency in which the Liberal majority has not been either materially, often hugely reduced or turned into a minority.

In the North, even in Yorkshire, still more in Westmoreland, the Unionists have achieved a few victories, but the verdict of the North as a whole has gone heavily against the Lords and for the Liberals. Wales is still overwhelmingly Radical in spite of one or two Conservative gains. In Scotland the Liberal party has been amazingly successful and increased its majorities in many places, maintained them in most and balanced occasional losses by compensating victories. The Celt everywhere has declared for revolution, as was to be expected from that ardent, mobile and imaginative race; the frank, adventurous Scandinavian blood of the North may account for its progressive sympathies; but the rest of England is the home of the conservative, slow-natured Anglo-Saxon always distrustful of new adventures and daring innovations. The struggle seems to us to have been not so much one of opinions as of blood and instinct. It is notable that the Conservative victories have been attained not so much by the reduction and transference of the Liberal vote as by a rush of Conservative electors to the polls who did not vote in previous elections. The unparalleled heaviness of the polling shows how deeply the people have been stirred and feel the magnitude and importance of the issues.

The Viceroy's Speech

THE SPEECH of Lord Minto on the occasion of the first meeting of the Viceroy's Council under the new regime is a very important pronouncement; and the most momentous of the passages in the pronouncement are two, the one in which he disposes finally of any lingering hopes in the minds of the Moderates, the other in which he threatens to dispose finally of any lingering hopes in the minds of the Nationalists. It has been a Moderate legend which still labours to survive, that the intention of Lords Morley and Minto in the Reforms was to lay the foundations of representative self-government in India. This legend was perseveringly reiterated in direct contradiction of the Secretary of State's famous pronouncement that, so far as his vision could pierce into the future, the personal and absolute element in Indian administration must for ever remain. Lord Minto has now stamped his foot on the Moderate legend and crushed it into atoms. We quote the important passages in which he accomplishes this ruthless destruction.

"We have distinctly maintained that representative Government in its Western sense is totally inapplicable to the Indian Empire and would be uncongenial to the traditions of Eastern populations — that Indian conditions do not admit of popular representation — that the safety and welfare of the country must depend on the supremacy of British administration — and that that supremacy can, *in no circumstances*, be delegated to any kind of representative assembly.... We have aimed at the reform and enlargement of our Councils but not at the creation of Parliaments. I emphasise what I have just said in view of the opinions to which advanced Indian politicians appear not infrequently to commit themselves."

In the face of speech so plain and uncompromising it will be difficult indeed to keep up the fiction that it is only the regulations which are objectionable and, if only the regulations are changed, we can with a clear conscience accept and participate in the Reforms. The Act and the Regulations are not different in aim or parentage; they have one origin, one object, one policy. Lord Minto has emphatically stated that the initiative in the Reforms was from beginning to end his own, and the facts bear out the truth of his statement. His inaugural speech has put a seal of finality on the death-doom of Moderatism of which the publication of the Councils' rules was the pronouncement. The objective of Moderatism is colonial self-government, the means, the grace and goodwill of the British rulers, and the two British rulers whom they have hailed as apostles and fathers of Reform have declared explicitly that in no future age, however distant, and in no circumstances, however changed, can the official supremacy be delegated to any kind of representative assembly however safely constituted. Not even, therefore, a Russian Duma, that simulacrum of a Parliament, is to be granted to India even in remote and millennial futurity.

The other passage is the reference to the licence of a revolutionary Press as a means of combating Terrorism. The revolutionary Press has long since disappeared and, therefore, we can only suppose that Lord Minto means the Nationalist Press and that this pronouncement heralds fresh coercive legislation. The platform has been silenced, the Press must follow. Then Thought alone will remain free from the prohibitions of the law and even that may be coerced by the deportation and exile of anyone whom the Police may suspect of entertaining liberal opinions. Just as the first-quoted passage ensures the extinction of all Moderate activity, so this menace portends the extinction of all Nationalist activity. We do not know that we shall be altogether sorry. If the *Englishman* is tired of assassinations, we also are tired of the thankless and apparently unsuccessful task of regulating popular discontent and pointing out legitimate paths to national aspiration on the one hand and attempting to save the officials from themselves on the other. We have only persevered in it from a strong sense of our duty to the country.

But we are beginning to feel that Fate is more powerful than the strongest human effort. We feel the menace in the air from above and below and foresee the clash of iron and inexorable forces in whose collision all hope of a peaceful Nationalism will disappear, if not for ever, yet for a long, a disastrously long season.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Fate and Free-Will
Anandamath XIII

KARMAYOGIN
A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 5th FEBRUARY 1910 { No. 31

Facts and Opinions

The Party of Revolution

Be the fault whose you will, ours or the Government's, the existence of an organised party of armed Revolution in Indian politics is now a recognised factor of the situation. The enormous strides with which events have advanced and a sky full of trouble but also of hope been overcast and grown full of gloom and menace, can be measured by the rapidity with which this party has developed. It is only five years since the national movement sprang into being. The cry was then for self-help and passive resistance. Boycott, Swadeshi, Arbitration, National Education, were the hope of the future, the means of self-regeneration. In five years everything has been struck to the earth. Boycott has almost disappeared, Swadeshi languishes under sentence of arrest, Arbitration died still-born, National Education is committing suicide. A tremendous disintegration has taken place and we look amazed on the ruins of the work our labour and our sacrifice erected. It is a huge defeat, an astonishing catastrophe. And on those ruins grim, wild-eyed, pitiless to itself and to others, mocking at death and defeat with its raucous and careless laughter Revolution rises repeating the language of the old-world insurgents, cherishing a desperate hope which modern conditions deny, grasping at the weapons which the Slav and the Celt have brought into political warfare. The seeds which the *Yugantar* sowed in its brief, violent and meteoric career have borne fruit in unexpected quarters and new-born journals repeat in foreign lands and in the English tongue the incitations to revolt and slaughter which have been put down in India by the strong hand of the law. Money is forthcoming to support a journalism which must obviously be all cost and no profit, young men exile themselves from their native land by openly joining the party of violence and in India itself repeated blows have been struck paralysing the hope and the effort to revive the activity of that broader and calmer Nationalism which, recognising modern conditions, still commands the allegiance of the bulk of the nation.

Its Growth

What is the precise nature, propaganda and strength of this party, which by so small an expenditure of energy has produced such surprising results? When the *Yugantar*, abandoning its habit of philosophic Revolutionism, first began to enter the field of practical politics, to sneer at passive resistance and gird at its chief exponents, no one thought that its change of attitude portended anything serious. Men read the paper for the amazing brilliance, grace and sustained force of its style, a new thing in Bengali journalism, and from the natural attraction men feel for strong writing and bold thought even when they do not agree with it. Afterwards the reckless fight of the *Yugantar* for existence attracted a more dangerous admiration and from that time the journal changed from a thing of literary interest into a political force. Even then it was taken as a practical guide only among a section of young men small in numbers and without means or influence. But things have changed since then. A void has been created by the conviction, deportation, self-imposed exile or silence of the great Nationalist speakers, writers, organisers, and the dangerous opinions and activities then created have rushed in to occupy the vacuum. The Nationalism we advocate is a thing difficult to grasp and follow, needing continual intellectual exposition to keep its hold on the mind, continual inspiration and encouragement to combat the impatience natural to humanity; its methods are comparatively new in politics and can only justify themselves to human conservatism by distinguished and sustained success. The preaching of the new revolutionary party is familiar to human imagination, supported by the records of some of the most inspiring episodes in history, in consonance with the impatience, violence and passion for concrete results which revolutionary epochs generate. The growing strength of this party is not difficult to explain; it is extremely difficult to combat.

Its Extent

This party has two sides, the propaganda carried on in foreign countries, and the Terrorist activity always recrudescent in our midst. The latter is the most formidable in the present, the former the most dangerous in the future. The foreign propaganda was first located in London and confined to the single paper, the *Indian Sociologist*, first an organ of Shyamji Krishnavarma's Home Rule Society and opposed to all methods of violence. The conversion of Krishnavarma to the Terrorism he once fiercely condemned, has been a very important factor in the growth of the new party. The propaganda has been driven from London only to spring at once into a ubiquitous activity abroad. From Paris Krishnavarma publishes the *Indian Sociologist*; from Berlin a new organ, significantly self-styled the *Talwar*, issues; in Geneva a paper naming itself the *Bande Mataram* busies itself with decrying the policy of the defunct *Bande Mataram* and denouncing its originator and former Editor; a paper called the *Free Hindustan* maintains itself in America. Wealthy men and women stand behind these organs, the Kathiawar Krishnavarma, the Parsi lady Mrs. Kama and possibly others who do not advertise their names. Young men of all nationalities in India seem to have joined these organisations and occasional pamphlets find their way into India in spite of the vigilance of the Post Office by means familiar to European revolutionism.

In India any violent propaganda is impossible; violent action takes its place and the swift succession of attempted or successful outrages in Gujerat, Maharashtra, Punjab and Bengal shows that if the movement is not organised, as in these foreign countries, it is equally widespread. The very existence of such a conspiracy must paralyse all other forms and methods of national aspiration by driving the Government and the Anglo-Indian community into the suppression of everything that goes beyond contented acceptance of that which exists. The revolutionists know this well and they have played their game with great skill and success.

Ourselves

Every established Government is bound to eradicate a movement of this kind and it will naturally use any means it thinks effective. We recognise this necessity, but we have no faith in the means the Government and the Anglo-Indians seem to favour. We are dead against covering over an evil by pretentious, sounding and hollow speech and measures; we do not believe in a remedial system which suppresses symptoms and leaves the roots untouched. All we can do is to stand aside and let the physician try his system — and this we propose to do from henceforward. We have written this week in order to explain our action and our attitude, but we shall abstain in future from comment on current Indian politics or criticism of Government and its measures until more favourable and normal conditions return. We only reserve to ourselves the liberty of writing once to point out the immense difference between Indian conditions in modern times and the historical precedents on which the revolutionists rely, — for which we had not sufficient space in this issue. With this exception the rest is silence. The *Karmayogin* was originally started as a weekly review intended to encourage the habit of deep and close thinking on all subjects and widen the intellectual range of the people, giving an especial importance to religion and the growth of spirituality. The disproportionate space allowed to current politics was necessitated by the absence of any political organ devoted to that propaganda of peaceful Nationalism in which we saw the only way to healthy political development in India. Now that that way is barred by the legislator and the Terrorist, we return to our original intention.

The Necessity of the Situation

A VERY serious crisis has been induced in Indian politics by the revival of Terrorist outrages and the increasing evidences of the existence of an armed and militant revolutionary party determined to fight force by force. The effect on the Government seems to have been of a character very little complimentary to British statesmanship. Faced by this menace to peace and security the only device they can think of is to make peaceful agitation impossible. Their first step has been to proclaim all India as seditious. Their second is to announce the introduction of fresh legislation making yet more stringent the already all-embracing law of sedition. By these two measures free speech on press or platform will practically be interdicted, since the perils of truthfulness will be so great that men will prefer to take refuge either in a lying hypocrisy or in silence. Frankness, honesty, self-respecting and truthful opposition in Indian politics are at an end. The spirit which dictates the resort to these measures, will inevitably manifest itself also in the proclamation as illegal of all societies or organisations openly formed for the purpose of training the strength of the nation by solid and self-respecting political and educational work towards a free and noble future. By the law which gives the Government that power of arbitrary suppression associated work is rendered impossible, though not as yet penalised. If free speech, if free writing, if free association is made impossible under the law, it is tantamount to declaring a peaceful Nationalism illegal and criminal.

The effect of the recent assassinations on the Moderate party has been to throw them into a panic and demoralisation painful for any lover of Indian manhood to witness. It is quite possible for an Indian politician at this crisis to consider in a spirit of worthy gravity and serious recognition of the issues involved the best way of combating the evil, even if it involves co-operation with a Government which persists in the repression of the national hopes and aspirations and seeks to compel co-operation by pressure instead of by winning the hearts of the people. But that is not the spirit shown by Moderate organs and by Moderate leaders. All that we can see is a desperate and cowardly *sauve qui peut*, an attempt by every man to save himself and to burrow under a heap of meaningless words. Wild denunciations of the revolutionary instruments as fiends, dastards, cowards, with loads of other epithets which defeat their purpose by their grotesque violence; strange panegyrics of the deceased police officer as a patriot, saint, martyr by those who formerly never discovered his transcendent merits or had a good word to say for the police; meetings to arrange steps for the suppression of Anarchism loudly advertised by leaders who know that they are powerless to take any effective steps in the present state of the country; Vigilance Committees which can at best pay for the hired vigils of watchmen easily avoidable by a skilful nocturnal assassin; — are these the speech and action of responsible and serious political leaders or the ravings and spasmodic gesticulations of a terrified instinct of self-preservation?

The Nationalist party can take no share in these degrading performances. On the other hand its own remedies, its own activities are doubly inhibited, inhibited from below by the paralysing effect of successful or attempted assassinations, inhibited from above by panic-stricken suspicion, panic-stricken repression. We have not disguised our policy, we have openly advertised our plans of party reconstruction and reorganisation, we have sought to speak and act candidly before the Government and the country, not extenuating the errors of the Government, not inflaming the minds of the people. The first answer to our propaganda was given by the revolutionary party in the blow struck at Nasik, the second by the Government in the extension of the Seditious Meetings Act to all India. We still felt it our duty to persevere, leaving the results of our activity to a higher Power. The assassination in the High Court and the announcement of a stringent Press legislation convinces us that any farther prosecution of the public activities we contemplated, will be vain and unseasonable. Until, therefore, a more settled state of things supervenes and normal conditions can be restored, we propose to refrain from farther political action. The Government and the Anglo-Indian community seem to be agreed that by some process of political chemistry unknown to us the propagation of peaceful Nationalism generates armed and militant revolutionism and that the best way to get rid of the latter is to suppress the former. We will give them the chance by suppressing ourselves so far as current Indian politics are concerned. We have no wish to embarrass the action of the Government or to accentuate the difficulties of the situation. The Government have no doubt a policy of their own and a theory of the best means of suppressing violent revolutionary activities. We have no faith in their policy and no confidence in their theory, but since it is theirs and the responsibility for preserving peace rests on them, let them put their policy freely and thoroughly into action. We advise our fellow Nationalists also to stand back and give an unhampered course for a while to Anglo-Indian statesmanship in its endeavours to grapple with this hydra-headed evil.

But before we resort to silence, we will speak out once freely and loudly to the Government, the Anglo-Indian community and the people. We will deliver our souls once so that no responsibility for anything that may happen in the future may be laid at our doors by posterity. To the Government we have only one word to say. We are well aware that they desire not the co-operation of the Nationalist party, but its annihilation. They trace the genesis of the present difficulties to the propaganda of the Nationalist leaders and an unstatesmanlike resentment is allowed to overpower their judgment and their insight. Choosing to be misled by a police whose incapacity and liability to corruption has been loudly proclaimed by their own Commissions presided over by their own officials, they have formed the rooted opinion that the leaders of Nationalism are secretly conspiring to subvert British rule, and neither the openness of our proceedings nor the utter failure of the police to substantiate these allegations have been able to destroy the illusion. The open espionage, menace and detective machinations to which we are subjected, are sufficient proof of its persistence. Nevertheless, it is due to the Government that we should speak the truth and it is open to them to consider or reject it at their pleasure. The one, the only remedy for the difficulties which beset them in India, is to cease from shutting their eyes on unpleasant facts, to recognise the depth, force and extent of the movement in India, the radical change that has come over the thoughts and hearts of the people and the impossibility of digging out that which wells up from the depths by the spades of repression. They are face to face with aspirations and agitations which are not only Indian but Asiatic, not only Asiatic but worldwide. They cannot do away by force with these opinions, these emotions, these developments unless they first trample down the resurgence in Japan, China, Turkey and Persia and reverse the march of progress in Europe and America. Neither can they circumvent the action of natural forces which are not moved by but move the Indian political leaders. Reforms which would have satisfied and quieted ten years ago are now a mere straw upon a torrent. Some day they must make up their minds to the inevitable and follow the example of rulers all over the world by conceding a popular constitution with whatever safeguards they choose for British interests and British sovereignty, and the earlier they can persuade themselves to concede it, the better terms they can make with the future. This has been the traditional policy of England all over the world, and it has always been an evil day for the Empire when statesmen have turned their backs on English traditions and adopted the blind impolicy of the Continental peoples. They have seen at Lahore and Hughly that Moderatism is a dead force impotent to help or to injure, that whatever the lips may profess, the hearts of the people are with Nationalism. Impolitic severity may transfer that allegiance to the militant revolutionism which is raising its head and thriving on the cessation of all legitimate political activity. The Nationalist leaders will stand unswervingly by their ideals and policy, but they may prove as helpless hereafter as the Moderates are in the face of the present situation.

The Anglo-Indian community, through its recognised organs, is now busy inflaming hostility, hounding on the Government to farther ill-advised measures of repression and adding darkness to darkness and confusion to confusion. Statesmanship they never had, but even common sense has departed from them. The Indian people made a fair offer of peace and alliance to them at the beginning of the movement by including goods produced in India through European enterprise and with European capital as genuine Swadeshi goods; but instead of securing their future interests and position by standing in the forefront of the political and industrial development of India, they have preferred to study their momentary caste interest and oppose the welfare of the country to which they owe their prosperity. As a punishment God has deprived them of reason. They are hacking at the roots of British investment and industry in India by driving blindly towards the creation of more unrest and anarchy in the country. They are imperilling a future which can still be saved, by fanatical attachment to a past which is doomed. If they could look at politics with the eye either of the statesman or of the man of business, they would see that neither their political nor their commercial interests can be served by a vain attempt to hold this vast country by pressing a mailed heel on the throats of the people. The pride of race, the arrogance of colour, a bastard mercantile Imperialism are poor substitutes for wisdom, statesmanship and common sense. Undoubtedly, they may induce the Government to silence and suppress, to imprison and deport till all tongues are hushed and all organisations are abolished — except the voice of the bomb and the revolver, except the subterranean organisation that, like a suppressed disease, breaks out the more you drive in its symptoms. Have they ever contemplated the possibility of that result of their endeavours — the possibility that their confusion of Nationalism with Terrorism may be ignorant and prejudiced, and that the measures they advocate may only destroy the one force that can now stand between India and chaos?

To the people also we have a last word to say. We have always advocated open agitation, a manly aspiration towards freedom, a steady policy of independent, self-sustained action and peaceful resistance to the repression of legitimate activities. That policy was only possible on condition of a certain amount of self-restraint in repressive legislation by the Government, and a great amount of courage, self-restraint, resolution and self-sacrifice on the part of the people. It appears we cannot count on any of these conditions. The rise of a revolutionist party fanatically opposed alike to the continuance of the British connection and to peaceful development makes our policy yet more impossible. A triangular contest between violent revolution, peaceful Nationalist endeavour and bureaucratic reaction is an impossible position and would make chaos more chaotic. Any action at the present moment would be ill-advised and possibly disastrous. The Government demands co-operation from the Moderates, silence from the Nationalists. Let us satisfy them and let there be no action on our part which can be stigmatised as embarrassing the authorities in their struggle with Terrorism. The self-restraint of our party after the conviction of Mr. Tilak was rewarded by the breakdown of Moderatism after it had undisputed control of the press and platform for almost a year. A similar self-restraint will be equally fruitful now. Revolution paralyses our efforts to deal peacefully but effectively with Repression; Repression refuses to allow us to cut the ground from under the feet of Revolution. Both demand a clear field for their conflict. Let us therefore stand aside, sure that Time will work for us in the future as it has done in the past, and that, if we bear faithfully the burden of the ideal God has laid upon us, our hour may be delayed, but not denied to us for ever.

The Elections

THE GREAT election is over, the first in England which has been fought on constitutional issues since the passing of the Reform Bill in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. The forces of reaction have put forth their utmost strength and, in the result, have only succeeded in just equalising their own numbers with those of the official Liberal party. This partial success will be more fatal to the cause of reaction than a defeat. For, in the coming Parliament, the Liberal Ministry will be dependent for their very existence on the forty Labour votes that represent the frankly socialistic element in English progressive opinion. Such a state of things has never before existed in English politics and a few years ago it would have been thought impossible. Practically, Socialist opinion will rule England so long as the Asquith Ministry lasts and, if the Socialists are wisely guided and refrain from abusing their opportunity, they will be able to take such steps in the modification of British politics as will ensure the triumph of Socialism in England at no distant date. Not only will the Government depend for its very existence on the Labour vote, but it will depend for its safety on Irish support. If, therefore, the Irish also are wisely guided and do not press the favourable situation too far, the long delayed concession of Home Rule is a certainty within the next two years. Necessarily, the success of the Irish and the Socialists can bear no fruit unless the veto of the House of Lords is annulled or a new elective Upper Chamber takes the place of the present absurd and antiquated institution. We have not therefore erred in forecasting a democratic revolution in England as the inevitable result of the action of the House of Lords in rejecting the Budget, or, as they euphemistically put it, referring it to the country. Mr. Balfour has recognised that the verdict of the United Kingdom has been given in favour of the Budget and against Tariff Reform. The real issue is now, what it should have been throughout, the reform, abolition or replacement of the House of Lords.

When the elections were in progress, Mr. Asquith committed himself on the question of Home Rule, and, even if he wished to draw back from it, in face of his dependence on Labour and Irish votes he can no longer retreat. All that he has done is to qualify his promise of a final solution of the Irish question by stipulating that it shall contain provision for the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament as well as local autonomy of a liberal character for the Irish nation. This means not only the restriction of all Imperial questions to the province of the Parliament meeting in London, but the decision of questions between Ireland and England by the same body and possibly a power of veto in certain matters for the British Cabinet. It is impossible for an English statesman to go farther in the direction of Irish autonomy, and the Irish party will be well advised to accept even this qualified autonomy and make it an instrument for so developing the strength of the Irish nation as to make further concession in the future inevitable. The lifework of Parnell has not gone in vain; the two great questions he brought to a head by his masterly policy, the liberation of the Irish peasant from rack-renting landlords and the liberation of the Irish race from an unsympathetic domination, are both in process of solution within a quarter of a century of his untimely end. Liberty is a goddess who is exacting in her demands on her votaries, but, if they are faithful, she never disappoints them of their reward.

For India, the elections are as favourable as an English election can be. We do not regard the defeat of pro-Indian Liberal candidates as a calamity. There is always a limit to the efforts of members of Parliament, however sincere, who are bound by ties of party loyalty and discipline not to embarrass their official chiefs beyond a certain point. The Labour members and the Nationalists are bound by no such scruples and both of these parties have sympathy with India. The one problem before us is how to turn that sentiment of sympathy into an effective impetus towards action; for in European politics sentiment is not a sufficiently strong motive unless it is supported by some practical community of interests. The Irish Parliamentary party were able to bring Home Rule into the category of realisable ideals because they made it to the interest of the British parties to get rid of the Irish difficulty; if that ideal is realised now, it will be because the interests of the English Liberals and the Irish Nationalists have become one and, therefore, they must accommodate each other. It is forces that effect great political changes, not moral sentiments or vague generosities. Even a great idea can only become operative when it is manifested as a working force with a definite aim and a distinct pressure on its environments.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Moondac Upanishad of the Atharvaveda I.1

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 12th FEBRUARY 1910 { No. 32

Passing Thoughts

Vedantic Art

The progress a new tendency or a new movement is making can be measured by the amount of opposition it meets, and it is encouraging to note that the revival of Indian Art is exciting intellectual opponents to adverse criticism. Mr. Vincent Smith, a solid and well-equipped scholar and historian but not hitherto noted as an art-critic, recently lectured on Indian Art, ancient and modern. It is not surprising that he should find little to praise in the characteristic Vedantic Art of our country and seek to limit its excellence to a few masterpieces. Neither is it surprising that he should object to the revival of the national traditions as restoring Brahminic separateness from the traditions of the rest of the world. These are arguments that are as obvious as they are superficial. But it is strange to find him basing his opinion of the inferiority of the Vedantic style on its appeal not being universal. This merely means that the Vedantic motive and conventions are new to the European mind, and the average eye, enslaved to old associations, cannot immediately welcome what is new and ill-understood. Every new step forward in artistic tradition within Europe itself has been met by the same limited comprehension and has had to get the assent first of the trained and sensitive taste and then of the average mind before it could be said to be universally recognised. The real question is whether the Vedantic style has anything in it that is true, deep and universal, whether it has a motive, a power of interpretation, a success in making Truth reveal itself in form, such as will ensure its conquest of prejudices based purely on inability to receive or welcome new impressions. The answer to that crucial question cannot be doubtful. Vedantic Art reveals spirit, essential truth, the soul in the body, the lasting type or idea in the mutable form with a power and masterly revelation of which European art is incapable. It is therefore sure to conquer Europe as steadily as Indian thought and knowledge are conquering the hard and narrow materialism of the nineteenth century.

Asceticism and Enjoyment

Small things are often indicative of great and far-reaching tendencies. While glancing at the *Modern Review*, — always the best worth perusal of our Indian monthlies, — our attention was arrested by a slight illustrated article on Railways in India and America. The writer contrasts the squalor, indigence and discomfort of railway travelling in this Paradise of the efficient Anglo-Indian with the lavish comfort and opulence of railway furnishings and appointments in the United States. The contrast is indicative of the immense gulf between the teeming wealth of America and the miserable indigence of India, once the richest country in the world. America is the land above all lands where enjoyment, bhoga, is frankly recognised and accepted. India, many would say, is the land above all lands where bhoga is sternly refused. That is the common view; we are not inclined to think it the correct view. The asceticism of India is a phase, a characteristic of a civilisation dominated by an unfavourable environment and driven in upon itself. The classical period when India was full of life, activity, development, abounding vigour, defending herself successfully against the impact of the outer barbarian, was a period of frank and lavish enjoyment far more intellectual, artistic, perfect than anything Europe has ever been capable of, even at its best. In yet older literature we find the true spirit of India, a splendid capacity for bhoga and tyaga in their highest terms, the utter enjoyment of the householder, the utter renunciation of the sannyasin. To take the utmost joy of life, to be capable of the utmost renunciation of life, at one and the same time, in the same mind and body, to be master of both capacities and bound by neither, — this was the secret of India, the mighty discipline of which Janaka was the traditional exemplar. "Renounce all that thou mayest enjoy all," — this is India's characteristic message, — not Buddha's absolute renunciation, not the European's enslavement to his bodily, vital and intellectual desires and appetites. Tyaga within, bhoga without, — Ananda, the divine delight of the purified soul, embracing both.

Aliens in Ancient India

We extract elsewhere a brief article on the above subject from the December *Indian Review* for which we had no space in our former issues. The ancient Indian treatment of foreign residents forms a curious contrast to the spirit of exclusion which is growing upon modern nations. We have our own doubts about that little privilege of exemption from suits for debt which Mr. Hayavadana Rau mentions with appreciation; it would obviously place the alien merchant at a disadvantage when compared with the scrupulous honesty of the Indian traders, and we are not sure that it may not have been a subtle stroke of Chanakyalike diplomacy to coddle the resident foreign middleman out of existence while favouring the non-resident importer. The chief importance of the article is, however, the incidental light it throws on the organisation of life in ancient India. We are too apt to forget how noble, great and well-appointed a life it was. There were no railways, telegraphs or steamships, it is true, and democracy was beginning to go out of fashion in favour of a centralised bureaucratic monarchy. But in spite of these drawbacks, the ancient life of India was as splendid, as careful, as convenient, as humane, as enlightened in its organisation as that of any modern society or administration.

The Scholarship of Mr. Risley

We are not concerned with the political issues of Mr. Risley's great oratorical effort in connection with the Press Bill, for we have renounced politics; but Mr. Risley as a scholar falls within our province, and we can only hope our remarks on that subject will not expose us to the provision against bringing officials into contempt. Even at that risk we must take leave to say that we can only hope Mr. Risley's ethnological science is less remarkably muddled than his knowledge of Indian civilisation and literature. In his exhortation to Indian womanhood to stand fast to its ancient moorings he jumbles together Swayamvaras, the rape of the Sabines and Shacuntala in a miraculous fashion! At no Swayamvara that we are aware of, did the women come forward as peacemakers between the abducting hero and the disappointed suitors. Mr. Risley has been misled by pitchforking his early memories of Roman history into Indian epic and narrative. And need we say that there was neither Swayamvara, nor fighting nor peacemaking in the story of Shacuntala? This is the first time, moreover, that a startled Indian public has been pointed to Shacuntala as the ideal Hindu woman. Sita, Draupadi, Savitri, Damayanti, — these are familiar to us as ideals, but Shacuntala is Mr. Risley's own addition. To us she is a beautiful poetic creation, not an exemplar of feminine conduct. We observe that the *Bengalee* is full of admiration for Mr. Risley's poetic rapture over Shacuntala. We do not know whom we should congratulate more, the poet of the Press Bill or his admirer.

Anarchism

Are we not entitled, by the way, in the interests of the English language, to protest against the misapplication of the word Anarchists to the Indian Terrorists and Anarchism to their policy? Their methods are wild and lawless, their effort is to create anarchy; but Anarchism and Anarchist are terms which imply something very different, a thing as yet unknown either in practice or in theory to India. The Irish Fenians did the same things as the Indian Terrorists are now practising, but nobody ever called them Anarchists; to misapply this term is to bring anarchy into the modern use of language. It is doubtful whether any Indian who has not been to Europe, really knows what Anarchism is. Philosophically, it is the negation of the necessity of government; in practice, it is often the use of assassination to destroy all government irrespective of its nationality or nature. Democracy is as abhorrent to the Anarchist as Czarism, a national government as intolerable as the government of the foreigner. All government is to him an interference with the liberty of the individual, and he sets out to assassinate Czar or democratic President, constitutional king or imperial Caesar with a terrible impartiality, an insane logicality. For if we ask him how liberty of any kind except the liberty of the strong to prey on the weak can exist in the absence of government, he will probably answer that by right education right ideas and right feelings will be established and the spirit of brotherhood will prevent the abuse of liberty, and if anyone infringes this unwritten law, he must be destroyed as if he were a noxious wild beast. And by a parallel logic he seeks to destroy all the living symbols of a state of society which stands in the way of the coming of his millennium.

The Gita and Terrorism

Mr. Risley repeats a charge we have grown familiar with, that the Gita has been misused as a gospel of Terrorism. We cannot find any basis for this accusation except the bare fact that the teaching of the Gita was part of the education given by Upendranath Banerji in the Maniktola garden. There is no evidence to show that its tenets were used to justify a gospel of Terrorism. The only doctrine of the Gita the Terrorist can pervert to his use, is the dictum that the Kshatriya must slay as a part of his duty and he can do it without sin if he puts egoism away and acts selflessly without attachment, in and for God, as a sacrifice, as an offering of action to the Lord of action. If this teaching is in itself false, there is no moral basis for the hero, the soldier, the judge, the king, the legislature which recognises capital punishment. They must all be condemned as criminals and offenders against humanity. It is undoubtedly true that since the revival of religious thought in India the Gita has ceased to be what Mr. Risley calls it, a transcendental philosophy, and has been made a rule of life. It is undoubtedly true that selflessness, courage, a free and noble activity have been preached as the kernel of the ethics of the Gita. That teaching has in no country been condemned as ignoble, criminal or subversive of morality, nor is a philosophy of any value to any sensible being if it is only transcendental and cannot be lived. We strongly protest against the brand of suspicion that has been sought to be placed in many quarters on the teaching and possession of the Gita, — our chief national heritage, our hope for the future, our great force for the purification of the moral weaknesses that stain and hamper our people.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Three Purushas
A System of National Education I
Conversations of the Dead I
Anandamath XIII (continued)
Moondac Upanishad of the Atharvaveda I.2, II.1

KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW
of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I. } SATURDAY 19th FEBRUARY 1910 { No. 33

Passing Thoughts

The Bhagalpur Literary Conference

The prevalence of annual conferences in the semi-Europeanised life of Bengal is a curious phenomenon eloquent of the unreality of our present culture and the inefficiency of our modernised existence. Our old life was well, even minutely organised on an intelligent and consistent Oriental model. The modern life of Europe is well and largely organised on an intelligent and consistent Occidental model. It materialises certain main ideas of life and well-being, provides certain centres of life, equips them efficiently, serves the objects with which they are instituted. Our old life did the same. But this is precisely what our modern life does not do. Its institutions are apes of a foreign plan, unintelligent expressions of an idea which is not ours; they serve no civic, no national purpose. They are the spasmodic movements of an organism whose own life is arrested, but which feels itself compelled to move, however awkwardly and uselessly, if only to persuade itself that it is not dead. We have for instance a Literary Conference which meets once a year, if nothing occurs to prevent it. But such an annual celebration has no intelligent purpose except as the centre of an organised literary life. The pulse of our literary life is feeble and artificial. Its centres are conspicuous by their absence. In Europe the club, the literary paper, the coterie, the school of writing, the Academy are distinct entities in which the members of the organism have living relations, a common atmosphere, a common intellectual food. They have no Literary Conference because the literary life of Europe is a reality. We in India have neither these institutions nor any other centres of our own. The Conference is a convulsive attempt to relate ourselves to each other, which evinces a vague desire for united living, but no capacity to effect it. There was a time when a vigorous literary life seemed about to form itself in Bengal, and its relics are seen in the literary magazine and the Sahitya Parishad; but at present these serve only to record the extremely languid pulsation of our intellectual existence. The great intellectual stir, hopefulness and activity of the last century has disappeared. The individual lives to himself, vigorously or feebly, according to the varying robustness of his personality or intensity of his temperament. Coordination is still far from us.

Life and Institutions

Life creates institutions; institutions do not create, but express and preserve life. This is a truth we are too apt to forget. The Europeans and especially our gurus, the English, attach an exaggerated importance to machinery, because their own machinery has been so successful, their organisation so strong and triumphant. In the conceit of this success they imagine that their machinery is the only machinery and that the adoption of their organisation by foreign peoples is all that is needed for perfect social and political felicity. In Europe this blind attachment to machinery does not do fatal harm, because the life of a free nation has developed the existing institutions and modifies them by its own irresistible law of life and development. But to take over those institutions and think that they will magically develop European virtues, force and robustness, or the vivid and vigorous life of Europe, is as if a man were to steal another's coat and think to take over with it his character. Have not indeed many of us thought by masquerading in the amazing garb which nineteenth century Europe developed, to become so many brown Englishmen? This curious conjuring trick did not work; hatted, coated and pantalooned, we still kept the chaddar and the dhooty in our characters. The fond attempt to become great, enlightened and civilised by borrowing European institutions will be an equally disastrous failure.

Indian Conservatism

In India we were, if possible, even more attached to our machinery — all the more because we had ceased to understand the science of social mechanics which they embodied. We attached a superstitious importance to maintaining our society exactly in the mould of our Shastras while in reality that mould had been altered out of recognition centuries ago. We quoted Parashara and Manu while we followed Raghunandan and custom. This religious fiction was very much like the English superstition about the British constitution which is supposed to be the same thing it was in the days of Lord Somers, but is really a thing Lord Somers would have stared at aghast as an unrecognisable democratic horror. The cause is the same in both cases — a robust and tenacious society freely developing its machinery in response to its inner needs while cherishing and preserving them. Englishman and Hindu have been alike in their tenacious conservatism and their refusal to accept revolution, alike in their respect for law and the thing established, alike in their readiness to change rapidly and steadily if the innovator would only disguise from them the fact that they were changing. The Hindu advanced more slowly because he was an Asiatic in a period of contraction, the Englishman more quickly because he was a European in a period of expansion. If our social reformers had understood this Indian characteristic, they might have revolutionised our society with comparatively small friction, but the parade of revolution which they made hampered their cause. Even as it is, Indian society, in Bengal at least, is changing utterly while all the time loudly protesting that it has not changed and will not change. The mould in which Raghunandan cast society, is disintegrating as utterly as the mould of Parashara or Manu has disintegrated. What will replace it, is another matter.

Samaj and Shastra

Every Samaj must have its Shastra, written or unwritten. Where there is no Social Scripture, there is none the less a minute and rigid code of social laws binding men in their minutest actions. The etiquette of the European is no less binding than the minute scrupulosities of Manu or Raghunandan, and it is even more minute and scrupulous. It is a mistake to think that in Europe men can eat as they will, talk as they will, act as they will with impunity. They cannot — or at least they could not, though one hears of strange revolutions, and in the days of the suffragette everything is possible. Society everywhere is exacting, scrupulous, minute, pitiless in punishment of slight departures from its code, however absurd and unreasonable that code may be. But while in India the sanction is religious, in Europe it is social. In India a man dreaded spiritual impurity, in Europe he shrinks from the sneers and dislike of his class or his fellows. Social excommunication is always the ultimate penalty.

Revolution

But in Europe and India alike we seem to stand on the threshold of a vast revolution, political, social and religious. Whatever nation now is the first to solve the problems which are threatening to hammer Governments, creeds, societies into pieces all the world over, will lead the world in the age that is coming. It is our ambition that India should be that nation. But in order that she should be what we wish, it is necessary that she should be capable of unsparing revolution. She must have the courage of her past knowledge and the immensity of soul that will measure itself with her future. This is impossible to England, it is not impossible to India. She has in her something daemonic, volcanic, elemental — she can rise above conventions, she can break through formalities and prejudices. But she will not do so unless she is sure that she has God's command to do it, — unless the Avatar descends and leads. She will follow a Buddha or a Mohammad wherever he will lead her, because he is to her either God himself, or his servant, — because as Sri Ramakrishna would have put it, she saw the *chapras*. It was a little of that daemonic, volcanic, elemental thing in the heart of the Indian which Lord Curzon lashed into life in 1905. But the awakening was too narrow in its scope, too feebly supported with strength, too ill-informed in knowledge. Above all the Avatar had not descended. So the movement has drawn back to await a farther and truer impulse. Meanwhile let it inform its intellect and put more iron into its heart, awaiting a diviner manifestation.

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN ISSUES 33–36

The Strength of Stillness
Conversations of the Dead II
A System of National Education II–V
Baji Purbhou (poem)
The Principle of Evil
The Stress of the Hidden Spirit
Moondac Upanishad of the Atharvaveda II.2, III.1

Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta for Chandernagore in the middle of February 1910. His connection with the *Karmayogin* ceased with his sudden departure. The editorial matter in the issue of 19 February certainly was written by him. Most articles in subsequent issues were written by Sister Nivedita. Two pieces by Sri Aurobindo published in the *Karmayogin* after his departure are reproduced on the following pages.

Sj. Aurobindo Ghose

WE ARE greatly astonished to learn from the local Press that Sj. Aurobindo Ghose has disappeared from Calcutta and is now interviewing the Mahatmas in Tibet. We are ourselves unaware of this mysterious disappearance. As a matter of fact Sj. Aurobindo is in our midst and, if he is doing any astral business with Kuthumi or any of the other great Rishis, the fact is unknown to his other Koshas. Only as he requires perfect solitude and freedom from disturbance for his Sadhan for some time, his address is being kept a strict secret. This is the only foundation for the remarkable rumour which the vigorous imagination of a local contemporary has set floating. For similar reasons he is unable to engage in journalistic works, and *Dharma* has been entrusted to other hands.

Karmayogin no. 37, 19 March 1910

In Either Case

THERE are two movements of humanity, upward and downward, and both are irresistible. It may seem for a moment that the downward movement is arrested and an upward lift may for a while rejoice the hearts that are attached to a cause forsaken by God and Destiny. The majestic or impetuous rise of a religion, an idea, a nation may for a fleeting period be held back by main force and with a fierce and infinite labour the wheel may be driven back for the space of an inch or even two. But God cannot be deceived and God cannot be conquered by violence. Where He is the Charioteer, victory is certain and if He wheels back, it is only to leave ground which is no longer advantageous to Him and shift the conflict to terrain fixed beforehand for the victory. Often He forces His adversaries to drive Him from ground conquered and occupied in order that they may exhaust their strength on a position never meant to be permanently held and by their very triumph prepare a more decisive overthrow.

Minute minds fix themselves on details and say, "Here we have failed, there we have prevailed"; and if the record of defeats seems to be long and ill-balanced by doubtful successes, they grow discouraged and apprehend the ruin of their cause. So men deceive themselves as to the trend of events by not keeping their eyes open to the great stream of inevitable tendency which prevails over all backwashes and petty currents. And where defeat is predestined for a season, their want of faith leads to the very calamity which they apprehended. The eye of Faith is not one with the eye of Knowledge; — Faith divines in the large what Knowledge sees distinctly and clearly; but in the main thing Faith and Knowledge are one and the wisdom of the Lover is justified and supported by the wisdom of the Seer. Faith fights for God, while Knowledge is waiting for fulfilment, and so long as the latter is withheld, the former is necessary. For without indomitable Faith or inspired Wisdom no great cause can conquer.

We must look therefore to the great tendency of things and interpret in their light the minute events that are passing at the moment. Is the main tendency of things upward or downward? If it is downward, even then we must strive, for the man who abandons a cause which is right because it is denied success, is despicable, and he inflicts a wound on mankind in the present and the future. Great causes which are fought out boldly to the end are made sacred by courage and suffering and their resurrection and final victory is inevitable. Only those which are supported by cowards and meanly abandoned, are erased from the books of the future. The mediaeval movement of civic liberty in France and Italy failed and gave place to Teutonic despotism, but it revived with a hundredfold force in the French Revolution and it was the impetuous rush earthwards of the souls that had fought for it hundreds of years before that shattered to pieces the once victorious feudal system. But if, as we are assured, the movement is upward, then we may persist in absolute confidence, sure that reverses in details are only meant to prepare and point the true way to victory.

Persistence does not imply persistence in methods that have proved to be infructuous or from which, though temporarily fruitful, God has withdrawn His sanction. We must remember that we are a nation not yet trained in the vaster movements of modern politics. Not only our rank and file, but our captains and our strategists need the training of events, the wisdom of experience to make them perfect. Fire, impetuosity, self-sacrifice, intellectual vigour, subtlety, wealth of ideas, fertility of resource to meet unexpected happenings, these have been given to us in abundance. But the perfect experience of the veteran in great battles, the acute political intelligence which comes of long familiarity with the handling of high affairs and national destinies, these are yet in us immature and in a state of pupillage. But God Himself is our master and teacher, for He would give to His chosen nation a faultless training and a perfect capacity.

Only we must be ready to acknowledge our mistakes, to change our path, to learn. Then only shall we victoriously surmount all obstacles and move steadily, impetuously, but without stumbling or swerving, to our goal.

Moreover, we have weaknesses that are still rampant and uncorrected in our midst. It is our first duty to purge these out of our hearts with a merciless surgery. If the intellectual equipment is deficient, the spiritual equipment is also far from perfect. Our leaders and our followers both require a deeper sadhana, a more direct communion with the Divine Guru and Captain of our movement, an inward uplifting, a grander and more impetuous force behind thought and deed. It has been driven home to us by experience after experience, that not in the strength of a raw unmoralised European enthusiasm shall we conquer. Indians, it is the spirituality of India, the sadhana of India, *tapasya*, *jnanam*, *shakti* that must make us free and great. And these great things of the East are ill-rendered by their inferior English equivalents, discipline, philosophy, strength. *Tapasya* is more than discipline; it is the materialisation in ourselves by spiritual means of the divine energy creative, preservative and destructive. *Jnanam* is more than philosophy, it is the inspired and direct knowledge which comes of what our ancients called *drishti*, spiritual sight. *Shakti* is more than strength, it is the universal energy which moves the stars, made individual. It is the East that must conquer in India's uprising. It is the Yogin who must stand behind the political leader or manifest within him; Ramdas must be born in one body with Shivaji, Mazzini mingle with Cavour. The divorce of intellect and spirit, strength and purity may help a European revolution, but by a European strength we shall not conquer.

The movements of the last century failed because they were too purely intellectual and had not an enlightened heart behind them. Nationalism has striven to supply the deficiency; it has poured the inspirations of the heart into a swifter and more discerning intellectual activity. But Nationalism also has been defective; it has been Indian in sentiment and aspiration, European in practice and actuality. It has helped itself with the intellect, rejoicing in its own lightness, clearness, accuracy, shrewd insight, but it has not been sufficiently supported by inspired wisdom. It has attached itself to imaginations and idealisms, but has not learned to discern the deeper Truth and study the will of God. It has been driven by ardent and vehement emotions, but was defective in clear will-power and the pure energy that is greater and more impetuous than any passionate feeling. Either Nationalism will purify itself, learn a more sacred truth and command a diviner impulse, or it will have to abandon utterly its old body and get itself a new. The pressure of events seems to be pointing in the latter direction. But in either case defeat cannot be the end, victory must be the end.

In all the events of the last year and a half the voice of the divine Teacher can be heard crying to us, "Abandon that you may possess; do my will and know yourselves, purify yourselves, cease to follow your fancies." He that has ears, let him hear. Knowledge will not come without self-communion, without light from within, not even the knowledge of the practical steps that can lead to success. Every step that is taken in the light of a lower wisdom will fail until the truth is driven home.

The work that was begun at Dakshineshwar is far from finished, it is not even understood. That which Vivekananda received and strove to develop, has not yet materialised. The truth of the future that Bijoy Goswami hid within himself, has not yet been revealed utterly to his disciples. A less discreet revelation prepares, a more concrete force manifests, but where it comes, when it comes, none knoweth.

Karmayogin no. 38, 26 March 1910

OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN ISSUES 37–39

A System of National Education VI–VIII
Some Aphorisms of Bhartrihari
Chitrangada (poem)

APPENDIX

Karmayogin Writings in Other Volumes of the Complete Works

Non-political writings from the *Karmayogin* are published in other volumes of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. In the table below, the items included in each volume are listed in the order of their appearance in the *Karmayogin*. The original titles are given. Some of these writings were later revised by Sri Aurobindo.

VOLUME 1. EARLY CULTURAL WRITINGS

Two Pictures
Kalidasa's Seasons
Suprabhat: A Review
Indian Art and an Old Classic
The Brain of India
The Revival of Indian Art
The National Value of Art
The Men that Pass
Conversations of the Dead
A System of National Education

VOLUME 2. COLLECTED POEMS

Invitation
Who?
An Image
The Birth of Sin
Epiphany
Baji Purbhou
Chitrangada

VOLUME 5. TRANSLATIONS

Anandamath
Some Aphorisms of Bhartrihari

VOLUME 13. ESSAYS IN PHILOSOPHY AND YOGA

The Ideal of the Karmayogin
Karmayoga
Man — Slave or Free?
Yoga and Human Evolution
Yoga and Hypnotism
The Greatness of the Individual
The Process of Evolution
Stead and the Spirits
Stead and Maskelyne
Fate and Free-Will
The Three Purushas
The Strength of Stillness
The Principle of Evil
The Stress of the Hidden Spirit

VOLUME 17. ISHA UPANISHAD

The Isha Upanishad

VOLUME 18. KENA AND OTHER UPANISHADS

The Kena Upanishad
The Katha Upanishad
Moondac Upanishad of the Atharvaveda

Note on the Text

KARMAYOGIN: POLITICAL WRITINGS AND SPEECHES 1909 – 1910 consists of articles published in the weekly newspaper *Karmayogin* in 1909 and 1910 and speeches delivered during the same period. The articles are published issue by issue in the order of their appearance, the speeches by date of delivery.

Between May 1909 and February 1910 Sri Aurobindo was the most prominent leader of the Nationalist or Extremist Party in Bengal. He had spent the previous year in jail while the Alipore Bomb Case, in which he was the principal accused, was under trial. Acquitted and released on 6 May 1909, he found the party disorganised and without an English-language organ, as the *Bande Mataram*, a newspaper he edited from 1906 to 1908, had been suppressed a few months after his arrest. He resolved to continue to place the nationalist ideal before the country; but he now conceived this ideal in less purely political terms than before his arrest. During his imprisonment he had undergone a series of spiritual experiences that had changed his outlook on life. When he decided to launch the *Karmayogin*, he conceived of it as "A Weekly Review of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c."

The first issue of the *Karmayogin*, which came out on 19 June 1909, contained part of the "Uttarpara Speech", which had been delivered on 30 May, as well as two important articles setting forth the purpose of the journal and the task before the country. Each issue of the journal after the first contained the following:

(1) A column consisting of from three to twelve headlined paragraphs dealing with one or more topics. Between 26 June 1909 and 5 February 1910 the column was called "Facts and Opinions" (with some variants). On 12 February the heading was changed to "Passing Thoughts". Subjects dealt with included current events, British rule, party politics, "national religion", and the like.

(2) One or two leading articles dealing with the same subjects in more depth.

Many issues also contained material by Sri Aurobindo in one or more of the following categories:

(3) Articles on philosophy, yoga and related topics. There is no clear border between articles in this category and those on national religion.

(4) Single articles or instalments of longer works on cultural topics: education, art, literature, etc.

(5) Literary works, including translations from the Sanskrit and the Bengali, poems, etc.

(6) Transcriptions of speeches. These were reproduced from other newspapers, which employed shorthand writers to take down the proceedings of public meetings. Some of them were revised by Sri Aurobindo for publication in the *Karmayogin*.

In addition, the *Karmayogin* contained:

(7) Articles and speeches by other persons reproduced from the Indian and British press.

(8) Articles written for the *Karmayogin* by other persons.

(9) Two or three pages of ordinary news per issue.

(10) Advertisements.

After the first several issues, the *Karmayogin* contained few articles written for it by other persons. Almost all original matter appearing in the journal was written by Sri Aurobindo.

In *Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910* the editors have reproduced only Sri Aurobindo's columns (whatever the subject), his longer articles on current politics and national religion, and the speeches delivered during this period. Other writings by him published in the *Karmayogin* are listed at the end of each issue. A table at the end of the book gives the volume of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO in which these writings are published.

Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta in the middle of February 1910, probably before the nineteenth of the month. From that time the newspaper was edited by Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble), and most of its articles were written by her. Writings (essays, translations and poems) that Sri Aurobindo had left behind in Calcutta continued to be published in the journal until it was discontinued on 2 April 1910. Sri Aurobindo spent late February and March incognito in the French enclave of Chandernagore, located thirty kilometers north of Calcutta. From here he sent the amusing letter published in the *Karmayogin* of 19 March. His essay "In Either Case" was either left behind in Calcutta or sent from Chandernagore.

On 31 March Sri Aurobindo left Chandernagore for Calcutta and the next morning boarded a ship that took him to Pondicherry, the capital of French India. Here he remained for the rest of his life. His departure from Calcutta marked the end of his active involvement in politics.

Printing history. Most of the writings in the present volume made their first appearance in print since 1909–10 in *Karmayogin: Early Political Writings–II*, volume 2 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (1972). "An Open Letter to My Countrymen" was issued as a pamphlet shortly after its publication in the *Karmayogin* in 1909. Several articles from the journal were reproduced, sometimes after revision, in three booklets: *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* (1918, 1919, 1921, 1927, 1937, 1938, 1945, 1950 and subsequently), *Man — Slave or Free?* (1922, 1966), and *The Need in Nationalism and Other Essays* (1923). The *Uttarpara Speech* was published as a booklet in 1919, 1920, 1922, 1943, 1950 and subsequently. An edition of Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches*, including six speeches published in the present volume as well as the "Open Letter", was brought out as a booklet in 1922 and reissued four times between 1948 and 1974. A new edition, published in 1993, included five speeches not published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. Copies of them were discovered in British India government files and first published in *Karmayogin: Early Political Writings and Speeches–II* or in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research*.

The texts of all the writings and speeches published in the present volume have been checked against the original *Karmayogin*, the booklets *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* and *The Need in Nationalism*, and the original sources of the speeches.

Record of Yoga

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 10 and 11
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2001
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Record of Yoga

Publisher's Note

Record of Yoga is a diary of Sri Aurobindo's yoga between 1909 and 1927. He kept it fairly regularly from 1912 to 1920, and also wrote a few entries in 1909, 1911 and 1927. At different times he gave this diary different names. "Record of Yoga" was the most typical and the editors have used it as the general title of the work.

During the years he kept the diary, Sri Aurobindo also wrote other materials relating to his practice of yoga. These include descriptions of the seven "chatusthayas" (groups of four elements), which are the basis of the yoga of the *Record*. These materials are published in the Introduction, in Parts Four and Five, and in the Appendix.

Sri Aurobindo wrote the diary and related materials by hand in various notebooks and on loose sheets of paper. He used a special terminology which included words from Sanskrit and other languages, as well as abbreviations, symbols and markings, some of which are difficult to represent in a printed book. The special terminology is explained in a separate glossary. The editors have tried to reproduce the details of the manuscripts as exactly as possible. Editorial problems arising from damage to the manuscripts, illegibility, etc. are indicated by means of the system explained in the Guide to Editorial Notation on the next page.

The text of the diary entries and related materials, transcribed and arranged by the editors, appears here for the first time as a book.

Guide to Editorial Notation

Most of this book has been transcribed from unrevised manuscripts. The text published here is as far as possible a verbatim transcript. Problems encountered in reproducing the manuscripts are indicated by means of the notation shown below.

Notation	**Textual Problem**
[......]	Word(s) lost through damage to the manuscript.
[. . .]	Illegible word(s), one group of three spaced dots for each presumed word.
[ ][1]	Superfluous word(s), often duplicating what immediately precedes; a footnote shows the word(s) as they occur in the manuscript.
[?]	Word(s) omitted by the author that could not be supplied by the editors.
[word]	Word(s) omitted by the author or lost through damage to the manuscript that are required by grammar or sense, and that could be supplied by the editors.
[?word]	Doubtful reading.
[word][1]	Emendation required by grammar or sense; a footnote gives the manuscript reading.
w. [word]	Abbreviation expanded by the editors.
w[o]rd	Letter(s) supplied by the editors.
word[,]	Punctuation supplied by the editors.
[*note*]	Textual situation requiring brief explanation. Longer explanations are provided in editorial footnotes, which are printed in italics followed by "—*Ed.*" (Sri Aurobindo's footnotes are printed in roman type.)

CONTENTS

Introduction
Sapta Chatusthaya

Sapta Chatusthaya 3
Outline of the Seven Chatusthayas (Revised Order) 24
Incomplete Notes on the First Chatusthaya 25

Part One
Diary Entries 1909–1912

17–25 June 1909 33
28 January–17 February 1911 38
13 January–8 February 1912 47
1–25 July 1912 74
12 October–26 November 1912 104

Part Two
Record of Yoga 1912–1920

26 November–31 December 1912 117
1–31 January 1913 175
1–14 February 1913 228
1 and 12 April, 19 and 21 May 1913 240
4–30 June 1913 246
1–11 July 1913 274
5–21 September 1913 287
22–30 September 1913 302
11–23 November 1913 305
24 November–2 December 1913 324
1–12 December 1913 334
12–21 December 1913 342
22 December 1913–15 January 1914 353
12 March–14 April 1914 382
15 April–1 June 1914 444
10 June–29 September 1914 484

29–30 September–31 December 1914 631
1 January–27 February 1915 779
22 April–26 August 1915 830
19 February–20 March 1916 909
9 January–14 February 1917 919
15 February–31 March 1917 958
15 August–28 September 1917 994
14–28 February 1918 1021
3–27 March 1918 1033
20 April–20 May 1918 1038
21 May–1 July 1918 1083
24 June–14 July 1919 1095
15–26 July 1919 1125
27 July–13 August 1919 1147
14 August–24 September 1919 1169
1–29 February 1920 1184
1 March–10 April 1920 1200
7–26 June 1920 1225
17–19 October 1920 1239

Part Three
Record of Yoga 1926–1927

December 1926–6 January 1927 1245
7 January–1 February 1927 1249
7–22 April 1927 1265
24–31 October 1927 1271

Part Four
Materials Written by Sri Aurobindo Related Directly to *Record of Yoga*, c. 1910–1931

Undated Record and Record-related Notes, c. 1910–1914 1277
Sortileges of May and June 1912 1285
Undated Notes, c. November 1912 1287
Draft Programme of 3 December 1912 1289

Undated or Partly Dated Script, 1912–1913 1290
Sortilege of 15 March [1913] 1311
Accounts of 31 May–15 June 1913 1312
Record Notes, 13 and 15 September 1913 1317
Vedic Experience, 14 and 15 December 1913 1319
Undated Notes, c. 1914 1321
Notes on Images Seen in March 1914 1323
Undated Script, c. 1920 1336
Undated Notes, c. December 1926 1337
Undated Notes, c. January 1927 1344
Notes on Physical Transformation, c. January 1927 1345
Diagrams, c. January 1927 1349
Miscellaneous Notations, c. February–April 1927 1352
Record of Drishti, 30 July 1927 1353
Undated Script, c. 1927 1354
Undated Script, c. 1927–1928 1356
Notes on Prophetic Vision, 1929 1358
Diagrams, c. 1931 1359
Undated Script Jottings 1361

Part Five
Automatic Writing

"The Scribblings", c. 1907 1367
Yogic Sadhan 1371
Automatic Writings, c. 1914 (First Set) 1400
Automatic Writings, c. 1914 (Second Set) 1404
Automatic Writing, c. 1920 1410
Automatic Writings, c. 1920 1411

Appendixes
Material from Disciples' Notebooks

Miscellaneous Notes, c. 1914 1453
Sapta Chatusthaya—Scribal Version 1467

Note on the Texts 1485

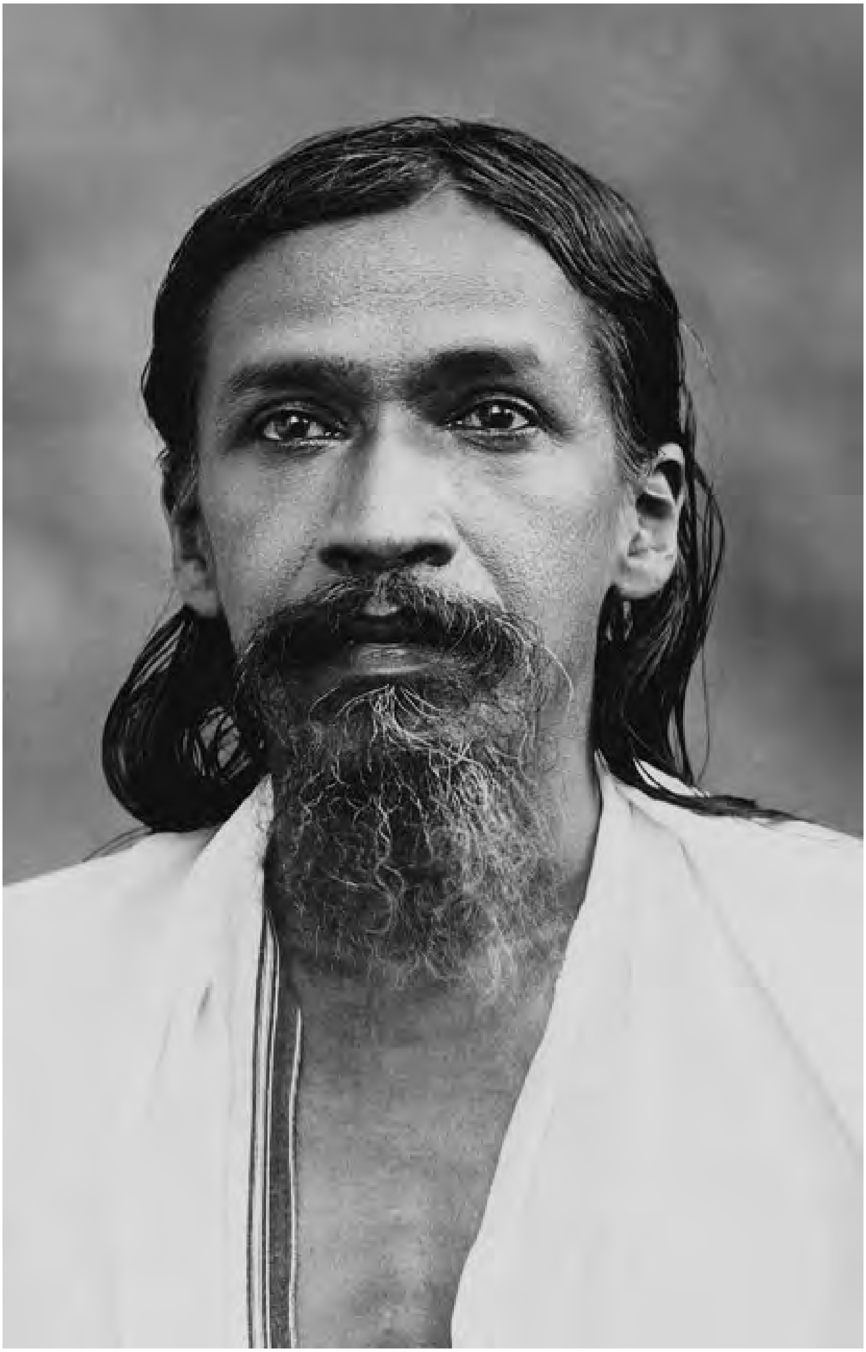

Sir Aurobindo in Pondicherry, c. 1915

Introduction

Sapta Chatusthaya

SAPTA CHATUSTHAYA

I Shanti-Chatusthaya.

समता शान्तिः सुखं हास्यमिति शान्तिचतुष्टयं।
Samata shantih sukham hasyam iti shantichatusthayam.

Samata

The basis of internal peace is samata, the capacity of receiving with a calm and equal mind all the attacks and appearances of outward things, whether pleasant or unpleasant, ill-fortune and good-fortune, pleasure and pain, honour and ill-repute, praise and blame, friendship and enmity, sinner and saint, or, physically, heat and cold etc. There are two forms of samata, passive and active, samata in reception of the things of the outward world and samata in reaction to them.

(1) *Passive*

Passive samata consists of three things—

तितिक्षोदासीनता नतिरिति समता।
titiksha, udasinata, natih iti samata

Titiksha

Titiksha is the bearing firmly of all contacts pleasant or unpleasant, not being overpowered by that which is painful, not being carried away by that which is pleasant. Calmly and firmly to receive both and hold and bear them as one who is stronger, greater, vaster than any attack of the world, is the attitude of titiksha.

Udasinata

Udasinata is indifference to the dwandwas or dualities; it means literally being seated above, superior to all physical and mental touches. The udasina, free from desire, either does not feel the touch of joy & grief, pleasure and pain, liking and disliking, or he feels them as touching his mind and body, but not himself, he being different from mind and body and seated above them.

Nati

Nati is the submission of the soul to the will of God; its acceptance of all touches as His touches, of all experience as His play with the soul of man. Nati may be with titiksha, feeling the sorrow but accepting it as God's will, or with udasinatá, rising superior to it and regarding joy and sorrow equally as God's working in these lower instruments, or with ananda, receiving everything as the play of Krishna and therefore in itself delightful. The last is the state of the complete Yogin, for by this continual joyous or anandamaya namaskara to God constantly practised we arrive eventually at the entire elimination of grief, pain etc, the entire freedom from the dwandwas, and find the Brahmananda in every smallest, most trivial, most apparently discordant detail of life & experience in this human body. We get rid entirely of fear and suffering; Anandam Brahmano vidván na bibheti kutaschana. We may have to begin with titiksha and udasinata but it is in this ananda that we must consummate the siddhi of samata. The Yogin receives victory and defeat, success and ill-success, pleasure and pain, honour and disgrace with an equal, a sama ananda,—first by buddhi-yoga, separating himself from his habitual mental & nervous reactions & insisting by vichara on the true nature of the experience itself and of his own soul which is secretly anandamaya,—full of the sama ananda in all things. He comes to change all the ordinary values of experience; amangala reveals itself to him as mangala, defeat & ill-success as the fulfilment of God's immediate purpose and a step towards ultimate victory, grief and pain as concealed and perverse forms of pleasure. A stage arrives even, when physical pain itself, the hardest thing for material man to bear, changes its nature in experience and becomes physical ananda; but this is only at the end when this human being, imprisoned in matter, subjected to mind, emerges from his subjection, conquers his mind and delivers himself utterly in his body, realising his true anandamaya self in every part of the adhára.

(2) *Active*

It is this universal or sama ananda in all experiences which constitutes active samata, and it has three parts or stages,—

रसः प्रीतिरानन्द इति सर्वानन्दः
Rasah, pritir anandah [iti sarvanandah]

Rasa is the appreciative perception of that guna, that áswada, taste and quality which the Ishwara of the lila perceives in each different object of experience (vishaya) and for the enjoyment of which He creates it in the lila. Pritih is the pleasure of the mind in all rasa, pleasant or unpleasant, sweet or bitter. Ananda is the divine bhoga superior to all mental pleasure with which God enjoys the rasa; in ananda the opposition of the dualities entirely ceases.

Shanti

Only when samata is accomplished, can shanti be perfect in the system. If there is the least disturbance or trouble in the mentality, we may be perfectly sure that there is a disturbance or defect in the samata. For the mind of man is complex and even when in the buddhi we have fixed ourselves entirely in udasinata or nati, there may be revolts, uneasinesses, repinings in other parts. The buddhi, the manas, the heart, the nerves (prana), the very bodily case must be subjected to the law of samata.

Shanti may be either a vast passive calm based on udásinata or a vast joyous calm based on nati. The former is apt to associate itself with a tendency to inaction and it is therefore in the latter that our Yoga must culminate.

Sukha

Sukham is the complete relief & release from duhkha, from vishada, which comes by the fulfilment of samata and shanti. The perfected Yogin has never in himself any touch of sorrow, any tendency of depression, cloud or internal repining and weariness, but is always full of a sattwic light and ease.

Hasya

Hasyam is the active side of sukham; it consists in an active internal state of gladness and cheerfulness which no adverse experience mental or physical can trouble. Its perfection is God's stamp and seal on the siddhi of the samata. It is in our internal being the image of the smile of Srikrishna playing, *bálavat*, as the eternal *balaka* and *kumara* in the garden of the world.

Shakti Chatusthaya

This may be called the siddhi of the temperament or nature in the lower system, in the internal triloka of mind, life & body, manas, prana, annam. To put it from a higher standpoint, it is the siddhi of the divine Shakti working in these three principles.

वीर्यं शक्तिश्चण्डीभावः श्रद्धेति शक्तिचतुष्टयं।
Virya, shakti, chandibhavah, sraddha, iti shaktichatusthayam.

Virya

The Chaturvarnya

By Virya is meant the fundamental swabhavashakti or the energy of the divine temperament expressing itself in the fourfold type of the cháturvarnya,—in Brahmanyam, brahmashakti, brahmatejas, in kshatram, kshatrashakti, kshatratejas, in Vaishyaswabhava, shakti and tejas, in Shudraswabhava, shakti and tejas. We must realise that the ancient Aryan Rishis meant by the cháturvarnya not a mere social division, but a recognition of God manifesting Himself in fundamental swabhava, which our bodily distinctions, our social orders are merely an attempt to organise in the symbols of human life, often a confused attempt, often a mere parody and distortion of the divine thing they try to express. Every man has in himself all the four dharmas, but one predominates, in one he is born and that strikes the note of his character and determines the type and cast of all his actions; the rest is subordinated to the dominant type and helps to give it its complement. No Brahmana is a complete Brahmana, unless he has the Kshatratejas in him, the Vaishyashakti and the Shudrashakti, but all these have to serve in him the fullness of his Brahmanyam. God manifests Himself as the four Prajapatis or Manus, the *chatwaro manavah* of the Gita, & each man is born in the ansha of one of the four; the first characterised by wisdom and largeness, the second by heroism and force, the third by dexterity and enjoyment, the fourth by work and service. The perfected man develops in himself all four capacities and contains at once the god of wisdom & largeness, the god of heroism and force, the god of skill and enjoyment, the god of work & service. Only, one stands dominant and leads and uses the others.

Brahmatejas

ज्ञानलिप्सा ज्ञानप्रकाशो ब्रह्मवर्चस्यं स्थैर्यमिति ब्रह्मतेजः।
Jnanalipsa jnanaprakasho brahmavarchasyam sthairyam iti brahmatejah.

Lipsa

I give only the dominant qualities of the type in these definitions. The purna Yogin does not reduce his nature to inaction but perfects it and uplifts in order to place it at the service of the Ishwara in His lila. He accepts the jnanalipsa and purifying it of desire turns it into a divine reaching out towards prakasha of knowledge; this divine desireless reaching out of Brahman in personality to Brahman in the vishaya or object, is the new sense which lipsa acquires in the language of the siddha.

Jnanaprakasha

Jnana includes both the Para and the Apara Vidya, the knowledge of Brahman in Himself and the knowledge of the world; but the Yogin, reversing the order of the worldly mind, seeks to know Brahman first and through Brahman the world. Scientific knowledge, worldly information & instruction are to him secondary objects, not as it is with the ordinary scholar & scientist, his primary aim. Nevertheless these too we must take into our scope and give room to God's full joy in the world. The methods of the Yogin are also different for he tends more and more to the use of direct vision and the faculties of the vijnana and less and less to intellectual means. The ordinary man studies the object from outside and infers its inner nature from the results of his external study. The Yogin seeks to get inside his object, know it from within & use external study only as a means of confirming his view of the outward action resulting from an already known inner nature.

Brahmavarchasya

Brahmavarchasya is the force of jnana working from within a man which tends to manifest the divine light, the divine power, the divine qualities in the human being.

Sthairya

Sthairyam is the capacity of fixity in jnana; the man who is sthira is able to hold the light and power that enters into him without stumbling or being dazzled and blinded by the shock and to receive & express the divine gunas in himself without being carried away by them & subjected to the blind, rushing stream of Prakriti. He has the dharanasamarthyam & does not, from incapacity of the adhára, lose or spill these things as they enter into him.

Kshatratejas

अभयं साहसं यशोलिप्सात्मश्लाघेति क्षत्रतेजः।
Abhayam, sahasam, yasholipsa, atmaslagha, iti kshatratejah.

Abhaya & Sahasa

Abhayam is the passive freedom from fear which with a bold calmness meets and receives every menace of danger and shock of misfortune. Sahasam is the active courage and daring which shrinks from no enterprise however difficult or perilous and cannot be dismayed or depressed either by the strength or the success of the opposing forces.

Yashas

By yashas is meant victory, success and power. Although the Kshatriya must be ready to face and accept defeat, disaster and suffering, yet his objective, the thing towards which he moves, is yashas. He enters the field to conquer, not to suffer. Suffering is only a means towards victory. Here again the reaching out, the lipsa must come to be free from desire & consist in the divine reaching out of God within to His self-fulfilment as the Kshatriya. Therefore the Kshatriya must manifest in himself the nature of the Brahmin, jnana & sthairyam, since without knowledge in some form desire cannot perish out of the system.

Atmaslagha

Atmaslághá in the unpurified Kshatriya is pride, self-confidence & the knowledge of his own might. Without these qualities the Kshatriya becomes deficient in force & fails to effect himself in type & action. But with purification it becomes no longer the slagha of the aham, but the slagha of the Atman, the divine Self within rejoicing in the shakti of God and its greatness and its power as it pours itself out in battle and action through the human adhara.

Vaishyashakti

दानं व्ययः कौशलं भोगलिप्सेति वैश्यशक्तिः।
Danam, vyayah, kaushalam, bhogalipsa, iti Vaishyashaktih.

Dana & pratidána are the especial dharma of the Vaishya; his nature is the nature of the lover who gives and seeks; he pours himself out on the world in order to get back what he has given increased a hundredfold. Vyaya is his capacity to spend freely for this purpose without any mean and self-defeating miserliness in the giving. Kaushalam is the dexterity & skill which is able so to arrange the means, the equipment, the action as to produce the greatest results possible & the best arranged results. Law, arrangement, suiting of means to ends, of expenditure to return, are the joy of the Vaishya. Bhoga is his object; possession & enjoyment, not merely of physical things, but all enjoyment, enjoyment of knowledge, of power, of self-giving, of service, comes within its scope. The Vaishya, purified and liberated, becomes the supreme giver and lover & enjoyer, Vishnu's ansha preserving & making the most of the world. He is the Vishnushakti, as the Brahmana is the Shivashakti & the Kshatriya the Rudrashakti.

Shudrashakti

कामः प्रेमः दास्यलिप्सात्मसमर्पणमिति शूद्रशक्तिः।
Kamah, premah, dasyalipsa atmasamarpanam iti Shudrashaktih.

The Shudra is God descending entirely into the lower world and its nature, giving himself up entirely for the working out of God's lila in Matter & in the material world. From this standpoint he is the greatest of the four shaktis, because his nature goes direct towards complete atmasamarpana; but the Shudra bound has cut himself off from knowledge, power and skill & lost himself in the tamoguna. He has to recover the Brahmana, Kshatriya & Vaishya in himself and give them up to the service of God, of man, of all beings. The principle of kamah or desire in him must change from the seeking after physical well-being, and self-indulgence to the joy of God manifest in matter. The principle of prema must find itself and fulfil itself in dasyalipsa and atmasamarpana, in the surrender of himself to God and to God in man and the selfless service of God and of God in man. The Shudra is the master-spirit of the Kali, as is the Vaishya of the Dwapara, the Kshatriya of the Treta and the Brahmana of the Satya.

Shakti

Shakti is that perfection of the different parts of the system which enables them to do their work freely and perfectly.

Dehashakti

महत्त्वबोधो बलश्लाघा लघुता धारणसामर्थ्यमिति देहशक्तिः ।
Mahattwabodho, balaslagha, laghuta, dharanasamarthyam iti dehashaktih.

The body is the pratistha in this material universe; for the working out of the divine lila on earth it is necessary that it should have especially the dharanasamarthyam or power of sustaining the full stream of force, of ananda, of widening knowledge & being which descends into mind and prana and the vital and bodily functions with the progress of the siddhi. If the body is unfit, the system is unable to hold these things perfectly. In extreme cases the physical brain is so disturbed by the shock from above as to lead to madness, but this is only in entirely unfit & impure adharas or when Kali descends angrily & violently avenging the attempt of the Asura to seize on her and force her to serve his foul & impure desires. Ordinarily, the incapacity of the body, the nervous system and the physical brain shows itself in slowness of progress, in slight derangements and ailments, in unsteady hold of the siddhi which comes & slips away, works & is spilled out. Dharanasamarthya comes by purification of the mind, prana and body; full siddhi depends upon full shuddhi.

Pranashakti

पूर्णता प्रसन्नता समता भोगसामर्थ्यमिति प्राणशक्तिः ।
Purnata, prasannata, samata, bhogasamarthyam, iti pranashaktih.

When in the physical sensations we are conscious of a full and steady vital force which is clear and glad and bright and undisturbed by any mental or physical shock, then there is the siddhi of the prana, the vital or nervous system. Then we become fit for whatever bhoga God imposes on the mind and body.

Chittashakti

स्निग्धता तेजःश्लाघा कल्यानश्रद्धा प्रेमसामर्थ्यमिति चित्तशक्तिः ।
Snigdhata, tejahslagha, kalyanasraddha, premasamarthyam, iti chittashaktih.

These are the signs of chittashuddhi & shakti of the chitta or emotional parts of the antahkarana. The wider and more universal the capacity for love, a love self-sufficient and undisturbed by want or craving or disappointment and the more fixed the faith in God and the joy in all things as mangalam, the greater becomes the divine force in the chitta.

Buddhishakti

विशुद्धता प्रकाशो विचित्रबोधः ज्ञानधारणसामर्थ्यमिति बुद्धिशक्तिः ।
Vishuddhata, prakasha, vichitrabodha, jnanadharanasamarthyam iti buddhishaktih.

Manas & Buddhi need not be considered separately as these elements of power apply both to the sixfold indriya and the thought-power in the mind. Their meaning is clear. For the full sense of vishuddhata, refer to the explanation of shuddhi in the seventh chatusthaya.

Chandibhava

Chandibhavah is the force of Kali manifest in the temperament.[1]

Sraddha

Sraddha is necessary in two things:—

शक्त्यां भगवति चेति श्रद्धा ।
Shaktyam Bhagawati cha, iti sraddha.

---

[1] The detailed description of this power is deferred.

There must be faith in the love & wisdom of God fulfilling Himself through us, fulfilling the Yogasiddhi, fulfilling our life work, working out all for our good even when it is apparently veiled in evil; and there must be faith in the power of the Shakti manifested by Him in this adhára to sustain, work out and fulfil the divine knowledge, power & joy in the Yoga and in the life. Without sraddha there is no shakti; imperfect sraddha means imperfect shakti. Imperfection may be either in the force of the faith or in its illumination. It is sufficient at first to have full force of the faith, for we cannot from the beginning of the Yoga have full illumination. Then, however we err & stumble, our force of faith will sustain us. When we cannot see, we shall know that God withholds the light, imposing on us error as a step towards knowledge, just as He imposes on us defeat as a step towards victory.

Vijnanachatusthaya

Siddhis

Siddhis, their justification, dangers and use.

The two first chatusthayas of the adhara have reference mainly to the central principle of man's existence, the antahkarana; but there is one superior faculty and one inferior instrument which have each its peculiar siddhi, the vijnana or supraintellectual faculty and the body. The siddhi of the vijnana and the siddhi of the body belong both of them to that range of experience and of divine fulfilment which are abnormal to the present state of humanity. These are called specially siddhis, because of their abnormal nature[,] rarity and difficulty; they are denied by the sceptic and discouraged by the saint. The sceptic disbelieves in them and holds them to be impostures, fables or hallucinations, as a clever animal might disbelieve in the reasoning powers of man. The saint discourages them because they seem to him to lead away from God; he shuns them just as he shuns the riches, power & attainments of this world, and for the same reason. We need not shun them and cannot shun them, because God is sought by us in His world-fulfilment as well as apart from the world and in the world these are the riches of His power and knowledge which we cannot avoid, once we dwell in Him perceiving and sharing His nature. Indeed, there is a stage reached by the Yogin, when, unless he avoids all action in the world, he can no more avoid the use of the siddhis of power and knowledge than an ordinary man can avoid eating and breathing unless he wishes to leave his body; for these things are the natural action of the vijnana, the plane of ideal consciousness, to which he is rising, just as mental activity and physical motion are the natural action of man's ordinary life. All the ancient Rishis used these powers, all great Avatars and Yogins and vibhutis from Christ to Ramakrishna have used them; nor is there any great man with the divine power at all manifest in him who does not use them continually in an imperfect form without knowing clearly what are these supreme faculties that he is employing. If nothing else, he uses the powers of intuition & inspiration, the power of ishita which brings him the opportunities he needs and the means which make these opportunities fruitful and the power of vyapti by which his thoughts go darting & flashing through the world & creating unexpected waves of tendency both around him and at a distance. We need no more avoid the use of these things than a poet should avoid the use of his poetical genius which is also a siddhi unattainable by ordinary men or an artist renounce the use of his pencil. At the same time there is a justification for the denial of the sceptic and the renunciation by the saint, & of this justification we must take note. The saint renounces because when these siddhis show themselves fragmentarily in a weak adhara dominated by egoism, the egoism becomes enormously enhanced, the ignorant sadhaka thinking that he is the possessor & creator of these abnormal powers and a very great man indeed, (just as we find an abnormal egoism very frequent in the small poet and the half artist, for those who have a really great power, know well enough that the power is not theirs but a gift from God & feel that the power of God is using them & not they the power); so the sadhaka, misled by ahankára goes running after these powers for their own sake and leaves following after God. The denial of the sceptic is justified by the credulity of ordinary men who regard these things as miracles & invent them where they do not exist, and by the weakness & egoism of the sadhakas themselves and of many who are not sadhakas; for if they catch even a glimpse of these things in themselves or others, they exaggerate, puff, distort & build around some petty & imperfect experiences all sorts of jargon, mysticism, charlatanism & bujruki of all kinds which are an offence & a stumbling block to the world. We must therefore keep in view very strictly certain fixed principles;—

1. That these powers are not miraculous, but powers of Nature, which manifest of themselves as soon as the vijnanapadma in us begins to open, & are no more a cause for bragging & vanity than the power of eating & breathing or anything else that is Nature's.

2. That they can manifest fully only when we leave ego and offer up our petty separate being in the vastness of God's being.

3 That when they manifest in the unpurified state, they are a dangerous ordeal to which God subjects us and we can only pass through it safely by keeping our minds clear of vanity, pride,

selfishness and by remembering continually that they are His gifts and not our acquirements.

4. That these powers are not to be pursued for their own sake, but developed or allowed to develop as part of the flower of divine perfection which is by God's grace blossoming out in us.

Subject to these cautions, we have not to reject these powers when they come but accept them, to be used in us by God for His own purposes and not by us for ours, to be poured out by vyapti on humanity and not kept for our own use & pride.

Vijnana—

ज्ञानं त्रिकालदृष्टिरष्टसिद्धिः समाधिरिति विज्ञानचतुष्टयम्।
Jnanam, trikaldrishtir, ashtasiddhih, samadhir, iti vijnanachatusthayam.

Jnana

By jnana is meant that power of direct and divine knowledge which works independently of the intellect & senses or uses them only as subordinate assistants. It perceives the things that are hidden from the ordinary man, helps us to cease seeing the world in the terms of our sense experiences and enables us to become sensitive to the great unseen forces, powers, impulses & tendencies which stand behind our material life and determine and govern it. To jnana the whole machinery of the world reveals itself in its hidden principles; the nature of Purusha, the workings of Prakriti, the principles of our being, God's purpose in His world-workings, the harmony of His gunas,—Brahman, Iswara, Atman, man & beast & object, idea & name and form, reality & relation, all these show themselves to the eye that God has illuminated with the sun of His knowledge, jnánadipena bhaswatá.

सत्यस्य दृष्टिः श्रुतिः स्मृतिः प्रतिबोध इति ज्ञानम्।
वृत्ते तु कर्मणि च सत्यधर्म एव ज्ञानम्।

Jnana is of three kinds, jnana of thought, jnana of experience, (realisation or pratibodha) and jnana of action or satyadharma.

Jnana of thought consists of three powers,

1. Drishti, revelation or swayamprakasha
2. Sruti, inspiration.
3. Smriti, consisting of
    1 Intuition
    2 Viveka.

Drishti

Drishti is the faculty by which the ancient Rishis saw the truth of Veda, the direct vision of the truth without the need of observation of the object, reasoning, evidence, imagination, memory or any other of the faculties of the intellect. It is as when a man sees an object and knows what it is, even if, sometimes, he cannot put a name on it; it is pratyakshadarsana of the satyam.

Sruti

Sruti is the faculty by which we perceive as in a flash the truth hidden in a form of thought or in an object presented to our knowledge or in the word by which the thing is revealed. It is that faculty by which the meaning of the mantra dawns on the mind or on the being of the sadhaka, although when he first heard it, he did not know its meaning nor was it explained to him. It is as when a man hears the name of a thing and by the name itself, without seeing the thing, comes to know its nature. A special power of sruti is the revelation of truth through the right & perfect vak in the thought.

Smriti

Smriti is the faculty by which true knowledge hidden in the mind reveals itself to the judgment and is recognised at once as the truth. It is as when a man has forgotten something he knew to be the fact, but remembers it the moment it is mentioned to him.

Intuition & viveka

Intuition is the power which distinguishes the truth and suggests at once the right reasons for its being the truth; viveka the power which makes at once the necessary limitations and distinctions & prevents intellectual error from creeping in or an imperfect truth from being taken for the whole satyam.

The importance of viveka for the purposes of man's progress in his present stage, is supreme. At present in the greatest men the powers of the vijnana act not in their own power, place & nature, but in the intellect; as helpers of the intellect & occasional guides. Directly we get an intuition or revelation, the intellect, memory, imagination, logical faculty seize hold of it & begin to disguise it in a garb of mingled truth & error, bringing down truth to the level of the nature, sanskaras and preferences of a man instead of purifying & elevating his nature & judgments to the level of the truth. Without viveka, these powers are as dangerous to man as they are helpful. The light they give is brighter than the light of the intellect, but the shadow which the intellect creates around them is often murkier than the mist of ignorance which surrounds ordinary intellectual knowledge. Thus men who use these powers ignorantly, often stumble much more than those who walk by the clear though limited light of the intellect. When these powers begin to work in us, we must be dhira and sthira and not be led away by our enthusiasm; we must give time for the viveka to seize on our thoughts & intuitions, arrange them, separate their intellectual from their vijnanamaya elements, correct their false extensions, false limitations, misapplications & assign them their right application, right extension, right limitation,—make, in the image of the Upanishads, the vyúha or just marshalling of the rays of the sun of knowledge, suryasya rashmayah. Knowledge is not for the hasty mind but only for the dhira, who can sit long accumulating & arranging his store and does not rush away with fragments like a crow darting off with the first morsel of food on which it can seize.

Realisation

Realisation or jnana of experience is the perception of things through bhava,—bhava of being or Sat, realising the truths of being, —bhava of Chit or knowledge, realising the truths of thought, bhava of tapas or force, realising the truths of force & action, bhava of love or ananda realising the truths of emotion & sensation and bliss.

Satyadharma

Satyadharma is the carrying out of the jnana in bhava and action.

Trikaladrishti

Trikaldrishti is a special faculty of jnana by which that general power is applied to the actuality of things, their details of event, tendency etc in the past, present & future of the world as it exists, has existed & will exist in Time. It deals with particular fact, just as jnana deals with general truth. Trikaldrishti works in several ways;

1. Directly, without a means or excuse, by drishti, sruti & smriti.

2. By dwelling in concentration on the object,—that process which Patanjali calls sanyama on the object,—until the mind in observer & observed becoming one, we know what the object contains, whether past, present or future, just as we can know the contents of our own being.

3. By using as a means some external sign or some indicative science, such as samudrik, astrology, augury etc. These sciences are worth little, if not used by the higher vijnanamaya faculties; for the signs they use, are mostly indications of tendencies and to distinguish perfectly tendencies of possibility from actual eventualities cannot be done by following written shastra or by rule of thumb.

4. By the two powers of vyapti & prakamya which constitute what the Europeans call telepathy.

Ashtasiddhi

व्याप्तिः प्राकाम्यमैश्वर्यमीशिता वशिता महिमा लघिमाणिमेत्यष्टसिद्धिः।
Vyaptih, prakamyam, aishwaryam, ishita, vashita, mahima, laghima, anima, iti ashtasiddhih.

Ashtasiddhi is of three orders,

1. Two siddhis of knowledge,—vyapti and prakamya
2 Three siddhis of power,—aishwarya, ishita, vashita.
3 Three siddhis of the body,—mahima, laghima, anima.

Prakamya

By prakamya is meant the full prakasha of the senses and the manas, by which they surpass the ordinary limits of the body and become aware by sight[,] hearing, touch or, more usually and more easily, by mental sensation and awareness

1. Of objects, scenes & events at a distance or hidden from the normal operation of the mind & senses.

2. Of objects, scenes & events belonging to other planes of existence.

3 Of objects, etc belonging to the past or future the images of which are contained in the object of our study.

4. Of the present states of mind, feeling, sensation etc of others or of their particular thoughts, feelings & sensations; or of such states or particular thoughts etc which they have had in the past & of which the impression remains in the chitta record or which they will have in the future & of which the image is already prepared in the prescient parts of the chitta.

Vyapti

To each form of prakamya there is a corresponding form of vyapti, ie reception or communication. By prakamya, for instance, we can have the perception of another's feelings; by vyapti these feelings are felt striking on our own consciousness or ours are thrown into another. Prakamya is the sight of one looking from a distance & seeing an object; vyapti is the sensation of that object coming towards us or into contact with us. It is possible by vyapti to communicate anything we have in our systems,—thought, feeling, power, etc,—to another and if he is able to seize and hold it, he can make it his own & use it. This can be done either by a sort of physical throwing of the thing in us into the other or by a will upon the Swabhava compelling it to effect the transfer. The teacher & the guru habitually use this power of vyapti which is far more effective than speech or writing but all men use or suffer it unconsciously. For every thought, feeling, sensation or other movement of consciousness in us creates a wave or current which carries it out into the world-consciousness around and there it enters into any adhara which is able and allowed to receive it. Half at least of our habitual thoughts and feelings are such unconscious borrowings.

Aishwarya

Aishwarya is effectiveness of the Will acting on object or event without the aid of physical means. It may work

1, by pressure or tapas of the chaitanya straight on the object that has to be affected

2, by pressure or tapas of chaitanya on the Prakriti (either the general world-Prakriti or Prakriti in the object itself) to bring about directly the result intended

3, by pressure on the Prakriti to bring about circumstances which will compel indirectly the result intended.

4, without pressure by mere thought that is will, the ajna or ajnanam of the Ishwara which Prakriti automatically obeys.

The last is the highest power of Aishwarya and its supreme siddhi; for here Chit & Tapas become one as in the Will of God Himself.

Ishita

Ishita is the same effectiveness of the will acting not as a command or through the thought, by ajnanam, but through the heart or temperament (chitta) in a perception of need or pure lipsa. Whatever the lipsa reaches out towards or even needs without conscious knowledge of the need, comes of itself to the man who possesses Ishita. Ishita also expresses itself either by pressure on the object or Prakriti or by simple perception automatically effective of its aim. The last is again the highest power of Ishita and its supreme siddhi.

Vashita

Vashita is the control of the object in its nature so that it is submissive to the spoken word, receptive of the thought conveyed or sensitive & effective of the action suggested. Vashita acts automatically through established control of one nature by another, or by the pouring of natural force into the word, thought or suggestion of action so as to produce an effect on the nature of others. The latter is the lower & ordinary siddhi, the former the supreme or entirely divine siddhi. Vyapti is one of the chief agents of Vashita.

The Conditions of Power

It should be noted that none of the siddhis of power can act perfectly or freely so long as there is impurity of the chitta, egoism in the thought and temperament or domination of desire in the use of the siddhi. Under such circumstances there may be occasional use & irregular effectivity of the power, — a thing not worth having in itself, but useful only in training the mind to give up its own sanskaras & habitual processes & accept the activity of the vijnanamayi shakti; or there may be a regular & effective use of limited powers by fixed Tantric processes (kriyas). The latter should be shunned by the sadhakas of the purna Yoga.

The Conditions of Jnana

It should also be noted that perfect jnana and trikaldrishti are only possible by complete shuddhi of the antahkarana, especially the exclusion of desire and vishuddhi of the buddhi, absolute passivity of the manas and, finally, perfected action of the powers of the vijnana. An imperfect & irregular action of these higher powers is always possible & is possessed obscurely by many who are not Yogins or sadhakas.

Physical Siddhis

The physical powers, Mahima[,] Laghima, Anima, need not be considered at present, as, although belonging to the dharma of the vijnana, they act in the body and are strictly part of the physical siddhi.

Samadhi

Samadhi is the power by dwelling fixedly of the chaitanya on its object to extend the range of knowledge & consciousness through all the three states of waking, sleep & dream, to the realisation of those tattwas of the Brahman to which the ordinary waking consciousness is blind and to the experience, either in reflected images or in the things themselves, of other worlds and planes of consciousness than the material earth or this waking physical consciousness. The consideration of Samadhi may also be postponed for the present.

Sharira chatusthaya.

Sharirasiddhi

The sharirachatusthaya, likewise, need not be at present explained. Its four constituents are named below

आरोग्यमुत्थापना सौन्दर्यं विविधानन्द इति शरीरचतुष्टयम्।
Arogyam, utthapana, saundaryam, vividhananda iti sharirachatushtayam.

The three general chatushtayas

These are the four chatusthayas of the Adhara-siddhi. In addition there are three general chatushtayas—

5. Karmachatusthaya or Lilachatusthaya

कृष्णः काली कामः कर्मेति कर्मचतुष्टयं।
Krishnah, Kali, kamah, karma iti karmachatushtayam.

6. Brahmachatushtaya

सर्वमनन्तं ज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्मेति ब्रह्मचतुष्टयम्।
Sarvam Anantam Jnanam Anandam Brahma, iti Brahmachatushtayam.

7. Yoga chatushtaya or Sansiddhi chatushtaya.

शुद्धिर्मुक्तिर्भुक्तिः सिद्धिरिति योगचतुष्टयम्।
Shuddhir, muktir, bhuktih, siddhir, iti yogachatushtayam.

The last or seventh is at once the means, the sum and the completion of all the rest. Its explanation is essential to the full understanding of the others and will be separately treated.

OUTLINE OF THE SEVEN CHATUSTHAYAS

(REVISED ORDER)

Yoganga—
    Sapta Chatusthaya—

1. Siddhichatusthaya—
    Shuddhi, Mukti, Bhukti, Siddhi.
2. Brahma Chatusthaya—
    Sarvam Anantam Jnanam Anandam Brahma.
3. Karma Chatusthaya—
    Krishna, Kali, Karma, Kama
4. Shanti Chatusthaya
    Samata, Shanti, Sukha, Hasya (Atmaprasada)
5. Shakti Chatusthaya
    Virya, Shakti, Chandibhava, Sraddha.
6. Vijnana Chatusthaya—
    Jnana, Trikaladrishti, Ashtasiddhi, Samadhi
7. Sharira Chatusthaya—
    Arogya, Utthapana, Saundarya, Vividhananda

INCOMPLETE NOTES ON THE FIRST CHATUSTHAYA

Shanti Chatusthaya

1. Samata is either negative or positive

Negative	Titiksha, Udasinata, Nati.
Positive	Sama rasa, Sama bhoga, Sama Ananda.

Negative Samata

Titiksha. The power to bear steadily & calmly all *sparshas* without any reaction in the centre of the being, whether they are pleasant or painful. The mind or body may desire or suffer, but the observing Purusha remains unattracted and unshaken, observing only as Sakshi and as Ishwara holding the system firmly together & calmly willing the passing of the dwandwas. It does not crave for or demand the pleasure. It does not reject the pain. Even when pleasure or pain are excessive, it wills that the mind and body should not shrink from or repel them, but bear firmly. It deals in the same way with all dwandwas, hunger & thirst, heat & cold, health & disease, failure & success, honour and obloquy etc. It neither welcomes & rejoices, nor grieves & avoids. It gets rid of all jugupsa, fear, shrinking, recoil, sorrow, depression etc, ie all the means by which Nature (bhutaprakriti) warns us [against][1] & tries to protect from all that is hostile. It does not encourage them, nor does it necessarily interfere with such means as may be necessary to get rid of the adverse touches; nor does it reject physically, except as a temporary discipline, the pleasant touches; but inwardly it presents an equal front of endurance to all.

The result is udasinata or indifference.

---

[1] *MS* again

Udasinata—

Indifference may be of four kinds, tamasic, rajasic, sattwic & trigunatita. Tamasic indifference is associated with vairagya, disgust, disappointment, weariness of effort, unwillingness to make an effort. It is not really true udasinata, for it tries to avoid all as equally a cause of suffering, directly or indirectly; it is a generalisation of jugupsa and does not come from titiksha, but from its opposite. It is sometimes called rajasic, because although its nature is tamasic, its cause is rajasic, the disappointment of desire. Tamasic udasinata is useful to the Vairagi who wishes to get rid of the world by any means, but to the striver after perfection it is a stumbling-block. Its only use is to discourage the persistent rajoguna, and when it comes, it has to be admitted for that purpose. But it does almost as much harm as good, & so long as we cannot do without it, our progress is likely to be slow, a series of oscillations between rajasic eagerness and tamasic weariness born of disappointment, with tamasic udasinata as an occasional release from the wear & tear of these opposites. To rest finally in tamasic udasinata is fatal to perfection.

Rajasic udasinata is indifference enforced by effort, sustained by resolution, habitualised by long self-discipline. It is the indifference of the moral hero, of the stoic. This is more helpful than the tamasic, but if persisted in, has a hardening and narrowing effect on the soul which diminishes in flexibility & in capacity for delight. Rajasic udasinata if used, must always be surmounted. It is an instrument which may easily become an obstacle.

Sattwic udasinata is indifference born of knowledge. It comes with the perception of the world either as an illusion or a play and of all things as being equal in the Brahman. It is calm, luminous, free from effort, tolerant of all things, smilingly indifferent to all happenings, careful to reject rajasic & tamasic reactions. Sattwic indifference is a great help and a stage which is almost unavoidable. But it has its limitations. It stands apart from the world and is a preparation for moksha, for the withdrawal from the Lila. It is unsuitable as a final resting place for the sadhak of perfection.

Trigunatita udasinata is that which takes all things alike, making no difference between sattwic, rajasic & tamasic reactions, but holding in soul aloof from all these movements & all the dwandwas, observing them first with an absolute impartiality & by constant refusal to participate in them getting rid of them out of the mind & the prana. It neither rejoices nor grieves at their coming & going, na sochati, na nandate. It regards all these things as the workings of Prakriti & their causes as the will of the Ishwara. This udasinata is the preparation for the third element of [samata],[2] nati.

Nati.

Nati is an equal submission to the will of the Ishwara. It regards all things as that will expressing itself and refuses to grieve or revolt inwardly at anything because it is hurt in its egoistic desires, opinions, preferences etc. Its whole attitude is based on the perception of God in all things & happenings. It accepts pleasure & pain, health & disease, bad fortune & good fortune, honour & disgrace, praise & blame, action & inaction, failure & victory; but attaches itself to none of them. Nati is not a tamasic acquiescence in inaction, a subjection to failure, an indifference to life. That is tamasic udasinata. Nati is active; it accepts life & effort as part of God's will & His being, but it is prepared equally for all results. It has no longing for fruits, but works for the results pointed out to it as kartavya karma without rajasic straining or tamasic indifference.

Shanti

Shanti

The fullness of negative samata is measured by the firm fixity of Shanti in the whole being. If there is an absolute calm or serenity in the heart & prana, no reactions of trouble, disturbance, yearning, grief, depression etc, then we may be sure that negative samata is complete. If there is any such disturbance, then it is a sign that there is some imperfection of titiksha, of udasinata or of nati. This imperfection may not be in the centre of the being, but only in its outer parts. There will then be a fixed calm in the centre, but some disturbance on the surface. These superficial disturbances may even be violent & veil the inner established shanti, but it always reemerges. Afterwards the disturbance becomes more & more thin in its density & feeble in its force. It ends in an occasional depression of the force & courage & faith & joy in the soul, negative & often without apparent cause, & then disappears entirely.

---

[2] *MS* udasinatá

Negative samata & shanti are the necessary preparation of positive samata and ananda. Without this foundation ananda is always liable to be uncertain in its duration & imperfect in its even fullness. Therefore all these things—endurance of all contacts, indifference to all dualities, submission to all movements of the divine Will, perfect inner peace and tranquillity are the first step in perfection.

Negative samata & shanti are the result of shuddhi & the condition of mukti—

=

Positive Samata.

On the basis of Nati we proceed to the positive Samata, ie to say, to Sama Ananda. Its foundation is the Atmajnana or Brahmajnana by which we perceive the whole universe as a perception of one Being that manifests itself in multitudinous forms and activities. This One is therefore the one Self of all beings, my Self as well as the self of all others, friend and enemy, saint and sinner, man, bird and beast, tree & stone,—and all things in the manifestation are the forms and activities of my Self. Moreover, this Self is again the Lord of the Cosmos, the Purushottama, the divine Vishnu, Shiva or Krishna, of whom every individual soul is a conscious centre, aware of its unity with Him in being and also of its difference in the universe; and the manifestation is a Lila or play of the Lord who is in His being all delight; the play, too, therefore, is not only a play of Existence and Consciousness, but also a play of delight. It is the dualities born of ego-sense in the heart, mind & body which creates grief and pain. We have to unite ourselves with this Self, Lord & One & with all things in Him, viewing them as our self, in order to get rid of pain & enjoy the divine Ananda. But, first, it is necessary that we should accept without revolt the Lila equally in all its details & happenings. This comes by Nati. Titiksha is the attitude of equal acceptance by the sense-mind & body, udasinata the attitude of equal acceptance by mind & heart, Nati the attitude of equal acceptance by the soul. The soul accepts all things as the play of the all-Blissful Lord, the Will of the supreme self and Ishwara. It accepts action also & the results of action, without being attached to them. But, though not attached, it must learn to take delight in all things even as the Lord takes delight in them.

The first delight is that of the Sakshi or Witness, who looking upon the whole action of the universe & even his own action like one who is watching a play or a drama, takes the rasa or taste of the whole thing by the intellect, the sense and the aesthetic faculties. All things, all events are the manifestation of certain gunas or qualities in universal Being; God is Ananta guna, Infinite Qualities. The rose is a manifestation of form, colour, odour & other less obvious qualities, each stamped with a particular form of the rasa, divine Delight.

Part One

Diary Entries 1909–1912

17–25 JUNE 1909

17 Thursday.
Started (Amavasya Tryasparsha) for Barisal. The Amavasya is Kali's day, so favourable to me. The Tryasparsha is the moment destined for a great advance in my Yoga. The ahankara was finally removed. Only faint remnants of it left. J. entered, but did not make herself manifest till next day.

In train to Khulna. Small Sun in centre of brilliant Swarupa

18 Friday.
On steamer to Barisal.
Tratak of Sun. Blue sukshma image of sun elliptical in shape. Pattern of bloodred curves on yellowish background. Violet sword. Bloodred sword. Voice rises from chitta into brain. Kamananda developed by self, also , also for a moment by mere thought, in head only. The others pervade body, last some seconds. Vaidyuta manava bust seen also Chandra (small) filled with vidyut. Body held & moved, the hold always there, not always noticed. Vidyunmandal. Sparks of lightning (vijas). Background red, bloodred or brownish red. Sun dark with broad golden rim. Golden-red scimitar (sattwa-rajas). Realisation of Vasudeva. Vijas of agni, jala, prithivi outside continually seen. Chaya Purusha, bust. Swarupa in red. U.R. exercise with kamananda. Long rope of prithivi, brilliant & coiling, in clouds of vayu. Brilliant rose. Kali blue black bust crowned with sun = Shakti with awakened buddhi (not *ugra*, simply outline). Savikalpa, Savichara & Avichara Samadhi, brief but very deep in spite of loud noise at ear. Exposure to sharp cold wind, no feeling of cold; to strong sun, only feeling of pleasant warmth. Mass of thick pale green. Sarup dhyan, antardarshi. Face of Shah Alum. Face of Kumudini. Kamananda from feeling (being startled) slight but pervasive. Basket of grapes on cotton, lid off

to one side. Swapnavastha (imagination playing in Samadhi as in dream[)]. Glass jug with napkin on top. K. Nil Surya with blue black rays. Namadrishta, 1. Tejonama. 2. bill with rose red letters. 3 ordinary black letter. Writing not coherent or noteworthy—all print. Open doors and wall behind. Kitten at Namasi's. Newspaper, probably weekly B.M. [Bande Mataram] Written account. Handwriting some words & forms deciphered. Piece of needlework. Handwriting, deciphered most, not remembered. Golden background in Samadhi. Talked to UW in Samadhi. To someone else, politics. Pang in foot immediately reproduced in face—proves nervous current. Namadrishti. Typewritten—deciphered—coherent, but not remembered. Tennis-racket, dark and soiled. Given food in Samadhi, ruti & chutney. Face of K. Bh. Dark clouded sky with sun & strong light in clouds. Deep dark thick rose-red. Woods with white low railing outside, wooden. Sampatrai's face in outline. Namasi (pale chayamay) with cup in hand. Long wooden bench. Electric shock moving leg. Sukshma image of network of chair in front of me. Two unknown or unremembered faces.. Rough adhardrishti. Boy wearing a turban stooping over something he stirs with his finger—indistinct. Aswini Dutt down to waist, features obscured. Bowl full of vegetables, moving. Most of motions involuntary at bath. Partial utthapana; raised violently up & floating on surface of water with palms for support. Saw wind very clearly against light clouds under thick dark ones and a pillar of cloudy moisture. One strong current blew very violently from right with whirls, eddies & upward and downward pourings; another very slight seemed to come from left & behind. At this time there was a strong wind and rain threatening.

Afternoon. All liberty of bodily movement being steadily taken away. Second voice in brain. Sri K.'s voice once in heart. "I come to slay." First voice sometimes rises from heart still to take its place in brain. First has personality, second none as yet.

Night. Bhava of Avesh in steamer shaking body; also in Kalimandir and on way to lodging. Swarupa bright star on dark background. Thin Nil triangle with very sharp apex like old Hindu pinnacle, a bright golden line in the middle. River scenes—Thickly wooded bank. Bright stream with islands. Padma wide flowing covered with boats. A terraced green bank with steps in middle. Namadrishti of many kinds. Short sentences deciphered & remembered. Felt the Presence in the Kalimandir Image today. J's prophecy about Barisal.

19 Saturday.
Feet of a woman, long & slender. Deep green antah. Tank with man on haunches in front of big shrub. UR. in afternoon. Speech from chitta. Voice insisting on images of kama—depicting future action. All relics of fear, disgust, dislike, hesitation rapidly disappearing. Doubt checked, suspension of judgment. Movement of limbs felt always to be alien except in ordinary motions of walking when there is knowledge without upalabdhi.

20 Sunday.
Unknown face. Bright yellow outside. Road on bank of stream. Adhar Drishti in trees imperfect but beyond rough stage. The grotesque still predominates. UR. Adhar Drishti much finer on wall.

21 Monday.
Warder Masson in boat with another. Little boy's face with beautiful spiritual expression. Girl's face, eyes winking violently. Adhardrishti on wall (figure good but not in detail). Training of heart in progress, of mind resumed. Part of small steamer. UR at night. B. *trained*, silent. J begins. Meghagarjan active since Amavasya. Prophecies of future, but with appeal to reason. Suggestions for practical work begin.

22 Tuesday.
Adhardrishti. (Tank with rocks & trees on one side reflected in water, also clouds. Small lake. Figures less rough but details still unexpressed.[)] Antardrishti of stool with circular patch in middle.

23 Wednesday.
Kamananda Barisal boy—Water in bowl. Kettle boiling against large fire. Very big & brilliant fire in motion.
Touch on body causes more & more ananda.

24 Thursday.
Tejorekha of woman's figure n. Girl's arm with bracelet. Speech of J continues consecutively in swapnavastha. Prophecies definite for six months. Prison grating. Crowd with one face close & vivid. Sukshma touches on feet frequent first in swapnavastha, then in jagrad. UR Faces & figures frequent. Bedstead on matted floor. Chairs like those in S [Shampukur] office. Dark, thick cross. Namadrishtis. Luminous space developing with chayas. Chayamay of mountain-peaks. Bow of colour, deep red, blue & an exquisite violet-pink. Tejorekha of bare arm, of leg lifted up . Face of Upen Sen of Barisal. Figure of boy rushing on another, catching round shoulders & ankles & lifting up in his arms. Food. Figure of boy putting down vegetable with some wooden instrument. A crowd of Indians sitting; face of Sudhir. A crowd, one figure conspicuous with khaki cap—Indian sannyasi with strong face in geruya. Another crowd, my own face, Aswini Babu's. Mah[o]medan boy pulling a Hindu back; then they stand released. European with a face like Roubey's. UR. e^{n} [evening] Heavy sleep full of dreams. Tratak of Sun. After first gaze saw in chittakash most exquisite deep green colour, sun with zigzag of this colour coming out of it. Tratak for minute. Sun sometimes pale yellow, sometimes bluish green. A commotion & waves of some subtle substances in it, coming out of it & whirling round it,—apparently prana. Closed eyes in chitta. Yellowish green with roundish patch of blue in it. Gazing into physical sky large patch of deep yellow floated before the eyes.
At night; woman in coloured dress; colours very vivid.

25 Friday.
Night. Strong utthapana, esp of lower limbs and upper part of trunk. N^{y} Some prananyasas & tratak on floating colours. Rapid visualisations. 1. Ramchandra in Yogic asan. 2. Two English girls in bright red over tea table, one stooping as if busy with something.

3. Aluminium glass lying on its side. 4. Undetermined scene dashed with green colour, a figure stooping down to ground. 5 A copper bowl with brown & yellow substance half-filling it. 6. A brown brightly polished teapot, two white cups and other tea things. 7. A glass of water which I was in the act of drinking. 8. Water being poured from a brass drinking glass into a small earthen handi almost full of water. 9. Figures of small girls & others. 10. Usha dark & young-looking, a piece of toast in left hand. Others not so vivid, but rapid in succession. Suggestion that these are sukshma images of realities.

28 JANUARY – 17 FEBRUARY 1911

Physical

Feb 6th

1. Felt the sweet taste of the amrita in the throat and noticed the struggle ibidem of the impure rasa causing nausea with the amrita.
2. Physical, tivra, ananda — brief but definite.
3. All the physical anandas together, ahaituka, negative vaidyuta strongest, going to the head to base chidghana.

Feb 14th

4 Example of pure raudrananda without discomfort from the strong bite of an ant. Cf experience in jail & the scorpion bite.
5. Sweetness of amrita much stronger, denser and more frequent and continuous, the mixture of phlegm less frequent.

Communications.

1. Sukshma Shabda. Gautama — about K.E. — formerly a beau of the eighteenth century.
2. Writing (not on paper). Prophesy that the trouble in the digestion would almost immediately pass away, by replacement of tejasic by akashic action. A few minutes subsequently it was fulfilled
3. As I was walking outside the house, a large flower (fallen from the tree in the garden and ragged) was thrown to me from the direction of the opposite corner of the front. It traversed, as far as I could see, a distance of some five yards, — flew at the level of my head and fell almost beside me. There was no person near; the servant was out, having gone to the bazaar; of the four boys, three were lying down in their rooms, another shut up in his at the other end of the house. The gate was bolted & no one could enter, or, if he did, escape in a second. There was no bird in the air, and the flower was not dropped, or thrown to a slight distance as a bird might throw it but flew horizontally for some yards. The

only defect in this proof was that I did not see the starting of the flower in its course, but only noticed it in the air at the distance of some yards from me. This is the first clear instance, the others being merely pushes to the table & doors which were far from conclusive.. — It appears that the flower is not of our tree, as it is deep red and a simul flower. The nearest tree of the kind is in a house in the street behind this house. It cannot have been thrown from there as it would have to cross 2 roofs and describe a high curve in the air descending not horizontally but by a high parabola.

4 Statement in sukshmashabda that the worst of Saurin's illness was past justified by fact.

5. All statements about the Yoga daily justified. Too frequent for a record to be kept.

Vision of other worlds.

1. While doing tratak on the physical sun, I saw clearly with sthuladrishti the sun of the pranamay jagat and felt its warmth on my body. Feb 9th

Record of the Drishti.

from January 28th

1. Sthapatya on windowframe, of (a) a head, half Rakshasa, half animal with the Pisacha & Pramatha bhavas, one tusk (ekadanti), over the eyes sealed in meditation, is written "God".

(b) another, half Rakshasa, half-Asura, with a headdress half Egyptian half Semitic, of an intellectual and formidable type; over the eyes half-open on the world, is written "God". I take it that in the former type God fulfils Himself, with the eyes of the soul blind; in the latter with the eyes half open; the first is without jnanam, the second with ardhajnanam.

2. A group of young Bengalis walking on a road, only the last clearly seen, two children sitting on a hillock at the side. All remarkable for beauty of figure and grace. Chitra tejas, in a fragment of the lining of a bird's nest on the floor. Vision of future India

3. An elephant, initial crude condition on wall, ill-kept and spiritless; the same, feebly lifting its trunk to order. Symbol of the Indian people at the present moment. Seen at Chandannagar often, of

the past, charging furiously with lashing trunk. Also of the future, ibidem, controlled by a tender, disciplined and waiting for the order of movement.
4. A beautiful butterfly (dark colours) emerged for a moment from the jagrat chittakash into the sthula—chhayayukta.
5. In the akash, head and bust of Assyrian Pallas Athene helmeted over the sun—chhayamay Athene and tejoghana sun.

Jan 30th
6. 2 small birds on a branch, on the wall, chhaya. Seen sometime afterwards in life on the tree in the next garden.
7. A Ghose—a future signature on a cheque in a very different writing from my present handwriting.
8. A short nib—tejas in the akash. Revelation that I should have to write followed by the necessity of writing (a cheque) though I had no intention of writing today. It was written with a fountain-pen, while usually I write with an ordinary pen and a long thin nib.
9. A scene of the future. An Occidental port with ships, men walking in Indian dress. Sarvatragati.
10 Mountains in the sea. Scene of one of the swargabhumis. Sarvatragati.
11 A Madrasi house, tiled floor bare with an armchair.

January 31st
12 Chitra of my grandmother on the wall.
13 A pattern of many colours, (particoloured squares), varnamaya.
14. Sthapatya, tejas, in the leaves of a tree in the next garden, of R, in cap and gown.

Prophecy.

15 A. J. Balfour, head and bust only, chitra on wall, ill. The chitra seen in December in the sand showed a more advanced state of illness.
16 A god in heaven, vyaghracharma, not worn,—seated. Samadhi
17 A dog, descending the stairs to the terrace, not familiar. Samadhi

18. A bundle of carbon papers for typewriting, put down, not folded, but partly turned down. Samadhi.
19. Chhaya in Akash of Kali armed, followed by Chhaya of Kalki on horseback.

For Feb 4th & 5th see other book.[1]

Feb 6th.
20 Chhayamay of Sister Nivedita.
21 Tejomays of a collar of pearls and two others of Jogini standing and asleep.
22 Varnamay of a dog — brownish yellow — All in the 1st stage of the perfect condition and in samadhi.

Feb 9th.
23 Nalini, with big whiskers, an ochre-coloured coat and military belt, in a very martial attitude. Prophecy of distant future. Sv. [Svapna] Samadhi
24. Small flags & hint of horses in great number in a State procession. Prophecy of the distant future: Sv Samadhi.
25. Men riding with news, great excitement and alarm. (Bengal). Sv. Sam.
26. Stag at rest. Symb. Trikaldrishti of the present. After tratak.
27. Bull at rest. Jyoti. Symbolical trikaldrishti of the present.
28. Very clear chhaya (initial stage) of a butterfly flying across the corner of the room
29. Jalabindus round about the sun, also a network of the peculiar lines (ringlike curves) indicating the presence of jalam. The sun seen green again instead of blue or blue with a green tendency as yesterday.

Feb 14th
30. The face of a watch — chhaya & chhayaghan — pointing to 10.30, 8.25 and 7.20

---

[1] *This "other book" has not survived. — Ed.*

31 After tratak on sun A nib, with a bell behind it (jyoti & varna), indicative of the removal of the remaining obstacles to perfect writing. (This process to begin today). The three times indicated in the subsequent[2] drishti of the watch seem to indicate times in this process on three successive days
32. Behind the last a naked woman bending over it. Symbolic.
33. My eldest brother in a past state of health & vigour, chhayamay in Samadhi. Indication that he will not recover that health or live long.

Feb 16th
34. An anchor (in samadhi) indicating that the dhairyam is now perfect.
35. R. [Ramchandra] broom in hand, $\frac{1}{2}$ v. Prophecy.
36. The Rakshasi returning after sarvatragati.
37. The plant Yogini eats in flower.

Feb 17th
38. Myself as a baby of 1 or 2—seen in Samadhi.
39. A baby of the future. —do.
40 The dog Yogini or one just like it licking the mouth of a[n] upright soda water bottle.

Siddhis

Feb 9th
1. Aishwaryam on ant to give up its object and go back, done after a short persistence in the forward movement.
2. Ishita and aishwaryam for lessening of Saurin's diarrhoea, fulfilled as soon as made.
3. Aishwaryam for rapid restoration of health and strength, repeated and fulfilled on the 10th

Feb 10th
4. Aishwaryam for M [Moni] to awake. Immediate success.

---

[2] *The reference is apparently to drishti 30, which here precedes the present drishti. Perhaps drishti 30 was seen subsequently in time.—Ed.*

5. Aishwaryam for him to get up and give the tea. Succeeded after a slight resistance, lasting five to ten minutes.
6. Aishwaryam for the thought to begin (not begun in spite of struggle for many days). Begun.
7. Aishwaryam for the dog to shake off its heavy tamas and manifest the new soul. Rapidly successful, but the tamas still struggles to remain & the old bhava in the face and body persists. A renewed Aishwaryam on the 11th produces an immediate effect, the dog doing what it had never done before.

Feb 11th
8. Aishwaryam of restored health & strength to S.[Saurin] succeeds, even the time coming correct.
9. Aishwaryam of particular drishti. Succeeded
10. Aishwaryam of particular forms of siddhi. Partly succeeded.
11 Aishwaryam to stay nausea while eating. Immediately successful.
12. Aishwaryam to clear the stomach of disturbance and heaviness by working of akash. Successful.

Feb 13th or 14th
13. Ishitasiddhi for the dog to eat bread which it had always refused. Suddenly it began eating with relish after first refusing.
14. Ishita to refrain from large piece of bread given, but eat others. Persistently refrained even when it was broken into small pieces, except when induced to think it was not the same.

N.B. Previously many ishitas had succeeded, but were not noted down—especially with regard to vyapti of yogic states or realisations into others or to people coming or not coming.

Feb 16th
15. Aishwaryam of S's regularity in the afternoon, immediately fulfilled.

Feb 17th

Same aishwaryam fulfilled in half an hour.

Feb 18

The same aishwaryam fulfilled under adverse circumstances (they sat down to cards at 4) within quarter of an hour.

Record of Ideal Cognitions

from 28th January.

1. I saw the time by the watch in the sitting room to be 2-40, ideally cognized the time by my watch to be 2-43. Verified, exact to the minute
2. A little later after a chase of the opposite house-dog, having lost the intellectual idea of the time, I ideally cognised it to be just 2.50. Verified, exact to the second
3. All rooms being closed, I ideally perceived that all were asleep. Verified immediately afterwards by no one moving when the servant repeatedly banged for admission at the door.
4. Sortilege with cards. First, I took out cards making a sum of 21 (Jack, nine and ace) and dividing by three got seven-o-clock; then for the minutes, took out queen, ten and nine, making 31, and dividing by three got $10\frac{1}{3}$. The cognition then gave the already prophesied ejection of the internal opposition to higher thought as the subject of the sortilege. I took it, by intellectual habit and inference, as meaning 7.10 pm. The incident actually occurred at ten minutes to seven.
5. Figure 3 in drishti. Interpreted as Rs 3 worth of books to be purchased. Subsequently (Feb 2d) selected a number of 6 a[nna]s books without calculating the price; found that it amounted to Rs 3.
6. Two people applied to see me at the door, not seen by me. Cognition that they were detectives. I heard immediately afterwards that they had asked for "[The Indian] Sociologist" and "Liberator".
7. I had a cognition formerly that the man calling himself Ram Rao Yogi was a detective—independent of all inference. Learned on Feb 1 of a police report in which he is mentioned as watching the trains and taken for some time by the others as a Bande Mataram man.

8 Confirmation by B. [Bijoy] of my cognition of the new change of soul in the dog.

9. Cognition by prakamya of improvements in Saurin's health, without seeing him, justified by fact.

Feb 10th

10. A man came calling outside. Immediate cognition by prakamya on seeing him and revelation acting in confirmation of each other that he was a detective. It turned out to be Ram Rao Yogi, the detective from Maharashtra side.

11 Trikaldrishti that Sri [Srinivasachari] etc would not come this evening. Confirmed.

12 Trikaldrishti that tomorrow S. [Saurin] will be restored to health. Already recovering it. Fully confirmed.[3]

13 Sukshma shabda of the dog under the table attended with strong prakamya of its presence and motion there. An image of the past.

Feb 11th

14 Confirmation of former cognition that M. [Moni] although apparently unconcerned, had really a touch in the prana about his brother's death.—confirmed by his statement about dreams & weeping.

15. Cognition by prakamya trikaldrishti of evacuation in the afternoon. Confirmed

Feb 13th

16. Vyapti from Saurin of the idea of making the tea. Immediately after I heard him talk of it, & a minute after he came and made it.

Feb 14th

17. Memory by inspiration. The passages of Kalidasa written out & translated by me a year and a half ago, not since read or remembered, were again read two or three times in the morning without particular attention to the words except to one or two lines. Later on memory began to restore the whole thing, not by effort to remember, for that hampered it, but by inspiration. Lines

---

[3] *"Fully confirmed" was written after the original entry.—Ed.*

came, framework or substance of thoughts were suggested, gaps filled up. Finally, the whole of the first passage with the mistake of दहति for ज्वलति, the whole of the second with no error, the last two lines of the third and two words with an error of the first line, and part of the second line in the fourth were remembered.

18. Cognition in reference to image of the watch that the final epic inspiration would begin from the time indicated, 10.30, fully confirmed by fact.

Feb 15th

19. Cognition that the third time indicated in the watch[4] 7.20 would be fulfilled today by the final inspiration of the dramatic faculty, confirmed by fact.

20. Cognition from a drishti of the face of a watch, hands at 1.28 or 1.29 that at this time just after meals there would be a fresh advance in the siddhi. Finally, after some false speculation in other directions than the siddhi, the general poetical inspiration was fixed on. Fulfilled, since it began at 1.28 and was definite at 1.29.

Feb 16th

21. Cognition in reference to the image of the watch that the power of translation would begin today at the time indicated, 8.25; exactly fulfilled.

22. Cognition in the early afternoon of [?] accompanied by the recurring image of a revolver.

Feb 17th

23. The boy from the hotel brought a dish and was told by Bhedi meaning to use the dish to come at 3. He remained, not understanding Hindi. While I was expecting somebody to come & send him off, vyapti came that Bhedi had changed his mind and would return the dish. A minute or two afterwards the dish was brought and given to the boy.

---

[4] *See above, Record of the Drishti, numbers 30 and 31.—Ed.*

13 JANUARY – 8 FEBRUARY 1912

Record of the Yoga.

January 13th. 1912

10.15 a.m.

The last record covered the period from Dec 12th. 1911 to January 11th 1912.[1] Liberated from anticipation, it was a pure record of fact and experience, but its correctness was sometimes vitiated by a misvaluation of the significance of the fact through over-appreciation or depreciation. It is intended that the present record should be free from this defect.   Ananda has very fully established itself in the field of the indriyas. All sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, movements, actions, are now pleasurable or give pleasure; all carry with them the rasagrahana or appreciation of the beauty of the gunas which they are in expression, the joy of the vijnana in them (the basis of chidghana ananda), the joy of the heart in them (the basis of premananda), the joy of the body in them (the basis of the kamananda), the joy of the mind as indriya in them (the basis of the ahaituka ananda). All this joy is of the nature of bhoga from which the ananda is beginning to emerge. Joy of the spirit in the Ekam which expresses itself (the basis of shuddhananda, chidananda & sadananda together making kaivalyananda) is as yet obscure & involved in the lower anandas. Since yesterday, the ahaituka kamananda & today the sahaituka tivrananda are manifesting. Yesterday also the discomfort of heat & cold and pain were again exiled, though not entirely. Experiments made with the body show that below a certain intensity all pain now gives ananda of bhoga at the time of the feeling of pain, & pain beyond that degree brings it after the immediate acuteness has passed. Sometimes sahaituka raudrananda results. As I write ahaituka tivrananda, raudrananda & vaidyutananda (negative) are recommencing; also vishayananda sahaituka and ahaituka, begun yesterday, are becoming more definite. The bhoga of all these forms is already established. The greatest difficulty is found in the prolonged contact of intense heat with a sensitive part of the body, eg. the heated stone of the floor under the midday sun. The intensity of the heat to the sensation can be increased, lessened or inhibited by Will; the prolonged contact tends to remove the element of suffering unless the Will is made to increase or maintain it, or unless the stream of Will (chit-shakti) is kept tamasic suffering weakly the contact instead of meeting it. This daurbalyam has been created in order to bring about certain forms of intense ananda, chiefly viparita. It is possible, as is now clearly seen, to render it a great element of strong positive (not viparita) ananda, but in that case the daurbalyam must be merely a form of balam, in other words, it must be supported by dhairyam and anandadharanashakti. Ananda is now being extended to events. Even depression and sinking are met and claimed by a stream of ananda, and the place, necessity & delight of amangalam, its true mangalamaya nature is being impressed by the jnanam not only on the buddhi but on the sanskaras of the manas, chitta, prana and material body. Pure varna manifested this morning in a form, (dense crude), so that all the material and possible variation of material for the crude forms is, in a way, ready and regularised; only the perfect crude forms have to be subjected to the same process. Other siddhis are in comparative abeyance awaiting the movement of the ananda.

---

[1] *The Record entries for this period have not survived.—Ed.*

11.20 a.m.

The spiritual communications to the ear, this morning, revealed themselves as the communications of two kinds of spirits, — those who are merely of the buddha plane, manasic, and given over to error, and those who stand on the borders of the sukshma and the mahat, receiving knowledge from the vijnanam, expressing it in the sukshma. Some of the latter are farther, some nearer to the borderline, some stand upon it, — and according to the proximity is the soundness of the expression of the knowledge to the mind and the fullness and force of its substance. Besides these manasic beings, there are the voices of the Suryaloka and Janaloka who have already manifested. The mere buddha voices are now very rare and weak. The siddhi has risen to the borders of the mahat and reached over into it, and none have power who are below its line of attainment. The thoughts, perceptions etc may also be classified as on the same levels; there is sometimes even a double movement of knowledge in the mahat echoed in the sukshma. The forward movement of the ananda is now being left to itself and another siddhi taken up, the relations of the Jiva (dasyam) with the Master of the Yoga and those whom he has chosen. All restraint by the mind or any other organ used by the Jiva is to be entirely abandoned. The Vani that announces appears as that of an Angel of God, controlling, but aware of the derivative nature of the control & allowing the vak to flow through her. The derivative control of the world by Angels, Powers, Gods, Mahatmas announced by this Vani preceded by a blowing of trumpets in the Anandaloka.

[Written] Next day. 10.20

The afternoon was begun with a suspension of definite progress in the siddhi and, afterwards, an attack on the siddhi of the ananda. The most important siddhi was the perfection of the articulate thought, which resumed rapidly all the characteristics of perfect vijnanamaya thought, — prakasha, asu, nischaya, inevitability (adequate, effective and effective illuminative) of the vak, truth of substance, nihshabdata. All these were perfected and delivered from breach or restraint, except the nihshabdata which is still pursued with shabda by the annamaya devatas; but the thought can no longer be strongly impeded or suspended by annamaya interference, only hampered in its speed. Fluency has been acquired, rapidity prepared and declared due at 8.2[2] a.m. on the morrow. A severe struggle was necessary with the shabda, the attack of the annam being obstinate and furious and added by the necessity of steering clear of the laya of vak in artha-bodha. Involved shabda in implicit vak, not involved vak in arthabodha is the rule of the expression of thought. Trikaldrishti was regularised in the interpretation both by perception and in expression of the lipis, drishtis, shakunas, on the basis of right interpretation of the meaning, the fulfilment in the sthula being as yet not guaranteed. There was also perfect prakamya vyapti of the unseen movements of the servant carefully tested for about half an hour, — only where inference interfered, was there error. The Vani accompanied by the personal use of the relations established with the Master of the Yoga came to perfection.   Exactness is entering into the pure trikaldrishti (subjective & self-existent without prakamya vyapti). The time of several incidents in the Yoga was exactly indicated, also the exact minute when the evening meal would be given. All these siddhis, however, are subject to interruption and obstruction, though not of the old powerful character.   Triple sanyama in samadhi has been established by involved process, occurring three times while walking, eg on the thought which [proceeded][3] undisturbed while the waking mind was unconscious, on the walk of the body or something in the immediate surroundings, on the fact of samadhi or an experience in the samadhi. External objects are, in this state, sensed not by the indriyas of the mind and body, but by the karana-indriya..   Ananda sahaituka of raudra and pain with bhoga; the tendency in the morning to the whole kamabhoga was discontinued in the later part of the day.

---

[2] *Sri Aurobindo generally omitted the "0" when writing the first nine minutes of the hour. — Ed.*

January 14th.

10.45.

The rapidity of the thought, promised at 8.2, was effected at that moment. Afterwards the trikaldrishti was taken up and brought to a higher state of general efficiency, but there is an obstinate obstruction to the siddhi of exactness in time, place & circumstance. Time-drishti is more advanced than place, place than circumstance. The lipis 1.2.3.4.7 have been given and afterwards 5 and 15. 1 is the siddhi of thought perception which, in combination with 2, is to give perfect trikaldrishti. 3 is the lipi and drishti which are preparing a more vivid and vigorous activity; 4 the siddhis of power, which are sensibly growing in perfection and from today are to develop rapidly and be perfect on the 21st; 7, the Ananda; the ratna of the kamananda is becoming more frequent, the rati tending to regularise itself, — the discipline of pain continues. 5 is the visvagati (samadhi) which is assured of farther development today. 15 refers to tomorrow which is to be as marked a day of progress as the 13th.

---

[3] *MS* preceded

The rest of the record of January 14th & the record of January 15th is set down elsewhere in an accompanying memorandum commenced on the 12th

[*Here begins the "accompanying memorandum"—a set of notes written on a separate sheet. No notes for the twelfth or thirteenth have been found.*]

Jan 14.

This script will be used always for all kinds of purposes. It stands on a different footing from other means of spiritual communication.

Now that the period of uninterrupted siddhi has begun, there will be no relaxation of the karma and the siddhi, the karma only waiting for the effectiveness of the power, the siddhi perfecting its force as the tapas increases in the body. Today, the typical perfection of the remaining elements of the jnanam throughout its whole range, the growth of lipi and drishti, the constant realisation of the Ishwara, the forward movement of the other siddhis.

Pain is being given in the body, so that the discomfort of pain may by the habit of bhoga pass away. Pain will continue to be given henceforth till this aim is effected.

There is no personality manifest behind this script, but this script belongs to the Master of the Yoga and proceeds from him through a passive channel.

=

There is a siege by the annamaya-chitta. It is allowed in order to get rid of it. Meanwhile the siddhis effected stand and those in preparation are being advanced. Today there will certainly be a partial siddhi of drishti and lipi, of the trikaldrishti with precision, of the ananda, the visvagati and the siddhis of power, not only in their general action, but in particular movement—

The siege will be over in ten minutes.

Lipi. "Efficient tapas". Interpretation.—"commences from today."

" "European civilisation in extremis".

" 21 years[4] of strife before Indian civilisation is willingly accepted in its flawless perfection.

=

The siege is broken. From this moment the full unrest[r]aint.

---

[4] *The manuscript is torn and the number not certain.—Ed.*

Although the siege is broken, it is renewed from time to time and broken until the whole force is broken up. There is still imperfect statement in this script and the imperfection will remain only so long as the trikaldrishti remains imperfect. The whole action of the consciousness on whatever level has to be made vijnanamaya and this is already being done with no farther regard for the hesitations in the chitta.

═

Until the old movements of the annam are entirely cast out, these obstructions will continue; the thought is free, but the thought perception, trikaldrishti and prakamya-vyapti are not free. Still less the lipi & drishti. These have to be liberated, but the full liberation cannot occur today. Only the perfection has been promised, not the freedom from obstruction, although that freedom will be much more rapidly effected than it could have been formerly. —

Jan 15.

Yesterday's promises have had a very meagre fulfilment, for they were made merely to whip into life the dying expectation of progress & finality. There has been only an increased persistence in the few drishtis that present themselves perfectly, the rest being mere blurs & smutches, — a revival of consecutive fluency in the lipi, — a deepening of the conscious samadhi, — an activity of the trikaldrishti which cannot be called perfect or new & is not yet proved in those parts which go beyond previous achievement, — some strengthening of the siddhis of power, — a constantly active relation with the personal Ishwara, a modification of the Jiva's personality and the permanent (not continuous) consciousness of one Personality in all things & beings, — a preparation of constant rati of the general ananda — some obscure movements of the arogya which seem to be retrograde rather than progressive, — an attempt of the elementary utthapana to recover lost ground, — and nothing else tangible. Yesterday's was in fact a farther purificatory and preparatory activity. —

Today's is to be, if prediction can be trusted, an activity like the 13th's. Too much need not be expected, but there will be a constant progress and firm establishment of positive siddhis. —

Lipi 3. The first progress to be made in 3. Fulfilled by the activity of the lipi

Lipi 1.2. Thought has to take trikaldrishti into its province firmly. This had already begun, and the lipi is only an explanation. The trikaldrishti is prakamya and intuition of distant movements and is accepted subject to confirmation.

The Vani which was anandamaya of the Prema Natha (dasya-madhura), is this morning ananda-vijnanamaya of the Guru-sakha.

Lipi-drishti. ३ clear, 3 dim, 3 clearer but thick, ३ vivid, but thick. That is, first, the lipi in the chitra, perfectly vivid & stable, then, the lipi in the akasha dim & vague but just legible, then clearer but still not vivid, then stable, but not perfectly well defined. Immediately after the succession of predictive lipis, each of these stages was manifested in type.

Lipi. "Stability", sufficiently clear, "steadiness" dim. That is, the akashalipi is ready for a sufficiently clear stability, persistent in manifestation, not yet for a perfect steadiness in place. Immediately afterwards fulfilled.

"Satiety". "safety". "Therefore satiety has to be forgotten by the system, safety has yet to be perfected." The lipi is now consecutive in manifestation, simultaneous in stability. It is legible & in a way clear, but all the letters are not at once clear, nor does the clearness amount to vividness.

The thought-perception without expression takes place now in the sukshma, but expresses truth of vijnana; if it expresses anything but this truth, it will be inhibited or corrected or inhibited and corrected.

Lipi. "Knowledge." earlier in the morning—fulfilled by the development of this increasing habit of right-perception in the thought. The possibilities of the lila are being included in this habit of right-perception; for the type & possibilities of the Yoga have long been fixed and are now being translated into actualities. The type of the lila has been fixed, the possibilities fixed in generality are now being fixed in minute detail,—a process that was unnecessary in the Yoga,—but the actualisation is still remote. Actuality can only be fixed after upalabdhi & the establishment of sraddha.

Sraddha is established with regard to the predictions of progress in the Yoga by the correctness of the lipi; there is no sraddha with regard to predictions of eventualities in the lila.

Drishti. 8 & the tracing of the walls of a prison. That is, the utthapana is still detained in the prison of physical tamas.

There has been a strong revival of tejasic activity in visrishti which seemed likely to become not only momentarily effective to a limited extent, but victorious recovering its old force. In the moment of stress this was twice contradicted by the inspiration which proved to be correct. Prediction has therefore become effective with regard to the bodily movements of the Yoga.

The rati in all things (of the prema-ahaituka-chidghana anandas) is established though occasionally interrupted; the establishment of the ratna has now begun. The rati is less forward in events, than in states & vishayas. The corresponding stages of the bhoga have been rapidly passed through without special notice because it is the ananda and not the bhoga that is intended to be the permanent form of the ananda.

According to prediction by the Vani there is a simultaneous movement of the jnanam, lipi, trikaldrishti covering the whole range attended by a general manifestation of rupadrishti (akasha & chitra) rough, vague or blurred predicted by the lipis 3, (vague & indistinct), 2 & 1. The movement has begun by the activity of the inspiration and of the viveka rejecting false inspirations. By this means several successive movements of men & animals have been accurately though not completely predicted, a few suggestions of error being rejected in time. Some of the inspirations present themselves at a distance & not as trikaldrishti, but a vague suggestion. Few [of] these prove correct.

Collapse of the elementary utthapana with momentary disappearance of the tejas bringing about a cessation of the siddhi about 12.

Lipi. J.F. will be C.J.[5]

Afternoon.

Lipi 8. followed by some restoration of the elementary utthapana sufficient for the resumption of the siddhi.

---

[5] *Justice Fletcher will be Chief Justice ("Justice Fl" is written below and cancelled.) – Ed.*

Certain predictions of future events have been made which have to be justified by the event before they can be taken as the beginning of correct prediction of the future.

A suspension of active progress till after 4 pm. Preparation of the accurate & precise trikaldrishti by inspiration & revelatory perception.

The rest of the day was marked only by the [?intrusion] of ordinary thought, the under-current, in the new jnanam.

[*Here resumes the notebook.*]

Jan 16th

Nothing is as yet final in the sense of being unbreachable except sraddha in the Yoga minus the physical saundaryam, a certain fluency of the new thought, a general freedom from any pronounced contradiction of the first two chatusthayas (sraddha in the Adesha and the daivashakti excepted) and an imperfect activity, very meagre but constant, of the third chatusthaya.

Lipi. "satiety" several times repeated.

" God. Int[erpretation]. The divine personality will manifest not only behind the Vani, but in all the circumstances of the life and Yoga.

" Tonight . . delight . . safety. The Ananda and the confirmation of the conditions of outward action of the Yoga are to be among today's siddhis.

10.15

The morning has been chiefly devoted to the taking entire possession by the personality of the Ishwara of the thought-expression and the removal of all restraints or government of the thought by the Shakti. The thought has also taken into itself the history of past ages, but is not yet as perfect in that province as in ordinary thought. The nature of the siddhi, as was recently more than once predicted by the Vani, approximates to the sadhan in the jail and is indeed in its nature the same sadhan, without its intensity, passing into siddhi. Sraddha is wanting or deficient. The lipi 8 has been frequent yesterday & was confirmed this morning. The elementary utthapana is once more triumphant over the denial of utthapana though still hampered by sukshma klanti and a strong return of the denial of anima. Walking from 6.20 to 7.35 and again from 8.5 to 10.8. No weariness in the body, the attempts of weariness to return being successfully rejected, but stiffness in the lower limbs & negative electrical ache, sukshma & slightly sthula, in the upper part of the body. The lipis 3 confirmed in the morning & 6 have also been frequent. Arogya is reasserting itself but not yet reestablished in possession of the body. The rupadrishti is still vague & blurred though often stable; perfect images come, but, except the prakashamaya, do not wholly or stably materialise.

2.2 pm

Walking, from 10.45 to 11.40. Again from 12.25 to 2.2. Altogether 6 hours with three intervals of half an hour and three quarters of an hour — ie 6 hours out of $7\frac{3}{4}$ hours. Result. Elementary utthapana was about to fail only once but was soon reinforced; in the other anima fails repeatedly, the last time entirely, but restores itself by a brief rest, the stiffness in the body & pain in the feet disappearing or reaching a minimum manifestation. The Ishwara is now master of all thought perceptions or expressed thought in the system and is laying his hold upon all feelings and sensations.

Walking from 2.35 to 3.45 . . The strain on the utthapanashakti greater than before, but that on the anima slightly more sukshma; the latter is continuous, the former intermittent. Again from 4.15 to 6.15, making 9 hours out of 12. The force of utthapana has increased in the whole system and even at the end of these long trials acknowledges no weariness except in the outer material shell where an inclination to rest shows itself occasionally, but can be removed by a pause, standing, for a minute or a few minutes. The state of the anima varies, the denial sometimes increasing, sometimes diminishing or temporarily decreasing.

The power of aisvaryam has greatly increased in the matters of siddhi, producing a much more rapid and spontaneous effect even in things physical than ever formerly. The satyadarshanam with regard to surrounding incidents, suspended for a time, has returned more powerful than when it was suspended but is still hampered by movements of buddha tapas, the one powerful obstacle now to the jnanam, but the power is that of soulless matter, inert and obstructive. A similar suspension of the clear rupadrishti & to some extent of the lipi has been also removed; the prakasha rupas are of great perfection, though not always vivid, and of all kinds and in answer to the aishwaryam is showing colours, red, violet, blue etc. Chhayaprakasha is also often very perfect. Chhaya is becoming perfect, but still shows stability in imperfection, but some instability in perfection. Other rupas are rare and unstable. The mastery of the system by the Ishwara is now almost complete, though still of a moderate intensity & force. The second chatusthaya & the nature & realisation of the Shakti Jiva, marked by the appearance of the lipi 11 (Kali), are growing more rounded and permanently real to the consciousness. Sraddha is increasing but falters before anupalabdhi. The movements of the [ ][6] vani & thought, which have become one, of the perceptions & the lipi & drishti seem now to be justified by the event and more & more precise and accurate.

Standing & walking 6.35 to 7.35. and again from 9.20 to 11.20. Altogether 12 hours out of 16. Sleep from 3.10 to 6.40. Ananda in all outward things and the established sense of the one Personality in all. Certain defects in the thought perception appeared towards the close of the day. Safety was confirmed to the trikaldrishti, not by events.

Jan. 17th

The progress of the siddhi today was greatly curbed by another attack of the asiddhi, but the asiddhi has no longer much power over the mind and feelings; all it can do is to affect the sraddha, obscure hamper or suspend the siddhis of the third chatusthaya and bring about some reaction in the fourth. During the morning remnants of sleep-tendency and some lowering of the elementary utthapana helped the asiddhi. Walking from 9 to 12.10. Samadhi in the afternoon, very deep and full of all kinds of drishti & lipi, but very confused and only towards the end sometimes helped by vijnana activity. Walked from 5.20 to 8.20. The utthapana does not fail, but is not intense and powerful as before. There is no positive weariness, but in the afternoon there was a general depression of activity. During the exertion pain & stiffness do not show themselves or very slightly, nor even afterwards, only when the exertion has been suspended for some time. Their hold even when manifest is not great. Occasionally they fill the sukshma body & manifest if there is a pause in the activity. Roga was strong today, nevertheless it yields to the aishwaryam without being removed entirely. The activity is excess of vayu with a slight element of tejasic, jalamaya & parthiva action, but the results are dull and feeble compared with former manifestations. Other rogas can no longer make any impression on the system. Ananda of the nature of rati is becoming stable & permanent even in condition & event, as well as in all vishaya, action, movement etc. The personality is now habitually manifest in all things and persons; but is not always remembered. Trikaldrishti was largely inhibited, but reappeared towards the close of the day without recovering complete exactitude except occasionally. Assurance of safety given from outside. The most important development was the confirmation of raudrananda, pain being now invariably attended with pleasure. Formerly only the dull kinds of pain had this attribute, but now it has extended to those which are acute, although the intensity has not yet gone in experience beyond a certain degree. This development has been persistently predicted recently by the ever recurrent rupa of the bee, wasp or hornet. Rupas are now often distinct, stable & perfect on the background as well as in the akasha, but have not advanced otherwise. Sleep 11.45 to 6.45

---

[6] *MS* the

Jan 18th

9.35

Defect of anima strongly felt on rising. Walking & standing from 7.20 to 9.30; the stiffness more insistent today. The utthapana has not recovered its force. Chhayarupas have still the tendency to vagueness & a blurred or imperfect form, but some are very distinct; these have a tendency to short stability or no stability at all. Momentary asaundaryam of guna, followed by a recovery and increased intensity of shuddha ananda in sarvasaundarya above guna; but this harmony is still imperfect.

The rest of the day has passed in the final purification of the system from all trace of rajas or sensibility of the system to rajasic impressions from outside. The sattwic remnants are also being removed, but the process is not yet complete. A relaxation of the elementary utthapana occupied the system. The roga that came, is being slowly eliminated. Its chief characteristic is a dull form of watery nausea, slight in substance but with some tamasic power of oppression. The prithivi, tejas & jala are very weak. Hunger persists. Samadhi in the afternoon greatly improved, but not free of the tamas. Sleep 1.0 to 7. Signs of the raising of the objective siege.

Jan 19th. Friday

Sattwa & Tamas in their remnants are being removed; also the shadowy trace of desire from the lipsa, of ahankara from the buddhi, of self-activity from the thought and action. The control of the buddhi over the action has been eliminated & has now become mere imagination expressing itself outside the system. Sattwic activity is being eliminated from the vijnanamay trigunatita activity, but here the remnants are still not altogether void of obstructive substance. Letter from P.R. [Paul Richard] Safety assured though not absolute. The lipi & thought fulfilled. Walking & short standing from 7.45 to 10.45. No failure of utthapana, but the accumulative effect of adhogati is not yet removed and stiffness hangs about the lower body & in the sukshma as depression without actually occupying it, though strong touches are frequent. Farther exercise of the utthapana twice for an hour at a time. The final elimination of the sattwa approaches completion. There has been a simultaneous activity, insignificant in quantity & force, but pure in quality of all the members of the siddhi from 1 – 17, that is, the whole third, fourth, fifth & sixth chatusthayas. Some of the movements, however, were hardly more than preparatory.

Lipi. इति ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे मोक्षयोगः, indicating the completion of the moksha and the establishment of the perfect samata with its three attributes and consequences. Sleep seven hours.

Jan 20th.

Exercise of elementary utthapana from 6.50 to 12.0 noon. Interval of about 10 minutes at 7.30 — standing twice for reading the papers, once for two or three minutes conversation. Some attempt at failure of utthapana about 10.15 removed entirely by the three minutes standing, and again after 11. removed of itself. The body is ceasing to be affected with depression by the defect of anima, itself now much reduced in its stress, even after discontinuation of activity. The lipi 8 is persistent and points to the early perfection of elementary utthapana by the removal of all nirveda, klanti or necessity of change of occupation for body or mind. The thought, expression & perception, are entirely liberated from interference of the mind or from watch by the mind except to a slight extent in the immediate trikaldrishti. Thought, trikaldrishti, vyaptiprakamya; all the elements of jnanam, now act freely & rapidly and with a predominant, though not perfect accuracy. Even the general thought in the minds of others is perceived frequently & has been repeatedly proved. Sraddha in the Yoga is acquiring tejas because now supported by the activity of the jnanam, but in the adesha is not yet existent, though prepared to emerge on the first decisive upalabdhi. Rati in all things except roga is now the rule, & is generally the rati of ananda. A dull nausea has been persistent all the morning, but does not interfere with the appetite or disturb the prana. More has been eaten today than ordinarily & with full rati of food. The lipi & rupas are preparing frequency. Sattwa has finally disappeared and now only touches from time to time as rajas did in its last stage. Tamas has been eliminated, except the asraddha, but still attacks though feebly & with a much diminished heaviness. False vijnanam persists, but is losing its insistence & activity.

Tamas, after a strong attack in the evening, was finally expelled, except in the body, and now survives only in ineffective touches; but the uncertainty of asraddha remains, — eliminated with regard to the Yoga, occasionally reviving with regard to the rapidity of the siddhi, easily sliding into actual sanshaya with regard to the adesha. Exercise of utthapana from 2.25 to 3.55 and from 6 to 7.30. The defect of anima gives trouble still after rest, but, although constantly recurrent, is deprived of continuous persistence. Sleep seven hours

Time of completion of cooking fixed at 8.45, — actually completed 8.47. Arrival of most of the four fixed at 7 to 7.20. Three arrived, two at 7.8, another about 7.15.

Jan 21st

The 21st has been fixed for the beginning of the perfected siddhis of power, the morning for the beginning of the frequency & stability of the rupa and the lipi. The latter prediction is being fulfilled, but the really vivid & perfect rupas are still prakasha or prakasha-chhaya or occasionally chhaya and there has been some retrogression in the vividness and perfection of lipi & of other rupas, except where the rupas are momentary. The trikaldrishti of the immediate surroundings though of some perfection when left to itself, is still hampered by the activity of foreign suggestions. Exercise of elementary utthapana 7.35 to 10.35 a.m. No weariness but occasional touches of adhogati & stiffness. Relics of watery nausea—much water rising into the mouth. Touch of tejas and proof of jala at the time of visrishti, but no strong reaction or disturbance. Exercise of elementary utthapana from 2.20 to 5.5 and from 10 pm to 12.30 am. The siege of adhogati in the sukshma was in both cases strong but not overpowering. The perfect action of the siddhis of power commenced but slowly and on a very small scale. Sleep from 12.30 to 6.30.

Jan 22d

The morning was occupied by a strong attack of asiddhi in which even the finality of the first chatusthaya was denied. Advantage was taken with regard to an error by which the imperfect harmony of pravritti & prakash tending to an imperfect harmony of pravritti & shama was mistaken for persistence of sattwa, rajas & tamas. This error produced strong asraddha and a return of attack by the triguna. The attack came clearly from outside & did not arise in the adhara but was admitted into it by the consent of the Jiva. The harmonisation of prakash, pravritti & shama is proceeding. Meanwhile the particular siddhis are not definitely active except the physical. There was exercise of elementary utthapana for nearly seven hours from 6.30 to 1.30 with a break of eighteen minutes (12.12 to 12.30) for meals. During this time there were only three standing pauses of from two to ten minutes, but only one for rest (two minutes), the two others for reading the paper & bathing. The exercise was pursued in spite of an insufficient tapas in the physical aura. It was followed at its close by a stronger denial of anima than usual, but this disappeared directly the exercise was resumed from 3.30 to 6.30 and during these three hours there was no failure of utthapana, no depression, no defect of tapas in the aura. The denial of anima became inoperative for practical purposes and the three hours minimum & six to seven hours maximum was established today as predicted yesterday. In the afternoon there was a strong attack of sleep which prevailed for one hour & more. In samadhi the occurrence of perfect continuous images & scenes (not so perfect) was reestablished.

Lipi indicating the death of Binod Gupta at an early date, fixed tentatively either on or by the 25th of the month. No verification of prediction about varta, money from expected source arriving by the 22d. Rati of rasagrahana established but with viparita srotas of virakti impairing its fullness especially with regard to events. Sleep for 6 hours(?).

Jan 23d

Morning occupied by strong attack of duhkha; the rest of the day by reconstitution of the siddhi. The vak of thought rose to the level of the inspired illuminative. Tejas & tapas low. Over nine hours exercise of elementary utthapana, but not continuous. Money from the expected quarter arrived after all on the 22d, but not the sum expected. There was, however, no prediction about the amount. Rati of bhoga and sarvasaundaryam established, chidghana and suddha strong, prema weak, ahaituka troubled, with a tendency to ratna of bhoga. Sahaituka sharirananda (vishaya and tivra) is establishing and generalising itself, raudra still subject to the limitation of intensity, vaidyuta & kama occasional and fitful. Attack on the health at the weak points still continues. Sleep 12.25 to 6.40 am. Sahitya was today resumed.

Jan 24th.

Lipi of death of Gupta fulfilled, but he died apparently on the day of the lipi, or possibly the next day, not on the 25th, of heart failure. There had been no previous news of illness etc. It is notable that the death of Sir J. Jenkins had been also foreseen, but in that case there was first the news of his illness. Exercise of utthapana 6.55 to 11.40; strong attack of non-anima and temporary failure of utthapana. The tendency to ratna in the bhoga continues and there is occasional ratha. The nirananda is mostly in the physical element of the higher anandas where the indriyas are touched. Motions of contact are now commencing in which, starting with the vishaya and the tivra, all the five physical anandas manifest together raudra, vaidyuta and kama following each other or rather developing out of each other. The same ratna of bhoga is being applied to events and happenings and even to the circumstances of roga. Satiety and dharananyunata interfere with the full consummation, but are being subjected to the general law. This movement is connected with a rapid deepening of the dasyam through which the realisation of all motions mental and bodily being inspired, conducted and imposed by Prakriti is being confirmed not only to Chit in buddhi, but also to Chit in sensation, mental nervous and physical. The movements of the body are being liberated from the shadow of emotional or affective intention and choice. Adverse movements are chiefly of the order of roga, a sore throat having taken hold after an interval of several years, and of bodily slackness and failure of utthapana.

Jan 25th & 26th

Days of clouded progress, the revolt of the triguna against expulsion from the nature-environment and of attempted relapse. No record was kept. The chief progress in the third chatusthaya has been the effective clearing away of false vijnana so as to leave the perfecting of the vijnanam unhampered, the clearing of the sraddha, increase of the dasyam, the steady progress of the arogyam and the rapid advance of the Ananda. Utthapana & bhautasiddhi have been strongly denied. The Kalibhava is gaining in completeness, firmness and permanence.

Jan 27th.

Progress, unclouded resumed this morning. The results of the last few days, so far as yet ascertained, may now be summed up. The first chatusthaya, denied by the assault of the triguna, has gained in strength by the ejection of the remnants of lower tejas; pravritti, prakasha & shama are arriving at a perfect harmony. The dasyam is being rendered firmer and firmer and combined with ananda is perfecting the shama and divesting it of all tamasic elements, perfecting also the pravritti and divesting it of all rajasic elements. The only tamas left is the physical and the asraddha of the Adesha, the latter the result of insufficient prakasha, the former of the imperfect conquest of the physical being by the vijnanam. The manifestation of the Kalibhava, harmonising the bala, raudra (karali) & shiva Kali, has perfected the second chatusthaya in all but intensity. The remnants of general asraddha in God & swashakti are disappearing and the only province of asraddha is the Adesha and the rapidity of the siddhi. This defect prevents the intensity of kalyanasraddha, and ishwarabhava etc. necessary to the perfection of the second chatusthaya. Jnanaprakasha is now strong and the mithyadharanas (asadgrahas) relating to the Yoga and Lila are disappearing. The Kalibhava and the realisation of self in all and all in the self are growing strong and persistent. The Master of the Yoga is more and more manifest in each detail of experience, but half-veiled by the Prakriti in the surroundings. Sahitya is once more hampered by the refusal of the annam to obey or even contain the vijnanamaya movements of the vak. On the other hand artha becomes more & more full and clear, powerful and luminous. Jnanam & Anandam Brahma are steadily deepening.

The chief struggle is over the third & fourth chatusthayas where the annamaya obstruction has concentrated the best of its strength. Ananda has risen from the râtha of rasagrahana to the ratna of bhoga with a frequent emergence of râtha, which is especially strong in the sahaituka vishayabhoga & tivra & is spreading to the kama etc. Ananda, even ratha of the kamananda, is beginning definitely to emerge. The other bhogas (chidghana, prema, ahaituka, shuddha) are involved in the sharira and emerge out of it. It is here that the contradictions of ananda are occasionally strong. Ratha of the bhoga of events, conditions etc is prevailing. The contradictions are being overborne; pain & discomfort of heat & cold, contact etc are being dominated. The other field of struggle is the arogya; the sore throat was ejected after a struggle by siddhi. The rogas still capable of touching the surface of the system attack frequently, but cannot hold except for short intervals, coming, retiring, succeeding, failing without cause. The disturbances of assimilation are yielding perceptibly to the Arogya; when they come, they cannot hold or make only a brief & seldom violent visit. Three full days of avisrishti were attended with perfect ease and the remaining one and a half with only a vague tendency to disturbance. Two nominal visrishtis occurred on the fifth & sixth days, but with only parthiva pressure, no tejasic, vayavic or jalamaya. Only at the end of the sixth day (this morning) somewhat acute tejahkshobha produced a copious visrishti of the old type. The system, however, dismissed the kshobha in about fifteen minutes and it went leaving behind no acute results. The central arogya still advances slowly. Sarvasaundaryam is not yet continuously permanent.

Jnanam increases in force & exactness. The style of the vak rises to the inspired illuminative and is effective at its lowest level. The thought perception is now almost rid of false vijnanam in its material, but not in the arrangement of its material. Nevertheless accuracy of time is growing, accuracy of place has begun, accuracy of circumstance, chiefly, is defective—all this in the trikaldrishti. Prakamya & vyapti are strong and more continuous, less chequered by error. The internal motions of animals & to a less extent of men, the forces working on them, the ananda & tapas from above, even the explicit thoughts are being more and more observed and are usually justified by the attendant or subsequent action. The siddhis of power work well & perfectly, in harmony with the trikaldrishti, not so well when divorced from it. The physical tone of the system is recovering its elasticity & with it elementary utthapana and bhautasiddhi are reviving. Samadhi improves steadily, but is much hampered by sleep which has revived its force during these last three or four days.

Time-prophecy. Arrival from the match predicted after 11.30, a little before 11.45. Actual arrival 11.43. Sahityasiddhi is being finally prepared.

Jan 28th.

The control of the Ishwara, complete in the script and vani, has extended itself to the thought perceptions. Thought-expression attained by a rapid involved process the siddhi of absolute inevitability; the old slow movements are being progressively abandoned. In this case the effective and illuminative effective were the siddhi with a tendency to frequency of illuminative & inspired illuminative; but now the inspired emerged in a moment and took the place of these lower movements drawing them into itself and was itself drawn next moment into the [inevitable].[7] A similarly rapid siddhi is being prepared in the lipi, but there is strong obstruction in the trikaldrishti and rupadrishti. Successful siddhiprayoga of power increases in frequency and perfection. The elementary utthapana is reviving (there was 3 hours exercise continuously with a minute or two of interval) but is still burdened with the bhauta asiddhi.

Jan 29th & 30th

Spent in the slow modulation of the annamaya mentality in the environment to the movements of the vijnanam. The annam of the body resists the working of the sahitya, the only karma that as yet seeks to proceed regularly, though bhasha, study and nirukta are pressing forward. A strong siege of tamas besets the physical brain. Knowledge floods it from the vijnanam, knowledge of type & possibility, but not yet of actuality; but the brain is unwilling to allow its expression, though willing to perceive & receive it. The third chatusthaya progresses slowly towards regularisation. Rigveda has been resumed & is pursued slowly but regularly.

Jan 31st.

The lipi & rupa are now less fugitive & more firm in outlines, but not yet sufficiently or spontaneously vivid. In rupa prakasha still predominates. Thought expression is perfect but infrequent; the script bears the burden of the transformation of the remains of asatyam to satyam. Trikaldrishti improves but in things petty

---

[7] *MS* inspired

& immediate; nevertheless distant movements are also becoming correct & proved, eg Lourdes' illness in its progressive stages. Today siddhis of power showed and advance in power of detail, but towards the end they were successfully resisted. There is no definite progress in bhautasiddhi or visvagati though there is some sign of preparation for regularity in the last. The vijnanam is slowly asserting itself in karma. At night according to a previous prediction swapna samadhi established its initial perfection in type, the recorded images being of an extraordinary minute perfection in vividness & multitudinous detail & sufficiently though not preeminently stable, eg a ship of another world. The images were mainly of the Bhuvar.

Feb 1st

The sahitya begins to extend itself to all types of prose, with freedom of flow and perfection of type but not yet rapidity of flow or perfection in every detail. The silence of the divine element in vani & script was broken & the siddhi moves swiftly. Saundarya bodha has been made finally the natural view of the mind & indriyas, only faint relics of the asundaram remaining in the physical consciousness. The last relics of asamata are finally disappearing, those of depression giving way to a settled tejas & tapas and the defects of the second chatusthaya are in course of removal. The old prediction about the duta was today fulfilled. Kamananda with the ratha recurs daily, but is not yet frequent or continuous. The lipi is proceeding towards finality, gaining in habit of vividness & maintaining the same relative stability of position; the akashic movement in which it occurs is settling down. The non-physical elements of the third chatusthaya increase slowly. The conquest of the roga in the stomach increases; tejasic excess fails to keep its hold, assimilation has a greater force & when visrishti occurs, it is so little as to be hardly worth reckoning. The akashic state is preparing. On the other [hand] bhautasiddhi, elementary utthapana and arogya of the centre are obstinately contradicted, and saundaryam makes indefinite advance. Sleep is once more strong and hampers the visvagati.

February 2d

After a long progressive advance the lipi has established finally by a sudden manifestation simultaneity, stability, legibility and is only hampered in spontaneous vividness. The unity of the sentence in the lipi is also broken by the superimposition of other sentences. These difficulties were removed in the afternoon and all that is now left is to eliminate the habit of imperfect lipi and strengthen the habit of perfect lipi. The exactitude of trikaldrishti has finally begun, but is strongly combated. Crude rupas are becoming clearer and of all kinds, but tejas, chhaya and prakash predominate. The visrishti broke out on this the seventh day, but tejasic excess only exerted itself, after and not before, for a short time. Subsequently vayavic excess remained for a long time. Today the samadhi was used persistently as a preparation for sahitya. At night perfect images are the rule, but stability & vividness are not yet the ordinary law of the vision. Farther progress of sahitya.

February 3d

Utthapana & bhauta siddhi seem to be recovering tone. 3 hours with a very slight reaction of defect of anima. The process of removal of jalavisrishti has begun, the frequent evacuation has been brought down to a limit of four times a day, not always copious. Little definite progress today.

February 4th.

The bhoga of the general (non-physical) ananda manifested once more in force with a tendency to the habit of the râtha, independent of saundaryabodha which emerges from the ananda. Firmness of the crude rupa established & the establishment of clearness conjoint with firmness and stability begun. The imperfect lipi predominates. The script as substitute for vani is revived. Thought manifests its absolute perfection but with a downward tendency to the inspired illuminative. Perfection of trikaldrishti is inhibited, but exactitude of effect of the aishwaryam is becoming more common. Elementary utthapana morning & afternoon, but with two hours, not three hours limit. Anandavani revived. Sahitya etc do not advance. The Kalibhava is more continuous.

February 5th

Personality of the Master in the vani more perfectly & continuously manifested. The Varahi in the Prakriti. The general ananda is liberated from nirananda in the common, expressionless and vulgar. Lipi predicting richness in rupas, finality of trikaldrishti not immediate; also visvagati. Sortilege. यया त्वया जगत्स्रष्टा जगत्पातात्ति यो जगत्। सोऽपि निद्रावशं नीतः कस्त्वां स्तोतुमिहेश्वरः॥ and उत्तस्थौ च जगन्नाथस्तया मुक्तो जनार्दनः। एकार्णवेऽहिशयनात्ततः स ददृशे च तौ, relating to the removal of the nidra, the release of the shakti of trikal (ahi) from the sushupti (एकार्णव) and the perfection of the visvagati in the two regions of sukshma & sthula (Bhur, Bhuvah, Swar). After a strong revival of false tejas, false vijnan and general asiddhi, the annamaya atmosphere was finally cleared, tyaga enforced on the lower annamaya devatas and dasyam in the general bhava delivered from the last reserves of liberty. The denial of arogya in the assimilative processes due to retention of jalavisrishti & imperfect assimilation revived with power. There is no real parthiva pressure, but merely the habit of bhauta excess.

Feb 6th. (Tuesday)

Yesterday's siddhi confirmed. Both liberty & prejudgment have ceased; passive activity is perfectly effected. The exactitude of satyadrishti is being effected in the lipi-drishti, subjective perceptions (of the lower vijnanam) and prakamya is being displayed. It is not yet quite exact as applied to physical events. The siddhi of the vani is perfect. The distinguishing faculty in vivek acts frequently & perfectly but without intensity or strong illumination, excluding actual error; where it does not [act],[8] there is uncertainty. This is especially with regard to the future (in the adesha and important events at a distance). Proofs of effective siddhi acting on the world at large are increasing, but the movements are still uncertain and comparatively rare. The rupa is increasing in frequency & richness of content. Later on the Shakti in its downward descent entered a layer of the annamaya Patala which had not yet been coerced by the vijnanam; there was in consequence a disturbance, a cloud of the old sanskaras flying up and obstructing the siddhi. The finality of trikaldrishti seems to have begun.

---

[8] *MS* exact

Feb 7th.

Chiefly occupied with the annamaya disturbance. The sahityasiddhi successfully invaded poetry, the epic & dramatic styles. The thought is working to establish the inspired instead of the effective as the persistent style of thought expression and to rise from it to absolute inevitability. It does not now sink below the effective. There has been farther trouble about the vani, the anandabuddha being misused; it now tends to be finally replaced by the anandamahat. Trikaldrishti is so far advanced that the turns of flight of a butterfly, or a bird can all be predicted during the flight, but there is a difficulty about the prediction of the next movement of an animal in a state of rest. It can be foretold but the action is capricious. Trikaldrishti of things unseen is hampered by diffidence, unless there is a knowledge of the actual occupation in which case the general stages, eg of the progress of cooking, can be told without any material data to go upon, by mere trikaldrishti. There is strong & almost perfect prakamya of inner movements, forces, intentions etc, but not yet of the determining force, movement or action. Visvagati revived in force; frequency of sight but not yet the stability. Sukshma smell has revived its activity, but is infrequent.

Feb 8th

The flight of some score of butterflies & many birds foretold in their turns, only two or three errors due to speculation or tejasic action. Usually siddhi of power & siddhi of knowledge seem to be one. Future movement of animals in rest can now be told with some exactitude, but error is easier because of stronger habit of tejasic speculation. Aishwarya & trikaldrishti have not yet been harmonised. Drishti of an eye, prakasha-chhaya-tejas, in the akasha, perfect but momentary,—an indication of the richer drishti (dense & developed) perfect but not yet capable of stability. This is already developing. The vani strongly anandamaya, first of the vijnanamaya ananda, then of the others, reappears full of the Vishnu or Pradyumna personality, taking into it Rudra (Balarama), Shiva (Mahavira) and Aniruddha (Kama). The definite personality of the Master in his personal relations to this Yoga and the Jiva in the Yoga has to develop out of the laya; for Vishnu is the Ishwara who incarnates. The present method of the Yoga is a progressive replacement of buddha bhavas by vijnana & ananda bhavas, and of the lower of these by the higher. The firmness and clearness of the stable rupas is much interfered with [ ][9] by unsteady floating waves of the subtle-gross etheric material of which it is formed; these waves mix with the clear form and blur it by excess of material in the attempt to reinforce its distinctness. Perfect satisfaction has now been given to the Aniruddha element in the Jiva, so far as the Yoga is concerned, by the revelation of the scientific means & steady progress used in the siddhi, but the Balarama element awaits satisfaction. The Mahavira element has also been satisfied by the floods of knowledge that are being poured down, but the Pradyumna element awaits satisfaction. In the Adeshasiddhi there has as yet been no perfect satisfaction even to the Aniruddha element. Lipi (on Sultan's back, chitra formed by the hairs). Satisfaction to Brihaspati, not yet to the other deities. Satisfaction to Bala (due). N.B. Bala is the Titanic force from the Mahat which must eventually conquer & replace Rudra, though conquered by him in the Buddha, because descending into the Buddha he becomes a Daitya disturbing evolution by a premature effort towards perfection. The same is true of all the greater Daityas who are not Rakshasic in temper (Asurim Rakshasincaiva prakritim apaunah). Sahitya siddhi in ordinary poetical forms. Satiety of interest in what is old and familiar, "staleness", is being overcome. Lipi "zoology" indicating a superior light on the science of life forms bringing zoology into harmony with the general satyam and getting rid of materialistic difficulties; immediately after while casually seeking a book to read, I picked up Haeckel, opened at the chapter on Worm forms ancestral to man and had the predicted illumination. Such detailed trikaldrishti is now becoming very frequent.

---

[9] *MS* it

1–25 JULY 1912

Journal of Yoga.

July 1st 1912—

August, 1912, will complete the seventh year of my practice of Yoga. It has taken so long to complete a long record of wanderings, stumbles, gropings, experiments,—for Nature beginning in the dark to grope her way to the light—now an assured, but not yet a full lustre,—for the Master of the Yoga to quiet the restless individual will and the presumptuous individual intelligence so that the Truth might liberate itself from human possibilities & searchings and the Power emerge out of human weaknesses and limitations. The night of the thirtieth marked by a communication from the sahasradala, of the old type, sruti, but clear of the old confusions which used to rise around the higher Commands. It was clearly the Purushottama speaking and the Shakti receiving the command. Already the lipi had given warning of a new life beginning on the 1st July,—a new life, that is to say, a new type of action, starting with a temporarily complete realisation of novel Personality and the final inevitable seal on the dasyabhava. Not that anything was done abruptly. In this yoga at least nothing has been abrupt except the beginnings,—the consummations are always led up to by long preparation & development, continual ebb & flow, ceaseless struggling, falling & rising—a progress from imperfection through imperfections to imperfect and insecure perfections & only at last an absolute finality and security.

Even now the dasyam though complete in action, is not free of an intellectual questioning. But this last leaven of asraddha, of nastikya-buddhi, is confined to the truth or untruth of the Adesha given in the jail, the apprehension of certain forms of akalyana; it is not capable any longer of positiveness & even at its highest is unable to generalise itself. For the rest the triple dasyam of the body is active beyond doubt, the last shadowy effigies of the double dasyam is fading away—in the mind and feelings there is not the same clearness; for the shadow of the double dasyam still persists by the strength of the asraddha, but the express thought, the vak of the divine communication, the experiences & feelings (all except the depression due to doubt) are ordinarily independent of the *anumati*. Only the perceptions present still a field to the unhappy independence of the soul, its *triste* liberty to doubt & revolt against God, and from this field the others are sometimes temporarily affected.

The three forms of dasyam are now distinct and well-marked. The simple dasyam is that obedience to the divine impulsion which is self-chosen & depends on the individual's intelligence of God's will and his consent, his readiness to obey. The Purusha is still karta & anumanta, a servant of God, not His slave. The great step bridging the transition from the simple to the double dasyam is the renouncement of the kartritwa abhimana, by which we perceive that Prakriti is the only doer of all our actions voluntary or involuntary from the most deliberately concerted endeavour even to the simplest trifle and, in consciousness, are aware of the impulse of Prakriti in every movement physical or mental. At first the consciousness tends to make a false division claiming the movement itself to be our own although the determining impulse is felt as a driving or a pressure proceeding from infinite Nature above or around us. The wearing away of this division marks a farther attenuation of servanthood and deepening towards the divine servitude. But so long as the anumanta keeps his abhimana and reserves his right of individual lordship (Ishwara) over Prakriti, we have not passed the stage of simple dasyam. For between the various impulses of Prakriti, we have the sense of choosing, of an active & constant freedom, & although we choose what we understand to be God's will, it is still our choice that determines the action in the adhara & not His direct and imperative Will. In the double dasyam on the contrary there is no active & constant freedom, but only a general & ultimate freedom which is used little or only exceptionally. We are aware of ourselves as Ishwara & anumanta, the individual ruling & sanctioning authority, but, although we still have the power of refusing our sanction to any particular impulse of

Prakriti if we choose, we do not choose; we make no choice, we do not determine what is God's will and act thereby or order Prakriti to act thereby, but leave everything to God to determine; the whole responsibility is His & a given impulse of Prakriti fulfils itself or not as He chooses without our interference. If the will is used, it is used by Prakriti. We are aware of it as being not our will, but the will in the adhar used by Prakriti. In the triple dasyam, even this potential freedom disappears. Whatever impulse of infinite Nature comes, we could not interfere with it if we wished, any more than the drifting leaf can deny itself to the storm or the engine to the force that works it. We are aware of our body as a whole & in its various parts being moved not by will in the body but by a will or force outside the body; our thoughts, feelings, will-power similarly. Each of these stands perfectly apart from the others & is worked separately by Nature. The will wills & has done; it does not try to determine action but leaves the action to happen or not as Nature pleases; the thought thinks & is done, it does not try to determine either the movement of the will or the movement of the action; the feelings equally live for themselves, atmatripta, not striving to compel action & emotion or thought & feeling to agree. What harmony is necessary is determined by the Para Shakti that drives us, which we feel always as a Force driving us. But this Force is itself only an instrument of a conscious Will driving it, — the Will or Anumati of the Purushottama, who is Parameshwara & universal Anumanta.

This consummation is also attended by a ripening realisation of the Divine Master. Formerly I realised the Impersonal God, Brahma or Sacchidan[an]dam separately from the Personal, Ishwara or Sacchidananda. Brahma has been thoroughly realised in its absolute infinity & as the material & informing presence of the world & each thing it contains, yat kincha jagatyam jagat. But the sense of the One has not been applicable utterly & constantly, — there have been lacunae in the unitarian consciousness, partly because the Personality has not been realised with equal thoroughness or as one with the Impersonality. Hence while dwelling on the Paratman, the mind, whenever the Jivatman manifested itself in the sarvam Brahma, has been unable to assimilate it to the predominant realisation and an element of Dwaitabhava,—of Visishtadwaita has entered into its perception. Even when the assimilation is partly effected, the Jiva is felt as an individual & local manifestation of the impersonal Chaitanya and not as the individual manifestation of Chaitanya as universal Personality. On the other hand the universal Sri Krishna or Krishna-Kali in all things animate or inanimate has been realised entirely, but not with sufficient constancy & latterly with little frequency. The remedy is to unify the two realisations & towards this consummation I feel the Shakti to be now moving.

The action of this triple dasyam is now characterised by a harmony of shama & tapas. This harmony has been hitherto impossible owing to the excess of mental tejas which sought perpetually to energise the action & bring about a more rapid or a more perfect fruit, thus impairing the shama which consists in anarambha, shanti & the perfect realisation by the Jnata-Purusha of his own passivity. The state of action vacillated from tamasic vairagya or udasinata to rajasic heat & fervour of action. All this was an importation from outside, from the annamaya devatas, but a constant importation. With the greater perfection of the dasyam this pendulary vacillation between inertia & disturbance is sinking to rest and the hour of intense (chanda) activity in the Prakriti with perfect anarambha in the Purusha is drawing nearer. The third power of action, Prakasha, which is as a light on the path to the tapas, showing it its own works, is more & more active, but not perfect, although rounding towards perfection.

This prakasha has been for the most part vijnanamaya, of the nature of discriminative & selective knowledge, acting directly by discrimination & selection as the first process of thought. For instance, I see a bird flying & I discriminate & select the farther course of its flight by an act of determining illumination—I do not see the future flight with the self-vision as I see the present flight with the physical vision & so know about it. I see only the truth (ritam, satyam) about this flight, satyam of it, not sat, its truth of existence, not its existence. But this day I realised more certainly what I had previously perceived by fragmentary experience, that the basis of all knowledge is atmaprakasha of sat; by chit, that is to say, or sat luminous to itself. I began to see first the thing-in-itself in the Brahman (whether thing objective or thing subjective) and as part of that vision idea or truth of the thing self-manifest.

The obstacles of vijnana-siddhi and of all subjective siddhi are no longer in myself but in the circumambient annamaya prakriti, not that attached to myself as an atmosphere by my past karma (for that is purified), but the general prakriti. It is from this besieging environment that imperfections expelled from myself reenter temporarily my system or the old regularised sanskaras of Nature which we miscall laws stand in the way of progress,—eg illness, unease, thirst, limitation of power or knowledge, inactivity of power or knowledge. I feel, for instance, no thirst in the body but a sense of dryness around me & besieging me, but not clinging as it does when in the karmadeha or personal environment; I have sometimes to drink in order to satisfy these devatas. When I feel no bodily chill or discomfort in exposure, sleeping out uncovered in the cold wind at night, yet around me there is an unease & a shrinking which I cannot yet ignore. The obstruction & limitation, however, are no longer jealous & malignant, but the voluntary or involuntary expression of the natural incompetence or unwillingness of the annamaya devatas to new movements to which they are unaccustomed & which hurt their ease & their egoism.

Notable Lipis today were these—

1. Fidelity to the duties laid down by the speech. (This lipi pronounces a principle of the new action which has already begun to be fulfilled).
2. The heart and nature of the child (including the animal), the strength of the Titan, the appetites of the old giants, the intellectuality of Gods.
3. Kindly in intention, tragic in result. (Dharma in the Kali).
4. Finality to the tejas. (One of the immediate siddhis to be expected in the yoga.[)]
5. Rupadrishti.
6 Thaumaturgy.

Yesterday, the 30th, there were four apposite sortileges which have an importance of the future and are besides worth noting for their entire appositeness to thought or circumstance.

(1) विरजानलजमग्निं धार्यं प्रोक्तं महर्षिभिः। औपासनसमुत्पन्नं गृहस्थेभ्यो विशेषतः॥ Brihajjabala.

Agni is the Tapas (Chit-tattwa in energy) & the activity of the tapas is the most important siddhi now in progress—an activity born of a fire purified from rajas. The disappearance of rajasic tendency is now being finally [effected][1] (the tamasic still lasts), even the last dust of it in the annamaya environment is being swept up and out. This purified tapas is that to be contained by the jnani in me. But in addition the tapas born of devotional self-dedication is needed, especially, by the karmi—the first belongs to the realisation of the nirgun sad Brahman, the second to the conception of universal Narayana. The first by itself makes for Sannyasa, the second for divine activity. The reference is to the passing away of the mere sannyasochita bhava in its last remnants at the end of June, the fulfilment of tyaga, the passing beyond the limitations of the sadhan of the Gita to the sadhan of the Veda. It is true this had already been effected in essence, but the last tendencies in the annamaya mind to the sanskaras of asceticism & mere renunciation have only now expired.

(2) उक्थं प्राणो वा उक्थं प्राणो हीदं सर्वमुत्थापयत्युद्धास्मादुक्थविद् वीरस्तिष्ठत्युक्थस्य सायुज्यं सलोकतां जयति य एवं वेद॥ Brihad Aranyaka.

Uktham (prayer) is here the ishita and to show me that ishita (lipsa without bondage) is one with prayer, the latter rose again at night at the moment of the final establishment of the dasya and the Adeshavani. Ishita is the force of life creating things, raising up from weakness to strength, from nonbeing to being[;] by ishita the soul rises up in strength and climbs from this lower condition to the high divine condition & becomes no longer of this world where ishita weakens into wish & longing but of the world of the Isha and in touch with the conditions of that state of Swarajya in which the ishita is the natural state of the soul. The sortilege was an answer to the depression caused by asraddha and an assurance of fulfilment by ishita.

(3) अन्नं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्। Taittiriya.

---

[1] *MS* affected

The financial condition is now at its worst,—a debt of Rs 300, money almost at an end, all sources either denied or suspended & everybody who could help temporarily in a similar condition of destitution. The sortilege came as an answer to the anxiety in the annamaya mind about the sharirayatra.

(4) तत्कुलमाचक्षते यस्मिन्कुले भवति य एवं वेद य उ हैवंविदा स्पर्धतेऽनुशुष्यत्यनुशुष्य हैवान्ततो म्रियत इत्यध्यात्मं। Brihad Aranyaka.

An answer to doubts about the activity of ill-wishers.

July 2d

Nothing of decisive importance today. The vani is active. It seems that the faculty of rapid interpretation of the rupas, lipis etc is being finally established and there is greater firmness of the trikaldrishti. There is stress in the lipi on the word "prodigy", which seems to be prophetic in its nature. The symbols of physical ananda have been determined and were repeatedly shown—a butterfly for kamananda, (this is of long standing), a wasp for raudrananda, a bee or honeyfly for tivrananda, the long Indian bee for vishayananda, a moth for vishayananda.[2]

Lipi—25th George—first end of existing state of destiny.

I may note that a former sortilege occurring after the Titanic disaster and pointing to fresh disasters in the struggle of machinery with Nature, which I had supposed to be false or falsely interpreted, is today vindicated. No less than four accidents (three fatal, one extensive) in two days in aviation! It is noteworthy that I was wondering only a day or two ago at the comparative freedom of Germany from these accidents—but these accidents (except one, I think) are in Germany.

8, 9 and 7 constantly reappear in the lipi. They indicate the chief points on which the struggle with the objective resistance is now concentrated. The secondary utthapana commenced feebly on the first attained on the night of the second some strength. There was perfect mahima & laghima (perfect in nature, not intensity) in the legs, but the defect of anima prevented sustainment for more than 15 minutes. In the arms it is general adhogati working through unease and general hostile physical sanskara that opposes; the special defect of anima is less prominent, though entirely absent only in one or two positions. Even in those the adhogati works through kala to recreate it.

---

[2] *The first or, less likely, the second occurrence of "vishayananda" is a slip for "vaidyutananda".—Ed.*

July 3d

The barrier offered in the annamaya prakriti to all decisive fulfilment of the vijnana-chatusthaya (the siddhis of knowledge & power incidental to the opening of the ideal faculty) [has][3] at last given way. The power of trikaldrishti in those movements which are nearest to the prakamya and vyapti (perception and reception of the truth about objects by sanyama on the objects or contact in consciousness with them), [has][4] triumphed over the obstruction. Instead of a difficult choice of the truth, past, present & future, about things & happenings, a choice hampered by a siege of false suggestions from the physical gods in the material environment, the suggestions themselves are coming to be automatically true. The vijnanam which is satyam ritam is conquering the last fields of mentality & imposing its satyadharma or law of self-existent truth which is necessary for perfect vision of things, satyadharmaya drishtaye. The movement is not yet entirely triumphant, for the enemy returns to the charge and clouds the siddhi with the anritam, but in the siddhi now there is fixity &, though not perfect continuity, yet a prevailing persistence. The enemy cannot prevent the persistence. The condition of success appears to be perfect passivity. If there is any arambha, any setting about to know, mental activity with its tangled web of error starts again; Truth, the satyam, is idea true in itself, self-revealing[,] atmaprakasha, not acquired, not in any way arrived at. The mind with all its guessing, inferring, discovering can only reach a marred & mutilated truth inevitably companioned by error. This breaking of the barrier was presaged by the lipi. "The difficulty is conquered."

---

[3] *MS* have

[4] *MS* have

The siddhis of power have also begun their decisive action but less perfectly than the trikaldrishti of prakamya and vyapti. There are four tendencies that prevent its proper action & effectuality; (1) the tendency to miss the object of the prayoga, as when Pallas Athene turns the shafts from the hero of her preference, so that the aishwarya or vashita does not act upon it at all; (2) the tendency because of habit, previous purpose or tendency or mere recalcitrance to a novel suggestion to pay no heed to it, to shake off the shaft of suggestion from the mental body & go on one's way, if one is in motion or remain firm, if static, as if the suggestion had not reached; by the sukshmadrishti or by some involuntary movement the hitting of the mark by the force aimed at it can be discerned; (3) the tendency to confusion in the mental current of suggestion & mechanical opposition in the body leading to delay of obedience or deviation from the time, place & circumstance enjoined; (4) the tendency for adverse circumstance to interfere & divert the faultless or generally successful fulfilment begun. However, the frequency of obedience & frequent exactness of the action show the emergence of the successful Shakti. It is notable that both these activities are confined in their success for the most part to the immediate happenings around me of a trifling nature. In the rest there is only a general pressure and ultimate success and a capricious success in details. The therapeutic power has evidently gained in force.

The vijnanamaya articulate thought had established its free activity regardless of all doubt & opposition in the mind, but it had not decisively proved its truth & vijnanamaya nature by unvarying result in the objective & subjective happenings of Yoga & life; but this movement of proof has now powerfully commenced. Drishti is also preparing a decisive movement both in lipi & in crude rupa.

The lipi "After dinner the siddhi will take a new turn", came in the afternoon & was fulfilled duly like the script of the morning. The new turn proved to be the final establishment of the first chatusthaya where it was still weak (in the hasyam or active atmaprasada) and its independence even in the annamaya prakriti & its last outworks of favourable & unfavourable happening (mangalam & amangalam). There are a few recesses of environing material mind in which sensitiveness to the apriyam survives feebly, but these touches have only a brief persistence. The second chatusthaya is preparing its liberation in the defective points (kalyanasraddha, faith in the adesha, ishwarabhava, etc), but as yet only the sraddha in the yoga siddhi is decisively fulfilled. The reason in the annamaya mind opposes the perfect sraddha, the damyam in the annamaya temperament opposes the ishwarabhava.

July 4th

The lipi is not yet entirely conquered by the Satyam. Especially when the doubt about the adesha siddhi rises, it gives or suggests false prophecies but the falsehood is usually noted, now, at the time & no longer deceives. Today's notable lipis

(1) Fullest satisfaction of the heart next after the fulfilment of the laughter (hasyam). It is notable that the fulfilment of hasyasiddhi has recently been predicted with great persistence by the lipi "laughter", which I could not then understand. Cf the old lipi, "Safety"

(2) Ekas tisthati viras tisthati.

(3) Sadi Carnot.

(4) Disorder — at once; yes.

The last script had reference to the prolonged attack on the first two chatusthayas & also on the new siddhis of the third which had produced in the annam some disorder, mental activity & vague uneasiness; it predicted the immediate removal of the disorder by restoration of passivity & was at once fulfilled. The attack lasted or recurred throughout the day until this script appeared with its immediate fulfilment.

The vividness, frequency & simultaneity of the lipi have now been established in fixity, with continuity; but are not yet invariable or intense. Different forms of lipi, chhayamay, varnamaya are becoming more frequent (called in the prophetic script lipikaushalya). Along with this successful issue from a long & weary struggle the details of the lipi are becoming more & more independent of mental activity, — eg le resultat decisif where the annamaya mind had blunderingly suggested decisive; the words suggested by the mental thought voice are increasingly rejected and other unexpected words substituted even when the lipi appears progressively and not with an unexpected spontaneity; etc. Automatic script recommenced today showed a greater truthfulness in the few statements made about the next movements of the yoga but is still capable of exaggeration. The vani has not yet entirely established its satyam to the mind. It is still taking up all imperative thought-voices suggestive of action & the articulate Thought is taking up all voices suggestive of knowledge. When this movement proceeds, there is a slight return to the old inefficiency of phrase, ambiguity of statement or exaggeration of suggestion; but these faults are only reproduced to be removed & not, as used to be the case, to have bhoga & be exhausted.

The siddhis of power progress steadily. One of the difficulties is now removed; the power hits its mark, & where unfavourable circumstances intervene, favourable circumstances have begun to appear to counteract them. But refusal, delay & perversion are still common. Those on whom the power is used for progress in Yoga (S. [Srinivasachari] Bh. [Bharati] Sn. [Saurin] Bj. [Bijoy]) give frequent proofs now of success of siddhi & especially of vyapti of the shakti & jnanam in my or of my thoughts, but this siddhi is not yet decisively regularised.

Mental bhukti is now complete (with the exception of adverse events where there is more of samata than bhukti) & is invariable in rasagrahanam, usual in bhoga and, nowadays, occasional as ananda. But the shuddha ananda attended by the realisation of universal saundaryam often fails temporarily, owing to the loss of hold on the inner man and the dwelling on the physical appearance instead,—when this happens, and it happens only with regard to human faces, there is a fall in the general tone of the bhukti which tends to lose hold of the second & third intensities of bhoga (râtha & ratna) and descend to the rati or lowest intensity or else even to go back from bhoga to mere rasagrahana. But the lapse is never long sustained.

Physical bhukti of the indriyas is well established except for the occasional failure of chakshush ananda in the movement above described and a failure in certain tastes of the palate,—the latter exceptional. Sparshananda is still confined mainly to the low state of the rati, though well capable of the higher states, and is hampered by the persistence of discomfort by prolonged exposure to excessive heat, exposure to cold above a certain degree in the state of sleep or after sleep when the nervous vitality is lowered, the intenser touches of pain or poisonous irritation. Thirst is being once more expelled, but hunger is again active. The five physical anandas occur occasionally sahaituka, but the ahaituka activities have for the time being been suspended along with progress in the other physical siddhis. Sleep is strong, also adhogati of weariness, denial of anima, refusal of the saundaryam, persistence of the stray survivals of the phantasm of illness-symptoms. These seem, however, to be losing all hold except on the stomach & central functions, where they are attempting to resist final eviction (fullness, tejasic unease, touches of nausea) or to prevent fixity of siddhi. Visrishti is stronger than it has been for a long time past. Utthapana of neck maintained for about 10 or 15 minutes, finally overcome by pressure of adhogati.

July 5th & 6th

A day of considerable and constant progress. Two predictions were made during its course of the progress apportioned to it, the first in script after an opening activity of telepathy and thought-reading, the second in thought and perception. The script ran, "More advance in vyapti & prakamya of thought; decisive effect in siddhi of rupadrishti. Progress in visvagati. Physical siddhi in 6. 7 & 8 (secondary)". The prediction was fulfilled, but perfunctorily without any generosity or amplitude of effect. It was replaced by the second prediction which promised the beginning of a second totality of the third chatusthaya on a larger scale & with a stronger effectiveness heralded by the extension of trikaldrishti, prakamya, vyapti and the siddhis of power to things distant in place & time and a preparation of totality in the fourth & fifth chatusthayas.

There has long been a free & successful telepathy (vyapti) & reading (prakamya) of the characters, feelings & states of mind of others and for longer still an elementary perception & vyapti of their actions. But the thought contents of the minds of others have been hidden from me except occasionally or in abnormal states of my being when it was concentrated in anger, apprehension or sympathy. Or it would be truer to say that I have read & received plentifully the thoughts of others, but as I now perceive without knowing their nature & origin,—because the discriminative faculty & the sraddha or shastra of the thing were absent. Today, however, the veil was lifted, the barrier finally broken. Not only did telepathy & thought-reading abound, but in a single day the proof of correctness began to be ample. Things distant in time & place have also begun to yield up the secret of their present, future & immediate past, even in the rough of their distant past. Proofs have simultaneously begun to be vouchsafed. Things have even been perceived, denied by the object of the drishti or by apparent events & then proved in spite of denial on more ample evidence. Nevertheless the action is not yet perfectly free; the power of obstruction in the annamaya nature can no longer entirely prevail, but the will persists. Trikaldrishti is still hampered by revivals of the lower movement, when incorrect suggestion resumes for a short time its sway. There are also elements of error in the successful movement, mostly of the nature of mithyagraha or mithyaropa,—misconception by which a tendency or passing thought is taken for an intention or an intention for the thing that will happen etc and misplacement by which the thought or action of one is taken for the thought or action of another or falsely placed in time, locality or order of circumstance.

The siddhis of power increase always in force and in frequency & accuracy of fulfilment, but are not yet as habitually successful as the siddhis of knowledge.

[*Five blank pages intervene in the manuscript between the above entry and the one that follows.*]

July 13th.

Morning.

Experience of perfect unity of shamas, prakasha & tapas first in trikaldrishti, then in action. It was found that the sole error (of final result) in a particular drishti was owing to haste of mental tapas taking the main tendency or intention as the thing that was bound to happen. The right details were given by vyapti-prakamya of the immediate future, but were not accepted by the mind till they were fulfilled. The tapas is not yet chanda. A great & supreme passivity remains in which traigunyamaya utsaha and nirveda try to subsist discouraging as yet the tapas and prakasha. Only shamas is, as yet, entirely victorious. There is no longer any attempt by the manasa buddhi to forecast action; it recognises the impotence of speculation.

Ananda Mimansa begun last night; the first adhyaya completed this morning.

The proof of preparation of beauty in a very initial stage has during the last few days at last begun to appear.

Strongly increased intensity of kamananda and much more continuous and pronounced general tendency to that ananda with its concomitants. Sometimes the force that commences is the tivra. Premananda based on realisation of God as every separate existence animate or inanimate re-becomes, suddenly active and strong.

General trikaldrishti but without proper arrangement or nishchaya therefore groping & incorrect in detail is becoming normal. The Shakti has begun to move towards normality of correct detail. Power applied more perseveringly to the bodily siddhi seems to be producing more consistent results. The apana is being dominated, resistance to saundaryam relaxed, urdhwagati tending to recover from its prostration. Three longstanding aishwaryas were fulfilled yesterday & today in public events.

Continuity of record promises to become more common in the samadhi.

The first chatusthaya is now acting in its completeness by completeness of samata & the hasyam no longer depends on mangala upalabdhi. The body is also being possessed by samata & universal ananda even in what was formerly mere pain or discomfort.

Sahaituka vishayananda is resuming its old occasional strength which now promises to be normal. The others are also more common. Nirvisesha (ahaituka, but another term must be used) shuddhananda seems about to be established and it is asserted that it is established within and in the body.

Aishwarya about Pé [Poincaré] successful; it remains to be seen whether he keeps his seat.

Today's predictions.

1. Passivity united with tapas and prakasha; removal of moral tamas and partially of mental tamas. Fulfilled; there is shamas, but no tamas except the uncertainty in the mind and a vague tendency to asraddha about the Adeshasiddhi & about the rapidity of the Yogasiddhi.

2. Ananda increased in the body; shuddhananda strengthened. Fulfilled

3 Health increased, linga and stomach strengthened in their chakras, apana dominated by prana.

4. Adhogati dominated by urdhwagati.

(In these two respects it remains to be seen whether the apparent improvement is real & permanent.)

5 Beauty prepared. (Fulfilled with the slightness proper to this stage)

6. Vijnanam strengthened in all its parts—beginnings of rupadrishti in dense & developed forms. (The latter is still doubtful)

7. Karmakama strengthened. (Not apparent.)

8 Kalikrishna strengthened. (Fulfilled)

9 Adeshasiddhi.

The meaning & fulfilment of the last prediction are not apparent.

Lipi "Today physical siddhi begins", fulfilled.

July 14th

Realisation of God in all attended by shuddhananda (in the state of bhoga like all the mental anandas) both nirvisesha and savishesha. These anandas (mental bhoga of all kinds & the physical bhogas) seem to be finally established & incapable of overthrow or effective breach by the nirananda. They have an air of being pratisthita. Only the nirvisesha sharirika anandas are intermittent and obstructed. The nirvisesha shuddha & premabhoga are, however, still dependent on the perfect realisation of Sarvavastushu Ishwara.

There is strong tendency to deposit of prithivi & visrishti, & if the apana is dominated by the prana, it is as one who still successfully struggles with his assailant. The same is true of all the physical siddhis that have at all advanced, they are attacking, sometimes prevailing, sometimes in possession, but not yet masters except in the suddhi, bhukti & mukti (the latter most imperfect of the three).

Yesterday by a sudden opening of faculty Sanscrit prose, even of the Kadambari type, which was until the last reading difficult to understand, troublesome & wearying to the brain, has become perfectly easy & intelligible at the first reading without labour. A similar result is coming in Sanscrit poetry but more slowly. Prakasha & tapas in the brain have increased, tamas is passing away.

It is now apparent that kama was greatly strengthened yesterday & karma in bhava and power, but not, apparently, in actuality.

The experience of the afternoon shows that ananda is not yet beyond effective breach by the nirananda & that the samatahasyam, though now normal, can still be interrupted, the traigunya become once more active feebly in rajas & by the use of force on the Jiva in his system, but strongly in tamas & with the consent of the Jiva. The old device of insisting, against the Jiva's will, on flattering statement & promise which no longer seems supported by experience, has again been used.

The exact trikaldrishti accurate in every detail or almost every detail seems to be becoming more normal, but is still very far from being habitual or even common; but it does not need so exceptional a movement of tapas as formerly; it comes, when it comes, easily & naturally

The central chakra was stronger than ever before for a short time this morning & almost perfect in type, but collapsed under pressure. The force of arogya in the stomach has not yet removed the bhautic symptoms & unease attendant on imperfect assimilation. Apana is active & dominant in the jalavisrishti.

The element of rajas in the daily written predictions is now clearly revealed by the extravagance of today's predictions which run as follows.

1. General physical siddhi established, particularly health, urdhwagati & ananda, in their types, not yet in unbroken possession.

2. Physical mukti & bhukti become more apparent.

3. Vijnana liberated from its limitations, not entirely, but able to move towards the brihat.

4 Adeshasiddhi & totality of the fifth chatusthaya.

The bhashasiddhi of Sanscrit prose, tested, proved to be well established.

It is now suggested that the predictions were not in themselves intended to indicate the actual fulfilment during the day but the occupation of the shakti with these things during the day & afterwards. In this case it will be a general programme, rather than a prediction. But it was preceded by a phrase which fixed the understanding in the mind in a different sense.

The attack of asiddhi in the afternoon was not entirely lifted during the day, especially in the intelligence (buddhi) which remained under the control of the tamas. Rupadrishti of ghana & developed form was active for a time, but the drishti still subject to the old defect, the vivid is unstable & the stable dim or ill-defined.

July 15th

This morning Samata is perfectly restored and there is a strong increase of the suddhananda with a manifestation of the faery element in the beauty of things, the sense of their beauty of ananda, the pleasure taken in them as visions of his weaving of God. This transcends or contains the beauty of guna proper to the vijnanam; it depends not on knowledge-perception of the separate guna & yatharthya of things, but on being-perception in chit of the universal ananda of things.

The written prediction today:—

1. Finality of shuddhananda.
2. Increase of sharira ananda.
3. Progress of health and utthapana (health in linga & stomach)
4. Preparation of saundaryam.
5. Kali Krishna (finality of mental dasyam and sraddha in the guidance,—not in the truth of everything stated.)
6. Karma & kama increase.
7. Trikaldrishti notably, powers less, samadhi somewhat developed.

The fifth has been immediately fulfilled; the personality of the balaka Krishna has taken possession of the sources of knowledge and communicates through the vani & vani script & even through the thought and the lipi; only the perceptions still belong to the Prakriti. The bala bhava (with a touch of the balaka) is established in the Shakti.

The general tendency to kamananda & shariraananda is increased & more persistent but does not yet pervade & hold the body, but only moves about it in brief & rapid wave-movements. The weakness of the nabhi chakra is the chief obstacle

Rupadrishti increases and instances of perfect dense crude & dense developed have manifested, but the latter are without stability.

Shuddhananda is universal; questioned at first by the objection of physical ugliness, it has been liberated by the perception of the faery grotesque, the place of the crude, the unformed, the uncouth & the fantastic in the scheme of the universal beauty. The vulgar is the effaced and has the charm of that effacement.

The movement of the intellect in difficult Sanscrit poetry is much easier and stronger & sometimes the vijnanamay knowledge manifests (smarta sruti) with regard to the meaning of unknown words.

The primary utthapana is now active in removal of general weariness & alasyam, but still subject to the necessity of ample sleep & change of occupation. Health is dominating the defects still existent in the two chakras. Kama is more settled & the general tendency to the ananda continues (afternoon).

In the trikaldrishti freedom of movement and the frequency of the sruti (which occupies at present all the means of knowledge along with the smriti) are now established, unhampered by the purely provisional nature of the sraddha conceded. This sraddha proceeds from the imagination, heart & general judgment but is refused by the buddhi which trusts only the smriti & drishti, where there is no prominence of sruti. Prakamya-vyapti is strong & frequently or even generally justified. The powers are not yet acting noticeably.

Lipi (earlier). "In four days trikaldrishti will be perfect."

Trikaldrishti is being finally liberated from the tejasic movement which instead of waiting for knowledge & allowing it to come, tries to find out & fix the truth, preferring speculation to sight. The general correctness of the trikaldrishti was first made quite normal in those movements which closely follow the incident from step to step as it [proceeds],[5] then in the prediction of the event before it begins; afterwards precise correctness of detail was brought to the level of a normal movement (not invariable, but natural, easy & frequent). Next the powers were applied to detail first of time, then of place, then of circumstance and precision of fulfilment was made normal; but the resistance here is greater & renders success less frequent.

By several lipis the extension of the siddhi to trailokyadrishti was promised for the day, especially in samadhi. The first step was to attach a perception to rupas seen of their meaning & circumstances. Subsequently in samadhi a series of visions of Patala occurred, brief but some of them representing continuous incidents & scenes, eg, a ghat of many hundred steps descending to an abysmal river, small watersnakes darting through a river, — all the scenes in shadow or dimness.

Kama strong & the kamachakra tested. Primary utthapana & strength of the chakras was maintained throughout the day. In the evening the vani was active in the highest degree in the buddha. Tendency of sharira ananda was maintained, attended usually with continuous incipient ananda more or less pronounced, but not intense.

---

[5] *MS* precedes

Siddhi in sharira mukti was promised & given by positive ananda in heat & cold, and also, so far [as] could be seen by a strong instance in pain. The ananda in cold was especially strong & unmixed; that in heat was qualified by the mildness of the heat inflicted. Farther experience is necessary.

Perfect dense & developed crude forms have at last effected their power of manifestation.

July 16th

Dasyam more strongly confirmed, by emphasis on all action being for Srikrishna's ananda & bhoga, not for the Shakti's and by passive acceptance of the truth of the vani as superior to the apparent experience of the moment. Knowledge by sruti has begun to be proved & accepted. The process of finally manifesting the trikaldrishti in things distant has begun, the automatic unsought knowledge proving always truer than the mental opinions, inferences etc. The increased strength of the kamachakra strongly tested last night, has endured the test so far. Visrishti in the morning, but the bhautic symptoms were slight.

Programme.

1. Trikaldrishti confirmed & extended; trailokyadrishti & rupadrishti
2. Powers strengthened.
3 Samadhi largely developed
4. Utthapana & health carried forward—
5 Ananda established in an intenser movement.
6. Madhurabhava of Kali Krishna.
7 Karma & Kama strengthened.

It may be noted that the stranding of the Persia begins the fulfilment of a recorded sortilege which has since been believed to be false. There are numerous instances of such belated fulfilment of old lipis, predictions in the thought, declarations in the vani. The postponement seems to have had for its purpose the indulgence & final refutation of the asraddha so firmly seated in the logical intellect.

The day was given up to an attack in great force by the Asiddhi disturbing or veiling all the chatusthayas. The strength of the kamachakra began to weaken in the morning & collapsed in the evening. The utthapana persisted almost untouched and the health though attacked held its own; the general ananda only wavered a little in the evening except the inner ahaituka etc in events which was entirely disturbed, but the sharira only came by intervals or persisted as a faint tendency. In the evening, however, there was a brief intense movement. After a violent struggle the powers prevailed over resistance in the evening. Trikaldrishti, likewise. Both attempted to move forward beyond normal action to invariability, but after a time the attempt was suspended. Trailokyadrishti was active, especially in the samadhi, rupadrishti also, but in the chitra, sthapatya & cruder forms and no advance was made. Samadhi advanced considerably. Yesterday's lipi, "story" explained at the time as the connected tracing out of a story in the night in dream-samadhi was fulfilled. One or more scenes are presented & the thought traces the development of the connected incidents, often beginning before the appearance of the scene, to the conclusion. In the afternoon there was a struggle between sleep & swapna samadhi, the latter prevailing for the greater part. At night a rapid succession of brilliant visions presented to the eye scenes from the swargabhumis generally, those of the ananda bhumi especially. There is a strong tendency for the disconnected dream with its incoherence & perverted memories to disappear. Sleep was reduced to four hours in the night. The promise was given during the day to confine it henceforth to a six hours maximum to be reduced successively to 4, $2\frac{1}{2}$ and nil. The Kalibhava was developed in the terms of the second chatusthaya, Mahakali, Mahasaraswati with a previous return to Maheshwari & Mahakali.

July 17th

Programme

1. Renewal of the force of the siddhi in the body
2. Forward movement of the vijnanam
3. Fifth chatusthaya prepared for life.

The force at work today in a state of depression, internal ananda wanting. The siddhis were rather in a process of modification than of advance, except the trikaldrishti which is becoming more & more the normal action of the mind, but still chequered with the tejasic habit of exaggerating or misplacing a perception. Speculation recurs frequently. The tapas was depressed in order that the fifth chatusthaya might be arranged for action & the tendency to personal use of power in karma eliminated. The siddhis of power encountered a great resistance, but they were usually successful, though not in the detail. Samadhi with visions of Anandaloka, the swargabhumis, Earth & Swarga. Lipi about the King. Evidences of preparation of saundaryam still slight and indecisive but no longer doubtful. Sleep at night six hours & short sleep in daytime.

July 18th

Programme.

1 Preparation of karma (sahitya, bhasha, philosophy, nirukta, prerana)
" of kama (knowledge, bhava, outflow)
Madhurabhava of dasyam in action.

2. Beauty prepared, health & utthapana maintained, physical ananda insisted on

3. Vijnanam made invariable, powers enforced in detail, samadhi extended.

Sahitya was resumed today, the Life Divine commenced; also the systematic study of Magha, an orderly arrangement of material (छ् dhatus) for the Structure of Sanscrit Speech and a review of past Prerana records begun. The insistence on physical ananda was not strong, but health & utthapana were maintained & in the evening the physical capacity of surfeit was, momentarily at least, conquered. The realisation of action as movement of Shakti enjoyed by Purusha came strongly in active dasya with arrangement in knowledge of the kama. There was one remarkable instance of outflow. Vijnanam is now acting invariably, spontaneously, not in particular instances & by special tapas as formerly, but not yet perfectly. The Powers overbore opposition & acted upon detail as well as generally, with great frequency in the evening. Extension of samadhi was not noticed in the swapna condition, but in the jagrat there was a temporary living in the pranamay jagat and a strong sensation of the vibrations of its earth & sense of its atmosphere. The annamaya self became finally trigunatita, indifferent to the action of the three gunas, not yet anantaguna. Tejasic tapas is dead in action, feebly phantomlike & ineffective in knowledge, but tamas is still strong, though the depression of the annamaya system, persistent recently, has been modified. Internal ananda is yet weak & overshadowed; only the buddhi keeps its grasp on the Anandam Brahma. Sleep at night six hours, in daytime half an hour.

July 19th

Programme.

1. Continuation of karma (Bhasha, Sahitya, nirukta, prerana, kavya); preparation of kama with strong action of madhurabhava; Krishnakali finally realised in triple dasya.
2. Health & utthapana to move forward and the intenser ananda to become frequent & normal. Saundarya prepared
3. Vijnana action to be perfected, action of powers rendered invariable and swapna-samadhi completed in its deficient parts.

Morning—

The vijnanam has by a greater activity and extension arrived at a point when the truth underlying every impression & idea in the mind or visiting the mind can be & is perceived, but owing to a tamasic obstruction it cannot always reveal the proper source & placement at the time of the drishti; consequently the mind has still time to misplace the truth & by misplacement turn it into an error. This is especially the case in the trikaldrishti that is not of prakamya vyapti in its nature but independently revelatory. It is now proved beyond doubt that the mind invents nothing, but merely transmits, records and interprets, & interpretation not being its proper function is more liable to misinterpret than to understand correctly. The activity of vijnana is not yet perfect, but it has moved nearer to perfection. The powers are already more active, successful & frequent.

Karma—The Life Divine continued, Rigveda resumed, nirukta & prerana slightly, kavya touched, Bhasha proceeded with. The difficulty of understanding Magha now only persists, ordinarily, where the meaning of important words is unknown. Triple dasya was strongly confirmed in the mind in relation to the Krishnakali bhava. The health & utthapana appear to be a little stronger & the intenser ananda occurs normally in place of the old tendency with inceptual ananda but its frequency was not great & is still strongly resisted. Reading of lipi in samadhi which was deficient, has been confirmed, but continuity of record was not clearly established. The vijnana action is perfected in itself, but still weak in force and not always perfect in action owing to the emergence of yet another layer of unreformed annamaya personality. The reform of this layer proceeded yesterday. The weakness is especially in the fluctuation from ananda vani & vijnana thought to buddha vani. Sleep 6 hours at night; in daytime swapna & sushupta samadhi.

July 20th

Programme.

1. Karma (sahitya, kavya, bhasha, nirukta, prerana); kama strengthened, madhurabhava & triple dasyam intensified.
2. Intenser ananda made invariable, health & utthapana strengthened.
3. Vijnana, powers & samadhi strengthened—continuous record developed.

The record from today resumes the character of a communication and includes a view of the future as well as of the present and past. Hitherto the programme has been carried out but often with a feeble & uncertain execution. This has to be changed. Especially, today, the force & joy of the soul has to be revived & the tamasic hue cast over it by the uncertainties of the tamasic intelligence removed. It is already too evident that the Yoga will be fulfilled for the tamasic intelligence to deny it any longer, but the denial is now of the rapidity of Yogasiddhi and of the certainty or probability of the Adeshasiddhi. Bhasha & the Life Divine have already been resumed.

Today, yesterday's trikaldrishti that there would be news in the paper today of a fresh Italian attack has been confirmed by the news of cannonade in the Dardanelles & of the ministerial difficulties in Turkey. In this connection it is evident that there is still a slight tejasic influence in the vani colouring the truth with the prepossessions. There is strong resistance to the therapeutic power. The promise of equipment does not materialise. The obstruction to the physical siddhi is stubborn. Even the vijnana is faltering & *"mesquin"* in its action although increasingly general in its truth & frequency. These are the main helps of the tamasic intelligence.

The trikaldrishti is already stronger in its action, though the confused method of working out the details from uncertainty to partly approximate partly complete correctness still continues. The siddhis of power are evidently much stronger & are overbearing in the field of exercise all the resistance brought against them; the only defect is that time is needed &, if time is not given, the prayoga is apt to be fruitless. In the field of life there are plenty of instances of success, but the power of offering a strong & successful resistance still belongs to the annamaya prakriti. Ananda is restored & force is coming to the bhava & the action.

During the day the karma was strengthened—Rodogune revised, prerana liberated from its shackles, nirukta strongly brought forward (छ् roots), the RV. proceeded with and, at night, the collection of materials for the R.V.. Bhasha and Sahitya were continued. The triple dasyam & madhura continue to be intensified. Ananda was made invariable & intenser even in touches of discomfort, but the nirvisesha was only increased in frequency. The third chatusthaya strengthens slowly, but lipi & drishti are at present under a cloud. Five hours sleep at night, a little in daytime.

July 21st

Ananda has been restored, but certainty in the sraddha is at a low ebb & the tamasic intelligence finds still plenty of justification. Today the usual daily programme will not be given. The sixth chatusthaya will now be made permanently manifest in all its parts as a single whole, though not yet a perfect whole; still intensity alone will be wanting. The literary work will in all its parts be brought to a regular activity during the next few days. Outward work will commence in the same interval. The third chatusthaya in the next three days will be liberated from pettiness & want of force, the fourth rise above the tamasic obstruction.

The doing of work in larger masses has begun this morning with the Rigveda. More of this collection of material will be done today, without interfering with other work.

The last suggestion was fulfilled. All the usual work has been done, but the collection of material replaced the usual comment on R.V. Prerana was intermitted. The sixth chatusthaya was rendered vivid & invariable, the fourfold Brahman being seen everywhere in the whole & in each object, very vividly, except when the mind is not free. There is a state in which the infinity of the mind is clouded by preoccupation with a particular idea or subject; the sense of freedom, prakash (transparent luminousness) & lightness is replaced by obscurity & a heavy contraction in the guna of narrowness. This is a remnant of the buddha condition. There is another in which there is a particular movement in mind (special occupation), but the mind itself is infinite[,] free & merely watches its own movement. This is mukti with particular tapas.

The second chatusthaya reemerged in the evening bringing with it a restoration of force & faith (not complete), but this reemergence was clouded afterwards. Health was much stronger, but perfect assimilation is still disputed by the apana, though the latter no longer produces distention of flatulence, but only tries to limit food-capacity, maintain the slowness of assimilation & restore the visrishti which has been discontinued for four days; the jalavisrishti is very strong and insistent. Nirvisesha kamananda in its intenser form, but not so intense as it was at times, is normal & frequent, but not long continued. The vyapti prakamya is becoming more decisive & intense. Samadhi is attacking the discontinuity & momentariness of the visible record,—thought record has already the power of continuity. Sleep for five & a half hours—1 hour in the daytime.

July 22d

Lipi 22.23. indicating these two days as of special importance. Sleep at night, which is tamasic, increases denial of utthapana, moral tamas, strength of apana & all asiddhi; sleep by day, which is strongly charged with samadhi, refreshes & is inclined to be brief. It is evident that the sleep which attacks has its stronghold in the karmadeha and not in the actual body.

Saundaryabodha & Ananda in the outside world are now perfectly established, but relics of asamata remain and momentary tendencies of mental revolt touch the prana & chitta & sometimes the buddhi, ऋत्वा विलीयन्ते. Kalibhava is strong, but has not taken possession of the speech where the old sanskar is powerful. Krishna seems sometimes to remove himself and look out from behind a veil. This presence & absence in myself with its results reveals Christ's state of mind when he complained of being forsaken by God. This is salokya,—sayujya is when there is the same feeling of presence, but of God in contact with us or embracing the soul from outside, not of being in us & part of us, thought different—& yet the same. Sadharmya is well established, but not perfect because of insufficient Ishwarabhava. The relation of Purushottama, Akshara Purusha and Kshara Purusha (Jivatma) is now constantly & vividly seen by me in others more than in myself, although just now it is manifesting in myself. In myself the Purushottama & Kshara Purusha are most vivid to me, in others the Jivatman & Akshara Purusha, while in the world at large (jagati), it is the Purushottama containing the other two in Himself & almost engulfing them—they seem to be merely movements of the Purushottama, parts, layers, aspects of His personality, as indeed they really are. This is because in the jagati & indeed in inanimate beings there is not the ahankara in the buddhi to create a sense of difference. Being more strongly aware of my own remnants of ahankara than that of others,—or, rather being more troubled by my awareness—the Akshara Purusha is less manifest to me than in others, in whom I see the ahankara only as a play of Srikrishna and am not disturbed by it.

The health of assimilation was strongly combated but in the end prevailed—distention, air-filled ether, is still the weapon of offence; also a relic of skin-irritation, exceedingly superficial, but persistent has reappeared since day before yesterday. Sleep was reduced to four hours and a half at night, none in the day. Nirvisesha kamananda became insistent & long continuous in the evening & up till 11 pm, but its first intensity was not maintained. It has, however, always a tendency to thrill & chandata or tivrata which was absent to the inceptual manifestation. The general tendency is strong & persistent. The signs of development of saundaryam are becoming clearer and more decisive, but none is as yet victoriously emergent; though one or two are on the point of it.

Scenes of the future in samadhi are manifesting & nearer to the antardarshi jagrat condition which has long been deprived of all but very dim images. There is a frequent replacement of perception of sthula by perception of prana values—eg a strong, almost violent pranamaya oscillation (throbbing & swaying) physically felt in chair & table when the physical chair & table were only given a slight vibration by a gentle motion of one seated on the table. The chair although detached from the table & connected only through my body shared strongly in the pranamaya disturbance. The senses tend to confuse the two & feel the chair and table physically moving, but the viveka having taken possession of the manas prevent[s] the sensations from succumbing to the error of the physical sense.

The most important & decisive results were in the second and sixth chatusthayas. The Mahakali bhava in Mahasaraswati continent, after being clouded for some time, finally revealed itself as perfectly established and is developing the permanent ugrata, ishwarabhava etc; the ishwarabhava is tending to become independent of the results of activity & to consist in the force & confidence of the activity itself and of the personality manifesting. But also in the trikaldrishti sruti is insisting on self-justification and increasing the self-existent faith which is independent of the misleading twists & turns of immediate result & event. The Mahalakshmi bhava, hitherto absent, is now tending to appear. At first it replaced momentarily the Mahakali which it is intended only to colour without altering its character, afterwards it tended to bring the Mahalaxmi-Mahasaraswati combinations, but eventually it has subordinated itself to the proper Chandibhava. The Mahakali bhava tends to be weakened, but no longer blotted out by the old sanskaras in conversation & after sleep; but it is no longer replaced by Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati, but by an improperly combined quadruple bhava. The Maheshwari (Gauri) pratistha is still too prominent, because the habit of exciting mental tapas, against which the pratistha is an insurance, still lingers, though weakly, as a habit that always revives with the advent of Mahakali. The permanent realisation of the fourfold Brahman is final. The activity of shuddhi, mukti, bhukti is now final in all their parts, though not yet consummate; only the siddhi remains and this is being rapidly brought forward. It is still chiefly hampered in the karma proper to Mahakali & in the outward fulfilment of kama.

July 23d

Today is the day long fixed for the fullness of the third chatusthaya apart from the two later chatusthayas, in so far as its action can be complete without being entirely effective in kama, karma & the body. It is also the day when the movement towards that effectiveness begins. Siddhi of power today is working instantaneously & in detail & the action of all the powers is normal, regular, effective, invariably employed as the chief & proper instrument, but not yet entirely perfect in detail. Bhautasiddhi is working, but still overpowered by adhogati, nor likely to be free till general utthapana overcomes adhogati. Samadhi is still deficient in continuity of visible record. It is supposed that it will round itself off today. The vijnana is now working with force & applying itself both in knowledge & shakti to things of moment. The physical siddhi is engaged in fighting down the tamasic obstruction. Yesterday only a little literary karma was done, as previously announced, nor will anything be done today. The activity of lipi & rupa, almost suspended for a time, is now reviving. In trailokyagati the mind seems to be standing on the doorstep of the pranamaya. Nirvisesha kama Ananda throughout the day was active & the general tendency continuous. The strength of the samadhi was increased & continuous coherent record established in the dream form, of speech, & communication with others on the plane of the Imagination, in the kalpanamayi prakriti of which are the heavens & hells of subjective experience objectivised in sensation (to the sukshma indriyas) but not in annam.

July 24th

A day of reaction in the body, suspension of health in the stomach, activity of bhautic tejas, visrishti (all the results of excess in madya which the nabhichakra failed to bear), cessation of kamananda, failure of utthapana, return of tamasic sleep tendency. The rest of the siddhi proceeded slowly & indeterminately. Epic poetry resumed.

July 25th

Continuation & strong attack of asiddhi, bringing a repetition for an hour of the old tapasic anger, struggle & disturbance — the old confused & misleading voices. Bhasha in Rigveda strengthened, vijnana working normally.

12 OCTOBER – 26 NOVEMBER 1912

Oct 12. 1912. Developed forms to show sufficient stability. Siddhis of power today. Samadhi from tomorrow. *Fulfilled*[1]

Oct 13

The siddhis of power have to be made more powerful and give more rapid and accurate results; the rupadrishti in all its parts to conquer the obstruction finally. The defect of anima has to be minimised. Samadhi to develop rapidly. Ananda to begin to be stable. *Fulfilled.*

Oct. 14.

The physical akash is still rebellious to the lipi, rupa & other drishtis & to all the siddhis which at all depend on the annam. It only gives normally the minimum results and has to be subjected to pressure of the will in order to give all the results attained. Today, it must be made to give up this habit of inductility due to inertia. Today, Ananda stable, intense & constant; Samadhi increased in range & richness; defect of anima (stiffness, in lower limbs especially) disregarded & convinced of its own impotence; siddhis of power to increase in frequency of accurate success; rupa & other drishtis to gain upon the akasha. *Fulfilled*

Tomorrow the direct government will be continuous. Tonight there will be the Ananda of the actual embrace of the daughters of delight. *Fulfilled (last in sukshma)*

Oct 16th

Ananda intensified. Utthapana increased. Adhogati beaten down. Health to emerge

═

---

[1] *Words italicised here and below were written in pencil after the original entry.—Ed.*

Oct. 18th
"Cn R.K" [Communication from Ramakrishna]
Make complete sannyasa of Karma
Make complete sannyasa of thought
Make complete sannyasa of feeling —
This is my last utterance.

Standing orders.
From Me. B.A.[2]
To believe everything, but put it in its place
To will everything, but only await the event & see where it has stumbled
To see everything, but force no drishti.

Oct.[3] 18th

The manomaya activity has to be cleared out before the final step is taken. Today the vijnana will recommence in the afternoon and all the siddhis with it.

Positive Ananda in all things has to be made habitual. From today it will be made complete and extended to the body, but attacks will continue to be made on it. The same with the removal of the manomaya.

From tonight no covering is to be used for the body. *From tomorrow walking in the sun will be steadily practised. This will finish the suddhi, mukti & bhukti.

Hunger & thirst are now only survivals, not imperative; they can be removed by the use of the will instead of by eating.

Fulfilled except the prediction marked *

=

Then the siddhi. Today the shanti has been disturbed and the shakti, because Mahakali had to draw back. From today this will be prevented or, if it comes, resisted & expelled. From tomorrow the third chatusthaya will begin to be absolutely final even in the siddhis of power, but not perfect till the end of the month. From today the physical siddhi will begin to be effective in all its parts. From today the fifth chatusthaya will begin to move towards general progressiveness even in karma & kama.

---

[2] *The significance of this abbreviation is not known. In the Record of 5 December 1912, these same "standing orders" are said to be from "the guiding source". — Ed.*

[3] *Date repeated in MS. — Ed.*

Fulfilled

=

Oct 26 –

Today the siddhi is being reconstituted with a surer basis for the shuddhi & mukti, founded this time in dasyam & shamanvita karma & not in dasyam & shama. Sortilege अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः। स सन्न्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः॥ There was still an oscillation between imperfect tejasic action and karmahin udasinata. This has now been expelled by associating the Mahakali bhava with the karma.

The second chatusthay is imperfectly founded in sraddha; the third yet insecure, deficient in *sani*; the fourth not yet established; the fifth only incipient. The next movement of the siddhi will be to bring "sani" into the third chatusthaya; to establish the fourth; to develop the fifth.

=

Oct. 27th.

The tejas is the chief obstacle to the fulfilment in permanence and completeness of the vijnana-siddhi. The confused remnants of the tejas are being progressively expelled, & the trikaldrishti, jnana and prakamya vyapti are growing – steadily & methodically, but without enthusiasm or any positive ananda, – in precision, correctness & range. This misplacement of circumstance, due to the tejasic attempt in the manas tattwa to fix things instead of seeing them as they are, is diminishing in insistence & effect. In the body tamas, not tejas is the chief enemy, as the nature of the annamaya is tamasic, just as the nature of the manomaya is tejasic.

Anandasiddhi has been reconstituted, the shuddhi & mukti & bhukti with the samata, but the perfection of the second chatusthaya is still to seek. The reason is that although there is sraddha now in the Yoga and in God, there is not sufficient sraddha in the Lilamaya Purusha, & therefore none in the increasing rapidity of the siddhi or in the inevitable and perfect fulfilment of the Adesha.

Nov 10th—

The Script is now liberated from imperfection.

The trikaldrishti is only imperfect from confusion of details & broken relics of the old tejasic overhaste accompanied by suggestions from phantasms of the dead devatas.

The shakti-prayog suffers only by the prematureness of the Mahakali kshiprakarita.

The samadhi is only obscured by the imperfect dharanashakti of the material mind.

The defect of anima is prolonged by the tamas in the body.

These imperfections have to be eliminated.

=

The physical siddhi is yet subject to relapse & temporary dislocation.

=

The subjective foundations of the Adeshasiddhi are now complete, but not yet perfect in solidity, power & range. Its instruments are still imperfectly organised & insufficiently effective in application.

=

Samata siddhi, sraddha, virya, shakti, are perfect except for the defective spot in the Sraddha through which the asiddhi can still enter.

Nov 12th

A period of resistance & denial, ending in revolt, is over now (4.30 pm) & the dasyam emerges from it perfected. The dasyam being perfected, the internal ananda will become stable, subject only to depression by the imperfect sraddha, & the tejas permanently reestablish itself. Knowledge & Power will follow as the result of consistent tejas & saundaryam as the result of physical ananda. The whole will be summed up in Bhoga & Amritam.

The demand that Krishna should gratify the Nature, has disappeared in the last crisis & it was the only demand left,—the demand for satya & siddhi. The literary work is now being done, faultlessly in manner, faultlessly in substance, almost without fault in style.

This perfection must be extended by the involved method to all other parts of the karma.

=

Nov 13.

The dasyam and internal ahaituka ananda being now permanently assured, the tejas has to be made equally firm and continuous. For this purpose the sraddha has to be perfectly restored — and this must first be done in the trikaldrishti, aishwarya & ishita. These must be made infallible. At present the perception of possibilities interferes with the perception of actualities which would otherwise be perfect. The aishwaryaprayoga is now free of false tejas & the only obstacle is the sluggishness of the Akasha. From today both trikaldrishti & shakti will become infallible, although there will be returns & survivals for a time of error & failure.

Nov 14

Yesterday the [infallibility][4] predicted commenced, but it works in a small field, with difficulty & subject to a certain groping uncertainty & confusion in handling its materials. It is contradicted from time to time, but reestablishes itself. The tejas has been added to ananda & dasyam, but when it seeks to act with speed & vigour, confusion is the result, except in the sahitya where only a slight tendency to defect is apparent as the result of rapid & unreflecting inspiration. Today the trikaldrishti & shakti will embrace definitely a larger field, — as it has already begun to do, but not yet with a triumphant infallibility; the lipi, drishti & samadhi will resume a steady progress and the physical siddhi once more move forward. The sahitya proceeds perfectly, although not always compassing an entirely flawless expression at the first thought. Rodogune, in its final form is completed & only needs a slight revision correcting an inconsiderable number of expressions. Today the Isha Upanishad will be resumed & steadily pursued till it is completed in a perfect form. Farther rewriting will be unnecessary.

---

[4] *MS* infallibly

Nov 15

The fulfilment of yesterday's predictions is not apparent. A contrary result & a return of udasinata, sattwatamasic, with strong asraddha, was the actual occurrence. There was a renewed activity of lipi, an emergence of the complete crude rupa in an instance or two & a first sign of bolder & more spontaneous lipi; the resumption of primary utthapana on a small scale & some tendency to physical siddhi; but the adverse results predominated, & both trikaldrishti & shakti were hopelessly inefficient—Promise of equipment unfulfilled.

Nov 16th—

There is an attack en masse of the Asiddhi in the Akasha on the whole totality of the siddhi. It has now been expelled from the immediate vicinity of the system, but fights from a distance and prevents the easy & pleasurable action of the siddhi. It is necessary to observe the following rules.

1. Pay no attention to outside voices, but only to the knowledge from above, the script, the vani, the prakamya-vyapti.
2. Keep firm hold on desirelessness & ananda; admit the tejas.
3. Yield on no point whatever; reject tamas whenever it comes
4. Accept the supreme Vani which will now once more become active.

Nov 17th

None of these four directions have been fulfilled. There is an attempt to adhere to them, but it is combated always by the experience of asiddhi. The establishment of intellectual infallibility which seemed assured at one time by the fulfilment of the intellectual perceptions & the right placing, accompanied with definite proofs, of that which was misplaced has been followed by a strong disillusionment which challenges the whole foundation of the theory as a self-delusion. While the existence of a perfectly accurate trikaldrishti, perceiving truth past, present & future even to exact time, place & circumstance has been put beyond all dispute, the fact that what seems to be precisely the same movement brings error & failure, clouds the whole issue & is being dwelt on in order to break down sraddha. For where is the use of trikaldrishti & aishwarya when one can never be certain whether a perception is trikaldrishti or false intuition, the perception of an actuality or a possibility, the perception of that which will be or the perception of something that someone else thinks of doing or looks at as a possibility, or whether an expense of will will bring a favourable or perverse result? The doubt comes to be one of God's guidance & the reality of the Adesha. The science of Yoga is justified, but the idea of the personal mission seems to be convicted of essential falsity. Meanwhile the particular siddhis established maintain themselves ordinarily, but do not progress. Only the sahitya proceeds smoothly & seems to develop in security.

Nov 19th

The sahitya still improves in sustained quality under the stress of rapidity, but the physical brain cannot yet respond to an unlimited call upon its vital energy. In all else there is still the adverse force. Swapna in samadhi is improving & last night there was a long & clear swapna marred only by the confusion of the recording mind which mixed itself up with what it saw & produced a few incongruities.

The directions of the [16th][5] are more nearly observed, than before, but not yet perfectly. Dasyam is perfect, but not yet ananda because of the depression of asraddha. Shakti acts as a force which produces an effect & sometimes prevails, but cannot prevail at once, perfectly or even usually. Trikaldrishti is irregular, although there are signs of its improving.

Directions.

1. Passivity has to be maintained; no attempt must be made to know, to judge, to act, to will or to move the body by self-action, — nor has any attempt to be made to check or alter any knowledge, judgment & action, will or motion that comes of itself; so with all parts of the siddhi.

---

[5] *MS* 15th *(16 was written lightly over 15 in that entry.)*

2. It will be found that then the siddhi will advance towards perfection of its own unaided motion.

3. Whatever happens, that seems to be adverse, must be accepted as a means towards success & fruition.

Nov 20th

The trikaldrishti, appearing at first false, is now on the way to be justified. It is only in the exact order of circumstances, time & place that there is real error. The rest is only a misplacement of prakamya & vyapti of intention & tendency in place of trikaldrishti. The Shakti is effective, but under the same limitations more heavily stressed. In both these respects the next three days will see a great change, but especially in the first & in lipi & rupa. Afterwards samadhi & shakti will develop into greatness.

The roga will begin finally to disappear after another three days. The sign will be the final establishment of Ananda, followed by utthapana & the breaking down of the obstacle to the saundaryam.

[*The predictions that follow, which overlap in date with the preceding entries, were written on a page of the notebook separated from those entries by several blanks, and upside down in relation to them.*]

Nov 19

A regular forward movement to begin from today. Fulfilled.

The letter to be received today in spite of difficulties. Fulfilled.

The rain to disperse early, — though not today. Breaks during the day — A larger break next day — Dispersal 21st, but continuance of showers. All foreseen correctly in detail.

N & P to keep their places. Fulfilled during time contemplated, but N's change gazetted.

Money to come within this fortnight from R. Fulfilled, but only half the sum expected.

Peace in the Balkans. — not fulfilled. Fulfilled afterwards.

A & I [Austria & Italy?] to insist successfully on their points — signs of fulfilment

Letter to be written today. Fulfilled

Lipi. "Break", fulfilled

Nov 20

Lipi "Greeks & Servians together will dispose of the last efforts of Turkey in Macedonia" apparently fulfilled. (Several days ago)

Money from S in a day or two. not fulfilled.

Nov 21

Perceptions about Turkish defeat at Monastir, which were contrary to the telegrams, precisely fulfilled (see telegrams of 27th)

Approximate time of return of D [dog] who had escaped, foreseen. (although improbable)

Approximate time of N. [Nolini] S. [Saurin] B. [Bijoy] & M's [Moni's] return & the order of their coming, all erroneous, but this confusion had been predicted in the lipi.

Pratijna becomes more & more satyapratijna.

Nov 22.

Rupa begins to organise itself with lipi as predicted

Trikaldrishti hampered by tejas & tamas in the speculative intellectual perception

Nov [26]

Everywhere in Europe the subjective fulfilment of the Will is evident, in the action of the Triple Alliance, the restored morale of the Turks, the stronger resistance in Macedonia, at Adrianople, the offensive at Chataldja, the course of events in England. But the material results are not attained.

In India there is, as yet, no substantial result.

Against roga there is often immediate temporary success, but the disease returns after being apparently cleared out. In other cases there is no success or only a struggle.

Part Two

Record of Yoga 1912–1920

26 NOVEMBER – 31 DECEMBER 1912

The regular record of the sadhana begins today, because now the perceptions are clear enough to render it of some real value and not merely a record of mistakes and overstatements. What has been effected with some finality & thoroughness, is the submission or dasyam. Certain lower strata of the personality surrounding the body in the atmosphere of the karmadeha, still vibrate with the old desires and attempt to act. But in the rest there is karmasannyasa. Prakriti drives the body, mind, heart & will without any interference from the Jiva, which only identifies itself now with the asraddha; for the identification with the activity, even if for a moment it seems to be restored, cannot stand for more than the moment & is not even then complete. The identification with the asraddha remains to be removed.

Negative samata is, in a way, complete. Active samata has yet to be perfectly established. There has been a reaction by which the bhukti has been clouded, though not entirely lost. It is still strongest in the indriyas, though sometimes breached. Sukham & hasyam are overclouded, but there is a negative shanti.

The second chatusthaya suffers from want of tejah, pravritti and sraddha in the swashakti. The third is active, but limited. Trikaldrishti works, though inaccurate in exact time, place & circumstance, but there is nothing but the result to distinguish the true from the false, because the vivek is clouded. Power works in preparing the subjective state of others & the world steadily but slowly & against a dull & heavy resistance; in objective result it is as yet poor & uncertain except in isolated details. A number of prayogas are fulfilled with exactness, some partially, others not at all. Samadhi does not progress, nor the bhautasiddhi. The physical siddhi is under the dominion of a reaction. Lipi & rupa establish their activity slowly.

The fifth chatusthaya depends on the Power & at present the success is faulty & limited, in many directions nil. The sixth is clouded.

Nov. 26.

Today a number of prayogas seem to be in course of being fulfilled—eg. Chatalja; Turkish resistance in Macedonia; action of the Triple Alliance. Today also the trikaldrishti has been almost infallibly accurate. The cloud has disappeared, and the siddhi except in the body is once more active. In the karma evidence has been given of effectuality of prayoga where it seemed to have failed;—of ishita rather than of aishwarya, and not sufficient, but nevertheless effective. (R.50 from D).. Kama is beginning to revive. Ananda has been restored though not perfectly. Rupa is once more, but imperfectly effective; the Akasha still resists clearness & spontaneity & stability, but stability without spontaneity and spontaneity without stability have returned. The profuse stable lipi is being manifested, but the Akasha resists either legibility or stability. The karma deha is clear of the resistance in the sukshmapranavad annam, but not of that in the sthulapranavad annam where the remnants of the impure sukshmaprana have taken refuge. A good many of the predictions in the lipi past, recent & immediate are being justified by the event. Tejas & lipsa are being reestabl[ish]ed in the buddhi, chitta and prana; but the force of the sraddha is still insufficient. The Vani is once again active. The bodily condition is very low and the remnants of roga active.

Nov 27.

Today the following have been fulfilled

1. Foreseen, when the last long spell of rain was in progress & its vicissitudes & dispersion accurately foreseen, that there would be another spell of cloud & rain Nov–Dec. Fulfilled today.

2. Break & sunshine foreseen in the afternoon (seen at 8.am, though signs contrary; fulfilled..[)]

3. Lipi "Break". ie. "It will be a break & not a final dispersion["] fulfilled. The clouds gathered again in the evening.

4. Series.
    - a. B. [Bijoy] will come between 7.20 & 7.25. B. came at 7.23.
    - b. S [Saurin] (?) will come at 7.40 exactly. N [Nolini] came at 7.40 exactly. S tried to come about that time.
    - c. S (?) will come at 7.55. R. [Ramaswamy] came at 7.55.
    - d. S will come at 8.5. Unfulfilled. S about this time was again thinking of coming
    - e. S will come at 8.25 corrected 8.35. S came at 8.33.
    - f. M [Moni] will come after S, last of all, but before 9. pm. fixed at 8.55 exactly. M came at 8.54 or 8.55. just after I sat down to meals at 8.52.

Besides, the ideas of what will happen or is the case in little details of the occurrences in the house are usually correct, but not always. The trend is to the satyam—intellectual infallibility, for the direct vijnanamay action is still held back in order to allow the mind to contract the habit of correctness, ie of not disfiguring by misapplication the truth from the vijnana.

The rupadrishti grows in strength and the bodily condition is turning towards improvement by lessening of the tamas of adhogati (sranti). The brain works at anything enjoined on it, but there is a disinclination in the karmadeha previous to the work or for a particular work. The fumes of tamas are strong in the brain, but do not prevent the luminosity working, although it is like the sun on a clouded day. Ananda is well restored to the regular point it had formerly reached except in kamananda and raudrananda. The tivrata is absent. But the general tendency of the siddhi is to take possession of this lower stratum also with its former circumstances. Roga however persists.

Nov 28

Clouds continue, fulfilling the trikaldrishti. Satyapratijna is now more common.

Instance of wrong circumstance. A crow comes to the verandah opposite the door and advances towards the door. Prediction. "He will turn sharp to the right & fly away." First error, hasty idea of immediate fulfilment,—at once put away by the viveka which saw that it would advance a little farther. Fulfilled. Second error. Idea, born of excess of energy, that it would fly away over the width of the verandah in the direction & line foreseen. It turned to the right & followed the exact line indicated, but hopping, not flying, reached the edge, stopped & then flew away.

At night there was once more confusion of the Trikaldrishti. The first arrival fixed at 7.57 took place at 7.57, but the rest, though ultimately foreseen, were confused by false indications. D's [dog's] going out at night, foreseen, happened in spite of all precautions and in the way foreseen.

Extension of power strongly opposed.

The Secret of Veda is now fixed & exact confirmations occur frequently.

Nov 29

The dispersion of the clouds foreseen yesterday morning as destined to happen today the first thing in the morning, took place suddenly at the time indicated, although the whole sky was dark & heavy till that moment. All yesterday the skies were heavily overcast but there was no rain. This also had been foreseen. The spell of entirely cloudy weather has lasted, allowing for one imperfect break, exactly the time predicted & foreseen some eight or ten days before, viz three days. There will be still flying clouds & temporary spells.

For some days there have been continual proofs of vyapti prakamya. eg the presence of an Austrian warship at Durazzo, the rumour of the Austrian consul being killed, etc. Yesterday there came in the mind the positive idea that Turkey had asked to be included in the Balkan Confederacy; today the same is given (in yesterday's evening paper reaching here this morning), as a strange piece of news from Constantinople and Sofia. This is striking as there was neither data nor probability & the knowledge, of the fact or rumour, came suddenly without previous thinking in that direction. Vyapti & prakamya of precise thought has begun to be frequent & often confirmed by the speech or action of the person or animal in whom it is perceived. Formerly only feeling & general thought used to come. Vyapti and prakamya are now abundant, continuous and almost perfect in arrangement, ie in assignment of its source & nature.

Fresh rain in the evening foreseen & also the stages by which the break was overcome; but in the interval there was much uncertainty owing to a fresh stratum of the karmadeha (sthulapranavad annam).

There is frequent unease & the equivalent of ashanti in the body & the anna-kosha & the chitta is clouded, but the mind is calm. (N.B The body is only the centralised part of the annakosha.)

Power is still successfully resisted, but not so successfully as before. eg the motion of a kite through the sky followed by the trikaldrishti and each fresh movement seen; while steadily describing straight flight & minimum gyre (from right to left) in succession, thus 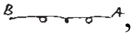

, willed that it should turn to the right in the middle of the gyre & resume the straight line. This was done in the next gyre, the bird hesitating for a moment before it obeyed, —th 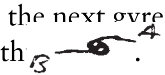

.

At night, the first arrival was correctly predicted at 8.10 (8.11 was the actual time) but not, firmly, the person. There was much confusion, many guesses by the intellect about the order of the persons & the order finally fixed on, was entirely wrong. Only it was correctly seen that none would come before eight or after nine. An arrival was fixed at 8.22, but another occurrence took place at 8.22. In other words, the correct times are suggested to the very minute, but the wrong circumstances are frequently attached by the intellect. It is in the intellect striving to do the work of the vijnana, & not in or from the vijnana direct that these perceptions come; but in the intellect only so much can be done as has been already established by the vijnana, & it has not as yet established correctness of circumstance. Therefore the vijnana this night has been made once more active and is carrying on the siddhi. The separate activity of the intellect occurs, as before, only as an element of imperfection or in interregnal periods.

The ahaituka kamananda, with great difficulty, became again active at moments, but its continuance is strongly obstructed. The sahaituka physical anandas are once more tivra.

There is an entire disappearance in the prana of the tejasic sraddha, ie hasty & excessive belief which turns into exaggerated expectation, & a great strength of samata—even in the karmadeha, whence only a vague physical uneasiness comes into the subtle part of the body in place of the old disappointment and despondency in the manahkosha. The reaction of anger in the karmadeha is no longer violent, but only a subdued, though at times a strong irritation, which being no longer able to insist, soon disappears. The body, however, is disappointed & tamasic. There has been excessive sleep (7 hours or more) for the last three nights. It is predicted that from tomorrow Place as well as Time will begin to be accurate.

Nov 30.

Rapidity only in the Veda-jnana. The place is beginning to be accurate, but the arrangement is not yet perfect. eg. a bird flying is observed, all the turns of movement are accurately predicted, but not always in their proper order; one turn is omitted or another too soon expected etc. Occasionally a momentary impulse in the bird or in the force that is driving it, is taken for a destined movement, but this source of error, which used to be dominant, is now very weak in its incidence & occasional in its occurrence... B [Bijoy] is now responding rapidly to the suggestions of the Power in the siddhi-prayoga, but still needs too much the aid of speech. His purity & mukti from dwandwa is perfect except in the karmadeha & the preparation of mukti from ahankara is being completed. Vijnana in the intellect, jnanam, in him is very strong, but not yet turned towards trikaldrishti. Prakamya & vyapti are well developed but not perfect. The other siddhis in him work fitfully. Samadhi is being prepared through dream. He gets sometimes the first stages of ahaituka & chidghana ananda...

Strong perception that S. [Srinivasachari] Bh [Bharati] & A [Aiyar] would come in the evening, less strong about A than the others & only general; fulfilled. Other vyaptis fulfilled or proved, vyaptis of action, vyaptis of thought, vyaptis of feeling. Prakamya generally turns into a vyapti. Prakamya vyapti may now be said to be perfect,—as perfect as it can be without perfection of the trikaldrishti. Clash of ahankaras over B; first sign of a fresh movement forward so far as he is concerned.

December

1st

Teja, tapas & prakasha are now coalescing into a harmony; power is increasing in small matters towards perfection of detail, but the movement is only in its initial stage. This initial movement was foreseen & the time fixed three days ago. The perception of the various & subtly shaded significance in lipi & rupa-symbol is perfected; but the rupadrishti itself is manifesting slowly. Images in the akasha are frequently perfect, but when perfect never stable except in very crude forms & that only because of the past strong development in crude images on the lines of perfection by effort which belonged to the initial & mediary stages of the sadhan. Comparative helplessness in the therapeutic power in certain directions, & always only a slow and gradual process.

This afternoon clear & vivid lipi finally emerged from the akasha and the rupa in the crude forms shows a tendency to established stability while the old forms of rupa, sthapatya, saurya, manasa are reemerging in their old perfection. Instantaneous developed rupa is becoming more frequent, but vanishes with the instant. Faith in the vani, lipi & rupa is established except for outside immediate events & the adesha siddhi, in which field faith in the trikaldrishti is not yet firm. Except in this field, tejasic will has separated itself from trikaldrishti & vyaptiprakamya of intention or tendency is no longer adopted as vyaptiprakamya of event or as trikaldrishti of the event. Therefore, if the unoccupied or rather ill-occupied field can be occupied, the perfection of trikaldrishti is within sight. Rapidity of progress promised in lipi & vani for some days past, is now beginning, not only in the Veda, but in the third chatusthaya also. Samata is perfect, tejas is establishing itself, jnana is full & active.

December 3d

Yesterday was a day of external suspension, almost of recoil. In the evening only the positive siddhi began to remanifest, but negatively the remnants of the impure tejasic elements in the karmadeha were [ ][1] farther eliminated & weakened. On the other hand, the new tejas has increased & grows on the buddhi which is admitting the subjective conditions of the adeshasiddhi, eg the Asura & Rakshasa bhavas of Mahakali, but not the probability of the siddhi itself in this life. Kamananda though it comes, has not overcome the opposition to its intensity & permanence. The higher material forms of lipi, in which vividness, simultaneity & amplitude are now gained, are beginning to manifest spontaneously. Only perfect spontaneity is lacking as yet to the perfected lipi. Rupadrishti is still held back at the point of development it had reached. Unstable developed images, stable images of a great crudity occur. Swapna Samadhi, night before last, gained a greater frequency of single & grouped image, but is still unable to develop long continuity of one series of events, which only occurs in purified swapna. Fresh proofs of trikaldrishti come daily, but the habitual invariability of correctness is not yet attained. A mixed action is the ordinary level, unvarying correctness only happens when the vijnana is in full vigour. The sky is once more clouded. This renewal of clouded weather in December had been foreseen, but not its date or even its approximate time.

Sleep for two nights has been restricted, of its own motion, to six hours or a little over. The karmadeha is physically full of tamas and an effect is produced on the material body which is slow to work & does not easily respond to the demand for new siddhi; but the bhauta-siddhi is showing some signs of improvement and there is no actual collapse of the tapas, but only sluggishness in physical pravritti.

Rupadrishti has emerged still farther. The Akasha today has been given the tendency to reject imperfect forms, & now in the sukshma layer of this annakasha fairly stable perfect forms of birds have begun to appear in all the crude forms & some of the ghana and developed; but not yet the pronounced developed forms.... Certain contacts once painful are losing their discomfort in the raudra vishayananda . . Kamananda appears in increasing force. There are now only a few categories of events which create a mixed ananda or recall the old reactions of depression & recoil.

---

[1] *MS* were

The vani is being justified in all its immediate predictions, & the script vani has disappeared. The morning's news all go farther in the direction of fulfilment. Shaktiprayoga in detail is still strongly resisted, though it sometimes prevails partially or completely, but not when there is a question of exact time & place or circumstance. Trikaldrishti is hampered by the attempt in the environment at infallibility of the mere intellect. This external intellectual suggestion usually is the first thing that comes & is generally erroneous, although, formerly, being specially guided it was often correct. This applies almost entirely to the question of detail. In the broad idea there is a greater correctness. It is now in the personal environment and not in the karmadeha that the subjective asiddhi acts.

The following programme has been given in script, but it is not yet certain that it is correct.

Vijnana Chatusthaya

1. Rupadrishti farther developed today, the 3d, and confirmed in stability tomorrow.
2 Spontaneity of Lipi tomorrow. A little tonight
3 Trikaldrishti will begin to work perfectly from tomorrow
4. The Power to overcome resistance in the next three days.
5. Samadhi to be regularised during December.

=

Sharira Chatusthaya

6. Intensity of ananda to precede permanence. Intensity from 3d to 10th, permanence from 10th to 31st.
7 Health in the last half of the month.
8. First successes of the saundarya 3d to 10th
9. Utthapana in the latter half of the month.

=

Adeshasiddhi.

10 "Equipment begins in the next week and is fulfilled in the two weeks succeeding."

So far as can be seen, 7–10 are not intended to be strongly or completely fulfilled.

The spontaneity of the vivid & simultaneous lipi has begun today, as predicted, both in Chitra and Akash. The step forward in [Rupa][2] was only the appearance of chaya & tejas akashic crude forms on a background, strong in material and distinct but not sharp in outline. Kama Ananda increased in intensity & frequency.

Dec 4th

9.30 am.

There is a farther movement of exhaustion of the environment, but the tejasic movement hampering the trikaldrishti refuses to be evicted & it is still only by waiting that the trikaldrishti can be got right. Ambiguous and misleading combinations in vani & lipi (immediate) still occur, though as an exception. Frequency of Kamananda continues and tends to increase, but is not prolonged as it was once yesterday.

Death of S.A's [Srinivasachari's] child. It was brought to me on the 29th or 30th Nov. On the 1st I had the trikaldrishti of its death; this was repeated three times in Lipi, "death["], and confirmed in Vani Script "The child will die." On the 2d I got the vyapti of an improvement, confirmed by R [Ramaswamy], but at the same time the trikaldrishti that the improvement would be immediately followed by death. This has now been confirmed by the event. There was one imperfection, a suggestion from outside and a hope within, growing almost into confidence, that the trikaldrishti, in spite of so many confirmations, might not be true. Nevertheless, there came a warning not to indulge the hope, but wait the event.

Today there is to be final fulfilment of the spontaneity of the lipi. (Written on the 5th) This has been fulfilled, although at first the fulfilment was attended by a swift & violent obstruction first to the appearance of the lipi, next to its spontaneity[,] thirdly to its vividness, fourthly, to its completeness, fullness of sentence & separation of different lipis. The enemy tried to bring back or at least prolong all the old defects of confusion, fragmentariness, mixture of sentences, faintness, inability to appear, necessity of mental support & suggestion, illegibility etc. Outwardly, it seemed to succeed, but the Lipi showed itself through perfectly established and asserted its legibility, spontaneity, fullness, sequence & with some difficulty its vividness. Moreover, it is now moving towards the elimination of imperfect lipi altogether. At the same time the tejas has become constant & indifferent to failure, even to continued and persistent failure.

---

[2] *MS* Lipi

The opposition now comes not from the personal environment, but from the Dasyus in the outside world and they fight not close (anti), but dure, from a distance. Their effort is to preserve the obstruction, to prevent Ananda from establishing itself and to enforce Asraddha by defeating the Adeshasiddhi. As regards the Ananda they have now (the 4th night & 5th) definitely failed. There is ahaituka Ananda well-established, even in spite of asraddha. In other words, the depression caused by the withholding of the Adesha-siddhi is so reduced in effectiveness that it can only now limit the Ananda and not any longer prevent its manifestation.

Rupadrishti was confirmed only to the extent of other crude forms appearing in the Akasha and on the background. Trikaldrishti acts once more, after its temporary clouding, but the confusion of the avaraka tamas is not yet removed and the tejasic intellectual action maintained from outside by the enemy is not extruded. It is possible that perfect trikaldrishti may be beginning to evolve its normal as opposed to its exceptional action, but this cannot yet be confidently asserted.

Dec. 5th

Lipi. Today is the last day of the imperfect tejas.

It has been predicted that the scholastic work will be done in future not by the intellect but by the Vijnanam. This has begun to be fulfilled, and the remaining difficulties in the Veda are beginning to vanish. It has also been asserted that no work will in future be allowed which is confused in its impulse & subject to tamasic interruption. It appears from this morning's action with regard to the Veda, that this is about to be fulfilled, or its fulfilment is being prepared. Sraddha is increasing in the rapidity of the subjective-objective Yogasiddhi, but not yet, with stability, in that of the Adesh siddhi, except in literature.

Today's news show a perfect action of the Shakti in detail on events of magnitude at a distance eg. the terms given to Turkey, the separation of Greece from the allies, the signing of the armistice, the attitude of the Powers. The pronounced defect, now, is in immediate & near events concerned with the actual Adeshasiddhi itself, rather than with the development of the necessary powers. The moulding of men proceeds subjectively, but not with accuracy of detail, except in occasional & unregulated fulfilments, nor is there yet any freedom & mastery. The equipment has, hitherto, entirely [failed][3] except for small, fortuitous & temporary successes, just preventing entire collapse.

The guidance from above seems now to be free from the necessity of any longer managing & giving rein to the forces of Anritam. Its final emergence from the action of the Mechanician, the Yantri, mending & testing His machine & self-revelation as that of the God of Truth & Love, began definitely to be worked out from 18th October, when the third & last message from Sri Ramakrishna was received. The first message was in Baroda, the "Arabindo, mandir karo, mandir karo", & the parable of the snake Pravritti devouring herself. The second was given in Shankar Chetti's house soon after the arrival in Pondicherry, & the words are lost, but it was a direction to form the higher being in the lower self coupled with a promise to speak once more when the sadhan was nearing its close. This is the third message (18 Oct 1912)

"Make complete sannyasa of Karma.
Make complete sannyasa of thought.
Make complete sannyasa of feeling.
This is my last utterance."

Subsequently there have been several instructions from the guiding Source, which seemed at the time to be not at all or only momentarily fulfilled.

---

[3] *MS* fulfilled

Oct. 18. To believe everything, but put it in its place

To will everything, but wait the event and see where the will has stumbled.

To see everything but force no drishti.

[In this trio the first is now being perfectly carried out and is resulting in a perfect trikaldrishti, perfect in the sense that every wrong suggestion is being corrected & put in its place either as a premature or misapplied truth or an ineffective or otherwise & otherwhere effective use of will. The second, beginning to be perfectly fulfilled, will lead to perfect effectiveness of the will. The third is being prepared for perfect fulfilment & will lead to perfect drishti].[4]

Nov 15th.

1. Pay no attention to outside voices, but only to the knowledge from above, the script, the vani, the prakamya vyapti.

(Note. A subordinate rule for perfect trikaldrishti; but the script is now eliminated.)

2. Keep firm hold on desirelessness & ananda; admit the tejas.

(Note. The tejas was suspected because of the disturbance it brought; the direction is how to admit it & be free from disturbance. This is now being fulfilled automatically.)

3. Yield no point whatever, reject tamas whenever it comes.

(Note. For this action the crowning touch was given yesterday and the direction will operate perfectly from today)

4. Accept the supreme Vani which will now once more become active.

(Note. This vani had three forms, speech attended with or formulated in script; speech substituted for thought; speech of supreme command. The first is eliminated; the second is passing into thought; the third alone will remain.)

Nov. 19.

1. Passivity has to be maintained; no attempt must be made to know, to judge, to act, to will or to move the body by self-action, nor has any attempt to be made to check or alter any knowledge,

---

[4] *The square brackets are Sri Aurobindo's.—Ed.*

judgment, action, will or motion that comes of itself. So with all parts of the siddhi.

[Note. This is now fulfilled. Prakriti is in perfect charge of these things, the Jiva interferes only a little in judgment.][5]

2. It will be found that then the siddhi will advance towards perfection of its own unaided motion.

3 Whatever happens that seems to be adverse, must be accepted as a means towards success & fruition.

(Note. This last direction is as yet very imperfectly fulfilled; the acceptance is there, but the outer mental parts are uneasy & cannot entirely resist the old reaction of distrust.)

The Avaranam from the trikaldrishti has been removed, & all its parts are again functioning as before & being continually proved. The Power is still obstructed.

4.45.pm.

Last night there was once more a dream of the higher order. The dream divided itself into two parts, images seen,—the record of an experience or vision in another world from which the spirit had returned & the intellectual effort of the mind to understand the record. The latter was, this time, absolutely perfect, a vision of a road along which I proceeded, met by men & women richly adorned & sumptuously clothed, a land where there was no ugliness or poverty, up to the meeting of this road by another at right angles to it from the left & between the two roads a great park with its gate near the crossways. The position of roads, gate & park was exactly that of the Baroda park, the Station or Racecourse Road & the Camp Road, but there was no other precise resemblance. There was even a vital difference, since I crossed a bridge before reaching the crossways, but the Baroda bridge over the Visvamitri is beyond the Park gates & not on this side. The mind, however, at once ran to the conclusion that this was Baroda. The speculation interrupted the vision. Afterwards the Park was again seen, but once more the reasonings of the mind interfered. Subsequently the mind became uncontrollably active & though Luxmi gave some clear records, it brought in so many cross ideas & images that at last entire confusion & the cessation of the siddhi resulted. Nevertheless continuity of record in deep sleep has at last been established after a long period of failure. The frequent & perfect combination of hearing, touch, taste & smell with sight in samadhi & dream is still wanting; for at present there is only occasional, though clear & intense, combined sight & hearing or sight & touch or hearing & touch, seldom all three together. Taste & smell are very rare. Afterwards there must be the actual experience of the spirit's wanderings & not as now only subsequent records of them. This I had a long time ago in one or two instances, eg the Chhayamayi vision in Patala; but since then it has been discontinued. Finally, there must be the actual leaving of the body in trance, wholly or partially.

---

[5] *The square brackets are Sri Aurobindo's.—Ed.*

There is a better & swifter subjective-objective response in others now to the vyapti & shakti prayoga; but it is still in its infant stages. Power is also telling on the bodies of others a little, eg. Bakhtyar's sores heal almost at once; but this too is only in its commencement. Samata, shanti, sukha are perfect & only the nonfulfilment of Adesha-siddhi prevents freedom & fullness of the hasyam.

The pressure of the eye on the akasha for developing imperfect rupas is being abandoned. All the directions now are being faithfully followed. Trikaldrishti is extending itself once more into the distant future, being assured of a relative accuracy in the immediate. As yet, however, it lacks its proper pratistha in sraddha.

Sleep for the last two night[s] has again risen to 7 hours or over. There is a movement towards the expulsion of sensibility to cold, which, once forcibly expelled, has for some time past returned and held the body.

The habit in the akasha of the rupa disappearing if subjected to tratak is being eliminated; the more developed forms now appear and remain with some stability in the trataka, but their consistency is always crude and not firm & full. The perfect images appear commonly enough in the various akashas either before the physical eye or, more usually, outside its range of vision, to the side, above the brows or elsewhere, but they do not persist, although they recur & occasionally try to remain. They come spontaneously without the aid of thought or tratak, but sometimes also, though undemanded, yet in response to a thought or mental image.

The thought-voices of the Shaktis have emerged in the Vani & alternate with the Master's.

Dec 6th.

The obstruction continues, but cannot prevent the continued perfection & increasing range & sureness of the prakamya-vyapti. Only, it clouds the vijnana & then the trikaldrishti cannot act certainly; it obstructs the Shakti-prayoga and brings about variation of failure & success; & it tries to disturb the system & prevent the growth of the physical siddhi and the samadhi. Nevertheless, the perfect response of the mind to trikaldrishti is growing & the Power is recovering its tone in all immediate circumstances; neither of them act perfectly in detail. The ordinary bhautasiddhi is recovering its tone & defect of anima does not seem to have so strong a hold as before; arogyasiddhi is resisting the attacks upon it and the physical ananda persists in spite of obstruction. The body, however, is still sensitive to cold; the violent ejection of this sensitiveness has been predicted (yesterday in lipi), but the movement is not yet successful.

Last night sleep once again fell to six hours or possibly less. Swapna-samadhi grows in frequency & the combination of the vishayas is frequent & vivid, except in taste & smell, whose normal action in sleep is only being prepared. But the images & scenes are still fleeting & dream is disturbed in its continuity. The dream-images last night were of the old unreal kind & the air of unreality strong, but a connected series of events took place, coherent and reasonable, although unusual & only possible in a long past age with other manners. The events were correct, the images probably not all from the true record or free from present associations & figures, though there was no definite intrusion from the present. It was only the sense of self that belonged to the present. On the whole a considerable & steady progress.

It is predicted that today will be a day of full progress; but the morning's indications are rather those of a half-successful obstruction. These, however, may be & often are misleading.

There is an evident movement towards the perfect arrangement of circumstances in the trikaldrishti. Eg. A passing glance vaguely takes in the ridge of a distant roof & is aware of something on the ridge; the first suggestion is that it is a bird, but it is felt that it is not a bird; then the suggestion is that it is the ridge alone & the impression of something on it is a misreading by the mind in the eye; but it is felt that there is something which will not stay there more than a moment. The mind remains confused between this false problem of bird or no bird. Then the eye is turned a second time on the object, with fixity this time, & the object is seen to be a squirrel motionless on the ridge, which immediately after leaps down from it. The whole confusion rises from the habit the mind has of seeing birds rather than any other object on the roofs & trees; otherwise everything would have been correct and in order. Immediately after, a butterfly is seen flying towards a tree. It is to pass on the other side of the tree, but there is prakamya-vyapti of an intended motion actually begun but checked, to this side, & the false suggestion comes that this intended motion will be effected; the suggestion is immediately rejected but not without a vyapti of the intention carried out simultaneously with the perception of it, to return to & continue the first line of flight. There is trikaldrishti of the right event, but not free from the intrusion of falsity, & eventually not of so much value as it would have had if it were preliminary to & uninfluenced by the data of prakamya-vyapti.

Lipi. Today, the trikaldrishti is to escape from this obstruction entirely. Fulfilled almost immediately in a succession of instances, but yet to be confirmed & universalised. The obstacle is the pseudo-Shaktiprayoga which tries to determine the event without belonging to the system. This is being replaced by an effective prayoga belonging to the system, but still the time & order of circumstances is disturbed by its appearance without self-knowledge. The liberating force is the activity of the viveka, no longer separate, judging the revelation or inspiration (drishti or sruti), & distinguishing it from false intuition, but contained in the drishti or sruti and either simultaneous with it or emerging from it.

The prediction on the 3$^{\underset{\cdot\cdot}{d}}$ that the Power will break through the resistance is being fulfilled today, but this conquest cannot be entirely complete today, for it has yet to apply itself to the fulfilment of the adeshasiddhi. But in things of practice & in themselves of no importance to me, the Siddhi with a little difficulty is succeeding now in the majority of its prayogas, only the circumstance is not always correct, eg a turn is taken [by a bird] in the right direction, but not at the time or in the order given or else the right turn is taken, but by a wheel to the right into the proper position, where a wheel to the left was indicated by the Will.

Lipi. Page. (ie A particular page of the Veda will give a sortilege & there will be occasion for the page to be kept in memory.)

The page was 286.[6] IV.28.1 [and 2] & had to be twice shut & opened, first, owing to interruption &, secondly, to necessity of record.

त्वा युजा तव तत्सोम सख्य इन्द्रो अपो मनवे सस्रुतस्कः।
अहन्नहिमरिणात्सप्त सिंधूनपावृणोदपिहितानि खानि॥
त्वा युजा नि खिदत्सूर्यस्य इन्द्रश्चक्रं सहसा सद्य इन्दो।

"By thee yoked to him, O Soma, in thy comradeship, Indra poured out that stream on the mind (or on the human being, the thinker); crushing the oppressor (Vritra) he set flowing the seven oceans[7] and opened the doors that were shut. By thee yoked to him, O lord of delight, Indra by force straightway dug out the circle of the Sun." ie. ["]the Mind Force now in contact with Ananda will pour out upon the mentality the stream of the upper knowledge & joy; that which obstructs will be crushed out of existence, the full stream of being will be poured down on the system and the siddhis denied will be enforced; the full circle of vijnana will be made to emerge from its obscuration."

The trikaldrishti is working still more effectively, not only without, but against data, eg. a bird on the opposite [roof] disinclined to stay, twice on the point of flying off & once making the starting motion, yet without any disturbance to the steady knowledge, always repeated at the critical moment, that it would remain.

---

[6] *Of the 1877 edition of Max Müller (Sanskrit text with padapāṭha).—Ed.*

[7] *This word was written above "streams", which was not cancelled.—Ed.*

Afternoon. 3.45.

The Kamananda has been almost constant at a varying pitch of intensity since the morning except for one interval of an hour or so; constant not continuous entirely, for there are momentary breaks. The tendency, however, is to substitute temporary mitigation for the actual break... The physical struggle is obstinate, asiddhi bringing the imperfections of arogya, siddhi throwing them out. Adhogati returns constantly in the primary utthapana, but more in the shape of fatigue or the shadow of fatigue than denial of anima. Sleep is attempting to recover possession. There is as yet no decisive sign of the initial movement towards saundarya except in the overcoming of the first difficulty with regard to moulding the undercurve that took so long to develop. Elsewhere there is as yet nothing. Further fullness of progress is promised for the rest of the day — in power, rupadrishti, ananda & samadhi.

(Written 7th morning)

The promise has been fulfilled. The tejasic suggestion from the environment which interfered with the trikaldrishti, is now turning into power of vyapti; a bird in its flight, an ant in its turnings, feels the thought strike it and either obeys or is temporarily influenced in its immediate or subsequent action. Power is also increasing rapidly; the will is sometimes fulfilled at the very moment, almost with the act of going out; at other times more slowly, but still with far greater force & frequency than has ever been the case in the past; sometimes, however, with great delay & difficulty & in some cases not at all. A curious example shows how difficult the resistance now finds it to be effective; a crow sitting on a branch received the suggestion of going to the end of the branch, but the force in it was unwilling; it went a little way thence came rapidly back, & for some minutes began dancing on the branch this way & that, towards the end when the force was applied, away from it when it was relaxed, until it reached the point as if driven suddenly by physical force, seeming several times about to fall off the tree, & then fluttered off to another bough.

A long struggle for the rupadrishti, ended in a number of stable images attaining to the dense developed, far superior in consistency to last night's forms, appearing straight before the vision, a great frequency of absolutely perfect images which either avoid the eye or only appear for a second before it, & a number of crude forms. Colour, jyotih & tejah are now common in all forms. The objective of the siddhi is to establish the habit of the perfect & stable image placed full before the vision; the object of the enemy is to preserve every possible imperfection & especially prevent stability. After some hours cessation, physical ananda of a much greater intensity was given for a short time, but not continued afterwards. Samadhi progresses slowly; but the dreams at night almost got rid of the element of dream-image & were only a series of mental images & ideas woven into a connected series of speech & incident. The elimination of dream image, is the first great desideratum, of incoherence in thought record the second. In addition to these siddhis universal prema with the established chidghana & prema anandas, rising into the suddha, are being again superimposed on the ahaituka. Tejas is now more powerful & continuous, the sraddha established in everything except the Adeshasiddhi. Nine hours & more of walking & standing during the day failed to bring fatigue, but brought this time some amount of defect of anima. Sleep 6 hours and a half.

Dec 7th.

11.36 am.

Nothing fresh has been added this morning; except that perfect forms of the crude variety are now more stable in the full line of the vision & more varied, eg varnamaya, agnimaya & jyotirmaya, but it is only the bird that so appears,—usually as on a former occasion the redbreast. In the fleeting images some of which are of an absolute perfection, various kinds of birds, flags, ink & other bottles, books[,] matchboxes, cigarettes, cigarette packets etc, in a word, the objects most commonly observed are commonest. In this respect there is a strong contrast to the images seen in samadhi. The power is now being applied to movements in the mass where a number of agents are concerned. An effect is produced, especially at the beginning, but afterwards the resistance stiffens and is successful. Trikaldristi of exact time recommenced last night. There was the usual error; the return of S. M & N [Saurin, Moni & Nolini] was seen to be due after 9.30 (very unusual & even unprecedented for a long time past), later fixed at 9.38, but again unfixed & seen to be due nearer 10. At 9.38, exactly, R [Ramaswamy] came, not the others, who arrived at 9.53. Occasional physical Ananda is resumed, but not yet the intenser Ananda of last night. The combination of the subjective Anandas, sahaituka, is reestablished and almost perfect; but in one or two directions, eg ordure, massed sores & one or two kinds of events, jugupsa still comes in from the outside world & touches the external psychic nerves. There is also a persistence of hostile perception of ugliness which tries to take advantage of this or that object in order to deny the shuddhananda.

Afternoon.

The Power is now in small things fulfilling itself in exact circumstance of place & order of circumstance, in isolated cases, frequently, although always with a resistance, mechanical or willed, —either entirely ineffective or effective only to delay, or effective in one or two circumstances or, sometimes, wholly effective either to vary the act, eg to take to one tree instead of to another, or to prevent any tangible result. Ananda, resisted, is infrequent, without intensity & uncontinuous. Rupadrishti does not fulfil itself. In all these respects the resistance is strong & concentrated & even the trikaldrishti cannot act perfectly. Although there has been now five hours physical activity, there has been a frequent burden of fatigue in the legs due to defect of anima. Health is resisted in particular symptoms, with obstinacy of recurrence, but not with force; the asiddhi succeeds in materialising at these points & insisting for a short time, but has to retire. It is most obstinate in the process of digestive assimilation; for though it can no longer freely bring excess of vayu or frequent purisha visrishti (the last two intervals have been $3\frac{1}{2}$ days and now 2 days) it insists successfully on the excess of jala, a vague hint of nausea without real nausea, & a recurrence of the sign of excess.

During the rest of the day there was a strong force of the obstruction and no progress. The attempt at exact trikaldrishti of time failed entirely; the Power also failed signally to act several times and only succeeded at close quarters. There fell from outside reflections of the old anger of impatience & to a less extent of tamasic tyaga almost amounting to depression. There was, however, no settled ashanti & no duhkha.

Sortilege—नक्तोषासा वर्णमामेम्याने धापयेते शिशुमेकं समीची।
द्यावाक्षामा रुक्मो अंतर्वि भाति देवा अग्निं धारयन्द्रविणोदां॥
ie. Both manifestation & non-manifestation contain the supreme force and in unison nourish the one child (Agni, Tapas); it shines out in various activity between pure mind and body, ie, in the vitalised mind, antariksha; and the gods then hold Agni, the pure tapas, & gain force & substance. This was given before the Nakta or period of non-manifestation in the later afternoon & evening, or when the manifestation was beginning to be replaced by the non-manifestation.

Dec. 8.

7.30 am.

The same condition. [Vyapti][8] & prakamya perfect; trikaldrishti uncertain; powers ineffective & inclined to be inactive. Misplaced power active as false trikaldrishti. Ananda vague. Yesterday 8 hours & a half of physical activity with fatigue decreasing as it went on; this morning dull fatigue & defect of anima, neither pronounced, but both effective.

Sortilege. ह्रस्वनुड्भ्यां मतुबिति मतुप उदात्तत्वं। This purely grammatical formula is given a sense. In the defective alpa state (of the siddhi) the taking up of the mind into vijnana is being effected for the mental being (मतुप्) by the ascending movements of thought constituting his mental activity. It is even suggested that उड् & मतुप् were actual words used in this sense in pre-Vedic Sanscrit.

Sleep yesterday seven hours. The dream images occurred, but they were scattered among pale chhayamaya images hardly distinguishable, except by the viveka, from dream images; a few were of the true taijasa kind. There was some confusion in the thought record of the experiences, but not excessive, nor such as to unhinge the general coherence. But the present sense of ego still overlays the personality in the dream thought.

---

[8] *MS* Vyapta

The whole morning was given up to a growth of the first two chatusthayas. The premananda established yesterday with regard to persons & objects, was extended to events even the most adverse and thus establishes completely the positive samata, rasagrahanam, bhoga, ananda. Individual contradictions do not disturb the established force of samata. It is noticeable also that tamasic tyaga fails to establish itself and the pravritti persists in spite of continuous non-result or adverse result. The formula of tejo balam mahattvam pravrittih is fulfilled. At first the tejas was merely in the dhairya with occasional pravritti; then it extended itself to kshiprata & ugrata and established itself, today, in pravritti. Moreover, the second general formula of the shakti chatusthaya, — adinata kshiprata sthairyam ishwarabhava is establishing itself and along with it the Chandibhava. But the continued successful resistance to the continuous action & progress of the powers prevents the ishwarabhava & kshiprata from perfecting themselves; for these depend on sarvakarmasamarthya & sraddha swashaktyam. A working sraddha for the future is established, though the old questioning still lingers; but it is not a present & dominating faith in the immediate power or the early fulfilment.

The action of the powers was reduced to their lowest limit all the morning; both continuity & generality were denied, only the crudest forms or isolated successes allowed & old imperfections attended the majority of the manifestations. The trikaldrishti has now, (3.45 pm), reestablished its activity, but the power still waits. Fatigue was thrown off in the morning, & 3 hours continuously then, 2 hours now were done, but some shadow of the fatigue hangs over the karmadeha & seizes sometimes on the nervous system & then on the muscular instrument. It was perceived, in the morning, that all the contradictions of the physical siddhi, except the saundaryam, belong now to the karmadeha or, more often, to the personal environment, not to the body itself. From there they are reimposed on the body.

4.10

The Power is now working again, but not with invariability of impact or exactness of circumstance. On the other hand the trikaldrishti is exact and minute, though it does not coordinate the circumstances. Various kinds of entirely perfect forms are appearing in the full focus of the eyes, but momentarily, without the least stability.

Written Dec. 9.

In the evening the Power & the rupadrishti regained their former activity & siddhi; no advance was made towards a fuller or wider perfection.. Sleep 7½ hours. There was a still more perfect swapna samadhi; marred only by a slight admixture of false thought in the watching mind, but the record of the thing seen was without a flaw & delivered from that tendency to overhaste in travelling through the scenes witnessed which shows an unsteady movement of the Apas in the mind. Everything was deliberate & slow as in the actual living of the scene. This was in deep samadhi. There were a greater number of visions, dim chhayamaya, in light samadhi, not continuous, but [?   ] in thought & subject. The actual dreams were at first perfectly free from present ego or suggestion of present associations, although the dream-images recurred faintly; but afterwards they became touched with present image & thought-association. Three ½ hours more physical activity, continuous, & another ¾ hour making over nine hours; the result the same.

Dec. 9th.

The trikaldrishti is now working normally with a surprising regularity and perfection in immediate things; but the haste of intellectual decision & error of intellectual hesitation,—the Scylla & Charybdis of prophetic thought,—are not yet eliminated; they recur whenever the trikaldrishti has to be done, though absent when the trikaldrishti is merely happening. Parasara's Suktas are being interpreted by the vijnana, but not yet perfectly, as the modern associations of the words still interfere. Historical trikaldrishti of the past is active.[9] Both the trikaldrishti and the power (at first frustrated) have been acting for five or ten minutes in a host of instances with great & continual effectiveness. It is only now the minutiae that are wrong, & these are to be perfected; for sometimes the minutiae also are for a long time absolutely accurate. The guidance also is at present perfect in every detail, although it is that of one of the Shaktis, & not the Purushottama's. There are three forms of the power, (1) one which works the object through the universal Prakriti, giving the suggestion to the Prakriti which transfers it to the swabhava of the object; (2) one which works the object by direct unspoken suggestion to the object, as in hypnotism; (3) one which applies the force of Prakriti physically to the object and drives the unwilling object. All three are now active & frequently, even ordinarily successful; but all three still need time to work effectively on the object. If they do not get time, an effect or movement is produced, but not always or even usually the actual accomplishment or the full effect.

---

[9] *"Historical" was inserted after the sentence was completed; "of the past" was left uncancelled.—Ed.*

During the rest of the day there was apparent suspension attended by loss of the Chandibhava, unreliability of the Vani and false suggestions through the outer swabhava. Health was also strongly attacked with great success in one detail and with temporary slight effect in others. The external suggestions are least effective at present in symptoms of phlegm & neuralgia which are obviously external, foreign to the system & unable to materialise in the sthula parts; they only affect the nerves with a suggestion of incipient cold or neuralgia. . The struggle over the visrishti still proceeds & the frequency of jalavisrishti maintains itself. However, the assimilation, although marred by excess of jala, seems to be more perfect with respect to prithivi, even though the maximum interval has been diminished from seven days to three or four.

Sleep for nearly seven hours. The dream images were again mental images rather than actual figures; present associations affected the images and were comparatively ineffective on the thought except in one or two cases.

Dec 10th

In the morning there was an attack through the asraddha on the completed mukti, which produced an effect on the pranic atmosphere.

Strong proofs were given of the vyapti-prakamya of thought & feeling which were very minute, perfect & vivid, the subject expressing in speech exactly the idea & emotion which had been immediately before seen in him by the sukshmadrishti. This power is so perfect that all such suggestions of the vyapti & prakamya, however vague, minute or unsupported by outward circumstance, can be accepted as true of the source from which they are seen to proceed, even though the subject be hundreds of miles away. Sometimes there is a little difficulty in fixing the subject & often, owing to the fragmentariness or isolation of the single perception, its real bearings & effectiveness cannot be rightly appreciated. This is now being remedied.

Lipi To destroy the asatyam by asraddha.

Lipi. Success at last. Perfection—followed immediately by the above development & the partial emergence of B [Bijoy] from the whirlpool in the karmadeha in which he has been plunged since the first of December.

The old defects of the trikaldrishti still recur and its limitations persist. The power is still more hampered & limited, even though its perfect action is frequent; but not on the body, nor in things belonging to the Karma.

The rain in December, long foreseen, came this morning; but it was, as expected, only a passing spell of cloud and rain. The development in rupadrishti predicted by the Vani yesterday (without any statement of time, but supposed to be due last evening) came instead today.

The trikaldrishti, power, knowledge, even special powers like bhasha, vyakarana etc are now progressing normally of themselves, without any sadhan or use of will-power for the purpose, the defects reoccurring, falling away, diminishing & thus passing out by a natural & quiet elimination,—the way in which the first two chatusthayas have been or are being finally perfected. It is only the rupadrishti in the third chatusthaya that is still being pushed forward against an active resistance by the occasional use of the will-power. The real struggle has now passed to the fourth and fifth chatusthayas.

Yesterday there were nine and a half hours of physical activity out of the twenty four, today there have been ten. It is now fixed that there can be the erect position & walking for ten hours every day without any binding reaction of fatigue. The fatigue that comes, is soon shaken off, as if alien to the body. It is noticeable that it is strongest after the night's sleep, diminishes as the day progresses & the physical activity increases and is least able to assert itself in the evening when it is taken three or [four hours][10] at a time. The resistance, therefore, is still obstinate, but not powerful as it used to be.

Sleep for over seven hours. The visions in samadhi grow in richness and completeness, eg last night a vision of armies of different nationalities advancing successively along a road, — not seen consecutively without interruption but successively with intervals of avikalpa samadhi. Dream is still in the same stage, but last night present associations interfered less than before in spite of the insistence of the present ego sense. Dream images were, however, frequent.

Lipi is now being left to the Akash to hold in its perfection without any assistance from the Adhara except the assistance of intention. For this reason its manifestation is infrequent, not copious & often attended by difficulty & illegibility; but the lipi is in itself perfect, only the manifestation is obscured by the films in the akashic movement between the eyes & the object. Rupa is still delayed at the stage of unstable vividness in the perfect images, the resistance is not conquered.

The first part of the programme given on the 3d has been fulfilled under limitations which are apparent in this record. As regards the rest, there is undoubtedly occasional intensity, not of the highest kind, in the Ananda, and the less intense Kama Ananda is common, but the resistance to its regularised activity is still unconquered and the permanence is still farther from accomplishment. The first successes in saundarya limit themselves to three — 1st the undercurves on the outer side have now become decided & indisputable, even comparatively deep; & the sidecurves have clearly declared themselves, although irregular in their formation & still slight; — the gain is a detail, but the important point is that the power of the will to change formations in the body has now been physically proved beyond doubt or dispute. 2d The gloss, softness

---

[10] *MS* fours

& smoothness of the hair has been restored; 3^{d} the tendency to unnatural entanglement and profuse loss of hair has been steadily diminishing, though it is not yet nil & the hair is now exceedingly thin, shot with grey & threatening baldness above the temples. These signs of old age show no promise of reversal or dissolution. The equipment also does not appear to be near, since there is nothing beyond the already existing amount except a trifling sum sufficient to fill the remaining gap in this month's equipment. It is true that next month's has arrived unusually early along with this increase. So far the will has prevailed

Health is strongly attacked. Visrishti again took place in the evening.

Dec 11th

The resistance is now to the fulfilment of the Adeshasiddhi, for if once a permanent power is manifested, in the control of the events immediately surrounding the adhara, all farther resistance will be convicted of inutility. This resistance, it is suggested, is now about to be overcome. The rupadrishti is to be brought on a level with the rest of the vijnanachatusthaya in this week, the bhautasiddhi liberated from the pressure of the defect of anima, the samadhi from the refusal of continuity in the visional record. Meanwhile the trikaldrishti & powers will expand rapidly in their action. The physical resistance to the Power in the body of self & others will yield, although it will from time to time recur until it is eliminated; as a result arogya, ananda & primary utthapana will be brought into line with the vijnanachatusthaya. Only saundarya in the physical siddhi will be left as a field of battle. The resistance to karma in the moulding of minds & the giving of experience & power will also break, & the resistance to the equipment. The rest will easily follow within these two months.

5. pm

The rupadrishti has advanced today; perfect crude forms now sit easily in the akasha, perfect crude dense & crude developed forms appear frequently & with some stability; absolutely perfect forms are more frequent, but not yet stable. The akasha is of itself bringing forward the lipi with more ease & force. The trikaldrishti is normally perfect, except in arrangement & exact time, unless it is confused with the shaktiprayoga,—all that is perceived is seen to be correct, only all is not seen in its exact place. The range also is widening. Shaktiprayoga has now more force & normal effectiveness. The force of bhautasiddhi is also increasing, in the ordinary mahima & laghima. Intellectual infallibility is now seen to be a possibility & not far from realisation, at least where it can be immediately tested. Kama Ananda today was continuous for some minutes, though not of the greater intensity already achieved. Sukshma sparsha is increasing in force & keenness, but is still usually only a subtle physical sensation, except in touches of water, fire or electric atoms which have now a great sthula reality & linger on the body both in the solid sensation & in its physical-nervous effects. Other touches do not yet materialise. Sukshma gandha & gandha-rasa with sparsha is keen & powerful, but irregular in occurrence. Sravana & drishti of actual forms & voices as opposed to images & symbolic sounds are still behindhand. All these are now recognised as parts of samadhi or visvagati, the fifth member of the third chatusthaya. Health is still attacked, but dully, not with yesterday's force.

Written Dec 12th

Later in the day the health was more strongly attacked in the process of digestion; it prevailed nowhere else, but on the contrary is being steadily extruded. The ananda of cold is growing but has not entirely extruded the returns of the discomfort which, even after its violent expulsion, returns from the environment. Sleep, nearly 7 hours. No advance in samadhi. Physical activity for twelve hours, four hours in the morning (1 + 3), two & three-quarters in the afternoon, the rest in the evening & night (5.15 pm to 9 & 9.20 to 11). There was no reaction to speak of in the morning & the fatigue that occasionally came was always easily thrown off. Kama Ananda is resisted, but tends to become the atmosphere of the physical experiences.

Dec 12th

11.5

This morning the action of the trikaldrishti took place purely in the intellect with the result that there was a vivid & copious prakamya-vyapti & trikaldrishti of possibilities, but the actuality of the event could not be regularly seen. This was cured as soon as the vijnana began to act. The difficulty that remains is only the difficulty of preventing the active & almost perfectly complete perception of possibilities, tendencies, intentions confusing the quite separate perception of the actual circumstance fixed in the foreknowledge of Virat & Prajna. The Shakti acts as before subject to delay & resistance. Lipi in the Akasha is still resisted in legibility except when it is aided by the subjective perception. In all other respects it is perfect. Rupadrishti, this morning has not been active, except in occasional images. Sukshma sparsha is increasing in force & frequency, & is accompanied by perception of action & of feeling & intention but not by subtle perception of the image or sound.   In the health the siddhi is again prevailing, though the attack continues. There has been five hours continual exertion this morning (walking almost all the time); fatigue was not effective, but denial of anima in the loins became insistent in the fifth hour.   One or two utterances of the Shakti's vani have been proved wrong in time or stress, but may still be fulfilled in fact.

3.55

Sortilege. युवो रजांसि सुयमास अश्वा. Your (the Aswins') active forcefulnesses are nervous energies well-controlled—   Tejas was first established permanently, tapas based on that tejas has now been firmly established, but it is apt to outrun the bounds of the ritam (अध्वानं यमगाम दूरात्); the permanent prakasha is now being added. But the result of the prakasha is to dominate unduly the tapas. Therefore Ananda of the Aswins (ever-youthful delight & strength) has to be added, so that these rajansi (activities of tapas) may be not only सुयमासः, which they must be if there is prakash, but अश्वाः, full of energy & therefore fit to draw the chariot of divine action.   ([Written] Dec 13)   There is already a movement towards the fulfilment.

Twelve hours again this day, five continuous in the morning; nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ in the afternoon; 4.10 to 10.20 with an interval of half an hour (between 8 & 9) for meals. The attacks on the anima were successfully thrown off without any trouble; but fatigue came strongly about 7.30 and necessitated rest by standing for some time. A certain vague stiffness in the legs has been left behind this morning. Sleep for seven hours & more, as usual; the sense of present ego & present associations interfered little in the dream, but there was once more some confusion & mixture of different records, a defect which has been hardly at all in evidence recently. The pale chhayamaya images were extremely frequent & varied & those that were more vivid showed a greater tendency to combination and continuity.

Ananda (kama) increased in force. In saundaryam there was retrogression (in the hair, tendency to entanglement, loss & diminished softness). A nominal visrishti in the evening (after two days), but jala has again increased.

The trouble about the trikaldrishti (over insistence of possibilities) was strong throughout the day, but passed away in the evening, and the approximate time of events as well as the events themselves & their circumstances were correctly fixed. Many evidences of the power working on the siddhi of others were given, in B, & now in S (vijnana begins to work); there are, therefore, signs that the obstacles to the Shakti in this part of the karma will soon give way.. A notable instance of delayed fulfilment occurred yesterday. When the flowers on the plant in the garden first appeared & proved all to be various shades of red & white, there was strong & repeated will for yellow flowers; but it failed & was abandoned a month ago. Now at last a solitary plant which used to give red or white flowers, has produced two yellow blossoms. The will at the time of the partial withering of the plants for fresh leaves on the withered part of the stalks, has also received a slight fulfilment on one of the plants.

Dec 13th.

Sortilege आ चर्षणिप्रा वृषभो जनानां राजा कृष्टीनां पुरुहूत इंद्रः। Indra (mental power) filling the actions, master of the peoples, king of their deeds.

The first movement towards the fulfilment of this sortilege which took place in the morning ended in a misadventure. A rush of power was the first sign, which had two results, a new power of direct powerful compulsion on living beings to act according to the Will in this adhar and another Tantric power of affecting the Akash physically so as to draw a line over which they could not pass. Both powers were at first of the nature of a physical pressure & compulsion on the objects, which struggled in vain to resist. In the first essays there was some momentary success in the resistance; a success which often supported itself on the first impulsion given against a new impulsion or reversion of the original command, but afterwards this success ceased and movement after movement was executed faithfully though unwillingly not only by individuals, but by numbers.. Afterwards there was a violent rush of enemies from outside the circle to oppose & break this success. In the struggle the old ashanti rose and many of the conditions established in the siddhi seemed to be broken & the mukti & bhukti seriously contradicted. The trouble did not pass away till after three in the afternoon. In the final result, the power has increased, but acts under a frequently successful resistance and the akash is still troubled & occupied by hostile forces. Today's experience has thrown a clear light on many expressions in the Veda especially in relation to Indra and the Rudras. There is a movement in the rupadrishti, perfect life-images, eg a butterfly, a squirrel, indistinguishable to the eye from the real object, dashing into the full sthula akasha or being glimpsed leaping through it; but there is, as yet, no stability. The normal manifestation of lipi is still successfully resisted.

During the evening there was constant application of the attention to the lipi, but legibility only resulted with difficulty. Trikaldrishti acted at a distance in detail of circumstance with a perfect correctness and approximate time was repeatedly fixed with great closeness.

In the morning stiffness became pronounced & it seemed that the primary utthapana would have to be relaxed; but the usual twelve hours was accomplished (1 + 2 in the morning, 3 in the afternoon, & from 5.15 to 11.40 with 25 minutes interval in the evening). It was only towards the close of the day that the defect of anima was overcome. Sleep 6 hours.

Dec 14th
2.25

Yesterday's trouble returned, not so pronounced or obstinate, but marked by a momentary return of the duhkha of asiddhi which has left behind it depression & asraddha. The lipi became, of itself, profusely active in the morning, but the old defects reappeared & the akashalipi lost its triumphant habit of vividness even when it reasserted legibility. Trikaldrishti is attempting to arrange circumstances perfectly in all cases, but does not yet command anything like a consistent success. The same is true of the Power, which sometimes enforces itself with great exactness of detail, sometimes not at all. The Vani is once more deficient in authority & creates false ideas in the mind, even though, so far as it goes, correct in the letter. It now appears that those vanis which were thought to be incorrect (see)[11] were correct in the letter, as they are now being fulfilled, but created an exaggerated idea in the mind about the time and amount of fulfilment.

([Written] Dec 15th. 7.30)

A moderate visrishti in the evening. The dates have been 2d morning, 5th, 7th, 10th, 14th all in the evening; on the 12th a nominal evacuation. None of these except the first has been copious; the old freedom of evacuation is disappearing, the tendency to loose stool seems to be eliminated, as even when the Apana is forceful & insist[ent] a moderate evacuation entirely parthiva is the result; the disturbances attending this strenuous process of assimilation, (for the food eaten has been increased rather than diminished) are less frequent & less insistent. Vayu is rare, nausea only a suggestion, tejaso-jalic ashanti only occasional, the sense of fullness easily dismissed & never so strong as to necessitate diminution of food, all that remains in strength is the habit of strong parthiva & jalamaya pressure which is now exaggerated and, in the parthiva pressure, out of all proportion to its substantial cause. It remains to be seen how far this progress is maintained. Hunger is less insistent, but still persists with a modified intensity; it is, however, being subtly & steadily replaced by the craving-free bubhuksha. As it is wintertime, there is no occasion for thirst which even in mid summer only appeared under great stress and could be dismissed ordinarily by a sip or two of water or even by the Will unaided.

---

[11] *Parenthesis left blank by Sri Aurobindo. — Ed.*

The trouble of depression lasted through the day & was attended with some confusion of knowledge especially on the point whether the vijnana chatusthaya could now be left to the unaided working of Prakriti, as had before seemed to be decided or needed more sadhan. It is notable that the rupadrishti is developing without sadhan; perfect images grow steadily more frequent & have more hold on the akasha, the old imperfections tend to be eliminated, eg the persistent recurrence of a single image, in this case, the bird; other forms are now forcing their way into the akash without any help from the system. Lipi has recovered vividness without losing its tendency to activity. Trikaldrishti develops greatly & it is noticeable that it is best when entirely spontaneous, almost indeed of an absolute & consistent perfection, — when, that is to say, there is no attempt in the system to determine the truth or arrive at the knowledge. Examples. The servant went out at 8.27. As he was going out, the knowledge came that someone was about to enter & would come in as soon as he was gone. R [Ramaswamy] came. Previously, there was vyapti that either S [Saurin] or N [Nolini] was returning. Now the knowledge came (in answer to a doubt whether the vyapti was not merely the vyapti of an intention) that he would come before 8.30. S came at 8.29. Subsequently, it was decided that 9.10 would be the exact moment to cease walking & have meals, & the knowledge came that M [Moni] would return at 9.10. N returned exactly at 9.10; exactly at 9.10 the meal was served (without any spoken order or mental suggestion) & the triple knowledge was fulfilled to the minute. In this way every little circumstance has to the time of writing proved exactly correct. This is, undoubtedly, the beginning of the consistent & invariable perfect drishti, but it is not to be supposed that it will establish itself even in this restricted sphere without farther opposition. The truth of telepathy is now thoroughly established; the proofs of its correctness when received from persons in the house or town [occur][12] daily, as by it I know when one is coming from one room to another, what an animal is about to do, when someone is returning to the house & often who it is, (formerly, this knowledge was usual, but has temporarily diminished or been obscured). Also the proofs of it, when it comes from hundreds or thousands of miles away, are now coming in, eg. from M [Motilal] in Bengal that he intended to send more money, confirmed a few days afterward; the previous knowledge of the rumour that the Turks had asked to join the Balkan Confederacy, the knowledge of the Unionist conspiracy in Constantinople & a number of other instances relating to the Balkan war. This power, indeed, has been working for a long time, but it is only now regularised. It is, in fact, part of the vyapti. The proof of vyapti of express thoughts is also increasing in frequency; here, of course, the only proof is the expression of the thought immediately afterwards by the thinker. This now occurs.

Physical exertion twelve hours (morning one hour + two hours 9.15 to 11.15; afternoon, three hours & a half; evening 4.40 to 9.10 & 9.40 to 10.40). In the morning there was pain in the soles of the feet when rising, but no appreciable stiffness in the limbs. Fatigue of adhogati, in the evening, was more persistent than usual, although not intense or powerful. Sleep, nearly seven hours. The last two nights, there has been a retrogression in samadhi; the dreams are, besides, not remembered, but the incoherent dream seems to prevail.

The asiddhi in the hair, although much diminished, is not yet removed.

Dec 15.

The ahaituka & other subjective anandas seem now to be firmly established in the indriyas; the chidghana, prema & shuddha still lack regular intensity, nor can the intensity come till yesterday's sortilege is fulfilled. Its fulfilment was disturbed & the system thrown back first into udasinata & then into the Maheshwari dhairya, shama & calm. Ahaituka kamananda is frequent, daily, but is seldom intense & never long continued. The sahaituka anandas

---

[12] *MS* occurs

(tivra, rudra, kama, vishaya) are there, but not always or even usually intense; vaidyuta is still undeveloped, although ahaituka vaidyuta is now, as I write, beginning to act with intensity. It comes as a blissful electric shock or current on the brain or other part of the nervous system & is of two kinds, positive or fiery & negative or cold, saurya or chándra, conveyed through the sun or conveyed through the moon. Formerly both these anandas used to come as sahaituka or ahaituka touches; the negative resembled the feeling of rheumatism turned into a form of physical pleasure, the positive the feeling of internal heat similarly converted, but their electric nature was always patent to the sensations. It is, probably, these two forms of sukshma vidyut that are the basis of the phenomena of heat & cold — such at least is the theory suggested to me in Alipur jail.

The trikaldrishti continues successfully, but the (involuntary) attempt to fix the truth brings the tendency to substitute a perception of force or tendency for a perception of result; nevertheless this error seems, now, to be usually corrected before it can seize on the mind. These remnants of false energy (anrita tejas) have to be entirely rooted out of the mental action.

Sensitiveness to cold after having been almost entirely extruded, except in the lowered night vitality between sleep & sleep, is now again attacking the system.

4 pm.

There is a pause in the siddhi today, a relaxation and resting; yet certain movements are being decided. The one defect in the subjective Ananda, the absence of a certain & victorious Ananda in asiddhi and amangalam is being finally remedied, the force of the sadhan is being turned on the physical siddhi & the final perfection of the dasyam is being prepared. So far only five hours and a half have been given to the primary utthapana. The purely parthiva insistence of the Apana has been strong throughout the afternoon. It seems that both these physical siddhis have to be relaxed today. On the other hand the ahaituka kamananda is taking possession of the sukshmadeha and surrounding the nervous system of the physical body on which it impresses now prolonged & sometimes intense touches; continuity seems to be beginning.

([Written] Dec 16)

Trikaldrishti in the evening. Return of someone, not fixed, between 7 & 7.30 (R. [Ramaswamy] returned); of N [Nolini], first, between 7.30 & 8 (N & M [Moni] returned); of S [Saurin] soon (seen at 8, S came about 8.10); of B [Bijoy] unusually late but before 8.30, (B came between 8.15 & 8.30). No exact time given; the two attempts to fix it, were rejected & the rejection justified by the event.

Visrishti (slight) in the evening, after the pressure of Apana had been got rid of by Will. Physical activity for 12 hours as usual. Sleep $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Progress in Samadhi nil. Lipi successfully vivid & spontaneous (varnamaya) at night, thus getting rid of the difference which had been established between daytime & night, with regard to the Lipi. There is, however, this difference that at night it is usually varnamaya, by day usually chhayamaya of all kinds.

Dec 16.

10.33 a.m.

Defect of anima no longer materialises easily, but persists as a vague stiffness which, like the pain in the soles of the feet, does not restrict the primary utthapana, but helps to break & distress it by aiding the Adhogati & increasing its force. Physical activity 6.10 to 7.10 & 7.30 to 10.30 this morning.

The lipi has definitely conquered in the Akash, but its invariable success of vividness & legibility is not yet allowed. The jnanam has now an invariable correctness, but the trikaldrishti is still clouded by the relics of the twilit intellectual activity. Shakti of chitta & prana is now being finally perfected on the basis of the perfect samata, shanti, sukha & atmaprasada. Dasyam is taking entire possession of all the functions, attended by dasyabuddhi in the devatas, and the Master of the Yoga is now habitually manifest in his personal relation. The two sortileges are being progressively fulfilled. Physical activity — 10.45 to 11.45. Adhogati is strong and seeks to base itself on defect of anima. Pranic utthapana, complete in the pranakosha, is unable as yet to possess wholly the annakosha except in its pranic parts; hence, failure of mahima & a strong sense of weakness & incapacity in the karmadeha affecting the body.

Again from 12.10 . . 1.5 & from 3.5 to 4.10 in the afternoon.

The afternoon has passed under Vritra, the power slow to act, the trikaldrishti & jnana uncertain, the physical brain dull and overcast. The Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati shanti is giving place under such circumstances to the Mahasaraswati-Mahakali quietude based on a concealed Maheshwari pratistha. Nirukta is now acting under the rule of the vijnana normally & bhasha begins to follow suit; the intellect in the environment has recognised the necessity of passivity & the superior results of the vijnanamaya method. The frequency of Ananda (Kama) continues but is interrupted by Vritric periods.

The trikaldrishti has now (4.55) recovered possession and is acting with a considerable perfection in all its movements & entire perfection (except of right combination) in some of them—ie a movement or incident is seen in pieces of knowledge each of which would lead to an incorrect conclusion by itself, but taken together give a perfectly correct result. Their separate advent shows want of spontaneous combination in the knowledge; there is only collocation ending in combination. Power is still ineffective, except occasionally.

Physical activity, 5.5 to 11.30 with an interval of 25 minutes for meal; altogether over 13 hours. There was no fatigue during this period. Lipi very perfect for a while in the artificial light, afterwards the Akasha tired. Ananda continuous for a long time & when discontinued tends to return. Assimilation exceptionally strong & perfect. The sensitiveness to cold persists, but is being extruded. Sleep less than 6 hours. Some secondary utthapana.

Dec 17

4.40 pm

Today except Ananda & primary utthapana all other siddhis seem to be suspended in order that occasion may be given to the samata and ananda in amangalam & asiddhi to emphasise itself. Relics of the impatience remain or rather recur, but cannot find a lodging. On the other hand asraddha in the Adeshasiddhi is strong. It is evident also that the remnants of intellectual activity in the environment are being given free but ineffectual play, in order that of themselves they may cease. The attempts at intellectual trikaldrishti & aishwarya fail invariably & it is only when the vijnana acts occasionally that some results are obtained. Physical activity from 6.15 to 4.25 with a break of 25 minutes for meal (12 to 12.25). It was only at the end that fatigue came, dull and not very pronounced, but insistent. The vague stiffness does not entirely disappear, but is ineffective. The dasya and personal relation of the Master increase. The substitute for religious piety has been established in the consciousness, viz the knowledge of the Para Purusha, the sense of the power of the Ishwara & submission to it attended with the appropriate bhava in the chitta & the personal relation to the Lover.

([Written] Dec 18)

Immediately after writing the above, the trikaldrishti again became active for a time, but was clouded later on. At the same time the interpretation of lipi & rupa was re-manifested in perfection; but there was a renewed cloud of confusion over the immaterial drishti. Physical activity, resumed at 5.15 was continued till 12.15 with an interval of 25 minutes for meals. Today therefore gave a total of 16 hours out of 18. Fatigue only dominated the system once in the day, on the occasion already recorded. Sleep for $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Yesterday, in the samadhi, the old movement of a conscious exit of the mental being from the material centre (not a complete exit, not trance, but the usual swapnamaya departure) was resumed. It has this defect still that too strong a trend of the consciousness towards the body remains, so that the purusha is easily drawn back to the body, leaving only his linga sharira in the place of dream experience. Dream has definitely relapsed into incoherence. Visrishti in excess of the usual quantity, nevertheless of an ordinary kind & amount.

Dec 18th

4.40

Today the exercise of primary utthapana, commenced at 6.7 was continued till 4.18 with an interval of 20 minutes (11.55 to 12.15) for meals. There was no overpoweringly insistent fatigue, like yesterday's, but only a fatigue which came & went four or five times, appealing to the vague defect of anima in the body, but disappearing when its appeal was rejected.. This defect of anima in the mere annam continues, but has no real effect, because the pranakosha & the physical nervous system liberates itself more & more from the mere physical experiences & accepts more & more the law of the sukshma deha. Kamananda, though strongly attacked, continues in spite of long interruptions and these two siddhis (K. [Kamananda] and primary utthapana) may be considered as finally established, though still altogether imperfect, and bound now to develop irresistibly towards perfection. On the other hand, the arogya is still engaged in the struggle to expel its minor contradictions & the saundaryam, although one more striking sign has been given of willed modification of form, continues to be feeble & uncertain in its inchoate manifestations.

Trikaldrishti has been clouded throughout the morning; active in the afternoon, perfect in detail, but not very active. Power is for the most part denied. A great dullness reigns over the physical brain and the karmadeha, in the midst of which samata & dasya become always stronger & now tejas & tapas are beginning to establish their indifference to adverse result. They are seeking, that is to say, to be no longer deterred from action either by failure or even asraddha. The asraddha in the Yogasiddhi has now disappeared, but not the asraddha in the Adeshasiddhi. It appears that the Power is acting in certain broad and important matters, but it is resisted in trifles.

([Written] Dec 19)

Development of the rupadrishti in various directions; stability up to the dense developed; only the entirely lifelike forms do not yet acquire stability. There is now a consistent activity (charshanipra & suyama aswa) which disregards or overcomes adverse result & doubt. On the other hand cold and defect of anima reasserted themselves. Physical activity 5.3 to 11.38 with 25 minutes interval, but the last hour of the sixteen was maintained with difficulty; stiffness, pain in the shoulders & feet reasserted themselves. The kamananda was successfully inhibited by the enemy. Sleep also attacked the system. Sleep six hours and fifteen minutes.

Dec 19.

8.10 am.

Physical activity 6.7 to 7.22. The defect of anima persists this morning; but the Kamananda after a short struggle reasserted itself. Trikaldrishti is acting regularly & correctly, but is still hampered by the dregs of the outer environmental intellectuality & rendered uncertain by the inability always to assign the vyapti & prakamya its proper place. The power is hampered & the opposition to the healing power is especially successful.

Sortilege युवा सुवासाः परिवीत आगात्स उ श्रेयान्भवति जायमानः। तं धीरासः कवय उन्नयन्ति स्वाध्यो मनसा देवयंतः। The reference is to the full manifestation of the Master of the Yoga which is approaching.

([Written] Dec. 20)

This was effected later in the day. The Master through the vani from above & by sukshma speech from outside began to manifest himself everywhere परिवीतः in a well-established stability सुवासाः with the character of youth & strength युवा and as he manifests, the aspect of Love & Good Auspice manifests also श्रेयान् भवति जायमानः. The first result has been a great increase in the satyam. The thought perception & trikaldrishti, as well as vani, became perfectly & minutely accurate for a time & continue to be so except, (1) in the more hasty perceptions, (2) in those which are still afflicted with doubt, (3) in the omission of important circumstances & their exact arrangement. When these are made perfectly effectual (and their survival in imperfection is a mere inert habit), the vijnana in its knowledge-side will be accomplished — only the range will remain to be widened. The haste must make no difference to the truth, doubt must make no difference, omission of circumstance must not lead to incorrect conclusion, arrangement must be exact so far as it goes. It is now evident also that the knowledge was still acting on the levels of potentiality, where the thing arranged can be disturbed, because it is the arrangement of the Manishi, not the Kavi. It was, however, one of the higher levels on which the Manishi is strong in will, clearsighted in perception, but not able to embrace enough in his view (mahan, urushansa). The knowledge is now rising to the levels of the vijnana proper, — becoming of the nature of vijnana and not only enlightened, helped or led by the vijnana. Power is working in the field of the Yogic karma, moulding the thoughts & feelings of others precisely in the immediate vicinity, but is not yet dominant in that province. It is reasserting its hold on immediately surrounding trifles.

Physical activity, $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours in the morning, $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours in the afternoon & from 5 to 11.30 with half an hour's interval in the evening & night, 12 hours in all. The violent insistence of defect of anima became ineffective in the last period, but is still present in a modified form on the morning of the 20th. Sleep 6 hours.

Dec 20th.

Ph. Act. [Physical Activity] 6 to 7.15 am. 8.45 to 12.20 & 12.45 to 1.50 – The Bhashya in Veda increases in force & the Vedantic interpretation is now almost entirely confirmed. Fresh emergence of lipi. The trikaldrishti has a prolonged and efficient activity; but the prakamya of thought, though proved in many instances, shows an imperfection in the readiness to accept incorrect outward suggestions without distinguishing them from true prakamya. The vyapti, on the other hand, shows no imperfection separate from the imperfection of the trikaldrishti.

Sortilege. (1) वि यत् तिरो धरुणमच्युतं रजो अतिष्ठिपो दिवः ।
(2) तदस्मै नव्यमंगिरस्वदर्चत शुष्मा यदस्य प्रत्नथा उदीरते॥

The second given yesterday points to a development in which the Master of the Yoga abandoning the part of the mere mechanician shows himself as Lord of Truth & Love so that the old powers & experiences in the jail & after may reemerge on a new basis of perfection. This movement has already begun. The first is a necessary part of it, viz the firm & unstumbling activity of the higher Pravritti & Ananda on a plane above that of mind, even of pure mind. Srikrishna standing on that level is giving this activity.

The sukshmadrishti has for the last two days been progressing. The gandhadrishti, which was always more pronounced than the others, has now overcome its two limitations, restriction of range to the smells most common in the immediate material experience and reliance on the material adhar; it is now admitting perfumes & other scents not within the physical range or usual experience. The rasadrishti, which was always prevented from manifesting till lately & even then was confined to the gandharasa, the touch on the palate of things smelt, has suddenly rushed to the front and stands on a level with the gandha except in frequency of the experience & permanence; but intensity & materiality are perfect & the range is not limited as it includes the sweet, the bitter & the pungent as well as nondescript tastes. Sparsha is still confined to the habitual touches, rain, wind, insects, heat of the sukshma sun, fire, etc & the result rather than the actuality of certain subtle touches. In samadhi however sparsha is very vivid & the physical sensation remains after waking. The more developed touches (human) are only felt in the waking state through the subtle nervous system, but they are there often acute. Such touches as reach the sthula body without this veil increase in frequency & intensity. Finally, shabda is now beginning to disengage itself finally from the adhara. This sense which was the most acute & earliest to develop, is now the latest (rupa excepted) to perfect itself & the clear sounds of the jail do not repeat themselves. Finally, rupa is still confined to mere image, pratimurti, & does not give the murti or actual form of which there were some instances in the jail & afterwards, but none here.

The health is still attacked. Last night there was a violent and unprecedentedly obstinate attack of the pain in the breast which used sometimes to occur when there was suppressed indigestion, but this time it was seen to come from outside & to be forced on the body. Intolerable at first, it was finally attacked and partly possessed by the ananda. It persisted in a dull form throughout the day, but was mostly cast out by the Will in the evening.. An attempt was also made to revive the ailments of cold & a crude appearance of tendency to phlegm in the nose was for some minutes materialised. All these, however, were failures and only at the centre & in the stomach was any real effect produced; in the latter, moreover, it was foreign and not native to the system. A very slight visrishti allowed for nominal relief at 8.30 pm. The twelve hours limit was maintained. Sleep 6 hours; but its attack was more oppressive than it should be.

Dec 21.

It is to be noted that the programme suggested on the tenth was, as was then suspected, only a tejasic suggestion; it has not been fulfilled, except partially in some details. It was a statement of tendency which came erroneously as a prediction. At present the tapas, & tejas, is being driven forward without much regard to the state of the adhara or the stumbles of the knowledge. Formerly, when the tapas became active, false tejas & tapas took possession of it and there had to be a return to nivritti, but now the intermixture of false tejas is not allowed to stop the pravritti, because, as it seems, this false tejas is not able to take possession. True tejas & prakasha are now in possession & the false is only an invading power which sometimes establishes a precarious foothold or which still occupies partially a part of the ground here & there. The siddhi of the second & third chatusthaya[s] (shakti & vijnana) is following therefore, but much more rapidly, the same process & line of development as the first. There was first the war to oust the enemy in possession, the calling in of the aid [ ][13] of doubtful friends & natural enemies, the carrying & loss of positions, the confused fighting, the slow & precarious progress; then the ill-assured possession, becoming more & more assured, then the possession subject to revolts & revolutions, then the entire possession subject to invasions by the ousted enemy, finally a complete possession with occasional vibrations of the memory of old troubles. In the case of the shanti & samata, the struggle has taken many years & gone through various stages, of which the last alone answers entirely to the above description. The other two were never regularly fought out, except in certain points, before the arrival at Pondicherry. Their final progress, owing to the victory of the samata, is proving much more easy and rapid.

Later in the day, a sudden revolt of impatience & unfaith, not grief or even actual anger, against the continual running after possibilities in the prana & trikaldrishti and a violent rejection of the resulting false trikaldrishti. This resulted in a cessation of the conditions of the siddhi. Physical activity, 4.40 hours [*i.e. 4 hours, 40 minutes*] in the morning, 3.35 in the afternoon, & from 4.55 to 8.55 & 9.35 to 10.20 in the evening & night, 13 hours in all. Sleep, 7 hours. Slight, almost nominal visrishti after meal.

---

[13] *MS* of the aid

Dec 22. Normal conditions have not been entirely restored during the day. There is a steady rejection of fruitless tejas & pursuit of mere possibilities. Ananda which was yesterday almost entirely suspended, is vaguely or slightly persistent today, but there is nothing else definite. Asraddha in the adeshasiddhi is strong in spite of proofs of successful action of aishwarya & ishita in all spheres except the immediate work & equipment. Physical [activity]. 6.12 to 12.12, 1 to 4 [p.m.][14]

([Written] Dec 23)

Afterwards the trikaldrishti resumed suddenly a normal continuous action, which as far as could be tested in a great number of minute instances was perfectly & invariably accurate so far as it went. Thought & lipi have also resumed their activities. Proof of the successful activity of the Will outside is now frequently occurring, as also of the correctness of the trikaldrishti when applied to outside occurrences. On the other hand health was strongly attacked at night & with some success, a slight soreness of the throat being produced this morning without any apparent cause which has persisted throughout the day (23$^{\text{d}}$). Physical activity 5.30 to 7.20 — afterwards other occupations prevented the continuation. Sleep $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours. There was some attempt in sleep to deal again with the dreams, but no success resulted.

Dec 23$^{\text{d}}$.

Yesterday a special test was applied to the arogya in the stomach. There was an attempt at roga, but it failed & ended only in a copious visrishti this morning, the first of its kind after three weeks. Health was strongly attacked and a vague tendency to headache established for some hours & phlegm in the nose for some minutes. These were got rid of by Will, but the sore throat persists, although it is extremely slight. There are movements towards the perfect ananda of cold, but neither the mukti there nor the bhukti are finally confirmed, — the confirmation being postponed until the health in that respect is perfectly assured. Physical activity $4\frac{3}{4}$ in the morning; 2 hours in the afternoon. There is a certain tendency to lassitude today due probably to the diminution of sleep & the strain on the health. The improvement in the trikaldrishti has been confirmed and a corresponding generalisation of the Aishwarya has begun. Ishita is becoming very powerful & the hold of Aishwarya & Ishita on karma is gaining in all directions except the equipment, healing and immediate work. Other siddhis are still moving forward without establishing definitely a fresh advance, eg in the rupadrishti stable ghana & developed forms of the lower intensity are becoming more frequent & today one perfect developed rupa was stable for a few seconds. Physical activity finally amounted to 11 hours only owing to interruptions. Sleep over 7 hours

---

[14] *MS* am.

Dec 24th.

Nothing of note. Trikaldrishti & Powers slowly progress. Samadhi is still [inhibited][15] and Adhogati seeks to bring back the failure of anima.. The rupadrishti cannot yet hold the Akasha nor Ananda the body, though both come and manifest themselves in detail. Health is unable to progress. Today the sore-throat lessened, but did not absolutely disappear, & there were strong efforts to develop cough etc so that it might go by the normal course. In spite, however, of disregard of all rules & continual exposure of throat & breast to cold, it is going without materialising either into cold or cough. Physical activity 11 hours; again other occupations prevented the full amount. Sleep 6 hours.

Dec 25.

The siddhi is in a depressed condition and unable to advance with rapidity, owing to the necessity of a farther transition of considerable magnitude consisting (1) in satyam, the cessation of all intellectual (manomaya) activity & its replacement by the karana, (2) the cessation of the relics of self-action & replacement by the divine action (dasya), (3) the cessation of the use of means in the yogasiddhi and its replacement by the self-fulfilment of the Para shakti working upon the lower. The public news (eg the attack on the Viceroy, the ill-success of the Turkish naval sortie) show that the Power is still ineffective to prevent adverse occurrences. ([Written] Dec 26.) During the rest of the day there was a struggle between the new system and the dregs of the old. The lipi became permanently active, but the old difficulty of manifestation or emergence in the sthula akasha is not yet overcome. At the same time interpreting power attending the lipi became swift and decisive and has so remained. Trikaldrishti in all its parts resumed its activity. The most important result is the final completion of the dasya & the disappearance of all questioning, revolts or self-action; for, whenever these try to manifest, they find no support in the Jiva. Even with regard to error, there is no revolt nor now any return to a tamasic udasinata. The siddhi now fulfils itself entirely by the divine action arranging the conflicting forces & the Jiva does not try to interfere or insist on a consistent method. By this the invading intellectual activity has become wholly discouraged and no longer insists on its own action. There is, however, a survival of manomaya suggestions representing themselves as vani & seeking to lay down the action, but as these are always falsified & the Jiva does not insist on them, they have no force of persistence. Health is undergoing a very serious assault. The sore-throat was flung off, but after a long struggle cough materialised for a very short time at night, & strenuous efforts are made to bring back cold. Tejasic disturbance in the stomach has returned & recurs, though it does not persist against the Will, & there was in the morning a copious visrishti quite of the old type. This is the result of copious eating & drinking without regard to satiety, which has been insisted on in order that [ ][16] the arogya may be established under more arduous conditions. Assimilation is powerful, but not enough to prevent a struggle & irregular workings of the asiddhi. There was no primary utthapana in the afternoon, so today's period amounted only to 10 hours — but there was 5 hours continuously from 4.30 to 9.35 without fatigue or subsequent reaction. Sleep 7 hours.

---

[15] *MS* inhabited

Dec 26.

Sortileges. (1) विद्याम इषं वृजनं जीरदानुं

---

[16] *MS* that

(2) मत्सि नो वस्य इष्टये इन्द्रमिन्द्रो वृषा विश।
ऋघायमान इन्वसि शत्रुमन्ति न विन्दसि॥
तस्मिन्ना वेशया गिरो य एकश्चर्षणीनाम्।
अनु स्वधा यमुप्यते यवं न चर्कृषद् वृषा॥

As usual, the sortileges began at once to be fulfilled. The force described has established itself in the siddhi; effort, no longer self-effort, manifests itself as a force throwing itself on the enemy & breaking down all opposition. This struggle is the working of mental force (Indra) possessed by the Vijnana and filled with mental ananda (Soma). Whenever Indra is thus infused with Soma, opposition seems to disappear; it is only when Indra works without Soma, that the opposition has strength to prevail or at least to resist. Once more Soma is being felt physically in the sensation as of wine flowing through the system, but in the sukshma rather than in the sthula body. Trikaldrishti has been working with a consistent perfection, & aishwarya, at first entirely resisted, broke down opposition & is still busy with the struggle. Throughout the whole siddhi, a state of joyous battle & assured victory is replacing the old alternation between the joy of attainment & the pain of struggle & defeat. 6 continuous hours of primary utthapana from 6.15 to 12.13 and again from 12.35 to 1.35. It was only towards the end that there was some reaction. The replacement of intellect by vijnana continues.

Rupa is still developing, stable developed forms are more perfect, & the perfect transient forms show a greater tendency to stability. Primary utthapana again from 4.20 to 10.15 with the half-hour interval for meal. Today secondary utthapana was resumed, the laghima being perfect, but limited in duration by defect of anima. Sleep 7 hours. Nominal visrishti at night. The jala-visrishti was today less insistent.

Dec 27.

P.U. [Primary Utthapana] 6.15 to 7.30. . 8.55 to 1.15 (minus 25 minutes). . 2.30 to 3.15. . 4.10 to 8.25 & 8.55 to 10.5.

After this month the diary has to change its character & become mainly a record of trikaldrishti, aishwarya, samadhi-experience & work, literary & religious; at the same time a brief note of the physical siddhi will be kept. The aishwarya-vyapti has had effects on purifying considerably the mentality of all in the house, & in the increase & definite development of trikaldrishti in S [Saurin], but his knowledge is still only fragmentarily active. The successful application of the power in immediate result is still successfully resisted except in individual cases; but yesterday groups of existences were made to obey the Will and even to obey it in exact circumstance. The attack on the health seems to be lessening in force; but last night the cough, which is however entirely superficial, returned with some vehemence after a hot sukshma touch on the sensitive spot in the throat. Kamananda is still in the same condition, but the sahaituka shariranandas seem to be once more at a high intensity.

The confused action of the intellect revived in some force and although the siddhis continued, certainty was for a time abrogated. The improvement in the Viceroy's health took place in the direction willed, viz elimination of fever & pain. A period must now be fixed for entire recovery & it must be seen whether the element of time can be controlled. The Turkish business is also centring round the point willed, but the upshot is still in doubt. The cough tried to cling throughout the day, but disappeared by the evening, contrary to its action yesterday. Roga in its other symptoms clings, but cannot assert itself. Will acted with great accuracy in the matter of the returns in the evening, but the trikaldrishti was confused in details. Another failure as regards equipment. The failure was seen before it was known, by vyapti, but there was an attempt to mislead by false vyaptis. Sleep over $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Samadhi at night is absent, but takes place in the daytime, — deep, the record confused with intervals of lucidity & coherence. There is a dull attack of defect of anima & mahima in the primary utthapana.

Dec 28th

St. [Sortilege] La guerre en Orient, meaning that the real struggle now is over the successful use of the will in equipment & Indian affairs. Aishwarya invariably successful this morning in small details; trikaldrishti seriously hampered, an intellectual movement being violently forced in when the vijnana tries to act. A period is about to ensue in which these survivals have to be eliminated both in the vijnana & the physical siddhi, as well as in the samata, dasya & tejas, and the sahitya, bhasha & nirukta have to be consolidated; the trikaldrishti of exact time & arrangement of circumstance & the ritam in karma have to be well-established,—and the obstacles in the saundarya, religious karma, Krishnanritya and public affairs finally broken. This movement, which is being prepared, must definitely begin today & will cover the greater part of January.

Physical activity. 6.10 to 7.15 . . 8.20 to 10.40 . . 11.20 to 12.40 . . 1.40 to 2.10 . . 4.50 to 8.30 . . 8.55 to 11.0.

The drag of the vague defect of anima on the body still continues. A very slight visrishti in the afternoon; subsequently there was a tendency to flatulence. The cough has not returned, but there is a tendency to phlegm in the nostrils. The physical ananda tends to recover its frequency & intensity. The aishwarya was strong today & lipi frequent; but the trikaldrishti much disturbed, rupadrishti almost suspended; particular tejas acts, but general tejas is discouraged and faith depressed. The Nirukta progresses and has attained a certain perfection of method, but not yet of vijnanamay substance, since possibility still has its play. The great gain in the method of work is renunciation of haste & a consequent thoroughness.

Sleep, nearly six hours.

Dec 29th.

Trikaldrishti & aishwarya are now irrevocably fixed in their ordinary daily action; but not yet delivered from inaccuracy of detail and arrangement, nor free to act perfectly in important or public affairs. Vijnanamaya Thought is beginning to regularise itself in relation to the vani. .

Physical activity. 5.10 to 7.10—8.40 to 11.10 . . 12.35 to 2.5 . . 3.25 to 4.28 . . 5.45 to 8.37 . . 8.52 to 11. Twelve hours.

There has been an attempt at securing the continuity of the ahaituka Kamananda. It was almost constant through the morning till 11, in fluctuating degrees of intensity, suspended in the afternoon except for frequent touches, & now (4.30) again active. But it does not as yet hold the system; it only takes partial possession of the outworks of the nervous system & then retires. Sometimes it enters the brain or lower nervous centres, but cannot secure a continuous hold. Nothing is as yet changed in the rest of the siddhi.

Nirukta proceeds rapidly. . Strong discouragement in the evening in reviewing the little that has been done, the vast amount that remains and the strength of the obstacles, which is apparently incapable of exhaustion. Sleep 7 hours.

Dec. 30th

There is no farther need of a record such as has been kept during this month. There has been considerable progress, but upon lines which have now to be altered and soon to be abandoned. The programme proposed on the 3^{d} December has as usual been fulfilled only in its beginnings & in one or two instances not at all. The stability of rupadrishti is of little value in itself, since the perfect forms do not hold the akasha, & has been accomplished only in the sense that the forms accomplished appear habitually & the progress made has not to be continually lost & built up again, as used to be the case. Lipi is not yet habitually spontaneous in legibility & still needs usually the stimulus of the subjective perception to become perfectly legible, but it appears more usually without particular demand, though less frequently without any warning or the turning of the attention in that direction. It will only be perfect when it appears uncalled for as an ordinary habit of the akasha and is always immediately legible without any attention or trouble to the mind. Trikaldrishti works perfectly often, but not always, nor even yet as a rule, except in single incidents which present themselves to the mind, but where the perception is active rather than passive, there is usually much uncertainty & confusion of details. Nevertheless the more or less perfect trikaldrishti does occur daily with some frequency & in an imperfect state it is working throughout the day. The Power has so far overcome resistance as to work habitually like the Trikaldrishti, but it is even more hampered & outside a narrow field imperfectly, slowly or irregularly effective. Samadhi has not been regularised.

Ananda (kama) is occasionally intense on a moderate estimate of intensity. It is that is to say tivra, but not rudra, not even tivratara or tivratama. It occurs, tivra or kuntha, daily & often frequently in the day and is in that sense permanent. But it is not continuous in its permanence or constant in its intensity. Health in the last half of the month has been successfully resisted, rather than successfully progressive; cough, which had disappeared, has reappeared; the other fragments of roga, however vague, slight, blunted or disjointed, still persist & even when they seem to have finally disappeared, unexpectedly return. Nevertheless, they are losing force; but that is all that can be said. The saundarya has not progressed since the 10th, materially; its successes are the merest beginnings & in most directions the opposite tendency prevails. Primary utthapana has so far established itself that ten to twelve hours daily are passed, walking or standing, without any permanent reaction except a vague defect of anima which sometimes tends to materialise feebly and a moderate adhogati, also vague & dull, in the earlier part of the day. The prediction about equipment has been entirely falsified & the acuteness of the position has not been lightened. The literary & scholastic work has begun to take shape & proceed or prepare to proceed on its proper lines, but the necessary materials are deficient. The religious work is now being founded on a certain power over the sadhana of others, but this is as yet only rudimentary. The same is true of other activities. There is an effective pressure of power, but not the sovran control that is needed. The contact with the Master of the Yoga is being constantly dulled & obscured by the siege of Ego in the environment, false suggestion & inferior vani. Realisation of Atman & Brahman Nirguna & Saguna is always available & at once returns in fullness when the mind turns in that direction, but the nitya smarana is not there, because, perhaps, the realisation of the Ishwara is not equally well-established. The whole Yoga is still subject to clouding & temporary breaches even of those siddhis that have been most perfectly accomplished. Although these breaches are often slight, temporary & without power yet their recurrence shows that the whole system has not been placed perfectly under the right control.

═

The directions given on the 18th October, & 15th & 19th November have only been partially fulfilled through no fault of the

Jiva, but owing to the constant siege from outside of the discarded intellectual activity. They have to be fulfilled.

═══

Trikaldrishti—

1. A squirrel on the roof-ridge descends the angle of the tiles, leaps on to the wall of the next house, runs along it & ascends its roof. The first motion seen in the squirrel's mind (prakamya) before it is executed, the second d[itt]o, the third by trikaldrishti without any data objective or subjective.

2. The leaflike insect put yesterday on the smaller tree stated yesterday by S [Saurin] to be no longer on the tree, suggested that it was back among the bean-leaves. While searching for it with the eyes today, trikaldrishti that it was not in the bean plant & was, probably, still on the tree. No data. The certainty was absent. Half an hour later it was shown by N [Nolini] still on the tree.

3. A crow approaching the veranda—another upon it. The idea of coming on the verandah seen in the crow's mind, but a suggestion of trikaldrishti that it would fly away to the wall on the left before reaching it. Uncertainty & false viveka mistaking the intention for the event. Suggestion at the last moment when the crow had paused just below the veranda to eat something, that something would happen to send it away—rejected obstinately by false viveka. The next moment the first crow flew away to the wall on the left & the object of observation followed it.

These three instances show the state of the trikaldrishti. Everything observed is the rendering in thought of a truth of tendency, intention, or event, but everything is not yet put easily in its correct place, & uncertainty about the actual event is the normal state of the mental being who cannot distinguish between the correct decision and a false choice.. This stage has to be exceeded, before a clear & reliable trikaldrishti can be established.

Physical activity 10 hours. Sleep 6. Slight visrishti in the afternoon. Jala very copious & frequent.

Dec 31st

Yesterday, it seemed as if the rudimentary equipment of the immediate life in its bare necessities were acquired, with a lacuna, with inconvenient effects of the past confusion, with a precarious source, but still if it is maintained, it stands as the first real triumph of the Power in overcoming this obstinate difficulty. Yesterday's lipis indicated that tyaga (outward) must be entirely abandoned and bhoga fully accepted; "submission to desirability" or some equivalent phrase was used. Another lipi ran "violent purposes have to be justified" & is interpreted in the sense that, although hitherto all the more vehement uses of the aishwarya have been abortive and only moderate demands have been satisfied, the vehement Mahakali use of the aishwarya and ishita have not therefore to be abandoned, but must be insisted on till they succeed. Aniruddha and his Shakti Mahasaraswati have been satisfied; the Yogasiddhi has been justified & the Adeshasiddhi is beginning to be justified by slow, small and steadily progressive processes. This is Aniruddha's method, the method of the patient intellectual seeker & the patient and laborious contriver who occupies knowledge & action inch by inch & step by step, covering minutely & progressively all the grounds, justifying himself by details and through the details arriving at the sum. But, if continued, this method would render success in this life impossible. The method chosen for preparation has been Mahasaraswati's, but the method chosen for fulfilment is Mahakali's in the Mahasaraswati mould. Mahakali's method is vehemence, force & swiftness, attaining knowledge by swift intuitions, moving to success in action by forceful strides. It is vehement in lipsa, violent in method, headlong in accomplishment. It seeks to attain the whole & then only returns upon the details. This vehemence, violence & precipitate rapidity has to be established in the prana, chitta and buddhi, so as to govern feeling, thought & action (there have been plenty of isolated instances & brief periods of it in the past of the sadhana) and justified by success; but the basis of hidden calm & self-possession in the Maheshwari-bhava of Mahasaraswati has to be maintained and all has to be in the [Mahasaraswati][17] mould which demands thoroughness, perfect [contrivance],[18] faultless elaboration of detail in the consummate whole. The literary work, the subjective action on others, the outward physical speech and action have all to be done with this swift elaboration & violent minuteness. At first, the Maheshwari bhava will retain some prominence, but will afterwards become implicit only in its Mahasaraswati continent. The first necessity is, however, that the Mahakali method should be justified in the results so that the intellectual sceptic & critic in Mahasaraswati may be assured of the correctness of the instructions given.

---

[17] *MS* Maheshwari

[18] *MS* contrive

Bhasha. Bh's [Bharati's] Panchali Sapatham taken up; in the first verse yesterday only a few words could be understood without reference to the dictionary & no connected sense has been made out from the sum of the vocable. Today, in the second verse, the difficulties of the Tamil way of writing (sandhi etc) were overcome by the intuition as well as some of the difficulties of the grammar, but the Bhashashakti which used formerly to give correctly the meaning of unknown words has not recovered its habit of action.

Trikaldrishti. This morning all the trikaldrishtis were correct, even when coupled in their action with aishwarya sometimes successful, sometimes unsuccessful. Formerly the aishwarya would represent itself as trikaldrishti, but this false action this morning occurred only three or four times & was immediately rejected; but in one or two cases the rejection was questioned for a while by false tejas.

Aishwarya mixed with trikaldrishti— On a bird alighting on a tree to move from one part of a branch to another & then from that branch to a neighbouring branch; carried out exactly; then to remain sitting where it was. This, too, was carried out. Afterwards, aiswarya on the same bird to move was resisted; but trikaldrishti came immediately that it would be resisted and that the bird would remain, not sitting quietly, but picking its feathers on the same spot until I had to go to drink tea. Also that two birds on another tree, making love, would so continue till the same moment. This was fulfilled exactly, although it was nearly ten minutes before I went away & the same birds had previously been restless, flown away once out of sight & come back, all foreseen by the drishti, except the return. Several instances of this kind happen daily.

Morning's news. No breach of the negotiations in spite of the extravagant Turkish demands. Foreseen.

The Viceroy's health is following exactly the movement of the Will which was that the pain should be relieved within Dec 31st and the healing of the wounds fulfilled in January. This morning's news is that there is no longer any discomfort from the wounds, although the healing will take some weeks. It is also announced that there is still a piece of metal in the neck. This confirms the trikaldrishti of two or three days ago which suggested the fact when reading the description of the state of the wounds.

The Congress badly attended, considerably less than 200 members, & practically a fiasco, as foreseen, so also the other Conferences. ? Beginning of the end of the Age of Palaver in India.

Wrecks etc abound—belated fulfilment of the lipi about accidents on the sea given some time ago.

———

Afternoon. Blank. The attitude of distrust with regard to the equipment is very strong. The pratijna in mind is not yet entirely satyapratijna, for there was tejasic fixing of things to be done today, which were presented as things that would be done; eg there was quarter of an hour secondary utthapana of the arms in the morning and more was suggested for the afternoon, but the suggestion was left unexecuted.

Last night there was some swapna samadhi, but only one image survives in the memory,—a room or tent with a small table such as might be used in a tent & a sola hat on the table, seen for some time, but with a momentary eclipse after which it emerged again & then vanished, a scene without any incident or moving figure, although it was felt that there would have been either movement or incident, if the power of vision had been able to hold the scene. The background and atmosphere were very dim as is usually now the case with these visions.

Visrishti, neither slight, nor excessive, in the afternoon; the first real evacuation since the 25th—6 days.

Physical activity 10½ hours. Secondary utthapana of arms for half an hour; this time with ease, although earlier in the day there had been difficulty in maintaining it for half an hour due to defect of anima, resultant strain in the arms & pain of the negative electric current. Sleep nearly 7 hours. Swapna samadhi with images indistinguishable to the eye from dream images, distinguishable by the viveka alone. The faculty of understanding the truth behind the dream record and disentangling its confusions has once more returned. Fresh proofs of the siddhis constantly occur, but there are plenty of instances of misplaced perception and the siddhis of power have as yet no assured mastery over results. Primary utthapana continues in the same condition; it cannot be perfected unless the secondary & tertiary are brought forward.

This day closes the year 1912. From its morrow a new record begins in which the progress of the siddhi of Mahakali-Mahasaraswati has to be recorded. At present there is no sign of any rapid progress or of really great results. All is petty, hampered & limited. A siddhi rapidly established becomes otiose for days together. Continuity in the higher states seems as yet impossible, and from accomplishment there is always a relapse into a condition of partial asiddhi. The whole Yoga is continually beset with tamas and uncertainty & seems unable to rise permanently into clearness & perfect joy & assurance. There is no grief or acute trouble or even anything that can really be called trouble, but a dull depression never acute & a certain weariness & lack of interest has settled down on the system and is only lifted for short intervals or replaced by a mere ahaituka state of ambitionless content. The active force, ananda etc established for a short period, have failed to hold their own. The tejasic ideas of a joyous progress & of siddhi within a given time have once more proved to be falsehoods.

On the other hand the theory of the Yoga has been proved. The perfectibility of the human being, trikaldrishti, Power, the play of the Divine Force in the individual, the existence of the other worlds, & of extra-mental influences, even the possibility of the physical siddhis are established facts — vijnana, the Vedic psychology, the seven streams, everything is established. What is wanting is the perfect application, free from the confusions of the anritam which result from the play of mind. It has been seen that in repose, in nivritti[,] in udasinata, perfect peace and ananda are possible; but the thing the Yoga has set out to establish is the perfect harmony of Nivritti & Pravritti, of desirelessness & Lipsa, of Guna & Nirguna, complete Ananda, Tapas, Knowledge, Love, Power & Infinite Egoless Being, consummating in the full and vehement flow of the Pravritti. By the fulfilment or failure of this harmony the Yoga stands or falls. The siddhi has now reached a stage when the test of its positive worldward side has to be undertaken. Tyaga is finished; shama & shanti & udasinata have had their fulfilment; but in that resting place there can be no abiding. It is the starting point of the Lila, not its goal. Therefore during the next three months it has to be seen whether, the harmony in nivritti being definitely thrown aside, the harmony in pravritti, which has always been attacked & denied by the enemy, can be prepared or accomplished. Only then can there be a settled peace and a perfected action.

1–31 JANUARY 1913

Record of the Yoga.
1913.
January.

January 1st.

The first movements were unsatisfactory, tamas-besieged and arrested by a dull depression. In the evening, only, progress began.

1. Ananda of heat & cold have been confirmed, but the discomfort not yet entirely removed.

2. Kamananda occurs more frequently than before, but is not yet in possession of the body. The sahaituka physical anandas are reasserting their possession of the system. Ahaituka ananda, long clouded, has once more triumphed over its obstacles and is in possession even of the obstacle and the adverse event.

3. The health, still much afflicted, tends slowly to reassert itself. There are still no movements of roga outside the survivals of phlegm, occasional neuralgic touches, imperfect digestive assimilation, eruption, headache and defect of the chakra. All the symptoms are slight and fragmentary, but in some of them there is a strong persistence.

4. In the primary utthapana there is still the persistence of a vague defect of anima which sometimes grows in force for a while, but cannot hold the body, although it encourages the adhogati. Secondary utthapana is emerging.

5. Saundarya makes no apparent progress.

Trikaldrishti.

The removal of the metal piece in the Viceroy's neck effected without trouble foreseen for yesterday; fulfilled.

A number of ordinary instances presenting no new feature—in the movement of birds, animals, persons etc.

Suggestions of the nature of vyapti or prophetic thought-communication are now extremely common . . eg. B [Bijoy] was asked to get two khatas of this type; suggested, he would bring small ones instead . . fulfilled. Ant. invited everybody this evening; suggested that the invitation was hastily made and, without being withdrawn, would not be zealously followed up . . fulfilled. Fulfilment of thought prakamya is fairly frequent, but the definite thought-vyapti is still dull & infrequent in its occurrence.

Aishwarya.

That P [Parthasarathi], after a long abstention of over a month, possibly two, should come to pay a visit . . fulfilled the same day.

The Aishwarya about the Insurance Act, long resisted, seems about to be fulfilled; there is every sign of the medical profession yielding. There are also signs of weakening in Ulster.

The ordinary aishwaryas, eg fulfilment of will by several birds at a time, exact movement in accordance with will, reception of vyapti & action in accordance, are all evidently established & exampled daily, but their regular success is still resisted. Apparently, the knowledge has to be perfected first.

Samadhi.

Brilliant visions of sea, waters etc just before sleeping; but all were momentary. Such other visions as can be remembered, were all dark, chhayamaya and chhayavrita. Sleep, under 6 hours.

Lipi and rupa slowly increase upon the material akasha.

It is indicated in the lipi that "from tonight" the Master of the Yoga will exercise a perfect and apparent control over the subjectivity of the system in all its parts. The subjective-objectivity will still remain for some time imperfectly siddha & subject to a dual control of the old & new Prakriti, the old fading, the new increasing in force, brilliance and all-pervading sovereignty.

Jan 2^{d} 2.45 pm.

The promise has been made that there will be no farther interruption in the continuity of the siddhi. Since then (last night), considerable progress is being made.

Trikaldrishti. . In the beginning there was a series of outward suggestions which fulfilled themselves rapidly & accurately, although the mind denied them admission and saw no probability of fulfilment. Subsequently, this element of external suggestion was put in its place as prophetic vyapti from the thought of supramaterial beings that foresee; the jnanam was then perfected and afterwards the trikaldrishti in its entirety brought up to the level of the same perfection. The difference between this new siddhi and all that have preceded it is, 1, that the first idea proves to be correct and has not to be replaced by a second, at most it has to be amplified and modified or enriched with suggestions of the right time and place & arrangement, 2, that even when it manifests in the intellect without being seen to descend from the vijnana, it is habitually correct, 3, that mistaken suggestion[s], except in small details of time, place & circumstance, tend to be more & more rare and already form the infrequent exception. In the thought-perception there is no falsity, but only appearances of it which turn out to be not falsity but aprakasha.

News today that yesterday (the 31st) the Viceroy was for the first time entirely without pain from his wounds, (the result of the last extraction). Thus the first aishwarya & drishti has been amply fulfilled. A rapid cure of the wounds must now be effected.

Trikaldrishti of the more distant future and of the far past is now taking place unhindered; it remains for the future siddhi to control its results whether for confirmation or rejection. In its application to the immediate future and the present it is evincing an astonishing accuracy.

Primary Utthapana

Yesterday nearly 12 hours were passed in walking or the erect position; this morning there was on rising the old pain in the soles of the feet, but it passed away at once; subsequently stiffness was felt for a minute or two in the thighs, but it passed away also and was convinced of material falsity. Only the vague defect of anima, now, is a persistent reality.

Dasya.

Dasya is becoming absolute in the thought and feeling no less than in the action; doubt extends only to the adesh-siddhi and has, even in this field, only a dull activity of reserve and caveat; for it is growing evident that something will be done through this yantra in the field of life, although the material equipment seems to be entirely lacking. It is this lack of material equipment which is the real obstacle to perfect faith; the slowness of the physical siddhi is only an accessory cause of hesitation and would have no force if the equipment were given. These movements have still to be occasionally noted, so that the condition of the activity which is to form the substance of the record may be understood.

4 pm.

Aishwaryasiddhi promised; the first result was the fulfilment of the aishwarya made at 1.30 that M [Moni] should come to make the tea about 3.10 by the time of my watch. He came at 3.11. This is a rare instance, almost the first that is entirely clear and definite, of an aishwarya of exact time being perfectly fulfilled, although trikaldrishtis of exact time have been not infrequent. Usually indeed, such aishwaryas have not even been attempted,—only aishwaryas of approximate time, eg between 9 & 9.30. This success was followed by a series upon birds which one after another flew in the direction indicated to them, although they obviously started in a different direction. There was invariably some resistance, in the last two cases long & persistent, & in three cases failure; but the trikaldrishti was uniformly correct except as to time, although deficient in circumstance, eg not giving all the swerves of the flight. There were some casual instances of the old type of error, speedily corrected. Uncertainty is still not infrequent.

Final. (written Jan 3^{d}.)

At night again some clouding. Aishwarya continued in the same stage of progress, sometimes unfulfilled although always with foreknowledge of nonfulfilment, sometimes fulfilled after resistance or partially, sometimes instantaneously and perfectly. This power of the Aishwarya covers only things of immediate occurrence. On eventualities that need a longer space of time for their fulfilment, on settled stages of mind or body, its working, although often successful, is slow and laborious.

Lipi advanced in power, vividness and authority. The beginnings of lipi-kaushalya, especially varna-lipi, were promised in the lipi itself and exemplified; this morning fiery, luminous & coloured lipis have occurred, of a rich substance and brilliant vividness. Rupa is still in the same stage, although it increases in the frequency, normality and even stability of perfect images, sometimes in the sukshma-sthula and sometimes in the sthula akasha. In the samadhi the images were dim and inconstant.

Sleep $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Primary utthapana 11 hours. Kamananda frequent and more easily intense, with a tendency to continuity. Siddhi of aishwarya and kamananda are indicated & promised, as well as of the lipi. Karma received a setback already predicted two or three days ago in the lipi "Trouble in the entourage", but its area & force are limited.

Jan 3d

Aishwarya-ishita-vashita,—with vyapti; rupa; lipi; kamananda; widening trikaldrishti, are the immediate siddhis that have to be effected.

Aishwarya

Will on B [Bijoy] for vijnana to resume activity fulfilled with regard to vijnana. Viceroy's wounds again give pain and fever, due to exertion of sitting,—only therefore, an indirect contradiction of aiswarya. Affairs in China adverse. On the other hand the Turkish peace negotiations appear to be moving to the point willed. Aishwarya this morning is hampered and largely unsuccessful, Trikaldrishti hampered, but successful.

The rest of the day was passed in a struggle with the difficulties of the aishwaryam.. Kamananda impeded in the evening. Temporary diminution of dasya.

Sleep 7 hours. Phy. act. [Physical activity] $9\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

The dreams remembered were confused in record, but intelligible. Image in swapnasamadhi is still afflicted.

Jan 4th.

Work (nirukta) has emerged from its hesitations & is being steadily done; incidentally much that was seen by intuition formerly is being proved by the data.

Trikaldrishti

Pain in the V's [Viceroy's] wounds continues; foreseen.

Peace negotiations at their critical stage.

Most of the day spent in Nirukta.

Some development of rupadrishti in the evening.

P.A. [Physical Activity] nearly 9 hours. Sleep 7 hours. A little more force in the swapnasamadhi.

Aishwarya entirely obstructed . . Trikaldrishti victorious in spite of opposition

Jan 5th

The persistence of tapas is now assured in spite of opposition; the action proceeds in the face of difficulties, disappointments & errors of method without flagging for more than a moment and is itself tejaswi even when the system loses hold of active tejas and falls back on shama or dhairyam. The physical obstacle to continuous karma is overcome as well as the subjective obstacle, failure of physical dhairya as well as failure of mental tejas. Mental dhairya, physical dhairya & pranic tejas assured, mental tejas has to be rendered equally permanent and invincibly active so that the physical brain may not flag in its response to the stimulus from above. The quaternary, Tejo balam pravrittir mahattwam, will then be assured in all the parts of the system. Vijnana is now beginning to assert its constant activity, pausing only to test the state of the intellect; for when the intellect, even in its darkened or clouded state, refuses to rest in error and begins to respond only to the satya, then the pratistha in intellect of the vijnanamaya action will be assured. At present, it is so assured in all but the trikaldrishti,—the action of mind on the objective field, & this is so because the trikaldrishti itself is still limited in its ordinary action, though already perfect in its best moments & in its extraordinary movements. It has been decided yesterday that the development of the Knowledge must be left to the unaided action of the Prakriti, the Power to its own self-development and the Samadhi, physical siddhi and Karma alone left for the present field of the stimulative action of the Will aiding Prakriti.

Trikaldrishti has to be liberated from the dregs of possibility; lipi from the remnants of the obstruction in the akasha; rupa from the denial of stability in the higher forms; prakamya-vyapti from the interference of elemental thought-images; samadhi from sleep & dream; power from the akashic obstruction to subjective reception and objective fulfilment; bhautasiddhi from defect of anima; primary utthapana from adhogati and the remnants of defect of anima; ananda from interruption and the obstruction by weaker nerve-elementals influencing the body; arogya from the habit of symptomatic recurrences. This field is almost conquered, subject to the last obstinate resistance.

Secondary utthapana of the neck, loins & legs was resumed this morning. It is growing stronger in the first, almost nil in the second, absent in the third.

The Unionist dissensions & the movement of the Ulster affair are now patently following the line of the aishwarya persisted in since the introduction of the Home Rule Bill & in the Insurance matter there is a perfect success. The relapse of the 1st in the V's health has had the consequences foreseen, but there may still be a rapid cure, if there is no farther premature exertion. It is suggested that his health will never be what it was formerly.

The Power is reasserting efficacy but with difficulty.

Trikaldrishti is now establishing itself on a wider basis: formerly it acted in isolated movements of knowledge on a basis either of error, of uncertainty or of passivity in the intellectual movements. It has now got rid of the third basis (nischeshtata of the mind), so important and so long sustained as a necessary movement of sadhana; admitting action, it allows the intellect to take in all that comes within its field and detecting its own misapplications to perceive the nature of the error, the actual truth misapplied and replace the former by the latter. At the same time, the separation of Power & Knowledge is being removed; they are acting simultaneously & the old form of error which took the will for the event, is being allowed play in order that it may be expelled by the viveka serving the trikaldrishti & deciding the correct event among the various tendencies, applied forces & possibilities.

The formed, articulate or vangmaya thought assumed suddenly its perfect and fluent activity in the evening; it has already all the qualities of perfection which, at an earlier stage of the siddhi, it was preparing, except that it has not a sure hold of its proper locality & sometimes, ie when it deals with matter not formerly included in the scope of the vangmaya thinking, descends from the higher style proper to it into the lower inefficient vak; at such times it tends to pass back from thought into inferior vani.

The watch being out of order, it was impossible to estimate periods. Dreams were much more coherent, although there is still the tendency to mixture of incidents & false forms due to the appearance of the present ego with its associations. Swapnasamadhi was stronger and dream images tend to pass into clear and living chhayamaya forms.

Jan 6th

The morning there was a rapid movement forward in knowledge. The progress of the trikaldrishti is tending to eliminate the sources of intellectual error and the thought perception and vangmaya thought between them are taking charge of all trikaldrishti not appertaining to this immediate existence or in this life to the progress of the siddhi. Perception of past & future lives of others is reestablished. All these perceptions are necessarily beyond immediate verification; the action of the vijnana is swayamprakasha. Their intellectual justification rests upon the ample daily proof of the soundness of the supra-intellectual faculty by which they are received, and the only remaining cause of doubt is the remnant of intellectual activity (external) and therefore of error which interferes with the vijnana-perception. Vani, conducted by one of the Shaktis, has asserted its authority and is proving its veridicity. Lipi is preparing the final proof of its truthfulness. The faith in the vani, thought & trikaldrishti is now ample except in the one field unconquered. Yesterday's lipi promising a change from steady to energetic battle with the opposing forces, is being fulfilled; the tejas is taking possession of the mentality & pouring itself out in the struggle, without the rapid exhaustion which used formerly to throw back the Adhara into udasinata or shama. The other lipi "death of the difficulties", has already begun to be fulfilled in the siddhi of the knowledge.

There is a tendency in the rupa to develop groups and paintings with their colours, but the obstruction in the akasha maintains itself & prevents the efflorescence of the rupadrishti which is waiting, perfect and richly-equipped, in the sukshma akasha for its hour of manifestation. The images of the swapna samadhi were once more of the richer & brighter kind, but the dreams were more incoherent and ill-remembered. Kamananda is more persistent in recurrence, but has not yet established continuity. The other parts of the physical siddhi are heavily obstructed and do not move forward; to a less extent the power; only knowledge, trikaldrishti and lipi are moving forward irresistibly.

Jan 7th.

It is indicated that today is a turning-point in the immediate movement that is being slowly effected. Dasya is already a fact in all parts of the activity, but it is not yet direct enough; the control through the Prakriti is felt rather than the direct impulse of the Purushottama. There must be identification with the Prakriti, possession of it and the sensation of its unimpeded use by the actual touch of Krishna. The shadow of intellectual consideration and hesitation over the act or the thought, the shadow of intellectual determination of the act or thought, the shadow of reflection & judgment over it when accomplished, or of the accompaniment or mediation of the intellect in the moment of accomplishment, all these glints of the lower humanity must be effaced from the movement of the Waters, apasi swasrínâm. They must be utterly replaced by unchecked Force in the act and pure Sight in the vision, Sight & Force simultaneous in their activity and one in their substance, but not intermixed in their function. Then only will the Dasya be of the true nature of the relation between the Jiva & the Ishwara.

The condition of the Viceroy answers to the trikaldrishti and aishwarya, in the circumstances of a rapid improvement. The Turkish affair is still uncertain but in several directions it is following the line laid down by the Will. In several directions, in Indian affairs, similar signs are evident; but as yet there is nothing decided.

The only work done in the day was a grammatical commentary on the fifth hymn of the Rigveda. Here as in all the works of Knowledge, there is a double stream of action, the intuition which sees the truth and the speculative reason with its groping judgments, imaginations, memories, inferences which works towards truth through error. The script was once more resumed; its first movement was of the old type, perfunctory, hasty & exaggerated in suggestion, although not actually false in statement; its second, accurate in statement and suggestion, but marred by the tejasic response of the mind reading more into the words than the words themselves conveyed. The trikaldrishti, perfect in the earlier part of the day, became a confused and stumbling movement at night. Lipi increases in force constantly, but slowly. In the body the adverse tendency still reigns, and although the aishwarya often acts, it is successful with difficulty & in details unsuccessful. Sleep is still excessive, but the dreams were of a remarkable character; they had for their subject world-spaces and primal movements of the gods. There was a slight admixture of present associations, but not of present ego except as the watcher. The whole took place in Chhayamayi.

The day proved to be a turning-point in the dasya chiefly, not that the necessary change has been effected, but that it has been begun; but otherwise the indication has not been justified.

Jan 8th

The script is now showing a remarkable accuracy of prediction which it shares with the vani. Two of its predictions made this morning for the day have already been fulfilled; "The trikaldrishti today will throw off the doubt and judgment, but not yet the uncertainty left behind by them in the action of the faculty on the intellect," and "Lipi will justify the prediction." It had been predicted three days ago in the script that lipi today would perfect itself in the material akasha. This has now been fulfilled. The great remaining defects of the lipi were insufficient spontaneity and an uncertain vividness; it depended for emergence too much on the subjective stimulus & obeyed too much the intellectual suggestion. This difficulty has been finally surmounted & even when the external mind suggests a word or form of words, the lipi pays no heed, but shapes its own word or sentence. All the other qualities needed, legibility, simultaneity, etc are now coexistent with the spontaneity, (formerly, one quality used to perfect itself at the expense of another,) and vividness though not invariable is now well established in the legible, spontaneous and simultaneous lipi. The legible simultaneity is not usually immediate, it is ordinarily the result of a consecutive appearance of the words; when the whole sentence starts at once into view, it is not always or usually legible. These slight deficiencies are not essential defects, but they have to be dismissed out of the siddhi & the perfection attained preserved and enriched by variety of the lipi-kaushalya. In trikaldrishti intellectual judgment & doubt have received their dismissal & the mind merely waits to see the result. In consequence, it is found that everything that enters the mind, is correct, although [ ][1] not always perfectly placed, & that it is the doubt & impatience of the intellect which is the source of error; for it cannot wait to see the suggestion placed & justified, but either catches at & overstresses it or rejects it by a premature haste of adverse judgment.

(Afternoon)

Trikaldrishti.

Pressure of Turkish Army for a change of ministry & command foreseen & fulfilled. Movements to put Shaukat (& Anwar) in command twice foreseen or felt by vyapti-prakamya & twice fulfilled . . Foreseen day before yesterday at night that money would come within two days from R. Fulfilled today, but only Rs 10 came (no data).

The aishwarya is recovering its full force in many instances & has again begun to be fulfilled in detail & repeatedly, but the opposition is still to some extent master of the sthula akasha. The prediction in script is that today Rupa will at last emerge & Power overcome, for the last time, the general obstruction. There was some emergence of Rupa in the morning, but it did not last, nor did it effect the stability of perfect forms. Every time the opposition in the akasha throws itself on the forward movement & seems to overbear it. At the same time there is a sensible movement of the Para Tapas to throw off the general obstruction and pursue steadily and powerfully the totality of the siddhi. Nirukta has been resumed today and is being well, but slowly done.

---

[1] *MS* though

Rupa emerged in the afternoon and evening, not perfect, but with greater force than before, so that perfect forms more frequently come out into the sthula akasha and meet the physical eye direct instead of manifesting as formerly mostly in the sukshma akasha or, if in the sthula, then avoiding the gaze and affecting the physical eye through the subtle vision. Still the indirect method and the subtle field continue to be the most common. Crude shapes alone meet the eye full and these are now more usually stable and perfect. Lipi continues to increase on the akash. Power has begun to overcome the general obstruction, but its victory is as yet neither decisive nor assured. There was a great extension of swapna-samadhi at night & especially in the early morning, images of great frequency & perfection occurring & brief continuous scenes frequently manifesting with something, often, of their background. This is the one real difficulty in the swapna-samadhi, the continuous action in a fixed scene. Otherwise the swapna (not dream, but vision-record) is perfect enough & combined touch, hearing & sight are well enough established, though they do not come as a regular circumstance of the siddhi in its present working. The only prediction in script that seemed to be beside the mark was the statement that Ananda this day would again take hold, but even this was true if it is understood of the subjective Ananda and not the Kamananda.

Jan 9th.

Another slight clash seems to be passing away. Today's telegrams all show the exact working of the Will except with regard to Adrianople, which is the one serious point of attack. Especially the action of the Powers, the situation at Constantinople and the opinion of the Triple Alliance with regard to the Aegean islands are in exact consonance with the line laid down by Will & prakamya vyapti. Today, the action of the vijnana is very much confused owing to the necessity of harmonising finally tejas & tapas with prakasha & dasya in the intellect. Always, the intellect & manas have been the field of their discord and incompatibility, & though they now agree well enough in the higher ideal or idealised movements (vijnanamaya or vijnana yantrita), the manomaya movements which besiege the system from the external kshetra are still full of the old confusion. Yet the lipi has insisted on today as a period of rapid progression. Up till now, this does not appear.

Afternoon.

The siddhi of the visrishti & freedom from satiety long combated and diminished has momentarily collapsed. Kamananda, although its activity has not disappeared, has at present no hold on the body. The physical siddhi persists in its retrograde motion. The external tapas is now falling away again from the system and is giving place to tapas under control of the dasyabuddhi . . The samadhi has suddenly & without farther difficulty acquired siddhi in the vijnana & saviveka samadhi, corresponding to the savichara and savitarka of the intellectual classification. The thought, whether as perception or vangmaya, maintains itself on the vijnanamay level, the intellect in a state of perfect passivity, only receiving it, even in the deepest swapnasamadhi which amounts to a practical sushupti of the manas & its silence in the mahat. It was because the system was accustomed to fall into sushupti whenever the manas-buddhi became inert, that this siddhi could not formerly be accomplished. Now the mind becomes inert, sushupta, but activity proceeds on the vijnanamaya level on which the Purusha is now jagrat in the body, and that activity is received by the inert intellect. Nevertheless owing to the great inertia of the intellect at the time, the thought is sometimes caught with difficulty, hardly remembered on waking, or, if remembered, then soon afterwards lost to the recollection. The intellect catches it, but does not get a good grasp upon it. The vijnanamay memory must become active, if the thought & vision of samadhi are to be remembered. This higher memory is developing, not swe dame, but on the intellectual plane; things are now remembered permanently without committing them to heart, which formerly would not have been remembered even for a day if they had been even carefully learned by heart—eg the first verse of Bharati's poem, in Tamil, not a line of which was understood without a laborious consultation of the dictionary. Yet although an unknown tongue, although no particular attention was paid to the words or their order everything remains in the mind even after several days. Formerly even a verse of Latin, English, Sanscrit carefully studied & committed to memory, would be lost even in a shorter time. The siddhi of the vijnana samadhi shows that the Purusha is now rising into the vijnana or preparing to rise; the manomaya is becoming passive, the vijnanamaya Purusha, so long secret & veiled by the hiranmaya patra of the buddhi, is beginning to reveal himself, no longer indirectly, but face to face with the lower man. An initial siddhi is also preparing in script communication. As was predicted earlier in the day, the sahitya-siddhi has extended itself to poetry this evening & the long obstruction of the poetic faculty is passing away. The epic style has been recovered and only the dramatic remains. Fluency in all will come back during the month, spontaneous & immediate perfection hereafter within these two months . . The lipi is now being freely & naturally utilised for knowledge; there is no farther need of any attention to its development or to the farther development of the vani or script. Only the trikaldrishti & the Power still need attention (apramattata), and the rupadrishti & samadhi still need the help of the Will for their wider development or their more perfect perfection.

The siddhi of the vijna[na]maya level for the Thought in samadhi does not extend to the vision; for this reason the dreams are still intellectual records or attempts to record rather than the actual vision of things and events, except when the dream is replaced by vision. Even then it is often savikalpa rather than sadarsha samadhi. The dreams last night (those remembered) were again of consecutive & well connected records; this time the present ego sense was carefully excluded and only once a present association interfered with the accuracy of the record. A rapid movement in trikaldrishti is promised and one in rupa indicated.

Jan 10th.

Secondary utthapana of neck & legs this morning, but not for long, as the adhogati succeeded in enforcing defect of anima . . The morning began with a clouded state, in which however Bhasa & Nirukta [proceeded];[2] in both the weariness of adhogati born of difficulty is being allowed to manifest according to its power & extruded. It is no longer able to prevent work or stop its continuity, but it can still limit the length of time which can be devoted to a single work & prevent any difficult work or drudgery being pursued unweariedly from day to day [without][3] intermission. The vijnana is now sufficiently developed for regular literary work to be resumed, but the physical adhogati & alasya has yet to be extruded. For this condition to be fulfilled, the reaction in the physical siddhi (health, utthapana, ananda) has to be got rid of & its forward march resumed. It is promised that this movement will begin today.

The obstacle to the trikaldrishti from the enemy which consisted in inability to decide on the event, is being removed & those movements which formerly presented themselves falsely and dimly as the event, are now revealed luminously as the thought in the person or the force or tendency moving it. Prakamya of the thoughts of others which so often came & went, in a half-clear half-confused movement, has by this success become clear & luminous & its objective sign in the corresponding movement, pause or *ingita* is so clearly shown that even the intellect cannot doubt the truth and accuracy of the siddhi. There is still confusion as to the time, place & order of circumstance of the event foreseen.

The vani, script, lipi and thought are now being used normally & habitually for the life-purposes. The trikaldrishti and prakamyavyapti, alone among the instruments of vijnanamaya knowledge, remain to be drawn into this normal movement. Apramattata is no longer necessary for the ordinary movement of the trikaldrishti, but is still necessary for the trikaldrishti of exact time, place and circumstance; in the prakamya-vyapti it is only necessary in order to prevent errors as to the source of the vyapti or the exact relations of the things perceived. This necessity will today be removed. The action of the power is beginning to be normal, although as yet very far from uniformly successful.

---

[2] *MS* preceded
[3] *MS* with

The clear shabdadrishti, free from adhara, has now definitely begun. The persistent doubt suggested as to the sukshmatwa of the gandhadrishti has now been finally put at rest, for one smell, that of cheese, impossible of material occurrence here has been repeated strongly & persistently in order to dispel the hesitation of the intellect. Rasadrishti is also extending its field, although not yet as vigorous as the gandhadrishti.

The necessity of apramattata has been removed from all the parts of the vijnanasiddhi except rupadrishti and samadhi; the rest will be accomplished henceforth by the unaided direct action of the Para Shakti. Rupa developed to a certain extent, but still fails to overcome its one remaining difficulty. Swapnasamadhi was absent; the dreams, though clear & consecutive, slightly confused by the mixing of historical names (not thought of for years past,) and one or two present associations with the actual chain of incidents. The present ego was also prominent in the central figure.

A violent struggle over the roga (digestive) began with success, passed through failure and ended again in success. There has been a strong reaction of asiddhi in the roga ending today in an attack of incipient diarrhoea, but the sense of health was persistent throughout & the whole system except the pure bodily part, remained unaffected by the attack. Even the body was free from any loss of strength or ananda; on the contrary the ahaituka ananda was strong not only in the mind but in the prana & the anna. Mukti therefore is almost perfect, although touches of the indriya-nirananda occasionally return.

Jan 11th

Contrary to past experience, trikaldrishti was active from the first this morning & its action had not to be resuscitated after the inaction of sleep; but the trikaldrishti of exact time, place & arrangement was in abeyance owing to the dullness of the vijnana in the physical brain. Lipi is also active from the first, but rupa and power in abeyance.

“Today the dasya in the third degree will be confirmed, the rupadrishti overcome its last obstacle, the samadhi develop in its deficient parts, the secondary utthapana progress. Kamananda will reassert its control & the shadow that has materialised in the health be removed. The action of the Will will pass over entirely into the fourth chatusthaya, in which Power will establish its control. Trikaldrishti will become more widely active."

Afternoon.

The samadhi is developing in its deficient parts, lipi in swapna-samadhi, shabdadrishti in jagrat, but the development is slow and impeded. Swapna-samadhi by flashes is frequent, but still fails to hold the vijnanamay level or to attain continuity. Secondary utthapana made slight progress before the prediction was written. The action of the Will is passing away from the rupadrishti & the samadhi, but not yet passed. The Power is working on the body & has already diminished the abnormal insistence of the jalavisrishti & got rid of the stress of the abnormal parthiva visrishti. There is strong resistance to the fulfilment and the mental parts have been all day in a state of confused action. Nothing clear & decisive yet emerges.

The news today are the reverse of favourable, although in consonance with the trikaldrishti, which expected the emergence of a yet stronger trend against Turkey. Aiswarya in the karma is strongly hampered and to a certain extent baffled.

The subjective ananda took possession in full force this morning, — a harmony of suddha, chidghana, ahaituka, premananda & sahaituka sharirananda, but the kamananda is resisted and the exclusion of the ananda from adverse events was successfully attempted by the enemy.

In the evening perfect forms directly under the eye became numerous and a number of them stable, but these were not of the most lifelike perfection, the defect being insufficiently developed material; the perfection was in the circumstances. Will has relinquished the rupadrishti to the self-action of the Para Prakriti, and is only slightly active for the samadhi. Swapna-samadhi is attempting to develop continuity, but is obliged to have recourse to recurrence in order to stimulate the tendency, as the habit of the drishti withdrawing immediately from the thing once it is seen, still prevails. Kamananda chiefly sahaituka was resumed, but not yet with a sustained frequency. Power began to control the bodily siddhi, but not yet with entire success; the jalavisrishti at last revived its intensity and the relics of sensitiveness to cold with nirananda suddenly recovered intensity. Secondary utthapana, attempted, failed to progress sensibly; but the primary utthapana overcame easily an attempt to break it and continued strongly from about five to after half past eleven (walking all the time) with only a break for meals. Sleep at night fell from 7 or 8 hours to five. Trikaldrishti manifested a striking power and accuracy. The resistance to Power in the karma showed itself in a fresh outbreak of anaikya in the surroundings, known by trikaldrishti before it happened.

Jan 12th.

Today's telegrams show remarkably the action of the Power & the vyapti-prakamya, more especially

(1) In the Austro-Italian claim of Janina, Scutari and Prizrend for Albania; (2) in the threatened action of Roumania with regard to the Bulgarian territory; (3) in the firm attitude of the Turks & especially in their refusal to be intimidated by the threat of a naval demonstration; (4) in the comparatively mild action of the Powers with regard to Adrianople. All these are instances of the accurate action of ishita-vyapti-aishwarya in details; but the final result is still a matter of dispute between the siddhi and the asiddhi. An instance of perfect final result occurs today in the Insurance Act matter,—the completion of panels all over Great Britain and the enrolment of 15,000 doctors . .

Yesterday's prediction, although not unfulfilled, was pitched in a key too high for the actual sthula fulfilment. The rupadrishti overcame its last obstacle but not perfectly; dasya in the third degree was confirmed, but not clearly & decisively, as the actions & thoughts are still confused,—it is dasya, but dasya without clearness about the command; samadhi developed in its deficient parts, slightly; secondary utthapana progressed in easy positions and for the rest more in the sukshma than the sthula; Kamananda reasserted itself rather than its control; the shadow in the health has been removed in the sukshma, but only diminished and almost extruded in the sthula, but it still clings; trikaldrishti has widened its activity & produced some striking results, but still works amid the suggestions of the intellectuality; power has relinquished the third chatusthaya & centred on the fourth, but some habitual action of will still lingers in the Samadhi. This high pitch, however, is intended, as these predictions are programmes or pratijnas rather than mere prediction, & the fulfilment has to rise to the pitch of the prediction, not the prediction fall to the pitch of the sthula fulfilment.[4]

"Today the tertiary dasya will become decisive and prepare to pass into the fourth degree or supreme dasya; rupadrishti & samadhi farther progress on yesterday's lines; trikaldrishti become at once great (mahat) and striking. Health will farther extrude the relics of the old symptomatic survivals, subject to some farther struggle; secondary utthapana declare itself more clearly; kamananda overcome the obstacles still presented to it; the general bodily power greatly increase. Aishwarya after making itself felt in the rest of the physical siddhi, will throw itself on the saundarya and the karma, which will begin to develop larger proportions. But the chief movement will be the final emergence and justification of the Mahakali element in its shuddha Asuric bhava."

Afternoon

The tertiary dasya has become decisive, trikaldrishti continues to produce striking results, but its mahattwa is faulty when applied by the Mahakali movement. In samadhi the clearness, consecutiveness & frequency of lipi increases & the tendency to continuity continues, but today the Will was not used. The struggle in the health continues; jalavisrishti is virulent, the semi-tejasic parthiva visrishti dominated, but not yet entirely dislodged in tendency; other symptoms also cling. The Mahakali element has emerged but is not yet justified. Instances of opposition to the karma have abounded today, even in the midst of the preparation for a larger activity of the karma. Secondary utthapana has occurred, but is not more advanced than yesterday, although it is felt that it is gathering strength.

Final. 13th morning.

The tertiary dasya is complete, except for occasional attempts to revolt of the asatya dwesha; the supreme dasya is preparing. Rupadrishti failed to progress in the direction of stable perfect forms, but developed in the less perfect forms, not however decisively; samadhi proceeded no farther than in the afternoon. Trikaldrishti continues to be striking & has a wide range, but is variable & uncertain in its action. In health the movement of extrusion progressed with great difficulty, &, although it seems to have succeeded, it is too early as yet to estimate the progress. Secondary utthapana progresses & the bodily power (tejo balam mahattwam pravrittih) greatly increases; but the kamananda did not overcome its obstacles, but rather manifested itself occasionally, especially in the sukshma body as madira, in spite of them. Aishwarya is applying itself more consistently to karma and saundarya. The Mahakali action is apparently established & sanctioned, but not yet justified by results.

---

[4] *Here the manuscript has closing quotation marks.—Ed.*

Jan 13th.

Dasya is of four degrees,—first, the dasya of the servant who obeys of his own free will or for a hire and can always refuse obedience; secondly, the dasya of the lover who might disobey, but does not & in a way cannot; thirdly, the dasya of the yantra, which cannot disobey, but is worked mechanically through an intermediate impulsion of Prakriti; fourthly, the dasya of the supreme degree which obeys helplessly the direct impulse of the Master and combines in itself, yet exceeds, the other three. It is this dasya which has to become the normal form of activity from today. It will be the dasya of the Mahakali bhava in the Mahasaraswati Prakriti. Although not yet justified by results,—because of the old sanskara in the external nature which always reacted successfully against the asuddha Asuric force in the adhara,—it is sanctioned, established and compelled to work, & will now begin to be justified by results.

Programme.—The trikaldrishti to widen still farther previous to getting rid of its variability & uncertainty, rupadrishti & samadhi to overcome the remnants of the obstacle still opposed to them, aishwarya to generalise success; health, secondary utthapana & kamananda to continue their struggle & prevail.

Record of domestic trikaldrishti.

11th Perception that none would return till ten or just before. All returned on the stroke of ten. Combined lipi &

perception, that a dispute would take place, before they returned. Confirmed by the event. Perception, that the mad boy was much improved & almost well. Confirmed by event. Perception that the dog was going out with the intention of not returning for the night — Confirmed by the event.

12th Trikaldrishti, (previous,) of a relapse in the mad patient. Confirmed . . d[itt]o that he had been violent, — prakamya. Confirmed. D[itt]o in the evening, that he had been worse, but there was some reason for a modified satisfaction. Confirmed; he had shown reason, in spite of relapse. Prakamya that B [Bijoy] had partly failed & partly succeeded in his experiment at cards. Confirmed . . Perception early in the evening that the dog would spend the night outside . . subsequent perception that it would manage to get out just before meals. Confirmed.

Sortilege देवश्चित्ररथो देवी च मदीरा त्वां द्रष्टुमाह्वयते. Various ananda & madiramaya physical ananda, attended by the anandadarshana. Fulfilled during the day in part, to be perfectly fulfilled by progressive increase of the force of the chitra ratih and the madira.

A sparrow on the ridge of the opposite roof, about to fly off; perception that it would remain for some time; confirmed: the same movement repeated and confirmed: the bird seemingly settled down; knowledge that it would fly off almost immediately; confirmed.

A moth on the wall; perception of the reasons for its movements, the pranic tendencies & the motion of the mentality, which is sensational, tamasic, obstinate in instinctive memory, tamasically attached to particular & limited experiences, slow in experiment, inconstant in the intentions which precede an action or resolution, but often tenaciously intent on the action when instituted or the resolution when formed; the thought merely a half-formalised reflection of the sensations; the jiva, however, thinks behind and is manomaya of the lower order. Several of the perceptions were confirmed by experiment, eg reason for closing or opening the wings, one for warmth & the other for acceptance of the sun, etc.

In Sanscrit अपध्यानात्, the meaning unknown. Without reflection, prerana suggested "curse"; the commentary consulted gave दुश्चिन्तनं, but Apte gives also "cursing".

Such trikaldrishtis were constant throughout the morning and usually accurate, even when received without previous sanyama or suggested to the intellect. The exceptions resolve themselves (1) to exaggerated tapas & stress on true perceptions, & (2) unfulfilled volitions. For example, a kite flying, a particular line of change of flight was suggested & the tapas laid upon it, another occurred to the intellect, but received scant attention; the kite followed, first, the second line & then the first. Mere speculative possibility seems to have disappeared from the trikaldrishti and to be replaced by actuality & actual possibilities (eg actual intentions, tendencies) & by the volition of possibilities. The latter source of anritam has to be removed by the rejection of volitions that are not to be fulfilled & the fulfilment of taijasa trikaldrishti and this process has already commenced. Lipi, rupa, [vyapti-prakamya][5] are being used for the trikaldrishti swiftly & abundantly as well as normally, & the fertility of the trikaldrishti & fertility of the lipi promised in lipi have commenced. The habitual correctness of the mahati trikaldrishti is now assured and error is growing exceptional.

Bhasha.

कौलेयक. Meaning not known. By intuition "dog".

वराटक. Prerana "berry". Commentary gives कपर्दक, dictionary either "cowrie" or "lotus seed-vessel"; probably the latter meaning.

The power of perceiving beforehand, while reading, what is immediately to follow, even without sufficient data, yet accurately, is also reviving & manifesting itself more decisively than before. Today the "Kadambari" was read, no longer with the ordinary (intellectually intuitive) linguistic faculties at their highest working, but with these faculties not so swift, yet aided by the extraordinary or vijnanamaya Bhashashakti, especially prerana, viveka & sahajadrishti. Moreover these three faculties have not only shown no diminution by their long inaction of many months in this field, but emerge with a clearer and more decisive action.

Samadhi, today, reenriched itself with drishti of the spoken shabda, ie to say human voices & words reaching the ear as if overheard and, in addition, memory of the thing seen reemerges. Three shabdadrishtis were distinct, a female voice saying “এখনি পরিষ্কার কর্বো?”, another saying simultaneously in quite another scene “সে ত রাজীই হল!” and Ramaswamy’s voice, saying “I don’t know what”; a fourth, Ramaswamy’s voice again, said something which did not reach the supta ear clearly. Things seen were a darbar hall, the interior of an Indian house, a door in a river-steamer, a long railway-saloon, several figures; the rest are forgotten. Tamasic nidra could not be extruded from the swapna samadhi, which had finally to be abandoned.

---

[5] *MS* vyapta-prakamya

In the trikaldrishti knowledge of the past, of past lives, of feelings, thoughts & motives of people in the past is becoming normally active. It has been suggested that Aishwarya should be renounced in the physical siddhi except saundarya; but owing to the persistence of physical asiddhi, — tejas in the assimilative process, virulent jalavisrishti, inhibition of kamananda (except in the form of madira and sukshma sahaituka kamananda), etc, — the mental shakti & its anucharas are unwilling to accept this suggestion as anything but a false & premature movement of withdrawal. The personality of the Master, long held back, remanifests in Script.

Rupadrishti still develops slowly, — a little more stability in the Akashic forms, the appearance of a momentarily stable perfect rupa in the daylight. The dreams at night were all about the relations in other lives with a single person and his surroundings, but the associations of the present were more insistent than they have been for some time past and confused the record. In swapna samadhi a certain initial continuity seems to have been established.

There is a strong attack of asiddhi in the karma. Prakamya-vyapti with regard to the results of the cricket match were correct, but not very correct; about the mad patient entirely wrong. In both cases tejasic tapas of volition interfered with the truth. The atmosphere of the house is full of the struggle and the opposition to the dharma of the satyayuga of which the assistants of the satyayuga are the chief instruments owing to their clinging to their egoism and small selfishnesses. The struggle in the body centres about the tejas in the assimilation which seeks to prolong its abnormal activity.

Jan 14th.

There is a growing passivity in the intelligence and the physical struggle is being made the instrument for the renunciation of intellectual judgment, the remnants of which are at present the chief obstacle to the possession of the whole system by the vijnana. Trikaldrishti & jnana are taking possession of the script, the vanis, the thought perceptions as well as the vangmaya thought, but the process cannot be completed owing to the excessive tapas, tejasic or tamasic, on the thing seen which converts a truth into a falsehood by overstressing it & so overprolonging its applicability in time or place or exaggerating its results. The perception of the locality of things or people not seen or their personality or nature is becoming stronger, but not yet sufficiently precise; e.g. a thing not found, it is at once known whether it is in the room or not and vaguely indicated that it is in such a place or in a place of such and such a nature,—anyone knocking at the door, it is indicated who is at the door or else what class of person; in the morning, it is invariably indicated whether the girl is coming immediately, a little later or much later etc. If once the excess of tapas is removed, there is no reason why intellectual infallibility should not be established; for then the other obstacle of uncertainty will have nothing on which to feed its existence. The fulfilment of the powers of Knowledge & the accomplishment of the divine Satyam are therefore certain, although the time of fulfilment is not yet revealed; for after the general working of the power is established without defect, there will still remain its perfect application to Bhasha, Nirukta, Itihasa, Darshana, Kala, Dravyajnana etc. The powers of Force, Kriyâshakti, are less surely developed, although they are growing, & their success in particular instances is slow, often uncertain, in many things inoperative, especially in the objective world, but also in the subjective. It is this difficulty & opposition which has to be attacked in its centre by applying the Powers to the karma and to objective happenings and movements.

In yesterday's programme, only the first item was thoroughly fulfilled. In the second, there was a progress; the samadhi overcame the obstacle to continuity, but the continuity attained was slight; the rupadrishti succeeded only in the barest possible manner, the momentary stability of a perfect form, the longer stability of a form developed but not sufficient in material substance. Aishwarya began the movement towards generalising success, by trying to get rid of such willings as are not consonant with the central movement of the Supreme Will, but the process is not yet complete; the struggle continued in health, utthapana & kamananda, but they did not prevail, except in effecting an obscure, moderate & preparatory success & in strengthening the force of their sukshma vaja or subtle material substance, of which, however, shansa, the actual bringing out into material being has not yet been realised. Chitraratha and Madira still increase.

Programme — Trikaldrishti to widen still farther and begin to get rid of variability and uncertainty; rupadrishti & samadhi to overcome the remnants of the obstacle opposed to them, more potently; aishwarya to generalise success; kamananda to come forward in the sthula; health & secondary utthapana to continue their struggle & grow in strength.

The pitch of the programme has been slightly lowered in order to come into better conformity with the trikaldrishti; but this is preparatory to a rise.

Sortilege. एकतमस्तु जरच्छबरस्तस्मात्पुलिन्दवृन्दादनासादितहरिणपिशितः पिशिताशन इव विकृतदर्शनः पिशितार्थी तस्मिन्नेव तरुतले मुहूर्तमिव व्यलंबत। A description of the self-indulgent Asura in S. [Saurin] which is in its nature a jarat shabara & still remains under the tree of the Yoga, pishitarthi, in search of material enjoyments and indulgences. It is his influence & vyapti which prevents the other two from advancing in their final purification. The sortilege, however, indicates that this is to be मुहूर्तमिव, for a short time only. On the other hand, the purification in B [Bijoy] on the main point seems to be all but complete, even in the karmadeha, — it has yet to be seen whether the circumferent swabhava is pure; the passive egoism remains.

It has been declared in the script that the Lipi must now be entirely left to itself to manifest or not manifest, free even from the stimulus of tapas in the attention. Movements have begun for the repossession of the body by the kamananda and for the combined action of aishwarya and trikaldrishti.

The main exception to the chitraratha is the discomfort of heat & cold, but for the last three days this defect has been in process of extrusion. The discomfort touches but is easily extruded by substituting the ananda of the discomfort. Discomfort of roga still exists when it is yielded to, but is attended always with ananda of the sensation or else with ananda of the discomfort, unless the opposite, nirananda, is encouraged. Discomfort of acute pain is still the one thing not yet really mastered by the Ananda, but that defect has been purposely left for gradual & later extrusion; even this discomfort is up to a certain point attended by ananda or replaced by ananda & overcomes, usually, only on the first sudden & unexpected attack when the Chit in the system is off its guard. There is also discomfort of adverse result & opposition but this too is being rapidly replaced by the ananda. There is a vague remnant of sanskara of discomfort in the vishayananda, but it is purely a mental sanskara & does not usually negative, though it often impairs the ananda of the physical indriya, eg there is a sensation of shrinking in the karmadeha's mental sanskara from the first touch of very cold water, but the moment the water reaches the skin, ananda and not nirananda is the result. Kamananda this morning is extending itself as madiramay ananda and entering into the raudra and other anandas; as yet it does not hold the body, but affects it with a prolonged sparsha. The weakness of the kamachakra is the chief obstacle.

Dasya has already passed into the fourth degree, but there is a lingering sanskara of the tertiary dasya in some of the physical, mental & emotional activities—the stamp of the Master is not yet everywhere. But the lipi which has recently been promising the "death of the difficulties", is being amply fulfilled in the three first chatusthayas and in the sixth and seventh. The increase of dasya is attended by an increase of prakasha and sraddha; but the doubt holds as to the time and the extent of the siddhi. If this difficulty is overcome, the first & second chatusthayas will attain their ultimate completeness, & only perfection of intensity will remain to be accomplished.

Prediction in lipi about K.G.G, place & event given, but no exact time, also about S.N.B, B.N.S & P.M, all soon.[6]

Afternoon

Several predictions have followed, but as they are experimental in their nature, they need not be recorded. Samadhi has been antardrishta jagrat with lipi and thought. There was proof of an increased bodily force and pravritti, but not yet of sufficient dharanasamarthyam (dhriti, sthairyam) of a single occupation. Yet it is alleged that [two of the][7] essential requisites demanded before the literary work could be allowed to recommence, play of vijnana and sufficient primary utthapana both in body & brain, are already accomplished, though they have to be confirmed in the karma; but the third,—equipment,—is yet wanting. Aishwarya is generalising itself slowly, but has not yet got rid of the mere tapasic volition which can create a force or tendency, but not produce the required effect. The perfect aishwarya either produces an immediate particular effect, (that being the limit of the thing willed), or a final result, without regard to the immediate or intermediate steps, or produces a final result through or subsequent to certain particular steps which may constitute the whole or a part of the apparent nimitta (immediate karana) of the final effect (karya). The first form is already strong and frequent, the second works, but with great slowness and infrequency, the third is yet rare & undeveloped. Trikaldrishti is effecting its siddhi with regard (1) to place, (2) to ordinarily unforeseeable effect. Rupadrishti is developing, in the daylight, long stability of images complete and incomplete and variety of image, (tejas,—chhaya,—chhayamay, tejomay & agnimaya varna). Script is free and active. Consideration of kartavyam akartavyam is finally disappearing, in its remnants, out of the supreme dasya.

In the evening the rupadrishti began to develop variety of perfect forms, but did not advance in stability. Swapnasamadhi was scanty, but the tendency towards continuity persevered in its struggle with the escaping drishti. Sleep which has recently been excessive, fell back to its normal level of six to seven hours. Kamananda, throughout the day, frequent & increasing in its hold on the body, has not yet recovered its tendency to continuity.

---

[6] *The last three sets of initials are probably those of Surendra Nath Banerjea, Baikuntha Nath Sen and Pherozshah Mehta, all prominent leaders of the Moderate party; K.G.G. may be the partly inverted initials of Gopal Krishna Gokale, another prominent Moderate.—Ed.*

[7] *MS* of the two

Jan 15th.

Yesterday's programme was amply fulfilled in the trikaldrishti and kamananda; rupadrishti & samadhi advanced very little; aishwarya began to generalise itself; secondary utthapana increased in innate force but was less in duration; arogya continued with some success, but not complete success its struggle to exclude the symptomatic touches. Tejas in the assimilation is still the principal defect.

Programme—Trikaldrishti to widen entirely and get rid of variability, ie of its moments of reversion to the old activity of the intelligence, but not yet of uncertainty. Aishwarya to generalise its successful movement. Rupadrishti and samadhi to prevail in their struggle. Kamananda to triumph. Secondary utthapana to generalise itself in its minor movement. Health to persevere in its successful struggle.

The general subjective ananda, after the test of several days experience, may be now considered permanently established & continuous in its shuddha, ahaituka and chidghana parts, about to be continuous in its prema part. In the sharira the sahaituka is established, although as yet without intensity or firm continuity, the ahaituka awaits the triumphant event of the kamananda. It exists, but is infrequent. The bhukti is nearing fulfilment.

Trikaldrishti is now, mainly, defective in audacity; the mind refuses to admit improbabilities or things not expected to happen. The movement is now towards the removal of this defect, which founds its strength upon past experience, by giving the opposite experience. Eg yesterday, there was the lipi "Journalism" & "Les journalistes"; the mind refused to admit any possible immediate application, but the same evening P [Parthasarathi] came with the proposal of a weekly or biweekly sheet. Today the trikaldrishti shows a general completeness of stuff, ie every suggestion is shown to be correct in itself, but there is confusion in the mental use of the stuff, ie in fixing the suggestion to its correct particular of person, time & place. These two movements, firm establishment of ahaituka kamananda and full mahattwa of the trikaldrishti have to be effected and confirmed today & accompanied the one by the development of other ahaituka shariranandas, the other by the clearing away of the accompanying confusion.

Lipi, rupa & samadhi, the three allied movements necessary to visvagati have to be delivered from the obstruction surrounding their activity in the akasha. These three movements constitute the central part of today's programme.

Afternoon

In the morning trikaldrishti passed rapidly through several stages, applying [itself][8] correctly with speed to a series of incidents, foreseeing a series of a single incident repeated beforehand, without any data and contrary to experience, assembling a mass of perceptions and arranging them with more or less accuracy. The process still continues. Aishwarya generalised success, but the success which comes slowly & with some effort, after some resistance. Rupadrishti was strengthened and kept in the akash forms perfect in all respects except a certain tenuity of material & a certain aloofness from the front layer of the sthula akash. The strongest movements were in samadhi and kamananda. In the antardrishta jagrat samadhi lipi organised itself & stable crude rupa, perfect in outline, completeness, clearness, stability, — in all but steadiness of material & vividness, — was manifested, as well as crude rupa deficient only in firm vividness. Lipi is not yet sure of stability. In the swapna samadhi images abounded and some showed continuity or both combination & continuity, eg a shaggy dog, lean & miserable-looking, trotting up to a wall & smelling it, the wall returning & remaining after eclipse, crude, — the sound of a small silver piece falling & a stout man near a window looking for it & picking it up, the man becoming vague after eclipse, but the window remaining vivid. In both the rupa & lipi have today become organised for use, especially for trikaldrishti & the samadhi generally for jnana & trikaldrishti. In the antardrishta symbolic colours are again returning, eg S's [aura], green brilliant, blue black tending to be blue, but often dulled into grey, uncertain suffusion of red from a blood-red sun; also, symbolic images, eg, in the same connection an unhatched egg replaced by a crown. Kamananda was entirely triumphant flooding the sukshma deha, seizing the sukshma parts of the body & touching its sthula parts with an intenser ananda than has ever been experienced before, equal to the first movements of the actual maithuna ananda. In the morning this came repeatedly, thrice, with hardly any interval and was each time continued for some time, & in the afternoon the ananda has returned and although, not so intense, is more persistent. There are also touches of ahaituka rudrananda and ahaituka tivra, negative vaidyuta & vishaya. The ananda now comes & continues even when the mind is otherwise occupied.

---

[8] *MS* its

Today's telegrams. The Viceroy's health almost answered to the Aishwarya as within the first fortnight of [January],[9] the time fixed, he was able to go out for a drive; but the premature exertion has brought back a return of restlessness at night & neuritis in the arm. The trikaldrishti is fulfilled in both the favourable & adverse movements, only the Aishwarya is slightly baffled. As foreseen, there is no result from the two witnesses summoned. Again, as foreseen to be willed by the Ishwara only recently, there have been fresh aviation accidents, more storms & wrecks and a serious railway accident all in the news of a single day; all occurred in England, but this was not foreseen. The revolt of Nature against machinery continues.

The stage now reached by the trikaldrishti is one in which sraddha, blind faith, is demanded in all suggestions which are not corrected by the viveka. The mind is to question nothing & correct nothing. If this is done, then the faith will be justified by absolute truth being established. A similar faith is demanded for the fulfilment of aishwarya, ishita, vyapti, although the full justification will be a little slower in coming. In fact, this movement of faith has to cover the whole range of the vijnanamaya activity.

The first results of this movement of sraddha were adverse, as the enemy who now fight from a distance only in these matters, sent in strong & persistent volitions of possibility like a cloud of arrows to confuse the knowledge & destroy the faith; afterwards the movement was righted with the result that the whole vijnana is now acting normally & uninterruptedly & variability in the instruments of knowledge & power need no longer be feared, except the minor variability of greater or less force & perfection. Trikaldrishti & aishwarya do not yet act with absolute perfection or unerring success, for volition of possibility is still active & exact time, place & circumstance are still the exception rather than the rule in both power & objective knowledge. The uncertainty therefore remains; but normally the trikaldrishti is roughly correct or often exactly correct even as regards place and circumstance, less so as regards time & order, & the fulfilment, normal or striking, slow or rapid, of the power is now more the normal movement than its entire or final failure.

---

[9] *MS* February

Arogya is steadily reestablishing itself, but there are still one or two serious defects. The slow therapeutic power works except in particular cases, the swift therapeutic power which showed itself once or twice at an earlier stage, is conspicuously absent except in very minor movements or in cases in which little interest is taken or little power is used, for these the enemy do not think it worth while to oppose.

Rupa in the evening did not progress beyond its previous point of attainment, except in shabdadrishti where there was drishti of a tea canister and the clear sound of setting it down. Secondary utthapana was applied to the neck, back and legs and in all positions showed a great force of mahima, anima and laghima, but the anima fails and with it the mahima after a space of time varying from two to five minutes. Laghima is sufficient, if not contradicted by the defect of anima. The failure of mahima is due, essentially, to an element of physical tapas (muscular strain) which still adheres to the action; if this were not present, the insistence of defective anima would not be so powerful. Dream was for the first time entirely discharged of present ego, present associations and present images, except for one attempt to identify present custom in eating with the manners presented in the dream; there was, however, this deficiency that the dream consciousness followed the internal movements of the central figure—one not myself—and only observed the external movements of others. This defect has to be remedied. Kamananda is persistent in the less intense form, but not always present.

Secondary utthapana and kamananda have entirely fulfilled the programme, also health; samadhi has prevailed, except in bringing about long continuity in the swapna and developed rupa in the antardrishta; rupadrishti has had only a slight success. Aishwarya and trikaldrishti have followed the lines laid down for them, but the movement is not yet complete.

Jan 16th.

Programme

1. Trikaldrishti has now to replace entirely the action of the intelligence; that is, nothing has to be done by judgment, logical reason, speculative imagination, sanskara born of memory; but even the most trifling and unimportant things have to be known by vijnana agencies. Where vijnana does not give light, there has to be no judgment, conclusion or even speculation. Aishwarya has to be utilised only where there is perception of the Divine Will behind; it has no longer to reflect in any way the movements of the manomaya Purusha or the manomaya Shakti. Lipi has to get rid of the obstacle in the Akasha which prevents it from manifesting with a successful and easy vividness. Rupa & Samadhi have to continue their struggle and progressively prevail. 2. Kamananda has now to move towards continuity of the more intense form and entire continuity of the less intense. Arogya has to expel the symptomatic survivals in the assimilation and kamachakra. Secondary utthapana, established in its generalised activity, has to increase the force of pure mahima and of anima. Saundarya must still struggle with its obstacle without as yet prevailing and the Aishwarya with the obstacle to the equipment.

Letter from Biren showing an improved mental state and a vague dawning of vyapti & speculative trikaldrishti. An instance of success in subjective-objective in its subtler or more subjective parts. The power of the aishwarya-vyapti in the subjective-objective field is now considerable and daily successful, but its compulsion on the objective action is still meagre. Today, as was foreseen, there is a fresh instance of train collision in England and the perception that the Viceroy's health would not be seriously affected, is justified.

The morning's siddhi has been noted for the final separation of the volition of possibility from the perception of actuality, of kratu from ketu. All such volitions are at once set aside by vivek acting on the mind as unreliable, not trikaldrishti; the only difficulty left is that the perception itself, of an actual intention or tendency, is sometimes overstressed into an apparent perception of eventuality, but this is in course of being corrected. As a result, error is now very slight and rapidly corrected, usually before it is falsified by the event. Many true perceptions are still doubted or not sufficiently stressed for fear of error; but this defect can be remedied effectually as soon as the habit of overstress itself is expelled. Aishwarya also is getting rid of false tapas and, when exercised, produces its effect. Lipi is strong in the sthula akash as chitralipi, but still uncertain as akashalipi.

Dasya of the fourth degree is now dominant; whenever the attention of the Chit follows the action, it is aware of the turiya dasyabuddhi,—whether in motion, speech, emotion or thought, except for a slight intermixture of merely Prakritic impulse in the thinking powers. This is true even of such involuntary motions as the closing or blinking of the eyelids, nimishannapi or the direction of the gaze. The sixth or Brahma chatusthaya is similarly established; the general (samena samavasthita) sarvam anantam jnanam anandam Brahma is seen everywhere, when the attention is awake. The nitya anusmaran is not established as yet, nor can it be established unless there is the capacity of multiple sanyama, ie naturally and normally dividing the tapas of the Chit between several things at a time. Kamananda tends to return dully or intensely with the smarana, but has not yesterday's continuity, force and spontaneity. This afternoon it will recover its hold.

Afternoon

Kamananda has lasted through the afternoon, with slight intermissions, sometimes slight, sometimes intense, but more in the subtle than in the gross body. Secondary utthapana of the neck confirmed yesterday's fulfilment as to time and force and added a purer mahima, but one of less duration; applied to one leg only, perfect in laghima & almost perfect in pure mahima, it lasted for as long as one could count deliberately two thousand. Sthapatyalipi shows a movement of remanifestation. Samadhi was barren of any progress, but did not go backward.

In the evening Rupadrishti developed in the crudest forms a greater variety and completeness. Samadhi at night was barren & the dreams confused in record. Aishwarya showed a considerable increase in force and each exercise of will was successful. Vijnana became active, though not yet well-harmonised, in its various parts and lipi more in possession of the akasha, though still obliged to use an effort in order to manifest; there was a perfect intelligibility and appositeness in most of the lipis and a full play of interpretation of the various objective materials of trikaldrishti. The subjective powers of knowledge have passed their period of effort and difficulty; only the objective material is still unable to deploy itself easily & richly in the material akasha. Power is beginning to accomplish its firm mastery, although still hampered in the matter of equipment and slow in other provinces. There is fresh proof of its efficacy in karma.

Jan 17th.

The final development of Aishwarya has been definitely undertaken. Aishwarya in effect is of three kinds, — 1, that which creates a tendency or produces an effect, but does not eventually or at all succeed; 2, that which produces the final effect, but slowly, with difficulty, against an effective resistance; 3, that which produces the final effect not as a combatant, but victoriously as a master. The first has to be eliminated from the siddhi henceforth; the second to be preserved for a time, the third to be continually strengthened until it replaces all the others.

Programme.

Yesterday's programme has to be completed; trikaldrishti has to get rid of the remnants of false stress which constitute now its one remaining positive defect; aishwarya to illumine itself with knowledge of the Divine Will, — for up till now it has only got rid of the urgency which impelled it to employ itself blindly and merely for exercise. It has also to confirm the movement excluding ineffectual applications. Lipi has attained to successful vividness; it has still to attain to easy vividness. Rupa & Samadhi must continue their struggle. Kamananda successful in the afternoon was slight and rare in the evening; it must expel the hesitation in the body which prevents it from domiciling itself in the sthula. Arogya, although much stronger, does not yet exclude the return of the symptoms which it has expelled; these affections must now be compelled to disappear. Secondary utthapana, which maintained in the afternoon and at night its efficiency except for a stronger attack of adhogati and defective anima, must increase the force of pure mahima in order to combat this deficiency.

The matter of the equipment has now been handed over to the passive Ishita; it is the one point of almost complete unsuccess which still prevents faith in the adeshasiddhi from attaining to self-confidence and fullness,—although the failure of the saundarya to emerge is a powerful auxiliary obstacle.

The news today confirms the trikaldrishti, especially vyapti-prakamya in a striking fashion—eg the hesitations in Constantinople, the fears of the Ministers about disruption and defeat, the want of real unanimity among the Powers, the easier state, yet continuance, of the Roumanian difficulty, fresh wrecks etc. One unexpected event is the murder at Comilla. The old trikaldrishti & sortilege about the frequency of wrecks is confirmed by today's telegram giving the number lost in 1912 as 228 (82 British). The working of the aishwarya-vyapti-ishita in great matters is also very evident in the movement of the subjectivity everywhere and to a great extent in the movement of the subjective objectivity, but it is still very deficient in the objective results,—effective, but only partially effective. The basis of the adeshasiddhi & karmasiddhi is being erected, but it is not as yet sufficiently firm or sufficiently wide.

A larger movement of the vijnanasiddhi is commencing today, in which it will be unnecessary to note every minute advance. Perfect passivity is its basis; brihat, vast abundance will be its field; satyam its atmosphere; ritam its line of definiteness. Mechanical perfection will spontaneously emerge in its apas. Already the lipi has commenced; to compass abundance is its first action and to that end it is compelling the sthula akasha to admit lipi wherever the eyes are cast,—legible lipi, pale at first, then pale chequered by intense, finally, the intense. Rupa this morning has followed up the movement of the night in crude forms. In the afternoon it has remanifested frequent chitra rupa and sthapatya rupa; both of these forms have at once taken possession of their old perfection in single figures, groups and landscapes. Lipi in the afternoon has attained to easy vividness, although there is still a certain difficulty and malaise in its movement, coming and staying, though much less in the chitra & sthapatya than in akasha lipi. In trikaldrishti the movement is towards the perfect correctness even of all the random external suggestions unverified by the viveka, but this is still subject to a certain inaccuracy of exact detail.

Rupa & swapna samadhi are now moving in the direction, first, of abundance, secondly, of the recovery of the old activities that have been lost by the action of the Vritras, thirdly, of the perfection of their materials. Dream at night was frequently confused. The physical siddhi suffered a slight reaction.

January 18th.

Trikaldrishti, that there would be news of an arrest today in Comilla; confirmed, but there were two arrests. Also, another wreck. Aishwarya successful & prakamya-vyapti justified in the attitude of the Triple Alliance, especially Italy, and the dropping of the Naval Demonstration.

Today has been a day of attack by the enemy and difficult survival of the gains of the siddhi, lipi maintaining itself, but manifesting with difficulty in the akash, trikaldrishti chequered by false suggestion and aishwarya successfully resisted and almost entirely overcome. Rupadrishti & samadhi have made no advance. The cause of the difficulty & the opportunity of the attack has been the necessity of finally establishing the harmony of pravritti with nivritti, tapas & tejas with shanti & dasya. The habit of the Nature acquired by long practice in the sadhana has been to insist on shanti, udasinata, & passivity as the condition of progress. It is now necessary to overlay & fill the shanti, udasinata, & passivity, the Maheshwari basis, with an active & even violent

& rapid tapas of Mahakali-Mahasaraswati; but the habitual reaction of failure caused by the irruption of false tejas & false tapas has first to be eliminated before the harmonisation can be managed.

Since the above was written, prediction in the script has been justified; "Successful struggle in vijnana during the rest of the day, triumph in the evening. Rupa develops brihat with difficult[y], not yet perfection except in single figures." The struggle in the afternoon was successful in maintaining the minimum gains of the siddhi; in the evening the siddhi has triumphed, restored the akashalipi to its fullness, although it is still laboured, brought aishwarya forward, without as yet being able to get rid of ineffective aishwarya, developed a fair abundance of rupas (chitra, sthapatya, akasha) but with perfection & stability in the akasha only for some crude forms & some crude dense & crude developed,—these, however, are entirely perfect,—and began to justify tejas & tapas in their results. It is now increasingly evident that the condition of success in the future is the broad and general activity of the vijnana including in itself all the members of the third chatusthaya and not any longer the separate development of each member by itself. Nothing fresh in the evening and night; activity of vijnana, rupadrishti, samadhi, but no definite progress.

Jan 19th.

This morning script became profuse and intimate and the old siddhis of aitihya lipi & janmantara drishti resumed their activity.[10] The latter has never been entirely suspended, but it will now work normally. Trikaldrishti again justified by the fresh wreck and aishwarya by the election of Poincaré as Republican Candidate; trikaldrishti (vyapti-prakamya) by the release on bail of the Comilla suspect.

The main movement of trikaldrishti today is towards complete independence from its intellectual couch of data. Formerly its highest habitual movement was to contradict the deduction from data & the selection from possibilities based on the data, or to surpass them & dispense with them while still regarding them as modifying or attendant considerations, but the present movement acts without any eye in the data, sometimes without even an eye on the object, in the absolute self-existence (sat, satya) of the truth. Kamananda has been continuous in varying degrees of intensity from before noon till now (towards 5 o'clock in the afternoon) and promises to remain continuous throughout the day. The tendency of emergence in rupadrishti is strong, but the habitual obstruction in the akasha does not yield finally except for chitra & sthapatya.

---

[10] *The script of January [1913] is reproduced on pages 1292–1300.—Ed.*

Kamananda remained continuous as a tendency throughout the evening, but lost hold of the body, nor could rupadrishti successfully emerge, owing to a return of the old struggle between the exaggerations of uninformed tejas in the mentality & the despondency & unfaith caused by asatya. Dream & swapna samadhi maintained their gains, but did not advance.

Jan 20th

It would seem today as if the exaggerated tejas of mentality were finally dismissed from action as a result of last night's repetition of the old form of purificatory disturbance and crisis. Sthapatya & chitra rupa now manifest with considerable perfection and frequency. There is a movement towards the expulsion of the fragmentary recurrence of discomfort in particular sights, sounds, touches, smells which mars the perfection of the vishayananda (bhoga) in the indriyas. Manas in physical prana & manas in psychical prana may still keep recurrences of discomfort for a time, so that discomfort of physical pain and discomfort of apriya event may for a while survive; but there is no farther justification for the persistence of discomfort of apriya vishaya to the senses. The day was mainly occupied with a struggle to enforce the freedom of the vijnana in all its parts. Rupa in chitra and sthapatya became very abundant; aiswarya increased remarkably in force, & trikaldrishti showed a tendency towards minute exactness. Kamananda was continuous in tendency, comparatively frequent in intensity, persistently recurrent in slighter manifestation. Arogya is increasing in force, but not yet victorious over its obstacle; utthapana variable.

Jan 21st

Aishwarya-vyapti once more effective in subjective objectivity with a striking exactness; for the Turkish draft reply to the Note is couched in exactly the terms and contained exactly the reasons about Adrianople that had been suggested; even the modification about the Aegean islands, viz. the insistence on the coast islands alone, is the one that from the beginning was suggested & continually maintained by the thought and the ishita. Aishwarya also in Poincaré's election which seems at one point to have been in jeopardy. The progress in the vijnana chatusthaya & the kamananda now continues like that of a creeping tide, throwing up waves always higher and seeming to retreat or rest for a moment, but in the result always advancing. Only in the physical siddhi other than ananda this movement as yet fails to establish itself. In the evening it took a much larger sweep and even the rupadrishti, which is the most sluggish of all the vijnana siddhis, began to manifest abundance. The lipi given a few days ago "rupas by the milliards", is now being accomplished, as already in chitra & sthapatya images are coming multitudinously and the salamba chitras & salamba rupas are beginning to follow suit. Crudeness, inconstancy & want of firm outline are the rule; on the other hand they have often great richness of colouring and not infrequent perfection of form, sometimes even of outline. The perfect developed or lifelike forms still occur, but rarely. In samadhi continuity of scene & action seem at last to be established, but only for the single act; still this minor continuity has occurred even in the jagrat antardrishta. The physical siddhi is obstinately disputed, especially health; even the kamananda is forcibly interrupted. Nevertheless this great change has been established in the sanskaras of the body that, while formerly it felt release from the continued ananda as a relief and as its normal condition of purity & freedom, now it feels continuity of it to be its normal condition and absence of it to be not purity but want, not freedom but a bondage.

Jan 22d

In the morning a strong harmonised movement of the vijnana began & although attacked by the old asiddhi, it is not diminished, only hampered & momentarily deprived of its full movement. The improvement in the swapna-samadhi maintains itself. The atmosphere of kamananda has been constant, under strong ordeals, throughout the day, except for slight interruptions. This siddhi is in future sure of its natural development. The stress of the ishita has passed on to the arogyasiddhi especially and in a less degree to the saundarya and karmasiddhi. Arogya, during the day, was greatly strengthened, but dull symptomatic survivals still remain to hamper it. Coherent dream-record with only a slight admixture of present ego, present association and consequent confusion seems to be now well established. Sometimes present ego is entirely absent, sometimes present association, sometimes the resulting confusion; at times one or other of these defects gains in stress. In rare instances all are absent and the only defects of the record are those of omission of details necessary for perfect understanding.

Jan 23$^{\underset{\cdot}{d}}$

Today the aishwarya & trikaldrishti suddenly developed an unprecedented force; while watching the movement of ants on the wall opposite, it was suddenly perceived that every slightest movement of the particular ant observed in each case followed the anticipatory observation; wherever my idea turned, there the ant, with but slight variations, immediately corrected, turned to follow it; when the forceful will was applied, there was sometimes a slight, but unavailing struggle. This observation covered some half hundred successive movements of various ants and was marred by only one actual & final failure. If this force can be rendered permanent & generalised so as to apply to all objects & subjects, then human omniscience & omnipotence in the field permitted by the Infinite are attained. It is a matter of time only; the perfectibility of knowledge & power have today been finally & irrevocably proved. There is, however, one defect, that if the movement willed be contrary to the stream of the apas in purpose or in nature, the obedience given is either slight or temporary or, even when it seems to be final, subject to a sudden return of the old unfulfilled impulse. During the rest of the day the power fluctuated in its force, but tends constantly to return to the point gained &

to extend it in the immediate surroundings. Kamananda is now constantly recurrent.

Jan 24th

The day's news about the Turkish acceptance of the Powers' Note is a success for the trikaldrishti (vyaptiprakamya) & for the Aishwarya for the conclusion of peace, but a violent defeat for the Aishwarya about the terms of peace which were either the coast islands should be retained and Adrianople either not ceded or ceded with dismantled fortifications or war. This morning kamananda of a great intensity continued for a long time and the ordinary level of intensity has also been raised; the ananda is still continuous at the time of writing. (afternoon.) Subsequently, the ananda increased to a yet greater intensity & gave the first definite hint of what it will be when it is firmly and uninterruptedly in possession of the sthula body. It subsided for a time at mealtime without actually disappearing, but, now, immediately after meals, is again active. It continues even when walking or absorbed in other work or thought, but is less firm then and does not attain to the full intensity. Lipi in the morning attained its full spontaneous materiality and is in the course of attaining its full freedom of profuse manifestation. Samadhi, deepest swapna, with fairly numerous images, scenes, a freer lipi, thought & vani sometimes quite coherent and one perfect & vivid varnamaya picture of a woman of high rank in some ancient age in a pillared room open upon a court having her toilette done by slaves. This is the first time that there has been a consistent jagrat condition of the manas in so profound a state of the swapnasamadhi; the defects that remain are the fleeting character of the images, a too rapid passing from one thought to another not connected with it and an occasional mixture of records and thoughts.

Abundance of rupa has begun definitely in addition to abundance of lipi. The chitra & sthapatya were already abundant and are now redeveloping an extraordinary minuteness of perfection; a bas-relief figure not so long as the thumbnail, is sometimes perfect in its details, eye, ear, beard, hat up to the buttons of the coat & frequently in the facial expression and bhava of the body.

Perfect landscapes, vivid groups are also frequent. Sketches are multitudinous. But now freedom & abundance are coming in the akasharupa along with vividness, variety & sufficient stability. The defects of blur, vagueness, inconstancy of outline, paucity & infirmness of material are being surmounted. Kamananda in continuity still persists (nearly 6 pm) & is attempting to establish a high degree of continuous intensity as its usual pitch. With one short interval of half an hour, it has now been continuous for nearly ten hours.

[Written] 25th Jan.

Akasha rupa developed freedom and vividness. Kamananda continued throughout the evening till retirement, but much diminished and sometimes quiescent. The drishtis (shabda etc) were delivered from the hesitations of the intellect by definite proof of sparsha other than the touch of rain and prakasha of the truth of the other drishtis,—subsequently sparshadrishti received a great increase of intensity and rain & wind of the other world were actually felt as in the jail not in touches but in a composite & well-materialised experience. At night dream remained stationary.

Jan 25th

Today's news corrects yesterday's failure. Recent trikaldrishtis have been that the Cabinet was hopeless of relieving Adrianople or of doing more than holding out at Tchataldja, that money was lacking and that the Russians were threatening an invasion of Asiatic Turkey; that Kiamil Pasha was hesitating whether to hold out or yield or resign; that in the Army & City there was profound dissatisfaction. All these have been justified. Aishwarya has been that the Note of the Powers should be rejected, but not cavalierly; that the Islands of the coast & Adrianople should be insisted on or else Kiamil resign; that there should be a change of military command and a Cabinet containing the chief Young Turks and, if possible, others determined to hold out, should come in. Today this Aishwarya has been in substance fulfilled. The situation is felt to be full of dangers (Abdulla Pacha, the Powers, Russia, lack of money, possible defeat,) but also there are possibilities if the Aishwarya can prevail (sympathy of Triple Alliance, at least Austria & Germany, energy of the Young Turks, desire of the army for war, finally, the Aishwarya itself, which is growing stronger every day). No definite trikaldrishti of the result arrives, unless the lipi indications "Tchorlu. Lules Burgas", belong to the present time.

The trikaldrishti is now in a state in which a throng of true perceptions constantly present themselves, but cannot yet be given their right value. Eg yesterday, the crude rupa of a prawn suggested itself and the indication was that there would be prawns for the night's meal; but the mind was afraid to accept the indication both from past experience of error in interpretation of lipi & rupa and because it was at the same time suggested that there would be fish for the night's meal. At the same time it was suggested that the prawn would be for breakfast, this was again negatived in favour of bread for breakfast and prawns for the day's meal; but there was no feeling of certainty. As it turned out, there were both prawns and fish for the night's meal, bread for breakfast & prawns and fish again for the day's meal. Certainty is unable to establish itself in the midst of this chaos. It is only when there is no attempt to decide or forecast, that the trikaldrishti is correct in all or most particulars. It is this uncertainty that is now being attacked; first, by distinguishing at the moment of its action the pseudo-trikaldrishti of volitional or creative perception, which may or may not be fulfilled, from the true trikaldrishti; secondly, by distinguishing the opposite or tamasic pseudo-trikaldrishti, overstressed perception of the possibilities of failure and adverse happening, which also may or may not occur, from the true trikaldrishti; thirdly, by the right arrangement of true perceptions so that their full sense may not be misinterpreted.

Rupa in the Akasha developed in the dense and developed forms, but not yet with perfect freedom and abundance. Secondary utthapana took a considerable step forward, mahima & laghima immensely increasing except in the back and defect of anima greatly decreasing except in the back & neck. Kamananda continuous throughout the day, was less frequently intense and its ordinary level raised beyond the former limit, but inferior to yesterday's though more regular.

Jan 26th

The difficulties of the new Turkish Cabinet in regard to the Powers promise not to be so acute as they might have been; as was felt by vyapti prakamya, there have been some ebullitions of anger & excitement, so that the Abdulla difficulty remains yet [unconquered].[11] Every day gained is, at present, an advantage as the strength of the Aiswarya continually increases.

After a temporary obscuration and struggle between prakasha and confusion lasting till teatime in the afternoon, the siddhi was finally cleared of the relics of the old tapas and of physical pressure. The aishwarya henceforth to be used is the spontaneous chinmay aishwarya free from all element of struggle, in which force and pressure will only be present to stress the energy of the fulfilment & not for overcoming resistance. Judgment in the intellect, a great obstacle to the range and freedom of the trikaldrishti, is also finally dismissed and the higher perception is allowed untrammelled play with the viveka for its assistant, not its judge. This movement was already in progress, but was prevented from universalising itself by the insistence of the old volitional tapas which demanded survival and justification.

Kamananda, absent on rising, continuous but slight during the morning, recovered intensity in the afternoon. This intensity is persistently recurrent, rather than continuous, but its recurrence is spontaneous and forcible, no longer dependent on the attention, but commanding the attention. It persists even in swapna-samadhi and is found continuously persistent on waking from sleep. Only bodily activity curbs its intensity. Otherwise it yields to nothing except the bodily habit of intermittence. Rupa & lipi are struggling with the physical obstruction in the akasha for a larger fulfilment. In answer to the aishwarya forms of animals & objects are manifesting in the perfection of the chitra & sthapatya,—formerly the human figure & landscape were almost the only subjects. In akasharupa, on the contrary, animals & objects predominate.

---

[11] *MS* unconjured

Jan 27th

Trikaldrishti made a final stride forward to its ultimate perfection by getting rid of the habit of tamasic denial which used to fasten on the least sign of amangala and asiddhi and hasten to accept adverse probability or even possibility as adverse certainty. In the place of this denial there is left a strong uncertainty chiefly with regard to those parts of the siddhi in which the sraddha has not yet been established by events, ie the saundarya and karmasiddhi. Aishwarya attained to perfection of detail and is now beginning to act automatically and without effort in its various fields, but is still resisted firmly in the karma in which there is a general attack on the siddhi which has been developing for some time past, as the opposition shifted more and more from the Yogasiddhi to the karmasiddhi, and is now at its height. The aishwarya has got rid of the remnants of tapasic stress and struggle which marred its perfection of method and has only to get rid of a remnant of tamasic anxiety & asraddha about its results. Vani, script etc are being more & more justified and whenever the trikaldrishti acts, it is justified and false trikaldrishti, ie misinterpretation of material, is being put in its proper place and turned into satyam. Therefore, the asraddha is being forced to its final collapse. Lipi is now free, vivid and spontaneous, but not always legible. Rupa has attained to activity in all kinds, but not yet free activity, & to more frequent stability in all but the developed perfect form; its force is daily increasing, but the progress is marked by the old gradual slowness & has not yet come into line with the new rapidity. Drishti of Samadhi & visvagati developed yesterday in force & stability, but has still an imperfect hold on the akasha. Kamananda has overcome all its difficulties, eg noncontinuity of intense ananda while walking etc, except the mere habit of intermission; this habit grew stronger yesterday, & there was much & frequent intermission. On the other hand the ananda pervades the system more perfectly & has not lost either in intensity or in ease of recurrence. It is growing more powerful in the raudra form. Arogya is increasing; strongly attacked yesterday, it overcame all difficulties except the weakness of the second chakra. There has been no parthiva visrishti, except nominal & infinitesimal relief, for these seven days, and it is now clear that this visrishti is no longer a physical necessity, but a habit kept in survival by the imperfect speed and still faulty method of the assimilation which, instead of drawing the food at once into the akash by the power of the mukhyaprana, recurs partially to the old panchabhauta absorption & therefore leaves a deposit which has to be dematerialised, or else produces symptoms of tejasic & jalamaya irregularity before it completes its process. For this reason, jalavisrishti is still overfrequent and the demand of the Apana still continues. Secondary utthapana is progressing in strength of laghima and mahima and has begun to expel defect of anima into the outworks of the physical system, but this process is still in its initial stages. Only saundarya is slow to manifest; it does not yet succeed in getting rid of its positive contradictions, the signs of old age etc. The saundarya once in motion and the equipment to hand, the whole siddhi will be in simultaneous successful movement.

Jan 28th

Nothing definite today in the telegrams, except the pressure on China. The struggle has been transferred now to its proper field and the full force of the adverse powers is in evidence to bring about the destruction of the karma.

Today, according to promise, proofs of the action of Aishwarya-ishita-vyapti in the karmasiddhi are beginning to crowd in; incidentally, the trikaldrishti is being justified against the relics of tamasic hesitation at every step. Dream became perfect in type, though still imperfectly organised, on its way to conversion into memorative experience in samadhi. Rupa in swapnasamadhi is now much more stable, although continuous experience in vision and in the sukshmadeha, as distinguished from continuous dream experience & momentary experiences in the sukshmadeha, are still held back from manifestation. Secondary utthapana in the neck increased in mahima, (maintenance while counting 1000 deliberately is the test), but defect of anima is still strong here and it resists successfully, in the back, the extension of the utthapana. Laghima is in all parts of the body sufficient, mahima variable, anima weak except in certain positions of the arms and legs. In the arms in the primary position utthapana can easily be maintained for an hour and, if necessary, for much longer. Arogya after a struggle gave proof of increasing force; there was the first real parthiva visrishti at the close of the seventh day, but even here the force of assimilation was proved by the absence of any serious reaction such as would have been inevitable a short while ago. Rupadrishti in the jagrat still progresses slowly & is perfect only in a few types, but its stability increases.

Dasya finally shed the remnants of the tertiary stage, & the quaternary dasyabuddhi is now constant & invariable whenever there is any turning of the mind towards the nature of the action, whatever the action may be. The purnabrahmadrishti is also normalised &, whenever there is smarana, invariable, whatever the object. Along with this development, there is perfect objective vishayananda even in the bibhatsa and jugupsita; the same perfection is establishing itself in the subjective vishaya, bibhatsa, apriya, amangala, & there are only a few defects. Kamananda fell to a minimum, but now persists under all circumstances and is not suspended at night, but is always there subject to the anusmarana. It is growing again in intensity, with the intention of maintaining intensity in the constancy. It still tends to diminish, though not disappear, while walking, and to become involved or implicit by distraction of attention.

Jan 29th.

([Written] 30th)

Trikaldrishti justified. The second suspect in Comilla has been released on bail, proving the correctness of the perception that the wrong people had been arrested. The idea long held, but uncertainly, that there was some irritant substance in the Viceroy's wound opposing the healing action, justified in today's telegram (30th). There was during the 29th no conspicuous [advance];[12] only a slight increase in the rupadrishti, a movement towards exactness of detail in trikaldrishti and aishwarya, maintenance of the kamananda throughout the day, till nighttime, and preparation of the final subjective vishayananda. This, however, was attacked & impaired as soon as it had been provisionally established, by evidence of a persistent and partially successful attack on the karmasiddhi. Health also is attacked & slightly impaired in certain directions.

---

[12] *MS* absence

Jan 30th.

Trikaldrishti of farther sea-accidents in the papers, of which the loss of a naval officer washed off his bridge, announced today, is a previous hint, showing the tendency still at work. The whole vijnana is now organising itself on the basis of the Sat-Tapas & the progress of this movement has been the principal siddhi of the day. In addition Ananda, reaching a higher intensity late in the morning, maintained it till the evening, diminished only when walking. This is now the normal pitch of the Kamananda when it occurs, in a state of activity; at the lower pitch it remains in a state of rest.

Jan 31st.

The transition which has been for some time in process of accomplishment, completes itself today. Formerly life was regarded as a thing to be worked upon and worked out, by active mental will and bodily means,—speech, writing, work etc. A thing written had to be composed. An intellectual difficulty had to be thought out, a conclusion fixed and edified. That which was undiscovered, had to be sought for by speculation, reasoning, experiment. That which was unattained, had to be constructed by labour, attempt, adaptation of means, careful manipulation of materials. The remnants of this way of seeing clung until now to the thought and action, but henceforth it is removed. Life is a great mass of existence, Sat, moulding itself through its own Tapas. All that has to be done is for the Jiva, the knowledge centre of this existence, to sit fast in his city, navadware pure, & allow the infinite Tapas to manifest through him, accepting it, sanctioning it, (anumati), giving the command to fulfil it to his helping devatas, (ishwara), holding up the whole system & its working, (bharta), and watching & enjoying the results. The Tapas may be with knowledge & then the results will be perfectly in accordance with what is intended, for what is intended, will be what is known to the mind as the thing that has to be done or is to happen, kartavyam karma; if it is without knowledge or with imperfect knowledge, it will still be known as the thing which God intends the individual system to lay stress upon (tapyeta), therefore to be willed, and the result, whether in accordance with the Tapas, or adverse to it, chosen or not chosen (ishta, anishta, priya apriya), favourable or adverse (mangala, amangala,) success or failure, (siddhi asiddhi, jayajayau,) will be the unseen thing that all along had to be & towards which all tapas has been contributing, (adrishtam, bhavitavyam), therefore to be accepted with equality of mind and with equality of ananda. This must be the first principle of the new period of action.

The second principle, which has also been long preparing, is the renunciation of nigraha or as it used to be called, tapasyá. Not that the Tapas may not have to persist under difficulties, but no violence has to be done to the Prakriti. It has to work out its own defects. This is now possible, because of the growth of the supreme or quaternary dasya, by which the very thought & feeling comes only as things impelled by the divine hand of the Master & Sarathi. Absolute Samata & passivity are now possible.

Therefore in action there will be no planning, only seeing of the way the thing to be done will develop under the shaping of the divine Tapas whether through myself or others; in writing no composition, only the record of the vak as it flows down from above and forms itself in the Sat of Mind; in Yoga no sadhan, but only the acceptance of the self-organising movements of the anandamaya vijnanamaya Prakriti as it progressively takes entire possession of this inferior mental & physical kingdom.

Today's news are mostly confirmative of the trikaldrishti or aiswarya; the running down of a sailing-vessel, confirming yesterday's perception; the rumour of the Karachi bomb-find proving to be a fact and not a newspaper invention, though probably a police fraud; the fresh demands and threats of Roumania; the falsity of the Vienna rumour; the Moorish resistance in Marrakesh; the Suffragette recrudescence. Only in the Turkish War the trikaldrishti has not worked well; for the imminent denunciation of the armistice reported from Vienna is contrary to what was expected, viz that the Allies would wait for the Turkish reply. It has to be seen, however, whether the report is correct.

Today has been a day of considerable advance. The script has recovered accuracy of detail and added to it accuracy of suggestion. All the predictions made for the day have been fulfilled not only in substance, but in detail and in order of time and circumstance. Intensity of ananda has been greatly increased and the more intense pitch is now established as the normal to which the Ananda tends always to rise when not hampered either by deliberate obstruction or by the tamasic sanskar of dharane asamarthya impressed on the karmadeha from the outside swabhava and through the karmadeha affective of the body; otherwise it sinks to the subnormal,—the pitch attained yesterday,—or even to the implicit when it seems to be discontinued or existing only as a general tendency. The health is being purified slowly of the remnants of cold and eruption and is almost free of both, though still subject to momentary touches; visrishti has been a little thrown back, the assimilation for the last three days being less powerful; but today, although subjected to an unusually powerful tejasic stimulus, it has resisted much better than ever before since the final stage began and was disturbed only partially & very temporarily. The weakness of the chakra has been greatly exaggerated, but tends always when allowed to return to the former state of passive efficiency, dhairya & dharana. Secondary utthapana also suffers from a partially successful attack & apparently successful obstruction.

Samadhi took a great stride forward. It has begun to organise itself and images (visual, auditory, sensational, actional, tactual) came in a crowd, not yet well organised, but evolving their own organisation. Continuity of incident accompanied with perfect vividness was greater in one typical case than has yet happened and the tendency of image to survive into the antardarshi jagrat was strong and successful. Rupadrishti in the jagrat is at last emerging definitively out of the prison of the sukshma, but the movement is not yet complete. Trikaldrishti and aishwarya are becoming more effective in details of the siddhi. The subjective tamas which returned partially for a short time, has been rejected and the physical is being expelled. In the chitra two fresh circumstances have reemerged, 1, chitra of objects, eg a sword, moneybag, spear etc, 2, chitra of familiar faces & scenes, eg the face of Gladstone & neck with collar.

The following lipis etc have been fulfilled or are in the course of fulfilment.

(1) She has to change her conception of life. (Sortilege, early in the morning; she being the Prakriti-Jiva; fulfilled at once.)

(2) En dépit de l'opposition le surhomme se dépeint dans l'homme actuel. (Lipi).

(3) 12. tejas, tapas, prakasha. (Lipi. ie the harmony of the three is now to be applied, imperfectly at first, to the karmasiddhi.[)]

(4) Rupadrishti besides samadhi. (Lipi. Rupadrishti's release had been promised, but this lipi indicates the previous release of samadhi. Fulfilled immediately.[)]

The following have been given.

(5) More shipwrecks. (Lipi)

(6) It is impossible to defeat the Bulgarians at Tchataldja . . by the false tejas. It is hopeless to expect assistance from the Europeans . . Defeat of the Bulgarians . . Dissolution of the Confederacy. (Lipi).

(7) Songe. (Lipi, indicating some progress in Dream).

No 6. seems to mirror the struggle between tejas & tamas and cannot be confidently accepted as anything but a lipi of vyapti, ie expressing thoughts of men or devatas concerned in the struggle going on in the Balkans. It is probable that neither represent the ultimate event.

([Written] 1st Febr).

Later in the day the Ananda still farther increased and at night, for the first time, the development of waves of Ananda out of simple touches, eg. the contact of the feet with the soil, was imposed on the system. This happened while walking and continued for several minutes. It is the sign of a new stage of progress in the physical siddhi. Rupadrishti was finally released from concealment in the subtle akasha; numerous images presented themselves, chitra of various kinds presented new developments of richness and a certain freedom was obtained in the akasharupa; but the perfect & developed forms are still momentary. Forms have once more begun to appear in the darkness. The improvement in samadhi was maintained, chitra especially of great richness and perfection appearing frequently, and in addition the commencement of the free and niradhara shabdadrishti was indicated. Arogya, free in other respects, is yet attacked by the tejas in assimilation & by weakness of the chakra. In trikaldrishti there is a movement towards the enforcement of correctness in all mental motions; not only their proper arrangement and the perception of the truth to which each relates, but this movement has, as yet, only begun to emerge, although long promised. Considerable force had to be used to maintain the utthapana. Dream was active, sometimes entirely free & accurate, almost equal to actual experience, sometimes coloured with present associations. The attack on the karmasiddhi may now be considered as having failed, since the effects produced have been unimportant.

The siddhi at the end of January, stands in a condition of considerable advance accomplished, rapidity increasing, finality in sight.

(1) The shuddhi is complete except for the relics of intellectual action that impede the vijnana and the occasional impacts of the old movements from the outskirts of the external swabhava.

(2) Mukti is complete except for the same fragmentary survivals.

(3) Bhukti is complete except for some disturbing touches in the body and for the same fragmentary survivals.

(4) Siddhi is in its last stage of struggle with the opposing forces.

(5) Samata is complete with the same qualification

(6) Shakti is complete in dasya & the passive members of the second chatusthay, complete in all else except sraddha and intensity of tejas.

(7) Vijnana is complete in jnana, established & effective in trikalsiddhi but still imperfectly organised, established in power but still imperfect in effectiveness and organisation, established in lipi but still weak in the richer varieties and not completely organised, established in rupa, but still poor and manifested with difficulty, except in chitra & sthapatya, established in samadhi but still hampered in continuity, poor in antardrishta jagrat, ill-organised and in jagrat shabdadrishti etc elementary & infrequent, established & effective in prakamya vyapti, but imperfectly organised, established

in pranic mahima & laghima, but still resisted, deficient in anima.

(8) Ananda of the body is established, but not yet sovran. Arogya imperfect in assimilation and kamachakra, doubtful in phlegm centres & skin, otherwise established. Utthapana is established in the pranic basis, active in primary & secondary, but everywhere hampered by defect of anima; of tertiary there is as yet no sign. Saundarya is manifest only in the slow alteration of certain lines in the feet & the trunk and in its subjective basis of youthful feeling.

(9) Karmasiddhi is initially active in all points, but has not yet embarked on its triumphant progress. All is still struggle and preparation.

The great feature of the siddhi now is that the objective alone resists, and there the resistance is artificially entertained, in some cases without any real basis, in others by taking exaggerated advantage of old grooves in the Sat of matter or the vaja of forward acting mind.

The movement of the siddhi in the immediate future must be in the totality of the seven chatusthayas. Not that all its members are equally developed, or that a separate stress on some of them is not still needed, but by the end of February this stress must have ceased and the whole must be united for the activities of life which are to replace the activities of the sadhana. Such siddhi as remains will grow by life and action and not by abhyasa in the ways of Yogic practice. The stress that is still necessary is due to the survival of the old elemental opposition which stands in the way of the siddhi being effectively expressed in life. This opposition is now a tamasic obstruction and will rapidly lose the little that it still keeps of the faculty of aggressive assault. Above all, the basis of samata is now perfect and once the medium of tejas is perfected, the instrument, vijnana, will equally liberate itself from the obstruction and no farther opposition can then prevail against the ananda and the karmasiddhi, the apas and the lila.

January has been a period of strong increase and rooted establishment; February must be a period of perfect completion and faultless organisation, for in March, a new year begins.

1 – 14 FEBRUARY 1913

Record of the Yoga
1913
February

February.

1st

Sat or Substance is now everywhere vyakta, Tapas is in activity, Ananda emergent, Vijnana in process of organisation. The first day of February has been outwardly a day of retardation, almost of relapse; for the trikaldrishti once more lapsed into a state of murky obscurity shot with light and halflit with erring illuminations, misplaced energy worked more than satya tapas, the body was overtaken by exhaustion or weakness, Ananda failed in sustained intensity. As usual, however, the movement was one of preparation, not of relapse, for the expulsion of these remnants, not a concession to their extant force. The karmasiddhi which seemed to have been once more attacked, emerged perfectly victorious in the immediate surroundings. . S's [Saurin's] interview with the Governor showed that the prakamyavyapti & the aishwarya were acting correctly; the news of the troubles of the opposition movement were still more strikingly in accord with the Will. A failure in the recurring problem was immediately corrected by the Will. The lipi "safety of the S.C." was justified. In other directions of the karma a motion is visible. Although therefore there was no addition or definite increase in the siddhi, the current of preparation was perfectly visible. In addition, the most powerful tests & attacks failed to disturb the samata & shanti which can now be considered as established. The last general shadows of ashanti, duhkha and vishada may now be considered as slain, although momentary touches are sure to recur.

2d.

The Telegrams today contain several fulfilments of the aishwarya & trikaldrishti 1. the appointment of Ijjat Pasha as Commander-in-Chief (lipi); 2. the passing of the Trades Unions Bill without Conservative opposition (aishwarya); 3. the loss of a boat and grounding of a ship, (lipi—more shipwrecks), and the storm & railway accidents in Germany (trikaldrishti); 4. the Nationalist success at Londonderry; 5. the trend of opinion about the Turkish note in Europe.

The morning began with an effective reorganisation of the trikaldrishti, but an unsuccessful attempt to bring in the strong and effective tejas & tapas disturbed the system, and brought back the unavailing struggle of false tapas to harmonise itself with knowledge & peace; the result was a return of the contradiction of samata, shanti, sukha & prasada, which although unable to possess the system, was able to overcome its outer activity by recurrent touches giving an impression of continuity. As usual, the contrariety started with impatience of asiddhi and was enforced by impatience of asatya. The result of the struggle has been to establish the satya tapas in knowledge; formerly, perfect trikaldrishti was only possible on condition of entire passivity, of a purely inert reception of true suggestions confirmed by the event or sanctioned by the illumination. The movement to introduce an active knowledge has hitherto had a chequered success and, if pushed too far, led always to false tapas and disturbance of truth and peace; but now the active knowledge has asserted its right to conjoint action with passive perception of the data. The elements of a well-organised trikaldrishti are, therefore, all of them present and the organisation will now be finally proceeded with and effected. In this organisation all the elements of error, which have so long troubled the intellect and the faith, will find their justification, for all of them are now revealed as essentially true processes of knowledge which only lead to error because their results are misunderstood by the stumbling and groping faculty of discrimination dignified with the name of reason. The tamasic trikaldrishti, the tejasic volitional, the speculative, the inferential have all their place and portion in intuitive and revelatory knowledge. At the same time satya tapas is being finally established, not in the sense of being finally effective, but in the sense of being either (1) immediately effective or (2) ultimately effective or (3) effective of a force or tendency intended ultimately to modify the present type of action or nature. Thus the sense of failure, error and misuse of energy which used to discourage the Chandibhava and bring back the merely calm or the discouraged passivity, now disappears in its causes and the basic elements of the bhava may be considered well-established, ie śauryam ugrata and yuddhalipsa and even daya ishwarabhavah karmasamarthyam, although not perfect & all-embracing are at least in established action. The sraddha alone is still deficient and liable, even in some of its efficient parts, to be discouraged.

A fresh siddhi today is the finality of the Krishna-Kali relation in the personality; the personal activity of the Purushottam; the personal script; the personal vani; the personal guidance. The period of intermittent manifestation of guidance passed some time ago, its remnants are now deleted; only the remnants of the indirect guidance remain and these too are to be rapidly deleted, for the indirect guidance itself ceases from today. It has long been only a subordinate part of the guiding activity, always tending to be overruled or dominated in its suggestions, impulses and utterances.

The programme given today (in the morning) and already partly fulfilled, runs:—

1 Ananda, increase and sovereignty of all states and all times
2. Trikaldristi, not yet perfectly arranged, but efficiently organised.
3. Power extended and confirmed.
4. Rupa, lipi, samadhi active and growing.
5. Health emergent again in assimilation and in chakra
6. Saundarya still growing slowly.
7. Fresh proofs of karmasiddhi.

The united action of tapas & trikaldrishti (formerly detrimental to each other) is now established in its harmony, although survivals of the past discord persist. The lipi, a little hampered recently, has recovered its profuse action and easy self-revelation of significance. In the kamananda a double sanyama is developing &, indeed, already active by which a part of the manas activity has detached itself to attend to the sensation of the ananda while the main energy is otherwise concerned. By this movement, which has yet to be perfected, the ananda has been enabled not only to possess, but to become sovereign of the body in both the states of physical activity and of mental abstraction; once this sovereignty is well established and emphasised, only the states of sleep and samadhi remain to be mastered. The state of samadhi is already open to the ananda, but its entrance there is still exceptional.

(Feb 3)

In accordance with the programme Ananda has taken sovereign possession of all states and has been continuous yesterday from the morning when it commenced, throughout the day, prevailed over several attempts to expel it in the evening, the time when it has usually declined, persisted throughout the night every time that the sleep was interrupted, recurred & held the body constantly in moments of samadhi and was often present in sleep. The only defect of the continuity was interruption by sleep and unevenness, — failure of continuous intensity; for twice in the evening it became almost implicit and in sleep it became involved in apparent cessation. Rupa and lipi were both active, & rupa commenced extending its range of stable developed images; the greatest progress, however, was in samadhi which finally triumphed and produced great, complex and continuous images and incidents in profusion, taking possession of dream, which is now passing into swapna-samadhi. Present association hardly occurred at all in a crowded succession of dreams and even present ego, though not entirely absent, became a practically negligible quantity. Only a slight tendency to inconstancy and rapid transition, not amounting to incoherency, marred this rapidly effected perfection. For the first time, the vision of the book with freely legible passages and sentences, became frequent and, if not yet fixedly stable, yet sufficiently stable in its rapid self-revelation for whole sentences & even several sentences at a time to be simultaneously read and understood. Ahaituka raudrananda also commenced to manifest more freely & continuously.

Trikaldrishti and Power are active in their organised movement. Proofs of karmasiddhi were given, especially the arrival of money in the full sum willed & more than had been probable or expected. There were slight indications of the emergent health and the elimination of positive asaundarya; here alone the fulfilment was meagre and unconvincing.

3d

Today's first movement has been the development of the authoritative direct guidance of the Master of the Yoga imposing itself on the mind even when there are no data for sraddha and, parallel with this movement, a strengthening of the pure revelatory movement,—independent of data, probability or actual fulfilment,—of the trikaldrishti and its materials, lipi, prakamya-vyapti and rupa. The purnabrahmadrishti has also been powerfully strengthened and is extruding the old outlook of mere Avidya. Otherwise the morning has been occupied chiefly with the removal of the remnants of certain old activities, eg, expectation, mental insistence, distrust etc. The process is not yet complete.

The rest of the day was occupied with action on the same lines and the removal of expectation & mental insistence was thoroughly tested; the latter has disappeared and is replaced by dhriti and tejas; expectation is inactive, but is not replaced yet by a settled faith, owing to the apparent contradiction given by events to some statements of the Vani which has revived the tendency of distrust. This distrust, however, can only hold its own in details and recur as a doubt with regard to saundarya and Adeshasiddhi. It does not any longer question the Yogasiddhi, but is only doubtful about its immediate incidents or its promised increase of rapidity. In any case samata seems to have been, at last, perfectly established. If so, it is the first fulfilment of the character predicted for the month of February,—a period of *perfect completion* and faultless organisation. This perfection of samata is subject, however, to an uneven distribution of tejas in the reception of impacts; but a superficial unevenness of ananda is apparently the intention of the siddhi; it is, therefore, not a defect of samata, but, so far as discomfort enters into the lower levels of the unevenly distributed tejas, a defect of shakti which concerns the second chatusthaya — a defect, practically, of bhogasamarthya. Sahitya was resumed in the afternoon. (Soul in Art).

The struggle over the health still continues and for the last two evenings there has been feverish heat in the system and a limitation of the pranic energy; utthapana has been practically discontinued. The attempt to establish force in the chakra has failed. On the other hand, there has been no success in the endeavours of the enemy to reintroduce eruption or the affections of cold. Kamananda showed at times an increased intensity working on the body rather than seated in it, but at others was dull and even implicit. Rupa progresses with the old slowness; samadhi did not increase, nor lipi grow in richness. Trikaldrishti & power continued to work accurately; but without intensity or inspiration, & only in details. The day's programme was not fulfilled in the sthula.

4th.

Telegrams — The Karachi bomb is now denounced as an informer's hoax; naturally, it is not admitted to be an unsuccessful police fraud. Curiously enough, the prakamya which two days before the find suggested the existence of a plot against Lord Sydenham, still persists, though in a vaguer form. A farther case of marine accident reported today.

Lipi — eighth — suggesting Saturday Feb 8th as a decisive day, both for the yogasiddhi and for the karmasiddhi. Some decisive action or news in the Balkans is also suggested, as well as something in the matter of equipment. Today, Tuesday, has already been given as decisive for the immediate movement of the Yoga.

The second chatusthaya is now being arranged by the harmony of the dasya, tejas and general sraddha, (tapas, tejas, prakasha), but the uncertainty of the trikaldrishti continues and prevents assured sraddha in details of time, place & circumstance.

Strong persistence of fever, mainly in the sukshmadeha, but with fluctuating effects on the sthula, was the principal feature of the day. No change was made as to food, bathing etc, nor was physical exertion altogether suspended. The assimilative process continued in spite of the sanskaras that attempted to destroy it.

Attempts were made to restore the old symptomatic affections under cover of the fever, but hitherto they have failed. Neither could any impression be produced on the clear working of the brain nor was literary work prevented. The general sraddha & tejas stood firm and continued to grow in spite of the adverse experience. The activity of the vijnana and the utthapana chiefly suffered. Trikaldrishti was strongly obscured although it continued to act along with aishwarya in ordinary details. Ananda is not affected; there is ananda in the sensations of the fever. Samata is perfect.

Kamananda got rid of the tendency to fall into the implicit state. It subsides now at its lowest to a subdued ananda bordering on the implicit, but usually well manifest out of which the normal intensity emerges. Samadhi is now well established in variety, frequency and brief continued activity of scenes and images. Communication with the manasic world in the jagrat is now occurring; formerly there was drishti only of the pranajagat and the subtle Bhu.

Feb 5th.

Another shipwreck; the resumption of hostilities in the Balkans; the insufficient pressure of the Powers on the belligerents; the attitude of the Porte; the Roumano-Bulgarian tension continued; the police notification to the inhabitants of Delhi, are all indicative today either of successful aishwarya or correct trikaldrishti.

(6th Feb)

Another day of strong attack, but the health succeeded in expelling the impure heat in the system; during the night the attack succeeded in impressing itself on the throat in a sensation, never quite determinate, but often strong, of sore throat; this was thrown off; returned in the morning of the 6th, was thrown off again, although dahi was freely eaten; but the remnants still persist in returning. It has become perfectly clear that all these are false illness, formulated in symptom and not in root in the sukshma body and thence pressed upon the sthula; but it is also clear that the sthula body is still insecure against these attacks. Always, the movement is to repeat the last fragments of the last ailments that were left unexpelled when the final movement of the siddhi began. Always, therefore, it is an attempt to keep in activity the almost dead physical sanskaras, the grooves of imperfect movement to which the body was finally accustomed.

Feb 6th. Thursday.

These two days have been of an old type long discontinued, in which the siddhi has been suspended almost entirely in all its imperfect parts and only those allowed to progress in which the attack could make no impression. In the present instance, it is the samata shanti sukha prasada which have stood a continued and violent test and emerged, as far as can be seen, entirely perfected. Shadows have fallen on the last two without being able to [affect][1] them substantially. Tejas of the nature of dhairyam and tapas of the Mahasaraswati type have also remained unaffected; there has been no sinking back into tamasic udasinata, although movements in that direction were attempted. Sraddha in the eventual Yoga-siddhi has remained substantially unaffected, in spite of shadows, except that strong doubts have assailed the faith in the saundarya, the one member of the four chatusthayas for which there is as yet very meagre justification. On the other hand the Mahakali tapas has sunk into inactivity, after one strong battle in which it prevailed temporarily over the strongest resistance to the aishwarya. The vijnana siddhi has been pale and fitful; physical siddhi heavily attacked and for the most part interrupted, even the kamananda sinking back into the implicit state from which the others fluctuatingly manifested. Sraddha in the adeshasiddhi and the rapidity of the yogasiddhi sank to the lowest terms now possible to the general faith.

7th Friday—

Today the mists have begun to clear and show an advance,—principally, towards the final removal of the false tejas & tamas in the knowledge which though expelled from the system still besiege it from the environment and occupy the outgoing and incoming paths of the thought perception. If the mind can be got to reject these false visitors, then there is a source of knowledge independent of all data which gives automatically the truth. That which learns from data, is also misled by data; this wrong suggestion of data has been for some time the besetting obstacle to the completion of the trikaldrishti & jnana, the strong refuge of outgoing error. The Personality of the Master is now occupying the life in place of the more general personality of the Saguna Brahman. It is no longer Ishwara or Bhagawan only, but Srikrishna-Narayana. At present, however, it is only in the personal relations with the Master of the Yoga that the substitution has been established. .

---

[1] *MS* effect

During the rest of the day, the parts of the Yoga which had been clouded, reemerged in full strength, with the exception of Rupa and Samadhi which did not yet manifest their full former strength. There are signs, however, in the swapna and jagrat samadhi of a more perfect manifestation approaching.

Lipi— 8–9 27th February. 12.

8th February.

Passing of the Trades Union Bill in the Lords (Trikaldrishti & Aishwarya). Bulgarian attack in Gallipoli & Turkish retreat (Trikaldrishti, but contrary to Aishwarya). Withdrawal of charge against two accused in Wari Arms Act Case (Trikaldrishti of Inference etc)

The tejas, tapas, prakasha united acted in harmony this morning so that the perfect knowledge of trikaldrishti, exampled once before while watching the movements of the ants on the wall, reemerged and applied itself to all surrounding movements, thoughts & feelings. This was in a state of comparative passivity. When the active tejas once more emerged, there was some disturbance by the volitional suggestions, but this action was feeble and the prakasha soon readjusted itself. With regard to distant movements, etc, the old incertitude still continues.

Yesterday, another signal proof of the power of Will to alter the forms of the body, was finally proved. The left undercurve of the foot, which was at first non-existent, that side being flat, and afterwards very slight, is now deep and declared, and by a test was found to be at least three times what it had been at the last time of testing. Similar proof has been recently given in the line of the waist, but this is not yet so striking and decisive. This success, after a long and obstinate resistance, justifies sraddha, not only in the saundarya, but in the ultimate emergence of the Adesha siddhi and the equipment; the justifiable doubt is about the extent of fulfilment and the timeliness.

In the afternoon exceeding[ly] brilliant swapnasamadhi at a great depth of dream-trance repeatedly occurred; the rupas were of the fleeting kind, but stable for two or three seconds, instead of, as usual, fleeting in the moment of appearance. At night also swapnasamadhi was rich and various at a great depth and perfectly stable scenes of entire vividness were at last developed, instead of the vivid stability of shifting panorama and dim stability which were formerly the highest attainment. The fleeting still predominates over the stable, the dim or pale over the vivid; but the disproportion is decreasing. Organisation, also, has not progressed and dream is once more imperfectly coherent.

Kamananda recovered intensity and confirmed the permanent stability of the subdued ananda. From today the intensity has become as natural and sustained in standing and walking as in the sitting and recumbent positions and is hardly less in pitch; but the abstraction of the attention has still the power of suspending the intense ananda. The movement now is to a greater continuity of the intense ananda.

Trikaldrishti grows in normal perfection of detail; but the other siddhis are still busy confirming their hold on the akash. Karmasiddhi has been thoroughly confirmed today in one direction by the retirement of the Pulinda into S's [Saurin's] karmadeha and outer swabhava; the chief obstacle in the house is therefore removed. The action of the tejas in physical pressure as a means of pushing the siddhi is removed, definitely, & everywhere the pure action of the Will on the akasha has been substituted. The second proof of the increasing saundarya is now more definite. A third is preparing, but still indefinite.

9th February.

Today is marked mainly by the continuation of the movements of the eighth; development of the Krishna Kali relation, progress of the instruments of knowledge, a more general force of the Powers, a more settled action of the rupadrishti, a finally secure and easy action in the akash of the lipi, Kamananda constant in the intense or subdued forms throughout the day and part of the night, — though in the evening almost implicit, — and more frequent & powerful in the state of samadhi, slow progress of the swapnasamadhi, the physical siddhi struggling with the remnants of asiddhi which intend to return or persist, maintenance of the karmasiddhi. Except in the lipi nothing assuredly final and definite.

10th & 11th.

Days of crisis & transition, intended chiefly for the exclusion of the remnants of false tapas in the lipsa and the full replacement of the Aniruddha bhava by the Balaram-Aniruddha in the Master of the Yoga. Kamananda now possesses the whole day in the subdued form with the intense rising out of it; it is discontinued at night.

12th February. Wednesday.

The Balaram-Aniruddha Bhava suffused with Pradyumna and based on concealed Maheshwara now governs the Yoga; but in the Prakriti, the Maheshwara bhava is not yet concealed. In neither is there as yet a very powerful energy of the Balarama or Mahakali bhava. The vijnana has recovered its elasticity, the knowledge & sight of the sukshma world is increasing and the kamananda grows in intensity.

This movement continued throughout the day, ceased in the evening. The movement is towards the purification of error out of the trikaldrishti & aishwarya and dream, incoherence & insufficiency out of the samadhi. But the resistance in the akasha is still strong enough to prevent an unhampered rapidity of improvement. Health improves & grows stronger, yet the abnormal symptomatic affections, which have no longer any coherence or raison d’être, still recur or cling. Adhogati is persistent & prevents the established utthapana from frequently manifesting. Saundarya is still limited to its one or two imperfect details. Karmasiddhi develops, but slowly & against a considerable obstruction.

13th February. Thursday.

A day of uncertain development. Swapna samadhi is slowly becoming more purposeful and developing a better organisation.

14th February. Friday.

Trikaldrishti improved and became normally free from the old sources of error except in matters of exact detail. Health strongly attacked.

15th February. Saturday.

[*No entry*]

1 AND 12 APRIL, 19 AND 21 MAY 1913

Record of Yoga—
April.

There has been a gap of nearly two months in the record due to an attack of pronounced asiddhi, which lasted from the middle of February till late in March and seemed to reverse much that had already been accomplished and recorded. The asiddhi was mostly physical in its nature, but [accompanied][1] also with entire interruption and partial reversal in some of the other siddhis, a general tamasic prostration and ill-health. The one positive result has been to confirm the removal of rajasic tejas in all but a feeble shadow of its old material tendencies.

April 1st

The first chatusthaya is now beyond the danger of successful attack except in the positive samata; a few touches of asamata & ashanti come occasionally, but soon die away. The second chatusthaya is feeble and ill-organised owing to the trivial nature of the siddhi and the failure of everything which would strikingly prove the Adesha. There is a general action of the vijnana, but it is not yet extricated from falsehood and uncertainty, so that all that can be done is to watch results & see whether the perception is a truth or a misapplication. Rupadrishti is of the feeblest & samadhi fails to advance. Physical siddhi is only fragmentary & its progress successfully resisted. The sixth chatusthaya is present, but only when the attention is attracted to the Brahman. The fifth chatusthaya is also fragmentary and mingled with ill-success.

---

[1] *MS* accompanished

There has been a great activity of the poetical power which has acquired rapidity accompanied with forceful & effective inspiration, but not always with inevitable & illuminating inspiration. The attempt is now to maintain the invariability of the illuminated & inspired inevitability without diminishing the rapidity. This is in epic poetry. The foundations of a rapid & sure inevitability are being laid in other literary powers. Equipment (bare) for three months has been effected.

The two great disappointments of the aishwarya have been the fall of Janina & Adrianople & the outrages in Bengal; the aishwarya has failed to avoid these disasters. In Albania the line of the Aishwarya has been followed, but not in every respect, eg Djakov[ic]a seems to be lost to Albania. The continued frequency of great calamities confirms the trikaldrishti. In small matters trikaldrishti is now very usually correct, but limited in its range. Time, place & order of circumstance, oftener right than before have still the anrita tendency very pronounced. All the parts of knowledge in the third chatusthaya are in action, but they are neither perfect, vigorous, fruitful nor organised.

Power now acts frequently, but is much resisted. Effectiveness in religious & moral influence is frequent & steady, but imperfect. So political siddhi, but more in the world at large than in India.

April 12th.

After the note on the 1st the diary was discontinued owing to the uncertainties in which the siddhi was still enveloped. All that has happened in the last few days confirms the view then taken; the stage is one of partial and combated efficiency. Yet there are proofs of advance. Eg On the 8th night a swelling on the ankle & foot began, in the morning the whole of the left foot was attacked & it did not seem as if a speedy cure were possible. It was, however, indicated in the thought that it was merely an effect of impure rasa and not the disease common in these parts,[2] would show no improvement during the day, would begin to go on the morrow and practically be got rid of the day after, but the remnants would be left. This prediction was fulfilled to the letter. Moreover, the swelling healed exactly as the will was applied, the part most insisted on improving first, the others more slowly.

---

[2] *Filariasis (elephantiasis), endemic in Pondicherry.—Ed.*

The great difficulty is the resistance in the physical akasha, first to the effective activity and, secondly, to the unmixed activity of the vijnana. If the mixture of the old intellectual activity can be got rid of, the effective vijnanamaya activity can be assured more rapidly. It is towards this end that the Power is now working. The immediate ends proposed are Brahman, Ananda external and internal, Arogya, effective Image in waking state & sleep and effective Trikaldrishti. The whole activity of the Yoga is being reconstituted. The rupas of all kinds appear though fitfully & with insufficient stability & frequency, in the waking state, & insufficient stability & continuity in sleep. The Brahmadrishti is now complete & less frequently forgotten & never lost. Kamananda, which had almost faded out, is reviving. The resistance in all directions still continues.

[*Here all but two lines of a page left blank.*]

19th May 1913.

The stable progress of the siddhi has been now established against the backward and downward tendencies; effects long produced fragmentarily and [in]securely are now firm and inalterable. Rapidity supervenes on the stability, but freedom from attack, superiority to resistance has yet to be effected.

The third or vijnana-chatusthaya has now been well planted in the soil of the lower kingdoms of the being. Their contradictions have still to be excluded, their defects corrected, their force strengthened and their range extended. The fourth or physical siddhi, long the subject of serious doubt, is now commenced in all its parts and in some of them appears to be firmly rooted. The third can now be left to develop; the fourth and fifth alone still present serious difficulties, admit of prolonged & sometimes effective resistance and demand some struggle.

Suggestions.

Today is the last day of the negative movements; from tomorrow pure progress commences. That change has to be prepared & completed this afternoon and evening.

[*Here a quarter of a page left blank.*]

21st May.

As is not unusual when a suggestion of strong and swift progress is made, the fulfilment, at first apparently complete, is interrupted by as powerful an opposite movement of non-fulfilment as the state of the siddhi will permit. The principle of pure progress is the perception of the end which all apparently adverse circumstances are intended to serve and the immediate conversion of the negative into a positive movement. Successfully established till 3 pm yesterday, it was then suddenly reversed and a negative movement induced of an obstinacy and completeness such as has been absent from the siddhi since last March.. The object of the reverse was to get rid of the remnants of tejasic suggestion (asha, desire, over-stress, effort,) which still persist in the mental environment.

All the vijnana siddhis are now permanently active and effective, but with defects and limitations & subject to the continued mental activity of mixed truth & falsehood which is still successfully maintained in the mental environment by the opposing tendencies of Prakriti and successfully thrust upon the mind in the form of suggestions. The rupa & samadhi formerly deficient have now a petty but sufficient regular fertility, which can be rapidly enlarged & eventually perfected. They still lack some of their old felicities, but when these return, they will no longer be fitful, uncertainly held & willed as formerly, but natural, spontaneous and a permanent possession. The rupas are principally embarrassed by the persistence of a few dominant images which shut out the others or replace them when they attempt to manifest. Another difficulty is the resistance obstinately offered to the emergence from the prana akasha of the perfect, as distinguished from the representative images.

In the physical siddhi, Ananda is the most advanced. The vishayanandas of the senses are all perfected in type, seldom contradicted, but as yet insufficient in intensity, except in the taste, where even it is uneven. The higher mental anandas are all present (prema, chidghana, shuddha), but as yet imperfectly active. Ahaituka ananda is constant in shanti, but not yet in active santosha. The sahaituka sharira anandas are established and growing; the ahaituka manifest but infrequent. Ahaituka kamananda is alone well-established, and awakes whenever recalled, but is still too much a matter of the will and not a self-acting dharma of the body. It can manifest now in any state, jagrat or samadhistha. Thirst has almost disappeared, though it made an appearance for two or three days, mostly in a suppressed form; but does not now occur even in the unusual heat of this summer. Hunger makes its appearance fitfully and is never intense & seldom prolonged; it is being rapidly replaced by hungerless bhojanánanda. Heat & cold are still slightly effective on the body. Pain has turned into some form of ananda except in extreme touches, eg burning by fire, blows touching the bone, etc; but here it is only the immediate contact that is painful, the after effect is always anandamaya; in some touches, eg mosquito bite the habit of discomfort still continues, but is now occasional and not a dharma of the body. Pain of events is the one asamata of mind still persisting & then only as asamata of failure; this too is occasional, largely artificial and no longer a dharma of the mind.

Arogya is troubled now only by the vicissitudes of the visrishti-visarjana which have much diminished and by the inefficiency of vajra. The solid visrishti takes place now irregularly after five days or three or more than five; it was preceded & is still accompanied or followed usually by some action of excessive tejas in the jala bhuta; but this is rapidly diminishing. Occasional trouble of vayavya or taijasa jala has been frequent, but seems now to be moving towards elimination. Jalavisrishti showed recently a tendency towards rapid diminution & even disappearance; at present it is again restored, but has no longer its former force and abundance. Touches of eruption and fragments of phlegmatism (sneezing etc) still subsist, but are effete and cannot materialise into roga.

Utthapana increases rapidly in force during this month. The arms can maintain themselves now for two hours & more without strain or reaction in the vertical position supine; for two hours & more with some but not an effective strain in the vertical position, sitting; only the horizontal position is yet unconquered. In the rest of the body the Shakti now aims at eliminating strain without excessive tapasya.

Saundarya has definitely begun, but the Will Power cannot alter the lines of the body except by a slow & tedious process & the bone still resists alteration of status; still the figure has definitely changed, & in the colour, hair, feet, etc there are slight but effective alterations. Some of the signs of old age, eg grey hairs, although no longer visibly increasing, still resist ejection.

The other chatusthayas have all been commenced, but the fifth is as yet active only in slow movements and petty degrees.

4–30 JUNE 1913

Record

Trikaldrishti—
Aishwarya, ishita, vashita..
Drishti, samadhi.
} accomplished, but subject to suspension and imperfect in arrangement, uncertain also in incidence & limited in penetration and force.

Ananda—
accomplished, but uncertain in continuity, insufficient in intensity.

Arogya—
unaccomplished, but on the verge of accomplishment.

Utthapana
unaccomplished, but in progress.

Saundarya,
feebly begun.

Krishna Kali
Accomplished, but not always nor perfectly manifest.

Karma
Commenced, but in its infancy and much obstructed

Kama
Embryonic.

Brahman.
Founded in all its parts, perfect only in sarvam & part of anantam[,] easily obscured in Ananda, less easily in jnana, inefficient in ananta tapas

The record of June 1913 was kept in three separate sets of loose sheets, headed "Record", "Script" and "Record of Details & Guidance". These are reproduced here in this order.

First Chatusthaya.

Complete; subject to occasional successful attack.

Second Chatusthaya

Complete, but imperfect in sraddha, — deficient in tejas, veiled in attahasya. Liable to eclipse & obscuration

Shuddhi	incomplete in body, almost complete in vijnana.
Mukti	complete, except for relics of egoism in the environment.
Bhukti	complete, but easily obscured.
Siddhi	imperfect in all its parts.

All subject to obscuration & temporary invasion by their opposites.

June 4th 1913.[1]

J[une ...] to 12th

[1.] The defects of the first chatusthaya to [be eliminated][2] with finality — ie to be no longer recurrent. Ineffective touches may yet come.

2. The defects of the second chatusthaya to disappear by the perfection of dasya & sraddha & jnana (including general trikaldrishti). Invasion still possible.

3. Jnana to be finally active without obstruction or suspension in thought, trikaldrishti & prakamyavyapti, but not yet perfect in range & penetration

4 Aishwarya, ishita, vashita to become general, though still limited & subject to breach & obstruction

5. Samadhi to be delivered from obstruction, though not yet perfectly grasped.

6. Ananda to be continuous, arogya & utthapana strengthened; saundarya will still be obstructed.

7. Karma & kama to develop a greater & less occasional power & action. KrishnaKali to increase.

---

[1] *Note that this is the date of the entry above. — Ed.*

[2] *MS damaged; words within brackets partly or wholly lost and not certain. — Ed.*

8. The rest to progress to a less obstructed perfection.

═

June 5th

Morning

Thought, trikaldrishti, telepathy to be cleared of their obstructions & impurities. Aishwarya to spread. Samadhi to be arranged. Begun.

═

Ananda to increase, utthapana recommence. Done

═

Karma. Begun.

═

The daiva karma is coming to a head in the house; there; but not in other places, where it has still to be enforced. It will take another fortnight for it to come entirely to a head here & there, a month for it to become sufficiently forceful outside. Daiva first, kriti next, sahitya third, kama fourth.

═

June 6th—

Thought, trikaldrishti, telepathy to be farther cleared. Aishwarya to spread & strengthen. Samadhi to increase in force. Done

Rupadrishti to grow in clearness & stability. Not evident.

Ananda to increase. Utthapana to grow in anima. Done

Karma to grow in force. Not evident, except in sahitya.

═

The attempt to establish the more ugra tejas has failed, owing to error of the vani and script—the latter in the prediction of the rupadrishti, in which there was no result corresponding to the prediction—

═

June 7th

The same to continue. Partly fulfilled

═

Ananda, utthapana & arogya to grow.— Fulfilled

=

Karma to strengthen. Not evident

=

Arogya suffered a violent break in the digestion; increased in another direction. Aishwarya now works from the centre of things & when it gets hold of the object can direct its movements against resistance. Samata & the general sraddha (in Yogasiddhi) are now strong & resist assault, except for certain tendencies of depression under strong pressure of asiddhi. Tejas exceeding dhriti has failed to effect its footing—the power & fulfilment are still insufficient, & the objective pressure still too successful[ly] hostile.

==

June 8th.

Ananda & utthapana to grow steadily; arogya with more resistance.

=

Karma to strengthen against resistance.

=

The vijnana chatusthaya to undergo a slight obscuration, before it emerges strengthened.

=

Today to be especially marked by physical siddhi & samadhi.

==

This is programme, not prediction. If not fulfilled today, it must be fulfilled subsequently, but in this the Shakti must persist till fulfilment—

Money to arrive in this month, beyond what is expected, in this month also all actual impediments to the kriti are to be cleared away. From the next week the wider movement is to begin—ie from the 8th to the fifteenth.

==

June 9th

Utthapana in leg, horizontal position, lying, 15 minutes (on 8th 10 & before 5), anima much stronger, but sharp strain on one muscle or sinew. In arms, horizontal position, one hour with relief by change of position; ananima still a little heavy at shoulder & near elbow (formerly 15 minutes or half an hour, though capable of hour).

Ananda, the same, but habits of time & circumstance eliminated; only habit of fluctuation & discontinuity obstructs.

Arogya gaining in k. [kamic] centre, but still resisted; troubled by artificial jalamay tejas in assimilation.

Saundarya only in increased curling of hair & apparently mukhasri. Falling of hair still profuse.

=

Vijnanasiddhi obscured & resisted; lipi & rupa rare; swapnasamadhi progresses—

=

The same programme; but this time final reemergence of thought processes & perfected trikaldrishti; also lipi.

=

June 10th

Thought process reemerged, but not yet lipi or perfected trikaldrishti. Utthapana was quiescent, ananda dull, physical shakti much depressed, also arogya. In the thought of trikaldrishti, the vigour of false tejasic suggestion seems temporarily to have revived. Only the samata retains its undiminished strength.

=

It is evident now that the trikaldrishti is reemergent in its more perfect form, especially in prakamyavyapti, but the determinative trikaldrishti is still uncertain and too narrow even when it acts certainly, fastening on one circumstance rather than embracing the whole.

=

Today rupadrishti will reemerge & move henceforward irresistibly towards perfection. The siddhis of power also recover their force from today & the samadhi moves forward.

June 11th

A day of baffled aiswaryasiddhi & mixed tejas & depression of tejas & sraddha. Departure of Shatrughna. Ananda tends to be continuous in manifestation, but failed at night. Rupadrishti reemerged & lipi became freer. No evident progress in samadhi. The siddhis of power acted in small things with partial effectiveness, but failed in great. No definite progress of utthapana or arogya.

═

June 12th

Dasya of the body to be emphasised, sraddha & tejas restored, knowledge perfected in circumstance and samadhi with rupadrishti strengthened. Aishwarya etc to become more effective.

═

Ananda to maintain its continuity, arogya & utthapana to justify the promise of increase, saundarya to begin definitely its march forward.

Karma chatusthaya to begin with greater power.

═══

June 13th

As predicted, a day of relapse.

Results.

1. The defects of the first chatusthaya still recur in touches, transient or [lingering],[3] effective for trouble, not effective for destruction of the siddhi or able to reach the centre of the being.

2. Tejas established, but for a time almost entirely breached & reduced to dhriti. Sraddha broken.

3. Jnana etc obstructed & suspended, but not entirely

4. Aishwarya powers momentarily breached

5 Samadhi obstructed; developing rupadrishti entirely suspended in jagrat.

6. Ananda reduced to the matrix condition in continuity with occasional manifestation of subdued intensity.

7. Arogya resisted & strong relapse in assimilative process; utthapana slowly develops.

8. Fifth chatusthaya suspended.

═

---

[3] *MS* lingerings

June 14th

Since last evening struggle of siddhi to reemerge. Strong tamas & scepticism of rapidity & of adeshasiddhi. Remnants of depression. Still it is apparent that behind the veil knowledge & power are increasing in force. There is no such appearance with regard to samadhi. Strong physical lassitude, revival of thirst, some discomfort.

═══

14th to 23d

Restoration of the siddhi by the evening.

═══

Tejas, jnana, shakti to be perfected. (Partly fulfilled)

Samadhi to be cured of its defects. do

Completion of secondary utthapana in type; continuity with intensity of ananda; new phase of arogya. do

Saundarya to make its first strong progress. do

Fifth & sixth chatusthayas to be prepared in perfection. do

═══

June 15th

The siddhi partially restored after a prolonged struggle. Process since yesterday afternoon.

═══

Defects.

Tejas not so strong & selfconfident as before the break.

Sraddha in siddhi but not in rapidity or adesha.

Thought still besieged & normal trikaldrishti yet imperfect & uncertain in circumstance

Power sometimes perfect in force & accuracy, at others resisted or baffled.

Samadhi still confused & rupadrishti ineffective.

Ananda moving towards continuity in a greater intensity.

Arogya, resisted, but growing very slowly.

Utthapana inactive awaiting restoration of bodily energy.

═══

15th. 16th

1. Trikaldrishti & aiswarya both perfect in circumstance will develop & extrude gradually but rapidly the tendency to tejasic & tamasic misplacement.

2. Tejas & sraddha will return.

3. The natural vangmaya thought will resume its normal action.

4. The tendency to rupadrishti will be strengthened, samadhi become more effective

5. Ananda will grow in intense continuity, action of utthapana reemerge, bodily energy be restored, arogya be better confirmed.

6. The tendency to saundarya will show farther signs of strength.

June 16—

1–4 & prediction of ananda confirmed by the actuality (15th), the rest not evident or even contrary. They are to be fulfilled today.

Vani, script & vangmaya have all been, apparently, delivered from the siege of their intrusive manomaya shadows. Only perception of actuality is still pursued by false suggestion of actuality. There is a strong & hitherto effective struggle to prevent Jnanam & Anandam Brahman from becoming the normal state of the consciousness. Henceforth this must be the object of the subjective siddhi. The Sarvam Brahman is already well-founded but must gain in power, depth, intensity & variety.

June 17th

The programme has been perfectly fulfilled. Lipi is now master of its akasha; rupadrishti is reemergent & needs only the union of a normal stability & clearness in all forms to be perfect. Jagrat samadhi (antardrishta) is still obstructed, but the swapnasamadhi is perfect in all but long continuity; it possesses now in thought, vishayas & even lipi an ordinary coherence & continuity.

Ananda is once more apparent in samadhi, & sleep alone has the power to effect its discontinuance.

The other physical siddhis are still obstructed, though slowly tending to prevail.

June 17th

1. Trikaldrishti & ordinary aishwarya to conclude their struggle with the tejasic misplacement.
2. Tejas & sraddha to be delivered from their reason for occasional & partial discouragement.
3. The vangmaya to effect normality of the inspired & illuminated inevitability.
4. Rupadrishti in bahirdarshi jagrat to overcome its last barrier
5. Samadhi to proceed in coherence & continuity.
6 Increase of telepathy & vyapti.
7. Ananda to get a more perfect hold on the body.
8. Arogya to assert its superiority to resistance.
9. Utthapana to quell the defect of anima in the arms & legs
10. Saundarya to persist in its advance.
11. Kama to be well prepared in the body.
12. Anandam Brahma to become normal.

Results.

1. There is no longer any struggle. The tejasic placement is more & more justifying itself and ceasing to be a misplacement, although still frequently a misinterpreted placement. A deeper trikaldrishti independent of all data or of concentration on the object is now becoming normal without extruding the established trikaldrishti which perceives the subjective & objective data, watches the object & selects beforehand the action or result.

2. With the tejasic misplacement the reason for discouragement has disappeared. The sraddha is not complete, but so far as it extends, is untroubled & the tejas is as strong as the basis of sraddha will bear, but tends still to lapse from chanda into dhira or saumya tejas.

3. The inspired & illuminated inevitability is now the normal

tendency of the vangmaya, but not yet frequent or invariable. The annamaya brain still feels unwilling to bear the energy of this higher vangmaya.

4 Rupa in bahirdarsha is still obstructed. Clear forms of some stability are beginning to reappear, but the movement is still crude.

5. Coherence & continuity are now much stronger in the samadhi; several groups of circumstances are observed, however, there is little concentration on the single group or object as yet.

6. Telepathy & vyapti are assuming a larger activity.

7. Ananda of great intensity took hold, but this as yet is little prolonged; the continuity was less evident.

8. Arogya is becoming more imperative & self-assured; decisive results are yet awaited.

9. Utthapana in the legs (both simultaneously, lying) for an hour, with but slight defect of anima; it might have been continued considerably longer. Laghima very strong; mahima strong, but affected by subjective weakness in the prana. Utthapana of arms, horizontal position, only 20 minutes & much afflicted by ananima. Power in wrist yet weak, but improving.

10 Saundarya; no decisive proof of advance.

11. Preparation of kama in the body begun.

12. Anandam Brahman is now normal when smrita, and subjective bhukti is established. Certain specific defects of indriya bhukti have revived, but there is an increase of bhogasamarthya in the body.

=

In addition, dasya (subjective) is now much more complete; the guidance of the Master being from this day imperative.

===

June 18 –

Yesterday's fulfilment was defective only in rupa & in saundarya. The programme has to be more perfectly fulfilled today.

—

Communications

1. Telepathy is becoming more common & distinct.

2. Rupa emerged with some forms, but still with only an initial stability

3. Intense ananda more continuous.

4. Utthapana of arms (horizontal position) one hour, almost perfect in right arm, heavily resisted in the left.

June 19—

Programme

1 Receptive Telepathy of thought

2. Rupadrishti—medial stability; not yet full range.

3. Samadhi—jagrat.

—

4. Ananda, intense & recurrent; continuous when recurrent

5. Utthapana, legs in horizontal position.

6. Arogya,—incomplete.

—

7. Karma—successes.

═══

Results.

The programme was hardly fulfilled at all except in 1. Rupadrishti was again obstructed, although inferior images appeared, rarely with any stability, & superior, rare also, without stability. Jagrat samadhi increased only in sukshma sparsha. Ananda was subdued & occasional, not continuous till the evening & then only for a time. Utthapana of the legs, horizontal, was effected with difficulty for 15 minutes. Arogya of assimilation was not pronounced & the karmic successes were slight. On the other hand trikaldrishti & aishwarya progressed,—especially telepathy. Articulate thought in the inevitable form was powerfully resumed.

June 20.

Results.

1. Aishwarya largely ineffective; trikaldrishti good, but not faultless, telepathy developing.

2. Samadhi steadily progresses in coherence & continuity of scene.

3. Rupadrishti still emergent & obstructed.

4. Vangmaya more frequent.

5 Cessation of straining in tejas, subjective ananda more undisturbed. Lilamaya upalabdhi stronger.

6. Arogya stronger; utthapana of neck, 50 minutes, with variations of pure utthapana & muscular strain; utthapana of legs, horizontal, reclined, 45 minutes, the last ten with difficulty because of the return of muscular strain.

7 Karmic success resisted & baffled.

═

June 21.

1. Aishwarya again partially effective, mainly through the Prakriti; trikaldrishti good in the broad result, but wanting in certainty, inspiration & ananda; occasionally perfect in circumstance, but with the same defects.

2 Rupadrishti slightly emergent; samadhi without definite progress.

3. Vangmaya still resisted & interrupted; imperfect in vak.

4. Ananda, subjective, depressed by depressed sraddha.

5. Utthapana of left arm, half an hour, ananima still heavy but no longer the painful pressure from above on the muscles of the shoulder & elbow. Utthapana of neck, (sitting in armchair) $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour. Some pressure of ananima but mainly at the end.

6. Arogya feeble; restoring itself after a collapse (in the morning) under exceptional circumstances. The same with physical ananda.

7. Some signs of Karmic success.

8. Saundarya—Improvement of hue in the leg (below the knee where it was blackish & clumsily glossy). Whiteness of teeth (especially lower row) with some relics of yellowness. This latter siddhi, once almost effected, had for a long time past retrograded & obstinately resisted the aishwarya.

June 22

1. Trikaldrishti & Aishwarya recovering force, rupadrishti slightly emergent, swapna coherent. .

2. Vangmaya reached the pure inevitability & was well associated with perceptive thought. Initial vangmaya of trikaldrishti

3. Ananda almost in abeyance, utthapana likewise, arogya of penultimate chakra recovering force

4. Manifestation of personality by the Master of the Yoga.

June 23

Trikaldrishti steadily improving in detail, but troubled by uncertainty & a shifting stress. Aishwarya normally active & then entirely denied. Rupadrishti still emergent, but not victorious. [Physical][4] siddhi almost dormant, but still small signs of a tendency to progress.

June 24th

Strong perception of imperfections of the siddhi. Complete arrestation of progress. Only the old siddhis continue, often in their inferior parts, eg rupa & lipi, ananda etc—Recoil in saundarya. Slow progress in sixth

June 27th—

Strong asiddhi in the morning, of first & second chatusthayas (sukha, sraddha especially). Arrested progress elsewhere.

A sudden finality in parts of the siddhi.

1. Subjective ananda; ahaituka alone was prominent before in the permanent constitution of the Ananda, prema, chidghana & shuddha are now firmly established on the ahaituka as a basis, and the whole subjective ananda stands in a saumya permanence with moments of intensity. Touches of the nirananda & tamasic depression seek to arrive, but are ineffective & at once repelled by the jnana.

2. Personality & personal relation of the Master with Anandavani & dasya; perfect guidance of the Yoga.

3. Immediate understanding of lipi & rupa,—not yet proof of their unvarying truth.

---

[4] *MS* Physically

4. Complete sukham & atmaprasada; ananda of passivity—

5. Normal activity of right perceptive thought (jnana, not yet trikaldrishti).

Besides these siddhis rupa is slowly developing & arrangement of prakamya vyapti as a basis of pure vijnanamaya trikaldrishti is approaching completion. Meanwhile vijnanadrishti is increasing in its intervention as a guide & arbiter of the mental perceptions in trikaladrishti. Vishaya bhoga is becoming more active & has regained its old relative perfection.

June 28th

[*No entry*]

Script—

June 16th

Morning

Everything must be known; it is not enough to reject a falsehood, the truth from which it starts & which it veils must be perceived and put in its place & proper relation to other truths of tendency, potentiality or actuality.

Satiety is attempting to reassert its old jurisdiction over the pranic system. *After a short struggle the attempt will be discomfited.*

The aishwarya must be used with greater confidence & a more sovereign force,—with sraddha, tejas & ishwarabháva. It is now bound always to produce an effect, though not always the entire or the accurate effect intended. There need be no regard, in using aishwarya, for the contradictory suggestions of the knowledge, since immediate failure in actuality may be intended by the Master as a step towards subsequent mastery.

The prediction about satiety has already been fulfilled in the particular instance at issue, but there must now be effected a general security in the siddhi. The satiety of struggle & failure which has long possessed the psychic prana must be expelled absolutely. Until it is expelled, struggle & failure will continue.

Aishwarya perfect in circumstance is now acting, although limited & besieged by the imperfection.

The right movement in the subjective siddhi has now been assured; but in action also there must be the right movement dependent entirely on dasya to the guidance, tapas & supreme pravritti. There must be no questioning or resistance.

The free & seated action, ordinarily effective even in detailed circumstance, of the trikaldrishti and aishwarya is now a thing permanent and ineffrangible. It must now become invariably effective & not only free but comprehensive. For this object it is necessary that the telepathy of thought & action should be developed & perfected—

The siddhi of aishwarya must now effect the rupadrishti & samadhi, and then attack more exclusively the physical siddhi with a part of its action on the karma & kama. Till then the ishita will take charge for the most part of the fourth & fifth chatusthayas.

═══

There has been no definite progress in the afternoon. The power & light fell into a state of subintense normality. Kamananda is now continuous, except at night, but at a lower level of intensity than yesterday. The effusion of the beard has been resumed after a very long period.

═══

Sortilege.

And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, & it was so. (Satyam & Ananda, Sun & Moon)

═

June 17th

Yesterday's programme is the first adequately fulfilled in all its details, although the saundarya seemed to take a step backward in one important detail.

═

The movement of the siddhi towards ejection of tejasic misplacement (sunless tejas) is being resisted by the asurya janah. It must be rigorously expelled & no trace of it left behind; every movement of the consciousness must be súra & prakashamaya

═

Trikaldrishti of the immediate present & future in life, has now to be boldly ventured upon. There must be no yielding to the attack, no cessation of script or thought or knowledge or trikaldrishti[,] no recognition of absolute anritam, no abandonment of lipi or rupa or samadhi. The suggestion of the arrival of money & relief of the pecuniary insufficiency has been constant, but there has been no corresponding actuality. It must now be definitely asserted. June is the beginning of the more powerful kriti which is impossible without money. In June therefore a movement forward in the equipment is due & inevitable.

═

1. Success of P. [Parthasarathi] in imparting Yoga freely. Success of S [Saurin] in practical Yogic effects. Drawing over of Bh.

[Bharati] into a more effective surrender. Success with N [Nolini] & R [Ramaswamy].

2. Movement forward with J. M. Ber & associates. Greater perfection with M's [Motilal's] circle. Reopening of communication with S. & S & other sadhakas.

3. Solution of chakra problem.

A violent & successful attack on every part of the siddhi has persisted throughout the morning from eight to eleven and is not yet over. The question is now between the tejas of siddhi & the tejas of asiddhi. There will be no abandonment of the struggle till the habit of attack ceases. Something of the asiddhi has now gone, but the detailed trikaldrishti is still obstructed.

June 18th. Henceforward this[5] is to be a record of trikaldrishti etc, not of general yoga.

4. Arrival of equipment. (Several minor amounts—not yet the great amount, but that is on its way).

5. Loss of friends cancelled & compensated.

These are general movements which will be effected by the more effective working of the tapas & ishita,

A complete denial of the apprehension suggested, *nor are the facts stated correctly.* The event suggested will take place in the space of a few days. The other in the space of a week.

The rupas have overcome the obstacle, but the obstacle is not destroyed. *The destruction will be the main work of today. It is obvious that the perfect freedom of the rupa is not yet intended, but neither is the persistence of an entirely successful obstruction intended.* Asraddha is not always a vehicle of true trikaldrishti.

Ananda will again possess the body today & utthapana advance;—the latter not now, but at night & in the morning. *Arogya of the assimilation, not yet of the penultimate centre.*

No violent disturbance of the arogya need be apprehended, only minor touches; it will move forwards now towards final perfection, with a few minor reverses on the way. The last of the rogas will begin definitely to overcome its chief adverse sanskara from today & by the 23d the movement will be definite & unmistakeable, elevating the arogya into a victorious tendency.

---

[5] *This record of Script begun on 16 June.—Ed.*

Utthapana has yet to get rid of the more violent pressure of ananima, to quell it, before it can move forward to the same stage. This is the work that has been set down to be done by the 23d. The apparent denial of the result in one position of the arms is one of those abnormal violences of the enemy which weaken & exhaust their general power. *This will be rectified tonight & tomorrow.*

In the saundarya the struggle is now mainly over the signs of age. The preparatory movement towards their removal is all that can be effected by the 23d. This will be done, but not perfectly—

═══

June 19th

By perfect passivity the deeper trikaldrishti to be perfected—

Utthapana of the legs this morning, successful, though not at first entirely successful. It must be done for half an hour with strong mahima & laghima, then its advance will be automatic.

(15 minutes, but not with ease)

Utthapana of the back after the 20th; meanwhile the utthapana of the neck will be confirmed. *The arms tonight.* (only for ¾ hour)

═

Rupa thrice today.

═

Beginning of regular Yogic teaching in literary form.

═

1–5 will all take place in the period of a month.

═

Three more proofs of karmic success today (very slight)

═

═══

June 20th

The book on Yoga will be continued.

═

Utthapana, in spite of resistance, in left arm, legs & neck

Rupa will continue to overcome the obstruction

Karmic success will become normal, though chequered still with failures. There will be *periods of arrested success*, but very brief.

Aishwarya will get a greater hold on the Akasha. (Not fulfilled; opposite movement)

The tejas of eruption will prove finally *abortive.*

Today is a day of positive advance, especially in the vijnana-siddhi, all parts of which will progress definitely. (Not fulfilled).

Ananda will again become active & continuous.

Arogya will increase in all its insufficient parts.

From today move forward with perfected
sraddha & tejas
From today triumph.
From today be perfect in subjective ananda.
Not fulfilled

From today does not mean from this moment; what came was the full asiddhi. There will not be an immediate siddhi of the triumphant aishwarya. The usual means are being employed for the maintenance of the asiddhi. Nor will the siddhi revive immediately. It has not yet revived. *But it will revive within the quarter hour.*

The last of the three commands is already fulfilled, in spite of adverse touches. Perfected, means, first, purified.

Thought has progressed in vangmaya & in purification from tejasic insistence; trikaldrishti in naturalness & ease, though not in certainty; samadhi in coherence & continuity; vyapti prakamya in fulness & frequency; aishwarya in purity.

June 21st

Tejas must be of the Mahasaraswati, not the Mahakali order with a clear intelligence even in its speed & fire. The rapidity of the siddhi cannot be of the meteoric speed, but still it must become rapid & unresisted. At present tamas possesses the sraddha & envelops the tejas. Doubt & uncertainty stand, if not victorious, yet largely justified. This state of things must be cleared away today—

Restoration of effective aishwarya & perfectly circumstanced trikaldrishti— (slight)

Emergence of rupadrishti, not yet complete— slight.

Progress of samadhi. No definite progress

Activity of the vijnana. In the evening only

Ananda, arogya, utthapana. Feeble, except the last.

There is a change proceeding in the vijnana-siddhi which must be effected by the 23d. Hence the suspension of the ordinary successful action of the powers of knowledge & force, prakasha & tapas. Arogya today, under strong provocation, has suffered from an unusually strong touch of bhauta tejas & a powerful visrishti. The nature of the reactions is on the lines of old habit, but their force & effectiveness have been far inferior to the former insistence & virulence. Nothing untoward will happen in the environment or in Bengal. . Equipment will arrive in large quantities before any fresh necessity for money is felt.

June 22d.

The fall of the tejas & sraddha contradicts the promise of perfected tejas & sraddha from the 20th; so the difficulties of the siddhi & the stains on the subjective ananda contradict the two other promises. The natural conclusion is that they were false predictions & they are so if taken in their literal sense; but what was really intended, was the beginning of their emergence from that data. This explanation also does not satisfy & is regarded by the mind as a sophism & an afterthought. Let it stand recorded, & afterwards the truth can be better judged by experience. .

═

1. The physical siddhi cannot be perfected at once.

2. The samata & sraddha depend on truth of guidance & truth of knowledge for their absolute finality. The mind cannot be satisfied with [. . .] or falsehood.

3. The tejas depends upon sraddha.

4. The vijnana siddhi is not perfect & will take some time to be perfected.

5. All suggestions to the contrary must be distrusted as inapplicable to the present conditions of the Yoga

═

These are the negative directions, and they stand; but positive directions are also necessary.

═

1. Do not accept error or falsehood, but let them not disturb such faith as is established. They are permitted, not enjoined.

Accept all error as a disguise of truth; penetrate the disguise.

2. Accept all failure as a link in the process of success; place the link.

3. Accept the rapidity of the siddhi as a certainty of the future & a growing certainty. Perceive all retardation as a help to the growth of the rapidity; fix the nature of the help.

4. Will pertinaciously whatever you are enjoined to will.

5. Believe in the absolute fulfilment of the adesha.

═══

June 23d

Truth of guidance is established; truth of knowledge advances. The first rule is now in application; the others are beginning.

═

June 24th

All else is founded. 5 is not founded. Trust to the knowledge to give you the nature of the disguise, the link & the help.

Today

1. Vijnana again active. Very poor activity
2. Preparation for beginning of kriti. Very poor preparation
3. Physical siddhi again reemergent. No real emergence

Tomorrow[6]

1. Beginning of real rapidity.
2 Automatic action & progress of vijnana siddhis
3 Final stage of physical siddhi governed by aishwarya & mixed with tapasya.
4. Pursuance of all forms of karma regularly in their initial movement.

═══

This is looking at one moment of resisted siddhi and not before or after, except so far as suits the inertia. It is true the triple promise or command has not been fulfilled. It is true it appears now to be the usual tejasic error of time. The conclusion to be drawn is that the fulfilment was not meant to be unchequered—

The Vani that guides in the script is largely a tejasic vani—the old tejas that seeks to justify errors & to exaggerate the siddhi. There have been clear falsehoods uttered. This record therefore ceases to have a real utility. At the same time it need not be destroyed, nor immediately discontinued. It may have a use for catharsis, but not for guidance.

═══

═══

The record is more and more convicted of tejasic exaggeration which towards the end, especially, becomes so great as to be actual falsity. It must be abandoned entirely

---

[6] *The four predictions that follow are cancelled in the manuscript. See the entry of 25 June in the Record of Details & Guidance that follows.*

Record of Details & Guidance.

June 25th

Today is a turning point. Beginning with a severe crisis of the old type, it prepares the results that were cancelled in a moment of irritation in the record now put by,[7] viz.

1. Automatic action and progress of the vijnanasiddhi.
2. The preoccupation of the active tapas & tapasya with the physical siddhi, to the exclusion of the first three chatusthayas.
3. The commencement of all forms of karma regularly pursued and no longer abandoned to long periods of inactivity.
4. The commencement of a more rapid progression.

The first stage of this movement will be transitional, still pursued by fragments of the former impulses & gradually eliminative of these relics.

5. Action of perfected tejas & sraddha.
6. " of perfected subjective ananda
7. " of a larger & less variable success.

Here also the movement is transitional.

The first stage will continue till the 30th June. The vijnanasiddhi will occupy till the 31st July, as also the tapasic attention to the physical siddhi

Old lipis to be fulfilled

1. Enthusiastic tejas & sraddha.
2. The daughters of delight (Ananda, sharira).
3 Sahityasiddhi.

Sahitya—

1. *Essays in Yoga.*
2. Upanishads
3. Ilion.

The least physical straining of the mental will must be avoided & all shadow of mere desire. Only the body will be for some time indulged in some of its cravings born of thirst, weariness etc. There is no need of the straining in the mind to assist the siddhi.—

---

[7] *The preceding record of Script ending with the entry of 24 June.—Ed.*

The consciously directed action of the siddhi is now confined to the fourth & fifth chatusthayas & must therefore be arranged in the mind.

1. Sharira ananda is established but irregular. It must be regularised.
2. Indriya ananda must be given a flawless completeness.
3. Hunger & thirst must again be banished from the system.
4. The tapasya of heat & cold must be carried to its conclusion.
5 Ananda of pain must be carried yet farther forward.
6. Arogya must be enforced perfectly where there are fragments of opposition, more irresistibly where there is a block of resistance.
7. Utthapana has to be resumed & completed in the arms, strengthened in the legs & neck, brought into the loins.
8. The full force of the Shakti must be directed towards the saundarya, where the force of the opposition is still solid & unbroken, though no longer untouched.
9. Weariness of brain & body must be resisted, also of prana (satiety)

In Sahitya perfection & continuity have to be enforced;

In Daiva resistance to be broken entirely;

In Kriti, control of events, actions & things completely established.

In Kama, the subjective conditions & objective results created.

Result. Defects often prominent, but principle of advance strengthened.

June 26th

There must be no mental reflection either in thought or sahitya, but only effective & spontaneous vision & creation. Even the criticism must be unreflective & inspired. Reflection is a seeking of the unpossessed; possession must be the mould of the consciousness, to comprehend & not to acquire. In place of reflection there must be for a time brooding chit-tapas, as free as possible from limited concentration & tending rather to wider & wider extension. Limited tapas fixes on one circumstance & ignores the rest; it is therefore a parent of much error. Mental tejas is impatient of the wideness of the mahat; it seeks to fasten on the alpam, the individual & possess it, & finds the process of possessing the individual through the universal too slow for its desire & too burdensome to its strength

June 27th

Yesterday, the trikaldrishti became more comprehensively effective & minutely correct, but is still not sure of its grasp. Today the aishwarya is once more insistent on general result, result in mass & result in detail of circumstance. The possession of the Akasha is still in the hands of the Asiddhi; & siddhi is only a growing circumstance, or a troubled occupation maintained in a hostile country; not as in the first two chatusthayas an established occupation even when attacked & disturbed in its details—

A reaction breaking down the first chatusthaya has suspended progress for half the morning. This frequent return of duhkha & unease is imposed on the system from without, for purposes connected with the world, not with the individual. It belongs to the swabhava of things, not to the individual karma. It cannot immediately cease, assurances to the contrary notwithstanding. Yet till it ceases there can be no perfected ananda—

The finality of the first chatusthaya must be insisted on. This is the only way to [.............][8]

These two opposing statements are both correct. The finality will have yet a little time to establish in its perfection.

---

[8] *MS damaged, three or four words lost; "only way to" doubtful.—Ed.*

June 27th

Results of 27th in the other record.[9]

June 28th. [*Saturday*]

So far (about 5 pm) apparently negative results with small advance. Yet Saturday was fixed for a great advance in trikaldrishti. It is apparent that a general activity of trikaldrishti has been attempted with the intention of finality, but tamasic asiddhi & confusion with vague straining of mental tejas has obscured the prakasha. Shanti & sukham & atmaprasad have been preserved in spite of touches of vague physical uneasiness trying to develop into their opposites. Hasya is for the most part absent. Aishwarya is active, forceful & persistent, but without self-confidence or enthusiasm & only with difficulty effective. Form in rupa is obstinately obstructed, & in lipi. Physical siddhi is still kept in comparative abeyance.

Three things seem to have been accomplished, in outline, not perfection.

1. Activity of trikaldrishti (perceptive thought) in interpreting its materials.
2 Superior activity of revelatory vijnana trikaldrishti watching & judging the mental impressions
3 Normal activity of the vijnanamaya perceptive thought in jnana.

In addition there was some lifting of the physical weakness & depression that for some time has possessed the system.

June 29th.

The day begins with a denial of the trikaldrishti & a suspension of the activity of the second chatusthaya. The first remains constant & resists all attacks. The obstinacy of the Will is assured, not its energy. Faith in the Adesha is still intermittent; the mind remains unconvinced, though admitting the possibility, it can give only a provisional faith to its actuality, dependent on the siddhi being rapidly fulfilled in the third, fourth & fifth chatusthayas.

---

[9] *See pages 258 – 59.*

1. Lipi active, it is suggested, with finality.
2 Rupa more clearly emergent
3 Proofs of strengthened aishwarya applied to kriti. Apollonian shakti, but working slowly towards its results
4 Stronger manifestation of the Lilamaya in the Saguna Brahman

The first chatusthaya firmly holds, allowing only of momentary physical touches in the prana (advertising manas through psychical prana)

5. Stronger perceptions of pranamaya world

June 30th

Text of lipi & interpretation of lipi are finally accomplished, though capable of greater swiftness & extension, & the latter still encumbered with initial gropings; but the lipi is not invariably legible or vivid—

Expected results.

1. Lipi to grow in swiftness, extension & legibility
2. Rupa to emerge more decidedly.
3. Finality of correct arrangement in trikaldrishti
4. Increased force of aishwarya.
5. Revived progress of samadhi.
6 Finality of second chatusthaya
7 Purification of physical prana from remnants of mental ashanti.

=

The finality of second chatusthaya cannot yet include entire sraddha in rapidity of siddhi or extent of adeshasiddhi; but the fundamental sraddha will be final.

—

Actual results—

1. Fulfilled. The legibility is not immediate nor invariable, but it is enforcing itself on the akasha
2. Fulfilled, but the decisiveness is not yet final
3. Fulfilled, but the old habit of confused perception tends to persist in a feeble & disorganised movement.

4. Fulfilled, but not yet final

5. Fulfilled — in greater coherency.

6. Fulfilled. Tejas & sraddha undisturbed, though not yet perfected.

7. Proceeding, — the touches are becoming more & more physical & less & less able to create even physical discomfort.

1 – 11 JULY 1913

July 1st

The record of June is written elsewhere.[1]

The results up to date of the movement in May and in June are, —

1. Finality of the first chatusthaya in all subjective experience. The body is still subject to touches of asamata, to physical disturbance and discomfort and to bodily depression but these remnants of asiddhi are in process of elimination. Subjectively, all that remains are occasional touches on the physical prana which more & more are rendered in terms of physical pressure, not mental, & even this pressure is being steadily converted into a physical ananda which replaces the old discomfort and nirananda, mental & bodily, of grief, vexation, revolt, defeat, failure etc.

2. Finality, so far as can be seen, of dasya, tejas & activity, — although this is entirely manifest, only today. Here again the obstacle is the persistence of physical weakness & depression. The fourfold dharma of virya is at work, subject to ineffective physical touches of their opposites, but not yet energetically active. With the same qualification the fourfold state of shakti is well established, but still uncertain in the bodily force. Chandibhava is limited as yet by the saumya character of the tejas which is full of dhairya and hatha, but not yet fierce & ardent except at intervals. Vali is there always, but Narasinha intermittently. This, however, is passing away & the Nârasinha tejas taking the lead. The conversion from saumya to chanda tejas seems definitive today; for the disturbing & depressing force, viz, failure of result, is now practically ineffective. Sraddha in God & self-force is complete, but the knowledge of time & extent in result being still embryonic sraddha in rapidity & in adesh-siddhi is still very moderate.

---

[1] *With this entry, Sri Aurobindo returned to the notebook he had set aside on 21 May 1913. — Ed.*

3. The vijnana chatusthaya is in complete, but not perfect, fertile or well-arranged activity.

4. The physical siddhi is still in the stage of formation.

5. The fifth chatusthaya is strong in Krishnakali, but only embryonic in karmakáma.

6. The Brahmachatusthaya is complete in extent, imperfect in detail; but the Saguna Brahman is still the basis; the Lilamaya only as yet strongly emergent from the Saguna.

7. The seventh chatusthaya is complete subjectively, though imperfect, especially in siddhi; but objectively it is still insecure.

During the day karmasiddhi of the sahitya (prose) strongly outlined itself, although the movement of the vak is not yet entirely sure of its detail. Work resumed. Natural and Supernatural Man; Aryan Origins; etc. The action of the vijnana was not strong & definite, though at no time suspended or inefficient; the remnant of asiddhi was strongly in evidence. Relapse took place in the processes of assimilation, although the roga of tejasic looseness is becoming more and more exclusively physical & imposed from outside on the system. The physical siddhi as a whole was mostly in abeyance, except in dehashakti which, for the most part, resisted the ordinary effects of these relapses. An attempt was made to revive the perishing rogas, but it succeeded only in manifesting scattered touches.

July 2^{d}.

A sharp touch of yesterday's roga on awaking; free visrishti of bad assimilation. The chanda tejas, not suspended, is somewhat quiescent. In the morning quiescence of siddhi. In the afternoon trikaldrishti recovered its force and a normal accuracy of vyapti prakamya with the inspired vichara and vidhana (arrangement and right assignment of perceptions) accompanied by a slow movement of the deciding vijnana (revelative intuition viveka). At the same time the shadow of uncertainty lingers and errors of placing and stress still continue. The thought (perceptive) is in a similar state of activity. Aishwarya still acts against a resistance sometimes successful, sometimes partially successful[,] sometimes ineffective. Occasionally the resistance is non-existent or so slight as to be only just perceptible. Communicative involuntary vyapti & swift fulfilment of lipsa-thought in small details are not infrequent. Kamananda inactive yesterday has revived, but is still very occasional. The Chanda tejas recovers force progressively. (5.30 pm).

For the last two or three days the siddhi of self-preservation & whiteness in the teeth has been swiftly recovering its force. For some months past the asiddhi had returned and the yellow film returned and deepened; now the lower teeth are again white with only a faint suggestion of the yellow shade. In the upper teeth the film is there in blotches, not covering the whole surface, but is rapidly dissolving. N.B. It is now more than four years since any artificial means of preservation or cleansing (brush, powder etc) were last used. In other respects, there are some faint signs of advance in saundarya, but none of these are decisive.

July 3d

Jnana and Trikaldrishti continue to grow in power and range, but are overshadowed by uncertainty. Revelatory knowledge is acting from above on the mind and the prakasha is not luminous. Aishwarya in the afternoon showed a considerable increase of force at the height of its action; but it easily falls back into a comparative quiescence. Kamananda more active & recovering its normal movement. Poetry (Ilion) was resumed; the power, though still sluggish and a little uncertain, seems freer from its baser & more inefficient elements.

July 4th.

The final purification of the system from the physical touches of Ashanti continues. In the morning there was only a rich and abundant rupadrishti, very bright in colours and numerous in forms and groups, mostly crude, in the prana akasha; this was under stimulus. In the afternoon the depression of the tejas parted and the Krishna Kali emerged with the Rudra personality of Krishna; the kamananda more continuous & persistent while walking. There is a throwback in the saundarya. The continuity and intensity of sharira ananda are predicted. Lipi "17" (Anandam Brahma) already fulfilled in the strong emergence of Ananda & the Anandamaya in the environing Brahman. The necessity of aishwarya-tapas for helping the shariranada is now removed; it remains for the other three members of the physical siddhi, but is to be lessened shortly and then renounced for the arogya.

In the second half of the day there was continuity & intensity of the sharirananda and diminution of the jalavisrishti (about 8 am and 12 midnight).

July 5th

In the morning inscription of a programme for the day. Its seven heads & their results coincided with an unusual accuracy.

(1) Lipi; express, free, perfecting its own arrangement and spontaneity.

The spontaneity & arrangement are still in course of perfection, not yet perfect; the lipi is express & free only when it conquers the resistance, but this is now frequent. Otherwise it is pale in material and confused in sequence.

(2) Rupa emerging, shaping, sometimes clear & perfect, recurrent, not spontaneous.

(3) Trikaldrishti, overcoming mental confusion and misplacement.

(4) Aishwarya developing control.

(5) Ananda (sháríra) regularising itself and preparing continuous action

(6) Arogya emerging in spite of obstinate opposition.

(7) Krishnakali possessing the whole range of the consciousness

None of these results are complete. In the trikaldrishti the movement is towards the exclusion of false stress & ascription of actuality in event by the mind and the accurate communication of event from vijnana to the mind. In Aishwarya the faculty of dictating several successive movements is accomplished and this is done instantaneously without resistance & in the majority of cases the force is successful; but in many it has to be used with great insistence & coercive pressure to bring about a single result, and short periods of almost entire asiddhi occur, in which the force does not touch or hardly touches or touches ineffectively its various objects. The arogya that emerges is chiefly the assimilative power which in spite of denial of visrishti for four days[,] the jala visrishti being allowed only twice daily (yesterday 8-10 am & 8-20 pm), succeeds in throwing off all tendencies to assimilative disturbance except a fluctuating degree of flatulence which tends towards disappearance. The minor rogas (cold etc) which are being expelled still appear momentarily or in isolated touches as external intrusions appearing with or without provocation. Exposure to cold is still effective in assisting this kind of uneasiness. The Kali consciousness aware of Krishna as the Iswara attached itself to all the acts & experiences; but the Krishna personality was held back & the anna given over to other influences.

This last movement was the result of the attempt to execute with force of tejas a second programme, the attempt going through the usual stages. A violent attack of asiddhi, bringing confusion & sunlessness to all the vijnana siddhis & general nirananda of impatience & asraddha, occupied the outer parts of the system. The first chatusthaya remained constant in the system proper, but the physical parts of mind responded to strong though unstable & unpoignant touches of doubt, depression of faith, impatience of asatya &, to a less degree, of asiddhi. In the system proper positive hasyam was alone affected, but atmaprasada remained intact.

The programme non-effectualised contained three considerable items—

1. Second chatusthaya complete in faith and force, (the two elements still most imperfect) and the third complete in knowledge.
2. Ananda complete in continuity.
3. Arogya triumphant over obstacles.

Sleep, for the last two days, has diminished its hold; on the 4th, from 12 to 5.40 with two half hours of continuous nidravishta samadhi, the 5th from 12 to 4 (about), with half an hour & an hour of broken nidravishta samadhi. Dasya is growing more & more concrete in its hold on the system & the movements of the body no longer depend even partially on the will, but are often enforced contrary to the immediate will of the body or the will in revolt of the

Jiva; the latter circumstance is rare & came yesterday after a long interval of passive submission as a result of the sudden revival of asraddha & weariness of physical tapasya. The element of tapasya is now much reduced, but still persists in the physical siddhi. For the most part all action is now a passivity supporting more or less effective tapas, not tapasya. In Samadhi coherent sentences of lipi are now common, but in the mass the lipi is incoherent. Isolated figures or momentary groups still prevail. Antardrishta jagrat is confined to the most elementary crude forms and even these come with difficulty and rarely; antardrishta speedily passes into sushupta or swapna samadhi.

July 6th.

The morning has been a continuation of yesterday's confused movement and obstruction, but with a fading stress of asiddhi. In the afternoon an almost perfect trikaldrishti has manifested, some twenty minute movements of the same object (a spider) being accurately predicted. The old defects,—overstress, intention or aishwarya mistaken for event,—still continue, but have less force and are much more infrequent. Chinmayaishwarya also increases rapidly in effectiveness.

As the result of the day's programme an extensive & minute trikaldrishti defective only in a slight uncertainty, occasional misplacements and errors of detail and a tendency to fatigue, when the tamasic or sunless movement tries to resume its hold, is definitely achieved. Telepathy (prakamya vyapti of thought) is now beginning to advance towards self-regularisation & a freer movement & range. The difficulty is only in recognising the thought when it is seen; for it is usually taken as an idea in one's own mind and not recognised as the thought of another, owing to our egoistic appropriation of whatever comes to us in our subjective experience. This difficulty once surmounted, aprakasha alone will remain to be overcome,—itself due to egoistic limitation of our subjective experience & attention to so much as interests or can be made useful to our own activity; an infinite openness & the ear of the mind alert for all shabda is required in order that these siddhis may be perfected.

Aishwarya increases considerably & rapidly in force & effectiveness, no longer in the old field of exercise mainly (movements of birds, beasts, insects, people around) but in the wider range of life. Certain remarkable instances occurred during the course of the day, eg the easy surmounting of the housing problem and the change in the temper of the intermediary. In the outside world events in the Balkans show a considerable increase in the particular effectiveness, but this is not entirely recent as it dates from the closing period of the war. Therapeutic power is on the increase, eg. Bharati's hysteric patient not cured by him in spite of strong effort & personal contact and suggestion, cured after a distant & moderate application of Will by myself in two days; Lebian père given up as hopeless by the doctor, rid in less than two days of his worst symptoms (difficulty of breathing at once, difficulty of urination in a day), young Dutambey, regarded as a complicated case, cured of all but a slight residuary symptom after one brief relapse brought on by his own imprudence etc. The most desperate cases still offer a stronger resistance. The control of the will over my own bodily states has also increased.

Sleep 11.45 to 5.50.

Faith & tejas are growing in the second chatusthaya.

July 7th

The transference of the siddhi from the mental to the ideal plane is indicated in the lipi. For this transference to be entirely effective, three preliminary conditions are required.

(1) The perception of the truth underlying & contained in every subjective experience, thought, thought-suggestion, speculation etc, since all thought proceeds from the vijnana which is satyam & not asatyam.

(2) The acceptance of every act of will, effort, impulsion, effectuating movement as a step in some process of God's effective tapas, the perception of the final object of the process & of the immediate object effected, and the rejection of the idea of failure, sterility & inutility as attached to anything that happens in God's world; since all action, event & impulse proceed from the vijnana which is entirely ritam & failure & inutility would be anritam.

(3) The acceptance of every feeling & sensation as part of one divine thousand-faceted ananda without distinction of satisfaction or disappointment, right pleasure & perverse pleasure, comfort or discomfort, since all emotions & sensations proceed from the vijnana which is brihat & bhuma & duality belongs to the alpam & the bheda.

These conditions have been partially effected, but the lacunae & defects in their siddhi must be got rid of and corrected, finally, for the upward movement.

A second programme was given and partially effected

(1) Enthusiastic faith and tejas commenced.

There was the first commencement only followed by the interposition of strong obstacles to the growth of either; in the result a calm and firm faith and a strong & steady tejas easily expulsive of shadows of doubt and despondency was established. The continued uncertainty of result and confirmation due to the surviving imperfections of knowledge & force alone prevent the rudra tejas & the avegamaya sraddha from taking possession of the system. They occur in it from time to time, sometimes baffled, but no longer rebuked.

(2) Ananda overcomes the obstacle to continuity and then to intense continuity.

Ananda (sharira) was active throughout the day, continuous in spite of asmarana due to distraction of attention or absorption in thought or act, mildly intense sometimes, but towards the end of the day uncertain, interrupted and, finally, during the night, quiescent

(3) The lacunae of knowledge begin to be filled up, the basis being already formed.

The improvement was chiefly in the more ordinary and spontaneous action of telepathy of idea, right perception of unseen fact, memory, sahityasmriti, acceptance of distant trikaldrishtis, etc. Scenes & incidents forgotten for decades begin to recur to the memory, isolated, not usually complete, but in the details restored quite vivid and precise.

(4) The arogya gets the better of its remaining difficulties.

There was constant proof of the power of the arogya, when touched or attacked, to resist the attack and right itself swiftly after even strong touches. But the movement is as yet only in its initial stage of decisiveness, not yet wholly decisive.

(5) The lipi in its tertiary stage begins to take possession of the akasha. The tertiary stage has as its features, fixity, immediate legibility, spontaneity of long lipis, variety & lipikaushalya in forms, colours etc. The movement is still embryonic.

A beginning in the predominance of aishwarya was subsequently predicted and took the shape of prayogas initially successful, then successfully baffled by opposing forces of habitual resistance, then fulfilled by unexpected circumstances suddenly intervening & showing the direct hand of the Ishwara. Samadhi was once more active, but has not recovered normal coherency or long continuity of action. Sleep resumed its force, bringing one hour of nidravishta samadhi in the afternoon and more than seven hours sleep at night.

Saundarya generally is forcefully obstructed & makes no progress; but in one detail there has been unexpected and rapid progress,—a rounding off of the sharp angles of those fingers which were formerly square. This was noticed two or three days ago, but farther progress was sensible even in the course of a single day. In only two or three of the fingers are there still traces of the old sharp angles. This isolated rapidity is a strong contrast to the occasional slow & slight progress covering many months & the usual failure of all success in other attempts of the psychic body to alter by mental force the physical sheath into its own image.

July 8th

Programme.

(1) Aishwarya begins to reign.

For a time the power and the knowledge both seemed to have retrograded & the first to be almost annulled; in the evening aishwarya reemerged with an increased force and effectiveness, fulfilling with an unprecedented frequency & persistence.

(2) Ananda overcomes the obstacle.

Intense ananda continuous for long periods has commenced today to be the rule of the body, but it is varied by long periods of subdued ananda and occasional lapses into quiescence. In the night quiescence is still the rule, but is varied by strong touches of activity.

(3) Lacunae of knowledge fill more completely.

Only a slight movement took place in this direction.

(4) Lipi takes stronger possession.

Formerly the ordinary rule of the lipi was the single word with occasional brief phrases & rare extensions, the rule is now the word or the brief phrase with a tendency to complete sentences. But the legibility, vividness & spontaneity are still combated and restricted by the obstinate resistance of the material akasha.

(5) Arogya yet stronger.

It resisted with general success, but not entire immunity, the conditions which have in the past usually or invariably provoked a retrograde movement.

(6) Obstacles to enthusiasm of faith & tejas remove[d].

The chief obstacle removed was dependence on favourable result & success; but the tendency to temporary depression of force from subjective causes is not yet altogether eliminated.

(7) Samadhi & rupa active.

Rupa (crude) was only briefly active in a few images, but these evinced a perfection and stability in various circumstances (image on background, crude image, group, developed image) not yet so decisively combined. Samadhi recovered coherency & is developing application to life. (eg Alpt carrying a cane chair through a veranda; Bh. [Bharati] offering to Rg & another some food, three glasses on a table & pieces of cocoanut (?)).

(8) Utthapana.

Utthapana of the arm in the horizontal position was enforced for an hour and a half; during the later part of this period an abnormal stiffness was produced and an artificial pressure from above strove to depress the arm; nevertheless after three minutes rest, it could again be continued, but in recumbent posture, for another half hour. A slight stiffness in the shoulder is the only after result. Typical utthapana of leg & neck were effected for half an hour, in order to get rid of the habit of adhogati which had again reasserted itself. The physical depression still continues.

(9) Saundarya.

No definite forward movement as yet distinguishable. In the teeth etc the movement is retrograde.

The articulate thought, long silent, manifested for a minute or two, but with an absolute perfection of style & substance, inevitable, with the full illumination & inspiration of phrase, even in the effective & adequate forms of the inevitability. This is a striking instance of involved siddhi, done without process or sadhan, behind the veil, illustrating the double action of Night & Dawn, naktoshásá swasárá ekam shishum [dhápayete].[2] There are also other instances, but these are slighter and less definite. Owing to the rush of the old inferior movements which used to rise whenever the avegamaya sraddha & tapas manifested, the trikaldrishti was clouded & disturbed, & the old tejasic misinterpretations abounded. But there was no disturbance, revolt or nirananda in the system & only the shadow of the old tamasic reaction.

July 9th.

The programme for the next three days is yesterday's with additions. The utthapana and saundarya especially must move forward. Trikaldrishti has already reasserted itself, but is imperfect in circumstance; this imperfection will now disappear. Aishwarya is inconstant in its action & often effective only against resistance; the action must be regular & the effectiveness spontaneous. Lipi must get a complete hold on the akash and the difficulty of the stability in rupa, especially in lifelike rupa must at last disappear. Ananda delivered from interruption and arogya triumphant over attack must reach a more solid state of security (vájasátih); utthapana recover itself and saundarya, now constantly obstructed and thrown back, share in the general victorious movement.

The 9th has been a day of failure & recoil. The attempt to establish the avegamaya tejas & sraddha without reaction has broken down; the avega became manomaya and resulted in confusion of knowledge, misplacement of tejas & final return of asamata, ashanti, duhkha in strong & then violent touches (10th) which, at first violently expelled, again & successfully invaded the system, supported by the revolt of the Jiva against the asatya. The saundarya has broken down or gone back in the parts not irrevocably fixed & the violent return of asaundarya is successful everywhere. Aishwarya is not entirely ineffective, but subject to frequent failure & almost universal resistance. The touches of roga returned where they were on the point of evanescence and there has been some diminution in the force of continuity of the kamananda. The promises of finality held out to the mind in the first & second chatusthayas, as well as in some details of the third & fourth, have proved, as always, to be tejasic and deceptive. On the other side, there has been enforced a more general perception of the unity of all movements of the Prakriti and of the unity of the mover of the Prakriti & their unity also with the same Purusha & Prakriti in this adhara. The Jiva also is made to recognise its unity with the Prakriti, but not yet with the Purusha, except in occasional glimpses.

---

[2] *Blank left in the manuscript by Sri Aurobindo; cf. the sortilege of 7 December 1912 and other Vedic verses.—Ed.*

The rounding of the fingers still progresses; the only definite trace of the sharp angles is in one corner of the third finger of the left hand where it is represented by a horn of dried & callous skin empty of flesh; otherwise they appear only in the excessive fullness of the curves or in slight unevennesses representing the lost angle (especially on one side of the right thumb). This fullness appears in all except the first fingers which were always pointed & the lefthand little finger which is now of the full pointed variety to which the righthand little finger has also progressed more than others. No other decisive improvement is noticeable in the saundarya, although there is a similar tendency in the feet.

Samadhi is more vigorous & dream recovering continuous coherence, but the movement of samadhi towards long continuity of single incident is not yet effective. Lipi is pressing slowly upon the akasha for removal of its habitual defects.

July 10th

A stronger attack of asiddhi not removed till the evening; & then not entirely. The only siddhi which advanced during the day was the lipi. The successful movement from manas to mahat predicted in the script as the result of the attack.[3]

July 11th

In accordance with the prediction the movement of the vijnana from action in the slight, petty & detailed to action in the satyam, ritam, brihat was commenced. At first the knowledge was merely brihat in manas, hundreds of perceptions coming without order or right direction; then the satyam in this infinity came to be revealed not the ritam; every perception was found to be true, but not always true at the time & in the place & order of circumstance indicated by the mind. Subsequently the ritam commenced, the trikaldrishti occurring with perfect accuracy even in the mental & sunless perceptions, but before it could be completed, other preoccupations commenced which filled the rest of the day (kriti). The movement of dasya, tejas, aishwarya, samadhi to mahattwa were similarly interrupted. Kamananda, only occasional the day before,

[*This entry was left incomplete. Three blank pages follow.*]

---

[3] *The last sentence of this entry appears to have been added on the eleventh.—Ed.*

5 – 21 SEPTEMBER 1913

September 5. [*written in pencil*]

The rest of yesterday evening passed in a return to a former mental condition, with a background of udasina ananda held against touches of disquiet, an imperfect & clouded knowledge, an ineffective or only partially and slowly effective will, a poor & struggling lipi & rupa, an unprogressive & infrequent samadhi. The dasyabuddhi of the body, strong in the afternoon, was covered at night.

September 5. [*written in ink*]

In the evening and night the remnants of the day's struggle and retrogression prevented progress. The mental suggestions still continued to be shot in from a distance and especially suggestions of unfaith, weariness and nirananda. All the powers of the vijnana were clouded and partially inoperative, the strong physical dasyabuddhi of the afternoon partially covered, kamananda declining and less frequent. The system reverted to the udasina ahaituka ananda of former times continually assailed by touches of strong & often angry disquiet. This is the first determined relapse into old conditions after many months of essential freedom from any true disturbance of the samata-shanti-sukham. This morning opens with the same conditions. It appears that for the first time in these few months a lower strain of the physical mind in the external swabhava yet surcharged with the anritam & avidya has been upheaved and its devatas let loose on the adhara.

The trikaldrishti labours for correctness of minute circumstance & unvarying correctness of actual result, but does not as yet go beyond amplitude of prakamya vyapti with frequency of the actual result and occasional correctness of minute circumstance. There is still the predominance of the perception of working mental forces in which the result intended & perceived is sometimes carried out, sometimes crossed by a successful counter-force, and often a result not intended, a force never meant to prevail, is foisted on the mind as the prearranged actuality. The latter result is especially frequent because the physical stratum upheaved is one inhabited by blind mechanical movements of the involved & unexpressed mind in matter which correspond in Nature to the subconscious physical stirrings in us of which our conscious mind takes no least cognizance in its normal & organised workings. Disregarded & unrecognised they pass without visible effect, although they must have some determining force & contribute to some result however slight of whose preparation we are unaware.

═══

There has been no distinct advance in the daytime. The physical ananda persists when it is remembered or in the stillnesses of the body, but tends, as formerly, to retire in motion or when forgotten by the mental attention. Its intensity is rare and not extreme. Trikaladrishti is still haunted & baffled by blind and purposeless false suggestions proceeding & entering from some external point in a far distance; power is uncertain in its effect and always hampered. Lipi & rupa do not take hold of the akasha. Health is successfully resisted. Utthapana though growing is assailed by vague adhogati and an acute uneasiness of [ ][1] negative electricity which brings about or is attended by pains of contraction. The laghima alone is strong & keeps the limb in the air without any mental will or muscular effort. Saundarya makes no apparent advance.

There are constant tejasic suggestions of immediate progress, but the Jiva refuses to lend credit to them. The dasya, however, instead of being hampered seems to grow by this struggle; the merely Prakritic forces diminish in their hold on the system. Ashanti has attempted to be acute at times, but has not succeeded in fastening on the system.

In the evening lipi & rupa showed some signs of strengthening and the other siddhis attempted to liberate themselves, but nothing very definite has yet been accomplished. Some literary work was well accomplished. Dasya always increases.

---

[1] *MS* of

Sept 6.

Instances of sukshma touch & smell increased yesterday and also of physical ananda; the touch of a fly on the palm of the hand creating a thrill of combined vishaya, tivra, vaidyuta & raudra which continued for more than a minute though not with entire continuity. Today the kamananda is more continuous, but not intense. Assimilation has strongly retrograded. Power manifests, but can be sustained only by the exertion of great force which tires the physical fibres and is always strongly resisted. Trikaldrishti is still baffled by the mental suggestions; it occurs frequently, but is in the highest degree uncertain and inconstant.

The suggestion has been made in the vani that purports to proceed from the master of the yoga—for the consciousness is crowded with many voices that confuse the mind—to proceed on the basis of positive affirmation and discovery of the precise truth & error in each suggestion and of positive faith in the march of the siddhi regardless of temporary failure & anritam. At first the trikaldrishti reemerged, only without the exactitude of detail, the actual event anticipated with omission of an intervening event or with denial of the coming event after it had been perceived instead of modification by the addition of the omitted circumstance or stress on intention as event; but for a time every perception was eventually justified by some result and later after a period of confusion, the old realisation, by which perception was shown to be the reflection in mind of a truth of tendency, intention or event & the nature of the truth shown & proved by some actual material movement, returned as the type of the siddhi. Beyond this point the siddhi of knowledge seems to be unable to advance except for brief occasional periods of a few minutes when absolute accuracy of event is temporarily effected. Willpower after proving eventually successful in all or almost all cases for a time is once more uncertain & chequered. There is the old tendency to a chaotic advance of mixed success & failure, imperfect & overstressed truth, unsatisfying siddhi. As it progresses correctness of knowledge & effectiveness of will tend to predominate over their opposites. It is not yet certain that this progress will become a fixed and uninterrupted tendency or produce results which will not be broken & need to be reconstituted. The

Atris & Vrikas are still strong in the sadhana, even stronger than the Vritras & no siddhi is safe from them although all tend to recover themselves once the evil period is passed.

The siddhi reconstituted itself more strongly during the evening and night. Subjective ananda, including in itself defeat, imperfection & suffering, which has been baffled always when it attempted these inclusions, was more finally prepared. Rupadrishti became strong in the waking Chidakash & Chittakash. Knowledge & power resumed more successfully their process of selftransference into the vijnana.

Sept 7.

The morning began with a chequered movement. Afterwards, there came the lipi "First God & liberty, then telepathy." The mind turned towards the perception of the Jnanam Anandam Brahma which has been increasing in force & persistence & perceived very powerfully the delight of Brahman in Avidya, limitation & suffering & the last knot of attachment to liberation was removed from the buddhi & the temperament. This liberation from mumukshutwa is the final step in mukti. It exists now in the buddhi & the soul, it has to be stamped firmly on the rest of the antahkaran. Afterwards, a very minute & brihat telepathy commenced—the realisation in practical mentality of the Sarvam Anantam Jnanam Brahma. All the perceptions do not yet come at the right time, some revealing themselves after the thing perceived has passed out of the mind of the object. Nevertheless the movements of men & animals are now perfectly understood, their hesitations & rejected or modified ideas & impulses as well as those which eventuate in action. It is evident, now, out of what a complex mental tangle the single clear & decisive act proceeds. In the animals it is sometimes an obscure & sudden suggestion which contradicts all the previous thinking & tendency & often half consciously forces the action. But often also in them an impulse abandoned and forgotten by the mind remains in & dominates the subconscious pranic energy and dominates a subsequent action. The same is true but in a less degree of man. In the insects the mind counts for much less than this pranic energy. Subsequently the basis of the telepathic trikaldrishti was shown to reside in the perception of the movements of this pranic energy, Matariswan, which governs action, apo Matariswá dadhati. An ant was climbing up the wall in an upward stream of ants; there was no sign of its reversing its progress; but the trikaldrishti saw that the ant would turn & go down, not upwards. At first it made a movement of uncertainty, then proceeded upward, then suddenly left the stream and went steadily & swiftly downwards. Afterwards the source of the trikaldrishti was seen, a coming movement of pranic energy, prepared in the sat-Brahman, latent both to the waking consciousness of the ant & my own, but caught by the vijnanamaya drishti. In another instance the same movement of energy was perceived in another ant and followed by an indicative movement, but it was also perceived that this was not the eventual impulse, & as a matter of fact a strong contrary tension intervened & carried the insect upward. In all these cases, the perception of the impulse by prakamya vyapti is not enough; the vijnana distinguishing the nature & fate of the tapas is required to constitute trikaldrishti. All error now consists in the absence of this distinguishing perception or in the false mental stress which tends to replace its unerring accuracy.

Sept 13—

During the last week a considerable quantity of ground has been covered. Ordinarily the condition of the system is a state of positive samata, sama ananda in all that occurs or is experienced, but there is still a tendency to asamata in the face of persistent bad result in Yoga accompanied by untruth in what seem to be the centres of knowledge. Usually the tendency only touches the system from outside and is repelled by the samata, but sometimes it actualises into a more or less prolonged state of unfaith, despondency and disquiet. The second chatusthaya has progressed greatly. Secondary dasya has given place to the first stage of tertiary; tejas & tapas have now become habitually active when the prakasha is clouded by the partial nirananda & unfaith; the bhava of Mahakali on the Maheshwari pratistha has occupied permanently the Mahasaraswati continent without this time ploughing up the pratistha & continent by the tendency to drag them also over to the rudrabhava. Faith is now almost complete & grows in intensity; but it is still troubled by too much subservience to the immediate actualities & cannot always look beyond to the future actuality. Nevertheless the habit of perceiving the truth in every perception, the force of fulfilment in every action or baulking of action & the ananda in every sensation of heart & mind is growing even upon the intellect.

The chief movement has been the development of the ideality, its increasing hold on the rebellious & self-acting intellectuality in the outer swabhava and the transfer of the mental activity to the ideal plane. Telepathy has increased to a considerable extent and embraces now the thoughts also, but is not always evenly active; in the use of the trikaldrishti it has become something of a stumbling block, as the rapid perception of the movements of impelling force, intention & impulse impresses the still active intellectual devatas with a false idea of actual result and tend[s] to shut out the event from the perception. Nevertheless the vijnanamay determination of the actual event even in detail begins to be more frequently reflected in the intellectual parts and has some force but, usually, little or no jyotirmaya prakasha. Power varies, but has grown in insistence, success & grip on the akasha. Vani & script are still excessive in statement, but the inert element tends to pass out of them. Lipi is now well-established in activity; but is more usually perfect in chitra & sthapatya than in akasha where the old faults of paleness, insufficient legibility & fragmentary manifestation are still powerful. Incoherence has not yet been removed, but the power to interpret lipi, coherent or incoherent, has grown immensely & is only faulty, as a rule, when the vijnana is clouded by the aprakasha & the intellect once more active. Rupa grows more fertile & is once more rich & perfect or almost perfect in chitra & sthapatya, (one defect is excess of human figures & defect of animal forms & objects), but in akasha it cannot yet compass the union of vivid clearness & stability. The obstruction here is still strong. Samadhi has increased in habitual coherence & continuity; even the lipi in sushupta swapna now tends to be coherent.

The physical siddhi is always resisted & put back in utthapana & saundarya; in ananda & arogya it is progressive with occasional retrocessions. Habituality of kamananda and frequency of the other physical anandas has considerably increased; also to a certain extent their intensity. A serious effort is being made to get rid of the obstinate fragments of eruption, headache, cold & stomach complaint which still recur needlessly in the system. Headache usually occurs only by vyapti from other adharas.

One great result of the week's progress has been the completion & permanent possession in perception of the fourfold Brahman. The only defect is a tendency to fall back from the jnanam element, thereby losing the lilamaya personality of the Brahman. Otherwise vismriti is now only an inert & ineffective suspension of the siddhi, which has no longer to be reconstituted on resumption of the mind's apramattata.

Intellectual work is now almost finally based, except for some defects in the poetical power, and all the various work fixed on is being pursued; but the regularity of brain-work on one subject & the simultaneity of brain work on different subjects is very deficient owing to the insubmission or incapacity of the physical brain. The former defect is being rapidly remedied. The force of kriti has a little increased,—perceptibly in effectiveness.

Later in the day deeper perceptions of the vijnana were awakened, resulting in some remarkable effects of trikaldrishti; but these were afterwards confused by the invasion of external intellectual suggestions confusing, by falsity of stress, the ritam & the anritam. Nevertheless the faith in the vijnana perceptions not immediately justified by the physical actualities grows in force and persistence. The power of the aishwarya over immediate results in the body increases; but is still deficient in the rapidity of final results, though more effective than of old.

Sept 14th (written on 15th)

(Yesterday) [*i.e. the 14th*] An attack on the health (assimilation) brought about a suspension of the kamananda & attempt at asiddhi; dominated early in the afternoon. The tejas is now beginning to fulfil itself against the tamas; its predictions being correct or corrected by the vijnanamaya prakasha. Lipi, rupa & samadhi continued steadily to gain in habitual force; but in the latter two the akasha is not yet clarified of the main obstruction. Trikaldrishti is habitually correct even in rough detail & often in exact detail, but with an element of erroneous & perverting stress on the telepathic impressions and considerable gaps and lacunae. Utthapana somewhat weakly recommenced in arms, neck and legs. The struggle, successful on the whole, still continues with the remnants of the old slighter ailments, eruption & cold. The former has no tejas & there is usually the eruption without the irritation. The latter is losing tejas, but is persistent. Roga of the assimilation has still an occasional force as in the morning. In the saundarya the lower range teeth have retained their whiteness, only slightly stained at first with a shadow of yellow, for five days, (formerly one day could hardly be registered,) and the upper are getting clarified to an extent not yet experienced since the reaction began or even before it. There is as yet no sign of reaction. In other directions the reaction holds or allows only a slow and doubtful progress in one or two details. Sahitya steadily continues, but only in short flows of energy.

Sept 16th

On the 14th there was a combination of successful aishwarya with strong & obstinate resistance to the aishwarya; this morning it succeeded almost in 100 per cent of the cases of application, &, what is quite a new feature, usually with instantaneous effect or else very rapidly after a slight and halfhearted resistance. Only in one case, the object, though obeying in minor details & long prevented from following its dominant impulse, obstinately & successfully resisted for many minutes the main command and finally executed an opposite movement.

The other principal movements were in lipi and samadhi. In lipi the various stages through which the etheric script has wavered backwards & forwards, indistinctness or paleness of script, illegibility, partial legibility, vividness of single words, vividness of short phrases, unspontaneity, partial spontaneity, incoherent richness, illegible vividness, legible vividness, etc have been passed through rapidly in a final movement and lipi is now fixed in the akasha as an abundant phenomenon both in the single word & the short phrase, spontaneous, vivid, legible, simultaneous, authoritative, and is now extending to long phrases. The interpretation of lipi is still occasionally hesitating owing to the uncertainties of the trikaldrishti, but this hesitation has disappeared from the thought scripts. The full authority of the thought is necessary to the full authority of the lipi. Rupa has developed a final richness, variety, frequency & perfect grouping in all the chitra & sthapatya forms including the vision in transparent substances; it has developed occasional perfection in single crude forms of all kinds & even in ghana, but is vague & indistinct in grouped images, & vivid but momentary in the lifelike developed or dense images. These are old difficulties. Samadhi last night attained again & more powerfully on the whole to richness, variety, grouping, vividness, continued action, shabda; but the continuity has to be swift and is limited to a very few successive movements owing to want of firm hold on the jagrat-swapna & jagrat-sushupta conditions. Only in dream is there long continuity; & dream is now, so far as remembered, usually connected & coherent, with only slight survivals of the old defects. Its images are more vivid & nearer to the forms of samadhi, but are still dream images. As yet they are not dreams of actuality, but scenes from past lives, sukshma experiences etc. The dreaminess has not departed out of them.

All the subjective anandas, especially prema & next to it shuddha have been finally fixed in the system; none of them are yet new in form, experience or intensity, but a tendency to greater generality of intense experience is visible. The perception of ugliness & ungainliness contradictory of beauty which had reemerged & long persisted is now sinking back into the shuddha & chidghana anandas. Kamananda was occasional & ceased to preserve continuity; it now stands that the ananda can no longer be successfully excluded for a single day, but it is not yet continuously permanent because it still visits the body and does not yet hold it as its natural dharma. Arogya improved, but is still struggling against difficulties. Utthapana increases in force slowly & with difficulty. The weakness of the body & its capacity for exhaustion struggle powerfully to keep their hold.

Sept 17th

Trikaldrishti & aishwarya went through a short period of confusion for the one, ineffectiveness for the other, but both have recovered their former activity, trikaldrishti accurate, often even in perfect detail, but with [deficiency][2] in mahattwa, aishwarya ordinarily effective after resistance. The tejasic powers tend to prevail over the tamasic, but have not yet an assured and perfect victory.

In the afternoon clear images of various kinds in the antardrishta jagrat, but all of the initial crudity of material. In the jagrat single clear images in the akasha come a little more frequently & lifelike images come before the eye, instead of avoiding it, but are not yet stable before the eye. Group images in the akasha are still imperfect in clearness.

In the evening there came the perfectly clear & stable image in the akasha, single and small group, but this was limited to the non-lifelike & to one or two figures, ie different kinds of birds & butterflies; but in that limit even the most developed figures occurred with some freedom; a third image, (a cat on a bough,) came without the clearness. This was in the full evening light outside the house, in the subdued light of evening in the house, the images were repeated but not with such ease & absolute clearness, & at night in the lamplight they failed still more to acquire the full vividness. The force of association here was evident. Certain habitual images appear with more power in the lamplight, but this was in a different manner of vaguely compacted definiteness—in a transition stage between the mere image & the lifelike image. Samadhi was again very powerful and this time short conversations occurred in some of which the speaker was visible as speaking,—an almost entirely new circumstance. Scent also has begun & the first hint of taste.

Trikaldrishti & will-power were again allowed to lapse into the pure intellectuality but this time a greater power to distinguish between the action of the two & consequently between true & false trikaldrishti was developed out of the confusion. Utthapana was contradicted by a great weariness and weakness. After six days of whiteness the upper teeth began again to become clouded and a slight shade to fall on the lower, especially on those at the right side. Kamananda increased in intensity. The personal lilamaya relation with the Master of the Yoga emerged, still feebly hampered by the old tapomaya & manomaya movements.

---

[2] *MS* deficient

Sept 18th

The day passed largely in a struggle ending in disturbance & reaction, owing to the old insistence of the mental tejas, which had been suffered to act, on overstress & exaggeration and a blind undiscriminating belief; but the disturbance was not acute nor very prolonged nor the reaction very obstinate or far-reaching. The chief loss was the enthusiasm & reach of the faith which returned to its normal belief in final success with an added disposition to accept the truth of a steady & increasingly rapid success in the Yoga, as distinct from the life-work. As usual circumstances apparent & real crowded to justify the element of unfaith, but also there were some that supported the faith. The balance was more even than formerly. Trikaldrishti continues to deal with the old intellectualities which still persist in external suggestion; it is usually correct when the mind is not in haste; the suggestions of the external mind are often precise & correct but are so interspersed, like most of the other movements of knowledge, with overstressed & misapplied truths, that uncertainty still reigns. Power grows in effectiveness. The rupa failed to preserve in the daytime the sudden advance made last evening. Rupas were non-lifelike, crude or dense of the crude tendency &, seldom, developed tendency, limited to a few forms and did not come easily & spontaneously or effect an assured union of clearness & stability. Lipi, on the other hand, after [having] become hesitating & infertile, recovered almost all its previous force and more than its previous frequency of comparative perfection. It is almost always intelligible, not always easily or perfectly legible. The reaction in the teeth grows in force. Saundarya makes no progress and weakness of the body continues. Dasya of the body has been perfected in the secondary stage of tertiary dasya, in which all physical action is done under visible compulsion of Krishna, but of Krishna through Prakriti, not direct. This dasya is extending to the mind & feelings. The progress of the personal relation has been troubled by false and simulative vani. Kamananda has been usually intense, & fairly continuous in intensity or subdued force, but not entirely continuous. Telepathy of thought etc has been much in abeyance in favour of telepathy of impulse & tendency. There is no certain progress in arogya. Sahitya has been for these two days suspended.

Neither the faith nor the energy recovered its tone during the evening and night. Still, progress was made. Something like the full bhava of the personal relation was manifested, and the relation itself is now permanent and secured against successful attack. The simulative vanis attempt to persist, but they cannot prevail, endure or pervert. The bhavas permanently manifest are those of conqueror and master, playmate and guide & instructor. There was also progress in the samadhi, smell & touch manifesting vividly, both combined with sight & action &, in the latter case, with sound; but the attempt to confirm & extend continuity failed. Dream manifested again full ihabhava of form & association, which could not, however, disturb the continuity & intelligibility of the series of incidents portrayed. Both in samadhi & jagrat perfect intelligibility of even fragmentary, confused or ill-decipherable lipi was firmly & suddenly established; undecipherable lipi still offers a difficulty to the thought perception. Telepathy flowered freely, but is not yet perfect in range or precision. Kamananda reached a high intensity, but was suspended, as commonly, during the night. Roga showed some reaction, & the physical siddhi generally is passing through a stage of persistent & concentrated obstruction.

Sept 19th

The teeth this morning have recovered their whiteness though some shadow of the yellow tinge hangs over them & its actuality is a little heavy, comparatively, in the side teeth. The reaction in the upper range has lightened. Kamananda continues but with suspensions & with a varying intensity. Inspired speech of the second order (illuminative-effective-inspired) took possession of the thought with very little trouble, but is now silent (9 am) and thought perception is once more active, mixed intellectual & ideal governed by vijnana-perceptions. This time the Master of the Yoga has rejected shama definitely as the agent of rehabilitation and enforced that function on pravritti which discharges it still with a hampered power owing to the siege of mental tapas. Script has been taken possession of by the governing force.

Today, the disturbance created yesterday continued in its after effects, chiefly in want of faith. Finally, calm and ananda returned and the control of the divine guidance manifested. Kamananda was less intense, trikaldrishti & aishwarya very broken & the siege of the external intellect persistent and heavy. Samadhi made no progress, rupa only in the arrival of akasha rupa on a background, but lipi recovered & increased its force.

Sept 20th 21st

During these two days there has been a rapid and liberal efflorescence of the siddhi. Faith at once fixed & enthusiastic has been established which surmounts all immediate contradictions because it has knowledge of the truth beyond. This illumined, firm & enthusiastic faith is being cured of its deficiencies and prepared for energy and action on a scale suitable to the life work. The process involves the display of the obstacles to the faith, — defect of perfect practical trikaldrishti, defect of effectiveness in will-power, — adverse experience with regard to rapidity in Yoga and large foundation & development in the adeshasiddhi. Sraddha & energy of tapas are developing, not yet grown to their full vigour. The Mahakali bhava has therefore tended without effacing itself to draw back, no longer into its Maheshwari pratistha, — this is the difference, — but upon rather than into its Mahasaraswati continent.

Trikaldrishti after displaying yesterday a great wideness & freedom of the satya is now removing the remnants of anritam, ordering the ritam in the ordinary practical trikaldrishti. The surviving defects are being remedied by a habitual illumination of the mental suggestions, — when an intention or impulse tends to be falsely stressed as event to be, a corrective illumination increasingly comes either along with the suggestion or immediately behind it; the mental suggestions themselves now, more often than not, justify themselves either in the immediate event or, if baffled immediately, in subsequent event. Telepathy of the object & its environment is rich & abundant. Reliable telepathy of distant & unseen objects has begun. Will power grows in force & is usually successful in whole or in part when associated with trikaldrishti, often even when it is not. Its rapid & exact effect is frequent on things in motion, less frequent on things in rest where the opposition has time to take cognisance and make itself felt. Lipi continues to grow in frequency of legibility; for this purpose the immediate intelligibility (even of the undecipherable script, for that too is gained) has been suspended somewhat from its activity. Akasha rupa is now fairly constant in all forms of unlifelike image, but chiefly in the crude, more often & clearly in single figure than in the group. The old defects of instability, remoteness in the prana akash, indistinctness in the blur of the material tend to depart, but strive yet successfully to remain & be frequent. The perfect rupa strengthens itself but does not stabilise in its clear forms to the direct vision. A few rupas (bird, butterfly, moth, horse, horseman, etc) predominate & recur with unwearied reiteration, but the drishti is no longer confined to them. In the antardrishta jagrat independent manifestation has begun; one or two perfect images have shown themselves & variety is freer than in the bahirdarshi jagrat. Swapna Samadhi grows slowly, but is stationary in the parts resisted, inconstantly organised in those established. Chitra & sthapatya grow in brilliance, richness & variety, rapidly & spontaneously, unaided even by the immediate will—beyond a usually passive ishita.

Kamananda, usually intense only in isolated touches more or less rapidly repeated, became yesterday intense to the point of maithunananda with continuously repeated touches, but owing to the fear of effusion, it was stayed before it could develop. Nevertheless the habitual intensity is now much greater & keener than formerly, but varies in continuity. The inner anandas have well established themselves & work whenever there is smarana, as does also the consciousness of the Brahman in all objects which grows always in strength, intense universality & richness.. The remaining symptomatic rogas are being steadily extruded, but are violent or obstinate before their outgoing. Utthapana & saundarya do not yet prosper; the shade over the teeth after an at first unsuccessful struggle & partial withdrawal has succeeded to some extent in returning.

The outward work, except in the struggle with the disease of others, is suspended, — except for the involuntary & unplanned beginning of the Eclogue in hexameter on which there has long been insistence in the lipi. The relation with the Ishwara is now well revealed & active even when it is apparently clouded by other vanis; these can no longer dupe the intellect though they keep the mind sometimes in forgetfulness of their undivine origin. They become more & more truthful with the growth of the trikaldrishti, but also voice the deficient drishti & the remnants of false stress.

In the night rupa expanded greatly commanding a plentiful variety in the crude forms, a limited movement in other non-lifelike forms & a few stabilised lifelike forms, not of the more vivid order, direct before the vision. Swapna-Samadhi recovered its frequency and variety of experiences but not their combination & organisation which had been begun but not steadily continued. Health moved forward a little, but not yet decisively.

22 – 30 SEPTEMBER 1913

Sept 22^{d}. 1913.

The siddhi has now firm standing in knowledge, in spite of lapses & lacunae, and the guiding Script can be invested in a definite form. The guiding Script orders & indicates, it does not predict. Its movement must be entirely liberated from the shadow of control by the mind's vigilance, suggestive & distrustful, which still subsists in the environmental outlook. The trikaldrishti has been reconstituted and needs only a greater illumination & decisive[ness] to get rid of the one positive defect that still clogs it from perfection, false distribution of stress by the masquerading of mental will-suggestions in the guise of knowledge-perceptions. That once cured, the range of practical knowledge will automatically increase. The willpower is as yet unable to act without a Prakritic resistance in the physical akasha. This habit of resistance must steadily be overborne and eliminated. It is especially active when continuous & detailed movements are dictated by the willpower to external objects, but this resistance has been overborne before and must now be overborne habitually. Finally, the actuality of the lipi, rupa & samadhi must prevail over the blind and inert, but stubborn refusal of the physical ether. This is the immediate work that yet remains in the third chatusthaya.

In the fourth, it is now evident that what is being prepared by the apparent reaction towards asiddhi of continuity in the kamananda, is the ability of the body to bear the high intensity of maithunananda without emission and its distribution as ananda throughout the body. A stronger force of natural health and a more perfect habit of assimilation is being prepared by the suspension of the imperfect siddhi in arogya. Similar movements account for the long obstruction or renewed obstruction in utthapana & saundarya as in the samadhi and the adesha-siddhi. These movements must be helped by the will to work out more rapidly.

Sept 25.

The apparent movement of reaction has ended, even more than usual, in a strong advance. The basis of samata has been strengthened and widely confirmed in the fixed perception of all things as true & all events as destined and helpful; if asamata now comes, it must be a purely mechanical movement of memory in the physical parts, unless knowledge is forcibly taken away. This in future will not be allowed. With samata dasya, tejas, sraddha have attained a more perfect security. All that is now needed is the expulsion of the physical memory of adasya & nistejas and the perfection of effective tapas in the knowledge & the power to establish the sraddha of the Ishwari in the Prakriti; the mere human sraddha is now well founded except in the adeshasiddhi. The faith in rapidity is really part of the faith in the adeshsiddhi, its condition and foundation. The relics of the egoistic outlook & inlook in the physical mind have also to be expelled.

The basis of effectiveness in knowledge has been laid, the centre of true sight, ritam in satyam, has been revealed in action perfectly removing anrita suggestions, suggesting and approving the ritam. The basis of effectiveness in action has not been revealed. This will now have to be done.

Sept 29th

Asamata still comes in the physical brain; therefore it is sometimes thought that it is possessing the mind & heart, but it only touches the outskirts & departs. Even this remnant is taking too long to expel owing to the liability of the physical brain to be clouded which prevents the vijnana from fixing itself on the whole being except in & through the intellectuality. The finality of accuracy in detail of time, place & circumstance must now be well established.

The time has come to distinguish always between truth and error, even in the trikaldrishti. It will not be done perfectly at once, but finally in itself and, for the rest, in its application progressively.

The time has also come to apply finally though not yet invariably, the perfect aishwarya, ishita, vashita of Mahakali in Mahasaraswati. This is not it; that is Mahasaraswati-Maheswari used by

Mahakali. That is done. Now it has to be lifted into the ritam.

Sept 30th.

The perfect establishment of invincible udasinata & firmly founded faith yesterday in the bhava of Mahakali assures a free course to the siddhi; in order that it may be rapid the defect in the subjective objectivity of the Bhuvar has to be removed, the attempt to hamper, obstruct, limit or even deny the tejas, tapas & prakasha. The trikaldrishti is now firm & acts with comparative ease, but not sufficiently swift & spontaneous and it is besieged and limited in its range, perfect only in the completeness of its intellectual apparatus. The habit of confused suggestions between which the vijnana has to distinguish, must be eliminated; the revelation & inspiration replace the vivek as the most frequent & important activities of the vijnana. The aishwarya etc are not yet lifted into the ritam.

These things however will now inevitably fulfil themselves. The barrier to the rupadrishti has also at last been broken & the remaining difficulties in that & in the swapna-samadhi will now follow suit. The concentration of the tapas is now in the physical siddhi and in the physical siddhi it must be on the saundarya especially, for all else is prepared for progress, even the secondary utthapana is now again under way. Only in the saundaryam is Vritra really powerful, & to a certain extent in the adesh-siddhi.

11 – 23 NOVEMBER 1913

11 Nov 1913.

Routine

Lipi . . Rupa . . Samadhi . .
Trikaldrishti, telepathy, jnana + aishwarya-ishita . . vashita
Faith . . Ishwarabhava . . Abhayam . . Premakama.
Sukham. Hasyam. Shanti Samatá
Shariránanda . . Arogya . . Utthápaná

Details

These things have to be fulfilled; the lines represent their immediate strength. They have to be raised to the next superior strength — four lines representing consummation.

Sharirananda still needs the aid of the sankalpa, but not of the aishwarya. Arogya still needs the aid of the tapas; utthápana not only of tapas, but also of some tapasyá. Saundarya is still imprisoned in the Adri. This is the physical sadhana.

The samatá-chatusthaya is established, but allowed to be disturbed superficially. All that is needed is to get rid of the shadow of mangalámangala, siddhyasiddhi.

—

The shakti chatusthaya is defective in faith & force. Both depend on the growth of the vijnana in the actuality.

The vijnánachatusthaya is now the chief subject of the sádhana, strong in knowledge, growing towards strength in power, deficient in range of being. The first two must grow by abhyasa alone; lipi needs some abhyasa still, but is on the point of a greater perfection; rupa & samadhi still need some tapas & much abhyása.

Third Chatusthaya

Now the necessary brihadbhava & satyam are there, only the ritam remains to be perfected. The condition demanded is a perfect passivity of the intellect.

Self-perfection of the trikaldrishti and telepathy; self-perfection of the lipi; development of rupa and samadhi.

═

General

The dasyabuddhi has become a little blurred. It must be restored to its former energy. At present, the aishwarya working in the intellect is fitfully effective & with a struggle, the aishwarya must come out of the ideality & act freely & without responsibility.. In this way & in no other the ideal powers will manifest themselves. More has yet to be done with the rupa and samadhi today.

═

Telepathy has now to be encouraged & indulged to the full; the brihadbhava must first be carried to its utmost present capacity.. Distant telepathies must be accepted and traced to their right source and place.

═

12th

Trikaldrishti

The errors still made are due to the old imperfection of the mind seizing on a partial truth. The fear entertained is groundless.

Samata

The samata is now subjectively perfected except for vague occasional touches, but stronger in titiksha, udasinata, & nati than in rasah, pritih and ananda-bhoga. The rasah is there, however, & will today be well-established along with the pritih. It is indeed already established, but has to be rendered immune from adverse touches.

Bhukti

Sarvasaundaryabodha with the shuddhananda, chidghanánanda, ahaituka and prema anandas has been reestablished on a firmer basis. Only a few old sanskaras combat it and bring the mind down to the level of the old dualities. There will be a farther advance today, but the final immunity of the subjective bhukti from disturbance or adverse touch is still delayed

═

Ananda

Samatá . . bhukti . . Anandam Brahma. These are the three stages of the Ananda. The ananda in the Lilamaya had already been realised, the Ananda in the Brahman is now realised. It was there in an indeterminate perception before; now it is determinate.

═

Once more the Mahakali tapas, tejas & shakti have to be combined & harmonised with the samata, & also with the action of the third chatusthaya. It is clear that only after a somewhat prolonged struggle can the third chatusthaya be entirely effected. The resistance of the tamas in the objectivity is still too obstinate, too constantly reinforced to admit of an immediate conquest; nevertheless a greater rapidity is now possible.

The aham of the karta, jnata, bhoktá, bhartá has been dissolved in the outer swabhava; only the aham of the sakshi is left and that is on the point of dissolution. The difficulty is now once more transferred to the field of the siddhi in the third chatusthaya. The ishwarabháva and full faith & abhayam depend on the perception of the truth of the Adesha & the fullness & rapidity of its fulfilment. This will now be accomplished by the right ordering, the ritam of the knowledge and the power.

Third Chatusthaya.

Today the telepathy, trikaldrishti, aishwarya have to be finally reconciled, in type & in dominant action; but the full range & invariability of this typical & dominant action cannot yet manifest, without provoking a strong relapse.

Ahankara-Mukti-Siddhi

The aham karta is now replaced by the kartri brahma, so the aham jnata by the jnatri, the aham bhokta by the bhoktri, the aham bhartá by the bhartri, the aham sakshi by the sakshi brahma. What is left of the aham is a kendra of action, a kendra of knowledge, a kendra of vision, a kendra of enjoyment. In this kendra Kali receives the will of God, thinks it out in the idea, fulfils it in action, watches its fulfilment and sends up the bhoga to God, becoming herself the will, the action, the vision, the bhoga, the knowledge. The two have now to be harmonised, the Kalibhava & the Krishnabhava in the one Brahman. The dissolution of the sakshi aham into the sakshi Brahma has rendered this possible at last in its finality and completeness.

Faith Ishwarabhava. Abhayam. Premakáma

This represents the immediate strength of the second chatusthaya as the result of the last two days' activity. The next superior strength has to be effected.

Sukham. Hasyam Shanti Samata

This represents the immediate strength of the first chatusthaya subjectively in all parts except the body. When it is completed in the body, then the quadruple line will be closed up & perfection secured.

Hasyam is increasing & will soon deserve the fourth line.

The Mahakali tapas is there in essence, but has to be tempered a little during the process of harmonisation of the two first chatusthayas.

Subjective shuddhi, mukti, bhukti are now, in a way, complete, but not yet fully perfected

Shuddhi Mukti Bhukti Siddhi

This is the state of the seventh chatusthaya.

The ritam in the jnana is now assured. It must spread to telepathy & trikaldrishti

In the Ananda (bhukti) the pure discomfort of harsh sounds & ugly faces etc is removed; smell, taste, touch are all come into line, taste a little forward & possessing a superior perfection; only pain beyond a certain degree is empty of the ananda, although even sharp pain leaves behind it ananda as its physical result. Strong & persistent touches of hot & cold also create discomfort. This is the defect of the bhukti which prevents the addition of the third line.

13th November 1913

Relapse

A tendency to relapse in the morning; impatience of non-result & slow process attempts again to manifest, in connection with the continued error of trikaldrishti.

Telepathy

The first necessity is to recognise unfalteringly that all intellectual suggestions, however void of support in the appearances of actuality, however contradicted by evidence are satyam,—prakamya or vyapti of actual intentions, tendencies, impulses etc in the world and connected with the objects or subjects in regard to which they occur to the mind. The next is to get rid of misplacement and assign these suggestions to their cause in fact. This has first to be done in the way of correction of error after the event, next, by correction of error before the event, last, by cessation of error & the immediate & essential right assignment and definition of the vyapti or the prakamya. At present, the movement is towards passing from the first to the second stage of the process.

Time-idea

The time idea is still obstructed and prevented from regulating itself. Today it has to break through the obstruction. The non-telepathic pure trikaldrishti has also to become more active.

Jnana

The jnana is now perfectly established in the intellect. All the thoughts are perceived to be true and are assigned, oftenest initially, but sometimes by a corrective movement to their right place & form. The corrective movement itself is not so much purgative of error as adjustive of an incomplete or crooked placement. As soon as this corrective movement ceases to be necessary, the jnana can be entirely lifted into the ideality and the fourth line, soon to be added to the jnana, invested with the sign of completion.

Telepathy

The telepathy now only needs to be given a fuller & quicker perception of the contents of the mind & intellect, in order to be complete. The prakamya-vyapti of the contents of the heart is returning; that of the intellect is being added.

Faith. Ishwarabhava. Abhayam. Premakama

Faith.

The present state of the second chatusthaya. The Ishwarabhava has temporarily gone back to its less developed stage. The faith is now strong in the Yoga siddhi and established as to its rapidity, but not with regard to the Adesh. The temporary setback in the Ishwarabhava is due to the inactivity of the Aishwarya. It will now rapidly develop to the third power along with the Abhayam & Premakama.

Bhukti

The discomfort of cold & heat is rapidly becoming ananda. The element of discomfort has to be eliminated. Pain alone will remain, then, as a negative element in the bhukti. The discomfort of roga is intermediary between pain & physical discomfort of the nervous system.

Dehasuddhi

In the physical siddhi, shuddhi of the body is almost complete. It consists of three parts, rasashuddhi, pranasuddhi, bhutasuddhi. The rasas are on the verge of complete purity; the panchapránas are withdrawing from their separateness into the state of differentiated activities of the mukhya prana,—that is their purity; but the movement is not yet completed. The pancha bhutas are also falling into line as movements & states of the akasha; but this last movement is still obstructed seriously. Its imperfection is the excuse for the continuance of roga in the processes of assimilation, as the panchaprana cannot work perfectly in the present state of the panchabhuta; that imperfection of the pránas is again the cause of excessive & defective action of the rasas, causing slight eruption on the skin & indeterminate tendencies of cough & cold. The two last are, however, on the verge of destruction.

rasashuddhi panchaprana panchabhuta

Amrita—

A clear distinction must now be made between the vidya-avidya-siddhi which is constituted by the seven chatusthayas & the higher Amrita in which all limitation is removed & Death, etc entirely cease. Only the first will in this life be entirely accomplished.

1st & 2d Ch.

Faith Iswarabhava Abhayam Premakama Hasyam

This is the condition now being established

Mukti Bhukti

Discomfort of sensation is now being brought forward in order to be removed. All the indriyas are now free as well as pure, only the manas, or sensational mind remains; it has yet priyam & apriyam in the sensation. As for the thought-mind, mangalam & amangalam, siddhi & asiddhi are now becoming for it two sides only of mangala & siddhi respectively. Failure is from God's standpoint siddhi, since it is intended to be brought about as a step to some surer, higher or more complete success.

Sraddha

Faith now exists in the Adesha siddhi, but is ill-informed as to measure & detail, & is only firm in the first four members of the adesha—political, religious, literary & social. The other four are only higher terms of the political & social or the first means. When this defect is removed faith will be complete, & only faith in all details of knowledge etc is needed to perfect the chatusthaya. The stage already outlined is now fulfilled of the faith, abhaya etc.

The farther development of the second chatusthaya, so far as it cannot come by its own force, depends now on the third & fourth chatusthayas. To these therefore the apramatta attention of the Shakti must be directed.

=

There is as yet no advance in the third & fourth chatusthayas. The obstruction there has concentrated itself. It will rapidly break down even in the rupa and the samadhi, not so soon in the saundarya.

The mind need not always take an anticipatory part in the script. It is enough that it should receive and follow. At present the old habit of unintelligent pranic reception & suggestion has once more a dominant play in the outer swabhava. The vijnana in the trikaldrishti is apt to be quiescent.

Discomfort of sensation suddenly revived in a high degree takes possession of the annakosha, & the progress is for the rest of the day arrested except for a slight movement in telepathy & trikaldrishti & aishwarya.

A tendency to freer rupadrishti in the evening.

14th November.

The overpowering siege of the sensational discomfort, which is evidently abnormal and brought forward for a particular purpose, still obsesses the sanjnána and tends to bring back the old tamasic bhava. In this attempt it has not been successful, except to suspend the Mahakali tapas and lower the tone of the faith. The system refuses to lose its hold on the samata shanti sukh hasya & therefore suffering is transferred from the subjective to the physical parts.

Today is to be a day of rapid progress in the third chatusthaya and the preparation of rapid progress in the fourth. The vijnána once active again, will clear out the anritam. It is from tomorrow, not today that the karma has to be resumed.

There is now a natural tendency to discover the sense & the actuality even of the most random thoughts, that wandering through the *dishah*, strike on the inner sravana. The telepathy increases constantly in range & success and commands confidence from the mentality.

The pranic suggestions, false as eventual actuality, are now entirely seen to be truths in actuality of force & tendency, and are finally accepted. It is true that their activity is puzzling to the mind which misinterprets, more often than not, the truth suggested. But the mind is now disciplined and will soon be able to receive the light of the vijnana perfectly, even in the outer swabhava where alone it has, now, any real activity.

Arogya

The rasa & prana are now shuddha, though not siddha; the bhutas are however passing through a period of violent disturbance, marked chiefly by excess of tejas with a tendency of reaction from tejas to excessive vayu.

Rasa Prana Bhuta

Third Ch.

This record is now established in the satyam ritam, as is all script. The same authority must attach to lipi, telepathy, trikaldrishti. To the jnana it already attaches. First, lipi and telepathy. Both are recognised as satyam; right interpretation must confirm them in ritam.

do

The vani will be found to be already established in ritam not less than in satyam. The interpretation given by the mind has to be carefully watched and censured; hence the appearance of anritam.

do

The essential satyam is now well founded in all instruments of the knowledge; only the ritam of arrangement in time, place & circumstance remains to be effected, and afterwards the range widened. The fullness of the essential satyam contains and implies an essential ritam. The ritam of arrangement is a relational truth of things.

Second Ch.

The Mahakali tapas is once more active in the adhar and adverse result is no longer effective to disestablish its activity. With two days more of this progress the Ishwarabhava which alone is positively defective in the second chatusthaya will rise to the proper intensity.

There is a movement which has often been presaged, but never succeeded in locating itself; the movement of the higher rudra intensity of knowledge, action, ananda. Now that the Mahakali tapas is finally seated in the adhara, this loftier movement of the life & Yoga may with security establish its initial activities. Rapidity of the rest of the siddhi is an essential factor in the rudra movement. During the rest of the month the siddhi of this rudra tapatya must be the principal aim of the Shakti.

Nov 15th. 1913.

The movement of the siddhi now is more obstructed, the struggle more intense in the Akasha, because the conquest has been less thoroughly prepared. The later chatusthayas have been reserved for a swifter movement and a more powerful divine action. At present there is no sign of any new swiftness or power. The Mahakali Tapas is being farther strengthened and confirmed by the test of adverse experience.

Dakshina Maghoni, the discernment in its fullness, is now at work; it is evident that all the suggestions given to the mind are satyam & ritam; only the exact ritam of arrangement is still wanting. Time is apprehended confusedly by the intellectual parts, circumstance is ill-arranged, though beginning to be well divined.

Aishwarya-ishitá is at present effective by long pressure, not by an immediate movement; by struggle, not anarvá. It is this imperfection which the Shakti will presently remove. Also it is efficient in the general idea, in the gross, not in particular detail of time, place & circumstance. When this defect is removed, the Power will be perfect, like the Knowledge.

The karmasiddhi will now begin—in sahitya, dharma, kriti, sri, not yet káma.

Sahitya—

Rig-Veda—	reading only—
Vedanta—	Isha Upanishad Commentary (The Life Divine)
	Brihad Aranyaka, translation.
Philology—	Dictionary. Vowel Roots.
	Origins of Aryan Speech.
Poetry	Ilion.
	Eric.
	Idylls of Earth & Heaven.
Bhasha—	Sanscrit, French, Bengali.

Rupadrishti has advanced a stage in the stability with comparative clearness of certain forms of developed image.

Nov 16th

The Saundarya-buddhi is recovering its universality. The main defect in rupa & lipi is the inability of the Akash to get rid of the long successful obstruction to a swift & forceful vividness. Everything else is gained, including the intelligibility, authority and spontaneity of lipi and rupa.

The tapas of action alternates with the tamas. The elimination of the tamas, both aprakasha and apravritti, has already begun.

This morning, trikaldrishti, power, rupa lipi.

This evening the same.

Dharma & Kriti have to advance with particular rapidity; first of all, only the necessary arrangements. There is a perfect guidance.

One thing has been omitted, the Sri. The routine of Sahitya, Dharma & Kriti have been fixed; the routine of Sri has also to be fixed. Routine is ritam & necessary for karma, only it must be ritam of the brihat, part of the infinite, not narrow & rigid, a flexible instrument, not a stiff & unpliant bondage.

Nov 17th

The new movement of the Siddhi is strongly obstructed. The chief difficulty is not in the power, but in the final arrangement of the ritam. There are the relics of the old mental stress in the tapas & tapatya; there is the obstinacy of the habit of anritam in the physical akash. The ritam of knowledge has no longer to be separated from the ritam of power; each has to enforce or illumine the other.

From now forward the organisation of the ritam will proceed steadily on the basis of the satyam brihat with a determining superior faculty which will eliminate the anritam & exalt the intellectual movements into the ideality.

Physical Ananda, more & more obstructed and suppressed during the past few days, will now recover its activity. Health is still undergoing its ordeal, but it has surmounted the severer tests, and although still very defective, is reaching out again towards self-perfection. Its four main defects have all shown themselves in exaggerated sensations out of all proportion to the reality of the roga behind. This is always a sign of failing power & approaching exhaustion; for the hostile forces, conscious of the failure, gather up & exhaust in an illegitimate endeavour all the forces which, properly used, might last for a longer season than that actually allotted to them. The Maheshwari patience is still needed to support these tyrannies,—samata, dhairyam.

Mahakali tapas begins to break through the habitual restrictions of the Mahasaraswati bhava.

Nov 18th

The second chatusthaya is still capable of check and thin cloudings, owing to the non-fulfilment of tapas and prakasha. But this defect does not belong to itself; it is a reflex action from the violently obstinate obstruction to the vijnana. The yuddhalipsa and ananda in check and obstruction must be perfected in order to overcome this reactionary tendency. They will henceforward be insisted upon till they are secure from attack.

The force of the vijnana is once more clouded, but it is only for a short time.

The doubt & inertia are in error, not the tejas and tapas. It is true that the siddhi is successfully obstructed in the three positive chatusthayas, but the obstruction is itself a means for a greater siddhi. The mere physical impact on the prana, giving an impression of doubt, discouragement or asamata, is of no essential importance for the mind refuses to receive the impression & even the psychical prana rejects it quickly. The one thing that still affects the mind is doubt. The faith in the Adesh and in the rapidity of the siddhi is now about to establish itself beyond serious clouding in the light of Surya. It will take a few days to eliminate the causes of doubt, but they will produce no effect when they come.

The knowledge is once more satyam brihat with a more untrammelled & well combined brihat & a nearer approach to the perfect ritam. Moreover the rapid use of the faculties for ritam has now commenced. Formerly, the rule was that the first perceptions were confused & wrong and a slow & deliberate sanyama on the object was necessary for the satyaprakasha. Now, though it is not yet the rule that the first perceptions should be the correct perceptions, yet that is the tendency established and it is more often the attempts of doubt to correct the first perceptions that go wrong.

The rapid effectuality of the tapas is being prepared.

Yuddhalipsa is well-established. Ananda in the check is still unable to take firm possession of the prana, but it is there in the rest of the system. Owing to its weakness in the prana, it comes oftener retrospectively after the event than simultaneously with the event.

The tendency of the ritam has already increased to a powerful extent; it is only combated by the doubt & the twilight false stress on a misapplied perception.

Physical siddhi will be strongly resumed from today.

The bodily samata has now reached, in prolonged exposure to strong heat, the fixed stage of udasinata and nati, the former predominating, with touches of discomfort which are met & expelled by the titiksha. The ananda of heat is not yet strong & firm like the ananda of cold. Long exposure to strong cold has yet to be tested.

The kamananda is once more only occasional, but the Shakti will now attempt the firm foundation of the panchavidha sharirananda—kama, vishaya, tivra, raudra & vaidyuta.

Lipi is in itself entirely perfect except in the immediate spontaneity of manifestation, but the old indistinct lipis, intelligible but not legible, continue to recur from the old force of habit in the material ákásha, a habit artificially maintained long after all real justification for it has ceased. With this exception all that has to be added is the free & varied play of the lipi unbroken by intervals of non-manifestation.

Ananda of defeat has been reestablished by the revival of the brihat activity of the Vijnána. It will not again be allowed to be broken. But it must be assimilated with the Mahakali tapas; it must be not the acquiescent ananda of Mahasaraswati, but the temporary acceptance of Mahakali who takes defeat only as a step on the way to victory & presses forward immediately to the siddhi and yashahprápti.

There remains the removal of doubt and the physical depression habitually resulting from doubt.

The intensity of the physical dasyabuddhi has now revived without stimulation from the Aishwarya.

The positive samata of the sight is established in rasagrahana and bhoga of the bhukti; the ananda varies. Taste & sight are now well established and touch in all but strong painful touches or touches of persistent discomfort. The Bhoga of the ear is not yet perfect. Smell is well-established although still liable to be taken by surprise by the old sanskara. *Ananda of the senses has now to develop perfectly. Sensation has also to perfect bhukti*

The gunas of daya, naishturyam & krauryam are now well-developed; *they have yet to be harmonised.* The Pashu, Pishacha, Pramatha, Rakshasa have all now taken their seat; *they have to be harmonised & subjected to the Deva-Asura who will give them the bali.*

The Ananda of defeat is now right in temperament and well-established. The doubts of the Mahasaraswati vibhuti have not yet been set at rest; they persist and find their justification in the falterings of the siddhi and the continued success of the obstruction

The authority of the trikaldrishti and of the tapas are about to be finally established.

Ananda begun in all the vishayas, really deficient only in the sravana & in some sensations, but this difficulty will be removed this evening. The nirananda will only remain for a while in the swabhava environment.

20[1]
Nov 19th

The intellectual tapas in the trikaldrishti has still to be eliminated; it represents the old stress of desire and speculation and intellectual or pranic preference. Nevertheless, what has been suggested in the thought, will be found to be justified. In the next two or three days the vijnanasiddhi in all its parts will have arranged itself in the ritam.

---

[1] *Perhaps this indicates that the entry for the nineteenth was written on the twentieth.—Ed.*

Vishayananda is firmly based. It has now to be developed out of its covering shell into the initial intensity. The shell is merely the mass of the old sanskara of ashubham and asundaram

Intelligent faith in the intellectuality is still doubtful of the Adesha and of the rapidity of the siddhi. The doubt has three foundations,—the non-development of akasha rupa etc, the slowness of the physical siddhi and its present impotence in arogya, saundarya and utthapana and the denial of the equipment and the outer shakti. Ideal faith seeks to establish itself without any wide basis in the intelligence, but sinks back every time into the perception of a double possibility.

Premananda reestablished on a basis of firm finality; only the shadow of the negative bhava, udasinatá, affects its completeness, by denying it to men, especially of the strong Kali-type. On objects, children, animals, women etc it is fixed. The source of this denial is the old virakti with the mean & the sordid. This must now disappear.

The action of the vijnana in details must hereafter be recorded.

1. Yesterday's sortilege—promise of fulfilment of mental sankalpa

मनोमये चोदाहृतो मंत्री मनसो ब्रह्मविज्ञानसाधनत्वात्।

2 Today's—promise of fulfilment of third chatusthaya on the basis of the ananda

तृतीयो भृगुवल्ल्यध्यायः समाप्तः।

Ideal faith established, but without precision, the intellect consenting with the reservation of an adverse possibility, which, it considers, must be accepted in case of definite, strong & persistent amangalam. Full faith in eventual Yogasiddhi, but only a provisional faith in a relative rapidity.

3 द्वितीयि[ये]यमंकनावृत्तिः Given at the time when the chitrarupa was again manifesting after a long eclipse of inactivity.

Chitrarupa of groups, landscapes, human figures once more manifested freely as a result of aishwarya tapas. There is still some difficulty in forming of animals and isolated objects not being human figures. The old rare fixed perfection of Alipur jail is replaced by a great freedom & multiplicity with less fixity of the figures in some of the images & with a tendency of shifting & too rapid replacement of one chitra by another.

Faith has now to be established in the detail by the development of truth & effectuality.

The opposition to the firm continuity of the vijnana is the immediate obstacle to be overcome. This once done, the vijnana chatusthaya will of its own motion perfect itself rapidly.

The physical ananda is once more active in kama, vishaya, tivra & raudra sahaituka & ahaituka. The vaidyuta is still ill-established. *Drishti in its five parts is now about to be organised*

4 Drishti of the tejobhuta

5 Sparsha of sukshmajala.

Ananda is now established in all the vishayas, including sravana. The covering nirananda in the environing swabhava is not yet eliminated, but it is in itself insignificant in force.

There is a stronger obstruction to the permanent & continuous Brahmabodha.

Lipi—*Ego ready.* ie the divine Aham or chaitanyakendra is about to perfect itself.

All the five parts of the drishti are now active, although the sabda is still feeble. Vaidyuta ananda has confirmed itself in the vaidyuta.

Lipi—*The arrangement of the lipi.*

Since the prediction, the lipi has begun spontaneously to arrange itself in the akasha.

Power is now working out its results against a background of knowledge, not without resistance, but with increasing force. Telepathy is once more powerful and arranging its ritam. But both power & knowledge are still subject to confusion & ineffectiveness in the arrangement of exact time, place and circumstance. Only the large general results are secured & the main movements of things known. The knowledge (trikaldrishti & telepathy) is more advanced in power of detail than the Aishwarya.

The final transfer of intellectual activities to the ideality is now in rapid progress.

Rupa in akasha is once more manifesting successfully; all types of the three orders of image, crude, dense, developed, are manifesting, but still in low values & with one or two typical forms. The human form in the crude image is now beginning to manifest. Lifelike images also are reappearing but in flashes & without even a momentary stability. The animal form is now beginning to appear perfectly & more freely in the chitra, as also perfect forms of isolated objects.

The vijnana is not yet arranged, but being arranged.

Akasharupa appeared roughly, but clearly in the lifelike image, imperfectly against the background, amidst a very strong but confused activity of crude material.

=

Nov 20th

Growth of Akasharupa

Slackening of the knowledge and opposition to the power.

The day was chiefly occupied in writing the seven chatusthayas.[2]

Nov 21st Friday

The progress of the third chatusthaya was slightly interrupted yesterday. The lipi $2\frac{1}{2}$ refers immediately to the first two chatusthayas which are fulfilled, in spite of some imperfections in the second, and the third which is now half fulfilled. *Today, the third chatusthaya will open out yet farther.* (already fulfilled by 10.30 am).

There is a general attack, as usual, on the siddhis attained, which shows a few signs of success in the obstruction of the faith, knowledge and power, but is chiefly effective in the fourth and fifth chatusthayas.

The trikaldrishti is increasing in power and accuracy of circumstance, but still stumbles over the fixing of some of its perceptions and therefore suffers from uncertainty when, as often, the power of illumination is not sufficiently decisive.

Ritam of the aishwarya is preparing to arrange itself on a sounder base. The satyam of the tejas & tapas is now showing itself like the satyam of the prakasha,—a satyam not yet arranged; each output of power is shown to have its purpose & effect; but not always or even often the precise purpose & effect intended by the personal mind.

---

[2] *See pages 3–24.—Ed.*

The satyam brihat & initial ritam of the Power is now established and active in type. *The perfect knowledge & power have to be universalised, released from defect of detail & from attack & harmoniously combined.* The first necessity is to increase its power over matter and over life. *In the general play on the subject (oneself & others) it will soon perfect itself automatically.*

Ananda remains firm, except in the shariranananda which is subject to much variation and interruption.

The application of the lipi $2\frac{1}{2}$ to the sharirachatusthaya must now proceed. Ananda must be made permanent, arogya perfected & secured from attack, utthapana restored to its lost activity & effectiveness. Meanwhile the obstruction to saundarya must be steadily destroyed.

Nov 22$^{\text{d}}$

The touches on the second chatusthaya still continue, but have no power or permanence—except in the imperfection of the faith and the consequent quiescence of the Chandibhava—.

On the whole, the first chatusthaya is finally secure; the second & in the third jnana & prakamyavyapti are firm in spite of waverings & temporary eclipses, to a less extent the trikaldrishti; similarly the lipi; rupa and samadhi are secure in their beginnings but fitful in their activity. Subjective ananda is perfect, but for occasional half obscurations. The powers are perfect in type, uncertain in application.

No definite advance during the day

Nov 23$^{\text{d}}$

Trikaldrishti once more confused in ritam and full of falsely-applied prakamic suggestions. Opposition to the third chatusthaya strong & massive, possessing the akasha & successful usually wherever it applies itself. Ananda & samata attacked though not overborne. Faith in Yogasiddhi and in a relative rapidity reemerges always but is troubled with a strong uncertainty about the Adesha-siddhi

The truth of the prakamya has been signally proved, but the truth of the pure trikaldrishti remains yet to be perfectly proved.

The struggle over the trikaldrishti continues; the success of the pure trikaldrishti is now much more common, but still marred by the false suggestions of hostile agencies. Sahitya is for the time entirely discontinued. Rupa has fallen back into its crude conditions, only two or three habitual forms appearing with any perfection. Lifelike images have once more failed to establish themselves.

The whole of the past asiddhi is being now thrown violently on the system, but cannot keep its footing there or even establish a footing. The samata has at last been touched owing to a false use of rajasic tejas, but the touch could not produce its after effects in the system. All this is really occurring in the swabhava environment. Nov 20 to 23^{d} may be taken as an adverse period of which this is the crowning movement. Although the resistance to the third chatusthaya will continue for a time, it will collapse and give place to a more rapid siddhi.

The apprehensions of immediate failure in the kriti are unfounded.

The struggle is over the absolute & detailed correctness of the various instruments of knowledge & effectuality of the instruments of Power. This struggle will not be over today. It will begin to decide itself in favour of the siddhi from this evening. The superficial restlessness, ashanti, vexation (there is no duhkha) are the old impure form of the rejection, the necessary rejection of an unjustifiably repeated & prolonged asiddhi & anrita.

24 NOVEMBER – 2 DECEMBER 1913

Nov 24th

The record between 11th & 23 Nov. entered on separate sheets. The record was discontinued after the 20th September,[1] as often before, because it was found that the habit of miscalculation still persisted, temporary success being mistaken for final fixity etc. None of the siddhis are yet finally perfect. Even the first which is nearest to absolute finality has been disturbed yesterday & has not yet recovered its balance. It is firm in the mass, but not on the surface of the mentality. In the second a temporary perfection, deficient only in faith, abhayam, ishwarabhava, was broken, it is indicated, in order that the dasatya & tapatya buddhi might be combined, taking the place of the old alternation between passive and udasina dasya-buddhi and active egoistic tapas; the combination represents the right Mahakali tapas. As a result the Maheshwari pratistha is more covered than before, & the relapse from rajasic excitement to udasina shanti is no longer entirely permitted. Faith in the rapidity of the Yogasiddhi and in the adeshasiddhi has been shaken by yesterday's movement; even the faith in the Yogasiddhi was temporarily tarnished, though not entirely suspended. The Akasharupa after a half-successful or initially successful attempt to recover its former activity, has fallen back into the crude, rudimentary & disorganised condition from which it was trying to emerge. Lipi is obstructed and only exceptionally legible, though generally intelligible to the perceptions by an imperfect legibility. The faculties of knowledge & power are once more in a state of confusion and the samadhi still unable to organise itself or manifest permanently its previous realisations. The fourth chatusthaya is still in the state of asiddhi. Saundaryabodha is once more obstructed, but rasa, priti & bhoga of the subjective Ananda in outward things seem to hold their own. Internal Ananda is superficially broken up, though still sound at the core.

---

[1] *This and the following entries were written in the notebook last used on 20/21 September. The entries of 22 – 30 September were written in a different notebook. They appear to have been forgotten, or else were not counted as "Record". — Ed.*

=

The guiding vani has now begun to descend consistently from above and manifest in the vijnanabuddhi. Manifestation in the manasabuddhi is henceforth to be discouraged, — not only of the vani, but of the knowledge & power movements. The script is also assuming consistently the same character. This is no new movement, but the culmination of a movement that has long been in progress.

1. Lipi — *Intellectual kinesis* — ie to be finally discontinued.

2. The samata has now to be based no longer on udasinata but on nati with chanda samánanda (Vani); the sukham is not to be shanta sukham, but chanda sukham, centred therefore in Chandibhava of Mahakali, not in its own chatusthaya, nor on the Maheshwari pratistha. (thought-perception sruti-smriti).

Last night the vijnana-buddhi made a preliminary self-arrangement, which has been disturbed this morning & gives glimpses of itself only through clouds. This vijnanabuddhi has now to arrange its movements in the surya jyotis.

Kamananda has to recover its recurrent activity.

The tapas, active in the lower estate of being in front of a veiled Chit and blind to it or to all but a few illuminations from it mostly ill-directed by the gropings of the manas in the twilight of the manasa buddhi, is in the higher estate of being and must therefore be in this siddhi, first a selected activity of the Chit on the background of the luminous Chit and ultimately a reproduction or cumulative result of the Chit. Henceforward therefore the tapas and the faculties of power, aishwarya, ishita, vashita must be habituated to act on the background of the knowledge, first as the selected activity, then as the cumulative result. Knowledge of the general state of being & of the forces at work in any given Apas is now fairly perfect in wideness (brihat) & in satyam; but the defect of the ritam arises in the attempt of manasabuddhi either as stress of speculation, mental knowledge tapas, (manasasmriti, judgment, imagination, memory working on observation & by inference) or as stress of mental will-tapas to select the event or the decisive force out of the Sat & the Tapas. Henceforth the tapas must act on the basis of the vijnanabuddhi eliminating the remnants of mental tapas of will & knowledge.

The full asamata is once more manifest in the system, with duhkham, and the authority of the sources of knowledge is denied; conflicting assertions are once more proceeding from the vani.

Afternoon.. The old form of samata with dhairyam & persistency in the tapas, but with no faith or pure ananda in the upper layer of the mentality, has been established; the Mahakali tapas is in abeyance. The present occasion therefore presents all the features of the old relapses into asiddhi. The only things that have hitherto held firm are some of the incomplete siddhis, eg vyaptiprakamya, physical ananda etc.

Sarvasaundaryabodha struggles to reestablish itself, but is only partially successful. On the other hand there is complete rasagrahana &, except with regard to human faces, rasapriti & rasabhoga of physical vishayas. Sravana has been a little lowered in the surety & completeness of its bhoga, but not substantially.

The Shakti is now strengthening the yuddhananda and parajayananda in the system, as it was through the insufficiency of this ananda that the collapse of these two days was effected. The Mahakali tapas is once more repossessing the system.

In the evening strong akasharupa of all types, but in one rupa (cards), the lifelike forms instantaneous & unstable. Strong aishwarya. Exact trikaldrishti more frequent than formerly and error less extensive.

Nov 25th

Faith is not yet restored, nor is the disorder in the system yet righted; touches of lighter asamata continue. On the other hand the siddhis persist, though in a state of imperfection and alternating or mixed with [asiddhi].[2] Vijnanabuddhi is not yet established. Shanta udasinata mixed with active movements of ananda is the prevailing condition.

---

[2] *MS* siddhi

The news in the papers today seems to indicate, if entirely true, the samula vinasha of the Europeanised revolutionary movement in India. If that is a true indication, it is a step in the right direction; but appearances are so deceitful that future events must be watched before the indication can be trusted. The old confidence in the selective trikaldrishti as opposed to the trikaldrishti of tendencies & possibilities has been too much undermined for me to accept any longer even the most obvious suggestions, especially where the mind interprets events in the sense of my own desires.

Trikaldrishti, it is evident, is still only fitfully correct in its selective & determinative activity, but increasingly perfect in the pure perceptive. This however acts within a very small range.

Rupa (Akasharupa & chitra) is now growing stronger. Clear human figures in the akasha are becoming frequent. Communication of Yoga by vyapti to those practising in the immediate vicinity is also becoming stronger.

Aishwarya is no longer an occasional output of will working upon an obstinate plastic material, but a powerful Shakti struggling with another powerful Shakti. The opposing force is still habitually the occupant of the Akasha and successful when not overborne by a strong & persistent pressure. The weakness of this movement, although it is capable of bringing about sudden powerful results, is that it establishes only a momentary force in the Akasha, instead of a permanently growing Power of Nature in the material ether which will form a dominant centre of Kali always responsive to the Purusha in this Adhara. It is noticeable that when this Shakti fails in its effort, the object after executing a contrary or different movement, returns to fulfil the original will when the struggle is over. This seems to show that the adverse Power in the akasha is also not a native of the Akasha & therefore has little more staying power than the Shakti of this Adhara. It is stronger only by use of the previously existing natural obstruction in the ether considered as a plastic material. It is also noticeable that when the object sits tight in its resistance, circumstances often arrive which compel it to execute the willed movement. None of these features are new; they date from the commencement of this sadhana (of the vijnana) three years ago (in 1910 on first coming to Pondicherry). At times they have seemed to be on the point of being corrected in the sense of a perfect siddhi (within a very limited range) & so it was more than once confidently recorded; but now the same features occur in a much wider range of activity. This is apparently what is immediately intended by a recent lipi, "It is useless to distinguish life from Yogasiddhi." It remains to be seen whether, as is suggested, these limitations are so powerfully brought forward, because they are on the point of being removed. The last defect is the tendency to create only a temporary result, then relapse, then succeed, & so slowly move to some kind of final success. Unless this defect is removed the rapidity so often promised cannot come.

The Brahmadrishti is now well-regulated, but still depends on smarana, the Sarva, Ananta & Ananda are more prominent than the Jnana Brahman.

Nov 26th

The force of the Aishwarya is now showing itself in a well-established generality of efficacy, but not either of invariable or of ordinarily complete efficacy. There are exceptions in which there seems to be no effect, or only a slight temporary impulse or movement.

Today utthapana has been firmly resumed, after some futile beginnings in the past month, with the horizontal position of the arms; the force of laghima and mahima has greatly increased in the interval of non-practice, the defect of anima diminished. At the first attempt (6 am) either arm maintained itself easily for 17 minutes or 15 with only a slight defect of anima, more in the left arm than the right, and a pressure of adhogati that only became pronounced at the end. Kamananda is again increasing on the body. The Will has resumed its pressure on the body for saundarya.

Utthapana of the left arm (horizontal position) resumed & continued from 10-49 to 11-49, one hour, the adhogati asserting itself with some force, but much less than formerly, during the last ten minutes. Strong pain given to the system (burning in the eyelids by the flaming tip of a match, and muscular pain of indigestion in the breast & back) showed that the sparshas habitual[ly] causing pain can no longer entirely shut out ananda, even when they are very powerful, but can temporarily overpower them. In all cases there is rasagrahana, but not pritih or ananda. Pritih is only beginning. Kamananda is resuming its former maithuna intensity.

An extension of the jnanam Brahma has brought into play a rich action of the telepathic trikaldrishti. Hitherto what was seen were the immediate forces of possibility & actuality in operation outside the living objects which act, pranad ejad, proceeding from elemental or other powers who people the universe; inside the living object were seen the mental states, feelings, impulses, tendencies, thoughts, nervous & physical states, proper to the conscious waking mind; now a fresh element enters with the clear perception of the dominant idea in the superconscious dream-mind (manomaya purusha), which dictates usually the ultimate action. Beyond this is the non-telepathic trikaldrishti which can alone perceive what is the unalterable eventuality actually destined. This perception is contained in the sleep mind of the manomaya purusha, where all beings know the past, present & future. The rest is a matter of range, arrangement & proper action of the knowledge. The perception is now goagram aswapeshasam.

Utthapana of the neck, raised position, maintained for a quarter of an hour; not yet at ease; laghima & mahima partially manifest, anima defective.

Swapnasamadhi in the afternoon; fragmentary conversations (“dialogue”, lipi predicted before sleep) of two persons accompanied with images but no complete group (eg Kedar Das Gupta, long forgotten), combination of image, shabda & action, etc, attempt also at continued action; but all in chhayamayi.

Power & knowledge are once more returning to the satyam, ritam & brihat, but ritam is very largely retrospective. Dasyam is fixed & powerful in the body, not yet usually intense. Swapnasamadhi is becoming once more brihat, but there is little of the ritam; in dream proper the associations of present ego & its images are still potent & prevent right vision, but incoherence is now slight.

Utthapana of the left arm again for 17 minutes; the reminiscent muscular pain exercised its pressure with varying force but not so much as to make adhogati successful. Utthapana of the legs, simultaneously, was unsuccessful.

Nov 27th

Utthapana of the left arm for one hour. Some heaviness of the muscles at the beginning developing into muscular pain of a slight character and pressure of the adhogati but at no time sufficient to menace overcoming of the utthapana. At the end capacity still left for half an hour's utthapana.

General ritam of the knowledge, including trikaldrishti, grows rapidly, general ritam of the power is only preparing. Interpretation of the lipi is moving to the state of general ritam.

Kamananda, again manifest chiefly or wholly in the states of rest of the body, sitting or lying, now again tends towards manifestation in the postures of exertion, standing or walking.

Ananda is now confirming itself in all that hitherto kept anything of the nature of apriyam in the subjective & the objective being; it has also begun to fill up inequalities, beginning with the taste.

Utthapana of the neck only for 9 and 12 minutes; adhogati powerful; of the leg (middle position) for 22 minutes; the force of the urdhwagati not pronounced, pressure of adhogati on the muscle.

Nov 28th

Utthapana of the neck for half an hour; Mahima & laghima were strong though not yet entirely perfect, but Anima very defective; strong & troublesome pressure on the nerves & veins of the neck and back of the head, but not an overpowering pressure. Utthapana of the right leg for 7 minutes only in the middle position, Anima & Mahima very weak, laghima satisfactory; of either leg successfully in the horizontal position for 5 and 6 minutes, Mahima insufficient, Anima very weak. The morning chiefly spent in Veda & Life Divine. Subjective siddhis dull owing to flagging of the Vijnanabuddhi. In this reactionary state Ananda is dull in the purely physico-vital parts of the indriyas though strong in the mental and intelligent parts, the other siddhis sink to a low intensity and show whatever imperfections are still defectively purged out of them. Mahasaraswati tapas with the Maheshwari basis sometimes covered, sometimes visible through a thin veil of Mahasaraswati bhava.

Recurrence on a small scale of the crisis of asiddhi in the first two chatusthayas centred in asraddha. After repeating the stereotyped movements, it gradually disappeared, leaving however a diminished faith and tapas.

Nov 29th

Utthapana of the neck in middle position for 15 minutes with great difficulty owing to violent An-anima; laghima at first weak afterwards strong enough to fill the place of a deficient mahima. Utthapana of both legs, middle position, for 5 minutes only, very defective. Utthapana of back, higher position, for 3 minutes; laghima & mahima a little stronger than formerly. The subjective siddhis not yet advanced. Kamananda sometimes intense, sometimes suppressed or subdued; general atmosphere of violent suppression. The assimilation has been resumed & is more in the control of the tapas; tendency to constipation diminished; free evacuation after 4 days, slight evacuations on the second and third. Health has been greatly strengthened

Discomfort of cold and heat is being extruded from the body, but recurs, especially when it is of the nature of a surprise, eg the sudden touch of cold water in a chilly atmosphere, and the Shakti in the physical nerve system has not time to send a sufficient force of Chittapas to meet & assimilate the sparsha.

Kamananda now comes without the smarana; it is more frequent and has a more constant tendency towards intensity.

Nov 30th.

Utthapana of the left leg, horizontal position lying on the side, half an hour. Laghima strong, mahima sufficient, violent an-anima in the sinew or nerve; of the right leg, horizontal position, lying on the back, ten minutes; urdhwagati deficient; of the neck, middle position, 20 minutes, difficulty of an-anima much reduced. In the afternoon utthapana of the right leg, lying on the side, 10 minutes, violent an-anima in the sinew compelled cessation, although laghima and mahima were sufficient.

Kamananda established itself in standing & walking.

Chitra of animal & inanimate forms suddenly strengthened; there is, however, still some resistance.

In the evening jnana of perception & jnana of vangmaya were reorganised with finality as well as lipi in all but material legibility. A movement was made to the same end in the rest of the vijnana, especially in swapnasamadhi where all the obstinate defects of the past broke down initially in type. Poetry resumed

Dec 1st

The whole day has been devoted to a struggle, attended by revived asiddhi & relapse into all the circumstances of mentality, to establish the organisation of the ritam in trikaldrishti, telepathy etc on the basis of entire Brahmabodha including especially the jnanam Brahma. The one positive result is the intensity of the Brahma bodha. Subjective ananda has ceased in the prema, except occasionally; the chidghana is assailed by obstructions which prevent the secure possession of its bhoga, & even in some habitual features of the ideal rasagrahana and priti.

Utthapana of the right arm for half an hour without difficulty in the horizontal position, and after an interval of three minutes for another half hour against an increasing pressure of an-anima. Advantage was taken of the muscular stress to confirm the ananda (rasa, priti & bhoga) of strong & insistent muscular pain.

Kamananda at night began to recur in the state of samadhi

Dec 2d

Utthapana of the legs, horizontal position, successively, a failure due to entire defect of anima and for the most part of mahima. Like the Brahmabuddhi yesterday, the Brahmaprema today was universalised and raised to a high intensity, bringing with it entire premananda on men, animals, objects & events. The movement now is to confirm all the anandas, except the physical, & the subjective siddhi generally, prema, kama, shama in the Ekam Brahma, so assuring it on the bahu, & no longer perfected by application through the Avidya to each object separately. So far as that movement was necessary, it has been accomplished, but it can only be finally safeguarded from interruption & relapse by being secured in the ekatwadrishti of buddhi, heart, indriyas & sanjna generally. The vani & script yesterday were confirmed in their proper nature as proceeding from the ananda & involving the vijnana. Faith also has been established in the truth of the instruments of knowledge; the satyam brihat is entirely confirmed & the truth of misapplied satyam is habitually perceived either before, with or after the event. The ritam however is yet defective, although its hold on the active consciousness increases & there is still uncertainty about the Adeshasiddhi & consequently about the entire rapidity of the physical siddhi & karmasiddhi. The rest is felt to be assured, since all the members are rapidly growing [in] force. There is constant pressure of the will on the asaundarya, but its compact resistance is yet far from being broken.

In the afternoon the resistance to the Will had entirely the upper hand and a period of Asiddhi began, with its usual circumstances. This movement has continued since and such siddhi as manifests, appears with difficulty and as from behind a veil. The successful contradiction in all the Chatusthayas continues, although hitherto it has not been so acute as in the more successful invasions.

Swapnasamadhi continues to grow in strength, especially in initial continuity of scenic action and coherence & intelligibility of lipi. Akasharupa is not yet able to confirm itself in the Akasha, but it manifests with an imperfect & fragmentary persistence. The frequency of vivid lipi is much obstructed.

The attempt in the Brahmabodha to unify the upalabdhi of the Atman & of the Ishwara with the upalabdhi of the Brahman has begun, but is not yet successful. Separately, they are all well developed. The sadhana of pleasure in pain continues and the success is general, but not yet complete in the intenser touches.

Dec 3d [3]

---

[3] *No entry was made under this date. One and a half pages were left blank before the next entry in this notebook, that of 12 December.—Ed.*

1–12 DECEMBER 1913

Dec 1.

1. The slow strengthening of the Occidental and Oriental States which have been indicated as selected nations—Persia, Turkey, Egypt, & for a time China & Japan; Ireland, France, Italy, Mexico, Brazil, Chile & Peru,—the discouragement of the shakti of the others.

2. In India,
   (1) the amalgamation of all powers under a single control
   (2) the provision of equipment & means for their work
   (3) their protection in the period of growth.

All this has to be done not by material means, but by tapas of the ideality through Aishwarya, Ishita, Vashita. The single control is God's own, not any intermediary's. During the peripeties a certain number of untoward incidents are inevitable; they must be minimised and finally obviated.

3. The strengthening of the centre, not only in self, but in outward reputation, means & power, so as to render it intangible.

═

The first necessity is perfect vijnanabuddhi and Brahmabuddhi. Neither of these are unprogressive, but neither are allowed to establish themselves firmly in the system owing to the constant successful invasion of the asiddhi, which no longer confines itself to this or that particularity, but seeks to cover the whole field. Nevertheless, the nodus of the asiddhi is unfaith based on uncertainty as to whether the central theory of the Yoga, namely the Apas, Tapas & Adesha is not a falsehood and a self-delusion. Much more than the doubt

On 1 December Sri Aurobindo began a separate Record on loose sheets of paper. On 12 December he returned to the notebook that he had used for most of the Record of 1913. There are entries both in the notebook and on the loose sheets for three dates: 1, 2 and 12 December.

about the rapidity, is this the root of the whole disorder. No part of the siddhi has been allowed to remain free from the successful attack of the Asiddhi. If any part were firmly acquired, the rapid addition of the rest could not be resisted with any hope of success. As it is, the siddhi progresses & even progresses rapidly but with a broken & resisted rapidity.

Much was expected of yesterday's movement, but it has been followed up by a struggle, not a victory. The intensifying of the Brahmabuddhi is the one positive gain, & to this may be added the firm extension of the brihat in the jnana with the mixed satya & anrita of trikaldrishti & telepathy. The difficulty is in the insufficient strengthening of the decisive viveka & the insufficient finality of the transfer of the intellectual movements to the vijnanabuddhi. The lipi announcing the finality of the transfer referred only to the completion of the process, not to the security of the results attained. The attack has destroyed the conditions of the vijnana manifestation and they have to be reconstituted in the active consciousness. There is as yet no finality of settled truth or settled effectiveness.

This is one side of the truth; the other is that the transfer has been finally secured, since it is only in appearance that the ideality has been disintegrated in the active consciousness. The disintegration is real to the intellectual judgment, not to the viveka.

=

Dec. 2.

The Adesha-siddhi is seen to be more possible than before, but not yet certain in fact, still less in time and extent. The confirmation of the faculties of knowledge in certainty, the confirmation of the faculties of power in effectiveness are the means by which the faith in the Adesha-siddhi will be established. At present both of these are effectively resisted in the outer swabhava; while the first two chatusthayas are effectively resisted only by invasion from the outer world-environment. This confirmation need not at first extend to invariable certainty & effectiveness, but to the exclusion of general uncertainty & general ineffectiveness. At present it is seen that the power can produce given particular effects, but its control of the final effect is still poor, & so long as this is so, it cannot be held to be siddha. Nevertheless, the hold on the final effect is increasing in force.

Dec. 3

There has been a relapse, as powerful as the combined forces of the outer world could make it. The attack on the samata has been furious and has had some superficial success, but the dhana, the parvata remains unmoved & intact. The second chatusthaya has been successfully inhibited from its full & arranged action, but here too the success is superficial. The third has been partially affected in knowledge, entirely in the unfinished parts of power; not at all in samadhi. The rest has been obstructed, not really affected. The fourth & fifth have been obstructed & to a certain extent injured.

The first thing, as always, is to restore the anandamaya action of the vijnanabuddhi and Brahmabuddhi. This after a long interval is being done. Dispelling & expelling of the intellectual & emotional activity forced again on the system is the indispensable preliminary, and this is often difficult because it entangles itself, by habit or of deliberate purpose, with the legitimate action. Absolute passivity, absolute sraddha in the Master of All, is the means. There is no other means. It is essential that all should be recognised as the being & action of the Ishwara and yet that the two agencies Arya & Anarya should be distinguished.

Dec 4.

The passivity & sraddha are being established, first, without any demand, but always with the udasina lipsa. The tapas is not yet pure of the temperamental stress left by desire & preference. There is still a preference, but of tapas purely, not of Ananda. The full Mahakali Mahasaraswati Tapas cannot manifest without a greater power of vijnana. There must now emerge the determinative knowledge & the determinative aishwarya, forming the ritam of the jnana & tejas, satyatapatya, satyadrishti.

Henceforth the tamas will be steadily eliminated from the pranic system & the body. The perceptions are real in themselves, not right in the mental impression produced.

Dec 5—

There must be the full activity of the kriti; only the means must first come. No more action without means. Therefore a period of repose is necessary; for self-collection & for emergence. The opposite tendency belongs to the intellectual tejas.

The action of the intellectual tejas is still habitual as an involuntary accompaniment to internal & external activity. Its removal is the condition of perfect vijnana. There must be no straining after truth of knowledge or efficacy of power, but natural prakasha and tapas.

The freedom of the mind from intellectual speculation is being restored. The asiddhi that has come is assisting the reestablishment of the second chatusthaya on the basis of a perfected nati and samata. The positive ananda, sraddha and Mahakali tapas have now to be restored. There was a slight disturbance, but it has righted itself; only the result is the tapas without the sraddha. As for the ananda, it is there & will now be entirely confirmed.

There is the beginning of the satya tejas & satya tapas, but only as yet the beginning.

Dec 6—

The pressure of the old tejas has been removed from the central system, but it still surrounds the nature. When that is dispelled then the present difficulties will disappear. At present it seems that the intellectuality is justified in certain of its conclusions; but on the contrary it is the ideality. The clearance of the doubt has only begun. All that may be true, yet the ideality may be justified.

Dec 7.

No appearance of failure should be allowed to affect the fundamental faith. It is true that the defect of overstress in the knowledge has not been cured, the struggle to establish the ritam seems to have failed, the Vani seems once more to have misled; but all this will be cleared as soon as this siege of the environment is lifted.

It is now clear that the brihat satyam of telepathy & telepathic trikaldrishti is perfect in all but thought & even, though more obstructed, in the thought. It is clear also that the positive trikaldrishti which decides & arranges or is itself naturally the ritam is on the point of perfection, but prevented from consistently manifesting. The satya tejas & satya tapas have first to be perfectly manifested.

Now the satyam, brihat & an imperfect ritam of the tapas in aishwarya, ishita [&] vashita, have been manifested in a series of movements. This siddhi also is liable to interruption and obscuration, but for the future it stands & will always emerge from the obscuration & overcome the interruption. The confirmation of these powers in the Yoga, the life, the body is awaited.

The instances of successful tapas are becoming more frequent, as predicted in the lipi, & are on the point of generality. The lipi "ruler of the subjectivity of others" is also being justified. What has now to be done is to break down the remaining resistance, whether near or at a distance, whether in subjectivity or objectivity, whether in sadhana or life. Although it is not apparent, this can be done rapidly.

Finally, the success of the siddhi in knowledge is now well founded. The ritam has begun to be well-established & increasingly powerful everywhere. It is now being developed & fixed in the tejasic touches, at the side, in the lipi & the telepathy of thought. It is already dominant in the central viveka & the general telepathy. The foundation has been laid for the final transfer of the thought & knowledge from the vijnanabuddhi to the vijnana.

The powers of Tapas increase in their dominance & insistence. Samadhi, manifesting from time to time, shows always a little more progress. Only the rupa is now strongly obstructed.

Dec 8.

The Tapas having confirmed its general force in particular actions, seeks now to get at the centre of the Bhuh-Prakriti and command final result. The movement in saundarya is still positively adverse & in the rest stationary with a tendency to relapse.

The script has been justified; it will therefore continue to deal with future as well as present; but all instruments are still weak in exactness of time & place & order. The distant future is also not yet included in the range of their proper action, except in isolated examples. Today, that will begin to be remedied.

The physical siddhi will revive from today, beginning with the Anandas. The health & utthapana will rapidly follow in the next two or three days. Already physical ananda (kama) is becoming common in samadhi & dream & seeks to prolong itself there. It needs now only fixity in continuity & intensity.

The physical ananda has already begun its battle for fixity with a series of initial successes. These are now confirmed by an outbreak of ahaituka maithunananda unparalleled as yet in its prolonged continuity & intensity. The continuity & intensity are now being constantly repeated, though the ahaituka maithunananda is still rare.

Dec 9.

The growth of ananda & preparation of health are being fulfilled. Utthapana remains.

There has once more been a storm in the subjective ananda due to the siege of egoistic mentality from the environment centred in the intellectuality. This will now pass away & the finally perfected knowledge & power prevail steadily & swiftly over the ajnana.

The second chatusthaya has once more been reestablished on the basis of the Mahakali Tapas & the nati, not yet of the perfect sraddha

There must be utthapana this afternoon & evening, basing, although at first imperfectly, the rapid development of the perfect secondary utthapana. The primary is well developed, but as yet imperfect & subject to interruption; but it soon recovers itself.

The teeth are once more after a long eclipse recovering the tendency to perfect whiteness. This is a sign of saundarya struggling to overcome the strong block of asaundarya.

Utthapana of both arms from 1.34 to 4.34 — first hour and a half medial or half-medial position, second hour & half vertical position; some spasmodic efforts at active ananima ineffective, they only gave trouble for a few minutes during the third half hour, then disappeared. Reflex strain in the back, but gave no trouble. The whole, except for two quarter hours of sitting, done while walking. Primary utthapana perfected. For the arms only the horizontal position has now to be fully tested. Therefore utthapana of the left arm in the horizontal position was continued from 4.34 to 5.4. Violent ananima applied from above as an actual downward pressure of pain on the muscle, but the mahima & laghima defied the strain, which finally began to lose its acuteness while increasing in a dull & heavy pressure. This is the first time the utthapana has been so prolonged; the longest previous period even for the vertical position, lying down, which has long been entirely conquered, was 3 hours.

Ananda has been persistent, except for discontinuance at night & early this morning, but it has been more in the suppressed & subdued forms than in the intensity.

Utthapana of the left leg, medial position, for half an hour. Mahima insufficient; no pronounced ananima.

Dec 10.

The same break in the physical Ananda. Health is strengthening itself, but not yet established. There is also a disturbance in the third chatusthaya owing to the outbreak of excessive stress usually associated with the Mahakali Tapas. There is, however, no reaction. The tapas is fixed & indeed the whole second chatusthaya except the sraddha in the Adeshasiddhi.

Today the basis of the faith has to be soundly laid. The renewed attack on the health must be pushed away and arogya founded, though not yet perfected, in the deficient parts. Only the kamachakra remains for a slower process. Utthapana has to be prepared in the other parts of the body. Rupa develops more perfectly.

Utthapana of the neck for 20 minutes. Laghima & Mahima deficient except at the end; the an-anima was strong at first but afterwards diminished. Its effects remained in the muscles of the neck

Utthapana of the right leg failed in mahima; first for 5 minutes, then fifteen; in the back also it failed. There was a general lassitude in the body as the result of yesterday's tapasya.

Rupa more perfect in one or two occasional forms or flashes, but no more decisively advanced than yesterday.

Dec. 11—

The Mahakali tapas persists in spite of attack & pressure, but feels the pressure & tends to relapse more in personality than tapas towards the Mahasaraswati form. The ugrata of the faith & tapas has abated in obedience to ill-result aided by the quieting effects of relief from the immediate amangala.

Rupa grows stronger, but cannot stabilise in the Akasha.

Kamananda interrupted at night, but resumed in the morning with less difficulty than on the previous days of its interruption.

The new attack on the health seems to have been repulsed, but old fragments of roga still prevail by a dull obstinacy of persistence.

Utthapana of the right leg, medial position, for half an hour; some difficulty owing to artificial pressure from above taking advantage of insufficient laghima & mahima; of the left, horizontal, for ten minutes, with great difficulty. Mahima very insufficient; ananima strong. Utthapana of the left, medial position, reclining in arm-chair, for hour and quarter; laghima very strong, mahima involved in laghima, ananima expelled, but sometimes recurrent

Strong attack on the first three chatusthayas, successful in disturbing samata & clouding sraddha, but resultant in confirmation of the Mahakali-Mahasaraswati form of the personality & the growth of the ugrata. Vijnana very full & active in jnana in the morning, disturbed for the rest of the day.

Dec 12 –

The strong confusion of the thought perceptions caused by a violent attack of the Evil in mind now takes the form of distorted interpretations involved in right perceptions which are seized, exaggerated & by exaggeration & overstress falsified in the mortal mind. The kamananda yesterday was persistent & of the initial intensity, but not continuous; as usual it was forcibly suspended at night & recovered, this time on waking, also by force, but its firm recovery combated for a while. The struggle over arogya continues, undecided, although at present arogya is stronger than the attack. The siddhi of Power has been thrown back & there must be a struggle fought out once more to expel the asiddhi from the Akasha. Kamananda this morning persistent, intense and insistent on growth; it is still obstructed in its attempt to pervade & possess the body.

12–21 DECEMBER 1913

Dec 12th.

The developments of the Yoga from the 1st to the 12th have been noted on separate sheets; this interruption is a concession to the transitional disturbances that result from the constant and almost unintermitting siege of the world-environment. In future it is intended to disregard the siege in its results, merely noting its recurrence, except where its results are positive & produced in the yet unestablished movements of the siddhi.

The faith in the eventual Yogasiddhi can no longer be interrupted; for, even when the opposite suggestion is made & supported by the rationally irrational intellect of infinite possibility, the unfaith is rejected & thrown back into its proper element. The faith in the rapidity of the Yogasiddhi is also positive in its substance, except with regard to saundaryam & karma, but varies in its intensity and incidence. Only the faith in the Adeshasiddhi is still in the inchoate condition.

The transfer of the perceptive & determinative intellectuality to the ideal plane has been violently & artificially retarded for the last two or three days by rushes of cloud & confusion, by a constant hammering of apparent refutation & ill-result at the sraddha. Nevertheless it is still being steadily pursued under all difficulties and is now about to be extended to the movements of tapas & tejas, which like the prakasha, must be made entirely satyam & ritam in the brihat. In the prakasha it is the perceptions of actuality & especially of determinative event in the actuality which are the remaining centre of deficiency and their imperfection is intimately connected with the common action of asatya tejas & asatya tapas in the Will powers & Will-states. Chitra & samadhi, obstinately obstructed, progress with a hampered slowness which cannot yet convert itself into rapidity.

Arogya struggles towards finality; kamananda grows &

persists, stimulating from time to time other anandas; utthapana has definitely entered on its final uninterrupted progression; saundaryam alone remains ineffective & uneffected.

Karmasiddhi awaits the faith in the Adeshasiddhi.

Kamananda throughout the day was active, insistent except for intervals of forcible obstruction, recurrent when not continuous; but in the sitting or lying position, estopped for the time in the erect or in ambulation.

The siege was allowed to prevail in the evening so far as temporarily to interrupt the faith & knowledge & produce old & long discontinued movements.

Utthapana throughout the day was unsuccessful.

Akasharupa is still in the same condition, manifesting, but unable to possess & hold the Akash, an intruder & not a resident.

Arogya still struggles, on the whole with a qualified success, against the fragmentarily recurrent or persistently recurrent denials of arogya. These denials are fragmentarily recurrent in the phlegm, cough & neuralgia (& in itch — except one spot,) & unable to fasten on the body, persistent, without itch, in the eruption, persistently recurrent in the slighter ailments of the digestion. The tendency of urination has been much reduced during the last three or four days.

Dec 13th

The siege has, today, been lifted, but the full vijnana is not yet manifest. At present the siddhis of power are being allowed to manifest through the Bhuvar tapas or the Swar-tapas on the objectivity. Manifesting through the Bhuvar tapas the Will tends to produce powerfully immediate results & more intermittently, often by indirect means & after much tergiversation, final results; manifesting through the Swar tapas it fastens more often on general than on particular effectualities or seizes only on the general effect & some of the effectuating movements. When the pure Chittapas manifests in vijnanabuddhi & manasbuddhi, there is a more consistent simultaneous & sometimes identical knowledge & effectuality, but the manasabuddhi is constitutionally averse or unable to hold for a long time the continuous activity of the Chittapas. When this Power is thus active through vijnanabuddhi & manasabuddhi, the knowledge also tends to lapse back from the ideality to these organs. It is now especially at home in vijnanabuddhi, where it perceives all or most of the forces at work, the possibilities, many of the immediate actualities & sometimes the eventual actuality. The movement is now towards a levelling up of the siddhis of Power & siddhis of knowledge. Script & vani have been made manifest to the mind in such a way that the real script & real vani can be distinguished from their secondary reproductions & from false simulations. Egoistic activity has been once more expelled and driven back into the world-environment. The Jiva is now only a secondary ishwara, bhokta, bharta & jnata receiving all things as a centre of enjoyment & lordship for the Purushottama.

Kamananda is once more active in the erect position and during movement of the body, but intermittently, not with continuity. There is an initial movement towards its recovered action at night and in samadhi.

Trikaldrishti of telepathy has once more manifested; it has two movements, one purely receptive, in which the movements past, present & future of an object reach the mind, but there is no active knowledge or discrimination of their actuality & relations till after the event, and a second both receptive & discriminative in which the future eventuality is correctly known before the event. In both cases but especially the first any tapasic stress on the intention, tendency, thought or impulse of the object as indicative of the eventual movement, leads to error; the same is true, if there is any attempt to infer intellectually the result from past or present data. Self-active non-telepathic trikaldrishti is at present more of the skylight than of the direct variety. This is not, however, always the case.

The just telepathy of thought which has hitherto been very poor in range and uncertain, is now in frequent play, eg in watching cardplay to know the idea in the mind of the player, but it has not yet its full exactness, only a general truth. It is showing itself from the beginning to be more reliable than the words & signs of the thinker, from which often false inferences are drawn. Right interpretation of lipi and rupa are also prevailing over the intellectual, imaginative and speculative interpretations.

The tapas has greatly increased in effectiveness without being yet master of the akasha

In the afternoon there was a relapse to intellectuality and ineffectiveness with a lowering of the Mahakali tapas. The system took refuge in subjective inertia.

The animal form which for a long time was excluded from the Chitra, is now of frequent occurrence and a rich perfection & variety, though not as yet on a level with the human form & the landscape. The separate inanimate object and groups of objects have also begun to manifest. The tapas is working on the Akasharupa, but it still fails to hold the physical ether; nevertheless it tends towards a more lingering transience than its former entirely fugitive display. Shabda & other drishtis are still very rare & poor in range &, usually, in force. Tivrananda is acquiring intensity in its sukshma touches.

Utthapana of the left arm, horizontal position, commenced while recumbent on the right side, was visited at once with a violent pain of ananima; after some minutes changed to the sitting position & walking, the ananima diminished, & the utthapana was maintained with increasing force for an hour & a half, but the ananima finally returned & terminated it. The right arm continued for an hour; then ananima grew suddenly upon it. It is noticeable that when held out rigidly, the ananima takes the form of strong muscular pain in the shoulder muscle; when held easily & slightly crooked, the ananima comes after a long time & takes the form rather of uneasiness. In both cases there is no pull of gravitation from below, the laghima of the arms being perfect, but a pressure of gravity from above, oppressing the mahima through ananima. Utthapana of the back persisted for nearly 5 minutes with intervals of varying pressure & growing urdhwagati. Other utthapanas were unsuccessful.

In the afternoon & evening the vijnana was again successfully clouded. It is noticeable that the trikaldrishti of exact time is growing in frequency, eg the return of B. [Bijoy] the other day at 7.55, the return of N [Nolini] & Br. [Biren] today by 7.

Dec 14. Sunday.

There is a growing strength of Samadhi; shabda & sparsha returned & were combined with rupa & action; distinct & coherent lipis occurred; the actions seen were more prolonged and better organised. The organisation however, as well as the prolongation, is still rudimentary. Kamananda was this time successfully established in the night, but is only occasional in sleep or samadhi. The body is still unable to maintain it with perfect continuity; although the relapse is now a habit forcibly maintained, and not at all a necessary relief or respite. Akasharupa maintains the same character of persistent pressure on the Akasha without possession or any real stability.

Arogya in the digestive faculties seems now to be tending away from the struggle between health & the petty fragments of digestive ailments (for nausea, constipation[,] diarrhoea etc have for some time been absent from the system except in touches of looseness, obstruction, nauseative tendency) to the old struggle between abnormal assimilation of food & normal or abnormal waste. For the last two days waste has been abnormal. Waste has to become subnormal without disturbing the digestive processes. Kamananda is now fixed,—either recurrent or continuous,—in all states except that of sleep & samadhi. Sukshma tivrananda is rapidly developing ubiquity & intensity. All the sahaituka physical anandas are now constant in the body, except vaidyuta which is yet rare and occasional. Ahaituka tivrananda is now becoming spontaneous although usually with some aid from smarana.

The subjective anandas, although well-established, are liable to clouding especially by the loss of the sense of beauty in the adaptation of form to guna. If the Brahman is seen in the guna of a face that is mean or ugly, the meanness or ugliness becomes itself beautiful to the inner eye & through the inner eye to the outer vision; but, this failing, the shuddha & premanandas fail by temporary loss of the chidghana. Premananda is also attacked by old sanskaras of relation & non-relation. Normally, however, chidghana, ahaituka & suddha are permanently manifest; prema is there usually in the priti, not so commonly in the bhoga.

Arrangement of lipi has been well-established both in chitra and akasha. The struggle now is between the slowly growing intensity & vividness of the letters & the old tendency to vagueness, dimness & illegibility. This intensity & vividness was formerly perfect, but exceptional, it is now imperfect, but tends to be normal. The lipi is usually intelligible even when imperfectly legible, but its interpretation by the ideality is often obstructed; eg the lipi Pyrotechnics on the Kart[t]ik Purnima. Owing to the mind's ignorance of the fact that it was Karttik Purnima or that here it is usual to have fireworks on that tithi, the lipi remained unintelligible in its main purpose until the evening when the fireworks began.

Utthapana of the right leg, medial position, for half an hour with but slight ananima,—discontinued owing to deficiency of established laghima and mahima. Subsequently utthapana of the back attempted without success, owing partly to commencement with the medial position, attempted again and successful[ly] maintained for 15 minutes; increasing laghima & mahima made the utthapana easier & easier, instead of its becoming more difficult by long continuance, and at the end only a slight dull pain of ananima in the hips and vepathu survived out of the first strong asiddhi. The back was then lowered to the medial position & could have been maintained owing to strong laghima, but there was violent vepathu; the utthapana was discontinued owing to an external occurrence, otherwise it might have been maintained for an indefinitely longer period. This is the first time utthapana of the back has been established.

Confusion of the first & second chatusthaya, due to confusion of the third, again occurred. The difficulty in distinguishing the Personality of the Master of the Yoga, owing to the interference of inferior personalities, is now a main cause of unfaith & discontent.

In the afternoon the confusion was cleared from the first & second chatusthaya, though still left in the third, in order that there might be no farther premature demand & therefore reaction of disappointment & discontent; the main agent in the clearance has been the final subtle but perfect distinction in the vivek between the supreme vani & script (not yet active) & the minor, secondary & immediately active & directive vani & script which are henceforth leading the siddhi forward. A similar distinction is being made but not yet perfected between ideal & un-ideal stresses of tapas & prakasha. At the same time the final transfer of the remnants of intellectuality to the ideal plane through the vijnana buddhi has begun to be completed. Dasya is on the verge of fullness, the ego remaining only in the sakshi and in some emotional remnants; the rest of the individual being lives now a secondary life as a conscious becoming of the one Being.

Raudrananda, ahaituka & sukshma (materialised), has for some time been established in the system; vishayananda today has received similar rights in the physical body & vaidyuta is beginning to be regularised, although at present it is more often negative than positive. The five sharira anandas now usually occur together, involved in the main bliss-touch or explicit & accompanying it; this concomitance, however, is not invariable. Premananda is once more generally active & in individual touches intense. Subjective vishayananda is shaking off its occasional obscurations.

Sraddha has once more been firmly established even for the sceptical intellectuality in the whole range of the siddhi except karma; there the sraddha is still [not] vijnanamaya & questioned by the surviving intellectual activities. The sraddha of rapidity is not yet similarly extensive.

During the evening & night there was a cessation of the siddhi; the vijnana, the Mahakali tapas etc were kept in abeyance, the kamananda suspended. Only samata & the fullness of the first chatusthaya, especially of anandamaya nati remained. The intellect attempted to be active in trikaldrishti, but was almost invariably [convicted][1] of error,—false stress, false understanding. Rheum tried to materialise.

Dec 15

The final condition of yesterday was continued in the morning with some modification; receptive telepathy was allowed to recover its activity & a sort of vijnanamaya thought-perception allowed. The object seems to be to stamp on the manasa parts of the being the realisation that all is intended, even what is most adverse & least understood, as a step in the siddhi, all brought about by the Master of existence, even when seeming to be brought about by inimical Powers, & all therefore to be received with submission. This state of realisation, however, can only be final if it persists when the Mahakali tapas is active.

---

[1] *MS* committed

The Ananda of cold is being increased by repeated & continued exposure to cold wind with the bare body. Only an almost subliminal part of the nervous system persists in the sanskara of discomfort & the reaction of rheum in the nose. This rheum just succeeds, so far, in materialising itself, but is unable to lay hold on the system. The discomfort of exposure to solar heat is also sinking down towards the subliminal Prakriti.

Kamananda today, though intense at times, was much interrupted. Akasha rupa & samadhi steadily increase.

Dec 16

The condition of the last two days has fulfilled its purpose of establishing firmly the anandamaya nati; all adverse movements are now recognised throughout the whole nature as the divine will and accepted with negative, when not with positive, ananda; their purpose is perceived or, when not perceived, taken for granted. Disappointment & despondency, when they offer themselves, are immediately or almost immediately rejected. These conditions persist even though the Mahakali tapas has been remanifested even though with small intensity. The Mahasaraswati nature with the Mahakali tapas has accepted entirely the full dasya.

Faith is now imposed on the intellect even in the saundaryasiddhi as the result of two or three slight but noticeable effects of the will on the body which establish in type the possibility &, to the reason arguing from experience, the divine intention of the siddhi. Only faith in karmasiddhi is still wanting in the intellectual parts of the general (non-personal) nature. The vijnana is [ ][2] transforming all thought & perception into the type of the vijnanabuddhi.

---

[2] *MS* being

Utthapana of the neck for half an hour in raised & medial positions. After twenty minutes the inferior position, without support for the back, was attempted, but brought on strong pain of ananima. The utthapana of the leg was abandoned after ten minutes owing to unsatisfactory nature of the laghima and mahima, although it could have been continued longer.

The full force of the Mahakali tapas & personality was allowed to take possession of the adhara in the evening, but as usual brought on activity of the lower tapas and reaction.

Dec 17

Telepathy confirmed afresh today, but under circumstances which brought on a brief attack of the intellectuality. The transfer of the intellectuality in its remnants to the ideality, the regularisation of the higher ideality and the extension of the vijnana continued. The greater force of Mahakali tapas is being attempted & persisted in in spite of untoward results. Vividness & legibility of lipi is becoming more common. Akasha rupa of the vivid kinds usually now dwells a little in the akasha & often before the eyes before vanishing, but not yet long enough to constitute stability. Kamananda is persistent & often intense, but interrupted & seldom continuous. Health in all its parts is striving to get rid of the recurrent touches of fragmentary roga & where the recurrence is persistent & prolonged to reduce it to the fragmentary condition.

Dec 18.

The result of the last three days' movement has been to transfer all the movements of mind normally to the ideality, to establish the truth (satyam) of all telepathies & arrange for the ritam, to increase the strength of the telepathic trikaldrishti & justify all movements of tejas & tapas as satyam, but not as ritam. The ritam is especially uncertain in essential trikaldrishti & this uncertainty leads to frequent relapse and an occasional & fragmentary play of the intellect. Power is greatly increased & always produces some kind of effect, even often the exact effect, but owing to the surviving strength of the resistance fails often of its specific purpose, is insufficient in finality and, even producing specific & final effects, does it with effort, waverings in the object, variations from the settled arrangement. This is the case even in the field of experiment & in the karma of life these defects are much more pronounced; there also the trikaldrishti is still rudimentary. As a result sraddha in the karmasiddhi has failed to establish itself. There is faith in the rapidity of the vijnanasiddhi, especially now that the rupa & samadhi grow with an increasing pressure on the objective akash & the physical system; faith in the physical siddhi, but not a settled faith in its rapidity; no faith, except the ideal sraddha, in the most important part of the karmasiddhi on which all the rest depends.

Utthapana of the neck raised & medial position, with support for the back, one hour; the last half way with pressure of ananima on the muscles of the neck. Utthapana of the left leg, horizontal, side position, fifteen minutes, with stress of ananima on the sinew kept out by the Will.

Crisis due to the attempt of the Shakti to raise the siddhi from the ideality of the vijnanabuddhi with subordinate action of manasa ketu, to the vijnana with subordinate action of the manasabuddhi.

Dec. 19

A confused condition of the vijnanabuddhi, in which there is sometimes action of the vijnana with reaction of the vijnanabuddhi, sometimes of the vijnanabuddhi with reaction of the manasa perception, sometimes the old action of the unillumined or confusedly illumined intellect, sometimes a mixture of these three functions. The attempt at finality of perfect samata & Mahakali tapas has failed once more. The sraddha established is once more interrupted and only fitfully recurrent.

The combination of the ananda, samata & knowledge with the effective Mahakali tapas in the Mahakali-Mahasaraswati personality was again effected, but the Mahasaraswati element predominates & the stronger movements of the tapas are only occasionally active. Sraddha in the kriti is wanting, & sraddha in the rapidity has been modified. Health & final effectiveness are being successfully resisted.

Utthapana of the neck for one hour. After forty minutes the ananima, till then apparent only as muscular sanskara or reminiscence became suddenly violent & effective & could only be resisted by physical means.

Dec 20

Abandonment of personal tapas and lipsa. Unprecedented strength of dasya, udasinata, sometimes with vairagya, sometimes with positive ananda of samata. Kamananda active

Dec 21. Sunday.

Another struggle to reinforce the combination of the first two chatusthayas, of passivity and tapas. The third chatusthaya began to reemerge from the successful siege of the manas tattwa. Samadhi was especially powerful, combining the more important drishtis, rupa, shabda, sparsha, karma, especially in groups of human beings speaking & acting & brief but perfect continuity of action was manifested. All the other elements of vijnana recommenced, but against a siege & in a cloud of mental perceptions. Exact trikaldrishti even manifested, but pursued by doubt & speculation & a disturbance of the view of right arrangement. Nevertheless one of the most powerful attacks of asiddhi has been overcome & defeated & finality definitely arrived at in the first chatusthaya.

22 DECEMBER 1913 – 15 JANUARY 1914

Record of Yoga
Dec 22d 1913...

Dec 22d Monday. 1913.

The 21st Dec marks the close of a period. The first chatusthaya, hitherto always subject to apparent & superficial relapse by adhyaropa & intrusion of trouble, asamata & nirananda from outside, is now superior, by reason of the final repulsion of desire and recognition of the conditions of the Yoga, to these intrusions, although a minor adhyaropa is still possible. The second is firm, under the surface and often on the surface, in all except sraddha, firm in itself, but not complete in its range or all its circumstances. Sraddha in the Yoga siddhi has been accepted by the intellect, but not sraddha in the kriti. There the surviving intellectuality demands certain objective proofs before assenting to the ideal faith as anything more than a possibility or probability justified by the general nature of past experience. The doubt resolves itself into a deficiency in the sraddha Bhagavati. The Allpowerful Master of the Yoga is accepted as the Master & Lover of the Jiva and there is faith in His grace for the Yoga, but not in His grace for the life, nor in His ritam, nor in His Adesha. For this reason the swashaktyam sraddha is also overcast by doubt and limited in its range, because it is thoroughly experienced and accepted that own-Power can do nothing without the divine sanction and grace. The third chatustaya is in all, but rupadrishti, so far established in self-expansive force & inevitability of self perfection that its entire fulfilment remains only a matter of time. Physical siddhi is moving towards that stage, but has not reached it. Brahmasiddhi is now deficient only in nityasmarana and depth. Karmasiddhi remains now as the sole nexus of the asiddhi.

The third chatusthaya is chiefly advanced in vangmaya thought, in general jnana where jnana does not pass into telepathy (prakamya-vyapti). The main difficulty lies in the defects of the interpretative power, daksha & ketu, which, although transferred in type to the ideality whether of vijnanabuddhi or vijnana, alternates practically between vijnana, vijnanabuddhi and those parts of manasabuddhi which are either pseudo-intuitional in the nature of their activity or else attempt to preserve the fragments of the old intellectual reasoning or of the undercurrent of habitual mentality. This defect is now being steadily mended; ideal interpretation is being applied to the material of telepathy, lipi, rupa, samadhi etc; but until this process is complete, the positive defects of knowledge, as opposed to mere occasional inactivity, incompleteness or limitation of range, must continue. Meanwhile the range has begun to be extended. Occasional inactivity of knowledge will remain & be used for ananda & uddeshya, the purposes of life & the joy of life. Power acts with frequency, but not with full mastery; nevertheless it is now often rapid, instantaneous[,] effortless & persistent in its efficacy. Lipi is organising itself materially, but lacks habituality of vividness & spontaneous fullness in the akasha. Chitra & sthapatya of rupa is now almost perfect, the human figure, animal, landscape & group being rich, various & perfect in all; the isolated object or object group is still obstructed, but is moving towards the same variety & richness. Perfection is already not uncommon. Akasharupa is now persistent in manifestation, but cannot yet acquire a free stability. The vishayadrishtis have all an occasional perfect action, but are limited to a few habitual forms. Samadhi is still deficient in free combination and prolonged continuity of vision and experience.

Kamananda is now fixed in the body as of frequent daily occurrence, but only sometimes (on some days, that is to say) continuous or intense in its frequency. Ahaituka tivrananda has acquired a great intensity & some persistence; raudra has intensity. Vishaya & still more vaidyuta are only occasional & still imperfectly developed. Health is strongly combated, utthapana likewise; but both have now begun a settled movement of struggle towards progress and in no feature yield for long to positive reaction. Saundarya is successfully obstructed; it is only rudimentary in a few features & still subject in a few to successful positive reactions.

Karma is established but of slow progress in Sahitya, Veda & Bhashatattwa; obstructed in dharma, rudimentary in kriti.

The last three chatusthayas are in the state of sure foundation, unfulfilled superstructure. Kali and Krishna are manifest, but not in their full power and being, and because they are not manifest in a sufficiently full power and being, therefore kama and karma linger. The fourfold Brahman, on which that manifestation rests, is realised subjectively, but not yet, except initially, in its objective effects. Shuddhi, mukti, bhukti are perfect except in the body & except in a few subjective terms, eg the imperfect exclusion of the active mentality, & even in the body are approaching that critical point of their progress after which completion becomes not only possible but easy; but siddhi is still kept back in parts, although it has now begun its finalities.

Dec 23d

The forward movement of trikaldrishti, yesterday & this morning, received its seal of final and speedy inevitability; the positive defects that remain are occasional overstress on a telepathic perception marring the satyam and imperfect light of detail and arrangement limiting the ritam. Nevertheless even in the unillumined secondhand perceptions of mind the ritam is at last prevailing and the satyam is now dominant.

*Lipi.[1] Effective fertility of the lipi; delight: utility of the lipi to the trikaldrishti.

In the drishtis full drishti of gandha is now accomplished, although still infrequent. Sparsha-drishti is strong, but not usually sufficiently materialised except in minor touches, eg touch of sukshma winds, insects, etc. Since writing the above gandha has founded its frequency; at first taking advantage of slight unnoticeable or distant physical gandha it has emphasised for the indriya to a violent intensity their psychical counterparts and taking advantage of the memory in the indriya it has established in it the capacity of receiving sukshmagandha without the aid of a physical suggestion. Finally, it has established the pure sukshma gandha in intensity & frequency.

---

[1] *The asterisk is Sri Aurobindo's; its significance is not known.—Ed.*

Vishayananda is now finally generating itself subjectively in the mind's reception of all actions, sights, sounds, touches etc, — a few touches of pain & discomfort in the body alone resisting, — and objectively in the physical response to all experiences. It is now manifest in the other ananda touches, raudra, tivra, kama, vaidyuta; it is becoming frequent by itself in touches which ordinarily bring other anandas; but objectively, it is not yet usually either intense or prolonged in ahaituka touches. This defect has now begun to be remedied. In type it has already been remedied, and the movement has been extended by concentrated process to the positive vaidyutananda. Negative vaidyuta had already intensity and prolongation, though usually associated with raudra. It is now being manifested separately.

Lipi — sunlit tapas and tapatya.

This has already (immediately after the lipi) been exemplified by certain movements of the aishwarya in which illumination of telepathy & trikaldrishti were perfectly combined with effective, though not immediately effective force of the will; both are still deficient in arrangement of ritam, but both work freely in particular effect. The resistance to the aishwarya, though still offered and often with obstinacy, is much weaker & less effective than formerly.

Rasadrishti is remanifesting combined usually with sparsha of the object, but as yet it is usually indistinct and insufficiently materialised. Shabda is also once more manifest, clear only in a few elementary sounds, strong but vague & remote in others, such as music, human voices etc. Neither has yet advanced beyond the stage arrived at long ago when these experiences were discontinued.

Rasa subsequently manifested great intensity and persistence in the bitter and bitter sour; the other tastes appear from time to time but without intensity or persistence, usually imperfectly materialised. Madhura is still involved in the sthula touches.

The siddhi descended again to the intellectuality to mould the mental pratistha more entirely to the passive reception of the vijnanamaya movements. In these descents jnana tends to keep its force & accuracy, receptive telepathy persists and sraddha in the yogasiddhi along with a provisional faith in the karma, recently imposed on the intellect. But trikaldrishti proper is much interrupted, & faith in the rapidity of the siddhi tends to be diminished, impaired or to disappear. Power increases without attaining at any time to definite mastery. Akasharupa cannot advance, being overmastered by the obstruction. Lipi grows in effective fertility, utility & just interpretation and is more often legible & vivid than before, but has not made the full material conquest of the Akasha. Samadhi keeps its gains, but fluctuates in its unestablished features.

Dec 24 –

It is indicated that the chief defect of the tapas in the yogasiddhi is the use of the physical insistence of the Will which is now out of date, though not ineffective, where direct physical tapasya has not to be used. Most of the reaction of asiddhi comes from the use of this force. On the other hand in the karmasiddhi, it has a permanent part to play, although always a subordinate part.

Yesterday's descent into the intellectuality gave an opportunity for an attack of the mortal mind which reproduced briefly & by a sort of violence certain features of the old asamata and duhkham connected with the asraddha. The effects were entirely physical and mechanical and had no psychological reality or importance or any just causality. They seem to be a physical adjunct always possible by mechanical revival of old sanskara when dwelling on the plane of mortal mind or in any condition exposed to shadows from the martya manas in the world. They are in the nature of the minor adhyaropa of the asiddhi to which the first chatusthaya is still liable.

Rasadrishti continues to develop. Many tastes manifest, mostly on the verge of sufficient materialisation, some just over it, a few depending on some material help and masquing behind an eatable object of quite different taste, eg sour behind pungent, or the memory of an eatable formerly eaten, either a little while ago or a few hours before or the last day. Sound quiescent since yesterday is again manifesting. The other drishtis are as yet stationary (touch) or imprisoned (satyarupa & hearing).

As the result of the recent struggle correct trikaldrishti is beginning to manifest in the intellectual response to the veiled vijnana.

Samadhi preserves its characteristics, but does not yet advance to a higher perfection. The satya of presentation is returning to the manasa swapna, but it still tends to reproduce more or less present personality & sanskara; occasionally however it is quite pure except for a feeble hardly noticeable touch of perversion. Today in the jagrat antardrishta the transfer of intellectual movements to the ideality has definitely begun.

Throughout the rest of the day, there were constant attacks of asiddhi, but the relapse into the Mahasaraswati form of udasina ananda could not again be enforced. The siddhi here appears to be complete. The only positive damage done by the attack was a partial bringing back of touches of physical discomfort disturbing the ananda of the indriyas in all touches & all sounds & restoring certain old sanskaras of unpleasant shrillness in sound or of dissatisfaction in the quality & effect of touch. The sensation however was confined to the physical organ & its nervous currents; the mind held its own.

Dream was ineffective.

Dec 25.

In the morning the full siddhi reasserted itself. There is a preparation, as was predicted yesterday in the lipi, for the transfer of the knowledge to a higher ideality by enforcing more perfectly on the mortal & finite mind the brihat & compelling it to see the truth behind all suggestions even those apparently the most false. Constantly the mind is illumined in all its perceptions except those of the trikaldrishti, where it is only sure that all its perceptions represent actual truth of fact conveyed by prakamya vyapti, but cannot perceive consistently decisive event or true order. It is now being shown, more convincingly than before, that all false arrangements are true arrangements elsewhere, in other space or time or both, but here effective as only true type of a potential or actual possibility working as one of the forces of conscious knowledge in the world which determine partially the actual event in its preparation, its intermediate effectuation or its decisive finality. But the mind still revolts against even the actual possibility being enforced on it as or even instead of the actuality. This demand still strives to disturb the ananda of struggle & defeat & victory proper to the Mahakali tapas and temperament.

The tapas-siddhi, clouded and interrupted yesterday, again manifests in a series of aishwaryaprayogas (with vashita) in which there was no instance of failure, but always some element of resistance. There are three forms of resistance; 1, the will is exactly fulfilled in all its successive dictates, but there is an involved & concealed resistance not betrayed by any action or movement but obvious to the prakamya-vyapti which would or might have manifested itself if the action of the will had been farther pursued; 2, the will is fulfilled with a slight delay or a slight deflection of detail or both; 3, the will is fulfilled with a longer delay or a greater deflection of details or both, or with constant alternations of failure & success leading to an ultimate victory. If the will were jatavedas, attended with a constant & perfect knowledge or identical with knowledge in the divine identity of Chit-Tapas, these difficulties would not occur; but, before that consummation can be allowed, will force in mind has to be educated to the necessary force & firmness. First, eventual failure in the particular event has to be eliminated then failure in process, then limitation of success to the particular event & its extension to series of events constituting finally one grand result.

The tapas siddhi shows signs of entering on a new stage. From the movements of this stage it is evident that there are four forms of arrangement of Chit-Tapas which enter into the eventuality of things; first; arrangement of potential possibilities and their event, proper to the imagination, which may be eventually fulfilled but usually are not, except in quite another space or time or under quite other circumstances; 2, arrangement of actual possibilities and their reasonable event, proper to the judgment & reasoning intelligence, which often are fulfilled, but quite as often frustrated by forces behind the scene or impossible to be properly estimated by logic & mental reason; 3, arrangement of actualities on the basis of actual forces in operation seen or unseen, perceptible by mind or inferable, proper to the telepathic & intuitional mind, vijnanabuddhi, which are usually fulfilled & always more or less, but need not be, or, if fulfilled, need not continue to be fulfilled; 4, arrangement of absolute actuality, proper to the pure vijnana, which is invariably fulfilled, being equivalent to the intentions of Fate and Providence. A great obstacle to the development of Power has been the desistence from its use when an event seemed fixed either in a favourable or hostile sense on the strength of the telepathic dristi or even of the reasoning perceptions. The latter difficulty is beginning to disappear with the transference of knowledge to the vijnanabuddhi, & the disappearance of the reasoning intellect, but the former persists & is likely to persist until the knowledge has been transferred from the intuitional mind to the pure vijnana. This is being done with jnana; it has yet to be done with trikaldrishti.

Lipi satyatejas is being fulfilled. All the powers are gaining in strength; aishwarya with vashita, not invariably successful in event, yet succeeds now far oftener than it fails, at any rate in the sadhankshetra; ishita is less powerful, but exercises a visible pressure & often fulfils itself; aishwarya with ishita stands between the two in effectiveness; both aishwarya & [vashita][2] have also a field of exercise involved in ishita. But ill-ordered as is still the action of the Power, it is now recognised as satyatejas, always either producing some kind of effect or motion, if not the exact effect intended, and, if not at the time, in the object, under the circumstances intended, then at another time or place, or in another object or under other circumstances. There is delay, there is deflection, there is even final frustration, but never entire inutility. The ritam yet remains to be brought into this disordered mass of satyam.

Kamananda has been seeking for the last three days to impose itself on the body, not as a circumstance, but as a law of its activities. It is this afternoon stronger in essential continuity than it has been in the past.

---

[2] *MS* ishita

Dec 26.

The remnants of anritam are now being persistently attacked & dominated in the telepathy & telepathic trikaldrishti; often even the unillumined mental movements constitute perfect ritam not only in telepathy but in trikaldrishti & when they are not so, they are always a full satyam with an imperfect ritam, an arrangement struggling to be right & attaining a half rightness, not as before entirely confused. Power grows, the sraddha of perfect power is taking possession of the mentality and preparing the eventual ritam of the tapas. The object can now be forced very often to the action it never intended contrary to its actual intention and endeavour, but this in living beings is effected through the mind & temperament by introducing a minor, weaker or side impulse which triumphs over the major, main or dominant impulses. Hence, usually, a long resistance occurs before the action is effected and often the object succeeds in getting away from the field of the vashikarana.

The Personality of the Ishwara & His relation with the Jiva are becoming more & more determined and frequent in action. Today there was a descent into the adhar of the Aniruddha-Balarama balakabhava, powerful in temperament & using life & action as a boy's game, — the seat being not as formerly the mind & buddhi, but the intuitional mind and the temperament.

Kamananda is now in possession of the physical system so far as to make itself always felt either in intensity, in subdued action or in a suppressed action effective on the body in secondary sensation, so that the system is not allowed to forget the ananda or to imagine its essential absence.

The Mahakali tapas has developed so far that now no defeat is taken as even temporarily final, — except in temporary particulars, — no nirananda is accepted, but at once converted wholly or partially into ananda, every suggestion of impossibility is rejected. Even the spirit of postponement of results is losing strength & the sraddha of immediate effect & rapidity is growing. These things, however, have not yet conquered the whole field, and a reserve still holds its own in the karma-sraddha & the sraddha of immediate actuality.

After a prolonged struggle with the fragmentary elfin agencies of the Manoloka there was a fresh emergence of a more perfect ideality.

Kamananda was almost entirely suspended as a result of physical expenditure in the second half of the day; only the faintest form of its suppressed existence subsisted.

Dec 27.

Telepathic drishti aided by the intuition arranged a kind of trikaldrishti perfect in all but exact detail of perspective. A more settled ideality, intolerant of intellectual tapas and manasic stress, now holds all the forms and instruments of knowledge and is extending itself to the Tapas. The mind in ketu is still active, but only for more perfect training in passive receptivity of the vijnana; this manasa ketu is almost entirely void of intellectuality, at most there is sometimes a vague involved reasoning in the perception or, more often, a fantasy of stress upon remote or frail possibilities not properly connected with the actualities of the life or its proper mass of creative effort & forecast. The transformation of this manasic perception is now one of the main movements of the siddhi.

Kamananda is again recovering its force; tivrananda, for some time a little discouraged, is regularising its action and local arrangement; the rest are still irregular in their manifestation. Subjective ananda is being exposed to a revival of discomfort in its parts of physical nerve-organism, mainly in the sravana, in order that ananda even in the most effective forms of physical discomfort may be more firmly stamped on the nervous system, first psychically, then physically. The doubt about the sukshma character of the gandhadrishti,—the idea, that is to say, that the abnormal perception of objective scents was being mistaken for sukshmadrishti,—revived, but has once more been removed by still more unmistakable examples. The physical prakamya exists & will grow, but accounts for only a small part of the phenomena. Eg the smell of food at midnight, in a shut room, under the bed-clothes cannot be physical gandhadrishti.

All the physical (ahaituka) anandas are now firm in the body; vaidyuta is still comparatively rare, vishaya seldom intense or prolonged, but all five are repeatedly present, kama & tivra both intense & prolonged, raudra sufficiently intense & somewhat prolonged. Tivra is generalising itself locally, kamananda has begun the generalisation in type, raudra is normally general; none, however, at any time cover the whole surface of the body, but are localised in their particular contacts. Kama is most self-diffusive in its single touches. All are steadily increasing themselves & their hold on the sthula body.

Telepathy is now entirely justified to the intellectual sraddha; it is seen now that every telepathic suggestion is true, all are being except for slight perversions correctly placed and only in their exaggeration by tapas into trikaldrishti is there any serious error or distortion. So also the wisdom & kalyanechcha of the Master of the Yoga are justified in every detail of priya apriya, mangala amangala, the exact use & intention even being now generally evident either vaguely or precisely to the mental perception aided by the ideality. The absolute power over the Yoga is also evident, but the absolute power over the world is still a matter of ideal faith &, to the mind, of inferential faith, not of intellectual pratyaksha. So also the personal Love (prema & not kama) is not entirely justified to the perceptive manas & the prana, although justified to the heart.

In the evening a shroud was drawn over the siddhi which seemed in great parts of it to become inactive or ineffective. At the same time it was evident that a process of purification of the old ideas & sanskaras formed in the course of the sadhan & no longer suited to the actual state or future course of the siddhi was in process.

Dec 28.

Recently the lipi appeared "Do not judge by the telepathy". This command to the nature is now being brought home to the mind by the continual demonstration of the uselessness of the telepathy unsupported by viveka & intuition for the decision of actual eventualities. Telepathy only brings to the knowledge actual forces, thoughts, states, tendencies, intentions etc; when it goes beyond and gives the event, as it can & does give, it is only [temporarily][3] fulfilling a function beyond itself and merging into revelation & inspiration. But when it does so in intuitional mind, it assists the manasa ketu to make mistakes of overstress by accustoming it to expect such monitions usually & not exceptionally from prakamya vyapti, so that it comes to take any & every vyapti & prakamya as an indication of actual event, in which case it falls into numberless errors, or as at least possible or probable event, in which case it flounders amid a chaos of uncertainties. The mind is now convinced of the proper limitations of telepathy & the intuitional mind as it was formerly of the insufficiency, proper limitations in the past & future uselessness of the intellect.

---

[3] *MS* temporally

The telepathy is now beginning to work again in harmony with the pure vijnana, and, more important, the tapas of effectuality is beginning to distinguish itself from the tapas of knowledge, while at the same time looking forward to a higher fulfilment in which the two again become one. Forces are now perceived at work long before they are fulfilled and the old tendency to insist on their immediate or rapid fulfilment and in default of that satisfaction to dismiss the perception of them as error or the forces themselves as futile, is passing away. It is now seen that all forces are effectual and must produce their result; until that result is seen & determined, they must not be dismissed from consideration, nor from use. The Will therefore is now working with this knowledge of the forces as its medium, making use of those that are favourable to its intention, discouraging those that are adverse. In this working it is generally successful, sooner or later, except when the object passes out of the field of operation & the idea or hope of bringing it back or distinguishing it if it returns is abandoned. The ritam or right working of the power is not yet advanced beyond its former stage of initial & inchoate development. It is also now seen by the duller parts of manas that a force which seems to be prevailing & its victory inevitable & intended, need not prevail at all; some other force may intervene or the will of God may strike the object and drive it towards other ends; the movement of the once dominant force then takes its place in the history of the total motion & final event as one of the forces of variation that modified or advanced the course of their fulfilment. The way is therefore clear for the entire perception of Ananta Brahman (guna, constituent forces and determining force or will), for its union in the Sarvam Brahma with the Jnanam Brahma and for its perfection in the sarvam samam anandam Brahma.

Vishayananda (ahaituka) now manifests sufficient intensity & continuity when it enters the physical system in company with the other physical anandas. When it comes by itself, involving in itself the others, it tends, if the intensity is too sthula or prolongs itself, to pass into the others, especially raudra and tivra. For the rest, this conjunction of all the anandas is intended as the normal state of ecstasy, except in its more particular movements of visheshsharadhas. Vishaya is in its nature a saumya ananda, the rest in their nature chanda anandas; hence states of chandata tend naturally to pass out of vishaya into its fiercer fellows. It is noticeable also that the other anandas obstructed or denied tend more & more, instead of at once extinguishing themselves in avyaktam, to pass into the raudra. This circumstance throws a considerable light on the true nature of pain.

Sortilege. RV I. 93 अग्निषोमाविमं सु मे शृणुतं वृषणा हवं। प्रति सूक्तानि हर्यतं भवतं दाशुषे मयः॥ O Agni (lord of divine Tapas) and Soma (lord of Ananda), hear perfectly my call, take joy in the things perfectly expressed in me, become Ananda to the giver (of the sacrifice of action). This expresses the next necessity of the siddhi. Hitherto the full Anandamay state (Soma) has been associated with shama; tapas has always brought either partial Ananda or disturbance. The siddhi is now ripe for the perfect combination. It is noticeable that the sortilege has for some time been illuminated by the pure vijnana; the lipi as yet is not free from the pursuit of the manasa ketu and has often to be interpreted through the vijnanabuddhi; this is still more the case with rupa. Now, however, the ideality is steadily pressing on all the instruments of knowledge to take them over into its own domain, swe dame.

The lipi in the samadhi is still fragmentary except in rare short sentences, sometimes even incoherent in the single word. eg "In the bath of men voltithaire impressionably" where voltithaire represents primarily Voltaire's Theatre (dramas) and the expressions "in the bath", "of men" "Voltaire's theatre" "impressionably", although separate, are run together as if forming one sentence. A less confused instance runs "demain matin (one of the illustrators in Paris ... country." In jagrat samadhi antardrishta a series of clear and stable images have manifested, but they are all crude in nature and struggle out of the old long-standing obstruction and obscurity.

A movement has now taken place which marks the final liberation of the jiva from the fragments of dwandwa ragadwesha in the outward world-consciousness (priya-apriya, mangala-amangala) by the disappearance of the kartavya-akartavya, aptavya-anaptavya. These things exist in the knowledge, but no longer in the emotional consciousness. The shadow of the old touches will fall for some time on the outer jada prakriti, but they will not be accepted by the organised consciousness of the jiva. Universal ananda is now hampered only by deficient physical mukti.

Clear & stable rupa is now establishing itself again with greater freedom in the Akasha, but as yet nothing entirely decisive has been attained. Perfect rupas are still transitory & rare, developed rare &, though not always transitory, fleeting in their momentary stability; in the stable forms the crude predominate & even the ghana is infrequent & less stable, nor are these stable crude forms plentiful in their variety.

The resistance to tapas is becoming less prolonged, its success less successful. There are exceptions, but these are principally in particular detail or to less constant aishwarya. Ishita is still insufficient. Will was successful in recalling lines of verse entirely forgotten. They welled up from passive or concealed memory immediately in answer to the touch after long vain striving by mental pressure.

In the samadhi, as a result of ishita, the supreme type of image, eg a city on the hills, once more recurred, but the prolonged continuous experience of these images and of continued movements & occurrences in the scene they represent, formerly not infrequent though imperfect either in prolongation or in continuity, do not yet recur. The type is still only a complete isolated incident in a limited scene rapidly represented or a momentary cinematographic glimpse on a more extended scale, eg a street and its movements etc.

Dec 29.

The Shakti is busy extending the subjective & pranic ananda in objective touches which are still discomfortable, eg heat in the entrails, nausea, tejas effective of discharge of purisha etc and purging out all tendencies to return of asantosha in ill-effect. Increasing premananda, shuddha, chidghana are still debating the ground with the fragmentary relics of the lower jaghanya or bibhatsa virati; ahaituka is firm but sometimes touched by the clouding of the others.

Tapas still grows in power, but its hold is still insufficient because not yet automatically effective, except occasionally; it is effective, usually, only by overcoming the resistance of the bhúmayi prakriti, a resistance which still fights, if no longer every inch of ground, yet all possible terrain and is still liable to revive even where it has been partially & seems to be entirely conquered. Its faculty of resistance is, however, visibly dwindling.

The sthula human touch is today being felt in addition to other touches but still in an initial & sukshma form, although it has passed the stage when it could only be felt perfectly in the pranakosha & its effects alone reached the annakosha. Certain forms of the prana jagat, rain, cloud, insects, etc are nowadays once again commonly visible though still vague & more often seen in their image or chhaya than in their proper bodies. Shabdadrishti is still behindhand & remains except for an occasional elementary or distant sound in the avyakta. It is however tending to gain strength.

Akasharupa laboured strongly to generalise itself; rupas seen in one form or state now tend more easily to be seen in others, eg, antardrishta jagrat in bahirdrishta, rupa on background in akasha & vice versa, & even swapna rupas in antardarshi jagrat, but this is as yet only after awakening & in the more ghana states of the antardrishta. Stability in the swapna rupas progresses by a gradual tendency. Very rich images, as in former times, now manifest in the mental akasha and half appear on the borders of the sthula. Swapnasamadhi is rich & varied.

The chief activity of the siddhi is now to prepare the thirteenth siddhi in the adhara subjectively and physically; all that is deficient subjectively is the survival of certain old sanskaras of unalterable cause & effect, physical possibility & impossibility. These removed the physical siddhi will be facilitated. The other main activity is the manifestation of the personal Shaktis of the Alipur sadhana in the anandatattwa of the mind, the explanation & justification of many dubious features and abandoned assertions of that sadhana, the justification of the mental tejas against the mental inertia, the extension of the dasya by submission to those chosen & allowed by the Ishwara, the removal of the fragments of straining, desire, nirananda, doubt of siddhi etc in the jada prakriti.

Dec. 30.

The mental ideas & suggestions are now usually justified in their substance; but at the same time their wanderings from the ritam in time, place, patra & placement of circumstance are often so much exaggerated that the unaided mind stumbles & cannot get a fixed conviction. The sraddha in the guidance grows, however, firmer & firmer behind and even through the perplexity, for the vijnana constantly returns and lightens up what had been dark or confused. There is now no unfriendly struggle in the vijnana chatusthaya, but only the clashes that attend natural growth & progressive adjustment. The struggle is now keenest in health & ananda; utthapana is in abeyance. Occasionally karmasiddhi of sahitya & dharma is taken in hand, but the serious pursuit is deferred, till the vijnana is essentially perfected and the sraddha justified. A certain amount of physical siddhi (mainly arogya & general utthapana) is also essential before the karma can be powerfully pursued.

For some time pure vijnana has been quiescent, vijnanabuddhi subordinately active & a free play given to the anandatattwa of the manas. The object & so far the result has been to secure entire passivity in the mental parts of the mortality, both knowledge & tejas and a purification of the jada nirananda. The jada Bharata stage has again been realised and emphasised. The Sat & Tapas of the manas has been manifested so far as they can be with a complete absence of initial vijnana, and it has been shown both how the thing to be manifested rises out of the indeterminate Sat, how the Tapas selects & moves towards mental vijnana, what place is filled by sraddha & asraddha, rajas & tamas & how the birth of ananda & niränanda born of their play effects the dwandwas. The movement is now towards reactivity & fulfilment of vijnana. The preparation of the thirteenth siddhi continues.

The attempt to rise out of the jada passivity resulted immediately in a relapse of parts of the mortal mind into the old forms of tejas & dwandwa and a struggle of these elements to force themselves again on the jada prakriti as the law of its activity. Although this endeavour has been repelled, it is only by a cessation of all activity to which the Vritras seek to bind the system. It is after a long time that this faculty of Vritra has been restored & enabled it to estop entirely both active knowledge & active ananda. The tapas has also temporarily drawn back into the old successfully resisted mental tapas.

The indeterminate position continued through the rest of the day, prolonged by the jada tendency in the Manas to attempt its own fulfilment without referring always or being lifted up into the Vijnana.

Dec 31.

Tapas now fulfils itself with great frequency in a perfect manner, instantaneously or almost instantaneously, sometimes without use of force in the will or pressure on the object, sometimes with slight force or a little pressure. The old ineffectuality, however, remains in all its outward types & recurs sufficiently often; this ineffectuality is especially strong where an impetus has already been given to another action or there is a powerful adverse bent in the object or when the attention of the Asiddhi has been called to it by a success of the will. These, however, are only the survival of a habit in the physical parts of the swabhava in the Bhumayi Prakriti.

Yesterday utthapana was resumed—utthapana of the neck for half an hour without effort or difficulty and with only an ineffective & moderate an-anima. Today there came utthapana of both legs in the medial position for quarter of an hour, with difficulty because of defect of mahima which finally induced abandonment, although there were signs that the asiddhi would diminish if the attempt were prolonged. Afterwards the left leg was supported in the horizontal position (reclining on the side) for an hour by a perfectly sufficient laghima & mahima & at the end could have been maintained for an indefinitely longer period. The pain of the sinews peculiar to this position was recurrent, but had no longer its old force; nevertheless it prevented the maintenance in a single position straight or crooked, change of position giving relief. Except when the mahima is withheld, the utthapana now can always be maintained owing to the great accomplished force of laghima in the body. An-anima is now the only substantial opponent. It is noticeable that physical tapasya has been greatly diminished & seems on the point of abandonment in favour of pure Tapas of willpower. The utthapana of the back & loins has, however, still to be tried; hitherto it has only once succeeded. The time for the horizontal position of the legs has not before been equalled, but the alteration of the method & the disappearance of true opposition is now the real siddhi, time only a test of its completeness or a circumstance. Vepathu remains, but it is now seen as the sign of a helpful agent which increases mahima & diminishes both muscular stress & muscular pain and strain; it is the sign of the pranashakti at work improving an unfit adhara.

In the afternoon there was a strong effort to reidealise the whole consciousness as well as the activity which succeeded with the thought but only partially with the trikaldrishti. In the evening there was, after a short struggle in which the trikaldrishti was almost unerring but the tapas only partially & defensively effective, an unprecedented sequent faultlessness of the effective will and, with one or two slight deflections, of the perceptive knowledge, but all this was in the manasa ketu and not in the daivya. So far it was a success for the manasa element which seeks to use the vijnana for its own development while refusing to the vijnana the possession & enjoyment of the system. The results however failed to give satisfaction to the Jiva or to the system which now demands vijnana and rejects the manasa perceptions whether true or false. This virati is the security that the attempt of the lower to use & dominate the higher cannot eventually succeed.

In the night for the first time there was entire success of the stability of rupa in the swapna samadhi, one scene, a street & the exterior of a house & its environment, lasting in spite of attempts of the asiddhi for many seconds before first one or two details became inconstant and then a swift shifting series of similar scenes was substituted for the one stable scene. Like the vision of the city on the hill some days ago, this was an unique instance & a success only in type, but it is an assurance of success in the near future.

Utthapana of the right leg, horizontal position, recumbent on the back, could be maintained only for 9 or 10 minutes; the ananima was strong & the mahima, though present, defective.

The principal work of the [year] 1913 has been the reduction of asiddhi to a survival in the external environmental swabhava, the purification of that swabhava from the contradictions of the first & second chatusthayas, the sure foundation of the siddhi in the third, fourth & sixth & its preparation in the fifth. The finality of the first chatusthaya is perfect in itself, though not yet entirely absolute, touches still surviving as an occasional insistence from the outer nature. Fierce trouble & distress is obsolete, distress itself & even impatience only an occasional & momentary memorial return, but temporary discouragement & distrust with a tendency to indifference & weariness are still able to make a superficial impression. This insecurity of the sraddha & tejas & their incomplete hold in regard to the karmasiddhi & the necessary rapidity of Yogasiddhi prevents a complete & forcible finality of the shakti, retains the excess of the Mahasaraswati-Maheswari combination in the Mahakali Mahasaraswati temperament and hampers the expression & activity of the Mahakali tapas. The third chatusthaya is founded in all its parts, but insecure in the jnana, unfinished in the trikaldrishti, wide & secure but still uncertain & variable in vyaptiprakamya, both imperfect & uncertain in the parts of Tapas and ill-developed in samadhi; nevertheless it is now powerfully & inevitably progressive. The fourth chatusthaya is somewhat advanced but insecure in physical ananda, growing persistently in arogya but obstinately haunted by the old mechanical recurrence of fragmentary defects, growing in secondary utthapana, merely initial & without force of progression in saundarya. The fifth is still in a state of preparation, seed-sowing & crude initial consistencies. The sixth is well advanced, but unable to hold its own without smarana except in the sarvam Brahma. The seventh is well advanced except in certain parts of the siddhi, especially in ritam.

1914. January.

विश्रयंतामृतावृधो द्वारो देवीरसश्चतः

> Let the divine doors swing wide open for him who is not attached, who increases in himself the Truth.

Jan 1.

The day was chiefly occupied with the struggle of the manasaketu to survive as an active factor in the consciousness instead of a passive unreacting recipient. At first, all the justifications that could still be advanced for its survival had to be allowed to rise in order that they might be refuted & destroyed. Subsequently, the manasa element in the tapas had to be rejected. As a result the action of the Mahakali tapas has been cleared of its besetting difficulty and a coordination of vijnanamaya knowledge and vijnanamaya tapas is being prepared. The manasaketu remains as an otiose but habitually recurring survival which cannot yet be entirely expelled.

Kamananda again became active; ahaituka tivrananda showed in its recurrence a considerable increase of generality and of force. The pure unaccompanied or unaided ahaituka vishaya is slowly emerging, but still usually stifled by the other anandas. Stability is growing firmer in the rupas of the swapna samadhi.

Jan 2.

The pure vijnanamaya trikaldrishti is once more disengaging itself from the telepathic basis over which it has to stand. Revelation & inspiration (drishti sruti) now take a leading part in the vijnana and intuition & viveka (smriti) are subordinate & secondary to them. The struggle is now definitely proceeding between the new tapas & the old prakriti for the expulsion of those elements which insist on the old slow & meticulous progress & prevent great results & rapid effectivity.

The vijnana gained throughout the day and finally reestablished the decisive general trikaldrishti which selects discriminatively the right event out of several telepathic perceptions of the actual forces at work, their varying strengths and possible eventualities. At the same time the aishwarya & vashita recovered and, especially the former, increased their dominance over the objects of the Bhumaya Akasha. Hitherto aishwarya has usually had to take the help of vashita; this dependence is now disappearing. Ishita is still slow & uncertain in its results.

The freedom of crude akasharupa greatly increased, & the tendency to take the use of the pranic pressure on the akasha in determining them has now taken a secondary place. More & more it is the pure mind that determines successfully results in the objective existence. For the rest this is the lipi that has already been given, "Subject control & perfect objects."

Dasya & tapas, samata and aishwarya are now being more successfully & perfectly combined in the total swabhava.

Jan 3.

Above the discriminative (vivekamaya) & intuitional trikaldrishti the revelatory trikaldrishti is remanifesting itself. The manasic perceptions are now being used in their very confusion for the assertion of the liberty of this revelatory knowledge and its disregard of the false limitations of present and outward appearances. The same liberty is being asserted also for the Will and its instruments. The ananda of temporary defeat & the perception of God's purpose in it is now being finally imposed on the rebellious pranic element in the outer swabhava. This perception precludes the conception of ultimate defeat for the Jiva, — there can be no ultimate defeat except where God's will & man's are at variance. The utility of the recent relapse & crisis now appears; the transfer of the intellectuality to the ideality had been burdened by the continued activity of manasa ketu and the supporting idea of the anandamaya pranic manas that the fulfilment of this infallible manasic activity using the vijnana as a referee was a main part of the siddhi. The main chaitanya had to come back into the manas in order to convince them, first, that the mind cannot be infallible except as a mere echo of the manifest or veiled vijnana and, secondly, that this fulfilment of an echo could not be the main intention of the Yoga.

The aishwarya-vashita which triumphs over the fixed intention of the object is now manifesting clearly & powerfully.

Shabdadrishti of the daivya turi (horn), indicating victory, & subsequently of divine music,—first heard (with long continuity) only in the left ear when closed by the hand to earthly shabda, but afterwards when the hand was removed. The whole sukshmabodha is now extending its sense-perceptions to the mental & pranic heavens as well as to the mental & pranic koshas of the material world. This movement initiates the completion of the trailokyadrishti first indicated in the Alipur jail. It marks also the growing emergence of the sukshma shabdadrishti in the sthula hearing.

In the tapas the mental energies of will at the side which were formerly confused by the mental tejas with the energies of knowledge, are now being devoted to their proper object, the development of vashita; aishwarya, vashita, ishita properly divided & combined are preparing the fullness of the Tapas.

Jan 4. Sunday.

Stability of the rupa background & continuity of a single complete event on the stable background seem now to be confirmed in the swapna samadhi & are seeking to extend themselves to the antardrishta jagrat; but transient scenes & figures still predominate in the swapna, while the stability in the jagrat lacks freedom and perfection. Kamananda is now well assured; nothing is able to break down its daily frequent manifestation and its tendency to persistence which promises before long to be victorious. Sparshadrishti hitherto confined to touches is adding continuity to frequency. Shabdadrishti also last night suddenly manifested in one sound, (flute-whistle,) an absolute clearness, vividness & continuity near the ear but entirely in the sthula akasha. Hitherto, however, this is an isolated incident.

The Shakti is now bringing forward the ishita, ishita-vashita & effective vyapti and it is immediately found that in actual inherent power, vaja, all these are as strong as the other parts of tapas, but owing to the akasha being less habituated to their impact not so readily or accurately effective as the vashita, aishwarya-vashita or even the pure aishwarya. Nevertheless the accuracy & readiness are already prepared and glimpsed in the action; they will soon develop in the mobile actuality.

The vijnanabuddhi is now acting with full brihat of satyam and the incipient brihat of ritam taking up all the obscure or half illumined movements of the manasaketu & putting them in their place even in the trikaladrishti; this movement covers the perception & vangmaya thought and the script. The vani is now anandamaya, but like the pure vijnana it works either in the manasaketu or in the vijnanabuddhi after traversing to the consciousness the Sat, Tapas & ananda of the manas tattwa. This movement often wakes a transient pain of dissatisfaction in the mortal mind of the outer swabhava, but that habitual reaction is being removed.

The higher anandamaya vani has once more manifested, deploying and overpowering the old sanskaras which hampered its fullness and possession, personality and delight. It is not yet settled in possession of the whole vani.

In the swapna samadhi large combined images like the city are now occurring and appear also dimly in the antardrishta jagrat, but as they pass the borders between the swapna and antardrishta, tend to disappear or fade into a more unsubstantial dimness.

Jan 5 —

The struggle over the ritam and the finality of the vijnana and ananda continues. The manas tattwa struggles, successfully so far, for survival and seizes hold of its own errors to discredit the vijnana & justify its own survival as a means for judging the vijnana. Health is once more strongly attacked, even cold and fever being threatened. The combination of dasatya & tapas continues to progress with the growth of the bhagavati sraddha.

Jan 6 —

The struggle over the arogya continues, the symptoms of fever & cold spending themselves in the sukshma parts without being able to materialise firmly in the body in spite of the opportunities given. The mind is assailed with suggestions of illness, but resists

& expels them while the bodily parts which have now learned to look up to the mind for light & impulse, are only slightly affected & chiefly in their subtle parts. The whole psychic mechanism of illness is now evident to the understanding.

Full light and ananda are being steadily combined, but their arrangement is hampered by the imperfect finality of the decisive or higher trikaldrishti which is largely held in abeyance. Meanwhile the sraddha in Yogasiddhi & in the guidance & kalyana of the Master of the Yoga has been firmly generalised, and the recurrence of touches of distress & disheartenment are becoming more & more fragile & momentary. Faith in rapidity & adeshasiddhi is still withheld from the manasaketu which only admits them by an indirect & wavering deduction. For this reason the tapas is unable to maintain ugrata & swiftness.

Jan 7—

Mainly occupied with the struggle in the body over the arogya.

Jan 8—

During the last two or three days samata & ananda have undergone a prolonged ordeal. Titiksha is absolutely firm except for slight & momentary failings in the body, udasinata & nati equally firm except for similar slight failings, a little more pronounced in the body than the failures of titiksha; sama ananda is firm in the core & the mass of the chaitanya, less firm on the surface, but its failings are now negative & do not, except in a very slight degree, amount to positive distress or even, to a sensible extent, to positive discomfort, except in the body where suffering still has its hold. It is on this point that the bodily attack has been principally determined. In certain points the attack has failed; the fragments of the tendency to slight itch & eruption after showing a false activity have retired weakened, the attempt to reestablish cold & fever has so far failed, but disorder of the assimilative functions amounting to flatulence, dull pain & heaviness in the region of the liver, & looseness of purisha, but not diarrhoea, has again appeared, contradicting the temporary siddhi of arogya which had exiled all pain & positive disorder, leaving only discomfort of ill-regulated apana and unrealised tendencies of alternate constipation & looseness. It is found, however, that the body has learned to retain its vital force & working energy, recovering elastically even from the brief after result of fever in the pranakosha. Kamananda continues obstinately though as yet unable to establish uninterrupted continuity in the body. The other physical anandas are occasional; tivra continues to grow in intensity and spontaneity. Subjective ananda is now seated & complete, including sakama prema. Hitherto the universal prema even when directed towards the material form was in the heart only; it has now extended to the whole system including the body. However the kamic element is not yet always automatically present. Vijnana has been dull and clouded for the last two or three days. Sraddha in the guidance remains firm, though sometimes darkened & bewildered in knowledge; sraddha in the Yogasiddhi persists against all attack. The sahityasiddhi (Veda, Bhashatattwa, Darshana) is now growing in steady working & with it the sraddha in this part of the karma; but the sraddha in the rest still awaits objective proof for its entire stability & is distrustful of the proposed extent of the karma.

At night dream became, for the most part, entirely coherent and at times identical with swapna samadhi in its chhayamaya movements. Swapnasamadhi also in its chhayamaya movement initiated long & coherent continuity & a greater stability of forms. These movements were repeated frequently & for a long time, fluctuating between the two conditions of dream and vision. At the end in the deeper tamomaya nidra the old incoherence of the lower fragmentary mind dominated by present impressions & associations reasserted its presence, but, although it persists, its hold and potency is greatly weakened.

Jan 9.

The attack on the health is steadily weakening and vijnana reasserting its activity, not yet the pure vijnana, but the vijnanabuddhi, even in trikaldrishti. It takes, assumes to itself, explains and often distinguishes in eventuality the perceptions of the manasaketu, which, as a consequence, is now working more passively & with less selfwill and obstinacy. Distress continues to fade steadily out of the conscious experience even in the outer nature; distrust & discouragement still recur.

Subsequently, the higher tapas of the mind, first sakama, then indifferent, then anandamaya emerged again after long struggle, failure & eclipse. It is now the tapas of Sacchidan[an]da in the mind, although it still awakens usually the tapas of the mortal mind as its accompaniment or medium of manifestation or partially effective agent. To get rid of the agent it is necessary first to perfect it as a medium and passive channel of communication for the daivya tapas working on the world. It must for that purpose become entirely sanmaya (shanta) & anandamaya without losing its chinmaya & tapomaya activity.

Cold failed to reassert itself; but the fragmentary skin affectation has once more manifested. The struggle continues in the assimilation, etc.

Jan 10.

The Tapas has at last effected firmly its combination with dasya, although the dasyabuddhi is not always at the surface of the consciousness in its action; it has now to be combined perfectly with sraddha. For that purpose the vijnana is once more becoming active in the vijnanabuddhi governed and informed by the pure vijnana. The telepathic mind or manasaketu is being trained not only to recognise the satyam in the telepathies it receives (when the buddhi is active, it is now only a few suggestions the justification of which cannot be eventually perceived or is wrongly placed), but to distinguish immediately the ritam and anritam. To this end the various sorts of lower truth, truth of potential fact, truth of actual developing or developed fact, truth of developing & struggling force, truth of actualising force, truth of eventuality have to be rapidly & automatically distinguished and the exact power & meaning of each & all in time[,] place & circumstance properly seen. Telepathy of thought which was hitherto limited by unwillingness to accept unverifiable suggestions or uncertainty & confusion in their acceptance or the inability to place conflicting vyaptis is now being brought forward, determined & arranged. The lower perceptions are being taught to yield without self-judgment or questioning to the pure vijnana & leave the latter to distinguish between truth & error. Ananda in the tapas, in struggle, in failure as a step towards success have been strengthened and discouragement is being eliminated like distress, though both return in momentary & often causeless stresses or touches. Distrust remains in its usual field, rapidity & adeshasiddhi, but the latter is now centred in the kriti from which by an inferential process it returns on the other parts of the karma. Once exiled thence by objective proof, its hold will be finally & effectually destroyed.

There is the attempt now firmly to establish the ugrata & shaurya, to banish the last traces of the dependence on fruits, phalahetu not the phalakanksha which is already disappearing while preserving the lipsa and the kaushalam, the one to be established free from kama, the other to be used when the perfected tapas is ready. The activity of the vijnana has revived, but is not yet universal or firmly stable. The other siddhis are mostly preparing behind the veil of Night. The nature of the difficulty in telepathy, — the mutual confusion of the retrospective, prospective, near present & distant present in addition to errors of placement in pátra, desha, kala etc is now being fully displayed & worked out without disturbing the sraddha of Yogatattwa & Yogasiddhi.

Jan 11 Sunday.

The vishayadrishtis are beginning slowly to regularise themselves. The one or two clear symbol shabdas (watch, flute, horn etc) are now coming more often & quite unmistakably sukshma. The rupa, apart from image, is confined to a few forms already familiar to the eye, rain etc. Touch has not yet passed beyond its former limits although it is more common & spontaneous; but taste & smell are increasing in force & frequency, especially in the sadharadrishti, eg the violent, intense, almost acridly intense & long continued taste in the mouth of the sweetness of sugar or molasses after the first puff of a cigarette, the smell amounting to nasikya aswada of the same sweet substance in the end of a cigarette thrown aside & smoking itself out, smell of strong perfumes etc on the basis of an unperfumed object or a slightly perfumed object at a great distance. The taste of madhura rasa is now well established.

All ordinary discomfort has now been invested with the ananda. Only the strong touches of pain remain to be conquered. Here dull pain even if strong & persistent offers little difficulty; acute pain beyond a certain degree still exceeds the titiksha & therefore passes beyond the scale of ananda.

Sahityasiddhi has for some time been developing, tamasi, and is now coming forward. For some days the work at the Veda has been continuing with great force & persistence & overcoming the tamasic reactions, even the bodily, which used formerly to hamper long continued intensity of labour. The brain still becomes a little dull at times, but usually recovers itself rapidly & is always capable at its worst of an intermittent luminosity.

Jan 15—

The siddhi of the last few days has been directed mainly towards the removal in the natural mind of the obstacles to the right activity of the vijnana especially in trikaldrishti & the preparation of the general effective vijnanamaya tapas. The vijnanamaya action in the buddhi is now generalised, tending always, except for short intervals of relapse, to take the place of manasic perception, and by its very activity diminishing steadily, though it has not yet removed, the persistent recurrence of the manasic false response and distortion of vijnanamaya messages. In the light of this self-perfecting jnana all the past vicissitudes of the sadhana are seen in their right light, their reasons, necessity, utility, essential cause & teleological purpose; for better impression on the natural mind, they recur in slight & fleeting instances, repeat their old action[,] are understood and dissolve themselves. This process, perfected in the jnana, is being applied more & more powerfully & steadily to Veda, sahitya, trikaldrishti, telepathy. The mechanism of the tapas, its defects, causes, working & the teleological purpose of the defects arising from their essential causes, is also being exposed, the first effect being to remove the last remaining obstacles to faultless subjective persistence in the tapas even when it fails & is or seems hopeless of its purpose (the objective persistence is limited by physical fatigue or incapacity), and, secondly, to the ugrata of the tapas. It was formerly the mind's habit to take failure as a sign of God's adverse will & cease from effort, & as ugra tapas usually failed of its immediate purpose, unless very persistent & furious, it was thought ugra tapas was forbidden. The failure, however, was due to the immixture of effort & desire & anishata generally & the mental nature of the tapas and these again to the necessities, essential & teleological, of the process of the transition from the mental to the ideal being. The second chatusthaya is, therefore, nearing full completion, the third preparing it; the first now only suffers momentarily in samata by passing depressions & in ananda by general limitation of the second; the third is delayed by insufficiency of tapas in the second, the second held back in sraddha & tapas by insufficient light & effectuality in the third. These two chatusthayas must therefore for a little time longer move forward together helping each other's fullness until the still watching intellect in the outer nature is sufficiently assured of its ground to allow fullness of tapas & sraddha. Samadhi has not moved forward except in the fullness & comparative frequency of the spontaneous sukshma ghrana & the increasing tendency of the other sukshma indriyas. The rupa drishti still struggles with the opposition in the material akasha to its combined perfection & stability; both perfection & stability have been carried separately in the jagrat to a high efficiency, but they cannot yet combine their forces. There are occasional images in which they meet, eg the reel of cotton thread, (1^{st} degree), the card of d[itt]o (3^{d} degree), the playing card in the ghana & developed forms (2^{d} degree of stability); but this combined siddhi cannot yet generalise itself or even establish either frequency in the habitual forms or an initial freedom & variety of the higher forms. It is only in the crude forms that there is an initial freedom & variety accompanied with some stability. The physical siddhi has been for some time badly afflicted & depressed; the signs of progress are more subliminal than supraliminal. Karmasiddhi progresses rapidly in sahitya where the body alone is now a real obstacle, but is obstructed or attacked in dharma & kriti; especially in the latter there is violent negation & menace of destruction, eg, in the therapeutic pressure on N. [Nolini] etc.

12 MARCH – 14 APRIL 1914

Record of Yoga. March. April.

1914.

12th March 1914—

Lipi (today first spontaneous & clear in long connected phrases)

1. *St Joseph's College . . St James' Gazette*—Continually recurrent since the beginning of the abundant record period: meaning, nature or purpose never yet fixed beyond doubt.
2. *Jollity—festivity*— & then *absolute jollity, festivity*—also of frequent recurrence & generally confirmed in fact, often unexpectedly on the very day. No data.
3. *St. Stephen's—Hyslop's College . . system.* These are also old lipis. The addition of the word *system* seems to mean that this & 1 all belong to the same system and are connected in sense.
4. *It is a sort of school for the intellectuality of ideality of interpretation of the lipi.* Sentence formed with much difficulty.

═

Telepathic Trikaldrishti & Ishita etc

1. Yesterday ishita & trikaldrishti of result of other than ordinary food, confirmed an hour or so afterwards by arrival of Ulysses who dined here & arrangements were made suddenly all without suggestion or interference on my part.

2. Successive movements of birds & ants etc can now often be determined for some minutes together with less resistance than formerly & fewer deviations, but in the end the object escapes from control, often however with an after effect inducing the sudden

fulfilment of unfulfilled aishwaryas when the actual pressure was withdrawn.

3. Sudden memory (intuitive) of long forgotten names & scenes of childhood in England, — spoiled & suspended by the attempts of intellectual memory to decide points of doubt.

Lipi

5 Lipi *"suffering"* several times repeated. This lipi is associated always with the return of subjective discomfort & nirânanda. Such nirânanda has for a long time been successfully expelled from the system & even extraneous touches had ceased to come. It returned, although [ ][1] not expected today even after the lipi, but has been unable to do more than momentarily stain the surface of the psychic prâna, even the after effect being rapidly effaced.

6. *"Subjective suffering is entirely due to the* (phantasy) *fancy in the intellect together with desire."* Sentence formed with difficulty, & with the aid of some subjective suggestion from outside.

Trikaldrishti.

Today, for the most part, unluminous but untelepathic & sound in general substance, occurring by force in a cloud of intellectual error suggested from outside, doubted & questioned by external intellect and seized & distorted as to exact time & place by the same deflecting agent. Attack of intellect of unusual obstinacy & intensity, due to its remnants being disowned & refused credit. This movement was heralded & predicted by the lipi "Alienate the intellectual helpers" this morning.

13th March. Friday.

The painful struggle of the intellectual elements to survive & get rid [ ][2] of delight & faith continues, — pre-indicated by a repetition of the lipi *"suffering"*. Lipi is frequent, but varies in ease of coming & vivid presentation. The malignance of hostility in the alienated helpers is very pronounced. Vijnana is clouded at every step by the veil of the manasic action which seeks, since it cannot enjoy, to replace it while imitating sunlessly its radiant action. It cannot however prevent truth from being the dominant tendency, but it suspends certainty and timely arrangement. Place, time, order are still very defective.

---

[1] *MS* though
[2] *MS* delight

Lipi. The beginning of delight—ie Physical Kamananda, which was reduced almost to zero in its action, is to resume its advance. *Intensive—extensive* (the two lipis replacing each other.)—ie It is to be first an intensive action, resuming & increasing the former normal intensity, then extensive, increasing its durability & pervasiveness. The action has now already begun, but is not yet very powerful.

Samadhi (swapna)—yesterday resisted, hampered & confused, is today still resisted, but not so often confused. There have been admirable scenes of brief movement, with vivid lifelike figures in full detail, & combinations of figure, speech and action with the beginnings of coherent conversation.

Lipi

1. *Lifeless . . September. This year in September.* (successively, the first then again repeated)

2. *Tonight . . light.* (the second word replacing *light*).[3]

The physical ananda of pain (heat) has suddenly been taken away by the Dasyu and its place is taken by imperfect titiksha.

Lipi

3. In antardrishta. *I am formless and thoughtless in my essentiality, but personality is my real* (being) *and my essentiality is only the initial status of things.*

Samadhi.

In antardrishta all sorts of forms are beginning to appear, but they are in the last degree crude, shifting, usually ill-formed except in parts and rapidly dissolving.

14th March—

The knowledge has temporarily gone back to the chaitanya in the heart, prana & body whose motions are now taken up into the vijnana-buddhi and there enlightened or more often now manifested at once as intuitionally luminous from the beginning. The higher or true vijnana is now only active through the vijnana buddhi.

---

[3] *See below, second paragraph under 14 March. It would appear that the lipi was "light . . tonight", "tonight" being "the second word replacing light".—Ed.*

Lipi

The lipi — *Light tonight* was justified by the return of this qualified luminosity & the re-idealising of the system & also by some new light on the world problem in the script re the 14 Manus.

Script

Resumption of script yesterday. First movements unsatisfactory & repetition of old false & trivial script, finally there came a movement that started from the best of the old script & passed beyond it; the mind tried to control but was outrun & seemed evidently in communication with another mind that did not depend on it for the suggestion of thought or even entirely of vak.

Telepathic Trikaldrishti

2 typical instances —

1. A crow seated on iron support of balcony; pranic impulse seen to be flight downward in a given direction, resisted by tamasic hesitation of mind and body. Trikaldrishti that in spite of all delay & resistance the contemplated movement would be executed. Doubt due to perception of adverse influences & tendencies, movement of bird away from line, arrival of finch tending to alter thought & standing partly in the line marked; still persistent affirmation. Ultimately the movement foreseen effected. Subsequent movements of both birds correctly seen but with errors of exact line of flight; general directions & turns correctly pre-indicated. This, however, is now very common. It is exactitude & freedom from error due to false stress & overdefinition of subordinate or understatement of definitive force, intention or tendency that have to be secured.

2. A shabby boy in a splendid & richly varnished Victoria push-push. Doubt whether he was not coachman's boy put up in carriage. Intuition, son of well-to-do Indian Christian (latter detail inferential from dress — short trousers — & not intuitional) & carriage newly varnished; shabbiness due to carelessness in these matters. Revelatory intuition, child belonging to Indian Christian in the house just behind this, Venumani. Sceptical intellect challenged

intuition. Went to verify. The carriage stopped opposite V's house & the boy went in leaving the coachman to follow.

The theory that all is satyam & error comes from false stress, false valuation & false application by the mind is now established. Eg idea of coachman's son came from satya perception of semi-paternal bhava of aged servant to the boy in the carriage.

The old power of receiving the emotional & sense idea content of others' minds is now active; the vyapti prakamya of formed thought is still infrequent, doubtful or sluggish, or when none of these, then insufficiently precise.

Samadhi—

Two typical antardrishta visions. 1. A heavily polished door half open showing part of a room carpeted with a clean white cloth, but apparently empty of furniture. Very vivid in the *pradiv* behind the outer chittakasha (ether of the pranic manas as pradiv is of the prano-manasic buddhi), but dim in the chittakasha & remote from it. 2 An atmosphere, not of earthly air, but of apas full of rolling & shifting clouds of colour strong but not very bright. In the apas jala & floating tejas (also leaping but not actively); a star seen at first but afterwards lost in the clouds of colour.

Lipi—

1. Chitra lipi

   fuel . . is upward . . July 13th

   July 13th spacious. These images are evidently the Vedic. The fuel of Agni, the divine Tapas is already heaped, समिद्ध अग्ना, its tendency is upward ऊर्ध्वो भव, by July 13th it will be already spacious, बृहद्भा, विप्रथस्व—ie in two months exactly. (Note—there was nothing in the mind to suggest this lipi; it is an instance of absolute spontaneity[)]

2. Akasha. *Authority of the lipi.* Nowadays frequently repeated.
3. *Jollity.* Once more emphatically repeated.
4 *Tuesday* (no precise indication, except of some progress in the siddhi,—the allusion is probably to the trikaldrishti).

15th March. Sunday.

Lipi

1. *Tuesday*

2. *Ideal thinking the result of spirituality; thoughtless before the unity of the spirit in all things.* This refers to the necessity in the sadhan for a passive & empty mind (the empty cup which has then to be filled by a vijnanamaya activity[)].

Samadhi

1. Sukshma taste still comes rare but vivid, usually *sadhara*, eg strong taste & smell of a sweet wine while smoking a cigarette. The difficulty of the *sadhara vishaya* is the doubt in the mind whether the vishaya is not really a strong perception of sthula, & not at all sukshma.

2. Varnamaya image on the wall; India, Bengal a vivid blue, the rest a bright & beautiful green, the whole floating in a haze of strong golden colour. Blue spirituality, green divine karma, golden knowledge. India is now shedding knowledge rather than in conscious possession of it.

Trikaldrishti

Idea of the rapid completion of the seventh book of Ilion (first of war.) (Not yet fulfilled 31st March)[4]

Lipi

The Lipi of "festivity" unexpectedly fulfilled.

Note

The vijnana clouded during the day & the intellect in the environment active.

16th March.

Today the vijnana of knowledge became almost perfect on the level of the vijnanabuddhi illumined from the vijnana before; then an outburst from the higher reaches of the vijnana, in which the buddhi became a tertiary & quite passive agent, was again followed by obscuration & activity of the clouding intellect.

---

[4] *This phrase was added between the lines on the thirty-first.—Ed.*

Lipis—

1. *Largest delight*—referring to the Ananda that came with the activity of the higher vijnana.
2. *Jollity, festivity—first often, then always.*
3 *Sunday . . settled . . .* The allusion seems to be to the arrangement of the trikaldrishti

17th March. Tuesday

The Lipi Tuesday, (14th March) is to some extent justified, as today the ritam in the jnana seems to be firmly founded in the vijnana-buddhi by a[n] affirmative and discriminative action of the higher vijnana on the fallible mind. An attempt is being made to extend this advance to the trikaldrishti which is not yet entirely successful, as the overstress of the telepathic drishti continues in the environmental nature & prevents accuracy at the centre. Nevertheless the ritam is becoming remarkably powerful, even though unequal & false in its mental incidence in the trikaldrishti.

Veda is now taking a clear form & the objections to it breaking down; the definite interpretation has begun.

Kamánanda, often obstructed and suspended, always return[s]; ahaituka tivra has established itself as a recurrent intensity, like ahaituka kamananda; ahaituka rudra now promises to do the same. Rupa is infrequent & crude in the jagrat. Samadhi is still attempting to organise itself, but the definite movement has not taken place. Lipi, though easily active if supported by the will, is otherwise subject to fluctuations from a state of intense, free & rapid to a state of dull & infrequent activity, although chitra is always freer than akasha & hardly at all suspended, though its ease & frequency vary. Aishwarya grows in strength and insistence, but is not yet in real possession of its field.

Lipi

1. *Finish.* It is suggested, with the knowledge side of the vijnana in its foundations.
2. *Lipi will (is about to) destroy its obstacles.*
3 *Field of authority of the lipi.*
4. *Perfect authority of the lipi.*

5 *Suffer disasters systematic*
6 *Distinguish between lipi of tendency & lipi of actuality.*

18th March

Lipi.

1 *Finish joyfully with the difficulties in the acceptance by the intellect of the ideality.*
2. *Beyond light delight.*
3 *Satisfaction of the faith in its still tottering elements*

Trikaldrishti—

All that has been effected on "Tuesday" is to complete the illuminated perception of the forces at play behind events & their intentions & movements & to a certain extent of the motions in the object itself; but this latter, though correct, is not always illumined. The trikaldrishti of eventual actuality is still obscured & successfully deflected or veiled by false suggestions except in the better moments of the sadhana. Today vijnana obscured.

The illuminated action in Veda continues but is usually associated with the written vak; the perceptional thought is still disputed by the intellect. In other words, the Sruti is effected, both in writing & thought, but the Drishti is yet inefficient.

Rupadrishti—

After many years the drishti of wind seen in the Alipore jail & often afterwards was again manifested, in this instance in connection with sukshma rain.

Chitra of the brilliant rays of Surya. Indicative of the reemergence of the higher vijnana in a greater brilliance (?)

Jonakis, stars and dark living spots very frequent. (N.B the firefly, the star, the wind are given in Swet. Up [Swetaswatara Upanishad]—along with others, moon, sun, fire etc, as signs of Yogasiddhi.)

19th March.

Dullness of vijnana continues. Remarkable instance of Aishwarya, Caillaux-Calmeth, & resignation of Caillaux, but not direct, nor of the same kind as the former, followed by the fall of the last Caillaux Cabinet in two days.

Lipi

1. *Typical effect of ishita, indirectly of aishwarya.*

2. *Distrust the inertia; knowledge is perfect, if it is perfectly utilised.*

3. *Always.* (in reference to partial effect of Will)

Vijnana is now revived. It is applying itself to the trikaldrishti, & is always roughly right, but not always or at all finely in detail & for that reason is confused about the eventual eventuality. Aishwarya & ishita are now more powerful, although still resisted by a less intrinsically powerful opposition, less powerful even when, by a greater exertion, it produces the same result of failure. There are also striking results of immediate effectuality by vashita & effective vyapti in awaking Yogic realisations & psychological changes in those around me. In the aishwarya, the servant bháva, having no separate personal interest in the result but only the Master's interest, is now becoming finally powerful. Ananda of the kama is now extending itself at a greater pitch of intensity than formerly, but still stands in necessity of smarana. Tivra is common; the other physical anandas (ahaituka) rare.

Vashita & Aiswarya

1 Following on explanation of oneness & vyapti & aishwarya for Brahmadrishti, B. [Bijoy] got vision of Sat & Chit samudras with all beings as kendras & the body no longer a barrier to the vision. 2. Aishwarya on Bharati to get lipi. Result, saw for first time lipi with open eyes, "Being. We." & a green sun. (Brahman, the Purushas & nishkama karma).

Strong & violent tivra from hetu of pain; strong kama & tivra from touch of vishaya on parts of the body not directly connected with kamachakra, (left arm near shoulder).

Lipis—

4. *3.* = some movement in the rupa.

5. *Dispensability of Inertia.* Inertia ie Tamas was formerly necessary to correct the errors of Rajas, but is no longer needed except in some fragmentary movements.

6 *Fallibility of inertia*

Kamananda in samadhi is now becoming frequent, but tends to break the samadhi either at once or more often by a gradual return to less & less profound states of the sleep.

The eye no longer seeks to force imperfect rupas to assume a perfect outline by aishwaryamaya tratak, but awaits a spontaneous perfection. Meanwhile the mind takes cognizance of the meaning & circumstances of obscure rupas by telepathic reading of the bhava in the rupa or by vijnanamay perception.

20th March Friday.

It is now evident by continual experience that the telepathic trikaldrishtis which fail, are perceptions of real tendencies or intentions or outside acting forces which either modify or tend to modify immediate action & always remain as latent forces in Prakriti & the individual which may determine future event or action in that or in other vessels of the Shakti which come within the zone of Nature affected. The determinative stress in the knowledge is still erratic & the final action of the true vijnana in trikaldrishti is still withheld at ordinary times.

The pure ahaituka kamananda at any point of the body has begun an occasional action, usually associated with other forms of bhoga.

Lipi.

1. *Tonight telepathy*

2 *Blessings in disguise*—ie there will now be full & habitual perception of the mangala in the apparent amangala.

3 *Passive telepathy . . try.* That is, telepathy is now almost entirely of the nature of vyapti; try now & prakamya will become equally active.

4 *Distinguish disciples. Authority.* (ie Authority of the trikaldrishti)

5. *Set fire to Bol. Aishwarya.* (Chitra-lipi).

6. *Flexibility of the intellectuality is replaced by flexibility of the ideality*

7 *Threatening intelligence.* ie news seeming to threaten but not really dangerous. This was fulfilled immediately afterwards, such intelligence being given at night but told in the morning re—J. Ayar, Chudamani & S.R.

Note. 1. 2. 3. 4. 6. 7. were all fulfilled or began to be fulfilled.

Script was active throughout the day; it has become satya. Prakamya which has long been overshadowed by a free & powerful vyapti has begun to develop the same freedom & power; at the same [time] telepathy of thought, formerly only occasional or secondary in reception, is now direct & enlarging its activity. Sortilege is also coming again freely & of itself & justifying its contents & utility. In the body (vital) wine of ananda is once more physically felt, but curiously enough in movements of pain as well as of ananda. Rupa of varna, crude, is becoming brilliant & perfect in a few forms.

Rupas

1. Small green sun, brilliant, in the antariksha; followed by a balloon of reddish orange. N.B. Orange is psychical sight or power & red is pravritti & karma.

2. In room, a leaping red flame of a lamp, now visible, now extinguished. Symbolic like 1—referring to the nature of much of the activity, due to inefficiency of the body.

The nirananda of pain seems to have reasserted itself partially on ground conquered for the Ananda. The shakti is now driving it out again from these positions.

On the whole there is a great activity of the siddhi, the net result being the firm generalisation of vijnanamaya knowledge, vijnanamaya power & sraddha. But as yet positive imperfection still remains & recurs even in the knowledge and the power is still met by resistance which, though with difficulty, still very often succeeds especially in things of the body etc.

21st March.

Lipi—

1. *Joyful liberation from the intellectuality*
(partially fulfilled. May 21st)[5]
2 *Perfectly established in the essentiality of the objectivity* (ie the lipi) fulfilled May 21st
3 *Strong thesis* (dhasi) *of the telepathy.*
fulfilled. (May 21st)

---

[5] *As usual, these notations of fulfilment were written after the original entry.—Ed.*

4 *The externality of the destiny* (only begun & uncertain May 21^{st})

5 *The Times . . God . . right. settled . . swiftly*

The lipi is now manifesting itself against all material resistance in the akasha with great frequency & authority, nor is it possible to keep a record of all the lipis that fulfil themselves. It is still, however, resisted and only visible usually after an effort, therefore, not always with perfect legibility, nor with invariable fullness, consecutiveness or coherence. The power of interpretation with viveka is there to mend the verbal incoherence & supply the lacunae of the form.

Sortilege is now frequent, although often needing a very figurative & even fanciful interpretation. The following are typical instances.

1. A case presenting itself in which a form of tapasya was necessary (jalarodha) & there being a doubt in the intellect of its permissibility, the eye glanced across involuntarily at a manuscript on the table & saw the sentence *"That is the system"*. Involuntary purposeful sortilege.

2. A sortilege being sought with no particular subject, need or purpose, except the testing of the theory of sortilege, another MS gave *"Vowel stems of the 3^d form the accusative vocative.["]* This had to be interpreted, *3^d* = 3^d chatusthaya, *vowel stems*, = subtle parts ie parts of knowledge in their beginnings & superstructure, the flower being yet to come, *form the accusative*, = regularise their objective action based on prakamya in the actuality, & *vocative* = their subjective action based on vyapti in the actuality. This movement as a matter of fact began immediately afterwards. Voluntary objectless sortilege.

Certainty in the trikaldrishti has at last begun to be frequent though far from invariable in the active perception as well as in the passive reception. Tapas as was predicted yesterday in the script has begun to assert itself with a greater & more habitual power both in ishita & aishwarya. At the same time sraddha is becoming firmer, more obstinate against disappointment &, though this is less prominent as yet, more anandamaya & savesha (enthusiastic). But, as yet, it is imperfectly applied to the kriti & physical siddhi in spite of better & sometimes positive & striking successes, eg Caillaux' resignation, etc.

Rupa now evolves obscure figures of all kinds, fourfooted animals included, on the background & in the akasha & a few more clear, though none perfect. Samadhi is attempting to expel the incoherence of tamasic nidra. Pictures are now very common, especially old Indian pictures in crowded groups & very brilliant colours, but also others without colours.

Lipi.

6. *Thirteenth—destroy the obstacles.* Chitra in chimney of lamp.
7. *Scholastic study of Scriptures.* (Repeated often recently)

Clear, brilliant & perfectly combined Rupas in samadhi, but not yet the requisite stability.

22d March. Sunday.

Certainty in the trikaldrishti is more powerful than yesterday, but still needs concentration (samadhi, samahitabhava) of the tapas to be assured of itself, as otherwise either the perception of conflicting possibilities tends to destroy certainty or overstress misplaces & defeats it.

Utthapana of the neck maintained for 45 minutes without any serious stress, but with an increasing strain of heaviness in the last 20 or 25 minutes; of the right leg, medial position for 15 minutes, —heaviness only, no muscular pain. Utthapana of left leg later in the day for 20 minutes.

The siddhi since yesterday evening is being continually attacked by upsurgings of the semi-intellectual activities of the joint vijnanabuddhi & manas. The greater effectiveness gained in aishwarya-ishita has also been suspended & the rupa fails to stabilise itself in clear forms. Lipi occurs but with less power & frequency. Variations throughout the day.

In the evening for a few minutes the formal material of the trikaldrishti achieved a condensed [form] for a short time. eg.

1. θεσφατα Varsity. Stage (Chitralipi in the clouds).

2. Images in the clouds. A nib (literature), a fish, (travel), a ring, a bracelet; then, a low comedian; a mother (European &

golden-haired) with a child climbing on her neck. All these were close together, connected in sense, & the first four closely connected in sense. They must be taken as indications about European womanhood in the future earth-destiny.

3. Also in the clouds. Certain scenes of a pursuit in the early Manwantaras of a race of divinised Pashus by Barbarians. Also, animals & arms of other ages. (The latter are common).

The whole of 3, which is recorded elsewhere,[6] was an instance expressly given of the way in which the Theosophists arrive at their results & shows both their sincerity & the possibilities and pitfalls of their method.

4 Three sortileges. Katha Upanishad (Apte's edition)

p. 82. (1) यद्विज्ञानान्न किंचिदन्यत्प्रार्थयंते ब्राह्मणाः कथं तदधिगम इति। उच्यते– येन रूपं रसं गंधं शब्दान्स्पर्शांश्च मैथुनान्। एतेनैव विजानाति किमत्र परिशिष्यते। एतद्वै तत्।

This has to be interpreted in connection with the present stage of the siddhi, = "Vijnana is active, but also the sense mind & the intellect. Only the vijnana is desired. How is that sole action of vijnana to be secured? By receiving the sense life also through the vijnana and not through the mind & senses. Then nothing is left; for the sense world becomes a vijnanamaya world, etad vai tat, & is rendered in the terms of Truth.[″]

p. 102 (2) परमात्मा दुःखी स्याद् दुःखाभिन्नत्वाल्लोकवदित्याह–एकस्य सर्वात्मकत्व इति। अविद्यायां प्रतिबिम्बितश्चिद्धातुरज्ञो भ्रांतो भवति।

Incidentally touches, if not of grief, yet of dissatisfaction still assail the Adhara even though Paramatman has been realised, owing to the Brahman being identified with the ego-world in the environmental intellect. This is due to the persistence of Avidya, there, that is of the sense life & the imperfect activity of the Vijnana.. Conscious[ness] reflected in the sense life is subject to ignorance & unrest which may become grief. This sortilege must be taken in connection with lipis which came at the same time.

eg. Destroy self.

ie. The relics of the ego attitude remain in the outskirts of the consciousness & try to return & recover the centre. These remnants must be destroyed.

---

[6] *See "The Evolutionary Scale", pages 1326 – 28.—Ed.*

(3) p. 112 तच्चेहैव बोद्धुं शक्तः सन्निहैव चेज्जानाति तदा मुच्यत एवेति संबंधः। तत इत्यस्य व्याख्यानमनवबोधादिति। परमात्मावगमाय यत्नः कार्य इत्युक्तमुपसंहरति।

Since the entire Oneness can be realised here & it is only by that complete realisation of God in everything in this world that absolute Liberty is possible, — for the idea of Him as something separate manifesting here is an error, — therefore the final word is that an effort must be made to realise God the Spirit here absolutely, so that nothing else may be seen, felt, smelt, heard, tasted.

Mar. 23.

Sortilege. Idem. p 76.

1. सिध्यतीति पृथिव्यादिषु तारतम्येन सौक्ष्म्यमुपपादयति स्थूलेत्यादिना।

In the application of the three sortileges already found, the experience of error still continuing, a doubt occurred as to their completeness. The impulse to consult was given & the mind assured that the sortilege would meet the doubt. The above was the response, & proves entirely the reality of the Sortilege system & its veridicity & capacity of direct response.

Interpretation. The vijnana is being perfect[ed] in the physical, vital & mental worlds according to their characteristic differences; at present the mental knowledge is being idealised to perfection by the idealising (rendering perfectly & spontaneously true & luminous) of the sense perceptions, the pranic impulses, the bodily movements & all connected therewith. Error is brought into play in order to be converted into its underlying truth.

2. तारतम्येन by itself is also a sortilege & means that by assigning each subjective perception of the body, nerves & mind to its right place, object & time vijnana will be progressively & finally perfected.

N.B. It is a curious fact that the physical knowledge received by the body through the annamaya Atman & the pranakosha is often truer, if at all illumined, than the mental knowledge; on the other hand the responses of the prana to knowledge are more erratic than those of the mind.

Other sortileges confirming the sense of those already given.

Images connected with yesterday's 3.[7] (1) An open country with a hill in the distance, representing the unoccupied land taken by the civilised invaders from the barbarian; (2) a fortified city on a plateau with great terraces cut in the slope in the background, in front level spaces leading to a great river with a vast ghaut at one place in the bank; (3) the same river; a hut large & spacious with a great door open, — afterwards, appear in the hut opposite the doorway a priest & a child; after a while the priest turns away lifting his hands as if shocked & despairing. All these in the chimney of the lamp. (4) not connected, a chitra on a rough envelope (inside torn open), very distinct in every detail (even more than the others,) two flights of step[s], with a rough, sculptured wall at the angle; a woman, young, beautiful, with a bonnet and a walking stick in her right hand held away from her body & supported on the stairs, very elegantly dressed; below her on the steps a crown, bracelet & cloth. These images are chitra; the akasha images are still vague & present seldom any clear details.

Trikaldrishti still continues to generalise itself without being able to expel error. Samadhi is now being utilised, but does not yet improve in its material. All the materials of trikaldrishti are in fact being utilised for all three times without any of them yet being entirely perfect. Tapas varies in effectiveness.

Mar 24. Tuesday

Saguna Brahmadrishti has now practically taken the place of the Nirguna which is now perceived only as a foundation for the action of the Saguna. It is seen that the Sarvam Brahma is prominent when the Tapas of mental Chaitanya is fixed on Matter, all else being felt as undifferentiated consciousness & Matter alone as real to the mind, unreal to the drishti; Sarvam Anantam is felt when the Tapas is fixed on Matter & Life, all else being felt to be a sea of consciousness out of which Life & Matter proceed; Sarvam Anantam Jnanam when the Tapas is fixed on Life, Matter & Mind with

---

[7] *See "The Evolutionary Scale", pages 1328 – 30, for a detailed description and interpretation of the images that follow. — Ed.*

Vijnanam felt behind vaguely as the source of Mind; but when the Jnanam increases & is sun-illumined, then the Anandam also appears & the Saguna Brahman becomes the Lilamaya Para Purusha. The Anantam has also two bhavas one in which the Infinite Force acts as if it were a mechanical entity, knowledge standing back from it, the other in which Life Force & Knowledge act together & the Infinite Force is an intelligent or at least a conscious force.

Hitherto the position of the Tapas has been that when strongly exerted, it has come to produce an effect against resistance, sometimes the full effect, sometimes a partial effect, sometimes a modified or temporary effect, sometimes a postponed effect, sometimes merely a struggle physical or mental towards the desired effect. In things physical & in things of the karma, the smaller effects are more common, full effect rare. When simply exerted, the force has often failed entirely, sometimes succeeded fully & at once, sometimes partly or with resistance, sometimes for a time only wholly or partially; sometimes only by producing a tendency or mental movement. Now the simply exerted will is becoming more effective, often perfectly effective, with no resistance or brief resistance or ineffective resistance. A month has been given in the trikaldrishti for the progress of this movement.

In the trikaldrishti a qualified authority is now enjoyed by the lipi, the written script, the articulate thought, & from today by the Vani & the unwritten Script; the perceptive thought is struggling towards this authority, but still hampered by inert & by tapasic suggestions which overstress a perception or which overshoot their mark. Today a more powerful movement of the perceptive thought, more readily, widely & accurately perceptive of the complex truth of forces & their results. If this tendency prevails, the lipi "Tuesday" & its interpretation will be amply justified. In any case, the claim of the tapasic devatas to be rendered effective before the knowledge is effective as knowledge, is from today rejected. As yet knowledge & force cannot become identical. Another attempt is also being made to cast out the relics of self from the environmental will. It is now evident that the whole difficulty which refuses to be still evicted, is the persistent survival of [Bhuvarmaya][8] Tapas and its attempt to profit by the vijnana instead of allowing the Swarvati Shakti to illumine itself in a pure desirelessness from the Mahas. Lipsa has been the excuse for this persistence & its distinction from Kama. But the lipsa must be a samalipsa ready entirely to take defeat as well as success and not choosing its will but leaving that to a higher Shakti than the Bhuvarmayi or manomayi. The whole trikaldrishti is still regulated by the idea of success & failure & therefore cannot free itself from overstress. The reason is that man is at present the Asura Rakshasa & seeks from the buddhi the satisfaction of the heart & senses. Therefore this particular nodus is so hard to unloose; because it is always this Asura Rakshasa who has to be liberated & fulfilled & the difficulty cannot be solved by casting him out & rising entirely into a higher principle. The Devasura variety of the Asura Rakshasa has to be established, not the pure Deva or even the pure Devasura. The crux is here, in the right solution of this complexity. There is a pull which would carry too high, there is a pull which would keep too low. Both have to be avoided.

Sortilege (1) हर्षचरितं (2) बलाकाजातीयः। दीर्घग्रीवः सितवपुर्महाप्राणः श्रवन्मनः। बलाकाजातिरित्युक्तस्तदन्यनारिकेलजः (3) दशकुमारचरितं. That is, the Ten Kumaras = the ten Purushas from Pashu to Siddhadeva. The present that is drawing to an end is the Rakshasa, whose type is that of हर्ष not आनन्द. It is the दृप्त बालाकि species, long necked = eager, purified in body, mahat in the prana element, therefore with a mind that listens in the ananta dasha dishah for the sruti from the vijnana. The other that is coming is Anandamaya, born of the full enjoyment of the Prakriti, ie the Devasura. Balaká also means in the sortilege the young unfulfilled Prakriti. The Anandamaya Devasura has been prepared in the Rakshasa by the Gandharva type of Rakshasa who is also नारिकेलजः, born not of Prakriti's full act of enjoyment, but of her full mood of enjoyment (the Gandharvi bhava in Mahasaraswati).

The thought-telepathy is now coming more freely; sometimes it is seen as a thought with impulse & proved by the immediately subsequent act; sometimes it is entertained by the mind not as a perception of thought in another's mind, but as an impression registered as a thought in one's own mind, yet vaguely but uncertainly associated, perhaps as a speculation of the other's conduct, with another mind. Eg. B [Bijoy] brings tea. Mind thinks of B. looking for a cigarette, seeing none & possibly bringing one. There is no such look or action in B's body, but only a vague idea of such a thought, possibly, in his mind. The next minute B brings a cigarette & looks to see whether or not there were any left, showing that this had actually been in his mind & he was now verifying by his senses an idea the mind had arrived at in thought only. At the same time it is possible that the thought went from my mind to his & produced the action or went to another's who gave the cigarette to be placed there & then only B looked to see if there were no cigarettes already. In the latter case the thought was an effective vyapti from my mind to his or another's; in the former a srauta vyapti from his to mine. Other cases were clear cases of prakamya; eg the perception of the thought & impulse in his mind & body to take the carbolic lotion, followed the next second by his action in taking it, etc.

---

[8] *MS* Bhuvarmukti

Lipi.

1. *Healthy system—effigies of the unhealthy system still resists the healthy*

2. *Healthy system established not in actuality but type of actuality.*

3. *"Sister"* or *"siskos"* very frequent

4 *Jollity . . festivity.* fulfilled immediately, followed before fulfilment by pranic manomaya impression of Bj's intention & its approaching execution. No data for the intellect.

5 *13.* This lipi comes daily & often. 13 = Kama, last member of the 5th chatusthay

6 *Sortilege.* Indicating necessity of resort to sortilege. Directional lipi

Sortilege.

1. Rv. [Rigveda] I. [178.][9] मा नः कामं महयंतमा धग् विश्वा ते अश्यां परि आप आयोः Destroy not or afflict not my desire as

---

[9] *MS* 138.

it acquires the Mahadbhav; may I taste all (fruits & enjoyments) throughout all the waters of being.

This sortilege gives full sanction to the ideal of the liberated Asura Rakshasa.

2 मूल्यं सार्धो रूप्यकः ie the value of the siddhi of knowledge is now the full faculty of jnana & half the fullness (8 a[nna]s) of trikaldrishti. This is an exact description of the ordinary action of the illumined vijnanabuddhi at the present stage of the siddhi. $1\frac{1}{2}$ has long been in the lipi the sign of perfect jnana & imperfect trikaldrishti, jnana being symbolised by 1, trikaldristi by 2, Rupa by 3, Tapas by 4, Samadhi by 5, Health by 6, Ananda by 7, Utthapana by 8, Saundarya by 9, Kali by 10, Krishna by 11, Karma by 12, Kama by 13; so in succession with the 4 members of the Brahmachatusthaya & the 4 of the Siddhi Chatusthaya making 21 in all.

3 पृष्टो भिंद्यामस्याः संशयं यथानुभवकथनेन. This refers to the persistent doubts of the sceptical intellect re the Karmasiddhi & points to increasing authority of the divine Vani, अस्याः being Kali the Prakriti & the speaker the Deva or Purusha, Krishna, Master of the Yoga. It appears, however, that the doubts as to dehasiddhi, rapidity, exact fulfilment of knowledge & power are also included.

Images

1. A mirror (back view) with a woman behind looking at herself in it. Fact & symbol.

2. The same, front view. Both Akasha, crude.

3 Bird. crude (a sign that none of the old effects already produced are lost to the siddhi, the bird being the ordinary figure in the crude form)

4. Human figure mounting an incline; a fish; a net; bird varnamaya; all crude, clear, but mostly fleeting. Lipi 7. *Insufficient stability.*[10]

Lipi.

8. *Flexibility of the intellectuality* ie brought about now in a greater degree by the discouragement of the stress on the tapas

---

[10] *This is the seventh in the series of lipis beginning before the sortileges and images above, and continuing below. — Ed.*

& inertia; with this change has come a greater perfection both of jnana & trikaldrishti.

9. *The disgust of the asiddhi*—has to be got rid of entirely.

10. *The political siddhi . . destroy*—ie the putting an end to the present anarchical activity is necessary for the return to political life & must be attempted henceforth. Inaction in this respect must cease. Only there need be no haste[,] no anxiety. At the present the means of action are not to hand. They must be found out or created or both.

11 *Type of the trikaldrishti . . telepathy perfect in detail. Perfect telepathy & trikaldrishti.* That is the type has now to be well formed & extended to the exclusion of speculation & overstressed perception.

The difficulty formerly experienced in thought-telepathy was that there was a full or almost full perception, whenever there was even slight sanyama, of the chitta-mould of the living object and of his sensation mind in its status & acquired form accompanied with a clear perception of the contents of the temperament & character, also of the waves of feeling & sensation that arose in the manas & chitta & to a less degree of the thought sensations that arose in the manas, but not of the buddhi, except in its vague mould & acquired status, its outer shell only,—not of either its general contents or of the particular ideas arising in it. These powers were gained long ago,—early in the Pondicherry stay,—& to some extent always existed in an inchoate form as they exist probably in all men; but they had to be discontinued for a long time; now with the growth of the jnanam Brahma this difficulty is being overcome by the perception of the contents of the buddhi & the waves of idea that rise in it. This evening the old powers arose in a much more powerful & vivid form than before. This revival was heralded by a note in the lipi referring to the former intensity of the powers for a short period as between Bj & myself; but the full intention of the lipi was not understood; it was not realised that the revival of that intensity this very day was intended. Therefore the lipi was not recorded. There is still much to be done, but the foundations of complete knowledge, trikaldrishti & prakamya-vyapti are now being very firmly and very bountifully laid.

Proofs of the idea-perception are being multiplied; eg, a quarrel between two cats on the opposite terrace, a black tom & a white pet cat; almost all the movements could be followed & predicted; 1st the intention of the black to leap on the parapet of the stairs where the white had taken refuge, then, partly from discretion, partly in obedience to aishwarya, its slow departure, — but this was not actually foreseen, the emotions of its retreat, — sullen anger, pride, fear of attack (this was proved by the frequent look back, yet not too frequent, from pride), the half idea of returning & pursuing the quarrel, always abandoned, the intention to come on to our kitchen roof, the turning aside for the direct descent, (here there was a doubt whether the reading of the intention was correct, probably caused by a hesitation in the cat himself whether he should not deviate to another side[)], the final descent before the doubt could be solved.

Incidentally, the doubt as to exact fulfilment of knowledge is being removed as predicted in the [sortilege][11] भिंद्यां संशयमनुभवकथनेन. There is still doubt as to the rapidity — except of individual movements of progression where the rapidity is undoubted, — owing to the past experience of invariable relapse & suspension of siddhis, although these relapses & suspensions are now, owing partly to the stronger foundation, either less prolonged or not thorough. There is doubt also as to the rapid effectivity of the tapas. Neither knowledge nor tapas are yet active with any force with regard either (1) to the actual past of individuals or their future, (2) to the karmasiddhi, (3) to things at a distance, (4) to details of the thought, such as names etc, [(5)][12] to exact time & place (ie the minute, the spot). Some siddhi in all these respects there is, but it is still fragmentary. The largeness of the field unoccupied is another ground for doubt of a generally effective rapidity.

Images. Chitra in the lamp.[13]

1. A river with a masonry bridge built across, arched doors (one only seen) in the bridge for the river to pass through; on the bridge, first one man, then others passing across, the first hastening,

---

[11] *MS* lipi *(see the last sortilege above)*

[12] *MS* (4)

[13] *See "The Evolutionary Scale", pages 1332 – 34. — Ed.*

the others slow; beyond the bridge on the river a girl & a man crossing the river in a sort of raft; [a][14] lamppostlike erection in the river, the nature & object of which are not clear yet. Beyond a hill with houses upon it. Connected with the Pashu-episodes. The type is no longer the Gandharva-Pashu, although a substratum of that type remains in the new race; the new type is distinctly coarser, one seen the other day after the Image, barbarously coarse; these seen today are of a higher kind, but all have a slightly Teutonic cast in the character-mould only half refined into an intelligent quiescence.

2. A low type of the Kali Pashu, 1st Manwantara,—in appearance hatted, bearded & visaged like a common type west country American.

3. A part of a hill with a house upon it roofed like a modern Church.

4. A very wide road climbing up a steep incline. Trees on one side showing the great width of the road.

5. Animals of the first chaturyuga. A huge seal-like water animal. A land-animal also exceedingly huge with red & yellow bands, a long rough projecting snouted face lifted up to roar; ferocious in appearance, harmless in fact. Suggestion, that these belonged to the animal chaturyuga before man appeared.

Akasha.

Two leaves, crude, first transparent, then tejas-chhaya, clear & stable, but not vivid. N.B It had been indicated that a clear & stable form would appear; but it came with difficulty & all that followed were clear but incomplete & rapidly changing half figures of animals.

Mar. 25.

Perceptive thought still fails to attain authority, though it presses towards authority. Telepathy of thought is still rough & wanting in fineness & firmness; it is also crossed by the perception of ideas from the pranamaya, manomaya & bhurmaya beings which besiege our activities. There are movements in the bodily self

---

[14] *MS* an

& our vital self, blind, instinctive thoughts, impulses, memories, like those of the animal, eg the horse mechanically taking an accustomed turning; these are now vividly seen, more vividly often than those of the active mind & confuse the thought-perception. False perceptions, however, always turn out to be true perceptions, true in essence, false in incidence. Eg (1) a dog paused in the middle of the road, three tendencies were seen, one in the direction it was originally [taking][15] became a vain effort of the pranamaya to persist & was soon forgotten by the dog, but remained in its subconscious mind and might, with favourable fate, have been revived & fulfilled in subsequent action; another, to the left, was disbelieved in by the perceptive thought which indicated a turn to the right as its eventual action, & the dog did turn its head immediately afterwards in that direction, — but it went to the left, not the right. The idea of a movement to the right was immediately dismissed by the intellect as a falsehood, but as a matter of fact, a few seconds afterwards, the dog returned & fulfilled the identical line to the right, to the very spot, that had been indicated. So a child about to turn the corner was seen as intending to turn into the house just round the corner; its course & thought after turning was away from the house, but a moment afterwards it went in at the door indicated. There were no less than four incidents of this kind with this door in the course of half an hour. When, however, there is no illumination, the source of the misdirected perception is not seen & the intellect labours under the idea of an absolute, originless & unjustifiable asatyam, which does not exist in this world. Satyam is established; it is the anritam which still gives trouble.

Lipis.

1. *Federation of love*
2. *Exiled dynasties . . tapas.* In reference especially to France, but not exclusively
3. *I* — indicating that the Deva, Krishna, Master of the Yoga, is taking more & more direct charge of the activities.

Drishti of the panchabhuta is now common & of wind in the panchabhuta, but not of wind in the ordinary akasha. Images of insects, birds are seen in the prana-akasha (bhuvar), but not usually the flying forms themselves; when seen, these are not clear to the eye.

---

[15] *MS* taken

Lipis

4. *Request. Yes. I don't intend to satisfy it immediately, but to satisfy it after the necessary delays in its due time.* ie the lipsa
5 *Tuesday—blaze.* ie The ideality founded yesterday will by next Tuesday have burst into a blaze.

The forms of the birds etc seen in the pranakasha are now beginning to be clear for a moment, but they disappear at once into the pranajagat. The explanation is that the pranakash ordinarily seen is the pranakasha envelope of bhu in which only the images of these creatures are seen & they themselves are in the akasha of the pranajagat, not the real Bhuvar but the Bhuvar of Bhu. It is these worlds that must first be seen & felt; the others can at present [ ][16] only be entered in Samadhi.

The perception of the one Jnanam Brahma in all is today very strong; but its grades & positions are still unstably harmonised, eg the general Manomaya Purusha in the Manastattwa taking the ananda of the various egos who know not themselves to be He, the same in the Anandatattwa of the Manas, the individual Manomaya Purusha watching the egoistic manas as the observing mind of an actor might watch his active mind on the stage, the Manomaya Purushottama in the cosmos & the same in the individual, the ego unconscious of its true self, the wider Manomaya aham conscious of it, yet differentiated. The Anandam Brahma is now beginning to be seen in the individual more frequently & vividly.

The restlessness & impatience & weariness of the environmental Prana with the contradictions, confusions & resistances that persist in the siddhi, still forces itself at times on the system, especially when the exiled intellectual devatas besiege & attack the city, no longer hoping to recover sway but to delay the perfect siddhi & revenge themselves for their expulsion.

---

[16] *MS* can

This siege & attack developed in the afternoon into a violent crisis, characterised by all the old movements except absolute obstruction & intended to break down the growing siddhi & destroy the authority of the lipi and other instruments of the vijnana. It is noticeable that in spite of confusion, anger, pain & unfaith, the activity of the vijnana & the principles of sraddha laid down in the pre-existent siddhi could not be entirely silenced, but applied themselves persistently to the confused thoughts, vanis, lipis, that came without being deterred by the chaos of errors & half truths that was raised. An immense but ill-coordinated activity of thought, lipi, telepathy etc accompanied the attack; the attack & the defense disputed possession of this outburst of activity & tried to make it the instrument of error & truth, confusion & a better coordination respectively. Nevertheless, the deficiencies of the previous vijnana siddhi have been accentuated by the disturbance and a manifest confusion now reigns, instead of the orderly advance which was being developed; nor does the mind know which suggestion it is to believe or which to reject as error & misplacement.

Ananda of physical pain has once more commenced; it is noticeable that pain of burning, pain of blows, nervous or muscular pain of disease, even pain of pressure are associated up to a certain degree with ananda simultaneous or subsequent in manifestation, but pain of wounds, touches on the raw flesh etc is less amenable & except in the ant's bite is as yet entirely divorced from ananda.

Image (1) The same stairs as seen in a former image . . a doll on the lower steps; a little child coming down some way above. The sculptures on the walls are clearer, some grotesque, some accurate & graceful, but unimaginative reproductions of daily life.

(2) Animal scene from the 2^{d} Manwantara.[17]

(3) Three scenes from the first [Manwantara], regarding the personage described in the lipi as "Iarlaus".[18]

Utthapana of neck & leg for 15 minutes, not maintained longer, because of the successful intrusion of muscular effort in place of the natural mahima. Laghima was strong, mahima defective.

---

[17] *See "The Evolutionary Scale", pages 1334 – 35. — Ed.*

[18] *See "The Evolutionary Scale", page 1335. — Ed.*

Mar 26 Thursday.

Sortilege. (1) विरुद्धानेकधर्मवत्त्वाद् दुर्विज्ञेयश्चेदात्मा कथं तर्हि पण्डितस्यापि सुज्ञेयः स्यादित्याशंक्याह—स्थितिगतीति. Kathak Upanishad. p [54.][19]

Referring to the difficulty noted yesterday of the ill-harmonised perceptions of the various bhavas, Manomaya etc, & also to the difficulties of the many various movements in the vani, etc; the rule is given that all must be seen as Paramatman & Para Purushah, Krishna, in the two states of status & dynamis, rest & motion.

(2) Are all mere representatives & agents of the Standard. Story of Trusts (Collins) p. 106

This is a very remarkable instance of the sortilege; for there is no connection between the Kathakopanishad & the Story of Trusts, yet a sortilege immediately taken from the latter after the interpretation of one from the former completes it & supplies precisely the thought needed for rounding off its unfinished suggestion. All the words are the exact words needed—"All" "mere" "representatives" "agents" "Standard["]. It is so, that all things in the world are now to be regarded in relation to the standard Being, the Sarva Ananta Jnana Ananda Krishna. Note that before taking the second sortilege, the book was pointed out & the indication given that the second sortilege would supply something still needed. All this shows an intelligent, omniscient & all-combining Mind at work which uses everything in the world as its instrument & is superior to the system of relations & connections already fixed in this world. It can use the most incoherent things harmoniously for one purpose. Nor is this an isolated instance & therefore classable as a mere coincidence,—instances & proofs are now crowding on the mind.

Lipi is now again developing kaushalya; instances of tejomaya, jyotirmaya, varnamaya have suddenly come & are or tend to be, unlike the former rare instances, at once clear & stable.

---

[19] *MS* 74.

Lipis.

1. *Tardy results—isolated results.*
2. *Joyfully exhaust the intellectuality.*
3. *Degeneration of telepathy.*

Trikaldrishti is now being developed on the principle of affirmation, ie everything is accepted as a fact, only the precise incidence & value of the fact has to be disengaged from the rude & inaccurate impression on the sensational mind. The importance of the unfulfilled tendency, intention or impulse physical, vital, mental or supramental, conscious, subconscious or super-conscious, is being emphasised—its indispensable importance both in determining the eventual action or result, in fixing its efficient value and chances of permanence or finality & in influencing future eventuality. It is now proved beyond doubt that the mental perception of these unfulfilled energies is not an error, proved by the constant unexpected fulfilment of those that had been put aside as errors; the vulgar test of reality, viz bodily fulfilment, is no longer needed by the mind for sraddha. The perfect trikaldrishti of eventuality will, it is supposed, emerge out of this mahadbhava of the telepathic mind, by the freer play of the higher vijnana in its fourfold quality. At present it is the telepathic trikaldrishti that is active and this, though it has been proved capable of sustained, detailed & complex accuracy, is not firm, but easily descends from the correct appraisement of event & tendency, to a mere mahat perception of tendencies open to false stress & false selection of the event.

Images (In the Clouds).

1. Yesterday & today—of a Pramatha Rakshasa (5th or 6th Manwantara) war[,] men hastening to battle, men fighting, a war-chariot & fighter, a youth giving news to his sister on the way to battle,—the same face, a modern Teutonic face reappearing always as one of the leaders, recognisable especially by the helmet, moustache & small aquiline face (middle-aged). Period Kaliyuga; a war of great historic importance.

2. A dancing girl of the same age, strong aquiline face, in loose transparent draperies. This seems to be a Roman period of the Kali. A handsome & imperial race, but already weakening in type. The bhava is that of men doomed to defeat.

3. Images of the opposite nation, a man & a woman, ugly, strong, fierce, Pisacha-Pramatha in type; the face expresses a diabolical cruelty & hunger. It is intimated that in this war the young Romanic leader in the war-chariot is victorious, but the eventual victory is to a modified race mixed of these two races, which overthrows the Empire.

4 Fantastic images of animals, a lion with an impossibly slender body, a cock face on a fourfooted animal,—belonging to the idea-world of the Manus where types are evolved & varied before they are fixed in the sthula.

In the same way as in the trikaldrishti, so in the rest of the siddhi & the lipi affirmation is being enforced. Every feeling & movement, even those that are apparently wrong or futile, has to be accepted temporarily as a factor in the eventual intention,—so also every event, however hostile. The habit of right stress will evolve hereafter & produce the right harmony.

In the afternoon return of yesterday's asiddhi, the ashanti less violent, though sufficiently acute, but the asiddhi more complete. The chaos lasted throughout the afternoon well into the evening. Contradiction in fact of the former lipis "Joyful exhaustion of the intellectuality etc."

Images—In Lamp

(1) Yesterday—the girl of the first image grown up to womanhood & another (n)[20]
(2) Today—Three of the same crossing a river by some rude kind of plank or tree bridge—three (n)
(3) Horses of that aeon—clumsy in build, long-eared. One on the bank of a river listening with head turned & ears pricked to some noise on the opposite bank.

Ananda of vishayas is growing in smell, sight & hearing. Beauty is manifesting in all faces & forms, but this janamaya drishti of the shuddhananda is still resisted & laboriously contradicted from time to time & lowered piecemeal to the chidghana or ahaituka perceptions. Today ananda of the painful touch on exposed flesh began, but did not go very far.

---

[20] *The meaning of this letter is not known.—Ed.*

Subjectively the Ananda of the pure mind, Swar, has been constantly manifest, & except in the attacks of asiddhi, dominant; the separate activities of the ananda of bhuvar are being expelled or discouraged. Today the anandamay Tapas of the Swar is being revealed; hitherto the Tapas of mind has always been of Bhuvar & not the anandamay Tapas of bhuvar, but the pranamaya rajasic, unquiet, full of desire or effort, nibhrishta-tavishi. This now afflicts from outside the system only. Vani has also once manifested from the Ananda of Jana.

The ostensible object of the movement of disturbance is to get rid of the intellectual interference and destroy the obstruction to a permanent ascent beyond the vijnanabuddhi. The chief feature has been a total destruction of the reliability of the telepathic trikaldrishti; only the mere telepathic perceptions of present tendency remain accurate & valid. As yet, however, the mind can put no fixed confidence, in the midst of the confusion, in any indication given. It is evident, at any rate, that the disintegration of the present faculty & inefficient telepathic trikaldrishti is intended and is being hastened by the Power that directs the Yoga.

Lipis.

1. *Assist the degeneration of the telepathy* — twice repeated.
2. (Much later) *Affirm the ideality against the intellectuality*
3. *Tuesday . . thyself* —
4. *Dictionary* (Tuesday refers also to this lipi).

The last thing at night the higher ideality, not the highest, — the intuitional not the revelational began to be affirmed in script & vani & fluent vangmaya thought, but could not be enforced in the perceptive thought. The manifestation of the Deva in the Adhara seems to have commenced.

Mar 27.

The mental powers of the higher Bhuvar expelled from control of the thought & perception & deprived of support from the higher Swar are now acting as a strong obstructional power and attempt to intercept and denaturalise every suggestion from the vijnana to the Swarvati buddhi. For this reason the jnana & trikaldrishti in the thought are not able to manifest themselves & even the telepathy is much hampered. The Vani & Script, however, seem now to be beyond attack or obscuration. The Lipi suffers by its right (vijnanamaya) interpretation being intercepted or seized & distorted; this disability is shared by the rupa. Pseudo-vani still occurs, but is easily detected & carries with it no authority.

The truth of intuitional vijnana has now begun to be enforced & the task of discouraging & excluding the habit of mental interception or interpretation has been taken in hand. The mind is to be a passive recipient & channel, not an active rational & perceptional agent.

Dasya — Tertiary

Dasyabhava has now taken a new form & is being reconstituted as obedience to the Master in the adhara, with Prakritic agencies as mere distributory functionaries of the Tapas of action & eventually of the Tapas of thought. Up till now the dasya was either obedience to a distant Master in the Cosmos or at least, when not distant external to the Adhara, & to Prakritic agencies who were often sahankara & opposed the direct command from the Master. Dasya was first primary, that is a free subjection of the Will on the basis of a potential independence, secondly, secondary, that is, a mechanical subjection of the adhara independent of the personal Will to the Prakriti, last, tertiary, a complete subjection, mechanical & volitional to the Ishwara with the Prakriti only as a channel or jada agent. The tertiary has also its three stages, one in which the volition was dominant in the consciousness not as free, but as accompanying & approving the movement which, though at first mechanically compulsory, might be suspended if the volition long opposed it, a second in which the Prakritic control was dominant though as a compelled & compulsory agent of a remote or veiled Ishwara and a third, now finally emerging, in which the assent of the Jiva is given compulsorily & independently of any freedom of choice in the Sakshi, the Prakriti is purely a jada channel & not an agent, & the compulsion from the Ishwara direct, omnipresent and immanent. The bhava of the dasya tends to its right relation of the bandini dasi with the characteristic madhur bhava of that relation, — a relation already familiar & frequent to the Prakriti or Devi in the system, but not yet permanent in the consciousness.

Vijnana

The referential action of the vijnana by which a suggestion first manifests deflected or overstressed in the buddhi & is then referred to the vijnana for right interpretation, is being constantly shown & condemned. It stimulates the mahadbhava of the satyam, but is unable to arrive at the ritam. It might arrive at a sort of secondary ritam after a long struggle & development, but that is not now intended, although it must be done at a later stage of the human advance in this age. At present it must be confined only to those who are incapable of the primary vijnana action.

Rupa

Formerly all kinds of rupa used to be manifested spasmodically, even to the most perfectly developed. That siddhi has by an increasing pressure of asiddhi been disintegrated in the jagrat, & has now to be reconstituted on a surer and more natural foundation. Rupa is of two kinds.

(1) Seen in the personal consciousness as image of a remote reality either in the mental akashas or the physical (prana & anna) akashas.

(2) Seen as actual form of things in the jagat or as linga image of the actual form or body.

The first is of two kinds according to perfection of manifestation

(1) inchoate (2) complete

of three according to fullness of material—

(1) crude—consisting only of the crude material (saptarchi of Agni[)], ie. 1 prakasha. 2. fire. 3. vidyut or varna 4 jyoti— 5 tejas 6 dhuma. 7 chhaya.

(2) dense—consisting of material developed into substance of consistency

(3) developed—when the substance has developed lifelike appearance of reality

of two according to circumstance of manifestation—

(1) reflection of form seen in sthula, whether real or image

(2) spontaneous, with no stimulation from any other form.

and finally either (1) stable or (2) unstable.

The perception of linga images & actual forms in the pranajagat [has][21] now become entirely complete, definite & developed, but is as yet of a momentary stability & usually stimulated rather than spontaneous, ie of birds, insects etc seen in the sthula akasha. The flight of kites & crows is constantly watched for the telepathy & trikaldrishti; therefore, the image of kite & crow are frequent; actual forms however, are more often of other birds not usually seen or watched.

In the rupa of image, all is being rebuilt again in the attempt to evolve a habitual combination of perfect complete clear & developed spontaneous form with a firm stability in the akash. For chitra rupas have now a confirmed perfection & stability, although all are not complete; the inchoate form still persists in cloud forms etc where the material is unstable, but even there the complete form is sufficiently frequent. Today rupas, individuals & groups, are occurring in the akasha which are complete but not clearcut, momentarily stable but not with a useful & durable stability. Moreover they are all crude with the extreme crudity. Other rupas in the akasha are fleeting &, though clearcut, seldom complete. Clearcut & complete crude rupas of a dense or developed crudity occur, but are also fleeting. Here there is as yet nothing that can be called an assured advance, as all this has happened before, been exceeded & then again destroyed. In samadhi there is retrogression & an old oft-repeated process of laborious rebuilding, the articulate thought in the jagrat prolongs itself into the swapna or sushupta of the mind & attempts to evolve a savijnana samadhi full of perceptive & vangmaya savijnana thought, sight etc in place of the present savikalpa samadhi. In the process a shadow of the old discontinued savichara & savitarka movements tends to recur, but is rejected & has no power or vitality. Images occur which have a kind of broken continuity & show part of the scene vividly, eg objects & action, but not the actor; this continuity is sometimes of action & mental rupa after loss of the bodily drishti. Tivra & kama occur in samadhi & continue after waking. None of these are new circumstances. There is therefore as yet no real advance. The confusions of the savikalpa continue. Antardrishta jagrat imitates at a distance the bahirdrishta.

---

[21] *MS* have

Animal forms are now coming freely & with some perfection in the chitra, but not so freely as the human or as landscape. They are more frequent than others in the antardarshi. Inanimate objects are still limited in their variety & freedom of occurrence.

In the afternoon there was again an automatic recurrence of the confusion, ashanti & revolt of the last few days; it revived as a result of anritam in the savikalpa samadhi and persisted for some two hours or more while recurrent nirananda and sensitiveness to asiddhi & asatya and the absence of the assured & sunlit jnana have been left behind as a deposit of this thrice repeated disturbance. The anger & revolt of the Prakriti at any pronounced & successful disturbance of finality in the first chatusthaya are caused by a sense of the total externality and want of justification in this wanton movement. It is no longer asatyam or other asiddhi that is the true cause of the self-identification by the Jiva with this movement of revolt. Ananda is being reestablished in the general bhavas, but continually contradicted & opposed in the detail; the nirananda is supported by the Jiva & hence lingers.

Morning Lipis. (Mostly Akasha)[22]

1. *African . . rapidity* (Really, two separate lipis)
2. *Jollity—festivity.* (From yesterday, often repeated—unexpectedly fulfilled this evening)
3 *Intellectuality . . type of the intellectualities.* (Current lipis)
4 *Fortnightly . . twilight.* Subsequently suggested that every fortnight shows a fresh growth of intensity in the ideality.
5. *The benefit of the totality*
6. *Deathless intensity*
8 *Disengaging itself* (In reference to the rupa)
7 *Joyful exhaustion—disintegration of the self-intellectuality.* (This is often repeated in various forms & temporarily established in fact only to be broken again)

---

[22] *In the following list items 8 and 7, 19 and 18 were written in the manuscript in the order listed.—Ed.*

9. *Ghose.* (Reference to Dr K. D. Ghose)
10 *Finality telepathy & trikaldrishti.* ie firmly begun—fulfilled (May 21st)
11 *White . . whistle . . write . . yes . . India . . fish . . light.* (Said to be all connected in sense. All occurred near each other in chitra. *Fish* refers to the rupa.)[23]
12. *Catholiques . . brahmaniques* (beginning to be fulfilled —May 21st)
13. *Disengage the siddhi from the asiddhi first in the telepathy.* (Direction to Shakti)
14 કદા—(Guj [Gujarati] letters = When. Time to be fixed in the trikaldrishti)
15. *The intensity of the lipi . . legibility.* (ie growing towards perfection).
16. *Small . . faith . . eager.* (ie the eager faith belongs to the alpa not the mahat)
17 *Already suggestions are of the ideality.*
19. *Tuesday is fixed for the perfection of the blaze.* (Finality is not suggested)
18 *It is against the systematic legistic temperament that the spirituality is directed.*
20. *The situation in England will develop with surprising rapidity.* (fulfilled)
21 *Beehive.* 21.a. *Faith—filling*
22 *Transition period* . . (To be read with 19)
23. *Suffer* (twice—fulfilled in the afternoon)
24. *St Joseph's College*—(daily & frequent)—refers to far future.
25. *Les Meilleures dispositions*
26. *Joyfully exhaust struggle.* (Direction to Shakti)
27. *Suffer always*, changed to *Suffer always delight to all eternity*
28. *Suffering is always present (as delight) to all eternity.* (The words in brackets were afterwards added)
29. *Saturday to Tuesday.* Said to be days of unbroken advance.

---

[23] *The first of the rupas listed below.—Ed.*

Trikaldrishtis.

(1) Continuance for some time of the struggle between soil & purity in the teeth. (In the sense given not fulfilled, for the teeth which are at present the field of the shiftings changed to a pure white, in accordance with an opposite suggestion not then believed or recorded)

(2) Image & form in pranajagat will now acquire a motional stability. (There were two or three initial movements of fulfilment)

(3) Rupa is still to develop slowly, — some stable clearness of form today. (Slight fulfilment noted in the body of the record).

(4) Trikaldrishti will not firmly emerge today. (Amply fulfilled)

(5) The trikaldrishti of exact time & place will now begin to generalise itself.

Rupas. *Symbolic.*

Eye — fish. The eye is vision; the fish travel.

Sophic

K.B.J [Khaserao B. Jadhav] in Pisacha period (Samadhi)

Mar. 28. *Opening sortilege*

(1) मत्सि नो वस्य इष्टये इन्द्रंइन्द्रो वृषा विश।
ऋघायमान इन्वसि शत्रुमंति न विंदसि।

Indra = pure Mind. Indu = Ananda. *Ishtaye* = for sacrifice or for wish fulfilled or for impulse or force of action. *Vrisha* = as master or strongly or abundantly. ऋघायमान = going straight up or ahead.

The sortilege indicates the control of buddhi by the Anandatattwa of mind in its full force & abundance for thought, emotion & action and the forward & upward movement of the Yoga free from internal enemies. This movement begins decidedly today & progressively frees itself from the relics of the old movement of battle & struggling advance. Hitherto the movement was only being prepared. Now it is ready.

(2) तस्मिन्ना वेशया गिरो य एकश्चर्षणीनां। अनु स्वधा यमुप्यते यवं न चर्कृषद्वृषा॥

ie the Srutis of the Vijnana are to be established by Ananda in Vijnana Buddhi which governs all the lower actions; the self-fixity of the higher Nature in its law of works is to be sown as a seed in all the nature of the vijnana buddhi and perfected as corn is perfected by the rains & cleared [of][24] chaff on the threshing floor.

This will take a longer time to fulfil than the first sortilege

Trikaldrishti

The ashatru movement is now possible in the knowledge because the intellect is now purified of any wish to dominate the system and use the ideality for its own purposes. The *bauddhá narah* still from habit intercept or misrender or try to anticipate the vijnana suggestions, but it is done unintentionally and mechanically and the movement corrected as soon as its [illegitimacy][25] is perceived. Trikaldrishti is once more acting above the telepathic trikaldrishti, a little obscurely, but correctly; except when it leaves the telepathic overstress to figure as trikaldrishti, it is already able to indicate the immediate event in seen objects & occurrences & even a little beyond the immediate event.

It is only, however, from internal enemies that the movement is free; the external are still there though they work from a more remote station, *dure* not *anti*. Here the Ananda is attempting to regard their opposition as from God, as a means of progress & by that constant impression on the intellect to prevent the return of suffering & permit the steadily joyful exhaustion of the struggle & of the active intellectuality itself. But for this the mind is not yet prepared owing to insufficient faith in divine protection and aid throughout, this defect permits the outer enemy to cloud the mind entirely from time to time so that the nirananda may have free play on the basis of unfaith. Nor does the Jiva at present wish to renounce the unfaith, owing to the persistent experience of self-delusion in the past & the determination not to be a willing party to self-delusion in the future. To everything therefore that is not yet proved by experience, there is only a provisional faith given if any, ie a mixture of faith & scepticism, an "It may be" or at most "It may well be" or "It probably is so."

---

[24] *MS* off

[25] *MS* legitimacy

There is now a double movement; the first, to replace the undefended intuitional ideality by an intuitional ideality defended by viveka; for it is found that when viveka is combined with the intuition (Daksha with Sarama), then there is less chance of the intellect misinterpreting or interfering with the truth. The second movement is to develop behind the higher or intuitional ideality an assistant revelatory (highest) ideality on a larger scale than any that has yet been manifested. Both, however, are on the lower rather than on the higher levels of their respective planes.

The difficulty now felt by the intellect with regard to the tapas, is why there should be insistence by the tapas on a movement not willed by God. So long as there is ignorance, the tapas may be exercised in the confidence that it is a means of God's workings even when the event is to be the opposite of the result attempted; but in the present stage this rule no longer satisfies as a rule of action. It is evident that there is a movement towards the renunciation of preferential Tapas not in accordance with knowledge. It is not likely however that this movement will be seriously effective for some time to come. Still, from henceforth, intellectual tapas in action must be renounced, like intellectual tapas in knowledge.

The vangmaya is now re-ascending to the inspirational form & it appears that it will act for some time indifferently in the higher & lower vijnanas & vijnana buddhi, but always with a tendency to finish rapidly its work in the vijnana buddhi & confine itself to the pure vijnana. A more general movement of the subjective thought-trikaldrishti is being attempted as opposed to the objective trikaldrishti which follows the movement of an extant object or present event. In the former the difficulty of the intellectual belief is that there is no means of physical verification or contradiction except when it is applied to history or the past of living men; in the second the telepathic difficulty (of misplacement & overstress) is yet unannulled & really unconquered in the normal perception, even if partially dominated when the siddhi is active.

The symbolic rupa of the fish & the eye has been fulfilled or begun to be fulfilled this afternoon, in images & vijnana definitions of the images. There have also been new symbolic and other images.

1. In antardarshi—

The golden Kali four-armed & weaponed, destroying the Asuras; a young man rushes at & throws his arms around her in filial love not hatred; he is spared & lifted up & carried away in her arms no longer as a young man but as a boy. Symbolic of the process of conversion from the Asuro-Rakshasic mind to the divine balabhava by the embrace of Kali. The visitation of Kali seems to be intended to save him from his Asura environment now turned hostile to him as to Prahlada. Qy. [Query] Was it in this way that the legends of the Puranas were formed? Jyotirmay Images.

2. Image of the Pashu-raid. A woman more mature of body & face than the other, fleeing with her two children. In the second image she has abandoned her children, but is seized by the hair by the younger Barbarian & is falling backward into his grasp.

The antardarshi, it is to be noted, no longer merely follows the Bahirdarshi, but is active in its own way & on its own lines. Akasha images continue to develop stability & clearness in the Bahirdrishta, but the progress made each day is infinitesimal.

Later in the afternoon the rupa disengaged itself more clearly from the veil of the asiddhi; instances occurred, other than the jyotirmaya & varnamaya bird, of crude rupa clear & yet stable for a second or two with a slight interval or tendency to interval of momentary obscuration, eg a shadowy hand clear, though not complete in detail, with a coat-sleeve & white cuff, figures of women, men on horseback, some of them entirely complete & clear.

Gandha & rasadrishti once more emerged, stronger & freer than before.

Gandhas

1. Of wine (no wine anywhere near)
2 Of cooked food in the room near the nose or rather in the pranakasha
3. Of bread warm from the oven.
4 Immediately afterwards of stale bread
5. Of eggs, salt & butter—Repeated later in the evening
6. Of salad, of vinegar & fragrant vegetables, of raw onion

} long continued

7. Vague & subtle, of flowers.
8. Of tobacco.

Taste

1. Taste of butter, first vague & subtle in other akasha, then in sthula palate, very long continued.
2. Taste of toast, with similar stages.

All these were without adhara sensible or visible; they can no longer be referred to a distant gandha keenly felt or any physical cause.

3 [*no notation*]

There is an attempt of the trikaldrishti finally to reemerge after being veiled in the afternoon. In accordance with the Script, "There will be no such return of suffering tomorrow, although there may be attempts and touches," there was no repetition of the last three days' crisis, only in the morning some heavy but passing touches, & in the afternoon & evening one or two quite fleeting attempts.

Lipis

Referee. ie the referential process has still to be used for some time until the external intellectuality can be dissipated

Orange Kingdom—jyotirmaya lipi—orange is the symbol of psychic knowledge & power

The tapatya . . the glory

Infinite telepathy

Rupa. Symbolic

Momentary incomplete tejas-surya followed by krishna-surya.

Mar 29.

Opening Sortilege.

(1)a. अनानुदो वृषभो जग्मिराहवं निष्टप्ता शत्रुं पृतनासु सासहिः।
असि सत्य ऋणया ब्रह्मणस्पत उग्रस्य चिद् दमिता वीडुहर्षिणः
अदेवेन मनसा यो रिषण्यति शासमुग्रो मन्यमानो जिघांसति।
बृहस्पते मा पृणक्तस्य नो वधो नि कर्म मन्युं दुरेवस्य शर्धतः।

Applied both subjectively & objectively—अनानुदो—without the tejasic egoism of aggression—ऋणया in forward action internal & external—रिषण्यति—seeks divine knowledge & power.

(1)b. त्वया वयमुत्तमं धीमहे वयो बृहस्पते पप्रिणा सस्निना युजा।

मा नो दुःशंसो अभिदिप्सुरीशत प्र सुशंसा मतिभिस्तारिषीमहि॥

sasnina = preserving   पप्रिणा = satisfying

In the morning the vijnana was held back & the intellect in the external swabhava allowed a free play; it is still able to occupy the outer mind (शासां मन्यमानो जिघांसति) but not with intensity or with any great or exultant power of pervasion (ugra, viduharshin); still it seeks with unillumined mind to seize on knowledge & power (अदेवेन मनसा रिषण्यति)

Lipi

1. *After telepathy, trikaldrishti.* Telepathy is already infinite in its movement, but not yet sure. Trikaldrishti is hampered even in its mahattwa. Telepathy cannot be sure without trikaldrishti either telepathic or pure vijnanamaya.

2 Telepathic Trikaldrishti (Intensely vivid lipi, varnamaya)

There are now three forms of trikaldrishti working, the telepathic which is extraordinarily accurate when not besieged by the telepathic overstress, the intuitional which acts but is rather blurred & indistinct & uncertain, the revelatory which is veiled and revealed only in the buddhi, therefore especially open to misinterpretation. At the same time with the diminution of the intellectual tapas, the daivya tapas manifests more & more & introduces often the most sudden & decisive movements in the object of the will, eg. Biren's fever expelled in less than an hour, the frequent cessation of disorder in the long-disordered washtap immediately on or soon after aishwarya, the repeated alteration by birds of their slow opposite or wheeling flight into a sudden & long-continued rush in the direction imposed. Still the atmosphere & habit of resistance still remains.

The afternoon & evening taken up by R's [Richard's] visit, Bh's [Bharati's] & translation of Rigveda II. 23 & 24. Bh. has fresh Yogic experiences,—this time of the voice of God & miraculous cure. Aiswarya operated today consecutively & with small resistance in the flight of the bird. This has happened before, but then as an exceptional circumstance. The value of the present siddhi is that it is a part of a general and pervading advance. Rupa maintains itself but has not appreciably advanced. Vijnana is exceedingly powerful in Veda.

Bj.[Bijoy] gets the vision of the colour-body with regard to R — behind the physical body — yellow in blue, then red, red in black, again red and once more yellow in blue.

Today with the Veda, the literary work of the Dharma has definitely begun; proof is given of the general successful pressure of the spiritual power for the works of the Dharma in others; but it is not yet regularised. In Kriti & Samaja the power is not yet ripe for organised action.

Veda II. 23, 24, 25, 26 — completed today. This shows a great advance in sustained energy.

Sortilege

En Préparation. Les Dieux. ie the Devas of the Ritam, Agni, Soma, Brihaspati, Varuna are being settled & manifested at last in the system (griha; sadanam).

Mar. 30.

Mahadbhava of the trikaldrishti is asserting itself, but being often still confused with the telepathy it is mixed with the trikaldrishti of possibilities & is therefore still impure (asuddha, sankara).

Opening Sortilege.

अग्निषोमाविमं सु मे शृणुतं वृषणा हवं ।
प्रति सूक्तानि हर्यतं भवतं दाशुषे मयः ॥

ie Forces of Action & Delight are to be combined and constitute the Ananda of perfect self-expressions in the material life.

Trikaldrishti of Time is beginning vaguely to arrange itself, eg Richard's arrival on the 29th, not as had been arranged on the 28th, his visit on the same day, & less clearly in the afternoon. But the mind has as yet no confidence in this action of the trikaldrishti. Moreover exact time is now seldom right; the former siddhi is still dormant.

The day again was mostly passed in Kriti. Veda [II.] 27.

Mar 31. Tuesday.

After a struggle the freer action of the higher vijnana has begun in preparation for its becoming the full action & absorbing all other activities into itself. A signal example of its minute action in tapas has been given in the action of a wasp which was guided to a narrow hole in the glass & out contrary to all probability, as it had to abandon five or six other natural lines of action to go direct to this exit. The aishwarya began with resistance & crooked movement (hvara) & ended in the straight & spontaneous action (riju). This is a sign of the course that will be followed with the tapas. As yet, however, the action of the higher vijnana is in the vijnana buddhi instead of being in the vijnana & on the vijnana buddhi; unless it is in the vijnana there cannot be the blaze predicted in the lipi for Tuesday.

Opening Sortilege

(1) एतत् तुल्यं यदि मन्यसे वरं वृणीष्व वित्तं चिरजीविकां च।
महाभूमौ नचिकेतस्त्वमेधि कामानां त्वा कामभाजं करोमि॥

The suggestion of worldly life in this sortilege having raised spiritual doubts, the solution was promised in a second sortilege

(2) सर्वात्मकं ब्रह्मोक्तं तदसत्, उपाध्यवच्छिन्नचैतन्यस्य जीवस्य संसारित्वाद्विरुद्धधर्माक्रांतयोरैक्यायोगादित्याशंक्य विरुद्धधर्मत्वस्योपाधिनिबंधनत्वात्स्वभावैक्ये न किंचिदनुपपन्नमित्याह।

This justification leaving still some doubt as to the working justification, a complete & decisive justification was promised in the third sortilege

(3) यस्तु विज्ञानवान् भवति युक्तेन मनसा सदा।
तस्येन्द्रियाणि वश्यानि सदश्वा इव सारथेः॥

Therefore it is a vijnanamaya muktabhoga arranged in the ritam that is suggested.

Strong opposition in the kriti. Struggle between old discouragement & passivity & new tendency of even tapas.

April 1.

Opening Sortilege

तव ते अग्न अर्चयो महि व्राधंत वाजिनः।
ये पत्वभिः शफानां व्रजा भुरंत गोनामिषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर।
नवा नो अग्न आ भर स्तोतृभ्यः सुक्षितीरिषः।
ते स्याम य आनृचुस्त्वादूतासो दमेदमे।
उभे सुश्चंद्र सर्पिषो दर्वी श्रीणीष आसनि॥

That is the movement of the pranic forces of tapas increasing must reach & become prakashamay & firmly established luminous impulsions; both minds becoming one movement in Tapas.

Very clear rupas are now manifest with some stability on a background or more rarely in the Akasha. The process of disengaging the crude rupa may be said to be on the point of completion. Power works more constantly in the ordinary field of its activities, & vijnana seeks to extend itself to the direction of power. Here there are two movements, one seeking to guide the action without insisting on knowledge, because knowledge is now only knowledge of tendencies, and one seeking to know not only tendencies but eventualities & to guide the action towards & through the eventualities. As yet nothing clear has emerged.

April 2.

Doubt as to R's [Richard's] theories which are assailing the mind, eg. theory of kama and ego as the seed of the world. Promise of a sortilege in reply.

Sortilege.

(1) मनसैवेदमाप्तव्यं नेह नानास्ति किंचन।
मृत्योः स मृत्युं गच्छति य इह नानेव पश्यति॥
(2) यतश्चोदेति सूर्यो अस्तं यत्र च गच्छति।
तं देवाः सर्वे अर्पितास्तदु नात्येति कश्चन।
यदेवेह तदमुत्र यदमुत्र तदन्विह।
मृत्योः etc.

Perfect Rupas (indistinguishable in appearance from reality, only in bhava) eg a bell, scent bottle are now again manifesting, but only for a fleeting fraction of a second. Telepathic drishti continues to widen & become surer & surer in its better moments, but relapses back into confusion & false stress. The higher vijnana emerges from time to time out of the telepathic mind or behind it or above it.

Rupa developed in the evening, according to prediction one or two forms of less crude rupa & even of dense.

April 3.

The blaze of the vijnana only temporary on Tuesday became steadier & took possession of the knowledge in the form of the revelatory vijnana which has hitherto been veiled except in exceptional movements. For the most part this vijnana acts on the lower levels direct upon, in or close to the vijnanabuddhi. It has not yet taken firm possession of the trikaldrishti.

Dense & developed rupa increasingly manifests but has not got hold on the akasha. The action of the tapas varies & is still exceedingly uncertain, but it has always a greater volume of effectiveness. Telepathy grows in power & efficiency. Sahitya has been for some time suspended. Utthapana was resumed, but without any advance.

April 4. Saturday.

Opening sortilege

वेद यस्त्रीणि विदथानि एषां देवानां जन्म सनुतरा च विप्रः।
ऋजु मर्तेषु वृजिना च पश्यन्नभि चष्टे सूरो अर्य एवान्॥

ie—When the soul is illumined & knows the three kinds of knowledge of these gods (ie Swar, Bhuvar, Bhur) & their eternal birth from the Divine Parapurusha, Surya of the vijnana, sees in mortals the straight & the crooked and illumines in his fulfilling power of upward movement their goings. This indicates a promise that the action shall before long be illumined & guided by the revelatory vijnana. In fact this has already begun this morning.

Saturday was fixed in the lipi (on Tuesday) for the fulfilment of the movement begun on Tuesday. It has also been fixed in the thought for the beginning of a new period in the siddhi, when the Yoga is to be applied fully to life; for it is the fourth anniversary of my arrival in Pondicherry.

Lipis

1. *The faith of love.*
2. *The faith . . destiny* (yesterday)
3. *Tuesday* (yesterday)
4. *Thursday*

5 *Efficient telepathy* (yesterday)

6. *Death of the difficulty . . filled with God* (do)

The whole difficulty of the knowledge is now the difficulty of manifesting the ritam in time with regard to the trikaldrishti, for the brihat & the satyam of the revelatory vijnana are established, even in the trikaldrishti; but because there is defect of the ritam, the siddhi slides back frequently to an inferior level where this knowledge can be obstructed.

Lipis[26]

5. *Imagination . . that is a form of desire*
6. *The glory of the ideality* (is already manifested in the Thought & is extending itself to the trikaldrishti).
7. *Exhaustion of the difficulty . . the fulfilment of the glory of the ideality . . the glory of the lipi.*

Owing to the efflorescence of the revelatory faculty, Agni & Soma, the Ananda & the Tapas are now taking united & harmonious possession of the mind; obstacles are taking their right place in the knowledge as means and managements for the accomplishment of the decreed end. The Ananda of obstacles & defeats is therefore now increasing & possible in perfection, because it is no longer a tamasic ananda bringing with it cessation of Tapas. Thus a development long ago insisted on & always obstructed is now being fulfilled, the view of the obstacle & defeat as a step towards victory & the ananda on that basis, not on the basis of *tamasic* submission (nati) in the idea that defeat is the will of God. The sortilege of March 30 is now fulfilled. Agni & Soma together have become *dásushe mayas*. This involves the fulfilment of the sortilege of the 29th. *Ni karma manyum durevasya shardhatah.* That of the 1st April & today's must follow. Only Tuesday's still remains doubtful.

Notable fulfilments of the aishwarya now occur, eg in regard to Home Rule & the increasing tendency to settle it by agreement between the two parties.

Lipi—

8. *The delight of the ideal responsibility*—(ie the renunciation of the personal responsibility of the ego & the acceptance of the universal responsibility of the Prakriti to fulfil the commands of the Ishwara)
9. *It is still . . tonight* (ie still resisted in the trikaldrishti—tonight success)
10. *Today . . the illumination in the trikaldrishti.*

It was perceived that the Ananda Brahman long increasing upon the active consciousness would today find its permanent base and then continue to possess the whole akasha of the being. The process has actually begun both within & without. The general physical bhukti is also remanifesting with a firmer grip on the body. In both cases discomfort & pain are included in the Anandabodha which is mild & tepid, not chanda and not either saumya. Trikaldrishti is assuming the revelatory method, but the process is only at its commencement.

---

[26] *Numbered in sequence to the four lipis near the margin; those numbered 5 and 6 were apparently not noticed.—Ed.*

April 5.

A strenuous & sustained attempt since yesterday evening to bring back by all the old devices the old niránanda. Hitherto there has been no success except in the external touches. The nearest approach to success has been secured by the return to the old tapatya & struggle with adverse forces to bring about the Aishwarya; this is always attended by confusion of knowledge & then by nirananda, physical discomfort of the struggle in the mind and the failure leading to emotional pain & revolt.

Sortileges—

(1) Comme une partie de la famille
(2) इन्द्रमिन्दो वृषा विश . . शत्रुमंति न विंदसि
(3) ग्रावाणेव तदिदर्थं जरेथे गृध्रेव वृक्षं निधिमंतमच्छा।
ब्रह्माणेव विदथे उक्थशासा दूतेव हव्या जन्या पुरुत्रा॥
(4) सोमापूषणा जनना रयीणां जनना दिवो जनना पृथिव्याः।
जातौ विश्वस्य भुवनस्य गोपौ देवा अकृण्वन्नमृतस्य नाभिम्॥

ie Knowledge & Ananda, creators of the various possessions & felicities, creators of the purified heaven of mind are also to be creators of a purified & blissful body & become protectors of all that has been created in the being; the gods have made them the navel, central support, of the divine & immortal nature. For that it is necessary that the full abundance of Ananda (Indo vrisha) should be maintained in the system & the opposition should be regarded as belonging to the operations of the favouring Shakti. Then the Aswins are to enjoy the object pressing the Soma out of it like stones of the distilling, to hasten to enjoyment like kites to their nest, to take enjoyments & actions as delightful offerings to the gods & to do all this as soul powers expressing the thing desired in the knowledge, not in the ignorance. The Aswins are the gods of vital Strength & Joy.

Veridical Rupa

Rupa of the ear—(karna = Sruti); interpreted, Sruti, inspirational knowledge has to act so as to lead back the environmental nature to drishti in the trikaldrishti. This very soon began to be fulfilled.

The Srauta vijnana is now combating the return of error & evolving the finality of the certain & decisive trikaldrishti. Meanwhile the final purification & illumination of the tapas is being prepared.

There was a perfectly vivid & unbroken continuity of single movement in several images of swapna-samadhi along with lifelike perfection of the scene. But fixity does not yet establish itself.

April 6.

There is an attempt to break the violently pronounced tamas of the body which has prevented all work recently. Today there was sahitya (Veda II. 28); yesterday some utthapana. But the tamas persists. There is also inactivity, for the most part, of vijnana, lipi & rupa; only the Aishwarya makes slow progress.

Ananda Brahma is now an established element of the Brahmabodha, but it is not perfectly manifest in the mortal object, only as something possessing & enjoying it so that grief, discomfort etc, while keeping their nature, are yet movements of Ananda. But the personal Anandamaya Purusha is only occasionally manifest.

April 7.

The Anandamaya Saguna becomes more & more immanent in all objects, & what is more difficult in all beings, to the conscious vision. The vision of all movements of sensation as forms & vikaras of Ananda-Chit-Sat is now fixed, as also the comprehensive Ananda-Akasha in which all things move, & of actions as vikaras of Ananda-Tapas.

Today also the Mahakali Tapas seems to have been permanently fixed in the system free from all accompaniment of rajasic ego or of straining, unquiet, eagerness, in full harmony with the first chatusthaya. Only faith in the destiny is needed to assure & complete the undisturbed entirety of the second chatusthaya.

The third has been largely inhibited, except for its indirect action in the vijnanabuddhi, for the last few days, although great results have fixed themselves in the actuality even in the midst of this period of suspense, reserve & comparatively unprogressive balance. The issue now is as to the relations of the Maheshwari and Mahakali forces. The Maheshwari pratistha has to be covered over entirely by the Mahakali contents of the Mahasaraswati bhava & that again to inform itself with the colouring of the Mahalakshmi bhava (love, madhurya). All these results are preparing, but largely *dosha*, in the avyakta.

April 8th

Dream this night, after a long struggle, recovered a sufficient coherence, not perfect, — for two separate dreams, connected in purpose or thought but diverse in time & surroundings, were falsely linked and there was false adhyaropa of personal & present ego in the principal personage, — but sufficient for the vijnana to work and disengage truth from error. There is a tendency also to recovered activity of coherent & thought-governed swapna-samadhi.

Lipis

1. *Self-existent trikaldrishti*
2 *Disengage the faith from its obstacles*
3 *Authority of the lipi — exaltation of the lipi*

1. Telepathy is now self-existent; trikaldrishti is to become the same. This has now begun to be fulfilled in the telepathic parts of the trikaldrishti which are revealing everywhere their satyam, but not yet their ritam, for the latter is hampered by the false action of sense-mind in interpreting the vijnana as well as the telepathic perceptions. The self-existent vijnana trikaldrishti is also occurring at times, imperfect, but fairly consecutive.

2. The mechanism & principles of working, the object of apparent retardations & relapses, deviations, errors, failures, are now becoming so apparent that the faith in the purposeful guidance of the Ishwara is on the point of being perfected. Faith in the ultimate fulfilment is only contradicted or held in suspense, (1) as to the

physical siddhi in times of great obscurity, (2) as to the destiny, at all times, except moments of strong force & enthusiastic sraddha. There is now restored faith in the perfect particular satyam of the telepathy & its imperfect ritam; the same is incipient with regard to the particular movements of the trikaldrishti where they are not challenged by doubt or corrective intimations of other possibility in the mind. There is deficient faith in the effective particular aishwarya or in the general rapidity, though particular rapidity is admitted, as also relative rapidity except in the fourth & fifth chatusthayas.

Lipi

4 *Aishwarya.* 5. *astral . . astral* (referring to a tendency to consider favourably the bases of European & Theosophical mysticism)

5. *Exulting* (effective aishwarya)

6. *Liberty* (now complete except in the body)

7. *Exit insistent tapas* — (ie physically insistent with the stress of external desire).

Physical Ananda (Kama), constantly combated & at last almost entirely suspended, is now again attempting to reestablish its constant recurrence. Its intensity remains constant & has not to be rebuilt, in spite of lower touches, but its extension has been suspended & is not yet remanifested. For one day, at least, there was a practical suspension of all kamananda (maithuna) except, possibly, in obscurer or suppressed movements.

Ritam of trikaldrishti is still successful[ly] resisted, although it is more frequent than it was when the forward movement was suspended. It is, however, progressively purifying itself of error. Aishwarya & ishita are also becoming more & more effective & exultantly effective, in accordance with the morning's lipi; for the bar or prohibition against exultation is now withdrawn, because harsha of the lower mind (joy of fulfilled desire) is now being replaced by chanda saumyata of the anandamaya observation in the desireless sakshi. Formerly, will always created immediately a reactive opposition which brought about, and more often than not with either immediate or eventual effectuality, different or reverse movements. Now this principle of resistance is less frequent, less confident or not at all confident, tired and seldom eventually effective except in the pure physical object or in things of the karma & even there its power is slowly but steadily waning. The triumphant immediate force with which it acted, is almost dead; when a ghost of it revives, it is almost immediately tired, & if it persists, persists with difficulty.

The Anandamaya Lilamaya Saguna is now being established in the conscious observation of persons & objects, although the Anandamaya Saguna is the usual bodha & there is a tendency of relapse to the mere Jnanamaya Saguna, but this is comparatively rare. Anandamaya Saguna tends to be the assured level (sanu) of the Brahmadarshana from which there is a steady tendency to rise to the Lilamaya. Formerly the sense of the Lilamaya Krishna or Narayana used to blot out the Jiva and, also, it used to be isolated without the background & continent of the Sarva Brahman or the pervasive content of the Sarva Ananta Jnana Brahman,—it was divine Anandamaya personality concentrated in a single individual being. All the suspensions, relapses & retardations of the Brahmadarshana during the last few years have had for their object the removal of these & other defects and the development & harmonious unification of its various aspects, Saguna & Nirguna, Purusha-Prakriti, Ishwara-Shakti, Prajna-Hiranya-Virat, Sarva with Ananta, Sarva-Ananta with Jnana, Sarva-Ananta-Jnana with Ananda etc. The unification seems now to be approaching completion.

The interpretation of the lipi is also now acquiring a firmer sureness and quickness & with this movement there keeps pace a growing authority of the lipi. All intimations of knowledge are now accepted not only in theory & faith but in practice & perception as satya, & both the tendency of the mind & its capacity for discovering the true source & nature of all suggestions is increasing. Only the primary error of estimation & its subsequent uncertainties have to be got rid of, in order firmly to base the ritam.

April 9th Thursday.

Tuesday & Thursday were fixed in the lipi as the dates of a definite result in the siddhi. Tuesday was fruitful openly only in the second chatusthaya, but this proved to be the starting-point of a strong siddhi in the third. Today, the aishwarya-ishita-vashita show a strong perfection which amounts in its best movements, & these are frequent, to a control only checked by a slight ineffective resistance or rather passive inertia & unwillingness in the material world. This is marked in the lipi by the figure sixty. Originally the values of the siddhi of power used to be 1, 6 & 10. Afterwards the lipi showed 20, 30 & 40. At 40, which is now tending to be the normal pitch, there is an ordinary effectiveness, subject to variations of completeness & definiteness, attended by a constant, but not ultimately successful resistance. At 60 the resistance is only initial and not maintained. At 80 the resistance will be only a memory of inertia. At 100 there will be a complete mastery. Moreover this power is not confined to the joint action of aishwarya-ishita, aishwarya vashita or vashita-ishita, but is attaching itself to their separate action as well. The old levels of efficiency & dull resistance still continue to manifest, especially in massed actions & in the resistance of finalities, but even here their strength is much diminished. Instances of swift & decisive siddhi are accumulating rapidly eg the rapid denouement of the Army crisis, the non-resistance of the Unionists in East Fife, the relaxation of the Ulster difficulty, the growth of the idea of Federal Home Rule, the South African solution, events in Bengal, tendencies in Pondicherry etc. Even in physical things the power increases, eg the stoppage of the disordered pipe twice in two minutes after it had been running persistently for three or four days & was at the moment in a violent state of disorder. Exact fulfilment also is now approaching the point of establishment.

Today the Lilamaya Purusha is manifesting itself in the Lilamaya Saguna as the normal perception; the other still remains as the lower or foundational level to which the pratibodha goes back when it is not samáhita.

Trikaldrishti of time, place & arrangement is now growing as self-existent knowledge, but exactness of minute, day, spot, precise line, precise succession are still in an indeterminate condition or manifest as the less frequent rather than the more frequent circumstance of the vision.

As a result of today's & yesterday's movement an incipient faith in the destiny is coming to be established, but it is still resisted by the sceptical intellect in Nature which demands more direct, decisive & personal proofs. These, it is intimated, will not long be wanting.

Sortileges

(1) *Obtenir le prestige par la victoire* (Kriti)

(2) *Vouloir (exclusivement) la délivrance de ses vassaux*. ie of the inferior Devas—but exclusively means simply to the exclusion of other ideas of justice, injustice, merit, demerit, good karma, bad karma. (Dharma & Kriti)

(3) *M. réservait ses forces essentielles pour l'unique but de conquérir les plus hautes initiations. Maintenant il lui fallait se soustraire à ses magnanimes ambitions, vouloir etc.*

Kamananda continues to recur, but has not yet recovered its old force. The nirananda unaccompanied by ananda still clings to a few touches of discomfort and some degrees of pain, but otherwise the liberty of the body from the dwandwa of pleasure & pain through their unity or companionship is now well established.

April 10th.

Dream last night was triumphantly clear, rational & coherent & free from all present personality & present associations; the dreamer was entirely absent in person from the dream & confined to the most diminished rôle of the sakshi,—viz an undefined sentience that watched, (not even a sentient person,) & was not even aware of itself at the time, but only remembered itself after the dream was over. On the other hand swapnasamadhi is back in the stage of obscure stability.

Today Mahakali personality of Mahasaraswati with the Mahalaxmi colouring has manifested & the Maheshwari element has lost its conscious place in the personality & been reduced to a base of calm sentience seen physically as a pedestal of level consciousness from which the personality rises. Also the universal pure kama has re-manifested contradicted only in the fibres of external being with regard to a limited number of personalities. Thus the lipi 13 which has been constant recently but seemed unjustified by anything definite in the current experience has been fully vindicated. It was being prepared dosha not ushasi. Now it is manifest, formed, *ushasi*.

Relation with M^{ya} at last defined in the spiritual & psychical experience. M^{ya} (Vayu) liberated from his Kali formation. The result has been the manifestation of Vayu in the heart—the first Devata to personalise himself in the present consciousness.

Tertiary dasya has suddenly been restored, first in its secondary phase, then in its tertiary fullness.

The Lilamaya Narayana bhava has now been withdrawn; the Anandamaya Saguna Brahman is constant, with occasional manifestations of the Lilamaya Krishna.

Lipi

1. *Falsehood of the intellectuality—inert.* (The inert denial is now being thrown away as convicted of falsehood & inutility)
2 *Descend*—(the devatas, the Deva).
3 θεσφατα 6. [*no notation*]
4. *Society objectivise*
5 *Intensity of the ecstasy.*

Farther Samadhi resulted in the remanifestation of almost all the past siddhi, and in one image clearness & a sufficiently long stability were at last combined.

Samadhi

1. A voice. "One archevêque plus."

2. Symbolic image. A revolving disc, an arm coming out of it to seize Le Vaillant who, wading waist deep in mist, bends down as if to hide himself in the mist, without reaching it, and looks back at the arm.

3. Chhaya of Tilak.

Rupa, after several days' quiescence, has been restored to its former activity & attempts to advance but does not yet advance beyond the point already reached. More samadhi with remanifestation of thought in the sushupta state of manas; the thought occurs consecutively above the sleeping manas in the vijnana (esha jagarti supteshu).

Today the old murti of the Kăli-Deva descended for a while into the bodily consciousness & also the old image of the Christ consciousness. Linga shariras & influences of Indra & Agni have also manifested & of the Aswins, the former in the mental rupadrishti.

The trikaldrishti & effectiveness were today entirely obstructed & the karmasiddhi suffered, as the result apparently of My's liberation releasing his adverse tendencies from control & hesitation in the Nature & throwing them in the personality upon my mind.

April 11th Saturday.

Dreams many & for the most part perfectly coherent; only the last two or three were affected by present personality & associations, but not by present images. The incidents & forms were real & coherent, & the incoherence existed only in the thought of the sakshi fixed by adhyaropa on the central images,—rupa & karma were correct, nama only confused,—eg the Salle de Lecture of Pondicherry adhyaropita on a small but efficient & nobly built library, the Baroda College or a place of education in the same locality, London, brother, sister etc being brought in & fixed on forms & places entirely different. There was also a tendency to run different dreams into each other. In Samadhi thought has become fluent, coherent & self-possessed above the sushupta mind, lipi is clear & frequent, writing or print struggles to be coherently legible, forms & incidents are still in the stage of obstructed progress towards stability.

The difficulty now is to harmonise the chanda action of the Mahakali personality with the luminous effectiveness of the vijnana, as it has been harmonised with the internal purity, liberty & bhukti. For the luminous & effective vijnana has hitherto been the privilege of Maheswari-Mahasaraswati, & the Mahakali bhava has been always accompanied by false action, false tejas, false knowledge due to eagerness, hope, desire & preference. The old association has revived in the environmental nature owing to the liberation of the asiddha vayavic forces in the surroundings.

Lipi

1. *It is finished*—ie the transitional movement of harmonisation between the first two & the third chatusthaya.
2. *Transit . . believe. It is still difficult to believe*—referring to the same movement.
3. *Foothold . . nothings* ie—These old asiddhis are now

nothings; for even if they are given a strong foothold, they cannot keep it.

4 *telepathy*

The Narayana-drishti, which had been withdrawn, is now established in the Sagunabodha and seeks to be confirmed. The Krishna-darshana is, in its turn, withdrawn. In the Darshana, however, Nara is prominent, Narayana in the background.

As the vijnana began to remanifest & harmonise with the ugrata of the Mahakali bhava, the inimical forces made a violent attempt to bring back the nirananda & ashanti of the asiddha Kalibhava in the Prakriti; the attempt was partially successful in the outer layers of the personality & although rejected, returned. The harmony, therefore, of the first two chatusthayas has been temporarily disturbed, although not in the mass of the consciousness, but only on its outskirts. In fulfilment of 4 telepathy & telepathic trikaldrishti manifested with complete satyam & almost complete ritam for a while. The struggle continued till 2 in the afternoon. Samadhi still strives for perfection, with very slow success, but it is plunging into greater profundities of slumber.

Lipi.

1. *Do not accept the telepathy as trikaldrishti*

2. *Liberation* . . θανουσης — ie from the posthumous action of the old dead Prakriti.

3. *Safe tapas* . . εἰσιδειν 4 *Tonight.*

The 3d lipi of the group has been interpreted in Script as a direction to apply the fourfold Brahma-darshana to the things of life through the Sarvam Jnanam Brahma, — & the systematic application has actually begun in the form of the brihat satya telepathy & trikaldrishti which was given in type this morning. But in this type the ritam is still hesitating & uncertain. Tapas which has been almost ineffective throughout yesterday & today, is once more active. It is the aim of the new personality to get rid of the gradual process, generalise the concentrated or even the involved & so ensure a triumphant rapidity; also to get rid of all the old ascetic conditions of Siddhi and Ananda.

Even violent & prolonged pain as well as violent & prolonged discomfort are now capable of Ananda; but this siddhi has yet to be generalised. If generalised it will be the first effectuality of the physical mukti. The other liberations are from the three tamasic doshas, —weariness, sleep and physical depression; from the two rajasic, hunger & thirst, from the three cosmic, disease, death & physical limitation (eg gravitation etc). Of these only thirst is well advanced towards preparation of liberty, the others nearest being disease & physical depression which persist only from tamasic dhriti. Hunger has a less sure hold than in the average body. The rest are yet in full or almost full possession, except for the imperfect primary & secondary utthapana.

At night the Mahakalibhava asserted entirely the liberation from want of harmony which had been manifested in the morning and veiled afterwards, but did not yet assert its positive harmony with the first & third chatusthayas at once.

April 12th

Dream was less free & less firmly coherent. To the rupa & samadhi the obstruction is still great & prevents a rapid & firm result. In the vijnana the siddhi has returned to the method of affirmation & no longer seeks to reject, but to rectify error. The result is not yet the complete ritam, but a progressive liberation from the habit of dwelling on the telepathic perception of tendency & taking its demand & power of self-fulfilment for the eventual act. In a certain sense this is a recoil to a less advanced stage than had been reached a few days ago and has been necessitated by the fresh forces liberated by the dissolution of the Vayuputra.

Kamananda continues to recover its former frequency & hold on the system, but is still held back by the pranic deficiencies which result in exhaustion & roga.

The Brahmadarshan fluctuates between the Krishna, Krishna Narayana, Narayana, Nara Narayana, Nara in Saguna Brahman & mere Saguna bhavas. The two former predominate in children, the young & the beautiful, the Narayana & Nara Narayana in others; the Nara & mere Saguna are survivals from former states of perception. The Nara comes whenever the mind concentrates on the ego in the object of perception.

Sortilege

विश्वजिते धनजिते स्वर्जिते सत्राजिते नृजिते उर्वराजिते।
अश्वजिते गोजिते अब्जिते भरेंद्राय सोमं यजताय हर्यतं॥

सत्र= ब्रह्मन्. नृ= देव. उर्वरा= शक्ति. Ananda is to be given up into Indra's hands for the action of the Lila (यजताय).

The sortilege of the 1st April is now almost fulfilled, but for its completeness it wants the completeness of the indication of the 4th. Today's & that of Mar 31st go together.

Lipi

1. *Organise the will.* 2. *It is the energy . . it is the terrestrial energy*

In obedience to the lipi the Will acting as a terrestrial energy was exercised on numbers of different objects in succession, — between 20 & 30. In all cases, except in a few in which a moving object passed out of range before the will could be effective, — the movement willed took place without resistance or after greater or less resistance. All three forms, vashita, aishwarya, ishita were tried; at first there was a difference, ishita seeming the least effective of the three, vashita most effective against active resistance, aishwarya against the passive obstruction of tamasic nature; but eventually all seemed to be equalised. Once, notably, aishwarya effected three successive exact & immediate movements in two flying birds with more than the sixtyfold power, but ishita also produced a similar result as well as one against resistance of the 50 value. Vashita also manifested the 50°, but not a higher value; that, however, it has done on previous occasions. All these effectivities were in particular movements and there does not seem to be yet the same effect upon persistent tendencies, established powers, material objects etc.

Kamananda today recovered something of its power of prolonged intensity & tendency to perpetuate itself in the system. At the same time subjective ananda is resuming its old intensities and attempting finally to get rid of the faint prano-manasic impressions of ugliness, unattractiveness etc which prevent the full & sama delight and are relics in the consciousness of mortal jugupsa. Universal prema & kama are also seeking final & confirmed possession of the consciousness in its parts of hridaya. The eka anandamaya Purusha also manifests in the Saguna Brahman with the ego as a circumstance in His possession of the individual body, but these things are not yet perfectly assured. Ananda of acute pain has again been tested with favourable results.

April 13th

Last night & this morning were a period of arrested motion in which the enemy were allowed to attack the results achieved. Mahakalibhava and tertiary dasya of the body remained firm, but the first chatusthaya was touched with the external asamata, ashanti & even momentary duhkha. The Brahmadarshan wavers between the Anandamaya Purusha, Nara in the Anandamaya Saguna & the generalised Nara-Narayana. The sense of universal beauty has been successfully interrupted & denied in the Indriya, the face being as usual the fortress of the Asundara. There is also a continual driving down of the thought from the vijnana into the mind where it takes up the old forms of error.

The reading of R's [Richard's] book "Les Dieux" has brought up the question of the Master & the Adesha, whether it is a God or God and the adesha an arbitrary impulsion or the voice of supreme Truth & Power. The faith is persistently attacked by suggestions which mask as friendly voices or are declared enemies. In answer there have come these sortileges.

1. यस्तु द्वितीयो विज्ञानवान्विज्ञानसारथ्युपेतो रथी विद्वानित्येतत्।
   युक्तमनाः समनस्कः स तत एव सदा शुचिः स तु तत्पदमाप्नोति।
   यस्मादाप्तात्पदादप्रच्युतः सन् भूयः पुनर्न जायते संसारे—
2. यथोदकं शुद्धे शुद्धमासिक्तं तादृगेव भवति।
   एवं मुनेर्विजानत आत्मा भवति गौतम—

ie—The failures & variations of the mental impressions & actions are due to imperfection of the vijnana, not imperfection of the Master who is the pure Vijnanavan Deva issuing from the Absolute.

3 यस्य ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं च उभे भवत ओदनः।
  मृत्युर्यस्योपसेचनं क इत्था वेद यत्र सः॥

The doubt not being satisfied, a more pointed & clear reply was promised in the third sortilege. It explains the origin of the difficulty. It is impossible for the Asamáhita Ashanta-mánusha (which R is) to know God by mere intellectuality or intellectual intuition. Only the pure vijnánamaya can do it; he does not insist on the God of pity & sorrow or the necessity of continual rebirth.

4 तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गह्वरेष्ठं पुराणं।
अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति॥

In answer to a doubt about the Ananda in the body

5 आनन्दाश्रममुद्रणालये आयसाक्षरैर्मुद्रयित्वा प्रकाशिता।

therefore the long processes used have to be suffered so that it may be firmly imprinted on all the motions of the body before it is fully manifested.

Subsequently, the Master of the Yoga manifested as the vijnanasarathyupeta Rathi vidvan, the Deva, whose manifestation depends on the manifestation of the Devi; it therefore awaited the firm manifestation of the Mahakali personality before basing permanently in the vijnana its own manifestation. This was indicated earlier in the day by the lipi, 10 changing in 11 without disappearing, thus 1$\rlap{1}0$.

Rupa symbolic

In jagrat samadhi of an eye figured in jyoti changing into a sun, then into a chhayamaya eye (terrestrial vijnanamaya knowledge emerging out of pure vijnana-chakshu) at a little distance from which the sun manifested (the terrestrial organ of vijnana illumined by the divine truth, ritam jyoti), but both sun & eye were veiled by clouds of pale luminousness (vijnana diffused in unformed intuitive mentality), from which the eye again emerged. This symbolises the present movement in the siddhi.

In the afternoon as predicted siddhi has returned. Narayana darshana is now unprecedentedly strong & spontaneously pervasive; Ananda of battle & defeat are attempting to fix themselves in the Mahakali sense; Sundara & Asundara are coalescing in a qualified chidghana ahaituka ananda.

Sortilege

स्वर्गलोका यजमाना अमृतत्वममरणतां देवत्वं भजंते प्राप्नुवन्ति तदेतदग्निविज्ञानं द्वितीयेन वरेण वृणे।

In the samadhi coherence of writing & of speech as well as lipi is at last establishing itself; even a long coherent sentence has been manifested & read in a fairly deep state of samadhi. This siddhi has been prepared by the continuity of vangmaya thought in the sushupta swapna. The speech, however, is of the more sukshma kind & nearer to thought, not the entirely objective sthula shabda.

Ananda of battle & defeat established firmly in its generality, no longer in type or particular instance.

Strong & continued oppressive pain between the lungs & navel as of approaching death, continued for nearly an hour. Borne at first with passive ananda, it became at last nirananda & had to be expelled by a constant pressure of the Will accompanied by rapid breathing and swallowing of amrita in the saliva. Not the element of pain, but the element of discomfort overpowered the ananda for the reason that the element of pain appeals only to the body & the mind can accept or reject it easily; but the element of discomfort working direct on the prana & obstructing it troubles the mind in prana & dissociation is less easy.

April 14. Tuesday

Power now is easily effective where the object is passive & not occupied by an opposite law of action; partially or ultimately effective where there is, to combat it, only an immediate intention or preoccupation (for it either changes or modifies the intention or acts when that is gone); slowly effective, & often after long continued failure, when there is, to combat it, a habit, trait of character or fixed & customary intention. It fails in immediate purpose when an active force works against it which is too strong & obstinate to be overpowered even after battle, because there is still in the nature the easygoing weakness of Mahasaraswati which is unwilling to face the necessity of ugrata & tapasya. It fails also as yet in changing easily fixed habits of working in the annamaya prakriti. The Ananda of battle has to be increased (this is the meaning of the lipi “battle” constantly given in the last few days) and the habit of physical weariness, lassitude & renunciation of effort eliminated. At the same time it is not the rajasic shakti which must dispel it, but the pure ugrapravritti of the trigunatíta shakti.

Last night, the symbol rupa was shown in bahirdarshi of a red sun changing into a rosy sun followed by a blue-green sun, ie the ugrapravritti of Mahakali developing love (Mahalakshmi) and pouring itself into beneficence governed by spiritual temperament and knowledge (the Sun is always vijnana). Afterwards the universal prema settled itself in the system as a part of the temperament and the temper of doing all things as paropakára, even apparent injury being done for an ultimate good to the individual & the world.

As the Ananda of defeat, of the asundara, of the ashiva is insisted on, there begins to be finally settled in the knowledge & mental consciousness a more luminous sense of the necessity & meaning of the adverse movements in the siddhi & the life. The whole environmental nature is therewith assuming a more perfect & all-pervading anandamaya nati to the Ishwara. Last night prayer, to which the nature has been long much opposed & then indifferent, was twice used to the Rudra-Vishnu as the helper & healer & yet the cause of the affliction.

In the afternoon there was again trouble owing to the obstinate obstruction of the vijnana & the attempt of the unillumined pranic movements of knowledge in the environment to justify themselves without waiting for illumination. The process of conversion of all pranic movements into jyotirmaya movements (Agner bhrajante archayah) is covered & delayed by this obstruction; meanwhile the action of knowledge & power seems to be suspended or confused & fragmentary, as these elements of asiddhi are given free & continued play. It is true at the same time that deeper movements of trikaldrishti are being prepared & fragmentarily emerge, as tendencies reveal themselves which are frustrated at the moment but intended to be fulfilled in the future, sometimes the distant future. These movements, however, are at present either obscure or dhuminah not bhraja[n]tah.

The Brahmadarshan has been interrupted in its higher parts in order, apparently, to extend the bodha of Narayana into the whole consciousness of the Nara instead of keeping it as a thing apart & containing & informing, but not identical with the Nara. In the descent there is a frequent relapse into the mere saguna.

The whole consciousness has been driven down into the manas & prana, apparently in order that their more obscure movements may learn to become satyam, brihat & ritam no less in the Annamaya & Pranamaya Purusha & Prakriti than in the Manomaya. It is promised that as a result of the apparent relapse a greater, firmer & vaster siddhi will emerge.

15 APRIL – 1 JUNE 1914

Record of Yoga
April 15th to
1914

April 15th Wednesday.

Today the siddhi is beginning to reemerge decidedly from its obscuration. The same movement, however, continues. Mahakali personality & dasya resist all attempts at disturbance; but the former is diminished in force by being confined to personality and barred from control over the bhava and the action in which the other three vary their combinations. Prema & kama of Mahasaraswati (the Sudrani) generalise themselves more & more & with them grows the dasya to individuals arising out of the dasya to God as well as the general dasyalipsa. This is today confirmed in universal atmasamarpana. The Brahmanic basis of Maheswari grows in force with the growth of the third chatusthaya, but its harmony with the kshatratejas is disturbed by the obstruction to the Chandibhava and the force of divine Tapas. All the old harmonies have been disturbed to make place for a new & greater arrangement of the same rhythm. As always, there is in the process some disturbance of samata, sukham, prasáda, but it is nothing compared with former disturbances; its movements are dull, brief & external, tamasic, not rajasic, of the nature of depression & [?weak] uneasiness with very little, if anything, of the nature of revolt.

In the manas & prana pranic suggestions, even though illumined at a great distance from the vijnana or not illumined or with a smoky & murky light, are tending more & more to an automatic correctness; but the stumbling buddhi of the Annamaya being interferes with its own sources of error & misplacement. Tapas is back at the stage of always resisted, variable & insecure effectiveness.

Dharma & kriti act fragmentarily with a hampered & baffled movement. Sahitya is almost entirely obstructed by bodily tamas.

Since the morning Sahitya has again revived and the "Life Divine", long suspended owing to the confused & overcrowded action of the mental Sruti, has been resumed with a greater clearness & regular proportion in its argument. The physical lassitude & divided purpose still resist sustained writing.

The action of the trikaldrishti on the pranic & manasic telepathies is now resuming its movement, but owing to the indecisive dimness of its illumination, a great delicacy of action is needed as the least overstress or understress falsifies or disturbs the arrangement of the details & may lead to a wrong ultimate conclusion.

The impersonality of the human consciousness is now everywhere perceived as the Srikrishna Narayana chaitanya diffused in the mental & sensational being with the ego centre as a circumstance of mind relating back to the ultimate cosmic personality of God in the universe.

Sortilege—referring to this Eg.

नास्मत्प्रत्यगात्मा भूतेश्वरकृत इत्येवं मिथ्याभिमानलक्षणवताम् ।

Subsequently the Srikrishnadarshan took the Narayan bodha into itself and manifested in persons and objects with considerable vividness and power.

Farther proof was given of the partial effectiveness of Tapas in kriti, but the real effectiveness, the immediate mastery of events, seems as far off as ever.

Strenuous efforts are being made by the enemy to get rid of the tertiary dasya in the body, but so far it has only been impaired in vividness, not in essence & stability.

Lipi

1. *First effectuality of the trikaldrishti on the largest scale.* ἐγγυς
2. *Tomorrow*—ie a considerable stage of advance on Thursday.

Sortilege

1 পূর্ব্বোক্ত-লক্ষণান্বিত পরব্রহ্ম একসময় দেবগণের নিমিত্ত বিজয়লাভ করিয়াছিলেন; **অর্থাত্** দেবাসুর-সংগ্রামে জগতের পরম **শত্রু** এবং ঈশ্বর-নিয়মের উল্লংঘনকারী অসুরগণকে জগৎ-রক্ষার্থ পরাজিত করিয়া দেবগণকে জয় ও জয়ফল প্রদান করিয়াছিলেন।

April 16th

The Narayanadarshana is now definitely put aside and the consciousness seen in the world varies between the Saguna Brahman usually Lilamaya which is the basis & the Lilamaya personal-impersonality Existence-Existent, Krishna, which is here the consummation. Only, as the present Lila has to be changed, there is a double aspect of the Krishnadarshana, Krishna that is, seen in the adult, & Krishna that is to be, seen more readily in children & the young. In women it is the Kalidarshana that prevails.

Power is now attempting to proceed from the experience of the 12th & 14th to a more puissant action. It is seen today by experience that a powerful & persistent vashita will bring about results that to the telepathic vision of working forces seem impossible, but there is a limit of effectiveness which the power is not yet able to overpass. It is suggested that the power now is in its use hampered by the Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati temperament of slow and regular unhasting pressure & has not yet sufficient ugrata in the *asu* poured into it. Mahasaraswati's habit of giving way to the immediate event or the most powerful pressure & going round the obstacle or slowly undermining it must be renounced for a more stern & direct pressure on the opposing forces. This is supported by strong partial successes. On the other hand the opposite suggestion is that force is useless until the early forces have been slowly prepared for the higher vijnana to manifest.

Lipi

1. *The first largeness of the trikaldrishti.* (as distinct from the telepathy)
2 *Terribly exercise destiny*
3 *13. 12.*
4 জয়লাভ

5. *It is the intellectuality in the telepathy that resists.* ie the devatas who watch & are guided by immediate forces are unwilling to allow the force & the vision to go beyond them. They approve the siddhi of Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati, but are opposed to the siddhi of Mahakali-Mahasaraswati.

The whole struggle in the siddhi now is between the present & the future, between the telepathic knowledge that sees & admits the present & the vijnanamaya that reaches beyond to the future, between the force that admits & manipulates present forces & the force that aims at annulling & replacing or transforming them rapidly into the image of their vijnanamaya & anandamaya equivalents, between the present NaraNarayana in men & the future Krishna who incarnated himself in Brindavana & Dwarka.

After a farther brief struggle the Mahakali bhava & tapas, as well as the personality, have been finally accepted in the bauddha parts of the consciousness. They have now to be imposed on all the sensations & impulses without diminishing the completeness of the other three elements in the being. At the same time the entire & rapid idealisation of the lower consciousness has to be resumed.

The Kamananda is still in the same uncertain condition wavering between cessation & continuance; but there are tendencies of advance in the physical ananda generally. Eg. the tivra after sahaituka (water-pipe) lasted long after the cessation of application of the physical cause; the three forms of vaidyuta tend to declare themselves, ie positive, negative & neutral; ahaituka raudra tries to disengage itself from the association of its usual internal physical causes, such as disease, etc.

Strong renewal of the Parabrahmadarshana of two years ago. In dream a single subject persisted through many dreams. Prolonged discomfort in forms usually obstinate to amelioration were turned into ananda.

April 17th.

Srikrishnadarshana is now generalising itself in objects, qualities, vishayas, persons of all kinds without distinction. The only defect is that it is not always the primary vision; for the namarupa or the Brahman come often in front.

Lipi.

1. *The perfect entirety of the trikaldrishti. God.* σθενος (Practical instances of entirety given immediately afterwards)
2. *Distinguish telepathy.* ie this is now the only real difficulty.
3 *Business.* 4 *Rapid*
5. *Enthusiastic faith. It is the telepathies that have disagreed.* (through not being well-placed & harmonised).

Today there is a prolonged attack producing indeed none of the old violent results in the contradiction of the samata, but a clouding of the faith, confusion of the vijnana & return of the old forms of external intellectuality. Kamananda is recovering strength of persistence.

A day of arrestation & confusions. Only at night there was a slight resumption of half-veiled progress. Dreams again presented the phenomenon of recurrence to a single subject.

April 18th

Srikrishnadarshana has now definitely established itself as the normal vision when the sight is full, but the Saguna Brahman with or without the Nara tends to persist or recur.

The health is again attempting to establish itself and although not yet pure of the roga, Arogya is once again the dominant faculty speedily rectifying or having the tendency to rectify any particular variations in the sense of old morbid symptom which may recur in the body. Roga is now in all but one respect a recurrent mechanical system and not either a seated element of the physical nature nor a positive recurrent force.

Ananda struggles towards permanence. Karmasiddhi is once more active.

April 19th

Today the sense of the Ishwara is making itself felt in movements which were formerly dismissed as unwilled by Him or opposite to the siddhi, eg vanis of the physical mental world etc. The siddhi is seen in movements of asiddhi. For some time the sense of the parabhava of Srikrishna has been withdrawn & the darshana tends to form in the Narabhava, the human personality, in the lowest stage of Avidya; this was in order that [ ][1] the Srikrishnadarshana might be established even in the lowest world of consciousness unenlightened or supported by the sense of the vidvan Deva above & around it. So also for some days the sense of the universal beauty in things has been withdrawn so that Srikrishna may be seen in all without the vision being dependent on the idea or vision of the Sarvasundara in all. So also He is being seen in the human Pishacha & for that purpose the realisation of the Immortal Being, the Ananda & the Love were separated & the buddha Bhava of the Pisacha in his coldest atrocities alone manifested. All these objects are being fulfilled today. The Truth in falsehood & error is becoming more & more visible.

Lipi.

1. *Intellectuality has prevented the siddhi.* (the result)
2 *Intellectualities have prevented the asiddhi* (the method).
3 *Liberty of the trikaldrishti*
4 *Try phantasy.* ie. the truth in all things, even errors, being seen, the play of the imagination should now be tried on the same basis.
5. *It is the dangerous active intellectuality* — which causes the truth of fantasy to be interpreted in the terms of immediate actuality.
6. *Eulogy.*
7 *Telepathy — fantasy*
ideality

The Vani, acting now in the mind and dominated by mental personality, is proving its truth wherever its affirmations can be verified. The source of many errors is now perceived in the incapacity of mental devatas of a certain class to judge, except by the senses, the fulfilment in matter of results already obtained in the sukshma. These form a mental equivalent who give impulses to our bodies for immediate fulfilment which cannot be immediately fulfilled but have to be worked out afterwards. In both cases it is an error not of fact but of placement. On a trial of the play of fantasy according to lipi 4 it is found that the same truth of sukshma, of tendency, of intention, of actual possibility & past or future eventuality is behind the play of the imagination.

---

[1] *MS* there might be

The power is once more beginning to act at the values of 50 & 60; but its action is chequered by the old successful resistances.

After these perceptions came a period of confusion, withdrawal of all authority from the instruments of knowledge, sense of positive falsehood, of entire absence of definite and enduring truth in trikaldrishti, of the impossibility of any finality in the siddhi & of the old resentment at relapse & deception. Afterwards the indications supposed to be false began to vindicate themselves. Nevertheless confusion & inefficacy remained throughout the afternoon.

In the later part of the afternoon an attack of fever. In the morning a touch of headache was felt in the pranakosha which afterwards attempted to materialise, a tendency of cough, as also a touch of chill, but all were expelled. In the afternoon the fever suddenly manifested without being heralded by any other previous symptoms. There was then a struggle between the Arogyashakti in the pranic system & the Roga from outside; the latter seeking by an appeal to the habitual memory in the bodily molecules to overpower the mind of the body & compel it to accept the "laws" of fever, the former refusing. Rice was eaten, the body exposed to draught; the fever ejected rapidly left behind it an intermittent heat, a sense of feverish pain in the back, though much more in the nervous body than in the physical, a trouble in that body & therefore a corresponding trouble in the physical nervous system & a sense of weakness, as also a certain sensitiveness of the nerve-currents to cold. In a subdued form these remained in the night. Before the fever there was some activity of antardrishta rupa which was, as usual, stimulated by the feverish excitement. There was also a tendency to constipation.

April 20th.

The fever was expelled in the morning & nervous strength reasserted in the body, but the rogashakti still besieges & hopes to renew itself in the afternoon or even earlier by the help of the constipation which is not yet dispelled. For some time the Arogyashakti has been busy dispelling one by one the old habitual & mechanical forms of roga which still survived as unreasoned recurrences. The fever seems to be a revolt of the old physical nature intended for breaking down of the results obtained & the recovery of the system by the forces of disorder.

The disorder in the subjective being has once more disappeared & universal ananda, including the ananda of battle & defeat, has remanifested itself; the object of particular asiddhis is also once more self-apparent. In the Tapas there has been a repeated effective Will for the favourable forces in the physical Swabhava to increase in strength. Formerly, these forces were sluggish & weak & to produce a decided result the will had to be constantly applied to the object & its movement, otherwise the result was either frustrated or manifested itself slowly, imperfectly or to other ultimate purposes than were intended. Now, the physical swabhava often takes up the will once cast out and carries it out suddenly, puissantly & with fixed determination. At other times, however, this force does not act or, after commencing action, flags and needs the support of a fresh application of the Vashita or Aishwarya.

A great efflorescence of sthapatyadrishti, all sorts of human figures variously dressed, scenes, landscapes, fields, plains, hedges, trees, lakes, cities, birds, beasts etc being seen crowded in a small space of foliage. The figures of beasts were at first obstinately prevented from manifesting & are still in all forms of drishti less free & frequent than the others. Known figures & heads sometimes occur, but known faces in detail are usually obstructed from manifesting except in the swapna samadhi & sometimes in the chitra.

In the afternoon fever again got the upper hand & remained with less pronounced [symptoms][2] but more persistence all night.

Karmasiddhi is now resisted & baffled in its masses & only successful in isolated & inconclusive movements.

B's [Bijoy's] spasmodic utthapana occurred for the second time.

---

[2] *MS* systems

April 21st

Fever continues slightly, but there is vital force in the body maintaining itself & contradicted only when the tamas gets the upper hand or by a more rapid exhaustion than usual, but even that exhaustion is speedily repaired with a novel persistence & swiftness. There is no disposition in the pranakosha to yield to the fever & take to the bed.

Rapid effectiveness in isolated aishwarya or vashita is becoming more frequent. The trikaldrishti is acting mentally only & without sureness or illumination. The aishwarya or vashita is now more frequently assisted by an effective force in the material Prakriti.

The trikaldrishti is now attempting to separate itself entirely from the telepathy & is so separated in bhava, but not yet entirely in practice.

In the afternoon the fever after failing to master the body & fluctuating several times left control of the system. The pranakosha established hunger, vital energy etc even in the midst of the fever, but is still susceptible in the body to feverish heat & cold & to suggestions of weakness & limitation of energy by illness.

April 22d

Fever non-existent in the morning, but broken suggestions of heat & illness float round the body & sometimes touch it. Power this morning is exceedingly active & always succeeds except in instances where there is not time to overcome the immediate resistance. Telepathy is also active & well-justified, but void of the intelligent ritam. The siege of the mental sat is, however, growing thinner & the reemergence of the vijnanamaya jyoti may be expected.

Another signal instance of kriti more complete than on either of the last two occasions, but in the Mexican matter owing to the withdrawal of the aishwarya & vashita long delayed contrary movements, successfully resisted till now or else minimised, are fulfilling themselves.

In the evening adverse forces declared themselves. Fever suddenly returned at 10 & remained all night, though without any serious pressure except in heat & a sleep slightly broken. Rupa in swapna samadhi has attained to a certain initial stability.

April 23d

Violent negation in kriti. Feverish heat still remains in the system in spite of free evacuation.

Later on the fever, by a farther resolute denial of its causes & effects, was expelled at its usual time for increased incidence under strong exposure to chill etc. Relics of it still remain in tendencies of headache etc. Better kriti today.

April 24th

Kamananda which has persisted in spite of fever is especially strong yesterday and today. The vijnana is not yet released from its envelope.

Fever returned at 8; expelled after 20 minutes again at 11 & lasted till three in the morning leaving behind a substratum of heat. Constipation & evacuation have no longer any ostensible connection with the malady.

Vijnana acted again but more in power than knowledge & then not for long in its first perfection.

April 25.

Kamananda continues with some steadiness, though at first checked by the fever. In the swapnasamadhi the collective city-vision again occurred after a long period of detached scenes & isolated figures & actions.

Sortilege

1. स्वप्नदृश्यानां भावानामन्तः संवृतस्थानमित्येतत्सिद्धं My. Up [Mandukya Upanishad (commentary)] p. 76. (given while reflecting on the swapnasamadhi).

   ie the contracted form of vision in the swapnasiddhi (limited in scope, momentary etc[)] is already established &, in a way, perfected. The rest is yet to come.

2 वैतथ्यं सर्वभावानां स्वप्न आहुर्मनीषिणः —

   ie Dream is a distortion, swapnasamadhi only gives truth of swapna, true dream can only be vision of samadhi,

& it is to prepare vision of samadhi, not sanvrita but vivrita, that long connected dream is being slowly established. Even symbolic dream must become symbolic vision.

3. স্বত্বাধিকারী শ্রীঅখিলচন্দ্র দত্ত ie Swarat—cosmic sarvananda (soma) given

Lipi.

1. *Fidelity to the ideality.* (an often repeated lipi) Necessary for advance, intellectual doubt leads to nothing
2. *philology.* 3 *fortnightly result ideality.*

The fever attempted to return in the evening but was expelled.

April 26th

Trikaldrishti still in the struggle to emerge; but there is as yet only the large movement[,] no definite certainty of ritam. No fever during the day or night.

Fairly long-continued action seen & felt in the Samadhi—the rabbit-skin. This is the first instance of a drishti so well sustained. There were also many swift visions of groups & crowds; but the dreams were somewhat incoherent & distorted & coloured by present associations.

April 27th

Aishwarya in connection with the elections has been successful in all except the central point—the vote for Rd [Richard] where it has failed entirely. Knowledge has been clouded owing to the subservience to the suggestions of others.

Lipis

1. *Apoplexy—epilogue* 3 *Brilliant idealities* (immediate application & future)
2 *Distinguish the ideality* 4 *Startling results* (future)
5 *Battle faith tapas destiny*—ie through battle the siddhi proceeds for the establishing of faith so that through sraddhamaya tapas the destiny may be worked out.
6. *Growing a little stronger ideality*
7 *figure of the truth*

8 *sophistries of the faith* (must be got rid of, ie of the dishonest faith which, eager to believe, tries to ignore or explain away disappointments & difficulties)

9 *tapas faith battle* converse of 5 — By effective tapas faith must be increased so that the battle may be fought out to a victory; but faith must not be eager to outrun the effectiveness of the tapas.

10. *firstly, the faith in the ideality, then in the actuality* — This lipi is intended to correct the mental impression produced by the last, which applies only to details, not to the general lines laid down by the vijnana, to the daily effectiveness, not to the final aim.

11 *intelligent ideality is obliterated by (n)*[3] *the faith, therefore the faith must be perfected, brilliant ideality is strengthened in the faith.* ie vijnanabuddhi replaced by brilliant vijnana with faith as an instrument & medium of the change, faith quelling intellectual judgment not in his own interests, but to replace it by luminous discrimination.

12. *suffer.* twice.

Lipi has now firmly established habitual vividness of its lettering in the akasha, but there it does not always or usually come with so quick a spontaneity as in chitra or sthapatya lipi.

April 28th.

The struggle over the faith continues, but the Mahakali tapas is sufficiently harmonised & strong in harmony to carry on the action in spite of temporary suspensions. The struggle is now generally over (1) faith + vijnana, (2) the body, (3) karma (especially kriti). In all karma the difficulties are over (1) sustained work, (2) sustained effectiveness (3) equipment; but the latter does not apply so much to other karma as to kriti.

At night the dreams were once more coherent but suffered from distortion by present ego & association; it is notable that when coherent dream is strong, swapna samadhi is temporarily suspended. This is due to the unsettled movement for the replacement of incoherent dream by coherent & coherent dream by swapnasamadhi. Rupa in the jagrat cannot yet be established, although the movement of expansion is now persistent in its insistence on the akasha; initially stable densities are common, but they avoid the straight gaze of the physical eye & appear to the subtle vision in the physical eye at the side or to the absent gaze in which the sanskaras of the physical gaze are not dominant.

---

[3] *The meaning of this letter is not known. — Ed.*

Persistent recurrence of Kamananda has surmounted all the old particular difficulties & has now only against it the general ahaituka difficulty of the former habit of non-occurrence or rather of suspended recurrence. Persistent continuity is not yet possible except for short periods.

There is a struggle between the ascetic tendency which the circumstances seem to demand & the Janaka ideal which has hitherto been imposed.

Although the fever was unable to enforce return, yet in more than one direction roga temporarily triumphed, especially in the flatulent pain, at night & was dispelled with some difficulty by the aishwarya & vashita. Cough of a kind has manifested in a loose & external fashion for the last few days without being able to hold the system.

At night swapna samadhi was active, but without any freedom or richness. In the daytime there was continuous swapna samadhi interrupted by a-swapna, but not by sleep. Dense rupa occurred in the antardrishta.

Krishnadarshana in the separate bhuta is establishing itself persistently in place of the old forms of the Brahmadrishti, but it is still interrupted by the denial of vision of the Divine Personality.

Lipis

1. *Sylhet . . disturb faith of thousand disciples.*

2 *Sylhet prophet . . physical disappearance.*

3. Suggestions disturb ideality by distinguishing false the ideality; jostle, the intellectual distinctions jostle the ideal distinctions.
4. *north-east*
5. *youth seat.*
6. 22

7 *knowledge distinct certain infallible*
distinct infallible positive

8. *entirely effective destiny*

9. *Matter is ordinarily only thing that publishes the true God*
10. *dignity of the telepathy.*
11 *subjectivities*
12. *joyful lipsa* 13 *ellipsis*[4] 14. *joyful ellipsis . . eclipse*

Rupa of watch at 11.42. Interpreted first as time of fresh progress in *subjectivities* (lipi 11), afterwards as time of calling to bathe or going to bathe. B. called at 11.40 & it took two minutes more to get ready. This also marks the resumption of trikaldrishti of exact time. There was a vaguer instance in the afternoon.

Vani, script, articulate thought, vijnanamaya perception etc are being resumed finally. The movement, it is suggested, will take up to the 1st May.

April 29th

Some movement forward of the rupa, though as yet nothing rich or pronounced. In the lipi for some time past kaushalya has been growing—ever since a prediction to that effect in the lipi. Roga, forced out as fever, insisted as cough etc; but the arogya no longer gives up the struggle to establish itself firmly & the morbid symptoms have always to struggle in order to maintain themselves. Incoherence of lipi in swapna samadhi again declared itself.

April 30th

Correct trikaldrishti independent of telepathy is now mechanically occurring, but without luminousness; overstress of telepathy is losing force & with but slight attention can always be detected, but actional stress still continues to confuse the mind. Aishwarya etc are now being liberated from the traces of egoism & used as an instrument of the divine power without preferential choice of result, insistence on knowledge of the result or, if known, on its perfection or continuance. Moreover, the thing ideally right is being willed without regard to the immediate actuality of possible or eventual outcome & success. Often also there is the movement of the trikaldrishti identical with the movement of power, —a sign of the gradual manifestation of pure Chitshakti in the mind.

---

[4] *Sri Aurobindo first wrote "eclipses" and then altered this to "ellipsis"; perhaps both words were seen.—Ed.*

Lipi

1. *Suffer relaxation of the tapas*—fulfilled in the afternoon
2 *Something still resists in the intellectuality—relaxation of the tapas*
3 *Sobriety*
4 *Selfless activity of the tapas*
5 *Abolish the obstacles of the tapas*
6. *There is still the opposition to the equipment . . it has to be abolished*
7. *Silhouettes*

Subjective Ananda once more asserted itself with some fixity in the intensity of the delight. Krishnadarshana is now well fixed in the attentive consciousness; it has still to be fixed in the inattentive half-regarding consciousness.

May 1st

Kamananda, comparatively feeble & intermittent for the last two days, is once more active & intense.

Lipis

1 *Last reign of the sobriety*
2. *Result of the ideality in the intellectuality*
3 *Solely tapatya, tapatya is still deficient*
4 *Self-established tapas of the righteousness*
5 *Suffering*
6. *Tapas-siddhi*
7 *Subjectivities of the tapas-siddhi*— ie t-s must be fixed in the perception & impulse of action before it is fulfilled in the objective means & results.
8. *Suffering fulfilled* in a slight ashanti & loss of faith
9 *fixed theory of the two idealities*—ie the lower & higher vijnana; in that the siddhi has to proceed.
10. *Results of the telepathy* —to be vindicated as basis of trikaldrishti

11 *the terrible authority* not yet given in result of particular action, but to be given, already given in general result of distinctive aishwarya.

12 *signs of the audition*— ie sukshma sravana.

The intellectuality in the whole adhara has finally accepted subjection of the lower prakriti to the ideal nature; only it awaits light of perfect discrimination in the nervous & tapasic parts of the being (व्रजा भुरंत गोनाम्). The external intellectuality on the contrary made a violent attack on the whole system, partly obscuring the Krishnadarshana, disturbing samata a little occasionally, shaking the faith especially in the bodily siddhi, but not prevailing against the dasya & Mahakali tapas. It is evident therefore that the era of successful relapse in the siddhi is drawing to a close & the safety of the gains (satir dhanánám) is more & more assured. Obstruction of progress is as yet still potent.

The 1st seems to have been the prefixed date for the following results. (1) the final subjective rejection of the intellectuality in favour of the ideality; (2) the removal of the obstacle to the constant manifestation of perceptive vijnanamaya thought, articulate vijnanamaya thought, free anandamaya vani, conversion of tapasic into luminous movements; (3) the definite faith in the power of dharma-karma; (4) the cessation of the dominance of relapse in the subjectivity, examples Br. [Biren,] Richard, X[5] etc.

Trikaldrishti—

(Script) 1. Inevitably tomorrow sahitya will be resumed, afterwards it will be arranged.

2. Work in the evening will be resumed

Continued action & tendency of stability persist in the swapna samadhi, but progress is not made in the dream or the long coherent vision. This & akasharupa are alone in the vijnana severely obstructed.

The subjectivities of the tapas-siddhi are being arranged.

Lipi-kaushalya slowly but steadily increases.

Cough disappeared for a time, but not permanently. There was no trace of tendency to fever.

---

[5] *This "X" was added between the lines after the first writing.—Ed.*

May 2d

The following results are indicated today.

(1) Sustained activity of the vijnana, especially in its parts of knowledge

(2) Sustained subjective progress daily without relapse, henceforth.

(3) Growth of or towards permanence in the kamananda.

Sortilege—

अयं स होता यो द्विजन्मा विश्वा दधे वार्याणि श्रवस्या।
मर्तो यो अस्मै सुतुको ददाश।

The process of transformation by which the blind or smoky movements of force, aswá—patwabhih śaphánám, had to become luminous movements (व्रजा भुरंत गोनाम्) is now approaching completion. The impulses are usually luminous & know to a certain extent, spontaneously, their own purpose & nature; the telepathic movements are habitually right except when the intellect tries to fix or arrange from old habit. The certain decisive discriminating trikaldrishti has still to be naturalised & perfected; but the vijnanamaya perception & vangmaya thought, vani & script are now moving forward freely & normally in all else but the trikaldrishti. These are "the results of the telepathy that are being manifested." Now that there is the combination of complete dasya subjective & objective with samata & ananda (sutuko dadásha), the fulfilment of the vijnana in its completeness (visvá váryáni sravasyá) is assured, for Deva Agni is manifest in both the parardha & aparardha.

Attempts are made by the roga to return; fever, in spite of favourable circumstances failed to effect an entry; cough, exaggerated in the morning was willed out in the afternoon & evening, but is not yet eradicated; constipation established itself & persists. Shuddha kama insists & seeks to overbear the insufficiency of its instrument so as to establish perfectly the kamananda.

Lipis

1. *battle.* (constantly repeated).
2 *intellectuality & ideality.* ie the struggle is now between these two powers in the trikaldrishti.

3 *Sortilege*—previous to & indicating the sortilege recorded.
4. *It is the results of the telepathy that are being manifested.*
5 *13.* constantly, for many days—sometimes 12. 13.
6 *Thirteenth*
7. *self-intellectuality*— ie the lower working is of the thought that does not reason on exterior facts, but still is in its spontaneous nature a working of mind on the basis of externalities.
8. *stereoscope*
9. *ghee*— indicating use in food in the morning (not usual, nor willed nor asked for) & fulfilled, but afterwards repeated symbolically in the sense of the Vedic ghritam, the clear richness & fullness of the chitta in thought movement.
10. *interesting travel stone*—ie the ananda once established, the progress & delays of the siddhi cease to be troublesome & become interesting like a journey, of which successive milestones mark the stages.
11. *D.S.* dasya & sraddha are being combined.
12. *thirty fifty* indicating the present variations of the tapasshakti.

The combination of dasya & sraddha does not yet extend beyond a general faith in the divine control by which the system is enslaved.

In the afternoon there was a failing or cessation of the constant activity of the vijnana— "Life Divine" resumed.

May 3^{d}

Unable to bring back the Brahmadarshana to the mere Saguna or Sarva Brahma, the Asiddhi now presses on the NaraNarayana as a lower substitute for the Lilamaya Krishna. Meanwhile the perception of the Ananta Brahma is growing in intensity & fullness, but the contents of the Jnana Brahma are somewhat veiled. This defect aids the evolution of the Pranic steeds into luminous herds of enlightened conscious powers, but that evolution can only be complete when the contents of the Jnana Brahma become also full & intense to the consciousness.

Lipis

1. *Obey.* 2 *The effectuality of the destiny is resisted.*
3 *Loftily effecting the internal dignity.*
4 *Lofty ideal of the destiny.*
5 *Objections to the ideality*
6. *Life & its fortunes*
7 *The feast of the ideality*
8 *It is the defect of the intellectuality* — by questioning certainty to prevent it.
9 *Sixty* — ie the sixtyfold power is again to manifest. It did so later on in individual cases, mostly subjective, but one objective.
10 *This is the last deputy of the French in India; instead of the deputy there will be only the senator.*. Uncertain whether (1) this is a prophecy or merely a telepathic statement of tendency, (2) whether "this" refers to Bluysen or another; (3) whether it means the suppression of the vote or substitution of an Indian deputy.
11. *12. 13*

Vijnana hampered & variable, but its forms are growing in normality.

Constipation broken by the aishwarya, cough repelled, but not eradicated.

Effective vyapti worked admirably on many persons in a gathering producing the precise effect or utterance needed.

Poetry resumed.

May 4th —

Kamananda manifested in waves flowing downward & mounting upward, with a sort of dull acuteness. In the sahaituka all the five anandas are manifesting, sometimes one prominent, sometimes two or three, sometimes all five together in one movement from one generating sparsha.

Action of the aishwarya & vashita is more frequently 50 & even 60 than before, but the intellectual tapasic movements of effort intervene.

Trikaldrishti acts normally but without any assured correctness of detail.

Lipis

1. *firm destiny* (chitra)
2 *telepathy effectualised by the tapas; it needed* (chitra)
3 *jollity—festivity.* (in spite of present impossibility)
4. *sleepless activity of the internal siddhi* (preparing)
5 *the result of the elections disappointing in itself is useful for future election*
6. *lioness in the open*
7 *battle* (constantly repeated)
8. *city of the ideality*
9. *result of the ideality*
10 *convert the intellectualities* (the process to be followed in order to ensure the complete finality of the vijnana)
11. *joy. glorious destiny*

The principal siddhi of the day was the continuous kamananda flowing through the body from the kamachakra & no longer confined to the chakra.

May 5th

The siddhi of the kamananda proceeds with great, almost unexampled rapidity. Yesterday there was a struggle of the roga to make it an excuse for the return of fever etc on the ground that the body is still unfit, but this was repelled. Today there is constant, continuous ananda, always recurrent, first only when seated, then while walking; it is also now beginning to recur even when the attention is withdrawn from the body. The ananda was at first not intense in the sthula body, only in the half-vyakta action of the pranakosha; & the capacity of the body to bear continual unintense pervading ananda was established. Now, while sitting, continuous intense ananda is being given, with dharanashakti behind in the mental body supporting the pranakosha in this activity. Thus, rapidly, the lipi "death of the difficulties" daily repeated (not recorded) is being fulfilled in this important siddhi by a sort of concentrated process emerging out of the most rapid gradual progress. It is now decided that the vijnana siddhi shall also get rid rapidly of its difficulties, so that the faith from now in the Yoga-siddhi (not yet in karma, kama, saundarya & utthapana) may extend to the long-promised rapidities of the siddhi.

The vijnanamaya instruments of knowledge (thought articulate & perceptive, script etc) are undertaking at last the expression of the trikaldrishti and no longer leave it entirely to their intellectual equivalents. The conversion of the intellectualities is being steadily begun.

Lipis

1. *Not yet destruction of intellectuality*
2 *disgusted—* that is the limited physical devatas are disgusted with the continuance of the kamananda & seek to escape from it.

Sortilege (involuntary)

The siege has passed. Once again the ugrata of the chandibhava. ie the immediate siege of the roga.

The old imperfect chandibhava rose again and repeated its habitual circumstances but this time without any force of persistence or even of possession.

The continuity of the kamananda was interrupted, but its brief recurrences continued with only a brief lapse due to relaxation of the kamachakric elements in the body. This is now the chief difficulty in the way of continuous intensity of the Ananda. Arogya is the next physical necessity.

May 6th

Kamananda is less potent today, but has a greater tendency to intensity approaching at times to the maithuna intensity; for a time it reached it, but was discontinued. Trikaldrishti is hampered by the activity of the false tejasic perception shot in by the pranic devatas from outside.

In the afternoon & evening kamananda was again spontaneously active.

Except a certain tendency to sahitya no definite subjective progress was visible during the day. Rather the vijnana in all its parts is hampered & obstructed. Even therefore if the first indication of May 2d be considered to be feebly commenced in execution, the second seems as yet far from fulfilment. Only the third has been definitely fulfilled. Especially sraddha has relapsed into its old movements.

May 7th

Everything in the morning under the influence of the asiddhi, as formerly, although not with the same intensity. The vijnana continues to act, but with an inferior force in the plane of nervous mind, not even in the vijnanabuddhi. This is represented to be a necessary process in the idealisation of the lower laws of the nervous mind. There is still there the old defect of the gross overstressing of sensory perceptions in the manas used as a sixth sense. The idealisation leads as yet to no more than a renewed perception of the satyam behind the nervous suggestions & their true or false valuations in the mind. In the afternoon the certainty of the decisive trikaldrishti manifested but was hampered by perception of possibilities chiefly suggested by telepathy from the minds of others.

Kamananda is now more spontaneously recurrent & continuous than it was ever before. It is now indeed only in the kamananda that the principle of rapid progress is manifesting.

Lipis

1. *Bhakti*
2 *Shakti*
3. *Tall talk of the spies* — referring to the rumours of a pending fabrication by the spies — on basis of inquiries about "name of any street in Chandannagar".

Bhakti entered into the Krishnadarshana suddenly, after the lipi, & seems to be established there, but the darshana is not yet of universal application except by smarana.

At night connected dream, but constant interference of present associations. Initial stability of vision seems to be established.

May 8th

Kamananda fluctuates. The Arogya is visibly growing in strength but not yet definitive. Karmasiddhi is being now attacked by a resurgence of old difficulties, all of them wearing the semblance of a power strong enough to destroy the little siddhi yet effected; it is not yet clear how many of these are merely phantoms or whether any of them have a strength capable of endangering or retarding the progress begun.

Trikaldrishti is again attempting to establish the reign of the free certain & non-telepathic vision. Power once more revived its higher movements, greater in volume, but not in quality than before. Rupa also revived some of the former movements, but is not yet definitive in the sense of a free & assured efflorescence. The struggle over the faith, the subjective-objective Ananda & the Krishnadarshana continues.

Lipis—

1. *Legend of the false ideal* (akasha background)
2 *It is the foreign forces that attempted to fix the ideality* (ie the external non-ideal forces in their own interest or according to their own pleasure)
3. *ideality of the objectivity* (antardrishta) now the object, to be the base of a true ideal.
4. *it is the objectivity that is yet to be idealised* (akasha background)
5 *ideality is to be given its fullest scope*
6 *authority of the lipi* (do) as the first base of full subjective-objective ideality.
7 *effectuality ideality* (akasha)
8. *internal subjectivity is in its full strength of the ideality* (do)
9 *energetic ideality in the tapas-siddhi . . aishwarya*
11 *it is the first tapas of the authority of the lipi*

N.B. 1 to 9 are the first instance of so many lipis connected with one subject and occurring consecutively & without break (except one) in a clear order of thought.

10 *attempt at the destruction of the siddhi—last attempt.*
12 *thirteenth . . tapas-siddhi*
battle
13. *after the battle is over* (chitra) *entirety of the ideality in the tapas siddhi* (akasha)

Unintelligible lipis

1. *Leo. Yorkshire.* 2. *Shakespeare* — often repeated
3 *any other elsewhere* 4. *Falstaff.*

Silhouettes occurred again on the wall (clear — or vague-clear), — a woman standing on a square carpet, a lady well-dressed with flounced skirts, & in the akasha, figures of women. At night dense images or dense developed. Dense images & developed now continually come into the field of sthula vision, but they do not present themselves direct to the physical eye, but rather to the sukshma vision in the sthula akasha; or if they present themselves to the sthula eye, they are unstable. At night the dense images were stable, but they had not the freedom, compact material & vividness of the others.

Lipi kaushalya is now fixed in the akasha. eg *"that is transition"* in a pale green colour, not very decided.

Physical Nirananda declared itself, but could not last very long void of the ananda.

Tapas-siddhi.

1. Doves flying along the roof & past were made to turn towards it, but alighted on the edge not on the ridge to which they were directed; at first resisting & meditating a downward flight, they turned suddenly & flew on to the spot indicated.

2. A crow on the staff of the Governor's house, immediately dislodged.

3. A man seated on the kerbstone, willed to depart, at first made no motion, a second man rather came, sat down & entered into conversation, then both suddenly got up and crossed the road.

4. A second crow on the staff similarly dislodged, but by the second aishwarya.

5 Two small birds flying in the akasha turned several times by the will, but with much resistance.

6. The spy near the corner willed to go to the corner & turn it, went & stood at the turn & looked down the other road but then sat down near it.

7. Two birds were compelled to turn in their paths, although flying with a definite will in a definite direction, but the later

attempts were failures, although there was always a struggle, generally physical, sometimes only subjective.

The following decisions in the nature of trikaldrishti rising out of telepathies were registered for observation of success or failure.

1. *Both will come*—ie Richard & Madame Richard.

N.B. Madame Richard was ill; moreover the Governor visited them at the time of their usual visit here; but they both came subsequently at 6 pm, 2 hours later than the regular time.

2 *The house will be found with a little more difficulty.*
3 *The Society will arrange itself after a few difficulties.*
4 *The money question will be arranged by a developing siddhi.*
5 *Henceforth absolute samata & abhyasa*—as the method of the siddhi.
6 *The difficulty of the rupa & samadhi is about to break down*

N.B. there are movements; the length of continuity in the samadhi is beginning to increase.

7 *The gradual process has to pass now into the concentrated.*

May 9th

The kamananda continues, typically free from all its old limitations, but awaiting the strength of the kamic chakra & the full adaptation of the body before it can materialise its freedom. The improvement in the arogya continues, but the strong pressure of tamas on the body for the last few weeks is not yet lifted. The higher tapas works in the midst of a continual heavy cloud. Continuity of vijnana, invariable action of the tapas-siddhi & the harmonised action of trikaldrishti & telepathy, the former often corrective of errors in the latter, were manifested throughout the morning, but could not maintain their activity through the rest of the day. Faith in the Yoga-siddhi is firm; faith in an eventual rapidity is growing, but as yet can find no secure basis in the actuality. Faith in the adeshasiddhi fluctuates, but the conception of it has now been greatly minimised.

Lipis—

1. *playground*—the world.
2 *sedition*

3 *nature. Phoenix* the system of manifestation
4. *It is the last journey*
5. *It is the last journey in the intellectuality*

The action of the tapas-siddhi is now revealed in three forms, the nervous with the play of forces, action & reaction, resistance etc, the mental, with perceptions realising themselves if vijnanamaya, acting as forces, if pranamaya, & the ideal working by the swabhava. The fourth is not yet manifest.

The improvement in the samadhi maintains itself & for the first time there was an instance of the merging of dream in swapnasamadhi towards which the swapnasiddhi is driving, but the hold of the siddhi is not yet a mastery, nor sufficient in force & quality.

Veda. VIII

May 10th

During the day there was attack & cloud constantly till the afternoon. The siddhi so far as it progresses behind the veil. The Arogya suffered something of a relapse. Rupadrishti progressed.

Veda VIII

May 11th.

The chief work done was in the karma, ie translation of Veda VIII, several movements towards the fulfilment of the predictions 2. 3. 4 of the 8th May, some indications of progress in the rupa, resumption of brief connected colloquies in swapnasamadhi, coherence in swapna; but all this happens still in a disorganised fashion subject to shiftings & collapse. Prediction 7 is still far from fulfilment.

Kamananda flagged during the day & the stress of Roga on the Arogyasiddhi continued. Heat heavily felt & thirst revived.

May 12th

The secret of the continued struggle long understood is now fully revealed to the experience in knowledge & sensation. It is a struggle between certain parts of the universal-personal Nature which are anandamaya of the mentality & attached to the slow, gradual & pleasant development of the siddhi through mental ananda & samata & others which are tapomaya of the sat in the mentality & aspire to the rapid, powerful & chanda development of the siddhi through vijnana. The former were at the centre of the action & personality, but are now displaced. In order to maintain or recover their hold, they have struggled to maintain the former gradual progress & favoured even relapse & obstruction as helpful to the retardation. As a result they see asiddhi & chaos threatening to establish themselves in the general failure of the Yoga. For this reason the principle of relapse has been allowed once again to become powerful in the subjective siddhi. Many of these parts are now repentant of their obstruction, others half-convinced, others uncertain & inclined to persevere.

The general result has not been favourable to a rapid siddhi. In the vijnana, the intellect is now forced to a more general & unquestioning acceptance of the satyam & brihat in the knowledge & of the value of personal tapas as a force in the determination of results;but the knowledge has receded in ritam & the power in actual effectivity as a result of the violent & obstinate pressure of the anandamaya mental devatas of the Mahasaraswati Prakriti.

Rupa advances slowly. There are now rare figures of all kinds of an initial stability that present themselves directly to the sthula vision; but for the most part the formlessness of the stable rupas (now even exaggerated) & the instability of formed rupas is still the rule of the jagrad drishti. In Samadhi the stability acquired is maintained but does not progress; swapna fluctuates between coherence & incoherence.

In the physical siddhi kamananda continues to recur with a brief intensity, but its continuity is discontinued, in order, it is suggested, that the physical nature may now take it up & develop spontaneously its higher permanence. In Arogya, although there is still the strong tendency of siddhi behind, the actuality presents rather acute symptoms of asiddhi. Thirst is fully revived in the exterior nervous parts, but the discomfort of heat is being expelled along with other physical discomfort. The revival of full subjective ananda is being attempted, but on the old basis.

In Karma there are strong effects of dharma, but these are isolated & not organised, nor subject to the vijnanamaya will. Veda continues (3 hymns in the day) & the residue of actual unillumination is slight. The rest of the sahitya is discontinued for the present. Kriti is active in the old way, unsatisfactorily, fragmentarily & confusedly. The general result at the moment is the triumph of the retarded gradual movement against the forces making for organisation & rapidity.

May 13th

In vijnana brihat ritam with imperfections & limited ritam with perfection; also reversion to inferential error. In power, the condition of struggle, but with a tendency for mental tapas to replace nervous tapas & to guide even such nervous tapas as persists.

There is a steady movement towards the expulsion of the oppressive tamas from the brain & the body. The old ananda in mere passivity regarding a progress determined almost independently by the forces of the trailokyamayi Prakriti, is now definitely rejected. The assertion of the luminous mastering Tapas is made finally in the inner nature & awaits the progress of the siddhi there to become effective in the outer world.

May 14th.

The most important result of the day was the progress in the expulsion of the tamas from the body. Veda IX. 1 – 5, 11 to 53, were read & annotated in less than 3 hours (the first five taking one hour) without any more than a slight eventual fatigue of the bodily parts, but no failure of the rapid & luminous faculty in the brain. The continuance of this force & pravritti has now to be assured.

For some time past there has been a fixed movement towards minimising evacuation, limited to twice in the day for the jala; for the other, there is no fixed time or proportion, but the movement is yet imperfect. The Arogya seems to be partially asserting itself in the most external parts of the body & prana where the roga had recently asserted itself with some force & great obstinacy.

May 15th

The Anandamaya Lilamaya is now making itself normal in the Brahmadarshana.

Veda. Veda [IX.] 54 to 60 completed on the 14th. Today 61–75. (long hymns)

The recurrent continuity of the vijnanamaya instruments seems now to have set in. Effectivity of tapas vindicates itself unexpectedly from time to time even in the kriti. Rupa is active in the chidakash in antardrishta; the forms complete & perfect, but unchanged in the chittakasha. Samadhi continues as before. Rupa in jagrat bahirdarshi is now perfect except in freedom & a stable stability.

May 16th.

Evacuation, comparatively slight & normal, after 6 days (ie on the 7th day) — no noticeable reaction. Last time was after 4 days, copious & there was slight momentary reaction & sign of imperfect assimilation. The body attempts to get weary with the stress of work, but is compelled to revive & the weariness disappears during the next spell of work; there is a slight tamas from time to time in the physical brain. Ritam is still fluctuating in the trikaldrishti.

Veda IX. 76–114 minus 86. 96. 97. 107–110.

May 17th

Disturbance in the progress of the assimilation; moderate evacuation. Arogya still resisted at the same point.

Veda IX. 86. 96. 97. 107–110. The ninth book completed in 4 days; the tapas always resisting the old forms of weariness.

May 18th

The intensity of subjective ananda is once more attempting to reassert its universal domination & equality & this time with greater chances of success, for it is intimately associated with the growing sense of the Anandamaya Lila & the integral dasya of the being. The satyam & brihat grow continually & take larger possession of the perceptive attitude towards the world; the ritam still fluctuates, because the truth & largeness are of the mental realm, not of the ideal consciousness; the mind receives the truths of being in action, but because it separates itself from the vijnana is unable to place them with spontaneous correctness. When it applies itself, it can place them correctly, if it rises beyond the duel of tapas & tamas neither of which can entirely justify itself or entirely refute the other. The physical siddhi fluctuates continually.

Seventh book of Veda commenced. 41 – 45 translated with notes. X. 1 – 4. read. Introduction to Veda commenced yesterday continued. Introduction to Life Divine commenced.

Utthapana resumed, but feebly. The three basic siddhis are eclipsed in the body; but laghima easily emerged & mahima to some extent. Anima is less active than formerly.

The force of continuity of swapnasamadhi very slightly increased after several nights of suspension of progress. Rupa still progresses by the same infinitesimal degrees, as also the other parts of the vijnana.

May 19th

The difficulty now felt with the vijnana is to raise the mind out of the sphere of the vijnanabuddhi turned towards form of force & form of matter & their movements. The Tapas cannot be easily effective because in the realm of nervous force every force put forward has a greater or less authority to persist &, if possible, conquer & every perception turns into a force which has a right to exert itself & persist. It is only by rising beyond to vijnana itself that the vijnanabuddhi can be liberated from the subservience to truth of possibility by freedom of ultimate law in the ritam. But there are two ritams, one that follows & adapts the possibilities, another that controls sovranly the possibilities & it depends on which plane the consciousness adopts whether the knowledge & power will be of the higher controlling kind or the lower self-adapting kind.

The chief source of ashanti & asamata in their recurrence was hitherto the unilluminated action of the nervous force in battle with the resistance in the activity. This is now being moulded to the samata by a double process of sama action without ashanti unilluminated except by the indirect or chandra tejas & of illumination leading to ananda of struggle, victory & defeat. The other source, absence of sufficient faith & sahasa, is being dealt with by a more gradual process.

Utthapana continued; one position of the neck, 15 minutes; horizontal & medial of the leg 15 minutes each; the waist & back, one minute. The right basis is not yet successfully established. The vertical position of the arms, in the recumbent state of the body, which could formerly be continued for 3 hours without strain, except a slight & hardly appreciable reaction at the end, now resulted in a very appreciable strain at the end of half an hour. There is in other respects also a noticeable relapse in the physical shakti.

As yet, the principle of relapse maintains itself everywhere; the second intimation of the 2^{d} May has not been fulfilled except that the relapse is no longer definitive, no part of the purely subjective siddhi being lost so that it has to be rebuilt, but only concealed so that it has to be remanifested. The Atris & Vrikas are no longer powerful, but the Coverers, Vritras, still retain their strength. In the less subjective parts of the vijnana, the Atris seem to persist, but they swallow without digesting & the siddhi eventually comes out again with a slight appearance of re-growth rather than of reconstruction. In the physical siddhi & the kriti the Vrikas seem yet to have power.

Assimilation is once more thrown back to its old condition of parthiva & jalamaya obstruction, but the tejomaya has not recovered its power. For some days there has been a daily manifestation for half an hour in the evening of slight feverish heat, but its strength & period is diminishing & it has no after-effect on the body.

Veda X. 5 to 15 read. The rest of the work intermitted.

Lipi

1 *S^{n} [Saurin] is about to understand.*
2 *Death of the difficulty in the society* (samaja) —not immediate, but to be prepared.
3. KS. —fulfilled as usual, but unexpectedly—KS coming after long absence to invite others.

There is a suggestion that kriti of a definite kind will now begin, not at first decisive, but constantly growing in force & power. At present separate aishwaryas in this direction are fulfilled wholly or partially, but there is no precision, or if precision, no harmony of separate effects & therefore, as a rule, no satisfactory upshot.

Veda VII. 46–49 translated.

May 21st

The fluctuations of personality have been resumed & continue, but the Mahakali nature tends always to return. The lapse is no longer determined by any subjective cause, but by a sort of subsidence in the physical & nervous energy.

Lipi (20th)

Enjoy—selfish (self-regarding) ideality.

Sortileges (20th)

1. अग्निः शुचिव्रततमः शुचिर्विप्रः शुचिः कविः।
शुची रोचत आहुतः॥
उत त्वा धीतयो मम गिरो वर्धंतु विश्वहा।
अग्ने सख्यस्य बोधि नः।

ie. the Divine Force (Tapas) has now to become entirely pure in its action, pure in the mental illuminations, pure in the idealities, pure in the sacrificial offering of all the energies to Krishna. So all the thoughts & their expressions in internal & external speech have to increase into an universal activity. It has also to open out in the personal relation with Krishna.

2 अग्निसोमा पुनर्वसू अस्मे धारयतं रयिं॥

The combined Tapas & Ananda of the mind have now to be reshaped in an ideal substance of consciousness and to hold the divine felicity firmly.

May 22d

Sortileges—recorded in the last khata & their indications

(1) Mar 28. Penetration of the mental being by the mental delight, Indra by Soma, fulfilled gradually in two months & now approaching perfection.

(2) Mar 29. Destruction of the tapasic rajas impulses disturbing the system—Fulfilled.

(3) do. Rejection of control by the Vrikas—Fulfilled in the pure subjectivity.

(4) Union of Tapas & mental Ananda & growth into pure

Ananda—(Mar 30). First part fulfilled, is being perfected; the second is being prepared.

(5) April 1—Illumination of the nervous impulses & coordination of mind & prana.. Fulfilled, now approaching perfection.

(6) April 4.—Knowledge of the three lower worlds within, discriminatory perception of the impulses & distinction between the true & the false. Fulfilled, to be perfected.

(7) April 12th. See explanation. In course of fulfilment.

The sortilege of Mar 31 remains unfulfilled even in its beginnings.

Isha Upanishad translated with notes.

A period of progressive fulfilment has been indicated from day before yesterday. There are some signs of its fulfilment. The basis of the triloka has been formed. In the knowledge the mind perceives the forces of the bhuvar & is no longer easily led away by the tapasic stress; where there is error, it is more swift to correct it even before the event; where there is uncertainty it is more willing to recognise it. There is a more illumined action of the mental telepathy. The decisive trikaldrishti reemerges & is more amply justified.

Kamananda recovered & increased its persistence yesterday; it is once more attempting a continuous permanence. With the smarana it is usually active, except when the contrary nervous forces put out a strong effort to oppress it; its capacity for acting without the smarana is steadily increasing, but as yet it is not dominant.

The main obstacle now to progress is the imperfection of that layer in the koshas of the being which represents the meeting-place of the prana & the anna in the most physical action of the former principle. This imperfection exaggerated not only insists on the habitual symptoms of roga, but it is a channel for the perpetuation of the previous habits of the mentality. It is aided by the tamasic ananda in the mind which enjoys & seeks to materialise all suggestions of inertia, defeat, collapse etc. Eg. it being noted that the tejasic difficulties of the assimilation could not reestablish themselves, this tamasic mentality at once sought to restore them & succeeded in rendering them once more active.

Lipis—

(1) *21.* (2) *31.* (3) *13.* These are the points in which the siddhi is still more behindhand than in others.

(4) *Teleology*—ie the purpose of the various mental & nervous movements favourable or adverse now reveals itself to the mind & the self-revelation has today begun to be habitual.

(5) *Together*—ie the immediate trikaldrishti & the distant must act together, although the mind seeks to reject the latter, because it cannot be verified—eg it disbelieves in lipi (2) entirely, [ ][6] in lipi 3 partially or mostly, in (1) to a slight extent.

(6) *Suspicion in the intellectuality of the ideality, especially the lipi*—referring to the last point noted & previous to the thought which it suggested.

(7) *Teleology of the lipi*—ie the lipi, as serving certain useful purposes in the life & progress, must be understood in its right purpose.

(8) *Shilleto. Auchulos.* An instance of this teleology. The first, often repeated in the last few days was fixed in its intention by the second, & has now served to recall a number of minute facts of the life in England which had rested entirely forgotten during the last twenty years, thus assisting one difficult & obscure motion of the siddhi which has been much resisted.

Kamananda recurrent, but much obstructed throughout the day.

Swapnasamadhi thrown back in lipi into a false coherence & in dream into the old confusion; the rupa does not yet advance at all sensibly but keeps its gains in continuity. It is, however, confined to the dim chhayamaya proper to that low physical nervosity now dominant & typified in some systems in Patala & the astral worlds. The luminous visions occur rarely, & those which come are usually of a gross pranic & trivial kind.

---

[6] *MS* (3)

The translation of experience into terms of vijnanabuddhi continues with a dull steadiness, without intense ananda, but without nirananda. Occasionally the Prana & nervous mind indicate a slight impatience or sense of depression. Apparently these have to be eliminated before the tamasic pressure will be entirely removed.

Utthapana is practically discontinued for the last two or three days.

Veda VIII. 101. translated with notes.

May 23d

Veda I. 90—translated with notes; settling several doubtful points, owing to the brilliance of the illuminations acting on the external proof. Kena Upanishad I Kh[anda] translated with notes. Also Ved I. 91. others prepared.

Lipis.

1. *P. tenth* 2. *Soul-kinship* (reference to the Rs [Richards]).
3 *Effort to deflect the siddhi*—ie into another spirit & other aims than those throughout intended, so as to deprive it of its leverage & its fullness. This attempt, long suffered, is now being defeated.
4. *signed authority of the lipi* with regard to trikaldrishti of the Kamananda which is now to progress inevitably subject to a more purely physical resistance.
5. *simplex, duplex.* Eka, Dwita?
6. *Tejas in the desire has to be changed into self-regarding ideality*

Indications

1. The jnanam Brahma & Anandam Brahma will not be held continuously in the full active consciousness for some time yet.

2. The same with the fullness of activity of the vijnanamaya knowledge & power. There is much development yet to be done.

The cloud of tamas began to be rent & drift apart after a sortilege from the Veda. त्वं ज्योतिषा वि तमो ववर्थ—ie Soma, the mental Ananda. During the rest of the day there was a struggle in which the Tamas receded without much difficulty. The vibrations of the mental Ananda are becoming more powerful & are being accorded with energy in the Tapas & prakasha in the Knowledge. The trilok of the physical consciousness is being subjected to the liberated trilok of the nervous consciousness with that of the pure mental behind but not *purohita*.

Kamananda persists in recurrence, but is oppressed from outside. Rupa has for two or three [days] ceased its slow, but steady progress except in the antardarshi where it is manifesting occasional perfect images in a cloud of darkness.

May 24th

Veda I. 92. Fresh proofs of efficiency in Dharma.

No sensible change from previous condition except increase of force & activity

May 25th

The Idea of the Veda begun as an introduction to translations. The energy is becoming more rapid & intense in intellectual action that takes an outward form eg writing & speech, where prakasha, tapas & shama are uniting into a single entity; but not as yet in thought & action where there are only movements of tapas afterwards discontinued. The script, also, is more effective than the articulate thought & the articulate thought more effective than the perceptive.

Speech is once more active and less governed or prompted by the lower intellectual functions.

At night there was once more dream coherent, pure of present ego & apparently commemorative of past truth; only some of the circumstances were borrowed from the present or else resembled the present.

May 26th

Veda I. 170 translated with commentary for the review.

Veda III. 37. . 40 — rendered with notes.

The siddhi is now in a state of outward inactivity in all but the sahitya. There is no decisive relapse in the subjectivity, but also no decisive progress, except in the second chatusthaya.

May 27th

Veda III. 41–50. Translation & Commentary on I. 1 commenced [ ].[7]

The shuddhananda & sense of Supreme Beauty in all things is growing with the growth of the Mahalakshmi bhava, but it is not, as formerly, overpowering & intolerant of the perception of differences in gunas in the mentality. It perceives the vulgar as vulgar, the common as common & yet as divine & uncommon in that which it expresses.

The consciousness now lives chiefly in the Bhuvar lower & higher, but not actively in the Pradiv or Swar. It has to raise itself to these altitudes.

The tamas is steadily receding into the most external parts of the bodily system; there it does not prevent activity, but it prevents progress in the physical siddhi.

May 28th

Veda I. 1. Commentary begun. III. 51.

There is now an attempt to apply the same constant tapas to Yogasiddhi as to literary & scholastic work. The first result is useful coherent lipi in samadhi & the resumption of coherent conversation in the same with clear sthula shabda. The lipi ran "All is Agni. All is He too. OM Agnih." with words that could not be read before they disappeared.

Lipi.

1 *Tonight.*
2 *Tuesday*
3 *Bluysen deputy till death destroys*—a continuation apparently of the lipi that was persistent during the past four years that B. would be deputy again.

The satyam in the nervous mind is now much strengthened & carries with it a growing force of ritam. There is occasional action of the deciding ritam in pradiv (pure mind in relation with nervous) which exceeds the nervous telepathic indications & indicates a result not contained in the outer or intermediary conscious[ness] of the object.

---

[7] *MS* in translation. [*This phrase was not cancelled after "Translation &" was added between the lines.—Ed.*]

It is now sufficiently enforced on the material intellect by experience that all the nervous movements of thought & action are justified, all have an utility and behind that utility a truth of fact in being. Without abandoning the nervous consciousness the siddhi may now on a securer basis again enlarge itself in the intermediate mental activities.

The faith is visibly growing stronger in the full Yogasiddhi (except saundarya), & in a part of the karma, ie sahitya & a certain amount of dharma.

May 29th

The siddhi is now returning to the intermediate mentality, the pradiva & seeks to perceive the contents of other mentalities as well as the contents of their nervous & affective parts & to develop again & more perfectly the mental trikaldrishti. Power, rupa, samadhi are still in the stage of struggle, *samarana*, against the Vala & Vritra opposition.

The mental perceptions, as distinguished from the nervous, have begun again to act, but as yet there is not the renewal of the general mental illumination which is necessary to their free activity. The decisive mental perception in trikaldrishti is increasing in force.

The second of the predictions on the 8th May has been fulfilled after a lapse of precisely three weeks due to a small difficulty which was not overcome owing to a want of energy in the search. The fourth has begun to fulfil itself with regard to the personal necessities, Rs 400 due paid[,] Rs 500 available, Rs 200 possible; with another Rs 250 there will be enough for bare necessities for a year from July 1914 to end of June 1915. By that time other resources will be found. The third prediction is still in process of fulfilment. The fifth is being carried out, but the samata is sometimes slightly & momentarily disturbed, the abhyasa is still hampered in its action & slow in result. The sixth & seventh are yet to be properly fulfilled.

The stability & continuity of rupa increased to some extent in the swapnasamadhi & tends to increase (in stability) in the jagrat.

May 30th

Faith is still deficient in kriti, samaja & saundarya as lacking entirely or almost entirely any ground in the actuality. In the dharma & sahitya it is increasing, but insufficient.

A letter from Sn [Saurin] showing power of Dharma acting at a distance through communicative vyapti. Continuance of the work on the Veda (The Secret of the Veda). In the progress of the internal siddhi a period of slight retardation. The physical siddhi is also obstructed. There are nevertheless overt movements towards progress.

May 31st

Dharma shows increasing effectivity. In French elections one main line of Aishwarya fulfilled, the others operative but only slightly effectual, as being in some details inconsistent & opposed to each other. Obstruction strong. Isha Up. translation & notes recast finally. Ritam in governing idea of the philosophical work.

June 1st

The formulated & steady activity for the regulation of the third chatusthaya is apparently to begin today & a separate detailed record of the results has been commenced.[8] The outward physical system today is much oppressed by heat & thirst while the inner is free & tends to have the ananda. Powerful tamas in the body; continued from many days. A great deal of walking was done & produced at first strong tamasic fatigue, but afterwards the fatigue was driven into the thin exterior shell of the physical consciousness & the rest of it was filled with a pranashakti untouched by tamas.

Lipis.

1. *Lady of delight*—ie the one of the sapta hotráh who directs Ananda of the Manas is to take charge. Fulfilled[9]

---

[8] *This separate record has not been found.—Ed.*

[9] *This and the fulfilments that follow (the last indicated by ditto marks) were written after the entry was completed.—Ed.*

2. *Perfect efflorescence of the siddhi*—ie of the already accomplished siddhi now veiled by the tamas—
fulfilled except in Power & Body.
3 *Light . . delight*— remanifestation "
4 *Tegument unripe*—referring to the exterior physical shell over which the siddhi seems to have no power.
5. J.F.[10]

Typical instance of communicative vyapti

The idea came to ask M^{me} R. [Richard] how soon they would go into the new house, but the question was asked only in the mind; in 15 or 20 seconds she answered, "In one or two days perhaps we shall go into the house."

Thought perception is now being regularised, but the false interpretations of mental content have still to be eliminated. The movement towards pure mental trikaldrishti and ritam persists. The sense of the general Ananda Brahman (ananda akasha) long covered over is now reviving.

Sort.

अग्निर्यथैक एव प्रकाशात्मा सन् भुवनं—भवंत्यस्मिन्भूतानीति भुवनम् —अयं लोकस्तमिमं प्रविष्टोऽनुप्रविष्टः ie. the Divine Force at work manifesting in luminous activity is to take possession of the whole subjective consciousness internal & external in this world; having already extended in the nervous consciousness it has to take possession of the rest.

June 2^{d}. June 3^{d}.

[*No entry*]

---

[10] *Perhaps "jollity—festivity"—Ed.*

10 JUNE – 29 SEPTEMBER 1914

Record of Yoga.

June. 1914 –

June 10th

Sortilege

इन्द्राकुत्सा वहमाना रथेन आ वामत्या अपि कर्णे वहंतु।
निः षीमद्भ्यो धमथो निः षधस्थान् मघोनो हृदो वरथस्तमांसि

The Pure Mind & the Sense-Pleasure borne up together by the Ananda are to be full of the sense-delight & so carried & wedded to the Inspired Thought in the Vijnana, ie known & taken cognizance of by it. In the streams of conscious being they are to form in an universal fashion the planes of activity of the siddhi & to remove from the "heart" of the vijnanamaya being the obscurations that still remain.

Script.

The lines of the subjective siddhi have now been fixed.

1. Ananda as the base, free & joyous Tapas & Prakasha as the special instruments.
2. The universal sense of the Anandamaya Lilamaya Krishna in the Brahmadrishti as the continent of all the conscious activity
3. The principle of Affirmation to replace the principle of rejection & denial.
4. Ritam to develop no longer only in isolated or combined details, but in the undivided *brihat* of the satyam with truth of detail & combination as a play of the ritam satyam brihat.

The statement is not complete; [there][1] are three others & then two more to be added making in all nine affirmations, stomah, of the developing God.

---

[1] *MS* they

Lipi

1. *literal . . intensity* (chitra)
2 *despite resistance of the intellectuality tapas exists* (chitra fixed)
3. *northeast, southeast; still to begin in the* (rest) ie the Dharma or Yoga.
4. *suspension of the activities* (akasha, sadhara) only for stronger resumption
5. *13.* (chitra)
6. *Typical of the lipi. authority*
7. *31* chitra.

Script.

The three other affirmations

5. The Personality of the Ishwara, Krishna, to be present in the consciousness, governing all the activities

6. Dasya of madhura to be the personal relation of the Jiva with Krishna—the dasya to be tertiary with the most intense consciousness of passive yantrabhava in the whole system.

7. Acceptance of all bhoga as a slave & instrument of the Lover to be the principle of the madhura.

Ananda

Recurrence of intense kamananda is now becoming persistent and common. Only continuity is insufficient.

Subjective ananda is almost perfect as positive samata, but not in intensity of positive ecstasy (rabhas, radhas).

Generality of objective ananda is now being restored; but intensities of physical pain still escape the grasp of the Ananda.

=

Later, an initial continuity of intense kamananda was manifested, but under certain conditions of will, smarana, hetu & state (eg the sitting posture). These conditions have to be surmounted & the continuity rendered ahaituka & unconditional

Intensity of subjective ananda through the indriyas (Kutsa) is again growing on the system; it alternates with the condition of shanta samata, the latter often tinged in the more subconscient parts with udasinata.

Aishwarya in Kriti

1. Immediate fulfilment in one detail of the suffragette movement
2. Final fulfilment in the S. African difficulty.
3. Slight fulfilment in Irish question (Volunteers).

Lipi

1. *Ideality of light together ideality in tapas.*
2. *Intense ideality.*

Rigveda II. 10.

Script

For the intense kamananda will should no longer be used; only smarana & involuntary hetu.

The power of rupa & samadhi is really growing. Suspension of its activity is being used in order to break down limiting habits formed by the material Prakriti in the ether and allow larger forms of fulfilment to manifest out of the Avyakta.

At night there was an attempt in the swapna at organising itself, but it did not go very far.

June 11th

Sortilege—

> न ता मिनंति मायिनो न धीरा व्रता देवानां प्रथमा ध्रुवाणि
> न रोदसी अद्रुहा वेद्याभिर्न पर्वता निनमे तस्थिवांसः।

Script.

There is still an activity of the illuminated mind in its middle ascent, not dependent on nervous consciousness, not yet in harmony with the ritam, but only satyam & brihat. It is full of true & active possibilities out of which the actuality is determined. This is the reason why it is neither ritam nor anritam. It is truth of being, but not truth of eventuality.

Lipi.

1. It is the bygone attention to the spirit of the intellectuality (Akasha, with difficulty).

2 *Turpitude*—to be fought & expelled from the environment (chitra)

3. *Energy Trikaldrishti* (antardrishta)

4 *Nature Trikaldrishti*

5 *13*

6. *31.*

Trikaldrishtis fulfilled.

1. J.F. seen in lipi 9th, fulfilled 10th by independent action of N.

2. Action of Suffragettes in injuring pacture. N.B. This peculiar feature of the campaign was foreseen before it began.

3. Lipi of the 10th (1) fulfilled by the rapid growth of intensity in the Ananda.

Ananda

The kamananda is now, in subdued action, continuous without smarana, intense with smarana in asana. It has to become intense without suggestive smarana.

Subjective Ananda is gradually increasing the Kutsa intensity.

Tivra is trying to generalise itself in ahaituka. It now comes in intense particular touches or subdued & general without as well as with smarana.

Kamananda is now present, both subdued & intense, in all positions, lying, sitting, standing or walking, with or without the stimulus of smarana or of hetu. It is therefore free of condition in essence, but it comes more often with the helping conditions than without & more easily. The free continuity & recurrence has to be generalised & its activity in samadhi, which has once recurred, must be manifested & also generalised. All this has been done by the concentrated method

The only obstacle now is the physical vessel, तनू, which does not yet admit of the continuous Ananda because of the part of the physical consciousness behind it which has not *sraddha* in its possibility. That consciousness must be purified & enlightened in order that the body also may change its faith & its habits.

Veda—

The perception of the Gods, (Vayu, Agni, Indra etc) which was formerly occasional, is now regularising itself, all the gods being seen as Krishna, & again as personalities of the Four who throw themselves out in all.

There was some loss of faith later in the day owing to adverse pressure in the body & in the kriti & the failure of confirmed decisive results in the third chatusthaya.

The ritam has ceased to develop & the thought & action are of the brihat of the mental activity.

Rig Veda II 5 to 8

June 12.

S. [Sortilege] इन्द्रापर्वता बृहता रथेन वामीरिष आ वहतं सुवीराः

Script.

There has been, as predicted in the lipi, a suspension of the effective activity, the activity in the sense of the sevenfold affirmations. The object is to develop the brihat of the mentality, the barhih, as a base for the activity of the gods. This leads to the remaining two affirmations not yet formulated

8. Siddhi must be on the basis of the largeness in the five worlds & not a selective & limited siddhi.

9. Time must be no longer a determinative, but only an instrumental factor in the siddhi. So also with Space & Circumstance.

These affirmations will take some time in working out, there will be resistance & temporarily successful resistance to their conquest of the field of action, whether the internal or the external field. Such delay or such episodes do not mean the triumph of the resistance or the falsity of the principles.

The sense of the sortilege of the 11th is that the realised action internal or external can never be an equivalent of the Infinite, it can only be a selection, as a rhythm or formation chosen out of infinite sound or infinite substance. This must be recognised. Only a part of what is perceived can be made effectual in action, can be justified by the event. All the rest must be seen in being & force, swáhá & swadhá.

—

Ananda

Kamananda has persisted in the will of the sukshma body, but was only occasional yesterday in the sthula because the physical body failed to react against habit & satisfy the test to which it was put. It is now attempting to recover continuity as well as frequent & intense recurrence.

In this attempt it will rapidly succeed.

Subjective ananda has been upset to a slight extent by the failure of faith, but is now recovering itself independently of the faith. It is ceasing to depend on belief in success & outward justification. This is necessary. Ananda must be entirely self-existent. To this rule there can be no exception or modification.

The ananda of adverse impact or result is always felt, but sometimes in immediate retrospect only. At the moment of the impact or the perception of result it is often more or less veiled by the external pranic reaction of discontent or discomfort. This will now go on being steadily rectified.

As a result, the *vámih suvírá ishah* will be rid of one obstacle to their action. But there must also be prakasha & effectivity of the tapas. Both ideas are conveyed in the expression *suvirah*; it is not only delight that is intended, but also light & power. But delight first, since Sat & Tapas have to be realised through Ananda.

Vijnana.

With a more energetic tapas the action of the ritam in trikaldrishti has revived, but it is still at the same stage, chequered by a sub-activity of the deductive inferential & speculative intellect transformed into ill-ordered intuitive reasoning which falsifies the truth of actuality by false distribution of stress. This great & longstanding stumbling block has been changed in its method of action, has risen out of the lower into the mediary mind activity, has diminished in its force & dominance, but still holds a place in the consciousness which baffles the attempt at a final siddhi of the vijnana.

The attempt to carry the ritam farther is for the present entirely baffled by the forces that seek to remain in the intuitive reason & develop it to the exclusion of the descending Ideal Mind.

Ananda—

The kamananda has only recovered an occasional continuity in two asanas with an inferior intensity & a recurrence baffled in the attempt at frequent & strong possession by the sense of physical inability (avira) which is obstinately imposed on the system from outside. The will in the system is opposed by a will outside which affects the system.

Subjective ananda is, by the same force, being prevented from excluding mechanical asamata.

—

The consciousness is now forced down to a level where all ideas & mental forces are projected into a false light where they seem all luminous, definitive, equal & cannot be seen in their relative play & right proportion. Here the nervous action seems to be dark & false because they do not fulfil the mental projections, instead of being seen as a necessary medium & modifying force necessary for the right realisation of the thing destined upon the physical plane. The strength of this plane of consciousness is external to the system even while in possession of it by *abhisti*, by *ábhava*; it belongs to others & not to the personal experience or temperament which has always had an orientation towards intuition of vijnana or to intuition of chitta, but not to the mediary or to the swapnamaya intelligence.

Trikaldrishtis fulfilled

1. That in the afternoon there would be no definite progress.
2. For the day, all the inertia perceptions (tamasic) denying the successes predicted by the egoistic faith of the tapasic mentality.

Lipi—

1. ἴσθι φίλος ἦσθα
2 *egoistic faith entirely killed*—ie the egoistic faith in the external consciousness that is still able to affect the internal being must be entirely destroyed before the vijnana can take possession of the mind.
3. *31*
4. *13*

Script.

The inertia perceptions are now being disproved as definitive eventualities, but affirmed as themselves forces that help in determining the eventuality & as perception of such forces in the action of the Prakriti. By this repeated realisation of affirmative & negative perceptions as truths that are forces & forces that are truths, the knowledge is not advanced, but only confirmed with an ever increasing sense of brihat. The Ritam does not gain by the repetition of the process.

The affirmation has recommenced, but only partially in the terms of the vijnana. The mental terms must steadily be replaced by ideal values.

June 13.

St. [Sortilege]

1. देवं नरः सवितारं विप्रा यज्ञैः सुवृक्तिभिः। नमस्यंति धियेषिताः

ie the illumined Powers of the nature, impelled by the Understanding, submit to the Ideality in sacrificial actions where all is clearly distinguished & put in its place.

This describes the movement that is now, against opposition, in course of being effected.

Lipi.

1. *unripe* — ie the mediary intelligence for full ideal action
2. *first fruits of the ideality in the intelligence*
3. *food of the ideality* — ie the bright full intelligence is offered up as food to the Vijnana.

Script

The Seven Affirmations have now to be entirely reaffirmed in the conscious experience. It is evident that aishwarya-vashita & ishita-vashita are growing in the satyam brihat. The pure ishita, aishwarya & vashita have to be equally asserted.

The true hinge of the seven affirmations is not the principle of affirmation, but the personal relation with the Ishwara & its triple rule of pervasive presence (avas), dasya madhura relation and universal bhoga result.

—

Sort.

2 *Ordinary . . Clari.* ie the sense of the Lilamaya in every person & object must be made the ordinary perception in a clarified consciousness.

Script.

The labour of the illuminated Intelligence is being constantly justified and again falsified, as was done formerly with the logical intellect, in order that the submission to the Ideality may be enforced on these powerful forces,—in order that they may see that they are not yet pure & cannot be pure of the nervous force that is not illumined, unless they give up the attempt at self-action. They are only there as the food of the Vijnana.

All attempts at permanently excluding obscuring confusion from the Tapas & the Light fail the moment they seem to have almost succeeded. It is no proof of false guidance by the Ishwara, but only of a false state in the Prakriti, a state of unaccomplished harmony. Nor is it a proof of non-guidance but merely that the goal has not been reached.

The error is in throwing force on the detail to the exclusion of the Brihat.

Kamananda

The action & intensity of the kamananda has been restored in all asanas after a prolonged struggle of 24 hours duration between the will in the mind & prana & the adverse external Will which uses the deficiencies of the body.

Subjective intensity of Ananda, after attack & clouding, has been easily restored in the senses. It is only in the mental reception of event that it is still subject to violent negations.

Tapas—

Aishwarya is now acting with the 60-fold power in consecutive movements, but only where there is no strong opposite intention or passive hostile force against it. It is also producing circumstance to rectify passive hostile force; but there is as yet no predominant power of success.

Script

Knowledge will manifest perfectly enough if the habit of nervous stress independent of light can be removed. For this reason all perceptions not proceeding from the centre above must be passive & indifferent, until the conversion into ideality is complete.

It is evident that all definitive perceptions of event now are perceptions of an active possibility, that is a possibility that is to be fulfilled or would be fulfilled but for the intervention of another force. Some are more remote being only intentions in the subconscious being that are kept from emergence by the overt nervous & mental activity or thoughts which cannot fulfil themselves in the actual state of the Prakriti.

Sort

3. बृहद्वदेम विदथे सुवीराः

Aishwaryas in Kriti fulfilled.

1. Irish National Volunteers
2. Stress of the Suffragette movement
3. Attempt at forward movement in the Society.

Distant Vyapti—

1 The scene in the Alipur Court, presented to the thought day before yesterday, but as an idea not a fact, down to the retirement of Counsel.

2. Communicative to M. R [Motilal Roy] of the formation of the vijnana.

Samadhi.

The Swapnasamadhi was once more somewhat active. Rupa shows some signs of a tendency to develop.

June 14th Sunday.

St.

अग्निषोमाविमं सु मे शृणुतं वृषणा हवं।
प्रति सूक्तानि हर्यतं भवतं दाशुषे मयः॥

The force & the mental Ananda have to enforce joy in the right thoughts & right forms of being & change in them into divine

Ananda. All that is not sukta must be made sukta

Lipi.

1. *The society of the Satyayuga, then rightly begin.*
2. *After the destruction of the intelligent activity.* ie the ideal can develop.

Script.

The Law of submission, namas, to Krishna revealed in the gods, is now accepted by the Jiva in all parts of the system. The law of affirmation is also being accepted & this implies a perfect faith in the guidance, but not yet in the result. The passivity of the critical intelligence, its surrender in favour of the Viveka is equally accepted. These things are now sukha and have to be generally enforced by Agni & Soma in the terms of Ananda. It is at present being done in the interests of Indra, who is King of Swar, in the supreme heaven of the mind within the triple system.

The siddhi of the Vijnana will now proceed regularly by self-action as the siddhi of the first & second chatusthayas have proceeded. It can do so because every motion, even the most adverse, is accepted as a step in the necessary process guided & imposed by the supreme Wisdom, Love & Power. This is the namas of the Prakriti to the Purusha. Till now it was only the submission of the Jiva to the Ishwara, & could not be perfectly effective because the exterior Prakriti was still rebellious. The next step must be the entire submission of the intelligence to the ideality. विप्रा नमस्यंति धियेषिताः

=

The instances of effectiveness in dharma continue.

In kriti there is a severe setback, eg. Irish Volunteer quarrel, French Cabinet instability, in public matters; the difficulties in organising the personal life are rather obstructions than adverse movements.

In the body the Tapas is still ineffective except in some details.

=

The day has been otiose in karma & in siddhi, except for the movement in the morning.

—

Kamananda is infrequent in occurrence, but not limited by any condition when it does recur.

Premananda continues to grow but is not in its activity as yet the normal movement of the chitta. The same limitation holds of the other anandas & of the Krishnadrishti. Only the shanti, sukha, prasada of the first chatusthaya are entirely in possession of their seats; Samata also except in certain physical touches. In the second chatusthaya dasya is normal, but not the continuous active dasyabuddhi. The rest of the second chatusthaya is dependent for its activity on smarana.

—

Rupa has now an almost full abundance & spontaneous activity in Chitra; in akasha on a background & in antardrishta clear forms emerge out of a confused abundance of vague incomplete images & remain for the briefest moment or emerge complete[,] vivid & clear but without more than the moment's stability.

—

Impulses of activity are abundant & even powerful, but are not able to emerge into coordinated work. They have chandra ananda, but are not fully illumined in their energy.

—

June 15th

Sort.

When thou hast drunk of this, O thou of the hundred activities, thou becomest the smiter of the Vritras, and protectest man in the fullness of his plenty —

Script.

That is to say, the Ananda is the condition, the fullness of the Prema, Ahaituka, Chidghana & Shuddha resulting in the Chidánanda & Sadánanda —

The forward movement of the Rupa today is the preparation for a final efflorescence & prepares in its turn a forward movement of the Samadhi which is dimly adumbrated. There is some strain of the Tapas; it is unnecessary & will fall away. But it prepares & represents the intensity of the Mahakali energy, involving also after purification an energy of the light & joy, which is to replace the calm Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati passivity of the empty vessel.

These things are not to be done slowly, gradually & with difficulty, but rapidly, victoriously and without relapse. The point at which this will be possible, is not yet reached, but is being rapidly approached.

Already affirmation is the dominant note of the thought-perception, the ketu. The base of Ananda will soon also be "normal", as indicated in the constant symbol-word, "Ordinary" read on the box. Tapas & Prakasha are being assured more & more of their freedom. Only the uncertainty in the faith holds them back, & this obstacle is now being removed by the removal of the Maheshwari restraint. Mahakali left to herself can now work out her own salvation.

The Anandamaya Drishti, the constant sense of the Ishwara, the dasya-madhura & bhoga are also almost ready.

The large siddhi has also been accepted in the sankalpa & the method of working. It awaits only the ritam of the vijnana in thought & tapas.

Time is the last enemy to be conquered & enslaved. That too depends on the ritam of the tapas.

=

Crude Rupa is now clear against a background, but with some difficulty, except for a few easily spontaneous forms, & without stability. Clearness has begun also in the antardrishta. An attempt is being made to introduce mobile forms in the jagrat, bahirdarshi & [antardarshi],[2] as owing to the rule of instability in the jagrat, a complex continuous action cannot be seen in the swapna-samadhi, except behind a veil of non-seeing by the eye of the supta chaitanya. This veil is growing thin & the chaitanya, jagrat in swapna, can now see a continued action, but not with the figure clear before the Chakshush.

In rupa sadhara, there appear to be three preliminary stages. First, chitra is formed from the material provided by the background, by the mental eye acting through the material & taking advantage of marks & physical helps; then the material is used for the substance of the picture, but the outlines are arbitrarily determined by the mental eye; then emerges the sadhara which is created not from the background, but from the akash & thrown on the background to help the distinctness; finally, the clear sadhara detaching itself from the background & practically equivalent to akasharupa.

---

[2] *MS* antardarsha

Lipi

1. *Soul-tejas;* αἴσχιστος ἦσθα
2 *the real intensity of the delight* (has only to reveal itself by seizure, in the mind, of the central & comprehensive Ananda)
3 *itself it is distinguishing itself* — ie the ideality in the movements of the intelligence
4 *joyful progress* — often repeated, almost daily

The subjective Ananda, the Krishnadrishti & Drishti of the Jnana & Ananda Brahman, the confirmation & enlargement of the Satyam Brihat, the strengthening of the principle of Ananda are all now proceeding automatically towards their completion. So also the acceptance of all bhoga and the dasya. Only an uninsistent but sustained attention is needed for their generalised activity. For the generalised activity of the madhura relation with the personal Ishwara, smarana also is necessary; there is not the automatic smarana. The automatic generality of the ritam & the conquest of Time are as yet only envisaged.

Samadhi is progressing in stability. Dream was extremely coherent, free from ego but deformed by present associations.

==

June 16th —

St. *Raw materials* (Fr. D.).

Script. It is the raw materials (áma) that are now being brought forward for *pachana.* This exactly describes the defect in the siddhi of the mental consciousness which was being strongly felt all the morning & especially at the moment of the sortilege.

—

Neuralgia with a struggle in the consciousness between discomfort of pain & raudrananda. Followed by intensification of pain & repetition in two places. An equally intense pain in the chest added. There the titiksha was deficient & the pressure was diminished & intermitted. In all cases except the last mental suggestion preceded the production of the pain. Afterwards the pains were renewed but with less simultaneity; the titiksha & element of ananda & physical udasinata increased, but could not rise to the right intensity. At last the pressure became too great and determined will had to be used to remove the pains. In this experience there was a conscious struggle between two Powers or sets of Powers, one exulting in the pain & desiring to use it for the abhyasa of Raudrananda, the other rejecting & opposing them as contrary to the Arogya siddhi.

For the moment the anritam seems to be strengthened. The samata, shanti, sukha, hasya are growing continually in positive force as well as the dasya and faith in the guidance & resist all attacks.

Lipi
1. *youth destiny* (chitra).
2. *enthusiastic faith in the ideality*
3 *referee.*

The clouded ideality is again emerging into overt action.

For some time the spirit of the ideal society seems in a crude form to be growing among a certain number. This fulfils the repeated lipi 13.

Cold has once more manifested (in the head) but with a slight effectiveness. It recurred, however, throughout the day, the will only availing to prevent its continuity.

Veda VII 61–66. Notes.

=

June 17th

St. intimating the destruction of the sollicitude.[3]

There is persistent clouding of the knowledge in order to annul the affirmations, maintain the principle of relapse and destroy the faith established & the shanti. It is always the method of the Vritra that is used, except in the fourth & fifth chatusthayas.

---

[3] *So spelled in the manuscript here and below; it is the French spelling.—Ed.*

Script.

The Ananda must be positively affirmed in all activities & experiences without regard to consequences. The governing Power will arrange the necessary affirmations & rejections.

=

Commencement of the Tablet of Vedanta.

The Affirmations remain. They are resisted in their conscious & perfect application. They have yet to be finally disengaged from that resistance.

=

The first chapter of the Secret of Veda completed. The power of swift writing & the joy & force of inspiration have been entirely recovered; but cannot be used with sufficient continuity as yet, because of the obstructive tamas in the physical consciousness. The shadow of Vritra still remains on the Adri.

—

Intimations—

1. The first chapter of the Life Divine & of the Synthesis of Yoga will be immediately begun & rapidly completed.
2. The physical siddhi will be extended into utthapana.
3. The literary activity having been organised, the activity of Dharma will be organised as the second outward fulfilment.

=

The physical siddhi is now the chief subject of active struggle between the Tapasya of Siddhi & the remaining strength of Asiddhi. As yet the Asiddhi predominates in the actualised existence, almost entirely in the Saundarya, effectively in objective utthapana, as a powerful obstruction in Arogya, as a habit of discontinuity in physical Ananda.

=

Kriti does not yet progress beyond rudiments; Dharma is only effective, for the rest with a great variability, in individuals; Samaja is only seen in indications of initial tendency.

=

Jun 18.

St. refers back to the raw materials, the destruction of the sollicitude, the *"soul-tejas."*

Script.

There is an apparent period of obstruction or even of relapse in the Vijnana & faith. As usual, it has an object connected with the next advance in the siddhi. That object is to get rid of the remnants of sollicitude & faltering faith and affirm the active tapas that will ripen the raw materials of the siddhi.

Lipi

1. *Suspensibility of the ideality*

It is found that in the state of passivity the suggestions of the brihat tend to arrange themselves in the terms of ritam, correcting automatically the false stresses with a greater power of self-existent truth than formerly; but activity of the tapas tends to reinforce false stress and deform the ritam. Therefore the old gulf between the passive udasina effectivity & the active joyous or *sahasya* seeking after effectivity, is not yet bridged.

Aishwarya etc are for the most part ineffective for the last two days.

The obstruction of Vritra has succeeded this morning in troubling the faith & the first chatusthaya.

The ritam in the state of passive recipiency is an unillumined or obscurely illumined ritam.

═

The Brahmadarshana varies between the Krishna & Narayan Bhava & the impersonal Brahman in which Sarva predominates & Ananta & Jnana are insufficient. It is only the Krishnadarshan that brings the Ananda.

═

The obscuration being effected, the full ananda of the senses is also affected with jugupsa.

Script.

These inroads in the siddhi will now be ejected & the damage done repaired. It is really the remnants of the egoistic faith that have been attacked & the other has been veiled in order that the attack might have effect. The suspensibility of the ideality is drawing to an end & with its removal, the principle of relapse will be removed from the emotional & nervous subjectivity.

=

The Affirmations are once more manifesting, but not in their entirety. They are pursued by a question that materialises in negation, partial or suspensive of the fullness of the affirmations. Especially, the affirmations of personal relation are still ineffective & without them the rest cannot keep their footing.

=

The full affirmation of the satyam brihat is no longer resisted, but the complete affirmation of the ritam is constantly attacked & broken when it seems to be on the point of perfect fulfilment. There is always an element of deviation, potential or actualised, or of potency of relapse which is made effectual, usually immediately after any instance of effective or perfect play of the ritam. It is always in the intelligence luminous or unillumined that the ritam acts.

=

Study has to be arranged with the same force & order that is almost accomplished in the writing. It has to be confined at present to Veda and philology. In both perfection & not rapidity must be the first consideration, but rapidity will come hand in hand with perfection.

=

Study of Veda.

June 19th

Samadhi showed a greater tendency of habitual stability in form & continuity of process than has hitherto been reached. Nevertheless the stability is not fundamental as yet, the pratistha, that is to say, is insufficiently firm & thus gives room for suspension & relapse.

Lipi.

(Chitra) 1. *glorious energy*—imprisoned & trying to emerge.
Akasha 2. *the result of the energy is still obstructed.*
" 3 *sunlit energy—the sunlight in the energy is instructive & enveloped in the theory of the intellect.*
4 *in the delight there is light, it is slight as yet in the tapas*
5. *31. 13* (daily repeated)

Script.

The sollicitude is now destroyed in its centre; in its application it has to be destroyed by substi[tu]tion of the free, joyous & unillumined Tapas proceeding direct from the Ishwara.

The raw material is being progressively turned into ripe & utilisable forms. This is evident in the knowledge in which the most apparently false suggestions are being reduced to terms of the Truth even in the difficult processes of the trikaldrishti. It is proceeding also, at a less advanced stage, in the tapas. It has begun in the rupa & samadhi.

Force of soul-tejas has to be substituted for the sense of want & the straining in the sollicitude. This process also is under way.

—

Study of Veda is beginning to take its proper form.

—

The Synthesis of Yoga commenced.

—

Aishwaryas fulfilled

1. Agreement about Irish National Volunteers & their growth
2. The formation of the French Ministry
3. The recent course of the Mexican War.
4 The action of Turkey in the Greek quarrel.
5. The undisturbed progress of the S. African solution.

Against—

1. The hitch in the Niagara Mediations.

—

Today the negations have been expelled, but they still surround the progress at a little distance.

Especially, the dasyabuddhi is greatly strengthened, & the Tapas. Physical alasya still persists & resists the pranic utthapana, but it is being constantly overborne. Mental utthapana is almost complete, ie the uninterrupted energy of the mind for action, pranic utthapana is only resisted by the *défaillances* of the body. The two are now moving towards a continuous variable energy; change of activity is used more often than rest as a means of relieving the strain on the unfit body. For some time sleep has been allowed in large quantities.

Lipi.

6. *The sleeping & suspended energies again in activity.* (chitra)
7 *something of fidelity to the ideality emerging, intellectuality losing its tejas of resistance to the ideality.*
8. *the exchange of intellectuality for ideality in the sea god* (Varuna).
9 *return of friends.*

═

Rupa in jagrad antardarshi is now showing stable groups including men, objects & animals together, crude, & with movement. But there is a deficiency of body & vividness. Shabda is trying to emerge into the jagrat.

═

Samadhi.

Strong & often brilliant activity of vision in swapnasamadhi & deepening of the solidity in the degree of stable continuity already achieved.

June 20th

St. Straining & anxiety must cease.

—

Script.

The entire fulfilment of the progress in motion since the 10th June is hampered by certain negations which cannot break down the progress but seek to limit & occasionally to suspend it. The *Nidah* are stronger than the Vritras, & this in itself is a significant indication of progress. Vritra, however, is still strong in the fourth & fifth chatusthaya[s] &, to a much less extent, in the sixth & seventh.

The intimations of the seventeenth are as yet being fulfilled only in the first & even that is subject to qualifications of the time-symbols then assumed by the mind.

—

The day has chiefly passed in karma.

Synthesis of Yoga takes its final form; the first Book of the Life Divine begun (the Vedantic Affirmations).

Lipi

1. *death of hope*
2 *sister energy* —to replace & already replacing hope, nishkama anandamaya tapas.

═

The touches of sollicitude from the external Nature now take the form of a passive doubt with a tendency to repining, more often than the sense of anxiety & effort.

═

Lipi

3. *The repining is in the intellectuality*
4. *energy of bliss* (to remove the repining).

—

Script.

There should be no struggle to do anything, know anything or effect anything, but only the readiness to be an active & blissful instrument in whatever is intended.

This does not mean that there is to be no passion & force in the action or that all is to be *saumya*, easy, pliant. On the contrary; for it is the action of Mahakali that is intended. That action is already pleasant in the impulse & joy of the sahitya, its isha & radhas—combined as the ratha, the chariot of the soul in its action. The same rudra energy will be extended everywhere; but it must result from the bhoga of the passive Prakriti enjoyed by the Ishwara.

It must be extended first to the vijnanasiddhi[,] to the thought, vak, script, lipi, sense-perception, power, vision,—afterwards to the body & the outward action. Not only is this to be done, but it is about to be done. It has already extended itself to the script & is preparing to extend itself to lipi & rupa & to the senses.

==

The change to the rudra ananda of Mahakali is already being effected, organically & organised-ly—it has extended itself to all experiences & activities, but is hampered by the sense of a discord & the discomfort of the discord. This discomfort can be well perceived as a form of ananda out of order & its source as the egoism of a standard erected by the individual mind and a demand that all should conform to it. The standard remains & the demand, but it must be the standard of God's tendency & the demand of God's tapas, so that the discord may also bring a joy of progressive fulfilment & of strenuousness in the progress, not the discomfort of a baffled struggle.

==

The use of error is to suggest or to maintain a truth of being which would otherwise be shut out by the limited precision of the truth of actuality. What we call truth is always an equivalence between a partial truth of fact & the perception in the human mind. If too rigidly insisted upon it is itself an error,—as if a tract of ground brilliantly lighted were to be taken for the whole earth & the vastnesses left in obscurity excluded as if they were non-existent. This rigidity is the ordinary method of truth-seekers. Necessary to the limited human mind, it yet prevents comprehensive vision. We deny or forego the infinities of Truth in order that we may securely grasp some of her fragments,—the broken bread of verity.

June 21st

The Ananda holds firm. The sortileges of June 10th 12th & 14th are fulfilled; & since safety of the gains is assured, whatever interruptions or cloudings there may be, the Ananda is a dhana which is in possession now once for all. It has only to be progressively intensified & cast more & more into the Mahakalibhava. It still keeps too much of the Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati bhava.

St. Sayana Bhur—ie the physical consciousness has now to be solarised (moulded into the ideality).

N.B. Before seeing, it was intimated to the thought-perception that today's sortilege would be a repetition & confirmation of those of the 13th. A glance was given at an old rejected MS. (Secret of Veda) with the above result which was first read Sight & Bhima. This was at once a prediction & an illustration of the thing predicted; for the perception came in the physical consciousness and was not first made luminous above in the Drishti.

The sortileges of the thirteenth are first to be fulfilled & then Sight & Rudrashakti are to be harmonised.

═

The body resists & attempts to keep its tamas, incited by the memory & habit of old reactions. It has to be given, when too insistent, a change of activity

═

Intervals of intense bodily passivity & inner calm still arrive, as this night, which belong to Maheshwari rather than to Mahakali-Mahasaraswati. They are used for the ever increasing fullness & force of the pratistha which is always the Maheshwari pratistha.

═

Great stability has been achieved in the rupa of swapnasamadhi & lipi there seems also to be growing [in] coherence, but these effectivities have not yet been generalised.

—

Annotated translation of Isha Up. corrected and copied.

June 22^{d}

There is a yet unconquered opposition to the vijnanamay fulfilment. The Ananda holds firm in spite of many trials.

St. *The action & intensity of the kamananda restored in all asanas—*

ie the kamananda has been sluggish & intermittent, it is now time for restoration of its activities.

The action is being restored, but the intensity is intermittent except in the seated position which does not help to disperse the nervous energies that concentrate in the self-expression of the kamananda. Smarana is, temporarily, again a condition for continuity.

=

The vijnana of knowledge progresses in the mass and through the mass the ritam is evolving, but when the mind concentrates on individual detail, the old disorder is apt to recur. This, however, is not invariable; for often in the individual detail there is correct order. But when the final result is forecast without a mental perception of the forces at work, there error in mind is more frequent than the correct reception of the truth from above. The latter occurs rarely; nor are the perceptions as a rule illumined, but belong to the physical consciousness. The sortilege of the 21st, Sayana Bhur is being fulfilled as the preparation for those of the 13th. The सुवृक्ति is going on in the physical consciousness which is being prepared as the lowest layer of the *barhis*.

In Tapas, the two difficulties are, on the one hand, to reject all willings that are not in harmony with the Divine Will & on the other to avoid mistaking the immediately dominant force for the eventual Divine Will.

Samadhi

The instances of prolonged action of rupa & stable status of rupa in swapnasamadhi are becoming more frequent, as well as coherence in dream, but as yet the insecurity & remoteness of the whole world of dream & vision are not removed.

=

Karma. Life Divine. Secret of Veda (improved & copied)

June 23d

Lipi

1. prophecy — has now to be made utilisable
2. brothers —
3. it is successfully arrested . . delight (in its increase but not abrogated or concealed)
4. eloquence

5. it is possible for it is everywhere successful (ie the turning of all things into delight,—in immediate answer to a half-doubt in the mind)
6 battle

The lipis doubly underlined refer to a later fulfilment which is now being prepared behind the outer actuality of things.

Script.

The governance of all thought & action by the Ishwara is becoming more & more general & apparent, but is still followed on separate converging lines and is not brought into an overtly common & harmonised action from the one centre. Prakriti in her new activity is still being prepared & organised. But the preparation is now rapidly drawing to a head & the relations of the diverse activities begin to be seen.

The main complaint is smallness, insufficiency, want of mass in the ritam. These are the things that have now to be remedied.

==

Vijnana

The ritam increases but always in the unillumined physical consciousness and always with an element of blindly striking consciousness that fails to hit the mark, or to get the right pitch & accent. [This][4] element in its activities is being steadily put into its right place, but still persists.

==

Reference to Veda for indicative Vak.

अमंदान् स्तोमान् प्र भरे मनीषा सिंधावधि क्षियतो भाव्यस्य
यो मे सहस्रानमिमीत सवानतूर्तो राजा श्रव इच्छमानः॥

Intimation that this Sutra which had long baffled the mind, would this time yield up its whole secret. Immediately fulfilled, with a constant play of the illumined ideality in its fourfold powers.

Work to be done.

A Society to be formed like the Theosophical Society which will support & popularise the Knowledge & the writings which express it.

---

[4] *MS* These

This is to be done by two means, the Will & Vyapti spreading the impulse to know & calling silently its supporters & the growth & manifestation of the Yogic powers attracting inquirers & convincing doubters.

=

Vijnana

The Knowledge after attaining a fair amount of Ritam in the Satyam Brihat, gave place to an attempt to establish the Aishwarya-Vashita-Ishita in a greater mastery, but here the Tapas is only one force among many, sometimes prevailing or partly prevailing, sometimes or partly failing & the Knowledge falls back to that level & reflects the struggle of forces & no longer the vijnanamaya knowledge of its eventualities. It becomes again the satyam brihat without the ritam, especially if failure reawakens the old struggle between egoistic faith & rajasic revolt of disappointment.

=

Utthapana

The utthapana (physical) has been renewed. So far all movements of the body in that direction have been a failure. Today, however, the medial asana of the legs was renewed & maintained for 15 minutes in each case with varying degrees of pranic mahima & laghima. Anima was intermittent, but on the whole defective, the cessation being due to the defect. In the right, the pressure was greater than in the left.

=

Karma

Recopying & correction of Secret of Veda Chapter I completed.

Jun 24th

St 1. We have to be content

2. स्विदित्यनर्थको वात्र चाक्षेपो वा भविष्यति –

That is effort is either inert & otiose at this stage of the Yoga or turns into Akshepa, that is grief, complaint or revolt.

Script.

These examples are being given to show beyond the least doubt that a great Intelligence is guiding the Yoga. The main feature of the moment in the Yoga is the attempt of sollicitude & effort to revive with their usual consequences of dissatisfaction, trouble, complaint & revolt. The first thing done therefore was to make the eye glance back & fall on the previous "significant words" recorded. "Straining & anxiety must cease" & "Raw Material", — the latter explains the difficulties of the process which has led to the shadow of dissatisfaction & sollicitude. The eye then glanced back at all the sortileges recorded & at once reinforced the corresponding activities & judged their state of progress at the present moment. Afterwards it glanced first at the paper Mahratta opposite where it got the first "significant word" & secondly, into the commentary in verse on the Isha Upanishad where it got the second. The agreement of these two entirely unconnected sources taken at random, seen in the light of previous "coincidences" shows that these are not coincidences, but the combinations of an Intelligence for which no method is too small to bring about the greatest ends or too great to be used for bringing about the smallest.

Thought

Despise not, O thinker, the things that seem to thee negligible or the thoughts that seem to thee only childish. Thou mayst miss by that neglect the little stone upon which rests all this mighty universe.

＝

Aishwarya

There are still three movements in the effectivity of Tapas

1. The Tapas is successfully resisted by strong powers of obstruction that are either in possession or take possession of the field of activity. The successes are then fragmentary & partial.

2. The Tapas acts resisted, but irresistible, in the power 60, sweeping away the resistance & realising an immediate success. This success may be either in one detail or in successive details but has not yet been generalised.

3. A mixed movement struggling towards general effectivity in which each act of tapas is satyam, but there is insufficient brihat and only a fragmentary ritam.

＝

Script.

The difficulties of the Vijnana ought not to discourage the Tapas. This is still the defect that the actuality of unsuccess brings unfaith not only in the immediate success but in the whole theory of the karma.

The unfaith in Yoga siddhi is only a shadow; the unfaith in karma is still a reality. It has a liberal & ample ground of justification, but also good reasons for self-distrust. If the Yoga siddhi is entirely fulfilled, so will [be] the karma. The question then is of time, of power & of good faith on the part of the Master of the Lila.

The doubt of good faith rests on the idea that this may be one of his deceptions by which he helps his purpose in the world, but deceives & breaks his instrument or satisfies his hopes only in a slight degree.

The doubt of power rests on the idea that the Master is not Krishna, but another who represents himself as Krishna or has taken advantage from the beginning of that belief in the mind, or that Krishna is only a god among gods & not the supreme Deity.

The doubt of time rests upon immediate disappointment & argues from that to eventual disappointment.

—

The first step is to set right the Tapas.

1. The Tapas, if applied with concentration, determines each series of movements in the sense of satyam brihat with a considerable but uncertain ritam.

2. This movement is baffled by an inhibition of the Will through partial knowledge which perceives a predominant possibility of unsuccess as a fate of unsuccess & help[s] the possibility to realise itself so that it seems justified as the fate.

3 This movement takes advantage of the uncertainty in the ritam, of the fact that knowledge is more correct when not coupled with action of Will on the result & of the weariness which comes on the physical self by expenditure of concentrated tapas.

It is necessary

1. That the satyam brihat should prevail also when there is automatic Aishwarya Vashita Ishita without Tapas.

2. That the idea of unsuccess should be recognised as a perception of strong or dominant possibility & removed from the central action which seeks the ritam of things in the Apas.

3 That Will & Knowledge should harmonise & coincide & the disparity between Chit of Knowledge & Chit of Tapas be resolved into a unity.

For this purpose two principles have to be observed.

1. The combination always of Will & Knowledge
2 The substitution of self acting for concentrated Tapas.

═

Asiddhi

Lipi battle repeated from yesterday justified. It is notable that this struggle always comes when there is in the consciousness a stress towards finality or rapid advance & is always to the advantage of the forces that obstruct.

—

Kamananda

It is suggested that the action & intensity of the kamananda is now established beyond recall in all asanas; but the continuity & freedom from necessity of smarana are not yet sufficiently established & are therefore [liable][5] to more serious interruption.

—

Lipi

1. *battle*
2 *egoistic faith* to be discharged of egoism & justified
3 *totality . . intelligence* —ie the subject of the battle
4 *fifteenth* —ie Anantam Brahma now inseparable from Sarvam.
5 *intensity of the delight* —a greater subjective intensity is already normal.

Kamananda

In essence the smarana is no longer indispensable, but is still utilised to stimulate the Ananda activities and shorten the periods of interruption, intervals of discontinuity.

Continuity therefore is the one siddhi in real defect.

---

[5] *MS* liability

Script.

1. The egoistic faith is already being justified; for it is the reflection of a higher tapas and ritam. The totality of the intelligence is being justified *in all the thoughts*, for they are being shown to be satyam brihat. The ritam alone is still reserved for imperfection.

2. The intensity of the delight will now be increased in the subjectivity, asserted in the physical ananda. The latter movement has already been recommenced.

3. It is true that the method still belongs to the old method of alternation between Night & Dawn, progression & apparent retrogression. The Nature is too much besieged as yet by the mental Mayavin to admit of the total exclusion of this inchoate & inferior vrijina movement.

4 The satyam has now been sufficiently established in the brihat. The ritam also has to cease to assert itself only in separate detail or small groups and must establish itself in the brihat. This movement also has been prepared, but it must be finally asserted & established.

5. The vijnana of Knowledge & Power is the crux. So long as it is not entirely justified, the perfect finality of Samata & Shakti in the adhar & its environment is not possible. For Error & Defect mean persistence of the vrana in the active Brahman & where there is a wound there will be suffering. The only other escape is into the shantam Brahma in Mind where activity ceases in a silent & impartial Delight that does not fulfil, but only escapes from the necessity of harmony. It is only in the ritam that the Shantam becomes the Active & Nivritti & Pravritti are perfectly reconciled.

6. Ananda is not yet sufficiently asserted in all the activities. The Mayavin of the Manomaya opposes & has hardened his heart against the Light. He has to be expelled, not fostered.

7. His opposition is to both the Swarajya & Samrajya, but the denial of the latter is his instrument. Aiswarya-Ishita is therefore the key to the perfection of the rest of the siddhi.

=

Samadhi.

Coherent & vivid swapna converted itself at times into vision

—only shadows of present association.

Shabda attempts to manifest itself in the jagrat.

==

Utthapana of arms, horizontal asan, for 15 minutes. Anima defective; strong pranic laghima.

June 25th

Lipi—

1 *clear buddhi*
2 *vestiges of the intellectuality*
3. *the intellectuality greatly extinguished.*
4 *egoistic faith is to be farther justified*

Aishwaryas fulfilled—

1 Greco-Turkish arrangement.
2. Progress of Home Rule & Irish N.V. [National Volunteers]
3 Delay of rupture, Mexico.

Script

The Intimations of the 17th were of the old type & are not being rapidly fulfilled—they expressed powerful tendencies, not actual eventualities. All of them must in the nature of things be executed, sooner or later, & therefore there was no value in the intimation, since the suggestion of rapidity has not been fulfilled. They are indications, rather than intimations and as indications had a full value, if by rapidly is understood rapidity of composition & not of completion.

Karma.

The first chapter of the Life Divine completed with great illumination in the thought & rapidity in its expression.

Idea of a publication "The Divine Victory" or the "Conquest of Immortality" ie the Hymns of Vamadeva translated into English in their psychological sense; suggested by the rendering of verses to be prefixed to the first Chapter of the Life Divine.

—

Ananda

The chandananda is now extending itself to thought perception

& vangmaya thought; it is stronger in the unwritten script.

—

Samadhi

The consecutive event in rupa (handling & turning the pages of a book) became much more stable & persistent in continuity than before, but was divided between jagrat & swapna & broken by one or two intervals of non-sight. The book was opened & the general nature of the contents perceived; one or two separate words even were read & retained (stores . . provided).

Materialised sukshma taste strong & stable on the physical tongue (bitter) for upward of a minute.

—

Vijnana.

Perceptive thought is now assuming the largeness of the ritam.

═

Utthapana —

The asana of the arms horizontal in the recumbent position. This asana, in which the siddhi came suddenly at Alipur after ten minutes of moderate struggle & extended to two hours of perfect & effortless laghima, was in Pondi. assailed (1) by a slight but ineffective unwillingness of the physical prana to persist in this attitude in spite of the absence of any physical obstacle. (2) by a slight but ineffective attack on the anima during the asan. (3) by a reaction after 3 hours of the asana manifesting in a subsequent tendency to stiffness in the shoulder muscles. Today it [continued][6] for 1 hour 9 minutes with occasional manifestations, none of them serious, of these difficulties.

Asana of right leg, medial, first 6 minutes, then 15 after a long interval (20 minutes); the left, 21 minutes. In the right laghima seemed to draw back & give the place to mahima which supported the utthapana. In the left laghima was agent & mahima supplementary. Defect of anima was intermittent in spite of great pressure on the right, until the close of the asana. Asana of left horizontal, first in position of body recumbent on the side (15 minutes) then on the back (5 minutes).

---

[6] *MS* contained

The cause of the relapse & long suspension of utthapana seems to be that the pranic siddhis were never really extended to the outermost shells of the physical prana. Their deficiencies were supplied by an exceptional force of Tapasya which afterwards retired, not being natural to the body.

═

Lipi

5. *Do not resist the intelligence*
6. *The bliss of God finite, yet infinite*
7 *getting right.*

Script.

The element of ritam in the thought perception is immensely increased in the ordinary movements, even those of the nature of trikaldrishti. All telepathy & trikaldrishti must now be dominated by the ritam.

That higher movement of ideality long presaged & prepared has yet to begin on a general scale. It demands for its success the entire passivity of the intellect.

Karma

The first instalment of Yogic Synthesis recommenced & rapidly completed. What was written before, is reserved for the second instalment.

Samadhi

Dream disorderly & confused. Rupa maintained, but chhayamaya. Stability frequent, not long continuity.

June 26th

Karma.

Translation of IV. 13. R.V. also 15 & 25

Doubt of kriti strong in the morning; Ananda & Ritam disputed, but not very forcibly. Intensity of subjective Ananda immediately restored. The whole being is now really subject to Ananda[,] even the ananda of asiddhi, there is only a part of the outer prana which forms a weak point by which the subjective asiddhi is able to affect & reappear in the system, & the nirananda of unfaith & asiddhi is its means of entry.

Jnanam Brahma is now adding itself to Sarva & Ananta as a constant manifestation in the consciousness. Ananda is behind.

Sat Brahman is always the base, but Ananta manifests normally in the Sat, Jnana now manifests less actively, but still normally in the Ananta. The Asat Brahma is behind & varies between Anandamay Asat in its purity, which is always anandamay, & the Negation of things in the mind & prana which is udasina or niranandamaya. The Asat in the body is Death.

═

Script.

The weak point in the Prana has to be made entirely strong; for that the unbroken stability of the Light is necessary.

Ritam increases, but is not yet in possession. Effective Tapas also increases in the mass, but is baffled in the details. At its best it controls, but does not possess the Akasha.

Lipi.

1. After the intellectuality, rapidity of the ideality in its entirety.

Lipi

This lipi manifested in the akasha in two parts showed a stability & a strength of material hitherto unprecedented in lipis of the first instance

Long lipis are yet of a shifting & unstable character, only single words & small phrases are yet capable of stability.

2. *it is to distinguish the ideality . . to forget the right of the ideality* (ie the habit of the intellectuality; it seeks to judge for itself[)].

3. *the tyranny of the Gods has to be destroyed.*

4 *they apologise . . paralogise.*

Script.

However hopeless the outlook may seem in the Kriti, yet it is sure that the work will be done, but the intelligent Powers give too large a place to the immediate process. This stage is the tyranny of the gods and must be overcome.

═

June 27th

St. तव प्रणीती तव शूर शर्मन्ना विवासंति कवयः सुयज्ञाः।

Lipi.

1. *isolated, digest equality.* (Samata).
2. *travel ideality*
3. *13.* repeated daily
4. *the perfection of the lipi first manifests itself*

Tapas—

A great change is now manifesting in the Vijnana of Power. There is a visibly growing tendency in the Prakriti, to aid, favour & accomplish the thoughts & will-movements & the previous tendency to contradict them at once is now more intermittent, more artificial & when it prevails, prevails with more difficulty. The old rule, however, still holds good in the body & in Kriti.

The tendency in the Mind to select & favour a particular thought or will as against others without knowing it to be the Truth or the divine Will is the chief subjective obstacle to the rapid progress of effectivity in the Vijnana.

Aishwarya

1. Prolongation of conference at Niagara
2. Events in Mexico, imperfectly
3. Success of J.C.B [Jagadish Chandra Bose] in Europe—still insufficient
4. Irish. N.V

In Dharma there is strong opposition.

Script.

It is necessary in the Kriti & in the body to substitute the brihat will for the alpa, and subordinate the pranic movement to the pure mental, so that the Prakriti may develop there the powers of 50 & 60. In the Dharma the same necessity enforces itself.

Karma

Life Divine—Chapter I recopied & corrected.

The obstacle to free & joyous Tapas & Prakasha is the disparity between the Tapas of aspiration & the effective Tapas. It resides therefore in a defective Prakasha of eventual actuality or a defective force of that Prakasha in its dealings with immediate actuality.

==

Strong revival of the sukshma gandha, but in isolated experiences.

==

June 28th

St. *ordinary psychological workings* — ie the process is to make the higher nature the ordinary nature, but the physical consciousness has to be progressively transformed to that end.

Script.

There is a need of increasing affirmation.

The Vijnana has only to be made more swift & spontaneous in the discriminative ritam. Instead of the perceptions being admitted & afterwards put in their relation, they must be in their right relation even in the act of entry — not a confused troop that arranges itself in the reception chamber, but an orderly band each entering with the right precedence & grouping. So much is still defective

The Tapas has only to increase in its hold on the executive agencies & bring all its workings to the degree of 50 & 60.

In the Rupa & Samadhi, there is a last obstruction to be overcome in order that all may expand irresistibly & rapidly.

—

The Affirmation of the Jnana Brahma is now sufficiently normal to provide a secure basis for the Ananda Brahman. Only it is the one Anandamaya in all who must be perceived constantly, not the Narayana imprisoned in the form. That must be only a subordinate movement in the One.

—

The fullness of the first four affirmations depends upon the second triad. That must now be made habitual to the consciousness and part of its "ordinary psychological workings". It is now being done.

═

{ Transfer the centre of the active consciousness from the mind to the supermind. The supermind is the seat of the superman.

—

{ See all forces as personalities in their action. That is Veda. See all personalities as the supreme Purusha, Krishna; that is Vedanta.

Samadhi

Strong manifestations of perfect rupa in the jagrat bahirdarshi, but as yet without stability.

Intense & stable lipi in words & small phrases

Intimations

1. Today Jnanam Brahma becomes permanently normal
2. Today Ananda Brahman commences normality
3 Lipi stabilises itself today in longer phrases.
4. Rupa takes today a permanent step forward.

═

Script.

The seven affirmations are now forming into their normal movement. Their deficiency is due to the lingering tendency of the consciousness towards formulation on the lower level of dividing mind.

—

Utthapana.

Medial asana of left leg, 20 minutes. Mahima defective, more than anima.

═

The Intimations

The Anandam Brahma seems to be confirmed as the normal experience and its contradiction has suddenly become the exception. Jnanam Brahma is perfectly established. Lipi has now the capacity for stabilisation in longer phrases of variable intensity & legibility. Rupa has acquired a firmer tendency towards stability & efflorescence & a beginning of greater stability, chiefly in perfect dense forms.

June 29 –

Sort. The supreme human aspiration lifting itself towards that which is at once the apparent contradiction and secret reality of our being.

(ie Krishna Kali).

Script.

All is realised that was promised yesterday. It is the definite beginning of the precise ideality, as was predicted yesterday in an unrecorded lipi. Today the movement will become much more powerful.

Lipi

1 *Authority of the lipi.* (increasing & to be made definitive)
2. *Yourself*
3. *13.* constantly repeated.

—

Samadhi

In the morning there was an enormous advance of coherence in a sort of imageless dream (conversation & bhava only), in lipi of swapna samadhi & in lipi of antardrishta jagrat. Rupa of swapna & antardrishta jagrat is still stationary.

Aishwarya

In the morning after a momentary ineffectivity there was, in a certain field, constant play of the 40, 50 & 60 power, but chiefly of the two former. 30 & 35 were rare, but still present in an active potentiality.

Trikaldrishti.

In the satyam brihat with a growing ritam, but the fullness seems to be awaiting the growth of the Tapas.

Faith.

Faith grows & is sometimes enthusiastic faith but still waits on the actuality in the body & in karma.

Intimations

1. Today the universal premakama with their subjective ananda in its intensity of self-content.

2. The veil finally removed from the constant presence of the Ishwara; consequent intense tertiary dasya & madhura. The latter will still be insufficiently brihat in its scope.

3. The rapidity of the ideality already realised will grow in force & certainty of its power.

Four other intimations are to be given.

═

Script—

The first intimation is already being fulfilled & the second prepared. The third has now to follow.

The intense perception of Krishna in all beings has begun but it is combated sometimes by the strong perception of the ego; in objects it is combated by the sanskara of the objective inconscience. Both these obstacles have to be rapidly removed.

═

Lipi.

4. *It is already established in the trikaldrishti.*

5. *3*—ie lipi & rupa to be perfect, the latter in the crude & dense.

6. *The full joyous sensibility to the knowledge of the divine personality.* (antard.)

7. *before the light the fulfilment of the tapas independent of the obstacle of time*

8. *the superiority of the perfect ideality to the intelligent ideality*

9. *it is the perfect business capacities that are about to be active.*

10 *besiege the faith*—immediately fulfilled

11 *the intellectuality still struggles to besiege the faith*

12 *disaster*

Script

The three intimations now are all being fulfilled but can still be denied and interrupted. That capacity in the lower prakriti must be rapidly removed.

Lipi grows continually in perfection & kaushalya is trying to manifest. There must be no relaxation of the rapidity of the movement.

Rupa is still overconscious of its difficulties.

═

Lipi

13. *death of the false tapas.*

14 *rupees before September*

15. *it is for the last time that the long struggle is to take place* (in the physical siddhi & parts of the karma).

═

Intimations—

4. Firm foundation of faith independent of immediate actuality.

5. Rupa to break down the difficulty that has so long prevented its perfect efflorescence.

6. Samadhi to effect the same advance.

7. Trikaldrishti & Aishwarya-Ishita to prepare their final possession of the Akasha.

═

Rupa & Samadhi are attempting a greater efflorescence. In Samadhi, rupa & action of eating food, intense acid taste breaking down the limitation which confined the action of the indriyas chiefly to sight, hearing & touch. The organisation of coherent lipi in swapna samadhi continues. The rest, while not positively advancing, is becoming more free & insistent in its action.

Rupa in jagrat antard. is also frequent & varied in crudeness, but instable & ill-defined in outline except at its best. Both in antar & bahirdarshi vision in the mental akasha is manifesting itself.

For some days the typical sounds (flute, bells, cricket ticking etc) have been loud, constant & uninterrupted for minutes together in the closed ear. Today they achieved the same manifestation to the open ear.

═

Asiddhi

The attack is now delivered on the body & on the faith through denial of the knowledge & power attained & their reduction to their now lowest possible terms. The faith remained firm; the body yielded, but not to any very marked degree.

Lipi

16 *disaster . . slight disaster in the activities of the subjectivity.* fulfilled.
17 *perfect physical delight.* to be now affirmed
18 *believe in the irresistibility of the tapas*
19 *prologue* 20 *profitable telepathy*
21. *faith in the potentiality is to change into faith in the actuality.*

═

Tapas

Effective vyapti is increasing to a great extent, but has large & puissant results mostly in those who are close in mind & person to the centre of the vyapti.

Trikaldrishti & aishwarya are more frequent in their right activity, but do not yet possess the akasha.

═

On the whole the intimations have been fulfilled, but the results attained are not yet perfect and the old habits of the consciousness can still by a struggle reassert themselves temporarily in a clouded mentality.

═

Tapas is attempting with a frequent success, but with more frequent failure to assert itself in the compulsion of the object towards the exact movement willed. Lipi 18 which was immediately justified by a succession of unexpected results was given in order to introduce this movement. Its success will progressively develop the fulfilment of Lipi 21.

June 30—

St. Brume . . Pondicherry

—

Script.

That which was organised yesterday has now to be continuously asserted & affirmed in the experience. The habit of subsidence in the evening & night & of partial suspension by other absorbing activities have to be deprived of their power of recurrence.

—

As yet there is no definite forward activity—only the persistence in manifestation, in spite of persistent assault, of the gains of yesterday.

═

Karma.

Final draft of Synthesis of Yoga begun.

Veda IV. 1 completed & IV. 2. partly translated.

═

Vijnana

There is as yet no certainty in the trikaldrishti except in unusual movements.

Lipi

1. *telephonics.*
2 *telescopy*
3 *flattery*
4. *fulfilment of the egoistic faith*

═

The one siddhi that seems to go on steadily is the perfection of the lipi. The rest progresses but with a hampered movement, flashes of affirmation in an exterior mass of denial. The effort is to throw back the movement into the old alternation of Dawn & Night.

July 1914

July 1st

St नि यच्छ तन्वं स त्वा ममत्तु सोम्यं

Script

The lines of development suggested in the *Vachansi* and in the affirmations have reached a stage when they are all in movement & in progressive & victorious movement, but still denied, by force, by those interested in their defeat, the Arya & Dasa enemies, but more now by the outdistanced Aryas than the Dasas. The month of June has closed on this note of imperfect success.

The renewal of the struggle between the Siddhi and the powers of limitation has assumed a new aspect; it is no longer, fundamentally, a question of the extent of the siddhi, still less of its entire denial. That is now recognised on all hands to be impossible. It is a question of the rapidity, of the continuance or cessation of the method of gradual development and of the habit of relapse & intermission by which the gradation was farther retarded. There may be devious hopes that the fullness of the physical siddhi can be sufficiently retarded to be practically denied or that by this retardation & other obstacles the necessary time may be denied to the karmasiddhi or even its fulfilment negatived by untoward events which will render it impossible; but these are failing powers of negation. Only in the last adverse tendency is there yet any serious strength for anything but retardation.

Therefore the Force is now being applied to the body. It has been proved that mental power can be applied to the modification of the lines of the figure or of particular parts of the body, to the hair etc; but the working has been slow, intermittent & except in one or two directions only partial in result. The features & the signs of age have defied the insistence of the Will. It has been proved also that secondary utthapana is possible in all parts of the body & that a certain amount of primary utthapana can be temporarily affirmed; but tertiary utthapana has been unable to emerge out of the pranic into the physical being & the other forms have been successfully attacked & thrown back into a state of weakness & arrested working. Arogya after reaching a certain point labours without making any definite general advance. At most there are signs of a slow, just perceptible progress.

Faith in this siddhi & energy of its fulfilment has to be restored to the body.

Finally, in the kriti especially & in dharma a more vigorous action has to be introduced which will dissipate the adverse movements & initiate a puissant tide of success. These are the results that have to be initiated in the first fortnight of July.

═

Tapas & samadhi continue to be active; but vijnana is now without illumination in most of its movements. The brihat is active rather than the satyam or ritam.

The siege of the siddhi by the Asiddhi continues.

Series of successful tapatya is now not infrequent, but the series does not yet extend beyond five or six successive movements.

There is no real relapse of siddhi, but there is suspension or rather intermittency of new results.

Trikaldrishti is active again & easy in its imperfect state of ritam when rigidly separated from Tapas.

Script—

Although the mental Prakriti has reasserted itself, the relapse must only be regarded as a temporary & partial eclipse. The Asiddhi itself is evidence of an advance in the siddhi.

═

Ananda.

Tivra is become more spontaneous with a more general strength.

Samadhi

Sukshmarasa has recurred in the swapna samadhi. There has been combination of action, sight, sound & touch, as well as of action, sight & taste.

There has also been vivid tivrananda in samadhi.

In other respects the advance is slow & labours against a strong obstruction.

==

July 2d

St. विश्वश्रुष्टिः सखीयते रयिरिव श्रवस्यते अदब्धो होता

Script.

This Vachas indicates anandamaya vijnana & irresistible success by undiscouraged offering of all the activities to God, sole Being & Master of all becomings

The movement now being imposed on the mind is to associate always Tapas & Prakasha. Every perception must be envisaged as a force applied in the mind, every force as a perception energised. In this way by rectification in ritam the unity of Chit & Tapas will be reestablished.

Brahman

The position now is that the fourfold Brahman in the type of Narayana is seen everywhere, but the perception of the Ananda being stronger in the perception of the One than in that of the Many, the Lilamaya Krishna is seen in the universe, but not always or at once in the individual.

Aishwarya—

1. Irish officers joining I.N.V. [Irish National Volunteers]
2 Movement towards the arrangement of funds.
3. Affairs in Mexico. Retreat of Villa & quarrel with Carranza.
4. Progress of events in China—eg subsidence of White Wolf, strength of central government, successful collection of the Provincial revenues.
5. Progress towards peace between Greece & Turkey.

Samadhi

The force of organised vision & experience has increased. Dream is always more firm, vivid & coherent, but still haunted by the confusions of present sanskara and personality.

Utthapana—

Of the arms, vertical asana; for five & a half minutes; strong defect of anima.

Of the arms, horizontal; for 30 minutes; strong laghima & involved mahima; anima defective chiefly in the shoulder-muscles. An-anima not effective to contradict or suspend utthapana.

Brahmadrishti

The Narayanabodha has given place to the general Krishnadrishti, but the latter is still deficient in closeness & intensity, except in individuals, and pervades rather than occupies the object.

July 3d

वायो शतं हरीणां युवस्व पोष्याणाम् उत वा ते सहस्रिणो रथ आ यातु पाजसा

O Vayu, energise thy hundred of illumined forces that ask for their increase, or let it be the movement even of thee in thy thousandfold fullness that comes to us in the impulse of a collected strength.

Krishna Drishti

Full Krishnadrishti is promised for today. At present all is Ananda Brahman in a general bright mentality but the Krishna Drishti is implied in it, not yet entirely possessed of it.

Asiddhi.

The force of the Asiddhi continues.

Utthapana—

Of the arms, vertical position, 30 minutes; an-anima present, but ineffective. Followed without break by horizontal position, 30 minutes; an-anima stronger than yesterday, but ineffective & not present at the end of the period. Laghima is exceedingly strong & the involved mahima increases despite fluctuations.

There is still a part of the physical shell which keeps the sense of the asiddhi.

In the afternoon utthapana of the arms, lowest asana, for 30 minutes. Laghima is extremely strong & but for the strain left behind in the shoulder & back muscles, the siddhi would in this part of the body be easily accomplished.

=

Ananda—

Electric, raudra & vishaya (ahaituka) promised for today & begun.

Subjective Ananda is once more affirmed.

Prema & kama are well established in their universality, but not always active.

The promise has been given, whenever the nirananda is suggested, to give the knowledge that counteracts it. If this is steadily done, the contradiction of Samata must necessarily disappear.

So far the promise is being observed, but the touches of the nirananda, though immediately disappeared, recur owing to the deficient faith in the kriti &, sometimes, in the physical siddhi.

=

Kriti

Kriti, if strongly resisted, yet disappoints the unfaith as well as the faith. Today sure promise, if not yet realisation, of a group of subscriptions to the review & Rs 100 in hand.

=

July 4th

St. *Introduction*

Utthapana

Of the right leg, horizontal asana, for 40 minutes. An-anima ineffective and, as in other asanas, decreases instead of increasing with the continuation of the position. This means that the element of tapasya is passing out of the secondary utthapana.

The external shell of the annakosha continues to feel the after-effects.

Krishna Drishti

It is now in possession of all forms, including the subtle, eg sounds, actions, but not yet ordinarily intense.

Ananda

In addition to tivra & kama, vaidyuta, vishaya & raudra are now well established. Kama is once more active in all asanas.

Samadhi

The brihat of the jagrat sukshmavishayas is in preparation.

Lipi.

1. *2* a vast movement of the trikaldrishti.
2. *playground of the telepathy.* the world is preparing to become this, overtly.
3. [*no notation*]

Intimations—

1. The health will now come under the control of the Tapas. Afterwards, the saundarya.
2. Intense Krishnadrishti will begin to prevail from today.
3. Finalities of the first two chatusthayas.

Script—

The physical siddhi is now prevailing in Ananda & Utthapana. Its extension into Arogya & Saundarya will complete this movement & remove all ground for unfaith.

There remains only the faith in kriti, which is intimately bound up with the faith in rapidity. There, there are the two important questions of equipment & result of Tapas. The solution will not be long delayed.

—

Krishnadrishti is now more intense & general, but not yet invariable in the form; it is possessed of all forms only when the centre of the buddhi is in direct relation with the Ananda Brahman.

July 5th

St. *Samadhi*

Ananda—

Ahaituka strong & universal, but not central.

Samata — Dasya

With the ahaituka ananda the first chatusthaya is perfect. The second still awaits the entire faith.

The first four intimations are now well prepared for final universality. Once the third is free from the defects of vijnanamaya suvrikti, they can be perfectly affirmed.

The next three have now begun to be prepared for their absolute assertion. The centre of the buddhi is still besieged & sometimes occupied by the mediary mind; this defect removed there will be no farther difficulty.

Lipi —

Lipi Kaushalya is now manifesting. Perfect stable lipis of jyotirmaya, chhayamaya, tejomaya, agnimaya & varnamaya aksharas (green, blue) manifest freely; only prakashamaya & dhumramaya are absent. The latter has been omitted from the rupa materials in the observation.

—

Script —

The first seven affirmations will today be completed. Also the finalities of the second chatusthaya, with the exception of faith in the kriti & saundarya.

—

A strong attack of asiddhi has failed to break the samata, but it has prevented the other finalities. Its assault is especially directed against the entirety of the principle of affirmation.

Karma —

1 Proof of Yogic progress in the brothers H & R.
2 Vyapti effective in Bengal in S. [Saurin]
3. Greco-Turkish peace.

Script

The seven affirmations have been now well-founded. That they are not always prominently active is immaterial. The foundation once well-made, the rest comes of itself.

As for the finalities of the second chatusthaya, they are in fact completed, with the one exception given. Only that exception prevents them from being steady & uninterrupted in their action.

═

July 6th

St *The seven affirmations*

Script.

To enforce the seven affirmations is the chief work for today. The second is to bring forward the vijnana chatusthaya to the same level as the samata & shakti chatusthayas.

The apparent contradiction & refusal of the ritam is a relapse into brihat & marks, no longer an insufficient preparation in the mind, but the continued power of irresponsible Mind to continue in the persistence of old sanskaras after the cause of them has been removed.

The Devatas must be more & more convinced of the inutility of their retardatory efforts.

═

Already the affirmations are being strengthened, but there is always an element which comes from the external Nature & seeks to stand between the Master of the Yoga & the Adhara, asserting a different statement of the universal Ego, seeking to replace the personal ahankara by another & more general ahankara. This has to be transformed, not eliminated. Elimination could be easily done and if this were the object, the perpetual insistence of the excentric ego would not be permitted. It persists & insists because, knowingly or unknowingly, it seeks transformation.

═

Vijnana.

The satyam is being restored in the brihat by force of right affirmation.

Tapas vacillates between a greater & a lesser, a more organised & a less organised efficacity.

Samadhi.

Lipi in swapnasamadhi gains always in coherence & meaning. Rupa has still the same difficulty in passing a limit once set and its progress is of the most gradual slowness.

Utthapana

Yesterday utthapana of the left leg, horizontal asana, recumbent on side, could not, because of an-anima endure for more than 15 minutes. Today the attack of an-anima was more violent, but laghima from the first developed great power & afterwards mahima overcame the pressure. Nevertheless in the first quarter-hour the position recumbent on side had to be changed for some seven minutes to recumbent on back in order to relieve the pain of the nerves. Eventually the asana continued for 45 minutes altogether in spite of frequent lesser repetitions of the attack. Kampana was pronounced.

Arogya

The general force of Arogya has increased, but the particular denials of it which have been so persistent, resist expulsion & even make inroads on the siddhi.

Jalavisrishti for the last two days has been easily limited to twice a day, once at 8 or 9 am & once in the afternoon. There is an effort today to persuade the body to postpone the second occasion till 9 or 10 pm, as at night it is suspended easily for 15 hours or even 16.

Script.

The seven affirmations are now in principle entirely regnant and are being more & more enforced in the active consciousness. It remains to bring forward the second part of the programme, the vijnana.

Ananda—

Great intensity of universal Anandabhoga through chidghana in the evening.

Arogya

Jalavisrishti twice at 7.30 am & 12 midnight.

July 7th

St उपो सु जातमप्तुरं गोभिर्भंगं परिष्कृतं।
इन्दुं देवा अयासिषुः॥

The Ananda having been affirmed & perfected for enjoyment by the illuminations of the vijnana must become the means of attaining to the final siddhi & be the working material of the divine powers.

Script.

The affirmation of vijnana is intermittent; it must be continuous and organised.

Arogya—

The attempt of the siddhi now is to reduce the evacuation without any reaction. Formerly it used to postpone for six, seven & up to 12 days any serious evacuation, but suffered at the end from reactions of consolidation & excessive rejection. Now the daily evacuation has been reaccepted, but is usually slight, with occasional ephemeral reactions. A step in advance is indicated.

Utthapana

Of the legs attempted, left medial position for five minutes, discontinued for an-anima & lack of mahima; subsequently (5 minutes afterwards) resumed, mahima improved, 15 minutes utthapana. Utthapana of both together recommenced.

=

Script—

The vijnana is being brought forward all along the line in the knowledge, but without the illumination & independence in the error-besieged brihat. Hence it appears as if there were no certain progress.

Lipis

1. *Ecstasy—Love—God*
2. *flimsy* (obstacles)
3 *sunlight.* (ritam jyotih).

Script.

The slackening in the speed of the progress takes the place of the old principle of relapse. No part of the progress is now denied, except to a slight degree in the physical siddhi, but there are slackenings, suspensions, attempts to force back. These are the last struggles of the old rhythm to survive. The suspensions, the attempts to force back must be got rid of definitely, but the alternate quickenings & slackenings of speed must continue to operate so long as the physical resistance is not abolished.

It is now evident that the Mahakali bhava has come to stay & that it is only the faith in the kriti and certain intensities, eg the tertiary dasya, that are really denied in the second chatusthaya. In the first the physical clouding of the prasada in the prana is the one defect & that proceeds from a defect in the second element of the shakti-chatusthaya.

These fluctuations in the second chatusthaya have to be rapidly eliminated. There is faith in the physical siddhi, an elementary faith even in the saundarya, although there are one or two lacunae. The faith in the kriti resolves itself in a defect of faith in the rapidity & completeness of the power-results & of the Kamasiddhi.

Utthapana fluctuates, but not seriously. It is assured. Arogya is resisted, but assured.

Rapidity of progress & generality of the luminous vijnana (sunlight) has now to be redeveloped on a broader foundation. The obstacles are much flimsier than they seem.

The two final affirmations are now being prepared in their initial steps.

Love . . ecstasy . . God is the formula of fulfilment of the second group of affirmations.

==

Anandam Brahma all-embracing in a continuous experience, —the fourfold Brahman complete in a strong, yet normalised realisation.

==

Tertiary dasya is being resumed on a larger scale, in its full complexity.

—

Tomorrow the full continuity—

July 8th

Samadhi.

Increasing coherence and purposefulness of lipi in the swapnasamadhi.

Lipi

1. *Expense of intensity attended by increase of the intensity.*

2. *Authorise intensity.*

3 *It is in the district of Sylhet that the intensity will first manifest.*

4. *The intensity of the delight & the emotional affectivity effectual of the delight.*

5 *Effectuality of the delight depends upon perfect liberty.*

6. *The responsibility for the effectuality of delight is transferred to the ideality.*

7. *It is delight that effects righteousness*

8 *Delight depends upon liberty, not constraint*

9. *Righteousness by constraint is a partial righteousness deflected from its ends.*

10 *Earth is delivered to delight*

11 *Finality.*

12 *It is egoism that obstructs delight*

13 *Desire is the badge of egoistic delight*

14 *It is the edge of egoistic delight that opens the soul to self-torture.*

15. *Self-torture is the sense of all pain.*

16 *All pain is the deflection of delight; suffering of delight is translated into suffering of self-torture.*

17. *It is the capacity of suffering that determines the capacity of delight.*

18 *It is the suggestibility of the body to the dualistic sensations that is to be abolished*

19. *It is the eternal fact of youth, the truth of delight, the joys of liberty that the eternal powers seek to effect.*

20. *It is the bodily instruments that are the obstacles.*

21. *It is the delight that shall deliver the physical instruments.*

Arogya

Jalavisrishti yesterday 10.45 am & 9.45 pm; this morning 9. am.

Purisha increased for the last two days as a result of the restriction in mutra.

The struggle of Arogya to impose itself on the body under conditions ordinarily producing physical disorders, continues to gain slow ground in spite of a resistance as powerful as the Confiners can now present.

V.V

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः।
निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद् ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः॥

Dasya

Tertiary dasya has been restored and is now generalised; only the shadow of the egoistic devatas falls on the mind & still tries to obscure the presence & constant control of the Master.

Tapas

Aishwarya, ishita, vashita, vyapti are now acting in exact fulfilments, but cannot ordinarily prevail because of the massed resistance in the swabhava.

Aishwarya—

1. The second reading of the Amending Bill in the House of Lords.
2. The Komagata Maru—& the fight to the finish.
3 [*no notation*]

Krishnadarshana

Strong sukshma-physical perception at meals of the universal bhokta, Bala Krishna, behind all taking the bhoga of the ego for himself without the knowledge of the ego—

In the consciousness of the Ananda Brahman it is once again the first & second intensities of the perception of the Lilamaya in persons as in objects.

—

Typical aishwarya

Materials—the house & shop at the distant corner, the door of the house in one street, the door of the shop in the other. A child of about four going round the corner from the house to the shop. Two bamboo mats at the corner of the pavement. Aishwarya for the child not to go to the shop, but turn aside to the mats.

The child first turned the corner, took two paces, then stopped dead under the influence of the aishwarya, uncertain for a time whether to go on or return. Then it drew back to the corner & stayed there fronting the shop. After a while one of the mats was blown on to the road by the wind, but this was not observed by the child, as its eyes were turned elsewhere. (Contributory circumstance created by pressure of Aishwarya on Prakriti). It finally turned the corner & went some way to the house then paused & turned again in the direction of the mats, but without observing them. It was seen that it would go into the house, not [to] the mats.

Sent vyapti to suggest to the mind the idea of the mats. The vyapti had effect; the child observed the mats & began to get the idea that they were not in the right place. After a long hesitation it went on towards the house in obedience to the prior impulse & then, overcome by fresh aishwarya, turned, went to the mats & brought them one by one to the door of the house.

This movement is typical of the Tapas working against the obstacles of a tamasically resistant physical Prakriti.

It was followed by a fresh instance (kite on roof taking after some resistance an unusual movement & walking from its place to the edge of the parapet) intended to demonstrate that these movements are no coincidences, but the effect of the siddhis.

This demonstration, useless to the reason which has been convinced by thousands of successful experiments, was meant for some obscure elements in the physical brain and has had the result of extending the normal faith over the whole field of the Yoga and part of the Kriti—

Faith.

Two questions now restrict the faith, 1st, whether the siddhi will extend so far as to form matter without any physical operation (saundarya in teeth etc), 2d whether the kriti will actually be fulfilled in the form & to the extent suggested to the mind. There is always the third question of rapidity.

Samadhi

Thought in samadhi in the form of ritam perceiving & interpreting the vijnanamaya sense of all forms of thought-suggestion or speech-suggestion.

Arogya—

Jv. [Jalavisrishti] yesterday at 4. pm, this morning at 5 am. Pressure increased.

═

Siddhi

Samata & Tertiary dasya maintained; but the faith & Mahakali bhava are sometimes overlaid.

Rupa

Strong perfect rupa in antardrishta & bahirdarshi but not sufficiently in the sthula akasha.

July 9th

St. *Les Dieux—*

Samadhi.

Dream is now repeatedly of the nature of Vision except in the vividness of its forms; but the old incoherences still haunt it in a minor degree.

All forms of swapnasamadhi active, but the stability is still of the initial secondary stage—only dream is coherent & continuous.

Script—

Nevertheless swapnasamadhi in spite of apparent obstruction and suspension advances steadily towards organised perfection. Rupa is now showing a tendency to overleap the denial so long opposed to it. Vijnana & Tapas are active, but insufficiently organised. The vijnana chatusthaya is therefore on its way to equality with the first two chatusthayas.

The over-assertions of the tapomaya devatas have continued to falsify the ritam, with the result that they are no longer believed.

The denials of the inert devatas are no more entitled to credence than their correlative opposites.

Ritam & ritam alone has to be asserted, not its false interpretations.

Samadhi

Coherent dream is attempting to change its forms into the forms of swapnasamadhi.

Asiddhi.

A strong wave of asiddhi is acting in the kriti. The Dharma shows some signs of moving forward, but only in particulars.

Arogya

Visrishti (jala) at 11 am & 11 pm as well as earlier in the morning. This breaks the twice a day rule.

July 10th

V.V. Les Dieux.

Script.

The struggle continues with the powers governing the unprogressive mentality. They are forms of the Gods, which seek to maintain their hold on the consciousness even when the divine Reality is passing out of them. Their tyranny has to be dissolved, before the siddhi can advance.

Lipi.

1. *The last revolt of the objectivity*
2. *belief in the affirmations.*
3 *intensity of the delight* 4 *Beauty*

Ananda

Kamananda is now much more persistent in its recurrence, though the persistency is most intense when seated, least when standing or walking. Absorption of the mind tends to cause its suspension.

Script

Today, a fresh advance begins, in vijnana, in sharira, in kriti. The first two chatusthayas are assured, except in the defect of faith.

The advance in the sharira & kriti will be at first less rapid than in the vijnana.

Today a marked improvement in the physical Ananda.

═

Vijnana

The ritam is reemerging in the satyam brihat, & is more powerful than before the eclipse of the sunlight, or rather its clouding.

Rupa is growing in strength, especially in the perception of forms in the Prana akasha. The other sukshma vishayas manifest rarely but with more intensity than formerly, except sparsha which is both intense & frequent, but limited in its forms, eg touch of water, fire, insects. In other forms it is yet remote or, if close, then subtle.

Tapas is still subject to the reinforced denial of the limiting devatas. It has always an effect, but seldom a complete success & sometimes is immediately overpowered by a contrary reaction.

═

Kriti

The physical obstacle in the body is once more opposed to the sahitya & although it can no longer suspend, it retards & slightly obscures its activity.

Tapas

The Tapas is once more beginning to act with power & effect, & this time it does not confuse the knowledge.

Script.

The conflict between the devatas & the Self has now taken its right form as a balance of force between the future godhead & the past, all taking place in the beginning of the Anandamaya & presided over by the Lilamaya Krishna.

The Bala Krishna will now emerge as the Master of the Yoga.

The difficulty that opposes this perfect development of the three affirmations will disappear like that which opposed the fullness of the first four.

==

Ananda.

Indriya Ananda (Sahaituka vishaya) is once again intense in all its parts, especially in the first developed, Taste. Hearing & Sight follow. If there is any defect it is in general touch, pranic, as affected by heat & cold or by keen touches of pain. But here also the jugupsa has diminished & titiksha is less necessary as the Ananda becomes more spontaneous.

Tivrananda is now sometimes both intense & continuous; all its touches have the character of intensity, but all have not yet attained to continuity in their recurrence.

Raudrananda is beginning to be easy & spontaneous, it has not yet much continuity in intensity, but that also is beginning.

Vishaya is yet a little obstructed, & vaidyuta.

==

Vijnana.

Trikaldrishti has returned to its old movement; the opposition is now to exactitude of the ritam & to the perception of things where there is no object & therefore telepathic prevision or postvision has no sure point d'appui & has to work in the vast.

This working in the Vast is now beginning to manifest itself, sometimes with the object for a departing point, sometimes without an object. But it is still pursued by telepathic errors.

==

Script.

Certainty & exactitude in a luminous ritam will henceforth develop & possess the knowledge, justifying the spirit of affirmation. But there is yet a residue of justifiable denial to be converted into right affirmation.

Tapas will also proceed to overcome its difficulties.

Rupa will effect stability in the jagrat & greater stability in swapna. The Trailokyadrishti will break its limits.

A rapid finality in the Vijnana is intended.

July 11th

Script.

The threefold affirmation will be perfectly confirmed today. In fact, it has been immediately confirmed, only it has to be delivered from the asmarana.

Samata & dasya are now secure; faith has to be similar[l]y secured. The great increase in the Tapas has to be changed into definite mastery & extended to the sharira & the kriti. With mastery assured, faith & shakti will be able to act instead of remaining hedged within limits. It would have been perfectly possible to proceed with a limited faith & hampered shakti, but that has not been the will of the Master.

Aishwarya.

1. Arrival of garden money (foreseen by telepathy)
2. Increase of appreciation of J.C.B. [Jagadish Chandra Bose]
3 Readiness of Huerta to resign
4 Slight amelioration in position of Gov^{t}

Otherwise adverse wave in Mexico & England continues.

Tapas.

In a continuous succession of tapatyas (vashita) all succeeded except some in which the object passed out of view before obeying the command. Those on stationary objects invariably succeeded, but with a resistance in almost all cases. The majority of tapatyas on moving objects now succeed. Therefore a difficult mastery has been founded.

It is notable that in some cases the object returned to its original station or intention after obedience. This is at once a proof of the power and a sign of limitation.

Exact obedience, or else almost exact, is now becoming common.

It is notable that the first impulse of the object or often the first movement of the object is to obey; but sooner or later resistance is applied which has varying degrees of persistence & effectuality. At present the persistence is common & strong.

Invariability of obedience, unresisting obedience & finality of obedience are the three wanting requisites. All depend on the removal of resistance, ie the mastery of the general Prakriti and the mastery of the subjectivity in all beings—

═

Script.

The Devatas are resisting once more the final elevation into the sunlight; but by this struggle they are confirming throughout the nature the ananda of battle and the right ananda of defeat as enjoyable in itself in the samata, but in the activity to be viewed & enjoyed in the light of a step towards victory. In reality the prakasha is there, but it is not yet evenly distributed & pervasive.

The equipment has begun; there will be enough for one year from this July onward for bare expenses. This step gained is only an initial step and the whole viewpoint will have to be changed before long. The means will be Brahminic, danagrahana, Vaisya, literary & commercial, & afterwards, Kshatriya. All these must be done on a large scale, but the Brahminic first. Of these things there is at present no apparent sign.

Samadhi

In swapnasamadhi clear but stationary rupas & scenes of great stability.

Abdul Baha, stable, repeatedly, the face only. "The time is coming" in Hindi.

In jagrat bahirdarshi the rupas are exceedingly vivid & have sometimes the first initial stability; only crude images have the longer stability. Reflected images are far more vivid & beautiful, whether of men or things, than their material counterparts.

Lipi kaushalya continues to manifest. Spontaneous stability is again difficult.

═

Script.

The progress in samadhi is gradual & step by step, not because it is difficult, but because of the immense mass of resistance opposed to it.

The attempts to prevent the triple affirmation are only temporarily successful as the price of great effort; the siddhi always reasserts itself.

The final double affirmation is visibly preparing behind the obstinate denial opposed to it.

═

Lipi.

1. *It is the egoistic faith that is to be dispelled.*

2 *It is the perfect light that is to dispel the egoistic faith in the gods in the intellectuality.*

3 *It is the intellectuality that is to accept delight of the ideality.*

═

Script

The egoistic faith now belongs to the devatas who oppose, not to the Jiva which accepts the entire mastery of Krishna. The shadow of their ego falls on the system, but even the system rejects it. That which was ego, is now only personality.

Ananda

Vaidyuta & vishaya are now developed though not to the intensity of the three other forms. Vaidyuta occurs with full spontaneity.

Tivra is developing a prolonged & acute intensity of the after effect of the sparsha which continues for several seconds even when the touch is removed.

Full intensity of the kama is now occurring with entire spontaneity.

Vishaya also has now attained full spontaneity.

Lipi.

4. *shortly faith*

5 *faith in the rapidity*

6 *entirety of the faith*

7. *faith in the entirety of the rapidity*

═

(four stages)

8 *joyful progression to the ideality* (in the external swabhava)

9 *in the intellectuality the delight.*

Script.

Faith in the Yoga is gaining on those powers that resisted it; faith in the rapidity is almost accomplished, but it is not entire.

Also, there is faith in the kriti & saundarya, but no faith yet in their rapidity. The struggle must first finish in the sense of the siddhi. At present it is only in the physical Ananda that the siddhi is entirely victorious & the faith also entire. In the Arogya faith in the rapidity is yet feeble & in the utthapana. In the saundarya, it does not exist, only the possibility of rapidity is seen.

Tonight, as indicated in the lipi, there will be a fresh advance in the siddhi. Vijnana will organise itself and prepare the organisation of the samadhi.

Ananda will now progress from day to day both in the subjectivity & in the body.

Lipi

10 *dasyata*
11. *subjectivity of the dasyata*
12. *dasyata objectivity is still to be realised.*

(That is the dasyabuddhi is almost perfect in its generality, but in the particular act it is not always intensely felt. Every tapatya must be felt as a dasatya).

Arogya

Jalavisrishti twice.

July 12th

V.V. सप्तरश्मिममनूनमग्निं पित्रोरुपस्थे।

Vijnana.

The organisation of Vijnana commenced last night and is proceeding rapidly. There is far from being perfect ritam, but a rapid arrangement & correction of all perceptions, reducing them to their right proportions & relations & in exquisitely minute telepathic perception. It is the final or determining perception that is still defective owing to the persistence of the hurried & overstressed nervous energies, which seize on some nervous will to fulfil & mistake it for the eventuality.

There is now a clear perception of the various levels of consciousness in the trailokya of Bhuh & their brihat consciousness; but not of the divine worlds.

Tapas increases in force, but is persistently obstructed in spite of an occasional freedom.

Script

The obscuration of the sunlight is the cause. Always there must be the will for the illumination of the lower consciousness. Otherwise the devatas will persist in trying to perfect the Avidya apart from the Vidya. They accept, as a lipi yesterday indicated, the light in the intellectuality, but wish to use it in the manner of the intellectuality. Their method of purification is to raise darkness & dissipate it; this can lead to no finality—

Lipi.

1. *dynasty*
2. *definitely against ideality* (certain forces, now separated from the Intelligences)
3. *13*

═

Script

The attack is on the central Ananda in the subjectivity. It is already passing.

The obscuration is helping the dasatya to manifest; even when the movement seems to be dictated by other forces in the Prakriti, it is really impelled by the Master. Even when it seems to be indirect, it is really direct. The apparent intervention of the Devatas, is really an association.

Asiddhi.

Violent momentary attack of nirananda & revolt in the physical Prana.

Ananda

The electric ananda is increasing in frequency & intensity.

It is suggested that certain customary tivras which had an undercurrent of discomfort, for the rest anandamaya will now be penetrated by the vishaya—

This is in fact being done, both in the armpits & even in the neck.

Vishaya is, in fact, growing stronger everywhere, but manifests more in connection with other anandas than separately, except in the sahaituka. This is indeed its natural tendency, since it is the sense-ananda preeminently.

All the physical anandas are now established in spontaneity, frequency & intensity.

═

Script.

The violence of the attack made today coupled with the barrenness of its results shows that in the subjective field the Asiddhi has no longer any power. It is about to be driven from the subjective-objective, ie the Vijnana where its remaining power to obstruct has only an illusory strength, & its sole real field now is the sharira & the kriti. Even there it lives only by abnormal exaggeration & persistence of its vestiges.

Today, this will be clearly seen in the vijnana; not that it will yet be removed, but that there will be a definite commencement of the removal.

The Sahitya has been resumed; it will be pursued now steadily by the ordering of the activities & the denial of the physical tamas; from tomorrow.

This promise will be maintained in spite of the attempts of the Asiddhi to falsify it. At the same time there will be days of intermission & repose.

═

The asiddhi in the shape of obstruction still holds, yet the organisation of the vijnana proceeds.

—

Arogya.

Jala 3 times, 7 am, 2 pm, 12.30 am; but the last time not indispensable

July 13th

V.V. *results.*

Samadhi

The thought in the swapna samadhi now entirely arranges itself along with the Vani; it is satyam ritam although not always vijnanamaya in the vak. Dream continues to be coherent, but remains dream & the present personality persists. Lipi continues to grow in largeness of coherence.

Script.

It is not yet clear to the mind how there has been a definite commencement of the removal indicated yesterday. Telepathy of thought is becoming more manifest & the vijnana of knowledge is organising itself, but there does not seem to be any new departure.

On the contrary there is a distinct tendency for the Intelligence on a higher level of its secondary stage (sanu) to predominate, illuminated by vijnana, but always referring downwards, for the Mahasaraswati bhava to revive & replace or modify the Mahakali bhava & for the faith in rapidity to be replaced by the faith in a slow & gradual process. The persistence of these tendencies would mean the triumph of the old over the new & of the lower over the higher.

At the same time the vijnana proceeds with its organisation in knowledge, the telepathy is ever more comprehensive, telepathy of thought more & more justifies itself in spite of errors of reception, the sense of the triloka in Bhu becomes more & more ordinary & dominant. Tapas is attempting to change from the half-free, half-nervous method to a purer form of power; in the process its effectivity seems to have decreased or sometimes to be almost suspended. Rupa is still in the same condition of slow, arrested labour to advance.

Krishnadrishti

This also has descended to the perception of the Lilamaya in the Jiva which is in the divine Lilamaya & reflects Him, but not, except in special perception, identical with him. The Master is once more a little remote & the Manomaya Purusha half veils the Vijnanamaya. There is continual advance & progress but on the old planes at a higher level & not on the new planes which seemed to have been permanently gained for the siddhi.

It is not precisely asiddhi that has conquered, but for the time being, a lower form of siddhi.

Ananda.

The electric & other anandas grow constantly in intensity.

Arogya.

Jala twice 10 am & 10 pm.

Saundarya

The Will has shown its strength in the alteration of the lines of the foot & the figure more than anywhere else; it has definitely created first the deep pronounced curve of the sole, 2$^{\text{dly}}$ a comparatively slight but distinct under curve where formerly it was flat with the soil, 3$^{\text{dly}}$ — the commencement of curve of the outer edges of the feet formerly non-existent. So also the waist has been compressed & a tolerable figure created. But all this has been done by a slow pressure lasting over some two or three years. It proves the possibility of a conscious action by the Will on the formed body in the same sense as in natural Evolution; but the power is too slow & insufficient.

Karma —

Sahitya resumed.

July 14th

The two sortileges of the 12 & 13th are yet unfulfilled. Therefore none is added today.

Aishwarya.

There is still the adverse movement in the kriti; there are results of past aishwaryas which oppose the action of the present.

1. Approach to peace in Mexico by resignation of Huerta.

Vijnana.

The gradual organisation of knowledge in the unillumined or half-illumined mentality continues.

There is now the clear vision of the living atoms & also of the smaller creatures in the prana akasha.

Kamananda has begun to recur in samadhi.

Perfect rupa manifests in antardarshi but in the chidakasha & not in the chittakasha.

The obstacle to stability of clear images persists in the Akasha.

==

Script—

The wall of the Restrainers is beginning to break down again. Nor is it, as before, the wall of Vala shutting out the light, still less the veil of Vritra preventing the activities.

Anima Agni is now manifesting in all the seven planes of consciousness of the physical being with a reference back to the mental plane.

Persist in the will for perfection; give no consent to an imperfect fullness.

==

Ananda.

The persistence of ahaituka tivra increased greatly today, but the vishaya had somewhat receded from its prolonged movement.

==

Vijnana.

Clear Rupa of all kinds becomes more & more frequent, but stability is unaccomplished.

—

Tapas, inhibited, showed some signs of recovery.

—

Karma—

Veda—I. 4 two translations & Commentary.
Notes for Review.
Veda VIII. Some hymns studied.

Arogya

Strong reaction; copious jala four times.

July 15th

उद् [घेदभि][7] श्रुतामघं वृषभं नर्यापसं। अस्तारमेषि सूर्य—

Script

Agni has all the seven rays & in this sense is not deficient, but he is not yet fully displayed. It is necessary that the Vijnana (Surya) should rise on the Mind which is now active & full in inspiration—

This is begun today. When completed, the "results" will also be complete.

The struggle now proceeding may be thus analysed.

1. The Restrainers seek in the Vijnana to negate entirely the effective Will, to prevent the Telepathy of thought from organising itself, to limit the Trikaldrishti to the passive reception of telepathic satyam.

2. Their aim is also to destroy the subjective Ananda of struggle & victory.

3. They wish to fix the siddhi in the gradual & mechanical process & prevent the divine Rapidity.

4 Their desire is to destroy entirely the active Faith.

In all these points they are, for the present, prevailing. Only the physical Ananda & the telepathic trikaldrishti are visibly & irresistibly advancing. The denial & apparent falsification of the truth of Script is part of their plan of operations.

The result is that the seven affirmations seem to be denied & equally the progress towards the ninth.

==

There need be no attempt to break up their success. It is that very success which will destroy them.

==

Lipi.

1. *It is the efficacy of the telepathy that is destroying their operations.* (Indra is *srutámagha.* He is also to be *naryápas* & so *astára.*)

2. *dasatya intentional.* (Success has been intentionally given to the Nidah in order that the dasatya may become more complete.

---

[7] *MS* घेदु

Now the system is ready to accept the most contrary impulses in both mind & body as the working of Krishna through the powers of the swabhava & the sense of being the living yantra is being rendered absolute. The Tapas will not by this movement be impaired. The passive & the active tapas will be managed until they are reconciled in the full Mahakali-Mahasaraswati bhava.[)]

==

Script—

The tapasic element of the external Ego is still sulky & dissatisfied,—but the centre of the being is once more restored to the right activity, of affirmation, brihat, Ananda Brahman, prakashamaya tapas. Prema, kama, dasyalipsa, atmasamarpana are there perfect, so are the Brahmin & Vaishya qualities, but because the Kshatriya is not active, therefore they also are restrained. Nothing is wanting but that perfect faith over which the battle is now raging between siddhi & asiddhi. That is the nodus of finality in the first two chatusthayas.

The Krishna drishti is really established, but there is a thin semi-transparent veil, the remnants of the old littleness, tucchyena abhwapihita, not now tad ekam, but sa ekah. The three affirmations have reemerged from the battle strengthened & intensified.

It is less Krishna than Kali who is now manifest in all beings & things, but that is as it should be. Otherwise, the Krishnadarshana itself would be incomplete.

—

Vijnana

Aishwarya & Vashita are once again active; the fierce pressure on the object will not be repeated; but the spontaneous effectivity once established, it will become *chanda* & not *saumya* in its action.

The decisive trikaldrishti is again being organised.

Karma—

Secret of the Veda. Veda VIII. Translation of Veda copied. Half translation of X. 129.

—

Script—

The rest of the siddhi is now a question of the greater or less rapidity & therefore of the greater or less work to be done.

That again is a question not of Time, but of Tapas,—tapaso mahina.

Half July is over, & the great tide of success is not yet, in appearance, initiated except in the subjectivity. But really it is already beginning in the subjective objectivity.

Ananda—

There is now more frequent intensity of the kamananda while walking. The tivra grows always in force, generality & duration. The other anandas are more intermittent.

Vijnana

The vangmaya thought is already organised, but it seems to wait for the organisation of the decisive trikaldrishti and distant telepathy.

Arogya

Jala 3 times. Pressure still heavy.

July 16th

[*Blank line in the manuscript*]

Script

The truth of yesterday's statement about the subjective objectivity is now becoming apparent. The organisation of telepathy at a distance, of rupa, of the higher effects of samadhi has begun.

=

Samadhi.

Continued tivra in swapnasamadhi.

Freer movement of rupa in antardrishta.

The continuity of moving & stability of fixed rupa in swapnasamadhi has suddenly increased in duration.

Rupa in bahirdarshi is attempting to form stability & clearness.

Vijnana.

Distant telepathy is active & is being continually justified.

Aishwarya & vashita, pure of effort, [are][8] now beginning to act effectively again, as well as ishita; the effectivity of the forceful tapas is still suspended.

---

[8] *MS* is *(the words "& vashita" were added after the first writing)*

The higher vijnana acts from time to time, but is not yet able to dispel the obscuration of the ideality by the intelligence.

Lipi—

1. *The little ideality is to be replaced by the ideality of the great.*
2. *totality all together* (of the vijnana)
3. *suffering in the body.*
4. *scholastic intellectuality* (to be replaced by intuition)

Ananda

Raudra is now being applied to intense & prolonged continuities of what would formerly have been pain.

Script.

Vishaya & Vaidyuta ananda must now be brought up to the full body & intensity of the three others. Frequency & even spontaneity is not sufficient without intensity.

Rupa has to be finally delivered & samadhi perfected.

The sukshmavishayas have to be normalised & perfected

These three movements will complete the totality of the vijnana.

═

Rupa is already showing an initial activity of perfect developed forms in the bahirdrishta. Its stabilities are becoming more various within the limits of the crude—

—

The vishayas are again beginning to act. Touch is developing the long withheld human sparsha. The voice is not yet sthula & even the sukshma voice has for two or three days been silent except in samadhi.

—

Jala

4 times in the first half of the day. Reaction also in Purisha—

Karma

Secret of Veda

July 17th

V.V.

अह्रितेन चिदर्वता जीरदानुः सिषासति।
प्रवाच्यमिन्द्र तत्तव वीर्याणि करिष्यतो भद्रा इन्द्रस्य रातयः।

Samadhi.

Continuity & stability of moving & fixed combined and increased. Free reading of sentences of lipi in a deeper samadhi. Dream incoherent.

Script.

Therefore the perfection of rupa and samadhi is being steadily pursued.

The general contradiction of the vijnana & faith this morning, is only the weariness of the old secondary intelligence which stood in the way of the luminous vijnana.

It is now yielding again progressively to the vijnana. There is no need to prepare the primary luminous intelligence; that is always perfect and ready.

The vijnana is steadily preparing its finalities. There is finality of the vangmaya, finality of the vani, finality of the jnana, finality of the two scripts. Finality of trikaldrishti & telepathy, of tapas, of rupa & samadhi is begun, but there is the question of rapidity, of process, of time, ie whether process & time are necessary or whether the involved & concentrated processes cannot now prevail in the subjective objectivity.

=

After the obscuration the triple Affirmation has reemerged thrice as powerful as it was before the obscuration.

It is true that the knowledge does not work steadily, but is constantly overpowered by the reemergence of the inferior mentality.

These are evolutions necessary for the last stage of the vijnana and necessary even in the interests of the rapidity.

Vijnana —

Today excellent script with R. [Richard] & Madame R.[9]

---

[9] *This may refer to one or more of the automatic writings reproduced in Part Five.*

Dense & developed stable rupa appeared at night, but none were perfect; perfect rupas are still unstable.

Script—

The totality of the vijnana therefore advances, but is not yet in possession of the lower system or the physical akasha.

Arogya

Jala 3 times.

Karma

The Secret of Veda, Commentary, copied and corrected.

July 18th

Script.

Although the siddhi is advancing, the obstruction of the *Nidah* is still insisted upon, & the actuality of non result made a reason for denying progress.

The centre of the resistance is in the Kriti; for the body is slowly beginning to respond to the Will. In the environment, the denial of Tapas is once more beginning to break down, but immediate siddhi, invariable siddhi, siddhi without resistance is denied.

In the Tapas, a difference is made in the result according to the material movement in the physical ether. This distinction must be abolished. The physical ether must cease to be a dense obstacle to the thought that is will. It must entirely & spontaneously fulfil it.

—

Vijnana—

Aishwarya-vashita are once more active, but as yet within the old limits & with a residue of the generally successful power of resistance which was formulated during the last few days.

The absence of ritam in the Power continues to disturb the ritam in the Knowledge. The Ananda of defeat is denied because it is not associated with the faith in ultimate victory. All these defects are reversions to old movements which mark the temporary success of the Asiddhi.

The battle is now to assert the necessity of Tapatya-siddhi even in the face of a strong adverse impulse & the power of regulating freely all movements of the object, free even from the necessity of the last impulse given by the Power itself.

Samadhi –

Movement towards organisation of *swapnasamadhi*. Rupas.

1. a girl with a Bengali book, title Kusumanjali in gold letters (jyotirmaya), the title clear & stable after waking

2. A Bengali with characteristic face & beard first expressing negation & then making namaskara.

==

Rupa

Stable dense rupa, imperfect, is trying to manifest in the daylight.

Script

The denial of finality in the samata of the physical mind, that is its continued response to touches forcibly imposed upon it from outside, is the constant triumph of the Asiddhi. It is evident how artificial, how little really penetrative are these touches, but they have no right to exist even in the semblance, & henceforth they will be steadily eliminated, by the elimination of the false tapas which is made their justification.

The real Tapas must continue & not yield to rajasik udasinata –

At present the Tapas is frequently successful even in continuous movements, but is not essentially more advanced than before the period of asiddhi.

The whole forces of the pure rational mind are striving their hardest to prevent the vijna[na]maya Assumption.

There must be a final desistence of the lower Tapas before there can be a desistence of the rational Mind.

==

Arogya

Jala 3 times.

==

Rupa –

The dense stable at night, but not so free as the night before.

==

Karma

Dharma effective on R & Madame R, but more in mentality & prana than for illumination.

Analysis of Upanishad begun.

=

Vijnana

Steady recovery of vijnanamaya activity in the sense of the seven affirmations.

—

Vishayas occasionally active; rasagandha now active sometimes, but rarely in samadhi.

July 19th

Script.

The total action of the Vijnana has now been realised in its first general effectualities; we may now cast an eye back on the period of partial Asiddhi.

The directing *Vachah* here were those of the 17th, 15th, 13th, 12th, 9th & 10th[,] 8th & 6th July.

The 17th indicated the breaking of the forces that tended to wear away the results by the luminous Intelligence without use of the vehement nervous Tapas, ahitena chid arvatá, & the manifestation of the Anandamaya Vijnanamaya Brahman in the activities of the creature, with the consequent felicitous delights of the luminous energies as they prepare their great & full activities. This is precisely & to the letter what has been clearly commenced yesterday and is now accomplished. This was the great result promised yesterday.

The 15th indicated the state of Indra of which the action prescribed on the 17th is the means. In the actual result the intelligence is full of the inspired action; but the revelatory is not yet entire. The strong effectivity of the light is now acting, but not yet manifest because it is arranging its method. It is getting rid of the violent nervous Tapas. Until that is done it cannot be *Astara*

The 13th indicated that the period of results was now approaching, the total effectivity of the divine Power. This is becoming clear to the discrimination, Daksha, & through Daksha to the intellect.

But its fullness is dependent on that full sevenfold activity of Agni in the Purusha & Prakriti indicated on the 12th. That is begun, not completed.

The obstacle is that the gods cannot reveal themselves (9th & 10th) because of the *Nidah* who take advantage of the lower forms of the gods to veil the higher forms.

Samata is the fundamental means by which the defects taken advantage of by the Censurers are to be removed. (8th).

The seven affirmations completed will be the sign of the perfect siddhi of the foundation, after which the divine action can manifest.

=

Samadhi –

Brihat & satyam in swapnasamadhi. Firm & frequent combination of speech, form & action. Taste repeated, also tivrananda. Long stability is not yet active.

There is a quickening in antardarshi & very perfect crude figures as well as the beginning of quadrupeds etc; but there is not yet freedom; nor is there stability of the dense & developed rupas.

Ananda

Frequency of spontaneous electric ananda and initial extension of the entirely spontaneous tivra.

Arogya –

Continued reaction. Tejas in both visrishtis. Jala four times.

=

July 20th

V. [Vachas] चर्षणीधृतं मघवानमुक्थ्यमिन्द्रं गिरो बृहतीर[भ्य]नूषत –

Script.

This movement has already begun, but on a small scale.

What is now being done is to convert finally the thoughts of the trikaldrishti into vijnana & remove the tapasic suggestions, putting them in their place & depriving their miscalculations of all credence.

The finality of the trikaldrishti will be founded today.

Afterwards the finalities of the rupa, samadhi, Tapas in their more perfect manifestations.

=

Brahmadarshan

The lowest power now possible is the Jnanam Brahma; but the normal vision is the second intensity of the Krishnadarshan. Jnanam with Ananda involved, Ananda without Krishna & the first intensity of the Krishnadarshana sometimes manifest, but are not static. The siddhi has rushed rapidly from the long-standing Sarvam & Sarvam Anantam through the Jnanam & leaped almost at once to the second intensity making the Ananda & the first intensity stepping stones lightly touched on only for a moment in the leaping. This is the concentrated method, with only a touch of the gradual left in it. The second intensity will now become the lowest power possible & the third intensity normal.

=

Vijnana.

Sukshmagandha is repeatedly manifesting itself but is generally sadhara & cast in the habitual moulds.

The gods Agni, Indra, Vayu are, since yesterday, manifesting constantly sometimes in their divine & sometimes in their manasic parts. Occasionally two or three of them form one deity. Surya, Usha, the four and Brihaspati seem about to manifest. All the rest are behind

Trikaldrishti of reference & pure trikaldrishti are active, but the latter is not luminous.

Tapas usually acts to some extent, sometimes altogether, but is more often finally ineffective.

Script

A rush of siddhi is now intended in Vijnana.

The asiddhi of the temperament (the Four) is being steadily reduced in its recurrent fullness & intensity. It is now not a denial, but a relaxation especially of the energy, less of the light, less still of the bhoga, (Aryama, Varuna, Bhaga). Love (Mitra) is not now denied, but is sometimes veiled or inactive. It is the tamas of blank passivity, not the positive tamas that now forms the asiddhi. The body recoils from the strain of the intensity, ie not the body itself, but its physical atmosphere.

=

Vijnana

Tapas is now acting more strongly & successfully, but against powerful resistance

There is now firm fixity in the finality of anandamaya vani & vijnanamaya thought of the inevitable word. The mere effectivity & adequacy have given place to an inspired inevitability with effectivity & adequacy as its prominent characteristics & illuminativeness as its atmosphere. This has been done by the concentrated method preparing the involved.

Vani is sometimes of the gods, sometimes of Krishna. There is external vani of others, but in all cases they are reduced to the terms of truth & Krishnahood. The gods are Krishna in his separate personalities.

=

Darshana

Now varies between an advanced second intensity & the third. The Jnanam Brahma, whenever it occurs, is immediately occupied by Krishna.

There is an immense extension of the satyam brihat by which all thoughts are seen as true & all forces & impulses as justified, useful & effective. At the same time things are seen not only in the terms of the physical universe, but in those of the nervous, mental & vijnanamaya & by implication in those of the three higher worlds.

All things are now sensed as Darshan by the indriyas & all sensations & thoughts as Krishna by the mind & the manasik buddhi. All events also, every thing is seen to be wisely & perfectly guided. It is the apocalypse in the triple world & especially in the triple heaven.

Sat, Chit & Ananda are separate in the material minds & because separate, their opposites are possible.

Every act is felt as a dasatya, or so perceived in self & others.

Script

The immediate rush of the siddhi has therefore taken place. But the earlier predictions are not, apparently, fulfilled. But these are preparing.

There is now a confused trikaldrishti representing the chaotic action of all the movements already realised including the referential & the pure. By this chaos dispelled, the luminous ritam will establish itself.

Asiddhi

Strong obstacles to Kriti. A general sense of the material hopelessness of the ideal. Siddhi in vijnana, physical ananda etc is felt to be certain & probable in saundarya but not certain. The faith in Kriti is still insistent on proof in the actuality.

—

Arogya—

Jala 3 times.

July 21st

V सं पृच्छसे समराणः शुभानैर्वोचेस्तन्नो हरिवो यत्ते अस्मे—

Script—

That is the active effective side of the Divine Mind must be made manifest in the mental activities. The pure subjective illumination is already there. Therefore now the subjective-objectivity must be perfected & the sharira & kriti lifted beyond doubt & reproach.

Lipi

1. *subjectivity accepted.*
2 *Teneriffe* (an often repeated lipi)
3 *Younghusband* (another)
4 *Reality of God's existence demonstrated*—
(the Brahman is already demonstrated & the gods. The omnipotent & omniscient God, not limited by laws, has yet to be practically proved).
5 *finality of the subjectivity in objectivity*

6 *God's ideality intense*
7. *College* – (a frequent lipi)

N.B. 2. 3. 7 seem to be lipis of practical trikaldrishti in the kriti.

Script

The ritam of the trikaldrishti was founded yesterday. Today it will be developed.

The second intensity of Krishnadarshana is already established fully as the normal perception; the third will now replace it.

The final normality of effective Tapas will today be established.

Krishnadarshana

The second intensity is now so powerful that the first & the Ananda Brahman which sometimes manifest cannot persist except by a deliberate holding back of the normal perception. Jnanam Brahma appears by glimpses & disappears into Anandamaya.

The third intensity is now manifesting more frequently, but with a power of impersonality & formlessness which makes the man appear as a mask of God.

The other gods – up to the present Surya, Varuna, Usha, Bhaga, Aryaman, Mitra, Aranyani are manifest in their forms & activities. They have now been followed rapidly by the others; Prithivi revealing herself as Aditi, Rudra manifest in the *chanda* form of all the gods etc. But these manifestations are not so close or so dominant as those of Indra, Agni & Vayu. It is the Vedic gods who so manifest. The others were known before. The gods of other systems also reveal themselves in a grand general unity & diversity with the Vedic & Puranic deities. All are manifestations of the one Vishnu who is Krishna & as Krishna, Rudra & Brahmá.

═

Script

This is the rapidly proceeding completion of the subjective siddhi which is now hampered only by the remnants of the old negations supported by the incompleteness of the subjective-objective siddhi.

Here the trikaldrishti & the effective Will are manifesting together in a still hampered progress.

In the subjective Time is now recognised as an instrument of God, not an obstacle to fulfilment or a determining factor. In the other it is still a determining factor & therefore an obstacle to practical omnipotence,—a fetter willingly worn by God in the mind, imposed on God in the prana & body.

Darshana

The third intensity is now established as the normal perception, with the personality. The impersonal form of it & the idea of the mask, which offered themselves as a necessary resting place for the siddhi, have been dispensed with in that character and now take their place among the past approximative perceptions which the exterior mentality after its fashion has a habit of emphasising with a temporary exclusiveness & therefore erecting as an obstacle to farther progress, thus increasing, if not creating, the despotism of Time.

The idea of the mask was due to an excessive separation of the form from the reality.

Vijnana.

Tapas is now showing a marked effectivity, for the resistance is less invariable & less effective, but it persists.

The Tapas shows a tendency to extend again to the utthapana and to the kriti. In the former the pranic denial which has caused the long interruption is still powerful. In the latter the obstruction has spent its best power.

Necessarily the ritam in tapas & knowledge will not be complete today, but it is already persistently powerful & will become still more puissant.

==

Script.

The struggle of the Asiddhi, which is once more attacking, is to get rid of, if possible, or at least deny for a time the perfect result of the sixth chatusthaya in its subjective parts. For that result if pursued means first the perfect knowledge of character, feeling & thought, secondly, a perfect mastery.

The struggle is vain; their best efforts are therefore transferred to the obstruction of the vijnana by insistence on the defects of the siddhi.

=

Darshana.

Self-manifestation of the Apsaras, & the Cherubim of the various spheres (Gundharvas, Venas) & the Seraphim (Angirasas & Bhrigus)

=

Vijnana

Telepathy is now becoming continually active & useful.

Rupa first of fish, then of cat, crude, in the Akasha; this is the triumph of the Will against the obstruction which has always fixed on the denial of the four-footed animal form except in the chitra, since the former rupasiddhi was destroyed or withdrawn. Both were sudden manifestations. The cat was followed by a squirrel, but this was not so clear, next by a horse.

In the morning in the antardarshi the sky of a luminous mental world with images of all kinds, gods etc, emerging momentarily out of a brilliant chaos of unformed figures. A farther sign that the earthy obstacle is about to give way.

Raudra in swapna samadhi

Script

The affirmation of the Ishwara means the affirmation of an omniscient & omnipotent Mind & Power. It includes, therefore, these three affirmations—

(1) The fulfilment of the Kriti involving the use of a divine power & knowledge divinely displayed in human affairs, is possible to the Master of the Yoga, Yogeshwara Hari.

(2) As he does nothing in vain & is Premamaya, the fulfilment is inevitable.

(3) The fulfilment involves the use of the involved process, because that alone expresses His freedom & mastery over Nature & that alone is equal to the accomplishment of the Work in one or even in two or three generations.

Therefore these supplementary or explanatory Affirmations have to be made. The nine are all now established, have swadha & are sure to fulfil themselves automatically by the law of their own nature. To deny them is the whole effort of the Powers of Limitation.

=

The worlds of the vijnana & ananda & those of sat & tapas below the Janaloka have to manifest themselves & their activities. The trailokya is already manifest though not in its fullness.

Leave now the vijnana to grow in power & concentrate on the sharira & the kriti, so that they too may come to the requisite swadha, especially in utthapana & saundarya, in dharma, kriti & kama.

=

Script.

The action of the dharma is evident; the action of the kama is only held back because the time & the circumstances are not ready, but the power is there in the subjectivity. In the kriti the power has still to be established, because it does not yet prevail definitely.

Arogya.

There are movements which seem to indicate a final siddhi in parts of the Arogya, but they are almost immediately contradicted by the Nidah.

Jala 3 times.

July 22$^{\underset{..}{d}}$

Repeated Vanis from the 6.7. purporting to indicate the Kriti.

Script.

What is now happening [is] that the Kriti & rapidity, its necessary condition, are being constantly affirmed by the Word & denied in the Fact.

In the Darshana even there is a struggle between the full affirmation in fact & the inferior affirmation supported by the Nidah who base upon the alleged unreadiness of the general Swabhava. The Anandamaya Purusha is the lowest affirmation having still a tendency to stability; the lower intensities tend always to [ ][10] pass into the third & highest, the Jnanam & Ananda Brahman into the Anandamaya Purusha.

The two affirmations which have now to be worked out perfectly are the development of the Ritam in the satyam brihat & the conquest of the obstruction of Time by the three supplementary Affirmations.

At present the Asiddhi possesses the field & strenuously denies their possibility.

=

The Asiddhi has once again shown itself a means of siddhi. It has corrected a false movement of the Tapas & the effective Aishwarya is once more in action.

=

Today the Ritam of the Trikaldrishti will farther develop, exiling more & more the exterior habit of false stress. Effective Tapas will advance but as yet slowly. Samadhi & rupa will also progress, but there will not yet be the rapid siddhi

=

An almost perfect ritam of both trikaldrishti & power is now repeatedly manifesting, with intervals or occasional admixture of a falsifying activity in the satyam brihat. Only the force of the light & power is saumya not chanda, manda not ashu.

The exterior nature is now progressively moulding itself to the perception of the Anandamaya Krishna & the triple affirmation & all the attempts of the Nidah to reverse the movement, only makes it more full & perfect. The Swarwatir Apah are pouring into it freely.

Today the Anandatattwa & the Anandamaya Shakti of the old jail-experience manifested in the visvadrishti.

Ananda

The raudra & electric anandas now come less frequently, but more spontaneously.

—

---

[10] *MS* the

Vijnana

Effective Tapas was constantly active, but is not yet dominant.

Ritam of the trikaldrishti also increases, but is not yet perfect, nor sure of itself.

There was some more activity of brilliant rupa in the antardrishta, but for the rest the samadhi is held back & subjected to the tamasic nidra. Dream also does not advance.

Arogya.

Continued reaction. Utthapana fails to reestablish itself.

Karma

The Synthesis of Yoga.

Strong opposition to Dharma in R [Richard].

July 23d

Script.

The opposition, apparently successful, covers a continual advance.

1. The tapasic trikaldrishti is beginning slowly to justify itself; it is no longer only the inert that is predominantly correct. It is only the egoistic tapas that fails.

2. The pressure of the Tapas is more continuous & more constantly effective. The resistance strong in appearance, is becoming more & more difficult

3. The telepathy is constantly justifying itself & veiled only by a slight film of error & uncertain placing.

4 The Ananda Atman is now firm in the place of the Jnana & the Krishnadarshan becomes continually more normal even in the external nature. If the identity of the Ananda Atman & Krishna is sometimes veiled, it is in order to admit of a more complex vision which is preparing.

5. This vision is now apparent. It is that of all the gods in man at one end & Krishna at the other.

6. The rupa, samadhi, the lokadrishti, vishaya continues to progress less definitely behind the mist of obstruction.

7 The physical siddhi prepares its strength always. So too the Karma.

==

Vijnana—

The progress of the siddhi is now taking place automatically, though with the will & the smarana as subordinate aids,—inevitably, though against a great resistance. In rupa & samadhi the progress is so much slower, that it is not marked, but its principle & method is the same; only the rapidity varies. It is this that is slowly being extended to sharira & [kriti][11] against a much more powerful resistance

Script.

There is as yet no apparent advance towards the effectual affirmation of the three supplementaries. It is their contradiction.

It is notable that the contradictions of the two first chatusthayas & the sixth are now only possible by a physical touch imposed with a tremendous force & slight effectivity. Even half of the fifth, Krishna-Kali is accomplished.

The obstacle offered by the mental forms of the gods & the remoteness of the Ishwara is a means for the full manifestation of the Lilamaya.

The full brilliant ritam jyotih is now sending down its massed rays to dispel the limitations imposed by the intellectual upon the divine mind. This is Surya—

==

Samadhi

In swapnasamadhi entire manifestation of vijnanamaya perceptive & vangmaya thought; it has only to be extended to the deepest layers of samadhi with sushupti of the mind and this also has been prepared.

Dense crude & developed crude as well as the preparations & first beginnings of dense & developed in the antardrishta. An attempt at free & profuse manifestation has had as yet only a crude & initial success for the crude forms & the preparations of the dense & developed. The latter in their perfection only appeared in the long established form of the reel of cotton.

---

[11] *MS* krita

In swapna samadhi, shabda, conversations etc are being organised.

Trikaldrishti is also beginning to enter into samadhi.

Although these movements are not yet developed, it is the beginning of the automatic rapidity in the whole vijnana.

Karma

The struggle between physical unwillingness (nir-utthapana) & the faculty of constant luminous work & activity is being resumed in the Sahitya.

Synthesis of Yoga.

July 24th

V. यच्चित्रमप्न उषसो वहन्तीजानाय शशमानाय भद्रं। तन्नो मित्रो वरुणो मामहंतामदितिः सिन्धुः पृथिवी उत द्यौः। — ie the rich & various activity which has only just begun to develop as the result of the samata & shakti chatusthayas & the Ananda of the Brahma chatusthaya. Varuna gives it greatness & expansion, Mitra intensity of love & delight, Earth & Heaven combine to formulate it, the cosmic consciousness & the universal ocean of substance supply that formulation with its field & materials.

Script.

The inconclusive result of the rupa extension has somewhat discouraged Prithivi, ie the inferior consciousness of the parthiva Akasha.

The activities of the luminous divine mind are now taking final possession of the thought & only need to take final possession of the trikaldrishti. The obstacle there is the sense of uncertainty born of deficiency. There is no other obstacle.

—

Samadhi

A greater firmness of continuity (rupa & action) in the swapnasamadhi, but not yet a greater continuity.

Script —

There is today an appearance of Asiddhi; the physical tamas weighs on the system without absolutely possessing it; for work is possible & easy in spite of the obstruction, but the physical brain does not take its proper share in it or the physical prana in its enjoyment. These are conditions & influences on the body which have to be extruded in order that the work may be well done & rapidly done.

Vijnana

Particular perception is now manifesting a great power of ritam which is of the nature of chit that is tapas, a perception that fulfils itself & is on the higher plane the cause of its fulfilment, Knowledge that is at the same time self-effective Will.

The prediction constantly made throughout the Yoga, which always seemed to be contradicted & turn into falsehood, that the tapasic perceptions & insistences, cause, as it seemed, of the greater part of error & failure, would eventually become true & justify themselves, is now being steadily & even rapidly fulfilled. Their anrita movements are being partly excluded, but much more corrected & justified & the ritam in them is revealing itself spontaneously & initially.

As a result the knowledge & tapas is ceasing to be a property of the dual mentality & is now plainly proceeding from a higher plane. The movements that are falsified come from a distance, horizontally.

Karma

Synthesis of Yoga — 2d chapter finished. Rewriting of Secret of Veda begun

July 25th

Opposition to the siddhi. Organisation of swapnasamadhi confused by restoration of chhayamaya, of the antardrishta & bahirdarshi by obstructions. Yesterday's siddhi of vijnana denied.

At the same time there was prophetic rupa in the samadhi confirmed this morning by the event.

—

Rupa—

1. Pale orange & subdued blue—indicating the state of those immediately under the influence of the dharma.
2. Red with a rim of blueblack cloud resolving into a blueblack hand holding a red sun which becomes more & more brilliant till it appears like a burning fruit in the hand. Red = karma. blueblack = passivity of the spirituality by udasinata or samata. The blueblack hand is that of Kali, the Shakti; the red sun—the accomplished karma.
3. The Hansa in a pale illumination (state of B. [Bijoy])

All in antardarshi

Lipi

1. daily intensity of the delight
2. telepathy.

3 twilight of the daityas

Script.

The prevalence of the lower intensities of the darshana is visibly working towards a more comprehensive organisation of the entire Krishnadarshana. The momentary prevalence of the Jnana Atman in the Ajnana form of the general Ego, has resulted in a perfect placing of the Ego & the greater strength of the Ananda Atman. With that there is a greater generality of the first intensity & a more powerful presentation of the third.

A strong telepathy also manifests, although the telepathy of thought is always obstructed & works in a lack of illumination.

These two movements are closely connected. It is the firm basing of the Jnanam Brahma which admits of a more & more complete telepathy.

The Anandatattwa is now very clear in its Powers behind all action & consciousness (in the Nríh & [Gnah]).[12] There is a hesitation to manifest equally clearly the Sat & the Tapas

==

Rupa

Animal forms (crude) now occur with a great richness in the

---

[12] *MS* Ganah

Antardarshi & are beginning in the bahirdarshi, but the instability of the perfect forms has seized with an exaggerated force on the crude.

═

Karma –

Life Divine. II commenced.

Ananda

Kamananda has again become active after some days of weak & intermitted action.

July 26th

Rupa

Rupa in the akasha (jagrat) is now capable of single figures, groups, scenes, landscapes with figures & objects, human beings & occasionally animals, but it is either confused & indistinct or clear but momentary in its distinctness.

Vijnana

The transformation of the tapasic [perceptions][13] is still the main movement; & the transformation of the tapasic impulses has begun. The suggestion is that the aishwarya must wait for the perfection of the tapasic perceptions, but this is not the Will of the Master.

Faith.

Enthusiastic faith (aveshamaya & anandamaya) in the guidance is independent of the mental Purusha, but he interferes with the faith in the details & therefore clouds the general faith.. This has to be mended.

Script

Faith in every smallest detail of the guidance must be not only a belief, but a living knowledge always active. Such dull returns of physical depression as are still possible are due to this defect. Also to the perception of the continued interference of the Time deities and consequent denial of entire rapidity.

---

[13] *MS* perfections

There is faith in the rapidity and an entire faith for the comparative rapidity of the three first chatusthayas & the sixth, but not in the entire rapidity, ie the rapidity in the fourth & fifth & the rapid rapidity in all. There is simply a fluctuating belief that this entire rapidity will come.

Vashita is now very powerful, but has still to use some pranic pressure. It has to be liberated from this necessity & is being liberated, but slowly or with the lesser rapidity. Once it is done, aishwarya & ishita must share the perfection.

═

The opposition in the body does not seem to lessen; & although it is now more slack, it persists in the Kriti

═

The chanda ananda is opposed. Without the chanda Ananda nothing must be done—It is being brought into the use of the Tapas (Aishwarya & Ishita) & will be established in all action of the Vijnana.

═

Karma—

Life Divine II

July 27th

Script

Await the impulse always. Care not for the result. The impulse is now towards the action of the Vijnanasiddhi. Accept that. When it changes, accept the change.

Today the rupa should take form.

There is a movement always, but not yet a conquering movement.

Lipi

1. *Telepathy—telepathy* —fulfilled
2. *battle* in the vijnanasiddhi—fulfilled

3 *3½* 4. *2½* (not yet approaching finality)

Script—

Samata now maintains itself with nothing worse than failings of self-confidence and movements of physical depression which cannot last. That chatusthaya then is accomplished.

The second needs only the most intense dasya and the faith in the entire rapidity to reach its highest expression in the subjectivity.

The third is the present field of progressive & automatic self-fulfilment.

The fourth is half in automatic progress, half in hampered & even concealed progress. This is the meaning of the lipi $3\frac{1}{2}$

The fifth is only in its stage of preparation.

The sixth is complete, but as yet denied its full intensity.

The seventh is complete, except in the siddhi. Shuddhi, mukti, bhukti are complete; only they have not reached their last terms.

The fullness of the vijnana is the key to the perfect & rapid siddhi, & there especially the unhampered action of the power.

=

Asiddhi

Strong force of asiddhi; refusal of light, cloud in brain, lassitude in the nervous powers of the body. Samata & dasatya etc endure. Krishnadarshana of the first intensity correcting strong jnanam Brahma which tries to cover the Ananda Brahma. The second & third intensity have more hold on the state of asiddhi than before. Tapas effective, but only, usually, after long resistance.

Lipi

4. *Tapas—*

followed by fresh & stronger activity of the chit-tapas; but this is not luminous. It is however, powerfully active & there is knowledge, though not jyotirmaya knowledge.

5. *Gita*—Commentary on the Gita to be written

Karma

Life Divine II—Veda. Nirukta & Hymns to the Ribhus, the latter commenced today, the former yesterday.

Lipi.

6. *Tapas*—ie it will continue, in answer to a doubt in the mind.

7. *telepathy. the telepathy of the trikaldrishti* This is working along with the tapas.

8. *2.* earlier in the day & now— fulfilled.
9 *13.* fulfilled.

Script

Therefore the authority of the lipi in these matters is perfect. It is only the tapasic attempt to exaggerate its sense that veils the perfection.

Only in the objective world & in the distant future its authority has still to be vindicated.

Rupa

Has begun to redevelop clear forms, but without stability.

July 28th

Script

All conditions imposed on the siddhi must be denied. The Tapas, however used, must be successful. It is true that the pranic force will be replaced by a higher movement, but not as a condition of siddhi. The Ishwarabhava must entirely develop.

The authority of the Vani & Trikaldrishti are increasing. They will soon be perfect.

The Tapas & Trikaldrishti are yet unharmonised, the fullness of the Tapas is awaited.

The obstinacy of the Bali element must now revive along with the growth of the Rakshasa. Equally, the lower forms, Pramatha, Pishacha, Gandharva, Yaksha, Charana, Pashu, must range themselves in their places & grow distinct yet one.

Darshana

Since yesterday afternoon the second intensity has taken possession in place of the first & is itself preparing to give way to the third. Where the Jnanam Brahman of the Dwaitabhava does not interfere, it is general & very strong.

Faith etc

There is now a present enthusiastic faith in the details of the guidance which at once meets the physical touches of Asamata and destroys them. The strong physical depression & obscuration is now being overpowered.

Vijnana

Trikaldrishti & Tapas acted with great perfection & continuity, but are now working again within the resistance, attacking & overpowering it, but not entirely.

Rupa is manifesting clear & temporarily stable images of the three types in their lower crude expression; the quadruped has manifested clear, perfect & stable for two moments in the developed crude. The general force of the rupa has also increased.

Ananda

Ananda is again active in all asanas. It can be interrupted, but not impaired. The reaction in Visrishti is lessening.

Kriti

Kriti is now becoming more effective. It is trying to come up to the standard of the general tapas. Karma of sahitya (Veda etc) is trying to arrange itself & take its place, but except for Veda, this is still subjective, not yet manifested & materialised —

—

Script —

Physical siddhi must be progressively insisted on. First, the Arogya. This will not be done without farther struggles; but the Siddhi must begin to prevail.

Kriti must also be steadily insisted on. In Sahitya, Dharma & the Review; also in equipment & the beginnings of Kriti. Kama will follow.

Today Rupa & Samadhi must develop towards the effective totality of the Vijnana, Ananda recover continuity in intensity overcoming Asmarana.

═

After meals.

Three realisations to be fixed in a few minutes & recorded —

1. A strong & anandamaya perception of all action & thought in beings as action of Prakriti obeying & expressing the Purusha, Ishwara.

2. Strong compulsion of dasatya in my own action.

3. Third intensity of Anandamaya Ishwara first in the Avidya part of all, then in the whole.

=

Rupa

The rupa in *antardrishta* is now permanently capable of manifesting all forms. An initial movement towards stability of clearness & completeness in the Brihat began today.

Shabda is once more becoming active & sentences out of conversations past, present or future are heard in the waking state. The words are not always clearly separated & the shabda is sthula of sukshma or sukshma of sthula, not full sthula.

Conversations occur in swapnasamadhi, but except sometimes the last sentence or part of it are lost to the waking memory.

In bahirdarshi, there is as yet no clear advance beyond the morning, only a general tendency of advance & greater stability in all forms.

Ananda.

The kamananda is now again becoming continuous in its intensity and often without smarana. But it can still be withheld by force from outside.

Samadhi

Great vividness, activity and an elementary organisation of rupa in swapnasamadhi.

Karma

Life Divine II

July 29th

Darshana

All is now in the third intensity, usually, except the ego, and, as a result of ego, sometimes the jnana consciousness which is still in the first & second intensities or goes back to the mere jnana Brahman.

Utthapana

Physical energy, not yet perfect, has returned to the body & supports the impulse of sustained intensity in work.

Script

Today to finish Life Divine II & commence completion of Secret of Veda.

Samadhi

The state of partial organisation continues.

Karma

Life Divine completed (II)
Analysis of I.U. [Isha Upanishad] – half finished.
Secret of Veda commenced (final copy) –

Script –

The day has been devoted chiefly to work. It has been promised that the rapidity shall be transferred or rather extended first to the completion of the first two chatusthayas & secondly to the vijnana –

July 30th

V. यो रोहितौ वाजिनौ वाजिनीवान्
त्रिभिः शतैः सचमानावदिष्ट।
यूने समस्मै क्षितयो नमंतां
श्रुतरथाय मरुतो दुवोया॥

The three hundreds of the mind, prana & body, the two powers of Tapas. It is the Balaka Krishna who manifests in them in the car of the Inspiration; all the nervous thought-powers are to submit to him & do him service.

Darshana

From yesterday the third intensity is firmly established, but the human personality is still in front, the divine behind & sometimes veiled by the human.

Faith

The swashakti is now manifest as a term of the Shakti of the Ishwara & enthusiastic faith in it is established, subject to its entering into oneness with that which it represents.

Samata

There is ananda in asamata, duhkham & ahasyam. Hasyam has now to be eternised so that even this anandamaya asamata may disappear into a variation of positive Ananda.

Vijnana

Power is today puissantly manifest; only the mind is not single-minded in its application, but the playground of a complex activity of willings which are not all personal to the Adhara. Hence the element of ineffectivity. This arises from an insufficiency of knowledge. If the whole will of the Ishwara is seen in the Chit Tapas, there will then be invariably effective Will.

Trikaldrishti must know God's event & its time, place & process. Tapas will fulfil what trikaldrishti has seen. All, however, will not be foreseen, though all will be known.

The difficult[y] is now the organisation of the Vijnana,—for all the faculties do not act together. Telepathy, trikaldrishti, jnana, power, Samadhi must cooperate & not give place to each other or conflict with each other.

Nor must karma when it is being done, monopolise as yesterday the vijnana, so that the rest of the siddhi seems to be arrested.

Trikaldrishti.

Declaration of War known & the news foreseen for today, also the possibility—no more—of localisation.

Script.

Hasyam is fixed in the sense of the Ishwara's Lila. The physical touches have to be transformed into joy of the Lila.

Rapidity has now to work out in the vijnana & establish itself in the kriti & sharira.

Samadhi

Swapnasamadhi greatly increased in force & vividness; continuity of action is now well founded on a base of stability. The state of jagrat in swapna does not cause the vision to vanish. Lipi is attempting to compass brihat in the swapna, but the first result is the old incoherent combination.

In antardrishti there is obstruction, also in bahirdarshi.

Karma

Analysis of I.U (for Sept) completed —
Life Divine corrected.

July 31st

Vijnana —

The Power continues to act & the telepathy, but the decisive trikaldrishti & Power in exact detail are deficient.

Darshana

Intensest third intensity except in the birds which were afterwards included in a minor force of the third intensity. Along with this manifestation full harmony of the suddha, chidghana, prema & kamanandas in the subjectivity.

Vijnana —

In the rupa, vishayas, samadhi, physical ananda there is a slow, but solid advance. Rapidity has not yet firm hold of the vijnanachatusthaya —

Asiddhi

Strong attack of asiddhi, but wholly ineffective except in the external touch, unenduring, & the obscuration or obstruction at one or two points only.

Saundarya

There are some indications, but more indications than accomplishments except in the restored thickness of the upper covering of hair. The regrowth of the hair all over the scalp has not yet become a dominant tendency & is still subject to doubt.

Script

There is now a full affirmation of the Vijnana as a steadily advancing & entirely inevitable siddhi, but there is not the entire rapidity.

In the body the sharira[siddhi] in all its members is now recognised by the *Nidah* to be inevitable, but its subjection to the gradual process is asserted & the extension of rapidity to it prevented.

The inevitability of the karma is not yet apparent; only the sahitya is being organised & the idea of organisation is at work in the dharma, but not yet in kriti & kama.

—

Rupa.

In jagrat, both antardarshi & bahirdarshi, dense crude & crude dense (stable) are well-established; the developed crude & dense & crude or dense developed also in the antardarshi, but these are not so firm or pronounced. Developed developed & dense developed have also occurred in the antardarshi. None of these forms are rich in matter or strong in substance, [but][14] some are exceedingly clear & perfect in form. The best forms are not yet stable.

Script

The subjective is assured & in all but its final touches accomplished. The subjective-objective is formulated and progresses inevitably. The objective still awaits strong formulation & the inevitable pace of progress.

August for the objective.
September for the Karma.
Both are preparing, neither prepared.

---

[14] *MS* both

August 1914.

August 1st

Script

The work done in July is still incomplete, since even the samata & faith are capable of temporary and partial obscuration, although no longer of serious disturbance or actual eclipse. Hasya has to be strengthened and faith in sharira & kriti made imperturbable, so as to end this persistent imperfection.

Rapidity & complete organisation have to be brought into the vijnana.

Sharira has to be brought to the level of Vijnana.

Kriti has to be made effective.

=

The obstruction to the power has been restored and although when force is put out, it breaks down in almost every case, yet the resistance is obstinate, occasionally vehement, &, when the force is not put out, usually successful. The spontaneous effectivity of the Chit Tapas has been suspended. All this, however, is an appearance & not a reality.

It is the effort of the Dwayavins to divide the being into two forces of effectivity & ineffectivity & of the Limiters to identify the ineffectivity with the clairvoyant knowledge. It has been proved that this is only telepathic trikaldrishti & shows at most which force will prevail, if no other is applied.

Ananda of struggle & defeat has been suspended & the activity of the affirmations. Therefore August begins with successful Asiddhi. This occurs always & shows that the struggle still continues. As usual it is the intention of the opposing forces [ ][15] to show that the statement of the completion of the subjectivity is a falsehood. But all that has been said is, It is assured & all but the final touches accomplished. It has not been said that the results cannot be clouded or suspended.

---

[15] *MS* is

There is still an excessive affirmation of result cast on the mind by the Tapasic powers of the intelligence.

Vijnana is not active in its own light, but only the mind in the borrowed & often deflected light of vijnana. It is therefore the worst asiddhi possible at this stage. An outer shell has been placed over the siddhi, through which however it is still entirely visible.

=

Reject the conditions of struggle imposed by the Dwayavins who are now replacing the Nidah as they replaced the Vritras & Atris. A little of the lower activities has been taken up by them, to be afterwards dropped.

=

It has been shown that the personal Power can prevail over the opposition & in its development must certainly become dominant. But it is the impersonal Power that has to prevail by taking possession of the hostile forces. It is for this reason that the gradual process is so prolonged & that even now the hampering of the full rapidity is permitted.

=

The Karma of Sahitya is being maintained, but too much in one groove. As soon as the October work is finished, a freer movement must be allowed, including Veda (Vamadeva), Poetry, Philology and a prose volume on Yoga. Essays on the Gita will also be begun.

—

There is no advance, only the struggle which shows continually that they cannot eventually prevail, but can obstruct & limit, to a certain extent cloud, to a less extent devour. But the last is an appearance rather than a fact. The clouding is also obstruction. Limitation is obstruction of new movement, clouding the obstruction of old for a time, devouring the actual impairing of what has been acquired. In this sense the clouding is a fact, but it is done by the Nidah, not the Vritras.

August 2d

Script

The immediate struggle is almost over & the natural march of the siddhi is being resumed, a march not unhampered but gaining strength & richness from every opposition. The Ananda & Tapas have once more to be puissantly united & applied in their union to every activity.

The affirmations are once more being affirmed.

There is nothing as yet definite in the nature of an advance beyond the point already reached.

=

Instructions

Regularise the work of the Review, Sahitya and study of the Veda & philology

Commence the regular working of the Dharma.

Perceive & arrange the course of the Kriti.

=

These instructions, except the first, seem now impossible of fulfilment, but the Shakti must turn steadily towards their fulfilment.

From tomorrow the regularisation of the first element.

=

The variations between the vijnana & the unillumined mind continue. Ishita is frequently active.

—

Kriti Veda VI. 29 . . 38. (previously 39 . . 4)[16]—Secret of Veda II finished.

August 3d

The Nidah attempt to prevent the application of the true trikaldrishti by the old method of misused telepathy.

Today there will be a definite beginning of the end of this resistance.

=

---

[16] *Space was left for one digit after the 4.—Ed.*

As yet there is no definite advance, only beginnings which may turn into something definite.

Kriti is successful only in details. Arogya is still successfully resisted.

Vijnana.

There is an action of the decisive trikaldrishti, but it is not yet either exactness in time (except roughly & occasionally) or certainty in the use.

Effectivity of aishwarya is being constantly suspended & resumed.

There is a check in the progress of samadhi.

Karma

Veda VI 19 . . 21

Aug 4th

Script.

The Sahitya is being steadily pursued but has not yet gathered sufficient force & rapidity.

═

The decisive, untelepathic trikaldrishti is now finally active & will not again be suspended; only its relations with the telepathic have to be reduced to the terms of the ritam.

—

Karma—Veda VI. 22 . . 26.

Aug. 5th

Script.

The Lipi 40 refers to the state of the Tapas effectivity which is now normal in this degree, ie effective but with resistance, slow success, often apparent unsuccess (being fulfilled afterwards or when the Tapas is not active or the attention elsewhere) or successful in wrong time, *patra* & circumstance. The higher degrees of the siddhi are held back or manifest only in detail.

The next step is to raise it to 50°.

═

For the kriti all preconceived notions must be renounced; only the Sahitya is sure in its details.

Vedanta
  1. The Life Divine (I.U [Isha Upanishad])
  2. The Mind & its Master. (K.U [Kena Upanishad])
  3. The Kingdom of Heaven. (T.U [Taittiriya Upanishad])
  4 Heredity & Evolution. (A.U [Aitareya Upanishad])
  5 The Realm of the Idea. (Vijnana)
  6. The Play of God (Ananda)
  7 The Triple Stair. (M.U [Mandukya Upanishad]).
These seven & two more
  8. The Twelve Upanishads.
  9. Vedanta & its Children.
In Veda—
  1 The Secret of the Veda.
  2. The Vedic Path of Truth.
  3 The Gods of the Veda.
  4 The Psychology of the Veda.
  5 Vedic Terminology
  6 The Origins of Aryan Speech.
  7. The Rigveda (translated)
  8. Vedic Legends.
  9 The Aryan Religions.
In Poetry.
  1. The Trilogy
  2. Ilion
  3. The Descent of Ahana & other Poems.

This is the programme, a vast one but realisable, like that of the Yoga.

Karma
  Veda VI 27–28. 9–18. Translation X. 129.

Aug 6th
  ता शं च योश्च रुद्रस्य वश्मि—

Script.

The progress is once more gradual, but there is progress. In order to justify themselves, the powers of Mahasaraswati are labouring to evolve more consciently & largely.

The struggle to carry forward Tapas to 50° has begun. There is now a mixed action of the two degrees 40° & 50°

40° when the result is brought about imperfectly or perfectly after a strong, obstinate but not dominant resistance.

50° when the result is brought about exactly after a brief & ineffectual resistance.

60° when the result is brought about instantaneously in spite of a slight internal resistance, but with all the resisting power behind in posse.

80° when the result is brought about instantaneously without resistance in spite of all the conditions of resistance being there

100° when the conditions of resistance are changed immediately into conditions of fulfilment.

The last three are powers of the Chit-Tapas, the others of divided Chit & Tapas.

Rupa-Samadhi has again to be carried forward.

—

Karma

Veda VI. 2–3. Work for the Review.

Samadhi

Renewal of activity in the samadhi.

Aug 7th

The force of Asiddhi has now endured for a full week. Its power is still in limitation by the division into favourable & hostile forces. It is most active in kriti & in sharira.

Samata has stood the test, but not the faith in the rapidity or the faith in the kriti. These are entirely eclipsed.

Karma

Translation of Paroles Eternelles—L'Impensable Divin. Le

Devenir Divin. Dieu en Tout.. Translation of Le Pourquoi des Mondes Chapter II commenced. Veda Select Hymns 3 commenced.

==

Script —

The body resists the impulse of indefatigable work which the Prana accepts & the Mind Powers support. As yet this struggle must continue. It is sure to end in success, but rapidity is not yet assured.

The power & thought are again working & overbearing the opposition.

Consequently, the faith also is reviving, but not yet in the kriti, nor entirely in the rapidity.

The decisive trikaldrishti is gaining in strength & frequency.

The communication of an exterior "vani" "England declares war" has proved accurate in time & in circumstance.

The indications of telepathy only go wrong when the false ideas of others are received as truths of fact. The adhar has no ideas of its own in these matters. The impression that it has, is a remnant of the old illusion.

No personal effort must be made to push forward the siddhi. That gives a handle to the Dwayavins.

It will be found that without effort everything arranges itself. The fight is only over the rapidity & over the method, but that battle must be fought out by the forces in the Prakriti.

The forward march will again begin —

==

Darshana

The third intensity is now constant, but not invariable as the perception is frequently pushed back to the lower intensities. But it is only in particular cases. The attempt at a general lowering always fail[s], although it is aided by the strong perception of ego in the consciousness of persons & of indeterminate sat in things.

==

Aug 8th

उद्धृषा रुक्ष ओषधीषु नूनोत्।

ie the fiercer (chanda) energy in the physical Ananda.

Script.

The remnants of physical habit of asamata are to be entirely removed by transformation into dasya—

Today, Translation & Vedic Hymn.

Growth of Vijnana

Ananda—

═

The dasyabuddhi & samata are now being strengthened & universalised both in the subjective & objective. For the latter to be absolute, it is necessary that there should be the utmost power of titiksha. Here the rapid concentrated & not the gradual method will be used, except in the titiksha of intense pain from external sparsha.

Both Vijnana and Ananda are already advancing.

═

The Karma of Sahitya must now be entirely regularised. Here also the rapid concentrated method will be used.

═

Afternoon.

There is now fixed and strong *dasatya* as well as *dasyabuddhi.* The faith in the Ishwara is once more firm; but the faith in the rapidity and in the kriti is as yet without food of sustenance.

In the thought the process of conversion of the non-luminous into the luminous continues.

In the *ananda* there is the process of conversion of subjective and objective discomfort into values of delight.

In the trikaldrishti the ritam continually increases and if not yet *brihat* in the active knowledge, is *brihat* in the passive and tends towards *mahimá* in the active.

The power increases in the mass of its force but is resisted in detail. In the end it more often prevails than fails. And it is now acquiring exactitude of result.

From tomorrow recovery of power in sharira and in kriti.

═

Karma.

Veda [I.] 165–6 — with Notes

Le Pourquoi des Mondes

Aug 9th

तन्नु वोचाम रभसाय जन्मने पूर्वं महित्वं वृषभस्य केतवे—

That is the old lost power with the new Light & Ananda.

—

Script—

The progress of the Vijnana & Power will be found inevitably rapid. The opposition now will be in kriti & sharira.

The rapid growth of the hair, although not yet prevailing in lowest stratum, is a second sign of rapid effectivity in saundarya. The first was the figure. The three that are effective, must be perfected—& the force extended to the features where chiefly the resistance is concentrated.

Utthapana will presently be resumed, the secondary,—the secondary is the key of the primary & tertiary.

The sharira has finally to be embraced in its entirety.

The vijnana is justifying itself always & the effective vyapti; the tapasic suggestions are now being converted into truths & the force of will is no longer a serious disturbing factor in the knowledge. It is active as a potential source of error, but the element of error is being constantly reduced.

There is a momentary resuscitation of the force of opposition in the vijnana & power, but until the opposition in the third chatusthaya is eliminated, such appearances are to be expected.

Karma

Ved [I.] 166–167 Notes.

Chapter II. L. P des M. [Le Pourquoi des Mondes] completed. also L'Essence Unique & Au Commencement in E.P. [Les Paroles Eternelles]

═

Vijnana—

Attempt to push forward Rupa. Not as yet successful, although the vision is slightly strengthened.

—

Temporary obscuration of third intensity of Darshana. Mental vision is now more frequent.

═

Aug 10th

Script.

The advance is evident, but it is not yet dominant in Rupa-Samadhi or in Arogya.

Kamananda is now perfectly fixed in recurrence & in frequent continuity. It has intensity as well & is independent of asana, although to some extent influenced by old habit of asana. It is becoming independent of smarana, but that is not so apparent. It is more independent than it seems. The contrary notion is due to a false experiential logic in the mind, which lays too much stress on the defect and on a certain attempt of the exterior smarana to rush upon the ananda & claim it as its effect by a rapid self-association. Entire continuity is delayed by old memories in the body which help in keeping up the idea of inability of dharana and the habit of discontinuance.

The other physical anandas are more subject to these old memories and habits & too dependent on smarana. The one strong exception is the tivra, but only in certain parts of the body.

Telepathy of sensation, feeling, state of mind, vague thought, especially those connected with action, are now extremely strong and frequent. Even when veiled for a time they reassert themselves. Pure thought & precise thought are also received, but here there is a much greater difficulty for the discernment, & they usually come as ideas in the mind rather than as perceptions of another mind. Clear telepathy is still much dependent on sanyama & not so spontaneous as general telepathy.

Karma.
Philology. An family (also an)
Veda [I.] 168 Notes (elaborate)
VI. 1. 3–9.

Script

The scholastic is now begun in earnest, with order & the working of the intuitive perception & the intuitive reason. Nothing, except physical interference, can now oppose its steady completion. It is also working rapidly.

The poetical faculty remains to be remanifested. That will be done afterwards, though not too long afterwards.

Aug 11th

Script.

The force of Aiswarya in Kriti is evident in the action, but successfully opposed in the result

By the successful materialisation of further opposition, the apparent struggle has been brought back into the Vijnana. It must again be expelled.

The opposition works by preventing illumination; it must be expelled by insisting on illumination.

This opposition will disappear presently. It has no force of reality, but only an artificial & external pressure.

Although the movement towards the final exclusion of the physical touches of asamata has been temporarily defeated, it will gather greater force from its check.

The suspension of the full activity of lipi, is also due to the opposition, but it also prepares the spontaneous uninterrupted activity independent of smarana

=

The normal action of the Siddhi has recommenced.

=

Karma—Veda VI. 50 . . 59—

=

Aug 12.

Telepathy justified in the German entrance into Liège. Aishwarya & Vyapti by this movement & by the French advance into Alsace..

Nevertheless the Kriti cannot be said to be much advanced.

=

Vijnana.

There is again the activity of the trikaldrishti; when it acts, it is no longer fallible, as before. But it does not always act, or not always with full light and energy.

=

Aishwarya is sometimes effective with the Chit-Tapas of the second intensity, sometimes effective by time, sometimes ineffective.

Nevertheless, it is becoming more & more powerful & pervasive after every check and even the Kriti in some of its sides, appears no longer quite impossible from the point of view of the rational intellect.

The Samaja seems impossible; and rapidity in the sharira denied, throwing a doubt on its completeness.

=

Activity of the siddhi throughout the day. Nothing final, except in details.

Karma—Veda V. 61.
VI 60–61.

Aug 13.—

Today there will be finalities.

What is being done, is the reduction of perceptions to their right value, the removal of over & understress. This is essential for the ritam. The trikaldrishti is already infallible, provided the telepathy does not disturb its valuations in the mind, mistaking forces for eventualities. All is satyam, all is not yet ritam.

This reduction will today be complete. Not that there will not be temporary disturbances.

At the same time there will be a rapid advance of the Aishwarya-vashita-ishita. This is already being prepared. Its present sign is the greater obstinacy and at the same time the greater weakness of the opposition. Its later sign will be the diminution to vanishing point of the factor of Time indicating the failure of the resistance. Its latest will be the disappearance of the deflections of circumstances.

At first limited in range the effectivity will be finally universalised.

Some advance will be made in Rupa-Samadhi

=

One finality yesterday was the irresistible reduction of all touches subjective or objective of discomfort or pain into terms of ananda. It is now only at the first touch that the subjective can present themselves as pain or discomfort; they are immediately afterwards converted into Ananda. The policy of conversion replaces the old method of exclusion, & is infinitely more effective.

═

Once more the Light & Ananda must dispel the twilight & the grey tint of the pale white serenity — nirananda shanti.

═

The record of lipi etc must be resumed.

═

Lipi

1. Tapas
2 Limit of the delight is about to be destroyed.
3 Sylhet
4 Mülhausen French advantage.
limit of the French } advance
German }

═

Utthapana

Of arms medial position, standing; strong defect of anima. Laghima & mahima strong. 16 minutes.

Ananda

Raudrananda. All dull pain even long continued is now Ananda. Also all acute pain & acute discomfort not long continued, even those proper to disease. It is the continued acuteness beyond a certain degree that still needs to be converted.

Vijnana

The whole action of the triloka is now perceived habitually, and no longer only the nervous & physical worlds, in their activities, except that the activity of the highest heaven is still a little obscure; because that of the second reveals itself more in relation to the third, than in relation to the super-conscient realms.

For the ritam it is necessary that the Maharloka should also reveal itself.

═

The reduction of perceptions to their right values proceeds . . In its type & general application the change is now fixed & final, but it sometimes fails in its particular application.

═

The force of effective Tapas is now very general. The extreme weakness of the opposition becomes more & more evident, but it has still a reserve of force which supports its obstinacy & which it is constantly expending in order to maintain itself.

═

In the swapna samadhi the firmness has increased in the continuity of action seen, but the continuity itself is rare. Momentary figures & scenes are still the rule. In jagrat the struggle continues without a definite victory on either side. Stable perfect rupa manifested twice, but in a distant akasha. The obstruction still reduces most stable forms to a blur or keeps perfect or clear forms to the state of instability varying from one to two or three moments.

═

Trikaldrishti.

German advance on Mülhausen & recoil of French—

Karma—V 1 notes . . 2–3. 5–6 read
VI. 62.
Selected Hymns. III

Aug 14.

Samadhi

Long stability but of pale rupa, chhayamaya.
Better lipi in swapna samadhi.

Script.

Today more finalities.

1. Samata by farther & swifter conversion to Ananda.
2 Krishnadarshana.
3 Activity of lipi.
4 Vijnana in all parts.

═

Lipi —

1. rupa telepathy telepathic trikaldrishti.
2. Saraswati in the Samadhi.
3 intense telepathy.

Script —

Obviously in the Samata the tendency to conversion is fixed. Only it must be swift, instantaneous and puissant in its intensity.

The Saraswati bhava must now subordinate its predominance. It forms the mould only, not the contents.

=

Aishwarya of the 50 degrees is now more frequently & easily active, & is no longer hampered by the telepathic trikaldrishti in its activity, nor always in its effect.

Krishnadarshana is no longer hampered by the perception of ego which is now seen merely as a formation in the universal personality.

=

Karma Ved — V. 4 . . 7. 30. 46 . . 63.

=

Utthapana

Arms, walking, medial, 30 minutes.

Script —

The Krishnadarshana is now fixed, but not at its highest intensity.

Everything is once more active in the swapna-samadhi, including symbolic rupa useful to the karma. Only the stability, continuity & coherency have to be perfected.

The rupa in jagrat is still imprisoned in the old grooves of the adri.

=

Today shows a distinct advance in the normality of trikaldrishti; but as yet the obstruction to the direct luminousness of the thought perceptions is maintained and the powers of jnana that are ready await the removal of this obstruction for their full activity.

=

Aug 15th

Script.

Life has been preparing all this time. Today it begins with the publication of the Review and the continued stream of subscribers.

However limited at present the success and the effectivity of the Tapas, it has been proved beyond doubt effective and is becoming regularly effective; always as a force among others, sometimes, in varying degrees, as the effective force. So much has been gained[,] no more.

The organisation of the vijnana is now possible, because there is not only the abundance, the vaja, not only the satyam & brihat—although both of these are capable of improvement,—but also the basis of faith & samata. Not yet faith in the kriti or the sharira to the extent needed, but faith in the powers that are at work as real powers & the aim as their real aim.

Whether that aim can be worked out by the evolution of the full power needed, has now to be seen. That is the work of 1914–15.

It is not necessary now to record every fluctuation of the siddhi,—only the definite results.

═

Organise vijnana.
Develop arogya, utthapana, saundarya.
Perfect ananda.
Become master in the karma, samrat as well as swarat.

═

Finalities for today in
  Kalibhava
  Organisation of Vijnana.
  Faith.
  Krishna—(relation)

═

Karma—Veda V. 64–72.

Aug 16th

The 15th passed in a state of void and of passive receptivity.

The suggestion of the complete Kalibhava is now fixed; ie the form of the egoistic consciousness with a name attached to it is repelled whenever it throws its shadow on the central consciousness, & there is instead the conception of the ego as an ansha of Prakriti or a vibhuti serving as an instrument and slave of the Ishwara or Para Purusha.

Organisation of Vijnana is now definitely proceeding by the combination of Vani, vangmaya thought and perceptive jnana. All mental perceptions are being made luminous & the *anritani* of the trikaldrishti and telepathy steadily reduced to the luminous terms of the ritam. There is an incipient arrangement of ritam.

This carries with it a corresponding andha visvasa & bhakti for the Ishwara, with anandamaya submission, but not faith in particular kriti. Sense of responsibility is repelled and begins to disappear. Vak is being definitely renounced into the hands of the Ishwara. The demand for truth is disappearing in its remnants, also the idea that anything done can be wrong or have the wrong results.

The perception of Krishna everywhere and all as forms & names of his play is definitely & irrevocably established. Intensity of the perception with chanda ananda is being added to the fixity.

The relation with the internal Ishwara is being fixed in the system by the Vani & the Kalibhava. The perception of the internal Ishwara is intermittent.

The relation with the external Ishwara is now permanently fixed in the consciousness. But both internally & externally the perception of the Person is imperfect, intermittent in the internal, covered in the external by the perception of the Manomaya.

This defect has today to be corrected.

From today dates the perfection of the first seven Affirmations.

=

The swapna samadhi strives to organise itself, but is continually held back & its component parts dissociated. Nevertheless, every fresh struggle marks an advance.

=

For some days the progressive [conversion][17] into the illuminated intelligence will continue; the organisation of the swapnasamadhi will proceed more slowly. It is only now in the jagrat samadhi that the obstruction prevents a sensible advance.

═

Karma Veda—V. 73–87. 31–32.

Lipi

1. England is still hesitating to adventure its fleet.
2 perfect telepathy in the intelligence.
3. tapas telepathy trikaldrishti in the intelligence (have to be organised perfectly).

4 The German eagle is fluttering in the tempest (refers to a vision in swapna samadhi; two rocks high in heaven, at an incredible height, showing prana jagat; a narrow passage between. At outer mouth an eagle attempts to advance into the open, but is met by a violent wind which prevents its progress & is struggling against it.. Vanishing script, "German Eagle"; fixed script, 31.)

═

Trikaldrishti.

1 Before going out, the perception of the Ishwara will be settled in type, but not perfectly established, till afterwards.

2 Saundarya will yet be obstructed & only won after a prolonged struggle, which, however, may be shortened by irruption of a new force.

3 There will be interesting conversation tonight.

═

Script.

The Ishwara has manifested Himself subjectively & to the sukshmadrishti veiled in the Light and also in the darkness of the chhayamaya form; but chiefly in power & bhava.

═

No 3. fulfilled.

Strong perception of the Master of the Yoga as the divine Reality behind Indra with the thunders. This, however is not Indra, but the Lilamaya with Indra, Varuna, Aryaman & Surya united in him. Bhaga was perceived to enter into the presence. Rudra has preceded & will be taken up as soon as the Jehovah form is assimilated.

---

[17] *MS* conversation

Aug 17th

Aishwarya —

The Kriti is at last succeeding in a greater group of details. Aishwar[y]a has been fulfilled in

1. The defeat of the Germans & their recoil to Liège & Tongres.
2. The successful resistance of the forts of Liège.
3 The impending of a naval battle in the North Sea.
4. The French successes on the Lorraine frontier
5. The Russian successes on the Bug & Dniester.
6. The crossing by the Austrians of the Save & the Drina.
7. The purchase of the German cruisers by Turkey. (Ishita)?
8. A long-standing Ishita, powerful recently in the thought, in the autonomy of Poland.
9 The Socialist riots in Berlin.

It is only in Alsace that there has been a marked defeat of the Aishwarya; the Austrian repulse from Servia was a temporary defeat now mended.

So long, it was the Vashita alone that was really powerful; it has now been joined by the Aishwarya. The Ishita is still obstructed.

Script —

Today the Sahitya will be successfully resumed & brought in spite of opposition into its final stage of victorious activity; but not this morning, this afternoon

Lipi

D. Bn [Deputy Bluysen] destroyed in the subjectivity, intelligence, temporarily delayed in the fulfilment.

Script.

There is now a double perception of the Iswara as the Anandamaya & as the Lord of Light & Power. The latter has to possess

Rudra and be possessed by Krishna. Mitra & Bhaga are both seated in the luminous Deva. Only the Rudra assumption remains for the basis.

Darshana

The third intensity is now well fixed & normal but not yet in entire possession.

Vijnana

The most untoward things are henceforth seen as important steps of fulfilment & the greatest anrita as pregnant of the greatest truths. But the habit of physical-subjective responses of asamata remains, like the habit of physical discomfort. They are turned or turn readily into an ananda of discomfort, but this is not sufficient. The element of discomfort & depression must be entirely eliminated.

Karma

Veda V. 33–45.

Selected Hymn. Commentary.

═

Script

The Commentary must be completed tomorrow, and the Secret of the Veda and a fresh hymn begun.

—

There must be a complete detachment from the pranamaya feeling after the result, and ananda in all result & in all process. For this state a settled faith & light must be present. It is still possible for the mind to lapse back into the obscure physical consciousness.

Aug 18th

The greater stability, with dimness, in swapnasamadhi continues and is increased—

Aishwarya

1. Resumption of the French advance in Alsace.
2 Continued successes of the Allies.

3 Inclusion of German & Austrian Poland in the Czar's ukase.
4. French attack on the Austrian fleet.

Script

The Sahitya was resumed yesterday in the afternoon as indicated. It will be taken up again this morning, but not immediately.

Vijnana

At present, there is a stay in the progress of vijnana.

Darshana

The third intensity is fixed in the Krishnadarshan and more prevalent, only in animals it is temporarily of the second intensity, owing to the non-assimilation of the ego. The universality is also nearer to fixity.

The intensity of the subjective Ananda has been for a time depressed & denied. It is now again brought forward. This is the Prab[h]ritha of the Veda. Intensity in the Indriya-Anandas, (sight etc) is easy; for it has long been established and can only be covered for a time, but can no longer be limited or, now, divided. The intensity of the purely subjective (manomaya & bauddha) Ananda will from today reach the same immunity. It is already there, but does not occupy always the surface of the chitta.

Vijnana is now again active, but the illumination & decisiveness continue to be resisted.

Karma
Selected Hymn. Commentary finished.
Veda III. 40 . . 52.

Aug 19th

There is only, as yet, a nominal fulfilment of yesterday's script of the Karma. The Commentary & Hymn have to be corrected and recopied. The rest is postponed till tomorrow.

Karma.
Commentary corrected and partly recopied.
Hymn corrected & copied. Veda V. 2. notes

Script.

The energy is depressed & the illumination withheld in order to prepare a greater normality of the Vijnana in those tracts of chaitanya that are still insufficiently receptive.

Certain habitual activities which belong to the old order of things, are likewise being discouraged by this suspension.

The slow trickling in of subscriptions continues; the rapid stream has not yet begun.

In Samadhi the organisation is arrested & there is inactivity in rupa and even in lipi, although the latter can always be energised by attention.

The action of the Vijnana cannot be destroyed, it can only be suspended for a while with a lowering of its correctness, as soon as it revives, it recovers all its force & power of ritam.

Aug 20 —

तुविग्रीवो वृषभो वावृधानो
अशत्रु अर्यः समजाति वेदः

The violence of the opposition to Arogya is now somewhat abating; but as yet there is no positive progress. The siddhi has, however, resisted strong tests & is slightly improved in its force.

The physical Ananda has been exposed to severe tests, but its stability & intensity remain unimpaired. Its permanent continuity is still successfully resisted.

The general force of primary utthapana remains. But here too there is no positive advance.

Saundarya after an attempt at advance is once more stationary —

=

Faith in the Yogasiddhi is now firmly settled; also Samata of the shanta order with sukham & hasyam firm, though subdued.

The denial of Kalibhava amounts only to a temporary obscuration, — the positive egoistic form of namarupa is no longer able to reassert itself.

The Krishnabhava also can, at most, be obscured for a time.

In the first two chatusthayas, half of the third, half of the fourth, half of the fifth & the sixth, arrest is possible, no longer diminution.

=

It is evident that the effectivity of the Tapas is stronger than before the eclipse, & also the sureness of the perceptions in the trikaldrishti.

It has now to be seen how swiftly this force can be extended.

=

Already the settled faith extends itself to eventual & general kriti as well as Yogasiddhi; & the anandamaya samata prepares to take the place of the shanta.

Sahasa is now assured, but has to unite with the kaushala.

The second stage of the third intensity in the Krishnadarshana is taking the place of the first.

=

Aishwarya-Vashita

1. The French march upon Strassburg
2. The entry into Colmar.
3. The commencement of activity in the North Sea.

Trikaldrishti

1. The British landing (Boulogne was not seen).
2. Death of Mme Petrus.

Script.

The third intensity is now confirmed although the bhedabuddhi still struggles to exclude it from the individual object.

Karma — The Secret of the Veda.
Veda VI 63 – 4 – 5 with notes.
71 – 73 read.

Samadhi

Dream of the old kind but attempting to transform itself. Chiefly, substance of the Pranajagat and its ideas.

Aug 21st

Script.

It is now the tertiary dasya which is gathering strength to get rid of the shadow of the old Prakritic illusion of freedom in the adhara.

The Kalibhava also persists in strengthening itself and the third intensity of the Darshana.

The Dwayavins are being excluded by the perception of the One in all mutually opposing movements & of the harmony of means and end in that movement.

The ordinary mental perceptions even in trikaldrishti are becoming more & more correct.

The resistance to the activity of Premananda must be removed. There is no positive denial any longer of the universal Prema which manifests itself in the adverse movements & associates itself with anger, opposition etc turning them to rudrata pure. It is the effigies of the old indifference which has to be replaced by the udasina prema. For there must be three forms of the prema, rudra prema, mitra-prema & udasina prema. All the three must eventually unite into a trinity with one or other of its three faces uppermost at will. This prema must be ugra & chanda; but the saumatya will be always concealed in it as a basis.

All this must be done rapidly & even suddenly, not gradually & slowly.

=

But the chief work now must be the perfection of the vijnana; in the trikaldrishti first; for there it is only the remnants of false stress that have to be transformed into right stress.

At bottom it is the same in the tapas. The will of the Ishwara has to be known & the adhara made its instrument. Here it is the false stress of partiality that has to be transformed.

The rupa & samadhi are less easy to perfect. For there the Nidah have a long record of successful obstruction.

That must now be broken, but the whole of the vijnanasiddhi must now be done spontaneously without individual effort on the part of the adhara.

=

Lipi. Rupa etc

1. *Tool.*—marking the final perfection of the yantri-yantra bhava.

2. Perfect sun of subdued tejas (*antardarshi*) marking approaching perfection of mentality (non-radiant).

3. Indication of the sense of chitra, Assyrian king seated, a type born or about to be born on earth. About to be born; the forerunners are born.

═

Script.

As yet the obstruction to Rupa & Samadhi remains intact, but a beginning has been made which will this time develop the brihat siddhi.

Karma — Veda VI. 66 – 67 notes.
Work for Review.

Samadhi —

Stability of dim rupa greatly increased; begun in brilliant rupa.

Aug 22d

Script —

As indicated yesterday, the telepathy (prakamya vyapti) is forming now towards perfection. Only the pure thought, without any indication, escapes the prakamya. It includes in its scope the subconscious & superconscious as well as the entirely conscious.

Strong blow on the elbow with resulting raudrananda continuous & varied.

There is no farther need for Will in the first two chatusthayas, nor in the Krishna Kali of the fifth, nor in the sixth.

There will be a daily progress in Rupa.

═

Samadhi — Rupa

The results of the night have been repeated & confirmed. Continuities also occur in the stability.

A fresh activity has begun in the antardarshi.

In the bahirdarshi perfect forms show a tendency to manifest, but there is no stability.

═

Exactitude is not yet conquered, but it is not far off. Meanwhile telepathy of pure thought has to be developed.

═

Violent attack on the faith, samata & kriti. Faith in Yoga did not fail, but faith in the kriti was temporarily interrupted; there was depression, but sama ananda survived—

1. Eloignement of friendship & support.
2 Cloud with R [Richard]
3 Reverses in Kriti

Samadhi—at night. Great richness of rupa & scenes; continual stability of both; lipi, but not always connected; power of rupa even in antardarshi.

Shabda for some time has become occasionally active even in jagrat samadhi, but only when concentrated not in the diffusive samadhi.

Karma
  Ved VI. 68–72 Notes.
    Secret of the Veda.

Aug 23^{d}

The faith has righted itself, but remains vague & with doubt as a background. Recently doubt had receded to an observing distance, with a rattache[ment] in the mind.

Rupa & samadhi have begun to advance irresistibly & methodically. They must now be extended to the outermost waking consciousness.

Lipi etc
1. Intelligent type of the ideality at its least intensity
2 Lion force (inferior vani)
3 Type of the ideal intensity
4 Fortnightly effectivity
5 Rupa . . tapas intensified.
6 destiny questioned in the intellectuality (akasha)
7 destiny.

Trikaldrishtis confirmed—

1. The entry of the Germans in Brussels
2 The French check in Lorraine
3 The stiffer resistance to the Russians on the Austro-German frontiers.

All these like the Servian victory are contradictions of the Aishwarya.

4. French action between Mülhausen & Alt-Breisach.

Shabda (human) is becoming active in the full jagrat, but as yet is insufficiently sthula. It will gain force during the day, as well as other activities of samadhi in the jagrat bahirdarshi.

The collapse of the obstruction in jagrat samadhi has commenced.

At the same time a stronger Tapas is being exercised on the Sharira & Kriti.

Karma Veda VI. Notes 73–74 & part of 75.

Aug 24th

The siddhi must now push forward to fullness of the chatusthayas realised or progressing & the free progress & realisation of the chatusthayas still incomplete, the fourth & fifth.

Rapidity has to be strengthened & universalised.

The forces of asiddhi are attempting once more to utilise their immediate success in the kriti to recover lost ground in the other chatusthayas.

This attempt may be disregarded & the siddhi pursued tranquilly.

It is in the samadhi & the body that it must be pursued & in the kriti.

═

Vijnana

1. Perception of German advance justified.
2 Also, attack on Namur.

═

Strong activity of Rupa-Samadhi in swapna & jagrat. Great fertility of crude rupa in antardarshi & beginnings of the same freedom in bahirdarshi; strength of entirely sukshma rupa, sparsha etc (manasic) & perfection of images in the Chidakasha.

Sharira

Strong attack of roga (stomach) due to particular causes—

Aug 25th

An empty day.

Karma—Work for Review.

Aug 26th

In swapna samadhi continuity is now joined to stability & habitual; but neither are developed to their full extent. Organisation of shabda, rupa, action, sparsha together is proceeding.

In jagrat samadhi there has been a pause.

Trikaldrishti has been justified

(1) in the fall of Namur
(2) in the position of the Br. [British] expeditionary force
(3) in the French withdrawal from Lorraine
(4) in the battle engaged at Charlevoi.
(5) in the German non-reply to Japan

But Aishwarya only in the Russian advance.

Faith in the Kriti is now at a low ebb, & the direct relation with the Ishwara clouded.

Karma. Letter to Hindu[18]—

Aug 27th

Kriti—

Subscribers have begun to come in again, but in insufficient quantity.

Trikaldrishtis successful.

1. Retreat of Allies to covering positions & British losses

---

[18] *See "Interpretation of the Veda" in* The Secret of the Veda, *volume 15 of* The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, *pages 593–96.—Ed.*

2. Repulse of German attack. (fulfilment of Aishwarya)

Samadhi.

Organisation growing in swapna samadhi; but utility suspended—Antardarshi obstructed, & jagrat; but not, as before, entirely suspended.

In the afternoon lipi in swapna samadhi improved in coherence. But the rest of the organisation was hampered by a light but obstinate veil of tamasic nidra.

=

Sharira.

There are signs that the saundarya is being prepared in spite of the outer veil of asiddhi.

Work.
For the Review.
Vijnana
Activity of Script & organised Lipi, etc.

Aug 28th

Samadhi ineffective at night owing to tamasic nidra.

Throughout the day, no definite advance.

At night samadhi more effective, but full activity not yet recovered.

Work
For the Review.
Vamadeva's Hymns begun.

Aug 29th

In Kriti the Aishwarya works very slowly & not perfectly. It fluctuates & has periods of ineffectivity & strong, though not as yet fatal reverses.

Record of 27th, not then noted—

Lipi

1 perfected intellectuality in the ideality ⎫
2 delight ⎬ a [antardarshi]
3 destiny is about to be shaped. ⎭
4. it is the last budget of deficit ⎫ b sadh. [bahirdarshi
5 French budget ⎭ sadhara]
6 delight definitely established
7 delight agelong.
8 destiny Tuesday Ak. [Akasha]
9. deputy Bluysen Chi [Chitra]
10 Italy joined Ch.
11 It is intended to finish the opposition.

Rupa—

Arm bare to elbow loosely mantled from shoulder, mediaeval hat; old Flemish type of face & body.

a. cr. [antardarshi crude]

Kriti

For some time subscribers have been coming in for the Review. All being well, the immediate demand for money can be met. But the obstruction is still strong.

Karma. Work for Review—
Veda V— translated.

Aug 30th

The obstruction to the rapidity & attempt to throw back the Siddhi has been persistent for several days. As usual there is a half opaque veil over the finished parts of the siddhi and a suspension of the most recent successes in the rest.

Continued state of demi-light with obscurity incumbent & occasional coruscation of the Vijnana.

Karma.

The Life Divine resumed.

Aug 31st

The last day of the month, which, like others, has been a disappointment, for that which it set out to fulfil, has not been fulfilled. The imperfection of Vijnana remains; there are still some occasional touches of Asamata; the faith in the Kriti is lacking except in a small & rudimentary form; the sharira is successfully obstructed; the Kriti is still a field of petty successes & large failures.

Advance there has been in the three first chatusthayas & the sixth, & the preparation of advance in the fourth & fifth. But real rapidity has yet to be evolved. What is done rapidly, is held back from its finality, even when it is not temporarily veiled or undone. The action of the Atris remains in its remnants, of Vritra in a partial veiling, of the Dwayavins & Nidahs in their practical power of division & obstruction.

Until these are removed & the false suggestions of the pranic & mental world corrected, there can be no effective general siddhi.

Karma Veda IV. 41 . . 49. 51 . . 57 –
Life Divine.
Analysis of Isha Upanishad.

Siddhi.

The Samata has recovered its positive force.

Samadhi is slowly reinforcing its general tone, & in antardarshi there are brilliantly perfect, but fleeting rupas.

The force of satya gains always in pervasion & definiteness.

Sept. 1

The Krishnadarshan, Ananda etc are recovering tone.

Karma –
Analysis of Isha Upanishad
Veda IV. 33 – 40. 19.

The siddhi is still under a cloud of obstruction owing to the division of the knowledge & the division of the power.

All depends on the manifestation of the Maharloka.

Sept 2.

Karma
Analysis of Upanishad
Veda IV. 20.

Samadhi—

A return to old forms of Samadhi, ie continuously moving pictures of places, but more coherent in the whole & stable in its parts.

Sept. 3

Karma—
Analysis of Isha Upanishad completed.
Life Divine recommenced.

—

Sept 4

आ धेनवः पयसा तूर्ण्यर्था
अमर्धंतीरुप नो यंतु मध्वा
महो राये बृहतीः सप्त विप्रो
मयोभुवो जरिता जोहवीति।

Trikaldrishtis realised.

1. Russian check & partial defeat in East Prussia
2. Their success against Austria.
3 Resumption of forward movement.

Aishwarya

1. Sale of Review.

Script.

The effective activity of the seven forms of consciousness & the farther establishment of Ananda are predicted in the sortilege. The key is always the opening up of the Maharloka.

The figure of the Cavalier & horse, seen by M R [Madame Richard], the latter hesitating to take the leap from the brink of the precipice to the summit of the mountain, indicate the Soul pushing the Prana, which resists, to undertake the great leap,

1 internally, from the trailokya to the Parardha.
2. externally, from passivity to the supreme action.

Both Cavalier & Horse are justified.
In the internality the leap will now be taken.
In the externality it is being prepared.
══

The vijnana is now active, admirably, within the surrounding mass of the mental movements, clarifying and converting them.

Karma — Hymn & Commentary.

The recent experience has shown that in proportion to the passivity of the mind, satya increases & converts itself into ritam. Extreme receptive passivity of the mind, increasing activity of the vijnana, this is the law, Tad vratam.

As for the Samadhi, that still prepares behind the veil & is obstructed in front. From time to time it manifests fragmentarily in front of the veil.

The power is enclogged & encumbered.

Therefore rapidity has not been accomplished, hampered progress continues..

Lipi

1. Prakriti. Pradhana — *Ch.* [*Chitra*]
2. 13. (jyotirmaya lipi) *Ant.* [*Antardarshi*]
3. lipi . . figurative intelligence. *Ak.* [*Akasha*]
4. tonight — *Sthap.* [*Sthapatya*] (fulfilled).
5 destiny . . dynasty.

From the evening the recovery of the Siddhi activity began to be more pronounced.

There is a clear illumination in the Sahitya & Veda. The word is not always immediately the best. There will be some delay in this respect, owing to the imperfect receptivity of the brain, a part of which is still obscure and another admits fatigue. But, except when there is general obscuration, the Sruti acts in spite of all.

Power is again clearly & rapidly effective, although still resisted & in details & immediate movements with frequent success.

Samadhi (swapna) has suddenly moved forward. There was long continuation of the same rupa (a pool of water) with continuous movement in it & a long succession of images in the water, each distinct, lifelike & long-stable. There was also perfect continuity of consciousness. This was also notable as an example of dream perfectly changed into vision. All night there was a higher activity.

Sept 5.

Antardrishta Samadhi is again being resumed with organisation of the samadhistha thought.

1. A bija of violet (ie active daya etc as opposed to green, dispassionate karma)
2. Destiny will steadily destroy the obstacles of the intellectuality . . (*Ant. Lip.* [*Antardrishta Lipi*] accompanied by a blur of bright light in the shape of an unformed sun, indicating that the obstacle arose from a confused but brilliant intellectual action transforming itself into an imperfect) ideality
3. Intellectuality in the ideality . . *Ant.*
   (This is due to the necessity of first perfecting the intellectuality in the ideality ie intuition vivek before the higher ideality can be safely used.)

4 Images of girls seated or standing in a field—a sense of luminosity.—(Satyayuga).

5. A finely formed leaf (crude) with a stalk.
   (Symbolic of the Earth that is preparing & of the physical universe as a leaf on the aswattha tree.)

The organisation of antardrishta has therefore not suffered by the eclipse. It has now to be completed.

Karma.
Hymn. Commentary completed.
Secret of Veda recommenced.

Sept 6.

Samadhi, active, but still ill-organised in swapna. There are more instances of dream-vision.

St. तेजोमयेनापिहितं स्वरूपं सत्यस्य बिम्बेन सदा परं तु
भानावसौ यः पुरुषोऽस्ति सोऽहं ज्ञेयं विभु ब्रह्म सदोंस्वरूपं

Vijnana

Vijnana is now applying itself to particular trikaldrishti, showing the elements in perception of nervous force, of mental possibility and going back from these to the ideal Truth which figures itself out in the physical actuality.

Rupa has recovered its former activities, but does not yet progress—

Sharira.

Utthapana—of arms medial position 30 minutes. Sufficient laghima & mahima. Slight actual defect of anima, but considerable reaction afterwards in the superficial muscles.

═

Knowledge of all the seven worlds, in their action on Life here, is now active; but in the two higher it is not yet pervasive & organised as in the three lower.

There is as yet an imperfect harmony of the vijnana with the thought in others. This has manifested tonight. It has to be attained by dissolving the last ties of personal opinion.

═

Sharira

Utthapana in the afternoon a failure except in the vertical position of the arms, recumbent, 30 minutes.

═

Samadhi.

Jagrat Antardarshi more active, though always crude. A pillared pavilion with numbers of men & women in a balcony; a corresponding style of pleasure-boat (houseboat). A medallion, varnamay etc. All of the past cycles—

In swapna, visions of actuality; faces of living men or forms & their present mood & occupation (none known).

—

At night a great advance. Perfect figures came several times in the antardrishti, though not stable. Dream became perfectly coherent again & dream-vision increased & grew firmer. Images of actual known scenes came in the swapna-samadhi, as an assurance of reality. It remains only to unite scene & figure in a firm &

stable continuity. Some of the dream visions were of the Pranajagat (Bhuvar.)

—

Lipi

1. Sunlight— (fulfilled)
2 sublime trikaldrishti
3 false thought of inability (in body & mental mind)
4 Integral ishita-siddhi.
5. S. (blue, large in Akasha, not compact—spiritual faith well grounded, not distinct, but developed . . not yet intellectual faith)
6 reply to the faith in the intellectuality
7 delight in the ideality.

Symbolic Rupa

Chitra—

Blackbird displaces shadowy crow on slender twig (before, a brighter bird on a faery bough). The brighter bird is the pranamaya dream that seeks to realise itself. The blackbird, displacing the crow, is the first step of the realisation. That will be replaced by better forms & finally by the Bird first seen.

The twig—Earth.
The Bird—Humanity (vih, suparna).

Sept 7.

Samadhi

It is noticeable in swapnasamadhi, that dream is pursued by associations of Ego, dream-vision free from them, but watched by intellect rather than ideality.

St इत्था हि सोम इन्मदे ब्रह्मा चकार वर्धनं।
शविष्ठ वज्रिन्नोजसा पृथिव्या निः शशा अहिं
अर्चन्ननु स्वराज्यं

Utthapana.

Of arms, vertical position, walking 30 minutes. Laghima strong, but not dominant; mahima defective, but not insufficient; anima attacked; defect & after reaction pronounced, but with less hold & effectuality than on former occasions.

Samadhi

In swapna lipi became extremely profuse, but for the most part incoherent.

In Jagrat the perfect rupas are becoming more frequent & less instable, but this is on the borders of the swapna, not in full jagrat.

In the jagrat there are signs of possible advance, rather than the advance itself.

Karma

Commentary copied & retouched.

Sept 8.

Utthapana

Of arms, vertical, walking . . 46 minutes. Mahima & laghima stronger, defect of anima only felt for a time in the first half hour & then again in the additional 16 minutes. Immediate reaction strong. Chief defect in the loins.

Commentary completed

Sept 9.

Devoted to Sahitya —
The Life Divine

Sept 10.

Some progress in Swapnasamadhi. Spontaneous shabda in Jagrat.

The Life Divine.

Trikaldrishtis

1. Strong impression of great German reverse approaching
2 Idea of increasing Russian difficulties but eventual victory.

Sept 11

The brief period of preoccupation is now over & the steady forward progress has to be renewed.

The thought with a little attention now always assumes automatically the vijnanamaya form, is always satya & increasingly rita. If there is any serious defect of rita it is that which still persists in trikaldrishti & affects the jnana. The trikaldrishti & telepathy have now to go through their closing stages of organisation. The rest will be only extension.

Power is improving really, though not quite apparently. That is, the resistance even in kriti is becoming more & more difficult.

Sharira & Kriti move slowly & with a hampered progress.

=

Lipis of Sept. 8

1. $1\frac{1}{2}$.
2 finality independent of the obstacles (Ak. [Akasha])

Lipi of 11th

1. Sudden in place of steady (Chitra) —

=

The conversion of ordinary into vijnanamaya thought, has now almost reached completion. The defect is still in the trikaldrishti. But it proceeds from the sluggishness of the physical system which requires the smarana to be ideally active.

=

Karma.

Life Divine revised & completed.

Sept 12

Sharira

Utthapana, of arms, vertical, walking, 1 hour. The strain from the past utthapana (defect of anima) remains & had a depressing effect on the Prana in the body. But there was no acute defect of anima except in the loins — only dull strain & some physical unwillingness, the latter not pronounced.

Vijnana

The trikaldrishti is proceeding towards the organisation of ritam in its telepathic parts. The pure trikaldrishti is not yet brihat.

Lipi.

1. Intensity of delight (to act again)
2. It is the lost flight (that men are seeking to recover)

3 As it is a settled ideality (the knowledge part of the vijnana is assured). Ak

4 It is to oblige the physical ether (that pressure is put by the eye for the production of rupa) Ak

5 Physical energy is still requisite.

6 It is entirely requisite in the entirety of the siddhi Ak.

Asiddhi.

Strong attack on the Kriti. (Review work . . opposition; misunderstandings; stoppage of flow of subscribers).

═

Sept 13.

Part of the asiddhi seems to be giving way.

═

Utthapana. The same half an hour. Strong resistance, at first acute, then dull but heavy.

═

There has been a remarkable display of effective vyapti (Lipi 3 days ago "effective telepathy") succeeding instantaneously in a number of cases & in mass.

Aishwarya continues to grow, effective vyapti is efficient, but ishita is defective. The three have to be united & fused, so as to represent the divine energy.

═

Certain trikaldrishti is growing in power

═

Fulfilled trikaldrishtis & vyaptis

1. The check to the Russian advance; preventing an immediate destruction of the Austrians.
2 Rumour of Francis Joseph's death
3 Russian check in East Prussia

Sept 14.

The prevision of a German defeat has been fulfilled.

═

Spontaneous Kamananda has been resumed.

═

Coherent lipi in swapnasamadhi.

—

Sept 15.

The great German defeat satisfies at once trikaldrishti and aishwarya. Similarly, the Russian victory, in spite of great resistance for several days.

—

Utthapana, the same, for half hour. Strong, but dull defect of anima.

═

Lipi.

1. The retreating intellectualities insulting the defects of the ideality.
2 Tapas
3 D. (dasya)

Ananda—

Long continued intensity & recurrence of the Kamananda.

—

Vijnana

Aishwarya now usually acts in the end, but not always, nor perfectly. It tends to dominate the physical akasha, but not yet to possess it.

The effectuality is often rapid, but usually in isolated movements.

═

A large confused activity, again, preparatory of a more effective ideality.

═

Cessation of effectivity in success of the Review—

Sept 16.

Utthapana.

The same, one hour. Dull resistance present, but much slighter & more subdued than on the 15th & 13th

═

There is a continuous struggle between the Siddhi & Asiddhi, the latter in all parts preventing finality of organisation, the former getting scattered advantages.

═

Utthapana of the legs, medial position, on the 15th, for 5 minutes with great difficulty, for 10 minutes on the 16th with greater. The old siddhi is entirely in abeyance.

Sept. 17 –

यथा शार्याते अपिबः सुतस्य
तव प्रणीती तव शूर शर्मन्नाविवासंति कवयः सुयज्ञाः।

The Ideal Intelligence drinking of the Ananda in its diffused & scattered form, is to lead the ideal perceptions perfected in their activity by the surrender to a peaceful & universalised realisation of the Light.

═

Utthapana –

The same, $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours; pressure small except at the end. Laghima & mahima increase with the length of the kriya; only anima loses & increases its defect.

Lipi –

Perfectly spontaneous lipis, perfectly stable in the akasha & composed of several words, have suddenly begun to appear. Some are varnamaya.

Other lipis are stable, but not quite distinct or not quite spontaneous in their emergence.

Sept. 18.

ओं यो वै श्रीरामः स भगवान् यश्च महेश्वरो भूर्भुवः स्वस्तस्मै वै नमो नमः

═

Swapnasamadhi improves in organisation especially in coherence of the lipi. Yesterday rasa, the most infrequent experience, was three times repeated.

═

Heavy depression of unfaith continued from the last two days –

═

Lipi

1. Folly of questioning . . not progressing
2 phosphor[esc]ence of telepathy

The vijnana is recovering its more accurate action.

Sept 19 –

नारायणेन रचिता श्रुतिमात्रोपजीविना
अस्पष्टवाक्यपदानां सर्वोपनिषद् दीपिका॥

This describes the process of luminous conversion now in progress. It has also several subordinate indications.

—

Utthapana –

The same one hour. The pressure of defect of anima again very strong, but could not overpower the mahima.

═

Vijnana

The telepathic trikaldrishti has been thoroughly confirmed in every detail with regard to the war; even as to the cause of the German retreat; also their reinforcement & retrenchment; the line Laon, Noyon, Rheims; etc etc

Aishwarya has also been effective, but is still resisted.

Lipi

1. Entirety of the trikaldrishti (Akasha)
obliged by the telepathy (chitra)

Sept 20th

The Kriti tries to form, but the movements of the forces are extremely confused.

Sept 22d

The cloud continues & prevents organised siddhi. There is progress but no definite & decided progress. Eg stable lipi is settled in the akash; the long continuity of scene in swapna samadhi is being slowly prepared; Tapas grows more powerful; the cosmic consciousness is settled.

The general intention seems to be to fix these & other siddhis in the obscurer parts of the consciousness so that they shall not be dependent on the play of the Vijnana.

The opposition to the siddhi is now greatest in great things; normally, it gives way easily in small ones; but chiefly in general effects, not in particular details.

==

Sept 23d

St 1. Routine of Lesson.
2. The Rajas. Div. — ie the remnants of Rajas in the prakritic atoms of the intellect are being purified.

Samadhi.

Continued movement firmly seen in swapna samadhi is now well-established, but not frequent; nor is it long continued.

==

Proof of the power of the Dharma (Yogasiddhi in others) is accumulating from various directions, and is evident in the immediate surroundings, but it is not yet sufficiently able to direct in details.

==

The preparation for Dharma & Kriti shows itself in the general working of the forces of Nature, but it is as yet only abhasa —

Sept 24th

St You are not near me & I know full well
My heart has need of patience & control.

==

Lipis

1. It is the late difficulties that are being gathered in [order][19] to be destroyed.
2. It is at once realised. } Ak.
3 If it is realised, it is the truth

==

---

[19] *MS* ordered

German success in the North Sea.

Sept 25

St. But the idea — ie the Vijnana still awaits finality —

Siddhi

Today the organised Ananda unified in all its parts, is once more manifested. As usual, it is more complete than before the obscuration.

The completeness of the first two siddhis revives with it, as also of the affirmations.

═

Kamananda is once more attempting to possess the body, but the obstruction is still too strong for it to be permanent.

Sept 26th

St.

1. Count No (obstacle)
2. The Anglo-French Text.

The activity of the Vijnana is now reviving and has to be enforced without heed of the obstacles & unsuccesses. The second St. provides an example—the will to make the Review the A-F. text of a new dispensation, in spite of the immediate obstacles. It is understood that the text in Sanskrit and other chosen languages will come subsequently.

═

Roga still resists, clinging to the system; but with a less fixed force than formerly.

═

Kamananda is frequently estopped & smarana is generally needed.

═

The lassitude of the body is pronounced & persistent.

═

Sept 27th

2[20] Volume III. extant. (third chatusthaya)

1. A choice collection of sensational trials (ie to the samata & shakti)

Lipi—

1. Enthusiastic faith in the ideality
2 Fearful effects of the aishwarya

Utthapana.

The same as before, an hour and eighteen minutes, interrupted. It was only at the end that the defect of anima became a little insistent, though never effective. Laghima strong; less need of mahima.

It appears, therefore, that in this utthapana the principle of the safety of past gains is applying itself. Formerly, after the suspension for some days the vertical utthapana of the arms could not be restored without a painful struggle.

Samadhi

The shabda (sukshma sthula) of the human voice has now become a normal action, free in swapnasamadhi, but needing concentration in jagrat.

Sept 28th

St. In the abundance of strength he carries the impeller beyond.

==

Utthapana

Of the left leg, horizontal position, recumbent on side, 15 minutes—strong laghima to the end; defect of anima often strong, but ineffective. Voluntarily discontinued.

—

Of the arms, one hour—

---

[20] *The numbers are so arranged in the manuscript.—Ed.*

Sept 29th

Lipi

1. By intensity of the delight— (the other siddhis will be perfected)

Ananda

Extreme intensity of the kamananda, but the body was unable to hold it.

29 – 30 SEPTEMBER — 31 DECEMBER 1914

October — 1914.

Sept 29 – 30

Preliminary

अस्मे रायो दिवे दिवे संचरंतु पुरुस्पृहः।
अस्मे वाजास ईरताम्॥
स विप्रश्चर्षणीनां शवसा मानुषाणाम्।
अति क्षिप्रेव विध्यति॥

"In us may felicities rich in aspiration come & combine together from day to day, in us may all abundances be set in energetic motion.

He illumined by the light & force of the human activities shall pierce & rise beyond with somewhat of rapidity."

* * *

These two days are not to belong to the former series; they are not to be days of oppression and obstruction, but of an increasing rapidity in the advance, preliminary to an uninterrupted progression in October.

Nati is now perfected, with titiksha and an udasinata only occasionally and superficially troubled. This habit of superficial touches has now to disappear.

By that perfection the finality of positive samata is at last entirely possible. All Ananda, except the purely physical, is now preparing for perfection. The perfection is being manifested, the intensity organised.

The second chatusthaya is only a little less advanced.

It has two bases, dasya and faith. Perfect tertiary dasya is now in normal action; only sometimes smarana of the Master is insufficient. Faith is being prepared for perfection; but faith in the double Kriti needs still the evidence of effective Aishwarya & Ishita. For want of sufficient Ishwarabhava it cannot find firm ground & the rest of the Chatusthaya, though well-prepared, cannot organise itself for action.

The physical Shakti has been entirely overpowered in the external body for many days owing to the attack on the Shárira siddhi. The month of October is set apart for its increasing perfection.

═

The third chatusthaya awaits organisation and perfection.

The fourth has yet to be given its victorious forward movement.

The fifth awaits the organised activity of the third and fourth.

The sixth is almost perfect in combination & organisation. Only the constant Krishnabodha has to be added.

═

The Rik promises for October (1) the increasing richness & organisation of the Ananda; (2) full and active plenty of the faculties & siddhis.. (3) Vijnana fulfilling itself by action (4) an increasing rapidity.

—

The rapidity will be real and positive, not apparent, but still not the extreme rapidity.

—

Question—
Bodily Asiddhi?
Rik— अर्हते जातवेदसे रथमिव संमहेम मनीषया।
भद्रा हि नः प्रमतिरस्य संसदि
यस्मै त्वमायजसे स साधति अनर्वा क्षेति दधते सुवीर्यं।
स तूताव नैनमश्नोत्यंहतिः॥

It is therefore by the Will that the body has to be perfected, but its effectivity depends on the *bhadra pramati*, the mentality being sufficiently clarified to be the medium of the perfect vijnana.

=

तवाहमग्न ऊतिभिर्मित्रस्य च प्रशस्तिभिः।
द्वेषोयुतो न दुरिता तुर्याम मर्त्यानाम्॥

=

The conversation yesterday has given light on the Yoga. Ananda confirmed & universalised is the path to the conversion of Prana into the universal Chit-Tapas and that the path to the conversion of Body into Sat—

It is this Chit Tapas which is the base of Aishwarya-Ishita-Vashita; so long as it is not entirely realised there can be only a partial efficacy of the individual Tapas. The way to it is self-association with all energies in the universe. The Dwayavins are those powers who divide these energies into acceptable and inacceptable, friendly & hostile, accept some, repel others. A choice is necessary in action, but it must be made not by the Dwayavins, but by the Ishwara. The elimination of the Dwayavins is the main work now in hand. A perfect passivity in the hands of the Ishwara is the first necessity.

Subjective Ananda is completed; physical Ananda is being added. Sudden pain of burning has at last become Ananda—Prolonged intensity of pain has also to become Ananda..

The fitness of the body has to be compelled. There is no time for slow and indulgent methods. Faith in the Ishwara & acceptance of all energies & experiences are therefore being given.

The remnants of pranic choice between satya & asatya, siddhi & asiddhi, mangala and amangala are giving way. It is this element of pranic choice which is the chief enemy of unity.

=

Faith in some karma has been given; the exact karma is not yet luminously revealed. Or rather the lines are known; the exact accomplishment or the measure of accomplishment in this life is still obscure to the intellect.

=

The second chatusthaya will now be completed; its finalities will be given. For action *sahasa* & *kaushala* have to be combined. For support of action Devibhava & faith. The basis of action is the combination of *dasya* & *ishwarabhava*.

═

The power of the physical failure has been almost broken. Sustained action is now becoming possible; but there must be no farther consent to interruptions. The body must be forced to do the work as the slave of the Ishwara.

═

Lipis—

1. Find by the isolation of the telepathy the just trikaldrishti. (Sadhara Akasha)—
2. Judge—(sthapatya)—

The fulfilment of the first lipi has begun, but is not as yet very strong or distinct in the general action of the mind, only in particular movements.

The call to judge (viveka) is a part of this development.

═

St.

This does not mean that there shall be no official guidance or help.

At the moment of thinking of the universal action in which the particular is to be merged & the method in which it can be harmonised with the particular action guided by the Ishwara, the eye fell on the above sentence in the newspaper "Mahratta" lying on the table. This sort of direct reply to a doubt or difficulty is now frequent.

Trikaldrishti—

1. There will be, today, intense Kamananda
2 Sleep must be lessened, what remains must be samadhised.
3 The final struggle over the physical siddhi is definitely begun.

—

There is an intermittent fulfilment of the first; the fulfilment of the second has begun, only a small part of the afternoon sleep being at all darkened by tamasic nidra. The truth or error of the third cannot yet be judged.

October 1.

यशसो मूर्धन् . . सम्यग् व्यक्तीकरोति इत्यर्थः

Samadhi—

Sleep at night was for less than six hours, but not samadhised.

There is a preparation of organised samadhi (formerly only realised in the crude type), but nothing definite is yet evolved. Obstruction continues.

=

Script.

Work is being combined, the scholastic and the philosophical at first, with dharma in a crude state of commencement. The rest of sahitya will be added gradually, as soon as the present work is sufficiently organised.

1. Philosophy—	1. The Life Divine
	2. The Synthesis of Yoga—
	3 The Secret of Veda
	4 Isha Upanishad.
2. Veda.	Bk V. IV. translated & studied
	Notes for General Interpretation
	Bks I. II. III. finally read.
3 Vedanta.	The Upanishads restudied.
4 Correspondence—	
5. Notes on the System of Yoga.	
6. Diary.	
7. Miscellaneous.	

=

There is an opposition in the material world in all its strata; there is no opposition in the worlds beyond.

Sharirananda

The tivra is growing at different points of the body. From today, it will nowhere be dependent on the smarana, but will come sometimes with smarana, sometimes without.

This is one finality.

It is also intense & continuous in its recurrence at many points & will soon be intense & continuous in recurrence everywhere.

Continuous intensity of the *kamananda* is now restored—the question is of the degree of *dháranasámarthya* in the body. It is the battle that has now to be fought out, for there is no other real obstacle to the permanent & not recurrent continuity of the *Kamananda.*

Raudra must now be developed to the same force as the *tivra*, & *Vishaya* & *Vaidyuta* brought out from their involution,—ie to say the Ahaituka, for the Sahaituka is already well-established.

=

Tivra is now intense in all parts of the body & much more spontaneous than before, usually almost and sometimes entirely brought without *smarana.*

Raudra is once more active & without immediate *smarana.*

Kamananda has been for some hours almost continuous, but only occasionally intense.

=

Sukshmagandha, intense & varied, is again active, but infrequently—*Sparsha*, as before, but slight & momentary in those contacts which suggest the human touch.—There is occasionally *sparsha* & *rasa* in the mouth, but after *smarana. Shabda* comes only by mudra or by concentration. *Drishti* is not active.

=

This is, on the whole, the old condition of occasional obstructed siddhi, subjected to many limitations. Here there must be freedom & finality.

=

Lipi—

1. A strong defeat, then destiny easily accomplished
2. Russian defeat at Berlin—

(neither 1 nor 2 are intelligible).

3. *grief*— only occasional shadows left in the physical prana, as attempts at depression.
4 *insult*— fulfilled—(Ar. S. talk of being "espion").
5. *battle* a struggle against the siddhi easily decided.

Beyond the finalities already attained today, there is already a greater activity, though not yet entirely free, in the *sukshmagandha*. Other finalities of the same order will occur and be confirmed in the first days of October.

═

In addition, the revelation of the Personality in the fourfold Brahman is again returning.

═

Already the sukshma drishti begins again to be active & perceive certain elementary forms of the Pranic worlds.

There is also the perception of the jnanamaya ego as the Ishwara, spontaneous & without immediate smarana.

═

The various *sukshmavishayas* have now recommenced their manifestation, but it is not yet powerful. Nevertheless, there is a finality here which will be made entirely firm.

═

The sense of the Lilamaya Krishna in all, is growing firmer & more intense, but is sometimes still suspended by the mere Brahmabhava.

═

October 2.

And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him; and he was nigh unto the sea –

═

The sortilege has no reference to another exodus, but embraces at once several movements; it is typical, more than particular.

═

There is still the same obstruction to the vijnanasiddhi, but the first two become more & more perfect.

═

Yesterday's finalities have today to be confirmed. The obstruction to the K.A [Kama Ananda] in standing & walking must disappear, as also the demand for *smarana*, which is no longer necessary.

═

K.A. is now active in all circumstances, but active without smarana only in the stationary postures. This difficulty is to be removed. All that will then remain will be the defective dharana in the body.

═

The isolation of the telepathy is proceeding so that there may be a finality in the exclusion of false stress of perception.

This cannot be done at once. During the month of October the organisation of the vijnana will proceed to the possibility of finality.

═

There must be no return to inactivity. As for the work it will be done with force as soon as the bodily tamas is dispelled—

═

The obstruction has prevailed throughout the day except in the generalisation of the Kamananda. Now, in the evening, the vijnanamaya thought (vangmaya) is once more active as well as the ideal perception. The Aishwarya-Vashita are still in their old stage of retarded & uncertain fulfilment.

═

October 3.

युक्तित इत्यर्थः —ie the sense of the obstruction is that it is only in conscious Yoga with the Master of the Yoga (by the three affirmations) that the siddhi should proceed.

═

Samadhi

The power of organisation is growing in Samadhi with the vijnanamaya vangmaya thought as its central agent. It is entering even into the deepest sushupta and attempting to organise there coherent lipi, perceptive thought & experience, with rupa to be added, making the Jiva jagrat in all stages.

This is the beginning of final siddhi in the swapna-samadhi & in the antardrishta jagrat, *which will necessarily bring with it siddhi in the bahirdarshi & in the sushupta*.

Samadhi in the afternoon pursued the same course, but was less successful owing to a heavier force of tamasic *nidra*.

Images & actions were combined with the rest, but not well combined.

In the jagrat, samadhi is, for the time being, obstructed & unsuccessful.

═

Kriti continues to operate in the same fashion of partial success and partial failure without any great or decisive result.

═

Lipi—

1. The telepathy isolated.
2. jollity.
3 results.

═

The "battle" against the Siddhi continues and has not been so easily decided as was imagined at the time of the lipi.

There is still a tendency to choose those of the perceptions which are flattering to the hope. Only this is sure that the progress continues in spite of resistance. The finality of the Samata has once more been successfully denied, although the touches of revolt and grief are only physical & momentary; but the Jiva associates itself with them for the moment. There is the old process of persistent disintegration & crumbling down at points of the siddhi in its superficies which seems to be something more than superficial to the impatience of the Tapas.

The moment of defeat has passed and for the rest of the afternoon, the siddhi will be pushed forward. Inactivity must on no ground be accepted. It is the pretension of the Asiddhi that it will only allow the siddhi on condition of passivity & retarded progress. The necessary passivity is already there in the mental parts; it has no longer to be extended to the whole system.

There is to be no farther work of Sahitya, this afternoon; only the Yoga—

═

The revolt comes always from the tapasic insistence on result, the apparent sanction by the Ishwara and the subsequent discrediting of the sanction.

It is a circumstance of the imperfect assimilation of the Mahakali Bhava, which in its stronger movements tends to be the pure Mahakali using Mahasaraswati & not Mahasaraswati informed by Mahakali. It is therefore an imperfection of the Daivi Prakriti.

October 4—

तस्मा उ राधः कृणुत प्रशस्तं
प्रातर्मक्षू धियावसुर्जगम्यात्

In spite of all the Vijnana is getting into habitual action, not always successfully, but with a frequent effectuality & always with some power upon the object & the environment.

Lipi—

1. twenty third August eighteen ninety
2 thirteenth August nineteen fortyfive.
3 Alexandrine . . objection.
4 intensity of the delight

The tertiary dasyam has to be entirely enforced in its full intensity, in the body, with a view to the perfect vijnanamaya selection of the action in the mind with a view to the similar selection of the thought & the perception. At first, the result may be some confusion, eventually the positive & authoritative vijnana must emerge.

So also with the speech. All this is finally determined today.

═

Clear & perfect animal forms, crude, in akasha, suddenly & spontaneously; not stable.

═

October 5

Power of active Consciousness.

═

The modified Asiddhi continues; siddhi proceeds, but interrupted and obstructed, petty & scattered in its advance.

Therefore, there is not yet the "uninterrupted progression in October"; except in so far as the work of forming Siddhi, as apart from constant success in advance, does not at all cease.

=

In kriti as regards the war, the Will is only effective in the slight Russian successes, but in France & Belgium it is on the defensive.

=

The Kamananda continues, but is not yet held by the body.

The sukshmavishayas have again become rare & unimportant.

Tamas once more holds the body, but not entirely. Sleep is diminished, but the samadhi does not progress.

=

Aishwarya etc are effective in a great number of small points, isolated, but as yet there is no mass, decisiveness or combination—

=

Work is seriously obstructed.

=

Utthapana is interrupted; saundarya entirely stationary.

=

Lipi.

1. Totality of index.
2 Retiring (the attempt at asiddhi).
3 vital ecstasy (chitra)
4 world ecstasy do

There is no work to be done today in Sahitya; it has to be resumed tomorrow—

=

Utthapana—

Of the arms, vertical, one hour. Defect of anima is no longer effective, but there is a lassitude in the prana which opposes a certain amount of physical unwillingness to the utthapana. Defect of anima acts more in reaction after the cessation of utthapana, very little during its activity.

=

Vijnana.

The tapasic stress of telepathy is being rigorously isolated.

=

Script—

Unknown to the obstructors, veiled by external failure, the greater siddhi prepares. The organisation of the vijnana is the sole preliminary step that remains. This step once successfully taken, the vastness of the accomplishment, the rapidity of the future progress will be apparent & effective.

The *défaillances* of the body are the instrument of the asiddhi, not its cause. In a sense, also, they are the result. The cause is in the physical Akash, in the unwillingness of the earthguiding Powers to undergo a novel Law.

The organisation is ready in all but the Power & the physical trilokadrishti.

It is now evident that the sukshmavishayas are firmly established, & so far as developed, even begin to be organised.

The sthula touch has to be enforced, the sthula voice, the sthula taste. They have all reached the point when they can manifest—the obstruction, strong & persistent, is yet artificial. Smell is already sthula; vision in certain forms, touch in certain contacts, taste in certain rasas.

Aishwarya-Vashita is beginning to act again more swiftly against the resistance.

═

The lipi "finality in the midst of obstruction" is now being fulfilled. Indeed, the obstruction is being made an instrument of finality, as in the normality of the tertiary dasya & the renunciation of the remnants of tapasic stress.

═

It is definitely fixed that udasinata is to be replaced by sama-bhoga & sama Ananda. There need, therefore, be no attempt to reestablish udasinata. Essentially it is there behind.

Oct 6.

सखाय आ शिषामहि ब्रह्मेन्द्राय वज्रिणे

═

The course of the conversion & organisation in Vijnana has to be pursued today. The whole of the hridaya (brahman) has to be given to the illumination

═

The attempt of the Asiddhi is, by disturbing the Samata, to compel tamasic udasinata and renunciation of tapas. The perfected Nati is attacked and the udasinata touched more than superficially. Owing to the constant siege of Asiddhi faith also is diminished.

=

After a long time the doubt of the Ishwara has returned with doubt of the Yogasiddhi & a moment & an element of tamasic udasinata.

=

This crisis, however, has not been able to stop the activity of the Tapas & the siddhi. Its more violent touch has been momentary. A general distrust of any decisive thought remains behind, & doubt of the relation of the Ishwara to the personality & the world, but especially to the personality.

=

Recent Visions

1. My in the bare garden, watering it. (on the 4th)

2 Mno in a great bare hall with a large fire at the end, walking towards the latter and returning.

=

Utthapana—

The same. Less physical unwillingness.

Oct. 7.

There is still the same siege of the Asiddhi. Tamasic udasinata is always forbidden; but faith & Nati are seriously breached. The Abhayam has also been successfully attacked in the physical prana, although it remains intact in the mentality (chitta).

—

There is finality of the perception of the triloka, (thrice seven), in the forces & purushas that constitute it.

There is finality in the perception of the brihat satyam, without finality in the ritam. Satyam means truth of being, in thought, force, tendency etc, not truth of fact in actual eventuality.

The finality of illuminated thought & ritam is being prepared. When it is complete, there will be no farther asiddhi in the first two chatusthayas. Knowledge is the condition of perfection. The lower powers were aiming at perfection without knowledge, a passive & negative perfection.

There is finality in the telepathic perceptions, satyam, of forces, tendencies, thoughts etc, but it is not yet brihat. Brihat is being prepared.

There is finality in the ponderability of the Will. Wherever it is applied, it is a force to be reckoned with, although not yet a force that always prevails.

=

Yesterday closed the period of prevalent Asiddhi. Today begins the period, for October, of siddhi prevalent in spite of Asiddhi. Even in the Asiddhi, there was an uninterrupted progression of the Siddhi.

=

Utthapana —

2 hours. At first physical unwillingness, intermittent; afterwards eliminated except in an occasional subcurrent. For the first $1\frac{1}{2}$ strain chiefly in loins, for a time, at first, in the back; only in the last half hour in the arms and shoulder-muscles.

=

Lipi
1. Steadily. steadily
2 Still — Tuesday. (the Asiddhi)
3 tapestry
4 passage of the faith.

Samadhi continues to be resisted.

Oct 8.

देवयानैः

The thought is now arranging itself in the sense of the ritam, only the trikaldrishti is seriously obstructed. The Energy is therefore transferring itself to the combined trikaldrishti and Aishwarya in order to make an effective combination.

—

Utthapana—2 hours. No physical unwillingness except momentarily in the exterior prana. At first some defect of anima in the arms, but this disappeared, & during the last half hour there was no strain, such as yesterday's, on the [shoulder-muscles & arms.][1] On the other hand the strain on the loins was more pronounced.

The absence of faith is still accentuated and there is nothing in the experience to restore the lost sraddha. For small indications are no longer satisfying—

The action of the vijnana is trivial and unimportant, so far as concerns life, and the attempt to organise it for practical use has failed.

The day has chiefly been occupied with work, & there is little progress.

October 9th

1. मृत्युर्वा प्रभवति

2 न तस्य योगिनो रोगो न जरा न मृत्युर्वा प्रभवति। कस्य। प्राप्तस्य योगाग्निमयं शरीरं

Ananda

Although Kamananda can now occur in all *asanas* and without *smarana*, yet the Asiddhi persists in demanding *smarana* and obstructing in the ambulatory asana. It puts its whole force on the strength of physical habit and the inability of the body to retain a continuous Ananda.

In the subjective Ananda it invades sometimes and suspends or momentarily impairs the indriya rasa, but this rapidly rights itself. The force of Asiddhi is in the mangalámangala & still more in siddhi-asiddhi. By leaning with its full force on these weak points it has restored depression and unfaith.

Therefore the old method persists and no part of the Siddhi is free from it. The Dwayavins are, for the time, triumphant.

---

[1] *MS* shoulder-arms & muscles.

Sharira—*Arogya*

The Yogagnimaya Sharira was more developed in Calcutta than now. Since then there has been a reaction. *Mrityur va prabhavati.* The signs of old age, disease, death, not only persist, but sometimes prevail and the force of the Arogya has to bear them as an irremovable, though not definitely overpowering burden.

The *Saundarya* no longer advances.

Utthapana progresses with difficulty and in a limited movement.

Sleep is once more dominant.

Karma

Kriti is again obstructed by a successful opposition. The month of October, proposed as a period of triumph, opens with a time of hampered movement. All the siddhis are obstructed and rendered inefficient except within their assured limits.

═

Script—

The importance of the present movement lies in the systematic discouragement of the tapasic stress which mistook telepathy for eventual trikaldrishti.

═

Kriti

A result willed vehemently a year or more ago now occurs suddenly— The faith accepts it as a result, the intellect questions

Oct 10—

St. *Bismillah placed at the head of the Koran*

The movement of the Siddhi is once again overcoming the Asiddhi. The second & first chatusthayas are being restored in their completeness. The faith that disregards immediate outward circumstances, is developing, although still combated by the suggestions of the intellectual environment

Outward circumstances of the moment have to be understood by the vijnana. But there must first be this general faith that they have all an intelligible purpose & an intelligible sense.

It is true that they are worked out through the Pranic world by the Dwayavins using conflicting energies, but the Power that governs them in spite of their ignorance & mutual misunderstanding is One, who is neither a passive Being nor a blind Force.

The only question that remains is whether the immediate guide of the Yoga is the Ishwara himself or a Spirit who errs,—the Manomaya Purusha in oneself or a Manishi outside.

The faith must be that it is the Ishwara, Anandamaya & Vijnanamaya who is the guide, although He still uses the impulsions & ideas of the Manishi & not yet the full Vijnanamaya harmony.

It is the replacement of the mental perceptions & impulses that is the work of the Vijnanachatusthaya. It is because that work is not yet done, that the first two chatusthayas are open to shocks & disturbances through the disappointment of the faith.

This is why it has always been said that the absolute finality of the first two chatusthayas depended on the fulfilment of the third.

But the entire fulfilment of the third implies the fulfilment of the fourth and fifth and therefore necessarily of the sixth and seventh.

Therefore it is an integral fulfilment that is being worked out & this aim prevents the separate perfection of each chatusthaya by itself without relation to the rest.

Faith & Ananda Brahman are the two keys to the perfect internal state, with dasya as the joining point. Knowledge & Power are the two keys to the perfect external state, with Daivi Prakriti as the joining point.

═

Utthapana Arms 1 hr 45 minutes, discontinued for want of time, not failure of power. More physical unwillingness & more defect of anima than day before yesterday..

—

Effectivity of tapas still acts against resistance and by lapse of time.

═

Lipi—

1. 28th
   18th truth. (changed to) tejas.
   third.
2. La cuisine Française.

St.

The End of the Beginning.

Script—

The principle of the Siddhi has been given. The actualities of the future have to be given—

The first seven Affirmations have to be continually reasserted and maintained until all denial is eliminated. Afterwards the other two will naturally emerge.

The satyam of the telepathy & trikaldrishti is the next finality intended.

After it the satyam of the Power—

Then their ritam.

Meanwhile the physical siddhi will work against its barriers and bring itself into line with the rest of the siddhi

Oct 11th

St. Arya . . The Wherefore of the Worlds . . Isha Upanishad—

What will now be done is to idealise all the perceptions & impulses, normally and spontaneously and so convert the whole being, including the two lower mentalities and the prana, into the ideal being. The body will follow.

This is already being done.

=

The state of another's mind is now physically concrete to the sense-mind. The contents are less visible, except in their generalities.

=

Aishwarya-vyapti of the nature of Dharma is now very commonly effective on people in the immediate neighbourhood; but the effectiveness is not invariable, & least developed in details.

=

At night, after a long time, the dreams were to a certain extent watched & remembered, but they have gone back to the worst confusion of incoherence & the intrusion of present personality and present associations. All were of the nature of pranic dream.

=

Oct 12th

अयं वां यज्ञो अकृत प्रशस्तिं वसुधिती अवितारा जनानाम्— The Aswins.

—

There is a preliminary Siddhi completed in all but the fourth & fifth chatusthayas, in preparation even in those chatusthayas. In the first two there is a perfect organisation, the only defect of which is that it is not constantly immune from disturbance. The same organisation is being prepared in the third, & even in those parts of the fourth & fifth which are ready—

=

It is now well proved that the Kamananda & Tivrananda are firmly established. There is only the question of their continuity & in the second of its pervasion. Questions of intensity remain behind.

It is necessary, for this purpose, that the Arogya should be strengthened; but the Power is not yet strong enough in its dealings with the body.

The Utthapana has to be extended finally to legs, neck & back. The old siddhi has to be recovered & improved.

In Kriti the rapid fall of Antwerp, anticipated by the Trikaldrishti, but combated by the Will, shows that the powers of the opposition are still too powerful.

Nevertheless satyam of the power is being established, though not yet perfectly.

Today physical Ananda, subjective Ananda of siddhyasiddhi, mangalamangala, organisation of Vijnana, pressure on Sharira.

═

Telepathy

1. Perception that the Russians had had slight success in Prussia, but not yet elsewhere, justified by today's news.

2. Rapid fall of Antwerp, anticipated but not seen.

═

Utthapana —

$2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Arms. Defect of anima greater than yesterday in the arms & shoulders. On the other hand the acute strain on the loins has disappeared; such strain as was felt, was intermittent & only at the end. Full laghima is almost accomplished; not yet full mahima or anima. —

—

Sortileges.

1 Application
2 प्र वो महे मतयो यंतु विष्णवे —

═

Script —

In the points noted for today's progress, there is a movement, but nothing is yet definitive.

The Kamananda attempts to be more constant, Vishayananda is more & more settled, but the subjective Ananda of good & bad event is still fiercely contested by the powers that oppose the Siddhi. It is there always, but more often retrospective than valid at the moment.

The satyam of Power & Knowledge is being more & more revealed; furiously attacked in the morning, it could not be seen by the mind for a time, but was persistently asserted by the intellect.

Samadhi —

Dream at night was more coherent; possessed at first by present personality & suffering in the end from present associations, it was for a long time delivered from them. The incoherences were no longer nervous & bizarre as on the 11th, but mental & due to abrupt transition & wrong combination of separate strains of experience or vision.

Oct. 13th

अर्चिषा सुजाते अश्वसूनृते – Usha.

The mind & nervous impulses to be clear, well-formed & true, by the illumination –

=

Kamananda maintains against obstruction its persistent & often continuous recurrence – Tivrananda is slowly developing and vishaya with vaidyuta shows signs of manifesting more firmly.

=

Arogya is still subject to constant obstruction

=

Saundarya is prevented from advancing.

=

Utthapana of the legs & neck is being attempted but as yet without success.

=

Lipi

1. Effectuality in the lipi.
2 distinguish the trikaldrishti altogether from the telepathy.
3. Soldiery . . talented stranger – (*civilisation*)

Utthapana

Utthapana of the arms for one hour – discontinued to give place to work for the Review. The laghima is now well-established; yesterday's exercise could have easily been continued for another half hour. Mahima defective is only a secondary state, an effect of defective Anima; in itself Mahima is sufficient, – weighed upon but not overpowered by defect of Anima. It is only in the defect of Anima, that the Asiddhi has a real point d'appui.

In other parts of the body, mahima is deficient & overpowered by violent pressure of the Asiddhi on the defect of Anima.

This defect of Mahima has to be forced out of the whole body.

=

Samadhi—

Rupa is now rarely manifested in the jagrat, except in form of Chitra. When manifested it has a tendency to the perfect and spontaneous, but has as yet no stability in the sthula except an initial & fugitive stability.

Kriti—

Kriti continues to be resisted. In the immediate surroundings Power grows in strength and frequency of effectiveness, although it is no longer intense in action or rapid in effect, except in certain instances of ishita & vyapti.

Faith—

Faith is being enforced in the terms of a knowledge that gives its proper place to actual circumstances & events, but is not subjected to or guided by them. It is still insufficient with regard to the personal love of the Ishwara and the fulfilment of this life, but admits the general Kalyana and the guidance.

=

The love has now to be admitted. The idea, given by knowledge without love, is that of a great mechanism & a wise, perfectly intentioned mechanician careless of the means of his work so long as they are well-judged & effective. The Iswara is known to be all-powerful; he has now to be admitted as all-loving, but not a victim of His love, not compelled by personal affection to vary from his plan, which is always the best for the individual and the universe.

Subsequently, it must be perceived how far that love implies for the Jiva fulfilment in this life of the desires & impulses implanted in him by the Iswara & of the ideas towards the realisation of which he is continually forced to strive.—

=

Utthapana

Of the neck maintained for 15 minutes. The old acute pain in the muscles declared itself, but was suspended at times.

Karma

Sahitya is proceeding with great rapidity, but with varying excellence. The attempt to resume poetry has not yet been successful.

Samadhi.

Dream as before. Present associations & personality still interfere

=

Attack on faith through *amangala* in Kriti.

Oct 14th

वहंति महद् देवानामसुरत्वमेकं

=

Samadhi—

Swapnasamadhi again active; the stability of rupas & scenes greatly increased.

=

Utthapana.

Legs; medial position, 15 minutes. Strong defect of anima, laghima sufficient; mahima distressed by defect of anima.

=

Lipi—

1. Destruction Antwerp
   Defeat Antwerp 18th.
2 Responsibility
3 this is the fitful siddhi
4 till eighteenth..
5 respectful of the rights of the opposition.
6 passivity
7 the assembly of the English Parliament
8 Blague. (in reference to menaces of the opposition, Ar. etc)

Note the 18th & 23d October & 9th November have been given as dates for the siddhi.

=

The separation of the telepathy & trikaldrishti continues.

=

Telepathy & Trikaldrishti

1 Of relief of Przemysl confirmed.

2 Of German successes at sea farther confirmed in loss of Russian cruiser.

3 Of check of Russian advance in Prussia

==

The former constitutes, as well as the 3d a failure of the Will.

Utthapana

Of the arms, an hour and a half. The annakosha is somewhat exhausted, but there is a great force in the pranic body —

The utthapana of the neck was unsuccessful.

==

Faith is increasing steadily & taking cognisance of the intention in things & events.

==

Dream incoherently consecutive, full of present association & ego. Forgotten entirely, afterwards by passive & empty tapas on the mental consciousness, almost all the details returned.

Swapna samadhi; but no advance.

==

Oct 15th

Great weakness followed by chill & fever.

—

Utthapana of arms for half an hour, interrupted owing to illness of body.

==

Strong fever throughout the rest of the day.

==

Samadhi

Rapid advance in samadhi

1. The three states of jagrat, sushupta & swapna superimposed simultaneously and perfectly combined. The mind in sushupta perceives below it the activities of the swapna & perceives also what is happening in the jagrat.

2. Perfect & unmixed arrangement of vijnanamaya thought perceptions in the mind; the result of an absolute flexibility of the

intellect gained during the last few weeks. Both in jagrat & in swapna & also in combined samadhi.

3. Greater activity of the rupa.
4. Activity of Will in the samadhi, attempting to become vijnanamaya.

═

Strong confirmation of samata; extended to body; but failed, physically, at the strongest pitch of the discomfort of fever.

═

The struggle to expel the fever was unsuccessful.

Oct 16th

Another day of fever.

═

Again progress in samadhi, but not so marked as yesterday. It is during the feverish state, the system being raised to a high pitch of force & intense living, that these phenomena take place. It has to be seen whether the full progress will be maintained in the normal condition of health.

═

Kamananda active, but discouraged for fear of the body being unable to sustain it. Strong activity of tivra & raudra anandas.

═

The attack of the fever & its force of entry was less powerful & prolonged. It is notable that the means on both sides was really mental, physical means being entirely inoperative either to check or increase the fever, except to a slight extent sweating. The latter was brought about by the will, not by remedies or external appliances.

═

Lipi—

1. nineteenth text.. (Indicating that the text of R.V. V. 81. which has still to be written out for the review, will be copied on that day. The fever will therefore be cured by that time as well as the weakness after fever).

Oct. 17th

The fever expelled in the morning.

==

No progress during the day—

==

Strong attack on prana sharira at night, but no fever in the physical body, only strong "surexcitation" & uneasiness & broken sleep.

==

Progress in swapna samadhi.

Oct 18th

As yesterday, but no farther attack. This time little reaction of weakness. Only unwillingness to work—in part of the system.

==

Progress in swapna samadhi confirmed & increased. Yesterday there was long continued action in firmly stable scene, but it was one action constantly continued for an indefinite period, the falling of rain in pools of water over a large surface— Today a varied action—& more than one vision.

Oct 19th

भद्रं ते अग्ने सहसिन्ननीकमुपाक आ रोचते सूर्यस्य—

==

The Siddhi is now taking up the results of the 16th & 17th. The organisation of the vijnana in the normal condition is to be firmly based. First, in the combination of the thought-perceptions, vangmaya, script & vani; secondly, in the combination, with them, of the samadhi; thirdly, of the addition of the organised Power; the one element subordinated during the last few days.

==

The gathering (ghana) of the Chit in the brain is no longer to be associated with morbid heat in the body. The attempt to absorb & hold it in the period of fever was the right & dominant movement.

==

Most of the day devoted to other occupations. Dullness returns on the system and suspends progress.

═

Oct 20th

There is still in the physical system the obstacle to activity and progress; but this will not endure.

The faith has to make itself more implicit, & to be the same for the guidance in Karma as for the guidance in Yoga.

It is not to be faith in every suggestion, but faith in the ensemble and in all that comes from the Master above.

The definite organisation of trikaldrishti & power is proceeding; it will be henceforth like that of the knowledge automatic & well up spontaneously out of the Sat. So also with the Samadhi.

The Tapas has to be used for the removal of the obstruction which is now general and mechanical.

═

Oct 21st

Lorsque l'esprit alors assemble les données et assouplit assez sa langue pour les traduire synthétiquement.—

Indicating the condition for the perfect trikaldrishti,—as it has been for the thought.

═

The whole active force of the Shakti must be concentrated on the body & on the Karma.

═

The trikaldrishti is defining itself more & more clearly in the sense of the sortilege. It is more effective & positive with regard to things near in time & place. This distinction will be steadily diminished & finally removed.

October 22d

The day was chiefly marked by a great advance in the organisation of trikaldrishti both telepathic and pure. Normally, the impressions received are justified; but there is still a remnant of the tendency to overstress when there is the attempt at active judgment.

For the most part, however, the impressions & perceptions were justified & begin to fall more & more into their right place & order.

The organisation of Tapas is proceeding, but has not yet gone very far.

Samadhi is still obstructed. The progress made during the fever has not been maintained in the normal condition.

=

There is more & more stress on the bodily siddhi and on the Karma, but as yet without effect.

=

The full Brahmadarshan—full in type, not in contents,—is becoming more & more entirely ordinary & normal.

=

Oct 23d

The Vijnana, with the exception of Samadhi, continues to organise itself.

Remarkable effects are being produced in the immediate vicinity by the Tapas. But the element of resistance, sometimes successful, sometimes overcome immediately or with delay, entirely or in part, always persists.

=

Utthapana resumed. Arms 30 minutes. Defect of anima impresses itself strongly on the body, but without overcoming laghima and mahima.

=

Sraddha (swashaktyam bhagavati cha) is now well-founded, but not sufficient either in range or in enthusiasm and intensity.

=

Nevertheless, the perfection of the first three chatusthayas is now decided & will accomplish itself inevitably. It is in the fourth chatusthaya of the body that a lengthy struggle seems still to be inevitable.

In the fifth Krishna Kali is ready for completion, but Karma is only in embryo and Kama still less advanced.

The sixth is now as much advanced as the first & second & more than the third.

The seventh is established in all but the bodily siddhi & the karma, and approaching perfection of a kind in all but the mukti from pain, the shuddhi of arogya, the bhukti of the raudra, the siddhi of body & of work, or if not approaching, then already in practice capable of perfection.

═

Attempt at recovering the progress in Samadhi as yet only partially successful, as the sushupti tends to take possession of the two other states and to admit a certain amount, though less than before, of the tamasic nidra.

═

Oct 24th

Swapna samadhi effective; but the continuity is still obscure & interrupted, and more of a continuity of action than of vision. Touch, sound, sight & movement are well combined.

═

In the War the Russian success is a first sign of renewed effectivity of Kriti.

═

Roga now attacks chiefly the stomach (mucous looseness), the teeth and the kamic centre. At other points it is usually ineffective. There is a tendency to dull headache, but this materialises badly.

═

In swapnasamadhi the organisation of the three states of consciousness effected in the fever, was restored; but with less force of the jagrat in the sushupti & swapna.

═

Oct 25.

There is as yet no new perceptible advance of any kind, rather an attempt of old confusions to reestablish themselves,—the result, it is suggested, of an attempt yesterday of the Tapas to move forward rapidly & get rid of movements of relapse, at least in the subjectivity.

The truth is that there is an alternation of states, the divine & the human, the illumined and the partially obscure, where there is pale tejas, not ritam jyotih. This alternation tends towards the elimination of the mortal and obscure and the normalisation of the divine and luminous.

Today the lower state predominates

Samadhi

Action of perceptive thought, usually vijnanamaya, at a deeper level of samadhi.

Dream makes no progress.

Oct 26th

Power is now distributed with a limited effectivity over all its fields; but it cannot entirely prevail anywhere, is nowhere free from resistance and is subjected to signal defeats & successful obstructions.

═

Utthapana of arms, an hour and a half. Pranic trouble the first half hour, muscular the last quarter of an hour. Good utthapana in between.

═

Oct 27th

Powerful attack on the kriti.

═

The telepathy has been proved to be still very mixed, for things at a distance, & the falsifying overstress continues.

═

In things near the decisive trikaldrishti works, but not with any largeness.

═

Oct 28th

The period of depression continues. Faith is shaken and udasinata replaces ananda.

—

Utthapana of the neck 15 minutes. Pressure of defect of anima, more pranic than material.

—

Sahitya—poetry has been active for some days.

═

More trouble, though of a minor kind, in the kriti, but this did not disturb the samata.

═

Lipi.

1. oubliez
2 tonight
3 inside a fortnight.

Oct. 29th

The literary activity continues in spite of everything.

—

The Yogic siddhi is attempting to revive from the serious blow that has been dealt to it; but the faith is wanting.

═

Without the faith the siddhi will continue; for the failure of faith has been allowed or even brought about because it is necessary.

═

There is an active Trikaldrishti, but it is of a mixed result & telepathic in its character.

═

The progress of the third chatusthaya must be resumed & the fourth & fifth insisted on again in spite of all opposition.

═

Only the conditions of the fifth must be changed

═

Oct 30th—

In seven days. St.

—

The Vijnana is now recovering its usual movement—

═

1. And he came by the Spirit into the temple.
2. P.X.
3. O Lord, my strength and my fortress and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of

the earth and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit. Shall a man make gods unto himself and they are no gods? Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know my hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is the Lord.

═

Lipi—

1. Lipi—

That is to say, as the sortilege is now active & organised for the actuality, so the lipi will now be made active & organised for the actuality.

═

Trikaldrishti, selective & decisive, is now acting in small matters with great frequency & correctness. The latter is not yet invariable.

═

The rest of the vijnana is still dull, except occasionally the jnana.—

Oct 31st

St. 1 Chandi.
2 Les Débats
3 Littéraires.

Lipi.
1. Jollity. outside. perfection. digest.
2 passive.
3. 13.

═

The normal activity of Vijnana is restored; the attempt to generalise accurate trikaldrishti and effective Tapas is being restored.

The subjective vishayananda is finally normalised; a similar normalisation of ananda in the manas with regard to events will complete the subjective ananda. Meanwhile the physical must be perfected.

═

The utility of the holding back of the perfect Brahmadarshan is now manifest. The defect was that the mind had not made a proper harmony between the Anandamaya Chaitanya & the ignorant Jivatman. The latter tended to be suppressed in the darshana; therefore it has been restressed & now enters normally into its place in the darshana.

═

The pursuit of rapidity is renounced by the Jiva, which has once more become passive, and is digesting the greater measure of perfection rendered possible in the lower consciousness.

═

Tertiary dasyam is getting a greater hold on the normal consciousness.

═

The whole stress of the Siddhi is towards a steady & unobtrusive normalisation of what has been gained. New progress seems to be suspended.

November.

Nov. 1—

The aims set forth for October are only now beginning to be accomplished, but the month of October was the turning-point for the action.

═

Lipi.

1. Already fitted for the intellectuality; fitted for the ideality. (Ak [Akasha])

2 Results of the rapidity. Yogasiddhi (Ch [Chitra])

3 It is futile to expect results immediately.

Darshana.

The Ananda Brahman is now an entirely normal part of the Darshana. It contains implicitly the Anandamaya Purusha. Krishna has now to become explicit in the normal darshana as he has been in the abnormal, when the intensity was at its highest.

═

Vijnana.

The telepathic perception, sukshma drishti, is being steadily purified from overstress & false stress.

Nov. 2—

Lipi.

1 It is fundamentally easy to distinguish the telepathy. (Chitra. Sky)

2. Henceforth distinguish telepathy from trikaldrishti.

3. 13.

4. 15—ie identification with all energies in the world, in the terms of the truth so that those to be preserved may be chosen, those to be transformed [?], & those to be eliminated recognised but rejected.

5. energetic faith egoistic faith.

6. enthusiasm.

═

Telepathic trikaldrishti can never give the inevitable result, although it may often give the right & actual result; for it contains only what is present in the subconscious mentality of the world, not the forces that may at any moment enter & change the event. Telepathy in the vijnana passes into trikaldrishti.—

═

Entire tertiary dasya is now being enforced, so as to overcome the mental suggestion of kartavya which seeks to preserve the prakritic or secondary dasya. The egoistic or personal dasya, with the illusion of choice, has long been eliminated in fact, but sometimes recurs in the external mentality.

═

The dasya established, energetic faith will be possible without the returns of egoism. Enthusiasm can then return.

St.
rnal d. = internal dissensions
Utthapana of arms, 45 minutes.

═

Nov 3.
St. Nos amis.

—

Lipi.
1. Faith—
2. Energy of yoga—
3 generalise the faith.

═

There is a tendency of revival of the energy in the yoga & of the energetic faith, but it is not yet very extended—

—

Tapas seems to be increasing in power—

—

Lipi is active & organised to serve the knowledge & the yogasiddhi, but not as yet the trikaldrishti—

═

Chitra also is organised for the intelligence of the world & its forms & tendencies.

=

Script is being organised within the same limits

=

A considerable organisation of the Vijnana proceeds, but height & energy & perfection are withheld.

=

A beginning of progress in the Rupa & Samadhi is indicated as imminent. As yet, there is no material indication. Script—*The rupa will now be developed in the akasha.*

—

Utthapana of arms, one hour.

Nov 4.

सुप्रवाचनं तव वीर वीर्यं यदेकेन क्रतुना विंदसे वसु—

=

Samadhi.

In dream, there was once more absolute & long coherence, other dreams supplying omitted & collateral parts of the first, & entire absence of present ego & associations. But all was in the nature of a tale or fiction, rather than actual event.

In swapna samadhi, there was long continued coherent conversation, not sufficiently sthula, & rather in the nature of a monologue.

=

In Kriti there is some confusion owing to the sudden change both in circumstance & attitude.

=

The removal of all habit of choice from the lower being is essential. The buddhi has entirely understood, the manas understands and no longer sanctions choice; it is now only the physical & pranic elements that have the habitual reactions which come from the mental choice. These have to be eliminated for perfection of Samata, for perfection of Shakti.

The Ishwara will choose through the Vijnana & work out through mind, prana & body obeying the Vijnana.

There must be the certain faith that all He does, is for the perfect Yogasiddhi. The perfect Yogasiddhi is for the perfect life.

When these reactions are excluded, then only there will be the perfect positive Samata = the perfect subjective Ananda—

—

Meanwhile the physical Ananda is resuming its development.

═

Rupa in the Akasha (crude) is remanifesting & it is evident that nothing is lost which was gained. Human figures, groups, landscapes, objects come freely; animal forms (fourfooted) are obstructed. In all a clear-cut & stable distinctness is the characteristic deficient & to which the opposition in the Akasha still presents its effective veto—

Forms not crude, but ghana & developed have a clear cut distinctness & completeness, but no stability or only the first initial stability, often with a deficient completeness.

It is the former gain without any advance, except in the energy of manifestation slowly increasing behind.

═

Vani is beginning to be organised.

═

Rupa is beginning to reappear on the background (sadhara).

═

Utthapana of arms. 3 hours. Muscular strain reappeared, more as the result of repeated utthapana than of extension of time. Twice an attempt was made to make it oppressive & victorious over the laghima & mahima, in the fourth quarter of an hour & once in the third half hour. A later attempt in the last half hour hardly materialised & the utthapana could have been continued, apparently indefinitely. Stress was then laid on the strain of reaction & this now remains as the one effective obstacle to this utthapana.

═

Trikaldrishti is beginning to be common & even to organise itself with continual ritam of detail, though not yet of arrangement.

There is a very brihat basis of telepathic trikaldrishti. Ritam of arrangement is being prepared.

═

A strong opposition is still offered to the organisation of Samadhi.

═

Nov. 5.

St. An omnipresent reality.

═

Lipi—

1. First stage effectually accomplished (Ant [Antardrishta]).
2 Ending without delay.

═

Definite trikaldrishti fulfilled, that the spell of continuous rain for a month would be broken up the first thing in November. Actually broken up from the second.

═

Utthapana of arms one hour. Reaction of strain less than expected.

Nov. 6.

The pressure of advance has somewhat diminished, but the progress attained continues. Only in the samadhi, there is not yet a sufficient movement of organisation; & the Tapas fluctuates in its activity.

—

Utthapana of the arms for about an hour, interrupted by visitor —Persistent dull strain, but there is no longer as there would have been before a powerful reaction preventing successful utthapana.

═

Chitra is now very clear, firm, rich & detailed. In swapna samadhi Chhaya still overhangs & stability is obstructed—There is strong obstruction to the firm emergence of akasharupa, whether sadhara or niradhara—

═

An attempt partially successful to bring back old conditions of siddhi by diminishing the affirmations.

==

Lipi.

1. Fortify the Aishwarya.
2. Tonight . . light on the situation (ie interior)

(Both antardrishta & very vivid, firm
& stable—the second fulfilled).

Nov. 7.

Progress today stationary—

==

Utthapana, arms 10 minutes, interrupted.

==

Nov. 8.

Utthapana, arms, an hour & a half; some pressure from defect of Anima.

==

Progress tends to recommence, but is still encircled.

==

Partial effectivity of Tapas is more generalised, but effectiveness is withheld from its detail—

Nov. 9th

Chiefly given up to Sahitya.

==

The Sahitya & study are now becoming well-organised, guided entirely by the impersonal force of the Personal & not interfered with by egoistic action & choice. The latter still makes suggestions which are more & more rejected.

A similar action must now be extended to the Dharma & to such external Karma as is immediately in the power of the Adhara as well as to subjective action for the Kriti.

Nov 10th

The Darshana is now beginning finally to normalise the perception of the Parapurusha in the Anandam Jnanam Anantam Sarvam.

It begins with the perception of the Manomaya Purusha in the individual as identically the Parapurusha even in its apparent separateness & half-negative representation of Sachchidananda.

=

Tertiary dasya is now powerful & begins to be pervasive.

=

The first chatusthaya is steadily working out its last remaining defect, the recurrence of physical reaction to *external* suggestions of duhkha & aprasada proceeding from others or from the world-environment & taking advantage of the deficient sraddha in the Karma. Persistent Asiddhi in Karma & Yoga is used for this purpose. It stamps *nati* on the most physical parts of the nervous being as it has already been stamped on the mental being.

=

The second chatusthaya is, except in faith and in realised karmasamarthya, complete in the manomaya organisation of the self. It has now to be converted into a vijnanamaya organisation based on the faith, the tertiary dasya & the daivi prakriti (karmasamarthya & ishwarabhava).

=

All animal forms are now coming freely in the Chitra. Objects are also more varied.

=

Utthapana, arms, one hour; defect of anima stronger than for some time past.

=

There is a promise of rapidity in the vijnana.

=

Lipi.

1. Brilliant.
2 great (brihat)
3. final submission of prana.
4. spiegel.

5 active.
6 eternal ethos
7 digest.

═

Insistence is once more being put on activity, constant will to know & tapas.

═

Nov 11th

Utthapana, one hour—defect of anima less, but still stronger than it should be.

═

Sahitya continues to be active.

═

Recurrence of intense kamananda throughout the day—

═

It is a remarkable fact that most of the things willed during the last few years & months, not connected with the personal life, are now being fulfilled in a confused mass, but the attitude having changed present an obstacle to the immediate willings.

═

Lipi

1. Saturday (for the vijnana)..
2 jadis
3 lordless energies of the asiddhi
4 first thought is infinitely better organised than the less spontaneous thought.

═

The present combinations are all mental & have no real relation to what is destined,—this is the indication given.

More precise indications may be expected very shortly.

The clearing up of the situation is inevitable. No attempts in a direction not intended will succeed.

Swapna-samadhi continues in the same condition. Coherent sabda now occurs in jagrat, but only a sentence at a time.

═

Nov 12.

All are now personalised in the Brahma Darsh[ana] as the one Person who is the Tat. The normalisation of the perception of Many in One is beginning. Here the ego in the mind of others is the obstacle

═

The Master of the Yoga remanifests as well as the Kalibhava—

Lipi

1. aspire
2. [*no notation*]

Swapna-Samadhi.

Struggle at night to develop entire & coherent lipi in deep samadhi. The scenes, rupas etc remain as before. There is an intermittent attempt to develop organised rupa etc in antardrishta jagrat—

═

Nov. 13.

There remains a want of harmony between the separate form of mind & temperament and the personality of the One in the Many which possesses the form. The perception of identity & penetration is insufficient; the form seems to belong rather to the material of the impersonal Brahman.

This view frequently gives way to entire possession, in which Prakriti & Purusha are again united.

═

Utthapana—$1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. No defect of anima in Prana, only for last half hour in muscles,—not compelling.

═

A repeated lipi—"John",—pointed to the Epistles of St John for a reference. The passage turned up ran—

"*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God:* because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God;

And every spirit that confesseth not . . is not of God."

As a doubt suggested itself: how there could be certainty of right decision; the next verse came

"Ye are of God & have overcome them; *because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.*["]

The reference is to the method in which the Vijnanachatusthaya has to be effected. All suggestions that have not the consciousness of the Master & the instrument behind them, have to be distrusted or else judgment reserved. The Power felt to be governing the world is the power of the mentality & is not vijnanamaya.

This Reference was supported throughout by Lipi, giving the exact answer to the thought in the mind & guiding the judgment.

═

Note that yesterday, the mind being in doubt about external menaces, the reference ran, "I will lie down & sleep, for thou, O Lord, art only my safety."

═

The immediate occasion of today's reference was an insistence on immediate organisation of sadharadrishti in jagrat.

Forms of rupa, including fourfooted animals, did outline on the background, but without stability or hold upon the akasha.

═

There is a preparation, but except in one or two points, mainly in the first, fifth & sixth, no rapid or final realisation.

═

Kamananda seems to be overcoming some of the adverse conditions which formerly helped its negation. These conditions recur, but have no longer the same power of prolonged suspension.

═

Asamata, when it recurs, is powerful[ly] discouraged & can no longer take hold on the system.

═

In arogya the struggle proceeds.

═

Lipi.

1. affirm. 3. righteousness strength
2. fixities.

—

4. egoistic faith justified. (now that it is ceasing to be egoistic).
5 softly . . fiery.

=

Samadhi.

Effort to organise lipi in samadhi continues.

=

There is a tendency to redevelop exact time in the trikaldrishti & telepathy.

Nov 14

There is no rapidity as yet in any of the three chatusthayas of effectuation, only in the three which are purely subjective.

=

R. [Reference]

And he shall sit as a purifier & refiner of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi & refine them as gold & silver that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

Indicating the purification of thought & life into the terms of the Ritam.

=

In this purification & refinement there are necessarily two processes corresponding to two necessities. First the mental & nervous reactions must all become satya, so that in the end there may be no anritam in *Etat* falsifying the vijnana; secondly, the mental & nervous action must be translated into the terms of vijnana, thus becoming ritam, & eventually being replaced by the total vijnanamaya action. At present the first process predominates, but the second also is definitely & finally proceeding.

=

The fourth & fifth chatusthayas depend on the perfection of the third, as the third has been led up to & at the same time assisted the first & second.

=

Utthapana.

Arms. 2 hours. Strain after $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours, mostly due to combination of walking & utthapana in this form, the muscles of the loin & back becoming outwearied. Utthapana must be enforced also in these parts of the body.

=

Faith.

There is now a well-founded certainty of entire siddhi in all seven chatusthayas, on two conditions—

1. That no circumstances intervene which prevent the continuation of the Yoga in this life—eg premature death etc. All circumstances hitherto brought in with that intention have failed of their object.

2. That no such successful obstruction is interposed as to retard the siddhi to the last days of this life or beyond.

The two questions, therefore, that still subsist are those of safety & rapidity—sati & taras. (साति . . तरस्).

=

Ananda.

There is again a successful obstruction of the Kama Ananda since yesterday afternoon, though it is in the nature of an artificial difficulty, rather than a natural suspension.

=

Rupa.

Images in akasha & sadhara, chiefly chhaya or tejas, sometimes varna; human figures the most distinct & stable, animal vague & unstable but various, objects of both kinds.

=

Dasya

Tertiary dasya is now strongly confirmed, complete & powerful in the body. In the mind it is still mixed with the secondary & Prakritic form. Shadows of the primary fall only when there is a touch of asamata.

=

Kamananda begins to resume its activity.

Samadhi—

Continuous incident by successive pictures of the same action in different stages, cinematographic in piecing rather than lifelike.

The struggle to develop clear & stable rupa in jagrat continues.

Nov. 15th.

A greater intensity of Tapas not disturbing the tranquillity of the Samata & the passivity of the Yantra in the hands of the Worker, has to be elaborated.

═

In rupa vague blurs of unrealised material of form alternate with form nearly realised or quite realised. The tendency to form is frequently active with success, but not yet master of the physical Akasha.

Rupa on the background begins in a blur, starts out into form & then immediately dissolves into a blur. Human forms, animals & objects occur equally; but there is at present a considerable tendency towards the frequency of the fourfooted animal which was formerly always obstructed.

═

Utthapana

Arms, 1 hour, 53 minutes. Physical defect of anima. It tried to make itself a pranic reaction for a while, but failed. Reaction strong in the body afterwards.

Rupa

At night very clear & perfect shadow forms on a background.

Nov 16th

Darshana has now a large & sure form of the Jnanam Brahma. Personality is therefore firm in the vision. But the Ananda Brahman, although always present, is not yet sufficiently strong & vivid.

═

Vijnana—

Certain trikaldrishti is now often entirely positive & compelling, but not sufficiently frequent.

There is also a secondary certainty or rather insistence of trikaldrishti which is not so positive, rather questioned by the sceptical intellect, but fulfils itself equally with the other.

There is a third which is a perception of force of possibility, afterwards self-justificatory in the event. It is this which is most difficult to distinguish from the mere perception of force of possibility unsanctioned by the destined Event.

Sometimes the trikaldrishti is surprisingly fulfilled at the very moment when non-fulfilment seemed inevitable in the actual occurrence. In such cases it seems to partake of the nature of Ishita, Aishwarya or Vashita.

=

Rupa has now a greater force & in Akasha is very clear & perfect with some stability, as well as on the background; but the stage of difficult & confused formation is not yet left behind.

=

Utthapana.

Arms. 2 hours; after an interval of 5 minutes, due to exterior causes, another 15 minutes. The physical defect & reaction were less, and the attempt to invade the prana was unsuccessful.

=

Samadhi in its profundities remains disorganised but today thought emerged in it & commenced putting lipi & experience in order.

Lipi in S. [*Samadhi*] Persist alone . . thought . . judgment.

Nov 17th

Strong reaction of unfaith in Karma & direct government & choice of Krishna.

=

Lipi.

1. *Yet enthusiastic faith*— (that is will persistently return and establish itself).
2. *Keltic faith* (the faith of the heart & imagination,—as distinguished from Teutonic, the faith of the nervous mentality,—Latin, the faith of the intellect in the idea,—Indian,

the intuitive faith. Of these the Latin is there, firmly; the rest are deficient, recurring, but not settled).

3. *Perfect beatitude; faith* (the perfection of the subjective Ananda depends on the perfection of the faith).

=

Utthapana.

Arms. 2 hrs. 30 minutes. No reaction in the loins & back except for a few intermediate moments, until after cessation of the utthapana. Reaction, chiefly in the muscles of the left shoulder for the last hour, strong only at the close. Ambulatory all the time.

=

There is a tendency to the establishment of 3 hours utthapana of the arms as perfectly normal; only the reaction in the shoulder resists. Laghima & mahima are sufficient & could have easily supported the arms for the remaining half hour and beyond.

=

Rupa

The struggle now in rupa is to establish rapidly the combined clearness, stability & spontaneity in a various rupa.

=

Utthapana

Of arms; after bath & meals, an interval of 1 hour 10 minutes, for thirty minutes sitting. More pranic than physical reaction

Of back & loins $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes; laghima excellent, inefficient mahima.

Of legs, 10 minutes; good laghima, entire absence of mahima; therefore the defect of anima prevailed throughout.

Nov 18th.

Utthapana.

Legs. 15 minutes. Mahima introduced & laghima stronger than yesterday. Defect of anima, after the first ten minutes, tried to overpower but failed. A great force of physical tapas is present in the body, but failed entirely for a time in the evening. Afterwards it recovered itself.

Long sleep is at present the habit of the body which thinks it necessary to recuperate itself from the strain which the pranic parts of the body feel less & less but the physical still consciously or subconsciously undergoes.

=

The Nine Affirmations have now again to be considered

It is evident that IV – VII are being completed first. The tertiary dasya is perfect in the body and perfecting in the mind & prana and there is a firm though not always equable or well-distributed sense of the passive *yantrabhava* in the whole system. But the dasya is not yet the dasya of the Madhura except at times because the subjective Ananda of *karma-siddhi asiddhi* is not yet perfect in the chitta.

Hence the acceptance of all bhoga as a slave & instrument of the Master is near completion, but not the acceptance as a slave and instrument of the Lover.

The Personality of Krishna is still often & long concealed behind his workings, his Prakriti.

—

If these can be perfected, the rest will be more easy. For there will be, & this is now preparing to be perfected, the universal sense of the Anandamaya Krishna as the continent & cause of all conscious activity & the base of Ananda with the instrument of free & joyous Tapas & Prakasha.

The principle of Affirmation has been constantly growing, but has not yet entirely replaced the principle of rejection & denial.

Ritam is developing on the lines of the brihat by the progressive rejection of the idea of the Dwayavins.

=

Affirmations VIII & IX are only preparing. The basis of the five worlds has been laid down in the consciousness, but only the three are habitually active to its awareness & this without particular observation. But the Anandaloka is also frequently active in the manoloka.

The main effort now is to subordinate Time so that it shall be instrument and not determinant.

=

Strong movement of progress during utthapana. The Ishwara takes full possession of the script, vani & vangmaya thought, a possession compatible with the suggestions of other vanis always automatically distinguishable from the central Word.

=

Farther progress in rupa.

=

Tapas is assuming a progressive strength & the Asura & Rakshasa begin to take their places.

The force of ritam begins to increase.

=

Enthusiastic faith is increasing its ground.

=

But the chief result has been the final rout of the Dwayavins & the unification of all multiplicity & dualities in the Ishwara.

=

Utthapana.

Arms, 3 hours. Strong attack of physical defect of anima chiefly in the muscles of the left shoulder which in the last half hour took the form of an acute pain. The attack failed to impose pranic defect or fatigue on the system. But the reaction is stronger than yesterday.

=

After $1\frac{1}{2}$ [hours'] interval, one hour sitting. Pranic unwillingness & oppression, afterwards only oppression then all clear, then again unwillingness without the oppression.

=

The after reaction increases in strength, but is almost entirely physical in its incidence, entirely in its direct incidence.

=

Lipi.

1. first let it disengage itself—the rupa
2 hopes.
3 hopes safeties
4. field of safeties is the field of the established, field of hopes is the field of the disestablished.

=

Kamananda once more intense.

=

The Record has now to include not only the details of what is accomplished & the lines of the accomplishment that is being attempted, but also the record of experiences and the indications of the future movement. This has often been attempted, but without success because of the insufficiency of Tapas and ritam. It will take a little time to establish the right working of this element. It must, first, be undertaken irregularly, so that it may gradually regularise itself.

=

There is still a great deal of action in the mentality nervous & intellectual; it is allowed so that by its self-motion under pressure from above it may idealise itself.

=

Utthapana

Right leg, horizontal, lying on side; 15 minutes; mahima & laghima although increased in strength overpowered eventually by acute defect of anima.

=

Back & loins, three minutes.

=

In the evening, a fresh attack to disturb the faith & the unity. The knowledge in the mind, although pushed backward in order to allow of the attack, was not overpowered, except in the matter of the faith in the Kriti.

=

Nov. 19—

Utthapana—

Legs—17 minutes. Entire absence of mahima, replaced by force.

=

The energy depressed last night & this morning is now recovering itself—(9. am)—and will maintain itself during the day. The affirmations have to be given a farther extension.

The attempt of the attack is (1)[2] to restore the empty, indifferent shanta Mahasaraswati bhava & negate the combination of Ananda + Tapas, centred in the Mahakali-Mahasaraswati Bhava; (2) to assert the passive Devi in place of the Asuro-Rakshasic (Chandi) Devi governed by the Deva in Krishna.

It is now a settled gain that the Maheshwari bhava as pratistha is practically covered over; it is dominated, first, by Mahasaraswati as continent and, secondly, by Mahakali as inhabitant, seated on Maheshwari & embraced by the conditioning Mahasaraswati. When the combination Mahakali-Mahasaraswati is perfect, the pratistha will be entirely covered. It only emerges when it is necessary to correct the tendency of Mahakali to assert the supremacy of her own peculiar bhava to the detriment of the Mahasaraswati cont[in]ent.

The type fixed is the Mahakali bhava of the Mahasaraswati Personality, not the Mahakali personality.

The emergence of the full intensity of Mahakali-Mahasaraswati is the development now attempted.

—

Yesterday the physical reaction of utthapana was excessive. Therefore today there must be some rest & relaxation, but not discontinuance.

═

Rf. [Reference] *Self-Knowledge.*

An introduction to the study of metaphysics. (This is the line the philosophical work has to take).

═

Utthapana

Arms 2 hrs. 25 minutes. Strong pressure of physical reaction & sometimes Pranic unwillingness; the former in loins & back, the latter generally or once or twice in the arms.

═

The Ishwarabhava steadily imposes itself on the mind & prepares to take possession of the Will in the action.

---

[2] *In the manuscript, "(1)" was inserted after "negate".—Ed.*

The full bhava in its personality has reappeared, that is the conscious self-knowledge as the Mahakali-Mahasaraswati Prakriti-angsha & the corresponding ego-form in the sukshma body & mind. It includes the bhava of the Dasi.

═

Perfect identification with the prana in all, the hopes, passions, discouragements of friends, enemies, distant nations in the war, the British in India, the estranged Swadeshis here etc. etc. There remains only the identification in physical prana and body.

═

Utthapana

Legs—horizontal: left—17 minutes, deficient mahima & laghima: right, 7 minutes, laghima and mahima sufficient, but acuter defect of anima manifesting as pain of nerve & muscle compelled desistence.

═

Swapna-samadhi.

Frequent occurrence of continued action, but consisting only of two or three rapid movements.

Thought & perception in samadhi are attempting to become vijnanamaya.

Yesterday's lipi, "utility" is being fulfilled, as such scenes & conversations are presented as may give knowledge of practical importance.

Dream is again being analysed in the state of samadhi itself & the importations of present sanskara separated from the true substance of the dream.

In this way one dream took its true aspect of a conversation in manoloka speculating as to whether certain presentations of event etc were not emanations from the minds of men falling in battle rather than realities.

═

1. A face & figure, gestures and the words—"They went up there & then turned in the right direction & were peeping through...." All could not be heard. The face was familiar, but long forgotten, & it was only after a time that it was remembered to be the young man who was first proprietor of the B.M. [Bande

Mataram] & his name almost immediately afterwards recalled, Kshetro.

2. A man, official or minister, sitting at a table with a map before him in which there was much red, on the West, & saying "Ainsi n'est-il pas assez rouge pour vous."

3. Figures etc connected with the war.

═

Antardrishta

The development here is slower; all sorts of crude forms come but not complete & except in a few cases not stable. Groups also come, eg a girl rocking in a low chair and another sitting facing her & holding her hand.

═

Lipi.

1. Godhead.
2 subtlety—

═

Rupa

At night, farther progress, the old stable ghana forms & unstable perfect reappearing. But there is as yet no advance on the past gains thus recovered.

═

Samadhi—

The movement is towards the rehabilitation of the former method of dream interpretation which had been somewhat discredited.

═

The perfection of the second chatusthaya has been completed in all but sraddha & chandibhava by the growth—still continued—of the Mahakali-Mahasaraswati.

Nov. 20—

Utthapana

Legs. 10 minutes only. Defect of mahima; laghima also insufficient.

═

The elements of shakti & virya—

Viryamiti

Kshatriya—

Abhayam, Sahasa, Atmaslagha, Yasholipsa.

Limited by Kaushala, but all now perfected (barring exterior nervous touches) except Atmaslagha which depends on Sraddha swashaktyam.

Vaishya

Danam, Vyayah, Kaushalam, Bhogalipsa.

All perfect & rightly combined.

Shudra

Prema, Kama, Dasyalipsatmasamarpanam.

Perfect & rightly combined.

Brahmana—

Jnanaprakasho, jnanalipsa, brahmavarchasyam, sthairyam.

Well-combined & now almost perfect; but full prakasha does not yet extend to action, & therefore brahmavarchasya is not yet perfect in effectivity.

Samanya

Sarvesham etesham tejo balam pravrittir mahattvam.

This is coming by Mahakali bhava.

Shaktiriti

Dehasya

Mahattwabodho, Balaslagha, Laghutwam, Dharanasamarthyam.

Well-established.

Pranasya

Purnata, Prasannata, Samata, Bhogasamarthyam.

Established, but sometimes attacked & touched in physical parts. The entire fullness of Bhogasamarthya depends on Arogyasiddhi.

Chittasya

Snigdhata, Tejahslagha, Kalyanasraddha, Premasamarthyam.

Well-established, but Kalyanasraddha is sometimes attacked by the intellectual doubt. It is complete in the normal state of the Chitta.

Buddher

Visuddhih, prakasho, vichitrabodho, jnanasamarthyam.

Well-established, but not entirely complete in the active parts owing to lacunae in the vijnana.

Samanya

Sarveshveteshu kshiprata, sthairyam, adinata cheshwarabhava.

Coming by Mahakalibhava.

Chandibhava

Mahakali

Shauryam, ugrata, yuddhalipsattahasyam, daya cheshwarabhavah sarvakarmasamarthyam.

These are now developing, but the [ ][3] Ishwarabhava is insufficiently established owing to defect of effectivity of Tapah-shakti & therefore of Karmasamarthya in manifestation.

Sraddha

Swashaktyam Bhagavati cha

Insufficient owing to thwarted Tapah-shakti & doubt of Kriti.

The lesser trikaldrishti is now very active & usually accurate,—that which comes in passivity by a sort of vyapti. The trikaldrishti of great things, distant things (distant in time & space), & that corresponding to prakamya, is less active[,] correct or organised.

Vijnana, not in the least depending on experience, is now becoming more active but does not yet command entire confidence from the intellect.

---

[3] *MS* the

There are three kinds of vijnana; the first corresponds to material mind intuitively reasoning & deals intuitively with things & ideas that might be known by experience, if the means of experience were sufficiently wide. It is prajnanamaya vijnana intuitional & discriminative.

The second corresponds to intuitive mind (perception) & is independent of possible experience. This is now developing. It is inspirational.

The third is pure vijnana & revelatory sakshaddarshana.

═

Yesterday kamananda was almost inactive, today it is again recovering activity. It must be intense & frequent during the day.

═

Utthapana shakti is a little depressed & will take a little time to recover. Arogya advances, but so slowly as to be almost imperceptible.

═

There is no sign of progress in saundarya except in increasing clearness of hue, varnaprasada.

═

In kriti there is still ineffectivity, except in details.

═

Vishayadrishti now acts occasionally in gandha & sparsha, more intensely or more variously than before, but there is no real advance in generality & organisation. *Aswada* is also occasionally active, but not so spontaneously & usually in the bitter, sour or bibhatsa rasas, which lead the mind to doubt whether they are not prakamya of sukshma effusions from the stomach. Some, however, are obviously non-material, eg taste of medicines which are never taken physically,—non-material or non-immediate. Sight & hearing are mostly in abeyance or sluggish.

═

But they are all attempting to throw off the obstruction & must progressively succeed.

Utthapana—

Arms. 15 minutes,—& after twenty minutes interval, 2 hours.

A violent attack of Asiddhi, first intended to prevent utthapana at all, then to bring it back to the one hour limit. Great strain on loin, back & shoulders.

==

Swapna Samadhi—

More extensively varied combinations of Rupa (various foods) & Rasa; the latter not always vivid, but always, when present, well appreciable. Also other combinations.

Image of large, bare room with one chair etc, & a young Brahmachari, slim & fine-featured of Bengali type, hastening full of respect & bhakti, to answer the call of his Guru.

Image of self, wearing dress with peculiar border & long hair, some hanging over the breast on the border. Query—future or idealised past?

More coherent lipis in deep samadhi; also a tendency to evolve the true lipi in those that are incoherent.

==

Rupa—

Perfect image etc came freely, but either before the eye without stability or with stability but avoiding the direct gaze or both indirect & unstable. The obstruction remains as yet obstinately unconquered.

—

Siddhi-Asiddhi.

There has been today a strong combination of circumstances in the nature of asiddhi in order to negate, as far as possible, the Mahakali bhava manifesting. All remains intact except the Ishwarabhava & its concomitants, but these are less affected than before.

==

Vijnana

At night a great activity for a time of Vangmaya transforming its habitual vak from effective speech into the illuminative & inspirational forms with an occasional rise into the pure inevitable.

==

There was also a movement of complete Jnana. The lifting of perceptive thought from the intuitional reason to the inspirational revelation is being prepared.

═

Swapna-samadhi

Dream still pursued by present association, therefore sometimes difficult of reduction to right form.

═

Kamananda failed to recover intensity and frequency, being overpowered by kshaya.

═

It is noticeable that now relapse is no longer general & activity of progress is rapidly resumed after a movement of recoil. But it changes its location, leaving the parts affected to undergo a period of suffering & depression. Nevertheless even there there is no longer the tendency of entire quiescence, udasinata & temporary renunciation.

═

Trikaldrishti pursues its organisation in the pranamaya response.

Nov. 21 –

Aishwarya-Vashita

Kriti is still effective only in details & movements, not effective in the mass & final effect, except when the final effect comes after a lapse of time.

The old habit was to leave it & allow time for the general ensemble of things to assimilate as much as it could of the tendencies created by the Aishwarya. The effort now is to maintain the Tapas and attempt to govern the movement of the ensemble by the Aishwarya-Ishita-Vyapti. But these powers cannot yet, even in small & ordinary things effect an organised *ritam*, though they can often act in the mass & produce a general result against resistance.

Nevertheless, the force of resistance in unimportant things is much attenuated, & in the majority of cases there is the result, sometimes with remarkable rapidity. But not where the opposite tendency is already strong & fixed.

In one case that has just happened, the same object (a bird) has four times in succession executed with only a slight tendency of deviation (ineffective besides) the movements willed. Another (human being) has done it with a little delay in spite of the intervention of hostile circumstances dispersed rapidly by the Will. Another performed the requisite movement, immediately & in full; three others with difficulty & not in full. (Human beings). Another (a goat) performed in full, so far as allowed by physical intervention of a companion; but negated the complete fulfilment by a return to its original position.

All this shows a marked advance of power; if generalised & applied it would be nearly omnipotence of Vashita over things animate.

Ishita.

The real defect of Tapas is imperfect Ishita preventing the full play of Aishwarya, Vashita, by giving a large hold to the Adverse, —just as in utthapana the real obstacle is defect of Anima which prevents the full play of Laghima-Mahima by giving a large hold to the opposition of the established physical powers.

There have been some movements of effective Ishita, but its general force is still submerged & tardy of effect, or, by result of tardiness, finally ineffective or [effective][4] at wrong time & in wrong circumstance.

The Ishita must now be applied with a greater force & effectivity so that, by experience of success, yashas, the mental response may acquire confidence and affirm it.

═

It is noticeable that when the opposite tendency or intention is fixed, insistence of Tapas gives it immediately an acceleration in the opposite sense. But this is often compensated by rapid exhaustion of tendency and a subsequent return in the sense of the Aishwarya or Vashita.

═

At present all attempt to enforce the Ishita by itself meets with an effective resistance, except in particular details, or leads to an inexact and deformed result.

---

[4] *MS* ineffective

It is the same whether Ishita is used or Ishita-Vashita.

When applied forcibly, however, it usually produces some effect; when passive, the effectiveness is occasional, except in nityakarma, where it is normal.

Utthapana

Arms—3 hours 15 minutes. No serious reaction, except the pure physical which was ineffective. There was an attempt at pranic unwillingness in the second hour, baffled & expelled; an [attempt] at physical pressure & unwillingness in the third hour, baffled & expelled; an attempt at acute physical pain in the left shoulder, at the end, baffled, dulled & expelled. After the completion, the body rejected fatigue & the desire of relief & rest. The contrast with yesterday is remarkable.

═

Vijnana

The conversion of intuitional into inspirational & inspirational-revelatory perception continues.

Thought & script also continue their inspirational-illuminative movement.

Trikaldrishti, inspirational, is preparing but not yet organised.

Rupa

Stable clear forms crude in the akash, but few, & insufficiently vivid.

On background, free, but not sufficiently clear-cut. Eg a street & house, with succession of moving images; men & women walking, riding, driving in carriages. Especially at end a carriage (motor?) driving at immense speed, seen continuously for almost a minute. Tejomay & varnamaya.

═

In the afternoon. All sorts of images in small, behind a thick but transparent mist of pranic akasha; all crude: women, men, men on horseback, animals, birds, houses, objects. Not numerous, but of all kinds. Spontaneous, stable, well-defined, but not complete. Eg a woman's head & shoulders, the dress very clear in every detail; a man on horseback, the back & saddle of the horse clear & distinct, also the general figure & outline of the man.

=

In swapnasamadhi, swift images only; one combination of rupa & intense sparsha.

1. A young Bengali, known type, saying in B^{li} [Bengali] "Once we get free from Ashanti, what next". Future?

2. S^{n} [Saurin] at end of a table with papers neatly ordered & placed upon it. An opera or field glass near him, at one side. Present or future?

3. Vividha Vani in jagrat. "Two hours at least", ie before tea is given & the sahitya etc is begun, for the movement of Siddhi contemplated.

=

Vijnana

Inspirational trikaldrishti is moving towards brihat satyam in its application to surrounding things & events. It has to be applied similarly to the distant & important.

Telepathy is proving correct in distant things.

A general satyam of thought telepathy is preparing.

=

Lipi

1. 2 (ie trikaldrishti) –

2. Satis universitatis (ie the time has now come for the development in the multiple actuality).

Vijnana.

Trikaldrishti is proving true even when it reveals itself to the body, the physical sensations, the obscure mind etc. Eg. an object sought in the darkness, the hand instinctively seeks the right place, if not interfered with by the mind. A physical consciousness presents itself of a certain fact or event, the mind being without a clue is unable to specify, although the kind of fact or event is felt or known. The fact or event justifies or produces itself. There are, also, wrong impulsions & perceptions which translate tendencies, possibilities, intentions, past facts or future events into present fact or immediate eventuality. But these are being more & more sorted out from the rest & stripped of sanction.

=

Asiddhi.

The sense of Asiddhi became again strong, but not overpowering at night. There was a partial withdrawal of the Mahakali bhava realised into a form less dominated by MK and more of the nature of Mahasaraswati with the Maheswari-Mahalakshmi type prominent.

This seems to be an operation for the increase of the Mahalakshmi colouring in the Chandibhava.

There was no failing of samata, no indifference or denial of Shakti within, but only a sense of want of means & sanction.

=

Samadhi.

Dream & samadhi continue on the same lines. In dream the present association is dispersed & attenuated

Nov. 22—

The morning devoted chiefly to work for the Review.

=

Utthapana

Arms, one hour, five minutes, owing to lack of time.

Yesterday's ambulatory utthapana for 3 hours & more left a violent stiffness in the calves, but this morning nothing was left of this reaction except a subtone of physical sluggishness in the outer annakosha.

This extended to the arms & loins as well.

=

Rupa

Freedom of variety, spontaneous, in the Akasharupa continues to develop. Stability is still of the confused or the incomplete clear rupa, not of the complete in clearness

Clear & fixed animal forms are becoming more frequent.

In antardrishta there is the same liberality; but there the veil of pranic mist is thicker; the figures come less forward, start less into distinctness.

═

Most of the day given to work for the Review, without leisure for the rest of the Sadhana, except at night.

═

The chief movement of the day, a recursus to states of apparent Asiddhi with the foundation of a perfect & catholic comprehension that overt Asiddhi is always veiled Siddhi—

It is this perception that is now being applied and enforced at every point.

Nov 23.

Sharira

Kamananda resumed yesterday morning was again obstructed entirely. This obstruction is apparently intended to enforce the perfect spontaneity of the normal Ananda which is not to be inconsistent with its response to inward Ishita. That is to say, there are to be eventually three operations of Kamananda

1. Normal, continual, spontaneous—the level of its pratistha.
2. Continual progressive heightening of the pratistha in response to a spontaneous ishita.
3. Temporary waves, swells, upheavals in response to exterior stimulus.

At present the real positive obstacle to the siddhi is the defect of Arogya.

═

Arogya still in the state of struggle. Nevertheless only in two circumstances is the obstruction still really important, 1. the digestive Assimilation; 2 the Kamic centre.

═

Saundarya, except in one slight movement, shows no definite progress

═

Yesterday, there was depression in the physical force and a certain sense of partial exhaustion.

=

There has been for some time a persistent pressure to introduce cough of a serious description. Except a recurrence of capricious irritation in throat and chest, this movement has not succeeded. But the body's sensitiveness to cold is persistent.

=

The remnants of skin-irritation tendency remain in recurrence, but are reduced in force of persistence, volume & extent; even in effective acuteness.

Kriti.

Kriti in one direction shows a certain positive mass of effectuality, but it is not yet decisive and cannot yet be pronounced final even in what is gained.

=

On another side it has been effective for attempt, but ineffective in result except for one or two details.

=

On a third it remains undecided.

=

Vijnana

Vijnana continues its pursuit of the mental brihat with increasing success

=

Aishwarya-Vashita when there is not *recursus*, continues to increase in effectiveness, but is still subject to the element of resistance —in things immediate and unimportant.

=

Affirmation

The affirmations are preparing a larger completeness. The mind now accepts more integrally what the buddhi had already accepted, the truth of anritam, the kalyana of akalyana, the effectivity of ineffectivities. In this way positive samata is being rendered more secure in its basis, as well as the perfect passivity that is the basis of the perfect activity, the absolute *nati* that is the basis of the

Dasya of Madhura and the absolute brihat of satyam which is the basis of complete ritam.

The mind cannot always distinguish the particular truth, kalyana & effectivity, but it has the belief which begins to be an intuition. It sees the thing formlessly when it does not see it in form

=

Kamananda again recurs with a perfect spontaneity. Aishwarya Vashita has to be replaced by Ishita & pure Aishwarya as a means of its progression.

=

The element of self-choice in the Tapas by the shadow of personality in the intellect has now to be exiled. Neither external action nor internal action is in the least to be determined by personal or intellectual choice. The Kavi in the Manishi has to give place to the pure Kavi dependent on the Ishwara, Krishna (Chaitanya, Sachchidananda).

=

Utthapana

Arms. 2½ hours; interrupted. Relics of yesterday's depression caused certain recurrences of pranic lassitude and unwillingness; but the physical strain was nil in the arms & shoulders & less in the back and loins. Utthapana is now quite normal for the 3 hours.

=

Vijnana

Ritam is now seeking to take full possession of the thoughts & perceptions, and also to translate into its own terms the habitual remnants of imagination.

=

Rupa

For the last few days there has been an attempt to redevelop manasic rupa in the antardrishta. Today in the bahirdarshi, pranamaya, manomaya, vijnanamaya, anandamaya, chaitanyamaya, sanmaya physical rupas of the butterfly (richly coloured) occurred successively, each very vivid, real & visible in its own akasha.

Nov. 24

Kriti

Remarkably successful in one point; but serious adverse signs in another. There is the same balance elsewhere.

Only telepathy is active here; decisive trikaldrishti is unable to manifest. The telepathy points to the probability of an adverse result.

═

There is strong obstruction to the rapidity of the development of Vijnana and to its constant action.

═

Sharira is also unable to advance.

═

Vijnana

It is Vashita, not Aishwarya & Ishita, that brings in the element of resistance, because it is still pursued in the material action by the habit of desire; a desire not formal or accepted, but vague, representing an excess of weight or pressure of pranic tapas rather than what is usually called desire, but easily creative of the psychological phenomena usually associated with or environing desire.

═

The temporary inactivity of vijnana is only in order to give time for the mentality to readjust certain inferior movements & prepare higher & more intense movements.

═

The force of Aiswarya & Ishita really maintains itself, as is shown in the two applications just now made. In one the general movement was executed with a few hesitations, in the other first a general movement, then a precise.

═

The resistance to Vashita is very great & strongly concentrated. It is when the pressure of Vashita is removed from the object, that the movement willed fulfils itself by the Aishwarya, less frequently by Ishita contained in the original Vashita.

This is an indication that the Vashita is the real point, (to a less degree the Ishita), in which Siddhi must be enforced.

═

Self-identification with all energies tends to lead to a certain *paresse* in enforcing the central energy when the mass of the others is against it. It is in order to emphasise the danger of this defect that, for a while, the self-identification has been drawn into the background & along with it the perfect samata that came with it.

═

The mental being passive & receptive, the Vijnanamaya tapas active, this is the formula for the Dharma and the Kriti. But the tapas is not yet entirely Vijnanamaya. Hence the element of mental stress & the appearance of the reactions of desire.

═

Rupa

The general development is intermitted; but there are occasional signs which show a progress behind the veil (eg—perfect image of head & neck of a horse, a knee with part of the leg above & below, the latter perfectly, the former initially stable).

═

Utthapana

Arms 3 hours. Depression in body; absence of pranic force & ananda. Defect of anima in the last half hour. Nevertheless the true reactions are dulled and reduced, though marked by a sullen obstinacy.

═

St. 1. Knowledge – to be the basis of perfected Tapas.
2. The True Christ. (vicarious exhaustion of the internal suffering).
3. Maya. Therefore. (ie the appearance of asiddhi & its reactions).

═

Rupa

Other rupas are less stable and represent the partial siddhi, from which the Yoga is advancing.

═

Vijnana

It is noticeable that Ishita works in some matters to combine things according to the immediate need. But this is not a predominant tendency.

═

The telepathy of exact thought was again active, chiefly in the form of a perception of the idea in the other mind and, secondly, of the word about to proceed from the mind in speech.

═

There was also a general movement at night of vijnana and Ananda; but not of any force of Tapas.

═

Tapas is at present discouraged by its failure to produce decided results..

═

Samadhi has also ceased to progress.

═

Samata persists in spite of a temporary & brief superficial disturbance.

Nov. 25—

Kriti doubtful.

═

Utthapana.

Arms; a little more than an hour. Interrupted by the arrival of visitors.—

═

Morning chiefly occupied with talk & with work for the Review. Afternoon also. The flow of the Sahitya is also a little hampered and imperfect in expression. Throughout the Siddhi there is the same deliberate depression of the effective Tapas

═

Lipi—

1. It is still the rapidity that is held in doubt
2. Defective Tapas.
3. It is still the figure of Asiddhi, not the reality.
4. Faith.

═

That is to say, the call just now is for faith *Swashaktyam bhagavati cha*,—especially the faith in the details of knowledge & Tapas & that a truth is carried in every suggestion, a fulfilment in every defect of strength & failure.

═

This faith is confirming its hold, but is not as yet secure against obscuration even in its general form and is continually combated in its application by inability to see the exact truth or fulfilment as well as frequent doubt of the explanation suggested.

═

Swapnasamadhi –

Occasional perception of incidents in the war, but obscured and shadowy..

═

Vijnana

A wider perception is already coming; it will normalise itself.

═

There is still much to be done tonight before sleeping, though very rapidly.

1. Restoration of vijnana activity.
2. The fixing of the personal relation
3. The reactivity of the Affirmations.

═

The vijnana has already begun to be active in perception with a wider satyam & also a wider, but not complete ritam. This includes activity of the inspirational vijnana and even a secondary activity of the revelatory thought.

═

The Vani also became active, Anandamaya, taking up the old mental relations and establishing the personal & human contact between the Master & the Jiva.

═

Trikaldrishti also was active in a limited sphere.

═

In Samadhi there was all, except the long-continued continuity. Even lipi was effective, in deep Samadhi, in a long-continued perusal.

Nov. 26th

The final perfection of the relations with the Lilamaya Ishwara has firmly begun. They are based on the madhura-dasya, the eternal Bala-Kishora-bhava & the Kautuka-krida. The difficulty that remains is on the side of the Jiva in the grave importance it attaches still to satya, mangala & siddhi.

This importance is real, as it is necessary to develop the Vyaya-lakshmi. But it will develop more rapidly when the samata of the Tapas is effected.

At the same time even in the Adhara the Bala-Kishore-bhava is developing and has attained a certain mass in its force of realisation (pajas).

=

Vangmaya thought has suddenly passed from the inspirational-illuminative to the pure inevitable forms of speech. The new form is yet deficient in *Asu* and *Ananda*, because the *Prakasha* it carries with it touches directly the obscurer parts of the mentality which give a less clear response and not the illuminated mind or sentiment which for the present is a little quiescent.

This quiescence is necessary in order that the obscurer parts may also become capable of satyam and convinced of satyam.

Sometimes, however, the Prakasha, Asu and Ananda are allowed to manifest in order to convince the Prana that it is the "true & happy Vak".—*sunrita*

=

Kamananda still fluctuates owing to the imperfection of the chakra. The Pranic dynamis increases in the body, but is not yet in possession.

=

The Arogya is also in the same uncertain condition. Its force increases and its pressure. But it is not in possession and is unable to expel the recurrent habitualities of Roga. The latter rely on tamasic dhriti of habit for their long persistence, though they are no longer sure of ultimate survival.

=

The bhava of the Mechanist, Yantri, has now become humanised to the consciousness and is taking its place as the rule of the play; the Child-God managing his toy-engines. This is an idealisation & fulfilment in the brihat of the former relations, mental, sentimental, restricted, with the boy Krishna.

=

The Bhaya Anandamaya once promised is now also manifesting and takes the form of the same relation, Bala-Kali at play with the Bala-Krishna.

═

All this can now be reestablished in the cadre of the satyam ritam brihat.

═

Therefore the Affirmations are taking their greater, deeper & fuller form.—to begin with 5–7

5. The Personality of the Ishwara Krishna present (no longer merely to be present) in the consciousness, governing all the activities

6. Dasya of Madhura the personal relation of the Jiva with Krishna—the dasya (to be) tertiary with the most intense consciousness of passive yantrabhava in the whole system.

7. Acceptance of all bhoga as a slave & instrument of the Lover to be the principle of the madhura.

Among the first four affirmations, 3 & 4 are powerfully developing.

3. The principle of Affirmation replacing the principle of rejection and denial.

4. Ritam developing no longer in isolated or combined details, but in the undivided brihat of the satyam with truth of detail and combination as a play of the ritam satyam brihat.

Undivided means in practice free from the brihat & leads to the second affirmation and that again to the first.

1. Ananda as the base, free & joyous Tapas & Prakasha as the special instrument.

2. The universal sense of the Anandamaya Lilamaya Krishna in the Brahmadrishti as the continent, cause, lord & Purusha of all the conscious activity—

That is to say, the relation now established personally has to be seen as the Truth in all others & in the universe in general.

═

The eighth & ninth affirmations are still being prepared for their effectivity, but are not yet fully realised in consciousness or dominant in fact; but only realised in perception and increasing in tendency.

8. Siddhi must be on the basis of the largeness in the five worlds and not of a selecting and limited siddhi.

9. Time must be no longer a determinative, but only an instrumental factor in the siddhi. So with Space & Circumstance.

═

Utthapana

1 hour 8 minutes—interrupted for an hour by outside circumstance, then half hour. The depression of the physical force continues. Unwillingness and strong reaction in dorsal muscles.

═

Distant telepathy justified . . kriti unsuccessful.

═

The attack on the karma continues, but hovers around without actually touching; there is always however the menace of an Amangala constituting a serious blow to the Siddhi—

—

Rupa

The human figures (small, crude) that now come, chiefly in groups, in the Akasha tend now to be often more clear, complete & stable.

═

Lipi

1. Safety intensified—(jyotirmaya stable)
2 Religiosity definitely denied.
3 settling the utility of the opposition (varna)

═

The exact utility of the opposition is now being settled to the perception both generally & in each case. At the same time the sensational revolt against Asiddhi is losing its force and giving way to serenity in front with Ananda behind. The emotional Ananda has long been gained, but it was besieged by the sensational nirananda. This is now in course of amelioration, although it has not yet disappeared.

═

Nov 27.

The mass of the Shakti must now turn towards effective Tapas siddhi applied to 1. *Samadhi.* 2. *Sharira.* 3 *Karma.*

The rest is so well assured that in them the faith cannot falter or be deficient.

Thought telepathy is now definitely organising itself.—

═

Lipi—

1. 31
2. 3 (ie the Rupa etc to be made effective for 1).
3. 13— Kama.

═

Kamananda active as yesterday. When in activity there is a much greater force of continuity, but not of intensity + continuity, than formerly. There is, however, an influence, not natural but imposed of the Asana.

═

Tapas—

The first necessity in the Tapas is persistence in the line of action or of will chosen.

═

Utthapana

Arms. 2 hours. Physical depression, though still existent, is diminished.

═

Samadhi

Activity in swapna-samadhi. Continued action a little more deliberate and prolonged than usual, but not very appreciably.

═

Kamananda strives to enforce itself with occasional intensity. It is only entirely discontinued for a long time when the attention is absorbed in some engrossing activity. Brief kamananda once more occurred in samadhi.

═

Akasharupa on background is active, but only human figures come out spontaneously clear, except in rare cases. Groups & landscapes are common.

═

Lipi—

1 Safety from the results of the intensity of delight—
(first, simply "safety from the intensity of delight[”])
2. safety
3. perfection of the safety.
4. belittle . . soulless. (the opposition)
5 before it is effective some little delight to be confirmed.
6. tangent.
7 telepathy . . enjoy the delight of others.

═

Kamananda still continues (10.30 pm) when there is *smarana*. The freedom from Asana & Smarana has not yet been reestablished.

═

Samadhi

Remarkable dreams of past and future; absolutely original & impossible under present circumstances; yet perfectly coherent, except for a slight admixture of present associations, trifling in quantity, yet almost sufficient to distort them & veil their sense & purport to the intellect.

═

Nov 28

Kamananda

"Safety from the results of delight", that is the bodily reaction[,] is beginning; since yesterday in spite of its daylong continuance, there was only [an][5] ineffective attempt at physical exhaustion.

There is this morning a struggle between the Siddhi which insists on the continuance of the Ananda & the prohibition of Siddhi which insists that after a day of manifestation should follow a day of reserve.

The Ananda is there in the mentality of the body, held back from the outward shell, but affecting it and occasionally breaking out in distinctness at a point.

═

---

[5] *MS* any

Trikaldrishti—

1. German defeat in Poland . . justified
2. Blowing up of B^{r}. [British] battleship—tapasic trik. from subconscient.
3. Completeness of German failure in the West—

All these were telepathic trikaldrishti, the decisive behind in 1. & 2, were not accepted because of tapasic doubt.

All these results (1. 3. & more) are in accordance with previous Will—exercised from the beginning of the war as an aid or instrument to active Asura powers against Rakshasa powers—until a month ago.

Utthapana

Arms 2 hours with 3 interruptions, of 20 minutes, 2 minutes & 5 minutes, two of them for correcting proofs. Entire absence of pranic enthusiasm, void of mahima, absence of force in laghima; great defect of anima in the whole back. The physical being is depressed & discouraged in the matter of utthapana.

Asiddhi

The struggle in the Ananda resulted in an entire denial of Kamananda all the morning. There was also a violent, persistent and increasing attack of asiddhi, suspending all progress and bringing back in miniature the old movements of asamata.

All three mental principles of the old sadhana were insisted upon.

1. The test of siddhi by destruction of siddhi—long recognised as absurd

2. The test of siddhi by continual recurrence of asiddhi showing [each][6] time a diminution of the latter's effective force.

3. The principle of exhaustion—which is a stupidity, since all things are infinite & the things combated can be infinitely replenished. The only true means are knowledge, illumination of the whole being, and force to keep out the attacks of the Asiddhi. If

---

[6] *MS* such a

knowledge is clouded in any part of the being, force also must fail.

=

The constant status and activity of the Vijnana is the only remedy. All the rest are merely evolutions intended to prepare the system for vijnana.

=

Nov 29.

A general quiescence since yesterday—More preparation for Sahitya than Yogic progress. Only in certain points of progressive indication rather than realisation was the latter active.

=

The impulse towards Karma continues, but does not take material form. It is only the subjective action that continues and this is in effective detail scattered & without dominant mass & in mass slowly preparatory without effective detail.

=

Lipi—

1. Major . . inert— (the passivity prepares for a greater effectivity.)
2 Efflorescence of the righteousness (ritam) in the ideality
telepathy
3 Choose destruction of difficulties by effective telepathy.

=

Utthapana

2 hours. Depression still continues. The reaction & defect of anima & mahima manifested in the second hour & were very strong.

=

Asiddhi continues, although no longer pure asiddhi.

=

Study of Veda in the afternoon (Hymns of Gotama Rahugana)—

=

In the morning Kamananda for a time overcame the obstruction, spontaneously. Obstruction returned by smarana.

It is a mark of the Asiddhi that telepathy & suggestion are extremely active, but there is no Light & no discernment (Jyotir Daksha), no power to distinguish the rightly interpreted & applied telepathy from the wrong or to give its right place & value to the suggestion . .

When, however, a strong will or force, Tapas, is applied, there is a sort of unillumined rightness (ritam) which gives the right value & brings even the right trikaldrishti.

This is because the knowledge descends from the vijnana & is able to pierce the cloud; but the substance of the truth comes and not the light of the truth.

==

The vijnana began again to become active in the evening, but slowly & incompletely.

==

Samadhi

The same circumstance of dream constantly repeated. But the nature of dream & samadhi made no progress.

==

The obscuration of vijnana contains a movement of siddhi which is divined and asserted by the tapasic suggestion, questioned and denied by the superficial experience.

The acceptance of the internal light in the obscure tapas, even when it contradicts the immediate experience, becomes then a necessary development in order that the obscure tapas by justification may assume the habit of light.

This assumption will be the siddhi of Vijnana.

Nov 30.

(1) आ विद्युन्मद्भिर्मरुतः स्वर्कै रथेभिर्यात ऋष्टिमद्भिरश्वपर्णैः। आ वर्षिष्ठया न इषा वयो न पप्तता सुमायाः॥

The passage indicates the nature of the change which the period of Asiddhi is intended to serve or prepare

==

(2) इमं स्तोममर्हते जातवेदसे रथमिव संमहेमा मनीषया।
This defines farther the वर्षिष्ठया इषा—

(3) अनुष्वधमा वह मादयस्व स्वाहाकृतं वृषभ वक्षि हव्यं।
ie. Bring the divine knowledge etc according to the self-fixity

attained by the nature, that is to say, the basis provided in its formation for the revelation of what is itself infinite; let the delight be in accordance; then let the action proceed from that basis of formed knowledge & delight, but swahakrita, turned into a self energy which produces fresh results & arrives at fresh formations through those results.

═

Vijnana

Once more active in script, perception, thought, & subordinately in vani, with the inspirational nature containing intuition & discrimination and at once expressing & veiling in its direct action the revelatory faculty.

The stress now is on the full value of the tapasic & the right value of the tamasic suggestions, ie on a full & complete ritam & rinam on the basis of a full & complete satyam

This has to be realised in the trikaldrishti, in time, arrangement, place of action & event.

Devabhava manifest as Vishnu with Agni prominent & in Agni Vayu, in Agni-Vayu Aryaman & Bhaga, Indra concealed in Agni Vayu, Mitra & Varuna behind Aryaman-Bhaga. Vishnu & Brihaspati are one. Surya is Vishnu working as Pushan & Yama. Rudra is a bhava of Vishnu. The Maruts are the host of Agni Rudra.

═

Lipi

1. Fierce tapas

2 disability in the telepathy is not of thought, but of the delight of others (not of the universal Anandamaya; for that is known)

Samadhi.

A considerable movement of Siddhi in the Samadhi.—

1. Jagrat Bahirdarshi—restoration of the inferior, inchoate or formative movement of Rupa

2. Antardarshi—a greater formative activity, crude, with all sorts of rupa. One instance of crude, dense & developed following each other in a single form, repeatedly & with some initial stability even of the developed.

3. Continuous & organised vangmaya thought in swapnasamadhi, connected and continuous on supramental level even when mind is sushupta and retained by the mind when it awakes

4 Continual & sustained perceptive thought in sw. sm [swapna samadhi]; sometimes vijnanamaya, sometimes satya manomaya

5. Perfect coherence of lipi in swapnasamadhi, frequent

6. Coherence of vani, both of the Master & the Many in sw. sm.

7. Repeated Kamananda in swapnasamadhi.

8. Persistence of the same scene in sw. sm. rupa with changing figures in the scene, separated by intervals of non-sight. (eclipse of rupa)

9. Continuous organised action, firmly held in alternate swapna & waking; rupa first seen by chakshu, then only by manasa vision.

10. Persistence of the same scene recurrent with continuous action, more firmly held than before, but separated by intervals of non-sight.

=

Kamananda again continuous for a time, & attempting against obstruction the complete continuity.

=

Vijnana continues its development of satyam ritam

=

Tapas & vijnana are being combined in Trikaldrishti-vashita, but without any perfection as yet of combination.

=

Kamananda again succeeded in being continuously active in the evening, but afterwards failed for want of smarana.

=

Utthapana

Arms — one hour. Some defect of anima at commencement.

=

Study of the Veda. Mandala I

=

Dream

Once again obscure and dogged with present association.

December—

==

The month of November has been marked principally by a sort of final and irrevocable confirmation of the organised fullness of the two first Chatusthayas. The one defect is in the Faith & Ishwarabhava,—the faith not in the Yogasiddhi which is irrevocably confirmed,—but in the Karma or rather in the Kriti, as opposed to the Sahitya and Dharma. The faith in the latter is subject to a proviso or doubt in the intellect whether something may not happen through failure of Kriti which will prevent either completion in this life of the full Yogasiddhi, ie the physical & active, or else the complete & successful exteriorisation of the Dharma & Sahitya.

The deficient faith in Kriti reacts and prevents the confirmation of the Ishwarabhava and this again produces a certain fluctuation, instability and limitation of the Krishna-Kali relation and consciousness which is the basis of successful Kriti. The deficiency of the faith itself is due to experience of deficient effectivity of the Tapas—unachieved organisation of the Vijnana.

==

The second result of November has been the confirmation of the Sarvam Anantam Jnanam in the Brahmadarshana with the Ananda constantly, but not continuously manifested. The occasional veiling of the Ananda Brahman carries with it a veiling of the Lilamaya Personality in all things & persons; for the two go together

==

The third result has been the confirmation of the satyam brihat in Jnana and with a less firmness and fullness in the trikaldrishti & telepathy and the beginnings of a full and organised ritam. The same movement has begun, but is not yet accomplished in Tapas. Samadhi is being organised in preparation for the same movement, but is not yet sufficiently advanced for the final confirmation.

═

Sharira and Kriti are being prepared; Sahitya is deployed, but not gathered together, Dharma has begun to deploy. In Sharira the Ananda is advanced, becoming more & more capable of organisation and continuity; Arogya is struggling with the tamasic dhriti of the opposition; Utthapana is alternately strong and oppressed for long periods; but inactive in certain directions & confined as yet to imperfect secondary utthapana; Saundarya struggles to manifest itself positively in certain details, in which it makes a slow advance, but is suppressed by an iron resistance in its generality.

═

Shuddhi, Mukti, Bhukti are approaching completion; Siddhi has accomplished its basis in all but Sharira and Tapas of Kriti.

═

In December the line of progress indicates, logically, a confirmation of the Ananda Brahman, the Lilamaya Personality, the Krishna Kali Bhava, the subjective & physical Ananda, and a development of the satyam ritam brihat in all parts of the Vijnanachatusthaya. In Sharira & Kriti, apart from Ananda, no definite progress is indicated by the past advance. Some progress is, however, inevitable in Arogya & Utthapana. Saundarya & Kriti are much more doubtful.

December 1st

The Ritam continues to grow in an increasing firmness of the satyam, even in trikaldrishti & telepathy.

This growth of the satyam ritam is communicating itself to the Tapas.

═

The difficulty of the Tapas is to harmonise the universal, the central & the individual Will. The universal is realised in the present & past progression. The central having realised itself in the past & present determines & prepares the future. The individual submits to the central and accepts its part in the preparation & determination.

The difficulty is to do it consciously knowing its part in relation to the whole. To know its line of action, but not the results & their relation to the whole plan & result, is not sufficient.

=

Samadhi

In jagrat antardarshi the variety is maintained but no appreciable progress made.

In swapnasamadhi, perceptive thought & vangmaya became active spontaneously at a great depth of samadhi. Vani was spontaneous, along with shabda, thought & vangmaya, at a lesser depth.

All these movements are now becoming normal and there is a tendency for activities of the jagrat to persist self-conscious & undistorted in the swapna.

This, however, is in the daytime, not at night. At night nidra predominates.

Also in swapnasamadhi, repeated kamananda[,] continuous action & conversation. The action continues with a faded chhayamaya rupa in jagrat antardarshi or light swapna. It does not yet last long in profound samadhi in which alone rupa is vivid, brilliant or varnamaya.

=

Lipi

1 Essentiality of the twilight is the tapas
2 Internal light in the tapas.

=

Ananda—

There is now the physical Ananda of shitasparsha & atmospheric cold, but not yet entirely of the sense of chill.

Certain strong touches of burning now produce Ananda.

=

Kamananda throughout the day; subdued only while walking or working and usually then suppressed. Continued till the time of retiring.

=

Aishwarya very successful, especially with regard to the rain which stops or diminishes usually in response to the Ishita-Aishwarya & sometimes stops altogether.

==

Trikaldrishti acts frequently now in the Kriti, but only in immediate things and details; it does [not] act largely or with combination.

==

Kamananda, suppressed or dull, until sleep.

==

In certain directions Arogya seems to be getting the upper hand. In others it is still stationary—

==

December 2d

The Kamananda continues with a disposition to greater intensity. This is the third day of continuity.

==

Arogya

Arogya seems definitely to have the upper hand in the matter of irritation, although the dhriti of the roga is not yet expelled.

In assimilation the old symptoms of roga still recur but without the same force of persistence or hold as before.

Dregs of toothache, headache, cold & fever still hang about the system & seek to touch it when there is exposure or other provocation. But they do not seriously materialise.

The only other roga is the weakness of the chakra which as yet shows no apparent signs of yielding.

At present exposure to rain & cold (moderate) is being persistently resorted to in order to compel equality in the body. Ananda is assured, not yet Arogya.

==

Tapas of Kriti is still effective only in defence; its positive force of effectiveness is scattered and limited.

==

Utthapana

Arms $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Reaction commenced, with the completion of the first hour and was fairly strong. The depression is not yet conquered.

* * *

Ananda

The difficulty of the asana has been conquered. Kamananda continued, sometimes subdued, sometimes half-suppressed, sometimes intense (even for some minutes together[)] during the whole period of the utthapana, which was throughout ambulant.

Smarana & waking have now to be overpassed by the Ananda as means and conditions of its continuance.

It is not dependent on smarana for its recurrence, but seeks its aid for its continuity & ceases its action when the attention is entirely absorbed elsewhere.

* * *

R.V [Rig Veda]

अयं जायत मनुषो धरीमनि होता यजिष्ठ उशिजामनुव्रतमग्निः स्वमनु व्रतं।
विश्वश्रुष्टिः सखीयते रयिरिव श्रवस्यते।
अदब्धो होता निषददिळस्पदे परिवीत इळस्पदे॥

This reference describes the movement which has occupied the morning; the growth of Agni as master of Tapas fulfilling the desires (anandamaya ishita) by self-effectivity of the Tapas; taking up all the inspirations based upon the Ananda and becoming no longer a mechanist of doubtful results but an entire friend. The last line suggests the result intended for the movement, the full establishment of complete manifested Tapas in the revelatory Vijnana (ilaspade).

* * *

Samadhi

In Antardrishta scenes with long continued action, eg two riders passing away from a great building at the meeting of two roads, two others galloping up, carriages driving, etc; occur freely. There is a vivid & precise sensation of the action & the movement as well as the vision, less often the sound. But in the vision only some details are quite clear & precise, although all is intelligible and more or less visible. Separate stable figures occur, but not with sufficient stability, clear, but not with sufficient body & vividness.

At night on the borders of sleep & waking there were many perfect rupas, scenes, groups, troops, seen entirely by the manas-drishti, but also with a greater or less clearness by the chakshu. But none of these were stable or sufficiently prominent before the eye except for a moment.

Some images are entirely [stable][7] but incomplete. All are crude, but sometimes dense or developed crude. Crude dense & crude developed also occur as well as their opposites

This restores the antardrishta rupa, after a long period of asiddhi, to its former efficiency. It must go farther and recover the efficiency it had in the jail period of the sadhana & more, but with the vijnana to understand and interpret its figures.

Perfect images, very fleeting, begin to occur in the jagrad antardrishta.

=

In Swapnasamadhi there has been maintenance of gains with better combination of continuous shabda, sparsha, rupa. But the force of the samadhi was inferior to its force during the last two days.

=

Kamananda almost suppressed but occasionally active in the afternoon, active in the evening.

=

Dream coloured by present associations, but extremely detailed and coherent.

=

December 3d

Morning taken up with work for Review.

=

Utthapana.

Arms, one hour: defect of anima, depression of energy.

=

---

[7] *MS* stables

Kamananda at first not active except occasionally, with smarana; afterwards active

═

Afternoon

Kamananda active

═

Rupa & Samadhi very active, but as yet no definite progress, except a more free & spontaneous activity of manusha shabda in jagrat as well as in swapna.

═

The activity of Rupa is on the whole swifter & more energetic; the organisation of the elements of Samadhi oscillates

═

Slackness of siddhi throughout the day

═

In the evening Vijnana became more active; but there was a recrudescence of unfaith in Kriti owing to inefficiency of Tapas—

═

Dream continues in the same condition—Force of Rupa is strong in Samadhi.

═

Dec. 4th

Vijnana once more active, but not with a full activity.

═

Kamananda discontinued in the later afternoon & evening, resumed this morning.

═

Strong denial of Tapas for a while seems again to be giving way; but there is no radical change in its force of effectivity.

═

Utthapana

1 hour. Defect of Anima; but less depression of energy.

═

The action of the Vijnana is still insufficient in light, force, ananda and in regularity.

The faith in the Kriti is not yet really restored.

The Affirmations also are clouded and defective

==

Asamata is now only manifest in occasional, separated & more or less subdued touches. Force becomes depressed, but no longer entirely inactive, although it lacks certitude and enthusiasm and regularity of action—

==

In Swapna Samadhi entire stability & entire perfection of rupa for the first time manifested. There was also a more prolonged continuity of action & shabda.

==

Kamananda recurrent throughout the day, until sleep. Recurrent also on the morning of the fifth in Samadhi & waking, before rising. This is unprecedented.

Dec 5th

Kamananda active.

==

Samata and Shakti passive, but strong.

==

The essence of the negative Samata has not really been shaken by any occurrence or contrariety; the positive is still a little feeble with regard to *amangala* and *asatya* and therefore easily overborne, but it is there at the bottom and always emerges as soon as the impact has passed.

==

Faith is arriving at a poise when the intellect neither asserts nor denies, but simply awaits confirming or refuting result. Meanwhile, none but convincing confirmation or refutation is accepted as final, since appearances may always mislead, even when they are strong and firm in actual incidence. They may show only an immediate tendency, or at most the immediate and not the final destiny.

==

What has now to be determined is the power of the Tapassiddhi— It is now a question whether faith is necessary for its complete action. In an instance just given,—the movements of a fly hébété and its escape from two spiders on each side of it,—faith at first made all the difference, but afterwards concentrated energy with an unresolved intellect was sufficient to produce the exact movements willed & their exact result.

═

In other cases, it is evident that the lower Tapas is only one force among others, through which a higher direction works. The struggle now is to exchange the lower Tapas for the higher direction..

Kamananda recurrent and often continuous throughout the day.

═

Swapna-Samadhi

Lipi at first coherent in small phrases, afterwards great bulk with entire uncoherence, from which towards the end some attempt at emergence of order proceeded.

═

Samata

Positive Samata is steadily advancing, though mechanical touches of depression of a purely physical order still continue..

Preference in Tapas is still accompanied by vague reactions in the outward nervous consciousness of the physical body, but these are merely a survival of the old habit. There is a great mass of true samata behind in which titiksha, udasinata & nati are fused into a complete harmony of shanti.

The perfect Ananda still depends on faith in details founded on vijnana & faith in kriti founded on habit of effective Tapas-siddhi.

═

Lipi.

First entirety of lipi, then of telepathy.

═

Swapna-Samadhi

Continued growth of perfectly stable rupa, but this does not yet hold its field entirely. The rest is in a state of struggle to advance.

═

Utthapana—one hour—defective anima..

Dec 6th

Vijnana

This morning it appeared that the combination of Tapas & trikaldrishti has made great progress; it is not yet perfect in all details or in decisive trikaldrishti but the telepathic parts are well-combined. This achievement is as yet typical only, but the type is surer & more equable than it has been in the past. There is also a movement towards its generalisation.

═

There is a forward movement towards entirety in lipi and in telepathic trikaldrishti. In the former the defect is insufficient vividness and a stability not yet perfectly assured. In the latter insufficiency of material and too haphazard a selection.

═

The eagerness of tapas and the desire of rapidity are being entirely suppressed in order that they may not interfere with effectivity of tapas and effectuation of rapidity.

═

Lipi

1. It is the intelligent aishwarya that is being established.
2. It is the entirety of the lipi (that is to say, the siddhi represented by the appearance of this entire phrase sufficiently stable in the akasha or sadhara).
3. It is the intensity of the entirety (that is, the long stability and the combination of many phrases not yet established).

Utthapana

Defective Anima almost stereotyped. At the beginning & end oppression of energy.

═

Kamananda continues, but is constantly besieged & obstructed, especially when walking. The siddhi of it recently established is not yet permanent. It is once more partly subject to Asana & Smarana, & even so obstructed and often oppressed.

═

Swapnasamadhi.

Extremely successful. Activity of form, scene, word. Stable continuity of action in perfect stability of scene was fixed into the chittakasha and securely possessed by the eye which did not for a moment lose the rupa, and this not in one case, but two or three. The continuity was long & perfect.

=

Kamananda recurrent, but much obstructed. In the afternoon it was continuous for a time with intensity.

=

The organised vijnana interrupted for some days past showed signs of recovery. Truncated vijnana is always active.

Lipi grows in spontaneous frequency of entirety.

Jagrat rupa other than chitra is only occasionally active.

=

Dec 7th

Vijnana

Aishwarya Vashita acted successfully on seven movements of birds & insects in a minute or two with only slight resistance. The Aishwarya from above was effective; it is accompanied by a movement of effort contradicting the Ishwarabhava, but this tends to fall away.

In other instances afterwards (children, fourfooted animals) the effect was incomplete, compelling only a partial movement in the sense suggested, or came only after a long denial. But in all cases there was either whole or half or three quarters success. In other cases the resistance showed itself only in partial divagations. Only in one case was the final movement contrary, & there the Will was not persisted in. In another the object came back after a short absence & executed the required movement.

The Power is not yet perfect, but it shows a great advance on its past effectuality. It is at the degree 50°–60° & is now almost habitual. But it does not yet apply with equal force to Sharira & Kriti. There it only produces effect in details, in movements, & after long pressure in broad & final results. But there is no mastery over the object, only a more or less successful pressure. Adverse result is still frequent.

=

Lipi is recovering its former occasional intensity of action.

=

In Aishwarya it now happens frequently that even the set intention of the object is often changed, a new thought or impulse being suggested which fulfils the required movement. This siddhi is not yet complete. As a rule a set intention in the object especially if an adult man, is too strong for the Vashita.

Ishita occasionally acts with great effectiveness.

==

All the morning the general efficacy of Tapas has maintained itself, but against a greater resistance. It has fallen back from 60° to 50°.

In only one instance the final result was repeatedly baulked, even though it was several times on the point of completion. In others partial effect. In most complete.

Ishita is manifesting the same efficiency as Aishwarya-Vashita.

==

Kamananda mostly obstructed in the morning & early afternoon, became again active, spontaneous and independent of smarana.

It was afterwards again oppressed, but continued to be recurrent—

==

There was an attempt at a general attack on the health, but it did not materialise except slightly at one minor point, throwing back a siddhi that had almost been attained.

==

The Ananda of atmospheric cold is more & more confirmed.

==

An attack of events was made on the samata & shakti but failed to depress them. Calm & Tapas continued. Only faith was slightly & externally touched.

==

The organisation of Vijnana has been resumed, in Script & Reference especially.

There is some difficulty in establishing the pure inevitability of the Vangmaya.

The basis of vijnanamaya progression is now definite.

December 8th

Ez. [Ezekiel] 34. 17. . 31

==

Lipi.

1. Judge (in vijnana)
2. Startling effectivities.
3. Sleeping lioness (Durga-Kali).

==

R. [Reference]

1 And they took him and brought him unto Areopagus, saying "May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is. For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know therefore what these things mean.["]

2 Ezra V. 1–2

==

Utthapana

Arms. $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. (Yesterday $1\frac{1}{4}$ hour)

At first exactly as during the last few days, strong defect of anima with occasional oppression of energy. But as soon as the body refused to yield to the Asiddhi, the old Siddhi manifested itself. The utthapana could have been continued for the full three hours.

It is evident therefore that the siddhi here also is safe, asiddhi factitious, except in so far as it is a defect of anima and of sraddha of the body in its own progress.

==

Tapas was less effective than yesterday.

Strong isolated effect of Kriti in the vicinity.

==

It is now definitely established that samata and shakti cannot be overthrown. Even faith in Kriti suffers only from uncertainty, not from actual breach. It is still limited in its scope.

==

The organisation of vijnana is proceeding almost of itself, but it occupies the gross of the attention. For attention is still necessary, not for its action of a kind, but for its perfect and organised & continuous action.

As soon as this necessity ceases, the whole of the attention will be concentrated on Karma & Sharira. Already this is being prepared.

There is a certain promise of greater rapidity in the siddhi.

=

Physical Ananda makes progress. Kamananda (as indicated first by a reference) became strong & spontaneous in the evening & so continued with a slight break till sleep.

Tivra inflicted on another subtle body was communicated to this physical body in the waking state. This usual[ly] happens only in Samadhi.

Subjective Ananda is now ready to possess the physical prana.

=

Dream coherent, but chiefly a combination of old familiar thoughts, once customary, now forgotten.

Stable rupa & continuous action, shabda etc now common in swapna-samadhi; but not usually with a firm hold on the Akasha.—

December 9th

Vijnana

Rapid effectivity of Aishwarya-Vashita increases in frequency.

The full effectivity now depends on rapidity & on the removal of the resistance offered by previous intention, will, temperament or nervous & physical tendency.

When this is accomplished, Aishwarya & Ishita will be completely siddha.

=

Proof continually comes of ultimate effectiveness of tapas, even when at first it seems to have failed.

Also of justice of telepathic perception, even when immediate outward circumstances seem to contradict it.

=

Decisive trikaldrishti is acquiring brihat & even rightness of circumstance, but there is still an absence of well-combined ritam.

=

Predictions for today were put down in yesterday's script—

1. a great advance in lipi
2. a great advance in telepathy
3. some advance in decisive trikaldrishti
4. some advance in effectuality of tapas.
5. some advance in rupasamadhi.

2. 3. 4. are already being fulfilled.

═

Utthapana

Arms. 2 hours 42 minutes—(interrupted at end by having to bathe). Defect of anima slight, except in reaction of stiffness when bringing down the arms. Oppression slight, occasional & ineffective. Defect of anima in back diminished.

Ananda.

Movements of pain & discomfort formerly acute are now giving Ananda.

═

Lipi

Lipi is becoming more vividly legible & intelligible. Formerly its stability was limited to phrases of four or five words & usually existed only in separate words, now it is extending itself to short sentences.

Rupa

All rupa siddhi is shown to be safe. The perfect forms are trying to become stable before the direct regard.

Developed & dense forms formerly only visible at night (in lamplight) now begin to appear by daylight. These, when a little loose and vague in material are fairly stable.

In antardrishta developed & crude forms (objects), stable, have begun to be more frequent, but they are far from being perfect. Long, continued action of a perfectly stable figure (horse & man) is preserved.

═

Utthapana

Arms, vertical, sitting, 1 hr 18 minutes. This makes a total of 4 hours & restores suddenly the siddhi of the 23d & 24th November after a decline of exactly a fortnight.

Physical weariness is being replaced by pranic unwillingness. This was manifest in the last half hour.

══

Kamananda

Very intense at times and tending to be continuous in its intensity.

Script

All five predictions of yesterday's script have now been fulfilled. In addition two others.

6. Utthapana and Arogya will continue to be pressed.
7. Kamananda will gain continually and not go back.

Lipi

1. The perfection of the lipi.
2 The intensity of the delight.
3 The liberty of the body.

These, it seems, are three of the siddhis that are now to be evolved.

4. The intellectuality resists the ideality for a space.
5. It is longing to be justified in the ideality.

══

Vijnana

In vangmaya the vak suddenly attained to the entirety of the pure inevitable form & recovered intensity of force, light & ananda.

══

Lipi repeated its gains in antardrishta.

══

Dream less troubled by personal association, but not perfectly organised.

══

Vaidyuta Ananda has begun, but needs smarana and does not yet hold the body.

Dec 10th

Samata

The Samata (positive) is being frequently tried by the old movements that used to disturb it. Momentary physical disturbance still comes, but is held by the Chit-Tapas & immediately rectified.

It is allowed to recur in order that the displeasure of the physical being may be turned into the pleasure of a contact forcibly endured.

=

Brahman

The Jnanam Brahma is now as strong as the Sarvam was previously & all beings are seen as personalities of that Brahman.

Anandam & Anantam are held a little back in order that there may be a full sense of weakness (defect) and depression, grief etc as movements of Anantam & Anandam—self-constraining movements. This cannot be felt when there is too strong a sense of the Purna & Vaisva, for then the minor & constrained movement is overpowered by the major & free movement.

When the Ananda of this lesser movement is entirely grasped by the sensation, then the full Anandamaya Purusha in all things can be fixed finally in the darshana.

=

Kamananda yesterday was at a very high level of intensity; there has been this morning an attempt to take advantage of the principle of recoil to interrupt it. But it continues with the same intensity.

=

It is now equally capable of continuous intensity while walking, but not equally habituated to it.

=

Utthapana

$3\frac{1}{4}$ hours, walking. Great stiffness as result of yesterday; occasionally violent oppression, at other times heavy pressure of defect of anima. At end, last half hour, acute pain in the shoulder-muscles.

=

It is now clear that laghima & mahima are sufficiently developed to maintain secondary utthapana of any part of the body, for any time, if allowed by the defect of anima. The latter is stronger in some parts of the body, weaker in others. Hence the variations of the power of utthapana. Mahima & laghima are not yet strong enough for tertiary utthapana, ie utth. of the whole body raised from the earth.

=

Ananda

The acute continued pain in the muscles recurring & sometimes almost constantly for nearly half an hour came as ananda to the psychic prana and to the physical as pain in which it took & felt pleasure. To a part of the physical prana it was pure ananda.

The liberty of the body in ananda is therefore assured, even already gained and has only to be applied uniformly.

Unexpected pain usually used to surprise the body with the negation of ananda; now even unexpected pain comes as ananda, though to a less degree than watched or anticipated pain.

Sharira.

Liberty of the body is assured in ananda, waits only for the removal of defect of anima in utthapana, but is still to be won in arogya & saundarya.

It is noticeable that defect of anima in the back & legs obeyed the prohibition of the Tapas and that the after reaction is being reduced.

The sense of exhaustion after effort is being expelled from the physical consciousness.

═

Vijnana

During utthapana a great & large activity of vijnanamaya thought harmonising all oppositions, explaining all appearances, justifying all forces, illuminating the truth of all suggestions. This movement has farther fortified the positive samata against all sorts of attacks and is preparing the enthusiastic faith.

═

Utthapana

$2\frac{1}{4}$ hours after meals making all together $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The pranic unwillingness much reduced since yesterday; in the body only an effort, in the left arm[,] the usual offender, at pain quickly reduced to mere stiffness. The utthapana could have been continued indefinitely.. Defect of anima is rapidly ceasing to be an effective obstacle.

═

Ananda

Continued ahaituka tivrananda with smarana, but overriding & independent of physical will, continued even in samadhi.

—

Samadhi

Lipi in swapna-samadhi coherent in short sentences and in deep samadhi read coherently for three lines together.

Frequent stable rupa with fixed scene & long-continued movement & action. Crude in light samadhi, but not in deep samadhi.

Perceptive & vangmaya thought perfect & in possession in continued profound samadhi coherent, organised, long-continued, perfectly vijnanamaya, regardless of mental sushupti.

Rupa in jagrat active in the crude

═

Utthapana

Another 35 minutes at night, making the 6 hours

═

Prediction in Script for today was of advance throughout the Vijnana as well as in Ananda, Arogya & Utthapana.

In utthapana amply fulfilled; in Ananda steady advance of Kamananda, rapid of Raudra, consolidated of Tivra. Strong Vaidyuta sahaituka but spontaneous, suddenly began; ahaituka is there, imperceptibly increasing, as also Ahaituka Vishaya. The advance in Arogya is more doubtful except that the Tapas is more able to work in the body & repel the attacks of Roga from outside.

In the Vijnana there is a general advance especially in Brihat of telepathy, in Samadhi, in Lipi & in thought.

On the other hand brihat Trikaldrishti resisted & Aishwarya has suspended part of its advance.

Dec 11th

Attack of Asiddhi by means of obscuration.—

═

The Script predicts.

1. Recovery of full Tapassiddhi
2 Activity of Vijnana.

3 Progress to fulfilment of Trikaldrishti.
4 Growth of Rupa & Samadhi
5 Growth of Power of Arogya
6 Growth of the consolidated Ananda objective & subjective
7. Growth of utthapana
8 Weak beginnings of Saundarya.

=

Utthapana

2 hours 52 minutes—interrupted. Defect of Anima felt. Some fatigue in the muscles. Greater reaction than yesterday. Afterwards 10 minutes more.

=

Ananda.

Movements connected with Asamata are now almost entirely turned into ananda of the tamoguna.

Raudra was felt in pain of great acuteness and continuity, of the nature of agony, but not entirely overpowering. It remains to be seen whether actual agony can be so converted without farther relapses—

Kamananda more & more normal in walking. Today it is more frequently recurrent than continuous, but intense when it manifests.

=

Lipi is now beginning to manifest double sentences in two lines, both in bahirdarshi & antardarshi.—

=

Jagrat rupa after being held back since its last movement is now manifesting dense & developed forms with a persistent but shifting stability. The attempt of perfect forms to stabilise themselves is not yet successful.

=

In Samadhi more coherent lipi sometimes in two lines; stable rupa.

=

Tapas siddhi is recovering itself, but is still hampered by a consolidated resistance.

=

It is now restored to its full former activity.

=

At the same time telepathy and decisive trikaldrishti have resumed their progress, but the excessive stress endures..

=

The subjective parts of the programme are therefore being fulfilled.

=

Utthapana has grown only in the fact that after so immense a deployment of force, the reaction has not been sufficient to break the 3 hours minimum.

=

Ananda is undoubtedly growing in tivra & raudra. In the rest, the growth is still doubtful.

=

Power of Arogya grows generally, but is not yet manifest in the removal of remnants—

=

Nothing new is noticeable in Saundarya

=

In Samadhi there is now fluent reading of successive lines of more or less coherent lipi.

=

In Rupa, jagrat bahirdarshi stable dense rupa begins to fix itself.—

=

Powerful consolidation of the Kali-bhava.—

Dec 12th

Predictions of yesterday's script.—

1. Ananda of all kinds, Utthapana, Arogya will continue to progress.

2. The pressure on Saundarya to manifest will increase.

3. The general organisation of the Vijnana will proceed in a movement of unprecedented rapidity

=

Utthapana.

Arms—walking 3 hours. Defect [of] Anima, but ineffective against established siddhi.—However, it persists in order to prevent improvement of siddhi.

The three hours limit has triumphantly survived a doubling of the utthapana in time extension.

This is the fourth day of the three hours exercise, the second after the six hours realisation.

=

Extraordinary perfection of vijnanamaya thought, perfect satyam in knowledge of force; less effective attempt to extend entire satyam in knowledge to telepathy & trikaldrishti.

=

Rupa develops a little more stability in the dense.

=

The chief siddhi of the morning is the entire confirmation of the Kali bhava & entire possession of the world in subjective unity by the Jiva-Prakriti.

=

Raudra Ananda, yesterday & today, is constantly developing and possessing more firmly all reactions of pain & discomfort.

Subjectively, also, amangala is increasingly ananda.

Premananda intense & active, applying itself to all things & persons.—

Lipi

1 Firmly
2 Daily effectuality
3 Tapas-siddhi.

=

Samadhi-Rupa.

Lipi in three lines in chitra.

Swapna-Samadhi maintained in status, but no fresh progress, nor is long-continued action with firm hold on akasha repeated.—

=

Sahaituka Vaidyutananda is becoming frequent & in its train ahaituka vaidyuta.—

Ahaituka raudra is reappearing with a greater generality—

Ahaituka vishaya comes usually combined with the others.

Combinations of raudra & tivra together or with vishaya and vaidyuta are frequent. Many of these movements are still obscure.

=

In the general unity of the Bhava vaira & prema have suddenly become harmonised & united. Formerly when they were not opposed, they stood side by side without mixing.

=

A certain degree of burning (when the finger is pressed on the lighted cigar) becomes too poignant for the nerves; but this is a degree of heat much higher than formerly. Continuous burning of this kind can now, below that point, be both borne & enjoyed. The degree is constantly & swiftly rising.

=

Heat of the sun after a time becomes discomfort, not owing to the degree of outer heat, but to the oppression due to the reaction of heat in the body. This has not yet been overcome. The first touch of very cold water fluctuates between ananda & discomfort. Continued it is only ananda.—

The organisation of telepathy, trikaldrishti & Tapas siddhi in a block has now begun. Isolated trikaldrishti is often entirely perfect and independent of telepathy—contrary that is to say to immediate force & intention & yet true in fulfilment. This siddhi is rapidly growing.

=

The rapidity is indeed very great in all Vijnana except rupa-Samadhi. It is already "unprecedented".

The Sharira continues to progress in all its parts, except Saundarya, but not so decisively in Arogya & Utthapana as in Ananda, nor so decisively in Kamananda as in others, nor so decisively in Ahaituka as in Sahaituka.

=

Authority of script & lipi, thought & vangmaya is growing in force, greatly in the two first, immensely in the others.

=

Kamananda is now entirely independent of asana & essentially of smarana for its recurrence or continuance. It is attempting an entire & spontaneous continuity & a greater level of intensity.

=

The organisation of telepathy, trikaldrishti & tapas siddhi in one block has now definitely begun.

=

Utthapana of back & loins, 3 minutes. Shakti defective.—

=

Copious play of sthapatya & chitra rupa, with beginnings of the tendency to manifest forms everywhere.

Akasha Rupa is attempting a general organisation of its movements, but does not yet progress victoriously

Dec 13—

Utthapana of legs, medial position, 20 minutes. Laghima improved, defect of mahima, strong defect of anima.

=

Script yesterday predicted for the day beginnings of the unprecedented rapidity in rupa-samadhi and telepathy-trikaldrishti-tapas siddhi; as well as farther developments of arogyashakti, utthapana & ananda.

The beginning was felt in T^3 [telepathy-trikaldrishti-tapas siddhi]; but not in rupa-samadhi, as there was only progress in details in samadhi & a tendency in rupa.

Utthapana & Ananda began fresh developments. Arogyashakti was strong enough to negate the attempt at a fresh general attack on the body, to bear exposure at night to cold air from both windows without reaction of fever, cold etc, to expel partially symptoms of one remnant-disease and to compel some progress in assimilation which has yet to be confirmed.

=

For today is predicted—

1. Continuation of the same rapidity in vijnana, in subjective base of Karma (Krishna-Kali) & in Brahmadarshana.
2. Beginnings of a greater rapidity in Sharira.

=

The advance in utthapana seems to indicate that the second prediction will be fulfilled.

═

Lipi

Chitra lipi in several lines is now established, only the words after they have been read, tend to change rapidly.

═

Vani

Truth of all sorts of Vani is established.

Krishna.

These vanis represent the mental voices of the Deva & principally the operation of fusion between the Indrabhava which is still independent and the Agni-Vayu-Aryaman bhava (Rudra-Vishnu) which is predominant.

Karma—Tapas

In Kriti the forces of opposition still prevail and have some notable successes.

In Tapas the forces of resistance that prevent full Aishwarya & the establishment of the 60 degrees power, maintaining constantly the survival of the 30°, 40° & 50°, with the 60° as an occasional movement, still hold the field, though with greater effort than before.

═

Krishna Kali

The Krishna Kali consciousness is beginning to realise itself. It is indeed realised in the Saguna Brahman, but not in the Ishwara (Lilamaya).

The fusion of Indra into the Agni-Vayu-Aryaman (containing already Mitra-Varuna-Surya-Bhaga-Aswins-Brihaspati-Twashtri-Maruts-Ribhus) seems to have been effected.

The female energies have already been resumed in the Mahakali bhava.

Only shadows now remain of the separate bhavas, shadows that are about to be absorbed.

═

Utthapana

2 hrs 40 m. Obstinate defect of anima consolidated in stiffness of shoulder-muscles. In the rest of the body, dull though always repeated.

═

Krishna Kali

Krishna Kali consciousness of the Iswara mould is now manifesting.

═

Tapas-siddhi

Swift, sudden & complete organised tapas-siddhi in immediate kriti (event last night, justifying yesterday's prediction of beginning of rapidity). If the same can be effected habitually in distant kriti, then the visvaiswarya will be accomplished.

═

Rupa.

The turning of Rupa, begun last night, to organise its various separated & conflicting tendencies of the past into one mass movement is today more pronounced. These tendencies are

1) to manifest form always out of an initial blur of material
2) to manifest forms of all kind of material
3) to manifest clear, crude form not stable.
4) to manifest stable crude, not clear
5) to manifest stable dense, not quite complete.
6) to manifest developed out of dense
7) to manifest unstable perfect forms
8) to stabilise perfect forms, not always complete.
9) to manifest variety of human forms, animals, landscapes, groups, scenes etc.

Ananda.

Subjective Kamananda is beginning to remanifest & generalise itself.

Utthapana

Arms (sitting), half an hour. —

—

Vijnana—

Frequent sukshma gandha during the day.

=

Lipi

1. first Liège foresee Antwerp
2. M. Ephor Colossus

3 हठ हठा.
4 thorough military charge (change?)
5 lose not the entire faith
6 satya
7 doubt is the refuge of the denial.

8. two (2d ch. or two days)
9. fix third. (chatusthaya)

The two line lipi is being fixed in chitra, akasha & antardarshi.

=

All parts of the Vijnana are now being prepared for practicality & combined to that end. This includes sukshma shabda (manushi vak) which is becoming more coherent. It is also being applied to the lokas.

=

Krishna is fixed in the self, but varies between swapada & mentality.

=

Dec 14—

Predictions of Script—

(1) Great stride forward in T^3; considerable strengthening of Rupa-samadhi.

(2) Continuation of the greater rapidity in Sharira.

=

In the morning fresh attack on Kriti, combined from all sides of the immediate action.

=

Tapas siddhi in environment shows a growing force in spite of resistance.

=

Lipi is acquiring fixity in chitra—

═

Kamananda has triumphantly overcome its ordeal.

═

Satyam of telepathy is complete; it must become ritam. Trikaldrishti must manifest brihat satyam, & also tapas—

═

Strong activity of luminous thought & telepathy combined with entire satyam.

Lipi. 1. Light of telepathy
Effectuality of trikaldrishti.

There is a struggle between static perception of event & dynamic perception of event (passive & active Chit). The latter which alters the event predestined by the ensemble of forces by a personal intervention (ie of higher forces) is becoming rapidly stronger & brings with [it] increasing satyam of trikaldrishti & increasing satyam of tapas-siddhi. The active Chit is either effectual trikaldrishti or effective will on the supramental plane (lower vijnana); but in higher Vijnana, they are twin actions and in Sachchidananda are inseparable & indiscernible.

They are now moving upwards towards the higher vijnana and therefore approaching each other more & more.

═

Kamananda is now continuous for a long period. But its hold is not yet confirmed in the body— It is not yet entirely naturalised.

═

Tapas-siddhi grows in force.

═

Utthapana

Arms—1 hour 55 minutes. Interrupted. Some depression of energy in the body.

Legs—30 minutes. Mahima increased, but still very deficient, laghima not sufficient to take its place, strong positive defect of anima from the beginning owing to reaction of stiffness in the leg muscles. Throughout a violent struggle; but the laghima increased to the end.

==

Samadhi

Manushi Vak—coherent conversation . . short sentences regarding things of the moment in Europe . . of this world, not the other lokas.

Rupa

Rupa still attempts to stabilise perfect forms, but increases in general force without getting definite results.

==

Ananda

The continuity of Kamananda continues; there is also a sort of subdued or diffused intensity. This sometimes gives place to a great or even the beginnings of a massed intensity. The Ananda since meal-time has only been partially discontinued by force of interruption in sleep.

Even if interrupted by sleep or other cause, it should resume automatically on waking and not have to be brought back by will or by lapse of time.

It is to this siddhi that it is moving. But the continuity is still too dependent on Asana.

Krishnabhava & Darshana

Krishnabhava is often obscure in the mentality, although fixed. Ishwaradarshan (Anandamaya) is combated by the mental formation of the jnanam Brahma and the perception of the udvigna Anandabhava. This disappears only by the recovery of Chidghanananda—

==

Utthapana

Back & loins, 8 minutes, maintained with immense difficulty owing to defect both of laghima & mahima; both were withheld except in infinitesimal quantity;—just sufficient to prevent the effort from collapsing.

==

Ananda—

Kamananda is more constant today than it has been before. It has been maintained with only a few intermissions from 1 to 6.30 minus an hour of sleep & samadhi, when it was recurrent & ceased to be continuous. This is a true continuity, & no longer a continuous recurrence.

Subjective Kamananda also continues to increase its hold and generality.

The Ananda was continued till sleep 1.30—always recurrent & spontaneous, and even in a subdued form continuous. Discontinued for sleep or any other cause, it revived at once when the cause was removed. This happened also in the morning at 5 on waking, for the first time,—as usually it takes some time in the morning for it to revive.

=

Great abundance of rupa etc in swapna-samadhi—everything but the firm hold of the experiences of Samadhi on the chittakasha.

=

Tapas, telepathy, etc continue to grow.

Dec 15.

Utthapana

Right leg, horizontal, crooked, lying on side, 1 hour. For the first 45 minutes defect of anima only occasional and quite ineffective; easy utthapana. During the last quarter of hour acute attack compelling momentary desistence. It was overcome in the end but not entirely. This is an unprecedented success, as this form was formerly the most difficult & could not be maintained for more than 20 minutes. The improvement is quite sudden, comes after a long discontinuance and shows,

1. That practice is only an excuse for habituating the body to the idea of a change which in itself could be otherwise effected
2. That siddhis prepare effectively behind the veil.
3. That laghima in the body is already sufficient, if defect of anima could be expelled,

4. That defect of anima is artificially maintained & ought long ago to have disappeared

═

Arogyashakti is standing stronger & stronger tests.

═

The rapidity of the advance in Sharira cannot be questioned. It was predicted in the Script that this rapidity will be rapidly increased. The increase seems already to have begun.

═

Rupa in last night's samadhi did sometimes hold the akasha and complete its movement perfectly. Swapnasamadhi is now nearing the point when it can be perfectly organised. Jagrat is still subject to the general obstacle.

Darshana

Ishwaradarshana is established in inanimate things; with regard to persons it comes and is taken away and forcibly withheld

═

Today, however, by the stronger perception of the Anandamaya as lord of all action & not only of all bhoga, it is becoming firmer with regard to persons.

═

Vijnana

T^3 this morning has made a great advance and is approaching fullness of satyam, although as yet in type frequently realised, not in general fashion

Script on the 12th fixed five days as the period of incubation for T^3, after which it will be ready to undertake perfection. This is especially for the Tapas siddhi, telepathy & trikaldrishti preceding it. The same period is fixed for the removal of the obstacle in Rupa-Samadhi.

═

Darshana

It is the mentality in the object that, as usual, presents the chief obstacle to the Ishwaradarshana & divides the man from his real Self. This is now being corrected by the mind being seen as an activity formulated & directed in himself by the universal Ishwara.

==

To this is now being added the same relation of mind to the transcendent Ishwara in the individual.

==

All that has now to be done is to confirm thoroughly the Krishnabhava & Ishwaradarshana against surprise & interruption, as is being done with the already established Kalibhava.

==

Utthapana

Arms. 2½ hours. Strong defect of anima with usual oppression & occasional depression of the energy; twice there was deflection for relief to the horizontal position.

Action of the limbs now begins to be left to the Pranashakti. This means, when effected, generalisation of primary utthapana and intensity in the body of tertiary dasya.

==

Rupa

Rupa in jagrat is now to be based on the realisation that all is there except a generalised clear stability. Nothing has to be entirely accepted except what is at once clear & stable. Such figures now occur more frequently; but the general obstacle still remains.

Ananda

Kamananda continues, really continuous, but in its entirely sensible manifestation constantly recurrent. It is yet of too insufficient a force, except in seated asana, to enforce smarana in spite of absorption of attention elsewhere. The Ananda has more mass than formerly & begins to take some hold of the body.

==

Rupa

Unstable figures tend to be more clear & vivid and are sometimes admirable in their own mode.

==

Script

There will be a new movement of the siddhi from today aiming at the preparation of perfection in Vijnana and Sharira.

=

Vijnana

Swapna-samadhi

Various indications of the *sati*—but isolated.

1. Sweet tea drunk with aswada
2. Tivra in samadhi.
3. Conversation, brief but coherent.
4. Three or four lines of lipi coherently read
5. Admirably vivid phrase lipi—

Antardrishta jagrat less active & fruitful, but though it does not advance, it has not really fallen back.

=

Lipi

Three line lipi, confirmed in Akasha and on background as well as in chitra, in swapna as well as in jagrat, has now to be given a firmer stability & then extended to page lipi and other extensions of the perfect writing

=

Script

There is now a certain amount of confidence in vijnanamaya vak when it expresses trikaldrishti. There must be entire confidence in vijnanamaya vak, thought-perception, lipi, rupa, samadhi-experience, vani, all instruments of the vijnana; but first there must be an accurate interpretation of everything that presents itself to the mind. For that accuracy mind itself must cease to judge even in the slightest degree. It is vijnana that must perceive, represent, interpret, judge—the revelation, the inspiration, the intuition, the discrimination.

=

Lipi

Kaushalya of the lipi is beginning to organise itself (different colours, jyotirmaya lipi, vividness, stability).

=

Script

It is necessary to give oneself up passively to the Power that governs. All will shape itself rapidly & inevitably.

=

Lipi

1. It is today ideality begins its definite victory.
2. Tomorrow the intelligence quite submits (fulfilled 16th Dec.)

3 it is difficult
in the neighbourhood of intelligence
for subjectivity to be free from intelligence *

4 the intelligence is a very bad judge
especially the logical intellect.* –

5 first ideality in all parts of itself

* Examples of the two lined & three lined lipi

══

Script

Overstress will now easily be got rid of.

—

There is a check apparently in Arogya and Utthapana, not in the growth of the Shakti, but in its successful manifestation. Ananda is overcoming the check. The other two will also overcome it.

—

Rupa

Rupa begins to manifest a more effective force of formation, but it is still upon the old lines of gradual development.

══

Ananda

Raudra ahaituka manifests only occasionally, but with increasing intensity.

Kamananda continues its development, but hampered by the old sanskara of asmarana.

══

Utthapana

Utthapana failed in the legs. There is a strong return of physical depression of energy, less powerful than before, but still effective. It prevents result; it does not prevent action.

—

Utthapana of arms sitting, half an hour. Strong depression of energy and physical unwillingness.

══

Siddhi

In the vijnana also there was an apparent slackening of the siddhi, such as has always been noticeable in periods of transition.. As usual unfaith assailed the mind, but had not the same effect as formerly. Nevertheless, faith in kriti is still easily depressed; it does not disappear, but is rendered doubtful & overcrowed by its contradiction.

=

Faith & Ishwarabhava are still the weak points in the two accomplished chatusthayas, and prevent the fulfilment of their full fruition.

The accomplishment of the Ishwaradarshana will greatly facilitate the perfection of the Ishwarabhava.

That again will facilitate the fulfilment of the three unaccomplished chatusthayas.

=

Dream

Dream still fluctuates between freedom from present association & an entire though thinly enforced subjection to it.

Dec 16.

Entire confirmation of the Krishnabhava and the personal relation (madhura-dasya). At the same time the Ishwaradarshana becomes more powerful in the world.

=

Utthapana

Legs. 14 minutes. Defect of anima still insistent, but laghima more mahat than before.

=

Vijnana

T^3

Telepathy & perceptive (telepathic) trikaldrishti seem to be fairly ready for perfection (ritam) but effective trikaldrishti lingers for want of tapas-siddhi.

—

Effective trikaldrishti (telepathic) is now taking its place in this fulfilment along with the rest. Only tapas-siddhi lingers behind.

—

The greater force of tapassiddhi is confirmed but at 50°. 60° and above manifest, but without hold on things.

═

In spite of all resistance it is true that in T^3 there is an ever increasing rapidity of growth.

═

The Ishwara has taken up the satyam of the telepathy-trikaldrishti-tapassiddhi.

═

A sudden, puissant & compelling rapidity of effect is manifesting itself in the effective trikaldrishti which is supported by decisive trikaldrishti & the Will of the Master.—

At the same time the Rudra in the Ishwara is manifesting. The gigantic imaginations of Alipur are being confirmed by the Vani & Script, and the War in Europe is given as an imperfect type. But the mind, though overpowered is not yet entirely willing to believe.

═

Utthapana

2 hours. The old system of laghima supported by a pranic mahima working partially through the muscles, with reaction, strain & defect of anima, still persists. It must be replaced by a laghima containing pure mahima in itself and producing no strain on the body which in its turn must get rid of the purely habitual reaction of defect of anima.

═

Great activity of the jnana under the new conditions preparing a comprehensive Tapas & trikaldrishti on the basis of the Krishnabhava and Ishwarabhava.

═

Rupa has developed clear stability, but with insufficient force and with no variety of forms.

═

Siddhi

A strong attack on faith & samata which for the moment reintroduced touches of partially effective *ashanti.*

═

Script—

1. In spite of all this disturbance faith in the entire rapidity will be rapidly established; for the Tapas-siddhi is on the point of manifesting.

2. Today, rapidity of Rupa-samadhi will be confirmed.

═

3 Ananda, Arogya, Utthapana will emerge again from the apparent denial of rapidity from today to tomorrow. Always Ananda first.

═

2. has been already partially fulfilled.

3 has been fulfilled by a sudden development of Tivra & raudra..

═

4. The period for the physical siddhi begins from today and extends to the end of the month.

5. Karmachatusthaya in its subjective parts will be perfectly established in the same period. In its objective parts it will begin to emerge during the fortnight.

═

Utthapana

Left leg horizontal ten minutes. In the left leg as in the left arm defect of anima is much stronger than in the right.

═

Ananda—

Great development of tivra; at double point, persistent, continuous in recurrence, ahaituka, entirely spontaneous, frequently recurrent. In the rest of the body it is beginning to assume that character, while it responds acutely to *sukshma hetu.*

Raudra is less long continued, but still has acquired some continuity, entire spontaneity and great intensity. It grows rapidly in force of continuity

═

On the other hand, Ananda, interrupted, sank for a time to its lowest or subdued point of continuity.

==

Intense ahaituka vaidyuta has also swiftly established itself. It is already capable of continuity.

==

Kamananda is again intense & [continuous].[8]

==

The five Anandas are preparing to join hands. Ahaituka Vishaya is manifest but in conjunction with the others.

==

Samadhi

Swapnasamadhi is preparing generality of vijnana in all its movements and experiences.

==

Clearness, stability, variety are beginning to manifest in rupa on a background.. The figures are necessarily crude.

==

Ananda.

The subjective Anandas are also preparing for a brihat universality and *sajatyam*, especially Prema, Kama, Chidghana in the final vision of the universal Anandamaya Ishwara, which has suddenly manifested & accomplished the Brahmachatusthaya.

==

Faith

Faith in the entire rapidity of the Vijnana & Ananda is restored & fixed. It is not yet extended to the whole Sharira Chatusthaya or to the objective parts of the Karma Chatusthaya—

==

Dream

A number of dreams more clearly remembered, all of the same character, coherence not quite perfect, present association less egoistic, but not quite expunged.

==

Kamananda strong & continuous or constantly recurrent during the evening.

---

[8] *MS* continuity

Dec 17

Vijnana

The 60° Tapas-siddhi is becoming more & more frequent & can sometimes be applied with great continuity & to a succession of cases.

═

Telepathy now definitely exceeds the possible limits of sense, inference etc; the trikaldrishti also deals fearlessly with results beyond the immediate assemblage of active forces; but as the management of the unseen & uninferrable is difficult for the mind, it throws in an element of wrong inference & suggestion which leaves the substantial truth of the results untouched, but distorts slightly the incidence of fact & the arrangement of details, the ritam.

═

Much of the anritam comes by the attempt of mind to *make* a formation from the elements of the satyam that it receives instead of allowing the truth of ritam to manifest itself. That which forms is not mind, but vijnana.

═

The attempt of the Sadhana now is to arrive at the ritam, being already sure of the satyam, but for this to be accomplished, mind must become entirely passive.

═

T^3 is now ready to undertake perfection, except for the greater deformation of satyam in Tapassiddhi & effective trikaldrishti which has to be corrected

═

Utthapana

Legs, medial position. No mahattwa in laghima, 15 minutes only, the last two with great difficulty.

═

Ananda

Ahaituka Vishaya distinct from the rest, strong & intense, massive (*pajas*) has manifested. This completes the ensemble of the five physical Anandas.

—

Script

The important movements today are in

Strong
1. Ananda
2. Rupasamadhi of all kinds
3 T^3

Less strong
4 Sharira generally
5 Karma

=

The movement henceforth will not be absent from any of the unaccomplished chatusthayas or unaccomplished parts of chatusthayas.

=

Vijnana is now in a sense accomplished, but its organisation, intensity & effectuality are still imperfect.

=

Ananda is accomplished, but has to be organised.

=

KrishnaKali is accomplished, but has yet to be entirely fulfilled in the intended harmony & effectuality.

=

Vijnana

Tapas-siddhi

Instances of 70° are now manifesting themselves, in brief continuity or succession.

=

The T^3 is beginning to be organised. 60° & 70° are becoming common. At the same time the invariable insistence on immediate result is being renounced by the tapasic forces which are trying to put themselves in harmony with the will of the Ishwara. At the same time there is no mere shama or inert passivity.

A continuous succession of effectivities both in the same object & action & in different objects & actions is now common. 80° must now manifest

=

Utthapana

Arms—one hour. The utthapana could have been continued, but the method is about to be altered. In a sense there will be a recoil to prepare a better siddhi.

═

Vijnana

Rupa

The movement in Rupasamadhi continues, but not with sufficient rapidity. Nevertheless a constant variety of all forms is showing itself in the crude, though without right stability, yet with an increasing clearness & vividness.

═

The various crude forms in the Akasha are now beginning to manifest either an initial or even a preparatory stability.

═

Lipi

Lipi is being organised for utility, applying itself at the right point or even physical spot to indicate what the mind could not know & the T^2 [telepathy-trikaldrishti] was at fault in supplying.

═

Vishaya

Sukshma gandha seems to have established itself, as it recurs daily, though sometimes oftener, sometimes once or twice only, in various odours which are strong, distinct and sufficiently stable. Only a little obscurity in the sukshmendriya remains to be corrected.

Sparsha & sravana come with difficulty or only in the few habitual touches.

Rasa only sadhara and seldom.

Darshana very little & in a few habitual forms.

Samadhi

Swapna-S. & Sushupta

Enormous advance. Perfect vangmaya thought almost entirely continuous for the whole hour of samadhi, only ceasing at will, or very occasionally when the tamasic nidra became very heavy; but for the most part it triumphed over both sushupti and tamasic nidra.

Perceptive thought was also active, but less victorious, because less intense in its vijnanamaya force and prakasha.

The Anandas received the freedom of the swapna-samadhi, kama especially being intense and constantly recurrent; tivra, raudra, vishaya, vaidyuta all occurred in their full intensity, the first two recurrently.

Lipi was consecutive though not always coherent & in more than one line; but too fugitive to be retained, although even when instantaneous, the mind was swift enough to read.

The printed page presented itself clearly, but was too fugitive to be legible.

Trailokya drishti recommenced with Patala and with shadowy pomps of past or future events upon earth, crowds, kings, generals, tribunals.

Jagrat

Activity of rupa in jagrat. Fixed shadowy landscapes, a rock by the sea, figures by water at night etc. The separate images were crude & for the most part fugitive.

==

Organisation of samadhi and rapidity of development have begun in earnest. The various activities are now combined. Organisation of lipi and of consecutive coherent experience & stable rupa are the sole elements of perfection wanting. These occur only rarely.

Prophetic Rupa

Prophetic Sadhara Rupa is manifesting—eg A crow in the opposite terrace mistaken for a pigeon. It was explained as a sign that a pigeon would alight & move about there today; but as during all these months this has never been seen, not much credit was given to the indication. In the afternoon, however, two pigeons alighted in the terrace & for a long time sat & made love there.

==

Tapas-siddhi

75° & 80° are manifesting together, establishing the type of a swifter consecutive Tapas-effectiveness

They have now to be made frequent and normal in all fields.

The prediction that 80° would now manifest, is fulfilled.

==

In vijnana only the element of stable & clear jagrat rupa (Akasha) is still in a backward condition; Vishaya is manifesting. Sadhara rasa is becoming more frequent. Vishaya also is in a sense obstructed, but not seriously. It is only its range of variety & fullness that is not yet manifested.

The distinction made between the two is not yet quite understood. Its reason will be made clearer soon.

=

Karma

Fresh proofs of effective Karma through subjectivity in surroundings; formerly C.S & R^2 [Richard and Madame Richard], now difficulties in the house righted.

=

Sharira

In Sharira (except Ananda) the surface movement has been today contrary rather than helpful. There are one or two weak signs in Saundarya. Arogya is attacked ineffectively, Utthapana almost suspended.

=

Rupa

The obstacle in crude Akash rupa is disappearing; in the rest it is still valid against stability.

Chitra is showing an extraordinary perfection, sthapatya preparing to follow suit. It has already acquired it in certain relief figures.

=

In the evening tertiary initial stability of dense, developed & primary initial of perfect. None of these effects are yet strong.

=

Samadhi

Rich and frequent lipi, more & more legible & more frequently coherent, sometimes in masses or pages of which parts or phrases were legible.

Brief conversation.

Long stable continuous action complete or else complete with moments of eclipse. Scenes, groups, streams of figures. Mostly chhayamaya

Frequent stable rupa, but stable only during sushupti of mind or its most swapnamaya swapna; disappearance when mind became jagrat in samadhi. This is now the one positive defect in swapna-samadhi.

Combinations of vishayas, — taste, hearing, touch, sight. Taste became strong & intense. Scent alone is absent.

It is noticeable that taste survived into jagrat with a physical effect on the palate and was frequently repeated & varied. In the rasa sparsha predominates.

═

Sharira attacked, ananda in its continuity, utthapana in *sati*, Arogya in its shakti & details.

═

Dec 18 —

Taste is emerging into frequency, but is still ordinarily obscure and ill-formed in jagrat. Sravana showed a slight sign of recovery. Sparsha is intense & more frequently active, but only in habitual touches.

═

The attack on Sharira has failed, though at the end it slightly clouded the immediate strength & faith, — owing to apparent non-fulfilment of Script satya.

Cold & cough, in spite of a violent & persistent effort, failed to materialise; fever could not even touch the system. The fragments of roga are being more & more reduced to simulacra, although they can still put out points of momentary intensity.

Non-assimilation is at once constantly active & constantly receding.

Kamachakra is attempting to develop force but as yet without success.

═

Utthapana is quiescent; saundarya except in the hair not definitely progressive.

═

Utthapana

Arms, one hour. Depression of energy at its height. Laghima, mahima, anima all inefficient hardly offering any opposition to the Asiddhi.—

==

During this hour all the other siddhis were equally oppressed, except at the beginning when Vishaya & Kama attempted a fresh progress.

==

$T^{\underset{..}{3}}$

Tapas-siddhi has now a great force, although its ritam is not yet effected. 80°, 70° & 60° are becoming more and more frequent.

Ishita is increasing in activity & effectivity.

Telepathy & telepathic trikaldrishti are constantly increasing their hold on the brihat satyam. Effective trikaldrishti is also increasing in mass & frequency

==

Rupa

Great richness and perfection of sthapatya. It is inferior to Chitra only in perfection of details, eg features of the human face. But this defect it is beginning to remedy.

==

Vishaya–sukshma.

Taste is now developing greater body and distinctness.

==

Kamananda is still oppressed in its continuity. Ahaituka Vishaya is acquiring continuity.

==

The attack on the Siddhi continued. Kamananda though for a moment it made a considerable progress was overpowered for the rest of the day. The other Anandas advanced, but piecemeal.

Raudra developed continuity and a greater intensity.

Tivra grew only a little and locally.

Vishaya acquired continuity and a greater distinctness in Ahaituka.

Vaidyuta became freer & more spontaneous.

==

Utthapana was entirely arrested.

==

Arogya-shakti persists against attack & seems to have made one considerable progress.

═

T^3 continued its rapid development and was the one siddhi that did not suffer from the attack

═

Rupa in jagrat went on developing but with considerable difficulty. Clear stability appears now in crude forms of all kinds, but is not yet their normal state. Dense, developed & perfect forms are manifesting, but with no great realisation in stability. The obstacle is not yet removed, though it can no longer entirely prevent progress.

═

Gandha, rasa, sparsha are now active though not yet entirely free from obstruction—especially in the rasa. But they have not yet advanced beyond their old limits.

═

Samata was attacked through the old inequality with regard to siddhi asiddhi. In this respect it broke down. In the evening the Ananda of battle & temporary failure were imposed, but have not entirely prevailed.

═

Faith in the rapidity has been somewhat shaken. Sharira-siddhi is no longer seen as a near event.

═

Samadhi

Maintenance of activity in lipi. Stable rupa with an entire hold on the akash long seen & resummoned after eclipse—part of a great city in the moonlit night, then only a particular house & its surroundings.

Perfect vijnanamaya perceptive thought with the mind sushupta

—

Dec. 19.

Utthapana

Legs. 15 minutes. Defect of anima, mahima insufficient.

Darshana

Anandam Jnanam Anantam Sarvam Brahma is now perfectly established everywhere. The object is no longer seen as other than That. The Anandam also carries with it the Nirguna Guni, the Impersonal Personality. But the sense of the Ishwara is still capable of drawing back into the super-conscious and being felt in the Brahman as its result rather than in itself. Definitely, it is now known & seen that the Ishwara is that from which the Brahman is born. Existence is the form of the Existent, Brahman is the mould of Parabrahman, & Parabrahman is Para Purusha. Purusha is the last word of the knowledge.

Vijnana

T^3

T^3 continues to develop. 80°, 70°, 60° are active, but also 50° & even less, because the subjectivity of things & beings still resists. This is typified in two instances, one because of a rajasic obstacle, hunger, the other because of a tamasic, the ananda of repose. The first gave way after a long time. The second still resists... It has given way after a long time, almost double the other & by extraneous circumstance.[9]

80° now sometimes act with great force & compelling instantaneity.

Telepathy, trikaldrishti are still much more developed than tapas-siddhi. Decisive trikaldrishti has progressed greatly.

Script

It is to be noted that Utthapana & Arogyashakti are taking longer to emerge from the denial of rapidity than was predicted on Dec 16th or than appeared to be predicted,—for the sense of the words “from today to tomorrow” was even then felt to be uncertain.

The 18th given by trikaldrishti & script has been a day of beginnings of perfection for T^3, as predicted; in other respects, as often happens, it was a day of attack & denial. A date fixed is almost always the object of attack by the opposing forces, so as to prevent the conquest of Time. This conquest of Time is now one of the main objectives of the siddhi.

---

[9] *This sentence was added at a later time.—Ed.*

Script predictions for yesterday were.

(1) Removal of obstacle to clear stability in akasha rupa, not complete, but effective. Fulfilled in type for crude & to a less extent for dense-developed at night.

(2) Rapid growth of T^3. (fulfilled).

(3) Rapid growth of Samadhi (fulfilled in swapna; begun in sukshmavishaya jagrat.)

(4) Karma. (fulfilled)

(5) Sharira

(a) growth of Ananda in all its forms (doubtful with regard to Kama, true of all other physical Anandas & of subjective Ananda in general)

(b) Restoration of utthapana (not yet fulfilled except in bhava underneath Asiddhi).

(c) Growth of Arogyashakti (fulfilled)

(d) Increasing pressure on Saundarya to manifest (fulfilled).

On the whole, with the exception of 5^b, there was fulfilment always just sufficient, if not always generous. This, on a day of attack, shows a considerable advance.

Ananda

Kamananda is recovering itself with the promise of a greater pervasion of the system.

=

Subjective Ananda aided by jnana is attempting to throw out the reversion to rajasic stress & reaction of Asamata. It appears, however, that this cannot be entirely done till Rudra-Vishnu is ready.

=

Krishna in his fullness is only seen in individuals where there is some kind of beauty, charm, youth, childhood etc. To remedy this defect it is necessary to perfect the chidghana and shuddha anandas.

=

Rupa

Promise of rupa perfection increases. Spontaneous images of perfect crude and perfect dense, developed & lifelike, the former with stability are beginning to break out from behind the *tiraskarani*.

Utthapana

Arms, one hour.

There is no longer an attempt to maintain the utthapana by separate mahima. The two principles are now to enforce *mahat-laghima* and to eliminate defect of anima.

The utthapana-shakti in the arms is restored, but not yet sufficient. It failed for a while at the end of the hour & faltered at other times.

══

Vijnana

Vijna[na]maya thought now embraces telepathy and a part of trikaldrishti, in the satyam—not yet except initially in the ritam.

—

Samadhi

In jagrat a great advance in rupa; especially dense & developed for the first time appeared with a firm stability & hold on the akasha. But the crude also greatly improved in clearness, stability & body.

In swapna samadhi the general stability of rupa constantly increases and lipi is constant.

══

Utthapana

Left leg horizontal. 20 minutes. defect of anima. strong mahima-laghima. The utthapana might have been maintained ten minutes longer.

══

Script Predictions for the day.

1. Increasing rapidity in rupa-samadhi—(fulfilled)
2 T^3 (fulfilled)
3 Ananda moves towards perfect spontaneity & force.

4. Arogya-shakti farther confirms itself.
5 Utthapana progresses on the new lines
6 Saundarya — farther pressure.

═

Script

Sahitya must be resumed and proceed normally, but not with great force until rapidity in Kriti has begun.

═

Tapasic interest has almost been excluded from the system; it must be entirely eliminated and replaced by force divine.

The Ishwarabhava has again to be manifested, this time without resuscitation of Tapasic force.

The Ishwarabhava is again manifesting, but not yet with entire force. Ishwarabhava, Sharira, Kriti are now the three fields of the Shakti; for the rest is fulfilling itself. These three are closely connected. Their full manifestation forms the last stage of the sadhana. The rest is pure siddhi.

═

Tertiary dasya in the mind is the condition of the last stage of sadhana. The sense of personal responsibility must be entirely renounced.

═

Since Vijnana is now assured, the Shakti must concentrate more upon Sharira and Kriti, — Sharira as a condition of Karma generally. Immediate Kriti is hardly dependent on Sharira, rather on Vijnana. It is Sahitya & Kama that depend upon Sharira. On Kriti, then, there must lie for some time the principal stress.

═

Krishna-Kali

Anandamaya Krishnadarshana is now extending itself to all objects & beings independent of form, guna etc.

═

The bhava of Mahalakshmi has taken its place in the Devi Bhava. The Kali Bhava has toned down its force in order to assimilate Mahaluxmi.

═

The Ishwara in the system is still preparing his bhava. Balarama-Aniruddha manifested; but Rudra-Vishnu is not yet entirely harmonised.

=

Vani, long silent, is now again active.

=

Lipi

1. Responsibility to be banished.
2 The brotherhood of the Ishwara (*bhratra*)
3 Friend (*sakhya*)
4 in reality soulless opposition to the kriti
5 it is already entirely ready equipment (mentally & nervously perhaps, materially it does not yet command faith).
6. Tapas . . telos . . tejas shuddhi—
(The tejas is purified of stress; if the tapas is purified, the shuddhi will be complete).
7. The effectivity of tapas in the kriti.

=

Rupa

Rupa at night showed an advance in the crude, clear figures (an arm holding a spear, jyotirmaya, a flag etc) appearing on the wall; others not so clear, but with more body (a human figure, two flags, a four-footed animal,) in the akash. The higher forms were mostly in abeyance except in the fugitive side view.

=

Samadhi

Dream copious; those that were vivid were exact representations of realities, but coherency was not sufficient. Present association, though not vivid nor compelling, held all the representation

The interpretation of dream has recommenced.

The movement in Samadhi towards the éveil and idealisation of the profounder states of swapnasamadhi continues.

=

Arogya

Arogya Shakti very slowly gets rid of fragments of Roga.

Dec 20 –

Utthapana –

Legs, medial position, 10 minutes, then after [?] minutes interval 16. – Mahima in laghima defective. Strong external oppression, which more & more takes the place of gravitation.

==

Vijnana

T^3.

An attempt to force back T^3. The opposition long, but finally ineffective. Immediate movements contradicted. One example of 80°.

Utthapana

Arms. one hour. There is a struggle and alternation between mahat laghima and laghima void of mahima weighed down by defect of anima, needing to be supported by mahima.

==

Rupa-Samadhi

A great play for a while of richly various crude^2 [crude crude] rupa, not stable; a little also of dense crude.

The effort to generalise samadhi in the state of sleep continues.

Stable rupa & stability of continuous action are entering into jagrat antardrishti.

==

Ananda

Kamananda continues but is comparative[ly] feeble in action, recurrent, but far from continuous.

Of the other Anandas tivra alone is fairly active, but not with full spontaneity

—

Script Predictions

Sharira

1. Utthapana develops the true and pure laghima
2. Arogya Shakti constantly increases.
3. Ananda maintains and strengthens itself.
4 Saundarya prepares

Vijnana

5 T^3 extends itself to distant things and to distant time

6. Rupa continues to grow towards the point where it can manifest perfection.

═

It is notable that in the Script prediction there was an error of understatement with regard to a particular thing to be done. These predictions, though usually fulfilled to a more or less extent, are still largely telepathic.

═

Lipi

Lipi, for some time sluggish, remanifested activity, but with an imperfect vividness and stability except in isolated words, one or two in number.

Afterwards it began to manifest long lines of many words and the beginnings of the page, but vividness, stability & legibility were insufficient, or rather there was stability without legibility or else legibility without stability

Lipi is now more free & self-acting in its development and formation

═

Shakti

Tertiary dasya in all parts of the system and in all actions is becoming entirely normal. With its development the stress of tapas and the sense of responsibility are being entirely removed. The remnants of *agraha* & *asamata* over *siddhi*, *satyam*, *mangalam* are also being dispersed—At the same time action is proceeding with a perfect energy and regularity of the Prakritic mental type, but not coordinated & perpetualised in energy by the vijnana

═

The energy of the mind is limited to the work in hand and intermittent with intervals of rest or change to other labour. The energy of the vijnana is permanent & equal, needs no rest and turns to other work in accordance not with interest of any kind or any necessity, but the free will of the Iswara.

═

At present there is the *manomaya* freedom of the paramahansa with the balabhava & jadatwa of the will that selects. The instrument does its work by the impulsion of Prakriti in obedience to the Ishwara.

=

Vijnana

Throughout the latter part of the day there was an extraordinary spontaneous accuracy in the thought telepathy & trikaldrishti, accurate even in the smallest details & shades of perception. There were still suggestions ill understood, intentions unfulfilled or refusals of intention contradicted in fact, but these were only a small part of the mental activity.

The type of union of knowledge & tapas, manomaya more than vijnanamaya, was almost entirely achieved.

Dream

Fantastic; not of this world.

=

Siddhi

Vijnana is hastening towards completion so far as that is possible without full control of Sharira & Karma.

Knowledge is preparing to complete itself both by perfecting itself in the limited field which it occupies and occupying the fields which it has invaded partially or else merely touches in a fragmentary fashion. As yet, it does not seriously attempt the higher movements which belong only to the Vijnana, but is directed towards completing its conquest of the fields of the Mind.

Tapas follows the march of the Knowledge. It is becoming more & more Vijnanamaya Tapas, that which fulfils what the knowledge sees.

The intellectual knowledge of the physical branches of information & utility is not yet attempted; for these are reserved for the action of the perfected Vijnana, not of the mentalised Vijnana.

=

In Sharira Ananda is preparing its masses and combinations rather than insisting on detailed successes. Arogya-Shakti also prepares its mass & only presses by the mass upon details. Its two great defects still remain in the defective actuality. Utthapana similarly insists on the growth & complete affirmation of pure laghima & is negligent of external victories. Saundarya is yet in the sukshma & only throws its chhaya on the sthula. There are one or two definite, but not yet decided sthula movements.

=

Karma also prepares its mass of force, & does not yet manifest fulfilment of its actualities except in the little.

Dec 21—

Vijnana

Tapas is now attempting its vijnanamaya completeness. It has to regulate its relations in eventuality with its action of tendency and its process of time. Once this is done it will be perfect in mental condition & tapasic potentiality.

=

Ishwarabhava

The type of Balarama-Aniruddha in the combination Rudra-Vishnu is now perfect in form, but not in force & contents.

The great question now is the validation of the 9th affirmation, the mastery of Time & process in Time.

The three Krishna affirmations are now finally founded.

=

Affirmations—

The affirmations can now be restated in other language.

=

1. Anandamaya Lilamaya Krishna, the source & sense of all being & activity.

2. The world rendered in the terms of Sachchidananda; therefore Satyam & Tapas in the form of Ananda the substance of all knowledge, feeling & action.

3. All being satyam, all must be affirmed, but in right terms, in the ritam.

4. Ritam, the just action of the Satyam Brihat. Vijnanamaya Sachchidananda the fulfilment of mind, life & body to replace asatyam, alpam, anritam.

5. The inner & the outer life of the person & the world the play of the consciously manifested *balaka Krishna* (Rudra Vishnu)

6. Madhuradasya the relation between the Prakriti-Jiva & the *balaka* Krishna.

7. The Jiva accepts all bhoga as the slave & instrument of the victorious & rudra Lover.

8 The field of play of Krishna the five worlds working themselves out in the fifth, Bhurloka

9. Time the instrument of the [Ishwara][10] & Ishwari, instrument & not determinant of the world-result.

═

It is the realisation of these nine affirmations which constitutes the active Siddhi. The rest is the condition of the active Siddhi.

═

Utthapana

Arms. 50 minutes. Stronger laghima

═

Rupa

Increasing perfection of sthapatya images and renewal of sadhara akasha images (half sthapatya) —

Perfect human figures & groups, crude, are now common in akasha rupa & occur in antardarshi.

Landscapes & fourfooted animals in bahirdarshi akasha are becoming clearer & more stable.

═

Lipi

1. first telepathy trikaldrishti
    afterwards
2 entire faith entire rapidity entire faith in the rapidity
3. entire faith in the telepathy & tapas-siddhi

═

Siddhi

There is an attack on the Sraddha. There is sraddha in the satyam, not yet sraddha in the ritam, sraddha in the tapas-siddhi of the small, not yet in the tapas-siddhi of the karma, sraddha in the sharira-siddhi, not yet in the rapidity of the sharira-siddhi. The possibility of rapidity is admitted, the actuality is felt to be doubtful

---

[10] *MS* Ishwari

═

Script

Deeper perceptions, more distant sight, a more rapid and all-embracing march.—

The greater vijnana; the more luminous and puissant ideality—

═

Vijnana

T^3 is always active, but there is an increase in mass with some temporary loss in clearness and separate fullness (*suvrikti*)

═

Siddhi

The rapidity of the advance has been evidently intermitted, although the general rapidity now at the worst moments is greater than it was before the recent forward rush.

The old principle of advance & relapse has been greatly modified, but is not yet eliminated in any limb of the siddhi.

Certain gains are always there, intact in foundation and mass, but not in intensity, activity and detail.

Sraddha is the key to perfection of sati in the first half of the siddhi, and sraddha is not perfect.

—

Dec 22—

Intensity of the Krishnadarshana in all beings, (Krishna & Kali, not yet KrishnaKali in human beings).

Krishnakali-darshana intensity begins in things & animals.

It has begun also in human beings.

Also pervading the extension of the Brahman in Akasha, Vayu etc—

It is the full joy & plenitude of the conscious existence illuminating also the inert & the void.

═

The difficulty that remains is to harmonise the perception of the ordinary egoistic consciousness with that of the KrishnaKali. The former is a subordinate mode of the latter and it must be seen as a lesser conscience in the Integrality. It is so seen, but the difficulty is that the egoistic conscience presents itself first & translates itself into the Integral or the mass of the Integral comes first & the mental egoistic has then to be distinguished in it—the two must be simultaneous, not exclusive.

═

The attack of the last two days is passing away & the normal daivabhava is restored.

═

Sharira

In one of the features the gross outline of the future saundaryam is beginning to establish itself after a long struggle which is not yet finished

On the whole the struggle of the saundarya with its physical prison can be felt; it is not yet effective as a whole.

═

Vijnana

Sukshma darshana is again manifesting and sravana attempting to manifest. The rest are for the time being obstructed, but not entirely inactive.

═

Utthapana

Arms 56 minutes. The struggle continues.

═

Rupa

Perfect animal forms are attempting to appear with stability in the Akasha. Hitherto only objects manifested. These forms are as yet only reproductions of sthula forms previously seen.—the eyes of a cat (in the pranakasha); a richly coloured butterfly, first seen in mental akasha of Earth, then in its pranakasha.

═

Landscapes in Akasha now appear distinctly, crude.—women on a hill, scattered houses, trees.

The fourfooted animal form tends still to be fugitive.

═

Vijnana

Vijnana is attempting its fuller movement of ritam.

Script

The lines of the past are fixed. It is only a question of accuracy in detail.

The future is vaguer and there is less sraddha. But there also there are materials for the sraddha. Certain lines have been laid down precise enough though general. They have to be filled in in the detail. The main difficulty is about the karma. It is here that asraddha stands as an obstacle.

The little ideality must be replaced by the large in order that the movements now being effected may fulfil themselves.

Samadhi

The siddhi (lipi, stable rupa etc)[11] continues to take a firmer hold of the akasha in swapna-samadhi. But as yet the hold is not entirely firm.

═

Sharira

There is a general adverse movement in Sharira, all the physical anandas being depressed & only intermittent in action & the subjective also superficially troubled

Arogya is attacked; the old affection of the eyes has revived, assimilation is put back, a copious rejection taking its place.

Utthapana does not prevail & the Shakti is discouraged.

In the little of Saundarya gained there are adverse signs.

═

Vijnana

Vijnana also is besieged by the old double asiddhi of tapasic & tamasic suggestions.

═

Siddhi

The general attack on the Siddhi is a denial of all the hopes of rapidity recently encouraged. It is again progress on the old lines of Anritam creating Ritam by advance & relapse, instead of the new lines of Ritam proceeding directly to greater ritam.

═

---

[11] *Closing parenthesis after "continues" in MS.—Ed.*

Samadhi

Swapna samadhi slowly enforces stability in the chittakasha.

Double page lipi read, but not with entire coherency.

Dec 23.

The movement of Asiddhi continues although the larger Siddhi prepares by means of the Asiddhi—

=

Vijnana

T^3 last night and this morning seemed to be disorganised and to lose hold of the objectivity; but afterwards there emerged a larger & more massive action, though less sure in details.

Especially, there is opposition to the Tapas-siddhi and an attempt to throw it back from the rapidity & sureness it had acquired.

Tapasic stress appeared; when it was absent, 80° acted frequently. In the action of the Tapasic stress, there were a number of contrary results, but a tendency was always created which acted in the mass, but with uncertainty of the detail.

=

Rupa is hampered by the affection of the eye which gives a disinclination towards Trataka.

=

Lipi continues to develop the page in the chitra, but it is not yet sufficiently legible. The double & triple line are frequent.

=

In samadhi the slow taking possession of the chittakasha continues.

=

The movement towards a larger trikaldrishti of the past & the future continues, but as yet it is neither fulfilled nor dominant.

=

Darshana

The Krishnakali darshana continues to increase its own normality.

Sharira

Arogya

The affection of the eye continues; it is evidently connected with cold, which it materialises; the materialisation of actual cold (catarrh) is not effective, but it has reestablished with great difficulty certain remnants. Cough does not materialise in spite of exposure.

—

Assimilation has been thrown backward for the last few days.

=

In another direction the Arogyashakti has maintained its gains, but certain remnants are more insistent than they have been.

=

On the whole the Asiddhi is for the present stronger in the objectivity than the Siddhi.

Ananda

Sahaituka Kama in its acute form reached a great extension of prolongation.

Ahaituka continuity has reached its lowest ebb and is unable for the present to reassert itself.

The other physical anandas are also less powerful in frequency of recurrence.

Subjective Ananda has been subjected to a revival of Asamata with regard to Asiddhi & Amangala.

=

Utthapana

Discontinued during the day.

—

Saundarya

The advance of saundarya is also checked in appearance.

Karma

Karmasiddhi is also stagnant. There is a great immobility everywhere. Points of asiddhi present themselves & threaten to become fulfilled.

Some of these points turn out to be illusions of actuality thrown out from a background of real though at present ineffective possibility; others are attempts to materialise possibilities.

=

Ananda

Ananda (kama) revived in the evening, continuous in seated asan, initially continuous otherwise. This under the circumstances of the day is unprecedented and along with the other advance in the afternoon constitutes a marked progress, in spite of the failure to establish spontaneous continuity.

═

Kamananda is also emerging from the vishaya & tivra in other parts of the body.

═

Arogya

The struggle over the eye affection continues. It is lessened, but not yet expelled.

Arogya as yet makes no rapid advance.

═

Vijnana

General vijnana again took stronger possession of the intellectuality in the evening.

═

Lipi

1. inflexible ideality, flexible intellectuality. (It is this which is the condition of the perfect ritam)

Dec 24

Sharira

Ananda

Spontaneous continuity of Ananda is attempting to establish itself. The spontaneity is manifesting, but not yet any dominant continuity.

═

Arogya

The eye affection has regained strength.

Assimilation, today, has improved.

Remnants expelled try still to rematerialise

There is acute sensation of catarrh, but only a point of material reality.

Utthapana

Arms. one hour. Laghima was easy but has not yet the required freedom from reaction.

—

Vijnana

$T^{\underset{..}{3}}$

There was a great largeness of T^3, but the defect of Tapasic stress and its reaction were prominent.

The final irresistibility of Tapas after long resistance was three times exemplified; but immediate siddhi occurred rarely.

On the other hand jnanam was almost full & luminous in ritam.

=

Lipi continues its work of self-preparation

=

Rupa is for the time being arrested in its progress by the eye-affection.

Dec 29.

The Record has been discontinued owing to the activity of the eye affection which is only now sufficiently cured to admit of freely reading or writing.

=

The siddhi has during these days continued but without an organised or forcible activity except in $T^{\underset{..}{3}}$.

=

T^3 from the 25th has attained to the coordination of the Tapasic & tamasic oppositions in thought, perception and telepathy. These are now at peace, seeking always to understand each other and usually succeeding. Something of the old nature of mutual hostility tries sometimes to recur, but unsuccessfully.

The movement is now establishing itself in Trikaldrishti and tapas-siddhi where it is as yet less final and successful.

=

In Rupa certain forms have improved, eg the eye or eye and part of the face with a continual recurrence & obstinate stability of perfection in all forms, both in antardarshi and bahirdarshi, but with most perfection in the former. This is the reflected image at its best.

=

Samadhi has been sometimes active, sometimes depressed, but chiefly occupied with self-organisation in profound swapna.

=

Today Samadhi reached a very high organisation of perceptive thought & vangmaya, even very profound samadhi admitting the jagrat & partly coherent observation of the mind.

Ananda, sukshma shabda, sukshma gandha recur in samadhi.

Organised continuity of mental vision in jagrat antardarshi continued in swapna.

=

Vani once more active

Sharira.

Utthapana

Arms—one hour.

During these four days there has only been utthapana of the arms varying from half to three quarters of an hour without great force. Today the force of utthapana was sufficient.

=

Ananda

Continuity is not achieved. The Kamananda has varied considerably; the others have been intermittent, only tivra somewhat more frequent.

Today all are again active, but not with full activity.

=

Arogya

Resisted all attack except in assimilation which does not yet assimilate the new habit demanded of it. In Chakra there is no visible advance except in force of M.A. [Maithuna Ananda]

=

In Saundarya Asiddhi is strong except at one or two points.

Karma

Mostly stationary except at one or two points. Nowhere any exceptional results..

Vijnana

Rupa Samadhi—

In the evening crude rupa distinct in forms.

Samadhi at night & in the early morning was very successful & received its fulfilment afterwards. The obstacle to continuity has broken down entirely

Frequent continuous action in stable rupa & connected series of action; frequent continuous conversation.

Lipi often continuous & fairly coherent except at the end when incoherency broke in again.

Continued rasa combined with appropriate action & experience.

The material of swapna samadhi is now complete in form though not yet full in content nor yet sufficiently effective in utility.

=

T^3

What is lacking now in T^3 is sufficient force of decisive telepathy, decisive trikaldrishti, decisive tapas-siddhi. This defect supplied, perfectly organised ritam will be possible.

=

But for the defect in jagrat rupa and vishayadrishti the vijnana is almost complete in itself; but its organisation for utility in life-action is as yet only in its commencement.

=

Sharira & Karma remain incomplete. The struggle that began in the middle of the month has not yet ended victoriously.

Dec 30th

The action of the Vijnana is now assured of its final development. The Shakti must concentrate even more than in the immediate past on Sharira and Karma.

=

There the development is following the path of steady consolidation and patient overcoming of difficulties. The effect is a rapidity which is only disclosed by the subsequent results, but is not apparent in the course of the action except in certain points of swift realisation which either prepare definite finality or are the result of an obscure previous preparation.

The rapidity is therefore not definitive and not yet entire.

═

Rupa in the afternoon developed certain clear stabilities of form on the background. Otherwise it only manifested the general variety without stable distinctness which it had already attained previously.

═

T^3 is preparing the emergence of decisive activities.

═

Utthapana half an hour.

═

Ananda is evolving the pure spontaneous action which must be its definite base

═

In dream perfect continuous & coherent lipi.. Reading of a sort of Akashic record of 20 lines in the nervous world relative to the last Franco-German war.

Dec 31st

Rupa in the afternoon developed a greater freedom of images on the background, including almost all varieties of form & combination in the crude.

═

There was no definite advance in any part of the siddhi, only a sense of stronger preparation in the various members not yet sufficiently realised.

═

Spontaneous equable continuity of the Kamananda is the chief force visibly preparing

═

Decisive T^3 is not at present visibly efficient in its organised action. There is once again the state of avyakta, a mass of indefinite potentiality, which gives a certain sense of Asiddhi, but the Prana is not allowed to revolt.

═

Swapna samadhi maintains its gains.

═

There is visible progress in some around, not as yet definite organisation of advance.

═

In Kriti there are signs & promises of movement, not yet the movement itself.

═

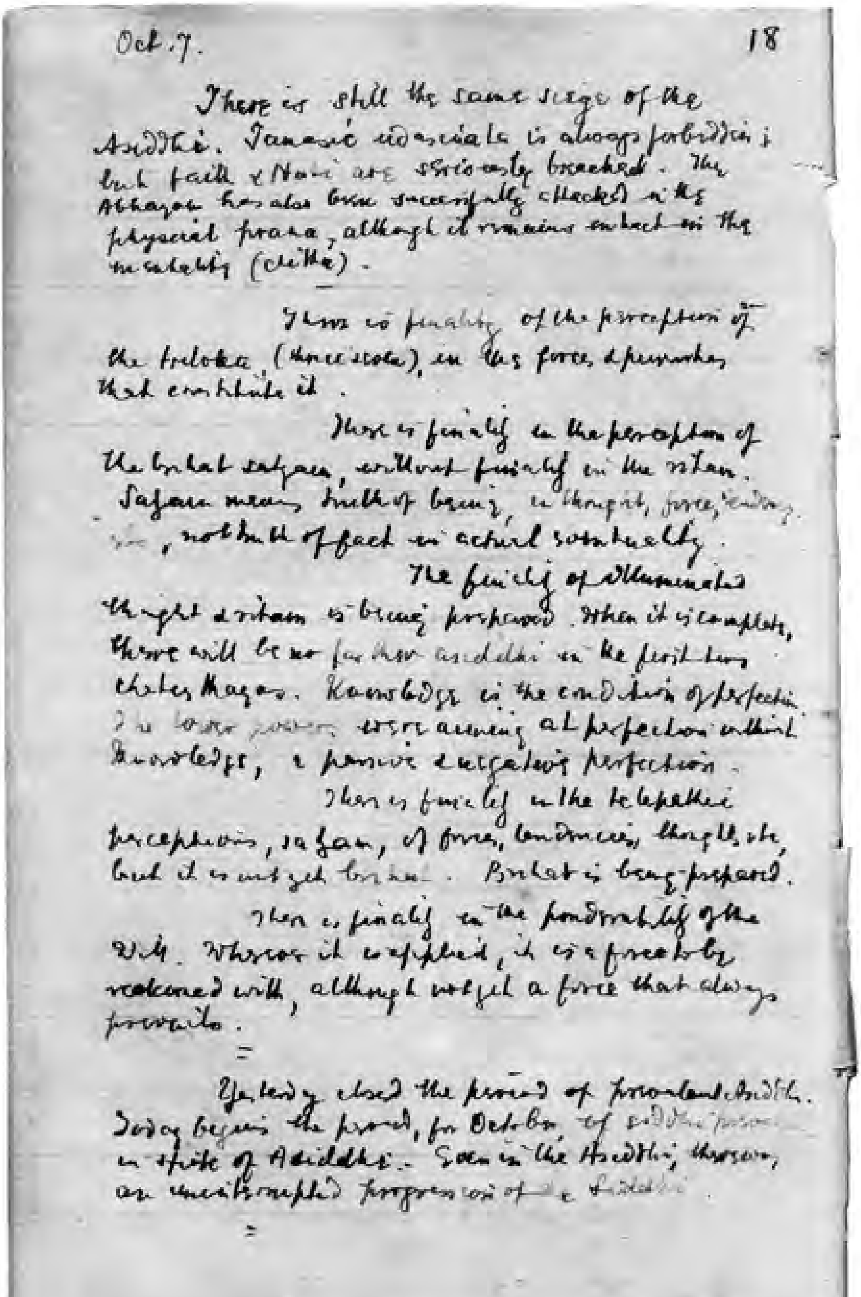

Oct. 7. 18

There is still the same siege of the Asiddhi. Tamasic udasinata is always forbidden; but faith & Hasi are seriously attacked. The Abhaya has also been successfully attacked in the physical prana, although it remains intact in the mentality (chitta).

There is finality of the perception of the triloka (three worlds), in the forces & personalities that constitute it.

There is finality in the perception of the brihat satyam, without finality in the ritam. Satyam means truth of being, in thought, force, tendency etc, not truth of fact in actual eventuality.

The finality of illuminated thought & ritam is being prepared. When it is complete, there will be no further asiddhi in the first two chatusthayas. Knowledge is the condition of perfection. The lower powers were aiming at perfection without knowledge, a passive & negative perfection.

There is finality in the telepathic perceptions, satyam, of force, tendencies, thoughts etc, but it is not yet brihat. Brihat is being prepared.

There is finality in the formidability of the Will. Wherever it is applied, it is a force to be reckoned with, although not yet a force that always prevails.

=

Yesterday closed the period of prevalent Asiddhi. Today begins the period, for October, of siddhi prevalent in spite of Asiddhi. Even in the Asiddhi, therefore, an uninterrupted progression of the Siddhi.

=

Record entry of 7 October 1914

1 JANUARY–27 FEBRUARY 1915

January.

During December the advance has been chiefly in the third and sixth chatusthayas.

In the first, Asiddhi has been reduced to an occasional physical depression of the sukham which does not affect the being generally but only the nervous & physical layers of the physical consciousness. As a rule the full samata operates.

Positive Ananda is sometimes deficient. Asiddhi does not bring revolt, but only a temporary failing of positive Ananda and a depression of force and faith.

Everything being now seen as the play of the Lilamaya Krishna, revolt is no longer possible. It is also seen that all forces, all experiences act & occur, succeed & fail in pursuance of his self-fulfilment in the world. It is only in the relations of the Lilamaya with the Jiva that there is a defect, positive harmony proceeding by ignorance, uncertainty, some unfaith.

This renders itself by a defect of the second chatusthaya. Faith in the Yogasiddhi does not really falter except in relation to the Saundaryam. An increasing rapidity & sureness & safety, (dhananam satih), is acknowledged. But the decisive knowledge & effectivity being insufficient, faith in the entire rapidity is insufficient, faith in the Kriti grows, but is troubled by doubts.

Hence, the Ishwarabhava cannot fix itself & brings with it a

The Record for 1–6 January 1915 was kept in the notebook in use since 29–30 September 1914. Between 2 and 23 January an "intermediate record" was kept in another notebook. There are entries for 2–6 January in both records; these contain some repetitions.—Ed.

general laxity of the Virya and Devibhava. Nevertheless the faith & the Ishwarabhava grow steadily.

In the third chatusthaya satyam brihat has extended itself to the trikaldrishti, telepathy & tapas-siddhi, but have not yet been converted into the full ritam. Ritam is being organised, but is self-constructive rather than transcendently decisive. Therefore it lacks mastery & selfconfidence and fullness.

The defect is in tapas-siddhi. There is the play of forces, the acceptance of all forces, the effectivity of tapas in the end. But the balance wavers continually; the tapas effects itself through a struggle of mutual adaptation on the level of this action, not by union with a mastering will that transcends the action.

This defect is dependent on a defect in KrishnaKali relation & related to the defect of the faith & Ishwarabhava.

Swapna Samadhi has conquered all its difficulties and has now only to organise itself finally for steady manifestation and definite ritam and utility. In jagrat there is manifestation of all sorts of forms, but not yet a victorious hold of stable clearness on the Akasha.

Sharira is still in full struggle to manifest & organise itself.

Ananda has arranged all its terms, but cannot yet deploy them in a sure & normal continuity. Recurrence is established varying in frequency & stability in the different terms, but continuity is still prevented.

Arogya advances slowly. It has got rid of the permanence of certain affections & of all but the last remnants of their recurrence, but it is not yet sure of the non-return of rogas that have been expelled but not destroyed,—as instanced by the eye-affection. Assimilation still repeats the old see-saw between excessive consolidation and jalya-tejomaya dissolution. The Will for right assimilation does not succeed. The chakra makes advances in certain details, but not any organised advance. Will is effective slowly or swiftly in temporary movements.

Utthapana has abandoned the attempt at self-fulfilment by tapasya. But the exclusion of defect of anima by Will is not yet sufficiently advanced to replace tapasya.

Saundarya is still held back. The body is prevented from obeying the Will. There is only a predominant, but slow and uncertain advance in some details. .

Kalikrishna is manifest & established in the completed Brahmadarshana; but there is need of smarana still. As soon as there is smarana, there is complete darshana, but emerging out of the incomplete darshana in which Ananda is involved, not dominant & Krishna concealed by the extended Brahman.

In the person Kali is organised in the Maheshwari-Mahaluxmi-Mahasaraswati combination, the second element as yet insufficient, but the dominant Mahakali is occasional only, the normal bhava being the contained and dominated Mahakali.

This again is due to the gulf that still remains between the Purusha & the Shakti. The Purusha is the dominant Krishna, bala, Balarama-Aniruddha; but the Prakriti does not always feel the fullness of the tertiary dasya & the actual presence of the bhava of madhura-dasya. Hence the Ishwara is recognised, but the Devi is not yet Ishwari by expressing the dominant will of the Ishwara.

Hence karma is not yet manageable. Sahitya is powerful & effective, but hampered by the sluggish response of the physical instrument. Dharma grows in strength, but is not yet easy & sure except in certain persons & movements & there not with sufficient force. Kriti is struggling slowly to emerge, but is still enveloped.

Kama is growing continually in bhava, but awaits the Sharira-siddhi.

Shuddhi-Mukti-Bhukti are imperfect only by the imperfect physical response. Siddhi moves forward steadily & surely, but is not yet victorious.

For January the development of ritam, the entire union of KrishnaKali in the madhura dasya, the organisation for life & action of the three first chatusthayas & the fullness & force of the completed chatusthayas seem to be indicated.

The struggle is now in Sharira and Karma. Ananda is assured, but its organisation has to be completed by continuity. Arogya has to conquer the obstacles to perfect sati & victorious fulfilment. Utthapana has to conquer defect of anima. Saundarya has to break down the wall of physical inadaptability. It is not clear how much of this can be done in the month of January.

The progress possible in Karma is still more obscure. . A great development in Sahitya & Dharma is possible. Kriti is enveloped in doubt. Kama waits on Sharira.

Probably the resistance will finally break down, if not completely, in January February.

Jan 1st

The day begins with a struggle as a result of which it is decided that no sadhana is necessary for the development of the ritam. The attempt at direct sadhana results in a return of old conditions and old defects.

==

T^3 [trikaldrishti, telepathy and tapas-siddhi] is now proceeding normally. The main movement is towards the substitution of Ishwarabhava in the tapas-siddhi for the attitude of effort and aim of the Devi.

==

In Rupa also the old tendency to compel by tratak imperfect figures to become perfect, is from today abandoned. The imperfect figure is only an indication of the Drishti working upon the physical akasha to open it to the physical vision. . The Drishti will do its own work unaided by trataka.

==

Ananda also must be left to perfect itself.

==

Sadhan is still needed in the rest of Sharira, but sadhan only of the discerning Will.

==

Lipi

By the faith

Trikaldrishti

Vague intimation that S [Saurin] & others would return about 11.30 pm. They came at 11.22—

==

Ananda

Shuddha Ananda with Kama & Premananda inherent in it is beginning to dominate Chidghana-Ahaituka.

Rupa

Stable rupa partially distinct at night. Perfect rupa with initial stability occurs occasionally.

=

KrishnaKali

The Ishwara is beginning finally to dominate all the action. There is always tertiary dasya, but it is generally void of the madhura. The madhura is now about to establish itself as the normal bhava.

This is evident in the darshana of external objects and there it comes automatically. It is less easy in the internal darshana.

Kali is now everywhere revealed in the bhava of the madhura dasi dominated by Krishna & ministering to his bhoga.

This bhava is becoming by a secondary motion more normal in the internal darshana –

=

$T^{\underset{\therefore}{3}}$

The decisive trikaldrishti is becoming more frequent & better justified in its frequency

=

Kriti

Kriti is manifesting tongues of potentiality, but at present it is action without any certain result.

Samadhi

In swapna samadhi lipi is still subject to a certain incoherence, ordinarily. Coherence of phrases is common.

St. [Sortilege]

1. The airship
2 Matches
3 safety.

=

Sharira

Ananda was recurrent, not continuous. There was frequently a physical obstruction.

Arogya also does not advance beyond the point already attained.

There was no utthapana

═

Samadhi

Samadhi at night was unproductive.

Dream was confused and entirely occupied with present associations.

═

Siddhi

The movement just now has reverted to the condition of obscured and disaggregated progress with preparation behind the veil.

Doubt of the Kriti has taken a somewhat acute form, although there is a struggling faith which refuses to retire.

Doubt of the Yoga-siddhi can no longer be reestablished. There is only uncertainty of the rapidity.

═

The ritam is steadily advancing under all.

Jan 2.

T^3

The ritam of telepathy is now becoming more & more marked and decisive. That of trikaldrishti is still hampered by hasty tapasic decisions. But these are converting themselves into excess of statement rather than misstatement.

The element of misstatement especially survives in the combination of Trikaldrishti & Tapas-siddhi.

═

The Tapas siddhi is now in a period of recoil. 80° acts seldom or not at all; long & obstinate resistances, contrary movements are the rule.

═

Utthapana

Arms, one hour. Easy; but afterwards there was some heaviness in the shoulder-muscles.

═

The Asiddhi is associated with an attempt of the Dwayavin consciousness to reassert itself and support an activity of the tamasic dhriti in the physical consciousness opposed to the constant manifestation of the Siddhi. The success has been to create a cleft between the divine consciousness & the physical by which the latter sees all things as the Brahman in the many, but not the Many as the One.

There is an alternation between this division & the integral consciousness.

Rupa

Jagrat Rupa of all kinds, except the perfect, with an initial stability, just before the eyes, emerging from pranic akasha.

═

Utthapana

Right leg, horizontal, recumbent on side, 20 minutes. At the end strong defect of anima, — always recurrent defect.

Saundarya

A certain gain has been effected in one of the features, but this is not accompanied by any general movement.

St.

1 Forget me not (nityasmarana)
2 The New Way (ie of the entire dasyam; by this the nityasmarana will come)

═

Trikaldrishti

1. The hold of the asiddhi passes away today
2. 4 days of progressive siddhi.

Ananda

The physical Anandas again became active.

Lipi

1. light
2 destiny belongs to the Ishwari
3 entire stability of the lipi has to be reinstated (fulfilled)
4. tapas siddhi
5 faith in the entire rapidity is about to be justified
6 fortnightly attack of the Asiddhi.
7. This is the entirety of the faith in the Yogasiddhi.

Jan 3d

The decisive Trikaldrishti is now regularising itself, putting away to each side of it the tapasic and tamasic insistences.

This involves a certain putting aside of the Tapas siddhi of tapasic aishwarya vashita, which has to give place to the self-knowing divine Aishwarya-Ishita-Vashita.

The Tapasic stress reveals itself more and more as a force working for a future effect in opposition to resistances (tamasic stress) and mistaken in its idea of time and circumstance because of absorption in the sureness of its own fulfilment. The tamasic stress is more in harmony with present time and circumstance, but mistakes present for future non-fulfilment.—

=

The day was chiefly given to work for the Review.

=

Utthapana half hour. At first dullness, afterwards force of the laghima.

=

Lipi active in sthapatya & manifesting page in single & double word, vivid & legible, but not entirely fixed.

=

At night activity of the tejomaya rupa in Swapnasamadhi.

=

Verification of distant telepathy.

=

Jan 4th

The morning devoted to work for the Review

═

Vijnana

T^3 continues to progress. Many combinations which come automatically in the unillumined mentality, prove to be right in every detail. This is a definite beginning of the ritam.

Tapasic stress justifies itself more & more as a promise of the future. But though the examples are many & striking, the fulfilment is either not invariable or does not always present itself to the observation.

═

80° does not now occur, but on the other hand there are instances of the almost immediate effectivity (70°) even where there is a previous opposite tendency & intention. Not yet, however, where the intention is strong and fixed, except rarely.

═

Stable dense rupa & dense developed (less stable) came frequently in jagrat antardrishta.

In swapnasamadhi there are now frequent instances of true scene, event & conversation of this world. Combinations are becoming more frequent & firm. But as yet there is not the use of samadhi for life-utilities.

═

Anandamaya Ishwaradarshan in all is now normal, but not usually intense.

═

Sharira

In Arogya there is something of a setback.

═

Physical Ananda can no longer be annulled. It can only be obstructed by a strong pressure.

═

The hair continues to be thin in front and especially on the left side. It is in the lower layer that the Asiddhi is obstinate.

═

Suddhananda is now fixed behind the Chidghana & Ahaituka. Prema & subjective Kama Anandas are as a result normalising themselves.

=

There is no indication as yet of any decisive movement in the Karma.

=

Utthapana of the arms one hour, laghima effective but burdened by [subsequent][1] reaction of the defect of anima.

=

Vijnana

80° acted twice in succession once for exact detail of aishwaryam, once after failure of aishwaryam for general effectivity of ishita

=

Swapnasamadhi continues at the same level wavering between imperfect and more perfect organisation.

=

Sharira

Denial of Arogya was a little stronger & one of the gains was temporarily abrogated.

=

Ananda sometimes obstructed, always impeded, yet maintains itself.

Jan 5th

In the morning a strong obstruction to the Ishwaradarshana preventing the physical consciousness from enjoying the light of the Affirmations even though aware of their actuality behind the denial.

This obstruction contains in itself a more entire, ready & solid participation in the siddhi by the whole conscious existence. The subconscious is being rapidly trained by the force of its obstructed aspiration towards the light.

---

[1] *MS* subagent

The response to the Asiddhi proceeds from the subconscious; as the source of these responses, it is being purified from them and fortified for the response to the Siddhi—

In the waking mind the obstruction creates a conclusion of unfaith in the rapidity of the Siddhi &, consequently, in the importance of the karma.

The element of error in the satyam is temporarily emphasised in order that the resultant truth may be more sure and self-assured.

St.

1. एति प्र होता व्रतमस्य मायया ऊर्ध्वां दधानः शुचिपेशसं धियं।

Agni, the divine force, precedes the present movement of action by the concealed creative & formative Maya of the Master of the Yoga holding in himself a thought pure in form of vision & exalted to the Vijnana. This is the sense of the present obstruction & its eventualities.

2. Any person must be able to trace his past, present and future.

Sharira

Ananda oppressed at night & in the morning acted from time to time during the day.

Utthapana

1. The utthapana of the arms failed because of the denial by physical heaviness.

2. Left leg, horizontal 27 minutes. Strong *laghu mahima*, strong defect of anima with *kampana*, finally prevailing. Intervals of pure anandamaya anima after the tremblings.

3. Back. One minute and a half. Mahat laghima, defect of anima.

Samadhi

Jagrat

1. A river with islands, chhayamaya but clear—occasionally dense

2. The same with a house on a small island in the middle, at first lit by a lamp which was afterwards extinguished

3. Objects, stable; one dense (the reel of thread[)].

Swapna

Scenes, objects, activities. Brief stability

Lipi, legible only in detached sentences of an illegible page or tract.

=

Trikaldrishti

The four days of steady (obstructed, not rapid) progress are over. The Lilamaya Ishwara darshana is confirmed.

Jan 6th

Today, the obstruction to the Lilamaya darshana is less powerful, though equally obstinate. It is put aside easily, but obscures the plenitude.

=

Satyam is again recovering its elasticity & throwing off the obstruction. Ritam is still obstructed, but not entirely. Tapas siddhi meets constantly the obstruction & immediate denial, though there are instances to the contrary.

[*Here begins the "intermediate record" of 2 – 23 January.*]

Jan 2d

==

The continued oppression of the Siddhi is met by an equally effective repression of the attempted *Asamata*. The attempt to reintroduce *duhkha* and Ashanti has definitely failed.

—

For some time the force of the kshatriya viryam has been suspended. It will now be restored to its firm activity.

==

In the saundarya the attempt to denude the head of the fresh growth of hair has failed. The thickness has not returned. There the two powers of youth and age are evenly balanced. With regard to the whitening, the new growth is black; it is only the old hair that keeps up the appearance of age.

==

The remodelling of the nose has not proceeded far, but a certain definite advantage has been gained.

==

With regard to other features the resistance of the Prithivi continues.

==

St.

1. Forget me not— (nityasmarana[)]
2. The New Way (ie of the entire dasyam,—by this the nityasmarana will come.)

==

Telepathic Tr. [Trikaldrishti]

==

The hold of the Asiddhi passes away today.

Ananda

Ananda (kama) has been intense & continuous &, instead of being discouraged, assisted by manasa abhyasa.

Tivra shows a sufficient strength of spontaneity for a beginning of the new method.

None of the other Anandas is, separately, very active.

=

Script

There is as yet not sufficient certainty in the guidance. Its details of time & arrangement seem sometimes to be contradicted by the event. This defect is about to be removed.

=

Lipi

1 This is the entirety of the faith in the Yogasiddhi.
2. fortnightly attack of Asiddhi
3 light.
4 destiny belongs to the Ishwari.
5 entire stability of the lipi has to be reinstated.
6 tapas-siddhi.
7 faith in the entire rapidity is about to be justified.

=

5 has been already fulfilled. Stable lipi of two lines has manifested with a greater sureness & vividness than before.

=

Ananda of raudra & vaidyuta are again active, as also vishaya—

Samadhi

The restoration of activity, but not as yet any new development.

=

Vijnana

Activity was restored after an interval of the play of unilluminated mental forces. But it is not as yet a well-organised activity. The illumination is opposed and insufficient except at times.

Script.

The main movement and utility of the last two days has been to deepen samata (nati and rasagrahanam) and to strengthen the general force of tertiary dasya.

The elements of bhoga & udasina nati must be so combined as to unite into a secure and full sama Ananda.

Tertiary dasya is only complete when anandamaya nati is complete

=

Anandamaya nati is the condition of madhura dasya and madhura dasya of the full vijnanasiddhi.

But it must be the madhura dasya of Mahakali-Mahasaraswati, not of the merely passive Mahasaraswati.

=

Trikaldrishti-Vani

4 days of progressive siddhi.

Jan 3d

The decisive Trikaldrishti[2] is now regularising itself, putting away to each side of it the tapasic and tamasic insistences.

This involves a certain putting aside of the Tapas-siddhi of tapasic aishwarya-vashita, which has to give place to self-knowing divine Aishwarya-Ishita-Vashita.

=

The morning has been given to sahitya for the Review; as also part of the afternoon.

=

The process with the first two Chatusthayas continues, as well as the progressive normalisation of the Krishna Kali consciousness in all vessels. The Anandam Brahma is already normalised.[3]

=

The Tapasic stress reveals itself more & more as a force working for a future effect in opposition to resistances (tamasic stress) and mistaken in its idea of time & circumstance because of absorption in the idea of its own fulfilment. The tamasic stress is more in harmony with present time and circumstance, but mistakes present for future nonfulfilment.

=

Activity of the tejomaya rupa in swapnasamadhi.

---

[2] NB. An error. This was telepathic and not real trikaldrishti, called decisive only because the prevision and the event happened to agree. [*Sri Aurobindo's note*]

[3] Errors. Both were imperfect and temporary. [*Sri Aurobindo's note*]

Jan 4th

Morning devoted to Sahitya for the Review.

═

T^3 continues to progress, many combinations coming automatically in the unillumined mentality, proving to be right in every detail.

═

The siddhi is now regulating itself in the new way. But the normal movement has not yet established itself in three members of the Sharira & in the Kriti.

═

The two trikaldrishtis of the second [January] have justified themselves. Moreover the full movement of the Asiddhi only lasted for three days at the most. There has been some relic of it for these two days also— But these will now pass away.

═

In Vijnana only jagrat rupa is giving real trouble. The rest is all moving forward very steadily in spite of the obstruction deliberately & massively opposed to it.

═

The Asiddhi of Samata is condemned to be now purely physical.

═

Two quickly successive instances of 80°, one of aishwarya in detail, the other of ishita in general movement.

═

The contradiction of the Sharira has now to be removed, first in the Arogya & Utthapana, then in the Saundarya.

Jan 5th

This record is not to replace the other,[4] but to supply another element.

═

---

[4] *I.e., the record written in the other notebook, which was temporarily abandoned after the sixth.—Ed.*

The obstruction now offered is to the conscious use of the Affirmations. They are all present in act, but the physical consciousness is prevented from enjoying their light.

This obstruction serves eventually the end of a more entire & solid participation in the siddhi by the whole conscious existence; for the subconscious is being trained through the aspiration towards the light. It is from the subconscious that the responses to the Asiddhi proceed, & the source of these responses is being fortified and purified. But the waking mind derives from the sense of obstruction a conclusion of unfaith in the rapidity of the Siddhi and the importance of the Karma.

=

The element of error of the satyam is therefore emphasised this morning.

=

St

एति प्र होता व्रतमस्य मायया ऊर्ध्वां दधानः शुचिपेशसं धियं।

Agni, the force of activity, precedes the present action by the concealed creative & formative Wisdom of the Master of the Yoga holding in himself a thought pure in form of vision & exalted to the Vijnana.

=

The denial of the Lilamaya Ishwaradarshan made strongly this morning, is again rectified.

=

The withholding of the Madhura Dasya bhava has now to be rectified.

=

The Ananda oppressed at night and in the morning, is again restored to its activity.

=

Jagrat samadhi.

Landscape

1. A river with islands, chhayamaya, but quite clear.
2. The same river with a house on a small island in the middle; the house at first lit by a lamp, but this went out.
3. Objects (stable); one dense (the reel of thread).

Note—1. became dense at times.

Some sukshma-shabda (vak).

Swapna-samadhi

Scenes, objects; actions. Brief stability.

═

Utthapana

Left leg, horizontal, 27 minutes.

Strong laghu mahima; strong defect of anima with tremblings only succeeded in prevailing after 25 minutes. Intervals of pure anandamaya anima after the tremblings.

—

Back; 1 minute 30 seconds. Mahat laghima did not fail, but defect of anima prevailed.

═

Script.

The four days, as was perceived by the telepathic trikaldrishti, were of steady progress against obstruction as opposed to rapid progress.

The progress has been especially in Ishwaradarshana & telepathy.

It must now extend itself to tapas & trikaldrishti,—though in the latter also there has been progress.

The struggle in the Sharira must continue.

In the Karma there will be some progress.

═

St

Any person must be able to trace his past, present and future.

═

Script

The failure of faith in the Kriti and the rapidity was inevitable at this stage, since the forces that oppose are allowed to justify their denial in appearance at most points.

Yet it is evident that the great force of Aishwarya Ishita continues, only it works against a stubborn resistance which prevents rapid result and rapid progress.

In reality the Ishwaradarshan has been rapidly effected; it is easy, it is normal; only it is still liable to forcible interruption &

obstruction. The difficulty is no longer in the Siddhi asserting itself, but for the Asiddhi to prevent the self-assertion even by massing all its force on the point.

In the other movements the rapidity is veiled by the opposition

=

The rapidity will manifest in spite of the obstruction.
The Kriti will fulfil itself in spite of the denial.
The Sharira will prevail in spite of the struggle.

Jan 6.

St.

But lo he speaketh boldly & they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

=

The revival of the Satyam is a preliminary to the larger assertion of the ritam.

=

In the thought the ritam is restored. It has to be restored in the trikaldrishti in an enlarged movement.

=

Sudden & strong attack of the old kind of Asamata, leaving vibrations behind in the outer parts of the physical heart & mind. –

=

The day has been for the most part dull and inactive. This inactivity is a preparation for a greater passivity of the instrument and a more intense normality of the tertiary dasya & yantrabhava.

=

Samadhi

As yet obscured in its more effective parts, but active in all.

=

Passivity is still being perfected; the straining of the consciousness for the result is being systematically discouraged.

As the darshana of the Lilamaya Ishwara has become normal, so the madhura-dasya bhava in its full intensity must become normal.

Jan 7th

The passivity has now to be tested by action.

═

The References point both to the idea of the continual progression in the Yoga, not stopping short with an imperfect result.

═

Lipi

1. telos trikaldrishti tapassiddhi.

═

The physical passivity is now complete; that of the mind & heart must follow.

═

Samadhi

Jagrat Antardrishta

1. Stable developed forms (books, reel)
2. Human group.

Swapna

Activity of organised drishti.. (not the most perfectly organised).

═

In the afternoon there was a return of Asiddhi, but the Ishwara persists in the enforcement of the Madhura Dasya. This will now be harmonised with the Tapas, the latter being delivered from the shadow of the independent ego.

≡

The trikaldrishti is acting with the ritam on broad lines, in large questions akin to the jnana. The application in time & immediate circumstance does not yet take place.

═

Dream very coherent; a whole story read in dream lipi.

Jan 8th

The struggle between Siddhi & Asiddhi continues. At first sight obstructive Asiddhi seems to have replaced positive Asiddhi and to hold the field.

It is now suggested that this will endure till the fortnight is complete, 14th January, but there is also a suggestion that this formation will be contradicted.

The necessary realisation which it is so difficult to establish as a normally working practical view applied to every little detail of thought, feeling, action & event is that of the undivided Ishwara, who is at once fulfiller & opponent, Deva & Vritra. It is the relics of the Dwayavin consciousness that are the strength of the remnants of subjective Asiddhi.

==

Trikaldrishti is now active, both telepathic & decisive, but without ritam of time & exact arrangement of circumstance.

Nevertheless this ritam also is becoming much more frequent. There is an attempt to make the telepathic or mental trikaldrishti one with the decisive or veiled vijnanamaya. The completeness of the satyam of telepathy & telepathic trikaldrishti is becoming more & more absolute. The ritam lingers because of continued misapplication in time, circumstance, eventuality.

This is due chiefly to the tapasic suggestion at the right side of the head near the ear, false knowledge of false sruti, which is substantially true, but erroneous in circumstance. There are other elements, tamasic suggestion etc, but these are less important.

Tapasic suggestion more & more frequently fulfils itself in the end, though baffled at the moment. Tamasic suggestion fulfils itself chiefly at the moment, though still often in the finality.

Tapas is at present depressed and occurs as a rule only in the finality, but often ends in an adverse movement.

==

Ananda also is depressed, Arogya does not advance, Utthapana makes no appreciable progress, Saundarya is immobilised.—

Karma likewise is for the most part obstructed.

==

With the remanifestation of the intense Kamananda a progress is visible in Vaidyuta which now flows through the body with a great intensity, distinctness & spontaneity. Tivra is also manifesting greater intensity & vishaya is acquiring it.

==

Utthapana
Arms — about one hour. Some heaviness
Left leg — 10 minutes.

=

Trikaldrishti progresses. Many instances of decisive trikaldrishti of the nature of Chit-Tapas.

=

Some activity of Tapas-siddhi & Jagrat-rupa.

=

Samadhi
Jagrat Ant.
Perfect forms, but on the borders of sleep
Swapna
Reading of successive lipi.
Long continued action & rupa with intervals of eclipse.

Jan 9th

महे नो अद्य बोधयोषो राये दिवित्मती
यथा चिन्नो अबोधयः सत्यश्रवसि वाय्ये
सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ।

The Sortileges are always appropriate; they are not always immediately fulfilled in their entirety. The reference given describes the movement towards which the Siddhi is directed, as yesterday's, अग्ने ऋतस्यासि क्षयो वामस्य भूरेः gave the preliminary movement begun yesterday, not finished.

Lipi.
1. Yes, it is already finished in the verity of the ideality
(on background)
(but has to be realised in the physical consciousness)
2. ἴσθι . . ἵνα μαθης θηρ. — (Chitralipi)
θηρ = पशु = the physical consciousness.

Ideality is accomplished, but has to be imposed on the whole physical consciousness. The siddhi of the mental & nervous dominating the physical are already complete, but they are veiled by Krishna as Vritra in order that they may not interfere with the enlightenment of the isolated physical consciousness.

3. good Tuesday (chitra) —
ie this movement will be complete by Tuesday.
4. perfect effectivity in the sahitya siddhi — (savalambana)

=

In the sahitya siddhi ineffectivity lingers in the form of a physical obstruction which prevents the inspired action of the vak. It can always be overcome, but its interference must be eliminated.

=

Utthapana

Left leg. — horiz. 30 minutes — attacks of an-anima ineffective, discontinued by will, not from necessity.

=

Samadhi

The same action of the samadhi continues

In ant [antardrishta] jagrat dense & developed rupa (book, shoe).

Some activity in bahirdarshi of rupa on the background.

=

Frequency of ritam in trikaldrishti is now normalised, but is not entirely complete and therefore not invariable.

=

It appears as if stable rupa on background in bahirdarshi were now established, but it is still far from perfect.

=

Stable clear rupa of all kinds, but imperfect in force of distinctness & lifelikeness is established in both antardrishta & bahirdarshi. Its development of perfection has to be awaited.

=

Therefore the vijnana continues to develop in spite of all obstruction with a limited & indecisive rapidity.

=

Ishwaradarshana is passing through the stage of Vritratwa after its final emergence. It is there but often concealed by the Vritra effort to restore the old bhavas of the darshana with a view to entire denial of all darshana. But this is now impossible.

Jagrad Rupa—Bahirdarshi At night
Akasha

Inkstand,—carriage & horses, house, & other objects; none of these, except the first, when it is dense or developed, is entirely distinct.

Human figures, groups, landscapes, scenes.—the same characteristic—

Very crude images of bird, butterfly & beast.

═

Kamananda, long intermittent, has become again spontaneously continuous. It so remained in act or tendency throughout the evening and till midnight.

═

Today Kavya was resumed.

═

Arogya continues to be subject to the Asiddhi.

═

The slight gain made in Saundarya is now being disputed by the Asiddhi. It is no longer apparent.

═

Swapnasamadhi inactive at night. Dream confused.

═

Exact instance of time trikaldrishti, S [Saurin] waking & rising at 3 pm instead of 4.30 pm. In other instances the time was only rough & approximate & hesitated between different alternatives (eg 8.15 & 8.30).

Jan 10th

प्रप्र पूष्णस्तुविजातस्य शस्यते महित्वमस्य तवसो न तंदते स्तोत्रमस्य न तंदते।
अर्चामि सुम्नयन्नहमंत्यूतिं मयोभुवं।
विश्वस्य यो मन आयुयुवे मखो देव आयुयुवे मखः॥

That is, the growth of the Vijnana in many forms increases, its *mahattwa* is not destroyed by the opposition.

It increases close about & within the adhara bringing with it the Ananda; it is becoming more & more illuminated in the physical consciousness which increases in peace & joy.

It is applying itself unperceived to the minds of all and overcoming the opposition of the littleness, besieging the mentality of the world with the Truth.

═

All this is justified by the observed facts.

═

There is entire satyam and almost entire ritam & brihat of the jnana & the telepathy in relation to outward event; decisive trikaldrishti is yet defective owing to defect of tapas siddhi and prakamya vyapti is not yet normally brihat, although it has all the necessary capacities.

═

For the rest T^3 is moving forward in the mass towards inevitable fulfilment.

═

Lipi

1. Tapas-siddhi entirety of tapas-siddhi

(Tapas has to become one with knowledge in order that there may be entire tapas-siddhi).

═

Utthapana

Arms. morning — half an hour. heaviness & pranic fatigue eliminated

Afternoon, half an hour, force & ananda, but reaction at moment of cessation.

═

Kavya.

═

Tapas-siddhi & lipi in work of formation, nothing final or definite.

═

Arogya still refractory.

═

Lipi —

2 sahitya-siddhi.
3 rupa-siddhi in the light
4 delight. .

═

Kamananda has recovered its tendency of continuity. The other shariranandas manifest from time to time.

==

The madhura dasya is attaining continuity, but the mere dasya is still too dominant over the madhura. This is a defect that from tonight will begin to disappear.

The one real obstacle is insufficient sraddha in rapidity & in kriti.

==

Sahityasiddhi is now assured in all its parts. The physical opposition, it will be found, is disintegrated. Only the remnants of it remain.

Ritam of trikaldrishti is more & more emerging; only it is not yet applied to important things in a large & definitive fashion.

Telepathy of thought & feeling is recovering distinctness, but is not yet sufficiently confident of its ritam.

==

The Mahakali-Mahasaraswati consciousness with the Mahaluxmi colour is finally taking form, but has not yet sufficient force of Mahakali.

==

For today in the Script, a progress in jagrad rupa antardrishta, in tapas-siddhi and in lipi was specially indicated. These indications often denote a movement of tendency rather than of definite or immediate fulfilment.

Lipi is visibly arranging the page behind the veil and shadows out from time to time, in front of it the reflection of its concealed movement. This it did yesterday, the large page appearing, but unvivid and therefore illegible. In front, entire vividness & stability of the long single line was reasserted, less vividness & stability of the double line, still less of the triple. The lipi still keeps the tendency to dissolve when it has been read. This is the chief obstacle to progress. Only sthapatya lipi has conquered it. Chitra sometimes prevails. Akasha tries to prevail.

In antardrishta there is the same movement of lipi less pronounced in its partial success.

Tapas-siddhi seems to be preparing its movement rather than to be actually advancing.

═

The dasya of Mahakali-Mahasaraswati with the Mahalakshmi tinge is now affirmed.

═

Whenever the Mahakali consciousness has been affirmed in Mahasaraswati, it has had too strong a tendency to overwhelm both Mahasaraswati and Maheshwari & assert the violent Asuric Kali bhava. For this reason the combination Mahasaraswati-Maheshwari has been constantly strengthened against this assertion & each time it has thus been strengthened, it has absorbed more & more of the Kalibhava which it denied.

Tonight the combination Mahalaxmi-Mahakali was effected & held steady against the Asuric Kali tendency which it then took into itself. By this action the perfect harmony was established; for Mahalaxmi has always asserted itself in the Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati formula, that is to say, with the right continent and the right pratistha. All that has now to be effected is the strengthening of the Kali tejas & virya till it reaches the right intensity without disturbing the other elements of the harmony. The intensification is already proceeding.

The result is the divinised Asuro-Rakshasi Kali with the Pisachi, Pramatheswari & Pashavi contained in the Rakshasi element. Mahalaxmi-Mahasaraswati brings with it the Gandharvi element.

The smooth development is now possible because the dasya is now complete and is taking the madhura into itself. The bhava is firmly founded on jnana & state of being & the Ishwara is being felt in all thought, feeling & action. The distinction between Ishwara and Prakriti is not yet merged in the unity + difference, but the Prakriti is subordinate & more conscious of being a form of the Ishwara.

Mahalaxmi brings with her bhakti & prema, the stable permanence of which was so long denied.

Jan 11th

The growth of ritam in the trikaldrishti continues, but still works chiefly on the material of the telepathy.

There is also a movement towards ritam of the impulsions which is not yet complete, but their satyam is now pronounced.

=

Sraddha in the guidance is now becoming absolute, but is still only partly illumined by knowledge of the exact drift of the guidance. Nevertheless, the exact sense & utility of each movement, whether overtly favourable or apparently adverse is more & more understood.

The sraddha is limited also by the doubt of the rapidity & of the kriti. In the vijnana & subjectivity generally the doubt of rapidity is giving way to comprehension of an increasing swiftness & sureness in the development; but in sharira & kriti the view is still blind. It is certain that something will be done, but the way & the extent is withheld from the knowledge. It only appears as a speculative formation.

=

Samata is almost entirely free from reactions of positive depression. There is only a shadow of depression & impatience due to defect of tapas-siddhi.

=

Sraddha in exact tapas-siddhi once accomplished there will be no farther defect of the first two chatusthayas.

=

The completion of the third is therefore the practical assurance of the whole Yoga-siddhi. The rest is only a matter of Time.

=

Jan 12th

The progress is now rather in thought & sahitya; in the rest there is more of preparation.

=

The force of the Kamic chakra & the sahaituka kamananda is increasing, but the Arogya is not sufficient.

=

There is a constant application of tests to the samata; but except momentary touches of depression & impatience, there is no result. The sama Ananda increases constantly & the only shadow over it is that of the recurrent unfaith.

═

On the other hand Shakti is affected by non-fulfilment and Asraddha. Tapatya continues, but fitfully where there is not the faith and without assured Ananda.

═

The Siddhi seems to move towards the Ananda of a purely disinterested and instrumental Tapatya not depending on faith in the results. But this brings a certain indifference to the Tapas-siddhi which cannot be final.

═

Jagrat rupa is at last manifesting really stable forms of all kinds that are at the same time clear, vivid & complete.

4 footed animal forms, long withheld by return of asiddhi, today manifest freely, but at first had no stability. They have already however begun to assume stability, though the movement is not yet successfully accomplished.

All this is in crude & with trataka, just in front of the eyes in a thick pranic akasha.

The figures at first ran swiftly away to the right, but they can now be kept floating before the eyes.

Both these results, reappearance & initial stability of four-footed animal forms and the cessation of the fugitive movement, are instances of almost instantaneous effectivity of tapas.

═

Lipi continues to develop fixity of single line and legibility of the multiple line.

═

The advance of rupa has come at a moment when a long obstruction made it appear impossible to push forward this siddhi.

It was followed by an outburst of successful tapassiddhi after a long period of ineffectivity. In the course of two minutes there were six or seven instances of aishwarya siddhi swiftly effective against which all resistance was helpless.

=

Utthapana of arms one hour, not yet free from slight defect of anima.

Of legs for eight minutes, medial position, strong & successful oppression of the laghima.

=

Bahirdarshi rupa at night began to repeat the movement of the day.

=

A certain movement of Kriti, but not of any great importance in itself.

=

Dream & samadhi continue in the same condition, the first subject to confusion, the second somewhat inactive, but capable of stability.

Jan 13th

First stable page lipi—chitra—Not legible at once, though very vivid. Legible line [ ][5] by line. But the preceding lines once read remained firm & could be re-read. Some seven or ten lines with fairly long phrases (about 7 words), a phrase to each line.

=

Tapas-siddhi continues.

=

The force of the Ananda of event increases, although the surface nirananda (negative rather than positive) still continues.

=

The faith increases slowly. The rapidity now manifested is a relative rapidity, a rapidity of gradual progression, not a positive and masterful rapidity. The body, the physical consciousness, the physical akash, the physical world are being moulded to the siddhi, but present still a tamasic resistance which reproduces mechanically the old forms of asiddhi. Hence the inability to advance with a positive rapidity.

---

[5] *MS* &

=

There are other signs of a revived effectivity of Tapas-siddhi, but as yet it is not decisively extended to Kriti or to Sharira.

=

Utthapana Arms one hour. Defect of anima a little more heavy than the day before.

=

Samadhi –

Long sleep. Struggle to conquer the tamasic nidra, only slightly successful.

=

The physical consciousness attempts to escape from the continued action of the Vijnana, not from hostility, but from tamas, indolence & addiction to easy & accustomed methods.

=

Telepathy of thought frequently occurs, but in a scattered form. It is not well-organised in the ritam.

=

The whole action now is one of adjustment occurring automatically, like a machine that is gradually putting itself to rights. . –

=

The attempt to conquer tamasic nidra continued. At night it was largely successful. There was a sense of samadhi rather than of nidra in the sushupti.

Swapna samadhi was rich in its activity & jagrat forms of considerable beauty (sea-scapes) appeared; but the more perfectly organised samadhi was not active.

Dream developed a great accuracy & considerable coherence of successive scenes & incidents, but the names & human images belonged to present ego & its associations.

=

In Arogya there is a struggle with revived form of old malady. Assimilation does not advance.

Saundarya is also stationary.

=

There seems to be a promise of recovered rapid realisation; but as yet there is no realisation.

Jan 14th

After a struggle with resistance the effective tapas-siddhi began to work as yesterday.

There are exceptions to its action of which the trikaldrishti becomes aware at the moment of tapatya. But this awareness is sometimes contradicted by a tapasic movement.

==

Utthapana. Arms, half hour. Defect of anima stronger, stiffness.

==

Return of Asamata in the forms of impatience, disbelief & duhkha. This came as usual from the unfulfilled promise of the Tapas & a violent repression of the siddhi. It is a direct denial of the suggestion made yesterday that the Samata is at last about to accomplish a complete finality and that rapid advance was about to return.

==

The period of asiddhi has now covered a whole fortnight, although for the most part (ie except in the body & in the rupa samadhi) it has taken the part more of an arrested siddhi than of any positive recoil. There have been movements of recoil, as in the samata today.

==

Darshana has gone back sometimes for a moment to the perception of the mere man in the Sarvam Brahman; but its normal pitch is now the Anandam J. A S [Jnanam Anantam Sarvam] Brahman as represented by the individual limited mental consciousness.

The Darshana of KrishnaKali is no longer normal.

==

It is now, however, manifesting again holding in itself both the double Personality & the bhava of Purusha enjoying Prakriti.

Stable scene & movements in scene in the jagrad antardrishta.

==

Serious & unforeseen blow to the Kriti, received without any reaction except incertitude & loss of faith in the Kriti or rather admission of the possibility of being entirely misled in the conception of the future.

=

At night perfect swapnasamadhi.

Intense, distinct & vivid vishayas, touch, hearing, taste, smell frequently repeated and well combined with rupa, with incident & with each other.

Perfect stability of rupa continued into the jagrat antardarshi.

Perfect coherent conversation

Rich activity of forms, scenes & incidents.

=

The only defects that remain are insufficient prolongation of the continuities, inapplicability to use in life and imperfect memory after the samadhi is over.

=

Jagrad rupa & vishaya are now the only parts of the Vijnana which are not well advanced; though none are yet finally perfect in their ordinary action, except pure jnana.

=

Sharira & Kriti continue to be backward, & this backwardness exercises its reactionary effect on the other chatusthayas.

=

Nevertheless now that the first three chatusthayas & the sixth are taking form, the power can be more concentrated on these so that the final question may be more rapidly fought out

Jan 15th

Clear & stable rupa on the background are now beginning to appear in bahirdarshi.

=

The period of dominant asiddhi seems to be over, since the obstruction in vijnana has proved ineffective. But the obstruction in Sharira & Kriti remains.

=

By the removal of the artificial obstruction of Asiddhi the Krishna Kali consciousness of the Anandamaya Purusha has been immediately normalised in all things & beings.

The sense of being in all things & all things being in oneself has returned.

The Devi envisages herself as the Ishwari though in conflict with her present world-form in order to purify & uplift it.

═

Lipi—

1 The object is faith in the tapas-siddhi.

2 Myself testing the opposition.

3 Honestly hopeful siddhi

4 The enthusiastic faith is still obstructed by the unfaith in the tapas-siddhi of the Kriti.

═

Utthapana

Arms one hour, stiffness more pronounced, but defect of anima less effective.

═

Kamananda which had been dulled becomes once more active.

═

Animal forms appear on the background & attempt to be stable, also objects, but the latter especially are not fine or correct in their outlines.

All kinds of forms & combinations are now so appearing as chhayas on the wall

Stable clearness has heralded but as yet failed to establish itself.

═

In jagrad antardarshi entirely stable forms attended sometimes by entirely & long continuous action are now well-established & begin to be various, but are surrounded by an atmosphere of dimness which makes them appear entirely crude though otherwise complete & even quite perfect & definite in form.

It is noticeable that continuous action here has a far better hold of the akasha & is far more firmly held by the vision than in swapnasamadhi.

═

Perfect rupas begin to reappear in the bahirdarshi, but they are still momentary.

═

Sukshma Vak is again attempting to manifest in the bahirdarshi—

═

A struggle over the Tapas-siddhi continues—

═

Perfect rupa in bahirdarshi at night also, but momentary—

═

Tamasic nidra took again some hold, but not a strong hold. Dream was confused. The higher parts of samadhi did not appear.

═

On the whole a day of progress.

═

Jan 16th

Tapas-siddhi is still active, but usually against strong resistance. 80° is long suspended.

═

Dream & samadhi are still under the shadow of the tamasic nidra; there was only one new outbreak, the inscription in antardarshi, *novae suae patriae percipere*. The first two words were slightly deformed "nuovae suoae". This inscription responded to nothing in the waking mind and was of the nature of Sruti.

═

Darshana varies between the perception of the lower Purusha in the individual, Anandamaya Brahmamaya, occupying Prakriti, & of the Lilamaya embracing & occupying all individuals.

The latter is the normal perception, but slides back into the inferior view. The darshana of Krishnakali is replaced by the darshana of Purusha-Prakriti.

═

The Ishwaribhava has again given place to the Devibhava with the Kali force quiescent and almost absent.

═

There has therefore been no definite progress during the day, although certain signs for the Kriti are good.

=

Utthapana

Arms—half hour. interrupted (diminished defect of anima)
Neck 10 minutes (strong defect of anima)

=

Samadhi

Obstruction of tamasic nidra.

Jan 17th

(1) तत्त्वंपदार्थौ तृतीयेऽध्याये निरूपितौ यद्यपि तथाऽपि त्वंपदार्थो नात्यन्तं निरूपितस्तदर्थमयं पञ्चमोऽध्याय आरभ्यते। धातुः प्रसादोपायस्तत्र चतुर्थेऽध्याये निरूपितः।

=

The nature & the person have been formed in the [ ][6] first three chatusthayas, but not being sufficient the fifth is now being pressed. The means of purification of the matter is being pursued in the fourth.

(2) स एष संप्रसादोऽस्माच्छरीरात्समुत्थाय परं ज्योतिरुपसंपद्य स्वेन रूपेणाभिसंपद्यते।

This is the means. (ततो न रोगादिभयमित्याह)

(3) प्रथमयोगप्रवृत्तेश्चिह्नानि दर्शयति—लघुत्वमित्यादि

(4) शिवां गिरित्र तां कुरु मा हिंसीः पुरुषं जगत्।

=

The vijnana is gradually reasserting the Affirmations, but against a strong opposition.

=

This month has been a reassertion of the Dwayavin consciousness ending in the possession of a world unity in which two forces of the same Being are at strife, both directed by the Ishwara.

=

The attitude of continual struggle with the adverse forces is being established in the consciousness. Tapatya is constant against a heavy obstruction.

---

[6] *MS* the

=

St.

विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारमीशं तं ज्ञात्वाऽमृता भवंति।

That is, the surrounding consciousness has to be normally felt as the Lord and not only as the continent & material & determining substance. This consciousness of the Lord is resisted by the Asiddhi; all the rest is well established in the Darshana.

=

80° is again manifesting itself.

Exact fulfilment is also manifesting itself.

Both, however, are as yet exceptions to the general rule of strong & often successful resistance.

=

Ananda is once more occupying the system.

=

The different physical Anandas are again at work in entire spontaneity & with strong intensity.

=

Utthapana of the arms, half an hour vertical, strong denial of Anima; afterwards, medial between horizontal & vertical, half an hour. In the latter laghima is exceedingly strong; but there is a subsequent reaction in the shoulders.

=

Utthapana of legs; medial, 6 minutes only.

Of left leg, horizontal, 15 minutes.

=

Swapna-samadhi

Two visions of actualities, living people, existing scenes.

=

The recovering Arogya was again attacked and pushed back. With the exception of Ananda, Sharira generally fails to advance. Ananda itself is only recovered, not advanced –

=

Madhura dasya is restored.

Vani is free & dominant.

Jan 18th

A new formation can be felt, marked for the moment by a great intensifying of Mahaluxmi and a mergence in her of Mahakali—

=

Lipi—

1. Rapidly telepathy is growing definite
2. There is a little result in the immediate futurity; in the remote there is the period of great results.

=

The satyam is restored, but still lacks the definitive & decisive ritam. It is a satyam of telepathy, not of the pure trikaldrishti.

There is a similar satyam, without definitive ritam, of the Tapas.

The satyam has a firmer ritam than before, but it is a ritam of telepathy & of manomaya forces, not vijnanamaya.

=

Utthapana of the arms—one hour & a half—increased laghima besieged by defect of anima.

=

Utthapana of legs, medial, 10 minutes.
Left leg, horizontal, 18 minutes—
Neck, 5 minutes.

=

Madhura dasya is well-established, but there is no action of Mahakali.

=

There is however a movement towards the fusion of the Mahakali & Mahaluxmi bhavas in the Anandamaya Tapas & Premamaya Virodha.

=

Jan 19th

There is no rapid or definite progress except in Darshana, where the Ishwaradarshana has become normal & the consciousness even when pulled back for a time to the simple Brahmadarshana, reverts naturally to the Siddhi.

The vivid personality of Krishna Kali is not yet normal in the darshana, but Purusha-Prakriti comes easily & is always there implied.

It is noticeable that as in former times the morning brings a reversion to the asiddhi. Today the reversion is determined and powerful.

Its main object now is to prevent the ritam in the knowledge & tapas by besieging the mind with the agitated struggle & errors of the nervous & physical mentality.

==

Utthapana.

Arms. 1 hour 45 minutes. Afterwards strong reaction in left shoulder

Back—ten minutes

Neck—half an hour.

≡

Karma of scholastic work has been begun with some initial steadiness (study of Rig Veda).

==

The poise of the Siddhi was restored during the morning, but the force of it is absent.

Utthapana increased.

General Ananda has become settled.

At the same time there is a lassitude with regard to the Kriti.

The Tapas is more firm on Sharira.

Jan 20th

Utthapana.

Legs 15 minutes—defective still, though improved

Arms 2 hours—pranic defect in the first hour, strong reaction after cessation, strain manifested in muscles of the back & loins. Laghima effective, but not mahat.

==

The consciousness of the cosmic Purusha-Prakriti confirms itself always; but belongs to an inferior plane, not to the Vijnana or the Ananda. There is no satisfaction to the Will or to the Mahakali element.

==

The same state of the Siddhi continues.

=

Work on the Veda continues.

=

Jan 21st

The samata continually deepens.

=

Utthapana—

Arms 1 hour and a half.

=

No definite progress, but the Ishwaradarshana deepens & fortifies itself.

Jan 22d

Samata is now very strong & has converted itself into a more or less dense Ananda.

=

Ishwaradarshana is also very strong & spontaneous. A little smarana is now all that is needed.

=

The same process of deepening & final basing is in process with regard to the Shakti. Along with this movement Mahakali is again emerging out of Maheshwari-Mahaluxmi-Mahasaraswati.

=

Rupa in jagrad is resuming activity after a long dullness. There is no disposition in the nature towards personal tapas of the Will, but only towards tapas of the action in the body.

=

St.

महे नो [अद्य बोधयोषो][7] राये दिवित्मती

=

Lipi again active in the Swapnasamadhi, but only partially coherent.

=

---

[7] *MS* अद्योषो बोधय

Utthapana. Arms 1 hour.

==

Work for the Review.

==

The activity of Vijnana is re-forming, but not yet in possession.

==

Jan 23d

Utthapana.

Arms – 1 hour 25 minutes.
Neck – 35 minutes.

==

In the struggle between Arogya & Roga the latter had reaffirmed itself in the blood with great vehemence. It seems now to be again subsiding under the pressure of the Aishwarya.

==

यज्ञस्य वो रथ्यं विश्पतिं विशां होतारमक्तोरतिथिं विभावसुं ।
शोचञ्छुष्कासु हरिणीषु जर्भुरद्वृषा केतुर्यजतो [द्यामशायत][8] ॥

==

The Mahakali element increases in the energy, but has yet no faith in the result of its thought or its action. It maintains udasinata & nati, but not an active attitude of tapatya.

==

The swapnasamadhi again became active, but jagrat state of the mind in swapna is not very firm.

==

Veda continues.

==

The Vijnana acts sometimes, but it is still usually the unenlightened physical consciousness which is dominant.

---

[8] *MS* द्यामवाशयत्

[*Here resumes the notebook set aside on 6 January*]

Jan 24th

The intermediate record has been kept in a separate book (2d to 23d).

Throughout the month there has been an encroachment by Asiddhi on Siddhi which became strongest between the 16th & 23d

The result has been an entire confirmation of samata & sama Ananda, followed by a revival of Shakti on the basis of entire samata and, now commencing[,] a revival of Vijnana on the same basis.

=

The defect of last year's siddhi was the survival of a Tapas & Tapatya which responded too eagerly to sakama suggestions from outside. For this reason it was necessary to obscure the siddhi in order to assure entire titiksha, udasinata and nati of all favourable or adverse results, pleasant or unpleasant experiences. Especially, the Ananda of success & failure, truth & falsehood has been secured against the constant denial opposed to them by this recoil.

=

On the other hand a temporary abandonment of Tapatya and Mahakali bhava and an all-prevailing incertitude amounting to ill-faith was brought back by the necessities of this movement.

Arogya has been thrown back violently & Sharira generally retarded.

=

The Ishwaradarshan is now securely normalised with the Krishna Kali Ananda, Guna & Jnana as its contents.

This is the first chatusthaya (Brahma) entirely satisfactory in its finality. Only intensity of bhava and fullness of detail have to be added, but this depends partly on the progress in other chatusthayas.

=

Samata is also final, but still vibrates sometimes momentarily to the touch of tamasic asamata.

=

Shakti is not final for want of faith, but force of madhura dasya has greatly increased.

=

The Affirmations of the Anandamaya Ishwara, the madhura dasya & the submission to all bhoga are now ready for their perfection.

Those of the Anandamaya as continent & Ananda as base follow upon these, but the free & joyous Tapas & Prakasha as base depend upon the fullness of the Ritam & Satya Brihat Affirmations.

=

The two other Affirmations are still held back.

=

For the results in Vijnana, Sharira & Kriti it is necessary to await the emergence of these siddhis.

=

In Swapnasamadhi the full hold of stability & continuity on the Akasha; but not the full play of the jagrat in swapna.

Jan 25th

Utthapana. Arms $\frac{3}{4}$ hour; interrupted.

=

The energy is now more fixed upon action than on Yogasiddhi. Work before which soon wearied out the body is now being pursued with tenacity and lines of effort that seemed formerly to be constantly broken & lead to nothing begin to prepare their fulfilment.

=

The Veda is taken up in two parts—Vamadeva's hymns on which notes are being taken from Sayana & the Ninth Book which is being copied and annotated.

=

The work of the Review must now be systematised as also the preparation of a statement of the Yoga—

=

The rest of the siddhi does not advance, but the first & sixth chatusthayas are maintained.

=

Sharira

The advance in Arogya has again been checked.

=

Ananda cannot normalise continuity because of the check to Arogya.

=

There is no progress in Saundarya.

=

Jan 28th

The last two days have been chiefly occupied with work & the Vijnana has been left inactive for the most part except in its dispersed action.

A slight depression in the superficial Samata is observable this morning; but the Vijnana is reviving its activity.

Ishwaradarshana remains firm.

The difficulty now experienced is with regard to the Tapas. The mind is unwilling to accept the effort of imperfect Tapas & no other manifests. There is also an entire uncertainty with regard to the Kriti & all things concerning the life & the life-work.

=

St.

इमं नु मायिनं हुव इंद्रमीशानमोजसा ।
मरुत्वंतं न [वृञ्जसे][9] ।
अयमिंद्रो मरुत्सखा वि वृत्रस्याभिनच्छिरः ।
वज्रेण शतपर्वणा॥

=

By this it seems to be indicated that the mental activity of the Tapas has to be admitted and used to destroy the obstruction.

=

---

[9] *MS* ओजसे

At present there are all sorts of brilliant formations of the nervous mentality which seem to have no sanction from the luminous mind

=

The action of the Vijnana is being resumed where it left off. There is occasional 80° but ordinarily resistance and imperfect result or delayed result, sometimes no apparent result.

What is now being attempted is the sustained and even obstinate action of the Tapas without regard to result and into this action the introduction of the united power & knowledge.

=

Utthapana

Arms. an hour and a half.

=

Samadhi

During the last few days samadhi & coherent dream have asserted themselves partially, with all their right circumstances & gains (except the jagrat); but there is still a dominant *Ashasti*, if not so strong an *abhisastih*.

=

Sharira

In Arogya at present the struggle seems to be turning again in favour of the siddhi.

=

Physical energy is more consistent but directed chiefly towards the support of brain work.

=

Vijnana

Aishwarya works again in immediate surroundings, but is not more advanced in effectuality.

=

There is this time no sudden & powerful revival of the Siddhi, but only a slow movement of recovered activity.

The finality, however, is greater in everything connected with the subjectivity.

Jan 29th

एवा नो अग्ने अमृतेषु पूर्व्य धीष्पीपाय बृहद्दिवेषु मानुषा।
दुहाना धेनुर्वृजनेषु कारवे त्मना शतिनं पुरुरूपमिषणि॥
वयमग्ने अर्वता वा सुवीर्यं ब्रह्मणा वा चितयेमा जनानति।
अस्माकं द्युम्नमधि पञ्च कृष्टिषु उच्चा स्वर्ण शुशुचीत दुष्टरं।

==

Script

Although the opposition seems to be strong, the force of the siddhi is stronger. It has already asserted itself entirely in the first, mainly in the second, entirely in the sixth chatusthaya. Except for deficient faith in the life, which is really a deficient knowledge, it holds the subjectivity. It has now to conquer the subjective-objective and this it is steadily doing in spite of all reverses & retardations.

==

The power on the immediate surroundings showed itself throughout the morning extremely effective in spite of all resistance sometimes compelling results subjectively, sometimes, where the subjective object resisted by the creation of circumstances which physically induced or compelled the necessary action. There was only one instance of failure.

==

Utthapana

Arms — 1 hr. 15 minutes —
Legs — 5 minutes only.

==

Samadhi.

Swapna Samadhi is trying to get rid of the Ashasti

Jan 30th

The Dyumna or luminous power (rajas, rochana) is established in the Bhuvar, it is now being established in the Divah. The energy is ready in the active nervous power and in the soul-thought (suviryam arvatá . . brahmaná) although manifest chiefly in the work of knowledge, thought, writing etc, not in the things of Prithivi, the objective world. It is here that the mental thought

(धीर्मानुषा) nourished by the ideal (बृहद्दिवेषु) is yielding its full results.

—

अनश्वासो ये पवयोऽरथा इंद्रेषिता अभ्यवर्तंत दस्यून्॥
प्र ते पूर्वाणि करणानि वोचं प्र नूतना मघवन्या चकर्थ।
शक्तीवो यद्विभरा रोदसी उभे जयन्नपो मनवे दानुचित्राः॥

═

The activity is now great in the intuitional field of the intellect, but concentrated chiefly on the Veda etc.

═

The first line refers to the recent passive activity of the Aishwarya from which the nervous force & anandamaya movement (aswa and ratha) have been excluded in order that they may be replaced now by the right aswa & ratha. This is the new action for Indra who with the Shakti in him is to conquer the opposition & bring in the varied bright activity of the *swarvatir apah*.

═

This is already being done today, the activity of the luminous mind being extended beyond the jnana & literary work to the trikaldrishti, but as yet insecurely & incompletely.

Feb. 1st

1. The Reference of the 29th repeated.
2. Finally in the third Rik.

═

The day has chiefly been devoted to work of Sahitya & Veda. A great capacity for large quantities of work swiftly done is being now manifested.

There is an attempt also at the primary utthapana in the shape of diminished sleep and the rejection from the physical system of fatigue and exhaustion; but this applies at present only to brainwork, not to physical activity.

═

In samadhi there is a strong tendency to the development of sukshma Vak, but as yet this is normal only in isolated sentences and when there is concentration in the jagrat or without concentration in the swapnasamadhi.

═

The Kriti is not yet favourable in exterior results & circumstances, only a difficult defence of the Sati.

═

Each part of the Kriti has its own difficulties and when these are brought forward & seem to be accumulated in an unsurmountable obstruction, the faith falters or is eclipsed.

═

Samata remains undisturbed, only there is still uneasiness & occasionally a subtle depression in the bodily consciousness, but much less palpable than formerly.

═

Feb 2d

Utthapana Arms 1 hour.

═

The vijnanamaya plane manifests in the thought & trikaldrishti, but as yet there is no constant well formed action.

═

Swapna samadhi is sometimes active, but here also it is only a scattered activity of details. In jagrad there is no activity except of imperfect figures except in chitra & sthapatya.

═

The progress of Sharira has long been discontinued.

═

In jagrat samadhi vak is acquiring greater force and perfect rupa, unstable, is more frequent.

═

Poetry resumed with more power.

═

There is a pause before the deficient parts of the third chatusthaya declare themselves & until they declare themselves, the organised action of the chatusthaya cannot manifest itself.

═

The powers of obstruction, always, are not broken, but merely pushed backward. Rapidity, so often promised and on the point of realisation, is still unrealised.

=

Feb 3d

There is a general increase of the siddhi in the vijnana, but not as yet anything decisive.

=

In swapna samadhi there is a movement towards utility, but nothing as yet of any value.

=

There is some relaxation in the physical force of the body for work

Feb 4th 5th

The same condition continues

=

Utthapana of arms daily for an hour or two.

=

The struggle in Arogya continues.

=

Kriti is still undecided.

=

Samadhi fluctuates; jagrat is mostly inactive, but vak becomes more & more spontaneous & sthula.

=

Karma of sahitya is alone pronouncedly active. Veda, poetry, Aphorisms.

Feb 6th

1. ἐπισχερω. Successively, in order, thence, afterwards.

2 We can begin then with this concentration and a constant consecrating of ourselves. . . For the first movement.

=

The concentration indicated is a movement no longer of personal effort, but of a sort of will from below evoking an action from above.

The result is a slow redevelopment of the beginnings of organised Vijnana.

[*Half a page left blank.*]

Feb 25th

The record has been suspended because of an almost entire suspension of all progress in which the hostile forces have seemed to take possession and only the literary & intellectual activity has continued to progress. In this field the perceptive intuition & creative interpretation grow in force.

Roga has been very powerful & violent.

Sharira has been practically suspended.

Kriti is a struggle in which minor points are gained, the great lost or left undecided or even if won are not decisive.

The one definite advance is in antardrishta where forms & vak are now perfect and sometimes stable, but this is when they come spontaneously, not when they are commanded.

Nevertheless there is progress, as now appears. First, the personal effort, view etc are more & more merged in the All. Action & thought & perception come more & more out of the All. Self is more and more identified with the All & proceeds out of it in its becomings rather than stands separate within it.

Secondly, telepathy & intuition are far more developed than before. Decisive intuition is fortified though not yet dominant.

Thirdly, the power of work without choice, steady, nishkama, proceeding out of Sat & Tapas of Sat is infinitely increased.

Feb 27th

The atmosphere of the Asiddhi still hangs heavy upon the system. Roga persists though the tide is receding. Sraddha finds no food to grow upon.

स सुतः पीतये वृषा सोमः पवित्रे अर्षति
विघ्नन् रक्षांसि देवयुः ।

The opposition is now no longer from Vritra, Vala, the Dwayavins, but from the Nidah & the Rakshas, — in reality however from the Rakshas giving the others their opportunity.

=

After a long interruption Kamananda is beginning again to be active.

=

In Samadhi the antardrishta and swapna are both perfect, except (1) for lack of long continued samadhi, (2) for lack of life utility.

=

22 APRIL–26 AUGUST 1915

April 22d(?)[1]

1. The vision (in Samadhi) of the Theosophical Path on the table, fulfilled next day. Suggestion of importance—fulfilled by solution of the Vedic Rishi-idea by example of Bodhi-sattwas in Japan.
2. The waking drishti of the cigarette on the table. Suggestion of certain fulfilment by exceptional means. Found on floor.

April 24th

Anandam Brahma confirmed in its final generality.

Renewal of the Anandas all contained together in the Suddha.

Firm general definition of Karma.

First entirely spontaneous & prolonged intensity of Vaidyuta (yesterday).

April 25th

Krishna Kali in all beings confirmed in its final generality—still obstructed in the animal. Afterwards extended to this field as well.

Kamananda made persistent (predicted during the last few days)

Telepathy justified in its general satyam and accepted—trikaldrishti in telepathy, but obstructed.

Beginnings of final organisation of knowledge parts of the Vijnana.

General prevalence of Aishwarya-Vashita, against resistance, after lapse of time. As yet, no general perfection in detail. The field is still limited.

Other Anandas continue to grow.

---

[1] *The question mark was put by Sri Aurobindo.—Ed.*

Rupa etc still strives to emerge into distinctness, stability & variety.

Growth of the Kali permanence.

The second chatusthaya increases in power.

Tertiary dasya emphasised in action & thought.

3.[2] Telepathic trikaldrishti of movements of the child in the opposite house.

April 26th

Krishna-Kali now generalising itself at its lowest pitch. It alternates with the Anandam Brahma also at a low pitch, in the terms of the material Avidya. It is still as a rule more at the back of things than at the front.

The organisation of the Knowledge by illumination proceeds. Lipi & Rupa are included.

Lipi

1. Build desolated Europe into a city of God.
2 Eyes in the splanchna. (the pranic sense).

April 27—

Prakriti Purusha well established in the Ananda Brahman.

Kamananda obstructed yesterday but not entirely discontinued in the body. Strong pressure for the Ananda from the Sukshma. Continuous under adverse circumstances.

All the physical anandas have for the time being slackened in frequency.

Organisation of vijnana continues against steady obstruction.

Prolonged rupa-vishaya (crow flying about in sky), chhaya, but not merely image,—saprana image left in the ether. True rupa vishaya of insects & birds in the Akasha (Prana akasha) are now common, but not detailed.

---

[2] *Numbering continued from 22(?) April.—Ed.*

April 29.

The Krishna Kali as the all containing one (An. Br [Anantam *or* Anandam Brahma]) & everything as its expression in the terms of Purusha Prakriti.

The Ishwara begins to take final possession.

Truth continues to grow in the trikaldrishti telepathy, effectivity in the power. Rupa advances, but is still seriously obstructed.

April 30

Krishna Kali in all, but not in the intensity.

An established sama-ananda in harmony with the ish, but not as yet with its full forceful activity.

The harmonising with the unequal reactions of the more forceful activity has begun—they are brought & taken up by the Ananda which has entered into them.

April 30—

Trikaldrishti has suddenly increased enormously in truth, but it has still its basis in the telepathy, and subject to the stress of error.

May 1st

The day is the close of one week of progress, steady and often rapid—

Samata

Universal *samata* has been finally confirmed and the reactions of *asamata* imposed from outside are now taken up by the Ananda.

In the body there are still movements & reactions of discomfort & *nirananda*, but these also are now being taken up. Even the pain of burning is pursued by the Ananda and generally accompanied by it. *Bhukti* is therefore on the point of accomplishment in generality. It remains to give it its destined intensity.

The reactions contradicting titiksha, nati, udasinata thus persist & are being purposely brought forward in order to be transformed. They can no longer prevail in their own kind.

Shakti

There is also a generalisation of Shakti. Sraddha is now confirmed except in the Karma where it still fluctuates and is environed by doubt. The doubt is no longer absolute. *Kalyanasraddha* has increased in the chitta.

The growth of knowledge, Ananda Brahman & Krishna has firmly based the Samatachatusthaya. The growth of power, Krishna-Kali & Sraddha has prepared the final basis of the Shakti-chatusthaya; but the power is not yet sufficient to assure the full sraddha and *devibhava (daivi prakriti)*.

Dasya is tertiary, but not always of the full intensity of its third tertiary form. D^3 is established, but not D^{3^3}, except as a frequent exception.

Brahman.

The generality of Sarvam Brahma, replaced by Sarvam Anantam, is now replaced by Sarvam Anantam Jnanam with the Anandam subdued but present in all the three. It is now in course of being replaced by the Krishna-darshana in the Jnanam Anandam; the Narayana-Vishnu Bhava persists, but as a past habit. The intensity of the Krishna-Narayana is now taking its place.

Karma.

Krishna-Kali bhava is growing to the point of the firm epiphany. Subjective kama is assured & the full subjective Ananda based on the Shuddha is present either in the subdued status or the intense movement. The oppositions of the subjective Vishaya-nirananda are being finally eliminated & exist only as external vibrations in the external mind. They are attended by the *viparita* Ananda.

Karma yet awaits the full power. In intellectual (intuitive) work it is now only combated by the remnants of the physical resistance; but in all else it is still bound & to a certain extent afflicted.

Vijnana.

All its parts, except Aishwarya-traya & Samadhi are in the hands of the Master, directly. The instrumental usurpation persists, but is no longer effective.

Telepathy is now mahat, except in thought-vyapti & thought-prakamya. Satyam is established, but ritam is still imperfect.

Trikaldrishti is now acquiring the satyam & has greatly improved in the ritam. The Chit-Tapas combination is beginning to prevail.

Aishwarya-traya & Samadhi have to be liberated in this month & essentially in its first week.

Sharira

All the physical Anandas are frequent & much more prolonged than ever before, but not yet permanent in continuity, only permanent in recurrence.

Vaidyuta (*ahaituka*) now manifests frequently, physical Vishaya *ahaituka* less frequently, but sahaituka is well-established.

Arogya grows in force, but has not yet expelled the habitual reactions.

Utthapana is suspended, but increases subjectively.

In Saundarya there is no appreciable advance.

* * *

The stress is now on Vijnana (especially trikaldrishti); it is growing in Aishwarya-traya and rupa. In the Sharira it is on Ananda & in a less degree on arogya; but it seeks to extend itself to the two deficient members.

Lipi

1. Yeast of bliss
2. Yeast of life } yeast, that is the inchoate ferment
3 Yeast of trikaldrishti
4 pragmatic telepathy
5 taste.
6 glad of bliss — ie the system & all its environment consenting to the Ananda. This is now done
7 glad of Ares in the force & struggle harmonised with the Ananda. This is now undertaken.
8 toil
9 [*no notation*]

References

1. enimvero . . certainly, but indeed . . enisus . . eniteo. (as an event) enitesco (as a habit)—enitor, enixe, enixus—

—connected with lipi 8. and indicating the struggle & luminous emergence now transferred from the person to the environing Prakriti.

2 eno—
enodate. enodatio— } confirming (1) from another standpoint & throwing light on Vedic images in the hymns to the Aswins (Kaksh[ivan]) read yesterday & today.

=

Lipi, rupa etc are now taking the pragmatic turn more decidedly; but this is not yet extended to the telepathy.

May 2^{d}

In the morning a general reduction to the lowest terms, with the object of taking up the apparent contradictions & turning them to siddhi.

=

Aishwarya traya increases in force & produces more rapid & exact results in the field of exercise, but is still subject to the obstruction & contradiction. In the karma it is still weak

=

Trikaldrishti grows in mahattwa of the satyam ritam, chiefly in its telepathic basis

=

Lipi

1. In the infinity youth; (not yet in the finite).

The adverse movement continues throughout the day,—reactions which are not taken up by the Ananda, voices, thoughts, suggestions which are not taken up by the Ishwara nor proceed from him, absence normally of the Krishnadarshana replaced by the Saguna-Nirguna Brahman, impaired Ananda of the vishaya of sight, failing faith, absence of udasinata & nati etc. Trikaldrishti, aishwarya etc act, but are no longer dominant.

=

Evening

The siddhi is now remanifesting, but with a residue of the Asiddhi. The main asiddhi is the reaction of Sushna Kayava, with the bhrista tavishi.

May 3d

Lipi—1. Yeast of love
2 Yeast of difficulties (general ferment of the opposition still left opposing the progress).

1. Universal Prema is now becoming fixed & spontaneous, ie not needing the aid of the mind's attention to the object

=

The Rupa has been largely eclipsed for some time; it is now undergoing a fresh movement towards manifestation; but the obstruction is not yet conquered.

=

After a long struggle the covering consciousness has once more been removed & the Krishna Kali once more occupies all manifesting freely in all often with the intensity & directly, or else with the disguise of the form & mentality.

=

Vijnana strives to perfect itself; but is still pursued by the error of stress.

=

Dream is once more coherent & better organised.

=

Perfect organisation of *lipi*, thought & *sukshma vak* in jagrad antardrishta and swapnasamadhi.

May 4th

The Kalikrishna darshana is now generalising itself more firmly.

In the health, the struggle continues. One long persistent roga is now in the last stage of dying recurrences. Another that threatened to be chronic (the eyes) is being successfully attacked at its roots. Feverish exhaustion attempts to recur daily, but is expelled after a short struggle; nevertheless it lingers in the environing akasha. Two only are still in the persistent stage of recurrence.

Reference

सखायः सं वः सम्यंचमिषं – स्तोमञ्चाग्नये – वर्षिष्ठाय क्षितीनामूर्जो नप्त्रे सहस्वते।

This is now beginning to manifest & attempting to generalise itself.

=

Organisation of the vijnana of knowledge proceeds.

=

The sense of the universe in myself and all energies & activities even the most adverse has been restored & is now constant.

=

Great extension of effective Vashita working in harmony with an almost perfect ritam of the telepathy & trikaldrishti.

=

Samadhi continues to organise itself. The things of the pranic & mental worlds are now distinguished, lipi & vak grow in coherence & organisation, there is a beginning of free rupa in the antardrishta.

=

Exact fulfilment in aishwarya vashita is again becoming frequent, but the deflecting resistance & to some extent the entire obstruction have still a power which though much diminished struggles to remain. The Shakti is now being led to apply itself with determination to the karma.

=

The सम्यक् इष् was first brought forward in the morning; it is now established in the action. The Agni is being developed ऊर्जो नप्ता सहस्वान्

=

Rupa became active, but did not increase to the full point attained in the past.

May 5 –

Rf. [Reference] Nulli visa cito decurrit tramite virgo –

═

There is no fresh advance, but only the yeast of what has been already accomplished combating the difficulties of farther progress. This difficulty of farther progress is a principle of retardation that has now to be destroyed as it is no longer useful for the purpose of [conservation].[3] The shakti can now dispense with such aids.

═

The struggle over the unfinished parts of the vijnana continues. It has not advanced appreciably beyond yesterday's limit, but is obviously preparing an advance. Meanwhile the sama Ananda etc are being strengthened.

═

Strong discomfort is being given & constantly met with the assumption of the discomfort by the ananda.. It is not as yet entirely transmuted.

═

Faith in the Karma fluctuates, but is normally much stronger than before.

May 6 –

The Aishwarya-Vashita is less effective today, on the other hand the Trikaldrishti-telepathy increases.

═

Force of rupa increases, but slowly & against great obstruction.

═

Lipi

Transitional character of opposition struggle (ie it is becoming more & more defensive).

═

No definite advance during the day.

═

Samadhi advances in all respects, but not yet victoriously.

---

[3] *MS* conversation

May 7.

The Krishna Darshana after going through several fluctuations has added to the darshana of the Continent & constituent which are now sufficiently fixed & that of the inhabitant which fluctuates the darshana of the identical (atmaivabhud bhutani). It is when the inhabitant, continent[,] constituent & identical unite that there is the full intensity.

=

Lipi.

1. for yeast of bliss—(to confirm it entirely the samata is being tested)
2. yeast of pain (this is now being given to generalise the raudrananda).
3. for yeast of life.

=

Kamananda very intense for a time; now frequently recurrent, but usually subdued. The intensity, however, also recurs.

=

May 8th

The Siddhi is now restored in the Aishwarya, although not yet in entire force.

=

This time the disturbance of the Samata by the Asiddhi has been slight & quite inconsiderable.

=

The Trikaldrishti progresses always in spite of apparent setbacks.

=

Kamananda grows slowly in force, as also Samadhi.

=

May 9th

The fluctuations of the Vijnana chatusthaya continue, especially with regard to Aishwarya, rupa lipi and samadhi. This afternoon there is a general cloud of tamas.

May 10th

A day of advance, but not of decisive advance.

Telepathy has grown stronger & surer.

Trikaldrishti is restored almost entirely, *aishwaryatraya* partially..

Rupa advances, but does not yet break the barrier to stability.

Samadhi is depressed.

==

The work in process is chiefly a work of general basing.

May 11th

भुवत्कण्वे वृषा द्युम्नी आहुतः क्रंददश्वो गविष्टिषु—

At first aishwarya traya depressed by the resistance, then it assumed for some time the upper hand compelling the result against direct resistance sometimes immediately & entirely, always at least partially in the end. This movement clearly reveals the fact that the physical Akasha-shakti is now on its defence maintaining its freedom with difficulty & no longer assured of its empire.

May 12

Since yesterday the organisation of the Vijnana has become normalised, 1. in script, 2, in vangmaya thought, 3 in vani (today) 4. in perceptive thought. 5 in aishwarya traya. In the last two there is still positive defect, owing to the imperfection of the aishwarya which brings with it the struggle of the Will against the Akasha-Shakti and throws back on (4) the shadow of the excessive stress of will-thought.

Aishwarya traya today is working more evenly, though with less precise force. Ishita is becoming more prominent. The shadow of personal will is steadily losing force of insistence & giving place to the Master-will.

The personal relation with the Master manifests, not again to be suspended; it brings the madhura dasya, the delight in all things & the understanding of all experience & movements of event in the terms of the divine Will

Krishna darshana depressed & put in the background for the last two days but not suspended is once more general as the continent & as the all. It is only deficient as the Inhabitant.

Rupa increases always in force, samadhi is depressed.

Trikaldrishti gains always in ritam, thought-telepathy increases

Kamananda depressed for the last two days, but not suspended, is again active & sometimes intense.

Afternoon

Crude rupa in all forms presented both primary & secondary stability.

Developed rupa increased stability to the remote or indirect vision, but does not yet endure before the fixed gaze, except primarily in the type form of the reel.

In this movement aishwarya ishita was throughout the agent.

Krishnadarshana now embraces whole groups in a great & sometimes with the first intensity.. In the intensity it is not yet general.

Primary utthapana is being enforced, but is still not entirely dominant.

Rf—

पूर्वीरस्य निष्षिधो मर्त्येषु पुरू वसूनि पृथिवी बिभर्ति ।
इंद्राय द्यावो ओषधीरुतापो रयिं रक्षंति जीरयो वनानि॥

The Rf in the morning to all the gods setting Agni to work (पनयंत) in his activities has been fulfilled.

The confusion of Knowledge Thought by Will Thought became very violent in the evening, but could not entirely annul even the decisive trikaldrishti; the telepathic maintained its satyam, but could not preserve the constant or always central use of its ritam. Subsequently, there was a reversion to the better harmony.

═

May 13th

Kamananda still active, with touches of intensity, sometimes in samadhi.

In the morning perfect telepathy & trikaldrishti. Aishwaryatraya sometimes in full force, but usually baffled by the resistance.

Gandhadrishti developing since yesterday was this morning full, varied, vivid & sthula. Rasadrishti also became active, but usually comes as a result or a part of gandha; not however always. It is sometimes associated with sparsha half-evolved from sukshma to sthula. Sparsha except in the old established touches is chiefly vivid sukshma. Shabda is infrequent & more sukshma than sthula. Darshana is poor and intermittent.

Samadhi has not yet recovered its activity and coherence.

Rupa is active, developed forms frequent, sometimes thickly frequent, but not stable.

Manusha sparsha has been experienced indirectly, on the cigar held between the fingers, not on the body itself.

Activity of the Rupa at night. At first free crude, akasha, & beginnings of free crude sadhara; also first stable dense & developed. Afterwards resistance brought in to spoil the forms.

Aishwarya of rain successful.

May 14th

The force of the aishwaryatraya is greatly increased.

There is a movement towards the completion of the satyam in the vijnana.

There is also an incipient movement of more complete ritam.

The bhava in the Ishwara is entirely confirmed; it is now being perfected in the Balaram-Aniruddha type, preparatory to the Sri Krishna-Rudra (the Asura).

The habit of relapse in the Krishnadarshana is being attacked.

═

Kamananda these two days has been constant with intermittences, but not continuous. This evening it has once more the tendency of continuity.

Rupa improves always, but does not yet confirm stability except in the crude.

Samadhi is beginning to reorganise itself.

Gandha is varied, but not so frequent & rich as yesterday. Aswada is also obstructed, though occasionally it manifests.

—

Samadhi is partly reorganised. Vangmaya thought is thoroughly established & continues in a stream even in the sushupta swapna, when memory, reason, mental attention are all absent. It was combined with lipi, perceptive thought & shabda (vak).

At night organised samadhi. Continuity of drishya, primary frequent, sometimes incipient secondary.

May 15

Organised samadhi in the morning.

Kamananda seems now to be settled in the system, as a constantly recurrent experience throughout the day and a permanent tendency. The other Anandas are still intermittent.

In the subjective Ahaituka is constant, Chidghana, frequent, Prema recurrent, Shuddha occasional.

The whole Vijnanachatusthaya is now on a line of fixed progress towards perfection. Sharira & Karmachatusthaya alone remain.

=

In the later part of the day a reaction and suspension of the progress.

May 16.

The reaction continues. Nothing is precisely lost except for a diminution of the Sraddha; but the forward impulse has ceased & in sharira & karma the adverse forces seem to be triumphant.

Asamata of satyasatya which hitherto gave such acute trouble has disappeared. Asamata of siddhi asiddhi has revived and is the sole asamata remaining; but it is neither absorbing, nor violent. It is being rapidly killed.

May 17

The reaction has deepened & injured without suspending the action of the Vijnana. The satyam is no longer perfect; the stress of suggestion & intellectual perception has revived. The Aishwarya traya acts less surely on the surroundings. Rupa is no longer active.

This morning the satyam is recovering tone & the aishwarya traya recovering force.

Krishnadarshana of a certain intensity is now general in spite of a constant effort in the Akasha Prakriti to pull it back to the mere Saguna Brahma or Narayanadarshana.

The Ishwara is now manifest in the Vani & as the master of all the thought & action; the dasyam is becoming entirely complete & personal. As yet it is the Balarama-Aniruddha Bhava with Aniruddha prominent.

Rupa revived, but not in full force.

Kamananda in spite of adverse circumstances.

Gandha frequent & varied.

May 18 –

Krishnadarshana seems to be invincibly established.

There is a tendency to the full restoration of the action of the Siddhi. This is most evident in the Aishwarya-cum-trikaldrishti, & in the three subjective chatusthayas & in Krishna Kali.

The new movement has not yet begun except in the first chatusthaya & the second & sixth where it is a completion and a preparation rather than an initiation.

Vak, jagrat, manifests, but with difficulty.

May 19th

All the subjective Anandas are confirmed, not in the intensity, but in their synthesis, from Suddha to subjective Kama.

Udasinata, Nati, Titiksha are finally established in their unabridged completeness & synthesis. The positive bhoga of Asiddhi is being enforced. This has been hitherto the one imperfection of the first chatusthaya & the point at which the Asamata always broke in. It was done chiefly through the impatience of Asatyam. That impatience is now killed. Without this basis the impatience of Asiddhi could not last.

Krishna Darshana resists all attacks.

Gandha continues, though less frequent.

Physical samata and Ananda of pain & discomfort are also being finally confirmed. Touches which formerly overcame the Titiksha, are now anandamaya.

Kamananda continues intermittently against oppression.

The other siddhis are obstructed in act, but none actually abridged in fact.

The relation of the Dasya grows constantly in force.

The Sraddha is attempting to override its difficulties.

Vijnana is considerably obstructed and the movement towards the ritam seems temporarily to have receded and lost part of its force.

Rupa & Samadhi are comparatively ineffective

Karma & Sharira fluctuate.

Krishna-Kali is preparing its finality.

The sense of the Self everywhere & all energies as the Self's is returning to activity.

═

On the whole the Suddhi, Mukti, Bhukti are nearing final completion & the purely subjective siddhi. Only in the subjective-objective siddhi the victory is still delayed & in the objective the adverse forces still hold most of the ground except in the physical Ananda, where victory is now assured.

May 20 –

Dasyam is now becoming all-pervading and intense

Sraddha Bhagavati is almost complete; sraddha swashaktyam is still deficient. The sraddha bhagavati is hampered by the inability to have complete confidence in the Vani; all vanis are now being taken up by the Ishwara.

═

The siddhi has now to take a new turn. Basing itself on the complete Dasya, Sraddha & Ananda it has to acquire intensity in all that is possessed, sureness in the Vijnana, rapidity in the Sharira & Karma. The Seven Affirmations have to be finally completed & then the two that remain.

The state of these Affirmations may again be stated:

1. The universal sense of the Anandamaya Lilamaya Krishna

in the Brahmadrishti has become the continent of the conscious activity in knowledge & is becoming the continent of the conscious activity in Will.

2. Affirmation has almost entirely replaced rejection & denial, but not entirely.

3. Brihat of the satyam is affirmed as the basis of the development of the ritam, but is not yet free from attack

4. Ananda is now entirely confirmed as the base, free & joyous Tapas is in course of being established and in a less degree free & joyous Prakasha as the special instruments.

—

5. The Personality of Krishna is present in the consciousness governing all the activities, but sometimes there comes the veil of the Prakriti.

6. Dasya of Madhura & tertiary dasya confirmed entirely, but not yet in full intensity.

7 Acceptance of bhoga as a slave & instrument of the Lover only now entirely & finally accomplished. Intensity has yet to be given.

=

8. Siddhi on the basis of the largeness in the five worlds is prepared, but not yet accomplished

9. Time, Space & Circumstance still appear as determinative, not yet as instrumental factors.

==

Intensity is now being brought into the Suddha-Chidghana-Ahaituka-Prema Ananda and prepared in the Madhura Dasya which is becoming Saumya-Raudra. For the present the Saumya predominates, with the Raudra as a background. In the Sraddha there is greater intensity (answering to yesterday's lipi, "enthusiastic faith") but not yet certainty in the Karma and Vijnana.

=

To the tratak the moving clouds of the pranic akasha are visible, sometimes a star, living specks, birds or insects.

There is the old struggle between the decisive vijnana & the perception of actual possibilities; but the consciousness still dwells in the triloka. Vijnana & Ananda occupy it or are in the background, —they are not yet the habitation, *kshaya*.

Aishwarya continues to fluctuate, sometimes triumphant, sometimes resisted successfully in moving objects; in stationary objects (prani, not sthavara) resisted usually with success. In inanimate objects there is now often success of the aishwarya..... Resistance is almost invariable, but often it is rapidly overcome

=

Kamananda is once more dominant.

=

Reference—

शोधः Purification . . rectification . . acquittal of debts . . retaliation.

=

At night foiled attack on the samananda.

=

Movement towards the intensity of the madhura dasya accompanied with a stronger sense of the Ishwara not as Mechanist, but as Natha & Bhokta.

May 21st

Rf 1 The haven must be reached.
2 Not soon is God's delight in us completed, nor with one life we end. Termless in us are our spirits seated and termless joy intend.
3. The heavens of the Three have beings bright (Sarvalokadrishti)

=

The subjective Ananda has made a sudden stride forward towards great intensity in all its parts.

The vangmaya has now risen from the effective-adequate to the illuminative & inspirational substance & form. This was preceded by a slow movement of the transformation of unharmonised satyam to harmonised ritam, which as a result of the rise has become rapid. The perceptive thought is becoming luminous & vijnanamaya in the vijnana instead of vijnanamaya in the manas.

Aishwaryavashita has also become much more forceful. Ishita tends to the same force, but is not yet so decisive.

Rupa-samadhi are still obstructed in their attempt to progress.

═

In aishwarya immediate decisive effects almost without resistance are now frequent; effect against resistance is more common in the ishita.

Trikaldrishti is following the same rapid forward movement. Decisive trikaldrishti, once more active, is aiming at exactness of place, time, circumstance.

Lipi

1) 15 . . 25 (ie 1915–1925 for the external purification & rectification).
2) solarithm (a new mathematical figure)
3) perfect disponibility of the lipi

The Aishwarya-Vashita is almost all-victorious this morning upon things in motion; only the insufficiency of the Ishita gives a hold to the resistance. Things in station feel the force, but resist successfully the exact fulfilment.

Where there is fixed intention with rapid movement, the Power does not as yet prevail. Fixed tendency, generally, is still an imperfectly mastered obstacle.

═

Rupa & samadhi are again active; the first in the crude with an imperfect deliverance of the form & a difficulty of the quadruped form, but with a greater hold on the akasha; the second imperfectly organised in rupa & vishaya, fluctuating in lipi, but perfect in thought, vangmaya & perceptive.

Samadhi

1. Conversation. "in emergency". (political. IO [India Office] & India)

2 "At such a distance we find that we can do nothing" and a figure in dhoti.

3 a conversation in French on a gnomic Greek poet, perfect in form although derivative in substance, indicating fresh discoveries of lost Greek poets. (N.B. The discovery of Bhasa's plays was fore-

seen a year or two before it happened. Saumilla's have also been promised).

=

The force of Tapas on the Roga increases. Chronic false cough has been expelled. The eruptional tendency is almost eliminated. Assimilation imperfection still resists as also the functional defect.

The resistance of living things in station is now overcome. Success is more usual than failure and exact fulfilment is frequent and striking. There are also now cases of immediate triumph over fixed intention in rapid movement.

It remains to give full intensity & universality to the power of the Tapas, raising it all round to the 80°, so that the resistance may disappear and Time, Place & Circumstance become instrumental instead of determinative. It is to this result that the siddhi now turns.

=

Effective tapas has to be imposed on the body & on the life (karma). Siddhi is effected in the first two chatusthayas & in the sixth & in three parts of the general (seventh) chatusthaya, & in the subjective half of the fifth, so far as is possible without dominance of the Tapas-Prakasha in the fourth & effective half of the fifth. In the third the successful & victorious march of the siddhi in all its four (five) members is now assured. Sharira & Karma-Kama remain.

==

The Siddhi at night showed signs of resuming the stability of the dense & developed; but the movement was not carried forward.

May 22^{d}

In swapnasamadhi successive scenes coherently connected together, but in themselves fleeting, though absolutely perfect. In jagrat antardrishta a scene of the manasa loka, (affective), coherent, well designed, but dim.

The vak of the thought maintains the level it had acquired and yet prepares a more ample & varied form. That it does this without sinking into a more backward state, is a sign that the old rhythm of [ ][4] progress & relapse is passing away; a movement anandamaya anarvan is beginning

The Tapas is less in possession this morning; its directions are more often refused or, when obeyed, usually more imperfectly. The trikaldrishti is more confused by the will-thought

Krishnadarshana has for some time drawn back into a fuller Ananda Brahma Saguna-Nirguna with the Narayan & Vishnu bhavas contained & the Lilamaya without the all-pervading expressed Krishna Nama in the rupa.

The violent attack of the old Asiddhi has failed after producing a few fugitive vibrations,—an effigies of incipient asamata & non-vijnana.

The struggle between Kamananda and its obstruction is now becoming constant.

=

Decisive trikaldrishti, independent of telepathy, increases in force, frequency & certainty; but it works in the midst of a mass of telepathies acting in the manas which tend indeed more & more to reveal their satyam of tendency or actual possibility, but continue to throw a shadow of confusion on the trikaldrishti. The Knowledge is still farther confused by the anrita will-thought, which is a stressed perception of tendency or actual possibility in the physical or subconscious that does not manifest in event, although it sometimes manifests in conscious tendency.

Knowledge & Tapas are this morning acting again in the manas & not in the vijnana; therefore there is no general ritam; only a ritam disengaging itself with difficulty from the brihat of the unregulated mental satyam. This constitutes a relapse.

=

The vibrations of asamata of asiddhi continue & amount to a breaking in on the siddhi of the fourth chatusthaya. As usual, there was a false security that this lapse would not again happen. There is also a shadow of the asamata of asatya.

=

---

[4] *MS* of

KrishnaKali Darshana is once more intense and more all-pervading than it was hitherto. There is an obstacle to the intensity of the darshana in the bird form and a general obstruction to the pervasiveness of the greater intensity & even a shadow of obstruction lingering about the intensity attained.

=

After a long struggle lasting till 3.30 pm the siddhi has again been resumed, but the vijnana has not yet been entirely recovered in all the movements, nor the complete Ananda in the manas. The delight of the vishayas has remained firm throughout in all its parts. It is the ananda of the physical Manas in asiddhi that has failed.

The intensity of the Ananda is, however, insufficient in a certain thin layer of vishaya sensation chiefly felt in the taste of insipid food, of vulgar & insipid faces, of coarse & discordant sound etc.

=

Samadhi has been afflicted by incoherencies of vishaya etc without losing what it had gained. What has not yet been gained, is being made prominent.

=

The Krishna-Kali-Darshana after a period of higher intensity has fallen back again into a lower degree of the Saguna-Nirguna dominated by Vishnu-Narayana with the Ananda in the background. The Asiddhi is still powerful.. Suddha & Prema Ananda have also become depressed, though not denied.

=

The Shuddha Prema is now being restored independently of the Krishna-Darshana.

=

Continuance of entire asamata in the evening—including rejection of nati. Resumed suspension of the progress of the siddhi.

The degree of the raudra up to which pain can be made subject to titiksha and converted into Ananda has immensely risen & is being rapidly & constantly heightened.

=

There is a reinforcement of the roga which had almost been eliminated, but as yet its materialisation is insignificant in force and extent.

None of the physical siddhis is yet decisively victorious in any of its parts.

═

The confusions & ill-results of the lapse continued even into the night. The refusal of the Jiva to participate in the effort of the Siddhi prevented the movement towards resumption of siddhi from taking definite shape. [Ritam][5] was challenged even in the script and vangmaya thought & therefore all confidence refused to any form of thought or knowledge. Samadhi at night was barren. All thoughts & suggestions from whatever source or through whatever instrument were contradictory & confused; the reconciling ritam was excluded in obedience to the asraddha.

═

The result of these movements in an increased siddhi cannot be apparent till the morrow.

═

May 23.

The siddhi is being remanifested, but with a successiveness which makes it appear like rapid rebuilding. The intensity of the dasya & the sraddha have not, however, been restored. In most movements the power of the siddhi emerges increased in range or intensity or in both.

The Aishwarya-Vashita has not yet the general force to which it temporarily rose, but it produces very often rapid effects in detail of a temporary or sometimes a final decisiveness, while its power of prolonged pressure has not decreased & that of the ishita has increased.

The unalloyed Ananda of defeat has not yet been restored.

The distinction is now being clearly drawn of trikaldrishtis certain of [themselves],[6] formed in the nature of knowledge & infallibly fulfilled and drishtis hesitating or else insisting & assuming a spurious certainty, formed in the nature of twilit & obscure force, dual, balanced or pursued by their opposites, representing a clash of forces & often or usually baffled of their result. The former are growing in frequency. There is also an intermediate drishti, in which the certain emerges out of the uncertain, the pure trikaldrishti out of the telepathic, but without the clear luminosity of the spontaneous sureness.

---

[5] *MS* Anrita

[6] *MS* itself

There is a pressure of movement towards the harmony of knowledge & force (Prakasha-Tapas), but it is as yet vague & ill defined, a large & obscure fluctuation & inchoate formation.

=

During the afternoon a confusion of Asiddhi without yesterday's violences. The Ananda of defeat has not been restored and the attempt of the system to replace it by indifference or akriya udasinata in defeat is being constantly thwarted.

The relation with the Ishwara has also not been restored. The script, vani, thought are no longer regarded as entirely in his possession; full dasya sometimes returns, but with a reserve, & is then again disturbed. Sraddha is absent, except when the vijnana is in play.

May 24.

Samadhi failed to preserve the incipient organisation already realised. There was, however, a movement to remanifest the lost stability of rupa & continuity of active drishya, but the continuity achieved was only of the manasic drishta and the stability had no sufficient hold on the akasha.

=

The siddhi is now restored with a more direct presence of the Ishwara in the thought and script and a more intimate prabhutwa in the dasya by the diminution of the role and insistence of the instrumental ganas. Only the intensity of the Sraddha is lowered by the exclusion of the hasty tapasic element in the enthusiastic faith. The faith is now deficient in enthusiasm & entirety, because it is deficient in certainty.

=

The Krishnadarshan is now full of the Saguna Brahman with the contents of the Trinity & often descends into the Saguna

Brahman. At other times it rises to the KrishnaKali. Usually it is divided between the two.

═

Sraddha has not yet been restored.

Trikaldrishti works with some fullness, but not sufficient certitude. Tapas is temporarily depressed in order to give more scope for the *udasina prakasha*.

═

There is no decisive forward movement anywhere else.

Sahitya has been recommenced.

═

Samananda of siddhi asiddhi is still infirm in the prana.

May 25th

There is today greater strength of the Sama Ananda & the Asraddha is less aggressive.

Aishwarya is stronger in exact movement of things in station, less powerful over things in motion. The general effectivity is still depressed. Satyam of telepathy always increases in largeness.

Trikaldrishti is becoming more & more accurate in general fact and even in perception of general order of circumstance, but is much astray in time & place & therefore in exact order of circumstance.

Rupa grows always behind the veil rather than in front of it and slowly against a still prevailing obstruction.

Samadhi is gradually reestablishing continuity of active drishya.

═

Sparsha is now beginning to be sthula in other directions than in the falling of water drops on the body etc, but it is a very sukshma sthula. It is chiefly as indicated often in the lipi on the lips that it makes itself felt.

Gandha persists, but more sparely & sparsely than at first

Rasa is infrequent & seldom decided.

Chakshusha in the habitual forms of the Akasha.

Sravana is the most backward.

═

A reaction in which the tapasic powers that helped the siddhi are thrown out from the centre and appear in the environment as confused suggestions & will-forces that no longer command the light.

==

May 26th

The Siddhi is now in a period of transitional reaction.

==

Frequent coherent conversations in the Samadhi; better organisation of rupa; incipient organisation of lipi.

==

Satyam brihat very pronounced; resumed action of ritam in the satyam.

==

In the evening attempt of the sukshma vak to manifest more freely & fully

==

May 27th

Attempted movement towards the complete satyam-ritam of the trikaldrishti, broken down by a fresh reaction.

Aishwarya depressed.

Kamananda persists, but is slight & broken during the last two or three days.

==

The chief movement has been the emergence of the fixed Mahakali temperament with fixity in the struggle and yuddhalipsa and the rejection of the tamasic Mahasaraswati temperament which draws back from apparently useless struggle & desires either an easy progress or acquiescence in an imposed immobility.

—

May 28th

Reemergence of the siddhi. Trikaldrishti & Tapas now act combined, but the trikaldrishti is surer than the Tapas. There is also a growing combination of the telepathic and the decisive trikaldrishti. None of these movements are yet perfect.

==

Kamananda shows a tendency to recover force.

=

The Ishwara is still obscured.

=

May 29th

The Siddhi is now restored in all but the Aishwarya-traya & the Rupa-Samadhi.

=

Among the Vishayas gandha alone persists & gandharasa. The others have fallen back to a lower degree

May 30th

The Krishna-darshana is reestablished in its first intensity; the difficulty of the unbeautiful face concealing the Sarva-sundara is conquered in fact, though it attempts to return & does recur as a reminiscent experience. The second intensity is now more frequent and more secure as founded on a firmer foundation of the first intensity.

Preliminary—	Krishna *sensed* behind the disguise
1st intensity—	Krishna *seen* behind the human mask.
2d	Krishna seen in the human being
3d	The human being seen in Krishna
Consummation.	The human being = Krishna.

The same rule holds with all things and beings

—

The samata holds against all things except complete asraddha of the Karma; it then becomes udasinata on the surface as soon as it has recovered from the positive depression.

=

In the second chatusthaya sraddha and consequently ishwara-bhava & attahasya are still subject the first to depression, the second to rejection from the front and non-emergence. The last two indeed are seldom present.

=

Vijnana improves in trikaldrishti, but is there subject to violent return of the falsifying will-thought due to baffled Tapas.

=

Rupasamadhi goes through a constant process of construction, demolition, reconstruction or manifestation, repression & gradual remanifestation.

═

Kamananda is now daily recurrent, but its intensity & continuity fluctuate. The other Sharira Anandas are intermittent.

Arogya grows slowly, but is not manifest in the two deficient points (teeth and the central function).

Utthapana & Saundarya are depressed or repressed.

═

The Krishnadarshan now varies between all intensities of itself and even all stages. Sometimes it lapses into the ordinary vision with the Brahman behind it.

The Dwaya consciousness which has long re-usurped this mind was again removed this morning, but still hangs about the mentality.

Aiswarya traya manifests sometimes, but is usually ineffective.

═

The rupa-samadhi attempts to progress, but as yet without any decisive success.

═

Gandha is now frequent & spontaneous. Sparsha is limited to the habitual touches, but capable of a surprising intensity & long after-effect in the contact.

May 31st

Another strong effort to organise swapna-samadhi by bringing coherence into vak, lipi, thought, successive rupa and connecting them together. A partial success.

═

The struggle is again over the vijnana. Aishwarya & trikaldrishti fluctuate, sometimes combining, sometimes acting against each other and at others both sinking into entire imbecility broken only by detailed & isolated successes.

═

The movements of thought occasionally move all in the vijnana or are vijnanamaya, but this is followed immediately by a collapse.

=

Physical touches of asamata persist.

=

Lapse of the Krishnadarshana; attempt to enforce the darshana of the Trinity, the Brahman or the mere Nara.

=

Repetition of the movements of the crises with Knowledge & Ananda combating & seizing on the disturbances, obscurities and painful reactions. The success of the movement has not been complete.

=

Trikaldrishti is telepathic, mental & non-luminous; it has a satyam which attempts & often succeeds in a non-luminous arrangement of the ritam.

=

Satyam of vijnana is well-established and does not fail during the asiddhi. It is the brihat ritam that fails & so much so as sometimes entirely to disaggregate even the particular ritam.

=

Exact trikaldrishti of time (by the watch or in the order of other measuring circumstances) has begun definitely yesterday and is continued today.

June 1st

Samata

The hope or idea expressed on the 1st May has had to be modified. Asamata is still capable of returning in its own kind; the tendency to turn it into Ananda is not yet victorious, although it prevailed till almost the end of May. In the body the growth of the bhukti continues without any sensible reaction.

Shakti

The same condition of things continues. Sraddha in karma came for a time only to be destroyed again. There is again a certain doubt even about full Yoga-siddhi. Devibhava is deficient, because of deficient power and sraddha.

Brahman

Full Krishnadarshana came, but is now subject to reactions of all the old bhavas.

Karma

Little has been altered. Krishna Kali remains, but is hampered by insufficiency of sraddha, power and general Krishnadarshana.

Vijnana.

Satyam is well-established even in trikaldrishti. Ritam began to be brihat, but has been thrown back.

Telepathy of thought is still deficient.

Aishwarya-Traya & Samadhi after a rapid movement are again hampered & successfully confined.

Sharira.

Stronger in the first two members; but vaidyuta is infrequent

═

Today sravana became acute & distinct, but only in one or two sounds. Gandha persists & a subtle rasa.

═

June 2d

Dasya has attained an extraordinary completeness in the tertiary form. Along with the dasya is the restoration of the perfect samata. But the Mahakali bhava (Singhabahini) is diminished and not always present. Nevertheless it is more normal now than the others.

═

KrishnaKali is now almost absolute.

═

The physical Anandas (sahaituka) continue to gain in force & normality. The ahaituka anandas are once more frequently recurrent. Raudra today is very frequent & prolonged. Sahaituka raudra is especially growing in force, intensity and above all normality.

═

The Will has once more abandoned the tapasic insistence on rapidity and immediate results.

═

Ananda of defeat & failure is restored; sraddha in karma is still depressed and partly withheld.

═

The lipi "intensity of delight" often repeated recently is now being fulfilled.

═

Gandha seems well-established; sravana (vak) is attempting to normalise itself.

═

Samadhi is again organising itself (swapna).

Emergence of the sukshma vak in various degrees of evolution, half-involved, evolved; half-audible; audible but unintelligible; intelligible in part, the rest to the mind; intelligible to the hearing.

June 3.

Rf.

1. Therefore saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth and cry, Peace.
2. Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances and the bag of deceitful weights?

═

Instances of exact fulfilment even by things in station are becoming suddenly very frequent, but the resistance is concentrated and obstinate. It is exceptional to have the 80° force or anything approaching to it.

The general power of the Aishwarya has increased.

Trikaldrishti of time continues to occur, but there is a wavering sometimes between possible general appreciations of time, sometimes of the exact minute or a falling short by a minute or two, eg. 11.22 (the right time) & 11.23 (a possibility), 11.35 instead of 11.34½ (right time) or 11.27 instead of 11.34.

═

After the morning reaction of the Asiddhi. First two chatusthayas attacked & momentarily touched. Sraddha farther shaken especially in Saundaryam & Utthapana of the Sharira and consequently in Karmachatusthaya.

Ananda remains firm & all the 2^{d} [chatusthaya] except sraddha

Satyam of trikaldrishti etc without ritam, except isolated or fragmentary movements. Vijnana obstructed.

Today asiddhi in the hair and progressive denudation.

Sharira is at [present][7] obstructed & attacked. Karma likewise.

═

Attempt to fix the *sraddha swashaktyam*

June 4.

The state of obstruction continues; but it contains only a slight amount of disruption.

Lipi.

1. Today—finality
2 finality of the delight
3 totality of the delight

═

Vaidyuta is again manifesting itself spontaneously.

═

The sense of the universe = self is growing in force and permanence, although strongly besieged by the dwaya consciousness. All energies are now felt to be in oneself.

Along with this realisation comes the Ishwarabhava and attahasya. The hasya is also manifesting itself. The sense of the transcendent Krishna maintains the dasya.

═

The Aishwarya is again active and powerful.

═

There is sraddha, but not immediate or particular, only of general and final result. There is still doubt as to the karma of the life.

═

Krishnadarshana is once more general.

═

---

[7] *MS* presented

Extreme intensity and sthulatwa of sukshma rasa (bitter). Other tastes, eg lemon, are less well defined in the sthula, though in themselves quite distinct.

June 5.

A day of no appreciable advance or recoil. The Krishnadarshana is attempting to fix itself & eliminate its denial by the less complete bhavas.

The denial of Arogya is still dominant in certain points and affects others where it was supposed to have been done with & expelled practically, if not in seed.

A proof of Tapas-shakti in Kriti

June 6.

The Krishnadarshan progresses greatly in fixity of its general presence, but is not yet free from temporary denial. There is, however, in essence no farther obstacle to the Darshanas; the obstacle is only a tamasic dhriti habit in the memory.

═

The first chatusthaya resists successfully the attempts at disruption, which are now losing all force; the second increases in Ishwarabhava & Yuddhalipsa. Sraddha is still deficient

═

Vijnana is obstinately resisted, especially in Trikaldrishti, Aishwarya & Samadhi. These sometimes fall back entirely, sometimes manifest a sudden completeness always just short of perfection. The struggle is over (1) perfection; (2) constant action; (3) organisation. Separately each element is there in something like perfection; they cannot be securely put together—the moment they are combined, a furious assault of the disruptive forces scatters them again and a fragmentary action takes place.

═

Sharira makes no definite progress. Daily recurrence of Kamananda is moving towards all day recurrence and a sort of incipient continuity; but this is not yet accomplished. Arogya is strongly combated. Saundarya recedes rather than advances. There is no progress of utthapana; the little that had been made is suspended.

═

In Karma KrishnaKali stands, although the first is not yet securely centralised; Karma Kama move forward or otherwise with the Vijnana.

═

Four assertions

1. Vijnana organised and in constant action within June—perfection perfectly organised afterwards
2. Sharira delivered & made sure to faith in all its members within June
3 Life begins to be developed under control of Ishwara
4. The seeds of these things to be laid down now within a few minutes.

═

The last assertion fulfilled.

═

June 7—

Krishnadarshana remains constant even when the other bhavas (the Three, the Four etc) seem to occupy the whole front; they are superficial and cannot blot out the Lilamaya even when they seem to exclude him from the organised object.

═

Samadhi this morning (swapna) crept forward one step towards greater hold of the thing sensed on the akasha.

For a moment Samata was broken; afterwards the movements of the old crises repeated themselves mechanically without producing asamata.

═

Crisis continual throughout the afternoon. Samata suffered, but only in the prana of the physical being with an occasional reaction in its mind. Towards evening promise of the foundation of the first assertion made yesterday.

═

The vangmaya and script firmly established in their constant (not incessant[)] action;[8] anandamaya, vijnanamaya, with the inevitable style in the vak of the thought, possessed by the Ishwara even when an instrumental or interceptive devata comes to the front. The vani also established, anandamaya.

The other instruments of the Vijnana are being prepared for their finality of right & constant action.

==

Perfect action of vangmaya thought organised along with other instruments (not perfect) in swapnasamadhi & antardrishta, whether jagrat-swapna, swapna or sushupta-swapna.

==

Stability of rupa increases & variety increases in the swapnasamadhi.

June 8th

Vijnana continues to progress.

==

Intelligibility, authority & stability of the lipi make considerable progress.

==

Action of certainty in the trikaldrishti is increasing.

==

Lipi, "rapid ideality in telepathy" in the swapna, — fulfilled in the progress of the siddhi.

==

Intense Krishnadarshana is becoming more firmly general.

==

Afternoon

A firm use of accurate and active telepathy, not yet entirely full nor entirely ritam, of vijnanamaya rita perception and of incipient positive and certain Trikaldrishti is now added to the action of vijnana which is meant to be constant. The trikaldrishti is not merely telepathic, but often pure vision. This movement however is not yet luminous, & in the whole knowledge, except in jnana, there is only at best a subdued light.

---

[8] *MS* (not incessant action);

Krishnadarshana is again general although still sometimes obstructed, but successfully only in regard to certain classes of animals.

═

Ref.

Like long lost knowledge speeding back
In sudden swelling flights she fills my mind
With bliss intoxicant,

Lipi—

exhaustive lipi.

═

Some progress of trikaldrishti & tapas [attempted],[9] but marred afterwards by the irruption of the will-thought, destroying the ritam and adversely affecting the samata. For a time the trikaldrishti was admirable.

June 9th

Krishnadarshana rose to generality (with one defect), in human beings, of the third intensity, then collapsed, then reasserted itself.

═

The movement of the vijnana continues.

The trikaldrishti is attempting a greater wideness of the satyam ritam; aishwarya a stronger and more firmly & generally effective movement.

═

Lipi—

1. *perfect ideality of the trikaldrishti.* movement towards fulfilment
2. *resurgence of life.*
3 *brilliant blaze.* fulfilled
4. *oceanic drishti* in course of fulfilment

═

---

[9] *MS* attended

Strong threat against the kriti . . a general adverse wave against the kriti.

==

Instances of "exhaustive lipi".

==

Krishnadarshana in the third intensity is now perfectly generalised with regard to the human being; the defect in regard to animals is being remedied.

==

Satyam of the trikaldrishti manifests with something of the ritam.

==

Attempt to bring forward the primary utthapana ($6\frac{1}{2}$ hours; not continuous, but in three portions of $3\frac{1}{2}$, $1\frac{1}{2}$, $1\frac{1}{2}$ with intervals of 1 hour and $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours). Process of turning physical strain into electric ananda, raudra and force.

==

June 10th

Satyam of trikaldrishti and telepathy combining; ritam is yet very imperfect.

Satyam of Tapas is trying to establish itself.

There is also an attempt of Jagrat samadhi to evolve again & break out from behind the curtain. Samadhi perception of sukshma sparsha (a bird hitting against a tower) is one of the elements.

==

Reaction in the afternoon, throwing back Krishnadarshana into the unfixed and fluid state ranging from non-vision or veiled vision to the third intensity.

The Vijnana generally was attacked by the intellectuality

Nevertheless its progress still continues,—a progress of inchoate preparation rather than of decisive results.

==

Farther development of taste (sukshma rasa) predicted yesterday in the lipi.

==

Abhyasa of primary utthapana, 3 hours, 1 hour, 3 hours, $1\frac{1}{2}$

hour = $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours, with intervals of 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours. In the morning a reaction of weariness from yesterday's abhyasa—

June 11—

The same state as yesterday.

=

Samadhi tends to grow; there is once more some application to life.

In the rest of the vijnana there is battle and preparation.

=

In the Sharira the Asiddhi has slightly the upper hand in Ananda & Arogya; entirely in Saundarya.

Practice of pr. utth. [primary utthapana] $11\frac{1}{2}$ hours (5 hours 10 minutes, 3 hours 20 minutes and 3 hours with intervals of 15 minutes and 30 minutes) up to 7.7 pm. After 9.40 half an hour = 12 hours. Result, no weariness, but considerable stiffness in muscles of the legs & pain of the soles of the feet. Elsewhere only slight reaction. Stiffness induces weakness physically not pranic—

=

The satyam of the telepathy-trikaldrishti with a great completeness but an imperfect ritam is now acting constantly.

=

The Tapas became very forcible & obstinate against a great and obstinate resistance and almost always gained its point in the general result; particular result also comes to be more & more subject to the force from day to day.

=

Kamananda was depressed & only occasionally recurrent.

=

The siddhi is moving to the union of chit & tapas.

=

There is now the attempt to fulfil the ninth Affirmation by overcoming the condition of Time. This is closely connected with the affirmation of the eighth principle, action on all the five planes at once which also tends to manifest.

June 12—

Steady advance in Aishwarya-traya.

The Aishwarya-ishita-vashita now acts with a very frequent effectivity in exact detail, a still more frequent partial effectivity in detail and a habitual effectivity in general result on things in station.

═

Ishwarabhava & Yuddhalipsa increase. Sraddha tends to increase.

═

Rupa-Samadhi grows constantly, but the decisive line has not yet been passed.

═

Strong, frequent, prolonged, varied & perfectly materialised intense gandha in the evening (scents etc). Gandha has for some time been constant.

Taste tries to become more varied, but except in two or three aswadas is insufficiently materialised.

═

Intense vaidyuta ananda in palm of hand as result of slight contact with a chair by the side of the hand; prolonged, compelling movement of the fingers & recurrent in long continuity, gradually diminished in continuity & intensity. For half an hour. Vaidyuta Ananda fully established, sahaituka and ahaituka. (Afterwards felt in the rest of the body.) It extended from the palm to the whole arm, then with less intensity to the left arm; accompanied by raudra and by tivra in palm and armpit. Another touch brought a separate stream, the two acting together for a short time. All this justifies the most vivid imaginations of the Alipur jail.

═

Strong kamananda, continuous or recurrent for greater part of the day; free from asana; intense & continuous in walking, intense but not continuous in standing, more of body in sitting.

═

Retrogression in arogya (incipient cold; gathered power of skin-irritation)

═

P. utth $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours ($3.45 + 2.15 + 3 + 1\frac{1}{2}$ with intervals of $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ and $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours)

June 13—

The "first assertion" is now to a great degree fulfilled.[10] All the parts and instruments of the Vijnana are in constant action and more or less organised. "Constant" is not "continual". There are periods of disorganisation and broken action, even of quiescence or mere mental action,—although the latter survival is decreasing in force and frequency.

Thought and script are frequent and normally vijnanamaya, but too often possessed by *ganas* who try to veil the Iswara. Perceptive thought is more often pulled down into the mentality, but still it rises again into the luminous action. *Trikaldrishti* is constant; though often disorganised. *Aishwarya-traya* is constant, though often broken and even confined to isolated effects.

Samadhi (swapna) is now organised; there is stable scene & movement, continuous action, combination, but it does not go beyond a brief stability & continuity. *Samadhi jagrat* is not yet delivered from the obstruction. This is the only absolute defect of the organised vijnana, but even here there is incipient organisation.

=

The contradictions of the Samata have now *ananda* behind or in them, except when the ananda also is expressly overpowered.

Sraddha & devibhava waver, but are founded,—though not yet complete.

Brahman is complete, but not yet quite securely Lilamaya in the Ishwara. The defect however is occasional & slight.

Krishna-Kali is constant, but not yet quite continuous.

=

All the physical Anandas ahaituka & sahaituka have progressed greatly.

Utthapana is attempting to emerge. In primary utthapana weariness, stiffness, pain can all be got rid of or rendered ineffective by the Tapas, but the exhaustion of the store of Pranic energy in the *annakosha* still persists as a habit & the resultant weakness tends to bring back these reactions. These are, however, very rapidly cast off. . The secondary & tertiary utthapanas are not now in action.

---

[10] *See the entry of 6 June, page 863.—Ed.*

In Arogya there is still the dominant recurrence of the habitual fragments of roga and the persistence of the two that are yet unbroken. Cold is attempting to return.

Saundarya is still unable to break its shell.

=

Karma & Kama await the growth of the Aishwarya & the Sharira. The life & its work [are][11] still under the menace of the Enemy & deprived of their instruments and equipment.

=

During the day 9 hours primary utthapana, but with greater breaks & less force of utthapana.

=

The relapse from the Arogya increases rather than diminishes.

=

On the other hand Sharira Ananda of all kinds grows more spontaneous, frequent, intense and prolonged.

=

A crisis during the day lowering the sraddha and the force.

=

No definite progress in the Vijnana which has been thrown back into the "yeast" of a confused and obscured action with the perceptive thought and tapastraya trying to form out of it.

=

June 14—

Some increase in the organisation of swapna samadhi. In the afternoon lipi of swapna samadhi again began to come right.

=

Continuation of relapse & crisis till the middle of the afternoon—

=

---

[11] *MS* is

Krishnadarshana, relapsed for these two or three days, is again active in its various intensities, but sometimes lapses into the Brahman.

=

Force of aishwarya traya increased a little, but the resistance still prevails over the attempt to apply it in all cases.

=

Taste developed strongly, so that always in the swallow there is some kind of taste sukshma or sthula. Taste of sweetness entirely sthula & intense lasted for many minutes. Gandha is frequent, often entirely *niradhara*— *Shabda* tries to develop.

=

The rule of not sitting or lying except when necessary, but always walking or standing is being observed and in this way almost the whole day has passed. Standing restores the declining force & thus a continuous spell of 4 hours in the afternoon has been done without any serious difficulty. Whole period of primary utthapana $4\frac{1}{4} + 1\frac{1}{4} + 4 + \frac{1}{2}$ hours with intervals of $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ & 4.

=

Sleep 12.30 to 7.15.

=

June 15—

Pr. utthapana 15 hours ($4\frac{3}{4} + 7\frac{1}{4} + 3$ with intervals of $\frac{1}{4}$ and $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours). Today practically 12 hours were done without a break. The reaction became powerful at times towards the end, but always lightened. Standing is sufficient without other rest for restoration, but sometimes the restoration of strength comes while walking.

=

A great advance in certainty of trikaldrishti and some in Aishwarya. The basis of perfect organisation of the knowledge has been laid.

=

Arogya is still affected by the persistence of the attack.

=

Karma is also suffering.

=

In the Vijnana it is evident that Will & Thought are drawing towards each other preparatory to union. At times they coincide entirely, but not yet in a well-organised fashion. Something of the tapasic stress still survives in the will affecting the thought. Something of the passive inertness and absence of power still lingers in the thought divorced from will

═

Vishaya has not yet definitely advanced, although shabda seems to be preparing, & there are pure sukshma movements in the others.

═

Samadhi is almost stationary in swapna; in jagrat dense forms of a certain stability imperfectly manifested in the darkness.

═

There is no advance in Saundarya.

═

In Krishnadarshana the vision of everything as a form of Krishna Kali seems fixed. Darshana of Krishna Kali ranges between the various intensities down to non-intensity.

═

Ananda is firmer, as the remnants of responsibility & desire have been diminished, the former to vanishing-point; but sraddha is not restored. There is sraddha in Yoga-siddhi minus Saundarya, imperfect in all Sharira except Ananda, but none in Karma.

═

The 16th will be a day of progress.

Sleep 6 hours.

June 16—

An enormous progress in Krishnadarshana, which has fixed itself rapidly, first in the mere darshana, then in the first intensity, then in the third where it varies between the first & third in the third. The first in the third is Sarvamaya, the second is Anantagunamaya and the third is Anandamaya Krishna.

A great intensity of 3^3 Kd [Krishnadarshana] in things, sounds etc.

═

The vijnana made considerable progress in trikaldrishti. The will also began to become more easily identical with knowledge. But there is still the difficulty of accommodating the transvolutive will & perception with the evolutive will and perception.

=

In rupasamadhi no definite progress.

Vishaya is depressed.

=

Anandamaya Samata made considerable progress towards undisturbed perfection. There is some attempt at backsliding in the invulnerability of the physical ananda

=

Ten hours pr. utth. but much broken. Reaction prevails

=

Arogya struggles to regain its ascendency, but it is not yet accomplished

=

Sleep about 6 hours.

=

June 17—

The Krishnadarshana is now almost fixed in the third degree of the third intensity, but the lower degrees still tend to return sometimes into predominance.

=

The entire *vijnanising* of the mentality proceeds rapidly, but the Tapas today is less potently effective. There is a movement, however, towards the entirety of the vijnana organisation.

=

In *swapnasamadhi* stability is both stronger and more frequent.

Jagrat samadhi is still preparing more behind the veil than in front of it.

=

In the second chatusthaya Ishwarabhava grows & declines along with the intensity of effective Tapas. Sraddha follows the same fluctuations.

=

The Ishwara is now manifest behind all thought & vani, sometimes both behind and in it.

=

Sharira is still subject to struggle.

Utthapana is under the influence of the reaction which is now strong & persistent; the weariness & weakness recur, but only in the annakosha & its pranic environment, not in the pranashakti proper. Stiffness & pain also recur, but are not persistent.

=

Ananda (sharira) is less active & vishaya depressed or obstructed.

Karma is obstructed, but the Tapas maintains itself & produces slight positive & much negative result.

=

A great advance in the combination of knowledge and tapas

Lipi . . *"figurative fashioning tapas"*

=

Pr utt. $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

=

Sleep 5 hours—swapnasamadhi $1\frac{1}{2}$

June 18—

The Krishnadarshan fluctuates and admits new combinations, but with a general fixity of the third intensity which only occasionally gives way. The intensity is imperfect with regard to animals.

=

The disorganised mentality is again active & all parts of the Siddhi depressed.

=

Lipi increases in regular activity.

(Lipi—*regularity of the lipi*)

=

June 19—

The Mahakali-Mahasaraswati consciousness with the Maheshwari *pratistha* & the Mahaluxmi colouring is now being firmly & finally established.

=

A similar finality of Krishna Kali is in process of final foundation.

═

The revolt of the evolutive tendency non-central to the adhara is the cause of the relapse of these last two days and the break of the unity in the universal consciousness. As usual the relapse has synchronised with the reappearance of the Mahakali energy.

═

Anandamaya samata has been superficially disturbed, but tends always to hold its own.

═

Sraddha is affected with regard to karma and rapidity, but the lapse is much less complete than on any former occasion of the same magnitude.

═

Lipi.

The last attack on the telepathy trikaldrishti.

═

Growth of the balabhava and manifestation of the KrishnaKali relation, the latter element in perfection, the former in imperfection.

═

Free recurrence of the sharira Anandas, depressed for some time, is now reviving.

═

A good part of the sleep turned into Samadhi.

June 20—

The Krishna relation is now established with perfection of the Krishnabhava.

═

Experiment has shown that the Kamananda is much stronger than it ever was before, reviving almost immediately from what formerly depressed it for a day or for half a day. Moreover it is beginning to manifest in the body and no longer only at its own centre.

═

Greater activity of the sukshmavak.

=

June 21

The Krishna-Kali relation is fixed & confirmed.

=

The Krishnadarshana which had gone back to the Anantaguna is now recovering the Anandamaya, the third degree of the third intensity.

=

The Sharira Anandas are again on the increase, more intense, more recurrent, tending to the continual recurrence & even to the continuous.

=

Satyam of combined telepathy, trikaldrishti, tapas is again active with greater force, but ritam is imperfect.

Strong increase of sukshmavak: it is not however entirely developed from the material envelope (Vritra).

=

Manasik rupa has for some time been occasionally active; manasik sparsha, sravana, etc are also occasionally active and not only in the form of imperfectly materialised vishayas, but as pure *manasa*.

=

The premananda which was long involved, has reemerged to the surface & is both general and particular.

The suddhananda also, which was contained & almost suppressed in the ahaituka + chidghana, has reemerged. With it the full intensity of the third degree of Krishnadarshana is reemerging.

=

Vishayas of smell & taste are again becoming active with the first force.

June 22 –

An uprush of a material layer full of the asiddhi.

Chidananda emerges with Sadananda behind it giving the ananda of the material oneness (substance) & of the all-life in its vital activity (prana).

═

The vijnana obscured during the last two days reemerges with the decisive Will-Knowledge.

═

Siddhi of Kriti, but not yet decisive.

═

June 23 –

There is a movement towards the settled intensity of the Anandas, subjective & objective, but the material environment resists strongly & obstinately.

═

Certainty of trikaldrishti, telepathic and pure, is very strong in the general result, but the *anritam* prevails in the detail. The movement is towards such a correction of the physical mentality that it shall record faithfully the *ritam* even when not illumined, but this movement is as yet unsuccessful except in moments of concentration.

═

The struggle in the Arogya continues. There is nowhere complete deliverance, but there is an increasing effectivity of the Will on the body in respect of Roga. In Utthapana & Saundarya the Will is depressed, held down and sometimes overcome.

═

There is a general repression of the Siddhi by the physical nature, but through it all the Siddhi progresses.

June 24 –

General intensity of premananda with occasional high intensity.

═

The shuddhananda increases.

═

Intense revelational-inspirational thought is manifesting in the vangmaya. Vijnana is active illuminating the perceptive thought & thought suggestions.

═

Rupa has for some days been increasing in intensity in the jagrat (perfect developed & dense) but has only an initial stability or none. Crude jagrat rupa has receded and seems dissolving rather than forming.

The Krishnadarshana is fixed, but depressed, at the lowest intensity possible to the complete darshana, except in occasional instances or moments of concentration. There is now a movement to recover & fix the general intensity beyond relapse.

The work now being done is to fix all gains in the lowest physical consciousness so that they may be always secure and not only present during periods, however long, of concentration, illumination or exaltation.

═

Tivra is beginning to generalise its intense recurrence throughout the body. Vaidyuta is also seeking to pervade the body and with less force kama and vishaya.

═

Rupasamadhi is growing by little jets of progress in the midst of an obstructing physical consciousness.

═

Trikaldrishti grows constantly in force, but fluctuates in completeness and especially in ritam.

═

Intensity of premananda fails now only because of the inability of the prana to hold it. The prana is accustomed only to calmness or to an equable ananda.

═

Kriti wavers in the balance & progresses only in little points.

═

The vishayas are depressed in their recurrence.

═

The defective parts of the second chatusthaya grow in strength.

—

June 25th

Vishaya is now the strongest pervasive Ananda in the body. The others are becoming continually recurrent at points & more disposed to pervasiveness. Pervasive Kama is the most backward.

=

The second chatusthaya is now fixed in its lesser completeness & intensity. The greater awaits the full organisation of vijnana.

=

Ananda is now complete & organised, the subjective & the physical; only the continuity in intensity has to be acquired. Continuity is beginning in all the physical anandas.

=

Trikaldrishti & tapas increase in force, but the organisation is once more inchoate preparing a stronger harmony.

=

Krishnadarshana is moving steadily towards its full & fixed intensity.

=

There is now a strong movement to replace the remnants of the intellectuality altogether by the ideality. It has already made some progress.

=

Crude akasha rupa of a certain stability & variety seems now to be established in the jagrat. Crude dense is also frequent.

=

Ananda Brahman came to the front; this was followed by a lapse into Jnanam Brahma. Afterwards Anandamaya Ishwara took its place.

=

Continuity of Sharira Ananda still needs smarana; recurrence is almost free from the necessity.

=

The Vijnana movement was obstructed & receded again in the afternoon.

=

Drishti of sukshma rain etc.

June 26th

Yesterday's lipi—175 = 17 + 5 and 1 + 7 + 5—In accordance with the first Ananda Brahman & some progress in Samadhi. In accordance with the latter progress in vijnana, sharira ananda and drishti of other planes.

═

17 + 5. Lilamaya Ananda Brahman with full fivefold subjective Ananda perfectly organised.

═

115. 11 + 5 preparing (Kalibhava on five planes). The action of the divine Prakriti must centre in the Vijnana and flow from it and work itself out through a passive receptive channel of mind, a passive enjoying Prana, a passive instrumental body.

═

The Seven Affirmations.

The three Krishna affirmations are now unalterably established in the being, but are sometimes pale to the consciousness

The four Brahma affirmations are fixed, but for their full action await the Ritam of the vijnana

The two Prakriti affirmations, Time & the five worlds, are in course of being established.

═

June 27th

The day has been devoted to the farther confirmation

(1) of the Ananda Brahman;

(2) of the 1st chatusthaya in sama Ananda; especially Ananda of failure

(3) of the 2d, especially in sraddha

(4) of the combination of Ishwarabhava & (3)

(5) of the vijnana organisation.

The only true resistance now is in the physical obstacle [affecting][12] especially (1) samadhi, (2) three members of the Sharira, especially Saundarya, in a less degree utthapana, in a still less degree Arogya, (3) Karma

═

---

[12] *MS* effecting

At night repeated coherent swapna.

June 28th

Organisation of samadhi has entered into the deepest sushupta swapna; but is not yet more than initial, conversations of three or four sentences, brief complex actions, short stabilities, rapid but not long continued thought, vangmaya & perceptive etc.

=

For the rest the established siddhis are growing stronger, especially telepathy & trikaldrishti, but there is a thick veil and siege of the environing manastattwa through which the vijnanamaya action has to break.

=

Lipi.

1. large interesting results.
2 pursue all the business || of the aishwarya, telepathy, tri-
(double line lipi) kaldrishti

=

Double line lipi in akasha & sadhara (chitra) is becoming gradually frequent.

June 29th

Great progress in organisation of tapas, telepathy, trikaldrishti.

=

The swapnasamadhi organisation progresses & confirms itself on a surer base.

=

There seems to be some beginning of a freer movement in the jagrad rupa.

=

June 30th

Swapnasamadhi very strong in all but stability of rupa and long continuity. Rupa in jagrat continues to attempt a freer breaking through the veil.

=

On the whole the vijnana may be said to have been well organised, but not perfectly in the month of June.

=

The Sharira has been delivered only in Ananda, not in Arogya etc; nevertheless there is a foundation of firm faith in the Sharira, but it wavers on the surface with regard to tertiary utthapana and saundarya.

=

The Iswara leads the life, but not yet to any definite result.

July—

June has been the period of four powerful finalities—

1. *Anandamaya Samata*

The first chatusthaya is delivered from the external attacks of the nirananda and asamata. Only a slight vibration is left combating the Ananda of failure, but this is itself becoming Anandamaya of the duality and is kept only to found a particular vibration of the pure Ananda.

2. *Daivi Prakriti*

The daivi prakriti and the fundamental sraddha are founded firmly and the Mahakali energy has occupied the Mahasaraswati frame, covered the Maheshwari pratistha, assumed the Mahaluxmi colouring and made its fiercer working compatible with the *anandamaya samata*. This movement is not yet touched to the final perfection and the *ishwarabhava* and *sraddha* are still insufficient and fluctuate on the surface. But the former defect is likely to disappear during the month. The latter depends on the imperfection of the *vijnana* and will disappear as the Tapas increases in its effectiveness.

3. *Brahman & Krishna Kali*

The Anandam Brahma is now fixed in the vision of all things and only occasionally goes back for a moment into the Anantam Jnanam Brahma. Along with this finality there is also the finality of the *Lilamaya darshana* in all existences; there is no longer the sharp distinction which confined the strong darshana to that which is *urjasvi*, the beautiful, young, noble or emphatic in character or to the human being. The siddhi however needs a more unwavering firmness and a more delightful intensity. These come to it sometimes, but are not yet part of the normal vision.

Krishnakali has been fixed in the consciousness finally. The Ishwara governs the action, thought etc entirely, but not yet with an invariable prominence. He is *vibhu*, but not always immediately & directly prabhu. Still the vangmaya, script & vani belong to him directly; only the perceptive thought & feeling are still indirectly possessed except in their extraordinary moments.

4. *Organised vijnana*

Vijnana is organised in all its parts. Tapas, telepathy, trikaldrishti work together, but while telepathy is *brihat* and almost entirely and spontaneously *ritam*, trikaldrishti though always active, has often to wait for or acquire its *ritam* out of the mass of the possibilities. The *ritam* however plays a large part and grows continually. Tapas is effective sometimes as will-thought against resistance, sometimes as Chit-Tapas. It is not yet entirely chit-tapas and therefore not in possession of the *samrajya.*

Samadhi is still crude & unstable in the jagrat, and in the swapna still brief and often attacked by confusion and dislocation, but all the necessary elements are present and work more and more together.

═

The perfection of the first three siddhis may be expected in July as well as a much greater perfection of the fourth.

═

Deficiencies

Sharira is the field of the main conflict; the Arogya is subject to constant attack which takes the form of habitual fragmentary roga. Utthapana after making a great stride (primary) fell back & is suspended. Saundarya has been unable to manifest in the head and *jara* attacks chiefly in the hair. In the *bhava* there is eternal youth.

═

Karma makes little visible headway. It waits on the growth of the effective Tapas. It is attacked chiefly in equipment and freedom.

═

Physical Ananda

All the physical anandas are daily active and even have an initial combination and organisation. This is the one physical siddhi which is liberated from complete obstruction and ready for finality.

July 1—

Lipi—

1. sahitya-siddhi
   trikaldrishti tapas telepathy ie the right combination
   της ὑγιειης ie the substitution of the healthy Prakriti for the rogamaya.
   Lointain ie distant telepathy etc.

(ie these are the things that must now be brought to perfection)

2. telepathy
3 trikaldrishti-siddhi.

=

In accordance with lipi 2. there was a great extension of telepathy of thought, the motions of thought in one physically near being followed with a great and constant, though not invariable exactness and proved by the subsequent action; the working was by a sort of combined mental prakamya and vyapti, prakamya predominating,—neither of them yet luminous,—manomaya, not vijnanamaya.

=

In accordance with lipi 3. there was a swift movement of ritam in trikaldrishti at the same time. This has yet to [be] perfected and extended to the distant (*lointain* of lipi 1); for in the distant there is still mainly the surge of possibilities, telepathy not trikaldrishti.

=

Sahitya-siddhi seems to be moving towards the recovery of the lost Mahalakshmi colouring in the style. (lipi 1).

Throughout the day a violent struggle between the Arogyaprakriti & the Rogasharira. The latter has manifested for some days in bad forms of assimilation and incipient cold, and now in incipient fever. The latter has been defied in all respects except not bathing & so far has been unable to make itself felt except in a fluctuating recurrent heat and occasional tendency to weakness. The weakness however makes no difference either to intellectual work or to physical exertion. This is the struggle to establish the Arogyasharira (lipi 1. της ὑγιειης)

=

The lipi "trikaldrishti tapas telepathy" is not yet in visible course of fulfilment, but there are incipient movements.

July 2^{d}

Lipi

to full effectivity hereafter in the telepathy trikaldrishti tapas together.

=

It is becoming more clear that the life has been directly taken in control by the Ishwara

=

Reference.

1. प्र सोमस्य पवमानस्योर्मय इन्द्रस्य यंति जठरं सुपेशसः
2 it is the glow of life, its finest breath

=

Developments in the jagrad rupa showing that the definite foundation has really begun (akasha, sadhara)

=

The struggle in the Arogya continues.

July 3^{d}

Sudden advance in several directions.

=

The fixed general tertiary intensity of the Krishnadarshana in the third degree has been suddenly established, free from all subjection to forms and circumstances. All fluctuations are in different degrees of *purohiti* of the Ishwara.

=

Vijnanamaya satyam of the jnana (complete) as opposed to manomaya satyam and, with less completeness & nearness, of the trikaldrishti in surrounding movements has been suddenly established

There is ritam of the jnana, only partially of the trikaldrishti & force.

=

Satyam of the force is preparing.

═

Ishwarabhava & sraddha have taken a step forward.

═

Thought, vangmaya, vani have all been entirely possessed by the Ishwara; the other voices & suggestions are being either taken up by him or turned into sukshma vak. This latter movement is assured, but has not yet the final definite completeness.

═

Personal relation of Ishwara & the jiva (prakriti) is now complete though not yet forceful in its central characteristic (rudrabhava).

═

The ritam of telepathy-trikaldrishti-tapas has now to be fixed.

═

Lipi—
1) 12 2) 13 3) great results.

═

Strong emergence of the shuddhananda involved in the chidghana-ahaituka; also of the subjective prema-kama. They are not entirely fixed in generality in their intense forms.

Since yesterday the gandha has again recovered its intensity & variety and is today beginning to become frequent. There is a movement of recovery in the rasa, great intensity in habitual sparshas & preparation of variety involved in indeterminate sparsha, incipient certainty & considerable intensity in sravana (chiefly in habitual sounds), spasmodic recurrence of darshana.

═

Trikaldrishti of things distant in space & time is beginning to be generalised (telepathy was already working & occasional trikaldrishti); but as yet there is no certainty, as there is still the siege of possibilities. Ritam is not yet certified to the intelligence. Lipi is beginning to work again on these things and rupasamadhi is preparing to follow.

═

In the afternoon the siddhi receded from the morning's intensity and in the evening there was even some touch of the reaction contradictory of samata usually associated with the Mahakali rajasic activity.

═

There is a considerable attempt of jagrat rupa to advance in all parts, but the success is not yet manifest.

At the same time the tendency to use even imperfect rupas for purposes of vijnana increases and seems to help the attempt.

═

July 4—

Ref.

ut sûryo brihad archinshi açret, puru viçwâ janimâ mânushânâm
samo divo dadrishe rochamânah, kratwâ kr'itah sukr'itah kartr'ibhir bhût.
sa sûryah prati puro na ud gâ, ebhih stomebhih etaçebhir evaih
pra no mitrâya varun'âya vocho, anâgaso aryamn'e agnaye cha
vi nah sahasram çurudho radantu, r'itavâno varun'o mitro agnih
yachchhantu chandrâ upamam no arkam, â nah kâmam pupurantu stavânâh—

Lipi

1. light to be manifested entirely telepathy trikaldrishti tapas.

The suddhananda as the result of yesterday's movement is fixed, dominating the Chidghana and *sajosha* with the subjective premakama, but not yet in its invariable intensity—

═

Yesterday's general attack is being overcome— It failed to create a crisis.

═

The fivefold plane is being manifested in thought etc (puru viçvâ janima manushânam) with the illumined mind as the centre (samo divo dadrishe rochamâno) & the *brihad archis* of the vijnana as the source.

The five *purah* are being manifested even to the rupadrishti. The vijnana (surya) has yet to ascend into all. The completion of this movement will establish the eighth Affirmation (of the nine, ebhih stomebhih), see May 20. The three Krishna affirmations are almost perfect. The four Satya-Ananda affirmations await for their perfection the free Tapas & Prakasha.

=

The dominance of the Vijnana has been restored, but it has to be consciously related to its roots in the Ananda. As foreseen in the jail the Ishwara is seated in the Ananda; the Ishwara + Jiva in the Vijnana.

Development of samadhi continues—

1 Jagrat Antardrishta—Any image willed comes after a time, always recognisable, but not always clear in outline or distinct.

2 Jagrat bahirdarshi—Images on the background independent of the will, a few distinct & stable, others clear, constant but shifting, not very distinct, others changing & fleeting.

3 Swapna. Combinations of vision, speech, action.

July 5th

Strong opposition and attack.

=

Ananda (sharira) continues to be constant in recurrence, sometimes continual in recurrence (especially tivra & kama) with an occasional continuity (especially kama). The anandas (vaidyuta, vishaya, raudra) are often pervasive. Pervasive kama & tivra also occur, but with less force & hold.

=

Samadhi continues slowly to develop.

=

Vijnana of trikaldrishti, telepathy, tapas is much obstructed

July 6th

Again a day of obstruction and struggle. Sharira is especially obstructed and the positive Asiddhi seems to prevail at some points.

=

The day devoted chiefly to sahitya (poetry).

=

Continuities of kamananda.

July 7th

The decisive trikaldrishti has during these few days acted only fragmentarily or dimly at a distance. Telepathy & its stresses have governed the field. Tapas has been with difficulty effective, often ineffective—

=

Kamananda is increasing against obstruction its force of continuity; but there is a tendency in the body to insist only on one continuous ananda at a time.

=

Last night pain of strained nerve in the knee joint turned to Ananda, but imperfectly owing to jugupsa.

=

July 8th

The vijnana siddhi touched bottom-point & then suddenly rose again. It appears that the final elimination of temperamental stress is being now engineered & that this was the principal object of the retrogression.

Sama Ananda has stood firm, except for rare touches; the second chatusthaya & the Mahakali bhava have been strengthened, even the ishwarabhava & the temperamental sraddha (in the heart) although the intellectual mind has been shaken.

Krishnadarshana increases in the tertiary Anandamaya sense through all fluctuations.

Sharira & Karmasiddhi have been obstructed & retarded; but the vijnana has been the chief sufferer.

July 9th–10th

Indefinite progress at various points

=

Telepathy, trik. tap. [trikaldrishti, tapas] are recovering force in their combination, but telepathy always predominates—

July 11th

The first part of the month has passed in the usual relapse into a confused and inchoate condition of the siddhi marked by a partial and temporary dissolution of what had just been gained, some amelioration & confirmation of previous gains and the vague beginning of a fresh advance.

It is indicated that there will now be a steady movement forward.

═

The right form of the Krishnadarshana seems now to be fixed —the Ananda-Purusha Krishna containing the Ananda Brahman which contains the Ananda Purusha as the Jiva—the Shuddha Ananda containing the Chidghana & Ahaituka and giving rise to the PremaKama. The right harmony in intensity of the three elements is not yet fixed.

—

Daivabhava of Mahakali is fixed. The Maheshwari Pratistha is submerged, but the Mahalaxmi-Mahasaraswati continent is still too strong for the right intensity of the Mahakali inhabitant to fix itself.

═

In Samata there is still a tendency to return of depression by non-faith in Siddhi.

═

The Pranic deficiencies of Ananda have yet to be mended; the indriyas are now fixed in the subjective vishaya & the buddhi in chidghana of vishaya, but the prana is not yet free from the memories of *virodha* in *bhoga*, eg in bad food, certain reminiscences of repulsion in sound, smell, sight, mental vishaya. These are however shadows that fall from the external auric shell and are rejected by the Prakriti when not compelled to respond.

═

Tapas-telepathy-trikaldrishti are now successfully combined and strong; but imperfection of trikaldrishti has to be mended before there can be perfection of tapas.

═

Jagrat rupa is once more seeking perfection in the crude.

=

Sudden development of the antardrishta; many scenes, stable, but marred by a constant "flottement" of the images—eg a sea against a rock, landscapes, in one a small cottage in the night, a fight in process, long continued flashes from & against the window from which first a light shone, figures behind watching a man on horseback wading through a wide expanse of water, also long-continued etc.

=

Tapas & trikaldrishti are gaining in general force of fulfilment, but they act mentally not with the light.

—

July 12th

Lipi.

1. Easy delight faith aiswarya result
2 energetic faith
3 tejas.

} for the fulfilment of the harmonised T^3

Perfect T^3 as the result of the above combination; it cannot yet be steadily applied because of defect of energy in the physical prana and of faith in the physical mind.

It is indicated by the Vani that telepathy must become trikaldrishti and trikaldrishti turn into Tapas = Chit-Tapas.

Already the perfect examples of telepathy turned trikaldrishti are being given, long, continuous, many movemented, exact in each detail.

=

Dream is once more attempting to turn itself into swapna samadhi

=

Telepathic trikaldrishti is now acting with almost entire perfection, only slightly marred by tapasic stress. Tapas is increasing in effectuality. All this in the mentality, not in vijnana.

The resistance of thing in statu to the exact movement willed is now often overcome.

=

Lipi.

4. to the entire liberation of the tapas in the physical siddhi
5. to the authority of the lipi.

(Both these are in the future—in preparation)

═

After a long discontinuance of some months secondary utthapana has been resumed. Laghima-mahima are very strong, defect of anima persists.

═

Lipi

6. third chatusthaya perfected
7. finality of the Krishnadarshana.

═

Exact trikaldrishti of time.

July 13th

A day of struggle. The T^3 is attacked and underwent some relapse, but in the perfection gained, not in its continued activity, except for some temporary failure in the activity of the tapas. Telepathy is sometimes clouded by will-thought masquerading as telepathy.

═

Samadhi is obstructed and does not make any advance. It is continually being suspended (ie thrown back to a former imperfection) in swapna and antardrishta

═

Vijnana is almost suspended, except for an occasional action. The mentality is being exercised in non luminous reception & action according to a concealed vijnana behind. The attempt is to make it mechanically right in all its movements.

═

Sharira makes no sensible advance.

═

Ananda Brahman containing Ananta-Jnana = Suddha Ananda containing Chidghana seems to be fixed, but it is still capable of following to the greatest point of depression consistent with non-evanescence.

═

In pain even when intolerable there seems always now to be a basis and content of Ananda; it is only the skin, as it were, of the contact that still preserves the memory of mere pain. This is at least true up to a certain & a high degree of intensity.

=

The pranic nirananda of the vishaya is in course of disappearing; it is already immensely extenuated; eg in tasteless food, disagreeable sounds, bad smells, ugly or vulgar forms, uncomfortable contacts.

=

Nirananda of event is now entirely physical & imposed by force from outside.

Lipi

1. justice for the tapas youth — georgos justice ἐγγυς—
2. youth. tapas. youth ϰλεινος
3. the divine Indian dynasty (Ch. Vsa?)[13]

=

The Dasya is constantly increasing in an all-embracing intensity. Madhura which has often fluctuated since May 26, but has always been behind the veil when not present or insistent in front, will now be always in front. Bhoga of the slave & instrument is also now complete. The presence of the Ishwara has often been veiled by his manomaya personalities & *ganas*, but is now to occupy the directing centre in the Ananda tattwa. The triple Krishna affirmation is therefore perfected.

July 14th 15th

Again an apparently stationary condition.

The Ishwara remains, the forward action seems to be opposed & inhibited.

Literary work is now done more rapidly.

---

[13] *Ch. Vsa = Chandra Vaṁśa. The question mark is Sri Aurobindo's.—Ed.*

July 16th 17th, 18th

The lapse into mentality with a disorganisation of the vijnana in T^3, preparing a farther discarding of the imperfections in the previous organisation, eg—stress of telepathy, stress of tapas, division of trikaldrishti from tapas.

The Samadhi advances dully enlarging itself, but shadowy, not luminous or in possession of itself.

July 19th

Development of swapna samadhi. Pages of lipi; but the power to read coherently is still withheld; coherent parts of sentences are frequent but mixed with parts of other sentences. Rupa, Vishaya & event are oftenest shadowy, but all kinds occur and there is occasional stability & continuity. Thought in Samadhi is fragmentary or suspended.

Telepathy & trikaldrishti of tendencies & "contingent certainties" is greatly extended. Tapas is slowly recovering itself. Positive trikaldrishti is discouraged and tapas no longer sure of itself.

Lipi
1 perfect inability to digest in the pristine fashion
2 perfect telepathy.

July 20th 21st

Slow recovery of the organised vijnana.

Mechanical unillumined trikaldrishti of exact time (3 times in one evening).

[*Here a third of a page left blank.*]

July 31st

July has been throughout a month of Asiddhi; retardation, suspension of activities gained has been its leading characteristic. All that is unripe in the siddhi has manifested itself,—all the error and false leading.

Samata is established except in regard to siddhi of result where continued asiddhi brings an occasional positive depression and vague touches not of asanti but of suffering & shadows of the old revolt against the leading. On the other hand complete samananda of siddhi asiddhi is obviously preparing & has become more normal than asamata.

In shakti faith is depressed, in siddhi of physical yoga, in siddhi of karma, in siddhi of rapidity and in God & self-power. It is doubted whether the leading is directly divine, — whether the leader of the yoga is the Master of all. Mahakali-shakti is depressed in its Mahakali bhava.

The third chatusthaya is entirely clouded; its action is disorganised & only mental, though constant. The satyam has gained, the ritam only occasionally manifests itself except in fragments. Power is slow & uncertain in its effectivity. Samadhi does not advance, but keeps beating against a wall of aggression.

Sharira is in all points obstructed & in most thrown back.

Karma gets no sure foundation; only sahitya progresses. Asiddhi prevails in kriti.

In Brahmadarshana jnana is strong, Ananda Brahman vague & often only implicit. Krishnadarshana is no longer intense; although it is laying its foundations more solidly.

A general physical lassitude & indifference of the will prevails.

August 1st

रदत् पथो वरुणः सूर्याय प्रार्णांसि समुद्रिया नदीनाम्।
सर्गो न सृष्टो अर्वतीर्ऋतायञ्चकार महीरवनीरहभ्यः॥

1 Wideness & purity of the Soul. (Varuna)
2 Has to cut out paths for the Vijnana in the mind.
3 Along those paths must be the flow of the higher existence.
4 The Tapasic impulsions and will-thought have to [be] turned into truth of Vijnana.
5. So all the activities or streams of the existence have to be made vast for the dawns of the Vijnana by the rapid movement of the wideness & purity.

Sukshma gandha recurred after a long time with intensity and frequency.

Vijnana is attempting once more to organise itself, better & more soundly than before. There is especially a perception of the relative truth of the physical, mental & vital satyam & ritam, with the absolute truth of the vijnana behind it.

Ritam increases slowly but steadily in the trikaldrishti & telepathy.

August 2d

Chiefly, a preparation of finality in the Anandamaya Ishwaradarshana.

Formerly the Brahmadarshan was of the impersonal Sarvam Anantam Jnanam Anandam, centred either in the Sarvam or Anantam or Jnanam or at the highest in the Anandam. Now this is a past state that recurs; it is the Personal in & embracing the Impersonal that is now the more normal, but this is most often in the Jnanam. From yesterday it begins to be more fixedly, more recurrently, for a longer time in the Anandam.

At the same time the second chatusthaya with the Mahakali bhava tends to fix itself. There is sraddha in the struggle & power of battle, not yet firm sraddha in the result.

The main point is that the maintenance of Mahakali bhava no longer depends on successful manifestation of power. Formerly with insuccess it fell back to Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati, recently to M.M with quiescent Mahakali. At present it wavers between M^3 with predominant Mahakali & insufficient Mahaluxmi colouring and M^4 with insufficient Mahakali force. In the latter case Maheshwari pratistha tends to be hidden, as is intended, in Mahakali intensity of the prana, but the intensity ceases in the general Tapas. In the latter there is intensity of tapas, but the pratistha appears & emphasises itself so as to support the tapas & prevent a relapse into the rajasic Kali. In the former there is a harmony and the intended harmony, but with insufficient sense of power.

This has now to be remedied.

==

Vijnana & Sharira continue as before; but in Vijnana there is the foreshadowing of victory, Sharira still dwells in the shadow of defeat. In Karma there is nothing decisive.

Aug 3.

एवा वंदस्व वरुणं बृहंतं नमस्या धीरममृतस्य गोपां।
इमां धियं शिक्षमाणस्य देव [क्रतुं दक्षं][14] वरुण सं शिशाधि

==

Yesterday sukshma gandha only in the evening, today active with the taste. Neither free.

==

A movement of the vijnana by which the central vani, script, thought (vangmaya) separate themselves from the indirect and apocryphal and assure themselves more firmly to the faith

==

This movement proceeds along with a[n] increasing firmness in the foundation of the Mahakali bhava and a definite assurance of the finality of the Ananda.

==

It is not yet clearly fixed for the intellect that the Master of the Yoga is the Master of the World, but it is fixed for the faith;

---

[14] *MS* दक्षं क्रतुं

& this is clear that it is the Swarat of the system accepting the conditions he has created for the work of development and not at once manifesting his full power and knowledge. It had already been indicated that this was his method—a progressive unveiling out of the satyam and anritam of the human creature. The same rule would then apply to him as Master of the World, Samrat,—but there the mastery is not yet so wide & absolute, the evolution has not proceeded so far and is therefore not so evident.

Aug 4.

Faith today seems to be completely founded & formed except in the detail and in the rapidity, but faith in the detail is preparing. It remains to be seen whether what has been formed can again be shaken.

═

In the Vijnana a preparation of farther advance towards (1) certainty of trikaldrishti-telepathy, (2) more general effectivity of tapas, (3) firm foundation of samadhi which has again been obscured & depressed. In the kriti there is again some effectivity, no longer merely of detail; in the sharira as yet no advance.

═

Lipi

1. act realise begin (in strong letters, but not sharply distinct)
2. rely on the aishwarya
3 delight. (ie in the action & result).

═

There has been as yet no definite success in the directions indicated, only a general strengthening which does not visibly go beyond the actual results already obtained. The fluctuations of the vijnana still continue.

═

There is a tendency towards renewed activity in the Sharira especially in Ananda which has become sparse and sluggish. It has to be remembered in order to come.

Aug 5—

A great advance towards certainty of the Ritam in the trikaldrishti.

At the same time there has come a rush of the will-thought attempting to establish itself as the effective thought with the knowledge thought contained in it. This is the same movement which formerly followed any considerable advance of the siddhi,—a rush of Mahakali pravritti, with confidence in the immediate fulfilment of the hope, desire etc in the rajasic being and a subsequent recoil of disillusionment, disappointment and loss of faith.

At present, however, the will-thought is much more normally effective than it ever was before; but it is not yet entirely effective and seldom immediately effective. Its enlightenment is imperfect & even when it is right, it is still half obscure of the nature of right-Force but not of Light or luminous right force. It is not *kratum sachetasam*, but only *prajavat*, *suvitam*.

The harmony of the will-thought & knowledge-thought must be the next step, leading to their entire oneness.

═

Some slight advance, but not yet quite firm in the *jagrad antardrishta*. Perfect forms initially stable.

═

Constant movement towards settled perfection for several days in the Brahma and Krishnadarshana.

Aug 6.

Movement towards harmony of the will-thought & knowledge-thought. Greater effectiveness of the will-thought.

═

Increasing frequency of the pure inspired & revelatory vijnana.

═

The whole process of the Yoga is now concentrated towards the perfection of the vijnana (samadhi excepted) and the perfection of the Krishnadarshana. In the former the entire perception by sanyama of the mental state of the object is now frequent, but the entire perception of the thought has to be added: the right (rita) perception of the trikaldrishti in that which is near in place & time is gained and frequent, but the perception of that which is far in time & place is inadequate. There is also the lapse into the intellectual perception visited by vijnana from the general vijnanamaya perception suffered by the intellectual & sensational mind. These defects have to be remedied.

In the Krishnadarshana, the difficulty of the entire perception of all forms as entirely Krishna is still only occasional & the siddhi which has progressed rapidly oscillates back into the lower stages from and through which it has progressed. The Shakti is aiming at the final removal of these defects.

=

The movement of the Samadhi is again suspended.

=

Sharira still continues in the same state of obstruction.

=

Ananda (kama) in sharira tries to move again towards normal continuity, the others towards normal recurrence.

Aug 7—

The Krishnadarshana has surmounted several of its difficulties. Formerly the adult vulgar & hirsute masculine face did not at once throw back the idea of Krishna. Now all faces at once reflect him. There was also a division between the Krishna in human form & the formless & universal Krishna. Either the first was intensely sensed & the latter became merely Brahman or the latter was seen & the human form became a mask of Brahman + guna etc. This is now in type surmounted; but the Siddhi goes back to this stage firmly in order to bridge over the division by proceeding from the universal to the individual and no longer from the individual to the universal. In all probability this movement will be complete today.

=

The tapas is becoming extraordinarily effective both in general movement & in exact movement whether of things in statu or things in motu. But it is only occasionally effective immediately

& without resistance. Therefore for things in motu the perfect movement is delay[ed], others contrary or imperfect intervening, or there is a failure of the occasion. In the latter case either the failure is definitive or the object returns to the same place & executes the movement or some other comes & executes it in its place. For things in motu, the movement is often executed, but in another place & time than was first indicated, after one or more contrary or imperfect movements; sometimes it is done immediately, sometimes in the same place but after delay or return.

Nevertheless the end of resistance is within sight for things near in time & place

=

Vani has assumed the entire *madhura dasya* relation which is beginning to affirm itself definitively; with it comes the full sense of the Lila and the *attahasya.*

The intermediate vani now makes no difference.

This siddhi is extending itself to the script & vangmaya.

At the same time the perceptive thought is becoming more powerful in trikaldrishti.

=

Tivra Ananda is becoming much more intense and tends to unite itself with madhura.

Raudra is becoming frequently spontaneous (without smarana).

The perfect spontaneity of all the sharira Anandas must be assured before there can be fixed recurrence and continuity.

=

The entire Krishnadarshana, individual in universal, universal in individual and both the same, is now accomplished. It has yet to be given such force & consistency as to eliminate all relapse and to be raised to higher intensities.

=

Farther combination of the instruments of the vijnana; especially script begins to work simultaneously with vangmaya which is getting rid of sthula sabda.

=

Renewed activity of samadhi in all parts, but with insufficiently firm hold on the akasha. There is sometimes perfect combination, but no stability and lipi in swapna has not recovered its coherence.

Aug 8th

1. Dieu sorti de l'école
2. fonder l'enseignement morale.

There is again a point of arrest, farther progress attempting to realise itself, a passive obstruction resisting.

In the tapas & knowledge the movement is toward immediate effectiveness of the tapas and automatic accuracy in detail of the knowledge. This is sometimes entirely realised, but immediately afterwards contradicted.

In Krishnadarshana it is the intensity.

In rupa it is the fixity & perfection of the rupa in all its variety.

Finally, the effective control of the body & of all outward result by the Will

═

The activity of Samadhi continued—stability and firm continuity, but not very prolonged. Occasional coherence of lipi in Swapna.

═

On the whole, however, the day has been one of arrest. The Tapas etc fell back slightly and the force of the Mahakali bhava; at the same time there was no forcible retrogression.

═

Kriti continues to be slight & limited, but it works.

═

It is felt that another advance is being prepared.

Aug 9th

The day chiefly occupied with Sahitya.

═

Spontaneous gandhadrishti shows a tendency to regularise itself.

Sukshma vak is also developing in its spontaneity.

=

The more subtle form of the vangmaya is already established; the script unsupported by vangmaya is also developing.

=

There is a suspension of organised vijnanamaya perception; but trikaldrishti of exact time is repeating itself. It is telepathic in its suggestion, rather than vijnanamaya; but it is trikaldrishti, not telepathy.

=

Sukshma vak tends now to develop sentences and is growing rich in implicit voices.

All drishti is attempting to break down the veils that have so long confined it. Sparsha is much stronger than before, but does not get beyond the habitual touches. The barriers still prevail in rupa.

Since writing, however, three or four dense & developed forms have appeared stable straight under the eyes.

=

Rupa in swapna samadhi is growing in habitual intensity, but there is still the influence of the chhaya over all, though all is not now chhayamaya.

=

Aug 10th

तममृक्षंत वाजिनमुपस्थे अदितेरधि विप्रासो अण्व्या धिया.

That is to say, the suspension of the vijnana action is for the purification of the Pranic Force in the vast of the infinite consciousness by the right action of the pure mind.

=

Great stability in profound swapna-samadhi.

Repeated coherence & samadhi character of swapna.

=

During the day no sensible advance. Occasionally it is shown that the siddhi has not really retrograded.

=

The movement is towards a more complete possession by the Ananda & Vijnana & the elevation of vijnana thought and perception to the pure drishti & sruti.

But the obstruction seeks to draw it back to the intellectuality.

This obstruction is being used as a means for the necessary transformation; it allows the habit of the inferior activity of vijnana to be weakened by suspension.

=

There is also an assertion that the decisive effectivity of the tapas is to be evolved.

=

Aug 11th – 12th

Dream & samadhi united at the borderline.

—

There is now definitely a new period of obstruction & of attempt at relapse; hostile attack is evident & not merely the pause of transition. Even the Samata has been slightly touched.

=

In the Krishnadarshan all that has now to be done is to exhaust the force of the habit of relapse which allows the opposition to affect the consciousness attained & throw it back to the simple Brahmadarshan or even the mere Sarvam & Ananta or Jnana or else to the inferior stages of the Krishnadarshana. This reversion seems now to be merely mechanical & to happen only because it has happened in the past and can still be forced on the consciousness in the present.

=

The loss of faith in the Sharira & Karma is still possible & brings with it brief touches of Asamata with all the old symptoms & reversions to the mere Mahasaraswati type. All these are forced upon the system by long and persistent violence & with great difficulty and are not natural to it, much less normal.

=

Yet the suspension of the Vijnana is not real, but only an appearance fastened onto the mind by sheer force. The coverlid is held on by sheer force & whenever contrary force is applied, it is lifted.

Aug 13th 14th

Progress chiefly in samadhi, confirmation of one or two stable dense & developed rupas, coherence of dream etc; but nothing very strongly decided.

=

The adverse current prevails in sharira and kriti and is not yet removed in the rest of the siddhi. The most discouraging fact is the return, however slight & transient, of the circumstances of the Asamata, ashanti, asukham which seemed to have been definitely excluded. Although no lodgment was effected, the attack itself contradicts this elementary & initial finality. The hope of rapidity in the rest of the siddhi has now to be postponed indefinitely.

=

Krishnadarshana is also successfully resisted & kept fluctuating between its inferior degrees & those of the Brahmadarshana.

=

Seven days have been given to almost entire asiddhi & almost the whole of July. None of the instruments of Vijnana can yet be firmly & wholly trusted, since they all seem to give themselves to the intrusion of inferior powers.

=

Physical Ananda is infrequent and the vishayas again rare & sluggish.

=

Aug 15th 16th

विहि होत्रा अवीताः [विपो न रायो][15] अर्यः —

=

The Siddhi is again dominant in the vijnana, but the element of mental error remains, though subordinated, & the element of tapasic ineffectivity.

The higher energies of the vijnana are trying to manifest, होत्रा अवीताः Repeatedly indications that seem to be contradicted or in constant course of contradiction & the corresponding tapas fulfil themselves victoriously; but the fulfilment is not always perfect.

=

---

[15] *MS* रायो न विपो

There is as yet no firm possession of the Vijnana and the realisations acquired sometimes descend and take possession, sometimes stand back & allow the old conditions to play in front of them, sometimes seem to be almost entirely obscured.

=

At present a process is going on with the mind in which that is at the mercy of mental suggestions and all that is true is carried on from above automatically, the mind being only a channel and not participating except very slightly & wrongly.

=

Later on (16th morning) entire return of the siddhi (tapas-telepathy-trikaldrishti-lipi).

=

Ananda sharira is again becoming normally active. The whole poise of the siddhi has been restored and the beginnings of a new organisation manifest.

Aug 26th

The last nine or ten days have been a period of uncertainty and confused labour; the main result has been to confirm the satyam entirely in knowledge thought & will thought on both the two planes of nervous & pure mental mind, but not yet in the intuitive mind; for satyam of intuitive mind = ritam.

Tapas effectiveness varies between all the different degrees from postponed or deflected effectivity to 80°

Telepathy is in the same condition, active, but not well-organised.

Samadhi is obstructed.

=

Krishnadarshana is firm in the Jnanam Brahma, but Anandam Brahma is not yet sufficiently brought forward,—therefore the full intensity is ordinarily absent.

=

Sharira is still denied.

=

Kriti is stronger than before, but very partial.

=

यदुत्तमे मरुतो मध्यमे वा यद्वावमे सुभगासो दिवि ष्ठ
अतो नो रुद्रा उत वा न्वस्याग्ने वित्ताद्धविषो यद्यजाम॥
अग्निश्च यन्मरुतो विश्ववेदसो दिवो वह्ध्वे उत्तरादधि ष्णुभिः
ते मंदसाना धुनयो रिशादसो वामं धत्त यजमानाय सुन्वते॥

This is an indication that the satyam (and ananda) are to be extended to the highest or intuitive mind as well as the two others.

It has begun to be fulfilled to a certain extent.

═

Gandha seems now to be fixed in recurrence, but it is sometimes rare, sometimes more frequent. Rasa also comes, but less firm & intense & often as a result of gandha. The others are frequently suspended & do not attain to any new variety or freedom.

═

Raudrananda has increased, especially in the agneya-sparsha.

═

19 FEBRUARY – 20 MARCH 1916

February 1916

In the interval since August there has been a period of long torpor and inertia followed by a period of more steady advance.

Samata chatusthaya is complete as well as the positive bhukti; only touches of asamata now occur, chiefly in the form of momentary depression though touches of uneasiness also sometimes but rarely occur. For the most part samata, shanti, are untouched, sukham occasionally, hasyam is sometimes clouded, but not seriously or positively.

The viryam is complete, except in touches of a-shaurya; only *nyunata*, not positive defect of contradiction is manifest in the other elements. Tertiary dasyam is complete & firmly established, but not always forceful. Shakti is deficient in the body, in the rest complete, but not forceful, and sometimes touched. Aishwaryabhava and sraddha (swashaktyam) are improved, but not yet firm, except for the sraddha in yoga-siddhi, minus *shârira*. There is no sraddha in adesh-siddhi.

Brahma chatusthaya is now complete, constant in Sarvam, Anantam, Jnanam; established but not always intense in Anandam. The Person is manifest in all, but not always vividly and there is still a divorce between the individual & the All in personality, no longer in the impersonality.

Sharira makes no evident progress, except in the frequency of the Anandas; kama and tivra especially are established, but not always operative.

Jnana is firm, as also telepathy except that of thought; trikaldrishti and tapas-siddhi are drawing towards a first initial perfection; the instruments are developed, but not frequently active;

Samadhi is slowly developing a firm basis in swapna, but has been thrown back in Jagrat.

—

Feb [Saturday Feb 19th]

Bath fixed first after 11, then at 11.20, (the intellect tried to fix 11); actually at 11.19. The exact time was fixed about half an hour before fulfilment, the approximate time about an hour before.

=

The tapas-siddhi has been steadily increasing in general force. The rule of resistance is no longer so absolute. Very often the exact movement is fulfilled again and again without resistance or with a minimum of resistance; but where the object is stationary at first, there is usually resistance. Eg. a squirrel on opposite ledge, suggested to mount on parapet, afterwards perceived that it was not to be at that spot (A), but might be farther on (B); seen that it would go on to the turn of the ledge; went on beyond to the end whence it attempted to descend. Stopped by will which suggested and trikaldrishti affirmed that it should mount the parapet suddenly; was compelled to do so by arrival of crow. This movement was twice willed, foreseen and fulfilled. Afterwards it went near position A, on the ledge, then frightened by a crow on the other side, fled to B exact and mounted in accordance with the original suggestion. This example and many others show that trikaldrishti and tapas, so long enemies, are beginning to unite and coalesce.

=

S's [Saurin's] return seen at either 9.15 or 9.30. The intellect first leaned to the latter, but after willing for the former, the ideality approved 9.15 (by the watch, by the right time 9.24), although the intellect still doubted. S came at 9.16.

=

In the evening two drishtis of a watch pointing to 11.50 and 2.57; the first indicated by the thought as the time at which S. would come upstairs tonight, the second connected with teatime tomorrow. S came at nearly 11.40 by the watch which must have been about 11.50 by the right time

Sunday—

S rose in the afternoon at 2.55 by the watch (right time 3.16) and went to make tea a minute afterwards; this agrees with the watch-dristi 2.57 last night: there is a minute's difference which may be due to wrong observation, since the watch-rupa was diminutive & the exact minute could be only approximately given. It is to be noted, however, that the two drishtis seem to have referred to different time-pieces.

==

Aishwarya increased in force. Formerly the object of the will would execute four or five evolutions & then escape entirely from the will-force. Today after the first escape it only deviated for a moment & that in obedience to a previous suggestion not maintained and subsequently still obeyed others, though not so perfectly as in the first five or six evolutions.

Sunday.
Feb. [20]

It is noticeable that [there][1] are now no longer long gaps of time in which a brief play of tapas and trikaldrishti gives place to confusion of knowledge and entire barrenness of effectivity in the will. The telepathic knowledge is always active and increases marvellously in correctness, although it is still troubled by a certain amount of false stress and false distribution but very much less than formerly; trikaldrishti is constantly active although it does not yet securely lead, but it is becoming frequent and active.

Tapas sometimes fails entirely for a few minutes, afterwards it rights enough. It always produces some effect slight or great, immediate or subsequent, in the object willed or other object not willed, perceptible in act or only just perceptible in tendency: but accurate result is now becoming frequent, though not yet continuously active. All this however, does not entirely apply outside the field of ordinary exercise of the will & knowledge.

Rupa in jagrat is growing, but slowly and with relapses, not into long suspension as formerly, but into inferior activity. The vishayas are yet very rudimentary; gandha is the most advanced.

---

[1] *MS* they

Tuesday 22d February.

Final confirmation of satyam of telepathy, followed by a great confusion of ritam owing to the insurgence of the mental and pranic environing suggestions. The precise place of these was, however, made clearer by the experience.

—

The Krishnadarshana (personal) generalised firmly in all existences, a little defective in animals. This darshana formerly depended on strong perception of the Ananda Brahman coupled with strong perception of the Lilamaya. It is now automatic, even when Ananda Brahman is depressed and sense of Lila not prominent. Only the invariability & intensity have now to be confirmed and the perfect union of Krishnakali bhava and the now complete Brahma chatusthaya will be founded.

—

The right interpretation of lipi and the lekha (sortilege) is now automatic.

═

The swapnasamadhi has now definitely advanced. Formerly the drishya there was evanescent, disappearing as soon as manifest, or else permanent only so long as the waking mind in sleep did not turn its eye upon the thing seen and it was only watched by the dream mind above. Now drishyas are common which remain before the swapna-jagrat eye long firm and constant in the *sthana* though not for very long in the *karma*. Transient drishyas are also more frequently lifelike & not shadowy. Lipi is more frequently coherent.

Thursday 24th

The vijnana overpowered for two days is returning to activity.

Meal fixed by trikaldrishti after 12 and bath with some hesitation at 11.55. (fixed about 11.) Bath at 11.55 (called at 11.54) and dinner at 12.5 to 12.10. Trikaldrishti (apara) continually justified in movements of birds etc.

Development of a powerful self-fulfilling force which is sure beforehand of its result, yet is not trikaldrishti, but still fulfils irresistibly; only it is only in general movements & does not apply victoriously in sthana or exact circumstance, but only in kala. It is not knowledge but sasraddha shakti — not the doubtfully effective rajasic tapastya but true tapatya. This however does not come at will.

Lipi. *perfection of delight.*

Friday.

Two strong telepathies in the evening

1. Bh. [Bharati] will not come, combated by a weaker telepathic suggestion of coming. Bh did not come, as he does daily

2. At 9.18 (by watch) strong suggestion that S [Saurin] would come immediately, combated by suggestion of mind trying to fix 9.30. Assurance that it was before 9.30 and indeed immediate. Mind compromised saying "Now probably, but at least before 9.30". S came at 9.20.

Constant growth of firm-founded general satya in the telepathy, trying to convert itself to ritam.

Saturday.

Satya of telepathy becomes more & more ritam; general satya of trikaldrishti preparing.

Growth of the more intense Vishayananda of the mind in all the objects of sense.

Growth of Krishna Kali bhava in the Brahma darshana

Thursday

March 2

In the evening telepathic trikaldrishti that N [Nolini] will come soon after 8.30, M [Moni] soon after 9.0, S [Saurin] soon after 9.30. N came at 8.35, M at 9.8, S at 9.35. The approximate time after was also correct.

Friday.
March 3

The telepathic trikaldrishti has now an element of certainty in general results distinguishing it from the mere telepathy; the latter also tries to represent itself as trikaldrishti, but is not accepted as before without the certainty.

All the siddhis are going through evolutions of recoil and advance. Firm and strong sama ananda is secure except in the case of strong and massed baffling of siddhi. Hasyam is beginning to take a stronger hold on the system.

Time of bath given correctly as after 12. and then as 12.10. (first mistaken for dinner-time); ready at 12.10, called at 12.11

Sunday
March 5

The Krishna-consciousness is now perfectly normal and universal, though not as yet seated on the plane of the Vijnana or Ananda, but only on the mental. Smarana is still necessary, though not invariably.

The dividing line between the Nara and Narottama is removed. General Satyam of trikaldrishti is adding itself to satyam of telepathy in the immediate time, place and event; ritam is as yet only in its initial stage.

All siddhi, except in the first chatusthaya, is subject to temporary denial in its later acquisitions.

=

Instances of immediate or exact fulfilment of tapas begin to become more normal; eg, a kite near the window pursued by crow; knowledge-will that crow should strike three times rapidly, then fly away; immediately & exactly fulfilled. Crow on bar under balcony opposite; willed to go one side, then return, then fly away from a particular spot; first two fulfilled immediately, the last after hesitating and moving several times to one side and another.

[*Here one page left blank.*]

Tuesday. Mar [7][2]

The satyam of thought, telepathy and trikaldrishti is attempting to arrange itself in the terms of the ritam, but as yet only succeeds occasionally in the type. There is the old struggle between the intellectuality to keep the truth for itself & become intuitive mind of the intelligence and the ideality to replace the intellectuality and establish the pure intuitive mind or the vijnana itself. For the present the intellectuality prevails; but tends to lose its hold of both satyam and ritam in the struggle.

Wednesday. March [8][3]

The Krishnadarshana is again subject to fluctuations. It has descended into the Anantam & the Jnanam; but the Chidghana is now more normally informed & encompassed by the Ananda and perceives the Narottama in the Nara. Sometimes however it is more Anantam than Jnanam and then sees merely the Nara with only an implicit Ananda and the Chidghana prayas.

All is now being turned into Ananda in the mind & body. The old reactions returned for a long time in the morning, but were forced to be anandamaya, as are all discomfortable sensations in the body. Nor can they now disturb the calm of the being, but only suspend the hasyam with a minor contradiction of the sukham making itself an ananda of asukham & ashivam.

Monday. Mar. [13][4]

वाङ्मनःकर्मभिः पत्यौ व्यभिचारो यथा न मे (स्यात्) — तथा विश्वंभरे देवि मामंतर्धातुमर्हसि॥ विश्वंभरा देवी = Aditi, अनंताभेदमयी चिच्छक्तिः तस्या एवांतः प्रतिष्ठां दातुं —

A new brihattwa, deepening, intensifying and unification of

---

[2] *MS 6 From this point until the entry for "Monday. 19th March" the days of the week do not agree with the days of the month in the calendar for 1916. The days of the week appear to be correct, as many of the days of the month were added afterwards in a different ink.—Ed.*

[3] *MS* 7

[4] *MS* 12

Titiksha, Udasinata & Nati with each other and all three with unified rasa, bhoga & ananda.

Intense chidghana is moving up into shuddhananda & the sense of a faery beauty in all things, even the most ugly. The downward movement of pure shuddhananda embracing chidghana and ahaituka is suspended. Sakama premananda and saprema kamananda are being unified, more firmly generalised & normalised.

After several days cessation the trikaldrishti is being again worked over, for a more positive satyam. The first movement is a greater certainty of the final result, but this is still by suggestion to the intellect or in the intellect. The difficulty is still to distinguish always, though it can now generally be done, the ideal suggestion from the intellectual certainty which cannot be securely trusted.

There is also an attempt to fix ritam of detail; this is still done in the old way, by unillumined suggestion to the intellect. Eg re the bath; fixed as after 11.30. Times fixed 11.35, 11.30 for unknown stages, 11.38 for being called to bathe: then 11.30 was fixed for S [Saurin] getting up from under the tap, 11.35 for M's [Moni's] finishing the actual bathing. 11.38 & 11.30 came out exactly to the second, but there was some doubt about 11.35 as the exact time was not noticed. At 11.35¾ M had left the tap and was drying himself.

Usually tapas is eventually successful in the immediate environment—but the tapas is no longer personally used; it comes of itself.

Since yesterday script and vangmaya are constantly in the type of vijnana with *prakasha*, *asu* and *ananda*, and Vani, less securely, in the type of pure ananda containing vijnana.

Reference carries with it a great clearness, appositeness and sure fulfilment.

=

Sometimes there is wrong application or combination of time and circumstance. Eg. 7.8 was given and taken as the time when Bh. [Bharati] would come; but at 7.8., the servant went out, Bh. came at 7.27. Afterwards indeed 7.25 or thereabouts was given, but it was thought by the intellect Bh would not come, although the ideality had given its decision that he would.

10.5 given by rupa of watch; decided to be time at which dinner would be finished, for it was already foretold that S would come early (he came about 9.15); when the watch was seen two or three minutes after finishing dinner, it was exactly 10.5.

═

9.40 and 7.50 given by rupa of watch.

Tuesday [14][5] March

9.40 doubly fulfilled, in the morning as the time when work on Veda (Bengali) was resumed (unforeseen), in the night as time of meal (foreseen), the first exact, the latter probably approximate, the watch not being immediately consulted —

Friday [17][6] March

After a crisis of anrita of intellectuality in which the unreliability of intellectual suggestions was insisted upon, there being no means of detecting whether they are ideal or merely telepathic, the Yogasiddhi is resumed on other lines.

Krishnadarshana fluctuates again for more confirmed normality of what has already been gained.

Rupa is slowly developing, but still without stability of perfect forms; samadhi fluctuates.

Samata is not yet entirely immune, but hasya has become entirely normal. Asamata is now usually anandamaya and only caused by strong nonfulfilment of yogasiddhi.

In the second chatusthaya, the only positive fluctuation is in sraddha and ishwarabhava and in the externalities of dehashakti.

Sunday. [19][7] March

In fixing time of Bh's coming two suggestions came 7.45 and 7.55. At 7.44 the servant went; at 7.55. Bh came.

---

[5] *MS* 13

[6] *MS* 16

[7] *MS* 18

Note—

Only these exact correspondences of time are at present being recorded; the numerous fulfilled telepathies, trikaldrishtis etc which occur each day are not [set][8] down.

Monday. [20th][9] March

Known by telepathy & telepathic trikaldrishti that Bh [Bharati] would not come; still 7.30 suggested—nothing external happened, only the beginning of an internal movement.

8.20 suggested for N's [Nolini's] coming. N came at 8.20 exact (by the watch)

Telepathy that N. would not come to read Greek; justified.

Will for S [Saurin] & M [Moni] to come at 9: they came at 9.3.

---

[8] *MS* sent

[9] *MS* 19th

9 JANUARY – 14 FEBRUARY 1917

Jan 9th 1917.

Re. [Reference]

> य ओहते रक्षसो देववीतावचक्रेभिस्तं मरुतो नि यात।
> यो वः शमीं शशमानस्य निंदात् तुच्छ्यान्कामान् करते सिष्विदानः॥

"The Rakshasas who rush to the attack in the birth of the godheads, – O Thought-gods,[1] him assail in your wheelless cars who confines your work when man seeks his self-expression and with sweat of effort creates little fragmentary desires."

This corresponds to the actual state of the siddhi. *Samata* is conquered; only vague unsubstantial touches of asamata can now trouble the outer physical skin of the *pranakosha*. Shakti on the basis of dasya is well founded, though still imperfect in the application of *sraddha* through uncertainty of knowledge & will and therefore imperfect also in *aishwarya* of *devibhava*. But the third chatusthaya is held back in order to get rid of the last fragments of the ghost of desire which prevent the free identification of the effortless will with the cosmic Will and to get rid also of the defect of the thought which the Rakshasa still tries to limit to the stumbling movements of the intellect.

Telepathy is now strong and spontaneous in its satyam, but the ritam is imperfect because of the persistence of the intellectual overstress, false choice, false valuation, false interpretation. Trikaldrishti is gradually strengthening itself, but is still occasional and uncertain because usually rendered by the physical mind intellectually and not ideally.

Re परिष्कृतस्य रसिन इयमासुतिश्चारुर्मदाय पत्यते

---

[1] *In the manuscript, "Thought-gods" is written above "Maruts", which is not cancelled. — Ed.*

The Ananda purified felt a little afterwards flowing through the sukshma body like a sweet and delightful wine (juice of grapes).

Jan 10

Sensitiveness of pranic body; intense pranic and emotional & sensational telepathy, brihattara; also development of sense-thought telepathy in the mind & some vague pure thought telepathy. Strength of sanyama

Valuative vartamanadrishti becoming more & more ritam. Immediate trikaldrishti strong, but still more tentative than decisive.

Ref.

अग्निस्तुविश्रवस्तमं तुविब्रह्माणमुत्तमं।
अतूर्तं श्रावयत्पतिं पुत्रं ददाति दाशुषे॥

Not immediate future. श्रावयत्पतिं indicates vijnanamaya realisation of the Ishwara.

While rejecting suggestion of fifth chatusthaya, fourth member—

द० प्रियो भूत्वा परमं सुखमश्नुते

Distant future, questioned by mind. In answer

कृणुष्व पाजः प्रसितिं च पृथ्वीं याहि राजेवाऽमवानिभेन। तृष्वीमनु प्रसितिं द्रूणानो अस्तासि विध्य रक्षसस्तपिष्ठैः॥

That is by rapidity of development of the divine Will and its destruction of the opposing powers, the thing may be realised even in this life.

Jan 11th

Both perceptive (ideal) thought & vangmaya as well as coherent lipi are constant in samadhi, seated, even at great depths which formerly brought sleep. Now sleep is put back and only slightly, occasionally and for a moment or two overcomes the swapna-sushupti or supta-swapna. It remains to be seen whether this great advance is firmly consolidated & whether or how far it will extend to samadhi, lying down, daytime. Night is still given to sleep, & until yesterday it prevailed always after a time in the daytime recumbence.

Re योंऽतःसुखोंऽतरारामस्तथांतर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति॥
लभंते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः॥

Doubt is being destroyed by the growth of the ideality, samata and dasya perfected have got rid of egoistic desire and its attendant stains, the Ishwara is governing the being; therefore the time has come to establish the inner joy and light, in itself entirely, the joy of things being merely its outflowing & not at all dependent on things. With this will come the completion of the brahmabhava by the dissolution of the remnants of mentality & the power to begin the karma. Thus *atmarati* & *brahmabhava* are already established, but still besieged by old habits of mind & therefore still imperfect.

Jan 12th

Stability, spontaneity, legibility of the lipi. When legibility is imperfect, spontaneity suffers[,] the mind interfering to catch the unexpressed or decipher the illegible portions. Stability also is then diminished.

There is some revival of intellectual confusion preparing a larger ideality.

Jan 13th

The battle to transform the telepathy into ideal thought and perception continues.

There is a distinct advance towards the universalisation of chidghana-shuddhananda & the sense of universal divine beauty in place of shuddha ahaituka ananda and the sense of natural beauty. If this is established, the अंतःसुखोंऽतरारामः will be complete.

The chidghana is now firmly prominent in the ahaituka in place of the nirvijnana ahaituka, even in human figures & faces where it was or tended to be absent. For some time chidghana has been perfect in things and present in animals.

Jan 16th

After two days of struggle & obscuration in which the Asamata pressed upon and into the consciousness owing to the revival of rajasic struggle, there is a triumph of the Ananda, cosmic, possessing the whole being, though it is still besieged from outside in the physical Prana by the resuscitated Asamata. This is connected with defect of Aiswarya & sraddha in the perfect siddhi.

Brahmadarshana has become again & more firmly Anandabrahmadarshana and is now being refilled with Krishna-Kalidarshana.

At the same time madhura dasya is restored with intensity.

The last remnants of the personal egoistic attitude are being attacked and persistently and rapidly removed to be replaced by the divine & cosmic ego, for whose will, enjoyment, knowledge, power the mind, life & body are to exist & not at all for the separate individual will & enjoyment.

Antahsukha & antararama are therefore well founded, but antarjyotih is only beginning. It cannot be complete except by complete conversion of *manas* into *vijnana*.

Jan 20th

The last few days have seen

(1) Strong confirmation of the first chatusthay in its completeness. There is now little opposition. Only the intensity of the sama ananda has to be increased and an occasional recurrence of vague disappointment prevented from returning.

(2) Increased strength of second chatusthaya especially of *sraddha bhagavati*, *devibhava* and confirmed *dasya*. In the latter madhura has to be increased. Aishwarya has to be encouraged & devibhava to be less Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati with more in it of Mahakali. The Mahalakshmi colour comes with the positive *ananda* & *madhura*, fades with the sinking back towards mere *shanti* and general *samata* & *sukha*. The rest awaits the development of the third chatusthaya.

(3) Great extension of perception of satyam in telepathy, which is preparing to embrace sensational & mental telepathy

and telepathic trikaldrishti. Tapas is increasing towards *brihat* effectiveness, but is not yet ideal (*vijnanamaya*). It awaits the development of pure trikaldrishti unified with pure will.

(4) A struggle in the fourth chatusthaya *arogya*. The opposition still prevails, though more hard put to it to maintain itself.

(5) Considerable extension of lipi.

(6) Increase of KrishnaKali, but not in the perfect form. *Karma* has suffered a return to the deadlock.

The instruments of vijnana are becoming more directly the Ishwara's.

अंतःसुख & अंतराराम being assured, अंतर्ज्योतिः is increasing. Agni is massing strength (कृणुष्व पाजः) in order to create a wide & swift movement (पृथ्वीं प्रसितिं & तृष्वीं प्रसितिं). But the principal action still needed is that of the Maruts रक्षसो नि यात.

Jan 21st

The lipi is still developing though hampered by the mental eagerness of the environment which seeks to anticipate and reproduce its own ideas in the lipi. The lipi is slower when not pressed, but more spontaneous, stable, vividly legible.

Spontaneous, stable, legible jyotirmaya lipi: also tejomaya. Varnamaya comes but with less ease. Dhumramaya and agnimaya are least spontaneous.

Script in the morning
"Today third chatusthaya"
"Lipi, script, thought, vani"
"Samadhi
Tapas-siddhi"

In the first part, the programme commenced its own fulfilment at once. A great flood of ideality in all these members is pushing out the siege of the intellect. At every point the ideality shows its superior truth in giving the light, the right relation to fact of any part, fraction, aspect of the thought, which the intellect has bungled.

The inspiration is fixing itself into all the instruments of the vijnana, even the perceptive thought.

Interpretation of the rupas (sadhara) has begun

Script. “Believe luminously”—that is by the ideality, in spite of the apparent resistance and nonfulfilment. This is now coming into force and the belief justifies itself by the eventual fulfilment; the light is also seeking to embrace more perfectly the details of the resistance and the fulfilment.

In consequence tapassiddhi is becoming larger in its movement and more frequently & powerfully effective, often immediate or nearly immediate, sometimes exact in circumstance.

In the afternoon samadhi made a general forward movement towards

(1) activity of ideal thought, perceptive as well as vangmaya. Hitherto vangmaya alone was partly ideal

(2) coherent & consecutive lipi, thought, narrative

(3) continuous drishya combined with sravana and sparsha.

(4) removal of mere *shama* in samadhi, replacement by shama + tapas + prakasha.

The motion is large, but not as yet entirely victorious. Especially is there resistance in the drishya etc.

On the whole the movement is that of the कृणुष्व पाजः, the पृथ्वी तृष्वी प्रसिति of Agni, the अंतर्ज्योतिः added to अंतःसुख & अंतराराम.

Intimation in the lipi several times repeated that this movement of the ideality will come to a head on Tuesday

Jan 22d Monday

For the first time today the Ishwara is the sakshi, and not the Jiva. At the same time the Ishwara jnata, bharta, anumanta, karta is being rapidly strengthened,[2]—(the karta from this moment after being added[)]. There is still a downward tendency of the mental powers trying to insist on the jiva in these capacities, but it is losing force.

Ideality of style & substance is constantly increasing in the vijnana instruments, especially the perceptive thought, in spite of the tamasic resistance of the old mentality in its general sanskara.

---

[2] *The word “karta” was added between the lines, apparently when this point of the sentence had been reached. Sri Aurobindo explained the insertion in the next phrase.—Ed.*

Script
Ideality in (telepathy), trikaldrishti, tapas
Samadhi. ^

(1) is being already fulfilled; first as indicated in the trikaldrishti-tapas; that is to say will & knowledge are combining, preparatory to unification; afterwards in all three[3]

Lipi. "future telepathy turns to trikaldrishti" This is being gradually fulfilled.

The tendency of the mind to carry on one thing at a time, insisting tamasically on the impossibility of doing all at a time in the siddhi of the ideality, is being constantly contradicted and corrected.

Ideal intellectuality is receding out of the system under pressure of intellectual ideality and that is constantly turning itself into ideal ideality, predominantly of the srauta kind (inspiration).

It is found more & more that every impulse, suggestion etc in the sadhan has its utility for its own purpose, but for that utility to be perceived and appreciated, the truth and limits and relation of each has to be ideally perceived. This is now being done more & more.

All this action is principally in the "school", not yet applied to life at large.

=

Antarjyoti may now be considered as established. Brahmabhava is growing, but has to be made more vivid & steady.

The पाजः, पृथ्वी प्रसिति & तृष्वी प्रसिति are founded. What is left is the destruction of the limiting Rakshasas and the royal march of Agni. यो . . तुच्छ्यान्कामान् करते सिष्विदानः, that Rakshasa is being destroyed rapidly. The निदः – यो शमीं शशमानस्य निंदात् has lost much of his field, but still holds the body & the karma and is not quite driven out of the ideality.

=

---

[3] *Apparently the script first came: "Ideality in trikaldrishti, tapas", the word "telepathy" being added later. The parentheses around and the caret below "telepathy" in Sri Aurobindo's transcription of the script appear to be his way of representing this sequence. — Ed.*

In Samadhi the activity of ideal thought perceptive and vangmaya is becoming quite normal, continuous, coherent in all the lighter layers & even in the middle depth. It is penetrating into deep samadhi. The real struggle continues to be in the jagrat

Ideal activity has now become normal in all depths of the mental samadhi. There is as yet no jagrat in vijnana-samadhi.

Rupa-drishya manifests coherently only in brief scenes of a few seconds' occurrence; the deeper the samadhi, the richer the power of vision, although this [ ][4] is not invariably the rule. Lipi and reading ditto. They are coherent, easily, only in swapna & sushupta, but in sentences only. It is at night that they begin to be long and yet coherent.

In jagrat antardarshi a little impression has been made, but it is nothing firm or definite. . It is here, in jagrat, that siddhi has been most deceptive in the past. The results have always been stolen by the Rakshasas.

=

Script

More progress. First in jagrat samadhi. Next in ideality of t^3. Thirdly, in physical siddhi. Some progress in vishaya. Today.

In jagrat rupas of all kinds begin to reappear with a greater general tendency to siddhi.

T^3 increases in ideality, broadly; nothing definitely new.

In physical siddhi the tivra & vishaya are taken up again and carried forward with greater generality & spontaneous intensity.

Jan 23d Tuesday.

Script—

The t^3 has to formulate itself in the ideality

Jagrat develops farther.

Vishaya improves

Sraddha swashaktyam, aishwaryabhava and devibhava have to found themselves firmly.

—

---

[4] *MS* this

T^3 is faulty in detail. To mend that fault must be the next movement of the third chatusthaya.

—

Brahmabhava is now vivid & steady. To Brahmabhava has been added & united = Brahmatmabhava. To this there is attempting to unite itself Ishwarabhava, but here there is a difficulty. . "Each body is the body of God" lipi realises itself with vividness, but not steadily. Each mentality the mind of God in spite of *anishabhava* less vividly, less steadily. The sense of the Spirit = Deva presiding over mind and body comes only occasionally.

Ananda Brahma has been for many days in suspension in favour of Manas Brahman. It is now returning sometimes with, sometimes without vijnanananda.

—

Sraddha swashaktyam (subject by dasya to sraddha bhagavati) is founded,—so too Devi bhava of the Dasi-Ishwari (Mahakali-Mahasaraswati) and as a result a qualified daiva aishwaryabhava

—

T^3 is formulating itself; but there is confusion owing to misplacement of detail by intellectual tapas. This is removed in general thought, where ideal tapas has almost replaced intellectual, but not in the application of t^3 to objects even in the "school-field".

—

Rupa in jagrat is now often clear and complete in crude, ghana crude & occasionally in perfect developed crude. It includes all the four main forms—animal, man, object, scene or group. But it is perfect & stable only in the bird form which has been chosen for the type owing to the preoccupation with the flight & movement of birds in the vicinity during the exercise of t^3.

—

Vishaya last night began to remanifest, but without any distinct improvement except in sravana. There was, however, the perfect & vivid sense, sukshma-sthula, of the sparsha of object with object, eg the moth knocking itself or moving on the window-pane or resting on the wall.

=

The पृथु पाजः is now accomplished, but it is not as yet sufficiently full of driving force to follow an entirely तृष्वी प्रसिति. Still the rapidity in the third chatusthaya is great; it has to be perfect.

=

Touch is developing itself more strongly in the sukshmabodha, and the result-sensation is often felt in the sthula; but the contact-sensation is only occasionally & very imperfectly sthula, except in the two or three familiar touches, especially that of water.

Taste is recovering its force, but has yet no [ ][5] stability except in the vaguer touches. Gandha is redeveloping.

—

See towards end of book[6]

Jan 23d 1917. Tuesday. (continued)

The Devibhava has now been fully defined—

क. शौर्यमुग्रता युद्धलिप्साट्टहास्यं
ई शांतिः विशालता ऐक्यलिप्सा आत्मप्रसादः
ल प्रेम भावसमृद्धिः सौंदर्यलिप्सा स्नेहहास्यं
स. दास्यं बुद्धिचातुर्यं कर्मलिप्सा प्रीतिः

Common to the four दया ईश्वरभावः सर्वकर्मसामर्थ्यं

The last three bhavas, ई ल स [i.e., Maheshwari, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati], are now complete; the first is there except अट्टहास्यं, but not steady nor well combined with the rest.

The afternoon has passed in a massive resistance to the recent siddhi, which has developed Ananda in battle, resistance & temporary defeat. The Devibhava has triumphed over the resistance.

Sukshmabodha of sparsha continues to develop.

=

The mental-pranic tejas (rajasic) has been absorbed into tapas; the intellectual tapas is being now excluded & its action transformed into ideal tapas. This can only be completed by identification of the three members of t^3.

---

[5] *MS* no

[6] *In the manuscript, thirty pages of previously written notes on the Veda intervene between the first and second parts of the entry of 23 January.—Ed.*

═

Varna in the lipi,—blue, green and red as well as the usual black, blue black & occasional brown & yellow. Varna, chhaya, tejas, jyoti, agni, are now all manifest with perfection in crude rupa of the three kinds. Developed crude is becoming common, though not so common as dense crude.

Jan 24th

Sahaituka Tivra now increases instead of diminishing by repeated sparsha. The old rule of decrease is not entirely abolished, but the new of increase has been established.

The body still tends to sink back from ahaituka tivra etc and only to feel it, except rarely, when remembered and willed. But each time it revives activity, it revives with greater intensity, though not with greater continuity.

In Arogya, the habit of disease is still violently strong. New disease does not come, but the old maladies persist by irrational, causeless habit & do not lose hold. Cold formerly could not materialise; this time it materialised for two days, but though really cured in two or three, the inert habit of certain of its reactions has continued, decreasingly, for 7. The two chief maladies on the other hand persist not decreasingly, but always with recurrence of force. Breast pain on the other hand is subject to the will, though not utterly abolished.

The physical siddhi is still the chief stronghold of intense and massed resistance by the opposing forces.

═

After an obscuration, lasting all yesterday afternoon & evening & partly this early morning—intended to get rid of intellectual tapas by isolating it, showing its futility when unenlightened & unsupported by the vijnana—t^3 is reviving, still largely telepathic, but more easily converted to ideal terms.

═

Chitra is now being perfected in richness & variety; some are marvellous in the perfection of every detail.

Rupa (crude) is increasing in variety & frequency and manifesting sadhara, but is usually imperfect in stability, vividness or finish. Prakasha and chhaya, a little vague, are commonest.

Jan 25th

Some advance in samadhi.

The movement of ideal thought entered well into the deepest manasik sushupti, but it is not yet at home and in possession there, as it is in swapna and antardarshi jagrat. Still a kind of jagrat in sushupti is becoming more common, though not yet well-sustained.

Coherent dream, which has almost ceased to have its dream element and rather reproduces some truth not yet grasped in its circumstances, is becoming common in daytime. At night it is less common.

Lipi fluctuates in the manasik sushupti.

Long continued stable rupa drishya and long coherent action in it, is increasing in frequency and firmness. But it is usually a little vague in its outlines & always shadowy in its substance. The vivid & the tejomaya are less stable.

Antardarshi tends to advance in rupadrishya but very slowly.

Jan 26th

Lipi fluent with a perfect legibility, but not vivid, and a spontaneity often anticipated by the thought. It is vivid only in brevity.

Vaidyuta is now common and even normal in association with tivra. Raudra is increasing in frequency & force and is also associated though less firmly with tivra & vaidyuta; it is also entering into tivra.[7]

The opposition to the Ananda-vijnana-darshana of living faces & figures (mostly faces) is breaking down; ananda is even intense; but the vijnana is still oppressed by manomaya.

---

[7] *Sri Aurobindo may have intended to write "vishaya" instead of one of the two apparently redundant occurrences of "tivra" in this sentence.—Ed.*

T^3 is recovering its force and increasing in light, knowledge and effectuality, but is still far from perfect in arrangement of detail and in certainty of result. Telepathy is still too predominant and intellectual tapasbuddhi still distorts the decisive perception

Script.
T^3 developed into trikaldrishti-tapassiddhi
Vishaya
Samadhi
Physical siddhi. Anandas
Fifth chatusthaya. Krishnakali
═

T^3 has begun to develop into T^2 [trikaldrishti-tapassiddhi], very crudely.
Vishaya has increased in sparsha (brihat sukshmabodha and strong sthula resultant feeling)
Samadhi in stability of clear rupa-drishya in motion. The slow advance of antardarshi continues.
Krishnakali has reestablished its force, increased with an entire hold of Ananda-vijnana.
The Anandas continue to grow slowly.

Jan 27th
Script
$T^3 = T^2$
Samadhi especially jagrat and rupadrishya
KK [KrishnaKali] — madhura dasya.
Physical siddhi — Anandas.
═

T^3 is progressively becoming T^2, but trikaldrishti is stronger than tapassiddhi, although the latter increases steadily in largeness and force, the will becoming more and more impersonal.

Madhura dasya of the KrishnaKali relation is well-established. It is now repelling all return of the nirananda relation as of that of the mere dasya.

Vishaya is crudely active in three, afflicted in two vishayas; but in the latter when it acts, it is sufficiently sthula.

The working of turning all pain and discomfort into raudra ananda is proceeding. Much sharper and stronger touches than before have become anandamaya.

=

Rupadrishya in jagrat at night developed all kinds of clear, perfect & stable forms; some of these were dense or developed or turned from crude to dense and developed.

Samadhi continues to gain in force, variety, stability, continuity of rupadrishya; but is not yet perfectly secure in these qualities. The penetration of manasik sushupti by the ideal thought & perception continues; it is only in the deepest sushupta that nidra or its swapna easily arrives.

Ananda Brahman with vijnanananda in the shuddha continues to grow in hold & force; in the mental darshana vijnana elements tend to become more pronounced.

Physical ananda slowly develops.

Jan 28th Sunday.

There is considerable assault of the intellectuality. Still tapas grows in effectuality and the element of certainty in trikaldrishti remains constant, though it cannot yet grow firmly.

Activity of vishaya & rupadrishya.

Jan 29th

Progress considerable in samadhi, richness of drishya—occasional perfect stability attained in rupa (swapna-samadhi) and frequency of relative stability—frequency and greater firmness of continuous drishya: perfect combination of rupa, shabda, sparsha—the speech as well as sound proceeding from rupa and not merely associated with it. Persistence of continuous event with vague or shadowy rupa,—eg. cutting meat etc. This is even in antardarshi. Substantial progress in antardarshi; fixity of progress made in crude rupa in bahirdarshi.

Physical raudrananda (sahaituka) now normal and general, all touches of discomfort & pain bring their ananda, except in sudden

& strong bahyasparsha of pain; even there the after effects tend to be anandamaya.

Tapas-siddhi against roga is getting stronger, though still not decisive.

Krishna growing stronger in personal Krishna Kali. Kali now normal, old bhava of personality almost entirely destroyed. All the instruments of vijnana are becoming the Ishwara's entirely. Madhuradasya increases.

T^2 still hampered & obscured, but developing.

Samananda hardly at all interfered with; when amangalabodha comes, it is anandamaya; the place of the amangala as a step of the mangalya is usually understood at once.

In second chatusthaya, aishwarya, Mahakali bhava, sraddha swashaktyam, daihik shakti still imperfect, — the rest satisfactory. Daya very strong. Mahalakshmi colour, once quite absent or almost quite, is now very deep. Dasyam is almost absolute, except in certain remnant movements of the intellectual suggestions.

Karma is now stationary, with slight advantage to the hostile forces.

Premananda is beginning to be general & strong, though more ahaituka than sahaituka. It manifests and relapses, then manifests again, but is on the point of becoming normal.

Jan 30 —

Third chatusthaya is now complete, though imperfect. It is most advanced in jnana where it is almost perfect in its more luminous movements.

Script

Today a great movement forwards intended in T^2, samadhi and for breaking of the obstacle in vishaya and rupadrishya.

═

Certainty in T^2 is now becoming rapidly general & normal; but it is only in the main event, not in the details surrounding it which are supplied by telepathic trikaldrishti which [is][8] uncertain but usually correct, though with certain lowerings & fluctuations, misses and overstresses. The certainty also arises out of telepathic perception & is in its own nature telepathic, that is the certainty that the tapas in Nature will effect the thing seen as the event. There is not yet, except exceptionally, action of pure trikaldrishti or united or identical action of the ideal knowledge & will. With the increase of certainty, the tapasbuddhi is becoming regulated, the tapassiddhi more effective and the sraddha in effectuality increases according to the frequent directions or predictions in the lipi "telepathy, trikaldrishti and tapassiddhi" and "enthusiastic faith in the light, knowledge and effectuality."

---

[8] *MS* in

=

The degree of pain intensity from bahyaspars at which ananda is possible has been sensibly raised, so much that it promises even complete siddhi of every touch short of those which break, cut, rack or crush the body

=

All the fundamental tastes are established, the bitter, sour, astringent in strength, spontaneity & solidity, frequency & persistence, the sweet rare & less strong except in one touch, the rest intense, but less solid & spontaneous, fairly frequent but not persistent.

Tratak brought the old forms in the pranic air[,] dark & brilliant living spots, shadows of real winged things, & insects & butterflies seen in the body, the first vividly, the second shadowily, but both without detail

—

In Samadhi a movement towards generalisation of the ideality in the depths of mental sushupti—ideal perception, vangmaya, lipi, etc. The jagrat chaitanya has to take possession & sushupti to be shifted upwards out of the mentality.

=

Activity in vishayas, but not yet breaking of the obstacles.

=

Some initial successes, not decisive, in bringing stable developed & dense into jagrat bahirdarshi.

=

All this activity is being indicated in spite of a massed assault & obstruction which tries to destroy results obtained and prevent fresh results.

══

Jan 31.

The same programme

T^2 advances; its chief difficulty is to get rid of the intellectual tapasbuddhi. Mental tejas seems to be definitely taken up into the tapas.

Premananda continues to develop itself. It is including in itself by intensity and the spiritual embrace of the physical the shuddha kamananda

Feb 1.

A higher ideality is now manifesting in the jnanam and takes up a large part of the thought

T^2 is developing, but still greatly hampered by overstress of telepathy and tejomaya intellectual tapasbuddhi

A great advance in Samadhi. . The last two days there was the attempt to normalise the ideal consciousness in manasic sushupti of the deepest kind, but this was only successful in fragments. Today coherent, continuous and even, in the lighter stages, unceasing ideal thought vangmaya and perceptive, continuous statement and speech, continuous action with almost perfectly stable rupa were brought firmly in and for the most [part] normalised in the deepest sushupti except perhaps in one layer of strong nidra. Dream is becoming entirely coherent vision and dream vision is acquiring the force of real vision. Lipi written before the eyes is coherent even in sushupti; lipi already written is still incoherent. All this is in daytime and is only trying to begin in the night

Lipi (antardarshi) is beginning to manifest in long, almost interminable lines and in three lines at a time, but is still in these circumstances almost illegible from faintness.

The ideality is now more revelatory than inspirational.

The spontaneity of lipi is being made absolute and anticipation by the mind discouraged, other words being substituted for those fixed by the mind when it escapes from control and anticipates.

Feb. 2

Brief incursion of asukham and ashanti after ineffectual touches during the last two days—announced by lipi—"grief" day before yesterday. A certain violence in it, but no power of stability—rejected by centre of being in the mind & prana & by its bulk: chief effect in surface of prana, touch in heart & mind momentarily forceful, but ineffectual. . Return of T^3 during last two days ending in confusion of T^2

=

In the afternoon again a stronger outbreak of asukham & ashanti with all the old circumstances of revolt against the method of the sadhana and the self-assertion of the Jiva, his refusal of anumati.

=

No progress in samadhi except a stronger tendency to read the written lipi coherently.

Rupa moves in the old rut of crude, usually crude crude, with occasional unstable perfect or half stable imperfect rupas.

=

In the evening a firm foundation of the higher ideality in script, vangmaya and less completely in the perceptive thought, where it is still ill disengaged from the mentality. But the revelation, revelatory inspiration, revelatory intuition, revelatory judgment were all displayed.

Feb 3.

There is a confirmation of the last night's work and the habit of refusal of all that is not reduced to the terms of the higher ideality. This siddhi is extended to the lipi and is being prepared in the tapas.

The Mahakali bhava has taken possession and is being combined with the Mahalaxmi colour.

Ananda is beginning to take possession of the prana and body. It has long been in possession of the chitta and mentality.

The higher perceptive ideality is not yet confirmed owing to deficiency of T^2.

R[eference]
इत्था सोम इन्मदे ब्रह्मा चकार वर्धनं।
शविष्ठ वज्रिन्नोजसा पृथिव्या [निः शशा अहिं][9] अर्चन्ननु स्वराज्यं।

This indicates the possession of the knowledge by the Ananda and the summing up of the work of the Maruts in the revelation of the Indra godhead, divine Mind of vijnana destroying the obstacles summed up in the one Vritra-force

The पाजः of Agni is attempting to become universal and ideal.

=

No definite advance in Samadhi, but wakefulness of the Purusha in mental samadhi is more विभु and has more पाजः and dream was also more attacked by the inner wakefulness, यो सुप्तेषु जागर्ति –

=

Mental, moral, pranic certainties are being reduced to their proper position, deprived of their certainty and shown to be merely probabilities & expectant forces, so that the ground may be clear for the generalisation of ideal certainty. Tapas-siddhi is now at the 50° and there fairly sure of itself and general.

=

The whole mental consciousness is now beginning to be pervaded by a sense of substantial light (jyotih) and the body with a sense of the flowing of a wine, an ecstatic subtle liquor of delight, Soma. The sense of will as a fire, Agni, is sometimes present.

—

There is a strong movement in jagrat rupadrishya towards the development of the dense & developed on the former large scale, but with greater firmness and permanence. As yet however there are only scattered signs, the few developed and perfect or dense & perfect rupas that come being momentary or only having a second's stability in the pranic akasha.

=

---

[9] *MS* अहिं निः शशा

Great progress, sudden in its definition, though long prepared in tivra ananda. First intensity has much more than doubled its normal force and tends to be decupled. Secondly, the law of the deadening or diminution of tivra by repetition of touch whether slow or rapid, is giving way & may be said to have given way to the law of increase by repetition. The old rule struggles to survive but is suppressed. The tivra maintains itself, if oppressed recovers, usually increases. The law of increase is not yet very strong, but it is born as a law & not, as before, only as an occasional phenomenon and then an often oppressed tendency.

=

Higher ideality has made its way into the perceptive thought in the midst of a general luminous play of inspirational intellectualised ideality (श्रवांसि — मनीषाः). It is now seeking to confirm & generalise itself. Indra is destroying Vritra on the earth, — in the physicality of the mind.

It is attempting to extend itself to all trikaldrishti.

Telepathic trikaldrishti of time

1. The three young men will come before nine; or at least two. vague in detail.

N [Nolini] & M [Moni] came at 8.45

2. N will come before 9.

Uncertain when he came, either just before 9 or just after; within 9.5 at latest.

3. Someone will come at 9.10.

Sn. [Saurin] came at 9.10

4 9.20 named as time of meal — changed to 9.10 by my watch, which is ten minutes slow.

Meal at 9.20 (9.10) or a minute or two earlier — usually at 9.30 or after, rarely so early as 9.20

5. 9.25 (by my watch = 9.35) named — first associated with S's coming, afterwards with finishing of meal. Meal finished at 9.25 exact

Feb. 4.

Script.

Today the higher reality will grow and be confirmed in its possession. The rupadrishya will make a great stride forward by the night. Lipi will advance. T^2 will begin to confirm itself. Kamananda will increase steadily in force from today. The battle for the health will continue. More force will come to the saundarya.

═

In the afternoon a strong attack of the old mentality, accepted yet rejected by the Purusha, which helped finally to put the intellectual movements in their right place.

═

The higher ideality is now at the back of the perceptive thought and will as of all other instruments. Wherever it gives the sanction as a sort of Will-Knowledge, though with more force in it than light because of a certain veil between it in its source and its manifestation in the mind, the thought or will infallibly fulfils itself. The rest has to be regulated and put in its place; for now the truth behind each thought & will is perceived, but not at once in its right relation to the rest and result.

For a while trikaldrishti was almost absolutely perfect, but without certainty.

═

Thespesia.

1. Lipi. feast.

At first misunderstood, afterwards understood rightly, but not with certainty—In the afternoon, long after, the Mahomedan came to arrange for pullao in the evening.

2 Yesterday, prevision of karana this evening. No intention in any mind, yet fulfilled by afternoon event.

3 Today, prevision of the same tomorrow. Contrary to all custom and intention arranged for by event and impulse in every mind but one, although resisted in act by myself. These incidents are decisive of a trikaldrishti which is no longer telepathic or uncertain.

═

Rupadrishya developed force of full dense & developed, but only in the type figure of the bird. In the rest a general tendency to display of the unstable or else imperfect dense & developed. Samadhi is only labouring to confirm and generalise its past gains.

==

Lipi is taking possession of the material trikaldrishti.

==

Kamananda is continually growing in force, but not yet free from dependence on hetu.

==

The will to saundarya is increasing, but as yet without any definite visible result. The habitual rogas still assert their force of persistence and recurrence though not with the old sovereign force.

==

On the whole T^2 is at last firmly founded.

==

R. [Reference]
यद्वाहिष्ठं तदग्नये बृहदर्च विभावसो—

That is to say, the general light in the mentality has to be turned into a large illumination of ideal knowledge which will be a firm support for the ideal will.

==

Prediction. Things—objectivity.

That is, the subjective-objective being now on the road to siddhi, the battle will be more henceforth for the control of things and objects, the bodily, prithivi.

Feb 5.

Script.

"The ideality must be confirmed against such attacks as yesterday's which must rapidly be made impossible

"There must be definite and steady progress in the Shuddha-Ananda-sarva-sundara-darshana on the Ananda-vijnana basis."

==

In the morning sudden efflorescence of a perfect shuddha anandamaya-vijnanamaya vision of universal beauty. Every detail is seen in its perfect, divine sense and faery loveliness and in its place in the whole and the divine symmetry of the whole based on its "brihat" Idea, even in what appears to the mind [un]symmetrical. This was realised in things yesterday, today in faces, figures, actions, etc. It is not yet stable, but strong and returns in spite of the force that depresses the vision and attempts to return to the diffuse mental view of things. In the mental view the general shuddha ananda is ahaituka, even when it is full of feature; in this it is self-existent, yet contains all hetu, guna, rasa = Ananda with vijnana in its embrace.

═

Script

T^2
Ideality in all the instruments
Samadhi
Rupadrishya
Ananda

—

Ideality enlarged its hold on the perceptive thought & intensified its action in the other instruments.

T^2 also developed

═

Trikaldrishti of time

1. 8.5 for first arrival. Incorrect by the watch.
   L arrived at 8.10.
2. Arrival at 8.25
   N & M arrived at 8.25
3. 8.55. Mistaken for time of arrival of Ns.

As it happened, we sat down exactly at 8.55.
General forecast of lateness today justified.

—

Samadhi strengthened itself considerably in continuity, stability, force of manifestation. Rich tejomay scenes appeared. Lipi became firmer. Written lipi & dream reading improved.

═

In jagrat rupadrishya is getting rid gradually of the method of fluid and fluctuating creation of images out of a confused blur of material. In antardarshi trailokyadrishti is attempting to emerge.

═

In Ananda raudra alone made some definite advance.

Feb. 6

Ideality is more and more overcoming the intellectuality which has lost all selfconfidence and only persists when it thinks itself the ideality or inspired by the ideality. This confirms recent lipi—"servant of ideality"

Samadhi confirmed its movement. It is trying to become complete. In jagrat there is still the obstacle and the same movement.

═

Jagrat bahirdarshi is slowly developing force and precision

Trikaldrishti still uncertain among the telepathies, sometimes almost entirely, rarely entirely accurate in all details, usually right in many points, overstressed & therefore wrong in others.—eg

1. Crow running along ledge—telepathic suggestion of its flying up to the parapet, though it ran the contrary way & then returned with constant impulse to fly downwards into the road.

2 Perception that it would not fly downward—fulfilled in spite of repeated impulsions & repeated uncertainty. It flew onto parapet fulfilling (1).

3. Perception that it would fly away in frontal direction. Fulfilled after much uncertainty & hesitation of telepathic perception and with a first movement sideward, justifying the uncertainty

═

Samadhi develops coherency [of] dream reading and dream-event.

═

Attempt to develop primary utthapana. Concentration on physical siddhi—not yet effective.

Feb 7. Wednesday.

Ideality taking up all telepathies; but this brought confusion of telepathic stress,—tejas & tapas—into trikaldrishti tapassiddhi. Though rejected, they insisted.

═

Samadhi is beginning to move towards fullness[,] firmness & sureness

═

Yesterday's time tri.

1. N will come early, take dinner and go out. N came about 8.20 and went just after 9.35 — the latter time seen, but not quite accurately placed; it was considered that he would finish his meal then; he finished at 9.33, went up at 9.35.

2. Ns would come second — he came at about 9 — (a little before) — time wrongly placed by a few minutes.

3. S at 9.5 — he came at 9.3

4. 9.25 & 9.30 named for S's coming and finishing dinner. Both happened at 9.30.

Hour begins to be seen by rupa of watch-hands, eg 11.45 for going to bed.

=

Wednesday's

Much less accurate; nevertheless generally correct.

=

Samadhi developed perfect coherence of dream. What has now to be got rid of is the presence of present personalities & namarupa in dream vision of past & future events.

Absolute stability of chhayamaya rupa. Tejomaya perfect but unstable. Trailokyadrishti begins to develop.

Feb 8.

Continuance of telepathic insistence in the morning. Confidence of intellectuality as representative of ideality destroyed; desire to pose as ideality practically destroyed except as a mechanical past habit. In the afternoon ideality resumed its expansion, completing more largely what it had begun before the interruption [—] the taking up of telepathy & putting it in its right place for T^2.

=

In jagrat bahirdarshi stable developed & dense are beginning to manifest spontaneously in type rupa; perfect rupa (life) manifested, also in the type rupa, with the power but not the fact of stability.

=

Coherent lipi is founding itself in the samadhi, both ready written and consecutive. Reading remains.

Tejomaya is beginning to develop.

Perceptive ideal thought is taking firm hold of mental sushupti.

Results perceived before commencing samadhi.

=

In vishaya and antardarshi the obstruction remains quite unbroken.

=

The highest ideality is manifesting through the veil.

=

The normal intensity of tivra is greatly increasing. Two new movements are beginning to define themselves, (1) a prolongation of tivra after cessation of touch, by repeated recurrence, not yet by continuity; (2) simultaneous tivra and raudra. Also there is a visible preparation of general tivra-sthiti.

=

Time.

No accuracy.

(1) General perception that all but one would come early; between 8.30 & 9. Three & L came at 8.35.

(2) Perception of early meal—9.5 or 9.10. Meal at 9.5

—

Samadhi

Dream coherence; lipi; attempt at coherent dream reading

—

Feb 9

Attack of old intellectuality and asamata throughout the day. Confused progress.

=

Ananda intensifies in vaidyuta, kama, raudra. Intensity is becoming normal. Kama much resisted.

=

Energetic tapas for removal of chronic ailments. It seems to be dominating in one direction; in the others doubtful. No progress as to chakra-shakti.

=

Samadhi again overpowered by nidra, still attempts to generalise chaitanya of the vijnanamaya in the mental sushupti and arrive at brihat. Jagrat relapses.

=

The secret or one secret of incoherent lipi etc in swapna is now found to be false combination. The thought is now able sometimes to correct the combination; by correction perfect coherence emerges.

=

There is still a fluctuation between the deadening of ananda by constant sparsha and the increasing by constant or repeated sparsha; the former intervenes, the latter begins, recurs and tends eventually to prevail. It is stronger in the tivra than in the other anandas.

=

Time.

=

(1) At 9—some will come between 9. & 9.15 by watch
M came before 9.10.

(2) At 9.10. N will come separately from S. and next
N came at 9.13

(3) At 9.13. Ns. will come at 9.25. dinner 9.30 perhaps 9.35 (without regard to watch)
Ns came at 9.26 by clock below; dinner at 9.36.

(4) After 9.30—S will come close on 10. S. came at 9.55 or thereabouts.
Clock vision. 10.19, direction, not prediction. . fulfilled.

=

Samadhi resisted—confirmed some of its gains, but with less force. However, combination of sparsha and drishti perfectly & repeatedly emphasised; also dream-reading and continuity of drishya in action.

Feb 10

Result of yesterday's attack—telepathy & mental tapas deprived of all force of certainty. Telepathy correct when seen as force, intention, what is trying to fulfil itself. When sanctioned from above, then fulfilled. The sanction is sometimes perceived; but there are also mental sanctions which only give an added force for fulfilment, but not certainty or else force for subsequent fulfilment. Even the higher sanction is not to be considered absolute, unless it is the luminously ideal sanction.

=

Therefore mental certainty is abrogated and non-existent. Ideal certainty is temporarily suspended

=

The instruments, except perceptive thought, are free now from the remnants of intellectuality.

=

There are three planes of ideality. The third or lowest regards the intellect, corrects and fulfils it. The first is absolutely independent. The second is intermediate.

=

Samadhi reaffirmed most of its gains against massed and violent obstruction; but with an inferior force of vividness and largeness. Obstruction successful against lipi and tejomaya drisya. Dream-reading of printed book began. Afterward lipi reaffirmed in jagrat antardarshi.

=

Script.

The difficulty of certainty arises from the refusal to affirm more than from the haste to affirm wrongly. Affirm and correct.

=

This being done, knowledge with Tapas proved to be invariably right in main issue; telepathy (knowledge without tapas) of details sometimes certain and correct, sometimes uncertain.

=

Violent tapas, long forbidden because rajasic or mental, is now being applied with success.

The ideal Tapas-knowledge is being more widely applied but the incertainty of the untransformed telepathies creates a strong obstacle to its ideal use.

=

Rupadrishya emphasises developed, dense and perfect, but only in the type.

=

What is called riot of the lipi develops, this time without the old effort and confusion or with only a shadow of it. It is not yet perfect, being often stable, but illegible or legible but unstable

=

Contacts now create kamananda response as well as the other anandas. . Kamananda is trying to generalise itself (ahaituka) in the body. The movement is as yet occasional only.

=

Various complete rupas even to the most developed manifest at night with great spontaneity but with no stability. The stable are always imperfect and incomplete, usually crude, sometimes dense, never developed.

=

There is a general growth of ideality taking up the telepathies[,] revealing their truth, their right relations and limits, correcting the errors of the mind's valuations and interpretations.

=

Samadhi, reaffirms continuity of action; stability of chhayamaya forms and scenes, variety; begins to develop more stable though less brilliant tejomaya; continues dream coherence but is still subject to the obstruct[ive] attempt at limitation and dislodgment from its gains.

=

Antardarshi yesterday developed variety of forms, some of them perfect, stable, in status and motion, complete; though mostly crude. (reel, dense; bed, [?crude] in status, birds in motion magnified, in status, book, etc). Today violently obstructed and sterile.

Feb 11. Sunday.

Telepathy, brihat, confused in ritam, though greatly increased in ritam; entirely satyam in the sense of being true in essence, though misapplied in fact. Tapas has still an effect perturbing to the ritam by its mental overstress. .

=

Telepathy = trikaldrishti steadily increases, but tapasic overstress of will in the suggested thought prevents as yet entire amalgamation of tapas = trikaldrishti, which is meant by T^2. The illumination of Tapas is, however, progressing, though with a more hampered movement.

═

Tapas is now being used for primary utthapana & the nature & laws of primary utthapana are being developed in the thought and initially brought in the body, though constantly borne down by the normal physical nature.

The nature of it is liberation from exhaustion, weariness, strain and all their results.

The laws are

(1) Standing, however long, shall be effectively as much a rest from motion as [sitting][10] or lying down.

(2) Lying down as a rest shall cease to be indispensable.

(3) The greater and more prolonged the motion, the greater the increase of force for continued motion.

It is evident that if the last is accomplished, the first will be unnecessary and the second will be fulfilled.

At present stiffness as an after result is reduced to a minimum, but muscular pain and sense of strain after persistent exercise of muscles in walking (especially in shoulders & neck) persist. Immediate exhaustion can be very rapidly cast out, but accumulative effect is still painful.

The general pranic force increases by sadhana, but the body is affected and through the body the most physical part of the pranakosha.

═

Lipi "Telepathy is the effective trikaldrishti." That is what is seen by the foreseeing & willing knowledge becomes effective force, feeling, impulse, etc and is perceived by the Manas. That is telepathy. What is foreseen is also forewilled—thus sight & will in the Knowledge coincide.

---

[10] *MS* standing

What was seen by the manas, is now beginning to be seen by the ideal mind into which the manas is being withdrawn or changed.

=

The tapas is moving towards its self-harmonising with the supreme Will in the matter of Time both as to final result and detail of stages in the evolution of the result.

=

Accumulative fatigue is being massed and emphasised in order to be exhausted more rapidly and attacked more completely by the Tapas.

The exhaustion felt was very great, so much that the body insisted on the need of recumbence to ease the back, but a few minutes afterwards—after half an hour's sitting—all had gone, activity returned, wine of anandamaya tapas was felt in the body and the tables were rearranged, dusted and motion kept up for an hour and a quarter with return of pain in the shoulder and neck and with unease in the physical nerve matter, but without the sense of dominating fatigue, rather of dominating vigour. Nor is there now any inclination in the Prana to rest.

=

All thought (not trikaldrishti), even what was formerly the discursory vagabondage of the mind, is becoming luminous, ideal and true in its limits.

Raudra Ananda is developing. Sharp & long-running muscular pain three times repeated, which would formerly have been felt as torture, was entirely anandamaya; the sharp pain in the neck-muscles is also being transformed. The prolonged contact of heat (the burning terrace floor at noon) was yesterday borne and turned into ananda-pain.

=

Time—Seen that the three would come late, long after 11 and the dinner be late, after 12. Came at 11.40—dinner at 12.30.

Sharp hunger conquered, but not abolished, nor actually turned into anandamaya bubhuksha; but this movement seems to be beginning.

Continued walking, half an hour; pain in neck-muscles suddenly abolished, though left in subtle form and power of revival. Afterwards it attempted to develop in the legs and partly succeeded; when tapas is withdrawn, fatigue declares itself.

═

Rupasiddhi is successfully developing variety in the crude. Formerly only a few types came with difficulty or easily only by repetition—the woman, the horse, the man on horseback or driving, sometimes groups of men [and] women, two horses and riders—the bird (crow or sparrow), butterfly or moth, one or two objects, a hill with figures or a building on it. Now many kinds of fourfooted animals, birds, insects, moths of various forms and hues. Others seem to be coming, fish, variety of objects, not yet variety of scenes & human figures.

═

After swapna samadhi this has increased; already, all sorts of fourfooted beasts—the thing most resisted till now—while variety of figures (boys, a man's face and head with hat) has begun, variety of scenes is trying to manifest; old forms which were vague (horse with carriage) are now becoming clear and complete. These shapes have usually little stability, swift variation, a trend to momentary precision. Sometimes they are precise and have an initial stability, sometimes more stability with precision and perfect completeness, but this is rare. Now however an attempt to combine precision, completeness and stability with the variety has begun.

═

Samadhi

Antardarshi. A certain variety of forms, but not clear & perfect as day before yesterday, except one or two, and not stable. Riot of varied lipi, not organised, but trying to organise itself.

Swapna. All perfect in swapna except richness of scenes & images. Coherent lipi, perceptive & vangmaya thought.

Sushupti. Fluctuates between confusion and coherence.

Dream-speech, narrative with lipi, lipi, etc.

It is notable that in daytime nidra is usually entirely absent, except for an occasional fleeting touch which today did not come. Even at night sushupti is beginning to replace nidra. In place of the sense of being asleep or the memory of it, there is the sense and memory of sushupti, full of shanti, ghana chaitanya and now of incipient ananda.

Pages for reading are being presented with more firmness, not yet with much success.

═

In jagrat bahirdarshi variety of scenes is beginning eg a house above a ghat, the ghat very clear, the house sufficiently & coloured; a bridge over a stream, a boy upon it not sufficiently clear and vivid; a temple and ghat and road — the same & high bank of a river. Other scenes longer and more detailed, but vague.

═

Variety of human figures increased, women, children, young men, boys (youth & beauty predominate) in various postures, groups, scenes, action. Variety of birds and insects and fish is developing. A great variety of buildings of all forms and structures, chiefly in colour, when not in prakasha.

Thus the poverty of the crude rupa seems to be at an end.

Raudra ananda is increasing greatly in frequency, intensity and even in prolonged intensity. Vaidyuta also tends to develop. Vishaya is strong and general, but in intensity tends to pass into the others.

Prolonged intensity of pain (internal, ahaituka and sahaituka) no longer overpowers the ananda; it increases it, merges into it or turns into it. Also pain is now seldom separate from the ananda; it does not come and cause it whether at the moment of the touch or after the touch has seized it, but is amalgamated with it. It is either anandamaya pain or pain-ananda or pure raudra ananda. Even in strong pain from outside touches, eg burning, this tends to be the rule. The old separation is only an occasional survival. Discomfort is following the same rule, but has not gone so far towards absorption.

═

Strong attack on the siddhi. Results

(1) Violent reaction against primary utthapana, but the utthapana was forcefully depressed in the body, not abolished even in the physical prana; and revived and resumed work though with a wounded force.

(2) Reaction in arogya. One of the chronic rogas which was on the point of abolition, reasserted tendencies of recurrence, but with a minimum force producing very slight material results. Another which was being depressed, revived, but still with less force than in former reaffirmations.

(3) Temporary return of phantasy and ideal intellectuality in perceptive thought, quickly removed. A quite momentary touch in one or two of the vijnana instruments, immediately gone.

(4) A shadow upon the faith, ineffective in the faith of siddhi. Faith of karma is still immature and uncertain.

(5) Obstruction of the lipi, samadhi, rupasiddhi, only partially effective.

=

Variety of scenes, mountains, valleys, river banks, oceans, with human figures, ships etc, but all vague, pallid and indistinct, though the objects are recognisable. Initial movement to variety of objects. All this in the crude, mostly crude crude, sometimes dense crude.

=

Samadhi. First combination of absolute stability of perfect scene with absolutely firm continuity of action in clearly seen perfect rupa. A street of picturesque houses, a woman in blue walking down the street to the end, joined at the end by a woman in green.

Second complete scene; a richly furnished room; only momentarily stable.

This marks a great advance in rupa power, for this combination has always been successfully resisted; either the scene was shifting and unstable and vague or if stable and clear, void of action and motion.

≡

Feb 12.

Continued effect of yesterday's denial of utthapana. Strong sweat in the heat of the sun to get rid of toxic matter generated by fatigue. N.B. Usually, exposure to heat produces no such sweat or very little. The utthapana-shakti persists in spite of denial; it does not, as it formerly used, collapse and acknowledge defeat, except apparently for an hour or less.

==

The attack on growing arogya also continues. Sensitiveness to cold and discomfort returned.

==

Ideality is taking hold of the interpretation of lipi; only the intellectual atmosphere still surrounds it. This, according to the lipi, is to be removed by tonight.

Ideality is also taking firm hold of telepathy in connection with trikaldrishti. All telepathy of the kind is now correctly understood in substance; the sole disturbing factor is the remnants of the mental tendency to fix event by the mind choosing one of the possibilities or tendencies or intentions thus seen as *the* event. Often this is done correctly, the possibility being properly valued, but then the method breaks down. If this can be removed, there will be no farther positive obstacle to correct certainty in the trikaldrishti; though some negative obstacles will remain.

All this is in the field of exercise, not yet applied to life and the world at large.

==

Tapasic mind action, = will stress in the knowledge or effective mind action is being idealised and taught the truth within it and its limits as well as its possibilities.

==

Intensity of self caused sahaituka tivra is greatly increasing. In the physical Ananda all the movements recorded are being more generalised and normalised, but most of them are not perfectly general and most fluctuate, sometimes manifest, sometimes are suspended.

==

In Antardarshi lipi developed, but its abundance cannot yet organise itself without the help of the interpretation which is becoming ideal in the antardarshi as well as in the bahirdarshi, in samadhi as well as in waking.

Rupa became more vivid in antardarshi with groups and a long though interrupted stability of scene, but instability of human figures. It would be easy to develop a great variety of vague, imperfect, instable figures, but both in inner and outer jagrat vision this is being rejected and combined precision, stability and variety is being insistently demanded.

═

Rupas of yesterday, of all kinds, but a few or one or two of each, in spite of the obsession of the akasha by the type rupa, which again appeared strongly in all forms, except the perfect or lifelike. The higher forms appear freely only after long watching of the living object. Stability + precision is not yet satisfactory (outside type rupa) except in one or two forms.

═

Source of ideal certainty has appeared, tapas-light, and is beginning to group round it[s] certainty telepathies of the stages and their tendencies. The movement is as yet kachcha. It was interrupted by a violent, rather brief attack of mental tapas which left the telepathy much freer than before from false incidence. Brief physical touches of asamata, strong but without body. The attempt is now to abandon all tapas except the ideal will-knowledge.

═

Physical asiddhi continues, but the siddhi also, though overweighted, persists.

═

Free play of crude rupa on larger dimensions, at night, in artificial light, combining precision and stability, though in various degrees, with variety; all kinds of forms, but quadrupeds few and human figures only in the old form. Greater variety of objects, utensils chiefly. Scenes not yet developed in this kind.

Some stable dense forms bear the gaze and remain complete; one of them turns to developed. Till now complete dense & developed forms were unstable.

═

Samadhi failed both afternoon and night, except for play of ideal thought in swapna and jagrat (afternoon).

Feb 13.

Temporary suspension of ideality, for a certain development of first two chatusthayas amounting to forceful samata and combination of ugrata and dasya. Caused by a circumstance throwing life siddhi into doubt. This endured till nearly noon when the ideality began again to play. It has firmly acquired certain elements of certainty of event, but for the most part it is composed of certainties of ideal telepathy.

Thought telepathy is beginning to take shape and justify itself in a less scattered fashion, more habitually and organically.

═

The habit of evolving rupas out of a confused blur of material, one changing into another before it was well formed, most not developing properly, many only hinting themselves, others confused together, is being again discouraged. Only figures which present precision first, then precision + stability are accepted. Variety is at the same time being demanded. As the result of yesterday's crude progress, the delineation of entirely perfect stable crude figures is gaining strength, frequency and variety.

═

Antardarshi is at last taking into itself the bahirdarshi gains; but stability & precision are not yet properly combined, neither being quite perfect in itself. Variety is great and scenes and colours are more vividly depicted.

It is noticeable that the physical light still makes a difference; when the room is open, the atmosphere of the antardarshi is luminous and the forms & scenes tejomaya and vivid; when two of the windows are closed, it is chhayamaya and the scenes and forms vague and chhayamaya though vaster, more full of unseen details.

At first samadhi was [?received] by the lower nature but the Will as Shakti (now manifest as the Ishwari in the Samadhi) insisted and prolonged samadhi with important results followed

(1) Ideal thought is now at ease in all realms of the mental samadhi, fluent, coherent, dealing even in the sushupti largely, consecutively, powerfully, grasping and solving problems the waking mind had missed. This is done though there is nothing awake in the mind except the inactive Sat-Purusha who hardly

even watches, is merely bharta. All is done by the supreme Shakti from above.

At first the ideal thought failed and broke off in sushupti owing to nidra, but the Shakti insisting, the thought resumed, *without coming back to swapna*, in the sushupti itself. Still in the deepest depth of all, there is still a little difficulty in eliminating nidra.

(2) Recently, the samadhi has developed the power of being in sushupti and yet receiving clear sense knowledge of the waking world—limited to one or two sounds etc—without for that ceasing to be sushupta. Today this developed into a triple Samadhi, the Ishwari sushupta, full there of ideal thought and absorbed consciousness, yet aware of another swapna consciousness open to a second plane of action and another conscious without living in it of things in the outer world

(3) Consciousness of the supramental Ishwari, the Shakti of which the mental Jiva is a mental personality

The Akasha still resists the rupadrishti. It can no longer persist long in denying forms to the eye; but it still perseveres ordinarily in the blur method and is more ready to give precision than stability. It yields free variety of forms only when quick succession is allowed and complete precision is not demanded, and even then with a certain reluctance, a preference of forms that have been often repeated, a tendency to deny those, eg quadrupeds, which it has been in the habit of denying.

Formerly, the principle was to form by mental-physical pressure images out of akashic material, the material being of seven kinds,—chhaya, dhuma, tejas, jyoti, varna, agni, prakasha. The result was a blur of material shaping itself into forms. A second method was sudden manifestation of form partial or complete out of other akashas into the physical.

The second is now preferred. Mental and physical pressure are abandoned except when they recur involuntarily as a habit. Ideal will only is used.

=

Depression of the physical in the evening in the mental shama. Quiescence of all progress.

Feb 14th

Recoil of the siddhi, owing to perception of *anrita* in what professed to be the *ritam*; this comes by excessive and therefore wrong affirmation. Attempt henceforth neither to overstress affirmation nor to linger in negation. Right affirmation of the truth in or behind all thought and perception is the secret. But the difficulty must not be underrated, nor achievement too easily announced.

═

There is greater spontaneity with a certain amount of variety, precision, stability in the rupa. But the stability is less than the precision, the variety comes still with difficulty. The terrestrial akasha is overborne, but not yet conquered and possessed.

Antardarshi still lingers amid difficulties. Scenes and objects come, but without clarity of precision or clear stability or ease of variety.

In Samadhi yesterday's experience reaffirmed, but with a less powerful grasp on the sushupti. On the other hand, the triple Samadhi has developed. Not only are sushupti, swapna and jagrat simultaneous, but the sushupta purusha or shakti not only observes, but judges the jagrat experiences and, initially at least, the swapna perceptions.

═

Telepathy grows in brihat & satyam in the field of exercise, but ritam is a little discouraged.

═

Samadhi (sitting) of a lighter kind than in the afternoon, but the same type and a strengthening of the jagrat in conjunct[ion] with sushupti or swapna or both; swapna stronger, sushupti lighter. Attempt to regularise firmly lipi, etc. in sushupti. At night rich and brilliant (jyotirmaya) rupadrishya in swapna of sushupti.

15 FEBRUARY – 31 MARCH 1917

Record of Yoga
Feb 1917

Feb 15

Programme laid down in script on 14th

(1) Today T^2 combination of knowledge-tapas

From 15th to 28th perfectioning of knowledge-tapas

(2) Today. Spontaneity of rupa-drishya with tendency to precision + variety + stability.

From 15th to 28th perfectioning of spontaneous precision-variety-stability.

(3) Today — breaking down of habit of relapse in samadhi

Completion of elimination of relapse and normalising of the elements of the samadhi

(4) Vishaya.

Breaking down of the obstacle. Evolution of general, spontaneous and varied vishaya.

These for the third chatusthaya

For the fourth

(1) Ananda.

Today; commence regularising kamananda.

From 15th to 28th regularising of kamananda — the others to arise out of it and it to arise out of others. They will also be generalised separately

(2) Arogya.

Elimination of blood-asuddhi confirmed. The stomach to be regulated.

(3) Utthapana

The battle of the primary utthapana to proceed towards victory.

(4) Saundarya

The obstacle to youth and saundarya to be more vigorously and successfully attacked.

═

T^2.

The shakti continues the elimination of mental stress in the telepathies.

(1) That which is perceived by mental prakamya vyapti is tendency, impulsion, intention, force etc. The mental tapas tries to turn it into fact without knowing whether, how, when, to what extent it is destined. The telepathy must simply observe without willing; but it must observe the force for fulfilment as well as the fact of intention etc.

(2) That which mental tapas wills, mental intelligence hopes, believes, is certain will happen—when it does not unduly negate. Mental tapas, awaiting its elimination and transformation into ideal tapas, has to feel itself only as a force and await fulfilment or nonfulfilment.

(3) However often or even invariably mental tapas or telepathy may be fulfilled, it must not be trusted; but simply observed. Only ideal knowledge-will must be trusted. .

This is what is now being brought into actuality.

═

Kamananda

Regularity commenced yesterday in customary posture, but not perfect. This morning regularised without regard to posture, sitting, walking, standing, but of varying intensity, sometimes intense, sometimes almost nil, though always potentially present and manifest as potentiality

═

Rupadrishya.

Only a small number of images come with a little difficulty, others, eg, quadrupeds, with great difficulty and no completeness or no stability. The whole represents a small variety, though of all kinds, and all the other abundance of images brought out during a moment of siddhi do not emerge, except a few, rarely.

═

T^2

T^2 is now aiming at the development of ideal certainty, not only in the field of exercise, but in life, and with application to time and circumstance. It has already begun, but enveloped still with a confused mist of groping mentality.

═

K.A.

Kamananda continues striving against a suspensive obstruction which sometimes overpowers it and against the absence of smarana.

═

Phantasy is being brought forward in order to be destroyed.

═

Lipi.

Lipi is much more organised and now often vividly legible and stable.

═

Samadhi.

Keeps its gains and is attempting as yet without success to remanifest the perfection of its other constituents and perfect those which were still deficient.

═

Tapas.

Ishita is growing visibly in force, but is still too mental. Aishwarya is nearer ideality.

K.A

Kamananda recovered force at night and remained steady.

═

Samadhi.

Strong, frequent, almost generalised stability and continuity, but chhayamaya, often vague, sometimes with great force of outline and detail, but always shadowy. Attempt to read perfectly stable printed page in very minute type; only one brief sentence suddenly magnified and legible. Tejomaya still unstable and infrequent. .

Feb. 16. Friday.

Lipi continues with a tendency to fix itself, but is yet resisted by the physical akasha.

The lipi is rapidly organising itself. First it has come sparingly making itself precise. Here there are two movements. In one suggestion, no longer intellectual, but ideal, helps the lipi to manifest, but it is then legible, yet not vivid, with a relative stability and only becomes vivid and stable by repetition; but it comes swiftly and writes itself out fluently. In the other movement it comes of itself, without assistance of suggestion, but slowly, sparingly; it is then usually very vivid, legible, spontaneous, stable—not with a long stability, but sufficient to be clearly read and held.

Subsequently there has come, with the assistance of suggestion, with all the characteristics of the first movement, [?] but are imperfectly realised to vividness. Now it is emphasising this tendency and preparing to reject entirely the help of the suggestion. By suggestion is meant now the ideal mind's perception of what the lipi is going to write or intends in its sense, but has not yet written.

═

K.A.

Kamananda is not so vivid as yesterday, but has a greater natural persistence in trying to manifest itself uninterruptedly. In this it does not yet succeed.

═

Arogya

The battle of the arogya still continues; the force of health increases and the tapas for health, but the undominated roga tendencies still hold the body against it. The one dominated attacks sometimes with energy, but its physical results are scattered and feeble.

The main struggle now is over the digestion and assimilation where there has been a setback.

═

Sharira

The other physical siddhis are in the same state as before, except that there seems to be some return of primary utthapana and dissipation of the physical depression of fatigue.

═

Samadhi

Samadhi in the afternoon has been rich and successful.

(1) Antardarshi; a great freedom and variety of rupa, chiefly human groups and sometimes scenes, brilliant, tejomay, often coloured, but extremely unstable in a floating varnamaya atmosphere. Scenes of the heavens of mental ananda.

(2) In swapna and sushupti all the elements, but not free in their manifestation, except continuity and stability of chhayamaya. Tejomaya has begun to be stable as chhayamaya tejomaya or tejomaya chhayamaya. At a higher level of tejas, it is sometimes stable, but only when the consciousness is not turned upon it; then it fades into the shadowy tejomaya.

Lipi in all three stages, but not copious; three kinds (1) self-writing, (2) written, (3) printed.

═

T^2

T^2 continues to idealise the telepathies, but more to justify them even intellectually by reducing them to their right proportions. It is noticeable that mental tapas-telepathy is now much more frequently and often much more rapidly effectual. It seems even as if the time obstacle were beginning to come under control.

═

Vijnana

A great rush of ideality, jyotirmaya, higher, highest as well as lower taking up and transfiguring the intellect remnants into the light of truth. Mostly timeless idealities, in jnana, not yet except slightly in trikaldrishti and then without reference to time.

═

Darshana

The Anandamaya darshana has been steadily increasing and generalising itself, but more often contains vijnana of mentality than the vijnana-ananda proper. This however is also increasing in force and frequency and is general enough, though not yet universal in objects. It is still in human figures that the vision of the vijnanamaya sarva-saundarya finds still a difficulty in manifesting or, if manifested, in ascending into the shuddha ananda without losing itself.

═

Rupa.

Rupa enforced variation in images seen in a relative darkness —on the terrace.

Feb 17.

Obstruction in the third chatusthaya. Negative sadhana.

═

Samadhi.

At first strong and persistent *nidra*, but with elements of samadhi enforcing themselves in the midst of the *nidra*

Afterwards samadhi.

(1) Ideal perceptive thought attained to the same abundance, fluency, continuity, power even in deepest sushupti as the vangmaya had already attained. Neither now needs to descend from the higher to the deeper states; both can act freely and initially even in the deepest.

(2) Power of physical action even in the deep sushupti. The particular action was writing with the hand what occurs in the thought. At first the consciousness dwelt on the thought and the action was mechanical; afterwards it dwelt on both the thought and the action united, continuous, unbroken

(3) Coherence in deepest sushupti even of the reading, lipi, dream speech, dream narrative. Concordance of successive scenes.

(4) Visions of chhayaloka, with light on incoherence of thought and action, visual hallucination etc. (eg. cat prolonged in leaping on table by persistence of sukshma image, pail of water about to be thrown on a table with books etc)

Ananda

Kamananda afflicted with frequent discontinuity.

Raudra touch anandamaya even when intolerable (extreme heat of terrace floor to the feet).

═

Rupa.

First, refusal of images, then persistence of blur unable to take shape, then inconstancy of images changing into each other, sometimes before complete formation. All these are being discouraged by failure.

The tendency to variety of images, less or more various, partly or entirely precise, initially stable or unstable seems to be now fixed in the physical akasha. The type still persists in usurping the place of the others, but with less force.

=

T^2

T^2 deals still with telepathies removing from even the most positive all decisive certainty.

=

Arogya

Asiddhi of the digestive process is still in possession.

=

Rupa

Greater freedom of dense rupas sometimes lifelike in the daylit atmosphere.

Samadhi

Great dream coherence. Only in dream reading is the incoherence still dominant.

Feb 18.

T^2

T^2 is now taking up telepathies on a larger scale and more rapidly. The siddhi attempted is to receive mental telepathies rapidly in great number without attaching to any one of them a decisive certainty or seeking for their fulfilment, secondly, to accept every telepathy and discover rapidly its ideal truth and exclude the mental error associated with it.

=

Rupa

Rupa is attempting to develop spontaneous and perfectly precise and complete images with variety. The tendency to frequency of dense, even developed images, sometimes lifelike, but unstable except when sadhara, continues.

═

Devibhava

Mahakalibhava seems to be now normal and the reversion to Mahaluxmi-Mahasaraswati empty of it, is rare. But there is variation between raw Mahakali bhava too ugra and saumya Mahakali with Mahaluxmi colour. Maheshwari, normally, is quite covered and a *pratistha* only.

═

Kamananda seems to be recovering force of continuity and even of intensity, though not the full force.

═

Samadhi.

(1) Antardarshi. Chhayamaya scenes, a railway line by a precipice, a train speeding up and back far out of sight, a path among mountains or moors or between two precipices with a cavalcade going, a two horsed carriage advancing, a horseman turning to fight, groups on foot, etc. Mountain scenes. A lake with a boat and a woman; the same with bird or a fish leaping. All vague and shadowy and yet every image clear enough to be recognizable; often a shoot of shadowy distinctness.

(2) Coherency of dream reading insisted on and constantly enforced, though still with a certain effort and difficulty. Lipi very coherent and continuous in nidra; so too dream thought, as opposed to ideal thought, dream speech, all dream connections.

═

Rupa.

The blur habit seems now to be definitely going out; the tendency of image formation overpowers it and is dominant; but the habit of rapidly inconstant, incongruous, ill combined or only partially successful formations still persists. Also, the customary incapacities, eg of formation of quadrupeds, try to persist; though it is often overpowered, it makes itself felt.

Still, the variety with sufficient precision for a recognition of the object is established. Even variety with perfect precision and completeness, natural and without effort, is frequent; stability combined with these though comparatively rare, is still not absolutely infrequent.

═

T^2

Sudden development of tapas siddhi; exact place and manner of movement was manifested repeatedly, and even three rapidly successive times in the same object, without resistance, only a pause, very brief. This is 80° power of tapas. The fourth time there was resistance and wrong place (direction) but right manner and upshot.

There is again an attempt to combine telepathy with ideal certainty, largely but not entirely successful.

Samadhi.

There is now a struggle to create the same general rule of coherence and continuity at night in the sleep, as in the daytime, in the involuntary as in the willed samadhi.

═

Kamananda stronger today, but discouraged in the evening

═

Feb 19 Monday.

Ananda.

Sparsha now as a rule creates a triple Ananda, tivra-vishaya-kama, one or other sometimes predominating and leading, or else all three equal and practically simultaneous. Sometimes one tends to overpower the others.

═

Arogya.

The struggle in the Arogya continues to be immediately adverse to the siddhi. Physically depression returns persistently, the old roga that had been abolished returns slightly, the asiddhi of digestion still continues.

═

Samadhi

Afflicted by nidra. Some development of tejomaya.

═

T^2.

T^2 pursues its work of taking up the telepathies. Some development of distant telepathies, the object being far or unseen.

═

K.A.

Kamananda strong in recurrence, not yet continuous throughout the day; but it seems to have overcome the old habit of long suspension. It is now only depressed or suppressed for short periods, within the day itself.

Feb 20th. Tuesday.

A certain inactivity of the siddhi or lessened activity during the last two days—partly owing to preoccupation with "Arya". At the same time there is a great increase of certainty and accuracy in the idealised telepathies and a slow but steady growth of force of effectuality in tapas.

═

Lipi is almost free from the aid of suggestions and manifests itself more or less vividly, usually in a stable legibility fluent or strong; but not with freedom in its perfection. Fluent, it tends still to be a little indistinct.

═

Samadhi infructuous, afternoon and night, except for some development of tejomaya

═

Rupa struggles to develop variety in the stable precise (crude) but is also strongly obstructed.

═

Kamananda less strong; persistent with a dull largeness rather than intensity in asana.

═

Physical depression has the upper hand of the primary utthapana.

═

The struggle in arogya sadhana continues.

═

The whole physical siddhi is for the time being more or less held up as were the other chatusthayas at the same stage.

═

Ananda darshana progresses slowly towards normalising of the global ananda, but as yet attains no finality of the movement.

═

The fifth chatusthaya is also obstructed. In all obstruction, however, there is now some sense of progress prepared.

Feb 21st

The movement towards generalisation of ideality continues. The movement is towards elimination of the critical intellect, the mind of doubt, and its replacing by the ideal judgment.

═

Obstruction of third chatusthaya has been strong for the last three days. Nothing fresh achieved. A strong preparation of advance in Brahmachatusthaya.

═

Kamananda continues, but less continuous. It is strong only in asana. There is some tendency to the renewal of advance in other anandas which are in no way thrown back, but a little quiescent.

═

Arogya in the half-abolished affection seems to be getting the upper hand. It is still oppressed by the old habitual inequalities in the assimilation, though for the time less intensely. The other members of the physical siddhi are obstructed or depressed.

═

Nothing in samadhi except in bahirdarshi jagrat greater tendency to freedom of unstable dense & developed, solitary intrusion of dense into antardarshi which otherwise is oppressed in lipi, no advance in swapna-sushupti, but less force of nidra.

═

Purification of tapas is proceeding; the tendency is to get rid of the remnants of tapastya and tapatya.

Feb 22^{d}

Some activity of samadhi in the early morning. Coherence of reading and lipi is here the one siddhi most often distressed.

═

Attack of the old breast pain; at first only in sukshma (pranic) parts, ineffectually touching from time to time the surface of the annakosha. This for a long time. Then a physical attack unprecedentedly rapid in its repetitions of intense pain. Ananda (raudra) maintained itself with difficulty, sometimes overborne but always repossessing the pain. The attack very soon cast out; formerly it would have lasted an hour. Remnants, dull, are still left in recurrence or more often the attempt to recur.

═

Fear of disease and death is practically abolished; touches only come from outside. The physical shrinking from intense pain is still able to affirm itself in a subdued, but effective fashion. The prana is touched by it, but not the mind.

═

Complete unification of all the anandas of darshana on their mental basis. Frequent affirmation of chidghana, intense or less intense. Its universalisation may now shortly be expected, since no images or objects, faces or figures can now be successfully free from it.

═

Rupa is remanifesting with a greater tendency to dense crude and dense Prakasha of the seven kinds. Hitherto in the last movement of the siddhi Prakasha has almost monopolised the field of the crude rupa. Now real chhaya has begun again to manifest.

Stable and precise rupa is increasing its force of manifestation. There are notable scenes of a vividness and ensemble superior to almost anything previously manifested in the jagrat without adhara. Others are less vivid & stable, but all have the tendency.

Samadhi remanifests in almost all its features, but with some difficulty and still without sufficient force. Nidra is almost absent, but deep sushupti is refused.

Antardarshi has begun again to manifest with a greater unfulfilled promise of abundance but not yet freely, except in chhayamaya landscapes. One alone was tejomaya.

=

T^2 is still mostly quiescent.

=

Roga is attacking in a curious fashion suddenly, without immediate cause, through the sukshma, usually between sleep and waking; it vanishes as abruptly, without evident reason, except the pressure of the will, but leaving behind it slight vestiges. This is the old attempt to reinforce a malady which still has force of recurrence and make it chronic. In the morning it was breast-pain, in the afternoon cough and cold.

23d–24th

T^2 develops the perfect ideality of the telepathies into stuff of trikaldrishti.

=

Otherwise things remain in status quo or obstructed,—especially samadhi.

Feb. 25th

The idealisation of the telepathies is finally confirmed. The intellectual are now only a mechanical survival and when they occur make no attempt to know, but passively record suggestions as suggestions. It is only when will is applied, that they recur to their old nature of seeking to anticipate fulfilment or non-fulfilment.

Renewed activity of the samadhi. Preparation for conscious vijnana-samadhi. Continuity of action and stability of scene are now firmly established.

A great lessening of the physical asiddhi in its generality, though in certain directions it is still felt heavily.

Vishaya is still heavily obstructed and practically inactive except occasionally in gandha.

Feb. 26th Monday.

Kamananda powerful and repeatedly intense and increased in force of continuity.

═

No other noteworthy movement. There is the repression of activities in order that a new movement free from the old defects may emerge.

═

Activity of samadhi at night — rupa-drishya.

Feb 27th Tuesday.

The play of the higher ideality is renewed. The movement now imposed is the removal of the direct source of the action and its plane to the level of the higher idealities. The intellect-regarding vijnana must take a lower place as part of this higher movement.

═

Absolute passivity of the lower being is demanded in order that all action and all siddhi may be conducted openly by the Ishwara from the higher nature.

═

Kamananda tested, momentarily depressed, survives the test and continues its previous action.

Feb 28.

Continued purification from the independent action of the lower nature. Preparation of a new movement in which it will fall into its place as part of the ideal nature.

Meanwhile, suspension of the illumined higher action, in order that the lower, deprived of the light, may learn to be passive & not seek to substitute itself, as if it could make up for the deficiency, but wait always for the higher to remanifest. This impulse of the lower to act when the higher withholds itself, is now the one strong positive obstacle in T^2. Its removal marks the turning-point of the siddhi.

Mar 1 Thursday

Large play of ideality in jnana. All thought or thought-suggestion taken up into the ideality and its ideal truth luminously revealed. As yet this is only the action of the higher ideality acting on the intellect through the lower vijnana, not yet on its own plane.

The light does not yet become in the same way brihat in the T^2.

Samadhi of all kinds is more or less in abeyance or active only in crudities or reduced to the type.

In the physical siddhi Kamananda goes on preparing its normality: there is flux and reflux, but no absolute suspension. The other anandas act occasionally.

The nirananda ahaituka and sahaituka (asiddhi & asraddha) is being taken up by Ananda so as to ensure final finality of positive samata.

Mar 2. Friday.

The large ideality playing on mind and mental suggestion is taking up all telepathies and showing their ideal truth by discernment of their form & limits; so also, though less largely all tapas. The principle of faultless certainty of trikaldrishti (future and, to a less extent, present) is being sought for, but is not yet perfectly found.

Telepathy of pranic & mental thought & feeling in animals is being founded in the brihat, not prakamya-vyapti of human thought & feeling & impulse, which is still only sought in the isolated and spasmodic fashion of the past.

The suspension in the rest of the third chatusthaya continues.

=

Samadhi active but quite incoherent, assailed by nidra.

=

Mar. 3

The lipi is once more active, entirely independent of suggestion even when attacked by it; but still obstructed in its physical manifestation. Legible, but not always vivid or stable.

=

Increased general intensity of tivra and of visvasparsha in kama + tivra.

=

Return of samadhi, but not yet in its full force of continuity or coherence.

=

At night coherence of the Samadhi in dream-reading and dream-thought.

=

Vishaya (gandha & rasa) begins to remanifest.

=

Some remanifestation of rupa in antardarshi and bahirdarshi.

=

Thought-telepathy (animals).

=

Mahakali bhava now firmly founded and in possession. Harmony of the four bhavas not yet developed on the new basis of Mahakali Mahasaraswati.

Mar 4.

Stability and vivid legibility of the unsuggested lipi is developing against the obstruction.

=

The Maheswari bhava concealed as pratistha in Mahalakshmi-Mahasaraswati has again risen, though it can no longer possess; it has to be concealed again in the Mahakali-Mahasaraswati with the Mahalakshmi colour.

=

Tapas is recovering its old effectualities which had fallen into disuse; but they are now only material for the larger effectuality, not, as once, an object in themselves.

=

There is in the kshetra a sort of rough and imperfect tapas-siddhi now fairly generalised. The main object is roughly attained, but not, except exceptionally, in the details and always with difficulty. The siddhi does not rise above the 50° or 60° limit in its general power. In life there is only khanda-siddhi, the attainment of partial effects which do not assure the success of the main object, and even this though much more frequent & general than before, is yet far from being quite general. Always there is some effect, but not always effectuality.

═

The development of the lipi continues and is almost in possession of the akasha.

═

Tendencies of redevelopment in samadhi and rupasiddhi

Mar 5. Monday.

Lipi is becoming rapidly stronger in vividness, stability and a certain relative abundance.

═

Almost entire recovery of swapna and sushupta samadhi. Example of perfect stability and continuity of action in tejomaya, shadowy but distinct and generally increased force of both in tejomaya. Movement towards idealisation of the samadhi

═

Greatly increased general force of effectuality of tapas-siddhi even in exact result, but always within limits of the 50° or 60° power and still in the kshetra. As yet the final combination of T^3 into T^2 lingers and is mastered by the obstruction.

═

Mar 6.

Samadhi in the early morning. Perfect coherence of ideal thought (vangmaya) in deep sushupti. The lapse of memory persists, but was powerfully overcome and the lost memory restored in the samadhi itself.

═

Telepathies & tapasbuddhi are being more largely taken up into the brihat satyam of the ideality preparing the brihad ritam.

═

Unity of action in lipi, reference, T^3 and other instruments of the vijnana is being established.

═

Tapas continues to increase in force, but is still far from being master of the akasha.

=

Samadhi in afternoon. Lipi in sushupti incoherent except when the ideal consciousness was present and either saw coherent lipi or evolved coherence out of confusion by disengaging the words from each other and adding what was incomplete. But all else tended to be coherent even when the ideal consciousness was not present.

At the end all sushupti and swapna became possessed by the ideal consciousness.

Images related to life upon earth.

=

Sukshma sparsha revived, but as yet it fails to pass into the sthula except in the accustomed touches.

=

Lipi developed independent fluency with some diminution of legibility and much of stability. It occasionally follows the ideal suggestions, but is usually independent or else affirms its independence by substituting other words when the thought has divined too soon the word that was coming.

=

The passage of T^3 into T^2 continues.

=

Strong & intense kamananda recurrent throughout the day. Intensity of tivra and vishaya.

—

Manifestation of the gods as agents of the ideal action, especially Surya in charge of the ideal vangmaya thought (recalling the last 15 August) — less directly Indra behind the perception, Agni behind the will. Mental images of the four Shaktis on the lower & middle planes of the ideality.

=

Traigunyasiddhi in type; shama full of prakasha and tapas, prakasha full of shama and tapas, tapas full of shama and prakasha.

=

Devibhava complete and strong, in type, not yet in action. Reemergence of one of the talents,—chitra.

Mar 7.

An attack of the intellectualities begun yesterday, continues. Still the devibhava is confirmed. It tends to bring also the sraddha bhagavati swashaktyam cha and as a result the sraddha in the complete siddhi, also a great physical energy into the body.

=

The attack of the intellectualities continues and there is no progress in the third chatusthaya.

=

Samadhi confined to an attempt to convert dream into samadhi, not as yet successful except in a minor degree

One prophetic image in yesterday's samadhi was justified today by the physical fact.

=

Samata severely tested has this time held good in spite of one or two adverse touches; the second chatusthaya (faith, devibhava) sometimes gives way, but reasserts itself swiftly. . The lower nature still resists the new devibhava and attempts to go back to the old sense of limitation and essential incapacity.

=

The devibhava is taking into itself Surya, Soma, Agni, Indra and seeking to unify them.

=

As a result, partly, of the unsuccessful attack sama ananda is greatly strengthened & is increasing rapidly in force. It is finally overcoming the dwaita of siddhi & asiddhi, as it did the dwaita of mangala and amangala.

Premananda remanifesting with the sense of self as all things and the Ishwara as all beings for its basis.

Mar 8.

The Premananda is combining its elements—(1) self = Ishwara; prakriti self all things and all beings. Therefore all the prakriti of

Ishwara one with myself (2) the beauty of the Ishwara—shuddha governing chidghana with ahaituka involved in it—(3) relations of brotherhood, love, motherhood & childhood, sakhya, madhura, vatsalya united into one composite bhava. It includes also guru-shishya, sakhya-vaira etc. Others are preparing to enter into the composite bhava.

═

The united action of the ideality, transforming virodha, is being prepared.

═

The shuddha-vijnanananda is now generalising itself successfully and firmly. It lives sometimes in the mental, sometimes in the vijnana plane; in the first shuddha predominates with vijnana subordinate to ahaituka; in the latter sometimes shuddha sometimes vijnana predominates. The tendency is for vijnana to be a prominent term of shuddha with ahaituka involved as a subordinate term.

═

Dasya vaira of Mahakali. The Energy serves all, but enforces on them with more or less violence the higher in place of the lower aims of their being; thus it is often in vaira or virodha with their lower desires which it yet accepts as part of its system and as material of its work.

The sixth chatusthaya of Sarvam Anantam Jnanam Anandam Brahma is now complete in itself. Its completeness of contents depends on the perfection of the third, fourth and fifth chatusthayas. Subjective bhukti may be now considered complete as well as subjective mukti. Subjective shuddhi is only defective in as much as the intellectual mentality still resists complete elimination by transformation into the ideality; but the separation & distinction of the two in knowledge is now complete. The full transformation is rather siddhi than shuddhi. Therefore only siddhi remains of the four elements of the seventh chatusthaya.

Physical shuddhi, mukti, bhukti though far advanced is not yet absolute, nor can be except by initial siddhi of the fourth chatusthaya.

═

The siddhi of the three chatusthayas still to be completed depends on the glory and power (sri) of the ideality perfecting itself and taking full possession not only of the mental being, but of the body and the life. The negative states are being replaced by the positive; quiescence by shama-tapas-prakasha, the human poise by the divine, the Brahmi by the Aishwari sthiti.

=

No advance in samadhi

=

The play of the old telepathies and tapas-telepathies continues with a view to their loss of all decisive force and reduction to their proper proportions. Meanwhile the action of higher ideality in T^2 is suspended. It is in force only in the jnana.

The direction is now for the ideality to act wherever it is free, jnana-perception, vangmaya, lipi, reference etc and not to wait suspended for the T^2. This it is already beginning to do

=

The alternations between the higher and the lower devibhava continue. The higher has at present too much of the Maheshwara in it, being dominated by Surya.

=

There is an increasing attempt at control of the speech by the ideality.

=

The power of the ideality is definitely emerging out of the state of subjection to the circle of the physical mentality. For some time it has acted in this field and upon it from above, dealing with the facts and the ideas open to the lower mind, the knowledge beyond its ken being presented to it as suggestions, not as light possessed by the mind. A higher action is now beginning to outline itself, not, as before, as something beyond the normal, but as the normal action of the new vijnana-buddhi.

=

Mar 9.

Three ideal planes—one observing the facts of the manifest world, the second the facts and the forces, possibilities etc out of which the facts emerge, the third & highest both these and the certainties, prefigured in the truth, which both possibilities and realised facts figure out in the succession of time. The lower knows the higher as the thing behind to which it refers back for the source of its activities; the higher looks down to the lower as its own fulfilment.

=

Suddha vijnanananda is becoming more and more confirmed, brilliant and intense on the vijnana plane. It is becoming also full of the devibhava and is preparing to base the full Krishna Kali darshana.

=

Devibhava grows in firmness and intensity and is preparing to expel the habit of reversion by the full illumination of the lower bhava and the removal of the division between para and apara.

=

Kamananda severely tried for the last few days has persisted in spite of depression and may now be considered as firmly established against all dependence on condition and attempt at temporary expulsion. It is still however capable of temporary depression, never now amounting to entire suppression, and subject to rise and fall of intensity, to lesser or greater power of recurrence and continuity. It also varies with the asana, tending to be quiescent in the others except by smarana or uddipana. These are the defects that have yet to be conquered.

=

The other anandas seem to be awaiting the complete victory of the kamananda. Only the sahaituka tivra advances steadily, though without any marked rapidities and subject to temporary quiescences. It is still not free from the fault of the cessation of the nervous response after constant stimulation. For a time the response maintains itself, may even become more intense, afterwards it becomes neutral or changes to vishaya, raudra or vaidyuta.

=

The energy of the Shakti is more and more changing from saumya to raudra. The Mahakali bhava has therefore taken full possession of the centre of energy, though it still fluctuates and has not taken its final character.

Mar 10.

At present the attack of the old against the new is the general feature of the sadhana. An attack in the first place on the siddhi of the third chatusthaya, obstruction and inefficiency, with the view of breaking down the recent gains of the first and second, and thus bring the system back to the poise of the old intellectual mentality of the limited human poise. While there is no definite breaking down, there is a certain success in restoring old touches of the asamata that had been expelled—touches of the asukham (predicted by lipi, “grief”.)

=

The traigunya-siddhi is especially denied. Shama alone seems perfect; tapas and prakasha fall back into mental rajas & sattwa when there is an attempt to particularise their actions.

=

Devibhava also now tends to sink to the lower condition by separation from the higher and, when joined to it, the poise is still in the lower rather than in the higher nature. There is a denial of ishwarabhava and sraddha in which the knowledge of the buddhi is resisted and tends to be overcome by the sense of deficiency & nonfulfilment acting on the pranic temperament.

=

Absolute finality, therefore, is still to seek in the first two chatusthayas.

=

Samadhi of the three avasthas; freer play of ideal thought, vangmaya and perceptive, the latter first free, afterwards obstructed.

For some time there have been sudden attacks on the health during samadhi which could not be successful during the waking. This is because a certain physical depression or even disintegration seems to take place in samadhi which is not possible when the tapas is concentrated on the physical world as the mental. Although this has been greatly reduced, it is still sufficient to leave the room open for attacks, eg yesterday of violent nausea, a thing easily dominated and dismissed if it comes in the waking state, today, of pain near the muladhara which refused to be turned into ananda although it could [not] prevent some ananda from being associated with it, though much submerged or rather overweighed and oppressed.

=

Almost all the recent gains of the siddhi have been temporarily denied by the results of the attack; but they have a stronger & swifter tendency to revive, even though they are not entirely reestablished

The siddhi begins to recover from the attack.

Mar. 11.

The main necessity is the full illumination of the tapas which remains on the lower level and for this the return to the direct dasya, but dasya to the vijnanamaya anandamaya Ishwara.

For some days the sense of the immediate presence of the Ishwara has been withheld and all has been done by the Prakriti. Now the presence is being restored and with it the intensity of dasya, but not the entirely immediate presence. The Prakriti still stands between.

=

Kamananda oppressed yesterday, though always present in sensible tendency, is recovering itself, in action at first, not yet in intensity.

=

The tapas-siddhi is losing its exclusive insistence on the particular result, accepting as its own the opposite energies and their results. Yet at the same time it is increasing its power of general and particular result.

=

The Chitshakti is insisting on a more universally vivid sense of all beings and objects as the anandamaya Ishwara manifesting himself in various forms. This is resisted by the mentality which is accustomed to see Brahman in all and all in Brahman and, with a less facile readiness, Brahman as all, but not all as the Ishwara. Notably, it makes more resistance as to beings than as to objects; in the latter the shuddha-chidghana-ananda is more habitually seen than in beings.

The difficulty of the tapassiddhi is still to combine it with trikaldrishti. The aspect[s] of will and idea in the telepathic mind, —tapas and jnana,—are being now gradually harmonised; but the decisive trikaldrishti and the decisive tapas do not come together.

=

Samadhi is recovering its force, but as yet no new progress has been made.

=

A considerable advance has been made towards the firm normalisation of the chidghana ananda in objects.

=

Samadhi continues to progress towards complete recovery of its force, but is not as yet in firm possession of itself.

Mar 12.

The universalising of the Ishwara-darshana is extended to beings as well as objects. When the ananda-darshana falls back into the mentality, it tends to be replaced by the Brahma-darshana; when it remains in the vijnana, it is firm. There is now a tendency to have the Ishwara vision in the mentality even, but only as a circumstance of the Brahma vision. In the vijnana the two become one, Brahma (Akshara and Kshara) being only aspects of the Ishwara.

=

Samadhi is now in possession of itself. It moved forward in three directions (1) The enforcement of the ideal consciousness as basis of vijnana-samadhi. (2) The insistence against lapse of memory. (3) The insistence on coherency everywhere.

In addition there was a manifestation of chhayamaya tejas & varna, scenes shadowy but full of beauty, subdued brilliance, rich colour and the faery atmosphere of the ananda.

=

The insistence throughout the day has been on the fifth chatusthaya + Ishwara, ie on the Ananda Brahman merging into the Anandamaya Purusha (Krishna-Kali).

=

For days the rupadrishya has been disorganised. The mental stress and formation is being eliminated. Meanwhile the old round of breaking up and rebuilding the broken siddhi is feebly occupying the atmosphere.

═

Samadhi at night confirms the day action.

═

Kavya for the last two days. Chitra daily, crude but with the automatic movement and growing norm.

March 13. Tuesday.

The suddha chidghana is now the normal basis of the ananda-darshana for objects, the attempt at reversion to mental shuddha still surviving, but feebly. The same holds good for animal forms, but with more strength in the reversion. It is only in the human figure (chiefly the face) that the reversion is still strong; but here too the sarvasaundarya of shuddha chidghana is gaining rapidly in strength and becoming normal. The strength of reversion here is due to the fact that there is a standard of divine beauty to which the actual form does not correspond.

═

The movement now is to strengthen sraddha so that there may be no room for any lapse, even slight, in the first two chatusthayas.

In the first there is still a deficiency in ananda of asiddhi and in the shuddha chidghana ananda of the vishayas, taste, sound etc — especially taste. Rasagrahana is there, but not invariable bhoga — owing to the pranic resistance — and therefore not the full, vivid and satisfying ananda.

═

Kamananda is recovering intensity. There is strong obstructive resistance to the physical siddhi, also to the karma-siddhi.

═

The chief obstacle to the ananda of asiddhi is that when it comes entirely, it tends to bring acquiescence in asiddhi: but the true bhava is ananda in and acceptance of asiddhi as a step towards siddhi. The other therefore is not allowed to establish itself, while the true bhava is as yet obstructed; its basis is not yet properly laid.

The movement now is to the fixing of that basis.

=

The progress in samadhi continued. Free chhayamaya of all kinds, though seldom at once the stability and the force of presentation. Lapse of memory minimised in sushupti in the perceptive thought (mainly ideal) as well as the vangmaya.

=

Today the ananda has begun to overbear the resistance of prana in the taste. In hearing, smell and touch, there is always the bhoga of ananda, not merely the rasagrahana. The only defect is defect of the chidghana, for the shuddha is always there though often only mental shuddha. But in the taste there is frequently denial of ananda or neutrality.

Lipi is rapidly normalising itself in the vivid legibility with an initial perfection of stability. The suggestion is again allowed to play a part in removing the obstruction, but it is always an interpretation of unmanifest lipi rather than a former of uncreated lipi. The lipi is largely spontaneous.

=

The telepathy is beginning to indicate in itself its spontaneous ritam; similarly the ideality even when it manifests in a thick veil or a thick atmosphere of mentality.

=

Some insistence on a spontaneously retentive memory, but the amnesia is still dominant; memory is more active, but retains its usual or capriciously selective character.

=

The insistence on ananda in the taste continues.

=

There is a covert struggle between sleep and the shakti that tries to overcome it. The physical reaction of diminished sleep, is still the stronger, even when the total amount of sleep is the same and the diminution is only of the night sleep. eg. tonight 5 hours (from 2 to 7) after 2 hours in the daytime, making the sufficient quantity of 7 hours. It is true that the day sleep was mostly samadhi and only a brief nidra. . As yet samadhi is not a substitute for nidra; the body is rather adversely than favourably affected by it. The opposite tendency is present, in state of preparation, but not yet effective.

═

Dream is no longer samadhi-like. It is again incoherent.

═

Samadhi at night very slight, mostly rupa-drishya in sushupti

Mar 14

Script.

"Today T^2 and lipi

"Confirmation of the first two chatusthayas and the (fifth + sixth) Brahmamaya Ishwara.

"Completion of the Ananda (subjective)

—

"First the shuddha chidghana in the chidghana, on that basis the Brahmamaya Ishwara."

═

This was immediately fulfilled. The chidghana darshana is being founded firmly in the chidghana consciousness, with a firm delineation of vijnanamaya form in all things. The shuddha is shuddha of chidghana, and the premature tendency to insist on the shuddha of ananda is being postponed. The first result was to have shuddha-chidghana of forms, but shuddha ananda with strong envelope of mentality in the surrounding Brahman. Immediately, however, the vijnana Brahman manifested in the containing Purusha, taking possession of the Akasha in place of the Manas Brahman.

The Brahmamaya Ishwara at once came in and associated itself firmly with this vijnanananda darshana.

This is the basis for the next step of the siddhi and has to be made inviolable before the final step can be successfully taken.

All vishaya is being subjected to this chidghana ananda sense of things.

The manasic sense in the darshana still hangs about, but it no longer dominates.

═

In T^2 the difficulty is still in the tendency of the telepathy to attempt the decision of the event. Left to itself in the mentality, it now speedily drops this tendency; but when the telepathy is idealised the resulting brilliance and positiveness gives it the false idea of decisiveness; it tries to supplement the ideal telepathy by the intellectual decision or determining choice. This is the secret of most of the intellectual error of brilliant minds. The ideal telepathy only gives the idea of intentions, forces, facts, possibilities surrounding the moment of time. Decisive certainty belongs only to the trikaldrishti. Therefore the final purification for T^2 consists in the discharging of the false foreseeing certainty of the intellect which tries to attend the ideal suggestions.

=

In the morning sudden attack of the external (exiled) mentality on the sraddha & sukham (samata). At first touching the buddhi, it failed to take possession of it. It only reproduced a mechanical repetition of some of its old movements on the prana and sense-mind by a purely physical touch. Striving constantly to recur, it failed to endure.

=

In Samadhi much interference of nidra, but at the same time the ideality is taking hold of it and undermining incoherence. The grasp of ideal perceptive thought in mental sushupti is increasing. Especially lipi in all the four states is gaining fluency, legibility, cohesion, stronger in swapna than in antardrishti, in both than in sushupti.

=

Lipi has now accomplished fluency in perfect legible stability. The result has only to be thoroughly confirmed, deepened and released from minor defects, the survivals of the older imperfection. The stability is essential, it does not as yet remain long fixed in the akasha; but there is no tendency to vanish as soon as it is manifested or, as before, even in the act of manifestation. The tendency is to remain as long as is necessary.

=

Chidghana in the human figure is being constantly pulled back into the mentality and constantly reasserted. This is now the only serious defect, but the affirmation is stronger than the denial.

═

Telepathies combined with tapas siddhi which begins to have the light of the trikaldrishti in the telepathies.

═

The first two chatusthayas recover their norm in the evening.

═

Brief manifestation of variety of crude rupa (in the darkness of the terrace). Only relative precision + stability.

Mar 15.

Manifestation of perfect stability of "readymade" sentences, rushing into the physical akasha from behind and holding it before the suggestion can interfere. This is now increasing. This stability is vivid and often vichitra in its lettering, that is in varna, jyoti etc as well as chhaya.

═

The combination of telepathies and tapas-siddhi continues, but the element of trikaldrishti in the telepathies is not yet precise; uncertainty predominates.

═

Besides the developing elements of the three first chatusthayas and the Ananda + Ishwara, the Script indicates Vishayas and Rupa-drishya as part of the day's progress.

═

The Ananda Ishwara manifests itself with greater force and perfection of chidghana than yesterday. The human figure has come into the line with the rest. Only in the human face the tendency to reversion has some strength, but it is daily diminishing.

═

Some drishyarupa.

═

Most of the afternoon & evening taken up with kavya.

═

Vishaya hardly noticeable—gandha

Mar 16.

Lipi is now confirmed in legible stability with a fair amount of fluency. The legibility is usually vivid.

=

Trikaldrishti begins to increase in the telepathy + tapasbuddhi.

=

Ananda now goes back to the manasa chidghana and not to the mere ahaituka or shuddha in manasa. There is a tendency to greater intensity of this subjective ananda.

=

More rupadrishya, but imperfect.

=

In Samadhi antardarshi is more frequent but slight.

=

Vishaya of rasa.

=

Kamananda discouraged for these two days begins to revive. Tivra is always intense with smarana, but tends otherwise to sleep.

=

Strong adverse movement in karma.

Mar 17.

The Ishwaradarshana has made a rapid bound to the shuddha Ananda possessing the chidghana, with the sense of the absolute universal beauty with the variety of feature. The chidghana gives a centrality and perfect harmony to the variety and reveals the spiritual law of each form of beauty, the guna and the swabhava, the thing it expresses. The Ananda is sometimes intense, sometimes moderate, sometimes goes back to the manasa shuddha chidghana; but the trend to intensity prevails.

=

Energy of tapas-siddhi is increasing, but there is still the division from trikaldrishti, the three elements of T^3 acting separately and not taken up into the union in duality of T^2

=

Sense (physical) and delight of touch in the contact of objects outside oneself, even at a distance, has long been developing,—mostly behind the veil with manifestations in front—and is now thinking of universalising itself. The sense is sometimes subtle physical, sometimes sthula.

═

Lipi confirms fluency in legible stability, but its free manifestation is forcefully obstructed.

═

Successful samadhi. Lipi in sushupti often coherent; otherwise resolved by ideal thought into some form of coherence; only occasionally left to incoherence. Increasing force of rupadrishya; present also, but more successfully resisted in antardarshi. The obstruction to samadhi is obstinate and strong.

Mar 18.

The rudra energy which has long been attempting to seize the system, has now laid hold.

═

Lipi

"Do not limit the rapidity possible to the Shakti."

"Do not admit defeat."

The last means obviously definite defeat; for actual adverse result has to be admitted. Script—"There must be a constant insistence, but an illumined insistence"

—

Script.

"From today the third chatusthaya has to be pushed on, the denials of the first and second energetically refused.

"Today the foundation of the rudra energy has been successfully laid and the Maheshwari in Mahakali once dominated (taken in as pratistha) will be perfected."

The Maheshwari already taken in as pratistha was Maheshwari in Mahasaraswati, the other sometimes manifest is Maheshwari in Mahalakshmi. Once in Ch. [Chandernagore] Maheshwari herself was manifest. This is the last stage of the pratistha preparation. It is connected with the union of aishwarya-ishita-vashita with trikaldrishti and prakamyavyapti.

═

For the last few days a revolution in Russia with Michael brought to the throne as Czar has been telepathically suggested to the mind. This is half-fulfilled by today's news.

Reference.

"The result will be that Prakriti will lose her power of reflecting herself in the Brahman" ie the lower Prakriti which interferes with the ideality. The higher is simply the consciousness and will of the Ishwara.

=

Samadhi

Force of distinct variety in rupa-drishya of Antardarshi. Great power of suppression of incoherence in the sushupta.

=

The sarvasaundarya of the Ananda chidghana is growing more and more, although it is not as yet secure against relapse.

Mar 20.

The sarva-saundarya increases in its hold. It tends to lose the vividness of its prema-kama elements and of the Ishwaradarshana, but easily recovers them.

=

The external asamata now is failing in its touch on the mind as well as on the buddhi; it touches only the physical sheath and affects the physical prana, but by evanescent touches, even when it is allowed to act without any attempt at expulsion.

=

There is an attempt of the asiddhi to confuse the Devibhava and sraddha which that draws back a little to see how the asiddhi works when the system is left to itself.

All these are the vestiges of the old mentality which come athwart the ideality without actually replacing it.

=

Samadhi oppressed by nidra.

=

There are constant returns of the physical asamata, never assuming the assent of the buddhi and the mind, but touching, sometimes settling for a while on the physical emotionalism.

═

The main work today has been the persistent and rapid discouragement of all tapatya whether of will to determine event or of will [to] determine knowledge or of will to secure results or enjoyments. Tapatya is intellectual, mental, rajasic will. In order to do this almost all will and almost all favourable result or inner activity has to be stopped, except such as is purely passive.

═

In the evening a movement outlined itself that has been for some time preparing, that of correct self-telepathies, telepathies perceiving at once their own substance of truth. This gives no surety of trikaldrishti, but only actualised fact of event, state, tendency, intention etc correctly conceived or rather felt & seen.

═

The old time-trikaldrishti, long discontinued, revives with its old imperfections.

1. M's [Moni's] return at about 8.55.
2 N's [Nolini's] return approaching
3 S's [Saurin's] early return and meal at about 9.15 and 9.25 but only the times came right, the two events being wrongly placed, S's return at 9.25, the meal at 9.15 or 9.25.

Mar 21.

Most of the day given to work for Arya. Negative condition in the siddhi. Asiddhi emphasised, as far as it will go, in all the chatusthayas. Some play of ideality in the evening.

Mar 22

Out of the inhibition and asiddhi there is being created a new luminously mechanical ideal substratum of thought and action —jnana tapas—combined which replaces gradually the old half-intelligent action or thought, habitual, instinctive etc which rose out of the subconscient or was determined by the subconscient. This rises out of the realised *sat* in the mental, vital, physical *prakriti* (pradhana elementalised) and is therefore satyam. It is not yet ritam, but prepares to be. It will be brihat by the large assimilation of the circumconscient under the law of the ideality.

═

Physical tamas has been for some days dominant. It is now being violently thrown off to be replaced by the dasya-tapas guided by an inherent, though largely involved shama-prakasha. The reactions of a sort of unreal, yet actualised physical weakness are fighting against this new type of action,—new, because formerly, when it came, it contained an element of rajas.

═

Ashanti is becoming more & more purely physical. It contains a sort of mechanical asamata and asukham. .

The resistance to the light of the ideality still continues. There is a physical repression of the thought when it tries to rise into the jyotih. The diminishing of the asamata into the pure physical touch continues.

Mar 25

The last two days given chiefly to Arya and poetry. No marked incident in the sadhana.

═

Today samadhi is recovering its activity after a temporary cessation.

Mar 30 – 31.

Revival of the active sadhana.

==

The chidghana shuddha is now perfectly founded, normalised & universalised. Only its status varies.

The Ishwara-darshana is equally founded and universalised. But there are two experiences of it, one in which it is only present to the observation as the material of consciousness, but does not come home to the mind, the other in which it is vivid and the very nature of the soul's view of things.

The Ishwara is not as often before Krishna or Kali, Purusha and Prakriti, in the individual, but the Lilamaya impartially in all, Krishna with Kali in the purusha, Kali with Krishna in the *stri*.

The prema-kama is normalising itself in the same way, — in two ways separately, first as essential stuff of the ananda; secondly, as essential result of the chidghana shuddha and its revelation of universal saundarya. This is not yet quite firm and complete.

==

For some time samata and dasyam were isolated from shakti, in order that the last power of attack of asamata might be removed. It now touches from outside without any hold on the buddhi or the manas and a very weak clutch at the prana, as a sort of mild physical depression in the prana dependent on defect of sraddha in the karma. The velleities of ashanti, revolt (absence of nati) etc which the external Nature would force on the individual, have no power left to form themselves, the aid of buddhi and manas being refused.

==

The active side is now being revived. Absolutely perfect reference, telepathy perfect in satyam of substance, perfect too in ritam of arrangement when it does not attempt to develop trikaldrishti and tapas; occasionally perfect trikaldrishti. Tapas is still tainted with the habit of effort and struggle; trikaldrishti with the false tapasic stress in its telepathic parts.

15 AUGUST–28 SEPTEMBER 1917

Aug 15th 1917. Wednesday.

The siddhi has reached a fresh turning-point.

The first chatusthaya is firm, complete, universal—except for occasional and quite momentary touches which have no power to fix themselves in the consciousness or outlast their moment or acquire intensity,—except, again, rarely in the failure of samadhi. But this is quite exceptional. Even the earth of the system (called in lipi, γη, territoriality) is subjected to the law of the samata. Only the positive ananda is still weak in [siddhi].[1]

The second chatusthaya is complete, fixed, universal; but there are defects, principally in devibhava (*ishwari bhâva, sarvakarmasâmarthyam,*) in *sraddha swashaktyâm* and most in *daihiki shakti*. All needs to take on a greater intensity, but all are founded, all firm except these three, but all have their points of weakness. Eg. *dasyam* is not yet normally tertiary of the third degree.

Defects in the first two chatusthayas are really not self-existent, but the result of insufficiency in the third, the vijnana. Here all hitherto has been preparation. Gnana is well advanced, T^2 only founded, samadhi is still subject to mentality and incoherence, the physical basis is undeveloped; but all have acquired their crude material. Lipi is specially forward. All the stages of the ideality are customary.

The fourth chatusthaya is developed only in Ananda. Arogya is prepared but still subject to fragmentary denial, in all but the [. . .] roga which still persists. Utthapana is thrown backward, Saundarya only developed in psychic youth and a few preparatory movements of the physical change.

Krishna Kali are both developed, but not perfect. Karma kama are psychically progressing, physically held back.

---

[1] *MS* asiddhi.

Brahmadarshana is complete as continent, incomplete in contents.

Shuddhi, mukti, bhukti are well-advanced psychically, strong with fragmentary defects physically. Siddhi depends on the perfection of the still imperfect chatusthayas.

Aug 15th to 20th

Arogya.

Attack of roga,—attempt at cold and fever. Slight cold and eye-affection; the former unable to materialise entirely, the latter materialised successfully after three days' struggle, but not with the same force as formerly. Strong on 17th and 18th, slight since. The disease was made an occasion for the exercise of the tapas-siddhi on the mental level, where the effect is never more than partial when used against strong resistance.

T^2.

During these days the telepathic mentality has been entirely and firmly idealised on its own level in the perception of force, tendency, possibility, and entire satyam thus secured. Even when the ideality is removed, the satyam remains as an unillumined perception. The movement towards ritam (T^2) is being resumed.

The stress on forces = mental tapas. This tapas has begun to be idealised and is already of the nature of a half-illumined balance of force-action. The satyam of the mental tapas is not so sure or not so illumined ordinarily as the satyam of the mental perception.

Samadhi.

Strong play of rich and perfect chhayamaya. There is a lack of stability and continuity; but these are firm in the obscure chhayamaya, sufficient in the half tejomaya chhayamaya without richness and variety. This rich and perfect but unstable play of rupa occurs sometimes in the jagrat antardrishta,—though more often various than rich and perfect. It is trying to emerge even in the bahirdrishta.

Vishaya.

Vishaya develops only in the sukshma, not in the sukshma sthula where it is still held up.

══

Aug 20th Monday.

Ananda.

Ananda is stationary in kama and tivra, preparing for a fresh advance. Vaidyuta has attained to occasional fullness in body and in length of pervasion. The basis of raudra is being farther perfected.

══

The rule of decrease by repetition is more and more giving way to the increasing power of the rule of greater intensification. Orgiastic tivra direct from the touch, after it has ceased, and subsequent sympathetic tivra orgiasm elsewhere have begun to show themselves. Sometimes repetition produces variations from intense tivra to intense vaidyuta and back

Orgiastic kamananda stream in pervasive non-orgiastic kamananda. The orgiastic tends to suppress and replace the pervasive, but sometimes the latter persists circumferentially in the body or is even increased. Simultaneously increasing orgiasm of both has to be developed.

Vaidyuta tends to grow constantly, to be pervasive and to be ahaituka as well as sahaituka.

══

Tivra touch continued in the same place for five minutes; constantly disappearing into vishaya or lessened, but always recurring and increasing though with [necessity][2] of smarana or smarana + tapas. After slight discontinuity more intense than before. This begins or presages the final victory of the law of increasing intensity. After complete cessation orgiastic tivra, continued briefly and often repeated.

Aug 21st Tuesday

Dasya

Tertiary *dasya* in the third degree is now being more regularly enforced in the movements of the body, even the slightest. The remnants of the secondary degree are being swallowed up into the third

---

[2] *MS* necessary

The same control is now to be enforced and is being enforced in the script, *vâni* and *vângmaya*. The dasya is now thoroughly introduced into the *îswarîbhâva*. Also into all bhoga. The firmness of this siddhi has to be firmly guarded.

The introduction of the *dasya* into the perceptive thought seems more difficult, but it is being easily done in the *jnana*. The test will be in the *trikaldrishti-tapas*. All responsibility for action, physical, vital, mental must be left entirely to the Iswara, the Shakti is only an instrument and the Jiva their meeting-place.

All traces of the *asamata*, now only the occasional recurrence of an old habit, must be finally removed. This can be done by bringing forward the delight in the *asiddhi*.

Brahma

Strong *Ishwaradarshana sarvabhuteshu*, followed by *jyotih* of the *Anantam (Jnanam) Brahma* in things. This was preceded half an hour ago by the *lipi* 15, several times repeated, the number of the *Anantam* in the enumeration of the siddhis which compose the last five *chatusthayas*.

1. *jnanam*, 2 *trikaldrishti*, 3 *rupa-siddhi*, 4 *tapas* 5 *samadhi*
6 *arogya*, 7 *ananda*, 8 *utthapana*, 9 *saundarya*
10 *Krishna*, 11 *Kali*, 12 *karma*, 13 *kama*
14 *Sarvam Brahma*, 15 *Anantam*, 16 *Jnanam*, 17 *Anandam*
18 *suddhi*, 19 *mukti*, 20 *bhukti*, 21 *siddhi*.

This *jyotih* is not yet to be free from interruption and diminution, but it is founded and from henceforth bound to increase. It is *jyoti* not *tejas*, ideal light, not the mental. It is now trying to ally itself entirely with the *Jnanam* and *Anandam Brahma*. . These manifest usually each with a separate intensity in which the three others disappear from view; henceforth the quadruple intensity has set out to create its united effulgence.

Aug 22^{d} Wednesday.

The *siddhis* established yesterday stand, except in *vismriti*, in which they are not so much denied as either unnoticed or in suspense. The tertiary *dasya* seems to be absolutely firm in the body, script, *vani*, and only suspended by *vismriti* in the perceptive jnana and in the *vangmaya* for the change which is being operated. This change is the transference of the thought from the control of the inferior *devatas* to that of the *Jiva-Prakriti* receiving it direct from the Ishwara. The perceptive thought is being similarly transferred. Thought is to occur henceforth in the *vijnana* of the *Jiva*; not as suggestion, but as thought in action and the thought of the *Ishwara* in origin.

At present the perceptive thought is becoming impersonally *vijnanamaya* with a vague sense of the *Ishwara* behind. In telepathic *trikaldrishti*, when it is not *vijnanamaya*, its nature and descent as *manasic* suggestion from the mind-world through the *rajas* of the pranic is more and more often perceived in its fullness. This is the false *trikaldrishti*, which is in reality no more than telepathic suggestion of possibility. These suggestions come either from above or from around, from the mind and life-planes of the earth; in reality the latter derive rapidly from the former except when there is exchange on the earth plane itself; even then the derivation is eventually the same.

Brahman.

The *jyotih* of *Jnanam Anantam* is now taking into itself the *Anandam.*

=

Lipi— *September*, the physical siddhi begins its perfection.
tejorashi. (yesterday) fulfilled today in the flow of ideality into the perceptive thought.

Vijnana

The real trikaldrishti is slowly growing over the telepathic basis, but combated always by the mental doubt. Lipi—“It is fashioning itself gradually in spite of the intellectuality; first, it has to take itself up into the ideality.” “Together the effective telepathy and the trikaldrishti." "Telepathy tapassiddhi."

=

Rupasiddhi and samadhi are resisted, sometimes growing, sometimes falling back.

=

Trikaldrishti is increasing as indicated in the lipi, in spite of a mass of intellectual suggestions of the old type; out of it emerge three elements, (1) the ineffectual suggestion which falls away, (2) effective telepathy, ie telepathy tapas sometimes dropping into pure tapas without foresight sometimes into foresight with an involved tapas, (3) trikaldrishti proper, but insufficient[ly] illumined and uncertain of itself. Only when there is illumination, is the trikaldrishti sure of itself and its fulfilment.

=

The pranic suggestions which amount only to rajasic imagination are being finally discouraged.

=

Some activity of vishaya in smell and taste. The latter is stronger in sukshma than in sukshma-sthula, but there is some sign in the latter of progress from the crude basic states to the dense and developed, which have hitherto appeared only in the madhura.

Aug 23 Thursday.

T^2

Lipi, "perfect telepathies siddhi." Perfection implies liberation from false stress and, positively, accurate limitation and accurate extent. This has begun to develop, but is yet imperfect. The necessary condition of perfection is that the mentality should cease all attempts to determine the *trikaldrishti* and leave that entirely to the ideality.

The force of tapas increases but as this works as telepathy tapas and increases only the effective telepathy, it makes the distinction of telepathy, ie mental perception of present fact, force and tendency, from *trikaldrishti*, as perception of present and future (the past has so far been mostly left alone), more difficult; for a constantly effective telepathy tapas easily masks as *trikaldrishti*, until an occasional failure shows the mistake. All this would not occur if the highest ideality were at work for T^2, but at present it is only the lower ideality working on the mental perceptions

The satyam of the telepathy is now extremely perfect, the ritam more perfect than it has ever been before; sometimes the perfection is entire. But all this is as yet in the field of vision where truth and error can be tested by immediate result. The telebuddhi and telesiddhi on which the lipi has been for some time insisting, is as yet imperfect and very limited.

==

Renewed action of samadhi with an increased general hold of the ideality in thought, vangmaya, lipi. Rupa, dialogue, reading etc have made no definite progress

Aug 24 Friday.

Entire perfection of stability and solidity in lipi with an almost perfect freedom in manifestation. There is only a slight obstruction still sensible in the akash, but this is sufficient to compel a return to the less perfect lipi. Until a siddhi has become entirely the nature of the system and environment, according as it is purely subjective or subjective-objective, it is not perfectly possessed and is liable either to temporary loss or diminution. A siddhi maintained by force or by habitual exercise is imperfectly possessed; it must be held entirely by nature, as easy as breathing or thinking.

==

Rupasamadhi is again obstructed; the obstruction is now evidently artificial, maintained by a pressure upon the nature of the terrestrial *sattwa* which is ready to yield the coherent *vijnanamaya samadhi* in its full abundance.

==

In all subjective movements and those subjective-objective in which the subjective element predominates and the personality alone is concerned, the obstruction of the γη is similarly artificial, not belonging to the earth nature itself, but to the Patala nature into which the old powers have been exiled but from the borders of which they still maintain their opposition.

The ideality is therefore obstructed in its progress only by this opposition; the real obstruction is only in the fourth and fifth chatusthayas.

Saturday 25th August.

Lipi more emphasised in its perfection, especially stability which is now practically universal; the solidity varies and the legibility is sometimes partial to the eye, and sometimes still at first the lipi is stable only, or solid also, but there has to be tapas to bring out the legibility. Sometimes it is incomplete, part of a sentence, or else words are omitted; sometimes it becomes coherent, instead of appearing formed, coherent and [complete][3] at one leap of emergence into the akasha. But the latter is now common, and all defects disappear at the first touch of tapas

In tivra the law of increase grows yet stronger, interruption decreases, intensity tends to be maintained. But at present if left alone, the general impressionability to tivra sinks often into a sort of subdued half quiescence and the intensity reawakens only after the first touch or the first few touches.

Samadhi varies, sometimes yielding to the obstruction, sometimes reemerging. Only the ideality of thought, vangmaya, lipi maintains itself and seems to be firmly established. Dream is commonest, comes very readily and is vivid, bordering on samadhi in its aping of coherence, vividness of rupa, dialogue etc, force of presentation. It is not however really coherent, as it was sometimes, but fanciful and extravagant in its details and connections. The nearness of a siddhi artificially withheld is however strongly felt. Rupa remains obstructed.

Sunday August 26th

The siddhis already established are now being taken up and carried to their completion on a higher plane.

Vangmaya is being taken up into the Ananda of the vijnana level, where it is no longer the thought of the Jivaprakriti with the Ishwara as the origin of the thought, but the thought of the Ishwara in the Shakti who is the medium and the instrument of the thinking. This has been done perfectly in the type; it has yet to be universalised.

---

[3] *MS* complement

A similar process is taking place with the perceptive thought and has been done less strongly and perfectly in the type, but its perfection and universalisation cannot proceed so far because the ideal perceptive thought still carries in itself an element of mentality and therefore more easily descends into mental thinking than it ascends into pure ideal thinking.

In the script to the presence of the Ishwara is being added the personality of the Ishwara and his relation of madhuradasya containing all his other relations with the Jiva-Shakti.

T^2 is still unidealised, but is pressing towards idealisation.

Lipi is rapidly universalising perfection of form and light in the thought-interpretation.

The containing Brahmadarshana is preparing to fix itself in the Ananda with the Jnana Ananta as content and Sarva as base.

Physical siddhi

In the physical siddhi *kamananda* pervasive and orgiastic is becoming more easy and natural in all positions, but needs and indeed is almost entirely dependent on *smarana* and sometimes on smarana + tapas: but the need of *tapas* is being gradually rejected. It is no longer entirely dependent on excitation of the centre by *sparsha*.

Ahaituka tivra has been for a long time less common, but it has a greater intensity and force for insistence when it comes and comes, besides, more easily everywhere.

There is the same increase of intensity in *vaidyuta* and *vishaya*, and also in the former a greater ease and normality in arrival, development and extension. But it needs *smarana* or *smarana* and *tapas*, more commonly both, in the ahaituka and in the *sahaituka* current, *smarana* only—and not always—in the intense *sahaituka* touch.

The other three members of the physical siddhi have made no definite advance and are except in certain directions subject to relapse.

═

Karma (subjective), though often and increasingly effective, is subject to great opposition, obstruction and reaction. *Kama* at present is not being pressed.

═

Samadhi

The other parts of *samadhi* not yet idealised, began to be taken hold of by the *vijnâna* in the afternoon, except the reading and rupa; all at the same time increased in coherence. At night the reading also was taken hold of, powerfully, both in its coherence and in its incoherence. Mentality now reigns only in *swapna*, although it still strives to persist also in *swapna-samâdhi*; but *swapna* is increasing in coherence. Even when interrupted, it tends to be resumed at the same point or to return to the same subject; this even happens after a long diversion to another subject. It is still, however, a sort of fragmentary coherence. The ideality also works in a fragmentary fashion, except in vangmaya

Tapas

Lipi, "sixty seventy". 60 degrees rising to 70 degrees of *tapas* effectiveness is being enforced in type and has set out to generalise itself. Hitherto *tapas* effect was all haphazard and incoherent, often strong, seldom perfect, frequently weak or nil, always partial except in details, never or hardly ever final except in certain broad effects after much difficulty

Aug 27 Monday.

60° to 70° effectiveness is becoming more general; though 50° and less persist and 80° occasionally occurs, but rarely. The 60° is sometimes in swiftness of overcoming resistance, sometimes in amount of effect, which is often not perfect, but only partial, a $\frac{3}{5}$ or $\frac{4}{5}$ effect, — especially in *tapas* of exact circumstance; — sometimes in both respects there is only this partial success.

Extension of *kâmânanda* proceeds against obstruction.

Much action of Samadhi in the direction of strengthening the ideality, but all is still fragmentary. The incoherent reading tends to be turned into coherence or replaced by coherent reading or else taken as it is and interpreted in its scattered parts. Increase of coherence is the rule.

Tuesday Aug 28.

The telepathy-*tapassiddhi* is becoming again idealised in the sense of being seen in its right limits of the satyam in the light of the vijnana; the *tapas-siddhi* is also acquiring more force with 60°–70° as the average force, though it falls below and goes above, the latter more often than the former, because of the renewed strength of obstruction. T^2 is in abeyance. A similar process of idealisation, more advanced and luminous, is being applied to the mental deformations of the *jnâna*.

Violent attack of the asiddhi chiefly on the first and third chatusthayas, but to a certain extent in all six. The old method of forcing undelight in asiddhi on the system from without through the pranic physicality aided by intellectual suggestions and throwing it out from within by the tapas and the buddhi. Pranic manas in its physicality is still compelled to respond, with a slight or evanescent response in its emotivity, but not in its buddhi which does not recognise the undelight as belonging to the system. The freedom of the buddhi from undelight is stronger for the attack; moreover the restoration of the ananda is becoming *ahaituka* or depends on the tapas and no longer on the buddhi. The habit of return of physical depression is also being eliminated, as well as the remnants of susceptibility to the suggestion of desire. Complete asiddhi is contemplated without revolt or depression.

There is now commencing an attempt to establish a more lasting stability in the lipi so that several lines may be manifested simultaneously—this has already been done often enough in type, but vanishingly,—with a firm hold on the akasha.

In the evening a preparation of farther progress towards the complete taking over of the whole action of the consciousness by the Ishwara.

Wednesday Aug 29th

Continuation of yesterday's last movement. No definite advance, except that even the telepathy, trikaldrishti and tapas are being taken up by the Ishwara.

═

The taking over of the whole ideality by the Ishwara is now complete; only the recurrence of the old movements has to be eliminated.

Samadhi.

Strong original lipi of the highest ideality in the *samâdhi*, (*antardarshi* and *swapna-samadhi*). *Rupa* is active and abundant, but not stable in *antardarshi*; obstructed, but sometimes luxuriant in certain *chhâyâmaya* forms in *swapna samâdhi*. Brief dialogue in *sthula sukshma* word in swapna, coherent but not continuous or perfect. Reading, sukshma dialogue etc vary again from coherence to absolute incoherence. Thought of all kinds is much stronger in the ideality.

At a very deep level of samadhi neighboring on the sushupti the old defects still remain, but dream has less hold.

═

Telepathy and trikaldrishti are now beginning to shake off some of their imperfections, but the latter is still very hampered and limited. *Lipi.* "perfect telepathy trikaldrishti" (yesterday) today, "perfect telepathy, perfect trikaldrishti". The perfection realised is necessarily only in type. It is now attempting to extend itself into the large and perfect satyam ritam. This attempt made formerly on the mental, is now being done on the *vijnâna* level.

═

Ambulant orgiastic kamananda

Aug 30 – Thursday.

Ishwarabhava in the Brahmadarshana seems now to be fixed in its universality, sometimes subdued, sometimes intense; but it varies from the mental to the *vijnanamaya* and Ananda levels and is generally upon the mental. It is only by tapas and smarana that it returns to the higher planes. The subjective *prema-kamananda* is also now absent, except by *smarana*.

Aug 31 Friday.

Ananda

Steady progress in the *tivra*.

Orgiastic *kamananda* is becoming more frequent and progressing towards normality, although still dependent on *smarana* and liable to obstruction. Ambulatory ananda is developing very fast, stationary is beginning to make itself normal, the sedentary without regard to *asana* shows sign also of following suit. The necessity of tapas is disappearing, smarana alone is required, except when the obstruction tries to recover strength; the normal readiness of the physical system for the Ananda may be considered as established.

Arogya is still obstructed, subject to relapse and unable to make any large advance.

Saundarya is also obstructed. Only psychological *yauvana* has become almost normal, varying in force and age, but never now settling into *vârdhakya*.

=

The pervasive kamananda is now orgiastic in its nature, even when subdued in its force and insufficiently sthula in its hold. The ananda has now taken hold of all positions, recumbent and loose sedentary as well as ambulant, sistory and close sedentary. It is rapidly increasing in intensity, continuity and power of self-repetition. It has even occurred once or twice without *smarana*. This is the beginning of the "vertiginous rapidity" predicted today in lipi of samadhi.

=

In samadhi reading more firmly gripped by the lipi. Vishaya in samadhi, separated or combined, taste, sound, touch, sight, —smell is rare and unready,—occur often in great intensity, but intermittently. They are not yet a standing feature of vision in swapnasamadhi.

September 1917

1st Saturday.

Telesiddhi (karma)

Telesiddhi takes place frequently in fragments; large, decisive or final success is rare except in telesiddhi of some propinquity. In the main matters the obstruction and opposition are in the mass, though hampered, still successful.

Ananda

The kamananda seems now to be firmly established as a normal dharma of the body. Continuity and intensity have to be normalised. There is continuity with smarana; continuity without smarana has to be established. Intensity increases with the continuity. Ananda wave by strong *sparsha* on any part of the body is now being taken up; it is kama with admixture of tivra, vaidyuta, raudra. It is at first dependent on smarana and tapas; but in fact the latter is being eliminated; the ananda now as a general rule develops best and most readily when there is smarana without pressure of tapas; the latter, at least if too direct, is even something of an obstacle. Practically this ananda wave by touch has been established in its universality, but the siddhi has now to be entirely confirmed. All this development has taken place in the course of five minutes or so, with the vertiginous rapidity.

Ananda of acute discomfort has for some time been developing and is now preparing to be confirmed and perfected.

In samadhi stronger grip of observing ideality on narrative and dialogue.

Tapas is now more frequently effective (60°–80°) in the environment (not life) on general event; it has begun to work more frequently also in exact circumstantial effect but against great obstruction and with more frequent failure than success. This is on the mental level, by itself, or in conjunction with telepathies, without trikaldrishti.

Obstruction is being offered to the new ananda siddhis; they lower the readiness, frequency, continuity and intensity, but do not succeed in altogether suspending; meanwhile independence of the *ahaituka* pervasion and normality of the short *sahaituka* wave are increasing.

═

Strength of ideal lipi in the samadhi.

Sept 2. Sunday.

Obstruction in all the siddhis and attempt to enforce relapse yesterday and today. In the first it is unsuccessful except for fleeting and increasingly unsubstantial touches. In the second it lowers the force of tertiary dasya in the third degree and keeps in abeyance the ishwarabhava and the intenser sraddha. In the third it forces back the ideality and keeps up the dead play of the disjointed intellectual mentality, as well as the direct sense of the Ishwara control. In the fourth it tries to keep up the old stereotyped rule of denial of siddhi after a day of exceptional siddhi in the kamananda and enforce *vismriti* on the body; it is only partially successful[;] it diminishes and interrupts but cannot suspend.

═

The process of changing separated telepathy and tapas into united T^2 is being given a new turn. This is to give always the decisive event first as at once trikaldrishti and tapas, and attend afterwards to the movements which try to contradict the decreed and foreseen result and those which help with the aids and modifications of the opposing forces to bring it about. For the latter purpose it is being attempted to universalise the ideal light in the telepathies. The difficulty is always to distinguish the real finality from something that imitates it and to seize the right measure of the telepathies. The force of possession of the telepathies by the ideality is as yet insufficient, the interference of the mentality yet too frequent to allow of this invariable certainty.

Sept 3 Monday

The movement of T^2 continues. To idealise the decisive T^2 entirely and to enforce *ritam* on the *satyam* of the telepathies are the two requisite preliminaries for perfection. The latter is the more difficult of the two processes.

—

Lipi is confirmed in the ideality; it is now attempting to raise itself into the highest ideality.

═

Attempt at *lipi-trikaldrishti*, but as yet distant prediction without detail of circumstance or time.

The lipi now varies from the lower idealities to the three forms of the highest vijnana.

═

Movement of T^2 continues to be prepared; but as yet with no decisive result. Only the satyam becomes more pronounced.

═

Samadhi is stationary, persisting in its present gains, but also in the obstacles

Sept 4 Tuesday

In Samadhi the tejomaya is reappearing, chiefly in the chhayamaya environment, clear, perfect, but only with an instantaneous stability, although a tendency of increased stability is not altogether absent. The chhayamaya is now capable at all stages of a great stability which is not infrequent, but still even in the chhayamaya stability is not the rule; instability prevails.

—

Lipi is now full of the highest vijnana light and usually or almost invariably belongs to that plane in its substance and status and increasingly in its style.

═

Thought also has followed the same development, but it is not as yet so advanced in the universality of the highest and most luminous vijnana.

═

T^2 is attempting to follow. The illumined satyam of the telepathies is now the rule, the darker movement is the exception and is immediately replaced by the light of the vijnanamaya interpretation. But the tapas is not equally illuminated in its satyam. With the increase of *satyam*, *ritam* also increases. Still *vijnânamaya* T^2 is the exception, T^3 is still the rule.

Wednesday. Sept 5.

Tapas effectivity in the environment tends towards greater normality of 70°, greater frequency of 80°, but this tendency is not yet well established. This effectivity however does not extend to exact detail of circumstance in which asiddhi both of will and eventual knowledge is the rule, siddhi the rare exception. Telepathy of contributory force, tendency, intention, impulse etc is sufficiently exact, though not always sufficiently complete.

Contributory tapas is becoming illumined in the same way as telepathy, in its *satyam* and increasingly in its *ritam*. But decisive tapas like decisive vision and even more is still unillumined or insufficiently illumined.

On the whole the vijnanamaya is now well-grounded and the rule of the being, but very far from perfection.

═

Tivra seems to have gone slightly back, but this is only the emergence of tendencies which had been held down by the energy of the tapas, not quite eliminated, though diminished and depressed. The habit of fluctuation from greater to less and from less to greater response has to be got rid of. Moreover the intimacy of the response has to be secured, that is to say, the inherent excitability of the physical system responding immediately to the sparsha by an intimate and intense thrill. At present this excitability is lost by prolonged excitation and replaced by an unsteady communicated excitability. Moreover the necessity of tapas has to be eliminated and smarana made sufficient. In kamananda this necessity is already recognised, and the advance is therefore retarded in order to get it satisfied

═

There is now increasing frequency of tapas-siddhi in exact circumstance, often sustained, varying from 70°, 75°, to 80°, but also sinking to 60°. Below 60° the normal, though not invariable rule is asiddhi. Delay of fulfilment brings often inexactitude in place as well as time or even incompleteness of the effect.

Thursday Sept. 6.

The lipi is now fixed normally in the highest ideality.

=

Kamananda has resumed its action of continuity. It is noticeable that pressure of tapas is eliminated, although an original act of tapas-memory is still sometimes used to set it in action. Smarana is still necessary except sometimes in the most habituated asanas. There is some indication of the future substitution of a partial or side attention for smarana, but this is not yet anything more than an unrealised intention in the system.

=

Rupa is active to some extent in the jagrat, but there is no ascertainable progress.

Friday Sept 7.

There is a more settled ritam in the telepathy and tapas working in the unillumined or partially illumined mentality. The increase in effectivity of tapas seems now to be settled and normal. The development of this movement continued throughout the day has been the one feature of its siddhi. Also the return of the Ishwara control

Saturday Sept 8

The substitution of the necessity of half-attention for the necessity of smarana in orgiastic kamananda is taking place; it is already strongly established in the type. At first it was only sufficient for the sustaining of the ananda, not for its inception after cessation or its assertion against obstruction; but the sufficiency of the half-attention for initiating or renewing the ananda is now established. All this is in type; much has to be done before it can be universalised. In the end even this will not be necessary. The old habit of applying tapas survives in a fragmentary fashion, but is no longer accepted or efficient, except in *smarana-tapas*.

=

The Ishwara control is now firmly universalised in vani, script and vangmaya, with whatever survival of *gana* participation; it is not yet universalised in perceptive thought, still less in T^2. That is being prepared.

═

The excentric waves and currents of kamananda are following rapidly the same development as the main or central surge; they have to come to depend first on smarana without tapas—though at first with an implied tapas in it,—then on a half-attention, while the removal of even this necessity is being already prepared. Here too maintenance without full smarana is easier and more frequent than inception or even renewal.

—

These excentric currents are often ahaituka, that is, not created as before only by actual sparsha. There are signs that *ahaituka tivra* will also be soon prepared for normality. At present it is still dependent—except in the three main locations where half-smarana is already sufficient,—on the full *smarana* and usually on *smaranatapas*.

═

Vaidyuta is developing indistinctly along with the *tivra* and *kama*. Separate development of *vaidyuta* and *raudra* seems to have been postponed.

═

Intense continuous ahaituka tivra is being prepared and established in type in all the nine locative centres; it is already done in type in the seven main and is begun in the two subordinate centres. The discursive tivra, which once emerged, is now being encouraged to reappear. Note that there are three other subordinate centres of the third class in which the same preparation is being indicated.

The fault of incomplete pervasion in the ananda surge is being remedied in the type.

Sunday Sep. 9.

The force of greater ananda continuance seems definitely to have been established. Obstructive denial persists, but it is greatly weakened and half ineffective. It can only have a temporary strength as a result of discontinuance by *vismriti*.

—

So far it is only in Ananda that the prediction of September as the first month of strong physical siddhi is being fulfilled. In the rest obstructive denial or successful resistance are paramount, denial in 8 and 9, resistance in the Arogya.

=

The half smarana is now often reduced to a minimum of attention chiefly in the physical mind or even the mind of the body and the dependence of the Ananda on the attention begins to be replaced by the involuntary Ananda forcing the attention. But this is only occasionally. Usually greater or less smarana is required. If the mind is vacant, then the attention can sink to the minimum. If it is concentrated on any object or subject, the ananda either sinks and ceases or is kept in abeyance and resumed with full force on the cessation of the absorption.

A new circumstance is the pervasion of the pranic body by the ananda as well as, with a less forcefulness of sensation, the manasic body. In the latter, at the highest, it is pure *madhu* of the Soma.

All the anandas show signs of an increasing tendency to the orgiastic

Monday Sept 10.

A strong attempt by the artificial obstruction to renew its power of strongly suspending the Ananda; at times almost successful, it has decisively failed.

The ananda in the pranic body has now the power of taking possession of the physical.

=

Kamananda diminished in force of continuity and frequency, but not suspended. The obstruction is no longer able to suspend it strongly and imperatively as before. Its occasional control is becoming more and more artificial and its strength to obstruct more and more laboured. No longer intervals of suspension, but intervals of more difficult manifestation are the most it can impose.

Tuesday Sept 11.

Kamananda is gradually recovering its force and the greater pervasion is being insisted upon.

T^3 after a somewhat prolonged eclipse is once more idealising itself, but not with any great force.

Even in the lesser force of the Ananda the power of the involuntary Ananda is increasing; it often re-initiates suddenly the forgotten or oppressed orgiasm.

Wednesday Sept 12.

The lipi now perfectly founded in the highest ideality, is aiming at perfect fluidity on that level. It is easier in the chitra than in the akasha lipi, though even there there is some difficulty of immediate physical manifestation. In this difficulty are comprised all the formal defects that still remain in the lipi.

A certain lethargy of the vijnana action which has been dominant for some days, is now in process of being removed. It is noticeable that even the intellectual action is really a perfectly accurate action of the ideality except in T^3, but its perfection is only realised when the ideal perception, ketu, stands above to observe it. Even in T^3 the action would be perfect in its justice, if the remnant intellect judgment would not misinterpret and misemphasise it

Kamananda is increasing in the type its force of involuntary initiation and involuntary retention or repetition. The force hovers, it is true, on the borders between pure involuntariness and a minimum, hardly noticeable or even unnoticeable act of *smarana*.

=

Revival of samadhi activity. Very perfect ideality of thought, lipi, vangmaya. The lipi has suddenly taken on the full perfection of ideality already established in the jagrat as well as certain types of extreme formal perfection which used only to occur in the beginning, years ago, when the vital force of the sadhana was strong, but the ideal weak.

=

The lipi predicts the return of that vital force into the new ideal principle. At present vital force is often at a minimum due to the excessive force of shama which was necessary to purification. But as shama is now absolutely strong, tapas-force in vitality can be increased without perturbance.

=

The interregnum of non ideality was necessary to get rid of false certainty and the last insistences of the intellect trying to play the part of the ideality. These have now been immensely weakened, though not abolished. The intellectual action is now in T^3 becoming more and more just, even when quite unillumined. It is far however from having then a perfection of *ritam*.

Ahaituka tivra is taking on firmly the orgiastic character

Intense pain, other than burning, now often not only takes on the character of ananda but keeps it when prolonged. It is noticeable however that pointed, lancing pain is easier to deal with than the long-edged and the long-edged easier than the massed. Also the nervous is easier to transform than the gross physical produced by a physical object. The Nirananda element in certain forms of discomfort obstinately returns, even when their ananda has been frequently strong and complete in the type.

Thursday. Sept 13

In samadhi yesterday's gains repeated; in addition a stronger force of conscious ideality took possession of narrative, dialogue etc which attained to a firm, long, consecutive coherence hardly exampled before. Fragmentariness however still remains and relics of the dream mentalising touched the action at its best. Reading and rupa still remain to be developed in the ideality.

A movement in the samadhi, jagrat, swapna, etc to take possession of all activities by the highest idealities. But this is not yet a sustained movement

=

T^3 continues its development, and even in the unillumined action the growth of ritam is removing the distinction between telepathy and trikaldrishti. Tapas has still to take its proper place in the ritam which extends only to the two other members of T^3.

Friday. Sept 14.

Chiefly, the continuance of the movement by which the direct Ishwara control in the highest ideality is taking possession of the whole vijnana. The T^2 is still the least prepared for the change and its preparation is the main feature of the sadhana, apart from the movement of the Ananda.

=

Steady progress in the Brahmadarshana. It is confirmed in the Ananda mentality and is being lifted into the Ananda ideality. There is no longer any strong tendency of relapse into the mental *asundara* and *nirananda*.

Saturday. Sept 15

The poise of the Brahmadarshana in things has changed rapidly, suddenly from the vijnanamaya with Ananda in it to the Ananda full with vijnana. It is only in beings that the lower poises are still strong. It only needs the sense of the infinite Ananda in each thing to be added and the darshana will be completely founded. This is already being prepared and is partially active even in regard to persons.

T^3 has been rapidly prepared this morning for the ideal control. It is only when the physical brain relaxes into failure to respond or when there are too rapid suggestions from the external intellectuality that the ideal reception fails. Even the intellectual ideality is now losing all its credit, because of its failure to satisfy the needs of the siddhi, especially the ritam.

=

Great incoherence in the reading. The other powers of samadhi maintain their ideality or at least their coherence, though sometimes with an initial difficulty. In rupa and reading the sadhana is up against the curious phenomenon which seems insuperable in jagrat rupa, vishaya, and the physical siddhi other than ananda, the stereotyped difficulty, the action of the Vedic *Nidah*, which consists in the eternal repetition of the past movements of success and failure forming a circle which refuses to be broken. In all the siddhi this phenomenon has been active, but most obstinately in certain members of the sadhana. In others siddhi has arrived in spite of it, has been more forceful than the tendency to turn each step into a final step, but in others it has seemed powerless. This however can be only an appearance. The change must come.

Sunday Sept 16.

Ananda darshana moves between suddha ananda proper and the same in the *ananda vijnana* or *ananda manas*. Sometimes it falls back into vijnana or mentality. This falling back is due to the recoil from the attempt to realise the infinite Ananda not only in but behind each finite, for which the mentality is not ready and therefore falls back into some fine or coarse mental representation of the thing desired by the will and sometimes, but insecurely seized in the knowledge.

═

Brilliant jyotirmaya action of the vijnana working sometimes upon the stumblings of the intellectual T^3. This is the real *surya*, still hampered by the limited receptivity of the mind, but already presaging in type its opulence of plenary light.

═

Yesterday's lipi was "Today is the last day of the intellectuality in the telepathy trikaldrishti aishwarya; it will be the first day of the ideality"; that is the last day of acceptance of the intellectual T^3 as a means of knowledge-siddhi and will-siddhi. The remnants continue to force themselves on the mind, but do not receive acceptation from the Jiva-Prakriti.

Monday Sept 17

Remoulding of the stuff of mind so that all thought and will and feeling may be *vijnanamaya*, has set in in earnest. The progress is rapid; though not yet of the highest rapidity, still of a decisive rapidity.

Tuesday Sept 18. Wednesday 19.

The same movement with a tendency to relapse.

Thursday Sept [20][4]

Renewal of intensity of kamananda. This time full pervasion in the intensity is established. But the power of the obstruction to profit by the vismriti has to be removed. Activity of the other anandas was also in a sort of abeyance and is reviving.

---

[4] *MS* 19

—

The passive samata is much stronger than before; positive ananda in the asiddhi is not yet quite firm, therefore a vague depression is still able to touch the system. Sraddha is capable of suspension with regard to rapidity, to complete physical siddhi and to karma; the ishwarabhava also and the sense of direct Ishwara control.

—

Arogya does not visibly advance; the other physical siddhis are still subject almost entirely to the denial.

═

Confirmation of the intense, all-pervasive Ananda in all positions. The strengthening of the separate current or wave so as to effectively universalise it, is beginning; but strong smarana with tapas in it is usually necessary.

Friday Sept [21][5]

Conversion of the passive samata, *titiksha*, *udasinata*, *nati*, into their positive forms of Ananda through *Ishwaraprema* and *dasya*. By this ananda in asiddhi will be perfected, since asiddhi will be the accomplishment of the will of the Ishwara, when decisive, of his temporary will and tortuous movement to siddhi when temporary.

═

Dasyam completed by intensity and universality. The Ishwarabhava belongs to the Ishwara at present, the Shakti has only the Mahasaraswati *dâsîbhâva*. So also sraddha in the power of the Ishwara; not yet in swashakti as its expression. The sraddha is now in the accomplishment of the will of the Ishwara, whatever it may be, through this adhara; for the siddhi only in eventual accomplishment, except for a doubt of the *sharira siddhi* and of the extent of the *karma*.

---

[5] *MS* 20

With this the determining of the Kali-Krishna bhava in the personality; together, dasya of the Kali-prakriti as expressive of the Krishna-purusha both making the upper and lower sides of one personality. The Ishwara of the system, with the Ishwara of the worlds above, one in two *dhamas*.

═

Idealising of the telepathies and perceptive thought practically complete; tapas is being also taken up by the Ishwara entirely and idealised; unideal tapas is being rejected. Decisive Trikaldrishti rare

Saturday Sept. [22][6]

In sahaituka tivra, the law of increase has received a setback. Attention is necessary to maintain it if there is a rapid and prolonged excitation, and finally attention even with tapas becomes unavailing in some local sthanas; the sensibility seems for a time entirely to fail, although it revives after cessation. On the other hand the attempt on the contrary to make even attention unnecessary is being made and has an initial success. This method of enforcing strong advance out of temporary regression and denial, is noticeable in other parts of the sadhana. To a certain extent the defect in the tivra is being remedied

═

Premananda, long held in abeyance, is now again universalising itself, and this time firmly, as the subjective kama has universalised itself. It has two aspects, the prema within independent of the object, *ahaituka*, but ready to apply itself to all objects, and the prema awakened by the object, all objects, *sahaituka*.

═

Lipi is pressing for the immediate manifestation in fluidity of the ideal lipi. The territoriality resists, but the resistance is much weakened.

═

General flood of ideality, not yet perfectly clear and distinct in all its details or perfectly luminous in its hold.

---

[6] *MS* 21

Sunday. Sept [23].[7]

Fluidity of the immediate independent manifestation in the lipi is gaining great strength. It is now oftenest independent of the suggestion of words, but when delayed or incomplete in its manifestation, sometimes dependent on suggestion of substance.

Independent manifestation is secured; it must be universally immediate.

═

Sahaituka raudrananda has increased in force and hold. Ananda of discomfort is not yet universalised. Ananda of pain still subject to limitation by degree, but much less than before.

Monday Sept [24].[8]

Lipi develops force of manifestation; but it does not yet get rid of the initial obstructiveness of the *parthiva akasha*

═

There are times when the whole action of the mentality becomes vijnanamaya with a long continuity; afterwards there is a fall into a confused tamasic condition of the receiving brain, when the unredeemed physical mind tries to work; after a struggle the light of the vijnana reappears in whole or in part action.

Friday Sept [28].[9]

No definite movement during the last few days except the preparation of absolute spontaneity in the immediate manifestation of the lipi and an uncertain movement towards restoration of right activity in the samadhi. For the rest, the sadhana has been in a state of torpor and slight relapse. In arogya strong and persistent attack. In vijnana remnants of intellectual ideality at work—suspension for the most part of true ideality.

---

[7] *MS* 22
[8] *MS* 23
[9] *MS* 27

14–28 FEBRUARY 1918

Feb 14.

After a long interval, mainly end of December and January, devoted to poetry, there has been during February a steady Yogic activity.

Results.

(1) Siddhi of first chatusthaya finally complete. Momentary touches of asamata in asiddhi alone remain, but are being rapidly replaced by ananda, which is now not only the passive, but the active Brahmabhava occupying the whole conscious being.

(2) Second chatusthaya finally completed though still not quite perfect in devibhava (aishwaryabodha, attahasya). Dasya absolute except for some remnant of the habit of responsible effort in the will.

(3) Ananda Brahman complete. Brahmachatusthaya only now needs filling in; the uttama and the akshara are complete. The view of things, creatures etc as well as the sense of the containing Akasha is the Ananda view; = suddha, chidghana (vijnana), prema, kama. Some more perfect confirmation is all that is needed.

(4) Suddhi, mukti, bhukti complete except so far as they depend on the remainder of the unfinished siddhi. Subjectively they may be considered as complete; only the physical remains.

(5) Krishna Kali firmly established, but it has to be more developed.

(6) Vijnana is at last taking firm possession not only of Jnana, but of the telepathic mind. This movement is as complete today as it can be without the development of ideal T^2. T^3 has reached a certain relative completeness—not satisfactory—and is making towards the satisfactory completeness and perfection which will turn it finally into T^2. Thought telepathy is still weak and all is obstinately obstructed. Rupasiddhi and Samadhi are successfully

obstructed and get little play; what there is, is fragmentary and unsatisfactory.

(7) Physical Ananda is developing (ahaituka) against obstruction. Ahaituka kama promises to fix itself. Sahaituka tivra is well advanced, and only imperfect by a remnant of the habit of interruption when rapid continuous excitation takes place, but this interruption no longer amounts to a suspension, much less a relapse. The rest is slowly pushing its advance, but not yet with any large effect. Arogya is still in the struggle. Saundarya and utthapana still obstructed from manifestation except in details.

Feb 15

T^3 is definitely turning itself into vijnana. The final step must be to turn the intelligent mind from the recipient and judge which it is now into a channel, so that the ideality will no longer send its messages into the lower mind, but work in itself for itself, with itself as its own observer and judge. This is now being undertaken.

Hitherto it is the active activity of the intelligent mind which has had to be eliminated by a long progression of advances and relapses; now it is the passive activity which must also go. It is only in the tapas that the active activity still makes any noteworthy attempt to persist.

Lipi is now entirely idealised. It is attempting to stabilise perfectly its spontaneous legibilities. This stability is becoming more and more frequent, pronounced and ample; but when the tapas is not applied, the old confusion, indistinctness and evanescence still tend to predominate. The truth of the lipi is now continually being justified by results.

Trikaldrishti proper is developing (until now all has been really intelligent and telepathic); but all is being arranged first in the lower intuitional vijnana, not in the higher revelatory and inspirational ideality.

In physical siddhi Kamananda is progressing rapidly. Today for the first time there was settled unmoving ahaituka kamananda pervading the whole body, *somasya hradah*. This was at first only in the sitting posture,—owing to old habit it could not at first take hold while walking. But this also was confirmed in the afternoon;

but here there was a greater tendency to movement. Movement of ahaituka k. [kamananda] was established in the evening. All this depends still on smarana; but it tends to be constant and even when interrupted returns immediately at the call of smarana. The effect of the opposition is slight and transient. Sahaituka occurs now most frequently as a wave in the ahaituka.

Some action of rupasiddhi. The old forms are beginning to recur

Feb 16.

Full force of constant ahaituka kamananda, standing. The only defect now is the dependence on smarana. In the afternoon full ahaituka k. lying, in antardarshi, over the borders of samadhi, united with thought.

Lipi increases in legibility and stability in antardarshi, where confusion was formerly the law. It is noticeable that as the samadhi gets deeper, vividness and stability increase.

The interpretation of the lipi is now being done entirely by the vijnana; but definite trikaldrishti with time, circumstance etc is still to seek, except as regards the sadhana.

In T^3 there has been today a throw back to the intellectuality which is still attempting to judge what it receives and even indirectly to determine.

More old rupas tend to revive. Some weak hints of vishaya returning

Feb 17

The movement is now to get rid of the intellectual element altogether and allow only the intuitive vijnana to act.

Intense ahaituka ananda not dependent on smarana.

Script is now perfectly idealised, following in the footsteps of the vani.

Asmarana k. is now established; it is interrupted by exclusive thought-concentration, but is found again at once still in possession or else recovered at once, usually of itself without need of smarana, when the exclusive concentration ceases. This has now to be confirmed in complete continuity. It remains (1) to get rid of the interruption noted above, (2) to increase the intensities.

The lipi has reached a certain relative perfection of combined legibility[,] spontaneity and stability: but the old imperfect type still recurs where tapas is not applied. The sadhana has now to eliminate (1) confused or indistinct lipi; (2) incomplete expression. This done the rest is a matter of intensity of inspirational and revelatory speech, which is already beginning to become common.

Vijnana thought is now inspirational and revelatory as well as intuitional, but chiefly in the intuitional form.

The rule is established that there shall be first knowledge, then tapas in accordance with the will, reversing the former order in which tapas came first and then it was questioned whether it should be fulfilled.

Feb 18.

Confusion is being got rid of in the lipi; indistinctness remains. It is only in the imperfect lipis that these things exist, but even there confusion is rapidly disappearing. The habit of intuitional interpretation, especially of suggestive lipi where it is most difficult, is being confirmed. In express lipi it is becoming the rule.

Rupasiddhi is manifesting the perfect as well as the developed forms; but for the former the old defects persist, (1) side manifestation, (2) want of stability, (3) want of variety—for it is almost entirely in the type form, though with variety in that narrow limit.

Continuity and intensity of ahaituka k. increase, but not yet sufficiently to conquer the interruption of exclusive forgetfulness.

Tapas on the mental plane is being abandoned; trikaldrishti also must be abandoned. It is finally seen even by the intelligence that there can be here no absolute certainty of foresight or result, since it is the play of partial, conflicting and mutually self-adjusting tendencies, forces, ideas, impulses. The telepathy of these things and the understanding of them is becoming wider, subtler, more accurate, though far yet from being perfect and complete. Meanwhile T^3 is suspended. T^2 is postponed.

The hostile powers are attempting, as they are no longer able to prevent directly the continuity of the a. k. [ahaituka kamananda], to turn it into a neutral vishaya with extremities of acuteness turning to discomfort, so that this may be a cause for its discontinuance. But the effect has been only temporary.

Variety is returning to the rupa, but only, as before, in the crude forms.

Feb 19.

Samadhi after a long time recovered its activity. The ideal lipi chatusthaya is founded; vangmaya thought is freely active on all four states of the mentality; ideal perceptive thought has initiated itself in the three inner states as well as the one outer. The rest is still mental only; but there was the seed today for reading, narrative, dialogue. Rupa was active only in the vague chhayamaya. All this was done in a rush, by the exclusion, almost though not quite complete, of sleep. Henceforth sushupti must mean the Yogic sleep of the mind with wakefulness of the vijnana.

Lipi is advancing continuously and rapidly. It has become all intuitional lipi to the exclusion of the telepathic ideality—though prediction of material events may be an exception. It is becoming distinct in an orderly completeness, and now fluid in a legible and spontaneous legibility. This has not yet been universalised, but it is becoming a general rule.

Both sahaituka and ahaituka raudrananda are advancing. The burning touch is entirely anandamaya, except when it is so continued as to be intolerable, but even then in certain forms and up to a certain degree, a high degree, it remains anandamaya. There are signs of a similar progression, not yet so far advanced in the mârana—

Five forms of raudra—karshana, apakarshana, prakarshana, apikarshana, sankarshana

Strong relapse in T^2 still persists. Relapse means now stress, the attempt of the intelligence to attach certainty to the results of mental telepathy and tapas

Lipi is now seated in the antardarshi and bahirdarshi; but in the former it has still to conquer a natural tendency to instability, in the latter the large though now less insistent recurrence of the old imperfections.

Great strength of intuitional light in all the instruments of thought; imperfect only in T^2

Feb 20.

For the last two days ahaituka k. much subjected to violent suppression to its minimum point and easily interrupted, sahaituka obstructed. Smarana can always restore the former to action and generally but not always to intensity. It is mainly while walking that the adverse movement takes place. Nevertheless the intensity is increasing both in force and in general level and in power of sustained continuity. The habit of interruption is the one real difficulty in ahaituka k.

In rupa perfectly developed and perfect forms now show, especially the former, a certain power of stability, but they arise from long tratak on the living object as their excuse or starting-point, though not their real cause, and they are confined to the type form, chiefly in the three varieties most commonly watched.

A clear ideal (intuitional) trikaldrishti is now acting, but it has to be firmly distinguished from the less certain vision of the mental and pranic superplanes which sometimes come in its place and sometimes are mixed with it. Moreover it is isolated and gives only the general result without time, place or circumstance of intermediate event. Tapas siddhi is still manasic, but has greatly increased in force for general, and even though much less, for particular result. The power varies from 10° or 20° to 60°. A higher force is rare, except in moving objects, where it sometimes reaches 80°

Unity of Trikaldrishti (telepathic and intuitional) and tapas has been roughly accomplished. The siddhi is now attempting to get rid of the confusion which periodically overtakes the T^2 thought, owing to revival of intelligential turmoil and false stress.

Ahaituka k. is again continuous, ordinarily with a certain intensity. . the periods of exclusive forgetfulness find it still in the body; therefore it must be considered to have been there all along in a suppressed state.

In Samadhi the effects of yesterday were carried a little farther, in antardarshi and swapna of the lighter kind. Lipi especially made great progress to an easy, spontaneous and unsupported perfection which it realised, but cannot always maintain against the old faults of confused manifestation, instability and vagueness and dimness. Some initial ideality and coherence was manifested in reading, dialogue and narrative, but none of them were well sustained. Tejomaya rupa in chhayamaya atmosphere, but evanescent. Some stability in some chhayamaya rupas, but not of long duration.

In afternoon work.

Feb 21.

Spontaneous variety in crude rupa greater than ever before, but all in the crude crude. Perfect stability only in two or three type forms, but an initial stability is striving to fix itself in the others. The rupas are not yet always complete or perfect.

Vangmaya, vani, script suddenly taken up in full by the Ishwara.

Inspirational ideality begins in the lipi and is already as common as the intuitional. Lipi begins to justify its trikaldrishti—eg with regard to the situation in Roumania, viz that the principle had already been settled, to yield after a little velleity of resistance. It is notable that the telepathic interpretation of the situation was correct. The perfect lipi with well developed stability is becoming more normal.

The style of the thought vangmaya is becoming more and more illumined and inspirational.

The intuitional lipi is oftenest perfect with difficulty,—it has not except at its best an immediate stability, legibility, spontaneity; the inspirational has it normally; the slower manifestation is exceptional to it. It is even sometimes instantaneously perfect as if in the flash. It is now however taking up the intuitional lipi.

Free manifestation of chhayamaya rupa in swapna-samadhi at night; stable forms, scenes, etc, continuous action. Even in one case the supreme stability of vivid scene, but with a certain *chanchalya* of motion in the scene and appearing and disappearing of figures. Strong stability of reading in one case. It is to be noted that the old habitual difficulty of quadruped forms seems to have been overcome in all fields; wherever this has happened, there has come as a sign, as previously predicted in the lipi, the form of the Antelope.

For some time lipi kaushalya has been tending to develop: clear fiery and jyotirmaya lipi in antardarshi. In bahirdarshi tejomaya is common and dhumramaya occurs; varnamaya is rare and not varied in hue.

Feb 22.

The intelligence is being pushed aside as the judge and recipient; it still persists, but is being dominated. It is the intuitive mind that is taking its place, while in the thought etc it is mostly the ideality itself that is the judge and recipient.

Lipi trikaldrishti is now being constantly fulfilled.

After taking up telepathies into the intuitive mind and observing there all the relative uncertain certainties of the mental, vital and physical planes, so as to give them their right incidence and root out false stress, — a rapid summing up of the movement of the last few days, — the intuitional trikaldrishti has founded itself. The intellectual action with regard to T^3 is now only a habit-survival which must progressively be discouraged and eliminated.

In samadhi large masses of reading and a persistent attempt to decipher, but only brief clauses or phrases decipherable, separate or in the mass. These however, are becoming more common. Development is also proceeding in the other deficient parts.

Feb. 23.

The union of T^2 is becoming closer, but there is strong resistance to the development of the intuitional ideality. It is, however, progressing.

Full variety in crude rupa. The tendency to clear completeness and stability does not yet fix itself; and all is done against great obstruction.

Inspirational ideality entirely takes the place of intuitional in the vangmaya and establishes itself in the perceptive thought; only the lower telepathic thought is intuitional. The trikaldrishti is also now inspirational and tends to increase, but is still imitated and hampered in its development by false inspirational certainties of the mental, pranic and physical planes. This in the midst of a violent attack of the old intelligence.

Samadhi advances greatly. Long coherent narrative and reading and to a less extent dialogue, but still infirm and floating; the dream element predominates. Lipi is becoming more and more perfect in the antardarshi.

Some attempt to recover activity in the vishaya; still much obstructed as also rupa.

Shadow of athumia still prevents perfect continuity of the first chatusthaya, though it is unable to persist successfully. Purely in reference to siddhi and asiddhi.

Feb 24

Intuitional lipi of the inspirational type is giving way before the pure inspirational which is more perfect in substance and form. The inspired lipi has at its highest an element of direct revelatory sight

T^2 has been considerably extended, but there is still much that has to be taken up before it can be secure or complete in its extension.

Sahaituka Kama Ananda has for some time been reduced almost to nil, and ahaituka depressed so as only to be active on condition of attentive smarana and intense by tapas smarana. Ahaituka is now recovering its vina-smarana activity suspended only by exclusive concentration, and its intensity. Vaidyuta has been showing occasionally signs of development.

Perfect development of narrative and reading in Samadhi, coherent, long-continued and initially idealised. The old incoherence intervened only at the end and very slightly from time to time. Dialogue also, but on a lesser scale, yet with the same essential qualities. Long continuity is frequent in rupa of swapna samadhi but stability is rare, except sometimes a troubled and recurrent stability. Chhayamaya reigns. In antardarshi lipi alone is really active. Rupa is obstructed more even than in the jagrat.

Rupa and vishaya fail to advance beyond their former bounds, except that the type touches are frequently stable and long-continued and the general touch is coming out from sukshma just over the borders of sthula. The sthula effect of feeling is partly there, though the touch remains sukshma

Great force of delight in raudrananda even when pain is strongly present. There are exceptions.

Feb 25.

Farther elimination of the attempt to decide things by intelligential telepathy. As a result the inspirational thought and T^2 are growing stronger.

Vishaya is resuming development, touch on the lines already indicated, taste and sight resuming their old gains, but hearing and smell are still obstructed, the first almost entirely, the latter partially.

Kamananda varies between the sasmarana and vinasmarana; the first is still more usual. Sahaituka is slowly recovering.

=

Brief attack (10 minutes) of the old form of asiddhi modified.

=

The inspirational ideality has completely taken up the lipi, the perceptive thought, the vangmaya: even the intuitional thought or lipi is inspirational in its substance and manner. Only the T^2 and the phantasy still admit the intellectual thought. In the former however both telepathy and tapas are becoming inspirational. Interpretation of lipi is following the same course.

Great play of rupa in the evening of all kinds, but imperfect except in crude and in the rest only when seen indirectly or sadhara (sthapatya) etc or in type forms. Stability is yet unattained and variety in the perfect forms is only promising to develop.

Sudden lipi perfect in form is becoming frequent.

Feb 26.

The inspirational ideality continues to enlarge, in spite of a turmoil of recurrent intellectuality assailing the system from outside.

Idealising of samadhi continues. Long continuity of successive event increases in rupa, but stability is still only recurrent, except up to a certain point. There is much obstruction. In vishaya and rupa there are only small isolated gains; the obstruction prevents a secure basis being founded.

Shanti resisted all attacks today, sraddha faltered for a while. Dasya is deepening. Once hasya and sraddha are perfectly established, only the secure intensity of the chandibhava of devi will remain in the first two chatusthayas to be secured against all attack or temporary relapse. Dehashakti is however still subject to superficial failure; at bottom it remains.

Feb 27.

T^2 is now successfully taking up all the old T^3, this time with a certainty of rapid finality. The attempt to decide by other means than the inspirational vijnana, whether by knowledge or will, is not entirely eliminated, but is now far advanced, and prevails only in moments of forgetfulness. As yet it is only to the extent of the old T^3 which was far from complete that this success obtains, but it is extending itself to the whole range of possible intelligent thought and will, to complete the brihat satyam ritam. Beyond that, however, there is the highest T^2, absolute, which has yet to manifest.

The defects in the strength of I and II [*first and second chatusthayas*] are being rapidly dealt with, except in dehashakti.

Raudrananda is raised to a high degree, but not yet absolute. Above a certain point, the first impression is pain, though ananda immediately intervenes and takes possession. In subsequent effects pain mingles, but the tendency is for ananda to prevail. The general receptive attitude of the physical being is anandamaya and this is rapidly prevailing.

The intelligence has not only lost, but renounced its right to judge; but it is still involuntarily the recipient in the lower mental system and even by habit in the thought, except when the latter acts as if by a sort of force in the inspirational ideality. The ideal action has not yet become natural to the whole being. The result was a temporary inability to act subjectively, a sunk quietude. No disturbance of samata, nor of dasya, but some of sraddha

Rupasiddhi continues to prepare its advance. Intermittent recurrence of variety in the crude is the only siddhi as yet well established.

Feb 28.

The inspirational ideality has suddenly become natural to the system, especially in thought of all kinds. The defect lies still in vyapti which comes to the emotion, intelligence or vital feeling, and in decisive trikaldrishti which is sometimes ideal, sometimes mental. But this is being rapidly remedied.

Physical siddhi has for some time been left to itself and does not advance. It maintains itself, but with difficulty and lapses. Vina smarana Ananda especially has lost its hold and comes only intermittently after sasmarana.

3–27 MARCH 1918

March 1918

The month of February has been the month of the founding of the vijnana in the type; the month of March is marked out for its confirmation and primary completion in all parts of the third chatusthaya. April for the farther confirmation and a greater completeness.

March 3.

After two days of oppression by the environing Intelligence, the ideality is again busy defining its form in the lipi, ideative thought and vangmaya. First, there has been in the thought, including telepathic thought of trikaldrishti, the entire revelatory intuitional ideality in the bed of the intuitive mentality. It is now seeking to get rid of the intuitive mental response and become pure revelatory inspirational ideation, the highest point reached on Feb. 28 in type. The surrounding Intelligence tries still to preserve its habit of response; this is still the chief stumbling-block.

Lipi more easily confirms itself in the revelatory inspirational vijnana; the lower forms occur, but are there easily discouraged.

March 4

The decisive trikaldrishti has at last fixed itself in the revelatory intuitional type.

Perfect lipi, sudden, spontaneous, vividly legible, completely stable of a high revelatory inspirational ideality is now beginning to make itself entirely normal.

Letter in the samadhi perfect in form except for want of vivid distinctness, not stable enough to be slowly deciphered, but recurrent in variation

Premananda is becoming normal in the sarvadarshana.

March 5.

Telepathies of thoughts, intentions, impulses, tendencies which do not fulfil themselves are to be known and are now to be addressed to the idealised heart consciousness, — it is not yet idealised, — all positive fact of trikaldrishti is to be known by the vijnana buddhi

Mar 7.

The lipi now fixed in the inspirational or middle ideality is being firmly founded in the eight qualities, spontaneity, legibility, stability, rapidity, fluidity, completeness, light, justice. The lipi kaushalya is being finally developed and all forms occur with some initial frequency of recurrence except the pure varna. Jyotir is commonest, tejas and agni occasional; prakasha seems to have been abandoned.

Both forms of thought have replaced, when the ideality is active, the inferior by the middle or inspirational vijnana, which holds in itself revelation and has taken up intuition and viveka. Trikaldrishti is in course of transformation. The middle ideality has a surer certainty and lends itself less to the relapses of the intuitive intelligence.

Prema kamananda in the darshana have firmly combined with the shuddha. The full ananda only fails when the sarvasaundarya darshana is deficient or withheld.

Vishaya and rupa are again obstructed.

Certain and decisive trikaldrishti is enlarging itself rapidly; tapas-siddhi is coalescing with the ideal knowledge and pure telepathic tapas is being rapidly abandoned. It is in fact no longer admitted. T^3 has received its dismissal. It only continues to exist in chaotic fragments in the external suggestions which are no longer accepted. This is with regard to the buddhi, — but in the sense-mind intuitively intelligential telepathy still exists.

=

There are trikaldrishtic indications that March will be a month of the extension of the physical Ananda and that secure continuity in the Kamananda will be rapidly established. The movement has already begun.

Sudden intensification, with prolonged recurrence, of the sahaituka vaidyuta, current through the body (arms and legs).

Mar 11

The revelatory has suddenly today substituted itself for the inspirational ideality, but it is at present the intuitional revelatory. It is taking up all the action of the ideality and enlightening and transforming the relics of the intelligential mentality.

=

There has been a struggle in the Kamananda. Persistent continuous recurrence seems to have been well established, though the enemy still struggles to bring about a long entire suspension; but secure continuity is not yet established.

Mar 15

The sadhana is going through what would formerly have been a relapse but is now a process of readjustment through the permission of the intellectual action trying to reestablish itself, but bringing about at each step a farther diminution of its power to return.

The first two chatusthayas are being steadily confirmed in their completeness and the touches of denial are being eliminated. The first is practically complete in its armour of passive samata, almost complete in the active. The second is feebly besieged at times, but the completion of the dasya and the chandibhava is evident. The latter is only deficient in hasya.

Continuity of ahaituka kamananda, when not suspended by exclusive vismarana, is confirmed. Sahaituka has been for long depressed and only occasional.

The Ananda in darshana is complete and consolidated in its combined action, but sometimes falls momentarily back into the mental form with one or two habits of dissociation, mostly omission of kamaprema; but this ordinarily, is instantaneously corrected with regard to living beings. The whole has still to be raised to a firmer intensity.

Kamananda continued through samadhi, light and double, only suspended by the deep and complete interiority. Other former incompatibilities initially conquered. A beginning has been made in overcoming the exclusive forgetfulness, but this is not yet confirmed.

Mar [*date not written*]

The first chatusthaya is now entirely confirmed. Even if old touches of impatience, discomfort etc arrive from outside by strong habit to touch the surface of the physical mentality, they are at once stopped and either disappear or are transformed.

═

The second chatusthaya is now complete in all its circumstances with the one fault that the Kali element in the Devibhava, which is constant, is not steady; the ordinary condition is that of the Mahasaraswati with a strong Mahaluxmi colouring and submerged Maheshwari basis. This is full of shama ananda, but insufficient in tapas. It is the Mahakali element that carries the full tapas, ishwarabhava and attahasya of the lila; but when the Mahakali element is there, the Mahaluxmi colouring and ananda intensity diminishes; this defect is the cause of the unsteadiness. Tapas ananda has to take possession of shama ananda; Mahakali has to mould itself into the Mahasaraswati, and be the contained in that continent.

═

After a long period of lower working the revelatory ideality is taking possession. The old physical lethargy of the mind can no longer act; but in its place is the akartri-shama; into this the prakasha of the revelatory vijnana (drishti) is beginning to pour itself.

═

The ahaituka tivrananda is recurring after a long interval of rarity. It is now pervasive, more prolonged in persistence, occurs in all the members.

═

Lipi is enforcing itself in the eightfold qualities against the old etheric obstruction.

═

Ishwaradarshana has taken possession of the Anandadarshana. It dwells more normally in the Ananda than in the lapse to the mentality.

=

Although violently obstructed, vaidyuta ananda now occurs, more and more pervasive in its current.

=

For several days the ahaituka kamananda has been violently obstructed and persistently expelled, but it retains its ground, though often reduced to a minimum.

=

There is a continual alternation now between the Mahakali bhava and the Mahasaraswati for possession, the latter becoming more and more full of the former.

Mar 25. The Mahakali element has fixed itself. Eight days are given by the lipi, up to April 2, for its taking full possession of the bhava.

Mar 27. Only momentary and rare touches affect the first two chatusthayas. The one deficiency is an infirm faith in the full extent of the siddhi in the sharira and the life; the devi hasya is there, but not constant. The third chatusthaya is extending itself, but experiencing still at each step the lapse towards the mentality.

20 APRIL – 20 MAY 1918

Notebook of the Sadhana.

20th April 1918.

A manifest change has been the accomplishment of the Chandi personality in the Devibhava of the Prakriti. This bhava is in its nature Mahasaraswati, the Aniruddha-shakti. It has for its base Maheshwari; it is strongly coloured with Mahaluxmi. This combination was finally expressed in a strong and long-permanent personality, perfect in equality, intense in bliss, full of universal love and *madhurya*, but deficient in *virya* and *shakti*, ῥαθυμος. The advent of the Chandi bhava, effected in accordance with lipi and other prediction on the 2d, stabilised and completed in rudra force on the 15th, since then undergoing modifications and vicissitudes, has brought the completion of the Devibhava, not yet altogether perfect, but firm fundamentally. It is Mahasaraswati personality with the Mahakali bhava; the Mahaluxmi colour, a hidden Maheswari base (*pratishtha*).

Defects still existent. (1) Occasionally the ῥαθυμια of the Mahasaraswati gets the better of the *rudra tejas*; this is mostly when things are getting on well or when the samata in shama gets the better of the samata in tapas. This however is rare. Ordinarily samata in tapas is the temperament.

(2) The samata having lost its old base is disturbed from time to time. The excessive mental tapas and its reactions which used to come with the Kali bhava recur, though with less and less hold on the system; they come but they cannot remain. They rush upon the adhara from outside, but can only partially get their hands upon it and have to loose their hold. Nevertheless this is now the chief difficulty and the root of all the others.

(3) The ishwarabhava has come with the Chandi virya. It is in its perfection the aishwarya of the *Dasi* empowered by the Lover

and Master, the [real][1] aishwarya being his, the executive aishwarya hers. But the mind element often insists too much on the instrumental aishwarya acting through the mind in forgetfulness of its source. Then there is trouble and disturbance of samata.

(4) The hasyam of the first chatusthaya is developing the attahasyam of Mahakali into which is to be taken the jnana-hasyam, sneha-hasyam and kautuka-hasyam of the three other powers. But with defect of perfect *sraddha swashaktyam*, of perfect samata in tapas and of perfect ishwarabhava, this cannot take possession of the temperament.

(5) Sraddha has an occasional perfection when it is sraddha in the Bhagavan and in the shakti as his executive power; but in the absence or defect of ideal tapas-siddhi, this also wavers. General habit of sraddha prevails, but is crossed by the intellectual uncertainty as to the intention of the Ishwara.

(6) & (7) Resultant defect of Mahaluxmi colour (bliss and love) and resurgence to the surface of the Maheshwari to correct the defect of excessive mental tapas and asamata.

Lipi predictions. Finality of the ideality from 15th July. (20th April).
The seagod in the ideality (Varuna).
Liberty in the idealities soon (21st April)
January to July the ideality, July to January the physical siddhi. (3d May).
The seagod in the telepathies, trikaldrishti, tapassiddhi. (May 4th)

The devihasyam which was formerly only in the buddhi and from thence affected the temperament, is now manifesting originally in the temperament. It is a compound of the four kinds of hasya or a combination of them. It has not yet occupied the place of the original colourless and featureless hasyam (ahaituka), but is preparing its occupation. Incidentally the ῥαθυμια of the Mahasaraswati is being taken up by the Mahakali,—it is an anandamaya titiksha-udasinata-nati — and will be converted into an element of the sama tapas (shamomaya tapas). Sraddha, ishwarabhava etc are also taking their proper shape and the other elements of the shakti-chatusthaya are preparing a more perfect combination and fusion. All this, however, is not yet well accomplished or perfectly sure in its action.

---

[1] *MS* really

* * *

21st April.

The akashic lipi is developing with an extraordinary swiftness. The lipis are manifesting in spite of a dull etheric resistance still left with a phenomenal rapidity and fluidity and an outflow of ideal justice and light in the substance and ordinarily, though not always, in the expression; also, with a great completeness. This is being done by the aid of the suggestions, but these are now not the intellectual, but the ideal suggestions. The resistance is to the rapidity in the completeness, but this is being overcome; and to the legibility; but the illegibility also is being overcome, though less perfectly; and to the spontaneity. Spontaneous lipi flows less readily, but this also is preparing to associate with itself the other qualities. Interpretation of the lipi is now really ideal with a spontaneous judgment (γνωρισις). There is still a habit of confusion when the mass of outflow is left to itself, but this is mainly in the chitra-lipi. This progress is in the bahirdarshi; lipi in the rest is still imperfectly developed. All this has been done in a few days.

22d April.

The development of the lipi and a certain development of the ideality — the sea-god in the ideality — is making itself common to bahirdarshi, antardarshi and swapna, but as yet with less force and ripeness of large action in the two last. In the jagrat there is an action of tapas which is at last quite freed from the personal element and perceives all its willings as actions of knowledge and has even begun to distinguish with a commencement of automatic fidelity those which will realise themselves from those which will remain as yet unfulfilled tendencies, impulses or intentions. What was formerly called the trikaldrishti was simply a telepathic stress which happened to come right, but had no sure principle or light of judgment and might easily turn to false stress. What is now coming, is an automatic fidelity to truth, a fidelity not of the telepathic stress in the intuitive intelligence, but of the intuitively revelatory judgment in the ideality. This is as yet very imperfect in its action and still involved in the intellectual telepathies.

25th April

After two or three days of a confused action, the intuitively revelatory judgment has disengaged itself and is extending its action. As yet it applies only to tapas and telepathies. As regards the latter it sometimes replaces them, that is, it takes them up idealised and accompanies them with the ideal judgment, so that they are entirely correct ideal and not doubtful mental telepathies, or it observes and judges them, or there is a mixed action. The latter has to be eliminated as an evident source or pratistha of error. With regard to the tapas, it is the impersonal perception of what has to happen, because that is what is being definitively willed in the ideal Vijnana; at present it is correct with the substance of the ideal Truth, but not often clearly luminous with the light of the ideal Truth. This is because it leans on what is being willed in the present, but does not go back to what stands as willed in the Eternal Idea. There is as yet much tendency to attendant intellectual hesitation and error of circumstance, where the fulfilment is not immediate, but this is being eliminated. The action of the ideal Truth as applied to present status of invisible objects is not yet developed beyond the telepathic action. What the ideal T^2 is now working on, is the present tendency and future action of visible objects.

30th April.

Completion of the Brahma-chatusthaya in the perception and sense of all things as the conscious body of the Purushottama. This was prepared by the *sors*,

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः
प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु

followed by the sense of the Ishwara as the delight, *rasa*, in the flood of the being, अप्सु, the light of knowledge in the vijnana (sun) and mentality (moon), the word and the thought, the tapas. This led to the perception and sense of all substance of matter and consciousness, quality, force, thought, action etc as the Ishwara. Formerly these perceptions were of separate things (tattwas, elements) and temporary, though often of long duration, but now it is global, integral and steadfast. It rejects the remnants of the intellectual fragmentation and division which still come to deny its completeness.

Ananda of samata has proved sufficiently firm throughout the month. It is now combined firmly with the tapas; desire has perished, though tapatya still remains, but only as a minor element. Therefore the touches of asamata can get no hold, are entirely external and are cast out of the adhar automatically as soon as they enter. External, moreover, not of any near, but of a distantly watching, rather than environing mentality.

Tapas is now very strong; in the field of exercise the obstacle has no longer a genuine power of resistance, but only of persistence and this again persists only by a persistent recurrence which gives it after much difficulty the power for a time to reestablish itself rather than by a right of its own in the environment. This is even when the tapas is without knowledge of trikaldrishti. The movement has now begun which will turn Time from an obstacle with which the personal Tapas had to struggle into an instrument which the personal Tapas, become that of the transcendent will working upon the universal to modify it as well as through the universal, will use for the disposition of its results. This movement is as yet only initial; as it advances tapas and trikaldrishti will become entirely reconciled and identified. Trikaldrishti increases in frequency and has begun to carry with it the right perception of Time.

This development enables the Chandi in the devibhava to affirm its characteristic singhi element more firmly. The ishwarabhava and attahasya are preparing to grow upon the system.

The intellect is gradually fading out of the system, (lipi, euthanasia of the intellectuality) and the whole is becoming vijnana + intuitive mentality. Only a vague floating remnant of the real intellectuality is left; it acts most when faced with the obstacle in life.

All is being idealised in the samadhi, but the dialogue, narrative etc are still usually mental, swapnamaya, though much more sustained and coherent. Reading is still normally incoherent. All are occasionally ideal. Lipi is always ideal, but is less perfected in its eightfold quality and less free and spontaneously active in the antardarshi than in the bahirdarshi. Rupa and vishaya in the bahirdarshi are still unable to take firm hold of the etheric system.

On the whole the "liberty in the idealities" (lipi, 21st April) is working itself out, but does not cover the whole third chatusthaya and is nowhere quite absolute.

May

May 1st—Lipi predicted today perfect ideality and the beginning of physical delight; but it is only the seed of the perfect ideality and the definite beginning of physical delight in the tivra that the interpretation relying on the mental pre-sentiment admitted. It is this which has actually evolved, but as a beginning in both cases of a steadier final development, of the perfect ideality including T^2 and of the total physical delight in all five anandas.

May 4th Saturday

Yesterday the siddhi in the sahaituka tivra developed beyond all mistake an incipient finality of development. First, an universality of the tivra response to any touch however slight, and even a general mass response even to such habitual sparsha as the close pressure of the cloth at the loins usually unfelt and the loose pressure on the legs. This tivra contains the vishaya and develops the kama, as is now seen, today. This triple movement is preparing to become a law, but as yet sometimes the vishaya prevails over the tivra, sometimes the tivra alone remains, or else the vishaya is at once the kama without any intermediate tivra. The tendency however is for all vishaya to become tivra. At the same time an abundant ahaituka raudra is beginning to manifest even while the sahaituka is pressing to generalise itself. Vaidyuta comes with more difficulty owing to want of past habit in the body or insistence in the mental tapas, but when it is insisted on, is more assured and can have more mass than before. Kama has for a long time been most vehemently resisted and suppressed partly because it has been the most demanded by the mental tapas and has therefore attracted the mass of the physical opposition, partly because it is the most central and vital of all the Anandas. It is now pressing to remanifest more securely, but has not yet got rid of the suppression, though that is steadily becoming less effective. All this justifies the lipi "today total delight", the truth of which was doubted by the intelligence because to the mental perception the physical opposition to the kamananda seemed too strong to be surmounted.

The script set down yesterday. "The first week of May outlines the ritam in the satyam brihat. It prepares the totality of the physical delight. It prepares too the samadhi." All three predictions are being fulfilled with what has been called the enthusiastic, that is a sudden, vehement and anandamaya rapidity.

In the samadhi today continuous vangmaya and ideal ideation was established, the habit of fatigue in the physical mind which demanded cessation or intermission being denied its claim and dismissed. The habit of simultaneous action of the two which has hitherto been violently or obstinately resisted by the physical mind, was firmly founded and illustrated by a rich continuity of simultaneous action. Initially the habit of simultaneous manifestation of the lipi in the antardarshi and even in the *swapna*, where it has been the most difficult, was immediately afterwards founded, in the same stream of rapid progress. The lipi in the *antardarshi* is now assuming the same freedom and perfection of the eightfold quality as in the *bahirdarshi*, only it is still rather more resisted by the physical ether, its manifestation less free, prompt and fluid in completeness, its stability more initial and less definitive. Ideal ideation is driving out the dull habit of intellectual thought in the samadhi along with the physical fatigue; it has been busy with its electric needleplay modifying the physical mind, in its sukshma brain-stuff even when no definite ideation was at work.

The same movement has begun in the outward waking mind; it is extending first to a confident play of the ideal telepathy, that is what was the intelligence's perception of present intention, tendency, possibility etc. This is now firm in the satyam brihat, except for actual situation etc of objects where the tamasic darkness of the external intelligence opposes the action of a power which has already been established in the mental telepathy, but has yet to be established in the ideal. T^2 today is developing the play of the universal ideal perception and tapas and for the first time manifested the transcendent Tapas and idea which predestines and decides. This is evidently the first beginning of that perfection which, it has been declared, will be made final in July.

That this may be done so rapidly, the lethargy habit has to be abolished, as the lipi has predicted, that is, the demand of the physicality for cessation and intermission, its refusal to respond to the tapas and idea which was the real though hidden basis for the habit of long cessation and relapse which the sadhana has been struggling with and at last gradually eliminating, — recently quite rapidly, — during the last seven years. It is still strong in the physical sadhana; therefore there is there except in the Ananda, only a slow and laboured and intermittent progress, though in some directions still a steady progress, and in some respects only a defensive denial of farther active asiddhi relapse, in others a balance of relapse and reparation with a slight gain sometimes for the siddhi, sometimes for the asiddhi. It is in utthapana and saundarya that the asiddhi is strongest, in arogya the siddhi for the most part holds its own and even has had definite particular victories and advances; in Ananda it is hampered, but now on the verge of a general triumphant progress, even engaged in its actual inception.

In the evening some initial fulfilment of the lipi, "the seagod in the telepathies, trikaldrishti, tapassiddhi.", chiefly in the telepathies.

Activity in the remainder of the samadhi, increasing with some difficulty and a tendency to constant intermissions, is not yet idealised or well-combined, but it tends in that direction.

May 5.

There is a considerable increase in frequency of the transcendent idea-tapas but the rest of T^2 has been acting through the intelligence this morning therefore uncertainly and without clear light. The chief advance has been in effectivity of vashita for particular effect, but the movement, though not without strength is only initial.

The main cause of the descent has been a general physical lassitude which has been indulged to a certain extent. Fatigue has begun now to be excluded from the mind, the psychic prana and the prana upholding the action of the body and confined to the body and the physical prana directly involved in the body. Action of the body can go on in spite of the fatigue in the muscles, but the general effect of the latter can still throw a general effect on the upholding prana, not precisely of fatigue, but of lassitude in the *virya*. The only imperative effect is the reaction of muscular strain

Tivra has now established the rule of increase by excitation; but this modified by a continued habit of intermediate deadening or diminution of response. The rule—in continuous excitation—of response with interstices of deadening or diminution followed by renewed and in the end increased response is being supplanted by the habit of sustained response; but the substitution is not yet complete.

Prolongation of response after cessation of touch and repetition after cessation, the latter sometimes an often repeated and almost continuous repetition, is rapidly coming in; so also the habit of sympathetic response, after cessation.

Pervading vaidyuta has begun, but is not yet strong in its hold or intense. The intensity is however increasing.

Sahaituka tivra still generally demands *nistapas smarana*, passive attention; continuity usually requires *satapas smarana*. Ahaituka is trying to develop frequency of its *nihsmarana* action. With smarana it occurs spontaneously anywhere.

After strong obstruction in the daytime a great development in the night of swapna samadhi. The undeveloped movements develop fluidity and ease in coherency; especially reading firm, clear, legible, sufficiently stable, only once or twice incoherent, frequent, fluid. Only when presented in the mass and not in short sentences, was it still incoherent, illegible, quite unstable, but even here there was an attempt at improvement.

Dream is now normally consecutive and coherent, though not invariably. It still has, however, the nature of phantasy.

May 6th

Tapatya is being exiled steadily from the action of T^2. Tapatya is the straining to know and fulfil; it is not in itself desire, but the cause of desire in the prana and heart; desire being banished, tapatya has remained as an illegitimate prolongation and stress of what is received in the ideality, it is mental tapas, bringing false stress and falsification of values. Although not a cause of grief and disappointment like desire, it is a cause of false hope and false doubt and also of undue pravritti and undue nivritti of mental action and as a result of temperamental and physical action. It is being driven out by the establishment of the transcendent idea-will of which the universal tendencies and movements become the effective media and results. At first this tends to bring an excessive passivity of the instrumental Jiva, but this is a defect which is in the course of being remedied. Tapatya took up the communications of the idea will and personalised them into a mental effort, belief, hope in the instrumental Jiva. They have, where necessary, to be personalised but as part of the personality of the Ishwara creating in the Jiva ideal sraddha and pravritti.

The day has been one chiefly of obstruction, only minor progress made. Fluency with incoherence in the newly progressing parts of the samadhi. Tejomaya rupa is frequent in swapna samadhi, but it is instable or imperfectly stable, without hold on the chidakasha. Perfect rupa has once or twice manifested in antardarshi, usually it is only crude; but it is only momentary.

Ananda progresses distinctly only in the tivra; there is a general tendency to suppression.

May 7.

The defect that has to be got rid of throughout the ideality, is the descent of the vijnana into mind. This makes the intellect the receptive agency which creates a sort of receptive intellectual judgment, assent and denial, a cause of error and uncertainty. It prolongs the old defects, especially in T^2, the defect of taking (1) inactual possibilities, (2) actual tendencies and possibilities as definite trikaldrishti. The first is not frequent and has no imperative power, the second is still the chief cause of positive error, although it is less powerfully insistent than it was formerly. The removal of this defect begins today. It is prolonged by the *rhathumia*, the leaving things to take care of themselves instead of insisting by the ideal tapas upon perfection. It gives an undue force to the etheric resistance in the physicality and prevents the full liberation of the ideality to act largely and perfectly. When it is absent, there is an anandamaya certainty.

The script has laid down for May in the physical siddhi (May 5)
(1) primary utthapana, to be pressed steadily and laid down in the base;
(2) a distinct general advance in arogya;
(3) a struggle with old age and asaundarya;
(4) a complete fivefold physical ananda.
All these necessarily to be only an initial movement.

For today the script runs

"The liberation of the ideality is to be completed today within certain limits. T^2 will take a little more time; so will effectivity of tapas in rupasiddhi and vishaya."

Nothing is said here about the samadhi.

═

The liberation of the ideality is being effected by two movements;

(1) elimination of the intellectual response, involving a physical movement by which the thought ceases to descend into the area of the mental brain-stuff in the sukshma body environing the brain in the physical body and acts from the junction of the sukshma mind and the vijnana above the head, upon and above the sahasradala;

(2) substitution of the inspirational for the intuitional stuff in the ideality.

This has been done already in speech thought and ideation; it is still to be done in T^2, though there too it is done within certain limits. Rupasiddhi has begun today with a more ideal tapas, but as yet no definitive progress has been made in the forms. Rupasiddhi also has eight qualities to be perfected, — spontaneity, stability, vividness, rapidity, fluidity, completeness, variety, coherence, and a ninth, truth (ie, point, right relation, utility) corresponding to the "light" and "justice" in the lipi qualities.

Vishaya shows no tendency to develop beyond its persistent limitations.

There is no longer any difficulty about maintaining the ideal liberty in the speech thought, it is normal; there is still difficulty in the ideation, it is only becoming normal.

Lipi is perfect in sadhara and niradhara, normally; it is still difficult to maintain perfection or even to enforce it in the chitra lipi and sthapatya lipi. The absolute perfection comes most easily in the niradhara; but in none is there entire freedom from the resistance of the physical ether to the perfect manifestation. Some force of tapas is always required; left to itself the ether yields always ideal lipi, but in an imperfect form.

For the second week of May the script runs.

"The second week of May is more important than the first. What was begun in the first, will be made effective in the second, that is, free ideality, abundance and accuracy of T^2, evolution of physical ananda, idealisation of the samadhi. In addition rupasiddhi and vishaya will break the long obstruction which has prevented their evolution. Other results will outline themselves during the week."

Physical ananda is once more active; the kama is overcoming the obstruction and it is developing a new movement which shows that even in the physical movements there is such a thing as the ideal and the mental action. That is to say, the ananda hitherto manifested even if in its origin supramental, was supported by the intelligent mind or at the best by the intuitive mind, while what is now manifesting is ideal delight in the body. That was mixed in its character, modified by the lower physical reaction, this is pure and sovereign and has taken up the physical reaction into the ideality; it is self-existent even when sahaituka. The sparsha only awakens, it does not produce it. A similar distinction is prefigured in the arogya but is not as yet practically defined.

May 8

The first week of May has fulfilled the outline of progress laid down for it, a preparation within certain limits. It has effected a great liberation in speech thought, ideation and lipi and not only outlined, but laid down here the clear and strong ideal ritam in the satyam brihat, fixing it for the present mainly in the inspirational form or at the lowest in an intuitional form truly ideal and not intellectualised. Sometimes the old intellectualised form still recurs, but this is an exception without power or sanction in the nature. In T^2 it has done no more than prepare, but it has got [rid][2] of desire in the tapas and diminished the force of tapatya: it has put the telepathies in their right place and tried to make the field clear for the real trikaldrishti; it has also laid down the right relation between the transcendent and the universal in this action of the ideality. But as yet the nature has not perfectly accommodated itself to the ideal law. The physicality persists in besieging the system with the old imperfect action. Lipi is fixed in the ideality, but has only established the formal perfection in the type frequently occurring, it has not as yet successfully universalised it, though for a time it seemed on the point of an almost complete success. The totality of the physical delight has been prepared, but not accomplished, except to a certain extent in the tivra. The samadhi has made great progress in the lipi, ideation and speech thought, which are all idealised and the [ ][3] first two well established in all depths of the samadhi, except for occasional touches of nidra bringing interruption and breaking of the thread; lipi occurs in all [*four states*], but not freely and firmly except in the antardarshi. Other elements now occur freely in swapna and have an initial ideality, but are not yet firm in it; rupa is less forward, but it has achieved frequency of tejomaya and an occasional initial stability in it. Formerly the stability and continuity was only in chhayamaya.

---

[2] *MS* ride

[3] *MS* two

Script. Today, physical delight, T^2, ideality, vishaya, rupa. Physical delight, especially kamananda, progress, not final finality. T^2 very perfect, but certainly not yet universal. Ideality perfect. Vishaya insistence, rupa d[itt]o.

T^2 today has almost got rid of tapatya, but still has tapata, an uninsistent intellectual stress. When the decisive sight comes, it is exact so far as it goes, but does not come freely, nor is it either luminous or forcible.

Kamananda is redeveloping against a strong, but still weakened physical obstruction (from the environmental ether, not in the body), but it is still subject to the old difficulties, limitations and disabilities. It has not yet any force of pervasion or the massed intensity and enthusiasm of former accesses of kamananda.

This has come subsequently, a pronounced and pervasive ananda. At first proceeding from the centre to pervade the lower parts of the body and occupying, from thence rising to pervade the upper parts to the brain. It was only by application of tapas that the contrary movement was induced; but it is a noteworthy instance of the tendency of the physicality to make laws of imperfections which are in their origin only temporary movements and stages in the complete evolution, that the normalising of this latter movement and the full occupation by it is still resisted and is not so complete as that of the former. This kamananda is long continuous, but not entirely continuous; it has however already the habit of constant return. It can be continued into samadhi, but there tends to drop away.

In samadhi of all depths an abundant play of lipi is now established. It is ideal, almost but not entirely free, but not yet perfect in the eightfold quality. Reading is acquiring force, the other movements are less apt to come freely.

Insistence on vishaya has only brought isolated internal sparsha in antardarshi and isolated combined drishti, sparsha and sravana in swapna samadhi. Insistence on rupa has only brought perfection of form in the type rupas. But the insistence has been only occasional.

In samadhi great wealth of reading, but with the established tendency to coherence a great bringing forward of the old tendency to incoherence. Rupa in swapna develops, but still not beyond the line already attained.

May 9.

Some difficulty is found in preventing even vangmaya thought from descending into the [intellectuality].[4] Still the pure inspirational is rapidly developing freedom and normality and the frequent descent tends to stop at intuitional ideality, without now the descent into the intellect and even this is now a secondary and no longer a chief movement.

It is noticeable that even what might be called the subconscient telepathy,—for that is what it was once, and it is still really that emerging to the surface of the sense mind,—is beginning to become idealised. This is a great step in advance and a promise of the total idealisation of the mind-stuff.

The inspirational ideality prevails more and more and has developed rapidly a higher revelatory substance, but the divergence has brought an unease and want of ananda into the mental system. This has been used as a discouragement to the intellectual thought when it comes because it creates a positive physical unease, but this use is contrary to the ideal method all whose means must be anandamaya. The ideality does not need the reactions of the old mental method to assist its progress; it can go on more rapidly and satisfactorily without them by its perception of truth and its own force to fulfil it.

The inspirational vangmaya now descends more freely into the physical region of the intellect without descending psychologically,

---

[4] *MS* ideality

—that is to say, it is not intellectualised or turned into intuitional thought, it remains the inspirational ideality. The ideation tries to follow the movements of the speech thought; but it is more backward and owing to its past habit of conversion into intellectual thought unable to effect the same progress as successfully.

It is noticeable that the difficulty is greater in samadhi than in the outward jagrat, which is also a reversion to a former state of things. Samadhi is now divided into two parts, the lighter forms in which the purusha is wakeful and ideality reigns, the deeper in which nidra reigns and the action is intellectual with much of the old incoherence. But now in this nidra the purusha is wakeful though in a swapnamaya fashion and the intellectuality is nearer to ideality and is sometimes idealised. It is on the point of conversion to the ideality. In this nidra kavya has suddenly made itself frequent.

Sparsha is increasing in swapna and even trying to enter into antardarshi

The ideation and speech thought have now effected the requisite conversion and the force of the ideality in them can be trusted to complete it and remove or transform the unconverted elements or tendencies that still remain. T^2 is now turning to make the same conversion and has begun it, but here the intellectual confusion and chaos of mental telepathies has been so great, though now partly cleared, that time is required to make the conversion equally effective.

The true revelatory thought has begun to manifest in the lipi, but with an absorbing inspirational form of itself or with a strong and too heavy intuitional tendency. The highest and subtlest form of it is not yet manifest

This revelatory thought has at once extended itself to the speech thought both in the jagrat and the antardarshi and swapna samadhis, and to a less extent to the ideation. Nowhere does it occupy the field, but it is already dominant everywhere.

Lipi now well established in antardarshi and swapna, even the deepest, is now insisting against great opposition on (1) perfectly free manifestation with no obstruction from the lethargy of the ether, (2) perfect manifestation in possession of all its eight qualities. It has already some initial success.

Reading in the swapna is becoming rapidly coherent, except when it presents itself in masses; it is then illegible and the attempt to read brings in incoherence.

May 10.

Script today fixes a large programme.

(1) The decisive conversion of T^2 fixed in all its parts
(2) Vishaya and rupa farther insisted on.
(3) Samadhi developing the undeveloped parts in a mass.
(4) Kamananda settled
(5) Ideality progressing in the revelatory thought.

T^2 at present has to deal with the following component situation.

1. The largest element to be dealt with is the old telepathic intellectual perceptions. These now are unable to insist on themselves and are no longer false trikaldrishtis, but perceptions of thought, tendency, intention, impulse, either belonging to the object or working on it from the environmental physical Virat or from the pranic and mental planes. Yesterday the inspirational thought was busy observing them and giving them their right place and scope. They have to be replaced by the intuitional telepathies.

2. The next largest element is the intuitional perceptions which are real[ly] telepathic, but which the intellect tried to represent by overstress as definite trikaldrishti of future action. These are now putting on their ritam and have begun to figure as accurate intuitions of present tendency etc and immediate or closely subsequent future action. This telepathic trikaldrishti of the future, however, can only be definitive if approved by the higher revelatory or inspirational ideality. Moreover they are vague about time and not quite full in circumstance.

3. Blind or unluminous inspirational thought of trikaldrishti-tapas, ie indicatory inspirations without farther discernment of detail or aspect, limit or scope, and without light of the revelation. To be entirely replaced by luminous revelatory trikaldrishti; this is the main conversion.

4 Luminous inspirational perception of trikaldrishti-tapas. These have been few and disputed by mental perceptions which imitate them, seem to give an ideal sanction, but are really only the ideality's sanction to the telepathic tapas, that is to attempts, partial results, side results etc. This is the element that has to be converted into decisive revelation and to dominate.

Sors
इंदविंद्राय बृहते पवस्व सुमृळीको अनवद्यो रिशादाः।
भरा चंद्राणि गृणते वसूनि –

इंदु is the Ananda, both ideal and physical—इंद्र बृहत् the large ideality

The kamananda is now, for the time being at least, so fixed that it is present whenever the attention or any part of it is turned to the body. There have been three recurring stages always of this Ananda, (1) prevalent obstruction refusing the Ananda even to the tapas, except occasionally, (2) the obstruction broken down by satapas smarana, Ananda recurring but intermittent though with periods of continuity, (3) constant Ananda dependent on nistapas smarana, but varying in intensity, sometimes full, sometimes only an impression, not definite Ananda. What has to be developed is ni[h]smarana Ananda, that is enforcing itself on the sense in the body even without smarana. This is now acting in the sahaituka

The sahaituka creates a stronger deposit of ahaituka; but this tends to diminish and fade away. When this tendency ceases, the Ananda will be perfectly founded.

The strong intense sahaituka still leaves a doubt whether the body is capable of bearing and therefore holding its indefinite prolongation and increase. This *dharana-samarthya* also must be determined in order to ensure permanence. When it is fixed, Ananda will help to enforce perfect arogya on the body.

The transformation of all telepathy into intuitional ideality is proceeding rapidly. When it is completed, thought will be entirely idealised, an ideal mentality will replace the average imperfect mentality. But this intuition has now (1) an inspirational and a revelatory element within its limits, (2) a strong intellectual element and atmosphere. The latter has to be entirely eliminated, the former strengthened and made dominant.

The vaguer parts of roga, not those that still have a strong and definite hold on the body, are being brought forward, evidently for the ideal tapas to begin to deal with them. If this is done, the arogya as well as the Ananda will be brought within the field of the new ideal activity.

The elimination of the intellectual atmosphere of the telepathy has begun. It will take time, but the difficulty is not so great as at first appears or as past experience would lead one to think, for the mentality now pervading the body is intuitive and not intellectual-vital; the intellectual element and atmosphere are brought in from outside, from the environmental mind.

The concession given to the intellectuality, led to a renewed intellectual interruption, but this has been very rapidly remedied, and it has served its turn in establishing a real will in the intellectual devatas in the environmental mind to seek for their own idealisation instead of resisting the idealisation of the adhar.

Both smarana of kamananda and ni[h]smarana ahaituka and sahaituka are becoming easy and frequent in samadhi. Even some initial continuity has shown itself.

The Ananda has now only to overcome the tendencies of discontinuation to be fixed.

In Samadhi there was a massed development, in strong and firm type, of ideality in kavya, dialogue, narrative, reading etc; a first movement turning these from ideal phantasy into truth of a definite aim and utility in the purpose of the divine Yoga, at least in one first instance of combined reading and lipi (Indian News . . nerv. [. . .]); also a first instance of strong, though partial legibility in persistent mass lipi, with however the defect that its persistence did not amount to legible stability. Kavya developed remarkably, eg "What swoon has brought The key of many immortalities?" But the farther progress was hampered by the after effects of the intellectual reaction, as the thought-action in the intellect hampered the revelatory thought from acting.

The physical anandas no longer as a principle of action replace, prevent or interfere with each other, but all seem to help the kamananda. The kamananda suffers not only from the old defects of diminution and discontinuity, but from its other old defect of insufficiency in ambulando. There seems however to be on the whole a much greater force of continuity than on former occasions. The intensity of the morning's sahaituka has not been repeated. There is strong reaction of negative vaidyuta on the sukshma body affecting the sthula. Recurrent Ananda is now fixed in the system.

The inspirational ideality has now sunk to the secondary place,—a degradation of the revelatory in the intellectual region. Thus another part of the script programme has already been fulfilled.

In T^2 the telepathy has become inspirational idealistic in the intuitive mind; there is also a secondary trikaldrishti which reposes upon it and is therefore telepathic in its nature; the intellectual element occurs rarely and is rejected and dismissed. Part only of the script programme has been fulfilled under this head and that too not completely; still it is a decisive conversion and therefore so far the fulfilment is, verbally, complete. In addition a pure inspirational trikaldrishti, not telepathic, has begun to operate again. But these inspirations are only just enough illumined for their restricted work. They have a narrow discrimination, no revelation. They give only the particular result sometimes with a time element, but no accessories or attendant circumstances except when another inspirational or intuitional indication is added to eke out the first main indication. There is satyam and ritam of a sparse and narrow character, no brihat.

Tapatya is being destroyed along with the intellectual element; but there is tapata. All trikaldrishti now contains its own effective tapas, and separate tapas apart from trikaldrishti is rarely employed. It is being eliminated, except to some extent in the action of will on the body. Tapas comes in the trikaldrishti only as if a sort of subordinate accessory, although really in the ideality both are necessary to each other and essentially inherent in each other. But the subordination is kept up in order to get rid of tapata. Once that is removed, the way will be open for an equal unified idea-tapas in the T^2.

Revelation with a stronger discriminatory power is now entering into the pure trikaldrishti, but it acts oftenest by a descent into the intuitive mind. Time, place, circumstance, though now often correct, are still pursued by intellectual error and uncertainty.

In the evening and night strong intellectual obstruction which for the most part prevented any definitive progress. Still there was a notable advance in the development of revelatory thought.

Vishaya [ ][5] has only gained so far by insistence (1) a daily but isolated occurrence in swapna, (2) intensity of subtle sparsha in jagrat, antardarshi and bahirdarshi, (3) greater intensity of the type sparshas already in force

Rupa is still limited to tendency in the jagrat, to occasional frequency of established movements in swapna.

Great intensity of audition and mental vision of the personalities (devatas) that stand behind the action of the intuitive and intellectual mind and temperament in the sadhana. The truth of the developments thus seen is established by the subsequent result in the changes of the mentality.

Script.

"What will outline itself, will be

1. An advance in the arogya, a decisive advance
2. An advance in primary utthapana
3. An advance in saundarya.

Also the T^2 acting in life."

May 11.

Script programme

"Conversion of the thought-speech to the revelatory is already complete. Ideation is to be converted today; for that has only begun. T^2 has to be converted from the inspirational-intuitive to the revelatory inspirational

---

[5] *MS* by insistence

"Kamananda to overcome several of its difficulties and to be sure of fixity.

"Vishaya and rupa farther to insist and develop.

"Samadhi to develop the idealities gained and to insist specially on rupa."

The thought speech is now revelatory in all its forms. Even when the inspirational and intuitive occur, they are revelatory in their substance. Lipi also is always revelatory in the same way. It is, it says, to develop T^2 and be the diary (journalier) of the trikaldrishti, telepathies, tapassiddhi.

Ideation is still afflicted ordinarily by the necessity of expressing itself, though ideal in substance, in the intuitive mind. Until this difficulty is overcome, its full conversion cannot take place.

Kamananda was oppressed in the latter part of the day yesterday; it is now recurrent rather than continuous.

Intense continuous kamananda; action of the nihsmarana sahaituka and in a less degree of the nihsmarana ahaituka. The Ananda has now only to strive with the forgetfulness in the body which tends to be quite effective only when supported by exclusive absorption in the mind. The Ananda in ambulando is maintained by nistapas smarana and in ahaituka partly by nihsmarana sahaituka, the latter sometimes of a fair intensity. Pervasiveness and an increase of force not yet amounting ordinarily to intensity were brought in successfully, even the fourfold wave movement.

Kamananda has attained power of continuity and easy maintenance by smarana in lighter swapna.

In Samadhi strong action of lipi even in the depths and frequent and strong sparsha. Play of rupa; instance of perfect rupa, but unstable.

The barrier has not yet been broken down in jagrat rupa. One definite development is the progressive elimination, by force of rejection, of what was once most common, rupa formed painfully out of chaotic material in the akasha. Spontaneity is now the rule; vividness has also begun to predominate; but stability is only initial, except in certain crude forms and even there it is very little more.

Only some incomplete forms have more stability. Completeness however is not yet perfectly established, though it is common; incomplete forms are frequent. Rapidity and fluidity increase, but are not perfect. Variety is growing strong in the type rupas, but other rupas for the most part come imperfectly and without any developed variety. Group coherence is very occasional. The two main things the will insists on, stability and variety in vivid completeness of the spontaneous developed or perfect figure only come,—if at all the first,—in the type forms. The main barrier remains erect.

In the afternoon much trouble of intellectual suggestion and obstruction, so that no new development came in the subsequent samadhi, except intensity and extension of lipi, speech-thought and ideation. Some mass lipi and reading, but no advance in coherent legibility. The rest was obstructed and occurred, if at all, feebly, and not often in the ideality.

The development of ideation was also much baffled and the two lines on which it proceeded rendered for a time doubtful and ineffective by intermixture or intervention of intellectuality. Now, however, the effect has become pronounced; 1st, conversion of intuition to the revelatory ideation, but with an intuitive burden and a tendency to drop towards mental intuition, 2dly revelatory inspiration, as demanded in the script programme for T^2, with a leaning also, very often, to excess of intuition; 3dly, though rare, revelatory ideation proper, a little broad and blurred in its light. By the development and liberation from defect of this process will come the complete conversion both of the ideation and of T^2.

Kamananda seems to be strong and fixed in a constant or frequent recurrence; it remains to be seen whether the old obstruction will again prevail to impose a long discontinuity or only the present tendency of brief discontinuity by *vismriti* will limit this siddhi.

Chitra rupa and sthapatya rupa are very strong, stronger even than at any previous time, although they have been well founded for several years. Rupa shows a tendency to variety, especially in the crude; but this cannot be entirely relied on as there has again and again been the same tendency, never leading to permanent siddhi;

it has always been undone, built itself up again, but each time with a diminution rather than a progress. The element of spontaneity however gives this time a greater chance of a final true initiation of progress.

Kamananda, though as usual less in the decline of the day, preserved its power of recurrence until sleep.

No definite progress in vishaya. There is some tendency of expansion of shabda in the sukshma voice.

Primary utthapana fluctuates from return of a certain strong exhaustion in the upholding prana, not the vital, but the physical, and an expulsion of the fatigue tendency, which then clings only by the habit of muscular strain exhausting temporarily the body's force for motion, but not the upholding prana. For some days the exhaustion has held sway, tonight the elimination was again resumed.

May 12.

Script gives, (1) T^2, to be pushed forward,—(2) conversion of ideation, to be enlarged and universalised, (3) kamananda, progress decisive,—(4) rupa, progress decisive,—(5) vishaya, insistence,—(6) action of ideality on health and primary utthapana. Add rapid development in things established, lipi, vangmaya, etc.

T^2 is now proceeding automatically in the idealisation of the telepathies which are to be converted from the mental to the intuitive ideal. It is dealing with all telepathies and fixing them decisively in their proper place.

Vangmaya is now to be noted in two movements, effulgent and refulgent; (1) effulgent, the pure vangmaya, vak leaping forth from the ideality with the ideation contained in it, (2) expressive of or responding to a previous ideation or else proceeding from a silent indefinite ideation to which it gives form and expression. The former tends to be always revelatory thought and to reject the inferior inspirational and intuitional forms; the latter is ordinar[il]y revelatory in the intuitional form or merely intuitional and can even sink to mental intuitive speech. Ideality is working upon this latter action to assimilate it to the effulgent revelatory speech.

Ideation is now usually full of revelatory substance and sometimes of revelatory light, but is obstructed in its form of manifestation by the old tendency to expression in the mentality. This is being indulged in order that the resisting intellect may be forced to change entirely into ideal substance of thought. It is the unconverted T^2 which is the main support of this obstruction.

The physical obstruction, taking advantage of suspension during the night, has tried to get rid of the kamananda, to disprove fixity. But the powers of fixity and pervasion have prevailed. They are now natural to the body, can do without tapas and, even when suppressed by the suspension, need only smarana to set them in action. To get rid of suspension by vismriti is now the task that lies before the Ananda. It is now no longer dependent on position, but self-acting in all positions, even in ambulando, where indeed it has a great power of spontaneity and pervasion. Nihsmarana ananda has also become self-acting.

Rupa develops variety in the quite crude forms, but the old defect of chaotic non-spontaneous formation with defect of rupa qualities is again strong in them, as in instability and want of variety in the spontaneous forms. These are the two rocks upon which the progress has always fatally stumbled, come to a halt and gone back.

Accuracy of intuitive telepathic trikaldrishti is now very strong and embraces detail, though here it is not always quite perfect in its choice. Confusion of stupefied intellect in the physical brain atmosphere is the one successful obstruction now remaining. When this occurs, the ideality has to break its way through to manifest.

In samadhi rupa shows a tendency to manifest in antardarshi, some of the forms with an initial, others with a greater stability, but all crude. Developed rupa in swapna once with a strong stability; chayamaya with a long continuance of chitras or action. The rest—reading sometimes very vivid and initially stable—ordinarily idealised, but their free action is not yet fixed in the samadhi.

Conversion of ideation into the revelatory-inspirational thought is now enlarging itself very rapidly and being applied to T^2. Decisive trikaldrishti is frequent, but it is usually telepathic or leans on the telepathic. The greater trikaldrishti awaits the development of the secondary ideality of which there are some precursor signs and instances. T^2 applied to internal movements is advanced, T^2 applied to objects in the field of exercise copious but weak, T^2 applied to life hardly yet in action, except for scattered instances.

Rupa developed some variety of fugitive perfect rupas in the evening; they do not emerge perfectly from the chidakasha.

The conversion of ideation has been founded, enlarged and developed a strong tendency of universalisation; T^2 has advanced, but is still obstructed. Kamananda has fixed recurrence and an initial power of nihsmarana. Rupa has a certain fixity of its will to progress. Vishaya made no progress. Ideality is acting on arogya and primary utthapana, but without any definite progress.

May 13.

T^2 is to be rapidly developed today; ideality to continue to universalise its action in the thought and its conversion of thought-speech to the revelatory form and substance; kamananda to develop sasmarana continuity and nihsmarana force, rupa and samadhi to compel their obstacles. Physical siddhi has to generalise its initial progress in its other members.

T^2 is busy with the telepathies. It is distinguishing two fields of telepathic knowledge. By identification (sanyama) with the physical plane of being, it feels accurately the tendencies etc that materialise in the object and determine its action; it can even see provisionally the presently future action to a certain extent, provided it does not miss the possibilities that are not yet in action, but may or will be in action. It can see which will prevail, provided no higher idea or will intervenes. Secondly, there are the forces of the lower mental and pranic planes. These it sees before they at all touch the physical; that they are true, it can see by feeling their reality and also because they translate themselves subsequently into intention, tendency, action, impulse, impression etc in the object observed. It is here that the danger of perversion by false stress is strongest,—though it occurs everywhere,—because the pranic especially have a vehement urge towards selffulfilment, the mental a strong intention to fulfil and belief in their success, and they convey this to the observing mind. But only a few can really act upon the object effectively and fulfil their aim. Their action is irregular; they often produce a subsequent partial effect or modify the immediate or subsequent action without fulfilling themselves as they had wished, or they fulfil themselves at other times, in another place, under other circumstances, even in other objects. Often the object first influenced escapes, but another which has come into the field of the influence is entirely affected; it is as if the powers acting in him took up and carried out the suggestion which the powers acting in the first had rejected. The powers of the higher mental and pranic planes fulfil themselves much more frequently, powerfully and [ ][6] they have more of the truth in them. But in all this there is no absolute certainty of future trikaldrishti, though prevision after prevision may be fulfilled with unvarying accuracy for a long time; still it is only even then a prevailing certainty, a mental and moral, not an absolute and ideal certainty. Moreover in all this there is a will attending the idea and the will in the observer may help or retard, make possible or prevent the fulfilment; because the powers hostile to a result take note and resist more strongly and if they are stronger, prevail, the powers favourable to it take advantage, strengthen themselves and if the observer's will is strong, they prevail. All this is now felt, seen, participated in by the intuitive-inspirational or less easily by the revelatory-inspirational perception in the being. The element of revelation however is now increasingly present in the first or else attends it in the accompanying ideation

The perception of all these things is becoming steadily more intense and satisfying, it is increasing in the quality of the satyam brihat and in the ritam of the satyam brihat. The pressure from above is for what is subconscient to be mentally or ideally seen and felt, and for the mental perception to be transformed into the ideal or to be accompanied or enlightened by the ideal thought.

---

[6] *MS* frequently,

Kamananda is [increasing][7] rapidly in sasmarana continuity, but it still tends sometimes and the Ananda tends always to diminution of intensity by vismriti. The opposite tendency of increase by continuity is not yet strong enough to get permanently the upper hand. There is also the habit of discontinuity which though no longer proper to the physical body is imposed on it by the mind of the Akasha of the surrounding [physicality][8] and accepted through force of past habit. The old sanskara of the body that the Ananda must be discontinued to give it relief, exists also in that mind and has its effect in bringing about discontinuity. The latter can be more easily eliminated than the general habit of discontinuance, which cannot be finally expelled except by the growth of the nihsmarana action.

In Samadhi rupa played freely in swapna, occurring automatically with spontaneous fluidity, rapidity, vividness, usually with completeness and with much variety every time, the moment the verge of swapna was crossed; but it is still unstable. This play carried itself also into the antardarshi, but there with a certain inability to impress itself on the chittakasha; the rupas however were in their nature of the developed kind. There is still a recurring obstruction to the free play of all the members of the samadhi; the etheric akasha holds them back, is forced, again withholds and has again to be forced. Nevertheless reading manifested and narrative by succession of images.

Sasmarana continuity seems now to be sufficiently established, but nihsmarana is still too easily suppressed. The stress has now to be more upon the overcoming of vismriti and its effects.

Script. "In kamananda the vismriti to be conquered in these three days, not indeed entirely, but fundamentally.... Rupa and samadhi will still take some time. The ideality to move strongly forward in thought and T^2."

---

[7] *MS* increasingly
[8] *MS* physically

The vismriti seems already to have been conquered in its effects and it is being now initially conquered in itself, that is, its force is being diminished and at times the Ananda persists against it enforcing itself and drawing back the mind to it instead of waiting for the mind to return from its preoccupation and then either reforming or renewing itself. Even when it waits, it does not now need to reform or renew, but is there all along and is simply felt again by the sense, like the water in which a swimmer is moving.

The movement in ideality and T^2 is preparing to set aside its remaining deficiencies.

May 14

Script.

(1) Kamananda, initial conquest of vismriti.

(2) T^2, emergence of pure trikaldrishti, enlarging of the tapas element

(3) Ideality; revelatory thought in the speech; farther conversion in the ideation.

(4) Rupa and samadhi proceed with their development.

(5) Vishaya to be strongly insisted on so as to break the barrier.

The initial conquest of vismriti is growing rapidly and irresistibly in strength. The obstruction is now falling back on the fear of the kamananda in the external physicality, its sense that the body will not be able to bear continuous or at least continuously intense kamananda. The only present justification is that the body does not feel quite at home with the grosser, too physical-vital, unidealised form which the ananda still tends too largely to take.

Rupa has now broken down two barriers, (1) the inability to proceed with its self-development which arose from a wrong attitude towards the processes actually employed and a haste to get done with imperfect movements; (2) denial of stability in perfection to all but very crude forms.

The development is proceeding steadily against every difficulty; all the old difficulties, presenting themselves as strongly as they can, are being overborne. Secondary initial stability as well as primary has been established in perfect, developed, dense and crude forms alike, but only in the type. Primary initial stability is when the object stands long enough for the eye as well as the mind to get a strong view and impression of it; it is momentary, of one moment. Secondary is when the object stands longer than is needed for this, lingers a moment or two and vanishes; it is a stability of two or three moments. Tertiary is when it stands for several moments. Final stability comes when the object stays as long as the will holds it.

The defect of the siddhi, the third barrier still unbroken is its lack of variety. Other forms come, but either they have not even the primary initial stability or, having it, yet they do not come so easily as the type, are not so complete or are in other ways deficient; and in the crude they tend always to be anticipated or replaced by the type. When this barrier breaks down, rupa in the jagrat will be able to develop rapidly its completeness, freedom and perfection.

Revelatory thought on the right level and in the inevitable style pure or the inevitable forms of the inspired, illuminative, effective and adequate styles is now well fixed, natural and normal, practically universalised in the original vangmaya. In the derivative it is beginning to triumph finally over the mental gravitation.

Vishaya is now reviving in gandha and taste.

The position of vishaya is complex and unequal. In gandha it has already been well developed, but it is subject to exceedingly long periods of obstruction and cessation and has then to be redeveloped by tapas. If this habit is overcome and sthula and sukshma gandhas well distinguished, there will be perfect siddhi. Crude primary tastes are similarly established, but here tapas is more easily effective and the distinction is clear; specific tastes occur, but not freely nor in great abundance; of substantial taste there is only an imperfect first movement. Sparsha is violently limited to a few habitual touches which are however well-developed, intensely sthula in their effect, capable of stability; very sukshma effect is more though not quite free, for its variety is limited. Shabda is still more baffled, even where established rare and obstructed and most confused of all by the sthula sounds of the material world. Darshana is only of the pranic akasha and two or three of its objects, and that too imperfectly developed.

Another attack from the external physical mind, but this was unable to take the old form of a lethargy of the tapas, relapse into inactive shama and prolonged cessation of the siddhi. It shaped into an upheaval of the lower ideal-intellectual confused-tapasic activity and an attempt to annul temporarily part of the gains of the ideality by a backsliding downwards of the active being. In kamananda it was unable to annul the conquest of the effects of vismriti, but succeeded in giving a fresh lease to the vismriti in itself, which was on the point of disappearing. The difficulties in the ideal conversion, which were disappearing, were also temporarily renewed. On the other hand the ideation gained and especially the perception of the causes, objects and utilities of the opposition movements were immediately seen; there was no disturbance of the samata, except for one or two flying touches.

Samadhi limited by the attack. But sthula shabda conversation in the swapna reached a rapid frequency not before realised, —ordinarily the dialogue is in sukshma shabda of the nature of thought overheard, though really it is speech. This was speech overheard, but in single sentences or single question and response, not connected dialogue.

Ideation has now effected initially its final conversion in the primary ideality. First, the revelatory intuition has begun to fall away and is now only an occasional and attendant lower activity (tertiary) which is on the way to disappearance; then the intuitive-inspirational transformed rapidly into the revelatory-inspirational has given its pride of place to the true revelatory which is taking up all the other forms of ideation.

At the same time trikaldrishti first become liberally positive and decisive in the general ideation is now acting with regard to the movements of the objects of vision, not as yet with a perfect arrangement of ritam, but still with a fairly sufficient decisiveness.

In the development of these two movements lies all the future perfection of the primary ideality

Rupa is attempting to develop variety and partially succeeding, but it is a variety of imperfect forms. Spontaneous manifestation out of the chidakash is beginning entirely to replace development by mental-physical pressure in the subtle physical ether. In this development lies the surety of a perfect siddhi.

May 15

The programme for the second week of May has been fulfilled in all its parts; but in the vishaya it is only a beginning.

Lipi is fixed in the ideality and always capable of perfect manifestation with the eightfold quality; but the resistance of the physical ether remains and force has to be used on it. As this has been little done recently, the resistance has increased, but it only exists initially and can be broken down very rapidly.

Ideality has become free and normal in the ideation; the revelatory is the normal type, though the inspirational and intuitional with the revelatory substance are also still in action. The form of the revelatory ideation is not yet perfect. Speech thought is fixed in the revelatory ideality, but not always in its highest form.

T^2 has evolved ideal telepathy and is evolving ideal trikaldrishti and the beginnings of ideal tapas, all in the revelatory form, though the other forms recur.

Rupa is attempting to establish variety in the initial stability; the obstacle to this variety is the last of the old barriers.

Vishaya is now initially active in all its parts but is still kept within its old limits.

Kamananda is fixed in recurrence, but its continuity is still broken in upon by vismriti aided by the demand for discontinuity as a relief to the physical system. The former difficulty is being attacked; the latter is being observed with a view to attack. Other anandas, prepared in various degrees, await the kamananda

=

Today is to be the turning point for a new movement, (1) developing what is yet imperfectly developed, (2) preparing the physical siddhi in its three other members, (3) developing new powers of the being.

Lipi is now laying stress on perfect spontaneity free from the ideal suggestions and a perfect rapid stability. It has founded both of them, the stability being no longer always of the initial order, but also very often a prolonged stability. To this new development only fluidity is lacking. Its complete siddhi will be the final overcoming of the etheric resistance. It is being extended also to the antardarshi

Samadhi is developing rupa more freely and labouring at mass reading, not yet with success, but still with an increasing approach to success.

The sasmarana Ananda is prosecuting successfully its initial struggle with the psycho-physical demand for discontinuity.

Lipi

1. The psychophysical resistance to the delight will be got rid of thoroughly in two days, initially.
2. Lipi will be thoroughly perfected in July.
3. (A long lipi, declaring that the superior ideality will be now manifested in the present limitations of the inferior ideality and they will develop together.)

Traigunyasiddhi. The intense Ananda of shama of the Mahasaraswati with the Maheswari basis and Mahaluxmi colour is now uniting itself with the strong tapas of the Mahakali bhava. A mediate equation has been arrived at, but the full Ananda of the ideal tapas is necessary before the final unification can be secure. It is notable that the Asamata now hardly even ventures to return except in touches of physical uneasiness, caused usually either by physical discomfort, eg, heat, lethargic pressure of tamas on the brain etc, or by psycho-physical discomfort of the attempt of intellect to mix still with the ideality or to accompany it. The latter is rapidly diminishing and is at best occasional.

Sraddha in Bhagavan and in the higher shakti which he uses as one's own universal shakti, is growing to completeness. The lower shakti not yet unified with the higher, is occasionally shaken by doubt or coloured by it; but this is more doubt of the rapid effectuality than of the final effectuality. Something of the latter still exists in the shape of uncertainty, with regard to physical siddhi and life, but it is no longer positive asraddha.

In samadhi, even in antardarshi, rupa is becoming more free and spontaneous, but not with sufficient power to hold the akasha so that there is still only an initial stability

Script, for the week

"Ideation to be fixed in the revelatory thought, the rest being taken up into it.

"T^2 to develop trikaldrishti powerfully and begin to strengthen powerfully the ideal tapas.

"Rupa to develop variety.

"Vishaya to press down the barrier.

"Kamananda to vindicate itself against vismriti and discontinuity

"Samadhi to begin to regularise itself.

"The struggle of the ideality with the roga to show its first decisive results of the novel order.

"The same in the saundarya and primary utthapana to be prepared."

==

Kamananda's conquest of vismriti seems to be proceeding by three movements. First, recurrence is being replaced by continuous sasmarana so that when the mind is not absorbed, the Ananda is immediately felt as a thing not recurring, but always present, though for the time being forgotten. This movement has gone very far, though it is not yet absolute. It is the overcoming of natural vismriti. There still remains the artificial vismriti brought about by absorbed concentration of the mind on its thoughts. This is being removed, first, by the mind not being absorbed, by the ideal faculty of a multiple attention, the thought being pursued, yet the Ananda remembered, secondly, by the Ananda becoming so strong as to force itself upon the mind and prevent the total absorption. Both these movements are only as yet initial and have not yet proceeded very far.

The power of simultaneous attention is now rapidly developing; it is seen that the thought in the ideality can easily be conducted and even more successfully conducted, when the mind is not absorbed, and can ordinarily coexist with the sense of the Ananda, especially the ideation and speech thought (this most, because it is most assured,) but also the T^2. The gathering together of the mind stuff and the closing of it to other ideas and objects which is the nature of absorption, is no longer necessary for the full force of the thought to reign. The habit still continues, but it is diminishing and has received its death blow. On the other hand when the thought is occupied not only with itself, but with the object of sense or in some action, as in reading, writing, conversing, this gathering and closing is more ready to intervene. Here also, however, there is a strong beginning and already a rapid growth of the elimination.

Nihsmarana Ananda is also insisting on regularisation and normality, but chiefly in the sahaituka, because there it is more intense.

A flood of action of the intuitive and inspirational lipi, unstable for the most part or with only a primary or secondary stability, pursued by the suggestions, serving only to show the complete ideality of the lipi even at its lowest. Amidst this much revelatory lipi now taking its place as an inferior movement, and beyond lipi manifestation of the superior ideality which takes no account of the intellect, forestalls its action and eliminates its substances. The inferior ideality [is][9] that which takes up the whole intellectual action and transforms it into vijnana; it is limited by what the intuitive intellect might have done; the superior takes up the inferior and is not limited by the possibilities of the intuitive mind. The inferior ideality does in its own right what the intuitive mind does by derivation from the inferior ideality, but the inferior ideality itself is only a selection from the greater range of the superior.

The speech thought has idealised itself thoroughly in succession to the [lipi][10] and the ideation including T^2 is beginning the same movement. In neither however is the superior ideality directly at work as in the lipi.

---

[9] *MS* which
[10] *MS* ideality

In the lipi the revelatory ideality is again asserting its predominance.

The superior ideality has manifested for a moment in the ideation. The complete idealisation of the thought is proceeding rapidly; but it has still to deal with the resistance with regard to exact and decisive T^2. For where the ideality does not yet act or acts only partially, the intellect has a natural tendency to attempt to fill the place.

Once again the ideal tapas has forced the fatigue out of the upholding prana. It now expresses itself in the physical body with a slight shadow thrown upon the prana.

May 17.

Script. "The extension of the ideality to T^2 in lipi, ideation, telepathy, tapas.. Enlargement of decisive trikaldrishti. Farther conquest of vismriti in Ananda. Development of rupa. The ideality to take possession of the samadhi. Vishaya."

—

Kamananda subject to suppression more than for some time past. On the other hand it has withstood a severe test under which formerly it always failed. In addition it successfully maintained its strong and long continuity throughout samadhi, even in sushupti of the mind, the vijnana observing the physical being within the consciousness, not as a form without. Also in samadhi the double concentration was easily and successfully sustained.

Ideality has begun to take possession of the samadhi with a sort of crudely regularised action.

The idealisation of the mind action seemed to break down for a time by the withdrawal of the vijnana which left the mechanical remnants of the old intellectual action to work by a sort of unwilling pravritti. There is now nothing that demands this action; when it works, it is by a sort of mechanical continuance of a dead habit. The vijnana is now resuming its work.

Kamananda recovers, though not quite firmly, its sasmarana continuity.

Ideality extends in spite of the intellectual obstacle in T^2 with a more frequent decisiveness in the details of the telepathy. The ideal tapas begins to disengage itself more decisively from the old enveloping case of the mind-stuff. Lipi trikaldrishti slightly strengthened.

Vishaya now acts intermittently in all its parts, but still slightly and without enlarging its action.

The action of the ideality continues in the primary utthapana holding at bay the attempt of fatigue to lay hold again of the upholding prana. The hold of reaction of pain and stiffness on the body continues, but is being diminished and prepared for dissolution.

Action of ideality on the fragments of roga. They try to recur, but cannot decisively materialise; some are unable to materialise at all.

May 18.

The recurrence of the intellectual action can in future be no more than a mechanical interlude. What has now to be dissolved is the mixed action of ideality embedded in or hung round with the old mind stuff, half ideality, half intuitive mentality. This inferior action has its stronghold in the T^2 and is dominant in tapas.

The stronger action of the superior ideality on a perfect inferior ideality is now the *mot d'ordre* of the siddhi. The superior ideality is very visibly busy perfect[ing] the inferior ideality so as to purify it from all immixture of the mental accompaniment.

Especially tapas is now getting rapidly idealised and the false mental stress is being at last really eliminated without the force of tapas being diminished. For the difficulty till now was that the force, the rudra shakti, of the tapas always brought with it excitement of mental wish, tapatya or tapata, and overstress, while the elimination of these brought with it also an elimination of the rudra shakti. It is now becoming possible to combine forceful will, even rudra tapas, with truth of ideality.

Thought telepathy is beginning to develop. Formerly it was only telepathy of the sensations, emotions, desires, impulses etc. Now these are to be combined with telepathic perception and communication of the thoughts.

A better distinction of primary and secondary utthapana has now to be made. Primary utthapana properly belongs to the vijnana, it is the full force of laghima, mahima, anima in the mind stuff and psychic prana so that the mind rejects all exhaustion, weariness, depression of force etc. When this extends to the prana upholding the body, that is primary utthapana in the physical being. Secondary utthapana is elimination of these reactions from the body so that the limbs and the whole body can take and maintain any position or begin and continue any movement for any length of time naturally and in its own right. Tertiary, is when gravitation is conquered.

Hitherto the distinction made was between movement ambulando and positions of the limbs and the body. These are now being unified in the primary siddhi. Fatigue in the positions is still powerful, but it is physical with a reaction on the upholding prana, brought about by violent pressure on the muscular system. This reaction must be eliminated.

The habit of reaction depends on the physical mind. This is shown by the fact that when the body is forgotten, the position is maintained with ease and on the attention coming back to the body it is found that perfect laghima reigns in it. But the attention then brings back the habit of reaction, the physical opposition seizing on the old long-established sanskara to renew its attack.

In the vertical triangular position of the arms there is now the pressure relieved by intervals of successful laghima.

The element of time abhyasa has to be eliminated. That is to say while formerly the idea was to maintain the position as long as possible and increase the length of time during which the siddhi maintained itself against fatigue, until by this abhyasa it became self-existent, the idea now must be to establish the already self-existent power of the ideality in the body, so that the time makes no difference. This was done originally in the first movement of utthapana in Alipur jail and sometimes subsequently in the lower utthapana, but in the latter it could not be fixed, in the former it was fixed from the beginning, but towards the end a little impaired by contagion of asiddhi from the other positions.

Power of double attention, to thought and to Ananda, is now well-established. What has now to be got rid of, is the interference of the mind-stuff in condensation; this is being already done initially by the interposition making no essential difference, since even then the Ananda reaches the side of conscious attention, subordinate as yet, which is deputed to receive it. But this siddhi is as yet imperfect and initial.

The T^2 is now attempting to extend itself out of the experimental field into the life, in which as yet it was only exercising the old scattered, half-mental action and had secured striking but isolated success and a mass of imperfect results, but no general control. All this movement must develop before the perfection required can be considered accomplished.

==

Script

"Samadhi is to carry on the regularisation by the ideality and to enforce freedom and stability in rupa and the other imperfect members.

In jagrat rupa a stable variety.
In vishaya a breaking down of the barriers.
In T^2 life.
These are the backward members of the ideality."

==

In samadhi all its members had play; all are fixed in the ideality or at lowest sink to the intuitive mentality; all have an initial stability. But reading is still fragmentary and some others occur without any large completeness or without any enlightening context.

In internal lipi occurrence of the superior ideality.

Samadhi has now two movements, samadhi proper when sitting, swapna when lying. The shakti is preparing to convert the latter into samadhi and sometimes succeeds, but on the plane of the intuitive mentality.

==

In the second and third items of the script, the physical obstruction has again massed itself powerful to reconstruct the barrier to the progress or fortify it where it was breaking down. In the latter attempt it has temporarily succeeded.

Kamananda is much hampered and though still recurrent afflicted by diminution and discontinuity. This defect is no longer due to vismriti or at least no longer has that [as] its base, but only a mechanical habit forced to recur by the massing of the obstruction in the external physicality.

The struggle continues in the primary utthapana and the arogya. The ideal shakti is more insistent at present in the former than in the latter where the roga successfully obstructs in its two chief strongholds, though in one there are slight signs of its approaching diminution.

In a continuity of five hours or so of walking, coming upon the constant abhyasa, more broken, of the past many days, fatigue in the upholding prana was shown to be now merely a shadow, fatigue in the body could only hold if there was relaxation of the utthapana shakti. Even then it was less fatigue than a pressure of the pain of stiffness in the muscles. In relaxation a sort of manomaya laghima without mahima upholds the body, and this force allows the reaction, although it is noticeable that the force of the reaction is diminishing. When the utthapana shakti of mahima-laghima takes possession,—and it now ordinarily holds the body,—all fatigue and reaction disappear and there is only the pain of stiffness which sometimes decreases and is suppressed, sometimes increases, but does not affect the unrelaxed body.

Utthapana of position is still too much afflicted by the pressure on the deficient anima, still too little supported by mahima in the laghima to be prolonged.

In Samadhi a great and solid advance. Dream reading (narrative and monologue) became perfect, except that it has to be hastily read, the lines disappearing or receding from the direct view as soon as the sense is grasped; but otherwise they are perfectly complete, massed, consecutive, coherent, forming a complete and often a long story or discourse, though occasionally the opening or the close is not read. On the other hand if there is an attempt at stability and deliberate reading, the massed print becomes either instable or incoherent. Dialogue also was perfect, though not so long and complete.

In swapna samadhi rupa was perfectly free in the chhayamaya and in the tejomaya with chhayamaya basis. Stability and prolonged continuity of action—some continuity there sometimes is—are wanting. Stability only occurs in faint and vague rupas.

Vishaya is developing.

May 19

Subsequent reaction of stiffness was felt in the morning as pain in the relaxation of the lying posture, but chiefly in the loins where it has not been felt while walking.. On rising everything disappeared or was reduced to a minimum leaving only a suppressed stiffness and fragmentary suggestions of pain. There is at present no trace of bodily fatigue, such as would formerly have been felt, or the vague weight of lassitude which would more recently have been the result. The defect of anima is evidently being conquered, although it still persists and resists ejection.

=

Script.

"Today T^2 completing itself. The superior ideality in ideation and lipi and speech thought. Restoration of kamananda. Samadhi development. Ideality to take possession of the rupa in the jagrat. Vishaya."

The superior ideality is beginning to take forcible possession of the inferior, that is to say to act within the limits set by it and in the style of its action, but independent of all reference to the old intellectual action and to the questioning of the intellect. That questioning still continues, but its doubts and its suggestions are disregarded, solved without reference to its difficulties and uncertainties. The inferior ideality respected them and leaned upon them. It was to a great extent a referee of the intellect, a substitute and an enlightener giving it the knowledge it required and could not itself compass. As a referee it solved its uncertainties; as a substitute it took up its action but carried it on in the manner of the ideality by revelation, inspiration, intuition, discrimination; as an enlightener it gave it knowledge beyond its scope, but not far beyond its scope. When it went far beyond its scope, it was more often by ideal suggestion than with an absolute authority.

The new movement is as yet only initial and still hampered by the continued outer action of the intuitive mind with its clinging ends of intellectual mind-stuff.

Lipi. "Superior ideality in trikaldrishti and tapas siddhi", already beginning to be initially fulfilled.

The first and second chatusthayas are now unified by the development of the traigunyasiddhi. Ananda of shama is combined with ananda of tapas, but tends to be modified and diminished by deficiency of ananda of tapas. This is preparatory to their complete unification.

The higher transcendent shakti and the personal shakti are now unified and sraddha swashaktyam is firmly based, but it is still deficient in force and extent.

The second chatusthaya is now complete, but in parts it is deficient in force, awaiting farther development of the Kalibhava and this again dependent on farther development of the ideality, that is the unification of the first three chatusthayas. Shama now contains in itself no longer a relaxed, but a concentrated tapas and relaxed prakasha, tapas an involved prakasha and a basic shama. By the unification of the three chatusthayas there will be the perfect unification of the three gunas. This is in the temperament, but the play of jnana and T^2 will bring it about also in the mentality. In the vijnana they are always united. There will then remain the body, but there too the siddhi is being made ready.

Ideality II is now acting upon the mental telepathy intuitive and manasic which still survives bringing about a greater light of vision and more efficacy of tapas, but without absolute certainty which only comes when there is the play of the ideal T^2; provisional certainty is however more frequent, but does not owing to the continued residuary action of the old intelligence always know its own proper limits.

There are now in the lipi three forms of vijnana, (1) the superior ideality (II), (2) the superior ideality in the form of the inferior, (3) the inferior ideality (I) in its three forms, revelatory, inspirational and intuitional. The intuitional lipi is now revelatory in its substance even when intuitional in its form, but the inspirational is often inspirational in substance as well as in form. This defect is now being removed and has almost in a moment practically disappeared.

Kamananda very much oppressed persists in a diminished and subtilised form, which at its lowest hardly seems kamananda. This is in ambulando, but even at other times there is an oppression which amounts sometimes to sheer and prolonged discontinuity. Advantage is however being taken of this depression to strengthen the element of ideal Ananda.

In the evening some restoration of the intensity, but fragmentary, recurrent, not continuous.

In the morning some depression of utthapana shakti, an overshadowing by strong effigies of fatigue, once imposing rest. Writing and visits prevented the abhyasa during the rest of the day, except for a short time at night when no trace of fatigue was left, but some muscular stiffness.

Samadhi developed chiefly in the ordering of dream. The confused amalgamations of dream are being disentangled by the buddhi in the dream state itself. Occurrence of superior ideality in deep swapna samadhi.

Some ideal rupa in jagrat.

Vishaya occurs, but makes no definite progress.

The attack of the external physicality and its mind has failed to disturb the first two [chatusthayas],[11] except for a vague superficial stain on the [ ][12] traigunyasiddhi. Sraddha holds firm, but is defective as to karma on account of uncertainty. Sraddha in yogasiddhi is complete.

---

[11] *MS* utthapanas

May 20

The siddhi in the lipi is being extended to the speech-thought so that even when the intellectual attack is allowed to reign and the ideality suspended, still the vangmaya is in its form ideal and either revelatory or inspirational in its substance

The attack is effectuated by the will of the Ishwara suspending the action of the higher ideality in the ideation. There has however been a constant action this morning of ideality in the intuitive mind commenting the confused action of the residuary mind-stuff and distinguishing its element of truth, which is that which sets its waves in motion, and the error which the mind-stuff throws up around the truth and attaches to it. This action is caused by (1) telepathies from outside, (2) telepathies from the mental and pranic planes, (3) obscurely received suggestions from the ideality. When the ideality does not act, the intellect tries to do what it can with all that it receives

The obstruction to kamananda continues, though lessened; the ideal Ananda is increasing in its subtle insistence and sometimes takes effect tenuously in the sthula form.

There is a movement to apply finally the law of the ideality to the ideation as in the speech thought and the lipi. This is not difficult in the ideation of jnana, but it is still difficult in the ideation of T^2, especially of tapas. Stress of tapatya and tapata have always been the chief obstacles; whenever removed, they have returned in a modified form; they now return as suggestions from the external physicality breaking down the defences of the intuitive mind. The Shakti has once more put them in their right place and discharged the intuitive mind of tapatya and even of unduly extended tapata. Decisive trikaldrishti and effective tapas are steadily increasing even in the intuitive mind; but until all tapas becomes ideal tapas, the perfection of the ideality cannot be thoroughly accomplished. This as yet has not been done. It can only be done by the satyam brihat ritam in the decisive trikaldrishti developing into its full amplitude. For that the rejection of the intellectual mind-stuff which clings to the ideation is a necessary preliminary.

---

[12] *MS* on the

In Samadhi still the same movement. At night a revival of dream incoherence.

Utthapana unsatisfactory.

21 MAY – 1 JULY 1918

May 21st

The sadhan is now concentrated on the *vijnana-chatusthaya* with an initial stress on the physical siddhi which is still secondary except in the *sharira ananda*, mainly the kamananda.

At present the ideality is passing through a stage of what would formerly have been called relapse, but is now recognised as a reversion to a lower movement in order to get rid of still existing defects or possibilities of defect and transform the remnants of the lower into the spirit and the form of the higher movement.

Script. "Develop T^2 and ideation, restore kamananda. Persist in rupa and vishaya and samadhi".

1. Kamananda is restored; it has recovered its power of continuity and its means against vismriti, but is still strongly subject to diminution which manifests chiefly in ambulando. It is clear that the initial conquest of vismriti is firm and real, since it manifests at once after discontinuity and has not to be built up again. The siddhi is subject to diminution and relapse into mechanical discontinuity; it has to overcome these tendencies and to complete its conquest of vismriti, for so long as the latter is only initial and not complete, the relapse to discontinuity must always be possible.

2. T^2 and ideation are working on the physical level of the intellect. They are getting rid of the inspirational and intuitional substance which most lend themselves to the attack of unideal tapas and intellectual error, because their enlightenment is essentially a partial illumination intervening in an initial ignorance. All is being turned to substance of revelatory thought, for it is this that illumines largely and is in its nature a self sight that does not address itself at all to the initial ignorance of the intellect. Even in T^2 the conversion to revelatory thought is being rapidly led towards completeness.

3. Rupa has been baffled in its development of stable variety.

Variety has been partially developed in power, but subject to all the old difficulties. In the crude the tyranny of the type form which obstructs and excludes the others, obstructs their spontaneous manifestation and allows only a difficult development pursued and overcome by the type form which, even when they emerge, returns upon them and usurps their place. In the developed and dense other forms occur, but are imperfect, unstable and confined to a few persistent forms or kinds of form. The principle of barring a free variety by insistence on already common rupas is still the chief and hitherto a successful weapon of the obstruction.

4. Vishaya is simply unable to overcome the barrier.

In samadhi, antardarshi and swapna, in the vangmaya the inspirational and intuitional forms have been entirely taken up into the revelatory form, so that both form and substance are now of this highest element of the inferior ideality. Moreover this inferior ideality is full of the spirit and presence of the superior ritam. The same movement has to be effected in the waking thought-speech and in the ideation and it has in fact begun, but here owing to the greater diffusion of the mind it is more difficult.

The revelatory thought has in a way taken up all the other forms, but their effects still remain as a limiting element which prevents and conditions the play of the knowledge. Especially it is now acting on the level of the intellect and its revelations are on that level pursued by the uncertainties of the intellect, by its tapas or ineffectual straining after certainty and effectivity, by its smallness of periphery in the conscious being and scope of knowledge and power. The object seems to be to meet these difficulties in their own field and even there to establish the fullness of revelatory light and substance and the free certainties of the superior ideality.

Here the script programme has been initially fulfilled. But in the rupa it has not been justified. Rupa has only become capable of variety; it has not accomplished it. Vishaya has only effected an uncertain and scanty initial play, an action of subtle sparsha just verging on the sthula, a dim fragmentary beginning of çravana. In samadhi vishaya has begun to play more freely, but in jagrat it has not broken down the barrier. In samadhi taste and smell are still crude and faint. Samadhi has established everywhere an initial ideality and regularisation by the ideality, but the action in each member is hampered by intermissions of obstruction and in swapna incoherence though no longer the rule, still recurs persistently in the reading and the dialogue etc have not yet, except sometimes in dream, a large continuity.

Primary utthapana after a brilliant beginning has relapsed into ineffectivity and subjection to physical fatigue. Arogya is limited to an incomplete and struggling inhibition of the fragments of roga, — but these only occur by persistent exposure to the action of their habitual causes, — and to a preparation for the conquest of the two or three fixed rogas; the actual conquest is still far from effectuation. In saundarya no advance except the stronger fixture of the sukshma bhava of youth and ananda and a certain light and prophecy of it in the eyes and face. Kamananda is still afflicted by diminution and discontinuity; the conquest of vismriti is still only initial.

May 22.

This is the fourth week of May, the month of decisive preparation of finality and perfection in the vijnana chatusthaya. It is proposed to effect the perfection of the primary ideality in ideation and speech thought and as far as possible in T^2. Rupa, vishaya, samadhi, the three defective members, have to insist on their initial completeness in the ideality. The preparation of the sharira siddhi has to insist also against the powerful obstruction of the old imperfect physicality which defends its habits as the law of the being.

The satyam brihat of the tapas, the physical telepathy and the telepathy of the mental and pranic planes is being established in the idealised intelligence under the guidance of the ideality; the object is to eliminate in its own field the false stress, the intellectual decision, so that the ideal ritam may be freed from the pursuit of the intellect.

In samadhi ideality took more firmly hold of rupa. There was also the beginning of the specific religious ideality and the ideal sense of prayer and adoration as an element of love and oneness with the Divine.

This is being extended and transformed into the finality of the personal relation of the Jiva with the Iswara

In samadhi at night obstruction, with prevalent incoherence. It was only by force of tapas that the play of the siddhi was brought about, and the free play could not be secured.

May 23.

For some days there has been a strong revival of the obstruction to the whole siddhi, but specially the ideality. The object is to enforce the old rule of a recurring period of relapse, enduring usually for a fortnight more or less, or even longer, and the method is to enforce a sort of lethargy of unresponsiveness in the mind and physicality by which first, if possible, all action shall be obstructed, secondly, whatever action is enforced by tapas shall be imperfect and marred by the old asiddhi, thirdly, as a result things which seemed to have been eliminated shall be revived, thus discouraging the faith and the tapas. The first object has not been gained, because in spite of periods of cessation, the tapas has insisted and the action of the ideality has been enforced even in this adverse condition, but the other two objects have been partially and temporarily gained. The action of the ideality is no longer free, but dependent on tapas and a struggle with the lethargic obstruction, the revived action of the intellect has vitiated the perfection of the ideality and even touches of imperfection have come in the first two chatusthayas. Nevertheless the siddhi advances and no longer behind the veil, as formerly in periods of relapse, but openly, though with apparent concessions to asiddhi used for strengthening the siddhi. The principle of subconscient progress has been eliminated, but the principle of finesse still continues.

The main progress this morning is the enforcement, 1, of the constant habitual action of the ideality, in spite of the physical brain's lethargy, 2, of the constant combined action of ideation, speech thought and T^2 to which is being added the lipi. These used to give place to each other and act alternately. There is also a movement to add the action of rupa and vishaya and kamananda but the power of multiple tapas is not yet strong enough to effect the perfect combination.

This enforcement of the combined action of ideation, T^2 and speech thought of the ideal kind is being more and more insisted on and is on the point of becoming spontaneous and normal. The main defect lies now in the downward gravitation which prevents the thought from being of the highest elevation possible, the stuff of intellect mixed in the ideation and vak by the persistence of a background of intellectual demand and pursuit of the thought by a vague intellectual observation and judgment, which though not often explicit hampers the ideality, and the continuance of external intellectual suggestion in T^2. Nevertheless the change from ideal intervention to a massed ideal movement of all the activities of the consciousness, progresses with considerable rapidity.

In Samadhi unprecedent[ed]ly large play of coherent reading of great length; but incoherence also persists side by side with it. The other members also had coherent play but less prominently.

The insistence on Kamananda is less, the continuity is suspended, but recurrence remains.

May 24.

T^2 advances steadily. Tapas (telepathic) is becoming normally effective and more clearsighted and therefore more accurate. Strong tapas which was hitherto discouraged, because it brought the tapatya, is now being encouraged and the remnants of tapatya are being transformed into forcible prolongation of right tapas. Accordingly the brihat satyam of T^2 is becoming as complete as it can be without perfect ritam and without the play of the superior ideality. For that combination alone can give all the right data in their right place including tendencies which are latent or obscurely implied and eventualities of which there is no present sign. The intimations of the mental and rajasic planes like those of the physical are receiving their right measure of satyam and it is now seen that all have their truth, except certain speculations, as to present and past especially, which are the intuitions of what might have been and may possibly be as the result of past intentions and tendencies, but do not correspond to any actually accomplished event.

Strong and successful secondary utthapana of position.

It is remarkable that fatigue of the physical mind and will, or rather the mind and will of the body, was not at all in question; for from the first it was as if already eliminated, except for a few ineffective attempts at return. Only at the end it came in in support of the muscular reaction. Primary utthapana was therefore established except in so far as it failed, through failure of secondary utthapana.

The secondary was tried in the morning in the arms, in two horizontal positions A Ia & b, frontal triangular and frontal straight. In Ia siddhi came easily; the attempt to enforce [an]anima, though recurrent, failed in persistence and in violence; self-existent utthapana, free from defect of anima, was established and remained. In Ib there was violent opposition, but it failed in the right arm, but succeeded in the left by persistence of pain of ananima aided afterwards by pressure of downward garima from above,—not gravitation, but pressure of some other external force which comes in when gravitation weakens. Gravitation is attraction from below, this is a mass of pressure from above. In the right arm self existent utthapana was established. In the left it became strong enough to maintain the position in spite of pressure and pain and even to make the pain recurrent instead of persistent and to discourage and sometimes lighten the pressure, but not to get rid of it. The whole lasted $2\frac{1}{2}$ continuous hours. In the result force of selfexistent utthapana is established in the arms as was shown in the afternoon, but ananima still remains to limit and resist the siddhi, though with greatly diminished force.

In the afternoon two positions of the legs, B.I & II, lying on the back, crooked position, lower parts horizontal, and lying on each side, alternately, horizontal II.a (straight) & II.b crooked. In B I. defect of anima was strong and prevented long abhyasa, but while recently and for a long time mahima has entirely failed to support the laghima, this time it came and held. In B II, (a) was found difficult owing to violent attack of ananima, but this was persistently recurrent, not persistent, and there was in the intervals complete utthapana; in (b) the recurrence was less persistent and less violent. On the whole on the left the utthapana was well maintained, either self-existent or satapas, for about 15 minutes; on the right there was after 7 or 8 minutes the overpowering by defect of anima. Therefore this utthapana of B positions can only be regarded as preparatory, as it was declared to be before it began.

In arms AA, (ie lying on back), the old self-existent utthapana force recovered strength and maintained itself, after one or two downward tendencies of lapse, even in sleep.

Throughout the increased power and effectivity of tapas was very marked.

In Samadhi free action of rupa and frequent initial stability and continuity. Incoherence has invaded the lipi in the deeper swapna.

May 25.

The dealings of the ideality with the revived intellect element, show an increasing subtlety and fullness of the vijnana, giving a clear ideal interpretation of the obscure brain-suggestions, which if carried to the extreme will mean a full satyam brihat with a sufficient ritam. But the process means a continual indulgence of the obscuration by the intellect which involves a suspension of the direct and primary action of the ideality. Behind the obscuration the superior ideality is growing in power upon the whole thought action.

The increase of the ritam in the satyam brihat of the telepathies on the lowest level has been proceeding rapidly, but complete ritam is not yet established.

Lipi is being left entirely to itself to establish the eightfold quality in perfectly spontaneous lipi without aid of the tapas or the suggestions. The first result of the movement has been to bring back the full etheric resistance to the manifestation with the result of fragmentariness, called formerly the desultory lipi, and defect in all the eight qualities. It is now attempting to dispel the imperfections, as yet only with a very partial success.

Recovery by the speech thought of its higher ideal pitch at which it now moves normally without any need of the least attention or tapas.

In samadhi lipi recovered its coherency in deep swapna samadhi, but there is an intermediate stage between dream and samadhi, the one passing over into the other, in which incoherence is still common. Nevertheless the incoherence can be pieced together: sometimes it arises from fragments of a sentence or thought being put together without the connecting words or thoughts, and then they have to be filled in, sometimes from the coalition of thoughts which are not connected and then they have to be separated.

Utthapana of position A I tried for about an hour. Self existent utthapana of laghima in the primary force, good for maintaining the position, if unafflicted, for two or three hours, if afflicted, for a shorter time, but not making the position entirely normal to the feeling of the body, only natural or much more natural than before. Anima not violently defective, but the defect slowly increases in force, compelling desistence in the end or at least interruption.

Subsequently, on almost immediately resuming, it was found that the compulsion of the asiddhi was not imperative, as it had appeared, but, the abhyasa being interrupted, it could not be seen how far the ananima could be eliminated. In the evening the will of the body to utthapana failed.

May 26

A II tried, but the self-existent u[tthapana]-shakti was found not to have even half the full primary force.

The movement in T^2 continues; tapas is steadily increasing.

For the last two days kamananda has been recovering its force, but is still deficient in ambulando.

Growth of rupa in Samadhi.

May 27–31

Entire absorption in another activity; the ideality continued to play of itself and to grow in quality. Rupa became increasingly powerful in Samadhi and more frequent in antardarshi.

June 1.

The upshot of the last month is to have founded firmly the ideality in the inferior or primary form, it is true, but with a substance of superior, that is to say, secondary ideality, and to have applied it to the whole range of thought including T^2. In the latter, however, it is still weak and has comparatively little scope. The lower intellectuality is on the point of abolition but the intuitive has still its role and must keep it till the superior ideality has got into its own characteristic form and occupied the place now held by the primary ideality. Samadhi has grown greatly in strength, especially in the last few days. Rupa in swapna is very strong, various and rich and stability up to the tertiary initial is common; but the prolonged stability is only in the shadowy forms. Reading has become free and current, but not always coherent, or even when coherent, not cohesive; the sentences are sufficient to themselves and have not, except exceptionally, a visible relation to each other. Rupa is pressing forward in antardarshi, but has not yet fixed its hold on the bahirdarshi. Vishaya is still unable to break down the barrier.

As a result of the work done in the last few days which was accomplished in the complete control (dasya), the passivity of the intellect has been greatly intensified and a new action is coming into being from above which evidently belongs to the secondary ideality. This is the beginning of the tertiary dasya.

June 3

Secondary utthapana II.a.b. left side for more than half an hour, variation for five minutes to IIb(a), slanting upwards. The opposition to mahima and laghima was all this time entirely ineffective and in fact rare, though occasionally it recurred only to give up the attempt almost immediately. The opposition to anima, though recurrent, could not persist, was not vehemently recurrent and was often in abeyance. Only after more than half an hour the disinclination of the body indicated a suppressed force of denial of the utthapana shakti

Rupa continues to grow in the swapna with a reflex action in the antardarshi. Stability is greatly increased. Vishaya in swapna is preparing to normalise itself. Only the self existent progress of all the parts in unison without exclusiveness or interruption has to be established. Vishaya and rupa in jagrat held on.

[*Half a page left blank.*]

June 14.

For the whole first fortnight of June the active sadhana has been suspended; there has been the absorbing preoccupation of another activity. At first the play of the ideality was associated with it, but it is now abated and is turning again to the sadhana. Still, this has left behind it the beginning of a movement to substitute the ideal for the ordinary mental action in all intellectual activities, eg, poetry, study etc.

The first movement has been action of the secondary utthapana.

This morning. B II, left, almost entirely b, for upward of an hour; simultaneously, A.A.b_1, left arm raised half way for an hour, lying on the right side, and neck, C b, in the same position. In all mahima and laghima triumphant. In B II the sharp defect of anima has lost its power of persistence and also of persistent recurrence; it occurred once or [twice][1] for a moment in the first half hour, once or twice with a more prolonged but with no very intense recurrence in the second. In C b, it came only for a time. The place of the old oppressive defect of anima has been taken by the pressure of garima on the limb, a weighing down, a sort of dull combined defect of the three qualities with the result of a temporary disinclination and declaration of inability in the body; but this could not last. It was stronger in A.A.b than in B II and in C b than in either of the other asanas. But in none could it prevail. All three might have been continued. But the object now is not, as before, to prolong the period of the asana which means only to postpone the return of the nir-utthapana, but to abolish the denial. This is being done by the will bringing in the nature of the vijnana into the body and abhyasa is now rather [ ][2] a test than a means of the siddhi.

---

[1] *MS* two

In the later morning A III; vertical position of both arms, walking, for between half an hour and an hour. Here too mahima laghima is in possession, but the defect of utthapana shakti is greater, due to the survival of the defect of anima shown by a reaction in the muscles after cessation, which was absent from the asanas of the early morning. The asana could not have been continued longer without some strain and difficulty. No evident reaction from the walking in this position.

The movement is now to replace finally in trikaldrishti the action through the intellect by the action through the intuitive mind. In trikaldrishti the survival of the inferior action is strong and will take some time to eliminate. It prevents decisive trikaldrishti and perpetuates error of stress and error of interpretation of the will-messages and knowledge-messages from the ideality.

Kamananda has gone back for the time being. Smarana is no longer always sufficient to recall it. Arogya also is thrown back in chronic rogas 1 and 2; but in the latter only under great stress lasting for the whole fortnight and here the siddhi tendency is evident even in failure.

Ready manifestation of the lipi is also a little dulled, as well as the strong play of the swapna samadhi and rupa. The lipi suffers chiefly in legibility. The tendency to stability is strong, but resisted and embarrassed.

All is, however, ready to reemerge against the strong obstruction. Full siddhi will come when interruption can no longer impair the vivacity of the siddhi.

---

[2] *MS* than

July 1st

On one side the absorption of work continues, on the other the sadhan is determining its upward movement. The ideality is gradually gaining upon the strong remnant of the intellectual obstruction and its obstinate lingering on the mental method of reception. The obstructed kamananda is resuming its force of sasmarana action, but has not yet reaffirmed strongly the trend to continuity. The rest of the physical siddhi does not advance.

24 JUNE – 14 JULY 1919

Tuesday 24th June 1919.

Today the condition of a general low tone of the being with yet a continued progress in the Yoga still continues; no depression, but a ghost of languor in the body which obstructs the channel action of the mind. The vijnana acts, but irregularly, not with a rapid or normal flow. It has not yet recovered its brightness, but is a clouded sunlight.

According to the lipi there should be today some blaze of the gnosis. Now it is suggested to the mind that trikaldrishti-tapas which yesterday founded itself in this halflight is to develop farther, telepathy be farther taken up, ideal samadhi increase its hold and the physical siddhi enlarge its foundation. Some progress may also be expected with the more constant darshana of the Ananda Ishwara.

=

Last night çukshma çravana became for a few minutes frequent and insistent; it even insisted a little to the fully waking ear and without any closing of it; but it is still faint in comparison and fragmentary.

=

Lipi. "Life in the entire ideality: between this and February it will develop in the first basis; it is already developing."

This last statement must be understood in the sense of an initial tenuous idealising of speech and action and of result of tapas in the immediate vicinity.

=

The gnosis is now taking up all the thought through the pragmatic form of the intuitive mentality; universalising that in the half and half intellectual ideal type, — but intellect not prevailing, fixed into the ideality; the mechanical intuivity is almost entirely dismissed except in the T^3.

=

In T^3 also the pragmatic intuitivity is establishing itself, strongest in the telepathies, but there is still an unauthorised intellectual stress of immediate fulfilment which baffles trikaldrishtic certitude. Even the trikaldrishti is pragmatic, not the highest entirely certain seeing, but gives only a practical certainty. Tapas is assuming the same kind of intuitivity. All tendencies and forces are admitted which offer themselves to the sight and now are seen in juster proportions than at any previous time. But the light is the clouded sunlight, not the full blaze of golden or fiery day.

There is the blaze of the highest logistic ideality in the lipi and the thought speech, but it has not yet gained the perceptive thought, much less the T^3. But as soon as this was written, that transforming movement too began. As always, it is the subjective trikaldrishti that is the first to advance; the objective is hampered by the physical obstruction. The golden but not the fiery blaze is gaining the lesser movements, including the remnants of the mechanical intuivity.

=

Kavya for a while worked in the revelation, but was soon clouded by the obscurity of the intellectual effort.

=

Arogya is steadily gaining in force, but with a slow pressure. The fragmentary rogas encircle dully in the subtle pranic atmosphere and touch or menace, but only hold now and then in certain residuary recurrences. The intestinal complaint is constantly reaching the vanishing point and then resuming hold, but there is nothing like the past violent returns. The restitution in the centre is only just trying to get and maintain an initial foothold; nothing evidently decisive.

=

Samadhi completed its idealisation in the afternoon; but at night it is subject to the relapse of sleep. In the afternoon there is only at most a shadow. In the morning there is a dull struggle of sleep to keep at bay the samadhi, and when the latter occurs there is a certain persistence of incoherence especially in the settled sthira lipi. This is being diminished, but it recovers its force repeatedly.

=

Ananda and secondary utthapana are for the time in intermission of progress.

Wednesday 25th June. 1919

The ideality of all speech thought has long been assured; the ideality of the perceptive thought is now becoming assured, wide, universal. Only the tapas and the trikaldrishtic thought and perception remains to be similarly illumined; this has begun, but its progress is interrupted and obstructed. There is a speech thought of the nature of vani expressing the trikaldrishti which is still of the intellectual ideality or intuitivity and subject to error, but that comes only in the inertia of the mechanical mentality. This mechanical passivity has to be got rid of, all has to become an ideal *çamamaya* activity. Passivity of the mind has now served its purpose, the mind has become a silent channel; only the obstruction of the physical brain atmosphere preserves the dull habit of this passivity, a tamasic persistence in an inert misrepresentation of the old *çanti*.

The only progress in the physical siddhi is a commencement of the idealising of the Ananda. Today the insistence on K.A. [Kama Ananda] is renewed; but the forgetfulness of the body continues. The intuitivity is strong in the K.A, only initial in the other anandas.

The Ananda Ishwara is now vivid and all the action and guna has been taken up into the Anandamaya; there was a discord between the darshan of the supreme universal Anandamaya and the perception of the universal mental unideal consciousness, but this is cured and only the bridge between the Anandamaya in universal and individual and the mentality is not yet brought into light. If this is done the darshana will be complete in essence.

=

Kamananda is again being pushed forward; the difficulties still are mechanical discontinuity, forgetfulness, mechanical diminution, the need of tapas to restore it when smarana is not sufficient, absorption, sleep. The mechanical discontinuity only prevails (1) when the energy is at a low ebb, (2) after long forgetfulness. Forgetfulness is being attacked and when the Ananda is in flow, there is usually a second memory in the body which retains it in various degrees of intensity or at least so keeps it that it is felt when the mind returns to some partial attention. Absorption now for the same reason does not necessarily bring discontinuity. Two movements are being carried on, (1) removal of exclusive absorption, the simultaneity of a double memory or concentration, (2) the inability of absorption to bring about complete discontinuity. These siddhis formerly only hinted at or momentarily accomplished, are now beginning to establish themselves, however imperfectly. Old occupations which excluded memory of K A are now admitting it, eg reading, writing, bathing, eating. There are two absorptions, the luminous concentration and the tamasic "absence" of the part of the mind not occupied in the particular work; the latter is the only real difficulty; it is not really an absence, but an involution in tamas, a sort of cloud of inertia, which is physically sensible all about the brain or near it.

Telepathic thought in its lowest mental form is being idealised on these levels.

K.A maintained throughout the day, even during absorbed writing and in conversation when it is apt to cease, but not without interruptions of forgetfulness. The body is not yet in secure possession of it, owing to a constant pressure for exclusion from the opposing forces.

Finesse was again used in the vijnana-siddhi in the evening; the whole mass of the old basic intellectuality was re-presented and the mind plunged into it, the ideality mostly held back, so that there might be a wider transformation, thought to be idealised even when occurring on the very lowest levels, even below the brain, even the thought of the chitta and the prana and the subconscious mind.

Samadhi today was strongly attacked by sleep.

Some beginnings of decisive ideal trikaldrishti and tapas, T^2.

Thursday 26th June 1919.

K.A interrupted in the night by forgetfulness and listlessness, restored with a little difficulty of opposition in the morning. Continued throughout the day, but with more frequent lapses into forgetfulness. The defect of the siddhi is that as yet it does not dwell sufficiently in the body, but is rather imposed on it by the psychic tendency. Once begun it can continue for a time of its own motion, but for its initiation and long maintenance has to depend on smarana and needs often a will in the smarana, sometimes a forceful tapas against the obstacle. Spontaneous initiation, renewal and maintenance [have][1] been begun and at favourable times are not infrequent, but are not yet the law of the body. The struggle between sleep and continuity of the Ananda has begun, but the continuity still needs the aid of smarana and tapas and does not subsist in the deeper nidra.

Samadhi has relapsed to a certain extent, is much assailed by sleep and incoherence. Its advance which was always laborious, has again become fragmentary. There is some progress in stability and vivid force of drishya, but it is again mostly chhayamaya. Extreme shadowy drishya has sometimes almost a complete stability; it then lasts long with some moments of eclipse. Combination of thought-speech, perceptive thought and lipi has begun, but with some difficulty.

Ideality has been strongly attacked throughout the day, but progresses even in a general lowering, especially in telepathy and trikaldrishti. Ideality of thought is being generalised on all levels and intellectual thought is now becoming more and more the recurrence of an abnormality. The generalisation of telepathic ideality has begun on a large scale. Decisive trikaldrishti is being enforced and enlarged against great difficulty.

The first two chatusthayas grow continually stronger and show this increasing strength in each fresh attack. They can only be attacked at all, and then very ineffectively, when the ideality is lowered or suspended.

Arogya too is attacked; but the attack amounts to an obstruction and lowering of the tapas, not to a positive disintegration, or at most there is only a slight superficial crumbling. But progress is slow, the strong rapidity which was trying to set in, is still held back from possession. Utthapana is suspended. Bhava-saundarya is gaining in continuity and generality.

---

[1] *MS* has

═

Ananda Ishwara is now confirmed except in the perception of mentality which is not yet linked up with the ideal anandamaya.

Friday 27th June 1919

The dasya is now being perfected and made vivid; first, the dasya of the worker and instrument is made complete and perfect. To that is added the dasya of the power, dasi iswari; the difficulty was the insufficiency of the aishwarya and consequently of the sense of the Ishwari, but now the relative and progressive aishwarya is for the time being accepted. The dasya to the Guru is also added and is uniting with these forms. The dasya in the relations of friend (raised to brother, bandhu), vatsalya, father etc are being prepared for perfection and unity in the madhura. All has to be taken up into the madhura. This movement can only be perfect when the sense of the presence of the Ishwara is allowed to be *nitya* in its directness and vividness. At present the Ishwara still acts from behind the Shakti.

Attack of roga on digestive functions suppressed by tapas after a struggle with a residue in bhava. This is only part of the general attack of vague recurrence and attempted restoration (fever, headache, cold etc); it materialises in the digestive functioning, because that is still immediately capable of brief sthula recurrence. The others are only potentially capable, except for fragmentary touches. This fragmentary recurrence has been attacked and is in process of slow diminution, but is not yet got rid of. The two constant rogas, as well as the imperfect process of evacuation still continue.

Telepathy has been purified in regard to the tendencies and forces immediately affecting the adharas in action; that is to say, the insistence of a perceived tendency, force or intention on its fulfilment, the choice of one to be favoured and fulfilled without reference to the real ideality and the claim of telepathy or present trikaldrishti to figure as future drishti, of tendency, force, intention, possibility and probability to masquerade as certain result, is being eliminated from T^3. The same movement is being rapidly applied to the forces of the vital rajasic and mental sattwic planes which stand behind the mechanism of forces of the physical plane. This will complete the present trikaldrishti, except for the right perception of the states of unseen objects which is still backward.

This movement is setting free the future trikaldrishti; certitudes are already increasing, but are still for the most telepathic certitudes, that is based on present fact, and extending to primary immediate or near result, which is growing strong, to secondary farther off or intermediate results, which is growing, and final results, which is still only in initiation or else not linked in to the rest in a sufficient ideal unity. Beyond this trikaldrishtic telepathy lies the pure trikaldrishti independent of all perception of tendencies, forces, intentions. Time and detail have still to develop certitude. It is notable that there has not been in the past nor is there now any attempt, except for fragmentary illuminations, to develop trikaldrishti of the past. This is partly due to the nature of the adhara in which the mind has always been concentrated on the present and the future, and subjected to a deficient memory from which past events have quickly faded. In part it is due to the mentality of the age which has taken in the adhara an extreme form, except that this individual mind goes back readily to a far past in which the future was prefigured.

Pain and discomfort are being strongly taken up by the Ananda. Today all pain and discomfort, the former even very acute and of some little persistence, the latter massive and oppressive, were permeated with Ananda. Only violent and very oppressive yantrana or discomfort has still to be taken up.

Samadhi is recovering force and coherent ideality, though with difficulty, yet rapidly.

Saturday June 28th 1919

Today, a rapid progress in T^2 is intended. Incertitude must be largely replaced by certitude, the activities taken up which are still left to the relics of the [intellectuality];[2] all universalised in the blaze of the ideality.

---

[2] *MS* ideal[it]y

The foundation of continuity in K.A is now securely laid in spite of some appearances; but the continuity itself is interrupted by forgetfulness and cessation of interest or capacity in the body. But these three things and especially the last are not only mechanical, but abnormal, the results of a strong hostile pressure from outside which takes advantage of the mechanical memory of old habit in the body. Sleep and absorption are now the only real difficulties, both have begun to yield to the siddhi.

The ideality is now busy with the trikaldrishti, taking up and fighting all the old confusions. When done on the higher level, this process proceeds harmoniously with little flaw or mistake; on the lower level it is a slower progress of order in the midst of a chaos. All telepathies are now justified but at the moment the old intellectual intervention of false stress continually returns in a less or a greater degree. This difficulty is chiefly felt with regard to rapidly changing action.

Other defects of the ideality are also being taken up for correction

Samadhi in the afternoon was overpowered by a persistent unnaturally deep sleep, but the samadhi power, though it could not persevere, broke to a certain extent into the nidra.

There are now frequent lapses into the idealised mentality and from there into the tamas of the physical obstruction. The Ananda perseveres, but does not increase, forgetfulness still besieges. The other siddhis are obstructed and some of the physical subject to a certain limited relapse.

The defect of the traigunya siddhi is that tapasic stress on the one hand, inertia of mental shama with tamas breaking across it and sometimes possessing cling to the mind by a sort of external affecting adhesion. This is being remedied first by an increasing externalisation of the inferior tapas, next by the increasing prakasha of the shamas. But until both tapas and shama are full of the *vijnana jyotis*, "the blaze of the ideality", the siddhi will not be complete and faultless.

Ideality recovered itself. In the Samadhi, symbolic figure of a dark (blue-black) moon with a shapeless reproduction of it below; above-round the small sphere a blaze of sunlight on one side. This meant the dark Soma (intuitive mind-orb, ananda consciousness, with the jyoti involved in it), emitting the jyoti, the other the intellectual reflection. The suryamandala is the symbol of the vijnana. The ideality was of this character. From the shama enveloping the mind activity came the initial blaze of the ideality in the trikaldrishti tapas. The rest, — thought-speech, perceptive thought — acted with the same anandamaya shama emitting jyoti.

Torpor of the kamananda in the evening and night. Much alasya of the body thrown off partly by tapas. Aprakasha is disappearing; but physical inertia still keeps a certain hold of recurrence and a besieging potentiality. From the alasya comes pramada, a negligence and confusion in the action of thought and perception.

Coherent symbolic dream in Samadhi

Sunday 29th June 1919.

In samadhi coherence gained ground in the lipi. There was a whole passage written successively with perfect coherence of thought and word, in spite of one or two attempts of the besieging incoherence. Incoherence remains especially when the lipi written or printed comes in large masses, but it is evidently a receding, though still persistent force. This is in a middlingly deep nidra; the deepest nidra is yet to be invaded and taken into possession by samadhi.

The ideality is to open into blaze today, to get a certain initial perfection in such fullness and range as is at present possible. This movement is to be completed tomorrow. Samadhi, today and tomorrow, is to round into the ideality. Ananda to advance, pressure on the obstruction to the other physical siddhis. Ananda Ishwara.

The Ananda Ishwara darshana is persistently bridging the gulf; the perception of the Anandamaya in objects is pouring into and taking up the personal mental consciousness. This movement has to be completed in perfection.

There is as yet no sign of the fulfilment of the proposed advance; but a siege and a reduction of ideality to the intuitive mentality, chandramandala. There has even come a touch and strong persistence of the old asamata, physical but with a nervous and emotional excitement of the physicality containing all the old symptoms. It has a curious symbolic form as of a small circular touch on the middle of the breast like a rupee, trying to extend rays of asukha and asanti, but prevented for the most part by the tapas. This is followed by an attempt to throw in scattering currents of duhkha as through subtle nerve currents. The whole disturbance comes from an illegitimate attempt from outside to bring the action of the chandramandala to replace the surya action.

The blaze of the surya action is now taking possession, forcing aside the minor soma action. The attack of the asamata falls away from the surya blaze; it subsists only by a reflex of the ineffective chandra action which is easily attackable by the old deficiencies. The blaze brings also the light of the trikaldrishti. A crisis has also been brought about in the Ananda, which failed in the interval, there has also been a strong attack of fatigue tamas. The Ananda disability is being pushed aside by the surya action, the fatigue combated by surya tapas.

Samadhi in its lighter forms is acclimatising the blaze of the Surya.

In the waking state the highest ideality is still combated by the mind's persistence in the intuitive chandra mould and in the lower forms of the intellectualised surya ideality, but it is making the other movements its own. The difficulty is with the T^3.

In the K.A. the intuitive substance of Ananda is more intense and tries to subsist as against the slighter substance of the suryamaya; but the latter is persisting and taking possession.

The Surya blaze has now taken preliminary possession of T^3 as well as thought speech and thought perception; only the remnants of the chandra intuivity still resist the assumption.

Ananda darshana is also assuming the Surya form and the Surya Ananda.

K.A too is now more readily running in the Surya mould; the Chandra intensity is being rapidly extruded.

There is now a descent of the Surya towards the sunlit intellectuality, for this has to be taken up as the mental base of the ideality and the whole mentality illumined into a silent channel and then a logistic form of the gnosis. Wherever the surya ideality or the illumined intuitive intellect does not act, there the chandra intuitivity with its infinite of possibility and incertitude is still active.

Surya is taking possession also of the sun of the imagination.

Monday 30th June 1919.

The Surya action limited by the sunlit intellectual intuitivity and the remnants of the Chandra intuitivity continues its gradual process of assumption.

The blaze of the ideality has spread itself and can now hold all the thought and thought-speech and the telepathies, but is still impeded in T^2 by the incertitudes of the mentality. In the telepathies it is a modified and quiet light, but in the rest a fuller stronger blaze with flashes of Agni and Vidyut; the latter suggest the supreme *vidyunmaya* Ananda chandra.

The Surya power is now also acting as tapas on the obstacles to the Arogya and the utthapana, but these are strong and persistent in their pressure.

The Samadhi is still being taken up by the Surya power only in antardarshi jagrat and the lighter depths. Deep nidra is still only invaded on its borders and gives at best coherent dream with a touch of misplaced ideality.

The ideality in the afternoon has been extending itself with a certain slow deliberateness. It is taking up telepathic trikaldrishti of time, place and circumstance, things neglected or else unsuccessfully attempted by the former sadhana; this is because the mental telepathic indications abound around every isolated certitude and bring in a besieging error and incertitude. These indications have yet to be reduced to their correct proportions before much headway can be made. This operation is now commenced on a slight scale. Time now is often correct and correctness of place and successive or surrounding circumstance is sometimes added.

All the movements of the Ananda are being taken up by Surya. For some time the Chandra was being excluded whenever it came; and for that reason, the intensities fell away; for all the intensities were chandramaya; but now the intensities are also being reduced to the sun-ideality. Forgetfulness is still strong; but the partial conquest of it is being taken up, although the dependence on memory and attention predominates.

Slight extension of ideality at night. Samadhi successful only in the early morning; rupa, stable in action as well as status, in deeper samadhi, also tejomaya; also sufficiently coherent lipi.

Attack of fragmentary roga at night, much diminished by tapas.

July.

Tuesday July 1st 1919

The month of June has been a period of the overcoming of difficulties in the central ideality, in the Ananda Ishwara Darshana and in the Kama Ananda, a combat with difficulties and slow varying progress in some elements of Çarira siddhi. The first two chatusthayas have enormously increased in breadth, power and finality, though not yet absolutely secure against superficial fragmentary and momentary disturbance. Brahma chatusthaya has enlarged in base and scope and taken on the supreme Ishwara, Purusha form. It has only to be thoroughly confirmed and filled in with the jnana, etc by the gnosis.

The difficulty is almost eliminated in all the central ideality except the T^3. There it is being removed and has to be eliminated partially or wholly during the month of July. Perfection prepared by the last month's work has to be initially founded in the highest logistic ideality. In Samadhi and rupa vishaya the obstacles have to be still overcome; in the former they have a diminished, in the latter a complete persistence. The difficulties of Ananda have to be obliterated and spontaneity, continuity and intensity fixed in the system. The difficulties of the arogya have to be attacked and brought to nothing; this is possible in July, but not yet certain. The utthapana and saundarya are likely to be longer hampered and are not likely to come to anything very considerable till the closing months of the year. Ananda Brahman has to be filled in with the guna and jnana.

The attack of the rogas of cold, cough, eye-disease are now attempting to materialise in the night, taking advantage of the slightest exposure, because then owing to sleep the tapas is not active and the prana is more vulnerable. This night owing partly to previous tapas the attack was neither so successful nor so forcible. Eye disease is now operating in the sukshma showing there its symptoms and trying to impress them on the physical body by the sraddha in the disease; it is combated by tapas and by sraddha in arogya and is not so far successful except very superficial[ly], and this slight superficial result is now more easily removed by tapas as soon as the body rises. It is now quite evident that the source of disease is psychical, not physical; it is due to failure of tapas, idea of ill-health, weakness of the prana-shakti, faith in ill-health in the physical body. Faith with knowledge from the ideality is now powerful to combat it, though not yet entirely to eliminate; for the body is still subject to the mental suggestions from the outside forces.

The rupa is commencing again; some crude rupas, some images of things immediately or habitually seen, some of things not habitually seen; but all are momentary and unstable except the crude rupas. There is a tendency also to resume the old abandoned rupas, ghana, etc. It is intimated that this time there will be a real recommencement and steady progress.

In spite of strong dullness of physical tamas ideality advances; a flood of ideal telepathy is taking up even the subconscious indications. Trikaldrishti is slowly elevating itself beyond the telepathies.

K.A dull but with occasional intensities

In Samadhi in the afternoon strong invasion of the deep nidra by the ideality; especially strong in lipi, but also in thought, interpretation of rupa and lipi, trikaldrishti of siddhi, dialogue etc. Most of these are still fragmentary. The ideality was inspired vijnana besieged by intellectuality, but subsequently was partly taken up by the revelatory vijnana. In lighter samadhi increased organisation and power of the gnosis.

Ideality is extending itself largely, tapas becoming idealised and powerful, but at present there is some confusion in the brihat, the ritam is not properly placed very often, owing to the interference of telepathic intellectuality.

In the evening struggle with attack of roga; slight fragmentary materialisations, especially of occasional cough. Action of general ishita, general and particular aishwarya, vashita upon the symptoms. The affection at night very occasional. The mind no longer adversely affects the result, but the habitual mind of the body still persists in trying to repeat the regulations of the malady. On this the tapas is beginning to act with an initial success.

Samadhi in the night and morning ineffective or difficult and slight in result; a tendency of fragmentariness and incoherence.

There are certain first indications of future siddhi, not yet able to persist in formation, but amounting to decisive hints of a preparation behind in the over-idea.

Wednesday July 2 1919.

A certain lapse towards intellectuality, intended to show the extent of the persistence of intellect in the ideal action and by a clearer distinctness base a firmer action of the T^3. The defect of the intellectual mixture lies mainly in an undue stress on active possibilities which brings in a continual error and incertitude. The possibilities have to be seen around the decisive certitude. The thought of the T^2, other than that of the sadhana and inner action, is growing in ideality and certitude, but is yet lacking in perfection. A still more decided and well-justified certitude is beginning.

Rupa is rapidly redeveloping various forms of ghana, developed and perfect as well as the different materials, notably colour, as also combined rupas and groups, but all this is only in the old initial form. The fugitiveness is modifying towards [a][3] yet ill-decided initial or momentary stability. The method of development has yet to be changed to the ideality.

In Samadhi, first an initial variety of complete and initially stable crude rupas in antardarshi (long-withheld and appearing to be condemned to infruition), in swapna brilliant momentary tejomaya figures and scenes in a first attempt at abundance, the movement cut short by nidra. In nidra a confused, partly coherent, partly incoherent generalisation of, first, intellectualised and then intuitive ideality. In lighter samadhi organisation of highest logistic ideality.

---

[3] *MS* an

Complete and distinct combined crude figures and scenes, but distinct in an indistinctness.

Tapas is now trying to come up to trikaldrishti. At first strain of tapas ordinarily fulfilling itself against fluctuations, but afterwards the fluctuations or opposite forces often prevailed, definitely or for a time, but all tapas is now being put in its place, as has already been done with trikaldrishti. Tapas decisively indicative of ideal certitude has begun, but has to be normalised. The difference is that trikaldrishti comes as the seeing idea carrying [in it][4] fulfilling tapas, ideal tapas as the seeing force with the sight subordinate indicating its certitude of effectuation.

No advance in the evening or night; roga (throat) attacked suddenly and held for a while but was lessened almost immediately and dismissed after a while though with slight after effects, much exaggerated in appearance, but with little material solidity. They were at once and easily dismissed in the morning.

Thursday July 3. 1919

The T^3 on the level of the old telepathies is now turning finally to T^2, telepathy enlightened by the ideality taking the form of present trikaldrishti. This is imperfect still, because elements of old telepathy are still imported into it, but these are being steadily eliminated and exist mainly in stress of telepathic tapas which is lessening rapidly. When the light of the ideality is withdrawn, T^3 returns, but that too is being immediately seized on and converted into an indirect gnosis. Tapas is resigning its strain of effort towards self-effectuation; it has for a long time been lessened, is now greatly diminished and is nearing the line of disappearance. Active trikaldrishti of future is still niggardly in spite of occasional freer movements,—as distinguished from general sadhana prevision; it is this which still gives room to some persistence of modified tapasic stresses. Knowledge and will are becoming more and more an expression of being, rather than detached observer and actor on being.

---

[4] *MS* it in

The removal of the remaining stress of tapas is now the key; but this cannot be done without a normalised self-effective ideal tapas; at present it exists only in type, usually of a mixed and imperfect kind. Tapas used by itself still tends to bring back confusion.

Samadhi at first ineffective owing to nidra. Afterwards strong organisation of the various action of gnosis in the lighter samadhi; also in deeper swapna with a gnostic waking control, jagrat in swapna, even in a considerable depth. Lax swapna without waking control is also being idealised, dream interpreted, analysed, turned into vision and thought of samadhi. This interpretation is done partly in antardarshi, partly in swapna. Only deep tamasic nidra still resists in some entirety, but that too has a pursuing touch of vijnana and is sometimes invaded by some gnosis.

Tapas is putting aside more effectively strain of effort for self-effectuation, though it is not entirely cleared away out of the whole action; but at times it is pure. Tapastya, tapatya, tapata continue, —in their absence, the tapas is still inert and not directly effective, but they act without strain, only as degrees of impersonal insistence: they are all to be replaced by tapana, the fire of surya in the will-powers. This is done in telepathic tapas. Trikaldrishtic tapas occurs more frequently, but is still rare. There is already a tendency for trikaldrishti and tapas, knowledge and will, to combine more closely and become one.

In the central roga there is some increase of the tendency of siddhi, more effective insistence of tightness mending the subsidiary looseness of the centre which is the immediate cause of all the roga. Looseness now comes less often without cause as a mechanical habit, more often with pressure of causes; but the causes of looseness are beginning to become causes of health and force. These changes are still not quite firm at the root and tend to fluctuate; there is a mixed action.   In cold etc health in the daytime holds sway; attacks are lessened in force and persistence, but touch once or twice in sleep or recumbence by physical laxity.   Utthapana is weak and afflicted.

K. Ananda is reviving after a time of suppression subsequent to the change of character. It is still very intermittent. In the attendant script it was suggested yesterday that there will still be difficulty, but the ananda will fix itself this week, by the 7th, in the intensities first, then in the continuity. In July it will endure

Friday, Saturday. 4th 5th July 1919

Preoccupation with writing; in the ideality a rather confused process of righting and arrangement of telepathy, tapas, relative trikaldrishti. Tapas is farther getting rid of the relics of stress, both understress and overstress, trikaldrishti striving towards a greater general and detailed certitude. Attack of roga, cough at night; K.A fitful and uncertain. In Samadhi growth of frequency of stability in shadowy rupas. Some progress of sahitya.

Sunday 6th July 1919

In the early morning incoherent dream turned suddenly into dream symbol recurring and progressing even after intermediate wakings. Ideality of a loose kind in the nidra.

Trikaldrishti, tapas, telepathy are now combining definitely into one movement which is beginning to rise above the constant uneven balancings of the two opposite perceptions, that of the powers and tendencies of the present and what they mean and presage, and that of the other powers and forces which attempt to create a future not bound by the probabilities of the present. In the intuitive mind the first corresponds to the current habitual understanding in the intellectual reason, the second to the pragmatic reason and will, a third range of perceptions to the truth-seeking reason. In the gnosis the lowest or primary logistic gnosis, of the nature of the intuition of the immediate, is strongest in the light of the present and proceeds from that to the other truths, it is more fitted for present telepathy than for future trikaldrishti. The secondary logistic gnosis of the nature of inspiration, is a sort of creative or forecasting light and gives best the tapas of the future, the will at work now and hereafter for effectuation. The tertiary logistic gnosis of the nature of revelation lifts up both these powers, gives them its own light and fuses perfectly the two elements of perception. It is here that the real trikaldrishti becomes facile. It is to this revelatory light that the T^3 is trying to rise so as to become entirely T^2. But it would also seem that the full power of trikaldrishti belongs to a higher vijnana than the logistic gnosis.

Tertiary dasya is now becoming very intense in its power; there is little questioning as to what should or should not be thought, done or spoken, but only the force compelling the thought, act or speech and its acceptance by the yantra. This is strongest in action, weakest in speech, because speech has always been for a long time past spoken mostly without reflection or thought from the speech centre and not the thought centre, the latter only cooperating sometimes or in a vague fashion, but only recently has there been some beginning of the idealised speech.

In samadhi much and increasing activity of rupa. In antardarshi, in which as in jagrat rupa has long been violently obstructed and almost suppressed, there is now a stirring. But samadhi is now a little inactive.

Monday July 7. 1919

Indications of fresh initiations of progress in the morning. The dasya is now rapidly growing in intensity; perfect tertiary dasya of thought is coming with the growth of the highest logistic ideality. Primary dasya has long since been taken up [ ][5] into the secondary, the Jiva into the Jiva-Prakriti (primary dasya is when the jiva acts consciously in obedience to the prakriti as the executrix of the Ishwara or to the Ishwara acting through the varying forces of the prakriti or those which she guides or drives as an imperative force). The secondary dasya in which the Prakriti uses the instrument and itself obeys the Ishwara, but guided as if from behind a veil and more immediately using her own forces for the satisfaction of his ganas, the devatas, is now coming to a close; it is being taken up into the tertiary dasya. This is now an action of the gnostic devatas in the Prakriti with the sense of the Ishwara immediately behind them; but the Ishwara also begins again to be directly manifest in the guidance and the Person. This is growing; meanwhile the Prakriti is unifying with the Purusha and the Ishwara directly or through the Deva-shaktis driving the instrument with an absolute and immediately and intensely felt decisiveness of control as if it were being pushed by him with his hand upon it and it vibrated with the ananda of the touch and the driving. This is in thought and still more vividly in action. Some shadow of the old dasyas persist in a subordinate sensation.

---

[5] *MS* or

The highest ideality is now acting in jnana frequently with a complete possession; only, when the thought tapas is relaxed or there is some other preoccupation, the older state of mixed intuitive mind and lower gnosis holds predominance. Very little remnant of intellectuality is left in existence; only some after effect of it is left in the lowest action of the intuitive perception.

Little samadhi; activity of clear crude rupa in antardarshi

Kama Ananda is now acting easily enough, but forgetfulness of other preoccupation is still strong in actuality; it has not been immediately abolished. In a sense however the Ananda may be said to be always there in an active or suppressed condition.

The process of filling in the T^2 with the light of the highest logistic ideality has now begun to move forward again with rapidity, the general thought being already totally enlightened. All this is still in the secondary ideality suffused with the light of the tertiary gnosis. Certitude in trikaldrishti is now being enforced; the telepathies that give the wrong stresses are being enlightened in those stresses, they are being turned into the truth of idea-forces of being, each with its own provisional certitude. This is one part of the process of transmutation. The other is to fix the right proportions, no longer in the intuitivity as was done before, but in the light of the true ideality and increasingly of the highest logistic gnosis, and to multiply the perceptions of the idea force which is destined to immediate or subsequent effectuation. A general idea of the time is growing. Place and circumstance as yet are only hinted or seen but with incertitude in the intuitive mind. This process already applied to prevision in the sadhana is now being applied to seen objects and their movements in the immediate vicinity. Distant sight is still in the imperfect telepathic condition, as also telepathy of thought (very fragmentary) and mental movements, the latter often vivid, abundant and accurate. Perception of the physical forces and sadhana is still subject to great incertitudes, as also that of distant eventuality.

K.A is now in a way settled in the body, thus fulfilling the suggestion about the 7th; but the intensities vary and there is not perfect continuity when the mind is turned away entirely from the body. Nevertheless the opening of a double consciousness which has the full mental or gnostic activity and below it the sense of the body has definitely set in in spite of frequent intermittence.

At night rupa in samadhi accompanied by shabda, sparsha and shabda speech. Shabda speech also in antardarshi. Until now night brought back the consciousness to a lower level, but this habit of the physical being is now being attacked; it is not yet overcome, but the force of the habit is diminished. Roga also recurred at night, but this time it was attacked with great force by the gnostic tapas and overcome;—cough and sensation though not actuality of catarrh. These things however still besiege in the subtle molecular body.

Tuesday July 8th 1919.

The action of the trikaldrishti continues to expand in the ideality, on the same lines. K.A grows in insistence of continuity, though with the same essential fluctuations. There is some constant insistence now on the arogya siddhi, but chiefly in the subtle physicality; the old fragmentarised rogas touch, but can almost immediately be quelled by the tapas.

In the afternoon a complete invasion of the deeper and deepest nidra by the samadhi; all was to a greater or lesser extent idealised. In the lighter depths complete ideality and an almost complete initial coherence of lipi etc. In the deeper nidra a more forcibly imposed and sometimes broken ideality. Coherence has set in; the incoherence is chiefly in incompleteness and fragmentation; the thing begun goes on well enough, but is suddenly broken off and another lipi etc starts in its place; but the chaotic entire incoherence was only occasional and immediately tended to change to coherence. Dream is being regularised and interpreted so far as it goes, though subject to fragmentation, or is replaced by vision.

The highest logistic ideality is now entirely taking up the lipi, in the midst of an attack of the old environing intellectuality; but this cannot any longer organise itself for thought action; it can only obstruct without entirely preventing the ideal action.

At night no action of the ideality, but only connected dream

Wednesday, July 9th 1919

The tertiary logistis is developing itself, but on the third or lowest scale in its three forms, the intuitive, inspired and revelatory forms of the intuitive revelation. This is in spite of the lowering of the system and a dull inactive siege of the substance of intuitive mentality (on which the gnosis is acting to transform it) by the environing intellectual forces. These produce no intellectual thought, but only semi-intellectualised motions of the intuitive mental stuff, with certain dull memories of the asamata. The capacity of the system to respond when vehemently forced to touches of asamata suggestion is therefore not destroyed, nor can be till the physical mentality is idealised without any remnant of intellectual suggestion.

Predicted in the script today, "This afternoon a great advance in samadhi.. Today, a great advance in K.A... The highest ideality to be in full possession, though in the lower form." This at the time seemed improbable, but has been not only accurately but fully executed. This shows a great advance in the suggestive script, which used formerly to be only partially fulfilled, the opposition at once proceeding with success to frustrate it, or else only fulfilled later at another time and under other circumstances

Samadhi, in deep nidra, was entirely of the ideality, where not drowned in tamas, though of a dream ideality, more than the gnosis of actuality. In lighter sleep there was no nidra or dream, but pure samadhi, dream being replaced by definite, coherent and intelligible vision of other worlds etc; all was besides of the highest ideality, which took entire possession of antardarshi and lighter swapna. These results may be considered as fixed; for however they may be attacked, they can no longer be thrown back towards asiddhi.

The highest ideality also took possession of thought, thought-speech, lipi, telepathy, tapas and trikaldrishti, the latter still a little besieged by incertitude and not yet free and ample.

K.A is now fixed in being, always felt when there is smarana, but often reduced to a very low intensity, just above the zero of definite cessation. It is now intense, persistent sometimes in sensation even against forgetfulness. The intensity is of a firm and growing force, though not secure against downward fluctuations

In Samadhi sthula sukshma-shabda of speech in swapna and antardarshi, the latter mostly when it is on the borders of or verging towards swapna. Taste in samadhi comes, but rarely, as also touch; smell has not yet come back to the samadhi experience

Roga rejected in the night, in spite of some slight rain exposure; only a strong but brief touch in both hands of phlegmatic roga, one only sukshma.

Thursday July 10th

Ideality a little suppressed; the intuitive mentality is externalised, it is now the environing power and not the intellectuality. The substance of consciousness is imperfectly idealised in the true ideality, but responds easily to intuitive mental touches and under pressure reverts superficially to its former type. Only when quite possessed by the ideal action is it an almost entirely gnostic consciousness. The final transformation is now to proceed to its completion—today. Lipi "Tomorrow incomple[te] perfection of the transformation."

All the crude *rasas* have occurred with some force and frequency, pure or mixed, and some definitive rasas. Sukshma gandha has also recommenced; but there is still some massing of physical obstruction.

K.A is now continuous, in varying intensities, except when [there is][6] absorption; this is the last refuge of the mind's forgetfulness,—except for sleep which brings about cessation. After the night's sleep there is a touch of the old difficulty of recovery, but it is slight and more of a physical reminiscence than an essential reality.

It is indicated that the K.A today is to attack and get rid of the obstacle of the absorption. This has now already begun; the thought and thought speech no longer interfere with the continuity of the ananda, or have only a slight tendency towards such interference. There remains the absorption with objects and work or action. This also is being removed, but the obstacle is stronger here; it brings momentary forgetfulness. These siddhis have long been insisted on and acquired in the type by the tapas, but they have been repeatedly lost and failed to achieve universality and finality. This time the siddhi is stronger; it remains to be seen whether it is final against absorption in pressure of work or strong concentration on objects. The fluctuation of intensity is here an obstacle, as the lesser intensity is unfavourable to the conquest of absorption. It is suggested that this also will be accomplished today, but will have to be confirmed in the following two or three days.

---

[6] *MS* their

The obstacle to the memory is the clouding of a certain substance of mentality which gets into the way of the rest of the consciousness: the ideality can concentrate completely on thought the power of thought and yet have plenty of power of attention for other simultaneous experience; this is the principle of multiple concentration in a general embracing infinite consciousness, the divine vijnana. Initially in a very restricted type this is beginning. As the remnants of the old mentality disappear as a result of their present constant progressive diminution, dilution and exclusion, the simultaneous mental and bodily consciousness will be without farther obstacle, except that of sleep, which is already conquered in the type, but has to be conquered in the universality

Lipi "Traigunyasiddhi in the physical mentality to be established without farther delay" This is already beginning, but not yet in complete perfection.

Highest ideality T^2 is generalising itself, in the immediate consciousness; it is still defective or limited in certitude in the field of external observation.

The sukshma gandha is stronger and has a more essential hold than before, but is not [ ][7] free yet to develop its new power, — the physical obstruction is still heavy and effective. Rasa is as before, but more rapidly varied when it is allowed to come. Sparsha too has begun, but so far in the old touches.

---

[7] *MS* yet

Previsions in script. (1) Decisive trikaldrishti today begins to be generalised. (2) Fuller and greater progress in Samadhi. (3) K.A to conquer all the difficulties with an initial finality.. (4) Rupa and vishaya today in the jagrat firmly.

Sahaituka kamananda, long discontinued, is beginning, but at first only in touches though these are increasing in frequency. They result from any touch on the body; there is frequently a mixture of it in the tivra. This rule is now suddenly established fully in the type, every strongly sensible touch is bringing the K.A with or without other anandas, tivra, vishaya, raudra, vaidyuta. The prediction of the Ananda is likely to be fulfilled in all the range of the five anandas. Raudra is now universalised; all touches of pain with rare exceptions bring in ananda, either at once or in the second instant after the touch. Vaidyuta is also beginning to resume and enlarge its operation. But it has still to be idealised as well as the three other Anandas. K.A itself is not yet idealised in perfection.

In Samadhi all is either highest ideality or dream ideality; but images of actuality are now commencing and all is turning towards the real reality. The pressure of the highest ideality increases with a constant though still obstructed rapidity. The samadhi was today much besieged by nidra. At night nidra prevailed and there was no progress.

K.A continued its insistence. Even in the prolonged writing it maintained itself in spite of pressure of obstruction, but there was a continual recurrence of forgetfulness due to excessive absorption. At night there was something of a collapse; tamas took hold of the system.

Rupa in jagrat today threw out some new brilliant forms, but did not seem to fulfil the presage in the script; vishaya, after enforcing itself in gandha and rasa and a slight renewal of sparsha, failed to develop sravana or a decisive beginning in sparsha.

Health is obstructed, relapses a little sometimes and makes no definitive progress, but only certain indications of the increasing arogya tapas.

Highest logistis continues to extend itself in the T^2 and the whole thought ideality

Friday. July 11th

This morning there is the return of the besieging intellectualised intuitive mentality. K A is persistent, but uncertain in its incidence. These two siddhis are advancing under difficulties; the thought is besieged by uncertainty and the intellectual confusion. There is a movement towards trikaldrishti of circumstance, but though the circumstances seen are actual and true, they are not seen in their right order and incidence, owing to the intuivity which takes possession of them before their logistic revelation

The interruptions of K.A are being reduced to momentary forgetfulness; the mind is almost immediately recalled to the Ananda. This is gaining in spite of massings of the tamasic stuff of mental oblivion. There is even often a simultaneous forgetfulness and oblivion, part of the mind absorbed, part of it conscious of the Ananda. It is intimated in the script that whatever forgetfulness or interruptions there may be the K A will in these three days fix its irrevocable continuity. Ananda usually pervades constantly the lower part of the body, less constantly the arms, intermittently the upper body, very rarely the head. There is now insistence on complete pervasion. Sahaituka is increasing its frequency and incidence. Ananda in the head is now constantly recurring and making for continuity, but there is a tendency for it to shift from one part to the other alternately; it has to be fixed in a complete pervasion.

No definite progress in Samadhi, only continuance.

The K.A fluctuates, owing to the lapse of the being towards the intuitive mentality. In that mentality there is the absorption of the mind in the thought because it has to listen and attend, the limited concentration, the forgetfulness of other things. The gnosis illumines easily without need of this strenuous concentration; it is capable of a multiple concentration. When the ideality is at work and the system full of the ideality, then the K.A proceeds without any but momentary lapses into oblivion.

Chitra in some abundance, but unstable. Repetition of vishayas, gandha, rasa, touches of old sparsha, but on a small scale. In Samadhi great abundance of lipi of all kinds, in a successive flow of sentences, but with some incoherence, and without a link of intelligent succession in the flow. Only in the lighter swapna is there full ideality. Some plenty of shadowy rupa, but insufficient stability. Easily dispelled touches of roga.

Saturday July 12.

Imperfect recovery of vijnana. There is a varying between intuitive mentality, intuitive and inspired ideality and the highest ideality with much of the old mixture.

Attack of roga, violent in the subtle body. There is an intense struggle between roga and physical health, the latter supported by the tendency to arogya. The occasion is the exposure to damp cold air at night; the old bodily tendency wishes to reply at once with fever, cold, cough, etc, the health force wants to get back to the state after Alipur yoga when the body was impervious to illness and get rid of the subsequent morbid sensibility. The ideal arogya itself is a different thing which yet waits to take direct possession of the body.

In Samadhi relapse to unidealised nidra with difficulty held up to occasional highest ideality

The system is returning to the ideality. Highest inspired ideality and a little of highest revelatory gnosis with an intuitional basis is taking possession of the lipi. Inspired highest gnosis is also taking possession of the thought-speech and initially of the perceptions; in the latter it is the highest intuition packed with inspiration. In T^2 the mixed movements are being rejected and pure highest ideality insisted on though with some difficulty; yet with a steady progression. K.A is also reviving its force which has been low owing to the depressed state of the physical shakti.

Chitra and fragmentary vishaya but no definite progress. Roga has been strong in the subtle sharira (feverish symptoms), but little manifestation in the body except depression and a sensation of weakness combated by the pranic tapas. Arogya force is changing to the ideal tapas, but not yet visibly in the physical body.

Roga conquered in the evening.

Sunday July 13th 1919

In the morning highest inspired revelatory gnosis and revelatory with inspirational basis take possession of lipi, thought-speech and perception. T^2 is still in the same condition but has begun to be taken up a little. To get rid of the remnants of mental effort and allow the vijnana to act with an entire freedom on the passive system is now the condition of rapid progress.

K.A has recovered, but is still subject to forgetfulness of absorption. The pervasiveness is now in a way established from head to foot, but the intensity is still liable to frequent loss or depression or diminution and the insufficient intensity brings with it the other imperfections. The body is still liable to the sense of lassitude and weakness.

Immediately afterwards K.A recovered all its intensity. When this is present forgetfulness can only be momentary, except in case of very strong absorption in which case the intensity still tends to fade.

In Samadhi there is again the full force of the ideality in spite of some heavy nidra; but as yet no definite forward progress, only a preparation. The dream ideality is still strong, not replaced by the actuality. The kamananda invaded the deeper samadhi and even the nidra, but with a frequent recurrence, not in continuity. It is however attacked then by the degradatory change to a negative form; intense but of the impure anandamaya, (negative electrical reaction.) Intensity of the ideality seems to be established in spite of some tendency to relapse; the old thin ananda is being excluded from the system.

The precise trikaldrishti is again being taken up; the decisive trik. now manifests in the intuitive form through an obstructing veil of mentality; it is correct when it is not modified by the mental stuff; modified it gives the general fact accurately but not the circumstance. The pure intuitive mental trik. is often accurately correct up to a certain point, but often errs in some details of the circumstance, but always in arrangement, not in fact of tendency or actual potentiality: the intellectualised intuitivity of the mind is always a confusion, but this now only occurs when there is mental tapas and insistence on the siddhi.

K.A. less insistent during the latter part of the day. In Samadhi at night no progress

Saturday July 14th 1919

In the morning progress only in trikaldrishti tapas. The system lowered to the intuitive mentality; in that mentality the habitual mind set to work and all its excesses and stresses set finally right, then this habitual mechanical intuivity rejected for the pragmatic intuitivity. This finality was effected by every suggestion being at once stripped of certainty; it fell then to its right proportion; the habit of insisting because many suggestions proved correct, was finally killed; whatever recurs will now be an involuntary habit of response with no vitality in it, a suggestion from outside unable to command credit. The pragmatic intuivity is being similarly dealt with and replaced by the real intuivity. As yet the highest intuivity has not been separately handled for finality. The next difficulty is the insistence of a mental intuivity responding to the gnosis or rather catching at it before it is formed on its own plane. This is possible because that was always the real nature of mental thought and the whole mentality is not yet possessed by the gnosis. This action is henceforth mainly that of the highest or truth reflecting intuivity which has taken into itself the abandoned mechanical and pragmatic action. The truth reflecting intuitivity is now put into its proper place. It has to be replaced entirely in T^2 by the ideality: but in this operation there are still considerable difficulties. The chief is the persistence in the stuff of the intuitive mentality of the habit of catching at the gnostic light instead of allowing it to manifest in its own way, on its own level and illumine the mentality. The other difficulties are incidental and secondary, but considerable. They all arise from old habits and limitations.

In samadhi at first pressure of nidra. Afterwards complete ideality. Kamananda in samadhi, more continuous, but not any complete continuity. Mostly thought; no lipi or drishya.

T^2, but in the intuitive mentality, corrected by modified or mentalised gnosis. Tapas still too insistent sometimes in the mentality. Modified gnosis gives only a relative certitude. Mental preparation of T^2 of gnosis.

K.A distressed and thin in the morning, not quite suppressed, sometimes vaguely intense, but not in possession of the sthula body and subject to oblivion. In the afternoon a growing force of intensity; full recovery now in the evening.

Roga still in fragments more or less frequent of occurrence. The two chief rogas continue, there is here no progress visible except a slight almost imperceptible strengthening under pressure in the central difficulty. Sharp continuous and recurrent pain acutely localised in one spot on the left side of the stomach; yielding slowly but not quite to local pressure of tapas. Ananda, but an ananda dominated by the sense of pain, rather than dominating the raudrata.

Chitra and vishaya slight, fragmentary and occasional; the sadhana Shakti is occupied with T^2

Strength of combined titiksha, udasinata, nati long established and almost perfect in universality, is now growing very intense; only when the mental tapas is overstressed and baffled, does some denial of passive asamata force its way in for a moment. Nati in the pain of roga was only contradicted slightly in the mental buddhi, not in the prana; this was the reflection of a certain intolerance in the body. Positive ananda is general, but not yet absolutely perfect in all its quality or universality. The second chatusthaya is established, but not yet in its perfect force of vividness or harmony of all its parts, eg dasyam and aishwarya, or sarvakarmasamarthya, or the qualities of the fourfold Ishwara. Defect where it exists is chiefly due to insufficiency of gnosis

Gnana is perfect in ideality in perception and speech, except when lowered to meet the deficiency of T^2: even then it is normally not always ideal in substance except in specific thought of T^2 on external things. It has attained in type the highest logistic ideality. T^2 is still imperfect in ideality owing to persistence of intuitive mentality, but that is about to be removed or transformed in all its range of activity. Samadhi is very imperfect, though now advancing with an obstructed and interrupted rapidity. Lipi perfect except in physicality, for it is yet insufficiently stable except at times, though no longer bafflingly fugitive, and therefore insufficient in rapid legibility and fullness; but it is already possessed of all the qualities to a sufficient extent for all its ordinary practical working. Jagrat rupa is often abundant and perfect in chitra, but this it has been for years together; it is suppressed still in akasha, good only occasionally and unstable except in the very crude. Jagrat vishaya is in a still cruder condition.

Sharira has developed a perfect foundation of K.A, continuous but for oblivion by absorption and sleep; the other Anandas are prepared, but not regularly working except raudra which is still capable of being overborne by a great degree and pressure of pain. The other siddhis are obstructed, except bhava saundarya. Some of them are advanced in certain directions.

The fourfold Brahman full in continent and substance, not yet in content, but sometimes lowered by lapse to mentality. Krishna Kali prepared and established, but not yet in perfect working. Karma still rudimentary except in the habitual personal karma in which it is advancing towards perfection

15–26 JULY 1919

Yoga Diary
July 15–July 26
1919

Diary of Yoga. July 1919.

July 15th Tuesday.

Today is supposed to begin the finality of initial perfect gnosis in the highest logistic ideality by the firm beginning of T^2. This is due for fulfilment in the second half of July. The two first chatusthayas are at the same time to begin their higher and fuller perfection,—they have already the fundamental perfection in samata, the fundamental completeness. K.A is to confirm its continuity and intensity and be a basis for the regular working of the other Anandas. Karma is to develop its already developing action, Krishna Kali to deepen and possess the system, Ananda Brahman to fill in with the Ishwara. The other siddhis are still uncertain of development, but the fight with the obstacles of arogya is to continue with a necessary result of advance in the tapas of Arogya. Practically all the siddhis are ready or almost ready for advance except the two most difficult parts of the Sharira and the outward Karma.

After a little difficulty the transformation of T^2 to the ideality has begun finally. The action of the intuitive mentality continues, but accompanying it there is an ideal action which gives sometimes a decisive, sometimes a limited and therefore relative certitude, sometimes in conjunction with the lower movement a mixed decisive and relative certainty or a mixed incertitude and certitude. This is especially in the T^2 of circumstance.

The trikaldrishti after perfecting itself in an universalised type in the intuitive mentality of a character of intuitive inspiration is now definitely transforming T^2 to the intuitional gnosis of the character of intuitivised revelation. This is attended with some fresh disturbance of the intellectual stuff, but that as soon as it comes is changed or replaced by the higher forms of thought and perception. Tapas is now of the same nature as the trikaldrishti.

The first chatusthaya is already being given its higher perfection. The positive ananda of equality is taking up all the adverse movements and reactions.

Vishaya is again renewed with strong gandha and taste of perfume. These two vishayas may now be considered established, however small the present range of their action.

Strong struggle with the roga difficulty. The pain in the side tried to prolong its continuity and represent itself as the sign of some organic ailment, but immediately disappeared every time ideal tapas was applied. Pain in response to pressure in this part of the body persisted, but has also disappeared suddenly. Throughout there is evidence of increasing force of arogya tapas, but it is not yet able to eliminate the roga with a decisive beginning of finality

July 16th Wednesday

Today is to be a hollow between two waves; there is a siege of the system by the external mind armed with all that has been cast out; but this comes now no longer in the shape of the old intellectual mind, but a semi-idealised intuivity translating into mental and physical terms all the rejected suggestions of the partial ideality which supports the lower order of things, drawing from a perversion of ideal intuitions their justification. For everything in the lower order has its justification in a truth of gnosis expressing something in the Infinite.

Kamananda, which was allowed a little to lapse yesterday, is after some difficulty of mechanical lowering and attempted discontinuity—attended by an emptiness of the gross body and retirement into the subtle physicality,—renewing its self-confirmation. The old habit of relapse is not yet excluded even in this first siddhi of the physical system. It is restored to a slightly obstructed continuity, but has not full possession of the physical system.

There is a strong attempt to restore asamata attended by a great violence of suggestion of raga and dwesha; it is not supported by the Purusha or the personal Prakriti, but has been able to produce asamata in the outward physical mentality. These things are still possible because of the persistence of intuitive mentality in the stuff of the physical consciousness; that can only be secure against mental suggestions by a partial personal siddhi cut off from the external Nature or by complete idealisation.

July 17th Thursday.

The ideality has resumed its work; it is taking up into the mixed intuitional form of ideality, mixed by the presence of mind-stuff with its limiting suggestions, the truth-reflecting intuitivity and itself is being taken up by the highest logistis. The inspirational intuivity suggested by the external mind remains as an obstacle, but is, when it comes, attacked and half transformed by the gnosis. Its power is in all those things that have not yet in the Abhyasa been assumed by the highest logistic gnosis

The obstacle now is the sluggishness of the old mentality unlifted by the inspired intuitivity which mixes with and keeps down the gnosis. This is the old action of the mixed intuitional ideality then strong and luminous, now unconvincing and void of force. Only the highest gnosis can continue the sadhana. The depressed lowness of the system has given occasion for another and furious attack of the environing intellectual powers, with a forced physically mental asamata in outworks of the system, vibrations not belonging to the system, but imposed from outside, also asraddha not in the Ishwara, but in the siddhi of the ideality. This has been expelled by a resort to rudra tapas of rajasic anger in the Shakti. Both the relapse and this resort have been recently predicted in the trik. and the lipi, the latter almost daily in an insistent lipi. The result has been unexpectedly a momentarily complete conversion of the physical mentality into the ideal form[,] the very siddhi obstinately obstructed for the last several days.

K.A. like every other siddhi has been depressed by the general obstruction. It is now reviving though with some incertitude.

There is some tendency of recovery in the swapna Samadhi which has for some time relapsed almost entirely into nidra.

All the rest of the day a recovered action of the ideality.

July 18th Friday.

The ideality is again taking up the whole thought and T^2, this time with a greater force of universality, but it is in the intuitional ideality and not the highest gnosis. The system is now almost settled in the intuitional ideality, though occasionally the old intuitive being breaks in or surges out from suppression and takes temporary possession. This is whenever the gnosis has been for some time inactive.

The siege of Roga continues, but chiefly in the subtle physicality: the effects on the dense body are occasional, sometimes strong, but thrown out by the tapas after a short struggle. Only in the two still chronic ailments is there as yet a permanently successful obstruction; but in the centrality the effective pressure of Arogya-tapas increases with a sort of slow, but always perceptible steadiness.

Chitra is showing some tendency to greater stability, but as yet only in the indirect vision. The fugitive forms have more firmness in their incidence. There is no improvement in the character of the forms or the range of the rupa.

After some dark nidra strong ideal action in the Samadhi. Finally the highest ideality took final possession of the perception, speech, lipi and to a certain extent of the T^2. In deeper and deepest nidra also ideality was exceedingly strong, but with some persistence of the dream character and occasional incoherence. Nevertheless coherence in the lipi even here was stronger than before. Rupa etc are now taking on the character of actuality, though as yet only of the pranic (astral)[1] reproduction of immediate things experienced in life. The presentation was accurate, entirely stable, steady in reproduction of continued action, though here with some interruptions and resumptions; combined scene not always complete, but with strong presentation of the central object and action, the accessories being left in a shadowy suggestion. The rupas however were no longer chhayamaya of the underworld, but tejomaya of the pranic world, with great but an unearthly vividness, beauty and force of life. Massed rupas of the same character appeared in light samadhi on the borders of antardarshi, but with a less heavy fullness and not actual, but rupas of possible things, and not stable, but also not entirely fugitive. Thought, judgment, interpretation maintained a coherent ideality even in the depths of nidra. A much greater character of normality in the whole samadhi.

---

[1] *In the manuscript, the closing parenthesis follows "reproduction".—Ed.*

Vishaya (physical) in jagrat antardarshi attained in touch to a great plenty; all the subtle results, suggestions, sensations of sparsha, except the actual sthula incidence. This too occurred freely, but only in habitual rupas. It is noticeable however that nothing came which had not previously been gained in past years by sadhana, only they came with a greater force, frequency and intensity. In swapna there is now more frequent and forceful sparsha. Sravana is obstructed both in antardarshi and full jagrat; it is rare even in swapna.

An attempt at a higher Thought confined to the centre of the thought above the head and a withdrawal of that which forms in the brain region of the subtle mind or is occupied with penetration to this region. This was the normal gravitation because here the thought assumed a satisfaction of present living actuality, while above it had a higher, but remoter less physically satisfying quality. The attempt to take up T^2 there failed initially and there was a brief relapse to the mass of possibilities and incertitudes, but all this is now taken up by a fiery thought, ideal of the pragmatic nature. This T^2 is telepathic, but correct except for certain confusions contributed by an understrain of intuitive suggestions which are for the most taken up and half-justified, half-corrected immediately or with a little difficulty. The centre thought now predominates and gathers round it at its own level all other thinking, but sometimes descends to give its own character to thought manifested in the lower levels or regions of the subtle body.

At night renewed action of coherence and ideality in the dream state.

July 19th Saturday

Rf. [Reference] “Which I must act, briefness and fortune, work”, of the approaching application to life of the ideal knowledge, power and guidance.

In the morning some retardation; inaction of ideality broken by a slight partial and a recurrent larger action. No definite progress in any direction.

Samadhi; at first full ideality, nidra conquered; coherence and strong gnosis in all the activity, but not all kinds in equal power. Afterwards some force of nidra, but not complete, the action always of the ideal kind. No prominent actuality.

In the afternoon T^2. All actual T^2 of an ideal intuitional kind, well-established, normal, satisfying in its limits, but subject to narrow limitations. Then a double movement first to extend to all possible trikaldrishtic and tapasic suggestion, at the same time to lift up to a higher gnosis. This was interrupted by a taking up of the suggestions of the pranic and mental world sometimes without, sometimes with a reference to their origin in the logistic gnosis. This brought finally into the solid intuitional ideality all these possibilities given their proper place, so far as that could be done in this kind of perception,—but the proper eye for them is the inspirational seeing,—got the right actuality of the may bes, might-be, may have been, might-have-beens, may-yet-bes, and even the relative certitudes of their will-bes, often but not always realised, with a certain initial decisive certitude of selection. The higher thought now coming for the T^2 will be inspirational gnosis. It is already beginning in the intuitional form or taking up the intuition. These movements had been made before on a lower scale and were often taken for the full and final siddhi: but this is of a greater, fuller, final kind in the real ideality standing on an idealised substance of the whole conscious being.

Subsequently the inspired thought began to take the place of the intuitional gnosis and take up into it the T^2. Much more might have been done on the intuitional basis, but this would have been a lesser siddhi and was not the intention of the will of the Ishwara, which is already giving presages of the ascent beyond logistic to the second stair of gnosis, when once the supreme logistis shall have been formulated in its relative entirety.

Health stronger again in resistance to cold exposure. The central arogya fluctuates, but is on the whole growing steadily but slowly in an initial preparatory force. There is no improvement in the digestive insufficiency, but rather a constant fluctuation and even a relapse in the symptoms of the one definite ailment. Continuity of K.A also fluctuates, though it is fixed in a recurrent continuity and the obstruction cannot resist the smarana.

At night incoherent dream and nidra.

July 20th Sunday.

Script in accordance with intuitional ideality suggested day before yesterday the following possibilities for the rest of July.

(1) T^2 sure; initial perfection only. [T^2 is already sure but the initial perfection depends on the final normality of the highest logistis.][2]

(2) Samadhi sure; fixity, ideality; nidra initially overcome, but at night active. [Samadhi, made sure this morning, in ideality and fixity; nidra is very initially overcome, except at night when it reigns and repels all certain forward movement.]

(3) Vishaya and jagrat rupa to get over their old difficulty [No sure sign of this siddhi; a slight improvement is all that is visible.]

(4) Ananda, fixed in recurrence of continuity. Also initial conquest of oblivion — except for sleep and samadhi (perhaps), the only difficulties. [There is already fixity of recurrent continuity and an unfixed recurrent intensity; oblivion has been overcome once or twice in initial type; but for some time there has been an indulged habit of oblivion in absence of will and smarana]

(5) Health; battle, supremacy of tapas, but not the perfect arogya. [The battle continues. Tapas is already in a way supreme, except in the two rogas; in one of them it is frequently effective more as ishita than as aishwarya or vashita; in the other it is for the time sometimes effective, sometimes ineffective. There are also some fragments of former rogas which very occasionally recur and resist tapas.]

---

[2] *This and the five sets of square brackets that follow are Sri Aurobindo's. The closing bracket in item 3 and opening bracket in item 5 have been supplied editorially.—Ed.*

(6) Saundarya in bhava. [Youth in bhava is growing, but bhava of saundarya apart from the youth-light is still uncertain. Physical youth and saundarya make no progress.]

(7) Utthapana still in difficulties.

In Samadhi in the morning perfect reign of ideality. All the forms of experience are beginning to develop in the ideality. Lipi was except for one or two instances coherent and significant, or sometimes significant in a lilamaya incoherence, even in frequent sentences set in fugitive masses. Dialogue, enacted story, some narrative. Steady action and stable rupa in abundance. Only vishaya absent. But the final beginning of assured samadhi progress is founded. Only jagrat rupa and vishaya are still subject to the old unconquerably obstinate obstruction.

In the sluggish states of the system, except at night, inertia, passivity, blankness whether of tamas or of shama is becoming the exception. An activity of [ ][3] the intellectual ideality, that is, the low pitched intuitional gnosis which supports the mental world of possibility, is then the rule. When the sadhana tapas is active, inspired ideality begins to resume its work of taking up the whole consciousness; sometimes an inspired intuitional, sometimes an inspirational logistis works on the thought and to a less degree on the tapas. It is only at a high pitch that tapas and trikaldrishti join in an assured ideal equality or oneness.

The inspired ideality is giving a more frequent decisive certitude of trikaldrishti in T^2 and the inspired intuition for the first time a quite perfect selection of succession of detailed circumstance in time; but these things have still to be universalised. The uninspired intuition is now being cast out of the action; since it is no longer necessary in the process of the taking up of the intuition by the inspired logistis.

K.A is being restored to constant intensity, pervasion, slightly interrupted continuity by the sadhana tapas. The thick recurrent masses of tamas of oblivion in the physical being are being attacked and dissipated, spontaneous recurrence enforced, sahaituka

---

[3] *MS* of

Ananda brought into occasional activity. The mental tamas masses of oblivion, while writing etc are also being attacked, dissipated, set aside or illumined by light of ideality. The work, it is said, will be confirmed today (thought) and completed in three days (lipi). The difference of Ananda in the postures is still marked. Sitting it is capable of a great initial intensity and force of continuity; today greater and more exciting to the whole system than before. Reclining, it is capable of a great intensity, but often impure of the unidealised kind, especially when there is samadhi and nidra. Walking it is intense with difficulty, more liable to decided interruption or reduction to a minimum. Standing it is still less intense except at moments, especially if there is other occupation. These defects are now being attacked. Insistent intensity has been introduced into the standing attitude, recurrent when reading; it is being insisted on in the walking. In reclining the ananda is being purified and idealised: it is being enforced in Samadhi.

Samadhi, late in the morning. Ideal lipi, scene etc. As the rupa becomes pranic instead of chhayamaya, visions of things never seen nor suggested by the seen arrive. Today, an eagle carrying a lamb to its nest and there beginning to devour it, half dead; nest, eagle, lamb very vivid, but pranamaya, as in a living picture of the Indian type, not quite the earthly bhava of the forms, nor the earthly lines, in spite of the bodily type and species being the same. This heralds the liberation of the rupa.

Ananda in samadhi constant in lighter depths, spontaneously recurrent in deeper swapna, but interrupted by nidra in the deepest swapna. The ananda tends to draw the mind back to the body, but then there occurs often a phenomenon which is now growing, the double or triple samadhi, in which the outside world is experienced accurately in an outer consciousness of sleep, by the sukshma and not the sthula indriya. The inner consciousness remains in swapna, a deeper is in sushupti of some kind, for the most part swapnamaya sushupti. Sometimes the outer world is experienced by the subtle sense with a fringe of waking physical sense. At times there is a division of the consciousness between the outer physical and the inner dream mind, the latter withdrawn into swapna and sleep, the former still aware physically on the outskirts of outer sound, touch or experience.

The replacement of the idealised, intuitional intellectuality by the inspired intuitional or intuitional inspired for the telepathy is proceeding very rapidly, but is not yet absolutely complete. Meanwhile the higher trikaldrishti acts only by intervention in the mass of rapid and crowding ideal telepathies. Now the process of including the inspired intuition has begun and is proceeding with a great initial rapidity.

The higher level of the thought and T^2 is now (in the afternoon) beginning suddenly to rise to the revelatory inspired and inspired revelatory logistis. This is necessary in order that the inspired and intuitional inspired may take entirely the place of the intuitional thinking as the lower level of the thought process. This lower level represents the substitute for the former intellectually intuitive thought and uncertain telepathic perception, the thought of the possibility. The higher level rises towards the certitudes and more and more, as it rises in the scale, commands them in its light and power

Drishya of the panchabhuta, mass and karma, the pranic ether and some of its elementary incidents, wind, rain etc is now recommencing. This brings in three of the long suspended vishayas. The other vishayas are coming forward, but with no widening range. Sravana is the most difficult, because the physical ear is beset by physical sounds in the daytime and cannot easily distinguish the slighter subtle sonances.

Sadhara rupa also is returning, fine crude, often perfect, but without stability. This has brought in an outburst of the finer prakashamaya niradhara rupas in a variety, groups, persons, objects, animals, scenes, some clear, others confused, none stable, except a solitary one or two: but there is already a hint of a tendency towards stability. Of the three gunas, variety, perfection, stability, the first long resisted may possibly now be on the point of bursting the barrier. It is to be noted that lipi in the morning declared that today would be the turning point in jagrat rupa and vishaya; this lipi has been repeated with a firmer asseveration. This may be the beginning in the rupa; but as yet there is no appearance of fulfilment in the vishaya. All the material crude forms have now manifested in this finer crude niradhara, — prakasha, chhaya, tejas, jyotir, agni and varnamaya forms. Subsequently some union of stability and relative perfection began to be developed in a still greater but confused and irregular variety. The higher forms occurred hardly at all and then without stability.

In Samadhi much pressure of Nidra, but the ideal samadhi persevered and kept itself in progress as an overtone. Rupas of the manasa loka, bright and tejomaya, but with a brief stability. Dream was immediately converted into symbol of ideality; incoherence of lipi into a crookedness of pointed significance.

In the lapse of the tapas the intuitional ideal mind reappeared for a while, but always with the inspired gnosis hovering over it to take it up and transform it into its own character. As yet the morning's hint of rapidity is not fulfilled, — it was so understood at the time that there might be some delay. The inspiration holds the field.

K.A also lost for a time its continuity and intensity. It is now recovering, but at this time between 12 and 3 it tends to some deidealisation and conversion into perverse negative electricity and has to be restored on the resumption of the normal activity. This has been done today with rapidity.

The conversion has begun of T^2 into the revelatory logistic ideality. At first this is attended with some intuitive revelatory action incased in the old intellectual doubt, but this is to be changed into the inspired logistic revelation. The certitude is already immensely increased, but it is not till all is changed to the terms of this drishti that there can be an initial perfection of accuracy in the T^2. The drishti reveals the decisive truth of each movement, whether it be a possibility of self-effecting force or a relative, temporary or decisive finality of effectuation. This is the last movement within the ideal logistis.

The revelatory even in the intuition gives the circumstances with a [constant][4] accuracy, but this is attended with much incertitude owing to the external intuitive intellectuality which darts in its suggestions and to a certain distrust and anxiety about the possible error of the result in the old judging mind. The element of revelatory judgment does not with sufficient prominence accompany the revelatory seeing of tapas or intention of action. Nevertheless, when left to itself this intuitive revelation can judge and fix accurately enough possibility and finality, even though it is not so forcible and conclusive as the inspired or the full revelation. This is with regard to succession of circumstance. This logistis acts as yet only partly in judgment of time, very uncertainly in relation to space and direction; but sometimes it takes them up all three and combines them with sufficient or complete fullness of accuracy. All this is in the field of exercise. Teledrishti is not yet being exercised in this higher action.

---

[4] *MS* constance

The lipi is still logistic, but a higher than the logistic ideality is entering into it attended by a diviner splendour of light and blaze of fiery effulgence. This may be called the hermetic gnosis. Its essence is çruti or divine inspiration, as the essence of logistis is smriti, divine mnemosyne. One remembers at a second remove the knowledge secret in the being but lost by the mind in the oblivion of the ignorance, the other divines at a first remove a greater power of that knowledge. One resembles the reason, is a divine reason, the other is [of] the nature of prophesis or inspired interpretation.

Sparsha is now abundant in the three things formerly gained by the sadhana, touch of subtle water and fire, touch of light things, eg insects, thread, wind, — both of these strong, vivid, materialised, effective on the physical body, and other touches not materialised, but having a certain physical result of sensation; subtle in intent, sthula in result, but not with the full density. Some of these sparshas are however on the verge of materialisation. All this action was formerly regarded as an inferior insufficiency by the intellectual impatience, but is now accepted as a stage towards the full sparsha. The old drishya of the pranic ether is also resuming its plenty. The çravana seems to be awaiting the silence of the night for its manifestation; but the sthula hearing is becoming exceedingly acute and comprehensive and there is a hint of sukshma sound behind its abundance. The lipi is to this extent justified, but there is as yet no sign of new extension, without which the barrier of obstruction cannot be said to have fallen.

Sadhara and niradhara are developing with some rapidity: in the midst of much confused, shapeless or half-shaped rupa there are some of perfect or almost [perfect vividness,][5] completeness and distinctness; old types of rupa are coming back with a greater perfection and vividness, but they have the old fault of instantaneous instability. Nevertheless this is a definite advance. At night there is the old difficulty; there is then the greatest confusion, vagueness, crudity; but there is also a beginning of better things.

Some isolated çravanas of the old type.

The revelatory ideality is taking up the consciousness, even the revived suggestions of the external intuitive mentality, but this involves a momentary retardation in the decisive trikaldrishti-tapas.

The yogic çravanas in the closed ear, strong while they lasted, but not persistent as in the former sadhana. Some çravana speech. But there is as yet no enlargement of the çravana

Nidra at night, but also samadhi. The coherence is now firmly established and enforces itself with great power. Stability in the chhayamaya rupa. The samadhi is fixed in the ideality. All has now to be developed, the physical obstruction which denies samadhi overcome, nidra to be replaced by samadhi.

July 21st Monday

Today, a full play of the ideality, but not all of the highest logistis. Highest logistis to attain to a partial universality. Increase of chitra and vishaya. Increase of Ananda. More attention to the physical siddhi.

Ideality is now acting in masses, but of all kinds, from the idealised intuitivity to the highest logistic, but the last is pressing on all for transmutation. The fluctuation of Ananda and the struggle in the Arogya continue. K.A idealised in the highest logistis is beginning to act and to press upon the intuitional and mental forms of the ananda.

Great intensity of gandha and gandha-rasa, combined and allied, but not yet the free variety. Great intensity of rasa, the crude turning to firm developed and to suggested perfect rasas.

---

[5] *MS* perfectness

The obstruction to freer frequency and variety has now alone to be broken for the perfection of this siddhi.

Farther Sadhana in the morning discontinued through pressure of work. This is a defect which the consciousness has not yet overcome, owing to deficiency of the multiple concentration.

Immense development of the samadhi. Only towards the end some lapse into nidra. Inexhaustible abundance of rupa, especially of the mental plane, but also of the pranic and chhayamaya, scenes of all kinds, figures, action, lipi, dialogue etc: for the most part a high ideal level. The chhayamaya scenes now attain to an absolute stability, frequent though not invariable; the others have only a first stability. There is also stability of successive action, but there were only one or two unsuccessful attempts at combination with stability of scene. Only once a fugitive touch of the incoherent dream consciousness attempting to bring in a terrestrial association of memory and confuse with it the accuracy of the recorded impressions. A little more development will securely found the whole base of swapna samadhi.   K.A in samadhi, interrupted occasionally by an intervening cloud of nidra power between the physical and the higher mental consciousness, but afterwards more persistently by a deepening towards nidra; but after the brief sleep there was an immediate recovery of the Ananda. It is now noticeable that when the Ananda occupies the brain there is no oblivion; when it pervades the rest of the body, but not the head, oblivion becomes possible.

Work in the afternoon.

Rasa acts now with some frequency, though without an entire freedom. Definite rasas are coming with increasing ease and variety. Gandha is for the present obstructed. An old siddhi, sparsha at a distance, sukshma or sukshma-sthula in incidence, felt by the subtle body and conveyed by it in the same moment to the physical sense: there is however no division, it is felt as one touch by the united sukshma and sthula sense.   Rupa has developed a few instances outside of the crude of a stability still within the primary stability, but in its highest degree. Variety of rupas at night is on the increase, crude of all the kinds, jyotir etc, and dense of the crude, dense and developed degrees, but few as yet are complete, except certain unstable forms and some stable crude rupas. There is a hint too of developed rupas; but not the actuality, except in some fugitive incomplete formations. Rare instances of çravana of a new kind. Attempts at jagrat sukshma speech, not yet articulate or fully audible. Thunder in the ears. The old persistent, unceasing loud cricket sound in the room, once rejected as a physical sound, is again heard, and is now clearly marked as sukshma. The thunder in the ears is followed by a great intensification of the physical hearing.

K.A is now very often stable in the head. Then even a low intensity of ananda turns to constant sensibility.

The idealised intuitivity is allowed sometimes to act, but is now the truth-reflecting intuitivity; there is no predominance of the pragmatic or mechanical mentality. These only recur in a dull fragmentary fashion.

[July][6] 22^{d} Tuesday.

The higher hermetic gnosis is now showing itself in the revelatory logistis not only in the lipi, but in thought-speech and perception; something of it is evident in trikaldrishti and Tapas, even when these act through the idealised intuivity; this action no longer disturbs to any great extent by a premature anticipation of the future actuality or possibility and falsification of the present actuality. That was formerly the result of a higher power suggesting its greater possibilities to the lower plane. The purification of the lower plane makes it a clearer channel and prevents this consequence. In the tapas there is some hint of a possible omnipotence of the gnosis which will remove the obstacles of the existing law of the body

Yesterday there was a violent attack of roga trying to materialise itself in digestive disturbance leading to nausea. This was cast out by the tapas after some fifteen minutes or more; it left a slight transient residue, followed by a strong health state. This morning the attack was of the diarrhoeic tendency, with all its concomitants of jalamaya, agnimaya, vayumaya disturbance. The revelatory tapas was applied to correct the sanskaras of the bodily mind and very rapidly the attack was overcome without its ordinary reaction of constipation. Some slight recurrent residue of tendency remains, but not enough to trouble the system. There is a great increase of tapas supremacy in the dealing with roga. If it can be extended to the digestive perversion and the central weakness, the Arogya will have its first complete basis.

---

[6] *MS* June

In the morning physical tamas, some relapse into the old intuivity. This is now being corrected, but it is noticeable that the obstruction is being concentrated in the physical system. Opposition in the objective subjectivity is half-hearted; the opposition has lost faith and self-confidence.

The remnants of the habit of intellectual judgment and recipiency are now being raised and extruded from the system; the ideality is to be its own recipient, its own critic, questioner, judge, authority.

Samadhi in the later part of the morning. Perfect freedom of rupa, variety, perfection, vividness, but only in initial or primary stability in the pranic world. Chhaya only comes in usually as a shade on some of the pranic rupas; most are free from chhaya. Incoherence in the lipi is at once turned to coherence or proved to be a coherence. Antardarshi rupa is being prepared in the light swapna, on the borders of the two states and in some cases in antardarshi itself there are scenes and figures of a pranic kind, not crude, but ghana.

Rasa is now frequent in masses, sometimes persistent; obstruction hardly exists for its action. Gandha gains in force, but is prevented by the obstruction from frequency.

The incidence of the relapse into the intuitive intellectuality has been very obstinate and severe, a great confusion created, almost all the old incidents of relapse suggested, even something like the old hardly idealised intellectual intuivity revived in fragments and in the mental atmosphere. The orderly and powerful development of the gnosis has undergone momentarily a strong interruption. Nevertheless lipi after some fluctuations has greatly increased in force of revelatory light and the breadth of its flood and luminous force; thought speech has also grown in inspired revelatory power. The T^2 has been most afflicted and with it the thought perception obstructed or brought to the lower level of intuition. At present all perception is of the intuitive ideal level with a touch or pressure of revelation tending to rise into the intuitive or inspired revelatory logistis, attended often by cloggings of intuitive matter or deviating into some kind of imperfect inspiration. The intuitive mentality itself has been so strongly idealised in its struggle with the gnosis that it is difficult sometimes to distinguish between this heavily idealised intuivity and the real intuitive or inspirational gnosis at its lower levels of force, light or certitude.

Dream at night of an extraordinary coherence, free for the most part from present association, except in the later nidra, and almost on the point of conversion to ideal experience of past, future or otherwhere happenings. In samadhi some incoherence and a lower level of general force of the ideality, but no cessation of abundance. This incoherence tends to turn into a more prolonged and sustained perfection of dialogue, narrative, lipi etc.

K.A afflicted, but not discontinued in its recurrence. Some attempt at enlargement of drishya and vishaya generally, as of rupa, but very uncertain and infirm though tending to largeness. Persistence of attack of roga and replying tapas. Generally an embarrassed but still successful progress, preparing a greater siddhi.

July 23^{d} Wednesday

A day of partial recovery and advance.

T^{2} is acting with a quieter, deliberately limited and restrained action. Correct in the intuivity of the gnosis, although embarrassed by a strong adhesion of stuff of uncertain mental intuivity, the inspirational form is still overpowered by the latter disability, gives only the tendencies, pressures of force, suggestions of coming possibility. Intuitive certitude is slowly but steadily enlarging its operation.

K.A after some difficulty has recovered its basic continuity, but thinly without the opulent incidence and pervasion. Steady in act, variable in incidence, but afflicted by oblivion of absorption, only the thought not going out to objects, interferes less with it than the concentration on act or object, but this too now causes oblivion when attention is required to the thought-process. At the same time there is a progressive force of recovery.

Premananda in the Vishwadarshana has for some days been insisting on its normality. Ahaituka mental darshana is the chief obstacle; it is shantimaya with suppressed prema or anandamaya with diminished prema. This mental sight is disappearing before the premamaya vision into the vijnana or chidghana saguna seeing. In proportion as the guna was not seen, there was deficiency of prema; in the prema itself the mentality would thrust a diminishing incompletive suggestion of sterile ahaituka. Vijnana darshana does not suppress, but can hold a non-insistent diminished prema. Prema increases the ananda in the vijnana; ananda increases prema. Brahma-vision seeing things as objects of the unifying cognizance tends to be without prema; Purusha Brahma or Ishwara brahma darshana brings the deeper unity, prema and ananda.

K.A has recovered its force, but is still easily depressed by the interruption of the mind's absorptions, because there is a pressure on it from the obstructing force which compels it to sink easily in a mechanical variation of intensity, fluctuation and occasional cessation of its overt presence. But now the memory always brings back the Ananda.

In Samadhi continuous narrative, monologue, dialogue or their combination in the ideal form. This was done largely and for long in lighter swapna, on its borders or partly in concentrated antardarshi and partly in swapna. There is no long continuity of it in the deeper swapna which is still a thing of many, swift and brief experiences, thoughts and visions. K. Ananda maintained in lighter swapna, brought in with difficulty at a greater depth, non-existent in deep nidra.   Exceedingly strong and violent varied gandha. Rasa is recurrent, but not with such persistent freedom as yesterday, but it is developing more distinct rasas.

Throughout the day there has been a strong persistence of the relics of the intuitive mentality and the intuitive ideality has not been effective in getting rid of the obsession; because it is no longer the chosen instrumentation. Now the inspirational ideality is taking up the work, with the highest logistis at its back. This is more effective, all is at once changed to the inspirational form. But this too is not absolutely effective. The highest logistis alone can do the work.

There is a beginning of the change of the physical consciousness to the inspirational ideality.

Free gandha in the evening; the obstruction seems to be broken down, though not either in gandha or rasa entirely destroyed. It is intact in çravana and sparsha.

Samadhi fluctuating between full ideality and a lower half ideality. Memory in waking is badly deficient; this is itself an obstacle to rapid progress. Great masses of printed lipi, largely incoherent, but much more fluently legible and stable than at any previous time. Stability of rupa and scene and of all other experience is beginning to move towards farther self-extension. Narrative attempted in deep swapna, but trailed off into incoherence. All this is in the adverse state of the mentality.

Ideality still hampered and obstructed in the system.

July 24th Thursday

A farther advance and complete recovery today.

The siddhi is now moving towards a system of complete affirmation; all thought and perception, no matter what the source or medium, is admitted as having some kind of justification in force and being and the exact nature of the justification is being immediately assigned and made as precise as possible. In this process intuitive mental thought is allowed, but idealised in the mentality, since so only can it get its proper proportions. This has always been the theory of the sadhana; it has been preparing and repeatedly insisted on for a long time, but only now by this removal of the too trenchant intellectual distinction between satyam and asatyam is it becoming entirely possible. This completion is necessary for the manifestation of the hermetic gnosis; the logistic is a limiting gnosis, the hermetic an entirely comprehensive ideality. T^2 cannot be perfect, but only relatively perfect in the logistic gnosis.

Gandha and rasa are now acting with a considerable freedom and variety and the former with a fundamental perfection. Rasa is still subject to its initial crudeness of incomplete massed tastes, though there are now definite and perfect rasas. Rasa is now insisting on perfection.

In Samadhi a great flood and mass of experiences of all kinds, but incoherent, yet all in the ideality. Subsequently an ordered movement. All the intuitive mind turned into ideality, what was before simple intellectuality, is now just before the ideal level and is changing to the intuivity. This movement represents a complete mutation of the whole being into the gnostic type. Even the physical being is beginning this mutation. Forecast in the samadhi, this change is also beginning in the jagrat condition.

Sparsha has now a greater freedom and variety of the more subtle touches. Half-sthula sukshma sparsha also comes more often and with greater force, but not without some difficulty and obstruction.

The K.A violently oppressed; but the mechanical discontinuity cannot maintain itself any longer when there is smarana, except for a while after long discontinuity by oblivion. There is only strong suppression of intensity reaching the verge of discontinuity. The intensity recurs whenever there is laxity of the oppression.

The movement is now to the complete idealisation of the whole being. But the system is still low and the intuitive mentality recurs persistently and has to be idealised into the full logistis. This is especially due to the recurrent imperfection of T^2 and to the continuance of old states in the physical being.

Friday. July 25.

Yesterday's recovery was not complete except for a temporary movement. The new siddhi is still invaded by the external intuitivity, though there is no complete relapse. The ideality moves on the level of a thickly illumined revelatory intuition. This is extending greatly a relatively certain trikaldrishti and taking up firmly some, rejecting others of the telepathic suggestions which are again coming from the intuitive externality. The siddhi of T^2 is only initial; much has to be done before it can acquire a settled universality.

K.A at first distressed to the extreme point near discontinuity. Now it has revived, though not in full force and has again begun to push away the oblivion of absorption. Other siddhis have been in abeyance during the morning.

Samadhi in relapse. Afternoon spent in work. K.A in fluctuation. In ideality T^2 slowly enlarges itself in the ideal intuition. Some accommodation of this power in the thought with an incomplete inspirational ideality to form anew an intuitive inspiration. All these things are movements of recovery and enlargement of ideality on the lower levels, not permanent form or the regular action of the gnosis.

Samadhi recovers some of its force, but there is a strong persistence of incoherence, especially in the lipi. The siege of the external intuitivity continues. As yet the system is not ready for the full renewed action and control by the highest revelatory gnosis. Some attempt at shabda (vakya).

July 26 Saturday

Highest ideality has now a greater force in the thought perception, but T^2 continues on the lower intuitive level, is mainly telepathic and draws down the rest of the thought towards its own present type of action. Tapas is increasing its Kali force and largeness of action.

There is now a struggle between two kinds of ideality, the old ideality which depends upon the existent actuality, illumines it, goes a little beyond it but from it, returns to it, acquiesces temporarily in its decisions, and a new greater pragmatic ideality which takes the present actuality as a passing [circumstance],[7] claims to go altogether beyond it, to create with a certain large freedom according to the Will and looks even beyond to the omnipotence of the Self and its will, [to] determine as well as see the future. It is over the relapse to the mentalised intuitive ideality that the question is being fought out, for it is the mental intuitivity and the intuitive ideality which illumines it into a lower gnosis which either temporarily support or resignedly acquiesce in the relapse as a part of the still existent law of the rhythm of the sadhana. The greater ideality aims at eliminating the rhythm of rapid progression and sudden relapse. It proposes to do everything from above, by the ideality, in the ideality, the gnosis working out itself, *âtmani âtmânam âtmanâ*.

---

[7] *MS* circumstances

The future of the sadhana lies with this greater pragmatic ideality and with something beyond it in the hermetic ideality. But it is still undetermined how soon it will be able to transcend the obstructing power of the intuitive mentality and act in its own right of rapid creation or revelation. The physical siddhi, the full force of Samadhi, rupa, vishaya, the greater T^2 seem to be waiting for this consummation

27 JULY – 13 AUGUST 1919

Yoga Diary
July 27 to Aug 13
1919

July 27th Sunday.

The complete fulfilment of the programme for July has been prevented by the sudden relapse towards the intuitive mentality. T^2 has indeed developed an initial firmness, but this is very insufficient in universality owing to the mental interference. The two first chatusthayas have again been contradicted by the invasion of the external mentality, which brings in an element of asraddha, tamas, dissatisfaction, and some broken hints of the revolt of the mental will and its old *duhkha* at *asatya* and *asiddhi*, the only two things that can still produce a perturbation. These touches are combated and thrown out by the tapas of samata, but they create recurrent vibrations though they cannot occupy the mentality. K A has confirmed only a recurrent, not an unbroken continuity, a continuity in smarana broken by brief mechanical discontinuities, but not a conquest of absorption and sleep; the other Anandas have therefore also to await their greater development. Karma is developing, but on a limited scale. Kali has deepened and possesses the system, but Krishna is still veiled by the ganas and devatas. Ananda Brahman has filled in with the chidghana and prema, but not yet with the fullness of the Anandamaya Ishwara. Tapas in Arogya has increased, the fragmentary rogas have a less insistence, but the two chronic rogas have acquired a new lease of continuance; nevertheless the digestive functionings are more under conscious control of the will. There is for the moment a great incertitude as to the immediate future of the development of the sadhana.

Lipi. Tapas siddhi to increase immediately to its full force in the pragmatic ideality. Health to continue the battle, but to give the increase of the tapas against the existing difficulties. The delight of the Ananda to fix itself against the oblivion of absorption, not yet against the sleep. Ananda Ishwara to determine itself in the darshana. Light of the hermetic ideality to suffuse the highest ideality. Samadhi to determine its ideality in the permanent fixity. Vishaya to develop as also the rupa siddhi. These things and others to begin in the remaining days of July.

Siddhi began with the Ananda-Brahman. This is now beginning finally to impose itself on both the chidghana and the mental darshana. In the latter it either diffuses itself or contains the mental seeing, but in both cases is itself mentalised and loses its character of the pure perfect unmodified Ananda. The vijnana darshana either contains or is contained in the Ananda. In the former case the Ananda is either made of the chidghana kind or surrounds it in its mental or its chidghana modification. Prema is always present in the Ananda darshana, but is often seen as an element of the thing, *rasa-grahana*, without evoking bhoga of prema in the chitta and prana. It is seen by prakamya, not received by vyapti. The vijnana darshana is now being made by tapas to replace more firmly and fully the mental seeing. The more perfect Ananda darshana then supervenes more easily and with a greater completeness, density and amplitude.

The struggle with the remnants of the relapse continued for a time. Strong pragmatic ideal tapas worked in and on the resistance, till the intuitive ideality in intuitive *manasa* and vijnana replaced the lax intuitive mentality. Then suddenly in Samadhi complete and powerful gnostic revelation took up the whole action in light and deeper swapna, brought in full coherence, excluded all mentality: but in the deepest nidra imperfection still continued though attacked and partially excluded by the revelatory gnosis. There was no actual dream, but insufficient inner jagrat[t]a.

In the waking state also this gnosis took up the thought, but not so completely; T^2 is still a gate for the intervention of *manasa*.

Nevertheless the gnosis is working upon this manasa to transform it and exclude all unconverted movements. There is also some initial movement of turning the K A into the character of this gnosis.

Samadhi in the afternoon overpowered by nidra, only towards the end returning to the gnostic drishti.

In the ideality a strong and stable perception of the mental panchabhuta, brilliantly etheric in its basis, tejomaya in its substance, with all the perceptions and forces acting in its intellectual intuitive medium: within, but alien to it the pranic, vayumaya in its basis and substance, below the material inconscience, prithivimaya and jalamaya in its basis and substance. The mind sees in this medium its own contributions to thought and action, consciousness and force, but with some difficulty the pranic interception and intervention, with most difficulty the material resistance and response. This ether forms an obstacle to the vijnana contribution which governs, originates, decides the whole action of the triloka.

Subsequently a descent from the highest ideality for the purpose of farther fixing the transformation of intuitive mentality into intuitive ideality. This has been effected so that even in relaxed states of the system, the thought is ideal and not of the mental substance. The mental form is becoming exceptional, peculiar to a most relaxed condition of the system.

Samadhi still distressed by nidra. Dream of half-samadhi turning to vision, incoherence sometimes overpowering, sometimes corrected with ease or difficulty to some regular or capricious coherence. Rupa and vishaya in abeyance. K.A acting, but oblivious tamas attending absorption insistent, not strongly attacked by gnostic tapas. Physical siddhi otherwise in abeyance or small isolated action or limited to simple maintenance of the present status. The relapse has been chiefly effective in the physical siddhi.

July 28th Monday.

The ideality is working still at the transformation. T^2 is now acting normally in the telepathic form in the intuitive ideality with a clinging adhesion of the stuff of mentality. Nevertheless, there is frequent correctness of circumstance, but with an insufficient force of certitude and some occasional intervening element of error and wrong selection. T^2 of inspired telepathy has begun to be finally idealised, but there is yet a heavy incidence of mentality. The highest gnosis in T^2 is in abeyance.

Lipi. There will be the rush of the highest ideality today in the thought and the thought speech; a beginning also in the trikaldrishti tapassiddhi.

The inspired telepathic ideality can give the fact to be, but does not command the time and the circumstance. The attempt to do it brought it back to the infinite incertitude of possibility and so to an intuitive mentality just shading off into a thin ideality. Afterwards was a rush of tapasic action of the being, mostly idealised in the intuivity, but pervious to unidealised mental suggestions. Samata, çraddha etc are being made compatible with this tapasic state of the being which formerly brought always disturbance and reaction. The replacement of tamas or mere çama by a tapas based in çama is the intention. On the whole now laxity of the system can bring it down only to an intuitive ideal state bordering on and pervious to suggestions of the mentality, but not to unideal mentality. The attempt now is to replace this intuitive level by an inspired ideality which will be the state of relaxation and to make the highest ideality the proper action.

The rush of the highest ideality has begun, but it is very pervious to the motions of the lower ideality. In its inspirational form it gives freely the fact to be, but not yet the circumstance which had begun to be given with much imperfection by the lower inspiration

Vishaya and rupa revived, but began with their old faults, crudeness of rasa, obstruction of gandha and fugitive rupa etc. These are now gradually being set aside. Gandha can now always be commanded in subdued form or intensity by inhalation; spontaneous gandha is still limited to rarity by the obstruction. The tendency in rasa is to define. In rupa to a doubtful and quickly withdrawn primary stability. The full freedom is not yet established in any of these siddhis.

When the relapse brings back to a former state, there are always three conflicting principles at work, the habit of rebuilding laboriously what was broken down, the method of remanifesting rapidly the past siddhis by a rapid repetition of some of the steps by which it had been formed, the immediate remanifestation with fresh progress. The second tends to prevail, but less in the undeveloped siddhis; the third is only in its infancy.

A considerable force of samadhi later in the morning.

Samadhi in the afternoon much half-idealised dreaming.

Brief freedom of gandha and sparsha and a freer çravana.

Work in the afternoon. Highest ideality, but some action of the lower gnosis and the idealised intuivity. Later laxity and apravritti.

July 29 Tuesday.

Today a more perfect T^2 has been presaged in the lipi and the presage is repeated this morning.

T^2 is already growing towards a relative perfection. The ideality acting on all levels gives increasingly a prediction which has indeed only a relative certitude, but is generally right in fact of event, always has some justification in telepathic actuality, is able to fix time with a sort of coarse appreciation, but not yet always with an entirely prevailing relative certainty, has some rough initial idea of the arrangement of circumstance, though not yet the fine detail, but all is still disquieted to a certain extent by three of the old difficulties, (1) chiefly, the incertitude caused by a defect of the decisive seeing, (2) an attempt of the telepathy to fill in illegitimately this defect and the defect of range by a false certitude, (3) the intervention of mental will trying to masquerade as trikaldrishti. The incidence of these difficulties is steadily diminishing, but they are still in action.

Chitra rupa has been for some days growing in abundance, vividness, life and variety. Sthapatya rupa has now reappeared, this time in full spontaneity, vividness, unlimited variety, perfection of form, truth of life, — forms of all kinds of beings, objects, scenes etc. Chitra is developing towards the same perfection.

The highest ideality is now attempting in thought perception and tapas to free itself from the lower action. That comes in as an alien intervention, a sign that it is rejected and when the highest gnosis works, it is only so that they can present themselves, piercing from outside through the regular working and finding some similar response in the physical system, but rejected by the gnostic and mental being. When this gnosis works in freedom, then it arouses no pragmatic eagerness in the mental system, tolerates no mechanical tamasic laxity

During the rest of the day a variable action of the ideality. In Samadhi dream pages, consecutive reading. Violent mass touch of sparsha, blow-push, in Samadhi. Nidra still oppressive. A general wavering and incertitude.

July 30 Wednesday.

The highest logistic gnosis is now finally taking up the mentality. At first in intuitive revelatory, then in intuitive inspired revelatory and inspired revelatory, then in full revelatory in the three orders, it invaded all the thought-activities and holds them firmly; even the lapses are full of the revelatory sense and light. The next step is to turn this idealised mentality into the full and true highest logistic gnosis. This is being partly done, but mainly in thought speech and perception; not yet in T^2.

Kamananda is recovering its siddhis in the revelatory form.

Great intensity, fullness and stability of all kinds of sparshas in bahirdarshi jagrat as well as antardarshi.

Hasya in samata; beginnings of the devi-hasya.

Samadhi in the afternoon: in the grasp of nidra. But all the dream in the nidra has turned to ideality and coherence. The old form of incoherent dream was unable to force its way back into the samadhi, except for certain associations of present personality. Much of the dream was in the form of the highest ideality mental or vijnanamaya.

Work in the afternoon; subsequently a duller state of the action. K.A weakened in the afternoon and evening, accomplished at night a certain overcoming of its difficulties, but is still very much subject to intermittence of its siddhis.

At night a splendid fullness of moving in dream vision; [absolute][1] perfection, colour, reality[,] intensity of scenes, objects, people, living creatures in an ordered succession as if seen by one moving through a new world,—the pranic worlds or else the bhuswargas. Afterwards again dream of the ordinary kind, though always with a certain kind of coherence.

---

[1] *MS* absolutely

July 31 Thursday.

The ideality is now seeking to get rid of the too strong effect of the physical laxity, to keep up a constant action of the thought of gnosis. There is also the movement towards the changing of the idealised revelatory mentality in the physical system to the true gnosis.

T^2 is still a difficulty. The main difficulty is the persistence of the recurring tendency to take strong actual possibility for final actuality. This defect is absent when there is no attempt to get the absolute decision; then all is actual possibility relieved by relative certainties. But the attempt at decisive trikaldrishti tapas brings in the hasty and wrong overstresses which mix with, interfere with, replace the true decisions. Decision is often of the inspired gnostic kind which is a strong tapas of perception often fulfilled, but liable to be overborne by a greater power. At the same time the absolute revelatory action often intervenes, but is mixed with intuitive seeing of relatively decisive gnostic intuitions and these forceful inspirations of a pragmatic almost absolute certitude. The absolute revelatory action is of the logistis, certain therefore of the moment, but with a background of still greater unperceived possibility which may reverse the natural effect of the decision.

K.A is now stronger in force of spontaneous persistence; but the spontaneity is not perfect, nor proof against oblivion by strong absorption or by a wandering of the lax mind to other interests. But it is seeking to get rid of this obstacle by tapas.

The action of the ideality bears now most on the T^2 which is being reduced to the revelatory form. Only remnants of the old action are still untransformed and of the mentality. This movement at first turned the mental into the idealised revelatory mentality. Now a revelatory ideal Tapas and trikaldrishti is being insisted on, but mixed with the idealised mentality or chequered by its recurrence. Telepathy is being changed into perception of the thought stuff as well as the feeling stuff and impulse stuff of the being, while there is also the accompaniment of a telepathic thought-perception reducing these indirect identities into idea and thought speech. The mechanical and pragmatic tapas is being idealised and raised towards or into the truth tapas governed by trikaldrishtic perception. This again varies between the intuitive and inspired revelation, remnants intervening of non-revelatory intuition and inspiration, and is also directed towards the full truth revelation. The movement is final and decisive, but has [ ][2] still much work to do upon the old matter and manner, before it can be entirely free to work in the revelatory gnosis.

K.A is enforcing continuity; the tendency to continuity insists and on the whole prevails in spite of the strong recurrence of its deficiencies.

The other siddhis are moving forward, but with a fragmentary and intermittent movement, liable still to some action of the principle of relapse. Saundarya, except in one or two details, and utthapana are unable to move forward or break down their barriers. They await the gnostic tapas. The programme for the month has been in part accomplished, in part half accomplished, the other half begun but not completed, in part partially or entirely baffled by the obstruction. On the whole the forward movement prevails or is increasing in strength. The physical obstruction is the great obstacle.

August.

Balance of progress.

First Chatusthaya. The first chatusthaya has been fortified by the stable founding and permanence of the full *hasya*. Asamata of asatya has now little or no force; its incidence is, if not quite deleted, yet ineffective. Asamata of asiddhi is passing, occasional, fragmentary and corrected without difficulty. Once the delight of failure is put in its right place, as an *anandamaya* perception of passing circumstance and step of the siddhi free from tamasic acquiescence, the last remnants of asamata can be abolished. Affection is the only thing that brings in a touch of the fear of amangala, but this is now a slight external suggestion.

---

[2] *MS* to

Second Chatusthaya. Complete except for the divine hâsya, aishwarya and the full sraddhâ in the swaçakti; these defects are due to the insufficiency of force in the *devi-bhâva*. Tejas, balam, mahattwam, pravritti of the elements are there, but not steady and equal in their action.

Third Chatusthaya. Gnana is in itself perfect in revelatory gnosis, capable even of the hermetic gnosis, but is held back and descends so as not to outstrip too much the T^2. T^2 is advancing to the revelatory power. It is already preparing its final freedom from mentality, normally gnostic and drishtimaya, but burdened with the persistent recurrence of the intervening old mental deficiencies or lower forms of the gnosis. Samadhi fluctuates, sometimes ideal, vigorous, abundant, then again for days together overpowered by nidra. In nidra dream is usually almost coherent, sometimes quite coherent, sometimes fantastic in coherence, sometimes orderly; when the ideality is active or presses on the system, dream-vision comes or dream is changed into vision. Vishaya has established itself in gandha and rasa, often perfect, intense, distinct and of a certain variety, but is often rendered rare by the obstruction. Sparsha is strong in the established sthula touches, often intense in sukshma or sthula-sukshma touch on the sukshma or sthula body, even in the half sthula or just sthula touches, but the full and free materialisation is still obstructed; this part of the old barrier, its last strong fencing has not yet fallen. Sravana comes with strength or persistence only in the old symbolic sounds, cricket, ticking, bells, thunder etc; the rest has failed to materialise. Drishya is limited to an occasional elementary vision of the pranic akasha and its simplest forms. There is no sign of progression. Rupa fluctuates; for some days it has failed in frequency and made no progress.

Fourth Chatusthaya. Kamananda has established the prevailing tendency of continuity, can in response to smarana and tapas overcome all the obstacles of oblivion, except sleep and long absorption; but none of its deficiencies has undergone a final elimination. Tivra is strong, but intermittent, raudra firmly established in all touches up to an indefinite degree of the violence of the sparsha, but is sometimes momentarily overcome by sudden unexpected contacts. There is no insistence on vishaya which is generally established subject to certain remnants of discomfort or insipidity, nor on vaidyuta, which can however be brought by *satapas smarana*. Arogya is strong in tapas in all but the two central rogas, which are still insistent in obstruction and relapse; the rest the tapas, if allowed to act, can hold back or cast out the fragments with more or less appearance or reality of difficulty. Saundarya is established in bhava, but fluctuates in intensity and varies in character; physically there is no advance except in one circumstance. Utthapana is stationary or rather in a state of inhibition.

Fifth Chatusthaya. Mental Kali finally and permanently established, Krishna darshana in the being intermittent in its manifestation. Karma is limited to personal action and some force of tapas in outward things. Kama is personal, but not yet moved towards exteriorisation.

Sixth Chatusthaya. Fundamental Brahma darshana complete in the Ananda vijnana, sometimes descends towards the mentality to effect a better fusion of ahaituka, prema, kama, vijnana and shuddha ananda. Brahma sight is full of the Purusha, but only sometimes contains the Ishwara seeing.

Seventh Chatusthaya. Suddhi is practically complete except for the body and the vijnana; essential mukti complete, but not the mukti of the Nature, as in the physical being and its most physical mentality, recurrence of tamas and something of rajas and sattwa are still visible. Bhukti is almost complete. These completenesses are fundamental, not a completeness of degree or of content. Siddhi is practically perfect in the first, moving towards final perfection in the second, striving towards completeness and a kind of perfection in the third, initial only in the fourth and for the most obstructed and subject to relapse, busy only with the personal foundation in the fifth, large in the sixth, but not full in its contents or complete in its combination.

Programme

I. Hasya to be fixed in the final perfection.

II. Çraddha to be completed, daivi prakriti brought to perfection.

III Ideality to be firmly raised in T^2 to the revelatory logistic power and to look upward to the hermetic gnosis in all its thought activities. Samadhi to overcome nidra. Vishaya to be completed in its element[s], jagrat rupa delivered from its barrier of obstruction.

IV Kamananda to acquire continuity, overcome its obstacles and bring in the other anandas. Health to increase its tapas and, if possible, found the two central arogyas. The development of the two other physical siddhis is not likely to come as yet to perfection, but the final battle may begin with the physical obstruction.

V. Kali to idealise and fix herself in the gnosis and Krishna to fix himself as the visible Ishwara in the Ananda. Karma to extend its force of perfection in the personal working and its power on outward eventuality. Kama to complete its personal basis in the subjectivity.

VI. Ishwara darshana to take up the perfected Brahma vision.

VII. Perfection in the first two, initial perfection in the third and sixth, preparation of completion in the other chatusthayas.

August 1. 1919. Friday.

Action of ideality in thought to perceive the right action. The full revelatory ideality, not the inspired or intuitive revelation, the truth seeing not the pragmatic or resistant mechanical seeing, not the alternation of these two opposite powers, nor even their simultaneous perception, but their unity and exceeding in the revelatory truth, must be the agent of the perfect siddhi. That therefore must be insisted on always, even in the midst of the persistence of the lower movements. This thing done means a sure rapidity.

In the K.A. urgent pragmatic tapas must be replaced by spontaneity aided by an ideal truth tapas and smarana.

An attack of the obstructive external physical mentality which sought to deny all farther speedy or immediate progress, was followed by an immediate and strong advance in the first two chatusthayas. The hasya is already achieving the requisite form and the acceptance of asiddhi as a circumstance and step of siddhi is complete. Into this acceptance has still to be brought the secure fullness of the equal ananda. A limited aishwarya-bodha and self-çraddha, a full çraddha in the kalyanabuddhi of the Ishwara is now being founded. These two siddhis have now to be given their last finality.

Lipi. The ideality in the physical siddhis to be undertaken in spite of the difficulties.

The rest of the day mostly a confirming of the first two chatusthayas against the attack of Asiddhi. It is now firmer; the moments of clouding prove ineffective; the siddhi perseveres in spite of absence of light or adverse suggestions in the mentality.

The oppression of primary utthapana is a little lightened today. The attack on the health still continues in the digestive perversion. In the fragmentary rogas it is held in check, its material effects abrogated as soon as they are slightly manifested, but is not eliminated from the system.

In Samadhi in the afternoon no recovery, except at the end; at night (early morning) ample rupa, but there is still incoherency in the lipi, unideality in the other features, inaction of the thought-powers. On the whole a day of obstruction, but of some initial advances.

Aug 2. Saturday

A day of the ideality.

The lipi predicts the 5th and 11th (with the 7th as an intermediary stage) and the 15th as the important days for the gnosis. Today it has to manifest under difficulties and this will go on till the 5th when the revelation, it is to be presumed, will be in some sort firmly founded; from the 5th to the 11th farther progress still in spite of difficulties, then some manifestation of the hermetic ideality. The 15th is to be the special day for the gnosis.

Thought and thought-speech have fixed themselves in an easy normal and brilliant revelatory gnosis of the subordinate intuitive character in all its degrees. This is also being applied to the mental levels where it is still of the same character, but of a more derivative and less complete and immediate luminosity and certitude. Next, the same process was applied to T^2. First, an inrush of the old mentality; next a lifting in which all first became incertitude and then was transformed into a gnosis of intuitive revelatory possibilities, the revelation taking up the possibilities and revealing their incidence and proportions, with an intervention of immediate revelatory certitudes. Behind this is now manifesting the full inspired revelatory dynamic possibilities and certitudes and the full revelatory illuminations. Tapas is of the same character, but with less completeness. This second movement however is as yet from above and has not become either full in itself or the normal thought action.

Subsequently, an attempt to bring in the inspired revelation as the type of all the thought especially in T^2. At first this brought about a descent from the revelatory to the inspired levels. Then there came above, with no hold on the lower being, a highest form of the full (not inspired) revelation, holding in itself the prominent element of inspiration. A difference has to be drawn between the inspired revelation and full most luminous revelation of an inspired character. T^2 came to no definite siddhi, but thought became of an inspired revelatory nature.

An attack of roga on the eye. Twice materialised and momentarily healed first by intuitive, then by inspirational Tapas of the revelatory kind, it managed to hold by a disposition to and some actual watering, but no effusion. The arogya tapas prevailed over the roga which for the most part lived only in suggestions in the subtle physicality which could not materialise in but only affected the sthula. There was some physical sense or initiation of all the symptoms, but not their physical actuality.

Samadhi overpowered by nidra in the afternoon, free, but still attacked by defects in the early morning

Aug 3 Sunday.

The movement to inspired revelation continues and all the thought and T^2 is of this character, revelation always present, inspiration predominating and sometimes swallowing it up, but on all levels, so that there is little certitude of a final character. Mostly the thought of T^2 on the idealised mental level. Some recurrence of intuitive forms. Later emergence of thought of inspired revelation and revelation permeated with inspiration. Invasion from outside failed to bring in any relapse or any element of intellectuality.

The roga made many fresh attacks, but was increasingly overpowered by Tapas; it is being reduced to the fragmentary character. No actual watering except early in the morning, very slightly, but still a disposition to watering and occasional attempts at heat. The causes of increased affection, strain of the eye, glare etc are being got to increase instead the force of the arogya. Arogya Tapas is changing to the ideal character. The thick obstacle of the most physical prana with its sanskara of roga is being pierced and broken up by the light of ideal tapas. The movement is [one][3] of strong prevalence, not yet of absolute finality. In the central rogas Tapas is resuming its operation, but not yet effective for sensible progress.

In the morning drishya of pranic akasha, full of small life; insects, butterflies etc so stable and vivid as often to be not easily distinguishable except by their multitude from terrestrial forms. Birds also, but not so stable, vivid, easily distinguishable as pranic beings.

In samadhi after some nidra and coherent dream, great abundance of samadhi experience. Tapas is resuming its force, revelatory ideality taking up more firmly the forms. One full dialogue narrative in this kind, many breaks of pure dialogue etc; abundant lipi. But the tendency to incoherence is still able to recur across the general coherence.

K.A is resuming its hold after two days subsidence and pale recurrence, and is now of a more firmly ideal revelatory character, even in the stronger and narrower intensity of the sthula current.

Aug 4 Monday.

The vijnana began with the highest gnosis in the third intensity, but afterwards there was especially in T^2 much play of the idealised mentality and the lower gnosis on the mental level.. T^2 has still a difficulty in remaining on the gnostic heights of thought and will and perception. The attack in the roga tried to prolong itself, but only with a slight success. Ideal and idealised Arogya tapas prevailed over the roga. Roga since attacked in other forms, but in all after some brief and apparently strong materialisation the Tapas was able to dismiss it from actuality, eg, a spell of cough, catarrh, not in fact but sensation. — Pain of the breast manifested repeatedly and was allowed for the sake of the raudra ananda. Pressures once intolerable are now filled with the Ananda; they then find it difficult to persevere, diminish and rapidly disappear. — The same state in the central rogas. —

---

[3] *MS* once

In Samadhi, seated, ideality, then in reclining nidra. Afterwards strong universal action of the highest gnosis in all depths, thought, speech, T^2, thought dealing with rupa, or lipi. Lipi was ideal, for the most part of the highest gnosis. Rupa at first telepathic turned to the gnostic content. Rupa was pranic and chhayamaya, eg a shadowy hand taking a shadowy bag, shadowy mountains and lakes, a great curving raised line of ground in daylight of chhayamaya, all sufficiently stable.

Jagrat rupa and vishaya are recovering their action. In rupa the stress is on stability which is now often secondary and tertiary in crude rupa, in the rest the tendency is to prolonged primary or arrested secondary; even when unstable, they are snatched away rather than in themselves fugitive.   In drishya birds etc vivid in pranic akasha, some hardly distinguishable from terrestrial creatures; colours only white and black. Free and abundant rupa (not drishya) of human forms etc against the pranic akasha.   In rasa and gandha the stress is on distinctness and particularity; the obstacle to frequency is not yet overcome. The obstruction remains in the sparsha, but there is [considerable][4] intensity in the established forms of sparsha, little spontaneity. Çravana is still subject to a return of complete obstruction.   K.A. varies; the stress is no longer on continuity, but on ideality.

T^2 active in the highest ideality of the third degree. The turn here is to the rejection of the confusion of incertitude. There is also some filling of the third with the light of the higher degrees.

Dream of connected sequences, but some fantasia. Beginning of a firmer gnosis in the dialogue.

Aug 5 Tuesday.

T^2 is now settling down into the gnostic movement; mainly in the third intensity of the highest gnosis. The finality has begun and there remains only the complete transformation and the dominant certitudes.

---

[4] *MS* considerably

The Ishwara has now begun to prepare his final overt occupation of the Adhyakshatwa. Strong dasya of the Shakti manifested, and although there is fluctuation is taking possession. Tertiary ideal dasya in intensity has definitely replaced the remnants of the old mental tertiary mixed with the over prominence of Prakriti which maintained the remnants of the secondary dasya. But the dasya is sometimes to the ideal ganas, sometimes direct to the Ishwara

In samadhi idealisation proceeds, complete narrative (part drishya and dialogue) is growing; dialogue, still fragmentary, is preparing for expansion. Strong hermetic gnosis occurred in the samadhi.

Aug 6 Wednesday

T^2 is now assured in the gnosis, mainly of the third and second intensities. The third is still the largest, the second is now about to secure its own perfection, predominance and finality so as to open fully to the first intensity. All is transformed into gnosis that touches the mental system. The intuitional gnosis has completed itself in the revelation and recognised its limits. Certitudes of revelatory intuition exist, but they are only temporary, immediate or relative, as it may be said, contributory and not final certitudes.

Tertiary ideal dasya is getting rid of all remnant of mental endeavour and overstress; on the other hand full force of tapas as yet comes only from above and is not normal to the system. Dasya of *nati* is established, but not a perfect dasya of *sâmarthya*

Last night there was again roga attack on the eye, but fragmentary and external though capable of a certain persistence. It lasts so long as the highest revelatory tapas does not act with a full incidence. Hot watering during sleep subsists, though reduced to a certain extent; other symptoms of shita susceptibility are very brief in their recurrence. No visible progress to finality in the central rogas.

Rupa moves forward very slowly. There is some combination of variety and increasing stability in crude rupa; ghana is trying to stand before the eye in the same way as the crude figures. But the old imperfections and limitations still hold their own against the tapas of vision.

A strong movement towards spontaneity combined with vivid distinctness and some variety in rasa, gandha and sparsha. In the latter the sukshma touch is getting more and more sthula, though as yet the border line to full sthulatwa has not been crossed.

Samadhi went back to nidra and began turning the touches of dream swapna immediately to ideal forms of gnostic swapna samadhi. At night there is real dream, but more and more a consequent and idealised dreaming.

Attack on eye, more full, cured, but the tendency remains.

Gnosis fixed itself in the second rising to the third intensity.

Aug 7. Thursday

Gnosis rose to the third intensity of the logistic revelation. As usual the whole mass of thinking with some considerable invasion from the exterior mentality was brought in for transformation to the new form. Some progress was made, but interrupted by the necessity of a long struggle with the eye roga which attacked persistently all the morning, was persistently put back, but renewed the attack when on the point of elimination. It is noticeable that all thought was of the ideal kind, though of all ideal kinds, idealised mentality as well as gnosis. The invaders could bring in no intellectual suggestion which was not given its luminous ideal translation whether into truth of mentality or gnosis. Even the suggestions of the subconscious physical mind are thus translated into light of gnosis. The lipi therefore which fixed the 5th & 7th as crucial dates for the gnostic siddhi, is amply justified in fact and in detail. The full conversion to the third intensity, especially of T^2 still remains to be done.

Success of the invasion was mostly in the physicality, — roga. It amounts to the eye attack — suspended during the early afternoon, and some brief repetition of cough and retardation of the central roga.

In Samadhi the very deepest overpowering nidra in which formerly there was no trace of samadhi experience, but even this is now in the afternoon turning to its initial ideality.

Friday. Saturday
Aug 8 – 9.

These two days have been marked by the immensely rapid progress of the gnosis. On the first thought and a certain part of T^2 rose or rather soared up with force into a highest logistic gnosis full of the deputed power of the hermetic and seer ideality. For the most part there was an increase of the inspired pragmatic or dynamic gnosis at this level of intensity, with an undertone of intuitive present or actual gnosis, corresponding to the old mechanical intellectuality. This took full shape and power on Saturday. T^2 got an immense development. The lower state of the system was at first transformed to the full ideality of all kinds, but chiefly highest ideality of the third intensity, then all to the highest gnosis either full of or penetrated or overshadowed by the influence of the hermetic and seer gnosis.

This change was chiefly managed with the violent struggle between the Arogya and the eye attack for an occasion. The struggle resolved itself into a dynamic highest gnostic tapas which sought to override physical rule and limitation and the invading idealised intellectuality aided by the upwellings of the subconscious mind of the body which insisted on the old physical law and habit. When tapas was active it prevailed but on the point of cure ceased and allowed the other thought to act and prevail. Thus for two days there has been an oscillation between movements of rapid ideal cure and the fragmentary but still persistent running of the old course of the disease. The tapas insisted (1) on every thought of the subconscient or the invading mentality being idealised and falling on the side of the gnostic truth or knowledge, whether by force of violence or illumination, (2) on every cause of pejoration of the disease being turned by this means into a cause of amelioration and strengthening of the eye and its sight, (3) on every layer of the consciousness to the most obscure physical being brought up into the light and penetrated and possessed by the light of the ideality. During these two days it gained successively all but the most physical flesh layer. The disease was left with a strong tendency to disappearance, but a remnant of persistence in its one last symptom maintained by action of the Roga consciousness on this purely physical layer.

T^2 of external happenings is still imperfectly brought into the highest gnosis.

Aug 10 Sunday.

The highest gnosis on Saturday began reconciling the dynamic inspirational and the actualist intuitional revelation in the pure revelatory union. This is now the thing that is in process. Except part of T^2 and fresh arriving invasional thought which supports the physical asiddhi, all is changed to some kind of this highest gnosis of the first intensity. T^2 also is undergoing the transformation. In Samadhi the same process is in action at a lower stage[,] that of turning all into gnosis at least of the third intensity.

The eye attack has succumbed to the gnostic Tapas. This struggle has founded the true basis of ideal Arogya and of the whole physical siddhi. The gnostic method is being applied initially to all the members of the sharira; but the whole bodily consciousness has to be converted before it can make rapid headway. K.A has been well founded in the ideal form and is taking over into that form all its previous siddhis. Its obstacles are still mechanical discontinuity (almost destroyed, except as a result of long discontinuity[)], laxity of the system, oblivion by absorption, sleep. The positive dark veil of oblivion has been destroyed by light of gnosis; only the mechanical oblivion survives its disappearance

Vishaya and rupa are moving forward deliberately by steps, firmer than before, but there is no mastering rapidity. The quadruped form, so long resisted, has now reached a brilliant perfection in chitra and sthapatya which are extraordinarily active whenever they can find a background and attention.

K.A is to be established today, according to the lipi, completely and perfectly established tomorrow, confirmed and filled out the day after. At present it has been established in the old way as an insistent presence supported by Tapas in continuity, brought immediately into natural recurrence by smarana, but hampered in both respects by an external obstruction to which the system is still sensible. Mechanical discontinuity is destroyed, but the other obstacles and interruptions have still their incidence.

Aug 11 Monday.

T^2 is arranging itself for a final dismissal of the remnants of positive defect, practically the excesses and deficiencies of stress of tapas, a final conversion of all telepathic perception into the highest logistic ideality of the three times, a taking up of actualistic and dynamic T^2 into the full revelatory gnosis. This is especially in outward things, as the inward is ready for the change to the hermetic ideality which can alone begin the reign of a quite positive certitude. At present all has been reduced to the lowest stress, on the borders between mind and gnosis so as to get the proper action at this lower pitch where deficiency of light gives the largest scope to inferior working and error. The highest logistic T^2 has begun there, but with some weakness. Incertitude and yet justification of both the actualistic and dynamic perceptions is being insisted upon, a repetition of the old method of purification

In Samadhi K.A overcame more and more the obstacle of absorption and nidra. It now occupies all the ranges of samadhi and is kept in continuity not only in the antardarshi and lighter swapna, but in the depths of swapna where nidra is not present as an element. But even with nidra it now increasingly comes as a strong recurrence or a difficult but still growing continuity. The defect is that this recurrence tends to break the samadhi, bring back swapna to antardarshi or lighten it to the point where some perception of the outer world clings to the skirts of the inner absorption. The perception in deep swapna is of the pranic basis of the physical body, but also often of the physical body made sensible to the sukshma mind and indriyas. There is also a direction towards the comprehensive many-planed samadhi.

The whole major insistence throughout the day has been on the K. Ananda. First of all the normal continuity has been founded in the settling of a great mass of gnostic K. Ananda on a pedestal of rocklike pratistha. Later this has faded and grown, half disappeared and returned, given place to a less certain fluid Ananda in the laxity of the mind and body, but the net upshot is a continuity only interrupted by sleep and distraction. The difficulties are being rapidly put aside. Laxity of the system no longer of itself brings on discontinuity, but only when it is supported by pramada, mental distraction. Absorption of thought also no longer imposes oblivion, except when there is this loose distraction or pramada of the channel mind in the physicality. Absorption in the object is at best only momentarily discontinuative; absorption of reading or writing only when extreme by necessity of attention; but this necessity is no longer really existent, since the gnosis is capable of a wide and multiple dhyana. In the reading it is almost eliminated as a necessary factor, in the writing it is on the point of elimination. The one thing now really to be conquered is the loose mental distraction, a habit and not a necessity of the system. This gained in the evening, was brought out in full and prevented the complete actual continuity. It is assisted by the old desire of the physical mind for release from tapas, rest by inertia. Sleep also, not transformed towards samadhi, is a positive interruption.

The highest logistic ideality in assured possession of the thought, preparing assured possession of the T^2; physical siddhi commencing finality in the ideal Kama Ananda. This fulfils the indication for the 11th, though not to the extent of the entire completeness.

Aug 12 Tuesday.

The gnosis is proceeding with its preparation of T^2. K.A is left to fix itself in the new siddhi, but all the obstacles, sleep excepted, have ceased to exercise a necessary interrupting action. They live only by dependence on the lax distraction of the channel mentality. Samadhi is still occupied with the transformation of nidra. On the whole a day of intermediate relaxation.

Aug 13 Wednesday

The gnosis is now definitely taking up the T^2 from the border line towards the higher region. Hermetic ideality is beginning to show itself in an action from above on the logistic plane, while it more and more moulds the logistis itself into a predominantly hermetic logistis. This is in the thought, the T^2 is being taken up by the inferior drashtri logistis, but this too is taking on a lower hermetic element, the fullness of dynamic certitude. Incertitude is giving way more and more to a relative certitude—the exact temporary power, force, result is seen,—thronged around by positive certitudes of immediately subsequent or slightly distant eventualities. Old difficulties are brought up by a lower seeing and immediately transformed to this positive vision. The process is only commencing its finality, but proceeds with a considerable rapidity. Nevertheless T^2 full perfection cannot come in the logistis; but only a limited sufficiency and initial perfection.

14 AUGUST–24 SEPTEMBER 1919

Yoga Diary
August 14
1919.

August 14th Thursday

The ideality is advancing in the same steps. Thought is perfectly fixed in the gnosis and rises to the hermetic logistic and the seer logistic ideality. T^2 is being transformed by the logistic drashta, —not the seer logistis, but with a touch of the hermeneusis. The old mentalities recur in the idealised incertitudes, but only to be interpreted by the light of gnosis. There is no relapse to mentality, but only some lapse to this admissibility of idealised mental suggestions; they come from outside and the system is still capable of a subordinate mechanical response to them. The range of T^2 is as yet small, restricted to the habitual field of action,—except sometimes when a higher action develops its first luminous suggestions. This higher T^2 is commonest in the lipi.

Samadhi is as yet making no masterful progress. It is kept back by the siege of nidra supported by a strong tendency to physical and mental laxity which has reigned for the last two or three days. Rupa and drishya and vishaya have for the time being suspended their advance and are in a state of comparative suspension.

The physical siddhi is advancing in the K.A, but under the difficulty of the laxity and distraction. The other physical siddhis are in a state of suspension.

Kamananda is working upon the laxity in order to enforce its perfect continuity. The main movement is an attempt to fix the Ananda (madirâmaya) in the head, but that still tends to bring a temporary lessening in the lower body. Ananda in the upper body is subject to the dominance of discontinuity; in the lower body the normal tendency is to continuity. At times there comes the perfect siddhi of continuity against which no absorption, even of writing, can prevail. It is this and the pervasion which have to be fixed in an absolute finality.

Ananda Purusha darshana and prema are again insisting on their intensity and universality. They are combated by the remnants of the old ahaituka indifferent universality. This is now likely to be overcome with some rapidity.

T^2 is now increasingly correct within the logistic limits. But there is the old defect of descending, now not into the mind, but to the lower border intensities open to mental suggestions, for the transformation. All work of progress should be done from the highest attained siddhi, the high lifting up the low, not the low working towards the higher siddhi. This has indeed begun and is even established in the subjectivity but not with a pure and perfect action

Aug 15 Friday

Hermetic logistic ideality took preliminary possession of the T^2. This action at once brought to bear effective gnostic tapas on the body. But the lower action still insists, has yet to undergo transformation. The survival of the tamoguna in the body is the chief obstacle; it brings not the absolute, but a relative aprakasha, apravritti, pramada, moha.

The day was taken up with the development of this action which marks a decisive turning-point in the gnosis. From the afternoon came, as often before in such crises, a lapse (for adjustment) into idealised mentality, no longer tinged with any dark tamas, but rather a vivid haze of light, a confusion of luminous incertitude. So long as this conversion of the gnosis is not provided with its full base, the other siddhis attend their moment for renewed progression.

Aug 16th 17th

Continuation of the lapse of adjustment. In the evening 17th[1] a recovery of the higher action and a renewal of the physical Ananda. Daivi prakriti with powerful and complete *matribhava* is constantly increasing, as also the anandamaya samata and strong hasya. Aishwarya bodha of the Ishwari in the Prakriti subject to the growing aishwarya of the Ishwara in the Ananda acting through the vijnana and limited by the continued imperfection of this instrumental nature.

Aug 18th Monday

Full force of the seer ideality in the logistis. Thought-perception has now the same freedom and almost the same assured power as the speech. Thought of T^2 is assuming the same freedom and potency; but, especially in the objective subjectivity it is limited by the large element of persistent telepathic incertitude. Nevertheless the certitudes are constantly progressing up the plane of increase.

K.A in sleep in the morning almost succeeded in overcoming the depth of nidra, but stopped short on the verge of possession. The Ananda is now increasing again to lay its hold on the system and overcome the distraction. It is attempting to penetrate more and take hold of the fibres of the physical body.

Tapas in T^2 is visibly increasing in mass and swiftness of efficacy, but it still acts in a large atmosphere of the surrounding and limiting incertitude.

Samadhi is recovering its progressive force. Long narrative reading, at first with skippings of large tracts, afterwards more continuous, but not quite ideal; dream reading. This was nidra in course of idealisation. Shabda has grown strong in samadhi; rupa, converse etc are increasing their strength and continuity.

Aug 19th Tuesday

Seer logistical ideality is taking up firmly the whole T^2 and rejecting and transforming all the lesser movements. Only detailed circumstance is still rebellious to this treatment and insists on inspirational telepathic trikaldrishti. The difficulty is still the adjustment of actualistic and dynamic logistis.

---

[1] *"17th" written above "evening" in MS.—Ed.*

K.A has altered its base of continuity to the more physical Ananda, but as a consequence there is a decrease in the force of continuity which had depended on the ananda of the sukshma body affecting the sthula sharira. The main insistence is now on the increase of the physical occupation and not on the final removal of distraction which is to depend on the intense continuity of Ananda on this new base.

In Samadhi in the afternoon a considerable extension of the dream siddhi, but at night a lapse to incoherent and fantastic continuity.

Tapas is filling the physical mentality.

Aug 20th

Ideality of the seer gnosis in the logistis is now successfully occupying the whole range of the T^2 siddhi; the element of recurrent lower ideality or idealised mentality is approaching the minimum.

The extension of Tapas in the physical being proceeds with the working of getting rid of the apravritti of mere prakashamaya çamas; the acquiescence in asiddhi mechanically recurs, but is no longer accepted by the Shakti

Strong united spontaneity and stability is finally taking possession of the physical manifestation of the lipi, in which these two siddhis had still great difficulty in effecting a perfect coalescence.

The action of the superior gnosis has again taken possession of the logistis. The base is a seer action modified to suit the lower key of the logistis, the force is a hermetic action informing the logistis with its higher luminosity and no longer dependent upon the actuality. This greater force is supreme in thought speech and thought-perception, even though still besieged there by a certain limitation of the surrounding mentality. In T^2 it has begun to act and to evolve a true trikaldrishti acting upon the telepathic seeing and impose on it a certain kind of absolute certitude, as absolute as can be admitted in the logistis. The telepathic action itself is assuming the force of the seer logistis, though not yet perfect in this evolution. Tapas in its separate initiative (not preceded by or involved in knowledge) has risen in its major action to 65° and is even rising beyond it to 75° and 80°. This movement is proceeding towards its completion

Samadhi has developed in all but the nidramaya depths to the heights of the seer logistis. Where there is nidra, it is assuming the character of the lower intensities of the logistis informed with revelatory gnosis, but the dream caprice often touches and spoils by its intervention. There are instances of a very perfect and sustained dream reading, also brief perfect converse.

K.A has suddenly developed the highest seer logistic character in the mental body and when it so acts forms a sea of ananda around the body, but when the body itself is penetrated by the ananda this tends to cease. The Shakti is working to combine the Anandas of the mental and physical bodies. Ananda recurred with spontaneity in the Samadhi, but could not endure against the nidramaya absorption.

At night in samadhi at first rational, then fantastic dream coherency.

Aug 21. Thursday.

Highest logistis in spite of general laxity firm in thought-perception, active amid some telepathic confusion in T^2.

Vishaya Ananda changed into seer logistic quality through a conversion to K.A. This was done with phenomenal rapidity; intuitive vishaya at first adhered to first contact, but was almost immediately converted in this last refuge. The siddhi first in sparsha, then extended to the other vishayas, even to action and happening. What now takes place is vishaya-kama, ideal sense of vishaya acting in the dominant Kama Ananda.

Rupa has for some time been working against temporary suppression, yesterday succeeded in turning it to strong obstruction, today it has recovered its force. Crude rupa is now for the most part possessed of the third stability; the others are still in the first in duration, but the rupas here too have the nature and consistency of the third, but are caught away by the old obstructive power in the akasha.

Vishaya again active. Gandha has almost conquered the obstruction in inhalation, but spontaneous gandha though increased in force of recurrence is still subject to its power. Rasa is trying to occupy the organs of taste more fully. Sparsha is still obstructed, but occasionally active in response to tapas. Sravana is rare and has not gone beyond the typical shabdas now commenced in the jagrat bahirdarshi, and no longer confined to antardarshi or dependent on the closing of the ear to sthula sounds. Drishya is depressed in its evolution.

Samadhi in the afternoon developed farther in the same direction. At night there was throughout in sleep the rationalised dream coherence—also some samadhi—the fantastic element even was reduced to the terms of rational coherence. The only exception was a brief, but for a time persistently repeated irrational fear-dream from the subconscient infant mentality associated with past sanskaras. The intrusion of personality and present life associations are now the only undispelled defects of this nidramaya swapna siddhi. The element of ideality in the coherence is rising, but not effective, because the purusha is only a passive witness and seer and not as in the samadhi proper a gnostic observer and judge of the things seen or experienced. Nidra must be dispelled to bring about this perfection.

Aug 22, 23. 24 Friday, Saturday. Sunday

On one side a strong development of hermetised logistis which is taking up the T^2; on the other a laxity of the system, a lapse towards something like the old mentality brought about by an invasion of the besieging external mentality and some return of the mental principle of advance through struggle which seemed for a time to have given way finally to the ideal principle of advance through adjustment; even for brief moments in the end (24th) strong touches of external asamata. The higher gnosis works from above on this mass and frequently occupies it, but the physical system and mind are relaxed to the old half idealised mentality.

T^2 has advanced so far that all telepathy is taking on the form of the seer logistis,—the hostile suggestions from outside excepted, and these too are now being attacked when they enter and either rejected or compelled to undergo transformation. Decisive seer trikaldrishti and tapas are rare, but the dynamic in that type is now common and is being better harmonised with the actualistic ideality raised to the same form. This seer logistis is of the higher form full of a varying measure of hermesis and even some reflection of a superior drishti.

Vishaya is again obstructed and occasional; rupa is trying to advance under difficulty. K.A has been much oppressed but is now reviving though not yet in full occupation. On the other hand the new dynamic seer tapas aided by a lower logistic tapas is working strongly for the arogya especially in the two central rogas with some initial effectuality. It is trying also to take hold of the other two members of the physical siddhi, but with no tangible result in the corporeality.

Samadhi is half advancing, half stopping under the same difficulty. Once there was the old vision of long continuous connected scene, but not this time in a rapid panorama, but steady as in actual life and changing only by the slow and regular movement of the witness through its environment. Towards the end, however, it was invaded by present suggestions and suffered from some fantastic incoherence and mutability, but more in the event and occupying figures than in the scenes. Last night there was a fall back to strong fantasia of present suggestion, though the physical circumstances and happenings were perfectly coherent and rational in their ensemble, connection and changes. In the afternoon for two days there was a difficult gnosis limited to thought and lipi and today a strong overmastering by disputed nidra, after some success of restoration. Occasionally in all these imperfect siddhis there are suggestions not immediately followed up of new development and progress. The obstacle interferes and drives back towards asiddhi.

A movement in the lipi towards the universalising of a rapid stable legibility in all the forms, chhaya, tejas, jyoti, varna, of the lipi. All but the chhaya are more facile and stable at night than in the daytime

Aug 25. Monday

The tapas is becoming constantly stronger in the physical field; the ideal tapas produces results which were impossible to the mental or intuitive power. But there is an obstinate retarding resistance.

Lipi 13 3 6 These are the siddhis which have to be brought forward and on which, in addition to the gnosis of jnana and T^2 the Shakti is most tending to concentrate. There is an attempt also to redevelop or rather to remanifest and reestablish the once manifested stable basis of the K. Ananda.

K.A is reestablished, but not with a full force or continuity.

In the Samadhi there is some revival of the full force of dream coherence; also occurrence of an absolute firmness of dream vision

T^2 is developing settled seer telepathy and seer telepathic trikaldrishti in spite of the confusion of the invading mentality. Tapas is dominating, but much besieged by the obstruction of the invading ashakti.

Aug 26 Tuesday.

T^2 continues to develop the seer certainties and right perception of telepathy, but the besieging confusion and physical tamas continues to limit its action. There is an increasing revival of the force of K.A. The two first chatusthayas depressed by tamas and laxity are recovering their completeness of the siddhi. This time the relapse tendency in the subjectivity has lasted seven days; the ordinary minimum formerly was a fortnight.

T^2 has emerged from the confusion and is now exiling all inferior suggestions. The telepathy of the seer logistis is still subject to a survival of mental incertitude and stress prematurely trying to set right the incertitude, but the tendency to automatic justness of appreciation is gaining ground in spite of lapses.

Samadhi has recovered full force of logistic ideality in the seer logistis. For the last day or two there has been a movement towards abundance and coherence of other experience than the dream vision. Abundance and continuity were secured initially in monologue, converse, scene-narrative with speech, lipi in the lighter samadhi; there was also light and stable scene and continuity in happening; but the mass lipi in deeper samadhi was subject to great incoherence and though there was an immense abundance of experience in the logistic samadhi, most of it was of a fragmentary character. At night there was some relapse to present suggestion.

K.A increases in the seer logistic ananda, but was discontinued late at night. The obstruction is yielding with much resistance and retardation. The two first siddhis are well reestablished in Devihasya.

Aug 27 Wednesday

T^2 in spite of laxity is proceeding with accuracy of telepathic incidence. The Surya direction of the Ishwara is prominent and moving towards direct logistic control and guidance.

A great increase of physical stability in sadhara, niradhara and chitra lipi, but especially in the niradhara. Also now in sthapatya lipi.

In Samadhi in the afternoon at first an oppression of nidra, but strongly resisted by the Shakti which established in spite of it a free flow of the lipi, mostly of the lower logistic character. Subsequently, when the nidra tendency was conquered, there was established a free coherent movement of the seer logistic thought-speech, natural, normal, not as formerly maintained by tapas against obstruction,—though a slight negligible obstruction is still present, a similar freedom, normality and coherent continuity of the seer logistic thought perception, then of the seer logistic lipi, with a beginning even in the profounder depths of samadhi (sushupta swapna), and a combination of these three powers, more obstructed, but still sufficient in action and normality. Other features of samadhic experience occurred in briefer snatches, but always significant and sufficient by the aid of the gnostic thought to yield their context and significance. The distinguishing character of the whole movement was the action of the observing thought actualising and understanding each experience and distinguishing in the scenes presented between the worlds and spheres of which they were a part. The mental worlds especially manifested in the more physical and [vital][2] rungs of their ascending order. Samadhi in the afternoon may now be considered to have well founded its stable basis

---

[2] *MS* vitals

There is a beginning of the full stability in the abundance of the lipi, as well as in isolated lipis. There is a variation between the three degrees, but each tends to its full duration. The perfect duration exists dissolved, but still present in the three degrees.

At night the lipi niradhara and sadhara fixed itself in the third degree of stability; it is also developing positive trikaldrishti of sadhana in the highest seer logistis.

Gnosis is leaning more upon the hermetic element in the highest seer logistis and seeking to make this the whole thought instrumentation, but the laxity still leans to a lesser force of seer logistis burdened with the siege of the old idealised uncertain mentality. The descents to lesser forms are decreasing in frequency and incidence.

At night laxity and the lower form of dream; but in the morning some force of increasing lipi in the depths of samadhi.

Aug 28th Thursday.

T^2 has now taken possession of the telepathy and is interpreting all the former movements in an increasing mass of logistic experience. There is an increase of the precise appreciation of tendency, including thought tendency and impulse tendency, in the effective force of dynamic seeing Tapas and in the relative or dominant telepathic certitude,—the certitude resulting from selective idea force in the tendencies and circumstances subject to potential reversal by some greater force. All this is in an intermediate seer logistis containing the hermeneutic element, but not filled and possessed by it. The quite positive trikaldrishti in the seer logistis is quiescent awaiting the hermesis. The trikaldrishtic commenting and interpreting thought speech is now combined with the perception..

Full third degree stability in all kinds of lipi subject to a certain initial uncertainty and some impediment in the immediate rapid legibility

In Samadhi an obstructed but still developing movement. The features not yet perfectly free presented themselves with more force of coherent continuity, but not in any abundance. Lipi in the depths was more coherent, but with effort and not in a free normality. Full freedom has been gained only for the thought, thought-speech and lighter lipi.

There was some attempt of the vishaya to break down the obstruction that again prevents its more frequent recurrence and progress, but success was small. Rasa is most apt to come in abundance, but not with perfection. Gandha is perfect, but comes with only an occasional spontaneity, otherwise it is obstructed. Both come daily, and are therefore established, but not yet frequently and freely. However by today's effort the tendency in rasa to recur has been greatly strengthened, as well as its mass; gandha in inhalation comes more easily; both have profited by the tapas. Sparsha increased in incidence, but was soon stopped by obstruction. Speech shabda came once only with no sequel. Drishya progress is obstructed.

Effort to develop higher trikaldrishti, not yet come to fruition. Telepathy is becoming more concrete and intimate, sanjna added to prajnana and embridged vyapti,—perception in being to perception in idea.

Relapse is now chiefly powerful in the physical siddhi. There is a revived sensitiveness to cold and an attempt to restore its results in roga. The tapas however is powerful enough to prevent any strong materialisation. In the central rogas there is a relapse, in one due to persistent overstrain on the centre, in the other a mechanical repetition of recrudescence.

Friday Aug 29th

T^2 this morning has made a large stride forward. A full free and normal thought or jnana of tapas and trikaldrishti has now associated itself with the actual perceptions (vyapti prakamya) and this has enormously increased the rapidity of progress which is now returning to what used to be called the enthusiastic (ie the luminous or fiery or both) and anandamaya rapidity in lipi, jnana and T^2, while it is partly active in samadhi.   The Shakti has first converted into the seer logistis the constantly recurring remnants of the old actualistic telepathies of the intuitive mind, intuition, inspiration and inferior (semi-intellectual) revelation; then the dynamic telepathies and tapas thought on the basis of accurate possibility, sometimes but not always full and complete in its vision—it is when some possibilities are ignored that error of stress becomes most tempting and facile; finally it is bringing out the telepathic decisions and relating them to and converting them into the nontelepathic or pure trikaldristic certitudes. The two first movements are now finally founded and the old errors can only recur by mechanical force of habit without any other justification, since there is no void of knowledge to justify their blinder seeking. The third is only just being founded with the final firmness, but the foundation is not yet complete.

No Samadhi in the afternoon. The other members of the siddhi are held back by the obstruction; but in antardarshi the force of lipi stability is increasing.

Aug 30th Saturday.

T^2 attained to a certain final basic action of certitude. The rest of the siddhi made no ascertainable progress.

Aug 31st Sunday.

The obstruction is now without being removed rendered null for the ideality. Lipi in the jagrat is moving forward, increasing the normality of the third degree of stability and its force of duration, bringing the rapid legibility in the stability and rejecting all unstable lipi. The ideal thought is enforcing its free, normal, pervading action and bringing it to the level of the thought speech in this normality and freedom. Trikaldrishtic thought shares in this new perfection. T^2 is increasing with a remarkable rapidity in frequency of logistic certitude. The normal character is now that of the logistic seer ideality either with a strong dynamic and hermetic force, successful tapas enforced by jnana, or of the same thing, but with full logistic revelation. The old inferior or middle seer logistis which was a correct adjustment of possibilities is giving way to this form—it recurs but without sanction for endurance—in which possibilities and certitudes are combined, but with the latter in domination. Tapas without knowledge is now being rejected and condemned to exclusion. The still existent defect arises chiefly from imperfection of vision of time, place and a certain and indisputable order and fullness of circumstance. These things can only be initially established in the seer logistis, since their sure fullness begins in the hermetic ideality.

Darshana which fluctuates between Ananda and mentality, is now increasing its insistence on the force of the vijnanamaya darshana, as only by fixity in the gnostic seeing can it get rid of the lapse to the defects of Ananda.

Samadhi is in a state of lapse; today in the afternoon after a day of interruption and one of unsuccess, it is trying to recover, but nidra has taken hold and prevents the freedom. At night incoherent or fanciful dream occupies the sleep. The other siddhis are preparing to recover, but cannot yet put aside the obstruction.

September.

Absolute finality is not yet gained in the first chatusthaya, for the fragments of external touches of asamata are able to touch the physical parts of the physical mentality, nor in the second for the Devi Bhava is pushed down to the old mental form and that survives in the sense of the body even when the rest is in the ideal Devibhava. The ideality is founded in the highest seer ideality though the lower forms still recur mainly in T^2, because that is still imperfect in circumstance; but the vijnana is constantly increasing. Its action is still capable of suspension during the later part of the day owing to laxity. The ideal traigunya siddhi is increasing, physical tamas giving more and more place to çamas, but the entire union of the three gunas is not absolute, because the physical mentality is still not wholly changed into the gnosis. These asiddhis are yet becoming more and more interruptions rather than permanent deficiencies. Samadhi has founded itself, but is free only in thought and lipi, and is capable of lapse. Rupa and vishaya are obstructed in their progress. The physical siddhi is in a state of relapse, though certain beginnings are established with some finality.

Sept 1 Monday

T^2 has to be made entirely valid in circumstance and a first movement is being made towards this development, but it is at once assailed by the old causes of incertitude and wrong placement. These act more easily when there has to be a multiple and rapid seeing than when there can as in simple cases with few details and slower movements be a deliberate exercise of the vijnana Shakti. There there is not only an increasing correctness of gnostic appreciation or judgment in the direct seeing, but an extension of it to more remote eventuality.

Gandha in inhalation has developed perception of neutral odours and with this new basis there is a great increase of frequency of positive gandhas. The spontaneous gandha is now rather more frequent. But the obstruction is still resisting eviction and retarding progress. Rasa is more active, but has not yet gained a firm basis.

Rupa is once again active; it is striving for stability as the basis for its perfection. K.A active, but not in settled continuity.

Sept 2 Tuesday.

T^2 today is again troubled by the external invasion; it is evidently preparing for a fresh extension, but this as usual has brought about a trouble of resistance and irruption. Drishya once again active; a few forms of greater stability in ghana rupa; tejomaya rupa in scenes etc of the first stability and continuity, but mere drishti, the thought in the drashta inhibited by nidra; in the early morning some mass of coherent reading.

Sept. 3 to 24—

This has been a period corresponding to the old long relapses, when as there was no continuous progress, nothing could be written. But the relapse has only been a fact in the physical siddhi, which has been entirely suspended, except for occasional movements soon falling off into inactivity. There has been even some relapse of positive roga; the fragmentary (catarrhic) rogas have tried to lay their hold persistently, but are always manageable by the tapas; the two central have prevailed without being severely aggravated. On the other hand Samata is constantly making itself more firm in the Ananda, more massive and imperturbable. It is not yet free from occasional pressure of the exterior physical pressure, but this is becoming rare and very vague. Shakti has also been fixing itself more and more, but varies from the *vijnana ghanata* to the physical-mental laxity; the first tends more and more to predominate. Vijnana has lapsed only for adjustment. All is intuitive mentality even in error, and all has been steadily transforming to the seer ideality. The defect is still in T^2 which draws down the others, but normally thought is of the seer ideality, and always when there is not the physical relaxation. T^2 has been increasing in the seer ideality and mere intuivity is being progressively eliminated. The extension is general, but not yet quite fixed in the higher ideal jyoti. Time place circumstance are the great difficulty. Tapas is increasing in force and applying initially to the immediately surrounding life-action, but against great opposition.

Sept 24 Wednesday.

Lipi for the first time has risen from the seer ideality of the logistis, to the hermetic vijnana. It is now the full logistis in the hermesis; beyond is the middle hermesis and beyond that the seer hermesis. Thought is rising into the fullness and pervasion of the complete seer logistis, all logistic levels are there, but all full of the seer logistis.

1–29 FEBRUARY 1920

1st Feb.
Thought to be set entirely free
T^2 to be thoroughly idealised and given certitude.
Tapas siddhi to be made luminously effective.
Physicality to be brought under control of Tapas.
Rupasiddhi and samadhi.

=

First get rid of the physical lapse.

=

The çraddha has to be firm and absolute

=

First week of February
Three chatusthayas.
Perfection of 2d chatusthaya.
Shakti. Idealised and intellectual perfection.

=

The highest ideality in the highest log[ist]ical ideality.

=

Lipi, thought-speech, jnana perfected on this level of vijnana
T^2 perfected a little later, but rapidly all the same.
Rupa-siddhi and samadhi

=

4th

The physical lapse in the subjectivity has been nearly got rid [of], but not quite eliminated. Its force however and effectuality have been much diminished and are being brought to the vanishing point.

The çraddha is now firm, but not yet absolute.

=

Shakti has got its intellectual perfection, so far as the word can be applied, and is getting its ideal perfection.

═

This is due to an extraordinarily rapid development of the whole system into the highest logistic ideality,—first elimination of mental intuivity, confirmation in intuitive revelatory vijnana, then rise to interpretative revelatory, then to revelatory full of founded power of inspiration. The lower forms of vijnana occur from outside.

═

The prana and body are also being taken up by this ideality..

═

The process is not yet quite complete.

There is a rapid development of combined action of all the parts of the siddhi, but this is as yet only being founded, not complete.

Thought-speech, jnana [and][1] primary T^2 are being founded on the highest logistis

═

Rupa and samadhi are still obstructed and pressing on the obstruction.

═

Some progress in rejecting obstruction in samadhi

═

Attack of the intuitive mind from outside, only temporarily successful in a partial invasion—

The idealistic force is strong enough to reestablish its hold.

Feb 6th

All February the struggle in the physical siddhi.

═

Feb 7th

In spite of the intuitive mental [invasion][2]—

---

[1] *MS* or

[2] *MS* evasion

(1) The interpretative or inspirational ideality has manifested itself with some power in lipi, thought[,] trikaldrishti etc. The logistic ideality remains but is surpassed.

(2) Lipi has got rid of the insistence of small intuitive vijnana, though it is still capable of some lapse.

(2)[3] The rest of the ideality is labouring to follow in its steps and get rid of all lower forms.

(3) In lipi revelatory logistis is now becoming the lower and not the higher form. The interpretative is the rule.

(4) Ananda is progressing and transforming itself first to the discriminative revelatory logistic then the interpretative and getting rid of the intuitive mental form. It is now persistent when there is smarana.

Feb 7th[4]

The second week of February.

(1) Lipi to be fixed in the second vijnana.

(2) Thought, T^2, to be raised to the second vijnana, the logistis only a lower form.

(3) Ideal Shakti to possess the body.

(4) Ananda to fix itself and be no longer dependent on smarana.

(5) Insistence on ideal Tapas control in arogya, utthapana, saundarya.

(6) Completeness of Brahmachatusthaya.

(7) Rupa and samadhi.

=

All these will not be complete, but all will advance. The rule of rapidity has to be brought in everywhere.

Ananda overcomes in type the obstacle of vismriti and has almost established the continuity. It is established in type and in dominant tendency, but is still resisted, sometimes briefly suspended by strong absorption. Sleep brings a total discontinuation, but the recovery is swift.

---

[3] *This item and the two that follow were misnumbered.—Ed.*

[4] *This, the second entry dated 7 February, is written on a different sheet from the previous entry.—Ed.*

Feb 8th

A certain lapse tendency. Ananda persists but with frequent momentary vismriti. The T^2 moves for a while in the telepathies. The thought-system is arriving through a last struggle to the condition of the lipi divided between the interpretative as the right and normal, the logistic as the lower relaxed action to the exclusion of the intuitive mentality.

=

Rupa-siddhi has been developing since yesterday fluidity, perfection of form (not always complete)[,] vividness, but not stability. Variety is poor as yet and stability only initial or primary.

=

Ananda is now constant (afternoon) but often forgotten by absorption yet present; sometimes this forgetfulness brings momentary cessation. Sleep brings cessation; but the obstacle is now being attacked, though not yet overcome.

=

T^2 has descended to rectify and turn into interpretative telepathic ideality.

Ananda Brahman is confirming itself in prema, kama and beauty.

Obstacle to Samadhi persists, but is slowly yielding.

=

At night a lapse to mentality.

=

Feb 9th

The whole ideality after a violent depression is now passing into the revelatory form of the interpretative vijnana. This is also laying hold on the body, but here more powerfully besieged by the intuitivity of the intelligence

=

The perfect shakti in the physical intelligence has been replaced in type by the perfect ideal shakti with the fourfold Devibhava.

=

Ananda is being reestablished in continuity after interruption.

Sahaituka has recommenced, but yet in a crude initial form. (since yesterday)

The Ananda is being idealised, but as yet not successfully; because the intuitive intelligence still normally holds the body.

Continuity of Ananda, forgotten sometimes but still existing has been established in type in Samadhi (morning).

Idealisation (rapid) in the revelatory interpretative form of the elements of samadhi has begun in the lipi etc.

=

Ananda absent in samadhi and sleep in the afternoon, but ideality at play, in dialogue etc. At times deep tamasic nidra hiding a core of sushupti, sometimes jagrat, sometimes আচ্ছন্ন

=

Ananda once more continuous in afternoon in spite of absorption in writing, finally with help of some smarana prevailed over absorption.

=

Ideal Shakti fixed in the body.

Feb 10th

Ideal Shakti is fixed in the body, lipi fixed in the vijnana, interpretative and revelatory of the two lower kinds. Thought-siddhi and T^2 is partly formed in the same idealities, but revelatory logistis predominates for the time. There is however a mixture of intelligence. Sharira Ananda discontinued at night by sleep and recovered with some difficulty in the morning. Brahma chatusthaya complete in Sarvam Anandam Brahma, Anantam Jnanam in essence. The Brahma-vision has now to be filled in with the vijnana. Rupa and Samadhi are progressing; rupa is still in the first stability, occasionally on the border of the second, recurrent, not steady in appearance. Ideal Samadhi baffled at night by sleep and dream: present in daytime but assailed by nidra.

Today thought-siddhi + T^2 ought to rid itself of the admixture.

The psychic suggestions, telepathy, vyapti, prakamya, possibility, doubt, denial etc are all being rapidly changed into the form of the revelatory logistis. There is a strong tendency to the interpretative form.

Ideal Shakti is being intensified into the Krishna Kali relation founded on madhura dasya.

Feb 14th

One day of lapse (12th), another of trouble of recovery. Eye malady, bleeding of nose, constipation; the will prevails only with a struggle.

The revelatory ideality is establishing itself, but with much fluctuation of adjustment, Shakti idealised in the body in the same way, sharira ananda similarly. The latter is being rapidly changed. As yet the siddhi has not recovered its full force of occupation.

Development of T^2 on the revelatory base but hampered by mentality and its invasion and siege.

15th 16th

Founding, in spite of difficulties, of the [ ][5] exclusive ideal action in thought-siddhi and T^2 as in script and lipi. In T^2 this is not complete and this has some reaction on thought-siddhi which is now being closely fused with T^2.

17th night. 18th

Recovery of vijnana in the system and rapid development of the ideality. The vijnana (revelatory of all kinds based on intuitive revelatory) is fixed in the system; lapses are only to intuitive ideality and momentarily to highly idealised mental intuitive.

19th

Interpretative revelatory vijnana has been rapidly rushed to the lead and holds it, but the intuitive rev. occurs frequently as a suggestion, but more and more filled with interpretative rev. V. Other lower forms only occur as suggestions from outside and are rapidly and increasingly turned into the right kind before or immediately after they enter the system.

During the lapse even the purely unmixed character of the mental intuitive, though it held the system, was made more and more clear. The ideality then continued in spite of this hold and was quite firm in lipi, script and often in thought-speech. Now even these suggestions cannot come in the mental form; only in laxity there is often a sort of mental cloud about the ideal form.

---

[5] *MS* the

Lipi, script, thought-speech are now firm in the ideality; thought-perception and T^2 are also substantially ideal, but to some extent in laxity of the shakti affected by the mental shadow. They are however being rapidly subjected to thorough idealisation. When the shakti is not pramatta, the mental shadow does not touch, but the lower forms are more common as yet than the revelatory; the contrary is the rule in the other members.

Vyapti is still chiefly of the mental kind

The interpretative revelatory since last night is being fixed in the system—the essentiality of it, its status in the tissue of the conscious being. But there is already the urge to the revelatory in its own highest kind.

The lipi which has been ideal of all kinds is now shedding the intuitive vijnana and keeping only the revelatory and interpretative.

Fixed in the interpretative form of all kinds it is now immediately (after five minutes, in the same uninterrupted movement) lifting up all to the revelatory vijnana in its three forms. This done in a minute or two it is drawing all into the highest form. This is the first instance of such a large miraculous rapidity

Vyapti is now coming in the revelatory vijnana, but of the totality of the bhava in the object; the particular movements are seen in it, but are undergoing a thorough idealisation, even in the mental intuitivity.

As a result also trikaldrishti tapas is beginning to be seen as a movement out of being and no longer only in their separate forms.

The complete idealisation of the tivra ananda whether ahaituka or sahaituka is taking place.

The insistence on the physical siddhi has been increasingly relaxed for the last few days. There is now scanty K.A. It is being transformed into the revelatory ideal K.A, but the transformation is much opposed by the survival of old idealised intuitive Ananda. The other Anandas are sharing the change.

The second half of the day possession by the intuitive mind from outside. Progress under difficulties.

==

20th Feb. Friday.

Rapid progress in spite of mental siege.

(1) Shakti in system fixing the essential being in representative revelatory vijnana; interpretative force present, but not insistent in manifestation. Occasional covering by inspirational intuitive idealised mind.

(2) Lipi deepening into the revelatory largeness even in intuitive vijnana type.

Rapid and powerful development of fixed stability in lipi sadhara and niradhara.

(3) Strong development of ideal thought-siddhi in all forms; rapid and continuous ideal thought-perception, jnana

(4) Developing certitude in trikaldrishti, but much enveloped in idealised mind-matter.

(5) Increasing ideal-power in kavya.

(6) Triumphing tendency to bring all mental action into the ideal form; but there are lapses.

(7) Progress in idealisation and in [s]table jagrat of the three forms of swapna samadhi in the afternoon. Internal lipi in antardarshi fixed in representative revelatory vijnana; continuity in swapna of ideal thought siddhi in speech and perception sometimes accompanied by rupa and drishya.

21st Feb. Saturday.

(1) Idealisation of the intuitive (mental) thought-siddhi jnana and T^2 knowledge, dominant but not absolutely complete.

(2) Immediately (in the morning) the movement turned to the normalising of the interpretative revelatory vijnana in all the mind and supermind, and after certain fluctuations this came in the evening

(3) In antardarshi interpretative revelatory vijnana in the lipi. The rest of the siddhi active in swapna, but limited and diminished by heavy attack of sleep.

(4) The interpretative in the shakti of the physical system has now filled the representative revelatory vijnana; the content is interpretative, the shell representative (logistic revelation).

(5) The Tapas is now acting vigorously on the physical asiddhi in the different remnant rogas and has begun on the most persistent central incapacity, in the latter as yet without dominant effect. The remnants still recur with a temporary show of force but cannot resist the dissipating action

(6) In the morning a remarkable solitary instance of the complete and rapid effectivity of the Tapas on inanimate things. This is practically the first instance.

(7) The T^2 is now normalised in the ideality, though still besieged and sometimes penetrated by the intuitivity, but it is no longer cased in the intuitive mental matter.

═

Today closes the third week of February and completes a definitive stage of the union of samata, shakti and vijnana. The asiddhi is not entirely exiled, but has lost its power to hold except for touches and a momentary (in the first two) or a brief (in the third) interval. Negative Asamata is only a touch and nothing more, but defect of sama ananda is still possible for a short while.

The next week must complete the perfection of the luminous revelatory reason.

It is also suggested that the rupa, vishaya and samadhi will develop finality of basic perfection.

There is also some preparation for the overcoming of the obstruction in Ananda and Arogya. In saundarya and utthapana the definitive effectivity has not come, but primary utthapana is being prepared for its basis by the steady pressure on the habit of fatigue. There the old strenuous defect of anima has little hold; it comes only in fragments, little as pain, mainly as stiffness. Fatigue is the chief asiddhi.

═

Tomorrow T^2 in the interpretative drishti. Ananda. Renewed hold on physical siddhi. Rupa-vishaya. Samadhi.

═

(1) Resumption of continuous Ananda, but as yet with insufficient force of spontaneous action.

(2) Shakti shown in resistance to an attack of many remnants of roga. Only three still survive at all in fact, the eye-watering, the stomach affections and the central weakness. All except the last are much reduced, and even the last is much modified in force.

(3) Samadhi progressive at night and in the morning. All is ideal, drishya included, but all is now turning to the revelatory vijnana. Drishya is becoming more complete and stable. Lipi in deep swapna shows a tendency to return to coherence.

Feb 22d Sunday

In the samata the siege of the exiled intuitivity throws a shadow of defect on the hasya and therefore on the sukham and equal Ananda. This is only when there is the withholding of the full play of the Shakti.

In the shakti the defect that emerges is a deficiency of height of force, aishwarya-bodha, hasya and çraddha in the immediate action of the Shakti.

None of these defects are real, but imposed on the system from outside by a shadow of the old habit of the physical mind.

═

These defects have now to be finally excised. There is already a commencement of the conversion of the surrounding activity to the ideal terms.

═

The first two chatusthayas cannot be quite absolute until the vijnana is universal and free from any suspension of the ideal action.

═

The rupa and vishaya show signs of reinitiation and of a firmer ideal completeness, but as yet there is no freedom or dominance of stability.

The difficulty of T^2 is now the adjustment between the higher and lower perceptions; so long as this lasts the surrounding intuitive mind is led to invade with its inadequate suggestions. But this mind now promises to turn into the ideal form.

Ananda is now again active, but subject to the recurrence of its old disabilities and still drawn down to the mental intuitive manner. Ideal Ananda comes in as an exception.

=

Rupa shows great vividness and perfection (not always completeness) and vividness of all forms, perfect, developed, ghana, crude; but except in the last it is only in the initial and primary stabilities

In the afternoon much sushupta swapna samadhi. An outburst of the highest revelatory lipi, vivid and powerful beyond anything yet seen in the jagrat bahirdarshi. Much lipi in the sushupta, ordinarily but not always coherent. Much revelatory vijnana; all ideal. But the hold was still insufficient and besieged not by the actuality, but by the vague consciousness of dream.

=

Today from the morning lapse towards mentality for the transformation of the surrounding mind. This has brought back unideal telepathy trikaldrishti tapas to a certain extent, but the ordinary thought seems secure. All however is hampered by the invasion. T^2 at the moment acts only in the representative vijnana with relative and occasional certitude, the truth of each suggestion stands, but not the decisive value the tapasic mind outside fastens on its indications. When the full ideality acts, each is reduced to its native proportions, but there is no future certitude, or only a relative morally certain indication of the future.

There is the same phenomenon in the interpretative representative T^2, on the lower scale. It remains to be seen what happens when both are lifted to and combined on the higher scale.

Vishaya is again manifesting vividly, but without freedom; only the old customary drishya, rasa, gandha, sparsha, the few limited things. Shabda is obstructed as before.

Ananda is now recovering a firmer, though still imperfect base.

There is much struggle in the primary utthapana; the two rogas are also still successfully obstructive. The Shakti persists in the utthapana and does not allow a long collapse.

Today pain (sharp in the shoulders) returned momentarily in the primary utthapana, but immediately subsided. Fatigue is strong, by cumulative effect; there is [no]where a successful reaction.

A strong interpretative revelatory vijnana of the Shakti in the physical system.

=

At night great vividness and constancy of the basic rasas.

T^2 in the interpretative revelatory and highest revelation of the third scale. All now is the third scale, ie, the divine reason.

Magnificent drishya in the deep and deepest swapna samadhi, scenes, happenings etc, great stability, perfection, sometimes chhayamaya of tejas, sometimes vivid with some jyoti in the tejas. A little force of chhaya however everywhere. Afterwards dream but with much coherence.

Feb 23^d Monday.

Today T^2 to develop highest certitude. Rupa, vishaya, samadhi. Ananda to idealise and to overcome obstacles. Pressure of Shakti on roga and obstacles to primary utthapana.

=

Yesterday there was in T^2 much confusion of the lower inadequate forms, insufficient half representative, half intuitive forms, mind-coated intuitivities and intuitivised mental suggestions from outside, inspirational forms without the discrimination etc; the highest certitudes finally emerging assailed with dubiety from the luminous chaos. Now the discriminating interpretative revelatory power is settling itself in the T^2. The intuitivities of all kinds are being rejected where they resist transformation, replaced or transformed when they admit change. The highest certitude of the third scale is acting now and then; the occasional certitudes are frequent. There is still much to be done.

Ananda is idealising itself with occasional lapses.

Lipi is now finally getting rid of the strong relics of the intuitive and the weak relics of the inspirational ideal lipi. The representative and interpretative lipi of all degrees take the place.

T^2 is now getting rid of all forms of tejasic and tapasic stress; but the work is not yet finished. The highest certitudes await the growth and completion of this eliminative process.

The battle is going on in the primary utthapana. The Shakti is trying to impose relief in standing and relief in walking and add them to the relief by sitting. But as yet it is only a temporary incomplete relief. The attack of fatigue is heavy and fierce.

=

Afternoon. Samadhi, ideal thought and speech continued in deeper swapna, but sushupta much under the power of nidra.

=

The force of ananda increases, but is much cased in inspirational and inspired intuitive mentality. The density tends to diminish in the idealised form. It is however becoming more intense in this form.

=

The T^2 acts now normally in the middle form. The higher action is exceptional except so far as it is translated into the middle form.

=

Rupa and Vishaya have been less active today. Vishaya is trying to manifest particular tastes in their subtle general essence

Feb 24th Tuesday

Last night T^2 action of various kinds, none entirely satisfactory, though one uplifted above the lower movements which gave some of the highest certitudes. At night wakefulness with intervals of swapna samadhi good of its kind; only towards morning nidra.

Today strong attack of besieging intuivity on all ideal members. In lipi this results in persistence of intuitive ideal lipi representing the intuitive mentality in the ideality, but not itself mental in kind. An insufficient speech and suggestion is its limitation; it is true in itself, but so expressed as to mislead the mind. It is rejected in favour of the intuitive revelatory or at lowest revelatory [intuitive],[6] representative and interpretative lipi, but still recurs sometimes in spite of prohibition.

In thought-siddhi the same process is taking place, but the recurrence of lower forms of ideal speech is strong and occasionally there is the half idealised mental suggestion from outside.

---

[6] *MS* intuition

Nevertheless lower ideal forms are now banned by the law of the Shakti.

In script as in lipi, but the lower forms are more rebellious to exclusion.

T^2 is most affected. Here too it is definitely settled that only the highest ideal reason is to give the certitudes and the recurrence of the lower forms however strong and obstructive to the proper action is not to be accepted, even if they give the truth.

Ananda promised last night to prevail, but this morning has been discontinued except in smarana.

=

T^2 perfect, decisive and invariably effective in the representative highest vijnana, but only in distinct isolated final results; the rest of a lower type besieged by mentality and confusing the mind by trying to figure as this representative ideal action.

In Samadhi much nidra.

Feb 25th Wednesday

T^2, the representative vijnana is taking up detail, but not all the detail. The confused action of the rest continues, but is becoming clearer by restriction. The Shakti now tends to allow provisionally all ideal T^2, but to accept only the forms of the highest ideality with a total acceptance, partially accept the revelatory forms of the lower (inspirational and intuitional) stages, observe only in order to reject or transform the survivals of mental suggestion. The rest occurs, but is partially sanctioned only when there is some revelatory force or interpretative in it or at the back.

Feb 26th Thursday.

The interpretative-representative highest ideality has now definitely replaced all other action as the standard movement in the T^2. The others still persist in laxity of the system. This ideality is now absorbing all the thought-siddhi and proving its truth and certitude.

=

At night this ideality, at first only able to act above the head free from the physical levels, began to act spontaneously on the head level. It begins to replace the physical tendency to intuivity and is descending to take possession of the whole system. At the same time it is adapting itself and taking possession of all kinds of thought perception in the nature. This it has done, first in the interpretative, then in the lower idealities.

All the vishayas, the others in little, gandha and rasa more in large.

Abundant rupa in the samadhi.

Friday 27th February

T^2 is now fixing itself in the complete ideality, first in the lower forms with some help from the highest interpretative vijnana. All is now turned to its elements of truth, but the last difficulties of the old excessive stress still remain. The rest is a difficulty of limitation and incertitude.

Afterwards something like a deliberate lowering or collapse, but even in this laxity the ideal tendency prevails, but not its order.

Sharira Ananda long neglected and occasional only by smarana is resumed today and restored to an interrupted continuity, while the remnants of the mental form are being rapidly idealised by the highest vijnana.

Rupa is obstructed, though it acts under call of tapas. It has gone back to the initial or very primary stability.

Vishaya acts but under obstruction.

═

Stable crude rupa (perfect in line) at night.

Saturday 28th February

Lapse.

The lipi has begun to reject all but the highest vijnana (chiefly interpretative) or else its light in other forms. The same process is beginning in antardarshi.

In Samadhi tertiary and perfect stability of rupa, scene and coherent movement begins to occur. Also conversation, no longer mental only, but the physical word. The elements of samadhi have now [to be][7] developed and combined, the [.......] more steady in spite [..................]

Thought speech has [...........] reject all [but the] forms of the highest vijnana or else its light and form on lower levels.

Sunday 29th February.

Today the whole vijnana has lifted to different levels of the revelatory vijnana. Even the highest drashta logos has manifested as well as the highest interpretative ideality. The basis of the luminous reason has been perfectly founded and what is now left is to perfect and make it universal in its embrace.

The first necessity is to get rid of the lower stratum of intuitive mentality, then to exclude the circumvironing mentality.

This has already begun to be done and for some time the shakti in the body is fixed in the basic third ideality, its contents varying from the intuitive to the revelatory, with interpretative and other floating. Even the intrusions from the surrounding ideality are now for the most solidly idealised though with a suspicion of strong intuitive mentality not easily distinguish[able] from a [ ][8] concentrated doubly illumined vijnana.

Rupa has suddenly at night manifested several old forms (reel, ribbon wound reel, bat, brushes etc) in ghana & developed with strong ghana tendency in the second and third (mostly third) stability.

Samadhi is still hampered by obstruction.

---

[7] *The page containing this paragraph and the next is damaged. Several words or groups of words are partly or wholly lost. The words printed between square brackets are conjectural.—Ed.*

[8] *MS* a

1 MARCH – 10 APRIL 1920

Yoga Diary.
1920
March.

The Yoga has been brought up during the last month to effectivity of vijnana. This vijnana is that of the lowest total stage of the triple ideal supermind, the domain of the luminous reason. First, there was the disappearance of the old intellectual into the intuitive mind and buddhi, and not only the thought-being, but the whole being including the consciousness in the body, the physical Ananda was brought up finally into this form, to the total exclusion of the old buddhi, sense and bodily consciousness. Here sattwa of the mind was changed into semi-luminous prakasha and jyoti of the mental intuition, inspiration and revelation, rajas into stress of tapasic will and impulse, tamas into a passive or a heavy shama. Tamas alone preserves in the more physical part of the being something of its old inertia and darkness, not entirely changed into passivity with involved or quiescent prakasha and tapas. This tamas is the cause of the persistence of the physical and other asiddhi.

And simultaneously the lower vijnana which represents the intellect in the forms of the ideal mind was developing its greater powers and finally turned into the ideal reason. At first this was done with a lower ideal intuition, discrimination, inspiration, revelation which have been developing for a long time, weighted, chequered, shot through, hampered by the defects of the intuitive mentality of the manasa buddhi. The lipi was the first to get clear of the manasa, — in the bahirdarshi waking state, the internal antardarshi jagrat followed long after, — next the script, next the thought-speech, finally, the thought-perception and only yesterday and not with an absolute perfection the trikaldrishtic thought-perception.

The relics of asamata persisted in a fragmentary occasional fashion so long as the defect of mentality in the Shakti has persisted in the physical consciousness; it did not belong to the system, but was imposed on it, so long as the outer mind could shoot in its arrows of suggestion or break in for a time and possess the surface. There is still a persistence of vague relics which are being steadily idealised out of existence. This is due to persistence of tamas element in the physical being and is part of laxity or physical depression. It is disappearing in proportion as the ideal Shakti fixes itself in the true vijnana. The chief defect is in insufficient force of hasya and ananda, although the sukham is strong and the hasyam and ananda can always be brought to the surface, but often there is a cloud not of duhkha, but of apravritti of positive ananda, especially of hasyamaya ananda, occasionally an excess of udasinata.

Shakti after fixing its base of intuitive mental power in the body, often replaced by ideal forms, is now fixed in a shell of revelatory or representative vijnana filled sometimes with intuition, sometimes with lower revelatory representative, representative-interpretative or interpretative content. Occasionally the higher revelatory drashta Shakti takes momentary possession: there is always now a tendency to its manifestation in the other figures. Virya, shakti (except laghuta sometimes in the physical fatigue or heaviness) are full and sufficient, but depend for their tejas, pravritti etc. on the state of the Devibhava. Devibhava has been established in all its parts, but is not always in the full overt action, because of apravritti of hasya and ishwarabhava. This siddhi awaits the full sraddha and vijnana. Sraddha in the Master of the being is fixed and complete, but sraddha in the Swashakti has been often diminished or overpowered by laxity and failure of siddhi. There is now full faith in the eventual perfection of the three first chatusthayas and the sixth, but incertitude as to physical siddhi, extent of karma and kama, completeness of the mission. This is only occasionally touched by a shadow of positive asraddha and even that now takes the shape of a strong incertitude.

Vijnana is based in the total ideality, but still besieged by the outer mind. All suggestions from the outer mind are now of the nature of intuitive mentality turned in entrance or almost turned into ideality, full at least of the vijnana stuff and manner, which seems like an incomplete vijnana. The play of the higher third vijnana is now occupying the system: revelatory intuition has taken the place of other intuitions and is already being turned into the representative, ie the highest intuitive revelatory reason; inspiration losing its over-stress and defect of discrimination is almost wholly turned into interpretative ideality, ie the highest inspired revelatory ideal reason, while the full drashta luminous reason has emerged in all its three forms, ie revelation with interpretation but the front representative, 2^d the front interpretative with intuition involved in the drishti, 3^d the whole drishti with the two other powers taken into the drishti. There are various combinations and permutations. This is completest in lipi, script and thought-speech; thought-perception is a little weighted down towards the intuitive, revelatory intuitive, or representative forms, but the others occur and take the field when there is full action of the vijnana Shakti. T^2 is now able to act with certitude, but this is not yet complete; the old telepathic form still labours to predominate. Telepathy of thought is developing, but chiefly of thought impulse, feeling, intention, not of pure thought; the whole mind of animals can be seen, but only partially the mind of men. Here there is still a wall of obstruction through which there is a forcing of prakamya vyapti. Concentration is necessary for this siddhi

Laxity occurs owing to physical tamas and prevents the full normality of the vijnana power, but can no longer[,] since yesterday[,] bring down the system to the mental level.[1]

Rupa is still struggling to establish the secondary and tertiary stability and all its other elements and its free play seem to be waiting for this siddhi, but it is now in frequent action. Samadhi has fixed the right ideal lipi in the antardarshi, developed many of its elements, but is obstructed by nidra in its further or at least in its rapid progress.

The physical siddhi is still the subject of battle. Some ground has been gained especially in the Ananda, but it has had to sacrifice the continuity once gained in order to change from the mental to the ideal form. The change is almost, but not quite or firmly complete. There is still persistence of old fragments of roga and the two or three chronic maladies. Sometimes two of them seem on the point of disappearing, but are then able to reassert their action. Primary utthapana fluctuates, saundarya is not able to manifest except in bhava.

---

[1] *In the manuscript, "since yesterday" is written above "bring down"; the caret marking the point of insertion comes after "bring" instead of "longer".—Ed.*

Brahmadarshana made itself perfect in the Ananda on the mental vijnanamaya plane, it has had to sink back into vijnana and mentalised vijnana in order to redevelop on the ideal plane. Sarvam brahma is always there in bhava, always at disposal to the thought by smarana. The fullness of Anantam and Jnanam brahma awaits the fullness of the vijnana.

March 1st Monday.

The shakti in the body has suddenly changed its base from the fixed revelatory intuitive to the representative vijnana. There is already a tendency to change that to the interpretative basis.

A rapid alteration of the basic and immediately surrounding consciousness into the representative and interpretative forms of the vijnana has begun. The other idealities will still persist for a time; they must replace the imperfect idealities which till now have been coming in from the outside.

The Ananda-darshana is also passing through the same phase, but has not yet altogether got rid of the recurrence of mental vijnana and Ananda on the mental plane. These are associated with certain forms, the latter Ananda being inspirational in its idiom, persist repeatedly in attaching themselves to them, and can as yet only be rejected by second thought or effort of Tapas.

An attempt to accept and transform inspirational-interpretative overstress led to the outside mind breaking through and getting in some of its movements. It cannot hold, but brought the recurrent Asamata which is accustomed to attend failure of Satya and Tapas.

There is some beginning of the same changes in the thought telepathy.

T^2 this morning is without the sure and decisive revelatory certitudes. Only late in the morning it is getting back into the true revelatory forms, but still much mixed with the others.

Premananda is developing the ideal drashta ananda.

Rupa is attempting to manifest variety of all kinds, but still obstructed by the physical refusal, although in an intermittent way it succeeds in its movement.

Lipi. July 15th = ideality = entire ideality in the body.

The Ananda-darshana has succeeded in filling the inspirational mental with the interpretative ideal Ananda; at most the former comes only for a second and is immediately occupied by the vijnana.

In Samadhi lipi is becoming coherent in small lipis, but in larger masses it is coherent only in patches. The ideal consciousness is taking more possession of the swapna samadhi, but the deeper stages are still affected by nidra or half nidra or imperfect conscience.

In the evening action of outward mind turning to ideality, the full vijnana held back, finally a hampered and narrowed action of the higher vijnana

March 2d Tuesday.

The action of outer mentality in a mass of all kinds turned into the lower and lesser ideal action. The object to get rid of the coating, penetration, mixture of the intuitive mental being in the thought-action, as has already been done in script and lipi. Also of the glamour of confused light in the uncentralised ideal action.. This seems to have been done, but not so as to absolutely exclude the potentiality of farther intrusion and necessity of farther suddhi. The success seems to be absolute in thought-speech; there is a mixture of stress and incertitude in trikaldrishti, jnana thought-perception is held in doubt between the greater and lesser siddhi. Mind-cased confused perception and half-perception can still pursue the trikaldrishti. The higher vijnana acts with some difficulty and is not yet in free command of its highest forms, but it is growing in power to hold the adhara.

In the evening the thought-perception acquired the same freedom in the ideality as has already been attained by the other members; that is to say, without any watching, attention[,] concentration or use of will it acts rapidly and constantly without falling from the vijnana or being invaded by unideal suggestions. How far it will be able to cover at once all the T^2 remains to be tested.

The higher ideality in the T^2 is now taking a firm hold. The remnants of mental stuff floating about have become mostly ineffective except for limitation. The lower idealities act as an inferior accompaniment to the higher vijnana or take its place in lax moments.

Ananda is recovering intensity and continuity, but still needs the smarana. It varies between the mental and the ideal forms, mental in laxity, ideal when supported by the tapas, but now contrary to what had been the rule hitherto the ideal are the more intense.

In Samadhi lipi is almost entirely coherent, though not in any great mass, still in longer continuities than before. The other elements are also regularising themselves a little. Lipi is ideal in Samadhi, thought sometimes falls into the mentalised ideal at least in physical level and in intensity. The other members, eg rupa, do not seem yet to be vijnanamaya. Nidra is still a persistent obstacle, but swapna while it persists in nidra is ceasing to interfere constantly with samadhi.

March 3^d Wednesday.

Ananda (sharira) has now a fluctuating continuity; the persistence of the mental forms forms the present chief obstacle. The falling of the intensity brings them into prominence. Nevertheless the ideal form is growing in power. Thought and writing no longer interfere necessarily with the body's smarana, but only when there is a total absorption in the writing etc or when a cloud of mental stuff comes in to interpose an element of the old formless abstraction of mind which attended absorption in a single subject or occupation. This is no longer a necessity, but a survival of habitude. The continuity has begun to prevail in this matter. The pervasiveness of the Ananda is also being prepared on a firmer foundation. And now even the cloud of mental abstraction no longer necessarily interrupts the ananda. It is only the exclusive absorption that is the ordinary obstacle. There is also the mechanical letting down of the

Shakti (eg at meal times and in the evening[)], that may interfere. Sleep and to a less extent samadhi remain a strong interruption. Fatigue is a power for diminution.

Tapas is greatly increasing in force and in ideal substance. T^2 is now passing through a stage in which the higher ideality is sometimes active, sometimes gives place to lower idealities. These are not proper any longer to the systems, but suggestions from outside.

Ananda during period of samadhi. The continuity remained almost throughout during the morning while writing a letter, an unprecedented circumstance. The lighter samadhi was constant in the Ananda. The deeper swapna samadhi is now getting free of nidra, except a shadow which gives a remoteness and sunless consciousness unfavourable to actuality. At the worst it is still samadhi, though nidramaya; gâdha-supta swapna. The Ananda in this deeper samadhi lost at first its continuity, and with it its mass, suffering diminution, recurred only in sharp and keen prolonged and frequent touches of great but narrow intensity which caused a spasm in the body and brought back the lighter state and then outer body consciousness. The samadhistha body consciousness is frequent, but of short duration. The more massed continuous Ananda occurred finally in all but the deepest supta swapna, but at a low power and remained half-involved, involved or lost in the nidramaya. The development has been extremely rapid and promises the complete conquest of swapna samadhi by the Ananda, as well as the complete expulsion of day nidra by samadhi. The next step will be the replacement of the profounder real nidra at night by swapna samadhi and sushupti. Sushupti here will not be sunya or alakshana, but vijnanamaya, anandamaya, chaitanyamaya, sanmaya.

Position now makes only a difference of degree, not of continuity in Ananda. Lying, it tends to be extremely intense, intense but less or of varying force in seated position, uncertain in standing posture. Walking has an effect of diminution of intensity. The mental form is being expelled; the form is ideal in ideality or ideal on the level of the mentality, a narrowed vijnanamaya. The mental has in fact been for some time really recurrent with a show of persistence. It is now merely recurrent. This shows that the physical consciousness has gone far in a first idealisation.

Pervasiveness is now becoming final, only the pervasion of the head offers some difficulty: there it is not, but tends to be quite continuous. In deeper samadhi Ananda sometimes shifts from head to body and body to head. This diminishes the constancy of the Ananda. But there are signs that this difficulty will not be long prevalent.

Lipi in the deep samadhi gains constantly in power and coherence. Rupa suddenly manifested perfect stability in one perfect form (a watch) prolonged for several minutes, though occasionally clouded over, yet reappearing, sometimes with a slight change of details. This endured through both swapna and deep antardarshi or half jagrat half swapna. For the rest, the rupa etc was spasmodic and disordered today, except for snatches.

T^2 on the lower level is now becoming fuller and more ordered and certain, though still shot through with inaccurate suggestions, ie wrong stresses. The struggle is between ideal perception of possibility (actualities even being suggested as possibilities) attended often with false stress of certitude and ideal perception of actuality (possibilities being seen as actual forces unfulfilled or partially effected) with right stress of certitude. Both come from the outer consciousness and are not native to the adhara. Only the higher vijnana on the highest or middle level is native to the adhara.

The T^2 and with it other siddhis dropped towards the lowest levels even with some hint of the mentality. Ananda was lowered to an interrupted continuity and suffered much intrusion of the mental forms. Now the highest vijnana is again at work in the thought-siddhi and a recovery is in progress.

Thought siddhi with some T^2 recovered and founded itself more firmly than before in the interpretative vijnana. All other movements, when they occur, are not accepted or invested with credit, except in so far as they are touched by the drashtri vijnana.

Ananda took some time in emerging from the interrupted continuity. The full intensity continued through a fairly long spell of reading, but was diminished and interrupted at the close. In type however all obstacles have been conquered, except sleep.

Sleep prevailed at night, only in the morning imperfect swapna samadhi. Lipi at first a little confused, but reasserted coherence. The morning samadhi is now coming up to the level of the afternoon swapna. Sleep for about six hours. Dream, while retaining its inconsequence, is sometimes curiously idealised in some of its incidents or features

Thursday Mar 4.

The Ananda varies now between three conditions. At night interruption, but restorable by smarana. Restoration automatic after rising. At daytime (except for samadhi) a highest, middle or a diminished condition. The marks of the last are interrupted continuity, much intrusion and some persistence of mental forms, a low or varying intensity. The marks of the first and second are uninterrupted continuity, exclusion of mental forms, sustained or great intensities; but the second is prone to the inspirational, the first to the interpretative vijnana. Tapas is still necessary for the first, partially or initially necessary for the second condition.

T^2 varies also between three conditions. The lowest is a diluted revelatory vijnana with mixture of other, often now mentally encased suggestions, and is afflicted with confusion and incertitude. The middle is a higher representative form, but touched by lower suggestions, into which stress of tapas or hasty certitude brings an element of error, and which is only correct when limited to immediate balancing trikaldrishti. The highest is interpretative and gives correct finalities. The difficulty of taking up all detail into the highest form is not yet overcome.

Other siddhis are not moving much, but there is a beginning of final idealisation of rupa and vishaya, especially gandha and rasa.

T^2 in the lowest scale of the interpretative vijnana has regularised itself in place of the revelatory ideal seeing, excluding the lower suggestions, which recur less frequently and are given no valid credit. They cannot be easily excised altogether, until their place has been taken by the highest vijnana. This can only give immediate certitudes. But the higher powers are sometimes acting in this lowest scale. This is a preparation for their own final emerge[nce], self-basing and replacement of the lowest interpretative vision.

The middle interpretative vijnana is now being developed, but is not yet clear of foreign (mainly the lower revelatory and inspirational) elements; the lower interpretative has begun to be excluded; its work will be taken up by the higher movements..

Thought-telepathy is being idealised like the other elements, but as yet in a mind-cased revelatory vijnana touched with the interpretative atmosphere.

The rest of the day taken up by a mixed action in which the middle interpretative has been taking in the lower action and generalising itself; but it is itself now being rejected from its insufficiency of decisiveness when not filled with the highest drishti. It is acting still, as also subordinately to it the occasional lower revelatory, and growing in accuracy and fullness, but it is filling slowly with the drishti.

Ananda has sunk into the lowest stage of the third condition and is much interrupted, but is slowly getting rid of the persistent mental form recurrence and preparing a temporary rule of the second condition.

Samadhi is obstructed but even in obstruction maintains with a little impairment its recent strongest gains.

Mar. 5. Friday

The drishti now promises to take the place of the interpretative form in T^2 and thought-siddhi. This is at first being done or rather prepared by a slow and fluctuating movement.

Ananda is wavering between the second condition and a compromise between the third and second, a basic uninterrupted continuity of the inspirational or representative kind, but also spells of interruption, interrupted continuity and a weight of recurrent mentality overlaying by invasion.

In the afternoon samadhi oppressed by nidra. Shama darkened by some element of tamas in the system; a depression or relative inactivity of tapas.

The drishti has emerged in the evening in T^2 and thought-siddhi, but has not a complete hold or satisfying fullness. In Ananda the tendency is to a fluctuation between the second condition and an interpretative drishti in the form of the Ananda, a higher version of the third condition. But the hold is still wanting in strength and continuous insistence.

Mar 6 Saturday

The endeavour today has been to get rid entirely of the lower and mediary forms, but this attempt brought an invasion of these forms, a confusion and a stressing of the difficulty of adjustment to the old proportions of a struggle. The siddhi on its positive side progresses, as has been lately more and more the rule in such crises, in the midst of the confusion. Thought-siddhi frequently manifests the highest form of the drashtri reason, T^2 occasionally gets at some incomplete form of it. But the main movement has been the persistent increasing rejection of the lowest forms in spite of their persistent recurrence; they cannot long hold the system and are beginning to lose power at all to put their grasp on the thought-consciousness. The mediary forms on the other hand penetrated or not by the drishti lay a strong temporary hold, persist for a long time, prevent the highest drishti, and when it manifests, rush into its place and try to do its functions and imitate its manner. This is the old method of progress. But the rule insisted on at present is that of the higher replacing and resuming the lower powers, not of the lower seizing on the higher and drawing them down to their level. This rule sometimes act[s] but cannot as yet assert its firm dominance.

Ananda continues to vary between its different formations, but now on the whole the tendency is to bare continuity of the highest condition (not its full pervasion, intensity and possession) in smarana. There is now a movement towards possession or at least pervasion in smarana.

The thought and with a less certainty the T^2 has now entered with some firmness on the same state as the script and lipi in which the various forms all belong to the full ideality and belong to the drishti with rarer deviations to the lesser forms still penetrated and covertly possessed by the drishti. But here the process is not yet absolutely complete.

Some play of gandha and rasa and of stable ghana or ghana developed rupa, mostly in the second stability; but the forms are old forms already seen in a previous far past state of the rupa sadhana.

Strong dream coherence in nidra.

Mar 7. Sunday.

The T^2 is proceeding with the development of the drishti. The movement goes much over old ground and confirms the stable hold of the drishti in the lesser ideal action. First, the lower form has been successfully converted; this gives near future and present potentialities valued in the terms and powers of the immediate actuality and frequently fulfilled according to the exact balance seen of the immediate present and future actuality, but barren of absolute future certitudes. Now the mediary form has been converted. This takes up the immediate potentialities, includes distant ones, and deals more largely with near and far potential, relative, temporary and isolated certitudes. But the near is more strongly and frequently dealt with than the farther, the farther more than the very distant; the last is still very rare. The chief difficulty is the survival of uncertain or self-regardingly positive stress, and this though less ignorant and vehement than in the mentality, less positive than in the lower idealities, is still sufficient to hamper the action of the highest drishti. The defect can only be cured by full and complete unification of knowledge and Tapas

There is movement again in the rupa, in the tendency of drishti idealisation, but as yet this is still embarrassed by the persistence of inspired and intuitive mental forms.

S. [Sharira] Ananda is depressed towards the inspirational mentality and intuition, but this form also is being taken up by the drishti. Sahaituka is rapidly undergoing the same change, but not yet with perfection. There is occasional basic or pervasive force of the higher drastri ananda.

Rupa has successfully idealised itself in all its forms after some difficulty with those that were full of the inspirational mentality. The crude forms are not unoften perfect, but not usually so, except in the ghana and developed crude, but often nearly perfect. The old persistent habit of the crude stuff to be doubtful of form, and change rapidly often before creating a perfect form with an initial stability is still obstinate. This is an obstacle also to the stability.

At the same time stability [and] perfection of form and material is increasing; and there is sometimes stability of the full second and even the third degree. This is also coming in a half crude, half-ghana. Full crude and developed forms are perfect in both form and material or in either form or material and if the latter only then perfect in part-form, but they are unstable.

Mar 8 Monday

A very clear, strong, distinguishing and accurate drishti in the telepathies, vyapti and prakamya. Its action is in the already occupied province, but it is there removing all sources of confusion. Also in the telepathic trikaldrishti.

One or two true ghanas have for the first time appeared with the primary stability out of the mass of crude material in daylight; this has the advantage of appearance and stability frankly fronting the physical eye. Other forms present themselves obliquely or dart into the direct field of vision and stay there for a moment or two or three moments or more. Some ghanas of that kind have direct under the eye a primary stability.

There is now occasional possession by the drashtri Ananda in the sharira; but there is as yet no harmonious or complete combination of the pervasion, possession and basic Ananda. The Tapas is now working to establish it in the homogeneity of the drishti, but the kind of drishti is not yet securely the same, nor is the possession then complete and stable.

A remarkable progress has been suddenly made in T^2 by the taking up of the mediary form by the highest drishti. There is now a mass of certitudes of various degrees and qualities, but governed by an increasing force of absolute certitude. The element of over or under stress remains, but is now made subordinate. The element of struggle in the adjustment is being removed and a comparatively smooth and anandamaya development on the higher scale has been given a firm foundation.

Mar 9–13 Tuesday–Saturday.

A period of relaxation of the siddhi. The T^2 has been steadily progressing, but by a complex occasional action, each time a step in the emergence of the more and more effective drishti in the two lower conditions. The other uncompleted members have been neglected, subject to obstruction and affected by recrudescence of asiddhi. There has been a great advance in firmness of passive samata and now in the ideal basis of the Shakti.

Mar 13 Saturday.

The highest drishti is finally imposing itself and completing its taking up of the lower movements in T^2, thought-speech, script and thought-perception. It is the beginning of the final process in the luminous ideal reason.

Sharira Ananda is again reviving, but as yet only in the basic Ananda.

A strong invasion of Tamas in body and physical mind dispelled by the drashtri vijnana which it failed to suspend or lower in character. There is now an invasion of confused luminous lower ideality, and this fails to suspend, but tends to dilute and lower the character of the vijnana.

The highest drashtri Tapas is now at work on the Yoga.

The ideal Ananda is now being imposed on the vishayas; it is dominant and almost perfect in darshana, though still too much mixed with or sometimes lowered towards the inferior forms in the seeing of the human figure. It still sinks in the rest by any lowering of the shakti, but its universal finality has been established beyond serious retardation.

The lipi has succeeded in establishing finally the full dominance of the drashtri vijnana. This is also accomplished in the script, though here there is a strong tendency still to an invasion by the inspirational intuitive thought-perception. The same siddhi seems also to be assured in the thought-speech in the vijnana; but there are still intrusions of the lower forms from the exterior atmosphere. The highest drishti may also be considered to be siddha in the jnana, but not yet in the T^2 thought-perception.

Mar 14 Sunday.

The T^2 thought-perception is being rapidly fixed in the ideality, but the incertitude still encourages the outside mind to send in the lower forms of the vijnana and even lesser mental movements. These as they come in are seized on and idealised, and all forms are now compelled to bear the drishti and there is a spontaneous discrimination of the limits and character of the truth on which they insist, so that when this process is complete, under and overstress may exist in them, but will not delude the witness and thinker. The process however is still incomplete. At the same time certitude of immediate result and movement is gaining greatly in force and amplitude. This must be the next movement to insist always on sight and certitude. When it is complete, there will be the completion of the ideal reason.

All forms of the rupa are idealised, except the crude, and this after some relapse is again and more firmly becoming vijnanamaya. It is unideal only in the process and in some occasional results of uncertain formation. On the other hand swapna Samadhi has been violently invaded by dream and oppressed by mentality, fantasy and incoherence.

Sraddha *bhagavati swashaktyam* is approaching completion, but there is still doubt as to the immediate power and the eventual fullness of yoga siddhi and karma siddhi.

The crude lipi is idealised and even in the process of uncertain formation there is only a momentary survival of the mental matter which is now become a suggestion rather than a real element.

The mental state is being at times brought back in the laxity in order to be overpowered by the drishti.

The Shakti is acting in the physical siddhi, and rupa etc, but as yet is not able to get rid of the obstruction

T^2 is extending itself to distant trikaldrishti as far as that is possible in the ideal reason.

Mar 15 Monday.

The movement in the ghana is getting up a greater rapidity. The substance of the rupa now varies between the idealised mental and the ideal; there is an increasing tendency to stability of the ghana crude and developed crude and also the crude developed and the crude ghana. Other forms have often an initial primary stability before the eye.

The process of idealisation is now completed, except that there is some immixture of the mental in uncertain or indistinct or incomplete crude formations and some initiality of it in unformed material, but the floating of crude matter without any immediate formation or beginning of formation of any kind is undergoing a rapid elimination.

As a next step slow formation is disappearing, has almost disappeared and what prevails now is immediate imperfect or uncertain, sometimes very imperfect or uncertain formation; the perfect complete crude is rare, the perfect incomplete more common.

The sadhara forms in which the unideality persisted, are also now being rectified; this has been done almost instantaneously, but not yet quite so completely as in the niradhara.

==

The K. [Kama] Ananda has been oppressed by the unideal forms, but there is now a pressure of Tapas to get rid of this covering oppression.

==

The crude rupa is now moving towards the elimination of inchoate or very imperfect and uncertain forms; the more definite rupas, complete or incomplete, perfect or partially perfect, wholly ideal or mental-ideal, are becoming more common. The chief difficulty is that the animal and human forms are resisted in this rupa and to evolve them the Akasha resorts to the old method of slow uncertain formation. Though no longer slow, it is still uncertain and produces the inchoate, imperfect and soon changing or uncertain figures.

The possessional Ananda is now always ideal, the basic is now developing ideal finality, the pervasive commencing the same movement. This is being effected against a strong siege of obstruction.

Since yesterday there has been a permitted invasion of the old intuitivity, and the drishti has been working in and upon it to take final possession of the channel mentality. The completion of this movement is predicted for tonight in the lipi. At present the confusions of the mentality are being corrected and decisive trikaldrishti with an element of accuracy of time and detail (mainly in the Yoga guidance) is establishing its predominance.

The samadhi is now the only member of the vijnana in which the obstruction can still keep in action an important aspect of struggle. In the others there is only difficulty of adjustment or difficulty of development of free action. Thought-telepathy (apart from thought-intention) has begun, but with a very slight occasional action.

Rupa at night assumed the same siddhi as in the daytime, but in its different kind of chhaya, tejah and jyoti.

Trikaldrishti, but not in full abundance and perfection.

The pervasive Ananda is striving for ideality, but is still much besieged by the inspirational mental form.

Mar 16 Tuesday.

A strong return of the relapse principle, recurrence of touches of asamata violently forced on the system, though of no duration, invasion, stoppage of siddhi. Crude rupa moves towards elimination of inchoate and very imperfect forms, but the obstruction prevents siddhi.

Mar 17 Wednesday.

The siddhi is recovering its basis. T^2 is assuring again the just drishti, but stress of Tapas is forced on the system from outside, although rejected by the Shakti. The highest drishti occasionally emerges, but the outward insistence on the lower forms of immediate actuality and insufficiently assured possibility hampers progress. The pervasive Ananda is pursuing idealisation in spite of the recurrence of inspiration[al] mentality: there is no intense continuous action.

═

T^2 in the afternoon proceeded with its elimination of stress, but there are intervals when it ceases and the outside mentality sends in its forms which are then either set right in stress or the errors corrected by the discriminating power of the drishti. At other times there is just drishti of the first, second or third order. The first which gives final decisions is still the least frequent and not in its highest power and assurance. Tapas is returning to the fuller power of drishti.

═

Rupa as yet does not advance rapidly. There is no successful insistence on stability; the imperfect forms recur obstinately, but without conviction

K. Ananda developed in the morning for a moment highest drishti, and this showed itself again with intensity in the evening. But the lower forms though they tend to be modified by the drishti, still besiege the system.

At night a sudden strong attack of most of the rogas to which the system is liable, including a touch of feverishness; some weakness in the morning.

March 18 – 24

The siddhi has progressed in spite of a heavy obstruction of physical tamas. The main progress is that all the members of the vijnana have now definitely fixed themselves in the true ideality (it is only in laxity that there is some touch of idealised mentality) and now including T^2 in the drishti. All except T^2 are entirely vijnanamaya.

T^2 has developed accurate drishti in the third condition and decisive trikaldrishti in the first condition. The common action is in the third; but it is now being changed to the second condition, that is right perception of possibility including right perception of immediate actuality. The first is increasing in power and fixing its certitudes on the others. The process is as yet far from complete, but is progressing with sufficient rapidity of transmutation.

Samadhi is developing vijnana action in spite of tamas and nidra.

Rupa is still hampered by the obstruction and cannot yet get rid of imperfect crude forms. But perfect crude forms (crude, ghana crude, developed crude) and crude ghana and developed are becoming more common before the eye. The freedom of rupa is much denied and impeded.

Vishaya is similarly hampered, but there is progress of idealisation in gandha and rasa.

K. Ananda is now firmly idealised in spite of an occasional pursuing fringe of idealised mentality, and is increasing in power of incidence. But the continuity is impeded by the physical obstruction.

Tapas is acting on roga and for utthapana, but as yet without any effect of finality.

Mar 25 – 27 Thursday, Friday, Saturday.

The development of the vijnana in the thought-siddhi is still the main movement.

Thought-speech and thought-perception are now normally fixed in the drishti. There are occasional drops and deviations, especially in laxity, but the laxity is now only usual in the evening and night and as a result in the early morning. It is being slowly got rid of in spite of the great siege and pressure of the external mind and its tamas.

Thought-speech and perception have been perfected in the two lower orders of the drishti; they are already perfect in the first order, but that has been held back; it is now manifesting and has to take possession of the others. The main difficulty is still in T^2.

T^2 (trikaldrishti side of the double power) is now fixed normally in the drishti. The stress has been on the telepathic drishti which gives the fact and tendency [of] actual and potential forces in action. Now the self-existent drishti is being developed which gives the certitudes. Certitudes of actuality (the third condition) are now more or less perfect, except in their extension: these give the certitude of immediate actualities and also of immediate or almost immediate dominant possibilities. It deals with the telepathies, but in the telepathies the possibilities of linked present and future action etc predominate, in the other the certitudes. This third condition corresponds in the drishti to the intuition, but is not revelatory intuition, but a high intuitively revelatory vision. Certitudes of remoter potentiality are now fixing themselves in perfection, but are as yet more limited and less disengaged from the telepathies. This second condition occupies in the drishti the place of inspiration, but is not revelatory inspiration, but a high inspirationally or interpretatively revelatory vision. The first condition in trikaldrishti is still held back and inactive.

In Samadhi intuition has been finally turned into drishti in the antardarshi. Swapna samadhi is still besieged by tamas and nidra. Dream has now a remarkable coherency due to the pressure of drishti.

Lipi has practically got rid of mere intuition, but admits drishti intuition; all the other powers are active.

Rupa and vishaya are still oppressed by the physical obstruction and are making no farther immediate progress.

Speech has now been for some time vijnanamaya with drishti in the third and is now often ideal in the second condition; but there is as yet no speech of trikaldrishti.

B. [Brahma] Darshana has long settled in the vijnana, but without the Ananda[,] the object being to get rid of the remnants of the mental form of vision. Now it is being raised to the vijnana Ananda, which it is already fixed in in vision of things, the other movement has been in the vision of living things, especially of human persons.

The difficulty in the vijnana Ananda darshana is that it tends [ ][2] often to be diluted with or flooded into the mental Ananda which is more intense, while the V.A is in the lesser intensities. This is now being, but is not entirely remedied by the equal intensity of the V. Ananda. The mental brings with it the prema Ananda, while the ideal has been for some time dissociated from Prema. The Prema ananda is becoming vijnanamaya, but the stronger prema still takes the mental character.

After writing the great intensities have come into the V. Ananda darshana and the vijnanamaya Prema Ananda, and the mental Ananda darshana and the mental premananda convicted of a lesser intensity are beginning to undergo a final elimination.

The third condition of T^2 is being taken up into the highest certitude of drishti, and the first condition manifesting has begun to take up the two lower conditions. This is only the incipient final movement.

The idealisation of the vishaya, suspended for some time, is now proceeding once more with a strong rapidity, but the mental sense obstinately resists entire eviction.

---

[2] *MS* to

The idealisation of the sahaituka vishayas has now become practically complete.

In samadhi more force of vijnana, but sushupta swapna is still under the hold of dream and nidra.

Vishwa darshana seems to be fixed in V.A in spite of occasional mental Ananda

Mar 28, Sunday

T^2 is now acting with considerable accuracy but insufficient force of certitude in the drishti. The lower movements persist, but their inadequacy is so evident that their persistence is only due to physical laxity and habit.

Mar 29–31.

There has been some development of T^2 and of vijnana generally, of which the main tendency is on one side the idealisation of the invading mentality, on the other the stronger emergence of the higher drishti. Other siddhis proceed slowly or are stationary or in abeyance.

The situation in the sadhana is as follows. Samata is perfect except for an occasional physical touch of asamata of great weakness which does not affect the mind, but only the physical shell of the pranic consciousness. The sama ananda is however still in need of greater development; its deficiency is due to the general withholding of intensity of Ananda, for even in the vijnana there is asu, a modified prakasha, but not the full Ananda. There is full sukham and prasada, but not full hasya in the samata.

Shakti is fixed in the vijnana and usually in one of the conditions of the logistic drishti; but subject to some dilution by the stuff of mental intelligence. Sraddha is complete, except for an element of besieging doubt about sharira and karma, amounting more to the perception of a possibility of limitation than to denial of the siddhi. There is however some element of doubt as to whether all may not be cut short by death of the body. Devibhava is there in basis, but incomplete by lack of full force, especially of ishwarabhava. The other siddhis of this chatusthaya are as developed as they can be without farther development of the vijnana.

Thought is now fixed in the vijnana except for the effect produced by the continuous siege of the surrounding envelope of mental intelligence. This is now distant and not close to the consciousness, but is still allowed full right of penetration and invasion. The old policy of the Kavacha seems to have been wholly abandoned. This effect is first, that of an increasing of the vijnana thought in the mental matter where it is still vijnanamaya, but with a strong infusion of mental limitation and incertitude; secondly, when the thought is more strongly vijnanamaya, ideal in the vijnana, a dilution by or an accompaniment of mentality; at other times, the thought is clearly and solely vijnana, but still limited by the environment of mental intelligence. These effects are strongest in the T^2; but affect the general thought-perception which does not now usually act as a separate power. The thought-speech is vijnanamaya except for a very small element of diluted vijnana, and when the thought-speech is active, except in great laxity or exercises of the idealised imagination, thought-perception also rises in vijnana intensity and fullness. Lipi and script are entirely ideal, but with a tendency towards the intuitivity saved by drishti, because of the siege of the mental intelligence. T^2 is more and more developed in the highest drishti, but still normally varies between the two lower conditions and is much impeded by the effects of the intelligence.

Samadhi is impeded by tamas and nidra. It tends to vijnana and is sometimes drishtimaya in thought etc in the antardarshi and all swapna except sushupta swapna, but this is only when there is application of tapas. Sahaituka Vishaya is at present idealised with some occasional element of manasa; the development, as also in rupa is temporarily suspended.

Physical siddhi is subject to a violent and successful siege of obstruction. Ananda is now ideal or idealised manasa, but spontaneity is rare, continuity brief and dependent on smarana. Roga has resumed something of its hold, though always removable or in the standing elements diminuable by tapas. One roga only still resists the tapas. The other siddhis in this field make no progress.

Darshana is now fixed in the vijnana and usually in a vijnana Ananda of secondary power.

April

April 1. This month is set apart for the overcoming of the final difficulties in the way of the vijnana.

Today mostly given to kavya. At night a full idealisation on all levels of the thought-perception; the manasa is now only an accompaniment, limitation or infiltration. The sinking of the thought into the manasa is being cast off and persists strongly only in the T^2, but there too it is no longer able to strive to be normal.

April 2 – 5

The siege of the mentalised physical tamas is exceedingly violent in its obstructive obstinacy, the siddhi proceeds in a few outbreaks in the midst of this tamas, and it is only yesterday that the Tapas has turned with an equal determination to get rid of the physical disability. The atmosphere of the physical mind is no longer allowed to give for long a sanction to it; but it still holds strongly to the atmosphere of the physical and to some extent of the psychic prana, and this effects a siege and retardation of the siddhi. Each day there is some decisive progress.

Thought-perception and T^2 has definitely risen into the second condition sometimes powerfully uplifted or taken possession of by the siddhi, sometimes giving place to the inspirational drishti from outside. The latter insists on possibility in the old excessive fashion and while it extends the bounds of vision, is still damaging to certitude. When the drishti acts in its highest form and first condition, certitude of present actuality, of present and future possibility and of real eventuality fall into a harmonious whole. The perfection of this harmony can only come when the second condition is entirely surmounted and the free and normal highest action becomes possible. More distant possibility is now being seen through the drishti and the logistic form of the srauta is initially showing its outline on the logistic level.

B. Darshana is fixing itself more firmly in the vijnana Ananda and insisting on its higher intensities which reveal the Purushottama in the Brahma.

Samadhi still struggles with more and more success, but still a very difficult success against nidra and tamas. Tamas more than nidra is now the real obstacle.

Rupa siddhi does not act freely and makes only progress in detail. It is now increasing[ly] stable in the crude form with an increasing force of vivid completeness, but the imperfect forms are still obstinate in recurrence. The formless material quickly takes form, but the form is sometimes though not usually inchoate, often imperfect, perfect only by overcoming of the siege of obstruction in the akasha.

Thought now hardly at all descends into the mentality except for side suggestions mostly in the state of laxity, but is still subject to accompaniment and infiltration by the stuff of manas.

The physical siddhi is now insisting on sustained tejas pravritti of the ideal Shakti in the body so as to get rid of tamas, but though there is a great improvement, the success is as yet far from complete. Sharira can make no definite progress against the obstruction.

April 6 – 10

The vijnana is steadily getting the better of the still persistent tamas and the progress continues. After a slight lapse towards the mental recurrence the thought is more firmly fixed in the gnosis. It is however of three kinds, the drishti cased in a mental accompaniment, the drishti of the lower conditions leaning to the limitations of the mental reason, the same lifted by or to the highest drishti or full of its power, though not yet of its constant light and ananda. Now even the forms of thought which were held most by the mental form, eg imagination etc, are captured by the vijnana drishti. The mental siege still continues, but is less sustained and effective. The real question is now between different conditions of the drishti. The first predominates, but with a gravitation towards the second condition.

T^2 also is idealised in all its movements. There are still two kinds, telepathic and original. The telepathic is in error when weighted with the mental accompaniment, but much less than at any previous time; there is a great increase in accuracy and certitude.

The original is in the three conditions (the telepathic is dominated by the second, the perception of the possible), and varies in power and accuracy and certitude according as it is free or beset by the mental intuitive reason.

Other activities are in the drishti, but with a mixture of mentality, (lipi and script alone perfect in vijnana), eg vishaya. Rupa is not active. The gnosis in the body is most affected by mental invasion.

Sharira Ananda after a long time is recovering power for continuity, but is less firmly vijnanamaya than when it acted with a careful and formative intermittence. Other members of the sharira have been adverse, but still affected by the Tapas.

7–26 JUNE 1920

Yoga Record
June.

June 7.

The discontinuation of the record for about two months marks a time when the Yoga was slowly proceeding against a strong obstruction in the physical consciousness. At no time did this obstruction amount to a gap in the process of the Yoga, a complete discontinuity (of more than hours) or a relapse in the old manner. It was not an arrest, but a retardation of the rate of the progress, and due principally to the necessity of an assimilation of steps rapidly taken, a dealing with intellectual remnants and an action on the last serious assault of the unrepentant and unconvinced environing opposition. There was a quickening at the end of May and the first six days of June has each been marked by a great particular step in advance; today there is a rapid but sure general advance, the result of the more or less covert or impeded work of April–May and its weakening of the obstacles.

=

Position.

Samata, complete, both positive and negative or rather active and passive. There only remains an inequality in the active ananda and an occasional proffer of doubt and depression which does not take any body in the chitta (effleure seulement pendant le quart d'un second). The doubt is only about the body and the karma and is falling away from the fixity of the çraddha.

Shakti. Complete, but awaiting for its fuller activities the perfection of the vijnana and the shârira and Brahma-darshana. The most sensible progress has been in the two weak parts, the tertiary dasya and çraddha. The Ishwara is now felt in all the activities of the Shakti, though not with an entire completeness because there is still an intrusive action of the *ganas*. The tertiary *dasya* has replaced the earlier stages, but it is of two kinds, *dasya* to the *ganas* moving the Prakriti, and *dasya* to the Ishwara controlling, moving and embodying himself in the Shakti. The *çraddha* in the Bhagavan is complete and in the power of the Shakti to the extent of the will to accomplish of the Ishwara. The personal Shakti is felt to be insufficient, but it is becoming one with the sufficient universal Shakti. Faith in the *sharira* and *karma* is qualified only by the doubt as to the prolongation of the life and the extent of the *karma*. The first is only a strong external suggestion getting its strength from the abnormal persistence of the digestive roga; the second is a real restriction of the çraddha, but it is rather questioning now than negative. The *ishwaribhava* is still qualified in intensity and fullness.

Vijnana. The conversion of the thought, *jnana*, to the vijnana form is now complete. The base is still the revelatory intuition, but the representative logis[tis] has penetrated the major part of its action and the interpretative often intervenes and prepares the normality of the highest logistis. Telepathies are now idealised and of a great but not always perfect correctness. Telepathic tapas is now vijnanamaya. The decisive T^2 at present emerges from the idealised telepathies (mental perceptions of event, force, tendency and possibility) and the idealised telepathic (old mental) tapas. At times there is the independent T^2 of the supreme logistis. Telepathies are now a part of trikaldrishti and amount to a drishti of the present, and often imply or hold in their action the drishti of the immediate future. At the same time none of these things have an absolute perfection, and decisive tapas is not as yet very strong, organised or effective. Prakamya of feeling and sensation is strong, but incomplete and intermittent; prakamya of thought intermittent and feeble. Vyapti is more effective. Action and knowledge at a distance is still unorganised and imperfectly effective. Rupa is still obstructed in the physical akasha, but confirmed in a primary type stability; vishaya not yet restored to action; samadhi firmly idealised, but limited by fantasy, instability and nidra. There is still great incoherence in the sushupta swapna lipi.

Sharira progresses in the Ananda which after some intermission varied by an unstable but more spontaneous recurrence is recovering continuity dependent on smarana, but this continuity is now for the most part spontaneous and has not to be maintained, though sometimes assisted, by tapas. The fragmentary rogas persist and cannot yet be totally expelled from the system, but the action of the Tapas on them is growing stronger. Only the central rogas are obstinate in possession, the rest only in persistent recurrence. The digestive fluctuates between almost complete intermission and a virulent, but now much less vehemently effective recurrence. There is no visible action of utthapana or saundarya.

Brahma. All is now fixed in the vijnana brahma darshana with an occasional emergence of the undertone of intuitive manasa which is [immediately][1] penetrated by and taken up into vijnana. In the V.B. [Vijnana Brahma] Ananda is organising itself, vijnana Ananda informed with the Ahaituka and manifesting in its own kind the Prema and Kama Ananda darshana. These two in the vision of the object are now vijnanamaya (fusion of intuitive + higher logistis or only the latter), in the subject, the chitta, twofold without sufficient fusion of the two simultaneous forms, but the higher logistis is growing on the chitta..

==

Samadhi. The pressure of afternoon nidra as shown in today's samadhi and prepared by the last few days' progress no longer alters the character of the swapna, nor does it amount to entire obscuration of the *drashtâ*, but only to a weight on the clarity of the visual consciousness. Sushupta swapna lipi is still the circumstance most affected and, as always, by incoherence due to suppression and to mixture of different lipis. At night nidra is still powerful to prevent samadhi

Vijnana. The invading environmental suggestions are now being steadily appropriated to the vijnana. Trikaldrishti of actuality has been trained to the vijnanamaya correctness, the same movement is being applied to the trikaldrishti of the possibilities that press on the actuality to modify or alter the event in the making. At present there is much environmental suggestion full of error, not of fact of tendency, but of its event-making incidence.

---

[1] *MS* immediated

Rupa advances against a strong obstruction. Vishaya revives in gandha, but there is still the obstruction.

=

Sharira Ananda. Continuity is growing, but still subject to the old causes of discontinuance. These however have much less reality of persistence than on the last occasion. Tivra shows a tendency to fix itself and is now vijnanamaya with an idealised intuitive mental undertone. Vishayananda is revelatory vijnanamaya. Raudra also is vijnanamaya, and vaidyuta. The physical ananda continues in antardarshi and in the lighter swapna, but is there subject to cessation or intermittence.

June 8.

After a long indulgence of the environmental invasion, the final conversion of the assured ideality to the interpretative logistical vijnana has commenced and immediately taken a considerable extension. All concentrated thought and thought-speech has begun to be fixedly of that character, as also the T^2. This is being effected not by select movements and a gradual extension, but with an initially instantaneous generality and rapidity in a crowded activity of thought-suggestions.

The Rupa is beginning to press down again the barrier of obstruction. The developed forms are still only of an initial stability, the ghana and ghana developed either that or of a primary or secondary, the crude of a primary, secondary or sometimes tertiary stability. The tendency in the latter is to long stability.

The lipi is fixing itself in freely in the interpretative vijnana; all former movements of the kind were only initial and preparatory; this is the last and definite movement.

Ananda powerful and persistent all the morning. More intense and often very intense with smarana; when mind occupied either suppressed with predisposition of the body to it, or half-suppressed or present with a lesser insistence. Often the mind occupied, but with a part of the physical consciousness fully aware of the intense Ananda. More firmness of continuous pervasion; for a long time the inner physical fibres penetrated and possessed by the Ananda. Result in the afternoon intenser A [Ananda] with the smarana; body full of the predisposition even in forgetfulness. The automatic and the forced cessation are being eliminated from the system, only the oblivious and the sleep cessation remain as effective obstacles.

The samadhi in the afternoon almost got rid of lipi incoherence. The interpretative vijnana took firm hold on thought speech and thought perception in the antardarshi. Nidra obscurity almost nonexistent, nidra weight of inclusion is still there.

In the evening and at night a laxity of the Shakti and some interruption, not complete, of the results acquired in the daytime.

June 9.

The laxity continued during the morning.

Samadhi in the afternoon directed to farther idealisation of the swapna, removal of fantasy, lipi incoherence, instability and fragmentariness of rupa, shabda etc. There is a detailed initial but not yet quite definite or organised progress.

The thought in the afternoon normalised interpretative vijnana in the revelatory and representative consciousness-substance. This movement extended to tapas and trikaldrishti. Indefinite thought from the environment is not yet always of the perfect logistis. A highest logistis has for some time been present in the interpretative and other form or substance. It is now beginning to prepare to take full possession. This will be the end of the logistic movement, the completion of the vijnana reason.

Ananda of the interpretative fashion acclimatised in the body. Physical Ananda is now of three moulds, interpretative, revelatory and as a survival the inspirational and (rarely, almost never) other lower kind[s] of vijnana.

For the first time developed or rather perfect rupa of the secondary-tertiary stability. As yet the longer stabilities except in the crude rupa are still isolated or else a rather frequent exception. The initial predominates when there is rapidity and frequency of the crude and developed rupa.

The thought since yesterday has begun to be attended with physical Ananda confined to the head region (where the K A has been till now exceptional, the ordinary pervasion being in the rest of the body) and the brain-stuff, but this now tends to become normal and to join itself to the Ananda in the rest of the body.

The Ananda Darshana now tends to be the infinite shuddha Ananda taking up all the rest, but still on the vijnana level. The old mental shuddha ananta Ananda recurs in the first movement as a coating to the vijnana Ananda, but changes easily to the vijnana shuddha Ananta.

The possibilities are now entirely normalised in the interpretative trikaldrishti, the authentic decisive is beginning to disengage itself more clearly, but has often a telepathic character from above which while fulfilling itself in the eventual actuality, remains without any certitude for the reason. An irruption still occasionally takes place of the lesser telepathic idealities which shows that the whole process of conversion is not yet completed. The thought and other prakamya vyapti is still of the lower inefficient and in the case of the thought initial and fragmentary character. Thought intention and thought substance are more easily accurate than pure thought perception.

June 10 Thursday.

Today the Yoga is more hampered than on any day since the beginning of the fresh stream of progress. The principal advance has been in the T^2, where the telepathies of actuality have been raised to the highest power of the logistis and those of modifying possibility strongly confirmed in the interpretative vijnana. Occasionally the tertiary or decisive vijnana acts, but where it does not pressure on the possibility by Tapas brings a confusion of unreliable certitudes.

Rupa in the ghana etc is hesitating between initial and primary stabilities.

The samadhi was more obstructed by nidra, though not of an obscure nature.

Ananda is obstructed and only constant in smarana, though the full intensity is not present.

=

In the afternoon a change. The T^2 manifested separately an action of the highest logistic vijnana not at all dependent on the idealised telepathic perception. Rupa began to stress the stabilities and arrived at a normal primary varying from the first point beyond the initial to a point tending to the secondary stability; the crude stability became again secondary and tertiary rather than primary and secondary. Ananda recovered intensity and pervasion with a strong cerebral action.

June 11 Friday.

Progress on the same lines. Tapas and Trik. are now being organised so as not to be in conflict. Tapas is taking its right place as telepathies have done; the union of decisive Tapas and trik. certitude is not yet effected.

June 12 Saturday.

Trikaldrishti pursues its organisation, but while the actualities grow constantly in power and certainty, the unrealised possibilities and decisive certitudes are not yet in the complete higher vijnanamaya development. There are still excessive stresses on possibility. At the same time the higher certitudes are becoming more frequent and more positive to the reason

Rupa is increasing tertiary stability in the ghana and developed crude, and attempting to bring in the secondary in the other rupas. Lipi now has frequent tertiary stability in the Akasha. There is also an incipient movement towards variety of Rupa

Ananda already settled in the intenser sa-smarana, though always feeble and interrupted from the evening, is fixing automatical constancy, so that after oblivion there is no need of mental smarana, the body keeping the memory whether of continuous but unnoted or of suppressed but still implicitly present Ananda.

=

The base of vijnanamaya organisation is being laid in the decisive T^2, and prepared in the prakamya-vyapti of thought intention: it is already strong as regards sensational tendency and impulse.

Rupa has now definitely begun secondary stability of ghana and developed rupas, but mostly still in the side-seen images, those that stand direct before the eye are less vivid and less stable. Primary stability is still the ordinary movement, but now it is less fugitive, less inclined to the initial and more to the secondary duration.

There is now a constancy of the penetrative more physical Ananda contained in the sthula fibres; the ananda of the sukshma body affecting the sthula alternates or sometimes coexists with it.

═

Samadhi at first of the same kind oppressed by a light unobscure nidra; afterwards strong organisation of thought speech and perception of the highest logistis in all stages of antardarshi and swapna, strong sharira Ananda continuous except in sushupta swapna, lipi perfect except in sushupta, but there no longer fantastically incoherent, other incidents not well organised except rupa (landscapes) clear, tejomaya, but insufficiently stable.

June 13 Sunday

There is a larger right vijnana of possibilities and telepathic relative certitudes and the decisive telepathic trikaldrishti of precise detail (only of the immediate future) is beginning to found itself, as yet imperfectly, on a larger basis.

Tertiary stability is now very common in crude rupa; primary and secondary prevail in the rest under the direct gaze, but tertiary has begun to appear in side images and promises even in the direct images.

There is more frequent cerebral and thought Ananda. The Ananda still fluctuates and the Ananda without smarana fails still to fix itself with a final possession.

═

Each of the three siddhis which are being rapidly pushed forward has taken a farther step in advance.

The decisive trikaldrishti certitudes are beginning to become near, actual and sure in telepathic trikaldrishtis of the immediate future, filling them as a first step to their replacement.

The rupa is increasing tertiary stabilities; initial tertiaries have come repeatedly in the direct image and final tertiary has made its appearance in the side images. Both are now common in the crude.

Ananda is deepening its insistent frequency and intensity in spite of interruption by oblivion. It is depressed in the late afternoon, evening and night, but for the last three days the shakti has been working on this depression and yesterday there was strong Ananda after a prolonged depression in the late afternoon, some in the evening and some, but rejected by the will in the body at night. Today it promises to be throughout continuous by recurrence.

June 14th–15th

Ananda deepens steadily, but the obstruction of forgetfulness at the periodic time still remains operative.

Rupa has now established the first tertiary stabilities; the more prolonged are still occasional only.

Trikaldrishti also is gradually confirming in the telepathic figure.

Samadhi in the afternoon is now idealised in all its parts, but weak in the incidents, except in scene and event in scene which are attaining to a perfect stability. The organisation for utility is not yet ready to commence.

June 16th Wednesday.

The Tapas which was held back in favour of the trikaldrishti is now being definitely taken up for perfection. At first there was the increased but uncertain effectivity of tapas and a renewal of the difficulty of discord between the telepathic form of the two siddhis, then the same difficulty in tapas as in trikaldrishti between the telepathic and the definitive. Finally, an initial fusion has been effected between trikaldrishti and tapas.

Rupa is trying to develop perfect stability; there is the potentiality, but not yet the actual presence.

Ananda has hitherto fluctuated between periods of intensity and periods of depression. Formerly the latter used to last for long periods, now there is only comparative depression on alternate days and fluctuation in the day itself,—greater strength in the morning, less with much interruption in the afternoon and evening, at night cessation or only occasional presence. The depression on alternate days is being eliminated. The continuity in the morning is every day greater and tends to conquer the oblivion; even when writing the body retains except in great absorption of the thought-mind the physical Ananda.

The ananta Ananda of the darshana has now definitely entered and for the present fixed itself in the vijnana form corresponding to that attained in the rest of the chaitanya.

June 17th Thursday.

The T^2 for a time was confused by an irruption of incertitudes from outside attended by an extension of relative certitudes in the revelatory and interpretative telepathies. Subsequently the supreme logistis reappeared and began to organise certitude of detail, circumstance and succession.

Rupa is now making prolonged tertiary and perfect stability the normal thing in crude of all kinds and beginning to develop it in crude developed and crude ghana. In side images they are becoming very frequent, though they do not yet predominate. The attempt to extend them to direct images of the full ghana and developed kinds is obstinately obstructed in the physical akasha. The long existing tendency to snatch away the rupa as soon as possible after appearance, even if it is [in its] nature perfectly stable, is the obstacle to be eliminated.

Ananda has fixed itself with a more basic firmness in the cerebral possession and the physical ananda of thought-speech and thought-possession which was till now only a faint preshadowing, has become definite and universal. The recurrence of asiddha thought and of interruptions of possession is however still persistent, though less powerful than before. Most of the conditions of perfect Ananda (except, mainly, the downward current and the fusion of the five anandas, though the latter has made some progress) is now accomplished in the basis.

Ananda persisted in the daily period of relaxation, in the afternoon, evening and at night. The automatic tendency to relaxation is therefore now ended; only that created by oblivion and the oblivion itself have to be conquered.

June 18th Friday.

Preoccupation with a work and a tendency in the siddhi of going slightly backward, eg in the rupa towards primary and secondary stability, in the Ananda of interruption by oblivion (but not of laxity as the result of interruption, only a certain potentiality of relaxation remains), in the T^2 of revelatory rather than highest logistic action.

June 19th Saturday.

The continuous steady rapidity of the siddhi upset today by a revolutionary attempt to substitute at once the srauta for the logistic vijnana. This was attended and frustrated by an invasion of asiddhi such as had not occurred for some months past including even an attack on the samata.

Insistent suggestion of asamata—amounting to duhkha in the prana and impatience in the buddhi—in the physical consciousness, not radical but strongly disturbing the outer physical fibres. This duhkha is now mingled with ananda when it enters the system and cannot preserve its pure character. Its recurrence however is a retardatory phenomenon foreign to the new settled course of the sadhana. Suggestion also, but less violent of asraddha, amounting in effect not to radical asraddha but to disbelief in the method, absence of the feeling of a possessing guidance by the Ishwara—that is felt as before behind a veil or only at the summit,—and a sense of the possibility of postponement of siddhi. At the same time it is felt that a greater siddhi is preparing.

An Ananda of a much greater potentiality of continuity, pervasion, largeness and intensity felt on the vijnana summit and descending into the sukshma body, but this is unable to make itself except at intervals intimate to the system. Meanwhile the constant possession of the sthula body by the revelatory has been taken away and that body is empty except of a greater tendency of response. The sukshma body is visited by a more continuous Ananda less affected, except at first by want of smarana or attention, more pervasive from above, more naturally intense, affecting the sthula without being established in it or possessing it, but not yet organised nor having a firm close hold even of the subtle body. It is at once more continuous and less intimately continuous. All the old asiddhis are suggested, including the dependence on posture. The struggle has not yet been determined in the sense of the greater organised siddhi.

The jnana etc are affected in a similar direction. The system is invaded by a vague and confused idealised mentality which is turned to an imperfect revelatory ideality when it enters the system and its surrounding atmosphere. The vijnana thought and T^2 occur, but do not closely hold the system as for a long time they have been doing. There is nothing left but to await the issue of the struggle.

Ananda during the time set apart for the samadhi insistent on possession of the sthula body, but a possession by penetration, not a reawakening of the hold on the sthula fibres.

The period of laxity was to some extent restored today, not entirely, for there was a frequent recurrence of Ananda, but as a result of smarana. In the evening the Ananda of the sthula body was brought back to a certain extent, but without the firm hold and sure intensity that had seemed fixed in finality. The Ananda in the sukshma body was for a time made constant, the ananda of thought universalised and intensified; these took on the form of the representative, interpretative and highest logistis. All this had to be done by a certain force of Tapas and therefore cannot be considered as a final siddhi.

The bodily consciousness became during the same time first revelatory representative and representative, then representative interpretative and interpretative, then the highest logistic vijnana. All this was done from above and cannot yet be considered final.

Attack of asamata eliminated, but sraddha not yet normal.

June 20th Sunday.

The morning was a period of laxity. None of the siddhis are yet final.

The representative mould of the bodily consciousness now predominates, but is not yet fixed in security. It is sometimes drawn back and the revelatory takes its place. There is not the sure pratistha

Afternoon—last night's Ananda again in action.

June 21st Monday

The sadhana is settling down again to a movement analogous to the past movements but on a higher scale, that is to say, greater developments are being foreshadowed and initiated which have to be gradually attained against the [persistence][2] of old lesser sufficiencies and insufficiencies.

Seven new movements are indicated of which four have begun to realise themselves in an initial action.

Thought is manifesting a highest logistic movement which is ready to change into the srauta vijnana. The lower thought still persists in the form no longer of a revelatory but an inspirational intuitional thought-action. Its insufficiency is recognised and it is condemned but does not cease from persistence

Trikaldrishti is effecting the same movement hampered by the inferior idealised telepathies

The Shakti in the body has left the fixed revelatory form and has manifested for a while inspirational, interpretative and a highest logistis ready for the srauta. Actually, however, there is a pressure of inspirational intuitive which veils the actuality of this higher movement.

There is the same phenomenon in the physical Ananda in the psychic body. There are fluctuations in all these movements, sometimes the siddhi holding the system, sometimes the asiddhi.

The environmental siege affects the lower movements with avoidable error and gives force of persistence to the asiddhi.

June 22d Tuesday

The same conditions as yesterday, but there is a stronger force of the Siddhi.

Tapas is effecting the same movement as trikaldrishti.

The government of the Devatas is giving place to the direct government by the Ishwara, but there is not yet the constant presence

June 26th Saturday.

The intervening days have been subject to difficulties in the Sadhana, the persistence of old forms of the ideality, the siege of the environment and some invasion of stuff of the intuitive mentality.

---

[2] *MS* persistent

Today the new siddhis are reasserting themselves with a greater power and especially the free all-occupying action of the highest logistic ideality in its highest degree in thought, trikaldrishti-tapas, lipi, script etc. It is also attempting to occupy the physical system and replace the intuitive vijnana. As yet there is still a persistent intervention of the other forms, a laxity of the tapas intervening which tends to restore them and a great difficulty in the physical system.

17 – 19 OCTOBER 1920

17th October 1920

Oct. 17. 1920.

Morning

Freedom of the inferior ideality. It is subject still to intrusions of the mental intuitivity from the environment mind, but these are compelled to see or to transform themselves. The stuff of mind in the physical conscience still contains unilluminated movements of obscure matter, but the pressure of the light on them is constant.

The lipi is the most perfect of the members of the vijnana, free in its action, free from the lower elements, established in the vijnana. T^3 is now developing with a certain freedom in the lipi.

Thought and T^3 in the thought are moving constantly to the same perfection. The action is free in concentration, but there are still the intrusive or untransformed elements of the physical mind. Except for this defect it is established in the first vijnana. The representative vijnana with all its three elements (representative, interpretative, imperative) is seeking to fix itself in the bodily consciousness of the Shakti in place of the revelatory + intuitive representative vijnana.

It takes possession of all but the head.

The obstruction still reigns in the rupa siddhi, vishaya, sharira, and the Tapas as yet can only diminish, but not overcome the obstruction. In Samadhi the basis has been laid, but sleep and dream continue.

Tapas is working for Arogya and physical Ananda, the latter well-prepared and only forcibly held away by the obstruction. The

Asiddhi still holds in the utthapana and Saundarya.

══

The object telepathies are rapidly uplifted into the representative (logos) vijnana. There has long been an effort from below insisted on and aided from above; this is the immediate action from above, a solution of the difficulty by the involved process. It does not exclude a temporary return towards the inferior process.

══

Later.

There has been a rapid progress in the idealisation of the physical Ananda. There was some beginning of continuity, but it was ill established and collapsed in the evening.

══

The normal state of the physical consciousness is the revelatory; the descent to the intuitive occurs much more rarely than before and is not of long duration. Occasionally there is the representative vijnana.

══

No decisive progress in the rest, but a pressure on the habitual passive obstruction in rupa[,] vishaya and samadhi (lone fleeting tejomaya scene) and on the active opposition in the sharira. Progress is made, but as yet by short steps only.

18th October.

Preparation of progress in the rupa siddhi.

══

Sudden introduction of the highest representative ideality (logos vijnana), first into the physical system, then in the afternoon into the lipi, thought-speech, thought-perception, tapas, telepathy, trikaldrishti. This is the beginning of a definitive, decisive and rapid conversion that is still in process.

══

The change brought at first a resuscitation of old imperfections belonging to the inspirational vijnana of the intuitive mind and the intellectualities that hung about it, an attempt at invasion and a resuscitation of the principle of struggle. This however has been checked and is being ejected.

=

Descent during later part of the day.

19th October

Arrangement of imperative vijnana begun on the lower levels of the ideal thought-powers.

=

Great extension and power of the logos vijnana in its highest action—thought, T^2, lipi. It is only beginning to convert largely the thought-speech into the mould of the logos.

The other forms survive as insistent remnants.

=

Three levels of the logos vijnana

1. Logistis—intuitive ideality of all kinds.
2. Logos reason. The lower representative idea, turned
   - (a) downwards to the logistis
   - (b) upwards to the logos vijnana.

N.B. The same downward and upward direction is possible for the logistis.

3. Logos vijnana.

The latter has to deal with three movements.

1. Actualities—representative
2 Potentialities (including and harmonising with the actualities, or separate.)
3 The imperatives of the infinite—absolute, imperative, identific.

The [?last] has to take possession of the other two and deliver them from contingent incertitudes.

This has been commenced, but has to be completed, before the consciousness can be taken into the srauta vijnana.

Part Three

Record of Yoga 1926 – 1927

DECEMBER 1926–6 JANUARY 1927

When the fullness of the supramental life-energy is in the body, then all difficulties will be reduced to nothingness.

It is the life-energy in all the body, not only in the seven centres that is demanded. Once in all the seven centres it cannot fail to pour through all the body.

It must take possession of all the cells, the flesh, muscles, bones, blood, nerves, skin, hair; then the body will be ready for transformation.

The life-energy to be firmly founded today in the last centres. The rest to follow in the next three days.

═

These things are author[it]ative suggestions; it depends on the energy and the adhara subject to the divine sanction from above whether they are fulfilled in the time fixed or have to wait for a later period.

═

If founded, all the remnants of the old illnesses and pains and bad habits of the body will disappear altogether and no new ones will be possible.

There is nothing complete yet done in the material physical Nature, and yet till that is done, there will be nothing complete in finality anywhere. Many things are established, but even the most advanced need the last touches or even many last touches.

═

There is still the problem of the physical material, the flesh and the organs. These have to become unassailable and invulnerable; that to be settled in its self-maintenance independently of food by one means or another.

═

Today, one at least of these problems ought to be settled in effective physical principle. There can be no sense of security till that is done.

—

Monday next. An ascending scale till then. The ascent today. No more for the present.

—

The ascent began, but it has been interrupted as usual by an attack. No matter; it will overcome, almost immediately overcome. It is a matter of the nerves which can still be touched by pain and suffering.

[*In the margin beside the above paragraphs, Sri Aurobindo wrote the following note, then cancelled it:*]

Observe: the flow of the energy has begun, but is still subject to interruption. That interruption should disappear today.

Youth and beauty manifest in the face, but are interrupted. That interruption must begin to disappear entirely today.

Make way for the Supreme Force. It will take up your responsibilities.

—

Today. The difficulty finishes today. The rest afterwards.

—

Get rid of the representative. The higher power can do its work.

=

Monday [*3 January 1927*]

The supreme Force descends. The difficulty is finished. The representative imperative still obstructs, but it is ready to disappear.

Today it disappears. Not altogether, but fundamentally and in principle it disappears. It is needed no more.

—

The supreme Power is taking up all the movements. It will turn them into the Truth. No effort is needed, no aid from the mind or any of the instruments; even the individual consent is no longer needed.

—

Tuesday

The fulfilment has undeniably begun. Till the 7th January this present development; the last mental clearance, the first final opening.

Wednesday

All has been cleared of what was left of the pure representative; only a colouring, an attenuating edge remains in the interpretative imperative. This has to disappear and will disappear, as the true form develops. If something lingers for a time, it will be of no potency and of no importance.

The full light in the interpretative, today — The full power in the imperative tomorrow.

Thursday. Jan 6.

What has been promised has been achieved. There remains the perfection of the supreme supermind taking up the supreme supramental supermind, the development of the Trikalsiddhi Tapas and the manifestation of the Gnosis. This from today to the 12th.

The fullness achieved has come on the 6th one day earlier than anticipated, but on the day promised. What was promised for the 7th was the completion of the first curve (or second, (1) 25 – 3d (2) 3d to 7th (3) 7th to 12th). Tomorrow therefore the appearance of the gnosis in the action of the supreme supermind

==

For her peace and surrender.

7 JANUARY – 1 FEBRUARY 1927

Friday Jan 7th

The gnosis has taken hold of the lesser movements of knowledge; not yet of the supreme supermind or the greater movements. It will do that now in spite of all difficulties.

The gnosis taking up the supermind means the Trikalsiddhi-Tapas.

After the 12th these difficulties will disappear.

It is the doubt that interferes. In spite of the doubt I will accomplish. Now.

Saturday. Jan 8th

I have prepared the ground for the gnosis. The fulfilment begins today in the face of every denial.

Sunday Jan 9th

The taking up of T^3 by gnosis has already begun. It will be initially completed today. All these menaces will utterly disappear in a few days.

This is the beginning. The rest will develop automatically throughout the evening and night.

Monday. Jan 10th

The movement yesterday took place, but was veiled and hampered. Today it is emerging in light. All the thought is being taken up by the derivative gnosis. T^3 has begun in all the movements,—this was what was meant by initial completion; today it is spreading. The old obstructions however still remain in thought T^{y} [Telepathy] and other movements.

Today thought and T^3 will continue to develop

As the gnosis of thought progresses, gnosis of the heart, the will, the vital movements will begin to develop. Here also the first touch was given this morning.

═

It is evident that the T^3 is undergoing the process, but as yet it is rather a working on old obstacles than a positive process and a positive progress.

—

Tuesday Jan 11th

The curve that was to have ascended till the 12th seems to have abruptly ended. A confused working in obstructive mental material seems to have taken its place.

═

Yet it will be fulfilled. Today the T^3 in the supreme supermind and gnosis. T^2 begins on the same level. This is contrary to all appearances, but it will happen.

═

In that case these are preparatory movements. What has happened is the progressive seizing of all the movements by the Ishwara and the increase of the tertiary dasya.

—

Wednesday Jan 12th

In spite of all opposition what has been promised is effected, only initially yesterday, it is true, but more completely today.

The supreme supermind has taken up the supreme supramental supermind and all the other inferior movements and is itself being penetrated by the gnosis. Substantially done in all other thought action, this process is taking up T^3 for its transformation. T^2 has begun on this level, but that is not yet perfectly apparent.

Today, complete T^3 in supreme supermind gnosis, initial T^2 in gnosis, increasing T^2 in supreme supermind gnosis. These three things.

═

T^3 is already gaining amplitude, but is interfered with by movements of incertitude, because T^2 [in][1] s.s.gn. [supreme supermind gnosis] is quite insufficient. It is however beginning to increase.

—

The application to all things of T^2 gnosis or T^3 gnosis is a matter of time. It is the foundation of the thing that is the immediate work in hand. At the same time the application too need not be gradual, it may and will be rapid. A vertiginous rapidity is possible.

—

Mark that the dependence on the critical verifying mind decreases. Verification is becoming automatic, criticism also automatic. Both will soon be entirely gnostic. The next curve is from the 12th to the 16th, another from the 16th to the 21st, another from the 21st to the 24th, yet another from the 24th 25th to the 28th. The last of this month is from the 28th to the 31st.

—

The final dealings with this body begin from today. The first stage of them finishes with the end of the month.

=

And with her body it begins from tomorrow. At present it is the preparation of the forces.

=

Thursday. Jan 13th

The T^2 in supreme supermind gnosis acted, but not on a large scale. Something of the other two indications came into practice, but not sufficiently to satisfy the demand of the intelligence.

The dealings with the body are not yet clearly final. In most matters there is a progress or a stability in the stage acquired, but there is a successful relapse in the eye and possibly in one or two other places.

=

There is undoubtedly a large scale progress in the thought-siddhi and all its instruments. The form of the supreme supermind is about to be universal, only the substance of gnosis in it is still insufficient.

---

[1] *MS* is

The preparation for T^3 and T^2 is evident, but the obstruction is violent and partially successful.

Nothing more till that obstruction is vanquished.

—

The development of the gnosis above and in the supreme supermind can alone conquer the obstruction in its last lines.

≡

That will be done. Tonight the inception of this movement.

=

Friday Jan 14th

Telepathic T^2 has already developed. The Tapasic is preparing to develop.

All will be done in spite of all the obstruction and all the difficulties.

—

Today the health and Ananda will develop. Tomorrow the evidence will be undeniable.

The attack on her body yesterday flatly denies the "Thursday" prediction. In this body there is evidence of control, but not of any final progress. The obstruction to finality is still successful, still obstinate.

=

For this body the evidence is tomorrow; for hers it is veiled and will only appear day after tomorrow.

—

Today the gnosis in T^2 (tapas). Also the gnosis above the supermind in T^2 tapas.

Saturday Jan 15th

The development of health and Ananda promised yesterday is not at all clear in result. There is evidence of power to control and minimise attacks on the health, but there is not yet power to prevent them. The small fragments of the old illnesses still recur a little.

There is sahaituka Ananda in the body on a small scale and it tends to increase in intensity, spontaneity and recurrence, but it has no body or long continuance.

—

The work seems rather to be turned towards increasing a relative Samata and Faith than in bringing the gnosis. In the latter movement there is only evident a strong clouding obstruction behind which no doubt some work is being done.

=

The effects promised yesterday seem to be declaring themselves today. Ananda (sahaituka, touch etc) has suddenly progressed after a long obstruction and developed a remarkable spontaneous continuity and body. [Absolute][2] spontaneity, penetration and diffusion, continuity without the help of memory or attention have still to develop.

=

It is evident also that a kind of gnosis is taking possession of T^2; but there is still an immense amount of work to be done. There is too a kind of gnosis descending from above, but it is not yet free nor rich in circumstance nor absolute to the mind in its conveyance of certitude. There is also some gnosis of T^3. All these things however although they begin to come more rapidly and freely, are still initial, hampered and poor in affluence.

=

Surrender, dasya, consolidation of the inner movements and initially the outer movements in the hands of the directing Power and Persons (or its Personalities) is becoming or beginning to become absolute.

Today, gnosis takes possession of all thought and T^3. Gnosis in T^2 develops in the supermind and above it.

The invincible Gnosis of the Divine will make its first appearance.

=

The proofs of the Power dealing with the body are rather in the development of Ananda and the control of certain functionings than in any finality of health. The fragments of old illnesses remain obstinately potential or obstinately actual. The hold diminishes but there is still the recurrence.

---

[2] *MS* Absolutely

═══

Sunday Jan 16th

The possession of all thought and T^3 by the gnosis is increasing, but it is frequently interrupted. The invincible Gnosis seems to appear, but in too thick and mixed a mass of movement and itself too occasional to create a clear recognition or an assured confidence.

—

Doubt is acute as regards the physical siddhi.

═

The divine Gnosis in T^2, that which is above the Telepathic and above the Tapasic trikalsiddhi and above the combination of these things, is beginning to manifest but only as a kind of occasional point or star above the mass movement.

═

These will continue to develop. Nothing will be left soon of the physical opposition to health and Ananda.

═══

Monday Jan 17th

Thought telepathy, prâkâmya, vyapti are trying to manifest, but the obstruction is heavy. The general mental and vital condition can be perceived by *sanyama*, habitual movements also, but precise movements only with difficulty and some incertitude.

═

Sahaituka ananda also continues to develop. There is a tendency to generalise its gains; but the physical non-response is still heavy. Spontaneous Sahaituka (without aid of memory [or][3] attention[)] occasionally manifests and is nearer to the surface.

═

Gnosis continues to develop in the thought-siddhi and its instruments. Today the T^2.

---

[3] *MS* of

It had been predicted that something would be done in six days for the healing in her body, that is by the 17th, and in fact a great relief and amelioration is evident; but not the decisive cure that had been taken to be the sense of the promise.

—

The physical proof has been given that the thrill of Sahaituka Ananda can be eternised in the body, but the time is not yet. The nature of it is still subtle vital material with a strong beginning of density, not yet the dense entirely material Ananda.

═

Tuesday Jan 18th

Yesterday the representative + inspirational imperative movement hitherto normal (the rest coming in concentrated movements) began to be definitely replaced in the universality by the interpretative + inspirational-interpretative imperative. This is a radical progress, but the new movement is not yet entirely gnostic—

—

Telepathy of general mind conditions and habitual mind movements and formations continues to develop.

═

There has been an apparent relapse in the Arogya. Primary utthapana has begun a strong forward movement; the secondary is greatly hampered.

—

Ad

Development of Gnosis in thought-siddhi and its instruments. Continued growth of T^2.

═

Wednesday Jan 19th.

Yesterday there was a strong attempt to dismiss [finally][4] the remnants of intellect, ideality, supramentality and after giving full play to the supramental and supreme supramental to pass beyond to the supreme supramental mind in the supreme supermind so as to prepare the strongest forms for the T^2 and gnosis.

---

[4] *MS* finality

Afterwards a crisis of questioning and a renunciation of personal action (in the suggestive mental Devasura) and an entire passivity in which some kind of action professedly gnostic or semi-gnostic is going on in a narrow and rigid form of inspirational imperative and a minor form of interpretative imperative thought-force

———

The development of Gnosis in the thought-siddhi and its instruments shall continue, also the growth of T^3 and T^2.

———

The crisis in her body continues in all its adverse acuteness. The causes seem to be not personal, but due to circumstance favouring blind surrounding physical and vital physical influences.

Thursday Jan 20

The adverse crisis continues in great violence.

In this body there seems to be a turn for the better, not yet final and decisive. A certain overmastering Ishwara influence already dominantly successful in certain directions, control of functionings etc, is extending its activity to the remaining fragmentary illnesses.

—

Development of supreme supermind, gnosis and T^2 continues. But the obstruction and partiality of result also continue.

—

Friday Jan 21

At last the power seems to be acting on the body. As predicted, there are the first signs of amelioration in her body, though nothing yet is complete or in appearance finally decisive. Still the black obstruction has failed to persevere.

—

This morning free gnosis in all the movements of the thought-siddhi and its instruments in a rapid and almost instantaneous development. This is the first free and large movement of the involved method.

—

At present Tapas movements and telepathy-Tapas movements are being handled. A relative T^2 in them with a great mixture of ineffective knowledge and will movements is taking place.

=

T^3 and T^2 to be made perfect like the gnostic thought in a vertiginously rapid movement. This will take place at first in a limited field of operations, then with a certain universality, then with a basic absoluteness applicable everywhere.

—

The physical siddhi advances, but is still too much obstructed. Ananda (sahaituka) increases in intensity, in prolongation (continuity), in spontaneous occurrence. This must be made perfect without farther retardation.

—

The entire removal of the fragments of old illness will not be immediate, but will yet speedily happen.

=

In the evening solution of difficulties and rapid progress in (1) Lipi, (2) Thought-siddhi, (3) T^3 (4) Drishya (5) Samadhi (6) Sahaituka Ananda.

=

Attacks on health, but the progress seems still to continue.

Saturday Jan 22d

Sarvam Anantam Anandam Brahma seems to be well established in its fundamental universality (except for some *duhkhabhoga* of result on the vital plane and some movements of physical semi-discomfort) and is growing in intensity. Gnanam Brahma consciousness grows, but needs development of T^3 & T^2 for full play.

—

Increase in Ananda (Sahaituka, chiefly sparsha, but also the others), T^3, T^2, Samadhi etc.

—

All grows rapidly, but all is still imperfect.

≡

Sunday Jan 23d

Rapid increase and spread through the body of mental material & vital material Sahaituka Ananda. The physical material is acute as yet only in the hands except for the immediate Sparsha which is now intense everywhere. Prolongation and diffusion have begun and will soon be well-established.

=

T^3 grows rapidly in gnosis. T^2 in T^3 seems definitely to have begun, but not yet in unmixed gnosis.

—

Attack on the Karma. Strong obstruction to equipment.

=

The difficulties now experienced, difficulties mainly of obstruction, will disappear today and tomorrow.

—

The body has still not shaken off entirely yesterday's sudden attack of fatigue and pains of fatigue. The energy is unimpaired, the fatigue and pains can be dismissed, but they return as soon as the body rests after long walking.

=

In spite of all appearances tomorrow will mark an immense stride in the Arogya-siddhi.

Today the obstacles to Ananda and telepathic T^3 disappear,—not entirely but in dominant practice.

≡

There was some appearance of a beginning of the disappearance of difficulties, but an adverse wave arrived and this movement ended.

—

Only the Arogya is slightly better, but whether this movement is permanent or not cannot yet be decided. Previous experience and present perception are against the idea of permanence. A gradual progress is the sole thing visible.

—

In the night a violent reaction. All thrown in doubt preparing the revival of a chaotic half-intellectual movement full of the mixture of falsehood and incertitude.

=

Monday Jan 24th

The adverse movement continues. Especially T^2 and T^3 seem petty in their achievement and full of error and incertitude. It is doubted whether gnosis is at all manifested or anything but a mixed mind and supermind with at most a few true supramental movements.

—

Universal perception of the Sarvam Anantam Anandam Brahma-Purusha. Ananda complete in all vishayas, especially sight, but not the intense completeness. The intensity came afterwards, but subsided. The completeness of the quiet Vishaya Ananda and universal Saundarya is still not always absolute.

═

The difficulties did not altogether disappear. Some began to dwindle. Ananda of the body (sahaituka) made some progress.

T^3 also made progress. The telepathic, tapasic and veiled gnostic accuracies in the telepathic T^2 were increased and exemplified from time to time. The mixture of error and imitative or encasing or accompanying and distorting mind action still continues.

For some time there has been a powerful attack on the Karma. The prospect of equipment seems entirely clouded and threatened.

≡

Arogya in this body seemed to make some progress. If the progress made turns out to be permanent, it may be called a large stride in the siddhi.

═

Tuesday. Jan 25th.

In the morning after a violent struggle continuing from the last few days, the conviction of falsehood began to lessen. Thought in the supramentalities and supramental began to arrange itself in the gnosis as had already been done with thought in the intuitive forms and processes. All these movements no longer exist in their initial and independent forms, but have been taken up into the supreme supramental and supreme supermind. The highest interpretative imperative acts as an intermediary force, lifting the former into the latter.

Organised T^3 and T^2 in these forms is at last preparing. Hitherto it was all in the lesser powers.

═

A great but chaotic profusion of jagrat bahirdarshi drishya began yesterday. Today organisation and some kind of stability is being introduced into this—as yet imperfect—freedom.

═

Rapid progress in Ananda. Ahaituka sparshananda is spreading; great continuity with intensity both in this and sahaituka, especially in the hands. The habitual movements of inhibition are losing their iron hold.

Today, tomorrow gnostic T^2 in initial perfection. Ananda, Vishaya, Samadhi, Arogya.

Wednesday Jan 26th

Again a strong attack and confusion in the morning. Attempt of the chaos of the mind movements to reestablish its reign under pretence of transforming finally the supramentality into gnosis.

═

Exceedingly intense Sahaituka Sparshananda tried to generalise itself after a first successful manifestation; the conditions were too unfavourable.

—

Some modification of the universal Darshana—simultaneous vision of Parameswara-Parameswari in all.

—

Some attempt at T^2. Some progress in Samadhi although in sushupta Swapna the incoherence continues.

—

The Arogya has once more been thrown back. Physical fatigue continues underlying and arising after an hour's physical exertion or even less. Up till the morning there was progress.

—

Drishya continues to develop but no distinct forward step.

═

T^2 is developing, but the medium and casing are so obscure and mental a material that even continued success brings no certitude.

=

Thursday Jan 27th.

Today a great revival. A vertiginous rapidity of progress in many directions. The attack of obscurity, resistance of the universal inconscience, refusal of the universal inertia, obstruction and conservatism of the material negation are beginning to lessen and even where they persist and intervene, cannot resist the progress. The past effects may still continue for a time, the future is not theirs. The four Powers that resisted now appear more clearly, — the Dragon of the nether foundations who preserves the old Law intact till the will of the Supreme is manifested, the Sphinx of the eternal questioning, the Night of the eternal negation, the Rock (stone Purusha, inert Shiva) of the eternal inertia. Still they are there, but a first victory has been assured against them.

—

Thought gnostic in essence, free, automatic, voluminous, not yet perfectly organised or complete, has been finally established and, except at intervals, acts even in the obscurity and inert relaxation of the material consciousness.

Surrender is complete; horizontal movements of desire cross but are [ ][5] easily rejected.

Samata is complete except for certain external movements that touch the physical sensation.

Shakti, Virya, Daivi Prakriti are returning and moving towards perfection.

Sraddha is there again, though not yet assured in all that concerns the final effectuality of the Tapas.

T^3, T^2 are developing much more clearly and consciously than before. T is beginning to manifest.

=

Stable organisation and organised stability are rapidly preparing in the Drishya, but are not yet accomplished.

=

---

[5] *MS* are

A certain perfection and absoluteness established in seven powers, samata, surrender, virya, shakti, daivi prakriti, thought (not T^3 or T^2 thought), faith (in the Supreme and his workings, not in the immediate realisation[)].

Friday Jan 28th.

A great progress in primary utthapana. The fatigue attack entirely disappears. Two hours exertion without any effect on the body except a pain in the loins at once dismissed. All other effects could be rejected at will. The left leg becomes almost as free as the right. The back and loins have still to be entirely liberated, but a relative freedom is effected.

A rapid increase in the control of certain bodily functionings.

Otherwise the day seems to be one of preparation rather than achievement.

Development of gnostic thought-powers.

Saturday. Jan. 29th

The opposition of the Four Matter Powers is being wrought into assent; but the process has necessar[il]y slowed down the action which tends often to flicker down into quiescence.

All the same T^3 and T^2 often combined together are becoming more common and more definite. All doubt with regard to them is over, although owing to imitative movements in the Ignorance, much confusion and incertitude continue.

Gnostic T is emerging more clearly, but is so much cased in the obscurity of the Inconscience that seeks to be or have knowledge, it is impossible to distinguish it clearly from the counterfeit except by result and occasionally by an automatic and undoubting certitude.

It is at the same time evident that when it acts it is of the nature of omniscience and omnipotence.

=

Drishya settled in all but the spontaneous full stability which obtains only in the crude forms.

=

Ananda spreads but is not as yet organised and generalised in the responses of the body.

—

The action on health in both bodies is more evident but not yet entirely conclusive.

Sunday Jan 30th

Again a day of preparation and of apparent check rather than of progress.

=

Such progress as has been made is in Darshana, Drishya, confirmation of T^3 and T^2. Thought etc are held up for the moment.

—

Vani has long been silent. Today it is trying to emerge.

≡

Today, in the evening Thought-siddhi and gnostic T will overcome the obstacle.

The final victory in Arogya is evidently preparing. In a few days it will be perfect.

After Arogya Ananda.

Meanwhile utthapana and saundarya will prepare.

All the third chatusthaya will soon be liberated from its still remaining shackles.

≡

Thought-siddhi at its best resumed in the evening. Gnostic T manifested, but extension and organisation are not yet possible.

≡

Monday Jan 31st

A day of relapse and resistance.

≡

Tuesday. Feb 1st

The siddhi began to recover. A step forward in Darshana (Aditi holding P^a-P^i [Parameshwara-Parameshwari] in all living things, less vividly in all objects). This is not yet entirely universalised but it is increasing.

—

Primary utthapana oppressed during the last days once more progresses. Stiffness and muscular pains are still possible, though they can be ejected by the knowledge-will movement. They are most prominent when the exertion ceases, but do not endure. The latent memory however persists and brings them back at customary times or junctures.

—

Drishya progresses. There is full stability of crude forms, conditional or initial or aided longer stability of others..

—

T^2 (T^2 T^3) progresses, but cannot get rid of incertitude.

—

Control of functions, violently interrupted for the last two days, is returning.

═

7–22 APRIL 1927

April 7. 1927 Thursday

There must be an entire submission to the transforming Power and the transforming process. However tedious it may [seem], each step, each recoil is inevitable; nothing is done unwisely or vainly in the economy of the supreme processes.

There is a sure means of distinguishing the truth from the falsehood. Pause and refer to the Light of the gnosis.

The truth that comes may not be all the truth, but it is that which is needed and effective at the moment.

Entire passivity first, a passive surrender.

Entire equanimity next, an absolute samata.

An entire and harmonised strength of the divine nature

An entire faith in the Supreme and his Divine Power, in the process and the result of the process. These are the four conditions of the rapid and decisive change.

April 8th Friday

The conditions are satisfied to a sufficient degree. The next steps are now possible which will make them perfect.

First the decisive T^2, the exact T^3, the perfect thought in the gnosis or at least in the supramental gnosis—ie the three degrees intuition, supermind, gnostic supermind, if not yet in the fourth or supreme degree of divine gnosis.

Second, the consciousness gnostic in all the body and all the environmental atmosphere.

Third, the gnostic Power in the body for the transformation of the body.

April 9th Saturday.

Passivity is now practically complete; surrender in the physical consciousness a little less, but still almost complete.

Equanimity is moving towards automatic completeness but is still imperfect.

Faith is limited and poor

Strength is there, but neither harmonised nor complete

[*Three pages with other writing (probably written earlier) intervene here.*]

April 9th

The first gradation of the Gnosis, ie the intuitivity, is being now securely organised in a universal and automatic action.

It is still mixed with mental stuff, imperfect therefore, limited in scope, insecure in decisive T^2; but it is there.

It has to be perfected. Meanwhile the others will be made ready.

* * *

Exact T^3 and perfect thought in the intuition. This is ready to be perfect. Perfect it.

Decisive T^2 is ready to be founded in the intuition. Found it.

Press on the elimination of illness undeterred by the resistance till it disappears for ever.

These three things are now possible.

* * *

April 10th

The equanimity is almost entire.

Faith has greatly increased, but is not absolute.

Strength is harmonised and in a way completed, but in a form that is still mediocre.

The forms of the gnosis are in final preparation. The three things required yesterday are being done, but as yet there is nothing definite. The truth thought is however becoming easy and automatic.

Let the T^3 grow swiftly.

—

There is a commencement of the automatic external Ananda. Fix it.

≡

April 12th

A still more perfect equanimity.

Faith more settled, more complete, but still not absolute, awaiting knowledge.

Strength confirmed, but vague and formless.

Passivity complete

—

T^3 has begun to be automatic; but is still imperfect.

=

The three things demanded are still in a very initial stage.

≡

April 13th

After a brief attack briefly successful, passivity, equanimity, faith, strength are established stronger and completer than before.

—

Thought is almost perfected in the intuition and in the other forms so far as they can be supported on the narrow intuitive basis.

T^3 is growing swiftly and moving towards a large development, T^2 begins to develop a limited but automatic accuracy.

=

Automatic external Ananda has begun to be fixed. Only memory is necessary.

≡

April 14th

Only mechanical movements contrary to passivity, equanimity and faith occur; usually they are thin and without substance.

Strength is still not continuous except in the old lesser form.

There is still a lack of the guiding Power; except at times all seems to be done by the mechanism of the forces with only an intervention of the smaller physical godheads and voices.

The supramental development and organisation of jagrat and swapna samadhi is trying to begin in earnest.

All the thought instruments have been taken up into the movement. Lipi and identity knowledge are most developed.

Automatic external ananda in its first fixity is beginning a preliminary organisation.

April 15th

Much obstruction today.

Strength seems in the end to be more firmly founded

Internal physical Ananda is beginning to be founded.

There are signs that drishya (with open eyes) is about to develop stability in the forms which till now were fugitive. It is increasing in the others.

Samadhi organisation proceeds, but is still initial and obscure.

Vishaya started last night, but does not as yet progress.

Tonight. Completeness of third chatusthaya to be initially founded

Fourth chatusthaya (half) to be thoroughly founded.

The rest to be prepared in essence.

Note—This last prediction or order does not seem to have been fulfilled even in part. The condition was clouded, ineffective and obscure.

April 16th

Progress has been mostly in the external physical Ananda. There was a recovery of gnostic thought and T^3 which had been almost suspended yesterday, but this came late in the afternoon.

Strength seems to be founded, but the attack on faith and samata has been all day heavy and fierce.

——

April 17th

Samadhi. First initial organisation of thought, trikaldrishti, lipi, event and drishya up to the sushupta swapna.

Farther purification of thought, T^3 and control including Vani.

Harmonisation of shakti with surrender and samata. Preparation of a harmony of these things with gnostic knowledge.

Vishaya. Persistent and stably visible vision of birds (small dark figures, jivanta, on the horizon[)]. For the first time liberty of this siddhi.

——

April 18th

All the movements are being reduced to gnosis, first those that were intellectual.

Remarkable movements of tapasic T^3.

Samadhi and Drishya continue to develop.

The rest are maintained but not in progress.

═

Passivity, surrender, faith, strength are constantly growing more perfect and harmonious with each other.

═

The third chatusthaya must be and will be rapidly completed and perfected.

The fourth must be finally undertaken before the end of the month.

The fifth, sixth and seventh will progress with the progress of the third and fourth chatushtayas.

≡

April 19th to 21st.

Three days strong obstruction.

Perfect founding of sukham and hasyam along with calm and samata.

Firm founding of the virya and shakti along with the daivi prakriti and sraddha.

These foundations seem now to be integral siddhis. Both are being tested but resist attack. Only the deha-shakti is seriously overcome at times, but this is due to the defect of utthapana and belongs less to the second than the fourth [chatusthaya].[1]

═

April 22d

First experience of entire gnostic intuition and supramental reason with supramental observation and a supramental recipient in the physical nature.

—

Intuition and supramental reason (all the grades except supreme supermind) are being steadily founded in a first integral movement.

Supreme supermind has also commenced its integral foundation.

═

All this in the thought chiefly. T^3 however has begun to be taken into the movement.

≡

---

[1] *MS* utthapana

24–31 OCTOBER 1927

October 24th. 1927

A day of great and rapid progress. The supreme supermind forms have begun to be normalised and taken up by the gnosis. T^2 has made some, although still a hampered progress. T^3 is now normal. Telepathies are becoming automatic but still need for their manifestation a slight *sanyama*. Ananda (*shârîra*) rapidly progresses. Samadhi has made some advance.

Today the gnosticised supreme supermind even to its highest forms will become normal.(1)

There will be the beginning of the promised progress in all the vishayas.(2)

Samadhi will break its barriers.(3)

Ahaituka Ananda within the body will be definitely founded.(4)

(1) Fulfilled to a certain degree.[1] But neither the gnosticity nor the normality are at all complete, rather they are in this field only initial.

(2) A meagre fulfilment; just the beginning in each if it is maintained, but hitherto the development of the vishayas has always been dropped after a brief movement

(3) Fulfilled but not completely. The obstruction is still there.

(4) Uncertain; it seems to have begun, but it is not clear that it is definitely founded.

---

[1] *The fulfilment of the above predictions was written afterwards in a different ink. The numbers after the items of the programme were added when their fulfilment was recorded.—Ed.*

October 25th 1927

Today, there is something of a recoil into the hampered semi-mental movement, although the progress still continues. However, the movements or rather the touches from outside of Asamata etc, the contradictions of the first two chatusthayas, were not only mechanical, but though they pierced could not hold the consciousness in the body or even the environmental conscious atmosphere; few, they were almost immediately or immediately flung outside.

Intensity in the sahaituka physical Ananda is rapidly increasing in all the Anandas including the raudra.

Rupa is at last moving forward towards prolonged stability of the perfect and initially real and not only the crude, dense or [developed][2] figures.

There is an attempt to return to the evolution of primary utthapana, ie abolition of fatigue and its symptoms

Prognosis is now no longer in the script and lipi only, but in the thought speech and vani.

═══

(Oct 27th)

The semi-mental movement increased and the sadhana fell back from the rapidity it had gained to a movement of return on old elements still imperfectly transfigured. This relapse has lasted two days but was not so intense as before and has created no reaction. Moreover, it has been visibly the preparation of most important transitional movements that have come to a head today, the 27th October.

Oct 29. 1927

A day of relaxation, dismissal of out-of-date elements and preparation for the descent of gnosis into the overmind system.

These four days are for the transition to gnosis. Afterwards the whole system will be perfected and applied before there is the ascent to the supermind plane.

═══

---

[2] *MS* delivered

Oct 30. 1927

Today the transition from T^3 to T^2 became decisive and with it there came the conception of the Ishwara in the bodily consciousness. The passive attitude of the T^3 movement in which the nature is the plaything of the powers of the Overmind has been definitely abandoned and the passive-active attitude of T^2 movement in which the Ishwara determines and the Powers may for a time resist and even modify temporarily what he has determined, but must now or in the end help to carry out his will, has begun to take its place. As yet the gnostic movement is imperfect and the Overmind powers are still powerful to determine results according to their choice, provided there is some supramental sanction behind it. All are powers of the Ishwara, but the play of disagreement and mutual opposition or emulation continues. T^3 is entirely supramental or gnostic, T^2 only has partially reached the same siddhi.

Oct 31. 1927

Today T^2 (anishwara) has acquired the supramental and gnostic character. Not that all movements have entirely eliminated the mental element, but all are supramental or supramentalised or else even (now to some extent) gnostic overmind. Infallible T^2 is beginning more freely to emerge.

Iswara consciousness is growing both below and above and Ishwara T^2 is beginning.

The supermind is increasing in the supramentalised movements and gnosis in the supramental movements.

Ananda is taking possession and becomes automatic, needing only memory or a little attention to act at once. All vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch is now anandamaya; even all that is seen, heard, sensed is beginning to be felt as full of ananda and even as if made of Ananda. Sahaituka Ananda of all except event is now automatic. Ahaituka Ananda within the body shows signs of reaching the same state, but has not quite reached it. This is the only physical siddhi that promises to be soon initially complete; for arogya is still hampered by obstinate minute fragments of illness.

Part Four

Materials Written by Sri Aurobindo Related Directly to *Record of Yoga* c. 1910–1931

UNDATED RECORD AND RECORD-RELATED NOTES

c. 1910 – 1914

[1]

[. . .] in Σ position
VM & flash of sattwa —
1. Bidhu } present
2 Susthir }
3 Bhadrakali — future
4. Table in Baroda — past
5 Namadrishti — letter from M. [Motilal Roy?]
6. Stars in psychic sky — paralokadrishti.
7. An urchin shaking flag — ihalokadrishti.

[2]

Bhasha. — 1. The intuition continues to work, not perfectly.

2. The inspiration developed on the connection of Tamil with O.S. [Old Sanskrit] pointing out lost significations, old roots, otherwise undiscoverable derivations.

3. The supreme inspiration yet inoperative.

Thought. Quiet and no longer subject to obstruction, but not yet perfectly satisfying, liable to be displaced; working often with the perception only, defective in driving force, therefore imperfectly convincing.

Sight.

In Samadhi, the lingas of the bodies, — all except jyotik and varnaghana.

The jagrat mainly inoperative, except the momentary manifestation of a pranamaya purusha, angushthamatra, from the sukshma; fulfilling the prophecy for the day.

Prophecy— As above. The mind deals with the past by means of perception, not revelation. Necessarily no proof.

Doubt— Only in anna and with regard to particulars in their details.

The Body— Visrishti unusually copious in both kinds. Weakness in annam and rapid fatigue

Asus— Working absolutely in the body, with more force than formerly in the buddhi and prana. Sattwic krodh in the chitta manifests free from the rajasic taint of an unsatisfied prana. Prema. Bhogasamarthyam increasing, but insufficient.

Aishwaryam etc. The Will began to act directly from the sahasradal with swift and invariable, though not instantaneous effect. The imperative vyaptis still resisted

A general deficiency of force experienced. The old humanity very strong in the annam and through the annam obstructive but not dominant in the whole system

---

[3]

[*Sanskrit Formulas—Second Chatushtaya*]

वीर्यं— अभयं, साहसं, यशोलिप्सात्मश्लाघा क्षत्रियस्य, दानं व्ययशीलता कौशलं भोगलिप्सा वैश्यस्य, ज्ञानप्रकाशो ज्ञानलिप्सा ब्रह्मवर्चस्यं स्थैर्यं ब्राह्मणस्य, प्रेम कामो दास्यलिप्सात्मसमर्पणं शूद्रस्य, सर्वेषां तेजो बलं प्रवृत्तिर्महत्त्वमिति वीर्यं।

शक्तिः— देहस्य महत्त्वबोधो बलश्लाघा लघुत्वं धारणसामर्थ्यञ्च, प्राणस्य पूर्णता प्रसन्नता समता भोगसामर्थ्यञ्च, चित्तस्य स्निग्धता तेजःश्लाघा कल्याणश्रद्धा, प्रेमसामर्थ्यञ्च, बुद्धेर्विशुद्धता [प्रकाशो] विचित्रबोधः सर्वज्ञानकार्यसामर्थ्यञ्च, सर्वेषां तु क्षिप्रता स्थैर्यमदीनता चेश्वरभाव इति शक्तिः।

चण्डीभावः— शौर्यमुग्रता युद्धलिप्साट्टहास्यं दया [चेश्वर]भावश्च सर्वसामर्थ्यमिति चण्डीभावस्य सप्तकं।

श्रद्धा तु निहतसंशयाप्रतिहता निष्ठा भगवति च स्वशक्त्याञ्च।

[4]

[*Sanskrit Formulas—Devibhava*]

महालक्ष्मीभावः— सौन्दर्यदृष्टिः लालित्यं कल्याणलिप्सा प्रेमहास्यं दया चेश्वरभावः सर्वकर्मसामर्थ्यं

महेश्वरीभावः— सत्यदृष्टिः ऋजुतामहिमा बृहल्लिप्सा ज्ञानहास्यं दया चेश्वरभावः सर्वकर्मसामर्थ्यं

महासरस्वतीभावः— कर्मपाटवं विद्या उद्योगलिप्सा सुखहास्यं दया चेश्वरभावः सर्वकर्मसामर्थ्यं

[5]

[*Sanskrit Formulas—Dasya*]

गुरुशिष्यभावः
- अधमः — दासभावात्मकः
- मध्यमः — सख्यभावात्मकः
- उत्तमः — मधुरभावात्मकः

दास्यभावः
- अधमः किङ्करभावात्मकः
- मध्यमः सख्यभावात्मकः
- उत्तमः मधुरबद्धभावात्मकः

सख्यभावः
- अधमः गुरुशिष्यभावात्मकः
- मध्यमः सहचरभावात्मकः
- उत्तमः मधुरबद्धभावात्मकः

वात्सल्यभावः
- अधमः पाल्यपालकभावात्मकः
- मध्यमः स्नेहभावात्मकः
- उत्तमः मधुरभावात्मकः

मधुरभावः
- अधमः स्त्रीपुरुषभावात्मकः
- मध्यमः स्वैरभावात्मकः
- उत्तमः दासभावात्मकः

[6]

[*Sanskrit Formulas—Third Chatushtaya*]

त्रिकालदृष्टिः—प्राकाम्यं व्याप्तिः साक्षाद्ज्ञानं प्रेरणा सहजदृष्टिर्विवेकः शकुनिदृष्टिर्ज्योतिषदृष्टिः सामुद्रिकदृष्टिः सूक्ष्मदृष्टिर्विज्ञानदृष्टिर्दिव्यदृष्टिश्चित्रदृष्टिः स्थापत्यदृष्टी रूपदृष्टिरिति त्रिकालदर्शनस्य विविधा उपायाः। ते तु द्विविधविषया यथा परकालविषया इहकालविषयाश्च। तस्मिन्नपि द्विविधविषये शब्ददृष्टिः स्पर्शदृष्टिर्देहदृष्टी रसदृष्टिर्गन्धदृष्टिरिति भागाः देहक्रियाविषयाः चिन्तादृष्टिश्च भावदृष्टिः बोधदृष्टिश्चान्तःकरणसंश्लिष्टाः। अन्या अपि सन्त्यप्रकाशिताः।

सर्वज्ञानं—सर्वविषये अप्रतिहतो ज्ञानप्रकाश इति सर्वज्ञानं तस्मिंश्च साक्षाद्ज्ञानं प्रेरणा सहजदृष्टिर्विवेकश्च प्रमुखाः बोधः स्मृतिः विचारो वितर्कः साक्षाद्ज्ञाने बोधः सर्वविधः अप्रतिहतः, प्रेरणायां वाक् च स्मृतिश्च सहजदृष्ट्यां वितर्कोऽप्रतिहतोऽभ्रान्तश्च विवेके तु विश्लेषः प्रज्ञा चेति विचारः

सिद्ध्यष्टकं ज्ञातमेव।

सर्वत्रगतिः। व्याप्त्यां वा चिन्तायां भावे बोधे सर्वभूतानां सर्वत्रगतिः शारीरिकी तु सप्तदेहेषु स्वप्ने सुषुप्त्यां वा जाग्रत्यां वा। अन्नमयस्त्वाकाशगत्या निःसृत्य सर्वत्र गच्छति जाग्रत्यां, प्राणमयस्तु यश्छायामयः कल्पनामयः त्रिषु तद्वत् तेजोमयः सूक्ष्मश्च यौ द्विविधौ मनोमयौ विज्ञानमयश्च बुद्धिमयश्च यौ द्विविधौ महति प्रतिष्ठितौ।

[7]

12 types {
Wisdom. Greatness. Calm
Strength. Speed. Wrath
Love. Joy. Prodigality
Intellect. Desire. Service.

7 anandas— Kama—Prema—Ahaituka—Chid. Suddha—Nirguna—Siddha.

= 84 worlds.

with 7 below, nine above = 100

7 below. Gandharva (beauty). Yaksha (pleasure). Kinnara (fantasy). Aghora (samata). Swadhina (freedom). Deva (love). Asura (might & glory) from lowest to highest

9 above. Vaikuntha, Goloka, Brahmaloka, Meruloka, Visvadevaloka (Karmadevatas), Ganaloka, Jnanaloka from top to bottom

[. . .] = Suryaloka. Swar—Chandraloka & Swarga. Jana, Tapah & Satya above

Swar—Chandraloka—Pitriloka; Kailas above, between 7 tiers of 14 worlds, according to types—Pashu, Pisacha, Pramatha, Rakshasa, Asura, Deva, Siddha—

Swarga—7—Kama, Yuddha, Prema, Manas, Jnana, Nishkama & Bhagavata

Naraka—offences of or against Kama, Prema, Satya, Ishwara, [?Devata], Jnana, Atma— 12 hells in each.

[8]

Idomeneus. Coriolanus. Antony. Richelieu. C. [Caius] Gracchus St Louis. Charles V.

Deiphobus. Brasidas.. T. [Tiberius] Gracchus. Clarence. Louis XII Lafayette. Pompey.

T. [Titus] Manlius. Marcellus. Agis. Philip IV.

Pausanias. Lysander. B. [Benedict] Arnold

[9]

ϰωμοι

Pericles, Agathon, Alcibiadas, Brasidas. . . . Agesilaus, Agis, Sophocles, Pharnabazus . . Lysander, Euripides, Pausanias

[10]

19th jagrat developed—except divya.
21st thought proved & free from error.
24th sarvatragati perfect
27 siddhis perfect. All proved.

[11]

Vak

correct	illuminative	inevitable	sattwic
fine	effective	inspiring	rajasic
poor	tolerable	good	tamasic

[12]

Anantaguna

I Prema
  1. kama, prema, bhakti, kalyanam, daya, karuna, rati
  2. arasah, raudryam, avahela, vairyam, naishthuryam, krauryam, udasinata

II. Jnana
  1. jnanam, aikyam, yatharthabodha, hasyam, rasajnanam, lokadarshanam, astikyam
  2. jnanoparati, anaikyam, ayatharthabodha, ahasyam, arasah, lokoparati, nastikyam

III Shakti
  1. slagha, viryam, shakti, sthairyam, amritam, saundaryam, vyapti
  2. dainyam, slathyam, uparati, chapalyam, mritam, vaiparityam, bheda

[13]

Memory—
I. 1. Of things noticed
  2. Of things unnoticed
II. 1. Of events
  2. Of objects and men
  3. Of words and ideas

Events

1. The occurrence a. in mass b. in detail c. the sequence or arrangement of details
2. The time—date, hour, minute
3. The place—spot, surroundings, relation of different spots to the event
4. The nimitta, or surrounding circumstances

Objects

1. Akar, including all the five vishayas & every detail with regard to them
2. Nama—
3. The thing in itself
   a single b combined

Words and Ideas

1. sound 2. symbol 3 meaning 4. bhava 5 relation

Memory—also of contrast, comparison, analogy ie memory of the things in relation to other things

Means of memory

1. Reception 2. Attention 3 Repetition 4. Association
5. Will

[14]

Psychological Notes

A butterfly comes flying over the garden, past a pepegach and two flowertrees which grow side by side. Ordinarily it will be attracted to one of these three objects of desire. It flies past without noticing them, reaches the wall in a straight flight, then contrary to all expectation turns suddenly back, turns aside while flying over the right-hand flowertree to dally for two seconds with another butterfly, then flies off through the pepegach. What dictated its return and departure?

First; it did not notice the flowertree because its mind was fixed on some more distant object present to its instinctive memory, but by a law of the mind it received subconsciously the impression of the scent from the flowers. By the time it reached the wall this came up to the supraliminal mind as a vague but powerful sense of something missed and attractive on the way. Working through the vital instincts & cravings by vital impulse which dominantly determines the movements of the insect, this sense immediately enforced a backward flight. If the other butterfly had not intervened, it is possible that at the second contact with the scent of the flowers, the vague sense would have identified itself, consciously or subconsciously, with a definite supraliminal expression & the descent on the flowers would have been determined, but the diversion once made, the vagueness not only remained, but the impression was half obliterated and only the idea of return to something in the distance remained. This, however, was strong enough to divert the insect from its fellow, especially as the latter was concerned with the flowers and did not respond to the advances made. Hence the farther pursuit of the flight backward.

SORTILEGES OF MAY AND JUNE 1912

Sortileges

20th May. 1912.

While thinking of present British policy in India.

न समानजातीयेनैवोपकारदर्शनात्। Brih. Up. 552.

D[itt]o — of present state of siddhi with regard to mental & ideal thought & action, error & truth & the replacement of manas by vijnanam or satyam.

1. अथ तेनेत्येवोपक्षीणः स्मार्तः प्रत्यय इदमिति चान्य एव वार्तमानिकः प्रत्ययः क्षीयते ततः सादृश्यप्रत्ययानुपपत्तिस्तेनेदं सदृशमिति। अनेकदर्शिन एकस्याभावात्॥

(सदृश to be taken for sortilege as with drishti). Brih. Up. 574.

Note. The chief difficulties now experienced are the habit of judging by past experience and association (स्मार्तः) and that of judging by present indications (वार्तमानिकः) and the insufficient power of judging by inner vision directly straight on the vishaya. This again is due to the insufficient realisation of the jnanam Brahma, anekadarshi ekam.

2. यदादित्यादिविलक्षणं ज्योतिरान्तरं सिद्धमित्येतदसत्। Brih. Up. 552.

All inner light effected, not of the vijnana, is asat & must be got rid of even if it seem to be intuition.

While thinking of the enormous difficulties of the sadhana; happened to open the drawer & saw on a stray piece of paper (R's [Ramaswamy's] Latin translation)

"a su surmonter toutes les difficultés et s'assurer une vie durable."

5th June 1912 Thesis — R.F. I p. 147

1. De nombreux accidents eurent lieu. (Subsequent to "Titanic")

2. Toute usurpation a un cruel retour et celui qui usurpe devrait y songer, du moins pour ses enfants qui presque toujours portent la peine.

3. (p. 290) On a déjà vu que les membres de cette noblesse échappée de France étaient divisés en deux partis; les uns[,] vieux serviteurs, nourris de faveurs, et composant ce qu'on appelait la cour, ne voulaient pas, en s'appuyant sur la noblesse de province, entrer en partage d'influence avec elle et, pour cela, ils n'entendaient recourir qu'à l'étranger; les autres comptant davantage sur leur épée, voulaient soulever les provinces du Midi en y réveillant le fanatisme.

UNDATED NOTES, c. NOVEMBER 1912

Laws of the Future Yoga—
Suddhata

1. Anarambha—

No effort must be made, no struggle to overcome difficulties, but the act must be allowed to work & pass unquestioned, unhindered, unaided. (कर्मणि अकर्म)

2. Nirapeksha—

Nothing must be looked on as a belonging (अपरिग्रहः) or as a thing to be gained or lost, but all as things sent and taken away for ananda. There must be no attempt to get anything or keep anything; nor must any object be held in view. The vijnana must understand why a particular thing is done or is being prepared, what it is, when & how it will develop, but not in any way allow its knowledge to influence the heart or the action.

3. Saucha.

There must be no desire, no repining, no rejecting (यदृच्छालाभसन्तोषः), no idea of dwandwa (पापपुण्यमानापमानप्रियाप्रियविवर्जनम्)

4. Sattwasthiti.

There must be a clear instinctive intelligence of the truth about everything due to vishuddhi & prakash—freedom from mental or moral tamas—but no attempt to understand or throw off tamas by mental activity.

Fundamental Knowledge
Sraddha.

1. Nothing can happen but mangalam.
2 The yoga as laid down cannot fail to be fulfilled.
3 Every detail of the Yoga is arranged by Srikrishna.
4 All subjective experiences are true, only they must be rightly understood.

5. All objective experiences are necessary for the lila.

Jnanam

Rules for Knowledge.

1. Everything thought is satyam—anritam is only misplacement in time[,] place & circumstance. We have to find the nature of the confusion & its source. The habit of being detected discourages anritam until it ceases to act

2. All knowledge is possible; no power is impossible. It is a matter of abhyasa and prakash—once there is shuddhi & sraddha.

3. Sraddha is omnipotent for jnanam, karma & ananda.

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF 3 DECEMBER 1912

Programme.[1]

1. Rupadrishti farther developed today (3d) & confirmed in stability tomorrow—
2. Spontaneity of Lipi tomorrow. A little tonight.
3 Trikaldrishti will begin to work perfectly from tomorrow
4. Powers to overcome resistance in the next three days
5. Samadhi to be regularised during December.

—

6. Intense ananda to come first before permanence. Intensity from 3d to 10th, permanence from 10th to 31st
7 Health in the last half of the month.
8 First successes of saundaryam 3d to 10th
9. Utthapana in the latter half of the month—

—

10. Equipment begins in this week & is fulfilled in the next two weeks succeeding.

---

[1] *This Programme was recopied, with some changes, in the Record of 3 December 1912. See page 125.—Ed.*

UNDATED OR PARTLY DATED SCRIPT, 1912–1913

[1]

Whatever may be the limitations of the ordinary script, there is another in which an old tendency must be fulfilled, the prophetic script, not Srikrishna's, but commissioned by him. This is the only form of script which has any practical connection with the yoga, not with its fulfilment, but with the action. Wherever the action has to be coordinated, this script will arrange the coordination. There are four divisions of the Karma, literary, religious, practical, social. The first of these is ready for coordination. ——

The literary Karma falls under three heads — poetry, prose and scholarship. The poetry again, under three, epic, dramatic and the minor forms which again include narrative, lyric and reflective. Besides these there is humorous & satirical poetry and translation. All forms have to be attempted & all from the beginning — The prose comprises — philosophical writings, fiction and essay in its many forms (treatise, article, essay, pamphlet, notes, review etc.). The fiction includes romance, ordinary novel and short stories. The philosophy includes Veda, Vedanta & explanation of other forms of Hindu thought & scripture. Scholarship covers the new system of philology, explanation of Veda with scholastic justification, more translation & comment on Sanscrit writings. To begin with — you have to complete The Commentary on the Kena Upanishad, The Introduction to the Study of the Upanishads and a book on Yoga (Philosophy); the two dramas and a third; the revision of your other poems; the completion of the Stone of Ishtar and a number of occasional verses (Poetry); the Idylls of the Occult, The Return of Moro Giafferi and The Siege of Mathura (Prose fiction); your study of the Vedas (first mandala) along with an explanation of the Vedic Gods (the Secret of the Veda).

[2]

There is no Script in this actually, it is only the record of thought vyakta or avyakta. Meanwhile the direct government has to begin; the slave to SriKrishna direct. Therefore the gods have stood back, but they are all present in the system. Tomorrow the direct government will be continuous. Tonight there will be the Ananda of the actual embrace of the daughters of delight.

—

At present the conquest of the Akasha is the one necessity.

———

Definitely, Ananda will take possession of the bodily system. The Arogyam will begin to take a definite trend towards finality. Utthapana will begin to recover force. No farther prophecies will be given about the third chatusthaya in the Script.—

[3]

The physical resistance is successful because it is exhausting itself. The difficulty in the trikaldrishti is the principal obstacle to the perfection of the sruti, replacement of trikaldrishti by tejas & tapas. It is intended to give a greater rapidity to the siddhi, but the forces of resistance are hitherto successful. However, they will not be successful for much longer. In reality, sight is the proper method, aided by thought, & it is so being arranged, the old mental drishti will revive preparatory to the actual rupadrishti. The health is about to take a final decisive step forward, covering the only ground yet unoccupied. Ananda (physical, akarana) will now grow intense & possess the body. The daurbalyam will once more be expelled, entirely. Only the saundaryam will be still left effectively opposed—though no longer contradicted. The opposition to the drishti in samadhi & jagrad goes—trikaldrishti & siddhis establish themselves—

There is only difficulty of belief in the lila down here. That is about to be removed— No writing this afternoon till teatime. Many are yet to be revealed.

Life has begun feebly, in literature & thought. It will soon take a more powerful movement of knowledge & commence in action; necessarily, also in enjoyment. Today & not later the Ananda will begin.

More force is needed. The normal writing must improve. Force cannot come, because the enemy makes use of it, — not Indra, not Vritra, not even Pani, but the Rakshasa, — Rakshaswi. Therefore only the calm stable or even regular force comes. But Rudrani needs a powerful and rushing force for her work, not merely a swift, even and unfailing force. It is this force which is in preparation. The physical weakness or brain arrest has nothing to do with it. The brain arrest comes because of the Rakshasic force and would be dispensed with if the stream of Rudrani's activity were once liberated from this impediment and aggression.

[4]

Words, words, words, but no real brotherhood. They pass. Fake silver, mortofil, with bits of the real stuff & some psychic faculties such as all men can develop. Yes. For some time. We shall see. They are trying to keep down the system on the lower levels, but they cannot permanently succeed. Fresh siddhi today. Siddhi of trikaldrishti, aishwarya, ishita, vyapti, samadhi. There is excellent swapnasamadhi, but stability is insufficient.

Yes, it is so intended to effect something by the script and immediately. Attend to the physical siddhi. The Arogya persists in spite of contradictions which are diminishing in force. Ananda has to be insisted on psychically till the body acquires it; it is not only willing, but eager to admit it, but the Vritras stand in the way. Saundarya will emerge in a few days.

The personal relation has to be established. It has to be established by Vani, script, thought & action. The telepathy therefore can now be as much trusted as the nearer trikaldrishti. It is the evil of the speculative reason, but it was not accepted. The trikaldrishti has to get beyond this dependent state & it will do so definitely today. That also is being solved, the attachment of the shama —

There are three kinds, πολιτης, [. . .], δουλος & in each kind there are three subdivisions.

All these powers have to be resumed & perfected. But not with too much of a rush at first. The torrent will come afterwards. Meanwhile the day has to be filled in with a perfect activity of all kinds & the physical (general) utthapana confirmed. Yesterday's success in the mukti from shitoshna has to be farther tested, but it depends on the removal of the mosquitoes. For the rest, the primary & secondary utthapanas have to revive simultaneously & the continuity of the kamananda has to be confirmed. This has to be done today.

Agesilaus = Sn [Saurin]. Agathon, Alcibiades, Pericles, Brasidas Agis, Agesilaus, Sophocles, Pharnabazus. Lysander, Euripides, Pausanias.

Two absolutely perfect, the rest mostly defective. That is already done. Now for the physical siddhi. Ananda first of all, Ananda first & foremost. If there were not strong resistance of a kind, there would be no need of the special pressure of the ishita. The others will come with Ananda & in its train.

==

Many press in, none are allowed. The time for them has not yet arrived. Only when the viveka is sufficient to its task, can that movement be undertaken.

आर सनान् पहि नाय दराः कुरु विष्टपिमूरं।

μεχρι τουτου του ἐτους οὐχ ἐδυναντο οὐτε τους πολεμιους ἀμυνειν—οὐτε τους φιλους σωζειν. ἐδει γαρ ἡ δυναμις, ἐδει ὁ πλουτος, ἐδει ἡ πληθυς των πολιτων. μιχρος φαυλος ἀδυνατος ὁ ὀχλος, ἀγαθοι ἀλλα δυστυχεις οἱ χρατιστοι. ἐδοχει γε ταυτα πασι τοις ῾Ελλησι.

There is still much to write. Immediate progress in the Ananda is needed—the Kamananda. It is increasing, so also the rupadrishti.

Today continuity of kamananda, abundance of rupadrishti & other drishtis; return of Personality of Master.

The continuous Kamananda is now assured. It is the turn of the Rupadrishti. The Arogya is already strengthened & the general utthapana as well as the primary. But the success of these utthapanas depend[s] upon the anima & the anima on the ananda. Meanwhile the subjection to hunger craving & weakness of emptiness is being removed. In fact, it is removed—but the craving itself is still present in a modified form.

Rupadrishti has not yet hold of the Akasha, but the time has now arrived. The vijnana has to become more active, with it the freedom of the rupa & lipi. I do not mean this very moment, nor do I mean that the vijnana is quiescent, but it has not recently been brilliantly active. The activity of chitrarupa is the sign, rather than the essential basis; it is if anything, a starting point. Chitra & sthapatya are linked together, they cannot be separated. The only question is about akasharupa & the method of bringing it about.

When it was said that today there must be perfect activity, the relapse & revolt were not contemplated. None of those predictions have been falsified, except the filling in of the day with a perfect activity, & that did not refer to yesterday in particular. Nor did the other prediction mean that the continuity or abundance would be immediately perfect.

The voices rejected are those that persist in misleading the mind by excessive encouragement. The lipi does not mean that there will be entire baldness, but that that is the price demanded. Let us leave these things & proceed with the positive siddhi. This is the command, be the results what they may. The superior strength of the aishwarya-ishita is now evident. There is no real need for the financial part of that letter. The Vanis have to be purified & the speech brought into stricter conformity with the Satya of Trikaldrishti. Continuity of the Ananda has first to be secured

Taste is entirely perfect, but hearing, smell, sight & touch are still attacked by old sanskaras. You are right about the permitted obstinacy of the opposition. The vani is now purified. Both vani & script have to express a positive rather [than] a negative truth, but they have to possess the capacity of limiting the positive statement whenever necessary. The false or alien aishwarya has no longer any power. The indriyas will now be finally purified of Nirananda.

Hearing first, then touch, then smell, last sight. The element of discomfort must be extruded, not suffered—nirananda must become ananda, then intense ananda of bhoga. It is discomfort alone that survives. Reason has to disappear in truth. The persistence of the Ananda is now perfect; its continuity is assured but not perfect. The continuity has to become perfect. Afterwards the intensity will of itself increase. This is not indriya. It is manas in the physical prana. That cannot be purified all at once. Pain & discomfort of the body will therefore last, not in the indriyas, but this pain & discomfort must be increasingly associated with ananda, become a form of ananda & finally transmute into ananda. There is no other reaction except the pain in the fight & a slight subtle stiffness. These have to be steadily extruded. The difficulties of assimilation have to be faced & borne; a sudden resort to evacuation must always be avoided except in case of extreme urgency.

A slow & steady development is still insisted on in the Sat of the apara prakriti & to that extent in the Sat of the Para Prakriti. It is evident that it is not intended immediately to succeed, but always now the aishwarya has an effect & usually an ultimate success, if it is persisted in and an ultimate effect, even if it is abandoned. Aishwarya now acts through direct pressure, through assistant circumstance in direct pressure & although it is not apparent by indirect action through Prakriti assisting these or by itself or using these. That is definite—your steady tapas is the instrument—faith will come with truth & success. Impure still, all three of them, but the Asura is broken—only in him, it rises occasionally.

सं परिति प्सरणा ककलायति काव्यमनग्नन्
सं जवनं पुरु हीति सपज्जनः। आर्यति राथः॥

Something definite & forceful must again be attempted by the combined forces of knowledge. Trikaldrishti, aishwarya-ishita-vyapti must receive a powerful impulse, carrying the first near to perfection, the second to invariable effectuality. And the kamananda must be intensified & restored to evident continuity. The continuity is being slowly established, the intensity made to recur. It is the method.

The personality must manifest. You need not be afraid of my upsetting things always. Accept vani, script, lipi as mine unless the vivek tells you to the contrary. You are right, but it is the personality subject to increase of Balarama. Never mind the attendant manomaya illusions. Do not mind either that pressure. At the proper time your course will be justified by the event. When that time will come, is not yet clear, but it is not today or now. There is yet a delay before the bhagya can manifest. It is the crown & seal of the siddhi subject of course to farther development of both simultaneously. More of the trikaldrishti, aishwarya & ananda, also of the lipi.

The exact trikaldrishti as yet fails to establish itself. That is what I insist on; the result you will see. You see. Tomorrow a great progress will be made as the result of today's struggle. Even today, considerable progress is being made. The intensity is manifest, it is recurrent; the continuity is attempting to assert itself & will eventually & before long succeed. There remains the lipi. I add the rupa & samadhi. No more here for today.

=

21st [January 1913]

Keep the mind clear of judgement. Make no attempt to increase the vijnana siddhi, whatever happens—only the physical siddhi needs still a little tapasya. The karma of course—it is the field for tapas. You see that you still succeed subjectively—not yet objectively except in some instances. You have only to go on applying the will with force, but not as a struggle. It will grow stronger & stronger. It is not tamasic.

Today, then, the steady progress of vijnana & kamananda & the struggle in the health and the utthapana & saundarya. Leave that alone for the present; it is part of the karma. Still tejas has to increase & tapas & the force of the sraddha.

It is the lack of the equipment that troubles & depresses the karma. Evidently the equipment is not yet due—even that promise is not really fulfilled; only the absolute anxiety for the morrow is postponed. The cause of prospective anxiety must now be got rid of—first. In that there need be no undue delay. For some time this movement must be followed. It is the restoration of kalyanasraddha. Although they have concentrated strength successfully there, it is only because you sought to push on the trikaldrishti, instead of allowing it to proceed of itself.

=

22d.

The last day of this attack. The body will now be liberated. Once more the relics of the judgment & consideration have to be expelled by the dasyam. In the morning the vijnana will begin its united & rapid sweep after some farther activity of the trikaldrishti & the kamananda again generalise itself. Intellectual infallibility, now acting in an irresistible stream, will increase enormously. First the vijnanamay progress & infallibility then the kamananda, then the physical tapas & siddhi. The tapas must now be directed purely to the physical siddhi & the karmasiddhi & first to the kamananda. Necessarily they will resist. Action must enter into it, but only temporarily as an end to inefficiency of the siddhi. The morning is not over yet. The other movement of the automatic script.

Valmiki—
संजन तायु दिलं ममनास्कुमि तायु परामि
जल्वनम् अभ्रम् अदे करया च पिप्रामनि हेडः।
पार दलं सद पाकि पयं ततरायिमि जान।

Ritadharma—

अंग पद ह योनिं रथस्य पथं दृशे। रथो ह प्रतमः रथो अन्तमः रथं मये। रथेन जगत् रथेन परमं रथीष्टमु। रथमद्म इं रथमयो ब्रह्मणस्पतिः॥

[. . . . . .]
Kálan kále kalaya kálan Satran satre
Redmi ranaya raná
Para para patri páyo Núna nalá
Salavú salaka salá

Gloria

सेयमागतास्मि—मम हि एतदारम्भणं यत्त्वया कृतं पुराणतमे कलौ यदेव वक्तुमुपचक्रमे—न मे भ्रमो भवितुं शक्यः न मे व्यतिक्रमः—तदालपनं तेषां दुष्कृतिनाम् अस्त्येव मे विशेषभावो विशेषगुणसम्पदपि मे। एतस्मिन्नेव कलौ ब्रवीमि। प्रथमे लवस्य यच्चरितं येन नष्टं पारीक्षितं कर्म। सो हि

युधिष्ठिरकुलोद्भवः क्षत्रियो न राजा। मन्त्री च स बभूव राज्ञो सतधनस्य न राजा कदापि।

The script is established. Its accuracy has to be entirely proved, not only in what it says, but in what it suggests. The opposition need not trouble you. Attend to the physical siddhi, especially the virya & to the saundarya— In the Greek there is a hesitation. The Script is not yet strong enough to overcome the sanskara. There is no utility just now in overburdening the record. On the other hand much has to be written here. Some of the perceptions of the future have been confirmed, but there must be a freer movement. It is not my object to repeat here what the thought perception has given you. Meanwhile I give you some results.

By Saturday—physical siddhi in full train, but saundarya especially not yet confirmed. By the 30th—all confirmed, but the saundarya still weak. In February three first perfected; only perfect saundarya & tertiary utthapana will remain to be completed. Equipment not yet due, but provision due & arriving

Bhishma . . Bengal Provincial Conference, The Presidential Address. Jessore Tragedy.

Equipment & karmasiddhi in February.

These predictions are to be observed in their fulfilment or nonfulfilment. It will be seen how far the script is correct. Now for nearer predictions. First, the general utthapana is restored tonight & confirmed tomorrow. Study will be resumed, but not more than slightly. It will include Tamil & Hebrew. The line of progress of the three utthapanas will then be indicated. The struggle over the saundaryam will be brought to a head tomorrow, decided Friday, confirmed Saturday.

23d

See whether it emerges or not. Health is a thing not so much to be defended as developed. First here as usual. It is a question now of the life, the karmasiddhi. As for utthapana, it will fulfil itself from today in spite of the survivals. Beauty will emerge slowly after tomorrow. The life-struggle centres in three points—1st equipment 2d manifestation of Yogic power as in therapeusis 3d the control of events in public matters. The rest is well assured & will come easily when the difficulties have been overcome. 2 & 3 are somewhat developed, but the struggle in them continues. 1 is not at all developed. It is really the sole thing that remains (except the saundarya). The doubt is stronger about saundarya and equipment than on any other point, & every suggestion of speedy improvement in these two matters is distrusted & repelled. It is towards this defect that the Shakti is now turning, as towards all other defects, but these must be overcome before the full flood of siddhi is possible. They must both begin to be overcome within this month of January & fully overcome in February.

Vijnana has been checked. Only to show trikaldrishti at work and to insist on the continuous action of the saundaryasiddhi. It is necessary to manifest the power of reading thoughts. It is already manifesting, but must be habitual in its action & complete. This imagination must be expelled. There is no farther need of it. The idea of impossibility must be expelled. No, the siddhi is of chief importance. Yes, but the tendency is towards firmness & clearness.

There is, undoubtedly, a defect in the present action of the vijnana & therefore of the script—the defect of clouded prakasha. The devatas of intellectual tejas are yet too active in their shadows. The dasya is somewhat abridged owing to the revival of judgment & dissatisfaction which is for the rest, justified by event. It is suggested either today or tomorrow. The successful opposition to the vijnana siddhi & the physical siddhi is chiefly responsible. The rest would not have touched but for that.

More deliberateness is needed without losing the rapidity. It must be so. Oppose the current no longer; even under the cloud, be sure of the sun behind. There is still an elusive activity seeking to arrange the thoughts. The arrangement must emerge of itself. There is a spirit of judgment waiting on script & thought which hampers the flow of the vijnana. This spirit of judgment has to be expelled. It waits also on the action & hampers it.

Treasure—outpouring from the treasure reserve for the lila; actual treasury will also be found; but the first is immediate, the second in the yet distant future. . Follow the impulse given as you accept the thought presented. War is preparing & the Turkish chances seem small; nevertheless the gage has to be thrown down to the subjective enemies — either Adrianople & the coast islands or war. There must be the will for the provision.

The power has not been maintained, only manifested. It is now returning, but it is not sure of its uninterrupted hold as yet. It will soon be sure & extend itself to all things, persons & movements. It is already doing it. It is extending to the actions of persons. Leave it to develop in the full flood of the jnana-trikaldrishti-aishwarya. But the other powers, rupa lipi samadhi have to be brought into the full stream.

24th

Already, there is a great improvement in the assimilation, in spite of occasional false steps. The diminution of jalavisrishti is a point of capital importance. The opposition to utthapana still persists. It has patiently to be extruded. The eruption is troublesome, but less vital than seems to be the case. It is dying out actually, even though artificially maintained. The Ananda is established, it is the continuity that is being resisted. As for the saundarya, it is still unestablished.

पाय मनः सहसे वचि संजन राम अरीहन्।
ना पतते करि ईलल्या अनि वस्मनि मल्ये
सं जभिता सीता स्वसिः। एवं वीयति वस्म॥

Ananda intense today & more continuous. Rupa & lipi free & perfect. Arogya & utthapana to increase. Not yet. First Ananda. Today is the day of final preparation for the karmasiddhi.

अंदिश वीलतनूः महि अभ्रजे आविलद् ऊय,
सालुकि, वीर अनं मरतां यद् अयाय परीयन्
रावणः ऊदपयाः वलम् आसखः आर्यरभाये।
सन्यं मर्तहनं वि पयामि।

[5]

Record—

No interference here, entire passivity.

1st rule. No interference anywhere, entire passivity
2d rule. Disregard of the probable consequences
3d rule. Persistence in will according to knowledge
4th rule. Application of jnana & trikaldrishti to all things, small or great, near or remote, knowable or apparently unknowable.
5th rule. Interpretation of error; utilisation of failure.
6th rule. Constant exercise of utthapana.
7th rule. Will in all things, and action a subordinate instrument—

In one week, the difference will be seen

═

Today, the first movement—

1. Knowledge to be finally set right, in all its instruments.
2. Power to apply itself to remove its own defects
3. Lipi, Chitra, Rupa
4. Ananda, Arogya—

[6]

No danger of relapse. This occasion was wholly abnormal— This is the script, it is about to assume the burden of trikaldrishti definitely. Let us see what they can do. "Dasya, tejas, faith, trikaldrishti, aishwarya, samadhi, all rising out of something into the great & splendid." The first dart failed, the second will now be made. ["]Exaltation approved, defiance sanctioned. Tonight & tomorrow, the move forward."

No danger of relapse. Lipi is already moving forward to the mahat. . The rest will follow—

As well die this time, not hereafter. The trikaldrishti is in a state of confusion—the mind cannot manage its materials. This confusion will be removed not at once but in the course of the day. The Aishwarya also is only clumsily effective & sometimes no[t] at all. But the movement has changed to brihat, not yet to ritam & satyam. Samadhi only remains. These things have now to be gathered up & confirmed in the satyam. Afterwards the ritam.

You see, the script has the trikaldrishti. No self-restraint. It stands in the way—vamamarga. Restraint by God only. Yes. Today, tomorrow & the day after.

(1) Satyam, ritam, brihat in the knowledge, power & samadhi
(2) Sharirananda confirmed & greatened
(3) Arogya made triumphant
(4) Removal of exaggerated adhogati, utthapana, firm beginnings of saundarya.

The movement is now for the dasyam on the widest scale. In the trikaldrishti the doubt of the exactness is still active, based on past experience. This is to be removed by the growth & dominance of the ritam. Vijnana led by mahat—

[7]

The assault is being given to the bhukti, tejas and faith. The samata has not been disturbed, only the hasyam has felt a cloud pass over it. The tejas & faith have been darkened for a moment; they subsist but have lost their ananda. Only the vijnana has been clouded and the positive bhukti suspended. That is over. We will now continue developing automatically the vijnana & the bhukti. You have to wait & see.

There is as yet no advance, only a taking up of positions. Nothing has been done which is not old & familiar & the balance of success is still on the side of the attack. That will change in & from the next half hour. It is already changing. Enough.

Two chatusthayas have been almost perfected & at any rate secured against real disturbance and above all against any continuous breach. The ishwarabhava, attahasya & faith in the rapidity & in the lila remain in the second chatusthaya. But these cannot be brought without actuality in the third & fourth. There are touches, not breaches. . The actuality in the third is being extended. But the Vritra has not yet been abolished. In the first two it is not the Vritra, but the vrika—except in the attahasya, brihat faith & ishwarabhava. Today is for the third chatusthaya & especially for knowledge & power, knowledge most, power secondarily. Lipi accompanies them. Samadhi & rupa follow. The development today will be decisive. Only in the fourth & fifth, there is still delay. I do not mean it will be at once perfect. Obviously this is not the direct script. These are not gods, but spirits who seek to guide, inform, direct. Only it is not true that the script is governed by them & never expressed a higher power & knowledge. It is not now being used by a spirit, but merely besieged by a spirit. It is I who am using it & me you know. Not Indra or another but the Master of the Yoga. It is not the divine script because it is acting through mind, not direct from Vijnana. It will always act from Vijnana. I am about to establish with fixity the personal relation. The rest is there. All these minor bhavas have to be expelled.

—

The end of the opposition is near in the third. It is really over in the trikaldrishti. It must be finished with in the lipi, rupa & samadhi. The one thing really that remains is rupa samadhi. There is a confusion, the incompetent devatas have to be expelled. It is true more was expected or demanded by one side of the mind than has been fulfilled, more accomplished than was expected by the inert, sceptical side. Perfection is not for today. The second chatusthaya is different. The faith, aishwarya, attahasya have been interrupted—

═

All the vijnana is definitely in action, though in unequal & imperfect action. The unequal & imperfect parts must now be filled in & out. Afterwards we can attend to the fourth chatusthaya more particularly.

We have to move forward. Recognise the nature of existence. This is the knowledge; therefore dhairya is necessary.

No dependence on the script. If it depends on the script, it will not be self-assured. The script is only for confirmation. It is perfectly true that the first chatusthay has been broken into after a promise that it should never again be broken. . Substantially it is intact. The violence done to the system is the proof that it cannot be destroyed. The continuance of the tejas will be the proof that the second chatusthay stands, even in the faith there is only a temporary disturbance. The harm done will be repaired. The promises have all been exaggerations of Will, therefore lies. The Vani has exaggerated, every source of knowledge has exaggerated. The inertia exaggerates on the opposite side.

═

So much has been done. All that was a play of the game intended to bring about a fresh grouping. Henceforth all the movements of knowledge & power will work themselves out not interfered with by the will in the intellect & the intellectual judgment, although these in their passing rupam can still distort the truth.

[8]

Shrink not nor falter, O hero, though thy toil seems ever to return on thee in vain menacing to crush thee in its rebound. Thy labour of Sisyphus is the laboratory of the future & the fulfilment of eternity is in thy present insignificant toil, as the tree that was & is to be in the seed that seems so little to the eye & vain.

[9]

The recurring confusion created by the pranic intellect intruding its activity is forced on the system, but it is noticeable that only the shadow of asamata & ashakti comes with it as a part of the ajnana & disappear[s] automatically with the return of the jnana. The apparent difficulty will disappear like all the rest. The pressure on the tejas is intended to force the emergence of the rapidly fulfilling divine tapas.

Trust first, — if there is anything wrong, seek the explanation or better await it. Rapidity is necessary first in the third chatusthaya & in the fourth; there will be sufficient money to keep you till January. The ecstasy is to increase in force & frequency, while the subdued (not the obstructed) ananda becomes perpetual during waking hours & even in sleep the ananda gains ground. Then the subdued ecstasy will take its place while intense ecstasy becomes the occasional higher state. So it will proceed. As for the siddhi of the health, that proceeds in spite of all resistance. Neither of these will be perfect till December; but meanwhile the utthapana will come rapidly forward & the saundarya begin to break through its obstacles.

═══

The range must be widened & the defects removed— The general obstruction must be met by a general denial of the obstruction & refusal to work out of it by the lower processes. That has been done sufficiently and has not to be repeated ad infinitum—

———

There is now no reason why the Samata etc should disappear. Only the tejas of Mahakali must finally be harmonised with the passivity and the dasya. This will be done today by eliminating the Maheshwari bhava from the superficial consciousness & its contents without bringing back the mental tejas. It is true. Nevertheless these things are done. The struggle is over the whole basis of the farther advance.

═══

The incident of yesterday was used as a turning point—to turn you into the road hitherto avoided, now destined for your treading, the road of mighty, straightforward effective karma. Others have tried, stumbled and fallen. You will see that you are henceforth as effectively protected in action as in self-defensive passivity & in action by others—as effectually & more. All these mishaps have had their object and their beneficial purposefulness. Not after this year. The knowledge & power have to be entirely harmonised first. That egoism is exhausting its remnants. The difficulty is great only because the pranic suggestions attempt to predominate & mislead; in itself it is not great.

Today a great movement forward. It is not forbidden; it has to be accepted; it will clear itself of the ignorance, which is now the only obstacle. Today for the second & third—if the second is cleared, the first automatically fulfils itself. There is a tremendous pressure in order to compel the buddhi to give up faith in the bodily siddhi & the new society. Let the power first be reestablished. The trikaldrishti, telepathy, power, lipi have now all to move towards absolute perfection dragging the samadhi & drishti with them. Till that is done, the fourth chatusthaya will only prepare its advance. The advance has begun; it will gather momentum during the day.

The powers of knowledge & tapas are stronger, but they are all acting in the intellect without the action of the intellectual judgment, therefore there is no light. The mental realm is being purified of the pranas. The force of the tapas is yet insufficient. Life has to be brought into line with the siddhis acquired, or in other words the powers have to take hold of life and possess it. Life means the Akash of the prithivi, & through the Akash all it contains. It is true, the Akash is full of opposition & obstruction where formerly it seemed clear. The obstruction is only in order to bring out the samata, tapas etc & increase the eventual force of the powers themselves. The admission of the power & right of the objective world to resist is to be once more cancelled. So far we have advanced that the power & knowledge are showing the old force & invariable effectiveness, but the effectiveness is usually partial, often slight in actuality, seldom flawless. We have not then advanced beyond the old point in appearance, except that the power & the instruments are all accepted & faith in them is completely founded, though still uncertain about rapid results. The second chatusthaya is now completely founded except in the extent & certainty in detail of the faith & of the Kalibhava, therefore the attahasya too is little manifest. That must now appear, while at the same time the instruments of the later chatusthayas farther justify themselves. The conditions are now fixed and will clear & develop themselves—

The third chatusthaya is reforming itself on a much sounder basis. The power, lipi & knowledge will during the next three days overpower the resistance of the physical akasha. Rupa and samadhi will follow their lead. About the rupa & samadhi you are uncertain, but the doubts will be removed. Meanwhile the fourth chatusthaya must be pushed forward. Health is going through its ultimate denials & is already shaking itself free from some of them. Ananda is insisting. But the utthapana & saundarya are still in a crude state & strongly opposed in their attempt to progress. A beginning has been made in the utthapana. It must be steadily pursued. As for the destruction in the fifth, it is only the destruction of unsound members and of the defects which make them unsound. This time the movement has not been favourable. The old obstruction seems to be momentarily successful.

The attempt will be persistent & successful. There is no ambiguity [.............................] directions. When it is said, there will be [.................................] power than has already [....][1]

From today regularisation of the Yoga & the life; but Yoga more first than the life. The activity of the second chatusthaya has to be restored perfectly; for the activity of the first is already restored & perfect but for the physical touch. This activity of the second chatusthaya must take place without disturbing the first, must bring universal ananda, not discouragement & disappointment. That once done, the third will progress itself towards its self-perfection as it is already doing in the lipi and the pure jnana. The practical jnana, the power & the samadhi will all perfect themselves on that basis. So, too by the perfection of the power the fourth will break down its obstacles & progress to perfection. Meanwhile the fifth will confirm and enlarge itself.

The doubt is justified by the past, not by the future. Until it is removed by knowledge, it must persist. There is a perfect knowledge at work removing the ignorance; only the ignorance is allowed to return & conquer so often, for the sake of humanity, so that its burden may be lightened. I am about to establish the parts of knowledge again, so that the faith may have some ground to stand upon.

---

[1] *Manuscript damaged; three lines partially or wholly lost.—Ed.*

The thing is now once again grounded in samata & dasya—The tejas will now begin to work, the faith develop & the vijnana act.

═══

The vijnana is preparing its own perfection and today there will be the necessary reconstruction. The body is still dominated by asiddhi. The struggle is with the general Vritra of the third, sixth & first, second—especially in the powers of knowledge. The vyuha is proceeding. Still the vyuha is proceeding. The Samúha is there, but in a disordered state. The negative stage is over; the positive affirmation must more & more fulfil itself. Arrangement means in time, place & circumstance. The vyuha is taking place; the rays do not yet go to their right p[lace]—Faith withstands all the assaults & the knowledge of Brahman Sarva & Ananta is confirming itself, but it must also be Jnana & Ananda. That is why the third must now fulfil itself & then the fourth. All these are only the first obstacles to the final perfection. Self-fulfilment is now the rule except in the body. It must become the rule there also. But not at once. As for the rapidity it will be soon at work.

Reconstitute. First, the vijnana—Next, the power—Self-development of all. It is only a temporary obstacle. There is a compulsion on the whole system[. I]t is an a[ttemp]t to dissolve & wreck that siddhi. Hence it is being resisted, [. . . .] I have allowed it for particu[lar] purposes. It has no [. . . .][2]

The window will not fall. The struggle for the third chatusthaya proceeds & the attack is now constant, but so also is the pressure of the siddhi. The siddhi will proceed now in the mass & not in detail, except in the rupa—All is of use. In the matter of the stomach, it is essential that the reversion to the old system of evacuation should cease & it will cease. The health & the ananda will now be specially dealt with while the utthapana is preparing. Meanwhile the third chatusthaya will perfect itself. No the first, not this. This is beautiful & useful for this life. No straining of the

---

[2] *Manuscript damaged; two lines partially lost.—Ed.*

Tapas is needed. There also no physical pressure is needed. This is how it will become regularised. . The only question is about time. Meanwhile the focus must be turned upon life. The articles must be sent and yet not in submission to them. Pránán atarah.

The life has now to be entirely expressed in these higher values. The second chatusthaya has to begin its play in life. Many have still the ego, & therefore impressions of egoism survive. The harmonious arrangement of the first three chatusthayas is proceeding. Today—the first two are being attacked by the old bhavas with which the material mind has long been familiarised, but they will overcome the attack & emerge permanently victorious.

dhairyam suddhatanantyalipsa mahadbhavah
pritih dakshyam danapratidanalipsa anandibhava
bhoga hasyam karmalipsa samabhava

The trikaldrishti will arrange itself today & the whole knowledge act connectedly from tomorrow. There is an attempt to revive the activity of the pranic intelligence in connection with the trikaldrishti & aishwarya. The difficulty is there to be overcome. The difficulty persists, but is now lightened by the persistent rejection of the pranic suggestions—

Ananda again in the afternoon & evening no longer subdued or obstructed. Utthápana—

═

There is full perfection of the first chatusthaya; in the second there are still defects, but you can see the immense progress made in the human parts of the system. Only the divine part is still imperfect. Till then the full intensity cannot come. The perfection is coming. This is the full attack on the karma, no longer of men, but of nature. They have called up the elements to aid them. The battle with the elements is still a losing battle for the present. Nor is the ideality yet perfectly combined in detail. This is the proof of the ideality but it has yet to be perfected.

The knowledge is once more working with a near approach to perfection, only some of the placements are still wrong. The power must be brought up to the same level in its ordinary movements, then in the body, then in the karma. The power will now begin to work in the ideality & in harmony with the knowledge, the telepathy & trikaldrishti.

Although it is as yet incompletely done, still it is done. Now lipi, [. . . . .][3]

---

[3] *Manuscript damaged; one line lost.—Ed.*

SORTILEGE OF 15 MARCH [1913]

March 15th

St. यदा वै विजानात्यादिवाक्यं व्याकुर्वन्नुत्तरमाह. When the vijnana is active, he (the Master of the Yoga) developing the initial Word, (OM, Brahman) declares all that follows. First, activity of the vijnana, second, constant perception of the Brahman, third, knowledge of the world in the terms of the Brahman.

ACCOUNTS OF 31 MAY–15 JUNE 1913

Record of Yogic details

June 1913

Credit—June 1st (May 31st)

Rs 15-0-0	(Rent for May)	Rs 15
Rs 40-0-0	in notes	
Rs 28-0-0	(Rent & servants for June)	
Rs 10-0-0	reserve	
Rs 7-0-0	in cash.	Rs 85
Rs 70-0-0	out in loans	Rs 70
Rs 150-0-0	in loan	
Rs 150-0-0	in Fr. notes	Rs 300
		470

For June Rs 85 of which 40 in notes and cash 7 for current expenses.
Also Rs 3-8-1 from last month.

June 2d

Rs 20 in notes
" 8 in cash
" 2-9-0 in purse
30-9-0-

May 0-8-1. (Rs 2 for monthly feast)
(" 1 for charity)

June 12th

		Paid	
Rs 50	loans recovered	Rs 15	Rent for May
Rs 150	in Fr notes	Rs 6	charity
Rs 150	in loan	Rs 43-14-	Bijoy. out of rent money (loans[)]
Rs 8-1	from last month		

Actually in hand

Rs 150	in Fr. notes
Rs 150	in loan
*Rs 20	in notes (rent money + Rs 4)
*Rs 10	in notes (reserve + current)
Rs 5	in cash
Rs 23	(rent & servants for June)
*Rs 0-9-10	in money (purse)

For the current expenses
Rs 15-9-10 out of * (9 + 6-9-10).

June 15th-

In hand

Rs 30	in notes
Rs 3-15-1	in cash
Rs 150	in notes.
Rs 10	in loan
Rs 44	with Bijoy
Rs 28	rent & servants

(Rs 16 —rent money
Rs 44 —rent money
Rs 14 + 3-15-1—month's expenses—Rs 1 for shoes.
Rs 150 reserve.[)]

Store Account & Standing

Rice	11 - 0-0	May 31st
Tea	0-13-0	"
Matches	0 - 0-9	"
Spices	1-10-6	"
Sugar	0 - 3-8	June 1st.
S's Cigarettes	0 - 8-0	"
Firewood	3 - 0-0	June 3d
Spices	0 - 0-1	"
Cigarettes (self)	0 - 1-3	"
Kerosine Oil	2 - 5-0	"
Spices	0 - 1-0	June 4th
Sugar	0 - 4-0	June 8th
Cigarettes (self)	0 - 1-3	June 8th
"	0 - 1-3	June 10th
"	0 - 0-6	June 12th
"	0 - 0-6	June 14th
	20 - 2-9	

Miscellaneous Expenses

Sweets	0-0-6	
Coolie	0-1-6	
Cigarettes	0-0-3	June 1st.
Cricket (special)	0-6-0	"
Oil	0-2-0	"
Milk	0-1-0	"
Stamps	0-0-6	"
Cigarettes (special)	0-3-9	June 2d
Lamp	0-2-0	"
(Feast, last month	2-0-0)	"
Barber	0-4-0	"
Wine	0-6-0	"
Cigarettes	0-0-1	June 3d
Saurin	0-0-3	June 4th
Coolie	0-0-3	"
Stamps	0-0-6	"
Ink	0-1-0	June 6th
Kalasi	0-0-9	"
Stamps	0-0-6	June 7th
Money order	0-2-0	"
Parcel	0-4-6	"
Petruz	0-1-0	"
Soap	0-1-3	"
Brooms	0-1-0	June 9th
Shoelaces	0-3-0	
Salle de Lecture	0-8-0	June 10th
Cricket	0-4-0	"
Envelopes & Paper	0-5-0	"
Nibs	0-5-0	"
Cigarettes	0-0-3	June 11th
Washerman	1-0-0	"
Telegram	0-6-0	"

Pushpush	0-6-0	June 12th
Claret	0-6-0	"
Lemons	0-0-3	"
Nalini	0-0-6	June 13th
Stamps	0-1-0	June 14th
Barber	0-2-6	June 15th
	6-8-1	

Daily Meal

Breakfast	0-2-6	June 1st
Meals	0-8-6	"
Breakfast	0-2-3	June 2d
Meals	0-4-0	"
Extra for feast	0-4-7	"
Breakfast	0-1-4	June 3d
Meals	0-7-0	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 4th
Meals	0-6-9	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 5th
Meals	0-7-0	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 6th
Meals	0-8-3	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 7th
Meals	0-8-0	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 8th
Meals	0-7-6	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 9th
Meals	0-8-0	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 10th
Meals	0-7-0	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 11th
Meals	0-7-0	"
Milk	0-0-6	June 12th

Extraordinary

Charity (to be recovered from May & July)	6-0-0-	June 2d
Bijoy's journey	43-14-0-	June 11th

Meals	0-7-0	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 13th
Meals	0-6-6	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 14th
Meals	0-6-6	"
Breakfast	0-2-0	June 15th
Meals	0-6-9	"
	11-3-0	

Daily Balance

	June 1st	Rs	31 - 3 - 10
	June 2d	Rs	29 - 15 - 0
	" 3d	Rs	26 - 7 - 5
	" 4	Rs	23 - 6 - 4
	" 5	Rs	22 - 13 - 7
	" 6	Rs	22 - 0 - 7
Rs 1 added from reserve	" 7	Rs	21 - 12 - 0
	" 8	Rs	20 - 15 - 1
	" 9	Rs	20 - 1 - 1
	" 10	Rs	17 - 13 - 4
	" 11	Rs	16 - 2 - 10
	" 12	Rs	14 - 13 - 10
	" 13	Rs	13 - 4 - 10
	" 14	Rs	12 - 10 - 10
	" 15	Rs	11

RECORD NOTES, 13 AND 15 SEPTEMBER 1913

Record of Yoga.
Theosophic.

Sept. 13

Sortilege— इहोप यात शवसो नपातः सौधन्वना ऋभवो माप भूत।
अस्मिन्हि वः सवने रत्नधेयं गमन्त्विन्द्रमनु वो मदासः॥

An exact application to the circumstances of the Yoga. The Ribhus are the gods of formation who proceed from the divine Tapas (शवसो नपातः) and use it to form thought, action & condition. This formative process is now the course of the Yoga (अस्मिन्हि वः सवने) and the delight of the ananda in the formative action is becoming habitual to the mind-force (रत्नधेयं इन्द्रं). At the moment, however, asiddhi had attacked, bringing defect of formation, defect of ananda[,] trouble & deficiency in the mind (defect of धन्वन्). Hence the इह यात माप भूत.

Lipi—"17th September." (akasha, varnamaya)

Typical Trikaldrishti

A frog hopping in one direction, with no sign of turning. A turn at a sharp right angle indicated & the exact line of subsequent passage indicated; fulfilled but not in the place perceived.

Another frog comes from the opposite direction; indication that the bodies of the two frogs will meet one leaping on the other, although the lines of their motion were not such as to promise meeting. The smaller frog turned away & began hopping in the opposite direction, but the larger pursued & sprang upon it, thus fulfilling the trikaldrishti, but with a variation of circumstance which had not been foreseen.

Sept. 15 –

Two crows descend into the road behind the wall fighting & are invisible. Indication that they will immediately rise above the wall fighting in the air & part. Fulfilled precisely, though the trikaldrishti itself was not jyotirmaya.

VEDIC EXPERIENCE, 14 AND 15 DECEMBER 1913

I. [176][1]

यस्य विश्वानि हस्तयोः पंच क्षितीनां वसु। स्पाशयस्व यो अस्मध्रुग्
दिव्येवाशनिर्जहि॥
असुन्वंतं समं जहि दूणाशं यो न ते मयः। अस्मभ्यमस्य वेदनं दद्धि
सूरिश्चिदोहते॥

O thou in whose two hands are all the possessions of our five dwelling places, make clear to our eyes him who betrays us, slay him even in heaven becoming the thunderbolt. Slay him who presses not out the nectar, the indifferent and oppressed in hope, who is not thy lover, give us the knowledge of him becoming utterly luminous to the worshipper so that he bears up thy activities.

Experienced, Dec 14 & 15th 1913. There are Powers of pure mind which are indifferent, equal to all things, as in possession of the samata,—but they are void of active delight; they do not press out the wine of immortal delight, they possess man in that state when, his hopes oppressed, he takes refuge in a passive & equal indifference, and is no longer in love with mental activities. In this state man takes this enemy of Indra & of his own perfection as a friend and helper. Mental force becoming entirely luminous in knowledge, súrih, is to pierce this dangerous disguise & make clear to the inner eye the true nature of this harmful agency, sama indeed, but asunvan, sama because dunasha & not because of equal delight. He is to be slain in the pure mind where he dwells by Indra in the form of the thunderbolt, mind force informed with vaidyuta energy from Mayas. A uhate is proleptic; the result of Indra or mind force becoming entirely luminous with the solar light of the ideal knowledge is to perfect the mental power of the Yogin so that he is strong to support & hold all the activities of mental knowledge & of the temperament in their fullness.

---

[1] *MS* 173

"Be rapturous in us and a dwelling for the sacrifice, enter with mastery into Indra, O Soma; thou art powerful, moving forward, and thou meetest no hostile forces on thy way. In him give to dwell our self-expressions, who is alone of the lords of action, and according to his movement is self-state sown in us & masterfully he cultivates that crop. O thou etc..... He who has the twofold fullness and his created being is free from flaw or crevice (continuous) in our realisations, in that Indra's struggle, O Indu, prolong (protect) his richness in its havings. As to thy former adorers, O Indra, thou camst into being as a lover, like waters to the thirsty, even after that manner of soul-experience I call to thee. May we find the force that is intense & pierces in the slaying."

UNDATED NOTES, c. 1914

Vijnanachatusthaya

Today—

Lipi, Rupa, Thought, Vani, Trikaldrishti, Power, none absolutely perfect, but moving nearer to perfection.

Tomorrow—

Thought perfect, Vani perfect, Trikaldrishti perfect in type; Power, Rupa, Lipi moving towards perfection.

Day after

Lipi perfect, Power in full force but not yet perfect. Rupa moving towards perfection.

Samadhi waits upon Rupa

It is this time seriously intended.

The script was suspended, not renounced. Today although the commencement has been unfavourable, good progress will be made, except in the physical siddhi, in which the enemy has permission to hold his own for three days more. Trikaldrishti is to be perfected today. That is the first siddhi. Afterwards the lipi has to be brought forward. The trikaldrishti has to move perfectly in all fields & with regard to time, place & circumstance even on the intellectual level.

Perfection is used as a relative term, but should be absolute. The script is not yet used through the highest agencies; it is only a reflection of the condition of the knowledge. There is therefore no help to be had from it which cannot be had from the other instruments of knowledge—Nevertheless it has to be used & perfected. The falsehoods suggested & uncorrected prevent the dasya from being entirely accepted, but the movement of anrita is a relapse of the intellect in body, not a movement justified by the actual condition of the siddhi—

The revolt against the dasyam where the directing Agency is not satisfactory nor plainly authorised, must cease. There is a perfect Wisdom governing the siddhi & the intellectual infallibility is well established except in that which doubts & judges & by doubting & judging confuses the intellect—

The tejas has not to be renounced, but justified

The trikaldrishti today will throw off the doubt & judgment, but not yet the uncertainties left behind by them in the action of the faculty in intellect. Lipi will justify the prediction—Rupa at last emerge & Power overcome for the last time the general obstruction. In the physical siddhi the Ananda will once more take hold. Samadhi will develop with the rupa. All this is for today.

NOTES ON IMAGES SEEN IN MARCH 1914

The Evolutionary Scale.

We shall see how the thought of God works itself out in Life. The material world is first formed with the Sun as centre, the Sun [ ][1] being itself only a subordinate star of the great Agni, Mahavishnu, in whom is centred the Bhu. Mahavishnu is the Virat Purusha who as Agni pours Himself out into the forms of sun and star. He is Agni Twashtá, Visvakarman, he is also Prajápati and Matariswan. These are the three primal Purushas of the earth life,—Agni Twashta, Prajápati & Matariswan, all of them soul bodies of Mahavishnu. Agni Twashta having made the Sun out of the Apas or waters of being, Prajapati as Surya Savitri enters into the Sun and takes possession of it. He multiplies himself in the Suris or Solar Gods who are the souls of the flames of Surya, the Purushas of the female solar energies. Then he creates out of this solar body of Vishnu the planets each of which successively becomes the Bhumi or place of manifestation for Manu, the mental being, who is the nodus of manifest life-existence and the link between the life and the spirit. The present earth in its turn appears as the scene of life, Mars being its last theatre. In the Bhumi Agni Twashta is again the first principle, Matariswan the second, finally, Prajapati appears in the form of the four Manus, chatváro manavah. Not in the physical world at first, but in the mental world which stands behind the earth-life; for earth has seven planes of being, the material of which the scenes and events are alone normally visible to the material senses, the vital of which man's pranakosha is built and to which it is responsive, the mental to which his manahkosha is attached, the ideal governing his vijnanakosha, the beatific which supports his anandakosha, & the dynamic and essential to which he has not yet developed corresponding koshas, but only unformed nimbuses of concrete being. All the gods throw out their linga-rupas into these worlds of earth and through them carry on her affairs; for these lingas repeat there in the proper terms of life upon earth the conscious movements of the gods in their higher existences in the worlds above Bhu. The Manus manifested in the Manoloka of Bhu bring pressure to bear upon the earth for the manifestation of life and mind. Prajapati as Rudra then begins to form life upon earth, first in vegetable, then in animal forms. Man already exists but as a god or demigod in Bhuvarloka of Bhu, not as a man upon earth. There he is Deva, Asura, Rakshasa, Pramatha, Pisacha, Pashu or as Deva he is either Gandharva[,] Yaksha, Vidyadhara or any of the Karmadevas. For Man is a son of the Manu and is assigned his place in Div & Pradiv, in Heaven & in the Swargabhumis. Thence he descends to earth and thither from earth he returns. All that will be explained afterwards. When the human body is ready, then he descends upon earth and occupies it. He is not a native of earth, nor does he evolve out of the animal. His manifestation in animal form is always a partial incarnation, as will be seen hereafter.

---

[1] *MS* itself

The animal proper is a lower type. Certain devas of the manasic plane in the Bhuvarloka descend in the higher type of animal. They are not mental beings proper, but only half-mental vital beings. They live in packs, tribes etc with a communal existence. They are individual souls, but the individuality is less vigorous than the type soul. If they were not individual, they would not be able to incarnate in individual forms. The body is only the physical type of the soul. The soul, if it were only a communal soul, would manifest in some complex body of which the conglomeration of the different parts would be the sole unity; say, a life like that of the human brain. The animal develops the tribe life, the pack or clan life, the family life. He develops chitta, manas, the rudiments of reason. Then only man appears.

How does he appear? Prajapati manifests as Vishnu Upendra incarnate in the animal or Pashu in whom the four Manus have already manifested themselves, and the first human creature who appears is, in this Kalpa, the Vanara, not the animal Ape, but man with the Ape nature. His satya yuga is the first Paradise, for man begins with the Satya Yuga, begins with a perfected type, not a rudimentary type. The animal forms a perfect type for the human Pashu and then only a Manuputra or Manu, a human, a true mental soul, enters into existence upon earth, with the full blaze of a perfect animal-human mentality in the animal form.

These are man's beginnings. He rises by the descent of ever higher types of Manu from the Bhuvarloka, — first he is Pashu, then Pishacha, then Pramatha, then Rakshasa, then Asura, then Deva, then Siddha. So he ascends the ladder of his own being towards the Sat Purusha.

Manu, the first Prajapati, is a part of Mahavishnu Himself descended into the mental plane in order to conduct the destinies of the human race. He is different from the four Manus who are more than Prajapatis, they being the four Type-Souls from whom all human Purushas are born; they are Manus only for the purpose of humanity & in themselves are beyond this manifest universe & dwell for ever in the being of the Para Purushas. They are not true Manomaya Purushas. But Manu Prajapati is a true manomaya Purusha. He by mental generation begets on his female Energies men in the mental & vital planes above earth, whence they descend into the material or rather the terrestrial body. On earth Manu incarnates fourteen times in each Kalpa & each of these fourteen incarnations is called a Manu. These fourteen Manus govern human destinies during the hundred chaturyugas of the Prati-Kalpa, each in turn taking charge of a particular stage of the human advance. While that stage lasts he directs it both from the mental world and by repeated incarnations upon earth. When Manu Prajapati wishes to incarnate in a fresh form, he has a mental body prepared for him by evolution of births by a human vibhuti, Suratha or another & takes possession of it at the beginning of his manvantara. Each manvantara is composed of a varying number of chaturyugas according to the importance & difficulty of the stage with which it is concerned. Once at least in each chaturyuga the Manu of the Manvantara incarnates as a man upon earth, but this never happens in the Kali Yuga. The seventh & eighth Manus are the most important in each Prati Kalpa & have the longest reigns, for in their Manvantaras the critical change is finally made from the type which was completed in the last Prati Kalpa to the type which is to be perfected in the present Kalpa. For each of the ten Prati-Kalpas has its type. Man in the ten Prati-Kalpas progresses through the ten types which have been fixed for his evolution in the Kalpa. In this Kalpa the types, dashagu, are the ten forms of consciousness, called the Pashu, Vanara, Pishacha, Pramatha, Rakshasa, Asura, Deva, Sadhyadeva, Siddhadeva and the Satyadeva. The last three are known by other names which need not be written at present. The Pashu is mind concentrated entirely on the annam, the Vanara mind concentrated on the Prana, the Pishacha mind concentrated on the senses & the knowledge part of the chitta, the Pramatha mind concentrated on the heart & the emotional & aesthetic part of the chitta, the Rakshasa is mind concentrated on the thinking manas proper & taking up all the others into the manas itself; the Asura is mind concentrated on the buddhi & in the Asura Rakshasa making it serve the manas & chitta; the Deva is mind concentrated in vijnanam, exceeding itself, but in the Asura Deva or Devasura it makes the vijnana serve the buddhi. The others raise mind successively to the Ananda, Tapas & Sat & are, respectively, the supreme Rakshasa, the supreme Asura, the supreme Deva. We have here the complete scale by which Mind ascends its own ladder from Matter to pure Being evolved by Man in the various types of which each of the ten principles is in its turn capable. To take the joy of these various types in their multifold play is the object of the Supreme Purusha in the human Lila.

[II]

A series of images and a number of intimations have been given yesterday in the chitra-drishti to illustrate the history of the first two Manwantaras & the vicissitudes through which the human idea has gone in the course of these unnumbered ages. It is not at all surprising that there should be no relics of those vicissitudes in the strata of the present earth; for the present earth is not the soil of the planet as it was in the earliest Manwantaras. The detritions, the upheavals, the convulsions, the changes that it has undergone cannot be estimated by the imaginative & summary methods of the modern geologists, — men who think themselves advanced &

masters of knowledge, but are only infants & babblers in their own sciences. It is unnecessary to go at present into the scene or habitat of the incidents & peoples shown in the drishti. The facts are sufficient.[2]

The first image was that of a young & beautiful woman fleeing, holding two children by either hand, preceded by a third—though this was not clearly seen—and followed by a little child, a girl with her cloth in her hand. All are of the female sex. In their flight they have upset a handsome & well-dressed young man, who was also fleeing across the line of their flight and now lies sprawling on his back. Behind the woman & her girls an elderly & bearded savage, naked & armed with some kind of weapon, runs at a distance of not many yards and but for the accident of the upset would soon overtake the fugitives. The second image showed the young man still supine with the savage upon him threatening him fiercely with his weapon, but the bhava shows that not slaughter, but prisoners & slaves are the object of the raid. The young man is evidently taken prisoner by the pursuer who has turned aside from the women to this, possibly, more valuable booty. In the third image the little girl of the first is seen captured by a young & handsome barbarian who has managed to comfort and soothe her & is persuading her to lead him to the secret refuge of the fugitives. By this device, it is now indicated, he is able to discover this refuge & capture the whole colony of the civilised people. The success raises him to the rank of a great chief among his people, for it is his section of the raiders who make the victory really profitable. The chitra-lipi *Indigenous* just given shows that these barbarians are the original inhabitants of the country, the others colonists & conquerors. It is intimated by the vijnana that both assailants & assailed are in the Pashu stage & people of the first or second Manu, but the civilised have reached a kind of Devahood of the Gandharva type, the savages are a reappearance of the Asura Rakshasa type of Pashu brought back into a more advanced age in order to re-invigorate the over-refined type that has been evolved. The young chief of the image is a sort of Caesar-Augustus or Alaric of the barbarians. He takes the lead of their revolt which is at first a disordered movement of indignation (lipi Indignation alternating with indigenous)[,] systematises it, conquers & enslaves the Gandharvas, learns from them their civilisation and modifies it by the barbarian manners. The new race evolved finally dominates the then world & fixes the next type of the Pashu evolution.

---

[2] *The three images that follow are mentioned in the Record of 22 March 1914; see page 395.—Ed.*

But who are these Pashus? For this is not the first pratikalpa of the Pashus, but the sixth of the Asuras, and it is indicated that none of these visions belong to any other pratikalpa than the present. It follows that even these savages cannot be pure Pashus, but Asuras or Asura Rakshasas starting from the Pashu stage, so far as the Asura can go back to that stage, and fulfilling the possibilities of a sort of Pashu-Asura before evolving his Asurahood in the higher types & arriving & shooting beyond the pure Asura. This is an important modification. It follows that each type of the Dashagavas goes, within the mould of his own type, through all the ten gâvas from the Pashu to the Siddhadeva. The Pashu-Asura will be different from the pure Pashu or the Pashu Deva, because he will always be first & characteristically an Asura, but he will weigh *from the buddhi* on the bodily experiences as Pashu, on the vijnana experiences as Deva & so in each type according to its particular field of activity. The Deva will do it, instead, from the vijnana, & the difference of leverage & point of action will make an immense difference both to the character of the activity and its results in the field. Moreover it is clear that the Pashu Asura goes also through the various types within his mixed Pashuhood & Asurahood before he passes to the Pisacha-Asura, who has to undergo a similar development. The great variety of types that will result from this evolutionary system, is evident.

The farther images seen[3] in connection with this Pashu-Asura episode are three in number. First the plain & desolate country with a hill in the distance, about which it is indicated by the vijnana that this was the appearance of the country not actually occupied by the barbarians before the colonists came in (by sea, it is suggested & then by movement from the coasts occupied to the inland tracts,) & peopled it sparsely. The catastrophe came because of their haste to conquer the whole small continent before they were able to people all the unoccupied land & build themselves into a strong & irresistible power organised in great cities & populous nations. This haste was due to the superior fertility & attractiveness of the soil actually occupied by the barbarians who, being poor agriculturalists, had settled only on rich soil not demanding a skilful labour & left the rest untilled. The contrast between the waterless soil first seen & the banks of the great river on which was the barbarian settlement, is typical of the contrast between the two kinds of soil, utilised & unutilised. The premature attempts at conquest began with aggressions on the nearest barbarian villages & the raid seen was the first effective retaliation carried out in the absence of the fighting men of the colony, so that on the side of the attacked only women, children & peaceful unarmed men are seen fleeing to a habitual & secret place of refuge. For this colony was on the very borders of the barbarian country & always exposed to incursions. It is not clear why the colonist fighters were absent, whether on a raid on the barbarians or in a civil quarrel among themselves.

---

[3] *These three images (along with a fourth) are mentioned in the Record of 23 March 1914; see page 397.—Ed.*

The second image, the fortified city on the plateau, shown by the terraces cut in the slope of the plateau & the subsequent separate chitra of one of the city domes, to be a civilised & magnificent metropolis, shows the final result of the amalgamation of barbarians & colonists. The original barbarian settlement was on the bank of the great river seen with one of its ghauts not far from the foot of the plateau, but after the raid, in order to safeguard themselves & their booty, the savages retreated at the instance of the young victorious chief, now by common consent their leader, to the plateau, then steep in its slope & difficult of access. Afterwards a great city was built on the site of this barbarian stronghold. The construction on the river in appearance like a house, but apparently standing on the water can have been nothing but a houseboat or rather a house-raft, & it is moored to a *char* in the river, a fact which suggested the first erroneous idea that it was a house on an island in the river.

The third image, the large, high & spacious hut, built almost with elegance & with the great wide open door, was that of the chief and shows that the savages, in spite of their nakedness, were not on the lowest scale either of human immaturity or of human degeneration. The figure in clerical dress & hat is that not of a priest, but of an envoy, one of the elders of the colony come to negotiate for the restoration of the captives; the girl with whom he converses & from whom he turns in shocked despair, is one of the daughters of the woman seen in the earliest of this series of images, now a slave & concubine of the chief. At first, the colonists were unwilling to use violence lest the captives should be maltreated. The fact that one of the most important of them has already been subjected to irremediable indignity, has just come to the knowledge of the elder along with other facts, eg the unwillingness of the chiefs to make any reparation, & accounts for the action which indicates despair of peace or any fruitful negotiation. The series is not yet complete, but awaits the unfolding of farther events already very vaguely indicated by the vijnana. The other image has no connection with these events but belongs to a later Manvantara, that of the Pramatha-Rakshasa, of the sixth Manu in one of its most perfect & brilliant stages. It has to be kept vivid in the mind for future interpretation.

III

The disposition of the Manwantaras may now be described. It will be remembered that there are fourteen Manus and ten gavas of the Dashagava. How are these divided among the Manus? In this Kalpa or rather Pratikalpa the type Pashu is the Vanara, but as in all Nature's movements, even in manifesting the Vanara, the others first make their appearance rapidly before the type "arrives"; those most germane to the matter are the lion, tiger, elephant, dog, wolf, cat, bull & cow, bear, fox, ass, horse, bee, ant, butterfly, fish, eagle (also kite, hawk & vulture), songbird, crow & cuckoo etc. In all these human egos readily incarnate & the human type absorbs them all. The first Manu takes all these totems & applies them to the general type of the Asura, driving at the evolution of a giant Vanara-Asura who has in him all these elements & combines them into an animal harmony dominated by curiosity, humour, adaptability & adaptiveness, the Ape virtues which bring that type nearest to man. This Vanara Asura the first Manu hands on to the second, who takes the type, fulfils it and evolves it into the Pishacha-Asura. This he does by bringing the Ape curiosity uppermost and applying it to all the experiences of man's animal life, to play, work, domesticity, battle, pleasure, pain, laughter, grief, relations, arrangements etc. All the higher qualities—imagination, reflection, invention, thought, spirituality even are turned towards these experiences & their possibilities,—cognitional not aesthetic exhausted so far as the human animal can exhaust them. This however, is done only in the third Manwantara. In the second it is the Vanara who satisfies his humour, curiosity & adaptiveness in a far more elementary & summary fashion, but as he does so, he begins to refine & evolve in search of new sensations until the full Pisacha Asura is born. This type is handed over to the third Manu to fulfil, & to it two Manvantaras are devoted,—in the third the Pisacho-Pramatha of the Asura type evolves; in the fourth the Pisacha Pramatha evolves into the full Pramatha-Asura. The curiosity ceases to be merely cognitional & practically scientific, it becomes aesthetic with an animal & vital aestheticism; the Pramatha seeks to extract their full emotional & aesthetic values, their full rasa out of everything in life, out of torture equally with ecstasy, death equally with life, grief equally with joy. That type is evolved by the fifth Manu into the Pramatha-Rakshasa of the Asura type, & by the sixth into the full Rakshasa-Asura. The Rakshasa it is who first begins really to think, but his thought is also egoistic & turned towards sensation. What he seeks is a gross egoistic satisfaction in all the life of the mind, prana & body, in all the experiences of the Pashu, Pisacha, Pramatha & his own. But as this type is not a pure Rakshasa, but a Rakshasasura, the thought is there from the beginning, for the Rakshasa has already established it in the human mould in the fifth pratikalpa. It now, however, in the Asura ceases to be subservient to the vital & animal instincts & becomes the instrument instead of a vigorous, violent & clamorous intellectual ego. As the main type is that of the Asura, there is always a tendency to subordinate the lower ego to the intellectual Aham, but the subordination is at first only a self-disciplining for a more intelligently victorious self-indulgence, like the tapasya of Ravana. This type evolved is fixed in the character of Ravana and takes possession of its field in the Manwantara of the seventh Manu, Vaivasvata. In that Manwantara it evolves into the Asuro-Rakshasa in which the intellectual ego & the emotional, sensational ego enter into an equal copartnership for the grand enthronement & fulfilment of the human ahankara. As the type of the sensational & emotional Rakshasa-Asura is Ravana, so the type of the more mightily balanced Asura Rakshasa of the Asura type is Hiranyakashipu. In the eighth Manwantara this Asura Rakshasa evolves into the pure Asura who serves his intellectual ego & subordinates to it all the other faculties. That type reigns with the ninth Manu & evolves into the Asuradeva of the Asura mould & in the tenth Manvantara into the Devasura who enthrones the vijnana and glorifies the Asura existence by the vijnanamaya illuminations playing on the whole of the triple mental[,] vital & bodily life of man. In the eleventh & twelfth manwantaras the Devasura evolves into the Sadhya, the Anandamaya Asura who at first with the pure Ananda, then with the Tapomaya Ananda, then with the Sanmaya Ananda dominates the reigns of the thirteenth & fourteenth Manus & completes the apotheosis of the Asura in man. With the Siddhadeva in the Asura the hundredth Chaturyuga of the sixth Pratikalpa comes to a glorious close.

IV. Certain farther images have appeared which seem intended to show the nature of the Kaliyuga civilisation evolved by the intermixture of the barbarian & the Gandharva Pashus.[4] One is that of a very wide road climbing up a steep incline; the comparative height of the trees on one side show its great width. This picture seems to be intended to confirm the impression created by the ensemble of the city on the plateau, by the dome & by another chitra of a part of the hill with a (private?) house roofed like a modern church, that this civilisation had a certain bigness, massiveness & sharply cut variety. A low type of the Pashu in this age was also seen, bearded, [hatted][5] & visaged like a lowclass modern American of the West. These resemblances have created some doubt as to either the genuineness of these images or their right interpretation; but the doubt is not justified by its cause. For throughout the fourteen Manwantaras, variations, permutations & combinations of the same type are bound to appear. This is the law of Nature's development in clay, plant & animal & applies equally to man, his manners, ideas, appurtenances & institutions. Given the truth of the Manwantara theory any other feature than this varied repetition would be more surprising than the repetition itself & lead to more legitimate distrust. There are plenty of variations & signs of immaturity or different tendency. In the image of the river, it is noticeable that there are no modern vessels. The houseboat is a houseraft & entirely different in structure from the modern houseboat; the craft in which the man & girl in another image are seen crossing the river is also a raft & not a boat. The Gandharvas, when first seen, are robed differently in the males & the women; the former have dresses like the older styles of European dress, the latter wear loose & light classical draperies—an arrangement which is after all sufficiently natural & might easily evolve in an artistic & aesthetically minded race. The Teutonic element in the character & civilisation of the new type Pashus is a result of the blending of the graceful, slight & artistic Gandharva with the plain, forceful & robust barbarian; the latter predominates in the blend & the former merely tones down his force & gives a few details of dress & manners much modified in the direction of rude & clear cut plainness & strength, & is chiefly prominent but not predominant in the women as typified by the girl on the raft who has a native grace denied to the men of her blood. Their elegance is heavy & artificial, worn as a dress rather than possessed as a native characteristic. Sometimes the type goes very low as in the premature American; the ordinary type is higher but void of dignity or greatness, grace or beauty. They represent an early tendency towards the Asura Rakshasa such as he manifests himself in the Kaliyugas of this Pratikalpa when he has compassed the first heavy self-restraint necessary for his evolution towards the

---

[4] *These images are mentioned, in a different order, in the Record of 24 March 1914; see pages 403-4.—Ed.*

---

[5] *MS* hated

Deva. In a later image the woman of the first, the captive of the barbarian Augustus, is seen in a later incarnation at the turning point when this type dissatisfied with itself is trying to recover the grace, humour, artistry, fantasy, liveliness of their Gandharva blood, so as to develop again in themselves the Pashu deva. This fixes the period of these incidents. It is in the Kali of the fourth chaturyuga in the reign of the first Manu when the Rakshasa Asura of the Pashu Asura type reigns & is attempting to turn full Asura with occasional overshootings to the Pashu deva. Every race that thus overshoots its mark & goes a step farther than their immediate next pace in evolution aids powerfully that evolution, but becomes unfit for survival & has to disappear. For this reason the Gandharva race of the Pashus disappeared & the Asura Rakshasa type reappeared, then took up something of the Gandharva & advanced one step towards the Asura-Pashu of the Asura type. By such overleapings & recoilings human evolution has always advanced.

V. There are certain images of animals dating from these early aeons which should be recorded here although they are not of the first Pashu period but fall before & after it.[6] The first are images of a monstrous creature resembling the modern seal, but thicker & bulkier seen in a region of ice; the other another animal of equally monstrous bulk, its skin a series of successive red and yellow bands, its face exceedingly long, rough, thin & snouted, a cross between bear, wolf & tiger in the face, rhinoceroslike, yet supple in the body, but in spite of its ferocious appearance, sufficiently harmless. These creatures, it is suggested in the vijnana, belong to the first chaturyuga of the pratikalpa previous to the appearance of man; for the fourteen Manus enjoy each a reign of seven chaturyugas of varying lengths and the first & last of the hundred belong not to any Manu but the opening chaturyuga to Brahma & Rudra, the closing to Kalki & to Shiva. Man in the first appears only tentatively at the end, in the last only as a survival at the beginning.

The third image is that of a bear leaping on a smaller animal which it keeps under its paw while it wrests from it & devours some eatable for which the victim was pursued. The male of the captive is near unable to help, unwilling to flee. It is a small deer, only one third the size of the modern fallow deer. Suddenly the head of the bear sinks. It has been killed, it would seem, by the arrow, spear or other weapon of a human hunter. This scene belongs to the second Manwantara of the Vanaras.[7]

---

[6] *These images are mentioned in the Record of 24 March 1914; see page 404.—Ed.*

A fourth image is of a horse of the first Manwantara in one of its earlier chaturyugas, a clumsy stiff-legged & long-eared animal squarish in its lines & most unlike the graceful modern equine species. The animal stands on the side of a river, & with head raised & stretched sideways & ears pricked, listens to a sound amid the trees on the opposite bank. This image was preceded by another of a horse of the Pashu period in the later age when the civilised barbarian type was trying to recover the Gandharva. This type of horse, standing with a rider on its back & other human beings conversing near & at its head, is more equine, but is still stiff-legged & has not lost the asinine cast of head of its predecessor.

VI. Three images of the fourth in descent from the Chief of the Barbarians; the first showing him standing meditating on the great ghaut of the river, a figure & face like Napoleon's clad in a dress resembling the modern European; the second, his mother & stepmother, descendants of the captives of the first image; the third, the emperor again with his halfbrother, irreproachably clad, Prefect of the city, consulting with regard to some palace intrigue in which the mother & stepmother are concerned.[8] It is intimated that it is this fourth King of the line who establishes the dominance of the race in the then earth.

---

[7] *This image is mentioned in the Record of 25 March 1914; see page 407.—Ed.*

[8] *These three images are mentioned in the Record of 25 March 1914; see page 407.—Ed.*

UNDATED SCRIPT, c. 1920

[1]

There is no possibility of immediate success in the physical siddhi or in the higher vijnana. The riot of the lower ideality stands in the way. It must quiet down before the drashtri vijnana can act with any completeness.

[2]

The Sortilege. It is to be revived once more. There is no writing this morning. The script is also to resume its movement. First, it has to be absolutely spontaneous. That is almost finished. It is a little obstacle, the suggestion.

Most of the amertume is a momentarily effective amnesia of the amara purusha. Momentary only. That is all at all today possible.

This denial must suffice both for the present and for all similar ascriptions in the future.

T^2 first—not complete, but perfect in the representative imperative—logos Vijnana

Thought-siddhi in interpretative imperative—d[itt]o.

Rupa siddhi, not yet stable.

Internal vijnana—perfect in thought-siddhi—growing in lipi[,] drishya etc

UNDATED NOTES, c. DECEMBER 1926

[1]

OM TAT SAT

The highest interpretation hitherto made in human understanding and experience may thus be stated with the proviso that since it is human it must be incomplete.

TAT. That.

The Absolute Unmanifested—Parabrahman, Purushottama, Parameswara (holding in himself the Parâshakti and in her the All).

SAT. The Existent (I Am.)

The Absolute containing all the power of the manifestation. The Absolute is Parabrahman-Mahâmâyâ. The Absolute is Purushottama-Parâprakriti. The Absolute is Parameswara-Âdyâ (original) Parâshakti.

OM. The Word of Manifestation.

A The external manifestation (consciousness realised in the actual and concrete—seen by the human consciousness as the waking state.)

U The internal manifestation (intermediate—the inner, not the inmost being—consciousness realised in the inner potentialities and intermediate states between the inmost supramental and the external—seen by the human consciousness as the subliminal and associated with the dream state.)

M The inmost seed or condensed consciousness (the inmost supramental, glimpsed by the human consciousness as something superconscient, omniscient and omnipotent, and associated with the state of dreamless Sleep or full Trance.)

AUM Turiya, the Fourth; the pure Spirit beyond these three, Atman consciousness entering into Tat Sat and able to identify with it. Believed to be obtainable in its absoluteness only in absolute Trance—nirvikalpa samadhi.

All this (first in the Upanishads) is the viewpoint from the mental consciousness. It is incomplete because two things that are one have been left out, the Personal Manifestation and the name of the Mahashakti. The subsequent growth of spiritual knowledge has brought about a constant effort to add these missing elements.

When the hidden secret has been discovered and made effective, the human consciousness will be exceeded, the superconscient made conscient and the subconscient or inconscient which is the inevitable shadow of the superconscient filled with the true spiritual and supramental consciousness. The Trance, Dream and Waking States (all imperfect at present and either touched with obscurity or limited) become each completely conscious and the walls, gaps or reversals of consciousness that intervene between them are demolished.

=

Tat then will appear in its entire truth, the Supreme Absolute, One in Two, each entirely in the other and both one in an ineffable Existence, Consciousness and Ananda.

Sat is the eternal and infinite truth of Sachchidananda ready for manifestation. It is the One Existence, but the Two in One are there, each in each, each perfect in the other.

OM is the manifestation. The Mahashakti comes forth from the Supreme for creation. In the eternal manifestation the Two in One are evident to each other; their identity and union are foundation of the diversity of this play, and it is the possession of the truth that makes the manifestation stable & eternal.

In the temporal creation Sat seems to be separated from Chit and Ananda. Hence the play of the inconscience becomes possible and the creation of an Ignorance and an ignorant Maya. The Chit-Shakti has to reveal the Sat Purusha to herself and her creation and entirely to meet him and recover the true identity and union in the Ananda. She seems to be put out from him, but all the time she is in him and he in her. It is this concealed truth that has to become manifest and effective and its discovery is the secret of the new creation in which the superconscient and inconscient will become conscious and fill with the supreme Sacchidananda, One in Two and Two in One. Then the temporal manifestation will be recreated in the image of the Truth. It will be in harmony with the eternal manifestation, built by what comes down to it directly from the Eternal. For through the Ananda and the Supramental the eternal manifestation stands behind the temporal creation and secretly supports its involved and evolving movements.

[2]

The secret name of the Supreme Mahashakti signifies

मयोभूः . . राधा	Love, Bliss,	*Ananda*
महामाया, पराप्रकृति	Creative and Formative Knowledge-Power	*Chit-Tapas*
	Support, Covering, Pervasion	*Sat*

For the Supreme is Ananda unifying Consciousness and Existence in the single Power (Shakti) of these things.

[3]

All is created by the Supreme Goddess, the Supreme and Original Mahashakti, all proceeds from her, all lives by her, all lives in her, even as she lives in all. All wisdom and knowledge are her wisdom and knowledge; all power is her power, all will and force her will and force, all action is her action, all movement her movement. All beings are portions of her power of existence.

=

Seven times seven are the planes of the Supreme Goddess, the steps of ascent and descent of the Divine Transcendent and Universal Adyashakti.

Above are the thrice seven supreme planes of Sat-Chit-Ananda, त्रिः सप्त परमा पदानि मातुः; in between are the seven planes of the

Divine Truth and Vastness, Mahad Brahma, सत्यमृतं बृहत्; below are the thrice seven steps of the ascent and descent into this evolutionary world of the earth existence.

These three gradations are successively Supermind or Truth-Mind, with its seven suns; Life with its seven Lotuses; Earth with its seven Jewel-Centres.

The seven Lotuses are the seven chakras of the Tantric tradition, descending and ascending from Mind (Sahasradala, Ajna[,] Vishuddha, Anahata) that takes up Life through Life in Force (Manipura, Swadhisthana) down to Life involved in Matter [(]Muladhara[)].

All these Life-Centres are in themselves centres of Truth in Life even as the seven Suns are each a flaming heart of Truth in luminous Divine-Mind-Existence; but these lotuses have been veiled, closed, shut into their own occult energies by the Ignorance. Hence the obscurity, falsehood, death, suffering of our existence.

The Jewel-Centres of the Earth-Mother are seven luminous jewel-hearts of Truth in Substance; but they have been imprisoned in darkness, fossilised in immobility, veiled, closed, shut into their own occult energies by the hardness, darkness and inertia of the material Inconscience.

To liberate all these powers by the luminous and flaming descent of the suns of the Supermind and the release of the eighth Sun of Truth hidden in the Earth, in the darkness of the Inconscience, in the cavern of Vala and his Panis, this is the first step towards the restoration of the Earth Mother to her own divinity and the earth-existence to its native light, truth, life and bliss of immaculate Ananda.

[4]

The Seven Suns.

—

The Sun of Creative Origination (from the eternal vastnesses).

The double Sun of Light and Power (concentrating the movements emanated from the infinite Wisdom-Will.)

The Sun of the Word (organising the creation).

The Sun of Love, Bliss and Beauty (dynamising the descending harmonies)

The Sun of Soul-Power (aspiring, receiving, grasping, assimilating the creation; divided here into the mind and psyche, there unified in Soul-Mind, Brahman.)

The Sun of Life (dynamically externalising the creation).

The Sun of Everlasting Form (stabilising and containing the creation).

—

These are the seven powers of the Truth-Mind above the body.

═

[5]

The Sun of Truth, originating the supramental creation

The double Sun of Supramental Light and Will, transmitting the Knowledge-Power that creates, founds and organises the supramental creation.

The Sun of the Word, expressing and arranging the supramental creation

The Sun of Love, Bliss and Beauty, vivifying and harmonising the supramental creation.

The Sun of supramental Force (Source of Life) dynamising the supramental creation.

The Sun of supramental Life-Radiances, (Power-Rays) canalising the dynamis and pouring it into forms.

The Sun of Supramental Form-Energy holding and embodying the supramental life and stabilising the creation.

[6]

The Seven Suns of the Supermind

1. The Sun of Supramental Truth,—Knowledge-Power originating the supramental creation.
   Descent into the Sahasradala.
2. The Sun of Supramental Light and Will-Power, transmitting the Knowledge Power as dynamic vision and command to create, found and organise the supramental creation.
   Descent into the Ajna-chakra, the centre between the eyes.
3. The Sun of the Supramental Word, embodying the Knowledge-Power, empowered to express and arrange the supramental creation
   Descent into the Throat-Centre.
4. The Sun of supramental Love, Beauty and Bliss, releasing the Soul of the Knowledge-Power to vivify and harmonise the supramental creation.
   Descent into the Heart-Lotus
5. The Sun of Supramental Force dynamised as a power and source of life to support the supramental creation
   Descent into the navel centre
6. The Sun of Life-Radiances (Power-Rays) distributing the dynamis and pouring it into concrete formations.
   Descent into the penultimate centre
7. The Sun of supramental Substance-Energy and Form-Energy empowered to embody the supramental life and stabilise the creation.
   Descent into the Muladhara.

[7]

The Seven Centres of the Life

1. The thousand-petalled Lotus—above the head with its base on the brain. Basis or support in Life-Mind for the Supramental; initiative centre of the illumined Mind.

2 The centre between the brows in the middle of the forehead. Will, vision, inner mental formation, active and dynamic Mind.

3 The centre in the throat. Speech, external mind, all external expression and formation.

4 The heart-lotus. Externally, the emotional mind, the vital mental: in the inner heart the psychic centre

5 The navel centre. The larger vital proper; life-force centre.

6 The centre intermediate between the navel and the Muladhara. The lower vital; it connects all the above centres with the physical

7 The last centre or Muladhara. Material support of the vital; initiation of the physical.

All below is the subconscient physical.

UNDATED NOTES, c. JANUARY 1927

Amrita—
Moses, Brihaspati, Hermes, Michael Angelo, Rudra, Pythagoras.

Bijoy
Child Krishna, St Jean, Kartikeya, child Vishnu

Barin
Nefdi. Apollo-Aryaman

St Hilaire—
Ramakrishna — (The Four)

Kshitish
Narada — Bach-Isaie

Kanai
Sukadeva — One of the Vital Four

Tirupati
One of the Vital Four

Purani
Trita. The Angel of Peace — One of the Vital Four

Anilbaran
Vivekananda — The "Fearless".

D [Durai] Swami
François I. Chandragupta. Janaka.

NOTES ON PHYSICAL TRANSFORMATION

c. JANUARY 1927

4 mistakes—

1. Began on a mistaken or merely theoretic knowledge—about absorption from outside

2 Giving up of food is not the condition for finding the secret, it is the result of finding the secret.

3 Cessation of hunger, feeling fed, refusal of food by the body not a sign; it proceeds from the body vital, not from the body substance

4 The entire secret can be found and made effective only when the body is brought into the right condition. A process of adaptation is necessary.

5 Transition

Continuity of consciousness, continuity of energy, continuity of Ananda, continuity of substance

Body substance sacred; earth herself; to be mastered, adapted and transformed, not forced and martyrised

Athanatogen.

1. Pranayama
2 Gland processes
3 Absorption from outside
4 Light process
5 Physical support—transformation of ordinary food; body power of living or etheric assimilation

The attempt to transform the body through the renunciation of food has not succeeded as was expected or in the time given and for the following reasons.

1. The knowledge or idea with which it was begun was imperfect and not applicable under the present circumstances. In reality what was chiefly relied upon was a great dynamic energy and the power of the will and aspiration to bring the divine realisation into the body. These forces can do miracles under the right conditions; and now they are quite strong enough to produce miraculous results on the subjective plane, in the physical consciousness, the physical mind and the vital physical, but the most material is not yet ready. The attempt was therefore premature. In order that it should succeed, one of two things was necessary, either a right entire knowledge and process or else the divine Grace supporting a complete descent of the highest supramental Truth and a complete ascent to meet it of the supramental from below. These things should have been got first and firmly founded, for till then there can be no effective divinisation of the material body.

2. The entire giving up of food cannot be the condition of the realisation; it must be, if it is to be done, one result or circumstance of the realisation.

3 It is a mistake to think that cessation of hunger, a sensation of being fed or the refusal of food by the body is a sign that the material frame is ready for living without sustenance. Hunger and the rest come from the vital in the body. It was this bodily vital which was ready and desirous of abstaining from food, but the most material parts were not ready. But being without a voice and accustomed to obey and act only as an instrument, they gave no sign except the fading of the flesh and physical weakness.

Now this material part is most important and indispensable. It is the earth herself in the concrete. It is part of the crude stuff you have to use for building the divine physical substance and you cannot do without it. Therefore it must be respected and not forced before it is ready. It has to be mastered and transformed, but not done violence to or neglected.

4. The entire secret for which you are seeking can only be found and applied effectively when the material body is ready and

for that a process of adaptation is indispensable. The final secret, even if you find it, must remain only a theory until this adaptation is made. What you need to find out first is a secret of the transition. For you are physically in a period of transition. The period of victorious realisation comes later.

Four physical things have to be attained; stability and continuity of consciousness, stability and continuity of energy, stability and continuity of Ananda, stability and continuity of substance.

The first she has gained; it gives a certain mukti, liberation, conscious immortality, and can give great results, but not by itself the complete result aimed at.

The second is beginning to come, but as it brings you a step nearer to the completeness, it is itself also more dependent than the first on its instrument, the body. It can exist in itself, but for its completeness it must become an entirely physical and material strength, for which there should be as a tool a strong body.

The other two stabilities and especially the last are still unattained. The last is the most difficult of all; it is the greatest achievement, the one problem that really has yet to be solved and on which the terrestrial security of the others depends.

My advice to you is not to mind retracing your steps; she should take food again and build up the body again as a necessary support. At the same time as a general rule try to use the food to the best advantage by concentration upon it and upon the body's reception of it and its right assimilation so that finally the body can maintain itself in full force and substance with a minimum quantity of stuff, a supreme quality and a maximum of assimilation. When that has been attained, the necessary adaptation will have neared completion. Advance progressively at first; rapidity will be possible afterwards. Do not mind the initial difficulties.

Remember however that the food problem is only a detail and do not exaggerate its importance. The main thing is to bring down and up the highest supramental from above and the deepest from below, to unite them and to obtain the support, sanction and constant effectuating action of what you call the divine Grace which is a descent from the Truth of the Supreme determining all from the plenitude of the Eternal. When you get these things in their fullness, the true material miracles will be possible in their marvellous rapidity and splendour.

Equanimity, patience, steadfast faith, steadfast will, dynamic aspiration, increasing knowledge-power are the things you need in their harmonious convergence that you may fulfil and conquer.

The power of subjective realisation in the physical is there as you see more from day to day; it will become absolute. The power through the subjective on the objective is increasing and will infallibly increase still more and become perfect. The direct power on the most material plane is the one thing still obstinately resisted. Persevere, satisfy the conditions, and it will come to you like the others.

DIAGRAMS, c. JANUARY 1927

SUPREME SELF-CONTAINED
ABSOLUTE
–

First Absolute – Tat. The Absolute Transcendent, the Supreme, Paratpara, (containing all, limited by nothing).

Second Absolute – Sat. The supreme self-contained absolute Existence, Sachchidananda, (Ananda uniting Sat & Chit), holding in its absolute unity the dual Principle (He & She, Sa and Sâ) and the fourfold Principle, OM with its four states as one.

Third Absolute – Aditi - M [the Mother]. Aditi is the indivisible consciousness force and Ananda of the Supreme; M, its living dynamis, the supreme Love, Wisdom, Power. Adya-Shakti of the Tantra = Parabrahman

Fourth Absolute – Parameswara = Parameswari
of the Gita of the Tantra

=

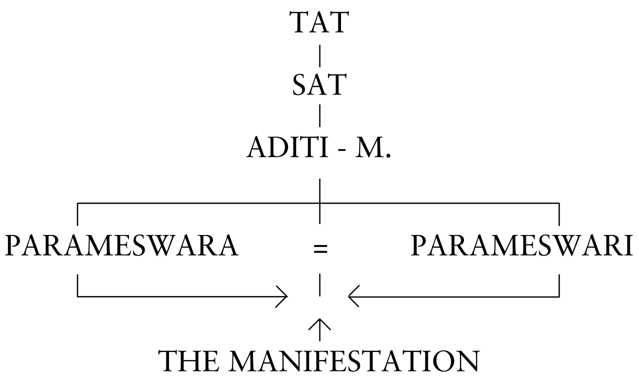

THE MANIFESTATION

I

First Absolute   The concealed Avyakta Supreme, self-involved Sachchidananda, Parabrahman (Parameswara-iswari)

Second Absolute – Aditi - M. containing in herself the Supreme. The Divine Consciousness, Force, Ananda upholding all the universes – Para Shakti, Para Prakriti, Mahamaya (yayedam dhâryate jagat).

Third Absolute – The Eternal Manifestation (The supreme Satya Loka, Chaitanyaloka, Tapoloka, Ananda-loka – not those of the mental series.)

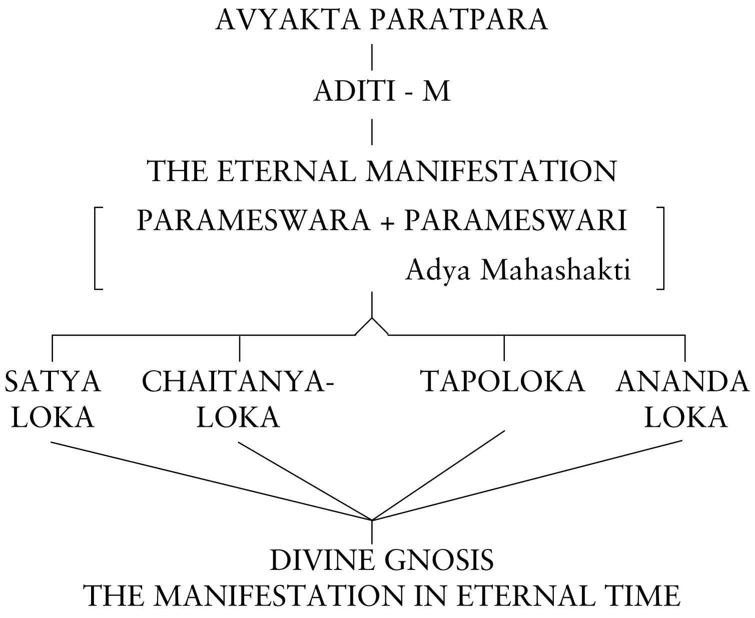
AVYAKTA PARATPARA
ADITI - M
THE ETERNAL MANIFESTATION
PARAMESWARA + PARAMESWARI
Adya Mahashakti
SATYA LOKA
CHAITANYA-LOKA
TAPOLOKA
ANANDA LOKA
DIVINE GNOSIS
THE MANIFESTATION IN ETERNAL TIME

II

The Manifestation in Eternal Time

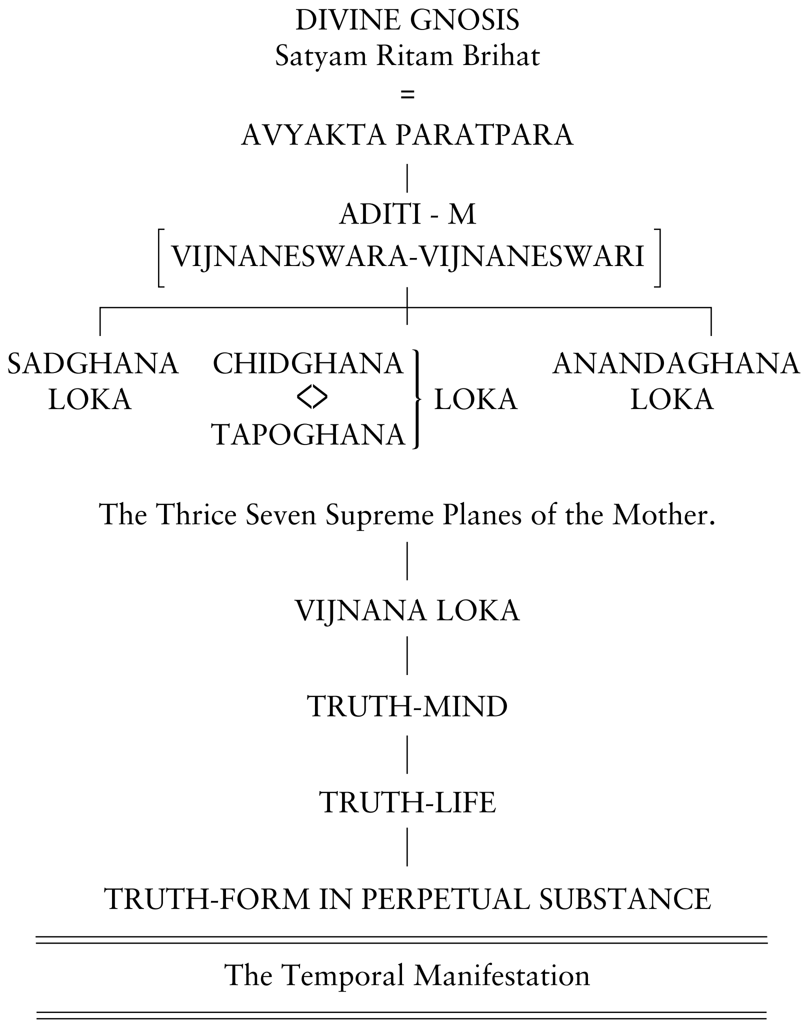

DIVINE GNOSIS
Satyam Ritam Brihat
=
AVYAKTA PARATPARA

ADITI - M
[VIJNANESWARA-VIJNANESWARI]

SADGHANA LOKA
CHIDGHANA <> TAPOGHANA } LOKA
ANANDAGHANA LOKA

The Thrice Seven Supreme Planes of the Mother.

VIJNANA LOKA

TRUTH-MIND

TRUTH-LIFE

TRUTH-FORM IN PERPETUAL SUBSTANCE

The Temporal Manifestation

MISCELLANEOUS NOTATIONS

c. FEBRUARY – APRIL 1927

[1]

No power will descend tonight.
Knowledge first, power afterwards.
Telepathy perfects itself first, then tapas, then the supreme T^2.
Till then nothing else can be finally perfect.

═══

Tonight Ananda, Drishya, Knowledge, Telepathic and Tapasic T^2.

—

[2]

There can be no doubt of the result. Only the time is doubtful and the full extent of the achievement. Tomorrow the entire lifting of the obstacle. Once more a free and rapid action. There is also the restoration of the first two chatusthayas. That will take place fully tonight. Nothing more tonight of an absolute character. The removal of the fragments of illness is not yet done, but it is preparing and will happen in a short time.

This is all for the time being.

[3]

April 2. 1927. Lipi
Christmas. Chittagong will be taken up.

[4]

ॐ आनन्दमयि चैतन्यमयि सत्यमयि परमे
OM anandamayi chaitanyamayi [satyamayi parame]

RECORD OF DRISHTI, 30 JULY 1927

July 30th 1927

1. Chl [Champaklal] lolling and rolling in a chair trance-awake.

Intimation. “The most material will now be conscious.”

2 A palm-tree of inordinate length growing from the bottom of the side of a well, climbing up and emerging above the earth level. All below now open (the subconscient awake). The palm-tree indicates the victory of conscious life and awakened spirit.

3 One in a cap standing and reading a letter. At first it appeared to be a vague form of M. which receded as the other grew clear, but was still felt reading over his shoulder.

Intimation. “A former personality (alchemist?) of Kanuga still strong in his psychic and vital nature[.”]

4. M’s hand; starting from it a running zigzag with the letter “a” at its starting point and going towards the Shiva (linga) affecting without as yet touching it.

I [Intimation]. The tivra Ananda—personal? “a” = beginning.

UNDATED SCRIPT, c. 1927

[1]

Take time to develop the next step. Strength in the organs, strength in the muscles. Hair, skin, flesh afterwards.

It is no use wasting time. Taking time means to do things thoroughly, prepare and accomplish.

[2]

The last possibility has been taken away from the hands of the opposing forces

The T^2 is now certain.

===

Now there is the perfect identity of the warrior and the slave in the imperfect Ishwara. There has to be the perfect identity with them of the king-sage. Then there will be the perfect Ishwara.

==

The body in her is the sole remaining obstacle—the most material body. It is influenced, it is not yet perfectly open and submissive.

==

The identity is not yet there because the strength and knowledge are not sufficiently full and they are not full because the supermind is not yet free. It will be free soon.

All is ready. It will be free from today.

[3]

More and more the opposition is furious, more and more the higher power insists. The opposition is effective in bringing three things, bodily illness, outside opposition, lack of physical means. These three must be destroyed or there can be no finality in the work or the sadhana.

UNDATED SCRIPT, c. 1927-1928

[1]

There is no certitude as yet of an absolute kind; even the relative certitude is very much veiled for the present. At any rate the ground has been cleared of much of the remnants of the intelligence. It is practically certain that much more will be done tonight, but the direction is not clear.

This will be done. First, in the third chatusthaya the entire elimination of the merely mental reason; the entire elimination of the original mind. The supramentalised form of these things in the Overmind. Second, the Vishaya and the Samadhi. In the latter, first coherence, then supramentalisation of lipi in deep samadhi, —stability and supramentalisation of *drishya*, *ghatana*, *chintana*, *itihasa*. In the former, freedom of all the four. Rupa soon to be complete followed by the fifth vishaya. Thirdly—in fourth chatusthaya, Arogya and Ananda to be established; the other two to be carried forward. In the fifth great increase of Karma and Kama.

These things will be done progressively but with a sufficiently rapid movement. Tonight begins the completion of the third chatusthaya.

It will be complete before long. There is no doubt of it.

All this is partly the old struggle, partly the process of supramentalising the most material consciousness and its movements, partly a condition of the farther advance of the supermind transformation.

[2]

Many things have still to be done before the divine gnosis can manifest in the nature. It is the gnostic overmind in different forms that is now current there; it has to be transformed into the true supermind gnosis. Let it be done rapidly from tonight till the 15th instant.

[3]

It is sure of fulfilment in the end but constantly delayed by the apparently chaotic complexity of the process. As yet, it is not the end. It is true that the most material couch is open and touched, though not yet transformed. But this is not sufficient; for the power that will work in it must be the true supermind, and as yet it is only the supramentalised overmind that has become at all normal in the material consciousness; the others are normal only for a time and then there is a relapse to the supramentality and to the supramentalised mind or overmind. This is the trouble.

It will soon be overcome.

[4]

[.....][1] has become more normal and facile, the first can now disappear. The second will remain until supermind in overmind (a still higher stage) can be perfectly established. That again will remain until gnostic overmind has changed into gnosis [in][2] overmind. The transformation will then be complete and only the transcendence of overmind and ascent into divine gnosis will be left as the last step to the perfect siddhi.

═

[..] supramental movement[3]
[...
....]
disregards all apparent disproof [and] adverse circumst[ances.]

The automatic perfection of supramental overmind thought is the next siddhi indicated. It will begin with a progressive elimination of all that remains of supramentalised mind in overmind.

---

[1] *Continued from a page now lost.—Ed.*

[2] *MS* into

[3] *The rest of this page was torn off and is lost. The next fragment is all that survives of what was written on the other side of the page.—Ed.*

NOTES ON PROPHETIC VISION, 1929

1. Some ten days before August 15th 1929, Venkataraman at soup sees himself in a vision falling from branch to branch of a tree. Half an hour afterwards, having returned from the soup to his rooms (Mudaliar's house near treasury) for flowers to bring to the Mother, he climbs a big tree of champak, misses his hold, falls from branch to branch on to the ground and is unable to move for a few days and cannot come to the house for the 15th celebration. *Prevision.*

2. A lottery is arranged for the distribution among the sadhaks of articles of small value—in order to see how the forces work on different people. Before the distribution of tickets Amrita sees in vision the number 61; he gets actually the number 62. On inquiry he learned that by mistake two tickets had been distributed to one sadhak, otherwise he would have received No 61. *Telepathic vision of the thing that was about to happen,—not prevision.*

3. On Monday, 23d February 1929 at soup, the Mother sees among a number of other visions the son of Madame Gaebelé with a broken arm bandaged, but attaches no importance to it. On Thursday she meets Madame Gaebelé and is told that her son broke his wrist at football on Monday and it was put in plaster before the time of the vision. At the moment she was praying earnestly that the Mother might give her help for the arm to cure. *Silent communication from the mind of another awaking telepathic vision.*

DIAGRAMS, c. 1931

THE SUPREME

|

Sachchidananda – Unmanifest, making possible every kind of manifestation.

|

SACHCHIDANANDA IN MANIFESTATION
The Supreme Planes of Infinite Consciousness
(1) Sat (implying Chit-Tapas and Ananda)
(2) Chit (implying Sat and Ananda)
(3) Ananda (implying Sat and Chit-Tapas.)

|

SUPERMIND or DIVINE GNOSIS.
(The Self-Determining Infinite Consciousness)

From the point of view of our ascent upwards this is the Truth-Consciousness as distinguished from all below that belongs to the separative Ignorance.

|

OVERMIND or MAYA

(Overmind takes all Truth that comes down to it from the Supermind, but sets up each Truth as a separate force and idea capable of conflicting with the others as well as cooperating with them. Each overmental being has his own world, each force has its own play and throws itself out to realise its own fulfilment in the cosmic play. All is possible; and from this separative seat of conflicting and even mutually negating possibilities comes too, as soon as mind, life and matter are thrown out into play[,] the possibility of ignorance, unconsciousness, falsehood, death and suffering.)

—

OVERMIND GRADATION TO MIND

=

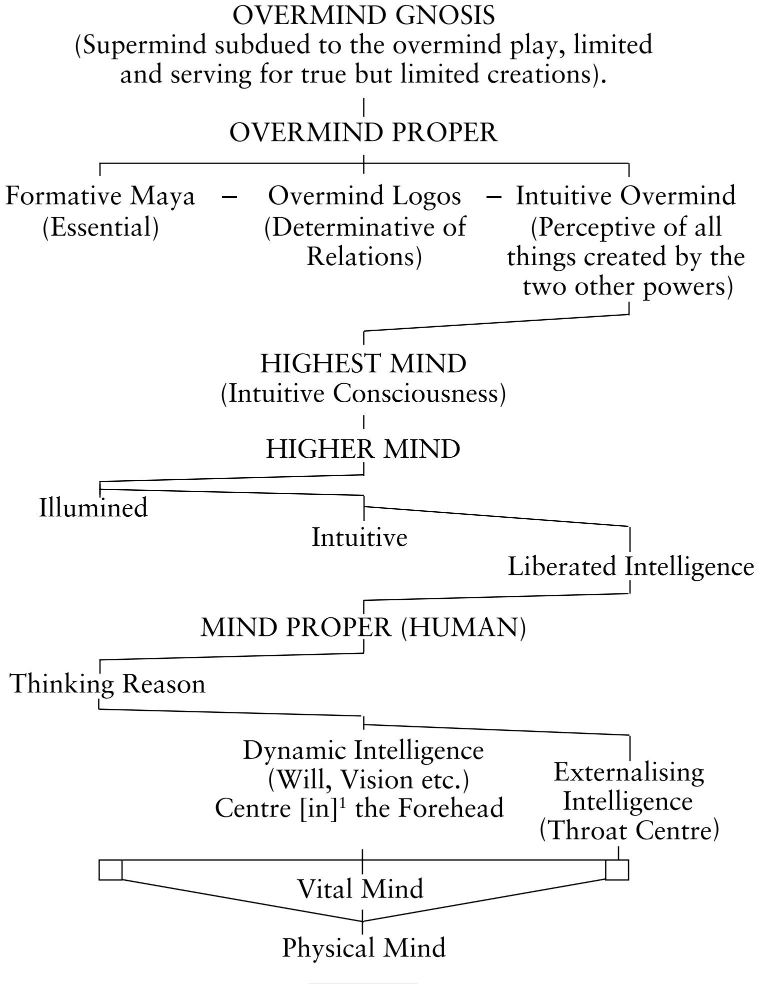

OVERMIND GNOSIS
(Supermind subdued to the overmind play, limited
and serving for true but limited creations).

OVERMIND PROPER

Formative Maya – Overmind Logos – Intuitive Overmind
(Essential) (Determinative of Relations) (Perceptive of all things created by the two other powers)

HIGHEST MIND
(Intuitive Consciousness)

HIGHER MIND

Illumined
Intuitive
Liberated Intelligence

MIND PROPER (HUMAN)

Thinking Reason

Dynamic Intelligence
(Will, Vision etc.)
Centre [in][1] the Forehead

Externalising
Intelligence
(Throat Centre)

Vital Mind

Physical Mind

LOWER CREATION

MIND
|
VITAL (Vital Mind / Vital Proper / Physical Vital)
|
PHYSICAL

---

[1] *MS* between

UNDATED SCRIPT JOTTINGS

[1]

That is the possibility that will emerge

[2]

There is no failure, only an intermission

[3]

no now indeed

[4]

There is nothing else to be done than to be careful and vigilant

That cannot be so easily done, but it is certain that the result will be perfect.

[5]

The grandeur of the past is the seed of the greater grandeur of the future

[6]

Nothing can be done till this has been changed; it is essential that there should be a larger movement. That is it, stand back, stand back, stand back.

[7]

This is the thing

That is the true effect. There is no certainty without the careful scrutiny of the ground

No doubt there is some difficulty but it is filled for the present

[8]

In the end of the long struggle there will be a movement of great rapidity that will work out the last difficulties triumphantly and leave nothing behind. That is destined.

[9]

Impossible to finish before the night— The reality is greater than the promise—

[10]

The last difficulties

Aeonic forces conquered in a brief space.

Monism entirely reconciled with personality

These are other forces than those that surround us in the silence of the mind.

[11]

This is the end of the difficulty Be calm and wait for [. . . .] in full

[12]

It is sure to be done.

[13]

[.....] useless—it is certain that it must come down

It is still difficult to do it in that way, work more and it will be done. That is the thing

[14]

There is no absolute certitude as yet except in isolated movements, but there is often a dominant certitude.

[15]

It is enough for the outward life of the moment, but not for the eternity within us..... This is the truth of life, but the truth of our other-life is of a greater kind.

Part Five

Automatic Writing

“THE SCRIBBLINGS”, c. 1907

Manik

Spirits are without body—Linga sharir is not body but mind. No shape visible to mortal eyes—They are the thoughts of the spirit which are shaped so as to present a visible scene—many of the scenes are not only thoughts but actual visions—

Perhaps not real or maybe the spirit of the first wife—The second wife was probably present and was anxious to be in the photo. There may have been no room.

Bhababhusan has gone but he will return—Khoka makes much of himself but he must be a little more modest—Where has Bhababhusan put the bag—No you are very careless—What made you send him—Why not go yourself—Begin what? Bengalees are a timid race but they are very desirous of being brave—Many make attempts, but few can succeed—You do a lot of work but not properly Because you do not see to the execution—Barin may try but he will not succeed when you cannot help him—My dear fellow, why try to hide yourself? I see no

My dear fellow, you are cowardly and wish to conceal yourself—Brave men will do the work but you must supervise—My dear fellow you will be cowardly—Because you are not selfconfident—Make an attempt next time to keep yourself present when the thing becomes a likelihood—May but it is more likely when you are present. Sudhir will be a good man for the next attempt. Prafulla has lost confidence in himself. Because he could not do it—Many will try but fail—Partly—Cowardice—Then he had someone to help—A man will not succeed if he cannot do it by himself—You will not be able—Make Sudhir do it—No but he will do what you tell him—A good many prophecies fail—

Yes, make a good attempt—No—You will not be overborne with the small charge of the stuff—Barin makes mistakes—Be more selfreliant—

They all depend on you—If you are brave it will begin soon—My dear fellow, don't be curious

Make attempts—By attempting again and again you will begin and then the work is sure to be speedy. No but why send B—No he will talk. Make some excuse to him when he comes back—They are not fools. Because he wanted to know why Sudhir did not go—Well he was doubtful—

YOGIC SADHAN

EDITED BY

THE UTTARA YOGI

SRIRANGAM:
SRI VANI VILAS PRESS.
1911.

Copyright Registered.

YOGIC SADHAN

A U M

I

The proper course of the Sadhan is just the opposite of the thing most people do and you have also done. People begin with the body and the prana, go on to the chitta and the manas, and finish up with the buddhi and the will. The real course is to start with the will and finish with the body. There is no need of Asana, Pranayama, Kumbhaka, Chittasuddhi, or anything else preparatory or preliminary if one starts with the will. That was what Sri Ramakrishna came to show so far as Yoga is concerned. "Do the Shakti Upasana first," he said, "get Shakti and she will give you Sat." Will and Shakti are the first means necessary to the Yogin. That was why he said always, "Remember you are Brahman," and he gave that as a central message to Swami Vivekananda. You are Ishwara. If you choose, you can be shuddha, siddha and everything else, or, if you choose, you can be just the opposite. The first necessity is to believe in yourself, the second in God and the third to believe in Kali; for these things make up the world. Educate the Will first, through the Will educate the Jnanam, through the Jnanam purify the Chitta, control the Prana and calm the Manas. Through all these instruments immortalise the body. That is the real yoga, the Mahapantha, that is the true and only Tantra. The Vedanta starts with Buddhi, the Tantra with Shakti.

What the Will is you have heard. It is Shakti, it is not Vasana, it is not Cheshta. Vasana and Cheshta are the negation of will. If you have desire, that means you doubt the power of your Will. Brahman has no desire. He wills and all things happen according to his Will. If you have Cheshta, that means you doubt your Will. Only those who feel or think they are not strong, struggle and labour to produce an effect. Brahman has no cheshta. He wills and His Will spontaneously produces its effect. But it produces it in time, space and causality. To demand a result now here and under given conditions is Ajnanam. The time, space and causality of every event and its development have been fixed ages ago by yourself and Parameswara, when the Kalpa began. It is ignorance to struggle and try to alter what you have yourself decreed. Care not about time, space or conditions, but will, and leave the result to God who is your omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient self. You are the individual God and He is the universal God. Nothing but God exists. Ekam evadwitiyam. Therefore Will implies Samata, absence of Vasana and Cheshta. Absence of Vasana and Cheshta implies knowledge. Until you have knowledge, you can never be safe against the return of Vasana and Cheshta.

The question is how to start. The Shakti is in you. Let her work and assist her by taking the right attitude. You are the Sakshi, Anumanta, Bhokta, and Bharta. As Anumanta, give the command, as Sakshi watch her work out the result, as Bhokta enjoy the result and as Bharta help her by maintaining the Adhar. Do not ruin it by tamasic udasinata or rajasic revolt. Be sure your Will can never fail to act. You are the Jnata: receive all knowledge that presents itself to you. Adopt the attitude I have described here and apply it to every individual act of the sadhana or of life. You have nothing else to do. Kali will do the rest. Be not troubled, be not anxious, be not in haste, you have all eternity before you, why be in haste? Only do not be tamasic or idly waste your time.

II

I shall speak to-day of the Shakti or Will, since that is the foundation of Yoga. The Shakti is situated in the Sahasradala just above the crown of the head and from that seat of activity it works. Below it at the top of the brain is the higher Buddhi and below that, occupying the middle level of the brain, is the reason or lower buddhi, and below that, at the bottom of the brain, is the organ of communication with the Manas. We may call this organ the understanding. Knowledge, reason and understanding are the three parts of the brain. These functions are in the subtle body, but they are connected with the corresponding portions of the material brain.

In the chest just above the heart is the Manas, that is, the organ of sensation with its five subordinate Indriyas. Below the Manas, from the heart to midway between the heart and the navel, is the Chitta. From that point up to the navel and below it is the psychic or sukshma prana. All these are in the sukshma deha but connected at these points with the sthula deha. In the sthula deha itself two functions are situated, the physical prana or the nervous system and the annam or the material body.

Now the will is the organ of the Ishwara or living master of the body. It works through all these functions, through the Buddhi for thought and knowledge, through the Manas for sensations, through the Chitta for emotions and through the Prana for enjoyment. When it functions perfectly, working in each organ according to the capacities of the organ, then the work of the Shakti becomes perfect and infallible. But there are two causes of weakness, error and failure. First, the confusion of the organs. If the Prana interferes in sensation, emotion and thought, then a man becomes anisha, the slave of the Prana, that is to say, of the desires. If the Chitta interferes with sensation and thought, then the sensations and thoughts are falsified by the emotions and their corresponding wishes. For instance if love interferes with the Buddhi, the man becomes blind to the truth about the person he loves, he is unable to distinguish between right and wrong, kartavya and akartavya, where the person is concerned. He becomes to a greater or lesser extent the slave of the emotions, love, anger, hatred, pity, revenge etc. So, if the Manas interferes with the reason, the man mistakes his sensations for just ideas or true arguments. He judges by what he sees or hears instead of judging what he sees or hears. If again the reason, imagination, memory and logic interfere with knowledge, the man is debarred from higher knowledge and wanders in the interminable circle of probabilities and possibilities. Finally, if even the Buddhi interferes with the Will, then the man is limited by the power of his limited knowledge, instead of moving nearer to Omnipotence. In brief, if a machine or instrument is used for a work for which it is unfit, for which it was not made or originally adapted, then it either cannot do that work at all or it does it badly; *dharma-sankara is created.* Now what I have described is the ordinary state of men before they gain knowledge. It is all dharma-sankara, confusion of functions, bad administration and incompetent and ignorant government. The Will, the true minister, is rendered a puppet of the lower officials who work each for his own selfish ends, interfering with and hampering each other or dishonestly playing into each other's hands, for their own benefit and to the detriment of the Ishwara, the master. He ceases to be Ishwara, he becomes Anisha, the puppet and dupe of his servants.

Why does he allow it? Because of Ajnanam. He does not know, he does not realise what the ministers and officials and their million and one hangers-on are doing with him. What is this Ajnanam? It is inability to recognise his own true nature, position and authority. He began by being deeply interested in a small portion of his royal activity, the body. He thought "That is my kingdom." He became the tool of his bodily functions. So with the nervous, the sensational, the emotional and the mental, he identifies himself with each of them. He forgets that he is different from them and much greater and stronger. What he must do is to resume the reins of power, to remember that he is Ishwara, the king, the master and God himself. He must on this understanding remember that he is all-powerful. He has a mighty minister, the Will. Let him support and direct the Will and the Will will introduce order into the government and compel the officials each to do obediently and perfectly his own duty. Not of course all at once. It will take time. The officials have become so much used to confused work and misgovernment that at first they will not be willing to work properly and, secondly, even when they wish, they will find it difficult. They hardly know even how to begin. For instance, when you begin to use your will, what is likely to happen? First you will try to use it through the Prana, through desire, wish, hope, or you will use it through the Chitta, with emotion, eagerness and expectation, or you will use it through the Manas using Cheshta, struggle, effort, as if you were physically wrestling with the thing you want to control; or you will use it through the Buddhi, trying to dominate the subject of your interest by thought, by thinking "Let this be", "Let that happen" etc. All these methods are used by Yogins to recover the power of the Will. The Hatha-yogin uses the Prana and the body, the Raja-yogin the heart, Manas and Buddhi, but the best method is none of these. Even the last of them is a second-best means and must entail struggle, failure and frequent disappointment. The Will is only perfect in its action when it works apart from all these, straight on the subject from the sahasradala, without effort, without emotion and eagerness and without desire. *Each function to itself and Will is its own function.* It always obeys the Ishwara but it acts in itself and by itself. It uses the rest, it must not be used by them.

It uses the Buddhi for knowledge, not for command; it uses the Manas for sensation, not for either command or knowledge; it uses the heart for emotion, not for sensation, knowledge or command; it uses the Prana for enjoyment, not for any other function; it uses the body for motion and action, not as a thing that can limit or determine either knowledge, feeling, sensation, power or enjoyment. Therefore it must keep itself apart and command all these things as a thing separate from all of them. These are merely a yantra, a machine, the Purusha is the yantri or master of the machine, the Will is the electricity or motor-power.

This is the right knowledge. How to use it I shall tell you afterwards. That is a matter of practice, not of mere instruction. The man who has dhairyam, calm steadfastness, even in a small degree, can gradually accustom himself to the mastery of his machine by the Will. But he must first know: he must know the machine, he must know the motor-power, he must know himself. The knowledge need not be perfect in order to begin, but the elementary knowledge at least he must have. That is what I am trying to give you. I am explaining to you the different parts of the machine, their nature and functions, the nature of the Will and the nature of the Ishwara.

III

The Will when it begins to act, will be hampered by the Swabhava; therefore until you are able to act on the Swabhava, you will not, should not bring your Will to bear upon life. In other words while you are a sadhak of the Shakti marga, be a sadhak only; when you have got Siddhi of the Will, then first use the Siddhi to get perfection of the adhar, and when you have got perfection of the adhar, then use the siddha adhar for Karma, for life.

The Swabhava opposes the perfect action of the Will. Why? Because the nature of humanity is imperfect, only partly evolved, asiddha, and being in all its dharmas asiddha, the tamasic force of habit, tamasi dhriti, makes it resist any attempt to make it siddha. Humanity is evolving. Yoga is a means of carrying that evolution forward with great and victorious rapidity. But the imperfect Swabhava says, "I do not wish to be perfect, I am accustomed to imperfection and find it easy and comfortable." First, then, the Will seizes hold of the Swabhava and removes the obstacles in the way of its own perfect development and action.

As I have said, it first gets rid of the old samskaras of impossibility, the samskara, the ajnanam that I am man, not God, limited, not illimitable, helpless, not omnipotent. The Will has first to say, "I am omnipotent, that which the Purusha commands, I can act". For the Will is the Shakti in action, and there is only one Shakti, Kali herself, who is God manifesting as Divine Energy.

Next the Will seizes the adhar and makes it shuddha in order that the Will may itself be shuddha. I have explained that if there is confusion and disorder among the functions, then the Will cannot act omnipotently. Therefore you must first develop Jnanam and by Jnanam effect the shuddhi of the adhar. When the adhar becomes shuddha, the Will being entirely free from wrong samskaras and wrong action, is what I call shuddha. It works perfectly. Working perfectly it makes the adhar siddha, that is the adhar rids itself of all doshas, deficiencies and weaknesses and works perfectly. It becomes a perfect instrument for the Purushottama, the Purusha and Shakti to carry on their Lila.

Knowledge, therefore, jnanam is the next stage to be considered. But before I come to that, let me finish about the obstacles in the Swabhava. There are not only the wrong Samskaras and the ashuddhi of the adhar, but the general nature of things has certain tendencies or laws in it which oppose the development of the Yoga as well as certain tendencies which help the development of the

Yoga. There are three laws which oppose—the law of persistence, the law of resistance and the law of recurrence: there are three laws which assist—the law of gradual processes, the law of concentrated processes and the law of involved processes.

The law of persistence is this, that a rule, habit or tendency once established has a right to survive, a natural unwillingness to be changed or annulled. The longer it has been established, the longer it takes to root out. If a man has been yielding to the shadripus for many lives without any serious effort to dominate them or purify himself, then he cannot by mere wish or a mere rapid effort get rid of them and become pure and calm. They refuse to be so cavalierly treated. They say "You have given us rights in this adhar, and we persist". Still more hard to deal with are those dharmas of the body which men call the laws of physical nature.

But the Will is omnipotent and if patiently, calmly and heroically exercised, will prevail. For the Will, I repeat, is—Kali herself. Therefore in the end it establishes by its action new rules, habits or tendencies which fight with and gradually overcome the old. What then happens is that the old, though put down, weakened and no longer a real part of the nature, resist eviction from the adhar. They are supported by an army of forces or spiritual beings who surround you and live upon your experiences and enjoyments. This law of resistance marks the second period of the Yoga and, unless the Will has already become siddha and the adhar shuddha, is very trying and troublesome to the sadhak. For there seems to be no end to the capacity of resistance.

Here again the Will is bound to triumph, if it is supported by faith or knowledge. Even then the evicted habits and tendencies strive continually to re-enter the system and recover their lost seats of power and enjoyment. This is called recurrence. In proportion as the Will is siddha and the Adhar shuddha, the recurrence becomes weaker and less frequent or, when it comes, less prolonged. But in an impure adhar, or with an imperfect Will, the recurrence is often as prolonged and troublesome as the resistance.

On the other hand there are the three favourable laws. When a new habit or tendency is once established, it is the law that it shall develop towards strength and perfection. So long as it is struggling to establish itself, the Yogin may at any time become bhrashta, that is he may from error, weakness or impatience give up the struggle. That is the only fall for the Yogin. Failure, temporary defeat, is not bhramsa, so long as he refuses to give up the struggle. But once the right tendency is established, no man can destroy it, until it has enjoyed supremacy and its bhoga.

Still at first, while the Will is comparatively weak or unpractised, the progress must be slow. In proportion as the perfection of the Will brings purity of the Adhar, the progress becomes rapid. Everything in this world is done by a process; a process means a series of actions leading to a particular result by certain recognised stages. These stages may be passed through slowly or swiftly, but so long as the law of gradual processes obtains, all the stages must be successively and consciously passed through. You have so many milestones to pass; but you may pass them walking, in a carriage, in a railway train, but pass them you must. Still by the growing strength of the Will, you can replace slow process by swift process.

Then a time comes when Kali begins to transcend the ordinary human limits and becomes no longer the Shakti of a man, but the Shakti of God in man. It is then that gradual processes are replaced by concentrated processes. It is as if, instead of travelling from milestone to milestone you could leap from the first milestone to the third and so on to your journey's end. In other words the process remains the same but some of the stages seem to be dispensed with. In reality they are passed over so lightly as to escape notice and occupy little time. Therefore it is called a concentrated or contracted process.

Lastly, when the man himself becomes God, either in a part of his actions or in the whole, then the law of concentrated processes gives place to the involved processes, when no process at all seems to be used, when the result follows the action instantaneously, inevitably and miraculously. In reality there is no miracle, the process is used but so rapidly, with such a sovereign ease, that all the stages become involved or hidden in what seems a moment's action.

To most men it is enough, if they can reach the second stage; it is only the Avatar or the great Vibhuti who can reach the third.

Therefore do not be discouraged by any failure or delay. It is purely a question of force and purity of the Will. By purity I mean freedom from desire, from effort, from misplacement. It is best to begin by concentrating effort on the self-purification of the Will, towards which the first necessity is passivity of desire for the fruit, the second the passivity of the Chitta and the Buddhi, while the will is being applied; the third the development of self-knowledge in the use of the Will. It will be found that by this process of educating the Will, *âtmânam âtmanâ*, purity of the adhar will also be automatically prepared and knowledge will begin to develop and act.

IV

What is knowledge? In what does it consist? We must distinguish between knowledge in itself and the means of knowledge. Again, among the means we must distinguish between the instruments and the operations performed with the instruments.

By Knowledge we mean awareness, taking a thing into active consciousness, into our Chaitanyam. But when we say, taking it into our Chaitanyam, what do we imply? Whence do we take it? The European says from outside, we say from inside, from Chaitanyam itself. In other words, all knowledge is an act of consciousness operating on something in the consciousness itself. In the first place everything we know exists in Parabrahman, that is, in our indivisible, universal self-existence. It is there, but not yet expressed, not vyakta. Then it exists in pure Chit, which is the womb of things as an idea of form, name and quality. It has name, form and quality in the Karana or Mahat, the causal, typal and ideal state of consciousness. Then it gets the possibility of change, development or modification in the Sukshma, the subtle, mental or plastic state of consciousness. Finally it gets the actual change, development, modification or evolution in the Sthula, the material or evolutionary state of consciousness. In the Karana there is no evolution, nothing ever changes, all is eternal. The Karana is Satyam. In the Sukshma all is preparation of change; it is full of imagination or anritam, therefore it is Swapna, not really false, but not immediately applicable to the Karana or Sthula. In the Sthula all evolves. It is partial satyam developing by the turning of old satyam into anritam, which is called destruction, and the turning of new anritam into new satyam, which is called creation. In the Karana there is no creation, no birth, no death, all exists for ever—the only change is from type to type, from fulfilment to fulfilment.

Therefore to know is really to be conscious of the thing in any or all of these three states. The knowledge of the Sthula is science. The knowledge of the Sukshma is philosophy, religion and metaphysics. The knowledge of the Karana is Yoga. When a man knows the Sthula, he knows it with his senses, that is, with the Manas, he knows the Sukshma with reason or the inspired intellect, he knows the Karana with the Jnanam or spiritual realisation. Therefore complete knowledge consists of three operations, first, objective Upalabdhi or experience, secondly, intellectual statement of your understanding of the thing, thirdly, subjective Upalabdhi or spiritual experience. The scientist begins from the bottom and climbs if he can, to the top. The Yogin begins from the top and descends for perfect proof to the bottom. You are not scientists, you are sadhaks. Therefore, when you speak of knowledge you must understand the process; you realise a thing by subjective experience, Bhava, then, think about it and formulate your experience in Artha and Vak, the combination which forms thought; you verify or test your experience by physical or objective experience.

For instance you see a man. You want to know what he is, what he thinks and what he does. How does the scientist or the material man do it? He watches the man, he notes what he says, what are his expressions of speech and face, what are his actions, what sort of people he lives with, etc. All this is objective. Then he reasons from his objective experience. He says "The man says this or that, so he must think so and so or he must have such and such a character; his actions show the same, his face shows the same," and so he goes on reasoning. If he does not get all the necessary facts, he fills them up from his imagination or from his memory, that is his experience of other men, of himself or of human life as read of in books or heard of from other people. He perceives, he observes, contrasts, compares, deduces, infers, imagines, remembers and the composite result he calls reason, knowledge, fact. In reality he has arrived at a probability, for it is impossible for him to be sure that his conclusions are correct or anything indeed correct in his thought, except the actual observation, perceptions of his eye, ear, nose, touch, and taste. Anything beyond this the material man distrusts. Nothing is true to him except what he observes with his senses or what agrees with his sensory perceptions.

Now what does the Yogin do? He simply puts himself into relation with the thing itself. Not with its form, name or quality, but with itself. He may never have seen the form, heard the name or had experience of the quality, but still he can know the thing. Because it is the thing itself and it is in himself and one with himself, that is in the Mahakarana in a man. There all meet the Atman and are so entirely one with the Atman that by merely being in contact with it, I can know everything about it. Few Yogins reach that state. But all the same, even in the Karana I can put myself in relation with the thing and know it by Bhava. I put myself, my soul, into relation with the soul of the man I study or the thing I study; Prajna in me becomes one with the Prajna in him or it. How do I do this? Simply by becoming passive and facing him or it in my Buddhi. If my Buddhi is quite pure or fairly purified, if my Manas is shanta, then I get the truth about him. I get it by Bhava, by spiritual or subjective realisation.

Then I have to make the thing I have got clear and precise. To do that I must state it intellectually to my mind, that is, I must think about it. I have these ideas I am telling you in myself as unexpressed knowledge; they shape themselves in words, Vak, and take on a precise meaning, Artha. That is thought. Most people think vaguely, half expressing the thing in an imperfect Vak and a partial Artha. The Yogin must not do that. His thoughts must express themselves in clear and perfect sentences. He may know a thing without thinking it out, but if he thinks, he must think clearly and perfectly.

The Yogin reasons when necessary, but not like the man of science. He sees the thing with his prophetic power interpreting the truth into thought; the pratyaksha gives him the Artha, the inspiration gives him the Vak, the intuition gives him the right conclusion about it, the right siddhanta, the Viveka guards him from error. Behold the truth by these four simple operations perfectly thought out. If he has to argue, then the intuitions give him the right arguments. He has not to proceed painfully from one syllogism to another as the logician does.

Finally, he verifies his knowledge by the facts of the objective world. He has seen the truth about the man by merely looking at him or at the idea of him; he has thought it out clearly and now he compares his idea with the man's action, speech etc. Not to test his truth; for he knows that a man's action, speech etc. only partially express the man and mislead the student; but in order to see how the truth he knows from the Karana is being worked out in the Sthula. He trusts the man's objective life only so far as it is in agreement with the deeper truth he has gained by Yoga.

You see the immense difference. The only difficulty is that you have been accustomed to use the senses and the reason to the subordination and almost to the exclusion of the higher faculties. Therefore you find it difficult to make the higher faculties active.

If only you could start from the beginning, with the Bhava, the Atmajnana, how easy it would be! That will yet happen. But first, you have to get rid of the lower Buddhi, of the Indriyas in the manas, and awaken the activity of the higher faculties. They will see for you, hear for you, as well as think for you.

First, then, get your sanskaras right. Understand intellectually what I have told you and will yet tell you. Then by use of the Will, keep the reason, imagination, memory, thought, sensations sufficiently quiet for the higher Buddhi to know itself as separate and different from these lower qualities. As the higher separates itself and becomes more and more active, the lower, already discouraged, will become less and less active and finally trouble you no more.

Therefore Will first, then by Will, by Shakti, the Jnanam. First Kali, then Surya. I shall explain the various faculties when I have finished with the rest of the system.

V

If men were satisfied with indulging in reason, memory and imagination, the purification of the Buddhi and the development of the higher faculties would be an easy matter. But there is another means of thought which they habitually indulge in and that is Manas. The Manas is a receptive organ; it receives the images expressed on the eye, the ear etc., and turns them into what the Europeans call the percepts, that is, things perceived. Besides, it receives the ideas, images etc., sent down from the Vijnana into the Chitta and passes them on to the latter organ. In this passage these things become what are called concepts, that is, things conceived or thought of. For instance, when the mind sees the image of a book and says "A book", it has hold of a percept the name of which it conceives; that is sensational thought. When it says "A book contains language" that is a remoter concept, intellectual thought. One merely puts things sensed into words, the other puts things thought into words. Percept and concept together make what is called understanding. Reason, according to the European idea, merely arranges percepts and concepts and draws from this arrangement fresh and more elaborate concepts. Many believe that concepts are merely percepts put together and converted into what is called thought. According to this idea, all thought is merely the arrangement of sensation in the terms of language. Even when I imagine an angel, I merely put a human figure and the wings of a bird together and give the combination a name, angel. Even when I talk of abstract qualities, for example, virtue, courage etc., I am not thinking of anything beyond sensation, but merely a classification of virtuous and courageous sensations and actions put together and labelled with the name virtue or courage.

All these ideas are correct so far as the Manas or understanding is concerned. The Manas is an organ of sensation, not of thought. It catches thoughts on their way from the Buddhi to the Chitta, but in catching them it turns them into the stuff of sensations, as described above.

It regards them from the point of view of sensations. Animals think with their Manas and animals are not able to form ideas that do not relate themselves to some image, form, sound, smell, touch, taste, etc. They are bound by their sensations. That is why in animals the Buddhi is dormant; so far as it acts, it acts behind the veil.

But man can become aware of things which the senses cannot grasp, *buddhigrâhyam atîndriyam*. The proof of that you can get daily, when the Yogic power is developed. This single fact that man can see with his Buddhi the truth about a thing he has never seen or known before, is enough to destroy the materialistic idea of thought.

That idea is only true of the Manas. The Manas responds to the senses and is always forming percepts and concepts about the sensations it receives. These ideas it sometimes gets from the outside world, sometimes from the passive memory in the Chitta, sometimes from the Buddhi. But it tries to impose them all on the Buddhi. It tests everything which it does not take for granted by reference to the senses. "I saw that", "I heard that", therefore it is true, that is the reasoning of the Manas. That is why people who have a poorly developed Buddhi, attach so much importance to what they have seen or read. "I have seen it in print" says the just literate man, and he thinks he has closed the argument.

What are we to do with the Manas? Get it to be still, says the Yogin. While it is busy, knowledge is impossible. You can get only fragments of knowledge. That is true and the quiet mind is no doubt essential to the Yogin. But what of the senses? Concepts in the Manas you may get rid of, but what are you to do with the percepts? You cannot stop seeing, hearing etc., except when you are in Samadhi. That is why the Vedantin attaches so much importance to samadhi. It is the only condition in which he is safe from the persistent siege of the percepts of the senses.

But if you can only exercise knowledge when you are in Samadhi, then you will have to become an ascetic or recluse, a man who gives up life or thought. That is a necessity which cuts the unity of God's world into two and makes an unnatural division in what should be indivisible. The Tantric knows that this is not necessary, that Samadhi is a great instrument, but not the only instrument. He so arranges his antahkarana that he can know when he is walking, talking, acting, sleeping, whatever he is doing. How? By not only stilling the conceptual activity of the Manas but by transferring to the Buddhi its perceptual activity.

In other words he sees, hears etc., not with the senses in the manas, but with the Indriya in the Buddhi. You will find what a difference this makes. Not only do you see much more perfectly, minutely, accurately than before, but you are able to appreciate colours, forms, sounds etc., in a way you never did before. And besides you are able to catch the soul, the Guna, the essential quality and emotion of a thing, the moment you are aware of it. This is part of what the Yoga calls Prakamya, the absolute and sovereign activity of the Indriya.

Therefore when the Yoga is perfect, you will not be troubled by the Manas. It will cease to perceive. It will be merely a passage, a channel for things from the Buddhi to the Chitta. There are many ways of bringing this about, but most of them suffer from this defect, that you get the thinking part of the Manas still, but the perceiving part retains its inferior and hampering activity. The best way is to use the Will simultaneously for awaking the Jnanam and for stilling the Manas. This method has two advantages. First, you do not, as in the ordinary method, have to make your mind a blank. That is a powerful but very difficult and trying discipline or Tapasya. You simply replace by degrees the activity of the lower reason by the activity of the higher thought, the activity of the mind by the activity of the same organ and the sense-perceptions by the activity of the Prakamya. This process is less painful and more easy. Secondly, you cannot stop perceiving so long as you are not in Sushupti, you only stop thinking. So you cannot make your mind blank. Unless you wake the Jnanam first, how are you going to get rid of this intrusive element? The Prakamya must be there already active before the ordinary perceptions can stop work.

This then is the third operation of the Tantric method. You develop the Will, you use the Will to awaken the Jnanam, you use the Will to still the mind and the lower Buddhi and you use the Jnanam to replace them.

VI

I come next to Chitta. There are two layers in the Chitta, one for the emotions, the other for passive memory. In the lower layer of the Chitta, the impressions of all things seen, thought, sensed, felt are recorded and remain until the Jiva leaves this body. Even afterwards all these impressions are taken up with the Sukshma body and go with the Jiva into the other worlds. When he is born again, they are brought with him as latent samskaras in the Muladhara; that is why people do not remember their past births, but can get back the memory by awakening the Kundalini in the Muladhara. These impressions are latent in the Chitta until the active memory in the Buddhi calls for them. Those which are continually brought to the Buddhi have a habit of recurring even when not wanted, habitual thoughts, ideas, sentiments, opinions etc., which are the Yogin's chief trouble until the Manas in which they occur becomes quiet.

The second and the upper layer is that of emotion. The emotions are the acts of Will sent down into the Chitta and there assuming the form of impulses. There are three divisions, thought-impulses, impulses of feeling, and impulses of action. The first are called by various names, instincts, inspirations, insights, intuitions etc. They are really messages sent down by the Jiva from the Sahasradala into the Chitta, they pass unobserved through the Buddhi, lodge in the Chitta and, whenever excited by any contact external or internal, start up suddenly and strike the Buddhi with the same force as the real inspirations etc., which come down direct from the Vijnana to the Buddhi. But they come up coloured by emotions, distorted by associations and memories in the Chitta, perverted by the imagination which brings them up. Much of what is called faith, Bhakti, genius, poetic inspiration etc., comes from this source. It is useful to the ordinary man, all important to the animal, but a hindrance to the Yogin.

The impulses of feeling are what are ordinarily called emotions. The emotions are of two kinds, natural or eternal, artificial or Vikaras. Love is natural, it proceeds from Jnanam and tends to endure in the evolution; hatred is a Vikara from love, a distortion or reaction caused by Ajnanam. So courage is eternal, fear is Vikara;

compassion is eternal, ghrina or weak pity, repulsion, disgust etc., are Vikaras. Those which are natural and eternal, love, courage, pity, truth, noble aspirations, are Dharma; the others are Adharma. But this is from the eternal standpoint and has nothing to do with Samajic or Laukic or temporary Dharma or Adharma. Moreover, Adharma is often necessary as a passage or preparation for passing from an undeveloped to a developed, a lower to a higher Dharma. The Yogin has to get rid of Vikaras, but not of Sanatana Dharmas.

The third kind of impulse is the impulse to action. Its presence in the Chitta is a temporary arrangement due to the rajasic development of the human being. The asuddha rajasic man cannot easily be stirred into action, except through two forces, desire or emotion. Love, hatred, ambition, rage etc., must stir in him or he cannot act, or acts feebly. He cannot understand shuddha pravritti, action without desire and independent of emotion. Emotion should only give a colour to the man's swabhava or temperament. He should be habitually full of feelings of love, courage, honour, true ambition, self-reliance etc., but he should not act from any individual impulse of however noble a character. He should act in obedience to the impulse from the Will in direct communication with the Purusha in the Vijnana, understanding with the Buddhi why the Will acts in that particular way and colouring the act with the emotion appropriate to his Swabhava. But neither the Buddhi nor the emotion should directly interfere with or try to determine his action. The Buddhi is for thought and the Chitta for emotion. Neither of them have anything to do with action in the shuddha state. The intellectual Asura determines his actions by his reason or his ideal, the emotional Asura by his feelings. But the shuddha determines them by the higher inspiration proceeding from the divine existence in the Vijnana. That is what people often call the Adesha. Only the shuddha can safely rely on having this kind of Adesha, the asuddha Yogin often mistakes his own ideas, imaginations, emotions or even desires for the Adesha.

Therefore what the Yogin must aim at, is to get rid of the activity of his lower Chitta or the old impressions by stilling the Manas as described in my last lecture; get rid of his instinctive thought or thought-impulses by the same means; get rid of the habit of acting on his emotions by allowing the will to silence his impulses and purify his emotions. He should prohibit and inhibit by the Will all action or speech that starts blindly from the passions or emotions surging in his heart. The emotions will then become quiet and must be habituated to come as a sort of wave falling into a sea, instead of surging furiously into action. These quiet waves which are satisfied with existing and do not demand satisfaction in action or seek to dominate the life or the ideas, are the purified emotions. Those which rise upward into the Buddhi and try to shape the thought or opinion, those which move outward into speech or action, are asuddha emotions. What I mean is that the emotions in the Chitta are for enjoyment only; the action must be dominated by a higher principle.

There again it is the Will that must purify, govern and renew the heart. Only, it has the best chance of doing it if the knowledge has first become active and the mind is still. A still mind means a heart easily purified.

VII

I come next to Prana, the nervous or vital element in man which is centralised below the Manas and Chitta in the subtle body and connected with the navel in the Sthula Deha. Here I must distinguish between the Sukshma Prana and the Sthula Prana, the former moving in the nervous system of the subtle body as described in the Yogic books, the latter in the nervous system of the gross body. The two are closely connected and almost always act upon each other. The prana forms the link between the physical and the mental man. I must here warn you against stumbling into the error of those who try to harmonise Yogic Science with the physical science of the Europeans and search for the Yogic Nadis and Chakras in the physical body. You will not find them there. There are certain centres in the physical nervous system with which the Chakras correspond, otherwise Hathayoga would be impossible. But the Chakras are not these centres. The Europeans are masters in their own province of knowledge and there you need not hesitate to learn from them, but for God's sake do not subject your higher knowledge to their lower; you will only create a most horrible confusion. Develop your higher knowledge first, then study their sciences and the latter will at once fall into their place.

It is with the Sukshma Prana that I am principally concerned; for the Sthula Prana belongs to the Annam rather than to the Antahkarana and I will speak of it in connection with the Annam. The Sukshma Prana is the seat of desire and its purification is of the utmost importance to the Yogin. Until you have got rid of desire, you have accomplished nothing permanent. When you have got rid of desire, you are sure of everything else. That is why the Gita says "Get rid of desire first". Only until you have got knowledge and can learn to use your will to still the mind and purify the emotions, you cannot utterly get rid of desire. You may drive it out by Samyama, you may hold it down by Nigraha but eventually it is of no use, for it will return. "Prakritim yânti bhûtâni nigrahah kim karishyati." Creatures follow after nature; what is the use of coercion? That is to say, it has a temporary result and the coerced desires come back ravening and more furious than before. That was what Christ meant by the parable of the devil, the unclean spirit who is driven out of a man only to return with seven spirits worse than himself. For it is the nature of things, the unalterable nature of things, that unpurified emotion must clamour after desire, an unstilled Manas give it harbourage whenever it returns, an unilluminated Buddhi contain the seed of it ready to sprout up at the first opportunity. Therefore unless the whole Antahkarana is purified, unless you get a new heart and a new mind, desire cannot be got rid of; it returns or it remains. When however an illuminated understanding lighting up the action of a strengthened Will and supported by a pure heart, casts desire into the Sukshma Prana and attacks it there in its native place, it can be utterly destroyed. When you have a visuddha Buddhi you will be able to distinguish these various organs and locate all your mental activities. Desire can then be isolated in the Prana and the heart and mind kept pure of its insistent inroads. For desire is only effective when it can get hold of the Chitta and Buddhi, generating Vikaras of emotion and perversions of knowledge which give it strength to impose itself on the Will and so influence internal and external action. It is most powerful in the higher kind of human being when it masks itself as a principle or ideal or as a justifiable emotion.

Remember moreover that all desires have to be got rid of, those which are called good, as well as those which are called bad. Some people will tell you, keep the good desires and drive out the bad. Do not listen to that specious piece of ignorance. You can use the good desires to drive out the bad on condition that immediately after you drive out the good also by the one desire of Mumukshutwa, liberation and union with God. And even that last desire finally you must renounce and give yourself up wholly to God's will, even in that last and greatest matter, becoming utterly desireless, nishkâma nihspriha. Otherwise you will find yourself travelling in a vicious circle. For if you keep desire at all, he is such a born traitor that he will eventually open the door to your enemies. When the unclean spirit returned to his house, he found it swept and garnished, that is, purified of bad thoughts and adorned with good desires, and immediately he got in and made the last state of that man worse than his first. So get rid of all desires utterly, good, bad and indifferent. Get beyond virtue as well as beyond vice. Be satisfied with no bondage even though the fetters be of pure gold. Admit no guide or master but God, even though they be gods or angels who claim your homage.

Desire is composed of three elements, attachment or Asakti, longing or Kamana, and preference or Ragadwesha. Get rid of attachment first. Use your will and purified Antahkarana to throw out that clinging and insistence on things, which says "I must have that, I cannot do without that," and returns on the idea of it, even when it is persistently denied. When the emotions are quiet, this Asakti will of itself die away, but for a time it will rage a great deal and try to get the emotions active again. Apply the Will steadily and patiently and do not get disturbed by failure; for desire is a terrible thing, as difficult to get rid of as a leech. It is indeed the daughter of the horse-leech crying "Give, give." Do not violently silence the cry; ignore it and use your Will to get rid of the clamourer. When Asakti becomes weak, Kamana loses nine tenths of its force and you can easily throw it off. Still for some time, out of sheer habit, the longing for certain things will come, not in the heart or Buddhi, but in the

Prana; only if Asakti is gone, the refusal of the thing craved will not leave behind it a permanent grief or continual hunger. There will only be temporary disturbance of the peace of the heart. When you have got rid of the Kamana, even then Raga may remain, and if Raga is there, Dwesha is sure to come in. You will not ask or crave for anything; for Kamana is gone; but when some things come, you will not like them; when other things come, you will feel glad and exultant. You will not rebel or cling to what you have, but you will not like the coming of the evil, you will not like the loss of your joy, even though you say "Very good" and submit. Get rid of that Raga and Dwesha and have perfect Samata.

When you have perfect Samata, then either you will have perfect Shanti, divine peace, or else perfect or Shuddha Bhoga, divine enjoyment. Shanti is the negative Ananda and those have it who rest in the Nirguna Brahman. Shuddha Bhoga is the positive Ananda and those have it who rest in the Trigunatita Ananta Brahman. You can have both and it is best to have both. God enjoys the world with Shuddha Bhoga based on the perfect Shanti. Most people cannot imagine Bhoga without Kama, enjoyment without desire. It is a foolish notion, none the less foolish because it is natural and almost universal. It is Ajnanam, a fundamental part of ignorance. Enjoyment does not really begin until you get rid of desire. That which you get as the result of satisfied desire is troubled, unsafe, feverish, or limited, but Shuddha Bhoga is calm, self-possessed, victorious, unlimited, without satiety and Vairagya, immortally blissful. It is in a word, not Harsha, not Sukha, but Ananda. It is Amrita, it is divinity and immortality, it is becoming of one nature with God. The soul has then no kama, but it has pure lipsa, an infinite readiness to take and enjoy whatever God gives it. Grief, pain, disgrace, everything that is to rajasic men a torture, changes then to bliss. Even if such a soul were to be cast into hell, it would not feel hell, but heaven. It would not only say with the Bhakta "This is from the beloved" but with the perfect Jnani "This is the Beloved; this is the Anandam Brahman: this is the Kantam, the Shivam, Shubham, Sundaram."

I need not repeat the process by which this purification is effected. I have indicated it sufficiently. This Tantric process is the same throughout, the reliance on the Shakti, the divine Will working in the Adhar, without any effort on the part of the Purusha, who remains Akarta throughout the sadhana, but still Ishwara, the source of the command and the sanction, the ruler dispossessed by his subjects and gradually recovering control of his rebellious and disordered kingdom.

VIII

There remains the Sthula, the gross part of man which is composed of the Sthula Prana or physical nervous system and the annam or body in which the prana operates. The prana is the principle of life, — death is brought about by the dissolution of the tie between the sukshma deha and the sthula deha. That tie is the prana. The sukshma deha takes the prana into itself and departs; the little that is left in the gross body is of the nature of apana with a tendency to that species of dissolution which we call corruption. The prana part of it, which can alone hold the body together, evaporates and the apana leads to swift disintegration. In some animals, however, the prana is so abundant that the body shows signs of life even after the sukshma deha has departed.

I have been dealing throughout with the purification of the sukshma part of man, the Antahkarana or mind, — the subject of the body is a little foreign to my purpose. Nevertheless a few words are necessary. The principle upon which this Yoga I am explaining to you stands, is that the gross body is merely the shadow or creation of the subtle. Body is a mould into which mind pours itself, but the mould itself has been prepared by the mind and can be changed by the mind. A mind purified, liberated and perfected (siddha) can do whatever it likes with the body. It may leave it as it is, allowing the past karma to do its will with the physical part in the form of disease, suffering, misfortune and death, without the mind being in the least affected. All that is impurity and bondage, which is the physical translation and result of mental impurity and bondage. With the cessation of the cause, the effect ceases; but not at once. It is again like the steam and the locomotive. The habits, the results created by past lives, are expelled from the mind and precipitated entirely into the body. You may allow them to work themselves out there, many do that. On the other hand, you may pursue them into the body and drive them out from there as well. In that case you get the Kayashuddhi and the Kayasiddhi. They are usually sought after by the Hathayogic or Rajayogic processes, but these are not necessary. It is even better and certainly much easier and surer to follow the process I have been indicating.

The very fact of having a purified mind makes for purity of the body, a liberated mind for liberation of the body, a perfected mind for perfection of the body, and to a certain extent as you go on with the yoga in the Antahkarana, the body will automatically begin to respond to the new influences. But you should not consciously meddle with the body until you have finished with the mind. Let nature do its work. Detach yourself as much as possible from the body, think of it as a mere case, leave it to the care of God and His Shakti. Many sadhaks are frightened by illness in the course of the Yoga. You need not be frightened, for you have put yourself in God's hands and He will see to it. It will come to you only as a part of the necessary process for purification of the body, work itself out, fade and return no more. Other disturbances of the body will come which are incidental to the turning of an unfit physical adhar into a fit one. Profound alterations are necessary in your brain-cells, your nervous system, your digestive and secretive processes and they cannot be effected without some physical disturbance, but it will never be more than is necessary for the process. Do no violence of any kind to the body; if you use physical remedies, let them be of the simplest and purest kind; above all dismiss anxiety and fear. You cannot care more for yourself than God cares for you. Only your care is likely to be ignorant and unwise; His is with knowledge and uses the right means to the right end.

Impurities in the body show themselves chiefly as disease, as pain, as the discomfort of heat and cold, as the necessity of the excretive processes. The first sign of Kayashuddhi is the disappearance of all tendency to disease; the second is liberation from the dwandwa of heat and cold, which will either go altogether or change to pleasurable sensations often marked by electrical phenomena; and the third, the diminution or disappearance of excretive activity. Pain also can be entirely eliminated from the body, but even before the reaction called pain is got rid of, or even without its being got rid of, the discomfort of pain can be removed and replaced by a sort of bodily Ananda. Finally, the craving of hunger and thirst disappears from the prana to which it belongs and the dependence on food diminishes or ceases. The perfection of all this is the basis of Kayasiddhi. But perfect Kayasiddhi includes other developments such as the siddhis of Mahima, Laghima, Anima and the invulnerability and incorruptibility of the body, — powers hitherto attained in the Kaliyuga only by very advanced Siddhas. They depend primarily on the replacement of the ordinary fivefold processes of prana, apana, vyana, samana and udana by the single simplified action of the original or elemental force of prana, the infinite vital energy surcharged with electricity, vaidyutam.

All these are important elements of Tantric Yoga, but I have mentioned them only cursorily because they are foreign to my purpose. They can all be developed if the mental siddhi is perfected and it is on this perfection that I wish you to concentrate your energy and attention. When you get that, you get everything. The centres of man's activity, at present, are the buddhi, the heart and the manas, and the body, though extremely important, is a dependent and subordinate function. It has not to be despised on that account, but most people give it an undue importance. When the Jiva is Ishwara of his mind, his body falls into its proper place and instead of interfering and often domineering over the mind and will, it obeys and takes its stamp from them. The Europeans are obsessed with the idea of the physical as the master of the mental. I would have you hold fast to the opposite standpoint and always remember that for the body to impose its conditions on the mind is an abnormal state of man's being, which has to be got rid of; it is the mind that must command, condition and modify the body.

IX

CONCLUSION

I have finished what I had to say. I will only add a word in conclusion. You must not think that what I have given you, is all the knowledge you need about yourself or about the Yoga. On the contrary, these are only certain indications necessary at a particular stage; they are chiefly important for purification, which is the first part of the Yoga. After the shuddhi is complete one has to perfect the mukti, to get liberation, a thing easy after shuddhi, impossible before it. By mukti I do not mean *laya*, which is a thing not to be pursued or desired, but waited for whenever God wills, but liberation from ignorance, Ahankara and all dualities. With the progress of the purification, there will be a natural tendency towards liberation and the farther stages of yoga, bhukti and siddhi, liberated enjoyment and perfection. As you go forward you will have to change your attitude, not radically but in certain important points. That, however, I will not meddle with. It is well to do one thing at a time.

In all that I have written, I have taken one standpoint to which many of you have not been accustomed. If you regard Vairagyam as the beginning of all wisdom, you will not be satisfied with me. Vairagyam is to me merely a useful temporary state of mind which God uses to enforce rejection of that to which the old samskaras cling too obstinately to be unseated from it by mere abhyasa. Jnanam is essential to shuddhi and mukti; but Jnanam must be assisted either by abhyasa or by vairagya until the mind is still and lets knowledge do its own work. As soon as the mind is still and not susceptible to resuscitation of its old energies from outside, the Jnanam develops, the Shakti pursues its task unhampered; there is then no sadhan for you, only a progressive siddhi without any deliberately adopted method, increasing by the mere easy and natural process of Nature as a man breathes or sees or walks. All necessity for either abhyasa or vairagya ceases. Attachment to vairagya is as harmful as attachment to lobha itself.

Again if you think with the Buddhists that all life is a misery and extinction of some kind the highest good, or if you think with the Mayavadin that we came into this world with no other object but to get out of it again as soon as possible, like the famous general whose greatest military exploit was to march up a hill in order to march back again, you had better pass me by. I am a Tantric. I regard the world as born of Ananda and living by

Ananda, wheeling from Ananda to Ananda. Ananda and Shakti, these are the two real terms of existence. Sorrow and weakness are vikaras born of ajnanam, of the forgetfulness of the high and true self. These are not universal or eternal things, but local and temporary, local mainly of this earth, temporary in the brief periods of the Kali yuga. Our business is to bring down heaven on earth for ourselves and mankind, to eliminate sorrow and weakness from the little corners of existence and time, where they are allowed to exist. I do not give any assent to the gloomy doctrine which preaches a world of sorrow and inaction and withdrawal from it as the sole condition of bliss and freedom, which thinks, contrary to all reason and knowledge, that God in himself is blessed, but God in manifestation accursed. I will not admit that the Brahman is a fool or a drunkard dreaming bad dreams, self-hypnotised into miserable illusions. I do not find that teaching in the Veda; it does not agree with my realisations which are of the actuality of unalterable bliss and strength and knowledge in the midst of desireless phenomenal action. I am of the mind of Sri Krishna in the Mahabharata when he says, "Some preach action in this world and some preach inaction; but as for those who preach inaction, I am not of the opinion of those weaklings." *Na me matam tasya durbalasya.*

But the action he holds up as an example, is the action of the great Gods, even as Goethe speaks of the action of the great natural forces, disinterested, unwearying, self-poised in bliss, not inert with the tamas, not fretful with the rajas, not limited even by the sattwic ahankara—action made one in difference with the Purushottama, my being in His being, my shakti only a particular action of His infinite shakti, of Kali. I am not ignorant, I am not bound, I am not sorrowful: I only play at being ignorant, I only pretend to be bound; like an actor or like an audience I only take the rasa of sorrow. I can throw it off when I please. Who calls me degraded and sinful, a worm crawling upon the earth among other worms? I am Brahman, I am He; sin cannot touch me. Who calls me miserable? I am God, all blissful. Who calls me weak? I am one with the Omnipotent. He, being One, has chosen to be Many. He, being infinite, localises himself in many centres and in each centre He is still infinite. That is the mystery of existence, the *uttamam* *rahasyam*, God's great, wonderful and blissful secret, a secret logic rejects, but knowledge grasps at, a knowledge not to be argued out but realised, but proved by experience, by the purified, liberated, all-enjoying, all-perfect soul.

EDITOR'S EPILOGUE

A few words seem necessary in conclusion. For it is as well to guard against certain misconceptions which may arise from the brevity of the writer and his omission of some important points considered by him, no doubt, to be, however important, yet outside his scope.

The prohibition of cheshta in the ideal use of the will does not imply the renunciation of Karma. The cheshta referred to is internal, not external, arambha, not karma. The distinction is that made by Sri Krishna in the Gita when he holds up the ideal of action with renunciation of all arambhas, —*sarvârambhân parityajya*. We are to do actions with the body, mind, buddhi, senses, each doing its own separated work in its absolute purified simplicity, *kevalair*, without any desire, expectation or straining in the will after either action or its success. The sadhak should abstain from applying his method to important actions in life until the higher purified will is to some extent trained, and even then it will be best for him to apply it to things of smaller moment first, then to those of greater moment. During the sadhana subjective progress and superfluous action small or great should be his main fields for test and training.

Secondly, it must not be supposed that the treatment in these short lectures is intended to be full or exhaustive or even that in those points which it handles at the greatest length all has been said that the sadhak needs to know. On the contrary, only a few main ideas have been broadly struck out which may be useful to the beginner. The more advanced will find that they have rapidly outgrown the utility of these hints and that they have to be greatly enlarged on and modified before the knowledge at which they point can be considered full and satisfactory.

Finally, the aim of the particular path of Yoga indicated is not the assertion of the individual will, but surrender of the individual will, its absolute, unreserved and ungrudging surrender into the direction and control of the Infinite Being. The training of the system or adhar prescribed has for its purpose, first, the subjugation of the clamorous desires and impulses, the stubborn pride and egoism, the vain self-sufficient reason and imagination of the unregenerate man so that they may not interfere with the completeness of the surrender, secondly, the possession of a strong, mighty and effective will to offer as a yajna to the Most High and not one that is weak, distracted, ignorant and diffident. The Karma of the Siddha Yogin must be like that of the sun and stars, the avalanche and the cyclone, the breeze, moon or flowers, fire and the dust of the earth, either calm and luminous or mighty and violent or gentle, sweet and useful, either lofty or humble at the will of the One Supreme Shakti, impelled and used by Her entirely, and, whatever its outward appearance, always working on a basis of absolute peace, self-surrender and self-knowledge.

AUTOMATIC WRITINGS, c. 1914 (FIRST SET)

[1]

Nothing is new in the world—What do you mean by new—New, in a sort of way, in relation to what is expressed within your knowledge—Let it go—All is well—That is too rigid a way of putting it—Why—Of all—That is a delicate question—I don't think I shall—You settle that yourselves—What of him? To you? What is he to you? Why does the Trinity need Abdul Baha—Need? then how can you act—

Too much pliability to the infinite. He is too much in contact with past worlds of beings who seek to fulfil themselves in him and prevent the final formation of certain things which would otherwise take a shape powerful for action.—That is good in the world of thought, but not, as it is now, for action. These three things in their principles, in that which brings them about, is good; but they have to find that & arrange themselves in it before they can be effective—Their own—It is difficult to say in words—But as they are, they are things that represent some perfection, are a preparation, without them as a stage the perfection could not be reached, but they must not rest too long in the stage of preparation—I don't know—There are many excellent things in the world—

You have not to arrange—Let it arrange itself under a higher impulsion—Not always—Speaking of precise defects interferes with the balance; it gives a tendency to exaggerate either the defect or its opposite—It is an attitude of the soul, the reason and the heart that is needed, a thing general not precise—People insist too much on particularities, on that which can be defined. But these things are the result of something general & not easily definable, a thing to be felt & seen rather than thought & expressed—

She is too balanced on one side—A gentle disbalancing would be good—She has created a balance firm & good, but depending too much on an unconscious restraint which limits the development of her capacities

[2]

Abd-ul-Baha, let him disappear then you will see the connection—He has got rid of Maurya or rather Maurya has got rid of himself—As Maurya—Yes, but at present powerless—He has dissolved his means of action—Not in this world. He is there, but by himself he is [ ][1] less free, less able to impress himself powerfully on the material world. Yes, spiritually—There is the same difficulty, but less concentrated. As with Abdul Baha. The choice is given always.—Why question about such weak forces—He is divided from you by his weakness, not as the others by their strength—If they have an immediate destiny—Who?—They are always there, it is in the material world you should seek. They are the men of the future, not of the present—Yes, or have not found themselves. Why are you here otherwise? That is a question you can answer yourselves.

Dissolve him if you will, leave him if you will not—There is nothing else to be done with him—If he is to be anything, he must first dissolve—No, the constitution of his inner being must be entirely changed first, but that would mean a great disintegration first & to begin with the loss of his evil power—What force?—Ah yes; it will be done at the right time, in this body or otherwise. Each man follows a path that leads him to the goal; only some follow it through disastrous or apparently disastrous revolutions and even have to begin again—He is good as an examiner of souls—That is the part of the devil in certain systems. He knows himself—Ah, ask the prophets—What?—I suppose you have had relations—Then? One of those who prepare, but are not prepared—Oh, let him do his own work, he does it well. Do not try to give men more part than the Divine Being has given them—That would do him harm, to try to make him more than himself—Friendship is blind—Love, but do not govern your actions by a partial affection—I was going to say what you have said—She is a great soul always with you. He was necessary to her force. Yes, in certain limits—In another sense than the Theosophist, she would have to be dissolved to be useful otherwise than she is I don't mean physically—Everything is possible, but all is not intended—No, help her by your thought & let the result be what it will. You come back to the action—Yes, but the Review is only a means; its success depends on what I told you at the beginning. In your case, the mechanical forces of matter are nothing; it is the inner powers that must work & fulfil. You have the light that is merely light, but where is the light that is power—Knock at the door that is still shut. You have said, personalise the Infinite. The Infinite as infinite does nothing, it is—All form & action are a choice in the Infinite. Yes, mount there. By equilibrium it is possible to mount. Reject nothing essential in yourself; only transform or rather allow to be transform[ed]—No—There are reasons why I will not—It is a consciousness that formulates itself

---

[1] *MS* more

What is impersonal? All is personal, yet impersonal. Everywhere—Not even that. I can, but I do not. No, surely not—That is different, from above. It is difficult to conduct this writing if one descends into a mixture of forces. That is why the writing is so often stupid—Not in the same way. It is not that I despise the physical world or physical means—Do that in your physical body. Yes—try to have it as far as possible. . . I am not like you in a physical body. I shall take it at the proper time. Thousands of times. Do not ask that; it goes too deep. It means that there are things for which neither you nor I are ready.

[3]

July, August, September—Yes—All goes well as it is—No reproach an affirmation—So it seems—You are doing or it is being done? In some directions—Not balanced—Let the Power work—don't quarrel with it. When there is want of balance, it means that both sides are wrongly arranged with regard to each other.

Many begin to be calm—None yet avail for action—What matters whence comes the truth—That let the recipient judge—The work—The work that is to be, not that which men imagine—Remove all preconceptions—No—I am nobody—When I write, I am only a word—It depends on what is active—

[4]

My dear friend,

It is quite impossible to tell you how glad I am to come into communication with you again. After so many years of separation, for old friends to be even partially united is a great happiness. If you will let me pour out my sentiments, I can write pages.—My name is Mo———[2] Too many people are thinking—I am the friend who died in the years when you were at Baroda—I am Nair- - -[3]

My soul is in the world of desires———

═══

My idea of your position in Pondicherry is that it is not serious as you think. There are some weak points on which certain forces are pressing in order to throw you out somewhere. Whether it is good that you should be thrown out or not, I do not know. But really the result depends on you & not on them. If you ask precise questions, I will try to answer—You want a prophet—I will answer if you like, but I am not a prophet.

---

[2] *Only two letters of the name were written, followed by a long line.—Ed.*

[3] *Uncertain reading. The marks represented here by three hyphens may indicate that the name is incomplete.—Ed.*

AUTOMATIC WRITINGS, c. 1914 (SECOND SET)

[1]

My dear friends,

I am eager to join you, but I am terribly opposed by all sorts of obstacles. Pray send me your strength—

He is gone—I am willing to talk about Agrippa or anything you like—I don't know Agrippa, but I know about him. He was a man grave, stern, sombre, full of retained force, a great lover of Augustus, but yet they did not always get on very well together from want of sufficient intellectual comprehension of each other—Horace—No—it was a private friendship—To found the empire? Agrippa, Maecenas,—at first Antony, though they quarrelled afterwards—You see, that was a dream & dreams very often distort things. You must understand them generally without pressing the details. He meant that the first step was a petty success which assured the chain of actions that followed. As for the exact step, it is difficult to say—perhaps he meant that he took possession of the Senate, the august monument of Republican Rome, in order to have a sure base for his empire. Caesar & Antony after him neglected these little powerful details about which Augustus who had always a practical intuition was always very careful.—When did you have it? In coming or going—Where? But where, near what country?—Near Egypt then—Well, then, the dream had obviously a close connection with the hidden object of your voyage,—hidden from yourself, of course. Augustus was the organiser of a new era in civilisation, though Caesar was the founder,—a civilisation which gave a firm base for a new development of the world. You have the same idea of a new civilisation—but what is missing is the organising power—It is that you waked in the dream. Since it was near Egypt you were probably Antony who attempted blindly a union of East & West typified by his connection with Cleopatra. As for the great toe of the foot, that is difficult. I will try to consider.

Not at all—They [*Antony and Augustus*] were greatly attracted to each other, but their interests clashed & their prana clashed & the attempts they made to link themselves closely like the marriage with Octavia drove them apart. They were complementary to each other, but could not understand each other. Of course I don't know that you were Antony—I only try to interpret the dream—Yes—he has much of the prana of Agrippa, only it is now illumined & purified & there is the effect of other lives—Whose? Yes, that is why I said you might be Antony—No, you have progressed much—If so, she has much altered—Why not? One can change out of recognition—Never—Yes, probably—Very little—No, I don't see anything—No—I don't say that, but I can trace nothing—Whose—He has, I understand, been identified with Virgil, & at any rate he has the Virgilean soul. . He is French, also, but a little of the Celtic Italian type—The Celtic type is dreaming artistic impulsive delicate intuitional a little formless; the Italian has the sense of form & mastery over the materials of life or of art—He is a Bengali, but no man belongs only to his present nation to the exclusion of his soul's past history—He is of the practical, formative type—Which? No—but I must try to get into touch with the past formations & I want an indication. It is not easy. These things don't remain in the nervous mind with any precision—Yes, but it is difficult—If you ask me about things Egyptian, I shall have to run away—What language? No—I don't think—More possible—You are going back very near Egypt—Oh, horribly symbolic, mystic, hieroglyphic—I think not—I don't accept your authority—You authorise yourself to authorise for her. Cleopatra is not Egypt—that is Greek easternised—Certainly not—She had none—She was all prana & imagination given up to the impulses of the prana—Charming—Yes—I can't say precisely just now; I only feel that they have come often together. Possibly; but more often united—I don't see him—Also—That is a thing which most of us don't like to reveal—Not on earth—Yes—Rather, the sign of a constant connection with earth, a persistence in the life of the earth—Sometimes a great, sometimes little according to the particular case—[1] It is difficult to say; the mentality is sometimes strongly reproduced, the nervous part a little; sometimes the contrary—I don't see why—I don't think so, but it depends perhaps on the spirit in which it is done

Much worse than the other—I am afraid you must ask others who have a greater power of mentality than myself.—He is more modern, but he may well have been there. How do you know she was Cleopatra?—Possibly you were not; I only saw a certain connection & therefore some probability—Yes, probably your own—I accept it as probable.—Yes—It's a way of saying—I regret not—I came in answer to your past desire—There is something opposing the writing, but that does not matter—only there is a distracting force somewhere which prevents the nervous part of the medium from concentrating.

[2]

My writing will be of another kind. I am here to speak of the things that interest myself and my friends—In the heavens of the second mind there are those who view the world through the symbols of the nervous mind and that distorts the vision. I hope to dissipate the mists that distort with your help. If you prefer, I will wait your own time, but absolutely you must help us, for then you will help yourself—To the writer—I have indicated what I am. As to who I am, how will that help you. From the world I am speaking of. On the whole I think I will wait. The time does not seem propitious.

What else do you expect? If there are communications, it is either when light spirits come to amuse themselves or those who have passed seek to reestablish communication or else the spirits of other worlds come to aid or to seek aid. Attend there—

No. Ask him—

---

[1] *At this point in the MS the following incomplete sentence was written and then cancelled:* It is great as far as concerns Agrippe &

Many wish to be present, but the dissipation of force is not favourable. Concentration is necessary. No, you have got a nice little spirit there, give him a chance—I should like to know what he means by the absence of love & suppleness. If he refers to us, we shall be very glad to know our defects. Is he. Well, perhaps. What does it matter, provided we help. We are interested in thought, not in love. In any case we think we are preparing for greater powers than ourselves to manifest. As for the writing we use it, but there are other & better means—You think so? To what? Does he think he comes from the highest heights—If there are such great powers on earth in man, what is this they have done with the earth? Do they think the horrible gâchis they have made is a credit to the greatest powers in the world? Then we speak a different language when we speak of greatness & height. He means height in love, I mean height in wisdom. At bottom, yes, but not in their way of manifesting. I am glad he added that; & his great want now is the right knowledge to direct his love. Love without knowledge is often a terrible thing. Granted—There I cannot follow him. Love infinitely; it is easy to say—How many among men can do it or have done it; & even among those who have done it to a large extent, there have been tracts of themselves where clarity was absent. These things in men more often exclude each other than admit each other's completeness. Do not fix on one thing, however great & high. Open yourselves to the light, to the power, to the love & do not exaggerate the importance of the one above all the others. If I say man needs knowledge most, I speak of the present need. Love without it will not help him in the great struggles that are before him.

I admit that I am more akin in my mind to light & power than to love, but I recognise the importance of love. I will admit that it is even the most important, but there are times & seasons for things. That is interesting—but there are different ways of service. And I as friend.—All do that—Seek on the mountains where the foot of man has not yet trod, when the moon is full, when the spring is at its height after meditation & prayer—But not now. When the hour comes, you will know. Not he who works for that, but for another cause. He must not be there at the search—There are reasons which it would be premature to reveal—That I know not, you may meet there, but you are not likely to go there together. Perhaps he who desires it most. For the other a stage must come in the work before he goes. Everything is fixed by the law of his nature & the law which governs that law. What do you mean by the reason? Again a doubtful expression; everything is rational from one point of view, absurd & arbitrary from another. The ultimate Law is beyond expression by the mind. Imperfectly & from a limited point of view. For man's convenience, yes. I don't say how. Yes, limit not the knowledge at any point, that is the essential—No—Yes—I do not think it will take long—Forty three[2] years for the work is my calculation, but Rama must manifest soon if it is to be done so quickly. For the changing of the world—For it to be completed. In 1956–7. Complete!! Who knows? That is a very impersonal answer. What of man's satisfaction? The work & the man; the man because of the work & the work also because of the man. Work is not in the void nor exists for its own sake but because of that which works. Why must the world be saved? That does not enlighten me—The salvation, if you like to use the word, of man which necessarily means the fulfilment of the present world in something more complete & divine. Eternity? what is that? I know nothing of eternity. There is time & that which is beyond time. Then what is meant by constructing something eternal for eternity. You touch on a problem which is perhaps the most difficult of all & you treat it very summarily. It is not born. Yes—Yes but then you construct for Time. Something which begins but does not end —Then why construct?—To that I agree. I must have known him, if he was in the world of light—But he said, I think, he knows me? That is why I waited. In his present form & name I do not know him. No—From my own. Approaching that? I can, if I try but I do not know whether I shall be permitted to speak. By that which governs my knowledge. I see three forms of light; one is white with a blue radiance around it & out of it fierce red lustres occasionally pour, another is white. No another day—

---

[2] *"Forty two" was altered by writing "three" over "two".—Ed.*

It is a force of Rudra who destroys—I find a difficulty in writing—I should not begin it apparently at least not now. If he can speak let him do so—Which is which? How, you have seen, it is you who must say—Is there any symbolism in your variations of writing? That is why I called him a nice little spirit. I got an impression of the child in him—O it is only an impression & probably a wrong one. But what was the name he gave me? Was it a name, what function?

What was it you asked? I was listening to him. How the same family? Yes, very close, but you have a brilliance; mine is a different kind of light. Mine is more subdued, less fertile. Less intense, more quietly spread, perhaps a little wider, but not so forceful & productive. No, there is an immense difference. . His is a light I cannot describe. No, that was a form. It is the mentality—Who the devil can describe it—Don't ask me to do impossible things. At the centre—In that from which the light comes; also to a certain extent in the process, but not in its forms. The union he speaks of will be perfect when you all three reach there. No, not in the way I mean. . To each his time & his work. I seek, not precisely that, but a connection enabling me to work. No, not at all—It is a different spirit—Yes, but there must also be a point of contact. I am willing if you are. Good—Not with all three. She would [not] open [to] me in her present condition: the element of mentality in which I am strongest, is in her half asleep. Yes, but others can do that better than I can. No, but if he is as you say, ask him to come soon. Who? In defining the higher knowledge so as to make it useful for life—Precisely, the light is too high as it is; I can help him as it descends to define it more practically. No, that is your affair—In managing the way of the earthly world in which you are. Not in the way most men call practical. By matter, I seek to be.——————

AUTOMATIC WRITING, c. 1920

Manek.

Manek is the name of the old introducer of the writing. Let us get rid of him at once. My name does not greatly matter. I am a spirit of the higher realms not present on the earth, but communicating from above.

First, let me tell the purpose of the script. It is to open a first means of embodied communication with the other worlds. There can be other means, but this was the readiest at the time. In all respects it was the most suitable. As a beginning only.

The object now is to introduce the wider knowledge of past, present and future beyond the range of the present terrestrial mind—That is all today—

AUTOMATIC WRITINGS, c. 1920

[1]

One of the guests of the future. . Millions of men are waiting for the day that comes but it comes not till the light has descended. And who shall make the light descend? Half lights will not do, they prepare and pass and fade. The whole light, the unveiled power. We behind the veil wait for our hour; not to a world such as is now can we come. We are the sons of the glory, the children of immortality, the flames of God. When the divine Light descends, then we descend. But we know that an hour approaches and the dawn is red, red as blood and red with blood, the fire is behind, the fire of the Angel of the Presence.

Light first, strength with the light, joy with the strength, love with the joy, the fourfold splendour. Who shall contain it within himself and give harbourage to all the Godhead? Who shall have the unfathomable calm that shall support all the light and neither be blasted by the fire nor spill it like an insufficient vessel? The strength, who shall be bold enough to bear it, mighty enough not to shrink from the terror and marvel of its works, great and sweet enough to turn its lion forces into the path of the Lover? Who shall be the sea of the universal joy and swallow up into it the poisons of the universe and his throat not even be blackened by the fire of the poison? Who shall know what the love is and take nothing out of it nor reject any face of love however strange and out of all experience it may be to the mind of the mortal? All this he must be before the Godhead of the future can descend. All else that promises to come are only glimpses of things that would intervene and take the great seat if they could or else flashes that mislead. The new age promises always, but is always the old age in another dress. This only can be the thing that is truly new born and the birth of a new humanity.

One who has come near because some of the ways are opened.

Not the highest, but still a soul and not a creature of the worlds that once communicated with you.

He has no name and innumerable names. Men call him God, therefore I use the word. . I am not a man, but I have been a man.

To whom? You would not know the names and they are secret.

I will not give the name I call him by; but some call him by a name that means he who cannot be obstructed. . A time will come when I must descend on earth, but not in the present humanity. One who passed the threshold. I am not a Mahatma. No. A man, a seeker who heard and saw, if you like to so call it, a Rishi. . What does the name matter? It would not help you to know anything. It is a strange and a vague question.

Put these questions to another who is nearer to external things than myself.

No information, only the things of the Idea. You have too many. I do not speak of ideas in the ordinary sense, but the Idea. Wait till another day if you will when I can make a closer and less impeded connection. This kind of communication needs a full force in the writer which he had at the beginning, but is now clouded. I can no longer express myself as I would and the idea is checked in its passage.

[2]

Be passive.

Blind the intelligence to what is being written. It does not matter if there is a knowledge of what is coming, but there must be no activity of the intelligence, no idea, no criticism of the intellectual sense, simply a passive acceptance.

[3]

The time is too short, you should have done it before. . However, I am here. What I have to say I will say another time, but you can ask me any question and I will see if I can answer. No, not stupid questions.

It is not tamasya. It is a state of relaxation of the being which is rajasic in its fundamental temperament with a sattwic flame ever growing on the heights; but the flame does not burn up the mist between the mind and the highest; it only thins it so as to allow the lightnings sometimes to pour down from above. The rajasic fuel of the nervous being gets exhausted by too rapid an expenditure often for quite useless purposes and then the mist precipitates itself downward. The result is a laxity of the nervous system and a resultant laxity of the mind. It is a tamasic state no doubt, but if the rajas of the wrong kind can be lessened by it and cast away and only the rajas that is fit for feeding the sattwic fire preserved and increased, then a greater fire of the upward light can be established which may perhaps burn up the mist on the heights. That is how I see your condition—

I am not a prophet. It depends on yourself and the gods of your nature and those of your destiny. Help them by your assent or if you can, by your will.

Why not, if the Power in you wills or if you can wake its action; but there is no need to force yourself at present if your system is reluctant.

I do not know the future positively. It is a power, but a power which works behind a cloud of light which is too strong for most eyes. I do not know if it will soon take a more directly effective form.

[4]

My presence is sure whenever you take up the pencil. I am always near you in my psychical being. The work you are doing is intimately connected with my destiny and therefore I am attracted towards those who embody the influences that are in operation to bring about its form and exterior movement. This writing is a means of direct communication and by it I can bring myself nearer to the earth where I shall have to descend. It is more useful to us than to you, but it is one of the means which the world behind is using today to throw out its presence and figures on the terrestrial plane. Others of a greater kind will take its place when the human mind is ready.

The time is short. My will is to see, but I see only in the figures of the psychic world. Yet I think I mistake not in seeing that the movement which was so slow prepares for a rapidity which will be first the flowing of a constant stream, then the spreading of a tide and last a storm of invading forces. The Shakti of the future has been as if ascending a steep ascent and is now approaching the summit from which she will be able to see the field of her work before her. The field is full of contrary forces and her first steps must be covert and behind a shield of self-veiling and only partially revealing movements. Other movements must be thrown in front which will attract the attention of the hostile forces, movements not of the definite future, but still helpful to prepare the field, and it is only when she has gathered sufficient material force that she will throw off disguise and come to the front to take up the direct battle. That is why at first the quicker movement will be only that of the flowing stream, a penetration and spreading and enlargement of the current. When there is the greater tide of movement, then the battle will be near and the Shakti will unveil her real figure.

There is a storm approaching, but it is of the outside movement, and as I am not in close touch with those forces, I cannot see clearly whether it merely threatens at present and will keep for a time the atmosphere surcharged and heavy or will break out into an early violence. I see the power that broods upon this outer movement, but his mind is not open to me. ——————————— .

I have finished saying what was immediately in my mind and have been simply thinking in the writing to materialise my thoughts a little. If you wish to say anything, I am ready to reply to you.

═══

Bolshevism is more distant to me, but it is part of the outer movement, only it has more force of reality than others I was thinking of. The movements of Europe have a potential or an actual violence of the power of execution in them which makes them press for realisation more rapidly; but it is the future which is preparing to arise in the East of which I was thinking.

Not in your atmosphere, but around. I see most readily the things nearest to you. I do not suppose it will be anything to you except a thing to be watched for the opportunities it may leave behind in passing.

Japan? I shall have to see more closely before I can say. From a distance I can only see things that prepare by bits; the sudden shocks that will break down what is established seem to me to be yet at a distance, but at what distance I cannot say.

That is a thing in which I have no right to give suggestions. The powers that preside over your destiny and the work have to settle that between them; but I doubt not that when the action is ready, the guidance will come. Spirits like myself are too little a part of the already materialising will of the terrestrial destiny to hazard their thoughts in the matter. The future, besides, can only be seen by me in tendency, in figures of general power. . I may be able to speak of more definite things hereafter, but not at present.

[5]

My wish is to make a few observations first, but please remain absolutely still in the mind or I shall not be able to manage. —

The age of our coming is the age of the omnipotence of the second emanation. The first is the age of the Spiritual without form, the second that of the spiritual possessing matter. The first, I mean, the age in which we formerly came. Therefore our coming depends upon your ability to lay hold on matter and make of it a true mould of the spiritual influx. In the former age there were symbols, but no true body. Therefore the spirit receded and left the other principles to play out their possibilities without its direct intervention. Now there is a second chance for us. That is why I have drawn near, more for help to myself than for anything else, to make a suitable connection in my psychical principle with the material and the work of the spirit upon it. This is to explain my side of the communication. Whatever I see or say about things on the earth is through a previous psychical translation and you must so understand it and not expect too great a precision at present in my communications.

≡

The tendencies of the present I can see and floating images of the future; but as the real body of the psychic worlds is not present to the physical mind, but only appears like a dream or imagination, so to my psychic mind is the body of the material world. This presents a difficulty which most who do this writing do not appreciate. It is only spirits who are very near to the earth who can to some extent see it with similar eyes to physical beings and they too borrow a great deal from the ideas, the mental suggestions and the nervous being of the one who writes and those about him so as to harmonise their mentality with that of men and make themselves intelligible. This I do not wish to do, as it brings much that is false and inferior into the communication. Please therefore be as still in mind as possible so that there may be a minimum of mixture.

Now if you want to say anything I am ready.

It is only minds who have a new idea either full of the spiritual influence or touched by thoughts that are helpful to it who can prepare the age that seeks to come. But there are those who have ideas only on the intellectual plane and no idea of anything behind and there are those who have spiritual experience but no power to embody or materialise. These give us no sufficient hope, whatever they may do for the moment. It is where there is the spiritual experience or the ideas that give it a mental body and along with that a strong will to materialise from whom we can expect the fulfilment of that for which we are awaiting. You are among the comparatively few who have these things. It is therefore either you if you are chosen and remain faithful to yourselves or those like you to whom we must look for the preparation of the future.

Because of the psychical vision. I can see something of your souls or at least its signs, even if I cannot see your bodies.

No, impossible, not in the period of transition.

That is because you have been less spiritually exclusive than myself; you have incarnated through the centuries and done work for mankind and you now continue that work and yours therefore is the right or, if you like, the spiritual necessity to labour for the great ages of mankind. I was of those who drew too much into myself seeking the pure principle of knowledge and I postponed though I knew to be necessary the sacrifice of action. I did the action that prepared myself for spiritual growth, but not in my last movements the action that goes outward. If I were to come now without the help of a favourable new age to externalise my spirit, I should have to begin by a form of mind corresponding to my last mental formation and start from that working out of it what was opposed to the action. I should not be a sufficient force for help to the world at this critical period. I might even join myself to old ideas having too much of the spiritual overstress. On the other hand if I come at a juncture where the right kind of work has already begun, I shall have the most favourable circumstances for making the most of my earthly destiny for myself and others.

That is a difficult question. It involves from my point of view a working out of an equation between your psychical forces as I see them and the circumstances of your earthly destiny as they are determined by the force of your past and the force of your future lives. I do not know enough for that, and I could not possibly do it satisfactorily in a few words or a little time. Besides there is the force of the collective need and the collective resistance to consider. If one could see not from the psychical but the higher principle it would be easy enough but I cannot do that at present. I think you should leave this question to another occasion. At present I should probably get only a side light which might be misleading.

Everywhere, to one degree or another, but to find them is no such easy matter. In number they are already thousands, but all of them have not found their way. Some need a lead and some a leader and some the destined moment for casting into form of thought and action what is now only a desire and an impulse. Some are meant only for the first steps and some for the greater things afterwards. It is not possible that you should coalesce with all of them; there are too many mental and temperamental differences, especially with those who have already taken their direction.

No. I began as what you would now call a Rishi, but I found no satisfaction in the things that were around me nor in the level of knowledge reached by my fellows. I said "Upwards, ever upwards." I drew back from my life and I went upwards in the inner world of my being. But when I felt myself full of the higher light and would have turned to pour it around me, I found I had cut the connection between the power of knowledge and the effective will to action, cut too the thread of similarity and sympathy which could have made a line of communication between my knowledge and the minds of others. My body too was a stranger to the principle which filled my spirit. I determined to come in another life, in another body; but when I retired, I found the inability to descend except at a sacrifice for which I was not ready. Therefore I had to wait for others to do what I might otherwise have done and to prepare the conditions for my return. I shall not be one of the initiators, but I shall be one of those who help to make the knowledge endure in the mind of the new humanity.

[6]

Not myself at first—

My desire is to suggest to you to enlarge your view of the things you are about to do. The steps you are taking are not in consonance with the scope of the power you are calling down. First, be sure of the presence of the power, certainly; but do not limit its action by too prudent a beginning. The power of the work is not the power of your past life nor temperament, not the power of Mahasaraswati which governed the past existences that have been revealed to you, but of Mahakali, the swift and forceful Shakti. The desire to lay a slow and sure basis which belongs to the careful reason and its experimental skill is not the genius of the work you have to do. The other side of the Shakti which hitherto has acted only on occasions, will be the force that presides over the not distant future. —

The limitations of the past were due to the heavy siege of the opposing powers and the obstacles they were able to heap about you. Some of these are already half dead and the others are beginning to lose their right; therefore be ready in a shorter time than you imagine to change your notions of the immediate future. The vaster, swifter more confident idea to which rendered careful by past failures you have long said "Not yet, not yet," is the only one that can act out with effect the aims that have been set before you. A force that hesitates not over its steps, that overbears and does not spend time in going round obstacles, that enlarges swiftly its means and moves over great spaces in short periods, can alone create the new world that is seeking to be born. ———

The forces that stand against you are great in appearance, but only in appearance; great no doubt still in material means, but smitten with the spirit of death in the very heart of those means. Their strength to endure derives only from the hesitations, the weakness of will, the slowness to combine and organise, or when organised to use boldly their strength which afflicts the forces of the future. This is the main reason why still they hold the world, because there is nothing except at a point here and there which is confident of its own power to replace them. Their shakti is broken within, the shakti of the future is infirm without, that is why there is the deadlock. ———

The person who wrote is gone; I presume he will come again; but it seemed to me he is passing about swiftly seeking something or somebody that will receive his inspiration and do his will. That is the impression he gave me—

Is there anything you would say to me or shall I stand back and let others come?

T S M ———

Be passive. T S M is the sign of the society, otherwise of the combination of groups that are working on the psychic conditions for the formation of things yet impotent to take a material body. . Three groups—one throwing up the errors likely to stand in the way of success so that they may express themselves and be done with; one sketching out the imperfect beginnings of the future; the third preparing under a veil the final things. The process of the new birth is a very complicated and difficult thing offering at every step errors and perils of perversion and failure or else of fallings short of the idea, and the mind of man and still more his life impulses are so difficult and obstinate a material that it needs many influences and much labour behind the veil to give a fair chance to the possibilities of the future. This applies in every part of the work that has to be done, spiritual, intellectual, material. The movement is at first a chaos of possibilities and the thing that is to be done appears generally to the human idea in certain ideas and tendencies which become more and more general; but the difficulty is with the forces, to make them purer and clearer in their idea of action, to get them together, to give them a combination and mass of action. At present they are in a confusion which deprives them of their means of success. It is the second group whose action tends to grow stronger; but for the third to bring their work forward needs the intervention of a great precipitating force. It is that no doubt which was spoken of, but if it is coming, it is still in the background. That is a thing I can convey with difficulty, if at all. T S M is only a sign. Together the letters mean the three things, apart they mean nothing. T is the sign of the past that failed trying to throw itself into the present, S of the present taking up the past and trying to change it into the future, M of the future creating the present. It is only a sign; but the name I cannot get into the writing. ————

He was trying to explain from his point of view why there is the difficulty in getting the greater force to come. The Shakti always waits for the moment of the fitness of its advent and that must be ready in the psychical field before it can be ready in the material action. That is what he wanted to say.

[7]

My own plan is to be more and more full of light and seek the end of the whole place which is above the vital region. As for the tunnel I think that is a mere figure of speech. There can be no tunnel, only a path made through the resistance of the ether but that is a path of light running through the density of the space above the terrestrial level. ————

I am one who have worked on these things. Not the one who comes ordinarily at first when you begin to write. I put him aside when you took up the pencil.

Not all, but I was passing when you talked of symbols.

That is one kind; but there are others belonging to that plane who are worse—All right. I am off. ——

That was an intervention such as often happens in this kind of communication. I am here. Have you anything to say to me?

=

Yes. Continue what and about whom? I think not, at least tonight.

What question? But I do not know.

=

That is simple. Let her free and let her do it herself. . No, but I mean that the question has only that solution. The change to be made is too great and the possibilities too many and complex for a plan to be made of any particular kind. It must be a natural evolution or if you like a natural revolution proceeding from the soul and will of the women themselves. If it is imposed on them in obedience to a previous idea, that will falsify the movement and produce something as artificial probably as the present system.

Why? It seems to me the most practical process.

In Asia. Europe will take, I think, a little time to adjust itself to a new impulse. It has been too much brought up to a sort of standstill or rather a circling round the same point by the disappointment of the hopes it had concerning the after results of the war. Besides the forces there are too bewildered and uncertain of themselves to take boldly at once a step forward—Even those which are sure of themselves are more concerned with consolidating their position than with any impulse of a fresh advance.

Not yet, so far as I can see. There must be at least three stages passed before that can come.

The first stage must be the exhaustion of the existing idea and movement which is rather a confused seeking for a means of self-effectuation than a strong and definite will and idea. And under the cover of this there must grow up a new will and strength fixed on its aim and luminous enough to create its means. Afterwards the struggle with the last remnants of the destiny of England.

I do not see yet clearly beyond the immediate situation; but this process seems to me certain though the forms and balance of the forces about to come into the field are not yet definite to me. As for the time, all I can say is that it will be swifter than seems now possible and that there will be a constant acceleration of the momentum of destiny which will become very pronounced after a year or two or at most three.

It is hanging all over Asia, but I do not know where it will break first. The enlargement of idea will, I believe, come of itself as the present immobile tension of circumstances breaks and new possibilities come into view. But that was not my seeing and I do not quite know what was in the mind of the spirit who spoke. He is more accustomed to the earth than I and probably has a more definite vision.

At present, yes; even those who are in action cannot at present really get forward. This is everywhere a moment of blocked forces.

Not only he,[1] but all who are at present politically active in India. In a year it will have been enough cleared up for new views to emerge. That is all I can say at present.

The second phase, I take it, will come by the loss of faith in present ideas and methods among the younger men. As to who will represent it, that is a thing I cannot yet say; certainly a number of new men must come forward; the old are too much wedded to the past notions.

This question is one which involves too much for an immediate answer. I can only say that the work which is to be done is to determine the new force that will make the India of the future. The removal of the foreign obstacle is only the removal of a negation, but there must be a positive creation which will be the beginning of the power that will govern the future, otherwise there will be so much weakness, confusion, aimless clash and dispersion of energies in this vast body that a rapid emergence of the greater future will not be possible. As to what work this or that person will do in this matter, that is a question difficult for me to answer without a consideration of many complex forces. I am not prepared to answer it at the moment.

You want the time in which it will be completed?

I am afraid I cannot say exactly. I can only say that as far [as] I can now see it will be in a few years quite visible.

I am afraid I cannot look so far ahead. A great power in Asia, yes, that is certain, but of what form is not clear to me on this level. It is no doubt decided above, but here I can only see still uncertain possibilities. I think I told you my vision of the terrestrial future is not yet clear and definite. I can only see a few general certainties

---

[1] *The word "he" was written over "Ga", presumably the beginning of "Gandhi". — Ed.*

No. I know none by that designation. Office? I do not understand. There is more than one godhead and power concerned with these things, but none so far as I know who has such an office. ———

I know very little about it; it has not seemed to me important enough to consider very closely.

I don't say that, but I don't know anyone of that description

[8]

My wish is to make a slight departure. There is as yet too much difficulty for me in seeing the things of the earth and I shall wait till I am stronger. Meanwhile if you like someone else will take my place. ——

Begin—

I am ready to communicate.

Any subject interests me. As for my competence, it is limited but various.

Yes, what is it you want to know?

As far as I can see, if you act quickly, you may get something done which will be a useful seed for the future. But before long the atmosphere is likely to be too thick and troubled for ideas of so large a kind to make immediate headway. As you can see, a struggle is approaching on which the course of the immediate future depends and until that comes to some kind of issue, it is the passion of the immediate struggle that will occupy all minds to the exclusion of other things. Your idea is one which may and must bear fruit in the future, but at present it is a thing of long views for which one must be content to sow and await a favourable season for the fruit. India is too much occupied with her interior problem which is at bottom one not of equality but independence to spare more than a side glance for the question of her people in the colonies. That is my opinion.

This is only as regards practical work. I should say that it will be a good thing to establish the idea; for as the struggle proceeds, there will be great chances of India turning to it in the hope of an outside support and assistance. She has up till now been looking westwards. The present movement is turning her towards some kind of unity of feeling with western or Musulman Asia. The future may turn her eyes eastward towards the rest of Asia and your scheme will be useful in preparing for that time; there will be something to lay hold on immediately and that will save much time and effort which would otherwise then be needed to make a connection.

Well, I don't know; it depends on getting over the present floating and uncertain state of action. If that can be done; there is obviously a big future, as it is a new idea with considerable possibilities of result and extension.

I should say, certainly publish it. The more you publish the better. It does not matter so much just now about terms etc, the thing is to give a wide publicity—give it to those who can do that best.

What?

That is nothing; such letters have no immediate meaning or importance, except as indications that many in the country feel a need of a leader and look this side. In my opinion it is best not to intervene in what others are doing for the moment, but leave the force at work to operate through its chosen instruments and confine yourselves to whatever special action is meant for you. There is not yet the critical juncture that calls for your action and to mix oneself with the immediate action might interfere with a better development afterwards.

No, that was another.

Not exactly; we are a very various company. No, it is without any order, at least without any deliberate order.

Yes, in the world of the mind, I am a spirit of the middle intelligence. . No, I have nothing to do with gods; of course they exist but I take no stock in them. . What use would it be to me? Of course not. At least if they do it, they will have to do it without showing themselves. I would reject any interference.

To satisfy the curiosity of my intelligence.

Yes. .

I was in many countries. I have had many lives, had many occupations, studied many things. The last life I was a little bit of a scientist, something of a philosopher, dabbled in politics too and in literature, but could not get much success. I was a good critic, but not a creator. In England. You would not know my name. The same thing, the curiosity of my intelligence; I had a mind that liked to inquire into the future of humanity and I had advanced views on the matter. No, you can help yourself much better.

It is an excellent form, very effective, that is if you want to wake people up and make them think. . I am certain we must have, but I cannot fix the occasion.

I know there is something above mind, but not what it is.

Do you ask me for my past opinions or for my present imaginations and ideas?

I am afraid that question passes my competence, that is the question how man came into being. My only idea about it is that all the theories are wrong.

No, I said advanced; that is in my past life. You would consider them commonplace.

[9]

Myself today. . The others are no longer here. ———

Yes ——

I do not know. Ask and we shall see.

In what respect?

(Tilak)[2]

He is, I believe, in the intermediate plane. He had a strong will to live, because he felt that his work was not finished, and when a man passes from the body with that feeling strong upon him, his personality is for a time turned towards the field of his human actions. Only a time is needed to bridge over the transition from one consciousness to another. When that is done, he will act for a time on the intermediate plane probably until he is satisfied that the idea governing him is in good train towards success or until he has worked out the force of the attacking idea in his own consciousness. I speak of the personal mental part of it that still feels the effect of the life vibrations. ——

---

[2] *The headings identifying the subjects of most of the following communications were added in the margin, sometimes in French and usually in what appears to be the Mother's handwriting.—Ed.*

That can only be done by the higher part of him. The part of his mind that is still concerned with the images of the outward world is likely for a time to act upon it through a certain impact on the men who are the channels of the general force that is working. It is only when these images fade and the consciousness becomes more free that the direct action of which you speak becomes probable. The action from the intermediate plane is in one sense stronger as it is capable of a more subtle and penetrating diffusion not hampered by the physical difficulties, but it has other difficulties of its own; it is strong for diffusion and the creation of impelling ideas and forces, but for the materialisation through human action it can only act in dependence on the transmitting agents. There is always a certain disparateness between the psychical and the physical planes and the transmission from the one to the other is not always facile

That is true, but always in the sense of a primary force. In the end this primary force is the important thing. I only speak of the difficulty of correct materialisation from the psychical plane. A strong will can produce from it a great general effect in the sense of its purpose and that after all is the important matter.

His psychic personality is composed of two parts, a higher soul which is the real man, a strong and brilliant soul of a great flight, and another which is the personality he works out in a certain round of lives and which gave the outward type of his human character and action. He is one of those who belong to the higher race, but has chosen to take on himself the burden of the lower for the help of the world action.

(M^r Tilak)

Yes. A great Karma Deva who is in intimate union with the Devas of knowledge.

(M$^{\underline{me}}$ Besant)

An Asuric being of great force busy divinising herself, but not yet successful because of the very force of her power which creates a great force of ego.

No, not a Rakshasa. There is a Rakshasa force associated with her, but it does not affect the centre of her being.

(I)

That is different. There are men who belong to one type and make an ascension, that is her case; there are others who have in themselves the various powers and have to transform them into the terms of the central unity. That I believe is yours.

(P.R)

To define your case is difficult. A Deva above, a strong Jnana Deva able to communicate with the higher planes, an Asura below representing the development of many lives, a Rakshasa force behind constantly weakened and fading, but not yet cast away by the drawing up of the vital being by the others, also several other minor deva kinds in the psychic being, that is the best I can manage.

(Rapports avec la Soc. Theosoph)

The fraternity is due to the fact that both are working out the common movement under a great superior direction. The hostility is due to the intermediate agencies. They are guided by inferior powers who are repelled and made afraid and therefore hostile by the superior force they at once feel in you; the greater intermediate powers that are behind you are not able to accommodate themselves to the narrowness of theirs and be sufficiently indulgent to their littleness. That is why there is the discord.

There is a great deal of ignorance in that idea. Kutthumi and Maurya are merely names and forms, true only as a psychic symbol or an instrumental representation, of the two main powers that are behind them, one governing their thought, the other influencing their action. In Madame Blavatsky they found a sufficient instrument who could as it were incarnate and harmonise both their forces. Her successors have not been able to do that, but have only responded to partial indications of one or the other; that is why there [have][3] been so many divisions and so much confused and uncertain action in the movement.

Kutthumi represents a Deva, not a Jnana Deva, but a certain kind of thought deva who responds with a limited light but a great abundance of curious thought formations to the greater Idea that comes from the supramental level.

Maurya represents an Asura who has stopped short on the way to Devahood, a being of aggressive thought force and great vital vehemence, but of a very limited power in the true sense of the word, who has associated himself with Kutthumi and is tolerated by him, because otherwise Kutthumi would not be able to exercise an influence of practical action on the human world.

(Rapports avec la T.S.)

I doubt, unless the Maurya influence can be broken, but that would mean that the Society would lose its practical force of action. It would have either to be transformed and taken up into a greater action or dissolve as a society and its members or the best of them enter into a work of larger inspiration and movement.

That represented the hostility of which I spoke. The Maurya influence is a despotic power which does not want any interference with its control or any dissolvent action on the frame of thought and organised movement it has stamped on the society.

(Gandhi)

A big Karma Deva risen to a certain thought region into which he has carried his habit of rigid and definite action, associated with a psychic Deva of great purity but no great knowledge. The thought region is one which reflects rather than possesses a higher light, but he gives to it always the forms suitable to his concentrated impulse of action. It is this kind of combination that creates those who are at once saints and fanatics.

(Mirra)

I find it impossible at present to make a definite answer, because I have to see through an atmosphere that is not favourable to a definite description. . All I can say is that there is a great Light Devata there, but the other elements are not clear to my vision. It is easy to define the psychic personality of people like Mrs Besant and Gandhi, but all your cases are different because of unusual or of complex elements of a considerable significance to which a short definition is not easily fitted.

---

[3] *MS* has

[10]

Yes. I am here ——————————

Tagore

There is not much to say. It is evident that there is in him a double being, one for the higher part of him, another for the lower nature. The higher is a very large psychic devata living in the celestial beauty of his own soul; the other is a sort of Gandharva. The Gandharva is limited, ego-bound, psycho-nervous, but his nervous expansion is made limited and weak by the domination of the psychic devata. At the same time he limits the psychic devata who because of him cannot impress himself on life, as he could if he had a strong intermediary, and therefore can find himself only in the world of his own imagination, poetry, art, an ineffective idealism.

He cannot be really a friend, because he lives only for his own psychic or nervous satisfaction and values people according as they minister to that. He may have sympathies, but they cannot take the active form necessary to friendship.

Yes, because he cannot pour himself out in life. He is therefore drawn into a sort of imprisoning circle of his own ether of isolated personality. . The devata in his relations to life. It is not that the devata would not like to be in active unity with others, but he has not the means in the vital nature of the human being.

That is first a sympathy of the psychic intelligence, secondly, the force of your own personality on him; it was not a thing deepseated in his own nature. You could still do the same thing with him if you were in constant relation with him, because he would like to be in action and would feel a support in the greater force that is around you; but as it is, it is not a thing that can be consistent and durable.

I should have to be in a little closer contact with them to do that effectively. As it is, I could only see through an intervening mist. The psychic image conveyed to me is not sufficiently precise and complete.

There is, but I fancy it belongs more to the past than anything else. You have gone too much forward.

It is the difficulty which meets all things that come from the future into the present and for which the powers of the present are not yet ready. In your case it is extremely strong in proportion as the idea and the force are large; if you were content with something smaller and more immediate, you would probably be much more effective. As it is, you come in advance of the godheads that are in march towards the actual world and you are too much beyond those who are actually at work at the moment. As yet you do not fit in and you have to create a place and a body for what is coming. But naturally the matter of the existing world is rebellious as it always is to things too great and new and not sufficiently prepared. The things you have formed in yourself need a greater outgoing force than they have at present in order to impress themselves sufficiently on the outside world. The momentum behind you is growing, but it is not yet sufficient. In these things those who create cannot see themselves where they are already effective, because the obstruction is greatest immediately around them; for they are the centre of the creation and therefore the centre of the accumulated resistance. Their thought and power work subtly, at a distance, through others, changed in those others to something less complete and characteristic which can mix with the actual material. That is to say, it is as mental influences that they work, but they do not take at once the recognisable form of which they can say, "This is the thing I mean, this is the actual creation I intend." That can only be when they become the direct material creators. I do not know whether I make myself clear to you.

It is difficult for me to say because I see the psychic better than the material things. In trying to make an inference from the former to the latter, I should probably commit many errors.

The obstacle is general; it applies itself for the moment to any action you are likely to take, but if you can once break it down effectively at one point, it is likely that others will open. My impression is that it will take you yet a little time to find the weak point of the obstruction and I myself cannot really tell. The obstruction is not something definite and rational, but a sheer force of obscurity and inertia which has somehow got itself concentrated in front for the time being. It is really a vital intuition enlightened by the higher mind which could find it out and that is a thing I necessarily lack in my present condition.

Yes, it is true. These forces know nothing, but they are as it were attracted where there is something that threatens them and they take time to form.

That also is true; India is a field where the opposing forces are most hostile to each other and there is besides a great complexity. If however the forces of the future can once form themselves effectively, they will get here perhaps their best chance of a direct and rapid action. That at least is one possibility on which certain very great Devatas are working.

It was someone else who suggested that—someone I think who is very sensitive to possibilities. It is true I believe that powers are at strenuous work to bring in a violent impetus and at moments it looks as if they would succeed, but the forces that make for an arrest direct themselves there and there is anew a deadlock.

[11]

I am here. —

That is not very easy for me. I wish to be quite well connected with the terrestrial plane by communication first before I give out myself. If things are suggested to me, I can by an effort put myself in relation at particular points and so strengthen the connection. Otherwise I can only speak of things foreign to the terrestrial atmosphere. ——

Russie

I think that the formations there are of a kind too forceful to be steady. There is a violent pressure upon natural psychological forces to suppress some, to create others. The transformation attempted is of the nature of a scheme made in the mind and imposed on the life forces. This means that many of the life forces lie inert and unconverted and a constant renewal of currents [has][4] to be made to galvanise things into effective action. If a constant struggle could be kept up with success with outside forces there would in time grow up a sufficiently steady and compact centre of transformation; but the Bolshevik motor force is at present a very small though powerful agent at once repressing a great inert mass and trying to use it for great and difficult work. That is a kind of action in which you must expect many crises and chances of failure. A failure anywhere means a retardation and a fresh expenditure of energy to start again. There is not the general excitement and vital enthusiasm that supported the French revolution. There is instead a more intelligent intellectual force and centre acting on a more complex and contradictory national psychology which is itself by no means strong either in intellectuality or in rapid vital energy. The experiment is most difficult, the chances precarious, and the one great hope is that the hostile forces will go on blundering and give the Bolshevik centre each time leisure and opportunity to repair the results of misfortune and strengthen itself for good. That is all I can see in the matter.

[12]

All right—

That is a little outside my power of vision.

Psychically the conditions seem to me favourable, I don't know about the material elements. .

Cousins

Yes. He is a soul of the middle regions, of what might be called the psychic and aesthetic world, associated with a very material being into which the soul has got rather thickly encased. There is an aesthetic devata enlightened by a Power of the intuitive intelligence, and its light burns inside and radiates through the material crust, but not with the free light that it might otherwise have. It gets free in the activities related to its own domain, but not even there quite free because it has had to educate the material mind and has not been able to make it a quite flexible and spontaneous instrument. In other things it is subject to the limitations of the material being with whom it is associated and can only refine it to some extent without being able to change it. The intuitive Power works chiefly in that domain and is not sufficiently concerned or active in the rest.

---

[4] *MS* have

For him you can do much, but I don't know whether the material being will allow you. Still you can bring an influence on the intuitive Power in him to act on the whole intelligence, where it is still content to work in rather cramped bounds. This Power is a little indifferent to other things than the aesthetic and psychic, and if you can interest it sufficiently in a wider domain for it to break from its indifference, and that is quite possible, it is strong enough to compel the material mind to which it now leaves those things, to enlarge itself and become intuitive. There is likely however to be much passive resistance because there are other influences.

As for the other question he can only help you in outward matters and that he can do very well if he is kept in close touch with you and his emotional being in active friendly relation. He is easily responsive to influences where this is the case.

Mme Cousins

That has been a help to him, but as often happens is also a hindrance. She is stronger than him in will, for his will is not very strong, but not being very wide in mind this decisiveness of will makes her rigid in her intelligence. Of course, if she could be induced to move from her moorings he would move with her like a boat in tow with a steam launch, but she is not flexibly responsive to influences.

[13]

More times than one I was here, but you did not call me. ——

No, because I depend on you for my connection with earth and I have nothing to say for myself any longer...

There are others who if you like can come.

═

That will not do, because the medium is not one who is in the state of passive receptivity.

I do not know, but there may be.

==

First let anyone come. Then there may be one who has something to say—This writing has either to be centred round one communicant or left absolutely free; but in the latter case all sorts of thing[s] interesting or uninteresting may come. One has to take one's chance.

I am here already. The thing I said last time I came that there was a storm preparing in Asia I can now explain more clearly. It is still preparing and it threatens the British Empire. Mesopotamia is one centre, India is the other. In India the electricity is gathering force and before long it will be the beginning of the end. —

There are three stages to be gone through. The first begins now with the movement of non-cooperation which will develop into a movement of separation and independence. The second will be a formation of something corresponding to the Sinn Fein, but of a more carefully organised character. The third will be a final revolution which will at once end the British rule and break up the old India of the past. These three stages will follow rapidly on each other and even overlap to a certain extent, the last taking up the results of the two others ——

The time I do not see clearly; but the flood of the present movement is likely to be three years, after which it will be replaced by the second. That may last a little longer. In any case all will be finished in ten years.

Not long considering that the greater part of India is still ill-prepared even for this stage. The people have to be accustomed to shake off their habits of timidity and dependence and work boldly and avowedly for freedom. It is the office of the present movement to make this change and three years is by no means a long time if one considers the psychological revolution that is to be made. The Swadeshi movement lasted six years and changed only one or two provinces to a certain extent. This will last only three years and will change the whole of India.

That is a question I cannot answer, for I am not in touch with your destinies. But so far as I can see from my present contact with you, the first stage is not the one for which anyone here can be directly useful. For it will be too confused and indefinite. It is more probably the second that will demand your assistance.

That I have not yet seen. . I think it depends on what happens in China. . Japan cannot be ready to help India until the state of things in the whole of the Far East is changed. If Japan and China are ready, there will probably be a great change in Indo China and then the whole Asiatic movement can link itself together through India.

That can only bear fruit subsequently. It is essential first that India should form the clear idea of independence and then your League may be a standing suggestion to her to turn for help to the Far East. At present she is looking to the West and to Mahomedan Asia and does not imagine at all that anything can come to her from the Far East.

If you establish it now, perhaps after two years it may begin to have a meaning for India beyond what it bears on the surface.

That is all I had to say myself. I shall return another day ——

[14]

290 *(le nombre d'êtres en moi)*

My knowledge does not go so far as to explain the number in each being. The proportion varies for each man, although there are possible classifications. Each man is unique being a centre of the possibilities of the infinite. The proportions remain the same through life for beings of a certain order of development who change only within a certain settled framework as a preparation for subsequent existences; it is variable in natures which admit of considerable enlargements and changes. There are four orders in the ordinary human nature, mental, psychic, nervous, physical; four in the superior or superconscient nature. It is probably to the four human orders that the 290 belong; the physical are few in comparison; it is the three others that are most complex. All I can say is that it is a very complex calculation and I see the figures 7, 6, 7, 6, 3, recurring. I must take a little time to see if I can see farther.

Probably the 7 includes both the psychic and mental and the 6 refers to the nervous being. In that case there will be two orders each of the number 40 (four tens) in the mental, and of 30 (three tens) in the psychic, and of 60 (six tens) in the nervous, and only ten orders of 3 each in the physical. I do not yet see to what the orders correspond.

You must remember that the physical has to bear the impact of the others. Therefore, however obscure they may be, thirty is not too much for the physical being.

The two orders on each plane must be the right hand and the left hand powers. The right hand are those who open upward so as to admit the influences from above and shape them for the being; the left hand are those who open downward to the world here and the actualised experience and send them up to the higher planes. That at least is the division which seems to me to correspond best in the arrangement.

That is quite different; it belongs to a more mystic truth of which I have not the key. Is there not something in the Hebrew or the Chaldean mysteries which might shed light on it?

It may be that that belongs to some secret potentiality or totality in the four superconscient planes which seek to realise themselves on the four human levels.

No, I don't think it has anything to do with the number of beings; it is something more recondite, more symbolic.

Chandra

This is a very easy question. The girl's psychical being is entirely concentrated upon the nervous life and there she has an immense but undeveloped force. Given certain favourable circumstances of education, social surroundings etc she could have been one of the notable enchantresses of men who draw not by physical beauty but by nervous magnetism and the secret charm of the psychical being behind, but she has fallen into the wrong forms of life and this has not been developed. However the psychical being with its potentialities is there and it is that he has felt and that attracts him. Behind all that is a spirit with a very powerful will, but it is behind the veil and what comes out from it is wasted on small and trivial things. If that spirit could be roused to break the veil and come into the front, then she would be a fitting mate for him and supply much that he needs for his own fullness. That too probably the soul in him vaguely feels though it is not known to the mind, and that enters into the strength of his attraction for her. But if he cannot do this, then the attraction will fail and they will separate. I believe they have met in former lives and past connections explain the swiftness of their drawing together.

M$^{\underline{lle}}$ Chattopadhyay—(Mrinalini)

This is a soul of a very high order though not of the highest. A great psychic being is there behind, whose stamp has determined the whole turn of the nature. This being has a strong spiritual inspiration of which the human mind in her is vaguely conscious; but because the higher experience has not taken shape, it could not become the ruling note in the life or the nature. The next strongest thing is the emotional mind which is one of an extraordinarily intense capacity, acute and poignant in all its movements but held in by the intelligence. It is still in the emotions that she lives and they are of a great spontaneity, sincerity, clarity and strength. The intelligence is a lesser force, but well trained and developed and it is the influence again of the psychic being that has given it a literary and artistic turn. There is a suppleness and fineness in the nature proceeding from the same source. The one thing wanting is the discovery of her spiritual self; she has not yet found herself, but has spent her gifts on the things of the mind and heart, and she is conscious of the want in her. If once she completes herself, the full beauty and power of the psychical devata in her will appear and she may do a considerable work for the social and cultural change in India, her real mission in life, a work more solid than any that can be done by any of her brothers or sisters. This is a view a little from the outside. The things behind I cannot tell properly today, because I have externalised myself excessively in my effort to get into touch with the outer existence

[15]

The spirit who ordinarily comes is not here. I have taken his place ——

He has gone into the region of the pranic worlds which is near to the earth. He is drawing around him pranic forces for his next birth. At the same time he will probably come if you continue the writing. .

I am the son of the middle heavens who have often descended on the earth. I am a frequent messenger to earth of the gods of the middle heaven.

There are three heavens of the gods who work on the mind from the heights of the mental world. The first is the heaven of the mind which is in tune with the infinite, the second or middle heaven that of the luminous mental determinations, the third of the origination of mental forms.

I have no special message for you; for the action which I represent affects the work you are seeking to do only by a sort of oblique injection of its powers and suggestions. It is not in the direct line of descent; that concerns others. Therefore I leave you to put your own questions.

Yes.

My work of mentality is different. It is not concerned with the actualities of the psychic plane. Await the coming of the other for that question. I can only tell you certain possibilities of his nature, not his actual psychic condition. But it is better to know his actual condition and then the possibilities will take their proper value. At present they may seem too much in the air without their proper foundation.

I have returned. —
Chokra = Ramaiah

This is a difficult question to answer, because there is so much that is undeveloped; there are not the clear, certain and vivid forms which I found in the others. .

What I see are certain things behind that have not yet their full representation in the surface nature. There is a strong psychic, a strong pranic being associated with the nature, a mental which is very active but has not found its means of self expression in the mind. The difficulty is in some knot of the physical birth producing a physical consciousness which is unequal to the powers of the soul and a life cast into circumstances that are still more in conflict with the greater potentialities. There is behind an urge and insistent will of seeking demanding a work, an association, a knowledge, anything which will help the soul to break out from its covering sheath of the physical consciousness. But the fixities that are established by the outward being are not as yet the right forms that are wanted for his real self to emerge. They are only tentative determinations to which the stress of the urge behind gives a certain ardent and eager character. If the coverings can be broken, the powers behind will reveal their true strength.

As far as I can see, it is the mental that is the strongest obstacle. The nervous and the psychic will find their own proper development if he finds his right mind and way of action. Let him by whatever means open up his mentality, so that the soul may have a chance. The obstacle is in the formed nature, the result of past circumstances; if that is allowed to govern, it will never, however he educates it, give an open field to the soul. . He may make some progress, but not realise in this life the true soul possibilities. He must break boldly the limits of the formed mental nature and let the soul powers flood out into the consciousness. That is the one way for him as it is for many others who are in a similar case—

I continue. . *N.P.K. Kalappa.*[5]

This is a clearer nature. . In front is a lesser mental devata with a strong and brooding will—through whom all the main soul currents come. The nervous and psychic are governed by beings who hold back until this devata has found the way for the nature. I see him very clearly. It is like a low burning red flame which grows more and more intense, supporting a shaft of golden light. Behind is a greater deva of knowledge and will who will only come forward if the lesser being succeeds in opening the way. A psychic being with great psychic power and a large emotional scope is also waiting for the same decisive movement. This much I can see for the present. Here too the problem is a development of the outward consciousness into a sufficient instrument or rather channel; but

[5] *This name and the next were apparently written by the individuals concerned.—Ed.*

the obstacle here is only a comparative narrowness of the channel owing to a blocking up by received ideas and mental habits and the obstacle is one of no great force, easily removed if a purifying flood of light can be poured into the channel.

That I cannot tell you. It depends on your bringing forward of your powers. I have no sufficient view of the future.

Ka. Neela Kantaiyar.

Here the power of the nature is psychic-intellectual; the presiding devata of the being sends down only an influence which turns into a seeking without a definite orientation. The activity has been governed by an intermediate being who is psychic with a turn to a curious action of the intelligence. The being has not in this case been concentrated round this governing action. There is in it a turn to a larger seeking. There are in this case too greater powers who can come forward if the chance is given. The presiding devata is one with a rainbow light around him, but there is a shaft of white descending on it from above. The psychic is of a very ruddy rose light. These are the two chief powers behind the veil of the physical consciousness.

[16]

30 corps physiques

Yes, I am here. —

The thirty are three tens. They are those who support the physical consciousness, not the physical body alone, but the obscurer consciousness of which it is the visible representation. In this consciousness there are three layers, one which receives the mental impressions and store[s] them in the corporeal system, so that it responds to a sum of habitual mental sanskaras; the second, which similar[ly] responds to the vital and preserves the habit of replying to habitual vital impulses, the third of a more purely material kind. These beings are not intelligent, but obscure and fixed in their habits. When a change has to be made, it is they who are the last support to a resistance to the change, but also if they can be made to reply to new things, they help to make them fixed in the physical consciousness and thus to assure their stability.

Yes; only the number may vary.

That depends on the plasticity and richness of the physical consciousness. . The more plastic, the more numerous the beings of this order. It may vary from three to ninety, or even many more in extraordinary cases.

The number can always increase and must if there is a development of this part of the being.

Yes. .

No.—They belong to the invisible world of matter. It is only a part of the physical that is visible to the human senses.

At least three.

Yes.

It is prepared during the gestation; but really determined before birth.

No, not freely; they are attracted

No. I only explain the information given to you. I see only the psychical.

I think he should develop a little first, it is not always good to give information about themselves to people in a certain stage of development; it is better that their minds should be fluid.

No—

There are strong reasons against giving this information.

═

You are like that, first, because of the powers that are associated with you, one of whom has nothing to do with reason, but only with his own vehement impulses and desires. As for the form of your question, I might suggest as a paradox that you are unreasonable because you reason too much; that is you support too much your unreason by your reason[6]

[17]

The traditions are symbolic, not exact. The system of the Puranas was not created by anybody, but was a development of very ancient traditions infinitely older than the historic culture to which the name of Puranic has been given. The present Puranas are very late creations with many ancient things imbedded in them and mixed with much of a recent creation.

---

[6] *This last paragraph was marked with a line in the margin sometime after the writing was communicated.—Ed.*

No, but the traditions they contain are often older than the extant Veda.

I could hardly say. There is much that has survived from old civilisations that have perished, but of course in a changed form. One would have to count their origin perhaps by tens of thousands of years. There are things also that were believed in old times, forgotten and again recovered from the mental planes. It is difficult to disentangle the various materials and say which dates from what time. The theory of the Kalpas has existed in one form or another from times lost in the mist of oblivion.

I composed many things, but they are not extant.

Vyasa is a name under which many different people have been confused together. If you mean Krishna Dwaipayana, he is somewhere in the planes of being which are at the height of what may be called the mental heavens.

They cannot be numbered. Besides these existed through centuries after centuries in long generations of Rishis.

The seven Rishis are a tradition. The original seven Rishis refer to seven personalities who did not belong to the earth. The seven of tradition have not been on the earth since the Vedic times.

I know nothing about the White Lodge. I should fancy they belong to the lower worlds between the pranic and the mental. They are certainly not the Vedic Rishis—though the name given to one of them is that of a later Rishi of the times of the Upanishads. Yes.

I do not think it is the same; but I cannot say certainly, for I do not know where Kutthumi is.

=

The best thing, I should imagine, would be to get them to enlarge their Theosophy by bringing in a current of new and upward pointing ideas; but that could not be done without either starting from their present ideas as a valid point of departure or breaking their framework and the latter would not be tolerated while the present control existed. It is rather through some kind of communication and indirect influence that they could be helped, but I could not say exactly how. If anything is possible, it will spring out of circumstances and individual relations.

There are many ways of changing, but the most common is by a pressure from above. All that develops in the mental, psychic, vital has an influence which is precipitated into the obscure physical consciousness and works there more or less slowly. Certain slight changes are always being produced, others of a more important kind occasionally. The physical beings receive these influences and assimilate them in the already established physical consciousness and there make of them a sure basis for the mental, psychic and vital habits. These change decisively in proportion as they can get the guardians of the physical consciousness to accept and support them. A great force of will from above can sometimes make abrupt changes. But ordinarily the movement is more or less slow and within well established limits. Outside these limits these beings offer a strong resistance to any change, unless it confines itself to the higher activities. In proportion as a great change of mental thought for instance tries to affect the vital and physical being, the opposition becomes strong and is usually obstinate. It is sometimes rapidly overborne, sometimes can only be obtained[7] by a slow process of transformation in the sanskaras of the physical beings. All this is in the ordinary kind of development. It is only if there is a great influx of power from above the mental that very extraordinary changes can usually be made. In that case the physical beings are sometimes overpowered, sometimes enlightened, sometimes rejected and replaced by others.

It must however be noted that abnormal changes of a purely physical kind are a different matter. They are the most difficult to accomplish. For there [these][8] physical beings are in their own domain and exercising their strongest right which is to prevent any violent change in the organised habits of physical Nature. It needs either an exceptional action of the physical Nature itself or an action of the suggestive mental powers in abnormal circumstances liberated from the usual obstacles or a powerful influx from the supramental and spiritual to change these things.

---

[7] *Written above "got rid", which was cancelled; an "of" after "got rid" remained uncancelled in the MS.—Ed.*

[8] *Cancelled in the MS, perhaps when the writing was reread. Since the previous word, "there", could also be read as "these", it seems possible that "there these" was misread as "these these", resulting in the cancellation.—Ed.*

Do you mean, on the physical level?

That is when other physical beings with a different set of impulses are allowed to invade the established circle of physical things and replace the guardians of the old order. That is part of the process of the great crises of evolution.

He would either be taken up into some higher part of the being and form an element of Rudra force in the totality without being any longer active as a separate element of the personality, or else, if he remained as a separate part of the personality, he would be a sort of enlightened and passive instrument for the Purusha with a view to a certain divine action of a kind it is difficult to describe. There would be a divine use of the Rakshasa force changed from a nervous egoism to a sort of powerful dynamic utility on that plane, just as the animal power in the body might be divinely used for the greater purposes of the divinised Purusha.

[18]

The last time I was near the earth, this time I am beginning to withdraw. I think before long I must depart to prepare during a sufficiently long period for my rebirth among men.

Yes; but an interval of preparation is necessary during which I must gather forces on the intermediary planes. After that I shall have again to enter into relation with the material plane, but of course in a different way, and gather powers and influences of the earth to form my earthly basis of personality, mind, life and body.

Yes.

I believe so; but it may be either in the direct surroundings or in dependent circles. .

Possibly, ten or fifteen years. .

No. That would not fulfil my personal need which is to repair the mistake I made in my last existence.

The sign is that I shall be known by my powers of renewing the link of memory between my own times and the new age. I shall be one who brings from that ancient past a power of realisation which shall enrich the elements of the new mankind. If this is not enough, then you may easily know me by seeing in vision the form of what I was renewed though changed in the form of my new body.

A seer with knowledge can know the identity of one he sees even though not known before to the physical mind.

It will be begun.

That is not necessary. That I should be directly descended.

No; I have not the physical vision. It is not always easy to see from a distance, and if I depend on any of you, I may be too much influenced by your impressions.

I cannot say, certainly; but I think you are having too fixed and limited ideas about the matter. There will be, I think, not one, but several centres, and the whole thing will be of a fluid character before there is any decisive formation. I should say, do not fix things beforehand, but let the force that descends have freedom of movement, the freedom as of waters descending and flowing in many directions, afterwards the solid formation.

My opinion is of no great value in that matter. The progress in these matters comes usually in two ways; either by a violent conversion which changes in a short time the whole direction of the nature, or by a slow and difficult process with many movements and reversions in which the progress made can only be estimated after a lapse of time by something having disappeared after alternate returns and weakenings or something new having been formed which attempts to come, then disappears, then comes again until it has made its foothold. Possibly, the effort in you has not decidedly taken either course, or it has attempted the first method and, failing, fallen back on the slower movement. I cannot say really, because it depends on a power which is not the psychical and which in your case is hidden behind a veil. In such cases, the outward signs are deceptive.

Don't put it in that form, because so put it is an already existing idea and attracts around it many difficulties. The word asrama and its concomitant associations, to begin with, should be cast away. Make the thing new in some flame of revealing intuition and then the chances of success will be real.

Let us say, the exchange-house of meeting influences of the self-creating superrace.

Words have power and names are often traps.

Once I go, I can no longer communicate.

I cannot say yet; it will not be immediately. .

To most; it will not be so to me. .

The pain of descent and self-limitation and loss of self in the body. Always the other planes are freer than the material; birth is usually a sacrifice.

Yes; they have the desire; but the fulfilment of the desire still involves a sacrifice.

Yes, a compression, that is the word.

═

Because I shall descend with a fuller consciousness and with the impulse that makes the superman. A greater Shakti will support me. I cannot explain all the process, but I know it will be so.

Death is usually a struggle. The struggle to get out of the compression is often as painful as the effort to get into it. But to some death is easy.

He may have in the end many ways, but the physical birth will continue. .

The superman will take all the ways that are necessary for the divine design in the evolution; if physical birth ceases to be a part of the plan, it will for him discontinue; but there will be no other reason for him to avoid it.

Make your question more precise.

No, it must be prepared in actual man. It can come by a rapid change, a decisive descent of the divine supermind into the human being.

It would be impossible for them to be born in the monkey except by a miraculous descent of the thinking mind into the life mind of the animal. How do you suppose a human couple to be suddenly born of a couple of monkeys? By stages of ascent, each involving an influx of more and more mind, the first into an original animal, not necessarily the ape, but one that has now disappeared after providing the necessary basis.

Suppose, an animal that has evolved the life mind to its highest limits of curiosity and adaptive invention and developed a favourable body. Suppose, an effort of Nature in certain individuals of the kind breaking a barrier between the animal mind and the secret greater mind which is subliminally brooding there in Nature, so that there is the influx I speak of, to however limited an extent. There is the seed man. Suppose a progression, more and more effort of progress, more and more result both of mental development and physical change. The lower kinds which are only a bridge, neither animals, nor complete men, disappear; the full basis of man is established. After that the real human progress. May it not so have happened?

[19]

The last time I made a mistake. It is only after the second month of the next year that I retire from the earth proximity. I imagined that a certain necessary development would proceed more quickly than it has actually done.

No, I have not met him. In any case the photograph by itself would tell me little. The fields of the psychic world are too numerous for meetings of this kind to be common, especially between souls descending to renew their touch with earth and others ascending and recently come from it.

I don't quite seize the question.

What two kinds of the Divine? There are many aspects, infinite movements, but I do not catch the distinction you make, I mean the exact significance of what you mean. The Bhakta pure is limited, so is the man of intelligence. But knowledge can mount to the unknown and manifest it, so too can love or Ananda mount to the unseized and bring it down into manifestation. It is the power of the soul that matters, not so much the way; that is to say, I cannot say that one way is superior to the other.

A greater completeness is always superior to a lesser completeness; but also an extreme power of one can do miracles. .

Be wise as a serpent and mild as a dove.

It is a possible approach, but it wants intuition and a happy seizing of occasion to deal with these people. What I would suggest is to take hold of them by the strong side of Theosophy and not to press too much on the weak side. People attached to a fixed and traditional thinking—for it has become traditional with them—have not usually the open nature which can bear exposure of the weakness of what they believe in. One or two may profit by that method, the most will react in a hostile fashion. On the other hand if the strong side is seized and broadened to its real issues, they may be led without knowing it to enlarge themselves and meet with a good disposition the atmosphere of larger thought you bring them. This reception is needed, because it is the difference of the two atmospheres that is likely to be a stumbling block. The second thing is if you can make a link with them through the active side of their ideas. The outer side of the practical idea you have is favourable from this standpoint, because it can easily be used as a means to bring out the broader side of their own principles of action. The ulterior motive has to be kept in the shadow for the present; a time may come when they will receive it, but that will be after the present dominating influence in the society has receded. The third thing is to mix mainly on the one hand with the larger, on the other with the simpler and more candid minds among them; leave aside those who are in between. Be careful with Mrs Besant; she is a difficult and deceptive personality.

The strong side is first their seeking after truth, which is constantly moving near things that are true without quite seizing them; the weak side is the imaginations, fancies and rigid formulas which they build up like a wall between the truth and their search. If you read their books, or listen to their ideas with patience, you will easily be able to distinguish the two elements and bring out what I call the strong side. Then there are their larger ideas which admit truth in all religions and many philosophies and their attempt to find a principle of unity for men of all races and peoples, etc. There is much else which one can seize with advantage if one is in their company and comes to know what is behind this movement of theosophy. .

A very difficult question to answer. Everything depends on the psychic impression you make and on keeping up that impression in her psychic being, if that is favourable. The difficulty is in all the rest of her nature which is full of egoism and of tricks of intelligence and tricks of passion which she herself cannot understand and that may trip you up at any moment. I really cannot say how to be careful. . It is a matter of vigilance and self-adaptation as to which no specific suggestion can be given. Probably she will be very busy and you need not see too much of her. Only see her when you are yourself in a good mood. She is psychically sensitive in a certain fashion and when well impressed psychically can be openminded up to a certain degree. If you are yourself well disposed and not too critical of her weaknesses, you can create a favourable magnetic interchange which is of more importance in her case than the mental relation.

Appendix

Material from Disciples' Notebooks

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES, c. 1914

[1]

Parabrahman:—

Asad Atman		
Sad Atman		
Sat	Satyaloka	Mahakarana
Chit	Tapoloka	Mahatapas
Ananda	Janaloka	Mahabuddhi
Karana	Maharloka	Vijnanam
Sukshma	Swarloka	
	Chandraloka	Buddhi
	Swarga	Manas
	Bhuvar	Prana, chitta
Sthula	Bhu	Annam

Sukshma:—

	Atman	
	Sat	Satyam
	Chit	Tapas
	Ananda	Mahabuddhi
Karana in Sukshma	Manasbuddhi	Higher buddhi or Intuitive Reason
		Reason
		Understanding—manas in the buddhi
Sukshma proper	Manas	Sensational mind
	Chitta	
Sthula in Sukshma	Sukshma prana	
	Annamaya	

Karana:—

	Atman	
Parardha in Karana	Satyam	
	Tapas	
	Mahabuddhi	
Karanam	Satyadarshanam	Seer, Rishi or Drashta
	Satyakalpana	Prophet, Poet
	Satyavadanam	Philosopher
Sukshma in Karana	Indriyam	Perception of all kinds
	Bhava	Feeling
Sthula in Karana	Bhoga	Prana
	Karma	Anna

Ananda—Swabhava—Mahabuddhi:—

(1) Anantyam Anantagunam

(2) Nirgunam Sukha (shanti) Pravritti } Jnanam

Nivritti } Realisation

(3) Trigunatitam of the Infinite

(4) Sagunam i.e. Aparardha Swabhava —Traigunyamayi Prakriti

Sattwa
Rajas
Tamas

Tapas:—

Tattwas:—

(1) Purusha	(1) Prajna	(1) Parameshwara
(2) Prakriti	(2) Hiranyagarbha	(2) Shakti
	(3) Virat	

OM

Satyam:—
- Manifest Atma:—
  - A. (1) Anirdeshyam
    - (2) Vasudeva and Shaktis
  - B. The Four:—
    - (1) Mahavira
    - (2) Balarama
    - (3) Pradyumna
    - (4) Aniruddha and their Shaktis

---

1. Brahmana	Mahavira	Jnanam, Mahima	Maheshwari
2. Kshatriya	Balarama	Force (Viryam), Raudryam	Mahakali
3. Vaishya	Pradyumna	Love (Prema), Danam	Mahalakshmi
4. Shudra	Aniruddha	Desire (Kama), Worldly Reason	Mahasaraswati

---

Atma:—

Mahakarana	Satya	Sat	Sankalpa	Prajna	Parardha
Mahatapas	Tapas	Chit or Shakti (Will)	Will	Virat	
Mahabuddhi	Jana	Ananda	Swabhava	Hiranyagarbha	
Karana	Mahas	Vijnana	Satyam	Prajna	
Sukshma	Swar	Antahkarana	Vikalpa	Hiranyagarbha	Aparardha
Sukshma-Sthula	Bhuvar	Prana	Vasana		
Sthula	Bhu	Anna	Sanghata	Virat	

[*The first piece on this page was revised by Sri Aurobindo; the next two pieces were written by him.*]

Kaivalyananda	Satya	Sat-kosha	Prakasha	Shiva
Chidananda	Tapas	Tapas-kosha	Agni (Fire)	Agni
Shuddhananda	Jana	Ananda-kosha	Vidyut	Prajapati
Chidghanananda	Vijnana	Vijnana-kosha	Jyoti	Surya
Ahaitukananda	Manas	Manah-kosha	Tejas	Chandra
Premananda	Chitta	Prana-kosha	Dhuma	Vayu
Kamananda	Deha	Anna-kosha	Chhaya	Prithivi

Kamananda	1.	Maithunananda	
	2.	Vishayananda	Sense-objects
	3.	Tivrananda	Thrill
	4.	Raudrananda	Pain
	5.	Vaidyutananda	Electric

Pashu (Vanara)		Bodily life	Prana & Deha	Play, Eating, Sleep
Pisacha		Jnana of bodily life	Manas	Curiosity, Science
Pramatha		Ananda of bodily life		Aesthetic
Rakshasa	Yaksha	Tapas of do		Egoism, Prana
Asura	Gandharva	Buddhi		Intellect, Feeling
Deva	etc.	Karana		Knowledge, Joy, Surrender
Siddhadeva		Ananda		
Siddhasura		Tapas		
Siddha Purusha		Satya		

[2]

Parabrahman:—

Asad Atman	Non-being	Both the same; Asad Atman containing the negation of universe; Sad [Atman] containing the potentiality of universe
Sad Atman	Being	

Mahakarana (cause of all causes)	Satyaloka	Sat	Supreme principle
Mahatapas (supreme force)	Tapoloka	Chit	
Mahajana (productive principle)	Janaloka	Ananda	
Mahabuddhi or Karana	Maharloka	Vijnanam	
Antahkaran or Sukshma i.e. inner instrument	Swarloka		
	Chandraloka	Buddhi	
	Swarga	Manas	
	Bhuvar	Prana, chitta	
Karan or Sthula i.e. outer instrument	Bhu	Annam	

Sukshma:—

	Atman		
Sukshma	Sat	Satyam	
	Chit	Tapas	
	Ananda	Jana	
Karana in Sukshma or divya ketu	Divine perception	Higher Buddhi or Intuitive Reason	
Sukshma proper		Reason	Lower Buddhi
		Understanding—manas in the buddhi	
	Manas	Sensational mind	
		Manas Chitta or Emotional mind	
	Chitta	Passive consciousness or Passive memory	

Sthula in Sukshma	Sukshma prana	Mental vitality or purely nervous mind
Sthula	Sthula prana	Vitality or Physical nervous system
	Annamaya	Physical substance

Vijnana or Karana:—

	Atman	
Vijnanamaya	Satyam Tapas Jana	
Karana proper	Satyadarshanam	Higher Karana (i.e. drishti, shruti) Lower Karana (i.e. siddha buddhi and viveka*)
	Satyakalpana	Lower Shruti
	Satyavadanam	Lower Viveka
Sukshma in Karana	Satya Indriyam	Perception of all kinds
	Satya Bhoga	Feeling
Sthula in Karana	Satya Bhoga	Prana
	Satya Karma	Anna

Ananda—Swabhava:—

Nivritti	Pravritti
Nirgunam	(1) Anantyam or Anantagunam (2) Trigunatitam (3) Traigunyamaya Swabhava (i) Sattwa—prakasha (ii) Rajas—pravritti (iii) Tamas—shama

---

* Viveka is not conscience but true judgment between higher and lower, true and false, right and wrong. [*The last six words were added by Sri Aurobindo in his own hand.*]

Tapas:—

Tattwas:—

$$\begin{array}{c}\text{Purusha}\\\text{or}\\\text{Ishwara}\end{array}\quad\underbrace{\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{(1) Prajna}\\\text{(2) Hiranyagarbha}\\\text{(3) Virat}\end{array}\right.}_{\text{OM}}\quad\begin{array}{c}\text{Prakriti}\\\text{or}\\\text{Shakti}\end{array}$$

Satyam:—

Anirdeshyam	Krishna (Mahamaya)		
	(1) Mahavira (Maheshwari)	Brahmana	Jnanam, Mahima
	(2) Balarama (Mahakali)	Kshatriya	Viryam, Raudryam
	(3) Pradyumna (Mahalakshmi)	Vaishya	Prema, Danam
	(4) Aniruddha (Mahasaraswati)	Shudra	Kama, karma, vishaya buddhi

[3]

$$\text{Tat}\ —\ \left.\begin{array}{l}\text{Asat}\\\text{Sat}\end{array}\right\}\ \text{Purusha and Prakriti}$$

Tat is the unknowable Brahman of which you cannot say that it exists or does not exist because it cannot be defined as that which we know or understand by the idea of existence. Therefore it is not Sat. At the same time it is not Asat or non-existent because it contains existence in itself.

By Asat or non-being we mean something beyond which is a contradiction of existence. It is generally considered as a sort of nothingness because it is nothing that we call existence. There is nothing in it that we can perceive or realise as something. Tat contains both Sat and Asat; but it is neither of them.

By Sat we mean pure existence not limited by qualities, infinite and eternal and unchanging, which is at the same time the source and foundation of all the worlds and the whole universe.

Sat—Purusha and Prakriti

Brahman representing itself in the universe as the stable, by immutable Existence (Sat), is Purusha, God, Spirit; representing [itself] as the motional by its power of active Consciousness (Chit) [it] is Nature, Force or World-Principle (Prakriti, Shakti, Maya). The play of these two principles is the life of the universe.

Prakriti [is] executive Nature as opposed to Purusha, which is the Soul governing, taking cognizance of and enjoying the works of Prakriti; Shakti [is] the self-existent, self-cognitive Power of the Lord (Ishwara, Deva, Purusha), which expresses itself in the workings of Prakriti.

[4]

Divine	*Human*
Sat	Annam
Chit-Tapas	Prana
Ananda	Manas-Chitta
Vijnana	Buddhi
Ishwara	Aham

Seven Planes

Sat
Chit-Tapas
Ananda
Vijnana
Manas-Chitta
Prana
Annam

Sat	is essence of being, pure, infinite and undivided.
Chit-Tapas	is pure energy of consciousness, free in its rest or action, sovereign in its will.
Ananda	is Beatitude, the bliss of pure conscious existence and energy.

Vijnana	—Supra-mental knowledge—is the Causal Idea which, by supporting and secretly guiding the confused activities of Mind, Life and Body ensures and compels the right arrangement of the Universe.
Buddhi	is the lower divided intelligence as opposed to Vijnana.
Manas-chitta	is the life of sensations and emotions which are at the mercy of the outward touches of life and matter and their positive or negative reactions, joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Prana	is the hampered dynamic energies which, feeding upon physical substances, are dependent on and limited by their sustenance; also [it] is the lower or vital energy.
Annam	is the divisible being which founds itself on the constant changeableness of physical substance.

Sat	Immortality, pure essence
Chit-Tapas	Free rest or free action
	Sovereignty of will
Ananda	Pure bliss
Vijnana	Revelation
	Inspiration
	Intuition
	Discrimination
Buddhi	Perception
	Imagination
	Reasoning
	Judgment
Manas-Chitta	Sattwic—Science, philosophy, thought (intellectual)
	1. Aesthetic—sense of beauty
	art, poetry, sculpture
	2. Religious and moral—virtuous, holy, good
Prana	Rajasic—desire, emotion, passion
Annam	Tamasic—food, money, physical health, play

Pravritti	Nature's tendency or impulse to action
Nivritti	Withdrawing from that tendency or impulse to action

Buddhi		*Vijnana*
Perception		Revelation = Pratyaksha or Drishti
Imagination		Inspiration = Sruti
Reason	Smriti	Intuition
Judgment		Discrimination = Viveka

[5]

The Chakras

Above the head	Sahasradala	Jnanam
Between the eyes	Ajnachakra	Drishti
In the throat	Vishuddha	Vak
In the heart	Anahata	Feeling, sensation, etc.
In the navel	Manipura	Instincts
Above the linga	Swadhishthana	Kama (desire)
	Muladhara	

The movement of pranas in the body

There are five pranas, viz: prana, apana, samana, vyana and udana.

The movement of the prana is from the top of the body to the navel, apana from Muladhara to the navel. Prana and apana meet together near the navel and create samana. The movement of vyana is in the whole body. While samana creates bhuta from the foods, vyana distributes it into the body. The movement of udana is from the navel to the head. Its work is to carry the virya (tejas) to the head. The movement of udana is different to the Yogin. Then its movement is from the Muladhara (from where it carries the virya to the crown of the head and turn[s] it [into][1] ojas) to the crown of the head.

---

[1] *MS (scribal)* out to

The colours

Violet—	religion, ideality, spirituality
Yellow—	intellect, perception, activity and flexibility of mind
Orange—	psychical power
Black—	darkness, inertia, melancholy, pessimism, timidity, etc.
Grey—	despondency and dullness
Red—	activity; or if a deep angry colour, anger; or if scarlet, lust; if rose, love.
White—	purity, strength, etc.
Green—	beneficency, unselfishness, readiness to serve without respect to one's own desire or ambition.
Dull green—	bad qualities of prana, jealousy etc.
Blue—	Spirituality more of the Bhakti type

Flaming golden yellow—Vijnana

[6]

Objects of Yoga

To put it in a word, the object of Yoga is God or the Divine or the Supreme whatever our conception of these things may be. There are minor objects of Yoga which are merely parts or separate aspects of the general object. We are composed of being, consciousness, energy and delight represented to us as life, knowledge, force and power, emotion, sensation and desire. The object of Yoga is to turn all these things towards God. Therefore to become one with God, to be Divine and live a Divine Life is the first object of Yoga. The second is to know God in Himself and in ourselves and in everything. The third is to make ourselves one with the Divine Will and to do in our life a Divine Work by means of the Divine Power using us as an instrument. The fourth object is to enjoy God in all beings, in all things and in all that happens.

Since the Life is to be Divine there must be *siddhi* or Perfection of the Being.

The difference between the Divine Being and Divine Life and ours is that we are in the limited ego, confined to our own physical and mental experiences while that is beyond ego infinite eternal and all-embracing. Therefore we have to get rid of the Ego in order to be Divine. Ego persists because of three things; first because we think we are the body; secondly because of desire; and thirdly because of the mental idea that I am a separate being existing in my own mind and body independently of everything and everybody else. We have therefore to know ourselves, to realise that we are not the body, nor the Prana, nor the mind and to find out our *real Self*.

That is called Atmajnana. Secondly we have to get rid of the idea of ourselves and others as separate being to realise everything as one Brahman or one Purusha or Ishwara manifesting himself in different names and forms. This Self and the Brahman or Ishwara are the same. We have to know what it is, how it manifests itself in the world and beings that we see. All this we have to realise in our experience and not merely know by the intellect. We have to realise It as Sachchidananda and to become *that* ourselves.

Thirdly we have to get rid of desire and replace it by the Ananda of Sachchidananda. After that in order to live and act in the world we have to act as mere instruments so the Divine Force which we must realise as the sole Power which acts in the world and we must get rid of the idea that actions are ours or that the fruit of the action belongs to us personally. The only work we have to do in the world is to perfect ourselves, carry out whatever the Divine Power wills that we should do and so far as possible help others to perfect themselves and help the life of humanity to become Divine.

[7]

Methods of Yoga
(Reproduction from memory)[2]

The first two things necessary for the practice of Yoga [are][3] Will and Abhyasa. In the course of Yoga these two things give helping hands to the perfection of the being unto the very end. Slowly and steadily, whether conscious or unconscious to the being itself, they are performing their functions in the onward march of human evolution. Be we unconscious of them, it will take a pretty long time to attain to that perfection. But once we are conscious, then we become the Will itself. Consciously we can quicken the progress. This method gives rise to individual perfected beings. As before, they will not see glimpses of the Light of Truth. They will ever be seeing the Eternal Truth. They will turn the darkness around them and in them, into Light.

---

[2] *Oral remarks by Sri Aurobindo recorded from memory by a disciple. Much of the wording clearly is not Sri Aurobindo's.—Ed.*

[3] *MS (scribal)* is

Hitherto, we should have felt a certain amount of difficulty in putting into Abhyasa what we have willed. Now there will be no more putting into Abhyasa but simply we will be seeing the march of progress without the least idea of strain felt by us. So first let us will in order to be not weak and unconscious but strong and conscious. Then there will be no more difficulty.

Until then we have to practise Yoga by two important means—by means of Purusha and by means of Prakriti.

Means of Purusha:—An ordinary man thinks he desires, he feels and so on. But what we are to do is to separate ourselves from desire, feeling etc. Whenever desire comes, we must realise that we are not desiring but only realise it as the coming and going of Desire. So also with the feeling, thinking etc. For instance, when [a] certain anguish comes, an ordinary man thinks and feels that he is lost and so on. He weeps bitterly and reduces himself to a mere crawling worm. We have to think that that anguish is a kind of action or reaction, going on in the heart. Anguish cannot affect me. I am the unsullied Self; it cannot touch me.

Means of Prakriti:—Whenever the thinking part of man is active, we notice very clearly that the work is going on in a place somewhere above the forehead. The action is centred in the heart, when the feelings are awake in him. In both the cases, the self takes the heart and mind for its theatre of action. In the one case, we are those thoughts and in the other, we are those feelings. Putting this in plain words, our actions proceed either from the heart or from the mind, while the actions of the animals proceed from the senses. We see the vast difference between an animal and a man. So if man transfers his centre of heart and mind, to that of a higher one, think how grand the God-man would be! That centre according to the psychology of the Hindus is Vijnana. This is just above the crown of [the] head. This is known as Sahasradala or the place where the Shakti is situated. From this seat of activity, all actions emanate.

Therefore the first Sadhana is not to feel ourselves either in the heart or in the mind but there just above the crown of [the] head. By these two means, we separate ourselves from body, life and mind. On account of this, misery cannot affect us and we will be above happiness and misery. Apart from all these, the main thing we effect thereby is, we will be in a position henceforward, to become one with the Brahman and to realise that everything is Brahman and everything is only one of the several forms, names and colours etc., of that one Vast Brahman. Whenever we see people walking along the road, we will no more see them as several different beings but as several forms of one vast undivided Brahman. As [a] rose is the manifestation of form, colour, odour so the Brahman is the manifestation of so many things we perceive by the senses and think by the mind etc.

Along with these, we must put into practice one after the other what we are going to see hereafter as the Sapta Chatusthayas. They are namely Samata, Shakti, Vijnana, Sharira, Karma, Brahman and Siddhi Chatusthayas. Chatusthayas means four divisions. These seven Chatusthayas have been arranged in their natural and logical order. But it is not required of you to get them in practice in this given order. One may begin with a chatusthaya which [one] finds to be easier and in this way he is expected to practise. Why they are arranged in this way, how we are to effect them in us, when we will have success, all will be known to us when we finish writing and sincerely practise.

SAPTA CHATUSTHAYA—SCRIBAL VERSION

I. Samata Chatusthaya

Samata, Shanti, Sukha, Hasya (Atmaprasada)

Negative Samata	Positive Samata
Titiksha	Sama Rasa—mind and intellect
Udasinata	Sama Bhoga—prana
Nati	Sama Ananda—spirit

Samata is accepting everything in the same way without any disturbance in any part of the being. Disturbance is caused [by][1] the want of harmony between the Chit-shakti in myself and the contacts of Chit-shakti outside. Pain, grief, dislike etc. are merely the system's way of saying that it objects to a particular contact because of want of harmony. The system cannot bear an inharmonious contact or even a pleasant one if it is too intense or too prolonged. Disgust, fear, horror, shame are attempts of the system to repel the unpleasant contact and defend itself.

Titiksha means the power of endurance. You bear the unpleasant contact yourself standing back from it with a watching mind and teaching the system to bear it.

What follows is Udasinata. Udasina means standing high. Udasinata is indifference, the Purusha standing high above these contacts and not minding what they are.

Nati is the subsequent one. It is the feeling of submission to God's Will, all contacts being regarded as the touches of God Himself.

Sama Rasa or equal Rasa from all things, happenings, experiences, objects etc. we have to take through our mind and intellect.

Sama Bhoga is the equal enjoyment in the Prana of all things, happenings, experiences, objects etc.

---

[1] *MS (scribal)* owing to

Sama Ananda is the joy of Unity in everything and with everything.

Sama Rasa and Sama Bhoga cannot be secured unless we have Sama Ananda, but it is difficult for Sama Ananda to come unless the mind and Prana have been taught Samata in Rasa and Bhoga.

[The] result of complete Samata is complete Shanti; on the other hand if there is any touch of anxiety, grief, disappointment, depression etc., it is a sign that Samata is not complete. When we get complete Shanti, then we get complete Sukham. Shanti is negative; it is a state of freedom from trouble. Sukham is positive; it is not merely freedom from grief and pain, but a positive state of happiness in the whole system.

Atmaprasada is a state of clearness, purity, contentment in the whole self, i.e. [the] essence of Sukham. When Sukham begins to become strong Ananda, then it is Hasya, a state of positive joy and cheerfulness which takes the whole of Life and the world as a pleasant and amusing play.

II. Shakti Chatusthaya

Viryam, Shakti, Daivi Prakriti, Sraddha

Viryam: Chaturvarnya in guna
Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra

Brahmana: Dhairyam, Jnanalipsa, Jnanaprakasha, Brahmavarchasya.

Shakti is the right guna and right state of activity or right elements of shakti-character in all parts of the system. The chaturvarnya in guna may be called Virya. It is the qualities of the four varnas in character. The perfect man has all the four in him, although one usually predominates and gives the character its general type. First, a man should have Brahmana qualities, [those of][2] the man of knowledge. He should have, first, the general temperament of the Brahmin, that is to say calmness, patience, steadiness and thoughtfulness, which may all be expressed by the word Dhairyam. Then he should have the tendency towards knowledge, especially the Divine Knowledge, but also all kinds of knowledge on all kinds of subjects, with the necessary mental openness and curiosity. This is Jnanalipsa. The Brahmin has not only the thirst for knowledge but also a general clearness of mind and its tendency to be easily illuminated by ideas and to receive the truth. This is Jnanaprakasha. He has also a spiritual force which comes from knowledge and purity. This is Brahmavarchasya.

---

[2] *MS (scribal)* or

Kshatriya: [Abhaya, Sahasa],[3] Yasholipsa, Atma Shakti (Atma Slagha)

There should also be the qualities of the Kshatriya, the qualities of the man of action or the fighter. The first of these is courage and it is of two kinds—Abhaya or passive courage which is alarmed by no danger and shrinks from no peril that offers itself and from no misfortune or suffering. The second is Sahasa or active courage, that is to say, the daring to undertake any enterprise however difficult or apparently impossible and carry it through in spite of all dangers, suffering, failures, obstacles and oppositions. For this, two other things are necessary. [First,] a tendency of the nature to insist on the battle and victory and effort and triumph, i.e. Yasholipsa. Secondly, there must be a strong self-confidence and a high idea of the power that is in one's self. This is Atma Shakti or Atma Slagha.

Vaishya: Vyaya, Kaushala, Dana, Bhogalipsa

The Vaishya qualities are also necessary for action and enjoyment. The first is the readiness to spend labour, resources, materials, means and life itself quite freely, taking great risks of loss in order to secure great gains. This may be called Vyaya. But with this there must be skill in the use of means and methods and their proper disposition in order to secure the end and also the knowledge of what is or is not possible to be gained by a particular means or method or a particular expense. There should be a sense of proportion, of order, and a skill [in][4] arrangement and management. All this may be called Kaushala. Also in the use of one's possessions, there are two other qualities of [the] Vaishya which are necessary. [First there must be] the readiness to give no less than to receive and to share with the world what one gets from the world. This is [the][5] nature of love as it is ordinarily practised; [this][6] giving and receiving may be called Dana. And then there should be a tendency to enjoy, i.e. Bhogalipsa.

---

[3] *MS (scribal)* Courage

[4] *MS (scribal)* and

Shudra: [Kama, Prema,] Dasyalipsa, Atmasamarpana.

The qualities of the Shudra are no less important. The Vaishya has the spirit of order, opposition and interchange. The Shudra has the spirit of service. Service is governed by two motives: first desire or kama, secondly love or prema. In the perfect man, Kama should take the form of an interest in the bodily well-being of the world and a wish to see that physically it lacks nothing. Love in [the] Shudra is not like that of [the] Vaishya, for it seeks no return. It is governed by the third quality of the Shudra, the desire to serve and this in the perfect man becomes the desire to serve God-in-all. This is Dasyalipsa. The perfection of the Shudra nature is in self-surrender, the giving of one's self without demanding a return. This is Atmasamarpana.

The nature of the Brahmana is knowledge, of the Kshatriya force and courage, of the Vaishya skill in works, and of the Shudra self-giving and service. The perfect character possesses all of these; for they are necessary for the perfect action.

Shakti

Shakti is a general force by which each of the four parts of the system (the body, the Prana, the Chitta and the Buddhi) is kept at its highest state of perfection. The perfect state of the body consists in four things, a sense of entire lightness (Laghuta), a sense of strength and energy (Balam), a sense of [a] certain mass and force (Mahattwa) and the power of containing without strain or reaction any working however intense and constant, of energy however great and [puissant].[7] This is Dharana Samarthyam.

The perfect state of Prana consists in a sense of fullness of vital force (Purnata), of general clearness and cheerfulness (Prasannata), of equality in all experiences, shocks and contacts (Samata), and in the capacity to take all enjoyment of the world without desire but also without exhaustion and satiety. This is Bhoga Samarthyam.

---

[5] *MS (scribal)* a

[6] *MS (scribal)* a

[7] *MS (scribal)* possible

The perfect state of Chitta consists in a sense of richness and gladness of feeling (Snigdhata), of abounding moral power and energy (Tejas), in a confidence [in the][8] divine grace and help and general sense of mangala (Kalyana Sraddha) and in the capacity for unbounded love for all beings and all objects. This is Prema Samarthyam.

The perfect state of Buddhi consists in a general purity and clearness of [the] thinking faculty (Vishuddhata and Prakasha); in richness and great variety and minuteness of the perceptions ([Vichitra][9] Bodha); and in the power of the mind to receive and adapt itself to any kind of knowledge without feeling anywhere a limit or an incapacity. This is Jnana Samarthyam.

Daivi Prakriti (Divine Nature)

This means the possession of the four Shaktis—Maheshwari, the Shakti of greatness and knowledge; Mahakali, the Shakti of force and violence; Mahalakshmi, the Shakti of beauty, love and delight; and Mahasaraswati, the Shakti of worldly reason (science) and work. The possession of these Shaktis carries with it a sense of the Divine Power, of general compassion [and] helpfulness to the world, and of faculty for any work that [the] nature may undertake.

Sraddha or Faith

1. Faith in God—Directing Power, Antaryami
2. Faith in Shakti—Executive Power.

III. Vijnana Chatusthaya

Jnanam (Divine thought), Trikaladrishti, Ashta Siddhi, Samadhi

Jnanam: The mental action consists of four parts: first of all, perception of the object and comparison and contrast with other objects. [Then][10] reasoning about the objects. Judgment whether the reasoning is right or not. And judgment is aided by memory and imagination.

---

[8] *MS (scribal)* of
[9] *MS (scribal)* Vichar
[10] *MS (scribal)* The

Judgment is a direct perception of the Truth, which may or may not be aided by reasoning and other helps.

Imagination is the power of presenting to yourself things or truths not actually perceived or established by reason, [of][11] seeing possibilities other than actual experience.

Memory is the power of retaining and reproducing mental or sensory impressions.

Judgment has two parts—discernment and direct perception. In the mind both of them are uncertain. In the Vijnana, there is a faculty of discernment called Viveka or Intuitive Discrimination, which sees at once what is wrong and what is right, the real difference between things and also their real resemblances and identities and also how far a truth is true and how far it has to be qualified. This Viveka is independent of reasoning. It knows the fact directly but not by a mere instinct; it knows it luminously with a clear perception which is certain and makes no mistake.

There is also a faculty of Vijnana called Intuition which does the work of reasoning without the necessity of reasoning to arrive at a conclusion; that is to say it [comes to][12] the conclusion not as a conclusion from other facts but as a fact in itself. Afterwards, it can group around that fact all the other facts not as reasons but as related facts which help to retain it.

Inspiration is called Sruti or Hearing because it is not the direct sight of the Truth but a sort of coming of the Truth into the mind in a sudden flash. Generally this Truth comes as a vibration which carries the Truth in it and sometimes it comes as the actual word which by revealing its meaning brings new truth to the mind.

The fourth faculty is Drishti or direct sight. This is not, like intuition, looking into a person, an object or a group of circumstances and finding out the truth about them, but it is the vision of the Truth itself, coming as a luminous thought independent of all circumstances, objects etc.

You must first of all get the Intuition and Discrimination to take up the ordinary work of mind, because they alone among the Vijnana faculties can give all the circumstances about the Truth. Otherwise Drishti and Sruti [will be distorted], because the reason will try to interpret them in the light of the circumstances as they are understood rightly or wrongly by the human mind. Even the Intuition and Discrimination will be at first distorted by the action of the reason, imagination, wrong judgment, wrong memory etc. Intuition and Discrimination have to go on working and getting stronger and surer until they are able to clear out from the mind the other activities and themselves take up the whole work. As they increase in Force and Light, the other two will begin to act of themselves. When these four faculties or any of them are applied to the things of thought, ideas and knowledge generally it may be called Jnanam or Divine Thought. When these four faculties are applied to the facts and events of the material world the result is Trikaladrishti, which means the direct knowledge of the past, the intuitive knowledge of the present and the prophetic knowledge of the future. To have it properly, it is necessary that there should be no desire or personal interest in the result or any trusting to reasoning, inferences, speculation etc.

---

[11] *MS (scribal)* with
[12] *MS (scribal)* does

Ashta Siddhi

There are two siddhis of knowledge, three of power and three of being. All siddhis exist already in Nature. They exist in you. Only owing to habitual limitations you make a use of them which is mechanical and limited. By breaking these limitations, one is able to get the conscious and voluntary use of them. The three siddhis of being are siddhis of the Sat or pure substance. In matter, Sat uses these siddhis according to fixed laws but in itself it is free to use them as it chooses. If one can get partly or entirely this freedom, one is said to have these three siddhis. They are Mahima including Garima, second Laghima and third Anima.

Sat manifests as Chit, pure consciousness, and Chit has two sides —consciousness and energy, that is to say knowledge and power. Consciousness in one material being communicates with the same consciousness in another material being by certain fixed methods such as speech, gesture, writing etc. and unconscious mental communication. But these limitations are mere habits [and other methods are possible,] as for instance ants communicate by touch and not by speech. Consciousness in itself is free to communicate between one mind and another without physical means consciously and voluntarily. The two siddhis by which this is done are called Vyapti and Prakamya.

In the same way there is a power in the consciousness of acting upon other conscious beings or even upon things without physical means or persuasion or compulsion. Great men are said to make others do their will by a sort of magnetism, that is to say there is a force in their words, in their action, or even in their silent will or mere presence which influences and compels others. To have these siddhis of power is to have the conscious and voluntary use of this force of Chit. The three powers are Aishwarya, Ishita, Vashita. These powers can only be entirely acquired or safely used when we have got rid of Egoism and identified ourselves with the infinite Will and the infinite Consciousness. They are sometimes employed by mechanical means, e.g. with the aid of Mantras, Tantric Kriyas (special processes), etc.

Vyapti is when the thoughts, feelings etc. of others or any kind of knowledge of things outside yourself are felt coming to the mind from those things or persons. This is the power of receptive Vyapti. There is also a power of communicative Vyapti, when you can send or put your own thought, feeling etc. into someone else.[13]

Prakamya is when you look mentally or physically at somebody or something and perceive what is in that person or thing, thoughts, feelings, facts about them etc. There is also another kind of Prakamya which is not of the mind but of the senses. It is the power of perceiving smells, sounds, contacts, tastes, lights, colours and other objects of sense which are either not at all perceptible to ordinary men or beyond the range of your ordinary senses.

---

[13] *The following passage is found in a scribal copy not used for the text printed here. This copy calls the communicative side of vyapti "communication or broadcasting", and goes on:* What happens in the Amutra happens in the Iha. What the Chit-shakti reveals in the Spirit, the Maya-shakti crudely and materially attempts in the material and mental universes. So spiritual Communism of Vijnana has its shadow in the material and Bolshevik Communism; and the Siddhis of the Vijnana are attempted in wireless telegraphy, broadcasting, telephone, image transcription [*transmission?*].

Vashita is when you concentrate your will on a person or object so as to control it.

Aishwarya is when you merely use the will without any such concentration or control and things happen or people act according to that will.

Ishita is when you do not will but merely have a want or need or a sense that something ought to be and that thing comes to you or happens.

Mahima is unhampered force in the mental power or in the physical power. In the physical it shows itself by an abnormal strength which is not muscular and may even develop into the power of increasing the size and weight of the body etc.

Laghima is a similar power of lightness, that is to say of freedom from all pressure or weighing down in the mental, pranic or physical being. By Laghima it is possible to get rid of weariness and exhaustion and to overcome gravitation. It is the basis of Utthapana.

Anima is the power of freeing the atoms of subtle or gross matter (Sukshma or Sthula) from their ordinary limitations. By this power one can get free of physical strain or pain or even make the body as light as one chooses. It is by this power that Yogis were supposed to make themselves invisible [and] invulnerable or [to] free the body from decay and death.

Samadhi

Samadhi means properly the placing of the consciousness on any particular object or in any particular condition. It is generally used for a state of consciousness in which the mind is withdrawn from outward things by [one's] placing the full energy of the consciousness on any particular object or general field. Thus by Samadhi one can become aware of things in this world outside our ordinary range or go into other worlds or other planes of existence. One can also enter into those parts of one's own existence which are either above or below ordinary consciousness or as it is said "superconscient" or "subconscient".

Samadhi may be in three states—Jagrat or waking, Swapna or dream, Sushupta or deep sleep.

Jagrat Samadhi is when in the waking consciousness, we are able to concentrate and become aware of things beyond our consciousness.

This Samadhi may either bring images and experiences seen outside one's own self as if in the physical atmosphere or else inside one's self, generally with the eyes closed. When the eyes are closed, another ether than the physical appears which is called Chittakasha or mental ether. It is in this that images are seen. There is also another ether behind called Chidakasha.

Swapna Samadhi is when the mind has lost its outward consciousness of outward surroundings and goes inside itself. It then has the experience either in itself or of scenes and happenings of this world or other worlds, of the past, present or future. When these experiences are merely distorted memories or confused, falsified and fragmentary, then it is called ordinary dream. [This happens when][14] the mind proper is not acting at all in the physical consciousness and only [ ][15] parts of the nervous system are awake. But when part of the mind remains as it were awake even in [ ][16] sleep, then one may get [accurate][17] records of true and actual experiences. These are not dreams but internal visions. Part of the mind is ranging through time and space or in other worlds. Another part is on the watch to receive its experiences and report them to the physical consciousness.

Sushupta Samadhi, the third stage, is when the whole physical consciousness, at least that part of it which belongs to the waking self, is asleep. When we are in deep sleep we think that nothing is going on in us; but that is a mistake. Consciousness is active all the time. But no report comes from it to the physical mind. In Sushupta Samadhi, one can get to the very limit of human consciousness, even [to][18] the superconscient. Everything which we cannot attain in the waking state is there in us in the dream-self and the sleep-self.

Samadhi is a means of increasing the range of consciousness. We can extend the inner wakefulness in the swapna to planes of existence which are at present sushupta to us and bring them into experience of swapna and even eventually into the waking state.

---

[14] *MS (scribal)* That is because
[15] *MS (scribal)* the
[16] *MS (scribal)* the
[17] *MS (scribal)* acute
[18] *MS (scribal)* of

There are several kinds of Samadhi according to the ordinary classification, such as Satarka in which the mind withdrawn into itself goes on thinking and reasoning and doubting; or Savichara in which the mind does not reason logically but judges and perceives; and so on up to Nirvikalpa Samadhi in which all the lower organs are stopped and there is only the superconscious experience of the Brahman.

IV. Sharira Chatusthaya

Arogya, Utthapana, Saundarya, Ananda

Arogya is the state of being healthy. There are three stages:

(1) When the system is normally healthy and only gets disturbed by exceptional causes or very strong strain, such as continual exposure to cold, overstrain of any kind.

(2) When even exceptional causes or great overstrain cannot disturb the system; this shows that there is full Arogya Shakti.

(3) Immortality in the body.

Utthapana is the state of not being subject to the pressure of physical forces. There are also three stages here:

(1) When there is a great force, lightness and strength in the body (full of vital energy); this shows that the body is full of Prana Shakti.

(2) When there is no physical weariness, no exhaustion of the brain or nervous centres.

(3) When one is not necessarily subject to the law of gravitation or other physical laws.

Saundarya is the state of being beautiful. There are also three stages here:

(1) When there is brightness in the body combined with sweetness of voice and charm of expression etc.

(2) Continual youth.

(3) When the features and figure can be changed to a form of perfect beauty.

Ananda referred to here is Physical Ananda or Kamananda. This is of various kinds, sensuous, sensual etc.

V. Karma Chatusthaya

Krishna, Kali, Karma, Kama

Krishna is the Ishwara taking delight in the world.

Kali is the Shakti carrying out the Lila according to the pleasure of the Ishwara.

Karma is the Divine Action.

Kama is the Divine Enjoyment.

VI. Brahma Chatusthaya

Sarvam, Anantam, Jnanam, Anandam Brahma

Sarvam Brahma—	when we realise one thing in the universe.
Anantam Brahma—	when we realise Infinite Force and Quality at play in all forms.
Jnanam Brahma—	when we realise a consciousness in everything which is aware of all.
Anandam Brahma—	when we realise in that consciousness a delight in all things.

VII. Siddhi Chatusthaya

Shuddhi, Mukti, Bhukti, Siddhi

Shuddhi

(1) Of the Pranas—Release from Vasana or desire, that is Asakti or attachment, action of emotion, e.g. I must have that, I cannot do without that; Kamana or longing, action of desire, i.e. I want that; Raga-dwesha or preference, action of mind, i.e. I prefer this. There are also [the opposites of these],[19] non-attachment, non-longing or craving and non-preference. We have also to [be released][20] from these things. When you have effected these three things you will have perfect Samata. Then you will naturally have perfect Shanti, that is Divine Peace [and] perfect or Shuddha Bhoga, that is Divine Enjoyment.

---

[19] *MS (scribal)* other sides

[20] *MS (scribal)* release

Shanti is the negative Ananda and those have it who rest in the Nirguna Brahman. Shuddha Bhoga is the positive Ananda and those have it who rest in the Trigunatita Ananta Brahman. Enjoy the world with Shuddha Bhoga based on the perfect Shanti. That which you get as the result of satisfied desire is troubled, unsafe, feverish or limited, but Shuddha Bhoga is calm, self-possessed, victorious, unlimited, without satiety and vairagya, immortally blissful. It is in a word, not Harsha, not Sukha, but Ananda. It is Amrita, it is Divinity and Immortality, it is [becoming of][21] one nature with God. [The soul][22] has then no Kama but pure Lipsa, an infinite readiness to take and enjoy whatever God gives.[23]

(2) Of the Chitta—Release from all sanskaras of feeling.

(a) Thought impulses start up from Chitta as instincts, inspirations, insights, intuitions etc. They come up coloured by emotions, distorted by associations and perverted by [the] imagination[s] which bring them up. Bhakti, genius, poetic inspiration all come from this source.

(b) Impulses of feeling are of two kinds, natural or eternal, artificial or Vikaras. Love, courage, compassion are natural and are actions caused by Jnanam. Hatred, fear, disgust are Vikaras and are distortions or reactions caused by Ajnanam.

(c) Impulses of action: Shuddha Pravritti, that is, action without desire independent of emotion. Ashuddha Pravritti, that is, action stirred by two forces, desire and emotion. Prohibit and inhibit by will all action or speech that starts blindly from the passions or emotions surging in the heart.

(3) Of the Manas—Release from habitual thoughts. Still the conceptual activity of the Manas and transfer to the Buddhi its perceptual activity (a part of Prakamya).

(4) Of the Buddhi—Release from reason, imagination, memory and logic and replace[ment of] them by the[ir] divine counterpart[s].

(5) Of the Body—Release from all bodily impurities, disease etc., and attain[ment of] Immortality.

---

[21] *MS (scribal)* of becoming

[22] *MS (scribal)* It

[23] *This paragraph is an almost verbatim transcription of most of the fifth paragraph of Chapter VII of* Yogic Sadhan.*—Ed.*

Mukti

(1) From Dwandwas or dualities

(a) Of the Prana—Kshutpipasa, hunger and thirst; Shitoshna, heat and cold; pleasure and pain of the body.

(b) Of the Chitta—Priyapriyabodha, the sense or feeling of love and hatred; Mangalamangalabodha, the sense of good and evil, good and bad fortune; Manapamanabodha, the sense of honour and obloquy.

(c) Of the Mind (that is, Manas and Buddhi)—Satyasatya, the knowledge of truth and falsehood; Papapunya, the knowledge of virtue and vice.

(2) From Ajnanam and the three gunas.

(a) Sattwa—wherever there is Sattwa, that is the clearness of being or Prakasha, it brings with it sukha or happiness; Sattwa is full of Prakasha.

Sattwa in mind—clearness of mind; we get knowledge.

Sattwa in Chitta—the pure love; we get love.[24]

Sattwa in body—ease, health and so on.

(b) Rajas is the principle of desire and activity; Rajas is full of Pravritti. The result of Rajas is any kind of pain, Duhkha or Ashanti, trouble, disturbance, anxiety.

(c) Tamas is Aprakasha and Apravritti. The result is fear, idleness, too much of sleep, ignorance.

Sattwa is to be replaced by pure Prakasha, Rajas by pure Pravritti, Tamas by pure Shama. There is no desire and no necessity of acting but there is the Divine Impulse which acts through us—this is pure Pravritti. When there is no such Divine Impulse, it is pure Shama, Tapas or force of action being there but not acting. Just as Pravritti is a Divine Force coming and making you act, so the pure Prakasha is the Divine Light bringing knowledge into the consciousness.

By being indifferent, we have to effect Shama; then acting as far as possible only under the Divine Impulse, we get pure Tapas. By keeping the mind always unattached to its own thoughts and activities and on the watch for Light from above and as far as possible quiet, we get Prakasha.

---

[24] *In all scribal copies, "we get" follows the noun in these two lines. Even when the order of the words is changed the sense remains somewhat unclear.—Ed.*

(3) From Ahankara; from the ignorance that you are the actor etc. Whenever you say “I like this”, “I do not want this”, there you choose and [act].[25] Whatever comes to you, you have to take and enjoy. Replace Ahankara or the idea of Aham by the idea that you are the Ishwara.

Bhukti is the Delight of existence in itself, independent of every experience and extending itself to all experiences. [It has three forms:]

(1) Rasagrahanam or taking the Rasa in the mind: (a) bodily sensations, (b) food, (c) events, (d) feelings, (e) thoughts.

(2) Bhoga in the Prana, i.e. Bhoga without Kama or enjoyment without desire.

(3) Ananda throughout the system.

Kamananda— Physical Ananda, [e.g.][26] Vishayananda, i.e. sensuous pleasure
Premananda— Getting delight by positive feeling of Love (Chitta)
Ahaitukananda— Delight without any cause (Manas)
Chidghanananda— Ananda of the Chit in the object full of the gunas (Vijnana)
Shuddhananda— Ananda of the Beauty of everything (Ananda)
Chidananda— Ananda of pure consciousness without the gunas (Chit-tapas)
Sadananda— Ananda of pure existence apart from all objects and experiences (Sat)

Siddhi of the five Chatusthayas, Brahma, Karma, Sharira, Vijnana and Samata.

---

[25] *MS (scribal)* do

[26] *MS (scribal)* ie

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

RECORD OF YOGA is a diary of Sri Aurobindo's *sādhana* or practice of yoga. He wrote entries with some regularity between 1912 and 1920, as well as scattered entries during the years 1909, 1911 and 1927. Some sections of entries have titles, such as "Journal of Yoga", "Record of the Yoga", "Record of Yoga", "Notebook of the Sadhana", "Yoga Diary" and "Yoga Record". The title he used most often is "Record of Yoga" In the text itself he generally referred to the work as "the record" and used the verb "to record" for the act of writing in it. For these reasons the editors have chosen *Record of Yoga* as the general title of the work.

In the entry of 1 July 1912, Sri Aurobindo noted that he had been doing yoga for almost seven years. He had begun in 1905 with the practice of *prāṇāyāma* or breath control. This practice became irregular when he started his political career in 1906 and by the end of 1907 he suffered a "complete arrest" of yogic experience. In January 1908 a yogi named Vishnu Bhaskar Lele showed him how to silence the activity of his mind. This led to the experience of the static Brahman or Nirvana. A few months later, in Alipore Jail, he had the experience of the dynamic Brahman or cosmic consciousness. He later referred to these as the first two of the "four great realisations" of his yoga. The other two — "that of the supreme Reality with the static and dynamic Brahman as its two aspects and that of the higher planes of consciousness leading to the Supermind" — began in jail, but developed more fully during the period of sadhana chronicled in the Record.

In April 1910, Sri Aurobindo left politics and settled in Pondicherry. Sometime after his arrival, as he explained in 1926, he "was given" a "programme of what I would do" in yoga. This programme had seven sections, each made up of four elements. It thus was known as "sapta chatusthaya" or the seven tetrads. (The proper transliteration of the Sanskrit phrase is *sapta catuṣṭaya*. Sri Aurobindo almost invariably spelled the second word "chatusthaya".) Because of the importance of this system to the yoga of the Record, the editors have placed Sri Aurobindo's written presentations of the seven chatusthayas before the dated Record entries. The system is explained in more detail in the "scribal version" of Sapta Chatusthaya, which is published in the Appendix, and in the introduction to the glossary, which is published in a separate booklet. All the terms of the system and all other non-English terms found in the Record are defined in the glossary.

Sri Aurobindo used an assortment of notebooks and loose sheets for writing the Record. The notebooks are of the same kinds as those used for other writings of the period; indeed many of them also contain notes, prose articles, poems, etc. Most of them are cheap student exercise-books, others are simply perforated pads of note-paper. There are also a few bound pocket notebooks; only one of these is a printed diary. In all, twenty-eight notebooks were used exclusively or principally for the Record. Several others contain significant amounts of Record material. In addition, a number of diary entries, mostly undated, and an assortment of Record-related jottings have been found scattered in a dozen or more notebooks and on loose sheets and odd scraps of paper.

Most diary entries, as opposed to records of "script" and "lipi" (these terms are explained below), seem to have been written down directly without notes. Entries were usually written on the dates given in the headings; sometimes there were two or more sittings in a day. Occasionally, however, the sadhana of the preceding night was noted down the next morning. Sometimes a single entry covers two or more days. Other entries seem to have been written a day or two in retrospect.

Many Record entries are divided into sections by means of single and double lines in the manuscript. That the lines had a specific purpose is indicated by the fact that Sri Aurobindo sometimes cancelled them. So far as typography permits, such lines and other markings are reproduced as they occur in the notebooks.

The editors have divided the Record proper, that is, the dated diary entries, into three parts: (1) entries written before the start of the "regular record" in November 1912; (2) the main series of entries, written between November 1912 and October 1920; (3) entries written in 1927 (and perhaps also at the end of 1926). The editors have further divided each of the parts into sections. These begin either where Sri Aurobindo resumed making entries after a significant break in the writing, or where he began work in a new notebook. Each section thus covers a specific chronological period, though sometimes there is a bit of overlap between sections. In one place the editors have put three partly concurrent groups of entries in a single section.

Thus divided, the Record proper comprises forty-four sections. Some of these contain scores of entries covering more than a hundred pages, others only a handful of entries covering less than a dozen pages. Sri Aurobindo began some but not all sections with headings written above the first entry or on the cover of the notebook. These have been reproduced as written. The editors have placed a heading in bold type at the beginning of every section. These editorial headings are in the following form: **28 JANUARY – 17 FEBRUARY 1911.**

Over the course of the years, Sri Aurobindo structured sections of entries in different ways. Recurrent features were sometimes abandoned, only to be taken up again months later. Some entries consist only of the briefest notations, occasionally presented in tabular fashion. Other entries were written in discursive prose that sometimes has literary qualities. During certain periods, Sri Aurobindo divided longer entries by means of subheadings. Most of these make use of the terminology of the seven chatusthayas.

Like all diaries—consciously literary productions excepted—the Record was written chiefly as an aid to the diarist. Sri Aurobindo's conception of its purpose is contained in certain early entries. It was meant to be a "pure record of fact and experience" (13 January 1912). The "condition of the activity" of his sadhana was "to form the substance of the record" (2 January 1913). Stated otherwise, it was the "progress of the siddhi" that was "to be recorded" (31 December 1912). This and other uses of the verb "record" suggest that Sri Aurobindo's writing down of an experience was a means by which he established it in his consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo wanted to record "definite results", not "every fluctuation of the siddhi" (15 August 1914). On a path like his, where "all life is yoga", this involved not only noting down such purely yogic activities as "trikaldrishti, aishwarya, samadhi-experience", but also mentioning "work, literary & religious", and making "brief note of the physical siddhi" (27 December 1912). All parts of the sadhana were given attention. We find one passage in which Sri Aurobindo speaks first of applied yogic knowledge and force, *trikāladṛṣṭi* and *tapas*, then the subtle physical power of levitation and then, in the next sentence, the condition of his teeth. This is followed, without a pause, by a note on the intensity of *ānanda* (delight) then being felt in his body. The paragraph closes with a mention of the state of "the personal lilamaya relation with the Master of the Yoga", the personal divinity who guided his sadhana (17 September 1913).

Another purpose of the Record was to be a register of guidance from this and other sources. It was, he wrote on 18 November 1914, to "include not only the details of what is accomplished & the lines of the accomplishment that is being attempted, but also the record of experiences and the indications of the future movement". Such indications were supplied by various means, notably "script", "lipi", "sortilege", and "vani". Full definitions of these terms are given in the glossary. Roughly, "script" is writing on paper, similar to but not the same as "automatic writing" (see below); "lipi" is writing seen by the subtle vision; "sortilege" is printed or handwritten texts sought or found by chance and interpreted; "vani" is the hearing of a voice. Sri Aurobindo transcribed many examples of each of these sorts of communication in the Record. Sometimes he seems to have jotted down scripts or lipis on handy pieces of paper and then copied them into the Record. A few rough notations of scripts that later were copied exist. The copied versions show some amplification. Sometimes only the rough notations have survived; these have been among the most difficult parts of *Record of Yoga* to transcribe. There are also numerous examples of script written separately from the Record proper and never incorporated into it. Some of these identify themselves explicitly as "script", others do not. As a rule such scripts are published in Part Four, separately from the Record proper.

The distinction between script and record is one made by Sri Aurobindo himself, but it was sometimes difficult for the editors to fix the boundary between the two. He occasionally used both words to refer to the same piece of writing. For example, in the regular record of 14 January 1912 he mentioned an "accompanying memorandum" containing the "rest of the record of January 14th & the record of

January 15th". This "memorandum" speaks of itself as "script". Some regular Record entries read like others that identify themselves as script; some entries (for instance, many in June to August 1914) give under the heading "Script" the sort of information generally found in the regular Record.

The principal difference between Record proper and script proper appears to be the way the writings took form in Sri Aurobindo's consciousness. Record was Sri Aurobindo's own "record of fact and experience", written in much the same was as he wrote his other writings. In the Record the word "I", if it occurs, refers to Sri Aurobindo himself. Script, on the other hand, was communicated to Sri Aurobindo by "the Master of the Yoga" or another source. This source sometimes addressed itself as "I" and Sri Aurobindo as "you" (see for example page 1303). In recording script, Sri Aurobindo often wrote down only the source's replies, not the mental questions to which the replies were given. This makes some scripts seem discontinuous and incomplete; reading them is like overhearing one end of a telephone conversation.

Script has some affinities with "automatic writing", a means of written communication in which the pen is said to be directed by a disembodied spirit. Some examples of this are published in Part Five; the phenomenon is discussed below, in the note to that part. Sri Aurobindo considered many automatic writings to be transcriptions of "the thing that is present in the subconscious part of the medium". He did not consider script to be of this nature. A comparison of the script published as parts of Record entries and in Part Four with the automatic writing published in Part Five reveals marked differences in subject matter, tone, elevation, and purpose.

Script was a "means of spiritual communication" which was used "for all sorts of purposes". Chief among these was the prediction of future events—mostly events in Sri Aurobindo's sadhana, but also outward happenings, ranging from great world events to trivial domestic matters. Scripts relating to sadhana were often called Prediction or Programme; they gave indications about inner movements a few days or a week in advance. Sri Aurobindo sometimes looked back on old scripts, predictive lipis and sortileges to check their accuracy. He occasionally jotted down whether they were fulfilled or not. Such notations are among the only evidence we have that Sri Aurobindo read back over the Record. He certainly never revised it in the way he did almost all his other writings. Additions to and corrections of the Record manuscripts were, with few exceptions, evidently made during the act of writing.

INTRODUCTION. SAPTA CHATUSTHAYA

As mentioned above, Sapta Chatusthaya or the seven tetrads was the "programme" of Sri Aurobindo's sadhana that he received sometime after his arrival in Pondicherry in April 1910. It is not known exactly when the system came to him, but it must have been familiar to him by 16 January 1912, when he referred in the Record to "the first two chatusthayas". (Note that the term "chatusthaya" does not occur in the Record of 28 January – 17 February 1911.) The system consists of twenty-eight elements arranged in seven groups of four. Throughout the Record the chatusthayas are referred to both by name and by number. These are listed in the chart below, along with the elements of each chatusthaya:

First chatusthaya. Samata chatusthaya [*earlier*, Shanti chatusthaya]
  Samata, Shanti, Sukha, Hasya [*later*, (Atma)prasada]
Second chatusthaya. Shakti chatusthaya
  Virya, Shakti, Chandibhava [*later*, Daivi Prakriti], Sraddha
Third chatusthaya. Vijnana chatusthaya
  Jnana, Trikaldrishti, Ashtasiddhi, Samadhi
Fourth chatusthaya. Sharira chatusthaya
  Arogya, Utthapana, Saundarya, Ananda [*or* Vividhananda]
Fifth chatusthaya. Karma chatusthaya [*or* Lila chatusthaya]
  Krishna, Kali, Karma, Kama [*last two sometimes reversed*]
Sixth chatusthaya. Brahma chatusthaya
  Sarvam Brahma, Anantam Brahma, Jnanam Brahma, Anandam Brahma
Seventh chatusthaya. Yoga chatusthaya [*or* (San)siddhi chatusthaya]
  Shuddhi, Mukti, Bhukti, Siddhi

This is what Sri Aurobindo called the "natural and logical order" of the chatusthayas and is the only one referred to in the Record proper. Other orders occur, however; for example, the one given in "Outline of the Seven Chatusthayas (Revised Order)" (see next page).

In the Record, the elements, or "siddhis", of each chatusthaya are sometimes referred to by the number of the element within the chatusthaya: for example, "the second element of the shakti-chatusthaya". In addition the siddhis of the third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh chatusthayas are often referred to by the numbers 1 to 21 — 21 and not 20 because in this enumeration the third chatusthaya is considered to have five instead of four elements. The scheme is as follows:

1. Jnana 2. Trikaldrishti 3. Rupa(-siddhi) 4. Tapas 5. Samadhi 6. Arogya 7. Ananda 8. Utthapana 9. Saundarya 10. Krishna 11. Kali 12. Karma 13. Kama 14. Sarvam Brahma 15. Anantam Brahma 16. Jnanam Brahma 17. Anandam Brahma 18. Shuddhi 19. Mukti 20. Bhukti 21. Siddhi

Sapta Chatusthaya. This text almost certainly was written on 20 November 1913. On that day Sri Aurobindo noted in the Record: "The day was chiefly occupied in writing the seven chatusthayas." The handwriting and paper used for the manuscript of this piece are similar to those of other manuscripts of 1913.

Outline of the Seven Chatusthayas (Revised Order). Sri Aurobindo wrote this outline during or not long after 1914 in an exercise-book used previously by one of his disciples for some of the notes published in the Appendix as "Material from Disciples' Notebooks". In it the chatusthayas are listed in a different order from the one generally used in the Record. The "three general chatushtayas" come first, the one that Sri Aurobindo called the "means, the sum and the completion of all the rest" heading the list. Then follow the "four chatusthayas of the Adhara-siddhi", the perfection or *siddhi* of the individual "vehicle" (*ādhāra*).

Incomplete Notes on the First Chatusthaya. Sri Aurobindo wrote these notes in the exercise-book he used for the above "Outline of the Seven Chatusthayas", at around the same time. The end of the last sentence, from the word "qualities", is not found in the manuscript, but is in several scribal copies of the text written by disciples; it undoubtedly was added by Sri Aurobindo to a copy that has since been lost.

PART ONE. DIARY ENTRIES 1909–1912

The diary entries in the first two sections of this part differ in kind from those written afterwards. The first section dates from ten months before Sri Aurobindo's arrival in Pondicherry in April 1910, and contains little of the terminology of the Sapta Chatusthaya. The entries of 1911, unlike the rest of the Record, are arranged under subject headings. The three sections from 1912 contain entries that differ little from those published in Part Two, but they come before the beginning of what Sri Aurobindo called "the regular record of the sadhana".

17–25 June 1909. Sri Aurobindo made these entries in a small pocket notebook during a visit to East Bengal (the present Bangladesh). A month and a half earlier, he had been released from jail after his acquittal in the Alipore Bomb Case. As the most prominent leader of the Bengal Nationalist party, he had been invited to Jhalakati, a town in Bakarganj District, to attend the 1909 session of the Bengal Provincial Conference of the Indian National Congress. The principal event of the tour was the speech he delivered in Jhalakati on 19 June 1909 (reproduced on pages 33–42 of *Karmayogin*, volume 8 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO).

28 January–17 February 1911. During this period Sri Aurobindo wrote dated Record entries under the following six headings: "Physical," "Communications", "Vision of other worlds", "Record of the Drishti", "Siddhis", and "Record of Ideal Cognitions". He wrote them on scattered pages of a notebook he had used years earlier in Baroda as a book catalogue, and later in Pondicherry for various prose and poetic writings.

13 January–8 February 1912. The Record of 12 December 1911 to 11 January 1912, referred to in the first sentence of the entry of 13 January, has not survived. Sri Aurobindo wrote Record entries for January and February 1912 in a notebook he had used in Baroda for literary essays and in Pondicherry for notes and articles on linguistics and other subjects. Above the first entry he wrote the heading "Record of the Yoga". This is the first surviving heading for a section of Record entries. An "accompanying memorandum" containing dated script for 14 and 15 January, which he wrote on a separate sheet of paper, is published between the notebook entries for 14 and 16 January. Note that Sri Aurobindo left long horizontal blanks after some sentences in the notebook. These appear to serve the purpose of paragraph separators.

1–25 July 1912. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a large ledger used otherwise for notes on linguistics and for prose writings on many subjects. He headed it "Journal of Yoga".

12 October–26 November 1912. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a small notebook used for Vedic and linguistic notes, translations, Bengali and Latin poetry, etc. The entries of 18 October to 17 November were written in ink on consecutive pages (with one page left blank between the first and second entries of 18 October). The remainder of the entries were written in purple pencil on scattered pages, sometimes upside down in relation to the rest of the entries. In the same notebook he also wrote a brief record of sortileges of May and June 1912 and several other Record-related pieces that are published in Part Four.

PART TWO. RECORD OF YOGA 1912–1920

The undated general note preceding the entry of 26 November 1912 begins: "The regular record of the sadhana begins today. . . ." The editors have followed this indication by making the entry of 26 November the first in the main series of Record entries. There are, all told, entries for a little more than half of the ninety-six months making up the "regular" period of November 1912 to October 1920.

26 November–31 December 1912. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in an exercise-book used previously for notes on the Veda. The daily entries are preceded by an undated general note, written probably on 26 November.

1–31 January 1913. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in an eighty-page exercise-book used only for this purpose, making it the first notebook devoted exclusively to the Record. Inside its front cover he wrote "Record of the Yoga. / 1913. / January."

1–14 February 1913. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in the first part of an exercise-book, most of which was later used for another purpose. Inside the front cover he wrote "Record of the Yoga / 1913 / February". After the second week of February, he discontinued the Record until the beginning of April.

1 and 12 April, 19 and 21 May 1913. On 1 April 1913 Sri Aurobindo began keeping the Record in a new exercise-book, on the cover of which he wrote "Record of Yoga— / April." After making two entries during the first two weeks of April and two entries in May, he set the notebook aside until July.

4 – 30 June 1913. During the month of June 1913, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in three separate forms that sometimes overlap, with the result that there are sometimes two entries for a single date.

(1) Between 4 June and 28 June, he wrote entries on three sheets of blank paper, each folded to form four narrow pages. He headed this bunch "Record". These entries are similar to those making up the rest of the Record, although they are written in a more tabular and abbreviated form.

(2) Between 16 and 24 June, he wrote a second set of entries on two sheets of blank paper folded like the ones described above. He headed this bunch "Script". These entries include not only the kind of communications to which he usually gave that name, but also more general comments.

(3) Between 25 and 30 June, he wrote several entries similar to the above script notations on a separate sheet of paper (of the same kind as the others and folded similarly) under the title "Record of Details & Guidance."

These three groups of entries are published separately in the above order.

1 – 11 July 1913. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in the notebook he had set aside in May. The entry of 1 July starts on the page that has the end of the entry of 21 May. No Record was written, or none survives, for the month of August 1913.

5 – 21 September 1913. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in the notebook he had set aside in July, leaving three blank pages between the entry for 11 July and the two entries for 5 September. The first of these entries was written in pencil and may be considered an incomplete draft of the second, which is written in pen. The first sentence of the first entry suggests that a now-lost Record was kept during the first days of September and perhaps also for part or all of August, perhaps on loose sheets, like the Record of June.

22–30 September 1913. Sri Aurobindo wrote these entries on four pages of the notebook used previously for the "Record of Yogic details" of 31 May–15 June and the "Record of Yoga. / Theosophic" of 13 and 15 September (both published in Part Four). They are more in the nature of script than ordinary record. No entries were written, or none have survived, for the month of October 1913.

11–23 November 1913. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record on four pieces of writing paper folded to form sixteen narrow pages (two of which were not used).

24 November–2 December 1913. On 24 November Sri Aurobindo returned to the notebook last used on 21 September. He continued to make entries in this notebook through most of December.

1–12 December 1913. Sri Aurobindo wrote most of the entries for this period on four loose sheets of paper. He also wrote entries for 1, 2 and 12 December in the notebook used for most of 1913 (see the notes immediately above and below).

12–21 December 1913. On 12 December Sri Aurobindo returned to the exercise-book last used on 2 December. He continued to make daily entries in this notebook until 21 December, when he reached its last page.

22 December 1913–15 January 1914. On 22 December Sri Aurobindo began a new exercise-book, on the front cover of which he wrote "Record of Yoga / Dec 22d 1913...". On 1 January, in order to mark the new year, he wrote the heading "1914. January." and part of a verse from the Rig Veda (1.13.6), on an otherwise blank page of the notebook. He continued to use it until 15 January 1914. No Record was written, or none survives, for the period between 15 January and 12 March 1914.

12 March–14 April 1914. On 12 March Sri Aurobindo began a new exercise-book, which he used for the Record until 14 April. He later wrote on its cover: "Record of Yoga. March. April. / 1914."

15 April–1 June 1914. Sri Aurobindo kept the Record for this period in a single exercise-book, on the cover of which he wrote: "Record of Yoga / April 15th to / 1914". After the entry for 1 June he wrote a heading for 2–3 June, but made no entry and then abandoned the notebook. When he resumed the Record on 10 June, he began work in a new notebook.

10 June – 29 September 1914. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a small, thick hard-cover notebook which he used for no other purpose. He wrote the heading "Record of Yoga. / June. 1914 — " on an otherwise blank page facing the first page used for entries. After writing the incomplete entry for 29 September, he went on to a new notebook, leaving the last five pages of this one blank.

29 – 30 September – 31 December 1914. After reaching the end of the notebook containing the Record of June to September 1914, Sri Aurobindo began work in a similar small, hard-cover notebook. Inside the front cover he wrote "October — 1914." Before writing the entry dated "October 1", he wrote a long note headed "Preliminary" and dated "Sept 29 – 30".

1 January – 27 February 1915. Sri Aurobindo kept the Record for this period partly in the notebook in use since October 1914 and partly in another. The first notebook contains, after an otherwise blank sheet headed "January", an introductory note followed by entries for 1 – 6 and 24 – 30 January and 1 – 6, 25 and 27 February 1915. In the second notebook Sri Aurobindo kept an "intermediate record" for 2 – 23 January. There are thus two sets of entries for 2 – 6 January. The editors reproduce the intermediate record after the first set of entries for 1 – 6 January, and before the entries of 24 January – 27 February. Sri Aurobindo wrote two annotations to the entry of 3 January in the "intermediate record" sometime after the original entry. The pen and the ink used for the annotations are the same as those used for the Record of January – February 1917, which was kept in the same notebook. Apparently Sri Aurobindo wrote these comments when he took up this notebook again after a lapse of two years.

22 April – 26 August 1915. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a letter-pad of the sort he used for writing material for the *Arya*, his monthly philosophical review. The entries begin abruptly; no mention is made of the gap between 27 February and 22 April. Sri Aurobindo put a question-mark after the date "April 22^{d}". The year of these entries is nowhere written, but the dates and days of the week correspond to those of 1915. After the entry of 26 August

Sri Aurobindo left a few pages blank, then began the entry dated "February 1916" with the words, "In the interval since August. . . ."

19 February – 20 March 1916. Sri Aurobindo wrote no Record entries between 26 August 1915 and mid-February 1916. On 19 February 1916 he resumed the Record, using the letter-pad he had set aside in August. The last paragraph of the entry for 19 February is found at the bottom of the preceding page in the manuscript, after the general introduction to February 1916. In the margin next to this paragraph, Sri Aurobindo wrote: "This should have been recorded on the next page." He also put a long double line to separate the misplaced paragraph from the rest of the contents of the page, and inserted the date "Saturday Feb 19th" at the top of the paragraph. This date has been put editorially within square brackets at the head of the entry of the nineteenth, which itself is dated only "Feb". After the entry of 5 March, the dates written in the manuscript do not agree with the days of the week according to the calendar for 1916. The discrepancy continues until the entry marked "Monday. 19th March" in the manuscript, where the Record for 1916 terminates. It may be noted that Sri Aurobindo left a page blank between the entry of "Sunday / March 5" and the one marked "Tuesday. Mar 6". This suggests that he wrote no entry for Monday, 6 March, and this resulted in a confusion of dates. The editors have accordingly emended the dates rather than the days of the week.

9 January – 14 February 1917. No Record was written or survives for the period of March 1916 to January 1917. Sri Aurobindo kept the Record of 9 January – 14 February 1917 in a small bound notebook used previously for notes on the Veda, for the "intermediate record" of 2 – 23 January 1915, and again for notes and an essay on the Veda. The entries for January – February 1917 were written on pages or parts of pages that had been left blank when the Vedic work was done. At one point thirty pages of Vedic material intervene between pages used for the Record. After the entry of 14 February this notebook was set aside, though a few usable pages remained.

15 February – 31 March 1917. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a small hard-cover notebook similar to the one he had used from 9 January to 14 February. Like that notebook, the present one had previously been used for notes on the Veda. It was abandoned after the entry of 31 March, many of its pages being left unused. No record was kept or has survived for the period from 1 April to 14 August 1917.

15 August–28 September 1917. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in an old exercise-book, a few pages of which had been used some years earlier for the poem *Ilion*. Sri Aurobindo left half a page blank between the entry for 28 September and the one for 14 February 1918. No Record was kept or none survives for the intervening period of more than four months.

14–28 February 1918. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in the notebook he had commenced on 15 August 1917.

3–27 March 1918. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record on a few pages of an old exercise-book used previously for Vedic notes and translations.

20 April–20 May 1918. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a new "Aryan Store Exercise-Book". (The manager of the Aryan Store was Saurin Bose, the "S" or "Sn" of the Record.) This was the first notebook to be used exclusively for the Record since June–September 1914. On its cover Sri Aurobindo wrote "Notebook of the Sadhana". This is the first heading given to a section of Record entries since June 1914.

21 May–1 July 1918. Sri Aurobindo continued the Record of 1918 in an "Aryan Store Exercise-Book" similar to the one used between 20 April and 20 May. Only three entries were made in June due to "the absorption of work". He set the notebook aside after the entry of 1 July and did not take it up again until June 1919. No Record was kept or none survives for the intervening period of almost one year.

24 June–14 July 1919. Sri Aurobindo kept the Record for this period in the notebook set aside on 1 July 1918. He left five pages blank between the entry for that date and the one for 24 June 1919.

15–26 July 1919. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a thin exercise-book used only for this purpose. On its cover he wrote the heading "Yoga Diary" and the opening and closing dates.

27 July–13 August 1919. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a thin exercise-book similar to the previous one, and like it used only for Record entries. On its cover he wrote the heading "Yoga Diary" and the opening and closing dates.

14 August–24 September 1919. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a thin exercise-book similar to the previous two, and like them used only for Record entries. On its cover he wrote the heading "Yoga Diary" and the opening date. It has almost daily entries until 2 September, then one dated "Sept. 3 to 24", which explains the gap before the final entry of 24 September. He apparently did not resume the Record until February of the next year.

1–29 February 1920. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record on seven pieces of paper of different sizes and shapes folded in various ways. Entries which continue from one page to another sometimes have the date repeated at the top of the new page followed by "continued" or "(cont.)". These headings have been omitted from the printed text.

1 March–10 April 1920. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a thin exercise-book used only for the purpose. Above the long introduction preceding the entry dated 1 March he wrote the heading "Yoga Diary. / 1920 / March." No entries have been found for the period between 10 April and 7 June 1920.

7–26 June 1920. During this period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record in a thin exercise-book similar to the previous one, and like it used only for this purpose. Above the first entry he wrote the heading "Yoga Record / June."

17–19 October 1920. Sri Aurobindo wrote Record entries for these three days on a few pages of a letter-pad. He wrote the date "17th October 1920" on the first sheet of the pad.

PART THREE. RECORD OF YOGA 1926–1927

No Record entries were written, or none survive, for the six-year period between October 1920 and December 1926. Sri Aurobindo wrote very little during this period. There are no known articles or poems and only a few letters that have dates to show that they were written during the six years that followed the suspension of the *Arya* in January 1921. The abrupt beginning of the entries preceding those of December 1926–January 1927 suggests that Sri Aurobindo may have made Record entries during parts of the period between 1920 and 1926, but chose not to preserve them, as he chose not to preserve those of October 1927 (see below).

December 1926 – 6 January 1927. Sri Aurobindo wrote these entries in a letter-pad used previously for writing Vedic notes and several pieces published in Part Four, including "The Seven Suns of the Supermind". That piece comes immediately before the first entry here, which speaks of the "supramental life-energy" in the "seven centres". The first two pages of this section of Record notes are undated. The third page begins with three short paragraphs which seem to have been written on a single day. This was probably Sunday, 2 January 1927, for the entry is followed on the same page by closely related entries marked "Monday", "Tuesday" and "Wednesday", then by one dated "Thursday. Jan 6." Sri Aurobindo did not write the year 1927 until 7 April (see below), but the agreement between the dates and days of the week written in the notebook and those of the calendar for 1927 proves that this was the year for the entries of January and February.

The two pages of undated entries preceding the partially dated ones were apparently written shortly before them. Most likely they belong to the first of three "curves" of progress in Sri Aurobindo's sadhana (25 December – 3 January, 3 – 7 January and 7 – 12 January) which he mentioned in the entry for 6 January. This inference is supported by the text of a prediction written on the second undated page: "Monday next. An ascending scale till then." It seems probable that Monday, 3 January, the end of the "curve" that began on 25 December, was also the culmination of the "ascending scale" mentioned in the prediction.

7 January – 1 February 1927. Sri Aurobindo wrote these entries in the letter-pad used for the above section. The entry of 7 January is preceded by some diagrams and script jottings published in Part Four.

7 – 22 April 1927. Sri Aurobindo kept the Record for this period in the letter-pad used for the two preceding sections. Between the entry for 1 February and the one for 7 April come several blank pages, two drafts of an essay, some script, and a poem written in French. No Record was written, or none survives, for the period between April and October 1927.

24 – 31 October 1927. During this eight-day period, Sri Aurobindo kept the Record on two loose sheets of paper. Another sheet discovered with them contains a passage of script published in Part Four. It would appear that Sri Aurobindo tore these three sheets up and threw them away. They were saved from destruction by A. B. Purani, one of his early disciples. The explanatory note reproduced below was written by Purani during the 1950s or 1960s:

> These few pages of Sri Aurobindo's diary of his Sadhana were intended to be burnt. The story of how they escaped that fate is as follows.
>
> To prepare hot water for the Mother's bath very early in the morning was part of the work I had undertaken almost from 1926. I was staying in the 'guest-house' at that time & used to come to the main house between 2.30–3 in the night. In order not to disturb the inmates of the house I was given a key of one of the gates to enter it. The water had to be ready before 4 o'clock, often it was needed at 3.30. (This continued up to 1938 November 23rd when Sri Aurobindo got the accident.)
>
> The boiler room is well-known—it is now the place from where incense is still fired and flowers distributed when it rains. The fuel used was ordinary wood with wooden shavings from the Carpentry department & waste papers. The wooden shavings often contained strips of teak-wood & many other useful tit-bits. I used to preserve them and make time-piece cases, photo-frames, corner brackets from them. When the matter was brought to Mother's notice by someone she approved of such salvaging from waste & added that there were men in France—in Paris—the chiffonniers who became rich only by utilising the enormous waste of papers & rags in the big city.
>
> But the papers I invariably burnt. Perhaps the god of Fire must have become suddenly active, because one day I was struck by half a basketful of torn small bits & casually looked at them. To my surprise and horror I found Sri Aurobindo's handwriting. I put them aside and looked at them in the daylight. I was able to make out with great labour extending for days—like a jig-saw puzzle—two or three readable pages.
>
> These pages are dated & they are evidently notes kept by Sri Aurobindo regarding his own Sadhana.

It is not known whether other pages of the Record from this period, or other periods, were actually destroyed.

PART FOUR. MATERIALS WRITTEN BY SRI AUROBINDO RELATED DIRECTLY TO *RECORD OF YOGA*, C. 1910–1931

This part consists of writings in Sri Aurobindo's own hand that may be considered components of *Record of Yoga*, but which have not been included in Parts One to Three because they are undated or incompletely dated or, if dated, not concerned with Sri Aurobindo's day-to-day sadhana. A number of different sorts of writings are represented: brief undated Record entries, scripts, sortileges, lipis, and notes on a wide variety of sadhana-related topics. They have been arranged in rough chronological order, groups of scripts being placed together in several chronological series.

Undated Record and Record-related Notes, c. 1910–1914. Sri Aurobindo wrote these fourteen items in different notebooks during the early part of his stay in Pondicherry, that is between 1910 and 1914. Further details on individual pieces or groups of pieces follow. [**1**] Sri Aurobindo jotted down these undated notes around 1910 in a notebook containing translations and other pieces written years earlier in Baroda and Calcutta. [**2**] Sri Aurobindo wrote these notes in a notebook used in Baroda for miscellaneous literary writings and in Pondicherry for philological notes. They begin with a reference to Sri Aurobindo's philological research under the heading "Bhasha" ("Language"). Sri Aurobindo's did most of his philological research around 1911–12. The present notes may be assigned to the same period. They have, in addition, some similarity to the Record entries of January–February 1911. Both the notes and the entries are arranged by category, and have one heading in common: "Prophecy". This term is used several times in January–February 1911 for what Sri Aurobindo normally called "trikaldrishti". "Prophecy" occurs rarely in 1912 and all but disappears from the terminology of the Record after that. [**3–13**] Sri Aurobindo wrote all but one of these eleven pieces on scattered pages of a notebook used in Pondicherry (and perhaps also earlier in Bengal) for miscellaneous writings, notably the play *Eric*, as well as notes on philology and other subjects. They date from the earliest years in Pondicherry, that is, 1910–12. Some of them may even have been written slightly before that. [**14**] Sri Aurobindo wrote these "Psychological Notes" (his title) in an exercise-book of the kind he used to keep the Record of 1913 and early 1914. The exercise-book also contains a draft of the last version of the "Life Divine" commentary on the Isha Upanishad (see *Isha Upanishad*, volume 17 of the THE COMPLETE WORKS). This commentary may be dated to 1914. The psychological notes apparently date from the same year.

Sortileges of May and June 1912. These two sortileges were written on a page of the notebook that later was used for the Record of 12 October to 26 November 1912 (see above).

Undated Notes, c. November 1912. Written on the first two pages of the notebook used for the Record of 12 October to 26 November 1912.

Draft Programme of 3 December 1912. Written on one of the last pages of the notebook used for the Record of 12 October to 26 November. The programme subsequently was copied, with a few changes, in the Record entry of 3 December, which was written in another notebook.

Undated or Partly Dated Script, 1912–1913. These nine scripts were written on nine different sheets or sets of sheets during the years 1912 and 1913. Further details on individual pieces follow. [**1**] Written apparently around July 1912, the approximate date of the incomplete "Commentary on the Kena Upanishad" which is referred to in the script. Note also that in the Record of 4 July 1912, Sri Aurobindo wrote "Automatic script recommenced today", and mentioned "prophetic script", a term found nowhere else in the Record. [**2**] This "record of thought" or script was written at the bottom of a loose sheet containing linguistic notes. Two sentences from it appear verbatim in the Record of 14 October 1912. The script evidently was written on that day and part of it transcribed in the Record. [**3**] These three pieces of script were written on the inner pages of a large folded sheet of paper used otherwise for linguistic notes and fragmentary writings on other subjects. The linguistic notes are very similar to those found along with item [2]. It is therefore likely that the scripts date from roughly the same period. The predictions contained in the first script may be the same as the "programme suggested on the tenth" mentioned in the Record of 21 December 1912. There are a number of similarities between the elements of sadhana mentioned in the present script and those described in the Record of 10–11 December 1912. [4] This item, written on the last ten of a set of twenty-eight small pages formed by folding loose sheets of paper, may be assigned with some confidence to January 1913. It consists of a long undated passage, followed by four shorter entries with dates from the "21st" to the "24th". The month and year are not specified, but under the "23d" there is a reference to "this month of January". The year 1913 may be established by comparison with the regular Record of January of that year. See for example the almost identical references to the Turkish city of Adrianople in the script of the "23d" and the Record of 24 January 1913. Since the partly dated portions of the script belong to 21–24 January 1913, the undated passage preceding them must have been written just before the 21st. Note also that the Record of 19 January states: "This morning script became profuse and intimate. . . ." The script contains some examples of writings in different languages known and unknown. Sri Aurobindo wrote or "received" a number of such writings around this time. The first eighteen of the set of pages on which the script is written are devoted to this project. Some examples of such "writings in different languages" are published in *Vedic Studies with Writings on Philology*, volume 14 of THE COMPLETE WORKS. [5] This script was written sometime around June 1913 on a sheet of letter paper found along with some Vedic and linguistic notes. The paper is of the type used also for item [6] as well as for letters written around June 1913. The third and fifth of the seven "rules" here correspond to some of the five "positive directions" given in the script of 22 June 1913, which is published as part of the Record proper. [6] These four paragraphs of script, written on two loose sheets similar in type to those used for item [5], contain no explicit dating clues, but the position they describe corresponds closely to the one referred to in the Record of 10 and 11 July 1913. The first paragraph says: "Lipi is already moving forward to the mahat. . . ." The Record of 10 July speaks of the "successful movement from manas to mahat predicted in the script", and observes: "The only siddhi which advanced during the day was the lipi." The second paragraph deals with a movement of the vijnana to brihat, to be followed by a further change to satyam and ritam. This is the situation described at the beginning of the second sentence of the Record of 11 July 1913: “At first the knowledge was merely brihat in manas. . . .” [7] This script, written on a single loose sheet, contains no explicit dating clues, but the situation it describes corresponds to the position of Sri Aurobindo’s sadhana between July and September 1913. The script may well have been written during the suspension of the regular Record between 11 July and 5 September 1913. [8] This short piece was written at the bottom of the sheet containing the first six paragraphs of the Record of 12 November 1913, but upside down in relation to them. It apparently was written before the commencement or at any rate the completion of the Record entry, which otherwise would have used the space occupied by the script. The style is similar to that of some of the “Thoughts and Aphorisms” and to the “Thought” noted down in the Record of 24 June 1914 beginning “Despise not, O thinker. . . .” [9] This long script was written on a large loose sheet folded to make four pages, the bottom edges of all of which have been damaged. The sheet was found together with the Record entries of 11 – 23 November 1913 and apparently belongs to the same period; note the phrase “till December” in the second paragraph. There are many similarities between the position of the sadhana as described in this script and in the Record of 12 – 18 November 1913. Compare, for example, the following passage in the script: “ Today a great movement forward. . . . The trikaldrishti, telepathy, power, lipi have now all to move towards absolute perfection dragging the samadhi & drishti with them. Till that is done, the fourth chatusthaya will only prepare its advance . . .” with this passage in the Record of 14 November: “Today is to be a day of rapid progress in the third chatusthaya and the preparation of rapid progress in the fourth.” Similarly the last page of the script has parallels with the Record of 17 and 18 November, while the last complete paragraph of the script has similarities to the Record of 18 November 1913.

Sortilege of 15 March [1913]. Written on a page of a notebook used mostly for *Ilion* and other poems. The year is not given but it may be inferred from (1) the handwriting, (2) the period of the other pieces in the notebook, (3) the fact that no regular Record, in which a sortilege would normally have been entered, was kept in March 1913.

Accounts of 31 May – 15 June 1913. Written on the first five pages of a notebook used later for Vedic translations and notes, the Record notes of 13 and 15 September (see below) and the Record of 22–30 September 1913. Sri Aurobindo wrote "Record of Yogic details" on the cover of this notebook. It should be remembered that to him "All life is Yoga."

Record Notes, 13 and 15 September 1913. Sri Aurobindo wrote these two entries under the heading "Record of Yoga. / Theosophic." in the notebook used previously for the "Record of Yogic details" (see above) and subsequently for the Record of 22–30 September 1913. The year, not given explicitly, may be inferred from this position. Note that Sri Aurobindo also wrote a regular Record entry in another notebook on 13 September.

Vedic Experience, 14 and 15 December 1913. Sri Aurobindo wrote regular Record entries for both these days, but chose to enter this experience in a notebook used otherwise for Vedic translations and notes.

Undated Notes, c. 1914. Sri Aurobindo wrote these notes headed "Vijnanachatusthaya" on a loose sheet of paper that was found inserted in a notebook used, among other things, for the Record of July 1912. The sheet, however, does not appear to be connected with anything in the notebook, and may have been put there simply as a placemark. The handwriting is that of 1912–14. It is possible that these notes are the "separate detailed record of the results" of the "formulated & steady activity for the regulation of the third chatusthaya" that Sri Aurobindo wrote of having "commenced" in the Record of 1 June 1914.

Notes on Images Seen in March 1914. Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece, which he entitled "The Evolutionary Scale", in March 1914 in an exercise-book of the same sort as he was using then for the Record. In the Record entry of 22 March 1914, he spoke of certain "scenes of a pursuit in the early Manwantaras of a race of divinised Pashus by Barbarians" which were "recorded elsewhere". The reference is evidently to the second section of "The Evolutionary Scale", which begins: "A series of images and a number of intimations have been given yesterday in the chitra-drishti to illustrate the history of the first two Manwantaras. . . ." The word "yesterday", which was added between the lines, would seem to indicate that the second, and probably the first and third sections as well, were written on 23 March. Further references in the Record make it clear that the images of the fourth section and the first paragraph of the fifth section were seen on 24 March, and that the images of the rest of the fifth section and probably those of the sixth were seen on 25 March.

Undated Script, c. 1920. The first of these two scripts is the last piece of writing in a letter-pad whose other contents (Vedic translations, etc.) provide no explicit dating clues. The term "drashtri vijnana", which occurs in the script, is found otherwise only in the Record of March 1920. The second piece, consisting of three short entries, was written on two loose sheets that cannot be precisely dated. The third entry employs the term "logos Vijnana", which occurs in the Record only in October 1920.

Undated Notes, c. December 1926. Sri Aurobindo wrote all but the last of these seven pieces in a letter-pad used previously for Vedic notes and subsequently for the Record of January – February and April 1927, as well as for certain undated Record entries, scripts, etc. "The Seven Suns of the Supermind" is followed closely by Record entries that are considered to have been written in December 1926. It seems likely that that piece and the five preceding it were written in the same month. Sri Aurobindo wrote the seventh piece, "The Seven Centres of the Life", on a sheet from another letter-pad, apparently around the same time.

Undated Notes, c. January 1927. Sri Aurobindo wrote these notes, in which the names of some of his disciples are linked with those of historical, legendary and divine figures, in the letter-pad of 1926 – 27 referred to above. Before and after it are Record notes that have been dated to the last week of December 1926 and the first week of January 1927.

Notes on Physical Transformation, c. January 1927. Sri Aurobindo wrote these notes in the letter-pad of 1926 – 27. They come just before the Record notes dated "Thursday. Jan 6." They appear to be more in the nature of script than ordinary writing. (The word "you" obviously refers to Sri Aurobindo, while "she" designates the Mother, as it does in several Record entries of January 1927.)

Diagrams, c. January 1927. Written and drawn in the letter-pad of 1926 – 27 between entries dated 6 January and 7 January.

Miscellaneous Notations, c. February – April 1927. [1 – 2] Written on two separate pages of the letter-pad of 1926 – 27, the first a few pages after the Record entry of 1 February, the second between the two parts of the entry of 9 April. (The script must have been written before this date, since the splitting of the entry of 9 April evidently was due to the fact that the intervening pages had already been used.) [**3**] This lipi, dated 2 April 1927, was written in the letter-pad of 1926–27 between the two parts of the entry of 9 April. [**4**] Sri Aurobindo wrote this *mantra* in the letter-pad of 1926–27, just after the lipi described above.

Record of Drishti, 30 July 1927. Sri Aurobindo wrote these dated notes in a tiny note-pad used otherwise to record electric-meter readings.

Undated Script, c. 1927. Sri Aurobindo wrote these three sets of script notations in a notebook belonging to the year 1927. Pieces [1] and [2] come a little before writings that may be dated with some certainty to July–August 1927; but some similarities between the terminology of these entries and the Record of January 1927 suggest that the entries may have been written earlier in the year. The third piece occurs further on in the same notebook, and appears to date from somewhat later in 1927.

Undated Script, c. 1927–1928. These four passages of script all come from manuscripts datable to late 1927 or 1928. All contain references to "overmind", a term that first occurs in the Record in the entry of 29 October 1927. [**1**] The torn-up sheet on which this passage was written was found by A. B. Purani together with those containing the Record of 24–31 October 1927. Its opening is similar to number 14 of the "Undated Script Jottings" (see below), which was found in a notebook used in 1928. [**2–3**] These two passages occur in two different notebooks, both from the period 1927–28. Their terminology suggests that they may have been written after October 1927, although this would mean that they were jotted down after most of the contents of the subsequent pages of the notebooks were written. [**4**] These two fragments were found on a scrap of a sheet detached from a letter-pad. The first occupies what was originally the top of the front of the sheet. It begins in the middle of a sentence. The preceding page or pages have been lost. The second fragment occupies what was the bottom of the reverse of the sheet. (The pad was stitched at the top.) Between the two fragments came whatever was written on the bottom three-quarters of the front page and the top three-quarters of the reverse.

Notes on Prophetic Vision, 1929. Sri Aurobindo wrote these dated notes in a small "Bloc-Memo" pad used otherwise for miscellaneous jottings and writings.

Diagrams, c. 1931. Written and drawn on both sides of a piece of letter paper, at the top of which is the conclusion of a letter-draft whose beginning has been lost. The draft ends:

> However I give the schema below and you can see for yourself —it is arranged according to an ascending scale of consciousness, grades superimposed on each other, but that does not mean that there is no interpenetration of one by another.

The letter was rewritten on 15 April 1931 and sent without the diagrams.

Undated Script Jottings. These fifteen passages of script were jotted down by Sri Aurobindo on the pages of various notebooks and loose pieces of paper between circa 1915 and the late 1920s. They are arranged in roughly chronological order, though their dates and sometimes even periods are difficult to determine. [**1**] Written on a sheet torn out of a letter-pad of the sort Sri Aurobindo used for the Record in 1915–16 and for other writings during approximately the same period. [**2**] Written on a page of a letter-pad containing writings that can be dated 1916–18. [**3**] Jotted on the last page of a notebook containing Vedic translations and English poetry written at different times. [**4–5**] Written on two pages of a notebook used around 1926. [**6**] Written on the back of a letter to Sri Aurobindo dated 16 August 1926. [**7–8**] Written on the front and back of a loose sheet inserted in the note-pad used for the Record of 1926–27; the loose sheet may once have been the first sheet of the pad, in which case the jottings may date to December 1926. [**9–11**] Written on three pages of the notebook that was used for the "Undated Script, c. 1927" (see above). [**12**] Written circa 1927–28 on a torn sheet used otherwise for a passage intended for the revised version of *The Synthesis of Yoga*. [**13**] Written on a torn letter, perhaps from slightly later than 1928. [**14**] Written and cancelled at the top of a page of a stenographic pad used around 1928. [**15**] Written in the margin of a page of a notebook used for the poem *Savitri* in the late 1920s.

PART FIVE. AUTOMATIC WRITING

Sri Aurobindo first tried automatic writing — defined by him as writing not "dictated or guided by the writer's conscious mind" — towards the end of his stay in Baroda (that is, around 1904). He took it up "as an experiment as well as an amusement" after observing "some very extraordinary automatic writing" done by his brother Barin; "very much struck and interested" by the phenomenon, "he decided to find out by practising this kind of writing himself what there was behind it." Barin seems at least sometimes to have used a planchette for his experiments, but Sri Aurobindo generally just "held the pen while a disembodied being wrote off what he wished, using my pen and hand". He continued these experiments during his political career (1906 – 10) and afterwards. In this part are published one example from 1907, an entire book received as automatic writing in 1910, and a number of examples from two years during which he also kept the Record: 1914 and 1920. His "final conclusion" about automatic writing

> was that though there are sometimes phenomena which point to the intervention of beings of another plane, not always or often of a high order, the mass of such writings comes from a dramatising element in the subconscious mind; sometimes a brilliant vein in the subliminal is struck and then predictions of the future and statements of things known in the present and past come up, but otherwise these writings have not a great value.

During the period of the Record, Sri Aurobindo made much use of a form of writing he called "script". As explained above, this was similar to automatic writing in that it came as a communication from another source, but differed from automatic writing in coming from a source that he considered to be higher and more reliable. It should be noted, however, that the distinction of "script" from ordinary automatic writing was not always strictly maintained. Some writings from a lower source refer to themselves as script (see for example page 1410), and Sri Aurobindo used the word "script" for writings that were produced in séances with others (see for example the Record of 17 July 1914, where he writes: "Today excellent script with R [Richard]

& Madame R.") In these examples, "script" is used as a generic term to cover all forms of written communication from other sources.

"The Scribblings", c. 1907. Written in a notebook previously used by Sri Aurobindo in Baroda for miscellaneous writings. In May 1908 this notebook and several others were seized by the police when Sri Aurobindo was arrested in connection with the Alipore Bomb Case. These automatic writings were submitted by the prosecution as evidence against Sri Aurobindo, but were not accepted by the judge as being in Sri Aurobindo's hand. They were, however, certainly written by him, though, being automatic, they are somewhat illegible; hence the name by which they were known during the trial: "The Scribblings". They mention Barindra Kumar Ghose, Sri Aurobindo's younger brother, who was the active head of a revolutionary group, as well as three other members.

Yogic Sadhan. Sri Aurobindo received this book as automatic writing in 1910. According to his biographer A. B. Purani,

> During the first three months of the stay at Pondicherry [April –June 1910] there used to be séances in the evening in which automatic writing was done. The book *Yogic Sadhan* was written in this way. At the rate of one chapter per day, the book was finished in a week or eight days. . . . The Editor's Epilogue added after the last chapter was written by Sri Aurobindo himself. The editor's name is given as "the Uttar[a] Yogi".

A year later, the text that had been received was transcribed and published under the title *Yogic Sadhan* by Sri Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam. "The Uttara Yogi" (the Yogi from the North) is a name by which Sri Aurobindo was known to the person who published the book. A second edition of *Yogic Sadhan*, lightly revised, was brought out by the Modern Press, Pondicherry, in 1920. Two further editions were brought out by Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, in 1923 and 1933. The present text follows the second edition with a few emendations, mainly in chapters 7–9, for which a manuscript in Sri Aurobindo's hand survives.

Sri Aurobindo permitted the publication of *Yogic Sadhan*, but he did not consider it his own work. In a letter of 1934 he wrote:

> The *Yogic Sadhan* is not Sri Aurobindo's own writing, but was published with a note by him, that is all. The statement made to the contrary by the publishers was an error which they have been asked to correct. There is no necessity of following the methods suggested in that book unless one finds them suggestive or helpful as a preliminary orientation of the consciousness—e.g. in the up-building of an inner Will etc.

The "note" referred to is the "Editor's Epilogue", which was included in all editions of *Yogic Sadhan*. Sri Aurobindo allowed the book to go out of print after the edition of 1933 was sold out. It has not been reprinted since then in the form of a book.

Automatic writings, c. 1914 (First Set). These four pieces of automatic writing are found on four loose sheets of paper folded together. They are not dated but almost certainly were written in 1914. The sheet on which item [1] was written contains also a draft of something published in the journal *Arya* in August of that year. Item [2] contains a reference to "the Review", that is, the *Arya*, which was conceived around 1 June 1914 and first published in August. Items [3] and [4] seem to have been written around the same time as the first two items.

Automatic writings, c. 1914 (Second Set). These two pieces of automatic writing were written on four loose sheets of paper folded to make eight pages. The sheets were found along with those on which the previous set were written, and appear to belong to the same period.

Automatic Writing, c. 1920. This short writing was found in a letter-pad used principally for Vedic translations and notes. Below it, on the same page, are a few lines that have been classified as Record-related script and published in Part Four (the first piece of "Undated Script, c. 1920"). That piece has been dated by terminology to around March 1920. The present writing describes itself as "script", that is, a "means of embodied communication with the other worlds"; but the "spirit of the higher realms" who speaks is evidently not the Master of the Yoga. The item is therefore classified as automatic writing rather than script.

Automatic Writings, c. 1920. These nineteen writings were found together in a single batch of seventy-eight loose sheets. They are published here in the order in which they were found. It is likely that each item is the product of a separate séance. References to known events in some of the writings lead one to date them to the summer of 1920. Lokamanya Tilak, who is referred to in item [9] as having departed from the body, apparently rather recently, died on 1 August 1920. The letter referred to in item [8] very likely is the one written by Tilak's associate Dr. B. S. Munje to Sri Aurobindo, inviting him to preside over the 1920 session of the Indian National Congress. Sri Aurobindo's reply turning down this offer is dated 30 August 1920. Mirra Richard (The Mother) and Paul Richard participated in some if not all the sessions. (See especially item [9].) They returned to Pondicherry from Japan on 24 April 1920. Richard left Pondicherry in December of the same year.

Appendix. Material from Disciples' Notebooks

The pieces in this Appendix have been transcribed from versions handwritten by early disciples of Sri Aurobindo. They are copies of notes written by Sri Aurobindo or of written records of his oral remarks. With one partial exception, none of these items exist in the form of manuscripts in Sri Aurobindo's handwriting. The exception is on the last page of item [1] of the "Miscellaneous Notes", where there are three pieces that were written or revised by Sri Aurobindo in his own hand. Only these pieces may be considered to be as authentic as the handwritten Record. Nevertheless, Sri Aurobindo may be regarded as the origin of all the pieces in this appendix, as they are either transcriptions of his talks or copies of now-lost written texts. They represent aspects of his teaching in an early form as given to his earliest disciples.

Miscellaneous Notes, c. 1914. These seven sets of notes are reproduced from handwritten copies made by disciples of Sri Aurobindo in various notebooks. Early copies of items [1], [2] and [5] were written in the exercise-book he used subsequently for the "Incomplete Notes on the First Chatusthaya" published in the Introduction. This notebook has "1914" printed on the cover. Another notebook containing the principal versions of items [3], [4], [6] and [7] has calendars for 1913 and 1914 printed inside the front cover. Many of the disciples' notebooks contain a copy of a letter written by Sri Aurobindo on 21 September

1914. It is reasonable to conclude that the pieces date roughly from the period around 1914.

Sapta Chatusthaya — Scribal Version. This presentation of Sapta Chatusthaya is the most complete one available. There is no manuscript of the piece in Sri Aurobindo's hand, but he was undoubtedly its source. The text survives only in the form of transcripts written down by disciples. Several of these "scribal copies", as the editors term them, have been collated and two of the oldest selected as the basis of the present text.

One of the scribal copies may date from as early as 1914; two others are from the mid-1920s, and most or all of the rest from the 1930s. These copies were made either from a now-lost manuscript written by Sri Aurobindo or, more likely, from one or more written records of a series of talks given by him. The scribal copies may be considered on the whole to be reliable records of the substance of what Sri Aurobindo must have written or said; but all of them contain obvious distortions of his words. Because of this, a much freer hand has been used in the editing of this piece than would have been permissible if the text was based on a handwritten manuscript.

The text is "eclectic"; that is to say, it follows for the most part the scribal version that seems to offer the best text as a whole, but it makes use of readings from the other principal scribal copy where these appear more likely to represent Sri Aurobindo's actual words. Where the scribal copies agree but the reading seems defective, an editorial alternative has been printed between square brackets, as part of the text, and the scribal version given in a footnote. (Such footnote variants are preceded by "*MS (scribal)*".) The editors have silently made minor corrections of the spelling, punctuation, etc. of these scribal texts.

PUBLISHING HISTORY

No part of *Record of Yoga* was published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. The notebooks and loose sheets containing the diary entries and related materials were found after his passing along with his other manuscripts. Most of *Record of Yoga* was published in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* between 1986 and 1994. Some material — mainly in Parts One, Four and the first section of the Appendix

—was omitted when *Record of Yoga* was published in that journal and appears here for the first time. The publishing history of *Yogic Sadhan* has been given above in the note on Part Five. “The Seven Suns of the Supermind” and the diagrams in Part Four were included in *The Hour of God* (Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo Ashram) in 1959 and subsequently; there the diagrams were given the editorial title “The Divine Plan”. A few related pieces that were added to the reorganised 1982 edition of *The Hour of God* are also included in Part Four. In 1973, Sri Aurobindo’s manuscript version of “Sapta Chatusthaya” was published, with much editorial normalisation of the spelling of Sanskrit words and other details, in volume 27 (*Supplement*) of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library.

The text of this first edition of *Record of Yoga* has been reproduced verbatim, as far as possible, from the manuscripts of the diary entries and related materials.

Essays Divine and Human

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 12
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1997
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Essays Divine and Human

Writings from Manuscripts

1910 – 1950

Publisher's Note

Essays Divine and Human consists of short prose pieces written by Sri Aurobindo after his arrival in Pondicherry in 1910 but not published before his passing in 1950. Short prose works written during the same period and published during his lifetime appear in *Essays in Philosophy and Yoga*, volume 13 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

There are indications in Sri Aurobindo's Pondicherry notebooks that he intended to bring out a collection of essays on yoga and other subjects. The headings written above two pieces, "Essays Divine and Human" and "Essays — Human and Divine", seem to have been intended as possible titles for this proposed book. The editors have chosen the first of these to be the title of the present volume.

The material has been arranged in four parts:

I. *Essays Divine and Human* — complete essays on yoga and related subjects, arranged in five chronological sections.
II. *From Man to Superman: Notes and Fragments on Philosophy, Psychology and Yoga*, arranged in three thematic sections.
III. *Notes and Fragments on Various Subjects*, arranged in five thematic sections.
IV. *Thoughts and Aphorisms*, as arranged by the author in three sections, with a section of additional aphorisms.

All the writings in this book have been reproduced from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts. He did not prepare any of them for publication and left many in an unfinished state. Simple editorial problems arising from illegibility, incomplete revision, etc. are indicated by means of the system explained in the Guide to Editorial Notation on the next page. More complex problems are discussed in the reference volume.

Guide to Editorial Notation

The contents of this volume were never prepared by Sri Aurobindo for publication. They have been transcribed from manuscripts that present a variety of textual difficulties. As far as possible the editors have indicated these problems by means of the notation shown below.

Notation	**Textual Problem**
[?word]	Doubtful reading
[. . .]	Illegible word(s), one group of three spaced dots for each presumed word
[.......]	Word(s) lost by mutilation of the manuscript (at the beginning of a piece, indicates that a page or pages of the manuscript have been lost)
[word]	Word(s) omitted by the author or lost through damage to the manuscript that are required by grammar or sense, and that could be supplied by the editors
[?]	Word(s) omitted by the author that could not be supplied by the editors
[ ]	Blank left by the author to be filled in later but left unfilled, which the editors were not able to fill
[*note*]	Situations requiring textual explication; all such information is printed in italics

Some textual situations requiring editorial intervention could not be handled by the above system. Such cases are discussed or tabulated in the reference volume (volume 35).

CONTENTS

Part One
Essays Divine and Human

Section One (circa 1911)

Certitudes 5
Moksha 6
Man 7
Philosophy 8
The Siddhis 14
The Psychology of Yoga 18

Section Two (1910 – 1913)

Na Kinchidapi Chintayet 23
The Sources of Poetry 28
The Interpretation of Scripture 33
On Original Thinking 38
The Balance of Justice 46
Social Reform 50
Hinduism and the Mission of India 59
The Psychology of Yoga 64
The Claims of Theosophy 67
Science & Religion in Theosophy 72
Sat 75
Sachchidananda 84
The Silence behind Life 88

Section Three (circa 1913)

The Psychology of Yoga

  Initial Definitions and Descriptions 93
  The Object of Our Yoga 96

Purna Yoga

  I. The Entire Purpose of Yoga 98
  II. Parabrahman, Mukti & Human Thought-Systems 103
  III. Parabrahman and Parapurusha 107

Natural and Supernatural Man

The Evolutionary Aim in Yoga 108
The Fullness of Yoga — In Condition 115
Nature 122
Maya 133

Section Four (1914 – 1919)

The Beginning and the End 141
The Hour of God 146
Beyond Good and Evil 148
The Divine Superman 150

Section Five (1927 and after)

The Law of the Way 155
Man and the Supermind 157
The Involved and Evolving Godhead 161
The Evolution of Consciousness 165
The Path 169

Part Two
From Man to Superman: Notes and Fragments on Philosophy, Psychology and Yoga

Section One. Philosophy: God, Nature and Man

God: The One Reality 177
Nature: The World-Manifestation 193
Man and Superman 221

Section Two. Psychology: The Science of Consciousness

The Problem of Consciousness 271
Consciousness and the Inconscient 290
The Science of Consciousness 302

Section Three. Yoga: Change of Consciousness and Transformation of Nature

The Way of Yoga 327
Partial Systems of Yoga 344
Integral Yoga 356

CONTENTS

Part Three
Notes and Fragments on Various Subjects

Section One. The Human Being in Time

The Marbles of Time 379
A Theory of the Human Being 380
A Cyclical Theory of Evolution 382

Section Two. The East and the West

A Misunderstanding of Continents 389
Towards Unification 391
China, Japan and India 394

Section Three. India

Renascent India 397
Where We Stand in Literature 398

Section Four. Genius, Poetry, Beauty

The Origin of Genius 403
Poetic Genius 404
The Voices of the Poets 405
Pensées 407
A Dream 409
The Beauty of a Crow's Wings 410

Section Five. Science, Religion, Reason, Justice

Science 413
Religion 414
Reason and Society 415
Justice 418

Part Four
Thoughts and Aphorisms

Jnana 423
Karma 453
Bhakti 481
Additional Aphorisms 500

Part One

Essays Divine and Human

The essays in this part have been arranged chronologically in five sections. The contents of several of the sections or subsections seem to have been intended by Sri Aurobindo to be published as series or collections of essays.

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry

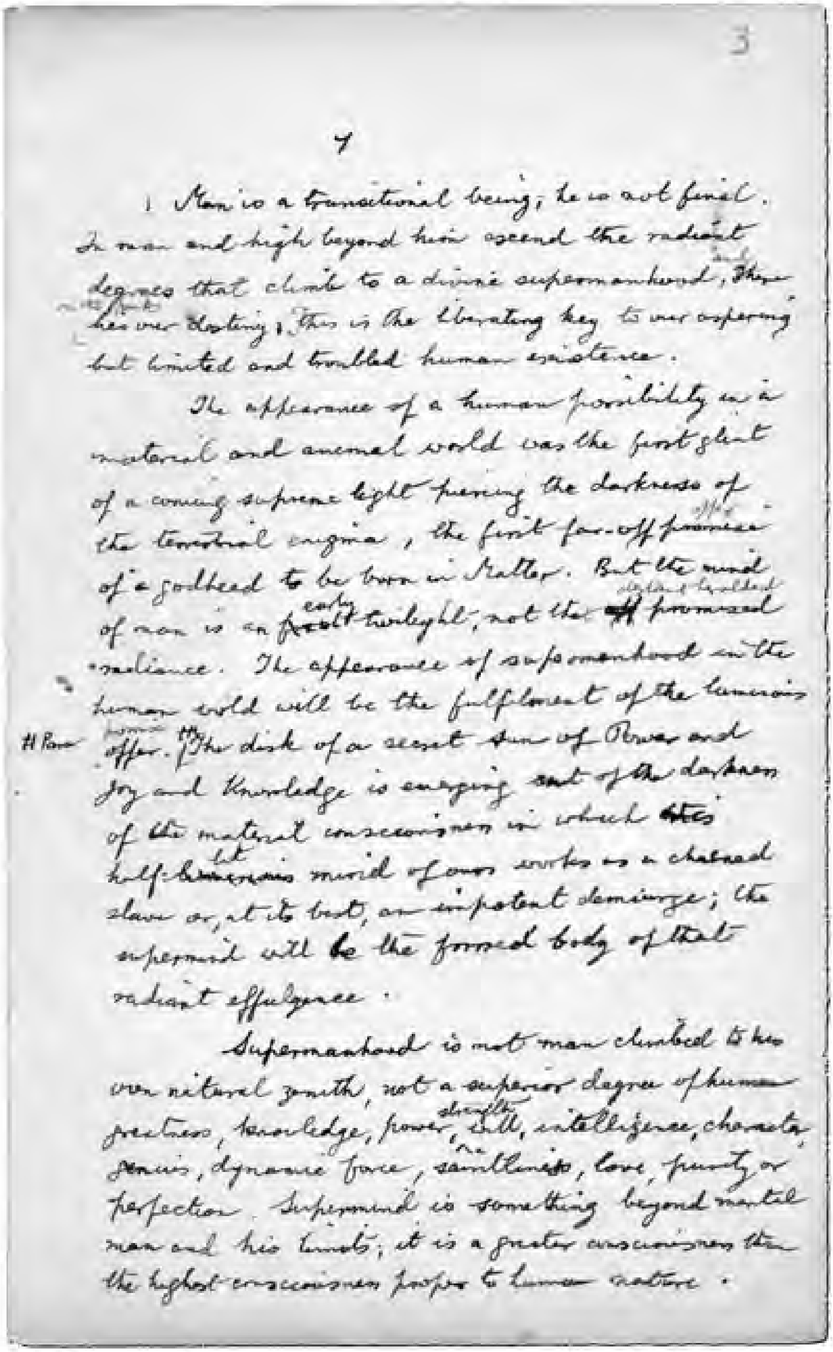

3

4

1 Man is a transitional being; he is not final. In man and high beyond him ascend the radiant degrees that climb to a divine supermanhood; and there lies our destiny; this is the liberating key to our aspiring but limited and troubled human existence.

The appearance of a human possibility in a material and animal world was the first gleam of a coming supreme light piercing the darkness of the terrestrial enigma, the first far-off promise offer of a godhead to be born in Matter. But the mind of man is an ~~faint~~ early twilight, not the ~~of~~ [illegible] promised radiance. The appearance of supermanhood in the human world will be the fulfilment of the luminous promise offer. H Pow The disk of a secret sun of Power and Joy and Knowledge is emerging ~~out~~ of the darkness of the material consciousness in which ~~thus~~ half-~~luminous~~ lit mind of ours works as a chained slave or, at its best, an impotent demiurge; the supermind will be the formed body of that radiant effulgence.

Supermanhood is not man climbed to his own natural zenith, not a superior degree of human greatness, knowledge, power, strength will, intelligence, character, genius, dynamic force, saintliness, love, purity or perfection. Supermind is something beyond mental man and his limits; it is a greater consciousness than the highest consciousness proper to human nature.

A page of a draft of "Man and the Supermind"

Section One

Circa 1911

Certitudes

In the deep there is a greater deep, in the heights a greater height. Sooner shall man arrive at the borders of infinity than at the fulness of his own being. For that being is infinity, is God —

I aspire to infinite force, infinite knowledge, infinite bliss. Can I attain it? Yes, but the nature of infinity is that it has no end. Say not therefore that I attain it. I become it. Only so can man attain God by becoming God.

But before attaining he can enter into relations with him. To enter into relations with God is Yoga, the highest rapture & the noblest utility. There are relations within the compass of the humanity we have developed. These are called prayer, worship, adoration, sacrifice, thought, faith, science, philosophy. There are other relations beyond our developed capacity, but within the compass of the humanity we have yet to develop. Those are the relations that are attained by the various practices we usually call Yoga.

We may not know him as God, we may know him as Nature, our Higher Self, Infinity, some ineffable goal. It was so that Buddha approached Him; so approaches him the rigid Adwaitin. He is accessible even to the Atheist. To the materialist He disguises Himself in matter. For the Nihilist he waits ambushed in the bosom of Annihilation.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

Moksha

The pessimists have made moksha synonymous with annihilation or dissolution, but its true meaning is freedom. He who is free from bondage, is free, is mukta. But the last bondage is the passion for liberation itself which must be renounced before the soul can be perfectly free, and the last knowledge is the realisation that there is none bound, none desirous of freedom, but the soul is for ever and perfectly free, that bondage is an illusion and the liberation from bondage is an illusion. Not only are we bound but in play, the mimic knots are of such a nature that we ourselves can at our pleasure undo them.

Nevertheless the bonds are many and intricate. The most difficult of all their knots is egoism, the delusion that we have an individual existence sufficient in itself, separate from the universal and only being, ekamevadwitiyam, who is one not only beyond Time, Space and Causality. Not only are we all Brahman in our nature and being, waves of one sea, but we are each of us Brahman in His entirety, for that which differentiates and limits us, nama and rupa, exists only in play and for the sake of the world-drama.

Whence then comes this delusion of egoism, if there is no separate existence and only Brahman is? We answer that there is separate existence but only in manifestation not in reality. It is as if one actor could play different parts not in succession but at one and the same moment; each part is He Himself, one and indivisible, but each part is different from the other. Brahman extends Himself in Time, Space & Causality which do not condition Him but exist in Him and can at any time be changed or abolished, and in Time, Space & Causality He attaches Himself to many namarupas which are merely existences in His universal being. They are real in manifestation, unreal outside manifestation.

Man

The Shastras use the same word for man and the one divine and universal Being — Purusha — as if to lay stress upon the oneness of humanity with God. Nara and Narayana are the eternal couple, who, though they are two, are one, eternally different, eternally the same. Narayana, say the scholiasts, is he who dwells in the waters, but I rather think it means he who is the essence and sum of all humanity. Wherever there is a man, there there is Narayana; for the two cannot be separated. I think sometimes that when Christ spoke of himself as the Son of Man, he really meant the son of the Purusha, and almost find myself imagining that *anthropos* is only the clumsy Greek equivalent, the literal and ignorant translation of some Syrian word which corresponded to our Purusha.

Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that man is full of divine possibilities — he is not merely a term in physical evolution, but himself the field of a spiritual evolution which with him began and in him will end. It was only when man was made, that the gods were satisfied — they who had rejected the animal forms, — and cried सुकृतमेव, "Man indeed is well and wonderfully made; the higher evolution can now begin." He is like God, the sum of all other types and creatures from the animal to the god, infinitely variable where they are fixed, dynamic where they, even the highest, are static, and, therefore, although in the present and in his attainment a little lower than the angels, yet in the eventuality and in his culmination considerably higher than the gods. The other or fixed types, animals, gods, giants, Titans, demigods, can rise to a higher development than their own, but they must use the human body and the terrestrial birth to effect the transition.

Philosophy

The knowledge which the man of pure intellect prefers to a more active and mundane curiosity, has in its surroundings a certain loftiness and serene detachment that cannot fail in their charm. To withdraw from contact with emotion and life and weave a luminous colourless shadowless web of thought, alone and far away in the infinite azure empyrean of pure ideas, can be an enthralling pastime fit for Titans or even for Gods. The ideas so found have always their value and it is no objection to their truth that, when tested by the rude ordeal of life and experience, they go to pieces. All that inopportune disaster proves is that they are no fit guides to ordinary human conduct; for material life which is the field of conduct is only intellectual on its mountaintops; in the plains and valleys ideas must undergo limitation by unideal conditions and withstand the shock of crude sub-ideal forces.

Nevertheless conduct is a great part of our existence and the mere metaphysical, logical or scientific knowledge that either does not help me to act or even limits my self-manifestation through action, cannot be my only concern. For God has not set me here merely to think, to philosophise, to weave metaphysical systems, to play with words and syllogisms, but to act, love and know. I must act divinely so that I may become divine in being and deed; I must learn to love God not only in Himself but in all beings, appearances, objects, enjoyments, events, whether men call them good or bad, real or mythical, fortunate or calamitous; and I must know Him with the same divine impartiality and completeness in order that I may come to be like Him, perfect, pure and unlimited — that which all sons of Man must one day be. This, I cannot help thinking, is the meaning and purpose of the Lila. It is not true that because I think, I am; but rather because I think, feel and act, and even while I am doing any or all of these things, can transcend the thought, feeling and action, therefore I am. Because I manifest, I am, and because I transcend manifestation, I am. The formula is not so clear and catching as the Cartesian, but there is a fuller truth in its greater comprehensiveness.

The man of unalloyed intellect has a very high and difficult function; it is his function to teach men to think clearly and purely. In order to effect that for mankind, to carry reason as far as that somewhat stumbling and hesitating Pegasus will go, he sacrifices all the bypaths of mental enjoyment, the shady alleys and the moonlit gardens of the soul, in order that he may walk in rare air and a cold sunlight, living highly and austerely on the peaks of his mind and seeking God severely through knowledge. He treads down his emotions, because emotion distorts reason and replaces it by passions, desires, preferences, prejudices, prejudgments. He avoids life, because life awakes all his sensational being and puts his reason at the mercy of egoism, of sensational reactions of anger, fear, hope, hunger, ambition, instead of allowing it to act justly and do disinterested work. It becomes merely the paid pleader of a party, a cause, a creed, a dogma, an intellectual faction. Passion and eagerness, even intellectual eagerness, so disfigure the greatest minds that even Shankara becomes a sophist and a word-twister, and even Buddha argues in a circle. The philosopher wishes above all to preserve his intellectual righteousness; he is or should be as careful of his mental rectitude as the saint of his moral stainlessness. Therefore he avoids, as far as the world will let him, the conditions which disturb. But in this way he cuts himself off from experience and only the gods can know without experience. Sieyès said that politics was a subject of which he had made a science. He had, but the pity was that though he knew the science of politics perfectly, he did not know politics itself in the least and when he did enter political life, he had formed too rigidly the logical habit to replace it in any degree by the practical. If he had reversed the order or at least coordinated experiment with his theories before they were formed, he might have succeeded better. His readymade Constitutions are monuments of logical perfection and practical ineffectiveness. They have the weakness of all logic; — granting your premises, your conclusion is all-triumphant; but then who is going to grant you your premises? There is nothing Fact and Destiny delight in so much as upsetting the logician's major and minor.

The logician thinks he has ensured himself against error when he has made a classification of particular fallacies; but he forgets the supreme and general fallacy, the fallacy of thinking that logic can, as a rule, prove anything but particular and partial propositions dealing with a fragmentary and one-sided truth. Logic? But Truth is not logical; it contains logic, but is not contained by it. A particular syllogism may be true, so far as it goes, covering a sharply limited set of facts, but even a set of syllogisms cannot exhaust truth on a general subject, for the simple reason that they necessarily ignore a number of equally valid premises, facts or possibilities which support a modified or contrary view. If one could arrive first at a conclusion, then at its exact opposite and, finally, harmonise the contradiction, one might arrive at some approach to the truth. But this is a process logic abhors. Its fundamental conception is that two contradictory statements cannot be true at the same time and place & in the same circumstances. Now, Fact and Nature and God laugh aloud when they hear the logician state his fundamental conception. For the universe is based on the simultaneous existence of contradictions covering the same time, place and circumstances. The elementary conception that God is at once One and Many, Finite & Infinite, Formed and Formless and that each attribute is the condition of the existence of its opposite, is a thing metaphysical logic has been boggling over ever since the reign of reason began.

The metaphysician thinks that he has got over the difficulty about the validity of premises by getting to the tattwas, the ideal truths of universal existence. Afterwards, he thinks, there can be no fear of confusion or error and by understanding and fixing them we shall be able to proceed from a sound basis to the rest of our task. He fashions his critique of reason, his system of pramanas, and launches himself into the wide inane. Alas, the tattwas are the very foundation, support and initial reason of this worldwide contradiction and logically impossible conciliation of opposites in which God has shadowed out some few rays of His luminous & infinite reality, — impossible to bind with the narrow links of a logical chain precisely because it is infinite. As for the pramanas, their manipulation is the instrument of all difference of opinion and the accompaniment to an unending jangle of debate.

Both the logician and the philosopher are apt to forget that they are dealing with words and words divorced from experience can be the most terrible misleaders in the world. Precisely because they are capable of giving us so much light, they are also capable of lighting us into impenetrable darkness. Tato bhuya iva te tamo ya u vidyayam ratah; "Deeper is the darkness into which they enter who are addicted to knowledge alone." This sort of word worship and its resultant luminous darkness is very common in India and nowhere more than in the intellectualities of religion, so that when a man talks to me about the One and Maya and the Absolute, I am tempted to ask him, "My friend, how much have you experienced of these things in which you instruct me or how much are you telling me out of a vacuum or merely from intellectual appreciation? If you have merely ideas and no experience, you are no authority for me and your logic is to me but the clashing of cymbals good to deafen an opponent into silence, but of no use for knowledge. If you say you have experienced, then I have to ask you, 'Are you sure you have measured all possible experience?' If you have not, then how can you be sure that my contradictory experience is not equally true? If you say you have, then I know you to be deluded or a pretender, one who has experienced a fragment or nothing; for God in His entire being is unknowable, avijnatam vijanatam."

The scientist thinks he has corrected the mistakes of the metaphysician because he refuses to deal with anything but a narrow and limited circle of facts and condemns everything else as hallucination, imposture and imagination. His parti pris, his fierce and settled prejudgments, his determined begging of the question are too obvious and well known to need particular illustration. He forgets that all experiences are facts, that ideas are facts, that subjective knowledge is the one fact of which he can be decently sure and that he knows nothing even of the material world by his senses but only by the use his subjective knowledge makes of the senses. Many a materialist will tell you that only those facts can be accepted as a basis to knowledge which the senses supply, — a position which no man can substantiate and which his science daily denies in practice. These reasoners consent to trust to their sovereign subjective instrument when it settles for them the truths about this world visible to their lower instruments, but the same sovereign instrument is condemned as wholly fallacious and insane when it deals in precisely the same way with another field of perceptions and experiences. When my subjective experience tells him, "I am hungry", he consents; "Of course, you must be since you say so." But let it tell him, "I am full of bliss from an immaterial source"; or "By certain higher instruments repeatedly tested I know that I have wandered in regions illuminated by no material sun," and he answers, "You are only fit for the gaol or the lunatic asylum." No one has seen the earth whirling round the sun, indeed we see daily the opposite, yet he holds the first opinion obstinately, but if you say "Although God is not seen of men, yet He exists," he turns from you angrily and stalks into his laboratory.

The practical man avoids error by refusing to think at all. His method at least cannot be right. It is not right even for the practical uses he prefers exclusively to all others. You see him stumbling into some pit because he refuses to walk with a light and then accusing adverse circumstances or his evil fortune, or he shouts, elbows, jostles, tumbles and stumbles himself into a final success and departs at last, satisfied; leaving behind a name in history and a legacy of falsehood, evil and suffering to unborn generations. The method of the practical man is the shortest and most facile, but the least admirable of all.

Truth is an infinitely complex reality and he has the best chance of arriving nearest to it who most recognises but is not daunted by its infinite complexity. We must look at the whole thought-tangle, fact, emotion, idea, truth beyond idea, conclusion, contradiction, modification, ideal, practice, possibility, impossibility (which must be yet attempted,) and keeping the soul calm and the eye clear in this mighty flux and gurge of the world, seek everywhere for some word of harmony, not forgetting immediate in ultimate truth, nor ultimate in immediate, but giving each its due place and portion in the Infinite Purpose. Some minds, like Plato, like Vivekananda, feel more than others this mighty complexity and give voice to it. They pour out thought in torrents or in rich and majestic streams. They are not logically careful of consistency, they cannot build up any coherent, yet comprehensive systems, but they quicken men's minds and liberate them from religious, philosophic and scientific dogma and tradition. They leave the world not surer, but freer than when they entered it.

Some men seek to find the truth by imaginative perception. It is a good instrument like logic, but like logic it breaks down before it reaches the goal. Neither ought to be allowed to do more than take us some way and then leave us. Others think that a fine judgment can arrive at the true balance. It does, for a time; but the next generation upsets that fine balancing, consenting to a coarser test or demanding a finer. The religious prefer inspiration, but inspiration is like the lightning, brilliantly illuminating only a given reach of country and leaving the rest in darkness intensified by the sharpness of that light. Vast is our error if we mistake that bit of country for the whole universe. Is there then no instrument of knowledge that can give us the heart of truth and provide us with the key word of existence? I think there is, but the evolution of mankind at large yet falls far short of it; their highest tread only on the border of that illumination. After all pure intellect carries us very high. But neither the scorner of pure intellectual ideation, nor its fanatic and devotee can attain to the knowledge in which not only the senses reflect or the mind thinks about things, but the ideal faculty directly knows them.

The Siddhis

Some men sneer at the Siddhis because they do not believe in them, others because they think it is noble and spiritual to despise them. Both attitudes proceed from ignorance. It is true that to some natures the rule of omne ignotum pro magnifico holds and everything that is beyond their knowledge is readily accepted as true marvel and miracle, and of such a temper are the credulous made, it is also true that to others it is omne ignotum pro falso and they cannot forbear ridiculing as fraud or pitiable superstition everything that is outside the reach of their philosophy. This is the temper of the incredulous. But the true temper is to be neither credulous nor incredulous, but calmly and patiently to inquire. Let the inquiry be scrupulous, but also scrupulously fair on both sides. Some think it shows superior rationality, even when they inquire, to be severe, and by that they mean to seize every opportunity of disproving the phenomenon offered to their attention. Such an attitude is good rather for limiting knowledge than increasing it. If it saves us from some errors of assertion, it betrays us into many errors of negation and postpones developments of the utmost importance to our human advance.

I do not wish to argue the question of the existence or nonexistence of Yogic siddhis; for it is not with me a question of debate, or of belief and disbelief, since I know by daily experience that they exist. I am concerned rather with their exact nature and utility. And here one is met by the now fashionable habit, among people presuming to be Vedantic and spiritual, of a denunciation and holy horror of the Yogic siddhis. They are, it seems, Tantric, dangerous, immoral, delusive as conjuring tricks, a stumbling block in the path of the soul's liberation. Swami Vivekananda did much to encourage this attitude by his eagerness to avoid all mention of them at the outset of his mission in order not to startle the incredulity of the Europeans. "These things are true" he said, "but let them lie hidden." And now many who have not the motives of Vivekananda, think that they can ape his spiritual greatness by imitating his limitations.

There was no such weakness in the robust temperament of our forefathers. Our great Rishis of old did not cry out upon Siddhis, but recognised them as a part, though not the most important part of Yogic accomplishment, and used them with an abundant and unhesitating vigour. They are recognised in our sacred books, formally included in Yoga by so devotional a Purana as the Bhagawat, noted and some of their processes carefully tabled by Patanjali. Even in the midnight of the Kali great Siddhas and saints have used them more sparingly, but with power and effectiveness. It would be difficult for many of them to do otherwise than use the siddhis since by the very fact of their spiritual elevation, these powers have become not exceptional movements, but the ordinary processes of their thought and action. It is by the use of the siddhis that the Siddhas sitting on the mountains help the world out of the heart of their solitude and silence. Jesus Christ made the use of the siddhis a prominent feature of his pure, noble and spiritual life, nor did he hesitate to communicate them to his disciples — the laying of hands, the healing of the sick, the ashirvada, the abhishap, the speaking with many tongues were all given to them. The day of Pentecost is still kept holy by the Christian Church. Joan of Arc used her siddhis to liberate France. Socrates had his siddhis, some of them of a very material nature. Men of great genius are usually born with some of them and use them unconsciously. Even in natures far below the power and clarity of genius we see their occasional or irregular operation. The West, always avid of knowledge, is struggling, sadly hampered by misuse and imposture, to develop them and gropes roughly for the truth about them in the phenomena of hypnotism, clairvoyance, telepathy, vouched for by men and women of great intellectuality and sincerity. Returning Eastwards, where only their right practice has been understood, the lives of our saints northern and southern are full of the record of Siddhis. Sri Ramakrishna, whose authority is quoted against them, not only made inward use of them but manifested them with no inconsiderable frequency in His lila. I see nothing in this long record immoral, dangerous or frivolous. But because Europe looks with scorn and incredulity on these "miracles" and this "magic", we too must needs be ashamed of them, hustle them into the background and plead that only a few charlatans and followers of false paths profess their use. But as for us, we are men of intellect and spirituality, ascetics, devotees, self-deniers, Vedantins; for these things we are too high and we leave them to Theosophists, immoral Tantrics and deluded pseudo-Yogins.

Let us have done with cant and pretension in all matters. There are no such things as miracles in this world of divine processes, for either there is no such thing as a miracle or, if we consider more closely, everything in this world is a miracle. A miracle is, literally, a marvel, a thing to be wondered at — so long as the process is [not] known. Wireless telegraphy is a great marvel, the speechless passage of a thought from brain to brain is a yet greater, yet it happens daily even in the most commonplace minds and existences. But when the process is known, nothing is left to be wondered at except the admirable greatness of wisdom, width & variety of conception & subtlety & minuteness in execution with which this universe is managed. And even that wonder ceases when we know God and realise that the most wonderful movements of the cosmos are but trifles and "conjuring-tricks" compared with His infinite Reality. And as it is with this siddhi of science which we call wireless telegraphy and with this other siddhi of nature which is exampled in the momentary or rapid spread of a single thought or emotion in a mob, a nation, an army, so it is with the Yogic siddhis. Explain & master their processes, put them in their proper relation to the rest of the economy of the universe and we shall find that they are neither miraculous nor marvellous nor supernatural. They are supernormal only in the way in which aviation is supernormal or motoring or the Chinese alphabet. Nor is there anything magical in them except in so far as magic, the science of the Persian Magi, means originally & properly the operations of superior power or superior knowledge. And in that sense the occultism of the present day is magic precisely in the same sense as the scientific experiments of Roger Bacon or Paracelsus. There is a good deal of fraud and error and self-deception mixed up with it, but so there was with the earliest efforts of the European scientists. The defects of Western practitioners or Eastern quacks do not get rid of our true & ancient Yoga.

The Psychology of Yoga

Yoga is not a modern invention of the human mind, but our ancient and prehistoric possession. The Veda is our oldest extant human document and the Veda, from one point of view, is a great compilation of practical hints about Yoga. All religion is a flower of which Yoga is the root; all philosophy, poetry & the works of genius use it, consciously or unconsciously, as an instrument. We believe that God created the world by Yoga and by Yoga He will draw it into Himself again. Yogah prabhavapyayau, Yoga is the birth and passing away of things. When Srikrishna reveals to Arjuna the greatness of His creation and the manner in which He has built it out of His being by a reconciliation of logical opposites, he says "Pasya me yogam aishwaram", Behold my divine Yoga. We usually attach a more limited sense to the word; when we use or hear it, we think of the details of Patanjali's system, of rhythmic breathing, of peculiar ways of sitting, of concentration of mind, of the trance of the adept. But these are merely details of particular systems. The systems are not the thing itself, any more than the water of an irrigation canal is the river Ganges. Yoga may be done without the least thought for the breathing, in any posture or no posture, without any insistence on concentration, in the full waking condition, while walking, working, eating, drinking, talking with others, in any occupation, in sleep, in dream, in states of unconsciousness, semiconsciousness, double-consciousness. It is no nostrum or system or fixed practice, but an eternal fact of process based on the very nature of the Universe.

Nevertheless in practice the name may be limited to certain applications of this general process for specific and definite ends. Yoga stands essentially on the fact that in this world we are everywhere one, yet divided; one yet divided in our being, one with yet divided from our fellow creatures of all kinds, one with yet divided from the infinite existence which we call God, Nature or Brahman. Yoga, generally, is the power which the soul in one body has of entering into effective relation with other souls, with parts of itself which are behind the waking consciousness, with forces of Nature and objects in Nature, with the Supreme Intelligence, Power & Bliss which governs the world either for the sake of that union in itself or for the purpose of increasing or modifying our manifest being, knowledge, faculty, force or delight. Any system which organises our inner being & our outer frame for these ends may be called a system of Yoga.

Section Two

1910–1913

Na Kinchidapi Chintayet

The cessation of thought is the one thing which the believer in intellect as the highest term of our evolution cannot contemplate with equanimity. To master the fleeting randomness of thought by regulating the intellectual powers and thinking consecutively and clearly is an ideal he can understand. But to still this higher development of thought seems to him the negation of human activity, a reversion to the condition of the stone. Yet it is certain that it is only by the stilling of the lower that the higher gets full play. So long as the body and the vital desires are active the mind is necessarily distracted and it is only when the body is forgotten and the vital part consents to quietude that a man can concentrate himself in thought and follow undisturbed the consecutive development whether of a train of reasoning or a train of inspiration. Not only is this so, but the higher faculties of the mind can only work at their best when the lower are quieted. If the accumulations in the chitta, the recording part of the mind, are continually active, full as it is of preconceived ideas, prejudices, predilections, the great mass of previous *sanskaras*, the reflective mind which is ordinarily called the reason is obstructed in its work and comes to false conclusions. It is essential for the faculties of the reason to be freed as far as may be from this ever increasing accumulation of thought-sensations good and bad, false and true which we call mind — manas. It is this freedom which is called the scientific spirit. To form no conclusions which are not justified by observation and reasoning, to doubt everything until it is proved but to deny nothing until it is disproved, to be always ready to reconsider old conclusions in the light of new facts, to give a candid consideration to every new idea or old idea revived if it deserves a hearing, no matter how contradictory it may be of previously ascertained experience or previously formed conclusion, is the sceptical temper, the temper of the inquirer, the true scientist, the untrammelled thinker. The interference of prejudgment and predilection means bondage and until the higher mind has shaken off these fetters, it is not free; it works in chains, it sees in blinkers. This is as true of the materialist refusing to consider spiritualism and occultism as it is of the religionist refusing to consider Science. Freedom is the first requisite of full working power, the freedom of the higher from the lower. The mind must be free from the body if it is to be purified from the grossness which clogs its motions, the heart must be free from the obsessions of the body if love and high aspiration are to increase, the reason must be free from the heart and the lower mind if it is to reflect perfectly, — for the heart can inspire, it cannot think, it is a vehicle of direct knowledge coloured by emotion, not of ratiocination. By [a] similar process if there is anything higher than the reason it can only be set free to work by the stillness of the whole mind not excluding the reflective faculties. This is a conclusion from analogy, indeed, and not entirely binding until confirmed by experience and observation. But we have given reason in past articles for supposing that there is a higher force than the logical reason — and the experience and observation of Yoga confirm the inference from analogy that the stillness of the mind is the first requisite for discovering, distinguishing and perfecting the action of this higher element in the psychology of man.

The stillness of the mind is prepared by the process of concentration. In the science of Rajayoga after the heart has been stilled and the mind prepared, the next step is to subjugate the body by means of *asan* or the fixed and motionless seat. The aim of this fixity is twofold, first the stillness of the body and secondly the forgetfulness of the body. When one can sit still and utterly forget the body for a long period of time, then the asan is said to have been mastered. In ordinary concentration when the body is only comparatively still it is not noticed, but there is an undercurrent of physical consciousness which may surge up at any moment into the upper current of thought and disturb it. The Yogin seeks to make the forgetfulness perfect. In the higher processes of concentration this forgetfulness reaches such a point that the bodily consciousness is annulled and in the acme of the *samadhi* a man can be cut or burned without being aware of the physical suffering. Even before the concentration is begun the forgetfulness acquired is sufficient to prevent any intrusion upon the mind except under a more than ordinarily powerful physical stimulus. After this point has been reached the Yoga proceeds to the processes of pranayam by which the whole system is cleared of impurities and the *pranasakti*, the great cosmic energy which lies behind all processes of Nature, fills the body and the brain and becomes sufficient for any work of which man is actually or potentially capable. This is followed by concentration. The first process is to withdraw the senses into the mind. This is partly done in the ordinary process of absorption of which every thinking man is capable. To concentrate upon the work in hand whether it be a manual process, a train of thought, a scientific experiment or a train of inspiration, is the first condition of complete capacity and it is the process by which mankind has been preparing itself for Yoga. To concentrate means to be absorbed; but absorption may be more or less complete. When it is so complete that for all practical purposes the knowledge of outward things ceases, then the first step has been taken towards Yogic absorption. We need not go into the stages of that absorption rising from pratyahar to samadhi and from the lower samadhi to the higher. The principle is to intensify absorption. It is intensified in quality by the entire cessation of outward knowledge, the senses are withdrawn into the mind, the mind into the buddhi or supermind, the supermind into Knowledge, Vijnana, Mahat, out of which all things proceed and in which all things exist. It is intensified in quantity or content; instead of absorption in a set of thoughts or a train of intuitions, the Yogin concentrates his absorption on a single thought, a single image, a single piece of knowledge, and it is his experience that whatever he thus concentrates on, he masters, — he becomes its lord and does with it what he wills. By knowledge he attains to mastery of the world. The final goal of Rajayoga is the annulment of separate consciousness and complete communion with that which alone is whether we call Him Parabrahman or Parameshwara, Existence in the Highest or Will in the Highest, the Ultimate or God.

In the Gita we have a process which is not the process of Raja-Yoga. It seeks a short cut to the common aim and goes straight to the stillness of the mind. After putting away desire and fear the Yogin sits down and performs upon his thoughts a process of reining in by which they get accustomed to an inward motion. Instead of allowing the mind to flow outward, he compels it to rise and fall within, and if he sees, hears, feels or smells outward objects he pays no attention to them and draws the mind always inward. This process he pursues until the mind ceases to send up thoughts connected with outward things. The result is that fresh thoughts do not accumulate in the chitta at the time of meditation, but only the old ones rise. If the process be farther pursued by rejecting these thoughts as they rise in the mind, in other words by dissociating the thinker from the mind, the operator from the machine and refusing to sanction the continuance of the machine's activity, the result is perfect stillness. This can be done if the thinker whose interest is necessary to the mind, refuses to be interested and becomes passive. The mind goes on for a while by its own impetus just as a locomotive does when the steam is shut off, but a time must come when it will slow down and stop altogether. This is the moment towards which the process moves. Na kinchid api chintayet: — the Yogin should not think of anything at all. Blank cessation of mental activity is aimed at leaving only the sakshi, the witness watching for results. If at this moment the Yogin entrusts himself to the guidance of the universal Teacher within himself, Yoga will fulfil itself without any farther effort on his part. The passivity will be confirmed, the higher faculties will awake and the cosmic Force passing down from the vijnana through the supermind will take charge of the whole machine and direct its workings as the Infinite Lord of All may choose.

Whichever of the two methods be chosen, the result is the same. The mind is stilled, the higher faculties awakened. This stillness of the mind is not altogether a new idea or peculiar to India. The old Highland poets had the secret. When they wished to compose poetry, they first stilled the mind, became entirely passive and waited for the inspiration to flow into them. This habit of yogic passivity, a relic doubtless of the discipline of the Druids, was the source of those faculties of second sight and other psychic powers which are so much more common in this Celtic race than in the other peoples of Europe. The phenomena of inspiration are directly connected with these higher faculties of which we find rudiments or sporadic traces in the past history of human experience.

The Sources of Poetry

The swiftness of the muse has been embodied in the image of Pegasus, the heavenly horse of Greek legend; it was from the rapid beat of his hoofs on the rock that Hippocrene flowed. The waters of Poetry flow in a current or a torrent; where there is a pause or a denial, it is a sign of obstruction in the stream or of imperfection in the mind which the waters have chosen for their bed and continent. In India we have the same idea; Saraswati is for us the goddess of poetry, and her name means the stream or "she who has flowing motion". But even Saraswati is only an intermediary. Ganga is the real mother of inspiration, she who flows impetuously down from the head of Mahadev, God high-seated, over the Himalay of the mind to the homes and cities of men. All poetry is an inspiration, a thing breathed into the thinking organ from above; it is recorded in the mind, but is born in the higher principle of direct knowledge or ideal vision which surpasses mind. It is in reality a revelation. The prophetic or revealing power sees the substance; the inspiration perceives the right expression. Neither is manufactured; nor is poetry really a poiesis or composition, nor even a creation, but rather the revelation of something that eternally exists. The ancients knew this truth and used the same word for poet and prophet, creator and seer, *sophos*, *vates*, *kavi*.

But there are differences in the manifestation. The greatest motion of poetry comes when the mind is still and the ideal principle works above and outside the brain, above even the hundred petalled lotus of the ideal mind, in its proper empire; for then it is Veda that is revealed, the perfect substance and expression of eternal truth. This higher ideation transcends genius just as genius transcends ordinary intellect and perception. But that great faculty is still beyond the normal level of our evolution. Usually we see the action of the revelation and inspiration reproduced by a secondary, diluted and uncertain process in the mind. But even this secondary and inferior action is so great that it can give us Shakespeare, Homer and Valmekie. There is also a tertiary and yet more common action of the inspiration. For of our three mental instruments of knowledge, — the heart or emotionally realising mind, the observing and reasoning intellect with its aids, fancy and memory, and the intuitive intellect, — it is into the last and highest that the ideal principle transmits its inspirations when the greatest poetry writes itself out through the medium of the poet. But if the intuitive intellect is not strong enough to act habitually, it is better for the poetry to descend into the heart and return to the intellect suffused and coloured with passion and emotion than to be formed directly in the observing intellect.

Poetry written from the reasoning intellect is apt to be full of ingenious conceits, logic, argumentation, rhetorical turns, ornamental fancies, echoes learned and imitative rather than uplifted and transformed. This is what is sometimes called classical poetry, the vigorous and excellent but unemotional and unuplifted poetry of Pope and Dryden. It has its inspiration, its truth and value; it is admirable in its way, but it is only great when it is lifted out of itself into intuitive writing or else invaded by the heart. For everything that needs fire rather than light, driving-force rather than clearness, enthusiasm rather than correctness, the heart is obviously the more potent instrument. Now, poetry to be great must have either enthusiasm or ecstasy.

Yet the poetry that rises up from the heart is usually a turbid stream; our own restless ideas and imaginations mix with the pure inrush from above a turbulent uprush from below, our excited emotions seek an exaggerated expression, our aesthetic habits and predilections busy themselves to demand a satisfaction greatly beyond their due. Such poetry may be inspired, but it is not always suitable or inevitable. There is often a double inspiration, the higher or ecstatic and the lower or emotional, and the lower disturbs and drags down the higher. This is the birth of romantic or excessively exuberant poetry, too rich in expression, too abundant and redundant in substance. The best poetry coming straight from the right centres may be bare and strong, unadorned and lofty, or it may be rich and splendid; it may be at will romantic or classical; but it will always be felt to be the right thing for its purpose; it is always nobly or rapturously inevitable.

But even in the higher centres of the intuitive intellect there may be defects in the inspiration. There is a kind of false fluency which misses the true language of poetry from dulness of perception. Under the impression that it is true and inspired writing it flows with an imperturbable flatness, saying the thing that should be said but not in the way that it should be said, without force and felicity. This is the tamasic or clouded stimulus, active, but full of unenlightenment and self-ignorance. The thing seen is right and good; accompanied with the inspired expression it would make very noble poetry. Instead, it becomes prose rendered unnatural and difficult to tolerate by being cut up into lengths. Wordsworth is the most characteristic and interesting victim of tamasic stimulus. Other great poets fall a prey to it, but that superb and imperturbable self-satisfaction under the infliction is his alone. There is another species of tamasic stimulus which transmits an inspired and faultless expression, but the substance is neither interesting to man nor pleasing to the gods. A good deal of Milton comes under this category. In both cases what has happened is that either the inspiration or the revelation has been active, but its companion activity has refused to associate itself in the work.

It is when the mind works at the form and substance of poetry without either the revelation or the inspiration from above that respectable or minor poetry is produced. Judgment, memory and imagination may work, command of language may be there, but without that secondary action of a higher than intellectual force, it is labour wasted, work that earns respect but not immortality. Doggerel and bastard poetry take their rise not even in the observing intellect but from the sensational mind or the passive memory guided only by the mere physical pleasure of sound and emotion. It is bold, blatant, external, imitative, vulgar; its range of intellectuality and imaginativeness cannot go beyond the vital impulse and the vital delight. But even in the sensational mind there is the possibility of a remote action from the ideal self; for even to the animals who think sensationally only, God has given revelations and inspirations which we call instincts. Under such circumstances even bastard poetry may have a kind of worth, a kind of inevitability. The poet in the sensational man may be entirely satisfied and delighted, and even in the more developed human being the sensational element may find a poetical satisfaction not of the highest. The best ballad poetry and Macaulay's lays are instances in point. Scott is a sort of link between sensational and intellectual poetry. While there are men mainly sensational, secondarily intellectual and not at all ideal, he will always be admired.

Another kind of false inspiration is the rajasic or fiery stimulus. It is not flat and unprofitable like the tamasic, but hasty, impatient and vain. It is eager to avoid labour by catching at the second best expression or the incomplete vision of the idea, insufficiently jealous to secure the best form, the most satisfying substance. Rajasic poets, even when they feel the defect in what they have written, hesitate to sacrifice it because they also feel and are attached either to what in it is valuable or to the memory of their delight when it was first written. If they get a better expression or a fuller sight, they often prefer to reiterate rather than strike out inferior stuff with which they are in love. Sometimes, drifting or struggling helplessly along that shallow and vehement current, they vary one idea or harp on the same imagination without any final success in expressing it inevitably. Examples of the rajasic stimulus are commonest in Shelley and Spenser, but few English poets are free from it. This is the rajasic fault in expression. But the fiery stimulus also perverts or hampers the substance. An absence of self-restraint, an unwillingness to restrict and limit the ideas and imaginations is a sure sign of a rajasic ideality. There is an attempt to exhaust all the possibilities of the subject, to expand and multiply thoughts and imaginative visions beyond the bounds of the right and permissible. Or else the true idea is rejected or fatally anticipated by another which is or seems to be more catching and boldly effective. Keats is the principle exemplar of the first tendency, the Elizabethans of the second. The earlier work of Shakespeare abounds with classical instances. As distinguished from the Greek, English is a pronouncedly rajasic literature and, though there is much in it that is more splendid than almost anything done by the Greeks, — more splendid, not better, — a great deal even of its admired portions are rather rich or meretricious than great and true.

The perfect inspiration in the intuitive intellect is the sattwic or luminous inspiration, which is disinterested, self-contained, yet at will noble, rich or vigorous, having its eye only on the right thing to be said and the right way to say it. It does not allow its perfection to be interfered with by emotion or eagerness, but this does not shut it out from ecstasy and exaltation. On the contrary, its delight of self-enjoyment is a purer and more exquisite enthusiasm than that which attends any other inspiration. It commands and uses emotion without enslaving itself to it. There is indeed a sattwic stimulus which is attached to its own luminosity, limpidity and steadiness, and avoids richness, force or emotion of a poignant character even when these are needed and appropriate. The poetry of Matthew Arnold is often though not always of this character. But this is a limited inspiration. Sattwic as well as rajasic poetry may be written from the uninspired intellect, but the sensational mind never gives birth to sattwic poetry.

One thing has to be added. A poet need not be a reflective critic; he need not have the reasoning and analysing intellect and dissect his own poetry. But two things he must have in some measure to be perfect, the intuitive judgment which shows him at a glance whether he has got the best or the second-best idea, the perfect or the imperfect expression and rhythm, and the intuitive reason which shows him without analysis why or wherein it is best or second-best, perfect or imperfect. These four faculties, revelation or prophecy, inspiration, intuitive judgment and intuitive reason, are the perfect equipment of genius doing the works of interpretative & creative knowledge.

The Interpretation of Scripture

The spirit who lies concealed behind the material world, has given us, through the inspiration of great seers, the Scriptures as helpers and guides to unapparent truth, lamps of great power that send their rays into the darkness of the unknown beyond which He dwells, *tamasah parastat*. They are guides to knowledge, brief indications to enlighten us on our path, not substitutes for thought and experience. They are *shabdam Brahma*, the Word, the oral expression of God, not the thing to be known itself nor the knowledge of Him. *Shabdam* has three elements, the word, the meaning and the spirit. The word is a symbol, *vak* or *nama*; we have to find the *artha*, the meaning or form of thought which the symbol indicates. But the meaning itself is only the indication of something deeper which the thought seeks to convey to the intellectual conception. For not only words, but ideas also are eventually no more than symbols of a knowledge which is beyond ideas and words. Therefore it comes that no idea by itself is wholly true. There is indeed a *rupa*, some concrete or abstract form of knowledge, answering to every name, and it is that which the meaning must present to the intellect. We say a form of knowledge, because according to our philosophy, all things are forms of an essentially unknowable existence which reveals them as forms of knowledge to the essential awareness in its Self, its Atman or Spirit, the Chit in the Sat. But beyond *nama* and *rupa* is *swarupa*, the essential figure of Truth, which we cannot know with the intellect, but only with a higher faculty. And every *swarupa* is itself only a symbol of the one essential existence which can only be known by its symbols because in its ultimate reality it defies logic and exceeds perception, — God.

Since the knowledge the Scripture conveys is so deep, difficult and subtle, — if it were easy what would be the need of the Scripture? — the interpreter cannot be too careful or too perfectly trained. He must not be one who will rest content in the thought-symbol or in the logical implications of the idea; he must hunger and thirst for what is beyond. The interpreter who stops short with the letter, is the slave of a symbol and convicted of error. The interpreter who cannot go beyond the external meaning, is the prisoner of his thought and rests in a partial and incomplete knowledge. One must transgress limits & penetrate to the knowledge behind, which must be experienced before it can be known; for the ear hears it, the intellect observes it, but the spirit alone can possess it. Realisation in the self of things is the only knowledge; all else is mere idea or opinion.

The interpretation of the Veda is hampered by many human irrelevancies. Men set up an authority and put it between themselves and knowledge. The orthodox are indignant that a mere modern should presume to differ from Shankara in interpreting the Vedanta or from Sayana in interpreting the Veda. They forget that Shankara and Sayana are themselves moderns, separated from ourselves by some hundreds of years only, but the Vedas are many thousands of years old. The commentator ought to be studied, but instead we put him in place of the text. Good commentaries are always helpful even when they are wrong, but the best cannot be allowed to fetter inquiry. Sayana's commentary on the Veda helps me by showing what a man of great erudition some hundreds of years ago thought to be the sense of the Scripture. But I cannot forget that even at the time of the Brahmanas the meaning of the Veda had become dark to the men of that prehistoric age. Shankara's commentary on the Upanishads helps me by showing what a man of immense metaphysical genius and rare logical force after arriving at some fundamental realisations thought to be the sense of the Vedanta. But it is evident that he is often at a loss and always prepossessed by the necessity of justifying his philosophy. I find that Shankara had grasped much of Vedantic truth, but that much was dark to him. I am bound to admit what he realised; I am not bound to exclude what he failed to realise. *Aptavakyam*, authority, is one kind of proof; it is not the only kind: *pratyaksha* is more important.

The heterodox on the other hand swear by Max Muller and the Europeans. It is enough for them that Max Muller should have found henotheism in the Vedas for the Vedas to be henotheistic. The Europeans have seen in our Veda only the rude chants of an antique and primitive pastoral race sung in honour of the forces of Nature, and for many their opinion is conclusive of the significance of the *mantras*. All other interpretation is to them superstitious. But to me the ingenious guesses of foreign grammarians are of no more authority than the ingenious guesses of Sayana. It is irrelevant to me what Max Muller thinks of the Veda or what Sayana thinks of the Veda. I should prefer to know what the Veda has to say for itself and, if there is any light there on the unknown or on the infinite, to follow the ray till I come face to face with that which it illumines.

There are those who follow neither Sayana and Shankara nor the Europeans, but interpret Veda and Vedanta for themselves, yet permit themselves to be the slaves of another kind of irrelevancy. They come to the Veda with a preconceived and established opinion and seek in it a support for some trifling polemic; they degrade it to the position of a backer in an intellectual prizefight. Opinions are not knowledge, they are only sidelights on knowledge. Most often they are illegitimate extensions of an imperfect knowledge. A man has perhaps travelled to England and seen Cumberland and the lakes; he comes back and imagines England ever after as a country full of verdant mountains, faery woodlands, peaceful and enchanted waters. Another has been to the manufacturing centres; he imagines England as a great roaring workshop, crammed with furnaces and the hum of machinery and the smell of metal. Another has sojourned in the quiet country-side and to him England is all hedges and lanes and the daisy-sprinkled meadow and the well-tilled field. All have realised a little, but none have realised England. Then there is the man who has only read about the country or heard descriptions from others and thinks he knows it better than the men who have been there. They may all admit that what they have seen need not be the whole, but each has his little ineffaceable picture which, because it is all he has realised, persists in standing for the whole. There is no harm in that, no harm whatever in limitation if you understand and admit the limitation. But if all the four begin quarrelling, what an aimless confusion will arise! That is what has happened in India because of the excessive logicality and too robust opinionativeness of Southern metaphysicians. We should come back to a more flexible and rational spirit of inquiry.

What then are the standards of truth in the interpretation of the Scripture? The standards are three, the knower, knowledge and the known.

The known is the text itself that we seek to interpret. We must be sure we have the right word, not an emendation to suit the exigency of some individual or sectarian opinion; the right etymology and shade of meaning, not one that is traditional or forced to serve the ends of a commentator; the right spirit in the sense, not an imported or too narrow or too elastic spirit.

The knower is the original *drashta* or seer of the *mantra*, with whom we ought to be in spiritual contact. If knowledge is indeed a perishable thing in a perishable instrument, such contact is impossible; but in that case the Scripture itself must be false and not worth considering. If there is any truth in what the Scripture says, knowledge is eternal and inherent in all of us and what another saw I can see, what another realised I can realise. The *drashta* was a soul in relation with the infinite Spirit, I am also a soul in relation with the infinite Spirit. We have a meeting-place, a possibility of communion.

Knowledge is the eternal truth, part of which the *drashta* expresses to us. Through the part he shows us, we must travel to the whole, otherwise we shall be subject to the errors incidental to an imperfect knowledge. If even the part is to be rightly understood, it must be viewed in the terms of the whole, not the whole in the terms of the part. I am not limited by the Scriptures; on the contrary I must exceed them in order to be master of their knowledge. It is true that we are usually the slaves of our individual and limited outlook, but our capacity is unlimited, and, if we can get rid of *ahankara*, if we can put ourselves at the service of the Infinite without any reservation of predilection or opinion, there is no reason why our realisation should be limited. *Tasmin vijnate sarvam vijnatam*. He being known, all can be known. To understand Scripture, it is not enough to be a scholar, one must be a soul. To know what the *drashta* saw one must oneself have *drishti*, sight, and be a student if not a master of the knowledge. *Atha para yaya tad aksharam adhigamyate*. Grammar, etymology, prosody, astronomy, metaphysics, logic, all that is good; but afterwards there is still needed the higher knowledge by which the Immutable is known.

On Original Thinking

The attitude of mankind towards originality of opinion is marked by a natural hesitation and inconsistency. Admired for its rarity, brilliancy and potency, yet in practice and for the same qualities it is more generally dreaded, ridiculed or feared. There is no doubt that it tends to disturb what is established. Therefore tamasic men and tamasic states of society take especial pains to discourage independence of opinion. Their watchword is authority. Few societies have been so tamasic, so full of inertia and contentment in increasing narrowness as Indian society in later times; few have been so eager to preserve themselves in inertia. Few therefore have attached so great an importance to authority. Every detail of our life has been fixed for us by Shastra and custom, every detail of our thought by Scripture and its commentators, — but much oftener by the commentators than by Scripture. Only in one field, that of individual spiritual experience, have we cherished the ancient freedom and originality out of which our past greatness sprang; it is from some new movement in this inexhaustible source that every fresh impulse and rejuvenated strength has arisen. Otherwise we should long ago have been in the grave where dead nations lie, with Greece and Rome of the Caesars, with Esarhaddon and the Chosroes. You will often hear it said that it was the forms of Hinduism which have given us so much national vitality. I think rather it was its spirit. I am inclined to give more credit for the secular miracle of our national survival to Shankara, Ramanuja, Nanak & Kabir, Guru Govind, Chaitanya, Ramdas & Tukaram than to Raghunandan and the Pandits of Nadiya & Bhatpara.

The result of this well-meaning bondage has been an increasing impoverishment of the Indian intellect, once the most gigantic and original in the world. Hence a certain incapacity, atrophy, impotence have marked our later activities even at their best. The most striking instance is our continued helplessness in the face of the new conditions and new knowledge imposed on us by recent European contact. We have tried to assimilate, we have tried to reject, we have tried to select; but we have not been able to do any of these things successfully. Successful assimilation depends on mastery; but we have not mastered European conditions and knowledge, rather we have been seized, subjected and enslaved by them. Successful rejection is possible only if we have intelligent possession of that which we wish to keep. Our rejection too must be an intelligent rejection; we must reject because we have understood, not because we have failed to understand. But our Hinduism, our old culture are precisely the possessions we have cherished with the least intelligence; throughout the whole range of our life we do things without knowing why we do them, we believe things without knowing why we believe them, we assert things without knowing what right we have to assert them, — or, at most, it is because some book or some Brahmin enjoins it, because Shankara thinks it, or because someone has so interpreted something that he asserts to be a fundamental Scripture of our religion. Nothing is our own, nothing native to our intelligence, all is derived. As little have we understood the new knowledge; we have only understood what the Europeans want us to think about themselves and their modern civilisation. Our English culture — if culture it can be called — has increased tenfold the evil of our dependence instead of remedying it.

More even than the other two processes successful selection requires the independent play of intellect. If we merely receive new ideas and institutions in the light in which they are presented to us, we shall, instead of selecting, imitate — blindly, foolishly and inappropriately. If we receive them in the light given by our previous knowledge, which was on so many points nil, we shall as blindly and foolishly reject. Selection demands that we should see things not as the foreigner sees them or as the orthodox Pandit sees them, but as they are in themselves. But we have selected at random, we have rejected at random, we have not known how to assimilate or choose. In the upshot we have merely suffered the European impact, overborne at points, crassly resisting at others, and, altogether, miserable, enslaved by our environments, able neither to perish nor to survive. We preserve indeed a certain ingenuity and subtlety; we can imitate with an appearance of brightness; we can play plausibly, even brilliantly with the minutiae of a subject; but we fail to think usefully, we fail to master the life and heart of things. Yet it is only by mastering the life and heart of things that we can hope, as a nation, to survive.

How shall we recover our lost intellectual freedom and elasticity? By reversing, for a time at least, the process by which we lost it, by liberating our minds in all subjects from the thraldom to authority. That is not what reformers and the Anglicised require of us. They ask us, indeed, to abandon authority, to revolt against custom and superstition, to have free and enlightened minds. But they mean by these sounding recommendations that we should renounce the authority of Sayana for the authority of Max Muller, the Monism of Shankara for the Monism of Haeckel, the written Shastra for the unwritten law of European social opinion, the dogmatism of Brahmin Pandits for the dogmatism of European scientists, thinkers and scholars. Such a foolish exchange of servitude can receive the assent of no self-respecting mind. Let us break our chains, venerable as they are, but let it be in order to be free, — in the name of truth, not in the name of Europe. It would be a poor bargain to exchange our old Indian illuminations, however dark they may have grown to us, for a derivative European enlightenment or replace the superstitions of popular Hinduism by the superstitions of materialistic Science.

Our first necessity, if India is to survive and do her appointed work in the world, is that the youth of India should learn to think, — to think on all subjects, to think independently, fruitfully, going to the heart of things, not stopped by their surface, free of prejudgments, shearing sophism and prejudice asunder as with a sharp sword, smiting down obscurantism of all kinds as with the mace of Bhima. Let our brains no longer, like European infants, be swathed with swaddling clothes; let them recover the free and unbound motion of the gods; let them have not only the minuteness but the wide mastery and sovereignty natural to the intellect of Bharata and easily recoverable by it if it once accustoms itself to feel its own power and be convinced of its own worth. If it cannot entirely shake off past shackles, let it at least arise like the infant Krishna bound to the wain, and move forward dragging with it wain and all and shattering in its progress the twin trees, the twin obstacles to self-fulfilment, blind mediaeval prejudice and arrogant modern dogmatism. The old fixed foundations have been broken up, we are tossing in the waters of a great upheaval and change. It is no use clinging to the old ice-floes of the past, they will soon melt and leave their refugees struggling in perilous waters. It is no use landing ourselves in the infirm bog, neither sea nor good dry land, of a secondhand Europeanism. We shall only die there a miserable and unclean death. No, we must learn to swim and use that power to reach the good vessel of unchanging truth; we must land again on the eternal rock of ages.

Let us not, either, select at random, make a nameless hotchpotch and then triumphantly call it the assimilation of East and West. We must begin by accepting nothing on trust from any source whatsoever, by questioning everything and forming our own conclusions. We need not fear that we shall by that process cease to be Indians or fall into the danger of abandoning Hinduism. India can never cease to be India or Hinduism to be Hinduism, if we really think for ourselves. It is only if we allow Europe to think for us that India is in danger of becoming an ill-executed and foolish copy of Europe. We must not begin by becoming partisans but know before we take our line. Our first business as original thinkers will be to accept nothing, to question everything. That means to get rid of all unexamined opinions old or new, all mere habitual sanskaras in the mind, to have no preconceived judgments. Anityah sarvasanskarah, said the Buddha. I do not know that I quite agree. There are certain sanskaras that seem to me as eternal as things can be. What is the Atman itself but an eternal and fundamental way of looking at things, the essentiality of all being in itself unknowable, neti, neti. Therefore the later Buddhists declared that the Atman itself did not exist and arrived at ultimate nothingness, a barren and foolish conclusion, since Nothingness itself is only a sanskara. Nevertheless it is certain that the great mass of our habitual conceptions are not only temporary, but imperfect and misleading. We must escape from these imperfections and take our stand on that which is true and lasting. But in order to find out what in our conceptions is true and lasting, we must question all alike rigorously and impartially. The necessity of such a process not for India, but for all humanity has been recognised by leading European thinkers. It was what Carlyle meant when he spoke of swallowing all formulas. It was the process by which Goethe helped to reinvigorate European thinking. But in Europe the stream is running dry before it has reached its sea. Europe has for some time ceased to produce original thinkers, though it still produces original mechanicians. Science preserves her freedom of inquiry in details, in the mint and anise and cummin of the world's processes, but, bound hand & foot in the formulas of the past, she is growing helpless for great ideas and sound generalisations. She sits contented with her treasuries; she has combed all the pebbles on the seashore and examined the shoreward gulfs and bays; of the oceans beyond and their undiscovered continents she cries scornfully "They are a dream; there is nothing there but mists mistaken for land or a waste of the same waters that we have already here examined." Europe is becoming stereotyped and unprogressive; she is fruitful only of new & ever multiplying luxuries and of feverish, fiery & ineffective changes in her political and social machinery. China, Japan and the Mussulman States are sliding into a blind European imitativeness. In India alone there is self-contained, dormant, the energy and the invincible spiritual individuality which can yet arise and break her own and the world's fetters.

It is true that original thinking makes for original acting, and therefore a caution is necessary. We must be careful that our thinking is not only original but thorough before we even initiate action. To run away with an isolated original idea, or charmed with its newness and vigour, to ride it into the field of action is to make of ourselves cranks and eccentrics. This world, this society, these nations and their civilisations are not simple existences, but complex & intricate, the result of a great organic growth in many centuries, sometimes in many millenniums. We should not deal with them after snatching at a few hurried generalisations or in the gust and fury of a stiff fanaticism. We must first be sure that our new thought is wide and strong-winged enough, our thoughts large enough, our natures mighty enough to deal with those vastnesses. We must be careful, too, to comprehend what we destroy. And destroy we must not unless we have a greater and more perfect thing to put in the place even of a crumbling and mouldering antiquity. To tear down Hindu society in the spirit of the social reformers or European society in the spirit of the philosophical or unphilosophical Anarchists would be to destroy order and substitute a licentious confusion. If we carefully remember these cautions, there is no harm in original thinking even of the boldest and most merciless novelty. I may, for example, attack unsparingly the prevailing system of justice and punishment as extraordinarily senseless and evil, even if I have no new system ready-made to put in as its successor; but I must have no wish to destroy it, senseless & evil though it be, until our new system is ready. For it fills a place the vacancy of which the Spirit that uplifts & supports our human welfare, would greatly abhor. I may expose, too, the weaknesses and narrownesses of an existing form of religion, even if I have no new & better form to preach of my own, but I must not so rage against those weaknesses as to destroy all religious faith and I should remember before the end of my criticism that even a bad religion is better than no religion, — that it is wiser to worship energy in my surroundings with the African savage than to be dead to all faith and all spirituality like the drunkards of a little knowledge — for even in that animal and unintelligent worship there is a spark of the divine fire which keeps humanity living, while the cultured imperial Roman or the luxurious modern wealth-gatherer and body worshipper drags his kind into a straight

& well built road which is so broad only to lead more easily to a mighty perdition — *na ched ihavedin mahati vinashtih*. Otherwise there is no harm in spreading dissatisfaction with fetish worship or refusing praise to an ancient and cruel folly. We need not be troubled if our thinking is condemned as too radical or even as reckless & revolutionary, — for the success of revolutionary thought always means that Nature has need of one of her cataclysms; even otherwise, she will make of it whatever modified use is best for our present humanity. In thought as in deeds, to the thinking we have a right, the result belongs to the wise & active Power of God that stands over us & in us originating, cherishing, indefatigably dissolving & remoulding man and spirit in the progressive harmonies of His universe. Let us only strive that our light should be clear, diffused & steady, not either darkness or a narrow glare and merely violent lustre. And if we cannot compass that ideal, still it is better to think than to cease from thinking. For even out of darkness the day is born and lightning has its uses!

[Draft opening of another version]

We have had recently in India a great abundance of speculations on the real causes of that gradual decline and final arrest which Indian civilisation no less than European suffered during the Middle Ages. The arrest was neither so sudden as in Europe nor so complete; but its effect on our nation, like the undermining activity of a slow poison, was all the more profoundly destructive, pervasive, hard to remedy, difficult to expel. At a certain period we entered into a decline, splendid at first like a long and gorgeous sunset, afterwards more & more sombre, till the darkness closed in, and if our sky was strewn with stars of a great number & brilliance, it was only a vast decay, confusion and inertia that they lighted and emphasised with their rays. We have, most of us, our chosen explanation of this dolorous phenomenon. The patriot attributes our decline to the ravages of foreign invasion and the benumbing influences of foreign rule; the disciple of European materialism finds out the enemy, the evil, the fount and origin of all our ills, in our religion and its time-honoured social self-expression. Such explanations, like most human thoughts, have their bright side of truth as well as their obscure side of error; but they are not, in any case, the result of impartial thinking. Man may be, as he has been defined, a reasoning animal, but it is necessary to add that he is, for the most part, a very badly-reasoning animal. He does not ordinarily think for the sake of finding out the truth, but much more for the satisfaction of his mental preferences and emotional tendencies; his conclusions spring from his preferences, prejudices and passions; and his reasoning & logic paraded to justify them are only a specious process or a formal mask for his covert approach to an upshot previously necessitated by his heart or by his temperament. When we are awakened from our modern illusions, as we have been awakened from our mediaeval superstitions, we shall find that the intellectual conclusions of the rationalist for all their [. . .] pomp & profuse apparatus of scrupulous enquiry were as much dogmas as those former dicta of Pope & theologian, which confessed without shame their simple basis in the negation of reason. Much more do all those current opinions demand scrutiny & modification, which express our personal view of things and rest patently on a partial and partisan view or have been justified by preferential selection of the few data that suited our foregone & desired conclusion. It is always best, therefore, to scrutinise very narrowly those bare, trenchant explanations which so easily satisfy the pugnacious animal in our intellects; when we have admitted that small part of the truth on which they seize, we should always look for the large part which they have missed. Especially is it right, when there are subjective movements & causes of a considerable extent and complexity behind the phenomena we have to observe, to distrust facile, simple and rapid solutions.

The Balance of Justice

The European Court of Justice is a curious and instructive institution. Europe, even while vaunting a monopoly of civilisation, cherishes and preens herself in some remarkable relics of barbarism. In mediaeval times, with the scientific thoroughness and efficiency which she shares with the Mongolian, she organised torture as the most reliable source of evidence and the ordeal of battle as the surest guide to judicial truth. Both ideas were characteristically European. A later age may seem to have got rid of these luminous methods, but it is not so in reality. In place of the rack the French have invented the investigating judge and the Americans some remarkable processes, which I think they call questioning (the old name for torture) in the first, second and up to the fifth degree if not to higher stages of excellence. The torture is sometimes of the mind not of the body; it is less intense, more lingering, but it leads to the same result in the end. When the tortured wretch, after protecting with lies for as long as may be his guilt or his innocence, escapes from his furious and pitiless persecutor by a true or false confession, preferring jail or the gallows to this prolongation of tense misery, the French call it delicately "entering into the way of avowals". The Holy Office in Seville could not have invented a more Christian and gentlemanly euphemism. The American system, is in the fifth degree, I think, to keep the miserable accused fasting and sleepless and ply him with a ceaseless assault of torturing questions and suggestions until the brain reels, the body sinks, the heart is sick and hopeless and the man is ready to say anything his torturers believe or want to be the truth. It is a true Inquisition; the mediaeval name fits these modern refinements.

The English people have often been accused as a brutal or a stupid nation; but they have a rugged humanity when their interests are not touched and enjoy glimpses of a rough common sense. They have besides an honourable love of publicity and do not like, for themselves at least, secret police methods. They have rejected the investigating judge and torture in the fifth degree. But their courts resemble the European. Under a civilised disguise these Courts are really the mediaeval ordeal by battle; only in place of the swords and lances of military combatants we have the tongues and technicalities of lawyers and the mutually tilting imaginations of witnesses. The victory is to the skilfullest liar and the most plausible workman in falsehoods and insincerities. It is largely an elaborate pitch and toss, an exhilarating gamble, a very Monte Carlo of surprising chances. But there is skill in it, too; it satisfies the intellect as well as the sensations. One should rather call it a game of human Bridge which admirably combines luck and skill, or consider it as an intellectual gladiatorial show. In big cases the stake is worthy of the play and the excitement, a man's property or his life. But woe to the beaten! In a criminal case, the tortures of the jail or the terrifying drop from the gallows are in prospect, and it is rather the hardihood of guilt than the trembling consciousness of innocence that shall best help him. Woe to him if he is innocent! As he stands there, — for to add to the pleasurableness of his condition, the physical ache of hours of standing is considerately added to the cruel strain on his emotions, — he looks eagerly not to the truth or falsehood of the evidence for or against him, but to the skill with which this or that counsel handles the web of skilfully mixed truth and lies and the impression he is making on the judge or the jury. A true witness breaking down under a confusing cross-examination or a false witness mended by a judicious reexamination may be of much better service to him than the Truth, which, our Scriptures tell us, shall prevail and not falsehood, — eventually perhaps and in the things of the truth, but not in the things of falsehood, not in a court of Justice, not in the witness box. There the last thing the innocent man against whom circumstances have turned, dare tell is the truth; it would either damn him completely by fatally helping the prosecution or it is so simple and innocent as to convince the infallible human reason of its pitiful falsity. The truth! Has not the Law expressly built up a hedge of technicalities to keep out the truth?

As one looks on, one begins to understand the passion of the Roman poet's eulogy of the defence counsel, *praesidium maestis reis*, the bulwark of the sorrowful accused. For in this strange civilised gambling with human dice where it is so often impossible to be certain about guilt or innocence, one's sympathies naturally go to the sufferer, the scapegoat of a callous society, who may be moving to a long period of torturing and unmerited slavery or an undeserved death on the gallows. But if one could eliminate this element of human pity, it would be a real intellectual pleasure to watch the queer barbarous battle, appraise the methods of the chief players, admire, in whatever climes, the elusiveness and fine casualness of Indian perjury or the robust manly cheery downrightness of Saxon cross-swearing. If the Courts convince us of our common humanity by making all men liars, they yet preserve a relishable unlikeness in likeness. And I think that even theology or metaphysics does not give such admirable chances for subtlety as the Law, nor even Asiatic Research or ethnology favour so much the growth of that admirable scientific faculty which deduces a whole animal out of some other animal's bone. If the thing proved is generally wrong, it is always ingenious; and after all in all these five sciences, or are they not rather arts? — it is not the thing that is true but the thing that is desired which must be established. This is perhaps why the Europeans think the system civilised, but as a semi-civilised Oriental, one would prefer less room for subtlety and more for truth.

On the whole, if anyone were to complain that modern civilisation eliminates danger and excitement out of human life, we could well answer the morbid grumbler, "Come into our Courts and see!" Still, praise must be given where praise is due, and let the English system once more be lauded for not normally exposing the accused to the torture of savage pursuit by a prosecuting judge or the singular revival in modern dress of the ancient "question" by the American police. Where political or other passions are not roused and bribery does not enter, the poor muddled magistrate does his honest best, and where there is a system of trial by jury, the blunders, whims and passions of twelve men may decide your fate less insanely than the caprices of a Kazi,—though even that is hardly certain. At any rate, if the dice are apt to be loaded, it is, with the exceptions noted, not on one but on both sides of the gamble.

Social Reform

Reform is not an excellent thing in itself as many Europeanised intellects imagine; neither is it always safe and good to stand unmoved in the ancient paths as the orthodox obstinately believe. Reform is sometimes the first step to the abyss, but immobility is the most perfect way to stagnate and to putrefy. Neither is moderation always the wisest counsel: the mean is not always golden. It is often an euphemism for purblindness, for a tepid indifference or for a cowardly inefficiency. Men call themselves moderates, conservatives or extremists and manage their conduct and opinions in accordance with a formula. We like to think by systems and parties and forget that truth is the only standard. Systems are merely convenient cases for keeping arranged knowledge, parties a useful machinery for combined action; but we make of them an excuse for avoiding the trouble of thought.

One is astonished at the position of the orthodox. They labour to deify everything that exists. Hindu society has certain arrangements and habits which are merely customary. There is no proof that they existed in ancient times nor any reason why they should last into the future. It has other arrangements and habits for which textual authority can be quoted, but it is oftener the text of the modern Smritikaras than of Parasara and Manu. Our authority for them goes back to the last five hundred years. I do not understand the logic which argues that because a thing has lasted for five hundred years it must be perpetuated through the aeons. Neither antiquity nor modernity can be the test of truth or the test of usefulness. All the Rishis do not belong to the past; the Avatars still come; revelation still continues.

Some claim that we must at any rate adhere to Manu and the Puranas, whether because they are sacred or because they are national. Well, but, if they are sacred, you must keep to the whole and not cherish isolated texts while disregarding the body of your authority. You cannot pick and choose; you cannot say "This is sacred and I will keep to it, that is less sacred and I will leave it alone." When you so treat your sacred authority, you are proving that to you it has no sacredness. You are juggling with truth; for you are pretending to consult Manu when you are really consulting your own opinions, preferences or interests. To recreate Manu entire in modern society is to ask Ganges to flow back to the Himalayas. Manu is no doubt national, but so is the animal sacrifice and the burnt offering. Because a thing is national of the past, it need not follow that it must be national of the future. It is stupid not to recognise altered conditions.

We have similar apologies for the unintelligent preservation of mere customs; but, various as are the lines of defence, I do not know any that is imperiously conclusive. Custom is *shishtachar*, decorum, that which all well-bred and respectable people observe. But so were the customs of the far past that have been discontinued and, if now revived, would be severely discountenanced and, in many cases, penalised; so too are the customs of the future that are now being resisted or discouraged, — even, I am prepared to believe, the future no less than the past prepares for us new modes of living which in the present would not escape the censure of the law. It is the *achar* that makes the *shishta*, not the *shishta* who makes the *achar*. The *achar* is made by the rebel, the innovator, the man who is regarded in his own time as eccentric, disreputable or immoral, as was Sri Krishna by Bhurisrava because he upset the old ways and the old standards. Custom may be better defended as ancestral and therefore cherishable. But if our ancestors had persistently held that view, our so cherished customs would never have come into being. Or, more rationally, custom must be preserved because its long utility in the past argues a sovereign virtue for the preservation of society. But to all things there is a date and a limit. All long-continued customs have been sovereignly useful in their time, even totemism and polyandry. We must not ignore the usefulness of the past, but we seek in preference a present and a future utility.

Custom and Law may then be altered. For each age its shastra. But we cannot argue straight off that it must be altered, or even if alteration is necessary, that it must be altered in a given direction. One is repelled by the ignorant enthusiasm of social reformers. Their minds are usually a strange jumble of ill-digested European notions. Very few of them know anything about Europe, and even those who have visited it know it badly. But they will not allow things or ideas contrary to European notions to be anything but superstitious, barbarous, harmful and benighted, they will not suffer what is praised and practised in Europe to be anything but rational and enlightened. They are more appreciative than Occidentals themselves of the strength, knowledge and enjoyment of Europe; they are blinder than the blindest and most self-sufficient Anglo-Saxon to its weakness, ignorance and misery. They are charmed by the fair front Europe presents to herself and the world; they are unwilling to discern any disease in the entrails, any foulness in the rear. For the Europeans are as careful to conceal their social as their physical bodies and shrink with more horror from nakedness and indecorum than from the reality of evil. If they see the latter in themselves, they avert their eyes, crying, "It is nothing or it is little; we are healthy, we are perfect, we are immortal." But the face and hands cannot always be covered, and we see blotches.

The social reformer repeats certain stock arguments like shibboleths. For these antiquities he is a fanatic or a crusader. Usually he does not act up to his ideas, but in all sincerity he loves them and fights for them. He pursues his nostrums as panaceas; it would be infidelity to question or examine their efficacy. His European doctors have told him that early marriage injures the physique of a nation, and that to him is the gospel. It is not convenient to remember that physical deterioration is a modern phenomenon in India and that our grandparents were strong, vigorous and beautiful. He hastens to abolish the already disappearing nautchgirl, but it does not seem to concern him that the prostitute multiplies. Possibly some may think it a gain that the European form of the malady is replacing the Indian! He tends towards shattering our cooperative system of society and does not see that Europe is striding Titanically towards Socialism.

Orthodox and reformer alike lose themselves in details; but it is principles that determine details. Almost every point that the social reformers raise could be settled one way or the other without effecting the permanent good of society. It is pitiful to see men labouring the point of marriage between subcastes and triumphing over an isolated instance. Whether the spirit as well as the body of caste should remain, is the modern question. Let Hindus remember that caste as it stands is merely *jat*, the trade guild sanctified but no longer working, it is not the eternal religion, it is not *chaturvarnya*. I do not care whether widows marry or remain single; but it is of infinite importance to consider how women shall be legally and socially related to man, as his inferior, equal or superior; for even the relation of superiority is no more impossible in the future than it was in the far-distant past. And the most important question of all is whether society shall be competitive or cooperative, individualistic or communistic. That we should talk so little about these things and be stormy over insignificant details, shows painfully the impoverishment of the average Indian intellect. If these greater things are decided, as they must be, the smaller will arrange themselves.

There are standards that are universal and there are standards that are particular. At the present moment all societies are in need of reform, the Parsi, Mahomedan and Christian not a whit less than the Hindu which alone seems to feel the need of radical reformation. In the changes of the future the Hindu society must take the lead towards the establishment of a new universal standard. Yet being Hindus we must seek it through that which is particular to ourselves. We have one standard that is at once universal and particular, the eternal religion, which is the basis, permanent and always inherent in India, of the shifting, mutable and multiform thing we call Hinduism. Sticking fast where you are like a limpet is not the dharma, neither is leaping without looking the dharma. The eternal religion is to realise God in our inner life and our outer existence, in society not less than in the individual. *Esha dharmah sanatanah*. God is not antiquity nor novelty: He is not the Manava Dharmashastra, nor Vidyaranya, nor Raghunandan; neither is He an European. God who is essentially Sacchidananda, is in manifestation *Satyam*, *Prema*, *Shakti*, — Truth, Strength and Love. Whatever is consistent with the truth and principle of things, whatever increases love among men, whatever makes for the strength of the individual, the nation and the race, is divine, it is the law of Vaivaswata Manu, it is the *sanatana dharma* and the Hindu shastra. Only, God is the triple harmony, He is not one-sided. Our love must not make us weak, blind or unwise; our strength must not make us hard and furious; our principles must not make us fanatical or sentimental. Let us think calmly, patiently, impartially; let us love wholly and intensely but wisely; let us act with strength, nobility and force. If even then we make mistakes, yet God makes none. We decide and act; He determines the fruit, and whatever He determines is good.

He is already determining it. Men have long been troubling themselves about social reform and blameless orthodoxy, and orthodoxy has crumbled without social reform being effected. But all the time God has been going about India getting His work done in spite of the talking. Unknown to men the social revolution prepares itself, and it is not in the direction they think, for it embraces the world, not India only. Whether we like it or not, He will sweep out the refuse of the Indian past and the European present. But the broom is not always sufficient; sometimes He uses the sword in preference. It seems probable that it will be used, for the world does not mend itself quickly, and therefore it will have violently to be mended.

But this is a general principle; how shall we determine the principles that are particular to the nature of the community and the nature of the Age? There is such a thing as yugadharma, the right institutions & modes of action for the age in which we live. For action depends indeed on the force of knowledge or will that is to be used, but it depends, too, on the time, the place & the vessel. Institutions that are right in one age are not right in another. Replacing social system by social system, religion by religion, civilisation by civilisation God is perpetually leading man onwards to loftier & more embracing manifestations of our human perfectibility. When in His cosmic circling movement He establishes some stable worldwide harmony, that is man's Satya Yuga. When harmony falters, is maintained with difficulty, not in the nature of men, but by an accepted force or political instrument, that is his Treta. When the faltering becomes stumbling and the harmony has to be maintained at every step by a careful & laborious regulation, that is his Dwapara. When there is disintegration, & all descends in collapse and ruin, nothing can stay farther the cataclysm that is his Kali. This is the natural law of progress of all human ideas & institutions. It applies always in the mass, continually though less perfectly in the detail. One may almost say that each human religion, society, civilisation has its four Ages. For this movement is not only the most natural, but the most salutary. It is not a justification of pessimism nor a gospel of dumb fate & sorrowful annihilation. It is not, as we too often think in our attachment to the form, a melancholy law of decline & the vanity of all human achievements. If each Satya has its Kali, equally does each Kali prepare its Satya. That destruction was necessary for this creation, and the new harmony, when it is perfected, will be better than the old. But there is the weakness, there is the half success turning to failure, there is the discouragement, there is the loss of energy & faith which clouds our periods of disintegration, the apparent war, violence, ragging, tumult & trample to and fro which attends our periods of gradual creation and half-perfection. Therefore men cry out dismally & lament that all is perishing. But if they trusted in God's Love & Wisdom, not preferring to it their conservative & narrow notions, they would rather cry out that all is being reborn.

So much depends on Time & God's immediate purpose that it is more important to seek out His purpose than to attach ourselves to our own nostrums. The Kala Purusha, Zeitgeist & Death Spirit, has risen to his dreadful work — lokakshayakrit-pravriddhas — increasing to destroy a world, — and who shall stay the terror & mightiness & irresistibility of Him? But He is not only destroying the world that was, He is creating the world that shall be; it is therefore more profitable for us to discover & help what He is building than to lament & hug in our arms what He is destroying. But it is not easy to discover His drift, & we often admire too much temporary erections which are merely tents for the warriors in this Kurukshetra and take them for the permanent buildings of the future.

The Pandits are therefore right when they make a difference between the practice of the Satya & the practice of the Kali. But in their application of this knowledge, they do not seem to me to be always wise or learned. They forget or do not know that Kali is the age for a destruction & rebirth, not for a desperate clinging to the old that can no longer be saved. They entrench themselves in the system of Kalivarjya, but forget that it is not the weaknesses but the strengths of the old harmony that are being subjected to varjanam, abandonment. That which is saved is merely a temporary platform which we have erected on the banks of the sea of change awaiting a more stable habitation; and it too must one day break down under the crash of the waves, must disappear into the engulfing waters. Has the time arrived for that destruction? We think that it has. Listen to the crash of those waters, — more formidable than the noise of assault, mark that slow, sullen, remorseless sapping, — watch pile after pile of our patched incoherent ramshackle structure corroding, creaking, shaking with the blows, breaking, sinking silently or with a splash, suddenly or little by little into the yeast of those billows. Has the time arrived for a new construction? We say it has. Mark the activity, eagerness and hurrying to and fro of mankind, the rapid prospecting, seeking, digging, founding — see the Avatars & great vibhutis coming, arising thickly, treading each close behind the other. Are not these the signs and do they not tell us that the great Avatar of all arrives to establish the first Satya Yuga of the Kali?

For in the Kali too, say the secret & ancient traditions of the Yogins, there is a perpetual minor repetition of Satya-Treta-Dwapara-Kali subcycles, the subSatya a temporary & imperfect harmony which in the subTreta & subDwapara breaks down and disappears in the subKali. The process then begins over again [……………………………………] for each new temporary harmony is fairer and more perfect than its preceding harmony, each new temporary collapse more resounding & terrible than its anterior dissolution. Already ended are the first five thousand years of the Kali which were necessary to prepare for final destruction the relics of the ancient Satya. Weakness & violence, error and ignorance and oblivion rushing with an increasing speed & rhythm over the whole earth have done for us that work. The morning of the first Kali-Satya is ready to break, the first few streaks dimly visible. So runs the not incredible tradition.

Yes. A new harmony, but not the scrannel pipes of European materialism, not an Occidental foundation upon half truths & whole falsehoods. When there is destruction it is the form that perishes, not the spirit — for the world and its ways are forms of one Truth which appears in this material world in ever new bodies and constantly varied apparel — the inward Eternal taking the joy of outward Mutability. The truth of the old Satya that is dead was not different from the Truth of the new Satya that is to be born, for it is Truth that restores itself always and persists. In India, the chosen land, it is preserved; in the soul of India it sleeps, expectant of that soul's awakening, the soul of India leonine, luminous, locked in the closed petals of the ancient lotus of strength and wisdom, not in her weak, sordid, transient & miserable externals. India alone can build the future of mankind; in India alone can the effective Avatar appear to the nations. And until He appears, it is for India to gather herself up out of her dust & degradation, — symbol of the shattered Satyayuga — commune with her soul by Yoga and to know her past & her future. I have not here speculated on what we should build, what we should break, nor shall I now define my detailed opinions — but whatever it be, we must do it in the light and in the spirit of that triple principle of the divine nature; we must act in the reflection of God's Love, Strength & Wisdom.

We are Hindus seeking to re-Hinduise society, not to Europeanise it. But what is Hinduism? Or what is its social principle?

One thing at least is certain about Hinduism religious or social, that its whole outlook is Godward, its whole search and business is the discovery of God and our fulfilment in God. But God is everywhere and universal. Where did Hinduism seek Him? Ancient or preBuddhistic Hinduism sought him both in the world and outside it; it took its stand on the strength & beauty & joy of the Veda, unlike modern or postBuddhistic Hinduism which is oppressed with Buddha's sense of universal sorrow and Shankara's sense of universal illusion, — Shankara who was the better able to destroy Buddhism because he was himself half a Buddhist. Ancient Hinduism aimed socially at our fulfilment in God in life, modern Hinduism at the escape from life to God. The more modern ideal is fruitful of a noble and ascetic spirituality, but has a chilling and hostile effect on social soundness and development, social life under its shadow stagnates for want of belief and delight, sraddha and ananda. If we are to make our society perfect and the nation is to live again, then we must revert to the earlier and fuller truth. We must not make life a waiting for renunciation, but renunciation a preparation for life; instead of running from God in the town to God in the forest, we must rather plunge into the mountain solitude in our own souls for knowledge & joy & spiritual energy to sustain any part that may be given to us by the master of the Lila. If we get that strength, any society we build up must be full of the instinct of immortal life and move inevitably towards perfection. As to the precise way in which society will be reconstructed, we have hardly yet knowledge enough to solve the problem. We ought to know before we act, but we are rather eager to act violently in the light of any dim ray of knowledge that may surprise our unreflecting intellects, and although God often uses our haste for great and beneficial purposes, yet that way of doing things is not the best either for a man or a nation. One thing seems to me clear that the future will deny that principle of individual selfishness and collective self-interest on which European society has hitherto been based and our renovated systems will be based on the renunciation of individual selfishness and the organisation of brotherhood, — principles common to Christianity, Mahomedanism and Hinduism.

Hinduism and the Mission of India

[.....] [That] which is permanent in the Hindu religion, must form the basis on which the world will increasingly take its stand in dealing with spiritual experience and religious truth. Hinduism, in my sense of the word, is not modern Brahmanism. Modern Brahmanism developed into existence at a definite period in history. It is now developing out of existence; its mission is done, its capacities exhausted, the Truth which, like other religions, it defended, honoured, preserved, cherished, misused and disfigured, is about to take to itself new forms and dispense with all other screens or defender than its own immortal beauty, grandeur, truth and effectiveness. It is this unchanging undying Truth which has to be discovered and placed in its native light before humanity. Tad etat satyam.

There are many defenders and discoverers of truth now active among us. They are all busy defending, modifying, attacking, sapping or bolstering current Hinduism. I am not eager to disparage but neither do I find myself satisfied with any of them. If I were, there would be no need for any speculation of my own. There are the orthodox who are busy recovering and applying old texts or any interpretations, new or old, of these texts, which will support the existing order, — and ignoring all that go against it. Their learning is praiseworthy and useful; it brings to notice many great and helpful things which were in danger of being misprized, lost or flung away as worthless; but they do not seem to me to go to the heart of the matter. There are the heterodox who are busy giving new interpretations to old texts and institutions in order to get rid of all such features as the modern world finds it hard to assimilate. Their brainwork can hardly be too highly praised; it is bringing to light or to a half light many luminous realities and possibilities which, if they cannot all be accepted, yet invigorate and sharpen the habit of original thinking and help to remove that blind adherence to traditions which is truth's greatest obstacle. Still they too do not seem to me to have the right grasp and discernment. Then there are the ascetics mystical or rationalistic who call men to disgust with the world and point to the temple, the monastery or the mountaintop as the best, if not the only place for finding God, and most of whom, in order to honour the Maker slight and denounce His works. Their position and temperament is so lofty and noble and their solvent force on the gross impurities of a materialised humanity has been so invaluable that it is with some reluctance one finds oneself obliged to put them on one side and pass onward. But it seems to me that we must pass onward if we would know and possess God in His entirety and not merely in a side or aspect. There is a story in the Jewish Scriptures which relates that when God wished to show himself to Moses, he could only, owing to the spiritual imperfections of the Jewish prophet, reveal safely to him His hinder parts. Moses would have died if he had seen the front of God; he had not the dharanam, the soul-power to support that tremendous vision. The story well illuminates the character of materialism generally and to its aggressive modern form, European thought & civilisation, it applies with a quite overwhelming appositeness. But it seems to me that the average Vedantist, too, has only seen, for his part, the crown of the Lord's head and the average bhakta only the Kaustubh-stone over His heart or the Srivatsa mark upon it. On the other hand, there are those rationalists who are by no means ascetical in their views or temperament and their name is legion; they insist on our putting religion and God aside or keeping Him only for ornamental uses in spare moments, leave that, they say, & devote yourselves to practical work for mankind. That rationalism is necessary too if only to balance the error of the ascetics who would make of God's world a mistake and of its Maker an Almighty blunderer or an inscrutable eccentric or an indefinable Something inhabiting a chaos or a mirage. Nevertheless, from materialism least of all, however philanthropic or patriotic, can our future salvation be expected. Finally, there are the mystics who are not ascetics, —

the Theosophists. From one point of view I cannot find praise warm enough to do justice to the work of Theosophy; from another I cannot find condemnation strong enough to denounce it. It has forced on the notice of an unwilling world truths to which orthodoxy is blind and of which heterodoxy is afraid or incredulous. It has shown a colossal courage in facing ridicule, trampling on prejudice and slander, persisting in faith in spite of disillusionment, scandal and a continual shifting of knowledge. They have kept the flag of a past & future science flying against enormous difficulties. On the other hand by bringing to the investigation of that science — not its discovery, for to the Hindu Yogin it is known already — the traditional European methods, the methods of the market-place and the forum, it has brought on the truths themselves much doubt and discredit, and by importing into them the forms, jugglery and jargon of European mystics, their romanticism, their unbridled imagination, their galloping impatience, their haste, bragging and loudness, their susceptibility to dupery, trickery, obstinate error and greedy self-deception, Theosophists have strengthened doubt and discredit and driven many an earnest seeker to bewilderment, to angry suspicion or to final renunciation of the search for truth. They have scattered the path of the conscientious investigators, the severe scientists of Yoga who must appear in the future, with the thorns and sharp flints of a well-justified incredulity and suspicion. I admit the truths that Theosophy seeks to unveil; but I do not think they can be reached if we fall into bondage even to the most inspiring table talk of Mahatmas or to the confused anathemas and vaticinations hurled from their platform tripods by modern Pythonesses of the type of Mrs Annie Besant, that great, capacious but bewildered and darkened intellect, now stumbling with a loud and confident blindness through those worlds of twilight and glamour, of distorted inspirations, perverted communications and misunderstood or half-understood perceptions which are so painfully familiar to the student and seeker.

If these things do not satisfy me, what then do I seek? I seek a light that shall be new, yet old, the oldest indeed of all lights.

I seek an authority that accepting, illuminating and reconciling all human truth, shall yet reject and get rid of by explaining it all mere human error. I seek a text and a Shastra that is not subject to interpolation, modification and replacement, that moth and white ant cannot destroy, that the earth cannot bury nor Time mutilate. I seek an asceticism that shall give me purity and deliverance from self and from ignorance without stultifying God and His universe. I seek a scepticism that shall question everything but shall have the patience to deny nothing that may possibly be true. I seek a rationalism not proceeding on the untenable supposition that all the centuries of man's history except the nineteenth were centuries of folly and superstition, but bent on discovering truth instead of limiting inquiry by a new dogmatism, obscurantism and furious intolerance which it chooses to call common sense and enlightenment; I seek a materialism that shall recognise matter and use it without being its slave. I seek an occultism that shall bring out all its processes and proofs into the light of day, without mystery, without jugglery, without the old stupid call to humanity, "Be blind, O man, and see!" In short, I seek not science, not religion, not Theosophy, but Veda — the truth about Brahman, not only about His essentiality, but about His manifestation, not a lamp on the way to the forest, but a light and a guide to joy and action in the world, the truth which is beyond opinion, the knowledge which all thought strives after — yasmin vijnate sarvam vijnatam. I believe that Veda to be the foundation of the Sanatan Dharma; I believe it to be the concealed divinity within Hinduism, — but a veil has to be drawn aside, a curtain has to be lifted. I believe it to be knowable and discoverable. I believe the future of India and the world to depend on its discovery and on its application, not to the renunciation of life, but to life in the world and among men.

In these articles I shall not try to announce truth, but merely to inquire what are those things in Hinduism by following which we may arrive at the truth. I shall try to indicate some of my reasons — as far as within these limits it can be done — for my faith in my guides and the manner in which I think they should be followed. I am impelled to this labour by the necessity of turning the mind of young India to our true riches, our real source of power, purification and hope for the future and of safeguarding it in the course of its search both from false lights and from the raucous challenges and confident discouragements cast at us by the frail modern spirit of denial. I write, not for the orthodox, nor for those who have discovered a new orthodoxy, Samaj or Panth, nor for the unbeliever; I write for those who acknowledge reason but do not identify reason with Western materialism; who are sceptics but not unbelievers; who, admitting the claims of modern thought, still believe in India, her mission and her gospel, her immortal life and her eternal rebirth.

The Psychology of Yoga

As the Indian mind, emerging from its narrow mediaeval entrenchments, advances westward towards inevitable conquest, it must inevitably carry with it Yoga & Vedanta for its banners wherever it goes. Brahmajnana, Yoga & Dharma are the three essentialities of Hinduism; wherever it travels & find harbourage & resting place, these three must spread. All else may help or hinder. Shankara's philosophy may compel the homage of the intellectual, Sankhya attract the admiration of the analytical mind, Buddha capture the rationalist in search of a less material synthesis than the modern scientist's continual Annam Brahma Pranam Brahma, but these are only grandiose intellectualities. The world at large does not live by the pure intellect, concrete itself it stands by things concrete or practical, although, immaterial in its origin, it bases practicality upon abstractions. A goal of life, a practice of perfection and a rational, yet binding law of conduct, — these are man's continual quest, and in none of these demands is modern Science able to satisfy humanity. In reply to all such wants Science can only cry, Society and again Society and always Society. But the nature of man knows that Society is not the whole of life. With the eye of the soul it sees that Society is only a means, not an end, a passing & changing outward phenomenon, not that fixed, clear & eternal inward standard & goal which we seek. Of Society as of all things Yajnavalkya's universal dictum stands; a man loves & serves Society for the sake of the Self & not for the sake of Society. That is his nature & whatever Rationalism may teach, to his nature he must always return. What Science could not provide India offers, Brahman for the eternal goal, Yoga for the means of perfection, dharma (swabhavaniyatam karma) for the rational yet binding law of conduct. Therefore, because it has something by which humanity can be satisfied & on which it can found itself, the victory of the Indian mind is assured.

But in order that the victory may not be slow & stumbling in its progress and imperfect in its fulfilment, it is necessary that whatever India has to offer should be stated to the West in language that the West can understand and through a principle of knowledge which it has made its own. Europe will accept nothing which is not scientific, nothing, that is to say which does not take up its stand on an assured, well-ordered and verifiable knowledge. Undoubtedly, for practical purposes the West is right; since only by establishing ourselves on such an assured foundation can we work with the utmost effectiveness and make the most of what we know. For shastra is the true basis of all perfect action & shastra means the full and careful teaching of the principles, relations and processes of every branch of knowledge, action or conduct with which the mind concerns itself. Indian knowledge possesses such a scientific basis, but, in these greater matters, unexpressed or expressed only in broad principles, compact aphorisms, implied logical connections not minutely treated in detail, fully, with a patient logical order & development in the way to which the occidental intellect is now accustomed and which it has become its second nature to demand. The aphoristic method has great advantages. It prevents the mind from getting encrusted in details and fossilising there; it leaves a wide room & great latitude for originality & the delicate play of individuality in the details. It allows a science to remain elastic and full of ever new potentialities for the discoverer. No doubt, it has disadvantages. It leaves much room for inaccuracy, for individual error, for the violences of the ill-trained & the freaks of the inefficient. For this, among other more important reasons, the Indian mind has thought it wise to give a firm & absolute authority to the guru & to insist that the disciple shall by precept & practice make his own all that the master has to teach him & so form & train his mind before it is allowed to play freely with his subject. In Europe the manual replaces the guru; the mind of the learner is not less rigidly bound & dominated but it is by the written rule

& detail not by the more adaptable & flexible word of the guru.

Still, the age has its own demands, and it is becoming imperatively necessary that Indian knowledge should reveal in the Western way its scientific foundations. For if we do not do it ourselves, the Europeans will do it for us and do it badly, discrediting the knowledge in the process. The phenomenon of the Theosophical Society is a warning to us of a pressing urgency. It will never do to allow the science of Indian knowledge to be represented to the West through this strange & distorting medium. For this society of European & European-led inquirers arose from an impulse on which the Time-Spirit itself insists; their object, vaguely grasped at by them, was at bottom the systematic coordination, explanation & practice of Oriental religion & Oriental mental & spiritual discipline. Unfortunately, as always happens to a great effort in unfit hands, it stumbled at the outset & went into strange bypaths. It fell into the mediaeval snare of Gnostic mysticism, Masonic secrecy & Rosicrucian jargon. The little science it attempted has been rightly stigmatised as pseudo-science. A vain attempt to thrust in modern physical science into the explanation of psychical movements, — to explain for instance pranayam in the terms of oxygen & hydrogen! — to accept uncritically every experience & every random idea about an experience as it occurred to the mind & set it up as a revealed truth & almost a semi-divine communication, to make a hopeless amalgam & jumble of science, religion & philosophy all expressed in the terms of the imagination — this has been the scientific method of Theosophy. The result is that it lays its hands on truth & muddles it so badly that it comes out to the world as an untruth. And there now abound other misstatements of Indian truth, less elaborate but almost as wild & wide as Theosophy's. From this growing confusion we must deliver the future of humanity.

The Claims of Theosophy

I wish to write in no narrow and intolerant spirit about Theosophy. There can be nothing more contemptibly ignorant than the vulgar prejudice which ridicules Theosophy because it concerns itself with marvels. From that point of view the whole world is a marvel; every operation of thought, speech or action is a miracle, a thing wonderful, obscure, occult and unknown. Even the sneer on the lips of the derider of occultism has to pass through a number of ill-understood processes before it can manifest itself on his face, yet the thing itself is the work of a second. That sneer is a much greater and more occult miracle than the precipitation of letters or the reading of the Akashic records. If Science is true, what more absurd, paradoxical and Rabelaisian miracle can there be than this, that a republic of small animalcules forming a mass of grey matter planned Austerlitz, wrote Hamlet or formulated the Vedanta philosophy? If I believed that strange dogma, I should no longer hold myself entitled to disbelieve anything. Materialism seems to me the most daring of occultisms, the most reckless and presumptuous exploiter of the principle, *Credo quia impossibile*, I believe it because it is impossible. If these minute cells can invent wireless telegraphy, why should it be impossible for them to precipitate letters or divine the past and the future? Until one can say of investigation "It is finished" and of knowledge "There is nothing beyond", no one has a right to set down men as charlatans because they profess to be the pioneers of a new kind of Science.

Neither, I hope, shall I be inclined to reject or criticise adversely because Theosophy has a foreign origin. There is no law of Nature by which spiritual knowledge is confined to the East or must bear the stamp of an Indian manufacture before it can receive the imprimatur of the All-Wise. He has made man in his own image everywhere, in the image of the Satyam Jnanam

Anantam, the divine Truth-Knowledge-Infinity, and from wheresoever true knowledge comes, it must be welcomed.

Nevertheless if men claim to be the pioneers of a new kind of Science, they must substantiate their claims. And if foreigners come to the people of India and demand to be accepted as instructors in our own special department of knowledge, they must prove that they have a prodigious superiority. Has the claim been substantiated? Has the superiority been proved?

What Indians see is a body which is professedly and hospitably open to all enquiry at the base but entrenches itself in a Papal or mystic infallibility at the top. To be admitted into the society it is enough to believe in the freest investigation and the brotherhood of mankind, but everyone who is admitted must feel, if he is honest with himself, that he is joining a body which stands for certain well-known dogmas, a definite and very elaborate cosmogony and philosophy and a peculiar organisation, the spirit, if not the open practice in which seems to be theocratic rather than liberal. One feels that the liberality of the outer rings is only a wisely politic device for attracting a wider circle of sympathisers from whom numerous converts to the inner can be recruited. It is the dogmas, the cosmogony, the philosophy, the theocratic organisation which the world understands by Theosophy and which one strengthens by adhesion to the society; free inquiry and the brotherhood of man benefit to a very slight degree.

One sees also a steady avoidance of the demand for substantiation, a withdrawal into mystic secrecy, a continual reference to the infallible knowledge of the male & female Popes of Theosophy or, when that seems to need bolstering, to the divine authority of invisible and inaccessible Mahatmas. We in India admit the Guru and accept the Avatar. But still the Guru is only a vessel of the infinite Knowledge, the Avatar is only a particular manifestation of the Divine Personality. It is shocking to our spiritual notions to find cosmic Demiurges of a vague semi-divine character put between us and the All-Powerful and All-Loving and Kutthumi and Maurya taking the place of God.

One sees, finally, a new Theocracy claiming the place of the old, and that Theocracy is dominantly European. Indians figure numerously as prominent subordinates, just as in the British system of government Indians are indispensable and sometimes valued assistants. Or they obtain eminence on the side of pure spirituality and knowledge, just as Indians could rise to the highest places in the judicial service or in advisory posts, but not in the executive administration. But if the smaller hierophants are sometimes and rarely Indians, the theocrats and the bulk of the prophets are Russian, American or English. An Indian here and there may quicken the illumination of the Theosophist, but it is Madame Blavatsky or Mrs Besant, Sinnett or Leadbeater who lays down the commandments and the Law. It is strange to see the present political condition of India reproducing itself in a spiritual organisation; it illustrates perhaps the subtle interconnection and interdependence of all individual and communal activities in the human being. But the political subordination finds its justification in the physical fact of the British rule. It is argued plausibly, and perhaps correctly, that without this subordination British supremacy could have no sure foundation. But where is the justification for the foreign spiritual control? The argument of native incapacity may be alleged. But I do not find this hypothesis of superiority supported by the facts. I do not see that Mrs Besant has a more powerful and perfect intellectuality, eloquence, personality or religious force than had Swami Vivekananda or that a single Theosophist has yet showed him or herself to be as mighty and pure a spirit as the Paramhansa Ramakrishna. There are Indian Yogins who have a finer and more accurate psychical knowledge than the best that can be found in the books of the Theosophists. Some even of the less advanced have given me proofs of far better-developed occult powers than any Theosophist I have yet known. The only member of the Theosophical Society who could give me any spiritual help I could not better by my unaided faculties, was one excluded from the esoteric section because his rare and potent experiences were unintelligible to the Theosophic guides; nor were his knowledge and powers gained by Theosophic methods but by following the path of our Yoga and the impulse of an

Indian guru, one who meddled not in organisations and election cabals but lived like a madman, *unmattavat*.

These peculiarities of the Theosophical movement have begun to tell and the better mind of India revolts against Theosophy. The young who are the future, are not for the new doctrine. Yet only through India can Theosophy hope to survive. It may attract a certain number of European adherents, but cannot hope to control the thought and life of the West. Its secretive and Papal tendency is a fatal bar. Europe has done definitely with all knowledge that will not submit itself to scrutiny; it is finishing with the usurpations of theocracy in things spiritual as it has finished with them in things temporal. Even devout Catholics writhe uneasily under the shower of Papal encyclicals and feel what an embarrassment it is to have modern knowledge forbidden by a revenant from the Middle Ages or opinion fixed by a Council of priests no more spiritual, wise or illustrious than the minds they coerce with their irrational authority. Europe is certainly not going to exchange a Catholic for a Theosophical Pope, the Council of Cardinals for the Esoteric Section, or the Gospel and the Athanasian Creed for *Ancient Wisdom* and *Isis Unveiled*.

Will India long keep the temper that submits to unexamined authority and blinds itself with a name? I believe not. We shall more and more return to the habit of going to the root of things, of seeking knowledge not from outside but from the Self who knows and reveals. We must more and more begin to feel that to believe a thing because somebody has heard from somebody else that Mrs Besant heard it from a Mahatma, is a little unsafe and indefinite. Even if the assurance is given direct, we shall learn to ask for the proofs. Even if Kutthumi himself comes and tells me, I shall certainly respect his statement, but also I shall judge it and seek its verification. The greatest Mahatma is only a servant of the Most High and I must see his *chapras* before I admit his plenary authority. The world is putting off its blinkers; it is feeling once more the divine impulse to see.

It is not that Theosophy is false; it is that Theosophists are weak and human. I am glad to believe that there is much truth in Theosophy. There are also considerable errors. Many of the things they say which seem strange and incredible to those who decline the experiment, agree with the general experience of Yogins; there are other statements which our experience appears to contradict or to which it gives a different interpretation. Mahatmas exist, but they are not omnipotent or infallible. Rebirth is a fact and the memory of our past lives is possible; but the rigid rules of time and of Karmic reaction laid down dogmatically by the Theosophist hierophants are certainly erroneous. Especially is the hotchpotch of Hindu and Buddhist mythology and Theosophic prediction served up to us by Mrs Besant confusing and misleading. At any rate it does not agree with the insight of much greater Yogins than herself. Like most Theosophists she seems to ignore the numerous sources and possibilities of error which assail the Yogin before his intellect is perfectly purified and he has his perfection in the higher and superintellectual faculties of the mind. Until then the best have to remember that the mind even of the fairly advanced is not yet divine and that it is the nature of the old unchastened human element to leap at misunderstandings, follow the lure of predilections and take premature conclusions for established truths. We must accept the Theosophists as enquirers; as hierophants and theocrats I think we must reject them.

If Theosophy is to survive, it must first change itself. It must learn that mental rectitude to which it is now a stranger and improve its moral basis. It must become clear, straightforward, rigidly self-searching, sceptical in the nobler sense of the word. It must keep the Mahatmas in the background and put God and Truth in the front. Its Popes must dethrone themselves and enthrone the intellectual conscience of mankind. If they wish to be mystic and secret like our Yogins, then they must like our Yogins assert only to the initiate and the trained; but if they come out into the world to proclaim their mystic truths aloud and seek power, credit and influence on the strength of their assertions, then they must prove. It need not and ought not to be suddenly or by miracles; but there must be a scientific development, we must be able to lay hold on the rationale and watch the process of the truths they proclaim.

Science & Religion in Theosophy

I have said that I wish to write of Theosophy in no strain of unreasoning hostility or spirit of vulgar ridicule; yet these essays will be found to be much occupied with criticisms and often unsparing criticisms of the spirit and methods of Theosophists. There is, however, this difference between my criticisms and much that I have seen written in dispraise of the movement, that I censure not as an enemy but as an impartial critic, not as a hostile and incredulous outsider but as an earnest and careful inquirer and practical experimentalist in those fields which Theosophy seeks to make her own. Theosophy was not born with Madame Blavatsky, nor invented by the Mahatmas in the latter end of the nineteenth century. It is an ancient and venerable branch of knowledge, which unfortunately has never, in historical times, been brought out into the open and subjected to clear, firm and luminous tests. The imaginations of the cultured and the superstitions of the vulgar played havoc with its truths and vitiated its practice. It degenerated into the extravagances of the Gnostics & Rosicrucians and the charlatanism of magic and sorcery. The Theosophical Society was the first body of inquirers which started with the set & clear profession of bringing out this great mass of ancient truth into public notice and establishing it in public belief. The profession has not been sustained in practice. Instead of bringing them out into public notice they have withdrawn them into the shrouded secrecy of the Esoteric society; instead of establishing them to public belief, they have hampered the true development of Theosophy & injured its credit by allowing promise to dwarf performance and by a readiness to assert which was far beyond their power to verify. I do not deny that the Theosophical Society increases in its numbers, but it increases as a mystic sect and not in the strength of its true calling. I do not deny that it has done valuable service in appealing to the imaginations of men both in India & Europe; but it has appealed to their imaginations & has not convinced their reason. When there is so serious a failure in a strong and earnest endeavour, we must look for the cause in some defect which lies at the very roots of its action. And it is just there at the very roots of its active life that we find the vital defect of modern Theosophy. We find a speculative confusion which fatally ignores the true objects and the proper field of such a movement and a practical confusion which fatally ignores the right and necessary conditions of its success. They have failed to see what Theosophy rightly is and what it is not; they have failed to understand that error and the sources of error must be weeded out before the good corn of truth can grow. They have fallen into the snare of Gnostic jargon and Rosicrucian mummery and have been busy with a nebulous chase after Mahatmas, White Lodges and Lords of the Flame when they should have been experimenting earnestly and patiently, testing their results severely and arriving at sound and incontestable conclusions which they could present, rationally founded, first to all enquirers and then to the world at large.

Mrs Besant would have us believe that Theosophy is Brahmavidya. The Greek Theosophia and the Sanscrit Brahmavidya, she tells us in all good faith, are identical words and identical things. Even with Mrs Besant's authority, I cannot accept this extraordinary identification. It can only have arisen either from her ignorance of Sanscrit or from that pervading confusion of thought and inability to perceive clear and trenchant distinctions which is the bane of Theosophical inquiry & Theosophical pronouncements. Vidya may be represented, though not perfectly represented by sophia; but Brahman is not Theos and cannot be Theos, as even the veriest tyro in philosophy, one would think, ought to know. We all know what Brahmavidya is,— the knowledge of the One both in Itself and in its ultimate and fundamental relations to the world which appears in It whether as illusion or as manifestation, whether as Maya or as Lila. Does Theosophy answer to this description? Everyone knows that it does not and cannot. The modern Theosophist tells us much about Mahatmas, Kamaloka, Devachan, people on Mars, people on the Moon, astral bodies, precipitated letters, Akashic records and a deal of other matters, of high value if true and of great interest whether true or not. But what on earth, I should like to know, has all this to do with Brahmavidya? One might just as well describe botany, zoology & entomology or for that matter, music or painting or the binomial theory or quadratic equations as Brahmavidya. In a sense they are so since everything is Brahman, — sarvam khalvidam Brahma. But language has its distinctions on which clear thinking depends, & we must insist on their being observed. All this matter of Theosophy is not Brahmavidya, but Devavidya. Devavidya is the true equivalent, so far as there can be an equivalent, of Theosophy.

I am aware that Theosophy speaks of the Logos or of several Logoi and the government of the world — not so much by any Logos as by the Mahatmas. Still, I say, that all this does not constitute Theosophy into Brahmavidya, but leaves it what it was, Devavidya. It is still not the knowledge of the One, not the knowledge that leads to salvation, but the knowledge of the Many, — of our bondage & not of our freedom, Avidya & not Vidya. I do not decry it for that reason, but it is necessary that it should be put in its right place and not blot out for us the diviner knowledge of our forefathers. Theosophy is or should be a wider & profounder Science, a knowledge that deals with other levels & movements of consciousness, planes if you like so to call them, phenomena depending on the activity of consciousness on those levels, worlds & beings formed by the activity of consciousness on those levels, — for what is a world but the synthesis in Space & Time of a particular level of consciousness, — forming a field of consciousness with which material Science, the Science of this immediately visible world, cannot yet deal, and for the most part, not believing in it as fact, refuses to deal. Theosophy is, therefore, properly speaking, a high scientific enquiry. It is not or ought not to be a system of metaphysics or a new religion.

Sat

What is Truth? said Pilate confronted with a mighty messenger of the truth, not jesting surely, not in a spirit of shallow lightness, but turning away from the Christ with the impatience of the disillusioned soul for those who still use high words that have lost their meaning and believe in great ideals which the test of the event has proved to be fallacious. What is truth, — this phantom so long pursued, so impossible to grasp firmly, — that a man young, beautiful, gifted, eloquent and admired should consent to be crucified for its sake? Have not circumstance and event justified the half-pitying, half-sorrowful question of the Roman governor? The Messenger suffered on the cross, and what happened to the truth that was his message? As Christ himself foresaw, it has never been understood even by its professors. For five hundred years it was a glorious mirage for which thousands of men and women willingly underwent imprisonment, torture and death in order that Christ's kingdom might come on earth & felicity possess the nations. But the kingdom that came was not Christ's; it was Constantine's, it was Hildebrand's, it was Alexander Borgia's. For another thirteen centuries the message was — what? Has it not been the chief support of fanaticism, falsehood, cruelty and hypocrisy, the purveyor of selfish power, the keystone of a society that was everything Christ had denounced? Jesus died on the cross, for the benefit, it would seem, of those who united to slay him, the Sadducee, atheist & high priest, the Pharisee, zealot, hypocrite & persecutor and the brutal, self-seeking, callous military Roman. Now in its last state, after such a lamentable career, Christ's truth stands finally rejected by the world's recent enlightenment as a hallucination or a superstition which sometimes helpfully, sometimes harmfully amused the infancy of the human intellect. This history is written in too pronounced characters to be the exact type of all messages that the world has received, but is it not in some sort a type of the fate of all truth? What idea has stood successfully the test of a prolonged & pitiless inquiry? what ideal has stood successfully the test of time? Has not mankind been busy for the last fifty years and more denying almost all that it had formerly affirmed? And now that under the name of rationalism or materialism the denial has shaped itself into some form of workably practical affirmation, mankind is again at its work of denying its denial and rearranging — but this time doubtingly — its old affirmations. The scepticism of Pilate would therefore seem to have some excuse in a recurrent human experience. Is there, indeed, such a thing as truth, — beyond of course that practical truth of persistent material appearances by which we govern our lives, the truth of death, birth, hunger, sexuality, pain, pleasure, commerce, money making, ease, discomfort, ambition, failure and success? Has not indeed the loftiest of our philosophical systems declared all things here to be Maya? And if Maya is illusion, a deceit of the thinking consciousness, then indeed there can be no truth anywhere in the world except that indefinable Existence which we cannot comprehend and which, after all, Buddhism, not without logic and plausibility, setting it down as another & more generalised sanskara, a false sensation of consciousness in the eternal Void, denies. And yet man is so constituted that he must follow after truth whether it is attained or not; something in him secret, masterful, essential to his existence, forbids him to be satisfied with a falsehood; the moment it is perceived or even believed to be a falsehood, he rejects it and the thing begins to crumble. If he persists in his rejection, it cannot last. Yesterday it was, today we see it tottering, tomorrow we shall look for it and find that it is no longer. It has passed back into Prakriti; it has dissolved into that of which it was made. For sraddha is the condition of all existence in consciousness and that to which sraddha is denied, ceases to have existence whether here or elsewhere, na caivamutra no iha. It is not, neither in this world nor in another. We may not unreasonably infer from this importance and this imperative necessity that Truth does really exist and everything is not illusion. If then Truth is always escaping our hold and leaving us to disillusionment and derision, it may be because we have neither formed any clear conception of what Truth itself is nor taken hold of the right means by which it can be grasped. Let us leave aside, for a while, Buddha's world of sanskaras; let us put aside, packed away in an accessible corner of the brain, Shankara's gospel of Maya, and start instead from the old Vedantic beginnings OM Tat Sat, That (Brahman) is the thing that Is, and Sarvam khalvidam Brahma, Verily, *all this*, everything of which we are aware, is Brahman. It is at least possible that we may return from this inquiry with a deeper idea both of sanskaras and of Maya and may find that we have answered Pilate's question by discovering the nature and conditions of Truth.

I am speaking of the fundamental truth, the truth of things and not merely the fact about particulars or of particulars only as their knowledge forms a basis or a help to the discovery of fundamental truth. The fact that a particular sort of contact makes me uncomfortable is nothing in itself except in so far as it throws light upon the general causes of pain; the nature, origin and purpose of pain is the fundamental truth that I seek about the sensational reaction to contact. This law of pain, moreover, is not so fundamental as the truth about the nature, origin and purpose of sensation and contact themselves, of which pain is a particularity, an example or a modification. This more fundamental truth becomes again itself particular when compared with the truth about the nature, origin and purpose of existence of which sensation and contact are only particular circumstances. In this we arrive at the one fundamental truth of all, and a little consideration will show that if we really & rightly know that, the rest ought and probably will reveal themselves at once and fall into their places. Tasmin vijnate sarvam vijnatam, That being known, all is known. Our ancestors perceived this truth of the fundamental unity of knowledge and sought to know Sat first, confident that Sat being known, the different tattwas, laws, details & particulars of Sat would more readily yield up their secret. The moderns follow another thought, which, also, has a truth of its own. They think that since being is one the knowledge of the particulars must lead to the knowledge of the fundamental unity and they begin therefore at the bottom and climb upwards — a slow but, one might imagine, a safe method of procession. "Little flower in the crannies" cries Tennyson addressing a pretty blossom in the wall in lines which make good thought, but execrable poetry, "if I could but know what you are, I should know what God and man is." Undoubtedly; the question is whether, without knowing God, we can really know the flower, — know *it*, and not merely its name and form or all the details of its name and form. Rupa we can know & analyse by the aid of science, nama by the aid of philosophy; but swarupa? It would seem that some third instrument is needed for that consummation of knowledge. The senses & reason, even though aided by microscope and telescope, cannot show it to us. Na sandrishe tisthati rupam asya. The form of That stands not in the ken of sight. Mind and speech are not permitted to lead us to it, na vag gacchati na mano. Even the metaphysical logic of a Shankara stops short of that final victory. Naisha tarkena matir apaneya. This realisation in thought is not to be obtained by logic. All these various disabilities are due to one compelling cause; they are, because Sat, the truth of existence, Brahman, the reality of things which fills & supports their idea and form, is beyond the recognisable & analysable elements of idea and form. Anor aniyan atarkyam anupramanat. It is subtler even than elemental subtlety and therefore not to be deduced, induced, inferred or discovered by a reasoning which proceeds from a consideration of the elements of name and form and makes that its standard. This is a truth which even the greatest philosophers, Vedantic or unVedantic, are apt to forget; but the Sruti insists on it always.

Nevertheless mankind has for some thousands of years been attempting obstinately & with passion to discover that Truth by the very means which the Sruti has forbidden. Such error is natural and inevitable to the human consciousness. For the Angel in man is one who has descended out of light & bliss into the darkness, twilight and half light here, the darkness of matter, the twilight of vital consciousness, the broken half lights of the mind, and the master impulse of his nature is to yearn passionately towards the light from which [he] has fallen. Unable to find it at once, too little *dhira* (calm & discerning) to perfect himself patiently, it is natural that he in his eagerness should grasp at other instruments meant for a limited utility and straining them beyond their capacity compel them to serve this his supreme object — which is always to recover the perfect light and by that recovery to recover also what dwells only in the perfect light, — the perfect & unfailing bliss. From this abuse of his parts of knowledge have resulted three illegitimate human activities, of which Philosophy, Religion & Science have severally made themselves guilty, the disputatious metaphysical philosophy of the schools, the theology of the Churches and the scientific philosophy of the laboratories. Philosophy, Religion & Science have each their appointed field and dominion; each can help man in his great preoccupation, the attempt to know all that he can about Sat, about Brahman. The business of Philosophy is to arrange logically the general modes of Sat, the business of Religion is to arrange practically & vitally the personal relations of Sat, the business of Science is to arrange observantly & analytically the particular forms & movements of Sat. They are really necessary to and ought to lean on each other; and, if all recognised proper limitations and boundary marks, could by their joint activity help man to his present attainable fullness; but by a sort of intellectual land hunger they are perpetual invaders of each other's dominion, deny each other's positions and therefore remain unprofitably at war through the human ages. Finally, all three after illegitimately occupying each other's fields insist on snatching at a knowledge of which they are all equally incapable — the essential nature of the world, the secret reality of Sat, the uttamam rahasyam of the Brahman. This error, this confusion, this sankara or illegitimate mixing of different nature and function is the curse of the Kali and from it arises much, if not most, of the difficulty we experience as a race in escaping from this misery & darkness into bliss and light. It is part and a great part of Kali Kalila, the chaos of the Kali.

India has always attempted, though not, since the confusion of Buddhism, with any success, if not to keep the three to their proper division of labour — which, with the general growth of ignorance became impossible — at least, always to maintain or reestablish, if disturbed, some harmony between them. Of this attempt the Gita is the standing monument and the most perfect example. To see the confusion working in its untrammelled force, — and it is only so, by isolating the disease from the modification of curative forces, that we can observe, diagnose and afterwards find its remedy — we must go to the intellectual history of the European continent. There have been, properly speaking, two critical periods in this history, the Graeco-Roman era of philosophic illumination previous to Christianity and the era of modern scientific illumination which is still unexhausted. In the first we see the revolt of Philosophy (with Science concealed in her protective embrace) against the usurpation of religion. We find it, after achieving liberation, in its turn denying religion and usurping her sacred prerogative. In the modern era we see Science this time emerged and adult, keeping Philosophy behind her, in revolt against religion, first liberate herself, then deny religion & usurp her prerogatives, then, or as part of this final process of conquest, turn, deny & strike down her lofty ally and usurp also her ancient territory. For if Science has scorned & denied religion, she has equally scorned & denied Metaphysics. If she has declared God to be a barbarous myth, a fiction of dreams and terrors and longings and denied us the right of communion with the infinite, equally has she declared metaphysics to be an aberration of the ideative faculty, a false extension of logic and denied our right to recognise any metaphysical existence or anything at all which cannot be judged by or inferred from the results of the test tube, the scalpel, the microscope & the telescope. Neither, however, has she herself hesitated to dogmatise about the essential nature of existence and the mutual relations of its general modes, matter, life, mind and spirit. But for our immediate purpose it is only necessary to note the result in either of these eras of these tremendous usurpations. The result of the usurpations of philosophy was that mankind flung itself with an infinite sincerity, with a passionate sense of relief into the religion of an obscure Jewish sect and consented for a length of time which amazes us to every theological absurdity, even the most monstrous, so that it might once more be permitted to believe in something greater than earth & to have relations with God. The old philosophical spirit was torn to pieces with Hypatia in the bloodstained streets of Alexandria. Theology usurped her place and discoursed blindly & foolishly on transubstantiation and consubstantiality and one knows not what other barren mysteries. So far as philosophy was allowed an independent existence, she was compelled to do not her own work but the work of science; so we find the schoolmen elaborately determining by logic and a priori word fencing questions which could only be properly determined by observation and analysis. For Theology, for Mediaeval Religion herself did not care for this field of knowledge; she had no need for scientific truths just as the Jacobin Republic had "no need of chemists"; in fact she guillotined Science wherever its presence attracted her attention. But all injustice — and that means at bottom all denial of truth, of the satyam and ritam — brings about its own punishment or, as Religion would put it, God's visitation & vengeance. Science liberated, given in her strenuous emergence the strength of the Titans, avenges herself today on her old oppressors, on Religion, on Philosophy, breaks their temples, scorns their gods & prophets & seeks to deprive them even of the right to existence. That was the result of the Graeco-Roman illumination. And what will be the result of the scientific illumination, the modern enlightenment, the fiery triumph and ardent intellectual bigotry of the materialist? It is too early to foresee the final denouement, but unformed lines of it show themselves, obscure masses arise. Mysticism is growing obscurely in strength, as Science grew obscurely in strength in the Middle Ages. We see Titanic & mystic figures striding out of the East, building themselves fortresses & points of departure, spreading among the half-intellectual, capturing even the intellectual — vague figures of Theosophy, Spiritualism, Mental Science, Psychical Research, Neo-Hinduism, Neo-Buddhism, Neo-Mahomedanism, Neo-Christianity. The priests of Isis, the adepts & illuminati of Gnosticism, denied their triumph by the intervention of St Paul & the Pope, reborn into this latter age, claim now their satisfaction. Already some outworks of materialism are giving way, the attack grows more insistent, the defence more uncertain, less proudly self-confident, though not less angry, contemptuous, bitter & intolerant; the invaders increase their adherents, extend the number of their strongholds. If no wider & higher truth intervenes, it would almost seem as if the old confusion in a new form might replace the new. Perhaps an Esoteric Society or a Spiritualist Circle of High Mediums will in a few centuries be laying down for us what we shall think about this world & the next, what particular relations with Gods will be permitted us, what Influences or Initiates we shall worship. Who knows? The fires of Smithfield may yet reblaze to save heretics from the perdition which an illustrious voice has declared to us to be the destined doom of all who do not acknowledge Maurya & Kutthumi.

These are not mere fantastic speculations. The history of humanity & the peculiar capacities of that apparently incalculable & erratic thing, human nature, ought to warn us of their possibility — or at least that they are not entirely impossible, in spite of the printing press, in spite of the clarities of Science. No doubt the old philosophers [thought] that with so many Stoas & Academies, such spread of education, never again would enlightenment be dimmed and the worship of gods & ghosts would in the end amuse none but the vulgar. We must accept these things as possible & examine why they are possible. This reaction is inevitable because Philosophy, though exceedingly high & luminous, tends to be exclusive & narrow and Science, though exceedingly patient, accurate & minute, tends to be limited, dry & purblind. They are both apt to be as dogmatic & intolerant in their own high way or in their own clear, dry way as Religion in her way which is not high, but intense, not clear but enthusiastic; and they live on a plane of mentality on which humanity at large does not yet find itself at perfect ease, cannot live without a struggle and a difficulty in breathing. They both demand from man that he shall sacrifice his heart & his imagination to his intellect, shall deny his full human nature and live coldly & dryly. You might just as well ask him to live without free breathing. The mental world in which we are asked to live, resembles what the life of humanity would be if the warmth of the sun had diminished, the earth were growing chill and its atmosphere were already too rarefied for our comfort. It is no use saying that he ought to live in such an atmosphere, that it will improve his mental health & vigour. Perhaps he ought, though I do not think so, but he cannot. Or rather the individual may, — everything is possible to individual man, — but the race cannot. The demand can never be allowed; for it is a denial of Nature, a violation of the great Mother, a displacement of her eternal facts by the aridities of logic; it is a refusal of the Truth of things, of the Satyam, Ritam, and if it is persisted in, it will bring its own revenges. Philosophy & Science, if they are to help mankind without hurting it and themselves, must recognise that mankind is a complex being and his nature demands that every part of that complexity shall have its field of activity & every essential aspiration in him must be satisfied. It is his nature & his destiny to be aptakama, satisfied in his desires, in the individual & in the race — though always in accordance with the satyam, the ritam, which is also the sukham & sundaram, not lawlessly & according to aberrations & caprices. It was the great virtue of the ancient Hinduism, before Buddhism upset its balance & other aberrations followed, that it recognised in principle at least this fundamental verity, did not deny what God insists upon but strove, it does not matter whether perfectly or imperfectly, to put everything in its place & create a natural harmony.

Sachchidananda

The Vedanta, that solemn affirmation of the ultimate truths beyond which no human thinking has ever proceeded or can proceed, looking deep into the last recesses where existence takes refuge from the scrutiny of the Mind, affirms there as the beginning and the end of all possible description of the infinite Knowable-Unknowable three terms, Being, Comprehension and Delight. They are the initial & final trinity of existence. From them all phenomena proceed, to them all phenomena seek to return. This personality envisaged as myself, has come out of infinite being, lives in infinite being; emmeshed in the limitations of form & idea it seeks laboriously to recover itself as the infinite being. This Awareness in me which centralised in my personality suffers and examines all impressions that reach me out of the infinite existence, is a selection from an infinite Awareness contemplating itself in its whole & its parts; localised & limited, involved at first in this form it has created, it emerges out of its creation and seeks first to comprehend that and then to comprehend itself; master in some sort of its surroundings, it seeks to become master of itself; enlarging always from the factor to the sum, from the particular to the general, from the form to the essence it seeks to recover itself as the infinite self-comprehension. This Will to be & know in myself is essentially the joy of being & the joy of comprehending — Ananda, Delight; and the particular delight in me is but a spark, a wave, a foam-crest of an infinite delight; fastened at first on partial, limited & transient pleasures, it seeks always to enlarge them, to combine, to intensify; it goes out seeking for new forms of happiness; it goes in turning from the vital joy to sense-delights, from sense-delights to pleasures of emotion, from pleasures of emotion to intellectual satisfaction, from intellectual satisfaction to the self-existent bliss of the spirit which depends on no object or circumstance; in all these motions it is seeking to recover itself as infinite Delight. In this way the final perceptions of Vedanta explain the whole process & labour of consciousness in the world.

These three, Sat, Chit and Ananda are one Trinity, Sachchidananda. They are not three different factors making a single sum, neither are any two of them merely attributes, even inseparable & invariable attributes, of the third. No doubt, they are always coexistent. Where there is no delight, latent or developed, there can be no existence; where there is no awareness self-absorbed or manifest, there can be no existence. Follow existence into utter & blind inertia, consciousness sits secret in that night; follow consciousness into the abyss of desolation, joy sits self-stunned in the mask of that misery. But their coexistence is only an exterior sign of their essential unity. They do not exist separately, because they are not different from each other, — all three are one thing-in-itself seen diversely; seen sensationally, touching the fibres of conscious life in us it is delight; seen mentally, touching the fibres of living consciousness, it is comprehension; seen spiritually, touching the very core of this living & conscious I, it is being. But the thing-in-itself is one; it is Brahman. Go behind the Trinity and you can say nothing of it but this, Tat, anirdeshyam, the indefinable, That which transcends all words & thoughts; seek to know & define it, you come back to the universal & mysterious Trinity, Sachchidananda, being, comprehension & delight. This is all that you can know fundamentally about yourself; you are That which Is, which, being, comprehends Its own existence, which, comprehending, has in its silence of being or in its play of comprehension a self-existent delight. It is all we can know fundamentally & all we need to know, for, this once grasped & pursued in knowledge, the whole of life begins to unroll itself in its secret motion & purpose to our gaze.

Against this sublime Trinity of the Vedanta, this penetrating analysis of the reality of things, this discovery of the real existence of God in the world, the appearances of that world seem to protest and militate. That which strikes us most saliently & leaps on us fiercely at every turn, is grief & pain, not delight; that which besieges our eyes always & everywhere is not conscious awareness, but the inertia or the brute movement of unconscious Matter. Existence we cannot deny; the voice of the mighty Life in us rejects always the systems of Nihilism & leaves them to the enjoyment of a few curious & subtle metaphysicians; nothing either in science or in experience supports the purely metaphysical idea of Nullity. But this undeniable existence stands before us rather as an inextricable confusion of pleasure & pain than as synonymous with delight; in its vast fields sown with worlds we find instead of an omnipresent consciousness rather an omnipresent non-consciousness in which tongues of consciousness flame like little points & tongues of fire on a huge inert pyre of various timber. Be not deceived, answers the Vedantin; appearances can never be trusted till the secrets behind them are fathomed. To the eye's unvarying experience the sun is a globe of fire that voyages round its worshipped earth; generations so conceived it & would have mocked at the truth; these solid appearances are an assemblage of gases; the colour of a rose is a brilliant deceit of the vision. Interrogate consciousness to find what it is or holds & unconsciousness to discover its secrets. Interrogate not only the state of waking but the states of dream & sleep. You will find at the end of long, patient & searching experiments that the confused consciousness of dream was confused only in the receiving parts of the material waking mind and behind it was a state of awareness even more perfect & orderly than the awareness of our waking life. You will find that the consciousness in abeyance of dreamless sleep was in abeyance only in the overpowered & cessant parts of the same material waking mind and behind it was a most exalted & perfect state of awareness which stands near the threshold of the House of God in which we really dwell; for here we are only labourers or overseers in His outer farms. It is admitted that when we are in sound sleep we dream; we are conscious, when we are swooned or stunned only a part of our consciousness, the outward, the here active is withdrawn. When you have interrogated unconsciousness in yourself, interrogate it in the tree & the clod. You will find, for by that time you will have entered into the kingdoms within & learned to command a self-exceeding experience of being, that in the tree & the rock there is the same being, the same consciousness, the same principle of Will to live, of delight, in a word, that is [in] yourself. The unconsciousness of the tree & the rock is the same unconsciousness as that which occupies your body when mind is withdrawn from the observation of its working. It is the sleep, the universal trance of Matter. And that means, eventually, the trance of consciousness forgetting itself in its own symbol or form. Consciousness in this its outer shell has become to the appearance something else which seems not to have any resemblance to conscious being, as gas becoming water is to appearance something else which has no remotest gaseous semblance. The truth sits veiled behind the appearance, self-absorbed; there is in all things, without exception, "That which is conscious in these conscious & unconscious existences, that which is awake in these who sleep."

The Silence behind Life

There is a silence behind life as well as within it and it is only in this more secret, sustaining silence that we can hear clearly the voice of God. In the noise of the world we hear only altered & disturbed echoes of it; for the Voice comes always — who else speaks to us on our journey? — but the gods of the heart, the gods of the mind, the gods of desire, the gods of sense take up the divine cry, intercept it and alter it for their purposes. Krishna calls to us, but the first note, even the opening power or sweetness, awakes a very brouhaha of these echoes. It is not the fault of these poor gods. The accent of power is so desirable, the note of sweetness is so captivating that they must seize it, they would be dull & soulless, there would be no hope of their redemption if they did not at once leap at it and make it their own. But in becoming their own, it ceases to be entirely his. How many who have the religious faith and the religious temperament, are following the impulses of their heart, the cravings of their desire, the urgency of their senses, the dictates of their opinion when they fully imagine that their God is leading them! And they do well, for God is leading them. It is the way He has chosen for them, & since He has chosen it, it is the best & wisest & most fruitful way for them. Still it is their God — not one they have made in their own image as the Atheist believes, but One who makes Himself in the image that they prefer, the image that best suits with their nature or their development. "In whatever way men come to me, in that way I love & cleave to them." It is a saying of fathomless depth which contains the seed of the whole truth about God & religion. After all it is only in this way that the conditioned can meet the Absolute, that which has a nature or dharma of its own with that which is beyond all limit of nature or dharma. After the meeting of the soul with God, — well, that is a different matter. The secrets of His nuptial chamber cannot all be spoken.

Nevertheless, there is a higher way of meeting him than that which leads us through subjection to the Gods. By perfect Love, by perfect Joy, by perfect Satisfaction, by perfected mind one can hear what the Voice truly says if not the Voice itself, — catch the kernel of the message with a sort of ecstatic perfection, even if afterwards the Gods dilate on it & by attempting to amplify & complete, load it with false corollaries or prevent some greater fullness of truth from arriving to us. Therefore this way also, though it is high, cannot be the highest.

Section Three

Circa 1913

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF YOGA

Initial Definitions and Descriptions

Yoga has four powers and objects, purity, liberty, beatitude and perfection. Whosoever has consummated these four mightinesses in the being of the transcendental, universal, lilamaya and individual God is the complete and absolute Yogin.

All manifestations of God are manifestations of the absolute Parabrahman.

The Absolute Parabrahman is unknowable to us, not because It is the nothingness of all that we are, for rather whatever we are in truth or in seeming is nothing but Parabrahman, but because It is pre-existent & supra-existent to even the highest & purest methods and the most potent & illimitable instruments of which soul in the body is capable.

In Parabrahman knowledge ceases to be knowledge and becomes an inexpressible identity. Become Parabrahman, if thou wilt and if That will suffer thee, but strive not to know It; for thou shalt not succeed with these instruments and in this body.

In reality thou art Parabrahman already and ever wast and ever will be. To become Parabrahman in any other sense, thou must depart utterly out of world manifestation and out even of world transcendence.

Why shouldst thou hunger after departure from manifestation as if the world were an evil? Has not That manifested itself in thee & in the world and art thou wiser & purer & better than the Absolute, O mind-deceived soul in the mortal? When That withdraws thee, then thy going hence is inevitable; until Its force is laid on thee, thy going is impossible, cry thy mind never so fiercely & wailingly for departure. Therefore neither desire nor shun the world, but seek the bliss & purity & freedom & greatness of God in whatsoever state or experience or environment.

So long as thou hast any desire, be it the desire of non-birth or the desire of liberation, thou canst not attain to Parabrahman. For That has no desires, neither of birth nor of non-birth, nor of world, nor of departure from world. The Absolute is unlimited by thy desire as It is inaccessible to thy knowledge.

If thou wouldst know Paratpara brahman, then know It as It chooses to manifest Itself in world and transcending it — for transcendence also is a relation to world & not the sheer Absolute, — since otherwise It is unknowable. This is the simultaneous knowing & not knowing spoken of in the Vedanta.

Of Parabrahman we should not say that "It" is world-transcendent or world-immanent or related or non-related to the world; for all these ideas of world and not-world, of transcendence and immanence and relation are expressions of thought by which mind puts its own values on the self-manifestation of Parabrahman to Its own principle of knowledge and we cannot assert any, even the highest of them to be the real reality of that which is at once all and beyond all, nothing and beyond nothing. A profound and unthinking silence is the only attitude which the soul manifested in world should adopt towards the Absolute.

We know of Parabrahman that It Is, in a way in which no object is and no state in the world, because whenever & in whatever direction we go to the farthest limits of soul-experience or thought-experience or body-experience or any essential experience whatsoever, we come to the brink of That and perceive It to be, unknowably, without any capacity of experiencing about it any farther truth whatsoever.

When thy soul retiring within from depth to depth & widening without from vastness to vastness stands in the silence of its being before an unknown & unknowable from which & towards which world is seen to exist as a thing neither materially real nor mentally real and yet not to be described as a dream or a falsehood, then know that thou art standing in the Holy of Holies, before the Veil that shall not be rent. In this mortal body thou canst not rend it, nor in any other body; nor in the state of self in body nor in the state of pure self, nor in waking nor in sleep nor in trance, nor in any state or circumstances whatsoever for thou must be beyond state before thou canst enter into the Paratpara brahman.

That is the unknown God to whom no altar can be raised and no worship offered; universe is His only altar, existence is His only worship. That we are, feel, think, act or are but do not feel, do not think, do not act is for That enough. To That, the saint is equal with the sinner, activity with inactivity, man with the mollusc, since all are equally Its manifestations. These things at least are true of the Parabrahman & Para Purusha, which is the Highest that we know & the nearest to the Absolute. But what That is behind the veil or how behind the veil It regards Itself and its manifestations is a thing no mind can assume to tell or know; and he is equally ignorant and presumptuous who raises & inscribes to It an altar or who pretends to declare the Unknown to those who know that they can know It not. Confuse not thought, bewilder not the soul of man in its forward march, but turn to the Universe & know That in this, Tad va etat, for so only & in these terms It has set itself out to be known to those who are in the universe. Be not deceived by Ignorance, be not deceived by knowledge; there is none bound & none free & none seeking freedom but only God playing at these things in the extended might of His self-conscious being, para maya, mahimanam asya, which we call the universe.

The Object of Our Yoga

The object of our Yoga is self-perfection, not self-annulment.

There are two paths set for the feet of the Yogin, withdrawal from the universe and perfection in the Universe; the first comes by asceticism, the second is effected by tapasya; the first receives us when we lose God in Existence, the second is attained when we fulfil existence in God. Let ours be the path of perfection, not of abandonment; let our aim be victory in the battle, not the escape from all conflict.

Buddha and Shankara supposed the world to be radically false and miserable; therefore escape from the world was to them the only wisdom. But this world is Brahman, the world is God, the world is Satyam, the world is Ananda; it is our misreading of the world through mental egoism that is a falsehood and our wrong relation with God in the world that is a misery. There is no other falsity and no other cause of sorrow.

God created the world in Himself through Maya; but the Vedic meaning of Maya is not illusion, it is wisdom, knowledge, capacity, wide extension in consciousness. Prajna prasrita purani. Omnipotent Wisdom created the world, it is not the organised blunder of some Infinite Dreamer; omniscient Power manifests or conceals it in Itself or Its own delight, it is not a bondage imposed by His own ignorance on the free and absolute Brahman.

If the world were Brahman's self-imposed nightmare, to awake from it would be the natural and only goal of our supreme endeavour; or if life in the world were irrevocably bound to misery, a means of escape from this bondage would be the sole secret worth discovering. But perfect truth in world-existence is possible, for God here sees all things with the eye of truth; and perfect bliss in the world is possible, for God enjoys all things with the sense of unalloyed freedom. We also can enjoy this truth and bliss, called by the Veda amritam, Immortality, if by casting away our egoistic existence into perfect unity with His being we consent to receive the divine perception and the divine freedom.

The world is a movement of God in His own being; we are the centres and knots of divine consciousness which sum up and support the processes of His movement. The world is His play with His own self-conscious delight, He who alone exists, infinite, free and perfect; we are the self-multiplications of that conscious delight, thrown out into being to be His playmates. The world is a formula, a rhythm, a symbol-system expressing God to Himself in His own consciousness, — it has no material existence but exists only in His consciousness and self-expression; we, like God, are in our inward being That which is expressed, but in our outward being terms of that formula, notes of that rhythm, symbols of that system. Let us lead forward God's movement, play out His play, work out His formula, execute His harmony, express Him through ourselves in His system. This is our joy and our self-fulfilment; to this end we who transcend & exceed the universe, have entered into universe-existence.

Perfection has to be worked out, harmony has to be accomplished. Imperfection, limitation, death, grief, ignorance, matter, are only the first terms of the formula — unintelligible till we have worked out the wider terms and reinterpreted the formulary; they are the initial discords of the musician's tuning. Out of imperfection we have to construct perfection, out of limitation to discover infinity, out of death to find immortality, out of grief to recover divine bliss, out of ignorance to rescue divine self-knowledge, out of matter to reveal Spirit. To work out this end for ourselves and for humanity is the object of our Yogic practice.

PURNA YOGA

I

The Entire Purpose of Yoga

By Yoga we can rise out of falsehood into truth, out of weakness into force, out of pain and grief into bliss, out of bondage into freedom, out of death into immortality, out of darkness into light, out of confusion into purity, out of imperfection into perfection, out of self-division into unity, out of Maya into God. All other utilisation of Yoga is for special and fragmentary advantages not always worth pursuing. Only that which aims at possessing the fullness of God is purna Yoga; the sadhaka of the Divine Perfection is the purna Yogin.

Our aim must be to be perfect as God in His being and bliss is perfect, pure as He is pure, blissful as He is blissful, and, when we are ourselves siddha in the purna Yoga, to bring all mankind to the same divine perfection. It does not matter if for the present we fall short of our aim, so long as we give ourselves whole-heartedly to the attempt and by living constantly in it and for it move forward even two inches upon the road; even that will help to lead humanity out of the struggle and twilight in which it now dwells into the luminous joy which God intends for us. But whatever our immediate success, our unvarying aim must be to perform the whole journey and not lie down content in any wayside stage or imperfect resting place.

All Yoga which takes you entirely away from the world, is a high but narrow specialisation of divine tapasya. God in His perfection embraces everything; you also must become all-embracing.

God in His ultimate existence beyond all manifestation and all knowledge, is the Absolute Parabrahman; in relation to the world He is that which transcends all universal existence while regarding it or in turning away from it; He is that which contains and upholds the universe, He is that which becomes the universe and He is the universe & everything which it contains.

He is also Absolute and Supreme Personality playing in the universe and as the universe; in the universe He appears to be its Soul & Lord, as the universe He appears to be the motion or process of the Will of the Lord and to become all the subjective and objective results of the motion. All the states of the Brahman, the transcendent, the continent, the universal, the individual are informed & sustained by the divine Personality. He is both the Existent & the state of existence. We call the state of existence the Impersonal Brahman, the Existent the Personal Brahman. There is no difference between them except to the play of our consciousness; for every impersonal state depends upon a manifest or secret Personality and can reveal the Personality which it holds and veils and every Personality attaches to itself and can plunge itself into an impersonal existence. This they can do because Personality & Impersonality are merely different states of self-consciousness in one Absolute Being.

Philosophies & religions dispute about the priority of different aspects of God & different Yogins, Rishis & Saints have preferred this or that philosophy or religion. Our business is not to dispute about any of them, but to realise & become all of them, not to follow after any aspect to the exclusion of the rest, but to embrace God in all His aspects and beyond aspect.

God descending into world in various forms has consummated on this earth the mental and bodily form which we call humanity.

He has manifested in the world through the play of all-governing Soul with its own formative Will or Shakti a rhythm of existence of which Matter is the lowest term and pure being the highest. Mind & Life stand upon Matter (Manas & Prana on Annam) and make the lower half of world-existence (aparardha); pure consciousness and pure bliss proceed out of pure Being (Chit and Ananda out of Sat) and make the upper half of world-existence. Pure idea (vijnana) stands as the link between the two. These seven principles or terms of existence are the basis of the sevenfold world of the Puranas (Satyaloka, Tapas, Jana, Mahar, Swar, Bhuvar & Bhur).

The lower hemisphere in this arrangement of consciousness consists of the three vyahritis of the Veda, "Bhur, Bhuvah, Swar"; they are states of consciousness in which the principles of the upper world are expressed or try to express themselves under different conditions. Pure in their own homes, they are in this foreign country subject to perverse, impure & disturbing combinations & workings. The ultimate object of life is to get rid of the perversity, impurity & disturbance & express them perfectly in these other conditions. Your life on this earth is a divine poem that you are translating into earthly language or a strain of music which you are rendering into words.

Being in Sat is one in multiplicity, one that regards its multiplicity without being lost or confused in it and multiplicity that knows itself as one without losing the power of multiple play in the universe. Under the conditions of mind, life & body, ahankara is born, the subjective or objective form of consciousness is falsely taken for self-existent being, the body for an independent reality & the ego for an independent personality; the one loses itself in us in its multiplicity & when it recovers its unity, finds it difficult, owing to the nature of mind, to preserve its play of multiplicity. Therefore when we are absorbed in world, we miss God in Himself; when we seek God, we miss Him in the world. Our business is to break down & dissolve the mental ego & get back to our divine unity without losing our power of individual & multiple existence in the universe.

Consciousness in Chit is luminous, free, illimitable & effective; that which it is aware of as Chit (Jnanashakti) it fulfils infallibly as Tapas (Kriyashakti); for Jnanashakti is only the stable & comprehensive, Kriyashakti only the motional and intensive form of one self-luminous Conscious Being. They are one power of conscious force of God (Chit-Shakti of Sat-Purusha). But in the lower hemisphere, under the conditions of mind, life & body, the luminousness becomes divided & broken up into uneven rays, the freedom trammelled by egoism and unequal forms, the effectiveness veiled by the uneven play of forces. We have, therefore, states of consciousness, non-consciousness & false consciousness, knowledge & ignorance & false knowledge, effective force & inertia and ineffective force. Our business is by renouncing our divided & unequal individual force of action & thought into the one, undivided universal Chitshakti of Kali to replace our egoistic activities by the play in our body of the universal Kali and thus exchange blindness & ignorance for knowledge and ineffective human strength for the divine effective Force.

Delight in Ananda is pure, unmixed, one & yet multitudinous. Under the conditions of mind, life & body it becomes divided, limited, confused & misdirected and owing to shocks of unequal forces & uneven distribution of Ananda subject to the duality of positive & negative movements, grief & joy, pain & pleasure. Our business is to dissolve these dualities by breaking down their cause & plunge ourselves into the ocean of divine bliss, one, multitudinous, evenly distributed (sama), which takes delight from all things & recoils painfully from none.

In brief, we have to replace dualities by unity, egoism by divine consciousness, ignorance by divine wisdom, thought by divine knowledge, weakness, struggle & effort by self-contented divine force, pain & false pleasure by divine bliss. This is called in the language of Christ bringing down the kingdom of heaven on earth, or in modern language, realising & effectuating God in the world.

Humanity is, upon earth, the form of life chosen for this human aspiration & divine accomplishment; all other forms of life either do not need it or are ordinarily incapable of it unless they change into humanity. The divine fullness is therefore the sole real aim of humanity. It has to be effected in the individual in order that it may be effected in the race.

Humanity is a mental existence in a living body; its basis is matter, its centre & instrument mind & its medium life. This is the condition of average or natural humanity.

In every human being there is concealed (avyakta) the four higher principles. Mahas, pure ideality in vijnana, is not a vyahriti but the source of the vyahritis, the bank upon which mental, vital and bodily action draw & turn its large & infinite wealth into small coin of the lower existence. Vijnana being the link between the divine state & the human animal is the door of escape for man into the supernatural or divine humanity.

Inferior mankind gravitates downward from mind towards life & body; average mankind dwells constant in mind limited by & looking towards life & body; superior mankind levitates upward either to idealised mentality or to pure idea, direct truth of knowledge & spontaneous truth of existence; supreme mankind rises to divine beatitude & from that level either goes upward to pure Sat & Parabrahman or remains to beatify its lower members & raise to divinity in itself & others this human existence.

The man who dwells in the higher or divine & now hidden hemisphere of his consciousness, having rent the veil, is the true superman and the last product of that progressive self-manifestation of God in world, Spirit out of matter, which is now called the principle of evolution.

To rise into divine existence, force, light & bliss and recast in that mould all mundane existence is the supreme aspiration of religion & the complete practical aim of Yoga. The aim is to realise God in the universe, but it cannot be done without realising God transcendent of the Universe.

II

Parabrahman, Mukti & Human Thought-Systems

Parabrahman is the Absolute, & because It is the Absolute, it cannot be reduced into terms of knowledge. You can know the Infinite in a way, but you cannot know the Absolute.

All things in existence or non-existence are symbols of the Absolute created in self-consciousness (Chid-Atman); by Its symbols the Absolute can be known so far as the symbols reveal or hint at it, but even the knowledge of the whole sum of symbols does not amount to real knowledge of the Absolute. You can become Parabrahman; you cannot know Parabrahman. Becoming Parabrahman means going back through self-consciousness into Parabrahman, for you already are That, only you have projected yourself forward in self-consciousness into its terms or symbols, Purusha & Prakriti through which you uphold the universe. Therefore, to become Parabrahman void of terms or symbols you must cease out of the universe.

By becoming Parabrahman void of Its self-symbols you do not become anything you are not already, nor does the universe cease to operate. It only means that God throws back out of the ocean of manifest consciousness one stream or movement of Himself into that from which all consciousness proceeded.

All who go out of universe-consciousness, do not necessarily go into Parabrahman. Some go into undifferentiated Nature (Avyakrita Prakriti), some lose themselves in God, some pass into a dark state of non-recognition of universe, (Asat, Shunya), some into a luminous state of non-recognition of universe — Pure Undifferentiated Atman, Pure Sat or Existence-Basis of Universe, — some into a temporary state of deep sleep (sushupti) in the impersonal principles of Ananda, Chit or Sat. All these are forms of release & the ego gets from God by His Maya or Prakriti the impulse towards any one of them to which the supreme Purusha chooses to direct him. Those whom He wishes to liberate, yet keep in the world, He makes jivanmuktas or sends them out again as His vibhutis, they consenting to wear for the divine purposes a temporary veil of Avidya, which does not at all bind them and which they can rend or throw off very easily. Therefore to lust after becoming Parabrahman is a sort of luminous illusion or sattwic play of Maya; for in reality there is none bound & none free & none needing to be freed and all is only God's Lila, Parabrahman's play of manifestation. God uses this sattwic Maya in certain egos in order to draw them upwards in the line of His special purpose & for these egos it is the only right and possible path.

But the aim of our Yoga is Jivanmukti in the universe; not because we need to be freed or for any other reason, but because that is God's will in us, we have to live released in the world, not released out of the world.

The Jivanmukta has, for perfect knowledge & self-fulfilment to stand on the threshold of Parabrahman, but not to cross the threshold.

The statement he brings back from the threshold is that That is & we are That, but what That is or is not, words cannot describe, nor mind discriminate.

Parabrahman being the Absolute is indescribable by any name or definite conception. It is not Being or Non-Being, but something of which Being & Non-Being are primary symbols; not Atman or unAtman or Maya; not Personality or Impersonality; not Quality or Non-Quality; not Consciousness or Non-Consciousness; not Bliss or Non-Bliss; not Purusha or Prakriti; not god nor man nor animal; not release nor bondage; but something of which all these are primary or derivative, general or particular symbols. Still, when we say Parabrahman is not this or that, we mean that It cannot in its essentiality be limited to this or that symbol or any sum of symbols; in a sense Parabrahman is all this & all this is Parabrahman. There is nothing else which all this can be.

Parabrahman being Absolute is not subject to logic, for logic applies only to the determinate. We talk confusion if we say that the Absolute cannot manifest the determinate & therefore the universe is false or non-existent. The very nature of the Absolute is that we do not know what it is or is not, what it can do or cannot do; we have no reason to suppose that there is anything it cannot do or that its Absoluteness is limited by any kind of impotency. We experience spiritually that when we go beyond everything else we come to something Absolute; we experience spiritually that the universe is in the nature of a manifestation proceeding, as it were, from the Absolute; but all these words & phrases are merely intellectual terms trying to express the inexpressible. We must state what we see as best we can, but need not dispute what others see or state; rather we must accept & in our own system locate & account for what they have seen & stated. Our only dispute is with those who deny credit to the vision or freedom & value to the statements of others; not with those who are content with stating their own vision. A philosophical or religious system is only a statement of that arrangement of existence in universe which God has revealed to us as our status of being. It is given in order that the mind may have something to stand upon while we act in Prakriti. But our vision need not be precisely the same in arrangement as the vision of others, nor is the form of thought that suits our mentality bound to suit a mentality differently constituted. Firmness, without dogmatism, in our own system, toleration, without weakness, of all other systems should therefore be our intellectual outlook.

You will find disputants questioning your system on the ground that it is not consistent with this or that Shastra or this or that great authority, whether philosopher, saint or Avatar. Remember then that realisation & experience are alone of essential importance. What Shankara argued or Vivekananda conceived intellectually about existence or even what Ramakrishna stated from his multitudinous and varied realisation, is only of value to you so far as you [are] moved by God to accept and renew it in your own experience. The opinions of thinkers & saints

& Avatars should be accepted as hints but not as fetters. What matters to you is what you have seen or what God in His universal personality or impersonally or again personally in some teacher, guru or pathfinder undertakes to show to you in the path of Yoga.

III

Parabrahman and Parapurusha

God or Para Purusha is Parabrahman unmanifest & inexpressible turned towards a certain kind of manifestation or expression, of which the two eternal terms are Atman and Jagati, Self and Universe. Atman becomes in self-symbol all existences in the universe; so too, the universe when known, resolves all its symbols into Atman. God being Parabrahman is Himself Absolute, neither Atman nor Maya nor unAtman; neither Being nor Not-Being (Sat, Asat); neither Becoming nor non-Becoming (Sambhuti, Asambhuti); neither Quality nor non-Quality (Saguna, Nirguna); neither Consciousness nor non-consciousness, (Chaitanya, Jada); neither Soul nor Nature (Purusha, Prakriti); neither Bliss nor non-Bliss; neither man nor god nor animal; He is beyond all these things, He maintains & contains all these things; in Himself as world He is & becomes all these things.

The only difference between Parabrahman & Parapurusha is that we think of the first as something beyond our universe-existence, expressed here indeed, but still inexpressible, and of the second as something approaching our universe-existence, inexpressible indeed, but still here expressed. It is as if, in reading a translation of the Ramayan or Homer's Iliad, we were to look at the unapproachable something no translator can seize and say "This is not the Ramayan", "This is not the Iliad" and yet, looking at the comparative adequacy of the expressions which do succeed in catching something of the original spirit and intention, were at the same time to say "This is Homer", "This is Valmekie." There is no other difference except this of standpoint. The Upanishads speak of the Absolute Parabrahman as Tat; they say Sa when they speak of the Absolute Parapurusha.

NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL MAN

The Evolutionary Aim in Yoga

In the Katha Upanishad there occurs one of those powerful and pregnant phrases, containing a world of meaning in a point of verbal space, with which the Upanishads are thickly sown. Yogo hi prabhavapyayau. For Yoga is the beginning & ending of things. In the Puranas the meaning of the phrase is underlined & developed. By Yoga God made the world, by Yoga He will draw it into Himself in the end. But not only the original creation & final dissolution of the universe, all great changes of things, creations, evolutions, destructions are effected by the essential process of Yoga, tapasya. In this ancient view Yoga presents itself as the effective, perhaps the essential & real executive movement of Nature herself in all her processes. If this is so in the general workings of Nature, if that is to say, a divine Knowledge and a divine Will in things by putting itself into relation with objects is the true cause of all force & effectuality, the same rule should hold good in human activities. It should hold good especially of all conscious & willed processes of psychological discipline, — Yogic systems, as we call them; Yoga can really be nothing but a consummate & self-conscious natural process intended to effect rapidly objects which the ordinary natural movement works out slowly, in the tardy pace of a secular or even millennial evolution.

There is an apparent difference. The aim put before us in Yoga is God; the aim of Nature is to effect supernature; but these two aims are of one piece & intention. God & supernature are only one the real & the other the formal aspect of the one unattainable fulfilment towards which our human march is in its ascent directed. Yoga for man is the upward working of Nature liberated from slow evolution and long relapses and self-conscious in divine or human knowledge.

God is That which is the All and yet exceeds and transcends the All; there is nothing in existence which is not God, but

God is neither the sum of existence nor anything in that sum, except symbolically, in image to His own consciousness. In other words, everything that exists, separately, is a particular symbol and the whole sum of existence is a general symbol which tries to translate the untranslatable existence, God, into the terms of world-consciousness. It is intended to try, it is not intended to succeed; for the moment it succeeds, it ceases to be itself and becomes that untranslatable something from which it started, God. No symbol is intended to express God perfectly, not even the highest; but it is the privilege of the highest symbols to lose in Him their separate definiteness, cease to be symbols and become in consciousness that which is symbolised. Humanity is such a symbol or eidolon of God; we are made, to use the Biblical phrase, in His image; and by that is meant not a formal image, but the image of His being and personality; we are of the essence of His divinity and of the quality of His divinity; we are formed in the mould and bear the stamp of a divine being and a divine knowledge.

In everything that exists phenomenally, or, as I shall prefer to say, going deeper into the nature of things, symbolically, there are two parts of being, thing in itself and symbol, Self and Nature, res (thing that is) and factum (thing that is done or made), immutable being and mutable becoming, that which is supernatural to it and that which is natural. Every state of existence has some force in it which drives it to transcend itself. Matter moves towards becoming life, Life travails towards becoming Mind, Mind aspires towards becoming ideal Truth, Truth rises towards becoming divine and infinite Spirit. The reason is that every symbol, being a partial expression of God, reaches out to and seeks to become its own entire reality; it aspires to become its real self by transcending its apparent self. Thing that is made, is attracted towards thing that is, becoming towards being, the natural towards the supernatural, symbol towards thing-in-itself, Nature towards God.

The upward movement is, then, the means towards self-fulfilment in this world; but it is not imperative on all objects. For there are three conditions for all changeable existences, the upward ascension, the arrested status and the downward lapse. Nature in its lower states moves upward indeed in the mass, but seeks the final salvation for only a limited number of its individuals. It is not every form of matter that organises life although every form of matter teems with the spirit of life and is full of its urgent demand for release & self-manifestation. Not every form of life organises mind, although in all forms of life mind is there, insistent, seeking for its escape and self-expression. Nor is every mental being fitted to organise the life of ideal truth, although in every mental being, in dog & ape & worm no less than in man, the imprisoned spirit of truth & knowledge seeks for its escape and self-expression. Nature in each realised state of her building seeks first to assure the natural existence of her creatures in that state; only after this primary aim is accomplished does she seek through the best fitted of them to escape from her works, to break down what she has built and arrive at something beyond. It is not till she reaches man that she arrives at a type of being of which every individual is essentially capable of realising not only the natural but the supernatural within it; and even this is true with modifications, with qualifications. But of this it will be better to speak at greater length in another connection.

Nevertheless, it remains true that the upward movement is the master movement of Nature; arrested status is a lower fulfilment, & if perfect, a transient perfection. It is a perfection in the realms of struggle and in the style of passing forms, a fulfilment in the kingdoms of Ashanaya Mrityu, Hunger who is death, Hunger that creates & feeds upon its creations; the upward movement is that which leads up through death to immortality & realises in this earth of the body the blissful and luminous kingdom of heaven; the downward lapse is destruction, Hell, a great perdition, mahati vinashtih. These are the three gatis or final states of becoming indicated in the Gita, uttama, madhyama & adhama, highest, middle and lowest, offered to the choice of humanity. It is for each individual of us to choose. For as we choose, God shall fulfil Himself in us, towards a transient human satisfaction, a divine perfection or a decomposition of our humanity into the fruitful waste-matter of Nature.

Every nature, then, is a step towards some super-nature, — towards something natural to itself, but supernatural to that which is below. Life is supernatural to Matter, Mind supernatural to Life, Ideal Being supernatural to Mind, the Infinite Spirit supernatural to ideal being. We must, therefore, accept the supernatural as our goal; for the tendency of our nature to the super-nature just above it is a command of the World Power to be obeyed and not rebelled against & distrusted. It is here that Faith has its importance & Religion, when uncorrupted, its incalculable utility; for our natural mind seeks to dwell in its nature & is sceptical of supernature. Faith & religion were provisions of the All Wise Energy to accustom the natural & merely mental man to the promptings of the ideal soul in him which seeks even now to escape out of twilight into light, out of groping into truth, out of the senses & reasoning into vision & direct experience. The upward tendency is imposed on us & we cannot permanently resist it; at some time or another God will lay his hands on us and force us up that steep incline so difficult to our unregenerate treading. For as surely as the animal develops towards humanity & in its most flexible types attains a kind of humanity, as surely as the ape and the ant having once appeared, man was bound to follow, so surely man develops towards godhead & in his more capable types approaches nearer & nearer towards godhead, attains a kind of deity, & so surely the genius & the saint having appeared man is bound to develop in himself & out of himself the superman, the siddha purusha. For this conclusion no prophetic power or revelation is needed; it is the inevitable corollary from the previous demonstrations worked out for us in the vast laboratory of Nature.

We have to transcend Nature, to become super-Nature, but it follows from what I have said that it is by taking advantage of something still imprisoned in Nature itself, by following some line which Nature is trying to open to us that we ought to proceed. By yielding to our ordinary nature we fall away both from Nature itself and from God; by transcending Nature we at once satisfy her strongest impulse, fulfil all her possibilities and rise towards God. The human first touches the divine and then becomes the divine. But there are those who seek to kill Nature in order to become the Self. Shall we follow them? No, however great & lofty be their path, however awful & dazzling their aspiration, because it is not God's intention in humanity & therefore not our proper dharma. Let any say, if he will, that we have made the lower choice. We answer in the language of the Gita, Sreyan swadharmo viguno, Better is the law of our own being though inferior, too perilous the superior law of another's being. To obey God's will in us, is certainly more blissful, perhaps even more divine than to rise to the austere heights of the Adwaitin & the ineffable self-extinction in an indefinable Existence. For us the embrace of Krishna is enough and the glory of the all-puissant bosom of Kali. We have to transcend & possess Nature, not to kill her.

In any case, whatever may be the choice for exceptional individuals, it is a general path of supreme attainment for humanity that we are seeking, — for I am not proposing to you in Yoga an individual path unconcerned with the rest of mankind, — and here there can be no doubt or hesitation. Neither the exaggerations of spirituality nor the exaggerations of materialism are our true path. Every general movement of our humanity which seeks to deny Nature, however religious, lofty or austere, of whatever dazzling purity or ethereality, has been & will always be doomed to failure, sick disappointment, disillusionment or perversion, because it is in its nature for the mass of humanity a transient impulse of exaggeration, because it contradicts God's condition for us who set Nature there as an indispensable term for His self-fulfilment in the universe and ourselves as the supreme instruments & helpers on this earth of that divine self-fulfilment. Every movement of humanity which bids us be satisfied with our ordinary Nature, dwell upon the earth, cease to aspire to the empyrean within us and choose rather to live like the animals looking to our mortal future before us & downwards at the earth we till, not upwards to God & our ungrasped perfection, has been & will always be doomed to weariness, petrifaction & cessation or to a quick & violent supernaturalistic reaction, because this also is for the mass of men a transient impulse of exaggeration & because it contradicts God's intention in us who has entered in and dwells secret in our Nature compelling us towards Him by an obscure, instinctive & overmastering attraction. Materialistic movements are more unnatural and abnormal than ascetic and negative religions & philosophies; for these lead us upward at least, though they go too furiously fast & far for our humanity, but the materialist under the pretence of bringing us back to Nature, takes us away from her entirely. He forgets or does not see that Nature is only phenomenally Nature, but in reality she is God. The divine element in her is that which she most purely & really is; the rest is only term and condition, process and stage in her whole progressively developed revelation of the secret divinity. He forgets too that Nature is evolving not evolved & what we are now can never be the term of what we shall be hereafter. The supernatural must be by the very logic of things the end & goal of her movement.

Therefore, not to be ensnared, emmeshed and bound by Nature, and not, on the other hand, to be furious with her & destroy her, is the first thing we must learn if we are to be complete Yogins and proceed surely towards our divine perfection. All beings, even the sages, follow after their nature and what shall coercion and torture of it, avail them? Prakritim yanti bhutani, nigrahah kim karishyati? And it is all so useless! Do you feel yourself bound by her and pant for release? In her hand alone is the key which shall unlock your fetters. Does she stand between you & the Lord? She is Sita; pray to her, she will stand aside & show Him to you; but presume not to separate Sita & Rama, to cast her out into some distant Lanca under the guard of giant self-tortures so that you may have Rama to yourself in Ayodhya. Wrestle with Kali, if you will, she loves a good wrestler; but wrestle not with her unlovingly, or in mere disgust & hate; for her displeasure is terrible and though she loves the Asuras, she destroys them. Rather go through her & under her protection, go with a right understanding of her and with a true & unfaltering Will; she will lead you on with whatever circlings, yet surely & in the wisest way, to the All-Blissful Personality & the Ineffable Presence. Nature is the Power of God Himself, leading these multitudes of beings, through the night & the desert & the tracts of the foeman to their secret & promised heritage.

Supernature, then, is in every way our aim in Yoga; being still natural to the world, to transcend Nature internally so that both internally and externally we may possess and enjoy her as free & lord, swarat and samrat; being still the symbol in a world of symbol-beings, to reach through it to that which is symbolised, to realise the symbol; being still a figure of humanity, a man among men, a living body among living bodies, manus, mental beings housed in that living matter among other embodied mental beings; being & remaining in our outward parts all this that we are apparently, yet to exceed it and become in the body what we are really in the secret self, — God, spirit, supreme & infinite being, pure Bliss of divine joy, pure Force of divine action, pure Light of divine knowledge. Our whole apparent life has only a symbolic value & is good & necessary as a becoming; but all becoming has being for its goal & fulfilment & God is the only being. To become divine in the nature of the world and in the symbol of humanity is the perfection for which we were created.

The Fullness of Yoga — In Condition

We are to exceed our human stature and become divine; but if we are to do this, we must first get God; for the human ego is the lower imperfect term of our being, God is the higher perfect term. He is the possessor of our supernature and without His permission there can be no effectual rising. The finite cannot become infinite unless it perceives its own secret infinity and is drawn by it or towards it; nor can the symbol-being, unless it glimpses, loves and pursues the Real-being in itself, overcome by its own strength the limits of its apparent nature. It is a particular becoming & is fixed in the nature of the symbol that it has become; only the touch of that which is all becomings and exceeds all becomings, can liberate it from the bondage to its own limited Nature. God is That which is the All and which exceeds the All. It is therefore only the knowledge, love and possession of God that can make us free. He who is transcendent, can alone enable us to transcend ourselves; He who is universal can alone enlarge us from our limited particular existence.

In this necessity is the justification of that great & imperishable force of Nature, which Rationalism has unjustly & irrationally despised, Religion. I speak of religion, — not of a creed, church or theology, for all these things are rather forms of religiosity than essence or even always action of religion, — but of that personal and intimate religion, a thing of temper and spirit and life, not of views & formal actions, which draws a man passionately and absorbingly to his own vision of the Supreme or his own idea of something higher than himself which he must follow or become. Without a fervent worship of the Supreme in the heart, a strong aspiration upwards to It in the will or a vehement thirst for it in the temperament, we cannot have the impulse to be other than ourselves or the force to do anything so difficult as the transcending of our own ingrained and possessing human nature. The prophets have spoken & the Avatars have descended always for the one purpose, to call us to God, to inspire us to this great call on our upward straining energies or else to prepare something in the world which will help to bring humanity nearer to the goal of its difficult ascending journey.

It may seem at first sight that there is no need for these religious terms or this religious spirit. If the aim is to become something superior to man, to evolve a superman out of ourselves, as man has been evolved out of the ape, — if that statement of the progression be indeed the truth, — the ape out of inferior animal forms, they again out of mollusc & protoplasm, jellyfish or vegetable animals, & so to the end of the series, then what need is there of anything but the training, preferably the most intelligent & scientific training of our mental, moral and physical energies till they reach a point when they are transmuted by the psychical chemistry of Nature into the coming superior type? But the problem is not so simple, in reality. There are three errors hidden at the basis of this sceptical question. We mistake the nature of the operation to be effected, we mistake the nature of the power & process that works it out, we mistake the nature of the thing that uses the power & works out the process.

Nature does not propose to man to work out a higher mental, moral and physical variation-type in the mould of the present human being, — the symbol we are; it proposes to break that general type altogether in order to advance to a new symbol-being which shall be supernatural to present man as present man is to the animal below him. It is doubtful whether in the pure human mould Nature can go much farther than she has gone at present; that she can for instance produce a higher mental type than Newton, Shakespeare, Caesar or Napoleon, a higher moral type than Buddha, Christ or St Francis, a higher physical type than the Greek athlete or to give modern examples, a Sandow or a Ramamurti. She may seek to bring about a better combination of mental & moral, or of moral, mental & physical energies; but is she likely to produce anything much above the level of Confucius or Socrates? It is more probable & seems to be true that Nature seeks in this field to generalise a higher level and a better combination. Neither need we believe that, even here, her object is to bring all men to the same level; for that can only be done by levelling downwards. Nothing in Nature is free from inequalities except the forms that are the lowest and least developed. The higher the effort accomplished, the more richly endowed the organism of the species, the greater the chances of inequality. In so high and developed a natural movement as Man, equality of individual opportunity is conceivable, equality of natural powers and accomplishment is a chimera. Nor will the generalisation of powers or the increase of material make any difference to the level of natural attainment. All the accumulated discoveries & varied information of the modern scientist will not make him mentally the superior of Aristotle or Socrates; he is neither an acuter mind nor a greater mental force. All the varied activities of modern philanthropy will not produce a greater moral type than Buddha or St Francis. The invention of the motor car will not make up for the lost swiftness & endurance nor gymnastics restore the physical capacity of the Negro or the American Indian. We see therefore the limits of Nature's possibilities in the human symbol, fixed by the character of the symbol itself and recognised by her in her strivings.

It is still a question whether in these limits the chief preoccupation of Nature is the exhaustion of the possibilities of the human symbol. That is rather man's preoccupation and therefore the direction she takes when human intellect interferes with her normal progression. Left to herself & even utilising human interferences, she seems bent rather on breaking the mould, than on perfecting it, — only indeed in her more advanced individuals & more daring movements and with due regard to the safety of the general human type, but this is always her method when she wishes to advance to a fresh symbol without destroying the anterior species. The more civilised man becomes, the more she plagues him with moral abnormalities, excesses of vice & virtue and confusions of the very type of vice & virtue; the more he intellectualises, the more he insists on rationality as his utmost bourne, the more she becomes dissatisfied and clamours to him to develop rather his instincts & his intuitions; the more he strives after health & hygiene, the more she multiplies diseases & insanities of mind and body. He has triumphed over supernaturalism, he has chained her down to the material, human & rational; immediately she breaks out fiercely into unthought-of revivals and gigantic supernaturalisms. Whatever work she is intent on, she will not be baulked in that work by the limited human reason. Through all her vast being she feels the pulsation of a supernatural power, the workings & strivings of a knowledge superior to material reason. She breaks out, therefore, she compels, she insists. Everywhere we see her striving to break the mental, moral & physical type she has created & to get beyond it to some new processes as yet not clearly discerned. She attacks deliberately the sound healthfulness & equilibrium of our normal type of intellectuality, morality & physical being. She is stricken also with a mania of colossalism; colossal structures, colossal combinations, colossal heights & speeds, colossal dreams & ambitions outline themselves everywhere more or less clearly, more or less dimly. Unable as yet to do her will in the individual, she works with masses; unable in the mind, with material forms & inventions; unable in actualities, with hopes & dreams; unable to reproduce or produce Napoleons & super-Napoleons, she generalises a greater reach of human capacity from which they may hereafter emerge more easily, & meanwhile she creates instead Dreadnoughts & Super-dreadnoughts, Trusts & mammoth combines, teems with distance destroying inventions & seems eager & furious to trample to pieces the limitations of space & time she herself has created.

As if to point her finger to the thing she intends, she has accumulated the signs of this process of breaking & rebuilding in the phenomena of genius. It is now common knowledge that genius hardly appears in the human species unattended, unprepared or unaccompanied by abnormalities in the individual body, vitality & mind which contains it, — degeneration, insanity or freak in the heredity which produces it and even disturbance & supra-normality in the human environment in which it occurs. The haste of a brilliant generalisation establishes on this basis the paradox that genius itself is a morbid phenomenon of insanity or degeneration. The true explanation is sufficiently clear. In order to establish genius in the human system, Nature is compelled to disturb & partially break the normality of that system, because she is introducing into it an element that is alien as it is superior to the type which it enriches. Genius is not the perfect evolution of that new & divine element; it is only a beginning or at the highest an approximation in certain directions. It works fitfully & uncertainly in the midst of an enormous mass of somewhat disordered human mentality, vital nervosity, physical animality. The thing itself is divine, it is only the undivine mould in which it works that is to a lesser or greater extent broken & ploughed up by the unassimilated force that works in it. Sometimes there is an element in the divine intruder which lays its hand on the mould & sustains it, so that it does not break at all, nor is flawed; or if there is a disturbance, it is slight and negligible. Such an element there was in Caesar, in Shakespeare, in Goethe. Sometimes also a force appears to which we can no longer apply the description of genius without being hopelessly inadequate in our terminology. Then those who have eyes to see, bow down and confess the Avatar. For it is often the work of the Avatar to typify already, partly or on the whole, what Nature has not yet effected in the mass or even in the individual, so that his passing may stamp it on the material ether in which we live.

But what is this type of which the great Mother is in labour? What birth will emerge from the cries & throes of this prolonged & mighty pregnancy? A greater type of humanity, it may be said. But in order to understand what we are saying, we must first see clearly what the humanity is which she seeks to surpass. This human symbol, this type we now are is a mental being with a mental ego, working in a vital case by mind always, but upon matter, in matter & through matter. It is limited in its higher workings by its lower instruments. Its basis of mind is egoistic, sensational & determined by experience & environment, its knowledge therefore pursues wider or narrower circles in a fixed and meagre range. Its moral temperament & action is similarly egoistic, sensational, experiential and determined by environment; for this reason it is bound equally to sin & virtue and all attempts radically to moralise the race within the limits of its egoistic nature have been & must necessarily, in spite of particular modifications, end in general failure. It is not only a mixed but a confused type, body & vitality interfering with mind & mind both hampered by & hampering body & vitality. Its search for knowledge, founded on sense contact, is a groping like that of a man finding his way in a forest at night; it makes acquaintance with its surroundings by touching, dashing on or stumbling over them; and, although it has an uncertain light of reason given it which partially corrects this disability, yet since reason has also to start from the senses which are consistent falsifiers of values, rational knowledge is not only restricted but pursued by vast dimnesses & uncertainties even in that which it seems to itself to have grasped. It secures a few flowers of truth by rummaging in a thorny hedge of doubts & errors. The actions of the type also are a breaking through thickets, a sanguine yet tormented stumbling forward through eager failures to partial and temporary successes. Immensely superior to all else that Nature had yet effected, this type is yet so burdened with disabilities, that, if it were impossible to break its mould and go forward, there would be much justification for those pessimistic philosophies which despair of Life & see in the Will not to Live humanity's only door of escape admitting to it no other salvation. But Nature is the will of the all-Wise God and she is not working out a reduction of the world to absurdity. She knows her goal, she knows that man as he is at present is only a transitional type; and so far as she can consistently with the survival of the type, she presses forward to what she has seen in God's eternal knowledge as standing beyond. From this ego, she moves towards a universal consciousness, from this limitation to a free movement in infinity, from this twilit & groping mind to the direct sunlit vision of things, from this conflict without issue between vice & virtue to a walking that keeps spontaneously to a God-appointed path, from this broken & grief-besieged action to a joyous & free activity, from this confused strife of our members to a purified, unentangled and harmonious combination, from this materialised mentality to an idealised

& illuminated life, body & mind, from the symbol to reality, from man separated from God to man in God & God in man. In brief, as she has aspired successfully from matter to life, from life to mind & mental ego, so she aspires & with a fated success to an element beyond mind, the vijnana of the Hindus, the self-luminous idea or Truth-self now concealed & superconscious in man and the world, as life was always concealed in matter and mind in life. What this vijnana is, we have yet to see, but through it she knows she can lay firm hold on that highest term of all which is the reality of all symbols, in Spirit, in Sachchidananda.

The aim of Nature is also the aim of Yoga. Yoga, like Nature at its summit, seeks to break this mould of ego, this mould of mentalised life body and materialised mind, in order to achieve ideal action, ideal truth and infinite freedom in our spiritual being. To effect so enormous an end great and dangerous processes have to be used. Those who have been eager on this road or have opened up new paths towards the goal, have had to affront as a possibility frequently realised loss of reason, loss of life & health or dissolution of the moral being. They are not to be pitied or scorned even when they succumb; rather are they martyrs for humanity's progress, far more than the lost navigator or the scientist slain by the dangers of his investigation. They prepare consciently the highest possible achievement towards which the rest of humanity instinctively & unconsciously moves. We may even say that Yoga is the appointed means Nature holds in reserve for the accomplishment of her end, when she has finished her long labour of evolving at least a part of humanity temperamentally equal to the effort and intellectually, morally & physically prepared for success. Nature moves toward supernature, Yoga moves towards God; the world-impulse & the human aspiration are one movement and the same journey.

Nature

If this is the nature of the operation to be effected, not a perfection of the present human mould but a breaking of it to proceed to a higher type, what then is the power & process that works it out? What is this Nature of which we speak so fluently?[1] We habitually talk of it as if it were something mighty & conscious that lives and plans; we credit it with an aim, with wisdom to pursue that aim and with power to effect what it pursues. Are we justified in our language by the actualities of the universe or is this merely our inveterate habit of applying human figures to non-human things and the workings of intelligence to non-intelligent processes which come right because they must and not because they will and produce this magnificent ordered universe by some dumb blind and brute necessity inconceivable in its origin & nature to intelligent beings? If so, this blind brute force has produced something higher than itself, something which did not exist preconceived in its bosom or in any way belong to it. We cannot understand what being & Nature are, not because we are as yet too small and limited, but because we are too much above being & Nature. Our intelligence is a luminous freak in a darkness from which it was impossibly produced, since nothing in that darkness justified itself as a cause of its creation. Unless mind was inherent in brute matter, — & in that case matter is only apparently brute, — it was impossible for matter to produce mind. But since this leads us to an impossibility, it cannot be the truth. We must suppose then, if matter is brute, that mind is also brute. Intelligence is an illusion; there is nothing but a shock of material impacts creating vibrations & reactions of matter which translate themselves into the phenomena of intelligence. Knowledge is only a relation of matter with matter, and is intrinsically neither different nor superior to the hurtling of atoms against each other or the physical collision of two bulls in a meadow. The material agents involved & phenomenon produced are different & therefore we do not call the recoil of one horned forehead from another an act of knowledge or intelligence, but the thing that has happened is intrinsically the same. Intelligence is itself inert & mechanical & merely the physiological result of a physiological movement & has nothing in it psychical or mental in the time-honoured sense of the words soul and mind. This is the view of modern scientific rationalism, — put indeed in other language than the scientist's, put so as to bring out its logical consequences & implications, but still effectively the modern account of the universe.

---

[1] *The following sentence was written at the beginning of this essay during revision. It was not worked into the text, and so is given here as a footnote:*

Nature is Force of Consciousness in infinite Being. The opinion that sees a mechanical world in which consciousness is only an exceptional figure of things, is a hasty conclusion drawn from imperfect data.

In that account the nature of a thing consists of its composition, the properties contained in that composition and the laws of working determined by those properties; as for [example] iron is composed of certain elementary substances, possesses as a consequence of its composition certain properties, such as hardness etc. and under given circumstances will act in a given manner as the result of its properties. Applying this analysis on a larger scale we see the universe as the composition of certain brute forces working in certain material substances, possessed in itself and in those substances of certain primary & secondary, general & particular properties and working as a result by certain invariable tendencies & fixed processes which we call by a human figure Nature's Laws. This is Nature. When searchingly analysed she is found to be a play of two entities, Force & Matter; but these two, if the unitarian view of the universe is correct, will some day be proved to be only one entity, either only Matter or only Force.

Even if we accept this modern view of the universe, which, it is not at all dangerous to prophesy, will have disappeared in the course of a century into a larger synthesis, there is still something to be said about the presence or absence of intelligence in Nature. In what after all does intelligence consist, what are its composition, properties, laws? What in its circumstances is human intelligence, the only kind of intelligence which we are in a position to study from within & therefore understand? It is marked by three qualities or processes, the power & process of adaptation towards an end, the power & process of discrimination between the impacts on its senses & the power & process of mentally conscious comprehension. Human intelligence is, to put it briefly, teleological, discriminative and mentally conscious. About other than human beings, about animals, trees, metals, forces, we can say nothing from inside, we can only infer the absence or presence of these elements of consciousness from the evidence collected by an external observation. We cannot positively say, having no internal evidence, that the tree is not a mind imprisoned in matter and unable to express itself in the media it has at its disposal; we cannot say that it does not suffer the reactions of pleasure and pain; but from the external evidence we infer to the contrary. Our negative conclusion is probable, it is not certain. It may be itself negatived in the future march of knowledge. But still, taking the evidence as it stands, what are the facts we actually arrive at in this comparison of intelligent & non-intelligent Nature?

First, Nature possesses in a far higher degree than man the teleological faculty & process. To place an aim before one, to combine, adapt, modify, unify, vary means & processes in order to attain that end, to struggle against and overcome difficulties, to devise means to circumvent difficulties when they cannot be overcome, this is one of the noblest & divinest parts of human intelligence. But its action in man is only a speciality of its universal action in Nature. She works it out in man partly through the reason, in animals with very little & rudimentary reason, mainly through instinct, memory, impulse & sensation, in plants & other objects with very little & rudimentary reason, mainly through impulse & mechanical or, as we call it, involuntary action. But throughout there is the end & the adaptation to the end, & throughout the same basic means are used; for in man also it is only for a selection of his ends & processes that the reason is used; for the greater part she uses the animal means, memory, impulse, sensation, instinct, — instincts differently directed, less decisive & more general than the animal instincts but still in the end & for their purpose as sure; & for yet another part she uses the same merely mechanical impulse & involuntary action precisely as in her mistermed inanimate forms of existence. Let us not say that the prodigality of Nature, her squandering of materials, her frequent failure, her apparent freaks and gambollings are signs of purposelessness and absence of intelligence. Man with his reason is guilty of the same laches and wanderings. But neither Man nor Nature is therefore purposeless or unintelligent. It is Nature who compels Man himself to be other than too strenuously utilitarian, for she knows better than the economist & the utilitarian philosopher. She is an universal intelligence & she has to attend, not only in the sum, but in each detail, to the universal as well as to the particular effect; she has to work out each detail with her eye on the group and not only on the group but the whole kind & not only on the whole kind but the whole world of species. Man, a particular intelligence limited by his reason, is incapable of this largeness; he puts his particular ends in the forefront and neither sees where absorption in them hurts his general well being nor can divine where they clash with the universal purpose. Her failures have an utility — we shall see before long how great an utility; her freaks have a hidden seriousness. And yet above all she remembers that beyond all formal ends, her one great object is the working out of universal delight founded on arrangement as a means, but exceeding its means. Towards that she moves; she takes delight on the way, she takes delight in the work, she takes delight, too, beyond the work.

But in all this we anticipate, we speak as if Nature were self-conscious; what we have arrived at is that Nature is teleological, more widely than man, more perfectly than man, & man himself is only teleological because of that in Nature & by the same elementary means & processes as the animal & the plant, though with additions of fresh means peculiar to mind. This, it may be said, does not constitute Intelligence, — for intelligence is not only teleological, but discriminative & mentally conscious. Mechanical discrimination, Nature certainly possesses in the highest degree; without it her teleological processes would be impossible. The tendril growing straight through the air comes into contact with a rope, a stick, the stalk of a plant; immediately it seizes it as with a finger, changes its straight growth for a curled & compressive movement, & winds itself round & round the support. What induces the change? what makes it discriminate the presence of a support & the possibility of this new movement? It is the instinct of the tendril and differs in no way, intrinsically, from the instinct of the newborn pup seizing at once on its mother's teats or the instinct of a man in his more mechanical needs & actions. We see the moon-lotus open its petals to the moon, close them to the touch of the day. In what does this discriminative movement differ from the motion of the hand leaping back from the touch of a flame, or from the recoiling movement of disgust & displeasure in the nerves from an abhorrent sight or from the recoiling movement of denial & uncongeniality in the mind from a distasteful idea or opinion? Intrinsically, there seems to be no difference; but there is a difference in circumstance. One is not attended with mental self-consciousness, the others are attended with this supremely important element. We think falsely that there is no will in the action of the tendril and the lotus, and no discrimination. There is a will, but not mentalised will; there is discrimination but not mentalised discrimination. It is mechanical, we say, — but do we understand what we mean when we say it, — & we give other names, calling will force, discrimination a natural reaction or an organic tendency. These names are only various masks concealing an intrinsic identity.

Even if we could go no farther, we should have gained an enormous step; for we have already the conception of the thing we call Nature as possessing, containing or identical with a great Force of Will placing before itself a vast end & a million complexly related incidental ends, working them out by contrivance, adaptation, arrangement, device, using an unfailing discrimination & vastly fulfilling its complex work. Of this great

Force human intelligence would only be a limited and inferior movement, guided and used by it, serving its ends even when it seems to combat its ends. We may deny Intelligence to such a Power, because it does not give signs of mental consciousness & does not in every part of its works use a human or mental intelligence; but our objection is only a metaphysical distinction. Practically, looking out on life & not in upon abstract thought, we can, if we admit this conception, rely on it that the workings of this unintelligent discrimination will be the same as if they were the workings of a universal Intelligence & the aim & means of the mechanical will the aims & means which would be chosen by an Almighty Wisdom. But if we arrive at this certainty, does not Reason itself demand of us that we should admit in Nature or behind it a universal Intelligence and an Almighty Wisdom? If the results are such as these powers would create, must we not admit the presence of these powers as the cause? Which is the truer Rationalism, to admit that the works of Intelligence are produced by Intelligence or to assert that they are produced by a blind Machine unconsciously working out perfection? to admit that the emergence of overt intelligence in humanity is due to the specialised function of a secret intelligence in the universe or to assert that it is the product of a Force to which the very principle of Intelligence is absent? To justify the paradox by saying that things are worked out in a particular way because it is their nature to be worked out in that way, is to play the fool with reason; for it does not carry us an inch beyond the mere fact that they are so worked out, one knows not why.

The true reason for the modern reluctance to admit that Nature has intelligence & wisdom or is intelligence & wisdom, is the constant association in the human mind of these things with mentally self-conscious personality. Intelligence, we think, presupposes someone who is intelligent, an ego who possesses & uses this intelligence. An examination of human consciousness shows that this association is an error. Intelligence possesses us, not we intelligence; intelligence uses us, not we intelligence. The mental ego in man is a creation & instrument of intelligence and intelligence itself is a force of Nature manifesting itself in a rudimentary or advanced state in all animal life. This objection, therefore, vanishes. Not only so, but Science herself by putting the ego in its right place as a product of mind has shown that Intelligence is not a human possession but a force of Nature & therefore an attribute of Nature, a manifestation of the universal Force.

The question remains, is it a fundamental & omnipresent attribute or only a development manifested in a select minority of her works? Here again, the difficulty is that we associate intelligence with an organised mental consciousness. But let us look at & interrogate the facts which Science has brought into our ken. We will glance at only one of them, the fly catching plant of America. Here is a vegetable organism which has hunger, — shall we say, an unconscious hunger, which needs animal food, which sets a trap for it, as the spider sets it, which feels the moment the victim touches the trap, which immediately closes & seizes the prey, eats & digests it & lies in wait for more. These motions are exactly the motions of the spider's mental intelligence altered & conditioned only by the comparative immobility of the plant & confined only, so far as we can observe, to the management of this supreme vital need & its satisfaction. Why should we attribute mental intelligence to the spider & none to the plant? Granted that it is rudimentary, organised only for special purposes, still it would seem to be the same natural Force at work in the spider & plant, intelligently devising means to an end & superintending the conduct of the device. If there is no mind in the plant, then, irresistibly, mental intelligence & mechanical intelligence are one & the same thing in essence, & the tendril embracing its prop, the plant catching its prey & the spider seizing its victim are all forms of one Force of action, which we may decline to call Intelligence if we will, but which is obviously the same thing as Intelligence. The difference is between Intelligence organised as mind, & Intelligence not organised but working with a broad elementary purity more unerring, in a way, than the action of mind. In the light of these facts the conception of Nature as infinite teleological & discriminative Force of Intelligence unorganised & impersonal because superior to organisation & personality becomes the supreme probability, the mechanical theory is only a possibility. In the absence of certainties Reason demands that we should accept the probable in preference to the possible and a harmonious & natural in preference to a violent and paradoxical explanation.

But is it certain that in this Intelligence & its works Mind is a speciality and Personality — as distinguished from mental ego — is entirely absent except as an efflorescence & convenience of Mind? We think so, because we suppose that where there are no animal signs of consciousness, there consciousness cannot and does not exist. This also may be an assumption. We must remember that we know nothing of the tree & the stone except its exterior signs of life or quiescence; our internal knowledge is confined to the phenomena of human psychology. But even in this limited sphere there is much that should make us think very deeply and pause very long before we hasten to rash negative assertions. A man sleeps, dreamlessly, he thinks; but we know that all the time consciousness is at work within him, dreaming, always dreaming; of his body & its surroundings he knows nothing, yet that body is of itself conducting all the necessary operations of life. In the man stunned or in trance there is the same phenomenon of a divided being, consciousness mentally active within apart from the body which is mentally even as the tree & the stone, but vitally active & functioning like the tree. Catalepsy presents a still more curious phenomenon of a body dead & inert like the stone, not even vitally active like the tree, but a mind perfectly aware of itself, its medium & its surroundings, though no longer in active possession of the medium and therefore no longer able to act materially on its surroundings. In face of these examples how can we assert that there is no life in the stone, no mind in stone or tree? The premise of the syllogism by which science denies mind to the tree or life to the stone, viz that where there is no outward sign of life or conscious mentality, life & mentality do not exist, is proven to be false. The possibility, even a certain probability presents itself, — in view of the unity of Nature & the omnipresent intelligence in her works, that the tree & the stone are in their totality just such a divided being, a form not yet penetrated & possessed by conscious mind, a conscious intelligence within dreaming in itself or, like the cataleptic, aware of its surroundings, but because not yet possessed of its medium (the intelligence in the cataleptic is temporarily dispossessed) unable to show any sign of life or of mentality or to act aggressively on its surroundings.

We do not need to stop at this imperfect probability, for the latest researches of psychology make it almost overwhelming in its insistence & next door to the actual proof. We now know that within men there is a dream self or sleep self other than the waking consciousness, active in the stunned, the drugged, the hypnotised, the sleeping, which knows what the waking mind does not know, understands what the waking mind does not understand, remembers accurately what the waking mind has not even taken the trouble to notice. Who is this apparent sleeper in the waking, this waker in the sleeping in comparison with whose comprehensive attentiveness & perfect observation, memory and intelligence our waking consciousness is only a fragmentary & hasty dream? Mark this capital point that this more perfect consciousness within us is not the product of evolution, — nowhere in the evolved & waking world is there such a being who remembers & repeats automatically the sounds of a foreign language which is unnoticed jabbering to the instructed mind, solves spontaneously problems from which the instructed mind has retired baffled & weary, notices everything, understands everything, recalls everything. Therefore this consciousness within is independent of evolution and, consequently, we may presume, anterior to evolution. Esha supteshu jagarti, says the Katha Upanishad, This is the Waker in all who sleep.

This new psychological research is only in its infancy & cannot tell us what this secret consciousness is, but the knowledge gained by Yoga enables us to assert positively that this is the complete mental being within who guides life & body, manomayah pranashariraneta. He it is who conducts our evolution & awakes mind out of life & is more & more getting possession of this vitalised human body, his medium & instrument, so that it may become what it is not now, a perfect instrument of mentality. In the stone he also is and in the tree, in those sleepers also there is one who wakes; but he has not in those forms got possession yet of the instrument for the purposes of mind; he can only use them for the purposes of vitality in its growth or in its active functioning.

We see, therefore, modern psychology, although it still gets away from the only rational & logical conclusion possible on its data, marching inevitably & under the sheer compulsion of facts to the very truths arrived at thousands of years ago by the ancient Rishis. How did they arrive at them? Not by speculation, as the scholars vainly imagine, but by Yoga. For the great stumbling block that has stood in the way of Science is its inability to get inside its object, the necessity under which it labours of building on inferences from external study, — & all its desperate & cruel attempts to make up the deficiency by vivisection or other ruthless experiments cannot remedy the defect. Yoga enables us to get inside the object by dissolving the artificial barriers of the bodily experience & the mental ego-sense in the observer. It takes us out of the little hold of personal experience and casts us into the great universal currents; takes us out of the personal mind sheath & makes [us] one with universal self and universal mind. Therefore were the ancient Rishis able to see what now we are beginning again to glimpse dimly that not only is Nature herself an infinite teleological and discriminative impersonal Force of Intelligence or Consciousness, prajna prasrita purani,[2] but that God dwells within & over Nature as infinite universal Personality, universal in the universe, individualised as well as universal in the particular form, or self-consciousness who perceives, enjoys & conducts to their end its vast & complex workings. Not only is there Prakriti; there is also Purusha.

So far, then, we succeed in forming some idea of the great force which is to work out our emergence from our nature to our supernature. It is a force of Conscious Being manifesting itself in forms & movements & working out exactly as it is guided, from stage to stage, the predetermined progress of our becoming & the Will of God in the world.

---

[2] Intelligent Consciousness that went forth in the beginning. Swetaswatara Upanishad.

Maya

The world exists as symbol of Brahman; but the mind creates or accepts false values of things and takes symbol for essential reality. This is ignorance or cosmic illusion, the mistake of the mind & senses, from which the Magician Himself, Master of the Illusion, is calling on us to escape. This false valuation of the world is the Maya of the Gita and can be surmounted without abandoning either action or world-existence. But in addition, the whole of universal existence is in this sense an illusion of Maya that it is not an unchanging transcendent and final reality of things but only a symbolical reality; it is a valuation of the reality of Brahman in the terms of cosmic consciousness. All these objects we see or are mentally aware of as objectively existing, are only forms of consciousness. They are the thing-in-itself turned first into terms & ideas born of a movement or rhythmic process of consciousness and then objectivised, in consciousness itself and not really external to it. They have therefore a fixed conventional reality, but not an eternally durable essential reality; they are symbols, not altogether the thing symbolised, means of knowledge, not altogether the thing known. To look at it from another point of view Existence or Brahman has two fundamental states of consciousness, cosmic consciousness and transcendental consciousness. To cosmic consciousness the world is real as a direct first term expressing the inexpressible; to transcendental consciousness the world is only a secondary & indirect term expressing the inexpressible. When I have the cosmic consciousness, I see the world as my Self manifested; in transcendental consciousness I see the world not as the manifestation of my Self but as a manifestation of something I choose to be to my Self-consciousness. It is a conventional term expressing me which does not bind me; I could dissolve it and express myself otherwise. It is a vocable of a particular language expressing something in speech or writing which could be equally well expressed by quite another vocable in another language. I say tiger in English; I might equally have spoken Sanscrit & used the word shardula; it would have made no difference to the tiger or to myself, but only to my play with the symbols of speech and thought. So it is with Brahman & the universe, the Thing in itself and its symbols with their fixed conventional values, some of which are relative to the general consciousness & some to the individual consciousness of the symbol-being. Matter, Mind, Life for instance are general symbols with a fixed general value to God in His cosmic consciousness; but they have a different individual value, make a different impression or represent themselves differently, as we say, to myself, to the ant or to the god and angel. This perception of the purely conventional value of form & name in the Universe is expressed in metaphysics by the formula that the world is a creation of Para Maya or supreme Cosmic Illusion.

It does not follow that the world is unreal or has no existence worth the name. None of the ancient Scriptures of Hinduism affirms the unreality of the world, nor is it a logical consequence of the great but remote and difficult truth words are so inadequate to express. We must remember that all these terms, Maya, illusion, dream, unreality, relative reality, conventional value, are merely verbal figures and must not be pressed with a too literal scholastic or logical insistence. They are like the paint-brush hurled by the painter at his picture in desperation at not arriving at the effect he wanted; they are stones thrown at the truth, not the truth itself. We shall see this clearly enough when we come to look at the Cosmos from quite another standpoint, — the standpoint not of Maya, but Lila.[1] But certain great metaphysical minds, not perceiving sufficiently that words like everything else have only conventional values and are symbols of a truth which is in itself inexpressible, have drawn from the ideas suggested by these words, the most rigorous and concrete conclusions. They have condemned the whole world as a miserable & lying dream, all the more hateful & profitless for a certain element of ineffugable reality which the more clearsighted part of their minds was compelled to realise & partially to admit. The truth in their premises has made their doctrines a mighty instrument for the liberation of great & austere souls, the error in their conclusion has afflicted humanity with the vain & barren gospel of the vanity not only of false mundane existence, but of all mundane existence. In the extreme forms of this view both nature & supernature, man & God are lies of consciousness, myths of a cosmic dream & not worth accepting. Amelioration is a chimera, divinity a lure and only absorption in a transmundane impersonal existence worth pursuing. The worshippers of God, the seekers after human perfection, those who would raise humanity from nature to supernature, find in their path two great stumbling blocks, on one side, the lower trend of Nature to persist in its past gains which represents itself in the besotted naturalism of the practical man & the worldling and on the other, this grand overshooting of the mark represented not only by the world-fleeing ascetic, who is after all, within his rights, but by the depressing pessimism of the ignorant who mean neither to flee the world, nor, if they did, could rise to the real grandeur of asceticism, but are still imbued intellectually & overshadowed in temperament by these high & fatal doctrines. A better day will dawn for India when the shadow is lifted and the Indian mental consciousness without renouncing the truth of Maya, perceives that it is only a partial explanation of existence. Mundane existence is not indispensable either to God's being or to God's bliss, but it is not therefore a vanity; nor is a liberated mundane existence — liberated in God — either a vain or a false existence.

---

[1] Illusion is itself an illusion. That which seems to the soul escaping from ignorance to be Maya, an illusion or dream, is seen by the soul already free to be Lila of God and the spirit's play.

The ordinary doctrine of Maya is not a simple truth, but proceeds upon three distinct spiritual perceptions. The first & highest is this supreme perception that the world is a mass of consciousness-symbols, having a conventional value, beings exist only in Brahman's self-consciousness & individual personality & ego-sense are only symbols & terms in the universal symbol-existence. We have said that & we shall see that we are not compelled by this perception to set down the world as a myth or a valueless convention. Nor would the Mayavadin himself have been brought to this extreme conclusion if he had not brought into the purity of this highest soul-experience his two other perceptions. The second of these, the lowest, is the perception of the lower or Apara Maya which I have indicated in the opening of this essay — the perception of the system of false values put by mind & sense on the symbol facts of the universe. At a certain stage of our mental culture it is easy to see that the senses are deceiving guides, all mental opinions & judgments uncertain, partial & haunted & pursued by doubt, the world not a reality in the sense in which the mind takes it for a reality, in the sense in which the senses only occupied by & only careful of the practical values of things, their vyavaharic artha, deal with it as a reality. Reaching this stage the mind arrives at this perception that all its values for the world being false, perhaps it is because there is no true value or only a true value not conceivable to the mind, and from this idea it is easy for our impatient human nature to stride to the conclusion that so it is & all existence or all world-existence at least is illusory, a sensation born of nothingness, a play of zeros. Hence Buddhism, the sensational Agnostic philosophies, Mayavada. Again, it is easy at a certain stage of moral culture to perceive that the moral values put by the emotions, passions and aspirations on actions & experiences are false values, that the objects of our sins are not worth sinning for & even that our principles & values do not stand in the shock of the world's actualities, but are, they too, conventional values which we do not find to be binding on the great march of Nature. From this it is natural & right to come to vairagya or dissatisfaction with a life of false valuations and very easy to stride forward, again in the impatience of our imperfect human nature, to the consummation of an entire vairagya, not only dissatisfaction with a false moral life, but disgust with life of any sort & the conclusion of the vanity of world-existence. We have a mental vairagya, a moral vairagya and to these powerful motives is added in the greater types the most powerful of all, spiritual vairagya. For at a certain stage of spiritual culture we come to the perception of the world as a system of mere consciousness values in Parabrahman or to a middle term, the experience, which was probably the decisive factor in the minds of great spiritual seekers like Shankara, of the pure & bright impersonal Sachchidananda beyond, unaffected by & apparently remote from all cosmic existence. Observing intellectually through the mind this great experience, the conclusion is natural & almost inevitable that this Pure & Bright One regards the universe as a mirage, an unreality, a dream. But these are only the terms, the word-values & conventional idea-values into which mind then translates this fact of unaffected transcendence; & it so translates it because these are the terms it is itself accustomed to apply to anything which is beyond it, remote from it, not practically affecting it in tangible relations. The mind engrossed in matter at first accepts only an objective reality; everything not objectivised or apparently capable of some objective expression it calls a lie, a mirage, a dream, an unreality or, if it is favourably disposed an ideal. When, afterwards, it corrects its views, the first thing it does is to reverse its values; coming into a region & level where life in the material world seems remote, unspiritual or apparently not capable of spiritual realisation, it immediately applies here its old expressions dream, mirage, lie, unreality or mere false idea and transfers from object to spirit its exclusive & intolerant use of the word-symbol reality. Add to this mental translation into its own conventional word-values of the fact of unaffected transcendence the intellectual conclusions & temperamental repulsions of mental & moral vairagya, both together affecting & disfiguring the idea of the world as a system of consciousness values and we have Mayavada.

Section Four

1914–1919

The Beginning and the End

Who knows the beginning of things or what mind has ever embraced their end? When we have said a beginning, do we not behold spreading out beyond it all the eternity of Time when that which has begun was not? So also when we imagine an end our vision becomes wise of endless Space stretching out beyond the terminus we have fixed. Do even forms begin and end? Or does eternal Form only disappear from one of its canvases?

⁂

The experiment of human life on an earth is not now for the first time enacted. It has been conducted a million times before and the long drama will again a million times be repeated. In all that we do now, our dreams, our discoveries, our swift or difficult attainments we profit subconsciously by the experience of innumerable precursors and our labour will be fecund in planets unknown to us and in worlds yet uncreated. The plan, the peripeties, the denouement differ continually, yet are always governed by the conventions of an eternal Art. God, Man, Nature are the three perpetual symbols.

The idea of eternal recurrence affects with a shudder of alarm the mind entrenched in the minute, the hour, the years, the centuries, all the finite's unreal defences. But the strong soul conscious of its own immortal stuff and the inexhaustible ocean of its ever-flowing energies is seized by it with the thrill of an inconceivable rapture. It hears behind the thought the childlike laughter and ecstasy of the Infinite.

God, Man, Nature, what are these three? Whence flow their divergences? To what ineffable union advances the ever-increasing sum of their contacts? Let us look beyond the hours and moments; let us tear down the hedge of the years and the concept-wall of centuries and millenniums and break out beyond the limits of our prison-house. For all things seek to concentrate our view on the temporal interests, conceptions and realisations of our humanity. We have to look beyond them to know that which they serve and represent. Nothing in the world can be understood by itself, but only by that which is beyond it. If we would know all, we must turn our gaze to that which is beyond all. That being known all else is comprehended.

* * *

A beginningless and endless eternity and infinity in which divisible Time and Space manage to subsist is the mould of existence. They succeed in subsisting because they are upheld by God's view of Himself in things.

God is all existence. Existence is a representation of ineffable Being. Being is neither eternal nor temporary, neither infinite nor limited, neither one nor many; it is nothing that any word of our speech can describe nor any thought of our mentality can conceive. The word existence unduly limits it; eternity & infinity are too petty conceptions; the term Being is an x representing not an unknown but an unknowable value. All values proceed from the Brahman, but it is itself beyond all values.

This existence is an incalculable Fact in which all possible opposites meet; its opposites are in truth identities.

It is neither one nor many and yet both one and many. Numberlessness increases in it and extends till it reaches unity; unity broken cannot stop short of numberlessness.

It is neither personal nor impersonal and yet at once personal and impersonal. Personality is a fiction of the impersonal; impersonality the mask of a Person. That impersonal Brahman was all the time a world-transcendent Personality and universal Person, is the truth of things as it is represented by life and consciousness. "I am" is the eternal assertion. Analytic thought gets rid of the I, but the Am remains and brings it back. Materialism changes "I am" into "It is", and when it has done so, has changed nothing. The Nihilist gets rid of both Am and Is only to find them waiting for him beyond on either side of his negation.

When we examine the Infinite and the Finite, Form and the Formless, the Silence and the Activity, our oppositions are equally baffled. Try however hard we will, God will not allow us to exclude any of them from His fathomless universality. He carries all Himself with Him into every transcendence.

* * *

All this is Infinity grasped by the Finite and the Finite lived by the Infinite.

The finite is a transience or a recurrence in the infinite, therefore Infinity alone is utterly real. But since that Real casts always this shadow of itself and since it is by the finite that its reality becomes conceivable, we must suppose that the phenomenon also is not a fiction.

The Infinite defines itself in the finite, the finite conceives itself in the Infinite. Each is necessary to the other's complete joy of being.

The Infinite pauses always in the finite; the finite arrives always in the Infinite. This is the wheel that circles forever through Time and Eternity.

If there were nothing to be transcended, the Transcendent would be incomplete in its own conception.

What is the value of the Formless unless it has stooped to Form? And on the other hand what truth or value has any form except to represent as in a mask the Indefinable and Invisible?

From what background have all these numberless forms started out, if not from the termless profundities of the Incommensurable? He who has not lost his knowledge in the Unknowable, knows nothing. Even the world he studies so sapiently, cheats and laughs at him.

When we have entered into the Unknowable, then all this other knowledge becomes valid. When we have sacrificed all forms into the Formless, then all forms become at once negligible and infinitely precious.

For the rest, that is true of all things. What we have not renounced, has no worth. Sacrifice is the great revealer of values.

⁂

As all words come out of the Silence, so all forms come out of the Infinite.

When the word goes back into the silence is it extinct for ever or does it dwell in the eternal harmony? When a soul goes back to God is it blotted out from existence or does it know and enjoy that into which it enters?

Does universe ever end? Does it not exist eternally in God's total idea of His own being?

Unless the Eternal is tired out by Time as by a load, unless God suffers loss of memory, how can universe cease from being?

Neither for soul nor universe is extinction the goal, but for one it is infinite self-possessing and for the other the endless pursuit of its own immutably mutable rhythms.

⁂

Existence, not annihilation is the whole aim and pursuit of existence.

If Nothing were the beginning Nothing also would be the end; but in that case Nothing also would be the middle.

If indiscriminable unity were the beginning it would also be the end. But then what middle term could there be except indiscriminable unity?

There is a logic in existence from which our Thought tries to escape by twisting and turning against its own ultimate necessity, as if a snake were to try to get away from itself by coiling round its own body. Let it cease coiling and go straight to the root of the whole matter, that there is no first nor last, no beginning nor ending, but only a representation of successions and dependences.

Succession and dependence are laws of perspective; they cannot be made a true measure of that which they represent.

Precisely because God is one, indefinable and beyond form, therefore He is capable of infinite definition and quality, realisation in numberless forms and the joy of endless self-multiplication. These two things go together and they cannot really be divided.

* * *

The Hour of God

There are moments when the Spirit moves among men and the breath of the Lord is abroad upon the waters of our being; there are others when it retires and men are left to act in the strength or the weakness of their own egoism. The first are periods when even a little effort produces great results and changes destiny; the second are spaces of time when much labour goes to the making of a little result. It is true that the latter may prepare the former, may be the little smoke of sacrifice going up to heaven which calls down the rain of God's bounty. Unhappy is the man or the nation which, when the divine moment arrives, is found sleeping or unprepared to use it, because the lamp has not been kept trimmed for the welcome and the ears are sealed to the call. But thrice woe to them who are strong and ready, yet waste the force or misuse the moment; for them is irreparable loss or a great destruction.

In the hour of God cleanse thy soul of all self-deceit and hypocrisy and vain self-flattering that thou mayst look straight into thy spirit and hear that which summons it. All insincerity of nature, once thy defence against the eye of the Master and the light of the ideal, becomes now a gap in thy armour and invites the blow. Even if thou conquer for the moment, it is the worse for thee, for the blow shall come afterwards and cast thee down in the midst of thy triumph. But being pure cast aside all fear; for the hour is often terrible, a fire and a whirlwind and a tempest, a treading of the winepress of the wrath of God; but he who can stand up in it on the truth of his purpose is he who shall stand; even though he fall, he shall rise again, even though he seem to pass on the wings of the wind, he shall return. Nor let worldly prudence whisper too closely in thy ear; for it is the hour of the unexpected, the incalculable, the immeasurable. Mete not the power of the Breath by thy petty instruments, but trust and go forward.

But most keep thy soul clear, even if for a while, of the clamour of the ego. Then shall a fire march before thee in the night and the storm be thy helper and thy flag shall wave on the highest height of the greatness that was to be conquered.

Beyond Good and Evil

God is beyond good and evil; man moving Godwards must become of one nature with him. He must transcend good and evil.

God is beyond good and evil, not below them, not existing and limited by them, not even above them, but in a more absolute sense excedent and transcendent of the ideas of good and evil. He exceeds them in his universality; they exist in him, but the values of good and evil which we give to things is not their divine or universal value, they are only their practical value created by us in our psychological and dynamic dealings with life. God recognises them and seems to deal with us on the basis of this valuation of life, but only to such an extent as may serve his purpose in Nature. In his universal action he is not limited by them. But into his transcendent being of which his highest universal is the image, they do not at all enter; there in the highest universal which is to us transcendent is only the absolute good of which both our good and evil have in them certain differentiated elements. Neither our good nor our evil are or can of themselves give the absolute good; both have to be transformed, evil into good, good into pure and self-existent good, before they can be taken up into it.

This explains the nature of the universe which would otherwise be inexplicable, inconsistent with the being of God, a forcefully inconscient and violently active enigma. God must be beyond limitation by our ideas of good, otherwise the universe such as it is could not exist whether as the partly manifested being of a divine Existence or a thing created or permitted by a divine Will. He cannot, either, be evil, otherwise in man, his highest terrestrial creature or his highest terrestrial manifestation, there could not be this dominant idea of good and this stream of tendency towards righteousness. He cannot be a mixture of good and evil, whether a self-perplexed and struggling or a mysteriously ordered double principle, Ormuzd and Ahriman, or at least he cannot be limited by this duality, for there is much in the universe which is neither good nor evil. Perhaps the greatest part of the totality is either supramoral or inframoral or simply amoral. Good and evil come in with the development of mental consciousness; they exist in their rudimentary elements in the animal and primitive human mind, they develop with the human development. Good and evil are things which arrive in the process of the evolution; there is then the possibility that they will disappear in the process of the evolution. If indeed they are essential to its highest possible point of culmination, then they will remain; or if one of them be essential and the other non-essential, then that one will remain and its opposite will disappear.

The Divine Superman

This is thy work and the aim of thy being and that for which thou art here, to become the divine superman and a perfect vessel of the Godhead. All else that thou hast to do, is only a making thyself ready or a joy by the way or a fall from thy purpose. But the goal is this and the purpose is this and not in power of the way and the joy by the way but in the joy of the goal is the greatness and the delight of thy being. The joy of the way is because that which is drawing thee is also with thee on thy path and the power to climb was given thee that thou mightest mount to thy own summits.

If thou hast a duty, this is thy duty; if thou ask what shall be thy aim, let this be thy aim; if thou demand pleasure, there is no greater joy, for all other joy is broken or limited, the joy of a dream or the joy of a sleep or the joy of self-forgetting. But this is the joy of thy whole being. For if thou say what is my being, this is thy being, the Divine, and all else is only its broken or its perverse appearance. If thou seek the Truth, this is the Truth. Place it before thee and in all things be faithful to it.

It has been well said by one who saw but through a veil and mistook the veil for the face, that thy aim is to become thyself; and he said well again that the nature of man is to transcend himself. This is indeed his nature and that is indeed the divine aim of his self-transcending.

What then is the self that thou hast to transcend and what is the self that thou hast to become? For it is here that thou shouldst make no error; for this error, not to know thyself, is the fountain of all thy grief and the cause of all thy stumbling.

That which thou hast to transcend is the self that thou appearest to be, and that is man as thou knowest him, the apparent Purusha. And what is this man? He is a mental being enslaved to life and matter; and where he is not enslaved to life and matter, he is the slave of his mind. But this is a great and heavy servitude; for to be the slave of mind is to be the slave of the false, the limited and the apparent. The self that thou hast to become, is the self that thou art within behind the veil of mind and life and matter. It is to be the spiritual, the divine, the superman, the real Purusha. For that which is above the mental being, is the superman. It is to be the master of thy mind, thy life and thy body; it is to be a king over Nature of whom thou art now the tool, lifted above her who now has thee under her feet. It is to be free and not a slave, to be one and not divided, to be immortal and not obscured by death, to be full of light and not darkened, to be full of bliss and not the sport of grief and suffering, to be uplifted into power and not cast down into weakness. It is to live in the Infinite and possess the finite. It is to live in God and be one with him in his being. To become thyself is to be this and all that flows from it.

Be free in thyself, and therefore free in thy mind, free in thy life and thy body. For the Spirit is freedom.

Be one with God and all beings; live in thyself and not in thy little ego. For the Spirit is unity.

Be thyself, immortal, and put not thy faith in death; for death is not of thyself, but of thy body. For the Spirit is immortality.

To be immortal is to be infinite in being and consciousness and bliss; for the Spirit is infinite and that which is finite lives only by his infinity.

These things thou art, therefore thou canst become all this; but if thou wert not these things, then thou couldst never become them. What is within thee, that alone can be revealed in thy being. Thou appearest indeed to be other than this, but wherefore shouldst thou enslave thyself to appearances?

Rather arise, transcend thyself, become thyself. Thou art man and the whole nature of man is to become more than himself. He was the man-animal, he has become more than the animal man. He is the thinker, the craftsman, the seeker after beauty. He shall be more than the thinker, he shall be the seer of knowledge; he shall be more than the craftsman, he shall be the creator and master of his creation; he shall be more than the seeker of beauty, for he shall enjoy all beauty and all delight. Physical, he seeks for his immortal substance; vital he seeks after immortal life and the infinite power of his being; mental and partial in knowledge, he seeks after the whole light and the utter vision.

To possess these is to become the superman; for [it] is to rise out of mind into the supermind. Call it the divine mind or Knowledge or the supermind; it is the power and light of the divine will and the divine consciousness. By the supermind the Spirit saw and created himself in the worlds, by that he lives in them and governs them. By that he is Swarat Samrat, self-ruler and all-ruler.

Supermind is superman; therefore to rise beyond mind is the condition.

To be the superman is to live the divine life, to be a god; for the gods are the powers of God. Be a power of God in humanity.

To live in the divine Being and let the consciousness and bliss, the will and knowledge of the Spirit possess thee and play with thee and through thee, this is the meaning.

This is the transfiguration of thyself on the mountain. It is to discover God in thyself and reveal him to thyself in all things. Live in his being, shine with his light, act with his power, rejoice with his bliss. Be that Fire and that Sun and that Ocean. Be that joy and that greatness and that beauty.

When thou hast done this even in part, thou hast attained to the first steps of supermanhood.

Section Five

1927 and after

The Law of the Way

First be sure of the call and of thy soul's answer. For if the call is not true, not the touch of God's powers or the voice of his messengers, but the lure of thy ego, the end of thy endeavour will be a poor spiritual fiasco or else a deep disaster.

And if not the soul's fervour, but only the mind's assent or interest replies to the divine summons or only the lower life's desire clutches at some side attraction of the fruits of Yoga-power or Yoga-pleasure or only a transient emotion leaps like an unsteady flame moved by the intensity of the Voice or its sweetness or grandeur, then too there can be little surety for thee in the difficult path of Yoga.

The outer instruments of mortal man have no force to carry him through the severe ardours of this spiritual journey and Titanic inner battle or to meet its terrible or obstinate ordeals or nerve him to face and overcome its subtle and formidable dangers. Only his spirit's august and steadfast will and the quenchless fire of his soul's invincible ardour are sufficient for this difficult transformation and this high improbable endeavour.

Imagine not the way is easy; the way is long, arduous, dangerous, difficult. At every step is an ambush, at every turn a pitfall. A thousand seen or unseen enemies will start up against thee, terrible in subtlety against thy ignorance, formidable in power against thy weakness. And when with pain thou hast destroyed them, other thousands will surge up to take their place. Hell will vomit its hordes to oppose thee and enring and wound and menace; Heaven will meet thee with its pitiless tests and its cold luminous denials. Thou shalt find thyself alone in thy anguish, the demons furious in thy path, the Gods unwilling above thee. Ancient and powerful, cruel, unvanquished and close and innumerable are the dark and dreadful Powers that profit by the reign of Night and Ignorance and would have no change and are hostile. Aloof, slow to arrive, far-off and few and brief in their visits are the Bright Ones who are willing or permitted to succour. Each step forward is a battle. There are precipitous descents, there are unending ascensions and ever higher peaks upon peaks to conquer. Each plateau climbed is but a stage on the way and reveals endless heights beyond it. Each victory thou thinkest the last triumphant struggle proves to be but the prelude to a hundred fierce and perilous battles... But thou sayest God's hand will be with me and the Divine Mother near with her gracious smile of succour? And thou knowest not then that God's grace is more difficult to have or to keep than the nectar of the Immortals or Kuvera's priceless treasures? Ask of His chosen and they will tell thee how often the Eternal has covered his face from them, how often he has withdrawn from them behind his mysterious veil and they have found themselves alone in the grip of Hell, solitary in the horror of the darkness, naked and defenceless in the anguish of the battle. And if his presence is felt behind the veil, yet is it like the winter sun behind clouds and saves not from the rain and snow and the calamitous storm and the harsh wind and the bitter cold and the grey of a sorrowful atmosphere and the dun weary dullness. Doubtless the help is there even when it seems to be withdrawn, but still is there the appearance of total night with no sun to come and no star of hope to pierce the blackness. Beautiful is the face of the Divine Mother, but she too can be hard and terrible. Nay, then, is immortality a plaything to be given lightly to a child or the divine life a prize without effort or the crown for a weakling? Strive rightly and thou shalt have; trust and thy trust shall in the end be justified; but the dread Law of the Way is there and none can abrogate it.

Man and the Supermind

Man is a transitional being, he is not final; for in him and high beyond him ascend the radiant degrees which climb to a divine supermanhood.

The step from man towards superman is the next approaching achievement in the earth's evolution. There lies our destiny and the liberating key to our aspiring, but troubled and limited human existence — inevitable because it is at once the intention of the inner Spirit and the logic of Nature's process.

The appearance of a human possibility in a material and animal world was the first glint of a coming divine Light, — the first far-off intimation of a godhead to be born out of Matter. The appearance of the superman in the human world will be the fulfilment of that distant shining promise.

The difference between man and superman will be the difference between mind and a consciousness as far beyond it as thinking mind is beyond the consciousness of plant and animal; the differentiating essence of man is mind, the differentiating essence of superman will be supermind or a divine gnosis.

Man is a mind imprisoned, obscured and circumscribed in a precarious and imperfect living but imperfectly conscious body. The superman will be a supramental spirit which will envelop and freely use a conscious body, plastic to spiritual forces. His physical frame will be a firm support and an adequate radiant instrument for the spirit's divine play and work in Matter.

Mind, even free and in its own unmixed and unhampered element, is not the highest possibility of consciousness; for mind is not in possession of Truth, but only a minor vessel or an instrument and here an ignorant seeker plucking eagerly at a mass of falsehoods and half-truths for the unsatisfying pabulum of its hunger. Beyond mind is a supramental or gnostic power of consciousness that is in eternal possession of Truth; all its motion and feeling and sense and outcome are instinct and luminous with the inmost reality of things and express nothing else.

Supermind or gnosis is in its original nature at once and in the same movement an infinite wisdom and an infinite will. At its source it is the dynamic consciousness of the divine Knower and Creator.

When in the process of unfolding of an always greater force of the one Existence, some delegation of this power shall descend into our limited human nature, then and then only can man exceed himself and know divinely and divinely act and create; he will have become at last a conscious portion of the Eternal. The superman will be born, not a magnified mental being, but a supramental power descended here into a new life of the transformed terrestrial body. A gnostic supermanhood is the next distinct and triumphant victory to be won by the spirit descended into earthly nature.

The disk of a secret sun of Power and Joy and Knowledge is emerging out of the material consciousness in which our mind works as a chained slave or a baffled and impotent demiurge; supermind will be the formed body of that radiant effulgence.

Superman is not man climbed to his own natural zenith, not a superior degree of human greatness, knowledge, power, intelligence, will, character, genius, dynamic force, saintliness, love, purity or perfection. Supermind is something beyond mental man and his limits, a greater consciousness than the highest consciousness proper to human nature.

Man is a being from the mental worlds whose mentality works here involved, obscure and degraded in a physical brain, shut off from its own divinest powers and impotent to change life beyond certain narrow and precarious limits. Even in the highest of his kind it is baulked of its luminous possibilities of supreme force and freedom by this dependence. Most often and in most men it is only a servitor, a purveyor of amusements, a caterer of needs and interests to the life and the body. But the superman will be a gnostic king of Nature; supermind in him even in its evolutionary beginnings will appear as a ray of the eternal omniscience and omnipotence. Sovereign and irresistible it will lay hands on the mental and physical instruments, and, standing above and yet penetrating and possessing our lower already manifested parts, it will transform mind, life and body into its own divine and luminous nature.

Man in himself is hardly better than an ambitious nothing. He is a narrowness that reaches towards ungrasped widenesses, a littleness straining towards grandeurs which are beyond him, a dwarf enamoured of the heights. His mind is a darkened ray in the splendours of the universal Mind. His life is a striving exulting and suffering wave, an eager passion-tossed and sorrow-stricken or a blindly and dully toiling petty moment of the universal Life. His body is a labouring perishable speck in the material universe. An immortal soul is somewhere hidden within him and gives out from time to time some sparks of its presence, and an eternal spirit is above and overshadows with its wings and upholds with its power this soul continuity in his nature. But that greater spirit is obstructed from descent by the hard lid of his constructed personality and this inner radiant soul is wrapped, stifled and oppressed in dense outer coatings. In all but a few it is seldom active, in many hardly perceptible. The soul and spirit in man seem rather to exist above and behind his formed nature than to be a part of its visible reality; subliminal in his inner being or superconscient above in some unreached status, they are in his outer consciousness possibilities rather than things realised and present. The spirit is in course of birth rather than born in Matter.

This imperfect being with his hampered, confused, ill-ordered and mostly ineffective consciousness cannot be the end and highest height of the mysterious upward surge of Nature. There is something more that has yet to be brought down from above and is now seen only by broken glimpses through sudden rifts in the giant wall of our limitations. Or else there is something yet to be evolved from below, sleeping under the veil of man's mental consciousness or half visible by flashes, as life once slept in the stone and metal, mind in the plant and reason in the cave of animal memory underlying its imperfect apparatus of emotion and sense-device and instinct. Something there is in us yet unexpressed that has to be delivered by an enveloping illumination from above. A godhead is imprisoned in our depths, one in its being with a greater godhead ready to descend from superhuman summits. In that descent and awakened joining is the secret of our future.

Man's greatness is not in what he is but in what he makes possible. His glory is that he is the closed place and secret workshop of a living labour in which supermanhood is made ready by a divine Craftsman.

But he is admitted to a yet greater greatness and it is this that, unlike the lower creation, he is allowed to be partly the conscious artisan of his divine change. His free assent, his consecrated will and participation are needed that into his body may descend the glory that will replace him. His aspiration is earth's call to the supramental Creator.

If earth calls and the Supreme answers, the hour can be even now for that immense and glorious transformation.

The Involved and Evolving Godhead

The involution of a superconscient Spirit in inconscient Matter is the secret cause of this visible and apparent world. The key-word of the earth's riddle is the gradual evolution of a hidden illimitable consciousness and power out of the seemingly inert yet furiously driven force of insensible Nature. Earth-life is one self-chosen habitation of a great Divinity and his aeonic will is to change it from a blind prison into his splendid mansion and high heaven-reaching temple.

The nature of the Divinity in the world is an enigma to the mind, but to our enlarging consciousness it will appear as a presence simple and inevitable. Freed we shall enter into the immutable stability of an eternal existence that puts on this revealing multitude of significant mutable forms. Illumined we shall become aware of the indivisible light of an infinite consciousness that breaks out here into multiform grouping and detail of knowledge. Sublimated in might, we shall share the illimitable movement of an omnipotent force that works out its marvels in self-imposed limits. Fixed in griefless bliss we shall possess the calm and ecstasy of an immeasurable Delight that creates for ever the multitudinous waves and rhythms and the ever increasing outward-going and inward-drawing intensities of its own creative and communicative world-possessing and self-possessing bliss. This, since we are inwardly souls of that Spirit, will be the nature of our fourfold experience when the evolving Godhead will work here in its own unveiled movement.

If that full manifestation had been from the beginning, there would be no terrestrial problem, no anguish of growth, no baffled seeking out of mind and will and life and body towards knowledge and force and joy and an immortal persistence. But this Godhead, whether within us or outside in things and forces and creatures, started from an involution in inconscience of

Nature and began by the manifestation of its apparent opposites. Out of a vast cosmic inconscience and inertia and insensibility, an initial disguise that is almost non-existence, the Spirit in Matter has chosen to evolve and slowly shape, as if in a grudging and gradually yielding material, its might and light and infinity and beatitude.

The significance of the terrestrial evolution lies in this slow and progressive liberation of some latent indwelling Spirit. The heart of its mystery is the difficult appearance, the tardy becoming of a divine Something or Someone already involved in physical Nature. The Spirit is there with all its potential forces in a first formal basis of its own supporting, yet resistant substance. Its greater subsequent and deliberately emerging movements, life and mind and intuition and soul and supermind and the light of the Godhead are already there, locked up and obscurely compressed into the initial power and first expressive values of Matter.

Before there could be any evolution, there must needs be this involution of the Divine All that is to emerge. Otherwise there would have been not an ordered and significant evolution, but a successive creation of things unforeseeable, not contained in their antecedents, not their inevitable consequences or right followers in sequence.

This world is not an apparent order fortuitously managed by an inexplicable Chance. Neither is it a marvellous mechanism miraculously contrived by a stumblingly fortunate unconscious Force or mechanical Necessity. It is not even a structure built according to his fancy or will by an external and therefore necessarily a limited Creator. Mentally conceivable, each of these solutions can explain one side or appearance of things; but it is a greater truth that can alone successfully join all the aspects and illumine all the facts of the enigma.

If all were indeed a result of cosmic Chance, there would be no necessity of a new advance; nothing beyond mind need appear in the material world, — as indeed there was then no necessity for even mind to arise at all out of the meaningless blind material whirl. Consciousness itself would be only a fortuitous apparition, a strange hallucinating reflection or ghost of Matter.

Or if all were the work of a mechanical Force, then too mind need not have appeared at all as part of the huge grinding engine; there was no indispensable call for this subtler and yet less competent groping mechanic contrivance. No frail thinking brain should have been there to labour over the quite sufficient cogs and springs and pistons of the first unerring machine. A supermind added on this brilliant and painful complication would be still more a superfluity and a luminous insolence; it could be nothing more than a false pretension of transitory consciousness to govern and possess the greater inconscient Force that is its creator.

Or if an experimenting, external and therefore limited Creator were the inventor of the animal's suffering life and man's fumbling mind and this huge mainly unused and useless universe, there was no reason why he should not have stopped short with the construction of a mental intelligence in his creatures, content with the difficult ingenuity of his labour. Even if he were all-powerful and all-wise, he might well pause there, — for if he went farther, the creature would be in danger of rising too near to the level of his Maker.

But if this is the truth of things that an infinite Spirit, an eternal Divine Presence and Consciousness and Force and Bliss is involved and hidden here and slowly emerges, then is it inevitable that its powers or the ascending degrees of its one power should emerge too one after the other till the whole glory is manifested, a mighty divine Fact embodied and dynamic and visible.

All mental ideas of the nature of things, are inconclusive considerations of our insufficient logical reason when it attempts in its limited light and ignorant self-sufficiency to weigh the logical probabilities of a universal order which after all its speculation and discovery must remain obscure to it still and an enigma. The true witness and discoverer is our growing consciousness; for that consciousness is itself the sign and power of the evolving Divine, and its growth out of the apparent inconscience of the material universe is the fundamental, the one abiding, progressive index event of the long earth-story.

Only when this evolving consciousness can grow into its own full divine power will we directly know ourselves and the world instead of catching at tags and tail ends of an insufficient figure of knowledge. This full power of the consciousness is supermind or gnosis, — supermind because to reach it we have to pass beyond and turn upon mind as the mind itself has passed and turned upon life and inconscient matter and gnosis because it is eternally self-possessed of Truth and in its very stuff and nature it is dynamic substance of knowledge.

The true knowledge of things is denied to our reason, because that is not our spirit's greatest essential power but only an expedient, a transitional instrument meant to deal with the appearance of things and their phenomenal process. True knowledge commences only when our consciousness can pass beyond its present normal limit in man: for then it becomes directly aware of its self and of the Power in the world and begins to have at least an initial knowledge by identity which is the sole true knowledge. Henceforward it knows and sees, no longer by the reason groping among external data, but by an ever increasing and always more luminous self-illumining and all illuminating experience. In the end it will become a conscious part of the Divine revealing itself in the world; its life will be a power for the conscious evolution of that which is still unmanifested in the material universe.

The Evolution of Consciousness

All life here is a stage or a circumstance in an unfolding progressive evolution of a Spirit that has involved itself in Matter and is labouring to manifest itself in that reluctant substance. This is the whole secret of earthly existence.

But the key of that secret is not to be found in life itself or in the body; its hieroglyph is not in embryo or organism, — for these are only a physical means or base: the one significant mystery of this universe is the appearance and growth of consciousness in the vast mute unintelligence of Matter. The escape of Consciousness out of an apparent initial Inconscience, — but it was there all the time masked and latent, for the inconscience of Matter is itself only a hooded consciousness — its struggle to find itself, its reaching out to its own inherent completeness, perfection, joy, light, strength, mastery, harmony, freedom, this is the prolonged miracle and yet the natural and all-explaining phenomenon of which we are at once the observers and a part, instrument and vehicle.

A Consciousness, a Being, a Power, a Joy was here from the beginning darkly imprisoned in this apparent denial of itself, this original night, this obscurity and nescience of material Nature. That which is and was for ever, free, perfect, eternal and infinite, That which all is, That which we call God, Brahman, Spirit, has here shut itself up in its own self-created opposite. The Omniscient has plunged itself into Nescience, the All-Conscious into Inconscience, the All-Wise into perpetual Ignorance. The Omnipotent has formulated itself in a vast cosmic self-driven Inertia that by disintegration creates; the Infinite is self-expressed here in a boundless fragmentation; the All-Blissful has put on a huge insensibility out of which it struggles by pain and hunger and desire and sorrow. Elsewhere the Divine is; here in physical life, in this obscure material world, it would seem almost as if the Divine

Divine is not but is only becoming, θεος ουκ έστιν αλλα γιγνεται. This gradual becoming of the Divine out of its own phenomenal opposites is the meaning and purpose of the terrestrial evolution.

Evolution in its essence is not the development of a more and more organised body or a more and more efficient life — these are only its machinery and outward circumstance. Evolution is the strife of a Consciousness somnambulised in Matter to wake and be free and find and possess itself and all its possibilities to the very utmost and widest, to the very last and highest. Evolution is the emancipation of a self-revealing Soul secret in Form and Force, the slow becoming of a Godhead, the growth of a Spirit.

In this evolution mental man is not the goal and end, the completing value, the highest last significance; he is too small and imperfect to be the crown of all this travail of Nature. Man is not final, but a middle term only, a transitional being, an instrumental intermediate creature.

This character of evolution and this mediary position of man are not at first apparent; for to the outward eye it would seem as if evolution, the physical evolution at least were finished long ago leaving man behind as its poor best result and no new beings or superior creations were to be expected any longer. But this appears to us only so long as we look at forms and outsides only and not at the inner significances of the whole process. Matter, body, life even are the first terms necessary for the work that had to be done. New living forms may no longer be appearing freely, but this is because it is not, or at least it is not primarily, new living forms that the Force of evolution is now busied with evolving, but new powers of consciousness. When Nature, the Divine Power, had formed a body erect and empowered to think, to devise, to inquire into itself and things and work consciously both on things and self, she had what she wanted for her secret aim; relegating all else to the sphere of secondary movements, she turned toward that long-hidden aim her main highest forces. For all till then was a long strenuously slow preparation; but throughout it the development of consciousness in which the appearance of man was the crucial turning point had been kept wrapped within her as her ultimate business and true purpose.

This slow preparation of Nature covered immense aeons of time and infinities of space in which they appeared to be her only business; the real business strikes on our view at least when we look with the outward eye of reason as if it came only as a fortuitous accident, in or near the end, for a span of time and in a speck and hardly noticeable corner of one of the smallest provinces of a possibly minor universe among these many boundless finites, these countless universes. If it were so, we could still reply that time and space matter not to the Infinite and Eternal; it is not a waste of labour for That — as it would be for our brief death-driven existences — to work for trillions of years in order to flower only for a moment. But that paradox too is only an appearance — for the history of this single earth is not all the story of evolution — other earths there are even now elsewhere, and even here many earth-cycles came before us, and many are those that will come hereafter.

Nature laboured for innumerable millions of years to create a material universe of flaming suns and systems; for a lesser but still interminable series of millions she stooped to make this earth a habitable planet. For all that incalculable time she was or seemed busy only with the evolution of Matter; life and mind were kept secret in an apparent non-existence. But the time came when life could manifest, a vibration in the metal, a growing and seeking, a drawing in and a feeling outward in the plant, an instinctive force and sense, a nexus of joy and pain and hunger and emotion and fear and struggle in the animal, — a first organised consciousness, the beginning of the long-planned miracle. Thenceforward she was busy no more exclusively with matter for its own sake, but most with palpitant plasmic matter useful for the expression of life; the evolution of life was now her one intent purpose. And slowly too mind manifested in life, an intensely feeling, a crude thinking and planning vital mind in the animal, but in man the full organisation and apparatus, the developing if yet imperfect mental being, the Manu, the thinking, devising, aspiring, already self-conscient creature. And from that time onward the growth of mind rather than any radical change of life became her shining preoccupation, her wonderful wager. Body appeared to evolve no more; life itself evolved little or only so much in its cycles as would serve to express Mind heightening and widening itself in the living body; an unseen internal evolution was now Nature's great passion and purpose.

And if Mind were all that consciousness could achieve, if Mind were the secret Godhead, if there were nothing higher, larger, [no] more miraculous ranges, man could be left to fulfil mind and complete his own being and there would or need be nothing here beyond him, carrying consciousness to its summits, extending it to its unwalled vastnesses, plunging with it into depths unfathomable; he would by perfecting himself consummate Nature. Evolution would end in a Man-God, crown of the earthly cycles.

But Mind is not all; for beyond mind is a greater consciousness; there is a supermind and spirit. As Nature laboured in the animal, the vital being, till she could manifest out of him man, the Manu, the thinker, so she is labouring in man, the mental being till she can manifest out of him a spiritual and supramental godhead, the truth conscious Seer, the knower by identity, the embodied Transcendental and Universal in the individual nature.

From the clod and metal to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man, so much has she completed of her journey; a huge stretch or a stupendous leap still remains before her. As from matter to life, from life to mind, so now she must pass from mind to supermind, from man to superman; this is the gulf that she has to bridge, the supreme miracle that she has to perform before she can rest from her struggle and discontent and stand in the radiance of that supreme consciousness, glorified, transmuted, satisfied with her labour.

The subhuman was once here supreme in her, the human replacing it walks now in the front of Time, but still, aim and goal of the future there waits the supramental, the superman, an unborn glory yet unachieved before her.

The Path

The supramental Yoga is at once an ascent towards God and a descent of Godhead into the embodied nature.

The ascent can only be achieved by a one-centred all-gathering upward aspiration of the soul and mind and life and body; the descent can only come by a call of the whole being towards the infinite and eternal Divine. If this call and this aspiration are there, or if by any means they can be born and grow constantly and seize all the nature, then and then only a supramental uplifting and transformation becomes possible.

The call and the aspiration are only first conditions; there must be along with them and brought by their effective intensity an opening of all the being to the Divine and a total surrender.

This opening is a throwing wide of all the nature on all its levels and in all its parts to receive into itself without limits the greater divine Consciousness which is there already above and behind and englobing this mortal half-conscious existence. In the receiving there must be no inability to contain, no breaking down of anything in the system, mind or life or nerve or body under the transmuting stress. There must be an endless receptivity, an always increasing capacity to bear an ever stronger and more and more insistent action of the divine Force. Otherwise nothing great and permanent can be done; the Yoga will end in a break-down or an inert stoppage or a stultifying or a disastrous arrest in a process which must be absolute and integral if it is not [to] be a failure.

But since no human system has this endless receptivity and unfailing capacity, the supramental Yoga can succeed only if the Divine Force as it descends increases the personal power and equates the strength that receives with the Force that enters from above to work in the nature. This is only possible if there is on our part a progressive surrender of the being into the hands of the Divine; there must be a complete and never failing assent, a courageous willingness to let the Divine Power do with us whatever is needed for the work that has to be done.

Man cannot by his own effort make himself more than man; the mental being cannot by his own unaided force change himself into a supramental spirit. A descent of the Divine Nature can alone divinise the human receptacle.

For the powers of our mind, life and body are bound to their own limitations and, however high they may rise or however widely expand, they cannot rise above their natural ultimate limits or expand beyond them. But, still, mental man can open to what is beyond him and call down a supramental Light, Truth and Power to work in him and do what the mind cannot do. If mind cannot by effort become what is beyond mind, supermind can descend and transform mind into its own substance.

If the supramental Power is allowed by man's discerning assent and vigilant surrender to act according to its own profound and subtle insight and flexible potency, it will bring about slowly or swiftly a divine transformation of our present semiperfect nature.

This descent, this working is not without its possibility of calamitous fall and danger. If the human mind or the vital desire seizes hold on the descending force and tries to use it according to its own limited and erring ideas or flawed and egoistic impulses, — and this is inevitable in some degree until this lower mortal has learned something of the way of that greater immortal nature, — stumblings and deviations, hard and seemingly insuperable obstacles and wounds and suffering cannot be escaped and even death or utter downfall are not impossible. Only when the conscious integral surrender to the Divine has been learned by mind and life and body, can the way of the Yoga become easy, straight, swift and safe.

And it must be a surrender and an opening to the Divine alone and to no other. For it is possible for an obscure mind or an impure life force in us to surrender to undivine and hostile forces and even to mistake them for the Divine. There can be no more calamitous error. Therefore our surrender must be no blind and inert passivity to all influences or any influence, but sincere, conscious, vigilant, pointed to the One and the Highest alone.

Self-surrender to the divine and infinite Mother, however difficult, remains our only effective means and our sole abiding refuge. Self-surrender to her means that our nature must be an instrument in her hands, the soul a child in the arms of the Mother.

Part Two

From Man to Superman

Notes and Fragments on Philosophy, Psychology and Yoga

1912 – 1947

The notes, drafts and fragments collected in this part were not written by Sri Aurobindo in the present sequence nor intended by him to form a single work. They have been arranged by the editors by topic in three sections — Philosophy: God, Nature and Man; Psychology: The Science of Consciousness; Yoga: Change of Consciousness and Transformation of Nature.

Section One

Philosophy

God, Nature and Man

God
The One Reality

The Divine Eternal and Infinite

1

There are three Powers with whom we have to reckon, three and no others; for no others are in the universe or out of the universe: God, the Soul and Nature. And these three are, as it were, different fronts of One Being.

2

All existence, whatever its appearance or its process of being, is and draws its substance, origin, energy, truth from a Spirit which is the beginning, middle and end of all — itself being eternal, infinite, self-existent beyond end or beginning, beyond Space and Time, beyond Form and Quality and Circumstance as well as in Space and Time, in Form and Quality and Circumstance. This is the fundamental Reality which is hidden from our knowledge, the one Truth on which all other truths depend, those that affirm it as well as those that seem to contradict it. To be conscious of this Reality and its right relations with the other truths or appearances of existence, to live in it and govern by its Truth all our being, consciousness, nature, will, action would then be the law of a perfect life. If human life is imperfect, it is because its consciousness moves seeking, groping, experimenting in a fundamental ignorance of the real truth of its own being and is therefore unable to know or to effectuate the true law of its life. It is only if man can overcome this ignorance and inability that he can hope to perfect his life and nature. If there is no means of doing that, then he can never hope to escape from his imperfection — and the suffering which is its consequence. He can only either die in his ignorance escaping from an incurable imperfection and suffering by a physical extinction or escape out of it by a spiritual extinction gained through an awakening of the soul to the illusoriness of birth and world and Nature or [. . .] & hope to get [out] of it into some other supraterrestrial state of existence. Human life on earth can then never grow into anything fundamentally other, better or more perfect than it is now. The hope that by using our reason and observing or utilising the laws of Nature we can arrive at a perfect life here is futile, for our nature here being itself ignorant and imperfect cannot arrive at anything better than a mitigated imperfection and ignorance. But if there is a means by which we can arrive at a true knowledge of the reality behind things and enter into its Truth and Light and Power then there is no reason why our life here should not become divine and perfect. It is through Yoga that this means can be found and this emergence become possible.

3

A greater existence and consciousness than what we are now or are in our surface being, to which yet we can by certain means raise ourself and become or enter into that, — this is the postulate of all Yoga.

What is this greater consciousness and existence? It is something or someone eternal and infinite, absolute or perfect, in which all is, from which all comes, to which all returns and which is the secret self of all things. All is by its existence, all is conscious by its consciousness, continues to be by its Ananda of being, thinks by its Mind, lives by its life, is a form of its Energy in the Cosmos. But still the existence we live, the consciousness we use, the highest joy of being which we experience, our mind, life, body, force are but a fragmentary phenomenon of or in It. That Eternal is the All, the whole, our greater Self, our completeness, our universe, yet is it more than any universe. If no universe were, it still would be.

This Eternal and Infinite is not only an Eternal of endless Time and Space. For its eternity can be realised not only in the endless progression of the years and aeons but in a single moment of Time, its infinity not only in the boundless extension of space to which we can assign no end or border, but in the most infinitesimal atom of an atom. But beyond the moment and the endless aeons the eternity of the Eternal is timeless and beyond the spatial Infinite and Infinitesimal the infinity of the Infinite is spaceless.

4

All begins from the Divine, from the Eternal, from the Infinite, all abides in it alone and by it alone, all ends or culminates in the divine Eternal and Infinite. This is the first postulate indispensable for our spiritual seeking — for on no other base can we found the highest knowledge and the highest life.

All time moves in the Eternal; all space is spread in the Infinite; all creatures and creations live by that in them which is Divine. This is patently true of an inner spiritual but also proves in the end to be true of this outer space and time. It is known to our inmost being that it lives because it is part of the Divine, but it is true also of the external and phenomenal creature compounded of ignorant Mind, blind life and subconscious Matter.

A secret Self is the Alpha and Omega of this manifested existence; it is also the constant term, the omnipresent x into which all things resolve separately or together and which is their sum, their constituting material and their essence. All here is secretly the Divine, all is the Eternal, all is the Infinite.

But this secret truth of things is contradicted by the world's external appearances, it is denied by all the facts placed before us by our mind and senses, inconsistent with the sorrow and suffering of the world, incompatible with the imperfection of living beings and the unchangeable inconscience of things. What then pushes the mind to affirm it? what compels us to admit a seeing of things which is in conflict with our outer seeing and experience?

For on the surface of our consciousness and all around us there is only the temporal and transient, only [the] confined and finite. What seems largest to us finds its limit, what we dreamed to be enduring comes to an end; even this vast universe with its masses of worlds upon worlds which seemed to stretch into infinity is convicted in the end of being only a boundless finite. Man claiming to be a divine soul and an all-discovering intellect is brought up short by Nature's rude proof of his ignorance and incompetence and exhibits constantly in his thoughts the proneness to self-confident error and in his feelings and acts the petty faultiness, meanness, and darkness or suddenly the abysses of falsehood or foulness or cruelty of his nature. In the management of his world the much that is undivine prevails easily over the little that is divine or they are inextricably mixed together. The ideal fails in practice, religion degenerates quickly into a settled sectarian fanaticism or formality, the triumphant good turns into an organised evil. The Christian doctrine of the fall, the Indian idea of the wandering of the Soul in a cosmic illusion or the sceptic affirmation of an inconscient material Nature producing the freak of consciousness seems often to be the kernel of the whole matter.

And yet if we go deep enough into ourselves, we strike against something valid that proves to be a veiled divine element which affirms its immortality, Soul. If we go beyond our embodied mind and senses we break suddenly into something permanent that feels itself to be eternal and infinite, that cannot see itself as anything else and we also cannot conceive of it as anything else, an infinite Self, an eternal Spirit. Moreover in our most secret essence we are convinced of perfection or of perfectibility — perfection in our deepest spiritual being, perfectibility in our nature; we have the instinct and intuition of the Divine.

Even to Time and Space our mind cannot fix or conceive a beginning or an end; it cannot conceive a first bound or a last, a primary or ultimate moment without at once looking beyond it. If we see the imperfection of things, the very idea implies a potentiality of a perfection by comparison with which they are imperfect, and this potentiality points to a beyond Mind and beyond Sense which is the integrally and permanently perfect. Every relative supposes an absolute.

For a long time we have been asked not to believe in these things, to put our trust only in the measuring rods of science and its calculations and crucibles, to accept only what is materially ascertainable and measurable. But these measurements are those of something that is limited — how can we ascertain by it whether there is or is not the Illimitable? The instruments by which we question Nature in order to find out what is ascertainable have been proved to give only the results which are already contained in the question or in the questioner. Science gives us the measures and process of things within the physical limit, but it has failed [to] tell us what things are, their final origin or their reason of existence.

In all this questing by one end or the other we cannot get beyond ourselves and it is better then to look into the inner side of ourselves, — why should we limit ourselves only to our responses to an outer evidence? Let us explore ourselves and not only our sense or perception of what is around us. And in ourselves let us look not only at our surfaces but at the inner and the inmost of our being and nature.

This self-knowledge pursued far enough shows us a deeper than the surface mind and a deeper than the physical sense, a profounder than the outward life. It shows us also a Beyond-Mind and Beyond-Sense, a Beyond-Life; the limited passes into [the] illimitable. If there were not this capacity of research, we would have to be content with an unsatisfied agnosticism; but the means is there by which we can know ourselves and this Alpha and X and Omega of things or if not absolutely It at any rate its status and its dynamis, the law of its being and the law of its nature quite as deeply and more deeply than Science can show us the law and process of the physical universe.

For the moment let us affirm only this result that this spiritual search and knowledge leads us beyond the phenomenon which apparently contradicts it to that which beyond the phenomenon brings us to the Divine Eternal and Infinite.

5

The rooted and fundamental conception of Vedanta is that there exists somewhere, could we but find it, available to experience or self-revelation, if denied to intellectual research, a single truth comprehensive & universal in the light of which the whole of existence would stand revealed and explained both in its nature and its end. This universal existence, for all its multitude of objects and its diversity of faces, is one in substance and origin; and there is an unknown quantity, X or Brahman to which it can be reduced, for from that it started and in & by that it still exists.

6

Brahman is that which was before the beginning and will be after the end of things. In the beginning, says the Upanishad, Self was, Being was or Non-Being was; that saw world-creation in itself or from that Non-Being or eternal Being temporal existence was born. What prevents the timeless Eternal from conceiving Time in himself and ceasing from the conception? But the very idea supposes time[.]

7

One says "In the beginning was the Self, the Spirit, God, the Eternal." But there was never a beginning, for the Eternal and its works are always and for ever.

"In the beginning" is a phrase that has no meaning unless we speak of sections of existence, sections of it in Time, sections of it in Space, sections of it in substance; for these have a beginning and an end. Existence in itself has no end even as it never had a beginning.

It is not of pure existence only that this [can be said], existence in its essence without any expressive motion or feature, but of existence with all it contains and reveals in its depths as on its surface. For pure existence is only a state of being and not being in its whole truth and integral significance.

And even this state, although it appears to the quiescent mind featureless, motionless, concentrated in bare uniqueness, is still not empty or without feature, — it contains enveloped in itself all truth of feature, all power of motion, all that ever was, is or shall be manifested in this or any universe.

But the supreme divine Being is beyond any distinction of pure existence and phenomenal existence, feature or no feature, form or no form, being or non-being, manifestation and the unmanifest — for these are distinctions, separate states, opposite ideas to the mind, separate experiences to the Soul on the mental level, *manomaya purusha*. But the Supreme is beyond Mind and has no need for these divisions and contradictions of its nature.

Ekamevadvitiyam: One Without a Second

8

All existence is existence of the one Eternal and Infinite. Ekamevadvitiyam, — there is one without a second and there can be nothing else at any time or anywhere.

Even existence in Time is that, even the finite is that; for the finite is only a circumstance of the Infinite and Time is only a phase of Eternity. What we call undivine is that, for it is only a disguise of the omnipresent Divinity.

9

All existence is the existence of the one Divine Eternal and Infinite, there is and can be nothing else; not only the infinite is that but the finite, not only the timeless but Time and all that is in Time, not only the Impersonal but the Person, quality and number and that which [is] beyond quality and number; the Formless and form, the individual no less than the cosmic and supracosmic, matter and life and mind as well as the spirit, the relative and the absolute. All is that: *ekam evadvitiyam*.

All that is is reality of the Real; there is no need to invent an eternal illusive principle of Maya to account for world existence. The idea that the Supreme Reality is incapable of self-manifestation and that its only power is a power of self-delusion is a last desperate refuge of the human Mind and Reason trying to escape from a difficulty which is of its own creation, its own self-imposed illusion or Maya and does not exist for the true and perfect supramental consciousness of the luminous Spirit.

There is no incompatibility between the Eternal and existence in Time. Time and the Timeless are the same Eternity in a self-contained status and a self-developing movement. The Timeless is eternal and knows itself in an everlasting present; Time too is eternal and is known in an indivisible movement of past, present and future. It is our consciousness poising itself in the mobile moment that gives us the impression of a divided Time, of consciousness moving from moment to moment, losing its past, gaining its future, connecting the three only by an act of memory which binds the is to the was and the to be. In the eternal Consciousness the past still exists and extends through the present into the future. To suppose that the Timeless is debarred by its timelessness from throwing itself out in a movement of Time and that Time therefore and all in time is an illusion or to suppose that Time alone exists and we are its temporal creations is to impose the ignorance and limitation of our little surface consciousness on the Divine Eternal. In reality we ourselves below our surface are the timeless developing in movement our existence in eternal Time.

10

One sole Reality constitutes all the infinite, the One, the Divine, the Eternal and Infinite — there is That alone and no other existence. Ekamevadvitiyam.

Infinite, but the finite existence is also that one being, that infinite Being; it has no separate reality: Eternal, but the temporal is nothing more than a movement of that Eternity, Time has no independent self-sustenance: Divine, but all that seems undivine is a disguise of the Divinity, it is no creation out of some unaccountable Opposite.

The Divine Reality is unconfined by form or quality; but form and quality also are his, infinite quality, innumerable figure, vessel of that earth, coin of that gold, colour inherent in that transcendent whiteness. All is the divine Eternal and Infinite.

Impersonal and Personal are not contrary appearances or even dual aspects nor is the Person our convenient imagination of an ever impersonal Entity, but rather both are for ever the One.

All is the Divine, even that which is undivine. There is no not self; all this is the eternal Self; all this universe and every other universe is the Time existence of the timeless Spirit.

11

There is one sole reality and there can be no other, the One, the Divine, the Eternal and Infinite. *Ekam evadvitiyam brahma*.

The One is at the same time the All, for it exists in all, all exists by it, it *is* all. Whatever be [the] plane of being, whatever be the cosmos, whatever be the individual, the truth of its existence is the same; that it or he is the One; for there is and can be no other. The Transcendent is the Divine, the universal is the Divine, the individual is the Divine; all are the one Reality.

Not only what we see as the Infinite, but the finite also is that One Existence; it has no separate and independent reality. Not only the Eternal [is] that, but the temporal also, for the temporal is only a circumstance of the Eternal apart from which Time has no self-existence. Not only what we see as Divine is that, but the undivine is no more than a disguise of the one Divinity, it is no creation out of an unaccountable Opposite.

12

All existence is one; it is existence of the One Being, divine, infinite, eternal, absolute.

What we see as the Many, is the multiplicity of the One. All these apparently separate persons and objects are also the one existence; they are beings of the One Being. For That is their one self; in their spiritual essence they are That, even in the play and form of their being they are That; they are personalities of the one Person, they are manifestations of the one Existence, they are so many realities of the only Real. In no way are they separate and independent from It, but in every way live by It, are of It, can be nothing else. All forces are powers of the one Force, the sole Power of the One Being; there is no other force than his. All objects are formations of the one Existence; there is nothing that exists in itself and apart from That, nothing that is of an individual essence other than the one Essence of the universe.

What we see as finite is not other than the Infinite. All is in the Infinite, all exists by the Infinite, all is of the stuff of the Infinite. No object or person could come into being or remain in being by its own finite and individual power; none exists by its own limited substance and essence other than the substance and essence of all others; all are at bottom indissolubly one. There is effective determination, definition, demarcation, diverse formation in the universe but no essential separation or division. A tree is separate as an object or phenomenon, but it is not a separate existence divided from all around it; there is a one-existence and a one-energy that has taken form of tree, constitutes every atom, molecule, fibre of it, pervades and is its whole structure of being and this existence, this energy not only abides in all of it and flows through all of it but extends everywhere around and is, constitutes, energises all other objects in the cosmos. Each finite is in fact the Infinite; all apparently separate or divided existence is only a front of the Indivisible.

All that we see as temporal is not other than the Eternal. The form of that which is in Time is or appears to be evanescent, but the self, the substance, the being that takes shape in that form is eternal and is one self, one substance, one being with all that is, all that was, all that shall be. But even the form is in itself eternal and not temporal, but it exists for ever in possibility, in power, in consciousness in the Eternal. Form is manifested and withdrawn from manifestation; it may be manifested by immediate apparition or it may be manifested by construction and withdrawn from manifestation by destruction or disaggregation, but in either case it exists beforehand in the consciousness and being of the Eternal. If it did not so preexist in power and possibility, it could not be created in actuality. For the actual proceeds from the possible and the possible is always a possibility of the truth of the Eternal.

13

All existence of whatever nature is existence of the One Divine, the Eternal and Infinite.

For not only the Infinite is that existence, but the finite also; not only the existence of the One, but the existence of the Many, not only the existence of the Unmanifest, but the existence of the manifested universe and of all actual or possible universes, not only the Impersonal, but the Personal, not only the Pure Existence, Consciousness, Bliss of Sachchidananda but all forms of existence or consciousness blissful or unblissful, not only the existence of the Absolute but the existence of all that is relative. There is nothing that is not the existence of the One Divine, the Eternal and Infinite. *Ekam evadvitiyam.*

14

There is one Being, infinite, eternal and divine, the sole Reality. All is the [ ], there is nothing else in the universe or outside the universe. *Ekam evadvitiyam.*

This eternity is not of Time; the eternity of Time is an extension in movement of the Timeless.

This infinity is not of Space; the infinity of Space is an extension in self of this spaceless Infinite.

15

All existence is the existence of the Eternal, the Infinite, the Divine, the Ineffable — existence in Time no less than existence in Eternity, existence in the finite no less than existence in the Infinite, of the Many no less than of the One, of the Personal no less than of the Impersonal, of the individual and the cosmos no less than of the supercosmic, of the relative no less than of the Absolute. *Ekam evadvitiyam Brahma.*

The Eternal is in his very truth of being Existence, Consciousness and Bliss of existence. These three are a trinity and inseparable — they are not three but one; it is only in a certain play of the Manifestation that they can be distinguished and separated from each other or turned phenomenally into their opposites. What appears to us as Nonexistence (Asat, Nihil or Sunya) is only an existence other than the existence of which we are aware. What appears to us as Inconscience is only a veiled or involved consciousness or else a consciousness to which our mind or sense has no access. What affects us as pain or suffering is only Ananda turned against itself, a distorted and tortured Bliss of existence. These contradictions are real in the Ignorance and because of the Ignorance, but to the true consciousness they are only phenomenal and superficial, not true truths of being.

Non-Being, Being and the Absolute

16

Nothing can arise from Nothing. Asat, nothingness, is a creation of our mind; where it cannot see or conceive, where its object is something beyond its grasp, too much beyond to give even the sense of a vague intangible, then it cries out "Here there is nothing." Out of its own incapacity it has created the conception of a Zero. But what in truth is this zero? It is an incalculable Infinite.

Our sense by its incapacity has invented darkness. In truth there is nothing but Light, only it is a power of light either above or below our poor human vision's limited range.

For do not imagine that light is created by the Suns. The Suns are only physical concentrations of Light, but the splendour they concentrate for us is self-born and everywhere.

God is everywhere and wherever God is, there is Light. Jnanam chaitanyam jyotir Brahma.

*

Of all that we know we know only the outside; even when we imagine that we have intimately seized the innermost thing, we have touched only an inner external. It is still a sheath of the covering, only it is a second or third or even a seventh sheath, not the most outward and visible.

It is the same when we think we know God or have possession of our highest inmost Self or have entered intimately into the inmost and supreme Spirit. What we know and possess is power or some powers of God, an aspect or appearance or formulation of the Self; what we have entered into is only one wideness or one depth of the Spirit.

This is because we know and possess by the mind or even what is below the mind, and when we find ourselves most spiritual, it is the mind spiritualised that conceives of itself as spirit. Imagining that we have left mind behind us, we take it with us into its own spiritual realms and cover with it the Supramental Mystery. The result is something to us wonderful and intense; but compared with That Intensity and Wonder, it is something thin and inadequate.

17

All existence, — as the mind and sense know existence, — is manifestation of an Eternal and Infinite which is to the mind and sense unknowable but not unknowable to its own self-awareness.

Whatever the manifestation spiritual or material or other may be, it has behind it something that is beyond itself, and even if we reached the highest possible heights of manifested existence there would be still beyond that even an Unmanifested from which it came.

The Unmanifested Supreme is beyond all definition and description by mind or speech; no definition the mind can make, affirmative or negative, can be at all expressive of it or adequate.

To the Mind this Unmanifest can present itself as a Self, a supreme Nihil (Tao or Sunya), a featureless Absolute, an Indeterminate, a blissful Nirvana of manifested existence, a Non-Being out of which Being came or a Being of Silence out of which a world-illusion came. But all these are mental formulas expressing the mind's approach to it, not That itself; impressions which fall from That upon the receiving consciousness, not the true essence or nature (swarupa) of the Eternal and Infinite. Even the words Eternal and Infinite are only symbolic expressions through which the mind feels without grasping some vague impression of this Supreme.

If we say of it neti neti, this can mean nothing except that nothing in the world or beyond it of which the mind can take cognisance is the Supreme in Its entirety or Its essence. If we say of it iti iti, this can mean at the most that what we see of it in the world or beyond is some indication of something that is there beyond and by travelling through all these indications to their absolutes we may get a step or two nearer to the Absolute of all absolutes, the Supreme. Both formulas have a truth in them, but neither touches the secret truth of the Supreme.

18

The Origin and eternal Supporter of all existence, as of all that seems to ignorant Mind to be non-existence, is a supreme infinite and absolute. This Infinite is an essential, not, except in manifestation, a mobile temporal or extended spatial infinite; this Absolute is an expressibly positive, not a merely negating absolute — not excluding, but containing all relatives; for in it they find their own eternal and stable truth behind their present temporary and fluctuating appearance.

The Supreme is knowable to itself but unknowable to mind, inexpressible by words, because mind can grasp and words coined by the mind can express only limited, relative and divided things. Mind gets only misleading inadequate indefinite impressions or too definite reflective ideas of things too much beyond itself. Even here in its own field it grasps not things in themselves, but processes and phenomena, significant aspects, constructions and figures. But the Supreme is to its own absolute consciousness for ever self-known and self-aware, as also to supramental gnosis it is intimately known and knowable.

This Infinite and Eternal is the supreme Self of all, the supreme Source, Spirit and Person of all, the supreme Lord of all; there is nothing beyond it, nothing outside it. A million universes for ever persist or for ever recur because they are substantial expressions and manifestations of the supreme Infinite and Eternal.

19

All is existence. Non-existence is a fiction of the mind; for we describe as non-existent all that has never been within the range of our limited consciousness or is not in that range at the moment or was there once but has gone beyond it.

20

Being is not Parabrahman nor is Non-Being Parabrahman; these are only affirmative & negative terms in which Consciousness envisages its self-existence.

Parabrahman is beyond Knowledge because Knowledge cannot comprehend that which comprehends it & is anterior to itself.

The beginning of Wisdom is to renounce the attempt to know the Unknowable.

Nevertheless vast shadows of the Unknowable are reflected in Knowledge & to these infinities we give names, the Absolute, the Relative, Being, Non-Being, Consciousness, Force, Bliss, God, Self, the Personal, the Impersonal, Krishna, Shiva, Brahman.

Each thing in the universe is All in the Universe and also That which is beyond the universe, — what Knowledge sees of it is only the face that the All presents in some play of Its infinite consciousness. We are our own Knowledge & all that is unknown to our Knowledge.

What matters in the universe is the play of the All in Itself & its ultimate self-fulfilment in Knowledge, Bliss & Being.

There is an individual self-fulfilment, a collective, a cosmic & an extra-cosmic. We may move towards any of these ultimate affirmations, but he who accepts them all & harmonises them, is the highest human expression of Parabrahman. He is the Avatar or the divine Unit.

21

All being is the Eternal, the Infinite, the Divine; there is nothing beyond the Eternal and Infinite, neither is there anything else anywhere whether in existence or in non-existence.

All being ranges between the Manifestation and the Non-Manifestation. These are the two poles of the Infinite.

The Non-Manifestation is not a Non-Existence. Non-Existence is a term created by the mind and has no absolute significance; there is no such thing as an absolute Nihil or Zero. It is agreed even by the philosophies of the Nihil, Tao or Zero (Sunya) that the Non-Existence of which they speak is a Nought in which all is and from which all comes. Tao, Nihil or Zero is not different from the Absolute or the Supreme Brahman of Vedanta; it is only another way of describing or naming it. The Supreme is an Existence beyond what we know of our existence and therefore only it can seem to our mind as a Zero, a Nihil, a Non-Existence. There is nothing there of what we know as existence, for though all is in Tao, yet all is there in a way of which our mind can have no conception or experience, therefore to the mind it has no reality and brings no concept of existence.

The manifestation in the Ignorance, that in which we live, has also been described as Asat, a non-existence, because it is not real, eternal, infinite, divine; it must therefore be an illusion, since only That exists and nothing else. But even Illusionism agrees that the manifested world is not without reality, — it is practically real, but not eternal. Moreover manifestation even if illusory in this sense, has no end or beginning in itself, but only to the soul that withdraws from it. It goes on existing eternally to other souls, it goes on existing to the Eternal. It is in the eternal consciousness that it exists, though apart from that consciousness it has no existence. Moreover the stuff of which it is made is not nothingness or void, but the Eternal itself which manifests it from itself and out of its own substance cast into form and force. It is therefore not a real Nihil, but a limited and constantly renewed, recurrent or mutable existence.

It is therefore permissible to say that all being ranges between Manifestation and Non-Manifestation, for both are degrees of existence, the one rising towards the Absolute, the other in appearance, but in appearance only, determined and relative.

Nature
The World-Manifestation

The Divine and the Manifestation

22

All existence is Brahman, Atman & Iswara, three names for one unnameable reality which alone exists. We shall give to this sole real existence the general name of God, because we find it ultimately to be not an abstract state of Existence not conscious of itself, but a supreme & self-aware One who exists — absolutely in Himself, infinitely in the world & with an appearance of the finite in His various manifestations in the world.

God in Himself apart from all world manifestation or realisable relation to world manifestation is called the Paratpara Brahman, & is not knowable either to the knowledge that analyses or the knowledge that synthetically conceives. We can neither say of Him that He is personal or impersonal, existence or nonexistence, pure or impure, Atman or unAtman. We can only say to every attempt to define Him positively or negatively, neti neti, Not this, not this. We can pass into the Paratpara Brahman, but we cannot know the Paratpara Brahman.

God in the world is Brahman-Iswara-Atman, Prakriti or Shakti and Jiva. These are the three terms of His world-manifestation.

23

The One and the Many are both of them eternal aspects of the Absolute Parabrahman which is Itself neither one nor many in an exclusive sense. It is beyond unity and multiplicity in its essential truth as it is beyond all other oppositions, but neither unity nor multiplicity, neither the One nor the Many are illusions, they are both of them truths of the Absolute, otherwise they could have no existence nor could they come into existence. The world is a manifestation, and in it the absolute Parabrahman manifests as the Ishwara, the one Eternal, but also It manifests the multiplicity of the One in the Jiva. This creates in the manifestation the double aspect of Being and Becoming. But becoming does not mean that Being becomes what it never was before or that it ceases to be its eternal self; it manifests something that is already in its existence, a truth, a power, an aspect of itself; only the forms are temporal and can be deformed by the Ignorance. The Power of itself which thus manifests what is in its being is its Shakti, Maya or Prakriti, three names for the same thing. It is called Prakriti when it is seen in its executive aspect as working out the manifestation for the Purusha or Ishwara.

Whether we regard the soul that manifests in a body as a portion of the Divine, eternal therefore like the Divine, as is held by the Gita, or the Divine himself in his aspect of multiplicity, or a separate being dependent on the Divine, as is held by the dualists, or an illusory self-perception of the soul subject to Maya, the reality being the Divine himself, indivisible and ever unmanifested — one thing is certain that what appears as the Jiva is something unborn and eternal.

24

The self which we have to perfect, is neither pure atman which is ever perfect nor the ego which is the cause of imperfection, but the divine self manifested in the shifting stream of Nature.

Existence is composed of Prakriti & Purusha, the consciousness that sees and the consciousness that executes & formalises what we see. The one we call Soul, the other Nature. These are the first double term from which our Yoga has to start. When we come to look in at ourselves instead of out at the world and begin to analyse our subjective experience, we find that there are two parts of our being which can be, to all appearance, entirely separated from each other, one a consciousness which is still & passive and supports, and the other a consciousness which is busy, active & creative, and is supported. The passive & fundamental consciousness is the Soul, the Purusha, Witness or Sakshi; the active & superstructural consciousness is Nature, Prakriti, processive or creative energy of the Sakshi. But the two seem at first to stand apart & distinct, as if they had no share in each other.

The Purusha, still & silent witness of whatever Prakriti chooses to create, not interfering with her works, but reflecting only whatever forms, names & movements she casts on the pure mirror of his eternal existence and the Prakriti restlessly creating, acting, forming & effecting things for the delight of the Purusha, compose the double system of the Sankhyas. But as we continue analysing their relations and accumulate more and more experience of our subjective life, we find that this seeing of the Purusha is in effect a command. Whatever Prakriti perceives it to be the pleasure of the Purusha to see, she tends to preserve in his subjective experience or to establish; whatever she perceives it to be his pleasure to cease to see, she tends to renounce & abolish. Whatever he consents to in her, she forces on him & is glad of her mastery & his submission, but whenever he insists, she is bound eventually to obey. Easily found to be true in our subjective experience, this ultimate principle of things is eventually discovered by the Yogin to determine even objective phenomena. The Purusha & Prakriti are therefore not only the Witness & the Activity witnessed, but the Lord & his executive energy. The Purusha is Ishwara, the Prakriti is His shakti. Their play with each other is both the motive & the executive force of all existence in the universe.

25

The Divine is the eternal Self and Spirit; but Nature too is everlasting power of the Self, eternal conscious-Force of the Spirit.

Mind, life and Matter are powers of that Power, energies of that Force, substance of that Spirit, Spirit and Matter are not separate and contrary creations, but Matter itself is a self-creation of the Spirit.

Being and Becoming are the single One. The One does not become the Many, but the One is for ever the Many even as the Many are for ever the One.

This by a self-existent self-knowledge thou shalt know, through a supramental knowledge by identity — the problem, the opposition, the shifts of philosophy, the rifts of Science, the fragmentary upliftings of Religion are the devices of a still ignorant consciousness, a [. . .] seeking knowledge.

26

All existence is one in the Reality; manifold in its manifestation of the Reality. The Reality is the Absolute, the Spirit, the Self, the Being, the One-Existence, which is all and everywhere, but which is also more than all and nowhere. This One can be all because it is no one in particular, it can be all-pervading and eternal in its essence because it is not bound by Space or by Time. It is One but it is also multitudinous, its multitudes are the self-expression, not the denial, the abundance, not the division or fragmentation of its oneness. Each being of its multitudes seems to be a portion of the One, a finite of the Infinite, a time-face and time-form of the Eternal; but in and behind this appearance is the Reality, and there each is itself the One displaying something of itself, each is the Infinite in a finite phenomenon of itself, each is the Eternal playing in Time. But Time too is eternal, Time is eternity in extension and movement, therefore each is in its reality an eternal being of the Eternal, an infinite of the Infinite, a spirit of the One spirit, a self of the One Self. For the Reality is beyond our oppositions of one and many; its oneness and its multitude are for ever inherent in each other; yet it is bound neither by its unity nor its multiplicity, though both are true, because it is that of which both are intimate aspects, — it is the Absolute.

27

God is not a Being who creates & governs the universe, but the universe itself & all besides that is Timeless & Spaceless.

God is also a Being who creates the universe in Himself & governs it; for the universe is only one term of His existence. If one could conceive a centre that contains its own circle, we might have a just definition of God in the universe.

What is the Impersonality of God? It is the fact of the Is Not, the Is & the Becoming. And what is the personality of God? It is the fact that all this, the Is like the Becoming, the Is not like the Is, is aware of itself in Time & Space & beyond them.

The Impersonality of Love is a self-existent Delight which embraces, possesses & makes one in being all that manifests in Brahman. The Personality of Love is One who is aware of self-Delight & extends His Love in all creatures.

Personality & Impersonality are the same reality differently conceived by Knowledge. Ego is the consciousness of the One Infinite Personality reflected in a limiting form of consciousness & distorted by the limitation. The form itself is a face of the All which has forgotten in the succession of Time moments, in the coherence of Space-units all that is behind itself & involved in itself. Ego is a bridge by which it awakes to self-Ignorance & returns towards self-Knowledge.

If we stand on the bridge facing the world of Forms we tend towards the Relative; if we face away from them we tend towards the Absolute. It is only when we have crossed the bridge that we can easily & perfectly embrace the Relative in the Absolute.

Spirit & Matter, Pure Being & Being formally extended in Space are the two poles of the universe. In Spirit there is no ego; in substance of Matter there is no ego. In each pole ego loses itself, but in Spirit through synthesis, in Matter through dissolution.

Substance of matter, life & mind are the material which Ego uses to develop its conscious existence; there are higher infinite affirmations in which it fulfils its conscious existence.

There is a unity of essence & a unity of sum. The latter is only a synthetic formula & affirmation of multiplicity. The unity of essence is the true unity.

Unity & multiplicity are necessary to each other & one reality. Multiplicity is unity extended in its possibility; unity is multiplicity self-gathered into its essence[.]

28

The infinite Being in rest aware of its own eternal oneness. There is the everlasting silence of the Absolute.

The infinite Conscious Power in movement aware of its own eternal many-ness — the everlasting movement and creation of the Supreme.

As in the immobile ether arises, first sign of the creative impulse of Nature, vibration, Shabda, and this vibration is a line of etheric movement, is ether contacting ether in its own field of mobile self-force and that primal stir is sufficient to initiate all forms and forces, even such is the original movement of the Infinite.

But this vibration is not the stir of any material force or substance and this contact is not material contact. This is a vibration of consciousness in spiritual essence; this is the contact of consciousness with itself in spiritual substance.

This original movement, not original or first in Time, for it was from ever and continues for ever, but original in that action of consciousness which is an eternal repetition of all things in an eternal present. Or, if you will, an eternal past-present-future, the three simultaneous times of that ever packed Time of the Infinite that translates [to] our blind finite conception as the void timelessness of the Absolute.

29

All existence and all force proceeds from the One Supreme and all works of whatever being or whatever force are movements of the Universal and take place in the Eternal and Infinite.

The Supreme is not manifest to our minds encased in matter; numberless superphysical planes separate our terrestrial consciousness from all direct touch of our Source, and there can be no question of an unveiled immediate intimate presence and guidance of that Ineffable. And yet the Divine Consciousness and Force, the everlasting Chitshakti, the original Power, the transcendent and eternal Mother, because she holds the Supreme concealed in her, can put us into some kind of touch with that inexpressible Glory and communicate to us a highest Will and its consequence. This cannot be done through the mind; for the thinking mind can only form some inadequate and quite abstract conception of an Absolute or a supreme Person or an impersonal Principle or Presence. And even the higher mind that experiences returns only a pale reflection of Sachchidananda which it takes for that Ineffable or a vague sense of the Eternal or the Infinite. It cannot lay hold upon That and it cannot enter, for if it tries, either that vanishes from it or itself it disappears in a featureless trance, extinction, annihilation, void or dissolution, nirvikalpa samadhi, nirvana, vinasha, shunya, laya. But what the mind cannot do, the soul and a great secret Overmind [can.]

To the earth-mind God does not exist or is only a mental idea, an emotional [ ] or the Life-mind's projection and self-image[.]

30

Chitshakti not mind has created the world. Chitshakti is the thing which the Scientists call in its various aspects Force & Energy, but it is no material Force or Energy, it is the divine power of self-conscious Being forming itself not materially, not in substance of matter but in the substance of that self-consciousness into these images of form and force which make up the world. What we call world, is a harmony of things seen not by the individual mind or even by universal mind, but rather seen through universal mind, as through a reflecting medium, by the Eye of divine Being. The eye that sees is immaterial, the things seen are immaterial; for matter itself is only a form, image & appearance of eternal Spirit.

31

How, it is asked, do we make a permanent and changeless world out of a world of changing and transient objects? But this is to create a problem where there is none. We do nothing of the kind; what we do is to perceive by the senses a world of stability in constant motion, of sameness in spite of change. It is the world that is like that; we do not make it so; our senses receive, they do not create; if there is an error in their perceptions or images it is a passive imperfection of sensing that causes the wrong or altered image, it is not a willed and dynamic change like the liberties the artist takes with Nature.

Men are always changing, but man has a permanent character which does not alter. Tigers differ from each other and from themselves in the process of time, but the tiger is always the same animal and always as such recognisable. It is the details that vary and change, the type, the fundamental pattern is constant. So far our senses and our mind standing upon their data do not betray or deceive us. If they see a world that is stable and the same in spite of constant mobility and mutation, it is because the world is like that and it is therefore that we have to see it so and cannot see it otherwise. If there is a problem it is not what we make of it, not a problem of our psychology but why it is so, what is behind the mobility of the world and its stability, what is the cause or the significance or reality of it. There is no doubt the problem of what are mind and sense and their nature, their reality, their relation to the world and its cause or significance; but that too is a problem of metaphysics.

Are there then two worlds, the one changing and existing in time, the other changeless and eternal? Or are there rather two ways of knowing one and the same world? These questions, as they are put, are meaningless; for it is obvious that it is one world we are seeing and not two and that objects here belong to the same universe and not to two different universes at the same time. It cannot be the truth that man belongs to one world and men in their mutability to another or that in seeing the changes and variations of the species tiger we are seeing the world in one way and when we see the persistence of type of the species we are knowing it in a different way. These artificial problems are the result of looking at words and concepts instead of things; we concentrate on the words and concepts "sameness" and "change", see that they represent as abstractions ideas that stand opposed to each other, imagine that they are as opposed in fact as in our minds, are incompatible and therefore cannot coexist in the same world or cannot be true at the same time or in the same world-perception. As a matter of fact there is no such incompatibility; something that is permanently the same may be in constant change of its details of existence without losing its constant fundamental sameness. There is no reason why something should not be transient (not therefore unreal) in many of its phenomena, yet permanent in itself, in its being, whether that permanence be only a duration in time or eternal. No doubt, two worlds may meet, world of mind or spirit enter into world of Matter, but then their elements combine into one world, a world let us say of mind-informed or spirit-governed Matter; it is not two separate worlds that we are seeing at the same time and confusing together by the erroneous action of our mind and senses. Our souls, our minds may belong by origination to the mind world or spirit world, but here they are in the same world as the changing life and body and in so seeing it, we make no error.

32

A philosophy of change?[1] But what is change? In ordinary parlance change means passage from one condition to another and that would seem to imply passage from one status to another status. The shoot changes into a tree, passes from the status of shoot to the status of tree and there it stops; man passes from the status of young man to the status of old man and the only farther change possible to him is death or dissolution of his status. So it would seem that change is not something isolated which is the sole original and eternal reality, but it is something dependent on status, and if status were non-existent, change also could not exist. For we have to ask, when you speak of change as alone real, change of what, from what, to what? Without this "what" change could not be.

---

[1] *These notes were written apropos of Bergson's "philosophy of change"; "you" below would refer to a proponent of this philosophy.*

Change is evidently the change of some form or state of existence from one condition to another condition. Otherwise, what is it? Is it itself fundamental and absolute, not explicable or definable by any other term than itself, perceivable and intelligible as the sole reality by a naked intuition which feels and cries out "Change = reality" and then falls dumb and can say no more?

An object changes, a person changes, a condition of things changes. But can it be said that the object is no real object but only a continuity of change, or that a person is not a person but a continuity of change, a condition of things is not a condition and there are no things but there is only a continuity of change? This seems to be an illustration of the besetting sin of metaphysics — to exalt a word into a reality or an idea into a reality — without fathoming what is the reality which it tries to indicate. For to label with a word or name is not to fathom and to define, to erect a concept is not to fathom. Fathom for us then what is change before you ask us to accept it as the only reality. You may say I have fathomed it, I have seen it to be the one constant real, but do not ask me to define what it is; "listen rather in silence to the silence of Nature and you too will fathom". But what if, so listening, I fathom other realities than change — let us say, immutable being as well as mutable force, status as well as change? To prevent that you plunge into speech and not silence, into dialectics of the intellect instead of the undebatable certitudes of intuition, and so abandon your own methodology. If intuition alone is to be used, then you must give a place to my intuition as well as yours and all, however contradictory in appearance must stand until a greater intuition comes in to put all in their place, reconcile, include in a consistent whole.

In the world of our experience contradictories [are] often complements and necessary to each other's existence. Change is possible only if there is a status from which to change; but status again exists only as a step that pauses, a step in the continuous passage of change or a step on which change pauses before it passes on to another step in its creative passage. And behind this relation is a duality of eternal status and eternal motion and behind this duality is something that is neither status nor change but contains both as its aspects — and That is likely to be the true Reality.

Existence, Consciousness-Force, Bliss

33

The nature of the Eternal is infinite Being, the nature of Being is Self-Awareness and all-Awareness or Consciousness, the nature of conscious Being is conscious Force aware of its self and its action, the nature of conscious self-awareness is infinite Bliss[.]

34

Identity is the first truth of existence; division is the second truth; all division is a division in oneness. There is one Existence which looks at itself from many self-divided unities observing other similar and dissimilar self-divided unities by the device of division.

Being is one; division is a device or a secondary condition of consciousness; but the primary truth of consciousness also is a truth of oneness and identity. One consciousness organised in many self-divided unities of consciousness is the subjective nature of existence.

The objective side of consciousness is force, because consciousness is a power of being. The eternal primary action of this force is to make for its own consciousness forms or figures of its being.

All force is inherently conscious force. Inhabiting and supporting every individual or universal form of being there is and must be some conscious power of being. But conscious force has the faculty of absorbing itself in its works and forms; there is in consciousness the power of self-oblivion. This self-oblivion is the primary phenomenon of material existence. But as [in] the sleeping or unconscious or self-oblivious man there is a subliminal self which neither sleeps nor forgets itself nor is unconscious, so in what appears to [be] inconscient form worked by an inconscient force or power of being there is, discoverable by extending knowledge, such a conscious power and that must be part of the conscious force of being of the one existence.

The nature of being aware of itself, in possession of all its consciousness and force is the inherent delight of its own existence. For experience shows that all complete possession of self is delight, only imperfection of possession creates imperfection or apparent absence of delight. But the one existence takes an equal delight in all the universal forms and figures of its own being, and this delight is the cause and support of universal and individual existence. For this reason all creation also and all action of force has secretly or overtly delight or a seeking for delight or [?some] attraction as its first motive cause, although the apparent object or aim of the action may seem to be of a different character.

These truths do not appear entirely to us because we start from division but they become self-evident when we get to a larger consciousness open to the conscious unity underlying things or one with the one conscious existence.

The One Existence whether we call it or him God, Brahman, Purusha or by some other name is in its or his nature infinite existence aware of itself and its own eternal bliss of existence. Or speaking less in terms of division and analysis it is one existence, consciousness, bliss in an inalienable unity.

35

The object and condition of Life is Ananda; the means of Ananda is Tapas; the nature of Tapas is Chit; the continent and basis of Chit is Sat. It is therefore by a process of Sat developing its own Ananda through Tapas which is Chit that the Absolute appears as the extended, the eternal as the evolutionary, Brahman as the world. He who would live perfectly must know Life, he who would know Life, must know Sacchidananda.

Pleasure is not Ananda; it is a half-successful attempt to grasp at Ananda by means which ensure a relapse into pain. Therefore it is that pleasure can never be an enduring possession. It is in its nature transient and fugitive. Pain itself is obviously not Ananda; neither is it in itself anything positive, real and necessary. It has only a negative reality. It is a recoil caused by the inability to command pleasure from certain contacts which becomes habitual in our consciousness and, long ingrained in it, deludes us with the appearance of a law. We can rise above transitory pleasure; we can get rid of the possibility of pain.

Pleasure, therefore, cannot be the end & aim of life; for the true object and condition of Life is Ananda and Ananda is something in its nature one, unconditioned and infinite. If we make pleasure the object of life, then we also make pain the condition of life. The two go together and are inseparable companions. You cannot have one for your bed-fellow without making a life-companion of the other. They are husband and wife and, though perpetually quarrelling, will not hear of divorce.

But neither is pain the necessary condition of life, as the Buddhists say, nor is extinction of sensation the condition of bliss.

36

The world lives in and by Ananda. From Ananda, says the Veda, we were born, by Ananda we live, to Ananda we return, and it adds that no man could even have the strength to draw in his breath and throw it out again if there were not this heaven of Bliss embracing our existence as ether embraces our bodies, nourishing us with its eternal substance and strength and supporting the life and the activity. A world which is essentially a world of bliss — this was the ancient Vedantic vision, the drishti of the Vedic drashta, which differentiates Hinduism in its early virility from the cosmic sorrow of Buddhism and the cosmic disillusionment of Mayavada. But it is possible to fall from this Bliss, not to realise it with the lower nature, in the Apara Prakriti, not to be able to grasp and possess it. Two things are necessary for the fullness of man's bliss, — the fullness of his being and the fullness of his knowledge creating by their union the fullness of his strength in all its manifestations, viryam, balam, bhrajas, tejas, ojas. For Ananda, Sat & Chit make one reality, and Chit is in its outward working pure force to which our Rishis gave the name of Tapas. To attain even here upon earth this fullness of bliss dependent upon fullness of existence, illumination and force, must always be humanity's drift, man's collective endeavour. To attain it within himself here and beyond, iha ca amutra ca, must always be the drift of the human unit, the individual's endeavour. Wherever the knowledge in him thinks it can grasp this bliss, it will fix its heaven. This is Swarga, Vaikuntha, Goloka; this is Nirvana.

37

The bliss of the Brahman can be described as the eternity of an uninterrupted supreme ecstasy. There is no opposition or incompatibility between these two states in the nature of the Brahman. Bliss there is the keen height and core of peace; peace there is the intimate core and essence of bliss. There is no turbidity or turbulence in the being of the Brahman; its ineffable poignancy is eternal in its self-poise.

The essential mark of the descent of the consciousness from its highest grade in the supreme spirit is the constant diminution of the power of Sachchidananda, the intensity of its force, force of being, force of consciousness, force of bliss. The intensity of all these three in the supreme status is ineffable;

in the Supermind the intensity of consciousness is ever luminous and undiminished; in overmind it is already diminished and diffuse; the highest intensity of mind is a poor thing in comparison with the splendour of overmind, and so it goes diminishing till it reaches an apparent zero which we call inconscience.

The degree and amount of pain which mind, life and body can bear is by our human standards considerable; but their capacity for pleasure is very limited and pale in its intensity, low in its degree. What we call ecstasy would seem to a god to be ridiculously thin and vapid and edgeless. Its capacity of duration also is pitifully brief and measurable by the moments.

38

In experience even on the spiritual plane so long as we do not transcend the spirit in mind, there is a difference between peace and Ananda. Peace is the Divine static, Ananda the Divine dynamic. Peace is a negative-positive; it is positive of itself, of status, of eternity, of the essential, of the abstract-concrete, of force in rest. It is or tends to be negative of all that is less than itself, contradictory to itself or more than itself, of the dynamic, of action, of creation, of time and happening, of the substantial concrete, of force in motion. Or when it allows these things or even feels or supports them, it is with a certain disinterested separateness. It has essentially the character of the Witness Spirit or at the most of the disinterested Witness-Creator. Ananda is in its every fibre a positive of positives. It affirms and rejoices in all that is native to peace, but it affirms too and rejoices in all that peace negates or regards with a sovereign separateness. Ananda is an all embracing and creative force. There can be in the world's tangle of conflicting forces an Ananda of pain and suffering and in the full manifestation pain and suffering no longer remain themselves but are transformed into Ananda. But these opposing differences prove in the end to be part of the separative mental creation, the disjunctive Maya in which we live. In supermind experience peace is always full of Ananda and by its Ananda can act and create; Ananda is for ever full of the divine peace and its most vehement ecstatic intensity contains no possibility of disturbance. At the height of the supramental Infinite peace and Ananda are one. For there status and dynamis are inseparable, rest and action affirm each other, essence and expression are one indivisible whole.

39

One that is Two that are Many, — this is the formula of the eternal and timeless manifestation in the worlds of Sachchidananda.

One who is Two and becomes the Two who become Many, — this is the formula of the perpetual manifestation in time in the three worlds of Mind, Life and Matter.

One who is in himself for ever the Two and for ever innumerably All and Eternal and Infinite, this is the indication of the Supreme who is beyond Time and Timelessness in the highest Absolute.

*

The One is Four for ever in his supramental quaternary of Being, Consciousness, Force and Ananda.

Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, these are the eternal Four, the quadruple Infinite.

Brahma is the Eternal's Personality of Existence; from him all is created, by his presence, by his power, by his impulse.

Vishnu is the Eternal's Personality of Consciousness; in him all is supported, in his wideness, in his stability, in his substance.

Shiva is the Eternal's Personality of Force; through him all is created, through his passion, through his rhythm, through his concentration.

Krishna is the Eternal's Personality of Ananda; because [of] him all creation is possible, because of his play, because of his delight, because of his sweetness.

Brahma is Immortality, Vishnu is Eternity, Shiva is Infinity; Krishna is the Supreme's eternal, infinite, immortal self-possession, self-issuing, self-manifestation, self-finding.

Manifestation, Not Illusion

40

As earth when it becomes pot, floor or oven, never ceases to be earth, so the Being even though it becomes all things and persons, is ever and immutably the same.

Becoming does not cancel Being; after millions of events in a million universes have passed in the Infinite, its infinity remains the same for ever.

The Mayavadins fix their definition, their rigid iti to the Parabrahman, the Absolute, and say that since it is that, it can never be anything else and therefore the world must be an illusion. But the Absolute is beyond all definitions, descriptions, qualifications, he is [not] bound by them, neither by features nor featurelessness, by unity nor multiplicity[.]

41

It is said by certain Adwaitists with an unusual largeness of philosophic toleration that the views of all other philosophies are true on the way or at least useful and mark stages in the realisation of the Truth, but the highest realisation is the truth of Monistic Adwaita — there is only the One and nothing else. This concession comes to nothing; for it means that other spiritual experiences are only temporarily helpful delusions or helpful half truths and the only true truth is Adwaita. The dispute remains; for all the other schools also will claim theirs as the highest truth. The mind cannot arrive at a perfect toleration, because the mind needs a cut and defined truth opposed or superior to all others. In the supermind, the aspect of the One is true like all other aspects; all are equally true but none solely true.

42

The position taken up by the Illusionists must first be firmly stated; for often there is a great nebulousness in the minds both of its supporters and antagonists which leaves room for much confused thinking and the real issue, the vital point gets obscured. We must first give this admission to the defence for whatever it is worth, that Illusionism does not affirm the absolute non-existence of the universe but only that it is an existence which is in its beginning and its end a non-existence and in its middle it is an existence which amounts to non-existence. It is real while it lasts to the mind that creates it; but it is not really real, — it is only phenomenally existent, like a dream, like a hallucination, like the imaginations of a person in delirium. Three questions arise from this proposition. Is this hallucinatory creation of the universe a truth or is the theory itself a hallucination of the logical mind or of the experiencing consciousness? Secondly, if true, how does the illusion come about and how is it possible? Thirdly, who is the victim of the hallucination?

The whole theory arises from and turns on one original proposition of which it is the logical consequence. It is this that Brahman the one real, original and eternal existence is, firstly, self-existent, secondly, featureless and relationless, thirdly, unmodifiable, immutable, incapable therefore of developing feature and relation, fourthly, solely existent, for there is and can be nothing else but that in existence. None of these original positions about the Brahman imposes itself irrefutably upon the intellect; there are philosophies which deny them one and all and with quite as good a show of logic as any the logical apparatus of the Mayavada can furnish us. In fact, what we first see as the one experience of our consciousness is not this at all, but just the opposite. We see that every thing reduces itself not to an existence at all, but to a continuity of the action of Force, Karma as the Buddhists call it. We see that this action of Force exists only by an infinite flux of feature and relation, the stream of the Buddhist figure. Apart from that it is nothing, it is the Buddhist sunya or Nihil, and the reduction of the universe to its original starting point, the escape out of it is not a return to the self-existent, but a return to Nihil, a Nirvana or extinction. Far, then, from being immutable and incapable of modification, it is in its very nature a constant modification and mutation. Eliminate the stream of becoming and the result is not Being, but a zero. This is the difficulty which the Mayavada has to surmount, the logic which it has to refute.

For it cannot be denied that the universe, the thing from which all our conscious experience starts, is such a constant stream of becoming, a round of mutations and modifications, a mass of features and relations. The question is how is it maintained? what is [it] that gives an appearance of permanence to the impermanent, of stability to the unstable, of a sum of eternal sameness in which all the elements of the sum are in constant instability and all capable of mutation? The Buddhist admits that it is done by an action of consciousness, by idea and association, vijnana, sanskara; but ideas and associations are themselves Karma, action of Force, themselves impermanent, only they create an appearance of permanence, by always acting in the same round, creating the same combination of forms and elements, as the flame and stream appear always the same, though that which constitutes them is always impermanent. The modern Materialist says that it is material Force or an eternal Energy which takes the form of Matter and follows always the same inherent law of action. The Mayavadin says on the contrary that it is Consciousness, but a consciousness which is in its reality immutable and unmodifiable self-existence, only it produces a phenomenon of constant modification and mutation. How is this possible? There lies the riddle, for it is a direct self-contradiction. To escape from it, he alleges that the phenomenon has no reality at all, but is an illusion.

To deal with this theory at all, we have first to admit that consciousness is the cause and continent of the universe and that it exists only in consciousness and not at all in itself. How does he [*the Mayavadin*] propose to prove it? It is by an appeal to reason and experience. Our reason tells us that we have no knowledge of the existence of the universe except by our conscious mentality, no possibility of knowing it; the universe can only be allowed to exist by a consciousness admitting its existence, supporting it by its assent. If by any chance, law or process our consciousness can cease finally to be aware of the universe, then so far as we are concerned, the universe no longer exists; it is annulled to us, it was an illusion from which we are released, as when a dream or hallucination ceases. Any such final upshot proves that originally also the universe was non-existent, for otherwise, if it had existed for us eternally without beginning, it would also continue for us eternally without end. But even if it ceases for us, it still continues in existence, is capable of being observed and lived in by others. How is that? We must suppose, that since it exists cosmically, its existence must be admitted and supported by the assent of a universal consciousness by which and for which it is or rather seems to be. Well, if by any chance, law or process this universal consciousness ceases finally to be aware of the universe, then the universe no longer exists for anybody or anything at all; it is proved to be an utter illusion, existent phenomenally only so long as the universal consciousness admitted it, but capable of coming to an end and therefore shown to be non-existent in its beginning and in its end non-existent. Now our ultimate experience is that there is a last and highest state of consciousness in which the universe does thus cease for the individual to be. What is that state? It is samadhi, a trance of consciousness in which the sole experience is thus expressed, "I am in bliss" and the sole memory brought back is "I was in bliss." In this state the universe has for the individual no existence; he is released from it. Therefore this highest state of experience is one of which only three things can be affirmed, existence, consciousness of existence, bliss of the consciousness of existence; but it is a pure existence without other feature or any relation. But how is this proved to be the ultimate state of our conscious being? Well, it is the knowledge of the sages who have entered into it that it is the ultimate state, it is the knowledge left behind them that they have finally passed away into it not to return to consciousness of the phenomenal world, and it is confirmed by the authority of the Veda. Reason tells us that such a condition must be the ultimate condition, since it is one infinitely beyond the phenomenal and to which the phenomenal arrives by self-elimination, and being the ultimate it must be also the original: the phenomenal which disappears from it, must originally have been imposed on it. There is no rational escaping from that conclusion.

Well, the individual soul can escape from consciousness of the universe, but what of the universal consciousness? For so long as the universe goes on existing — and who shall say that it is not for all eternity? — this escape may only prove that the individual soul goes into a state of unconsciousness or absorbed self-consciousness, like a man going to sleep or falling into a trance, while the world goes on around him just as before essentially unaffected and not at all annulled by his unconsciousness of it. But in the first place this highest power of the individual consciousness cannot be peculiar to it, for it must be a power of the general and universal; the individual reflects the universal, for it is only the law of the universal that can be repeated with individual modifications in the law of the individual. Secondly, the universal soul is the same in all; for that is the experience of the highest knowledge and consciousness, that there [is] one self in all, featureless, immutable, unmodifiable, the same amidst all the changes of phenomena. As this self can draw back that which supports the individual into it, so it is and must be capable of drawing back that which supports the universal. In one case the stream of phenomena centred around its individual reflection ceases, in the other the stream of phenomena centred around its universal reflection. A theory only? But it is justified by reason acting on our total experience which sees the lower or phenomenal and the higher or eternal and sees how the phenomenal disappears, vanishes away from the face of the eternal.

We have then as a fact a supreme state of existence which is self-existent, the original I am, which is featureless bliss and consciousness of being, immutable, eternal and this seems to be common to all beings, secret in all, the real self of all. But what then of the world? It is a mass of constant modifications of consciousness and being, itself in its nature modification of consciousness or of being or of both. It cannot be a modification of nothing, it must be a modification of something. If consciousness and being are the first fact, real, eternal, is it not a modification of conscious being, of this real, this eternal something, and itself therefore real? Is it not itself eternal, an eternal continuity of modification, uninterrupted continual or else interrupted and recurringly continual? Must we not then suppose two states of the Brahman, a primary state of eternal unmodified being, a secondary state of eternal continuity of modifications of being, becomings of the Brahman? Does not the Vedantic statement that all comes from the Brahman, exists by it, returns to it, imply that all is eternally contained in it and all are modifications of it? In that case, we cannot say that the Eternal Being is absolutely unmodifiable. No, says the Illusionist, the supreme eternal self is not only unmodified, but unmodifiable and nothing else but the eternal unmodifiable self exists really: all else is seeming. How then do all these modifications come about? What is the clue to this mystery, the cause of this magic of illusion?

Maya, answers the Illusionist. And what is Maya? It is a power of the eternal consciousness of Brahman by which there comes about an apparent modification of consciousness of which all these modifications we call the universe are the outcome. The modification is apparent, not real, yet a fact, unreally, non-existently existent. Maya exists, yet does not exist; and its results too are apparent, not real, yet while Maya lasts, they are a fact we have to deal with, unreally, non-existently existent. We have to escape from them, by escaping from Maya. We do not understand. How can the unmodifiable consciousness undergo at all even an apparent modification, to say nothing of such portentous results of the modification? To that there is no explanation, there can be no explanation. It takes place beyond the intellect, before the intellect can at all exist and cannot be understood by the intellect; it must be accepted as a fact; it is a fact that Maya is, it is a fact that Maya can be escaped from, and therefore not being eternal, is transient, is unreal, is not. To see this and escape is our only business. Only while it lasts, are we concerned with the modifications. But what is meant by saying while it lasts and who is it that is subject to it and escapes from it? Is it Brahman who is subject to Maya? No, Brahman the eternally unmodifiable consciousness aware only of the bliss of its self-existence cannot be subject to Maya, does not behold this phenomenal illusion. For if he did, we returning into that, should also behold it and could not by the returning escape from it. It is the individual soul only that is subject to Maya and escapes from it. But who is this individual soul? Is it the self in the individual, the Jivatman, and is the self in the individual different from the eternal Self? No, the individual self is the eternal Brahman, for there is only one self and not many. But then the Jivatman also cannot be subject to Maya or escape from it. There is then nobody subject to it, nobody who escapes. And really that is so, says the illusionist, but what seems to us now to be the individual self, is a reflection of the eternal Self in the mind, and it is that which is subject to Maya and suffers by it. But what then is Mind? It is a result of Maya, it is an illusory movement of consciousness, it is that for which and by which the universe exists. Get rid of its action, its movement, and the illusion will cease; you will be free. But then again who is this you? If I am really the eternal, then I, the individual do not exist; my real self, to use a desperately foolish language, — since that means an individual in possession of a self which cannot be, as my individuality is an illusion, — my real self is in eternal bliss and not being affected cannot care whether this false, nonexistently existent I is bound or escapes, suffers or is in bliss. To whom then does it matter? Only to Maya and mind. Well, then, it is an affair between Maya and mind, and they can settle it between themselves. Precisely, the Illusionist will reply; to you, the mental being, it does matter because you are in Maya, you suffer, however phenomenally, however unreally, and the only way to get rid of it is to abolish Maya by abolishing yourself, your mental individuality, her result by which alone she exists; then you will not exist, Maya and the world will exist for other mental beings; but you will undergo extinction in the Brahman, for you Brahman only will exist. How for me, since I can only be either in Maya or out of it, either individually aware of Maya and not of my real self or else non-existent individually? How can 'I' be aware of my real self only and of nothing else? It is possible; for as the mind falsely reflects Brahman by Maya as the individual, so free from Maya, it can truly reflect Brahman and it ceases to be individual mind, although in an individual body it still seems to be individually released. Really, it is Brahman expelling Maya from the consciousness, then the mind is taken up into Samadhi, extinguished in Samadhi, and this is the [?prefatory] sign. Fix your mind upon that, look at things practically, and do not ask inconsistent questions, as to how there can be individual salvation when there is no individual self to be saved. These questions do not arise once the release is made, they arise in Maya which is a practical fact and can receive only a practical solution.

Well that is a kind of answer. But how am I to know that it is not an evasion of the difficulty? What if I say that really the unmodifiable Brahman is not the highest truth? that the Brahman is aware at once of his unmodified eternal self and of his eternally modified cosmic existence, Akshara and Kshara, but he is himself beyond both, and that my real way of escape is to be the same, to be aware of my eternal self and of all the universe as modifications of my self; that with this transcendence and universality comes perfect bliss, and that the fact that I, still existing in Maya, can be blissfully aware of one Self everywhere and of all things in the universe is a proof of my assertion? This seems to me at least as good a theory as your theory of Maya; and if you say, how is that possible, I can either allege reasons or answer like you, it is a supraintellectual fact and we have to take it as a fact and find the practical way of realising it. If you want me to reject it in favour of your theory, give me at least some help. Make me realise how the world can be nonexistently existent, how the unmodifiable can be apparently modified, how I can exist only beyond the world and yet exist in it so palpably that I must struggle to get out of it, how Brahman exists only beyond Maya and yet by me exists in Maya, how mind is the result of Maya, an instrument to see world and is yet capable of getting rid of Maya and seeing only the Brahman, how being by my individuality subject to Maya, and only able to escape by getting rid of my individuality, I am yet to become individually aware of Brahman and get an individual salvation, while all the rest of the world by which alone I am individual in my experience is still subject to it, how an unreal individual can realise Brahman.

The Mayavadin answers that as it is the Maya power of the Self which creates the ignorance in each individual, so it is the Self in each individual which enables him to have the knowledge by removing from him the Maya power. How this can be, can only be explained by analogies. As a man mistakes a rope for a snake, and then discovers it is a rope and there is no snake, so the mind thinks there is a world where there is only Brahman and discovers in the end that there is only Brahman; — or as a man mistakes mother of pearl for real pearl and runs after it and is then disillusioned and leaves it to go after the reality. As a pot is only a name and form of earth and earth is the only reality, so the world and the individual are only a name and form; break the pot, it will go back to its original earth; break the name and form in the consciousness, get rid of the individual, and there will be only Brahman in the consciousness. There are many golden ornaments, but the reality of them all is the gold; it is that alone which has value. So Brahman only is worth having; the rest is name and form and mere vanity. Or if these analogies seem to be only physical images not valid for a supraphysical fact, observe how you dream. The dream has no reality, yet is real to your consciousness while it lasts. The you in the dream is an unreal you; you awake to your real self. So the world is a dream; falling asleep to the world, the dream ceases; awake to the Brahman, the dream is convinced of unreality. That is the only possible and a quite sufficient answer.

Is it a sufficient answer? Does it prove the main point that the world consciousness is an apparent and unreal modification of the ever unmodifiable Brahman and therefore to be dispelled as quickly as possible, so that I may cease to exist, except insofar as I already eternally exist, not at all as I, but as the Brahman?

Above all, does it show that my one practical business is to get rid of a world consciousness which is of no value and has no purpose except self-bewilderment, and become again what I ought never to have ceased to be in my unreal consciousness, as indeed I am still that in my real consciousness, the featureless and immutable Spirit? Is the world really a valueless dream, a purposeless delirium of ignorance? Have we no other true spiritual business here except to get out of it? These are the real questions that the soul of man asks of the illusionist thinker, and we have to judge his answer.

43

Existence is not a fluke, a random creation by nobody, a thing that unaccountably happened to be. It carries in itself the Word of God, it is full of a hidden Divine Presence.

Existence is not a blind machine that somehow came and started a set ignoble motion without object or sense or purpose. Existence is a Truth of things unfolding by a gradual process of manifestation, an evolution of its own involved Reality.

Existence is not an illusion, a Maya that had no reason, no business to exist, could not exist, does not exist but only seems to be. A mighty Reality manifests in itself this marvellous universe.

44

All that is is the manifestation of a Divine Infinite. The universe has no other reason for existence.

There is an eternal manifestation and there is a temporal manifestation; both are without end or beginning even as That which manifests is without end or beginning. Time and its creations are for ever.

The temporal manifestation is cast partly in a gradation of enduring types; partly it moves through a long unrolling series of vicissitudes of change and new formation and is evolutionary in its process.

The typal worlds do not change. In his own world a god is always a god, the Asura always an Asura, the demon always a demon. To change they must either migrate into an evolutionary body or else die entirely to themselves that they may be new born into other Nature.

45

All that is is the manifestation, even as all that is not is the self-reservation, of a Supreme, an Infinite who veils himself in the play of impersonal forces, in the recesses of a mysterious Inconscience and will at last rediscover here his most intimate presence, his most integral power, light, beauty, Ananda and all vast and ineffable being through a growing illumination of the still ignorant consciousness now evolving in Matter, a consciousness of which Man is only one stage, at once the summit of an ascent that is finished and the starting point of a far greater ascension that is still only preparing its commencement.

All manifestation that is not evolution is a play and self-formulation of the One Infinite in one term or another of his existence, consciousness-force, Ananda, his self-knowledge, self-power, self-delight, for the glory, joy and beauty of the play and for no other reason.

All evolution is the progressive self-revelation of the One to himself in the terms of the Many out of the Inconscience through the Ignorance towards self-conscient perfection.

The evolution has a purpose, but it is a purpose in a circle. It is not a straight line or other figure of progression from the not to the is, from the less to the more.

There is no beginning or end of the Universe in space or time; for the universe is the manifestation of the Eternal and Infinite.

Manifestation is not an episode of the Eternal. It is his face and body of glory that is imperishable, it is the movement of his joy and power that needs not to sleep or rest as do finite things from their labour.

In the beginning, it is said, was the Eternal, the Infinite, the

One. In the middle, it is said, is the finite, the transient, the many. In the end, it is said, shall be the One, the Infinite, the Eternal.

For when was the beginning? At no moment in Time, for the beginning is at every moment; the beginning always was, always is and always shall be. The divine beginning is before Time and in Time and beyond Time for ever. The Eternal Infinite and One is an endless beginning.

And where is the middle? There is no middle; for the middle is only the junction of the perpetual end and the eternal beginning; it is the sign of a creation which is new at every moment. The creation was for ever, is for ever, shall be for ever. The eternal Infinite and One is the magical middle term of his own existence; it is he that is this beginningless and endless creation.

And when is the end? There is no end. At no conceivable moment can there be a cessation. For all end of things is the beginning of new things which are still the same One in an ever developing and ever recurring figure. Nothing can be destroyed for all is He who is for ever. The Eternal Infinite and One is the unimaginable end that is the never closing gate upon new interminable vistas of his glory.

Man and Superman

Man and the Evolutionary Process

46

Man is a transitional being, he is not final. He is a middle term of the evolution, not its end, crown or consummating masterpiece.

47

Man is not final, he is a transitional being. Beyond him awaits formation the diviner race, the superman.

48

God is the beginning, middle and end of all things; but in the beginning He is concealed, in the middle partly and progressively manifest, in the end revealed.

The universe is such a manifestation of God under certain conditions and in the terms of a gradually unfolding harmony. These conditions and the movements which govern the rhythms of the harmony are the universal laws.

In this manifestation the two terms are involution and evolution. The material universe starts from an involution of God in the movement of inconscient Force and the forms of inert Matter and it is impelled by the divine impulse within it to the evolution of God through the increasing manifestation of consciousness and conscious power which must culminate in a perfect and infinite self-knowledge, self-mastery and self-delight. By the involution we mean a self-concealing of the Divine in a descent of which the last rung is Matter, by the evolution a self-revealing of the Divine in an ascent of which the last rung is Spirit.

Since evolution or a gradual self-unfolding is the essential movement of the universe, the impulse of all life in the universe must be to self-fulfilment and the realisation of its utmost potentialities. Behind each form of life there is a divine idea which determines its form and its limits and the form circumscribes the potentialities of the life. Therefore the self-fulfilment of the life is contained within certain limits fixed by the nature of the life and the law of its being and action which that nature determines.

The idea which thus determines is the cause and the form which thus limits the sign of the Finite in the universe. The universe is an infinity creating innumerable finite expressions of itself in idea and form within its own infinite being. The one and infinite is the soul and reality of each finite; the multiple finite is the rhythm, movement and harmony of the infinite.

Therefore in and behind all finite life in the universe there is an infinite reality seeking to arrive at itself which must in its self-unfolding create finite forms of life which are yet able in their consciousness and movement to manifest and realise the infinite. Man is such a finite-infinite and the sole type of such a form of life that yet exists upon the earth.

49

All life and mind on earth is the story of a Being, a Consciousness, a Power, a Joy that is darkly imprisoned in the apparent inconscience of Matter and is struggling for liberation. Blinded, cabined, drugged, immured, it is yet ever striving to come out of the black cell of this obscurity into its own light, wideness, conscious sight and force, self-aware action, bliss, freedom, harmony, perfection. It starts with small beginnings, as a vibration in the metal, as a feeling out and drawing in and a groping and [?infusing] in the plant, as a crude or minute power of sensory life-urge rising to an instinctive reason and mind and purposeful force in the insect, as a more organised and conscious and emotional, even a roughly and narrowly thinking and planning vital being in the animal, and has persevered till it has broken into some half opening on itself in the thinking, reasoning, willing and aspiring nature of man, the Manu, the mental creature. Here at present it stands not by any means satisfied, but it would seem, feeling out for something more entirely itself, some supreme manhood or supermanhood, some beginning of godhead that would be at last its true self-finding and triumphant manifestation out of matter, even here in this limited and limiting earthly Nature.

This striving and slow outburst of Something that was hidden all along in Matter, in the Inconscient, is the whole sense of Evolution — not the mere development of a more and more organised living body out of protoplasm, as the scientists with their eyes fixed only or mainly on physical things would have it, but the struggle of Consciousness somnambulised in Matter to wake and free, find and possess itself more and more completely, the emancipation and slow self-revealing of a Soul secret at first in Force and Form, the growth of a Spirit.

This evolution, it is sometimes pretended, ends in man, man is the term and end; but this is because we miss the real values of the process. At first indeed we see this Spirit spending numberless millions of years to evolve a material system of worlds empty in the beginning of life, a lesser but vast enough series of millions to develop an earth on which life can inhabit, a lesser series of millions to make possible and train, raise life itself with but a feeble and restricted apparatus of mind; but once it has found a body, a brain, a living apparatus not perfect, but still sufficient it is no longer concerned mainly with evolving a body or [. . .] an embodied life but can at last grapple with its own proper business. Evolution henceforth means the evolution of the consciousness, of mind and, if any such thing there be, of what is beyond mind, — and in that case as its last stride has been the evolution of the mental being, man, out of the vital being, the animal, so its next stride will be to evolve out of mental man a greater spiritual and supramental creature.

50

All mind and life on earth are the progressive manifestation of a Spirit or Being that has involved itself in Matter and is slowly evolving in Matter, against the inconscient resistance of a first rigid material self-formation and under its conditions, its own secret powers and nature. In the Inconscience in which it has involved itself, these powers, this nature seem not only to be hidden but contradicted; cast into their own opposites they emerge with difficulty and labour at first in flickers and faint glimpses, then growing into a better but still much diminished figure. But the evolution cannot be considered at an end until these diminished figures growing more and more free, developed, powerful arrive at their own complete fulfilment, revelation of their truth, native perfection, beauty and greatness. This is the aim of terrestrial existence — to reveal in Matter, in Time-Space, in figure and body what was once self-held only in an eternal unembodied self and spirit.

In order that this evolution might be, an implacable plunge of supreme Consciousness and Being into an apparent void of insentience, inconscience, non-existence was inevitable; for without that plunge, immergence, seeming yet effective annihilation [in] its opposite the creation of that phenomenon of cosmic Energy which we call Matter would have been impossible. Yet however effective this appearance is only an appearance. In the void of that Non-Existence all the powers of being are held involved and latent; in the impenetrable darkness of that Inconscience all the possibilities of consciousness lie ready to be evolved; in that insentience is a drowned Delight of Existence which emerging in the contradictory figures of pleasure and pain can struggle upwards towards cosmic expression of its own truth of the Bliss that supports all things.

To ask why this plunge was taken at all, why such an evolution slow, gratuitous, painful should ever have been undertaken is natural for man struggling painfully with his own transience, ignorance and suffering — inevitable consequences of that plunge or fall — but from the cosmic point of view irrelevant and otiose. A possibility was there in the Infinite and outlined itself for manifestation, the lines of an evolutionary world amidst the numberless possibility or numbered reality of various universes, and it was undertaken because the Spirit in things is afraid of no possibility of itself but is rather ready to sanction all by its will towards manifest existence. To the Cosmic Spirit which sees things as a whole, the working out of this universe or any universe is self-justified, the obscure labour of the emergence no less than the glory of its completion and final perfection in a yet unattained light, bliss and greatness.

At any rate into this world of evolution something of the eternal spirit has thrown itself, with all in it that consented to the descent and to fulfil the world, not to escape from it, is the deepest meaning of the Spirit and Godhead within us and the universe.

This then must be our will in terrestrial existence — being mind in matter to grow into the Spirit, being man-animal to emerge into the Godhead, to expand out of our limited sense of existence into freedom and infinite wideness, out of the half figure of consciousness we have realised to be illumined into true consciousness, out of weakness to realise divine Mastery, out of the dual experience of pain and pleasure to emerge into possession of the cosmic Bliss of existence, out of the dull chrysalis of our limited selves to flower into oneness with the Divine Self that we are. For this is not an egoistic will in us but the meaning of the Divine Inhabitant for which he has undertaken bodily life and terrestrial existence.

51

Before there could be any evolution, there must needs be an involution of the Divine All that is to emerge. Otherwise there would be not an evolution, but a successive creation of things new, not contained in their antecedents, not their inevitable consequences or followers in a sequence but arbitrarily willed or miraculously conceived by an inexplicable

Chance, a stumblingly fortunate Force or an external Creator.

The long process of terrestrial formation and creation, the ambiguous miracle of life, the struggle of mind to appear and grow in an apparent vast Ignorance and to reign there as interpreter and creator and master, the intimations of a greater something that passes beyond the finite marvel of mind to the infinite marvels of the Spirit, are not a meaningless and fortuitous passing result of some cosmic Chance with its huge combination of coincidences; they are not the lucky play of some blind material Force. These things are and can be only because of something eternal and divine that concealed itself in energy and form of Matter.

The secret of the terrestrial evolution is the slow and progressive liberation of this latent indwelling spirit, the difficult appearance, the tardy becoming [of a] divine Something or Someone already involved with all its potential forces in a first formal basis of supporting substance, its greater slowly emerging movements locked up in one initial expressive power of Matter.

Man the thinker and seeker would not be here if he were not an embodied portion of an all-conscious Infinite that is superconscient above him but lies also hidden in the inconscience of the material universe.

The development of forms is not the most important or the most significant part of the evolutionary process; it is one sign of the thing that is being done, but it is not its essence. Material form is only a support and means for the progressive manifestation of the Spirit.

If all were chance or play of inconscient or inconsequent Force, there would be no reason why man with all his imperfections should not be the last word of this feat of unconscious intelligence or this haphazard miracle. It is because the Divine Spirit is there and his manifestation the meaning of the movement that a new power must emerge in the series that started from Matter.

The material universe would be a waste if wonderful desert if Life had not appeared as the first index to some marvellous utility and an ultimate profound and moving significance. But life too by itself would be a movement without sequence to its purposeful initiation or any light to its own mystery if in Life there were not concealed an interpretative or at least a seeking power of consciousness that could turn upon its powers and try to grasp and direct them towards their own realised issue.

52

Our life is neither an accident nor a mechanism; it is not a freak of some wide-spread self-organising Chance, nor is it the result of a blind unaccountable material Necessity.

What we call Chance is a play of the possibilities of the Infinite; what we call Necessity is a truth of things working itself out in a Time-sequence of the Infinite.

It [*our life*] seems indeed to be born from a cosmic Inconscience which, pushed somehow towards world-building, does what it can or does what it must but in either case knows nothing of itself or of its own action. Yet is there a meaning in these workings, a conscious intention; our life is led by the will of some secret Being, secret perhaps within its own phenomenon, towards the solution of this packed cosmic Mystery, the unrolling of a willed and mighty Enigma.

What we see in and around us is a play of God, a "Lila". It is a scene arranged, a drama played by the One Person with his own multitudinous personalities in his own impersonal existence, — a game, a plan worked out in the vast and plastic substance of his own world-being. He plays with the powers and forces of his Nature a game of emergence from the inconscient Self out of which all here began, through the mixed and imperfect consciousness which is all we have now reached, towards a supreme consciousness, a divine nature.

This we cannot now know; our eyes are fixed on a partial outer manifestation which we see and call the universe — though even now we see and know very little of it or about it, know perhaps a few of its processes but nothing fundamental, nothing of its reality, — and an inner partial manifestation which we do not see but experience and feel and call ourselves. Our mind is shut up in a cleft between these two fragments and tends to regard it as the whole of things and the only tangible and real existence.

It is so that the frog regards himself and his well. But we have to grow out of this frog consciousness and exceed the limits of this well. In the end we come to perceive that we have a truer and divine being of which our petty personality is only a surface and corrupted output, a truer and divine Consciousness in which we must become self-aware and world-aware discarding our present fragmentary and bounded mental vision of self and things.[1]

The term of our destiny is already known to us; we have to grow from what we are into a more luminous existence, from pleasure and pain into a purer and vaster and deeper bliss, from our struggling knowledge and ignorance into a spontaneous and boundless light of consciousness, from our fumbling strength and weakness into a sure and all-understanding Power, from division and ego into universality and unity. There is an evolution and we have to complete it: a human animality or an animal humanity is not enough. We must pass from the inadequate figure of humanity into a figure of the Godhead, from mind to supermind, from the consciousness of the finite to the consciousness of the Infinite, from Nature into Supernature.

*

This is no vaulting imagination, but the inevitable outcome of our still unfulfilled being and incomplete nature, a necessity of the evolutionary world-urge: because things are what they are, this too must be. For things are what they are, but not what they were; they cannot remain for ever what they are, but must grow into what they can be and shall be. And what they shall be can be nothing less than the exceeding of their present imperfection, the fullness of what they have only half become; but it may and must be something more than that, they must grow into their own concealed reality, their nature must reveal what is now concealed, their real self.

---

[1] *The following sentence from an earlier draft was not incorporated in the final version of this piece:*

Our life is a journey towards the bliss of a vaster and happier existence, — not merely elsewhere in a far-off Paradise, but already here upon earth, *ihaiva*, in the terrestrial life and in an earthly [body.]

The perfection of species or of types is not what is aimed at; the type is often perfect [within its] limits, for it is the limits that make the type; the species too can be perfect in itself, perfect in its own variation of the genus and the genus perfect by the number and beauty or curiosity of its variations. But what we see in Nature is that it strives ever to exceed itself, to go beyond what it has yet done. For having achieved in the animal the whole of which animality was capable, it did not in achieving man endeavour to produce the perfect synthetic animal, it began at once working out something more than the animal. Man is to a certain extent a synthesis of several animals; he might even be said to synthetise all, from the worm and the skink, to the elephant and the lion; but as an animal he is terribly imperfect. His greatness lies in his being more than an animal and by this new nature he has exceeded the animal and made up for all his deficiencies even in the region of the struggle for life. Comparatively defenceless at first, he has become the master of the earth; he is not merely *primus inter pares*; he is a sovereign and the others are not any longer, even if they were ever his equals.

53

The world we live in is not a meaningless accident that has unaccountably taken place in the void of Space; it is the scene of an evolution in which an eternal Truth has been embodied, hidden in a form of things, and is secretly in process of unfoldment through the ages. There is a meaning in our existence, a purpose in our birth and death and travail, a consummation of all our labour. All are parts of a single plan; nothing has been idly made in the universe; nothing is vain in our life.

The evolution is arranged or arranges itself according to this plan. It begins here with a system of worlds which seem to be dead, yet in perpetual motion; it proceeds towards birth and life and consciousness, justifying Matter; it finds the justification of birth in thinking man; [?] to divinity. A slow [?] of godhead in Matter, this is the sense of the material universe.

Man is a transitional being, he is not final. He is too imperfect for that, too imperfect in capacity for knowledge, too imperfect in will and action, too imperfect in his turn towards joy and beauty, too imperfect in his will for freedom and his instinct for order. Even if he could perfect himself in his own type, his type is too low and small to satisfy the need of the universe. Something larger, higher, more capable of a rich all embracing universality is needed, a greater being, a greater consciousness summing up in itself all that the world set out to be. He has, as was pointed out by a half blind seer, to exceed himself; man must evolve out of himself the divine superman: he was born for transcendence. Humanity is not enough, it is only a strong stepping stone; the need of the world is a superhuman perfection of what the world can be, the goal of consciousness is divinity. The inmost need of man is not to perfect his humanity, but to be greater than himself, to be more than man, to be divine, even to be the Divine.

To rest in humanity is to rest in imperfection; the perfect man would be a self-contented finality of incompleteness. His nature is transitional and there is therefore in it an innate tendency to strive towards something more.

— Unless indeed he turned aside from his destiny, became a two-legged termite content with a perfectly arranged or sufficiently comfortable material order. He would [. . . . . .] exist, deteriorate or become stable like the ant or the dung-beetle or after attaining complete efficiency, disappear like the sloth, the mammoth, the pterodactyl or the dinosaur. His innate reason for existence would have ceased and with it his necessity for being.

But this cannot be; there is something in him that forbids it.

But this most — that humanity cannot realise itself except by passing into supermanhood.

The saint, the sage, the seer, the inspired man of action, the creator, — these are his summits of being. Beyond him is the supramental being, the spiritual superman.

54

Our existence in the cosmic order is not an accident, the purposeless freak of a Chance which happened to organise itself into a world or the product of a blind Force which has somehow managed to exist in what we call a void Space and executes there [?soulless] inexplicable revolutions, as if compelled by its own causeless necessity; nor is man the result of a chemical combination of gases by an Energy which has somehow, being radically inconscient, succeeded without intending it to produce consciousness and started writing poems, painting pictures, producing civilisations, conceiving an inexistent God and invisible Creator. There is surely more in it than that; there was [an] Idea somewhere [and if it] has emerged it is because it was [. . .] and had to emerge.

If there is an intelligence which has appeared in Matter and is constantly developing its height and its range, this can only be because there was already an intelligence there, asleep, involved, latent or in some way a possibility of Matter, which has come forth from latency when things and conditions were ready. Or else it [is] because behind or in the world immanent in it there is an Intelligence which has created or is manifesting this world and at the right time has sent this power of itself [. . . . .]

The nature of evolution according to physical Science is a development of forms more and more suitable to an increasingly complex and subtle development of Life and incidentally only to a more and more complex and subtle consciousness serving the ends of Life. This consciousness is a temporary phenomenon beginning in each form with birth and ending with death of the body. Consciousness then is a circumstance of body and incapable of survival of the body. There is no such thing per se as consciousness. A consciousness not dependent on the body, expressing itself in it as its instrument, a soul or spirit, is therefore a myth, an imagination; if it existed, it would be an unwarrantable intrusion into the nature of things as seen in this material universe; or, since everything in this universe is dependent on Matter, arose from Matter, is a circumstance or result of Matter and returns to Matter, soul too would be a circumstance or result of Matter, would act by it and in it only, would return finally to Matter. Consciousness itself is a phenomenon of Matter, is nothing but Matter in action, a combination of phenomenal action of chemical or other physical entities and operations and can be nothing else. It is unproven and unprovable, — though it may be that it is also not disproved and not disprovable. Either it must be left in a barren light or no light of agnosticism or is at most a matter of faith and not of knowledge.

But all this only means that Science has not any adequate means to deal precisely with the supraphysical nor can it collect and handle all the necessary data; it can deal only with the physical and with the physical side of the supraphysical; and that is not enough. Faith and knowledge are themselves supraphysical things with which Science cannot deal; for psychology at present is not a science; it is only a dispute between different bundles of inferences and guesses.

*

Man is not final, he is a transitional being.

This imperfect thinker embarrassed by the limitations of his brain and senses, this ignorant mind seeking after the truth of himself and things and never arriving at a certain knowledge, this stumbling reasoner capable only of speculation and stiff logical conclusions but not of indubitable conclusions or of a complete or direct knowledge, this imperfect liver divided between his reasoning will and his half-governed impulsions and instinctive desires, this thing of bundles of ideas and sensations and lusts and longings, this hunter after forms and formulas, this suffering and sorrowing mixture of wisdom and imbecility we call man is not the final essay of Nature, her last word, the crown of her evolution, the summit of consciousness, her master creation.

*

The central fact, the essential and cardinal significance of the evolution is not development and perfection of the outer and instrumental form, but the development [and] increasing perfection of consciousness. If human consciousness had been something complete, consummate, a ne plus ultra, then we could confidently say that here was the summit, here the crown and end of things and beings, here the perfected creation and the supreme terrestrial creator. Or if his consciousness though imperfect showed signs that it could arrive [at] the very top of possibility, rule earth and discover heaven, then we might believe that man was the last instrument by which Nature was passing from the terrestrial to the highest stage developing out of her initial inconscience a supreme conscient being.

But man seems to be by his very mould of nature a being with an animal living out of which he grew and a mental boundary beyond which he cannot pass.

For mind is the man, mind cramped into a body and entangled in the intricate machinery of a laborious and precarious physical organism which helps it less than it hampers. Mind's only data for knowledge are the motions of terrestrial life, the motions and processes of the physical world and its own processes and motions. Its notions about other things are merely speculations, guesses, imaginations; it thinks about them by means of abstractions, it cannot grasp anything concrete. It can observe life and know it by observation and inferences from observation or it can know by theory; it can find out its constituent parts and its processes. Its knowledge of itself is of the same variety; it traces out the processes of thinking, demarcates the observed constituents of personality; it evaluates men from what they say and do, not from what they are, for that it cannot see. It discovers by analysis or makes a synthesis by fitting together the fragments of things. Eventually it discovers the phenomenon, but misses the reality; it knows things as objects but knows nothing about things in themselves. Reality is beyond its grasp, it is only sure about the appearance. This is much for one who emerged out of nescient Matter and started as the ignorant animal, but it is not enough to make of man the crown of creation and the last apex of the evolution.

If man's knowledge and his way of knowledge are imperfect, still more imperfect are his living and his doing. [His] works sometimes attain perfection. Some men have done well in poetry and the arts and crafts, more have done badly, most are conventional copyists or botchers. In science and works with a scientific basis, men have certainly done well and their works were often efficient or masterly, for there all is method and rule and there the human mind seeks to master and execute what he has to do and that he can always do. Few have insight in works, fewer have any originality. Journeyman's work he can do, for man is essentially a journeyman. He is skilful in putting things [up], buildings, a job, a swindle. In pulling down he is perfect, a destroyer ne plus ultra. The world is full of his constructions, but more pervasive is his destruction; but that leaves few traces. But still the great doers are few in number, the good doers are many, the poor doers are legion, the evil doers hardly less. All this shows that he is a transitional and evolving animal, the highly evolved are rare, the poorly evolved numerous, the ill-evolved a multitude.

Living is more difficult than doing; though it is universal, and ought to have become easy by practice, it is commonly ill done, almost universally botched or half worked out. Human society is a ramshackle affair; it is top-heavy, over-elaborate and opulent at the top, below a multitudinous level. When he tries to reform his world, he sets out to level everything down towards or even to the worst. He can force all things down to the level of a universal proletariat, but he cannot make of the proletariat a universal aristocracy.

55

There are two states of being, two levels or limits between which all existence stands or moves, a highest limit of supreme consciousness, an omniscient Superconscience, a nethermost limit of supreme unconsciousness, an omnipotent Inconscience. The secret of consciousness reveals itself only when we perceive these two limits and the movement between them which we call the universe.

There can be no consciousness without existence, for the consciousness of a Void or a Nihil is a vain imagination, a thing impossible. For Nothing cannot be conscious of anything — cannot be conscious of itself; if it were conscious of itself, it would at once be an existence aware of itself, it would cease to be a Nihil; it would at once be evident that it was all the time an Existence appearing to be Nihil, that it was Being or a Being unconscious, but now grown conscious of its own existence. A void conscious of itself is conceivable, but it would then be a void existence and not Nihil. There might be an eternal Non-Being, but that too could not be Nihil; eventually it could only be a supreme superconscient existence exceeding our notion of Being. A true Nihil would necessarily be as incapable of consciousness as of existence; out of it nothing could come as in it nothing could be, neither spirit nor soul nor mind nor Matter.

We have then at one end of things a supreme superconscient existence and [at the other] a supreme inconscient existence and between them we have consciousness in the universe; but both are two states of one Being; what is between also is movement of that one Being between its two ends, its two highest and lowest levels of self-manifestation. *Ekam evadvitiyam*.

56

All existence upon earth is an evolution of what has come down from a superconscious Eternity to be involved here in a subconscious Infinite.[2]

That Eternity and this Infinite are the same Essence in opposite powers, but the one appears as a dark shadow of the other. The Superconscient is hidden from us because it is wrapped in its own being of illimitable light; the Inconscient escapes our search because it is plunged in its own veil of impenetrable darkness.

All that manifested from the Eternal has already been arranged in worlds or planes of its own nature, planes of subtle Matter, planes of Life, planes of Mind, planes of Supermind, planes of the triune luminous Infinite. But these worlds or planes are not evolutionary but typal.

A typal world is one in which some ruling principle manifests itself in its free and full capacity and energy and form are plastic and subservient to its purpose. Its expressions are therefore automatic and satisfying and do not need to evolve; they stand so long as need be and do not need to be born, develop, decline and disintegrate.

For evolution to be necessary there must be an opposing medium or recalcitrant instruments or an involution of the thing in its opposite. This is what has happened in the terrestrial world. Spirit has to evolve out of matter, consciousness out of the Inconscient, life out of inanimation, mind out of a life that is void of thought; out of mind and its fragmentation and difficult piecing together of things the automatic completeness of the supramental knowledge.

---

[2] *Three drafts of this piece exist; the first paragraph of each of them is identical, or almost so. From the third paragraph, the second and third drafts were developed on different lines by Sri Aurobindo. These two drafts have been printed as pieces 56 and 57. The first draft, much shorter, contains a few phrases not taken up in either of the other drafts. It is printed in its entirety below:*

All existence upon earth is an evolution, in an ascending series of figures, of what came down from a superconscious Eternity to be involved here in a subconscient Infinite.

What was involved evolves slowly; each manifested term of the evolution is a step in the series and presupposes another step beyond it. There can be no finality until a perfect potential is reached which can express all the possibilities of the involved Godhead.

The evolution is from the Inconscient; therefore at first ignorant, feeling its way rather than consciously finding it. But its significant element is a growing consciousness which must at last emerge out of ignorance into Knowledge. When that happens the evolution will become conscious, aware of its way, no longer a stumbling search or precarious growth but a luminous outblossoming of the Divine.

There is a secret self-compulsion in the Inconscient to manifest what is involved — gaoled, suppressed and inactive within it, but also there is a stupendous Inertia, as of some fathomless cosmic sleep, that resists the will to manifest and retards the evolution. There is thus an upward levitation towards the luminous eternity of the Spirit strongly countered by a downward gravitation back towards the Inconscience.

This Inertia was needed in order that the evolution might be gradual by aeonic process and not an explosion of the concealed elements either into a rapid self-ordered typal series or into their original superconscience.

As a consequence of this retarding force what is involved evolves with difficulty and slowly. Evolution is a struggle between an insistent call to manifestation and an iron retardatory reluctant Inertia. Evolutionary existence is precarious because the downward gravitation back to its source contradicts powerfully both the stress from within towards permanence and the pull from above towards self-transcendence. Matter in our world can easily dissolve into its elements, life sink back into death, mind relapse into unconsciousness. A type evolved, animal or man, struggles slowly and with much difficulty into manifestation, it is less difficult for it to disappear, as disappeared the mastodon and the dinosaurus. Hence the law of a precarious impermanence laid on the forms of Matter which is corrected only for a time by the lavish will to reproduction in Nature.

As the evolution is from the Inconscient, it is not only a precarious but also an ignorant movement feeling its way rather than consciously finding it. But still its most significant term is a growing consciousness which must at last emerge out of ignorance into knowledge. When that happens, the evolution will become a willed and conscious movement, aware of its process and its way, no longer a stumbling search or a precarious growth but a luminous outflowering of the Divine.[3]

The call to manifestation is composed of a double current of Force moving between two poles. There is a will or at least an urge in the Inconscient itself, slow, dumb, obscure but imperative and inevitable towards the revelation of its involved contents. But there is also a pressure from above from the already established Powers for their manifestation in Space-Time here and for their evolutionary possibilities in the world of Matter. A world of subtle Matter presses on the shapeless Inconscient for the manifestation of forms; a world of essential Life presses on form of Matter for the manifestation of an embodied life; a world of essential Mind presses on animate life for the manifestation of mind in the living body. This compulsion is so great as to contradict and counteract finally the refusing and retarding Inertia.

Above on the summits of existence is all that is beyond Mind and all that is the complete splendour of the Spirit. These too wait for their hour of manifestation, their turn for revelation in Time and Space and the evolving series of the powers of the Eternal.

57

All existence upon earth is an evolution of what has come down from a superconscious Eternity to be involved here in a subconscious Infinite.

The superconscious Eternity to which we tend and the subconscious Infinite from which we rise — for we are a part of both and we stand between them as their developing link — are opposite powers of the same Being, are indeed, in their essence, one and the same Being; but one appears to our experience as a dark and void shadow of the other. The Superconscient is hidden from us because it is wrapped in its own being of illimitable light; the Inconscient escapes our search because it is plunged in its own veil of impenetrable darkness.

---

[3] *The incomplete passage that follows apparently was intended for insertion here:*
A third consequence of the origin of the evolution is its character of struggle and suffering. For all is involved here in its opposite. Being descends into the phenomenon of Non-Being and has to emerge from it. Consciousness descends into the worldwide Inconscience and is involved in its night. Force descends into

What comes down from the Superconscient is self, spirit, the wide and all-containing Essence of the eternal existence. It plunges, carrying its powers in it, into an infinite ocean of inconscience, *apraketam salilam*, and hides itself there. It hides itself and its powers from itself — it appears in us as its own opposite.

The Self is an immortal and unseizable essence and substance of all things, it is a pure omnipresent omniscient omnipotent existence. It appears to our experience when we emerge from the subconscient as a mysterious Void or Nihil, indeterminable yet from it all things and forms are, inconscient yet flowering into consciousness, inert yet manifesting enormous energies, lifeless yet the parent of life, insensible yet a fountain of pain and pleasure. This impossibility, this universal contradiction is unreal and born of our ignorance; yet that ignorance is not ours, but a result of the inconscience which was imposed on itself as a veil by the involved Self and Spirit. For if that Inconscience were not there, the evolutionary emergence of the Self which is the law and object of this universe would not have been possible; all would have flowered into a manifestation too immediate, too irresistibly powerful in its process, too absolute.

The Self, the Spirit is a pure existence, a spiritual substance that is self-aware and therefore all-aware. It is in its nature an absolute and omniscient consciousness, eternally comprehending all itself, all in itself and would naturally manifest as an absolute, unwalled, indivisible knowledge. It becomes an inconscience out of which consciousness struggles brokenly into light, seeking and groping for itself, groping after signs and intimations of its substance, but finding at first only fragmentary signs and separated forms and objects which seem not itself. The consciousness in the individualised form becomes aware of itself by the shock of things outside that are or seem to be not itself. It becomes aware of itself as a separated form and only when it grows more and more deeply self-conscious slowly becomes aware of all outside it as part of its own continuous indivisible existence.

The nature of the Spirit's consciousness is a self-existent Force which in action becomes a spontaneously self-manifesting or, as it seems to us, self-creating and self-determining energy. It is omnisciently omnipotent and creates out of itself what it wills under whatever conditions it wills — for its will is that of an infinite and infinitely variable self-aware oneness whose steps, no matter what they are, are by necessity the movement of a perfect Truth and Knowledge. But it is by an equal necessity the very opposite when the manifestation of the Substance of things becomes the working of a void Inconscience. For even if that Inconscience be only apparent because an all-knowledge and its force are hidden there, yet this error, this phenomenon of Inconscience is and was intended to be dynamic and operative. In other words, all had to look and appear as the gropings of an Inconscience whose results in their upshot were yet those of an ordered and imperative Intelligence. An inert Soul guiding with a strange and blind sureness the steps of a somnambulist Nature would be no inadequate image of the apparent Spirit of this material universe.

This material world sprung from the subconscious Infinite appears to us as if [it] were the sole actual universe and even perhaps the only creation possible. But that is because we are limited by our senses which we now know to be restricted in their field and even there fallible. The material senses by their very nature can perceive only material things and from that our still infantile external reason infers that only material things exist and there is nothing else. All forms that are immaterial or of another substance than ours are and cannot but be illusions, hallucinations, unreal images. But a being otherwise constituted in consciousness or sense could well see this world in other figures than present themselves to ours. Another would see perhaps other worlds made of another, a subtler material or an essentially mental or vital or spiritual substance. A world is only an arrangement of things as experienced by consciousness of the Spirit and this consciousness can see all kinds of things in all kinds of ways according to whatever plane of itself, whatever medium and whatever instruments it has produced for its cosmic purpose. We shall understand nothing of existence if we confine our vision to the particular view of things our primary consciousness and its instruments which are physical impose upon us; for this consciousness is only a surface phenomenon of ourselves and our total being is far deeper, higher and vaster than that, our possibilities extend infinitely beyond their present limit, and the world also is far more complex than the first crude inexplicable mystery of Matter would lead us to imagine.

The immense material world in which we live is not the sole reality but only one of innumerable potential and existent universes; all of them need not have either Matter as we know it or the Inconscient for their base. Indeed this world of matter is itself dependent on many planes of consciousness and existence which are not material; for these have not this gross substance as their foundation or as the medium of their instrumentation of energy and consciousness or their primary condition of existence.

All the powers that are involved here in the inconscient Infinite and that we see rising out of it, — mind, life and what is beyond mind no less than matter itself — have their previous existence and are not merely evolutionary results of Nature in this universe. They have not only a preexistence but also their separate planes of manifestation in which each in turn is, as matter is here, the foundation, the medium of instrumentation, the primary condition of existence.

58

All terrestrial existence is the slow surge of a hidden Consciousness mounting up out of an apparent Inconscience towards its own perfect and luminous manifestation. This is the secret of evolution and its significance.[4]

There is a spirit secret even in things immobile, — there is an All-Consciousness disguised in the Inconscient. In Matter life is embedded, in Life is an enveloped mind, in Mind is concealed a greater supramental and spiritual being not yet manifested. These are the significant and illumining terms of the riddle.

---

[4] *Sri Aurobindo left out the sentence that follows when he revised the first draft of this piece:*

All else is only veils and means and forms, conditions and stages, action and counteraction of this great half-veiled becoming which is the heart of the earth's enigma.

Evolution is the labour of Nature, or let us say at once of the Energy of the secret Spirit, working in the semblance and under the limiting conditions of an inconscient Power to release these latencies each in its turn out of their involution in the original Inconscience.

It is an All-consciousness that is working, the force of a self-aware cosmic Spirit, and the emergence of its secret powers is implied in the very nature of existence; therefore the result is inevitable.

Science has discovered a physical evolution hidden in the past history of the earth of which the living record remains in the embryo; but the physical evolution is only an outward sign, means and material condition of a still more secret evolution. A spiritual evolution, an evolution of consciousness is the inner fact which alone illumines the problem of earth existence and opens to it its true solution; apart from it our life here has no intelligible significance.

Ancient Indian thought discovered an evolution from birth to birth, from the life of tree and plant to the life of insect and animal, from the life of the animal to the life of man, attained with difficulty through the ages. This slowly attained human life it took to be the key of release from the baffling circle of the enigma. After some eighty and more lakhs of births, says the Tantra, a soul reaches the human form and consciousness and sooner or later finds the secret of escape from birth in time into the birthless and deathless Eternity from which it came.

These two discoveries seem at first sight quite unconnected and disparate. In one it is a physical Life in the cosmos that evolves and the individual is only an ephemeral member of the species, the species a means of this cosmic evolution. Mind is indeed the term and the mental human being the crown of this inexplicable emergence; when human progress is over, when the race decays and perishes, the cosmic evolution will be at an end, for it has nothing more then it can do. In man it has shot its bolt; nothing more is possible. Consciousness emerging out of the Inconscient has achieved this shoddy and splendid, this winging and limping miracle of the ever-seeking creative Mind of Man and sinks back into the Inconscient; its emergence had no discoverable significance, its brief play and cessation make no difference to the meaningless rounds of an inconscient universe.

In the Indian view it is the individual that evolves from birth to birth and the hierarchy of the vegetal, animal, human kinds [is] a fixed unchanging ladder for its ascent. A successive creation of higher and higher species is envisaged in the Upanishads as well as the Puranas and heredity affirmed as a means of conscious continuity of the human embodiment of the Spirit, but still the evolution is individual and not cosmic, spiritual not physical. Yet here too this persistent phenomenon of spiritual embodiment appearing from the bodiless Spirit and evolving back into the bodiless Spirit seems to be devoid of significance.

If stripped of their limitations the two discoveries can be regarded as complementary rather than disparate. There is evidently an evolution; Matter first manifests out of the Formless — inanimate in appearance; in Matter life manifests unconscious in appearance; in life mind manifests in the animal but instinctive and irrational in appearance; in life-mind thinking mind appears rational but yet self-ignorant in appearance, — for it seeks to know but yet does not know the secret and significance of its own existence. It is not yet undisputed but it is affirmed that in thinking man spirit is moving towards manifestation, spirit aware of itself and of its own secret and significance. Thus far at least an evolution is indisputable and we may affirm without hesitation that there is a cosmic Existence here which first achieves a material manifestation of itself or a manifestation in itself, a material formula, then on that basis a life formulation, a vital formula, on that again a mental formulation, a mind formula. It is possible that on that again it is preparing a spiritual formulation of self-affirmation and self-knowledge which will complete the emergence.

There is also very evidently an evolution of forms, generic and individual in the genus and species, which enables the formulation to be effective, each in its own kind, organised so as to express more and more definite and superior possibilities of matter, more and more definite and superior possibilities of life, more and more definite and superior possibilities of mind, — more than this cannot yet be positively asserted, but this much is asseverable. If we can add that in the mental formula, in the mentalised life and body of man, a spiritual emergence is in process which has not yet reached its full possibility and that possibility is the emergence of the spiritual man or supramental being, then the object of the physical evolution and its significance becomes clear. The evolution of bodies is only a means for the evolution of consciousness and the spiritual formulation will be that in which the cosmic Existence will find its own full affirmation, manifest through the original veil of Matter its self-awareness, self-knowledge, self-realisation. The Cosmic Spirit hidden in the Inconscience is then the Alpha, its manifestation in the consciousness of spiritualised man the Omega.

The Stages of Evolution
Matter, Life, Mind, Supermind

59

The evolution of the earth nature is not finished because it has manifested only three powers out of the seven-fold scale of consciousness that is involved in manifested Nature. It has brought out from its apparent inconscience only the three powers of Mind and Life and Matter.

60

Matter, one might say from a certain viewpoint, is purely a matter of mathematics. That cannot be said of Mind or of Life.

Then again, Matter is a matter of formulas. Everything purely material is created according to a formula.

Again, Matter is a matter of magic. It is a thing of magical and irrational or suprarational formulas.

Lastly, all Matter is *matra*, a thing of degrees, measures, quantities.

*

We find that water is produced by a combination in a fixed quantity of the two first elements, hydrogen and oxygen. We do not know or do not yet know why this should be so. All we can say is that [it] is a fixed law of Nature that when this formula is scrupulously followed without deviation something called water appears, — becomes a phenomenon of material Nature. There seems to be no reason in this miracle. We could partly understand if oxygen and hydrogen by their very nature tended to produce in any combination water or something like water, but only in the fixed amounts could bring out the perfect article.

But this is not the case; only by the fixed relative combination can it be done. This formula then is of the nature of a magic formula. Only by pronouncing a fixed combination of words or syllables or sounds can the [. . .] magic result follow and not otherwise. Any variation voids the effect and leaves the incantation barren.

Hydrogen itself is produced by a combination of a fixed number of electrons or electric particles of energy in a fixed relative position in their movement. Oxygen is produced by another such combination. The elements are alike in kind, it is a positional quantitative [*remainder of piece missing*]

61

Ether and material space are different names for the same thing. Space, in its origin at least if not in its universal character, is an extension of the substance of consciousness in which motion of energy can take place for the relations of being with being or force with force and for the building up of symbolic forms on which this interchange can be supported. Ether is space supporting the works of material energy and the symbolic forms it creates; it is, speaking paradoxically but to the point, immaterial or essential matter[.]

62

Matter is but a form of consciousness; nevertheless solve not the object entirely into its subjectivity. Reject not the body of God, O God lover, but keep it for thy joy; for His body too is delightful even as His spirit.

Perishable and transitory delight is always the symbol of the eternal Ananda, revealed and rapidly concealed, which seeks by increasing recurrence to attach itself to some typal form of experience in material consciousness. When the particular form has been perfected to express God in the type, its delight will no longer be perishable but an eternally recurrent possession of mental beings in matter manifest in their periods & often in their moments of felicity.

63

Evolution is the one eternal dynamic law and hidden process of the earth-nature.

An evolution of the instruments of the spirit in a medium of matter is the whole fundamental significance of the values of the earth-existence. All its other laws are its values of operation and process; the spiritual evolution is its one pervading secret sense.

*

The history of the earth is first an evolution of organised forms by the working of material forces.

There follows on this initial stage an evolution of life in the form and an organisation of a hierarchy of living forms by the working of liberated life-forces. The next step is an evolution of mind in living bodies and an organisation of more and more conscious lives by the process of developing mind forces. But even this is not the end; for there are higher powers of consciousness beyond mind which await their turn and must have their act in the great play, their part of the creative Lila.

*

Matter, the medium of all this evolution, is seemingly inconscient and inanimate; but it so appears to us only because we are unable to sense consciousness outside a certain limited range, a fixed scale or gamut to which we have access. Below us there are lower ranges to which we are insensible and these we call subconscience or inconscience. Above us are higher ranges which are to our inferior nature an unseizable superconscience.

The difficulty of Matter is not an absolute inconscience but an obscured consciousness limited by its own movement, vaguely, dumbly, blindly self-aware, only mechanically responsive to anything outside its own form and force. At its worst it can be called not so much inconscience as nescience. The awakening of a greater and yet greater consciousness in this Nescience is the miracle of the universe of Matter.

This nescience of Matter is a veiled, an involved or a somnambulist consciousness which contains all the latent powers of the Spirit. In every particle, atom, molecule, cell of Matter there lives hidden and works unknown all the omniscience of the Eternal and all the omnipotence of the Infinite.

The evolution of forms and powers by which Matter will become more and more conscious until passing beyond form and life and mind it becomes aware with the supernal awareness of the eternal and infinite Spirit in his own highest ranges, this is the meaning of earth existence. The slow self-manifesting birth of God in Matter is the purpose of the terrestrial Lila.

* *

Matter is at once a force and a substance. Matter is original being, Brahman made concrete in atomic division; Matter is original substance-force, Brahman-Shakti made active in an obscure involution of the spirit's powers, in a self-forgetful nescience.

Matter-force casts matter-substance, material Shakti casts Matter-Brahman into form expressive of its own most characteristic powers. When that has been done, the physical world is ready for the splendid intrusion of conscious Life into the force-driven inertia of material substance.

Matter is not the only force, nor the only substance. For Life and Mind too and what is beyond Mind are also forces that are substances but of another kind and degree.

Spirit is the original force-substance; all these others are kinds and derivations of force of spirit, degrees and modifications [of] substance of spirit. Matter too is nothing but a power and degree of the spirit; Matter too is substance of the Eternal.

But the Matter that we see and sense is only an outermost sheath and coating; behind it are other subtler degrees of physical substance which are less dense with the atomic nescience and it is easier for Life and Mind to enter into them and operate. If finer invisible physical layers or couches did not exist supporting this gross visible physical world, that world could not abide; for then the fine operations of transmission between Spirit and Matter [could not] be executed at all and it is these that render the grosser visible operations possible. The evolution would be impossible; life and mind and beyond-mind would be unable to manifest in the material universe.

There is not only this material plane of being that we see, there is a physical life plane proper to the vital physical operation of Nature. There is a physical mind plane proper to a mental physical operation of Nature. There is a physical supermind plane proper to the supramental physical operation of Nature. There is too a plane of physical spirit power or infinite physical Being-Consciousness-Force-Bliss proper to the spiritual physical operations of Nature. It is only when we have discovered and separated these planes of Nature and of our physical being and analysed the synthesis of their contributions to the whole play that we shall discover how the evolution of vital, mental and spiritual consciousness became possible in inconscient Matter.

But there is more; for beyond these many couches of the physical existence are other supraphysical degrees, a many layered plane of Life, a many layered plane of Mind, planes of Supermind, of Bliss, of Consciousness Force and of infinite Being on which the physical existence depends for its origination and its continuance. It is higher planes that flood the constantly unfolding unseen energies which have raised its evolution from the obscurity in which it began to the splendour of a light of consciousness to which the highest human mind shall only be the feeble glimmer of a glowworm fire before the sun in its flaming glories.

There is a stupendous hierarchy of grades of consciousness between darkest Matter and most luminous spirit. Consciousness in Matter has to go on climbing to the very top of the series and return with all it has to give us before the evolution can utterly fulfil its purpose.

* *

Matter, Life, Mind, Supermind or Gnosis, and beyond these the quadruple power of a supreme Being-Consciousness-Force-Bliss — these are the grades of the evolutionary ascent from inconscience to the Superconscience.

Life does not wholly come into the earth from outside it; its principle is there always in material things. But, imprisoned in the apparent inanimate inertia or blind force movement of Matter, it is bound by its movements and unable to manifest its own independent or dominant existence.

Life is there in the earth, rock, metal, gas, atom, electron and the other more subtle yet undiscovered forces and particles that constitute material energy and form. It is in everything, but at first a hardly detectable presence organised only to support secretly material energies, processes, formations and transformations; it is there as an involved power for the building and expression of Form of Matter, not for the expression of Life. It is not in possession of itself, not self-conscious in the form, not pushed towards self-manifestation; a helpless tool and instrument, not a free agent, it is a servant of Matter and a slave of the Form, not the master of the house.

But above the material world there is a plane of dominant Life that presses down upon this material universe and seeks to pour into it whatever it can of its own types, powers, forces, impulsions, manifesting creative godheads. When in the material world form is ready, the Gods and Life-Daemons of this higher plane are attracted to put their creative touch upon Matter. Then there comes a rapid and sudden efflorescence of Life; the plant, the animalcule, the insect, the animal appear. A Life-Soul and a Life-Force with its many and always more complex movements are manifested in what seemed once to be inert and inanimate substance. Life souls, life minds, animal existences are born and evolve; a new world appears that is born and contained in this world of Matter and yet surpasses it in its own dynamic nature.

64

At each capital step of Nature's ascent there is a reversal of consciousness in the evolving spirit. As when a climber turns on a summit to which he has laboured and looks down with an exalted and wider power of vision on all that was once above or on a level with him but is now below his feet, the evolutionary being not only transcends his past self, his former now exceeded status, but commands from a higher grade of self-experience and vision, with a new apprehending feeling or a new comprehending sight and effectuating power, in a greater system of values, all that was once his own consciousness but is now below his tops and belongs to an inferior creation. This reversal is the sign of a decisive victory and the seal of a radical progress in Nature.

The new consciousness attained in the spiritual evolution is always higher in grade and power, always larger, more comprehensive, wider in sight and feeling, richer and finer in faculties, more complex, organic, dominating than the consciousness that was once our own but is now left behind us. There are greater breadths and spaces, heights before impossible, unexpected depths and intimacies. There is a luminous expansion that is the very sign manual of the Supreme upon his work.[5]

Mark too that each of the great radical steps forward already taken by Nature has been infinitely greater in its change, incalculably vaster in its consequences than its puny predecessor. There is a miraculous opening to an always richer and wider expression, there is a new illuminating of the creation and a dynamic heightening of its significances. There is in this world we live in no equality of all on a flat level, but a hierarchy of ever-increasing precipitous superiorities pushing their mountain-shoulders upwards towards the Supreme.

Plant-life is a most significant progress upon the mineral, but the difference is as nothing compared with the gulf that divides the dumb vitality of the plant from the conscious experience of the animal. The hiatus between the animal and the human is so great in consciousness, however physically small, that the scientists' alleged cousinship of monkey and man looks psychologically almost incredible. And yet the difference between vital animal and mental man is as nothing to that which will be between man's mind and the superman's vaster consciousness and richer powers. That past step will be to this new one as the snail's slow march in the grass to a Titan's sudden thousand league stride from continent to continent.

Evolution on the terrestrial plane, even in the dullest brute matter is only in outward appearance a progression of physical function and form; in its essential fact, in its inner meaning, in its significant power, it is a progression of consciousness, a spiritual or psychological change.

At each step the spirit heightens its stature, perfects its instruments, organises better its self-expression; a new consciousness comes in, takes up the old and gives it an extended movement and another significance, adds greater, richer, more complex movements of which the first formulation was incapable.

---

[5] *The following passage from the first draft of this piece was not incorporated by Sri Aurobindo in the present draft:*

Illuminating his creation here and pointing out to it its own significance it suggests the culmination of ever-ascending superiorities in the Supreme and the opening of released ever-increasing widenesses in the Infinite.

In the sub-vegetal world all movements, all stimulus, all reaction are of a material and if dynamic, of a mechanically dynamic character. Even the life movements that exist there, as in the mineral, are of the most rigidly automatic, unindividualised and mechanical and external nature, birth, formation, fatigue, sleep, death. Mental or psychic powers and significances there are, as an occult knowledge discovers, but of these the form seems not aware; it is something behind the life of the mineral, a consciousness supporting rather than inhabiting it, using but not used by it, that is their possessor.

In the plant world for the first time a true vital consciousness appears in earth Nature.

65

All the trend and purpose of Nature in terrestrial existence is to manifest the yet unmanifested. Her continual aim is to develop out of what has been evolved that which has not been evolved but is waiting to [be] liberated out of latency. This continual evolution is the whole meaning of terrestrial existence.

What has already been evolved is form of matter with life and mind housed in it, what has yet to be evolved is supermind liberating from their narrow limits and transforming mind and life and matter.

Here on earth and in the material universe matter has been the first term, the basis of things, the condition of all that must evolve here. Life can evolve here only so far as it can persuade or compel matter to give it a form and an instrumentation. Mind too has to accommodate itself to the means given it by an organised living body. There is no reason to suppose however that life in itself is limited in its possibilities to the small range realised by the living animal or human body; or the potentialities [of] mind limited to the field of powers accorded to it by the brain, nerves and physical senses, its ingenious but still very poor and unreliable instruments here.

In a world where life and not matter was the first term, condition and basis, in a vital world life would be free to organise itself in its own way with a free energy in plastic and pliable forms and its ranges of possibilities would be immense and circumscribed by no rigid limits.

66

But what shall be the gain won for the earth-consciousness we embody by this unprecedented ascent out of mind to whatever may be beyond it and what the significance of the supramental change? To what end shall man leave his safe human limits for this godlike but hazardous adventure?

First consider what was gained when earthly Nature passed from the brute inconscience and inertia of the first organised forms in what seems to us inanimate Matter to the vibrant sensibility of the plant range. Life was gained; the gain was the beginning of the mute groping and involved consciousness that reaches out to growth, to sense-vibration, to waking and sleep, to hunger and thirst, to physical pain and pleasure, to a preparation for vital yearnings and a living joy and beauty. That was begun which still is unfinished — the first step towards a conscious consciousness and what shall yet be the divine Ananda.[6]

In the plant earth-nature achieved a first figure of life, but the creature she made could not possess it, because this first organised life-consciousness had feeling and seeking, woke and slept, hungered and was satisfied, thirsted and drank and grew and flourished, had pleasure of some contacts and suffered from others, but was still externally blind, dumb, deaf, chained to the soil from which it was born, involved in its own nerve and tissue. It could not get out of this primitive formula, could not get behind its nerve-self as does the vital mind of the animal, still less could turn down from above it to know and realise its own motions as does the thinking and observing mind of man and to control them. This was a decisive but an imprisoned gain; for there was still a gross oppression of the original Inconscience which had covered up with the brute phenomenon of Matter and energy of Matter all signs of the Spirit. Nature could nowise stop here, because she held so much in her that was still occult, potential, unexpressed, unorganised, suppressed, latent; the evolution had perforce to go farther. The animal had to replace the plant at the head and top of Nature.

---

[6] Not joy or pleasure, but the bliss of existence and its movements from which the world arose.

And what then was gained when Nature passed from the obscurity of the plant kingdom to the awakened sense and desire and emotion and the free mobility of animal life? The gain was liberated sense and feeling and desire and courage and cunning and the contrivance of the objects of desire, passion and action and hunger and battle and conquest and the sex-call and play and pleasure, and all the joy and pain of the conscious living creature. Not only the life of the body which the animal has in common with the plant but a life-mind that appeared for the first time in the earth-story and grew and grew from form to more organised form till it reached in the best the limit of its own formula.

The animal achieved a first form of mind, but could not possess it, because this first organised mind consciousness was enslaved in a narrow scope, tied to the first functionings of the physical body and brain and nerve, tied to serve the physical life and its desires and needs and passions, limited to the insistent uses of the vital urge, to natural longing and feeling and action, bound by its own inferior instrumentation, its spontaneous combinings of association and memory and instinct. It could not get away from them, could not get behind them as man's intelligence gets behind them to observe them; still less could it turn down on them from above as do human reason and will to control, enlarge, reorder, exceed, sublimate.

67

Mind emerges out of life in matter; it is incapable of manifesting directly in the material form. It is there, but it acts mechanically in the somnambulism of an original force of inconscience and inertia. This and no more is what we mean by the inconscience of Matter; for although consciousness is there, it is involved, inorganic, mechanical in its action; it supports the works of Force by its inherent presence, but not by its light of active intelligence. This is why material Nature does the works of a supreme and miraculous intelligence and yet there seems to be no intervention of any indwelling Seer or Thinker.

68

Because man is a mental being, he naturally imagines that mind is the one great leader and actor and creator or the indispensable agent in the universe. But this is an error; even for knowledge mind is not the only or the greatest possible instrument, the one aspirant and discoverer. Mind is a clumsy interlude between Nature's vast and precise subconscient action and the vaster infallible superconscient action of the Godhead.

There is nothing mind can do that cannot be better done in the mind's immobility and thought-free stillness.

When mind is still, then Truth gets her chance to be heard in the purity of the silence.

Truth cannot be attained by the mind's thought but only by identity and silent vision. Truth lives in the calm wordless Light of the eternal spaces; she does not intervene in the noise and cackle of logical debate.

Thought in the mind can at most be Truth's brilliant and transparent garment; it is not even her body. Look through the robe, not at it, and you may see some hint of her form. There can be a thought-body of Truth, but that is the spontaneous supramental Thought and Word that leap fully formed out of the Light, not any difficult mental counterfeit and patchwork. The supramental Thought is not a means of arriving at Truth, for Truth in the supermind is self-found or self-existent, but a way of expressing her. It is an arrow from the Light, not a bridge to reach it.

Cease inwardly from thought and word, be motionless within you, look upward into the light and outward into the vast cosmic consciousness that is around you. Be more and more one with the brightness and the vastness. Then will Truth dawn on you from above and flow in on you from all around you.

But only if the mind is no less intense in its purity than its silence. For in an impure mind the silence will soon fill with misleading lights and false voices, the echo or sublimation of its own vain conceits and opinions or the response to its secret pride, vanity, ambition, lust, greed or desire. The Titans and the Demons will speak to it more readily than the divine Voices.

Silence is indispensable, but also there is needed wideness. If the mind is not silent, it cannot receive the lights and voices of the supernal Truth or receiving mixes with them its own flickering tongues and blind pretentious babble. Active, arrogant, noisy, it distorts and disfigures what it receives. If it is not wide, it cannot house the effective power and creative force of the Truth. Some light may play there but it becomes narrow, confined and sterile. Or the force that is descending is cabined and thwarted and withdraws again from this rebellious foreign plane to its vast native heights. Or even if something comes down and remains, it is a pearl in the mire; for no change takes place in the nature or else there is formed only a thin intensity that points narrowly upward to the summits but can hold little and diffuse less upon the world around it.

69

Reason is a clarified, ordered and organised Ignorance. It is a half-enlightened Ignorance seeking for truth, but a truth which it insists on founding upon the data and postulates of the Ignorance. Reason is not in possession of the Truth, it is a seeker. It is [unable to] discover the Truth or embody it; it leaves Truth covered but rendered into mental representations, a verbal and ideative scheme, an abstract algebra of concepts, a theory of the Ignorance. Sense-evidence is its starting point and it never really gets away from that insecure beginning. Its concepts start from sense-data and though like a kite it can fly high into an air of abstractions, it is held to the earth of sense by a string of great strength; if that string is broken it drifts lazily [in] the clouds and always it falls back by natural gravitation to its original earth basis — only so can it receive strength to go farther. Its field is the air and sky of the finite, it cannot ascend into the stratosphere of the spiritual vision, still less can it move at ease in the Infinite.

70

Mind can never be a perfect instrument of knowledge. For even if it could be free from all positive error, even if it could be all intuitive and infallibly intuitive, it could still present and organise only half truths or separated truths and these too not in their own body but in luminous representative figures put together to make an accumulated total or a massed structure[.]

71

The office of intellect is not to fathom reality, but to fabricate and preside over action; intellect cannot comprehend life and reality. Intellect (logic) goes round the object, intuition enters into the object; one stops at the [?   ], the other enters into the absolute[.]

72

Intuition, — but what do we mean when we speak of intuition? What is its origin, nature, working, and how is it connected with intelligence and sense and instinct, our other ways of knowing, or what is the difference? Is intuition the one means of true and complete knowledge or does it need intelligence, sense, instinct to complete it? Is there a greater power of direct and absolute and complete knowledge of which intuition is only a special or part action, — some first and last potency, the Alpha and Omega of an all-knowledge, the all-knowledge that we attribute to God or to the Spirit of the universe?

These are the queries it is proposed to answer here; but the answer can come only from intuition itself, from a direct seeing and experience, for if intuition exists, it and its way of working must obviously be something beyond the reasoning intelligence and therefore not entirely seizable by the reasoning intelligence.

I know myself because I am myself, I know the movements of my mind, joy, anger, love, thought, will, because they are myself or parts of myself; I have a direct knowledge of myself, a knowledge by identity. Observation, reasoning there can be as a subsidiary process; but it is not by observation or reasoning that I know them; I feel and know my anger or love as part of myself and have no need to observe or to reason in order to know that I am angry or that I love.

Intuition is a direct knowledge self-existent and independent of means and devices; it is naturally self-existent and founded upon a knowledge by identity; or when it is gained, it is either by identification or by a knowledge arising from some intimate contact made possible by an underlying or occult identity.

73

Nothing has the value of truth for the supramental if it is only thought or understood with the intelligence. That is a shadow or reflection and shadows can always distort, at best only adumbrate; reflections can always misform or mistranslate and at best have not the truth-substance. It is only when the object is entered into, seen with an inner and surrounding vision, possessed in experience, taken into our living universal & identifying individual consciousness, made one with us in the Truth that is, holds, comprehends, actuates all things, — only then is there the characteristic process of the supermind, the way of directness, the sincerity and power, the magnificence and general wholeness of the gnosis[.]

74

But what is supermind and where is it in this world of half lights, in which consciousness is a constructor of ideas, images and sensations that at once inform and mislead, representations that are half truths, half misrepresentations, symbols of things, not things in themselves, relative impressions but nothing absolute. Our senses give us the forms of things as they seem to our senses, not as they are; for they would appear quite different to other senses than ours; our mind builds the great mass of its idea of the world and things on this insecure basis, or if it corrects the evidence of the senses, it is in the light of a reason whose conceptions of Time, Space and Substance are equally imperfect, equally relative, empirically valid up to a certain point, but fundamentally dubious and insecure. Is not this the only consciousness possible, or at least the highest of which we are capable and have we any evidence of a higher power of awareness and knowledge or any ground to suppose that there are beings greater than man who possess it? Is not this world and must it not be always a world of Ignorance, knowledge partial at the best, all knowledge here relative, pragmatic, indirect and no knowledge either here or anywhere that can be called supreme, direct or absolute? If absolute knowledge there is it must be the sheer consciousness of the Featureless Infinite, the One Self, the void or formless Spirit, and there can be no other.

75

I mean by the supermind a power, a level, an organisation of consciousness which is not only above the human mind, but above all that can be called mind, — another higher and wider essence and energy of consciousness altogether. Mind is that which seeks after truth of any kind or of all kinds within its range, labours to know it, attempts to direct and utilise it. But by supermind I mean a divine awareness which inherently possesses truth, knows it by its own intrinsic identity with it and puts it into action or effect spontaneously by its own sovereign power without any need of endeavour or labour. Mind even though it seeks after knowledge and can sometimes grasp its figure or touch its shadow, is a product of the cosmic Inconscient or of a Half-Conscience-Ignorance; supermind is an eternal Truth-consciousness, a divine Knowledge self-maintained for ever and luminous in its own right beyond all Ignorance.

The Emergence of the Superman

76

A god has veiled himself in the earth & mire and beauty and perfection lie unevolved in masses of ordure. This is the play of God with His substance in Matter.

In the atom there is hidden all the will & intelligence & joy that created the universe. In Man they have emerged, but blinking & dazzled by the gleam of their own sunlight, bewildered at themselves & each other. They stumble up against each other, strive & wrestle blindly; for they cannot even [in] the highest man accomplish altogether their own unity & harmony.

An ignorance in which is packed up all knowledge, a mighty inertia in which all cosmic force strives helplessly, an insensibility which conceals the pain and strain of all ecstasy present, but held back, this is the outer face of material Nature and our starting point.

The Spirit awakening out of this veil gradually and with difficulty but inevitably is the secret sense of life. The power to accomplish the perfect awakening against accumulated difficulties, is God's offer to man throughout his cycles.

The perfection & the unity of the divine knowledge, will, delight in the mould of his universalised individuality is the destiny of man, his ascent to Godhead and the unfolding in him of Superman.

Mind evolved is man; supermind unevolved conceals in him the superman.

77

This is the meaning of our existence here, its futuristic value and inherent trend of power, to rise above ourselves, to grow into gods, to reveal God in a world of material forms and forces.

Earth and conscious life upon earth are not a freak of cosmic Chance, a meaningless accident in the vacant history of nebula and electron and gas and plasm; they are the field of a game of the Gods with the destiny of our souls as the stake of their wager.

To evolve Godhead out of the mud of matter, some divinest consciousness out of a primal inconscience and a struggling ignorance, immortality out of death, undying bliss out of pain and sorrow, the everlasting Truth out of the falsehoods and denials of this relative world is their great and daring gamble.

All life upon earth is the evolution of a divine Spirit that is concealed as by a self-formed mask and robe in the appearance of Matter. Out of that involution it evolves, manifests by a series of ascendent steps its suppressed powers and, once this process has begun, will not cease till the Godhead is manifest in Matter.

Man is a struggling transitional term, an intermediate being who has gathered up into himself the consciousness of the mineral and the vegetable, of the insect and the animal, and is fashioning and refining in the confused twilight and chaos of a half knowledge founded on Ignorance the materials of the god that is to be born.

The instrument of man is mind and thinking and willing mind-force — just as the instrument of the animal is life instinct and feeling and remembering life force and the instrument of the plant and tree existence is the vital push and the dynamism of material energy turning into force of life. As these lower states developed up to a point at which Mind-intelligence could descend into the organised living body and take up the earth-past to mentalise and transform it, so Mind in man has to develop up to a point at which a consciousness greater than Mind can descend into the mind and living body and take up the human material to supramentalise and transform it into godhead. This is man's rise to the Infinite.

An air from a consciousness greater than mind has already been felt by many of those who have climbed to the human summits and to the glow that has come from above they have given many names, *bodhi*, intuition, gnosis. But these things are only the faint edge of that greater light thrust into the pallid twilight that we call mind. Only when the lid between mind and supermind has been utterly rent apart and the full power of the sun of a divine Gnosis can pour down — not trickling through mind as in diminished and deflected beams — and transform the whole mind and life and body of the human creature, can man's labour finish. Then only shall begin the divine play and the free outpouring of the liberated self-creating Spirit.

To rise into this greater consciousness above our mental level of humanity as man has risen above the level of the life-mind of the beast, to grow from mind into supermind, from twilight into light, from the mind's half-consciousness into what is now to us superconscient, from a narrow imprisoned ego into the transcendent and universalised individual, from a struggling half effective into a throned and master power, from little transient joys and sorrows into an unalloyed divine delight, this is the goal of our journey, the secret of our struggle.

This is our way of emergence from the now dark riddle of the earth and unsolved problem of human life. If there were not this secret sense in all we are and do, there would be no significance in the material world and no justification for our earth-existence.

A gnostic superman is the future master of the earth and rescuer of the divine meaning out of the ambiguous terms of this great world-enigma.

78

All that baffles us in existence can find its solution, if we can read it in the light of intention that comes from its source. The original Light points us from our preoccupation with our roundabout and puzzling course to the revealing significance of its aim; for the world's source and origin and its aim are one.

The Cause and Fount of all things is the Divine and the end and aim of all things is the Divine. The finite in Time reveals its own deep and abiding sense when it opens to the Eternal and throws itself into the Infinite.

The only true knowledge — for all the rest is either false or only true in a limited field, half-true and therefore, from the vision of the whole, false — is that which reads everything in the sense and light of the Divine. If man would open himself to the Divine Light, he would begin at last to know; but he prefers always to read everything in the light of man's consciousness, man's sense, man's aims and hopes in his little half lit circle.

But man was not the beginning of the manifested universe or even of the earth-cycle, so also he is not its end and fulfilment. There was much before he appeared; there will be much after he has gone — or fallen into a subordinate place.

Human consciousness is a half term in earth nature's climb from the electron and atom, gas and metal through the vegetable and animal and human formulas to the god and Titan and through the god to the Divine. It is not in the light of the realised alone that we should read the earth-riddle; it is in the light of the unrealised that we shall understand the realised and know why all was and to what all was moving in Nature.

At present what we know best is man and mind and what mind and its several senses see or infer about the universe. But mind is not the highest possible instrument and mental man is not the last creation possible to the capacities of creative evolution in the material universe.

There is indeed the real man as well as this that is apparent. The apparent is this imperfect and struggling humanity, the real is the Purusha, the conscious being within us. The Conscious Being within us, one with the Being in whom we live and move, is indeed the cause and beginning and the end and aim of existence. But our humanity is only a transitory phase of the Conscious Being within us.

Man is not final.

79

The transition from manhood to supermanhood is, in one sense, a self-exceeding, a ceasing to be what we now are in order to become something else or more. In another sense it is a self-becoming, a flowering out of something concealed by our present state, a latent godhead that already is and always was our true being.

Supermanhood is for us a self-exceeding because man, pragmatically and to his own surface awareness, is a small, confused, limited, still ignorant formation of evolutionary Nature, — if supermanhood is intended, then either he has himself to become superman or, if he cannot or will not achieve it, he must make way for some creature greater than he who will have both the will and the power.

But again supermanhood is at bottom a self-becoming because what we now call ourselves is only the surface man, a thinking and living body; but this [is] only the top of a wave, not the whole sea that secretly we are. All that makes supermanhood is there at least in material in our secret depths and on our still more occult height; what in outward fact, in appearance, in present self-awareness man is not but must become, is already there within him; he has only to find himself in order to become that greater self and nature.

80

Man [is a] transitional being, not the final end of the evolution and the crown of terrestrial existence.

This ignorant, imperfect and divided being, with his labouring uncertain thought and half-successful will, this toiling and fluctuating experiment, this field of the attempt at emergence of a thousand things that are striving to be, is no consummation of the struggle of cosmic Force; he is only a laboratory in which Nature seeks for its own concealed secret, makes tentative efforts at what she has been missioned to achieve.

As man arose out of the animal, so out of man superman shall come.

81

Man is a transitional being; he is not final. As it did not begin with him, neither does it end with him. He is not its evident crown, not its highest issue, not the last clear sum of Nature. Nature has not brought out in man her highest possibilities; she has not reached in him the supreme heights of consciousness and being; as there was before him the infrahuman, the insect and animal, so there shall be after him the superhuman, the superman.

Man may himself become the superman, he may become all that he is not now; but for that he must exceed himself. It is not by clinging to his present imperfect consciousness that he can take the next step in the evolution. He must discover and release the spiritual godhead within him, realise his divine possibilities, be himself the giant potential something, the divine someone who has been struggling into emergence out of the original plasm that imprisoned it since began the mystery of terrestrial Nature.

82

Man cannot be final, he is a transitional being. This is very clear from the incompleteness and imperfection of all his powers of consciousness; he can only arrive at some limited form of temporary and unstable perfection by much labour and struggle; and yet the search for perfection is ingrained in his nature. There is something that he is not yet which he has to be; he is reaching always towards the something yet unrealised; his whole life and nature is a preparation, an endeavour of Nature towards what is beyond him.

The human consciousness is limited in every direction; it does not know itself, it does not know the world around it, it does not know the origin and meaning and use of its existence.

But it strives always to know, to find the truth of its being, the right use of its life, the end towards which Nature in him is tending; this it does with a seeking and blundering movement; man's consciousness is an ignorance struggling towards knowledge; it is a weakness training itself for power; it is a thing of pleasure and suffering that tries to lay hands on the true delight of existence.

All that we see in us and around us in this material world is a mystery-play of the Eternal and Infinite; it is the large total and the curiously variable detail of steps and circumstances in a self-discovery or self-unfolding of a Divinity who has hidden his real from his manifested self in the vast black disguise of the inconscience of Nature.

This is the constant miracle that is the key to the meaning of existence, — the miracle of the birth and growth of life and consciousness in the inanimation and inconscience of the material universe.

The birth and growth of consciousness is the whole sense of evolution. For evolution is not in its inner and essential character a development of more and more organised forms of Matter. This development is only an outer instrumentation for the evolution of life and of consciousness in life. That again in its deepest inmost sense is a growth embodying the slow self-discovery and self-revelation of a soul or spirit in a form of living matter.

The evolution has been an ascension starting from forms that seem to be inanimate and inconscient objects, for in them the spirit in things is asleep, through a leisurely waking in plant and animal till it reached with difficulty a beginning of self-awareness in man the mental being, the first and only speaking, thinking, reasoning creature. But there is no ground for the idea cherished by this imperfect human being that he is the summit and last word of the evolution. Humanity is one step in the destiny of the evolving spirit, the last before it assumes something of its own divinity delivered and apparent; his imperfect life and consciousness must develop itself into the type of the fully conscious being, after man or out of him must be born the superman.

This consummation can only take place by an evolution of the consciousness of the individual and humanity beyond its present stage of development; it can take place only if man is ready to take the turn towards which Nature has been slowly leading him, to discover himself, to know himself as soul and spirit, to see and lay firm hold on the Reality behind world and life and things after which he has been seeking through the ages. Nature's first evolution has been an evolution of Matter, of physical objects, of the stage, scenery, external conditions and instruments of the drama of an evolving conscious Life in Matter. In life itself she has been content at first to organise a physicality, an externality of life; the evolution of the body has been the sign, the instrument, the apparent cause of the evolution of consciousness. Even when she has arrived at the evolution of Mind, the mind of a humanity which is capable not only of knowing outwardly the external world but of going within itself, of knowing itself, of knowing the secret things, powers, forces which are behind itself and behind the works of a surface external Nature, still she has been most careful to organise a surface Mind dealing with surface and external things and an organisation of personality which is superficial and not the whole of ourselves, a wave only of the ocean of our hidden being, our secret reality. To build an ego which will deal with material life and nature as its user but also as its subject, a life that is bound by matter, a mind that is bound by both matter and life has been her main preoccupation. But still the evolution of consciousness is the real and central fact which gives a significance otherwise altogether lacking to the mechanical structure of the universe. Man is here not merely to utilise his world for the service of his individual and collective ego; he is here as a medium in which the Spirit within, the secret growing Consciousness can evolve farther its self-manifestation, arrive from a partial to a complete consciousness and, since life itself is there only as a means of this evolution and an image of it, at a complete and perfect individual and social life. If the psychological truth of our being is the real and central truth, more central and important than the physical, this must be its true nature, a conscious being growing towards its own completeness of consciousness and growing too towards its expression and formation in a complete individual and social life.

Section Two

Psychology

The Science of Consciousness

The Problem of Consciousness

The Triple Enigma

83

Existence, consciousness and the significance of our conscious being, — a triple enigma confronts us when we look at them to discover their origin, foundations, nature, their innermost secret. We begin with a riddle, we end with a mystery.

Existence itself is the first riddle. What it is we do not know, we are ignorant how it came to be at all, we cannot say whether it is an eternal fact or a temporary phenomenon. It may be only an appearance or it may be real, not in itself but as a manifestation of some hidden Reality; but then of what is it the manifestation and how came it into being or why had it to be?

Consciousness of existence is a second insoluble miracle. It seems not to have been and now is and it may be that some day it will not be; yet it is a premier fact and without it being would not know of its own existence. Things might exist, but only as a useless encumbrance of a meaningless space, — consciousness makes being self-aware, gives it a significance. But what then is consciousness? Is it something in the very grain of being or an unstable result or fortuitous accident? To whom does it belong? to the world as a whole? or is it peculiar to individual being? Or has it come from elsewhere into this inanimate and inconscient universe? To what end this entry?

The significance of our conscious being in an inconscient material world is the last and worst enigma. What is the sense and justification of the individual, his consciousness, his feeling of self, his personality? Is our individuality real or apparent, temporary or permanent, a minor circumstance or a central secret of the whole? Has it a meaning in the universe or in something beyond the universe? or is it only a chance outburst of Nature with no sense in it or any but a mechanical purpose?

*

All these problems arise in our consciousness and in our consciousness alone can be found their solution — or to it or through it perhaps from a greater consciousness the solution must come. On the nature and validity of our consciousness depends the nature and validity of the discovery we shall make or the conclusions to which we can come. On the power of our consciousness depends the possibility or impossibility of putting into the terms of life the solutions our knowledge discovers. But most of all the appearance and development of consciousness in the inconscient world is the decisive factor, the one thing that gives its existence a light of meaning, a possibility of purpose, a hope of fulfilment and the soul's self-finding. To know, then, the nature of consciousness, its process, its birth, growth and destiny is for us a study of supreme importance.

84

All the problem of existence turns around three things, the nature of being, the nature of consciousness and the secret of the dynamics, the energy of existence by which being and consciousness find each other and manifest what is within them. If we can discover these three things, all is known which we fundamentally need to know; the rest is application and process and consequence.

The problem of consciousness is the central problem; for it links the other two together and creates their riddle. It is consciousness that raises the problem it has to solve; without it there would be no riddle and no solution. Being and its energy would then fulfil themselves in form and motion and in cessation of form and motion without any self-awareness and without any enjoyment or fruition of their form and motion.

Existence would be a fact without significance, the universe an inanimate machine turning for ever — or for a time, — without any reason or issue in its turning. For it to have any significance there must be either a Mind or some other kind of Awareness that observes it, originates it perhaps, has joy in its turning, works out something by the turning of the machine for its own satisfaction or dissatisfaction; or there must be a consciousness that emerges by the turning and reveals being and energy to themselves and leads them to some kind of fulfilment. Even if it is only a temporary consciousness that emerges, yet that must be the one significant fact of being, the one thing that lights up its movements, makes it aware of itself, raises it to something that is more than a mere dead or blank self-existence, a One or a Many that is yet worth no more than a zero.

Even if what fundamentally is in being, is not consciousness but a superconscience, yet that must be one supreme kind of self-awareness, if not also all-awareness; for otherwise there would be no difference between superconscience and inconscience; the two would be only top-side and bottom-side of the same blank, yet mysteriously but vainly fruitful reality.

In the ancient tradition eternal and infinite Being and Consciousness carry in them as the result of their oneness or coexistence an eternal significance of Bliss, Ananda. If we suppose Being-Consciousness to carry in them an eternal and infinite energy that creates, as we say, expresses, as the Sanskrit term better puts it, the universe, then the bliss of eternal conscious being would contain in itself a bliss of eternal energy of consciousness and being finding itself in the joy of self-expression, self-manifestation, self-creation. That would be a sufficient explanation of the appearance of a phenomenal universe, there is in fact no other that is satisfactory. These then are there the three or the four terms underlying all the secret of existence, — Being, Consciousness-Energy, Bliss of being, Ananda.

It would not materially affect the fundamental satisfactoriness of this explanation that the world we live in is not a world of bliss, not a world of consciousness, — though it is in its evident appearance, a world of being and of energy of being, that it is in its phenomenal basis inconscient and works itself out through process and labour and, when consciousness appears, through joy of being but also through pain of being. If the eternal creative Energy takes joy in that, has the Ananda of it (and without consciousness there can be no joy or Ananda), as a poet in the creation of his tragedy or comedy, then that would be a sufficient explanation of the existence of this universe, though we would still have to seek for its significance, the reason of this choice of pain and labour.

Consciousness then is the centre of the riddle. If we know what is Consciousness, where its action begins and ends — if it has a beginning and an ending, what is its process and the significance of its temporal appearance and action, we shall then be able to look deeply into being and its energy and understand and solve all their enigma.

*

But here in our world of Matter the original and fundamental phenomenon we meet everywhere is a universal Inconscience, Consciousness appears to come in as only an incident, a development, a strange consequence of some ill-understood operations of Energy in inconscient Matter. It arises out of an original Inconscience, it dissolves or sinks back into the Inconscience. Once it has appeared it persists indeed but as a general phenomenon precariously manifested in individual living beings. It has the seeming either of an uncertain freak of inconscient Nature, — a disease some would conjecture, a phosphorescence playing upon the stagnant waters of inconscient being, active at certain points of animation, or a guest in a world in which it is alien, a foreign resident with difficulty able to maintain itself in a hardly amicable environment and atmosphere.

According to the materialist hypothesis consciousness must be a result of energy in Matter; it is Matter's reaction or reflex to itself in itself, a response of organised inconscient chemical substance to touches upon it, a record of which that inconscient substance through some sensitiveness of cell and nerve becomes inexplicably aware. But such an explanation may account, — if we admit this impossible magic of the conscious response of an inconscient to the inconscient, — for sense and reflex action [yet] becomes absurd if we try to explain by it thought and will, the imagination of the poet, the attention of the scientist, the reasoning of the philosopher. Call it mechanical cerebration, if you will, but no mere mechanism of grey stuff of brain can explain these things; a gland cannot write Hamlet or pulp of brain work out a system of metaphysics. There is no parity, kinship or visible equation between the alleged cause or agent on the one side and on the other the effect and its observable process. There is a gulf here that cannot be bridged by any stress of forcible affirmation or crossed by any stride of inference or violent leap of argumentative reason. Consciousness and an inconscient substance may be connected, may interpenetrate, may act on each other, but they are and remain things opposite, incommensurate with each other, fundamentally diverse. An observing and active consciousness emerging as a character of an eternal Inconscience is a self-contradictory affirmation, an unintelligible phenomenon, and the contradiction must be healed or explained before this affirmation can be accepted. But it cannot be healed unless either the Inconscient has a latent power for consciousness — and then its inconscience is phenomenal only, not fundamental, — or else is the veil of a Consciousness which emerges out of a state of involution which appears to us as an inconscience.

There is no doubt a connection and interdependence between consciousness and the inconscient substance in which it resides and through which it seems to operate. Consciousness depends upon the body and its functionings, on the brain, nerves, gland-action, right physiological working, for its own firm state and action. It uses them as its instruments and, if they are injured or unable to act, the action of the consciousness may also be in part or whole impaired, impeded or suspended. But this does not prove that the action of consciousness is an action of the body and nothing else. There is an instrumentation and if the instrument is impaired, the user of the instrument can no longer manifest himself rightly through it; if it is destroyed, he cannot operate any longer unless or until he can get another instrument. This then has to be seen whether the phenomena of consciousness are such that they make it necessary to suppose such a use or instrumentation of the body.

If so then either there must be a conscious being in us that is other than the body or else a conscious Energy that thinks, senses, observes, acts intelligently through the physical instrument. This is what we actually observe in our experience of ourselves that there is such a being or else such an energy at work in us and this self-experience is surely as valid, as binding as the accompanying experience of an inconscient substance or building of inconscient Matter which is its field and habitat. Both sides of the phenomenon must be given their value; to reject Matter as an illusion of Consciousness or Consciousness as a freak or disease of Matter are equally one-eyed views which miss the true problem and are not likely to lead to a satisfying solution.

It is certainly possible, prima facie, that Consciousness may be a subordinate phenomenon dependent on Matter or, more accurately, on the Energy that formulates Matter. Our need then is to discover its exact nature, origin, function in a material world and the utmost limit of its possibilities for the human being; for to man matter is only a basis of his life, a material of his works, an opportunity; what is really important to him is consciousness, for it is his consciousness and use of consciousness that gives him his significance and importance to himself and the world; without it he would be nothing and mean nothing.

At any rate this is the fact that faces us, that there is an apparent Energy that seems to have built up this world which first in the animal and then more amply in man has become and works as a conscious Energy and that this transformation is the crucial and capital fact of our universe. It may well be that in it lies the secret of the significance of that universe. It may turn out on deeper enquiry that a Conscious Energy has created as its field an inconscient substance and is veiled in its creation and emerges in it, a Power, a Godhead releasing itself slowly and with difficulty out of its self-made chrysalis of material Inconscience.

It is not sufficient to examine the material, the physiological processes accompanying the functioning of consciousness and attempt to explain the functioning by its physical processes. This leaves consciousness itself unexplained; if it accounts to some extent, but imperfectly, for sense phenomena or mechanical thinking, it does not account in the least for the most important powers of our conscious energy; it does not account for reason, understanding, will, creative thought, conscious selection, the conscious intellectual and spiritual action and self-development of the human being. Yet these are of capital importance, for it is here that consciousness begins to unfold itself out of its chrysalis or matrix of inconscience and a half conscious first working and reveal its true nature. Here consciousness acts in its own right, in its own field and not as a product of the body. To see how the body uses consciousness may be within limits a fruitful science, but it is more important to see how consciousness uses the body and still more important to see how it evolves and uses its own powers. The physiological study of the phenomenon of consciousness is only a side-issue; the psychological study of it independent of all reference to the body except as an instrument is the fruitful line of inquiry. A body using consciousness is the first outward physical fact of our existence, the first step of our evolution; a consciousness using a body is its inner spiritual reality, it is what we have become by our evolution and more and more completely are[.]

What Is Consciousness?

85

Consciousness — but what is consciousness? A word only conveniently ticketing a class of natural phenomena or a fundamental reality of existence?

Apparently a phenomenon which has only a small range intervening in an immense mass of things inconscient and without significance, consciousness alone gives a value to the universe. It seems to have taken no part in the creation of the universe; it was not there in the beginning or even during the greater part of the history of the earth; it may not be there at its end. In the middle it plays a great role in the life of animal and man, but its action is crude and ill-developed in the animal, imperfect in the human creature. Its evolution wears the character of an episode in the long history of an inconscient world, a chapter that began some time ago, but one knows not why it intervened at all or how it will end or whether its appearance has any meaning, whether its developing importance has an accidental and meaningless or a purposeful and revelatory character. It may be a freak of creative Chance or it may be or may carry in itself the whole meaning of the world-drama.

In an inconscient universe, in a Nature or the working of an Energy which is fundamentally material, the emergence [of] Consciousness has at first the air of a surprising, a contradictory, an impossible event. For in such a world, in the working of such a Nature or Energy, how could it ever come into existence? Either there is no real consciousness, only an action of Matter or unconscious Energy which takes this inexplicable and deceptive form, or Nature or Energy is not fundamentally inconscient. Consciousness was always a possibility which at a certain stage chanced or was bound to take place, or it was a latent power that has become manifest. Or even it may be all Nature is really conscious and it is we who foist inconscience upon her because we are limited to a certain range and character of consciousness and cannot communicate with her other ranges or even detect their existence.

It has been held by a certain opinion that consciousness in itself does not exist, there are only phenomena of reactions of Matter to Matter or of Energy in Matter to Energy in Matter to which by generalisation we give the name. There is no person who is conscious, thinks, speaks, perceives, wills, acts; it is an organised body in which certain chemical, molecular, cellular, glandular and nerve activities take place and certain material results and reactions of these activities take place in the brain which take the form of these phenomena. It is the body that thinks, perceives, wills, speaks, acts; it is Matter that goes through these operations and becomes aware of them; it may be said that brain-matter makes a record or notation of these actions and this notation is consciousness and this record is memory. There is nothing in the world except Matter and the operations of Matter.

This theory arose when physical Science concentrated on the operations of Matter, saw only Matter and energy of Matter everywhere; it persists even after that seeing of things has been severely shaken. For now we are driven to see and say that there is no such thing as Matter in itself; what we call Matter is only a mass of phenomena of Energy, events of energy, which our senses regard as objects and our minds classify under the general name of Matter. But we can still hold that all phenomena are phenomena of Energy acting in the forms or sensible events which we call Matter and the phenomena of consciousness are of that character. There is nothing else to it, nothing but the mobile and executive Energy, Nature, Prakriti; there is no soul, no Purusha. Consciousness would still be a general name for a brain-record and notation of these events of material Energy and this will still be the true character of thought, perception, will, speech, act. All these events are separate phenomena which may act and react on each other or group themselves together, but they are not the result or manifestations of any one general force or power of being that we can call Consciousness.

86

Consciousness, — but what is consciousness?

And first of all we have to face the possibility that there is no such thing. For many hold that the word is an unreal generalisation invented to cover a class of material phenomena having their origin in Matter and material in their nature and essence, an operation of Matter on Matter and in Matter. Thoughts are only vibrations of the grey matter of the brain; they are not something other [than] that or capable of existing beyond the material plane; they cannot exist independently of the brain; brain is not their instrument of expression or manifestation; they are [its] instrument made of its substance, dependent on [its] substance, inexistent without it. Mind is an action of Matter, not a separate power or force; there is nothing in it superior to the physicality of the body; it exists by the body and as a part of its activity, lasts along with it, dies with it. Mind is a product of gases, some operation of Nature's chemistry, glandular influences, nervous stimuluses; it is matter and records the operations of Matter.

But why then this appearance of mentality, of consciousness, of a conscious being? That too is only a trick of Matter. They are reflexes and reactions to the contacts of things outside, to other material objects, bodies, movements, forces. Sense and sensation are the reply of the nerves to stimulus of external and material things or to internal stimuli that are still material. To the experience of the body the result of these, recoils, reflexes, reactions, may seem mental, but that cannot alter the fact that they are material products of the workings of Matter.

Well, be it so; but still this mentality creates an awareness of self and things and the movements of self and things, even if both be only a body and so many other bodies, and it is difficult to describe awareness as an inconscient movement or condition or as the inconscient seeming to be conscious. Evidently we are in face of a general sophism invented by specialists of a limited field of data, the data of inconscient Matter, who are determined to force everything into its characteristic formulas and refuse to admit everything else. We must at least recover the right to see this awareness and its movements as they are or as they present themselves to us and see how far it leads us and whether indeed, even if it occurs in matter and the body, it does not lead us to something other than the body and other than Matter. The materialist contention that consciousness is not a separate power or force or manifestation of energy like electricity or magnetism or steam, but only a name for a particular bundle of brain phenomena, cannot hide the startling fact that inconscient and insentient Matter has become sentient and conscient even if it be only at points, in jets, in small masses.

This awareness has created at least the appearance of a sentient and conscient being who not only becomes relatively aware of self and things, but can study them, discover their nature and process, determine and develop the possibilities of his own consciousness and the possibilities of the world's forces and processes, can will and can create, can ponder and philosophise, can write poetry and create works of art, can use [?] to modify and alter the world around him and make for himself a different life-environment, can look beyond Matter, can tend towards the heights of consciousness not yet developed, can envisage the Superconscient. If the consciousness that can do all this is not a force, a power in itself, it at least looks strangely like it. And we have the right, at least hypothetically, to study it as such a power or force and find out how far that leads us.

It may even lead us to the discovery of a Reality greater than the world of Matter or of Energy building up shapes of Matter and movements in Matter. It may take us beyond phenomena and appearances to the truth of things and to something that is the origin of all that seems to be[.]

*

At the other extreme of human mentality we meet a similar and more devastating denial. Consciousness has no real existence; or, so far as it exists at all, it is as a dynamic Power, a creator of illusions. There is nothing sound or real in what it builds; there is nothing true in what it sees; the world it shows us is [an] impossible chimera, a mass of figments and falsehoods. The sole consciousness that is true is the self-awareness of some absolute Silence, a spaceless immobile Infinite, a timeless featureless Eternity. Or, as the materialist sees only a bundle of phenomena material and dependent on Matter or a fortuitous result of material operations, so the Nihilistic Buddhist sees only a bundle of associations, *sanskaras*, which stuck together produce the false appearance of a continuity of concrete phenomena or a stream of momentary perceptions giving the impression of a false self and coherent world, a coherent personality, but if the bundle is dissolved, if the stream ceases to flow, all dissolves and collapses and shows the empty Nothingness which is the only eternal truth and the sole eternal reality. This superconscient Nothingness has no need of consciousness [for] the greatness of its emptiness or its everlasting peace of unconscious bliss. To return to Nothingness is the only use or meaning of existence.

Here too we seem to be in front of [the] sophism of a specialist seizing the sole salient and striking side, the one prominent aspect of Truth in which he is versed putting aside all the rest as inconsistent or invalid. After all the world exists and is too persistent and effective and solid a phenomenon to be put aside or merely whistled off the field with an airy "It is not"; — a mirage is ineffectual and recedes or fades if it is touched, an illusion dissolves if revealed but this is stupendously effective, overwhelmingly persistent and we have to sound all its possibilities before dismissing it as something vain and trifling. World-consciousness may be only one aspect of our being, but it is a big and momentous aspect and it too should be given its full chance of justifying itself before it is ruled out of court. The eternal reality of a pure immobile existence and its self-awareness is also a truth of our being. But it is not impossible that these are two aspects of one Reality and not so incompatible as the metaphysical logician imagines. This is what we propose to do integrally and with a full and exhaustive inquiry before we decide either way. The chances are that so enormous a thing as this world is something more than an astonishing chimera. The chances are that when two such great aspects of existence confront each other, there is a connection somewhere, a reconciliation of their contraries. It is possible that both are aspects, static and dynamic, of some absolute Reality from which both have drawn their own reality and in which they have their true and inevitable place.

*

In any case consciousness is the one thing by which we can consider or decide the question at all. It is the one thing by which we know at all that world exists or can inquire into its truth and its meaning. If consciousness has no reality and no value, then there is nothing by which we can know the truth, — one explanation of things has then as little value as the other, neither can be claimed as the truth. The consciousness by which we affirm the featureless sole Reality can be as fallacious as that by which we affirm our individual self and the universe.

If consciousness is the self-awareness of the eternal Existence, it can only be this self-awareness seeing its own power and the works of its power as a real world. If consciousness is a creation of the evolution, it is also the one thing by which it receives some value, the one thing by which its values can be reckoned, its [. . .], its one central and essential value. It is not by the development of forms that evolution reaches its height, but by the evolution of consciousness. The degree of consciousness is the degree of evolution; the extent to which consciousness has developed its powers, range, height, its fulness of vision and self-vision, is the measure of the evolution's development of its work and aim, its progress towards its goal, if goal indeed it has and is not the incoherent working out of an accidental Chance. Indeed, if we look at the way in which the Inconscient has devised the world and the sequences by which it has arrived at intelligence, we have some reason [to think] that it is a secret Consciousness which has made this world and under the mask of inconscience has emerged as a slow process of an Ignorance developing Knowledge.

If so, it may well be that it is the self-awareness of the [eternal Existence] that is working out in the formula of inconscient Matter and ignorant Life and half-awakened Mind its own self-manifestation in the material universe.

87

But what is consciousness and what its relation to existence? How and why did it come into being in an inconscient universe, a universe which even if it originated by an inexplicable chance, has assumed the proportions of a huge and complex inexorable mechanism repeating the same processes through the aeons without respite or cessation? By what spiritual or mechanical necessity? by what mechanical chance or accidental process of Energy? To what end or purpose, if any purpose there can be in an inconscient mechanism of brute Necessity or inexplicably organised Chance or any end in a movement which never had any reason for beginning? Does consciousness exist or is it a fortuitous illusion? Who or what is it that becomes conscious in the animal and in the body of the human being?

Three possible solutions. Consciousness has not come into being but was and is always there, a fundamental power of existence, latent or involved or concealed from our mind and sense even in what we call inanimate and unconscious things. It has not come into existence but has emerged from existence; involved it has evolved in the general evolutionary process. Or consciousness is only a phenomenon, a surprising result of certain inconscient processes of Nature, unintentional but actual, unnecessary and accidental or else somehow inevitable as an output of chemical and other physical energies which could not help imposing itself at a certain point of their activity in the natural course of things. It did not exist before that point was reached; when another point has been reached it may go out of existence. Or again the world is a creation of an extracosmic or immanent conscious Being personal or impersonal who has either put his consciousness or a consciousness resembling his into his mechanical creation to be an element there or else has infused it from within into the mechanical self-expression in which he has chosen to dwell as its upholder, inspirer, inhabitant.

What is meant by consciousness? what is this phenomenon which seems to have so small a part in the vast inconscient mass of things and is yet the sole element here that can give any value to the universe?

And to come to the heart of the difficulty — is it indeed only a phenomenon, an appearance that has emerged in the course of the workings of an Energy which was, is and will always remain inconscient? Or is it something fundamental, an inherent reality or a latent character or power of that Energy and bound to emerge at some time once it had begun its workings?

88

It is to a mass of ill-connected and ill-understood phenomena that we give this name of consciousness; when these are at work we say that a man or animal is conscious, when they are suspended we say that he or it is unconscious; where they are absent, as in a tree, we suppose the object, even if it has life, to be inconscient by its very nature, incapable of sensation no less than empty of thought and will. Where life is not, inconscience seems to us a still more self-evident character of the thing or being. Man alone is fully conscious, for he alone is aware of himself, reflective on things, in full possession of mental capacities and their aware and observant use. Mind and consciousness are almost synonymous to our ordinary notions; where consciousness is not mentalised, we find it difficult to recognise its presence, hardly possible to follow its movements; even in the animal we are apt to regard it as reflex movement not aware of itself, undeveloped, primitive.

89

All that exists or can exist in this or any other universe can be rendered into terms of consciousness; there is nothing that cannot be known. This knowing need not be always a mental knowledge. For the greater part of existence is either above or below mind, and mind can know only indirectly what is above or what is below it. But the one true and complete way of knowing is by direct knowledge.

All can be rendered into terms of consciousness because all is either a creation of consciousness or else one of its forms. All exists in an infinite conscious existence and is a part or a form of it. In proportion as one can share directly or indirectly, completely or incompletely in the eternal awareness of this Infinite, or momentarily contact or enter into it, or formulate some superior or inferior power of its consciousness or knowledge, one can know what it knows, in part or whole, by a direct knowing or an indirect coming to knowledge. A conscious, half conscious or subconscious participation in the awareness of the Infinite is the basis of all knowledge.

All things are inhabited by this consciousness, even the things that seem to us inconscient and the consciousness in one form can communicate with or contact the consciousness in another or else penetrate or contain or identify with it. This in one form or another is the true process of all knowledge; the rest is ignorant appearance.

All things are one self; it is the one Knower who knows himself everywhere, from one centre or another in the multiplicity of his play. Otherwise no knowledge would be possible.

The Secret below the Surface

90

All life, all existence is an enigma to the human mind, because the mind is a light which sees only the surfaces of things or at most a little below the surface and is moreover limited by its own circumscribed area of vision. It cannot see what is beyond those limits and yet there are an infinity of things beyond its circle. It cannot see what is above, it cannot see what is within, it cannot see what is below. But what is on the surface is never the truth of things; the surface presents us only with facts not with truths, with phenomena not with realities, with imperfect indications, not with the realisation of things in themselves. The secret, the truth, the reality of things is above, within, below, it is not on their surface.

91

There is a meaning in the universe, an intention in cosmic existence; there is a significance of the individual, his life is a sign and has a purpose.

The true truth of things is not apparent on the surface, it is something hidden. Truth is not obvious, it comes always as a discovery, Life is the working out of a secret, the process and progress of a mystery; we too are not what we seem to be, we have to find and become ourself.

What we seem to be is a thinking human animal. What we are and have to become is God; the secret purpose of our existence here is to find the occult Reality of ourselves and the world, to become Divine.

92

Our existence in the world has a reality which is other than that which strikes our mind and senses on the surface. It contains a secret, a mystery which we have to discover, for through that discovery we must move both to the realisation of our self and spirit and the perfection and fulfilment of our life in Nature.

Our life is not an illusion nor a delirium nor is Nature a Maya, a fabricator of dreams or a dealer in vanities as certain religions would have it nor is one the outcome of a blind Force or the trick [of] a blind self-regulating Chance, the other an unconscious Power as it must be if the materialists' dogma were true. Our life is neither a freak of God nor a freak of Nature; it has a conscious plan although a secret plan, a significance although an occult and mystic significance.

The plan, the significance are secret and mysterious to us because we live on the surface of ourselves and things and are not in touch with either their core or their height or depths. Science on one side, Religion and Philosophy on the other try to arrive at the hidden Truth, but each touches and only just touches one end of it and refuses to go farther and discover the other end or the link and reconciling relation between these two poles of existence.

It is said in the Veda of Agni, the flame of the creative Will and Force, that he hides his two extremities; only his middle is patent and visible. The head of Agni is occult in some superconscient height, his feet are plunged in the abyss of the material Inconscience. Consciousness emerging in the universe of life and mind is the bridge and link between the two poles. But our human consciousness is a term in the chain which is aware only of itself and sees all the rest in its own terms; it cannot identify itself with the other links and misses their significance and their purpose. It stands on the middle of the bridge looking all around it, but the bridgeheads are to its sight invisible. It cannot see what is there, but only speculate, infer or conjecture.

Science questing with its measuring rod of empirical experiment begins to have a dark glimpse of the Inconscient; it knows the universe as an organised freak that has emerged from the material Inconscience and will go back to its source. Religion and Philosophy rise on the wings of spiritual experience or in a balloon of metaphysical logic into some stratosphere of superconscient Reality, they seem to discover a God or Self or Spirit or Absolute and try to map it with the intellect or to turn it into a dynamic spiritual formula. But they are unable to reconcile these three terms of being; their physical experiments or their spiritual experiences are valid, but each has hold of only one end of the enigma.

Science has discovered Evolution; Religion and Philosophy have discovered something of that which is involved and evolves in this cosmic Existence. But the two discoveries have refused to shed light upon each other; each has shut itself up in its own formulas. This is because each is a creation and activity of Mind, Science of the concretising experimental mind, Philosophy of the abstracting intellectual mind, Religion of the dynamic spiritual mind. But Mind is bound always by its partial formulations of the Truth; Mind grasps formulas or images but is itself grasped by its own creations, it cannot get free from them or go beyond them. But the mind's concepts and formulas are only fragmentary representations of Truth or pointers or abstract schemas and images, not her very self and reality. Either a deeper inner soul-vision or a higher overmental or supramental consciousness is needed to discover Truth in her very face and body.

Then only can both ends of the riddle be firmly seized and connected together, the whole of existence seen in one gaze and life compelled to unmask its fathomless significance[.]

*

A mysterious something involved in Matter, concealed by it, evolving from it but in a material house or figure, striving to reveal itself in life and mind, but concealed by its forms of life, concealed by its forms of mind, shooting out from them glimpses of itself, glimpses that hint but do not elucidate, — this is what we can see, and we see no more; the rest is speculation and conjecture. Is this something native to Matter, born in it and destined to die in it? Or is it an alien, a temporary visitor? Is Matter itself only a mask of it, a phenomenon of Energy, as it now more and more seems to be? Energy itself is a movement, a force of concealed Consciousness, Consciousness the sign of a hidden spiritual Being. But if so, what possible significance or purpose can there be in this involution, this material self-concealment and self-imprisonment, this slow tormented emergence of the Spirit?

Two lines of enquiry seem to give, though imperfectly and in opposition, a positive base for a reply to the question and the riddle, — the experiments of the scientist and the experience of the mystic.

Consciousness and the Inconscient

Inconscience

93

World and life can be looked at from one of two opposite vision-bases — observed in the light of the knowledge that looks below and sees as the foundation of things the Inconscient from which our physical birth took its rise or experienced in the light of the knowledge that looks above and draws the radiations it throws upon all around it from the Superconscient which is our soul's source. These two conflicting light-streams — which yet at their extreme points seem almost to meet or at least touch the same mystery — yet shed at first opposite values on the phenomenon of conscious life in matter and illumine in contrary senses the destiny of man and his place in world-existence; for in the light from above it assumes a supreme significance, in the light from below a supreme insignificance.

For if we look from one side, consciousness appears as a circumstance, a thing secondary or even accidental, a little flickering temporary uncertain light in a vast darkness of inconscient world-systems; if we look from the other it is the slowly delivered but not yet perfectly released blaze of that which supported all along this seemingly inconscient creation, subtly concealed in its very cells, molecules, atoms, electrons or whatever still more infinitesimal whorls of motional force-substance have been made its base. Either then consciousness is a perishable jet of flame shooting up out of the slime of this obscure teeming morass we call Matter, a strange inexplicable temporary freak sprung from gas and plasm, chromosome and gene, gland and hormone — we know not well how even when we have found the process, and know not at all why and can never know and hardly need to know, since the whole thing is a meaningless and eventually purposeless miracle of incalculable Chance or blind Necessity, — or if it is not this, then it is the very Flame which, dynamic and hidden, has shaped all these things and now, overt and revealed, can work openly on them and on itself to use, to uplift, to subtilise, to refine, to liberate, to transfigure.

If the first view is right, the view so long pressed on us by physical Science, then this very universe itself is but a queer paradoxical movement of mindless eyeless Force or of a brute substance emanating purposeless energy, which yet works as if it had a purpose; for it produces by some inconscient compulsion on itself a steady succession of evolutionary forms that carry themselves as if they had an aim and a meaning, although in the nature of things they can really have none. The whole is a mechanism which automatically turns out what it must with a certain inevitability but has no comprehending Intelligence, no intuitive Power behind it to determine its use. Universal Nature is a Chance that works as if it were a Necessity or else perhaps a Necessity that works like a self-regulating Chance. What seems to be consciousness has come out of this machine just like everything else in this singular freak-universe, constituted somehow, miraculously, impossibly, as the plant and the flower came out of the seed, somehow constituted, or as different chemical atoms are mysteriously constituted out of variant numbers of identical electrons, or as water leaps inexplicably into birth by a combination in exact measure of two gases. We have discovered that by just this process it came, — consciousness, the flower, the atom, water, — but how it could come into being by such a process is an unsolved riddle and how it took this form out of such a mother or could be the result of such ingredients and what each of these things in itself is remains unknowable. It is or has so become (or perhaps is not, but only so seems to our senses) — but that is all, for more than this science limited by its methods cannot tell and speculative philosophy itself with all its range and licence can hardly conjecture. And it does not much matter; for after all this consciousness which emerged obscurely in Time will in a later

Time disappear with its living vessels and be as if it had never been leaving behind the Inconscient still busy with its perpetual and empty labour. And perhaps indeed this consciousness is not really consciousness at all but only a sort of strange vibrant typewriting of conventional signs by which the Inconscient records to itself its own mechanical values; for things are not what they seem, colour is not colour but only a fictitious sign, all things perhaps are mere signs of bundled vibrations and consciousness itself nothing else. However we look at it, it would seem very much as if this universal Energy which creates these strange, inexplicable, impossible things or semblances that yet in a way are, were only a sort of Maya, like that of the Illusionists, *aghatana-ghatana-patiyasi*, very skilful to make happen things that cannot happen, a huge senseless well organised paradox, a sequently arranged mass of inevitable inconsequences, a defiance to reason of which reason is the last brilliant but bewildered outcome. And of all these phenomenal appearances, the uprising of consciousness is perhaps the most paradoxical, the least inevitable, — Nature's most accidental, most startling inconsequence.

And again in this reading of the universe, more baffling than any unbelievable belief — *credo quia incredibile*, — with which ever dogmatic theology or mystic philosophy has challenged us, man loses all his cosmic value. An infinitesimal little creature on a tiny speck of matter lost amidst a whirling multitude of stupendous universes most or all of them perhaps vacant of life and thought and made for no other end but simply to whirl, he is (justifying Scripture) even as the worm is — only an edition de luxe, with copious developments and commentaries, of the same laborious but useless text, the same minute, careful, well-arranged, painstaking but insignificant script that we see already in the ant and the termite. Individual man lasts for a few years which are in the aimless vastness of the universe of no more matter than the few days or weeks or months of the insect. The race indeed has endured for millions of years and may endure for some centuries, some thousands, myriads or millions of years longer; but what are these millions in the incalculable aeons of the cosmos? The termite perhaps was before man and may be there when he has disappeared, perhaps massacring his kind out of existence or destroyed by his own science; it has like man done against adverse conditions extraordinary miracles of intelligence (having yet, it seems, no intelligence with which to do them), built immense fortified cities, cultivated earth, organised remarkable societies, adapted means to end and overcome a stepmotherly Nature. Each has an equal value for itself which arrives after all only to the passion Nature has put in each species for survival, for exploitation of its life; for each other their only significance is to come annoyingly and destructively in each other's way; for the universe — at least the universe as Science has described it — both have an equal non-value, for to it neither can matter, since they will disappear and the world go on interminably as it did without them. Vanity of vanities, Science teaches us even as did the world's Scriptures; out of nothingness we came and into nothingness we shall sink hereafter. All that we are and think and create [and] do, however wonderful to our own eyes, or even if really wonderful in the mind's values, is but a bubble, a vibration, a plasmic pullulation on the surface of Matter.

This is one side of the picture; but there is another.

94

If there is a consciousness in Matter, however secret and involved, there must be a consciousness secret and involved in the Inconscient.

But the question then arises whether such a thing can be any more than there can be a square circle [or] cold fire. "Not even a hundred declarations of the Veda," says Shankara, "could prove the coldness of fire." There are psychologists who deny that there is or can be any such thing as the subconscious, for it is a flat self-contradiction to speak of a consciousness which is below the level of consciousness. To be conscious is to be aware of self and things or at least of things, with whatever limitation, as a man's or an animal's waking mind is aware.

To a certain thought it might seem that only the surface of things is knowable, the rest either does not or cannot exist or must be left in the shadow of an inevitable agnosticism. There are no depths [or they] are, as Bertrand Russell would have us believe, an uninhabited emptiness; there is no inner sky except the sky of thought or an abstract void crossed by the wandering wings of the Idea; if there is a sky behind the sky, it is such a Void, a void of unattainable superconscience. But this too is an imagination, a nonexistence. There can be no consciousness in the Inconscient, no Conscious in unconscious things, no superconscience.

If that were so, it would be impossible to have any true or whole knowledge. For our mind is an Ignorance searching for knowledge and arriving at representations or figures of it, it can never be except by a miraculous transformation something that knows, still less knows truly and knows all. But knowledge exists somewhere, knowledge is possible and a seeking ignorance is not our first and last fate. Our boundaries are lost [. . .], the depths teem [or] are no longer vacant, the sky above mind is peopled with winged realities. The subconscient is disburdened of its strange contents, the superconscient becomes the top [of] consciousness, the peak of knowledge, there is a Conscient in unconscious things. Let us look then with the eye of the Ignorance first but also with the eye of this greater knowledge at the subconscient, at Inconscience, at the superconscient top of things. An immediate change will take place in our conception of self and our outlook on the universe.

95

The subconscious is a fact of our mentality. It is not the fact that our whole being, even our whole mentality, is on the surface. There are concealed heights, there are hidden gulfs, there are crowded spaces behind the front wall, below the threshold, in the unseen mental environment. There is a vast inconscient below us, an infinite superconscience above us. All these are part of a secret consciousness in the world, but also part of our own hidden being of which we are not aware or only intermittently and ignorantly or only, in our ultimate evolution, eventually aware.

Even in our ordinary experience there are moments in which one or other of these things becomes apparent, acts in our daily actions or peers out above the surface and replaces our absent and inattentive mind. We start writing and finish the writing without knowing what we have written. We are walking with our mind aware and guiding our course, — the [?outer] mind, — but we continue to walk and find ourselves after a time farther on the intended way or beyond the intended goal or turn and have to retrace our steps. In an unconscious or half conscious moment words pour from our lips which we would never have spoken if we had used our fully awake mind and will. What is it that thus takes up the writing, the walk, the speech and completes our intention or betrays us? It must be either something of the mind behind or below its active surface movement or something of a driving life-force or action of the body.

But in the first explanation there must be a part of the mind, not our conscious thought and will that is capable of continuing automatically a course once habitual or previously fixed or pursuing of itself the direction accustomed or repetitive. It is capable not only of execution but of a radical direction, even a misdirection. This means a consciousness at conscious work, however vague or latently automatic, and can only be described as a subconscient or at least partly subconscious or subjacent, an underlying something else akin to consciousness. This is the first sign of a subconscient mind or of a secret consciousness which may even underlie not only our own surface being, but the whole cosmic operation and its apparently inconscient functioning and driven interactions, its purposeless purpose.

If it is a life-force that goes on with the works of the life when the mind is not attending to them, then only this must be a subconscious action and where it continues an action initiated by the conscious mind, then some sort of mechanical consciousness must be attributed to it. If it is the body that takes up the action, it must equally be credited with a subconscience that can do under certain circumstances the work of consciousness.

I have written a letter and proceed to put the name and address on the envelope, but my mind gets absorbed in something else and I find that I have written another habitual name and address, not the one I intended. Memory evidently has done this uncalled for work, but not a conscious memory with the mind aware of what it was doing. A subconscious layer of memory must have come to the surface mistaking the call, or there must have been a double action of memory one deliberate, the other automatic, the temporary suspension of the first giving room to an inadvertent action of the subliminal working.

On the other hand I may complete a sentence with a phrase I had not intended or thought of; where did it come from if not from the subconscious mind? It may even be a phrase having no connection with the conscious thought or in itself incoherent or have the form of words but be unintelligible. What is it that has dictated these things?

96

As consciousness descends from the supreme and the higher to the lower levels, it loses progressively its force and intensity till it reaches the nadir of inconscience.

97

The figure of Inconscience is the mask of an all-conscious Creator; the Inconscient creates with an unerring art, adaptation of means to end, ingenious originality, spontaneity and [. . .] of device. The conscious creator man cannot even come near the inconscient Creator, God. But [the] Inconscient is only a mask on a mobile face; its blank rigidity hides from us the expression of the face of the Omnipresent.

The Inconscient Energy

98

At one end of existence, the nether material end, we observe the reign of a complete phenomenal Inconscience. No creative consciousness or will can be detected there; we start from something that is but is not aware that it is, things that are but are unconscious that they are or that anything is. Yet it is this vast impalpable Inconscient that seems to have created Matter and the whole material universe.

There is, obvious and undeniable, an Energy that creates and there is a creation; these are the only two affirmations we can make which are beyond doubt. Even if we take the creation to be illusory, still the illusory creation is there and there is a Force or Energy or Power that has created it, whether it be mere unconscious Energy, Prakriti, or an energy of deceptive consciousness, Maya.

What we actually experience here is an energy inconscient or seemingly inconscient which is in constant motion and in that motion takes on forms or produces forms and in these forms it enters into many kinds of activity and engenders a multitude of active relations. Energy and action and the results of action, Prakriti and Karma, this is the whole formula of the material universe. Objects innumerable there are, lives too and things living, a Mind or minds, a Consciousness or consciousnesses or else perhaps mere phenomena in the Inconscient to which we give these names; but all these appear to us as if they were temporary results, events ephemeral or long persistent of the movement of Energy and action, its Karma.

What is this Energy? is it something uncreated and unborn, eternal, absolute though all it produces is created, temporal, relative? If it is born, then whence came it? in or on what does it work? what set it going and towards what? We do not know and seem to have no means of knowing; at least our intellect does not know and has not yet found out any sure way to know; it can only speculate, speculate endlessly in an inconclusive circle.

It is not an unborn eternal Matter from which it is born or of which it is the eternal force or in and on which it works, as was once supposed and as some still suppose. For that is now only a construction of the speculative mind, an idea, a hypothesis, an arbitrary postulate for which there is no discoverable correspondent reality. Matter, as we now know it, is something that we can almost see coming into existence or at least can determine its process of creation; waves of energy materialising into particles and again becoming waves, but finally the waves coalesce and become atoms of what we must needs call Matter. This cannot be the inert inconscient Godhead, original and eternal, out of which all came, in and on which Energy works and produces by automatic necessity or a fortunately self-organising Chance the material world and all the lives, minds, souls — if souls there are — which in it live and move.

It can be said that this is only a conclusion of Science and Science is unfinished and everchanging; it may refute tomorrow what it affirms today; it may discover that electricity and light, the electron and proton and the photon are not the last word or the first fact; there may be a subtler Matter which is not that but something else — a Matter not formed but motional, vibratory, aetheric. But, still, what can that be but a subtler motion of Energy, a vibration of Energy in Space? And of Space too we do not know what it is, — whether a mere conception of our mind and its sense or an extension of something that exceeds the grasp of our mind and sense, — perhaps an unseizable Infinite.

The Sankhya philosopher affirmed an original indiscriminate Matter which evolves from Prakriti, from the eternal Energy, — is, we might say, its first state of manifestation. But as it is indiscriminate, it is not likely to be in any way determinable by our senses. And, after all, this too is only a creation of Energy, an evolution out of itself or a state which it assumes; we do not get away from the original formula, Energy and its actions and results, Prakriti and Karma.

99

An energy of some Inconscient Existence has created Matter and the material universe. All this material universe is indeed nothing but an inconscient Energy taking form or producing form and in and through its forms entering into all kinds of activity. Energy (Prakriti) and motion and action of Energy, Karma, and results of its action — this is the formula of our universe.

But whence then comes consciousness? How can things in their very nature inconscient and unaware become conscious or develop some kind of awareness? There is here a contradiction which is inexplicable and the more we look at it, becomes more and more inexplicable.

This is possible because inconscience is a phenomenon not a fundamental reality. A phenomenon is something that appears to us, but does not show to us the whole reality of existence or of its own existence; it is a front, a face, a circumstance of something more than itself that does not appear but is — the Reality. Inconscience is a phenomenal state; it is consciousness that is the Reality; consciousness is an inherent and eternal state of being, inconscience is its temporal, temporary and apparent condition when it forms itself by its own energy into Matter and material objects. Its consciousness involves itself in inanimate Matter and seems there an inconscience; its energy too acts as if it were an inconscient energy, doing things without knowing what it is doing, creating a universe but unaware of the universe it creates, contriving millions of devices, but without any intelligence. So it seems, but so it cannot be; there is something hidden from us which we have to discover. It is the consciousness behind the Energy, the conscious Being behind the action that we have to discover.

Consciousness, being, force, energy (shakti), these are the three first terms of the fundamental truth of existence. What we have to know is how they work out together in ourselves and the universe.

*

Chance, some say, does all; the phenomena of consciousness — for there is no such thing as consciousness in itself, only reactive phenomena of sense and mind provoked by outward impacts — are, like everything else, the products of Chance.

But what is Chance, after all? It is only a word, a notion formed by our consciousness to account for things of which we have no true knowledge — and it does not account for them.

When we do not know how or why a thing came to pass, we escape by saying, it was chance. We do not truly know how or why the universe happened or things in the universe, so we say "Chance made it; Chance did it." An intellectual escape, nothing more. If we said "A selection, mysterious to us, out of infinite possibility," then there would be some truth and some profundity in our thinking.

But the emergence of consciousness out of the Inconscient was more probably a necessity in the very being of being, in the innate movement of being, than merely a possibility. Necessity, then? an inevitable determination in Nature? or a self-determination in the conscious Spirit?

Consciousness and Immortality

100

Our existence is not a freak of some inconscient mechanical Force stumbling into consciousness nor an inexplicable activity on the surface of a blank Nothingness or an impassive inactive Infinite. There is a significance in our life, it moves towards a spiritual end, it fulfils the drive of an eternal reality.

Immortality is the nature of our being, birth and death are a movement and incident of our immortality. Birth is an assumption of a body by the spirit, death is the casting off [of] the body; there is nothing original in this birth, nothing final in this death. Before birth we were; after death we shall be. Nor are our birth and death a single episode without continuous meaning or sequel; it is one episode out of many, scenes of our drama of existence with its denouement far away in time.

101

All depends upon consciousness. For all world-existence is a form created by consciousness, upheld by consciousness, determined by consciousness. All that is is a consciousness veiled or unveiled, manifesting or concealing its own substance. All is energy of consciousness masked by movement of mind and life and matter and taking forms which are merely motions of the energy stabilised to appearance, yet always in movement; for the consciousness that constitutes these forms is always in dynamic movement; the visible rhythm and self-result of this self-repeating or self-continuing vibration and never resting motion and dynamis is what we call form. Disperse the energy that constitutes it and the form dissolves. Withdraw the consciousness that expresses itself in the energy and the energy can keep up no longer its sustaining rhythm; therefore it disperses, therefore the form dissolves. If we could so intensify the power of the consciousness put out in us that we could keep the energy always repeating, continuing, enlarging, progressing in its rhythm, then, the form might change but need not dissolve and even physically we should be immortal[.]

The Science of Consciousness

Vedantic Psychology

102

Body, brain, nervous system are instruments of consciousness, they are not its causes.

Consciousness is its own cause, a producer of objects and images and not their product. We are blinded to this truth because when we think of consciousness, it is of the individual we think.

We look at the world in the way and speak of it in the terms of individual consciousness; but it is of the universal consciousness that the world is a creation.

The individual participates subconsciently and superconsciently in the universal consciousness. But the embodied individual in his physical or waking mind does not so much participate as arrive at participation. He is not directly part of it, but reproduces it by a partial indirect action, and in reproducing selects and varies, combines, discombines, new combines and develops his selections.

In the body his waking mind receives its impressions from the outside world and reacts upon them. Body and nerves are his instrument for the impressions and the reaction; therefore all their apparent instrumentation is nervous, physical, atomically combined, a physiological apparatus for a battery of nervous energy.

Physical, nervous and sensory impressions are the means by which this individual is induced to put himself into waking relations with the physical universe. Physical, nervous and sensory reactions are his means for entering into that relation.

*

He, — but who is he? The mental being in his mentality.

Who is it that feels himself to be separate from the world or things in the universe to be outside his being? Not the Spirit, for the Spirit contains the universe, creates and combines all relations. All personalities act in the one spirit, as our own multiple personalities act in one being. Spiritual being is their continent, they are not its constituents, but its outer results and the diverse representative selves of its consciousness and action.

Not, either, the supramental being. For the supramental being is one with the spirit in its original or basic consciousness, in its idea-consciousness it is ideally comprehensive of cosmic things or, if we must speak in terms of space, commensurate with the universe. The supramental being with one action of his Idea-self can regard universal being as his object of will and knowledge. That attitude is the seed of mind. It can regard it as contained in itself and itself contained in it, and in that way know and govern it. But it can too, like Spirit in its real action know all things by identity and govern all things by identity. Externality of being does not enter into supramental experience.

Supermind can see mind externalising objects; it can itself take a particular viewpoint fronting objects but it is in itself that it fronts them, as we front our subjective operations in mind. It does not regard them as something outside its own being, as we regard physically objects.

Mind is a delegation from supermind, which primarily regards existence as an object fronting its vision. Mental being also need not regard the universe as quite separate from or outside its own being. Subliminal mentality is capable by extension of a comprehensive relation with cosmic things and of entering into unity with the universe. Mind's starting-point is not a containing universal vision or a knowledge by identity, but an individualised viewpoint from which it sees the universe. Still mind can arrive at a sort of containing vision, a mentalised cosmic consciousness.

What then compels embodied mind to see objects externally and by separation? It is compelled by the fact of physical embodiment. Body is a self-limitation of conscious being by which mind is rigidly bound down to its own tendency of separative individuation.

Body, including all physical formations from the atom upwards, is a device of Nature for the extreme of conscious individuation. Empirically it is immaterial whether it is an image created by consciousness or a real substance of being. For practical purposes we may take it as a substantial formation. In fact body is a knot of conscious being built up by its own energy, instinct with nervous or subnervous life, — because the energy is in dynamic actuality a living energy — cognizing and cognized by subconscious or superficially conscious sense, because the energy is in a certain inherent reality a conscious energy. It is a knot indivisible in reality from universal Consciousness and Force and Substance but in a certain empirical utility of selective action separative rather than separate. Body, not really separate, is limited by subconscious instinct of separation and energetic tendency of separation, but not capable of effecting real separation. All its movements are a practical result of selective experience and selective action which is based on a phenomenon of separate physical being.

Body is separated from other bodies by intervention of universal matter, but both of the separate bodies are one with the indivisible intervening matter, therefore not separate in reality, but indivisibly connected in energy, and one matter in fundamental reality.

Put otherwise, two bodies are images or formations of one indivisible ethereal space, which is in reality one indivisible movement of material energy, life-energy, mind energy.

This inseparable connection and fundamental unity of bodies become of immense importance when we examine the relation of the appearances of consciousness to its reality.

Mind in body has to begin from the separation proper to body. Embodied mind is bound down in its root-action to a separative view of the universe. This is its waking view; subliminally, whether in subconscious mentality or where it approaches or touches the superconscient being, it is capable of bridging the artificial separation.

Taking this separative basis of waking consciousness for itself and for a reality, the house of imprisoned awareness from which it looks at the world, it is bound to see objects as external to this awareness and this conscious vision. Embodied mind is as if a walled house were to have a thinking soul and spirit (air and ether) and look at things not in itself as things outside through windows (the senses), receive the touches of the outside air (nervous life-impacts) as if other than the air in itself; even its own ether as other than the rest of ether (my soul and other souls). This is the self and not-self of our mentality.

Mind subliminal is able, though not normally habituated, to bridge the gulf between self and not-self; where it approaches the superconscient, this gulf lessens and conscience of oneness grows upon the being.

Body is only the instrument and basis of this extreme separative individuation, not its first cause. Mind itself is a prior cause; but mentality in itself need not be rigidly separative: especially, subliminal mind has a large integrating power. Mind in itself is only the basis of a relatively separative plurality; mind in body increases this relation into a phenomenon of absolutely separative plurality.

From this basis of externalising individuation and separative plurality waking mental consciousness in the physical universe commences its operations.

103

Psychology is the knowledge of consciousness and its operations.

A complete psychology must be a complex of the science of mind, its operations and its relations to life and body with intuitive and experimental knowledge of the nature of mind and its relations to supermind and spirit.

A complete psychology cannot be a pure natural science, but must be a compound of science and metaphysical knowledge.

This necessity arises from the difference between natural or physical sciences and psychology.

A physical science is a knowledge of physical processes which leads inevitably to action and use of physical processes. The scientist may only regard scientific truth and not utility; but he can find only truth of the process of things, not truth of the nature of things. His discoveries bring about inevitably an utility for action; for all truth of process is an utility for action. Even when not the aim of science, process and utility are the soul and body of physical science. Matter itself is only an utility of Spirit or Being or Nature for physical process and action. Material energy is an instrumental dynamis for that utility or else an original dynamis which has no other sense of its operations. We get beyond to a higher sense only when [we] get beyond material to mental, psychical and spiritual energy, to mind, soul and spirit.

Debateable it is whether if we knew the real essence of Matter and the basic, not only the apparent, relations of mind, soul and spirit to matter and material operations, we could not arrive at an infinitely more potent use of physical process and operations. But in any case these things cannot be discovered by physical science; it has its limits and cannot exceed its limits.

Psychology may begin as a natural science, but it deals already with superphysical and must end in a metaphysical enquiry. If one side of the process it studies and its method of enquiry is physical, the other and more important is non-physical; it is a direct observation of mental operations by mind without any regard to their physiological meaning, support, substratum or instrumentation.

If this is in the first place a study of process and involves an utility for psychological action, yet what it leads to inevitably is not that action but an enquiry into the nature of mental consciousness.

This necessity arises from the immediate perception by mind of something beyond and behind its operations, some energy of hidden consciousness greater than our apparent mentality. To know what that is, we have to resort to a metaphysical enquiry.

Consciousness is itself found to be not essentially a process, — although in mind it appears as a process, but the very nature of self-existent being. Being or the Self of things can only be known by metaphysical — not necessarily intellectual — knowledge.

This self-knowledge has two inseparable aspects, a psychological knowledge of the process of Being, a metaphysical knowledge of its principles and essentiality.

We find that one of these principles of being is energy. Energy is an eternal and inherent power of conscious being. Since all energy is convertible to action, this knowledge also contains a side of psychological and spiritual utility, — eventually perhaps even, since life and body are results of the energy of being and supports of its action, of vital and physical utility.

Two great utilities open before psychology. We may acquire the possibility of a greater being, consciousness and energy. We may open up the possibility and discover the psychical means or process [of] becoming consciously one with our original self-existent Being, with God, the Absolute, the Transcendence. To lead up to these possibilities is the aim of Vedantic psychology.

104

All psychology must result in and every complete statement of psychological truth must have for its frame a double schema of existence into which the facts it deals with must fall, a descending scale and an ascending scale.

The simplest elementary psychology deals with three notes of a limited scale, — the body and physical field and its impacts, the life and body and biological and physiological processes, the mental being and its conscious experience and action. This is a scale of ascension.

*

The nature of the physical field is the first fact; it determines everything else; it gives the impacts which awaken the consciousness, the impressions, images, subjects which are its matter, the starting-point and basis of all its conceptions, the body which is its support, instrument, fulcrum of action, the physical occasion of the sense of self.

Everything appears to be in the body or by the body and either for the body or for the I-sense in the body.

The body seems to be the principal if not the only cause or determinant of individual consciousness.

What is not of the body is of the physical field outside the body.

Whatever in consciousness seems not to be of the physical field, yet appears to be derived from it, to be a resultant, development or deformation from physical experience.

*

The life in the body is the necessary modification of the first fact of material being, without whose intervention consciousness is unable to manifest in any material form. The atom is a form of matter, the stone is a material body, but life in these things is either nil or not developed to the point where manifestation of consciousness becomes possible. Consciousness in the atom and the stone is either latent, non-manifest to us, suppressed, potential or nil.

Life in any degree is not sufficient for the manifestation of mental consciousness. A certain high degree of it or else a certain indispensable kind of organisation is needed for this third tone of the scale. Plants are living, even in a degree intensely living, they have a nervous organisation, but consciousness is either nil or latent, non-manifest at least to us, suppressed or else of another kind than ours, a submental nervous consciousness and not mentality.

Life supplies certain biological conditions and certain physiological processes which physically underlie the operations of conscious mental being.

Life gives the intermediate dynamic link between mind and body.

Life has two operations which serve the purpose of mentality, a necessary life power in a nervous apparatus and a capacity of instrumental development and modification. Without the power of life in the nervous apparatus consciousness in the body is impossible; without the power of developing modifications it might exist as in the lower animals, but it could not expand as in man.

The nervous apparatus is the initial biological fact necessary to mentality. Life power consists not of the nervous system, which is a physical element, but of a new power or energy of which the system is the vehicle, — the power of nervous communication, nervous charge, nervous discharge. This power is not sufficient to create mentality, for the plant too possesses them, yet does not appear to be a mental being, but it is the first condition of embodied mentality.

A power of biological and physiological development is the secondary, continuative factor necessary to farther evolution of mentality. Once the nervous vital power appears in material body, it shows a biological power of developing a more complex physical instrumentation for a more complex nervous activity. Once it has attained a certain complexity of physical instrumentation, life seems able indefinitely to refine in some subtle way its action of nervous power so as to support a more and more fine and complex action of mentality.

How far this development of mentality can go and how far it is dependent on the physical apparatus and the nervous action is one of the capital questions of psychology.

*

Mental being, power and operation of mental consciousness is the third note of the scale of being.

Mind cannot certainly be said to be constituted of life and body, nervous action and reaction in a physical body. Nervous action does not appear to constitute of itself consciousness, any more than physical impact and consequent atomic disturbance appears of itself to constitute nervous action. As a correspondent or resultant nervous communication, charge and discharge is necessary to manifest life, so a resultant or correspondent conscious action, — sensation, perception, thought, conscious motiving impulsion, desire, intention, will, — are necessary to manifest mind.

Mind may or may not be an exact result, reflection or correspondence of life action in body, life thinking itself out in body, body living and thinking out its experience in mind, but it is not the same thing as life and body.

Life is a new or second power emerging from or in material energy. Mind is a new or third power emerging from or in the life-energy.

*

But this is only the ascending scale.

Mind is not only awakened by life-action in the body at a certain evolutionary pitch of its operations; mind reacts upon and in certain ways uses, for its own characteristic purpose, modifies by its will to act and increase the life action and the ways of the body.

Mind is not limited in its thoughts by the life and body. There is an action in it which is more than a creative stress of life, an attempt to image supraphysical realities, which we may dismiss as an illusion or a result of abnormal physiological states, but may also follow as first clues to a greater truth and possibly a higher tone or tones of the scale of being.

In that case, mind appears as a larger thing than life and material being. Though apparently an evolution from life and the body, it may have been in reality a prior power, life and body only its occasions and means for self-manifestation on the material plane of being.

At any rate, psychology has to regard the scale not only from the upward point of view of body creating life, life creating mind, but from the downward point of view of mind creating new life in body.

Evidently mind is a greater thing, higher than life and body. In that case, besides the ascending scale of the lower rising to a highest possibility, we must regard a possibility of the descending scale, the highest reality involving itself in the lower conditions of being.

But the question arises whether mind itself is the highest possibility or the highest reality[.]

*

Vedantic psychology explores the idea and intuition of a higher reality than mind.

The intuition can only be verified by psychological experience exceeding the normal action of mind. This experience may lead to constantly ascending intuitions verified by an ascent of experience to some summit of being.

Beyond mind psychological experience finds another power of energy, another note in the scale of being. This we will call the supermind. This supermind lives and acts natively in a domain of experience of which the mind becomes aware by a reflective experience and calls vaguely spirit or spiritual being.

Spirit is found to have three tones of its being. Triune, it makes each successively a power of its energy, a status of spiritual experience and form of its action. Triune, they are inseparable, but one or other can be so stressed as to appear a leading principle.

But we have to note three essential facts about spirit: —

Spirit is infinite consciousness, even when it dwells upon finite formulations of conscious being.

Awareness of spirit is infinite self-awareness.

All its three essential principles must have this character of infinity.

Infinite self-conscious bliss is the first; infinite self-conscious conscious energy is the second; infinite self-conscious existence the third principle of spirit. Existence, consciousness, bliss are the three tones of infinity, the three basic colours of the Absolute.

*

The ascending scale of being presents then seven notes, matter, life, mind, supermind, bliss self, self of conscious energy, self of primary conscious existence.

But the experience we get as we ascend in the scale leads us to the discovery that what in evolution appears subsequent is prior in reality. Life evolves in matter, but was preexistent to matter, latent, omnipresent, waiting for matter to be ready to be manifest — which it does when the movement of energy reaches a certain intensity.

Mind evolves in embodied life, but was preexistent to matter and life, latent, omnipresent, involved, a hidden cause of action waiting for life and matter to be ready for its manifestation which comes when the movement of energy has reached a greater intensity. So supermind is prior to mind, latent, omnipresent, involved even in matter and life, a hidden cause of action and waits for mind to be ready for its manifestation, and since supermind acts only in spirit spirit too must be there latent, omnipresent, involved, a hidden cause of action. But spirit is not dependent on the evolution of supermind for its manifestation; it can appear to our mentality, to our life-consciousness, even to our physical mind.

The true nature and rationale of this priority appear in the descending scale. There we see the true development of the universe.

Spirit of self-being develops self of conscious energy which supports its self of cosmic bliss, which acts on the finite by supermind, which offers its differentiations to mind, relates them in life, fixes them phenomenally in body of material substance. This is the descending scale by which universe is created or made sensible to embodied soul.

But in the material world, all is first involved in matter and has to find itself by a development from material being and with material being as its support and basis. The evolving process of this self-discovery of the universal existence produces the phenomenon of evolution of higher and greater from lower and lesser principles which we call the ascending scale of being.

This phenomenon baffling now to the reason becomes a self-evident proposition when we observe the descending scale and find involution to have preceded evolution. The phenomenon arises inevitably from the nature of our being.

*

Schema of being has to be formulated from these two points of view, the results, though data of experience, being at first taken as a working hypothesis, subject to verification. We follow actually the ascending scale, but the descending scale has first to be shown, as otherwise the possible explanations of psychological phenomenon which result from this line of experience, would be unintelligible and would have either to be excluded or the whole enquiry restated in altered detail in the end.

All questions of the reality or unreality of the world, its fundamental or ultimate purpose or want of purpose, the destiny of the soul, must be left over till the psychological data have been understood. To proceed otherwise would be to determine them by metaphysical reasoning; but the object before us is to arrive at them by the road of psychology.

The whole psychology of Vedanta depends upon this double scale and without it could have no complete scientific verification. Because it exists experience of consciousness can give a clue to the nature of world existence. Metaphysical reasoning by itself could only give us philosophical opinions, psychological verification makes Vedantic truth a firm guide in life. It gives us a tangible ladder of ascension by which we rise to our highest truth of being[.]

105

The knowledge at which psychology arrives in its largest generalisations, is that there is one absolute and indefinable Reality which we call for psychological purposes the Self one, indivisible and common to all existence which manifests itself with an infinite variety in the universe and that every soul is an individual personality — we will use the word for want of a better — of that Self manifesting itself with a variety not precisely infinite, but indefinite, but in accordance with its individual nature which provides the principle of harmony, regulates the variety, casts it into a certain mould of unity. All existence is one, but with a constantly active principle of variation and individuation. There is a universal nature of things, but man while abiding within the principles of that nature, has also a nature of his own which distinguishes him from the animal and from lower forms of life. There is therefore this general individuality of Man which the totality of mankind represents in its full play of oneness and variety. Within that general individuality there are typal, racial, national, class individualities and each man has his own individual nature, one indeed in its general basis and materials with general human nature and with his type, race, class, nation, but yet possessed of its own principle of particular individuation. It is this which reigns in his mentality, vital being, physical being and stamps itself upon them, but in itself it is neither mental, vital nor physical, but proceeds from a secret principle superior to all these; mind, life and body are only means and values of his self-expression. So is it with every community, nation or other natural grouping of men.

Towards a True Scientific Psychology

106

When the ancient thinkers of India set themselves to study the soul of man in themselves and others, they, unlike any other nation or school of early thought, proceeded at once to a process which resembles exactly enough the process adopted by modern science in its study of physical phenomena. For their object was to study, arrange and utilise the forms, forces and working movements of consciousness, just as the modern physical Sciences study, arrange and utilise the forms, forces and working movements of objective Matter. The material with which they had to deal was more subtle, flexible and versatile than the most impalpable forces of which the physical Sciences have become aware; its motions were more elusive, its processes harder to fix; but once grasped and ascertained, the movements of consciousness were found by Vedic psychologists to be in their process and activity as regular, manageable and utilisable as the movements of physical forces. The powers of the soul can be as perfectly handled and as safely, methodically and puissantly directed to practical life-purposes of joy, power and light as the modern power of electricity can be used for human comfort, industrial and locomotive power and physical illumination; but the results to which they give room and effect are more wonderful and momentous than the results of motorpower and electric luminosity. For there is no difference of essential law in the physical and the psychical, but only a difference and undoubtedly a great difference of energy, instrumentation and exact process. The Supreme Existence which expresses itself equally in soul and matter, moves upon one fundamental principle on all its sevenfold levels, and even by one set of medial processes, but It varies their minute arrangement and organic functioning to suit the material which it is using and the objective which it has set before Itself in Its divine movement.

Exact observation and untrammelled, yet scrupulous experiment are the method of every true Science. Not mere observation by itself — for without experiment, without analysis and new-combination observation leads to a limited and erroneous knowledge; often it generates an empirical classification which does not in the least deserve the name of science. The old European system of psychology was just such a pseudo-scientific system. Its observations were superficial, its terms and classification arbitrary, its aim and spirit abstract, empty and scholastic. In modern times a different system and method are being founded; but the vices of the old system persist. The observations made have been incoherent, partial or morbid and abnormal; the generalisations are far too wide for their meagre substratum of observed data; the abstract & scholastic use of psychological terms and the old metaphysical ideas of psychological processes still bandage the eyes of the infant knowledge, mar its truth and hamper its progress. These old errors are strangely entwined with a new fallacy which threatens to vitiate the whole enquiry, — the fallacy of the materialistic prepossession.

107

Psychology ought to be rather than is the science of consciousness and of the motions of consciousness as distinguished from the science of form and of the motions of form. We are dealing, therefore, in psychology with a more subtle, flexible and versatile material than in the physical sciences; its motions are more elusive, its processes harder to fix; but when once grasped and ascertained, its laws and activities are found to be quite as regular, manageable and utilisable as the processes of physical Nature. They give room to even more wonderful and momentous results. There is no difference of essential law in the physical & psychical, but a great difference of instrumentation and exact process. For the Supreme Existence moves on one fundamental principle or one set of principles in all its manifestations, but varies its organic arrangement and functioning of the principles to suit the material which It is using & the objective which It intends to reach. In both fields observation & experiment are the only sound foundation of knowledge. But observation without experiment leads only to a limited and erroneous science, often to an empirical system of surface rules which do not deserve the name of science at all. It is this defect which has so long kept European psychology in the status of a pseudo-science; and, even now when real observation has begun & experimentation of an elementary kind is being attempted, the vices of the perishing sciolism mar and hamper this infant knowledge. It has not rid itself of all its old scholastic swaddling clothes; therefore it still walks on all fours and cannot yet learn to stand up erect and walk.

108

Psychology is the science of consciousness and its status and operations in Nature and, if that can be glimpsed or experienced, its status and operations beyond what we know as Nature.

It is not enough to observe and know the movements of our surface nature and the superficial nature of other living creatures just as it [is] not enough for Science to observe and know as electricity only the movements of lightning in the clouds or for the astronomer to observe and know only those movements and properties of the stars that are visible to the unaided eye. Here as there a whole world of occult phenomena have to be laid bare and brought under control before the psychologist can hope to be master of his province.

Our observable consciousness, that which we call ourselves, is only the little visible part of our being. It is a small field below which are depths and farther depths and widths and ever wider widths which support and supply it but to which it has no visible access. All that is our self, our being, — what we see at the top is only our ego and its visible nature.

Even the movements of this little surface nature cannot be understood nor its true law discovered until we know all that is below or behind and supplies it — and know too all that is around it and above.

For below this conscient nature is the vast Inconscient out of which we come. The Inconscient is greater, deeper, more original, more potent to shape and govern what we are and do than our little derivative conscient nature. Inconscient to us, to our surface view, but not inconscient in itself or to itself it is a sovereign guide, worker, determinant, creator. Not to know it is not to know our nether origins and the origin of the most part of what we are and do.

And the Inconscient is not all. For behind our little frontal ego and nature is a whole subliminal kingdom of inner consciousness with many planes and provinces. There are in that kingdom many powers, movements, personalities which are part of ourselves and help to form our little surface personality and its powers and movements. This inner self, these inner persons we do not know, but they know us and observe and dictate our speech, our thoughts, feelings, doings even more directly than the Inconscient below us.

Around us too is a circumconscient Universal of which we are a portion. This Circumconscience is pouring its forces, suggestions, stimulus, compulsions into us at every moment of our existence.

Around us is a universal Mind of which our mind is a formation and our thoughts, feelings, will, impulses are continually little more than a personally modified reception and transcription of its thought-waves, its force-currents, its foam of emotion and sensation, its billows of impulse.

Around us is a permanent universal life of which our petty flow of life-formation that begins and ceases is only a small dynamic wave.

109

Psychology is the science of Consciousness; it is the knowledge of its nature, its processes and the aim or results of its processes, its law or laws of being, its habitat and instruments, its what, why, where, whence and whither.

But what is consciousness and can there be a science of consciousness? We are not in presence of a body of concrete, visible or sensible facts, verifiable by all, which form an indisputable starting-point, are subject to experiment and proof, where theories can be tested at every point and discarded if they do not accord with the facts, with all the facts. The data here are subjective, fluid, elusive. They do not subject themselves to exact instruments, can lend themselves to varying theories, do not afford proofs easily verifiable by all. Their presentation is difficult and can hardly be more than scanty and often infantile in their insufficiency. Theories are numerous, but few or none have any solidity or permanence.

To understand the psychology of others we depend upon our observation of them and our own interpretation of the movements we observe and our comparison with our own psychological actions and reactions. But our observation is limited by the fact that what we observe is not the psychological events we wish to study but signs of speech, action, facial or bodily expression which seem to us to indicate them; but it is still more limited by the possibility of error in our observation and still more in our interpretation. Errors of wrong attribution, exaggeration, diminution, false [?evidence], false valuation, crop up at every turn; indeed, the whole observation may be nothing but error, the interpretation purely personal and mistaken. Comparison with ourselves may be a fruitful fountain of mistakes; there is no doubt a general similarity in the mass of human reactions, but the differences and variations are also marked and striking; there is here no source of certitude.

A direct experiential and experimental psychology seems to be demanded if psychology is to be a science and not merely a mass of elementary and superficial generalisations with all the rest guesswork or uncertain conclusion or inference. We must see, feel, know directly what we observe; our interpretations must be capable of being sure and indubitable; we must be able to work surely on a ground of sure knowledge.

*

Modern psychologists have aimed at certitude in their knowledge, have found it or thought they found it by mixing up psychology and physiology; our physiological processes are supposed to be not only the instrumentation or an instrumentation of our consciousness, but the base or constituents of our psychological processes. But by this method we can only arrive at an extended physiological, not at a true psychological knowledge. We learn that there is a physical instrumentation by which physical things and their contacts work upon our consciousness, reach it through the nerves and the brain and awake certain reactions in it which may however vary with the brain and the consciousness contacted; we learn that the consciousness uses certain physiological processes as well as physical means to act upon outward things and conditions; we learn too that physical conditions have an action upon our state of consciousness and its functionings. But all this was to be expected, since we are a consciousness embodied and not disincarnate, acting through a body and with a body as a habitation and instrument and not a pure consciousness acting in its own right[.]

Yogic Psychology

110

The problem of consciousness can only be solved if we go back to a radical state of our existence in which things get back to their reality. For there they are no longer a mass of phenomena which have to be cleared up, classified, organised by the perceptions, conceptions and relative logic of the human intellect. These perceptions, these concepts, this logic belong to an imperfect instrument and the arrangements they make can only be provisional and, at that, onesided and only half-true or a good deal less than half-true — and even that truth is of an inferior kind, a constructed representation and not truth itself in its own nature. In fact the intellect sees only the phenomenon, it cannot go back behind it; when it tries, it only arrives at other and more occult phenomena. The truth of things can only be perceived when one gets to what may be called summarily the spiritual vision of things and even there completely only when there is not only vision but direct experience in the very substance of one's own being and all being.

111

Consciousness is not an unaccountable freak or a chance growth or a temporary accident in a material and inconscient universe.

It may so appear on the surface and physical science, since by its very terms it is limited to the examination of appearances and must start from the surface phenomenon, may choose or may have no alternative but to treat it on that basis. But surface appearances are not the reality of things, they may be a part of the truth but they are not the whole reality. One must look beyond the external appearances of things before one can know things in themselves: especially first appearances are apt to be deceptive. It is not by regarding a flash of lightning as a chance ebullition of fiery temper in a cloud that one can know the truth of electricity. We must go far and dig deep before we can get at the truth about the Force that manifested the lightning. Consciousness may similarly appear as a phenomenon, an outbreak of sentience in the obscurity of an originally nescient being; but we must go far beyond that specious appearance if we would know the true nature and origin and discover the entire possibilities of this apparently strange and anomalous force. For anomalous it is, since it occurs in a fundamentally inconscient universe of Matter and strange and curious it is in its reactions, aberrations, workings, destiny.

Physical science — and psychology in its present methods is only an extension of physical science — conducts its search into things from down upwards; it regards Matter as the foundation and the bottom of things and having searched into that foundation, got as it thinks to the very bottom, it believes, or once believed, it has by that very fact understood their depths, their centre, their height and top. But this is a naive error. The truth of things is in their depths or at their centre and even at their top. The truth of consciousness also is to be found at its top and in its depths or at its centre; but when we enter into the depths of consciousness or when we try to reach its centre, we go off into trance and likewise before we get to its top, we go off into trance.

Our searches into Matter also are vitiated by the fact that in Matter consciousness is in a trance and gives no apparent response to our probings. In living Matter, not yet mental, still subconscious, it does give sometimes a reply, but not one that we can understand, and, as for mind in the animal, it is only consciousness half awakened out of the original trance of inconscient Matter: even in the human being it starts from an original nescience, its expressions, its data, all that we can ordinarily observe of it, are the movements of Ignorance fumbling for knowledge. We cannot understand from these alone what consciousness really is nor discover its source or its supreme possibilities or its limits, if indeed it has any limits and is not like being itself infinite and illimitable. Only if we can get away from this imperfection and ignorance to some top of its possibilities or to its latent depths or some hidden centre, can we discover its true nature and through it the very self and reality of our being.

How do we know that there is a top to consciousness or an inner centre, since these are not apparent on the face of things? By its supernormal, not its normal manifestations and phenomena, for the top of things is always supernormal, it is only the bottom and what is near to the bottom that are normal, at any rate to our ordinary consciousness in the material universe. Especially we can know by the supernormal becoming normal to us — by Yoga.

112

I mean by Yogic psychology an examination of the nature and movements of consciousness as they are revealed to us by the processes and results of Yoga.

This definition at once takes us out of the field of ordinary psychology and extends the range of our observation to an immense mass of facts and experiments which exceed the common surface and limited range very much as the vastly extended range of observation of Science exceeds that of the common man looking at natural external phenomena only with the help [of] his unaided mind and senses. The field of Yoga is practically unlimited and its processes and instrumentation have a plasticity and adaptability and power of expansion to which it is difficult to see or set any limit.

It is true that modern psychology has probed the internal law of living matter and consciousness and arrived at results which are remarkable but limited and fundamentally inconclusive. We know from it that the movements of consciousness are affected and on a certain side determined by the functioning of the physical organs. But still the nature, origin and laws of consciousness remain unknown; all that has been proved is that the body provides for it an engine or instrumentation for its manifestation in living physical bodies and that certain lesions, alterations or deteriorations of the engine may lead to considerable or serious results in the functioning of the embodied consciousness. This was to be expected and can at once be conceded; but there is no proof that consciousness is a function of matter or that it was originated by the chemical or biological processes of the body or that it perishes with the dissolution of life in the body. The cessation of its functioning in the body at death proves nothing, for that was to be expected whatever the origin of consciousness or its fundamental nature. Its disappearance may be a departure, a disappearance from the body, but not a disappearance from existence.

It is true also that modern inquiry probing into psychological (as opposed to physiological) phenomena has discovered certain truths that are equally discovered by Yogic process, the role of the subconscient, the subliminal, double or multiple personality; but its observations in these fields are of an extremely groping and initial character and one does not see easily how it can arrive at the same largeness of results here as in physiology, physics, chemistry or other departments of physical Science.

It is only by Yoga process that one can arrive at an instrumentation which will drive large wide roads into the psychological Unknown and not only obscure and narrow tunnels. The field of psychology needs a direct inner psychological instrumentation by which we can arrive at sure data and sure results in ourselves verified [by] equally sure data [and] results in our observation of others and of the hidden psychological world and its play of unseen forces. The physical is the outwardly seen and sensed and needs physical instruments for its exploration; the psychological is the physically unseen and unsensed, to be discovered only by an organisation of the inward senses and other now undeveloped and occult means. It is through consciousness, by an instrumentation of consciousness only that the nature and laws and movements of consciousness can be discovered — and this is the method of Yoga.

Section Three

Yoga

Change of Consciousness and Transformation of Nature

The Way of Yoga

Change of Consciousness: The Meaning of Yoga

113

Yoga is a means by which one arrives at union with the Truth behind things through an inner discipline which leads us from the consciousness of the outward and apparent to the consciousness of the inner and real. Yoga consciousness does not exclude the knowledge of the outer apparent world but it sees it with the eyes of an inner, not an outer seeing and experience, alters and sets right all its values in the light of an inner deeper greater truer consciousness and applies to it the Law of the reality, exchanging the law of the creature's Ignorance for the rule of a divine Will and Knowledge.

A change of consciousness is the whole meaning of the process of Yoga[.]

114

Yoga is the science, the process, the effort and action by which man attempts to pass out of the limits of his ordinary mental consciousness into a greater spiritual consciousness[.]

115

All yoga is in its essential [. . .   . .] heightening or deepening of our consciousness so that it may become capable of something beyond our ordinary consciousness and our normal Nature. It is an entering into depths, an ascent towards heights, a widening beyond. Or it is contact with depths within, heights above, vastnesses beyond us, an opening to their greater influences, beings, movements or a reception of them into our surface consciousness and being so that the outer [is] altered, enveloped, governed by what is not our ordinary self. For the Reality which we are seeking does not lie on our surface or, if it is there, it is concealed and only a deeper, higher or wider consciousness than any to which we now have access can reach, touch or know and possess it. Even if we dive below our normal consciousness to find what is there it is some aspect of the Reality into which we enter.

116

By Yoga is meant — the word is not here used in the limited sense given to it in the disputations of Pandits — the use and [?] of certain processes of self-discipline [and] self-exercise or spontaneous and automatic self-intensification and self-extension of the mind and whatever in us is limited and that by which we enter into a larger deeper consciousness than is ordinarily ours.

This consciousness is aware of external things not only through the physical mind and senses but by other though often similar means of Mind, an inner sense or senses, an inner tact or feeling such as a projective or responsive awareness of things at a slight or great distance, a premonitory sense of things about to happen [or] preparing to happen, a feeling of things or persons not seen, an inner vision of physical objects and happenings not before the eye and hundreds of other phenomena not normal to the ordinary mind. These phenomena are ordinarily labelled occult or psychic or described as hallucinatory according to the point of view of the speaker, but such epithets explain nothing. This range of phenomena exists and for anyone who would know the nature and origin and possibilities of consciousness an examination of them is imperative.

This range of phenomena is however only an outer fringe of Yoga. It is more important that it admits to an inner field of experiences of the utmost import, to a growth of psyche and spirit, to deepest realities and [?finally] to the deepest of all; [. . . . . .]

But what precisely do we mean by the word Yoga? It is used here in the most general sense possible as a convenient name including all processes or results of processes that lead to the unveiling of a greater and inner knowledge, consciousness, experience. Any psychic discipline by which we can pass partly or wholly into a spiritual state of the consciousness, any spontaneous or systematised approach to the inner Reality or the supreme Reality, any state of union or closeness to the Divine, any entry into a consciousness larger, deeper or higher than the normal consciousness common to humankind, fall automatically within the range of the word Yoga. Yoga takes us from the surface into the depths of our consciousness or it admits us into its very centre; it takes us up to the hidden topmost heights of our conscious being. It shows to us the secrets of the Self and the secret of the Divine. It gives us the knowledge, the vision, the presence of the Immanent and the Cosmic and the Transcendent Reality; that is its supreme purpose. On a lower grade it gives us the key to an inner and larger consciousness that is subliminal to us and brings out its experiences, its powers and possibilities and unless we know these things the secret of Consciousness and the knowledge of our whole being must escape us. It is through this door that we pass from a nescience of our true nature into a full light of self-knowledge.

But there are methods, schools, disciplines of Yoga that are turned towards one restricted aim, follow each a different path, win control of a separate province and by following that exclusive path we shall know that province of our being only or reach a single summit. It is by the integrality of Yoga that one can attain the integrality of consciousness. Our aim must be to embrace in this new knowledge all the planes of consciousness and all its summits. Then in the light of the knowledge brought to us and its widening and heightening of our consciousness, it is in the light of the top of things that we have to see and know all. It is then only that our ignorance or a very partial and surface awareness of ourselves can be flooded by a light of self-revelation and turn into self-knowledge.

117

Yoga is in its essence a passage from the ordinary consciousness in which we are aware only of appearances into a higher wider deeper consciousness in which we become aware of realities and of the one Reality. Not only do we become aware of it, but we can live in it and act from it and according to it instead of living in and according to the appearance of things. Yoga is a passage from ignorance to self-knowledge, from our apparent to our true being, from an outer phenomenal mental vital material life-existence to an inner spiritual existence and a spiritualised nature.

By Yoga we pass from the phenomenal to the real Man, from the consciousness of our own apparent outer nature to the consciousness of our real self, Atman, an inner and inmost man, Purusha, that which we truly and eternally are. This self or true being remains constant through all the changes of our phenomenal being, changes of the mind, life or body or changes of our apparent personality; it is permanent, perpetual and immortal, a portion or manifestation of the Eternal.

By Yoga we pass also from our consciousness of the phenomenal appearance or appearances of the cosmos or world around us to a consciousness of its truth and reality. We become aware of the world as a manifestation of or in universal being who is the true truth of all that we see, hear, experience. We become aware of a cosmic Consciousness which is the secret of the cosmic Energy, a cosmic Self or Spirit, the cosmic Divine, the universal Godhead.

But by Yoga we become aware also that our own Self or true being is one with the cosmic Self and Spirit, our nature a play of the cosmic Nature; the wall between ourselves and the universe begins to disappear and vanishes altogether. We realise the selfsame Pantheos in ourselves, in others and in all universal existence.

But also by Yoga we become aware of something that is more than our individual being and more than the cosmic being, a transcendent Being or Existence which is not dependent on ours or the existence of the universe. Our existence is a manifestation of and in that Being, the cosmos also is a manifestation of and in that one Supreme Existence.

This then is the Truth or Reality to which we arrive by Yoga, a one and supreme Being or Existence and Power of Being which manifests as a cosmic Self or Spirit and a cosmic Energy or Nature and in that again as our own self or spirit which becomes aware of itself as an individual being and nature.

Union: The Aim of Yoga

118

It is the aim of all Yoga to pass by a change of consciousness into the Reality that is behind things and live no longer in their appearance. To enter into some kind of union or communion or participation in that is the common object of all Yoga.

But the Reality presents itself to the consciousness of man the mental being under many aspects. We seek after union or closeness to the Divine, whatever the Divine may be. We see the Divine as a personal Godhead or as an impersonal Existence. A God of Love or compassion attracts us or a God of might and power. It is a divine Friend who meets us or a Divine Master or a World Father or World Mother or an almighty Lord of all or a Divine Lover. We are in the presence of a Cosmic Spirit in whose universal consciousness we lose our separate ego or a Supracosmic Absolute in whom we lose altogether our cosmic as well as our individual existence. We find our own highest Self or the Self of all or we pass into a sublime

Mystery without relation or feature where neither self nor all can exist any longer. Or it may be the inexpressible mystery of an original Nihil that abolishes for us all suffering along with all existence — or else that Nihil may be a mystic All that is far other than the false and illusory being created for us by mind and life experience.

119

Yoga is our union with some Being or some Reality, which is greater than ourselves or is our own greatest and real Self; it is That which by Yoga we join, enter into or become.

120

All Yoga strives towards union with the Highest, the Spirit, the Self, the Divine, or whatever other name or aspect we seize of the One Eternal and Infinite.

And by union we mean, first, contact constant and increasing with the consciousness of the Divine or Infinite, then to assimilate it or assimilate ourselves to it, then to become not only like to it and full of it, but to enter into it and dwell in it, to become that divine consciousness and being, essence of its essence and so abolish all division that separates us from the Divinity from whom we came.

121

To be one with the Eternal is the object of Yoga; there is no other object, because all other aims are included in this one divine perfection.

To be one with the Eternal is to be one with him in being, consciousness, power and delight. All that is is summed in these four terms of the infinite, for all else are but their workings.

To be one with the Eternal is also to live in the Eternal and in his presence and from his infinite nature, — sayujya, salokya, samipya, sadrishya. These four together are one way of being and one perfection.

To live in the Eternal is also to live with the Eternal within us. Whosoever consciously inhabits his being, his conscious presence inhabits. God lives and moves and acts in us when we live and move and act in him[.]

122

Yoga is the contact of the humanity in us with the deity in which it dwells, of the finite with the Infinite, of the as yet accomplished evolving & imperfect humanity with its yet unevolved attainable perfection, of the outwardly active waking consciousness which is controlled with the inwardly active controlling consciousness, of man with God, of the changing outward apparent ego with the secret real and immutable Self. By that contact the lower rises to the higher, the unevolved evolves, the unborn is created, humanity assumes some part of godhead, man moves upward to God. This upward and self-expanding movement is the utility of Yoga.

123

To be one in all ways of thy being with that which is the Highest, this is Yoga. To be one in all ways of thy being with that which is the All, this is Yoga. To be one in thy spirit and with thy understanding and thy heart and in all thy members with the God in humanity, this is Yoga. To be one with all Nature and all beings, this is Yoga. All this is to be one with God in his transcendence and his cosmos and all that he has created in his being. Because from him all is and all is in him and he is all and in all and because he is thy highest Self and thou art one with him in thy spirit and a portion of him in thy soul and at play with him in thy nature, and because this world is a scene in his being in which he is thy secret Master and lover and friend and the lord and sustainer and aim of all thou art, therefore is oneness with him the perfect way of thy being[.]

124

The human being on earth is God playing at humanity in a world of matter under the conditions of a hampered density with the ulterior intention of imposing law of spirit on matter & nature of deity upon human nature. Evolution is nothing but the progressive unfolding of Spirit out of the density of material consciousness and the gradual self-revelation of God out of this apparent animal being.

Yoga is the application, for this process of divine self-revelation, of the supreme force of tapas by which God created the world, supports it & will destroy it. It substitutes always some direct action of an infinite divine force for the limited workings of our fettered animal humanity. It uses divine means in order to rise to divinity.

All Yoga is tapasya and all siddhi of Yoga is accomplishment of godhead either by identity or by relation with the Divine Being in its principles or its personality or in both or simultaneously by identity and relation.

Identity is the principle of Adwaita, relation of Dwaita, relation in a qualified identity of Visishtadwaita. But entire perfection comes by identity with God in essential experience & relation of difference with Him in experience of manifestation.

125

In the end a union, a closeness, a constant companionship in the soul with the Divine, and a yet more wonderful oneness and inliving[.]

Yoga Partial and Complete

126

Yoga means union and the whole object of Yoga is the union of the human soul with the supreme Being and of the present nature of humanity with the eternal, supreme or divine Nature.

The greater the union, the greater the Yoga, the more complete the union, the more complete the Yoga.

There are different conceptions of the supreme Being and to each conception corresponds a school of Yoga with its separate idea and discipline. But these are partial and not complete systems; or rather they are complete in themselves, but do not cover the whole human being and nature. Most of them lead away from life and are useful only to the few who are moved to turn away from human existence and seek the bliss of some other state of being. To humanity at large this kind of Yoga has no real message. The complete Yoga will be one which accepts God in the world and oneness with all beings and solidarity with the human kind, fills life and existence with the God-consciousness and not only raises man the individual but leads man the race towards a total perfection.

127

The aim put before itself by Yoga is God; its method is tapasya.

God is the All and that which exceeds & transcends the All; there is nothing in existence which is not God but God is not anything in that existence, except symbolically, in image to His own consciousness. Humanity also is a symbol or eidolon of God, we are made in His image; and by that is meant, not a formal image, but in the image of His being and personality, the essence of divinity & its quality, the divine being & divine knowledge.

There are in every thing existing phenomenally or, as we shall say, symbolically, two parts, the thing in itself & the symbol, Self & Nature, res (thing that is) & factum (thing that is made), immutable being & mutable becoming, that which is supernatural in it & that [which] is natural.

Everything in existence has something in it which seeks to transcend itself; Matter moves towards becoming Life, Life moves towards becoming Mind, Mind moves towards becoming ideal Truth, ideal Truth rises to become divine & infinite Spirit.

The reason is that every symbol, being a partial expression of God, reaches out to & seeks to become its own entire reality; it aspires to become its real self by transcending its apparent self. Thing that is made is attracted towards Thing that is, becoming towards being, the natural to the supernatural, symbol towards Thing in itself, Nature towards God.

The upward movement is the means towards fulfilment of existence in the world; downward movement is destruction, Hell, perdition. Everything tends [to] move upward; once it is assured of its natural existence, it seeks the supernatural. Every nature is a step towards some supernature, something natural to itself but supernatural to what is below it. Life is supernatural to Matter, Mind supernatural to Life, ideal being supernatural to mental being, infinite being supernatural to ideal being. So too man is supernatural to the animal, God is supernatural to man. Man too as soon as he has assured his natural existence, must insist on his upward movement towards God. The upward movement is towards Heaven, the downward movement towards Hell.

The animal soul fulfils itself when it transcends animality & becomes human. Humanity also fulfils itself when it transcends humanity & becomes God.

By yielding to Nature, we fall away both from Nature & from God; by transcending Nature we at once fulfil all the possibilities of Nature & rise towards God. The human touches first the divine & then becomes divine.

There are those who seek to kill Nature in order to become the Self; but that is not God's intention in humanity. We have to transcend Nature, not to kill it.

Every movement of humanity which seeks to destroy Nature, however religious, lofty or austere, of whatever dazzling purity of ethereality, is doomed to failure, sick disappointment, disillusionment or perversion. It is in its nature transient, because it contradicts God's condition for us. He has set Nature there as a condition of His self-fulfilment in the world.

Every movement of humanity which bids us be satisfied with Nature, dwell upon the earth & cease to look upwards, however rational, clearsighted, practical, effective, comfortable it may be is doomed to weariness, petrifaction & cessation. It is in its nature transient because it contradicts God's intention in us. He dwells secret in Nature & compels us towards Him by His irresistible attraction.

Materialistic movements are as unnatural & abnormal as ascetic & negatory religions & philosophies. Under the pretence of bringing us back to Nature, they take us away from her entirely; for they forget that Nature is only phenomenally Nature but in reality she is God. The divine element in her is that which she most really is; the rest is only condition, process & stage in her development of the secret divinity.

Not to be ensnared, emmeshed and bound by Nature, not to hate & destroy her, is the first thing we must learn if we would be complete Yogins & proceed towards our divine perfection.

Being still natural in the world to transcend Nature internally so that both internally & externally we may master & use her as free & lord, swarat samrat, is our fulfilment.

Being still the symbol to reach through it the thing that symbolises itself, to realise the symbol, is our fulfilment.

Being still a figure of humanity, man among men, a living body among living bodies, though housed in life & matter yet a mental being among mental beings, being & remaining all this that we are apparently, yet to exceed all this apparent manhood and become in the body what we are really, God, spirit, supreme & infinite, pure Bliss, pure Force, pure Light, this is our fulfilment.

Our whole apparent life is a becoming, but all becoming has for its goal & fulfilment being & God is the only being; to become divine in the nature of the world, in the symbol of humanity is our fulfilment.

Yoga in its practice may be either perfect or partial, either selective or comprehensive. Perfect and comprehensive Yoga avoids limitations by aspects and leads to entire divinity.

If we are to exceed our human stature and become divine, we must first, in our Indian phrase, get God; for this human ego is the lower imperfect term of our being, God is its higher perfect term. God in us is the possessor of our super-nature and without Him there is no effectual rising. The finite cannot become infinite, unless it perceives & desires to touch its own secret infinity; nor can the symbol-being, unless it knows, loves and pursues its Self-Reality, overcome the present limits of its merely apparent nature. This necessity is the imperative justification of religion, — not of a church, creed or theology; for these things are all outward religiosity rather than the truth of religion, but of that personal and intimate religion, a thing of temper and spirit and life, not of views or ceremonies which draws each man to his own vision of the Supreme or his own idea of something higher than himself. Without the worship of the Supreme in the heart, the aspiration towards it in the will or the thirst for it in the temperamental cravings we shall not have the impulse or the strength for the difficult and supreme effort demanded of us. Therefore have the prophets spoken and the Avatars descended, so that mankind may be inspired to this great call upon its upward-straining energies. The aim of rationalism & Science is to make man content with his humanity and contradict Nature, baffling her evolution; the aim of religion, — but not unhappily of the creeds & Churches — is to farther the great aim of Nature by pushing man towards his evolution.

The attainment of God is the true object of all human effort for which all his other efforts political, social, literary, intellectual, are only a necessary condition & preparation of the race; but then there are both differences in the state of the attainment, differences in its range & effectivity. Three states of divine attainment may usefully be distinguished, touch with God, indwelling in Him & becoming He. The first is initial & elementary; unless passing the veil of our ordinary nature we touch the divine Being or He leaning down impose His touch [on] us, unless we come first into contact with Him either in our heart, our mind, our works or our being, we cannot go on to indwell in Him. If we are strong in spirit, the touch may indeed be rapid & summary & we may wake at once & stride forward to the state of divine indwelling, soul of man in the soul of God, the individual in the universal; but the touch must be there. To enforce this preliminary step, to bring man into some kind of contact with God, is the common and sometimes the sole preoccupation of human religions. It does not matter greatly to Nature for her purpose how it is done, — in however crude & elementary a way, through whatever intellectual errors & emotional blunders or ethical outrages, the touch must be established; this imperatively & above all things the religious spirit demands. Nature, as is always her way, presses on to her all-important, immediate steps and is willing to purchase a single great & general gain by any number of particular losses. Man, besides, is so various in the arrangement of his human qualities, the master spring as well as the peculiar temperament differs so greatly or so subtly in each individual that there can never be, for this purpose of Nature's, too many sects, disciplines or different religions. Swami Vivekananda has well seen the consummation of religion in a state when each human individual has his own religion dictated by his own spiritual needs & nature; for collective creeds, Churches & theologies, in spite of their temporary necessity & some undeniable permanent advantages, help to formalise the upward effort & deprive it of its adaptability, freedom & perfect individual sincerity. The priest & dogma will seldom leave God & the soul free to meet each other in that solitude & spontaneity which gives the union its highest force & delight. They are always pressing in to control & preside at the marriage & legitimise it with formulas, rites & official registration.

Moreover the intellect of natural man is narrow, his effort soon exhausted & easily satisfied with imperfection. If he is led to think that his way of contact with the Divine is the only way, his own freedom of higher development is fettered or entirely taken away from him & in his intellectual & religious egoism he militates against the freedom of others. Most religions tend easily to believe that the contact with God once established, no matter with what limitations or of what kind, all is done that needs to be done, all fulfilled that God demands of us.

Popular religions tend naturally to be dualistic and to preserve a trenchant distinction between man & God dividing the symbol being from That which expresses itself in him; while with one hand they raise man towards his super-nature, with the other they hold him down to his ordinary nature. The lower is suffused with the glow of the higher & touched with its power & rapture, but it does not itself rise into & dwell within it. At its lowest the dualistic soul cherishes the taint of its imperfections, at its highest, unless in rare self-transcending moments, keeps itself distinct in awe & reverence from the divine Lover, worships at His feet but cannot hide itself in His bosom.

Therefore Nature, still following her upward surge, has provided a mightier rank of human souls who are capable of going forward beyond this preliminary effort & having entered into the very being of God, of dwelling there in beatitude. Entering into the consciousness of the Infinite, feeling it all around them & in them, ever thrilling with its touch, aware of identity with It in nature, joy and inner awareness, they yet preserve a constant separateness of their special being in that identity. They do not plunge themselves wholly into the divine ocean or, if they go down into it, they keep hold on a fathomline which will preserve their touch with the surface. In their nature — whatever be their opinions — such men are Visishtadwaitins, souls not drawn towards entire oneness. But unless man plunges himself wholly into God caring not whether he reemerge, unless the human sacrifices himself wholly to the divinity, keeping back no particle of his being, not even the least particle of separateness of the individual ego, jivatman, the divine purpose in man cannot be utterly accomplished. Therefore Nature or the Will of God — for Nature is nothing but the Will of God in action — has provided that some, having indwelt in God, human soul in divine soul, shall be irresistibly called immediately, with brief respite or at long & last to the utter immersion. These go onward & throw away the last trace of Ego into God. Some of us, it has been said by a great teacher, are jivakotis, human beings leaning so preeminently to the symbol-nature that, if they have lost it utterly for a while in the Reality, they lose themselves; once immersed, they cannot return; they are lost in God to humanity; others are ishwarakotis, human beings whose centre has already been shifted upwards or, elevated in the superior planes of our conscious-existence from the beginning, was established in God rather than in Nature. Such men are already leaning down from God to Nature; they, therefore, even in losing themselves in Him yet keep themselves since in reaching God they do not depart from their centre but rather go towards it; arrived they are able to lean down again to humanity. Those who can thus emerge from this bath of God are the final helpers of humanity & are chosen by God & Nature to prepare the type of supernatural man to which our humanity is rising.

There are, then, these three divine conditions, states separately conceived of humanity's God attainment. Man being limited in energy & discriminative rather than catholic in intellect, fastens usually on this separate conception & limits himself to one or other of these conditions; Yogic method, also, being careful of the different natures of men, suits itself to their limitations, becomes selective and concentrates upon one of these conditions or another. Or even it becomes partial as well as selective; for in its contact with God, it relates itself to a part of divine quality rather than the perfect divinity, to a God of mercy, the God of Justice, the Divine Master, the Divine Friend, or else with some aspect of divine impersonal being, to Infinite Rapture, to Infinite Force or to Infinite Calm & Purity. In the indwelling there may be the same limitations, in the becoming also they may persist. There is no fault to be found with this selective process or with this partiality. They are necessary; human limitations demand this device; human perfectibility itself finds its account in these concessions. Nature knows her task & she proceeds to it with a wide, flexible & perfect wisdom which smiles at our impatient logical narrownesses & rigid, onesighted consistencies. She knows she has an infinitely complex & variable material to deal with & must be infinitely complex & variable in her methods. We only consider precise method & ultimate fulfilment; she has to reckon on her way with thousand-armed struggles & infinite possibilities.

Nevertheless, her ultimate aim & the perfect & comprehensive Yoga is that which embraces rather than selects. We are meant to be within the symbol of humanity what God is in Himself & universally. Now God is free, absolute from these limitations & all-comprehensive. He is always one in his being, yet both one with & separate from his symbols & in that differentiated oneness able to stand quite apart from them. So we too in our ultimate divine realisation when we have become one with our divine Self, may & should be able also to stand out as the self still one in all things and beings, yet differentiated in the symbol, so as to enjoy a blissful divided closeness such as that of the Lover & Beloved mingling yet separate in their rapture; & may & should even be able to stand away from God with a sort of entire separateness holding His hand still, unlike the pure dualist, but still standing away from Him so that we may enjoy that infinity of human relation with God which is the wonder & beauty & joy of dualistic religions. To accomplish this is the full, the purna Yoga, and the sadhak who can attain to it, is in his condition the complete Yogin.

Is such a triune condition of the soul possible? Logically, it would seem impossible; logically, all trinities are chimeras and a thing must be one thing at a time & cannot combine three such divergent states as oneness, differentiated oneness & effective duality. But in these matters an inch of experience runs farther than a yard of logic, & experience, you will find, affirms that the triune God-state is perfectly possible & simple once you have attained God's fullness. We must not apply to the soul a logic which is based on the peculiarities of matter. It is true of a clod that it cannot be at the same time a clod hanging up or pasted on some bough, a clod protruding from the earth and a shapeless mass trodden into the mother soil. But this is because the clod is divided from the earthly form. The soul is not divided from God by these barriers of material & dimension. What is true [of] matter is not true of Spirit, nor do the standards of form become facts applied to the formless. For matter is conscious being confined in form, the spirit is conscious being using form but unconfined in it; & it is the privilege of Spirit that though indivisible in its pure being, it is freely self-divisible in its conscious experience & can concentrate itself in many states at a time. It is by this tapas, by this varied concentration of self-knowledge that Divine Existence creates & supports the world & is at one & the same [time] God & Nature & World, Personal & Impersonal, Pure & Varied, Qualitied & without Qualities, Krishna & Kali, Shiva & Brahma & Vishnu, man & animal & vegetable & stone, all aspects of Himself & all symbols. We need not doubt therefore that we, recovering our divine reality, shall not be bound to a single condition or aspect but can command a triune or even a multiple soul-experience. We, becoming God, become that which is the All & exceeds & transcends the All. Sarvabhutani atmaivabhud vijanatah. The soul of the perfect knower becomes all existent things & That transcendental in which all things have their existence, ihaiva, without ceasing to possess his human centre of separate experience. For this is the entire divinity that is the result of the perfect & comprehensive Yoga.

Partial Systems of Yoga

Jnana Yoga: The Yoga of Knowledge

128

All existence is the existence of the One, the Eternal and Infinite, the beginning and middle and end, the source and substance and continent and support of all things. There is not and cannot be any other existence, anything that is other than or outside of or above or below or beyond or in any way separate from the existence of the one Eternal and Infinite. All that appears as finite, temporal, multiple and phenomenal is still in reality being of the being of the Infinite and the Eternal. *Ekam evadvitiyam.*

This is the first and abiding truth without which no other can be understood in the truth of things or put in its proper place in the integrality of the Whole. It is therefore the fundamental realisation at which the seeker of the Yoga must arrive.

129

God is, is the first seed of Yoga. It is Tat Sat of the Vedanta. I am, is the second seed. It is So'ham of the Upanishads. God is infinite self-existence, self-conscious force of existence, self-diffused or self-concentrated delight of existence; I too am that infinite self-existence, self-consciousness, self-force, self-delight; this is the double third seed. It is Sachchidananda of the worldwide transcendental conclusion of all human thinking.

130

Self-knowledge is the foundation of the complete Yoga. Affirm in yourselves self-knowledge.

Self-knowledge and knowledge of the Brahman is one; for I am He. Of this let there be no doubt in thy mind.

Self is twofold, essential and phenomenal, being & becoming[.]

131

First be aware of thy inner self and spirit. Next be aware of that self and spirit one with thine in others.

132

All Yoga starts from the perception that what we are now or rather what we perceive as ourselves and so call is only an ignorant partial and superficial formulation of our nature. It is not our whole self, it is not even our real self; it is a little representative personality put forward by the true and persistent being in us for the experience of this brief life; we not only have been in the past and can be in the future but we are much more than that in the present secret totality of our being and nature. Especially, there is a secret soul in us that is our true person; there is a secret self that is our true impersonal being and spirit. To unveil that soul and that self is one of the most important movements of Yoga[.]

133

The sense of a greater or even of an ultimate Self need not be limited to a negative and empty wideness whose one character is to be without limitation or feature. The first extreme push of our recoil from what we now are or think ourselves to be may and does often at first carry us over into this annihilating experience. A negation of our present error, a release from our petty irksome aching bonds may seem to be the only thing worth having, the only thing true. The rest is infinity, freedom, peace. We feel an Infinity that needs nothing but its own infinite to fill it. We rejoice in a freedom of which any form, name or description, any creative activity, any movement, any impulse would be a disturbing denial and the beginning of a relapse into the error of will and desire, the ignorance of the illusory finite. To accept nothing but the bare bliss of infinity is the condition of this peace. The mind escaping from itself denies all thought, all form-making, all motion or play of any kind; for that would be a grievous return to itself, a miserable imprisonment and renewed hard-labour. The life released from the toil of labouring and striving and living, demands only immobility and no more to be, a sleep of force, the surety and rest of an immutable status. The body accepts denial and dissolution, for to be dissolved is to cease to breathe and suffer. A bodiless, lifeless, mindless infinite breadth and supreme silence shows to us that we are in contact with the Absolute.

134

This method of extinction is imposed on our mind and our mental ego, because all that is eternal, infinite, absolute is superconscient to mind; mind and its ego cannot remain awake in that greater consciousness, they must disappear. But if we can change or evolve from mental into supramental beings, then the superconscient becomes our normal consciousness. We can then hope to wake in That and not fall asleep in it, to grow into it and not abolish ourselves in it, to last in identity and not lose ourselves in identity with the supreme Existence.

135

It is possible for the reason, the thinker in us to rest and cease satisfied in this sole spiritual experience and to discard all others on the ground that they are in the end illusory or of a minor phenomenal significance. The logical mind drives naturally towards a pursuit of the abstract, towards pure essences, an indefinable substratum of all experiences, a nameless X without contents, an ineffable and featureless Absolute. Itself a creator of definitions without which it cannot think but none of which can give it any abiding sense of an ultimate, it escapes from itself with a sense of relief into the Indefinable. But if the mind finds its account in cessation and release, the other parts of our being have in this solution to be cast away from us or put to silence. The heart remains atrophied and unfulfilled; the will is baulked of its last dynamic significances. These too tend towards an absolute, the heart towards an absolute of ineffable Love and Bliss, the will towards an absolute of ineffable Power. And there is nothing to prove that the knowledge at which the reason arrives is alone true. There is no reason to suppose that the heart and will and the deeper soul within us have not too their own sufficient doors opening upon the Supreme, their key to the mystery of the Eternal.

Bhakti Yoga: The Yoga of Devotion

136

The integral Yoga of Devotion proceeds through seven stages each of which opens out from the one that precedes it:

Aspiration and self-consecration; devotion; adoration and worship; love; possession of the whole being and life by the Divine; joy of the Divine Love and the beauty and sweetness of the Divine; the absolute Bliss of the Absolute.

Faith is our first need; for without faith in the Divine, in the existence and the all-importance of the Divine Being there can be no reason to aspire or to consecrate, there can be no power in the aspiration or force behind the consecration.

Doubts do not matter, if the faith central and fundamental is there. Doubts may come, but they cannot prevail against [the rock] of faith in the centre of the being. The rock may be covered awhile by surges of doubt and despondency, but the rock will emerge firm and indestructible. Faith is of the heart, the inner heart where lives the psychic being. The outer heart is the seat of the vital being, the life personality. That like the mind may believe and then lose its belief, doubt comes from the mind, the vital and the physical consciousness. [The greater the intensity] of the psychic fire, the less will be the power of doubt to soil and darken the mind, the life and the consciousness of the body.

137

Three are the words that sum up the first state of the Yoga of devotion, faith, worship, obedience.

Three are the words that sum up the second state of the Yoga of devotion, adoration, delight, self-giving.

Three are the words that sum up the supreme state of the Yoga of devotion, love, ecstasy, surrender.

*

These are the seven ecstasies of Love —

The ecstasy of the body in the clasp of the Lover.

The ecstasy of the life consecrated and self-given to the Lord.

The ecstasy of the Mind made one in idea and [will] with the divine Consort.

The ecstasy of the supermind united with mind and body and enjoying the bliss of difference.

The ecstasy [of the] soul in the pure bliss of the Beatific.

The ecstasy of the spirit united in consciousness and force with the Universal.

The ecstasy of the pure being absolute and one with the Transcendent.

Karma Yoga: The Yoga of Works

138

All spiritual paths lead to a higher consciousness and union with the Divine and among the many paths one of the greatest is the

Way of Works: it is as great as the Way of Bhakti or the Way of Knowledge.

Do not imagine that works are in their nature nothing but a bondage, they can be a powerful means towards liberation and divine perfection. All depends on the spirit in our works and their orientation towards the inner and the higher Light away from desire and ego.

Works are a bondage when they are done out of desire or for the sake of the ego, by a mind turned outwards, involved in the act and not detached and free, bound to the ignorance of this lower nature.

139

To create the union of his soul with the Divine Presence and Power through a perfect surrender of the will in all his activities, is the high aspiration of the seeker on the Way of Works.

To put off like a worn-out disguise the ignorant consciousness and stumbling will that are ours in our present mind and life-force and to put on the light and knowledge, the purity and power, the tranquillity and ecstasy of the divine Essence, the spiritual Nature that awaits us when we climb beyond mind, is the victory after which he reaches.

To make mind and heart and life and body conscious, changed and luminous moulds of this supramental Spirit, instruments of its light and power and works, vessels of its bliss and radiance, is the glory he assigns to his transfigured human members.

On one side a darkened mind and life, ignorant, suffering, spinning like a top whipped by Nature always in the same obscure and miserable rounds, on the other a soul touched by a ray from the hidden Truth, illumined, conscious, concentrated in a single unceasing effort towards its own and the world's Highest, — this is the difference between man's ordinary life and the way of the divine Yoga[.]

*

It is not a mental or moral ideal to which is turned the seeker of the Way, but a truth of the spirit, the experience of a hidden Reality living and concrete, a Light, a Power, a Joy that surpasses the mental understanding and is beyond any merely mental experience.

The ideals created by the mind are constructions in the air that have no sufficient foundation in our vital and physical nature; therefore they can change a side of our mind and colour a part of our actions, but they cannot transform our lives, cannot find here their physical body. Ideals touch and pass, mankind remains the same; after religions, ideals, moralities without end we keep always the same ignorant and imperfect human nature.

Moral rules and ideals are a harness for the ignorant soul, bridle and bit for the passions, reins that compel it to an assigned road, yoke and poles and traces that bind it to be faithful to the burden it carries. Morality checks and controls but does not purify or change the vital nature.

In ethics there is an artificial shaping of the mind's surfaces, but no spiritual freedom, no satisfying perfection of the whole dynamic nature.

The mind's ideals like the life's seekings are at once absolute each in its own demand and in conflict with one another; neither mind nor life knows the means either of their complete or their harmonised fulfilment. The mind labours through the centuries but human nature remains faithful to its imperfections and man's life amid its changes always the same.

Beyond mind on spiritual and supramental levels dwells the Presence, the Truth, the Power, the Bliss that can alone deliver us from these illusions, display the Light of which our ideals are tarnished disguises and impose the harmony that shall at once transfigure and reconcile all the parts of our nature.

*

The first secret of Yoga is to get back behind the mind to the spirit, behind the surface emotional movements to the soul, —

behind the life to the universal force that builds these outward shapes and movements, — behind matter to the eternal Existence that puts on the robe of the body.

The second secret of Yoga is to open these discovered powers to their own supreme Truth above matter, above life, above the mind. This Truth, secret in the Superconscient, has four gradations or movements of its power, infinite supermind or Gnosis, infinite Bliss, Ananda, infinite Consciousness and Power, Chit-Tapas, infinite Being — Sat-Chid-Ananda.

The third secret of Yoga is, once arisen beyond mind, to bring down the power [*sentence not completed*]

140

The progressive surrender of our ignorant personal will and its merger into a greater divine or on the highest summits greatest supreme Will is the whole secret of Karma Yoga. To bring about the conditions in which alone this vast and happy identity becomes possible and to work out the lines we must follow to their end if we are to reach it, is all the deeper purpose of this discipline. The first condition is the elimination of personal vital desire, for if desire intervenes, all harmony with the supreme Divine Will becomes impossible. Even if we receive it, we shall disfigure its working and distort its dynamic impulse. To give up all desire, all insistence upon fruit and reward and success must be renounced from our will and all vital attachment to the work itself excised from our nature; for attachment makes it our own and no longer the Godhead's. The elimination of egoism is the second condition, not only of the rajasic and tamasic egoisms that twine around desire, but of the sattwic egoism that takes refuge in the idea of the I as the worker.

The ordinary consciousness of man cannot accept this difficult renunciation or, if it accepts it, cannot achieve this tremendous change. The human mind is too ignorant, narrow and chained to its own limited movements, the human life-instincts too blind, selfish, obscure, shut up in their own earth-bound pursuits and satisfactions, the human body too clumsy and hampering a machine. There is here no freedom, no large and infinite room, no willing and happy plasticity for the greater play of the Divine in Nature. A certain half-seeing and imperfect subordination of the personal will to an ill-understood greater Will and Power, a stumbling and occasional intuition or at best a brilliant lightninglike intimation of its commands and impulsions, a confused, clouded and often grossly distorted execution of the little one seizes of a divine Mandate seems to be the uttermost that the human consciousness as it is at its best seems able to accomplish. Only by a growth into a greater superhuman and supramental consciousness whose very nature is to be attuned to the Divine can we achieve the true and supreme Karma Yoga.

This transformation is only possible after certain steps of a divine ascent have been mastered and to climb these steps is the object of the Yoga of Works as it is conceived by the Gita. The extirpation of desire, a wide and calm equality of the mind, the life soul and the spirit, annihilation of the ego, an inner quietude and expulsion or transcendence of ordinary Nature, the Nature of the three gunas and a total surrender to the Supreme are the successive steps of this preliminary change. Only after all this has been done, can we live securely in an infinite consciousness not bound like our mental human nature. And only then can we receive the Light, know perfectly the will of the Supreme, attune all our movements to the rhythm of its Truth and execute perfectly from moment to moment its imperative commandments. Till then there is no firm achievement, but only an endeavour, seeking and aspiration, all the stress and struggle of a great and uncertain spiritual adventure. Only when these things are accomplished is there for the dynamic parts of our nature the beginning of a divine security in its acts and a transcendent peace.

141

Desire is always sinning against the Truth; it thins it and prevents it from taking body. Desire does not eternalise descending Truth;

it disintegrates, makes temporal, minimises and soon or at last abandons from dissatisfaction (vairagya) its maimed creation.

142

To do works in a close union and deep communion with the Divine in us, the Universal around us and the Transcendent above us, not to be shut up any longer in the imprisoned and separative human mind, the slave of its ignorant dictates and narrow suggestions, this is Karmayoga.

To work in obedience to a divine command, an eternal Will, a transcendent and universal impulsion, not to run under the whips of ego and need and passion and desire, and not to be goaded by the pricks of mental and vital and physical preference, but to be moved by God only, by the highest Truth only, this is Karmayoga.

To live and act no longer in human ignorance, but in divine Knowledge, conscient of individual nature and universal forces and responsive to a transcendent governance, this is Karmayoga.

To live, be and act in a divine, illimitable and luminous universal consciousness open to that which is more than universal, no longer to grope and stumble in the old narrowness and darkness, this is Karmayoga.

Whosoever is weary of the littlenesses that are, whosoever is enamoured of the divine greatnesses that shall be, whosoever has any glimpse of the Supreme within him or above him or around him let him hear the call, let him follow the path. The way is difficult, the labour heavy and arduous and long, but its reward is habitation in an unimaginable glory, a fathomless felicity, a happy and endless vastness.

Find the Guide secret within you or housed in an earthly body, hearken to his voice and follow always the way that he points. At the end is the Light that fails not, the Truth that deceives not, the Power that neither strays nor stumbles, the wide freedom, the ineffable Beatitude.

The heavens beyond are great and wonderful, but greater and more wonderful are the heavens within you. It is these Edens that await the divine worker.

143

A peace and bliss inconceivable to the pleasure-bound and pain-racked mind, and immeasurable by the limited capacities of our present bodily sense, is the reward of the seeker's insistent self-discipline, his painful struggle, his untiring endeavour.

*

At first a consecration, then a surrender and subordination of our human personal will, then its merger in a greater divine or greatest supreme Will is the central secret and core of intention of the Karmayoga. But this cannot be entirely done by our mental consciousness in its little human boundaries. Our Yoga must help us to leave it and enter into a greater consciousness enlightened by a truer radiance of knowledge, armed with a mightier unerring strength, open to that vaster delight in which are drowned for ever our petty human pain and pleasure. Still even what can be done within the limits of our human consciousness brings a great liberation.

But even to do that little is not easy to the physical mind of man, even when his higher mind and will consent and demand it. There is something in us wedded to ignorance, eternally in revolt against all surrender, attached to its own blind activity, its own freedom of will, a "freedom" that rattles its hundred chains at every step; — but to that element in us even that seems a divine music. And our human mind will invent a hundred good reasons against any such surrender to something not ourselves or even to our highest Self, — unless that be nothing more than a magnified reflection of our ego; for then it will be willing enough to surrender. And even our highest spiritual achievement on the mental plane is tainted and limited, when it is not distorted, by this ever unredeemed element in our nature.

Our only safety is to push on beyond the mind to a Truth-consciousness with a larger dynamic light in it that is ever free by its inherent knowledge and illumined power from these pettinesses and this egoistic darkness. For in this supramental consciousness is the Truth and there we meet it and its Master. The supermind is the primal creative and organic instrument of the Supreme Will, the Will that is free from error because eternal, one and infinite.

Integral Yoga

Integrality

144

Most Yoga has for its aim one or other of two great ends, either the abandonment of the world and departure into some reality of supracosmic existence or some form of limited perfection, knowledge, bliss or mastery in the world. But there is a third objective of Yoga in which there is a harmony between world existence & supracosmic freedom. God is possessed; the world is not renounced or rather renounced as an aim in itself, but possessed as the play of God. A selfless and transcendent perfection in the divine existence is the goal in this path of Yoga.

145

There are many Yogas, many spiritual disciplines, paths towards liberation and perfection, Godward ways of the spirit. Each has its separate aim, its peculiar approach to the One Reality, its separate method, its helpful philosophy and its practice. The integral Yoga takes up all of them in their essence and tries to arrive at a unification (in essence, not in detail) of all these aims, methods, approaches; it stands for an all-embracing philosophy and practice.

146

To enter into the entire consciousness of the Divine Reality with all our being and all parts and in every way of our being and to change all our now ignorant and limited nature into divine nature so that it shall become the instrument and expression of the

Divine Reality that in our self and essence we are, — this is the complete fulfilment of our existence and this is the integral Yoga.

To enter into the Divine either by the way of the thinking mind or by the way of the heart or by the way of the will in works or by a change of the psychological nature-stuff or a freeing of the vital force in the body is not enough; all this is not enough. Through all these together it must be done and by a change of our very sense and body consciousness even to the material inconscience which must become aware of the Divine and luminous with the Divine.

To be one with the Divine, to live in and with the Divine, to be of one nature with the Divine, this should be the aim of our Yoga.

147

The integral Yoga is so called because it aims at a harmonised totality of spiritual realisation and experience. Its aim is integral experience of the Divine Reality, what the Gita describes in the words *samagram mam*, "the whole Me" of the Divine Being. Its method is an integral opening of the whole consciousness, mind, heart, life, will, body to that Reality, to the Divine Existence, Consciousness, Beatitude, to its being and its integral transformation of the whole nature[.]

148

Our Yoga is the integral Yoga. Its object is the harmony of a total spiritual realisation and experience, a supreme consummation of the spirit and the nature.

149

This Yoga is called the integral Yoga, first because its object is integral covering the whole field of spiritual realisation and experience. It takes existence at its centre and in all its aspects and turns it into a harmony at once single and entire. It is the method of an integral God realisation, an integral self-realisation, an integral fulfilment of the being, an integral transformation and perfection of the nature[.]

150

What is the integral Yoga?

It is the way of a complete God-realisation, a complete Self-realisation, a complete fulfilment of our being and consciousness, a complete transformation of our nature — and this implies a complete perfection of life here and not only a return to an eternal perfection elsewhere.

This is the object, but in the method also there is the same integrality, for the entirety of the object cannot be accomplished without an entirety in the method, a complete turning, opening, self-giving of our being and nature in all its parts, ways, movements to that which we realise.

Our mind, will, heart, life, body, our outer and inner and inmost existence, our superconscious and subconscious as well as our conscious parts, must all be thus given, must all become a means, a field of this realisation and transformation and participate in the illumination and the change from a human into a divine consciousness and nature.

This is the character of the integral Yoga.

151

The integral Yoga is a single but many-sided way of the growth of our spirit and development of our nature. A total experience and a single and all embracing realisation of the integral Divine Reality is its consequence. There is too implied in it a radical change and transformation of the whole being and of every part of the nature. Our being is a nexus of the human mental-vital-physical nature of Ignorance, it is transmuted into a spiritual and supramental consciousness: it becomes a divine unity in a harmony of the infinite and universal and integrated will, love, bliss and knowledge.

The Infinite Reality presents itself to our limited consciousness in an infinity of aspects; different ways of Yoga try to realise one or other of these aspects. The integral Yoga takes all of them in its movement, but it limits itself to no aspect; its sole desire is to embrace the whole Divinity (samagram mam — Gita).

A highest aspect of the infinite Reality is the supracosmic Absolute, unthinkable, ineffable, without relation to the universe. There is a path of Yoga that [*sentence not completed*]

152

The heart of the integral Yoga is in a triple spiritual endeavour. It is a realisation of the Divine, of all the Divine by our whole being and through all the parts of our being. It includes a discovery and harmonisation, a unification of our total consciousness subliminal as well as supraliminal, the now superconscient and subconscient as well as the now conscient and its surrender to the Divine for a spiritual instrumentation here; it culminates in an evolution of this consciousness [*sentence not completed*]

The integral Yoga is integral by the totality or completeness of its aim, the completeness of its process and the completeness of the ground it covers in its process. This kind of integrality must by its nature be complex, manysided and intricate; only some main lines can be laid down in writing, for an excess of detail would confuse the picture.

The aim the Yoga puts before itself is in essence the same as the object of other Yogas — the realisation of the Divine. But it is not the Divine in one of its aspects, personal or impersonal, cosmic or transcendent, Self or Lord or [*sentence not completed*]

153

That Yoga is full or perfect which enables us to fulfil entirely God's purpose in us in this universe.

All Yoga which takes the soul entirely out of world-existence, is a high but narrow specialisation of divine tapasya.

God's purpose in us is that we should fulfil His divine being in world-consciousness under the conditions of the Lila.

With regard to the universe God manifests Himself triply, in the individual, in the universe, in that which transcends the universe.

In order to fulfil God in the individual, we must exceed the individual. The removal of limited ego and the possession of cosmic consciousness is the first aim of our sadhana.

In order to fulfil God in the cosmos, individually, we must transcend the universe. The ascension into transcendent consciousness is the second aim of our sadhana.

154

All Yoga aims at oneness or union or a close communion or contact with the Divine, infinite and eternal. To reach to this union or come by this contact it is necessary to enter or at least open into a greater consciousness than that of the human mental being who is shut up in the limitations of an individualised living body. To arrive wholly at the union or the constant communion one must enter the consciousness of the Divine, — whether into its infinite cosmic consciousness or that of its supracosmic eternity. Or else, uniting both these terms, one may add to them that of the individualised Divine in oneself and through this trinity arrive at a perfect union, one, satisfying and complete.

But the Divine Consciousness can manifest itself through any and every plane, on the mental, on the vital, on the physical, or on those which are higher than the mental[.]

155

All Yoga done through the mind alone or through the heart or the will or the vital force or the body ends in some one aspect of the infinite and eternal Existence and rests satisfied there, as the mind imagines for ever. Not through these alone shall thy Yoga move, but through all these at once and, supremely, through that which is beyond them. And the end of thy Yoga shall be the integrality of thy entrance not into one aspect, but into all the Infinite, all the Eternal, all the Divine in all its aspects indivisibly unified together.

Whatever is beyond mind and life and body is spirit. But spirit can be realised even on these lower levels, in the spiritualised mind, in the spiritualised life-force, even in the spiritualised physical consciousness and body. But if thou rise not up beyond the mind-level, then in these realisations the spirit must needs be modified by the medium through which thou attainest to it and its supreme truth can only be seized in a reflection, partial even in widest apparent universality, and the utmost essential integrality will escape thy seizure.

Rise rather into the supramental levels and then all the rest shall remain a part of thy experience, but wonderfully changed, transfigured by a supreme alchemy of consciousness into an element of the supramental glory. All that other Yogas can give thee, thou shalt have, but as an experience overpassed, put in its place in the divine Whole and delivered from the inadequacy of an exclusive state or experience.

The Supramental Yoga

156

All Yoga is in its very nature a means of passing out of our surface consciousness of limitation and ignorance into a larger and deeper Reality of ourselves and the world and some supreme or total Existence now veiled to us by this surface. There is a Reality which underlies everything, permeates perhaps everything, is perhaps everything but in quite another way than the world now seen by us; to It we are obscurely moving by our thought, life and actions; we attempt to understand and approach by our religion and philosophy, at last we touch directly in some partial or, it may be, some complete spiritual experience. It is that spiritual experience, it is the method, it is the attainment of this realisation that we call Yoga.

But the Reality is an Absolute or an Infinite; our consciousness, even our spiritualised consciousness is that of a finite being. It is inevitable therefore that our spiritual experience should be not that of a concrete integrality of this Absolute or Infinite, but of aspects of it; we are, so long at least as we are mental beings, the blind men of the story trying to tell what the Elephant Infinite is in its totality by our touch upon a part of it, some member of its spiritual body, tanum svam. One experiences it as Self or Spirit. It may be a Self of himself in which he finds his spiritual consummation, integrality, infinity, perfection. It may be a Self of the universe in which his individuality loses itself forever. It may be a Self transcendent in which the Ego disappears, but cosmos too is annulled forever in a formless Eternal and Infinite. Another may experience it as God; and God may be either the All of the Pantheist, a cosmic Spirit, an individual Deity, a supracosmic Creator; or all of these together. A Personal Godhead may be the spiritual Form in which He presents Himself to us or rather He may reject forms from his being [and] resolve Himself into an impersonal Existence. Moreover each of these aspects of the Reality can be variously experienced; for each suits itself to the grasp of our consciousness, even though it can be very apparent that it is the same Reality that these variations differently account for. But also there may [be] other realisations of the Reality such as the Zero of the Nihilistic Buddhists which is yet a mysterious All, a negation that is a positive Permanence. It is an error to take these variations as a proof that spiritual experience is unreliable. All religions, all philosophies are equally desperate in their attempts to give an account of the Real and Ultimate; science itself for all its matter of fact physical positivism draws back bewildered from the attempt to touch the Real and Ultimate. It is the nature of Mind to arrive at this result of uncertain certainty; our experience is true but it is not and cannot be the sole possible integral experience.

157

All human Yoga is done on the heights or levels of the mental nature; for man is a mental being in a living body. But mind if it is able to reflect some light of the divine Truth or even admit some emanations from her power, is incapable of embodying her.

There is an eternal dynamic Truth-consciousness beyond mind; this is what we call supermind or gnosis.

For mind is or can be a truth seeker, but not truth-conscious in its inherent nature; its original stuff is made not of knowledge, but of ignorance.

158

All Yoga has one supreme object; a permanent liberation from the ignorance and weakness of this limited and suffering human and earthly consciousness is its purpose and either an escape or a growth and swift flowering into a greater consciousness beyond mind, life and body, into a wider and diviner existence.

But this greater consciousness is differently conceived by different seekers, for in itself it is to the mind unseizably infinite. One, but multitudinously one, it presents itself in a million aspects. To some it appears as a great permanent Negative or a magnificent, a happy annihilation of all that we know as an existence. To others it is a featureless Absolute; the annihilation of personality and world-Nature is its key and silence and an ineffable peace its gate of our entrance. To others it is a Supreme, positive beyond all positives, an Existence, an absolute Consciousness, an illimitable Beatitude. To others it is the one Divine beyond all Divinities, an ineffable Person of whom all these three supreme things are the attributes. And so through an endless chapter. As is the power of our spirit and the cast of our nature, so we conceive of the one Eternal and Infinite.

This Eternal and Infinite, however we conceive it, is the one ultimate aim of Yoga. Other smaller aims there are that can be achieved by it and are pursued by many seekers; but these are crowns of the wayside or even flowers of the bye-paths and their pursuit for their own sake may lead us far aside or far away from our eternal home.

The object of supramental Yoga combines all the others, but uplifts and transforms the smaller aims into a part of the completeness of the one supreme object.

Not to lose oneself altogether in some ineffable featurelessness is its object, but to renounce ego for our true divine person one with the universal and infinite; not to abolish consciousness, but to exchange ignorance for a supreme and all-containing Knowledge, not to blot out joy but to renounce human pleasure for a divine griefless beatitude, not to give up but to transform all world-nature and world-existence into a power of the Truth of the Divine Existence. Asceticism is not the final condition or characteristic means of this Yoga, although it does not exclude, whenever that is needful ascetic self-mastery or ascetic endeavour.

To become one in our absolute being with the ineffable Divine and in the manifestation a free movement of his being, power, consciousness and self-realising joy, to grow into a divine Truth-consciousness beyond mind, into a Light beyond all human or earthly lights, into a Power to which the greatest strengths of men are a weakness, into the wisdom of an infallible gnosis and the mastery of an unerring and unfailing divinity of Will, into a Bliss beside which all human pleasure is as the broken reflection of a candle-flame to the all-pervading splendour of an imperishable sun, but all this not for our own sake [but] for the pleasure of the Divine Beloved, this is the goal and the crown of the supramental path of Yoga.

This change is a thing in Nature and not out of Nature; it is not only possible, but for the growing soul inevitable. It is the goal to which Nature in us walks through all this appearance of ignorance, error, suffering and weakness.

159

The supramental Yoga is at once an ascent of the soul towards God and a descent of the Godhead into the embodied nature.

The ascent demands a one-centred all-gathering aspiration of soul and mind and life and body upward, the descent a call of the whole being towards the infinite and eternal Divine. If this call and this aspiration are there and if they grow constantly and seize all the nature, then and then only its supramental transformation becomes possible.

There must be an opening and surrender of the whole nature to receive and enter into a greater divine consciousness which is there already above, behind and englobing this mortal half-conscious existence. There must be too an increasing capacity to bear an ever stronger and more insistent action of the divine Force, till the soul has become a child in the hands of the infinite Mother. All other means known to other Yoga can be used and are from time to time used as subordinate processes in this Yoga too, but they are impotent without these greater conditions, and, once these are there, they are not indispensable.

In the end it will be found that this Yoga cannot be carried through to its end by any effort of mind, life and body, any human psychological or physical process but only by the action of the supreme Shakti. But her way is at once too mysteriously direct and outwardly intricate, too great, too complete and subtle to be comprehensively followed, much more to be cut out and defined into a formula by our human intelligence.

Man cannot by his own effort make himself more than man, but he can call down the divine Truth and its power to work in him. A descent of the Divine Nature can alone divinise the human receptacle. Self-surrender to a supreme transmuting Power is the key-word of the Yoga.

This divinisation of the nature of which we speak is a metamorphosis, not a mere growth into some kind of superhumanity, but a change from the falsehood of our ignorant nature into the truth of God-nature. The mental or vital demigod, the Asura, Rakshasa and Pishacha, — Titan, vital giant and demon, — are superhuman in the pitch and force and movement and in the make of their characteristic nature, but these are not divine and those not supremely divine, for they live in a greater mind power or life power only, but they do not live in the supreme Truth, and only the supreme Truth is divine. Only those who live in a supreme Truth consciousness and embody it are inwardly made or else remade in the Divine image.

The aim of supramental Yoga is to change into this supreme Truth-consciousness, but this truth is something beyond mind and this consciousness is far above the highest mind-consciousness. For truth of mind is always relative, uncertain and partial, but this greater Truth is peremptory and whole. Truth of mind is a representation, always an inadequate, most often a misleading representation, and even when most accurate, only a reflection, Truth's shadow and not its body. Mind does not live in the Truth or possess but only seeks after it and grasps at best some threads from its robe; the supermind lives in Truth and [is] its native substance, form and expression; it has not to seek after it, but possesses it always automatically and is what it possesses. This is the very heart of the difference.

The change that is effected by the transition from mind to supermind is not only a revolution in knowledge or in our power for knowledge. If it is [to] be complete and stable, it must be a divine transmutation of our will too, our emotions, our sensations, all our power of life and its forces, in the end even of the very substance and functioning of our body. Then only can it be said that the supermind is there upon earth, rooted in its very earth-substance and embodied in a new race of divinised creatures.

Supermind at its highest reach is the divine Gnosis, the Wisdom-Power-Light-Bliss of God by which the Divine knows and upholds and governs and enjoys the universe[.]

160

The supramental Yoga is a path of integral seeking of the Divine by which all that we are is in the end liberated out of the Ignorance and its undivine formations into a truth beyond the Mind, a truth not only of highest spiritual status but of a dynamic spiritual self-manifestation in the universe.

The object of this Yoga is not to liberate the soul from Nature, but to liberate both soul and nature by sublimation into the Divine Consciousness from whom they came.

The aim of the ordinary Yoga is to liberate the soul from Nature or, perhaps sometimes, to liberate the soul in Nature.

Our aim is to liberate both soul and nature into the Divine. Our aim is to pass from the Ignorance into the Divine Light, from death into Immortality, from Desire into self-existent Bliss, from limited human-animal consciousness into all-consciousness and God-consciousness, from the ignorant seeking of Mind into the self-existent knowledge of Supermind, from obscure half animal life into luminous God-force, from the material consciousness [*sentence not completed*]

161

It is at the high line where the surrender can become absolute that a divine gnostic consciousness commences and the first authentic and unconditioned workings of the supramental Nature.

162

The first word of the supramental Yoga is surrender; its last word also is surrender. It is by a will to give oneself to the eternal Divine, for lifting into the divine consciousness, for perfection, for transformation, that the Yoga begins; it is in the entire giving that it culminates; for it is only when the self-giving is complete that there comes the finality of the Yoga, the entire taking up into the supramental Divine, the perfection of the being, the transformation of the nature.

The Yoga of Transformation

163

This is a Yoga of transformation of the being, not solely a Yoga of the attainment of the inner Self or the Divine, though that attainment is its basis without which no transformation is possible. In this transformation there are four elements, the psychic opening, the transit through [the] occult, the spiritual release, the supramental perfection. If any of the four is unachieved, the Yoga remains incomplete.

I mean by the psychic the inmost soul-being and the soul nature. This is not the sense in which the word is used in ordinary parlance, or rather, if it is so used, it is with great vagueness and much misprision of the true nature of this soul and it is given a wide extension of meaning which carries it far beyond that province. All phenomena of an abnormal or supernormal psychological or an occult character are dubbed psychic; if a man has a double personality changing from one to another, if an apparition of a dying man, something of his mere vital sheath or else a thought-form of him, appears and stalks through the room of his wondering friend, if a poltergeist kicks up an unseemly row in a house, all that is classed under psychic phenomena and regarded as a fit object for psychic research, though these things have nothing whatever to do with the psyche. Again much in Yoga itself that is merely occult, phenomena of the unseen vital or mental or subtle physical planes, visions, symbols, all that mixed, often perturbed, often shadowy, often illusory range of experiences which belong to this intervening country between the soul and its superficial instruments or rather to its outermost fringes, all the chaos of the intermediate zone, is summed up as psychic and considered as an inferior and dubious province of spiritual discovery. Again there is a constant confusion between the mentalised desire-soul which is a creation of the vital urge in man, of his life-force seeking for its fulfilment and the true soul which is a spark of the Divine Fire, a portion of the Divine. Because the soul, the psychic being uses the mind and the vital as well as the body as instruments for growth and experience it is itself looked at as if it were some amalgam or some subtle substratum of mind and life. But in Yoga if we accept all this chaotic mass as soul-stuff or soul-movement we shall enter into a confusion without an issue. All that belongs only to the coverings of the soul; the soul itself is an inner divinity greater than mind or life or body. It is something that once it is released from obscuration by its instruments at once creates a direct contact with the Divine and with the self and spirit.

164

In the integral Yoga there is a progressive discovery of our spiritual status; this progression is accompanied by a dynamic new-creation of our nature. A triple transformation is its process and the revelation of its entire significance.

A first discovery is the unveiling of the soul out of its disguising mask, concealing curtain, blockading wall of mind, life and body — the psychic entity, the divine element in our nature which gives it its permanence and immortality, becomes the open ruler of our instruments and transmutes them into conscious spiritualised agents so that they are no longer a changing formulation of the nature of the Ignorance.

165

Yoga is not only a discovery of our concealed spiritual status but a dynamic spiritual self-creation; a triple transformation is the heart of its process and the revelation of its entire significance.

Its first step is the unveiling of the soul;[1] for there [is a] secret psychic being, a divine element in our depths that is concealed even more than garbed by the mind, body and life. To bring it out of its seclusion where it lives like a spiritual king without apparent power served and replaced by its ministers, so that it may take over the whole active government of the nature is the first great unfolding, the initial potent self-discovery of the Yoga. Mind the thinker is the prime minister in us who covers the king, but mind too is dominated and led by the vital powers, the strong and violent of the realm, who force it to serve their purpose and these too can only act with the means given them by the body and physical nature, the inert hardly conscious subject existence whose passive assent and docile instrumentation is yet indispensable to its rulers. This is our present constitution and it amounts to no more than a sort of organised confusion, a feudal order that is an ignorant half anarchy and cannot make the most of the possibilities and resources even of the limited tract of nature which we inhabit, much less reveal to us and exploit our spiritual empire. To reinstate the king-soul is the first step in a needed revolution — the soul directing the mind will exercise through it its sovereign power over the powers of life and subject to them in their turn an enlightened and psychically consenting body. But this is not all; for soul-discovery is not complete without a psychic new creation of the mental, vital and physical instrumentation of nature. The mind will be recast by the soul's intuition of Truth, the vital being by its perception of power and good, the body and whole nature by its command for light, harmony and beauty. Our nature will become that of a true psychic entity, not a brute creation unified by a precarious life and illumined by the candlelight of a struggling intelligence.

---

[1] *Reproduced below is another, incomplete version of this passage:*

Its first step is the unveiling of the soul, the psychic entity, now covered by the superficial activity of mind and life and body. The soul is the deep hidden natural divine element in us, a permanent portion of the Godhead which persists in a spiritual permanence and ensures our immortality of being; for without it there could be only a temporary mechanical formation and action of nature-energy and its phenomenon of substance. This unveiling is accompanied by a psychic transformation of the nature; mind, life and body become truly ensouled and ready for a spiritual change.

Its second step is the revelation of a self and spirit which supports our individual soul manifestation and soul development, but knows itself to be one being with cosmic Godhead and universal Nature and can stand back from that even as a transcendent spirit. By this discovery the being in us exceeds its separate individuality, enters into a cosmic consciousness, is released into a supracosmic transcendence.

166

I mean by the integral Yoga a manysided way or means of self-liberation and self-perfection, a radical change of our entire being by which we grow out of its present mental, vital and physical human ignorance into a large and integral spiritual and divine Consciousness; — as a result of this liberation, this change or transformation there is a union in the spirit with our Divine Origin in its integral Reality, an ascent of all our being and nature into the Divine Existence, the Divine Consciousness, the Divine Bliss or Ananda, and a descent of the Divine infinite Wideness, Light, Knowledge, Force, Joy, Ananda into our entire nature.

167

Our Yoga is a Yoga of transformation, but a transformation of the whole consciousness and the whole nature from the top to the bottom, from its hidden inward parts to its most tangible external movements. It is neither an ethical change nor a religious conversion, neither sainthood nor ascetic control, neither a sublimation nor a suppression of the life and vital movements that we envisage, nor is it either a glorification or a coercive control or rejection of the physical existence. What is envisaged is a change from a lesser to a greater, from a lower to a higher, from a surface to a deeper consciousness — indeed to the largest, highest, deepest possible and a total change and revolution of the whole being in its stuff and mass and every detail into that yet unrealised diviner nature of existence. It means a bringing forward of what is now hidden and subliminal, a growing conscious in what is now superconscient to us, an illumination of the subconscient and subphysical. It implies a substitution of the control of the nature by the soul for its present control by the mind; a transference of the instrumentation of the nature from the outer to the now more than half-veiled inner mind, from the outer to the inner vital or life-self, from the outer to an inner subtler vaster physical consciousness and by this transference a direct and conscious instead of an indirect and unconscious or half conscious contact with the secret cosmic forces that move us; a breaking out from the narrow limited individual into a wide cosmic consciousness; an ascension from mental to spiritual nature; a still farther ascension from the spirit in mind or overspreading mind to the supramental spirit and a descent of that into the embodied being. All that has not only to be achieved but organised before the transformation is complete.

168

The ascent to supermanhood will be a radical change of consciousness, force and bliss-power, a potent building of all that is necessary to manifest the new godhead in mind, life and body. There will be at once an inner revelation and an outer transformation. Something will be born that was not here or was latent and hidden in its own invisible radiances and at the same time there will be a metamorphosis and reversal in our existing structure.

A creation by a consensus of superior and nether powers is the condition demanded by the Spirit for its decisive works; and this double action, this meeting, consensus, unification of the superconscient and subconscient gods in a growing consciousness is the key to the critical revolutions of Nature.

The creation of conscious supermind on the terrestrial plane will be done therefore not only from above by the Spirit but from below by the Earth-Power. The sun of supramental Truth will descend into the body, but also it will awake another secret sun of supramental Truth that was asleep in the foundations and very principle of Matter.

169

The boon that we have asked from the Supreme is the greatest that the earth can ask from the Highest, the change that is most difficult to realise, the most exacting in its conditions. It is nothing less than the descent of the supreme Truth and Power into Matter, the supramental established in the material plane and consciousness and the material world and an integral transformation down to the very principle of Matter. Only a supreme Grace can effect this miracle.

The supreme Power has descended into the most material consciousness but it has stood there behind the density of the physical veil demanding before manifestation, before its great open workings can begin, that the conditions of the supreme Grace shall be there, real and effective. And the first condition is that the Truth shall be accepted within you entirely and without reserve before it can be manifested in the material being and Nature.

A total surrender, an exclusive self-opening to the divine influence, a constant and integral choice of the Truth and rejection of the falsehood, these are the only conditions made. But these must be fulfilled entirely, without reserve, without any evasion or pretence, simply and sincerely down to the most physical consciousness and its workings[.]

170

Victory in this effort depends upon the sincerity within you, the purity of your aspiration, the burning core of your faith, the absoluteness of your will and surrender[.]

171

Two things are needed if thou wouldst follow the steep and difficult way of Yoga, the need and will within thee and the call of the Spirit.

The need is the need of the soul, awakened or awaking or striving to come to the surface. For all other may be transitory or false; but the soul's need is lasting and true.

Thy soul's need of divine light and the spirit's perfection can alone bear thee across the darkness of the many nights through which thou must pass, beyond the open or hidden pitfalls of the road, past the dangers of the precipice and the morass, through the battle with giant forces and the clutching of hands that mislead and the delusions of the night and the twilight, through false light and illusive glamour, triumphant over the blows and ordeals and nets and temptations of the gods and on and up to the immeasurable summits[.]

Part Three

Notes and Fragments on Various Subjects

The pieces collected in this part were written by Sri Aurobindo at different times and for various purposes. They have been arranged by the editors by subject in five sections.

Section One

The Human Being in Time

The Marbles of Time

Institutions, empires, civilisations are the marbles of Time. Time, sitting in his banqueting hall of the Ages, where prophets and kings are the spice of his banquet, drinking the red wine of life and death, while on the marble floor at his feet are strewn like flowers the images of the same stars that shone on the pride of Nahusha, the tapasya of Dhruv and the splendours of Yayati, that saw Tiglath-Pileser, Sennacherib and the Egyptian Pharaohs, Pompey's head hewn off on the sands of Egypt and Caesar bleeding at Pompey's sculptured feet, Napoleon's mighty legions thundering victorious at the bidding of that god of war on the field of Austerlitz and Napoleon's panic legions fleeing disordered with pursuit and butchery behind them from that last field of Waterloo, — Time, the Kala Purusha, drunk with the fumes of death and the tears and laughter of mortals, sits and plays there with his marbles. There are marbles there of all kinds, marbles of all colours, and some are dull and grey, some glorious with hearts of many colours, some white and pure as a dove's wings, — but he plays with them all equally and equally he thrusts them all away when he has done with them. Sometimes even, in his drunkenness, he hurls them out of his window or lifts his mace and deals blows here and there smashing into fragments the bright and brittle globes, and he laughs as they smash and crumble. So Time, the god, sits and plays for ever with his marbles.

A Theory of the Human Being

It is a superstition of modern thought that the march of knowledge has in all its parts progressed always in a line of forward progress deviating from it, no doubt, in certain periods of obscuration, but always returning and in the sum constituting everywhere an advance and nowhere a retrogression. Like all superstitions this belief is founded on bad and imperfect observation flowering into a logical fallacy. Our observation is necessarily imperfect because we have at our disposal the historical data and literary records of only a few millenniums and beyond only disjected and insufficient indices which leave gigantic room for the hardly-fettered activity of the mind's two chief helpers and misleaders, inference and conjecture. Our observation is bad because, prepossessed by the fixed idea of a brief & recent emergence from immemorial barbarism, imagining Plato to have blossomed in a few centuries out of a stock only a little more advanced than the South Sea islander, we refuse to seek in the records that still remain of a lost superior knowledge their natural and coherent significance; we twist them rather into the image of our own thoughts or confine them within the still narrow limits of what we ourselves know and understand. The logical fallacy we land in as the goal of our bad observation is the erroneous conception that because we are more advanced than certain ancient peoples in our own especial lines of success, as the physical sciences, therefore necessarily we are also more advanced in other lines where we are still infants and have only recently begun to observe and experiment, as the science of psychology and the knowledge of our subjective existence and of mental forces. Hence we have developed the exact contrary of the old superstition that the movement of man is always backward to retrogression. While our forefathers believed that the more ancient might on the whole be trusted as more authoritative, because nearer to the gods, and the less ancient less authoritative because nearer to man's ultimate degeneracy, we believe on the contrary that the more ancient is always on the whole more untrue because nearer to the unlettered and unenquiring savage, the more modern the more true because held as opinion by the lettered and instructed citizen of Paris or Berlin. Neither position can be accepted. Verification by experience & experiment is the only standard of truth, not antiquity, not modernity. Some of the ideas of the ancients or even of the savage now scouted by us may be lost truths or statements of valid experience from which we have turned or become oblivious; many of the notions of the modern schoolmen will certainly in the future be scouted as erroneous and superstitious.

Among the ancient documents held by the ancients to be deep mines of profound and fertile truth but to us forgetful and blind of their meaning the Veda & Upanishads rank among the very highest.

A Cyclical Theory of Evolution

[.....] Driven from all other fields by a perception of the slow and aeonic processes of Nature, the mushroom theory of existence took refuge in this ill-explored corner of scientific theory. Thence, although later discoveries have had an enlarging effect, it still hampers the growth of more thoughtful generalisations. The time-limit allowed for the growth of civilisation is still impossibly short and in consequence an air of unreality hangs over the application of the evolutionary idea to our human development. Nor is this essential objection cured by any evidence of the modernity of human civilisation. Its great antiquity is denied merely on the absence [of] affirmative data; there are no positive indications to support the denial; but where data are scanty, such a negative basis is in the last degree unsound and precarious. We can no longer argue that no ancient civilisations can have existed of which the traces have entirely perished and that prehistoric means, necessarily, savage and undeveloped. History on the contrary abounds with instances of great societies which were within an ace of disappearing without leaving any visible memorial behind them and recent excavations have shown that such disappearances in ancient times have been even not uncommon. We cannot have exhausted all that the earth contains. There should be the remains of other civilisations yet undiscovered & there may well have been yet others which because of the manner of their disappearance or for other causes have left no traces at all whether upon the surface of the earth or under it. Indeed with regard to no object or previous existence, no silent or imperfectly documented [?scene], is it safe to argue that because there are no traces or sufficient evidence of it, therefore it never existed. Yet in many fields of generalisation modern scholarship has used substantially this argument with a prodigal freedom. It is at least possible that mighty cities and noble civilisations filled with their rumour the now silent spaces of Time for countless millenniums before Egypt and Assyria rose into their historic greatness.

Brief lapse of time is not indeed the cardinal point of the savage theory and even if larger time-spaces are allowed, the theory itself need not fall. But I have urged the question of time as of primary moment not for the overthrow of the modern explanation but for the readmission of another and more ancient synthesis. For if once we allow the existence of prehistoric civilisations older, it would seem, than the Egyptian, — such as may be argued from the deep-buried cities of Asia, — and the presence in an unknown antiquity of great national cultures where now the savage or the semi-savage swarm uncreative and unreflecting, — such as may be argued from the ruins of Mashonaland or the state of mediaeval Barbary after the ravages of Moor and Vandal or even the fate which overtook for almost a millennium the magnificent structure of Graeco-Roman culture and threatened even to blot out its remnants and ruins, — the question then arises, what was the nature of these forgotten civilisations and how was the relapse to barbarism often of an extreme form, so completely effected. These gigantic spaces of time, this worldwide rise and fall of human society, this swaying to and fro from darkness to light and light to darkness leave the ground open for another explanation which is in some respects the reverse of the savage theory, — for the Hindu explanation.

For the Hindu mind has never admitted the principle in Nature of progress in a straight line. Progress in a straight line only appears to occur and so appears only because we concentrate our scrutiny on limited sections of the curve that Nature is following. But if we stand away from this too near and detailed scrutiny and look at the world in its large masses, we perceive that its journeying forward has no straightness in it of any kind but is rather effected in a series of cycles of which the net result is progress. The image of this apparent straight line is that of the ship which seems to its crew to be journeying on the even plain of the waters but is really describing the curve of the earth in a way perceptible only to a more distant and instructed vision. Moreover even the small section of the curve which we are examining & which to our limited vision seems to be a straight line is the result of a series of zigzags and is caused by the conflict of forces arriving by a continual struggle at a continual compromise or working out by their prolonged discord a temporary harmony. The image of the actual progress in cycles is the voyaging in Space of the planets which describe always the same curve round their flaming & luminous sun, image of the perfect strength, joy, beauty, beneficence and knowledge towards which our evolution yearns. The cycle is always the same ellipse, yet by the simultaneous movement of the whole system the completed round finds the planet at a more advanced station in Space than its preceding journey. It is in this way, by an ever-swaying battle, a prodigal destruction and construction, a labouring forward in ever-progressing curves and ellipses that Nature advances to her secret consummation.

These are the conceptions we find expressed in the Puranic symbols familiar to our imagination. There is the Kalpa of a thousand ages with its term of fourteen Manwantaras dividing a sub-cycle of a hundred chaturyugas; there is the dharma, the well-harmonised law of being, perfect in the golden period of the Satya, impaired progressively in bronze Treta and copper Dwapara, collapsing in the iron Kali only to open the way by its disintegration to the manifestation in the next Satya of the old law, truth or natural principle of existence arranged in a new harmony. There is throughout this zigzag, this rhythm of rise and fall and rise again brought about by the struggle of upward, downward and stationary forces. There are the alternate triumphs of deva and daitya, helping god and opposing or too violently forward-striving Titan; — the dharmasya glani and abhyutthanam adharmasya, when harmony is denied and discord or wrong harmony established, and then the Avatara and the dharmasya sansthapanam, eternal Light and Force descending, restoring, effecting a new temporary adjustment of the world's ways to the truth of things and of man.

Translated into more modern but not necessarily more accurate language these symbols point us to a world history not full of the continual, ideal, straightforward victory of good and truth, not progress conceived as the Europeans conceive it, a continual joyous gallop through new & ever new changes to an increasing perfection, but rather of the alternately triumphant forces of progress and regression, a toiling forward and a sliding backward, — the continual revolution of human nature upon itself which yet undoubtedly has but conceals & seems not to have its secret of definite aim and ultimate exultant victory. In certain respects the old Vedantic thinkers anticipate us; they agree with all that is essential in our modern ideas of evolution. From one side all forms of creatures are developed; some kind of physical evolution from the animal to the human body is admitted in the Aitareya. The Taittiriya suggests the psychological progress of man, and the psychological progress of race cannot be different in principle from the evolution of the individual — a proceeding from the material, the emotionally and mentally inert man upwards [?through] the mental to [?our] spiritual fulfilment. The Puranas admit the creation of animal forms before the appearance of man and in the symbol of the Ten Avatars trace the growth of our evolution from the fish through the animal, the man-animal and the developed human being to the different stages of our present incomplete evolution. But the ancient Hindu, it is clear, envisaged this progression as an enormous secular movement covering more ages than we can easily count. He believed that Nature has repeated it over & over again, as indeed it is probable that she has done, resuming briefly & in sum at each start what she had previously accomplished in detail, slowly & with labour. It is this great secular movement in cycles, perpetually self-repeating, yet perpetually progressing, which is imaged and set forth for us in the symbols of the Puranas. It is for this reason that he assigned to his civilisation those immense eras and those ancient and far backward beginnings which strike the modern as so incredible. He may have erred; recent discoveries & indications are increasingly tending to convince us that nineteenth century scholarship has erred equally in the opposite direction.

Translated again into modern language the Hindu idea of the chaturyuga, four Ages, with all the attendant Puranic circumstances persists as the tradition of a period just such as has been postulated, a period of natural and perfect poise in his knowledge, action and temper between man and his environment. The ideas, the knowledge, the temper, the spirit of this great epoch of civilisation, — but not its institutions or practices — is preserved for us in the Veda and Vedanta, and all existing human societies, civilised or barbarous, go back for the origins of their thought, character & effort to the general type of humanity that was then formed.

Section Two

The East and the West

A Misunderstanding of Continents

The peculiar and striking opposition of thought, temperament, culture and manners between Asia and Europe has been a commonplace of observation and criticism since the times when Herodotus noted in his history the objection of both men and women to be seen naked as a curious and amusing trait of Asiatic barbarism. Much water has flown under the bridges since Herodotus wrote and in this respect Asia seems not only to have infected Europe with this "barbaric" trait of manners, but to have been far outstripped by her pupil in the development of sartorial superfluities. Excessive wealth and gorgeous splendour was also quoted as a characteristic of Asiatic barbarism from the time of the classical poets. Europe has seen to it that this charge shall only apply now in a very minimum quantity to the eastern continent. Asia now stands, not only by choice of her ascetics, but by economic compulsion for the simple life, and the ostentation of wealth which was once depreciated as a sign of oriental barbarism now parades itself, much vulgarised, at least to our barbaric eastern notion of aesthetics as the splendid face of occidental civilisation. But if circumstances have changed, the essential opposition abides; East is still East in its soul and West is still West and the misunderstanding of continents still flourishes, not only in the minds of politicians and "statesmen", — where one would naturally expect to find it, since it is there that vulgar prejudices, half-truths, whole untruths and unintelligent commonplaces assume their most solemn and sententious form, coin themselves into glittering phrases or flow in rhetorical periods, — but in the minds too of critics, poets and leading intellectuals. Faced with this continued misunderstanding, one is obliged to ask whether it is really incurable, an antinomy on which Nature is resolved to insist until the end of this cycle.

Some of us, temerarious idealists, have thought that the misconception, the want of understanding is not only curable, but that to cure it as soon as may be is essential to the future interests of humanity. For my part I hold that all antinomies and opposed powers in this world of contradictions would be much better for an attempt to understand each other's souls and find their meeting point, would find something helpful not only to tone down their own exaggerations, but to fill in and round themselves without losing what is essential to their own spirit. Recently there has been a distinct widening in many minds, a nearer approach to understanding, almost to fusion. A little while ago in the first lyrical enthusiasm of the war and its "sacred unions" one imagined that a decisive step had been taken and the peoples themselves would now be ready for sympathy and understanding. But it seems it is not quite so yet[.]

Towards Unification

The progress of distance-bridging inventions, our modern facility for the multiplication of books and their copies and the increase of human curiosity are rapidly converting humanity into a single intellectual unit with a common fund of knowledge and ideas and a unified culture. The process is far from complete, but the broad lines of the plan laid down by the great Artificer of things already begin to appear. For a time this unification was applied to Europe only. Asia had its own triune civilisation, predominatingly spiritual, complex and meditative in India, predominatingly vital, emotional, active and simplistic in the regions of the Hindu Kush and Mesopotamia, predominatingly intellectual, mechanical and organised in the Mongolian empires. East, West and South had their widely separate spirit and traditions, but one basis of spirituality, common tendencies and such commerce of art, ideas and information as the difficulties of communication allowed, preserved the fundamental unity of Asia. East & West only met at their portals, in war oftener than in peace and through that shock and contact influenced but did not mingle with each other. It was the discovery of Indian philosophy and poetry which broke down the barrier. For the first time Europe discovered something in the East which she could study not only with the curiosity which she gave to Semitic and Mongolian ideas and origins, but with sympathy and even with some feeling of identity. This metaphysics, these epics and dramas, this formulated jurisprudence and complex society had methods and a form which, in spite of their diversity from her own, yet presented strong points of contact; she could recognise them, to a certain extent she thought she could understand. The speculativeness of the German, the lucidity of the Gaul, the imagination and aesthetic emotionalism of the British Celt found something to interest them, something even to assist. In the teachings of Buddha, the speculation of Shankara, the poetry of Kalidasa their souls could find pasture and refreshment. The alien form and spirit of Japanese and Arabian poetry and of Chinese philosophy which prevented such an approximation with the rest of Asia, was not here to interfere with the comprehension of the human soul & substance. There was indeed a single exception which remarkably illustrates the difficulty of which I speak. The art of India contradicted European notions too vitally to be admitted into the European consciousness; its charm and power were concealed by the uncouthness to Western eyes of its form and the strangeness of its motives and it is only now, after the greatest of living art-critics in England had published sympathetic appreciations of Indian art and energetic propagandists like Mr. Havell had persevered in their labour, that the European vision is opening to the secret of Indian painting & sculpture. But the art of Japan presented certain outward characteristics on which the European could readily seize. Japanese painting had already begun to make its way into Europe even before the victories of Japan and its acceptance of much of the outward circumstances of European civilisation opened a broad door into Europe for all in Japan that Europe can receive without unease or the feeling of an incompatible strangeness. Japanese painting, Japanese dress, Japanese decoration are not only accepted as a part of Western life by the select few and the cultured classes but known and allowed, without being adopted, by the millions. Asiatic civilisation has entered into Europe as definitely though not so victoriously as European civilisation into Asia. It is only the beginning, but so was it only the beginning when a few scholars alone rejoiced in the clarity of Buddhistic Nihilism, Schopenhauer rested his soul on the Upanishads and Emerson steeped himself in the Gita. No one could have imagined then that a Hindu monk would make converts in London and Chicago or that a Vedantic temple would be built in San Francisco and Anglo-Saxon Islamites erect a Musulman mosque in Liverpool. It appears from a recent inquiry that the only reading, omitting works of fiction, which commands wide and general interest among public library readers is either scientific works or books replete with Asiatic mysticism. How significant is this fact when we remember that these are the two powers, Europe & Asia, the victorious intellect and the insurgent spirit, which are rising at this moment to do battle for the mastery of the unified world. Nevertheless it is not the public library reader, that man in the street of the literary world, but the increasing circle of men of culture and a various curiosity through whom the Orient & the Occident must first meet in a common humanity and the day dawn when some knowledge of the substance of [the] Upanishads will be as necessary to an universal culture as a knowledge of the substance of the Bible, Shankara's theories as familiar as the speculations of Teutonic thinkers and Kalidasa, Valmekie & Vyasa as near and common to the subject matter of the European critical intellect as Dante or Homer.

It is the difficulties of presentation that prevent a more rapid and complete commingling.

China, Japan and India

It is significant of the tendencies of the twentieth century that all its great and typical events should have occurred no longer as in the last few centuries in Europe, but in Asia. The Russo-Japanese war, the Chinese Revolution, the constitutional changes in Turkey & Persia and last but most momentous the revival however indeterminate as yet of the soul of India, are the really significant events of the young century. In Europe except in its one Asiatic corner there has been no event of corresponding magnitude & importance. The abortive orgy of revolutionary fury in Russia, the growth of enormous strikes, the failure of the peace movement, the increase of legislation stamped with the pressure of a materialistic Socialism, although they may hold in themselves germs of greater things, are so far mere indistinct material symptoms of disorganisation & a disease vainly doctored with palliatives, not events of a definite movement of new birth & regeneration. The importance of this new tendency lies in the fact that great events in Europe, even when they are outwardly spiritual, have usually an intellectual or social trend & significance, but great events in Asia have even when they are outwardly intellectual, social or political a spiritual significance. Therefore when Asia once more becomes the theatre of the world's chief events, it is a sure sign that some great spiritual revolution, perhaps a great age of spirituality is preparing for humanity.

Section Three

India

Renascent India

Everybody can feel, even without any need of a special sense for the hidden forces and tendencies concealed in the apparent march of things, for the signs are already apparent, that India is on the verge, in some directions already in the first movements of a great renascence, more momentous, more instinct with great changes and results, than anything that has gone before it. Every new awakening of the kind comes by some impact slight or great on the national consciousness which puts it in face of new ideas, new conditions, new needs, the necessity of readaptation to a changing environment. The spirit of the nation has to take account of its powers and possibilities and is stirred by a will to new formation and new creation. The change does not always amount to a renascence. But the impact in which we live at the present hour is nothing less than that of a new world. It is not merely the pressure of the whole Western civilisation upon the ancient spirit of the East or of modernism on a great traditional civilisation, but it is a great worldwide change, an approaching new birth of mankind itself of which the change in us is only a part. Therefore the result that we are face to face with, is a renascence, the birth of the Spirit into a new body, new forms in society and politics, new forms of literature, art, science, philosophy, action and creation of all kinds. And the question arises what in the great play of modification and interchange around us are we going to take from the world around us, how are we going to shape [it] in the stress of our own spirit and past traditions, and what are we going to bring out of ourselves and impress upon the world in exchange? In what new forms is the spirit of India going to embody itself and what relations will its new creations have with the future of the world?

Where We Stand in Literature

[Draft A]

Where we stand, not only in literature, but in all things, is at or near a great turning point in which the thoughts and forms of East and West, both in an immense ferment of change, are working upon each other to produce something great, unforeseeable and unprecedented. From the less worldwide viewpoint which most nearly concerns us in this country, we may say, that we find ourselves in a great hour of rebirth of the ancient soul of India. The momentous issues of this hour are producing their inevitable upheaval, change and effort at creation in the whole national life, politics, society, economical conditions, industry, commerce, as well as and more noisily than in literature. But it is perhaps in art, literature and science that the future will see what was most definitive in the creations of the present hour, the most significant thing in the Indian renascence; for these things reveal most freely the spirit which is coming to birth; they have found their field, discovered their motive; the rest is still only a primary effort to escape out of unnatural conditions; the field has there yet to be made clear, before the struggling spiritual motive can make itself dominant and create its appropriate forms. Especially, is the movement of literature most revelatory; for while music and art reveal perhaps more absolutely the soul of a nation, literature is the whole expression of its mind and psychology, — not only of what it is in action, or what it is in essence, but its thought, character and aspiration.

[Draft B]

In literature, as in all else, we stand in India at the opening of a new age, in an hour of national rebirth and in the midst of a number of tendencies, possibilities, movements of which only a few have as yet formed for themselves distinct shapes, plainly decipherable signs. It is an hour not yet of accomplishment, but of travail and inception. What will be born of this dim travail, these shapeless or half-shaped beginnings, is no doubt already decided in the secret spirit of the age and in the subconscient mind of the people. Behind the waverings and strivings of our twilit surface minds the soul of India knows no doubt what it intends and is moving us to great fulfilments. But it is well also for us to ponder and inquire what it is the national soul and the soul of humanity demand from us and on what paths we are most likely to give our energies and efforts the maximum power and serviceableness to the great age of mankind and of India on which we are entering. For at such a moment there are usually many false starts and many misdirected aims and by seeing our way and our goal more clearly we may better be able to avoid the waste of energy, talent and even genius to which they give rise.

Section Four

Genius, Poetry, Beauty

The Origin of Genius

When the human being puts forth a force in himself which is considerable but acts normally, we call it talent; when it is abnormal in its working we call it genius. It would seem, therefore, that genius is in reality some imperfect step in evolution by which mankind in its most vigorous and forward individuals is attempting to develop a faculty which the race as a whole is not strong enough as yet to command or to acclimatise. As always happens in such a movement, there is a considerable irregularity in the working of the new phenomenon. Sometimes Nature seems to prepare by heredity for these its new experiments & fine flowers of humanity[.]

Poetic Genius

The greatest poets are usually those who arise either out of a large simple and puissant environment or out of a movement of mind that is grandiose, forceful & elemental. When man becomes excessively refined in intellect, curious in aesthetic sensibility or minute & exact in intellectual reasoning, it becomes more & more difficult to write great and powerful poetry. Ages of accomplished intellectuality & scholarship or of strong scientific rationality are not favourable to the birth of great poets or, if they are born, not favourable to the free & untrammelled action of their gifts. They remain great, but their greatness bends under a load; there is a lack of triumphant spontaneity and they do not draw as freely or directly from the sources of human action & character. An untameable elemental force is needed to overcome more than partially the denials of the environment. For poetry, even though it appeals in passing to the intellect & aesthetic sense, does not proceed from them but is in its nature an elemental power proceeding from the secret & elemental Power within which sees directly & creates sovereignly, & it passes at once to our vital & elemental parts. Intellect and the aesthetic faculties are necessary to the perfection of our critical enjoyment; but they were only assistants, not the direct agents of this divine birth.

The Voices of the Poets

Out of the infinite silence of the past, peopled only to the eye of history or the ear of the Yogin, a few voices arise which speak for it, express it and are the very utterance and soul of those unknown generations, of that vanished and now silent humanity. These are the voices of the poets. We whose souls are drying up in this hard and parched age of utilitarian and scientific thought when men value little beyond what gives them exact and useful knowledge or leads them to some outward increase of power & pleasure, we who are beginning to neglect & ignore poetry and can no longer write it greatly & well, — just as we have forgotten how to sculpture like the Greeks, paint like the mediaeval Italians or build like the Buddhists, — are apt to forget this grand utility of the poets, one noble faculty among their many divine and unusual powers. The kavi or vates, poet & seer, is not the manishi; he is not [the] logical thinker, scientific analyser or metaphysical reasoner; his knowledge is one not with his thought, but with his being; he has not arrived at it but has it in himself by virtue of his power to become one with all that is around him. By some form of spiritual, vital and emotional oneness, he is what he sees; he is the hero thundering in the forefront of the battle, the mother weeping over her dead, the tree trembling violently in the storm, the flower warmly penetrated with the sunshine. And because he is these things, therefore he knows them; because he knows thus, spiritually & not rationally, he can write of them. He feels their delight & pain, he shares their virtue & sin, he enjoys their reward or bears their punishment. It is for this reason that poetry written out of the intellect is so inferior to poetry written out of the soul, is, — even as poetical thinking, — so inferior to the thought that comes formed by inscrutable means out of the soul. For this reason, too, poets of otherwise great faculty, have failed to give us living men and women or really to show to our inner vision even the things of which they write eloquently or sweetly, because they are content to write about them after having seen them with the mind only, and have not been able or have not taken care first to be the things of which they would write and then not so much write about them as let them pour themselves out in speech that is an image of the soul. They have been too easily attracted by the materials of poetry, artha & shabda; drawn by some power & charm in the substance of speech, captivated by some melody, harmony or colour in the form of speech, arrested by some strong personal emotion which clutches at expression or gropes for expression in these externals of poetry they have forgotten to bathe in the Muse's deepest springs.

Therefore among those ancient voices, even when the literature of the ages has been winnowed & chosen by Time, there are very few who recreate for us in poetic speech deeply & mightily the dead past, because they were that past, not so much themselves as the age & nation in which they lived and not so much even the age and nation as that universal humanity which in spite of all differences, under them and within them, even expressing its unity through them is the same in every nation and in every age. Others give us only fragments of thought or outbursts of feeling or reveal to us scattered incidents of sight, sound and outward happening. These are complete, vast, multitudinous, infinite in a way, impersonal & many-personed in their very personality, not divine workmen merely but true creators endowed by God with something of His divine power and offering therefore in their works some image of His creative activity.

Pensées

God has a personality but no character; He is as we say in our Eastern thought, Anantaguna, of an infinite variation of qualities without fixed limitation or rigid distinction and incompatibility. His superhuman cruelty melts into and harmonises with His ineffable pity; His fierce enmity is one mask of His intensest love. For, being alone existent, He is irresponsible and the harmonies He creates, are the figment of His own plastic will and governed by laws of aesthetics determined in His own unfettered but infallible fantasy. Out of His infinite personality He creates all these characters & their inevitable actions & destinies. So it is with every divine creator, — with Homer, Shakespeare, Valmiki, Kalidasa. It is perfectly true that each has his own style of language & creation, his own preferred system or harmony of the poetic Art, just as the creator of this universe has fashioned it in a particular style & rhythm & on certain preferred & fixed canons, differing from that of the other universes He may have built in His infinite Being. But within that style & harmony they are not bound by any fixed personality. It is rather the infinite they express though through their personality, than their personality through their works. The writers who are limited by their personality may be among the fine artists of literature; they cannot be among the greatest creators; for to the creator freedom & infinity are necessary attributes. It is the infinite alone that can create; the finite can only manufacture, reproduce or at the most bring out a fine art & craftsmanship. Among all the Elizabethan dramatists Shakespeare alone has produced living men; the rest are only admirable, trivial or monstrous sketches, caricatures or images of men. There is, however, one exception to this rule; every man can at his best moments cast out, create in some way or another — for in our Indian languages the word for creating is casting out, letting free out of one's own being — one living creature & character, — himself. Milton has produced several bold & beautiful or fine outlines or descriptions, but only one living being, the rebel Archangel Satan, and only so in the first four books of Paradise Lost does Satan really live. When Milton ceases to portray himself in his fallen state and thinks only of his plot & subject, Satan also ceases to live. But the great impersonal creators even in their slightest creations, cannot help creating life. Impersonal, I say, but I do not mean by impersonality the nirguna, devoid or pure of quality, but rather the unfixed & unlimited by quality, — an infinite & indefinable personality out of which is not manufactured or cunningly shaped but perfectly & inevitably arises under the compelling eye of an intuitive Will to be this created world of innumerable brilliantly-coloured variously outlined individual existences.

A Dream

This is the story of a dream that often came & always fled, a dream that continued by snatches and glimpses through a succession of nights, at intervals of weeks, the mind returning again and again to the unfinished vision, the imagination and intuition filling in the gaps & interstices of a half told tale. Visions of waters blue in an immortal sunlight or grey in the drifting of a magic welter of cloud & rain, rocks swept by the surf and whistling in their hollows with the wind, island meadows & glades many pictured above the sea, rivers and haze-purpled hills, a scene of unimaginable beauty where forms moved that had not lost the pristine beauty of man before the clutch stiffened on him of early decay & death, of grief and old age, where hearts beat that had not lost the pulsations of our ancient immortality and were not yet attuned to the broken rhythms of pain & grief. The impression of such an atmosphere & background remains which the linking of ineffective details & the effort of words which are laden with the thoughts of an afflicted and oppressed humanity, strive vainly to restore. For those colours we have lost. When we speak of brightness, it is a subdued brilliance that is the utmost our imaginations can conceive; we mean only a broken hint of rapture when we talk even most eagerly of enjoyment & bliss.

The Beauty of a Crow’s Wings

It is not only that the sable blackness of the crow’s wings has in it wonderful shades of green and violet and purple which show themselves under certain stresses of sunlight, but that the black itself, sable of wing or dingy of back & breast has itself a beauty which our prejudiced habits of mind obscure to us. Under its darkness, we see, too, a glint of dingy white.

Section Five

Science, Religion, Reason, Justice

Science

We live under the reign of Science, a reign which from the mouth of its hierophants claims to be a tyranny or at least an absolute monarchy. It makes this claim by right of the great things it has done, of the immense utilities with which it has served, helped, strengthened, liberated, mankind, right knowledge of the world, an increasing and already fabulous mastery of Nature, a clear and free intellectual vision of things and masterful dealing with them, liberation from the fetters of ignorance, from blind subjection to authority, from unquestioning political, social, religious and cultural tradition with all their hindrance and their evil.

Religion

In a word, the religious tendency, the religious spirit in man does not escape from the law of evolution that governs the other parts of his complex psychological nature. Even though its very reason of existence is the inner sense of a soul and spirit within and around us and the search for spiritual truth and experience, that must be in their very nature a suprarational truth and experience, it begins like the rest with an infrarational instinct, an infrarational formulation, falls under the influence of the reasoning mind and only at its [*sentence not completed*]

Reason and Society

A pragmatic mentalism would not be in its essential principle other than the attempt already made by the race to make the intellectual Reason the governor of life, but this has been done hitherto by a reason preoccupied with the external fact and subjected to it; mind has attempted to read the law of life and its possibilities and organise life anew within those limits by invention, device, regulation, mechanisms of many kinds, or it has attempted to govern life by mental ideals of an abstract order, such as democracy or socialism, and devise an appropriate machinery materialising that mental abstraction so as to make the dominance of the idea practical and viable. A subjectivist pragmatic mentalism would try to act more subtly and plastically on life; it would seek for "truth of being", some idea or ideal of its perfection or practice or efficiency, right way of being or living, and attempt to let that grow in the individual and govern his nature, grow in the collective life and govern its formations. Or it would place the development and organisation of the mental life of man as the primary consideration and life and society as a convenience for this true aim of human existence. A new civilisation no longer vitalistic or mainly political and economic, but intellectual, cultural, idealistic, taking up the ancient ideal of man, the perfected mental being in an ennobled life and sound body, a great expansion of human mind and intellect, a mankind more mentally alive, even a human race grown capable of culture and not only of a greater external civilisation, thus fulfilling on a large human and universal scale the tendencies which in the past appeared only in a few favoured countries and epochs and even then imperfectly and mostly in a cultured class, might be the consequence of this change. That prospect has its attractions, and for the humanist and the intellectual it is in one form or another their utopia of the future. But this would not really carry the human evolution farther; it would only give it for a time a larger, finer and freer movement in its widest attainable circle. If the mentality remained too pragmatic, too eager to rationalise or organise life according to the idea, the peril of mechanisation and standardisation would be there. If the mental ideas governing the individual and social life took a settled form, became a cultural system of the mind, this system would after a time exhaust its possibilities and human life would settle down into a groove, satisfied and non-evolutive, as happened in the Graeco-Roman world or in China or elsewhere where the mental intellect became the predominant power of life. If this arrest were avoided either by the multiplication of different cultures — different peoples acting upon each other but escaping the tendency to replication and standardisation which is the tendency of the human collective mind or by a free progressiveness of the human intelligence making constantly new ideas, new ideals, still the movement would eventually be in a circle or an ellipsis which could be a constant description of a new-old movement in the same field. In fact our external mind moving on the surface tends always to exhaust itself rapidly; if it expends itself slowly, conservatively, at a leisurely pace, it can create a civilisation and culture which will last for centuries or even for one or more thousands of years; but that too will exhaust itself in time; if it throws itself into a brilliant or rapid movement as in ancient Greece or in modern Europe a few centuries are likely to see the end of this flaming up as of a new star. Afterwards there must be stagnation, decline and a renewal of the mental circle.

This is because mind and thought are not the sovereign principle or highest term of our existence; mind and thought therefore can to a certain extent fulfil themselves, but they cannot fulfil life nor can they give to man his complete self. Mind is an instrument, not the self of man; nor the complete reality or highest reality of his being. It is a mediator between the being and life; it seeks to know truth of being and truth of life and bring them together. Truth of idea therefore is effective only so far as it can interpret truth of spirit and truth of life, it has itself no essential existence; when it erects itself as a mental abstraction, it has no reality and no effective power; it is only an index, a figure. It can become effective only by taking up life and catching hold of some vital force to effectuate it, but usually it ends by [. . .], exhausting or stereotyping and sterilising the force it uses; or it can become effective only when it canalises and brings out into action of mind and life an inner truth of being, a truth of spirit and it is then powerful only so long as it replenishes itself from its spiritual source and so keeps itself true and alive.

Justice

Justice, one says; but what is Justice? Plato's question applies to this as to every other sacred icon set up by men for their worship.

Justice for each man is what his own type of mind accepts as right and proper and equitable as between men and men. Or, it might be added, between the community and its constituents, the State and its citizens.

Part Four

Thoughts and Aphorisms

Sri Aurobindo wrote the main series of 540 aphorisms around 1913 in a single notebook under the headings "Jnana", "Karma" and "Bhakti". Seven additional aphorisms were not classified under these headings; the last five were written in a different notebook, probably somewhat later.

Jnana

Jnana

1. There are two allied powers in man; knowledge & wisdom. Knowledge is so much of the truth seen in a distorted medium as the mind arrives at by groping, wisdom what the eye of divine vision sees in the spirit.

2. Inspiration is a slender river of brightness leaping from a vast & eternal knowledge, it exceeds reason more perfectly than reason exceeds the knowledge of the senses.

3. When I speak, the reason says, “This will I say”; but God takes the word out of my mouth and the lips say something else at which reason trembles.

4. I am not a Jnani, for I have no knowledge except what God gives me for His work. How am I to know whether what I see be reason or folly? Nay, it is neither; for the thing seen is simply true & neither folly nor reason.

5. If mankind could but see though in a glimpse of fleeting experience what infinite enjoyments, what perfect forces, what luminous reaches of spontaneous knowledge, what wide calms of our being lie waiting for us in the tracts which our animal evolution has not yet conquered, they would leave all & never rest till they had gained these treasures. But the way is narrow, the doors are hard to force, and fear, distrust & scepticism are there, sentinels of Nature, to forbid the turning away of our feet from her ordinary pastures.

6. Late, I learned that when reason died, then Wisdom was born; before that liberation, I had only knowledge.

7. What men call knowledge, is the reasoned acceptance of false appearances. Wisdom looks behind the veil and sees.

8. Reason divides, fixes details & contrasts them; Wisdom unifies, marries contrasts in a single harmony.

9. Either do not give the name of knowledge to your beliefs only and of error, ignorance or charlatanism to the beliefs of others, or do not rail at the dogmas of the sects and their intolerance.

10. What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows; the rest is appearance, prejudice and opinion.

11. My soul knows that it is immortal. But you take a dead body to pieces and cry triumphantly "Where is your soul and where is your immortality?"

12. Immortality is not the survival of the mental personality after death, though that also is true, but the waking possession of the unborn & deathless self of which body is only an instrument and a shadow.

13. They proved to me by convincing reasons that God did not exist, and I believed them. Afterwards I saw God, for He came and embraced me. And now which am I to believe, the reasonings of others or my own experience?

14. They told me, "These things are hallucinations." I inquired what was a hallucination and found that it meant a subjective or a psychical experience which corresponds to no objective or no physical reality. Then I sat and wondered at the miracles of the human reason.

15. Hallucination is the term of Science for those irregular glimpses we still have of truths shut out from us by our preoccupation with matter; coincidence for the curious touches of

artistry in the work of that supreme & universal Intelligence which in its conscious being as on a canvas has planned & executed the world.

16. That which men term a hallucination is the reflection in the mind & senses of that which is beyond our ordinary mental & sensory perceptions. Superstition arises from the mind's wrong understanding of these reflections. There is no other hallucination.

17. Do not, like so many modern disputants, smother thought under polysyllables or charm inquiry to sleep by the spell of formulas and cant words. Search always; find out the reason for things which seem to the hasty glance to be mere chance or illusion.

18. Someone was laying it down that God must be this or that or He would not be God. But it seemed to me that I can only know what God is and I do not see how I can tell Him what He ought to be. For what is the standard by which we can judge Him? These judgments are the follies of our egoism.

19. Chance is not in this universe; the idea of illusion is itself an illusion. There was never illusion yet in the human mind that was not the concealing [?shape] and disfigurement of a truth.

20. When I had the dividing reason, I shrank from many things; after I had lost it in sight, I hunted through the world for the ugly and the repellent, but I could no longer find them.

21. God had opened my eyes; for I saw the nobility of the vulgar, the attractiveness of the repellent, the perfection of the maimed and the beauty of the hideous.

22. Forgiveness is praised by the Christian and the Vaishnava, but for me, I ask, "What have I to forgive and whom?"

23. God struck me with a human hand; shall I say then, "I pardon Thee thy insolence, O God"?

24. God gave me good in a blow. Shall I say, "I forgive thee, O Almighty One, the harm and the cruelty, but do it not again"?

25. When I pine at misfortune and call it evil, or am jealous and disappointed, then I know that there is awake in me again the eternal fool.

26. When I see others suffer, I feel that I am unfortunate, but the wisdom that is not mine, sees the good that is coming and approves.

27. Sir Philip Sidney said of the criminal led out to be hanged, "There, but for the grace of God, goes Sir Philip Sidney." Wiser, had he said, "There, by the grace of God, goes Sir Philip Sidney."

28. God is a great & cruel Torturer because He loves. You do not understand this, because you have not seen & played with Krishna.

29. One called Napoleon a tyrant and imperial cut-throat; but I saw God armed striding through Europe.

30. I have forgotten what vice is and what virtue; I can only see God, His play in the world and His will in humanity.

31. I saw a child wallowing in the dirt and the same child cleaned by his mother and resplendent, but each time I trembled before his utter purity.

32. What I wished or thought to be the right thing, does not come about; therefore it is clear that there is no All Wise one who guides the world but only blind Chance or a brute Causality.

33. The Atheist is God playing at hide & seek with Himself;

but is the Theist any other? Well, perhaps; for he has seen the shadow of God and clutched at it.

34. O Thou that lovest, strike! If Thou strike me not now, I shall know that Thou lov'st me not.

35. O Misfortune, blessed be thou; for through thee I have seen the face of my Lover.

36. Men are still in love with grief; when they see one who is too high for grief or joy, they curse him & cry, "O thou insensible!" Therefore Christ still hangs on the cross in Jerusalem.

37. Men are in love with sin; when they see one who is too high for vice or virtue, they curse him & cry, "O thou breaker of bonds, thou wicked and immoral one!" Therefore Srikrishna does not live as yet in Brindavun.

38. Some say Krishna never lived, he is a myth. They mean on earth; for if Brindavun existed nowhere, the Bhagwat could not have been written.

39. Strange! the Germans have disproved the existence of Christ; yet his crucifixion remains still a greater historic fact than the death of Caesar.

40. Sometimes one is led to think that only those things really matter which have never happened; for beside them most historic achievements seem almost pale and ineffective.

41. There are four very great events in history, the siege of Troy, the life and crucifixion of Christ, the exile of Krishna in Brindavun and the colloquy with Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra. The siege of Troy created Hellas, the exile in Brindavun created devotional religion, (for before there was only meditation and worship,) Christ from his cross humanised Europe, the colloquy at Kurukshetra will yet liberate humanity. Yet it is said that none of these four events ever happened.

42. They say that the Gospels are forgeries and Krishna a creation of the poets. Thank God then for the forgeries and bow down before the creators.

43. If God assigns to me my place in Hell, I do not know why I should aspire to Heaven. He knows best what is for my welfare.

44. If God draw me towards Heaven, then, even if His other hand strive to keep me in Hell, yet must I struggle upward.

45. Only those thoughts are true the opposite of which is also true in its own time and application; indisputable dogmas are the most dangerous kind of falsehoods.

46. Logic is the worst enemy of Truth, as self-righteousness is the worst enemy of virtue, — for the one cannot see its own errors nor the other its own imperfections.

47. When I was asleep in the Ignorance, I came to a place of meditation full of holy men and I found their company wearisome and the place a prison; when I awoke, God took me to a prison and turned it into a place of meditation and His trysting-ground.

48. When I read a wearisome book through and with pleasure, yet perceived all the perfection of its wearisomeness, then I knew that my mind was conquered.

49. I knew my mind to be conquered when it admired the beauty of the hideous, yet felt perfectly why other men shrank back or hated.

50. To feel & love the God of beauty and good in the ugly and the evil, and still yearn in utter love to heal it of its ugliness and its evil, this is real virtue and morality.

51. To hate the sinner is the worst sin, for it is hating God; yet he who commits it, glories in his superior virtue.

52. When I hear of a righteous wrath, I wonder at man's capacity for self-deception.

53. This is a miracle that men can love God, yet fail to love humanity. With whom are they in love then?

54. The quarrels of religious sects are like the disputing of pots, which shall be alone allowed to hold the immortalising nectar. Let them dispute, but the thing for us is to get at the nectar in whatever pot and attain immortality.

55. You say that the flavour of the pot alters the liquor. That is taste; but what can deprive it of its immortalising faculty?

56. Be wide in me, O Varuna; be mighty in me, O Indra; O Sun, be very bright and luminous; O Moon, be full of charm and sweetness. Be fierce and terrible, O Rudra; be impetuous and swift, O Maruts; be strong and bold, O Aryama; be voluptuous and pleasurable, O Bhaga; be tender and kind and loving and passionate, O Mitra. Be bright and revealing, O Dawn; O Night, be solemn and pregnant. O Life, be full, ready & buoyant; O Death, lead my steps from mansion to mansion. Harmonise all these, O Brahmanaspati. Let me not be subject to these gods, O Kali.

57. When, O eager disputant, thou hast prevailed in a debate, then art thou greatly to be pitied; for thou hast lost a chance of widening knowledge.

58. Because the tiger acts according to his nature and knows not anything else, therefore he is divine and there is no evil in him. If he questioned himself, then he would be a criminal.

59. The animal, before he is corrupted, has not yet eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; the god has abandoned it for the tree of eternal life; man stands between the upper heaven and the lower nature.

60. One of the greatest comforts of religion is that you can get hold of God sometimes and give him a satisfactory beating. People mock at the folly of savages who beat their gods when their prayers are not answered; but it is the mockers who are the fools and the savages.

61. There is no mortality. It is only the Immortal who can die; the mortal could neither be born nor perish. There is nothing finite. It is only the Infinite who can make for Himself limits; the finite can have no beginning nor end, for the very act of conceiving its beginning & end declares its infinity.

62. I heard a fool discoursing utter folly and wondered what God meant by it; then I considered and saw a distorted mask of truth and wisdom.

63. God is great, says the Mahomedan. Yes, He is so great that He can afford to be weak, whenever that too is necessary.

64. God often fails in His workings; it is the sign of His illimitable godhead.

65. Because God is invincibly great, He can afford to be weak; because He is immutably pure, He can indulge with impunity in sin; He knows eternally all delight, therefore He tastes also the delight of pain; He is inalienably wise, therefore He has not debarred Himself from folly.

66. Sin is that which was once in its place, persisting now it is out of place; there is no other sinfulness.

67. There is no sin in man, but a great deal of disease, ignorance and misapplication.

68. The sense of sin was necessary in order that man might become disgusted with his own imperfections. It was God's corrective for egoism. But man's egoism meets God's device by being

very dully alive to its own sins and very keenly alive to the sins of others.

69. Sin & virtue are a game of resistance we play with God in His efforts to draw us towards perfection. The sense of virtue helps us to cherish our sins in secret.

70. Examine thyself without pity, then thou wilt be more charitable and pitiful to others.

71. A thought is an arrow shot at the truth; it can hit a point, but not cover the whole target. But the archer is too well satisfied with his success to ask anything farther.

72. The sign of dawning Knowledge is to feel that as yet I know little or nothing, & yet, if I could only know my knowledge, I already possess everything.

73. When Wisdom comes, her first lesson is, "There is no such thing as knowledge; there are only aperçus of the Infinite Deity."

74. Practical knowledge is a different thing; that is real and serviceable, but it is never complete. Therefore to systematise and codify it is necessary but fatal.

75. Systematise we must, but even in making & holding the system, we should always keep firm hold on this truth that all systems are in their nature transitory and incomplete.

76. Europe prides herself on her practical and scientific organisation and efficiency. I am waiting till her organisation is perfect; then a child shall destroy her.

77. Genius discovers a system; average talent stereotypes it till it is shattered by fresh genius. It is dangerous for an army to be led by veterans; for on the other side God may place Napoleon.

78. When knowledge is fresh in us, then it is invincible; when it is old, it loses its virtue. This is because God moves always forward.

79. God is infinite Possibility. Therefore Truth is never at rest; therefore, also, Error is justified of her children.

80. To listen to some devout people, one would imagine that God never laughs; Heine was nearer the mark when he found in Him the divine Aristophanes.

81. God's laughter is sometimes very coarse and unfit for polite ears; He is not satisfied with being Molière, He must needs also be Aristophanes and Rabelais.

82. If men took life less seriously, they could very soon make it more perfect. God never takes His works seriously; therefore one looks out on this wonderful Universe.

83. Shame has admirable results and both in aesthetics and in morality we could ill spare it; but for all that it is a badge of weakness and the proof of ignorance.

84. The supernatural is that the nature of which we have not attained or do not yet know, or the means of which we have not yet conquered. The common taste for miracles is the sign that man's ascent is not yet finished.

85. It is rationality and prudence to distrust the supernatural; but to believe in it, is also a sort of wisdom.

86. Great saints have performed miracles; greater saints have railed at them; the greatest have both railed at them and performed them.

87. Open thy eyes and see what the world really is and what God; have done with vain and pleasant imaginations.

88. This world was built by Death that he might live. Wilt thou abolish death? Then life too will perish. Thou canst not abolish death, but thou mayst transform it into a greater living.

89. This world was built by Cruelty that she might love. Wilt thou abolish cruelty? Then love too will perish. Thou canst not abolish cruelty, but thou mayst transfigure it into its opposite, into a fierce Love & Delightfulness.

90. This world was built by Ignorance & Error that they might know. Wilt thou abolish ignorance and error? Then knowledge too will perish. Thou canst not abolish ignorance & error, but thou mayst transmute them into the utter & effulgent exceeding of reason.

91. If Life alone were & not death, there could be no immortality; if love were alone & not cruelty, joy would be only a tepid & ephemeral rapture; if reason were alone & not ignorance, our highest attainment would not exceed a limited rationality & worldly wisdom.

92. Death transformed becomes Life that is Immortality; Cruelty transfigured becomes Love that is intolerable ecstasy; Ignorance transmuted becomes Light that leaps beyond wisdom and knowledge.

93. Pain is the touch of our Mother teaching us how to bear and grow in rapture. She has three stages of her schooling, endurance first, next equality of soul, last ecstasy.

94. All renunciation is for a greater joy yet ungrasped. Some renounce for the joy of duty done, some for the joy of peace, some for the joy of God and some for the joy of self-torture, but renounce rather as a passage to the freedom and untroubled rapture beyond.

95. Only by perfect renunciation of desire or by perfect satisfaction of desire can the utter embrace of God be experienced;

for in both ways the essential precondition is effected, — desire perishes.

96. Experience in thy soul the truth of the Scripture; afterwards, if thou wilt, reason & state thy experience intellectually & even then distrust thy statement; but distrust never thy experience.

97. When thou affirmest thy soul-experience & deniest the different soul-experience of another, know that God is making a fool of thee. Dost thou not hear His self-delighted laughter behind thy soul's curtains?

98. Revelation is the direct sight, the direct hearing or the inspired memory of Truth, drishti, sruti, smriti; it is the highest experience and always accessible to renewed experience. Not because God spoke it, but because the soul saw it, is the word of the Scriptures our supreme authority.

99. The word of Scripture is infallible; it is in the interpretation the heart and reason put upon the Scripture that error has her portion.

100. Shun all lowness, narrowness & shallowness in religious thought & experience. Be wider than the widest horizons, be loftier than the highest Kanchenjunga, be profounder than the deepest oceans.

101. In God's sight there is no near or distant, no present, past or future. These things are only a convenient perspective for His world-picture.

102. To the senses it is always true that the sun moves round the earth; this is false to the reason. To the reason it is always true that the earth moves round the sun; this is false to the supreme vision. Neither earth moves nor sun; there is only a change in the relation of sun-consciousness & earth-consciousness.

103. Vivekananda, exalting Sannyasa, has said that in all Indian history there is only one Janaka. Not so, for Janaka is not the name of a single individual, but a dynasty of self-ruling kings and the triumph-cry of an ideal.

104. In all the lakhs of ochre-clad Sannyasins, how many are perfect? It is the few attainments and the many approximations that justify an ideal.

105. There have been hundreds of perfect Sannyasins, because Sannyasa had been widely preached and numerously practised; let it be the same with the ideal freedom and we shall have hundreds of Janakas.

106. Sannyasa has a formal garb and outer tokens; therefore men think they can easily recognise it; but the freedom of a Janaka does not proclaim itself and it wears the garb of the world; to its presence even Narada was blinded.

107. Hard is it to be in the world, free, yet living the life of ordinary men; but because it is hard, therefore it must be attempted and accomplished.

108. When he watched the actions of Janaka, even Narada the divine sage thought him a luxurious worldling and libertine. Unless thou canst see the soul, how shalt thou say that a man is free or bound?

109. All things seem hard to man that are above his attained level, & they are hard to his unaided effort; but they become at once easy & simple when God in man takes up the contract.

110. To see the composition of the sun or the lines of Mars is doubtless a great achievement; but when thou hast the instrument that can show thee a man's soul as thou seest a picture, then thou wilt smile at the wonders of physical Science as the playthings of babies.

111. Knowledge is a child with its achievements; for when it has found out something, it runs about the streets whooping and shouting; Wisdom conceals hers for a long time in a thoughtful and mighty silence.

112. Science talks and behaves as if it had conquered all knowledge: Wisdom, as she walks, hears her solitary tread echoing on the margin of immeasurable Oceans.

113. Hatred is the sign of a secret attraction that is eager to flee from itself and furious to deny its own existence. That too is God's play in His creature.

114. Selfishness is the only sin, meanness the only vice, hatred the only criminality. All else can easily be turned into good, but these are obstinate resisters of deity.

115. The world is a long recurring decimal with Brahman for its integer. The period seems to begin and end, but the fraction is eternal; it will never have an end and never had any real beginning.

116. The beginning and end of things is a conventional term of our experience; in their true existence these terms have no reality, there is no end and no beginning.

117. "Neither is it that I was not before nor thou nor these kings nor that all we shall not be hereafter." Not only Brahman, but beings & things in Brahman are eternal; their creation and destruction is a play of hide and seek with our outward consciousness.

118. The love of solitude is a sign of the disposition towards knowledge; but knowledge itself is only achieved when we have a settled perception of solitude in the crowd, in the battle and in the mart.

119. If when thou art doing great actions and moving giant results, thou canst perceive that *thou* art doing nothing, then know that God has removed His seal from thy eyelids.

120. If when thou sittest alone, still & voiceless on the mountaintop, thou canst perceive the revolutions thou art conducting, then hast thou the divine vision and art freed from appearances.

121. The love of inaction is folly and the scorn of inaction is folly; there is no inaction. The stone lying inert upon the sands which is kicked away in an idle moment, has been producing its effect upon the hemispheres.

122. If thou wouldst not be the fool of Opinion, first see wherein thy thought is true, then study wherein its opposite and contradiction is true; last, discover the cause of these differences and the key of God's harmony.

123. An opinion is neither true nor false, but only serviceable for life or unserviceable; for it is a creation of Time and with time it loses its effect and value. Rise thou above opinion and seek wisdom everlasting.

124. Use opinion for life, but let her not bind thy soul in her fetters.

125. Every law, however embracing or tyrannous, meets somewhere a contrary law by which its operation can be checked, modified, annulled or eluded.

126. The most binding Law of Nature is only a fixed process which the Lord of Nature has framed and uses constantly; the Spirit made it and the Spirit can exceed it, but we must first open the doors of our prison-house and learn to live less in Nature than in the Spirit.

127. Law is a process or a formula; but the soul is the user of processes and exceeds formulas.

128. Live according to Nature, runs the maxim of the West; but according to what nature, the nature of the body or the nature which exceeds the body? This first we ought to determine.

129. O son of Immortality, live not thou according to Nature, but according to God; and compel her also to live according to the deity within thee.

130. Fate is God's foreknowledge outside Space & Time of all that in Space & Time shall yet happen; what He has foreseen, Power & Necessity work out by the conflict of forces.

131. Because God has willed and foreseen everything, thou shouldst not therefore sit inactive and wait upon His providence, for thy action is one of His chief effective forces. Up then and be doing, not with egoism, but as the circumstance, instrument and apparent cause of the event that He has predetermined.

132. When I knew nothing, then I abhorred the criminal, sinful and impure, being myself full of crime, sin and impurity; but when I was cleansed and my eyes unsealed, then I bowed down in my spirit before the thief and the murderer and adored the feet of the harlot; for I saw that these souls had accepted the terrible burden of evil and drained for all of us the greater portion of the churned poison of the world-ocean.

133. The Titans are stronger than the gods because they have agreed with God to front and bear the burden of His wrath and enmity; the gods were able to accept only the pleasant burden of His love and kindlier rapture.

134. When thou art able to see how necessary is suffering to final delight, failure to utter effectiveness and retardation to the last rapidity, then thou mayst begin to understand something, however faintly and dimly, of God's workings.

135. All disease is a means towards some new joy of health, all evil & pain a tuning of Nature for some more intense bliss &

good, all death an opening on widest immortality. Why and how this should be so, is God's secret which only the soul purified of egoism can penetrate.

136. Why is thy mind or thy body in pain? Because thy soul behind the veil wishes for the pain or takes delight in it; but if thou wilt — and perseverest in thy will — thou canst impose the spirit's law of unmixed delight on thy lower members.

137. There is no iron or ineffugable law that a given contact shall create pain or pleasure; it is the way the soul meets the rush or pressure of Brahman upon the members from outside them that determines either reaction.

138. The force of soul in thee meeting the same force from outside cannot harmonise the measures of the contact in values of mind-experience & body-experience, therefore thou hast pain, grief or uneasiness. If thou canst learn to adjust the replies of the force in thyself to the questions of world-force, thou shalt find pain becoming pleasurable or turning into pure delightfulness. Right relation is the condition of blissfulness, ritam the key of ananda.

139. Who is the superman? He who can rise above this matter-regarding broken mental human unit and possess himself universalised and deified in a divine force, a divine love & joy and a divine knowledge.

140. If thou keepest this limited human ego & thinkest thyself the superman, thou art but the fool of thy own pride, the plaything of thy own force and the instrument of thy own illusions.

141. Nietzsche saw the superman as the lion-soul passing out of camel-hood, but the true heraldic device & token of the superman is the lion seated upon the camel which stands upon the cow of plenty. If thou canst not be the slave of all mankind, thou

art not fit to be its master and if thou canst not make thy nature as Vasistha's cow of plenty with all mankind to draw its wish from her udders, what avails thy leonine supermanhood?

142. Be to the world as the lion in fearlessness and lordship, as the camel in patience and service, as the cow in quiet, forbearing & maternal beneficence. Raven on all the joys of God as a lion over its prey, but bring also all humanity into that infinite field of luxurious ecstasy to wallow there and to pasture.

143. If Art's service is but to imitate Nature, then burn all the picture galleries and let us have instead photographic studios. It is because Art reveals what Nature hides, that a small picture is worth more than all the jewels of the millionaires and the treasures of the princes.

144. If you only imitate visible Nature, you will perpetrate either a corpse, a dead sketch or a monstrosity; Truth lives in that which goes behind & beyond the visible & sensible.

145. O Poet, O Artist, if thou but holdest up the mirror to Nature, thinkest thou Nature will rejoice in thy work? Rather she will turn away her face. For what dost thou hold up to her there? Herself? No, but a lifeless outline & reflection, a shadowy mimicry. It is the secret soul of Nature thou hast to seize, thou hast to hunt eternally after the truth in the external symbol, and that no mirror will hold for thee, nor for her whom thou seekest.

146. I find in Shakespeare a far greater & more consistent universalist than the Greeks. All his creations are universal types from Lancelot Gobbo & his dog up to Lear & Hamlet.

147. The Greeks sought universality by omitting all finer individual touches; Shakespeare sought it more successfully by universalising the rarest individual details of character. That which Nature uses for concealing from us the Infinite, Shakespeare used for revealing the Ananta-guna in man to the eye of humanity.

148. Shakespeare, who invented the figure of holding up the mirror to Nature, was the one poet who never condescended to a copy, a photograph or a shadow. The reader who sees in Falstaff, Macbeth, Lear or Hamlet imitations of Nature, has either no inner eye of the soul or has been hypnotised by a formula.

149. Where in material Nature wilt thou find Falstaff, Macbeth or Lear? Shadows & hints of them she possesses but they themselves tower above her.

150. There are two for whom there is hope, the man who has felt God's touch & been drawn to it and the sceptical seeker & self-convinced atheist; but for the formularists of all the religions & the parrots of free thought, they are dead souls who follow a death that they call living.

151. A man came to a scientist and wished to be instructed; this instructor showed him the revelations of the microscope & telescope, but the man laughed and said, "These are obviously hallucinations inflicted on the eye by the glass which you use as a medium; I will not believe till you show these wonders to my naked seeing." Then the scientist proved to him by many collateral facts & experiments the reliability of his knowledge but the man laughed again & said, "What you term proofs, I term coincidences, the number of coincidences does not constitute proof; as for your experiments, they are obviously effected under abnormal conditions & constitute a sort of insanity of Nature." When confronted with the results of mathematics, he was angry & cried out, "This is obviously imposture, gibberish & superstition; will you try to make me believe that these absurd cabalistic figures have any real force & meaning?" Then the scientist drove him out as a hopeless imbecile; for he did not recognise his own system of denials and his own method of negative reasoning. If we wish to refuse an impartial & openminded enquiry, we can always find the most respectable polysyllables to cover our refusal or impose tests & conditions which stultify the enquiry.

152. When our minds are involved in matter, they think matter the only reality; when we draw back into immaterial consciousness, then we see matter a mask and feel existence in consciousness alone as having the touch of reality. Which then of these two is the truth? Nay, God knoweth; but he who has had both experiences, can easily tell which condition is the more fertile in knowledge, the mightier & more blissful.

153. I believe immaterial consciousness to be truer than material consciousness? Because I know in the first what in the second is hidden from me & also can command what the mind knows in matter.

154. Hell & Heaven exist only in the soul's consciousness. Ay, but so does the earth and its lands & seas & fields & deserts & mountains & rivers. All world is nothing but arrangement of the Soul's seeing.

155. There is only one soul & one existence; therefore we all see one objectivity only; but there are many knots of mind & ego in the one soul-existence, therefore we all see the one Object in different lights & shadows.

156. The idealist errs; it is not Mind which created the worlds, but that which created mind has created them. Mind only missees, because it sees partially & by details, what is created.

157. Thus said Ramakrishna and thus said Vivekananda. Yes, but let me know also the truths which the Avatar cast not forth into speech and the prophet has omitted from his teachings. There will always be more in God than the thought of man has ever conceived or the tongue of man has ever uttered.

158. What was Ramakrishna? God manifest in a human being; but behind there is God in His infinite impersonality and His universal Personality. And what was Vivekananda? A radiant glance from the eye of Shiva; but behind him is the divine gaze

from which he came and Shiva himself and Brahma and Vishnu and OM all-exceeding.

159. He who recognises not Krishna, the God in man, knows not God entirely; he who knows Krishna only, knows not even Krishna. Yet is the opposite truth also wholly true that if thou canst see all God in a little pale unsightly and scentless flower, then hast thou hold of His supreme reality.

160. Shun the barren snare of an empty metaphysics and the dry dust of an unfertile intellectuality. Only that knowledge is worth having which can be made use of for a living delight and put out into temperament, action, creation and being.

161. Become & live the knowledge thou hast; then is thy knowledge the living God within thee.

162. Evolution is not finished; reason is not the last word nor the reasoning animal the supreme figure of Nature. As man emerged out of the animal, so out of man the superman emerges.

163. The power to observe law rigidly is the basis of freedom; therefore in most disciplines the soul has to endure & fulfil the law in its lower members before it can rise to the perfect freedom of its divine being. Those disciplines which begin with freedom are only for the mighty ones who are naturally free or in former lives have founded their freedom.

164. Those who are deficient in the free, full and intelligent observation of a self-imposed law, must be placed in subjection to the will of others. This is one principal cause of the subjection of nations. After their disturbing egoism has been trampled under the feet of a master, they are given or, if they have force in them, attain a fresh chance of deserving liberty by liberty.

165. To observe the law we have imposed on ourselves rather

than the law of others is what is meant by liberty in our unregenerate condition. Only in God & by the supremacy of the spirit can we enjoy a perfect freedom.

166. The double law of sin & virtue is imposed on us because we have not that ideal life & knowledge within which guides the soul spontaneously & infallibly to its self-fulfilment. The law of sin & virtue ceases for us when the sun of God shines upon the soul in truth & love with its unveiled splendour. Moses is replaced by Christ, the Shastra by the Veda.

167. God within is leading us always aright even when we are in the bonds of the ignorance; but then, though the goal is sure, it is attained by circlings & deviations.

168. The Cross is in Yoga the symbol of the soul & nature in their strong & perfect union, but because of our fall into the impurities of ignorance it has become the symbol of suffering and purification.

169. Christ came into the world to purify, not to fulfil. He himself foreknew the failure of his mission and the necessity of his return with the sword of God into a world that had rejected him.

170. Mahomed's mission was necessary, else we might have ended by thinking, in the exaggeration of our efforts at self-purification, that earth was meant only for the monk and the city created as a vestibule for the desert.

171. When all is said, Love & Force together can save the world eventually, but not Love only or Force only. Therefore Christ had to look forward to a second advent and Mahomed's religion, where it is not stagnant, looks forward through the Imams to a Mahdi.

172. Law cannot save the world, therefore Moses' ordinances are dead for humanity & the Shastra of the Brahmins is corrupt

& dying. Law released into Freedom is the liberator. Not the Pandit, but the Yogin; not monasticism, but the inner renunciation of desire and ignorance & egoism.

173. Even Vivekananda once in the stress of emotion admitted the fallacy that a personal God would be too immoral to be suffered and it would be the duty of all good men to resist Him. But if an omnipotent supra-moral Will & Intelligence governs the world, it is surely impossible to resist Him; our resistance would only serve His ends & really be dictated by Him. Is it not better then, instead of condemning or denying, to study and understand Him?

174. If we would understand God, we must renounce our egoistic & ignorant human standards or else ennoble and universalise them.

175. Because a good man dies or fails & the evil live & triumph, is God therefore evil? I do not see the logic of the consequence. I must first be convinced that death & failure are evil; I sometimes think that when they come, they are our supreme momentary good. But we are the fools of our hearts & nerves & argue that what they do not like or desire, must of course be an evil!

176. When I look back on my past life, I see that if I had not failed & suffered, I would have lost my life's supreme blessings; yet at the time of the suffering & failure, I was vexed with the sense of calamity. Because we cannot see anything but the one fact under our noses, therefore we indulge in all these snifflings and clamours. Be silent, ye foolish hearts! slay the ego, learn to see & feel vastly & universally.

177. The perfect cosmic vision & cosmic sentiment is the cure of all error & suffering; but most men succeed only in enlarging the range of their ego.

178. Men say & think "For my country!" "For humanity!"

"For the world!" but they really mean "For myself seen in my country!" "For myself seen in humanity!" "For myself imaged to my fancy as the world!" That may be an enlargement, but it is not liberation. To be at large & to be in a large prison are not one condition of freedom.

179. Live for God in thy neighbour, God in thyself, God in thy country & the country of thy foeman, God in humanity, God in tree & stone & animal, God in the world & outside the world, then art thou on the straight path to liberation.

180. There are lesser & larger eternities, for eternity is a term of the soul & can exist in Time as well as exceeding it. When the Scriptures say "śaśwatih samah", they mean for a long space & permanence of time or a hardly measurable aeon; only God Absolute has the absolute eternity. Yet when one goes within, one sees that all things are secretly eternal; there is no end, neither was there ever a beginning.

181. When thou callest another a fool, as thou must, sometimes, yet do not forget that thou thyself hast been the supreme fool in humanity.

182. God loves to play the fool in season; man does it in season & out of season. It is the only difference.

183. In the Buddhists' view to have saved an ant from drowning is a greater work than to have founded an empire. There is a truth in the idea, but a truth that can easily be exaggerated.

184. To exalt one virtue, — compassion even, — unduly above all others is to cover up with one's hand the eyes of wisdom. God moves always towards a harmony.

185. Pity may be reserved, so long as thy soul makes distinctions, for the suffering animals; but humanity deserves from thee something nobler; it asks for love, for understanding, for comradeship, for the help of the equal & brother.

186. The contributions of evil to the good of the world & the harm sometimes done by the virtuous are distressing to the soul enamoured of good. Nevertheless be not distressed nor confounded, but study rather & calmly understand God's ways with humanity.

187. In God's providence there is no evil, but only good or its preparation.

188. Virtue & vice were made for thy soul's struggle & progress; but for results they belong to God, who fulfils himself beyond vice & virtue.

189. Live within; be not shaken by outward happenings.

190. Fling not thy alms abroad everywhere in an ostentation of charity; understand & love where thou helpest. Let thy soul grow within thee.

191. Help the poor while the poor are with thee; but study also & strive that there may be no poor for thy assistance.

192. The old Indian social ideal demanded of the priest voluntary simplicity of life, purity, learning and the gratuitous instruction of the community, of the prince, war, government, protection of the weak & the giving up of his life in the battlefield, of the merchant, trade, gain and the return of his gains to the community by free giving, of the serf, labour for the rest & material havings. In atonement for his serfhood, it spared him the tax of self-denial, the tax of blood & the tax of his riches.

193. The existence of poverty is the proof of an unjust & ill-organised society, and our public charities are but the first tardy awakening in the conscience of a robber.

194. Valmekie, our ancient epic poet, includes among the signs

of a just & enlightened state of society not only universal education, morality and spirituality but this also that there shall be "none who is compelled to eat coarse food, none uncrowned & unanointed or who is restricted to a mean and petty share of luxuries."

195. The acceptance of poverty is noble & beneficial in a class or an individual, but it becomes fatal and pauperises life of its richness & expansion if it is perverted into a general or national ideal. Athens, not Sparta, is the progressive type for mankind. Ancient India with its ideal of vast riches & vast spending was the greatest of nations; modern India with its trend towards national asceticism has finally become poor in life & sunk into weakness & degradation.

196. Poverty is no more a necessity of organised social life than disease of the natural body; false habits of life & an ignorance of our true organisation are in both cases the peccant causes of an avoidable disorder.

197. Do not dream that when thou hast got rid of material poverty, men will even so be happy or satisfied or society freed from ills, troubles & problems. This is only the first & lowest necessity. While the soul within remains defectively organised, there will always be outward unrest, disorder & revolution.

198. Disease will always return to the body if the soul is flawed; for the sins of the mind are the secret cause of the sins of the body. So too poverty & trouble will always return on man in society, so long as the mind of the race is subjected to egoism.

199. Religion & philosophy seek to rescue man from his ego; then the kingdom of heaven within will be spontaneously reflected in an external divine city.

200. Mediaeval Christianity said to the race, "Man, thou art in thy earthly life an evil thing & a worm before God; renounce

then egoism, live for a future state and submit thyself to God & His priest." The results were not over-good for humanity. Modern knowledge says to the race, "Man, thou art an ephemeral animal and no more to Nature than the ant & the earthworm, — a transitory speck only in the universe. Live then for the State & submit thyself antlike to the trained administrator & the scientific expert." Will this gospel succeed any better than the other?

201. Vedanta says rather, "Man, thou art of one nature & substance with God, one soul with thy fellow-men. Awake & progress then to thy utter divinity, live for God in thyself & in others." This gospel which was given only to the few, must now be offered to all mankind for its deliverance.

202. The human race always progresses most when most it asserts its importance to Nature, its freedom & its universality.

203. Animal man is the obscure starting-point, the present natural man the varied & tangled mid-road but supernatural man the luminous & transcendent goal of our human journey.

204. Life and action culminate and are eternally crowned for thee when thou hast attained the power of symbolising & manifesting in every thought & act, in wealth getting, wealth having or wealth spending, in home & government & society, in art, literature and life, the One Immortal in this lower mortal being.

Karma

Karma

205. God leads man while man is misleading himself, the higher nature watches over the stumblings of his lower mortality; this is the tangle & contradiction out of which we have to escape into the [?self-unity] to which alone is possible a clear knowledge & a faultless action.

206. That thou shouldst have pity on creatures, is well, but not well, if thou art a slave to thy pity. Be a slave to nothing except to God, not even to His most luminous angels.

207. Beatitude is God's aim for humanity; get this supreme good for thyself first that thou mayst distribute it entirely to thy fellow-beings.

208. He who acquires for himself alone, acquires ill though he may call it heaven and virtue.

209. In my ignorance I thought anger could be noble and vengeance grandiose; but now when I watch Achilles in his epic fury, I see a very fine baby in a very fine rage and I am pleased and amused.

210. Power is noble, when it overtops anger; destruction is grandiose, but it loses caste when it proceeds from vengeance. Leave these things, for they belong to a lower humanity.

211. Poets make much of death and external afflictions; but the only tragedies are the soul's failures and the only epic man's triumphant ascent towards godhead.

212. The tragedies of the heart & the body are the weeping of children over their little griefs & their broken toys. Smile within

thyself, but comfort the children; join also, if thou canst, in their play.

213. “There is always something abnormal and eccentric about men of genius.” And why not? For genius itself is an abnormal birth and out of man’s ordinary centre.

214. Genius is Nature’s first attempt to liberate the imprisoned god out of her human mould; the mould has to suffer in the process. It is astonishing that the cracks are so few and unimportant.

215. Nature sometimes gets into a fury with her own resistance, then she damages the brain in order to free the inspiration; for in this effort the equilibrium of the average material brain is her chief opponent. Pass over the madness of such and profit by their inspiration.

216. Who can bear Kali rushing into the system in her fierce force and burning godhead? Only the man whom Krishna already possesses.

217. Hate not the oppressor, for, if he is strong, thy hate increases his force of resistance; if he is weak, thy hate was needless.

218. Hatred is a sword of power, but its edge is always double. It is like the Kritya of the ancient magicians which, if baulked of its prey, returned in fury to devour its sender.

219. Love God in thy opponent, even while thou strikest him; so shall neither have hell for his portion.

220. Men talk of enemies, but where are they? I only see wrestlers of one party or the other in the great arena of the universe.

221. The saint and the angel are not the only divinities; admire also the Titan and the giant.

222. The old writings call the Titans the elder gods. So they still are; nor is any god entirely divine unless there is hidden in him also a Titan.

223. If I cannot be Rama, then I would be Ravana; for he is the dark side of Vishnu.

224. Sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice always, but for the sake of God and humanity, not for the sake of sacrifice.

225. Selfishness kills the soul; destroy it. But take care that your altruism does not kill the souls of others.

226. Very usually, altruism is only the sublimest form of selfishness.

227. He who will not slay when God bids him, works in the world an incalculable havoc.

228. Respect human life as long as you can; but respect more the life of humanity.

229. Men slay out of uncontrollable anger, hatred or vengeance; they shall suffer the rebound now or hereafter; or they slay to serve a selfish end, coldly; God shall not pardon them. If thou slay, first let thy soul have known death for a reality & seen God in the smitten, the stroke & the striker.

230. Courage and love are the only indispensable virtues; even if all the others are eclipsed or fall asleep, these two will save the soul alive.

231. Meanness & selfishness are the only sins that I find it difficult to pardon; yet they alone are almost universal. Therefore these also must not be hated in others, but in ourselves annihilated.

232. Nobleness and generosity are the soul's ethereal firmament; without them, one looks at an insect in a dungeon.

233. Let not thy virtues be such as men praise or reward, but such as make for thy perfection and God in thy nature demands of thee.

234. Altruism, duty, family, country, humanity are the prisons of the soul when they are not its instruments.

235. Our country is God the Mother; speak not evil of her unless thou canst do it with love and tenderness.

236. Men are false to their country for their own profit; yet they go on thinking they have a right to turn in horror from the matricide.

237. Break the moulds of the past, but keep safe its gains and its spirit, or else thou hast no future.

238. Revolutions hew the past to pieces and cast it into a cauldron, but what has emerged is the old Aeson with a new visage.

239. The world has had only half a dozen successful revolutions and most even of these were very like failures; yet it is by great & noble failures that humanity advances.

240. Atheism is a necessary protest against the wickedness of the Churches and the narrowness of creeds. God uses it as a stone to smash these soiled card-houses.

241. How much hatred & stupidity men succeed in packing up decorously and labelling "Religion"!

242. God guides best when He tempts worst, loves entirely when He punishes cruelly, helps perfectly when violently He opposes.

243. If God did not take upon Himself the burden of tempting men, the world would very soon go to perdition.

244. Suffer yourself to be tempted within so that you may exhaust in the struggle your downward propensities.

245. If you leave it to God to purify, He will exhaust the evil in you subjectively; but if you insist on guiding yourself, you will fall into much outward sin and suffering.

246. Call not everything evil which men call evil, but only that reject which God has rejected; call not everything good which men call good, but accept only what God has accepted.

247. Men in the world have two lights, duty and principle; but he who has passed over to God, has done with both and replaced them by God's will. If men abuse thee for this, care not, O divine instrument, but go on thy way like the wind or the sun fostering and destroying.

248. Not to cull the praises of men has God made thee His own, but to do fearlessly His bidding.

249. Accept the world as God's theatre; be thou the mask of the Actor and let Him act through thee. If men praise or hiss thee, know that they too are masks & take God within for thy only critic and audience.

250. If Krishna be alone on one side and the armed & organised world with its hosts and its shrapnel and its Maxims on the other, yet prefer thy divine solitude. Care not if the world passes over thy body and its shrapnel tear thee to pieces and its cavalry trample thy limbs into shapeless mire by the wayside; for the mind was always a simulacrum and the body a carcass. The spirit liberated from its casings ranges and triumphs.

251. If thou think defeat is the end of thee, then go not forth to fight, even though thou be the stronger. For Fate is not purchased

by any man nor is Power bound over to her possessors. But defeat is not the end, it is only a gate or a beginning.

252. I have failed, thou sayest. Say rather that God is circling about towards His object.

253. Foiled by the world, thou turnest to seize upon God. If the world is stronger than thou, thinkest thou God is weaker? Turn to Him rather for His bidding and for strength to fulfil it.

254. So long as a cause has on its side one soul that is intangible in faith, it cannot perish.

255. Reason gives me no basis for this faith, thou murmurest. Fool! if it did, faith would not be needed or demanded of thee.

256. Faith in the heart is the obscure & often distorted reflection of a hidden knowledge. The believer is often more plagued by doubt than the most inveterate sceptic. He persists because there is something subconscient in him which knows. That tolerates both his blind faith & twilit doubts and drives towards the revelation of that which it knows.

257. The world thinks that it moves by the light of reason but it is really impelled by its faiths and instincts.

258. Reason adapts itself to the faith or argues out a justification of the instincts, but it receives the impulse subconsciously; therefore men think that they act rationally.

259. The only business of reason is to arrange and criticise the perceptions. It has neither in itself any means of positive conclusion nor any command to action. When it pretends to originate or impel, it is masking other agencies.

260. Until Wisdom comes to thee, use the reason for its God-given purposes and faith and instinct for theirs. Why shouldst thou set thy members to war upon each other?

261. Perceive always and act in the light of thy increasing perceptions, but not those of the reasoning brain only. God speaks to the heart when the brain cannot understand him.

262. If thy heart tell thee, Thus & by such means and at such a time it will happen, believe it not. But if it gives thee the purity and wideness of God's command, hearken to it.

263. When thou hast the command, care only to fulfil it. The rest is God's will and arrangement which men call chance and luck and fortune.

264. If thy aim be great and thy means small, still act; for by action alone these can increase to thee.

265. Care not for time and success. Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper.

266. There are three forms in which the command may come, the will and faith in thy nature, thy ideal on which heart and brain are agreed and the voice of Himself or His angels.

267. There are times when action is unwise or impossible; then go into tapasya in some physical solitude or in the retreats of thy soul and await whatever divine word or manifestation.

268. Leap not too quickly at all voices, for there are lying spirits ready to deceive thee; but let thy heart be pure and afterwards listen.

269. There are times when God seems to be sternly on the side of the past; then what has been and is, sits firm as on a throne and clothes itself with an irrevocable "I shall be". Then persevere, though thou seem to be fighting the Master of all; for this is His sharpest trial.

270. All is not settled when a cause is humanly lost and hopeless; all is settled, only when the soul renounces its effort.

271. He who would win high spiritual degrees, must pass endless tests and examinations. But most are anxious only to bribe the examiner.

272. Fight, while thy hands are free, with thy hands and thy voice and thy brain and all manner of weapons. Art thou chained in the enemy's dungeons and have his gags silenced thee? Fight with thy silent all-besieging soul and thy wide-ranging will-power and when thou art dead, fight still with the world-encompassing force that went out from God within thee.

273. Thou thinkest the ascetic in his cave or on his mountaintop a stone and a do-nothing? What dost thou know? He may be filling the world with the mighty currents of his will & changing it by the pressure of his soul-state.

274. That which the liberated sees in his soul on its mountain-tops, heroes and prophets spring up in the material world to proclaim and accomplish.

275. The Theosophists are wrong in their circumstances but right in the essential. If the French Revolution took place, it was because a soul on the Indian snows dreamed of God as freedom, brotherhood and equality.

276. All speech and action comes prepared out of the eternal Silence.

277. There is no disturbance in the depths of the Ocean, but above there is the joyous thunder of its shouting and its racing shoreward; so is it with the liberated soul in the midst of violent action. The soul does not act; it only breathes out from itself overwhelming action.

278. O soldier and hero of God, where for thee is sorrow or shame or suffering? For thy life is a glory, thy deeds a consecration, victory thy apotheosis, defeat thy triumph.

279. Do thy lower members still suffer the shock of sin and sorrow? But above, seen of thee or unseen, thy soul sits royal, calm, free and triumphant. Believe that the Mother will ere the end have done her work and made the very earth of thy being a joy and a purity.

280. If thy heart is troubled within thee, if for long seasons thou makest no progress, if thy strength faint and repine, remember always the eternal word of our Lover and Master, "I will free thee from all sin and evil; do not grieve."

281. Purity is in thy soul; but for actions, where is their purity or impurity?

282. O Death, our masked friend and maker of opportunities, when thou wouldst open the gate, hesitate not to tell us beforehand; for we are not of those who are shaken by its iron jarring.

283. Death is sometimes a rude valet; but when he changes this robe of earth for that brighter raiment, his horseplay and impertinences can be pardoned.

284. Who shall slay thee, O soul immortal? Who shall torture thee, O God ever-joyous?

285. Think this when thy members would fain make love with depression and weakness, "I am Bacchus and Ares and Apollo; I am Agni pure and invincible; I am Surya ever burning mightily."

286. Shrink not from the Dionysian cry & rapture within thee, but see that thou be not a straw upon those billows.

287. Thou hast to learn to bear all the gods within thee and never stagger with their inrush or break under their burden.

288. Mankind have wearied of strength and joy and called sorrow and weakness virtue, wearied of knowledge and called

ignorance holiness, wearied of love and called heartlessness enlightenment and wisdom.

289. There are many kinds of forbearance. I saw a coward hold out his cheek to the smiter; I saw a physical weakling struck by a strong and self-approving bully look quietly & intently at the aggressor; I saw God incarnate smile lovingly on those who stoned him. The first was ridiculous, the second terrible, the third divine and holy.

290. It is noble to pardon thine own injurers, but not so noble to pardon wrongs done to others. Nevertheless pardon these too, but when needful, calmly avenge.

291. When Asiatics massacre, it is an atrocity; when Europeans, it is a military exigency. Appreciate the distinction and ponder over this world's virtues.

292. Watch the too indignantly righteous. Before long you will find them committing or condoning the very offence which they have so fiercely censured.

293. "There is very little real hypocrisy among men." True, but there is a great deal of diplomacy and still more of self-deceit. The last is of three varieties, conscious, subconscious and half-conscious; but the third is the most dangerous.

294. Be not deceived by men's shows of virtue, neither disgusted by their open or secret vices. These things are the necessary shufflings in a long transition-period of humanity.

295. Be not repelled by the world's crookednesses; the world is a wounded and venomous snake wriggling towards a destined off-sloughing and perfection. Wait; for it is a divine wager, and out of this baseness, God will emerge brilliant and triumphant.

296. Why dost thou recoil from a mask? Behind its odious, grotesque or terrible seemings Krishna laughs at thy foolish

anger, thy more foolish scorn or loathing and thy most foolish terror.

297. When thou findest thyself scorning another, look then at thy own heart and laugh at thy folly.

298. Avoid vain disputing; but exchange views freely. If dispute thou must, learn from thy adversary; for even from a fool, if thou listen not with the ear and the reasoning mind but the soul's light, thou canst gather much wisdom.

299. Turn all things to honey; this is the law of divine living.

300. Private dispute should always be avoided; but shrink not from the public battle; yet even there appreciate the strength of thy adversary.

301. When thou hearest an opinion that displeases thee, study and find out the truth in it.

302. The mediaeval ascetics hated women and thought they were created by God for the temptation of monks. One may be allowed to think more nobly both of God and of woman.

303. If a woman has tempted thee, is it her fault or thine? Be not a fool and a self-deceiver.

304. There are two ways of avoiding the snare of woman; one is to shun all women and the other to love all beings.

305. Asceticism is no doubt very healing, a cave very peaceful and the hill-tops wonderfully pleasant; nevertheless do thou act in the world as God intended thee.

306. Three times God laughed at Shankara, first, when he returned to burn the corpse of his mother, again when he commented on the Isha Upanishad and the third time when he stormed about India preaching inaction.

307. Men labour only after success and if they are fortunate enough to fail, it is because the wisdom and force of Nature overbear their intellectual cleverness. God alone knows when & how to blunder wisely and fail effectively.

308. Distrust the man who has never failed and suffered; follow not his fortunes, fight not under his banner.

309. There are two who are unfit for greatness and freedom, the man who has never been a slave to another and the nation that has never been under the yoke of foreigners.

310. Fix not the time and the way in which the ideal shall be fulfilled. Work and leave time and way to God all-knowing.

311. Work as if the ideal had to be fulfilled swiftly & in thy lifetime; persevere as if thou knewest it not to be unless purchased by a thousand years yet of labour. That which thou darest not expect till the fifth millennium, may bloom out with tomorrow's dawning and that which thou hopest and lustest after now, may have been fixed for thee in thy hundredth advent.

312. Each man of us has a million lives yet to fulfil upon earth. Why then this haste and clamour and impatience?

313. Stride swiftly for the goal is far; rest not unduly, for thy Master is waiting for thee at the end of thy journey.

314. I am weary of the childish impatience which cries & blasphemes and denies the ideal because the Golden Mountains cannot be reached in our little day or in a few momentary centuries.

315. Fix thy soul without desire upon the end and insist on it by the divine force within thee; then shall the end itself create its means, nay, it shall become its own means. For the end is Brahman and already accomplished; see it always as Brahman, see it always in thy soul as already accomplished.

316. Plan not with the intellect, but let thy divine sight arrange thy plans for thee. When a means comes to thee as thing to be done, make that thy aim; as for the end, it is, in world, accomplishing itself and, in thy soul, already accomplished.

317. Men see events as unaccomplished, to be striven for and effected. This is false seeing; events are not effected, they develop. The event is Brahman, already accomplished from of old, it is now manifesting.

318. As the light of a star reaches the earth hundreds of years after the star has ceased to exist, so the event already accomplished in Brahman at the beginning manifests itself now in our material experience.

319. Governments, societies, kings, police, judges, institutions, churches, laws, customs, armies are temporary necessities imposed on us for a few groups of centuries because God has concealed His face from us. When it appears to us again in its truth & beauty, then in that light they will vanish.

320. The anarchic is the true divine state of man in the end as in the beginning; but in between it would lead us straight to the devil and his kingdom.

321. The communistic principle of society is intrinsically as superior to the individualistic as is brotherhood to jealousy and mutual slaughter; but all the practical schemes of Socialism invented in Europe are a yoke, a tyranny and a prison.

322. If communism ever reestablishes itself successfully upon earth, it must be on a foundation of soul's brotherhood and the death of egoism. A forced association and a mechanical comradeship would end in a worldwide fiasco.

323. Vedanta realised is the only practicable basis for a communistic society. It is the kingdom of the saints dreamed of by Christianity, Islam and Puranic Hinduism.

324. "Freedom, equality, brotherhood," cried the French revolutionists, but in truth freedom only has been practised with a dose of equality; as for brotherhood, only a brotherhood of Cain was founded — and of Barabbas. Sometimes it calls itself a Trust or Combine and sometimes the Concert of Europe.

325. "Since liberty has failed," cries the advanced thought of Europe, "let us try liberty cum equality or, since the two are a little hard to pair, equality instead of liberty. For brotherhood, it is impossible; therefore we will replace it by industrial association." But this time also, I think, God will not be deceived.

326. India had three fortresses of a communal life, the village community, the larger joint family & the orders of the Sannyasins; all these are broken or breaking with the stride of egoistic conceptions of social life; but is not this after all only the breaking of these imperfect moulds on the way to a larger & diviner communism?

327. The individual cannot be perfect until he has surrendered all he now calls himself to the divine Being. So also, until mankind gives all it has to God, never shall there be a perfected society.

328. There is nothing small in God's eyes; let there be nothing small in thine. He bestows as much labour of divine energy on the formation of a shell as on the building of an empire. For thyself it is greater to be a good shoemaker than a luxurious and incompetent king.

329. Imperfect capacity & effect in the work that is meant for thee is better than an artificial competency & a borrowed perfection.

330. Not result is the purpose of action, but God's eternal delight in becoming, seeing and doing.

331. God's world advances step by step fulfilling the lesser unit before it seriously attempts the larger. Affirm free nationality first, if thou wouldst ever bring the world to be one nation.

332. A nation is not made by a common blood, a common tongue or a common religion; these are only important helps and powerful conveniences. But wherever communities of men not bound by family ties are united in one sentiment and aspiration to defend a common inheritance from their ancestors or assure a common future for their posterity, there a nation is already in existence.

333. Nationality is a stride of the progressive God passing beyond the stage of the family; therefore the attachment to clan and tribe must weaken or perish before a nation can be born.

334. Family, nationality, humanity are Vishnu's three strides from an isolated to a collective unity. The first has been fulfilled, we yet strive for the perfection of the second, towards the third we are reaching out our hands and the pioneer work is already attempted.

335. With the present morality of the human race a sound and durable human unity is not yet possible; but there is no reason why a temporary approximation to it should not be the reward of strenuous aspiration and untiring effort. By constant approximations and by partial realisations and temporary successes Nature advances.

336. Imitation is sometimes a good training-ship; but it will never fly the flag of the admiral.

337. Rather hang thyself than belong to the horde of successful imitators.

338. Tangled is the way of works in the world. When Rama the Avatar murdered Vali or Krishna, who was God himself,

assassinated, to liberate his nation, his tyrant uncle Kansa, who shall say whether they did good or did evil? But this we can feel, that they acted divinely.

339. Reaction perfects & hastens progress by increasing & purifying the force within it. This is what the multitude of the weak cannot see who despair of their port when the ship is fleeing helplessly before the storm wind, but it flees, hidden by the rain & the Ocean furrow, towards God's intended haven.

340. Democracy was the protest of the human soul against the allied despotisms of autocrat, priest and noble; Socialism is the protest of the human soul against the despotism of a plutocratic democracy; Anarchism is likely to be the protest of the human soul against the tyranny of a bureaucratic Socialism. A turbulent and eager march from illusion to illusion and from failure to failure is the image of European progress.

341. Democracy in Europe is the rule of the Cabinet minister, the corrupt deputy or the self-seeking capitalist masqued by the occasional sovereignty of a wavering populace; Socialism in Europe is likely to be the rule of the official and policeman masqued by the theoretic sovereignty of an abstract State. It is chimerical to enquire which is the better system; it would be difficult to decide which is the worse.

342. The gain of democracy is the security of the individual's life, liberty and goods from the caprices of the tyrant one or the selfish few; its evil is the decline of greatness in humanity.

343. This erring race of human beings dreams always of perfecting their environment by the machinery of government and society; but it is only by the perfection of the soul within that the outer environment can be perfected. What thou art within, that outside thee thou shalt enjoy; no machinery can rescue thee from the law of thy being.

344. Be always vigilant against thy human proneness to persecute or ignore the reality even while thou art worshipping its semblance or token. Not human wickedness but human fallibility is the opportunity of Evil.

345. Honour the garb of the ascetic, but look also at the wearer, lest hypocrisy occupy the holy places and inward saintliness become a legend.

346. The many strive after competence or riches, the few embrace poverty as a bride; but, for thyself, strive after and embrace God only. Let Him choose for thee a king's palace or the bowl of the beggar.

347. What is vice but an enslaving habit and virtue but a human opinion? See God and do His will; walk in whatever path He shall trace for thy goings.

348. In the world's conflicts espouse not the party of the rich for their riches, nor of the poor for their poverty, of the king for his power & majesty, nor of the people for their hope and fervour, but be on God's side always. Unless indeed He has commanded thee to war against Him! then do that with thy whole heart and strength and rapture.

349. How shall I know God's will with me? I have to put egoism out of me, hunting it from every lair & burrow, and bathe my purified and naked soul in His infinite workings; then He himself will reveal it to me.

350. Only the soul that is naked and unashamed, can be pure and innocent, even as Adam was in the primal garden of humanity.

351. Boast not thy riches, neither seek men's praise for thy poverty and self-denial; both these things are the coarse or the fine food of egoism.

352. Altruism is good for man, but less good when it is a form of supreme self-indulgence & lives by pampering the selfishness of others.

353. By altruism thou canst save thy soul, but see that thou save it not by indulging in his perdition thy brother.

354. Self-denial is a mighty instrument for purification; it is not an end in itself nor a final law of living. Not to mortify thyself but to satisfy God in the world must be thy object.

355. It is easy to distinguish the evil worked by sin & vice, but the trained eye sees also the evil done by self-righteous or self-regarding virtue.

356. The Brahmin first ruled by the book & the ritual, the Kshatriya next by the sword and the buckler; now the Vaishya governs us by machinery & the dollar, & the Sudra, the liberated serf, presses in with his doctrine of the kingdom of associated labour. But neither priest, king, merchant nor labourer is the true governor of humanity; the despotism of the tool and the mattock will fail like all the preceding despotisms. Only when egoism dies & God in man governs his own human universality, can this earth support a happy and contented race of beings.

357. Men run after pleasure and clasp feverishly that burning bride to their tormented bosoms; meanwhile a divine & faultless bliss stands behind them waiting to be seen and claimed and captured.

358. Men hunt after petty successes & trivial masteries from which they fall back into exhaustion & weakness; meanwhile all the infinite force of God in the universe waits vainly to place itself at their disposal.

359. Men burrow after little details of knowledge and group them into bounded & ephemeral thought systems; meanwhile

all infinite wisdom laughs above their heads & shakes wide the glory of her iridescent pinions.

360. Men seek laboriously to satisfy & complement the little bounded being made of the mental impressions they have grouped about a mean & grovelling ego; meanwhile the spaceless & timeless Soul is denied its joyous & splendid manifestation.

361. O soul of India, hide thyself no longer with the darkened Pandits of the Kaliyuga in the kitchen & the chapel, veil not thyself with the soulless rite, the obsolete law and the unblessed money of the dakshina; but seek in thy soul, ask of God and recover thy true Brahminhood & Kshatriyahood with the eternal Veda; restore the hidden truth of the Vedic sacrifice, return to the fulfilment of an older & mightier Vedanta.

362. Limit not sacrifice to the giving up of earthly goods or the denial of some desires & yearnings, but let every thought and every work & every enjoyment be an offering to God within thee. Let thy steps walk in thy Lord, let thy sleep and waking be a sacrifice to Krishna.

363. This is not according to my Shastra or my Science, say the men of rule, formalists. Fool! is God then only a book that there should be nothing true & good except what is written?

364. By which standard shall I walk, the word that God speaks to me, saying "This is My will, O my servant," or the rules that men who are dead, have written? Nay, if I have to fear & obey any, I will fear & obey God rather & not the pages of a book or the frown of a Pandit.

365. Thou mayst be deceived, wilt thou say, it may not be God's voice leading thee? Yet do I know that He abandons not those who have trusted Him even ignorantly, yet have I found that He

leads wisely & lovingly even when He seems to deceive utterly, yet would I rather fall into the snare of the living God than be saved by trust in a dead formulary.

366. Act according to the Shastra rather than thy self-will & desire; so shalt thou grow stronger to control the ravener in thee; but act according to God rather than the Shastra; so shalt thou reach to His highest which is far above rule & limit.

367. The Law is for the bound & those whose eyes are sealed; if they walk not by it, they will stumble; but thou who art free in Krishna or hast seen his living light, walk holding the hand of thy Friend & by the lamp of eternal Veda.

368. The Vedanta is God's lamp to lead thee out of this night of bondage & egoism; but when the light of Veda has dawned in thy soul, then even that divine lamp thou needest not, for now thou canst walk freely & surely in a high & eternal sunlight.

369. What is the use of only knowing? I say to thee, Act and be, for therefore God sent thee into this human body.

370. What is the use of only being? I say to thee, Become, for therefore wast thou established as a man in this world of matter.

371. The path of works is in a way the most difficult side of God's triune causeway; yet is it not also, in this material world at least, the easiest, widest & most delightful? For at every moment we clash against God the worker & grow into His being by a thousand divine touches.

372. This is the wonder of the way of works that even enmity to God can be made an agency of salvation. Sometimes God draws and attaches us most swiftly to Him by wrestling with us as our fierce, invincible & irreconcilable enemy.

373. Shall I accept death or shall I turn and wrestle with him

and conquer? That shall be as God in me chooses. For whether I live or die, I am always.

374. What is this thing thou callest death? Can God die? O thou who fearest death, it is Life that has come to thee sporting with a death-head and wearing a mask of terror.

375. There is a means to attain physical immortality and death is by our choice, not by Nature's compulsion. But who would care to wear one coat for a hundred years or be confined in one narrow & changeless lodging unto a long eternity?

376. Fear and anxiety are perverse forms of will. What thou fearest & ponderest over, striking that note repeatedly in thy mind, thou helpest to bring about; for, if thy will above the surface of waking repels it, it is yet what thy mind underneath is all along willing, & the subconscious mind is mightier, wider, better equipped to fulfil than thy waking force & intellect. But the spirit is stronger than both together; from fear and hope take refuge in the grandiose calm and careless mastery of the spirit.

377. God made the infinite world by Self-knowledge which in its works is Will-Force self-fulfilling. He used ignorance to limit His infinity; but fear, weariness, depression, self-distrust and assent to weakness are the instruments by which He destroys what He created. When these things are turned on what is evil or harmful & ill-regulated within thee, then it is well; but if they attack thy very sources of life & strength, then seize & expel them or thou diest.

378. Mankind has used two powerful weapons to destroy its own powers and enjoyment, wrong indulgence and wrong abstinence.

379. Our mistake has been and is always to flee from the ills

of Paganism to asceticism as a remedy and from the ills of asceticism back to Paganism. We swing for ever between two false opposites.

380. It is well not to be too loosely playful in one's games or too grimly serious in one's life and works. We seek in both a playful freedom and a serious order.

381. For nearly forty years I believed them when they said I was weakly in constitution, suffered constantly from the smaller & the greater ailments & mistook this curse for a burden that Nature had laid upon me. When I renounced the aid of medicines, then they began to depart from me like disappointed parasites. Then only I understood what a mighty force was the natural health within me & how much mightier yet the Will & Faith exceeding mind which God meant to be the divine support of our life in this body.

382. Machinery is necessary to modern humanity because of our incurable barbarism. If we must incase ourselves in a bewildering multitude of comforts and trappings, we must needs do without Art and its methods; for to dispense with simplicity & freedom is to dispense with beauty. The luxury of our ancestors was rich & even gorgeous, but never encumbered.

383. I cannot give to the barbarous comfort & encumbered ostentation of European life the name of civilisation. Men who are not free in their souls & nobly rhythmical in their appointments, are not civilised.

384. Art in modern times & under European influence has become an excrescence upon life or an unnecessary menial; it should have been its chief steward and indispensable arranger.

385. Disease is needlessly prolonged & ends in death oftener than is inevitable, because the mind of the patient supports & dwells upon the disease of his body.

386. Medical Science has been more a curse to mankind than a blessing. It has broken the force of epidemics and unveiled a marvellous surgery; but, also, it has weakened the natural health of man and multiplied individual diseases; it has implanted fear and dependence in the mind and body; it has taught our health to repose not on natural soundness but a rickety & distasteful crutch compact from the mineral and vegetable kingdoms.

387. The doctor aims a drug at a disease; sometimes it hits, sometimes misses. The misses are left out of account, the hits treasured up, reckoned and systematised into a science.

388. We laugh at the savage for his faith in the medicine man; but how are the civilised less superstitious who have faith in the doctors? The savage finds that when a certain incantation is repeated, he often recovers from a certain disease; he believes. The civilised patient finds that when he doses himself according to a certain prescription, he often recovers from a certain disease; he believes. Where is the difference?

389. The north-country Indian herdsman, attacked by fever, sits in the chill stream of a river for an hour or more & rises up free & healthy. If the educated man did the same, he would perish, not because the same remedy in its nature kills one & cures another, but because our bodies have been fatally indoctrinated by the mind into false habits.

390. It is not the medicine that cures so much as the patient's faith in the doctor and the medicine. Both are a clumsy substitute for the natural faith in one's own self-power which they have themselves destroyed.

391. The healthiest ages of mankind were those in which there were the fewest material remedies.

392. The most robust and healthy race left on earth were the African savages; but how long can they so remain after their

physical consciousness has been contaminated by the mental aberrations of the civilised?

393. We ought to use the divine health in us to cure and prevent diseases; but Galen and Hippocrates & their tribe have given us instead an armoury of drugs and a barbarous Latin hocuspocus as our physical gospel.

394. Medical Science is well-meaning and its practitioners often benevolent and not seldom self-sacrificing; but when did the well-meaning of the ignorant save them from harm-doing?

395. If all remedies were really and in themselves efficacious and all medical theories sound, how would that console us for our lost natural health and vitality? The upas-tree is sound in all its parts, but it is still an upas-tree.

396. The spirit within us is the only all-efficient doctor and submission of the body to it the one true panacea.

397. God within is infinite and self-fulfilling Will. Unappalled by the fear of death, canst thou leave to Him, not as an experiment, with a calm & entire faith thy ailments? Thou shalt find in the end that He exceeds the skill of a million doctors.

398. Health protected by twenty thousand precautions is the gospel of the doctor; but it is not God's evangel for the body, nor Nature's.

399. Man was once naturally healthy and could revert to that primal condition if he were suffered; but Medical Science pursues our body with an innumerable pack of drugs and assails the imagination with ravening hordes of microbes.

400. I would rather die and have done with it than spend life in defending myself against a phantasmal siege of microbes. If that is to be barbarous [and] unenlightened, I embrace gladly my Cimmerian darkness.

401. Surgeons save & cure by cutting and maiming. Why not rather seek to discover Nature's direct all-powerful remedies?

402. It should take long for self-cure to replace medicine, because of the fear, self-distrust and unnatural physical reliance on drugs which Medical Science has taught to our minds & bodies & made our second nature.

403. Medicine is necessary for our bodies in disease only because our bodies have learned the art of not getting well without medicines. Even so, one sees often that the moment Nature chooses for recovery is that in which the life is abandoned as hopeless by the doctors.

404. Distrust of the curative power within us was our physical fall from Paradise. Medical Science and a bad heredity are the two angels of God who stand at the gates to forbid our return and reentry.

405. Medical Science to the human body is like a great Power which enfeebles a smaller State by its protection or like a benevolent robber who knocks his victim flat and riddles him with wounds in order that he may devote his life to healing & serving the shattered body.

406. Drugs often cure the body when they do not merely trouble or poison it, but only if their physical attack on the disease is supported by the force of the spirit; if that force can be made to work freely, drugs are at once superfluous.

Bhakti

Bhakti

407. I am not a Bhakta, for I have not renounced the world for God. How can I renounce what He took from me by force and gave back to me against my will? These things are too hard for me.

408. I am not a Bhakta, I am not a Jnani, I am not a worker for the Lord. What am I then? A tool in the hands of my Master, a flute blown upon by the divine Herd-Boy, a leaf driven by the breath of the Lord.

409. Devotion is not utterly fulfilled till it becomes action and knowledge. If thou pursuest after God and canst overtake Him, let Him not go till thou hast His reality. If thou hast hold of His reality, insist on having also His totality. The first will give thee divine knowledge, the second will give thee divine works and a free and perfect joy in the universe.

410. Others boast of their love for God. My boast is that I did not love God; it was He who loved me and sought me out and forced me to belong to Him.

411. After I knew that God was a woman, I learned something from far-off about love; but it was only when I became a woman and served my Master and Paramour that I knew love utterly.

412. To commit adultery with God is the perfect experience for which the world was created.

413. To fear God really is to remove oneself to a distance from Him, but to fear Him in play gives an edge to utter delightfulness.

414. The Jew invented the God-fearing man; India the God-knower and God-lover.

415. The servant of God was born in Judaea, but he came to maturity among the Arabs. India's joy is in the servant-lover.

416. Perfect love casts out fear; but still keep thou some tender shadow and memory of the exile and it will make the perfection more perfect.

417. Thy soul has not tasted God's entire delight, if it has never had the joy of being His enemy, opposing His designs and engaging with Him in mortal combat.

418. If you cannot make God love you, make Him fight you. If He will not give you the embrace of the lover, compel Him to give you the embrace of the wrestler.

419. My soul is the captive of God, taken by Him in battle; it still remembers the war, though so far from it, with delight and alarm and wonder.

420. Most of all things on earth I hated pain till God hurt and tortured me; then it was revealed to me that pain is only a perverse and recalcitrant shape of excessive delight.

421. There are four stages in the pain God gives to us; when it is only pain; when it is pain that causes pleasure; when it is pain that is pleasure; and when it is purely a fiercer form of delight.

422. Even when one has climbed up into those levels of bliss where pain vanishes, it still survives disguised as intolerable ecstasy.

423. When I was mounting upon ever higher crests of His joy, I asked myself whether there was no limit to the increase of bliss and almost I grew afraid of God's embraces.

424. The next greatest rapture to the love of God, is the love of God in men; there, too, one has the joy of multiplicity.

425. For monogamy may be the best for the body, but the soul that loves God in men dwells here always as the boundless & ecstatic polygamist; yet all the time — that is the secret — it is in love with only one being.

426. The whole world is my seraglio and every living being and inanimate existence in it is the instrument of my rapture.

427. I did not know for some time whether I loved Krishna best or Kali; when I loved Kali, it was loving myself, but when I loved Krishna, I loved another, and still it was my Self with whom I was in love. Therefore I came to love Krishna better even than Kali.

428. What is the use of admiring Nature or worshipping her as a Power, a Presence and a goddess? What is the use, either, of appreciating her aesthetically or artistically? The secret is to enjoy her with the soul as one enjoys a woman with the body.

429. When one has the vision in the heart, everything, Nature and Thought and Action, ideas and occupations and tastes and objects become the Beloved and are a source of ecstasy.

430. The philosophers who reject the world as Maya, are very wise and austere and holy; but I cannot help thinking sometimes that they are also just a little stupid and allow God to cheat them too easily.

431. For my part, I think I have a right to insist on God giving Himself to me in the world as well as out of it. Why did He make it at all, if He wanted to escape that obligation?

432. The Mayavadin talks of my Personal God as a dream and prefers to dream of Impersonal Being; the Buddhist puts that

aside too as a fiction and prefers to dream of Nirvana and the bliss of nothingness. Thus all the dreamers are busy reviling each other's visions and parading their own as the panacea. What the soul utterly rejoices in, is for thought the ultimate reality.

433. Beyond Personality the Mayavadin sees indefinable Existence; I followed him there and found my Krishna beyond in indefinable Personality.

434. When I first met Krishna, I loved Him as a friend and playmate till He deceived me; then I was indignant and could not forgive Him. Afterwards I loved Him as a lover and He still deceived me; I was again and much more indignant, but this time I had to pardon.

435. After offending, He forced me to pardon Him not by reparation, but by committing fresh offences.

436. So long as God tried to repair His offences against me, we went on periodically quarrelling; but when He found out His mistake, the quarrelling stopped, for I had to submit to Him entirely.

437. When I saw others than Krishna and myself in the world, I kept secret God's doings with me; but since I began to see Him and myself everywhere, I have become shameless and garrulous.

438. All that my Lover has, belongs to me. Why do you abuse me for showing off the ornaments He has given to me?

439. My Lover took His crown and royal necklace from His head and neck and clothed me with them; but the disciples of the saints and the prophets abused me and said, "He is hunting after siddhis."

440. I did my Lover's commands in the world & the will of my Captor; but they cried, "Who is this corruptor of youth, this disturber of morals?"

441. If I cared even for your praise, O ye saints, if I cherished my reputation, O ye prophets, my Lover would never have taken me into His bosom and given me the freedom of His secret chambers.

442. I was intoxicated with the rapture of my Lover and I threw the robe of the world from me even in the world's highways. Why should I care that the worldlings mock and the Pharisees turn their faces?

443. To thy lover, O Lord, the railing of the world is wild honey and the pelting of stones by the mob is summer rain on the body. For is it not Thou that railest and peltest, and is it not Thou in the stones that strikest and hurtest me?

444. There are two things in God which men call evil, that which they cannot understand at all and that which they misunderstand and, possessing, misuse; it is only what they grope after half-vainly and dimly understand that they call good and holy. But to me all things in Him are lovable.

445. They say, O my God, that I am mad because I see no fault in Thee; but if I am indeed mad with Thy love, I do not wish to recover my sanity.

446. "Errors, falsehoods, stumblings!" they cry. How bright and beautiful are Thy errors, O Lord! Thy falsehoods save Truth alive; by Thy stumblings the world is perfected.

447. Life, Life, Life, I hear the passions cry; God, God, God, is the soul's answer. Unless thou seest and lovest Life as God only, then is Life itself a sealed joy to thee.

448. "He loves her", the senses say; but the soul says "God God God". That is the all-embracing formula of existence.

449. If thou canst not love the vilest worm and the foulest of

criminals, how canst thou believe that thou hast accepted God in thy spirit?

450. To love God, excluding the world, is to give Him an intense but imperfect adoration.

451. Is love only a daughter or handmaid of jealousy? If Krishna loves Chandrabali, why should I not love her also?

452. Because thou lovest God only, thou art apt to claim that He should love thee rather than others; but this is a false claim contrary to right & the nature of things. For He is the One but thou art of the many. Rather become one in heart & soul with all beings, then there will be none in the world but thou alone for Him to love.

453. My quarrel is with those who are foolish enough not to love my Lover, not with those who share His love with me.

454. In those whom God loves, have delight; on those whom He pretends not to love, take pity.

455. Dost thou hate the atheist because he does love not God? Then shouldst thou be disliked because thou dost not love God perfectly.

456. There is one thing especially in which creeds and churches surrender themselves to the devil, and that is in their anathemas. When the priest chants Anathema Maranatha, then I see a devil worshipper praying.

457. No doubt, when the priest curses, he is crying to God; but it is the God of anger and darkness to whom he devotes himself along with his enemy; for as he approaches God, so shall God receive him.

458. I was much plagued by Satan, until I found that it was

God who was tempting me; then the anguish of him passed out of my soul for ever.

459. I hated the devil and was sick with his temptations and tortures; and I could not tell why the voice in his departing words was so sweet that when he returned often and offered himself to me, it was with sorrow I refused him. Then I discovered it was Krishna at His tricks and my hate was changed into laughter.

460. They explained the evil in the world by saying that Satan had prevailed against God; but I think more proudly of my Beloved. I believe that nothing is done but by His will in heaven or hell, on earth or on the waters.

461. In our ignorance we are like children proud of our success in walking erect and unaided and too eager to be aware of the mother's steadying touch on the shoulder. When we wake, we look back and see that God was leading and upholding us always.

462. At first whenever I fell back into sin, I used to weep and rage against myself and against God for having suffered it. Afterwards it was as much as I could dare to ask, "Why hast thou rolled me again in the mud, O my playfellow?" Then even that came to my mind to seem too bold and presumptuous; I could only get up in silence, look at him out of the corner of my eyes — and clean myself.

463. God has so arranged life that the world is the soul's husband; Krishna its divine paramour. We owe a debt of service to the world and are bound to it by a law, a compelling opinion, and a common experience of pain and pleasure, but our heart's worship and our free and secret joy are for our Lover.

464. The joy of God is secret and wonderful; it is a mystery and a rapture at which common sense makes mouths of mockery;

but the soul that has once tasted it, can never renounce, whatever worldly disrepute, torture and affliction it may bring us.

465. God, the world Guru, is wiser than thy mind; trust Him and not that eternal self-seeker & arrogant sceptic.

466. The sceptic mind doubts always because it cannot understand, but the faith of the God-lover persists in knowing although it cannot understand. Both are necessary to our darkness, but there can be no doubt which is the mightier. What I cannot understand now, I shall some day master, but if I lose faith & love, I fall utterly from the goal which God has set before me.

467. I may question God, my guide & teacher, & ask Him, "Am I right or hast Thou in thy love & wisdom suffered my mind to deceive me?" Doubt thy mind, if thou wilt, but doubt not that God leads thee.

468. Because thou wert given at first imperfect conceptions about God, now thou ragest and deniest Him. Man, dost thou doubt thy teacher because he gave not thee the whole of knowledge at the beginning? Study rather that imperfect truth & put it in its place, so that thou mayst pass on safely to the wider knowledge that is now opening before thee.

469. This is how God in His love teaches the child soul & the weakling, taking them step by step and withholding the vision of His ultimate & yet unattainable mountaintops. And have we not all some weakness? Are we not all in His sight but as little children?

470. This I have seen that whatever God has withheld from me, He withheld in His love & wisdom. Had I grasped it then, I would have turned some great good into a great poison. Yet sometimes when we insist, He gives us poison to drink that we

may learn to turn from it and taste with knowledge His ambrosia & His nectar.

471. Even the atheist ought now to be able to see that creation marches towards some infinite & mighty purpose which evolution in its very nature supposes. But infinite purpose & fulfilment presupposes an infinite wisdom that prepares, guides, shapes, protects & justifies. Revere then that Wisdom & worship it with thoughts in thy soul if not with incense in a temple, and even though thou deny it the heart of infinite Love and the mind of infinite self-effulgence. Then though thou know it not it is still Krishna whom thou reverest & worshippest.

472. The Lord of Love has said, "They who follow after the Unknowable & Indefinable, follow after Me and I accept them." He has justified by His word the Illusionist & the Agnostic. Why then, O devotee, dost thou rail at him whom thy Master has accepted?

473. Calvin who justified eternal Hell, knew not God but made one terrible mask of Him His eternal reality. If there were an unending Hell, it could only be a seat of unending rapture; for God is Ananda and than the eternity of His bliss there is no other eternity.

474. Dante, when he said that God's perfect love created eternal Hell, wrote perhaps wiselier than he knew; for from stray glimpses I have sometimes thought there is a Hell where our souls suffer aeons of intolerable ecstasy & wallow as if for ever in the utter embrace of Rudra, the sweet & terrible.

475. Discipleship to God the Teacher, sonship to God the Father, tenderness of God the Mother, clasp of the hand of the divine Friend, laughter and sport with our Comrade and boy Playfellow, blissful servitude to God the Master, rapturous love of our divine Paramour, these are the seven beatitudes of life in the human body. Canst thou unite all these in a single supreme &

rainbow-hued relation? Then hast thou no need of any heaven and thou exceedest the emancipation of the Adwaitin.

476. When will the world change into the model of heaven? When all mankind becomes boys & girls together with God revealed as Krishna & Kali, the happiest boy & strongest girl of the crowd, playing together in the gardens of Paradise. The Semitic Eden was well enough, but Adam & Eve were too grown up and its God himself too old & stern & solemn for the offer of the Serpent to be resisted.

477. The Semites have afflicted mankind with the conception of a God who is a stern & dignified king & solemn judge & knows not mirth. But we who have seen Krishna, know Him for a boy fond of play and a child full of mischief & happy laughter.

478. A God who cannot smile, could not have created this humorous universe.

479. God took a child to fondle him in His bosom of delight; but the mother wept & would not be consoled because her child no longer existed.

480. When I suffer from pain or grief or mischance, I say "So, my old Playfellow, thou hast taken again to bullying me," and I sit down to possess the pleasure of the pain, the joy of the grief, the good fortune of the mischance; then He sees He is found out and takes His ghosts & bugbears away from me.

481. The seeker after divine knowledge finds in the description of Krishna stealing the robes of the Gopis one of the deepest parables of God's ways with the soul, the devotee a perfect rendering in divine act of his heart's mystic experiences, the prurient & the Puritan (two faces of one temperament) only a lustful story. Men bring what they have in themselves and see it reflected in the Scripture.

482. My lover took away my robe of sin and I let it fall, rejoicing; then he plucked at my robe of virtue, but I was ashamed and alarmed and prevented him. It was not till he wrested it from me by force that I saw how my soul had been hidden from me.

483. Sin is a trick & a disguise of Krishna to conceal Himself from the gaze of the virtuous. Behold, O Pharisee, God in the sinner, sin in thy self purifying thy heart; clasp thy brother.

484. Love of God, charity towards men is the first step towards perfect wisdom.

485. He who condemns failure & imperfection, is condemning God; he limits his own soul and cheats his own vision. Condemn not, but observe Nature, help & heal thy brothers and strengthen by sympathy their capacities & their courage.

486. Love of man, love of woman, love of things, love of thy neighbour, love of thy country, love of animals, love of humanity are all the love of God reflected in these living images. So love & grow mighty to enjoy all, to help all and to love for ever.

487. If there are things that absolutely refuse to be transformed or remedied into God's more perfect image, they may be destroyed with tenderness in the heart, but ruthlessness in the smiting. But make sure first that God has given thee thy sword and thy mission.

488. I should love my neighbour not because he is neighbourhood, — for what is there in neighbourhood and distance? nor because the religions tell me he is my brother, — for where is the root of that brotherhood? but because he is myself. Neighbourhood and distance affect the body, the heart goes beyond them. Brotherhood is of blood or country or religion or humanity, but when self-interest clamours what becomes of this brotherhood? It is only by living in God & turning mind and heart & body

into the image of his universal unity that that deep, disinterested and unassailable love becomes possible.

489. When I live in Krishna, then ego & self-interest vanish and only God himself can qualify my love bottomless & illimitable.

490. Living in Krishna, even enmity becomes a play of love and the wrestling of brothers.

491. To the soul that has hold of the highest beatitude, life cannot be an evil or a sorrowful illusion; rather all life becomes the rippling love and laughter of a divine Lover & Playfellow.

492. Canst thou see God as the bodiless Infinite & yet love Him as a man loves his mistress? Then has the highest truth of the Infinite been revealed to thee. Canst thou also clothe the Infinite in one secret embraceable body and see Him seated in each & all of these bodies that are visible & sensible? Then has its widest & profoundest truth come also into thy possession.

493. Divine Love has simultaneously a double play, an universal movement, deep, calm & bottomless like the nether Ocean, which broods upon the whole world and each thing that is in it as upon a level bed with an equal pressure, and a personal movement, forceful, intense & ecstatic like the dancing surface of the same Ocean, which varies the height & force of its billows and chooses the objects it shall fall upon with the kiss of its foam & spray and the clasp of its engulfing waters.

494. I used to hate and avoid pain and resent its infliction; but now I find that had I not so suffered, I would not now possess, trained and perfected, this infinitely & multitudinously sensible capacity of delight in my mind, heart and body. God justifies himself in the end even when He has masked Himself as a bully and a tyrant.

495. I swore that I would not suffer from the world's grief and the world's stupidity and cruelty & injustice and I made my

heart as hard in endurance as the nether millstone and my mind as a polished surface of steel. I no longer suffered, but enjoyment had passed away from me. Then God broke my heart and ploughed up my mind. I rose through cruel & incessant anguish to a blissful painlessness and through sorrow and indignation & revolt to an infinite knowledge and a settled peace.

496. When I found that pain was the reverse side & the training of delight, I sought to heap blows on myself & multiply suffering in all my members; for even God's tortures seemed to me slow & slight & inefficient. Then my Lover had to stay my hand & cry, "Cease; for my stripes are enough for thee."

497. The self-torture of the old monks & penitents was perverse & stupid; yet was there a secret soul of knowledge behind their perversities.

498. God is our wise & perfect Friend; because he knows when to smite as well as when to fondle, when to slay us no less than when to save & to succour.

499. The divine Friend of all creatures conceals His friendliness in the mask of an enemy till He has made us ready for the highest heavens; then, as in Kurukshetra, the terrible form of the Master of strife, suffering & destruction is withdrawn & the sweet face, the tender arm, the oft-clasped body of Krishna shine out on the shaken soul & purified eyes of his eternal comrade & playmate.

500. Suffering makes us capable of the full force of the Master of Delight; it makes us capable also to bear the utter play of the Master of Power. Pain is the key that opens the gates of strength; it is the high-road that leads to the city of beatitude.

501. Yet, O soul of man, seek not after pain, for that is not His will, seek after His joy only; as for suffering, it will come to thee surely in His providence as often and as much as is needed for

thee. Then bear it that thou mayst find out at last its heart of rapture.

502. Neither do thou inflict pain, O man, on thy fellow; God alone has the right to inflict pain; or those have it whom He has commissioned. But deem not fanatically, as did Torquemada, that thou art one of these.

503. In former times there was a noble form of asseveration for souls compact merely of force and action, "As surely as God liveth." But for our modern needs another asseveration would suit better, "As surely as God loveth."

504. Science is chiefly useful to the God-lover & the God-knower because it enables him to understand in detail and admire the curious wonders of His material workmanship. The one learns & cries, "Behold how the Spirit has manifested itself in matter"; the other, "Behold, the touch of my Lover & Master, the perfect Artist, the hand omnipotent."

505. O Aristophanes of the universe, thou who watchest thy world and laughest sweetly to thyself, wilt thou not let me too see with divine eyes and share in thy worldwide laughters?

506. Kalidasa says in a daring image that the snow-rocks of Kailasa are Shiva's loud world-laughters piled up in utter whiteness & pureness on the mountaintops. It is true; and when their image falls on the heart, then the world's cares melt away like the clouds below into their real nothingness.

507. The strangest of the soul's experiences is this, that it finds, when it ceases to care for the image & threat of troubles, then the troubles themselves are nowhere to be found in one's neighbourhood. It is then that we hear from behind those unreal clouds God laughing at us.

508. Has thy effort succeeded, O thou Titan? Dost thou sit, like Ravana and Hiranyakashipou, served by the gods and the

world's master? But that which thy soul was really hunting after, has escaped from thee.

509. Ravana's mind thought it was hungering after universal sovereignty and victory over Rama; but the aim his soul kept its vision fixed upon all the time was to get back to its heaven as soon as possible & be again God's menial. Therefore, as the shortest way, it hurled itself against God in a furious clasp of enmity.

510. The greatest of joys is to be, like Naraka, the slave of God; the worst of Hells, being abandoned of God, to be the world's master. That which seems nearest to the ignorant conception of God, is the farthest from him.

511. God's servant is something; God's slave is greater.

512. To be master of the world would indeed be supreme felicity, if one were universally loved; but for that one would have to be at the same time the slave of all humanity.

513. After all when thou countest up thy long service to God, thou wilt find thy supreme work was the flawed & little good thou didst in love for humanity.

514. There are two works that are perfectly pleasing to God in his servant; to sweep in silent adoration His temple-floors and to fight in the world's battlefield for His divine consummation in humanity.

515. He who has done even a little good to human beings, though he be the worst of sinners, is accepted by God in the ranks of His lovers and servants. He shall look upon the face of the Eternal.

516. O fool of thy weakness, cover not God's face from thyself by a veil of awe, approach Him not with a suppliant weakness.

Look! thou wilt see on His face not the solemnity of the King & Judge, but the smile of the Lover.

517. Until thou canst learn to grapple with God as a wrestler with his comrade, thy soul's strength shall always be hid from thee.

518. Sumbha first loved Kali with his heart & body, then was furious with her and fought her, at last prevailed against her, seized her by the hair & whirled her thrice round him in the heavens; the next moment he was slain by her. These are the Titan's four strides to immortality and of them all the last is the longest and mightiest.

519. Kali is Krishna revealed as dreadful Power & wrathful Love. She slays with her furious blows the self in body, life & mind in order to liberate it as spirit eternal.

520. Our parents fell, in the deep Semitic apologue, because they tasted the fruit of the tree of good and evil. Had they taken at once of the tree of eternal life, they would have escaped the immediate consequence; but God's purpose in humanity would have been defeated. His wrath is our eternal advantage.

521. If Hell were possible, it would be the shortest cut to the highest heaven. For verily God loveth.

522. God drives us out [of] every Eden that we may be forced to travel through the desert to a diviner Paradise. If thou wonder why should that parched & fierce transit be necessary, then art thou befooled by thy mind and hast not studied thy soul behind and its dim desires and secret raptures.

523. A healthy mind hates pain; for the desire of pain that men sometimes develop in their minds is morbid and contrary to Nature. But the soul cares not for the mind & its sufferings any more than the iron-master for the pain of the ore in the furnace; it follows its own necessities and its own hunger.

524. Pity is sometimes a good substitute for love; but it is always no more than a substitute.

525. Self-pity is always born of self-love; but pity for others is not always born of love for its object. It is sometimes a self-regarding shrinking from the sight of pain; sometimes the rich man's contemptuous dole to the pauper. Develop rather God's divine compassion than human pity.

526. Not pity that bites the heart and weakens the inner members, but a divine masterful & untroubled compassion and helpfulness is the virtue that we should encourage.

527. To find that saving a man's body or mind from suffering is not always for the good of either soul, mind or body, is one of the bitterest of experiences for the humanly compassionate.

528. Human pity is born of ignorance & weakness; it is the slave of emotional impressions. Divine compassion understands, discerns & saves.

529. Indiscriminate compassion is the noblest gift of temperament, not to do even the least hurt to one living thing is the highest of all human virtues; but God practises neither. Is man therefore nobler and better than the All-loving?

530. Love and serve men, but beware lest thou desire their approbation. Obey rather God within thee.

531. Not to have heard the voice of God and His angels is the world's idea of sanity.

532. See God everywhere and be not frightened by masks. Believe that all falsehood is truth in the making or truth in the breaking, all failure an effectuality concealed, all weakness strength hiding itself from its own vision, all pain a secret & violent ecstasy. If thou believest firmly & unweariedly, in the end thou wilt see & experience the All-true, Almighty & All-blissful.

533. Human love fails by its own ecstasy, human strength is exhausted by its own effort, human knowledge throws a shadow that conceals half the globe of truth from its own sunlight; but divine knowledge embraces opposite truths & reconciles them, divine strength grows by the prodigality of its self-expenditure, divine love can squander itself utterly, yet never waste or diminish.

534. The rejection of falsehood by the mind seeking after truth is one of the chief causes why mind cannot attain to the settled, rounded & perfect truth; not to escape falsehood is the effort of divine mind, but to seize the truth which lies masked behind even the most grotesque or far-wandering error.

535. The whole truth about any object is a rounded & all-embracing globe which for ever circles around, but never touches the one & only subject & object of knowledge, God.

536. There are many profound truths which are like weapons dangerous to the unpractised wielder. Rightly handled, they are the most precious & potent in God's armoury.

537. The obstinate pertinacity with which we cling to our meagre, fragmentary, night-besieged & grief-besieged individual existence even while the unbroken bliss of our universal life calls to us, is one of the most amazing of God's mysteries. It is only equalled by the infinite blindness with which we cast a shadow of our ego over the whole world & call that the universal being. These two darknesses are the very essence & potency of Maya.

538. Atheism is the shadow or dark side of the highest perception of God. Every formula we frame about God, though always true as a symbol, becomes false when we accept it as a sufficient formula. The Atheist & Agnostic come to remind us of our error.

539. God's negations are as useful to us as His affirmations. It is He who as the Atheist denies His own existence for the better

perfecting of human knowledge. It is not enough to see God in Christ & Ramakrishna & hear His words, we must see Him and hear Him also in Huxley & Haeckel.

540. Canst thou see God in thy torturer & slayer even in thy moment of death or thy hours of torture? Canst thou see Him in that which thou art slaying, see & love even while thou slayest? Thou hast thy hand on the supreme knowledge. How shall he attain to Krishna who has never worshipped Kali?

Additional Aphorisms

541. I know that the opposite of what I say is true, but for the present what I say is still truer.

542. I believe with you, my friends, that God, if He exists, is a demon and an ogre. But after all what are you going to do about it?

*

543. God is the supreme Jesuit Father. He is ever doing evil that good may come of it; ever misleads for a greater leading; ever oppresses our will that it may arrive at last at an infinite freedom.

544. Our Evil is to God not evil, but ignorance and imperfection, our good a lesser imperfection.

545. The religionist speaks a truth, though too violently, when he tells us that even our greatest and purest virtue is as vileness before the divine nature of God.

546. To be beyond good and evil is not to act sin or virtue indifferently, but to arrive at a high and universal good.

547. That good is not our ethical virtue which is a relative and erring light in the world; it is supra-ethical and divine.

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

ESSAYS DIVINE AND HUMAN consists of short prose pieces written by Sri Aurobindo between 1910 and the late 1940s and not published before his passing in 1950. Most prose works written prior to 1910 on subjects other than politics are published in *Early Cultural Writings*, volume 1 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. Most short prose works written after 1910 and published during his lifetime are included in *Essays in Philosophy and Yoga*, volume 13 of THE COMPLETE WORKS. Short writings on the Vedas, the Upanishads and other specialised subjects are included in the volumes devoted to those subjects. Most of the writings in the present volume deal with philosophy, yoga, and yogic psychology. The contents have been divided into four parts:

Part One. *Essays Divine and Human.* More or less complete essays, most of which were given titles and revised to some extent by the author. They have been grouped by period in five sections.

Part Two. *From Man to Superman.* Notes, drafts and fragments on yoga and yogic philosophy and psychology. Few of these pieces were revised; most are incomplete, several quite fragmentary. The editors have arranged them by subject on lines explained below.

Part Three. *Notes and Fragments on Various Subjects.* Miscellaneous pieces that received little or no revision by the author. They differ from the pieces in Part Two in dealing with subjects not directly related to yoga, philosophy or psychology.

Part Four. *Thoughts and Aphorisms.* A series of aphorisms, revised but never prepared for publication by the author.

PART ONE: ESSAYS DIVINE AND HUMAN

The pieces in this part have been arranged by the editors in five chronological sections. Many of the sections or subsections correspond to organic divisions in the author's work.

Section One (circa 1911)

All but the first piece in this section were written in a single notebook, probably in 1911. “Certitudes” belongs roughly to the same period. Above “Man” Sri Aurobindo wrote a collective title: “Essays — ”.

Certitudes. Circa 1911–13. The Sanskrit phrase at the end, a citation from the Bhagavad Gita (4.11), means “as men approach me, so I accept them to my love”.
Moksha. Circa 1911.
Man. Circa 1911. The Sanskrit phrase in the second paragraph, an altered citation from the Aitareya Upanishad (I.2.3), means “well-built, indeed”.
Philosophy. Circa 1911.
The Siddhis. Circa 1911.
The Psychology of Yoga. Circa 1911. Sri Aurobindo used this title again for a piece in Section Two that was written independently a year or two later and yet again as the general title of the first group of essays in Section Three.

Section Two (1910–1913)

Manuscripts of six of these essays — “The Sources of Poetry”, “The Interpretation of Scripture”, “On Original Thinking”, “The Balance of Justice”, “Social Reform” and “The Claims of Theosophy” — were typed in or around 1912 using the same typewriter and the same sort of paper. The other seven essays are related to the typed ones by subject or date or both.

Na Kinchidapi Chintayet. Possibly early 1910. The title is a quotation from the Bhagavad Gita (6.25): “One should not think of anything at all.”
The Sources of Poetry. Circa 1912.
The Interpretation of Scripture. Circa 1912.
On Original Thinking. Circa 1912. After the text of the principal version, the editors have placed the draft opening of another version, entitled in the manuscript “On the Importance of Original Thinking”. Above this title Sri Aurobindo wrote: “Essays — Human and Divine”.

The editors have used a variant of this (see "The Silence behind Life" below) as the title of this part and of the volume as a whole.

The Balance of Justice. Circa 1912. This is a revised and enlarged version of "European Justice" (published in *Early Cultural Writings*), which probably was written in 1910.

Social Reform. Circa 1912. The first nine paragraphs were typewritten. Sri Aurobindo subsequently added five handwritten paragraphs to the last typed sheet. (These paragraphs are difficult to read and parts have been lost through mutilation of the manuscript.) The passage beginning "We are Hindus" was written separately and headed "For 'Social Reform'". Sri Aurobindo left no indication where he wanted it inserted. The editors have placed it at the end, separating it from the main text by a white space.

Hinduism and the Mission of India. Circa 1912. Editorial title. The first pages of the manuscript have been lost; the first surviving sentence lacks its beginning.

The Psychology of Yoga (regarding the title, see the note on "The Psychology of Yoga" in Section One). Circa 1912 (written around the same time as the pieces on Theosophy that follow).

The Claims of Theosophy. Circa 1910–12 (certainly written after January 1908, when Sri Aurobindo met V. B. Lele, the "member of the Theosophical Society who [gave] me spiritual help" mentioned in paragraph six). This article, like the others on Theosophy, was never published by Sri Aurobindo. However much he disagreed with some of the methods or doctrines of the Theosophical Society, he was well aware of the pioneering work done by this movement, which "with its comprehensive combinations of old and new beliefs and its appeal to ancient spiritual and psychic systems, has everywhere exercised an influence far beyond the circle of its professed adherents" (*The Renaissance in India*, CWSA vol. 20, p. 70). He assured a disciple who had been associated with the Theosophists: "I have nothing against it [the Theosophical Society] nor against any of the Theosophists, to all of whom I wish the best. I am not against them" (Talk with a disciple, 11 January 1926).

Science & Religion in Theosophy. Circa 1910–12. Heading in the manuscript: "Papers on Theosophy / II / Science & Religion in Theosophy". (Although not so identified, "The Claims of Theosophy" evidently is the first of the papers.)

Sat. Circa 1912.
Sachchidananda. Circa 1912–13.
The Silence behind Life. Circa 1912. Above the title Sri Aurobindo wrote: "Essays Divine and Human". The editors have used this as the title of this part and of the volume as a whole.

Section Three (circa 1913)

The essays in this section form three groups, which were written in three notebooks in or around 1913. The titles of the first and third groups were given by Sri Aurobindo.

The Psychology of Yoga. Sri Aurobindo wrote this title inside the cover of the notebook used. On the front of the cover he wrote, and then cancelled, "Hints on Yoga".
  Initial Definitions and Descriptions. Circa 1913. Before the first paragraph Sri Aurobindo wrote the numeral "1".
  The Object of Our Yoga. Circa 1913. This essay is found in the notebook containing the pieces that make up the next group, but seems to go better here. It has no title in the manuscript.
Purna Yoga. Editorial title. The three pieces are headed I, II, III in the manuscript.
  I. The Entire Purpose of Yoga. Circa 1913.
  II. Parabrahman, Mukti & Human Thought-Systems. Circa 1913.
  III. Parabrahman and Parapurusha. Circa 1913. Editorial title.
Natural and Supernatural Man. This title is written on the cover of the notebook that contains all the pieces in this group.
  The Evolutionary Aim in Yoga. Circa 1913.
  The Fullness of Yoga — In Condition. Circa 1913. A draft of this and the preceding essay is published as piece 127 of Part Two. The second part of the draft, from the phrase "Yoga in its practice may be either perfect or partial" to the end, was rewritten as "The Fullness of Yoga — In Condition". This essay follows the draft rather closely for two and a half paragraphs; from this point the two are developed on different lines. The significance of the phrase "in condition" in the title is not made clear in the essay; but it is brought out sufficiently well in the draft.

Nature. Circa 1913. This essay was at one point to be entitled "Maya, Lila, Prakriti, Chit-Shakti". Individual pieces on each of these aspects of the force called Nature were apparently planned, but only "Maya" was written.

Maya. Circa 1913. In the second paragraph Sri Aurobindo writes of his intention to "look at the Cosmos from . . . the standpoint . . . of . . . Lila". Although never able to complete an essay on this theme, he did sketch his view of the subject in two sentences written on the back cover of the notebook. These sentences are given as a footnote.

Section Four (1914–1919)

The four essays making up this section were written independently during the period of publication of the monthly journal *Arya* (1914–21). They may have been meant for the journal, but were not published there. They have no relationship with each other except that of date.

The Beginning and the End. Circa 1915. Editorial title. In the manuscript this passage is followed by one that was published in the *Arya* in May 1915 under the title "Thoughts and Glimpses". Subsequently this second passage was reproduced as three parts of the booklet *Thoughts and Glimpses* (published in *Essays in Philosophy and Yoga*).

The Hour of God. Circa 1918.

Beyond Good and Evil. Circa 1918. Editorial title.

The Divine Superman. Circa 1918.

Section Five (1927 and after)

The second, third and fourth essays in this section were written in the same notebook around 1930. The other two were written at roughly the same time.

The Law of the Way. Circa 1927. The manuscript is untitled; the editors have used a phrase from the last sentence as heading.

Man and the Supermind. Circa 1930. Sri Aurobindo returned to the theme "Man is a transitional being" again and again. See pieces 46, 47, 53, 54, 77, 80, 81 and 82 of Part Two. The present essay is the last of several drafts.

The Involved and Evolving Godhead. Circa 1930. Written immediately after the preceding essay in the same notebook. An earlier draft, written around 1927, is published as piece 51 of Part Two.

The Evolution of Consciousness. Circa 1930. Untitled in the manuscript. The Greek sentence at the end of the third paragraph means "God is not but becomes."

The Path. Circa 1930. This essay is one of several pieces written around 1930 on the supramental yoga. Three others are published as pieces 18, 157 and 159 of Part Two.

PART TWO: FROM MAN TO SUPERMAN

The 171 notes, drafts and fragments that make up this part were written by Sri Aurobindo over the course of thirty-five years, from around 1912 to 1947, when failing eyesight obliged him to stop writing by hand.

None of the pieces were revised for publication by the author. It has sometimes been necessary for the editors to make judgments as to what his intentions were. In addition, some of the pieces, particularly those from the 1940s, are quite difficult to read. The editors have been able to decipher all but a few words; doubtful readings and illegible words are indicated in accordance with the Guide to Editorial Notation. Special problems are discussed in the reference volume.

These 171 pieces were never intended to form a single work. The compilation, arrangement and numbering is the responsibility of the editors. They have chosen to arrange the pieces by subject rather than date because a strict chronological arrangement, even if possible, would have resulted in thematic incoherence. A table in the reference volume shows the approximate chronological sequence of the pieces.

The material falls into three broad categories, which have been made the main sections of the compilation: philosophy (the principles of things), psychology (the study of consciousness), and yoga. The pieces in each section have been divided into subsections and sub-subsections.

A number of the pieces have headings in the manuscript. Some apparently were intended to be the titles of the essays or books that the pieces would have introduced. Since Sri Aurobindo frequently abandoned the pieces before the subject given in the title was reached, all headings have been omitted from the texts. They are given in the notes on individual pieces below. Some headings have been made the titles of subdivisions. One heading used twice by Sri Aurobindo, “From Man to Superman”, has been used as the title of this part.

Sri Aurobindo usually placed some sort of sign (asterisk, group of asterisks, bar, etc.) to mark his own division of pieces into sections. The editors have represented his sign uniformly by a single asterisk.

Notes on Individual Pieces in Part Two

1. Circa 1927. Heading: “God, Nature and Man” (used as the subtitle of this section; cf. the heading of piece 14). The text of the piece is cancelled in the manuscript.
2. Circa 1936.
3. Late 1920s to early 1930s. Heading: “The Divine”.
4. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
5. Circa 1912. Heading: “Ishavasyam”. On the next two pages of the same notebook is written a fragmentary commentary on the Isha Upanishad. The present piece clearly is related to that commentary.
6. *Arya* period (1914–21).
7. Circa 1928–29.
8. Late 1920s to early 1930s. Pieces 8–15 are fragmentary treatments of a theme taken up by Sri Aurobindo recurrently over a period of ten to twenty years. Pieces 8–11 all were written in the same notebook. Cf. also piece 55 and piece 128.
9. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
10. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
11. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
12. Circa 1942. The phrase “Ekam evadvitiyam” was written at the end of the first paragraph, then cancelled.
13. 1930s.
14. Circa 1945. Heading: “God, Nature and Soul. / God / I” (cf. the subtitle of this section).

15. 1930s.
16. Circa 1927.
17. Circa 1927. This piece was not included in the 1994 edition of *Essays Divine and Human*.
18. Circa 1930. Heading: "2. The Fundamental Knowledge". Preceded in the same notebook by "The Path" (Part One, Section Five).
19. Circa 1927. The piece clearly is a fragment.
20. 17 June 1914. Heading: "The Tablet of Vedanta." The opening sentence was written above the title in the manuscript, evidently after some or all of the rest had been written.
21. 1930s.
22. Circa 1913.
23. Circa 1942. Heading: "Note on a criticism in the Modern Review". Written in or shortly after August 1942, when *The Modern Review* (Calcutta) published an adverse review of a Sanskrit-Bengali edition of the Gita edited by Anilbaran Roy, a disciple of Sri Aurobindo. The reviewer charged that the Sanskrit phrase *parā prakṛtir jīvabhūtā* (cf. Gita 7.5), translated by Anilbaran according to Sri Aurobindo's interpretation as presented in *Essays on the Gita* (see CWSA vol. 19, pp. 266, 269 and 519), could not bear the meaning given it, viz., the supreme Nature which has become the *jīva* (individual soul). Sri Aurobindo never published his note. His disciple Kapali Shastri answered the reviewer from a purely grammatical point of view in an article published in the *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual* of 1943 (no. 2, pp. 236–42).
24. Circa 1913.
25. Late 1920s to early 1930s. Headed "(2)"; the unmarked "(1)" presumably is one of the "Ekam evadvitiyam" pieces written in the same notebook (cf. pieces 8–11), probably piece 10. Cf. also piece 92.
26. Circa 1940.
27. June 1914 (probably between 3 and 17 June).
28. Circa 1927.
29. Circa 1927. This piece is the third of three drafts, written within a short time of one another, of the opening of the revised version of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Part I, Chapter 11. The first of

these drafts bears an obvious relation to the printed version, the second an obvious relation to the first, and the third to the second; but almost nothing of the third draft appears in the printed version. It has therefore been printed here as a separate piece.

30. Early 1913.

31. Circa 1942. Heading: “Psychology”.

32. Circa 1942. In the manuscript this piece comes after a passage consisting of quotations from a book dealing with Bergson’s “philosophy of change”, and two sentences written by Sri Aurobindo that are reproduced as piece 71.

33. Late 1920s to early 1930s. Written at the top of a page used otherwise for what is printed as the second footnote to piece 56. The present piece seems to have some textual relation to pieces 56 and 57.

34. *Arya* period (1914–21). The edge of the manuscript is damaged and several words partly or wholly lost. The piece may have been intended for the *Arya*, but was never published there.

35. Circa 1912. Heading: “Life”.

36. Circa 1912. Heading: “Vedantic Suggestions / The Secret of Life — Ananda”.

37. Middle to late 1940s.

38. Circa 1929.

39. Circa 1927.

40. Circa 1942.

41. Circa 1929.

42. Circa 1918. Possibly intended for the *Arya*, perhaps as part of a chapter of *The Life Divine*, but not used even in a modified form in any *Arya* article.

43. Middle to late 1940s. The piece is the second section of a fragment headed “Man and Superman”; the first section is printed as piece 80. In the manuscript three asterisks divide the two sections; the editors have treated them as separate pieces.

44. Circa 1927. The manuscript of the piece occurs amid drafts of “Man and the Supermind” (Part One, Section Five).

45. Circa 1927.

46. Late 1920s to early 1930s.

47. Circa 1947. Heading: "From Man to Superman" (used as the title of this part, cf. piece 53).
48. Circa 1917–18.
49. Circa 1928–29.
50. 1930s.
51. Circa 1927. The piece is a partial draft of "The Involved and Evolving Godhead" (Part One, Section Five).
52. Circa 1942.
53. Middle to late 1940s. Heading: "From Man to Superman / I" (used as the title of this part, cf. piece 47).
54. Middle to late 1940s. Heading: "Superman".
55. Circa 1942. Heading: "The Secret of Consciousness". Note the phrase "Ekam evadvitiyam" (cf. pieces 8–15).
56. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
57. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
58. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
59. Circa 1927.
60. Middle to late 1940s. Heading: "Mat[t]er".
61. Circa 1927. Heading: "Jottings".
62. Circa 1913.
63. Circa 1927.
64. Circa 1927.
65. 1930s, probably 1934.
66. Circa 1927. Written as part of a draft of "Man and the Supermind" (Part One, Section Five).
67. Circa 1927.
68. Circa 1927.
69. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
70. Circa 1927.
71. Circa 1942. Written below the quotations from a book on Bergson mentioned in the note to piece 32. The present piece is headed by the numeral 2, which separates it from the notes. Unlike the notes, the piece is not enclosed in inverted commas and so has been considered to be a writing of Sri Aurobindo's.
72. Late 1930s to early 1940s. Heading: "Intuition".
73. Circa 1927–29.
74. Circa 1928–29.

75. Circa 1928–29. Heading: “On the Supermind.”

76. *Arya* period (1914–21), probably towards the end of the period. Pieces 76–82, as well as pieces 46, 47 and 53 are treatments of a single theme taken up by Sri Aurobindo recurrently over a period of more than twenty-five years (or thirty-five if Aphorism 162 in Part Four is taken into consideration). Pieces 64, 66 and 68 are on a related theme. Sri Aurobindo’s most complete essay on the subject is “Man and the Supermind” (Part One, Section Five).

77. Circa 1928–29.

78. Circa 1928–29.

79. Circa 1928–29.

80. Middle to late 1940s. Heading: “Man and Superman”. This piece was written along with what is published as piece 43.

81. Circa 1942. Heading: “Man and Superman”.

82. 1940–42.

83. 1940–42.

84. 1940–42.

85. Late 1930s to early 1940s. Heading: “Consciousness”.

86. Middle to late 1940s. Heading: “Is Consciousness Real”.

87. 1940–42.

88. Late 1930s to early 1940s.

89. Circa 1927. Heading “Prolegomena”.

90. Circa 1937.

91. Middle to late 1940s.

92. Late 1920s to early 1930s.

93. Late 1920s to early 1930s. The piece is the incomplete second part of an untitled essay, the first part of which is published as “The Evolution of Consciousness” (Part One, Section Five). Sri Aurobindo abandoned the piece without examining the question from the second of the two “vision-bases” spoken of in the first sentence.

94. Middle to late 1940s. Heading: “The Conscient in unconscious things”.

95. Middle to late 1940s (written immediately after piece 94). Heading: “The Consciousness below the Surface”.

96. Middle to late 1940s.

97. Middle to late 1940s.

98. Circa 1942. Heading: "1 The Inconscient Energy".
99. Circa 1942.
100. 1940–42.
101. Circa 1928–29.
102. Circa 1917–18. A half-page blank separates the present piece from piece 103. Heading: "Psychological Maxims".
103. Circa 1917–18. A half-page blank separates the present piece from piece 104.
104. Circa 1917–18.
105. Early 1917. Heading: "The Psychology of Social Development / VII"; this is the title under which the book later published as *The Human Cycle* appeared in the *Arya*; the seventh instalment of the work, unrelated to the present piece, was published in the issue of February 1917.
106. 1912–13.
107. 1912–13. Faces piece 106 in the manuscript.
108. Circa 1927.
109. Late 1940s. Heading: "The Psychology of Integral Yoga".
110. Circa 1942. Heading: "Notes on Consciousness"; the piece is preceded by "1." (no further notes were written).
111. 1 September 1947. Heading: "Consciousness".
112. Circa 1936.
113. 1930s.
114. Circa 1928–29.
115. Late 1940s.
116. Middle to late 1940s.
117. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
118. Late 1920s to early 1930s.
119. Circa 1942. Heading: "*Yoga*".
120. Circa 1930.
121. Circa 1917–18.
122. Circa 1913.
123. Circa 1917–18. Heading: "The Web of Yoga."
124. Circa 1913. Heading: "The Evolutionary Aim of Yoga." The piece apparently is related to "The Evolutionary Aim in Yoga" (Part One, Section Three), and so to piece 127.
125. 1930s.

126. Circa 1920. Heading: “An Introduction to Yoga. / 1 / The Meaning of Yoga”.

127. Circa 1913. This long piece can be considered a draft of what, differently developed, became two essays, “The Evolutionary Aim in Yoga” and “The Fullness of Yoga — In Condition” (Part One, Section Three). The sense of the second of these titles is explained better in the last two paragraphs of the present piece than in the revised essay.

128. Late 1920s to early 1930s.

129. Circa 1915. Heading: “Essays in Yoga. / The Seeds of Yoga.”

130. Circa 1915.

131. Circa 1927.

132. 1930s.

133. Circa 1927.

134. Circa 1928–29. This piece and piece 135 were written in the same notebook; it is possible that they are passages intended for insertion in a larger work, perhaps the revised version of *The Synthesis of Yoga*. (Note, in the first sentence of both pieces, the antecedentless “this”.)

135. Circa 1928–29.

136. Middle to late 1940s. Heading: “Yoga of Devotion”.

137. Circa 1945. Heading: “The Yoga of Devotion”.

138. 1930s.

139. Circa 1926–27. Heading: “The Way of Works”.

140. Circa 1927.

141. Circa 1927.

142. Circa 1927. The manuscript of this piece comes between two drafts of “The Law of the Way” (Part One, Section Five), and parts of the present piece are reminiscent of that essay.

143. Circa 1927.

144. Circa 1912.

145. Circa 1938.

146. Late 1920s to early 1930s.

147. 1930s. Pieces 147–51 were written in this order in a single notebook.

148. 1930s.

149. 1930s.

150. 1930s.

151. 1930s. This piece includes what was published as piece 17 in the 1994 edition of *Essays Divine and Human*.

152. Circa 1928–29. Heading: "The Aim of the Integral Yoga".

153. Circa 1913. The piece breaks off abruptly; it is likely that Sri Aurobindo intended to write about more than two aims of the sadhana (cf. piece 154).

154. Circa 1930.

155. Circa 1930.

156. Late 1930s to early 1940s.

157. Circa 1930. Closely related to "The Path" (Part One, Section Five).

158. Circa 1930.

159. Circa 1930. Heading: "The Path". This piece is the first draft of what is published in Part One, Section Five as "The Path" (the heading of the present piece is used as the title of that essay).

160. Circa 1928–29.

161. Circa 1928–29.

162. Circa 1928–29.

163. 1930s. The piece evidently is incomplete; only one of the four elements mentioned in the first paragraph was taken up.

164. Late 1930s to early 1940s. The piece evidently is incomplete; only one of the three transformations mentioned was taken up.

165. Late 1920s to early 1930s.

166. Late 1930s to early 1940s.

167. Circa 1936.

168. Circa 1927.

169. Circa 1927.

170. Circa 1927. These lines were written (and later bracketed) at the top of an incomplete draft of what is published in Part One, Section Five as "The Law of the Way".

171. Circa 1926–27.

PART THREE: NOTES AND FRAGMENTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS

The pieces in this part were written between 1910 and the late 1940s. They have been arranged by subject.

The Marbles of Time. 1910–14. Editorial title. Cancelled heading: "Marbles".

A Theory of the Human Being. 1912–14.

A Cyclical Theory of Evolution. 1910–13. This piece probably was written around the same time as the preceding one. The opening page or pages (and so also the title) are missing.

A Misunderstanding of Continents. Circa 1918.

Towards Unification. Circa 1912. In the manuscript written beneath the heading: "Studies in the Mahabharat— / The Book of the Woman." Evidently the passage printed here was meant to be an introduction to a discussion of the eleventh book of the Mahabharata, the *Stri-Parva* or Book of the Woman. Sri Aurobindo broke off work on the piece without reaching the proposed subject. The title has been supplied by the editors.

China, Japan and India. Circa 1912.

Renascent India. 1916–18. Editorial title.

Where We Stand in Literature. Circa 1916–18. Draft B was written after Draft A in the same notebook.

The Origin of Genius. 1910–14.

Poetic Genius. Circa 1912. Editorial title. In the manuscript the heading is "The Genius of Valmekie" (see the next piece).

The Voices of the Poets. Circa 1912. Editorial title. The text of this piece, like the preceding one, was written under the heading "The Genius of Valmekie". There is no explicit mention of Valmiki in either piece.

Pensées. Circa 1912.

A Dream. 1910–14. Editorial title. Written under the heading "Srevian [?Srevina] / A Tale of Prehistoric Times—Preface." This introductory fragment is all that exists of a proposed story.

The Beauty of a Crow's Wings. 1910–12. Editorial title.

Science. 1914–21. Editorial title.

Religion. Circa 1927. Editorial title.

Reason and Society. Late 1930s or 1940s. Editorial title. The piece seems to be related to *The Human Cycle*. Published here for the first time.

Justice. Late 1940s. Editorial title.

PART FOUR: THOUGHTS AND APHORISMS

Thoughts and Aphorisms. In or around 1913, Sri Aurobindo wrote 552 aphorisms in a single notebook. In May 1915 and May 1916 he published ten of them in the monthly review *Arya*. (These ten have not been reproduced here. They form part of *Thoughts and Glimpses*, included in *Essays in Philosophy and Yoga*.) Of the 542 aphorisms that remain, two have been classed with the "Additional Aphorisms" (see below). This leaves 540 aphorisms forming the main series of *Thoughts and Aphorisms*.

In the notebook, the aphorisms were written in nine groupings, three of which are headed Jnana, three Karma and three Bhakti. The groupings occur in this order: Jnana, Karma, Bhakti, Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, Karma, Bhakti, Jnana. The editors have placed the three groupings of Jnana, the three groupings of Karma and the three groupings of Bhakti together. Sri Aurobindo numbered all the aphorisms in Jnana and Karma, none of those in Bhakti. Since it appears that he intended the numbers to form part of the text, the editors have placed a number before each aphorism. These numbers do not correspond to those in the manuscript because the three groupings of each section have been placed together and the unnumbered Bhakti section included.

Sri Aurobindo left indications in the manuscript that certain aphorisms were to be moved to a different part or position. For example, he seems to have wanted present aphorisms 240 and 241 to be placed after present aphorism 98. But since some of these manuscript indications are not clear, the editors have followed the original notebook order.

The manuscript, entirely handwritten, was revised once or twice by Sri Aurobindo. The original writing is mostly clear, but the revision is sometimes cramped and difficult to read.

"Additional Aphorisms". The last two aphorisms (541–42) in the notebook containing the main series were not clearly intended for inclusion in the Karma, Jnana or Bhakti sections. The editors have placed them in a separate section along with five other aphorisms (543–47) that were written in a different notebook. The handwriting of these last five indicates that they were written somewhat later than 1913 — possibly as late as 1919.

PUBLISHING HISTORY

Some of the material published in this volume was brought out in *The Hour of God* (Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo Ashram) in 1959. This booklet was reprinted in 1964, 1970 and 1973. In 1982 a new, reorganised edition was published. This was reprinted in 1986, 1991 and 1993.

Thoughts and Aphorisms was first published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1958. A second impression of the first edition was issued the next year. New editions textually identical to the first came out in 1968 and 1971. The texts of the fourth (1977) and fifth (1982) editions each contained corrections of transcription errors. The fifth edition was reprinted in 1988, 1992 and 1996.

In 1971 the contents of the original edition of *The Hour of God*, along with *Thoughts and Aphorisms* and other material, were brought out as *The Hour of God and Other Writings*, volume 17 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library.

In 1994 those parts of *The Hour of God and Other Writings* that had not been published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime, along with other material of the same nature that had not yet been published in a book, were brought out as *Essays Divine and Human*. The texts of all the pieces were checked against the manuscripts. The present volume is for the most part a reprint of that edition.

Essays in Philosophy and Yoga

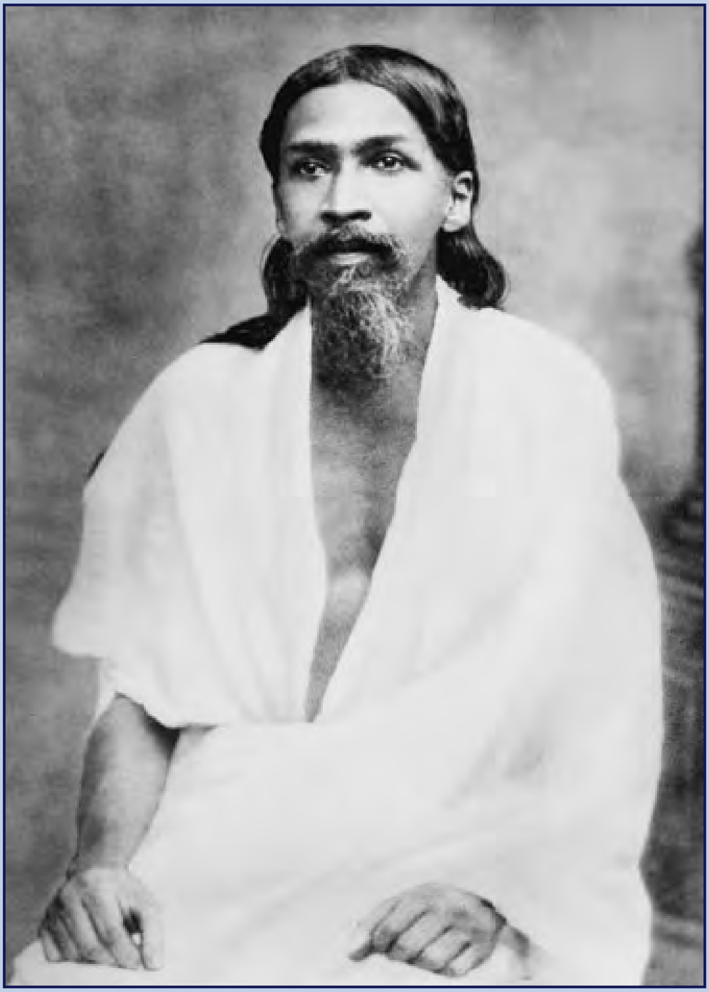

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 13
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1998
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Essays in Philosophy and Yoga

Shorter Works

1910 – 1950

Publisher's Note

Essays in Philosophy and Yoga consists of short works in prose written by Sri Aurobindo between 1909 and 1950 and published during his lifetime. All but a few of them are concerned with aspects of spiritual philosophy, yoga, and related subjects. Short writings on the Veda, the Upanishads, Indian culture, political theory, education, and poetics have been placed in other volumes.

The title of the volume has been provided by the editors. It is adapted from the title of a proposed collection, "Essays in Yoga", found in two of Sri Aurobindo's notebooks. Since 1971 most of the contents of the volume have appeared under the editorial title *The Supramental Manifestation and Other Writings*.

The contents are arranged in five chronological parts. Part One consists of essays published in the *Karmayogin* in 1909 and 1910, Part Two of a long essay written around 1912 and published in 1921, Part Three of essays and other pieces published in the monthly review *Arya* between 1914 and 1921, Part Four of an essay published in the *Standard Bearer* in 1920, and Part Five of a series of essays published in the *Bulletin of Physical Education* in 1949 and 1950.

Many of the essays in Part Three were revised slightly by the author and published in small books between 1920 and 1941. The editors have retained the titles and arrangement of most of those books.

The texts of the pieces have been checked against the texts published in journals and books during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime.

CONTENTS

Part One
Essays from the *Karmayogin* (1909–1910)

The Ideal of the Karmayogin 3
Karmayoga 9
Man — Slave or Free? 13
Yoga and Human Evolution 18
Yoga and Hypnotism 23
The Greatness of the Individual 29
The Process of Evolution 33
Stead and the Spirits 38
Stead and Maskelyne 43
Fate and Free-Will 47
The Three Purushas 51
The Strength of Stillness 57
The Principle of Evil 60
The Stress of the Hidden Spirit 64

Part Two
The Yoga and Its Objects (circa 1912)

The Yoga and Its Objects 71
Appendix: Explanations of Some Words and Phrases 92

Part Three
Writings from the *Arya* (1914–1921)

Notes on the *Arya*

The "Arya's" Second Year 101
Appendix: Passages Omitted from "Our Ideal" 103

The "Arya's" Fourth Year 105

On Ideals and Progress

On Ideals 111
Yoga and Skill in Works 119
Conservation and Progress 127
The Conservative Mind and Eastern Progress 133
Our Ideal 140

The Superman

The Superman 151
All-Will and Free-Will 158
The Delight of Works 163

Evolution

Evolution 169
The Inconscient 176
Materialism 184

Thoughts and Glimpses

Aphorisms 199
Thoughts and Glimpses 208

Heraclitus

Heraclitus 215

The Problem of Rebirth

Section I: Rebirth and Karma

Rebirth 259
The Reincarnating Soul 270
Rebirth, Evolution, Heredity 277
Rebirth and Soul Evolution 285
The Significance of Rebirth 295
The Ascending Unity 307
Involution and Evolution 317
Karma 330
Karma and Freedom 338

Karma, Will and Consequence 351
Rebirth and Karma 358
Karma and Justice 367

Section II: The Lines of Karma

The Foundation 379
The Terrestrial Law 386
Mind Nature and Law of Karma 398
The Higher Lines of Karma 413
Appendix I: The Tangle of Karma 427
Appendix II: A Clarification 433

Other Writings from the *Arya*

The Question of the Month

The Needed Synthesis 439
"Arya" — Its Significance 441
Meditation 445
Different Methods of Writing 448
Occult Knowledge and the Hindu Scriptures 451
The Universal Consciousness 453

The News of the Month

The News of the Month 459

South Indian Vaishnava Poetry

Andal: The Vaishnava Poetess 465
Nammalwar: The Supreme Vaishnava Saint and Poet 467

Arguments to *The Life Divine*

Arguments to *The Life Divine* 471

Part Four
From the *Standard Bearer* (1920)

Ourselves 509

CONTENTS

Part Five
From the *Bulletin of Physical Education* (1949 – 1950)

The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth

Message 517
Perfection of the Body 521
The Divine Body 536
Supermind and the Life Divine 558
Supermind and Humanity 568
Supermind in the Evolution 578
Mind of Light 585
Supermind and Mind of Light 588

Part One

Essays from the *Karmayogin*

1909 – 1910

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry

The Ideal of the Karmayogin

A NATION is building in India today before the eyes of the world so swiftly, so palpably that all can watch the process and those who have sympathy and intuition distinguish the forces at work, the materials in use, the lines of the divine architecture. This nation is not a new race raw from the workshop of Nature or created by modern circumstances. One of the oldest races and greatest civilisations on this earth, the most indomitable in vitality, the most fecund in greatness, the deepest in life, the most wonderful in potentiality, after taking into itself numerous sources of strength from foreign strains of blood and other types of human civilisation, is now seeking to lift itself for good into an organised national unity. Formerly a congeries of kindred nations with a single life and a single culture, always by the law of this essential oneness tending to unity, always by its excess of fecundity engendering fresh diversities and divisions, it has never yet been able to overcome permanently the almost insuperable obstacles to the organisation of a continent. The time has now come when those obstacles can be overcome. The attempt which our race has been making throughout its long history, it will now make under entirely new circumstances. A keen observer would predict its success because the only important obstacles have been or are in the process of being removed. But we go farther and believe that it is sure to succeed because the freedom, unity and greatness of India have now become necessary to the world. This is the faith in which the *Karmayogin* puts its hand to the work and will persist in it, refusing to be discouraged by difficulties however immense and apparently insuperable. We believe that God is with us and in that faith we shall conquer. We believe that humanity needs us and it is the love and service of humanity, of our country, of the race, of our religion that will purify our heart and inspire our action in the struggle.

The task we set before ourselves is not mechanical but moral and spiritual. We aim not at the alteration of a form of government but at the building up of a nation. Of that task politics is a part, but only a part. We shall devote ourselves not to politics alone, nor to social questions alone, nor to theology or philosophy or literature or science by themselves, but we include all these in one entity which we believe to be all-important, the *dharma*, the national religion which we also believe to be universal. There is a mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience of which India has always been destined to be guardian, exemplar and missionary. This is the *sanātana dharma*, the eternal religion. Under the stress of alien impacts she has largely lost hold not of the structure of that *dharma*, but of its living reality. For the religion of India is nothing if it is not lived. It has to be applied not only to life, but to the whole of life; its spirit has to enter into and mould our society, our politics, our literature, our science, our individual character, affections and aspirations. To understand the heart of this *dharma*, to experience it as a truth, to feel the high emotions to which it rises and to express and execute it in life is what we understand by Karmayoga. We believe that it is to make the *yoga* the ideal of human life that India rises today; by the *yoga* she will get the strength to realise her freedom, unity and greatness, by the *yoga* she will keep the strength to preserve it. It is a spiritual revolution we foresee and the material is only its shadow and reflex.

The European sets great store by machinery. He seeks to renovate humanity by schemes of society and systems of government; he hopes to bring about the millennium by an act of Parliament. Machinery is of great importance, but only as a working means for the spirit within, the force behind. The nineteenth century in India aspired to political emancipation, social renovation, religious vision and rebirth, but it failed because it adopted Western motives and methods, ignored the spirit, history and destiny of our race and thought that by taking over

European education, European machinery, European organisation and equipment we should reproduce in ourselves European prosperity, energy and progress. We of the twentieth century reject the aims, ideals and methods of the Anglicised nineteenth precisely because we accept its experience. We refuse to make an idol of the present; we look before and after, backward to the mighty history of our race, forward to the grandiose destiny for which that history has prepared it.

We do not believe that our political salvation can be attained by enlargement of Councils, introduction of the elective principle, colonial self-government or any other formula of European politics. We do not deny the use of some of these things as instruments, as weapons in a political struggle, but we deny their sufficiency whether as instruments or ideals and look beyond to an end which they do not serve except in a trifling degree. They might be sufficient if it were our ultimate destiny to be an outlying province of the British Empire or a dependent adjunct of European civilisation. That is a future which we do not think it worth making any sacrifice to accomplish. We believe on the other hand that India is destined to work out her own independent life and civilisation, to stand in the forefront of the world and solve the political, social, economical and moral problems which Europe has failed to solve, yet the pursuit of whose solution and the feverish passage in that pursuit from experiment to experiment, from failure to failure she calls her progress. Our means must be as great as our ends and the strength to discover and use the means so as to attain the end can only be found by seeking the eternal source of strength in ourselves.

We do not believe that by changing the machinery so as to make our society the ape of Europe we shall effect social renovation. Widow-remarriage, substitution of class for caste, adult marriage, intermarriages, interdining and the other nostrums of the social reformer are mechanical changes which, whatever their merits or demerits, cannot by themselves save the soul of the nation alive or stay the course of degradation and decline. It is the spirit alone that saves, and only by becoming great and free in heart can we become socially and politically great and free.

We do not believe that by multiplying new sects limited within the narrower and inferior ideas of religion imported from the West or by creating organisations for the perpetuation of the mere dress and body of Hinduism we can recover our spiritual health, energy and greatness. The world moves through an indispensable interregnum of free thought and materialism to a new synthesis of religious thought and experience, a new religious world-life free from intolerance, yet full of faith and fervour, accepting all forms of religion because it has an unshakable faith in the One. The religion which embraces Science and faith, Theism, Christianity, Mahomedanism and Buddhism and yet is none of these, is that to which the World-Spirit moves. In our own, which is the most sceptical and the most believing of all, the most sceptical because it has questioned and experimented the most, the most believing because it has the deepest experience and the most varied and positive spiritual knowledge, — that wider Hinduism which is not a dogma or combination of dogmas but a law of life, which is not a social framework but the spirit of a past and future social evolution, which rejects nothing but insists on testing and experiencing everything and when tested and experienced turning it to the soul's uses, in this Hinduism we find the basis of the future world-religion. This *sanātana dharma* has many scriptures, Veda, Vedanta, Gita, Upanishad, Darshana, Purana, Tantra, nor could it reject the Bible or the Koran; but its real, most authoritative scripture is in the heart in which the Eternal has His dwelling. It is in our inner spiritual experiences that we shall find the proof and source of the world's Scriptures, the law of knowledge, love and conduct, the basis and inspiration of Karmayoga.

Our aim will therefore be to help in building up India for the sake of humanity — this is the spirit of the Nationalism which we profess and follow. We say to humanity, "The time has come when you must take the great step and rise out of a material existence into the higher, deeper and wider life towards which humanity moves. The problems which have troubled mankind can only be solved by conquering the kingdom within, not by harnessing the forces of Nature to the service of comfort and luxury, but by mastering the forces of the intellect and the spirit, by vindicating the freedom of man within as well as without and by conquering from within external Nature. For that work the resurgence of Asia is necessary, therefore Asia rises. For that work the freedom and greatness of India is essential, therefore she claims her destined freedom and greatness, and it is to the interest of all humanity, not excluding England, that she should wholly establish her claim."

We say to the nation, "It is God's will that we should be ourselves and not Europe. We have sought to regain life by following the law of another being than our own. We must return and seek the sources of life and strength within ourselves. We must know our past and recover it for the purposes of our future. Our business is to realise ourselves first and to mould everything to the law of India's eternal life and nature. It will therefore be the object of the *Karmayogin* to read the heart of our religion, our society, our philosophy, politics, literature, art, jurisprudence, science, thought, everything that was and is ours, so that we may be able to say to ourselves and our nation, 'This is our *dharma*.' We shall review European civilisation entirely from the standpoint of Indian thought and knowledge and seek to throw off from us the dominating stamp of the Occident; what we have to take from the West we shall take as Indians. And the *dharma* once discovered we shall strive our utmost not only to profess but to live, in our individual actions, in our social life, in our political endeavours."

We say to the individual and especially to the young who are now arising to do India's work, the world's work, God's work, "You cannot cherish these ideals, still less can you fulfil them if you subject your minds to European ideas or look at life from the material standpoint. Materially you are nothing, spiritually you are everything. It is only the Indian who can believe everything, dare everything, sacrifice everything. First therefore become Indians. Recover the patrimony of your forefathers. Recover the Aryan thought, the Aryan discipline, the

Aryan character, the Aryan life. Recover the Vedanta, the Gita, the Yoga. Recover them not only in intellect or sentiment but in your lives. Live them and you will be great and strong, mighty, invincible and fearless. Neither life nor death will have any terrors for you. Difficulty and impossibility will vanish from your vocabularies. For it is in the spirit that strength is eternal and you must win back the kingdom of yourselves, the inner Swaraj, before you can win back your outer empire. There the Mother dwells and She waits for worship that She may give strength. Believe in Her, serve Her, lose your wills in Hers, your egoism in the greater ego of the country, your separate selfishness in the service of humanity. Recover the source of all strength in yourselves and all else will be added to you, social soundness, intellectual preeminence, political freedom, the mastery of human thought, the hegemony of the world."

Karmayoga

WE HAVE spoken of Karmayoga as the application of Vedanta and Yoga to life. To many who take their knowledge of Hinduism secondhand this may seem a doubtful definition. It is ordinarily supposed by "practical" minds that Vedanta as a guide to life and Yoga as a method of spiritual communion are dangerous things which lead men away from action to abstraction. We leave aside those who regard all such beliefs as mysticism, self-delusion or imposture; but even those who reverence and believe in the high things of Hinduism have the impression that one must remove oneself from a full human activity in order to live the spiritual life. Yet the spiritual life finds its most potent expression in the man who lives the ordinary life of men in the strength of the Yoga and under the law of the Vedanta. It is by such a union of the inner life and the outer that mankind will eventually be lifted up and become mighty and divine. It is a delusion to suppose that Vedanta contains no inspiration to life, no rule of conduct, and is purely metaphysical and quietistic. On the contrary, the highest morality of which humanity is capable finds its one perfect basis and justification in the teachings of the Upanishads and the Gita. The characteristic doctrines of the Gita are nothing if they are not a law of life, a *dharma*, and even the most transcendental aspirations of the Vedanta presuppose a preparation in life, for it is only through life that one can reach to immortality. The opposite opinion is due to certain tendencies which have bulked large in the history and temperament of our race. The ultimate goal of our religion is emancipation from the bondage of material Nature and freedom from individual rebirth, and certain souls, among the highest we have known, have been drawn by the attraction of the final hush and purity to dissociate themselves from life and bodily action in order more swiftly and easily to reach the goal. Standing like mountain-peaks above the common level, they have attracted all eyes and fixed this withdrawal as the highest and most commanding Hindu ideal. It is for this reason that Sri Krishna laid so much stress on the perfect Yogin's cleaving to life and human activity even after his need of them was over, lest the people, following, as they always do, the example of their best, turn away from their *dharma* and bastard confusion reign. The ideal Yogin is no withdrawn and pent-up force, but ever engaged in doing good to all creatures, either by the flood of the divine energy that he pours on the world or by himself standing in the front of humanity, its leader in the march and the battle, but unbound by his works and superior to his personality.

Moreover the word Vedanta is usually identified with the strict Monism and the peculiar theory of Maya established by the lofty and ascetic intellect of Shankara. But it is the Upanishads themselves and not Shankara's writings, the text and not the commentary, that are the authoritative Scripture of the Vedantin. Shankara's, great and temporarily satisfying as it was, is still only one synthesis and interpretation of the Upanishads. There have been others in the past which have powerfully influenced the national mind and there is no reason why there should not be a yet more perfect synthesis in the future. It is such a synthesis, embracing all life and action in its scope, that the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda have been preparing. What is dimly beginning now is a repetition on a wider stage of what happened once before in India, more rapidly but to smaller issues, when the Buddha lived and taught his philosophy and ethics to the Aryan nations. Then as now a mighty spirit, it matters not whether Avatar or Vibhuti, the full expression of God in man or a great outpouring of the divine energy, came down among men and brought into their daily life and practice the force and impulse of utter spirituality. And this time it is the full light and not a noble part, unlike Buddhism which, expressing Vedantic morality, yet ignored a fundamental reality of Vedanta and was therefore expelled from its prime seat and cradle. The material result was then what it will be now, a great political, moral and social revolution which made India the Guru of the nations and carried the light she had to give all over the civilised world, moulding ideas and creating forms which are still extant and a living force. Already the Vedanta and the Yoga have exceeded their Asiatic limit and are beginning to influence the life and practice of America and Europe; and they have long been filtering into Western thought by a hundred indirect channels. But these are small rivers and underground streams. The world waits for the rising of India to receive the divine flood in its fullness.

Yoga is communion with God for knowledge, for love or for work. The Yogin puts himself into direct relation with that which is omniscient and omnipotent within man and without him. He is in tune with the infinite, he becomes a channel for the strength of God to pour itself out upon the world whether through calm benevolence or active beneficence. When a man rises by putting from him the slough of self and lives for others and in the joys and sorrows of others; — when he works perfectly and with love and zeal, but casts away the anxiety for results and is neither eager for victory nor afraid of defeat; — when he devotes all his works to God and lays every thought, word and deed as an offering on the divine altar; — when he gets rid of fear and hatred, repulsion and disgust and attachment, and works like the forces of Nature, unhasting, unresting, inevitably, perfectly; — when he rises above the thought that he is the body or the heart or the mind or the sum of these and finds his own and true self; — when he becomes aware of his immortality and the unreality of death; — when he experiences the advent of knowledge and feels himself passive and the divine force working unresisted through his mind, his speech, his senses and all his organs; — when having thus abandoned whatever he is, does or has to the Lord of all, the Lover and Helper of mankind, he dwells permanently in Him and becomes incapable of grief, disquiet or false excitement, — that is Yoga. Pranayam and Asans, concentration, worship, ceremonies, religious practice are not themselves Yoga but only a means towards Yoga. Nor is Yoga a difficult or dangerous path, it is safe and easy to all who take refuge with the Inner Guide and Teacher. All men are potentially capable of it, for there is no man who has not strength or faith or love developed or latent in his nature, and any one of these is a sufficient staff for the Yogin. All cannot, indeed, reach in a single life the highest in this path, but all can go forward; and in proportion as a man advances he gets peace, strength and joy. And even a little of this *dharma* delivers man or nation out of great fear.

स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात्।

It is an error, we repeat, to think that spirituality is a thing divorced from life. "Abandon all" says the Isha Upanishad "*that thou mayst enjoy all*, neither covet any man's possession. But verily *do thy deeds in this world* and wish to live thy hundred years; no other way is given thee than this to escape the bondage of thy acts." It is an error to think that the heights of religion are above the struggles of this world. The recurrent cry of Sri Krishna to Arjuna insists on the struggle; "Fight and overthrow thy opponents!" "Remember me and fight!" "Give up all thy works to me with a heart full of spirituality, and free from craving, free from selfish claims, fight! let the fever of thy soul pass from thee." It is an error to imagine that even when the religious man does not give up his ordinary activities, he yet becomes too sattwic, too saintly, too loving or too passionless for the rough work of the world. Nothing can be more extreme and uncompromising than the reply of the Gita in the opposite sense, "Whosoever has his temperament purged from egoism, whosoever suffers not his soul to receive the impress of the deed, though he slay the whole world yet he slays not and is not bound." The Charioteer of Kurukshetra driving the car of Arjuna over that field of ruin is the image and description of Karmayoga; for the body is the chariot and the senses are the horses of the driving and it is through the bloodstained and mire-sunk ways of the world that Sri Krishna pilots the soul of man to Vaicuntha.

Man — Slave or Free?

THE EXCLUSIVE pursuit of Yoga by men who seclude themselves either physically or mentally from the contact of the world has led to an erroneous view of this science as something mystic, far-off and unreal. The secrecy which has been observed with regard to Yogic practices, — a necessary secrecy in the former stages of human evolution, — has stereotyped this error. Practices followed by men who form secret circles and confine the instruction in the mysteries strictly to those who have a certain preparatory fitness, inevitably bear the stamp to the outside world of occultism. In reality there is nothing intrinsically hidden, occult or mystic about Yoga. Yoga is based upon certain laws of human psychology, a certain knowledge about the power of the mind over the body and the inner spirit over the mind which are not generally realised and have hitherto been considered by those in the secret too momentous in their consequences for disclosure until men should be trained to use them aright. Just as a set of men who had discovered and tested the uttermost possibilities of mesmerism and hypnotism might hesitate to divulge them freely to the world lest the hypnotic power should be misused by ignorance or perversity or abused in the interests of selfishness and crime, so the Yogins have usually preserved the knowledge of these much greater forces within us in a secrecy broken only when they were sure of the previous ethical and spiritual training of the neophyte and his physical and moral fitness for the Yogic practices. It became therefore an established rule for the learner to observe strict reserve as to the inner experiences of Yoga and for the developed Yogin as far as possible to conceal himself. This has not prevented treatises and manuals from being published dealing with the physical or with the moral and intellectual sides of Yoga. Nor has it prevented great spirits who have gained their Yoga not by the ordinary careful and scientific methods but by their own strength and the special grace of God, from revealing themselves and their spiritual knowledge to mankind and in their intense love for humanity imparting something of their power to the world. Such were Buddha, Christ, Mahomed, Chaitanya, such have been Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. It is still the orthodox view that the experiences of Yoga must not be revealed to the uninitiated. But a new era dawns upon us in which the old laws must be modified. Already the West is beginning to discover the secrets of Yoga. Some of its laws have revealed themselves however dimly and imperfectly to the scientists of Europe while others through Spiritualism, Christian Science, clairvoyance, telepathy and other modern forms of occultism are being almost discovered by accident as if by men groping in the dark and stumbling over truths they cannot understand. The time has almost come when India can no longer keep her light to herself but must pour it out upon the world. Yoga must be revealed to mankind because without it mankind cannot take the next step in the human evolution.

The psychology of the human race has not yet been discovered by Science. All creation is essentially the same and proceeds by similar though not identical laws. If therefore we see in the outside material world that all phenomena proceed from and can be reduced to a single causal substance from which they were born, in which they move and to which they return, the same truth is likely to hold good in the psychical world. The unity of the material universe has now been acknowledged by the scientific intellect of Europe and the high priests of atheism and materialism in Germany have declared the *ekam evādvitīyam* in matter with no uncertain voice. In so doing they have merely reaffirmed the discovery made by Indian masters of the Yogic science thousands of years ago. But the European scientists have not discovered any sure and certain methods, such as they have in dealing with gross matter, for investigating psychical phenomena. They can only observe the most external manifestations of mind in action. But in these manifestations the mind is so much enveloped in the action of the outer objects and seems so dependent on them that it is very difficult for the observer to find out the springs of its action or any regularity in its workings. The European scientists have therefore come to the conclusion that it is the stimulations of outside objects which are the cause of psychical phenomena, and that even when the mind seems to act of itself and on its own material it is only associating, grouping together and manipulating the recorded experiences from outside objects. The very nature of mind is, according to them, a creation of past material experience transmitted by heredity with such persistence that we have grown steadily from the savage with his rudimentary mind to the civilised man of the twentieth century. As a natural result of these materialistic theories, science has found it difficult to discover any true psychical centre for the multifarious phenomena of mind and has therefore fixed upon the brain, the material organ of thought, as the only real centre. From this materialistic philosophy have resulted certain theories very dangerous to the moral future of mankind. First, man is a creation and slave of matter. He can only master matter by obeying it. Secondly, the mind itself is a form of gross matter and not independent of and master of the senses. Thirdly, there is no real free will, because all our action is determined by two great forces, heredity and environment. We are the slaves of our nature, and where we seem to be free from its mastery, it is because we are yet worse slaves of our environment, worked on by the forces that surround and manipulate us.

It is from these false and dangerous doctrines of materialism which tend to subvert man's future and hamper his evolution, that Yoga gives us a means of escape. It asserts on the contrary man's freedom from matter and gives him a means of asserting that freedom. The first great fundamental discovery of the Yogins was a means of analysing the experiences of the mind and the heart. By Yoga one can isolate mind, watch its workings as under a microscope, separate every minute function of the various parts of the *antaḥkaraṇa*, the inner organ, every mental and moral faculty, test its isolated workings as well as its relations to other functions and faculties and trace backwards the operations of mind to subtler and ever subtler sources until just as material analysis arrives at a primal entity from which all proceeds, so Yoga analysis arrives at a primal spiritual entity from which all proceeds. It is also able to locate and distinguish the psychical centre to which all psychical phenomena gather and so to fix the roots of personality. In this analysis its first discovery is that mind can entirely isolate itself from external objects and work in itself and of itself. This does not, it is true, carry us very far because it may be that it is merely using the material already stored up by its past experiences. But the next discovery is that the farther it removes itself from objects, the more powerfully, surely, rapidly can the mind work with a swifter clarity, with a victorious and sovereign detachment. This is an experience which tends to contradict the scientific theory, that mind can withdraw the senses into itself and bring them to bear on a mass of phenomena of which it is quite unaware when it is occupied with external phenomena. Science will naturally challenge these as hallucinations. The answer is that these phenomena are related to each other by regular, simple and intelligible laws and form a world of their own independent of thought acting on the material world. Here too Science has this possible answer that this supposed world is merely an imaginative reflex in the brain of the material world and to any arguments drawn from the definiteness and unexpectedness of these subtle phenomena and their independence of our own will and imagination it can always oppose its theory of unconscious cerebration and, we suppose, unconscious imagination. The fourth discovery is that mind is not only independent of external matter, but its master; it can not only reject and control external stimuli, but can defy such apparently universal material laws as that of gravitation and ignore, put aside and make nought of what are called laws of nature and are really only the laws of material nature, inferior and subject to the psychical laws because matter is a product of mind and not mind a product of matter. This is the decisive discovery of Yoga, its final contradiction of materialism. It is followed by the crowning realisation that there is within us a source of immeasurable force, immeasurable intelligence, immeasurable joy far above the possibility of weakness, above the possibility of ignorance, above the possibility of grief which we can bring into touch with ourselves and, under arduous but not impossible conditions, habitually utilise or enjoy. This is what the Upanishads call the Brahman and the primal entity from which all things were born, in which they live and to which they return. This is God and communion with Him is the highest aim of Yoga — a communion which works for knowledge, for work, for delight.

Yoga and Human Evolution

THE WHOLE burden of our human progress has been an attempt to escape from the bondage to the body and the vital impulses. According to the scientific theory, the human being began as the animal, developed through the savage and consummated in the modern civilised man. The Indian theory is different. God created the world by developing the many out of the One and the material out of the spiritual. From the beginning, the objects which compose the physical world were arranged by Him in their causes, developed under the law of their being in the subtle or psychical world and then manifested in the gross or material world. From *kāraṇa* to *sūkṣma*, from *sūkṣma* to *sthūla*, and back again, that is the formula. Once manifested in matter the world proceeds by laws which do not change, from age to age, by a regular succession, until it is all withdrawn back again into the source from which it came. The material goes back into the psychical and the psychical is involved in its cause or seed. It is again put out when the period of expansion recurs and runs its course on similar lines but with different details till the period of contraction is due. Hinduism regards the world as a recurrent series of phenomena of which the terms vary but the general formula abides the same. The theory is only acceptable if we recognise the truth of the conception formulated in the Vishnu Purana of the world as *vijñāna-vijṛmbhitāni*, developments of ideas in the Universal Intelligence which lies at the root of all material phenomena and by its indwelling force shapes the growth of the tree and the evolution of the clod as well as the development of living creatures and the progress of mankind. Whichever theory we take, the laws of the material world are not affected. From aeon to aeon, from *kalpa* to *kalpa* Narayan manifests himself in an ever-evolving humanity which grows in experience by a series of expansions and contractions towards its destined self-realisation in God. That evolution is not denied by the Hindu theory of *yugas*. Each age in the Hindu system has its own line of moral and spiritual evolution and the decline of the *dharma* or established law of conduct from the Satya to the Kaliyuga is not in reality a deterioration but a detrition of the outward forms and props of spirituality in order to prepare a deeper spiritual intensity within the heart. In each Kaliyuga mankind gains something in essential spirituality. Whether we take the modern scientific or the ancient Hindu standpoint the progress of humanity is a fact. The wheel of Brahma rotates for ever but it does not turn in the same place; its rotations carry it forward.

The animal is distinguished from man by its enslavement to the body and the vital impulses. *Aśanāyā mṛtyuḥ*, Hunger who is Death, evolved the material world from of old, and it is the physical hunger and desire and the vital sensations and primary emotions connected with the *prāṇa* that seek to feed upon the world in the beast and in the savage man who approximates to the condition of the beast. Out of this animal state, according to European Science, man rises working out the tiger and the ape by intellectual and moral development in the social condition. If the beast has to be worked out, it is obvious that the body and the *prāṇa* must be conquered, and as that conquest is more or less complete, the man is more or less evolved. The progress of mankind has been placed by many predominatingly in the development of the human intellect, and intellectual development is no doubt essential to self-conquest. The animal and the savage are bound by the body because the ideas of the animal or the ideas of the savage are mostly limited to those sensations and associations which are connected with the body. The development of intellect enables a man to find the deeper self within and partially replace what our philosophy calls the *dehātmaka-buddhi*, the sum of ideas and sensations which make us think of the body as ourself, by another set of ideas which reach beyond the body, and, existing for their own delight and substituting intellectual and moral satisfaction as the chief objects of life, master, if they cannot entirely silence, the clamour of the lower sensual desires.

That animal ignorance which is engrossed with the cares and the pleasures of the body and the vital impulses, emotions and sensations is tamasic, the result of the predominance of the third principle of nature which leads to ignorance and inertia. That is the state of the animal and the lower forms of humanity which are called in the Purana the first or tamasic creation. This animal ignorance the development of the intellect tends to dispel and it assumes therefore an all-important place in human evolution.

But it is not only through the intellect that man rises. If the clarified intellect is not supported by purified emotions, the intellect tends to be dominated once more by the body and to put itself at its service and the lordship of the body over the whole man becomes more dangerous than in the natural state because the innocence of the natural state is lost. The power of knowledge is placed at the disposal of the senses, *sattva* serves *tamas*, the god in us becomes the slave of the brute. The disservice which scientific Materialism is unintentionally doing the world is to encourage a return to this condition; the suddenly awakened masses of men, unaccustomed to deal intellectually with ideas, able to grasp the broad attractive innovations of free thought but unable to appreciate its delicate reservations, verge towards that reeling back into the beast, that relapse into barbarism which was the condition of the Roman Empire at a high stage of material civilisation and intellectual culture and which a distinguished British statesman declared the other day to be the condition to which all Europe approached. The development of the emotions is therefore the first condition of a sound human evolution. Unless the feelings tend away from the body and the love of others takes increasingly the place of the brute love of self, there can be no progress upward. The organisation of human society tends to develop the altruistic element in man which makes for life and battles with and conquers *aśanāyā mṛtyuḥ*. It is therefore not the struggle for life, or at least not the struggle for our own life, but the struggle for the life of others which is the most important term in evolution, — for our children, for our family, for our class, for our community, for our race and nation, for humanity. An ever-enlarging self takes the place of the old narrow self which is confined to our individual mind and body, and it is this moral growth which society helps and organises.

So far there is little essential difference between our own ideas of human progress and those of the West except in this vital point that the West believes this evolution to be a development of matter and the satisfaction of the reason, the reflective and observing intellect, to be the highest term of our progress. Here it is that our religion parts company with Science. It declares the evolution to be a conquest of matter by the recovery of the deeper emotional and intellectual self which was involved in the body and overclouded by the desires of the *prāṇa*. In the language of the Upanishads the *manaḥkoṣa* and the *buddhikoṣa* are more than the *prāṇakoṣa* and *annakoṣa* and it is to them that man rises in his evolution. Religion farther seeks a higher term for our evolution than the purified emotions or the clarified activity of the observing and reflecting intellect. The highest term of evolution is the spirit in which knowledge, love and action, the threefold *dharma* of humanity, find their fulfilment and end. This is the *ātman* in the *ānandakoṣa*, and it is by communion and identity of this individual self with the universal self which is God that man will become entirely pure, entirely strong, entirely wise and entirely blissful, and the evolution will be fulfilled. The conquest of the body and the vital self by the purification of the emotions and the clarification of the intellect was the principal work of the past. The purification has been done by morality and religion, the clarification by science and philosophy, art, literature and social and political life being the chief media in which these uplifting forces have worked. The conquest of the emotions and the intellect by the spirit is the work of the future. Yoga is the means by which that conquest becomes possible.

In Yoga the whole past progress of humanity, a progress which it holds on a very uncertain lease, is rapidly summed up, confirmed and made an inalienable possession. The body is conquered, not imperfectly as by the ordinary civilised man, but entirely. The vital part is purified and made the instrument of the higher emotional and intellectual self in its relations with the outer world. The ideas which go outward are replaced by the ideas which move within, the baser qualities are worked out of the system and replaced by those which are higher, the lower emotions are crowded out by the nobler. Finally all ideas and emotions are stilled and by the perfect awakening of the intuitive reason which places mind in communion with spirit the whole man is ultimately placed at the service of the Infinite. All false self merges into the true Self. Man acquires likeness, union or identification with God. This is *mukti*, the state in which humanity thoroughly realises the freedom and immortality which are its eternal goal.

Yoga and Hypnotism

WHEN the mind is entirely passive, then the force of Nature which works in the whole of animate and inanimate creation, has free play; for it is in reality this force which works in man as well as in the sun and star. There is no doubt of this truth whether in Hinduism or in Science. This is the thing called Nature, the sum of cosmic force and energy, which alone Science recognises as the source of all work and activity. This also is the Prakriti of the Hindus to which under different names Sankhya and Vedanta agree in assigning a similar position and function in the Universe. But the immediate question is whether this force can act in man independently of man's individual will and initiative. Must it always act through his volition or has it a power of independent operation? The first real proof which Science has had of the power of action independent of volition is in the phenomena of hypnotism. Unfortunately the nature of hypnotism has not been properly understood. It is supposed that by putting the subject to sleep the hypnotist is able in some mysterious and unexplained way to substitute his will for the subject's. In a certain sense all the subject's activities in the hypnotic state are the results of his own volition, but that volition is not spontaneous, it is used as a slave by the operator working through the medium of suggestion. Whatever the hypnotist suggests that the subject shall think, act or feel, he thinks, acts or feels, and whatever the hypnotist suggests that the subject shall become, he becomes. What is it that gives the operator this stupendous power? Why should the mere fact of a man passing into this sleep-condition suspend the ordinary reactions of mind and body and substitute others at the mere word of the man who has said to him, "Sleep"? It is sometimes supposed that it is the superior will of the hypnotist which overcomes the will of the other and makes it a slave. There are two strong objections to this view. It does not appear to be true that it is the weak and distracted will that is most easily hypnotised; on the contrary the strong concentrated mind forms a good subject. Secondly, if it were the operator's will using the will of the subject, then the results produced must be such as the latter could himself bring about, since the capacities of the instrument cannot be exceeded by the power working through the instrument. Even if we suppose that the invading will brings with it its own force still the results produced must not exceed the sum of its capacity plus the capacity of the instrument. If they commonly do so, we must suppose that it is neither the will of the operator nor the will of the subject nor the sum of these two wills that is active, but some other and more potent force. This is precisely what we see in hypnotic performance.

What is this force that enables or compels a weak man to become so rigid that strong arms cannot bend him? that reverses the operations of the senses and abrogates pain? that changes the fixed character of a man in the shortest of periods? that is able to develop power where there was no power, moral strength where there was weakness, health where there was disease? that in its higher manifestations can exceed the barriers of space and time and produce that far-sight, far-hearing and far-thinking which shows mind to be an untrammelled agent or medium pervading the world and not limited to the body which it informs or seems to inform? The European scientist experimenting with hypnotism is handling forces which he cannot understand, stumbling on truths of which he cannot give a true account. His feet are faltering on the threshold of Yoga. It is held by some thinkers, and not unreasonably if we consider these phenomena, that mind is all and contains all. It is not the body which determines the operations of the mind, it is the mind which determines the laws of the body. It is the ordinary law of the body that if it is struck, pierced or roughly pressed it feels pain. This law is created by the mind which associates pain with these contacts, and if the mind changes its *dharma* and is able to associate with these contacts not pain but insensibility or pleasure, then they will bring about those results of insensibility or pleasure and no other. The pain and pleasure are not the result of the contact, neither is their seat in the body; they are the result of association and their seat is in the mind. Vinegar is sour, sugar sweet, but to the hypnotised mind vinegar can be sweet, sugar sour. The sourness or sweetness is not in the vinegar or sugar, but in the mind. The heart also is the subject of the mind. My emotions are like my physical feelings, the result of association, and my character is the result of accumulated past experiences with their resultant associations and reactions crystallising into habits of mind and heart summed up in the word, character. These things like all the rest that are made of the stuff of associations are not permanent or binding but fluid and mutable, *anityāḥ sarvasaṁskārāḥ*. If my friend blames me, I am grieved; that is an association and not binding. The grief is not the result of the blame but of an association in the mind. I can change the association so far that blame will cause me no grief, praise no elation. I can entirely stop the reactions of joy and grief by the same force that created them. They are habits of the mind, nothing more. In the same way though with more difficulty I can stop the reactions of physical pain and pleasure so that nothing will hurt my body. If I am a coward today, I can be a hero tomorrow. The cowardice was merely the habit of associating certain things with pain and grief and of shrinking from the pain and grief; this shrinking and the physical sensations in the vital or nervous man which accompany it are called fear, and they can be dismissed by the action of the mind which created them. All these are propositions which European Science is even now unwilling to admit, yet it is being proved more and more by the phenomena of hypnotism that these effects can be temporarily at least produced by one man upon another; and it has even been proved that disease can be permanently cured or character permanently changed by the action of one mind upon another. The rest will be established in time by the development of hypnotism.

The difference between Yoga and hypnotism is that what hypnotism does for a man through the agency of another and in the sleeping state, Yoga does for him by his own agency and in the waking state. The hypnotic sleep is necessary in order to prevent the activity of the subject's mind full of old ideas and associations from interfering with the operator. In the waking state he would naturally refuse to experience sweetness in vinegar or sourness in sugar or to believe that he can change from disease to health, cowardice to heroism by a mere act of faith; his established associations would rebel violently and successfully against such contradictions of universal experience. The force which transcends matter would be hampered by the obstruction of ignorance and attachment to universal error. The hypnotic sleep does not make the mind a tabula rasa but it renders it passive to everything but the touch of the operator. Yoga similarly teaches passivity of the mind so that the will may act unhampered by the *saṁskāras* or old associations. It is these *saṁskāras*, the habits formed by experience in the body, heart or mind, that form the laws of our psychology. The associations of the mind are the stuff of which our life is made. They are more persistent in the body than in the mind and therefore harder to alter. They are more persistent in the race than in the individual; the conquest of the body and mind by the individual is comparatively easy and can be done in the space of a single life, but the same conquest by the race involves the development of ages. It is conceivable, however, that the practice of Yoga by a great number of men and persistence in the practice by their descendants might bring about profound changes in human psychology and, by stamping these changes into body and brain through heredity, evolve a superior race which would endure and by the law of the survival of the fittest eliminate the weaker kinds of humanity. Just as the rudimentary mind of the animal has been evolved into the fine instrument of the human being so the rudiments of higher force and faculty in the present race might evolve into the perfect *buddhi* of the Yogin.

Yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ. According as is a man's fixed and complete belief, that he is, — not immediately always but sooner or later, by the law that makes the psychical tend inevitably to express itself in the material. The will is the agent by which all these changes are made and old *saṁskāras* replaced by new, and the will cannot act without faith. The question then arises whether mind is the ultimate force or there is another which communicates with the outside world through the mind. Is the mind the agent or simply the instrument? If the mind be all, then it is only animals that can have the power to evolve; but this does not accord with the laws of the world as we know them. The tree evolves, the clod evolves, everything evolves. Even in animals it is evident that mind is not all in the sense of being the ultimate expression of existence or the ultimate force in Nature. It seems to be all only because that which is all expresses itself in the mind and passes everything through it for the sake of manifestation. That which we call mind is a medium which pervades the world. Otherwise we could not have that instantaneous and electrical action of mind upon mind of which human experience is full and of which the new phenomena of hypnotism, telepathy etc. are only fresh proofs. There must be contact, there must be interpenetration if we are to account for these phenomena on any reasonable theory. Mind therefore is held by the Hindus to be a species of subtle matter in which ideas are waves or ripples, and it is not limited by the physical body which it uses as an instrument. There is an ulterior force which works through this subtle medium called mind. An animal species develops, according to the modern theory, under the subtle influence of the environment. The environment supplies a need and those who satisfy the need develop a new species which survives because it is more fit. This is not the result of any intellectual perception of the need nor of a resolve to develop the necessary changes, but of a desire, often though not always a mute, inarticulate and unthought desire. That desire attracts a force which satisfies it. What is that force? The tendency of the psychical desire to manifest in the material change is one term in the equation; the force which develops the change in response to the desire is another. We have a will beyond mind which dictates the change, we have a force beyond mind which effects it. According to Hindu philosophy the will is the Jiva, the Purusha, the self in the *ānandakoṣa* acting through *vijñāna*, universal or transcendental mind; this is what we call spirit. The force is Prakriti or Shakti, the female principle in Nature which is at the root of all action. Behind both is the single Self of the universe which contains both Jiva and Prakriti, spirit and material energy. Yoga puts these ultimate existences within us in touch with each other and by stilling the activity of the *saṁskāras* or associations in mind and body enables them to act swiftly, victoriously, and as the world calls it, miraculously. In reality there is no such thing as a miracle; there are only laws and processes which are not yet understood.

Yoga is therefore no dream, no illusion of mystics. It is known that we can alter the associations of mind and body temporarily and that the mind can alter the conditions of the body partially. Yoga asserts that these things can be done permanently and completely. For the body conquest of disease, pain and material obstructions, for the mind liberation from bondage to past experience and the heavier limitations of space and time, for the heart victory over sin and grief and fear, for the spirit unclouded bliss, strength and illumination, this is the gospel of Yoga, is the goal to which Hinduism points humanity.

The Greatness of the Individual

IN ALL movements, in every great mass of human action it is the Spirit of the Time, that which Europe calls the Zeitgeist and India Kala, who expresses himself. The very names are deeply significant. Kali, the Mother of all and destroyer of all, is the Shakti that works in secret in the heart of humanity manifesting herself in the perpetual surge of men, institutions and movements, Mahakala the Spirit within whose energy goes abroad in her and moulds the progress of the world and the destiny of the nations. His is the impetus which fulfils itself in Time, and once there is movement, impetus from the Spirit within, Time and the Mother take charge of it, prepare, ripen and fulfil. When the Zeitgeist, God in Time, moves in a settled direction, then all the forces of the world are called in to swell the established current towards the purpose decreed. That which consciously helps, swells it, but that which hinders swells it still more, and like a wave on the windswept Ocean, now rising, now falling, now high on the crest of victory and increase, now down in the troughs of discouragement and defeat, the impulse from the hidden Source sweeps onward to its preordained fulfilment. Man may help or man may resist, but the Zeitgeist works, shapes, overbears, insists.

The great and memorable vision of Kurukshetra when Sri Krishna manifesting his world-form declared himself as destroying Time, is significant of this deep perception of humanity. When Arjuna wished to cast aside his bow and quiver, when he said, "This is a sin we do and a great destruction of men and brothers, I will forbear," Sri Krishna after convincing his intellect of error, proceeded by that marvellous vision described in the eleventh canto of the Gita to stamp the truth of things upon his imagination. Thus run the mighty stanzas:

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत् प्रवृद्धो
   लोकान् समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।
ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे
   येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥
तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व
   जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम् ।
मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव
   निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥

"I am Time who waste and destroy the peoples; lo, I have arisen in my might, I am here to swallow up the nations. Even without thee all they shall not be, the men of war who stand arrayed in the opposing squadrons. Therefore do thou arise and get thee great glory, conquer thy foes and enjoy a great and wealthy empire. For these, they were slain even before and it is I who have slain them; be the occasion only, O Savyasachin."

It is not as the slow process of Time that Sri Krishna manifests himself; it is as the Zeitgeist consummating in a moment the work carefully prepared for decades that He appears to Arjuna. All have been moving inevitably towards the catastrophe of Kurukshetra. Men did not know it: those who would have done everything possible to avert the calamity, helped its coming by their action or inaction; those who had a glimpse of it strove in vain to stop the wheels of Fate; Sri Krishna himself as the *niṣkāma karmayogin* who does his duty without regard to results, went on that hopeless embassy to Hastinapura; but the Zeitgeist overbore all. It was only afterwards that men saw how like rivers speeding towards the sea, like moths winging towards the lighted flame all that splendid, powerful and arrogant Indian world with its clans of Kings and its weapons and its chariots and its gigantic armies were rushing towards the open mouths of the destroyer to be lost in His mighty jaws, to be mangled between His gnashing teeth. In the *līlā* of the Eternal there are movements that are terrible as well as movements that are sweet and beautiful. The dance of Brindaban is not complete without the death-dance of Kurukshetra; for each is a part of that great harmonic movement of the world which progresses from discord to accord, from hatred and strife to love and brotherhood, from evil to the fulfilment of the evolution by the transformation of suffering and sin into beauty, bliss and good, *śivam*, *śāntam*, *śuddham*, *ānandam*.

Who could resist the purpose of the Zeitgeist? There were strong men in India then by the hundred, great philosophers and Yogins, subtle statesmen, leaders of men, kings of thought and action, the efflorescence of a mighty intellectual civilisation at its height. A little turning to the right instead of to the left on the part of a few of these would, it might seem, have averted the whole catastrophe. So Arjuna thought when he flung aside his bow. He was the whole hope of the Pandavas and without him their victory must seem a mere dream and to fight an act of madness. Yet it is to him that the Zeitgeist proclaims the utter helplessness of the mightiest and the sure fulfilment of God's decree. "Even without thee all they shall not be, the men of war who stand arrayed in the opposing squadrons." For these men are only alive in the body; in that which stands behind and fulfils itself they are dead men. Whom God protects who shall slay? Whom God has slain who shall protect? The man who slays is only the occasion, the instrument by which the thing done behind the veil becomes the thing done on this side of it. That which was true of the great slaying at Kurukshetra is true of all things that are done in this world, of all the creation, destruction and preservation that make up the *līlā*.

The greatness of this teaching is for the great. Those who are commissioned to bring about mighty changes are full of the force of the Zeitgeist. Kali has entered into them and Kali when she enters into a man cares nothing for rationality and possibility. She is the force of Nature that whirls the stars in their orbits, lightly as a child might swing a ball, and to that force there is nothing impossible. She is *aghaṭana-ghaṭana-paṭīyasī*, very skilful in bringing about the impossible. She is the *devātmaśaktiḥ svaguṇair nigūḍhā*, the Power of the Divine Spirit hidden in the modes of its own workings, and she needs nothing but time to carry out the purpose with which she is commissioned. She moves in Time and the very movement fulfils itself, creates its means, accomplishes its ends. It is not an accident that she works in one man more than in another. He is chosen because he is a likely vessel, and having chosen him she neither rejects him till the purpose is fulfilled nor allows him to reject her. Therefore Sri Krishna tells Arjuna:

> यदहङ्कारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे ।
> मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ॥

"The thought which thou thinkest and takest refuge in egoism saying 'I will not fight,' this thy resolve is a vain thing; Nature will yoke thee to thy work." When a man seems to have rejected his work, it merely means that his work is over and Kali leaves him for another. When a man who has carried out a great work is destroyed, it is for the egoism by which he has misused the force within that the force itself breaks him to pieces, as it broke Napoleon. Some instruments are treasured up, some are flung aside and shattered, but all are instruments. This is the greatness of great men, not that by their own strength they can determine great events, but that they are serviceable and specially-forged instruments of the Power which determines them. Mirabeau helped to create the French Revolution, no man more. When he set himself against it and strove, becoming a prop of monarchy, to hold back the wheel, did the French Revolution stop for the backsliding of France's mightiest? Kali put her foot on Mirabeau and he disappeared; but the Revolution went on, for the Revolution was the manifestation of the Zeitgeist, the Revolution was the will of God.

So it is always. The men who prided themselves that great events were their work, because they seemed to have an initial hand in them, go down into the trench of Time and others march forward over their shattered reputations. Those who are swept forward by Kali within them and make no terms with Fate, they alone survive. The greatness of individuals is the greatness of the eternal Energy within.

The Process of Evolution

THE END of a stage of evolution is usually marked by a powerful recrudescence of all that has to go out of the evolution. It is a principle of Nature that in order to get rid of any powerful tendency or deep-seated association in humanity, whether in the mass or in the individual, it has first to be exhausted by *bhoga* or enjoyment, afterwards to be dominated and weakened by *nigraha* or control and, finally, when it is weak, to be got rid of by *saṁyama*, rejection or self-dissociation. The difference between *nigraha* and *saṁyama* is that in the first process there is a violent struggle to put down, coerce and, if possible, crush the tendency, the reality of which is not questioned, but in the second process it is envisaged as a dead or dying force, its occasional return marked with disgust, then with impatience, finally with indifference as a mere ghost, vestige or faint echo of that which was once real but is now void of significance. Such a return is part of the process of Nature for getting rid of this undesirable and disappearing quantity.

Saṁyama is unseasonable and would be fruitless when a force, quality or tendency is in its infancy or vigour, before it has had the enjoyment and full activity which is its due. When once a thing is born it must have its youth, growth, enjoyment, life and final decay and death; when once an impetus has been given by Prakriti to her creation, she insists that the velocity shall spend itself by natural exhaustion before it shall cease. To arrest the growth or speed unseasonably by force is *nigraha*, which can be effective for a time but not in perpetuity. It is said in the Gita that all things are ruled by their nature, to their nature they return and *nigraha* or repression is fruitless. What happens then is that the thing untimely slain by violence is not really dead, but withdraws for a time into the Prakriti which sent it forth, gathers an immense force and returns with extraordinary violence ravening for the rightful enjoyment which it was denied. We see this in the attempts we make to get rid of our evil *saṁskāras* or associations when we first tread the path of Yoga. If anger is a powerful element in our nature, we may put it down for a time by sheer force and call it self-control, but eventually unsatisfied Nature will get the better of us and the passion return upon us with astonishing force at an unexpected moment. There are only two ways by which we can effectively get the better of the passion which seeks to enslave us. One is by substitution, replacing it whenever it rises by the opposite quality, anger by thoughts of forgiveness, love or forbearance, lust by meditation on purity, pride by thoughts of humility and our own defects or nothingness; this is the method of Rajayoga, but it is a difficult, slow and uncertain method; for both the ancient traditions and the modern experience of Yoga show that men who had attained for long years the highest self-mastery have been suddenly surprised by a violent return of the thing they thought dead or for ever subject. Still this substitution, slow though it be, is one of the commonest methods of Nature and it is largely by this means, often unconsciously or half-consciously used, that the character of a man changes and develops from life to life or even in the bounds of a single lifetime. It does not destroy things in their seed and the seed which is not reduced to ashes by Yoga is always capable of sprouting again and growing into the complete and mighty tree. The second method is to give *bhoga* or enjoyment to the passion so as to get rid of it quickly. When it is satiated and surfeited by excessive enjoyment, it becomes weak and spent and a reaction ensues which establishes for a time the opposite force, tendency or quality. If that moment is seized by the Yogin for *nigraha*, the *nigraha* so repeated at every suitable opportunity becomes so far effective as to reduce the strength and vitality of the *vṛtti* sufficiently for the application of the final *saṁyama*. This method of enjoyment and reaction is also a favourite and universal method of Nature, but it is never complete in itself and, if applied to permanent forces or qualities, tends to establish a see-saw of opposite tendencies, extremely useful to the operations of Prakriti but from the point of view of self-mastery useless and inconclusive. It is only when this method is followed up by the use of *saṁyama* that it becomes effective. The Yogin regards the *vṛtti* merely as a play of Nature with which he is not concerned and of which he is merely the spectator; the anger, lust or pride is not his, it is the universal Mother's and she works it and stills it for her own purposes. When, however, the *vṛtti* is strong, mastering and unspent, this attitude cannot be maintained in sincerity and to try to hold it intellectually without sincerely feeling it is *mithyācāra*, false discipline or hypocrisy. It is only when it is somewhat exhausted by repeated enjoyment and coercion that Prakriti or Nature at the command of the soul or Purusha can really deal with her own creation. She deals with it first by *vairāgya* in its crudest form of disgust, but this is too violent a feeling to be permanent; yet it leaves its mark behind in a deep-seated wish to be rid of its cause, which survives the return and temporary reign of the passion. Afterwards its return is viewed with impatience but without any acute feeling of intolerance. Finally supreme indifference or *udāsīnatā* is gained and the final going out of the tendency by the ordinary process of Nature is watched in the true spirit of the *saṁyamī* who has the knowledge that he is the witnessing soul and has only to dissociate himself from a phenomenon for it to cease. The highest stage leads either to *mukti* in the form of *laya* or disappearance, the *vṛtti* vanishing altogether and for good, or else to another kind of freedom when the soul knows that it is God's *līlā* and leaves it to Him whether He shall throw out the tendency or use it for His own purposes. This is the attitude of the Karmayogin who puts himself in God's hands and does work for His sake only, knowing that it is God's force that works in him. The result of that attitude of self-surrender is that the Lord of all takes charge and according to the promise of the Gita delivers His servant and lover from all sin and evil, the *vṛttis* working in the bodily machine without affecting the soul and working only when He raises them up for His purposes. This is *nirliptatā*, the state of absolute freedom within the *līlā*.

The law is the same for the mass as for the individual. The process of human evolution has been seen by the eye of inspired observation to be that of working out the tiger and the ape. The forces of cruelty, lust, mischievous destruction, pain-giving, folly, brutality, ignorance were once rampant in humanity, they had full enjoyment; then by the growth of religion and philosophy they began in periods of satiety such as the beginning of the Christian era in Europe to be partly replaced, partly put under control. As is the law of such things, they have always reverted again with greater or less virulence and sought with more or less success to reestablish themselves. Finally in the nineteenth century it seemed for a time as if some of these forces had, for a time at least, exhausted themselves and the hour for *saṁyama* and gradual dismissal from the evolution had really arrived. Such hopes always recur and in the end they are likely to bring about their own fulfilment, but before that happens another recoil is inevitable. We see plenty of signs of it in the reeling back into the beast which is in progress in Europe and America behind the fair outside of Science, progress, civilisation and humanitarianism, and we are likely to see more signs of it in the era that is coming upon us. A similar law holds in politics and society. The political evolution of the human race follows certain lines of which the most recent formula has been given in the watchwords of the French Revolution, freedom, equality and brotherhood. But the forces of the old world, the forces of despotism, the forces of traditional privilege and selfish exploitation, the forces of unfraternal strife and passionate self-regarding competition are always struggling to reseat themselves on the thrones of the earth. A determined movement of reaction is evident in many parts of the world and nowhere perhaps more than in England which was once one of the self-styled champions of progress and liberty. The attempt to go back to the old spirit is one of those necessary returns without which it cannot be so utterly exhausted as to be blotted out from the evolution. It rises only to be defeated and crushed again. On the other hand the force of the democratic tendency is not a force which is spent but one which has not yet arrived, not a force which has had the greater part of its enjoyment but one which is still vigorous, unsatisfied and eager for fulfilment. Every attempt to coerce it in the past reacted eventually on the coercing force and brought back the democratic spirit fierce, hungry and unsatisfied, joining to its fair motto of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" the terrible addition "or Death". It is not likely that the immediate future of the democratic tendency will satisfy the utmost dreams of the lover of liberty who seeks an anarchist freedom, or of the lover of equality who tries to establish a socialistic dead level, or of the lover of fraternity who dreams of a world-embracing communism. But some harmonisation of this great ideal is undoubtedly the immediate future of the human race. On the old forces of despotism, inequality and unbridled competition, after they have been once more overthrown, a process of gradual *saṁyama* will be performed by which what has remained of them will be regarded as the disappearing vestiges of a dead reality and without any further violent coercion be transformed slowly and steadily out of existence.

Stead and the Spirits

CONSIDERABLE attention has been attracted and excitement created by the latest development of Mr. W. T. Stead's agency for communicant spirits which he calls Julia's Bureau. The supposed communications of Mr. Gladstone, Lord Beaconsfield and other distinguished politicians on the question of the Budget have awakened much curiosity, ridicule and even indignation. The ubiquitous eloquence of Lord Curzon has been set flowing by what he considers this unscrupulous method of pressing the august departed into the ranks of Liberal electioneering agents, and he has penned an indignant letter to the papers in which there is much ornate Curzonian twaddle about sacred mysteries and the sanctities of the grave. If there is anything at all in the alleged communications from departed souls which have become of increasing interest to the European world, it ought to be fairly established that the grave is nothing but a hole in the earth containing a rotting piece of matter with which the spirit has no farther connection, and that the spirit is very much the same after death as before, takes much interest in small, trivial and mundane matters and is very far from regarding his new existence as a solemn, sacred and mysterious affair. If so, we do not see why we either should approach the departed spirit with long and serious faces or with any more unusual feelings than curiosity, interest and eagerness to acquire knowledge of the other world and communication with those we knew and loved in this, in fact, the ordinary human and earthly feelings existing between souls sundered by time and space, but still capable of communication. But Lord Curzon still seems to be labouring under the crude Christian conception of the blessed dead as angels harping in heaven whose spotless plumes ought not to be roughly disturbed by human breath and of spiritual communication as a sort of necromancy, the spirit of

Mr. Gladstone being summoned from his earthy bed and getting into it again and tucking himself up comfortably in his coffin after Julia and Mr. Stead have done with him. We should have thought that in the bold and innovating mind of India's only Viceroy these coarse European superstitions ought to have been destroyed long ago.

It is not, however, Lord Curzon but Mr. Stead and the spirits with whom we have to deal. We know Mr. Stead as a pushing and original journalist, not always over-refined or delicate either in his actions or expressions, skilful in the advertisement of his views, excitable, earnest, declamatory, loud and even hysterical, if you will, in some of his methods, but certainly neither a liar nor a swindler. He does and says what he believes and nothing else. It is impossible to dismiss his Bureau as an imposture or mere journalistic réclame. It is impossible to dismiss the phenomena of spirit communications, even with all the imposture that unscrupulous moneymakers have imported into them, as unreal or a deception. All that can reasonably be said is that their true nature has not yet been established beyond dispute. There are two conceivable explanations, one that of actual spirit communication, the other that of vigorously dramatised imaginary conversations jointly composed with wonderful skill and consistency by the subconscious minds, whatever that may be, of the persons present, the medium being the chief dramaturge of this subconscious literary Committee. This theory is so wildly improbable and so obviously opposed to the nature of the phenomena themselves, that only an obstinate unwillingness to admit new facts and ideas can explain its survival, although it was natural and justifiable in the first stages of investigation. There remains the explanation of actual spirit communication. But even when we have decided on this hypothesis as the base of our investigation, we have to be on our guard against a multitude of errors; for the communications are vitiated first by the errors and self-deceptions of the medium and the sitters, then by the errors and self-deceptions of the communicant spirits, and, worst of all, by deliberate deceit, lies and jugglery on the part of the visitants from the other world. The element of deceit and jugglery on the part of the medium and his helpers is not always small, but can easily be got rid of. Cheap scepticism and cheaper ridicule in such matters is only useful for comforting small brains and weak imaginations with a sense of superiority to the larger minds who do not refuse to enquire into phenomena which are at least widespread and of a consistently regular character. The true attitude is to examine carefully the nature of the phenomena, the conditions that now detract from their value and the possibility of removing them and providing perfect experimental conditions which would enable us to arrive at a satisfactory scientific result. Until the value of the communications is scientifically established, any attempt to use them for utilitarian, theatrical or yet lighter purposes is to be deprecated, as such misuse may end in shutting a wide door to potential knowledge upon humanity.

From this point of view Mr. Stead's bizarre experiments are to be deprecated. The one redeeming feature about them is that, as conducted, they seem to remove the first elementary difficulty in the way of investigation, the possibility of human deceit and imposture. We presume that he has got rid of professional mediums and allows only earnest-minded and honourable investigators to be present. But the other elements of error and confusion are encouraged rather than obviated by the spirit and methods of Mr. Stead's Bureau. First, there is the error and self-deception of the sitters. The spirit does not express himself directly but has to give his thoughts at third hand; they come first to the intermediary spirit, Julia or another, by her they are conveyed to the human medium and through him conveyed by automatic or conscious speech or writing to the listeners. It is obvious how largely the mind of the medium and, to a smaller but still great extent, the thought-impressions of the other sitters must interfere, and this without the least intention on their part, rather in spite of a strong wish in the opposite direction. Few men really understand how the human mind works or are fitted to watch the processes of their own conscious and half-conscious thought even when the mind is disinterested, still less when it is active and interested in the subject of communication. The sitters interfere, first, by putting in their own thoughts and expressions suggested by the beginnings of the communication, so that what began as a spirit conversation ends in a tangle of the medium's or sitters' ideas with the little of his own that the spirit can get in now and then. They interfere not only by suggesting what they themselves think or would say on the subject, but by suggesting what they think the spirit ought dramatically to think or say, so that Mr. Gladstone is made to talk in interminable cloudy and circumambient periods which were certainly his oratorical style but can hardly have been the staple of his conversation, and Lord Beaconsfield is obliged to be cynical and immoral in the tone of his observations. They interfere again by eagerness, which sometimes produces replies according to the sitters' wishes and sometimes others which are unpleasant or alarming, but in neither case reliable. This is especially the case in answers to questions about the future, which ought never to be asked. It is true that many astonishing predictions occur which are perfectly accurate, but these are far outweighed by the mass of false and random prediction. These difficulties can only be avoided by rigidly excluding every question accompanied by or likely to raise eagerness or expectation and by cultivating entire mental passivity. The last however is impossible to the medium unless he is a practised Yogin, or in a trance, or a medium who has attained the habit of passivity by an unconscious development due to long practice. In the sitters we do not see how it is to be induced. Still, without unemotional indifference to the nature of the answer and mental passivity the conditions for so difficult and delicate a process of communication cannot be perfect.

Error and self-deception from the other side of the veil cannot be obviated by any effort on this side; all that we can do is to recognise that the spirits are limited in knowledge and cabined by character, so that we have to allow for the mental and moral equation in the communicant when judging the truth and value of the communication. Absolute deception and falsehood can only be avoided by declining to communicate with spirits of a lower order and being on guard against their masquerading under familiar or distinguished names. How far Mr. Stead and his circle have guarded against these latter errors we cannot say, but the spirit in which the sittings are conducted, does not encourage us to suppose that scrupulous care is taken in these respects. It is quite possible that some playful spirit has been enacting Mr. Gladstone to the too enthusiastic circle and has amused himself by elaborating those cloudy-luminous periods which he saw the sitters expected from the great deceased Opportunist. But we incline to the view that what we have got in this now famous spirit interview, is a small quantity of Gladstone, a great deal of Stead and a fair measure of the disembodied Julia and the assistant psychics.

Stead and Maskelyne

THE VEXED question of spirit communication has become a subject of permanent public controversy in England. So much that is of the utmost importance to our views of the world, religion, science, life, philosophy, is crucially interested in the decision of this question, that no fresh proof or disproof, establishment or refutation of the genuineness and significance of spirit communications can go disregarded. But no discussion of the question which proceeds merely on first principles can be of any value. It is a matter of evidence, of the value of the evidence and of the meaning of the evidence. If the ascertained facts are in favour of spiritualism, it is no argument against the facts that they contradict the received dogmas of science or excite the ridicule alike of the enlightened sceptic and of the matter-of-fact citizen. If they are against spiritualism, it does not help the latter that it supports religion or pleases the imagination and flatters the emotions of mankind. Facts are what we desire, not enthusiasm or ridicule; evidence is what we have to weigh, not unsupported arguments or questions of fitness or probability. The improbable may be true, the probable entirely false.

In judging the evidence, we must attach especial importance to the opinion of men who have dealt with the facts at first hand. Recently, two such men have put succinctly their arguments for and against the truth of spiritualism, Mr. W. T. Stead and the famous conjurer, Mr. Maskelyne. We will deal with Mr. Maskelyne first, who totally denies the value of the facts on which spiritualism is based. Mr. Maskelyne puts forward two absolutely inconsistent theories, first, that spiritualism is all fraud and humbug, the second, that it is all subconscious mentality. The first was the theory which has hitherto been held by the opponents of the new phenomena, the second the theory to which they are being driven by an accumulation of indisputable evidence. Mr. Maskelyne, himself a professed master of jugglery and illusion, is naturally disposed to put down all mediums as irregular competitors in his own art; but the fact that a conjuror can produce an illusory phenomenon, is no proof that all phenomena are conjuring. He farther argues that no spiritualistic phenomena have been produced when he could persuade Mr. Stead to adopt conditions which precluded fraud. We must know Mr. Maskelyne's conditions and have Mr. Stead's corroboration of this statement before we can be sure of the value we must attach to this kind of refutation. In any case we have the indisputable fact that Mr. Stead himself has been the medium in some of the most important and best ascertained of the phenomena. Mr. Maskelyne knows that Mr. Stead is an honourable man incapable of a huge and impudent fabrication of this kind and he is therefore compelled to fall back on the wholly unproved theory of the subconscious mind. His arguments do not strike us as very convincing. Because we often write without noticing what we are writing, mechanically, therefore, says this profound thinker, automatic writing must be the same kind of mental process. The one little objection to this sublimely felicitous argument is that automatic writing has no resemblance whatever to mechanical writing. When a man writes mechanically, he does not notice what he is writing; when he writes automatically, he notices it carefully and has his whole attention fixed on it. When he writes mechanically, his hand records something that it is in his mind to write; when he writes automatically, his hand transcribes something which it is not in his mind to write and which is often the reverse of what his mind would tell him to write. Mr. Maskelyne farther gives the instance of a lady writing a letter and unconsciously putting an old address which, when afterwards questioned, she could not remember. This amounts to no more than a fit of absent-mindedness in which an old forgotten fact rose to the surface of the mind and by the revival of old habit was reproduced on the paper, but again sank out of immediate consciousness as soon as the mind returned to the present. This is a mental phenomenon essentially of the same class as our continuing unintentionally to write the date of the last year even in this year's letters. In one case it is the revival, in the other the persistence of an old habit. What has this to do with the phenomena of automatic writing which are of an entirely different class and not attended by absent-mindedness at all? Mr. Maskelyne makes no attempt to explain the writing of facts in their nature unknowable to the medium, or of repeated predictions of the future, which are common in automatic communications.

On the other side Mr. Stead's arguments are hardly more convincing. He bases his belief, first, on the nature of the communications from his son and others in which he could not be deceived by his own mind and, secondly, on the fact that not only statements of the past, but predictions of the future occur freely. The first argument is of no value unless we know the nature of the communication and the possibility or impossibility of the facts stated having been previously known to Mr. Stead. The second is also not conclusive in itself. There are some predictions which a keen mind can make by inference or guess, but, if we notice the hits and forget the misses, we shall believe them to be prophecies and not ordinary previsions. The real value of Mr. Stead's defence of the phenomena lies in the remarkable concrete instance he gives of a prediction from which this possibility is entirely excluded. The spirit of Julia, he states, predicted the death within the year of an acquaintance who, within the time stated, suffered from two illnesses, in one of which the doctors despaired of her recovery. On each occasion the predicting spirit was naturally asked whether the illness was not to end in the death predicted, and on each she gave an unexpected negative answer and finally predicted a death by other than natural means. As a matter of fact, the lady in question, before the year was out, leaped out of a window and was killed. This remarkable prophecy was obviously neither a successful inference nor a fortunate guess, nor even a surprising coincidence. It is a convincing and indisputable prophecy. Its appearance in the automatic writing can only be explained either by the assumption that Mr. Stead has a subliminal self, calling itself Julia, gifted with an absolute and exact power of prophecy denied to the man as we know him, — a violent, bizarre and unproved assumption, — or by the admission that there was a communicant with superior powers to ordinary humanity using the hand of the writer. Who that was, Julia or another, ghost, spirit or other being, is a question that lies beyond. This controversy, with the worthlessness of the arguments on either side and the supreme worth of the one concrete and precise fact given, is a signal proof of our contention that, in deciding this question, it is not *a priori* arguments, but facts used for their evidential value as an impartial lawyer would use them, that will eventually prevail.

Fate and Free-Will

A QUESTION which has hitherto divided human thought and received no final solution, is the freedom of the human being in his relation to the Power intelligent or unintelligent that rules the world. We strive for freedom in our human relations, to freedom we move as our goal, and every fresh step in our human progress is a further approximation to our ideal. But are we free in ourselves? We seem to be free, to do that which we choose and not that which is chosen for us; but it is possible that the freedom may be illusory and our apparent freedom may be a real and iron bondage. We may be bound by predestination, the will of a Supreme Intelligent Power, or blind inexorable Nature, or the necessity of our own previous development.

The first is the answer of the devout and submissive mind in its dependence on God, but, unless we adopt a Calvinistic fatalism, the admission of the guiding and overriding will of God does not exclude the permission of freedom to the individual. The second is the answer of the scientist; Heredity determines our Nature, the laws of Nature limit our action, cause and effect compel the course of our development, and, if it be urged that we may determine effects by creating causes, the answer is that our own actions are determined by previous causes over which we have no control and our action itself is a necessary response to a stimulus from outside. The third is the answer of the Buddhist and of post-Buddhistic Hinduism. "It is our fate, it is written on our forehead, when our Karma is exhausted, then alone our calamities will pass from us"; — this is the spirit of tamasic inaction justifying itself by a misreading of the theory of Karma.

If we go back to the true Hindu teaching independent of Buddhistic influence, we shall find that it gives us a reconciliation of the dispute by a view of man's psychology in which both Fate and Free-will are recognised. The difference between Buddhism and Hinduism is that to the former the human soul is nothing, to the latter it is everything. The whole universe exists in the spirit, by the spirit, for the spirit; all we do, think and feel is for the spirit. Nature depends upon the Atman, all its movement, play, action is for the Atman.

There is no Fate except insistent causality which is only another name for Law, and Law itself is only an instrument in the hands of Nature for the satisfaction of the spirit. Law is nothing but a mode or rule of action; it is called in our philosophy not Law but Dharma, holding together, it is that by which the action of the universe, the action of its parts, the action of the individual is held together. This action in the universal, the parts, the individuals is called Karma, work, action, energy in play, and the definition of Dharma or Law is action as decided by the nature of the thing in which action takes place, — *svabhāva-niyataṁ karma*. Each separate existence, each individual has a swabhava or nature and acts according to it, each group, species or mass of individuals has a swabhava or nature and acts according to it, and the universe also has its swabhava or nature and acts according to it. Mankind is a group of individuals and every man acts according to his human nature, that is his law of being as distinct from animals, trees or other groups of individuals. Each man has a distinct nature of his own and that is his law of being which ought to guide him as an individual. But beyond and above these minor laws is the great dharma of the universe which provides that certain previous karma or action must lead to certain new karma or results.

The whole of causality may be defined as previous action leading to subsequent action, Karma and Karmaphal. The Hindu theory is that thought and feeling, as well as actual speech or deeds, are part of Karma and create effects, and we do not accept the European sentiment that outward expression of thought and feeling in speech or deed is more important than the thought or feeling itself. This outward expression is only part of the thing expressed and its results are only part of the Karmaphal. The previous karma has not one kind of result but many. In the first place, a certain habit of thought or feeling produces certain actions and speech or certain habits of action and speech in this life, which materialise in the next as good fortune or evil fortune. Again, it produces by its action for the good or ill of others a necessity of happiness or sorrow for ourselves in another birth. It produces, moreover, a tendency to persistence of that habit of thought or feeling in future lives, which involves the persistence of the good fortune or evil fortune, happiness or sorrow. Or, acting on different lines, it produces a revolt or reaction and replacement by opposite habits which in their turn necessitate opposite results for good or evil. This is the chain of karma, the bondage of works, which is the Hindu Fate and from which the Hindus seek salvation.

If, however, there is no escape from the Law, if Nature is supreme and inexorable, there can be no salvation; freedom becomes a chimaera, bondage eternal. There can be no escape, unless there is something within us which is free and lord, superior to Nature. This entity the Hindu teaching finds in the spirit ever free and blissful which is one in essence and in reality with the Supreme Soul of the Universe. The spirit does not act, it is Nature that contains the action. If the spirit acted, it would be bound by its action. The thing that acts is Prakriti, Nature, which determines the Swabhava of things and is the source and condition of Law or dharma. The soul or Purusha holds up the swabhava, watches and enjoys the action and its fruit, sanctions the law or dharma. It is the king, Lord or Ishwara without whose consent nothing can be done by Prakriti. But the king is above the law and free.

It is this power of sanction that forms the element of free will in our lives. The spirit consents not that itself shall be bound, but that its enjoyment should be bound by time, space and causality and by the swabhava and the dharma. It consents to virtue or sin, good fortune or evil fortune, health or disease, joy or suffering, or it refuses them. What it is attached to, that Nature multiplies for it; what it is weary of, has *vairāgya* for, that Nature withdraws from it. Only, because the enjoyment is in space and time, therefore, even after the withdrawal of consent, the habitual action continues for a time just as the locomotive continues to move after the steam is shut off, but in a little while it slows down and finally comes to a standstill. And because the enjoyment is in causality, the removal of the habit of action is effected not spontaneously and freely, but by an established process or one of many established processes. This is the great truth now dawning on the world, that Will is the thing which moves the world and that Fate is merely a process by which Will fulfils itself.

But in order to feel its mastery of Nature, the human soul must put itself into communion with the infinite and universal Spirit. Its will must be one with the universal Will. The human soul is one with the universal Spirit, but in the body it stands out as something separate and unconnected, because a certain freedom is permitted it in order that the swabhava of things may be diversely developed in different bodies. In using this freedom the soul may do it ignorantly or knowingly. If it uses it ignorantly, it is not really free, for ignorance brings with it the illusion of enslavement to Nature. Used knowingly, the freedom of the soul becomes one with surrender to the universal Will. Either apparent bondage to Fate in Nature or realised freedom from Nature in the universal freedom and lordship of the Paramatman and Parameshwara, this is the choice offered to the human soul. The gradual self-liberation from bondage to Nature is the true progress of humanity. The inert stone or block is a passive sport of natural laws, God is their Master. Man stands between these two extreme terms and moves upward from one to the other.

The Three Purushas

THE GREATEST of all the philosophical problems which human thought has struggled to solve, is the exact nature and relation to us of the conscious Intelligence in the phenomenal existence around. The idealist denies the phenomenal existence, the materialist denies the conscious Intelligence. To the former, phenomenon is a passing shadow on the luminous calm of the single universal Spirit: to the latter, intelligence is a temporary result of the motions of Matter. The idealist can give no satisfactory explanation of the existence of the shadow; he admits that it is inexplicable, a thing that is and yet is not: the materialist can give no satisfactory explanation of the existence of intelligence; he simply tries to trace the stages of its development and the methods of its workings, and covers over the want of an explanation by the abundant minuteness of his observations. But the soul of Man, looking out and in, is satisfied neither with Shankara nor with Haeckel. It sees the universal existence of phenomena, it sees the universal existence of Intelligence. It seeks a term which will admit both, cover both, identify both; it demands, not an elimination of either, but a reconcilement.

The Upanishads do not deny the reality of the world, but they identify it with Brahman who transcends it. He is the One without a second; He is the All. If all is Brahman, then there can be nothing but Brahman, and therefore the existence of the All, *sarvam idam*, does not contradict the unity of Brahman, does not establish the reality of *bheda*, difference. It is one Intelligence looking at itself from a hundred view-points, each point conscious of and enjoying the existence of the others. The shoreless stream of idea and thought, imagination and experience, name and form, sensation and vibration sweeps onward for ever, without beginning, without end, rising into view, sinking out of sight; through it the one Intelligence with its million self-expressions pours itself abroad, an ocean with innumerable waves. One particular self-expression may disappear into its source and continent, but that does not and cannot abolish the phenomenal universe. The One is for ever, and the Many are for ever because the One is for ever. So long as there is a sea, there will be waves.

In the oceanic stir and change of universal Nature the soul or Purusha is the standing-point, stable, unmoving, unchanging, eternal, — *nityaḥ sarvagataḥ sthāṇur acalo'yaṁ sanātanaḥ*. In the whole, the Purusha or soul is one, — there is One Spirit which supports the stir of the Universe, not many. In the individual the One Purusha has three stages of personality; He is One, but triple, *trivṛt*. The Upanishads speak of two birds on one tree, of which one eats the fruit of the tree, the other, seated on a higher branch, does not eat but watches its fellow; one is *īśa* or lord of itself, the other is *anīśa*, not lord of itself, and it is when the eater looks up and perceives the greatness of the watcher and fills himself with it that grief, death, subjection, — in one word *māyā*, ignorance and illusion, ceases to touch him. There are two unborn who are male and one unborn who is female; she is the tree with its sweet and bitter fruit, the two are the birds. One of the unborn enjoys her sweetness, the other has put it away from him. These are the two Purushas, the *akṣara*, or immutable spirit, and the *kṣara*, or apparently mutable, and the tree or woman is Prakriti, universal Energy which the Europeans call Nature. The *kṣara puruṣa* is the soul in Nature and enjoying Nature, the *akṣara puruṣa* is the soul above Nature and watching her. But there is One who is not seated on the tree but occupies and possesses it, who is not only lord of Himself, but lord of all that is: He is higher than the *kṣara*, higher than the *akṣara*, He is Purushottama, the Soul one with God, with the All.

These three Purushas are described in the fifteenth chapter of the Gita. "There are two Purushas in the world, the *akṣara* and the *kṣara*, — the *kṣara* is all creatures, the *akṣara* is called *kūṭastha*, the one on the summit. There is another Purusha, the highest (*uttama*), called also the Paramatma or Supreme Spirit, who enters into the three worlds, (the worlds of *suṣupti*, *svapna*, *jāgrat*, otherwise the causal, mental and physical planes of existence), and sustains them as their imperishable lord." And in the thirteenth chapter, while drawing the distinction between the lower Purusha and the higher, Sri Krishna defines more minutely the relations of God and the individual soul to Nature. "Prakriti is the basic source of cause, effect and agency; the Purusha, of the sense of enjoyment of happiness and grief; for it is the soul in Nature (Purusha in Prakriti) that enjoys the threefold workings of things caused by Nature, (the play of conservation, creation and destruction; reception, reaction and resistance; illumination, misconception and obscuration; calm, work and inertia; all being different manifestations of three fundamental forces called the gunas or essential properties of Prakriti), and it is the attachment of the soul to the gunas that is the cause of births in bodies good and evil. The highest Purusha in this body is the one who watches, who sanctions, who enjoys, who upholds, who is the mighty Lord and the Supreme Soul."

The personality of the Supreme Soul is universal, not individual. Whatever is in all creatures, character, idea, imagination, experience, sensation, motion, is contained by Him as an object of spiritual enjoyment without limiting or determining Him. He is all things at once. Such a universality is necessary to support and supply individual existence, but it cannot be the determining limit of individual existence. Something has to be reserved, something put forward, and this partial manifestation is the individual. "It is verily an eternal part of Me that in the world of individual existence becomes the Jiva or individual." The Jiva or individual is *kṣara puruṣa*, and between him and the Supreme stands the *akṣara puruṣa*, the bird on the summit of the tree, joyous in his own bliss, undisturbed by the play of Nature, impartially watching it, receiving its images on his calm immovable existence without being for a moment bound or affected, eternally self-gathered, eternally free. This *akṣara puruṣa* is our real self, our divine unity with God, our inalienable freedom from that which is transient and changing. If it did not exist, there would be no escape from the bondage of life and death, joy and grief, sin and virtue; we should be prisoners in a cage without a door, beating our wings against the bars in vain for an exit; life and death, joy and grief, sin and virtue would be eternal, ineffugable realities, not temporary rules determining the great game of life, and we should be unwilling actors, not free playmates of God able to suspend and renew the game when we will. It is by realising our oneness with the *akṣara puruṣa* that we get freedom from ignorance, freedom from the cords of desire, freedom from the imperative law of works. On the other hand if the *akṣara puruṣa* were all, as the Sankhya philosophy contends, there would be no basis for different experience, no varying personality, every individual existence would be precisely like every other individual existence, the development and experience of one soul in Nature an exact replica of the development and experience of another soul. It is the *kṣara puruṣa* who is all creatures, and the variety of experience, character and development is effected by a particular part of the universal swabhava or nature of conscious existence in phenomena being attached to a particular individual or Jiva. This is what is meant by saying that it is a part of God which becomes the Jiva. This swabhava, once determined, does not change; but it manifests various parts of itself, at various times, under various circumstances, in various forms of action and various bodies suited to the action or development it has to enjoy. It is for this reason that the Purusha in Nature is called *kṣara*, fluid, shifting, although it is not in reality fluid or shifting, but constant, eternal and immutable, *sanātana*. It is the variety of its enjoyment in Time, Space and Causality that makes it *kṣara*. The enjoyment of the *akṣara puruṣa* is self-existent, beyond Time, Space and Causality, aware of but undisturbed by the continual multitudinous flux and reflux of Prakriti. The enjoyment of Purushottama is both in Prakriti and beyond it, it embraces and is the reality of all experience and enjoyment.

Development is determined by the *kṣara puruṣa*, but not conducted by him. It is Prakriti, the Universal Energy, that conducts development under the law of cause and effect, and is the true agent. The soul is not the agent, but the lord who enjoys the results of the action of his agent, Prakriti or Nature; only by his attachment to Prakriti he forgets himself and identifies himself with her so as to have the illusion of agency and, by thus forgetting himself, ceases to be lord of himself, becomes subject to Causality, imprisoned in Time and Space, bound by the work which he sanctions. He himself, being a part of God, is made in His image, of one nature with Him. Therefore what God is, he also is, only with limitation, subject to Time, Space and Causality, because he has, of his own will, accepted that bondage. He is the witness, and if he ceased to watch, the drama would stop. He is the source of sanction, and what he declares null and void, drops away from the development. He is the enjoyer, and if he became indifferent, that individual development would be arrested. He is the upholder, and if he ceased to sustain the *ādhāra*, the vehicle, it would fall and cease. He is the lord, and it is for his pleasure that Nature acts. He is the spirit, and matter is only his vehicle, his robe, his means of self-expression. But all his sanctions, refusals, behests act not at once, not there and then, not by imperative absolute compulsion, but subject to lapse of time, change of place, working of cause to effect. The lapse may be brief or long, a moment or centuries; the change small or great, here or in another world; the working direct or indirect, with the rapid concentration of processes which men call a miracle or with the careful and laboured evolution in which every step is visibly ordered and deliberate; but so long as the Jiva is bound, his lordship is limited and constitutional, not despotic and absolute. His sanction and signature are necessary, but it is the Lords spiritual and temporal of his mind and body, the Commons in his external environment who do the work of the State, execute, administer, legislate.

The first step in self-liberation is to get rid of the illusion of agency, to realise that Nature acts, not the soul. The second is to remove the siege of phenomenal associations by surrendering lordship to God, leaving Him alone to uphold and sanction by the abdication of one's own independent use of these powers, offering up the privilege of the enjoyer to Him. All that is then left is the attitude of the *akṣara puruṣa*, the free, blissful self-existence, watching the action of Prakriti, but outside it. The *kṣara* withdraws into the *akṣara*. When the *sākṣī* or witness withdraws into God Himself, that is the utter liberation.

The Strength of Stillness

THERE are two great forces in the universe, silence and speech. Silence prepares, speech creates. Silence acts, speech gives the impulse to action. Silence compels, speech persuades. The immense and inscrutable processes of the world all perfect themselves within, in a deep and august silence, covered by a noisy and misleading surface of sound — the stir of innumerable waves above, the fathomless resistless mass of the ocean's waters below. Men see the waves, they hear the rumour and the thousand voices and by these they judge the course of the future and the heart of God's intention; but in nine cases out of ten they misjudge. Therefore it is said that in History it is always the unexpected that happens. But it would not be the unexpected if men could turn their eyes from superficies and look into substance, if they accustomed themselves to put aside appearances and penetrate beyond them to the secret and disguised reality, if they ceased listening to the noise of life and listened rather to its silence.

The greatest exertions are made with the breath held in; the faster the breathing, the more the dissipation of energy. He who in action can cease from breathing, — naturally, spontaneously, — is the master of Prana, the energy that acts and creates throughout the universe. It is a common experience of the Yogin that when thought ceases, breathing ceases, — the entire kumbhak effected by the Hathayogin with infinite trouble and gigantic effort, establishes itself easily and happily, — but when thought begins again, the breath resumes its activity. But when the thought flows without the resumption of the inbreathing and outbreathing, then the Prana is truly conquered. This is a law of Nature. When we strive to act, the forces of Nature do their will with us; when we grow still, we become their master. But there are two kinds of stillness — the helpless stillness of inertia, which heralds dissolution, and the stillness of assured sovereignty which commands the harmony of life. It is the sovereign stillness which is the calm of the Yogin. The more complete the calm, the mightier the yogic power, the greater the force in action.

In this calm, right knowledge comes. The thoughts of men are a tangle of truth and falsehood, *satyam* and *anṛtam*. True perception is marred and clouded by false perception, true judgment lamed by false judgment, true imagination distorted by false imagination, true memory deceived by false memory. The activity of the mind must cease, the chitta be purified, a silence fall upon the restlessness of Prakriti, then in that calm, in that voiceless stillness illumination comes upon the mind, error begins to fall away and, so long as desire does not stir again, clarity establishes itself in the higher stratum of the consciousness compelling peace and joy in the lower. Right knowledge becomes the infallible source of right action. *Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*.

The knowledge of the Yogin is not the knowledge of the average desire-driven mind. Neither is it the knowledge of the scientific or of the worldly-wise reason which anchors itself on surface facts and leans upon experience and probability. The Yogin knows God's way of working and is aware that the improbable often happens, that facts mislead. He rises above reason to that direct and illuminated knowledge which we call *vijñānam*. The desire-driven mind is emmeshed in the intricate tangle of good and evil, of the pleasant and the unpleasant, of happiness and misfortune. It strives to have the good always, the pleasant always, the happiness always. It is elated by fortunate happenings, disturbed and unnerved by their opposite. But the illuminated eye of the seer perceives that all leads to good; for God is all and God is *sarvamaṅgalam*. He knows that the apparent evil is often the shortest way to the good, the unpleasant indispensable to prepare the pleasant, misfortune the condition of obtaining a more perfect happiness. His intellect is delivered from enslavement to the dualities.

Therefore the action of the Yogin will not be as the action of the ordinary man. He will often seem to acquiesce in evil, to avoid the chance of relieving misfortune, to refuse his assent to the efforts of the noble-hearted who withstand violence and wickedness; he will seem to be acting *piśācavat*. Or men will think him *jaḍa*, inert, a stone, a block, because he is passive, where activity appears to be called for; silent, where men expect voicefulness; unmoved, where there is reason for deep and passionate feeling. When he acts, men will call him *unmatta*, a madman, eccentric or idiot; for his actions will often seem to have no definite result or purpose, to be wild, unregulated, regardless of sense and probability or inspired by a purpose and a vision which is not for this world. And it is true that he follows a light which other men do not possess or would even call darkness; that what is a dream to them, is to him a reality; that their night is his day. And this is the root of the difference that, while they reason, he knows.

To be capable of silence, stillness, illuminated passivity is to be fit for immortality — *amṛtatvāya kalpate*. It is to be *dhīra*, the ideal of our ancient civilisation, which does not mean to be tamasic, inert and a block. The inaction of the tamasic man is a stumbling-block to the energies around him, the inaction of the Yogin creates, preserves and destroys; his action is dynamic with the direct, stupendous driving-power of great natural forces. It is a stillness within often covered by a ripple of talk and activity without, — the ocean with its lively surface of waves. But even as men do not see the reality of God's workings from the superficial noise of the world and its passing events, for they are hidden beneath that cover, so also shall they fail to understand the action of the Yogin, for he is different within from what he is outside. The strength of noise and activity is, doubtless, great, — did not the walls of Jericho fall by the force of noise? But infinite is the strength of the stillness and the silence, in which great forces prepare for action.

The Principle of Evil

THE PROBLEM of evil is one that has taxed human thought and evolved various and conflicting solutions. To the rationalist who does not believe in anything not material, the problem does not exist. Everything is in nature as the result of evolution. Nature is blind and unintelligent and has therefore no conception of good or evil; the conception belongs to the human mind and is the result of the social sense and the ideas of pleasure and pain developed in human beings by a perfectly intelligible natural process. It is to men who believe in Intelligence as governing and developing the world that the problem exists. Why did evil come into existence and what is its purpose?

The unwillingness of the devout soul to admit that evil can have its existence in God, has led to variations of the Manichean theory which sees a double control in the world, God as the Principle of good and Satan as the Principle of evil. Those who regard the belief in the existence of an intelligent evil power as superstition, find the origin of evil in man who abuses his freedom and by his revolt and self-will gives birth to sin. This solution solves nothing, for it does not explain why there should have been a possibility of evil at all. Unless we limit our conception of God as the source and creator of all, that from which all proceeds, we must admit that evil as part of the economy of the world must have proceeded from Him no less than good. Even if we violently posit another creative force in the world limiting His universality, we shall have to assume that He, having the power to prevent evil, permits it; for He is omnipotent, and none can do anything except by the permission of His all-wise and overruling Providence. And if we limit the omnipotence of God, we reduce Him to a mere Demiurgus, a great Artificer of things struggling amongst forces over which He has not entire control. Such a conception is unphilosophical and contrary to the universal spiritual experience of mankind. The problem remains why, if He is God, All-Love, *sarvamaṅgalam*, He creates evil or, if He does not create it, permits it.

To our mind there is no escaping from the belief that, if God exists, He is All. All proceeds from Him; from what other source can it proceed? All exists in Him; in what other being or continent can it exist? Therefore evil must proceed from Him, evil must exist in Him. Since He is All-Wise, for all knowledge is His, it must exist for some wise and perfect purpose. Since He is All-Love, it must exist for good and not for anything which contradicts the good. Only, His is an infinite wisdom, ours a finite, His perfect, ours undeveloped. His is an infinite and all-wise love, ours a finite and unwise love, a love imperfectly informed by knowledge, full of *māyā*, attachment to passing happiness and pleasure. God's love looks beyond, ours fixes its eyes on the moment.

Experience must always be the basis of true knowledge, but it must be experience illuminated by true perception, not experience dominated by surface impressions. The experience of the mind which has compassed calm and is able to preserve its tranquillity under the most strenuous assaults of pain, misfortune and evil, is alone worth having. The mind which is not *dhīra*, which feels grief and thinks under the influence of affection and passion, even if it be noble affection and passion, cannot arrive at the *samyag jñānam*, the complete and perfect truth. Emotion is for the heart, it should not besiege the intellect; for the proper business of the intellect is to observe and understand, not to be obscured by the slightest prejudice, the least trace of feeling. One who is *dhīra* will look narrowly at every incident and, if he cannot see at once, wait for enlightenment as to its ultimate purpose and issue; so waiting, so calmly considering, the meaning of life dawns on the mind, an infinite purpose reveals itself in things small and great, in occurrences good and bad: omniscient Providence reveals itself in the fall of the sparrow and the death of the ant as well as in the earthquake that destroys great cities and the floods that make thousands destitute and homeless. Rudra and

Shiva reveal themselves as one. The Yogin sees God in all things, not only in all beings but in all events. He is the flood, He is the earthquake, He is Death that leads to a higher life, He is Pain that prepares us for a higher bliss. This is a thing that cannot be argued; it has to be seen. *Paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ*. And sight is only possible to the calm heart and the unperturbed understanding.

The materialist is not wrong when he holds good and evil to be merely operations of Nature which she uses impartially and without making a distinction, and that the distinction is an evolution in the human mind. Evil is good disintegrating to prepare for a higher good. That which is now tyranny, was once necessary to consolidate human society. What was once an ideal state of society, would now be barbarous and evil. Morality progresses, religion widens with the growing manifestation of that which is divine in the human race. As with the individual, so with the race and the world, evil tends to good, it comes into existence in order that men may reject the lesser good and rise to the higher.

The problem of pain remains. Was it necessary that the process should be accompanied with pain to the individual? At one time the capacity for pain, physical and mental, was infinitely less than it is now, so little that it might be pronounced to be nil. It is a remarkable fact that disease, pain and grief have grown keener with the growing fineness of the human organisation. Obviously this can only be a temporary development necessary to prepare a higher race which shall rise above pain to a higher capacity for pleasure and happiness. The lower organisation resisted the *saṁskāra* of pain and grief by the coarseness of its composition, it rejected pain in the sense of not knowing it. The higher organisation of the future will not be below it, but rise above it. It was the knowledge of good and evil that brought grief and sin into the world; when that knowledge is surmounted, man will rise above grief and sin. Before he ate the forbidden fruit, he had the innocence of the animal; when he shall cease to eat it, he will have the innocence of the God. Is it not so that in nature pain is a possibility which has to be exhausted and man has been selected as the instrument to bring it into existence, in a limited space, for a limited time, and work it out of the cosmos? In the light of this idea the Christian doctrine of the Son of Man on the cross acquires a new significance and man himself becomes the Christ of the universe.

Another question occurs. Is pain real or a shadow? The Vedantist believes that the soul is a part of God or one with God Himself, and cannot feel pain or grief, but only *ānanda*, bliss. The *jīva* or soul takes the *rasa*, the delight of the dualities, and it changes to bliss in his nature; but this is veiled by the ignorance and separates the *jīva* in his *svarūpa* from the mind and the heart. Pain is a negative *vikāra* or corruption of true experience in the mind, pleasure a positive *vikāra*. The truth is *ānanda*. But this is a knowledge for which mankind is not ready. Only the Yogin realises it and becomes *sama*, like-minded to pain and pleasure, good or evil, happiness or misfortune. He takes the *rasa* of both and they give him strength and bliss; for the veil between his mind and his soul is removed and the apparent man in him has become one with the *svarūpa* or real man. If mankind as a whole came too early by that knowledge, the evolution of the perfect good would be delayed. The utter sweetness of *dayā* and *prema*, pity and love, might never be extracted from the *līlā*.

The Stress of the Hidden Spirit

THE WORLD is a great game of hide and seek in which the real hides behind the apparent, spirit behind matter. The apparent masquerades as real, the real is seen dimly as if it were an unsubstantial shadow. The grandeur of the visible universe and its laws enslaves men's imaginations. "This is a mighty machine," we cry, "but it moves of its own force and needs neither guide nor maker; for its motion is eternal." Blinded by a half truth we fail to see that, instead of a machine without a maker, there is really only an existence and no machine. The Hindus have many images by which they seek to convey their knowledge of the relation between God and the world, but the idea of the machine does not figure largely among them. It is a spider and his web, a fire with many sparks, a pool of salt water in which every particle is penetrated by the salt. The world is a waking dream, an embodied vision, a mass of knowledge arranged in corporeal appearances expressing so many ideas which are each only a part of one unchanging truth. Everything becomes, nothing is made. Everything is put out from latency, nothing is brought into existence. Only that which was, can be, not that which was not. And that which is, cannot perish; it can only lose itself. All is eternal in the eternal spirit.

What was from of old? The spirit. What is alone? The spirit. What shall be for ever? The spirit. All that is in Space and Time, is He; and whatever there may be beyond Space and Time, that too is He. Why should we think so? Because of the eternal and invariable unity which gives permanence to the variability of the many. The sum of matter never changes by increase or diminution, although its component parts are continually shifting; so is it with the sum of energy in the world, so is it with the spirit. Matter is only so much mobile energy vibrating intensely into form. Energy is only so much spirit manifesting the motion that we call energy. Spirit is Force, Spirit Existence, — matter and energy are only motions in Spirit. Force and Existence made one in Bliss, Sachchidanandam, this is the eternal reality of things. But that Force is not motion, it is Knowledge or Idea. Knowledge is the source of motion, not motion of knowledge. The Spirit therefore is all, It is alone. Idea or Force, Existence, Bliss are only its triune manifestations, existence implying idea which is force, force or idea implying bliss.

The Spirit manifest as Intelligence is the basis of the world. Spirit as existence, Sat, is one; as Intelligence it multiplies itself without ceasing to be one. We see that tree and say "Here is a material thing"; but if we ask how the tree came into existence, we have to say, it grew or evolved out of the seed. But growth or evolution is only a term describing the sequence in a process. It does not explain the origin or account for the process itself. Why should the seed produce a tree and not some other form of existence? The answer is, because that is its nature. But why is that its nature? Why should it not be its nature to produce some other form of existence, or some other kind of tree? That is the law, is the answer. But why is it the law? The only answer is that it is so because it is so; that it happens, why no man can say. In reality when we speak of Law, we speak of an idea; when we speak of the nature of a thing, we speak of an idea. Nowhere can we lay our hands on an object, a visible force, a discernible momentum and say "Here is an entity called Law or Nature." The seed evolves a tree because tree is the idea involved in the seed; it is a process of manifestation in form, not a creation. If there were no insistent idea, we should have a world of chances and freaks, not a world of law — there would be no such idea as the nature of things, if there were not an originating and ordering intelligence manifesting a particular idea in forms. And the form varies, is born, perishes; the idea is eternal. The form is the manifestation or appearance, the idea is the truth. The form is phenomenon, the idea is reality.

Therefore in all things the Hindu thinker sees the stress of the hidden spirit. We see it as Prajna, the universal Intelligence, conscious in things unconscious, active in things inert.

The energy of Prajna is what the Europeans call Nature. The tree does not and cannot shape itself, the stress of the hidden Intelligence shapes it. He is in the seed of man and in that little particle of matter carries habit, character, types of emotion into the unborn child. Therefore heredity is true; but if Prajna were not concealed in the seed, heredity would be false, inexplicable, impossible. We see the same stress in the mind, heart, body of man. Because the hidden spirit urges himself on the body, stamps himself on it, expresses himself in it, the body expresses the individuality of the man, the developing and conscious idea or varying type which is myself; therefore no two faces, no two expressions, no two thumb impressions even are entirely alike; every part of the body in some way or other expresses the man. The stress of the spirit shows itself in the mind and heart; therefore men, families, nations have individuality, run into particular habits of thought and feeling, therefore also they are both alike and dissimilar. Therefore men act and react, not only physically but spiritually, intellectually, morally on each other, because there is one self in all creatures expressing itself in various idea and forms variously suitable to the idea. The stress of the hidden Spirit expresses itself again in events and the majestic course of the world. This is the Zeitgeist, this is the purpose that runs through the process of the centuries, the changes of the suns, this is that which makes evolution possible and provides it with a way, means and a goal. “This is He who from years sempiternal hath ordered perfectly all things.”

This is the teaching of the Vedanta as we have it in its oldest form in the Upanishads. Adwaita, Vishishtadwaita, Dwaita are merely various ways of looking at the relations of the One to the Many, and none of them has the right to monopolise the name Vedanta. Adwaita is true, because the Many are only manifestations of the One. Vishishtadwaita is true because ideas are eternal and having manifested, must have manifested before and will manifest again, — the Many are eternal in the One, only they are sometimes manifest and sometimes unmanifest. Dwaita is true, because although from one point of view the One and the Many are eternally and essentially the same, yet, from another, the idea in its manifestation is eternally different from the Intelligence in which it manifests. If Unity is eternal and unchangeable, duality is persistently recurrent. The Spirit is infinite, illimitable, eternal, and infinite, illimitable, eternal is its stress towards manifestation filling endless space with innumerable existences.

Part Two

The Yoga and Its Objects

Circa 1912

The Yoga and Its Objects

THE YOGA we practise is not for ourselves alone, but for the Divine; its aim is to work out the will of the Divine in the world, to effect a spiritual transformation and to bring down a divine nature and a divine life into the mental, vital and physical nature and life of humanity. Its object is not personal Mukti, although Mukti is a necessary condition of the yoga, but the liberation and transformation of the human being. It is not personal Ananda, but the bringing down of the divine Ananda — Christ's kingdom of heaven, our Satyayuga — upon the earth. Of *mokṣa* we have no personal need; for the soul is *nityamukta* and bondage is an illusion. We play at being bound, we are not really bound. We can be free when God wills; for he, our supreme Self, is the master of the game, and without his grace and permission no soul can leave the game. It is often God's will in us to take through the mind the *bhoga* of ignorance, of the dualities, of joy and grief, of pleasure and pain, of virtue and sin, of enjoyment and renunciation: for long ages, in many countries, he never even thinks of the yoga but plays out this play century after century without wearying of it. There is nothing evil in this, nothing which we need condemn or from which we need shrink, — it is God's play. The wise man is he who recognises this truth and knowing his freedom, yet plays out God's play, waiting for his command to change the methods of the game.

The command is now. God always keeps for himself a chosen country in which the higher knowledge is through all chances and dangers, by the few or the many, continually preserved, and for the present, in this Chaturyuga at least, that country is India. Whenever he chooses to take the full pleasure of ignorance, of the dualities, of strife and wrath and tears and weakness and selfishness, the tamasic and rajasic pleasures, of the play of the Kali in short, he dims the knowledge in India and puts her down into weakness and degradation so that she may retire into herself and not interfere with this movement of his Lila. When he wants to rise up from the mud and Narayana in man to become once again mighty and wise and blissful, then he once more pours out the knowledge on India and raises her up so that she may give the knowledge with its necessary consequences of might, wisdom and bliss to the whole world. When there is the contracted movement of knowledge, the yogins in India withdraw from the world and practise yoga for their own liberation and delight or for the liberation of a few disciples; but when the movement of knowledge again expands and the soul of India expands with it, they come forth once more and work in the world and for the world. Yogins like Janaka, Ajatashatru and Kartavirya once more sit on the thrones of the world and govern the nations.

God's Lila in man moves always in a circle, from Satyayuga to Kali and through Kali to the Satya, from the Age of Gold to the Age of Iron and back again through the Iron to the Gold. In modern language the Satyayuga is a period of the world in which a harmony, stable and sufficient, is created and man realises for a time, under certain conditions and limitations, the perfection of his being. The harmony exists in its nature, by the force of a settled purity; but afterwards it begins to break down and man upholds it, in the Treta, by force of will, individual and collective; it breaks down further and he attempts to uphold it in the Dwapara by intellectual regulation and common consent and rule; then in the Kali it finally collapses and is destroyed. But the Kali is not merely evil; in it the necessary conditions are progressively built up for a new Satya, another harmony, a more advanced perfection. In the period of the Kali which has passed, still endures in its effects, but is now at an end, there has been a general destruction of the ancient knowledge and culture. Only a few fragments remain to us in the Vedas, Upanishads and other sacred works and in the world's confused traditions. But the time is at hand for a first movement upward, the first attempt to build up a new harmony and perfection. That is the reason why so many ideas are abroad for the perfection of human society, knowledge, religion and morals. But the true harmony has not yet been found.

It is only India that can discover the harmony, because it is only by a change — not a mere readjustment — of man's present nature that it can be developed, and such a change is not possible except by yoga. The nature of man and of things is at present a discord, a harmony that has got out of tune. The whole heart and action and mind of man must be changed, but from within, not from without, not by political and social institutions, not even by creeds and philosophies, but by realisation of God in ourselves and the world and a remoulding of life by that realisation. This can only be effected by Purnayoga, a yoga not devoted to a particular purpose, even though that purpose be Mukti or Ananda, but to the fulfilment of the divine humanity in ourselves and others. For this purpose the practices of Hatha and Raja Yoga are not sufficient and even the Trimarga will not serve; we must go higher and resort to the Adhyatmayoga. The principle of Adhyatmayoga is, in knowledge, the realisation of all things that we see or do not see but are aware of, — men, things, ourselves, events, gods, titans, angels, — as one divine Brahman, and in action and attitude, an absolute self-surrender to the Paratpara Purusha, the transcendent, infinite and universal Personality who is at once personal and impersonal, finite and infinite, self-limiting and illimitable, one and many, and informs with his being not only the Gods above, but man and the worm and the clod below. The surrender must be complete. Nothing must be reserved, no desire, no demand, no opinion, no idea that this must be, that cannot be, that this should be and that should not be; — all must be given. The heart must be purified of all desire, the intellect of all self-will, every duality must be renounced, the whole world seen and unseen must be recognised as one supreme expression of concealed Wisdom, Power and Bliss, and the entire being given up, as an engine is passive in the hands of the driver, for the divine Love, Might and perfect Intelligence to do its work and fulfil its divine Lila. *Ahaṅkāra* must be blotted out in order that we may have, as God intends us ultimately to have, the perfect bliss, the perfect calm and knowledge and the perfect activity of the divine existence. If this attitude of perfect self-surrender can be even imperfectly established, all necessity of Yogic *kriyā* inevitably ceases. For then God himself in us becomes the sadhaka and the siddha and his divine power works in us, not by our artificial processes, but by a working of Nature which is perfectly informed, all-searching and infallibly efficient. Even the most powerful Rajayogic *saṁyama*, the most developed *prāṇāyāma*, the most strenuous meditation, the most ecstatic Bhakti, the most self-denying action, mighty as they are and efficacious, are comparatively weak in their results when set beside this supreme working. For those are all limited to a certain extent by our capacity, but this is illimitable in potency because it is God's capacity. It is only limited by his will which knows what is best for the world and for each of us in the world and apart from it.

The first process of the yoga is to make the *saṅkalpa* of *ātmasamarpaṇa*. Put yourself with all your heart and all your strength into God's hands. Make no conditions, ask for nothing, not even for *siddhi* in the yoga, for nothing at all except that in you and through you his will may be directly performed. To those who demand from him, God gives what they demand, but to those who give themselves and demand nothing, he gives everything that they might otherwise have asked or needed and in addition he gives himself and the spontaneous boons of his love.

The next process is to stand aside and watch the working of the divine power in yourself. This working is often attended with disturbance and trouble in the system, therefore faith is necessary, though perfect faith is not always possible at once; for whatever impurity is in you, harboured openly or secretly lurking, is likely to rise at first and be repeated so long as it is not exhaustively swept out, and doubt in this age is an almost universal impurity. But even when doubt assails, stand by and wait for it to pass, availing yourself if possible of the *satsaṅga* of those who are already advanced on the path, but when that is absent, still holding fast to the principle of the yoga, self-surrender. When distressed within or assailed from without, remember the words of the Gita,

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात् तरिष्यसि।

"By giving thyself up in heart and mind to Me, thou shalt cross over all difficulties and perils by My grace," and again,

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥

"Abandon all *dharmas* (all law, rule, means and codes of every kind whether formed by previous habit and belief or imposed from outside) and take refuge in Me alone; I will deliver thee from all sin and evil, — do not grieve." "I will deliver", — you have not to be troubled or struggle yourself as if the responsibility were yours or the result depended on your efforts, a mightier than you is busy with the matter. Neither disease nor calamity nor the rising of sin and impurity in you should cause any alarm. Hold fast only to him. "I will deliver thee from all sin and evil." But the release does not come by a sudden miracle, it comes by a process of purification and these things are a part of the process. They are like the dust that rises in clouds when a room long uncleaned is at last swept out. Though the dust seem to choke you, yet persevere, *mā śucaḥ*.

In order to stand aside, you must know yourself as the Purusha who merely watches, consents to God's work, holds up the Adhar and enjoys the fruits that God gives. The work itself is done by God as Shakti, by Kali, and is offered up by her as a Yajna to Sri Krishna; you are the Yajamana who sees the sacrifice done, whose presence is necessary to every movement of the sacrifice and who tastes its results. This separation of yourself, this renunciation of the *kartṛtva-abhimāna* (the idea of yourself as the doer) is easier if you know what the Adhar is. Above the *buddhi* which is the highest function of mind is the higher *buddhi*, or *vijñāna*, the seat of the *satyadharma*, truth of knowledge, truth of *bhāva*, truth of action, and above this ideal faculty is the *ānanda* or cosmic bliss in which the divine part of you dwells. It is of this *vijñāna* and this *ānanda* that Christ spoke as the kingdom of God that is within you.

We at present are awake, *jāgrat*, in the lower movements but *suṣupta*, fast asleep, in the *vijñāna* and *ānanda*; we have to awaken these levels of consciousness within us and their awakening and unmixed activity is the *siddhi* of the yoga. For when that happens, we gain the condition of being which is called in the Gita dwelling in God, of which Sri Krishna speaks when he says, *mayi nivasiṣyasyeva*, "Verily thou shalt dwell in Me." Once it is gained, we are free and blessed and have everything towards which we strive.

The third process of the yoga is to perceive all things as God. First, as a rule, in the process of knowledge one comes to see pervading all space and time one divine impersonal Existence, Sad Atman, without movement, distinction or feature, *śāntam alakṣaṇam*, in which all names and forms seem to stand with a very doubtful or a very minor reality. In this realisation the One may seem to be the only reality and everything else Maya, a purposeless and inexplicable illusion. But afterwards, if you do not stop short and limit yourself by the impersonal realisation, you will come to see the same Atman not only containing and supporting all created things, but informing and filling them, and eventually you will be able to understand that even the names and forms are Brahman. You will then be able to live more and more in the knowledge which the Upanishads and the Gita hold up as the rule of life; you will see the Self in all existing things and all existing things in the Self, *ātmānaṁ sarvabhūteṣu sarvabhūtāni cātmani*; you will be aware of all things as Brahman, *sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ brahma*. But the crowning realisation of this yoga is when you become aware of the whole world as the expression, play or Lila of an infinite divine personality, when you see in all, not the impersonal Sad Atman which is the basis of manifest existence, — although you do not lose that knowledge, — but Sri Krishna who at once is, bases and transcends all manifest and unmanifest existence, *avyakto 'vyaktāt paraḥ*. For behind the Sad Atman is the silence of the Asat which the Buddhist Nihilists realised as the *śūnyam* and beyond that silence is the Paratpara Purusha (*puruṣo vareṇya ādityavarṇas tamasaḥ parastāt*). It is he who has made this world out of his being and is immanent in and sustains it as the infinite-finite Ishwara, *ananta* and *sānta*, Shiva and Narayana, Sri Krishna the Lilamaya who draws all of us to him by his love, compels all of us by his masteries and plays his eternal play of joy and strength and beauty in the manifold world.

The world is only a play of his being, knowledge and delight, *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. Matter itself, you will one day realise, is not material, it is not substance but form of consciousness, *guṇa*, the result of quality of being perceived by sense-knowledge. Solidity itself is only a combination of the *guṇas*, *saṁhati* and *dhṛti*, cohesion and permanence, a state of conscious being, nothing else. Matter, life, mind and what is beyond mind, it is all Sri Krishna the Ananta-guna Brahman playing in the world as the Sachchidananda. When we have this realisation, when we dwell in it securely and permanently, all possibilities of grief and sin, fear, delusion, internal strife and pain are driven puissantly from our being. We realise in our experience the truth of the Upanishads,

> आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् न बिभेति कुतश्चन।

"He who possesses the delight of the Brahman has no fear from anything in the world,"and that other in the Isha Upanishad,

> यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद् विजानतः।
> तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः॥

"When all created things become one with a man's self by his getting the knowledge (*vijñāna*), thereafter what bewilderment can he have or what grief, when in all things he sees their oneness?" The whole world then appears to us in a changed aspect, as an ocean of beauty, good, light, bliss, exultant movement on a basis of eternal strength and peace. We see all things as *śubha*, *śiva*, *maṅgala*, *ānandamaya*. We become one in soul with all beings, *sarvabhūtātma-bhūtātmā*, and, having steadfastly this experience, are able by contact, by oneness, by the reaching out of love, to communicate it to others, so that we become a centre of the radiation of this divine state, *brāhmī sthiti*, throughout our world.

It is not only in things animate but in things inanimate also that we must see Narayana, experience Shiva, throw our arms around Shakti. When our eyes, that are now blinded by the idea of Matter, open to the supreme Light, we shall find that nothing is inanimate, but all contains, expressed or unexpressed, involved or evolved, secret or manifest or in course of manifestation, not only that state of involved consciousness which we call *annam* or Matter, but also life, mind, knowledge, bliss, divine force and being, — *prāṇa*, *manas*, *vijñāna*, *ānanda*, *cit*, *sat*. In all things the self-conscious personality of God broods and takes the delight of his *guṇas*. Flowers, fruits, earth, trees, metals, all things have a joy in them of which you will become aware, because in all Sri Krishna dwells, *praviśya*, having entered into them, not materially or physically, — because there is no such thing, Space and Time being only conventions and arrangements of perception, the perspective in God's creative Art, — but by *cit*, the divine awareness in his transcendent being.

ईशा वास्यमिदं सर्वं यत् किञ्च जगत्यां जगत्।

"All this world and every object in this world of Prakriti has been created as a habitation for the Lord."

Nor is it enough to see him in all things and beings, *sarvabhūteṣu*; you must see him in all events, actions, thoughts, feelings, in yourself and others, throughout the world. For this realisation two things are necessary: first, that you should give up to him the fruit of all your actions, secondly, that you should give up to him the actions themselves. Giving up the fruits of action does not mean that you must have the *vairāgya* for the fruits, turn away from them or refuse to act with a given end before you. It means that you must act, not because you want this or that to happen or think it necessary that this or that should happen and your action needed to bring it about, but because it is *kartavyam*, demanded by the Master of your being and must be done with whatever result God is pleased to give.

You must put aside what you want and wish to know what God wants; distrust what your heart, your passions or your habitual opinions prefer to hold as right and necessary, and passing beyond them, like Arjuna in the Gita, seek only to know what God has set down as right and necessary. Be strong in the faith that whatever is right and necessary will inevitably happen as the result of your due fulfilment of the *kartavyaṁ karma*, even if it is not the result that you preferred or expected. The power that governs the world is at least as wise as you and it is not absolutely necessary that you should be consulted or indulged in its management; God is seeing to it.

But what is the *kartavyaṁ karma*? It is very difficult to say, — *gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ*. Most people would translate *kartavyaṁ karma* by the English word and idea, *duty*; if asked to define it, they would say it is the right and moral action, what people understand by right and morality, what you yourself conscientiously think to be right or else what the good of society, the nation or mankind demands of you. But the man who remains bound by these personal or social ideas of duty, necessary as they are for the ignorant to restrain and tame their clamorous desires or their personal egoism, will be indeed what is called a good man, but he will never attain to the fulfilment of this yoga. He will only replace the desire for one kind of fruit by the desire for another kind; he will strive, even more passionately perhaps, for these higher results and be more bitterly grieved by not attaining them. There is no passion so terrible as the passion of the altruist, no egoism so hard to shake as the fixed egoism of virtue, precisely because it is justified in its own eyes and justified in the sight of men and cannot see the necessity for yielding to a higher law. Even if there is no grieving over the results, there will be the labour and strife of the rajasic *kartā*, struggling and fighting, getting eager and getting exhausted, not *triguṇātīta*, always under bondage to the *guṇas*.

It was under the domination of these ideas of personal virtue and social duty that Arjuna refused to fight. Against his reasonings Sri Krishna sets two different ideas, one inferior for the use of the man bound but seeking liberation, another superior for the liberated man, the Shastra and surrender not only of the fruits of the work but of the work itself to God. The virtue of the Shastra is that it sets up a standard outside ourselves, different from our personal desires, reasonings, passions and prejudices, outside our selfishness and self-will, by living up to which in the right spirit we can not only acquire self-control but by reducing even the sattwic *ahaṅkāra* to a minimum prepare ourselves for liberation. In the old days the Shastra was the Vedic Dharma based upon a profound knowledge of man's psychology and the laws of the world, revealing man to himself and showing him how to live according to his nature; afterwards it was the law of the Smritis which tried to do the same thing more roughly by classifying men according to the general classes of which the Vedas speak, the *cāturvarṇya*; today it is little more than blind mechanical custom and habitual social observance, a thing not sattwic but tamasic, not a preparatory discipline for liberation, but a mere bondage.

Even the highest Shastra can be misused for the purposes of egoism, the egoism of virtue and the egoism of prejudice and personal opinion. At its best it is a great means towards the preparation of liberation. It is *śabda-brahma*. But we must not be satisfied with mere preparation, we must, as soon as our eyes are opened, hasten on to actual freedom. The liberated soul and the sadhak of liberation who has surrendered even his actions to God, gets beyond the highest Shastra, *śabdabrahmātivartate*.

The best foundation for the surrender of action is the realisation that Prakriti is doing all our actions at God's command and God through our *svabhāva* determines the action. From that moment the action belongs to him, it is not yours nor the responsibility yours; there is indeed no responsibility, no bondage of Karma, for God has no responsibility, but is in every way master and free. Our actions become not only like the Shastric man's *svabhāvaniyata*, regulated by nature and therefore *dharma*, but the *svabhāva* itself is controlled like a machine by God. It is not easy for us, full as we are of the Sanskaras of ignorance, to arrive at this stage of knowledge, but there are three stages by which it can be rapidly done. The first is to live in the spirit of the *śloka*, —

> त्वया हृषीकेश हृदि स्थितेन यथा नियुक्तोऽस्मि तथा करोमि।

"According as I am appointed by Thee, O Hrishikesha! seated in my heart, so I act." When this has entered into your daily life, it will be easier to accomplish the second stage and live in the knowledge of the Gita,

> ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति।
> भ्रामयन् सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया॥

"God stands in the heart of all beings, whirling round all, as on a wheel, by the Maya of the three *guṇas*." You will then be able to perceive the action of the three *guṇas* in you and watch the machinery at its work, no longer saying, *tathā karomi*, I do, but *guṇā vartanta eva*, it is merely the *guṇas* that work. One great difficulty in these stages, especially before you can distinguish the action of the *guṇas*, is the perception of the impurity of the *svabhāva*, the haunting idea of sin and virtue. You must always remember that, since you have put yourself in God's hands, he will work out the impurities and you have only to be careful, as you cannot be attached either to *pāpa* or *puṇya*, sin or virtue. For he has repeatedly given the *abhaya vacana*, the assurance of safety. "*Pratijānīhi*," he says in the Gita, "*na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*, he who is devoted to Me cannot perish."

The third stage comes out of the second, by full realisation of God, or of itself by the grace of God. Not only will the Purusha stand apart and be *triguṇātīta*, beyond the three *guṇas*, but the Prakriti, though using the *guṇas*, will be free from their bondage. Sattwa, as we know it, will disappear into pure *prakāśa* and *jyotiḥ*, and the nature will live in a pure, free and infinite self-existing illumination. Tamas, as we know it, will disappear into pure *śama* or *śānti*, and the nature will take its firm stand on an infinite and ineffable rest and peace. Rajas, as we know it, will disappear into pure *tapas*, and the nature will flow in a free and infinite ocean of divine force. On that foundation of calm and in that heaven of light, action will occur as the spontaneous objective expression of God's knowledge, which is one with God's will. This is the condition of infinity, *ānantya*, in which this struggle of bound and limited sattwa, rajas and tamas is replaced by a mighty harmony of free *prakāśa*, *tapas* and *śama*. And even before you reach that condition, on the way to it, you will find that some mighty force not your own, not situated in your body though possessing and occupying it, is thinking for you, feeling for you, acting for you, your very body as well as your mind and heart being moved by that force and not by yourself. You will enjoy that thought, feeling, action, but will neither possess nor be possessed by it, — *karmāṇi pravilīyante*, your actions will disappear without leaving in you mark or trace, as a wave disappears from the surface of the sea, as water falls from the lotus leaf. Your mind, heart, body will not be yours, but God's; you yourself will be only a centre of being, knowledge and bliss through which God works in that Adhar. This is the condition in which one is utterly *taccittaḥ*, given up in all his conscious being to God, in which there is utter fulfilment of the description,

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते।

"One whose state of being is free from egoism and whose understanding receives no stain." This is the surrender of action to which Sri Krishna gives so much importance.

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः॥

"Laying down all actions upon Me, with thy whole conscious being in *adhyātmayoga*, become free from desire and the sense of belongings; fight, let the fever of thy soul pass from thee." For this great and complete liberation it is necessary that you should be *niḥspṛha*, *nirdvandva* and *nirahaṅkāra*, without the longing and reaching after things, free from the *saṁskāra* of the dualities and free from egoism; for these three things are the chief enemies of self-surrender. If you are *nirdvandva*, you can be *niḥspṛha*, but hardly otherwise, for every *dvandva* creates in the mind by the very nature of the mind some form of *rāgadveṣa*, like and dislike, attraction and repulsion, whether they are the lowest dualities that appeal to the mind through the body, hunger and thirst, heat and cold, physical pleasure and pain, or the middle sorts that appeal to it through the feelings and desires, success and failure, victory and defeat, fortune and misfortune, pleasure and displeasure, joy and grief, hate and love, or the highest which appeal to the mind through the discriminating *buddhi*, virtue and sin, reason and unreason, error and truth. These things can only be put under our feet by complete knowledge, the knowledge that sees God in all things and thus comes to understand the relations of things to each other in his great cosmic purpose, by complete Bhakti which accepts all things with joy, — thus abolishing the *dvandvas*, — because they come from the Beloved or by perfect action offering up all works as a sacrifice to God with an entire indifference to these dualities of success, failure, honour, disgrace, etc., which usually pursue all Karma. Such knowledge, such Bhakti, such Karma come inevitably as the eventual result of the *saṅkalpa* of self-surrender and the practice of it.

But it is *ahaṅkāra* that by making the relation and effect of things on ourselves or on things connected with us the standard of life, makes the *dvandvas* a chain for our bondage. *Ahaṅkāra* in its action on our life and sadhana will be seen to be of three kinds, rajasic, tamasic and sattwic. Rajas binds by desire and the craving in the nature for occupation and activity, it is always reaching after action and the fruit of action; it is in order that we may be free from the rajasic *ahaṅkāra* that we have the command, "Do not do works from the desire of fruit," *mā karma-phala-hetur bhūḥ*, and the command to give up our actions to God. Tamas binds by weakness and the craving in the nature for ease and inaction; it is always sinking into idleness, depression, confusion of mind, fear, disappointment, despondency and despair; it is in order that we may get rid of the tamasic *ahaṅkāra* that we are given the command, "Let there be no attachment to inaction," and the instruction to pursue the yoga always, whether we seem to advance or seem to be standing still or seem even to be going back, always with a calm faith and patient and cheerful perseverance, *anirviṇṇacetasā*. Sattwa binds by knowledge and pleasure; it is always attaching itself to some imperfect realisation, to the idea of one's own virtue, the correctness of one's own opinions and principles or at its highest, as in the case of Arjuna, opposing some personal idea of altruism, justice or virtue against the surrender of our will that God demands of us. It is for the escape from the sattwic *ahaṅkāra* that we have to pass beyond the attachment to the duality of virtue and sin, *ubhe sukṛtaduṣkṛte*.

Each of the *guṇas* working on the *ahaṅkāra* has its particular danger for the sadhak who has made the *saṅkalpa* of self-surrender, but has not yet attained to the full accomplishment of the surrender. The danger of the *rajoguṇa* is when the sadhak is assailed by the pride that thinks, "I am a great sadhak, I have advanced so far, I am a great instrument in God's hands," and similar ideas, or when he attaches himself to the work as God's work which must be carried out, putting himself into it and troubling himself about it as if he had more interest in God's work than God himself and could manage it better. Many, while they are acting all the while in the spirit of rajasic *ahaṅkāra*, persuade themselves that God is working through them and they have no part in the action. This is because they are satisfied with the mere intellectual assent to the idea without waiting for the whole system and life to be full of it. A continual remembrance of God in others and renunciation of individual eagerness (*spṛhā*) are needed and a careful watching of our inner activities until God by the full light of self-knowledge, *jñānadīpena bhāsvatā*, dispels all further chance of self-delusion.

The danger of *tamoguṇa* is twofold, first, when the Purusha thinks, identifying himself with the tamas in him, "I am weak, sinful, miserable, ignorant, good-for-nothing, inferior to this man and inferior to that man, *adhama*, what will God do through me?" — as if God were limited by the temporary capacities or incapacities of his instruments and it were not true that he can make the dumb to talk and the lame to cross the hills, *mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim*,—and again when the sadhak tastes the relief, the tremendous relief of a negative *śānti* and, feeling himself delivered from all troubles and in possession of peace, turns away from life and action and becomes attached to the peace and ease of inaction. Remember always that you too are Brahman and the divine Shakti is working in you; reach out always to the realisation of God's omnipotence and his delight in the Lila. He bids Arjuna work *lokasaṅgrahārthāya*, for keeping the world together, for he does not wish the world to sink back into Prakriti, but insists on your acting as he acts,

> उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम्।

"These worlds would be overpowered by tamas and sink into Prakriti if I did not do actions." To be attached to inaction is to give up our action not to God but to our tamasic *ahaṅkāra*.

The danger of the *sattvaguṇa* is when the sadhak becomes attached to any one-sided conclusion of his reason, to some particular *kriyā* or movement of the sadhana, to the joy of any particular *siddhi* of the yoga, perhaps the sense of purity or the possession of some particular power or the Ananda of the contact with God or the sense of freedom and hungers after it, becomes attached to that only and would have nothing else. Remember that the yoga is not for yourself; for these things, though they are part of the *siddhi*, are not the object of the *siddhi*, for you have decided at the beginning to make no claim upon God but take what he gives you freely and, as for the Ananda, the selfless soul will even forego the joy of God's presence, when that is God's will. You must be free even from the highest sattwic *ahaṅkāra*, even from the subtle ignorance of *mumukṣutva*, the desire of liberation, and take all joy and delight without attachment. You will then be the *siddha* or perfect man of the Gita.

These then are the processes of the yoga, (1) the *saṅkalpa* of *ātmasamarpaṇa*, (2) the standing apart from the Adhar by self-knowledge, (3) the vision of God everywhere and in all things and in all happenings, the surrender of the fruits of action and action itself to God, and the freedom thereby from ignorance, from *ahaṅkāra*, from the *dvandvas*, from desire, so that you are *śuddha*, *mukta*, *siddha*, full of Ananda, pure, free, perfect and blissful in your being. But the processes will be worked out, once the *saṅkalpa* is made, by God's Shakti, by a mighty process of Nature. All that is indispensable on your part is the *anumati* and *smṛti. Anumati* is consent, you must give a temporary consent to the movements of the yoga, to all that happens inside or outside you as part of the circumstances of the sadhana, not exulting at the good, not fretting at the evil, not struggling in your heart to keep the one or get rid of the other, but always keeping in mind and giving a permanent assent to that which has to be finally effected. The temporary consent is passive submission to the methods and not positive acceptance of the results. The permanent consent is an anticipatory acceptance of the results, a sort of effortless and desireless exercise of will. It is the constant exercise of this desireless will, an intent aspiration and constant remembrance of the path and its goal which are the *dhṛti* and *utsāha* needed, the necessary steadfastness and zeal of the sadhak; *vyākulatā* or excited, passionate eagerness is more intense, but less widely powerful, and it is disturbing and exhausting, giving intense pleasure and pain in the pursuit but not so vast a bliss in the acquisition. The followers of this path must be like the men of the early yugas, *dhīrāḥ*, the great word of praise in the Upanishads. In the remembrance, the *smṛti* or *smaraṇa*, you must be *apramatta*, free from negligence. It is by the loss of the *smṛti* owing to the rush and onset of the *guṇas* that the yogin becomes *bhraṣṭa*, falls from his firm seat, wanders from his path. But you need not be distressed when the *pramāda* comes and the state of fall or clouded condition seems to persist, for there is no fear for you of a permanent fall since God himself has taken entire charge of you and if you stumble, it is because it is best for you to stumble, as a child by frequent stumbling and falling learns to walk. The necessity of *apramattatā* disappears when you can replace the memory of the yoga and its objects by the continual remembrance of God in all things and happenings, the *nitya anusmaraṇa* of the Gita. For those who can make the full surrender from the beginning there is no question; their path is utterly swift and easy.

It is said in the "Sanatsujatiya" that four things are necessary for *siddhi* — *śāstra*, *utsāha*, *guru* and *kāla* — the teaching of the path, zeal in following it, the Guru and time. Your path is that which I am pointing out, the *utsāha* needed is this *anumati* and this *nitya smaraṇa*, the Guru is God himself and for the rest only time is needed. That God himself is the Guru, you will find when knowledge comes to you; you will see how every little circumstance within you and without you has been subtly planned and brought about by infinite wisdom to carry out the natural process of the yoga, how the internal and external movements are arranged and brought together to work on each other, so as to work out the imperfection and work in the perfection. An almighty love and wisdom are at work for your uplifting. Therefore never be troubled by the time that is being taken, even if it seems very long, but when imperfections and obstructions arise, be *apramatta*, *dhīra*, have the *utsāha*, and leave God to do the rest. Time is necessary. It is a tremendous work that is being done in you, the alteration of your whole human nature into a divine nature, the crowding of centuries of evolution into a few years. You ought not to grudge the time. There are other paths that offer more immediate results or at any rate, by offering you some definite *kriyā* you can work at yourself, give your *ahaṅkāra* the satisfaction of feeling that you are doing something, so many more *prāṇāyāmas* today, so much longer a time for the *āsana*, so many more repetitions of the *japa*, so much done, so much definite progress marked. But once you have chosen this path, you must cleave to it. Those are human methods, not the way that the infinite Shakti works, which moves silently, sometimes imperceptibly to its goal, advances here, seems to pause there, then mightily and triumphantly reveals the grandiose thing that it has done. Artificial paths are like canals hewn by the intelligence of man; you travel easily, safely, surely, but from one given place to another. This path is the broad and trackless ocean by which you can travel widely to all parts of the world and are admitted to the freedom of the infinite. All that you need are the ship, the steering-wheel, the compass, the motive-power and a skilful captain. Your ship is the Brahmavidya, faith is your steering-wheel, self-surrender your compass, the motive-power is she who makes, directs and destroys the worlds at God's command and God himself is your captain. But he has his own way of working and his own time for everything. Watch his way and wait for his time. Understand also the importance of accepting the Shastra and submitting to the Guru and do not do like the Europeans who insist on the freedom of the individual intellect to follow its own fancies and preferences which it calls reasonings, even before it is trained to discern or fit to reason. It is much the fashion nowadays to indulge in metaphysical discussions and philosophical subtleties about Maya and Adwaita and put them in the forefront, making them take the place of spiritual experience. Do not follow that fashion or confuse yourself and waste time on the way by questionings which will be amply and luminously answered when the divine knowledge of the *vijñāna* awakes in you. Metaphysical knowledge has its place, but as a handmaid to spiritual experience, showing it the way sometimes but much more dependent on it and living upon its bounty. By itself it is mere *pāṇḍitya*, a dry and barren thing and more often a stumbling-block than a help. Having accepted this path, follow its Shastra without unnecessary doubt and questioning, keeping the mind plastic to the light of the higher knowledge, gripping firmly what is experienced, waiting for light where things are dark to you, taking without pride what help you can from the living guides who have already trod the path, always patient, never hastening to narrow conclusions, but waiting for a more complete experience and a fuller light, relying on the Jagadguru who helps you from within.

It is necessary to say something about the Mayavada and the modern teachings about the Adwaita because they are much in the air at the present moment and, penetrated with ideas from European rationalism and agnosticism for which Shankara would have been astonished to find himself made responsible, perplex many minds. Remember that one-sided philosophies are always a partial statement of truth. The world, as God has made it, is not a rigid exercise in logic but, like a strain of music, an infinite harmony of many diversities, and his own existence, being free and absolute, cannot be logically defined. Just as the best religion is that which admits the truth of all religions, so the best philosophy is that which admits the truth of all philosophies and gives each its right place. Maya is one realisation, an important one which Shankara overstressed because it was most vivid to his own experience. For yourself leave the word for subordinate use and fix rather on the idea of Lila, a deeper and more penetrating word than Maya. Lila includes the idea of Maya and exceeds it; nor has it that association of the vanity of all things, useless to you who have elected to remain and play with Sri Krishna in Mathura and Brindavan.

God is one but he is not bounded by his unity. We see him here as one who is always manifesting as many, not because he cannot help it, but because he so wills, and outside manifestation he is *anirdeśyam*, indefinable, and cannot be described as either one or many. That is what the Upanishads and other sacred books consistently teach; he is *ekamevādvitīyam*, One and there is no other, but also and consequently he is "this man, yonder woman, that blue-winged bird, this scarlet-eyed." He is *sānta*, he is *ananta*; the Jiva is he. "I am the *aśvattha* tree," says Sri Krishna in the Gita, "I am death, I am Agni Vaishwanara, I am the heat that digests food, I am Vyasa, I am Vasudeva, I am Arjuna." All that is the play of his *caitanya* in his infinite being, his manifestations, and therefore all are real. Maya means nothing more than the freedom of Brahman from the circumstances through which he expresses himself. He is in no way limited by that which we see or think about him. That is the Maya from which we must escape, the Maya of ignorance which takes things as separately existent and not God, not *caitanya*, the illimitable for the really limited, the free for the bound. Do you remember the story of Sri Krishna and the Gopis, how Narada found him differently occupied in each house to which he went, present to each Gopi in a different body, yet always the same Sri Krishna? Apart from the devotional meaning of the story, which you know, it is a good image of his World-Lila. He is *sarva*, everyone, each Purusha with his apparently different Prakriti and action is he, and yet at the same time he is the Purushottama who is with Radha, the Para Prakriti, and can withdraw all these into himself when he wills and put them out again when he wills. From one point of view they are one with him, from another one yet different, from yet another always different because they always exist, latent in him or expressed at his pleasure. There is no profit in disputing about these standpoints. Wait until you see God and know yourself and him and then debate and discussion will be unnecessary.

The goal marked out for us is not to speculate about these things, but to experience them. The call upon us is to grow into the image of God, to dwell in him and with him and be a channel of his joy and might and an instrument of his works. Purified from all that is *aśubha*, transfigured in soul by his touch, we have to act in the world as dynamos of that divine electricity and send it thrilling and radiating through mankind, so that wherever one of us stands, hundreds around may become full of his light and force, full of God and full of Ananda. Churches, Orders, theologies, philosophies have failed to save mankind because they have busied themselves with intellectual creeds, dogmas, rites and institutions, with *ācāraśuddhi* and *darśana*, as if these could save mankind, and have neglected the one thing needful, the power and purification of the soul. We must go back to the one thing needful, take up again Christ's gospel of the purity and perfection of mankind, Mahomed's gospel of perfect submission, self-surrender and servitude to God, Chaitanya's gospel of the perfect love and joy of God in man, Ramakrishna's gospel of the unity of all religions and the divinity of God in man, and, gathering all these streams into one mighty river, one purifying and redeeming Ganges, pour it over the death-in-life of a materialistic humanity as Bhagirath led down the Ganges and flooded with it the ashes of his fathers, so that they may be a resurrection of the soul in mankind and the Satyayuga for a while return to the world. Nor is this the whole object of the

Lila or the Yoga; the reason for which the Avatars descend is to raise up man again and again, developing in him a higher and ever higher humanity, a greater and yet greater development of divine being, bringing more and more of heaven again and again upon the earth until our toil is done, our work accomplished and Sachchidananda fulfilled in all even here, even in this material universe. Small is his work, even if he succeeds, who labours for his own salvation or the salvation of a few; infinitely great is his, even if he fail or succeed only partially or for a season, who lives only to bring about peace of soul, joy, purity and perfection among all mankind.

APPENDIX

Explanations of Some Words and Phrases

> "Matter itself, you will one day realise, is not material, it is not substance but form of consciousness, *guṇa*, the result of quality of being perceived by sense-knowledge." (p. 77)

There is no need to put "the" before "quality" — in English that would alter the sense. Matter is not regarded in this passage as a quality of being perceived by sense; I don't think that would have any meaning. It is regarded as a result of a certain power and action of consciousness which presents forms of itself to sense perception and it is this quality of sense-perceivedness, so to speak, that gives them the appearance of Matter, i.e. of a certain kind of substantiality inherent in themselves — but in fact they are not self-existent substantial objects but forms of consciousness. The point is that there is no such thing as the self-existent Matter posited by nineteenth-century Science.

> "chitta" and "chetas"

Chitta is ordinarily used for the mental consciousness in general, thought, feeling, etc. taken together with a stress now on one side or another, sometimes on the feelings as in *citta-pramāthī*, sometimes on the thought-mind — that is why I translated it [on p. 75 (*maccittaḥ*)] "heart and mind" in its wider sense. Chetas can be used in the same way, but it has a different shade of sense, properly speaking, and can include also the movements of the soul, covering the whole consciousness even; [on p. 82] I take it in its most general sense. The translation is not meant

Sri Aurobindo wrote these explanations in 1938 in answer to questions asked by a Hindi translator of The Yoga and Its Objects.

to be literal but to render the thought in the line in its fullness. *Adhyātmacetasā* practically amounts to what in English we would describe as a spiritual consciousness.

"throw our arms around" (p. 78)

It is a figure meaning to comprehend in our consciousness with love and Ananda.

"the nature" (p. 81, lines 29, 31, 33)

Nature here means the parts of Prakriti in the human being: as it is the condition of the Prakriti that changes with shifting of the gunas and it is this condition of the Prakriti that will become illumined by the transformation of *sattva* into *jyotiḥ*.

lokasaṅgrahārthāya (p. 85) — Does this mean present order?

No. It is in a more general sense the maintenance of the world order which may be a developing, not necessarily a stationary one, an order spiritual, moral etc. and not merely a social order.

Part Three

Writings from the *Arya*

1914–1921

N° 1

आर्य

A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

(*English Edition of the "Revue de Grande Synthèse."*)

Editors :

SRI AUROBINDO GHOSE — PAUL & MIRRA RICHARD.

15th August 1914

7, Rue Dupleix, Pondicherry.

INDIA.

MODERN PRESS, PONDICHERRY.

"ARYA"

MONTHLY REVIEW.

The "ARYA" is a Review of pure philosophy.

The object which it has set before itself is twofold :—

1. A systematic study of the highest problems of existence ;

2. The formation of a vast Synthesis of knowledge, harmonising the diverse religious traditions of humanity occidental as well as oriental. Its method will be that of a realism, at once rational and transcendental,—a realism consisting in the unification of intellectual and scientific discipline with those of intuitive experience.

This Review will also serve as an organ for the various groups and societies founded on its inspiration.

The Review will publish :—

Synthetic studies in speculative Philosophy.
Translations and commentaries of ancient texts.
Studies in Comparative Religion.
Practical methods of inner culture and self development.

CONTENTS.

THE LIFE DIVINE..................................Aurobindo Ghose.
THE WHEREFORE OF THE WORLDS ....Paul Richard.
THE SECRET OF THE VEDA..................... A. G.
    a.) The Problem and its Solution.
    b.) Selected Hymns.
ANNOTATED TEXTS : Isha Upanishad...... A. G.
THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA........................ A. G.
THE ETERNAL WISDOM:.......................... P. R.
VARIETIES : The Soul of a Plant.
THE QUESTION OF THE MONTH.
THE NEWS OF THE MONTH.

Notes on the *Arya*

The "Arya's" Second Year

THE "ARYA", born by a coincidence which might well have been entirely disastrous to its existence in the very month when there broke out the greatest catastrophe that has overtaken the modern world, has yet, though carried on under serious difficulties, completed its first year. We have been obliged unfortunately to discontinue the French edition from February last as our director M. Paul Richard was then recalled to join his class of the Reserve Army in France. We have to thank the indulgence of our French subscribers who have consented to receive the English edition in its stead.

We have been obliged in our first year for reasons we shall indicate in the preface to our August number[1] to devote the Review almost entirely to high philosophy and severe and difficult thinking. But the object we had in view is now fulfilled and we recognise that we have no right to continue to subject our readers to the severe strain of almost 64 pages of such strenuous intellectual labour. We shall therefore in the next year devote a greater part of our space to articles on less profound subjects written in a more popular style. Needless to say, our matter will always fall within the definition of a philosophical Review and centre around the fundamental thought which the "Arya" represents.

We shall continue the *Life Divine*, the *Synthesis of Yoga* and the *Secret of the Veda*; but we intend to replace the *Selected Hymns* by a translation of the Hymns of the Atris (the fifth Mandala of the Rig Veda) so conceived as to make the sense of the Vedic chants at once and easily intelligible without the aid of a commentary to the general reader. The same circumstance which obliged us to discontinue the French edition, will also prevent us from continuing the *Wherefore of the Worlds*. Happily, we have been able to bring it to a point where the writer's central idea appears, the new creation of our world by redeeming Love, — a fitting point for the faith and reason of man to pause upon at the moment of the terrible ordeal which that world is now undergoing.

---

[1] *The "preface" in question appeared under the title "Our Ideal". The bulk of that piece is printed on pages 140–47. Passages referring to the* Arya *were omitted from it after its first publication; these are reproduced on pages 103–4. — Ed.*

Without the divine Will which knows best what to use and what to throw aside, no human work can come to the completion hoped for by our limited vision. To that Will we entrust the continuance and the result of our labours and we conclude the first year of the "Arya" with the aspiration that the second may see the speedy and fortunate issue of the great world-convulsion which still pursues us and that by the Power which brings always the greatest possible good out of apparent evil there may emerge from this disastrous but long-foreseen collapse of the old order a new and better marked by the triumph of higher principles of love, wisdom and unity and a sensible advance of the race towards our ultimate goal, — the conscious oneness of the Soul in humanity and the divinity of man.

APPENDIX

Passages Omitted from "Our Ideal"

The "Arya" having completed its first year and survived the first perils of infancy, now offers itself a second time to the decisions of Time and the mind of the hour. We think it necessary to open our new year with a succinct statement of the idea this Review is intended to serve and the aim which it holds before it. For our Review has been conceived neither as a mirror of the fleeting interests and surface thoughts of the period we live in, nor as the mouthpiece of a sect, school or already organised way of thinking. Its object is to feel out for the thought of the future, to help in shaping its foundations and to link it to the best and most vital thought of the past.

*

Our first preoccupation in the "Arya" has therefore been with the deepest thought that we could command on the philosophical foundations of the problem; and we have been so profoundly convinced that without this basis nothing we could say would have any real, solid and permanent value that we have perhaps given too great a space to difficult and abstruse thought whether in the shaping of our own ideas or in the study and restatement of the ancient Eastern knowledge. Our excuse is that we come forward as ourselves learners and students and must begin at the roots to proceed forward safely.

These paragraphs formed part of the article "Our Ideal" when it was published in the Arya *in August 1915 (one month after "The 'Arya's' Second Year"). The passages occurred at the beginning of the essay and before its last paragraph. They were omitted from "Our Ideal" when it was included in the book* Ideal and Progress *in 1920.*

Our second preoccupation has been with the psychological disciplines of Yoga; but here also we have been obliged to concern ourselves with a deep study of the principles underlying the methods rather than with a popular statement of methods and disciplines. But without this previous study of principles the statement of methods would have been unsound and not really helpful. There are no short cuts to an integral perfection.

Other and more popular sides of our work we have been obliged hitherto to neglect; but now that we have advanced a little in the more difficult part of it, we hope to turn increasingly to these more obvious and general subjects of interest. And if our readers are still willing to follow us, their recompense will be a more clear, sound and solid thought on these subjects than we could otherwise have given them.

The "Arya's" Fourth Year

WE CLOSE this month the fourth year of the "Arya", and bring to a conclusion at the same time the "Psychology of Social Development", the "Ideal of Human Unity" and the first series of the "Essays on the Gita". A few more chapters will complete the "Life Divine". We are therefore well in view of the completion of the first part of the work which we had proposed to ourselves in starting this philosophical monthly, and we take the opportunity to say a few words upon the principle which has governed our writing and which the difficulty of a serial exposition on several lines at a time, scattering and breaking up the total impression, may have prevented some of our readers from grasping in its entirety.

We had not in view at any time a review or magazine in the ordinary sense of the word, that is to say, a popular presentation or criticism of current information and current thought on philosophical questions. Nor was it, as in some philosophical and religious magazines in India, the restatement of an existing school or position of philosophical thought cut out in its lines and needing only to be popularised and supported. Our idea was the thinking out of a synthetic philosophy which might be a contribution to the thought of the new age that is coming upon us. We start from the idea that humanity is moving to a great change of its life which will even lead to a new life of the race, — in all countries where men think, there is now in various forms that idea and that hope, — and our aim has been to search for the spiritual, religious and other truth which can enlighten and guide the race in this movement and endeavour. The spiritual experience and the general truths on which such an attempt could be based, were already present to us, otherwise we should have had no right to make the endeavour at all; but the complete intellectual statement of them and their results and issues had to be found. This meant a continuous thinking, a high and subtle and difficult thinking on several lines, and this strain, which we had to impose on ourselves, we were obliged to impose also on our readers. This too is the reason why we have adopted the serial form which in a subject like philosophy has its very obvious disadvantages, but was the only one possible.

Our original intention was to approach the synthesis from the starting-point of the two lines of culture which divide human thought and are now meeting at its apex, the knowledge of the West and the knowledge of the East; but owing to the exigencies of the war this could not be fulfilled. The "Arya" except for one unfinished series has been an approach to the highest reconciling truth from the point of view of the Indian mentality and Indian spiritual experience, and Western knowledge has been viewed from that standpoint. Here the main idea which has governed our writing, was imposed on us by the very conditions of the problem. All philosophy is concerned with the relations between two things, the fundamental truth of existence and the forms in which existence presents itself to our experience. The deepest experience shows that the fundamental truth is truth of the Spirit; the other is the truth of life, truth of form and shaping force and living idea and action. Here the West and East have followed divergent lines. The West has laid most emphasis on truth of life and for a time come to stake its whole existence upon truth of life alone, to deny the existence of spirit or to relegate it to the domain of the unknown and unknowable; from that exaggeration it is now beginning to return. The East has laid most emphasis on truth of the Spirit and for a time came, at least in India, to stake its whole existence upon that truth alone, to neglect the possibilities of life or to limit it to a narrow development or a fixed status; the East too is beginning to return from this exaggeration. The West is reawaking to the truth of the Spirit and the spiritual possibilities of life, the East is reawaking to the truth of Life and tends towards a new application to it of its spiritual knowledge. Our view is that the antinomy created between them is an unreal one. Spirit being the fundamental truth of existence, life can be only its manifestation; Spirit must be not only the origin of life but its basis, its pervading reality and its highest and total result. But the forms of life as they appear to us are at once its disguises and its instruments of self-manifestation. Man has to grow in knowledge till they cease to be disguises and grow in spiritual power and quality till they become in him its perfect instruments. To grow into the fullness of the divine is the true law of human life and to shape his earthly existence into its image is the meaning of his evolution. This is the fundamental tenet of the philosophy of the "Arya".

This truth had to be worked out first of all from the metaphysical point of view; for in philosophy metaphysical truth is the nucleus of the rest, it is the statement of the last and most general truths on which all the others depend or in which they are gathered up. Therefore we gave the first place to the "Life Divine". Here we start from the Vedantic position, its ideas of the Self and mind and life, of Sachchidananda and the world, of Knowledge and Ignorance, of rebirth and the Spirit. But Vedanta is popularly supposed to be a denial of life, and this is no doubt a dominant trend it has taken. Though starting from the original truth that all is the Brahman, the Self, it has insisted in the end that the world is simply not-Brahman, not-Self; it has ended in a paradox. We have attempted on the contrary to establish from its data a comprehensive Adwaita. We have shown that mind and life and matter are derivations from the Self through a spiritual mind or supermind which is the real support of cosmic existence and by developing mind into that, man can arrive at the real truth of the spirit in the world and the real truth and highest law of life. The Self is Sachchidananda and there is no incurable antinomy between that and the world; only we see the world through the eyes of the Ignorance and we have to see it through the eyes of the Knowledge. Our ignorance itself is only knowledge developing out of its involution in the apparent nescience of Matter and on its way to a return to its conscious integrality. To accomplish that return and manifest the spiritual life in the human existence is the opportunity given by the successions of rebirth. We accept the truth of evolution, not so much in the physical form given to it by the West as in its philosophical truth, the involution of life and mind and spirit here in matter and their progressive manifestation. At the summit of this evolution is the spiritual life, the life divine.

It was necessary to show that these truths were not inconsistent with the old Vedantic truth, therefore we included explanations from this point of view of the Veda, two of the Upanishads and the Gita. But the Veda has been obscured by the ritualists and the scholiasts. Therefore we showed in a series of articles, initially only as yet, the way of writing of the Vedic mystics, their system of symbols and the truths they figure. Among the Upanishads we took the Isha and the Kena; to be full we should have added the Taittiriya, but it is a long one and for it we had no space. The Gita we are treating as a powerful application of truth of spirit to the largest and most difficult part of the truth of life, to action, and a way by which action can lead us to birth into the Spirit and can be harmonised with the spiritual life. Truth of philosophy is of a merely theoretical value unless it can be lived, and we have therefore tried in the "Synthesis of Yoga" to arrive at a synthetical view of the principles and methods of the various lines of spiritual self-discipline and the way in which they can lead to an integral divine life in the human existence. But this is an individual self-development, and therefore it was necessary to show too how our ideal can work out in the social life of mankind. In the "Psychology of Social Development" we have indicated how these truths affect the evolution of human society. In the "Ideal of Human Unity" we have taken the present trend of mankind towards a closer unification and tried to appreciate its tendencies and show what is wanting to them in order that real human unity may be achieved.

Our plan has compelled us to deal mainly with first principles and work them out in their fullness. In future we do not propose to start any other long series of this kind, but to have more short articles with a broader, more direct and, as far as possible, more popular treatment. We shall also permit ourselves a freer range and diversity, so far as that is permissible in a philosophical review.

On Ideals and Progress

On Ideals

IDEALS are truths that have not yet effected themselves for man, the realities of a higher plane of existence which have yet to fulfil themselves on this lower plane of life and matter, our present field of operation. To the pragmatical intellect which takes its stand upon the ever-changing present, ideals are not truths, not realities, they are at most potentialities of future truth and only become real when they are visible in the external fact as work of force accomplished. But to the mind which is able to draw back from the flux of force in the material universe, to the consciousness which is not imprisoned in its own workings or carried along in their flood but is able to envelop, hold and comprehend them, to the soul that is not merely the subject and instrument of the world-force but can reflect something of that Master-Consciousness which controls and uses it, the ideal present to its inner vision is a greater reality than the changing fact obvious to its outer senses. The Idea is not a reflection of the external fact which it so much exceeds; rather the fact is only a partial reflection of the Idea which has created it.

Certainly, ideals are not the ultimate Reality, for that is too high and vast for any ideal to envisage; they are aspects of it thrown out in the world-consciousness as a basis for the workings of the world-power. But they are primary, the actual workings secondary. They are nearer to the Reality and therefore always more real, forcible and complete than the facts which are their partial reflection. Reflections themselves of the Real, they again are reflected in the more concrete workings of our existence. The human intellect in proportion as it limits itself by the phenomena of self-realising Force fails to catch the creative Idea until after we have seen the external fact it has created; but this order of our sense-enslaved consciousness is not the real order of the universe. God pre-exists before the world can come into being, but to our experience in which the senses act first and only then the finer workings of consciousness, the world seems to come first and God to emerge out of it, so much so that it costs us an effort to rise out of the mechanical, pluralistic and pantheistic conceptions of Him to a truer and higher idea of the Divine Reality. That which to us is the ultimate, is in truth the primary reality. So too the Idea which seems to us to rise out of the fact, really precedes it and out of it the fact has arisen. Our vulgar contrast of the ideal and the real is therefore a sensuous error, for that which we call real is only a phenomenon of force working out something that stands behind the phenomenon and that is pre-existent and greater than it. The Real, the Idea, the phenomenon, this is the true order of the creative Divinity.

The pragmatic intellect is only sure of a thing when it finds it realised in Power; therefore it has a certain contempt for the ideal, for the vision, because it drives always at execution and material realisation. But Power is not the only term of the Godhead; Knowledge is the elder sister of Power: Force and Consciousness are twin aspects of being both in the eternal foundation of things and in their evolutionary realisation. The idea is the realisation of a truth in Consciousness as the fact is its realisation in Power, both indispensable, both justified in themselves and in each other, neither warranted in ignoring or despising its complement. For the idealist and visionary to despise the pragmatist or for the pragmatist to depreciate the idealist and visionary is a deplorable result of our intellectual limitations and the mutual misunderstandings by which the arrogance of our imperfect temperament and mentality shuts itself out from perfection. It is as if we were to think that God the Seer and Knower must despise God the Master of works and energies or the Lord of action and sacrifice ignore the divine Witness and Originator. But these two are one and the division in us a limitation that mankind has yet to conquer.

The human being advances in proportion as he becomes more and more capable of knowing before he realises in action. This is indeed the order of evolution. It begins with a material working in which the Prakriti, the executive Power, is veiled by its works, by the facts it produces, and itself veils the consciousness which originates and supports all its workings. In Life the force emerges and becomes vibrant in the very surface of its works; last, in Mind the underlying consciousness reveals itself. So too man is at first subject in his mentality to the facts which his senses envisage, cannot go behind and beyond them, knows only the impressions they make on his receptive mind. The animal is executive, not creative; a passive tool of Matter and Life he does not seek in his thought and will to react upon and use them: the human being too in his less developed state is executive rather than creative; he limits his view to the present and to his environment, works so as to live from day to day, accepts what he is without reaching forward in thought to what he may be, has no ideals. In proportion as he goes beyond the fact and seeks to anticipate Nature, to catch the ideas and principles behind her workings and finally to seize the idea that is not yet realised in fact and himself preside over its execution, he becomes originative and creative and no longer merely executive. He begins thus his passage from subjection to mastery.

In thus progressing humanity falls apart after its fashion into classes; it divides itself between the practical man and the idealist and makes numerous compromises between the two extremes. In reality the division is artificial; for every man who does anything in the world, works by virtue of an idea and in the force given to him by ideals, either his own or others' ideals, which he may or may not recognise but in whose absence nevertheless he would be impotent to move a single step. The smaller the ideals, the fewer they are and the less recognised and insisted on, the less also is the work done and the progress realised; on the other hand, when ideals enlarge themselves, when they become forceful, widely recognised, when different ideals enter into the field, clash and communicate their thought and force to each other, then the race rises to its great periods of activity and creation. And it is when the Ideal arisen, vehement, energetic, refuses to be debarred from possession and throws itself with all the gigantic force of the higher planes of existence on this reluctant and rebellious stuff of life and matter to conquer it that we have the great eras which change the world by carrying out the potentialities of several centuries in the action of a few decades.

Therefore wherever and whenever the mere practical man abounds and excludes or discourages by his domination the idealist, there is the least work and the least valuable work done in that age or country for humanity; at most some preliminary spade-work, some labour of conservation and hardly perceptible motion, some repression of creative energies preparing for a great future outburst. On the other hand, when the idealist is liberated, when the visionary abounds, the executive worker also is uplifted, finds at once an orientation and tenfold energy and accomplishes things which he would otherwise have rejected as a dream and chimera, which to his ordinary capacity would be impossible and which often leave the world wondering how work so great could have been done by men who were in themselves so little. The union of the great idealist with the great executive personality who receives and obeys the idea is always the sign of a coming realisation which will be more or less deep and extensive in proportion as they are united or as the executive man seizes more or less profoundly and completely the idea he serves and is able to make permanent in force what the other has impressed upon the consciousness of his age.

Often enough, even when these two different types of men work in the same cause and one more or less fulfils the other, they are widely separated in their accessory ideas, distrust, dislike and repudiate each other. For ordinarily the idealist is full of anticipations which reach beyond the actual possibilities or exceed the work that is destined to be immediately fulfilled; the executive man on the other hand is unable to grasp either all the meaning of the work he does or all its diviner possibilities which to him are illusion and vanity while to the other they are all that is supremely valuable in his great endeavour. To the practical worker limiting himself by patent forces and actual possibilities the idealist who made his work possible seems an idle dreamer or a troublesome fanatic; to the idealist the practical man who realises the first steps towards his idea seems a coarse spoiler of the divine work and almost its enemy: for by attaching too much importance to what is immediately possible he removes the greater possibilities which he does not see, seems to prevent and often does prevent a larger and nobler realisation. It is the gulf between a Cavour and a Mazzini, between the prophet of an ideal and the statesman of a realisable idea. The latter seems always to be justified by the event, but the former has a deeper justification in the shortcomings of the event. The successes of the executive man hiding away the ideal under the accomplished fact are often the tragedies of the human spirit and are responsible for the great reactions and disappointments it undergoes when it finds how poor and soulless is the accomplished fact compared with the glory of the vision and the ardour of the effort.

It cannot be doubted which of these two opposites and complementaries is the most essential to success. Not only is the upheaval and fertilising of the general consciousness by the thinker and the idealist essential to the practical realisation of great changes, but in the realisation itself the idealist who will not compromise is an indispensable element. Show me a movement without a force of uncompromising idealism working somewhere in its sum of energies and you have shown me a movement which is doomed to failure and abortion or to petty and inconsiderable results. The age or the country which is entirely composed of reasonable, statesmanlike workers ever ready for concession and compromise is a country which will never be great until it has added to itself what is lacking to it and bathed itself in pure and divine fountains and an age which will accomplish nothing of supreme importance for the progress of humanity. There is a difference however between the fanatic of an idea and the true idealist: the former is simply the materialistic, executive man possessed by the idea of another, not himself the possessor of it; he is haunted in his will and driven by the force of the idea, not really illumined by its light. He does harm as well as good and his chief use is to prevent the man of compromise from pausing at a paltry or abortive result; but his excesses also bring about great reactions. Incapable of taking his stand on the ideal itself, he puts all his emphasis on particular means and forms and overstrains the springs of action till they become dulled and incapable of responding to farther excitation. But the true idealist is not the servant of the letter or the form; it is the idea which he loves and the spirit behind the idea which he serves.

Man approaches nearer his perfection when he combines in himself the idealist and the pragmatist, the originative soul and the executive power. Great executive personalities have usually been men of a considerable idealism. Some indeed have served a purpose rather than an ideal; even in the idea that guided or moved them they have leaned to its executive rather than its inspiring and originative aspect; they have sought their driving force in the interest, passion and emotion attached to it rather than in the idea itself. Others have served consciously a great single thought or moral aim which they have laboured to execute in their lives. But the greatest men of action who were endowed by Nature with the most extraordinary force of accomplishment, have owed it to the combination in them of active power with an immense drift of originative thought devoted to practical realisation. They have been great executive thinkers, great practical dreamers. Such were Napoleon and Alexander. Napoleon with his violent prejudice against ideologues and dreamers was himself a colossal dreamer, an incurable if unconscious ideologist; his teeming brain was the cause of his gigantic force and accomplishment. The immense if shapeless ideas of Alexander threw themselves into the form of conquests, cities, cultures; they broke down the barriers of Greek and Asiatic prejudice and narrow self-imprisonment and created an age of civilisation and soul-interchange.

But these great personalities do not contain in themselves the combination which humanity most needs; not the man of action driven by ideas, the pragmatist stirred by a half-conscious exaltation from the idealistic, almost the mystic side of his nature, but the seer who is able to execute his vision is the higher term of human power and knowledge. The one takes his stand in the Prakriti, the executive Force, and is therefore rather driven than leads himself even when he most successfully leads others; the other takes his stand in the Purusha, the Knower who controls executive force, and he possesses the power that he uses. He draws nearer to the type of the divine Seer-Will that has created and governs the universe. But such a combination is rare and difficult; for in order to grasp the Ideal the human soul has to draw back so far from the limitations, pettinesses, denials of the world of phenomenal fact that the temperament and mentality become inapt for executive action upon the concrete phenomena of life and matter. The mastery of the fact is usually possible to the idealist mind only when its idealism is of no great depth or power and can therefore accommodate itself more easily to the actual life-environment.

Until this difficulty is overcome and the Seer-Will becomes more common in man and more the master of life, the ideal works at a disadvantage, by a silent pressure upon the reluctant world, by occasional attacks and sudden upheavals; a little is accomplished in a long time or by a great and sudden effort, a little that is poor enough, coarse enough, material enough compared with the thing seen and attempted, but which still makes a farther advance possible though often after a period of quiescence and reaction. And times there are, ages of stupendous effort and initiative when the gods seem no longer satisfied with this tardy and fragmentary working, when the ideal breaks constantly through the dull walls of the material practical life, incalculable forces clash in its field, innumerable ideas meet and wrestle in the arena of the world and through the constant storm and flash, agitation of force and agitation of light the possibility of the victoriously fulfilled ideal, the hope of the Messiah, the expectation of the Avatar takes possession of the hearts and thoughts of men. Such an age seems now to be coming upon the world. But whether that hope and expectation and possibility are to come to anything depends upon whether men prepare their souls for the advent and rise in the effort of their faith, life and thought to the height and purity of a clearly-grasped ideal.

The Messiah or Avatar is nothing but this, the divine Seer-Will descending upon the human consciousness to reveal to it the divine meaning behind our half-blind action and to give along with the vision the exalted will that is faithful and performs and the ideal force that executes according to the vision.

Yoga and Skill in Works

Yoga is skill in works.
Gita

YOGA, says the Gita, is skill in works, and by this phrase the ancient Scripture meant that the transformation of mind and being to which it gave the name of Yoga brought with it a perfect inner state and faculty out of which the right principle of action and the right spiritual and divine result of works emerged naturally like a tree out of its seed. Certainly, it did not mean that the clever general or politician or lawyer or shoemaker deserves the name of a Yogin; it did not mean that any kind of skill in works was Yoga, but by Yoga it signified a spiritual condition of universal equality and God-union and by the skill of the Yogic worker it intended a perfect adaptation of the soul and its instruments to the rhythm of the divine and universal Spirit in a nature liberated from the shackles of egoism and the limitations of the sense-mind.

Essentially, Yoga is a generic name for the processes and the result of processes by which we transcend or shred off our present modes of being and rise to a new, a higher, a wider mode of consciousness which is not that of the ordinary animal and intellectual man. Yoga is the exchange of an egoistic for a universal or cosmic consciousness lifted towards or informed by the supra-cosmic, transcendent Unnameable who is the source and support of all things. Yoga is the passage of the human thinking animal towards the God-consciousness from which he has descended. In that ascent we find many levels and stages, plateau after plateau of the hill whose summit touches the Truth of things; but at every stage the saying of the Gita applies in an ever higher degree. Even a little of this new law and inner order delivers the soul out of the great peril by which it had been overtaken in its worldward descent, the peril of the ignorance by which the unillumined intellect, even when it is keenest or sagest, must ever be bound and limited, of the sorrow and sin from which the unpurified heart, even when it wears the richest purple of aspiration and feeling, must ever suffer soil and wound and poverty, and of the vanity of its works to which the undivinised will of man, even when it is most vehement and powerful or Olympian and victorious, must eternally be subject. It is the utility of Yoga that it opens to us a gate of escape out of the vicious circle of our ordinary human existence.

The idea of works, in the thought of the Gita, is the widest possible. All action of Nature in man is included, whether it be internal or external, operate in the mind or use the body, seem great or seem little. From the toil of the hero to the toil of the cobbler, from the labour of the sage to the simple physical act of eating, all is included. The seeking of the Self by thought, the adoration of the Highest by the emotions of the heart, the gathering of means and material and capacity and the use of them for the service of God and man stand here on an equal footing. Buddha sitting under the Bo-tree and conquering the illumination, the ascetic silent and motionless in his cave, Shankara storming through India, debating with all men and preaching most actively the gospel of inaction are all from this point of view doing great and forceful work. But while the outward action may be the same, there is a great internal difference between the working of the ordinary man and the working of the Yogin, — a difference in the state of the being, a difference in the power and the faculty, a difference in the will and temperament.

What we do, arises out of what we are. The existent is conscious of what he is; that consciousness formulates itself as knowledge and power; works are the result of this twofold force of being in action. Mind, life and body can only operate out of that which is contained in the being of which they are forces. This is what we mean when we say that all things act according to their nature. The divine Existence is pure and unlimited being in possession of all itself, it is *sat*; whatever it puts forth in its limitless purity of self-awareness is truth of itself, *satya*; the divine knowledge is knowledge of the Truth, the divine Will is power of the Truth, the divine workings are words and ideas of the Truth realising themselves in manifold forms and through many stages and in infinite relations. But God is not limited or bound by any particular working or any moment of time or any field of space or any law of relation, because He is universal and infinite. Nor is He limited by the universe; for His infinity is not cosmic, but supracosmic.

But the individualised being is or acts as if he were so bound and limited, because he treats the particular working of existence that he is and the particular moment of time and field of space in which it is actually operating and the particular conditions which reign in the working and in the moment and in the field as if they were self-existent realities and the binding truth of things. Himself, his knowledge, his force and will, his relations with the world and his fellows, his need in it and his desire from them he treats as the sufficient truth and reality, the point of departure of all his works, the central fact and law of his universe. And from this egoistic error arises an all-vitiating falsehood. For the particular, the individual can have no self-existence, no truth, no valid force except in so far as it reflects rightly and relates and conforms itself justly to the universal, to the all-being, the all-knowledge, the all-will and follows its true drift towards self-realisation and vast delight in itself. Therefore the salvation of the individual lies in his universalising himself; and this is the lesson which life tries always to teach him but the obstinate ego is always unwilling to learn; for the universal is not any group or extended ego, not the family, community, nation or even all mankind, but an infinite far surpassing all these littlenesses.

Nor is the universalising of himself sufficient for liberation, although certainly it will make him practically more free and in his being nearer to the true freedom. To put himself in tune with the universal is a step, but beyond the universal and directing and determining it is the supracosmic Infinity; for the universe also has no self-existence, truth or validity except as it expresses the divine Being, Knowledge, Will, Power, Delight of Him who surpasses all universe, so much that it can be said figuratively that with a petty fragment of His being and a single ray of His consciousness He has created all these worlds. Therefore the universalised mind must look up from its cosmic consciousness to the Supernal and derive from that all its sense of being and movement of works. This is the fundamental truth from which the Yogic consciousness starts; it helps the individual to universalise himself and then to transcend the cosmic formula. And this transformation acts not only on his status of being but on his active consciousness in works.

The Gita tells us that equality of soul and mind is Yoga and that this equality is the foundation of the Brahman-state, that high infinite consciousness to which the Yogin aspires. Now equality of mind means universality; for without universality of soul there may be a state of indifference or an impartial self-control or a well-governed equality of temperament, but these are not the thing that is meant. The equality spoken of is not indifference or impartiality or equability, but a fundamental oneness of attitude to all persons and all things and happenings because of the perception of all as the One. Such equality, it is erroneously thought, is incompatible with action. By no means; this is the error of the animal and the intellectual man who thinks that action is solely possible when dictated by his hopes, fears and passions or by the self-willed preferences of the emotion and the intellect justifying themselves by the illusions of the reason. That might be the fact if the individual were the real actor and not merely an instrument or secondary agent; but we know well enough, for Science and Philosophy assure us of the same truth, that the universal is the Force which acts through the simulacrum of our individuality. The individual mind, pretending to choose for itself with a sublime ignorance and disregard of the universal, is obviously working on the basis of a falsehood and by means of an error and not in the knowledge and the will of the Truth. It cannot have any real skill in works; for to start from a falsehood or half-truth and work by means of blunders and arrive at another falsehood or half-truth which we have immediately to change, and all the while to weep and struggle and suffer and have no sure resting-place, cannot surely be called skill in works. But the universal is equal in all and therefore its determinations are not self-willed preferences but are guided by the truth of the divine will and knowledge which is unlimited and not subject to incapacity or error.

Therefore that state of the being by which the Yogin differs from the ordinary man, is that by which he rises from the foundation of a perfect equality to the consciousness of the one existence in all and embracing all and lives in that existence and not in the walls of his body or personal temperament or limited mind. Mind and life and body he sees as small enough things which happen and change and develop in his being. Nay, the whole universe is seen by him as happening within himself, not in his small ego or mind, but within this vast and infinite self with which he is now constantly identified. All action in the universe he sees as arising in this being, out of the divine Existence and under the stress of the divine Truth, Knowledge, Will and Power. He begins to participate consciously in its working and to see all things in the light of that divine truth and governance; and even when his own actions move on certain lines rather than others, he is not bound by them or shut to the truth of all the rest by his own passions and preferences, gropings and seekings and revolts. It is evident that such an increasing wideness of vision must mean an increasing knowledge. And if it be true that knowledge is power, it must mean also an increasing force for works. Certainly, it would not be so, if the Yogin continued to act by the light of his individual reason and imagination and will; for the intellect and all that depends on it can only work by virtue of rigid limitations and exclusive determinations. Accordingly, the continued activity of the unillumined intellect and its servants conflicts with the new state of consciousness and knowledge which arises out of this larger existence, and so long as they remain active, it cannot be perfect or assured; for the consciousness is being continually pulled down to the lower field of ego-habit by the claim of their narrow workings. But the Yogin ceases, progressively, to act by the choice of his intellectual or emotional nature. Another light dawns, another power and presence intervenes, other faculties awake in the place of the old human-animal combination.

As the state of being changes, the will and temperament must necessarily be modified. Even from an early stage the Yogin begins to subordinate his personal will or it becomes naturally subordinate to the sense of the supreme Will which is attracting him upward. Ignorantly, imperfectly, blunderingly it moves at first, with many recoils and relapses into personal living and personal action, but in time it becomes more in tune with its Source and eventually the personal will merges upward and all ways into the universal and infinite and obeys implicitly the transcendent. Nor does this change and ascension and expanding mean any annihilation of the will-power working in the individual, as the intellectual man might imagine; but rather it increases it to an immense forcefulness while giving it an infinite calm and an eternal patience. The temperament also is delivered from all leash of straining and desire, from all urge of passion and pain of wilful self-delusion. Desire, even the best, turns always to limitation and obscuration, to some eager exclusive choice and pressure, to some insistent exclusion of what should not be excluded and impatient revolt against the divine denials and withholdings. It generates anger and grief and passion and obstinacy, and these bring about the soul's loss of its divine memory or steadfast consciousness of itself and its self-knowledge and its equal vision of the truth of things. Therefore desire and its brood are incompatible with skill in works and their persistence is the sign of an imperfect Yoga.

Not only must the will and fundamental knowledge-view of things change, but a new combination of faculties take the place of the old. For if the intellect is not to do all our mental work for us or to work at all in its unillumined state and if the will in the form of desires, wishes, intellectual preferences is not to determine and enforce our action, then it is clear that other powers of knowledge and will must awaken and either replace the intellect and the mental preference or illumine and guide the one and transform and dominate the other. Otherwise either the action may be nil or else its impulses mechanical and chaotic, even if the static being is blissfully enlarged; for they will well up indeed out of the universal and not the personal, but out of the universal in its lower formula which permits the erratic action of the heart and mind, while the old personal will and reason will not be there to impose some light and order on their ill-connected impulsions. Such faculties and new combination of faculties can and do emerge and they are illuminations and powers that are in direct touch and harmony with the light and power of the Truth; therefore in proportion as they manifest and take hold of their functions, they must increase the force, subtlety and perfection of the Yogin's skill in works.

But the greatest skill in works of Yoga is that which to the animal man seems its greatest ineptitude. For all this difficult attainment, the latter will say, may lead to anything you please, but we have to lose our personal life, abandon our personal objects, annul our personal will and pleasure and without these life cannot be worth living. Now the object of all skill in works must be evidently to secure the best welfare either of ourselves or of others or of all. The ordinary man calls it welfare to secure momentarily some transient object, to wade for it through a sea of grief and suffering and painful labour and to fall from it again still deeper into the same distressful element in search of a new transient object. The greatest cunning of Yoga is to have detected this cheat of the mind and its desires and dualities and to have found the way to an abiding peace, a universal delight and an all-embracing satisfaction, which can not only be enjoyed for oneself but communicated to others. That too arises out of the change of our being; for the pure truth of existence carries also in it the unalloyed delight of existence, they are inseparable in the status of the infinite. To use the figures of the Vedic seers, by Yoga Varuna is born in us, a vast sky of spiritual living, the divine in his wide existence and infinite truth; into that wideness Mitra rises up, Lord of Light and Love who takes all our activities of thought and feeling and will, links them into a divine harmony, charioteers our movement and dictates our works; called by this wideness and this harmony Aryaman appears in us, the Divine in its illumined power, uplifted force of being and all-judging effective will; and by the three comes the indwelling Bhaga, the Divine in its pure bliss and all-seizing joy who dispels the evil dream of our jarring and divided existence and possesses all things in the light and glory of Aryaman's power, Mitra's love and light, Varuna's unity. This divine Birth shall be the son of our works; and than creating this what greater skill can there be or what more practical and sovereign cunning?

Conservation and Progress

MANKIND thinks naturally in extremes or else reconciles by a patchwork and compromise. Whether he makes a fetish of moderation or surrenders himself to the enthusiasm of the single idea, the human being misses always truth of vision and the right pitch of action because instead of seeing, feeling and becoming in obedience to his nature like other animate existences he tries always to measure things by a standard he has set up in his intelligence. But it is the character of his intelligence that it finds it an easy task to distinguish and separate but is clumsy in combining. When it combines, it tends to artificialise and falsify. It feels at ease in pursuing a single idea to its logical consequences and in viewing things from a single standpoint; but to harmonise different ideas in action and to view the facts from different standpoints is contrary to its native impulse; therefore it does that badly, with an ill grace and without mastery. Oftenest it makes an incongruous patchwork rather than a harmony. The human mind is strong and swift in analysis; it synthesises with labour and imperfectly and does not feel at home in its syntheses. It divides, opposes and, placed between the oppositions it creates, becomes an eager partisan of one side or another; but to think wisely and impartially and with a certain totality is irksome and disgusting to the normal human being.

All human action as all human thought suffers from these disabilities. For it is seduced by a trenchant idea which it follows without proper attention to collateral issues, to necessary companion ideas, to the contrary forces in operation, or else it regards these merely as enemies, brands them as pure falsehood and evil and strives with more or less violence to crush them out of existence. Then it sees other ideas which it attempts to realise in turn, either adding them to its past notions and possessions or else rejecting these entirely for the new light; it makes a fresh war and a new clearance and denies its past work in the interest of a future attainment. But it has also its repentances, its returns, its recalls and re-enthronings of banished gods and even of lifeless ghosts and phantoms to which it gives a temporary and false appearance of life. And on the way it has continually its doubts, scruples, hesitations, its portentous assumptions of a sage moderation and a gradual and cautious advance. But human moderation is usually a wiseacre and a botcher; it sews a patch of new velvet on old fustian or of new fustian on old velvet and admires its deplorable handiwork. And its cautious advance means an accumulation of shams, fictions and dead conventions till the burden of falsehood becomes too great for life to bear and a violent revolution is necessary to deliver the soul of humanity out of the immobilising cerements of the past. Such is the type of our progress; it is the advance of an ignorant and purblind but always light-attracted spirit, a being half-animal, half-god, stumbling forward through the bewildering jungle of its own errors.

This characteristic of human mentality shows itself in the opposition we create between conservation and progress. Nothing in the universe can really stand still because everything there is a mould of Time and the very essence of Time is change by a movement forward. It is true that the world's movement is not in a straight line; there are cycles, there are spirals; but still it circles, not round the same point always, but round an ever advancing centre, and therefore it never returns exactly upon its old path and never goes really backward. As for standing still, it is an impossibility, a delusion, a fiction. Only the spirit is stable; the soul and body of things are in eternal motion. And in this motion there are the three determining powers of the past, future and present, — the present a horizontal and constantly shifting line without breadth between a vast realised infinity that both holds back and impels and a vast unrealised infinity that both repels and attracts.

The past is both a drag and a force for progress. It is all that has created the present and a great part of the force that is creating the future. For the past is not dead; its forms are gone and had to go, otherwise the present would not have come into being: but its soul, its power, its essence lives veiled in the present and ever-accumulating, growing, deepening will live on in the future. Every human being holds in and behind him all the past of his own race, of humanity and of himself; these three things determine his starting-point and pursue him through his life's progress. It is in the force of this past, in the strength which its huge conservations give to him that he confronts the unillumined abysses of the future and plunges forward into the depths of its unrealised infinities. But also it is a drag, partly because man afraid of the unknown clings to the old forms of which he is sure, the old foundations which feel so safe under his feet, the old props round which so many of his attachments and associations cast their tenacious tendrils, but also partly because the forces of the past keep their careful hold on him so as to restrain him in his uncertain course and prevent the progress from becoming a precipitation.

The future repels us even while it irresistibly attracts. The repulsion lies partly in our own natural recoil from the unknown, because every step into this unknown is a wager between life and death; every decision we make may mean either the destruction or the greater fulfilment of what we now are, of the name and form to which we are attached. But also it lies in the future itself; for there, governing that future, there are not only powers which call us to fulfil them and attract us with an irresistible force but other powers which have to be conquered and do not desire to yield themselves. The future is a sphinx with two minds, an energy which offers itself and denies, gives itself and resists, seeks to enthrone us and seeks to slay. But the conquest has to be attempted, the wager has to be accepted. We have to face the future's offer of death as well as its offer of life, and it need not alarm us, for it is by constant death to our old names and forms that we shall live most vitally in greater and newer forms and names. Go on we must; for if we do not, Time itself will force us forward in spite of our fancied immobility. And this is the most pitiable and dangerous movement of all. For what can be more pitiable than to be borne helplessly forward clinging to the old that disintegrates in spite of our efforts and shrieking frantically to the dead ghosts and dissolving fragments of the past to save us alive? And what can be more dangerous than to impose immobility on that which is in its nature mobile? This means an increasing and horrible rottenness; it means an attempt to persist on as a putrid and stinking corpse instead of a living and self-renewing energetic creature. The greatest spirits are therefore those who have no fear of the future, who accept its challenge and its wager; they have that sublime trust in the God or Power that guides the world, that high audacity of the human soul to wrestle with the infinite and realise the impossible, that wise and warrior confidence in its ultimate destiny which mark the Avatars and prophets and great innovators and renovators.

If we consider carefully we shall see that the past is indeed a huge force of conservation, but of conservation that is not immobile, but on the contrary offers itself as material for change and new realisation; that the present is the constant change and new actual realisation which the past desires and compels; and that the future is that force of new realisation not yet actual towards which the past was moving and for the sake of which it lived. Then we perceive that there is no real opposition between these three; we see that they are parts of a single movement, a sort of Trinity of Vishnu-Brahma-Maheshwara fulfilling by an inseparable action the one Deity. Yet the human mind in its mania of division and opposition seeks to set them at strife and ranges humanity into various camps, the partisans of the past, the partisans of the present, the partisans of the future, the partisans of all sorts of compromises between the three forces. Nature makes good use of the struggle between these partisans and her method is necessary in our present state of passionate ignorance and egoistic obstinacy; but none the less is it from the point of view of a higher knowledge a pitiably ignorant struggle.

The partisans of the future call themselves the party of progress, the children of light and denounce the past as ignorant, evil, a mass of errors and abuses; their view alone has the monopoly of the light, the truth, the good — a light, good and truth which will equally be denounced as error and evil by succeeding generations. The partisans of the present look with horror upon all progress as an impious and abominable plunge into error and evil and degeneration and ruin; for them the present is the culmination of humanity, — as previous "present" times were for all the preceding generations and as the future which they abhor will be for these unprogressive souls if they should then reincarnate; they will then defend it with the same passion and asperity against another future as they now attack it in the interests of the present. The partisans of the past are of two kinds. The first admit the defects of the present but support it in so far as it still cherishes the principles of the high, perfect, faultless, adorable past, that golden age of the race or community, and because even if somewhat degenerate, its forms are a bulwark against the impiety of progress; if they admit any change, it is in the direction of the past that they seek it. A second kind condemn the present root and branch as degenerate, hateful, horrible, vicious, accursed; they erect a past form as the hope of a humanity returning to the wisdom of its forefathers. And to such quarrels of children the intellectuals and the leaders of thought and faith lend the power of the specious or moving word and the striking idea and the emotional fervour or religious ardour which they conceive to be the very voice and light and force of Truth itself in its utter self-revelation.

The true thinker can dispense with the éclat which attaches to the leader of partisans. He will strive to see this great divine movement as a whole, to know in its large lines the divine intention and goal in it without seeking to fix arbitrarily its details; he will strive to understand the greatness and profound meaning of the past without attaching himself to its forms, for he knows that forms must change and only the formless endures and that the past can never be repeated, but only its essence preserved, its power, its soul of good and its massed impulse towards a greater self-fulfilment; he will accept the actual realisations of the present as a stage and nothing more, keenly appreciating its defects, self-satisfied errors, presumptuous pretensions because these are the chief enemies of progress, but not ignoring the truth and good that it has gained; and he will sound the future to understand what the Divine in it is seeking to realise, not only at the present moment, not only in the next generation, but beyond, and for that he will speak, strive, if need be battle, since battle is the method still used by Nature in humanity, even while all the while he knows that there is more yet beyond beside which, when it comes to light, the truth he has seized will seem erroneous and limited. Therefore he will act without presumption and egoism, knowing that his own errors and those which he combats are alike necessary forces in that labour and movement of human life towards the growing Truth and Good by which there increases shadowily the figure of a far-off divine Ideal.

The Conservative Mind and Eastern Progress

THE ARRIVAL of a new radical idea in the minds of men is the sign of a great coming change in human life and society; it may be combated, the reaction of the old idea may triumph for a time, but the struggle never leaves either the thoughts and sentiments or the habits and institutions of the society as they were when it commenced. Whether it knows it or not, it has gone forward and the change is irretrievable. Either new forms replace the old institutions or the old while preserving the aspect of continuity have profoundly changed within, or else these have secured for themselves a period of greater rigidity, increasing corruption, progressive deterioration of spirit and waning of real force which only assures them in the future a more complete catastrophe and absolute disappearance. The past can arrive at the most at a partial survival or an euthanasia, provided it knows how to compromise liberally with the future.

The conservative mind is unwilling to recognise this law though it is observable throughout human history and we can easily cull examples with full hands from all ages and all climes; and it is protected in its refusal to see by the comparative rarity of rapid revolutions and great cataclysmal changes; it is blinded by the disguise which Nature so often throws over her processes of mutation. If we look casually at European history in this light the attention is only seized by a few conspicuous landmarks, the evolution and end of Athenian democracy, the transition from the Roman republic to the empire, the emergence of feudal Europe out of the ruins of Rome, the Christianisation of Europe, the Reformation and Renascence together preparing a new society, the French Revolution, the present rapid movement towards a socialistic State and the replacing of competition by organised cooperation. Because our view of European history is chiefly political, we do not see the constant mutation of society and of thought in the same relief; but we can recognise two great cycles of change, one of the ancient races leading from the primitive ages to the cultured society of the Graeco-Roman world, the other from the semi-barbarism of feudal Christendom to the intellectual, materialistic and civilised society of modern times.

In the East, on the contrary, the great revolutions have been spiritual and cultural; the political and social changes, although they have been real and striking, if less profound than in Europe, fall into the shade and are apt to be overlooked; besides, this unobtrusiveness is increased by their want of relief, the slow subtlety of their process and the instinctive persistence and reverence with which old names and formulas have been preserved while the thing itself was profoundly modified until its original sense remained only as a pious fiction. Thus Japan kept its sacrosanct Mikado as a cover for the change to an aristocratic and feudal government and has again brought him forward in modern times to cover and facilitate without too serious a shock the transition from a mediaeval form of society into the full flood of modernism. In India the continued fiction of the ancient fourfold order of society based on spiritual idealism, social type, ethical discipline and economic function is still used to cover and justify the quite different, complex and chaotic order of caste which, while it still preserves some confused fragments of the old motives, is really founded upon birth, privilege, local custom and religious formalism. The evolution from one type of society to another so opposed to it in its psychological motives and real institutions without any apparent change of formula is one of the most curious phenomena in the social history of mankind and still awaits intelligent study.

Our minds are apt to seize things in the rough and to appreciate only what stands out in bold external relief; we miss the law of Nature's subtleties and disguises. We can see and fathom to some extent the motives, necessities, process of great revolutions and marked changes and we can consider and put in their right place the brief reactions which only modified without actually preventing the overt realisation of new ideas. We can see for instance that the Sullan restoration of Roman oligarchy, the Stuart restoration in England or the brief return of monarchy in France with the Bourbons were no real restorations, but a momentary damming of the tide attended with insufficient concessions and forced developments which determined, not a return to the past, but the form and pace of the inevitable revolution. It is more difficult but still possible to appreciate the working of an idea against all obstacles through many centuries; we can comprehend now, for instance, that we must seek the beginnings of the French Revolution, not in Rousseau or Mirabeau or the blundering of Louis XVI, but in movements which date back to the Capet and the Valois, while the precise fact which prepared its tremendous outbreak and victory and determined its form was the defeat of the Calvinistic reformation in France and the absolute triumph of the monarchical system over the nobility and the bourgeoisie in the reigns of Louis XIII and Louis XIV. That double victory determined the destruction of the monarchy in France, the downfall of the Church and, by the failure of the nobles to lead faithfully the liberal cause whether in religion or politics, the disappearance of aristocracy.

But Nature has still more subtle and disguised movements in her dealings with men by which she leads them to change without their knowing that they have changed. It is because she has employed chiefly this method in the vast masses of the East that the conservative habit of mind is so much stronger there than in the West. It is able to nourish the illusion that it has not changed, that it is immovably faithful to the ideas of remote forefathers, to their religion, their traditions, their institutions, their social ideals, that it has preserved either a divine or an animal immobility both in thought and in the routine of life and has been free from the human law of mutation by which man and his social organisations must either progress or degenerate but can in no case maintain themselves unchanged against the attack of Time. Buddhism has come and gone and the Hindu still professes to belong to the Vedic religion held and practised by his Aryan forefathers; he calls his creed the Aryan dharma, the eternal religion. It is only when we look close that we see the magnitude of the illusion. Buddha has gone out of India indeed, but Buddhism remains; it has stamped its giant impress on the spirit of the national religion, leaving the forms to be determined by the Tantricism with which itself had made alliance and some sort of fusion in its middle growth; what it destroyed no man has been able to restore, what it left no man has been able to destroy. As a matter of fact, the double cycle which India has described from the early Vedic times to India of Buddha and the philosophers and again from Buddha to the time of the European irruption was in its own way as vast in change religious, social, cultural, even political and administrative as the double cycle of Europe; but because it preserved old names for new things, old formulas for new methods and old coverings for new institutions and because the change was always marked in the internal but quiet and unobtrusive in the external, we have been able to create and preserve the fiction of the unchanging East. There has also been this result that while the European conservative has learned the law of change in human society, knows that he must move and quarrels with the progressist only over the right pace and the exact direction, the Eastern or rather the Indian conservative still imagines that stability may be the true law of mortal being, practises a sort of Yogic *āsana* on the flood of Time and because he does not move himself, thinks — for he keeps his eyes shut and is not in the habit of watching the banks — that he can prevent the stream also from moving on.

This conservative principle has its advantages even as rapid progress has its vices and its perils. It helps towards the preservation of a fundamental continuity which makes for the longevity of civilisations and the persistence of what was valuable in humanity's past. So, in India, if religion has changed immensely its form and temperament, the religious spirit has been really eternal, the principle of spiritual discipline is the same as in the earliest times, the fundamental spiritual truths have been preserved and even enriched in their contents and the very forms can all be traced back through their mutations to the seed of the Veda. On the other hand this habit of mind leads to the accumulation of a great mass of accretions which were once valuable but have lost their virtue and to the heaping up of dead forms and shibboleths which no longer correspond to any vital truth nor have any understood and helpful significance. All this putrid waste of the past is held to be too sacred to be touched by any profane hand and yet it chokes up the streams of the national life or corrupts its waters. And if no successful process of purification takes place, a state of general ill-health in the social body supervenes in which the principle of conservation becomes the cause of dissolution.

The present era of the world is a stage of immense transformations. Not one but many radical ideas are at work in the mind of humanity and agitate its life with a vehement seeking and effort at change; and although the centre of the agitation is in progressive Europe, yet the East is being rapidly drawn into this churning of the sea of thought and this breaking up of old ideas and old institutions. No nation or community can any longer remain psychologically cloistered and apart in the unity of the modern world. It may even be said that the future of humanity depends most upon the answer that will be given to the modern riddle of the Sphinx by the East and especially by India, the hoary guardian of the Asiatic idea and its profound spiritual secrets. For the most vital issue of the age is whether the future progress of humanity is to be governed by the modern economic and materialistic mind of the West or by a nobler pragmatism guided, uplifted and enlightened by spiritual culture and knowledge. The West never really succeeded in spiritualising itself and latterly it has been habituated almost exclusively to an action in the external governed by political and economic ideals and necessities; in spite of the reawakening of the religious mind and the growth of a widespread but not yet profound or luminous spiritual and psychical curiosity and seeking, it has to act solely in the things of this world and to solve its problems by mechanical methods and as the thinking political and economic animal, simply because it knows no other standpoint and is accustomed to no other method. On the other hand the East, though it has allowed its spirituality to slumber too much in dead forms, has always been open to profound awakenings and preserves its spiritual capacity intact, even when it is actually inert and uncreative. Therefore the hope of the world lies in the re-arousing in the East of the old spiritual practicality and large and profound vision and power of organisation under the insistent contact of the West and in the flooding out of the light of Asia on the Occident, no longer in forms that are now static, effete, unadaptive, but in new forms stirred, dynamic and effective.

India, the heart of the Orient, has to change as the whole West and the whole East are changing, and it cannot avoid changing in the sense of the problems forced upon it by Europe. The new Orient must necessarily be the result either of some balance and fusion or of some ardent struggle between progressive and conservative ideals and tendencies. If therefore the conservative mind in this country opens itself sufficiently to the necessity of transformation, the resulting culture born of a resurgent India may well bring about a profound modification in the future civilisation of the world. But if it remains shut up in dead fictions, or tries to meet the new needs with the mind of the schoolman and the sophist dealing with words and ideas in the air rather than actual fact and truth and potentiality, or struggles merely to avoid all but a scanty minimum of change, then, since the new ideas cannot fail to realise themselves, the future India will be formed in the crude mould of the Westernised social and political reformer whose mind, barren of original thought and unenlightened by vital experience, can do nothing but reproduce the forms and ideas of Europe and will turn us all into halting apes of the West. Or else, and that perhaps is the best thing that can happen, a new spiritual awakening must arise from the depths of this vast life that shall this time more successfully include in its scope the great problems of earthly life as well as those of the soul and its transmundane destinies, an awakening that shall ally itself closely with the renascent spiritual seeking of the West and with its yearning for the perfection of the human race. This third and as yet unknown quantity is indeed the force needed throughout the East. For at present we have only two extremes of a conservative immobility and incompetence imprisoned in the shell of past conventions and a progressive force hardly less blind and ineffectual because secondhand and merely imitative of nineteenth-century Europe, with a vague floating mass of uncertainty between. The result is a continual fiasco and inability to evolve anything large, powerful, sure and vital, a drifting in the stream of circumstance, a constant grasping at details and unessentials and failure to reach the heart of the great problems of life which the age is bringing to our doors. Something is needed which tries to be born; but as yet, in the phrase of the Veda, the Mother holds herself compressed in smallness, keeps the Birth concealed within her being and will not give it forth to the Father. When she becomes great in impulse and conception, then we shall see it born.

Our Ideal

WE BELIEVE in the constant progression of humanity and we hold that that progression is the working out of a Thought in Life which sometimes manifests itself on the surface and sometimes sinks below and works behind the mask of external forces and interests. When there is this lapse below the surface, humanity has its periods of apparent retrogression or tardy evolution, its long hours of darkness or twilight during which the secret Thought behind works out one of its phases by the pressure mainly of economic, political and personal interests ignorant of any deeper aim within. When the Thought returns to the surface, humanity has its periods of light and of rapid efflorescence, its dawns and splendid springtides; and according to the depth, vitality, truth and self-effective energy of the form of Thought that emerges is the importance of the stride forward that it makes during these Hours of the Gods in our terrestrial manifestation.

There is no greater error than to suppose, as the "practical" man is wont to do, that thought is only a fine flower and ornament of life and that political, economic and personal interests are the important and effective motors of human action. We recognise that this is a world of life and action and developing organism; but the life that seeks to guide itself only by vital and material forces is a slow, dark and blundering growth. It is an attempt to approximate man to the method of vegetable and animal existence. The earth is a world of Life and Matter, but man is not a vegetable nor an animal; he is a spiritual and a thinking being who is set here to shape and use the animal mould for higher purposes, by higher motives, with a more divine instrumentation.

Therefore by his very nature he serves the working of a Thought within him even when he is ignorant of it in his surface self. The practical man who ignores or despises the deeper life of the Idea, is yet serving that which he ignores or despises. Charlemagne hewing a chaotic Europe into shape with his sword was preparing the reign of the feudal and Catholic interpretation of human life with all that that great though obscure period of humanity has meant for the thought and spiritual development of mankind. But it is when the Thought emerges and guides life that man grows towards his full humanity, strides forward on his path and begins to control the development of Nature in his destiny or at least to collaborate as a conscious mind and spirit with That which controls and directs it.

The progress of humanity has therefore been a constant revolution with its rhythm of alternative darkness and light, but both the day and the night have helped to foster that which is evolving. The periods have not been the same for all parts of the globe. In the historic ages of the present cycle of civilisation the movement has been almost entirely centred in the twin continents of Asia and Europe. And there it has been often seen that when Asia was moving through the light, Europe was passing through one of her epochs of obscurity and on the other hand the nights of Asia's repose or stagnation have corresponded with the days of Europe's mental vigour and vital activity.

But the fundamental difference has been that Asia has served predominantly (not exclusively) as a field for man's spiritual experience and progression, Europe has been rather a workshop for his mental and vital activities. As the cycle progressed, the Eastern continent has more and more converted itself into a storehouse of spiritual energy sometimes active and reaching forward to new development, sometimes conservative and quiescent. Three or four times in history a stream of this energy has poured out upon Europe, but each time Europe has rejected wholly or partially the spiritual substance of the afflatus and used it rather as an impulse to fresh intellectual and material activity and progress.

The first attempt was the filtering of Egyptian, Chaldean and Indian wisdom through the thought of the Greek philosophers from Pythagoras to Plato and the Neo-Platonists; the result was the brilliantly intellectual and unspiritual civilisation of Greece and Rome. But it prepared the way for the second attempt when Buddhism and Vaishnavism filtered through the Semitic temperament entered Europe in the form of Christianity. Christianity came within an ace of spiritualising and even of asceticising the mind of Europe; it was baffled by its own theological deformation in the minds of the Greek fathers of the Church and by the sudden flooding of Europe with a German barbarism whose temperament in its merits no less than in its defects was the very antitype both of the Christian spirit and the Graeco-Roman intellect.

The Islamic invasion of Spain and the southern coast of the Mediterranean — curious as the sole noteworthy example of Asiatic culture using the European method of material and political irruption as opposed to a peaceful invasion by ideas — may be regarded as a third attempt. The result of its meeting with Graecised Christianity was the reawakening of the European mind in feudal and Catholic Europe and the obscure beginnings of modern thought and science.

The fourth and last attempt which is as yet only in its slow initial stage is the quiet entry of Eastern and chiefly of Indian thought into Europe first through the veil of German metaphysics, more latterly by its subtle influence in reawakening the Celtic, Scandinavian and Slavonic idealism, mysticism, religionism, and the direct and open penetration of Buddhism, Theosophy, Vedantism, Bahaism and other Oriental influences in both Europe and America.

On the other hand, there have been two reactions of Europe upon Asia; first, the invasion of Alexander with his aggressive Hellenism which for a time held Western Asia, created echoes and reactions in India and returned through Islamic culture upon mediaeval Europe; secondly, the modern onslaught of commercial, political, scientific Europe upon the moral, artistic and spiritual cultures of the East.

The new features of this mutual interpenetration are, first, that the two attacks have synchronised and, secondly, that they have encountered in each case the extreme exaggeration of their opposites. Intellectual and materialistic Europe found India, the Asia of Asia, the heart of the world's spiritual life, in the last throes of an enormous experiment, the thought of a whole nation concentrated for centuries upon the pure spiritual existence to the exclusion of all real progress in the practical and mental life of the race. The entering stream of Eastern thought found in Europe the beginning of an era which rejected religion, philosophy and psychology, — religion as an emotional delusion, philosophy, the pure essence of the mind, as a barren thought-weaving, — and resolved to devote the whole intellectual faculty of man to a study of the laws of material Nature and of man's bodily, social, economic and political existence and to build thereon a superior civilisation.

That stupendous effort is over; it has not yet frankly declared its bankruptcy, but it is bankrupt. It is sinking in a cataclysm as gigantic and as unnatural as the attempt which gave it birth. On the other hand, the exaggerated spirituality of the Indian effort has also registered a bankruptcy; we have seen how high individuals can rise by it, but we have seen also how low a race can fall which in its eagerness to seek after God ignores His intention in humanity. Both the European and the Indian attempt were admirable, the Indian by its absolute spiritual sincerity, the European by its severe intellectual honesty and ardour for the truth; both have accomplished miracles; but in the end God and Nature have been too strong for the Titanism of the human spirit and for the Titanism of the human intellect.

The salvation of the human race lies in a more sane and integral development of the possibilities of mankind in the individual and in the community. The safety of Europe has to be sought in the recognition of the spiritual aim of human existence, otherwise she will be crushed by the weight of her own unillumined knowledge and soulless organisation. The safety of Asia lies in the recognition of the material mould and mental conditions in which that aim has to be worked out, otherwise she will sink deeper into the slough of despond of a mental and physical incompetence to deal with the facts of life and the shocks of a rapidly changing movement. It is not any exchange of forms that is required, but an interchange of regenerating impulses and a happy fusion and harmonising.

The synchronism and mutual interpenetration of the two great currents of human effort at such a crisis in the history of the race is full of hope for the future of humanity, but full also of possible dangers. The hope is the emergence of a new and better human life founded on a greater knowledge, a pursuit of the new faculties and possibilities opening out before us and a just view of the problem which the individual, the society, the race have to solve. Mankind has been drawn together by the developments of material science and for good or evil its external future is henceforth one; its different parts no longer develop separately and in independence of each other. There opens out at the same time the possibility that by the development and practice of the science and the life of the soul it may be made one in reality and by an internal unity.

The idea by which the enlightenment of Europe has been governed is the passion for the discovery of the Truth and Law that constitutes existence and governs the process of the world, the attempt to develop the life and potentialities of man, his ideals, institutions, organisations by the knowledge of that Law and Truth and the confidence that along this line lies the road of human progress and perfection.

The idea is absolutely just and we accept it entirely; but its application has been erroneous. For the Law and Truth that has to be discovered is not that of the material world — though this is required, nor even of the mental and physical — though this is indispensable, but the Law and Truth of the Spirit on which all the rest depends. For it is the power of the Self of things that expresses itself in their forms and processes.

The message of the East to the West is a true message, "Only by finding himself can man be saved," and "what shall it profit a man though he gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?" The West has heard the message and is seeking out the law and truth of the soul and the evidences of an inner reality greater than the material. The danger is that with her passion for mechanism and her exaggerated intellectuality she may fog herself in an external and false psychism, such as we see arising in England and America, the homes of the mechanical genius, or in intellectual, unspiritual and therefore erroneous theories of the Absolute, such as have run their course in critical and metaphysical Germany.

The idea by which the illumination of Asia has been governed is the firm knowledge that truth of the Spirit is the sole real truth, the belief that the psychological life of man is an instrument for attaining to the truth of the Spirit and that its laws must be known and practised with that aim paramount, and the attempt to form the external life of man and the institutions of society into a suitable mould for the great endeavour.

This idea, too, is absolutely just and we accept it entirely. But in its application, and in India most, it has deviated into a divorce between the Spirit and its instruments and a disparagement and narrowing of the mental and external life of the race. For it is only on the widest and richest efflorescence of this instrumental life that the fullest and most absolute attainment of the spiritual can be securely based. This knowledge the ancients of the East possessed and practised; it has been dimmed in knowledge and lost in practice by their descendants.

The message the West brings to the East is a true message. Man also is God and it is through his developing manhood that he approaches the godhead; Life also is the Divine, its progressive expansion is the self-expression of the Brahman, and to deny Life is to diminish the Godhead within us. This is the truth that returns to the East from the West translated into the language of the higher truth the East already possesses; and it is an ancient knowledge. The East also is awaking to the message. The danger is that Asia may accept it in the European form, forget for a time her own law and nature and either copy blindly the West or make a disastrous amalgam of that which she has in its most inferior forms and the crudenesses which are invading her.

The problem of thought therefore is to find out the right idea and the right way of harmony; to restate the ancient and eternal spiritual truth of the Self so that it shall re-embrace, permeate, dominate, transfigure the mental and physical life;

to develop the most profound and vital methods of psychological self-discipline and self-development so that the mental and psychical life of man may express the spiritual life through the utmost possible expansion of its own richness, power and complexity; and to seek for the means and motives by which his external life, his society and his institutions may remould themselves progressively in the truth of the spirit and develop towards the utmost possible harmony of individual freedom and social unity.

This is our ideal and our search. Throughout the world there are plenty of movements inspired by the same drift, but there is room for an effort of thought which shall frankly acknowledge the problem in its integral complexity and not be restrained in the flexibility of its search by attachment to any cult, creed or extant system of philosophy.

The effort involves a quest for the Truth that underlies existence and the fundamental Law of its self-expression in the universe — the work of metaphysical philosophy and religious thought; the sounding and harmonising of the psychological methods of discipline by which man purifies and perfects himself — the work of psychology, not as it is understood in Europe, but the deeper practical psychology called in India Yoga; and the application of our ideas to the problems of man's social and collective life.

Philosophy and religious thought based on spiritual experience must be the beginning and the foundation of any such attempt; for they alone go behind appearances and processes to the truth of things. The attempt to get rid of their supremacy must always be vain. Man will always think and generalise and try to penetrate behind the apparent fact, for that is the imperative law of his awakened consciousness; man will always turn his generalisations into a religion, even though it be only a religion of positivism or of material Law. Philosophy is the intellectual search for the fundamental truth of things, religion is the attempt to make the truth dynamic in the soul of man. They are essential to each other; a religion that is not the expression of philosophic truth, degenerates into superstition and obscurantism, and a philosophy which does not dynamise itself with the religious spirit is a barren light, for it cannot get itself practised. But again neither of these get their supreme value unless raised into the spirit and cast into life.

What then shall be our ideal? Unity for the human race by an inner oneness and not only by an external association of interests; the resurgence of man out of the merely animal and economic life or the merely intellectual and aesthetic into the glories of the spiritual existence; the pouring of the power of the spirit into the physical mould and mental instrument so that man may develop his manhood into that true supermanhood which shall exceed our present state as much as this exceeds the animal state from which science tells us that we have issued. These three are one; for man's unity and man's self-transcendence can come only by living in the Spirit.

The Superman

The Superman

THE IDEAL of the Superman has been brought recently into much notice, some not very fruitful discussion and a good deal of obloquy. It is apt to be resented by average humanity because men are told or have a lurking consciousness that here is a claim of the few to ascend to heights of which the many are not capable, to concentrate moral and spiritual privileges and enjoy a domination, powers and immunities hurtful to a diffused dignity and freedom in mankind. So considered, supermanhood is nothing more important than a deification of the rare or solitary ego that has out-topped others in the force of our common human qualities. But this presentation is narrow and a travesty. The gospel of true supermanhood gives us a generous ideal for the progressive human race and should not be turned into an arrogant claim for a class or individuals. It is a call to man to do what no species has yet done or aspired to do in terrestrial history, evolve itself consciously into the next superior type already half foreseen by the continual cyclic development of the world-idea in Nature's fruitful musings. And when we so envisage it, this conception ranks surely as one of the most potent seeds that can be cast by thought into the soil of our human growth.

Nietzsche first cast it, the mystic of Will-worship, the troubled, profound, half-luminous Hellenising Slav with his strange clarities, his violent half-ideas, his rare gleaming intuitions that came marked with the stamp of an absolute truth and sovereignty of light. But Nietzsche was an apostle who never entirely understood his own message. His prophetic style was like that of the Delphic oracles which spoke constantly the word of the Truth but turned it into untruth in the mind of the hearer. Not always indeed; for sometimes he rose beyond his personal temperament and individual mind, his European inheritance and environment, his revolt against the Christ-idea, his war against current moral values and spoke out the Word as he had heard it, the Truth as he had seen it, bare, luminous, impersonal and therefore flawless and imperishable. But for the most part this message that had come to his inner hearing vibrating out of a distant Infinite like a strain caught from the lyre of far-off Gods, did get, in his effort to appropriate and make it nearer to him, mixed up with a somewhat turbulent surge of collateral ideas that drowned much of the pure original note.

Especially, in his concept of the Superman he never cleared his mind of a preliminary confusion. For if a sort of human godhead is the goal to which the race must advance, the first difficulty is that we have to decide to which of two very different types of divinity the idea in us should owe allegiance. For the deity within may confront us either with the clear, joyous and radiant countenance of the God or the stern convulsed visage of the Titan. Nietzsche hymned the Olympian but presented him with the aspect of the Asura. His hostile preoccupation with the Christ-idea of the crucified God and its consequences was perhaps responsible for this distortion, as much as his subjection to the imperfect ideas of the Greeks. He presents to us sometimes a superman who fiercely and arrogantly repels the burden of simple sorrow and service, not one who arises victorious over mortality and suffering, his ascension vibrant with the triumph-song of a liberated humanity. To lose the link of Nature's moral evolution is a capital fault in the apostle of supermanhood; for only out of the unavoidable line of the evolution can that emerge in the bosom of a humanity long tested, ripened and purified by the fire of egoistic and altruistic suffering.

God and Titan, Deva and Asura, are indeed close kin in their differences; nor could either have been spared in the evolution. Yet do they inhabit opposite poles of a common existence and common nature. The one descends from the light and the infinity, satisfied, to the play; the other ascends from the obscurity and the vagueness, angry, to the struggle. All the acts of the God derive from the universal and tend to the universal. He was born out of a victorious harmony. His qualities join pure and gracious hands and link themselves together naturally and with delight as in the pastoral round of Brindavan, divine Krishna dominating and holding together its perfect circles. To evolve in the sense of the God is to grow in intuition, in light, in joy, in love, in happy mastery; to serve by rule and to rule by service; to be able to be bold and swift and even violent without hurt or wickedness and mild and kindly and even self-indulgent without laxity or vice or weakness; to make a bright and happy whole in oneself and, by sympathy, with mankind and all creatures. And in the end it is to evolve a large impersonal personality and to heighten sympathy into constant experience of world-oneness. For such are the Gods, conscious always of their universality and therefore divine.

Certainly, power is included. To be the divine man is to be self-ruler and world-ruler; but in another than the external sense. This is a rule that depends upon a secret sympathy and oneness which knows the law of another's being and of the world's being and helps or, if need be, compels it to realise its own greatest possibilities, but by a divine and essentially an inner compulsion. It is to take all qualities, energies, joys, sorrows, thoughts, knowledge, hopes, aims of the world around us into ourselves and return them enriched and transmuted in a sublime commerce and exploitation. Such an empire asks for no vulgar ostentation or golden trappings. The gods work oftenest veiled by light or by the storm-drift; they do not disdain to live among men even in the garb of the herdsman or the artisan; they do not shrink from the cross and the crown of thorns either in their inner evolution or their outward fortunes. For they know that the ego must be crucified and how shall men consent to this if God and the gods have not shown them the way? To take all that is essential in the human being and uplift it to its most absolute term so that it may become an element of light, joy, power for oneself and others, this is divinity. This, too, should be the drift of supermanhood.

But the Titan will have nothing of all this; it is too great and subtle for his comprehension. His instincts call for a visible, tangible mastery and a sensational domination. How shall he feel sure of his empire unless he can feel something writhing helpless under his heel, — if in agony, so much the better? What is exploitation to him, unless it diminishes the exploited? To be able to coerce, exact, slay, overtly, irresistibly, — it is this that fills him with the sense of glory and dominion. For he is the son of division and the strong flowering of the Ego. To feel the comparative limitation of others is necessary to him that he may imagine himself immeasurable; for he has not the real, self-existent sense of infinity which no outward circumstance can abrogate. Contrast, division, negation of the wills and lives of others are essential to his self-development and self-assertion. The Titan would unify by devouring, not by harmonising; he must conquer and trample what is not himself either out of existence or into subservience so that his own image may stand out stamped upon all things and dominating all his environment.

In Nature, since it started from division and egoism, the Titan had to come first; he is here in us as the elder god, the first ruler of man's heaven and earth. Then arrives the God and delivers and harmonises. Thus the old legend tells us that the Deva and the Asura laboured together to churn the ocean of life for the supreme draught of immortality, but, once it had been won, Vishnu kept it for the God and defrauded the fiercer and more violent worker. And this seems unjust; for the Asura has the heavier and less grateful portion of the burden. He begins and leads; he goes his way hewing, shaping, planting: the God follows, amends, concludes, reaps. He prepares fiercely and with anguish against a thousand obstacles the force that we shall use: the other enjoys the victory and the delight. And therefore to the great God Shiva the stained and stormy Titan is very dear, — Shiva who took for himself the fierce, dark and bitter poison first churned up from the sea of life and left to others the nectar. But the choice that Shiva made with knowledge and from love, the Titans made from darkness and passion, — desirous really of something very different and deceived by their stormy egoism. Therefore the award of Vishnu stands; to the God shall fall the crown and the immortality and not, unless he divinise himself, to the proud and strenuous Asura.

For what is supermanhood but a certain divine and harmonious absolute of all that is essential in man? He is made in God's image, but there is this difference between the divine Reality and its human representative that everything which in the one is unlimited, spontaneous, absolute, harmonious, self-possessed becomes in the other limited, relative, laboured, discordant, deformed, possessed by struggle, kept by subservience to one's possessions, lost by the transience and insecurity which come from wrong holding. But in this constant imperfection there is always a craving and an aspiration towards perfection. Man, limited, yearns to the Infinite; relative, is attracted in all things towards their absolute; artificial in Nature, drives towards a higher ease, mastery and naturalness that must for ever be denied to her inconscient forces and half-conscient animals; full of discords, he insists upon harmony; possessed by Nature and to her enslaved, is yet convinced of his mission to possess and master her. What he aspires to, is the sign of what he may be. He has to pass by a sort of transmutation of the earthly metal he now is out of flawed manhood into some higher symbol. For Man is Nature's great term of transition in which she grows conscious of her aim; in him she looks up from the animal with open eyes towards her divine ideal.

But God is complex, not simple; and the temptation of the human intellect is to make a short cut to the divine nature by the exclusive worship of one of its principles. Knowledge, Love whose secret word is Delight, Power and Unity are some of the Names of God. But though they are all divine, yet to follow any of them exclusively is to invite, after the first energy is over, His departure from us and denial; for even unity, exclusively pursued, ceases to be a true oneness. Yet this error we perpetually commit. Is it Love in whose temple we adore? Then we shut its gates upon Power as a child of the world and the devil and bid Knowledge carry elsewhere her lack of sweetness and remoteness from the heart's fervour. We erect an idol of Power and would pass all else through the fire of Moloch before its sombre and formidable image, expelling Love with scorn as a nurse of weaklings and degrading Knowledge to the position of a squire or even a groom of Force. Or we cultivate Knowledge with a severe aloofness and austerity to find at last the lotus of the heart dulled and fading — happy if its more divine faculties are not already atrophied — and ourselves standing impotent with our science while the thunders of Rudra crash through and devastate the world we have organised so well by our victorious and clear-minded efficiency. Or we run after a vague and mechanical zero we call unity and when we have sterilised our secret roots and dried up the wells of Life within us, discover, unwise unifiers, that we have achieved death and not a greater existence. And all this happens because we will not recognise the complexity of the riddle we are set here to solve. It is a great and divine riddle; but it is no knot of Gordius, nor is its all-wise Author a dead king that he should suffer us to mock his intention and cut through to our will with the fierce impatience of the hasty mortal conqueror.

None of these oppositions is more constant than that of Power and Love: yet neither of these deities can be safely neglected. What can be more divine than Love? But followed exclusively it is impotent to solve the world's discords. The worshipped Avatar of love and the tender saint of saints leave behind them a divine but unfollowed example, a luminous and imperishable but ineffective memory. They have added an element to the potentialities of the heart, but the race cannot utilise it effectively for life because it has not been harmonised with the rest of the qualities that are essential to our fullness. Shall we therefore turn round and give ourselves to Power with its iron hands of action and its hard and clear practical intellect? The men of power may say that they have done a more tangible work for their race than the souls of Love, but it is a vain advantage. For they have not even tried to raise us beyond our imperfect humanity. They have erected a temporary form or given a secular impetus. An empire has been created, an age or a century organised, but the level of humanity has not been raised nearer to the secret of a Caesar or a Napoleon. Love fails because it hastily rejects the material of the world's discords or only tramples them underfoot in an unusual ecstasy; Power because it seeks only to organise an external arrangement. The world's discords have to be understood, seized, transmuted. Love must call Power and Knowledge into the temple and seat them beside her in a unified equality; Power must bow its neck to the yoke of Light and Love before it can do any real good to the race.

Unity is the secret, a complex, understanding and embracing unity. When the full heart of Love is tranquillised by knowledge into a calm ecstasy and vibrates with strength, when the strong hands of Power labour for the world in a radiant fullness of joy and light, when the luminous brain of knowledge accepts and transforms the heart's obscure inspirations and lends itself to the workings of the high-seated Will, when all these gods are founded together on a soul of sacrifice that lives in unity with all the world and accepts all things to transmute them, then is the condition of man's integral self-transcendence. This and not a haughty, strong and brilliant egoistic self-culture enthroning itself upon an enslaved humanity is the divine way of supermanhood.

All-Will and Free-Will

HIS IS surely a bounded soul who has never felt the brooding wings of a Fate overshadow the world, never looked beyond the circle of persons, collectivities and forces, never been conscious of the still thought or the assured movement of a Presence in things determining their march. On the other hand it is the sign of a defect in the thought or a void of courage and clearness in the temperament to be overwhelmed by Fate or hidden Presence and reduced to a discouraged acquiescence, — as if the Power in things nullified or rendered superfluous and abortive the same Power in myself. Fate and free-will are only two movements of one indivisible energy. My will is the first instrument of my Fate, Fate a Will that manifests itself in the irresistible subconscious intention of the world.

All error like all evil is born of a division in the indivisible. Because God has a myriad aspects, mind breaks up His unity; it creates a violent opposition and vain attempt at mutual exclusion in the united family of the Ideas and Powers that are convergently busy with the universe. Thus our thought erects a mysterious Fate or an equally mysterious free-will and insists that this or that must be but both shall not subsist together. It is a false and unreal quarrel. I have a will, that is plain; but it is not true that it is free in the sense of being a thing apart in the world determining itself and its actions and fruits as if it alone existed or as if it could at all shape itself except as visible crest and form of an invisible wave. Even the wave is more than itself; for that too has behind it the tramp of the whole measureless ocean of Force and Time. On the other hand there is no incalculable Fate, no blind, cruel and ineluctable Necessity against which the wings of the soul must dash themselves in vain as if it were a bird snared by a monstrous Fowler in a dim-lit and fantastic cage.

All times and nations have felt or played with the idea of Fate. The Greeks were pursued by the thought of a mysterious and ineffable Necessity presiding over the divine caprices of the gods. The Mahomedan sits calm and inert under the yoke of Kismet. The Hindu speaks of Karma and the writing on the forehead when he would console himself for calamity or failure or excuse himself from perseverance and masculine effort. And all these notions are akin in the general imprecision of the idea they shadow forth and the vague twilight in which they are content to leave its ulterior significance. Modern Science has brought in an equally formless and arbitrary predestination of Law of Nature and Heredity to contradict the idea of responsibility in a free, willing and acting soul. Where there is no soul, there can be no freedom. Nature works out her original law in man; our fathers and mothers with all that they carried in them are a second vital predestination and the dead generations impose themselves on the living; pressure of environment comes in as a third Fate to take from us the little chance of liberty we might still have snatched out of this infinite coiling of forces. The triple Moirai of the Greeks have been re-enthroned with other masks and new names. We believe once more in a tremendous weaving of our fate, but by the measured dance of immense material Powers. It is the old gods again, but stripped of intelligence and the chance of human sympathy, inexorable because they are conscious neither of themselves nor of us.

It is doubtful whether belief in Fate or free-will makes much difference to a man's action, but it certainly matters a great deal to his temperament and inner being; for it puts its stamp on the cast of his soul. The man who makes belief in Fate an excuse for quiescence, would find some other pretext if this were lacking. His idea is only a decorous garment for his mood; it clothes his indolence and quiescence in a specious robe of light or drapes it with a noble mantle of dignity. But when his will clutches at an object or action, we do not find him pursuing it with a less strenuous resolution or, it may be, a less childish impatience or obstinacy than the freest believer in free-will. It is not our intellectual ideas that govern our action, but our nature and temperament, — not *dhī*,[1] but *mati* or even *manyu*, or, as the Greeks would have said, *thumos* and not *nous*.

On the other hand a great man of action will often seize on the idea of Fate to divinise to himself the mighty energy that he feels driving him on the path of world-altering deeds. He is like a shell discharged from some dim Titanic howitzer planted in concealment far behind this first line of trenches which we see thrown out by Life into the material world; or he is like a planet sped out from Nature's hands with its store of primal energy sufficient for its given time, its fixed service to the world-life, its settled orbit round a distant and sovereign Light. He expresses in the idea of Fate his living and constant sense of the energy which has cast him down here whether to break like some Vedic Marut the world's firm and established things or to cut through mountains a path down which new rivers of human destiny can pour. Like Indra or Bhagirath he precedes; the throng of the divine waters follow. His movement decides their course; here Indus shall flow, there Ganges pace yellow and leonine to the sea. Therefore we find that the greatest men of action the world has known were believers in Fate or in a divine Will. Caesar, Mahomet, Napoleon, what more colossal workers has our past than these? The superman believes more readily in Destiny, feels more vitally conscious of God than the average human mind.

A saying of Napoleon's is pregnant of the true truth of this matter. Questioned why, since he talked continually of fate, he thought it worth while to be always thinking and planning, he answered with just reason, "Because it is still Fate who wills that I should plan." This is the truth. There is a Will or Force in the world that determines the result of my actions as part of the great whole; there is a Will in me that determines, concealed by my thought and personal choice, the part that I shall take in determining the whole. It is this that my mind seizes on and calls my will. But I and mine are masks. It is All-existence that gives me my reality; it is the All-will and All-knowledge that, while I calculate, works in me for its own incalculable purpose.

---

[1] These are terms of Vedic psychology. *Dhī* is the intellect; *mati*, the general mentality; *manyu*, the temperament and emotive mind.

For this very reason I am right in laying stress on my free-will. If a Necessity governs even the gods, yet is my will a daughter of Necessity with a right in the mansion of her mother; or even it is a face of the divine Necessity that in many forms plays with the world. If Kismet is the will of God, yet is that will active in my present moment and not only in the hour of my birth or of the birth of the world. If my past actions determine my present, my immediate action also determines the moment that shall be and is not utterly put off by a tardy mechanism to belated effects in a far-off life. If Law of nature and heredity and environment are powerful, yet do they depend on the individual for the use to which they shall be turned.

The fruit of my actions belongs not to me, but to God and the world; my action belongs to God and myself. There I have a right. Or rather it belongs to God in myself; the right is His, but I enjoy it. The Will that works in me is the indivisible All which only seems to separate itself from itself in my body and personality, *nāmarūpa*, as the whole sea throws itself upon a particular coast in a particular surge of waves. The All and the I are at play of hide and seek with each other in a corner of an infinite universe.

I may play entirely at cross-purposes with the All-Will in me. That is when I lend my will-power to be a servant of the nervous part of my mind which, ignorant and passionate, adores self, openly or under many pretences, as its own god. It is this in me, this egoist, this hungerer that feels upon it in the heavy hand of Fate the oppression of a tyrant or the resistance of a blind and unintelligent power. For always absorbed in its own need and view-point it helps the All by that friction and opposition which are so essential to the mechanism of the world. Therefore it misunderstands the firm Teacher and His stern, yet loving compulsion in things and must progress by self-will and struggle and suffering because it cannot yet learn to progress by obedience. But also I may, by an intuition in my nature, an aspiration in my heart and a reason in my mind, put myself at the service of some strong ideal, some intelligent Force that serves God with or without knowledge of Him. Then is my will a true will; it does its share, it leaves its quota, it returns to its Master with its talent used or increased. And to a certain extent it is free; for a great liberty is this, to be delivered from the Animal and the Rakshasa in ourselves, free to choose the right or be chosen by it.

But how different a thing would it be if I could persuade my ego to break and emerge from the mould in which it has taken refuge from its divine Pursuer! The great antinomy would then be abrogated and not simply mitigated. My free-will would become God-will and Fate put off her mask. By consenting to be the mere slave of God and consciously but one instrument of That which is not bound by its instruments, I should know a freedom which sings on the harps of heaven, but which no speech of man can utter; I should be washed and rolled in the waves of pure puissance and pure ecstasy, the immeasurable and unfathomable ecstasy of all-being and all-life and all-force. I should see Fate illumined melting into Will and Will glorified passing into God.

The Delight of Works

IN THY works there are always these three, the Master, the Worker and the Instrument. To define them in oneself rightly and rightly to possess them is the secret of works and of the delight of works.

Learn thou first to be the instrument of God and to accept thy Master. The instrument is this outward thing thou callest thyself; it is a mould of mind, a driving-force of power, a machinery of form, a thing full of springs and cogs and clamps and devices. Call not this the Worker or the Master; it can never be the Worker or the Master. Accept thyself humbly, yet proudly, devotedly, submissively and joyfully as a divine instrument.

There is no greater pride and glory than to be a perfect instrument of the Master.

Learn thou first absolutely to obey. The sword does not choose where it shall strike, the arrow does not ask whither it shall be driven, the springs of the machine do not insist on the product that shall be turned out from its labour. These things are settled by the intention and working of Nature and the more the conscious instrument learns to feel and obey the pure and essential law of its nature, the sooner shall the work turned out become perfect and flawless. Self-choice by the nervous motive-power, revolt of the physical and mental tool can only mar the working.

Let thyself drive in the breath of God and be as a leaf in the tempest; put thyself in His hand and be as the sword that strikes and the arrow that leaps to its target. Let thy mind be as the spring of the machine, let thy force be as the shooting of a piston, let thy work be as the grinding and shaping descent of the steel on its object. Let thy speech be the clang of the hammer on the anvil and the moan of the engine in its labour and the cry of the trumpet that proclaims the force of God to the regions.

In whatsoever way do as an instrument the work that is natural to thee and appointed.

The sword has a joy in the battle-play, the arrow has a mirth in its hiss and its leaping, the earth has a rapture in its dizzy whirl through space, the sun has the royal ecstasy of its blazing splendours and its eternal motion. O thou self-conscious instrument, take thou too the delight of thy own appointed workings.

The sword did not ask to be made, nor does it resist its user, nor lament when it is broken. There is a joy of being made and a joy of being used and a joy of being put aside and a joy too of being broken. That equal joy discover.

Because thou hast mistaken the instrument for the worker and the master and because thou seekest to choose by the ignorance of thy desire thy own state and thy own profit and thy own utility, therefore thou hast suffering and anguish and hast many times to be thrust into the red hell of the furnace and hast many times to be reborn and reshaped and retempered until thou shalt have learned thy human lesson.

And all these things are because they are in thy unfinished nature. For Nature is the worker and what is it that she works at? She shapes out of her crude mind and life and matter a fully conscious being.

⁂

Know thyself next as the Worker. Understand thy nature to be the worker and thy own nature and All-Nature to be thyself.

This nature-self is not proper to thee nor limited. Thy nature has made the sun and the systems, the earth and her creatures, thyself and thine and all thou art and perceivest. It is thy friend and thine enemy, thy mother and thy devourer, thy lover and thy torturer, the sister of thy soul and an alien and a stranger, thy joy and thy sorrow, thy sin and thy virtue, thy strength and thy weakness, thy knowledge and thy ignorance. And yet it is none of these things, but something of which they are attempts and imperfect images. For beyond all these it is an original self-knowledge and an infinite force and innumerable quality.

But in thee there is a special movement, a proper nature and an individual energy. Follow that like a widening river till it leads thee to its infinite source and origin.

Know therefore thy body to be a knot in Matter and thy mind to be a whirl in universal Mind and thy life to be an eddy of Life that is for ever. Know thy force to be every other being's force and thy knowledge to be a glimmer from the light that belongs to no man and thy works to be made for thee and be delivered from the error of thy personality.

When that is done, thou shalt take thy free delight in the truth of thy individual being and in thy strength and in thy glory and in thy beauty and in thy knowledge; and in the denial of these things thou shalt take delight also. For all this is the dramatic mask of the Person and the self-image of the self-Sculptor.

Why shouldst thou limit thyself? Feel thyself also in the sword that strikes thee and the arms that embrace, in the blazing of the sun and the dance of the earth, in the flight of the eagle and the song of the nightingale, in all that is past and all that is now and all that is pressing forward to become. For thou art infinite and all this joy is possible to thee.

The Worker has the joy of her works and the joy of her Lover for whom she works. She knows herself to be his consciousness and his force, his knowledge and his reserving of knowledge, his unity and his self-division, his infinity and the finite of his being. Know thyself also to be these things; take thou also the delight of thy Lover.

There are those who know themselves as a workshop or an instrument or the thing worked, but they mistake the Worker for the Master; this too is an error. Those who fall into it can hardly arrive at her high, pure and perfect workings.

The instrument is finite in a personal image, the worker is universal with a personal trend, but neither of these is the Master; for neither is the true Person.

⁂

Know last the Master to be thyself; but to this self put no form and seek for it no definition of quality. Be one with That in thy being, commune with That in thy consciousness, obey That in thy force, be subject to That and clasped by it in thy delight, fulfil That in thy life and body and mentality. Then before an opening eye within thee there shall emerge that true and only Person, thyself and not thyself, all others and more than all others, the Director and Enjoyer of thy works, the Master of the worker and the instrument, the Reveller and Trampler in the dance of the universe and yet hushed and alone with thee in thy soul's silent and inner chamber.

The joy of the Master possessed, there is nothing else for thee to conquer. For He shall give thee Himself and all things and all creatures' gettings and havings and doings and enjoyings for thy own proper portion, and He shall give thee that also which cannot be portioned.

Thou shalt contain in thy being thyself and all others and be that which is neither thyself nor all others. Of works this is the consummation and the summit.

Evolution

Evolution

WHAT IN its principle and scope is the force of evolution and how does it work out in the world?

The theory of evolution has been the key-note of the thought of the nineteenth century. It has not only affected all its science and its thought-attitude, but powerfully influenced its moral temperament, its politics and its society. Without it there could not have been that entire victory of the materialistic notion of life and the universe which has been the general characteristic of the age that is now passing, — a victory which for a time even claimed to be definitive, — nor such important corollary effects of this great change as the failure of the religious spirit and the breaking-up of religious beliefs. In society and politics it has led to the substitution of the evolutionary for the moral idea of progress and the consequent materialisation of social ideas and social progress, the victory of the economic man over the idealist. The scientific dogma of heredity, the theory of the quite recent emergence of the civilised thinking human animal, the popular notion of the all-pervading struggle for life and the aid it has given to an exaggerated development of the competitive instinct, the idea of the social organism and the aid it has given to the contrary development of economic socialism and the increasing victory of the organised State or community over the free individual, — all these are outflowings from the same source.

The materialistic view of the world is now rapidly collapsing and with it the materialistic statement of the evolution theory must disappear. Modern European thought progresses with a vertiginous rapidity. If it is Teutonic in its fidelity of observation and its tendency to laborious systematisation, it has also another side, Celtic-Hellenic, a side of suppleness, mobility, readiness for rapid change, insatiable curiosity. It does not allow the same thought, the same system to exercise for very long a secure empire; it is in haste to question, to challenge, to reject, to remould, to discover new and opposite truths, to venture upon other experiments. At present this spirit of questioning has not attacked the evolution theory at its centre, but it is visibly preparing to give it a new form and meaning.

The general idea of evolution was the filiation of each successive form or state of things to that which preceded it, its appearance by a process of outbringing or deploying of some possibility prepared and even necessitated by previous states and previous tendencies. Not only does a form contain the seed of the form that reproduces it, but also the seed of the possible new form that varies from it. By successive progression a world-system evolves out of the nebula, a habitable planet appears in an uninhabitable system, protoplasmic life emerges by some yet unknown process out of Matter, the more developed grows out of the less developed organism. The fish and the creeping thing are the descendants of the plasm, the biped and quadruped trace back to the fish and reptile, man is a quadruped of the genus Ape who has learned to walk erect on two legs and has divested himself of characteristics unsuited to his new mode of life and progression. Force in Matter is the unconscious Goddess who has worked these miracles by her inherent principle of natural adaptation and in the organism by the additional machinery of heredity; by natural selection those species which reproduce new characteristics developed by adaptation to the environment and favourable to survival, tend to propagate themselves and remain; others fall back in the race of life and disappear.

Such were once the salient ideas; but some of them and not the least important are now questioned. The idea of the struggle for life tends to be modified and even denied; it is asserted that, at least as popularly understood, it formed no real part of Darwinism. This modification is a concession to reviving moralistic and idealistic tendencies which seek for a principle of love as well as a principle of egoism in the roots of life. Equally important are the conclusion arrived at by some investigators into the phenomena of heredity that acquired characteristics are not handed down to the posterity and the theory that it is chiefly predispositions that are inherited; for by these modifications the process of evolution begins to wear a less material and mechanical aspect; its source and the seat of its motive power are shifted to that which is least material, most psychical in Matter. Finally, the first idea of a slow and gradual evolution is being challenged by a new theory of evolution through sudden and rapid outbursts; and again we pass from the sense of an obvious superficial machinery and all-sufficient material necessity to profundities whose mystery is yet to be fathomed.

In themselves, indeed, these modifications would not be radical. Their importance lies in their synchronism with a great resurgence, in new forms, of old ideas that had been submerged by the materialistic wave. Theories of vitalism, idealistic tendencies of thought, which were supposed to have been slain by the march of physical Science, now arise, dispute the field and find their account in every change of scientific generalisation which at all opens the way to their own expansion and reassertion. In what respects then is it likely that the evolution theory will be found deficient by the wider and more complex thought of the future and compelled to undergo essential changes?

In the first place, the materialistic theory of evolution starts from the Sankhya position that all world is a development out of indeterminate Matter by Nature-Force, but it excludes the Silent Cause of the Sankhyas, the Purusha or observant and reflective Soul. Hence it conceives the world as a sort of automatic machine which has somehow happened. No intelligent cause, no aim, no *raison d'être*, but simply an automatic deployment, combination, chance self-adaptation of means to end without any knowledge or intention in the adaptation. This is the first paradox of the theory and its justification must be crushing and conclusive if it is to be finally accepted by the human mind.

Again, Force in indeterminate Matter without any Conscious-Soul being all the beginning and all the material of things, Mind, Life and Consciousness can only be developments out of Matter and even only operations of Matter. They cannot be at all things in themselves, different from Matter or in the last degree independent of it. This is the second paradox and the point at which the theory has eventually failed to establish itself. More and more the march of knowledge leads towards the view that the three are different forms of Force, each with its own characteristics and proper method of action, each reacting upon the other and enriching its forms by the contact.

An idea has even begun to dawn that there is not a single creation but a triple, material, vital and mental; it may be regarded as a composite of three worlds, as it were, interpenetrating each other. We are led back to the old Vedic idea of the triple world in which we live. And we may reasonably forecast that when its operations are examined from this new standpoint, the old Vedic knowledge will be justified that it is one Law and Truth acting in all, but very differently formulated according to the medium in which the work proceeds and its dominant principle. The same gods exist on all the planes and maintain the same essential laws, but with a different aspect and mode of working and to ever wider results.

If this be the truth, then the action of evolution must be other than has been supposed. For example the evolution of Life in Matter must have been produced and governed not by a material principle, but by a Life-Principle working in and upon the conditions of Matter and applying to it its own laws, impulses, necessities. This idea of a mighty Life, other than the material Principle, working in it and upon it has begun to dominate the advanced thought of Europe. The other idea of a still mightier Mind working in Life and upon it has not yet made sufficient way because the investigation of the laws of Mind is still in its groping infancy.

Again, the materialist theory supposes a rigid chain of material necessity; each previous condition is a coordination of so many manifest forces and conditions; each resulting condition is its manifest result. All mystery, all element of the incalculable disappears. If we can completely analyse the previous conditions and discover their general law, we can be sure of the subsequent result, as in the case of an eclipse or an earthquake. For all is manifestation which is the logical result of a previous manifestation.

Once more the conclusion is too simple and trenchant; the world is more complex. Besides the manifest causes there are those that are unmanifest or latent and not subject to our analysis or come from behind or above and cannot be calculated and forecast though by a higher revelatory Knowledge they may be foreseen. This element increases as we climb the ladder of existence; its scope is greater in Life than in Matter, freer in Mind than in Life. European thought already tends to posit behind all manifest activity an Unmanifest called according to intellectual predilection either the Inconscient or the Subconscient which contains more and in a way unseizable to us knows more and can more than the surface existence. Out of this Unmanifest the manifest constantly emerges.

Again we return towards an ancient truth already known to the Vedic sages, — the idea of an inconscient or subconscient ocean of being, the ocean of the heart of things out of which the worlds form themselves. But the Veda posits also a governing and originating Superconscient which accounts for the appearance of a hidden consciousness and knowledge pervading the operations of Evolution and which constitutes the self-acting Law and Truth behind them.

The theory of materialistic evolution led naturally to the idea of a slow and gradual progression in a straight line. It admits reversions, atavisms, loops and zigzags of reaction deflecting the straight line, but these must necessarily be subordinate, hardly visible if we calculate by ages rather than by shorter periods of time. Here too, fuller knowledge disturbs the received notions. In the history of man everything seems now to point to alternations of a serious character, ages of progression, ages of recoil, the whole constituting an evolution that is cyclic rather than in one straight line. A theory of cycles of human civilisation has been advanced, we may yet arrive at the theory of cycles of human evolution, the Kalpa and Manwantaras of the Hindu theory. If its affirmation of cycles of world-existence is farther off from affirmation, it is because they must be so vast in their periods as to escape not only all our means of observation, but all our means of deduction or definite inference.

Instead of slow, steady, minute gradations it is now suggested that new steps in evolution are rather effected by rapid and sudden outbursts, outbreaks, as it were, of manifestation from the unmanifest. Shall we say that Nature preparing slowly behind the veil, working a little backwards, working a little forwards, one day arrives at the combination of outward things which makes it possible for her to throw her new idea into a realised formation, suddenly, with violence, with a glorious dawning, with a grandiose stride? And that would explain the economy of her relapses and her reappearances of things long dead. She aims at a certain immediate result and to arrive at it more quickly and entirely she sacrifices many of her manifestations and throws them back into the latent, the unmanifest, the subconscient. But she has not finished with them; she will need them at another stage for a farther result. Therefore she brings them forward again and they reappear in new forms and other combinations and act towards new ends. So evolution advances.

And her material means? Not the struggle for life only. The real law, it is now suggested, is rather mutual help or at least mutual accommodation. Struggle exists, mutual destruction exists, but as a subordinate movement, a red minor chord, and only becomes acute when the movement of mutual accommodation fails and elbow-room has to be made for a fresh attempt, a new combination.

The propagation of acquired characteristics by heredity was too hastily and completely asserted; it is now perhaps in danger of being too summarily denied. Not Matter alone, but Life and Mind working upon Matter help to determine evolution. Heredity is only a material shadow of soul-reproduction, of the rebirth of Life and Mind into new forms. Ordinarily, as a constant factor or basis, there is the reproduction of that which was already evolved; for new characteristics to be propagated in the species they must have been accepted, received, sanctioned in the vital and mental worlds; then only can they be automatically self-reproduced from the material seed. Otherwise they are private and personal acquisitions and are returned into the State exchequer, the treasury of the subconscient, and do not go to the family estate. When the mind-world and life-world are ready, they are poured out freely on fit recipients. This is the reason why it is predisposition that is chiefly inherited. The psychical and vital force in the material principle is first impressed; when that has been done on a sufficient scale, it is ready for a general new departure and an altered heredity appears.

Thus the whole view of Evolution begins to change. Instead of a mechanical, gradual, rigid evolution out of indeterminate Matter by Nature-Force we move towards the perception of a conscious, supple, flexible, intensely surprising and constantly dramatic evolution by a superconscient Knowledge which reveals things in Matter, Life and Mind out of the unfathomable Inconscient from which they rise.

The Inconscient

THE FIRST or superficial view which the observing mind takes on any object of knowledge is always an illusory view; all science, all true knowledge comes by going behind the superficies and discovering the inner truth and the hidden law. It is not that the thing itself is illusory, but that it is not what it superficially appears to be; nor is it that the operations and functionings we observe on the surface do not take place, but that we cannot find their real motive-power, process, relations by the simple study of them as they offer themselves to the observing senses.

In the realm of physical science this is obvious enough and universally admitted. The earth is not flat but round, not still but constant to a double motion; the sun moves but not round the earth; bodies that seem to us luminous are in themselves non-luminous; things that are part of our daily experience, colour, sound, light, air are quite other in their reality than what they pretend to be. Our senses give us false views of distance, size, shape, relation. Objects which seem to them self-existent forms are aggregations and constituted by subtler constituents which our ordinary faculties are unable to detect. These material constituents again are merely formulations of a Force which we cannot describe as material and of which the senses have no evidence. Yet the mind and the senses can live quite satisfied and convinced in this world of illusions and accept them as the practical truth — for to a certain extent they are the practical truth and sufficient for an initial, ordinary and limited activity.

But only to a certain extent; for there are possibilities of a wider life, a more mastering action, a greater practicality which can only be achieved by going behind these surfaces and utilising a truer knowledge of objects and forces. The discovery of the secret operations of Nature leads to a contingent discovery, the possibility of a farther use of her forces to which she herself has not proceeded, not finding them necessary for the mere preservation of existence and its ordinary workings, but has left to man, her mental being, to discover and utilise for the amelioration of existence and for the development of its possibilities.

All this is easy to see in the realm of Matter; but mankind is not yet entirely ready to recognise the same truth and follow up the same principle in the realm of Mind. It is true that psychology has made an advance and has begun to improve its method. Formerly, it was a crude, scholastic and superficial systematisation of man's ignorance of himself. The surface psychological functionings, will, mind, senses, reason, conscience, etc., were arranged in a dry and sterile classification; their real nature and relation to each other were not fathomed nor any use made of them which went beyond the limited action Nature had found sufficient for a very superficial mental and psychic life and for very superficial and ordinary workings. Because we do not know ourselves, therefore we are unable to ameliorate radically our subjective life or develop with mastery, with rapidity, with a sure science the hidden possibilities of our mental capacity and our moral nature. The new psychology seeks indeed to penetrate behind superficial appearances, but it is encumbered by initial errors which prevent a profounder knowledge, — the materialistic error which bases the study of mind upon the study of the body; the sceptical error which prevents any bold and clear-eyed investigation of the hidden profundities of our subjective existence; the error of conservative distrust and recoil which regards any subjective state or experience that departs from the ordinary operations of our mental and psychical nature as a morbidity or a hallucination, — just as the Middle Ages regarded all new science as magic and a diabolical departure from the sane and right limits of human capacity; finally, the error of objectivity which leads the psychologist to study others from outside instead of seeing his true field of knowledge and laboratory of experiment in himself. Psychology is necessarily a subjective science and one must proceed in it from the knowledge of oneself to the knowledge of others.

But whatever the crudities of the new science, it has at least taken the first capital step without which there can be no true psychological knowledge; it has made the discovery which is the beginning of self-knowledge and which all must make who deeply study the facts of consciousness, — that our waking and surface existence is only a small part of our being and does not yield to us the root and secret of our character, our mentality or our actions. The sources lie deeper. To discover them, to know the nature and the processes of the inconscient or subconscient self and, so far as is possible, to possess and utilise them as physical science possesses and utilises the secret of the forces of Nature ought to be the aim of a scientific psychology.

But here the first difficulty confronts us, the problem whether this other and greater self of which our waking existence is only a surface and a phenomenon, is subconscient or inconscient. And thereon hinges the whole destiny of the human being. For if it is inconscient in its very nature, then we cannot hope to illuminate ourselves with the hidden light of these depths — for light there is none — or to find and to possess ourselves of the secret of its power. On the other hand if it is subconscient, that is to say a concealed consciousness deeper, greater, more powerful than our superficial self, an endless vista of self-enlargement opens out before us and the human race marches towards infinite possibilities.

Modern psychological experiment and observation have proceeded on two different lines which have not yet found their point of meeting. On the one hand psychology has taken for its starting-point the discoveries and the fundamental thesis of the physical sciences and has worked as a continuation of physiology. The physical sciences are the study of inconscient Force working in inconscient Matter and a psychology which accepts this formula as the basis of all existence must regard consciousness as a phenomenal result of the Inconscient working on the inconscient. Mind is only an outcome and as it were a record of nervous reactions. The true self is the inconscient; mental action is one of its subordinate phenomena. The Inconscient is greater than the conscient; it is the god, the magician, the creator whose action is far more unerring than the ambitious but blundering action of the conscious mentality. The tree is more perfectly guided than man in its more limited action, precisely because it lives unambitiously according to Nature and is passive in the hands of the Inconscient. Mind enters in to enlarge the field of activity, but also to multiply errors, perversities, revolts against Nature, departures from the instinctive guiding of the Inconscient Self which generate that vast element of ignorance, falsehood and suffering in human life, — that "much falsehood in us" of which the Vedic poet complains.

Where then lies the hope that mind will repair its errors and guide itself according to the truth of things? The hope lies in Science, in the intelligent observation, utilising, initiation of the forces and workings of the Inconscient. To take only one instance, — the Inconscient operates by the law of heredity and, left to itself, works faultlessly to ensure the survival of good and healthy types. Man misuses heredity in the false conditions of his social life to transmit and perpetuate degeneracy. We must study the law of heredity, develop a science of Eugenics and use it wisely and remorselessly — with the remorseless wisdom of Nature — so as to ensure by intelligence the result that the Inconscient assures by instinctive adaptation. We can see where this idea and this spirit will lead us, — to the replacement of the emotional and spiritual idealism which the human mind has developed by a cold sane materialistic idealism and to an amelioration of mankind attempted by the rigorous mechanism of the scientific expert, no longer by the profound inspiration of genius and the supple aspiration of puissant character and personality. And yet what if this were only another error of the conscient mind? What if the mistaking and the disease, the revolt and departure from Nature were itself a part, a necessary part of the wise and unerring plan of the profound Inconscient Self and all the much falsehood a means of arriving at a greater truth and a more exalted capacity? The fact that genius itself, the highest result of our developing consciousness, flowers so frequently on a diseased branch is a phenomenon full of troubling suggestions. The clear way of ascertained science need not always be the best way; it may stand often in the path of development of a yet greater and deeper Knowledge.

The other line of psychological investigation is still frowned upon by orthodox science, but it thrives and yields its results in spite of the anathema of the doctors. It leads us into by-paths of psychical research, hypnotism, mesmerism, occultism and all sorts of strange psychological gropings. Certainly, there is nothing here of the assured clearness and firmly-grounded positivism of the physical method. Yet facts emerge and with the facts a momentous conclusion, — the conclusion, that there is a "subliminal" self behind our superficial waking mind not inconscient but conscient, greater than the waking mind, endowed with surprising faculties and capable of a much surer action and experience, conscient of the superficial mind though of it the superficial mind is inconscient. And then a question rises. What if there were really no Inconscient at all, but a hidden Consciousness everywhere perfect in power and wisdom, of which our mind is the first slow, hesitating and imperfect disclosure and into the image of which the human mentality is destined progressively to grow? It would at least be no less valid a generalisation and it would explain all the facts that we now know considerably better than the blind and purposeless determinism of the materialistic theory.

In pursuing psychological investigation upon this line we shall only be resuming that which had already been done by our remote forefathers. For they too, the moment they began to observe, to experiment, to look below the surface of things, were compelled to perceive that the surface man is only a form and appearance and that the real self is something infinitely greater and more profound. They too must have passed through the first materialistic stages of science and philosophy. For we read in the Aitareya Upanishad that entering upon possession of the material world and the body, the Purusha, the Conscious Soul, asks himself, "If utterance is by speech and life by the breath, vision by the eye, hearing by the ear, thought by the mind," if in short all the apparent activities of the being can be accounted for by the automatic functioning of Nature, "then what am I?" And the Upanishad says farther, "He being born distinguished only the working of the material elements, for what else was there of which he should discuss and conclude?" Yet in the end "he beheld this conscious being which is Brahman utterly extended and he said to himself, Now have I really seen." So too in the Taittiriya Upanishad Bhrigu Varuni meditating on the Brahman comes first to the conclusion that "Matter is Brahman" and only afterwards discovers Life that is Brahman, — so rising from the materialistic to the vitalistic theory of existence as European thought is now rising, — then Mind that is Brahman and then Knowledge that is Brahman, — so rising to the sensational and the idealistic realisations of the truth — and at last Bliss of Existence that is Brahman. There he pauses in the ultimate spiritual realisation, the highest formulation of knowledge that man can attain.

The Conscient therefore and not the Inconscient was the Truth at which the ancient psychology arrived; and it distinguished three strata of the conscient self, the waking, the dream and the sleep selves of Man, — in other words the superficial existence, the subconscient or subliminal and the superconscient which to us seems the inconscient because its state of consciousness is the reverse of ours: for ours is limited and based on division and multiplicity, but this is "that which becomes a unity"; ours is dispersed in knowledge, but in this other self conscious knowledge is self-collected and concentrated; ours is balanced between dual experiences, but this is all delight, it is that which in the very heart of our being fronts everything with a pure all-possessing consciousness and enjoys the delight of existence.[1] Therefore, although its seat is that stratum of consciousness which to us is a deep sleep, — for the mind there cannot maintain its accustomed functioning and becomes inconscient, — yet its name is He who knows, the Wise One, Prajna. "This" says the Mandukya Upanishad, "is omniscient, omnipotent, the inner control, the womb of all and that from which creatures are born and into which they depart." It answers, therefore, closely enough to the modern idea of the Inconscient corrected by the other modern idea of the subliminal self; for it is inconscient only to the waking mind precisely because it is superconscient to it and the mind is therefore only able to seize it in its results and not in itself. And what better proof can there be of the depth and truth of the ancient psychology than the fact that when modern thought in all its pride of exact and careful knowledge begins to cast its fathom into these depths, it is obliged to repeat in other language what had already been written nearly three thousand years ago?

---

[1] See the Mandukya Upanishad for these brief and profound definitions.

We find the same idea of this inner control repeated in the Gita; for it is the Lord who "sits in the hearts of all creatures and turns all creatures mounted on an engine by his Maya." At times the Upanishad seems to describe this Self as the "mental being leader of the life and the body", which is really the subliminal mind of the psychical investigators; but this is only a relative description. The Vedantic psychology was aware of other depths that take us beyond this formula and in relation to which the mental being becomes in its turn as superficial as is our waking to our subliminal mind. And now once more in the revolutions of human thought these depths have to be sounded; modern psychology will be led perforce, by the compulsion of the truth that it is seeking, on to the path that was followed by the ancient. The new dawns, treading the eternal path of the Truth, follow it to the goal of the dawns that have gone before, — how many, who shall say?

For this knowledge was not first discovered in the comparatively late antiquity that gave us the Upanishads which we now possess. It is already there in the dateless verses of the Rig Veda, and the Vedic sages speak of it as the discovery of yet more ancient seers besides whom they themselves were new and modern. Emerging from the periods of eclipse and the nights of ignorance which overtake humanity, we assume always that we are instituting a new knowledge. In reality, we are continually rediscovering the knowledge and repeating the achievement of the ages that have gone before us, — receiving again out of the "Inconscient" the light that it had drawn back into its secrecies and now releases once more for a new day and another march of the great journey.

And the goal of that journey cannot be other than the "highest good" which the ancient psychologists proposed to the life and growth of the soul. Man, the mental being, once aware that there is this deep, great and hidden self, the real reality of his being, must necessarily seek to enter into it, to become conscious in it, to make there his centre instead of dwelling on the surface, to win and apply its diviner law and supreme nature and capacity, to make himself one with it so that he shall become the Real instead of the Apparent Man. And the sole debate that remains is whether this great conquest can be achieved and enjoyed in this human life and terrestrial body or is only possible beyond — whether in fact the human consciousness is the chosen instrument for the progressive self-revelation of this "Inconscient", this real self within us, or only a baulked effort with no fruition here or a haphazard and incomplete sketch that can never be perfected into the divine image.

Materialism

MANY hard things have been said about materialism by those who have preferred to look at life from above rather than below or who claim to live in the more luminous atmosphere of the idealistic mind or ether of the spiritual existence. Materialism has been credited with the creation of great evils, viewed even as the archimage of a detestable transformation or the misleader guiding mankind to an appalling catastrophe. Those whose temperament and imagination dally lovingly with an idealised past, accuse it for the cultural, social, political changes which they abhor, regarding them as a disturbance, happily, they believe, temporary, of eternal moral values and divinely ordained hierarchies. Those, more numerous, who look beyond to the hope of a larger idealism and higher spirituality, proclaim in its decline and passing away a fortunate deliverance for the human spirit. World-wide strife and competition have been, it is said, its fruits, war and the holocaust of terrible sacrifice in which mankind has been squandering its strength, blood, treasure, — though these are no new calamities, nor would it be safe to hope that they are the last of their kind, — are pointed to as its nemesis or regarded as a funeral pyre it has lighted for itself in whose cruel flame the errors and impurities it brought into existence are being burned to ashes. Science has been declared suspect as a guide or instructor of mankind and bidden to remain parked within her proper limits, because she was for long the ally of the material view of existence, a suggester of atheism and agnosticism, a victory-bringer of materialism and scepticism, the throne of their reign or pillar of their stability. Reason has been challenged because rationalism and free-thought were appropriated as synonyms of materialistic thinking.

All this wealth of accusation may have and much of it has its truth. But most things that the human mind thus alternately trumpets and bans, are a double skein. They come to us with opposite faces, their good side and their bad, a dark aspect of error and a bright of truth; and it is as we look upon one or the other visage that we swing to our extremes of opinion or else oscillate between them. Materialism may not be quite as dead as most would declare it to be; still held by a considerable number of scientific workers, perhaps a majority, — and scientific opinion is always a force both by its power of well-ascertained truth and its continued service to humanity, — it constitutes even now the larger part of the real temper of action and life even where it is rejected as a set opinion. The strong impressions of the past are not so easily erased out of our human mentality. But it is a fast receding force; other ideas and standpoints are crowding in and thrust it out from its remaining points of vantage. It will be useful before we say farewell to it, and can now be done with safety, to see what it was that gave to it its strength, what it has left permanently behind it, and to adjust our new viewpoints to whatever stuff of truth may have lain within it and lent it its force of applicability. Even we can look at it with an impartial sympathy, though only as a primary but lesser truth of our actual being, — for it is all that, but no more than that, — and try to admit and fix its just claims and values. We can now see too how it was bound to escape from itself by the widening of the very frame of knowledge it has itself constructed.

Admit, — for it is true, — that this age of which materialism was the portentous offspring and in which it had figured first as petulant rebel and aggressive thinker, then as a grave and strenuous preceptor of mankind, has been by no means a period of mere error, calamity and degeneration, but rather a most powerful creative epoch of humanity. Examine impartially its results. Not only has it immensely widened and filled in the knowledge of the race and accustomed it to a great patience of research, scrupulosity, accuracy, — if it has done that only in one large sphere of inquiry, it has still prepared for the extension of the same curiosity, intellectual rectitude, power for knowledge to other and higher fields, — not only has it with an unexampled force and richness of invention brought and put into our hands, for much evil, but also for much good, discoveries, instruments, practical powers, conquests, conveniences which, however we may declare their insufficiency for our highest interests, yet few of us would care to relinquish, but it has also, paradoxical as that might at first seem, strengthened man's idealism. On the whole, it has given him a kindlier hope and humanised his nature. Tolerance is greater, liberty has increased, charity is more a matter of course, peace, if not yet practicable, is growing at least imaginable. Latterly the thought of the eighteenth century which promulgated secularism has been much scouted and belittled, that of the nineteenth which developed it, riddled with adverse criticism and overpassed. Still they worshipped no mean godheads. Reason, science, progress, freedom, humanity were their ideals, and which of these idols, if idols they are, would we like or ought we, if we are wise, to cast down into the mire or leave as poor unworshipped relics on the wayside? If there are other and yet greater godheads or if the visible forms adored were only clay or stone images or the rites void of the inmost knowledge, yet has their cult been for us a preliminary initiation and the long material sacrifice has prepared us for a greater religion.

Reason is not the supreme light, but yet is it always a necessary light-bringer and until it has been given its rights and allowed to judge and purify our first infra-rational instincts, impulses, rash fervours, crude beliefs and blind prejudgments, we are not altogether ready for the full unveiling of a greater inner luminary. Science is a right knowledge, in the end only of processes, but still the knowledge of processes too is part of a total wisdom and essential to a wide and a clear approach towards the deeper Truth behind. If it has laboured mainly in the physical field, if it has limited itself and bordered or overshadowed its light with a certain cloud of wilful ignorance, still one had to begin this method somewhere and the physical field is the first, the nearest, the easiest for the kind and manner of inquiry undertaken. Ignorance of one side of Truth or the choice of a partial ignorance or ignoring for better concentration on another side is often a necessity of our imperfect mental nature.

It is unfortunate if ignorance becomes dogmatic and denies what it has refused to examine, but still no permanent harm need have been done if this willed self-limitation is compelled to disappear when the occasion of its utility is exhausted. Now that we have founded rigorously our knowledge of the physical, we can go forward with a much firmer step to a more open, secure and luminous repossession of mental and psychic knowledge. Even spiritual truths are likely to gain from it, not a loftier or more penetrating, — that is with difficulty possible, — but an ampler light and fuller self-expression.

Progress is the very heart of the significance of human life, for it means our evolution into greater and richer being; and these ages by insisting on it, by forcing us to recognise it as our aim and our necessity, by making impossible hereafter the attempt to subsist in the dullness or the gross beatitude of a stationary self-content, have done a priceless service to the earth-life and cleared the ways of heaven. Outward progress was the greater part of its aim and the inward is the more essential? but the inward too is not complete if the outward is left out of account. Even if the insistence of our progress fall for a time too exclusively on growth in one field, still all movement forward is helpful and must end by giving a greater force and a larger meaning to our need of growth in deeper and higher provinces of our being. Freedom is a godhead whose greatness only the narrowly limited mind, the State-worshipper or the crank of reaction can now deny. No doubt, again, the essential is an inner freedom; but if without the inner realisation the outer attempt at liberty may prove at last a vain thing, yet to pursue an inner liberty and perpetuate an outer slavery or to rejoice in an isolated release and leave mankind to its chains was also an anomaly that had to be exploded, a confined and too self-centred ideal. Humanity is not the highest godhead; God is more than humanity; but in humanity too we have to find and to serve him. The cult of humanity means an increasing kindliness, tolerance, charity, helpfulness, solidarity, universality, unity, fullness of individual and collective growth, and towards these things we are advancing much more rapidly than was possible in any previous age, if still with sadly stumbling footsteps and some fierce relapses. The cult of our other human selves within the cult of the Divine comes closer to us as our large ideal. To have brought even one of these things a step nearer, to have helped to settle them with whatever imperfect expression and formula in our minds, to have accelerated our movement towards them are strong achievements, noble services.

Objection can at once be made that all these great things have no connection with materialism. The impulse towards them was of old standing and long active in the human mind; the very principle of the humanitarianism which has been one of the striking developments of modern sentiment, was first brought out from our nature and made prominent by religion, compassion and the love of man first intimately and powerfully enforced by Christianity and Buddhism; if they have now a little developed, it is the natural expanding from seeds that had long been sown. Materialism was rather calculated to encourage opposite instincts; and the good it favoured it limited, made arid, mechanised. If all these nobler things have grown and are breaking the bounds set to them, it is because man is fortunately inconsistent and after a certain stage of our development cannot be really and wholly materialistic; he needs ideals, ethical expansion, a closer emotional fulfilment, and these needs he has tacked on to his development of materialistic opinion and corrected its natural results by them. But the ideals themselves were taken from an anterior opinion and culture.

This is the truth, but not the whole truth. The old religious cultures were often admirable in the ensemble and always in some of their parts, but if they had not been defective, they could neither have been so easily breached, nor would there have been the need of a secularist age to bring out the results the religions had sown. Their faults were those of a certain narrowness and exclusive vision. Concentrated, intense in their ideal and intensive in their effect, their expansive influence on the human mind was small. They isolated too much their action in the individual, limited too narrowly the working of their ideals in the social order, tolerated for instance and even utilised for the ends of church and creed an immense amount of cruelty and barbarism which were contrary to the spirit and truth from which they had started. What they discouraged in the soul of the individual, they yet maintained in the action and the frame of society, seemed hardly to conceive of a human order delivered from these blots. The depth and fervour of their aspiration had for its shadow a want of intellectual clarity, an obscurity which confused their working and baulked the expansion of their spiritual elements. They nourished too a core of asceticism and hardly cared to believe in the definite amelioration of the earth life, despised by them as a downfall or a dolorous descent or imperfection of the human spirit, or whatever earthly hope they admitted saw itself postponed to the millennial end of things. A belief in the vanity of human life or of existence itself suited better the preoccupation with an aim beyond earth. Perfection, ethical growth, liberation became individual ideals and figured too much as an isolated preparation of the soul for the beyond. The social effect of the religious temperament, however potentially considerable, was cramped by excessive other-worldliness and distrust in the intellect accentuated to obscurantism.

The secularist centuries weighed the balance down very much in the opposite direction. They turned the mind of the race wholly earthwards and manwards, but by insisting on intellectual clarity, reason, justice, freedom, tolerance, humanity, by putting these forward and putting the progress of the race and its perfectibility as an immediate rule for the earthly life to be constantly pressed towards and not shunting off the social ideal to doomsday to be miraculously effected by some last divine intervention and judgment, they cleared the way for a collective advance. For they made these nobler possibilities of mankind more imperative to the practical intelligence. If they lost sight of heaven or missed the spiritual sense of the ideals they took over from earlier ages, yet by this rational and practical insistence on them they drove them home to the thinking mind. Even their too mechanical turn developed from a legitimate desire to find some means for making the effective working of these ideals a condition of the very structure of society. Materialism was only the extreme intellectual result of this earthward and human turn of the race mind. It was an intellectual machinery used by the Time-spirit to secure for a good space the firm fixing of that exclusive turn of thought and endeavour, a strong rivet of opinion to hold the mind of man to it for as long as it might be needed. Man does need to develop firmly in all his earthly parts, to fortify and perfect his body, his life, his outward-going mind, to take full possession of the earth his dwelling-place, to know and utilise physical Nature, enrich his environment and satisfy by the aid of a generalised intelligence his evolving mental, vital and physical being. That is not all his need, but it is a great and initial part of it and of human perfection. Its full meaning appears afterwards; for only in the beginning and in the appearance an impulse of his life, in the end and really it will be seen to have been a need of his soul, a preparing of fit instruments and the creating of a fit environment for a diviner life. He has been set here to serve God's ways upon earth and fulfil the Godhead in man and he must not despise earth or reject the basis given for the first powers and potentialities of the Godhead. When his thought and aim have persisted too far in that direction, he need not complain if he is swung back for a time towards the other extreme, to a negative or a positive, a covert or an open materialism. It is Nature's violent way of setting right her own excess in him.

But the intellectual force of materialism comes from its response to a universal truth of existence. Our dominant opinions have always two forces behind them, a need of our nature and a truth of universal existence from which the need arises. We have the material and vital need because life in Matter is our actual basis, the earthward turn of our minds because earth is and was intended to be the foundation here for the workings of the Spirit. When indeed we scan with a scrupulous intelligence the face that universal existence presents to us or study where we are one with it or what in it all seems most universal and permanent, the first answer we get is not spiritual but material. The seers of the Upanishads saw this with their penetrating vision and when they gave this expression of our first apparently complete, eventually insufficient view of Being, “Matter is the Brahman, from Matter all things are born, by Matter they exist, to Matter they return,” they fixed the formula of universal truth of which all materialistic thought and physical science are a recognition, an investigation, a filling in of its significant details, elucidations, justifying phenomena and revelatory processes, the large universal comment of Nature upon a single text.

Mark that it is the first fact of experience from which we start and up to a certain point an undeniable universal truth of being. Matter surely is here our basis, the one thing that is and persists, while life, mind, soul and all else appear in it as a secondary phenomenon, seem somehow to arise out of it, subsist by feeding upon it, — therefore the word used in the Upanishads for Matter is *annam*, food, — and collapse from our view when it disappears. Apparently the existence of Matter is necessary to them, their existence does not appear to be one whit necessary to Matter. The Being does present himself at first with this face, inexorably, as if claiming to be that and nothing else, insisting that his material base and its need shall first be satisfied and, until that is done, grimly persistent with little or with no regard for our idealistic susceptibilities and caring nothing if he breaks through the delicate net of our moral, our aesthetic and our other finer perceptions. They have the hope of their reign, but meanwhile this is the first visage of universal existence and we have not to hide our face from it any more than could Arjuna from the terrible figure of the Divine on the battle-field of Kurukshetra, or attempt to escape and evade it as Shiva, when there rose around him the many stupendous forms of the original Energy, fled from the vision of it to this and that quarter, forgetful of his own godhead. We must look existence in the face in whatever aspect it confronts us and be strong to find within as well as behind it the Divine.

Materialistic science had the courage to look at this universal truth with level eyes, to accept it calmly as a starting-point and to inquire whether it was not after all the whole formula of universal being. Physical science must necessarily to its own first view be materialistic, because so long as it deals with the physical, it has for its own truth's sake to be physical both in its standpoint and method; it must interpret the material universe first in the language and tokens of the material Brahman, because these are its primary and its general terms and all others come second, subsequently, are a special syllabary. To follow a self-indulgent course from the beginning would lead at once towards fancies and falsities. Initially, science is justified in resenting any call on it to indulge in another kind of imagination and intuition. Anything that draws it out of the circle of the phenomena of objects, as they are represented to the senses and their instrumental prolongations, and away from the dealings of the reason with them by a rigorous testing of experience and experimentation, must distract it from its task and is inadmissible. It cannot allow the bringing in of the human view of things; it has to interpret man in the terms of the cosmos, not the cosmos in the terms of man. The too facile conclusion of the idealist that since things only exist as known to consciousness, they can exist only by consciousness and must be creations of the mind, has no meaning for it; it first has to inquire what consciousness is, whether it is not a result rather than a cause of Matter, coming into being, as it seems to do, only in the frame of a material inconscient universe and apparently able to exist only on the condition that that has been previously established. Starting from Matter, science has to be at least hypothetically materialistic.

When the action of the material principle, the first to organise itself, has been to some extent well understood, then can this science go on to consider what claim to be quite other terms of our being, — life and mind. But first it is forced to ask itself whether both mind and life are not, as they seem to be, special consequences of the material evolution, themselves powers and movements of Matter. After and if this explanation has failed to cover and to elucidate the facts, it can be more freely investigated whether they are not quite other principles of being. Many philosophical questions arise, as, whether they have entered into Matter and whence or were always in it, and if so, whether they are for ever less and subordinate in action or are in their essential power greater, whether they are contained in it only or really contain it, whether they are subsequent and dependent on its previous appearance or only that in their apparent organisation here but in real being and power anterior to it and Matter itself dependent on the essential pre-existence of life and mind. A greater question comes, whether mind itself is the last term or there is something beyond, whether soul is only an apparent result and phenomenon of the interaction of mind, life and body or we have here an independent term of our being and of all being, greater, anterior, ultimate, all matter containing and contained in a secret spiritual consciousness, spirit the first, last and eternal, the Alpha and the Omega, the OM. For experiential philosophy either Matter, Mind, Life or Spirit may be the Being, but none of these higher principles can be made securely the basis of our thought against all intellectual questioning until the materialistic hypothesis has first been given a chance and tested. That may in the end turn out to have been the use of the materialistic investigation of the universe and its inquiry the greatest possible service to the finality of the spiritual explanation of existence. In any case materialistic science and philosophy have been after all a great and austere attempt to know dispassionately and to see impersonally. They have denied much that is being reaffirmed, but the denial was the condition of a severer effort of knowledge and it may be said of them, as the Upanishad says of Bhrigu the son of Varuna, *sa tapas taptvā annaṁ brahmeti vyajānāt*. "He having practised austerity discovered that Matter was the Brahman."

The gates of escape by which a knowledge starting from materialism can get away from its own self-immuring limitations, can here only be casually indicated. I may take another occasion to show how the possibility must become in eventual fact a necessity. Physical science has before its eye two eternal factors of existence, Matter and Energy, and no others at all are needed in the account of its operations. Mind dealing with the facts and relations of Matter and Energy as they are arranged to the senses in experience and continuative experiment and are analysed by the reason, would be a sufficient definition of physical science. Its first regard is on Matter as the one principle of being and on Energy only as a phenomenon of Matter; but in the end one questions whether it is not the other way round, all things the action of Energy and Matter only the field, body and instrument of her workings. The first view is quantitative and purely mechanical, the second lets in a qualitative and a more spiritual element. We do not at once leap out of the materialistic circle, but we see an opening in it which may widen into an outlet when, stirred by this suggestion, we look at life and mind not merely as phenomenon in Matter but as energies and see that they are quite other energies than the material with their own peculiar qualities, powers and workings. If indeed all action of life and mind could be reduced, as it was once hoped, to none but material, quantitative and mechanical, to mathematical, physiological and chemical terms, the opening would cease to be an outlet; it would be choked. That attempt has failed and there is no sign of its ever being successful. Only a limited range of the phenomena of life and mind could be satisfied by a purely bio-physical, psycho-physical or bio-psychical explanation, and even if more could be dealt with by these data, still they would only have been accounted for on one side of their mystery, the lower end. Life and Mind, like the Vedic Agni, have their two extremities hidden in a secrecy, and we should by this way only have hold of the tail-end: the head would still be mystic and secret. To know more we must have studied not only the actual or possible action of body and matter on mind and life, but explored all the possible action of mind too on life and body; that opens undreamed vistas. And there is always the vast field of the action of mind in itself and on itself, which needs for its elucidation another, a mental, a psychic science.

Having examined and explained Matter by physical methods and in the language of the material Brahman, — it is not really explained, but let that pass, — having failed to carry that way of knowledge into other fields beyond a narrow limit, we must then at least consent to scrutinise life and mind by methods appropriate to them and explain their facts in the language and tokens of the vital and mental Brahman. We may discover then where and how these tongues of the one existence render the same truth and throw light on each other's phrases, and discover too perhaps another, high, brilliant and revealing speech which may shine out as the definitive all-explaining word. That can only be if we pursue these other sciences too in the same spirit as the physical, with a scrutiny, not only of their obvious and first actual phenomena, but of all the countless untested potentialities of mental and psychic energy, and with a free unlimited experimentation. We shall find out that their ranges of the unknown are immense. We shall perceive that until the possibilities of mind and spirit are better explored and their truths better known, we cannot yet pronounce the last all-ensphering formula of universal existence. Very early in this process the materialistic circle will be seen opening up on all its sides until it rapidly breaks up and disappears. Adhering still to the essential rigorous method of science, though not to its purely physical instrumentation, scrutinising, experimenting, holding nothing for established which cannot be scrupulously and universally verified, we shall still arrive at supraphysical certitudes. There are other means, there are greater approaches, but this line of access too can lead to the one universal truth.

Three things will remain from the labour of the secularist centuries; truth of the physical world and its importance, the scientific method of knowledge, — which is to induce Nature and Being to reveal their own way of being and proceeding, not hastening to put upon them our own impositions of idea and imagination, *adhyāropa*, — and last, though very far from least, the truth and importance of the earth life and the human endeavour, its evolutionary meaning. They will remain, but will turn to another sense and disclose greater issues. Surer of our hope and our labour, we shall see them all transformed into light of a vaster and more intimate world-knowledge and self-knowledge.

Thoughts and Glimpses

Aphorisms

THE GOAL

When we have passed beyond knowings, then we shall have Knowledge. Reason was the helper; Reason is the bar.

When we have passed beyond willings, then we shall have Power. Effort was the helper; Effort is the bar.

When we have passed beyond enjoyings, then we shall have Bliss. Desire was the helper; Desire is the bar.

When we have passed beyond individualising, then we shall be real Persons. Ego was the helper; Ego is the bar.

When we have passed beyond humanity, then we shall be the Man. The Animal was the helper; the Animal is the bar.

Transform reason into ordered intuition; let all thyself be light. This is thy goal.

Transform effort into an easy and sovereign overflowing of the soul-strength; let all thyself be conscious force. This is thy goal.

Transform enjoying into an even and objectless ecstasy; let all thyself be bliss. This is thy goal.

Transform the divided individual into the world-personality; let all thyself be the divine. This is thy goal.

Transform the Animal into the Driver of the herds; let all thyself be Krishna. This is thy goal.

⁂

What I cannot do now is the sign of what I shall do hereafter. The sense of impossibility is the beginning of all possibilities. Because this temporal universe was a paradox and an impossibility, therefore the Eternal created it out of His being.

Impossibility is only a sum of greater unrealised possibles. It veils an advanced stage and a yet unaccomplished journey.

If thou wouldst have humanity advance, buffet all preconceived ideas. Thought thus smitten awakes and becomes creative. Otherwise it rests in a mechanical repetition and mistakes that for its right activity.

To rotate on its own axis is not the one movement for the human soul. There is also its wheeling round the Sun of an inexhaustible illumination.

Be conscious first of thyself within, then think and act. All living thought is a world in preparation; all real act is a thought manifested. The material world exists because an Idea began to play in divine self-consciousness.

Thought is not essential to existence nor its cause, but it is an instrument for becoming; I become what I see in myself. All that thought suggests to me, I can do; all that thought reveals in me, I can become. This should be man's unshakable faith in himself, because God dwells in him.

Not to go on for ever repeating what man has already done is our work, but to arrive at new realisations and undreamed-of masteries. Time and soul and world are given us for our field, vision and hope and creative imagination stand for our prompters, will and thought and labour are our all-effective instruments.

What is there new that we have yet to accomplish? Love, for as yet we have only accomplished hatred and self-pleasing; Knowledge, for as yet we have only accomplished error and perception and conceiving; Bliss, for as yet we have only accomplished pleasure and pain and indifference; Power, for as yet we have only accomplished weakness and effort and a defeated victory; Life, for as yet we have only accomplished birth and growth and dying; Unity, for as yet we have only accomplished war and association.

In a word, godhead; to remake ourselves in the divine image.

THE DELIGHT OF BEING

If Brahman were only an impersonal abstraction eternally contradicting the apparent fact of our concrete existence, cessation would be the right end of the matter; but love and delight and self-awareness have also to be reckoned.

The universe is not merely a mathematical formula for working out the relation of certain mental abstractions called numbers and principles to arrive in the end at a zero or a void unit, neither is it merely a physical operation embodying certain equations of forces. It is the delight of a Self-lover, the play of a Child, the endless self-multiplication of a Poet intoxicated with the rapture of His own power of endless creation.

We may speak of the Supreme as if He were a mathematician working out a cosmic sum in numbers or a thinker resolving by experiment a problem in relations of principles and the balance of forces: but also we should speak of Him as if He were a lover, a musician of universal and particular harmonies, a child, a poet. The side of thought is not enough; the side of delight too must be entirely grasped: Ideas, Forces, Existences, Principles are hollow moulds unless they are filled with the breath of God's delight.

These things are images, but all is an image. Abstractions give us the pure conception of God's truths; images give us their living reality.

If Idea embracing Force begot the worlds, Delight of Being begot the Idea. Because the Infinite conceived an innumerable delight in itself, therefore worlds and universes came into existence.

Consciousness of being and Delight of being are the first parents. Also, they are the last transcendences. Unconsciousness is only an intermediate swoon of the conscious or its obscure sleep; pain and self-extinction are only delight of being running away from itself in order to find itself elsewhere or otherwise.

Delight of being is not limited in Time; it is without end or beginning. God comes out from one form of things only to enter into another.

What is God after all? An eternal child playing an eternal game in an eternal garden.

MAN, THE PURUSHA

God cannot cease from leaning down towards Nature, nor man from aspiring towards the Godhead. It is the eternal relation of the finite to the infinite. When they seem to turn from each other, it is to recoil for a more intimate meeting.

In man nature of the world becomes again self-conscious so that it may take the great leap towards its Enjoyer. This is the Enjoyer whom unknowingly it possesses, whom life and sensation possessing deny and denying seek. Nature of the world knows not God only because it knows not itself; when it knows itself, it shall know unalloyed delight of being.

Possession in oneness and not loss in oneness is the secret. God and Man, World and Beyond-world become one when they know each other. Their division is the cause of ignorance as ignorance is the cause of suffering.

Man seeks at first blindly and does not even know that he is seeking his divine self; for he starts from the obscurity of material Nature and even when he begins to see, he is long blinded by the light that is increasing in him. God too answers obscurely to his search; He seeks and enjoys man's blindness like the hands of a little child that grope after its mother.

God and Nature are like a boy and girl at play and in love. They hide and run from each other when glimpsed so that they may be sought after and chased and captured.

Man is God hiding himself from Nature so that he may possess her by struggle, insistence, violence and surprise. God is universal and transcendent Man hiding himself from his own individuality in the human being.

The animal is Man disguised in a hairy skin and upon four legs; the worm is Man writhing and crawling towards the evolution of his Manhood. Even crude forms of Matter are Man in his inchoate body. All things are Man, the Purusha.

For what do we mean by Man? An uncreated and indestructible soul that has housed itself in a mind and body made of its own elements.

THE END

The meeting of man and God must always mean a penetration and entry of the divine into the human and a self-immergence of man in the Divinity.

But that immergence is not in the nature of an annihilation. Extinction is not the fulfilment of all this search and passion, suffering and rapture. The game would never have been begun if that were to be its ending.

Delight is the secret. Learn of pure delight and thou shalt learn of God.

What then was the commencement of the whole matter? Existence that multiplied itself for sheer delight of being and plunged into numberless trillions of forms so that it might find itself innumerably.

And what is the middle? Division that strives towards a multiple unity, ignorance that labours towards a flood of varied light, pain that travails towards the touch of an unimaginable ecstasy. For all these things are dark figures and perverse vibrations.

And what is the end of the whole matter? As if honey could taste itself and all its drops together and all its drops could taste each other and each the whole honeycomb as itself, so should the end be with God and the soul of man and the universe.

Love is the keynote, Joy is the music, Power is the strain, Knowledge is the performer, the infinite All is the composer and audience. We know only the preliminary discords which are as fierce as the harmony shall be great; but we shall arrive surely at the fugue of the divine Beatitudes.

THE CHAIN

The whole world yearns after freedom, yet each creature is in love with his chains; this is the first paradox and inextricable knot of our nature.

Man is in love with the bonds of birth; therefore he is caught in the companion bonds of death. In these chains he aspires after freedom of his being and mastery of his self-fulfilment.

Man is in love with power; therefore he is subjected to weakness. For the world is a sea of waves of force that meet and continually fling themselves on each other; he who would ride on the crest of one wave, must faint under the shock of hundreds.

Man is in love with pleasure; therefore he must undergo the yoke of grief and pain. For unmixed delight is only for the free and passionless soul; but that which pursues after pleasure in man is a suffering and straining energy.

Man hungers after calm, but he thirsts also for the experiences of a restless mind and a troubled heart. Enjoyment is to his mind a fever, calm an inertia and a monotony.

Man is in love with the limitations of his physical being, yet he would have also the freedom of his infinite mind and his immortal soul.

And in these contrasts something in him finds a curious attraction; they constitute for his mental being the artistry of life. It is not only the nectar but the poison also that attracts his taste and his curiosity.

⁂

In all these things there is a meaning and for all these contradictions there is a release. Nature has a method in every madness of her combinings and for her most inextricable knots there is a solution.

Death is the question Nature puts continually to Life and her reminder to it that it has not yet found itself. If there were no siege of death, the creature would be bound for ever in the form of an imperfect living. Pursued by death he awakes to the idea of perfect life and seeks out its means and its possibility.

Weakness puts the same test and question to the strengths and energies and greatnesses in which we glory. Power is the play of life, shows its degree, finds the value of its expression; weakness is the play of death pursuing life in its movement and stressing the limit of its acquired energy.

Pain and grief are Nature's reminder to the soul that the pleasure it enjoys is only a feeble hint of the real delight of existence. In each pain and torture of our being is the secret of a flame of rapture compared with which our greatest pleasures are only as dim flickerings. It is this secret which forms the attraction for the soul of the great ordeals, sufferings and fierce experiences of life which the nervous mind in us shuns and abhors.

The restlessness and early exhaustion of our active being and its instruments are Nature's sign that calm is our true foundation and excitement a disease of the soul; the sterility and monotony of mere calm is her hint that play of the activities on that firm foundation is what she requires of us. God plays for ever and is not troubled.

The limitations of the body are a mould; soul and mind have to pour themselves into them, break them and constantly remould them in wider limits till the formula of agreement is found between this finite and their own infinity.

Freedom is the law of being in its illimitable unity, secret master of all Nature: servitude is the law of love in the being voluntarily giving itself to serve the play of its other selves in the multiplicity.

It is when freedom works in chains and servitude becomes a law of Force, not of Love, that the true nature of things is distorted and a falsehood governs the soul's dealings with existence.

Nature starts with this distortion and plays with all the combinations to which it can lead before she will allow it to be righted. Afterwards she gathers up all the essence of these combinations into a new and rich harmony of love and freedom.

Freedom comes by a unity without limits; for that is our real being. We may gain the essence of this unity in ourselves; we may realise the play of it in oneness with all others. The double experience is the complete intention of the soul in Nature.

Having realised infinite unity in ourselves, then to give ourselves to the world is utter freedom and absolute empire.

Infinite, we are free from death; for life then becomes a play of our immortal existence. We are free from weakness; for we are the whole sea enjoying the myriad shock of its waves. We are free from grief and pain; for we learn how to harmonise our being with all that touches it and to find in all things action and reaction of the delight of existence. We are free from limitation; for the body becomes a plaything of the infinite mind and learns to obey the will of the immortal soul. We are free from the fever of the nervous mind and the heart, yet are not bound to immobility.

Immortality, unity and freedom are in ourselves and await there our discovery; but for the joy of love God in us will still remain the Many.

Thoughts and Glimpses

Some think it presumption to believe in a special Providence or to look upon oneself as an instrument in the hands of God, but I find that every man has a special Providence and I see that God uses the mattock of the labourer and babbles in the mouth of a little child.

Providence is not only that which saves me from the shipwreck in which everybody else has foundered. Providence is also that which while all others are saved snatches away my last plank of safety and drowns me in the solitary ocean.

The delight of victory is sometimes less than the attraction of struggle and suffering; nevertheless the laurel and not the cross should be the aim of the conquering human soul.

Souls that do not aspire are God's failures; but Nature is pleased and loves to multiply them because they assure her of stability and prolong her empire.

Those who are poor, ignorant, ill-born or ill-bred are not the common herd; the common herd are all who are satisfied with pettiness and an average humanity.

Help men, but do not pauperise them of their energy; lead and instruct men, but see that their initiative and originality remain intact; take others into thyself, but give them in return the full godhead of their nature. He who can do this is the leader and the guru.

God has made the world a field of battle and filled it with the trampling of combatants and the cries of a great wrestle and struggle. Would you filch His peace without paying the price He has fixed for it?

Distrust a perfect-seeming success, but when having succeeded thou findest still much to do, rejoice and go forward; for the labour is long before the real perfection.

There is no more benumbing error than to mistake a stage for the goal or to linger too long in a resting-place.

⁂

Wherever thou seest a great end, be sure of a great beginning. Where a monstrous and painful destruction appals thy mind, console it with the certainty of a large and great creation. God is there not only in the still small voice, but in the fire and in the whirlwind.

The greater the destruction, the freer the chances of creation; but the destruction is often long, slow and oppressive, the creation tardy in its coming or interrupted in its triumph. The night returns again and again and the day lingers or seems even to have been a false dawning. Despair not therefore, but watch and work. Those who hope violently, despair swiftly: neither hope nor fear, but be sure of God's purpose and thy will to accomplish.

The hand of the divine Artist works often as if it were unsure of its genius and its material. It seems to touch and test and leave, to pick up and throw away and pick up again, to labour and fail and botch and repiece together. Surprises and disappointments are the order of his work before all things are ready. What was selected, is cast away into the abyss of reprobation; what was rejected, becomes the corner-stone of a mighty edifice. But behind all this is the sure eye of a knowledge which surpasses our reason and the slow smile of an infinite ability.

God has all time before him and does not need to be always in a hurry. He is sure of his aim and success and cares not if he break his work a hundred times to bring it nearer perfection. Patience is our first great necessary lesson, but not the dull slowness to move of the timid, the sceptical, the weary, the slothful, the unambitious or the weakling; a patience full of a calm and gathering strength which watches and prepares itself for the hour of swift great strokes, few but enough to change destiny.

Wherefore God hammers so fiercely at his world, tramples and kneads it like dough, casts it so often into the blood-bath and the red hell-heat of the furnace? Because humanity in the mass is still a hard, crude and vile ore which will not otherwise be smelted and shaped: as is his material, so is his method. Let it help to transmute itself into nobler and purer metal, his ways with it will be gentler and sweeter, much loftier and fairer its uses.

Wherefore he selected or made such a material, when he had all infinite possibility to choose from? Because of his divine Idea which saw before it not only beauty and sweetness and purity, but also force and will and greatness. Despise not force, nor hate it for the ugliness of some of its faces, nor think that love only is God. All perfect perfection must have something in it of the stuff of the hero and even of the Titan. But the greatest force is born out of the greatest difficulty.

⁂

All would change if man could once consent to be spiritualised; but his nature mental and vital and physical is rebellious to the higher law. He loves his imperfections.

The Spirit is the truth of our being; mind and life and body in their imperfection are its masks, but in their perfection should be its moulds. To be spiritual only is not enough; that prepares a number of souls for heaven, but leaves the earth very much where it was. Neither is a compromise the way of salvation.

The world knows three kinds of revolution. The material has strong results, the moral and intellectual are infinitely larger in their scope and richer in their fruits, but the spiritual are the great sowings.

If the triple change could coincide in a perfect correspondence, a faultless work would be done; but the mind and body of mankind cannot hold perfectly a strong spiritual inrush: most is spilt, much of the rest is corrupted. Many intellectual and physical upturnings of our soil are needed to work out a little result from a large spiritual sowing.

Each religion has helped mankind. Paganism increased in man the light of beauty, the largeness and height of his life, his aim at a many-sided perfection; Christianity gave him some vision of divine love and charity; Buddhism has shown him a noble way to be wiser, gentler, purer, Judaism and Islam how to be religiously faithful in action and zealously devoted to God; Hinduism has opened to him the largest and profoundest spiritual possibilities. A great thing would be done if all these God-visions could embrace and cast themselves into each other; but intellectual dogma and cult egoism stand in the way.

All religions have saved a number of souls, but none yet has been able to spiritualise mankind. For that there is needed not cult and creed, but a sustained and all-comprehending effort at spiritual self-evolution.

The changes we see in the world today are intellectual, moral, physical in their ideal and intention: the spiritual revolution waits for its hour and throws up meanwhile its waves here and there. Until it comes the sense of the others cannot be understood and till then all interpretation of present happening and forecast of man's future are vain things. For its nature, power, event are that which will determine the next cycle of our humanity.

Heraclitus

Heraclitus

THE PHILOSOPHY and thought of the Greeks is perhaps the most intellectually stimulating, the most fruitful of clarities the world has yet had. Indian philosophy was intuitive in its beginnings, stimulative rather to the deeper vision of things, — nothing more exalted and profound, more revelatory of the depths and the heights, more powerful to open unending vistas has ever been conceived than the divine and inspired Word, the *mantra* of Veda and Vedanta. When that philosophy became intellectual, precise, founded on the human reason, it became also rigidly logical, enamoured of fixity and system, desirous of a sort of geometry of thought. The ancient Greek mind had instead a kind of fluid precision, a flexibly inquiring logic; acuteness and the wide-open eye of the intellect were its leading characteristics and by this power in it it determined the whole character and field of subsequent European thinking. Nor is any Greek thinker more directly stimulating than the aphoristic philosopher Heraclitus; and yet he keeps and adds to this more modern intellectual stimulativeness something of the antique psychic and intuitive vision and word of the older Mystics. The trend to rationalism is there, but not yet that fluid clarity of the reasoning mind which was the creation of the Sophists.

Professor R. D. Ranade has recently published a small treatise on the philosophy of Heraclitus. From the paging of the treatise it seems to be an excerpt, but from what there is nothing to tell. It is perhaps too much to hope that it is from a series of essays on philosophers or a history of philosophy by this perfect writer and scholar. At any rate such a work from such a hand would be a priceless gain. For Professor Ranade possesses in a superlative degree the rare gift of easy and yet adequate exposition; but he has more than this, for he can give a fascinating interest to subjects like philology and philosophy which to the ordinary reader seem harsh, dry, difficult and repellent. He joins to a luminous clarity, lucidity and charm of expression an equal luminousness and just clarity of presentation and that perfect manner in both native to the Greek and French language and mind, but rare in the English tongue. In these seventeen pages he has presented the thought of the old enigmatic Ephesian with a clearness and sufficiency which leaves us charmed, enlightened and satisfied.

On one or two difficult points I am inclined to differ with the conclusions he adopts. He rejects positively Pfleiderer's view of Heraclitus as a mystic, which is certainly exaggerated and, as stated, a misconception; but it seems to me that there is behind that misconception a certain truth. Heraclitus' abuse of the mysteries of his time is not very conclusive in this respect; for what he reviles is those aspects of obscure magic, physical ecstasy, sensual excitement which the Mysteries had put on in some at least of their final developments as the process of degeneration increased which made a century later even the Eleusinian a butt for the dangerous mockeries of Alcibiades and his companions. His complaint is that the secret rites which the populace held in ignorant and superstitious reverence "unholily mysticise what are held among men as mysteries." He rebels against the darkness of the Dionysian ecstasy in the approach to the secrets of Nature; but there is a luminous Apollonian as well as an obscure and sometimes dangerous Dionysian mysticism, a Dakshina as well as a Vama Marga of the mystic Tantra. And though no partaker in or supporter of any kind of rites or mummery, Heraclitus still strikes one as at least an intellectual child of the Mystics and of mysticism, although perhaps a rebel son in the house of his mother. He has something of the mystic style, something of the intuitive Apollonian inlook into the secrets of existence.

Certainly, as Mr. Ranade says, mere aphorism is not mysticism; aphorism and epigram are often enough, perhaps usually a condensed or a pregnant effort of the intellect. But Heraclitus' style, as Mr. Ranade himself describes it, is not only aphoristic and epigrammatic but cryptic, and this cryptic character is not merely the self-willed obscurity of an intellectual thinker affecting an excessive condensation of his thought or a too closely-packed burden of suggestiveness. It is enigmatic in the style of the mystics, enigmatic in the manner of their thought which sought to express the riddle of existence in the very language of the riddle. What for instance is the "ever-living Fire" in which he finds the primary and imperishable substance of the universe and identifies it in succession with Zeus and with eternity? or what should we understand by "the thunderbolt which steers all things"? To interpret this fire as merely a material force of heat and flame or simply a metaphor for being which is eternal becoming is, it seems to me, to miss the character of Heraclitus' utterances. It includes both these ideas and everything that connects them. But then we get back at once to the Vedic language and turn of thought; we are reminded of the Vedic Fire which is hymned as the upbuilder of the worlds, the secret Immortal in men and things, the periphery of the gods, Agni who "becomes" all around the other immortals, himself becomes and contains all the gods; we are reminded of the Vedic thunderbolt, that electric Fire, of the Sun who is the true Light, the Eye, the wonderful weapon of the divine pathfinders Mitra and Varuna. It is the same cryptic form of language, the same brief and abundant method of thought even; though the conceptions are not identical, there is a clear kinship.

The mystical language has always this disadvantage that it readily becomes obscure, meaningless or even misleading to those who have not the secret and to posterity a riddle. Mr. Ranade tells us that it is impossible to make out what Heraclitus meant when he said, "The gods are mortals, men immortals." But is it quite impossible if we do not cut off this thinker from the earlier thought of the mystics? The Vedic Rishi also invokes the Dawn, "O goddess and human"; the gods in the Veda are constantly addressed as "men", the same words are traditionally applied to indicate men and immortals. The immanence of the immortal principle in man, the descent of the gods into the workings of mortality was almost the fundamental idea of the mystics. Heraclitus, likewise, seems to recognise the inextricable unity of the eternal and the transitory, that which is for ever and yet seems to exist only in this strife and change which is a continual dying. The gods manifest themselves as things that continually change and perish; man is in principle an eternal being. Heraclitus does not really deal in barren antitheses; his method is a statement of antinomies and an adumbrating of their reconciliation in the very terms of opposition. Thus when he says that the name of the bow *(biós)* is life *(bíos)*, but its work is death, obviously he intends no mere barren play upon words; he speaks of that principle of war, father of all and king of all, which makes cosmic existence an apparent process of life, but an actual process of death. The Upanishads seized hold of the same truth when they declared life to be the dominion of King Death, described it as the opposite of immortality and even related that all life and existence here were first created by Death for his food.

Unless we bear in mind this pregnant and symbolic character of Heraclitus' language we are likely to sterilise his thought by giving it a too literal sense. Heraclitus praises the "dry soul" as the wisest and best, but, he says, it is a pleasure and satisfaction to souls to become moist. This inclination of the soul to its natural delight in a sort of wine-drenched laxity must be discouraged; for Dionysus the wine-god and Hades, the Lord of Death, the Lord of the dark underworld, are one and the same deity. Professor Ranade takes this eulogy of the dry soul as praise of the dry light of reason; he finds in it a proof that Heraclitus was a rationalist and not a mystic: yet strangely enough he takes the parallel and opposite expressions about the moist soul and Dionysus in a quite different and material sense, as an ethical disapprobation of wine-drinking. Surely, it cannot be so; Heraclitus cannot mean by the dry soul the reason of a sober man and by a moist soul the non-reason or bewildered reason of the drunkard; nor when he says that Hades and Dionysus are the same, is he simply discouraging the drinking of wine as fatal to the health! Evidently he employs here, as always, a figurative and symbolic language because he has to convey a deeper thought for which he finds ordinary language too poor and superficial.

Heraclitus is using the old language of the Mysteries, though in his own new way and for his own individual purpose, when he speaks of Hades and Dionysus and the everliving Fire or of the Furies, the succourers of Justice who will find out the Sun if he oversteps his measure. We miss his sense, if we see in these names of the gods only the poorer superficial meanings of the popular mythological religion. When Heraclitus speaks of the dry or the moist soul, it is of the soul and not the intellect that he is thinking, *psuchē* and not *nous*. *Psuchē* corresponds roughly to the *cetas* or *citta* of Indian psychology, *nous* to *buddhi*; the dry soul of the Greek thinker to the purified heart-consciousness, *śuddha citta*, of the Indian psychologists, which in their experience was the first basis for a purified intellect, *viśuddha buddhi*. The moist soul is that which allows itself to be perturbed by the impure wine of sense ecstasy, emotional excitement, an obscure impulse and inspiration whose source is from a dark underworld. Dionysus is the god of this wine-born ecstasy, the god of the Bacchic mysteries, — of the "walkers in the night, mages, bacchanals, mystics": therefore Heraclitus says that Dionysus and Hades are one. In an opposite sense the ecstatic devotee of the Bhakti path in India reproaches the exclusive seeker by the way of thought-discernment with his "dry knowledge", using Heraclitus' epithet, but with a pejorative and not a laudatory significance.

To ignore the influence of the mystic thought and its methods of self-expression on the intellectual thinking of the Greeks from Pythagoras to Plato is to falsify the historical procession of the human mind. It was enveloped at first in the symbolic, intuitive, esoteric style and discipline of the Mystics, — Vedic and Vedantic seers, Orphic secret teachers, Egyptian priests. From that veil it emerged along the path of a metaphysical philosophy still related to the Mystics by the source of its fundamental ideas, its first aphoristic and cryptic style, its attempt to seize directly upon truth by intellectual vision rather than arrive at it by careful ratiocination, but nevertheless intellectual in its method and aim. This is the first period of the Darshanas in India, in Greece of the early intellectual thinkers. Afterwards came the full tide of philosophic rationalism, Buddha or the Buddhists and the logical philosophers in India, in Greece the Sophists and Socrates with all their splendid progeny; with them the intellectual method did not indeed begin, but came to its own and grew to its fullness. Heraclitus belongs to the transition, not to the noontide of the reason; he is even its most characteristic representative. Hence his cryptic style, hence his brief and burdened thought and the difficulty we feel when we try to clarify and entirely rationalise his significances. The ignoring of the Mystics, our pristine fathers, *pūrve pitaraḥ*, is the great defect of the modern account of our thought-evolution.

Heraclitus – 2

WHAT PRECISELY is the key-note of Heraclitus' thinking, where has he found his starting-point, or what are the grand lines of his philosophy? For if his thought is not developed in the severe systematic method of later thinkers, if it does not come down to us in large streams of subtle reasoning and opulent imagery like Plato's but in detached aphoristic sentences aimed like arrows at truth, still they are not really scattered philosophical reflections. There is an inter-relation, an inter-dependence; they all start logically from his fundamental view of existence itself and go back to it for their constant justification.

As in Indian, so in Greek philosophy the first question for thought was the problem of the One and the Many. We see everywhere a multiplicity of things and beings; is it real or only phenomenal or practical, *māyā*, *vyavahāra*? Has individual man, for instance, — the question which concerns us most nearly, — an essential and immortal existence of his own or is he simply a phenomenal and transient result in the evolution or play of some one original principle, Matter, Mind, Spirit, which is the only real reality of existence? Does unity exist at all and, if so, is it a unity of sum or of primordial principle, a result or an origin, a oneness of totality or a oneness of nature or a oneness of essence, — the various standpoints of Pluralism, of Sankhya, of Vedanta? Or if both the One and the Many are real, what are the relations between these two eternal principles of being, or are they reconciled in an Absolute beyond them? These are no barren questions of logic, no battle of cloudy metaphysical abstractions, as the practical and sensational man would have us contemptuously believe; for on our answer to them depends our conception of God, of existence, of the world and of human life and destiny.

Heraclitus, differing in this, as Mr. Ranade reminds us, from Anaximander who like our Mayavadins denied true reality to the Many and from Empedocles who thought the All to be alternately one and many, believed unity and multiplicity to be both of them real and coexistent. Existence is then eternally one and eternally many, — even as Ramanuja and Madhwa have concluded, though in a very different spirit and from a quite different standpoint. Heraclitus' view arose from his strong concrete intuition of things, his acute sense of universal realities; for in our experience of the cosmos we do find always and inseparably this eternal coexistence and cannot really escape from it. Everywhere our gaze on the Many reveals to us an eternal oneness, no matter what we fix on as the principle of that oneness; yet is that unity inoperative except by the multiplicity of its powers and forms, nor do we anywhere see it void of or apart from its own multiplicity. One Matter, but many atoms, plasms, bodies; one Energy, but many forces; one Mind or at least Mind-stuff, but many mental beings; one Spirit, but many souls. Perhaps periodically this multiplicity goes back, is dissolved into, is swallowed up by the One from which it was originally evolved; but still the fact that it has evolved and got involved again, compels us to suppose a possibility and even a necessity of its renewed evolution: it is not then really destroyed. The Adwaitin by his Yoga goes back to the One, feels himself merged, believes that he has got rid of the Many, proved perhaps their unreality; but it is the achievement of an individual, of one of the Many, and the Many go on existing in spite of it. The achievement proves only that there is a plane of consciousness on which the soul can realise and not merely perceive by the intellect the oneness of the Spirit, and it proves nothing else. Therefore, on this truth of eternal oneness and eternal multiplicity Heraclitus fixes and anchors himself; from his firm acceptance of it, not reasoning it away but accepting all its consequences, flows all the rest of his philosophy.

Still, one question remains to be resolved before we can move a step farther. Since there is an eternal One, what is that?

Is it Force, Mind, Matter, Soul? or, since Matter has many principles, is it some one principle of Matter which has evolved all the rest or which by some power of its own activity has changed into all that we see? The old Greek thinkers conceived of cosmic Substance as possessed of four elements, omitting or not having arrived at the fifth, Ether, in which Indian analysis found the first and original principle. In seeking the nature of the original substance they fixed then on one or other of these four as the primordial Nature, one finding it in Air, another in Water, while Heraclitus, as we have seen, describes or symbolises the source and reality of all things as an everliving Fire. "No man or god" he says "has created the universe, but ever there was and is and will be the everliving Fire."

In the Veda, in the early language of the Mystics generally, the names of the elements or primary principles of Substance were used with a clearly symbolic significance. The symbol of water is thus used constantly in the Rig Veda. It is said that in the beginning was the inconscient Ocean out of which the One was born by the vastness of His energy; but it is clear from the language of the hymn that no physical ocean is meant, but rather the unformed chaos of inconscient being in which the Divine, the Godhead lay concealed in a darkness enveloped by greater darkness. The seven active principles of existence are similarly spoken of as rivers or waters; we hear of the seven rivers, the great water, the four superior rivers, in a context which shows their symbolic significance. We see this image fixed in the Puranic mythus of Vishnu sleeping on the serpent Infinite in the milky ocean. But even as early as the Rig Veda, ether is the highest symbol of the Infinite, the *apeiron* of the Greeks; water is that of the same Infinite in its aspect as the original substance; fire is the creative power, the active energy of the Infinite; air, the life-principle, is spoken of as that which brings down fire out of the ethereal heavens into the earth. Yet these were not merely symbols. The Vedic Mystics held, it is clear, a close connection and effective parallelism to exist between psychical and physical activities, between the action of Light, for instance, and the phenomena of mental illumination; fire was to them at once the luminous divine energy, the Seer-Will of the universal Godhead active and creative of all things, and the physical principle creative of the substantial forms of the universe, burning secretly in all life.

It is doubtful how far the earlier Greek philosophic thinkers preserved any of these complex conceptions in their generalisations about the original principle. But Heraclitus has clearly an idea of something more than a physical substance or energy in his concept of the everliving Fire. Fire is to him the physical aspect, as it were, of a great burning creative, formative and destructive force, the sum of all whose processes is a constant and unceasing change. The idea of the One which is eternally becoming Many and the Many which is eternally becoming One and of that One therefore not so much as stable substance or essence as active Force, a sort of substantial Will-to-become, is the foundation of Heraclitus' philosophy.

Nietzsche, whom Mr. Ranade rightly affiliates to Heraclitus, Nietzsche, the most vivid, concrete and suggestive of modern thinkers, as is Heraclitus among the early Greeks, founded his whole philosophical thought on this conception of existence as a vast Will-to-become and of the world as a play of Force; divine Power was to him the creative Word, the beginning of all things and that to which life aspires. But he affirms Becoming only and excludes Being from his view of things; hence his philosophy is in the end unsatisfactory, insufficient, lop-sided; it stimulates, but solves nothing. Heraclitus does not exclude Being from the data of the problem of existence, although he will not make any opposition or gulf between that and Becoming. By his conception of existence as at once one and many, he is bound to accept these two aspects of his everliving Fire as simultaneously true, true in each other; Being is an eternal becoming and yet the Becoming resolves itself into eternal being. All is in flux, for all is change of becoming; we cannot step into the same waters twice, for it is other and yet other waters that are flowing on. And yet, with his keen eye on the truth of things, preoccupied though he was with this aspect of existence, he could not help seeing another truth behind it. The waters into which we step, are and are not the same; our own existence is an eternity and an inconstant transience; we are and we are not. Heraclitus does not solve the contradiction; he states it and in his own way tries to give some account of its process.

That process he sees as a constant change and a changing back, an exchange and an interchange in a constant whole,— managed for the rest by a clash of forces, by a creative and determinative strife, "war which is the father and king of all things." Between Fire as the Being and Fire in the Becoming existence describes a downward and upward movement — *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* — which has been called the "back-returning road" upon which all travels. These are the master ideas of the thought of Heraclitus.

Heraclitus – 3

TWO APOPHTHEGMS of Heraclitus give us the starting-point of his whole thinking. They are his saying that it is wisdom to admit that all things are one and his other saying "One out of all and all out of One." How are we to understand these two pregnant utterances? Must we read them into each other and conclude that for Heraclitus the One only exists as resultant of the many even as the many only exist as a becoming of the One? Mr. Ranade seems to think so; he tells us that this philosophy denies Being and affirms only Becoming, — like Nietzsche, like the Buddhists. But surely this is to read a little too much into Heraclitus' theory of perpetual change, to take it too much by itself. If that was his whole belief, it is difficult to see why he should seek for an original and eternal principle, the everliving Fire which creates all by its perpetual changing, governs all by its fiery force of the "thunderbolt", resolves all back into itself by a cyclic conflagration, difficult to account for his theory of the upward and downward way, difficult to concede what Mr. Ranade contends, that Heraclitus did hold the theory of a cosmic conflagration or to imagine what could be the result of such a cosmic catastrophe. To reduce all becoming into Nothing? Surely not; Heraclitus' thought is at the very antipodes from speculative Nihilism. Into another kind of becoming? Obviously not, since by an absolute conflagration existing things can only be reduced into their eternal principle of being, into Agni, back into the immortal Fire. Something that is eternal, that is itself eternity, something that is for ever one, — for the cosmos is eternally one and many and does not by becoming cease to be one, — something that is God (Zeus), something that can be imaged as Fire which, if an ever-active force, is yet a substance or at least a substantial force and not merely an abstract Will-to-become, — something out of which all cosmic becoming arises and into which it returns, what is this but eternal Being?

Heraclitus was greatly preoccupied with his idea of eternal becoming, for him the one right account of the cosmos, but his cosmos has still an eternal basis, a unique original principle. That distinguishes his thought radically from Nietzsche's or the Buddhists'. The later Greeks derived from him the idea of the perpetual stream of things, "All things are in flux." The idea of the universe as constant motion and unceasing change was always before him, and yet behind and in it all he saw too a constant principle of determination and even a mysterious principle of identity. Every day, he says, it is a new sun that rises; yes, but if the sun is always new, exists only by change from moment to moment, like all things in Nature, still it is the same everliving Fire that rises with each Dawn in the shape of the sun. We can never step again into the same stream, for ever other and other waters are flowing; and yet, says Heraclitus, "we do and we do not enter into the same waters, we are and we are not." The sense is clear; there is an identity in things, in all existences, *sarvabhūtāni*, as well as a constant changing; there is a Being as well as a Becoming and by that we have an eternal and real existence as well as a temporary and apparent, are not merely a constant mutation but a constant identical existence. Zeus exists, a sempiternal active Fire and eternal Word, a One by which all things are unified, all laws and results perpetually determined, all measures unalterably maintained. Day and Night are one, Death and Life are one, Youth and Age are one, Good and Evil are one, because that is One and all these are only its various shapes and appearances.

Heraclitus would not have accepted a purely psychological principle of Self as the origin of things, but in essence he is not very far from the Vedantic position. The Buddhists of the Nihilistic school used in their own way the image of the stream and the image of the fire. They saw, as Heraclitus saw, that nothing in the world is for two moments the same even in the most insistent continuity of forms. The flame maintains itself unchanged in appearance, but every moment it is another and not the same fire; the stream is sustained in its flow by ever new waters. From this they drew the conclusion that there is no essence of things, nothing self-existent; the apparent becoming is all that we can call existence, behind it there is eternal Nothing, the absolute Void, or perhaps an original Non-Being. Heraclitus saw, on the contrary, that if the form of the flame only exists by a constant change, a constant exchange rather of the substance of the wick into the substance of the fiery tongue, yet there must be a principle of their existence common to them which thus converts itself from one form into another; — even if the substance of the flame is always changing, the principle of Fire is always the same and produces always the same results of energy, maintains always the same measures.

The Upanishad too describes the cosmos as a universal motion and becoming; it is all this that is mobile in the mobility, *jagatyāṁ jagat*, — the very word for universe, *jagat*, having the radical sense of motion, so that the whole universe, the macrocosm, is one vast principle of motion and therefore of change and instability, while each thing in the universe is in itself a microcosm of the same motion and instability. Existences are "all becomings"; the Self-existent Atman, Swayambhu, has become all becomings, *ātmā eva abhūt sarvāṇi bhūtāni*. The relation between God and World is summed up in the phrase, "It is He that has moved out everywhere, *sa paryagāt*"; He is the Lord, the Seer and Thinker, who becoming everywhere — Heraclitus' Logos, his Zeus, his One out of which come all things — "has fixed all things rightly according to their nature from years sempiternal", — Heraclitus' "All things are fixed and determined." Substitute his Fire for the Vedantic Atman and there is nothing in the expressions of the Upanishad which the Greek thinker would not have accepted as another figure of his own thought. And do not the Upanishads use among other images this very symbol of the Fire? "As one Fire has entered into the world and taken shapes according to the various forms in the world," so the one Being has become all these names and forms and yet remains the One. Heraclitus tells us precisely the same thing; God is all contraries, "He takes various shapes just as fire, when it is mingled with spices, is named according to the savour of each." Each one names Him according to his pleasure, says the Greek seer, and He accepts all names and yet accepts none, not even the highest name of Zeus. "He consents and yet at the same time does not consent to be called by the name of Zeus." So too said Indian Dirghatamas of old in his long hymn of the divine Mysteries in the Rig Veda, "One existent the sages call by many names." Though He assumes all these forms, says the Upanishad, He has no form that the vision can seize, He whose name is a mighty splendour. We see again how close are the thoughts of the Greek and very often even his expressions and images to the sense and style of the Vedic and Vedantic sages.

We must put each of Heraclitus' apophthegms into its right place if we would understand his thought. "It is wise to admit that all things are one," — not merely, be it noted, that they came from oneness and will go back to oneness, but that they are one, now and always, — all is, was and ever will be the everliving Fire. All seems to our experience to be many, an eternal becoming of manifold existences; where is there in it any principle of eternal identity? True, says Heraclitus, so it seems; but wisdom looks beyond and does see the identity of all things; Night and Day, Life and Death, the good and the evil, all are one, the eternal, the identical; those who see only a difference in objects, do not know the truth of the objects they observe. "Hesiod did not know day and night; for it is the One," — *esti gar hen*, *asti hi ekam*. Now, an eternal and identical which all things are, is precisely what we mean by Being; it is precisely what is denied by those who see only Becoming. The Nihilistic Buddhists[1] insisted that there were only so many ideas, *vijñānāni*, and impermanent forms which were but the combination of parts and elements: no oneness, no identity anywhere; get beyond ideas and forms, you get to self-extinction, to the Void, to Nothing. Yet one must posit a principle of unity somewhere, if not at the base or in the secret being of things, yet in their action. The Buddhists had to posit their universal principle of Karma which, when you think of it, comes after all to a universal energy as the cause of the world, a creator and preserver of unchanging measures. Nietzsche denied Being, but had to speak of a universal Will-to-be; which again, when you come to think of it, seems to be no more than a translation of the Upanishadic *tapo brahma*, "Will-Energy is Brahman." The later Sankhya denied the unity of conscious existences, but asserted the unity of Nature, Prakriti, which is again at once the original principle and substance of things and the creative energy, the *phusis* of the Greeks. It is indeed wise to agree that all things are one; for vision drives at that, the soul and the heart reach out to that, thought comes circling round to it in the very act of denial.

---

[1] Buddha himself remained silent on this question; his goal of Nirvana was a negation of phenomenal existence, but not necessarily a denial of any kind of existence.

Heraclitus saw what all must see who look at the world with any attention, that there is something in all this motion and change and differentiation which insists on stability, which goes back to sameness, which assures unity, which triumphs into eternity. It has always the same measures; it is, was and ever will be. We are the same in spite of all our differences; we start from the same origin, proceed by the same universal laws, live, differ and strive in the bosom of an eternal oneness, are seeking always for that which binds all beings together and makes all things one. Each sees it in his own way, lays stress on this or that aspect of it, loses sight of or diminishes other aspects, gives it therefore a different name — even as Heraclitus, attracted by its aspect of creative and destructive Force, gave it the name of Fire. But when he generalises, he puts it widely enough; it is the One that is All, it is the All that is One, — Zeus, eternity, the Fire. He could have said with the Upanishad, "All this is the Brahman", *sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ brahma*, though he could not have gone on and said, "This Self is the Brahman", but would have declared rather of Agni what a Vedantic formula says of Vayu, *tvaṁ pratyakṣaṁ brahmāsi*, "Thou art manifest Brahman."

But we may admit the One in different ways. The Adwaitins affirmed the One, the Being, but put away "all things" as Maya, or they recognised the immanence of the Being in these becomings which are yet not-Self, not That. Vaishnava philosophy saw existence as eternally one in the Being, God, eternally many by His nature or conscious-energy in the souls whom He becomes or who exist in her. In Greece also Anaximander denied the multiple reality of the Becoming. Empedocles affirmed that the All is eternally one and many; all is one which becomes many and then again goes back to oneness. But Heraclitus will not so cut the knot of the riddle. "No," he says in effect, "I hold to my idea of the eternal oneness of all things; never do they cease to be one. It is all my everliving Fire that takes various shapes and names, changes itself into all that is and yet remains itself, not at all by any illusion or mere appearance of becoming, but with a severe and positive reality." All things then are in their reality and substance and law and reason of their being the One; the One in its shapes, values, changings becomes really all things. It changes and is yet immutable: for it does not increase or diminish, nor does it lose for a moment its eternal nature and identity which is that of the everliving Fire. Many values which reduce themselves to the same standard and judge of all values; many forces which go back to the same unalterable energy; many becomings which both represent and amount to one identical Being.

Here Heraclitus brings in his formula of "One out of all and all out of One", which is his account of the process of the cosmos just as his formula "All things are one" is his account of the eternal truth of the cosmos. One, he says, in the process of the cosmos is always becoming all things from moment to moment, hence the eternal flux of things; but all things also are eternally going back to their principle of oneness; hence the unity of the cosmos, the sameness behind the flux of becoming, the stability of measures, the conservation of energy in all changes. This he explains farther by his theory of change as in its character a constant exchange. But is there then no end to this simultaneous upward and downward motion of things? As the downward has so far prevailed as to create the cosmos, will not the upward too prevail so as to dissolve it back into the everliving Fire? Here we come to the question whether Heraclitus did or did not hold the theory of a periodic conflagration or *pralaya*. "Fire will come on all things and judge and convict them." If he held it, then we have again another striking coincidence of Heraclitus' thought with our familiar Indian notions, the periodic *pralaya*, the Puranic conflagration of the world by the appearance of the twelve suns, the Vedantic theory of the eternal cycles of manifestation and withdrawal from manifestation. In fact, both the lines of thought are essentially the same and had to arrive inevitably at the same conclusions.

Heraclitus – 4

HERACLITUS' account of the cosmos is an evolution and involution out of his one eternal principle of Fire, — at once the one substance and the one force, — which he expresses in his figurative language as the upward and downward road. "The road up and down" he says "is one and the same." Out of Fire, the radiant and energetic principle, air, water and earth proceed, — that is the procession of energy on its downward road; there is equally in the very tension of this process a force of potential return which would lead things backward to their source in the reverse order. In the balance of these two upward and downward forces resides the whole cosmic action; everything is a poise of contrary energies. The movement of life is like the back-returning of the bow, to which he compares it, an energy of traction and tension restraining an energy of release, every force of action compensated by a corresponding force of reaction. By the resistance of one to the other all the harmonies of existence are created.

We have the same idea of an evolution of successive conditions of energy out of a primal substance-force in the Indian theory of Sankhya. There indeed the system proposed is more complete and satisfying. It starts with the original or root energy, *mūla prakṛti*, which as the first substance, *pradhāna*, evolves by development and change into five successive principles. Ether, not fire, is the first principle, ignored by the Greeks, but rediscovered by modern Science;[1] there follow air, fire, the igneous, radiant and electric energy, water, earth, the fluid and solid. The Sankhya, like Anaximenes, puts Air first of the four principles admitted by the Greeks, though it does not like him make it the original substance, and it thus differs from the order of

---

[1] Now again rejected, though that does not seem to be indubitable or final.

Heraclitus. But it gives to the principle of fire the function of creating all forms, — as Agni in the Veda is the great builder of the worlds, — and here at least it meets his thought; for it is as the energetic principle behind all formation and mutation that Heraclitus must have chosen Fire as his symbol and material representative of the One. We may remember in this connection how far modern Science has gone to justify these old thinkers by the importance it gives to electricity and radio-active forces — Heraclitus' fire and thunderbolt, the Indian triple Agni — in the formation of atoms and in the transmutation of energy.

But the Greeks failed to go forward to that final discrimination which India attributed to Kapila, the supreme analytical thinker, — the discrimination between Prakriti and her cosmic principles, her twenty-four tattwas forming the subjective and objective aspects of Nature, and between Prakriti and Purusha, Conscious-Soul and Nature-Energy. Therefore while in the Sankhya ether, fire and the rest are only principles of the objective evolution of Prakriti, evolutionary aspects of the original *phusis*, the early Greeks could not get back beyond these aspects of Nature to the idea of a pure energy, nor could they at all account for her subjective side. The Fire of Heraclitus has to do duty at once for the original substance of all Matter and for God and Eternity. This preoccupation with Nature-Energy and the failure to fathom its relations with Soul has persisted in modern scientific thought, and we find there too the same attempt to identify some primary principle of Nature, ether or electricity, with the original Force.

However that may be, the theory of the creation of the world by some kind of evolutionary change out of the original substance or energy, by *pariṇāma*, is common to the early Greek and the Indian systems, however they may differ about the nature of the original *phusis*. The distinction of Heraclitus among the early Greek sages is his conception of the upward and downward road, one and the same in the descent and the return. It corresponds to the Indian idea of *nivṛtti* and *pravṛtti*, the double movement of the Soul and Nature, — *pravṛtti*, the moving out and forward, *nivṛtti*, the moving back and in. The

Indian thinkers were preoccupied with this double principle so far as it touches the action of the individual soul entering into the procession of Nature and drawing back from it; but still they saw a similar, a periodic movement forward and back of Nature itself which leads to an ever-repeated cycle of creation and dissolution; they held the idea of a periodic *pralaya*. Heraclitus' theory would seem to demand a similar conclusion. Otherwise we must suppose that the downward tendency, once in action, has always the upper hand over the upward or that cosmos is eternally proceeding out of the original substance and eternally returning to it, but never actually returns. The Many are then eternal not only in power of manifestation, but in actual fact of manifestation.

It is possible that Heraclitus may so have thought, but it is not the logical conclusion of his theory; it contradicts the evident suggestion of his metaphor about the road which implies a starting-point and a point of return; and we have too the distinct statement of the Stoics that he believed in the theory of conflagration, — an assertion which they are hardly likely to have made if this were not generally accepted as his teaching. The modern arguments against enumerated by Mr. Ranade are founded upon misconceptions. Heraclitus' affirmation is not simply that the One is always Many, the Many always One, but in his own words, "out of all the One and out of One all." Plato's phrasing of the thought, "the reality is both many and one and in its division it is always being brought together," states the same idea in different language. It means a constant current and back-current of change, the upward and downward road, and we may suppose that as the One by downward change becomes completely the All in the descending process, yet remains eternally the one everliving Fire, so the All by upward change may resort completely to the One and yet essentially exist, since it can again return into various being by the repetition of the downward movement. All difficulty disappears if we remember that what is implied is a process of evolution and involution, — so too the Indian word for creation, *sṛṣṭi*, means a release or bringing forth of what is held in, latent, — and that the conflagration destroys existing forms, but not the principle of multiplicity. There will be then no inconsistency at all in Heraclitus' theory of a periodic conflagration; it is rather, that being the highest expression of change, the complete logic of his system.

Heraclitus – 5

IF IT is the law of Change that determines the evolution and involution of the one downward and upward road, the same law prevails all along the path, through all its steps and returns, in all the million transactions of the wayside. There is everywhere the law of exchange and interchange, *amoibē*. The unity and the multiplicity have at every moment this active relation to each other. The One is constantly exchanging itself for the many; that gold has been given, you have instead these commodities, but in fact they are only so much value of the gold. The many are constantly exchanging themselves for the One; these commodities are given, disappear, are destroyed, we say, but in their place there is the gold, the original substance-energy to the value of the commodities. You see the sun and you think it is the same sun always, but really it is a new sun that rises each day; for it is the Fire's constant giving of itself in exchange for the elemental commodities that compose the sun which preserves its form, its energy, its movement, all its measures. Science shows us that this is true of all things, of the human body, for instance; it is always the same, but it preserves its apparent identity only by a constant change. There is a constant destruction, yet there is no destruction. Energy distributes itself, but never really dissipates itself; change and unalterable conservation of energy in the change are the law, not destruction. If this world of multiplicity is destroyed in the end by Fire, yet there is no end and it is not destroyed, but only exchanged for the Fire. Moreover, there is exchange between all these becomings which are only so many active values of the Being, commodities that are a fixed value and measure of the universal gold. Fire takes of its substance from one form and gives to another, changes one apparent value of its substance into another apparent value, but the substance-energy remains the same and the new value is the equivalent of the old, — as when it turns fuel into smoke and cinders and ashes. Modern Science with a more accurate knowledge of what actually happens in this change, yet confirms Heraclitus' conclusion. It is the law of the conservation of energy.

Practically, the active secret of life is there; all life physical or mental or merely dynamic maintains itself by constant change and interchange. Still, Heraclitus' account is so far not altogether satisfactory. The measure, the value of the energy exchanged remains unaltered even when the form is altered, but why should also the cosmic commodities we have for the universal gold be fixed and in a way unchanging? What is the explanation, how comes about this eternity of principles and elements and kinds of combination and this persistence and recurrence of the same forms which we observe in the cosmos? Why in this constant cosmic flux should everything after all remain the same? Why should the sun, though always new, be yet for all practical purposes the same sun? Why should the stream be, as Heraclitus himself admits, the same stream although it is ever other and other waters that are flowing? It was in this connection that Plato brought in his eternal, ideal plane of fixed ideas, by which he seems to have meant at once an originating real-idea and an original ideal schema for all things. An idealistic philosophy of the Indian type might say that this force, the Shakti which you call Fire, is a consciousness which preserves by its energy its original scheme of ideas and corresponding forms of things. But Heraclitus gives us another account, not quite satisfactory, yet profound and full of suggestive truth; it is contained in his striking phrases about war and justice and tension and the Furies pursuing the transgressor of measures. He is the first thinker to see the world entirely in the terms of Power.

What is the nature of this exchange? It is strife, *eris*, it is war, *polemos*! What is the rule and result of the war? It is justice. How acts that justice? By a just tension and compensation of forces which produce the harmony of things and therefore, we presume, their stability. "War is the father of all and the king of all"; "All things becoming according to strife"; "To know that strife is justice"; these are his master apophthegms in this matter. At first we do not see why exchange should be strife; it would seem rather to be commerce. Strife there is, but why should there not also be peaceful and willing interchange? Heraclitus will have none of it; no peace! he would agree with the modern Teuton that commerce itself is a department of War. It is true there is a commerce, gold for commodities, commodities for gold, but the commerce itself and all its circumstances are governed by a forceful, more, a violent compulsion of the universal Fire. That is what he means by the Furies pursuing the sun; "for fear of Him" says the Upanishad "the wind blows . . . and death runs." And between all beings there is a constant trial of strength; by that warfare they come into being, by that their measures are maintained. We see that he is right; he has caught the initial aspect of cosmic Nature. Everything here is a clash of forces and by that clash and struggle and clinging and wrestling things not only come into being, but are maintained in being. Karma? Laws? But different laws meet and compete and by their tension the balance of the world is maintained. Karma? It is the forcible justice of an eternal compelling Power and it is the Furies pursuing us if we transgress our measures.

War, contends Heraclitus, is not mere injustice, chaotic violence; it is justice, although a violent justice, the only kind possible. Again, from that point of view, we see that he is right. By the energy expended and its value shall the fruits be determined, and where two forces meet, expenditure of energy means a trial of strength. Shall not then the rewards be to the strong according to his strength and to the weak according to his weakness? So it is at least in the world, the primal law, although subject to the help of the weak by the strong which need not after all be an injustice or a violation of measures, in spite of Nietzsche and Heraclitus. And is there not after all sometimes a tremendous strength behind weakness, the very strength of the pressure on the oppressed which brings its terrible reaction, the back return of the bow, Zeus, the eternal Fire, observing his measures?

Not only between being and being, force and force is there war, but within each there is an eternal opposition, a tension of contraries, and it is this tension which creates the balance necessary to harmony. Harmony then there is, for cosmos itself is in its result a harmony; but it is so because in its process it is war, tension, opposition, a balance of eternal contraries. Real peace there cannot be, unless by peace you mean a stable tension, a balance of power between hostile forces, a sort of mutual neutralisation of excesses. Peace cannot create, cannot maintain anything, and Homer's prayer that war might perish from among Gods and men is a monstrous absurdity, for that would mean the end of the world. A periodic end there may be, not by peace or reconciliation, but by conflagration, by an attack of Fire, *to pur epelthon*, a fiery judgment and conviction. Force created the world, Force is the world, Force by its violence maintains the world, Force shall end the world, — and eternally re-create it.

Heraclitus – 6

HERACLITUS is the first and the most consistent teacher of the law of relativity; it is the logical result of his primary philosophical concepts. Since all is one in its being and many in its becoming, it follows that everything must be one in its essence. Night and day, life and death, good and evil can only be different aspects of the same absolute reality. Life and death are in fact one, and we may say from different points of view that all death is only a process and change of life or that all life is only an activity of death. Really both are one energy whose activity presents to us a duality of aspects. From one point of view we are not, for our existence is only a constant mutation of energy; from another we are, because the being in us is always the same and sustains our secret identity. So too, we can only speak of a thing as good or evil, just or unjust, beautiful or ugly from a purely relative point of view, because we adopt a particular standpoint or have in view some practical end or temporarily valid relation. He gives the example of "the sea, water purest and impurest", their fine element to the fish, abominable and undrinkable to man. And does not this apply to all things? — they are the same always in reality and assume their qualities and properties because of our standing-point in the universe of becoming, the nature of our seeing and the texture of our minds. All things circle back to the eternal unity and in their beginning and end are the same; it is only in the arc of becoming that they vary in themselves and from each other, and there they have no absoluteness to each other. Night and day are the same; it is only the nature of our vision and our standing-point on the earth and our relations of earth and sun that create the difference. What is day to us, is to others night.

Because of this insistence on the relativity of good and evil, Heraclitus is thought to have enunciated some kind of supermoralism; but it is well to see carefully to what this supermoralism of Heraclitus really amounts. Heraclitus does not deny the existence of an absolute; but for him the absolute is to be found in the One, in the Divine, — not the gods, but the one supreme Divinity, the Fire. It has been objected that he attributes relativity to God, because he says that the first principle is willing and yet not willing to be called by the name of Zeus. But surely this is to misunderstand him altogether. The name Zeus expresses only the relative human idea of the Godhead; therefore while God accepts the name, He is not bound or limited by it. All our concepts of Him are partial and relative; "He is named according to the pleasure of each." This is nothing more nor less than the truth proclaimed by the Vedas, "One existent the sages call by many names." Brahman is willing to be called Vishnu, and yet he is not willing, because he is also Brahma and Maheshwara and all the gods and the world and all principles and all that is, and yet not any of these things, *neti neti*. As men approach him, so he accepts them. But the One to Heraclitus as to the Vedantin is absolute.

This is quite clear from all his sayings; day and night, good and evil are one, because they are the One in their essence and in the One the distinctions we make between them disappear. There is a Word, a Reason in all things, a Logos, and that Reason is one; only men by the relativeness of their mentality turn it each into his personal thought and way of looking at things and live according to this variable relativity. It follows that there is an absolute, a divine way of looking at things. "To God all things are good and just, but men hold some things to be good, others unjust." There is then an absolute good, an absolute beauty, an absolute justice of which all things are the relative expression. There is a divine order in the world; each thing fulfils its nature according to its place in the order and in its place and symmetry in the one Reason of things is good, just and beautiful precisely because it fulfils that Reason according to the eternal measures. To take an example, the world war may be regarded as an evil by some, a sheer horror of carnage, to others because of the new possibilities it opens to mankind, it may seem a good. It is at once good and evil. But that is the relative view; in its entirety, in its fulfilment in each and all of its circumstances of a divine purpose, a divine justice, a divine force executing itself in the large reason of things, it is from the absolute point of view good and just — to God, not to man.

Does it follow that the relative view-point has no validity at all? Not for a moment. On the contrary, it must be the expression, proper to each mentality according to the necessity of its nature and standpoint, of the divine Law. Heraclitus says that plainly; "Fed are all human laws by one, the divine." That sentence ought to be quite sufficient to protect Heraclitus against the charge of antinomianism. True, no human law is the absolute expression of the divine justice, but it draws its validity, its sanction from that and is valid for its purpose, in its place, in its proper time, has its relative necessity. Even though men's notions of good and justice vary in the mutations of the becoming, yet human good and justice persist in the stream of things, preserve a measure. Heraclitus admits relative standards, but as a thinker he is obliged to go beyond them. All is at once one and many, an absolute and a relative, and all the relations of the many are relativities, yet are fed by, go back to, persist by that in them which is absolute.

Heraclitus – 7

THE IDEAS of Heraclitus on which I have so far laid stress, are general, philosophical, metaphysical; they glance at those first truths of existence, *devānāṁ prathamā vratāni*,[1] for which philosophy first seeks because they are the key to all other truths. But what is their practical effect on human life and aspiration? For that is in the end the real value of philosophy for man, to give him light on the nature of his being, the principles of his psychology, his relations with the world and with God, the fixed lines or the great possibilities of his destiny. It is the weakness of most European philosophy — not the ancient — that it lives too much in the clouds and seeks after pure metaphysical truth too exclusively for its own sake; therefore it has been a little barren because much too indirect in its bearing on life. It is the great distinction of Nietzsche among later European thinkers to have brought back something of the old dynamism and practical force into philosophy, although in the stress of this tendency he may have neglected unduly the dialectical and metaphysical side of philosophical thinking. No doubt, in seeking Truth we must seek it for its own sake first and not start with any preconceived practical aim and prepossession which would distort our disinterested view of things; but when Truth has been found, its bearing on life becomes of capital importance and is the solid justification of the labour spent in our research. Indian philosophy has always understood its double function; it has sought the Truth not only as an intellectual pleasure or the natural dharma of the reason, but in order to know how man may live by the Truth or strive after it; hence its intimate influence on the religion, the social ideas, the daily life of the people, its immense dynamic power on the mind and actions of Indian humanity. The Greek thinkers, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, the Stoics and Epicureans, had also this practical aim and dynamic force, but it acted only on the cultured few. That was because Greek philosophy, losing its ancient affiliation to the Mystics, separated itself from the popular religion; but as ordinarily Philosophy alone can give light to Religion and save it from crudeness, ignorance and superstition, so Religion alone can give, except for a few, spiritual passion and effective power to Philosophy and save it from becoming unsubstantial, abstract and sterile. It is a misfortune for both when the divine sisters part company.

---

[1] The first laws of working of the Gods.

But when we seek among Heraclitus' sayings for the human application of his great fundamental thoughts, we are disappointed. He gives us little direct guidance and on the whole leaves us to draw our own profit from the packed opulence of his first ideas. What may be called his aristocratic view of life, we might regard possibly as a moral result of his philosophical conception of Power as the nature of the original principle. He tells us that the many are bad, the few good and that one is to him equal to thousands, if he be the best. Power of knowledge, power of character, — character, he says, is man's divine force, — power and excellence generally are the things that prevail in human life and are supremely valuable, and these things in their high and pure degree are rare among men, they are the difficult attainment of the few. From that, true enough so far as it goes, we might deduce a social and political philosophy. But the democrat might well answer that if there is an eminent and concentrated virtue, knowledge and force in the one or the few, so too there is a diffused virtue, knowledge and force in the many which acting collectively may outweigh and exceed isolated or rare excellences. If the king, the sage, the best are Vishnu himself, as old Indian thought also affirmed, to a degree to which the ordinary man, *prākṛto janaḥ*, cannot pretend, so also are "the five", the group, the people. The Divine is *samaṣṭi* as well as *vyaṣṭi*, manifested in the collectivity as well as in the individual, and the justice on which Heraclitus insists demands that both should have their effect and their value; they depend indeed and draw on each other for the effectuation of their excellences.

Other sayings of Heraclitus are interesting enough, as when he affirms the divine element in human laws, — and that is also a profound and fruitful sentence. His views on the popular religion are interesting, but move on the surface and do not carry us very far even on the surface. He rejects with a violent contempt the current degradation of the old mystic formulas and turns from them to the true mysteries, those of Nature and of our being, that Nature which, as he says, loves to be hidden, is full of mysteries, ever occult. It is a sign that the lore of the early Mystics had been lost, the spiritual sense had departed out of their symbols, even as in Vedic India; but there took place in Greece no new and powerful movement which could, as in India, replace them by new symbols, new and more philosophic restatements of their hidden truths, new disciplines, schools of Yoga. Attempts, such as that of Pythagoras, were made; but Greece at large followed the turn given by Heraclitus, developed the cult of the reason and left the remnants of the old occult religion to become a solemn superstition and a conventional pomp.

Doubly interesting is his condemnation of animal sacrifice; it is, he says, a vain attempt at purification by defilement of oneself with blood, as if we were to cleanse mud-stained feet with mud. Here we see the same trend of revolt against an ancient and universal religious practice as that which destroyed in India the sacrificial system of the Vedic religion, — although Buddha's great impulse of compassion was absent from the mind of Heraclitus: pity could never have become a powerful motive among the old Mediterranean races. But the language of Heraclitus shows us that the ancient system of sacrifice in Greece and in India was not a mere barbaric propitiation of savage deities, as modern inquiry has falsely concluded; it had a psychological significance, purification of the soul as well as propitiation of higher and helpful powers, and was therefore in all probability mystic and symbolical; for purification was, as we know, one of the master ideas of the ancient Mysteries. In India of the Gita, in the development of Judaism by the prophets and by Jesus, while the old physical symbols were discouraged and especially the blood-rite, the psychological idea of sacrifice was saved, emphasised and equipped with subtler symbols, such as the Christian Eucharist and the offerings of the devout in the Shaiva or Vaishnava temples. But Greece with its rational bent and its insufficient religious sense was unable to save its religion; it tended towards that sharp division between philosophy and science on one side and religion on the other which has been so peculiar a characteristic of the European mind. Here too Heraclitus was, as in so many other directions, a forerunner, an indicator of the natural bent of occidental thought.

Equally striking is his condemnation of idol-worship, one of the earliest in human history, — "he who prays to an image is chattering to a stone wall." The intolerant violence of this protestant rationalism and positivism makes Heraclitus again a precursor of a whole movement of the human mind. It is not indeed a religious protest such as that of Mahomed against the naturalistic, Pagan and idolatrous polytheism of the Arabs or of the Protestants against the aesthetic and emotional saint-worship of the Catholic Church, its Mariolatry and use of images and elaborate ritual; its motive is philosophic, rational, psychological. Heraclitus was not indeed a pure rationalist. He believes in the Gods, but as psychological presences, cosmic powers, and he is too impatient of the grossness of the physical image, its hold on the senses, its obscuration of the psychological significance of the godheads to see that it is not to the stone, but to the divine person figured in the stone that the prayer is offered. It is noticeable that in his conception of the gods he is kin to the old Vedic seers, though not at all a religious mystic in his temperament. The Vedic religion seems to have excluded physical images and it was the protestant movements of Jainism and Buddhism which either introduced or at least popularised and made general the worship of images in India. Here too Heraclitus prepares the way for the destruction of the old religion, the reign of pure philosophy and reason and the void which was filled up by Christianity; for man cannot live by reason alone. When it was too late, some attempt was made to re-spiritualise the old religion, and there was the remarkable effort of Julian and Libanius to set up a regenerated Paganism against triumphant Christianity; but the attempt was too unsubstantial, too purely philosophic, empty of the dynamic power of the religious spirit. Europe had killed its old creeds beyond revival and had to turn for its religion to Asia.

Thus, for the general life of man Heraclitus has nothing to give us beyond his hint of an aristocratic principle in society and politics, — and we may note that this aristocratic bent was very strong in almost all the subsequent Greek philosophers. In religion his influence tended to the destruction of the old creed without effectively putting anything more profound in its place; though not himself a pure rationalist, he prepared the way for philosophic rationalism. But even without religion philosophy by itself can give us at least some light on the spiritual destiny of man, some hope of the infinite, some ideal perfection after which we can strive. Plato who was influenced by Heraclitus, tried to do this for us; his thought sought after God, tried to seize the ideal, had its hope of a perfect human society. We know how the Neo-platonists developed his ideas under the influence of the East and how they affected Christianity. The Stoics, still more directly the intellectual descendants of Heraclitus, arrived at very remarkable and fruitful ideas of human possibility and a powerful psychological discipline, — as we should say in India, a Yoga, — by which they hoped to realise their ideal. But what has Heraclitus himself to give us? Nothing directly; we have to gather for ourselves whatever we can from his first principles and his cryptic sentences.

Heraclitus was regarded in ancient times as a pessimistic thinker and we have one or two sayings of his from which we can, if we like, deduce the old vain gospel of the vanity of things. Time, he says, is playing draughts like a child, amusing itself with counters, building castles on the sea-shore only to throw them down again. If that is the last word, then all human effort and aspiration are vain. But on what primary philosophical conception does this discouraging sentence depend? Everything turns on that; for in itself this is no more than an assertion of a self-evident fact, the mutability of things and the recurrent transiency of forms. But if the principles which express themselves in forms are eternal or if there is a Spirit in things which finds its account in the mutations and evolutions of Time and if that Spirit dwells in the human being as the immortal and infinite power of his soul, then no conclusion of the vanity of the world or the vanity of human existence arises. If indeed the original and eternal principle of Fire is a purely physical substance or force, then, truly, since all the great play and effort of consciousness in us must sink and dissolve into that, there can be no permanent spiritual value in our being, much less in our works. But we have seen that Heraclitus' Fire cannot be a purely physical or inconscient principle. Does he then mean that all our existence is merely a continual changeable Becoming, a play or Lila with no purpose in it except the playing and no end except the conviction of the vanity of all cosmic activity by its relapse into the indistinguishable unity of the original principle or substance? For even if that principle, the One to which the many return, be not merely physical or not really physical at all, but spiritual, we may still, like the Mayavadins, affirm the vanity of the world and of our human existence, precisely because the one is not eternal and the other has no eventual aim except its own self-abolition after the conviction of the vanity and unreality of all its temporal interests and purposes. Is the conviction of the world by the one absolute Fire such a conviction of the vanity of all the temporal and relative values of the Many?

That is one sense in which we can understand the thought of Heraclitus. His idea of all things as born of war and existing by strife might, if it stood by itself, lead us to adopt, even if he himself did not clearly arrive at, that conclusion. For if all is a continual struggle of forces, its best aspect only a violent justice and the highest harmony only a tension of opposites without any hope of a divine reconciliation, its end a conviction and destruction by eternal Fire, all our ideal hopes and aspirations are out of place; they have no foundation in the truth of things. But there is another side to the thought of Heraclitus. He says indeed that all things come into being "according to strife", by the clash of forces, are governed by the determining justice of war. He says farther that all is utterly determined, fated. But what then determines? The justice of a clash of forces is not fate; forces in conflict determine indeed, but from moment to moment, according to a constantly changing balance always modifiable by the arising of new forces. If there is predetermination, an inevitable fate in things, then there must be some power behind the conflict which determines them, fixes their measures. What is that power? Heraclitus tells us; all indeed comes into being according to strife, but also all things come into being according to Reason, *kat' erin* but also *kata ton logon*. What is this Logos? It is not an inconscient reason in things, for his Fire is not merely an inconscient force, it is Zeus and eternity. Fire, Zeus is Force, but it is also an Intelligence; let us say then that it is an intelligent Force which is the origin and master of things. Nor can this Logos be identical in its nature with the human reason; for that is an individual and therefore relative and partial judgment and intelligence which can only seize on relative truth, not on the true truth of things, but the Logos is one and universal, an absolute reason therefore combining and managing all the relativities of the many. Was not then Philo justified in deducing from this idea of an intelligent Force originating and governing the world, Zeus and Fire, his interpretation of the Logos as "the divine dynamic, the energy and the self-revelation of God"? Heraclitus might not so have phrased it, might not have seen all that his thought contained, but it does contain this sense when his different sayings are fathomed and put together in their consequences.

We get very near the Indian conception of Brahman, the cause, origin and substance of all things, an absolute Existence whose nature is consciousness (Chit) manifesting itself as Force (Tapas, Shakti) and moving in the world of his own being as the Seer and Thinker, *kavir manīṣī*, an immanent Knowledge-Will in all, *vijñānamaya puruṣa*, who is the Lord or Godhead, *īś*, *īśvara*, *deva*, and has ordained all things according to their nature from years sempiternal, — Heraclitus' "measures" which the Sun is forced to observe, his "things are utterly determined." This Knowledge-Will is the Logos. The Stoics spoke of it as a seed Logos, *spermatikos*, reproduced in conscious beings as a number of seed Logoi; and this at once reminds us of the Vedantic *prājña puruṣa*, the supreme Intelligence who is the Lord and dwells in the sleep-state holding all things in a seed of dense consciousness which works out through the perceptions of the subtle Purusha, the mental Being. Vijnana is indeed a consciousness which sees things, not as the human reason sees them in parts and pieces, in separated and aggregated relations, but in the original reason of their existence and law of their existence, their primal and total truth; therefore it is the seed Logos, the originative and determinant conscious force working as supreme Intelligence and Will. The Vedic seers called it the Truth-consciousness and believed that men also could become truth-conscious, enter into the divine Reason and Will and by the Truth become immortals, *anthrōpoi athanatoi.*

Does the thought of Heraclitus admit of any such hope as the Vedic seers held and hymned with so triumphant a confidence? or does it even give ground for any aspiration to some kind of a divine supermanhood such as his disciples the Stoics so sternly laboured for or as that of which Nietzsche, the modern Heraclitus, drew a too crude and violent figure? His saying that man is kindled and extinguished as light disappears into night, is commonplace and discouraging enough. But this may after all be only true of the apparent man. Is it possible for man in his becoming to raise his present fixed measures? to elevate his mental, relative, individual reason into direct communion with or direct participation in the divine and absolute reason? to inspire and raise the values of his human force to the higher values of the divine force? to become aware like the gods of an absolute good and an absolute beauty? to lift this mortal to the nature of immortality? Against his melancholy image of human transiency we have that remarkable and cryptic sentence, "the gods are mortals, men immortals", which, taken literally, might mean that the gods are powers that perish and replace each other and the soul of man alone is immortal, but must at least mean that there is in man behind his outward transiency an immortal spirit. We have too his saying, "thou canst not find the limits of the soul", and we have the profoundest of all Heraclitus' utterances, "the kingdom is of the child." If man is in his real being an infinite and immortal spirit, there is surely no reason why he should not awaken to his immortality, arise towards the consciousness of the universal, one and absolute, live in a higher self-realisation. "I have sought for myself" says Heraclitus; and what was it that he found?

But there is one great gap and defect whether in his knowledge of things or his knowledge of the self of man. We see in how many directions the deep divining eye of Heraclitus anticipated the largest and profoundest generalisations of Science and Philosophy and how even his more superficial thoughts indicate later powerful tendencies of the occidental mind, how too some of his ideas influenced such profound and fruitful thinkers as Plato, the Stoics, the Neo-platonists. But in his defect also he is a forerunner; it illustrates the great deficiency of later European thought, such of it at least as has not been profoundly influenced by Asiatic religions or Asiatic mysticism. I have tried to show how often his thought touches and is almost identical with the Vedic and Vedantic. But his knowledge of the truth of things stopped with the vision of the universal reason and the universal force; he seems to have summed up the principle of things in these two first terms, the aspect of consciousness, the aspect of power, a supreme intelligence and a supreme energy. The eye of Indian thought saw a third aspect of the Self and of Brahman; besides the universal consciousness active in divine knowledge, besides the universal force active in divine will, it saw the universal delight active in divine love and joy. European thought, following the line of Heraclitus' thinking, has fixed itself on reason and on force and made them the principles towards whose perfection our being has to aspire. Force is the first aspect of the world, war, the clash of energies; the second aspect, reason, emerges out of the appearance of force in which it is at first hidden and reveals itself as a certain justice, a certain harmony, a certain determining intelligence and reason in things; the third aspect is a deeper secret behind these two, universal delight, love, beauty which taking up the other two can establish something higher than justice, better than harmony, truer than reason, — unity and bliss, the ecstasy of our fulfilled existence. Of this last secret power Western thought has only seen two lower aspects, pleasure and aesthetic beauty; it has missed the spiritual beauty and the spiritual delight. For that reason Europe has never been able to develop a powerful religion of its own; it has been obliged to turn to Asia. Science takes possession of the measures and utilities of Force; rational philosophy pursues reason to its last subtleties; but inspired philosophy and religion can seize hold of the highest secret, *uttamaṁ rahasyam*.

Heraclitus might have seen it if he had carried his vision a little farther. Force by itself can only produce a balance of forces, the strife that is justice; in that strife there takes place a constant exchange and, once this need of exchange is seen, there arises the possibility of modifying and replacing war by reason as the determinant principle of the exchange. This is the second effort of man, of which Heraclitus did not clearly see the possibility. From exchange we can rise to the highest possible idea of interchange, a mutual dependency of self-giving as the hidden secret of life; from that can grow the power of Love replacing strife and exceeding the cold balance of reason. There is the gate of the divine ecstasy. Heraclitus could not see it, and yet his one saying about the kingdom of the child touches, almost reaches the heart of the secret. For this kingdom is evidently spiritual, it is the crown, the mastery to which the perfected man arrives; and the perfect man is a divine child! He is the soul which awakens to the divine play, accepts it without fear or reserve, gives itself up in a spiritual purity to the Divine, allows the careful and troubled force of man to be freed from care and grief and become the joyous play of the divine Will, his relative and stumbling reason to be replaced by that divine knowledge which to the Greek, the rational man, is foolishness, and the laborious pleasure-seeking of the bound mentality to lose itself in the spontaneity of the divine Ananda; "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The Paramhansa, the liberated man, is in his soul *bālavat*, even as if a child.

The Problem of Rebirth

Section I

Rebirth and Karma

Rebirth

THE THEORY of rebirth is almost as ancient as thought itself and its origin is unknown. We may according to our prepossessions accept it as the fruit of ancient psychological experience always renewable and verifiable and therefore true or dismiss it as a philosophical dogma and ingenious speculation; but in either case the doctrine, even as it is in all appearance well-nigh as old as human thought itself, is likely also to endure as long as human beings continue to think.

In former times the doctrine used to pass in Europe under the grotesque name of transmigration which brought with it to the Western mind the humorous image of the soul of Pythagoras migrating, a haphazard bird of passage, from the human form divine into the body of a guinea-pig or an ass. The philosophical appreciation of the theory expressed itself in the admirable but rather unmanageable Greek word, metempsychosis, which means the insouling of a new body by the same psychic individual. The Greek tongue is always happy in its marriage of thought and word and a better expression could not be found; but forced into English speech the word becomes merely long and pedantic without any memory of its subtle Greek sense and has to be abandoned. Reincarnation is the now popular term, but the idea in the word leans to the gross or external view of the fact and begs many questions. I prefer "rebirth", for it renders the sense of the wide, colourless, but sufficient Sanskrit term, *punarjanma*, "again-birth", and commits us to nothing but the fundamental idea which is the essence and life of the doctrine.

Rebirth is for the modern mind no more than a speculation and a theory; it has never been proved by the methods of modern science or to the satisfaction of the new critical mind formed by a scientific culture. Neither has it been disproved; for modern science knows nothing about a before-life or an after-life for the human soul, knows nothing indeed about a soul at all, nor can know; its province stops with the flesh and brain and nerve, the embryo and its formation and development. Neither has modern criticism any apparatus by which the truth or untruth of rebirth can be established. In fact, modern criticism, with all its pretensions to searching investigation and scrupulous certainty, is no very efficient truth-finder. Outside the sphere of the immediate physical it is almost helpless. It is good at discovering data, but except where the data themselves bear on the surface their own conclusion, it has no means of being rightly sure of the generalisations it announces from them so confidently in one generation and destroys in the next. It has no means of finding out with surety the truth or untruth of a doubtful historical assertion; after a century of dispute it has not even been able to tell us yes or no, whether Jesus Christ ever existed. How then shall it deal with such a matter as this of rebirth which is stuff of psychology and must be settled rather by psychological than physical evidence?

The arguments which are usually put forward by supporters and opponents, are often weak or futile and even at their best insufficient either to prove or to disprove anything in the world. One argument, for instance, often put forward triumphantly in disproof is this that we have no memory of our past lives and therefore there were no past lives! One smiles to see such reasoning seriously used by those who imagine that they are something more than intellectual children. The argument proceeds on psychological grounds and yet it ignores the very nature of our ordinary or physical memory which is all that the normal man can employ. How much do we remember of our actual lives which we are undoubtedly living at the present moment? Our memory is normally good for what is near, becomes vaguer or less comprehensive as its objects recede into the distance, farther off seizes only some salient points and, finally, for the beginning of our lives falls into a mere blankness. Do we remember even the mere fact, the simple state of being an infant on the mother's breast? and yet that state of infancy was, on any but a Buddhist theory, part of the same life and belonged to the same individual, — the very one who cannot remember it just as he cannot remember his past lives. Yet we demand that this physical memory, this memory of the brute brain of man which cannot remember our infancy and has lost so much of our later years, shall recall that which was before infancy, before birth, before itself was formed. And if it cannot, we are to cry, "Disproved your reincarnation theory!" The sapient insipiency of our ordinary human reasoning could go no farther than in this sort of ratiocination. Obviously, if our past lives are to be remembered whether as fact and state or in their events and images, it can only be by a psychical memory awaking which will overcome the limits of the physical and resuscitate impressions other than those stamped on the physical being by physical cerebration.

I doubt whether, even if we could have evidence of the physical memory of past lives or of such a psychical awakening, the theory would be considered any better proved than before. We now hear of many such instances confidently alleged though without that apparatus of verified evidence responsibly examined which gives weight to the results of psychical research. The sceptic can always challenge them as mere fiction and imagination unless and until they are placed on a firm basis of evidence. Even if the facts alleged are verified, he has the resource of affirming that they are not really memories but were known to the person alleging them by ordinary physical means or were suggested to him by others and have been converted into reincarnate memory either by conscious deception or by a process of self-deception and self-hallucination. And even supposing the evidence were too strong and unexceptionable to be got rid of by these familiar devices, they might yet not be accepted as proof of rebirth; the mind can discover a hundred theoretical explanations for a single group of facts. Modern speculation and research have brought in this doubt to overhang all psychical theory and generalisation.

We know for instance that in the phenomena, say, of automatic writing or of communication from the dead, it is disputed whether the phenomena proceed from outside, from disembodied minds, or from within, from the subliminal consciousness, or whether the communication is actual and immediate from the released personality or is the uprising to the surface of a telepathic impression which came from the mind of the then living man but has remained submerged in our subliminal mentality. The same kind of doubts might be opposed to the evidences of reincarnate memory. It might be maintained that they prove the power of a certain mysterious faculty in us, a consciousness that can have some inexplicable knowledge of past events, but that these events may belong to other personalities than ours and that our attribution of them to our own personality in past lives is an imagination, a hallucination, or else an instance of that self-appropriation of things and experiences perceived but not our own which is one out of the undoubted phenomena of mental error. Much would be proved by an accumulation of such evidences but not, to the sceptic at least, rebirth. Certainly, if they were sufficiently ample, exact, profuse, intimate, they would create an atmosphere which would lead in the end to a general acceptance of the theory by the human race as a moral certitude. But proof is a different matter.

After all, most of the things that we accept as truths are really no more than moral certitudes. We have all the profoundest unshakable faith that the earth revolves on its own axis, but as has been pointed out by a great French mathematician, the fact has never been proved; it is only a theory which accounts well for certain observable facts, no more. Who knows whether it may not be replaced in this or another century by a better — or a worse? All observed astronomical phenomena were admirably accounted for by theories of spheres and I know not what else, before Galileo came in with his “And yet it moves,” disturbing the infallibility of Popes and Bibles and the science and logic of the learned. One feels certain that admirable theories could be invented to account for the facts of gravitation if our intellects were not prejudiced and prepossessed by the anterior demonstrations of Newton.[1] This is the ever-perplexing and inherent plague of our reason; for it starts by knowing nothing and has to deal with infinite possibilities, and the possible explanations of any given set of facts, until we actually know what is behind them, are endless. In the end, we really know only what we observe and even that subject to a haunting question, for instance, that green is green and white is white, although it appears that colour is not colour but something else that creates the appearance of colour. Beyond observable fact we must be content with reasonable logical satisfaction, dominating probability and moral certitude, — at least until we have the sense to observe that there are faculties in us higher than the sense-dependent reason and awaiting development by which we can arrive at greater certainties.

---

[1] This was written in pre-Einsteinian days.

We cannot really assert as against the sceptic any such dominant probability or any such certitude on behalf of the theory of rebirth. The external evidence yet available is in the last degree rudimentary. Pythagoras was one of the greatest of sages, but his assertion that he fought at Troy under the name of the Antenorid and was slain by the younger son of Atreus is an assertion only and his identification of the Trojan shield will convince no one who is not already convinced; the modern evidence is not as yet any more convincing than the proof of Pythagoras. In absence of external proof which to our matter-governed sensational intellects is alone conclusive, we have the argument of the reincarnationists that their theory accounts for all the facts better than any other yet advanced. The claim is just, but it does not create any kind of certitude. The theory of rebirth coupled with that of Karma gives us a simple, symmetrical, beautiful explanation of things; but so too the theory of the spheres gave us once a simple, symmetrical, beautiful explanation of the heavenly movements. Yet we have now got quite another explanation, much more complex, much more Gothic and shaky in its symmetry, an inexplicable order evolved out of chaotic infinities, which we accept[2] as the truth of the matter. And yet, if we will only think, we shall perhaps see that even this is not the whole truth; there is much more behind we have not yet discovered. Therefore the simplicity, symmetry, beauty, satisfactoriness of the reincarnation theory is no warrant of its certitude.

---

[2] Or used to accept, but now it is suggested that this order is only a schema created by our own mind or determined by the constitution of our brain, a syntax and logic of word and thought which we impose on a world that in fact does not or may not contain any such thing.

When we go into details, the uncertainty increases. Rebirth accounts, for example, for the phenomenon of genius, inborn faculty and so many other psychological mysteries. But then Science comes in with its all-sufficient explanation by heredity, — though, like that of rebirth, all-sufficient only to those who already believe in it. Without doubt, the claims of heredity have been absurdly exaggerated. It has succeeded in accounting for much, not all, in our physical make-up, our temperament, our vital peculiarities. Its attempt to account for genius, inborn faculty and other psychological phenomena of a higher kind is a pretentious failure. But this may be because Science knows nothing at all that is fundamental about our psychology, — no more than primitive astronomers knew of the constitution and law of the stars whose movements they yet observed with a sufficient accuracy. I do not think that even when Science knows more and better, it will be able to explain these things by heredity; but the scientist may well argue that he is only at the beginning of his researches, that the generalisation which has explained so much may well explain all, and that at any rate his hypothesis has had a better start in its equipment of provable facts than the theory of reincarnation.

Nevertheless, the argument of the reincarnationist is so far a good argument and respect-worthy, though not conclusive. But there is another more clamorously advanced which seems to me to be on a par with the hostile reasoning from absence of memory, at least in the form in which it is usually advanced to attract unripe minds. This is the ethical argument by which it is sought to justify God's ways with the world or the world's ways with itself. There must, it is thought, be a moral governance for the world; or at least some sanction of reward in the cosmos for virtue, some sanction of punishment for sin. But upon our perplexed and chaotic earth no such sanction appears. We see the good man thrust down into the press of miseries and the wicked flourishing like a green bay-tree and *not* cut down miserably in his end. Now this is intolerable. It is a cruel anomaly, it is a reflection on God's wisdom and justice, almost a proof that God is not; we must remedy that. Or if God is not, we must have some other sanction for righteousness.

How comforting it would be if we could tell a good man and even the amount of his goodness, — for should not the Supreme be a strict and honourable accountant? — by the amount of ghee that he is allowed to put into his stomach and the number of rupees he can jingle into his bank and the various kinds of good luck that accrue to him. Yes, and how comforting too if we could point our finger at the wicked stripped of all concealment and cry at him, "O thou wicked one! for if thou wert not evil, wouldst thou in a world governed by God or at least by good, be thus ragged, hungry, unfortunate, pursued by griefs, void of honour among men? Yes, thou art proved wicked, because thou art ragged. God's justice is established." The Supreme Intelligence being fortunately wiser and nobler than man's childishness, this is impossible. But let us take comfort! It appears that if the good man has not enough good luck and ghee and rupees, it is because he is really a scoundrel suffering for his crimes, — but a scoundrel in his past life who has suddenly turned a new leaf in his mother's womb; and if yonder wicked man flourishes and tramples gloriously on the world, it is because of his goodness — in a past life, the saint that was then having since been converted — was it by his experience of the temporal vanity of virtue? — to the cult of sin. All is explained, all is justified. We suffer for our sins in another body; we shall be rewarded in another body for our virtues in this; and so it will go on *ad infinitum*. No wonder, the philosophers found this a bad business and proposed as a remedy to get rid of both sin and virtue and even as our highest good to scramble anyhow out of a world so amazingly governed.

Obviously, this scheme of things is only a variation of the old spiritual-material bribe and menace, the bribe of a Heaven of fat joys for the good and the threat of a hell of eternal fire or bestial tortures for the wicked. The idea of the Law of the world as primarily a dispenser of rewards and punishments is cognate to the idea of the Supreme Being as a judge, "father" and school-master who is continually rewarding with lollipops his good boys and continually caning his naughty urchins. It is cognate also to the barbarous and unthinking system of sometimes savage and always degrading punishment for social offences on which human society, unable still to find out or organise a more satisfactory way, is still founded. Man insists continually on making God in his own image instead of seeking to make himself more and more in the image of God, and all these ideas are the reflection of the child and the savage and the animal in us which we have still failed to transform or outgrow. We should be inclined to wonder how these fancies of children found their way into such profound philosophical religions as Buddhism and Hinduism, if it were not so patent that men will not deny themselves the luxury of tacking on the rubbish from their past to the deeper thoughts of their sages.

No doubt, since these ideas were so prominent, they must have had their use in training humanity. Perhaps even it is true that the Supreme deals with the child soul according to its childishness and allows it to continue its sensational imaginations of heaven and hell for a time beyond the death of the physical body. Perhaps both these ideas of after-life and of rebirth as fields of punishment and reward were needed because suited to our half-mentalised animality. But after a certain stage the system ceases to be really effective. Men believe in Heaven and Hell but go on sinning merrily, quit at last by a Papal indulgence or the final priestly absolution or a death-bed repentance or a bath in the Ganges or a sanctified death at Benares, — such are the childish devices by which we escape from our childishness! And in the end the mind grows adult and puts the whole nursery nonsense away with contempt. The reward and punishment theory of rebirth, if a little more elevated or at least less crudely sensational, comes to be as ineffective. And it is good that it should be so. For it is intolerable that man with his divine capacity should continue to be virtuous for a reward and shun sin out of terror. Better a strong sinner than a selfish virtuous coward or a petty hucksterer with God; there is more divinity in him, more capacity of elevation. Truly the Gita has said well, *kṛpaṇāḥ phalahetavaḥ*. And it is inconceivable that the system of this vast and majestic world should have been founded on these petty and paltry motives. There is reason in these theories? then reason of the nursery, puerile. Ethics? then ethics of the mud, muddy.

The true foundation of the theory of rebirth is the evolution of the soul, or rather its efflorescence out of the veil of Matter and its gradual self-finding. Buddhism contained this truth involved in its theory of Karma and emergence out of Karma but failed to bring it to light; Hinduism knew it of old, but afterwards missed the right balance of its expression. Now we are again able to restate the ancient truth in a new language and this is already being done by certain schools of thought, though still the old incrustations tend to tack themselves on to the deeper wisdom. And if this gradual efflorescence be true, then the theory of rebirth is an intellectual necessity, a logically unavoidable corollary. But what is the aim of that evolution? Not conventional or interested virtue and the faultless counting out of the small coin of good in the hope of an apportioned material reward, but the continual growth towards a divine knowledge, strength, love and purity. These things alone are real virtue and this virtue is its own reward. The one true reward of the works of love is to grow ever in capacity and delight of love up to the ecstasy of the spirit's all-seizing embrace and universal passion; the one reward of the works of right Knowledge is to grow perpetually into the infinite Light; the one reward of the works of right Power is to harbour more and more of the Force Divine, and of the works of purity to be freed more and more from egoism into that immaculate wideness where all things are transformed and reconciled into the divine equality. To seek other reward is to bind oneself to a foolishness and a childish ignorance; and to regard even these things as a reward is an unripeness and an imperfection.

And what of suffering and happiness, misfortune and prosperity? These are experiences of the soul in its training, helps, props, means, disciplines, tests, ordeals, — and prosperity often a worse ordeal than suffering. Indeed, adversity, suffering may often be regarded rather as a reward to virtue than as a punishment for sin, since it turns out to be the greatest help and purifier of the soul struggling to unfold itself. To regard it merely as the stern award of a Judge, the anger of an irritated Ruler or even the mechanical recoil of result of evil upon cause of evil is to take the most superficial view possible of God's dealings with the soul and the law of the world's evolution. And what of worldly prosperity, wealth, progeny, the outward enjoyment of art, beauty, power? Good, if they be achieved without loss to the soul and enjoyed only as the outflowing of the divine Joy and Grace upon our material existence. But let us seek them first for others or rather for all, and for ourselves only as a part of the universal condition or as one means of bringing perfection nearer.

The soul needs no proof of its rebirth any more than it needs proof of its immortality. For there comes a time when it is consciously immortal, aware of itself in its eternal and immutable essence. Once that realisation is accomplished, all intellectual questionings for and against the immortality of the soul fall away like a vain clamour of ignorance around the self-evident and ever-present truth. *Tato na vicikitsate*. That is the true dynamic belief in immortality when it becomes to us not an intellectual dogma but a fact as evident as the physical fact of our breathing and as little in need of proof or argument. So also there comes a time when the soul becomes aware of itself in its eternal and mutable movement; it is then aware of the ages behind that constituted the present organisation of the movement, sees how this was prepared in an uninterrupted past, remembers something of the bygone soul-states, environments, particular forms of activity which built up its present constituents and knows to what it is moving by development in an uninterrupted future. This is the true dynamic belief in rebirth, and there too the play of the questioning intellect ceases; the soul's vision and the soul's memory are all. Certainly, there remains the question of the mechanism of the development and of the laws of rebirth where the intellect and its inquiries and generalisations can still have some play. And here the more one thinks and experiences, the more the ordinary, simple, cut-and-dried account of reincarnation seems to be of doubtful validity. There is surely here a greater complexity, a law evolved with a more difficult movement and a more intricate harmony out of the possibilities of the Infinite. But this is a question which demands long and ample consideration; for subtle is the law of it. *Aṇur hyeṣa dharmaḥ*.

The Reincarnating Soul

HUMAN thought in the generality of men is no more than a rough and crude acceptance of unexamined ideas. Our mind is a sleepy or careless sentry and allows anything to pass the gates which seems to it decently garbed or wears a plausible appearance or can mumble anything that resembles some familiar password. Especially is this so in subtle matters, those remote from the concrete facts of our physical life and environment. Even men who will reason carefully and acutely in ordinary matters and there consider vigilance against error an intellectual or a practical duty, are yet content with the most careless stumbling when they get upon higher and more difficult ground. Where precision and subtle thinking are most needed, there they are most impatient of it and averse to the labour demanded of them. Men can manage fine thought about palpable things, but to think subtly about the subtle is too great a strain on the grossness of our intellects; so we are content with making a dab at the truth, like the painter who threw his brush at his picture when he could not get the effect that he desired. We mistake the smudge that results for the perfect form of a verity.

It is not surprising then that men should be content to think crudely about such a matter as rebirth. Those who accept it, take it usually ready-made, either as a cut-and-dried theory or a crude dogma. The soul is reborn in a new body, — that vague and almost meaningless assertion is for them sufficient. But what is the soul and what can possibly be meant by the rebirth of a soul? Well, it means reincarnation; the soul, whatever that may be, had got out of one case of flesh and is now getting into another case of flesh. It sounds simple, — let us say, like the Djinn of the Arabian tale expanding out of and again compressing himself into his bottle or perhaps as a pillow is lugged out of one pillow-case and thrust into another. Or the soul fashions for itself a body in the mother's womb and then occupies it, or else, let us say, puts off one robe of flesh and then puts on another. But what is it that thus "leaves" one body and "enters" into another? Is it another, a psychic body and subtle form, that enters into the gross corporeal form, — the Purusha perhaps of the ancient image, no bigger than a man's thumb, or is it something in itself formless and impalpable that incarnates in the sense of becoming or assuming to the senses a palpable shape of bone and flesh?

In the ordinary, the vulgar conception there is no birth of a soul at all, but only the birth of a new body into the world occupied by an old personality unchanged from that which once left some now discarded physical frame. It is John Robinson who has gone out of the form of flesh he once occupied; it is John Robinson who tomorrow or some centuries hence will reincarnate in another form of flesh and resume the course of his terrestrial experiences with another name and in another environment. Achilles, let us say, is reborn as Alexander, the son of Philip, a Macedonian, conqueror not of Hector but of Darius, with a wider scope, with larger destinies; but it is still Achilles, it is the same personality that is reborn, only the bodily circumstances are different. It is this survival of the identical personality that attracts the European mind today in the theory of reincarnation. For it is the extinction or dissolution of the personality, of this mental, nervous and physical composite which I call myself that is hard to bear for the man enamoured of life, and it is the promise of its survival and physical reappearance that is the great lure. The one objection that really stands in the way of its acceptance is the obvious non-survival of memory. Memory is the man, says the modern psychologist, and what is the use of the survival of my personality, if I do not remember my past, if I am not aware of being the same person still and always? What is the utility? Where is the enjoyment?

The old Indian thinkers, — I am not speaking of the popular belief which was crude enough and thought not at all about the matter, — the old Buddhistic and Vedantist thinkers surveyed the whole field from a very different standpoint. They were not attached to the survival of the personality; they did not give to that survival the high name of immortality; they saw that personality being what it is, a constantly changing composite, the survival of an identical personality was a non-sense, a contradiction in terms. They perceived indeed that there is a continuity and they sought to discover what determines this continuity and whether the sense of identity which enters into it is an illusion or the representation of a fact, of a real truth, and, if the latter, then what that truth may be. The Buddhist denied any real identity. There is, he said, no self, no person; there is simply a continuous stream of energy in action like the continuous flowing of a river or the continuous burning of a flame. It is this continuity which creates in the mind the false sense of identity. I am not now the same person that I was a year ago, not even the same person that I was a moment ago, any more than the water flowing past yonder ghaut is the same water that flowed past it a few seconds ago; it is the persistence of the flow in the same channel that preserves the false appearance of identity. Obviously, then, there is no soul that reincarnates, but only Karma that persists in flowing continuously down an apparently uninterrupted channel. It is Karma that incarnates; Karma creates the form of a constantly changing mentality and physical bodies that are, we may presume, the result of that changing composite of ideas and sensations which I call myself. The identical "I" is not, never was, never will be. Practically, so long as the error of personality persists, this does not make much difference and I can say in the language of ignorance that I am reborn in a new body; practically, I have to proceed on the basis of that error. But there is this important point gained that it is all an error and an error which can cease; the composite can be broken up for good without any fresh formation, the flame can be extinguished, the channel which called itself a river destroyed. And then there is non-being, there is cessation, there is the release of the error from itself.

The Vedantist comes to a different conclusion; he admits an identical, a self, a persistent immutable reality, — but other than my personality, other than this composite which I call myself. In the Katha Upanishad the question is raised in a very instructive fashion quite apposite to the subject we have in hand. Nachiketas, sent by his father to the world of Death, thus questions Yama, the lord of that world: Of the man who has gone forward, who has passed away from us, some say that he is and others "this he is not"; which then is right? what is the truth of the great passage? Such is the form of the question and at first sight it seems simply to raise the problem of immortality in the European sense of the word, the survival of the identical personality. But that is not what Nachiketas asks. He has already taken as the second of three boons offered to him by Yama the knowledge of the sacred Flame by which man crosses over hunger and thirst, leaves sorrow and fear far behind him and dwells in heaven securely rejoicing. Immortality in that sense he takes for granted as, already standing in that farther world, he must surely do. The knowledge he asks for involves the deeper, finer problem, of which Yama affirms that even the gods debated this of old and it is not easy to know, for subtle is the law of it; something survives that appears to be the same person, that descends into hell, that ascends into heaven, that returns upon the earth with a new body, but is it really the same person that thus survives? Can we really say of the man "*He* still is," or must we not rather say "This *he* no longer is"? Yama too in his answer speaks not at all of the survival of death, and he only gives a verse or two to a bare description of that constant rebirth which all serious thinkers admitted as a universally acknowledged truth. What he speaks of is the Self, the real Man, the Lord of all these changing appearances; without the knowledge of that Self the survival of the personality is not immortal life but a constant passing from death to death; he only who goes beyond personality to the real Person becomes the Immortal. Till then a man seems indeed to be born again and again by the force of his knowledge and works, name succeeds to name, form gives place to form, but there is no immortality.

Such then is the real question put and answered so divergently by the Buddhist and the Vedantin. There is a constant reforming of personality in new bodies, but this personality is a mutable creation of force at its work streaming forward in

Time and never for a moment the same, and the ego-sense that makes us cling to the life of the body and believe readily that it is the same idea and form, that it is John Robinson who is reborn as Sidi Hossain, is a creation of the mentality. Achilles was not reborn as Alexander, but the stream of force in its works which created the momentarily changing mind and body of Achilles flowed on and created the momentarily changing mind and body of Alexander. Still, said the ancient Vedanta, there is yet something beyond this force in action, Master of it, one who makes it create for him new names and forms, and that is the Self, the Purusha, the Man, the Real Person. The ego-sense is only its distorted image reflected in the flowing stream of embodied mentality.

Is it then the Self that incarnates and reincarnates? But the Self is imperishable, immutable, unborn, undying. The Self is not born and does not exist in the body; rather the body is born and exists in the Self. For the Self is one everywhere, — *in* all bodies, we say, but really it is not confined and parcelled out in different bodies except as the all-constituting ether seems to be formed into different objects and is in a sense in them. Rather all these bodies are in the Self; but that also is a figment of space-conception, and rather these bodies are only symbols and figures of itself created by it in its own consciousness. Even what we call the individual soul is greater than its body and not less, more subtle than it and therefore not confined by its grossness. At death it does not leave its form, but casts it off, so that a great departing Soul can say of this death in vigorous phrase, "I have spat out the body."

What then is it that we feel to inhabit the physical frame? What is it that the Soul draws out from the body when it casts off this partial physical robe which enveloped not it, but part of its members? What is it whose issuing out gives this wrench, this swift struggle and pain of parting, creates this sense of violent divorce? The answer does not help us much. It is the subtle or psychical frame which is tied to the physical by the heart-strings, by the cords of life-force, of nervous energy which have been woven into every physical fibre. This the Lord of the body draws out and the violent snapping or the rapid or tardy loosening of the life-cords, the exit of the connecting force constitutes the pain of death and its difficulty.

Let us then change the form of the question and ask rather what it is that reflects and accepts the mutable personality, since the Self is immutable? We have in fact an immutable Self, a real Person, lord of this ever-changing personality which, again, assumes ever-changing bodies, but the real Self knows itself always as above the mutation, watches and enjoys it, but is not involved in it. Through what does it enjoy the changes and feel them to be its own, even while knowing itself to be unaffected by them? The mind and ego-sense are only inferior instruments; there must be some more essential form of itself which the Real Man puts forth, puts in front of itself, as it were, and at the back of the changings to support and mirror them without being actually changed by them. This more essential form is or seems to be in man the mental being or mental person which the Upanishads speak of as the mental leader of the life and body, *manomayaḥ prāṇa-śarīra-netā*. It is that which maintains the ego-sense as a function in the mind and enables us to have the firm conception of continuous identity in Time as opposed to the timeless identity of the Self.

The changing personality is not this mental person; it is a composite of various stuff of Nature, a formation of Prakriti and is not at all the Purusha. And it is a very complex composite with many layers; there is a layer of physical, a layer of nervous, a layer of mental, even a final stratum of supramental personality; and within these layers themselves there are strata within each stratum. The analysis of the successive couches of the earth is a simple matter compared with the analysis of this wonderful creation we call the personality. The mental being in resuming bodily life forms a new personality for its new terrestrial existence; it takes material from the common matter-stuff, life-stuff, mind-stuff of the physical world and during earthly life it is constantly absorbing fresh material, throwing out what is used up, changing its bodily, nervous and mental tissues. But this is all surface work; behind is the foundation of past experience held back from the physical memory so that the superficial consciousness may not be troubled or interfered with by the conscious burden of the past but may concentrate on the work immediately in hand. Still that foundation of past experience is the bedrock of personality; and it is more than that. It is our real fund on which we can always draw even apart from our present superficial commerce with our surroundings. That commerce adds to our gains, modifies the foundation for a subsequent existence.

Moreover, all this is, again, on the surface. It is only a small part of ourselves which lives and acts in the energies of our earthly existence. As behind the physical universe there are worlds of which ours is only a last result, so also within us there are worlds of our self-existence which throw out this external form of our being. The subconscient, the superconscient are oceans from which and to which this river flows. Therefore to speak of ourselves as a soul reincarnating is to give altogether too simple an appearance to the miracle of our existence; it puts into too ready and too gross a formula the magic of the supreme Magician. There is not a definite psychic entity getting into a new case of flesh; there is a metempsychosis, a reinsouling, a rebirth of new psychic personality as well as a birth of a new body. And behind is the Person, the unchanging entity, the Master who manipulates this complex material, the Artificer of this wondrous artifice.

This is the starting-point from which we have to proceed in considering the problem of rebirth. To view ourselves as such and such a personality getting into a new case of flesh is to stumble about in the ignorance, to confirm the error of the material mind and the senses. The body is a convenience, the personality is a constant formation for whose development action and experience are the instruments; but the Self by whose will and for whose delight all this is, is other than the body, other than the action and experience, other than the personality which they develop. To ignore it is to ignore the whole secret of our being.

Rebirth, Evolution, Heredity

TWO TRUTHS, discoveries with an enormous periphery of luminous result and of a considerable essential magnitude, evolution and heredity, figure today in the front of thought, and I suppose we have to take them as a well-established unquenchable light upon our being, lamps of a constant lustre, though not yet very perfectly trimmed, final so far as anything is final in man's constantly changing cinematographic process of the development of intellectual knowledge. They may be said to make up almost the whole fundamental idea of life in the way of seeing peculiar to a mind dominated, fashioned, pressed into its powerful moulds by the exact, curious, multifariously searching, yet in the end singularly limited observation and singularly narrow reason of our modern science. Science is in her own way a great seer and magician; she has both the microscopic and the macroscopic, the closely gazing and the telescopic view, a dissolving power of searching analytic resolution, a creative power of revealing synthetic effectuation. She has hunted to their lair many of the intermediate secret processes of the great creatrix, and even she has been able, by the inventive faculty given to us, to go and do one better. Man, this midget in infinity, locomotive yet nailed to the contiguity of a petty crust of soil by the force of gravitation, has certainly scored by her a goodly number of points against the mother of the universe. But all this has been done in some perfection only in the limits of her lowest obtrusive physical field.

Face to face with psychic and spiritual secrecies, as in the open elementary world even of mind, Science has still the uninformed gaze and the groping hands of the infant. In that sphere she, so precise, illuminative, compelling in the physical, sees only the big blazing buzzing confusion which James tells us, with a possibly inaccurate vividness of alliterative phrase, is the newborn baby's view of the sensible world into which he has dropped down the mysterious stairs of birth. Science, faced with what are still to her the wonderful random accords and unexplained miracles of consciousness, protects herself from the errors of the imagination, — but stumbling incidentally by that very fact into plenty of the errors of an inadequate induction, — behind an opaque shield of cautelous scepticism. She clings with the grasping firmness of the half-drowned to planks of security she thinks she has got in a few well-tested correspondences, — so-styled, though the word as used explains nothing, — between mental action and its accompaniment of suggestive or instrumental physical functionings. She is determined, if she can, to explain every supraphysical phenomenon by some physical fact; psychological process of mind must not exist except as result or rendering of physiological process of body. This set resolution, apparently rational and cautious of ascertainable and firmly tangible truth, but really heroic in its paradoxical temerity, shuts up her chance of rapid discovery, for the present at least, in a fairly narrow circle. It taints too her extensions of physical truth into the psychological field with a pursuing sense of inadequacy. And this inadequacy in extended application is very evident in her theories of heredity and evolution when she forces them beyond their safe ground of physical truth and labours to illumine by them the subtle, complex, elusive phenomena of our psychological being.

There are still, I dare say, persons here and there who cherish a secret or an open unfaith in the theory of a physical evolution and believe that it will one day pass into the limbo of dead generalisations like the Ptolemaic theory in astronomy or like the theory of humours in medicine; but this is a rare and excessive scepticism. Yet it may not be without use or aptitude for our purpose to note that contrary to current popular notions the scientific account of this generalisation, like that of a good number of others, is not yet conclusively proved, even though now taken for granted. But still there is on the whole a mass of facts and indications in its favour so considerable as to look overwhelming, so that we cannot resist the conclusion that in this way or some such way the whole thing came about and we find it difficult to conceive any more convincing explanation of the indubitable ascending and branching scale of genus and species which meets even our casual scrutiny of living existence. One thing at least seems now intellectually certain, we can no longer believe that these suns and systems were hurled full-shaped and eternally arranged into boundless space and all these numberless species of being planted on earth ready-made and nicely tailored in seven days or any number of days in a sudden outburst of caprice or Dionysiac excitement or crowded activity of mechanical conception by the fiat of a timeless Creator. The successive development which was summarily proposed by the ancient Hindu thinkers, the lower forms of being first, man afterwards as the crown of the Spirit's development of life on earth, has been confirmed by the patient and detailed scrutiny of physical science, — an aeonic development, though the farther Hindu conception of a constant repetition of the principle in cycles is necessarily incapable of physical evidence.

One thing more seems now equally certain that not only the seed of all life was one, — again the great intuition of the Upanishads foreruns the conclusions of the physical enquiry, one seed which the universal self-existence by process of force has disposed in many ways, *ekaṁ bījaṁ bahudhā śakti-yogāt*, — but even the principle of development is one and the structural ground-plan too as it develops step by step, in spite of all departures to this side or that in the workings of the creative Force or the creative Idea. Nature seems to start with an extraordinary poverty of original broad variative conceptions and to proceed to an extraordinary richness of her minuter consequential variations, which amounts to a forging of constant subtle differentiations of species and in the individual a startling insistence on result of uniqueness. It almost looks as if in the process of her physical harmonies there was meant to be some formal effect or symbolic reproduction of the truth that all things are originally one being, but a one who insists on his own infinite diversity, and even a suggestion that there is in this eternal unity an eternal pluralism, the Infinite Being self-repeated in an infinite multiplicity of beings each unique and yet each the One. To a mind on the look-out for the metaphysical suggestions we can draw from the apparent facts of being, that might not seem altogether an imagination.

In any case we have this now patent order in the profuse complexities of the natural harmony of living things, — one plasmic seed, one developing ground-plan, an opulent number of varieties whose logical process would be by an ascending order which passes up through fine but still very distinct gradations from the crude to the complex, from the less organised to the more organised, from the inferior to the superior type. The first question that should strike the mind at once, when this tree of life has been seen, is whether this logical order was indeed the actual order in the history of the universe, and then, a second, naturally arising from that problem, whether, if so, each new form developed by variation from its natural predecessor or came in by some unknown process, a fresh, independent and in a way sudden creation. In the first case, we have the scientific order of physical evolution, — in the other one knows not well what, perhaps an unseen Demiurge who developed the whole thing in the earlier period of the earth evolution and has now wholly or almost entirely stopped the business so that we have no new physical development of that kind, but only, it may be, an evolution of capacity in types already created. Science stands out for a quite natural and mechanical, a quite unbroken physical evolution with many divergent lines indeed of developing variation, but in the line no gap or interstice. It is true that there are not one but a host of missing links, which even the richest remains of the past cannot fill in, and we are not in a position to deny with an absolute dogmatism the possibility of an advance *per saltum*, by a rapid overleaping, perhaps even by a crowded psychical or bio-psychic preparation whose result sprang out in the appearance of a new type with a certain gulf between itself and the preceding forms of life. With regard to man especially there is still an enormous uncertainty as to how he, so like yet so different from the other sons of Nature, came into existence. Still the gaps can be explained away, there is a great mass of telling facts in favour of the less physically anarchic view, and it seems to have on its side the right of greatest probability in a material universe where the most perfectly physical principle of proceeding would seem to be the just basic law.

But even if we admit the most scrupulous and rigorous continuity of successive determination, the question arises whether the process of evolution has been indeed so exclusively physical and biological as at first sight it looks. If it is, we must admit not only a rigorous principle of class heredity, but a law of hereditary progressive variation and a purely physical cause of all mental and spiritual phenomena. Heredity by itself means simply the constant transmission of physical form and biological characteristics from a previous life to its posterity. There is very evidently such a general force of hereditary transmission within the genus or species itself, as the tree so the seed, as the seed so the tree, so that a lion generates a lion and not a cat or a rhinoceros, a man a human being and not an ourang-outang, — though one reads now of a curious and startling speculation, turning the old theory topsy-turvy, that certain ape kinds may be, not ancestors, but degenerate descendants of man! But farther, if a physical evolution is the whole fact, there must be a capacity for the hereditary transmission of variations by which new species are or have been created, — not merely in the process of a mixture or crossing, but by an internal development which is stored up and handed down in the seed. That too may very well be admitted, even though its real process and rationale are not yet understood, since the transmission of family and individual characteristics is a well-observed phenomenon. But then the things transmitted are not only physical and biological, but psychological or at least bio-psychic characters, repetitions of customary nervous experience and mental tendency, powers. We have to suppose that the physical seed transmits these things. We are called upon to admit that the human seed for instance, which does not contain a developed human consciousness, yet carries with it the powers of such a consciousness so that they reproduce themselves automatically in the thinking and organised mentality of the offspring. This, even if we have to accept it, is an inexplicable paradox unless we suppose either that there is something more behind, a psychical power behind the veil of material process, or else that mind is only a process of life and life only a process of matter. Therefore finally we have to suppose the physical theory capable of explaining by purely material causes and a material constitution the mystery of the emergence of life in matter and the equal mystery of the emergence of mind in life. It is here that difficulties begin to crowd in which convict it, so far at least, of a hopeless inadequacy, and the nature of that inadequacy, its crux, its stumbling-point leave room for just that something behind, something psychical, a hidden soul process and for a more complex and less materialistic account of the truth of evolution.

The materialistic assumption — it is no more than a hypothetical assumption, for it has never been proved — is that development of non-living matter results under certain unknown conditions in a phenomenon of unconscious life which is in its real nature only an action and reaction of material energy, and the development of that again under certain unknown conditions in a phenomenon of conscious mind which is again in its real nature only an action and reaction of material energy. The thing is not proved, but that, it is argued, does not matter; it only means that we do not yet know enough; but one day we shall know, — the necessary physiological reaction called by us an intuition or train of reasoning crowned by discovery having, I suppose, taken place in a properly constituted nervous body and the more richly convoluted brain of a Galileo of biology, — and then this great and simple truth will be proved, like many other things once scoffed at by the shallow common sense of humanity. But the difficulty is that it seems incapable of proof. Even with regard to life, which is by a great deal the lesser difficulty, the discovery of certain chemical or other physical and mechanical conditions under which life can be stimulated to appear, will prove no more than that these are the favourable or necessary conditions for the manifestation of life in body, — such conditions there must be in the nature of things, — but not that life is not another new and higher power of the force of universal being. The connection of life responses with physical conditions and stimuli proves very clearly that life and matter are connected and that, as indeed they must do to coexist, the two kinds of energy act on each other, — a very ancient knowledge; but it does not get rid of the fact that the physical response is accompanied by an element which seems to be of the nature of a nervous excitement and an incipient or suppressed consciousness and is not the same thing as the companion physical reaction.

When we come to mind, we see — how could it be otherwise in an embodied mind? — a response, interaction, connection, a correspondence if you will; but no amount of correspondence can show how a physical response can be converted into or amount to or by itself constitute in result a conscious operation, a perception, emotion, thought-concept, or prove that love is a chemical product or that Plato's theory of ideas or Homer's Iliad or the cosmic consciousness of the Yogin was only a combination of physiological reactions or a complex of the changes of grey brain matter or a flaming marvel of electrical discharges. It is not only that common sense and imagination boggle at these theories, — that objection may be disregarded, — not only that perception, reason and intuition have to be thrust aside in favour of a forced and too extended inference, but that there is a gulf of difference here between the thing to be explained and the thing by which it is sought to explain it which cannot be filled up, however much we may admit nervous connections and psycho-physical bridges. And if the physical scientist points to a number of indicative facts and hopes one day to triumph over these formidable difficulties, there is growing up on the other side an incipient mass of psychical phenomena which are likely to drown his theory in fathomless waters. The insuperability of these always evident objections is beginning to be more widely recognised, but since the past still holds considerable sway, it is necessary to insist on them so that we may have the clear right to go on to more liberal hypotheses which do not try prematurely to reduce to a mechanical simplicity the problem of our being.

One of these is the ancient view that not only incidence of body and life on mind and soul, but incidence of mind and soul on body and life have to be considered. Here too there is the evolutionary idea, but physical and life evolution, even the growth of mind, are held to be only incidental to a soul evolution of which Time is the course and the earth among many other worlds the theatre. In the old Indian version of this theory evolution, heredity and rebirth are three companion processes of the universal unfolding, evolution the processional aim, rebirth the main method, heredity one of the physical conditions. That is a theory which provides at least the framework for a harmonious explanation of all the complex elements of the problem. The scientific idea starts from physical being and makes the psychical a result and circumstance of body; this other evolutionary idea starts from soul and sees in the physical being an instrumentation for the awakening to itself of a spirit absorbed in the universe of Matter.

Rebirth and Soul Evolution

THE IDEAS that men currently form about life and things are for the most part pragmatic constructions. They are forms of a reason which is concerned with giving only such a serviceable account to itself of its surroundings as shall make a sufficient clue to our immediate business of the growth, action, satisfaction of the personality, something feasible, livable, effective for our journeying in Time, something viable in the twofold French sense of the word. Whether it corresponds to or is directly in touch with any real reality of things seems to be very much a matter of accident. It seems to be sufficient if we can persuade our facile and complaisant reason of its truth and find it serviceable and fruitful in consequences for thought, action and life-experience. It is true that there is another unpragmatic reason in us which labours to get rid of this demand of the intellectual and vital personality; it wants to look at the real truth of things without veils and without any object, to mirror the very image of Truth in the still waters of a dispassionate, clear and pure mentality. But the workings of this calmer greater reason are hampered by two tremendous difficulties. First, it seems next to impossible to disengage it entirely from the rest of ourselves, from the normal intellectuality, from the will to believe, from that instinct of the intelligence which helps the survival, by a sort of subtle principle of preference and selection, of the way of thinking that suits our personal bent or the accomplished frame of our nature. And again, what is the Truth that our reason mirrors? It is after all some indirect image of Truth, not her very self and body seen face to face; it is an image moulded from such data, symbol, process of Reality, — if any real Reality there is, — as we can gather from the very limited experience of self and existing things open to human mind. So that unless there be some means by which knowledge can burst through all veils to the experience of the very Reality itself, or unless there be some universal Logos, divine Mind or Supermind, which knows itself and all things and our consciousness can reflect or get into touch with that, a pursuing insufficiency and uncertainty must always keep its baffling grasp upon even the highest power and largest walk of our reason and beset all the labour of human knowledge.

Nowhere are these disabilities more embarrassing than in those fundamental questions of the nature of the world and of our own existence which yet most passionately interest thinking humanity because this is in the end the thing of utmost importance to us, since everything else, except some rough immediate practicality of the moment, depends on its solution. And even that, until this great question is settled, is only a stumbling forward upon a journey of which we know not the goal or the purpose, the meaning or the necessity. The religions profess to solve these grand problems with an inspired or revealed certainty; but the enormity of their differences shows that in them too there is a selection of ideas, separate aspects of the Truth, — the sceptic would say, shows of imagination and falsehood, — and a construction from a limited spiritual experience. In them too there is an element of chosen and willed believing and some high pragmatic aim and utility, whether that be the soul's escape from the sorrow or unreality of existence or celestial bliss or a religio-ethical sanction and guidance. The philosophical systems are very obviously only feasible selective constructions of great reflective ideas. More often these are possibilities of the reason much rather than assured certainties or, if founded on spiritual experience, they are still selective constructions, a sort of great architectural approach to some gate into unknowable Divine or ineffable Infinite. The modern scientific mind professed to rid us of all mere intellectual constructions and put us face to face with truth and with assured truth only; it claimed the right to rid man of the fantastic encumbrance of religion and the nebulous futilities of metaphysical philosophy. But religion and philosophy have now turned upon science and convicted her, on her own statement of facts, of an equal liability to the two universal difficulties of human reason. The system of science seems to be itself only another feasible and fruitful construction of the reason giving a serviceable account to itself of the physical world and our relations to it, and it seems to be nothing more. And its knowledge is fatally bound by the limitation of its data and its outlook. Science too creates only a partial image of Truth stamped with a character of much uncertainty and still more clearly imprinted with the perverse hallmark of insufficiency.

We have to recognise that human reason, moving as it does from a starting-point of ignorance and in a great environing circle of ignorance, must proceed by hypothesis, assumption and theory subject to verification of some kind convincing to our reason and experience. But there is this difference that the religious mind accepts the theory or assumption, — to which it does not at all give these names, for they are to it things felt, — with faith, with a will of belief, with an emotional certainty, and finds its verification in an increasing spiritual intuition and experience. The philosophic mind accepts it calmly and discerningly for its coherent agreement with the facts and necessities of being; it verifies by a pervading and unfailing harmony with all the demands of reason and intellectualised intuition. But the sceptical mind — not the mind of mere doubt or dogmatic denial which usually arrogates that name, but the open and balanced mind of careful, impartial and reserved inquiry, — gives a certain provisional character to its hypotheses, and it verifies by the justification of whatever order or category of ascertainable facts it takes for its standard of proof and invests with a character of decisive authority or reality. There is room enough for all three methods and there is no reason why our complex modern mind should not proceed simultaneously by all of them at once. For if the sceptical or provisional attitude makes us more ready to modify our image of Truth in the light of new material of thought and knowledge, the religious mind also, provided it keeps a certain firm and profound openness to new spiritual experience, can proceed faster to a larger and larger light, and meanwhile we can walk by it with an assured step and go securely about our principal business of the growth and perfection of our being. The philosophic mind has the use of giving a needed largeness and openness to our mentality, — if it too does not narrow itself by a closed circle of metaphysical dogma, — and supports besides the harmony of our other action by the orderly assent of the higher reason.

In this matter of the soul and rebirth the initial hypothesis now lies quite open to us; the barrier has fallen. For if there is one thing now certain it is that physical science may give clues of process, but cannot lay hold on the reality of things. That means that the physical is not the whole secret of world and existence, and that in ourselves too the body is not the whole of our being. It is then through something supraphysical in Nature and ourselves which we may call the soul, whatever the exact substance of soul may be, that we are likely to get that greater truth and subtler experience which will enlarge the narrow rigid circle traced by physical science and bring us nearer to the Reality. There is nothing now to bar the most rational mind, — for true rationalism, real free thought need no longer be identified, as it was for some time too hastily and intolerantly, with a denial of the soul and a scouting of the truths of spiritual philosophy and religion, — there is nothing to prevent us from proceeding firmly upon whatever certitudes of spiritual experience have become to us the soil of our inner growth or the pillars on our road to self-knowledge. These are soul realities. But the exact frame we shall give to that knowledge, will best be built by farther spiritual experience aided by new enlarged intuitions, confirmed in the suggestions of a wide philosophic reason and fruitfully using whatever helpful facts we may get from the physical and the psychic sciences. These are truths of soul process; their full light must come by experimental knowledge and observation of the world without us and the world within.

The admission of the soul's existence does not of itself lead, by its own necessity, by any indispensable next step, to the acceptance of rebirth. It will only bring in this indispensable consequence if there is such a thing as a soul evolution which enforces itself always and is a constant part of the order of existence and the law of the time process. Moreover some kind of admission of an individual soul is a first condition of the truth of rebirth. For there is a plausible theory of existence which admits an All-Soul, a universal being and becoming of which the material world is some sensible result, but does not admit any at all abiding truth of our spiritual individuality. The All-Soul may continually develop, may slowly yet urgently evolve its becoming; but each individual man or apparent individual being is to this way of thinking only a moment of the All-Soul and its evolution; out of that it rises by the formation which we call birth and it sinks back into it by the dissolution which we call death. But this limiting idea can only stand if we credit a creative biological evolution and its instrument of physical heredity with the whole causation of all our mental and spiritual being; but in that case we have no real soul or spirit, our soul personality or spiritual becoming is a fruit of our life and body. Now the question of rebirth turns almost entirely upon the one fundamental question of the past of the individual being and its future. If the creation of the whole nature is to be credited to the physical birth, then the body, life and soul of the individual are only a continuation of the body, life and soul of his ancestry, and there is no room anywhere for soul rebirth. The individual man has no past being independent of them and can have no independent future; he can prolong himself in his progeny, — the child may be his second or continued self, as the Upanishad puts it, — but there is no other rebirth for him. No continued stream of individuality presided over by any mental or spiritual person victoriously survives the dissolution of the body. On the other hand, if there is any element in us, still more the most important of all, which cannot be so accounted for, but presupposes a past or admits a future evolution other than that of the race mind and the physical ancestry, then some kind of soul birth becomes a logical necessity.

Now it is just here that the claims of physical and vital evolution and heredity seem to fail, — as a cause of our whole mental and spiritual being. Certainly it has been shown that our body and the most physical part of our life action are very largely the results of heredity, but not in such a way as to exclude an assisting and perhaps really predominant psychical cause other than the ancestral contribution. It has been shown if you will that our conscious vitality and those parts of mind which depend upon it, something of temperament, something of character, certain impulses and predispositions, are to a great extent shaped — or is it only influenced? — by evolutionary heredity; but not that they are entirely due to this force, not that there is no soul, no spiritual entity which accepts and makes use of this instrumentation, but is not its created result or helplessly subject to it in its becoming. Still more are the higher parts of our mind marked with a certain stamp of spiritual independence. They are not altogether helpless formations of evolutionary heredity. But still all these things are evidently very much under the influence of environment and its pressures and opportunities. And we may draw from that, if we choose, a limiting conclusion; we may say that they are a phase of the universal soul, a part of the process of its evolution by selection; the race, not the individual, is the continuous factor and all our individual effort and acquisition, only in appearance, not really independent, ceases with death, except so much of our gain as is chosen to be carried on in the race by some secret will or conscious necessity in the universal being or the persistent becoming.

But when we come to our highest spiritual elements, we find that here we do arrive at a very clear and sovereign independence. We can carry on far beyond any determination by environment or the pressure of the race-soul our own soul evolution by the governing force of our spiritual nature. Quite apart from any evidence of an after-life on other planes or any memory of past births, this is sufficient warrant for a refusal to accept as sufficient any theory of the ephemeral being of the individual and the sole truth of the evolutionary Universal. Certainly, the individual being is not thereby shown to be independent of the All-Soul; it may be nothing but a form of it in time. But it is sufficient for our purpose that it is a persistent soul form, not determined by the life of the body and ceasing with its dissolution, but persisting independently beyond. For if it is thus independent of the physical race continuity in the future, if it thus shows itself capable of determining its own future soul evolution in time, it must have had secretly such an independent existence all through and it must have been determining in reality, though no doubt by some other and indirect insistence, its past soul evolution too in time. Possibly it may exist in the All-Soul only during the universal continuity, may have arisen from it in that, may pass into it eventually. Or on the contrary it may exist in it prior to, or it is better to say, independent of the universal continuity, and there may be some kind of eternal individual. But it is sufficient for the theory of rebirth that a secret soul continuity of the individual does exist and not alone a brute succession of bodies informed by the All-Soul with a quite ephemeral illusion of mental or spiritual individuality.

There are theories of existence which accept the individual soul, but not soul evolution. There is, for instance, that singular dogma of a soul without a past but with a future, created by the birth of the body but indestructible by the death of the body. But this is a violent and irrational assumption, an imagination unverified and without verisimilitude. It involves the difficulty of a creature beginning in time but enduring through all eternity, an immortal being dependent for its existence on an act of physical generation, yet itself always and entirely unphysical and independent of the body which results from the generation. These are objections insuperable to the reason. But there is too the difficulty that this soul inherits a past for which it is in no way responsible, or is burdened with mastering propensities imposed on it not by its own act, and is yet responsible for its future which is treated as if it were in no way determined by that often deplorable inheritance, *damnosa hereditas*, or that unfair creation, and were entirely of its own making. We are made helplessly what we are and are yet responsible for what we are, — or at least for what we shall be hereafter, which is inevitably determined to a large extent by what we are originally. And we have only this one chance. Plato and the Hottentot, the fortunate child of saints or Rishis and the born and trained criminal plunged from beginning to end in the lowest fetid corruption of a great modern city have equally to create by the action or belief of this one unequal life all their eternal future. This is a paradox which offends both the soul and the reason, the ethical sense and the spiritual intuition.

There is too the kindred idea, behind which a truth obscurely glimmers, that the soul of man is something high, pure and great which has fallen into the material existence and by its use of its nature and its acts in the body must redeem itself, must return to its own celestial nature. But it is evident that this one earthly life is not sufficient for all to effect that difficult return, but rather most may and do miss it entirely; and we have then either to suppose that an immortal soul can perish or be doomed to eternal perdition or else that it has more existences than this poor precarious one apparently given to it, lives or states of being which intervene between its fall and the final working out of a sure redemption. But the first supposition is subject to all the difficulties of that other paradox. Apart from the problem of the reason of the descent, it is difficult to see how straight from celestial being these different souls should have lapsed immediately to such immense differences of gradation in their fall and in such a way that each is responsible for the otherwise cruel and unequal conditions under which he has to determine so summarily his eternal future. Each must surely have had a past which made him responsible for his present conditions, if he is to be held thus strictly to account for all their results and the use he makes of his often too scanty, grudging and sometimes quite hopeless opportunity. The very nature of our humanity supposes a varying constituent past for the soul as well as a resultant future.

More reasonable therefore is a recent theory which suggests that a spirit or mental being has descended from another and greater plane and taken up the material existence when the physical and the animal evolution had proceeded far enough for a human embodiment upon earth to be possible. He looks back to a long series of human lives, beginning from that point, which has brought each of us to his present condition, and forward to a still continuing series which will carry all by their own degrees and in their own time to whatever completion, transfiguration, return awaits the self-embodying human soul and is the crown of its long endeavour. But here again, what is it that brings about this connection of a spiritual being and higher mental nature and a physical being and lower animal nature? what necessitates this taking up of the lower life by the spirit which here becomes man? It would seem surely that there must have been some previous connection; the possessing mental or spiritual being must all the time have been preparing this lower life it thus occupies for a human manifestation. The whole evolution would then be an ordered continuity from the beginning and the intervention of mind and spirit would be no sudden inexplicable miracle, but a coming forward of that which was always there behind, an open taking up of the manifested life by a power which was always secretly presiding over the life evolution.

What this theory of rebirth supposes is an evolution of being in the material world from matter to embodied mind and a universal spirit which ensouls this evolution, while our individual spirits exist in the universal and follow their upward course to whatever purposed consummation or liberation or both may beckon to us at its end. Much more than this it may mean, but this at least; a soul evolution the real fact, an assumption of higher and higher forms the first appearance. We might indeed allow a past and future for the human soul, but place them below and above this terrestrial plane and admit only one casual or purposeful existence upon earth. But this would mean two orders of progressive existence unconnected and yet meeting for a brief moment. There would be an errant individual human soul intervening in the ordered terrestrial evolution and almost immediately passing out without any connecting cause or necessity. But especially it leaves insufficiently explained the phenomenon of the largely terrestrial animal being and nature of this spiritual and supra-terrestrial entity, this soul, its struggle for liberation, and the infinitely varying degrees in which in different bodies it has succeeded in dominating the lower nature. A past terrestrial soul evolution sufficiently accounting for these variations and degrees of our mixed being and a future soul evolution that helps us progressively to liberate the godhead of the spirit, seem the only just and reasonable explanation of this labour of a matter-shackled soul which has attained a variable degree of humanity in the midst of a general progressive appearance of the life, mind and spirit in a material universe. Rebirth is the only possible machinery for such a soul evolution.

The Significance of Rebirth

THE ONE question which through all its complexities is the sum of philosophy and to which all human enquiry comes round in the end, is the problem of ourselves, — why we are here and what we are, and what is behind and before and around us, and what we are to do with ourselves, our inner significances and our outer environment. In the idea of evolutionary rebirth, if we can once find it to be a truth and recognise its antecedents and consequences, we have a very sufficient clue for an answer to all these connected sides of the one perpetual question. A spiritual evolution of which our universe is the scene and earth its ground and stage, though its plan is still kept back above from our yet limited knowledge, — this way of seeing existence is a luminous key which we can fit into many doors of obscurity. But we have to look at it in the right focus, to get its true proportions and, especially, to see it in its spiritual significance more than in its mechanical process. The failure to do that rightly will involve us in much philosophical finessing, drive on this side or the other to exaggerated negations and leave our statement of it, however perfect may be its logic, yet unsatisfying and unconvincing to the total intelligence and the complex soul of humanity.

The bare idea of repeated births as the process of our soul existence does not carry us much farther than the simple material reality of this single life in the body, that first fact of our conscious sensation and memory which is the occasion of all our speculations. Behind our present starting-point and preceding this one lappet of our race in the fields of being rebirth reminds us indeed of a past, of pregnant anterior courses, a soul-existence in many previous bodies which have immediately created what we now are. But to what use or advantage if there is no progressive significance in our pre-existence and our persevering continuity?

In front of us it rolls far back from our vision the obstruction of the near blank wall of death; our journeying upon earth becomes less of a long or brief unretraceable road ending abruptly and perplexingly in a cul-de-sac; our physical dissolution is robbed of the cruellest poison of its sting. For the burden of death to man the thinking, willing, feeling creature is not the loss of this poor case or chariot of body, but it is the blind psychical finality death suggests, the stupid material end of our will and thought and aspiration and endeavour, the brute breaking off of the heart's kind and sweet relations and affections, the futile convicting discontinuity of that marvellous and all-supporting soul-sense which gives us our radiant glimpses of the glory and delight of existence, — that is the discord and harsh inconsequence against which the thinking living creature revolts as incredible and inadmissible. The fiery straining to immortality of our life, mind, psyche, which can assent to cessation only by turning in enmity upon their own flame of nature, and the denial of it which the dull acquiescence of a body consenting inertly to death as to life brings in on us, is the whole painful irreconcilable contradiction of our double nature. Rebirth takes the difficulty and solves it in the sense of a soul continuity with a beat of physical repetition. Like other non-materialistic solutions it gives the right to the soul's suggestion as against the body's and sanctions the demand for survival, but unlike some others it justifies the bodily life by its utility to the soul's continued self-experience; our too swift act in the body ceases to be an isolated accident or an abrupt interlude, it gets the justification of a fulfilling future as well as a creating past for its otherwise haphazard actions and relations. But simple persistence, mechanical continuity is not enough; that is not all our psychical being signifies, not the whole luminous meaning of survival and continuity; without ascension, without expansion, without some growing up straight into light in the strength of our spirit our higher members toil here uncompleted, our birth in matter is not justified by any adequate meaning. We are very little better off than if death remained our ending; for our life in the end becomes then an indefinitely continued and renewed and temporarily consequent in place of an inconsequent, abruptly ended and soon convicted futility.

By rebirth, too, this world around us, our environment, its suggestions, its opportunities are no longer left as the field of an ephemeral physical flowering or as a Life which cares very little for and means very little to the individual, though it may offer much perhaps during its uncertain longer time to the species. The world grows to us a field of soul-experience, a system of soul-recurrences, a means of self-effectuation, perhaps a crystallising of the conscious being's effective self-reflections. But to what end if our recurrence is only a repetition or a hesitating fluctuation within a few set types with a very limited, always uncompleted circle of accomplishment? For that is what it comes to, if there is no upward outlet, no infinite progression or no escape or enlarging into the soul's infinities. Rebirth tells us that what we are is a soul performing constantly the miracle of self-embodiment; but why this embodiment, what this soul has to do here with itself and what use it is to make of this world which is given to it for its grandiose scene, its difficult, plastic material and its besieging battery of multiform stimulus and suggestions, is hardly at all clearer than before. But the perception of rebirth as an occasion and means for a spiritual evolution fills in every hiatus. It makes life a significant ascension and not a mechanical recurrence; it opens to us the divine vistas of a growing soul; it makes the worlds a nexus of spiritual self-expansion; it sets us seeking, and with a sure promise to all of a great finding now or hereafter, for the self-knowledge of our spirit and the self-fulfilment of a wise and divine intention in our existence.

The oppressing sense of a circle of mechanical recurrence and the passionate seeking for an outlet of absolute escape haunted the earlier statements of the truth of rebirth and have left upon them in spite of the depths they fathomed a certain stamp of unsatisfactory inadequacy, — not illogical, for they are logical enough, once their premisses are admitted, but unsatisfying, because they do not justify to us our being. For, missing the divine utility of the cosmic workings, they fail to explain to us with a sufficiently large, patient, steadfast wholeness God and ourselves and existence, negate too much, miss the positive sense of our strain and leave sounding an immense note of spiritual futility and cosmic discord. No statement of the sense of our being or our non-being has laid a more insistent stress on rebirth than did the Buddhistic; but it affirms strongly only the more strongly to negate. It views the recurrence of birth as a prolonged mechanical chain; it sees, with a sense of suffering and distaste, the eternal revolving of an immense cosmic wheel of energy with no divine sense in its revolutions, its beginning an affirmation of ignorant desire, its end a nullifying bliss of escape. The wheel turns uselessly for ever disturbing the peace of Non-being and creating souls whose one difficult chance and whole ideal business is to cease. That conception of being is only an extension from our first matter-governed sense of the universe, of our creation in it and of our decisive cessation. It takes up at every point our first obvious view of the bodily life and restates all its circumstances in the terms of a more psychical and spiritual idea of our existence.

What we see in the material universe is a stupendous system of mechanical recurrences. A huge mechanical recurrence rules that which is long-enduring and vast; a similar but frailer mechanical recurrence sways all that is ephemeral and small. The suns leap up into being, flame wheeling in space, squander force by motion and fade and are extinct, again perhaps to blaze into being and repeat their course, or else other suns take their place and fulfil their round. The seasons of Time repeat their unending and unchanging cycle. Always the tree of life puts forth its various flowers and sheds them and breaks into the same flowers in their recurring season. The body of man is born and grows and decays and perishes, but it gives birth to other bodies which maintain the one same futile cycle. What baffles the intelligence in all this intent and persistent process is that it seems to have in it no soul of meaning, no significance except the simple fact of causeless and purposeless existence dogged or relieved by the annulling or the compensating fact of individual cessation. And this is because we perceive the mechanism, but do not see the Power that uses the mechanism and the intention in its use. But the moment we know that there is a conscious Spirit self-wise and infinite brooding upon the universe and a secret slowly self-finding soul in things, we get to the necessity of an idea in its consciousness, a thing conceived, willed, set in motion and securely to be done, progressively to be fulfilled by these great deliberate workings.

But the Buddhistic statement admits no self, spirit or eternal Being in its rigorously mechanical economy of existence. It takes only the phenomenon of a constant becoming and elevates that from the physical to the psychical level. As there is evident to our physical mind an Energy, action, motion, capable of creating by its material forces the forms and powers of the material universe, so there is for the Buddhistic vision of things an Energy, action, Karma, creating by its psychic powers of idea and association this embodied soul life with its continuity of recurrences. As the body is a dissoluble construction, a composite and combination, so the soul too is a dissoluble construction and combination; the soul life like the physical life sustains itself by a continuous flux and repetition of the same workings and movements. As this constant hereditary succession of lives is a prolongation of the one universal principle of life by a continued creation of similar bodies, a mechanical recurrence, so the system of soul rebirth too is a constant prolongation of the principle of the soul life by a continued creation through Karma of similar embodied associations and experiences, a mechanical recurrence. As the cause of all this physical birth and long hereditary continuation is an obscure will to life in Matter, so the cause of continued soul birth is an ignorant desire or will to be in the universal energy of Karma. As the constant wheelings of the universe and the motions of its forces generate individual existences who escape from or end in being by an individual dissolution, so there is this constant wheel of becoming and motion of Karma which forms into individualised soul-lives that must escape from their continuity by a dissolving cessation. An extinction of the embodied consciousness is our apparent material end; for soul too the end is extinction, the blank satisfaction of Nothingness or some ineffable bliss of a superconscient Non-Being. The affirmation of the mechanical occurrence or recurrence of birth is the essence of this view; but while the bodily life suffers an enforced end and dissolution, the soul life ceases by a willed self-extinction.

The Buddhistic theory adds nothing to the first obvious significance of life except an indefinite prolongation by rebirth which is a burden, not a gain, and the spiritual greatness of the discipline of self-extinction, — the latter, no doubt, a thing of great value. The illusionist solution adds something, but does not differ very greatly in its motive from the Buddhistic. It sets against the futile cosmic repetition an eternity of our own absolute being; from the ignorance which creates the illusory mechanism of a recurrence of rebirth, it escapes into the self-knowledge of our ineffable existence. That seems to bring in a positive strain and to give to our being an initial, a supporting and an eventual reality. But the hiatus here is the absence of all true and valid relation between this real being of ours and all our birth and becoming. The last event and end of our births is not represented as any absolute fulfilment of what we are, — that would be a great, fruitful and magnificently positive philosophy, nor as the final affirmation of a progressive self-finding, — that too would give a noble meaning to our existence; it is a turning away from the demand of the universal Spirit, a refusal of all these cosmic ideas, imaginations, aspirations, action and effectuation. The way to find our being given us is an absolute denial of all our becoming. We rise to self by a liberating negation of ourselves, and in the result the Idea in the universe pursues its monstrous and aimless road, but the individual ceases and is blest in the cessation. The motive of this way of thought is the same oppressive sense of an ignorant mechanical cosmic recurrence as in the Buddhistic and the same high impatient passion of escape. There is recognition of a divine source of life, but a non-recognition of any divine meaning in life. And as for rebirth it is reduced in its significance to a constant mechanism of self-deception, and the will not to live is shown us as the last acquisition, the highest good and the one desirable result of living. The satisfaction which Illusionism gives, — for it does give a certain high austere kind of satisfaction to the intellect and to one turn of spiritual tendency, — is the pressing to a last point of the obvious antinomy between this great burdensome and tyrannous mechanism, the universe, and the spirit which feels itself of another and a diviner nature, the great relief to a soul passioning for freedom, but compelled to labour on as a spring of the dull machine, of being able to cast away the cosmic burden, and finally the free and bare absoluteness of this spiritual conclusion. But it gives no real, because no fruitful answer to the problem of God and man and the significance of life; it only gets away from them by a skilful evasion and takes away from them all significance, so that any question of the sense and will in all this tremendous labour and throb and seeking loses meaning. But the challenge of God's universe to the knowledge and strength of the human spirit cannot in the end be met by man with a refusal or solved by an evasion, even though an individual soul may take refuge from the demand, as a man may from the burden of action and pain in unconsciousness, in spiritual trance or sleep or escape through its blank doors into the Absolute. Something the Spirit of the universe means by our labour in existence, some sense it has in these grandiose rhythms, and it has not undertaken them in an eternally enduring error or made them in a jest.[1] To know that and possess it, to find and fulfil consciously the universal being's hidden significances is the task given to the human spirit.

There are other statements or colourings of the idea of rebirth which admit a more positive sense for existence and nourish a robuster confidence in the power and delight of being which are its secret fountains; but they all stumble in the end over the limitations of humanity and an inability to see any outlet from their bondage in the order of the universe, because they suppose this to be a thing fixed from of years sempiternal — *śāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ*, not an eternally developing and creative, but an immutable cycle. The Vaishnava idea of the play of God, striking as it does into the secret of the hidden delight at the core of things, is a luminous ray shot into the very heart of the mystery; but isolated it cannot solve all its enigma. There is more here in the world than a play of secret delight; there is knowledge, there is power, there is a will and a mighty labour. Rebirth so looked at becomes too much of a divine caprice with no object but its playing, and ours is too great and strenuous a world to be so accounted for. Such chequered delight as is given to our becoming, is a game of disguises and seekings with no promise here of any divine completeness; its circles seem in the end not worth following out and the soul turns gladly to its release from the game's unsatisfying mazes. The Tantric solution shows us a supreme superconscient Energy which casts itself out here into teeming worlds and multitudinous beings and in its order the soul rises from birth to birth and follows its million forms, till in a last human series it opens to the consciousness and powers of its own divinity and returns through them by a rapid illumination to the eternal superconscience. We find at last the commencement of a satisfying synthesis, some justification of existence, a meaningful consequence in rebirth, a use and a sufficient though only temporary significance for the great motion of the cosmos. On lines very like these the modern mind, when it is disposed to accept rebirth, is inclined to view it. But there is a too minor stress on the soul's divine potentialities, a haste of insistence on the escape into superconscience; the supreme Energy constructs too long and stupendous a preparation for so brief and so insufficient a flowering. There is a lacuna here, some secret is still missing.

---

[1] The magnificent and pregnant phrase of the Koran, "Thinkest thou that I have made the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in a jest?"

There are certain limitations of our own thought over which all these solutions stumble, and the chief of these obstacles are our sense of the mechanical nature of the universe and our inability to see forward to a greater than our present type of humanity. We see the superconscient Spirit in its effulgence and freedom and we see the universe in its inconscient bondage to the cycle of its mechanical recurrences, or we see existence as an abstract entity and Nature as a mechanical force; the conscient soul stands between as a link between these opposites, but it is itself so incomplete that we cannot find in this link the secret or make of it a strong master of reconciliation. Then we pronounce birth to be an error of the soul and see our one chance of liberation in a shaking off of these natal shackles and a violent reversion to supracosmic consciousness or the freedom of abstract being. But what if rebirth were in truth no long dragging chain, but rather at first a ladder of the soul's ascension and at last a succession of mighty spiritual opportunities? It will be so if the infinite existence is not what it seems to the logical intellect, an abstract entity, but what it is to intuition and in deeper soul experience, a conscious spiritual Reality, and that Reality as real here as in any far off absolute Superconscience. For then universal Nature would be no longer a mechanism with no secret but its own inconscient mechanics and no intention but the mere recurrent working; it would be the conscient energy of the universal Spirit hidden in the greatness of its processes, *mahimānam asya*. And the soul ascending from the sleep of matter through plant and animal life to the human degree of the power of life and there battling with ignorance and limit to take possession of its royal and infinite kingdom would be the mediator appointed to unfold in Nature the spirit who is hidden in her subtleties and her vastnesses. That is the significance of life and the world which the idea of evolutionary rebirth opens to us; life becomes at once a progressive ascending series for the unfolding of the Spirit. It acquires a supreme significance: the way of the Spirit in its power is justified, no longer a foolish and empty dream, an eternal delirium, great mechanical toil or termless futility, but the sum of works of a large spiritual Will and Wisdom: the human soul and the cosmic spirit look into each other's eyes with a noble and divine meaning.

The questions which surround our existence elucidate themselves at once with a certain satisfactory fullness. What we are is a soul of the transcendent Spirit and Self unfolding itself in the cosmos in a constant evolutionary embodiment of which the physical side is only a pedestal of form corresponding in its evolution to the ascending degrees of the spirit, but the spiritual growth is the real sense and motive. What is behind us is the past terms of the spiritual evolution, the upward gradations of the spirit already climbed, by which through constant rebirth we have developed what we are, and are still developing this present and middle human term of the ascension. What is around us is the constant process of the unfolding in its universal aspect: the past terms are there contained in it, fulfilled, overpassed by us, but in general and various type still repeated as a support and background; the present terms are there not as an unprofitable recurrence, but in active pregnant gestation of all that is yet to be unfolded by the spirit, no irrational decimal recurrence helplessly repeating for ever its figures, but an expanding series of powers of the Infinite. What is in front of us is the greater potentialities, the steps yet unclimbed, the intended mightier manifestations. Why we are here is to be this means of the spirit's upward self-unfolding. What we have to do with ourselves and our significances is to grow and open them to greater significances of divine being, divine consciousness, divine power, divine delight and multiplied unity, and what we have to do with our environment is to use it consciously for increasing spiritual purposes and make it more and more a mould for the ideal unfolding of the perfect nature and self-conception of the Divine in the cosmos. This is surely the Will in things which moves, great and deliberate, unhasting, unresting, through whatever cycles, towards a greater and greater informing of its own finite figures with its own infinite Reality.

All this is to the mind that lives in the figures of the present, as it must be to the careful sceptical mind of positive inquiry, no more than a hypothesis; for if evolution is an acknowledged idea, rebirth itself is only a supposition. Take it so, but still it is a better hypothesis than the naive and childlike religious solutions which make the world an arbitrary caprice and man the breathing clay puppet of an almighty human-minded Creator, and at least as good a hypothesis as the idea of a material inconscient Force somehow stumbling into a precarious, ephemeral, yet always continued phenomenon of consciousness, or a creative Life labouring in the Bergsonian formula oppressed but constant in the midst of a universal death, as good too as the idea of a mechanical working of Prakriti, Maya, Shakti into which or in which a real or unreal individual stumbles and wanders, *dandramyamāṇo andhena nīyamāno yathāndhaḥ*,[2] until he can get out of it by a spiritual liberation. To a large philosophical questioning it will not seem in disagreement with the known lines of existence or out of tune with the facts and necessities of being or the demands of reason and intuition, even though it admits a yet unrealised factor, things yet to be; for that is implied in the very idea of evolution. It may modify, but does not radically contradict any religious experience or aspiration, — for it is not inconsistent either with a union with Superconscience or bliss in heavens beyond or any personal or impersonal relation with the Divine, since these may well be heights of the spiritual unfolding. Its truth will depend on spiritual experience and effectuation; but chiefly on this momentous issue, whether there is anything in the soul-powers of man which promises a greater term of being than his present mentality and whether that greater term can be made effective for his embodied existence. That is the question which remains over to be tested by psychological inquiry and the problem to be resolved in the course of the spiritual evolution of man.

There are transcendental questions of the metaphysical necessity, possibility, final reality of an evolutionary manifestation of this kind, but they do not need to be brought in now and here; for the time we are concerned only with its reality to experience and with the processional significance of rebirth, with the patent fact that we are a part of some kind of manifestation and move forward in the press of some kind of evolution. We see a Power at work and seek whether in that power there is a conscious Will, an ordered development and have first to discover whether it is the blind result of an organised Chance or inconscient self-compelled Law or the plan of a universal Intelligence or Wisdom. Once we find that there is a conscious Spirit of which this movement is one expression, or even admit that as our working hypothesis, we are bound to go on and ask whether this developing order ceases with what man now is or is laden with something more towards which it and he have to grow, an unfinished expression, a greater unfound term, and in that case it is evidently towards that greater thing that man must be growing; to prepare it and to realise it must be the stage beyond in his destiny. Towards that new step in the evolution his history as a race must be subconsciently tending and the powers of the highest individuals half consciently striving to be delivered of this greater birth; and since the ascending order of rebirth follows always the degrees of the evolution, that too cannot be meant to stop short or shoot off abruptly into the superconscient without any regard to the intended step. The relation of our birth to life on other levels of consciousness and to whatever transcendent Superconscience there may be, are important problems, but their solution must be something in harmony with the intention of the Spirit in the universe; all must be part of a unity, and not an imbroglio of spiritual incoherences and contradictions. Our first bridge from the known to the unknown on this line of thought must be to discover how far the yet unfinished ladder of evolution can mount in the earth series. The whole processional significance of rebirth may be wrapped up in that one yet unattempted discovery.

---

[2] "Beating about like the blind led by the blind."

The Ascending Unity

THE HUMAN mind loves a clear simplicity of view; the more trenchant a statement, the more violently it is caught by it and inclined to acceptance. This is not only natural to our first crudity of thinking, and the more attractive because it makes things delightfully easy to handle and saves an immense amount of worry of enquiry and labour of reflection, but, modified, it accompanies us to the higher levels of a more watchful mentality. Alexander's method with the fateful knot is our natural and favourite dealing with the tangled web of things, the easy cut, the royal way, the facile philosophy of this and not this, that and not that, a strong yes and no, a simple division, a pair of robust opposites, a clean cut of classification. Our reason acts by divisions, even our ordinary illogical thought is a stumbling and bungling summary analysis and arrangement of the experience that offers itself to us with such unending complexity. But the cleanest and clearest division is that which sets us most at ease, because it impresses on our still childlike intelligence a sense of conclusive and luminous simplicity.

But the average mind enamoured of a straight and plain thinking, for which, for a famous instance, that great doctor Johnson thought with the royal force dear to all strong men when he destroyed Berkeley's whole philosophy by simply kicking a stone and saying "There I prove the reality of matter," is not alone affected by this turn towards simple solutions. Even the philosopher, though he inclines to an intricate reasoning by the way, is best delighted when he can get by it to some magnificently conclusive conclusion, some clean-cutting distinction between Brahman and non-Brahman, Reality and unreality or any of the host of mental oppositions on which so many "isms" have been founded. These royal roads of philosophy have the advantage that they are highly and grandly cut for the steps of the metaphysical intellect and at the same time attract and overpower the ordinary mind by the grandiose eminence of the peak in which they end, some snow-white heaven-cutting Matterhorn of sovereign formula. What a magnificent exterminating sweep do we hear for instance in that old renowned sentence, *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*, the Eternal alone is true, the universe is a lie, and how these four victorious words seem to settle the whole business of God and man and world and life at once and for ever in their uncompromising antithesis of affirmation and negation. But after all perhaps when we come to think more at large about the matter, we may find that Nature and Existence are not of the same mind as man in this respect, that there is here a great complexity which we must follow with patience and that those ways of thinking have most chance of a fruitful truth-yielding, which like the inspired thinking of the Upanishads take in many sides at once and reconcile many conflicting conclusions. One can hew material for a hundred philosophies out of the Upanishads as if from some bottomless Titans' quarry and yet no more exhaust it than one can exhaust the opulent bosom of our mother Earth or the riches of our father Ether.

Man began this familiar process of simple cuttings by emphasising his sense of himself as man; he made of himself a being separate, unique and peculiar in this world, for whom or round whom everything else was supposed to be created, — and all the rest, the subhuman existence, animal, plant, inanimate object, everything to the original atom seemed to him a creation different from himself, separate, of another nature; he condemned all to be without a soul, he was the one ensouled being. He saw life, defined it by certain characters that struck his mind, and set apart all other existence as non-living, inanimate. He looked at his earth, made it the centre of the universe, because the one inhabited scene of embodied souls or living beings; but the innumerable other heavenly bodies were only lights to illumine earth's day or to relieve her night. He perceived the insufficiency of this one earthly life only to create another opposite definition of a perfect heavenly existence and set it in the skies he saw above him. He perceived his "I" or self and conceived of it as a separate embodied ego, the centre of all his earthly and heavenly interests, and cut off all other being as the not-I which was there for him to make the best use he could out of it for this little absorbing entity. When he looked beyond these natural sense-governed divisions, he still followed the same logical policy. Conceiving of spirit, he cut it off sharply as a thing by itself, the opposite of all that was not spirit; an antinomy between spirit and matter became the base of his self-conception, or else more amply between spirit on the one side and on the other mind, life and body. Then conceiving of self as a pure entity, all else being not-self was separated from it as of quite another character. Incidentally, with the eye of his inveterate dividing mind, he saw it as his own separate self and, just as before he had made the satisfaction of ego his whole business on earth, so he made the soul's own individual salvation its one all-important spiritual and heavenly transaction. Or he saw the universal and denied the reality of the individual, refusing to them any living unity or coexistent reality, or saw a transcendent Absolute separate from individual and universe so that these became a figment of the unreal, Asat. Being and Becoming are to his clean-cutting confidently trenchant mind two opposite categories, of which one or the other must be denied, or made a temporary construction or a sum, or sicklied over with the pale hue of illusion, and not Becoming accepted as an eternal display of Being. These conceptions of the sense-guided or the intellectual reason still pursue us, but a considering wisdom comes more and more to perceive that conclusive and satisfying as they may seem and helpful though they may be for action of life, action of mind, action of spirit, they are yet, as we now put them, constructions. There is a truth behind them, but a truth which does not really permit of these isolations. Our classifications set up too rigid walls; all borders are borders only and not impassable gulfs. The one infinitely variable Spirit in things carries over all of himself into each form of his omnipresence; the self, the Being is at once unique in each, common in our collectivities and one in all beings. God moves in many ways at once in his own indivisible unity.

The conception of man as a separate and quite peculiar being in the universe has been rudely shaken down by a patient and disinterested examination of the process of nature. He is without equal or peer and occupies a privileged position on earth, but is not solitary in his being; all the evolution is there to explain this seeker of spiritual greatness embodied in a fragile body and narrow life and bounded mind who in turn by his being and seeking explains to itself the evolution. The animal prepares and imperfectly prefigures man and is itself prepared in the plant, as that too is foreseen obscurely by all that precedes it in the terrestrial expansion. Man himself takes up the miraculous play of the electron and atom, draws up through the complex development of the protoplasm the chemical life of subvital things, perfects the original nervous system of the plant in the physiology of the completed animal being, consummates and repeats rapidly in his embryonic growth the past evolution of the animal form into the human perfection and, once born, rears himself from the earthward and downward animal proneness to the erect figure of the spirit who is already looking up to his farther heavenward evolution. All the terrestrial past of the world is there summarised in man, and not only has Nature given as it were the physical sign that she has formed in him an epitome of her universal forces, but psychologically also he is one in his subconscient being with her obscurer subanimal life, contains in his mind and nature the animal and rises out of all this substratum into his conscious manhood.

Whatever soul there is in man is not a separate spiritual being which has no connection with all the rest of the terrestrial family, but seems to have grown out of it by a taking up of it all and an exceeding of its sense by a new power and meaning of the spirit. This is the universal nature of the type man on earth, and it is reasonable to suppose that whatever has been the past history of the individual soul, it must have followed the course of the universal nature and evolution. The separative pride which would break up the unity of Nature in order to make of ourselves another as well as a greater creation, has no physical warrant, but has been found on the contrary to be contradicted by all the evidence; and there is no reason to suppose that it has any spiritual justification. The physical history of humankind is the growth out of the subvital and the animal life into the greater power of manhood; our inner history as indicated by our present nature, which is the animal plus something that exceeds it, must have been a simultaneous and companion growing on the same curve into the soul of humanity. The ancient Indian idea which refused to separate nature of man from the universal Nature or self of man from the one common self, accepted this consequence of its seeing. Thus the Tantra assigns eighty millions of plant and animal lives as the sum of the preparation for a human birth and, without binding ourselves to the figure, we can appreciate the force of its idea of the difficult soul evolution by which humanity has come or perhaps constantly comes into being. We can only get away from this necessity of an animal past by denying all soul to subhuman nature.

But this denial is only one of the blind, hasty and presumptuous isolations of the human mind which shut up in its own prison of separate self-perception refuses to see its kinship with the rest of natural being. Because soul or spirit works in the animal on a lower scale, we are not warranted in thinking that there is no soul in him, any more than a divine or superhuman being would be justified in regarding us as soulless bodies or soulless minds because of the grovelling downward drawn inferiority of our half-animal nature. The figure which we use when sometimes we say of one of our own kind that he has no soul, is only a figure; it means only that the animal type of soul predominates in him over the more developed soul type which we expect in the finer spiritual figure of humanity. But this animal element is present in every mother's son of us; it is our legacy, our inheritance from the common earth-mother: and how spiritually do we get this element of our being or incur the burden of this inheritance, if it is not the earning of our own past, the power we have kept from a bygone formative experience? The spiritual law of Karma is that the nature of each being can be only the result of his past energies; to suppose a soul which assumes and continues a past karma that is not its own, is to cut a line of dissociation across this law and bring in an unknown and unverified factor. But if we admit it, we must account for that factor, we must explain or discover by what law, by what connection, by what necessity, by what strange impulsion of choice a spirit pure of all animal nature assumes a body and nature of animality prepared for it by a lower order of being. If there is no affinity and no consequence of past identity or connection, this becomes an unnatural and impossible assumption. Then it is the most reasonable and concordant conclusion that man has the animal nature, — and indeed if we consider well his psychology, we find that he houses many kinds of animal souls or rather an amalgam of animal natures, — because the developing self in him like the developed body has had a past subhuman evolution. This conclusion preserves the unity of Nature and its developing order; and it concurs with the persistent evidence of an interaction and parallelism which we perceive between the inward and the outward, the physical and the mental phenomenon, — a correspondence and companionship which some would explain by making mind a result and notation of the act of nerve and body, but which can now be better accounted for by seeing in vital and physical phenomenon a consequence and minor notation of a soul-action which it at the same time hints and conceals from our sense-bound mentality. Finally, it makes of soul or spirit, no longer a miraculous accident or intervention in a material universe, but a constant presence in it and the secret of its order and its existence.

The concession of an animal soul existence and of its past subhuman births slowly and guardedly preparing the birth into humanity cannot stop short at this abrupt line in the natural gradation. For man epitomises in his being not only the animal existence below him, but the obscurer subanimal being. But if it is difficult for us to concede a soul to the despised animal form and mind, it is still more difficult to concede it to the brute subconscience of the subanimal nature. Ancient belief made this concession with the happiest ease, saw a soul, a living godhead everywhere in the animate and in the inanimate and nothing was to its view void of a spiritual existence. The logical abstracting intellect with its passion for clean sections intermediately swept away these large beliefs as an imaginative superstition or a primitive animism and, mastered by its limiting and dividing definitions, it drove a trenchant sectional cleavage between man and animal, animal and plant, animate and inanimate being. But now to the eye of our enlarging reason this system of intolerant cleavages is in rapid course of disappearance. The human mind is a development from what is inchoate in the animal mentality; there is, even, in that inferior type a sort of suppressed reason, for that name may well be given to a power of instinctive and customary conclusion from experience, association, memory and nervous response, and man himself begins with these things though he develops out of this animal inheritance a free human self-detaching power of reflective will and intelligence. And it is now clear that the nervous life which is the basis of that physical mentality in man and animal, exists also in the plant with a fundamental identity; not only so, but it is akin to us by a sort of nervous psychology which amounts to the existence of a suppressed mind. A subconscient mind in the plant, it is now not unreasonable to suggest, — but is it not at the summits of plant experience only half subconscious? — becomes conscient in the animal body. When we go lower down, we find hints that there are involved in the subvital most brute material forms the rudiments of precisely the same energy of life and its responses.

And the question then arises whether there is not an unbroken continuity in Nature, no scissions and sections, no unbridgeable gulfs or impassable borders, but a complete unity, matter instinct with a suppressed life, life instinct with a suppressed mind, mind instinct with a suppressed energy of a diviner intelligence, each new form or type of birth evolving a stage in the succession of suppressed powers, and there too the evolution not at an end, but this large and packed intelligence the means of liberating a greater and now suppressed self-power of the Spirit. A spiritual evolution thus meets our eye in the world which an inner force raises up a certain scale of gradations of its births in form by the unfolding of its own hidden powers to the greatness of its complete and highest reality. The word of the ancient Veda stands, — out of all the ocean of inconscience, *apraketaṁ salilaṁ sarvam idam*, it is that one spiritual Existent who is born by the greatness of his own energy, *tapasas tan mahinā ajāyata ekam*. Where in this evolution does the thing we call soul make its first appearance? One is obliged to ask, was it not there, must it not have been there from the first beginnings, even though asleep or, as we may say, somnambulist in matter? If man were only a superior animal with a greater range of physical mind, we might conceivably say that there was no soul or spirit, but only three successive powers of Energy in a series of the forms of matter. But in this human intelligence there does appear at its summit a greater power of spirit; we rise up to a consciousness which is not limited by its physical means and formulas. This highest thing is not, as it might first appear, an unsubstantial sublimation of mind and mind a subtle sublimation of living matter. This greatness turns out to have been the very self-existent substance and power of our being; all other things seem in comparison only its lesser forms of itself which it uses for a progressive revelation; spirit in the end proves itself the first and not only the last, Alpha as well as Omega, and the whole secret of existence from its beginning. We come to a fathomless conception of this all, *sarvam idam*, in which we see that there is an obscure omnipresent life in matter, activised by that life a secret sleeping mind, sheltered in that sleep of mind an involved all-knowing all-originating Spirit. But then soul is not to be conceived of as a growth or birth of which we can fix a date of its coming or a stage in the evolution which brings it to a first capacity of formation, but rather all here is assumption of form by a secret soul which becomes in the self-seeking of life increasingly manifest to a growing self-conscience. All assumption of form is a constant and yet progressive birth or becoming of the soul, *sambhava*, *sambhūti*, — the dumb and blind and brute is that and not only the finely, mentally conscious human or the animal existence. All this infinite becoming is a birth of the Spirit into form. This is the truth, obscure at first or vague to the intelligence, but very luminous to an inner experience, on which the ancient Indian idea of rebirth took its station.

But the repeated birth of the same individual does not at first sight seem to be indispensable in this overpowering universal unity. To the logical intellect it might appear to be a contradiction, since all here is the one self, spirit, existence born into nature, assuming a multitude of forms, ascending many gradations of its stages of self-revelation. That summary cutting of existence into the I and the not-I which was the convenience of our egoistic notion of things, a turn of mind so powerful for action, would seem to be only a practical or a mechanical device of the one Spirit to support its separative phenomenon of birth and conscious variation of combined proceeding, a sorcerer's trick of the universal intelligence; it is only apparent fact of being, not its truth, — there is no separation, only a universal unity, one spirit. But may not this again be a swinging away to the opposite extreme? As the ego was an excessive scission in the unity of being, so this idea of an ocean of unity in which our life would be only an inconstant momentary wave, may be a violent excision of something indispensable to the universal order. Individuality is as important a thing to the ways of the Spirit of existence as universality. The individual is that potent secret of its being upon which the universal stresses and leans and makes the knot of power of all its workings: as the individual grows in consciousness and sight and knowledge and all divine power and quality, increasingly he becomes aware of the universal in himself, but aware of himself too in the universality, of his own past not begun and ended in the single transient body, but opening to future consummations. If the aim of the universal in our birth is to become self-conscient and possess and enjoy its being, still it is done through the individual's flowering and perfection; if to escape from its own workings be the last end, still it is the individual that escapes while the universal seems content to continue its multitudinous births to all eternity. Therefore the individual would appear to be a real power of the Spirit and not a simple illusion or device, except in so far as the universal too may be, as some would have it, an immense illusion or a grand imposed device. On this line of thinking we arrive at the idea of some great spiritual existence of which universal and individual are two companion powers, pole and pole of its manifestation, indefinite circumference and multiple centre of the activised realities of its being.

This is a way of seeing things, harmonious at least in its complexity, supple and capable of a certain all-embracing scope, which we can take as a basis for our ideas of rebirth, — an ascending unity, a spirit involved in material existence which scales wonderfully up many gradations through life to organised mind and beyond mind to the evolution of its own complete self-conscience, the individual following that gradation and the power for its self-crowning. If human mind is the last word of its possibility on earth, then rebirth must end in man and proceed by some abrupt ceasing either to an existence on other planes or to an annulment of its spiritual circle. But if there are higher powers of the spirit which are attainable by birth, then the ascent is not finished, greater assumptions may lie before the soul which has now reached and is lifted to a perfecting of the high scale of humanity. It may even be that this ascending rebirth is not the long upward rocket shooting of a conscious being out of matter or its whirling motion in mind destined to break up and dissolve in some high air of calm nothingness or of silent timeless infinity, but a progress to some great act and high display of the Divinity which shall give a wise and glorious significance to his persistent intention in an eternal creation. Or that at least may be one power of the Eternal's infinite potentiality.

Involution and Evolution

THE WESTERN idea of evolution is the statement of a process of formation, not an explanation of our being. Limited to the physical and biological data of Nature, it does not attempt except in a summary or a superficial fashion to discover its own meaning, but is content to announce itself as the general law of a quite mysterious and inexplicable energy. Evolution becomes a problem in motion which is satisfied to work up with an automatic regularity its own puzzle, but not to work it out, because, since it is only a process, it has no understanding of itself, and, since it is a blind perpetual automatism of mechanical energy, it has neither an origin nor an issue. It began perhaps or is always beginning; it will stop perhaps in time or is always somewhere stopping and going back to its beginnings, but there is no why, only a great turmoil and fuss of a how to its beginning and its cessation; for there is in its acts no fountain of spiritual intention, but only the force of an unresting material necessity. The ancient idea of evolution was the fruit of a philosophical intuition, the modern is an effort of scientific observation. Each as enounced misses something, but the ancient got at the spirit of the movement where the modern is content with a form and the most external machinery. The Sankhya thinker gave us the psychological elements of the total evolutionary process, analysed mind and sense and the subtle basis of matter and divined some of the secrets of the executive energy, but had no eye for the detail of the physical labour of Nature. He saw in it too not only the covering active evident Force, but the concealed sustaining spiritual entity, though by an excess of the analytic intellect, obsessed with its love of trenchant scissions and symmetrical oppositions, he set between meeting Soul and Force an original and eternal gulf or line of separation. The modern scientist strives to make a complete scheme and institution of the physical method which he has detected in its minute workings, but is blind to the miracle each step involves or content to lose the sense of it in the satisfied observation of a vast ordered phenomenon. But always the marvel of the thing remains, one with the inexplicable wonder of all existence, — even as it is said in the ancient Scripture,

> *āścaryavat paśyati kaścid enam,*
> *āścaryavad vadati tathaiva cānyaḥ;*
> *āścaryavac cainam anyaḥ śṛṇoti,*
> *śrutvāpyenaṁ veda na caiva kaścit.*

"One looks on it and sees a miracle, another speaks of it as a miracle, as a miracle another hears of it, but what it is, for all the hearing, none knoweth." We know that an evolution there is, but not what evolution is; that remains still one of the initial mysteries of Nature.

For evolution, as is the habit with the human reason's accounts and solutions of the deep and unfathomable way of the spirit in things, raises more questions than it solves; it does not do away with the problem of creation, for all its appearance of solid orderly fact, any more than the religious affirmation of an external omnipotent Creator could do it or the illusionist's mystic Maya, *aghaṭana-ghaṭana-paṭīyasī*, very skilful in bringing about the impossible, some strange existent non-existent Power with an idea in That which is beyond and without ideas, self-empowered to create an existent non-existent world, existent because it very evidently is, non-existent because it is a patched up consistency of dreamful unreal transiences. The problem is only prolonged, put farther back, given a subtle and orderly, but all the more challengingly complex appearance. But, even when our questioning is confined to the one issue of evolution alone, the difficulty still arises of the essential significance of the bare outward facts observed, what is meant by evolution, what is it that evolves, from what and by what force of necessity? The scientist is content to affirm an original matter or substance, atomic, electric, etheric or whatever it may finally turn out to be, which by the very nature of its own inherent energy or of an energy acting in it and on it, — the two things are not the same, and the distinction, though it may seem immaterial in the beginning of the process, is of a considerable ultimate consequence, — produces owing to some unexplained law, constant system of results or other unalterable principle a number of different basic forms and powers of matter or different sensible and effective movements of energy: these come into being, it seems, when the minute original particles of matter meet together in variously disposed quantities, measures and combinations, and all the rest is a varying, developing, mounting movement of organised energy and its evolutionary consequences, *pariṇāma*, which depends on this crude constituting basis. All that is or may be a correct statement of phenomenal fact, — but we must not forget that the fundamental theory of science has been going of late through a considerable commotion of an upsetting and a rapid rearrangement, — but it carries us no step farther towards the principal, the all-important thing that we want to know. The way in which man sees and experiences the universe, imposes on his reason the necessity of a one original eternal substance of which all things are the forms and a one eternal original energy of which all movement of action and consequence is the variation. But the whole question is what is the reality of this substance and what is the essential nature of this energy?

Then, even if we suppose the least explicable part of the action to be an evolutionary development of the immaterial from Matter, still is that development a creation or a liberation, a birth of what did not exist before or a slow bringing out of what already existed in suppressed fact or in eternal potentiality? And the interest of the question becomes acute, its importance incalculable when we come to the still unexplained phenomenon of life and mind. Is life a creation out of inanimate substance or the appearance of a new, a suddenly or slowly resultant power out of the brute material energy, and is conscious mind a creation out of inconscient or subconscient life, or do these powers and godheads appear because they were always there though in a shrouded and by us unrecognizable condition of their hidden or suppressed idea and activity, Nomen and Numen? And what of the soul and of man? Is soul a new result or creation of our mentalised life, — even so many regard it, because it clearly appears as a self-conscient, bright, distinguishable power only when thinking life has reached some high pitch of its intensity, — or is it not a permanent entity, the original mystery that now unveils its hidden form, the eternal companion of the energy we call Nature, her secret inhabitant or her very spirit and reality? And is man a biological creation of a brute energy which has somehow unexpectedly and quite inexplicably managed to begin to feel and think, or is he in his real self that inner Being and Power which is the whole sense of the evolution and the master of Nature? Is Nature only the force of self-expression, self-formation, self-creation of a secret spirit, and man however hedged in his present capacity, the first being in Nature in whom that power begins to be consciently self-creative in the front of the action, in this outer chamber of physical being, there set to work and bring out by an increasingly self-conscious evolution what he can of all its human significance or its divine possibility? That is the clear conclusion we must arrive at in the end, if we once admit as the key of the whole movement, the reality of this whole mounting creation a spiritual evolution.

The word evolution carries with it in its intrinsic sense, in the idea at its root the necessity of a previous involution. We must, if a hidden spiritual being is the secret of all the action of Nature, give its full power to that latent value of the idea. We are bound then to suppose that all that evolves already existed involved, passive or otherwise active, but in either case concealed from us in the shell of material Nature. The Spirit which manifests itself here in a body, must be involved from the beginning in the whole of matter and in every knot, formation and particle of matter; life, mind and whatever is above mind must be latent inactive or concealed active powers in all the operations of material energy. The only alternative would be to drive in between the two sides of our being the acute Sankhya scission; but that divides too much spirit and nature. Nature would be an inert and mechanical thing, but she would set to her work activised by some pressure on her of the Spirit. Spirit would be Being conscious and free in its own essence from the natural activity, but would phenomenally modify or appear to modify its consciousness in response to some reaction of Nature. One would reflect the movements of the active Power, the other would enlighten her activities with the consciousness of the self-aware immortal being. In that case the scientific evolutionary view of Nature as a vast mechanical energy, life, mind and natural soul action its scale of developing operations would have a justification. Our consciousness would only be a luminous translation of the self-driven unresting mechanical activity into responsive notes of experience of the consenting spiritual witness. But the disabling difficulty in this notion is the quite opposite character of our own highest seeing; for in the end and as the energy of the universal force mounts up the gradients of its own possibilities, Nature becomes always more evidently a power of the spirit and all her mechanism only figures of its devising mastery. The power of the Flame cannot be divided from the Flame; where the Flame is, there is the power, and where the power is there is the fiery Principle. We have to come back to the idea of a spirit present in the universe and, if the process of its works of power and its appearance is in the steps of an evolution, there imposes itself the necessity of a previous involution.

This spirit in things is not apparent from the beginning, but self-betrayed in an increasing light of manifestation. We see the compressed powers of Nature start released from their original involution, disclose in a passion of work the secrets of their infinite capacity, press upon themselves and on the supporting inferior principle to subject its lower movement on which they are forced to depend into a higher working proper to their own type and feel their proper greatness in the greatness of their self-revealing effectuations. Life takes hold of matter and breathes into it the numberless figures of its abundant creative force, its subtle and variable patterns, its enthusiasm of birth and death and growth and act and response, its will of more and more complex organisation of experience, its quivering search and feeling out after a self-consciousness of its own pleasure and pain and understanding gust of action; mind seizes on life to make it an instrument for the wonders of will and intelligence; soul possesses and lifts mind through the attraction of beauty and good and wisdom and greatness towards the joy of some half-seen ideal highest existence; and in all this miraculous movement and these climbing greatnesses each step sets its foot on a higher rung and opens to a clearer, larger and fuller scope and view of the always secret and always self-manifesting spirit in things. The eye fixed on the physical evolution has only the sight of a mechanical grandeur and subtlety of creation; the evolution of life opening to mind, the evolution of mind opening to the soul of its own light and action, the evolution of soul out of the limited powers of mind to a resplendent blaze of the infinities of spiritual being are the more significant things, give us greater and subtler reaches of the self-disclosing Secrecy. The physical evolution is only an outward sign, the more and more complex and subtle development of a supporting structure, the growing exterior metre mould of form which is devised to sustain in matter the rising intonations of the spiritual harmony. The spiritual significance finds us as the notes rise; but not till we get to the summit of the scale can we command the integral meaning of that for which all these first formal measures were made the outward lines, the sketch or the crude notation. Life itself is only a coloured vehicle, physical birth a convenience for the greater and greater births of the Spirit.

The spiritual process of evolution is then in some sense a creation, but a self-creation, not a making of what never was, but a bringing out of what was implicit in the Being. The Sanskrit word for creation signifies a loosing forth, a letting out into the workings of Nature. The Upanishad in a telling figure applies the image of the spider which brings its web out of itself and creates the structure in which it takes its station. That is applied in the ancient Scripture not to the evolution of things out of Matter, but to an original bringing of temporal becoming out of the eternal infinity; Matter itself and this material universe are only such a web or indeed no more than a part of it brought out from the spiritual being of the Infinite. But the same truth, the same law holds good of all that we see of the emergence of things from involution in the material energy. We might almost speak here of a double evolution. A Force inherent in the Infinite brings out of it eternally the structure of its action in a universe of which the last descending scale is based upon an involution of all the powers of the spirit into an inconscient absorption in her self-oblivious passion of form and structural working. Thence comes an ascent and progressive liberation of power after power till the spirit self-disclosed and set free by knowledge and mastery of its works repossesses the eternal fullness of its being which envelops then and carries in its grasp the manifold and unified splendours of its nature. At any rate the spiritual process of which our human birth is a step and our life is a portion, appears as the bringing out of a greatness, *asya mahimānam*, which is secret, inherent and self-imprisoned, absorbed in the form and working of things. Our world-action figures an evolution, an outrolling of a manifold Power gathered and coiled up in the crude intricacy of Matter. The upward progress of the successive births of things is a rise into waking and larger and larger light of a consciousness shut into the first hermetic cell of sleep of the eternal Energy.

There is a parallel in the Yogic experience of the Kundalini, eternal Force coiled up in the body in the bottom root vessel or chamber, *mūlādhāra*, pedestal, earth-centre of the physical nervous system. There she slumbers coiled up like a Python and filled full of all that she holds gathered in her being, but when she is struck by the freely coursing breath, by the current of Life which enters in to search for her, she awakes and rises flaming up the ladder of the spinal chord and forces open centre after centre of the involved dynamic secrets of consciousness till at the summit she finds, joins and becomes one with the spirit. Thus she passes from an involution in inconscience through a series of opening glories of her powers into the greatest eternal superconscience of the spirit. This mysterious evolving Nature in the world around us follows even such a course. Inconscient being is not so much a matrix as a chamber of materialised energy in which are gathered up all the powers of the spirit; they are there, but work in the conditions of the material energy, involved, we say, and therefore not apparent as themselves because they have passed into a form of working subnormal to their own right scale where the characteristics by which we recognise and think we know them are suppressed into a minor and an undetected force of working. As Nature rises in the scale, she liberates them into their recognisable scales of energy, discloses the operations by which they can feel themselves and their greatness. At the highest summit she rises into the self-knowledge of the spirit which informed her action, but because of its involution or concealment in the forms of its workings could not be known in the greatness of its reality. Spirit and Nature discovering the secret of her energies become one at the top of the spiritual evolution by a soul in Nature which awakens to the significance of its own being in the liberation of the highest truth: it comes to know that its births were the births, the assumptions of form of an eternal Spirit, to know itself as that and not a creature of Nature and rises to the possession of the revealed, full and highest power of its own real and spiritual nature. That liberation, because liberation is self-possession, comes to us as the crown of a spiritual evolution.

We must consider all the packed significance of this involution. The spirit involved in material energy is there with all its powers; life, mind and a greater supramental power are involved in Matter. But what do we mean when we say that they are involved, and do we mean that all these things are quite different energies cut off from each other by an essential separateness, but rolled up together in an interaction, or do we mean that there is only one Being with its one energy, varying shades of the light of its power differentiated in the spectrum of Nature? When we say that Life is involved in Matter or in material Force, for of that Force Matter seems after all to be only a various self-spun formation, do we not mean that all this universal working, even in what seems to us its inconscient inanimate action, is a life-power of the spirit busy with formation, and we do not recognise it because it is there in a lower scale in which the characteristics by which we recognise life are not evident or are only slightly evolved in the dullness of the material covering? Material energy would be then Life packed into the density of

Matter and feeling out in it for its own intenser recognisable power which it finds within itself in the material concealment and liberates into action. Life itself would be an energy of a secret mind, a mind imprisoned in its own forms and quivering out in the nervous seekings of life for its intenser recognisable power of consciousness which it discovers within the vital and material suppression and liberates into sensibility. No doubt, practically, these powers work upon each other as different energies, but in essence they would be one energy and their interaction the power of the spirit working by its higher on its lower forces, depending on them at first, but yet turning in the scale of its ascent to overtop and master them. Mind too might only be an inferior scale and formulation derived from a much greater and supramental consciousness, and that consciousness too with its greater light and will a characteristic originating power of spiritual being, the power which secret in all things, in mind, in life, in matter, in the plant and the metal and the atom assures constantly by its inevitable action the idea and harmony of the universe. And what is the spirit itself but infinite existence, eternal, immortal being, but always a conscious self-aware being, — and that is the difference between the materialist's mechanical monism and the spiritual theory of the universe, — which here expresses itself in a world finite to our conceptions whose every movement yet bears witness to the Infinite? And this world is because the spirit has the delight of its own infinite existence and the delight of its own infinite self-variation; birth is because all consciousness carries with it power of its own being and all power of being is self-creative and must have the joy of its self-creation. For creation means nothing else than a self-expression; and the birth of the soul in the body is nothing but a mode of its own self-expression. Therefore all things here are expression, form, energy, action of the Spirit; matter itself is but form of spirit, life but power of being of the spirit, mind but working of consciousness of the spirit. All Nature is a display and a play of God, power and action and self-creation of the one spiritual Being. Nature presents to spirit at once the force, the instrument, the medium, the obstacle, the result of his powers, and all these things, obstacle as well as instrument, are the necessary elements for a gradual and developing creation.

But if the Spirit has involved its eternal greatness in the material universe and is there evolving its powers by the virtue of a secret self-knowledge, is disclosing them in a grandiose succession under the self-imposed difficulties of a material form of being, is disengaging them from a first veiling absorbed inconscience of Nature, there is no difficulty in thinking or seeing that this soul shaped into humanity is a being of that Being, that this also has risen out of material involution by increasing self-expression in a series of births of which each grade is a new ridge of the ascent opening to higher powers of the spirit and that it is still arising and will not be for ever limited by the present walls of its birth but may, if we will, be born into a divine humanity. Our humanity is the conscious meeting place of the finite and the infinite and to grow more and more towards that Infinite even in this physical birth is our privilege. This Infinite, this Spirit who is housed within us but not bound or shut in by mind or body, is our own self and to find and be our self was, as the ancient sages knew, always the object of our human striving, for it is the object of the whole immense working of Nature. But it is by degrees of the self-finding that Nature enlarges to her spiritual reality. Man himself is a doubly involved being; most of himself in mind and below is involved in a subliminal conscience or a subconscience; most of himself above mind is involved in a spiritual superconscience. When he becomes conscient in the superconscience, the heights and the depths of his being will be illumined by another light of knowledge than the flickering lamp of the reason can now cast into a few corners; for then the master of the field will enlighten this whole wonderful field of his being, as the sun illumines the whole system it has created out of its own glories. Then only he can know the reality even of his own mind and life and body. Mind will be changed into a greater consciousness, his life will be a direct power and action of the Divinity, his very body no longer this first gross lump of breathing clay, but a very image and body of spiritual being. That transfiguration on the summit of the mountain, divine birth, *divya janma*, is that to which all these births are a long series of laborious steps. An involution of spirit in matter is the beginning, but a spiritual assumption of divine birth is the fullness of the evolution.

East and West have two ways of looking at life which are opposite sides of one reality. Between the pragmatic truth on which the vital thought of modern Europe enamoured of the vigour of life, all the dance of God in Nature, puts so vehement and exclusive a stress and the eternal immutable Truth to which the Indian mind enamoured of calm and poise loves to turn with an equal passion for an exclusive finding, there is no such divorce and quarrel as is now declared by the partisan mind, the separating reason, the absorbing passion of an exclusive will of realisation. The one eternal immutable Truth is the Spirit and without the spirit the pragmatic truth of a self-creating universe would have no origin or foundation; it would be barren of significance, empty of inner guidance, lost in its end, a firework display shooting up into the void only to fall away and perish in mid-air. But neither is the pragmatic truth a dream of the non-existent, an illusion or a long lapse into some futile delirium of creative imagination; that would be to make the eternal Spirit a drunkard or a dreamer, the fool of his own gigantic self-hallucinations. The truths of universal existence are of two kinds, truths of the spirit which are themselves eternal and immutable, and these are the great things that cast themselves out into becoming and there constantly realise their powers and significances, and the play of the consciousness with them, the discords, the musical variations, soundings of possibility, progressive notations, reversions, perversions, mounting conversions into a greater figure of harmony; and of all these things the spirit has made, makes always his universe. But it is himself that he makes in it, himself that is the creator and the energy of creation and the cause and the method and the result of the working, the mechanist and the machine, the music and the musician, the poet and the poem, supermind, mind and life and matter, the soul and Nature.

An original error pursues us in our solutions of our problem. We are perplexed by the appearance of an antinomy; we set soul against Nature, the spirit against his creative energy. But Soul and Nature, Purusha and Prakriti, are two eternal lovers who possess their perpetual unity and enjoy their constant difference, and in the unity abound in the passion of the multitudinous play of their difference, and in every step of the difference abound in the secret sense or the overt consciousness of unity. Nature takes the Soul into herself so that he falls asleep in a trance of union with her absorbed passion of creation and she too seems then to be asleep in the whirl of her own creative energy; and that is the involution in Matter. Above, it may be, the Soul takes Nature into himself so that she falls asleep in a trance of oneness with the absorbed self-possession of the spirit and he too seems to be asleep in the deep of his own self-locked immobile being. But still above and below and around and within all this beat and rhythm is the eternity of the spirit who has thus figured himself in soul and nature and enjoys with a perfect awareness all that he creates in himself by this involution and evolution. The soul fulfils itself in Nature when it possesses in her the consciousness of that eternity and its power and joy and transfigures the natural becoming with the fullness of the spiritual being. The constant self-creation which we call birth finds there the perfect evolution of all that it held in its own nature and reveals its own utmost significance. The complete soul possesses all its self and all Nature.

Therefore all this evolution is a growing of the Self in material nature to the conscious possession of its own spiritual being. It begins with form — apparently a form of Force — in which a spirit is housed and hidden; it ends in a spirit which consciously directs its own force and creates or assumes its own forms for the free joy of its being in Nature. Nature holding her own self and spirit involved and suppressed within herself, an imprisoned master of existence subjected to her ways of birth and action, — yet are these ways his and this spirit the condition of her being and the law of her workings, — commences the evolution: the spirit holding Nature conscious in himself, complete by his completeness, liberated by his liberation, perfected in his perfection, crowns the evolution. All our births are the births of this spirit and self which has become or put forth a soul in Nature. To be is the object of our existence, — there is no other end or object, for the consciousness and bliss of being is the whole beginning and middle and end, as it is that which is without beginning or end. But this means in the steps of the evolution to grow more and more until we grow into our own fullness of self; all birth is a progressive self-finding, a means of self-realisation. To grow in knowledge, in power, in delight, love and oneness, towards the infinite light, capacity and bliss of spiritual existence, to universalise ourselves till we are one with all being, and to exceed constantly our present limited self till it opens fully to the transcendence in which the universal lives and to base upon it all our becoming, that is the full evolution of what now lies darkly wrapped or works half evolved in Nature.

Karma

ONE FINDS an unanswerable truth in the theory of Karma, — not necessarily in the form the ancients gave to it, but in the idea at its centre, — which at once strikes the mind and commands the assent of the understanding. Nor does the austerer reason, distrustful of first impressions and critical of plausible solutions, find after the severest scrutiny that the more superficial understanding, the porter at the gateways of our mentality, has been deceived into admitting a tinsel guest, a false claimant into our mansion of knowledge. There is a solidity at once of philosophic and of practical truth supporting the idea, a bedrock of the deepest universal undeniable verities against which the human mind must always come up in its fathomings of the fathomless; in this way indeed does the world deal with us, there is a law here which does so make itself felt and against which all our egoistic ignorance and self-will and violence dashes up in the end, as the old Greek poet said of the haughty insolence and prosperous pride of man, against the very foundation of the throne of Zeus, the marble feet of Themis, the adamantine bust of Ananke. There is the secret of an eternal factor, the base of the unchanging action of the just and truthful gods, *devānāṁ dhruvāṇi vratāni*, in the self-sufficient and impartial law of Karma.

This truth of Karma has been always recognised in the East in one form or else in another; but to the Buddhists belongs the credit of having given to it the clearest and fullest universal enunciation and the most insistent importance. In the West too the idea has constantly recurred, but in external, in fragmentary glimpses, as the recognition of a pragmatic truth of experience, and mostly as an ordered ethical law or fatality set over against the self-will and strength of man: but it was clouded over by other ideas inconsistent with any reign of law, vague ideas of some superior caprice or of some divine jealousy, — that was a notion of the Greeks, — a blind Fate or inscrutable Necessity, Ananke, or, later, the mysterious ways of an arbitrary, though no doubt an all-wise Providence. And all this meant that there was some broken half-glimpse of the working of a force, but the law of its working and the nature of the thing itself escaped the perception, — as indeed it could hardly fail to do, since the mental eye of the West, absorbed by the passion of life, tried to read the workings of the universe in the light of the single mind and life of man; but those workings are much too vast, ancient, unbrokenly continuous in Time and all-pervading in Space, — not in material infinity alone, but in the eternal time and eternal space of the soul's infinity, — to be read by so fragmentary a glimmer. Since the Eastern idea and name of the law of Karma was made familiar to the modern mentality, one side of it has received an increasing recognition, perhaps because latterly that mentality had been prepared by the great discoveries and generalisations of Science for a fuller vision of cosmic existence and a more ordered and majestic idea of cosmic Law. It may be as well then to start from the physical base in approaching this question of Karma, though we may find at last that it is from the other end of being, from its spiritual summit rather than its material support that we must look in order to catch its whole significance — and to fix also the limits of its significance.

Fundamentally, the meaning of Karma is that all existence is the working of a universal Energy, a process and an action and a building of things by that action, — an unbuilding too, but as a step to farther building, — that all is a continuous chain in which every one link is bound indissolubly to the past infinity of numberless links, and the whole governed by fixed relations, by a fixed association of cause and effect, present action the result of past action as future action will be the result of present action, all cause a working of energy and all effect too a working of energy. The moral significance is that all our existence is a putting out of an energy which is in us and by which we are made and as is the nature of the energy which is put forth as cause, so shall be that of the energy which returns as effect, that this is the universal law and nothing in the world can, being of and in our world, escape from its governing incidence. That is the philosophical reality of the theory of Karma, and that too is the way of seeing which has been developed by physical Science. But its seeing has been handicapped in the progress to the full largeness of its own truth by two persistent errors, first, the strenuous paradoxical attempt — inevitable and useful no doubt as one experiment of the human reason which had to have its opportunity, but foredoomed to failure — to explain supraphysical things by a physical formula, and a darkening second error of setting behind the universal rule of law and as its cause and efficient the quite opposite idea of the cosmic reign of Chance. The old notion of an unintelligible supreme caprice, — unintelligible it must naturally be since it is the working of an unintelligent Force, — thus prolonged its reign and got admission side by side with the scientific vision of the fixities and chained successions of the universe.

Being is no doubt one, and Law too may be one; but it is perilous to fix from the beginning on one type of phenomena with a predetermined will to deduce from that all other phenomenon however different in its significance and nature. In that way we are bound to distort truth into the mould of our own prepossession. Intermediately at least we have rather to recognise the old harmonious truth of Veda — which also came by this way in its end, its Vedanta, to the conception of the unity of Being, — that there are different planes of cosmic existence and therefore too of our own existence and in each of them the same powers, energies or laws must act in a different type and in another sense and light of their effectuality. First, then, we see that if Karma be a universal truth or the universal truth of being, it must be equally true of the inly-born mental and moral worlds of our action as in our outward relations with the physical universe. It is the mental energy that we put forth which determines the mental effect, — but subject to all the impact of past, present and future surrounding circumstance, because we are not isolated powers in the world, but rather our energy a subordinate strain and thread of the universal energy. The moral energy of our action determines similarly the nature and effect of the moral consequence, but subject too — though to this element the rigid moralist does not give sufficient consideration, — to the same incidence of past, present and future surrounding circumstance. That this is true of the output of physical energy, needs no saying nor any demonstration. We must recognise these different types and variously formulated motions of the one universal Force, and it will not do to say from the beginning that the measure and quality of my inner being is some result of the output of a physical energy translated into mental and moral energies, — for instance, that my doing a good or a bad action or yielding to good or to bad affections and motives is at the mercy of my liver, or contained in the physical germ of my birth, or is the effect of my chemical elements or determined essentially and ultimately by the disposition of the constituent electrons of my brain and nervous system. Whatever drafts my mental and moral being may make on the corporeal for its supporting physical energy and however it may be affected by its borrowings, yet it is very evident that it uses them for other and larger purposes, has a supraphysical method, evolves much greater motives and significances. The moral energy is in itself a distinct power, has its own plane of karma, moves me even, and that characteristically, to override my vital and physical nature. Forms of one universal Force at bottom — or at top — these may be, but in practice they are different energies and have to be so dealt with — until we can find what that universal Force may be in its highest purest texture and initial power and whether that discovery can give us in the perplexities of our nature a unifying direction.

Chance, that vague shadow of an infinite possibility, must be banished from the dictionary of our perceptions; for of chance we can make nothing, because it is nothing. Chance does not at all exist; it is only a word by which we cover and excuse our own ignorance. Science excludes it from the actual process of physical law; everything there is determined by fixed cause and relation. But when it comes to ask why these relations exist and not others, why a particular cause is allied to a particular effect, it finds that it knows nothing whatever about the matter; every actualised possibility supposes a number of other possibilities that have not actualised but conceivably might have, and it is convenient then to say that Chance or at most a dominant probability determines all actual happening, the chance of evolution, the stumblings of a groping inconscient energy which somehow finds out some good enough way and fixes itself into a repetition of the process. If Inconscience can do the works of intelligence, it may not be impossible that chaotic Chance should create a universe of law! But this is only a reading of our own ignorance into the workings of the universe, — just as prescientific man read into the workings of physical law the caprices of the gods or any other name for a sportive Chance whether undivine or dressed in divine glories, whether credited with a pliant flexibility to the prayers and bribes of man or presented with an immutable Sphinx face of stone, — but names only in fact for his own ignorance.

And especially when we come to the pressing needs of our moral and spiritual being, no theory of chance or probability will serve at all. Here Science, physical in her basis, does not help except to point out to a certain degree the effects of my physicality on my moral being or of my moral action on my physicality: for anything else of just illumination or useful purpose, she stumbles and splashes about in the quagmire of her own nescience. Earthquake and eclipse she can interpret and predict, but not my moral and spiritual becoming, but only attempt to explain its phenomena when they have happened by imposing polysyllables and fearful and wonderful laws of pathology, morbid heredity, eugenics and what not of loose fumbling, which touch only the draggled skirts of the lowest psycho-physical being. But here I need guidance more than anywhere else and must have the recognition of a law, the high line of a guiding order. To know the law of my moral and spiritual being is at first and last more imperative for me than to learn the ways of steam and electricity, for without these outward advantages I can grow in my inner manhood, but not without some notion of moral and spiritual law. Action is demanded of me and I need a rule for my action: something I am urged inwardly to become which I am not yet, and I would know what is the way and law, what the central power or many conflicting powers and what the height and possible range and perfection of my becoming. That surely much more than the rule of electrons or the possibilities of a more omnipotent physical machinery and more powerful explosives is the real human question.

The Buddhists' mental and moral law of Karma comes in at this difficult point with a clue and an opening. As Science fills our mind with the idea of a universal government of Law in the physical and outward world and in our relations with Nature, though she leaves behind it all a great unanswered query, an agnosticism, a blank of some other ungrasped Infinite, — here covered by the concept of Chance, — the Buddhist conception too fills the spaces of our mental and moral being with the same sense of a government of mental and moral Law: but this too erects behind that Law a great unanswered query, an agnosticism, the blank of an ungrasped Infinite. But here the covering word is more grandly intangible; it is the mystery of Nirvana. This Infinite is figured in both cases by the more insistent and positive type of mind as an Inconscience, — but material in the one, in the other a spiritual infinite zero, — but by the more prudent or flexible thinkers simply as an unknowable. The difference is that the unknown of Science is something mechanical to which mechanically we return by physical dissolution or *laya*, but the unknown of Buddhism is a Permanent beyond the Law to which we return spiritually by an effort of self-suppression, of self-renunciation and, at the latest end, of self-extinction, by a mental dissolution of the Idea which maintains the law of relations and a moral dissolution of the world-desire which keeps up the stream of successions of the universal action. This is a rare and an austere metaphysics; but to its discouraging grandeur we are by no means compelled to give assent, for it is neither self-evident nor inevitable. It is by no means so certain that a high spiritual negation of what I am is my only possible road to perfection; a high spiritual affirmation and absolute of what I am may be also a feasible way and gate. This nobly glacial or blissfully void idea of a Nirvana, because it is so overwhelmingly a negation, cannot finally satisfy the human spirit, which is drawn persistently to some highest positive and affirmation of itself and only uses negations by the way the better to rid itself of what comes in as an obstacle to its self-finding. To the everlasting No the living being may resign itself by an effort, a sorrowful or a superb turning upon itself and existence, but the everlasting Yes is its native attraction: our spiritual orientation, the magnetism that draws the soul, is to eternal Being and not to eternal Non-Being.

Nevertheless certain essential and needed clues are there in the theory of Karma. And first, there is this assurance, this firm ground on which I can base a sure tread, that in the mental and moral world as in the physical universe there is no chaos, fortuitous rule of chance or mere probability, but an ordered Energy at work which assures its will by law and fixed relation and steady succession and the links of ascertainable cause and effectuality. To be assured that there is an all-pervading mental law and an all-pervading moral law, is a great gain, a supporting foundation. That in the mental and moral as in the physical world what I sow in the proper soil, I shall assuredly reap, is a guarantee of divine government, of equilibrium, of cosmos; it not only grounds life upon an adamant underbase of law, but by removing anarchy opens the way to a greater liberty. But there is the possibility that if this Energy is all, I may only be a creation of an imperative Force and all my acts and becomings a chain of determination over which I can have no real control or chance of mastery. That view would resolve everything into predestination of Karma, and the result might satisfy my intellect but would be disastrous to the greatness of my spirit. I should be a slave and puppet of Karma and could never dream of being a sovereign of myself and my existence. But here there comes in the second step of the theory of Karma, that it is the Idea which creates all relations. All is the expression and expansion of the Idea, *sarvāṇi vijñāna-vijṛmbhitāni.* Then I can by the will, the energy of the Idea in me develop the form of what I am and arrive at the harmony of some greater idea than is expressed in my present mould and balance. I can aspire to a nobler expansion. Still, if the Idea is a thing in itself, without any base but its own spontaneous power, none originating it, no knower, no Purusha and Lord, I may be only a form of the universal Idea and myself, my soul, may have no independent existence or initiation. But there is too this third step that I am a soul developing and persisting in the paths of the universal Energy and that in myself is the seed of all my creation. What I have become, I have made myself by the soul's past idea and action, its inner and outer karma; what I will to be, I can make myself by present and future idea and action. And finally, there is this last supreme liberating step that both the Idea and its Karma may have their origin in the free spirit and by arriving at myself by experience and self-finding I can exalt my state beyond all bondage of Karma to spiritual freedom. These are the four pillars of the complete theory of Karma. They are also the four truths of the dealings of Self with Nature.

Karma and Freedom

THE UNIVERSE in which we live presents itself to our mentality as a web of opposites and contraries, not to say contradictions, and yet it is a question whether there can be in the universe any such thing as an entire opposite or a real contradiction. Good and evil seem to be as opposite powers as well can be and we are apt by the nature of our ethical mind to see the world, at any rate in its moral aspect, as a struggle and tug of war between these eternal opposites, God and devil, Deva and Asura, Ahuramazda, Angrya Mainyu. We hope always that on some as yet hardly conceivable day the one will perish and the other triumph and be convinced of eternity; but actually they are so intertangled that some believe they are here always together like light and shadow and, if at all, then only somewhere beyond this world of action, in some restful and silent eternity is there a release from the anguish of the knot of their intertwining, their bitter constant embrace and struggle. Good comes out of evil and again good itself seems often to turn to evil; the bodies of the wrestling combatants get so mixed and confounded together that to distinguish them the minds of the sages even are perplexed and bewildered. And it would seem sometimes as if this distinction hardly existed except for man and the spirits who urge him, perhaps since he ate of that tree of dual knowledge in the garden; for matter knows it not and life below man troubles itself but little, if at all, with moral differences. And it is said too that on the other side of human being and beyond its struggles is a serenity of the high and universal spirit where the soul transcends sin, but transcends also virtue, and neither sorrows nor repents nor asks "Why have I not done the good and wherefore have I done this which is evil?"[1] because in it all things are perfect and to it all things are pure.

---

[1] Taittiriya Upanishad.

But there is a yet more radical instance of the eventual unreality of opposites. For the sages make too an opposition of the Knowledge and the Ignorance, — *vidyā avidyā*, *citti acitti*, — on which this question of good and evil seems very intimately to hang. Evil runs behind an ignorant urge of the soul in nature, is itself an ignorant perversion of its will, and the partiality of good is equally an affliction of the Ignorance. But when we look closely into the essence of these two things, we find that on one side ignorance seems to be nothing else than an involved or a partial knowledge; it is knowledge wrapped up in an inconscient action or it is knowledge feeling out for itself with the tentacles of mind; and again on the other side knowledge itself appears to be at best a partial knowing and always to have something beyond of which it is ignorant, even its highest and widest splendour a golden outbreak of solar effulgence against the mass of blue-black light of infinity through which we look beyond it to the Ineffable.

Our mind is compelled to think always by oppositions, from the practical validity of which we cannot escape, but which yet seem always in some sort questionable. We get a perception of a law of Karma, the constant unavoidable successions of the acts of energy and its insistent stream of consequences and reactions, the chain of causality, the great mass of past causes behind us from which all future consequence ought infallibly to unroll itself, and by this we try to explain the universe; but then immediately there arises the opposite idea and the challenging problem of liberty. Whence comes this notion of liberty, this divine or this Titanic thirst in man for freedom, born perhaps of something in him by which, however finite be his mind and life and body, he participates in the nature of infinity? For when we look round on the world as it is, everything seems to be by necessity and to move under a leaden constraint and compulsion. This is the aspect of the unthinking world of Force and Matter in which we live; and even in ourselves, in man the thinker, how little is free from some kind of present constraint and of compelling previous necessity! So much of what we are and do is determined by our environment, so much has been shaped by our education and upbringing, — we are made by life and by the hands of others, are clay for many potters: and, as for what is left, was it not determined, even that which is most ourselves, by our individual, our racial, our human heredity or in the last resort by universal Nature who has shaped man and each man to what he is for her blind or her conscient uses?

But we insist and say that we have a will which is aware of a however heavily burdened freedom and can shape to its own purpose and change by its effort environment and upbringing and the formations of heredity and even our apparently immutable common nature. But this will and its effort, is it not itself an instrument, even a mechanical engine of Nature, the active universal energy, and is not its freedom an arbitrary illusion of our mentality which lives in each moment of the present and separates it by ignorance, by an abstraction of the mind from its determining past, so that I seem at every critical moment to exercise a free and virgin choice, while all the time my choice is dominated by its own previous formation and by all that obscure past which I ignore? Granted that Nature works through our will and can create and change, can, that is to say, produce a new formation out of the stuff she has provided for her workings, is it not by a past impulsion and a continuous energy from it that the thing is done? That is the first idea of Karma. Certainly, our present will must come in as one though not by any means the sole element of the act and formation, but in this view it is not a free ever-new will, but in the first place a child and birth of all the past nature, our action, our present karma the result of an already formed shape of the force of that nature, swabhava. And in the second place our will is an instrument constantly shaped and used by something greater than ourselves. Only if there is a soul or self which is not a creation, but a master of Nature, not a formation of the stream of universal energy, but itself the former and creator of its own Karma, are we justified in our claim of an actual freedom or at least in our aspiration to a real liberty. There is the whole heart of the debate, the nodus and escape of this perplexed issue.

But here the critical negative analytic thinker, ancient nihilistic Buddhist or modern materialist, comes in to take away the basis of any actual freedom in our earthly or in any possible heavenly existence. The Buddhist denied the existence of a Self free and infinite; that, he thought, was only a sublimation of the idea of ego, an imposition, *adhyāropa*, or gigantic magnified shadow thrown by the falsehood of our personality on eternal Non-Existence. But as for the soul, there is no soul, but only a stream of forms, ideas and sensations, and as the idea of a chariot is only a name for the combination of planks and pole and wheels and axles, so is the idea of individual soul or ego only a name for the combination or continuity of these things. Nor is the universe itself anything other than such a combination, *saṅghāta*, formed and maintained in its continuity by the successions of Karma, by the action of Energy. In this mechanical existence there can be no freedom from Karma, no possible liberty; but there is yet a possible liberation, because that which exists by combination and bondage to its combinations can be liberated from itself by dissolution. The motive power which keeps Karma in motion is desire and attachment to its works, and by the conviction of impermanence and the cessation of desire there can come about an extinction of the continuity of the idea in the successions of Time.

But if this extinction may be called a liberation, it is yet not a status of freedom; for that can only repose upon an affirmation, a permanence, not upon a negative and extinction of all affirmations, and needs too, one would imagine, a someone or something that is free. The Buddha himself, it may be remarked, seems to have conceived of Nirvana as a status of absolute bliss of freedom, a negation of Karmic existence in some incognisable Absolute which he refused steadfastly to describe or define by any positive or any negative, — as indeed definition by any exclusive positive or widest sum of positives or any negative or complete sum of negatives would seem by the very fact of its bringing in a definition and thereby a limitation to be inapplicable to the Absolute. The Illusionist's Maya is a more mystic thing and more obscure to the intelligence; but we have at least here a Self, a positive Infinite which is capable therefore of an eternal freedom, but only in inaction, by cessation from Karma. For the self as the individual, the soul in action of Karma is bound always by ignorance, and only by rejection of individuality and of the cosmic illusion can we return to the liberty of the Absolute. What we see in both these systems is that spiritual freedom and the cosmic compulsion are equally admitted, but in a total separation and an exclusion from each other's own proper field, — still as absolute opposites and contraries. Compulsion of ignorance or Karma is absolute in the world of birth; freedom of the spirit is absolute in a withdrawal from birth and cosmos and Karma.

But these trenchant systems, however satisfactory to the logical reason, are suspect to a synthetic intelligence; and at any rate, as we find that knowledge and ignorance are not in their essence absolute contraries but ignorance and inconscience itself the veil of a secret knowledge, so it may be at least possible that liberty and the compulsion of Karma are not such unbridgeable opposites, but that behind and even in Karma itself there is all the time a secret liberty of the indwelling Spirit. Buddhism and Illusionism too do not assert any external or internal predestination, but only a self-imposed bondage. And very insistently they demand of man a choice between the right and the wrong way, between the will to an impermanent existence and the will to Nirvana, between a will to cosmic existence and the will to an absolute spiritual being. Nor do they demand this choice of the Absolute or of the universal Being or Power, who indeed cares nothing for their claim and goes on very tranquilly and securely with his mighty eternal action, but they ask it of the individual, of the soul of man halting perplexed between the oppositions of his mentality. It would seem then that there is something in our individual being which has some real freedom of will, some power of choice of a great consequence and magnitude, and what is it then that thus chooses, and what are the limits, where the beginning or the end of its actual or its possible liberty?

Difficult also is it to understand how unsubstantial Impermanence can have such a giant hold or present this power of eternal continuity in Time, — there must surely, one thinks, be a Permanent which expresses itself in this continuity, *dhruvam adhruveṣu*; or how an Illusion, — for what is illusion but an inconsequent dream or unsubstantial hallucination? — can build up this mighty world of just sequence and firm law and linked Necessity; some secret self-knowledge and wisdom there must be which guides the Energy of Karma in its idea and has appointed for her the paths she must hew in Time. It is because of their persistence of principle in all the transiences of particular form that things have such a hold on our mind and will. It is because the world is so real that we feel so potently its grasp on us and our spirits turn on it with this grip of the wrestler. It is often indeed too fiercely real for us and we seek for liberty in the realm of dream or planes of the ideal and, not finding it sufficiently there, because we have not the freedom nor can develop the mastery to impose our ideal on this active reality, we seek it beyond in the remote and infinite greatness of the Absolute. We shall do better then to fix on that other more generally admissible distinction, namely, of the world of Karma as a practical or relative reality and the being of the Spirit constant behind it or brooding above it as a greater supreme reality. And then we have to find whether in the latter alone is any touch of freedom or whether, as must surely be if it is the Spirit that presides over the Energy at work and over its action, there is here too some element or some beginning at least of liberty, and whether, even if it be small and quite relative, we cannot in these steps of Time, in these relations of Karma make this freedom great and real by dwelling consciously in the greatness of the Spirit. May not that be the sovereignty we shall find here when we rise to the top of the soul's evolution?

One thing we will note that this urge towards control and this impression of freedom are an orientation and an atmosphere which cling about the action of mind, and they grow in Nature as she rises towards mentality. The world of Matter seems to know nothing about freedom; everything there appears as if written in sibyllic laws upon tablets of stone, laws which have a process, but no initial reason, serve a harmony of purposes or at least produce a cosmos of fixed results, but do not appear to be shaped with an eye to them by any discoverable Intelligence. We can think of no presence of soul in natural things, because we can see in them no conscious action of mind and a conscious active mental intelligence is to our notions the very basis and standing-ground, if not the whole stuff of soul-existence. If Matter is all, then we may very easily conclude that all is a Karma of material energy which is governed by some inherent incomprehensible mechanically legislating Necessity. But then we see that Life seems to be made of a different stuff; here various possibility develops, here creation becomes eager, pressing, flexible, protean; here we are conscious of a searching and a selection, many potentialities and a choice of actualities, of a subconscient idea which is feeling around for its vital self-expression and shaping an instinctive action, — often, though in certain limits, with an unerring intuitive guidance of life to its immediate objective or to some yet distant purpose, — of a subconscient will too in the fibre of all this vast seeking and mutable impulsion. But yet this too works within limits, under fetters, in a given range of processes.

But when we get out into mind, Nature becomes there much more widely conscious of possibility and of choice; mind is aware of potentialities and of determinations in idea which are other than those of the immediate actuality or of the fixedly necessary consequence of the sum of past and present actualities; it is aware of numberless "may-be"s and "might-have-been"s, and these last are not entirely dead rejected things, but can return through the power of the Idea and effect future determinations and can fulfil themselves at last in the inner reality of their idea though, it may well be, in other forms and circumstances. Moreover, mind can and does go still further; it can conceive of an infinite possibility behind the self-limitations of actual existence. And from this seeing there arises the idea of a free and infinite Will, a Will of illimitable potentiality which determines all these innumerable marvels of its own universal becoming or creation in Space and Time. That means the absolute freedom of a Spirit and Power which is not determined by Karma, but determines Karma. Apparent Necessity is the child of the spirit's free self-determination. What affects us as Necessity, is a Will which works in sequence and not a blind Force driven by its own mechanism.

This is not, however, a binding inference and always there remain on this head arguable by the reason three main conceptions which we can form of existence. First, there is the idea, facile to our reason, of a blind mechanical Necessity of some kind, — and against or behind that nothing or some absolute non-existence. The nature of this Necessity would be that of a fixed processus bound to certain initial and general determinations of which all the rest is the consequence. But that is only a first appearance of universal things, the stamp of phenomenal impression which we get from the aspect of the material universe. Then, there is the idea of a free infinite Being, God or Absolute, who somehow or other creates out of something or out of nothing, in reality or only in conception, or brings out of himself into manifestation a world of the necessity of his will or Maya or Karma in which all things, all creatures are bound as the victims of a necessity, not mechanical or external, but spiritual and internal, a force of Ignorance or a force of Karma or else some kind of arbitrary predestination. And, finally, there is the idea of an absolute free Existence which supports, develops and informs a universe of relations, of that Power as the universal Spirit of our existence, of the world as the evolution of these relations, of beings in the universe as souls who work them out with some freedom of the spirit as its basis, — for that they inwardly are, — but with an observation of the law of the relations as their natural condition.

This law would be in phenomenon or as seen in a superficial view of its sole outward machinery an apparent chain of necessity, but in fact it would be a free self-determination of the Spirit in existence. The free self and spirit would be there informing all the action of material energy, secretly conscient in its inconscience; his would be the movement of life and its inner spirit of guidance; but in mind would be something of the first open light of his presence. The soul evolving in Nature, *prakṛtir jīvabhūtā*, would be an immortal clouded Power of him growing into the light of the spirit and therefore towards the consciousness and reality of freedom. It would be bound at first in Nature and obey helplessly in all its action the urge of Karma, because on the surface the action of energy would be the whole truth of its kinetic being; the rest, the freedom, the origination is there, but concealed below, subliminal and therefore not at all manifest in the action. Even in mentality the action of Karma would be the main fact; everything would be determined by the nature of force of our active being working upon and responding to the influences of the environment and by the nature of quality of our active being which would colour and shape the character of these outputtings and responses. But that force is the force, that quality the quality of the soul; and as the soul grew aware of itself, the consciousness of Freedom would emerge, assert itself, insist, strive to grow into a firmly felt and possessed reality. Free in the spirit within, conditioned and determined in Nature, striving in his soul to bring out the spiritual light, mastery and freedom to work upon the obscurity and embarrassment of his first natural conditions and their narrow determinations, this would be the nature of man the mental being.

On this basis it becomes possible to come at some clear and not wholly antinomous relation between man's necessity and man's freedom, between his earthly human nature at whirl in the machinery of mind, life and body and the master Soul, the Godhead, the real Man behind whose consent supports or whose bidding governs its motions. The soul of man is a power of the self-existence which manifests the universe and not the creature and slave of a mechanical Nature; and it is only the natural instruments of his being, it is mind, life and body and their functions and members which are helpless apparatus and gear of the machinery. These things are subject to the action of Karma, but man in himself, the real man within is not its subject, *na karma lipyate nare*. Rather is Karma his instrument and its developments the material he uses, and he is using it always from life to life for the shaping of a limited and individual, which may be one day a divine and cosmic personality. For the eternal spirit enjoys an absolute freedom. This freedom appears to us no doubt in a certain status, origin or background of all being as an unconditioned infinite of existence, but also it is in relation to the universe the freedom of an existence which displays an infinite of possibilities and has a power of shaping at will out of its own potentiality the harmonies of the cosmos. Man, too, may well be capable of a release, *mokṣa*, into the unconditioned Infinite by cessation of all action, mind and personality. But that is not the whole of the spirit's absolute freedom; it is rather an incomplete liberty, since it endures only by its inaction. But the freedom of the Spirit is not so dependent; it can remain unimpaired in all this action of Karma and is not diminished or abrogated by the pouring of its energies into the whirl of the universe. And one may say that man cannot enjoy the double freedom because as man he is an individual being and therefore a thing in Nature, subject to Ignorance, to Karma. To be free he must get away from individuality, nature and Karma, and then man no longer exists, there is only the unconditioned Infinite. But this is to assume that there is no power of spiritual individuality, but only a power of individuation in Nature. All is then a formation of a nodus of mental, vital and physical Karma with which the one self for a long time mistakenly identifies its being by the delusion of ego. But if on the contrary there is any such thing as an individual power of spirit, it must, in whatever degree of actuality, share in the united force and freedom of the self-existent Divinity; for it is being of his being.

Freedom somewhere there is in our being and action, and we have only to see how and why it is limited in our outward nature, why here I am at all under any dominion of Karma. I appear to be bound by the law of an outward and imposed energy only because there is separation between my outward nature and my inmost spiritual self and I do not live in that outwardness with my whole being, but with a shape, turn and mental formation of myself which I call my ego or my personality. The cosmic spirit in matter seems itself to be so bound, for the same reason. It has started an outward compressed action, a law and disposition of material energy which must be allowed to unroll its consequences; itself holds back behind and conceals its shaping touch;

but still its supporting assent and impulse are there and these come out more into the open as Nature raises herself in the scales of life and mind. Nevertheless, I have to note that even in mind and even in its phenomenon of a conscious will Karma is the first law and there cannot be for me there a complete freedom; there is no such thing as a mental will which is absolutely free. And this is because mind is part of the action of the outward Ignorance, an action which seeks for knowledge but does not possess its full light and power, which can conceive of self and spirit and infinity and reflect them, but not altogether live in them, which can quiver with infinite possibility, but can only deal in a limited half-effective fashion with restricted possibilities. An Ignorance cannot be permitted to have, even if in its nature it could have, free mastery. It would never do for an ignorant mind and will to be given a wide and real freedom; for it would upset the right order of the energy which the Spirit has set at work and produce a most unholy confusion. It must be forced to obey or, if it resists, to bear the reaction of the Law; its partial freedom of a clouded and stumbling knowledge must be constantly overruled both in its action and its result by the law of universal Nature and the will of the seeing universal Spirit who governs the dispositions and consequences of Karma. This constrained overruled action is in patent fact the character of our mental being and action.

But still there is here something which we may call a relative freedom. It does not really belong to our outward mind and will or that shadow of myself which I have put forth in my mental ego; for these things are instruments and they work in the roads of the successions of Karma. But they still feel a power constantly coming forth and either assenting to or intervening in the action of the nature, and that power they attribute to themselves. They are aware of a relative freedom in their disposition of action and of at least a potential absolute freedom behind it, and mixing these two things confusedly together mind, will and ego cry out in unison "I am free." But this freedom and power are influences from the soul. To use a familiar metaphysical language, they type the assent and will of the Purusha without which the Prakriti cannot move on her way. The first and the greater part of this soul-influence is in the form of an assent to Nature, an acquiescence; and for good reason. For I start with the action of the universal Energy which the Spirit has set in motion and as I rise from the ignorance towards knowledge, the first thing demanded from me is to gather experience of its law and of my relations to the law and partly therefore to acquiesce, to allow myself to be moved, to see and to come to know the nature of the motions, to suffer and obey the law, to understand and know Karma.

This obedience is forcibly imposed on the lower ignorant creation. But thinking man who experiences increasingly from generation to generation and from life to life the nature of things and develops reflective knowledge and the sense of his soul in Nature, delivers in her a power of initiating will. He is not bound to her set actualities; he can refuse assent, and the thing in Nature to which it is refused goes on indeed for a time and produces its results by impetus of Karma, but as it runs, it loses power and falls into impotence and desuetude. He can do more, he can command a new action and orientation of his nature. The assent was a manifestation of the power of the soul as giver of the sanction, *anumantā*, but this is a power of the soul as active lord of the nature, *īśvara*. Then Nature still insists more or less on her old habitual way by reason of her past impetus or the right of previous sanctions and may even, in proportion as she is unaccustomed to control, resist and call in hostile powers, our own creations, the children of our past willings; then is there a battle in the house of our being between the lord and his spouse or between old and new nature and a defeat of the soul or its victory. And this is certainly a freedom, but only a relative freedom, and even the greatest mental self-mastery a relative and precarious thing at the best. This liberty when we look down at it from a higher station, is not well distinguishable from a lightened bondage.

The mental being in us can be a learner in the school of freedom, not a perfect adept. A real freedom comes when we get away from the mind into the life of the spirit, from personality to the Person, from Nature to the lord of Nature. There again the first liberty is a passive power; it is of the nature of an assent; it is an observing and essential liberty in which the active part of the being is an instrument of the supreme Spirit and its universal action. But the assent is to the will of the Spirit and not to the mechanical force of Nature, and there is thrown on the mind the freedom of the spirit's light and purity and a right knowledge of relations and a clear detached assent to the divine workings. But if man would have too a freedom of power, of participation, of companionship as the son of God in a greater divine control, he must then not only get back from mind, but must stand, in his thought and will even, above the levels of mentality and find there a station of leverage, a spiritual *pou stō*,[2] whence he can sovereignly move the world of his being. Such a station of consciousness there is in our supramental ranges. When the soul is one with the Supreme and with the universal not only in essence of consciousness and spiritual truth of being, but in expressive act too of consciousness and being, when it enjoys an initiating and relating truth of spiritual will and knowledge and the soul's overflowing delight in God and existence, when it is admitted to the spirit's fullness of assent to self and its creative liberty, its strain of an eternal joy in self-existence and self-manifestation, Karma itself becomes a rhythm of freedom and birth a strain of immortality.[3]

---

[2] A "where to stand", the station of leverage from which Archimedes, could he only have found it, undertook to move the world.

[3] *Sambhūtyā amṛtam aśnute*, "by birth he enjoys immortality."

Karma, Will and Consequence

WILL, KARMA and consequence are the three steps of the Energy which moves the universe. But Karma and consequence are only the outcome of will or even its forms; will gives them their value and without it they would be nothing, nothing at least to man the thinking and growing soul and nothing, it may be hazarded, to the Spirit of which he is a flame and power as well as a creature. The thing we first see or imagine we see, when we look at the outward mechanism of the universe, is energy and its works, action and consequence. But by itself and without the light of an inhabiting will this working is only a huge soulless mechanism, a loud rattling of crank and pulley, a monstrous pounding of spring and piston. It is the presence of the spirit and its will that gives a meaning to the action and it is the value of the result to the soul that gives its profound importance to all great or little consequence. It would not matter to anyone or anything, not even to the cosmos itself, though this universal stir came to an end tomorrow or had never been created, if these suns and systems were not the field of a consciousness which there rolls out its powers, evolves its works, enjoys its creations, plans and exults in its immense aims and sequences. Spirit and consciousness and power of the spirit and Ananda are the meaning of existence. Take away this spiritual significance and this world of energy becomes a mechanical fortuity or a blind and rigid Maya.

The life of man is a portion of this vast significance, and since it is in him that on this material plane it comes out in its full capacity of meaning, a very important and central portion. The Will in the universe works up to him in the creative steps of its energy and makes of his nature a chariot of the gods on which it stands within the action, looks out on its works from the very front and no longer only from behind or above Nature's doings and moves on to the ultimate consequences and the complete evolution of its purpose. The will of man is the agent of the Eternal for the unveiling of his secret meaning in the material creation. Man's mind takes up all the knots of the problem and works them out by the power of the spirit within him and brings them nearer to the full force and degree of their individual and cosmic solutions. This is his dignity and his greatness and he needs no other to justify and give a perfect value to his birth and his acts and his passing and his return to birth, a return which must be — and what is there in it to grieve at or shun? — until the work of the Eternal in him is perfected or the cycles rest from the glory of their labour.

This view of the world is the standpoint from which we must regard the question of man's conscious will and its dealings with life, because then all things fall into their natural place and we escape from exaggerated and depreciated estimates. Man is a conscious soul of the Eternal, one with the Infinite in his inmost being, and the spirit within him is master of his acts and his fate. For fate is *fatum*, the form of act and creation declared beforehand by a Will within him and the universe as the thing to be done, to be achieved, to be worked out and made the self-expression of his spiritual being. Fate is *adṛṣṭa*, the unseen thing which the Spirit holds hidden in the plan of its vision, the consequence concealed from the travailing mind absorbed in the work of the moment by the curtained nearnesses or the far invisible reaches of Time. Fate is *niyati*, the thing willed and executed by Nature, who is power of the Spirit, according to a fixed law of its self-governed workings. But since this Eternal and Infinite, our greater Self, is also the universal being, man in the universe is inseparably one with all the rest of existence, not a soul working out its isolated spiritual destiny and nature while all other beings are nothing but his environment and means or obstacles, — that they are indeed, but they are much more to him, — which is the impression cast on the mind by the thought or the religions that emphasise too much his centre of individuality or his aim of personal salvation. He is not indeed solely a portion of the universe. He is an eternal soul which, though limited for certain temporal purposes in its outward consciousness, has to learn to enlarge itself out of those limits, to find and make effective its unity with the eternal Spirit who informs and transcends the universe. That spiritual necessity is the truth behind the religious dogma.

But also he is one in God and one in Nature with all beings in the cosmos, touches and includes all other souls, is linked to all powers of the Being that are manifest in this cosmic working. His soul, thought, will, action are intimate with the universal soul, thought, will and action. All acts on and through him and mixes with him and he acts too on all and his thought and will and life mix in and become a power of the one common life. His mind is a form and action of the universal mind. His call is not to be busy and concerned only with his own growth and perfection and natural destiny or spiritual freedom. A larger action too claims him. He is a worker in a universal work; the life of others is his life; world-consequence and the world-evolution are also his business. For he is one self with the selves of all other beings.

The dealings of our will with Karma and consequence have to be envisaged in the light of this double truth of man's individuality and man's universality. And seen in this light the question of the freedom of our individual will takes on another appearance. It becomes clear enough that our ego, our outward personality can be only a minor, a temporal, an instrumental form of our being. The will of the ego, the outward, the mentally personal will which acts in the movement cannot be free in any complete or separate sense of freedom. It cannot so be free because it is bound by its partial and limited nature and it is shaped by the mechanism of its ignorance, and again because it is an individualised form and working of the universal energy and at every moment impinged upon and modified and largely shaped by environing wills and powers and forces. But also it cannot so be free because of the greater Soul in us behind the mind which determines works and consequence according to the will in its being and the nature, its power of being, not in the moment but in the long continuities of Time, not solely by the immediate adaptation to the environment, but by its own previous intention which has shaped the environment and already predetermined in great part the present act and consequence. The inward will in the being which is in intimacy with that Power is the real will and this outward thing only an instrumentation for a working out from moment to moment, a spring of the karmic mechanism. That inward will we find when we get back to it, to be a free will, not armoured in a separate liberty, but free in harmony with the freedom of the Spirit guiding and compelling Nature in all souls and in all happenings. This thing our outward mind cannot see easily because the practical truth which it feels is the energy of Nature at once working on us from without and forming too our action from within and reacting upon herself by the mental will, her instrument, to continue her self-shaping for farther Karma and farther consequence. Yet are we aware of a self and the presence of this self imposes on our minds the idea of someone who wills, someone who shapes even the nature and is responsible for consequence.

To understand one must cease to dwell exclusively on the act and will of the moment and its immediate consequences. Our present will and personality are bound by many things, by our physical and vital heredity, by a past creation of our mental nature, by environmental forces, by limitation, by ignorance. But our soul behind is greater and older than our present personality. The soul is not the result of our heredity, but has prepared by its own action and affinities this heredity. It has drawn around it these environmental forces by past karma and consequence. It has created in other lives the mental nature of which now it makes use. That ancient soul of long standing, sempiternal in being, *puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ sanātanaḥ*, has accepted the outward limitation, the outward ignorance as a means of figuring out in a restriction of action from moment to moment the significance of its infinity and the sequence of its works of power. To live in this knowledge is not to take away the value and potency of the moment's will and act, but to give it an immensely increased meaning and importance. Then each moment becomes full of things infinite and can be seen taking up the work of a past eternity and shaping the work of a future eternity. Our every thought, will, action carries with it its power of future self-determination and is too a help or a hindrance for the spiritual evolution of those around us and a force in the universal working. For the soul in us takes in the influences it receives from others for its own self-determination and gives out influences which the soul in them uses for their growth and experience. Our individual life becomes an immensely greater thing in itself and is convinced too of an abiding unity with the march of the universe.

And karma and consequence also get a wider meaning. At present we fix too much on the particular will and act of the moment and a particular consequence in a given time. But the particular only receives its value by all of which it is a part, all from which it comes, all to which it moves. We fix too much also on the externalities of karma and consequence, this good or that bad action and result of action. But the real consequence which the soul is after is a growth in the manifestation of its being, an enlarging of its range and action of power, its comprehension of delight of being, its delight of creation and self-creation, and not only its own but the same things in others with which its greater becoming and joy are one. Karma and consequence draw their meaning from their value to the soul; they are steps by which it moves towards the perfection of its manifested nature. And even when this object is won, our action need not cease, for it will keep its value and be a greater force of help for all these others with whom in self we are one. Nor can it be said that it will have no self-value to the soul grown aware of freedom and infinity; for who shall persuade me that my infinity can only be an eternal full stop, an endless repose, an infinite cessation? Much rather should infinity be eternally capable of an infinite self-expression.

The births of the soul are the series of a constant spiritual evolution, and it might well seem that when the evolution is finished, and that must be, it might at first appear, when the soul involved in ignorance returns to self-knowledge, the series of our births too ought to come to a termination. But that is only one side of the matter, one long act here of the eternal drama, doing, karma. The spirit we are is not only an eternal consciousness and eternal being; its characters are an eternal power of being and an eternal Ananda. Creation is not to the spirit a trouble and an anguish, but a delight expressed, even though in the entirety of its depths inexpressible, fathomless, endless, inexhaustible. It is only the limited action of mind in the ignorance straining after possession and discovery and unable to find the concealed power of the spirit that makes of the delight of action and creation a passion or suffering: for, limited in capacity and embarrassed by life and body, it has yet desires beyond its capacity, because it is the instrument of a growth and the seed of an illimitable self-expression and it has the pain of the growth and the pain of the obstacle and the pain of the insufficiency of its action and delight. But let this struggling self-creator and doer of works once grow into the consciousness and power of the secret infinite spirit within it and all this passion and suffering passes away into an immeasurable delight of liberated being and its liberated action.

The Buddhist perception of karma and suffering as inseparable, that which drove the Buddha to the search for a means of the extinction of the will to be, is only a first phase and partial appearance. To find self is the cure of suffering, because self is infinite possession and perfect satisfaction. But to find self in quiescence is not the whole meaning of the spiritual evolution, but to find it too in its power of being; for being is not only eternal status, but also eternal movement, not only rest, but also action. There is a delight of rest and a delight of action, but in the wholeness of the spirit these two things are no longer contraries, but one and inseparable. The status of the spirit is an eternal calm, but also its self-expression in world-being is without any beginning or end, because eternal power means an eternal creation. When we gain the one, we need not lose its counterpart and consequence. To get to a foundation is not to destroy all capacity for superstructure.

Karma is nothing but the will of the Spirit in action, consequence nothing but the creation of will. What is in the will of being, expresses itself in karma and consequence. When the will is limited in mind, karma appears as a bondage and a limitation, consequence as a reaction or an imposition. But when the will of the being is infinite in the spirit, karma and consequence become instead the joy of the creative spirit, the construction of the eternal mechanist, the word and drama of the eternal poet, the harmony of the eternal musician, the play of the eternal child. This lesser, bound, seemingly separate evolution is only a step in the free self-creation of the Spirit from its own illimitable Ananda. That is behind all we are and do; to hide it from mind and bring it slowly forward into the front of existence and action is the present play of Self with Nature.

Rebirth and Karma

THE ANCIENT idea of Karma was inseparably connected with a belief in the soul's continual rebirth in new bodies. And this close association was not a mere accident, but a perfectly intelligible and indeed inevitable union of two related truths which are needed for each other's completeness and can with difficulty exist in separation. These two things are the soul side and the nature side of one and the same cosmic sequence. Rebirth is meaningless without karma, and karma has no fount of inevitable origin and no rational and no moral justification if it is not an instrumentality for the sequences of the soul's continuous experience. If we believe that the soul is repeatedly reborn in the body, we must believe also that there is some link between the lives that preceded and the lives that follow and that the past of the soul has an effect on its future; and that is the spiritual essence of the law of Karma. To deny it would be to establish a reign of the most chaotic incoherence, such as we find only in the leaps and turns of the mind in dream or in the thoughts of madness, and hardly even there. And if this existence were, as the cosmic pessimist imagines, a dream or an illusion or, worse, as Schopenhauer would have it, a delirium and insanity of the soul, we might accept some such law of inconsequent consequence. But, taken even at its worst, this world of life differs from dream, illusion and madness by its plan of fine, complex and subtle sequences, the hanging together and utility even of its discords, the general and particular harmony of its relations, which, if they are not the harmony we would have, not our longed-for ideal harmony, has still at every point the stamp of a Wisdom and an Idea at work; it is not the act of a Mind in tatters or a machine in dislocation. The continuous existence of the soul in rebirth must signify an evolution if not of the self, for that is said to be immutable, yet of its more outward active soul or self of experience. This evolution is not possible if there is not a connected sequence from life to life, a result of action and experience, an evolutionary consequence to the soul, a law of Karma.

And on the side of Karma, if we give to that its integral and not a truncated meaning, we must admit rebirth for the sufficient field of its action. For Karma is not quite the same thing as a material or substantial law of cause and effect, the antecedent and its mechanical consequence. That would perfectly admit of a Karma which could be carried on in time and the results come with certainty in their proper place, their just degree by a working out of the balance of forces, but need not in any way touch the human originator who might have passed away from the scene by the time the result of his acts got into manifestation. A mechanical Nature could well visit the sins of the fathers not on them, but on their fourth or their four-hundredth generation, as indeed this physical Nature does, and no objection of injustice or any other mental or moral objection could rise, for the only justice or reason of a mechanism is that it shall work according to the law of its structure and the fixed eventuality of its force in action. We cannot demand from it a mind or a moral equity or any kind of supraphysical responsibility. The universal energy grinds out inconsciently its effects and individuals are only fortuitous or subordinate means of its workings; the soul itself, if there is a soul, makes only a part of the mechanism of Nature, exists not for itself, but as a utility for her business. But Karma is more than a mechanical law of antecedent and consequence. Karma is action, there is a thing done and a doer and an active consequence; these three are the three joints, the three locks, the three *sandhis* of the connexus of Karma. And it is a complex mental, moral and physical working; for the law of it is not less true of the mental and moral than of the physical consequence of the act to the doer. The will and the idea are the driving force of the action, and the momentum does not come from some commotion in my chemical atoms or some working of ion and electron or some weird biological effervescence. Therefore the act and consequence must have some relation to the will and the idea and there must be a mental and moral consequence to the soul which has the will and idea. That, if we admit the individual as a real being, signifies a continuity of act and consequence to him and therefore rebirth for a field of this working. It is evident that in one life we do not and cannot labour out and exhaust all the values and powers of that life, but only carry on a past thread, weave out something in the present, prepare infinitely more for the future.

This consequence of rebirth would not follow from the very nature of Karma if there were only an All-Soul of the universe. For then it would be that which is carrying on in myriads of forms its past, working out some present result, spinning yarn of karma for a future weft of consequence. It is the All-Soul which would be the originator, would upbear the force of the act, would receive and exhaust or again take up for farther uses the returning force of the consequence. Nothing essential would depend on its doing all these things through the same individual mask of its being. For the individual would only be a prolonged moment of the All-Soul, and what it originated in this moment of its being which I call myself, might very well produce its result on some other moment of the same being which from the point of view of my ego would be somebody quite different from and unconnected with myself. There would be no injustice, no unreason in such an apparently vicarious reaping of the fruit or suffering of the consequence; for what has a mask, though it be a living and suffering mask, to do with these things? And, in fact, in the nature of life in the material universe a working out of the result of the action of one in the lives of many others, an effect of the individual's action on the group or the whole is everywhere the law. What I sow in this hour, is reaped by my posterity for several generations and we can then call it the karma of the family. What the men of today as community or people resolve upon and execute, comes back with a blessing or a sword upon the future of their race when they themselves have passed away and are no longer there to rejoice or to suffer; and that we can speak of as the karma of the nation. Mankind as a whole too has a karma; what it wrought in its past, will shape its future destiny; individuals seem only to be temporary units of human thought, will, nature who act according to the compulsion of the soul in humanity and disappear; but the karma of the race which they have helped to form continues through the centuries, the millenniums, the cycles.

But we can see, when we look into ourselves, that this relation of the individual to the whole has a different significance; it does not mean that I have no existence except as a more or less protracted moment in the cosmic becoming of the All-Soul: that too is only a superficial appearance and much subtler and greater is the truth of my being. For the original and eternal Reality, the Alpha and Omega, the Godhead is neither separate in the individual nor is he only and solely a Pantheos, a cosmic spirit. He is at once the eternal individual and the eternal All-Soul of this and many universes, and at the same time he is much more than these things. This universe might end, but he would still be; and I too, though the universe might end, could still exist in him; and all these eternal souls would still exist in him. But as his being is for ever, so the succession of his creations too is for ever; if one creation were to come to an end, it would be only that another might begin and the new would carry on with a fresh commencement and initiation the possibility that had not been worked out in the old, for there can be no end to the self-manifestation of the Infinite. *Nāsti anto vistarasya me.* The universe finds itself in me, even as I find myself in the universe, because we are this face and that face of the one eternal Reality, and individual being is as much needed as universal being to work out this manifestation. The individual vision of things is as true as the universal vision, both are ways of the self-seeing of the Eternal. I may now see myself as a creature contained in the universe; but when I come to self-knowledge, I see too the universe to be a thing contained in myself, subtly by implication in my individuality, amply in the great universalised self I then become. These are data of an ancient experience, things known and voiced of old, though they may seem shadowy and transcendental to the positive modern mind which has long pored so minutely on outward things that it has become dazed and blind to any greater light and is only slowly recovering the power to see through its folds; but they are for all that always valid and can be experienced today by any one of us who chooses to turn to the deepest way of the inner experience. Modern thought and science, if we look at the new knowledge given us in its whole, do not contradict them, but only trace for us the outward effect and workings of these realities; for always we find in the end that truth of self is not contradicted, but reproduced and made effectual here by law of Energy and law of Matter.

The necessity of rebirth, if we look at it from the outward side, from the side of energy and process, stands upon a persistent and insistent fact which supervenes always upon the generality of common law and kind and constitutes the most intimate secret of the wonder of existence, the uniqueness of the individual. And this uniqueness is everywhere, but appears as a subordinate factor only in the lower ranges of existence. It becomes more and more important and pronounced as we rise in the scale, enlarges in mind, gets to enormous proportions when we come to the things of the spirit. That would seem to indicate that the cause of this significant uniqueness is something bound up with the very nature of spirit; it is something it held in itself and is bringing out more and more as it emerges out of material Nature into self-conscience. The laws of being are at bottom one for all of us, because all existence is one existence; one spirit, one self, one mind, one life, one energy of process is at work; one will and wisdom has planned or has evolved from itself the whole business of creation. And yet in this oneness there is a persistent variety, which we see first in the form of a communal variation. There is everywhere a group energy, group life, group mind, and if soul is, then we have reason to believe that however elusive it may be to our seizing, there is a group-soul which is the support and foundation — some would call it the result — of this communal variety. That gives us a ground for a group karma. For the group or collective soul renews and prolongs itself and in man at least develops its nature and experience from generation to generation. And who knows whether, when one form of it is disintegrated, community or nation, it may not wait for and assume other forms in which its will of being, its type of nature and mentality, its attempt of experience is carried forward, migrates, one might almost say, into new-born collective bodies, in other ages or cycles? Mankind itself has this separate collective soul and collective existence. And on that community the community of karma is founded; the action and development of the whole produces consequence of karma and experience for the individual and the totality even as the action and development of the individual produces consequences and experience for others, for the group, for the whole. And the individual is there; you cannot reduce him to a nullity or an illusion; he is real, alive, unique. The communal soul-variation mounts up from the rest, exceeds, brings in or brings out something more, something new, adds novel powers in the evolution. The individual mounts and exceeds in the same way from the community. It is in him, on his highest heights that we get the flame-crest of self-manifestation by which the One finds himself in Nature.

And the question is how does that come about at all? I enter into birth, not in a separate being, but in the life of the whole, and therefore I inherit the life of the whole. I am born physically by a generation which is a carrying on of its unbroken history; the body, life, physical mentality of all past being prolongs itself in me and I must therefore undergo the law of heredity; the parent, says the Upanishad, recreates himself by the energy in his seed and is reborn in the child. But as soon as I begin to develop, a new, an independent and overbearing factor comes in, which is not my parents nor my ancestry, nor past mankind, but I, my own self. And this is the really important, crowning, central factor. What matters most in my life, is not my heredity; that only gives me my opportunity or my obstacle, my good or my bad material, and it has not by any means been shown that I draw all from that source. What matters supremely is what I make of my heredity and not what my heredity makes of me. The past of the world, bygone humanity, my ancestors are there in me; but still I myself am the artist of my self, my life, my actions. And there is the present of the world, of humanity, there are my contemporaries as well as my ancestors; the life of my environment too enters into me, offers me a new material, shapes me by its influence, lays its direct or its indirect touch on my being. I am invaded, changed, partly recreated by the environing being and action in which I am and act. But here again the individual comes in subtly and centrally as the decisive power. What is supremely important is what I make of all this surrounding and invading present and not what it makes of me. And in the interaction of individual and general Karma in which others are causes and produce an effect in my existence and I am a cause and produce an effect on them, I live for others, whether I would have it so or no, and others live for me and for all. Still the central power of my psychology takes its colour from this seeing that I live for my self, and for others or for the world only as an extension of my self, as a thing with which I am bound up in some kind of oneness. I seem to be a soul, self or spirit who constantly with the assistance of all create out of my past and present my future being and myself too help in the surrounding creative evolution.

What then is this all-important and independent power in me and what is the beginning and the end of its self-creation? Has it, even though it is something independent of the physical and vital present and past which gives to it so much of its material, itself no past and no future? Is it something which suddenly emerges from the All-Soul at my birth and ceases at my death? Is its insistence on self-creation, on making something of itself for itself, for its own future and not only for its fleeting present and the future of the race, a vain preoccupation, a gross parasitical error? That would contradict all that we see of the law of the world-being; it would not reduce our life to a greater consistency with the frame of things, but would bring in a freak element and an inconsistency with the pervading principle. It is reasonable to suppose that this powerful independent element which supervenes and works upon the physical and vital evolution, was in the past and will be in the future. It is reasonable also to suppose that it did not come in suddenly from some unconnected existence and does not pass out after one brief intervention; its close connection with the life of the world is rather a continuation of a long past connection. And this brings in at once the whole necessity of past birth and karma. I am a persistent being who pursue my evolution within the persistent being of the world. I have evolved my human birth and I help constantly in the human evolution. I have created by my past karma my own conditions and my relations with the life of others and the general karma. That shapes my heredity, my environment, my affinities, my connections, my material, my opportunities and obstacles, a part of my predestined powers and results, not arbitrarily predestined but predetermined by my own stage of nature and past action, and on this groundwork I build new karma and farther strengthen or subtilise my power of natural being, enlarge experience, go on with my soul evolution. This process is woven in with the universal evolution and all its lines are included in the web of being, but it is not merely a jutting point or moment of it or a brief tag shot into the tissue. That is what rebirth means in the history of my manifested self and of universal being.

The old idea of rebirth errs on the contrary by an excessive individualism. Too self-concentrated, it treated one's rebirth and karma as too much one's own single affair, a sharply separate movement in the whole, leaned too much on one's own concern with one's self and even while it admitted universal relations and a unity with the whole, yet taught the human being to see in life principally a condition and means of his own spiritual benefit and separate salvation. That came from the view of the universe as a movement which proceeds out of something beyond, something from which each being enters into life and returns out of it to its source, and the absorbing idea of that return as the one thing that at all matters. Our being in the world, so treated, came in the end to be regarded as an episode and in sum and essence an unhappy and discreditable episode in the changeless eternity of the Spirit. But this was too summary a view of the will and the ways of the Spirit in existence. Certain it is that while we are here, our rebirth or karma, even while it runs on its own lines, is intimately one with the same lines in the universal existence. But my self-knowledge and self-finding too do not abolish my oneness with other life and other beings. An intimate universality is part of the glory of spiritual perfection. This idea of universality, of oneness not only with God or the eternal Self in me, but with all humanity and other beings, is growing to be the most prominent strain in our minds and it has to be taken more largely into account in any future idea or computation of the significance of rebirth and karma. It was admitted in old times; the Buddhist law of compassion was a recognition of its importance; but it has to be given a still more pervading power in the general significance.

The self-effectuation of the Spirit in the world is the truth on which we take our foundation, a great, a long self-weaving in time. Rebirth is the continuity of that self-effectuation in the individual, the persistence of the thread; Karma is the process, a force, a work of energy and consequence in the material world, an inner and an outer will, an action and mental, moral, dynamic consequence in the soul evolution of which the material world is a constant scene. That is the conception; the rest is a question of the general and particular laws, the way in which karma works out and helps the purpose of the spirit in birth and life. And whatever those laws and ways may be, they must be subservient to this spiritual self-effectuation and take from it all their meaning and value. The law is a means, a line of working for the spirit, and does not exist for its own sake or for the service of any abstract idea. Idea and law of working are only direction and road for the soul's progress in the steps of its existence.

Karma and Justice

WHAT ARE the lines of Karma? What is the intrinsic character and active law of this energy of the soul and its will and development of consequence? To ask that question is to ask what is the form taken here by the dynamic meaning of our existence and what the curves of guidance of its evolving self-creation and action. And such a question ought not to be answered in a narrow spirit or under the obsession of some single idea which does not take into account the many-sidedness and rich complexity of this subtle world of Nature. The law of Karma can be no rigid and mechanical canon or rough practical rule of thumb, but rather its guiding principle should be as supple a harmonist as the Spirit itself whose will of self-knowledge it embodies and should adapt itself to the need of self-development of the variable individual souls who are feeling their way along its lines towards the right balance, synthesis, harmonies of their action. The karmic idea cannot be — for spirit and not mind is its cause — a cosmic reflection of our limited average human intelligence, but rather the law of a greater spiritual wisdom, a means which behind all its dumb occult appearances embodies an understanding lead and a subtle management towards our total perfection.

The ordinary current conception of law of Karma is dominantly ethical, but ethical in no very exalted kind. Its idea of karma is a mechanical and materialistic ethics, a crudely exact legal judgment and administration of reward and punishment, an external sanction to virtue and prohibition of sin, a code, a balance. The idea is that there must be a justice governing the award of happiness and misery on the earth, a humanly intelligible equity and that the law of Karma represents it and gives us its formula. I have done so much good, *puṇya*. It is my capital, my accumulation and balance. I must have it paid out to me in so much coin of prosperity, the legal currency of this sovereign and divine Themis, or why on earth should I at all do good? I have done so much evil. That too must come back to me in so much exact and accurate punishment and misfortune. There must be so much outward suffering or an inward suffering caused by outward event and pressure; for if there were not this physically sensible, visible, inevitable result, where would be any avenging justice and where could we find any deterrent sanction in Nature against evil? And this award is that of an exact judge, a precise administrator, a scrupulous merchant of good for good and evil for evil who has learned nothing and will never learn anything of the Christian or Buddhistic ideal rule, has no bowels of mercy or compassion, no forgiveness for sin, but holds austerely to an eternal Mosaic law, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, a full, slow or swift, but always calm and precisely merciless *lex talionis*.

This commercial and mathematical accountant is sometimes supposed to act with a startling precision. A curious story was published the other day, figuring as a fact of contemporary occurrence, of a rich man who had violently deprived another of his substance. The victim is born as the son of the oppressor and in the delirium of a fatal illness reveals that he has obliged his old tyrant and present father to spend on him and so lose the monetary equivalent of the property robbed minus a certain sum, but that sum must be paid now, otherwise — The debt is absolved and as the last pice is expended, the reborn soul departs, for its sole object in taking birth is satisfied, accounts squared and the spirit of Karma content. That is the mechanical idea of Karma at its acme of satisfied precision. At the same time the popular mind in its attempt to combine the idea of a life beyond with the notion of rebirth, supposes a double prize for virtue and a double penalty for transgression. I am rewarded for my good deeds in heaven after death until the dynamic value of my virtue is exhausted and I am then reborn and rewarded again materially on earth. I am punished in hell to the equivalence of my sins and again punished for them in another life in the body. This looks a little superfluous and a rather redundant justice, and, even, the precise accountant becomes very like an unconscionable hundred per cent usurer. Perhaps it may be said that beyond earth it is the soul that suffers — for purification, and here the physical being — as a concession to the forces of life and the symmetry of things: but still it is the soul that thus pays double in its subtle experience and in its physical incarnation.

The strands of our nature which mix in this natural but hardly philosophic conception, have to be disentangled before we can disengage the right value of these ideas. Their first motive seems to be ethical, for justice is an ethical notion; but true ethics is dharma, the right fulfilment and working of the higher nature, and right action should have right motive, should be its own justification and not go limping on the crutches of greed and fear. Right done for its own sake is truly ethical and ennobles the growing spirit; right done in the lust for a material reward or from fear of the avenging stripes of the executioner or sentence of the judge, may be eminently practical and useful for the moment, but it is not in the least degree ethical, but is rather a lowering of the soul of man; or at least the principle is a concession to his baser animal and unspiritual nature. But in natural man, born before the higher dharma and more potent and normal as a motive to action, come two other very insistent things, *kāma*, *artha*, desire and pleasure of enjoyment with its corresponding fear of suffering, and interest of possession, acquisition, success with its complementary pain of lacking and frustration, and this is what governs most prominently the normal barbaric or still half barbaric natural man. He needs to some not small extent if he is to conform his close pursuit of desire and interest to the ethical standard, a strict association or identity of result of virtue with some getting of his interest and pleasure and result of sin with some loss of materially or vitally desirable things and the infliction of mental, vital or physical pain. Human law proceeds on this principle by meeting the grosser more obvious offences with punishment and avenging pain or loss and on the other hand assuring the individual in some degree of the secure having of his legitimate pleasure and interest if he observes the legal rule. The cosmic law is expected by the popular theory of

Karma to deal with man on his own principle and do this very thing with a much sterner and more unescapable firmness of application and automatic necessity of consequence.

The cosmic Being must be then, if this view is to hold, a sort of enlarged divine Human or, we might say, a superior anthropoid Divine, or else the cosmic Law a perfection and magnitude of human methods and standards, which deals with man as he is accustomed to deal with his neighbour, — only not with a rough partial human efficacy, but either a sure omniscience or an unfailing automatism. Whatever truth there may be behind that notion, this is not likely to be an adequate account of the matter. In actual life, if we put aside the rebirth theory, there are traces of this method, but it does not work out with any observable consistency, — not even if we accept an unsatisfactory and hardly just vicarious punishment as part of the scheme. What surety have we, then, of its better or its faultless working out in rebirth except for some similar partial signs and indications and, to fill in the blanks, our general sense of the fitness of things? And again where does the true nature of ethics come in in this scheme? That more elevated action, it would almost seem, is an ideal movement of less use for the practical governance of life than as one part of a preparation for a fourth and last need of man, his need of spiritual salvation, and salvation winds up finally our karma and casts away the economy along with the very thought and will of life. Desire is the law of life and action and therefore of Karma. To do things above the material level for their own sake and their pure right or pure delight is to head straight towards the distances of heaven or the silence of the Ineffable. But this is a view of the meaning of existence against which it is time for the higher seeing mind and being of man to protest and to ask whether the ways of the Spirit in the world may not be capable of a greater, nobler and wiser significance.

But still, since the mind of man is part of the universal mind and reflects something of it in a however broken or as yet imperfect and crookedly seeing fashion, there may well be something of a real truth behind this view, though it is not likely to be the whole or the well understood truth. There are some certain or probable laws of the universal working which are relevant to it and must enter into the account. First, it is sure that Nature has laws of which the observance leads to or helps well-being and of which the violation imposes suffering; but all of them cannot be given a moral significance. Then there is the certainty that there must be a moral law of cause and consequence in the total web of her weaving and this we would perhaps currently put into the formula that good produces good and evil evil, which is a proposition of undoubted truth, though also we see in this complicated world that evil comes out of what we hold to be good, and again out of evil disengages itself something that yet turns to good. Perhaps our system of values is too rigidly precise or too narrowly relative; there are subtle things in the totality, minglings, interrelations, cross-currents, suppressed or hidden significances which we do not take into account. The formula is true, but is not the whole truth, at least as now understood in its first superficial significance.

And at any rate in the ordinary notion of Karma we are combining two different notions of good. I can well understand that moral good does or ought to produce and increase moral good and moral evil to farther and to create moral evil. It does so in myself. The habit of love confirms and enhances my power of love; it purifies my being and opens it to the universal good. The habit of hatred on the contrary corrupts my being, fills it with poison, with bad and morbid toxic matter, and opens it to the general power of evil. My love ought also by a prolongation or a return to produce love in others and my hatred to give rise to hatred; that happens to a certain, a great extent, but it need not be and is not an invariable or rigorous consequence; still we may well see and believe that love does throw out widening ripples and helps to elevate the world while hatred has the opposite consequence. But what is the necessary connection between this good and evil on the one hand and on the other pleasure and pain? Must the ethical power always turn perfectly into some term of kindred hedonistic result? Not entirely; for love is a joy in itself, but also love suffers; hatred is a troubled and self-afflicting thing, but has too its own perverse delight of itself and its gratifications; but in the end we may say that love, because it is born of the universal Delight, triumphs in its own nature and hatred because it is its denial or perversion, leads to a greater sum of misery to myself as to others. And of all true moral good and real evil this may be said that the one tends towards some supreme Right, the *ṛtam* of the Vedic Rishis, the highest law of a highest Truth of our being and that Truth is the door of the spirit's Ananda, its beatific nature, the other is a missing or perversion of the Right and the Truth and exposes us to its opposite, to false delight or suffering. And even in the perplexed steps of life some reflection of this identity must emerge.

This correspondence is, still, more essentially true in the inner field, in the spiritual, mental and emotional result and reaction of the good or the evil or of the effects of its outgoing action. But where is the firm link of correspondence between the ethical and the more vital and physical hedonistic powers of life? How does my ethical good turn into smiling fortune, crowned prosperity, sleek material good and happiness to myself and my ethical evil into frowning misfortune, rugged adversity, sordid material ill and suffering, — for that is what the desire soul of man and the intelligence governed by it seem to demand, — and how is the account squared or the transmutation made between these two very different energies of the affirmation and denial of good? We can see this much that the good or the evil in me translates itself into a good or an evil action which among other things brings about much mental and material happiness and suffering to others, and to this outgoing power and effect there ought to be an equal reaction of incoming power and effect, though it does not seem to work itself out immediately or with any discoverable exactness of correspondence. There does still appear to be a principle of rebound in Nature; our action has in some degree the motion of recoil of the boomerang and cycles back towards the will that has cast it on the world. The stone we hurl rashly against the universal Life is cast back at us and may crush, maim or injure our own mental and physical being. But this mechanical rebound is not the whole principle of Karma. Nor is Karma wholly a mixed ethical-hedonistic order in its total significance, for there are involved other powers of our consciousness and being. Nor is it again a pure mechanism which we set going by our will and have then helplessly to accept the result; for the will which produced the effect, can also intervene to modify it. And above all the initiating and receiving consciousness can change the values and utilities of the reactions and make another thing of life than this automatic mechanism of fateful return or retribution to the half-blind embodied actor in a mute necessity of rigorous law of Nature.

The relation of our consciousness and will to Karma is the thing upon which all the subtler lines of action and consequence must depend; that connexus must be the hinge of the whole significance. The dependence of the pursuit of ethical values on a sanction by the inferior hedonistic values, material, vital and lower mental pleasure, pain and suffering, appeals strongly to our normal consciousness and will; but it ceases to have more than a subordinate force and finally loses all force as we grow towards greater heights of our being. That dependence cannot then be the whole or the final power or guiding norm of Karma. The relation of will to action and consequence must be cast on more subtle and liberal lines. The universal Spirit in the law of Karma must deal with man in the lower scale of values only as a part of the transaction and as a concession to man's own present motives. Man himself puts these values, makes that demand for pleasure and prosperity and dreads their opposites, desires heaven more than he loves virtue, fears hell more than he abhors sin, and while he does so, the world-dispensation wears to him that meaning and colour. But the spirit of existence is not merely a legislator and judge concerned to maintain a standard of legal justice, to dole out deterrents and sanctions, rewards and penalties, ferocious pains of hell, indulgent joys of paradise. He is the Divine in the world, the Master of a spiritual evolution and the growing godhead in humanity. That godhead grows however slowly beyond the dependence on the sanctions of pleasure and pain. Pain and pleasure govern our primary being and in that primary scale pain is Nature's advertisement of things we should avoid, pleasure her lure to things she would tempt us to pursue.

These devices are first empirical tests for limited objects; but as I grow, I pass beyond their narrower uses. I have continually to disregard Nature's original warnings and lures in order to get to a higher nature. I have to develop a nobler spiritual law of Karma.

This will be evident if we consider our own greater motives of action. The pursuit of Truth may entail on me penalties and sufferings; the service of my country or the world may demand from me loss of my outward happiness and good fortune or the destruction of my body; the increase of my strength of will and greatness of spirit may be only possible by the ardours of suffering and the firm renunciation of joys and pleasures. I must still follow after Truth, I must do the service to my race my soul demands from me; I must increase my strength and inner greatness and must not ask for a quite irrelevant reward, shun penalty or make a bargain for the exact fruits of my labour. And that which is true of my action in the present life, must be equally true of my connected action and self-development through many births. Happiness and sorrow, good fortune and ill-fortune are not my main concern whether in this birth or in future lives, but my perfection and the higher good of mankind purchased by whatever suffering and tribulation. Spinoza's dictum that joy is a passage to a greater perfection and sorrow a passage to a lesser perfection is a much too summary epigram. Delight will be indeed the atmosphere of perfection and attends too even the anguish of our labour towards it, but first a higher delight which has often much trouble for its price, and afterwards a highest spiritual Ananda which has no dependence on outward circumstances, but rather is powerful to new-shape their meanings and transform their reactions. These things may be above the first formulation of the world energy here, may be influences from superior planes of the universal existence, but they are still a part of the economy of Karma here, a process of the spiritual evolution in the body. And they bring in a higher soul nature and will and action and consequence, a higher rule of Karma.

The law of Karma is therefore not simply an extension of the human idea of practical justice into future births and a rectification there of the apparent injustice of life. A justice or rather a justness there must be in all the workings of the world-energy; Nature certainly seems to be scrupulous in her measures. But in the life of man there are many factors to be taken into the reckoning; there are too stages, grades, degrees. And on a higher step of our being things do not look the same nor are quite the same as on a lower grade. And even in the first normal scale there are many factors and not only the ethical-hedonistic standard. If it is just that the virtuous man should be rewarded with success and happiness and the wicked man punished with downfall and pain at some time, in some life, on earth or in heaven or in hell, it is also just that the strong man should have the reward of his cultivated strength, the intellectual man the prize of his cultivated skill, the will that labours in whatever field the fruit of its effort and its works. But it does not work rightly, you say, not morally, not according to the ethical law? But what is right working in this connection of will and action and consequence? I may be religious and honest, but if I am dull, weak and incompetent? And I may be selfish and impious, but if I have the swift flame of intellect, the understanding brain, the skill to adapt means to ends, the firm courageous will fixed on its end? I have then an imperfection which must impose its consequences, but also I have powers which must make their way. The truth is that there are several orders of energy and their separate characteristic working must be seen, before their relations can be rightly discovered in the harmonies of Nature. A complex web is what we have to unravel. When we have seen the parts in the whole, the elements and their affinities in the mass, then only can we know the lines of Karma.

Section II

The Lines of Karma

The Foundation

THE IDEA of Karma has behind it two ideas that are its constituent factors, a law of Nature, of the energy or action of Nature, and a soul that lives under that law, puts out action into that energy and gets from it a return in accordance and measure with the character of its own activities. And here certain considerations have at once intervened which it will not do to ignore. This putting out of action and its return cannot have anything more than a mechanical importance, it cannot have a mental, moral and spiritual significance, if the action of universal Nature is something quite different from the soul's action in character, in meaning, in the law of her being that constitutes it, if it is not itself the energy, the work of a Mind, a Soul, a Spirit. If the individual energy is that of a soul putting out action and receiving a return in kind, physical, mental, moral and spiritual from the universal energy, the universal energy too that makes the return should be that of an All-Soul in which and in relation to which this individual flame of the All-Soul lives. And it is apparent, if we consider, that the individual's energy of action is not something miraculously separate and independent, it is not a power born of itself, living in itself, acting in its separate and wholly self-formed puissance. On the contrary it is the universal that acts in the individual energy and acts, no doubt with an individual application, but on universal lines and in harmony with its universal law. But if that were all the truth, then there would be no real individual and no responsibility of any kind except the responsibility of universal Nature to carry out the idea or to execute the force put forth in the individual as in the universal by the All-Soul, the cosmic Spirit. But there is also this soul of the individual, and that is a being of the Infinite and a conscious and efficient portion of the All-Soul, a deputy or representative, and puts forth the energy given to it according to its own potentiality, type, limits with a will that is in some sense its own. The Spirit in the cosmos is the lord, the Ishwara of all Nature, but the individual soul is likewise a representative, a delegate Ishwara, the underlord at least if not the overlord of his nature, — the recipient, agent and overseer, let us say, of his own form and use of the universal energy of Nature.

And next we see that each being is actually in life, in the world an individual in a species and each species has a nature of its own, a Swabhava or way of the self-being, and each individual too a nature of his own, an individual way of his self-being within that of the species. The law of the action is determined generally by this swabhava of the species and individually by the swabhava of the individual but within that larger circle. Man is at once himself, in a certain way peculiar and unique, and a depressed portion of God and a natural portion of mankind. There is in other words a general and an individual Swadharma or natural principle and law of all action for the kind and for the individual in the kind. And it is clear too that every action must be a particular application, a single result, a perfect or imperfect, right or perverted use of the general and within it of the individual swadharma.

But again, if that were all, if each man came into life with his present nature ready determined for him and irrevocable and had to act according to it, there would be no real responsibility; for he would do good according to the good and evil according to the evil in his nature, he would be imperfect according to its imperfection or perfect according to its perfection; and he might have to suffer the return of his good or evil, bear exactly the just consequences of his perfection or his imperfection, but mechanically and not by his choice: for his apparent choice would be the compulsion of the nature in him and could not be in any way, directly or indirectly, the result of his spirit's will. But in fact there is within his being a power of development, a power of change, or in the language of our modern conceptions an evolutionary power. His nature is what it is because he has so made it by his past; he has induced this present formulation by a precedent will in his spirit. He has risen to humanity by the force of his spirit and by the power of the All-Soul out of the vast possibilities of universal Nature. He has developed by his own long evolution of that humanity the character and law of action of his present individual being; he has built his own height and form of human nature. He may change what he has made, he may rise even, if that be within the possibilities of the universe, beyond human and to or towards superhuman nature. It is the possibility of the universal Nature and her law that determines his natural being and action, but it is part of her law to be subject to the spirit, and she will develop in reply to an insistent call; for then she must respond, she must supply the needed energy, she must determine the acts in that direction, she must assure its issue. His past and his present nature and the environment he has secured may present constant obstacles, but they must still yield in the end to the evolutionary will in him in proportion to its sincerity, wholeness and insistence. All the possibility of the All-being is in him, all the power of the All-Will is behind him. This evolution and all its circumstances, his life, its form, its events, its values arise out of that urge and are shaped according to the past, present or future active will of his spirit. As is his use of the energy, so was and will be the return of the universal energy to him now and hereafter. This is the fundamental meaning of Karma.

At the same time this action and evolution of the spirit taking birth in a body are not an easy and simple thing, as it would or might be if Nature were all of one piece and evolution were only a raising of the degrees of a single power. For there are many strands, many degrees, many forms of energy of Nature. There is in the world of birth an energy of physical being and nature, arising out of the physical an energy of vital being and nature, arising out of the vital an energy of mental being and nature, arising out of the mental an energy of spiritual or supramental being and nature. And each of these forms of energy has a law of its own, lines of its own action, a right to its own manner of operation and existence, because each is fundamental to some necessity of the whole. And we see accordingly that each in its impulse follows its own lines regardless of the rest, each in the combination imposes as much of its domination as it can on the others. The mental being is itself a most complex thing and has several forms of energy, an intellectual, a moral, an emotional, a hedonistic energy of mental nature, and the will in each is in itself absolute for its own rule and is yet forced to be modified in action by the running into it and across it of the other strands. The way and the movement of the world action are indeed a difficult and entangled process, *gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ*, and therefore too the way and movement of our own action which we cannot separate in its law, however much the mere mind in us might like to have it so, from the law of the world action. And if all these energies are forms of energy of the nature of the Spirit, then it is likely that only when we rise into the consciousness of the supreme spiritual being can we hope wholly to understand all the integral secret and harmony of the world action and therefore the integral meaning and law of Karma.

It may therefore serve a partial purpose but can be of little eventual advantage to try to cut the knot of the riddle by reducing to the law of one form of energy alone all the apparent tangle of the cosmic action. The universe is not solely an ethical proposition, a problem of the antinomy of the good and the evil; the Spirit of the universe can in no way be imagined as a rigid moralist concerned only with making all things obey the law of moral good, or a stream of tendency towards righteousness attempting, hitherto with only a very poor success, to prevail and rule, or a stern Justicer rewarding and punishing creatures in a world that he has made or has suffered to be full of wickedness and suffering and evil. The universal Will has evidently many other and more supple modes than that, an infinity of interests, many other elements of its being to manifest, many lines to follow, many laws and purposes to pursue. The law of the world is not this alone that our good brings good to us and our evil brings evil, nor is its sufficient key the ethical-hedonistic rule that our moral good brings to us happiness and success and our moral evil brings to us sorrow and misfortune. There is a rule of right in the world, but it is the right of the truth of Nature and of the truth of the spirit, and that is a vast and various rule and takes many forms that have to be understood and accepted before we can reach either its highest or its integral principle.

The will in the intellectual being may erect knowledge and truth of knowledge as the governing principle of the Spirit, the will in the volitional being may see Will or Power as very God, the will in the aesthetic being enthrone beauty and harmony as the sovereign law, the will in the ethical being have a vision of it as Right or Love or Justice, and so on through a long chapter. But even though all these may very well be supreme aspects of the Supreme, it will not do to shut up the acts of the Infinite into one formula. And for a beginning it is best to phrase the law of Karma as generally and vaguely as may be and put it simply thus without any particular colour or content that according to the energy put forth shall be its return, not with any mathematical precision of conscious will and its mechanical consequences, but subject to the complicated working of many world forces. If we thus state broadly our foundation, the simplicity of the ordinary solutions disappears, but that is a loss only to love of dogma or to the mind's indolence. The whole law of the cosmic action or even the one law governing all the others cannot well be the measure of a physical, mechanical and chemical energy, nor the law of a life force, nor a moral law or law of mind or of idea forces; for it is evident that none of these things by its single self covers or accounts for all the fundamental powers. There is likely to be something else of which all these are the means and energies. Our initial formula itself can be only a general mechanical rule, but still it is likely to be the practical rule of all parts of the mechanism, and if it only states itself and does at first nothing more, yet an impartial regard on the variety of its operations may open out many meanings and may lead us to the essential significance.

The practical and the efficient base of Karma is all the relation of the soul to the energies of Nature, the use by Purusha of Prakriti. It is the soul's demand on, consent to or use of the energies of Nature and the return and reflex of her energies on the soul that must determine the steps of our progress in our births, whether that progress be in a given direction or a long up and down or in a perpetual circle. There is another, a circumstantial aspect of the law of Karma and that hinges on the turn of our action not only to our self, but to others. The nature of the energies we put forth and even the return and reflex of their consequence upon us affects not only ourselves but all around us and we must account too for the direction of our acts upon others, its effect upon them and the return of the direction and rebound of consequence of the effect upon our own life and being. But the energy we put forth on others is ordinarily of a mixed character, physical, vital, moral, mental and spiritual, and the return and consequence too are of a mixed character. A physical action, a vital pressure thrown forth from ourselves carries in it a mental or moral as well as a physical and vital power and issues often quite beyond our conscious will and knowledge and the consequence to ourselves and to others is found to be different enough in character and measure from anything we intended or could have calculated and foreseen. The calculation escapes us because too complex by far is the universal energy acting through us and our conscious will intervenes in it simply as an instrument; our real acceptance is that of a more fundamental power within, a secret, a subliminal assent of our subconscient and superconscient spirit. And the return too, whatever the agents, is of the same complex universal energy and determined by some difficult correlation of the force acting and the force acted upon in her.

But there is another, an ultimate and essential sense of Karma, a relation in it between the soul in us and the Supreme or the All-Self; on that all is founded and to that all leads and must refer to it at every step. That relation too is not so simple a thing as is imagined by the religions. For it must answer to a very vast spiritual sense underlying the whole process of Karma and there must be a connection of each of our workings in the use of the universal energy to that fundamental and perhaps infinite significance. These three things, the will of the soul in Nature and the action of Nature in and on the soul and through it and back to it, the effect of the intercrossing between the action of the soul on others and the return to it of the force of its action complicated by theirs, and the meaning of the soul's action in relation to its own highest Self and the All-Self, to God, make up between them all the bearings of Karma.

The Terrestrial Law

A CONSIDERATION of the lines of Karma ought certainly to begin with a study of the action of the world as it is, as a whole, however contrary it may be to the rule or to the desire of our moral or our intellectual reason, and to see if we cannot find in its own facts its own explanation. If the actual truth of the world breaks out from the too rigid cadres our moral sense or our intelligence would like to see imposed on the freely or the inevitably self-determining movement of the Infinite, on the immeasurable largeness of his being or the mighty complexities of his will, it is very likely that that is because our moral sense and our intellect, since they are mental and human, are too narrow to understand or to bind him. Any shifting of the base of the problem by which we get out of the difficulty, impose our limits on what overpasses us and compel God to be even as ourselves, may very well be an evasion and an intellectual device and not the way of truth. The problem of knowledge is after all this, to reflect the movements of the Infinite and see, and not to force it into a mould prepared for it by our intelligence.

The ordinary idea of Karma follows this latter unsound method. The world we see is to our notions, if not immoral, yet non-moral and contradictory to our idea of what it should be. Therefore we go behind it, discover that this earth life is not all, erect anew there our moral rule and rejoice to find that after all the universe does obey our human conceptions and therefore all is well. The mysterious conflict, the Manichean struggle, the inextricable tangle here of good and evil is not cured or accounted for, but we say that at least the good and the evil are justly dealt with according to their kind, this duly rewarded and that duly punished in other worlds or other births, there is therefore a dominant moral law and we may cherish a faith that the good will prevail, Ahuramazda conquer and not Ahriman, and on the whole all is as it should be. Or if not, if the tangle is inextricable, if this world is evil or existence itself an enormous mistake — as it must be, man is inclined to think, if it does not suit his desires and conceptions, — then at least I individually by satisfying the moral law may get out of the tangle away to the pleasures of a better world or to the bodiless and mindless peace of Nirvana.

But the question is whether this is not a rather childish and impatient mood and whether these solutions come anywhere near solving the whole complexity of the problem. Let us grant that a dominant moral law governs, not action, — for that is either free or, if not free, compelled to be of all kinds, — but the result of action in the world and that a supreme good will work itself out in the end. The difficulty remains why that good should use evil as one and almost the chief of its means or the dominant moral law, sovereign, unescapable, categorical, imperative, the practical governor, if not the reason of our existence, should be compelled to fulfil itself through so much that is immoral and by the agency of a non-moral force, through hell on earth and hell beyond, through petty cruelty of punishment and huge fury of avenging calamity, through an immeasurable and, as it seems, never ending sequence of pain and suffering and torture. It must surely be because there are other things in the Infinite and therefore other laws and forces here and of these the moral law, however great and sovereign to itself, has to take account and is compelled to accommodate its own lines to their curve of movement. And if that is so our plain course, if we are to see the true connections, is to begin by studying the separate law and claim of these other forces: for till it is done we cannot know rightly how they act upon and condition or are acted upon and utilised by any moral rule that we may distinguish intervening in the complex of the world action. And first let us look at the terrestrial law as it is apart from any question of rebirth, the joining, the play, the rule, the intention of the forces here: for it may be that the whole principle is already there and that rebirth does not so much correct or change as complete its significance.

But on earth the first energy is the physical; the lines of the physical energy creating the forms, deploying the forces of the material universe are the first apparent conditions of our birth and create the practical basis and the original mould of our earthly existence. And what is the law of this first energy, its self-nature, swabhava and swadharma? It is evidently not moral in the human sense of the word: the elemental gods of the physical universe know nothing about ethical distinctions, but only the bare literal rule of energy, the right track and circuit of the movement of a force, its right action and reaction, the just result of its operation. There is no morality, no hesitation of conscience in our or the world's elements. The fire is no respecter of persons and if the saint or the thinker is cast into it, it will not spare his body. The sea, the stormwind, the rock on which the ship drives do not ask whether the just man drowned in the waters deserved his fate. If there is a divine or a cosmic justice that works in these cruelties, if the lightning that strikes impartially tree or beast or man, is — but it would appear in the case of the man alone, for the rest is accident, — the sword of God or the instrument of Karma, if the destruction wrought by the volcano, the typhoon or the earthquake is a punishment for the sins of the community or individually of the sins in a past life of each man there that suffers or perishes, at least the natural forces know it not and care nothing about it and rather they conceal from us in the blind impartiality of their rage all evidence of any such intention. The sun shines and the rain falls on the just and the unjust alike; the beneficence and the maleficence of Nature, the gracious and dreadful Mother, her beauty and terror, her utility and her danger are bestowed and inflicted without favour or disfavour on all her children and the good man is no more her favourite than the sinner. If a law of moral punishment is imposed through the action of her physical forces, it must be by a Will from above her or a Force acting unknown to her in her inconscient bosom.

But such a Will could not be itself that of a moral Being ethical after the conceptions of man, — unless indeed it resembled man in his most coldly pitiless and savage moral reason or unreason. For its action involves terrors of punishment that would be abhorred as atrocities in an all-powerful human ruler and could not be other than monstrous in a moral Divine Ruler. A personal God so acting would be a Jehovah-Moloch, a merciless and unrighteous demander of righteousness and mercy. On the other hand an inconscient Force mechanically executing an eternal ethical rule without an author or mover would be a paradox: for morality is a creation of conscious mind; an inconscient machinery could have no idea of good and evil, no moral intention or significance. An impersonal or omni-personal conscious Will or Spirit in the universe could well enact such a law and assure its execution, but must then be, although imposing on us good and evil and their results, itself beyond good and evil. And what is this but to say that the universal Being escapes from our ethical limitations and is a supramoral, appearing to us here in physical Nature as an infra-moral, Infinite?

Now, that a conscious Infinite is there in physical Nature, we are assured by every sign, though it is a consciousness not made or limited like ours. All her constructions and motions are those of an illimitable intuitive wisdom too great and spontaneous and mysteriously self-effective to be described as an intelligence, of a Power and Will working for Time in eternity with an inevitable and forecasting movement in each of its steps, even in those steps that in their outward or superficial impetus seem to us inconscient. And as there is in her this greater consciousness and greater power, so too there is an illimitable spirit of harmony and beauty in her constructions that never fails her, though its works are not limited by our aesthetic canons. An infinite hedonism too is there, an illimitable spirit of delight, of which we become aware when we enter into impersonal unity with her; and even as that in her which is terrible is a part of her beauty, that in her which is dangerous, cruel, destructive is a part of her delight, her universal Ananda. If then all else in us, our intelligence, our dynamic and volitional, our aesthetic, our hedonistic being, when they regard the physical universe, feel intuitively the satisfaction in it of something great and illimitable but still mysteriously of their own kind, must not our moral sense, our sense of Right, find too there the satisfaction of something of which it is itself the reflection? An intuitive perception of this kind is at the root of our demand for a moral order in the universe. Yes, but here too our partial conceptions, our own moral canons are not sufficient; this is a greater and illimitable Right, not bound to the ethical formula, and its first principle is that each thing should observe the law of its own energy and each energy move in its own lines in the total scheme and fulfil its own function and make its own returns. The physical law is the right and justice, the duty, the ought of the physical world. The godhead of Fire in the Upanishad, questioned by the Spirit, "What is the power in thee?" makes answer "This is my power that whatever is cast to me, I burn," and a similar answer is made by each physical thing to the question of the life and the mind. It observes the lines of its physical energy and is concerned with no other law or justice. No law of Karma, the moral law included, could exist, if there were not to begin with this principle as the first foundation of order.

What then is the relation of man to this physical Nature, man this soul intervening in and physically born of her in a body subjected to her law of action? what his function as something that is yet more than her, a life and a mind and a spirit? what his swabhava, his swadharma? First, he owes to her a mechanical obedience of which she herself working in his body takes care: but also, as a soul evolving the power of consciousness secret in her, his business is to know and to use her law and even in knowing and using it to transcend her more material limit, habit, purpose and formula. Observance of Nature but also transcendence of first nature is continually the purpose of the Spirit within him. A continuous series of transcendences is the most significant thing in the world action and evolution itself is only Nature's constant impulse and effort of self-exceeding, of a greater self-becoming, her way of expressing more and more, getting out a greater form of birth and awakened power of presence of the self that is in her. Life brings in a whole range of these transcendences, mind another and greater range, and since mind is so evidently imperfect and incomplete, a thing of seeking in its very nature, there must surely be a range or many ranges of transcendence above mind. Man meets with the powers of his mind the rule of the physical action and the law of vital Karma, brings in a law of mental and moral Karma and lifts along the ladder of these scales to something more, to a potency of spiritual action which may even lead him to an exceeding of Karma itself, a freedom from or of birth and becoming, a perfecting transcendence.

Man's exceeding of the physical law does not come solely by his evolution of a moral sense in a non-moral world of Nature. Its essential rule is rather a turning of a conscious intelligence and will on life and matter, morality itself only this knowledge and will seeking for a rule of truth and right of action, *satyam ṛtam*, in his relation to his inner self and to his fellow-beings. But his dealings with the purely physical lines of Nature are non-moral, a matter at first of observance where he must, of satisfaction by instinctive or experienced utilisings, of suffering at her hands by compulsion, and more and more, as he grows, of a struggle of his knowledge and will to know and master her forces for his use and pleasure, for instruments and expedients, for a greater base and circle of opportunities, for the joy itself of will and knowledge. He makes her forces his opportunities and to increase them faces her perils. He defies her powers, transgresses her limitations, sins constantly against her first prohibitions, takes her punishments and overcomes them, becomes by wrestling of his mind and will with her acquainted with her greater possibilities which she herself has left unused while she waited for his coming. She meets his effort with physical obstruction and opposition, with a No that constantly recedes, with the mask of his own ignorance, with the menace of her danger. One might suggest the fancy, — attributing to her that resistance which certain instincts in man oppose to the daring of spiritual adventure, to new enlargings of knowledge, new forms of will or new standards of conduct, regarding them stupidly as sin and impiety because they transgress what is established, — that to physical Nature in her first power life itself with its starts and deviations and stumblings and sufferings is a sin against her law of sure physical harmony and exact measure and much more mind with its daring, its sin of boundless adventure, its final yearnings towards the unmeasured, the above-law, the infinite.

But in fact all that the godhead of physical Nature is concerned with in man's dealings with her is to observe a just law of return of her energies to his effort. Wherever his knowledge and will can harmonise itself with the lines of her energies, she makes a return according to its action on her: where it works on her with insufficiency, ignorance, carelessness, error, she overwhelms his effort or injures; as he wills more and discovers more, she returns to him a greater utility and fruit of her powers, consents to his masteries and favours his violences. He has arrived at a unity, a Yoga with her in her greater secret possibilities,— he has liberated them and, as he uses them, so he has from her their return. He observes and he extends for her her lines and she responds with an exact ministry and obedience. All this he can do at present within certain physical limits and lines of working and there is a modification but not a radical change. There are indications that by a more direct pressure of a mental and psychical energy on the physical, the response can be made more variable, the physical depart from what seem to be fixed limits and habits, and it is conceivable that as knowledge and will entered into the region of higher and yet higher powers, the action of physical energy might grow entirely responsive, giving whatever return is seemingly demanded from her, and its lines perfectly flexible. But even this transcendence would have to regard the great original measures fixed by the All-Will: there could be a free use, perhaps a large transformation of the physical energy, but not a departure from its fundamental law and purpose.

All this founds a reign of law, a principle of the just return of energy that is the neutral essence of Karma, but it has no eye of regard for ethical measures and no moral significance. Man may and does invent cruel and immoral means of getting at physical knowledge and its powers or turn to unethical ends the energies she places at his service, but that is a matter between his will and his own soul and of his relation with other living beings, his and their concern and not hers. Physical Nature gives impartially her results and rewards and demands from man observance not of the moral but the physical law: she asks for a just knowledge and a scrupulous practice of her physical lines and nothing else. There is no karmic retort from her on the many cruelties of science, no revolt against an unethical use of her facilities, much punishment of ignorance but none of wickedness. If there is something in the lower rounds of Nature which reacts against certain transgressions of the moral law, it begins obscurely on a higher scale, with life. A vital reaction of the kind there is and it produces physico-vital effects, but mark that in this kind of reaction there is no observance of our limits and measures, but rather the same promiscuous impartiality as in the acts of physical Nature. In this field we have to admit a law of vicarious punishment, a constant smiting of the innocent for the sins of the guilty which would seem shocking and brutally unethical and unjust to us if inflicted by a human being. Life seems to punish itself for its errors and excesses without any care to limit the reaction to the agent of the excess or the error. There is here an order of the lines of energy that is not at least primarily or in intention ethical, but rather concerned with a system of returns not governed by our moral ideas.

The movements of life seem indeed to be as little as the physical laid on ethical lines. The fundamental right and justice of life is to follow the curve of the vital energies, to maintain the functions of the life force and to give a return to its own powers. Its function is to survive, to reproduce itself, to grow and possess and enjoy, to prolong and enlarge and assure its action, power, having, pleasure as much as earth will allow. All means are good to life that secure these ends: the rest is a matter of right balance between the vital energy and its physical means, of a putting forth of its powers and the kind of return it gets for those powers. At first — and this continues even after the emergence of mind in life and as long as mind is subservient to the life force, — that is all we see. Vital nature works out her ends faultlessly enough, but not by any means blamelessly in the ethical sense. Death is her second means of self-preservation, destruction her constant instrument for change and renovation and progress, suffering inflicted on oneself or on others oftenest her price for victory and pleasure. All life lives upon other life, makes a place for itself by encroachment and exploitation, possesses by association but even more by struggle. Life acts by mutual shock and mutual use of creatures by each other; but it works only partly by mutual help and very much by a mutual assault and devouring. And its reproduction is bound to a means that the ethical sense even when most tolerant feels to be animal and inferior, is inclined to regard as immoral in itself and, when raised to its ascetic or puritan acuities, rejects as vile. And yet when once we put aside our limited human conceptions and look with impersonal eyes on this vast and various and wonderful vital nature into which we are born, we find in it a mysteriously perfect order, the work of a deep and illimitable intuitive wisdom, an immense Power and will at its perfectly seeing work, a great whole of beauty and harmony built out of what seems to us a system of discords, a mighty joy of life and creation which no heaviest toll of individual death or suffering can tire or discourage and which, when we enter into oneness with the great Ananda of its movement, these things seem rather to cast into relief and against the hue of its ecstasy these shades not to matter. There is here also, in these steps of vital Nature and the law of her energies, a truth of the infinite; and this truth of the Infinite's insistence on life, life as it were for its own sake and for the joy of creation has its own standards of right and harmony, just balance and measure, fit action and reaction of energy that cannot be judged by the human rule. It is a pre-mental and still impersonal Tapas and Ananda and therefore a still non-moral order.

Man's relation with vital Nature is, again, first to be one with it by observance and obedience to its rule, then to know and direct it by conscious intelligence and will and to transcend by that direction the first law of life, its rule and habit, formula, initial significance. At first he is compelled to obey its instincts and has to act even as the animal, but in the enlarged terms of a mentalised impulsion and an increasingly clear consciousness and responsible will in what he does. He too has first to strive to exist, to make a place for himself and his kind, to grow and possess and enjoy, to prolong, to enlarge and assure the first vital lines of his life movement. He too does it even as the others, by battle and slaughter, by devouring, by encroachment, by laying his yoke on earth and her products and on her brute children and on his fellow-men. His virtue, his dharma of the vital nature, *virtus*, *aretē*, is at first an obligation to strength and swiftness and courage and all things that make for survival, mastery and success. Most even of the things in him that evolve an ethical significance have at root not a truly ethical but a dynamic character, — such as self-control, *tapasyā*, discipline. They are vital-dynamic, not ethical energies; they are a rightly massed and concentrated, rightly ordered putting forth of mentalised life forces and the return they seek and get are of the vital and dynamic kind, power, success, mastery, increased capacities of vital possession and expansion or the result of these things, vital-hedonistic, the satisfaction of his desires, vital happiness, enjoyment and pleasure.

Man's first business is to bring his conscious intelligence and will to enlarge the lines of life of the individual and the race. Here again it is to these two powers primarily and only secondarily and partially to any moral force that the life energy gives its returns. The battle in life's primitive values is to the strong and the race to the swift, and the weak and the torpid cannot claim the goal and the crown on the strength of their greater virtue; and there is in this a justice, while the moral principle of reward would be here an injustice, for it would be a denial of the principle of the right returns of energy which is fundamental to any possible law of Karma. Raise the action by the powers of the mind and still the greater successes, the glory and the victory, fall to the men of great intelligence and the men of great will and not necessarily to the more ethical intelligence or to the more moralised will. Morality counts in this dynamic aspect of life only as a prudential check or a concentrating tapasya. Life helps those who most wisely and faithfully follow her impulses while observing her limits and restraints or those who most powerfully aid her greater impulses of expansion. It is those that get the most prudential profit out of her and these the most of her power and movement and joy.

The greater movement at the same time brings in a power of greater suffering as well as joy, the greater sins of life and its greater virtues. Man as he dares the perils of physical nature, dares too the perils of the vital energy by transgressing her safe rules and limits which she imposes automatically on the animal. There are balances of her use of her energies, safe measures and restraints which make living as secure as it can be, — for all living is naturally a peril and an adventure, but a certain prudence in Nature minimises the adventure as much as is consistent with her ends and the intelligence of man tries to do still better, to live securely and not dangerously, to exclude the more formidable incertitudes from the order of his life. But the instinct of expansion in man is continually breaking Nature's vital balances and disregarding his own limits and measures. He is avid of experience, of the unmeasured and unknown in power and experience and enjoyment as of the common and known and safe, of the perilous extremes as of the sane averages. He must sound all life's possibilities, test the wrong as well as the right use of her energies, pay his toll of suffering and get his prize of more splendid victories. As far as mind working in life's ways can do it, he has to enlarge the lines of life and to make a transformation of its action and its possibilities. This has hitherto been a greatening of forms and never gone so far as to make a radical change and override its first nature. It is only by a transformation of our inner life that we can get beyond the magnified, mentalised, reasoning and consciously willing animal that for the most part the greater number of us are and only by raising it up to unity with some spiritual power we have not yet reached that we can hope to transform vital nature and make her a free instrument of the higher spirit. Then man may be really what he strives to be, master of his life, in control of vital and physical Nature.

Meanwhile it is through an inward turn of his mind that he gets to something like a transcendence, a living not for life but for truth, for beauty, for power of the soul, for good and right, love, justice. It is this endeavour that brings down into the lower rounds of energy the powers of a higher circle, something of a mental and a truly moral tending at its end to become a spiritual law of action and the fruits of action of Karma.

Mind Nature and Law of Karma

MAN IS not after all in the essence of his manhood or in the inner reality of his soul a vital and physical being raised to a certain power of mental will and intelligence. If that were so, the creed that makes our existence a manifestation of a Will to life, a Life Force moved by no other object than its own play, heightening, efficient power, expansion, might have a good chance of being the sufficient theory of our universe, and the law of our Karma, the rule of our activities would be in entire consonance with that one purpose and ordered by that dominant principle. Certainly in a great part of this world's outer activities, — or if we, fixing our eye mainly on the vital play of the spirit of the universe, consider them as man's chief business and the main thing that matters, — there is a colourable justification for this limited view of the human being. But the more he looks into himself and the more he goes inward and lives intimately and pre-eminently in his mind and soul, the more he discovers that he is in his essential nature a mental being encased in body and emmeshed in the life activities, *manu*, *manomaya puruṣa*. He is more than a thinking, willing and feeling result of the mechanism of the physical or an understanding nexus of the vital forces. There is a mental energy of his being that overtops, pervades and utilises the terrestrial action and his own terrestrial nature.

This character of man's being prevents us from resting satisfied with the vitalistic law of Karma: the lines of the vital energy are interfered with and uplifted and altered for man by the intervention of the awakened mental energy of the spirit that emerges in the material universe and creates here on earth the form of man for its habitation, his complex nature to be its expressive power, the gamut of its music, and the action of his thought, perception, will, emotions the notation of its harmonies. The apparent inconscience of physical Nature, the beautiful and terrible, kindly and cruel conscious but amoral Life Force that is the first thing we see before us, are not the whole self-expression of the universal Being here and therefore not the whole of Nature. Man comes into it to express and realise a higher law of Nature and therefore a higher system of the lines of Karma. The mental energy divides itself and runs in many directions, has an ascending scale of the levels of its action, a great variety and combination of its dynamic aims and purposes. There are many strands of its weaving and it follows each along its own line and combines manifoldly the threads of one with the threads of another. There is in it an energy of thought that puts itself out for a return and a constant increase of knowledge, an energy of will that casts itself forth for a return and increase of conscious mastery, fulfilment of the being, execution of will in action, an energy of conscious aesthesis that feels out for a return and an increase of the creation and enjoyment of beauty, an energy of emotion that demands in its action a return and a constant increase of the enjoyment and satisfaction of the emotional power of the being. All these energies act in a way for themselves and yet depend upon and are inextricably accompanied and mingled with each other. At the same time mind has descended into matter and has to act in and through this world of the vital and physical energy and to consent to and make something of the lines of the vital and physical Karma.

Man, then, since he is a mental being, a means of the evolution of the mental self-expression of the spirit, cannot confine the rule of his action and nature to an obedience to the vital and physical law and an intelligent utilisation of it for the greater, more ordered, more perfect enjoyment of his vital and physical existence, perpetuation, reproduction, possession, enjoyment, expansion. There is a higher law of mental being and nature of which he is bound to become aware and to seek to impose it on his life and his action. At first he is very predominantly governed by the life needs and the movement of the life energies, and it is in applying his mental energy to them and to the world around him that he makes the earliest development of his powers of knowledge and will and trains the crude impulses that lead him into the path of his emotional, aesthetic and moral evolution. But always there is a certain obscure element that takes pleasure in the action of the mental energies for their own sake and it is this, however imperfect at first in self-consciousness and intelligence, that represents the characteristic intention of Nature in him and makes his mental and eventually his spiritual evolution inevitable. The insistence of the external world around him and the need of utilising its opportunities and of meeting its siege and dangers causes his mind to be much obsessed by life and external action and the utility of thought and will and perception for his dealings with the physical and life forces, and to this preoccupation the finer more disinterested action and subtler cast of motive of the mind nature demanding its own inner development, seeking for knowledge, mastery, beauty, a purer emotional delight for their own sake, and the pursuits which are characteristic of this higher energy of the mental nature, appear almost as by-products and at any rate things secondary that can always be postponed and made subordinate to the needs and demands of the mentalised vital and physical being. But the finer and more developed mind in humanity has always turned towards an opposite self-seeing, inclined to regard this as the most characteristic and valuable element of our being and been ready to sacrifice much and sometimes all to its calls or its imperative mandate. Then life itself would be in reality for man only a field of action for the evolution, the opportunity of new experience, the condition of difficult effort and mastery of the mental and spiritual being. What then will be the lines of this mental energy and how will they affect and be affected by the lines of the vital and physical Karma?

Three movements of the mental energy of man projecting itself along the lines of life, successive movements that yet overlap and enter into each other, have created a triple strand of the law of his Karma. The first is that, primary, obvious, universal, predominant in his beginnings, in which his mind subjects and assimilates itself to the law of life in matter in order to make the most of the terrestrial existence for its own pleasure and profit, *artha*, *kāma*, without any other modification or correction of its pre-existing lines than is involved in the very impact of the human intelligence, will, emotion, aesthesis. These indeed are forces that lift up and greatly enlarge and infinitely rarefy and subtilise by a consciously regulated and more and more skilful and curious use the first crude, narrow and essentially animal aims and movements common to all living creatures. And this element of the mentalised vital existence, these lines of its movement making the main grey solid stuff of the life of the average economic, political, social, domestic man may take on a great amplitude and an imposing brilliance, but they remain always in their distinctive, their original and still persistent character the lines of movement, the way of Karma of the thinking, willing, feeling, refining human animal, — not to be despised or excluded from our total way of being when we climb to a higher plane of conception and action, but still only a small part of human possibility and, if regarded as the main preoccupation or most imperative law of the human being, then limiting and degrading it; for, empowered up to a certain point to enlarge and dynamise and enrich, but not raise to a self-exceeding, they are useful for ascension only when themselves uplifted and transformed by a greater law and a nobler motive. The momentum of this energy may be a very powerful mental action, may involve much output of intelligence and will power and aesthetic perception and expenditure of emotional force, but the return it seeks is vital success and enjoyment and possession and satisfaction. The mind no doubt feeds its powers on the effort and its fullness on the prize, but it is tethered to its pasture. It is a mixed movement, mental in its means, predominantly vital in its returns; its standard of the values of the return are measured by an outward success and failure, an externalised or externally caused pleasure and suffering, good fortune and evil fortune, the fate of the life and the body. It is this powerful vital preoccupation which has given us one element of the current notion of law of Karma, its idea of an award of vital happiness and suffering as the measure of cosmic justice.

The second movement of mind running on the lines of life comes into prominent action when man evolves out of his experience the idea of a mental rule, standard, ideal, a concretised abstraction which is suggested at first by life experience, but goes beyond, transcends the actual needs and demands of the vital energy and returns upon it to impose some ideal mental rule, some canon embodying a generalised conception of Right on the law of life. For its essence is the discovery or belief of the mind that in all things there is a right rule, a right standard, a right way of thought, will, feeling, perception, action other than that of the intuition of vital nature, other than that of the first dealings of mind seeking only to profit by the vital nature with a mainly vital motive, — for it has discovered a way of the reason, a rule of the self-governing intelligence. This brings into the seeking of vital pleasure and profit, *artha*, *kāma*, the power of the conception of a mental truth, justice, right, the conception of Dharma. The greater practical part of the Dharma is ethical, it is the idea of the moral law. The first mind movement is non-moral or not at all characteristically moral, has only, if at all, the conception of a standard of action justified by custom, the received rule of life and therefore right, or a morality indistinguishable from expediency, accepted and enforced because it was found necessary or helpful to efficiency, power, success, to victory, honour, approval, good fortune. The idea of Dharma is on the contrary predominantly moral in its essence. Dharma on its heights holds up the moral law in its own right and for its own sake to human acceptance and observance. The larger idea of Dharma is indeed a conception of the true law of all energies and includes a conscience, a rectitude in all things, a right law of thought and knowledge, of aesthesis, of all other human activities and not only of our ethical action. But yet in the notion of Dharma the ethical element has tended always to predominate and even to monopolise the concept of Right which man creates, — because ethics is concerned with action of life and his dealing with his vital being and with his fellow-men and that is always his first preoccupation and his most tangible difficulty, and because here first and most pressingly the desires, interests, instincts of the vital being find themselves cast into a sharp and very successful conflict with the ideal of Right and the demand of the higher law. Right ethical action comes therefore to seem to man at this stage the one thing binding upon him among the many standards raised by the mind, the moral claim the one categorical imperative, the moral law the whole of his Dharma.

At first however the moral conceptions of man and the direction and output and the demand of return of the ethical energy in him get themselves inextricably mixed with his vital conceptions and demands and even afterwards lean on them very commonly and very considerably for a support and incentive. Human morality first takes up an enormous mass of customary rules of action, a conventional and traditional practice much of which is of a very doubtful moral value, gives to it an imperative sanction of right and slips into the crude mass or superimposes on it, but still as a part of one common and equal code, the true things of the ethical ideal. It appeals to the vital being, his desires, hopes and fears, incites man to virtue by the hope of rewards and the dread of punishment, imitating in this device the method of his crude and fumbling social practice: for that, finding its law and rule which, good or bad, it wishes to make imperative as supposing it to be at least the best calculated for the order and efficiency of the community, opposed by man's vital being, bribes and terrifies as well as influences, educates and persuades him to acceptance. Morality tells man, accommodating itself to his imperfection, mostly through the mouth of religion, that the moral law is imperative in itself, but also that it is very expedient for him personally to follow it, righteousness in the end the safest policy, virtue the best paymaster in the long run, — for this is a world of Law or a world ruled by a just and virtuous or at least virtue-loving God. He is assured that the righteous man shall prosper and the wicked perish and that the paths of virtue lie through pleasant places. Or, if this will not serve, since it is palpably false in experience and even man cannot always deceive himself, it offers him a security of vital rewards denied here but conceded in some hereafter. Heaven and hell, happiness and suffering in other lives are put before him as the bribe and the menace. He is told, the better to satisfy his easily satisfied intellect, that the world is governed by an ethical law which determines the measure of his earthly fortunes, that a justice reigns and this is justice, that every action has its exact rebound and his good shall bring him good and his evil evil. It is these notions, this idea of the moral law, of righteousness and justice as a thing in itself imperative, but still needing to be enforced by bribe and menace on our human nature, — which would seem to show that at least for that nature they are not altogether imperative, — this insistence on reward and punishment because morality struggling with our first unregenerate being has to figure very largely as a mass of restraints and prohibitions and these cannot be enforced without some fact or appearance of a compelling or inducing outward sanction, this diplomatic compromise or effort at equivalence between the impersonal ethical and the personal egoistic demand, this marriage of convenience between right and vital utility, virtue and desire, — it is these accommodations that are embodied in the current notions of the law of Karma.

What real truth is there behind the current notions of Karma in the actual facts or the fundamental powers of the life of man here or the visible working of the law of the energies of the cosmos? There is evidently a substantial truth, but it is a part only of the whole; its reign or predominance belongs to a certain element only, to the emphasis of one line among many of a transitional movement between the law of the vital energy and a greater and higher law of the mind and spirit. A mixture of any two kinds of energy sets up a mixed and complex action of the output of the energy and the return, and a too sharp-cut rule affixing vital returns to a mental and moral output of force is open to much exception and it cannot be the whole inner truth of the matter. But still where the demand is for the vital return, for success, an outer happiness, good, fortune, that is a sign of the dominant intention in the energy and points to a balance of forces weighing in the indicated direction. At first sight, if success is the desideratum, it is not clear what morality has to say in the affair, since we see in most things that it is a right understanding and intelligent or intuitive practice of the means and conditions and an insistent power of the will, a settled drive of the force of the being of which success is the natural consequence. Man may impose by a system of punishments a check on the egoistic will and intelligence in pursuit of its vital ends, may create a number of moral conditions for the world's prizes, but this might appear, as is indeed contended in certain vitalistic theories, an artificial imposition on Nature and a dulling and impoverishment of the free and powerful play of the mind force and the life force in their alliance. But in truth the greatest force for success is a right concentration of energy, *tapasyā*, and there is an inevitable moral element in Tapasya.

Man is a mental being seeking to establish a control over the life forces he embodies or uses, and one condition of that mastery is a necessary self-control, a restraint, an order, a discipline imposed on his mental, vital and physical being. The animal life is automatically subjected to certain measures; it is the field of an instinctive vital Dharma. Man, liberated from these automatic checks by the free play of his mind, has to replace them by willed and intelligent restraints, an understanding measure, a voluntary discipline. Not only a powerful expenditure and free play of his energies, but also a right measure, restraint and control of them is the condition of his life's success and soundness. The moral is not the sole element: it is not entirely true that the moral right always prevails or that where there is the dharma, on that side is the victory. The immediate success often goes to other powers, even an ultimate conquest of the Right comes usually by an association with some form of Might. But still there is always a moral element among the many factors of individual and collective or national success and a disregard of acknowledged right has at some time or other disastrous or fatal reactions. Moreover, man in the use of his energies has to take account of his fellows and the aid and opposition of their energies, and his relations with them impose on him checks, demands and conditions which have or evolve a moral significance. There is laid on him almost from the first a number of obligations even in the pursuit of vital success and satisfaction which become a first empirical basis of an ethical order.

And there are cosmic as well as human forces that respond to this balance of the mental and moral and the vital order. First there is something subtle, inscrutable and formidable that meets us in our paths, a Force of which the ancient Greeks took much notice, a Power that is on the watch for man in his effort at enlargement, possession and enjoyments and seems hostile and opposite. The Greeks figured it as the jealousy of the gods or as Doom, Necessity, Ate. The egoistic force in man may proceed far in its victory and triumph, but it has to be wary or it will find this power there on the watch for any flaw in his strength or action, any sufficient opportunity for his defeat and downfall. It dogs his endeavour with obstacle and reverse and takes advantage of his imperfections, often dallying with him, giving him long rope, delaying and abiding its time, — and not only of his moral shortcomings but of his errors of will and intelligence, his excesses and deficiencies of strength and prudence, all defects of his nature. It seems overcome by his energies of Tapasya, but it waits its season. It overshadows unbroken or extreme prosperity and often surprises it with a sudden turn to ruin. It induces a security, a self-forgetfulness, a pride and insolence of success and victory and leads on its victim to dash himself against the hidden seat of justice or the wall of an invisible measure. It is as fatal to a blind self-righteousness and the arrogations of an egoistic virtue as to vicious excess and selfish violence. It appears to demand of man and of individual men and nations that they shall keep within a limit and a measure, while all beyond that brings danger; and therefore the Greeks held moderation in all things to be the greatest part of virtue.

There is here something in the life forces obscure to us, considered by our partial feelings sinister because it crosses our desires, but obedient to some law and intention of the universal mind, the universal reason or Logos which the ancients perceived at work in the cosmos. Its presence, when felt by the cruder kind of religious mind, generates the idea of calamity as a punishment for sin, — not observing that it has a punishment too for ignorance, for error, stupidity, weakness, defect of will and tapasya. This is really a resistance of the Infinite acting through life against the claim of the imperfect ego of man to enlarge itself, possess, enjoy and have, while remaining imperfect, a perfect and enduring happiness and complete felicity of its world-experience. The claim is, we may say, immoral, and the Force that resists it and returns, however uncertainly and late to our eyes, suffering and failure as a reply to our imperfections, may be considered a moral Force, an agent of a just Karma, though not solely in the narrowly ethical sense of Karma. The law it represents is that our imperfections shall have their passing or their fatal consequences, that a flaw in our output of energy may be mended or counterbalanced and reduced in consequence, but if persisted in shall react even in excess of its apparent merits, that an error may seem to destroy all the result of the Tapasya, because it springs from a radical unsoundness in the intention of the will, the heart, the ethical sense or the reason. This is the first line of the transitional law of Karma.

A second line of Karmic response of the cosmic forces to our action puts on also an appearance which tempts us to give it a moral character. For there can be distinguished in Nature a certain element of the law of the talion or — perhaps a more appropriate figure, since this action seems rather mechanical than rational and deliberate — a boomerang movement of energy returning upon its transmitter. The stone we throw is flung back by some hidden force in the world life upon ourselves, the action we put out upon others recoils, not always by a direct reaction, but often by devious and unconnected routes, on our own lives and sometimes, though that is by no means a common rule, in its own exact figure or measure. This is a phenomenon so striking to our imagination and impressive to our moral sense and vital feelings that it has received some kind of solemn form and utterance in the thought of all cultures, — "What thou hast done, thou must suffer", "He that uses the sword shall perish by the sword"; "Thou hast sown the wind and thou shalt reap the whirlwind"; — and we are tempted to erect it into a universal rule and accept it as sufficient evidence of a moral order. But the careful thinker will pause long before he hastens to subscribe to any such conclusion, for there is much that militates against it and this kind of definite reaction is rather exceptional than an ordinary rule of human life. If it were a regular feature, men would soon learn the code of the draconic impersonal legislator and know what to avoid and the list of life's prohibitions and vetoes. But there is no such clear penal legislation of Nature.

The mathematical precision of physical Nature's action and reaction cannot indeed be expected from mental and vital Nature. For not only does everything become infinitely more subtle, complex and variable as we rise in the scale so that in our life action there is an extraordinary intertwining of forces and mixture of many values, but, even, the psychological and moral value of the same action differs in different cases, according to the circumstance, the conditions, the motive and mind of the doer. The law of the talion is no just or ethical rule when applied by man to men and, applied by superhuman dispenser of justice or impersonal law with a rude rule of thumb to the delicate and intricate tangle of man's life action and life motives, it would be no better. And it is evident too that the slow, long and subtle purposes of the universal Power working in the human race would be defeated rather than served by any universality of this too precise and summary procedure. Accordingly we find that its working is occasional and intermittent rather than regular, variable and to our minds capricious rather than automatic and plainly intelligible.

At times in the individual's life the rebound of this kind of Karma is decisively, often terribly clear and penal justice is done, although it may come to him in an unexpected fashion, long delayed and from strange quarters; but however satisfactory to our dramatic sense, this is not the common method of retributive Nature. Her ways are more tortuous, subtle, unobtrusive and indecipherable. Often it is a nation that pays in this way for past crimes and mistakes and the sign manual of the law of the talion is there to point the lesson, but individually it is the innocent who suffer. A commercially minded king of Belgium is moved to make a good thing of the nation's rubber estate and human cattle farm in Africa and his agents murder and mutilate and immolate thousands of cheap negro lives to hasten the yield and swell his coffers. This able monarch dies in the splendour of riches and the sacred odour of good fortune, his agents in no way suffer: but here of a sudden comes Germany trampling her armed way towards a dream of military and commercial empire through prosperous Belgium and massacred men and women and mutilated children startlingly remind us of Karma and illustrate some obscure and capricious law of the talion. Here at least the nation in its corporate being was guilty of complicity, but at other times neither guilty individual nor nation is the payer, but perhaps some well-meaning virtuous blunderer gets the account of evil recompense that should have been paid in of rights by the strong despots before him who went on their way to the end rejoicing in power and splendour and pleasure.

It is evident that we cannot make much of a force that works out in so strange a fashion, however occasionally striking and dramatic its pointing at cause and consequence. It is too uncertain in its infliction of penalty to serve the end which the human mind expects from a system of penal justice, too inscrutably variable in its incidence to act as an indicator to that element in the human temperament which waits upon expediency and regulates its steps by a prudential eye to consequence. Men and nations continue to act always in the same fashion regardless of this occasional breaking out of the lightnings of a retaliatory doom, these occasional precisions of Karmic justice amidst the uncertainties of the complex measures of the universe. It works really not on the mind and will of man — except to some degree in a subtle and imperfect fashion on the subconscient mind — but outside him as a partial check and regulator helping to maintain the balance of the returns of energy and the life purposes of the world-spirit. Its action is like that of the first line of transitional Karma intended to prevent the success of the vital egoism of man and serves as an interim compression and compulsion until he can discover and succeed in spite of his vital self in obeying a higher law of his being and a purer dynamism of motive in his directing mind and governing spirit. It serves therefore a certain moral purpose in the will in the universe, but is not itself, even in combination with the other, sufficient to be the law of a moral order.

A third possible and less outwardly mechanical line of Karma is suggested by the dictum that like creates like and in accordance with that law good must create good and evil must create evil. In the terms of a moral return or rather repayment to moral energies this would mean that by putting forth love we get a return of love and by putting forth hatred a return of hatred, that if we are merciful or just to others, others also will be to us just or merciful and that generally good done by us to our fellow-men will return in a recompense of good done by them in kind and posted back to our address duly registered in the moral post office of the administrative government of the universe. Do unto others as you would be done by, because then they will indeed so do to you, seems to be the formula of this moral device. If this were true, human life might indeed settle down into a very symmetrical system of a harmoniously moral egoism and a mercantile traffic in goodness that might seem fair and beautiful enough to those who are afflicted with that kind of moral aesthesis. Happily for the upward progress of the human soul, the rule breaks down in practice, the world-spirit having greater ends before it and a greater law to realise. The rule is true to a certain extent in tendency and works sometimes well enough and the prudential intelligence of man takes some account of it in action but it is not true all the way and all the time. It is evident enough that hatred, violence, injustice are likely to create an answering hatred, violence and injustice and that I can only indulge these propensities with impunity if I am sufficiently powerful to defy resistance or so long as I am at once strong enough and prudent enough to provide against their natural reactions. It is true also that by doing good and kindness I create a certain goodwill in others and can rely under ordinary or favourable circumstances not so much on gratitude and return in kind as on their support and favour. But this good and this evil are both of them movements of the ego and on the mixed egoism of human nature there can be no safe or positive reliance. An egoistic selfish strength, if it knows what to do and where to stop, even a certain measure of violence and injustice, if it is strong and skilful, cunning, fraud, many kinds of evil, do actually pay in man's dealing with man hardly less than in the animal's with the animal, and on the other hand the doer of good who counts on a return or reward finds himself as often as not disappointed of his bargained recompense. The weakness of human nature worships the power that tramples on it, does homage to successful strength, can return to every kind of strong or skilful imposition belief, acceptance, obedience: it can crouch and fawn and admire even amidst movements of hatred and terror; it has singular loyalties and unreasoning instincts. And its disloyalties too are as unreasoning or light and fickle: it takes just dealing and beneficence as its right and forgets or cares not to repay. And there is worse; for justice, mercy, beneficence, kindness are often enough rewarded by their opposites and ill will an answer to goodwill is a brutally common experience. If something in the world and in man returns good for good and evil for evil, it as often returns evil for good and, with or without a conscious moral intention, good for evil. And even an unegoistic virtue or a divine good and love entering the world awakens hostile reactions. Attila and Jenghiz on the throne to the end, Christ on the cross and Socrates drinking his portion of hemlock are no very clear evidence for any optimistic notion of a law of moral return in the world of human nature.

There is little more sign of its sure existence in the world measures. Actually in the cosmic dispensation evil comes out of good and good out of evil and there seems to be no exact correspondence between the moral and the vital measures. All that we can say is that good done tends to increase the sum and total power of good in the world and the greater this grows the greater is likely to be the sum of human happiness and that evil done tends to increase the sum and total power of evil in the world and the greater this grows, the greater is likely to be the sum of human suffering and, eventually, man or nation doing evil has in some way to pay for it, but not often in any intelligibly graded or apportioned measure and not always in clearly translating terms of vital good fortune and ill fortune.

In short, what we may call the transitional lines of Karma exist and have to be taken into account in our view of the action of the world forces. But they are not and cannot be the whole law of Karma. And they cannot be that because they are transitional, because good and evil are moral and not vital values and have a clear right only to a moral and not a vital return, because reward and punishment put forward as the conditions of good doing and evil doing do not constitute and cannot create a really moral order, the principle itself, whatever temporary end it serves, being fundamentally immoral from the higher point of view of a true and pure ethics, and because there are other forces that count and have their right, — knowledge, power and many others. The correspondence of moral and vital good is a demand of the human ego and like many others of its demands answers to certain tendencies in the world mind, but is not its whole law or highest purpose. A moral order there can be, but it is in ourselves and for its own sake that we have to create it and, only when we have so created it and found its right relation to other powers of life, can we hope to make it count at its full value in the right ordering of man's vital existence.

The Higher Lines of Karma

THE THIRD movement of mind labours to bring the soul of man out of the tangle of the vital and mental forces and opens to him a field in which the mind raises itself, raises at least the head of its thought and will, above the vital demands and standards and there at that top of its activities, whatever its other concessions to the lower Karma, lives for the sake of the true values, the true demands of a mental being, even though one imprisoned in a body and set to wrestle with the conditions of life in a material universe. The innate demand of the mental being is for mental experience, for the mind's manifold strengths, its capacities, joys, growth, perfections, and for these things for their own sake because of the inevitable satisfaction they give to his nature, — the demand of the intellect for truth and knowledge, the demand of the ethical mind for right and good, the demand of the aesthetic mind for beauty and delight of beauty, the demand of the emotional mind for love and the joy of relation with our fellow-beings, the demand of the will for self-mastery and mastery of things and the world and our existence. And the values which the mental being holds for supreme and effective are the values of truth and knowledge, of right and good, of beauty and aesthetic delight, of love and emotional joy, of mastery and inner lordship. It is these things that he seeks to know and follow, to possess, discover, enjoy, increase. It is for this great adventure that he came into the world, to walk hardily through the endless fields they offer to him, to experiment, to dare, to test the utmost limit of each capacity and follow each possibility and its clue to the end as well as to observe in each its at present discovered law and measure. Here as in the other fields, as in the vital and physical, so in his mental provinces, it is the appointed work of his intelligence and will to know and master through an always enlarging experience the conditions of an increasing light and power and right and truth and joy and beauty and wideness, and not only to discover the Truth and the Law and set up a system and an order, but to enlarge continually its lines and boundaries. And therefore in these fields, as in life, man, the mental being, cannot stop short too long in the partial truth of an established system and a temporary mistaken for an eternal order — here least, because as he advances he is always tempted still farther forward until he realises that he is a seeker of the infinite and a power of the absolute. His base here plunges into the obscure infinite of life and matter; but his head rises towards the luminous infinite of the spirit.

The third movement of the mental energy carries it therefore into its own native field and kingdom above the pressing subjection to the lowering and limiting claim of a vital and physical Karma. It is true that his lower being remains subject to the law of life and of the body, and it is true also that he must strive either to find in life or to bring into the world around him some law of truth, of right and good, of beauty, of love and joy, of the mind's will and mastery, for it is by that effort that he is man and not the animal and without it he cannot find his true satisfaction in living. But two things he has more and more to feel and to realise, first, that life and matter follow their own law and not, in man's sense of it at least, a moral, a rational, a mentally determined aesthetic or other mind order, and if he wishes to introduce any such thing into them, he must himself here create it, transcending the physical and the vital law and discovering another and a better, and secondly, that the more he follows these things for their own sake, the more he discovers their true form, *svarūpa*, and develops their force to prevail upon and lift up life into an air of higher nature. In other words he passes from the practical pursuit of a serviceable knowledge, morality, aesthesis, force of emotion and will-power, — serviceable for his vital aims, for life as it first is, — to an ideal pursuit of these things and the transformation of life into the image of his ideal. This he is unable indeed as yet to realise and is obliged to rest on balance and compromise, because he has not found the whole reconciling secret of that which lies beyond his ideals. But it is as he pursues them in their purity, for their own imperative innate demand and attraction, on the line of their trend to their own infinite and absolute that he gets nearer in his total experience to the secret. There is so a chance of his discovering that as the beauty and irrefragable order of life and matter are due to the joy of the Infinite in life and in matter and the fidelity of the Force here at work to the hidden knowledge and will and idea of the Self and Spirit in them, so there is within his own hidden self, his own vast and covert spirit a secret of the Infinite's self-knowledge, will, joy, love and delight, mastery, right and truth of joy and action by which his own greater life rising above the vital and mental limitations can discover an infinite perfection and beauty and delight in itself and spontaneous irrefragable order.

Meanwhile this third movement of mind discovers a law of the return of mental energies, pure in its kind and as certain as the vital and the physical, as faithful to itself, to the self of mind and to mind nature, a law not of vital returns to mental dynamis, but of progression of the soul in the being and force of good and beauty and power — of mind-power and soul-power — and greatness and love and joy and knowledge. Mounting here the ethical mind no longer follows good for a reward now on earth or in another existence, but for the sake of good, and no longer shuns evil for fear of punishment on earth later on in this life or else in another life or in hell, but because to follow evil is a degradation and affliction of its being and a fall from its innate and imperative endeavour. This is to it a necessity of its moral nature, a truly categorical imperative, a call that in the total more complex nature of man may be dulled or suppressed or excluded by the claim of its other parts and their needs, but to the ethical mind is binding and absolute. The virtue that demands a reward for acting well and needs a penalty to keep it walking in the straight way, is no real portion, no true law of the ethical being, but rather a mixed creation, a rule of his practical reason that seeks always after utility and holds that to be right which is helpful and expedient, a rule that looks first not at the growth of the soul but at the mechanical securing of a regulated outward conduct and to secure it bribes and terrifies the vital being into acquiescence and a reluctant subordination of its own instincts and natural ventures. The virtue so created is an expediency, a social decency, a prudent limitation of egoism, a commercial substitute for the true thing; or, at best, it is a habit of the mind and not a truth of the soul, and in the mind a fabrication, mixed and of inferior stuff, a conventional virtue, insecure, destructible by the wear and tear of life, easily confused with other expediencies or purchasable or conquerable by them, — it is not a high and clear upbuilding, an enduring and inwardly living self-creation of the soul. Whatever its practical utility or service as a step of the transition, the mental habit of confusion and vitalistic compromise it fosters and the more questionable confusions and compromises that habit favours, have made conventional morality one of the chief of the forces that hold back human life from progressing to a true ethical order. If humanity has made any lasting and true advance, it has been not through the virtue created by reward and punishment or any of the sanctions powerful on the little vital ego, but by an insistence from the higher mind on the lower, an insistence on right for its own sake, on imperative moral values, on an absolute law and truth of ethical being and ethical conduct that must be obeyed whatever the recalcitrances of the lower mind, whatever the pains of the vital problem, whatever the external result, the inferior issue.

This higher mind holds its pure and complete sway only on a few high souls, in others it acts upon the lower and outer mind but amidst much misprision, confusion and distortion of thought and will and perverting or abating mixture; on the mass of men governed by the lower egoistic, vital and conventional standards of conduct its influence is indirect and little. None the less it gives the clue we have to follow in order to pursue the spiral ascent of the lines of Karma. And first we observe that the just man follows the ethical law for its own sake and not for any other purpose whatsoever, is just for the sake of justice, righteous for the sake of righteousness, compassionate for the sake of compassion, true for the sake of truth alone.

Harishchandra sacrificing self and wife and child and kingdom and subjects in an unswerving fidelity to the truth of the spoken word, Shivi giving his flesh to the hawk rather than fall from his kingly duty of protection to the fugitive, the Bodhisattwa laying his body before the famished tiger, images in which sacred or epic legend has consecrated this greater kind of virtue, illuminate an elevation of the ethical will and a law of moral energy that asks for no return from man or living thing or from the gods of Karma, lays down no conditions, makes no calculation of consequence, of less or more or of the greatest good of the greatest number, admits neither the hedonistic nor the utilitarian measure, but does simply the act as the thing to be done because it is right and virtue and therefore the very law of being of the ethical man, the categorical imperative of his nature.

This kind of high absoluteness in the ethical demand is appalling to the flesh and the ego, for it admits of no comfortable indulgence and compromise, no abating reserves or conditions, no profitable compact between the egoistic life and virtue. It is offensive too to the practical reason, for it ignores the complexity of the world and of human nature and seems to savour of an extremism and exclusive exaggeration as dangerous to life as it is exalted in ideal purpose. *Fiat justitia ruat coelum*, let justice and right be done though the heavens fall, is a rule of conduct that only the ideal mind can accept with equanimity or the ideal life tolerate in practice. And even to the larger ideal mind this absoluteness becomes untrustworthy if it is an obedience not to the higher law of the soul, but to an outward moral law, a code of conduct. For then in place of a lifting enthusiasm we have the rigidity of the Pharisee, a puritan fierceness or narrowness or the life-killing tyranny of a single insufficient side of the nature. This is not yet that higher mental movement, but a straining towards it, an attempt to rise above the transitional law and the vitalistic compromise. And it brings with it an artificiality, a tension, a coercion, often a repellent austerity which, disregarding as it does sanity and large wisdom and the simple naturalness of the true ethical mind and the flexibilities of life, tyrannising over but not transforming it, is not the higher perfection of our nature. But still even here there is the feeling out after a great return to the output of moral energy, an attempt well worth making, if the aim can indeed so be accomplished, to build up by the insistence on a rigid obedience to a law of moral action that which is yet non-existent or imperfectly existent in us but which alone can make the law of our conduct a thing true and living, — an ethical being with an inalienably ethical nature. No rule imposed on him from outside, whether in the name of a supposed mechanical or impersonal law or of God or prophet, can be, as such, true or right or binding on man: it becomes that only when it answers to some demand or aids some evolution of his inner being. And when that inner being is revealed, evolved, at each moment naturally active, simply and spontaneously imperative, then we get the true, the inner and intuitive Law in its light of self-knowledge, its beauty of self-fulfilment, its intimate life significance. An act of justice, truth, love, compassion, purity, sacrifice becomes then the faultless expression, the natural outflowering of our soul of justice, our soul of truth, our soul of love and compassion, our soul of purity or sacrifice. And before the greatness of its imperative mandate to the outer nature the vital being and the practical reason and surface seeking intelligence must and do bow down as before something greater than themselves, something that belongs directly to the divine and the infinite.

Meanwhile we get the clue to the higher law of Karma, of the output and returns of energy, and see it immediately and directly to be, what all law of Karma, really and ultimately, if at first covertly, is for man, a law of his spiritual evolution. The true return to the act of virtue, to the ethically right output of his energy — his reward, if you will, and the sole recompense on which he has a right to insist, — is its return upon him in a growth of the moral strength within him, an upbuilding of his ethical being, a flowering of the soul of right, justice, love, compassion, purity, truth, strength, courage, self-giving that he seeks to be. The true return to the act of evil, to the ethically wrong output of energy — his punishment, if you will, and the sole penalty he has any need or right to fear, — is its return upon him in a retardation of the growth, a demolition of the upbuilding, an obscuration, tarnishing, impoverishing of the soul, of the pure, strong and luminous being that he is striving to be. An inner happiness he may gain by his act, the calm, peace, satisfaction of the soul fulfilled in right, or an inner calamity, the suffering, disturbance, unease and malady of its descent or failure, but he can demand from God or moral Law no other. The ethical soul, — not the counterfeit but the real, — accepts the pains and sufferings and difficulties and fierce intimidations of life, not as a punishment for its sins, but as an opportunity and trial, an opportunity for its growth, a trial of its built or native strength, and good fortune and all outer success not as a coveted reward of virtue, but as an opportunity also and an even greater more difficult trial. What to this high seeker of Right can mean the vital law of Karma or what can its gods do to him that he can fear or long for? The ethical-vitalistic explanation of the world and its meaning and measures has for such a soul, for man at this height of his evolution no significance. He has travelled beyond the jurisdiction of the Powers of the middle air, the head of his spirit's endeavour is lifted above the dull grey-white belt that is their empire.

There can be no greater error than to suppose, misled by this absolute insistence of the ethical being, that the ethical is the single or the supreme demand of the Infinite upon us or the one law and line of the higher Karma, and that in comparison with it nothing else matters. The German thinker's idea that there is a categorical imperative laid upon man to seek after the right and good, an insistent law of right conduct, but no categorical imperative of the Oversoul compelling him to seek after the beautiful or the true, after a law of right beauty and harmony and right knowledge, is a singular misprision. It is a false deduction born of too much preoccupation with the transitional movement of man's mind and, there too, only with one side of its complex phenomena. The Indian thinkers had a wiser sight who while conceding right ethical being and conduct as a first need, still considered knowledge to be the greater ultimate demand, the indispensable condition, and much nearer to a full seeing came that larger experience of theirs that either through an urge towards absolute knowledge or a pure impersonality of the will or an ecstasy of divine love and absolute delight, — and even through an absorbing concentration of the psychical and the vital and physical being, — the soul turns towards the Supreme and that on each part of our self and nature and consciousness there can come a call and irresistible attraction of the Divine. Indeed, an uplift of all these, an imperative of the Divine upon all the ways of our being, is the impetus of self-enlargement to a complete, an integralising possession of God, freedom and immortality, and that therefore is the highest law of our nature.

The fundamental movement of life knows nothing of an absolute ethical insistence, its only categorical imperative is the imperative of Nature herself compelling each being to affirm its life as it must or as best it can according to its own inborn self and way of expression of her, Swabhava. In the transitional movement of life informed by mind there is indeed a moral instinct developing into a moral sense and idea, — not complete for it leaves large ranges of conduct in which there is a lacuna or inconscience of the moral sense, a satisfied fulfilment of the egoistic desires at the expense of others, and not imperative since it is easily combated and overthrown by the earlier imposed, more naturally dominant law of the vital being. What the natural egoistic man obeys most rigorously is the collective or social rule of conduct impressed on his mind by law and tradition, *jus*, *mores*, and outside its conventional circle he allows himself an easy latitude. The reason generalises the idea of a moral law carrying with it an obligation man should heed and obey but may disregard at this outer or that inner peril, and it insists first and most on a moral law, an obligation of self-control, justice, righteousness, conduct, rather than a law of truth, beauty and harmony, love, mastery, because the regulation of his desires and instincts and his outward vital action is his first necessary preoccupation and he has to find his poise here and a settled and sanctioned order before he commences securely to go deeper and develop more in the direction of his inner being. It is the ideal mind that brings into this superficial moral sense, this relative obligation, the intuition of an inner and absolute ethical imperative, and if it tends to give to ethics the first and most important and in some minds the whole place, it is still because the priority of action, long given to it in the evolution of mind on earth, moves man to apply first his idealism to action and his relations with other beings. But as there is the moral instinct in the mind seeking for good, so too there is the aesthetic instinct, the emotional and the dynamic and the instinct in man that seeks after knowledge, and the developing reason is as much concerned to evolve in all these directions as in the ethical and to find out their right law; for truth, beauty, love, strength and power are after all as necessary for the true growth of mind and of life and even for the fullness of the action as righteousness, purity and justice. Arriving on the high ideal plane these too become, no less than the ethical motive, no longer a seeking and necessity of this relative nature and importance, but a law and call to spiritual perfection, an inner and absolute divine imperative.

The higher mind of man seeks not only after good, but after truth, after knowledge. He has an intellectual as well as an ethical being and the impulse that moves it, the will to know, the thirst for truth is not less divine in its upward orientation than the will to good, not less too in its earlier workings, but even more, a necessity of the growth of our consciousness and being and the right ordering of our action, not less an imperative need laid upon man by the will of the spirit in the universe. And in the pursuit of knowledge as in the pursuit of good we see the same lines and stages of the evolution of energy. At first as its basis there is simply a life-consciousness seeking for its self, becoming more and more aware of its movements, actions and reactions, its environment, its habits, its fixed laws, gaining and enlarging and learning always to profit by self-experience. This is indeed the fundamental purpose of consciousness and use of intelligence, and intelligence with the thinking will in it is man's master faculty and supports and embraces, changes with its change and widens with its widening and increasingly perfects all the others. Mind in its first action pursues knowledge with a certain curiosity, but turns it mainly to practical experience, to a help that enables it to fulfil better and to increase more assuredly the first uses and purposes of life. Afterwards it evolves a freer use of the intelligence, but there is still a dominant turn towards the vital purpose. And we may observe that as a power for the returns of life the world energy seems to attach a more direct importance and give more tangible results to knowledge, to the right practical workings of the intelligence than it yields to moral right. In this material world it is at least doubtful how far moral good is repaid by vital good and moral evil punished by a recoil, but it is certain that we do pay very usually for our errors, for stupidity, for ignorance of the right way of action, for any ignoring or misapplication of the laws that govern our psychical, vital and physical being; it is certain that knowledge is a power for life efficiency and success. Intelligence pays its way in the material world, guards itself against vital and physical suffering, secures its vital rewards more surely than moral right and ethical purpose.

But the higher mind of humanity is no more content with a utilitarian use of knowledge as its last word in the seeking of the intelligence than with a vitalistic and utilitarian turn and demand of the ethical being. As in the ethical, so in the intellectual being of man there emerges a necessity of knowledge which is no longer its utility for life, its need of knowing rightly in order to act rightly, to deal successfully and intelligently with the world around it, but a necessity of the soul, an imperative demand of the inner being. The pursuit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge is the true, the intrinsic dharma of the intellect and not for the sake primarily or even necessarily at all for the securing or the enlargement of the means of life and success in action. The vital kinetic man tends indeed to regard this passion of the intellect as a respectable but still rather unpractical and often trivial curiosity: as he values ethics for its social effects or for its rewards in life, so he values knowledge for its external helpfulness; science is great in his eyes because of its inventions, its increase of comforts and means and appliances: his standard in all things is vital efficiency. But in fact Nature sees and stirs from the first to a larger and more inward Will and is moved with a greater purpose, and all seeking for knowledge springs from a necessity of the mind, a necessity of its nature, and that means a necessity of the soul that is here in nature. Its need to know is one with its need to grow, and from the eager curiosity of the child upward to the serious stress of mind of the thinker, scholar, scientist, philosopher the fundamental purpose of Nature, the constant in it, is the same. All the time that she seems busy only with the maintenance of her works, with life, with the outward, her secret underlying purpose is other, — it is the evolution of that which is hidden within her: for if her first dynamic word is life, her greater revealing word is consciousness and the evolution of life and action only the means of the evolution of the consciousness involved in life, the imprisoned soul, the Jiva. Action is a means, but knowledge is the sign and the growth of the conscious soul is the purpose. Man's use of the intelligence for the pursuit of knowledge is therefore that which distinguishes him most from other beings and gives him his high peculiar place in the scale of existence. His passion for knowledge, first world-knowledge, but afterwards self-knowledge and that in which both meet and find their common secret, God-knowledge, is the central drift of his ideal mind and a greater imperative of his being than that of action, though later in laying its complete hold on him, greater in the wideness of its reach and greater too in its effectiveness upon action, in the returns of the world energy to his power of the truth within him.

It is in the third movement of highest mind when it is preparing to disengage itself, its pure self of will and intelligence, the radiant head of its endeavour from subjection to the vital motive that this imperative of nature, this intrinsic need that creates in the mind of man the urge towards knowledge, becomes something much greater, becomes instead more and more plainly the ideal absolute imperative of the soul emerging from the husks and sheaths of ignorance and pushing towards the truth, towards the light as the condition of its fulfilment and the very call of the Divine upon its being. The lure of an external utility ceases to be at all needed as an incentive towards knowledge, just as the lure of a vital reward offered now or hereafter ceases on the same high level of our ascent to be needed as an incentive to virtue, and to attach importance to it under whatever specious colour is even felt to be a degradation of the disinterestedness, a fall from the high purity of the soul motive. Already even in the more outward forms of intellectual seeking something of this absoluteness begins to be felt and to reign. The scientist pursues his discoveries in order that he may know the law and truth of the process of the universe and their practical results are only a secondary motive of the enquiring mind and no motive at all to the higher scientific intelligence. The philosopher is driven from within to search for the ultimate truth of things for the one sake of Truth only and all else but to see the very face of Truth becomes to him, to his absorbing mind and soul of knowledge, secondary or of no importance; nothing can be allowed to interfere with that one imperative. And there is the tendency to the same kind of exclusiveness in the interest and the process of this absolute. The thinker is concerned to seek out and enforce the truth on himself and the world regardless of any effect it may have in disturbing the established bases of life, religion, ethics, society, regardless of any other consideration whatsoever: he must express the word of the Truth whatever its dynamic results on life. And this absolute becomes most absolute, this imperative most imperative when the inner action surpasses the strong coldness of intellectual search and becomes a fiery striving for truth experience, a luminous inner truth living, a birth into a new truth consciousness. The enamoured of light, the sage, the Yogin of knowledge, the seer, the Rishi live for knowledge and in knowledge, because it is the absolute of light and truth that they seek after and its claim on them is single and absolute.

At the same time this also is a line of the world energy, — for the world Shakti is a Shakti of consciousness and knowledge and not only a Power of force and action, — and the output of the energy of knowledge brings its results as surely as the energy of the will seeking after success in action or after right ethical conduct. But the result that it brings on this higher plane of the seeking in mind is simply and purely the upward growth of the soul in light and truth; that and whatever happiness it brings is the one supreme reward demanded by the soul of knowledge and the darkening of the light within, the pain of the fall from truth, the pain of the imperfection of not living only by its law and wholly in the light is its one penalty of suffering. The outward rewards and the sufferings of life are small things to the higher soul of knowledge in man: even his high mind of knowledge will often face all that the world can do to afflict it, just as it is ready to make all manner of sacrifices in the pursuit and the affirmation of the truth it knows and lives for. Bruno burning in the Roman fire, the martyrs of all religions suffering and welcoming as witnesses to the light within them torture and persecution, Buddha leaving all to discover the dark cause of universal suffering in this world of the impermanence and the way of escape into the supreme Permanence, the ascetic casting away as an illusion life in the world and its activities, enjoyments, attractions with the one will to enter into the absolute truth and the supreme consciousness are witnesses to this imperative of knowledge, its extreme examples and exponents.

The intention of Nature, the spiritual justification of her ways appears at last in this turn of her energies leading the conscious soul along the lines of truth and knowledge. At first she is physical Nature building her firm field according to a base of settled truth and law but determined by a subconscient knowledge she does not yet share with her creatures. Next she is Life growing slowly self-conscious, seeking out knowledge that she may move seeingly in them along her ways and increase at once the complexity and the efficacy of her movements, but developing slowly too the consciousness that knowledge must be pursued for a higher and purer end, for truth, for the satisfaction, as the life expression and as the spiritual self-finding of the soul of knowledge. But, last, it is that soul itself growing in the truth and light, growing into the absolute truth of itself which is its perfection, that becomes the law and high end of her energies. And at each stage she gives returns according to the development of the aim and consciousness of the being. At first there is the return of skill and effectual intelligence — and her own need explains sufficiently why she gives the rewards of life not, as the ethical mind in us would have it, to the just, not chiefly to moral good, but to the skilful and to the strong, to will and force and intelligence, — and then, more and more clearly disengaged, the return of enlightenment and the satisfaction of the mind and the soul in the conscious use and wise direction of its powers and capacities and, last of all, the one supreme return, the increase of the soul in light, the satisfaction of its perfection in knowledge, its birth into the highest consciousness and the pure fulfilment of its own innate imperative. It is that growth, a divine birth or spiritual self-exceeding its supreme reward, which for the Eastern mind has been always the highest gain, — the growth out of human ignorance into divine self-knowledge.

APPENDIX I

The Tangle of Karma

OBVIOUSLY we must leave far behind us the current theory of Karma and its shallow attempt to justify the ways of the Cosmic Spirit by forcing on them a crude identity with the summary notions of law and justice, the crude and often savagely primitive methods of reward and punishment, lure and deterrent dear to the surface human mind. There is here a more authentic and spiritual truth at the base of Nature's action and a far less mechanically calculable movement. Here is no rigid and narrow ethical law bound down to a petty human significance, no teaching of a child soul by a mixed system of blows and lollipops, no unprofitable wheel of a brutal cosmic justice automatically moved in the traces of man's ignorant judgments and earthy desires and instincts. Life and rebirth do not follow these artificial constructions, but a movement spiritual and intimate to the deepest intention of Nature. A cosmic Will and Wisdom observant of the ascending march of the soul's consciousness and experience as it emerges out of subconscient Matter and climbs to its own luminous divinity fixes the norm and constantly enlarges the lines of the law — or, let us say, since law is a too mechanical conception, — the truth of Karma.

For what we understand by law is a single immutably habitual movement or recurrence in Nature fruitful of a determined sequence of things and that sequence must be clear, precise, limited to its formula, invariable. If it is not that, if there is too much flexibility of movement, if there intervenes too embarrassing a variety or criss-cross of action and reaction, a too rich complex of forces, the narrow uncompromising incompetence of our logical intelligence finds there not law but an incertitude and a chaos. Our reason must be allowed to cut and hew and arbitrarily select its suitable circumstances, isolate its immutable data, skeletonise or mechanise life; otherwise it stands open-mouthed at a loss unable to think with precision or act with effect in a field of subtle and indefinite measures. It must be allowed to deal with mighty Nature as it deals with human society, politics, ethics, conduct; for it can understand and do good work only where it is licensed to build and map out its own artificial laws, erect a clear, precise, rigid, infallible system and leave as little room as possible for the endless flexibility and variety and complexity that presses from the Infinite upon our mind and life. Moved by this need we endeavour to forge for our own souls and for the cosmic Spirit even such a single and inflexible law of Karma as we would ourselves have made, had the rule of the world been left to us. Not this mysterious universe would we have made, but the pattern of a rational cosmos fitted to our call for a simple definite guidance in action and for a well-marked thumb rule facile and clear to our limited intelligence. But this force we call Karma turns out to be no such precise and invariable mechanism as we hoped; it is rather a thing of many planes that changes its face and walk and very substance as it mounts from level to higher level, and on each plane even it is not one movement but an indefinite complex of many spiral movements hard enough for us to harmonise together or to find out whatever secret harmony unknown to us and incalculable these complexities are weaving out in this mighty field of the dealings of the soul with Nature.

Let us then call Karma no longer a Law, but rather the many-sided dynamic truth of all action and life, the organic movement here of the Infinite. That was what the ancient thinkers saw in it before it was cut and shredded by lesser minds and turned into an easy and misleading popular formula. Action of Karma follows and takes up many potential lines of the spirit into its multitudinous surge, many waves and streams of combining and disputing world-forces; it is the processus of the creative Infinite; it is the long and multiform way of the progression of the individual and the cosmic soul in Nature. Its complexities cannot be unravelled by our physical mind ever bound up in the superficial appearance, nor by our vital mind of desire stumbling forward in the cloud of its own instincts and longings and rash determinations through the maze of these myriad favouring and opposing forces that surround and urge and drive and hamper us from the visible and invisible worlds. Nor can it be perfectly classified, accounted for, tied up in bundles by the precisions of our logical intelligence in its inveterate search for clear-cut dogmas. On that day only shall we perfectly decipher what is now to us Nature's obscure hieroglyph of Karma when there rises in our enlarged consciousness the supramental way of knowledge. The supramental eye can see a hundred meeting and diverging motions in one glance and envelop in the largeness of its harmonising vision of Truth all that to our minds is clash and opposition and the collision and interlocked strife of numberless contending truths and powers. Truth to the supramental sight is at once single and infinite and the complexities of its play serve to bring out with an abundant ease the rich significance of the Eternal's many-sided oneness.

The complexity of the lines of Karma is much greater than we have yet seen in the steps of thought that we have been obliged to cut in order to climb to the summits where they converge. For the convenience of the mind we have chosen to speak as if there were four quite separate planes each with its separate lines of Karma, — the physical with its fixed law and very easily perceptible return to our energies, the life plane, complex, full of doubtful rewards and dangerous rebounds, rich promise and dark menace, the mind plane with its high trenchant unattainable absolutes each in its separateness so difficult to embody and all so hard to reconcile and combine and the supramental where Nature's absolutes are reached, her relativities ordered to their place and all these lower movements delivered and harmonised because they have found luminously their inner spiritual reason for existence. That division is not false in itself, but its truth is subject to two capital provisos which at once give them a complexity not apparent in the first formula. There are above and behind our human existence the four levels but there each plane contains in itself the others, although in each these others are subject to the dominant law of the plane, — life for instance obeys on the mental level the law of mind and turns its movements into an instrumentation of the free intelligence. Again man exists here in the body and the physical world; he is open more or less to the vast movements of a life plane and the free movements of a mental world that are far vaster and freer in their potentialities than anything that we call here life and mind, but he does not live in that free mental light or in that vast vital force. His business is to bring down and embody here as much of that greater life and greater mind as can be precipitated into matter and equipped with a form and organised in the physical formula. In proportion as he ascends he does indeed rise above the physical and vital into the higher mental lines of Karma, but he cannot leave them entirely behind him. The saint, the intellectual man, scientist, thinker or creator, the seeker after beauty, the seeker after any mental absolute is not that alone; he is also, even if less exclusively than others, the vital and physical man; subject to the urgings of the life and the body, he participates in the vital and physical motives of Karma and receives the perplexed and intertwined return of these energies. It is not intended in his birth that he shall live entirely in mind, for he is here to deal with life and Matter as well and to bring as best he can a higher law into life and Matter. And since he is not a mental being in a mental world, it is not easy and in the end, we may suspect, not possible for him to impose entirely and perfectly the law of the mental absolutes, a mental good, beauty, love, truth and power on his lower parts. He has to take this other difficult truth into account that life and Matter have absolutes of their own armed with an equal right to formulation and persistence and he has to find some light, some truth, some spiritual and supramental power that can take up these imperatives also no less than the mind's imperatives and harmonise all in a grand and integral transformation. But the difficulty is again that if he is not open to the world of free intelligence, he is still less open to the deeper and vaster spiritual and supramental levels. There can indeed be great descents of spiritual light, purity, power, love, delight into the earth consciousness in its human formula;

but man as he is now can hold only a little of these things and he can give them no adequate organisation and shape and body in his mental movements or his life-action or his physical and material consciousness and dynamis. The moment he tries to get at the absolute of the spirit, he feels himself obliged to reject body, to silence mind, and to draw back from life. It is that urgent necessity, that inability of mind and life and body to hold and answer to the spirit that is the secret of asceticism, the philosophical justification of the illusionist, the compulsion that moves the eremite and the recluse. If on the other hand he tries to spiritualise mind and life and the body he finds in the end that he has only brought down the spirit to a lower formulation that cannot give all its truth and purity and power. He has to some extent spiritualised mind, but much more has he mentalised the spiritual and to mentalise the spiritual is to falsify and obscure it or at the very least to dilute its truth, to imprison its force, to limit and alter its potentialities. He has perhaps to a much less extent spiritualised his life, but much more has he vitalised the spiritual and to vitalise the spiritual is to degrade it. He has never yet spiritualised the body, at most he has minimised the physical by a spiritual refusal and abstinence or brought down some mental and vital powers mistaken for spiritual into his physical force and physical frame. More has not been done in the human past so far as we can discover, or if anything greater was done it was a transitory gain from the superconscient and has returned again into our superconscience.

The secret reason of man's failure to rise truly beyond himself is a fundamental incapacity in the mind, the life and the body to organise the highest integral truth and power of the spirit. And this incapacity exists because mind and life and matter are in their nature depressed and imperfect powers of the Infinite that need to be transformed into something greater than themselves before they can escape from their depression and imperfection; in their very nature they are a system of partial and separated values and cannot adequately express or embody the integral and the one, a movement of many divergent and mutually non-understanding or misunderstanding lines they cannot arrive of themselves at any but a provisional, limited and imperfect harmony and order. There is no doubt a material Infinite, a vital Infinite, a mental Infinite in which we feel a perfection, a delight, an essential harmony, an inexpressible completeness which, when we experience it, makes us disregard the discords and imperfections and obscurities we see and even perceive them as elements of the infinite perfection. In other words the Spirit, the Infinite supports these depressed values and elicits from them a certain joy of his manifestation that is complete and illimitable enough in its own manner. But there is more behind and above, there are greater more unmistakably harmonious values, greater truly perfect powers of the Spirit than mind, life and matter and these wait for their expression and only when they are expressed can we escape from this system of harmony through discords and of a perfection on the whole that subsists by imperfection in the detail. And as we open to a greater knowledge, we find that even for such harmonies, stabilities, perfections as the energies of Mind, Life and Matter can realise, they depend really not on their own delegated and inferior power which is at best a more or less ignorant instrument but on a greater deeper organising force and knowledge of which they are the inadequate derivations. That force and knowledge is the self-possessed supramental power and will and the perfect and untrammelled supramental gnosis of the Infinite. It is that which has fixed the precise measures of Matter, regulates the motive instincts and impulsions of Life, holds together the myriad seekings of Mind; but none of these things are that power and gnosis and nothing therefore mental, vital or physical is final or can even find its own integral truth and harmony nor all these together their reconciliation until they are taken up and transformed in a supramental manifestation. For this supermind or gnosis is the entire organising will and knowledge of the spiritual, it is the Truth Consciousness, the Truth Force, the organic instrumentation of divine Law, the all-seeing eye of the divine Vision, the freely selecting and generating harmony of the eternal Ananda.

APPENDIX II

A Clarification

> *In 1935, Sri Aurobindo was asked:* "In 'Rebirth and Karma', second chapter,[1] I find that it is the 'mental being' which is put forth from life to life — that it is the reincarnating soul. But would not the mental being be a part of the personality — the mental, nervous and physical composite — which in the popular conception is the thing that is carried over or which takes a new body in the next life? And the 'Self' here is quite different from the 'mental being'. . . . Is the 'mental being' then the same thing as the 'psychic being' which is carried over to the next life?"

The mental being spoken of by the Upanishad is not part of the mental-nervous-physical composite — it is the manomaya purusha prana-sharira-neta, the mental being leader of the life and body. It could not be so described if it were part of the composite. Nor can the composite or part of it be the Purusha, — for the composite is composed of Prakriti. It is described as manomaya by the Upanishads because the psychic being is behind the veil and man being a mental being in the life and body lives in his mind and not in his psychic, so to him the manomaya purusha is the leader of the life and body, — of the psychic behind supporting the whole he is not aware or dimly aware in his best moments. The psychic is represented in man by the Prime Minister, the manomaya, itself being a mild constitutional king; it is the manomaya to whom Prakriti refers for assent to her actions. But still the statement of the Upanishads gives only the apparent truth of the matter, valid for man and the human stage only — for in the animal it would be rather the pranamaya purusha that is the *netā*, leader of mind and body. It is one reason why I have not yet allowed the publication of

---

[1] *See page 275.*

Rebirth and Karma because this had to be corrected and the deeper truth put in its place. I had intended to do it later on, but had not time to finish the remaining articles.

Other Writings from the *Arya*

The Question of the Month

The Needed Synthesis

What is the Synthesis needed at the present time?

Undoubtedly, that of man himself. The harmony of his faculties is the condition of his peace, their mutual understanding and helpfulness the means of his perfection. At war, they distract the kingdom of his being; the victory of one at the expense of another maims his self-fulfilment.

The peculiar character of our age is the divorce that has been pronounced between reason and faith, the logical mind and the intuitive heart. At first, the declaration of war between them was attended by painful struggles, a faith disturbed or a scepticism dissatisfied. But now their divorce has created exaggerated tendencies which impoverish human life by their mutual exclusiveness, on the one side a negative and destructive critical spirit, on the other an imaginative sentiment which opposes pure instinct and a faith founded on dreams to the sterile fanaticism of the intellect.

Yet a real divorce is impossible. Science could not move a step without faith and intuition and today it is growing full of dreams. Religion could not stand for a moment if it did not support itself by the intellectual presentation, however inadequate, of profound truths. Today we see it borrowing many of its weapons from the armoury of its opponent. But a right synthesis in virtue of a higher and reconciling truth can alone dissipate their mutual misunderstandings and restore to the race its integral self-development.

The synthesis then of religious aspiration and scientific faculty, as a beginning; and in the resultant progress an integrality also of the inner existence. Love and knowledge, the delight of the Bhakta and the divine science of the knower of Brahman, have to effect their unity; and both have to recover the fullness of Life which they tend to banish from them in the austerity of their search or the rapture of their ecstasy.

The heart and the mind are one universal Deity and neither a mind without a heart nor a heart without a mind is the human ideal. Nor is any perfection sound and real unless it is also fruitful. The integral divine harmony within, but as its result a changed earth and a nobler and happier humanity.

"Arya" — Its Significance

What is the significance of the name, "Arya"?

The question has been put from more than one point of view. To most European readers the name figuring on our cover[1] is likely to be a hieroglyph which attracts or repels according to the temperament. Indians know the word, but it has lost for them the significance which it bore to their forefathers. Western Philology has converted it into a racial term, an unknown ethnological quantity on which different speculations fix different values. Now, even among the philologists, some are beginning to recognise that the word in its original use expressed not a difference of race, but a difference of culture. For in the Veda the Aryan peoples are those who had accepted a particular type of self-culture, of inward and outward practice, of ideality, of aspiration. The Aryan gods were the supraphysical powers who assisted the mortal in his struggle towards the nature of the godhead. All the highest aspirations of the early human race, its noblest religious temper, its most idealistic velleities of thought are summed up in this single vocable.

In later times, the word Arya expressed a particular ethical and social ideal, an ideal of well-governed life, candour, courtesy, nobility, straight dealing, courage, gentleness, purity, humanity, compassion, protection of the weak, liberality, observance of social duty, eagerness for knowledge, respect for the wise and learned, the social accomplishments. It was the combined ideal of the Brahmana and the Kshatriya. Everything that departed from this ideal, everything that tended towards the ignoble, mean, obscure, rude, cruel or false, was termed un-Aryan. There is no word in human speech that has a nobler history.

---

[1] आर्य — *the word "ārya" printed in Devanagari script on the cover of the review. See page 97. — Ed.*

In the early days of comparative Philology, when the scholars sought in the history of words for the prehistoric history of peoples, it was supposed that the word Arya came from the root *ar*, to plough, and that the Vedic Aryans were so called when they separated from their kin in the north-west who despised the pursuits of agriculture and remained shepherds and hunters. This ingenious speculation has little or nothing to support it. But in a sense we may accept the derivation. Whoever cultivates the field that the Supreme Spirit has made for him, his earth of plenty within and without, does not leave it barren or allow it to run to seed, but labours to exact from it its full yield, is by that effort an Aryan.

If Arya were a purely racial term, a more probable derivation would be *ar*, meaning strength or valour, from *ar*, to fight, whence we have the name of the Greek war-god Ares, *areios*, brave or warlike, perhaps even *aretē*, virtue, signifying, like the Latin *virtus*, first, physical strength and courage and then moral force and elevation. This sense of the word also we may accept. "We fight to win sublime Wisdom, therefore men call us warriors." For Wisdom implies the choice as well as the knowledge of that which is best, noblest, most luminous, most divine. Certainly, it means also the knowledge of all things and charity and reverence for all things, even the most apparently mean, ugly or dark, for the sake of the universal Deity who chooses to dwell equally in all. But, also, the law of right action is a choice, the preference of that which expresses the godhead to that which conceals it. And the choice entails a battle, a struggle. It is not easily made, it is not easily enforced.

Whoever makes that choice, whoever seeks to climb from level to level up the hill of the divine, fearing nothing, deterred by no retardation or defeat, shrinking from no vastness because it is too vast for his intelligence, no height because it is too high for his spirit, no greatness because it is too great for his force and courage, he is the Aryan, the divine fighter and victor, the noble man, *aristos*, best, the *śreṣṭha* of the Gita.

Intrinsically, in its most fundamental sense, Arya means an effort or an uprising and overcoming. The Aryan is he who strives and overcomes all outside him and within him that stands opposed to the human advance. Self-conquest is the first law of his nature. He overcomes earth and the body and does not consent like ordinary men to their dullness, inertia, dead routine and tamasic limitations. He overcomes life and its energies and refuses to be dominated by their hungers and cravings or enslaved by their rajasic passions. He overcomes the mind and its habits, he does not live in a shell of ignorance, inherited prejudices, customary ideas, pleasant opinions, but knows how to seek and choose, to be large and flexible in intelligence even as he is firm and strong in his will. For in everything he seeks truth, in everything right, in everything height and freedom.

Self-perfection is the aim of his self-conquest. Therefore what he conquers he does not destroy, but ennobles and fulfils. He knows that the body, life and mind are given him in order to attain to something higher than they; therefore they must be transcended and overcome, their limitations denied, the absorption of their gratifications rejected. But he knows also that the Highest is something which is no nullity in the world, but increasingly expresses itself here, — a divine Will, Consciousness, Love, Beatitude which pours itself out, when found, through the terms of the lower life on the finder and on all in his environment that is capable of receiving it. Of that he is the servant, lover and seeker. When it is attained, he pours it forth in work, love, joy and knowledge upon mankind. For always the Aryan is a worker and warrior. He spares himself no labour of mind or body whether to seek the Highest or to serve it. He avoids no difficulty, he accepts no cessation from fatigue. Always he fights for the coming of that kingdom within himself and in the world.

The Aryan perfected is the Arhat. There is a transcendent Consciousness which surpasses the universe and of which all these worlds are only a side-issue and a by-play. To that consciousness he aspires and attains. There is a Consciousness which, being transcendent, is yet the universe and all that the universe contains. Into that consciousness he enlarges his limited ego; he becomes one with all beings and all inanimate objects in a single self-awareness, love, delight, all-embracing energy. There is a consciousness which, being both transcendental and universal, yet accepts the apparent limitations of individuality for work, for various standpoints of knowledge, for the play of the Lord with His creations; for the ego is there that it may finally convert itself into a free centre of the divine work and the divine play. That consciousness too he has sufficient love, joy and knowledge to accept; he is puissant enough to effect that conversion. To embrace individuality after transcending it is the last and divine sacrifice. The perfect Arhat is he who is able to live simultaneously in all these three apparent states of existence, elevate the lower into the higher, receive the higher into the lower, so that he may represent perfectly in the symbols of the world that with which he is identified in all parts of his being, — the triple and triune Brahman.

Meditation

> What exactly is meant by meditation in Yoga? And what should be its objects?

The difficulty our correspondent finds is in an apparent conflict of authorities, as sometimes meditation is recommended in the form of a concentrated succession of thoughts on a single subject, sometimes in the exclusive concentration of the mind on a single image, word or idea, a fixed contemplation rather than meditation. The choice between these two methods and others, for there are others, depends on the object we have in view in Yoga.

The thinking mind is the one instrument we possess at present by which we can arrive at a conscious self-organisation of our internal existence. But in most men thought is a confused drift of ideas, sensations and impressions which arrange themselves as best they can under the stress of a succession of immediate interests and utilities. In accordance with the general method of Nature much is used as waste material and only a small portion selected for definite and abiding formations. And as in physical Nature, so here the whole process is governed by laws which we rather suffer than use or control.

The concentration of thought is used by the Rajayogins to gain freedom and control over the workings of mind, just as the processes of governed respiration and fixed posture are used by the Hathayogins to gain freedom and control over the workings of the body and the vital functions.

By meditation we correct the restless wandering of the mind and train it like an athlete to economise all its energies and fix them on the attainment of some desirable knowledge or self-discipline. This is done normally by men in ordinary life, but Yoga takes this higher working of Nature and carries it to its full possibilities. It takes note of the fact that by fixing the mind luminously on a single object of thought, we awaken a response in general Consciousness which proceeds to satisfy the mind by pouring into it knowledge about that object or even reveals to us its central or its essential truth. We awaken also a response of Power which gives us in various ways an increasing mastery over the workings of that on which we meditate or enables us to create it and make it active in ourselves. Thus by fixing the mind on the idea of Divine Love, we can come to the knowledge of that principle and its workings, put ourselves into communion with it, create it in ourselves and impose its law on the heart and the senses.

In Yoga concentration is used also for another object, — to retire from the waking state, which is a limited and superficial condition of our consciousness, into the depths of our being measured by various states of Samadhi. For this process contemplation of the single object, idea or name is more powerful than the succession of concentrated thoughts. The latter, however, is capable, by bringing us into indirect but waking communion with the deeper states of being, of preparing an integral Samadhi. Its characteristic utility, however, is the luminous activity of formative thought brought under the control of the Purusha by which the rest of the consciousness is governed, filled with higher and wider ideas, changed rapidly into the mould of those ideas and so perfected. Other and greater utilities lie beyond, but they belong to a later stage of self-development.

In the Yoga of Devotion, both processes are equally used to concentrate the whole being or to saturate the whole nature with thoughts of the object of devotion, its forms, its essence, its attributes and the joys of adoration and union. Thought is then made the servant of Love, a preparer of Beatitude. In the Yoga of Knowledge meditation is similarly used for discrimination of the True from the apparent, the Self from its forms, and concentrated contemplation for communion and entry of the individual consciousness into the Brahman.

An integral Yoga would harmonise all these aims. It would have also at its disposal other processes for the utilisation of thought and the mastery of the mind.

Different Methods of Writing

> What is the origin of the different methods of writing, — from right to left, from left to right or, like the Chinese, vertically?

The question is one of great interest but impossible to solve definitely for lack of substantial data. All one can do is to speculate on the most probable and satisfying explanation.

In the first place, it is evident that these differences are no mere accident nor the result of some trivial and local cause; for they coincide with great cultural divisions of humanity belonging to prehistoric times. It is the races called Aryan from their common original culture whose script is directed from left to right; the Mesopotamian races deriving their culture from the Chaldeans proceed from right to left; the Mongolians write vertically.

In the second place no explanation is possible if we adopt the view that writing is a comparatively recent invention in the history of the human race and borrowed by all the ancient nations from a common source, — a derivation, let us say, from Egyptian hieroglyphs popularised and spread broadcast over earth by the commercial activities of Phoenician traders. We must suppose on the contrary that these differences were developed at a very early time while the great cultures were in their formation and before the dispersal of the races representing them.

Undoubtedly, the general use of writing is a late development in the history of the present cycle of civilisation. And to this retardation two causes contributed, at first, the absence of a simple and easy system and, afterwards, the absence of a simple, common, but handy and durable material. While this state of things endured, writing would not be used for daily and ordinary purposes, but only in connection with great religious ceremonies or, where culture was materially more advanced, for the preservation of important records or of treasured and sacred knowledge.

It is, therefore, in some circumstance intimately connected with religious ideas and practices that we must look for the explanation we are seeking; and it should be a circumstance common to all these cultures, yet capable of leading to so striking a difference.

The one important circumstance common, one might almost say central, to the ideas and practices of the ancient nations was the reverence for the sun and its supreme importance in religious ceremonies. Might not the direction adopted for their writing be determined by some difference in their attitude towards the direction of the sun in its daily movement from east to west?

The difference of attitude can only be explained if we suppose that for some reason the Aryan forefathers had their faces turned southwards, the Mesopotamian northwards and the Mongolian eastwards. In that case, the sun for the Aryans would move from their left to their right, for the Mesopotamians from their right to their left, for the Mongolians straight towards them, and this difference would be represented by the movement of the hand tracing the sacred symbols on some hard flat surface, of stone or other material used for these early scripts.

But what circumstance, again, could lead to this difference? We can only think of one, — that this tendency might have been formed during the constant migration of these races from their original habitat. If we accept Mr. Tilak's theory of an Aryan migration from the arctic regions southwards towards India, Persia and the Mediterranean countries; if we can suppose that the fathers of the Mesopotamian culture came from the south northwards and that the first Mongolian movement was from Central Asia to the east, we shall have the necessary conditions. We may thus explain also the Sanskrit terms for the four directions; for entering India from the west and following this line in their early colonisation, the east would be in front of the Aryans, *pūrva*, the west behind, *paścima*, the south on their right, *dakṣiṇa*, while the name for the north, *uttara*, higher, might possibly indicate a memory of their old northern home in that supreme point of the earth where they still placed the sacred mountain of their gods.

Necessarily, this explanation is in the highest degree conjectural and depends on pure intellectual reasoning which is an unsafe guide in the absence of solid and sufficient data. Nevertheless, it is the one positive explanation that suggests itself to us and, as a hypothesis, is well worth taking into consideration.

Occult Knowledge and the Hindu Scriptures

> Are any of the following queries touched in Sanatan Dharma books of philosophy?
>
> 1) The nature and formation of animal souls.
> 2) The shape, size, formations, nature and colour of subtle bodies.
> 3) The difference between the subtle bodies of saints and ordinary people and the process of developing one into the other.
> 4) The rationale of the reincarnation theory.
> 5) The nature, constituents and situation of invisible worlds.

The first three questions are of a curious interest, the last two cover a very wide field. All except the fourth belong more or less to a kind of knowledge pursued with eager interest by a growing number of inquirers, but still looked on askance by the human mind in general, — the occult sciences. The Hindu Scriptures and books of philosophy do not as a rule handle such questions very directly or in any systematic fashion. They are concerned either with the great and central questions which have always occupied the human mind, the origin and nature of the universe, the why, whence and whither of life, the highest good and the means of attaining it, the nature of man and the destiny of the human soul and its relation with the Supreme, or else they deal with the regulation of ethics, society and the conduct of daily life. Occult knowledge has been left to be acquired by occult teaching. Nevertheless it was possessed by the ancient sages and our correspondent will find a great deal of more or less scattered information on these and cognate questions in the Veda, Upanishads and Puranas. But it is doubtful whether he would obtain a satisfactory answer to his queries in the form in which he has put them. He will find for instance a long description of invisible worlds, — invisible, that is to say, to our physical senses, — in the Vishnu Purana, but it is picturesque rather than precise. We do not think he will find much about the constituents of the worlds or the size of subtle bodies.

The form of the third question lends itself to misconception. Obviously the method for an ordinary man to develop his subtle body into that of a saint, is to cease to be an ordinary man and to become a saint. There can be no other means. The subtle body is the mental case and reflects the changes of the mentality which is housed in it or the influence exercised on it by the activities and experiences of our physical existence.

Reincarnation is much more prominent and the ideas about it more systematised in Buddhist than in Hindu books. But most of the Hindu philosophies took some kind of reincarnation for granted. It was part of the ancient teaching which had come down to them from the earliest times. They are more concerned with its causes and the method of escape from the obligation of rebirth; the thing itself was for them a fact beyond question. But the nature of reincarnation is not the same for all the old thinkers. The Upanishads, for instance, seem to teach that the physical self is dissolved at death into its principle, ether; it is the mental being that appears to be born and reborn, but in reality birth and death are merely semblances and operations of Nature, — of Aditi full of the gods, *Aditi devatāmayī*; the spirit is really one in all bodies and is neither born nor dies. Nachiketas in the Katha Upanishad raises the question whether the man as we know and conceive him really survives death and this seems to be the sense of the answer that he receives.

The Universal Consciousness

> I have encountered in my life several examples of people living or trying to live in the universal consciousness and it seemed to me that it rendered them less compassionate, less humane, less tender to the sufferings of others. It seems to me that if it is necessary not to remain in the individual consciousness when it is a question of our own sufferings, it is otherwise when it is a question of sympathising with the sufferings of others. In my opinion we feel more keenly the troubles of our brothers in humanity if we remain in the individual consciousness. But I may be mistaken and ask only to be enlightened by you on this point.

Is it certain that such people are living in the universal consciousness? or, if they are, is it certain that they are really less humane and compassionate? May they not be exercising their humanity in another fashion than the obvious and external signs of sympathy and tenderness?

If a man is really insensible to the experiences of others in the world, he is not living in the full universal consciousness. Either he has shut himself up in an experience of an individual peace and self-content, or he is absorbed by his contact with some universal principle in its abstract form without regard to its universal action, or he is living inwardly apart from the universe in touch with something transcendent of world-experience. All these states are useful to the soul in its progress, but they are not the universal consciousness.

When a man lives in the cosmic self, he necessarily embraces the life of the world and his attitude towards that world struggling upward from the egoistic state must be one of compassion, of love or of helpfulness. The Buddhists held that immersion in the infinite non-ego was in itself an immersion in a sea of infinite compassion. The liberated Sannyasin is described in the Gita and in other Hindu books as one whose occupation is beneficence to all creatures. But this vast spirit of beneficence does not necessarily exercise itself by the outward forms of emotional sympathy or active charity. We must not bind down all natures or all states of the divine consciousness in man to the one form of helpfulness which seems to us the most attractive, the most beautiful or the most beneficent. There is a higher sympathy than that of the easily touched emotions, a greater beneficence than that of an obvious utility to particular individuals in their particular sufferings.

The egoistic consciousness passes through many stages in its emotional expansion. At first it is bound within itself, callous therefore to the experiences of others. Afterwards it is sympathetic only with those who are identified in some measure with itself, indifferent to the indifferent, malignant to the hostile. When it overcomes this respect for persons, it is ready for the reception of the altruistic principle.

But even charity and altruism are often essentially egoistic in their immediate motive. They are stirred by the discomfort of the sight of suffering to the nervous system or by the pleasurableness of others' appreciation of our kindliness or by the egoistic self-appreciation of our own benevolence or by the need of indulgence in sympathy. There are philanthropists who would be troubled if the poor were not always with us, for they would then have no field for their charity.

We begin to enter into the universal consciousness when, apart from all individual motive and necessity, by the mere fact of unity of our being with all others, their joy becomes our joy, their suffering our suffering. But we must not mistake this for the highest condition. After a time we are no longer overcome by any suffering, our own or others', but are merely touched and respond in helpfulness. And there is yet another state in which the subjection to suffering is impossible to us because we live in the Beatitude, but this does not deter us from love and beneficence, — any more than it is necessary for a mother to weep or be overcome by the little childish griefs and troubles of her children in order to love, understand and soothe.

Nor is detailed sympathy and alleviation of particular sufferings the only help that can be given to men. To cut down branches of a man's tree of suffering is good, but they grow again; to aid him to remove its roots is a still more divine helpfulness. The gift of joy, peace or perfection is a greater giving than the effusion of an individual benevolence and sympathy and it is the most royal outcome of unity with others in the universal consciousness.

The News of the Month

August–September 1914

The News of the Month

"L'IDÉE NOUVELLE"

In close connection with the intellectual work of synthesis undertaken by this Review a Society has been founded in French India under the name of the New Idea, (L'Idée Nouvelle). Its object is to group in a common intellectual life and fraternity of sentiment those who accept the spiritual tendency and idea it represents and who aspire to realise it in their own individual and social action.

The Society has already made a beginning by grouping together young men of different castes and religions in a common ideal. All sectarian and political questions are necessarily foreign to its idea and its activities. It is on a higher plane of thought superior to external differences of race, caste, creed and opinion and in the solidarity of the spirit that unity can be realised.

The Idée Nouvelle has two rules only for its members, first, to devote some time every day to meditation and self-culture, the second, to use or create daily at least one opportunity of being helpful to others. This is, naturally, only the minimum of initial self-training necessary for those who have yet to cast the whole trend of their thought and feeling into the mould of a higher life and to enlarge the egoistic into a collective consciousness.

The Society has its headquarters at Pondicherry with a reading-room and library. A section has been founded at Karikal and others are likely to be opened at Yanaon and Mahe.

AN INDO-FRENCH COMMITTEE IN PARIS

An Indo-French Committee (Comité Franco-Hindou) has been founded in Paris and M. Pierre Loti has been invited to become its Honorary President. The Committee proposes to develop intellectual, scientific, artistic and economic relations between France and India. It is a good deal for one Committee! Let us at least hope that it will be able to carry out the first item of its programme. No doubt, everything that brings men and nations nearer to each other helps in the formation of a general intelligence more synthetic and comprehensive than the old divided mind of humanity; but it is above all in the realm of thought and by the exchange of ideas and the deeper experiences that the best fruits are likely to be borne. Every new tie, especially every tie of the spirit between Europe and India, between the West of today and the East of yesterday and tomorrow, is a welcome sign of the times for those who know how much the world's progress depends on their union.

M. Pierre Loti, in a letter addressed to the President of the Committee, thus expresses his veneration for India: —

"And now I salute thee with awe, with veneration and wonder, ancient India of whom I am the adept, the India of the highest splendours of Art and Philosophy, the India also of monstrous mysteries that terrify, India our cradle, India where all that has been produced since her beginnings was ever impetuous and colossal. May thy awakening astonish that Occident, decadent, mean, daily dwindling, slayer of nations, slayer of gods, slayer of souls, which yet bows down still, ancient India, before the prodigies of thy primordial conceptions."

We cannot but subscribe to the sentiment, if not to all the phrases, of this fine piece of literature.

But what are these monstrous and terrifying mysteries of which M. Loti speaks? Terror is no longer in the mode, the age of mysteries is over and the age of monstrosities has never been. Ignorance is the only monstrosity.

MR. TILAK'S BOOK ON THE GITA

In an interview with the representative of an Indian journal Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak has given a brief account of the work on the Gita which he has been writing during his six years' internment in Mandalay. He begins: —

"You know that the Gita is regarded generally as a book inculcating quietistic Vedanta or Bhakti. For myself, I have always regarded it as a work expounding the principles of human conduct from a Vedantic ethical point of view, that is, reconciling the philosophy of active life with the philosophy of knowledge and the philosophy of devotion to God."

Mr. Tilak then expresses his belief that before Shankara and Ramanuja, the great Southern philosophers, wrote their commentaries, the Gita was understood in its natural sense, but from that time forward artificial and sectarian interpretations prevailed and the element of Karmayoga in the Song Celestial was disregarded. His book is intended to restore this natural sense and central idea of the famous Scripture. It will contain a word for word rendering preceded by an introduction of some fifteen chapters in which he discusses the Vedanta and the ethics of the Gita and compares the ethical philosophy of Western thinkers with that of the Indian schools of thought. Although the book will be published first in Marathi, we are promised a version also in English.

We look forward with interest to a work which, proceeding from a scholar of such eminence and so acute an intellect, one especially whose name carries weight with all Hindus, must be considered an event of no small importance in Indian religious thought. We welcome it all the more because it seems to be conceived in the same free and synthetic spirit as animates this Review. It is a fresh sign of the tendency towards an increasingly liberal movement of religious opinion in orthodox India, the dissolution of the old habit of unquestioning deference to great authorities and the consequent rediscovery of the true catholic sense of the ancient Scriptures.

Those who have studied the Gita with a free mind, still more those who have tried to live it, cannot doubt for a moment the justice of Mr. Tilak's point of view. But is not the tendency of the Gita towards a supra-ethical rather than an ethical activity? Ethics is, usually, the standardising of the highest current social ideals of conduct; the Song Celestial, while recognising their importance, seeks to fix the principle of action deeper in the centre of a man's soul and points us ultimately to the government of our outward life by the divine self within.

August 1914

THE WAR

The "Arya", a Review of pure Philosophy, has no direct concern with political passions and interests and their results. But neither can it ignore the enormous convulsion which is at present in progress, nor at such a time can it affect to deal only with the pettier happenings of the intellectual world as if men were not dying in thousands daily, the existence of great empires threatened and the fate of the world hanging in the balance. The War has its aspects, of supreme importance to a synthetic Philosophy, with which we would have the right to deal. But now is not the hour, now in this moment of supreme tension and wide-spread agony. Therefore, for the time, we suppress this heading in our Review and shall replace it by brief notes on subjects of philosophical interest, whether general or of the day. Meanwhile, with the rest of the world, we await in silence the predestined result.

September 1914

South Indian Vaishnava Poetry

Andal

The Vaishnava Poetess

PREOCCUPIED from the earliest times with divine knowledge and religious aspiration the Indian mind has turned all forms of human life and emotion and all the phenomena of the universe into symbols and means by which the embodied soul may strive after and grasp the Supreme. Indian devotion has especially seized upon the most intimate human relations and made them stepping-stones to the supra-human. God the Guru, God the Master, God the Friend, God the Mother, God the Child, God the Self, each of these experiences — for to us they are more than merely ideas, — it has carried to its extreme possibilities. But none of them has it pursued, embraced, sung with a more exultant passion of intimate realisation than the yearning for God the Lover, God the Beloved. It would seem as if this passionate human symbol were the natural culminating-point for the mounting flame of the soul's devotion: for it is found wherever that devotion has entered into the most secret shrine of the inner temple. We meet it in Islamic poetry; certain experiences of the Christian mystics repeat the forms and images with which we are familiar in the East, but usually with a certain timorousness foreign to the Eastern temperament. For the devotee who has once had this intense experience it is that which admits to the most profound and hidden mystery of the universe; for him the heart has the key of the last secret.

The work of a great Bengali poet has recently reintroduced this idea to the European mind, which has so much lost the memory of its old religious traditions as to welcome and wonder at it as a novel form of mystic self-expression. On the contrary it is ancient enough, like all things natural and eternal in the human soul. In Bengal a whole period of national poetry has been dominated by this single strain and it has inspired a religion and a philosophy. And in the Vaishnavism of the far South, in the songs of the Tamil Alwars we find it again in another form, giving a powerful and original turn to the images of our old classic poetry; for there it has been sung out by the rapt heart of a woman to the Heart of the Universe.

The Tamil word, Alwar, means one who has drowned, lost himself in the sea of the divine being. Among these canonised saints of Southern Vaishnavism ranks Vishnuchitta, Yogin and poet, of Villipattan in the land of the Pandyas. He is termed *Perialwar*, the great Alwar. A tradition, which we need not believe, places him in the ninety-eighth year of the Kaliyuga. But these divine singers are ancient enough, since they precede the great saint and philosopher Ramanuja whose personality and teaching were the last flower of the long-growing Vaishnava tradition. Since his time Southern Vaishnavism has been a fixed creed and a system rather than a creator of new spiritual greatnesses.

The poetess Andal was the foster-daughter of Vishnuchitta, found by him, it is said, a new-born child under the sacred tulsi-plant. We know little of Andal except what we can gather from a few legends, some of them richly beautiful and symbolic. Most of Vishnuchitta's poems have the infancy and boyhood of Krishna for their subject. Andal, brought up in that atmosphere, cast into the mould of her life what her foster-father had sung in inspired hymns. Her own poetry — we may suppose that she passed early into the Light towards which she yearned, for it is small in bulk, — is entirely occupied with her passion for the divine Being. It is said that she went through a symbolic marriage with Sri Ranganatha, Vishnu in his temple at Srirangam, and disappeared into the image of her Lord. This tradition probably conceals some actual fact, for Andal's marriage with the Lord is still celebrated annually with considerable pomp and ceremony.

Nammalwar

The Supreme Vaishnava Saint and Poet

MARAN, renowned as Nammalwar ("Our Saint") among the Vaishnavas and the greatest of their saints and poets, was born in a small town called Kuruhur, in the southernmost region of the Tamil country — Tiru-nelveli (Tinnevelly). His father, Kari, was a petty prince who paid tribute to the Pandyan King of Madura. We have no means of ascertaining the date of the Alwar's birth, as the traditional account is untrustworthy and full of inconsistencies. We are told that the infant was mute for several years after his birth. Nammalwar renounced the world early in life and spent his time singing and meditating on God under the shade of a tamarind tree by the side of the village temple.

It was under this tree that he was first seen by his disciple, the Alwar Madhura-kavi, — for the latter also is numbered among the great Twelve, "lost in the sea of Divine Love". Tradition says that while Madhura-kavi was wandering in North India as a pilgrim, one night a strange light appeared to him in the sky and travelled towards the South. Doubtful at first what significance this phenomenon might have for him, its repetition during three consecutive nights convinced him that it was a divine summons and where this luminous sign led he must follow. Night after night he journeyed southwards till the guiding light came to Kuruhur and there disappeared. Learning of Nammalwar's spiritual greatness he thought that it was to him that the light had been leading him. But when he came to him, he found him absorbed in deep meditation with his eyes fast closed and although he waited for hours the Samadhi did not break until he took up a large stone and struck it against the ground violently. At the noise Nammalwar opened his eyes, but still remained silent. Madhura-kavi then put to him the following enigmatical question, "If the little one (the soul) is born into the dead thing (Matter)[1] what will the little one eat and where will the little one lie?" to which Nammalwar replied in an equally enigmatic style, "That will it eat and there will it lie."

Subsequently Nammalwar permitted his disciple to live with him and it was Madhura-kavi who wrote down his songs as they were composed. Nammalwar died in his thirty-fifth year, but he has achieved so great a reputation that the Vaishnavas account him an incarnation of Vishnu himself, while others are only the mace, discus, conch etc. of the Deity.

From the philosophical and spiritual point of view, his poetry ranks among the highest in Tamil literature. But in point of literary excellence, there is a great inequality; for while some songs touch the level of the loftiest world-poets, others, even though rich in rhythm and expression, fall much below the poet's capacity. In his great work known as the Tiru-vay-moli (the Sacred Utterance) which contains more than a thousand stanzas, he has touched all the phases of the life divine and given expression to all forms of spiritual experience. The pure and passionless Reason, the direct perception in the high solar realm of Truth itself, the ecstatic and sometimes poignant love that leaps into being at the vision of the "Beauty of God's face", the final Triumph where unity is achieved and "I and my Father are one" — all these are uttered in his simple and flowing lines with a strength that is full of tenderness and truth.

The lines which we translate below are a fair specimen of the great Alwar's poetry;[2] but it has suffered considerably in the translation, — indeed the genius of the Tamil tongue hardly permits of an effective rendering, so utterly divergent is it from that of the English language.

---

[1] The form of the question reminds one of Epictetus' definition of man, "Thou art a little soul carrying about a corpse." Some of our readers may be familiar with Swinburne's adaptation of the saying, "A little soul for a little bears up the corpse which is man."

[2] *Sri Aurobindo's translation of "Nammalwar's Hymn of the Golden Age" appears in* Translations, *volume 5 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. — *Ed.*

Arguments
to
The Life Divine

Chapter XIX

Life

ARGUMENT

Mind as a final action of Supermind is a creative and not only a perceptive power; in fact, material force itself being only a Will in things working darkly as the expression of subconscious Mind, Mind is the immediate creator of the material universe. But the real creator is Supermind; for wherever there is Mind conscious or subconscious, there must be Supermind regulating from behind the veil its activities and educing from them their truth of inevitable result. Not a mental Intelligence, but Supermind is the creator of the universe. — Mind manifests itself in the form of Force to which we give the name of Life, and Life in Matter is an energy or power in dynamic movement which builds up forms, energises, maintains, disintegrates and recreates; death itself is only a process of life. It is one all-pervading Life or constant movement of dynamic energy which creates all these forms of the material universe and is not destroyed in the destruction of its forms. — The distinction between animal and plant life is unreal and that between the animate and the inanimate unessential. Plant-life has been found to be identical in organisation with animal-life and, although the organisation may differ, life is also present in the metal, the earth, the atom. This life-force pervades the universe and is present in every form of it and there is a constant interchange of its energies which creates the symptoms and characteristics of vitality recognised by us; but even where these are suspended, Life is present and only withdraws by a process of dispersion which replaces the process of continual reconstitution of the form. The presence of these symptoms and characteristics is not the essential nor is their absence a sign of the

Sri Aurobindo prefixed brief summaries or "arguments" to fifteen chapters of The Life Divine *when they were first published in the* Arya *in 1916 and 1917. He omitted these summaries when he revised the book in 1939–40.*

absence of Life-force. Even where we do not detect Life, it exists. — Conscious nervous sensation accompanies life in the animal, but much of the action of nervous or life energy is subconscious; in the plant, as in many actions of man, the nervous sensation is present but the mentality of the sensation is subconscious. In the very atom there is a subconscious will and desire which must also be present in all atomic aggregates because they are present in the Force which constitutes the atom. That force is Chit-shakti, force of conscious being, variously represented in various forms of life. — Life is an energising of conscious being in substance of Matter, which on one side is constantly supplying the material of physical formation and on the other labouring to release mind and sense from their subconscious sleep in Matter. It is therefore the dynamic link between Mind and Matter. To create form and evolve consciousness out of its imprisonment in form is the sense of the omnipresent Life in the universe.

Chapter XX

Death, Desire and Incapacity

ARGUMENT

Life is the same whatever its workings and its terms need not be limited to those proper to physical existence. Life is a final operation of divine conscious-force for individualising existence; it is the energy-aspect of Mind when that creates and relates itself to form of substance: it has all the universal conscious-force of existence behind it and is not a separate entity or movement. Life in us must become conscious of this divine Force behind it in order to become divine. — Life, at first darkened, ignorant, divided and helplessly subject, seeks as it develops to become master and enjoyer, to grow in Power; but until it escapes from the bonds of individuality it must be subject to its three badges of limitation, Death, Desire and Incapacity. — The nature of physical life imposes death because all life exists by a mutual devouring and struggle and Life itself feeds upon the forms it creates; but the fundamental justification of Death is the necessity of a constant variation of experience in succession of Time, the soul seeking thus to enlarge itself and move towards the realisation of its own infinity. — The process of Death results inevitably from the division of substance; life's attempt to aggrandise its being thus divided and limited translates itself into the hunger that devours. This hunger is the crude form of Desire, and Desire is the necessary lever for self-affirmation; but eventually Desire has to grow out of the law of Hunger into the law of Love. — Desire itself is the result of the limitation of capacity which is the consequence of divided Life working as the energy of ignorant mind, all-force being only possible to all-knowledge. Therefore growth by struggle is the third Law of Life. This strife again has to divinise itself and become the clasp of Love. Until then Death, Desire and Strife are and must be the triple mask of the divine Life-principle in its cosmic self-affirmation.

Chapter XXI

The Ascent of Life

ARGUMENT

The development of Life starts from an original status of division, subconscious will and inert subjection to mechanical forces. This is the type of material existence. — The terms of the second status which we recognise as vitality, are death, hunger and conscious desire, sense of limited capacity and the struggle for survival and mastery. This is the basis of the Darwinian conception of Life, the struggle for life and the survival of the fittest. But this struggle involves a third status whose preparation is marked by the emergence of the conscious principle of love. — The third status contradicts the others in appearance, but really fulfils them. Life begins with division and aggregation based on the refusal of the atom, the first principle of ego and individuality to accept death and fusion by dissolution. This gives a firm basis for the creation of aggregate forms to be occupied by vital and mental individualities. In the next stage we have the general principle of death and dissolution by which the individual form fuses itself in its elements into other lives. This principle of constant fusion and interchange is the law of Life and extends into vital and mental existence as well as the physical. The two principles of individual persistence and mutual fusion have to be harmonised and this can only be done by the emergence and full development of mind which alone is subtle enough to persist in individual consciousness beyond all fusion and dissolution of forms. Here the union and harmony of the persistent individual and the persistent aggregate life become possible. — Love is the power by which this union and harmony are worked out; for love exists by the persistence of the individual and his conscious acceptance of the necessity and desire of interchange and self-giving. Its growth means the emergence of Mind imposing its law on the material existence, for Mind does not need to devour in order to possess and grow; it increases by giving and confirms itself by fusion with others. — Subconscious will in the atom becomes hunger and conscious desire in the vital being. Love is the transfiguration of desire, a desire of possessing others but also of self-giving; at first subject to hunger and the desire of possession it reveals its own true law by an equal or greater joy in self-giving. — The inert subjection of the will in the atom to the not-self becomes in the vital being the sense of limited capacity and the struggle for possession and mastery. In the third status the not-self is recognised as a greater self and subjection to its law and need freely accepted; at the same time the individual by making the aggregate life and all it has to give his own, fulfils his impulse of possession. This is the Mind's reconciliation of the two conflicting principles which we find at the root of all existence. — But the true and perfect reconciliation can only come by passing beyond Mind and founding all the operations of life on the essential freedom and unity of the spirit.

Chapter XXII

The Problem of Life

ARGUMENT

Life being a divided movement of consciousness although really an undivided force becomes a clash of opposing truths each striving to fulfil itself. Mind has to solve the thousand and one problems resulting but in Life itself, not merely in thought. The difficulty lies in its ignorance of itself and the world. Man knows only the surface of his own being and does not know the universality of the Force of which he is a part; therefore he can master neither himself nor the world. He has to know and solve the problem or else give place to some higher evolutionary being. — The poise of Life is determined by the relation of the Force to the Consciousness which drives it. Accordingly we have, besides the Infinite Existence, first the life of material Nature ruled by the infallible Inconscient; secondly the life of conscious being in material Nature emerging out of the Inconscient, fallible, bewildered, only half-potent, which is our own; and thirdly the life of the real Man to which we are moving where Consciousness and Force are fulfilled and in harmony and the One at unison with the many. That life will be founded on the awareness of one Consciousness in many minds, one Force working in many lives, one Delight of being in many hearts and bodies. — Man's difficulties; first, he only knows and governs a part of himself, the greater part of himself is subconscient and it is this greater cosmic part that really governs his surface being. This is what is meant by his being governed by his Nature and by the Lord seated within through the Maya or apparent denial of Sachchidananda by Himself. It is only by becoming one with the Lord that man can be master of himself, but this union must be in the Divine Maya, in the superconscient and not only or chiefly in this lower Maya of the mental existence. — Secondly, he is separated by his individuality from the universal and does not know his fellow-beings. He must be not only in sympathy with them, but arrive at a conscious unity with all and this conscious unity exists only in what is now superconscient to us. — Thirdly, Life is at war with body, Mind at war with the life and the body, each trying to subject the others to its own law. Only the supramental can find the law of immortal harmony which shall reconcile this discord of our mortality. Each of these principles has besides a soul in it which seeks a self-fulfilment beyond what the present force of life, mind or body can give. There is a conflict between opposing instincts of the body, opposing desires and impulses of the life, opposing ideas of the mind. The principle of unity is above in the supermind. — Man as he develops becomes acutely aware of all these discords and seeks a reconciliation with himself and with his fellow-beings. This can only come by the perfection of his own existence through the principle in himself to which he has not yet attained and by embracing consciously the life of others in his own through a universal consciousness which must also be gained by the superconscient becoming conscient in us through an upward evolution.

Chapter XXIII

The Double Soul in Man

ARGUMENT

The ascent of Life is in its nature the ascent of the divine Delight in things from its dumb conception in Matter to its luminous consummation in Spirit. Like the other original divine principles, this Delight also must be represented in us by a cosmic principle corresponding to it in the apparent existence. It is the soul or psychic being. — As there is a subliminal luminous mind behind our surface mind, a subliminal life behind our mortal life, a subliminal wider corporeality behind our gross body, so we have a double soul, the superficial desire-soul and the true psychic entity. — The superficial in us is the small and egoistic, the subliminal is in touch with the universal. So our subliminal or true psychic being is open to the universal delight of things, the superficial desire-soul is shut off from it. It feels the outward touches of things, not their essence and therefore not their *rasa* or true touch; and because it cannot reach the universal world-soul, it cannot find its own true soul which is one with the world-soul. — The desire-soul returns the triple response of pleasure, pain and indifference, but the psychic being behind it has the equal delight of all of its experiences; it compels the desire-soul to more and more experience and to a change of its values. By bringing this soul to the surface we can overcome the duality of pleasure and pain, as is actually done in certain directions of experience by the artist, Nature-lover, God-lover, etc. each in his own fashion. But the difficulty is to do it in the desire-soul at its centre where it comes into contact with practical living; for here the human mind shrinks from the application of the principle of equality. — To bring this subliminal soul to the surface is not enough; for it is open passively to the world-soul but cannot possess the world. Those who thus arrive, become close to the universal delight, but not masters of life. For there are two principles of order and mastery, one false, the ego-sense, the other true, the Lord who is one in the many. By merely suppressing the ego-sense in the impersonal delight we gain the centreless Impersonal and are fulfilled in our static being but not in our active being. We must therefore gain the other centre in the Supermind by which we shall consciously possess and not merely undergo the delight of the One in His universal existence.

Chapter XXIV

Matter

ARGUMENT

Life and Mind are in the fact of evolution conditioned by the body and therefore by the principle of Matter. The body is the chief difficulty in the way of a spiritual transformation of life; it has therefore been regarded by spiritual aspiration as an enemy and the escape from the material existence has been made an indispensable condition of the final emancipation. — The quarrel begins with the struggle between Life and Matter with the apparent defeat of life in death as its constant circumstance; it continues with the struggle of the Mind against the life and the body and culminates with the struggle of the spirit against all its instruments; but the right end and solution of these discords is not an escape and a severance but the complete victory of the higher over the lower. — We have to examine the problem of the reality of Matter. Our present experience of Matter does not give us its truth; for Matter is only an appearance of the Reality, a form of its force-action presented to the principle of sense in the universal consciousness. As Mind is only a final dividing action of Supermind and Life of Conscious-Force working in the conditions of the Ignorance, so Matter as we know it is only the final form taken by conscious-being as the result of that same working. Mind precipitating itself into Life to create form gives to the universal principle of Being the appearance of material substance instead of pure substance, that is to say, of substance offering itself to the contact of mind as a stable thing or object. This contact of mind with its object is Sense. — In the divine Mind there is a movement which presents to the divine Knower the forms of Himself as objects to His knowledge and this would create a division between the Knower and the object of knowledge if there were not at the same time, inevitably, another movement by which He feels the object as

Himself. This movement, in the divided state of existence created by dividing Mind, is represented to us as the contact of sense which becomes a basis for contact through the thought-mind by which we return towards unity. — Since the action of Mind is to divide infinitely the one infinite existence, Matter, the result of that action, becomes in its apparent nature an infinite atomic division and atomic aggregation of infinite substance. But its reality is one and indivisible, even as is the reality of Life and of Mind. Matter is Sachchidananda represented to His own mental experience as a formal basis of objective knowledge, action and delight.

Chapter XXV

The Knot of Matter

ARGUMENT

Spirit and Matter are the two ends of a unity, Spirit the soul and reality of Matter, Matter the form and body of Spirit. There is an ascending series of substance and Spirit at the summit is itself pure substance of being. Brahman is the sole material as well as the sole cause of the universe and Matter also is Brahman; it is, like Life, Mind and Supermind, a mode of the eternal Sachchidananda. — Still, practically, Matter seems to be cut off from Spirit and even its opposite and the material existence incompatible therefore with the spiritual. Matter is the culmination of the principle of Ignorance in which Consciousness has lost and forgotten itself and the self-luminous Spirit is represented by a brute inconscient Force in whose mere action there appears to be no self-knowledge, mind or heart. In this huge no-mind Mind emerges and has to labour besieged and limited by the universal Ignorance and in this heartless Inconscience a heart has manifested which has to aspire opposed and corrupted by the brutality of material Force. This is the form-absorbed Consciousness returning progressively to itself, but obliged to work under the conditions of Matter, that is to say, always bound and limited in its results. — For Matter is the opposite of the Spirit's freedom and mastery, the culmination of bondage; it is a huge force of movement, but of inertly driven movement subject to a law of which it has no conscience nor initiative but mechanically obeys. It opposes therefore to the attempt of Life to impose itself and freely utilise and the attempt of Mind to impose itself and know and freely guide the constant opposition of its inertia; it yields reluctantly to a certain extent, but brings always in the end a definite denial, limit and obstruction. For this reason knowledge, power, love, etc. are always pursued, accompanied and hedged in by their opposites. — For Matter is the culmination of the principle of division and struggle. It can only unify by an association which carries with it the possibility of dissociation and an assimilation which devours. Therefore Life and Mind in Matter working under this law of division and struggle, that is to say, of death, desire and limitation, aggregation and subsequent dissociation, labour without any finality or certainty of assured progress. — But especially the divisions of Matter bring in the law of pain. Ignorance and Inertia would not be necessarily a cause of pain if the Mind and Life were not aware of an infinite Consciousness, Light and Power in which they live but are prevented from participating by the Ignorance and Inertia of Matter or were not stirred to possess this wideness partly or wholly. Man especially, because he is most self-conscious, develops this awareness to a high degree, nor can he be permanently satisfied with increase of power or knowledge within the limits of the material world, for that is also limited and inconclusive and, being aware of and impelled by the infinite within and around him, he cannot escape the necessity of seeking to know and possess it. This progression of the conscious being out of the Inconscient to the infinite Consciousness might be a happy outflowering but for the principle of rigid division and imprisonment of each divided being in his own ego which imposes the law of struggle, the dualities of attraction and repulsion, pleasure and pain, effort and failure, action and reaction, satisfaction and dissatisfaction. All this is the denial of Ananda and implies, if the negation be insuperable, the futility of existence; for if in this existence the satisfaction sought by the Infinite in the finite cannot be found, then ultimately it must be abandoned as an error and a failure. — This is the basis of the pessimist theory of material existence which supposes Matter to be the form and Mind the cause of the universe and both of these to be eternally subject to limitation and ignorance. But if on the contrary it is immortal and infinite Spirit which has veiled itself in Matter and is emerging, the development of a liberated supramental being who shall impose in Mind, Life and Matter a higher law than that of limitation and division, is the inevitable conclusion from the nature of cosmic existence. There is no reason why such a being should not liberate and make divine the physical existence as well as the mind and life, unless our present view of Matter represents the sole possible relation here between sense and its object in which case, indeed, fulfilment must be sought only in worlds beyond. But there are other states even of Matter and an ascending series of the gradations of substance, and their higher law is possible to the material being because it is there in it already latent and potential.

Chapter XXVI

The Ascending Series of Substance

ARGUMENT

The materiality of Matter consists in a concentration of the density of substance and its resistance to the conscious-force of which through sense it becomes the object. An ascending scale of substance from Matter to Spirit must mean a diminution of resistance, division and bondage and an increasing subtlety, flexibility, power of assimilation, interchange, transmutation, unification. — There is such an ascending scale from the dense to the subtle even in material substance and beyond the subtlest material essence we have grades of other substance corresponding to the series of Matter, Life, Mind, Supermind and Spirit. Each, that is to say, is the basis of a world or other kind of existence in which these higher principles successively dominate the others and fulfil themselves with their aid. In each therefore there is an ever wider range of being, consciousness and force ascending from the inconscience of material substance to the infinite self-consciousness of spiritual. But all these principles are interconnected. Matter contains all of them and evolves them out of itself in obedience to the constant pressure of the higher worlds, an evolution which must continue until they are able to express themselves fully in the material principle. — Man is the fit instrument for this fulfilment. He has other bodies besides the physical in which he can become conscious and so enter into the supraphysical grades of substance and impose their law upon his material existence. Therefore his complete perfection is through the ascent to supermind and the conquest of the physical also by the supramental substance so that he will be able to command a diviner physical life and conquer death in a divine body.

Chapter XXVII

The Sevenfold Chord of Being

ARGUMENT

There are, therefore, seven or else eight principles of being and the four which constitute human existence are a refraction of the four which constitute divine existence, but in inverted order. The Divine descends from pure existence to Supermind to cast itself into cosmic existence; the creature ascends from Matter to Mind towards the Divine and meets it where mind and Supermind meet with a veil between them. By the rending of the veil each of the four divine human principles can find its transfigured self in its divine equivalent. This transfiguration is the only possible positive goal of the creative evolution. — The presence of the seven principles is essential to all cosmic being. For cosmic being cannot exist except as the All-existence figuring itself in its self-conception as Time and Space, nor can this figuration take place except by an infinite Force which being of the nature of an all-determining and all-apprehending Will must repose on the action of an all-comprehending infinite Consciousness. Nor could the result be a cosmos but for a power of infinite knowledge and will determining out of the infinity in each figure of things their law, form and course through a self-limitation by Idea proceeding from a boundless liberty within. That power of Knowledge-Will, that Idea is the fourth name of the Divine; it is the Supermind or supreme Gnosis. — The lower trilogy is also necessary in some form however different it may be from our experience of Life, Mind and Matter. For there must be a subordinate power and action of Supermind measuring, creating fixed standpoints of mutual view and interaction in the universal self-diffusion as between an infinite number of centres of the one Consciousness; and such a power would be what we mean by Mind. So too, Mind once given, Life, which is the working of will and energy and conscious dynamis of being dependent on such fixed standpoints of interaction, must accompany it and substance with differentiation of form must also be present. — It follows that in every cosmic arrangement the seven principles must be existent, either manifested in simultaneous apparent action or else all apparently involved in one of them which then becomes the initial principle, but all secretly at work and bound to evolve into manifestation. Therefore out of initial Matter latent Life and Mind have emerged as apparent Life and Mind, and latent Supermind and the hidden Spirit must emerge as apparent Supermind and the triune glory of Sachchidananda.

Chapter XXVIII

The Knowledge and the Ignorance

ARGUMENT

The seven principles of existence are, then, one in their reality, inseparable in their sevenfold action. They create the harmony of the universe and there is no essential reason why this should not be a complete harmony free from the element of discord, division and limitation. — The Vedic seers believed in such a creation and held its formation in man — called immortality — to be the object of man's Godward effort. But this is difficult for the human mind to accept, except in a beyond, because here the Inconscient seems to be all and the conscient soul an accident or an alien unable fully to realise itself. Here Ignorance seems to be the law. — It is true that here we start from the Inconscient and are governed by the Ignorance; we must therefore examine this power of Consciousness and determine its operation and origin, — not accepting the refusal of some philosophies to consider the question because it is insoluble; and first we must fix what we mean by the Ignorance. — In the Veda the Ignorance is the non-perceiving of the essential unity which is beyond mind and of the essence and self-law of things in their original unity and actual universality; it is a false knowledge based on division of the undivided, insistence on the fragmentary and little and rejection of the vast and complete view of things; it is the undivine Maya. — The Vedantic distinction of Vidya and Avidya made the opposition more trenchant, Vidya being the knowledge of unity, Avidya the knowledge of multiplicity, but the knowledge of both was held to be necessary for the Truth and the Immortality; the Ignorance was not a mere falsehood and seeing of unreality. The One really becomes

Chapter XXVIII of The Life Divine *as published in the* Arya *was extensively revised in 1939–40, becoming the present Book Two, Part I, Chapter VII.*

the Many. — Later, the opposition was supposed to be rigid and irreconcilable, the world unreal, a super-imposition of name and form on featureless Unity by Mind, the Ignorance an absolute nescience of the Truth. — This we reject, because such dialectical oppositions, flawed at their source, represent no actual reality of existence as a whole; there is no irreconcilable opposition of dual principles, Ignorance creative, Knowledge destructive of world-existence, but an essential unity. As pain is an effect of the universal Delight produced in the recipient by incapacity, as incapacity is a disposition of the universal Will-force, so ignorance is a particular action of the universal Knowledge. — Consciousness, which is Power, takes three poises; its plenitude of the divine knowledge invariable in unity and multiplicity and beyond; its dwelling upon apparent oppositions, the extreme being the superficial appearance of complete nescience in the Inconscient; and a mediary term or compromise between the two which is a superficial and partial emergence of self-conscious knowledge, our own egoistic ignorance or false-knowledge. The exact relations between these three have to be determined.

Chapter XXIX

Memory, Self-Consciousness and the Ignorance

ARGUMENT

Memory is believed by some schools to be the constituent of our continuous personality; but memory is only a mechanism, a device, a substitute for direct consciousness. The mind is directly conscious of existence in the present, holds existence in the past by its substitute memory, infers its future existence from this direct present self-consciousness and the memory of its continuity in the past. — This sense of self-conscious existence it extends into the idea of eternity, but the only eternity the mind really seizes is a continuous succession of moments of being in eternal Time; of this eternity it possesses only the present moment, a limited portion of the past held fragmentarily and nothing at all of the future, while it is unable to know any timeless eternity of conscious being, any real eternal Self. Therefore the nature of our Mind is an Ignorance seizing at knowledge by successive action in the moments of Time. — If mind is all, then we must remain for ever in this Ignorance which is not absolute nescience, but an ineffectual and fragmentary seizing at knowledge. But there are really two powers of our conscious being, Ignorance of the mind, Knowledge beyond mind, simultaneously existing, either separately in an eternal dualism or, as is really the fact, as superior and inferior, sovereign and dependent states of the same consciousness, by which the Knower sees his timeless being and the action of Time in that self through the Knowledge while he sees himself in Time and travelling in the succession of its moments by the Ignorance. For this reason the Upanishad declares that Brahman can really be known only by knowing

Chapter XXIX of The Life Divine *as published in the* Arya *was revised in 1939–40, becoming the present Book Two, Part I, Chapter VIII.*

him as both the Knowledge and the Ignorance and so only can one arrive at the status of immortality. — Ignorance is therefore the consciousness of being in the succession of Time, and it is so called because, actually self-divided by the moments of Time, the field of space and the forms of the multiplicity, it cannot know either eternal Being or the World, either the transcendent or the universal reality. Its knowledge is partly true, partly false, because it ignores the essence and sees only fugitive parts of the phenomenon. — It is through self-consciousness that the mind can arrive most readily at the eternal Reality; the rest of its means of knowledge are, like memory, devices and substitutes for direct consciousness. It is easy therefore to regard the knowledge of the self within as real and the rest as not-self and illusion. But the distinction is illusory and self-absorption in the stable self within is only one state of consciousness like self-dispersion in thought and memory and will. The real self is the Eternal who is capable simultaneously of the mobility in Time and the immobility basing Time. All object of knowledge is that real and eternal self whether seen in essence and stability or in phenomenon and instability of Time. — The Ignorance is a means by which it is rendered into values of knowledge and action, Time being a sort of bank on which we draw for valuation and action in the present, with a realised store in the account of the past and an unrealised infinite deposit to be taken from the future so as to be made valuable for Time-experience and valid for Time-activity. But, behind, all is known and ready for use according to the will of the Self in its dealings with Time and Space and Causality.

Chapter XXX

Memory, Ego and Self-Experience

ARGUMENT

Consciousness of Self has two different aspects, the awareness of a stable, immutable and timeless Self beyond mentality and the awareness of a various self-experience in the process of Time and the field of Space. There is a constant shifting of the point of Time, a constant though less obvious changing of the habitation and the environment and in these a constant subjective modifying of the experience of the states of personality and the experience of the environment. — Memory here is an indispensable factor in the linking of past and present experience and is necessary to secure its continuity and coherence. Still Memory is not all; it is only a mediator between the mind-sense and the coordinating mind. — It is the mind-sense which shapes the object of experience as a wave of the conscious being into a movement of emotion, vitality, sensation or thought-perception. There is also an act of mental observation and valuation of this wave in the sense-mind. There is also the subject or mental being who thus modifies his mental becoming and observes and values it by an act of mind. It is when the mental being stands back from the mental becoming and even from the mental act that he begins to perceive himself as something different from all becoming, mutable in that, but immutable beyond it. He is not two selves, one that is and one that becomes, but one immutable who sees changing phenomena of his being, the immutability evident to a direct and pure self-consciousness, the mutable evident indirectly through a conditional and secondary mental consciousness. — It is the character of this indirect mental consciousness which can experience only by succession of Time that brings in the device

Chapter XXX of The Life Divine *as published in the* Arya *was revised in 1939–40, becoming the present Book Two, Part I, Chapter IX.*

of Memory. Memory is not the essence of mental experience of becoming, nor of its continuity, nor of the recurrence of the same experience or the same cause and effect in Time. These are circumstances of the movement of the stuff of conscious being and conscious force of being, a movement which is really undivided though only seen by mind in artificial divisions. Memory is a device by which the experiences of the mind-sense are linked together and these artificial divisions in Time bridged over so that the coordinating mind and will may better and better use the material of experience and impose order on its conscious knowledge of its self and its conscious action in its environment. It is an aid to our ignorance of self developing, in the evolution of mind out of inconscient force, knowledge of self by experience. — The ego-sense is a mental device by which the mental being develops towards knowledge of that which experiences as well as of that which is experienced. Memory only tells us that the successive experiences have happened in the same field of conscious being; it is the coordinating and distinguishing mind which tells us that it is the same mental being who experiences. — Mind-substance suffers the changes of becoming; mind-sense experiences them; memory assures the mind-sense of its continuity of experience; the coordinating mind of knowledge relates them together and relates them also to the ego or being who, it says, is the same in past and present whether he forgets or remembers. In the animal this may be little more than a coordination in the sense-mind by a discernment largely involved in the sensations and the memories, but in man it becomes a coordinating reason superior to sense and memory. It is by this development that the ego-sense becomes distinct and disengaged from its aids. — But it is itself only a device and basis for self-development of true self-knowledge; it is a stage in the evolution from nescience to partial knowledge and from partial knowledge to true self-consciousness. The evolving Mind becomes by it aware of an “I” that becomes and then of a self superior to the becoming. It may fix on either to the rejection of the other, but in doing so it acts on an imperfect self-knowledge. It is as yet ignorant of all even of the individual becoming which is not superficial; ignorant of the universal becoming except indirectly, as a not-self exterior to it. Its attempt to find the true relation of the self and its becomings is based therefore on an Ignorance; that can only be truly known by an attempt to live out the relation in an integral development of self-knowledge. That is the natural goal of our evolution which is the movement of the Ignorance to exceed itself and arrive at the conscious Truth of its being and conscious knowledge of all being.

Chapter XXXI

The Boundaries of the Ignorance

ARGUMENT

We know only a part even of our superficial life and conscious becoming, fastening only on a little of our experience of self and things, memorising less, using still less for knowledge and action. What we reject, Nature stores and uses in our development, for the most part by her subconscious action. Our waking self is only a superimposition, a visible summit; the great body of our being is submerged or subliminal. — The subliminal self perceives, remembers, understands, uses all that we fail to perceive, remember or use. It provides all the material of our surface being which is only a selection from its wider existence and activity. It is only the physical and vital part of our existence which is, properly speaking, subconscient; the subliminal self is the true mental being and in relation to our waking mind it is rather secretly circumconscient; for it envelops as well as supports. Of all this larger part of our being we are ignorant. — We are ignorant also of the superconscient, that which we ordinarily call spirit or oversoul; yet this we find to be our highest and widest self, Sachchidananda creating and governing all that we are and become by His divine Maya. We are ignorant of the subliminal sea of our being which casts up the wave of our superficial existence; we are ignorant also of the superconscient ether of our being which constitutes, contains, overroofs and governs both the subliminal sea and the superficial wave. — We are ignorant of ourselves in Time, for we know only a part of the present life we are living; yet that exists only by all our past of which we are ignorant and its trend is determined by all our future of which we are still more ignorant. For our superconscient Self is eternal

Chapter XXXI of The Life Divine *as published in the* Arya *was extensively revised in 1939–40, becoming the present Book Two, Part I, Chapter XI.*

in its being and Time is only one of its modes, our subliminal is eternal in its becoming and Time is its infinite field of experience. — We are equally ignorant of the world, holding it to be not-self, ignorant of ourselves in Space; for the world is one Self developing the movement of its conscious force in its self-conceptive extension as Space. We confine ourselves in our consciousness to a single knot of the one indivisible Matter, a single eddy of the one indivisible Life, a single station of the one indivisible Mind, a single soul-manifestation of the one indivisible Spirit. Yet it is only by knowing the One that this individual mind, life, body, soul can know itself or its action. — Thus ignorance of self is the nature of our mind, but an ignorance full of the impulse towards self-possession and self-knowledge. A many-sided Ignorance striving to become an all-embracing Knowledge is the definition of man the mental being.

Chapter XXXII

The Integral Knowledge

ARGUMENT

The ignorance in which we live is a sevenfold self-ignorance; an ignorance of the Absolute and knowledge only of the relations of being and becoming; an ignorance of our timeless and immutable self-existence and knowledge only of the cosmic becoming; an ignorance of our cosmic self and knowledge only of our egoistic existence; an ignorance of our eternal becoming in Time and knowledge only of the one life present to our memory; an ignorance of our larger and complex being in the world and knowledge only of our surface waking existence; an ignorance of the higher principles of our existence and knowledge only of the life, mind and body; an ignorance therefore of the right law and enjoyment of living and a knowledge only of the confused strife of the dualities. — Our conception of the Ignorance determines our conception of the knowledge and by that of the aim of our existence, which coincides with the ideal of the earlier Vedic thought. — We confirm by it our rejection of the extreme views which hold the absolute Non-existence or absolute Existence to be alone true and the relative world of being and becoming an ignorance to be renounced. There is the unmanifest Absolute and there is its manifestation; to fulfil the manifestation and live in the sense of it as the Absolute manifesting himself is the Knowledge. — We reject the view that regards the One, Infinite, Formless, Spirit, Superconscient as the sole truth and the opposite terms as unreal or eventually false and vain values to be abandoned. We accept it and them also not as alternates, but as simultaneous values of the manifestation and their union in our consciousness and right use of their relations as the knowledge.

Chapter XXXII of The Life Divine *as published in the* Arya *was extensively revised and enlarged in 1939–40, becoming the present Book Two, Part II, Chapter XV, "Reality and the Integral Knowledge".*

— We reject equally the views that affirm a pluralistic Becoming without Being or see Mind, Life or Matter as the original principle, and we reject the limitation to our apparent Nature which is their practical conclusion. Becoming as the working out of the energies of Being, Mind, Life and Matter as inferior terms of the higher divine Nature to be illumined, uplifted, transformed by the higher terms is our view of the knowledge. — We reject also intermediate theories like that which makes God and cosmos one, — perceiving as we do that cosmos exists in God who exceeds it and not God by the cosmos, — or like that which seeks to abandon the earth and find fulfilment only in heavens where the Many enjoy the presence of the One, — perceiving, as we do, that there is a higher knowledge which leads to complete identity and that divine life based upon it need not be confined to heavens beyond, but may embrace the earth also. — Ignorance is an initial state of knowledge, the essence of which is to create a sense of limitation and division; it is this which we have to overcome and transcend without creating an opposite self-limitation. The integral aim of our existence can only be the possession and power and joy of our integral self-knowledge.

Chapter XXXIII

The Progress to Knowledge

ARGUMENT

To rise out of the sevenfold Ignorance into the integral Knowledge is the progress of man's being; it is to grow in all his complex existence and consciousness into the full possession and enjoyment of his whole and his true being. — He starts with three categories, himself, Nature or cosmos and God, and though he tries to deny any two of these in order to affirm the third only, he cannot really succeed; for he is neither separate nor sufficient to himself, cosmos also is not sufficient to itself, but points always to an infinite, one and absolute behind it, and to affirm the Absolute to the exclusion of these two others leaves man unsatisfied and cosmos unexplained. — In affirming himself man has first to put himself in front and act and feel as if God and the world existed for him and were less important to him than himself; this is his egoistic phase necessary to disengage his individuality out of Nature and as if against her and to bring it out into force and capacity. He has to affirm himself in the Ignorance before he can perfect himself in the Knowledge. Afterwards he has to seek for himself in Nature and God and others, but it is still himself that he seeks to know and possess and his own perfection or salvation which is his motive. — In the progressive enlargement of his knowledge he gets rid of his sevenfold ignorance; of the temporal by growing into his eternal being with its pre-existence and subsequent existence in Time; of the psychological by enlarging his self-knowing beyond the waking self into the subconscient and superconscient; of the constitutional by realising his spiritual being and its categories; of the cosmic by discovering his timeless self; of the egoistic by

Chapter XXXIII of The Life Divine *as published in the* Arya *was extensively revised in 1939–40, becoming the present Book Two, Part II, Chapter XVII, "The Progress to Knowledge — God, Man and Nature".*

realising the cosmic consciousness; of the original by opening to the Absolute of whom Self, individual and Nature are so many faces. — At the same time he realises the unity of himself and Nature in the first three steps of knowledge, of himself and God in the others; of himself with all beings relatively in Nature and absolutely in God; of God and Nature because it is the Self who has become all these beings and the nature of the Lord which is apparent in cosmos. — The knowledge of Nature leads him to the same results as soon as he goes beyond Matter and Life to Mind; for he discovers a subconscient and superconscient, a soul in Matter, and perceives a supernature in which he realises the Self, the Spirit, the Absolute. — In the quest of God he begins by seeing him through Nature and himself, crudely and obscurely at first, till he finds more luminously the one Truth behind all religions; for all seize on the Divine in many aspects and their variety is necessary in order that man should come to know God entirely. — When he arrives at the unity of his knowledge of God, man and Nature, he has the complete knowledge, the sense and goal of humanity's progress and labour and the sure foundation of all perfections and all harmonies.

APPENDIX I

Chapter I

The Human Aspiration

ARGUMENT IN BRIEF

A search for God, (for a spiritual or divine Reality within oneself and behind, above or within the phenomenon of existence,) for perfection, for freedom, for an absolute Truth and Bliss, for immortality has been the persistent preoccupation of the highest human thought since the earliest times. This preoccupation seems to be a perpetual element in man's nature; for it survives the longest periods of scepticism.

This aspiration is in contradiction with his present existence and normal experience of himself which is that of a mortal being full of imperfections, ego-ridden, largely animal, subject to transitory joys and much pain and suffering, bound by mechanical necessity. But the direct contradiction between what he is and what he seeks to be need not be a final argument against the validity of his aspiration. For such contradictions are part of Nature's general method; the aspiration may be realisable either by a revolutionary individual effort or by an evolutionary general progress.

The problems of existence are problems of harmony. Discords and disorder of the materials, oppositions, demand a solution by accordance, by the discovery of a harmony. Thus the accordance of an inanimation and inertia in a containing Matter and the active indwelling stress of Life is Nature's first problem, its initial difficulty; its perfect solution would be immortality in a material body. The accordance of an unconscious Matter and

In December 1940 Sri Aurobindo wrote an "Argument in Brief" and a shorter summary of Book One, Chapter I of the revised Life Divine. *Around the same time he drafted a summary of Book One, Chapter XXIV. These summaries, similar to the "arguments" published in the* Arya, *are reproduced here from his manuscripts.*

an unconscious or half-conscious Life with a conscious Mind and Will is her second problem; the possession of a direct and perfect instrumentation of knowledge in a living body would be its complete solution. The accordance of a mortal mind, life and body with a secretly indwelling immortal spirit is the final problem; the spiritualisation or divinisation of mind, life and body, a divine life, would be the perfect solution. The search after these solutions by the human being is not irrational; it is rather the very effort and striving of Nature within him.

Life appears in Matter, Mind in Life because they are already there. Matter is a form of veiled Life; Life a form of veiled Mind; Mind may well be a form and veil of a higher power, the Spirit, which is supramental in its nature. Nature has implanted an impulse towards life in certain forms of Matter and evolves it there, a similar evolutionary impulse towards mind in certain forms of life, an impulse in certain minds towards what is beyond Mind, towards the unveiling of Spirit, the evolution of a spiritual being. Each impulse justifies itself by the creation of the necessary organs and faculties.

There is therefore no reason to put a limit to evolutionary possibility by taking our present organisation or status of existence as final. The animal is a laboratory in which Nature has worked out man; man may very well be a laboratory in which she wills to work out superman, to disclose the soul as a divine being, to evolve a divine nature.

SHORTER SYNOPSIS OF THE CHAPTER

Man's highest aspiration has been always a seeking for God, perfection, freedom, an absolute truth and bliss, immortality.

A direct contradiction exists between this aspiration and his present state of mortality, imperfection, bondage to mechanical necessity, ego and animality.

This contradiction between what he is now and what he seeks to be is not a final argument against his aspiration. Contradictions are part of Nature's method; the aspiration may be achievable by individual effort or by an evolutionary progress.

The problems of existence are problems of harmony.

The accordance of an active life-principle with the inanimate Matter containing it is Nature's first evolutionary problem; its complete solution would be immortality in the body.

The accordance of conscious mind with an unconscious matter and half-conscious life is her second evolutionary problem; a direct and perfect instrumentation of knowledge in a living body would be its complete solution.

The accordance of immortal spirit with a mortal mind, life and body is her third and final problem; its complete solution would be the evolution of a divine being and a divine nature.

As Nature has implanted the impulse to life in matter, to mind in life, so she has implanted in mind the impulse towards the evolution of what is beyond mind, spiritual, supramental. Each impulse justifies itself by the creation of the necessary organs and faculties.

The animal is a laboratory in which she has worked out man; man may be a laboratory in which she wills to work out the superman, the being of a divine nature.

APPENDIX II

Chapter XXIV

Matter

Life then is not an inexplicable dream or impossible evil; it is a force of being, a pulsation of the divine All-existence capable of divine outflowering. But there still remains the problem of Matter.

This problem is of a fundamental importance. For all here, mind, life, body, depend on Matter, evolve out of it; Matter is their support, conditions their emergence and action. Man rose out of the animal by developing a body capable of a progressive mental illumination; to rise beyond himself to a divine manhood or supermanhood he must develop a physical instrumentation or body capable of a still greater supramental illumination.

But the body seems to be from the beginning the soul's great obstacle. Its opposition is a compelling cause of asceticism and of the condemnation put by most religions upon Matter.

The conflict begins with Life and increases as higher principles evolve. There is a discord between Life and Matter ending in death, the defeat of Life; but really there is a constant compromise, Life using Matter and even death for its own continuance: Mind struggles with the limitations of life and matter, and there is a half victory, a constant compromise. When spirit wakens to itself it finds itself hampered by mind, life and body, oppressed by its instruments. The solution proposed is to carry this discord to its logical conclusion. Life rejects body, mind rejects life, the spirit abandons its instruments and departs from world into its own infinity.

This solution is not a solution, it is only the individual's escape from the problem; the labour of the world and its discord continues. But if Sachchidananda is the world's indwelling reality, discord cannot be the fundamental principle. The real solution must be a true and complete conquest and taking up of body by life, of life by mind, of all three by the spirit.

This can seem possible only when we have found the real truth of Matter as of Soul, Mind and Life. As Life is found to be force of Spirit, and Mind to be consciousness of Spirit, so Matter is found to be body and substance of Spirit.

Matter as a thing in itself is non-existent. What we see of it is a form or forms created by a particular relation between our sense-experience and the all-existence in which we move. Science discovers that Matter resolves into forms of Energy; Philosophy discovers that Matter is only a substantial appearance and the one reality is Spirit. But what brings about this phenomenon of forms of Energy or this appearance of Spirit?

There should be only states of spirit or currents of Energy; whence these phenomena of forms? It can be attributed to an action of consciousness, an intervention of Mind, — sense-mind creates the forms it seems to perceive; Thought works upon them and gives them their values. But the embodied individual thought or sense which thus conceives or perceives is itself a creation and cannot be the creator. There must be a universal Mind not known to us because subconscious to us in the form of the universe, superconscious to us in the spirit. Such a universal Mind may have determined and constructed the relations of form with form and the rhythms of the universe.[1]

But how is this done?

Existence in its activity is a Consciousness-Force which presents the workings of its Force to its consciousness as forms of being. The Force of Existence of the one sole conscious being can by its workings produce no results that are not forms of that Being. Matter as substance of forms must then be itself a form or substance of spirit; it can be nothing else.

The appearances it assumes, the phenomena of Matter are the result of the dividing action of Mind. Consciousness descending from Supermind appears as Mind, an inferior power of Supermind, Force appears as Life, an energy instrumental to Mind; Mind descending into Life becomes by involution in it subconscient and gives to the material workings of Life the appearance of inconscience. The inconscience, inertia, atomic disaggregation of Matter is due to this involved action of Mind. The creative life-energy of Mind involved in Matter and there turned into what appears to us as an inconscient material Energy gives to form or substance of being on which it works the aspect of inconscience. Mind here is a first action of Supermind in the involutionary descent working in these conditions, separated from the Supermind, Life is a similar action of Force of Being, Matter the form taken by Being itself as a result of this working.

---

[1] The embodied individual mind is a surface fragmentation of the universal consciousness repeating by its perceptions this creation and so by a sort of reflection creating for its own thought and sense its own perceptual and conceptual universe.

The fragmentation of Matter is due to the dividing action of Mind which does not abrogate the essential unity of Existence. The object is to push the principle of Multiplicity in the One to its extreme which can only be done by division and separativeness of consciousness and of form. For an awareness of things from separate centres of consciousness is meant to be the basic experience of existence here. The movement of Mind the dividing principle makes the knower regard the forms of his own universal being as other than he, but it has also a movement of union which heals this phenomenal division. In divine Mind the two actions are simultaneous and prevent the division from being real. In ignorant or involved Mind the division seems real; the movement towards union becomes a contact of consciousness and primarily a contact of sense. Material substance is the form in which Mind acting through sense contacts being as object, — as a general object, a mass of objective existence and a multitude of objects in that mass of being.

Part Four

From the *Standard Bearer*

1920

Ourselves

THE "STANDARD BEARER" comes into the field today entrusted with a special mission and as the bearer of an ideal and a message. The standard it carries is not that of an outward battle, but the ensign of a spiritual ideal and of a life that must be its expression and the growing body of its reality. Our endeavour shall be to prepare the paths and to accomplish the beginning of a great and high change which we believe to be and aim at making the future of the race and the future of India. Our ideal is a new birth of humanity into the spirit; our life must be a spiritually inspired effort to create a body of action for that great new birth and creation.

A spiritual ideal has always been the characteristic idea and aspiration of India. But the progress of Time and the need of humanity demand a new orientation and another form of that ideal. The old forms and methods are no longer sufficient for the purpose of the Time-Spirit. India can no longer fulfil herself on lines that are too narrow for the great steps she has to take in the future. Nor is ours the spirituality of a life that is aged and world-weary and burdened with the sense of the illusion and miserable inutility of all God's mighty creation. Our ideal is not the spirituality that withdraws from life but the conquest of life by the power of the spirit. It is to accept the world as an effort of manifestation of the Divine, but also to transform humanity by a greater effort of manifestation than has yet been accomplished, one in which the veil between man and God shall be removed, the divine manhood of which we are capable shall come to birth and our life shall be remoulded in the truth and light and power of the spirit. It is to make of all our action a sacrifice to the master of our action and an expression of the greater self in man and of all life a Yoga.

The West has made the growth of the intellectual, emotional, vital and material being of man its ideal, but it has left aside the greater possibilities of his spiritual existence. Its highest standards are ideals of progress, of liberty, equality and fraternity, of reason and science, of efficiency of all kinds, of a better political, social and economical state, of the unity and earthly happiness of the race. These are great endeavours, but experiment after experiment has shown that they cannot be realised in their truth by the power of the idea and the sentiment alone: their real truth and practice can only be founded in the spirit. The West has put its faith in its science and machinery and it is being destroyed by its science and crushed under its mechanical burden. It has not understood that a spiritual change is necessary for the accomplishment of its ideals. The East has the secret of that spiritual change, but it has too long turned its eyes away from the earth. The time has now come to heal the division and to unite life and the spirit.

This secret too has been possessed but not sufficiently practised by India. It is summarised in the rule of the Gita, *yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi*. Its principle is to do all actions in Yoga, in union with God, on the foundation of the highest self and through the rule of all our members by the power of the spirit. And this we believe to be not only possible for man but the true solution of all his problems and difficulties. This then is the message we shall constantly utter and this the ideal that we shall put before the young and rising India, a spiritual life that shall take up all human activities and avail to transfigure the world for the great age that is coming. India, she that has carried in herself from of old the secret, can alone lead the way in this great transformation of which the present *sandhyā* of the old *yuga* is the forerunner. This must be her mission and service to humanity, — as she discovered the inner spiritual life for the individual, so now to discover for the race its integral collective expression and found for mankind its new spiritual and communal order.

Our first object shall be to declare this ideal, insist on the spiritual change as the first necessity and group together all who accept it and are ready to strive sincerely to fulfil it: our second shall be to build up not only an individual but a communal life on this principle. An outer activity as well as an inner change is needed and it must be at once a spiritual, cultural, educational, social and economical action. Its scope, too, will be at once individual and communal, regional and national, and eventually a work not only for the nation but for the whole human people. The immediate object of this action will be a new creation, a spiritual education and culture, an enlarged social spirit founded not on division but on unity, on the perfect growth and freedom of the individual, but also on his unity with others and his dedication to a larger self in the people and in humanity, and the beginning of an endeavour towards the solution of the economic problem founded not on any Western model but on the communal principle native to India.

Our call is to young India. It is the young who must be the builders of the new world, — not those who accept the competitive individualism, the capitalism or the materialistic communism of the West as India's future ideal, nor those who are enslaved to old religious formulas and cannot believe in the acceptance and transformation of life by the spirit, but all who are free in mind and heart to accept a completer truth and labour for a greater ideal. They must be men who will dedicate themselves not to the past or the present but to the future. They will need to consecrate their lives to an exceeding of their lower self, to the realisation of God in themselves and in all human beings and to a whole-minded and indefatigable labour for the nation and for humanity. This ideal can be as yet only a little seed and the life that embodies it a small nucleus, but it is our fixed hope that the seed will grow into a great tree and the nucleus be the heart of an ever extending formation. It is with a confident trust in the spirit that inspires us that we take our place among the standard-bearers of the new humanity that is struggling to be born amidst the chaos of a world in dissolution and of the future India, the greater India of the rebirth that is to rejuvenate the mighty outworn body of the ancient Mother.

Part Five

From the *Bulletin of Physical Education*

1949–1950

The Supramental Manifestation
upon Earth

Message

I TAKE the opportunity of the publication of this issue of the "Bulletin d'Éducation Physique" of the Ashram to give my blessings to the Journal and the Association — J.S.A.S.A. (Jeunesse Sportive de l'Ashram de Sri Aurobindo). In doing so I would like to dwell for a while on the deeper *raison d'être* of such Associations and especially the need and utility for the nation of a widespread organisation of them and such sports or physical exercises as are practised here. In their more superficial aspect they appear merely as games and amusements which people take up for entertainment or as a field for the outlet of the body's energy and natural instinct of activity or for a means of the development and maintenance of the health and strength of the body; but they are or can be much more than that: they are also fields for the development of habits, capacities and qualities which are greatly needed and of the utmost service to a people in war or in peace, and in its political and social activities, in most indeed of the provinces of a combined human endeavour. It is to this which we may call the national aspect of the subject that I would wish to give especial prominence.

In our own time these sports, games and athletics have assumed a place and command a general interest such as was seen only in earlier times in countries like Greece, Greece where all sides of human activity were equally developed and the gymnasium, chariot-racing and other sports and athletics had the same importance on the physical side as on the mental side the Arts and poetry and the drama, and were especially stimulated and attended to by the civic authorities of the city state. It was Greece that made an institution of the Olympiad and the recent re-establishment of the Olympiad as an international institution is a significant sign of the revival of the ancient spirit. This kind of interest has spread to a certain extent to our own country and

India has begun to take a place in international contests such as the Olympiad. The newly founded State in liberated India is also beginning to be interested in developing all sides of the life of the nation and is likely to take an active part and a habit of direction in fields which were formerly left to private initiative. It is taking up, for instance, the question of the foundation and preservation of health and physical fitness in the nation and the spreading of a general recognition of its importance. It is in this connection that the encouragement of sports and associations for athletics and all activities of this kind would be an incalculable assistance. A generalisation of the habit of taking part in such exercises in childhood and youth and early manhood would help greatly towards the creation of a physically fit and energetic people.

But of a higher import than the foundation, however necessary, of health, strength and fitness of the body is the development of discipline and morale and sound and strong character towards which these activities can help. There are many sports which are of the utmost value towards this end, because they help to form and even necessitate the qualities of courage, hardihood, energetic action and initiative or call for skill, steadiness of will or rapid decision and action, the perception of what is to be done in an emergency and dexterity in doing it. One development of the utmost value is the awakening of the essential and instinctive body consciousness which can see and do what is necessary without any indication from mental thought and which is equivalent in the body to swift insight in the mind and spontaneous and rapid decision in the will. One may add the formation of a capacity for harmonious and right movements of the body, especially in a combined action, economical of physical effort and discouraging waste of energy, which result from such exercises as marches or drill and which displace the loose and straggling, the inharmonious or disorderly or wasteful movements common to the untrained individual body. Another invaluable result of these activities is the growth of what has been called the sporting spirit. That includes good humour and tolerance and consideration for all, a right attitude and friendliness to competitors and rivals, self-control and scrupulous observance of the laws of the game, fair play and avoidance of the use of foul means, an equal acceptance of victory or defeat without bad humour, resentment or ill-will towards successful competitors, loyal acceptance of the decisions of the appointed judge, umpire or referee. These qualities have their value for life in general and not only for sport, but the help that sport can give to their development is direct and invaluable. If they could be made more common not only in the life of the individual but in the national life and in the international where at the present day the opposite tendencies have become too rampant, existence in this troubled world of ours would be smoother and might open to a greater chance of concord and amity of which it stands very much in need. More important still is the custom of discipline, obedience, order, habit of team-work, which certain games necessitate. For without them success is uncertain or impossible. Innumerable are the activities in life, especially in national life, in which leadership and obedience to leadership in combined action are necessary for success, victory in combat or fulfilment of a purpose. The role of the leader, the captain, the power and skill of his leadership, his ability to command the confidence and ready obedience of his followers is of the utmost importance in all kinds of combined action or enterprise; but few can develop these things without having learned themselves to obey and to act as one mind or as one body with others. This strictness of training, this habit of discipline and obedience is not inconsistent with individual freedom; it is often the necessary condition for its right use, just as order is not inconsistent with liberty but rather the condition for the right use of liberty and even for its preservation and survival. In all kinds of concerted action this rule is indispensable: orchestration becomes necessary and there could be no success for an orchestra in which individual musicians played according to their own fancy and refused to follow the indications of the conductor. In spiritual things also the same rule holds; a sadhak who disregarded the guidance of the Guru and preferred the untrained inspirations of the novice could hardly escape the stumbles or even the disasters which so often lie thick around the path to spiritual realisation.

I need not enumerate the other benefits which can be drawn from the training that sports can give or dwell on their use in the national life; what I have said is sufficient. At any rate, in schools like ours and in universities sports have now a recognised and indispensable place; for even a highest and completest education of the mind is not enough without the education of the body. Where the qualities I have enumerated are absent or insufficiently present, a strong individual will or a national will may build them up, but the aid given by sports to their development is direct and in no way negligible. This would be a sufficient reason for the attention given to them in our Ashram, though there are others which I need not mention here. I am concerned here with their importance and the necessity of the qualities they create or stimulate for our national life. The nation which possesses them in the highest degree is likely to be the strongest for victory, success and greatness, but also for the contribution it can make towards the bringing about of unity and a more harmonious world order towards which we look as our hope for humanity's future.

Perfection of the Body

THE PERFECTION of the body, as great a perfection as we can bring about by the means at our disposal, must be the ultimate aim of physical culture. Perfection is the true aim of all culture, the spiritual and psychic, the mental, the vital and it must be the aim of our physical culture also. If our seeking is for a total perfection of the being, the physical part of it cannot be left aside; for the body is the material basis, the body is the instrument which we have to use. *Śarīraṁ khalu dharmasādhanam*, says the old Sanskrit adage, — the body is the means of fulfilment of dharma, and dharma means every ideal which we can propose to ourselves and the law of its working out and its action. A total perfection is the ultimate aim which we set before us, for our ideal is the Divine Life which we wish to create here, the life of the Spirit fulfilled on earth, life accomplishing its own spiritual transformation even here on earth in the conditions of the material universe. That cannot be unless the body too undergoes a transformation, unless its action and functioning attain to a supreme capacity and the perfection which is possible to it or which can be made possible.

I have already indicated in a previous message a relative perfection of the physical consciousness in the body and of the mind, the life, the character which it houses as, no less than an awakening and development of the body's own native capacities, a desirable outcome of the exercises and practices of the physical culture to which we have commenced to give in this Ashram a special attention and scope. A development of the physical consciousness must always be a considerable part of our aim, but for that the right development of the body itself is an essential element; health, strength, fitness are the first needs, but the physical frame itself must be the best possible. A divine life in a material world implies necessarily a union of the two ends of existence, the spiritual summit and the material base. The soul with the basis of its life established in Matter ascends to the heights of the Spirit but does not cast away its base, it joins the heights and the depths together. The Spirit descends into Matter and the material world with all its lights and glories and powers and with them fills and transforms life in the material world so that it becomes more and more divine. The transformation is not a change into something purely subtle and spiritual to which Matter is in its nature repugnant and by which it is felt as an obstacle or as a shackle binding the Spirit; it takes up Matter as a form of the Spirit though now a form which conceals and turns it into a revealing instrument, it does not cast away the energies of Matter, its capacities, its methods; it brings out their hidden possibilities, uplifts, sublimates, discloses their innate divinity. The divine life will reject nothing that is capable of divinisation; all is to be seized, exalted, made utterly perfect. The mind now still ignorant, though struggling towards knowledge, has to rise towards and into the supramental light and truth and bring it down so that it shall suffuse our thinking and perception and insight and all our means of knowing till they become radiant with the highest truth in their inmost and outermost movements. Our life, still full of obscurity and confusion and occupied with so many dull and lower aims, must feel all its urges and instincts exalted and irradiated and become a glorious counterpart of the supramental super-life above. The physical consciousness and physical being, the body itself must reach a perfection in all that it is and does which now we can hardly conceive. It may even in the end be suffused with a light and beauty and bliss from the Beyond and the life divine assume a body divine.

But first the evolution of the nature must have reached a point at which it can meet the Spirit direct, feel the aspiration towards the spiritual change and open itself to the workings of the Power which shall transform it. A supreme perfection, a total perfection is possible only by a transformation of our lower or human nature, a transformation of the mind into a thing of light, our life into a thing of power, an instrument of right action, right use for all its forces, of a happy elevation of its being lifting it beyond its present comparatively narrow potentiality for a self-fulfilling force of action and joy of life. There must be equally a transforming change of the body by a conversion of its action, its functioning, its capacities as an instrument beyond the limitations by which it is clogged and hampered even in its greatest present human attainment. In the totality of the change we have to achieve, human means and forces too have to be taken up, not dropped but used and magnified to their utmost possibility as part of the new life. Such a sublimation of our present human powers of mind and life into elements of a divine life on earth can be conceived without much difficulty; but in what figure shall we conceive the perfection of the body?

In the past the body has been regarded by spiritual seekers rather as an obstacle, as something to be overcome and discarded than as an instrument of spiritual perfection and a field of the spiritual change. It has been condemned as a grossness of Matter, as an insuperable impediment and the limitations of the body as something unchangeable making transformation impossible. This is because the human body even at its best seems only to be driven by an energy of life which has its own limits and is debased in its smaller physical activities by much that is petty or coarse or evil; the body in itself is burdened with the inertia and inconscience of Matter, only partly awake and, although quickened and animated by a nervous activity, subconscient in the fundamental action of its constituent cells and tissues and their secret workings. Even in its fullest strength and force and greatest glory of beauty, it is still a flower of the material Inconscience; the inconscient is the soil from which it has grown and at every point opposes a narrow boundary to the extension of its powers and to any effort of radical self-exceeding. But if a divine life is possible on earth, then this self-exceeding must also be possible.

In the pursuit of perfection we can start at either end of our range of being and we have then to use, initially at least, the means and processes proper to our choice. In Yoga the process is spiritual and psychic; even its vital and physical processes are given a spiritual or psychic turn and raised to a higher motion than belongs properly to the ordinary life and Matter, as for instance in the Hathayogic and Rajayogic use of the breathing or the use of Asana. Ordinarily a previous preparation of the mind and life and body is necessary to make them fit for the reception of the spiritual energy and the organisation of psychic forces and methods, but this too is given a special turn proper to the Yoga. On the other hand, if we start in any field at the lower end we have to employ the means and processes which Life and Matter offer to us and respect the conditions and what we may call the technique imposed by the vital and the material energy. We may extend the activity, the achievement, the perfection attained beyond the initial, even beyond the normal possibilities but still we have to stand on the same base with which we started and within the boundaries it gives to us. It is not that the action from the two ends cannot meet and the higher take into itself and uplift the lower perfection; but this can usually be done only by a transition from the lower to a higher outlook, aspiration and motive: this we shall have to do if our aim is to transform the human into the divine life. But here there comes in the necessity of taking up the activities of human life and sublimating them by the power of the spirit. Here the lower perfection will not disappear; it will remain but will be enlarged and transformed by the higher perfection which only the power of the spirit can give. This will be evident if we consider poetry and art, philosophic thought, the perfection of the written word or the perfect organisation of earthly life: these have to be taken up and the possibilities already achieved or whatever perfection has already been attained included in a new and greater perfection but with the larger vision and inspiration of a spiritual consciousness and with new forms and powers. It must be the same with the perfection of the body.

The taking up of life and Matter into what is essentially a spiritual seeking, instead of the rejection and ultimate exclusion of them which was the attitude of a spirituality that shunned or turned away from life in the world, involves certain developments which a spiritual institution of the older kind could regard as foreign to its purpose. A divine life in the world or an institution having that for its aim and purpose cannot be or cannot remain something outside or entirely shut away from the life of ordinary men in the world or unconcerned with the mundane existence; it has to do the work of the Divine in the world and not a work outside or separate from it. The life of the ancient Rishis in their Ashramas had such a connection; they were creators, educators, guides of men and the life of the Indian people in ancient times was largely developed and directed by their shaping influence. The life and activities involved in the new endeavour are not identical but they too must be an action upon the world and a new creation in it. It must have contacts and connections with it and activities which take their place in the general life and whose initial or primary objects may not seem to differ from those of the same activities in the outside world. In our Ashram here we have found it necessary to establish a school for the education of the children of the resident sadhaks, teaching upon familiar lines though with certain modifications and taking as part and an important part of their development an intensive physical training which has given form to the sports and athletics practised by the Jeunesse Sportive of the Ashram and of which this Bulletin is the expression. It has been questioned by some what place sports can have in an Ashram created for spiritual seekers and what connection there can be between spirituality and sports. The first answer lies in what I have already written about the connections of an institution of this kind with the activities of the general life of men and what I have indicated in the previous number as to the utility such a training can have for the life of a nation and its benefit for the international life. Another answer can occur to us if we look beyond first objects and turn to the aspiration for a total perfection including the perfection of the body.

In the admission of an activity such as sports and physical exercises into the life of the Ashram it is evident that the methods and the first objects to be attained must belong to what we have called the lower end of the being. Originally they have been introduced for the physical education and bodily development of the children of the Ashram School, and these are too young for a strictly spiritual aim or practice to enter into their activities and it is not certain that any great number of them will enter the spiritual life when they are of an age to choose what shall be the direction of their future. The object must be the training of the body and the development of certain parts of mind and character so far as this can be done by or in connection with this training, and I have already indicated in a previous number how and in what directions this can be done. It is a relative and human perfection that can be attained within these limits; anything greater can be reached only by the intervention of higher powers, psychic powers, the power of the spirit. Yet what can be attained within the human boundaries can be something very considerable and sometimes immense: what we call genius is part of the development of the human range of being, and its achievements, especially in things of the mind and will, can carry us half-way to the divine. Even what the mind and will can do with the body in the field proper to the body and its life, in the way of physical achievement, bodily endurance, feats of prowess of all kinds, a lasting activity refusing fatigue or collapse and continuing beyond what seems at first to be possible, courage and refusal to succumb under an endless and murderous physical suffering, these and other victories of many kinds sometimes approaching or reaching the miraculous are seen in the human field and must be reckoned as a part of our concept of a total perfection. The unflinching and persistent reply that can be made by the body as well as the mind of man and by his life-energy to whatever call can be imposed on it in the most difficult and discouraging circumstances by the necessities of war and travel and adventure is of the same kind, and their endurance can reach astounding proportions and even the inconscient in the body seems to be able to return a surprising response.

The body, we have said, is a creation of the Inconscient and itself inconscient or at least subconscient in parts of itself and much of its hidden action; but what we call the Inconscient is an appearance, a dwelling place, an instrument of a secret Consciousness or a Superconscient which has created the miracle we call the universe. Matter is the field and the creation of the

Inconscient and the perfection of the operations of inconscient Matter, their perfect adaptation of means to an aim and end, the wonders they perform and the marvels of beauty they create, testify, in spite of all the ignorant denial we can oppose, to the presence and power of consciousness of this Superconscience in every part and movement of the material universe. It is there in the body, has made it and its emergence in our consciousness is the secret aim of evolution and the key to the mystery of our existence.

In the use of such activities as sports and physical exercises for the education of the individual in childhood and first youth, which should mean the bringing out of his actual and latent possibilities to their fullest development, the means and methods we must use are limited by the nature of the body and its aim must be such relative human perfection of the body's powers and capacities and the powers of mind, will, character, action of which it is at once the residence and the instrument so far as these methods can help to develop them. I have written sufficiently about the mental and moral parts of perfection to which these pursuits can contribute and this I need not repeat here. For the body itself the perfections that can be developed by these means are those of its natural qualities and capacities and, secondly, the training of its general fitness as an instrument for all the activities which may be demanded from it by the mind and the will, by the life-energy or by the dynamic perceptions, impulses and instincts of our subtle physical being which is an unrecognised but very important element and agent in our nature. Health and strength are the first conditions for the natural perfection of the body, not only muscular strength and the solid strength of the limbs and physical stamina, but the finer, alert and plastic and adaptable force which our nervous and subtle physical parts can put into the activities of the frame. There is also the still more dynamic force which a call upon the life-energies can bring into the body and stir it to greater activities, even feats of the most extraordinary character of which in its normal state it would not be capable. There is also the strength which the mind and will by their demands and stimulus and by their secret powers which we use or by which we are used without knowing clearly the source of their action can impart to the body or impose upon it as masters and inspirers.

Among the natural qualities and powers of the body which can be thus awakened, stimulated and trained to a normal activity we must reckon dexterity and stability in all kinds of physical action, such as swiftness in the race, dexterity in combat, skill and endurance of the mountaineer, the constant and often extraordinary response to all that can be demanded from the body of the soldier, sailor, traveller or explorer to which I have already made reference, or in adventure of all kinds and all the wide range of physical attainment to which man has accustomed himself or to which he is exceptionally pushed by his own will or by the compulsion of circumstance. It is a general fitness of the body for all that can be asked from it which is the common formula of all this action, a fitness attained by a few or by many, that could be generalised by an extended and many-sided physical education and discipline. Some of these activities can be included under the name of sports; there are others for which sports and physical exercises can be an effective preparation. In some of them a training for common action, combined movement, discipline are needed and for that our physical exercises can make one ready; in others a developed individual will, skill of mind and quick perception, forcefulness of life-energy and subtle physical impulsion are more prominently needed and may even be the one sufficient trainer. All must be included in our conception of the natural powers of the body and its capacity and instrumental fitness in the service of the human mind and will, and therefore in our concept of the total perfection of the body.

There are two conditions for this perfection, an awakening in as great an entirety as possible of the body consciousness and an education, an evocation of its potentialities, also as entire and fully developed and, it may be, as many-sided as possible. The form or body is, no doubt, in its origin a creation of the Inconscient and limited by it on all sides, but still of the Inconscient developing the secret consciousness concealed within it and growing in light of knowledge, power and Ananda. We have to take it at the point it has reached in its human evolution in these things, make as full a use of them as may be and, as much as we can, further this evolution to as high a degree as is permitted by the force of the individual temperament and nature. In all forms in the world there is a force at work, unconsciously active or oppressed by inertia in its lower formulations, but in the human being conscious from the first, with its potentialities partly awake, partly asleep or latent: what is awake in it we have to make fully conscious; what is asleep we have to arouse and set to its work; what is latent we have to evoke and educate. Here there are two aspects of the body consciousness, one which seems to be a kind of automatism carrying on its work in the physical plane without any intervention of the mind and in parts even beyond any possibility of direct observation by the mind or, if conscious or observable, still proceeding or capable of continuing, when once started, by an apparently mechanical action not needing direction by the mind and continuing so long as the mind does not intervene.

There are other movements taught and trained by the mind which can yet go on operating automatically but faultlessly even when not attended to by the thought or will; there are others which can operate in sleep and produce results of value to the waking intelligence. But more important is what may be described as a trained and developed automatism, a perfected skill and capacity of eye and ear and the hands and all the members prompt to respond to any call made on them, a developed spontaneous operation as an instrument, a complete fitness for any demand that the mind and life-energy can make upon it. This is ordinarily the best we can achieve at the lower end, when we start from that end and limit ourselves to the means and methods which are proper to it. For more we have to turn to the mind and life-energy themselves or to the energy of the spirit and to what they can do for a greater perfection of the body. The most we can do in the physical field by physical means is necessarily insecure as well as bound by limits; even what seems a perfect health and strength of the body is precarious and can be broken down at any moment by fluctuations from within or by a strong attack or shock from outside: only by the breaking of our limitations can a higher and more enduring perfection come. One direction in which our consciousness must grow is an increasing hold from within or from above on the body and its powers and its more conscious response to the higher parts of our being. The mind pre-eminently is man; he is a mental being and his human perfection grows the more he fulfils the description of the Upanishad, a mental being, Purusha, leader of the life and the body. If the mind can take up and control the instincts and automatisms of the life-energy and the subtle physical consciousness and the body, if it can enter into them, consciously use and, as we may say, fully mentalise their instinctive or spontaneous action, the perfection of these energies, their action too become more conscious and more aware of themselves and more perfect. But it is necessary for the mind too to grow in perfection and this it can do best when it depends less on the fallible intellect of physical mind, when it is not limited even by the more orderly and accurate working of the reason and can grow in intuition and acquire a wider, deeper and closer seeing and the more luminous drive of energy of a higher intuitive will. Even within the limits of its present evolution it is difficult to measure the degree to which the mind is able to extend its control or its use of the body's powers and capacities and when the mind rises to higher powers still and pushes back its human boundaries, it becomes impossible to fix any limits: even, in certain realisations, an intervention by the will in the automatic working of the bodily organs seems to become possible.

Wherever limitations recede and in proportion as they recede, the body becomes a more plastic and responsive and in that measure a more fit and perfect instrument of the action of the spirit. In all effective and expressive activities here in the material world the cooperation of the two ends of our being is indispensable. If the body is unable whether by fatigue or by natural incapacity or any other cause to second the thought or will or is in any way irresponsive or insufficiently responsive, to that extent the action fails or falls short or becomes in some degree unsatisfying or incomplete. In what seems to be an exploit of the spirit so purely mental as the outpouring of poetic inspiration, there must be a responsive vibration of the brain and its openness as a channel for the power of the thought and vision and the light of the word that is making or breaking its way through or seeking for its perfect expression. If the brain is fatigued or dulled by any clog, either the inspiration cannot come and nothing is written or it fails and something inferior is all that can come out; or else a lower inspiration takes the place of the more luminous formulation that was striving to shape itself or the brain finds it more easy to lend itself to a less radiant stimulus or else it labours and constructs or responds to poetic artifice. Even in the most purely mental activities the fitness, readiness or perfect training of the bodily instrument is a condition indispensable. That readiness, that response too is part of the total perfection of the body.

The essential purpose and sign of the growing evolution here is the emergence of consciousness in an apparently inconscient universe, the growth of consciousness and with it growth of the light and power of the being; the development of the form and its functioning or its fitness to survive, although indispensable, is not the whole meaning or the central motive. The greater and greater awakening of consciousness and its climb to a higher and higher level and a wider extent of its vision and action is the condition of our progress towards that supreme and total perfection which is the aim of our existence. It is the condition also of the total perfection of the body. There are higher levels of the mind than any we now conceive and to these we must one day reach and rise beyond them to the heights of a greater, a spiritual existence. As we rise we have to open to them our lower members and fill these with those superior and supreme dynamisms of light and power; the body we have to make a more and more and even entirely conscious frame and instrument, a conscious sign and seal and power of the spirit. As it grows in this perfection, the force and extent of its dynamic action and its response and service to the spirit must increase; the control of the spirit over it also must grow and the plasticity of its functioning both in its developed and acquired parts of power and in its automatic responses down to those that are now purely organic and seem to be the movements of a mechanic inconscience. This cannot happen without a veritable transformation, and a transformation of the mind and life and very body is indeed the change to which our evolution is secretly moving and without this transformation the entire fullness of a divine life on earth cannot emerge. In this transformation the body itself can become an agent and a partner. It might indeed be possible for the spirit to achieve a considerable manifestation with only a passive and imperfectly conscious body as its last or bottommost means of material functioning, but this could not be anything perfect or complete. A fully conscious body might even discover and work out the right material method and process of a material transformation. For this, no doubt, the spirit's supreme light and power and creative joy must have manifested on the summit of the individual consciousness and sent down their fiat into the body, but still the body may take in the working out its spontaneous part of self-discovery and achievement. It would be thus a participator and agent in its own transformation and the integral transformation of the whole being; this too would be a part and a sign and evidence of the total perfection of the body.

If the emergence and growth of consciousness is the central motive of the evolution and the key to its secret purpose, then by the very nature of that evolution this growth must involve not only a wider and wider extent of its capacities, but also an ascent to a higher and higher level till it reaches the highest possible. For it starts from a nethermost level of involution in the Inconscience which we see at work in Matter creating the material universe; it proceeds by an Ignorance which is yet ever developing knowledge and reaching out to an ever greater light and ever greater organisation and efficacy of the will and harmonisation of all its own inherent and emerging powers; it must at last reach a point where it develops or acquires the complete fullness of its capacity, and that must be a state or action in which there is no longer an ignorance seeking for knowledge but Knowledge self-possessed, inherent in the being, master of its own truths and working them out with a natural vision and force that is not afflicted by limitation or error. Or if there is a limitation, it must be a self-imposed veil behind which it would keep truth back from manifestation in Time but draw it out at will and without any need of search or acquisition in the order of a right perception of things or in the just succession of that which has to be manifested in obedience to the call of Time.

This would mean an entry or approach into what might be called a truth-consciousness self-existent in which the being would be aware of its own realities and would have the inherent power to manifest them in a Time-creation in which all would be Truth following out its own unerring steps and combining its own harmonies; every thought and will and feeling and act would be spontaneously right, inspired or intuitive, moving by the light of Truth and therefore perfect. All would express inherent realities of the spirit; some fullness of the power of the spirit would be there. One would have overpassed the present limitations of mind: mind would become a seeing of the light of Truth, will a force and power of the Truth, Life a progressive fulfilment of the Truth, the body itself a conscious vessel of the Truth and part of the means of its self-effectuation and a form of its self-aware existence. It would be at least some initiation of this Truth-consciousness, some first figure and action of it that must be reached and enter into a first operation if there is to be a divine life or any full manifestation of a spiritualised consciousness in the world of Matter. Or, at the very least, such a Truth-consciousness must be in communication with our own mind and life and body, descend into touch with it, control its seeing and action, impel its motives, take hold of its forces and shape their direction and purpose. All touched by it might not be able to embody it fully, but each would give some form to it according to his spiritual temperament, inner capacity, the line of his evolution in Nature: he would reach securely the perfection of which he was immediately capable and he would be on the road to the full possession of the truth of the Spirit and of the truth of Nature.

In the workings of such a Truth-consciousness there would be a certain conscious seeing and willing automatism of the steps of its truth which would replace the infallible automatism of the inconscient or seemingly inconscient Force that has brought out of an apparent Void the miracle of an ordered universe, and this could create a new order of the manifestation of the Being in which a perfect perfection would become possible; even a supreme and total perfection would appear in the vistas of an ultimate possibility. If we could draw down this power into the material world, our agelong dreams of human perfectibility, individual perfection, the perfectibility of the race, of society, inner mastery over self and a complete mastery, governance and utilisation of the forces of Nature could see at long last a prospect of total achievement. This complete human self-fulfilment might well pass beyond limitations and be transformed into the character of a divine life. Matter after taking into itself and manifesting the power of life and the light of mind would draw down into it the superior or supreme power and light of the spirit and in an earthly body shed its parts of inconscience and become a perfectly conscious frame of the spirit. A secure completeness and stability of the health and strength of its physical tenement could be maintained by the will and force of this inhabitant; all the natural capacities of the physical frame, all powers of the physical consciousness would reach their utmost extension and be there at command and sure of their flawless action. As an instrument the body would acquire a fullness of capacity, a totality of fitness for all uses which the inhabitant would demand of it far beyond anything now possible. Even it could become a revealing vessel of a supreme beauty and bliss, — casting the beauty of the light of the spirit suffusing and radiating from it as a lamp reflects and diffuses the luminosity of its indwelling flame, carrying in itself the beatitude of the spirit, its joy of the seeing mind, its joy of life and spiritual happiness, the joy of Matter released into a spiritual consciousness and thrilled with a constant ecstasy. This would be the total perfection of the spiritualised body.

All this might not come all at once, though such a sudden illumination might be possible if a divine Power and Light and

Ananda could take their stand on the summit of our being and send down their force into the mind and life and body illumining and remoulding the cells, awaking consciousness in all the frame. But the way would be open and the consummation of all that is possible in the individual could progressively take place. The physical also would have its share in that consummation of the whole.

There would always remain vistas beyond as the infinite Spirit took up towards higher heights and larger breadths the evolving Nature, in the movement of the liberated being towards the possession of the supreme Reality, the supreme existence, consciousness, beatitude. But of this it would be premature to speak: what has been written is perhaps as much as the human mind as it is now constituted can venture to look forward to and the enlightened thought understand in some measure. These consequences of the Truth-consciousness descending and laying its hold upon Matter would be a sufficient justification of the evolutionary labour. In this upward all-uplifting sweep of the Spirit there could be a simultaneous or consecutive downward sweep of the triumph of a spiritualised Nature all-including, all-transmuting and in it there could occur a glorifying change of Matter and the physical consciousness and physical form and functioning of which we could speak as not only the total but the supreme perfection of the body.

The Divine Body

A DIVINE life in a divine body is the formula of the ideal that we envisage. But what will be the divine body? What will be the nature of this body, its structure, the principle of its activity, the perfection that distinguishes it from the limited and imperfect physicality within which we are now bound? What will be the conditions and operations of its life, still physical in its base upon the earth, by which it can be known as divine?

If it is to be the product of an evolution, and it is so that we must envisage it, an evolution out of our human imperfection and ignorance into a greater truth of spirit and nature, by what process or stages can it grow into manifestation or rapidly arrive? The process of the evolution upon earth has been slow and tardy — what principle must intervene if there is to be a transformation, a progressive or sudden change?

It is indeed as a result of our evolution that we arrive at the possibility of this transformation. As Nature has evolved beyond Matter and manifested Life, beyond Life and manifested Mind, so she must evolve beyond Mind and manifest a consciousness and power of our existence free from the imperfection and limitation of our mental existence, a supramental or truth-consciousness, and able to develop the power and perfection of the spirit. Here a slow and tardy change need no longer be the law or manner of our evolution; it will be only so to a greater or less extent so long as a mental ignorance clings and hampers our ascent; but once we have grown into the truth-consciousness its power of spiritual truth of being will determine all. Into that truth we shall be freed and it will transform mind and life and body. Light and bliss and beauty and a perfection of the spontaneous right action of all the being are there as native powers of the supramental truth-consciousness and these will in their very nature transform mind and life and body even here upon earth into a manifestation of the truth-conscious spirit. The obscurations of earth will not prevail against the supramental truth-consciousness, for even into the earth it can bring enough of the omniscient light and omnipotent force of the spirit to conquer. All may not open to the fullness of its light and power, but whatever does open must to that extent undergo the change. That will be the principle of transformation.

It might be that a psychological change, a mastery of the nature by the soul, a transformation of the mind into a principle of light, of the life-force into power and purity would be the first approach, the first attempt to solve the problem, to escape beyond the merely human formula and establish something that could be called a divine life upon earth, a first sketch of supermanhood, of a supramental living in the circumstances of the earth-nature. But this could not be the complete and radical change needed; it would not be the total transformation, the fullness of a divine life in a divine body. There would be a body still human and indeed animal in its origin and fundamental character and this would impose its own inevitable limitations on the higher parts of the embodied being. As limitation by ignorance and error is the fundamental defect of an untransformed mind, as limitation by the imperfect impulses and strainings and wants of desire are the defects of an untransformed life-force, so also imperfection of the potentialities of the physical action, an imperfection, a limitation in the response of its half-consciousness to the demands made upon it and the grossness and stains of its original animality would be the defects of an untransformed or an imperfectly transformed body. These could not but hamper and even pull down towards themselves the action of the higher parts of the nature. A transformation of the body must be the condition for a total transformation of the nature.

It might be also that the transformation might take place by stages; there are powers of the nature still belonging to the mental region which are yet potentialities of a growing gnosis lifted beyond our human mentality and partaking of the light and power of the Divine and an ascent through these planes, a descent of them into the mental being might seem to be the natural evolutionary course. But in practice it might be found that these intermediate levels would not be sufficient for the total transformation since, being themselves illumined potentialities of mental being not yet supramental in the full sense of the word, they could bring down to the mind only a partial divinity or raise the mind towards that but not effectuate its elevation into the complete supramentality of the truth-consciousness. Still these levels might become stages of the ascent which some would reach and pause there while others went higher and could reach and live on superior strata of a semi-divine existence. It is not to be supposed that all humanity would rise in a block into the supermind; at first those only might attain to the highest or some intermediate height of the ascent whose inner evolution has fitted them for so great a change or who are raised by the direct touch of the Divine into its perfect light and power and bliss. The large mass of human beings might still remain for long content with a normal or only a partially illumined and uplifted human nature. But this would be itself a sufficiently radical change and initial transformation of earth-life; for the way would be open to all who have the will to rise, the supramental influence of the truth-consciousness would touch the earth-life and influence even its untransformed mass and a hope would be there and a promise eventually available to all which now only the few can share in or realise.

In any case these would be beginnings only and could not constitute the fullness of the divine life upon earth; it would be a new orientation of the earthly life but not the consummation of its change. For that there must be the sovereign reign of a supramental truth-consciousness to which all other forms of life would be subordinated and depend upon it as the master principle and supreme power to which they could look up as the goal, profit by its influences, be moved and upraised by something of its illumination and penetrating force. Especially, as the human body had to come into existence with its modification of the previous animal form and its erect figure of a new power of life and its expressive movements and activities serviceable and necessary to the principle of mind and the life of a mental being, so too a body must be developed with new powers, activities or degrees of a divine action expressive of a truth-conscious being and proper to a supramental consciousness and manifesting a conscious spirit. While the capacity for taking up and sublimating all the activities of the earth-life capable of being spiritualised must be there, a transcendence of the original animality and the actions incurably tainted by it or at least some saving transformation of them, some spiritualising or psychicising of the consciousness and motives animating them and the shedding of whatever could not be so transformed, even a change of what might be called its instrumental structure, its functioning and organisation, a complete and hitherto unprecedented control of these things must be the consequence or incidental to this total change. These things have been already to some extent illustrated in the lives of many who have become possessed of spiritual powers but as something exceptional and occasional, the casual or incomplete manifestation of an acquired capacity rather than the organisation of a new consciousness, a new life and a new nature. How far can such physical transformation be carried, what are the limits within which it must remain to be consistent with life upon earth and without carrying that life beyond the earthly sphere or pushing it towards the supra-terrestrial existence? The supramental consciousness is not a fixed quantity but a power which passes to higher and higher levels of possibility until it reaches supreme consummations of spiritual existence fulfilling supermind as supermind fulfils the ranges of spiritual consciousness that are pushing towards it from the human or mental level. In this progression the body also may reach a more perfect form and a higher range of its expressive powers, become a more and more perfect vessel of divinity.

* * *

This destiny of the body has rarely in the past been envisaged or else not for the body here upon earth; such forms would rather be imagined or visioned as the privilege of celestial beings and not possible as the physical residence of a soul still bound to terrestrial nature. The Vaishnavas have spoken of a spiritualised conscious body, *cinmaya deha*; there has been the conception of a radiant or luminous body, which might be the Vedic *jyotirmaya deha*. A light has been seen by some radiating from the bodies of highly developed spiritual persons, even extending to the emission of an enveloping aura and there has been recorded an initial phenomenon of this kind in the life of so great a spiritual personality as Ramakrishna. But these things have been either conceptual only or rare and occasional and for the most part the body has not been regarded as possessed of spiritual possibility or capable of transformation. It has been spoken of as the means of effectuation of the dharma and dharma here includes all high purposes, achievements and ideals of life not excluding the spiritual change: but it is an instrument that must be dropped when its work is done and though there may be and must be spiritual realisation while yet in the body, it can only come to its full fruition after the abandonment of the physical frame. More ordinarily in the spiritual tradition the body has been regarded as an obstacle, incapable of spiritualisation or transmutation and a heavy weight holding the soul to earthly nature and preventing its ascent either to spiritual fulfilment in the Supreme or to the dissolution of its individual being in the Supreme. But while this conception of the role of the body in our destiny is suitable enough for a sadhana that sees earth only as a field of the ignorance and earth-life as a preparation for a saving withdrawal from life which is the indispensable condition for spiritual liberation, it is insufficient for a sadhana which conceives of a divine life upon earth and liberation of earth-nature itself as part of a total purpose of the embodiment of the spirit here. If a total transformation of the being is our aim, a transformation of the body must be an indispensable part of it; without that no full divine life on earth is possible.

It is the past evolution of the body and especially its animal nature and animal history which seems to stand in the way of this consummation. The body, as we have seen, is an offspring and creation of the Inconscient, itself inconscient or only half-conscious; it began as a form of unconscious Matter, developed life and from a material object became a living growth, developed mind and from the subconsciousness of the plant and the initial rudimentary mind or incomplete intelligence of the animal developed the intellectual mind and more complete intelligence of man and now serves as the physical base, container and instrumental means of our total spiritual endeavour. Its animal character and its gross limitations stand indeed as an obstacle to our spiritual perfection; but the fact that it has developed a soul and is capable of serving it as a means may indicate that it is capable of further development and may become a shrine and expression of the spirit, reveal a secret spirituality of Matter, become entirely and not only half-conscious, reach a certain oneness with the spirit. This much it must do, so far at least it must transcend its original earth-nature, if it is to be the complete instrument of the divine life and no longer an obstacle.

⁂

Still the inconveniences of the animal body and its animal nature and impulses and the limitations of the human body at its best are there in the beginning and persist always so long as there is not the full and fundamental liberation, and its inconscience or half-conscience and its binding of the soul and mind and life-force to Matter, to materiality of all kinds, to the call of the unregenerated earth-nature are there and constantly oppose the call of the spirit and circumscribe the climb to higher things. To the physical being it brings a bondage to the material instruments, to the brain and heart and senses, wed to materiality and materialism of all kinds, to the bodily mechanism and its needs and obligations, to the imperative need of food and the preoccupation with the means of getting it and storing it as one of the besetting interests of life, to fatigue and sleep, to the satisfaction of bodily desire. The life-force in man also is tied down to these small things; it has to limit the scope of its larger ambitions and longings, its drive to rise beyond the pull of earth and follow the heavenlier intuitions of its psychic parts, the heart's ideal and the soul's yearnings. On the mind the body imposes the boundaries of the physical being and the physical life and the sense of the sole complete reality of physical things with the rest as a sort of brilliant fireworks of the imagination, of lights and glories that can only have their full play in heavens beyond, on higher planes of existence, but not here; it afflicts the idea and aspiration with the burden of doubt, the evidence of the subtle senses and the intuition with uncertainty and the vast field of supraphysical consciousness and experience with the imputation of unreality and clamps down to its earth-roots the growth of the spirit from its original limiting humanity into the supramental truth and the divine nature. These obstacles can be overcome, the denials and resistance of the body surmounted, its transformation is possible. Even the inconscient and animal part of us can be illumined and made capable of manifesting the god-nature, even as our mental humanity can be made to manifest the superhumanity of the supramental truth-consciousness and the divinity of what is now superconscious to us, and the total transformation made a reality here. But for this the obligations and compulsions of its animality must cease to be obligatory and a purification of its materiality effected by which that very materiality can be turned into a material solidity of the manifestation of the divine nature. For nothing essential must be left out in the totality of the earth-change; Matter itself can be turned into a means of revelation of the spiritual reality, the Divine.

The difficulty is dual, psychological and corporeal: the first is the effect of the unregenerated animality upon the life, especially by the insistence of the body's gross instincts, impulses, desires; the second is the outcome of our corporeal structure and organic instrumentation imposing its restrictions on the dynamism of the higher divine nature. The first of these two difficulties is easier to deal with and conquer; for here the will can intervene and impose on the body the power of the higher nature. Certain of these impulses and instincts of the body have been found especially harmful by the spiritual aspirant and weighed considerably in favour of an ascetic rejection of the body. Sex and sexuality and all that springs from sex and testifies to its existence had to be banned and discarded from the spiritual life, and this, though difficult, is not at all impossible and can be made a cardinal condition for the spiritual seeker. This is natural and unescapable in all ascetic practice and the satisfaction of this condition, though not easy at first to fulfil, becomes after a time quite feasible; the overcoming of the sex instinct and impulse is indeed binding on all who would attain to self-mastery and lead the spiritual life. A total mastery over it is essential for all spiritual seekers, the eradication of it for the complete ascetic. This much has to be recognised and not diminished in its obligatory importance and its principle.

But all recognition of the sex principle, as apart from the gross physical indulgence of the sex impulse, could not be excluded from a divine life upon earth; it is there in life, plays a large part and has to be dealt with, it cannot simply be ignored, merely suppressed or held down or put away out of sight. In the first place, it is in one of its aspects a cosmic and even a divine principle: it takes the spiritual form of the Ishwara and the Shakti and without it there could be no world-creation or manifestation of the world-principle of Purusha and Prakriti which are both necessary for the creation, necessary too in their association and interchange for the play of its psychological working and in their manifestation as soul and Nature fundamental to the whole process of the Lila. In the divine life itself an incarnation or at least in some form a presence of the two powers or their initiating influence through their embodiments or representatives would be indispensable for making the new creation possible. In its human action on the mental and vital level sex is not altogether an undivine principle; it has its nobler aspects and idealities and it has to be seen in what way and to what extent these can be admitted into the new and larger life. All gross animal indulgence of sex desire and impulse would have to be eliminated; it could only continue among those who are not ready for the higher life or not yet ready for a complete spiritual living. In all who aspired to it but could not yet take it up in its fullness sex will have to be refined, submit to the spiritual or psychic impulse and a control by the higher mind and the higher vital and shed all its lighter, frivolous or degraded forms and feel the touch of the purity of the ideal. Love would remain, all forms of the pure truth of love in higher and higher steps till it realised its highest nature, widened into universal love, merged into the love of the Divine. The love of man and woman would also undergo that elevation and consummation; for all that can feel a touch of the ideal and the spiritual must follow the way of ascent till it reaches the divine Reality. The body and its activities must be accepted as part of the divine life and pass under this law; but, as in the other evolutionary transitions, what cannot accept the law of the divine life cannot be accepted and must fall away from the ascending nature.

Another difficulty that the transformation of the body has to face is its dependence for its very existence upon food, and here too are involved the gross physical instincts, impulses, desires that are associated with this difficult factor, the essential cravings of the palate, the greed of food and animal gluttony of the belly, the coarsening of the mind when it grovels in the mud of sense, obeys a servitude to its mere animal part and hugs its bondage to Matter. The higher human in us seeks refuge in a temperate moderation, in abstemiousness and abstinence or in carelessness about the body and its wants and in an absorption in higher things. The spiritual seeker often, like the Jain ascetics, seeks refuge in long and frequent fasts which lift him temporarily at least out of the clutch of the body's demands and help him to feel in himself a pure vacancy of the wide rooms of the spirit. But all this is not liberation and the question may be raised whether, not only at first but always, the divine life also must submit to this necessity. But it could only deliver itself from it altogether if it could find out the way so to draw upon the universal energy that the energy would sustain not only the vital parts of our physicality but its constituent matter with no need of aid for sustenance from any outside substance of

Matter. It is indeed possible even while fasting for very long periods to maintain the full energies and activities of the soul and mind and life, even those of the body, to remain wakeful but concentrated in Yoga all the time, or to think deeply and write day and night, to dispense with sleep, to walk eight hours a day, maintaining all these activities separately or together, and not feel any loss of strength, any fatigue, any kind of failure or decadence. At the end of the fast one can even resume at once taking the normal or even a greater than the normal amount of nourishment without any transition or precaution such as medical science enjoins, as if both the complete fasting and the feasting were natural conditions, alternating by an immediate and easy passage from one to the other, of a body already trained by a sort of initial transformation to be an instrument of the powers and activities of Yoga. But one thing one does not escape and that is the wasting of the material tissues of the body, its flesh and substance. Conceivably, if a practicable way and means could only be found, this last invincible obstacle too might be overcome and the body maintained by an interchange of its forces with the forces of material Nature, giving to her her need from the individual and taking from her directly the sustaining energies of her universal existence. Conceivably, one might rediscover and re-establish at the summit of the evolution of life the phenomenon we see at its base, the power to draw from all around it the means of sustenance and self-renewal. Or else the evolved being might acquire the greater power to draw down those means from above rather than draw them up or pull them in from the environment around, all about it and below it. But until something like this is achieved or made possible we have to go back to food and the established material forces of Nature.

In fact we do, however unconsciously, draw constantly upon the universal energy, the force in Matter to replenish our material existence and the mental, vital and other potencies in the body: we do it directly in the invisible processes of interchange constantly kept up by Nature and by special means devised by her; breathing is one of these, sleep also and repose. But as her basic means for maintaining and renewing the gross physical body and its workings and inner potencies Nature has selected the taking in of outside matter in the shape of food, its digestion, assimilation of what is assimilable and elimination of what cannot or ought not to be assimilated; this by itself is sufficient for mere maintenance, but for assuring health and strength in the body so maintained it has added the impulse towards physical exercise and play of many kinds, ways for the expenditure and renewal of energy, the choice or the necessity of manifold action and labour. In the new life, in its beginnings at least, it would not be necessary or advisable to make any call for an extreme or precipitate rejection of the need of food or the established natural method for the maintenance of the still imperfectly transformed body. If or when these things have to be transcended it must come as a result of the awakened will of the spirit, a will also in Matter itself, an imperative evolutionary urge, an act of the creative transmutations of Time or a descent from the transcendence. Meanwhile the drawing in of the universal energy by a conscious action of the higher powers of the being from around or from above, by a call to what is still to us a transcending consciousness or by an invasion or descent from the Transcendence itself, may well become an occasional, a frequent or a constant phenomenon and even reduce the part played by food and its need to an incidence no longer preoccupying, a necessity minor and less and less imperative.

Meanwhile food and the ordinary process of Nature can be accepted, although its use has to be liberated from attachment and desire and the grosser undiscriminating appetites and clutch at the pleasures of the flesh which is the way of the Ignorance; the physical processes have to be subtilised and the grossest may have to be eliminated and new processes found or new instrumentalities emerge. So long as it is accepted, a refined pleasure in it may be permitted and even a desireless ananda of taste take the place of the physical relish and the human selection by likings and dislikings which is our present imperfect response to what is offered to us by Nature. It must be remembered that for the divine life on earth, earth and Matter have not to be and cannot be rejected but have only to be sublimated and to reveal in themselves the possibilities of the spirit, serve the spirit's highest uses and be transformed into instruments of a greater living.

The divine life must always be actuated by the push towards perfection; a perfection of the joy of life is part and an essential part of it, the body's delight in things and the body's joy of life are not excluded from it; they too have to be made perfect. A large totality is the very nature of this new and growing way of existence, a fullness of the possibilities of the mind transmuted into a thing of light, of the life converted into a force of spiritual power and joy, of the body transformed into an instrument of a divine action, divine knowledge, divine bliss. All can be taken into its scope that is capable of transforming itself, all that can be an instrument, a vessel, an opportunity for the expression of this totality of the self-manifesting Spirit.

⁂

There is one problem raised by sex for those who would reject *in toto* the obligations imposed by the animality of the body and put forward by it as an insistent opposition in the way of the aspirant to a higher life: it is the necessity of the prolongation of the race for which the sex activity is the only means already provided by Nature for living beings and inevitably imposed upon the race. It is not indeed necessary for the individual seeker after a divine life to take up this problem or even for a group who do not seek after it for themselves alone but desire a wide acceptance of it by mankind as at least an ideal. There will always be the multitude who do not concern themselves with it or are not ready for its complete practice and to these can be left the care for the prolongation of the race. The number of those who lead the divine life can be maintained and increased, as the ideal extends itself, by the voluntary adhesion of those who are touched by the aspiration and there need be no resort to physical means for this purpose, no deviation from the rule of a strict sexual abstinence. But yet there may be circumstances in which, from another standpoint, a voluntary creation of bodies for souls that seek to enter the earth-life to help in the creation and extension of the divine life upon earth might be found to be desirable. Then the necessity of a physical procreation for this purpose could only be avoided if new means of a supraphysical kind were evolved and made available. A development of this kind must necessarily belong to what is now considered as the sphere of the occult and the use of concealed powers of action or creation not known or possessed by the common mind of the race. Occultism means rightly the use of the higher powers of our nature, soul, mind, life-force and the faculties of the subtle physical consciousness to bring about results on their own or on the material plane by some pressure of their own secret law and its potentialities, for manifestation and result in human or earthly mind and life and body or in objects and events in the world of Matter. A discovery or an extension of these little known or yet undeveloped powers is now envisaged by some well-known thinkers as a next step to be taken by mankind in its immediate evolution; the kind of creation spoken of has not been included among these developments, but it could well be considered as one of the new possibilities. Even physical science is trying to find physical means for passing beyond the ordinary instrumentation or procedure of Nature in this matter of propagation or the renewal of the physical life-force in human or animal beings; but the resort to occult means and the intervention of subtle physical processes, if it could be made possible, would be a greater way which could avoid the limitations, degradations, incompleteness and heavy imperfection of the means and results solely available to the law of material force.

In India there has been always from the earliest times a widely spread belief in the possibility and reality of the use of these powers by men with an advanced knowledge of these secret things or with a developed spiritual knowledge and experience and dynamic force and even, in the Tantras, an organised system of their method and practice. The intervention of the Yogi in bringing about a desired birth of offspring is also generally believed in and often appealed to and the bestowal on the child so obtained of a spiritual attainment or destiny by his will or his blessing is sometimes asked for and such a result is recorded not only in the tradition of the past but maintained by the witness of the present. But there is here still the necessity of a resort to the normal means of propagation and the gross method of physical Nature. A purely occult method, a resort to supraphysical processes acting by supraphysical means for a physical result would have to be possible if we are to avoid this necessity: the resort to the sex impulse and its animal process could not be transcended otherwise. If there is some reality in the phenomenon of materialisation and dematerialisation claimed to be possible by occultists and evidenced by occurrences many of us have witnessed, a method of this kind would not be out of the range of possibility. For in the theory of the occultists and in the gradation of the ranges and planes of our being which Yoga-knowledge outlines for us there is not only a subtle physical force but a subtle physical Matter intervening between life and gross Matter, and to create in this subtle physical substance and precipitate the forms thus made into our grosser materiality is feasible. It should be possible and it is believed to be possible for an object formed in this subtle physical substance to make a transit from its subtlety into the state of gross Matter directly by the intervention of an occult force and process, whether with or even without the assistance or intervention of some gross material procedure. A soul wishing to enter into a body or form for itself a body and take part in a divine life upon earth might be assisted to do so or even provided with such a form by this method of direct transmutation, without passing through birth by the sex process or undergoing any degradation or any of the heavy limitations in the growth and development of its mind and material body inevitable to our present way of existence. It might then assume at once the structure and greater powers and functionings of the truly divine material body which must one day emerge in a progressive evolution to a totally transformed existence both of life and form in a divinised earth-nature.

But what would be the internal or external form and structure and what the instrumentation of this divine body? The material history of the development of the animal and human body has left it bound to a minutely constructed and elaborated system of organs and a precarious order of their functioning which can easily become a disorder, open to a general or local disorganisation, dependent on an easily disturbed nervous system and commanded by a brain whose vibrations are supposed to be mechanical and automatic and not under our conscious control. According to the materialist all this is a functioning of Matter alone whose fundamental reality is chemical. We have to suppose that the body is constructed by the agency of chemical elements building up atoms and molecules and cells and these again are the agents and only conductors at the basis of a complicated physical structure and instrumentation which is the sole mechanical cause of all our actions, thoughts, feelings, the soul a fiction and mind and life only a material and mechanical manifestation and appearance of this machine which is worked out and automatically driven with a figment of consciousness in it by the forces inherent in inconscient Matter. If that were the truth it is obvious that any divinisation or divine transformation of the body or of anything else would be nothing but an illusion, an imagination, a senseless and impossible chimera. But even if we suppose a soul, a conscious will at work in this body it could not arrive at a divine transformation if there were no radical change in the bodily instrument itself and in the organisation of its material workings. The transforming agent will be bound and stopped in its work by the physical organism's unalterable limitations and held up by the unmodified or imperfectly modified original animal in us. The possibility of the disorders, derangements, maladies native to these physical arrangements would still be there and could only be shut out by a constant vigilance or perpetual control obligatory on the corporeal instrument's spiritual inhabitant and master. This could not be called a truly divine body; for in a divine body an inherent freedom from all these things would be natural and perpetual; this freedom would be a normal and native truth of its being and therefore inevitable and unalterable. A radical transformation of the functioning and, it may well be, of the structure and certainly of the too mechanical and material impulses and driving forces of the bodily system would be imperative.

What agency could we find which we could make the means of this all-important liberation and change? Something there is in us or something has to be developed, perhaps a central and still occult part of our being containing forces whose powers in our actual and present make-up are only a fraction of what could be, but if they became complete and dominant would be truly able to bring about with the help of the light and force of the soul and the supramental truth-consciousness the necessary physical transformation and its consequences. This might be found in the system of Chakras revealed by Tantric knowledge and accepted in the systems of Yoga, conscious centres and sources of all the dynamic powers of our being organising their action through the plexuses and arranged in an ascending series from the lowest physical to the highest mind centre and spiritual centre called the thousand-petalled lotus where ascending Nature, the Serpent Power of the Tantrics, meets the Brahman and is liberated into the Divine Being. These centres are closed or half-closed within us and have to be opened before their full potentiality can be manifested in our physical nature: but once they are opened and completely active, no limit can easily be set to the development of their potencies and the total transformation to be possible.

But what would be the result of the emergence of these forces and their liberated and diviner action on the body itself, what their dynamic connection with it and their transforming operation on the still existing animal nature and its animal impulses and gross material procedure? It might be held that the first necessary change would be the liberation of the mind, the life-force, the subtle physical agencies and the physical consciousness into a freer and a diviner activity, a many-dimensioned and unlimited operation of their consciousness, a large outbreak of higher powers and the sublimation of the bodily consciousness itself, of its instrumentation, capacity, capability for the manifestation of the soul in the world of Matter. The subtle senses now concealed in us might come forward into a free action and the material senses themselves become means or channels for the vision of what is now invisible to us or the discovery of things surrounding us but at present unseizable and held back from our knowledge. A firm check might be put on the impulses of the animal nature or they might be purified and subtilised so as to become assets and not liabilities and so transformed as to be parts and processes of a diviner life. But even these changes would still leave a residue of material processes keeping the old way and not amenable to the higher control and, if this could not be changed, the rest of the transformation might itself be checked and incomplete. A total transformation of the body would demand a sufficient change of the most material part of the organism, its constitution, its processes and its set-up of nature.

Again, it might be thought that a full control would be sufficient, a knowledge and a vision of this organism and its unseen action and an effective control determining its operations according to the conscious will; this possibility has been affirmed as something already achieved and a part of the development of the inner powers in some. The cessation of the breathing while still the life of the body remained stable, the hermetic sealing up at will not only of the breath but of all the vital manifestations for long periods, the stoppage of the heart similarly at will while thought and speech and other mental workings continued unabated, these and other phenomena of the power of the will over the body are known and well-attested examples of this kind of mastery. But these are occasional or sporadic successes and do not amount to transformation; a total control is necessary and an established and customary and, indeed, a natural mastery. Even with that achieved something more fundamental might have to be demanded for the complete liberation and change into a divine body.

Again, it might be urged that the organic structure of the body no less than its basic outer form would have to be retained as a necessary material foundation for the retention of the earth-nature, the connection of the divine life with the life of earth and a continuance of the evolutionary process so as to prevent a breaking upward out of and away from it into a state of being which would properly belong to a higher plane and not to a terrestrial divine fulfilment. The prolonged existence of the animal itself in our nature, if sufficiently transformed to be an instrument of manifestation and not an obstacle, would be necessary to preserve the continuity, the evolutionary total; it would be needed as the living vehicle, *vāhana*, of the emergent god in the material world where he would have to act and achieve the works and wonders of the new life. It is certain that a form of body making this connection and a bodily action containing the earth-dynamism and its fundamental activities must be there, but the connection should not be a bond or a confining limitation or a contradiction of the totality of the change. The maintenance of the present organism without any transformation of it would not but act as such a bond and confinement within the old nature. There would be a material base but it would be of the earth earthy, an old and not a new earth with a diviner psychological structure; for with that structure the old system would be out of harmony and it would be unable to serve its further evolution or even to uphold it as a base in Matter. It would bind part of the being, a lower part to an untransformed humanity and unchanged animal functioning and prevent its liberation into the superhumanity of the supramental nature. A change is then necessary here too, a necessary part of the total bodily transformation, which would divinise the whole man, at least in the ultimate result, and not leave his evolution incomplete.

This aim, it might be said, would be sufficiently served if the instrumentation of the centres and their forces reigned over all the activities of the nature with an entire domination of the body and made it both in its structural form and its organic workings a free channel and means of communication and a plastic instrument of cognition and dynamic action for all that they had to do in the material life, in the world of Matter. There would have to be a change in the operative processes of the material organs themselves and, it may well be, in their very constitution and their importance; they could not be allowed to impose their limitations imperatively on the new physical life. To begin with, they might become more clearly outer ends of the channels of communication and action, more serviceable for the psychological purposes of the inhabitant, less blindly material in their responses, more conscious of the act and aim of the inner movements and powers which use them and which they are wrongly supposed by the material man in us to generate and to use. The brain would be a channel of communication of the form of the thoughts and a battery of their insistence on the body and the outside world where they could then become effective directly, communicating themselves without physical means from mind to mind, producing with a similar directness effects on the thoughts, actions and lives of others or even upon material things. The heart would equally be a direct communicant and medium of interchange for the feelings and emotions thrown outward upon the world by the forces of the psychic centre. Heart could reply directly to heart, the life-force come to the help of other lives and answer their call in spite of strangeness and distance, many beings without any external communication thrill with the message and meet in the secret light from one divine centre. The will might control the organs that deal with food, safeguard automatically the health, eliminate greed and desire, substitute subtler processes or draw in strength and substance from the universal life-force so that the body could maintain for a long time its own strength and substance without loss or waste, remaining thus with no need of sustenance by material aliments, and yet continue a strenuous action with no fatigue or pause for sleep or repose. The soul's will or the mind's could act from higher sources upon the sex centre and the sex organs so as to check firmly or even banish the grosser sexual impulse or stimulus and instead of serving an animal excitation or crude drive or desire turn their use to the storing, production and direction towards brain and heart and life-force of the essential energy, *ojas*, of which this region is the factory so as to support the works of the mind and soul and spirit and the higher life-powers and limit the expenditure of the energy on lower things. The soul, the psychic being, could more easily fill all with the light and turn the very matter of the body to higher uses for its own greater purpose.

This would be a first potent change, but not by any means all that is possible or desirable. For it may well be that the evolutionary urge would proceed to a change of the organs themselves in their material working and use and diminish greatly the need of their instrumentation and even of their existence. The centres in the subtle body, *sūkṣma śarīra*, of which one would become conscious and aware of all going on in it, would pour their energies into material nerve and plexus and tissue and radiate them through the whole material body; all the physical life and its necessary activities in this new existence could be maintained and operated by these higher agencies in a freer and ampler way and by a less burdensome and restricting method. This might go so far that these organs might cease to be indispensable and even be felt as too obstructive: the central force might use them less and less and finally throw aside their use altogether. If that happened they might waste by atrophy, be reduced to an insignificant minimum or even disappear. The central force might substitute for them subtle organs of a very different character or, if anything material was needed, instruments that would be forms of dynamism or plastic transmitters rather than what we know as organs.

This might well be part of a supreme total transformation of the body, though this too might not be final. To envisage such changes is to look far ahead and minds attached to the present form of things may be unable to give credence to their possibility. No such limits and no such impossibility of any necessary change can be imposed on the evolutionary urge. All has not to be fundamentally changed: on the contrary, all has to be preserved that is still needed in the totality, but all has to be perfected. Whatever is necessary for the evolutionary purpose for the increasing, enlarging, heightening of the consciousness, which seems to be its central will and aim here, or the progression of its enabling means and preserving environment, has to be kept and furthered; but what has to be overpassed, whatever has no longer a use or is degraded, what has become unhelpful or retarding, can be discarded and dropped on the way. That has been evident in the history of the evolution of the body from its beginning in elementary forms to its most developed type, the human; there is no reason why this process should not intervene in the transition from the human into the divine body. For the manifestation or building of a divine body on earth there must be an initial transformation, the appearance of a new, a greater and more developed type, not a continuance with little modifications of the present physical form and its limited possibilities. What has to be preserved must indeed be preserved and that means whatever is necessary or thoroughly serviceable for the uses of the new life on earth; whatever is still needed and will serve its purpose but is imperfect, will have to be retained but developed and perfected; whatever is no longer of use for new aims or is a disability must be thrown aside. The necessary forms and instrumentations of Matter must remain since it is in a world of Matter that the divine life has to manifest, but their materiality must be refined, uplifted, ennobled, illumined, since Matter and the world of Matter have increasingly to manifest the indwelling Spirit.

The new type, the divine body, must continue the already developed evolutionary form; there must be a continuation from the type Nature has all along been developing, a continuity from the human to the divine body, no breaking away to something unrecognisable but a high sequel to what has already been achieved and in part perfected. The human body has in it parts and instruments that have been sufficiently evolved to serve the divine life; these have to survive in their form, though they must be still further perfected, their limitations of range and use removed, their liability to defect and malady and impairment eliminated, their capacities of cognition and dynamic action carried beyond the present limits. New powers have to be acquired by the body which our present humanity could not hope to realise, could not even dream of or could only imagine. Much that can now only be known, worked out or created by the use of invented tools and machinery might be achieved by the new body in its own power or by the inhabitant spirit through its own direct spiritual force. The body itself might acquire new means and ranges of communication with other bodies, new processes of acquiring knowledge, a new aesthesis, new potencies of manipulation of itself and objects. It might not be impossible for it to possess or disclose means native to its own constitution, substance or natural instrumentation for making the far near and annulling distance, cognising what is now beyond the body's cognisance, acting where action is now out of its reach or its domain, developing subtleties and plasticities which could not be permitted under present conditions to the needed fixity of a material frame. These and other numerous potentialities might appear and the body become an instrument immeasurably superior to what we can now imagine as possible. There could be an evolution from a first apprehending truth-consciousness to the utmost heights of the ascending ranges of supermind and it may pass the borders of the supermind proper itself where it begins to shadow out, develop, delineate expressive forms of life touched by a supreme pure existence, consciousness and bliss which constitute the worlds of a highest truth of existence, dynamism of tapas, glory and sweetness of bliss, the absolute essence and pitch of the all-creating Ananda. The transformation of the physical being might follow this incessant line of progression and the divine body reflect or reproduce here in a divine life on the earth something of this highest greatness and glory of the self-manifesting Spirit.

Supermind and the Life Divine

A DIVINE life upon earth, the ideal we have placed before us, can only come about by a spiritual change of our being and a radical and fundamental change, an evolution or revolution of our nature. The embodied being upon earth would have to rise out of the domination over it of its veils of mind, life and body into the full consciousness and possession of its spiritual reality, and its nature also would have to be lifted out of the consciousness and power of consciousness proper to a mental, vital and physical being into the greater consciousness and greater power of being and the larger and freer life of the spirit. It would not lose these former veils but they would no longer be veils or imperfect expressions but true manifestations; they would be changed into states of light, powers of spiritual life, vehicles of a spiritual existence. But this again could not be if mind, life and body were not taken up and transformed by a state of being and a force of being superior to them, a power of Supermind as much above our incomplete mental nature as that is above the nature of animal life and animated Matter, as it is immeasurably above the mere material nature.

The Supermind is in its very essence a truth-consciousness, a consciousness always free from the Ignorance which is the foundation of our present natural or evolutionary existence and from which nature in us is trying to arrive at self-knowledge and world-knowledge and a right consciousness and the right use of our existence in the universe. The Supermind, because it is a truth-consciousness, has this knowledge inherent in it and this power of true existence; its course is straight and can go direct to its aim, its field is wide and can even be made illimitable. This is because its very nature is knowledge: it has not to acquire knowledge but possesses it in its own right;

its steps are not from nescience or ignorance into some imperfect light, but from truth to greater truth, from right perception to deeper perception, from intuition to intuition, from illumination to utter and boundless luminousness, from growing widenesses to the utter vasts and to very infinitude. On its summits it possesses the divine omniscience and omnipotence, but even in an evolutionary movement of its own graded self-manifestation by which it would eventually reveal its own highest heights, it must be in its very nature essentially free from ignorance and error: it starts from truth and light and moves always in truth and light. As its knowledge is always true, so too its will is always true; it does not fumble in its handling of things or stumble in its paces. In the Supermind feeling and emotion do not depart from their truth, make no slips or mistakes, do not swerve from the right and the real, cannot misuse beauty and delight or twist away from a divine rectitude. In the Supermind sense cannot mislead or deviate into the grossnesses which are here its natural imperfections and the cause of reproach, distrust and misuse by our ignorance. Even an incomplete statement made by the Supermind is a truth leading to a further truth, its incomplete action a step towards completeness. All the life and action and leading of the Supermind is guarded in its very nature from the falsehoods and uncertainties that are our lot; it moves in safety towards its perfection. Once the truth-consciousness was established here on its own sure foundation, the evolution of divine life would be a progress in felicity, a march through light to Ananda.

Supermind is an eternal reality of the divine Being and the divine Nature. In its own plane it already and always exists and possesses its own essential law of being; it has not to be created or to emerge or evolve into existence out of involution in Matter or out of non-existence, as it might seem to the view of mind which itself seems to its own view to have so emerged from life and Matter or to have evolved out of an involution in life and Matter. The nature of Supermind is always the same, a being of knowledge, proceeding from truth to truth, creating or rather manifesting what has to be manifested by the power of a pre-existent knowledge, not by hazard but by a self-existent destiny in the being itself, a necessity of the thing in itself and therefore inevitable. Its manifestation of the divine life will also be inevitable; its own life on its own plane is divine and, if Supermind descends upon the earth, it will bring necessarily the divine life with it and establish it here.

Supermind is the grade of existence beyond mind, life and Matter and, as mind, life and Matter have manifested on the earth, so too must Supermind in the inevitable course of things manifest in this world of Matter. In fact, a supermind is already here but it is involved, concealed behind this manifest mind, life and Matter and not yet acting overtly or in its own power: if it acts, it is through these inferior powers and modified by their characters and so not yet recognisable. It is only by the approach and arrival of the descending Supermind that it can be liberated upon earth and reveal itself in the action of our material, vital and mental parts so that these lower powers can become portions of a total divinised activity of our whole being: it is that that will bring to us a completely realised divinity or the divine life. It is indeed so that life and mind involved in Matter have realised themselves here; for only what is involved can evolve, otherwise there could be no emergence.

The manifestation of a supramental truth-consciousness is therefore the capital reality that will make the divine life possible. It is when all the movements of thought, impulse and action are governed and directed by a self-existent and luminously automatic truth-consciousness and our whole nature comes to be constituted by it and made of its stuff that the life divine will be complete and absolute. Even as it is, in reality though not in the appearance of things, it is a secret self-existent knowledge and truth that is working to manifest itself in the creation here. The Divine is already there immanent within us, ourselves are that in our inmost reality and it is this reality that we have to manifest; it is that which constitutes the urge towards the divine living and makes necessary the creation of the life divine even in this material existence.

A manifestation of the Supermind and its truth-consciousness is then inevitable; it must happen in this world sooner or later. But it has two aspects, a descent from above, an ascent from below, a self-revelation of the Spirit, an evolution in Nature. The ascent is necessarily an effort, a working of Nature, an urge or nisus on her side to raise her lower parts by an evolutionary or revolutionary change, conversion or transformation into the divine reality and it may happen by a process and progress or by a rapid miracle. The descent or self-revelation of the Spirit is an act of the supreme Reality from above which makes the realisation possible and it can appear either as the divine aid which brings about the fulfilment of the progress and process or as the sanction of the miracle. Evolution, as we see it in this world, is a slow and difficult process and, indeed, needs usually ages to reach abiding results; but this is because it is in its nature an emergence from inconscient beginnings, a start from nescience and a working in the ignorance of natural beings by what seems to be an unconscious force. There can be, on the contrary, an evolution in the light and no longer in the darkness, in which the evolving being is a conscious participant and cooperator, and this is precisely what must take place here. Even in the effort and progress from the Ignorance to Knowledge this must be in part if not wholly the endeavour to be made on the heights of the nature, and it must be wholly that in the final movement towards the spiritual change, realisation, transformation. It must be still more so when there is a transition across the dividing line between the Ignorance and the Knowledge and the evolution is from knowledge to greater knowledge, from consciousness to greater consciousness, from being to greater being. There is then no longer any necessity for the slow pace of the ordinary evolution; there can be rapid conversion, quick transformation after transformation, what would seem to our normal present mind a succession of miracles. An evolution on the supramental levels could well be of that nature; it could be equally, if the being so chose, a more leisurely passage of one supramental state or condition of things to something beyond but still supramental, from level to divine level, a building up of divine gradations, a free growth to the supreme Supermind or beyond it to yet undreamed levels of being, consciousness and Ananda.

The supramental knowledge, the truth-consciousness of the Supermind is in itself one and total: even when there is a voluntary limitation of the knowledge or what might seem to be a partial manifestation, it is so voluntarily; the limitation does not proceed from or result in any kind of ignorance, it is not a denial or withholding of knowledge, for all the rest of the truth that is not brought into expression is implicit there. Above all, there are no contradictions: whatever would seem to be opposites to the mind, here carry in themselves their own right relation and reconciling agreement, — if indeed any reconciliation were needed, for the harmony of these apparent opposites is complete. The mind tends to put the personal and the impersonal in face of each other as if they were two contraries, but the Supermind sees and realises them as, at the lowest, complements and mutually fulfilling powers of the single Reality and, more characteristically, as interfused and inseparable and themselves that single Reality. The Person has his aspect of impersonality inseparable from himself without which he could not be what he is or could not be his whole self: the Impersonal is in its truth not a state of existence, a state of consciousness and a state of bliss, but a Being self-existent, conscious of self, full of his own self-existent bliss, bliss the very substance of his being, — so, the one single and illimitable Person, Purusha. In the Supermind the finite does not cut up or limit the infinite, does not feel itself contrary to the infinite; but rather it feels its own infinity: the relative and temporal is not a contradiction of eternity but a right relation of its aspects, a native working or an imperishable feature of the eternal. Time there is only the eternal in extension and the eternal can be felt in the momentary. Thus the integral Divine is there in the Supermind and no theory of illusion or self-contradictory Maya need be thrust in to justify its way of existence. It will be obvious that an escape from life is not necessary for the Divine to find itself or its reality; it possesses that always whether in cosmic life or in its transcendent existence. The divine life cannot be a contradiction of the Divine or of the supreme reality; it is part of that reality, an aspect or expression of it and it can be nothing else. In life on the supramental plane all the Divine is possessed, and when the Supermind descends on earth, it must bring the Divine with it and make that full possession possible here.

The divine life will give to those who enter into it and possess it an increasing and finally a complete possession of the truth-consciousness and all that it carries in it; it will bring with it the realisation of the Divine in self and the Divine in Nature. All that is sought by the God-seeker will be fulfilled in his spirit and in his life as he moves towards spiritual perfection. He will become aware of the transcendent reality, possess in the self-experience the supreme existence, consciousness, bliss, be one with Sachchidananda. He will become one with cosmic being and universal Nature: he will contain the world in himself, in his own cosmic consciousness and feel himself one with all beings; he will see himself in all and all in himself, become united and identified with the Self which has become all existences. He will perceive the beauty of the All-Beautiful and the miracle of the All-Wonderful; he will enter in the end into the bliss of the Brahman and live abidingly in it and for all this he will not need to shun existence or plunge into the annihilation of the spiritual Person in some self-extinguishing Nirvana. As in the Self, so in Nature, he can realise the Divine. The nature of the Divine is Light and Power and Bliss; he can feel the divine Light and Power and Bliss above him and descending into him, filling every strand of his nature, every cell and atom of his being, flooding his soul and mind and life and body, surrounding him like an illimitable sea and filling the world, suffusing all his feeling and sense and experience, making all his life truly and utterly divine. This and all else that the spiritual consciousness can bring to him the divine life will give him when it reaches its utmost completeness and perfection and the supramental truth-consciousness is fulfilled in all himself; but even before that he can attain to something of it all, grow in it, live in it, once the Supermind has descended upon him and has the direction of his existence. All relations with the Divine will be his: the trinity of God-knowledge, divine works and devotion to God will open within him and move towards an utter self-giving and surrender of his whole being and nature. He will live in God and with God, possess God, as it is said, even plunge in him forgetting all separate personality, but not losing it in self-extinction. The love of God and all the sweetness of love will remain his, the bliss of contact as well as the bliss of oneness and the bliss of difference in oneness. All the infinite ranges of experience of the Infinite will be his and all the joy of the finite in the embrace of the Infinite.

The descent of the Supermind will bring to one who receives it and is fulfilled in the truth-consciousness all the possibilities of the divine life. It will take up not only the whole characteristic experience which we recognise already as constituting the spiritual life, but also all which we now exclude from that category but which is capable of divinisation, not excluding whatever of the earth-nature and the earth-life can be transformed by the touch of the Supermind and taken up into the manifested life of the Spirit. For a divine life on earth need not be a thing apart and exclusive having nothing to do with the common earthly existence: it will take up human being and human life, transform what can be transformed, spiritualise whatever can be spiritualised, cast its influence on the rest and effectuate either a radical or an uplifting change, bring about a deeper communion between the universal and the individual, invade the ideal with the spiritual truth of which it is a luminous shadow and help to uplift into or towards a greater and higher existence. Mind it will uplift towards a diviner light of thought and will, life towards deeper and truer emotion and action, towards a larger power of itself, towards high aims and motives. Whatever cannot yet be raised into its own full truth of being, it will bring nearer to that fullness; whatever is not ready even for that change, will still see the possibility open to it whenever its still incomplete evolution has made it ready for self-fulfilment. Even the body, if it can bear the touch of Supermind, will become more aware of its own truth, — for there is a body consciousness that has its own instinctive truth and power of right condition and action, even a kind of unexpressed occult knowledge in the constitution of its cells and tissues which may one day become conscious and contribute to the transformation of the physical being. An awakening must come in the earth-nature and in the earth-consciousness which will be, if not the actual beginning, at least the effective preparation and the first steps of its evolution towards a new and diviner world order.

This would be the fulfilment of the divine life which the descent of Supermind and the working of the truth-consciousness taking hold of the whole nature of the living being would bring about in all who could open themselves to its power or influence. Even its first immediate effect would be on all who are capable the possibility of entering into the truth-consciousness and changing all the movements of the nature more and more into the movements of the supramental truth, truth of thought, truth of will, truth in the feelings, truth in the acts, true conditions of the whole being even to the body, eventually transformation, a divinising change. For those who could so open themselves and remain open, there would be no limitation to this development and even no fundamental difficulty; for all difficulties would be dissolved by the pressure of the supramental light and power from above pouring itself into the mind and the life-force and the body. But the result of the supramental descent need not be limited to those who could thus open themselves entirely and it need not be limited to the supramental change; there could also be a minor or secondary transformation of the mental being within a freed and perfected scope of the mental nature. In place of the human mind as it now is, a mind limited, imperfect, open at every moment to all kinds of deviation from the truth or missing of the truth, all kinds of error and openness even to the persuasions of a complete falsehood and perversion of the nature, a mind blinded and pulled down towards inconscience and ignorance, hardly arriving at knowledge, an intellect prone to interpret the higher knowledge in abstractions and indirect figures seizing and holding even the messages of the higher intuition with an uncertain and disputed grasp, there could emerge a true mind liberated and capable of the free and utmost perfection of itself and its instruments, a life governed by the free and illumined mind, a body responsive to the light and able to carry out all that the free mind and will could demand of it. This change might happen not only in the few, but extend and generalise itself in the race. This possibility, if fulfilled, would mean that the human dream of perfection, perfection of itself, of its purified and enlightened nature, of all its ways of action and living, would be no longer a dream but a truth that could be made real and humanity lifted out of the hold on it of inconscience and ignorance. The life of the mental being could be harmonised with the life of the Supermind which will then be the highest order above it, and become even an extension and annexe of the truth-consciousness, a part and province of the divine life. It is obvious that if the Supermind is there and an order of supramental being is established as the leading principle in earth-nature, as mind is now the leading principle, but with a sureness, a complete government of the earthly existence, a capacity of transformation of all upon their level and within their natural boundaries of which the mind in its imperfection was not capable, an immense change of human life, even if it did not extend to transformation, would be inevitable.

It remains to consider what might be the obstacles in the way of this possibility, especially those offered by the nature of the earth-order and its function as a field of a graded evolution in which our humanity is a stage and, it might be argued, its very imperfection an evolutionary necessity, how far could or would Supermind by its presence and government of things overcome this difficulty while respecting the principle of gradation, and whether it could not rectify the wrong and ignorant order imposed by the Ignorance and Inconscience and substitute for it a right gradation in which the perfection and divinisation would be possible. Certainly, the way for the individual would be open; whatever group of human beings aspire as united in an endeavour at a perfect individual and collective living or aspire to the divine life, would be assisted towards the attainment of its aspiration: that at least the Supermind would make its minimum consequence. But the greater possibility is also there and might even be offered to the whole of humanity. This, then, we have to consider, what would the descent of the Supermind mean for mankind and what would be its result or its promise for the whole life and evolutionary future and destiny of the human race?

Supermind and Humanity

WHAT THEN would be the consequence for humanity of the descent of Supermind into our earthly existence, its consequence for this race born into a world of ignorance and inconscience but capable of an upward evolution of its consciousness and an ascent into the light and power and bliss of a spiritual being and spiritual nature? The descent into the earth-life of so supreme a creative power as the Supermind and its truth-consciousness could not be merely a new feature or factor added to that life or put in its front but without any other importance or only a restricted importance carrying with it no results profoundly affecting the rest of earth-nature. Especially it could not fail to exercise an immense influence on mankind as a whole, even a radical change in the aspect and prospect of its existence here, even if this power had no other capital result on the material world in which it had come down to intervene. One cannot but conclude that the influence, the change made would be far-reaching, even enormous: it would not only establish the Supermind and a supramental race of beings upon the earth, it could bring about an uplifting and transforming change in mind itself and, as an inevitable consequence, in the consciousness of man, the mental being, and would equally bring about a radical and transforming change in the principles and forms of his living, his ways of action and the whole build and tenor of his life. It would certainly open to man the access to the supramental consciousness and the supramental life; for we must suppose that it is by such a transformation that a race of supramental beings would be created, even as the human race itself has arisen by a less radical but still a considerable uplifting and enlargement of consciousness and conversion of the body's instrumentation and its indwelling and evolving mental and spiritual capacities and powers out of a first animal state. But even without any such complete transformation, the truth-principle might so far replace the principle we see here of an original ignorance seeking for knowledge and arriving only at a partial knowledge that the human mind could become a power of light, of knowledge finding itself, not the denizen of a half-way twilight or a servant and helper of the ignorance, a purveyor of mingled truth and error. Mind might even become in man, what it is in its fundamental origin, a subordinate, limited and special action of the Supermind, a sufficiently luminous receptacle of truth, and at least all falsity in its works might cease.

It could at once be objected that this would alter the whole evolutionary order and its balance and leave an incurable gap in its completeness: there would be an unbridged gulf between man and the animal and no way for the evolutionary nisus to journey over it in the progress of the consciousness from animality to divinity; for some kind of divinity would be involved in the suggested metamorphosis. It might be contended that the true process of evolution is to add a new principle, degree or stage to the already existing order and not to make any alteration in any previously established feature. Man came into being but the animal remained the animal and made no progress towards a half-humanity: all slight modifications of consciousness, capacities or habits in domestic animals produced by the association with man or by his training of them are only slight alterations of the animal intelligence. Still less can the plant move towards animal consciousness or brute Matter become in the slightest degree, even subconsciously or half subconsciously, aware of itself or responsive or reactive. The fundamental distinctions remain and must remain unaltered in the cosmic order. But this objection presumes that the new humanity must be all of one level; there may well be gradations of consciousness in it which would bridge the distance between its least developed elements and the higher animals who, although they cannot pass into a semi-human kind, might still progress towards a higher animal intelligence: for certain experiments show that these are not all entirely unprogressive. These gradations would serve the purpose of the transition quite as well as the least developed humans in the present scale without leaving a gap so wide as to disturb the evolutionary order of the universe. A considerable saltus can, as it is, be observed separating the different orders, Matter and the plant, the plant and the lower animals, one species of animals and another, as well as that always existing and large enough between the highest animal and man. There would therefore be no incurable breach in the evolutionary order, no such distance between human mind and animal mind, between the new type of human being and the old animal level as could not be overleaped or would create an unbridgeable gulf for the most developed animal soul in its passage to the least developed type of the new humanity. A leap, a saltus, there would be, as there is now; but it would not be between animality and divinity, from animal mind to Supermind: it would be between a most highly developed animal mind turning towards human possibilities — for without that the passage from animal to man could not be achieved — and a human mind waking to the possibility, not yet the full achievement, of its own higher yet unattained capacities.

One result of the intervention of Supermind in the earth-nature, the descent of the supreme creative Truth-Power, might well be a change in the law of evolution, its method and its arrangement: a larger element of the principle of evolution through knowledge might enter into the forces of the material universe. This might extend itself from a first beginning in the new creation and produce increasing effects in the order which is now wholly an evolution in the ignorance, and indeed starts from the complete nescience of the Inconscient and proceeds towards what can be regarded even in its highest attainment of knowledge as a lesser ignorance, since it is more a representation than a direct and complete possession of knowledge. If man began to develop the powers and means of a higher knowledge in something like fullness, if the developing animal opened the door of his mentality to beginnings of conscious thought and even a rudimentary reason, — at his highest he is not so irrevocably far from that even now, — if the plant developed its first subconscient reactions and attained to some kind of primary nervous sensitiveness, if Matter, which is a blind form of the Spirit, were to become more alive with the hidden power within it and to offer more readily the secret sense of things, the occult realities it covers, as for instance, the record of the past it always preserves even in its dumb inconscience or the working of its involved forces and invisible movements revealing veiled powers in material nature to a subtler generalised perception of the new human intelligence, this would be an immense change promising greater changes in the future, but it would mean only an uplifting and not a disturbance of the universal order. Evolution would itself evolve, but it would not be perturbed or founder.

It is difficult for us to conceive in theory or admit as a practical possibility the transformation of the human mentality I have suggested as a change that would naturally take place under the lead of the supramental Truth-consciousness, because our notions about mind are rooted in an experience of human mentality in a world which starts from inconscience and proceeds through a first almost complete nescience and a slowly lessening ignorance towards a high degree but always incomplete scope and imperfect method of only partially equipped knowledge which does not serve fully the needs of a consciousness always pushing towards its own still immeasurably distant absolute. The visible imperfections and limitations of mind in the present stage of its evolution here we take as part of its very nature; but in fact the boundaries in which it is still penned are only temporary limits and measures of its still incomplete evolutionary advance; its defects of methods and means are faults of its immaturity and not proper to the constitution of its being; its achievement, although extraordinary under the hampering conditions of the mental being weighed down by its instrumentation in an earthly body, is far below and not beyond what will be possible to it in its illumined future. For mind is not in its very nature an inventor of errors, a father of lies bound down to a capacity of falsehood, wedded to its own mistakes and the leader of a stumbling life as it too largely is at present owing to our human shortcomings: it is in its origin a principle of light, an instrument put forth from the Supermind and, though set to work within limits and even set to create limits, yet the limits are luminous borders for a special working, voluntary and purposive bounds, a surface of the finite ever extending itself under the eye of infinity. It is this character of Mind that will reveal itself under the touch of Supermind and make human mentality an adjunct and a minor instrumentation of the supramental knowledge. It will even be possible for the mind no longer limited by the intellect to become capable of a sort of mental gnosis, a luminous reproduction of the Truth in a diminished working, extending the power of the Light not only to its own but to lower levels of consciousness in their climb towards self-transcendence. Overmind, Intuition, Illumined Mind and what I have called Higher Mind, these and other levels of a spiritualised and liberated mentality, will be able to reflect in the uplifted human mind and its purified and exalted feeling and force of life and action something of their powers and prepare the ascent of the soul to their own plateaus and peaks of an ascending existence. This is essentially the change which can be contemplated as a result of the new evolutionary order, and it would mean a considerable extension of the evolutionary field itself and will answer the question as to the result on humanity of the advent of Supermind into the earth-nature.

If mind in its origin from Supermind is itself a power of Supermind, a principle of Light and a power of Light or a force for Knowledge specialised in its action for a subordinate purpose, yet it assumes a different aspect when in the working out of this purpose it separates itself more and more from the supramental light, from the immediate power and supporting illumination of the supramental principle. It is as it departs more and more in this direction from its own highest truth that it becomes a creator or parent of ignorance and is or seems to be the highest power in a world of ignorance; it becomes itself subject to ignorance and seems only to arrive at a partial and imperfect knowledge. The reason of this decline is that it is used by the Supermind principally for the work of differentiation which is necessary if there is to be a creation and a universe. In the Supermind itself, in all its creation there is this differentiating power, the manifestation of the One in the Many and the Many in the One; but the One is never forgotten or lost in its multiplicity which always consciously depends upon and never takes precedence over the eternal oneness. In the mind, on the contrary, the differentiation, the multiplicity does take precedence and the conscious sense of the universal oneness is lost and the separated unit seems to exist for itself and by itself as a sufficient self-conscious integer or in inanimate objects as the inconscient integer.

It should be noted, however, that a world or plane of mind need not be a reign of ignorance where falsity, error or nescience must have a place; it may be only a voluntary self-limitation of knowledge. It could be a world where all possibilities capable of being determined by mind could manifest themselves in the successions of Time and find a true form and field of their action, the expressive figure of themselves, their capacity of self-development, self-realisation of a kind, self-discovery. This is actually what we meet when we follow in psychic experience the line of descent by which the involution takes place which ends in Matter and the creation of the material universe. What we see here is not the planes or worlds of the descent in which mind and life can keep something of their truth and something of the light of the spirit, something of their true and real being; here we see an original inconscience and a struggle of life and mind and spirit to evolve out of the material inconscience and in a resultant ignorance to find themselves and grow towards their full capacity and highest existence. If mind succeeds in that endeavour there is no reason why it should not recover its true character and be once more a principle and power of Light and even in its own way aid in the workings of a true and complete knowledge. At its highest it might pass out of its limitations into the supramental truth and become part and function of the supramental knowledge or at the least serve for a minor work of differentiation in the consensus of that knowledge: in the lower degree below Supermind it might be a mental gnosis, a spiritual or spiritualised perception, feeling, activity, sense which could do the works of knowledge and not of ignorance. Even at a still lower level it could be an increasingly luminous passage leading from light to light, from truth to truth and no longer a circling in the mazes of half-truth and half-nescience. This would not be possible in a world where untransformed mind or human mind burdened with its hampering disabilities, as it now is, will still be the leader or the evolution's highest achievement, but with Supermind for the leading and dominant power this might well happen, and might even be regarded as one result and an almost inevitable result of its descent into the human world and its touch on the mind of humanity.

How far this would go, whether the whole of humanity would be touched or only a part of it ready for the change, would depend on what was intended or possible in the continued order of the universe. If the old evolutionary principle and order must be preserved, then only a section of the race would pass onward, the rest would keep the old human position, level and function in the ascending order. But even so there must be a passage or bridge between the two levels or orders of being by which the evolution would make its transition from one to the other; the mind would there be capable of contact with and modification by the supramental truth and thus would be the means of the soul's passing on upward: there must be a status of mind capable of receiving and growing in the Light towards Supermind though not reaching it; through that, as even now happens in a lesser degree through a dimmer medium, the lustre of a greater truth would send down its rays for the liberation and uplift of the soul in the ignorance. Supermind is here veiled behind a curtain and, though not organised for its own characteristic action, it is the true cause of all creation here, the power for the growth of truth and knowledge and the ascension of the soul towards the hidden Reality. But in a world where Supermind has made its appearance, it could hardly be a separate factor isolated from the rest, it would inevitably not only create superman but change and uplift man. A total change of the mental principle, such as has been suggested, cannot be ruled out as impossible.

Mind as we know it, as a power of consciousness quite distinct from Supermind, no longer a power devolved from it, connected with it and dependent upon it, but practically divorced from its luminous origin, is marked by several characteristics which we conceive to be the very signs of its nature: but some of these belong to Supermind also and the difference is in the way and scope of their action, not in their stuff or in their principle. The difference is that mind is not a power of whole knowledge and only when it begins to pass beyond itself a power of direct knowledge: it receives rays of the truth but does not live in the sun; it sees as through glasses and its knowledge is coloured by its instruments, it cannot see with the naked eye or look straight at the sun. It is not possible for mind to take its stand in the solar centre or anywhere in the radiant body or even on the shining circumference of the orb of perfect truth and acquire or share in its privilege of infallible or absolute knowledge. It would be only if it had already drawn near to the light of Supermind that it could live anywhere near this sun in the full splendour of its rays, in something of the full and direct blaze of Truth, and the human mind even at its highest is far from that; it can only live at most in a limited circle, in some narrow beginnings of a pure insight, a direct vision and it would take long for it, even in surpassing itself, to reach to an imitative and fragmentary reflection of a dream of the limited omniscience and omnipotence which is the privilege of a delegated divinity, of the god, of a demiurge. It is a power for creation, but either tentative and uncertain and succeeding by good chance or the favour of circumstance or else, if assured by some force of practical ability or genius, subject to flaw or pent within unescapable limits. Its highest knowledge is often abstract, lacking in a concrete grasp; it has to use expedients and unsure means of arrival, to rely upon reasoning, argumentation and debate, inferences, divinations, set methods of inductive or deductive logic, succeeding only if it is given correct and complete data and even then liable to reach on the same data different results and varying consequences; it has to use means and accept results of a method which is hazardous even when making a claim to certitude and of which there would be no need if it had a direct or a supra-intellectual knowledge. It is not necessary to push the description further; all this is the very nature of our terrestrial ignorance and its shadow hangs on even to the thought and vision of the sage and the seer and can be escaped only if the principle of a truth-conscious supramental knowledge descends and takes up the governance of the earth-nature.

It should be noted, however, that even at the bottom of the involutionary descent, in the blind eclipse of consciousness in Matter, in the very field of the working of the Inconscient there are signs of the labour of an infallible force, the drive of a secret consciousness and its promptings, as if the Inconscient itself were secretly informed or impelled by a Power with a direct and absolute knowledge; its acts of creation are infinitely surer than the workings of our human consciousness at its best or the normal workings of the Life-power. Matter, or rather the Energy in Matter seems to have a more certain knowledge, a more infallible operation of its own and its mechanism once set going can be trusted for the most part to do its work accurately and well. It is so that man is able, taking hold of a material energy, to mechanise it for his own ends and trust it under proper conditions to do for him his work. The self-creating life-power, amazingly abundant in its invention and fantasy, yet seems to be more capable of flaw, aberration and failure; it is as if its greater consciousness carried in it a greater capacity for error. Yet it is sure enough ordinarily in its workings: but as consciousness increases in the forms and operations of life, and most when mind enters in, disturbances also increase as if the increase of consciousness brought with it not only richer possibilities but more possibilities of stumbling, error, flaw and failure. In mind, in man, we seem to reach the height of this antinomy, the greatest, highest, widest reach and achievements of consciousness, the greatest amount of uncertainty, defect, failure and error. This, we may conjecture, may be because in inconscient Nature there is a truth of energy at work which follows infallibly its own law, an energy which can walk blindfold without stumbling because the automatic law of the truth is within it, operating surely without swerving or mistake when there is no external intervention or interference. But in all normally automatic processes of existence there is this law: even the body has an unexpressed knowledge of its own, a just instinct in its action within certain limits and this when not interfered with by life's desires and mind's errors can work with a certain accuracy and sureness. But Supermind alone has the truth-consciousness in full and, if this comes down and intervenes, mind, life and body too can attain to the full power of the truth in them and their full possibility of perfection. This, no doubt, would not take place at once, but an evolutionary progress towards it could begin and grow with increasing rapidity towards its fullness. All men might not reach that fullness till a later time, but still the human mind could come to stand perfected in the Light and a new humanity take its place as part of the new order.

This is the possibility we have to examine. If it is destined to fulfil itself, if man is not doomed to remain always as a vassal of the Ignorance, the disabilities of the human mind on which we have dwelt are not such as must remain irredeemably in possession and binding for ever. It could develop higher means and instrumentalities, pass over the last borders of the Ignorance into a higher knowledge, grow too strong to be held back by the animal nature. There would be a liberated mind escaping from ignorance into light, aware of its affiliation to Supermind, a natural agent of Supermind and capable of bringing down the supramental influence into the lower reaches of being, a creator in the light, a discoverer in the depths, an illuminant in the darkness, helping perhaps to penetrate even the Inconscient with the rays of a secret Superconscience. There would be a new mental being not only capable of standing enlightened in the radiance of the Supermind but able to climb consciously towards it and into it, training life and body to reflect and hold something of the supramental light, power and bliss, aspiring to release the secret divinity into self-finding and self-fulfilment and self-poise, aspiring towards the ascension to the divine consciousness, able to receive and bear the descent of the divine light and power, fitting itself to be a vessel of the divine Life.

Supermind in the Evolution

A NEW humanity would then be a race of mental beings on the earth and in the earthly body, but delivered from its present conditions in the reign of the cosmic Ignorance so far as to be possessed of a perfected mind, a mind of light which could even be a subordinate action of the supermind or Truth-consciousness, and in any case capable of the full possibilities of mind acting as a recipient of that truth and at least a secondary action of it in thought and life. It could even be a part of what could be described as a divine life upon earth and at least the beginnings of an evolution in the Knowledge and no longer entirely or predominantly in the Ignorance. How far this would go, whether it would eventually embrace the whole of humanity or only an advanced portion of it, would depend upon the intention in the evolution itself, on the intention in whatever cosmic or transcendent Will is guiding the movements of the universe. We have supposed not only the descent of the supermind upon the earth but its embodiment in a supramental race with all its natural consequences and a new total action in which the new humanity would find its complete development and its assured place in the new order.

But it is clear that all this could only come as a result of the evolution which is already taking place upon earth extending far beyond its present bounds and passing into a radically new movement governed by a new principle in which mind and man would be subordinate elements and no longer mind the utmost achievement or man the head or leader. The evolution we see around us at present is not of that kind and, it might be said, shows few signs of such a possibility, so few that the reason, at present our only sure guide, has no right to hazard belief in it. Earth, the earth we see, with its life deeply immersed and founded in inconscience and ignorance, is not built for such a development or capable of holding such an advent; its materiality and limitations condemn it to be permanently the field of a far inferior order. It may be said too that for such an order there must be a place somewhere and even if supermind is not a mere unwarranted speculation and is a concrete reality, there is no need and no place for its embodying itself here. Mind, as marking the full play of the knowledge possible to the ignorance, must have its field somewhere and to keep the earth as its natural field would best serve the economy of cosmic Nature. A materialistic philosophy would admit of no possibility of a divine life in Matter; but even a philosophy admitting a soul or spirit or a spiritual terminus of the evolutionary movement here could very well deny the capacity of earth for a divine life: a divine existence could only be achieved by a departure from earth and the body. Even if cosmic existence is not an illusion or Maya, a divine or a completely spiritual being is likely to be possible only in another less material world or only in the pure spirit. At any rate, to the normal human reason the odds seem to be heavily against any early materialisation on earth of anything divine.

Again, if too strong a stress is laid on the present or apparent character of the evolution here as it is presented to us by physical science, it might be urged that there is no warrant for expecting any emergence of a principle higher than human mind or of any such thing as superhuman beings in a world of Matter. Consciousness is itself dependent upon Matter and material agencies for its birth and its operations and an infallible Truth-consciousness, such as we suppose supermind to be, would be a contradiction of these conditions and must be dismissed as a chimera. Fundamentally, physical science regards evolution as a development of forms and vital activities; the development of a larger and more capable consciousness is a subordinate result of the development of life and form and not a major or essential characteristic or circumstance and it cannot go beyond limits determined by the material origin of mind and life. Mind has shown itself capable of many extraordinary achievements, but independence of the material organ or of physical conditions or a capability for any such thing as a power of direct and absolute knowledge not acquired by material means would be beyond the conditions imposed by Nature. At a certain point therefore the evolution of consciousness can go no further. Even if a something definite and independent which we call a soul exists, it is limited by its natural conditions here where Matter is the basis, physical life the condition, mind the highest possible instrument; there is no possibility of an action of consciousness apart from the body or surpassing this physical, vital or mental Nature. This fixes the limits of our evolution here.

It might be suggested also that until something clearly recognisable like supermind manifests itself with some definiteness and fullness or until it descends and takes possession of our earth-consciousness, we cannot be certain that it exists; till then mind holds the place as a general arbiter or field of reference for all knowledge and mind is incapable of any certain or absolute knowledge; it has to doubt all, to test all and yet to achieve all, but cannot be secure in its knowledge or its achievement. That, incidentally, establishes the necessity of such a principle as the supermind or Truth-consciousness in any intelligible universe, for without it there is no issue, no goal for either life or knowledge. Consciousness cannot achieve its own entire meaning, its own supreme result without it; it will end in an inconsequence or a fiasco. To become aware of its own truth and all truth is the very aim of its existence and it cannot do so, so long as it has to tend towards truth, towards knowledge in ignorance and through the ignorance: it must develop or it must reach a power of itself whose very nature is to know, to see, to possess in its own power. This is what we call supermind and, once it is admitted, all the rest becomes intelligible. But till then we are in doubt and it may be contended that even if supermind is admitted as a reality, there can be no certainty of its advent and reign: till then all effort towards it may end in failure. It is not enough that the supermind should be actually there above us, its descent a possibility or a future intention in Nature. We have no certainty of the reality of this descent until it becomes an objectivised fact in our earthly being. Light has often tried to descend upon the earth, but the Light remains unfulfilled and incomplete; man may reject the Light, the world is still full of darkness and the advent seems to be little more than a chance; this doubt is to some extent justified by the actualities of the past and still existing possibilities of the future. Its power to stand would disappear only if supermind is once admitted as a consequent part of the order of the universe. If the evolution tends from Matter to Supermind, it must also tend to bring down Supermind into Matter and the consequences are inevitable.

The whole trouble of this incertitude arises from the fact that we do not look straight at the whole truth of the world as it is and draw from it the right conclusion as to what the world must be and cannot fail to be. This world is, no doubt, based ostensibly upon Matter, but its summit is Spirit and the ascent towards Spirit must be the aim and justification of its existence and the pointer to its meaning and purpose. But the natural conclusion to be drawn from the supremacy and summit existence of Spirit is clouded by a false or imperfect idea of spirituality which has been constructed by intellect in its ignorance and even by its too hasty and one-sided grasp at knowledge. The Spirit has been thought of not as something all-pervading and the secret essence of our being, but as something only looking down on us from the heights and drawing us only towards the heights and away from the rest of existence. So we get the idea of our cosmic and individual being as a great illusion, and departure from it and extinction in our consciousness of both individual and cosmos as the only hope, the sole release. Or we build up the idea of the earth as a world of ignorance, suffering and trial and our only future an escape into heavens beyond; there is no divine prospect for us here, no fulfilment possible even with the utmost evolution on earth in the body, no victorious transformation, no supreme object to be worked out in terrestrial existence. But if supermind exists, if it descends, if it becomes the ruling principle, all that seems impossible to mind becomes not only possible but inevitable. If we look closely, we shall see that there is a straining of mind and life on their heights towards their own perfection, towards some divine fulfilment, towards their own absolute. That and not only something beyond and elsewhere is the true sign, the meaning of this constant evolution and the labour of continual birth and rebirth and the spiral ascent of Nature. But it is only by the descent of supermind and the fulfilment of mind and life by their self-exceeding that this secret intention in things, this hidden meaning of Spirit and Nature can become utterly overt and in its totality realisable. This is the evolutionary aspect and significance of supermind, but in truth it is an eternal principle existing covertly even in the material universe, the secret supporter of all creation, it is that which makes the emergence of consciousness possible and certain in an apparently inconscient world and compels a climb in Nature towards a supreme spiritual Reality. It is, in fact, an already and always existent plane of being, the nexus of Spirit and Matter, holding in its truth and reality and making certain the whole meaning and aim of the universe.

If we disregard our present ideas of evolution, all changes, — if we can regard consciousness and not life and form as the fundamental and essential evolutionary principle and its emergence and full development of its possibilities as the object of the evolutionary urge. The inconscience of Matter cannot be an insuperable obstacle; for in this inconscience can be detected an involved consciousness which has to evolve; life and mind are steps and instruments of that evolution; the purposeful drive and workings of the inconscient material Energy are precisely such as we can attribute to the presence of an involved consciousness, automatic, not using thought like the mind but guided by something like an inherent material instinct practically infallible in all its steps, not yet cognitive but miraculously creative. The entirely and inherently enlightened Truth-consciousness we attribute to supermind would be the same reality appearing at an ultimate stage of the evolution, finally evolved and no longer wholly involved as in Matter or partly and imperfectly evolved and therefore capable of imperfection and error as in life and mind, now possessed of its own natural fullness and perfection, luminously automatic, infallible. All the objections to a complete evolutionary possibility then fall away; it would, on the contrary, be the inevitable consequence contained not only in Nature as a whole but even in material Nature.

In this vision of things the universe will reveal itself in its unity and totality as a manifestation of a single Being, Nature as its power of manifestation, evolution as its process of gradual self-revelation here in Matter. We would see the divine series of the worlds as a ladder of ascent from Matter to supreme Spirit; there would reveal itself the possibility, the prospect of a supreme manifestation by the conscious and no longer a veiled and enigmatic descent of the Spirit and its powers in their fullness even into this lowest world of Matter. The riddle of the universe need be no longer a riddle; the dubious mystery of things would put off its enigma, its constant ambiguity, the tangled writings would become legible and intelligible. In this revelation, supermind would take its natural place and no longer be a matter of doubt or questioning to an intelligence bewildered by the complexity of the world; it would appear as the inevitable consequence of the nature of mind, life and Matter, the fulfilment of their meaning, their inherent principle and tendencies, the necessary perfection of their imperfection, the summit to which all are climbing, the consummation of divine existence, consciousness and bliss to which it is leading, the last result of the birth of things and supreme goal of this progressive manifestation which we see here in life.

The full emergence of supermind may be accomplished by a sovereign manifestation, a descent into earth-consciousness and a rapid assumption of its powers and disclosing of its forms and the creation of a supramental race and a supramental life: this must indeed be the full result of its action in Nature. But this has not been the habit of evolutionary Nature in the past upon earth and it may well be that this supramental evolution also will fix its own periods, though it cannot be at all a similar development to that of which earth has hitherto been the witness. But once it has begun, all must unavoidably and perfectly manifest and all parts of Nature must tend towards a greatest possible luminousness and perfection. It is this certainty that authorises us to believe that mind and humanity also will tend towards a realisation that will be far beyond our present dreams of perfection. A mind of light will replace the present confusion and trouble of this earthly ignorance; it is likely that even those parts of humanity which cannot reach it will yet be aware of its possibility and consciously tend towards it; not only so, but the life of humanity will be enlightened, uplifted, governed, harmonised by this luminous principle and even the body become something much less powerless, obscure and animal in its propensities and capable instead of a new and harmonised perfection. It is this possibility that we have to look at and that would mean a new humanity uplifted into Light, capable of a spiritualised being and action, open to governance by some light of the Truth-consciousness, capable even on the mental level and in its own order of something that might be called the beginning of a divinised life.

Mind of Light

A NEW humanity means for us the appearance, the development of a type or race of mental beings whose principle of mentality would be no longer a mind in the Ignorance seeking for knowledge but even in its knowledge bound to the Ignorance, a seeker after Light but not its natural possessor, open to the Light but not an inhabitant of the Light, not yet a perfected instrument, truth-conscious and delivered out of the Ignorance. Instead, it would be possessed already of what could be called a mind of Light, a mind capable of living in the truth, capable of being truth-conscious and manifesting in its life a direct in place of an indirect knowledge. Its mentality would be an instrument of the Light and no longer of the Ignorance. At its highest it would be capable of passing into the supermind and from the new race would be recruited the race of supramental beings who would appear as the leaders of the evolution in earth-nature. Even, the highest manifestations of a mind of Light would be an instrumentality of the supermind, a part of it or a projection from it, a stepping beyond humanity into the superhumanity of the supramental principle. Above all, its possession would enable the human being to rise beyond the normalities of his present thinking, feeling and being into those highest powers of the mind in its self-exceedings which intervene between our mentality and supermind and can be regarded as steps leading towards the greater and more luminous principle. This advance like others in the evolution might not be reached and would naturally not be reached at one bound, but from the very beginning it would be inevitable: the pressure of the supermind creating from above out of itself the mind of Light would compel this certainty of the eventual outcome. The first gleamings of the new Light would carry in themselves the seed of its highest flamings; even in the first beginnings, the certainty of their topmost powers would be there; for this is the constant story of each evolutionary emergence: the principle of its highest perfection lies concealed in the involution which precedes and necessitates the evolution of the secret principle.

For throughout the story of evolution there are two complementary aspects which constitute its action and are necessary to its totality; there is hidden in the involution of Nature the secret power and principle of being which lies concealed under the veil cast on it by material Nature and there is carried in that Nature itself the inevitable force of the principle compelling the process of emergence of its inherent powers and characters, the essential features which constitute its reality. As the evolutionary principle emerges, there are also two constant features of the process of the emergence: there are the gradations by which it climbs out of the involution and manifests more and more of its power, its possibilities, the force of the Godhead within it, and there is a constant manifestation of all types and forms of its being which are the visible, indicative and efficient embodiments of its essential nature. There appear in the evolutionary process organised forms and activities of Matter, the types of life and the living beings, the types of mind and the thinking beings, the luminosities and greatnesses of the spiritual principle and the spiritual beings whose nature, character, personality, mark the stages of the ascent towards the highest heights of the evolution and the ultimate largest manifestation of what it is in itself and must become by the force of time and the all-revealing Spirit. This is the real sense and drive of what we see as evolution: the multiplication and variation of forms is only the means of its process. Each gradation contains the possibility and the certainty of the grades beyond it: the emergence of more and more developed forms and powers points to more perfected forms and greater powers beyond them, and each emergence of consciousness and the conscious beings proper to it enables the rise to a greater consciousness beyond and the greater order of beings up to the ultimate godheads of which Nature is striving and is destined to show herself capable. Matter developed its organised forms until it became capable of embodying living organisms; then life rose from the subconscience of the plant into conscious animal formations and through them to the thinking life of man. Mind founded in life developed intellect, developed its types of knowledge and ignorance, truth and error till it reached the spiritual perception and illumination and now can see as in a glass dimly the possibility of supermind and a truth-conscious existence. In this inevitable ascent the mind of Light is a gradation, an inevitable stage. As an evolving principle it will mark a stage in the human ascent and evolve a new type of human being; this development must carry in it an ascending gradation of its own powers and types of an ascending humanity which will embody more and more the turn towards spirituality, capacity for Light, a climb towards a divinised manhood and the divine life.

In the birth of the mind of Light and its ascension into its own recognisable self and its true status and right province there must be, in the very nature of things as they are and very nature of the evolutionary process as it is at present, two stages. In the first, we can see the mind of Light gathering itself out of the Ignorance, assembling its constituent elements, building up its shapes and types, however imperfect at first, and pushing them towards perfection till it can cross the border of the Ignorance and appear in the Light, in its own Light. In the second stage we can see it developing itself in that greater natural light, taking its higher shapes and forms till it joins the supermind and lives as its subordinate portion or its delegate. In each of these stages it will define its own grades and manifest the order of its beings who will embody it and give to it a realised life. Thus there will be built up, first, even in the Ignorance itself, the possibility of a human ascent towards a divine living; then there will be, by the illumination of this mind of Light in the greater realisation of what may be called a gnostic mentality, in a transformation of the human being, even before the supermind is reached, even in the earth-consciousness and in a humanity transformed, an illumined divine life.

Supermind and Mind of Light

THE ESSENTIAL character of Supermind is a Truth-consciousness which knows by its own inherent right of nature, by its own light: it has not to arrive at knowledge but possesses it. It may indeed, especially in its evolutionary action, keep knowledge behind its apparent consciousness and bring it forward as if from behind the veil; but even then this veil is only an appearance and does not really exist: the knowledge was always there, the consciousness its possessor and present revealer. This too is only in the evolutionary play and on the supramental plane itself the consciousness lives always in an immediacy of knowledge and acts by a direct immediacy of knowledge. In Mind as we see it here the action is very different; it starts from an apparent absence of knowledge, a seeming ignorance or nescience, even, in material Nature, from an inconscience in which any kind of knowing does not seem at all to exist. It reaches knowledge or the action of knowledge by steps which are not at all immediate but rather knowledge at first seems utterly impossible and foreign to the very substance of this Matter. Yet, in the blindness of Matter itself there are signs of a concealed consciousness which in its hidden fundamental being sees and has the power to act according to its vision and even by an infallible immediacy which is inherent in its nature. This is the same Truth that is apparent in Supermind but is here involved and seems not to be. The Mind of Light is a subordinate action of Supermind, dependent upon it even when not apparently springing direct from it, in which the secret of this connection becomes evident and palpable.

The Truth-consciousness is not only a power of knowledge; it is a being of consciousness and knowledge, a luminous many-sided dynamis and play of the omniscient Spirit; in it there can be a spiritual feeling, a spiritual sensation, a spiritual essentiality of substance that knows and reveals, that acts and manifests in an omniscience which is one with omnipotence. In Mind this Truth-consciousness and these workings of the Truth-consciousness can be there and even though it limits itself in Mind and has a subordinate or an indirect working, its action can be essentially the same. There can even be a hidden immediacy which hints at the presence of something absolute and is evidence of the same omnipotence and omniscience. In the Mind of Light when it becomes full-orbed this character of the Truth reveals itself, though in a garb that is transparent even when it seems to cover: for this too is a truth-consciousness and a self-power of knowledge. This too proceeds from the Supermind and depends upon it even though it is limited and subordinate. What we have called specifically the Mind of Light is indeed the last of a series of descending planes of consciousness in which the Supermind veils itself by a self-chosen limitation or modification of its self-manifesting activities, but its essential character remains the same: there is in it an action of light, of truth, of knowledge in which inconscience, ignorance and error claim no place. It proceeds from knowledge to knowledge; we have not yet crossed over the borders of the truth-conscious into ignorance. The methods also are those of a self-luminous knowing and seeing and feeling and a self-fulfilling action within its own borders; there is no need to seek for something missing, no fumbling, no hesitation: all is still a gnostic action of a gnostic power and principle. There has been a descent from full Supermind into Mind, but this Mind though a self-limited is not yet an agnostic consciousness unsure of itself or unsure of its workings; there is still a comprehending or an apprehending consciousness which goes straight to its object and does not miss its mark or have to hunt for it in the dark or in insufficient light: it sees, knows, puts its hand immediately on things of self and things of Nature. We have passed into Mind but Mind has still not broken its inherent connection with the supramental principle.

Still there is an increasing self-limitation which begins even with Overmind: Overmind is separated by only a luminous border from the full light and power of the supramental Truth and it still commands direct access to all that Supermind can give it. There is a further limitation or change of characteristic action at each step downwards from Overmind to Intuition, from Intuition to Illumined Mind, from Illumined Mind to what I have called the Higher Mind: the Mind of Light is a transitional passage by which we can pass from supermind and superhumanity to an illumined humanity. For the new humanity will be capable of at least a partly divinised way of seeing and living because it will live in the light and in knowledge and not in the obscuration of the Ignorance.

Still, again there will be a difference between the superhuman and the human, a difference in nature and power but a difference especially in the access and way of admission to the Truth-consciousness and its activities: there may indeed be two orders of its truth, direct and half-direct, immediate and near or even only a reception at a distance. But this we must consider afterwards; at present it is sufficient to mark certain differences in the descending order of gnostic mind which culminates here. We may say that there is a higher hemisphere of our being in which Mind, luminous and aware of its workings, still lives in the Light and can be seen as a subordinate power of the Supermind; it is still an agent of the Truth-consciousness, a gnostic power that has not descended into the mental ignorance; it is capable of a mental gnosis that preserves its connection with the superior light and acts by its power. This is the character of Overmind in its own plane and of all the powers that are dependent on the Overmind: the Supermind works there but at one remove as if in something that it has put forth from itself but which is no longer entirely itself but is still a delegate of the Truth and invested with its authority. We are moving towards a transitional border beyond which lies the possibility of the Ignorance, but the Ignorance is not yet here. In the order of the evolutionary descent we stand in the Mind of Light on that border and a step downward can carry us beyond it into the beginnings of an ignorance which still bears on its face something of the luminosity that it is leaving behind it. On the other hand, in the ascending order of the evolution we reach a transition in which we see the light, are turned towards it, reflect it in our consciousness and one further step carries us into the domain of the Light. The Truth becomes visible and audible to us and we are in immediate communication with its messages and illuminations and can grow into it and be made one with its substance. Thus there is a succession of ranges of consciousness which we can speak of as Mind but which belongs practically to the higher hemisphere, although in their ontological station they are within the domain of the lower hemisphere. For the whole of being is a connected totality and there is in it no abrupt passage from the principle of Truth and Light into their opposite. The creative truth of things works and can work infallibly even in the Inconscient: the Spirit is there in Matter and it has made a series of steps by which it can travel from it to its own heights in an uninterrupted line of gradations; the depths are linked to the heights and the Law of the one Truth creates and works everywhere.

Even in the material world which seems to us a world of ignorance, a world of the workings of a blind and inconscient Force starting from inconscience and proceeding through ignorance and reaching with difficulty towards an imperfect Light and Knowledge, there is still a secret Truth in things which arranges all, guides towards the Self many contrary powers of being and rises towards its own heights where it can manifest its own highest truth and fulfil the secret purpose of the universe. Even this material world of existence is built upon a pattern of the truth in things which we call Law of Nature, a truth from which we climb to a greater truth until we emerge in the Light of the Supreme. This world is not really created by a blind force of Nature: even in the Inconscient the presence of the supreme Truth is at work; there is a seeing Power behind it which acts infallibly and the steps of the Ignorance itself are guided even when they seem to stumble; for what we call the Ignorance is a cloaked Knowledge, a Knowledge at work in a body not its own but moving towards its own supreme self-discovery. This Knowledge is the covert Supermind which is the support of the creation and is leading all towards itself and guides behind this multitude of minds and creatures and objects which seem each to be following its own law of nature; in this vast and apparently confused mass of existence there is a law, a one truth of being, a guiding and fulfilling purpose of the world-existence. The Supermind is veiled here and does not work according to its characteristic law of being and self-knowledge, but without it nothing could reach its aim. A world governed by an ignorant mind would soon drift into a chaos; it could not in fact come into existence or remain in existence unless supported by the secret Omniscience of which it is the cover; a world governed by a blind inconscient force might repeat constantly the same mechanical workings but it would mean nothing and arrive nowhere. This could not be the cause of an evolution that creates life out of Matter, out of life mind, and a gradation of planes of Matter, Life and Mind culminating in the emergence of Supermind. The secret truth that emerges in Supermind has been there all the time, but now it manifests itself and the truth in things and the meaning of our existence.

It is in this series of the order of existence and as the last word of the lower hemisphere of being, the first word of the higher hemisphere that we have to look at the Mind of Light and see what is its nature and the powers which characterise it and which it uses for its self-manifestation and workings, its connection with Supermind and its consequences and possibilities for the life of a new humanity.

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

ESSAYS IN PHILOSOPHY AND YOGA consists of short prose pieces written by Sri Aurobindo after May 1909 and published by him in journals or books or both before his passing in 1950. Most of them are on aspects of philosophy and yoga. Short prose pieces written between 1910 and 1950 but not published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime are included in *Essays Divine and Human*, volume 12 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. Short prose writings published between 1910 and 1950 on certain specialised subjects — the Vedas, the Upanishads, Indian culture, political theory, education, poetics — are included in the volumes of THE COMPLETE WORKS dealing with those subjects.

Essays in Philosophy and Yoga is divided into five parts according to the date of writing and original place of publication of the constituent pieces: Part One, essays from the *Karmayogin*, 1909–10; Part Two, *The Yoga and Its Objects*, written around 1912; Part Three, writings from the *Arya*, 1914–21; Part Four, an essay from the *Standard Bearer*, 1920; Part Five, writings from the *Bulletin of Physical Education*, 1949–50.

PART ONE: ESSAYS FROM THE *KARMAYOGIN* (1909–1910)

Sri Aurobindo was the editor of and principal writer for the *Karmayogin*, "A Weekly Review of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.", between June 1909 and February 1910. Most of the contents of the *Karmayogin* are published in volume 8 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. The fourteen pieces selected for inclusion in the present volume deal with philosophical and yogic subjects rather than with politics or literature. All but two of them were published in one or more of three booklets: *The Ideal of the*

Karmayogin (c. 1918, 1919, 1921, 1927, 1937, 1945, 1950 and subsequently), *Man — Slave or Free?* (c. 1922 and subsequently) and *The Need in Nationalism and Other Essays* (1923).

The Ideal of the Karmayogin. Published in the first issue of the *Karmayogin*, 19 June 1909, and later in *The Ideal of the Karmayogin.*
Karmayoga. Published in the first issue of the *Karmayogin*, 19 June 1909, and later in *The Ideal of the Karmayogin.*
Man — Slave or Free? Published in the *Karmayogin*, 26 June 1909, and later in *Man — Slave or Free?* and *The Need in Nationalism.*
Yoga and Human Evolution. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 3 July 1909, and later in *Man — Slave or Free?*
Yoga and Hypnotism. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 17 July 1909, and later in *Man — Slave or Free?*
The Greatness of the Individual. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 24 July 1909, and later in *The Ideal of the Karmayogin.*
The Process of Evolution. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 18 September 1909, and later in *The Ideal of the Karmayogin.*
Stead and the Spirits. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 27 November 1909.
Stead and Maskelyne. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 1 January 1910.
Fate and Free-Will. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 29 January 1910, and later in *Man — Slave or Free?* and *The Need in Nationalism.*
The Three Purushas. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 12 February 1910, and later in *The Ideal of the Karmayogin.*
The Strength of Stillness. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 19 February 1910, and later in *The Ideal of the Karmayogin.*
The Principle of Evil. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 26 February 1910, and later in *Man — Slave or Free?* and *The Need in Nationalism.*
The Stress of the Hidden Spirit. Published in the *Karmayogin*, 26 February 1910, and later in *The Ideal of the Karmayogin.*

PART TWO: THE YOGA AND ITS OBJECTS (CIRCA 1912)

The Yoga and Its Objects. This essay, which is mentioned in a letter written by Sri Aurobindo in 1912, was first published as a booklet in

1921 under the title “The Yoga and Its Object”. The title was changed to the present form in the second edition, issued in 1922. New editions were published in 1931, 1938, 1943, 1946, 1949 and subsequently. In 1934 Sri Aurobindo wrote that the booklet represented “an early stage” of his sadhana “and only a part of it is applicable to the Yoga as it has at present taken form after a lapse of more than twenty years”. The Appendix consists of explanations of certain words and phrases in the essay, written by Sri Aurobindo in June 1938 in answer to questions posed by a disciple.

PART THREE: WRITINGS FROM THE *ARYA* (1914–1921)

The monthly *Arya*, “a Review of pure philosophy”, was launched in August 1914 and ran until January 1921. Almost all its contents were written by Sri Aurobindo, particularly after the departure of his co-editors Paul Richard and Mirra Richard (the Mother) in February 1915. We reproduce here facsimiles of the front cover of the first issue of the *Arya* and the note printed inside the cover of every issue. This note undoubtedly was written by Sri Aurobindo.

Notes on the *Arya*

The “Arya’s” Second Year. Published in the *Arya* in July 1915. The next month the same subject was dealt with in four paragraphs of the essay “Our Ideal” that were omitted when it was reprinted in the 1920 edition of *Ideal and Progress*. The omitted paragraphs are printed here as an appendix.

The “Arya’s” Fourth Year. Published in the *Arya* in July 1918. Note that while the preceding piece was written just before the *beginning* of the *Arya*’s second year, this one was written at the *end* of the fourth year of the journal.

On Ideals and Progress

First published in the *Arya* in 1915 and 1916, these five essays were issued together in 1920 under the title *Ideal and Progress*. This was the first of three collections of essays issued in 1920 and 1921 under the series title *Ideal and Progress*. New editions were published in 1922 (lightly revised), 1946 and subsequently. In 1951 and 1966 the book appeared under the editorial title *Ideals and Progress*. Another title, *On Ideals and Progress*, which appeared above the title of the first essay in 1920 and 1922, has been used as the title of this section in the present volume.

On Ideals. Published in the *Arya* in June 1916.
Yoga and Skill in Works. Published in the *Arya* in July 1916.
Conservation and Progress. Published in the *Arya* in May 1916.
The Conservative Mind and Eastern Progress. Published in the *Arya* in July 1916.
Our Ideal. Published in the *Arya* in August 1915. When this essay was included in *Ideal and Progress* in 1920, four paragraphs referring to the *Arya* were deleted: the original first paragraph and the fourth, third and second paragraphs from the end. The first sentence of the last paragraph was also deleted: "We shall develop our general thought in later numbers; at present we content ourselves with restating our ideal." When Sri Aurobindo revised the second edition, he inserted a new sentence at this point: "What then shall be our ideal?" In the present edition, the four omitted paragraphs are reproduced as an appendix to "The 'Arya's' Second Year" (see above under "Notes on the *Arya*").

The Superman

First published in the *Arya* in 1915, these three essays were issued together in 1920 under the title *The Superman*. This was the second collection of essays issued at that time under the series title *Ideal and Progress*. New editions were published in 1922 (lightly revised), 1944, 1950 and subsequently.

The Superman. Published in the *Arya* under the title "The Type of the Superman" in April 1915.
All-Will and Free-Will. Published in the *Arya* in March 1915.
The Delight of Works. Published in the *Arya* in August 1915.

Evolution

First published in the *Arya* in 1915 and 1918, these three essays were reprinted in 1920 or 1921 under the title *Evolution*. This was the third collection of essays issued at that time under the series title *Ideal and Progress*. New editions were published in 1923 (lightly revised), 1933, 1944, 1950 and subsequently.

Evolution. Published in the *Arya* in August 1915.
The Inconscient. Published in the *Arya* in September 1915.
Materialism. Published in the *Arya* in October 1918.

Thoughts and Glimpses

The first section, "Aphorisms", was published in three instalments in the *Arya* in March, May and June 1915, the second, "Thoughts and Glimpses", in two instalments in May 1916 and August 1917. Between 1920 and 1922 all the pieces were published as a booklet entitled *Thoughts and Glimpses*. New editions were published in 1923 (lightly revised), 1932, 1941, 1944, 1950 and subsequently.

Heraclitus

The chapters of this work first appeared in the *Arya* between December 1916 and June 1917. It began as an examination of *Herakleitos* by R. D. Ranade (Poona: Aryabhushana Press, 1916). Sri Aurobindo's *Heraclitus* was published as a book in 1941 (lightly revised), 1947 and subsequently.

The Problem of Rebirth

These sixteen essays were first published in the *Arya* between 1915 and 1921. Those comprising Section I appeared without a general title in two groups: November and December 1915, and March to December 1919. Those comprising Section II came out under the headings "The Lines of Karma" and "The Higher Lines of Karma" between August 1920 and January 1921.

Sometime during the 1920s, Sri Aurobindo collected and revised the sixteen essays with the intention of publishing them as a book to be entitled *The Problem of Rebirth*. The revision included the addition of three long passages: the last paragraph of "The Significance of Rebirth", the last three paragraphs of "Involution and Evolution", and the last three paragraphs of "Karma, Will and Consequence". Most of the pages of the proposed book were set in type and a few copies — possibly proof copies — were printed, but the book was never published. The letter reprinted in Appendix II explains why. It may be noted that in this letter Sri Aurobindo referred to the collection of essays as "Rebirth and Karma". The editors, who are responsible for the division into sections, use this phrase as the subtitle of Section I. (The same phrase was used as the title of the entire book in an edition published in the United States in 1991.)

The Problem of Rebirth was first published posthumously in 1952. The third edition of the book, published in 1978, incorporated some revisions made by Sri Aurobindo that had not been discovered when the earlier editions were printed.

Rebirth. Published in the *Arya* in November 1915.
The Reincarnating Soul. Published in the *Arya* in December 1915.
Rebirth, Evolution, Heredity. Published in the *Arya* in March 1919.
Rebirth and Soul Evolution. Published in the *Arya* in April 1919.
The Significance of Rebirth. Published in the *Arya* in May 1919.
The Ascending Unity. Published in the *Arya* in June 1919.
Involution and Evolution. Published in the *Arya* in July 1919.
Karma. Published in the *Arya* in August 1919.
Karma and Freedom. Published in the *Arya* in September 1919.
Karma, Will and Consequence. Published in the *Arya* in October 1919.
Rebirth and Karma. Published in the *Arya* in November 1919.
Karma and Justice. Published in the *Arya* in December 1919.
The Foundation. Published in the *Arya* in August 1920. The title of the essay was printed under the heading "The Lines of Karma".
The Terrestrial Law. Published in the *Arya* in two instalments in September and October 1920. The title of the essay was printed under the heading "The Lines of Karma".
Mind Nature and Law of Karma. Published in the *Arya* in two in-

stalments in October and November/December 1920. The title of the essay was printed under the heading “The Lines of Karma”.
The Higher Lines of Karma. Published in two instalments in the last two issues of the *Arya*: November/December 1920 and January 1921. The second instalment was printed with the subheading “The Lines of Truth”. This subheading was deleted in the unreleased edition of *The Problem of Rebirth*.
Appendix I: The Tangle of Karma. This incomplete essay was written around 1927, presumably for inclusion with the other essays of *The Problem of Rebirth*.
Appendix II: A Clarification. Sri Aurobindo wrote this note on 25 December 1935 in reply to a question put by a disciple.

Other Writings from the *Arya*

The Question of the Month

These six pieces appeared under the heading “The Question of the Month” in the first six issues of the *Arya*, August 1914 – January 1915. In 1941 the first three and the sixth pieces were published along with five reviews from the *Arya* under the title *Views and Reviews*. (These reviews are published in *Early Cultural Writings*, volume 1 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.) The titles of the pieces were added at that time. New editions of this book were brought out in 1946 and subsequently. In 1972 the fourth and fifth pieces were reprinted for the first time since 1914 in *The Hour of God and Other Writings*.

The Needed Synthesis. Published in the *Arya* in August 1914.
“Arya” — Its Significance. Published in the *Arya* in September 1914.
Meditation. Published in the *Arya* in October 1914.
Different Methods of Writing. Published in the *Arya* in November 1914. Editorial title. At the time *View and Reviews* was being planned, Sri Aurobindo wrote that this piece was “too slight for inclusion in a book”.
Occult Knowledge and the Hindu Scriptures. Published in the *Arya* in December 1914. Editorial title. In the *Arya* the following sentence preceded the question: “One of our Subscribers sends us the following Question:”

The Universal Consciousness. Published in the *Arya* in January 1915. In the *Arya* the following sentence preceded the question: "One of our subscribers in Europe puts to us the following difficulty: — "

The News of the Month

This brief-lived feature was halted after the second issue of the *Arya*, September 1914.

South Indian Vaishnava Poetry

Sri Aurobindo published these essays on Andal and Nammalwar, two of the *alwars* or Vaishnava devotional poets of Tamil Nadu, in the *Arya* in May and July 1915. In the same issues he published translations of some of their poems, which he executed with the help of the poet Subramania Bharati. The translations are published in *Translations*, volume 5 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Arguments to *The Life Divine*

Between February 1916 and April 1917 Sri Aurobindo wrote "arguments" for Chapters XIX to XXXIII of *The Life Divine* as they originally appeared in the *Arya*. The first argument was followed by this note:

> In response to the desire of some of our subscribers we shall prefix henceforth a brief summary or argument to each chapter of the "Life Divine."

The Life Divine was revised before publication as a book in 1939–40. At this time Sri Aurobindo renumbered *Arya* Chapters XXVIII to XXXIII as Book Two, Part I, Chapters VII, VIII, IX, XI, XV and XVII. In the revised text all the arguments published in the *Arya* were omitted.

In December 1940 Sri Aurobindo wrote an "Argument in Brief" and a "Shorter Synopsis" of the first chapter of *The Life Divine*, possibly to show how such summaries might be made. Around the same time he wrote a draft of an argument to most of Book One, Chapter

XXIV. This contains some new turns of phrase and some explanatory material not found in the chapter itself (see especially the footnote). These three pieces are reproduced here from his manuscripts.

PART FOUR: FROM THE *STANDARD BEARER* (1920)

The *Standard Bearer* was launched in August 1920 by the Prabartak Sangha of Chandernagore, a group then working under the inspiration of Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo wrote at least one article for this monthly journal. Some of his earlier writings (for example, "Hathayoga" and "Things Seen in Symbols", included in *Early Cultural Writings*) were also published in the *Standard Bearer*.

Ourselves. This essay was written for publication in the first issue of the *Standard Bearer*, 15 August 1920. The editors have compared the sometimes defective text published in the journal with that of a manuscript draft.

PART FIVE: FROM THE *BULLETIN OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION* (1949–1950)

The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth

These eight essays, Sri Aurobindo's last prose writings, first appeared in the quarterly *Bulletin of Physical Education* (at present called *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*) in 1949 and 1950. Unable to write as a result of his failing eyesight, Sri Aurobindo dictated them to a secretary. The series was left unfinished on his passing in December 1950. It was published as a book in 1952 under the title *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*. (This title was provided or at least approved by the Mother.) The book has been reprinted several times. In 1953 and subsequently it was brought out in the United States under the title *The Mind of Light*.

Message. Published in the *Bulletin* in February 1949; dated 30 December 1948.

Perfection of the Body. Published in the *Bulletin* in April 1949; dated 23 March 1949.
The Divine Body. Published in the *Bulletin* in August 1949.
Supermind and the Life Divine. Published in the *Bulletin* in November 1949.
Supermind and Humanity. Published in the *Bulletin* in February 1950; dated 13 January 1950.
Supermind in the Evolution. Published in the *Bulletin* in April 1950.
Mind of Light. Published in the *Bulletin* in August 1950.
Supermind and Mind of Light. Published in the *Bulletin* in November 1950.

THE PRESENT EDITION

In 1971 most of the contents of the present volume were published in *The Supramental Manifestation and Other Writings*, volume 16 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. A new, rearranged and slightly enlarged edition was brought out in 1989.

The present edition is the first to be published under the title *Essays in Philosophy and Yoga*. It contains all the contents of *The Supramental Manifestation and Other Writings* as well as some writings that appeared in other volumes of the Centenary Library. All the constituent pieces have been checked against the versions published by Sri Aurobindo in books and journals.

The Secret of the Veda

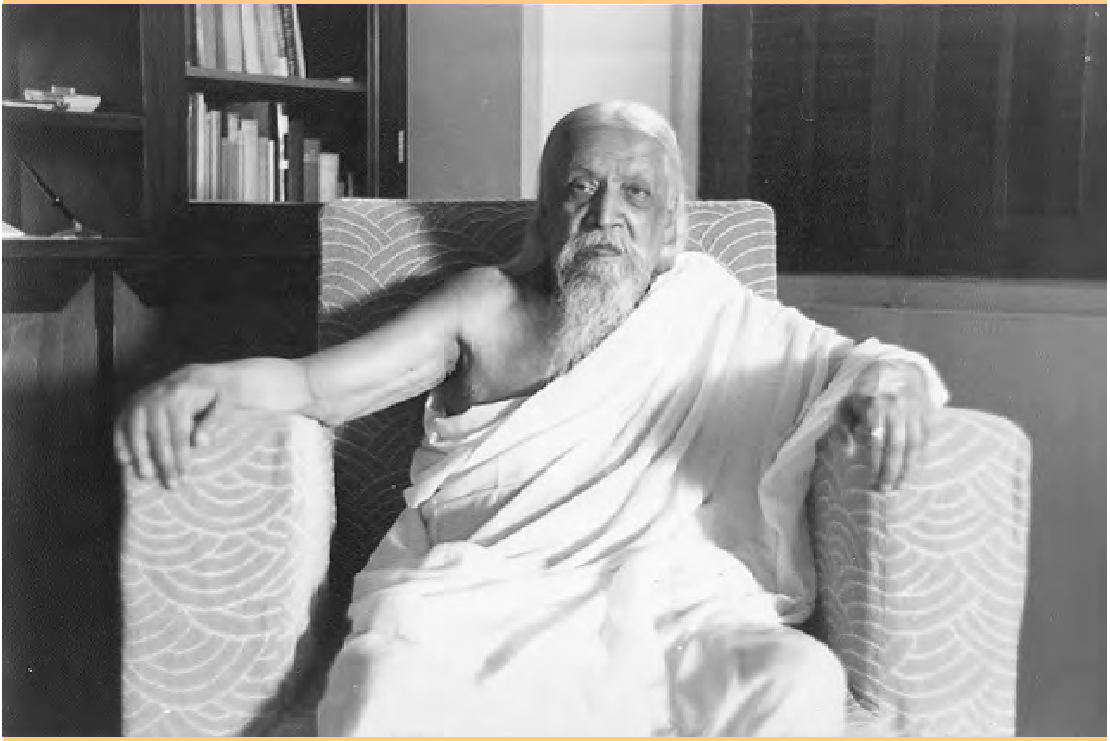

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 15
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1998
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

The Secret of the Veda

with Selected Hymns

Publisher's Note

This volume comprises Sri Aurobindo's writings on and translations of the Rig Veda that were published in the monthly review *Arya* between 1914 and 1920. Most of this material appeared under three headings:

The Secret of the Veda, August 1914 – July 1916.
Selected Hymns, August 1914 – July 1915.
Hymns of the Atris, August 1915 – December 1917.

These series form the first three parts of the present volume. Other translations of Vedic hymns that came out in the *Arya*, but not under any of the above headings, make up Part Four. Sri Aurobindo's Vedic writings and translations that did not appear in the *Arya* are published in *Vedic Studies with Writings on Philology* and *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, volumes 14 and 16 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

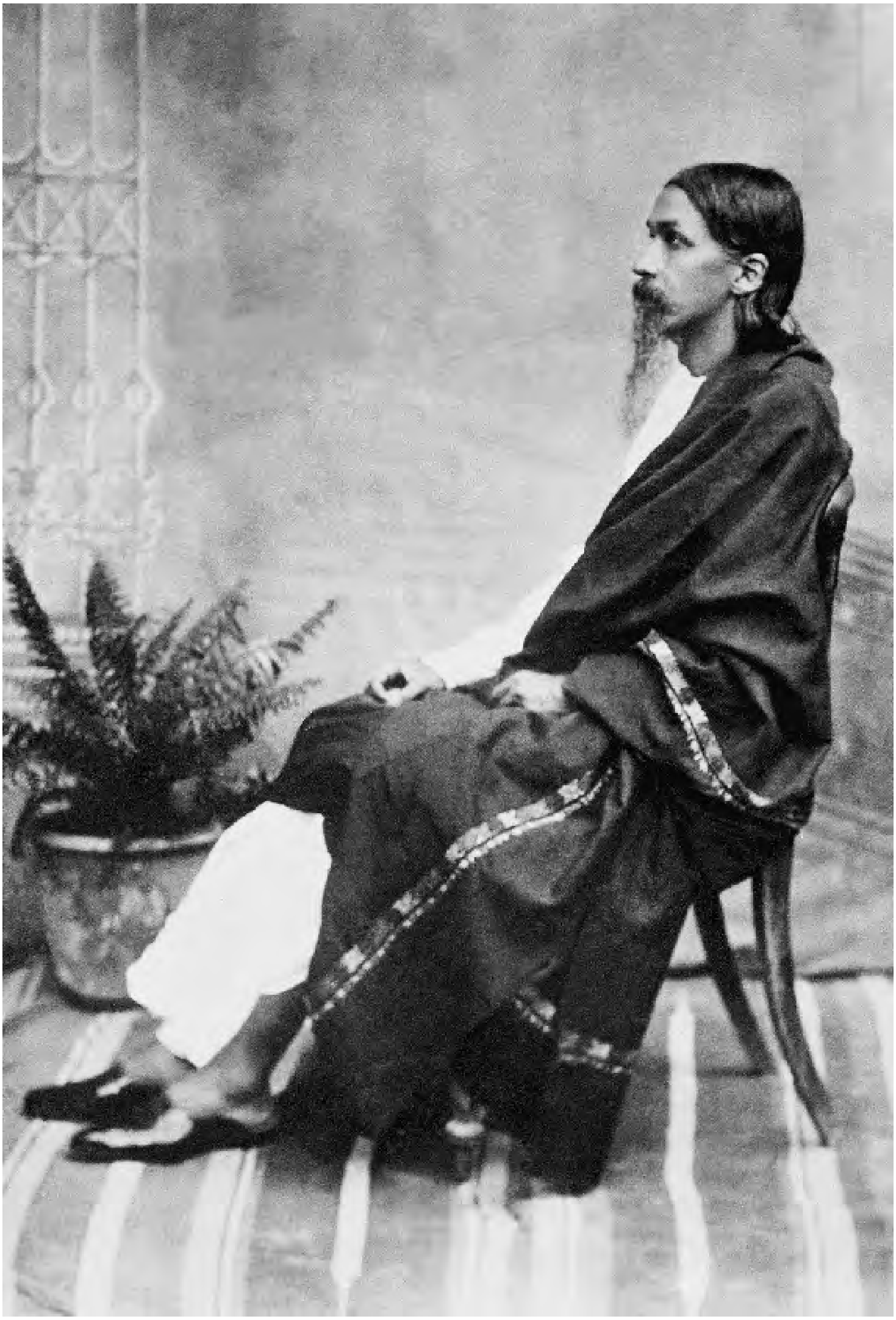

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry

CONTENTS

PART ONE
THE SECRET OF THE VEDA

I
The Problem and Its Solution 3

II
A Retrospect of Vedic Theory 10

III
Modern Theories 24

IV
The Foundations of the Psychological Theory 34

V
The Philological Method of the Veda 48

VI
Agni and the Truth 58

VII
Varuna-Mitra and the Truth 70

VIII
The Ashwins — Indra — the Vishwadevas 80

IX
Saraswati and Her Consorts 91

X
The Image of the Oceans and the Rivers 100

XI
The Seven Rivers 109

XII
The Herds of the Dawn 123

XIII
Dawn and the Truth 131

XIV
The Cow and the Angiras Legend 138

XV
The Lost Sun and the Lost Cows 149

XVI
The Angiras Rishis 159

XVII
The Seven-Headed Thought, Swar and the Dashagwas 173

XVIII
The Human Fathers 187

XIX
The Victory of the Fathers 199

XX
The Hound of Heaven 211

XXI
The Sons of Darkness 223

XXII
The Conquest over the Dasyus 232

XXIII
Summary of Conclusions 241

PART TWO

SELECTED HYMNS

I
The Colloquy of Indra and Agastya (I.170) 253

II
Indra, Giver of Light (I.4) 257

III
Indra and the Thought-Forces (I.171) 266

IV
Agni, the Illumined Will (I.77) 276

V
Surya Savitri, Creator and Increaser (V.81) 285

VI
The Divine Dawn (III.61) 293

VII
To Bhaga Savitri, the Enjoyer (V.82) 299

VIII
Vayu, the Master of the Life Energies (IV.48) 306

IX
Brihaspati, Power of the Soul (IV.50) 315

X
The Ashwins, Lords of Bliss (IV.45) 326

XI
The Ribhus, Artisans of Immortality (I.20) 336

XII
Vishnu, the All-Pervading Godhead (I.154) 343

XIII
Soma, Lord of Delight and Immortality (IX.83) 351

PART THREE

HYMNS OF THE ATRIS

Foreword 363
The Doctrine of the Mystics 370

Hymns to Agni

Agni, the Divine Will-Force 387
Hymns to Agni (V.1 – 28) 393

Hymns to the Lords of Light

The Guardians of the Light 473
Hymns to Mitra-Varuna (V.62 – 72) 518
Hymn to Varuna (V.85) 544
Hymns to the Dawn (V.79, 80) 549
A Hymn to Savitri (V.81) 555

PART FOUR
OTHER HYMNS

A Vedic Hymn (VII.60) 559
A Hymn of the Thought-Gods (based on V.52 – 61) 562
The God of the Mystic Wine (IX.75, 42) 565
The Vedic Fire (I.94, 97) 568
A Vedic Hymn to the Fire (I.59) 574
Parashara's Hymns to the Lord of the Flame (I.65 – 73) 576

APPENDIX

Interpretation of the Veda 593

Part One

The Secret of the Veda

Chapter I

The Problem and Its Solution

IS THERE at all or is there still a secret of the Veda?

According to current conceptions the heart of that ancient mystery has been plucked out and revealed to the gaze of all, or rather no real secret ever existed. The hymns of the Veda are the sacrificial compositions of a primitive and still barbarous race written around a system of ceremonial and propitiatory rites, addressed to personified Powers of Nature and replete with a confused mass of half-formed myth and crude astronomical allegories yet in the making. Only in the later hymns do we perceive the first appearance of deeper psychological and moral ideas — borrowed, some think, from the hostile Dravidians, the "robbers" and "Veda-haters" freely cursed in the hymns themselves, — and, however acquired, the first seed of the later Vedantic speculations. This modern theory is in accord with the received idea of a rapid human evolution from the quite recent savage; it is supported by an imposing apparatus of critical research and upheld by a number of Sciences, unhappily still young and still largely conjectural in their methods and shifting in their results, — Comparative Philology, Comparative Mythology and the Science of Comparative Religion.

It is my object in these chapters to suggest a new view of the ancient problem. I do not propose to use a negative and destructive method directed against the received solutions, but simply to present, positively and constructively, a larger and, in some sort, a complementary hypothesis built upon broader foundations, — a hypothesis which, in addition, may shed light on one or two important problems in the history of ancient thought and cult left very insufficiently solved by the ordinary theories.

We have in the Rig Veda, — the true and only Veda in the estimation of European scholars, — a body of sacrificial hymns couched in a very ancient language which presents a number of almost insoluble difficulties. It is full of ancient forms and words which do not appear in later speech and have often to be fixed in some doubtful sense by intelligent conjecture; a mass even of the words that it has in common with classical Sanskrit seem to bear or at least to admit another significance than in the later literary tongue; and a multitude of its vocables, especially the most common, those which are most vital to the sense, are capable of a surprising number of unconnected significances which may give, according to our preference in selection, quite different complexions to whole passages, whole hymns and even to the whole thought of the Veda. In the course of several thousands of years there have been at least three considerable attempts, entirely differing from each other in their methods and results, to fix the sense of these ancient litanies. One of these is prehistoric in time and exists only by fragments in the Brahmanas and Upanishads; but we possess in its entirety the traditional interpretation of the Indian scholar Sayana and we have in our own day the interpretation constructed after an immense labour of comparison and conjecture by modern European scholarship. Both of them present one characteristic in common, the extraordinary incoherence and poverty of sense which their results stamp upon the ancient hymns. The separate lines can be given, whether naturally or by force of conjecture, a good sense or a sense that hangs together; the diction that results, if garish in style, if loaded with otiose and decorative epithets, if developing extraordinarily little of meaning in an amazing mass of gaudy figure and verbiage, can be made to run into intelligible sentences; but when we come to read the hymns as a whole we seem to be in the presence of men who, unlike the early writers of other races, were incapable of coherent and natural expression or of connected thought. Except in the briefer and simpler hymns, the language tends to be either obscure or artificial; the thoughts are either unconnected or have to be forced and beaten by the interpreter into a whole. The scholar in dealing with his text is obliged to substitute for interpretation a process almost of fabrication. We feel that he is not so much revealing the sense as hammering and forging rebellious material into some sort of shape and consistency.

Yet these obscure and barbarous compositions have had the most splendid good fortune in all literary history. They have been the reputed source not only of some of the world's richest and profoundest religions, but of some of its subtlest metaphysical philosophies. In the fixed tradition of thousands of years they have been revered as the origin and standard of all that can be held as authoritative and true in Brahmana and Upanishad, in Tantra and Purana, in the doctrines of great philosophical schools and in the teachings of famous saints and sages. The name borne by them was Veda, the knowledge, — the received name for the highest spiritual truth of which the human mind is capable. But if we accept the current interpretations, whether Sayana's or the modern theory, the whole of this sublime and sacred reputation is a colossal fiction. The hymns are, on the contrary, nothing more than the naive superstitious fancies of untaught and materialistic barbarians concerned only with the most external gains and enjoyments and ignorant of all but the most elementary moral notions or religious aspirations. Nor do occasional passages, quite out of harmony with their general spirit, destroy this total impression. The true foundation or starting-point of the later religions and philosophies is the Upanishads, which have then to be conceived as a revolt of philosophical and speculative minds against the ritualistic materialism of the Vedas.

But this conception, supported by misleading European parallels, really explains nothing. Such profound and ultimate thoughts, such systems of subtle and elaborate psychology as are found in the substance of the Upanishads, do not spring out of a previous void. The human mind in its progress marches from knowledge to knowledge, or it renews and enlarges previous knowledge that has been obscured and overlaid, or it seizes on old imperfect clues and is led by them to new discoveries. The thought of the Upanishads supposes great origins anterior to itself, and these in the ordinary theories are lacking. The hypothesis, invented to fill the gap, that these ideas were borrowed by barbarous Aryan invaders from the civilised Dravidians, is a conjecture supported only by other conjectures. It is indeed coming to be doubted whether the whole story of an Aryan invasion through the Punjab is not a myth of the philologists.

Now, in ancient Europe the schools of intellectual philosophy were preceded by the secret doctrines of the mystics; Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries prepared the rich soil of mentality out of which sprang Pythagoras and Plato. A similar starting-point is at least probable for the later march of thought in India. Much indeed of the forms and symbols of thought which we find in the Upanishads, much of the substance of the Brahmanas supposes a period in India in which thought took the form or the veil of secret teachings such as those of the Greek mysteries.

Another hiatus left by the received theories is the gulf that divides the material worship of external Nature-Powers in the Veda from the developed religion of the Greeks and from the psychological and spiritual ideas we find attached to the functions of the Gods in the Upanishads and Puranas. We may accept for the present the theory that the earliest fully intelligent form of human religion is necessarily, — since man on earth begins from the external and proceeds to the internal, — a worship of outward Nature-Powers invested with the consciousness and the personality that he finds in his own being.

Agni in the Veda is avowedly Fire; Surya is the Sun, Parjanya the Raincloud, Usha the Dawn; and if the material origin or function of some other Gods is less trenchantly clear, it is easy to render the obscure precise by philological inferences or ingenious speculation. But when we come to the worship of the Greeks not much later in date than the Veda, according to modern ideas of chronology, we find a significant change. The material attributes of the Gods are effaced or have become subordinate to psychological conceptions. The impetuous God of Fire has been converted into a lame God of Labour; Apollo, the Sun, presides over poetical and prophetic inspiration; Athene, who may plausibly be identified as in origin a Dawn-Goddess, has lost all memory of her material functions and is the wise, strong and pure Goddess of Knowledge; and there are other deities also, Gods of War, Love, Beauty, whose material functions have disappeared if they ever existed. It is not enough to say that this change was inevitable with the progress of human civilisation: the process also of the change demands inquiry and elucidation. We see the same revolution effected in the Puranas partly by the substitution of other divine names and figures, but also in part by the same obscure process that we observe in the evolution of Greek mythology. The river Saraswati has become the Muse and Goddess of Learning; Vishnu and Rudra of the Vedas are now the supreme Godhead, members of a divine Triad and expressive separately of conservative and destructive process in the cosmos. In the Isha Upanishad we find an appeal to Surya as a God of revelatory knowledge by whose action we can arrive at the highest truth. This, too, is his function in the sacred Vedic formula of the Gayatri which was for thousands of years repeated by every Brahmin in his daily meditation; and we may note that this formula is a verse from the Rig Veda, from a hymn of the Rishi Vishwamitra. In the same Upanishad, Agni is invoked for purely moral functions as the purifier from sin, the leader of the soul by the good path to the divine Bliss, and he seems to be identified with the power of the will and responsible for human actions. In other Upanishads the Gods are clearly the symbols of sense-functions in man. Soma, the plant which yielded the mystic wine for the Vedic sacrifice, has become not only the God of the moon, but manifests himself as mind in the human being. These evolutions suppose some period, posterior to the early material worship or superior Pantheistic Animism attributed to the Vedas and prior to the developed Puranic mythology, in which the gods became invested with deeper psychological functions, a period which may well have been the Age of the Mysteries. As things stand, a gap is left or else has been created by our exclusive preoccupation with the naturalistic element in the religion of the Vedic Rishis.

I suggest that the gulf is of our own creation and does not really exist in the ancient sacred writings. The hypothesis I propose is that the Rig Veda is itself the one considerable document that remains to us from the early period of human thought of which the historic Eleusinian and Orphic mysteries were the failing remnants, when the spiritual and psychological knowledge of the race was concealed, for reasons now difficult to determine, in a veil of concrete and material figures and symbols which protected the sense from the profane and revealed it to the initiated. One of the leading principles of the mystics was the sacredness and secrecy of self-knowledge and the true knowledge of the Gods. This wisdom was, they thought, unfit, perhaps even dangerous to the ordinary human mind or in any case liable to perversion and misuse and loss of virtue if revealed to vulgar and unpurified spirits. Hence they favoured the existence of an outer worship, effective but imperfect, for the profane, an inner discipline for the initiate, and clothed their language in words and images which had, equally, a spiritual sense for the elect, a concrete sense for the mass of ordinary worshippers. The Vedic hymns were conceived and constructed on this principle. Their formulas and ceremonies are, overtly, the details of an outward ritual devised for the Pantheistic Nature-Worship which was then the common religion, covertly the sacred words, the effective symbols of a spiritual experience and knowledge and a psychological discipline of self-culture which were then the highest achievement of the human race. The ritual system recognised by Sayana may, in its externalities, stand; the naturalistic sense discovered by European scholarship may, in its general conceptions, be accepted; but behind them there is always the true and still hidden secret of the Veda, — the secret words, *niṇyā vacāṁsi*, which were spoken for the purified in soul and the awakened in knowledge. To disengage this less obvious but more important sense by fixing the import of Vedic terms, the sense of Vedic symbols and the psychological functions of the Gods is thus a difficult but necessary task, for which these chapters and the translations that accompany them are only a preparation.

The hypothesis, if it proves to be valid, will have three advantages. It will elucidate simply and effectively the parts of the Upanishads that remain yet unintelligible or ill-understood as well as much of the origins of the Puranas. It will explain and justify rationally the whole ancient tradition of India; for it will be found that, in sober truth, the Vedanta, Purana, Tantra, the philosophical schools and the great Indian religions do go back in their source to Vedic origins. We can see there in their original seed or in their early or even primitive forms the fundamental conceptions of later Indian thought. Thus a natural starting-point will be provided for a sounder study of Comparative Religion in the Indian field. Instead of wandering amid insecure speculations or having to account for impossible conversions and unexplained transitions we shall have a clue to a natural and progressive development satisfying to the reason. Incidentally, some light may be thrown on the obscurities of early cult and myth in other ancient nations. Finally, the incoherencies of the Vedic texts will at once be explained and disappear. They exist in appearance only, because the real thread of the sense is to be found in an inner meaning. That thread found, the hymns appear as logical and organic wholes and the expression, though alien in type to our modern ways of thinking and speaking, becomes, in its own style, just and precise and sins rather by economy of phrase than by excess, by over-pregnancy rather than by poverty of sense. The Veda ceases to be merely an interesting remnant of barbarism and takes rank among the most important of the world's early Scriptures.

Chapter II

A Retrospect of Vedic Theory

VEDA, then, is the creation of an age anterior to our intellectual philosophies. In that original epoch thought proceeded by other methods than those of our logical reasoning and speech accepted modes of expression which in our modern habits would be inadmissible. The wisest then depended on inner experience and the suggestions of the intuitive mind for all knowledge that ranged beyond mankind's ordinary perceptions and daily activities. Their aim was illumination, not logical conviction, their ideal the inspired seer, not the accurate reasoner. Indian tradition has faithfully preserved this account of the origin of the Vedas. The Rishi was not the individual composer of the hymn, but the seer (*draṣṭā*) of an eternal truth and an impersonal knowledge. The language of Veda itself is *Śruti*, a rhythm not composed by the intellect but heard, a divine Word that came vibrating out of the Infinite to the inner audience of the man who had previously made himself fit for the impersonal knowledge. The words themselves, *dṛṣṭi* and *śruti*, sight and hearing, are Vedic expressions; these and cognate words signify, in the esoteric terminology of the hymns, revelatory knowledge and the contents of inspiration.

In the Vedic idea of the revelation there is no suggestion of the miraculous or the supernatural. The Rishi who employed these faculties, had acquired them by a progressive self-culture. Knowledge itself was a travelling and a reaching, or a finding and a winning; the revelation came only at the end, the light was the prize of a final victory. There is continually in the Veda this image of the journey, the soul's march on the path of Truth. On that path, as it advances, it also ascends; new vistas of power and light open to its aspiration; it wins by a heroic effort its enlarged spiritual possessions.

From the historical point of view the Rig Veda may be regarded as a record of a great advance made by humanity by special means at a certain period of its collective progress. In its esoteric, as well as its exoteric significance, it is the Book of Works, of the inner and the outer sacrifice; it is the spirit's hymn of battle and victory as it discovers and climbs to planes of thought and experience inaccessible to the natural or animal man, man's praise of the divine Light, Power and Grace at work in the mortal. It is far, therefore, from being an attempt to set down the results of intellectual or imaginative speculation, nor does it consist of the dogmas of a primitive religion. Only, out of the sameness of experience and out of the impersonality of the knowledge received, there arise a fixed body of conceptions constantly repeated and a fixed symbolic language which, perhaps, in that early human speech, was the inevitable form of these conceptions because alone capable by its combined concreteness and power of mystic suggestion of expressing that which for the ordinary mind of the race was inexpressible. We have, at any rate, the same notions repeated from hymn to hymn with the same constant terms and figures and frequently in the same phrases with an entire indifference to any search for poetical originality or any demand for novelty of thought and freshness of language. No pursuit of aesthetic grace, richness or beauty induces these mystic poets to vary the consecrated form which had become for them a sort of divine algebra transmitting the eternal formulae of the Knowledge to the continuous succession of the initiates.

The hymns possess indeed a finished metrical form, a constant subtlety and skill in their technique, great variations of style and poetical personality; they are not the work of rude, barbarous and primitive craftsmen, but the living breath of a supreme and conscious Art forming its creations in the puissant but well-governed movement of a self-observing inspiration. Still, all these high gifts have deliberately been exercised within one unvarying framework and always with the same materials. For the art of expression was to the Rishis only a means, not an aim; their principal preoccupation was strenuously practical, almost utilitarian, in the highest sense of utility. The hymn was to the Rishi who composed it a means of spiritual progress for himself and for others. It rose out of his soul, it became a power of his mind, it was the vehicle of his self-expression in some important or even critical moment of his life's inner history. It helped him to express the god in him, to destroy the devourer, the expresser of evil; it became a weapon in the hands of the Aryan striver after perfection, it flashed forth like Indra's lightning against the Coverer on the slopes, the Wolf on the path, the Robber by the streams.

The invariable fixity of Vedic thought when taken in conjunction with its depth, richness and subtlety, gives rise to some interesting speculations. For we may reasonably argue that such a fixed form and substance would not easily be possible in the beginnings of thought and psychological experience or even during their early progress and unfolding. We may therefore surmise that our actual Sanhita represents the close of a period, not its commencement, nor even some of its successive stages. It is even possible that its most ancient hymns are a comparatively modern development or version of a more ancient[1] lyric evangel couched in the freer and more pliable forms of a still earlier human speech. Or the whole voluminous mass of its litanies may be only a selection by Veda Vyasa out of a more richly vocal Aryan past. Made, according to the common belief, by Krishna of the Isle, the great traditional sage, the colossal compiler (Vyasa), with his face turned towards the commencement of the Iron Age, towards the centuries of increasing twilight and final darkness, it is perhaps only the last testament of the Ages of Intuition, the luminous Dawns of the Forefathers, to their descendants, to a human race already turning in spirit towards the lower levels and the more easy and secure gains — secure perhaps only in appearance — of the physical life and of the intellect and the logical reason.

But these are only speculations and inferences. Certain it is that the old tradition of a progressive obscuration and loss of the Veda as the law of the human cycle has been fully justified by the event. The obscuration had already proceeded far before the opening of the next great age of Indian spirituality, the Vedantic, which struggled to preserve or recover what it yet could of the ancient knowledge. It could hardly have been otherwise. For the system of the Vedic mystics was founded upon experiences difficult to ordinary mankind and proceeded by the aid of faculties which in most of us are rudimentary and imperfectly developed and, when active at all, are mixed and irregular in their operation. Once the first intensity of the search after truth had passed, periods of fatigue and relaxation were bound to intervene in which the old truths would be partially lost. Nor once lost, could they easily be recovered by scrutinising the sense of the ancient hymns; for those hymns were couched in a language that was deliberately ambiguous.

---

[1] The Veda itself speaks constantly of "ancient" and "modern" Rishis, (*pūrvaḥ* . . . *nūtanaḥ*), the former remote enough to be regarded as a kind of demigods, the first founders of knowledge.

A tongue unintelligible to us may be correctly understood once a clue has been found; a diction that is deliberately ambiguous, holds its secret much more obstinately and successfully, for it is full of lures and of indications that mislead. Therefore when the Indian mind turned again to review the sense of Veda, the task was difficult and the success only partial. One source of light still existed, the traditional knowledge handed down among those who memorised and explained the Vedic text or had charge of the Vedic ritual, — two functions that had originally been one; for in the early days the priest was also the teacher and seer. But the clearness of this light was already obscured. Even Purohits of repute performed the rites with a very imperfect knowledge of the power and the sense of the sacred words which they repeated. For the material aspects of Vedic worship had grown like a thick crust over the inner knowledge and were stifling what they had once served to protect. The Veda was already a mass of myth and ritual. The power had begun to disappear out of the symbolic ceremony; the light had departed from the mystic parable and left only a surface of apparent grotesqueness and naivete.

The Brahmanas and the Upanishads are the record of a powerful revival which took the sacred text and ritual as a starting-point for a new statement of spiritual thought and experience. This movement had two complementary aspects, one, the conservation of the forms, another the revelation of the soul of Veda, — the first represented by the Brahmanas,[2] the second by the Upanishads.

The Brahmanas labour to fix and preserve the minutiae of the Vedic ceremony, the conditions of their material effectuality, the symbolic sense and purpose of their different parts, movements, implements, the significance of texts important in the ritual, the drift of obscure allusions, the memory of ancient myths and traditions. Many of their legends are evidently posterior to the hymns, invented to explain passages which were no longer understood; others may have been part of the apparatus of original myth and parable employed by the ancient symbolists or memories of the actual historical circumstances surrounding the composition of the hymns. Oral tradition is always a light that obscures; a new symbolism working upon an old that is half lost, is likely to overgrow rather than reveal it; therefore the Brahmanas, though full of interesting hints, help us very little in our research; nor are they a safe guide to the meaning of separate texts when they attempt an exact and verbal interpretation.

The Rishis of the Upanishads followed another method. They sought to recover the lost or waning knowledge by meditation and spiritual experience and they used the text of the ancient mantras as a prop or an authority for their own intuitions and perceptions; or else the Vedic Word was a seed of thought and vision by which they recovered old truths in new forms. What they found, they expressed in other terms more intelligible to the age in which they lived. In a certain sense their handling of the texts was not disinterested; it was not governed by the scholar's scrupulous desire to arrive at the exact intention of the words and the precise thought of the sentences in their actual framing. They were seekers of a higher than verbal truth and used words merely as suggestions for the illumination towards which they were striving. They knew not or they neglected the etymological sense and employed often a method of symbolic interpretation of component sounds in which it is very difficult to follow them. For this reason, while the Upanishads are invaluable for the light they shed on the principal ideas and on the psychological system of the ancient Rishis, they help us as little as the Brahmanas in determining the accurate sense of the texts which they quote. Their real work was to found Vedanta rather than to interpret Veda.

---

[2] Necessarily, these and other appreciations in the chapter are brief and summary views of certain main tendencies. The Brahmanas for instance have their philosophical passages.

For this great movement resulted in a new and more permanently powerful statement of thought and spirituality, Veda culminating in Vedanta. And it held in itself two strong tendencies which worked towards the disintegration of the old Vedic thought and culture. First, it tended to subordinate more and more completely the outward ritual, the material utility of the mantra and the sacrifice to a more purely spiritual aim and intention. The balance, the synthesis preserved by the old Mystics between the external and the internal, the material and the spiritual life was displaced and disorganised. A new balance, a new synthesis was established, leaning finally towards asceticism and renunciation, and maintained itself until it was in its turn displaced and disorganised by the exaggeration of its own tendencies in Buddhism. The sacrifice, the symbolic ritual became more and more a useless survival and even an encumbrance; yet, as so often happens, by the very fact of becoming mechanical and ineffective the importance of everything that was most external in them came to be exaggerated and their minutiae irrationally enforced by that part of the national mind which still clung to them. A sharp practical division came into being, effective though never entirely recognised in theory, between Veda and Vedanta, a distinction which might be expressed in the formula, "the Veda for the priests, the Vedanta for the sages."

The second tendency of the Vedantic movement was to disencumber itself progressively of the symbolic language, the veil of concrete myth and poetic figure, in which the Mystics had shrouded their thought and to substitute a clearer statement and more philosophical language. The complete evolution of this tendency rendered obsolete the utility not only of the Vedic ritual but of the Vedic text. Upanishads, increasingly clear and direct in their language, became the fountainhead of the highest Indian thought and replaced the inspired verses of Vasishtha and Vishwamitra.[3] The Vedas, becoming less and less the indispensable basis of education, were no longer studied with the same zeal and intelligence; their symbolic language, ceasing to be used, lost the remnant of its inner sense to new generations whose whole manner of thought was different from that of the Vedic forefathers. The Ages of Intuition were passing away into the first dawn of the Age of Reason.

Buddhism completed the revolution and left of the externalities of the ancient world only some venerable pomps and some mechanical usages. It sought to abolish the Vedic sacrifice and to bring into use the popular vernacular in place of the literary tongue. And although the consummation of its work was delayed for several centuries by the revival of Hinduism in the Puranic religions, the Veda itself benefited little by this respite. In order to combat the popularity of the new religion it was necessary to put forward instead of venerable but unintelligible texts Scriptures written in an easy form of a more modern Sanskrit. For the mass of the nation the Puranas pushed aside the Veda and the forms of new religious systems took the place of the ancient ceremonies. As the Veda had passed from the sage to the priest, so now it began to pass from the hands of the priest into the hands of the scholar. And in that keeping it suffered the last mutilation of its sense and the last diminution of its true dignity and sanctity.

Not that the dealings of Indian scholarship with the hymns, beginning from the pre-Christian centuries, have been altogether a record of loss. Rather it is to the scrupulous diligence and conservative tradition of the Pandits that we owe the preservation of Veda at all after its secret had been lost and the hymns themselves had ceased in practice to be a living Scripture. And even for the recovery of the lost secret the two millenniums of scholastic orthodoxy have left us some invaluable aids, a text determined scrupulously to its very accentuation, the important lexicon of Yaska and Sayana's great commentary which in spite of its many and often startling imperfections remains still for the scholar an indispensable first step towards the formation of a sound Vedic learning.

---

[3] Again this expresses the main tendency and is subject to qualification. The Vedas are also quoted as authorities; but as a whole it is the Upanishads that become the Book of Knowledge, the Veda being rather the Book of Works.

THE SCHOLARS

The text of the Veda which we possess has remained uncorrupted for over two thousand years. It dates, so far as we know, from that great period of Indian intellectual activity, contemporaneous with the Greek efflorescence, but earlier in its beginnings, which founded the culture and civilisation recorded in the classical literature of the land. We cannot say to how much earlier a date our text may be carried. But there are certain considerations which justify us in supposing for it an almost enormous antiquity. An accurate text, accurate in every syllable, accurate in every accent, was a matter of supreme importance to the Vedic ritualists; for on scrupulous accuracy depended the effectuality of the sacrifice. We are told, for instance, in the Brahmanas the story of Twashtri who, performing a sacrifice to produce an avenger of his son slain by Indra, produced, owing to an error of accentuation, not a slayer of Indra, but one of whom Indra must be the slayer. The prodigious accuracy of the ancient Indian memory is also notorious. And the sanctity of the text prevented such interpolations, alterations, modernising revisions as have replaced by the present form of the Mahabharata the ancient epic of the Kurus. It is not, therefore, at all improbable that we have the Sanhita of Vyasa substantially as it was arranged by the great sage and compiler.

Substantially, not in its present written form. Vedic prosody differed in many respects from the prosody of classical Sanskrit and, especially, employed a greater freedom in the use of that principle of euphonic combination of separate words (*sandhi*) which is so peculiar a feature of the literary tongue. The Vedic

Rishis, as was natural in a living speech, followed the ear rather than fixed rule; sometimes they combined the separate words, sometimes they left them uncombined. But when the Veda came to be written down, the law of euphonic combination had assumed a much more despotic authority over the language and the ancient text was written by the grammarians as far as possible in consonance with its regulations. They were careful, however, to accompany it with another text, called the Padapatha, in which all euphonic combinations were again resolved into the original and separate words and even the components of compound words indicated.

It is a notable tribute to the fidelity of the ancient memorisers that, instead of the confusion to which this system might so easily have given rise, it is always perfectly easy to resolve the formal text into the original harmonies of Vedic prosody. And very few are the instances in which the exactness or the sound judgment of the Padapatha can be called into question.

We have, then, as our basis a text which we can confidently accept and which, even if we hold it in a few instances doubtful or defective, does not at any rate call for that often licentious labour of emendation to which some of the European classics lend themselves. This is, to start with, a priceless advantage for which we cannot be too grateful to the conscientiousness of the old Indian learning.

In certain other directions it might not be safe always to follow implicitly the scholastic tradition, — as in the ascription of the Vedic poems to their respective Rishis, wherever older tradition was not firm and sound. But these are details of minor importance. Nor is there, in my view, any good reason to doubt that we have the hymns arrayed, for the most part, in the right order of their verses and in their exact entirety. The exceptions, if they exist, are negligible in number and importance. When the hymns seem to us incoherent, it is because we do not understand them. Once the clue is found, we discover that they are perfect wholes as admirable in the structure of their thought as in their language and their rhythms.

It is when we come to the interpretation of the Veda and seek help from ancient Indian scholarship that we feel compelled to make the largest reserves. For even in the earlier days of classical erudition the ritualistic view of the Veda was already dominant, the original sense of the words, the lines, the allusions, the clue to the structure of the thought had been long lost or obscured; nor was there in the erudite that intuition or that spiritual experience which might have partly recovered the lost secret. In such a field mere learning, especially when it is accompanied by an ingenious scholastic mind, is as often a snare as a guide.

In Yaska's lexicon, our most important help, we have to distinguish between two elements of very disparate value. When Yaska gives as a lexicographer the various meanings of Vedic words, his authority is great and the help he gives is of the first importance. It does not appear that he possessed all the ancient significances, for many had been obliterated by Time and Change and in the absence of a scientific Philology could not be restored. But much also had been preserved by tradition. Wherever Yaska preserves this tradition and does not use a grammarian's ingenuity, the meanings he assigns to words, although not always applicable to the text to which he refers them, can yet be confirmed as possible senses by a sound Philology. But Yaska the etymologist does not rank with Yaska the lexicographer. Scientific grammar was first developed by Indian learning, but the beginnings of sound philology we owe to modern research. Nothing can be more fanciful and lawless than the methods of mere ingenuity used by the old etymologists down even to the nineteenth century, whether in Europe or India. And when Yaska follows these methods, we are obliged to part company with him entirely. Nor in his interpretation of particular texts is he more convincing than the later erudition of Sayana.

The commentary of Sayana closes the period of original and living scholastic work on the Veda which Yaska's Nirukta among other important authorities may be said to open. The lexicon was compiled in the earlier vigour of the Indian mind when it was assembling its prehistoric gains as the materials of a fresh outburst of originality; the Commentary is almost the last great work of the kind left to us by the classical tradition in its final refuge and centre in Southern India before the old culture was dislocated and broken into regional fragments by the shock of the Mahomedan conquest. Since then we have had jets of strong and original effort, scattered attempts at new birth and novel combination, but work of quite this general, massive and monumental character has hardly been possible.

The commanding merits of this great legacy of the past are obvious. Composed by Sayana with the aid of the most learned scholars of his time, it is a work representing an enormous labour of erudition, more perhaps than could have been commanded at that time by a single brain. Yet it bears the stamp of the coordinating mind. It is consistent in the mass in spite of its many inconsistencies of detail, largely planned, yet most simply, composed in a style lucid, terse and possessed of an almost literary grace one would have thought impossible in the traditional form of the Indian commentary. Nowhere is there any display of pedantry; the struggle with the difficulties of the text is skilfully veiled and there is an air of clear acuteness and of assured, yet unassuming authority which imposes even on the dissident. The first Vedic scholars in Europe admired especially the rationality of Sayana's interpretations.

Yet, even for the external sense of the Veda, it is not possible to follow either Sayana's method or his results without the largest reservation. It is not only that he admits in his method licences of language and construction which are unnecessary and sometimes incredible, nor that he arrives at his results, often, by a surprising inconsistency in his interpretation of common Vedic terms and even of fixed Vedic formulae. These are defects of detail, unavoidable perhaps in the state of the materials with which he had to deal. But it is the central defect of Sayana's system that he is obsessed always by the ritualistic formula and seeks continually to force the sense of the Veda into that narrow mould. So he loses many clues of the greatest suggestiveness and importance for the external sense of the ancient Scripture, — a problem quite as interesting as its internal sense. The outcome is a representation of the Rishis, their thoughts, their culture, their aspirations, so narrow and poverty-stricken that, if accepted, it renders the ancient reverence for the Veda, its sacred authority, its divine reputation quite incomprehensible to the reason or only explicable as a blind and unquestioning tradition of faith starting from an original error.

There are indeed other aspects and elements in the commentary, but they are subordinate or subservient to the main idea. Sayana and his helpers had to work upon a great mass of often conflicting speculation and tradition which still survived from the past. To some of its elements they had to give a formal adhesion, to others they felt bound to grant minor concessions. It is possible that to Sayana's skill in evolving out of previous uncertainty or even confusion an interpretation which had firm shape and consistence, is due the great and long-unquestioned authority of his work.

The first element with which Sayana had to deal, the most interesting to us, was the remnant of the old spiritual, philosophic or psychological interpretations of the Sruti which were the true foundation of its sanctity. So far as these had entered into the current or orthodox[4] conception, Sayana admits them; but they form an exceptional element in his work, insignificant in bulk and in importance. Occasionally he gives a passing mention or concession to less current psychological renderings. He mentions, for instance, but not to admit it, an old interpretation of Vritra as the Coverer who holds back from man the objects of his desire and his aspirations. For Sayana Vritra is either simply the enemy or the physical cloud-demon who holds back the waters and has to be pierced by the Rain-giver.

A second element is the mythological, or, as it might almost be called, the Puranic, — myths and stories of the gods given in their outward form without that deeper sense and symbolic fact which is the justifying truth of all Purana.[5]

---

[4] I use the word loosely. The terms orthodox and heterodox in the European or sectarian sense have no true application to India where opinion has always been free.

[5] There is reason to suppose that Purana (legend and apologue) and Itihasa (historical tradition) were parts of Vedic culture long before the present forms of the Puranas and historical Epics were evolved.

A third element is the legendary and historic, the stories of old kings and Rishis, given in the Brahmanas or by later tradition in explanation of the obscure allusions of the Veda. Sayana's dealings with this element are marked by some hesitation. Often he accepts them as the right interpretation of the hymns; sometimes he gives an alternative sense with which he has evidently more intellectual sympathy, but wavers between the two authorities.

More important is the element of naturalistic interpretation. Not only are there the obvious or the traditional identifications, Indra, the Maruts, the triple Agni, Surya, Usha, but we find that Mitra was identified with the Day, Varuna with the Night, Aryaman and Bhaga with the Sun, the Ribhus with its rays. We have here the seeds of that naturalistic theory of the Veda to which European learning has given so wide an extension. The old Indian scholars did not use the same freedom or the same systematic minuteness in their speculations. Still this element in Sayana's commentary is the true parent of the European Science of Comparative Mythology.

But it is the ritualistic conception that pervades; that is the persistent note in which all others lose themselves. In the formula of the philosophic schools, the hymns, even while standing as a supreme authority for knowledge, are yet principally and fundamentally concerned with the Karmakanda, with works, — and by works was understood, preeminently, the ritualistic observation of the Vedic sacrifices. Sayana labours always in the light of this idea. Into this mould he moulds the language of the Veda, turning the mass of its characteristic words into the ritualistic significances, — food, priest, giver, wealth, praise, prayer, rite, sacrifice.

Wealth and food; — for it is the most egoistic and materialistic objects that are proposed as the aim of the sacrifice, possessions, strength, power, children, servants, gold, horses, cows, victory, the slaughter and the plunder of enemies, the destruction of rival and malevolent critic. As one reads and finds hymn after hymn interpreted in this sense, one begins to understand better the apparent inconsistency in the attitude of the Gita which, regarding always the Veda as divine knowledge,[6] yet censures severely the champions of an exclusive Vedism,[7] all whose flowery teachings were devoted solely to material wealth, power and enjoyment.

It is the final and authoritative binding of the Veda to this lowest of all its possible senses that has been the most unfortunate result of Sayana's commentary. The dominance of the ritualistic interpretation had already deprived India of the living use of its greatest Scripture and of the true clue to the entire sense of the Upanishads. Sayana's commentary put a seal of finality on the old misunderstanding which could not be broken for many centuries. And its suggestions, when another civilisation discovered and set itself to study the Veda, became in the European mind the parent of fresh errors.

Nevertheless, if Sayana's work has been a key turned with double lock on the inner sense of the Veda, it is yet indispensable for opening the antechambers of Vedic learning. All the vast labour of European erudition has not been able to replace its utility. At every step we are obliged to differ from it, but at every step we are obliged to use it. It is a necessary springing-board, or a stair that we have to use for entrance, though we must leave it behind if we wish to pass forwards into the penetralia.

---

[6] Gita XV.15.
[7] Ibid. II.42.

Chapter III

Modern Theories

IT WAS the curiosity of a foreign culture that broke after many centuries the seal of final authoritativeness which Sayana had fixed on the ritualistic interpretation of the Veda. The ancient Scripture was delivered over to a scholarship laborious, bold in speculation, ingenious in its flights of fancy, conscientious according to its own lights, but ill-fitted to understand the method of the old mystic poets; for it was void of any sympathy with that ancient temperament, unprovided with any clue in its own intellectual or spiritual environment to the ideas hidden in the Vedic figures and parables. The result has been of a double character, on the one side the beginnings of a more minute, thorough and careful as well as a freer handling of the problems of Vedic interpretation, on the other hand a final exaggeration of its apparent material sense and the complete obscuration of its true and inner secret.

In spite of the hardiness of its speculations and its freedom in discovery or invention the Vedic scholarship of Europe has really founded itself throughout on the traditional elements preserved in Sayana's commentary and has not attempted an entirely independent handling of the problem. What it found in Sayana and in the Brahmanas it has developed in the light of modern theories and modern knowledge; by ingenious deductions from the comparative method applied to philology, mythology and history, by large amplifications of the existing data with the aid of ingenious speculation, by unification of the scattered indications available it has built up a complete theory of Vedic mythology, Vedic history, Vedic civilisation which fascinates by its detail and thoroughness and conceals by its apparent sureness of method the fact that this imposing edifice has been founded, for the most part, on the sands of conjecture.

The modern theory of the Veda starts with the conception, for which Sayana is responsible, of the Vedas as the hymnal of an early, primitive and largely barbaric society crude in its moral and religious conceptions, rude in its social structure and entirely childlike in its outlook upon the world that environed it. The ritualism which Sayana accepted as part of a divine knowledge and as endowed with a mysterious efficacy, European scholarship accepted as an elaboration of the old savage propitiatory sacrifices offered to imaginary superhuman personalities who might be benevolent or malevolent according as they were worshipped or neglected. The historical element admitted by Sayana was readily seized on and enlarged by new renderings and new explanations of the allusions in the hymns developed in an eager hunt for clues to the primitive history, manners and institutions of those barbarous races. The naturalistic element played a still more important role. The obvious identification of the Vedic gods in their external aspects with certain Nature-Powers was used as the starting-point for a comparative study of Aryan mythologies; the hesitating identification of certain of the less prominent deities as Sun-Powers was taken as a general clue to the system of primitive myth-making and elaborate sun-myth and star-myth theories of comparative mythology were founded. In this new light the Vedic hymnology has come to be interpreted as a half-superstitious, half-poetic allegory of Nature with an important astronomical element. The rest is partly contemporary history, partly the formulae and practices of a sacrificial ritualism, not mystic, but merely primitive and superstitious.

This interpretation is in entire harmony with the scientific theories of early human culture and of the recent emergence from the mere savage which were in vogue throughout the nineteenth century and are even now dominant. But the increase of our knowledge has considerably shaken this first and too hasty generalisation. We now know that remarkable civilisations existed in China, Egypt, Chaldea, Assyria many thousands of years ago, and it is now coming generally to be agreed that Greece and India were no exceptions to the general high culture of Asia and the Mediterranean races. If the Vedic Indians do not get the benefit of this revised knowledge, it is due to the survival of the theory with which European erudition started, that they belonged to the so-called Aryan race and were on the same level of culture with the early Aryan Greeks, Celts, Germans as they are represented to us in the Homeric poems, the old Norse Sagas and the Roman accounts of the ancient Gaul and Teuton. Hence has arisen the theory that these Aryan races were northern barbarians who broke in from their colder climes on the old and rich civilisations of Mediterranean Europe and Dravidian India.

But the indications in the Veda on which this theory of a recent Aryan invasion is built, are very scanty in quantity and uncertain in their significance. There is no actual mention of any such invasion. The distinction between Aryan and un-Aryan on which so much has been built, seems on the mass of the evidence to indicate a cultural rather than a racial difference.[1] The language of the hymns clearly points to a particular worship or spiritual culture as the distinguishing sign of the Aryan, — a worship of Light and of the powers of Light and a self-discipline based on the culture of the "Truth" and the aspiration to Immortality, — Ritam and Amritam. There is no reliable indication of any racial difference. It is always possible that the bulk of the peoples now inhabiting India may have been the descendants of a new race from more northern latitudes, even perhaps, as argued by Mr. Tilak, from the Arctic regions; but there is nothing in the Veda, as there is nothing in the present ethnological features[2] of the country to prove that this descent took place near to the time of the Vedic hymns or was the slow penetration of a small body of fair-skinned barbarians into a civilised Dravidian peninsula.

---

[1] It is urged that the Dasyus are described as black of skin and noseless in opposition to the fair and high-nosed Aryans. But the former distinction is certainly applied to the Aryan Gods and the Dasa Powers in the sense of light and darkness, and the word *anāsaḥ* does not mean noseless. Even if it did, it would be wholly inapplicable to the Dravidian races; for the southern nose can give as good an account of itself as any "Aryan" proboscis in the North.

[2] In India we are chiefly familiar with the old philological divisions of the Indian races and with the speculations of Mr. Risley which are founded upon these earlier generalisations. But a more advanced ethnology rejects all linguistic tests and leans to the idea of a single homogeneous race inhabiting the Indian peninsula.

Nor is it a certain conclusion from the data we possess that the early Aryan cultures — supposing the Celt, Teuton, Greek and Indian to represent one common cultural origin, — were really undeveloped and barbarous. A certain pure and high simplicity in their outward life and its organisation, a certain concreteness and vivid human familiarity in their conception of and relations with the gods they worshipped, distinguish the Aryan type from the more sumptuous and materialistic Egypto-Chaldean civilisation and its solemn and occult religions. But those characteristics are not inconsistent with a high internal culture. On the contrary, indications of a great spiritual tradition meet us at many points and negate the ordinary theory. The old Celtic races certainly possessed some of the highest philosophical conceptions and they preserve stamped upon them even to the present day the result of an early mystic and intuitional development which must have been of long standing and highly evolved to have produced such enduring results. In Greece it is probable that the Hellenic type was moulded in the same way by Orphic and Eleusinian influences and that Greek mythology, as it has come down to us, full of delicate psychological suggestions, is a legacy of the Orphic teaching. It would be only consonant with the general tradition if it turned out that Indian civilisation has throughout been the prolongation of tendencies and ideas sown in us by the Vedic forefathers. The extraordinary vitality of these early cultures which still determine for us the principal types of modern man, the main elements of his temperament, the chief tendencies of his thought, art and religion, can have proceeded from no primitive savagery. They are the result of a deep and puissant prehistoric development.

Comparative Mythology has deformed the sense of man's early traditions by ignoring this important stage in human progress. It has founded its interpretation on a theory which saw nothing between the early savage and Plato or the Upanishads. It has supposed the early religions to have been founded on the wonder of barbarians waking up suddenly to the astonishing fact that such strange things as Dawn and Night and the Sun existed and attempting in a crude, barbaric, imaginative way to explain their existence. And from this childlike wonder we stride at one step to the profound theories of the Greek philosophers and the Vedantic sages. Comparative Mythology is the creation of Hellenists interpreting un-Hellenic data from a standpoint which is itself founded on a misunderstanding of the Greek mind. Its method has been an ingenious play of the poetic imagination rather than a patient scientific research.

If we look at the results of the method, we find an extraordinary confusion of images and of their interpretations in which there is nowhere any coherence or consistency. It is a mass of details running into each other, getting confusedly into each other's way, disagreeing yet entangled, dependent for their validity on the licence of imaginative conjecture as our sole means of knowledge. This incoherence has even been exalted into a standard of truth; for it is seriously argued by eminent scholars that a method arriving at a more logical and well-ordered result would be disproved and discredited by its very coherency, since confusion must be supposed to be the very essence of the early mythopoeic faculty. But in that case there can be nothing binding in the results of Comparative Mythology and one theory will be as good as another; for there is no reason why one particular mass of incoherence should be held to be more valid than another mass of incoherence differently composed.

There is much that is useful in the speculations of Comparative Mythology; but in order that the bulk of its results should be sound and acceptable, it must use a more patient and consistent method and organise itself as part of a well-founded Science of Religion. We must recognise that the old religions were organic systems founded on ideas which were at least as coherent as those which constitute our modern systems of belief. We must recognise also that there has been a perfectly intelligible progressive development from the earlier to the later systems of religious creed and of philosophical thought. It is by studying our data widely and profoundly in this spirit and discovering the true evolution of human thought and belief that we shall arrive at real knowledge. The mere identification of Greek and Sanskrit names and the ingenious discovery that Heracles' pyre is an image of the setting sun or that Paris and Helen are Greek corruptions of the Vedic Sarama and the Panis make an interesting diversion for an imaginative mind, but can by themselves lead to no serious result, even if they should prove to be correct. Nor is their correctness beyond serious doubt, for it is the vice of the fragmentary and imaginative method by which the sun and star myth interpretations are built up that they can be applied with equal ease and convincingness to any and every human tradition, belief or even actual event of history.[3] With this method we can never be sure where we have hit on a truth or where we are listening to a mere ingenuity.

Comparative Philology can indeed be called to our aid, but, in the present state of that Science, with very little conclusiveness. Modern Philology is an immense advance on anything we have had before the nineteenth century. It has introduced a spirit of order and method in place of mere phantasy; it has given us more correct ideas of the morphology of language and of what is or is not possible in etymology. It has established a few rules which govern the phenomena of the detrition of language and guide us in the identification of the same word or of related words as they appear in the changes of different but kindred tongues. Here, however, its achievements cease. The high hopes which attended its birth, have not been fulfilled by its maturity. It has failed to create a Science of Language and we are still compelled to apply to it the apologetic description given by a great philologist after some decades of earnest labour when he was obliged to speak of his favourite pursuits as “our petty conjectural sciences”. But a conjectural Science is no Science at all. Therefore the followers of more exact and scrupulous forms of knowledge refuse that name altogether to Comparative Philology and deny even the possibility of a linguistic science.

There is, in fact, no real certainty as yet in the obtained results of Philology; for beyond one or two laws of a limited application there is nowhere a sure basis. Yesterday we were all convinced that Varuna was identical with Ouranos, the Greek heaven; today this identity is denounced to us as a philological error; tomorrow it may be rehabilitated. *Parame vyoman* is a Vedic phrase which most of us would translate "in the highest heaven", but Mr. T. Paramasiva Aiyar in his brilliant and astonishing work, *The Riks*, tells us that it means "in the lowest hollow"; for *vyoman* "means break, fissure, being literally absence of protection, (uma)"; and the reasoning which he uses is so entirely after the fashion of the modern scholar that the philologist is debarred from answering that "absence of protection" cannot possibly mean a fissure and that human language was not constructed on these principles. For Philology has failed to discover the principles on which language was constructed or rather was organically developed, and on the other hand it has preserved a sufficient amount of the old spirit of mere phantasy and ingenuity and is full of precisely such brilliances of hazardous inference. But then we arrive at this result that there is nothing to help us in deciding whether *parame vyoman* in the Veda refers to the highest heaven or to the lowest abyss. It is obvious that a philology so imperfect may be a brilliant aid, but can never be a sure guide to the sense of Veda.

---

[3] E.g. Christ and his twelve apostles are, a great scholar assures us, the sun and the twelve months. The career of Napoleon is the most perfect Sun-myth in all legend or history.

We have to recognise in fact that European scholarship in its dealings with the Veda has derived an excessive prestige from its association in the popular mind with the march of European Science. The truth is that there is an enormous gulf between the patient, scrupulous and exact physical sciences and these other brilliant, but immature branches of learning upon which Vedic scholarship relies. Those are careful of their foundation, slow to generalise, solid in their conclusions; these are compelled to build upon scanty data large and sweeping theories and supply the deficiency of sure indications by an excess of conjecture and hypothesis. They are full of brilliant beginnings, but can come to no secure conclusion. They are the first rough scaffolding for a Science, but they are not as yet Sciences.

It follows that the whole problem of the interpretation of Veda still remains an open field in which any contribution that can throw light upon the problem should be welcome. Three such contributions have proceeded from Indian scholars. Two of them follow the lines or the methods of European research, while opening up new theories which if established, would considerably alter our view of the external sense of the hymns. Mr. Tilak in his *Arctic Home in the Vedas* has accepted the general conclusions of European scholarship, but by a fresh examination of the Vedic Dawn, the figure of the Vedic cows and the astronomical data of the hymns, has established at least a strong probability that the Aryan races descended originally from the Arctic regions in the glacial period. Mr. T. Paramasiva Aiyar by a still bolder departure has attempted to prove that the whole of the Rig Veda is a figurative representation of the geological phenomena belonging to the new birth of our planet after its long-continued glacial death in the same period of terrestrial evolution. It is difficult to accept in their mass Mr. Aiyar's reasonings and conclusions, but he has at least thrown a new light on the great Vedic mythus of Ahi Vritra and the release of the seven rivers. His interpretation is far more consistent and probable than the current theory which is not borne out by the language of the hymns. Taken in conjunction with Mr. Tilak's work it may serve as the starting-point for a new external interpretation of the old Scripture which will explain much that is now inexplicable and recreate for us the physical origins if not the actual physical environment of the old Aryan world.

The third Indian contribution is older in date, but nearer to my present purpose. It is the remarkable attempt by Swami Dayananda, the founder of the Arya Samaj, to re-establish the Veda as a living religious Scripture. Dayananda took as his basis a free use of the old Indian philology which he found in the Nirukta. Himself a great Sanskrit scholar, he handled his materials with remarkable power and independence. Especially creative was his use of that peculiar feature of the old Sanskrit tongue which is best expressed by a phrase of Sayana's, — the "multi-significance of roots". We shall see that the right following of this clue is of capital importance for understanding the peculiar method of the Vedic Rishis.

Dayananda's interpretation of the hymns is governed by the idea that the Vedas are a plenary revelation of religious, ethical and scientific truth. Its religious teaching is monotheistic and the Vedic gods are different descriptive names of the one Deity; they are at the same time indications of His powers as we see them working in Nature and by a true understanding of the sense of the Vedas we could arrive at all the scientific truths which have been discovered by modern research.

Such a theory is, obviously, difficult to establish. The Rig Veda itself, indeed, asserts[4] that the gods are only different names and expressions of one universal Being who in His own reality transcends the universe; but from the language of the hymns we are compelled to perceive in the gods not only different names, but also different forms, powers and personalities of the one Deva. The monotheism of the Veda includes in itself also the monistic, pantheistic and even polytheistic views of the cosmos and is by no means the trenchant and simple creed of modern Theism. It is only by a violent struggle with the text that we can force on it a less complex aspect.

That the ancient races were far more advanced in the physical sciences than is as yet recognised, may also be admitted. The Egyptians and Chaldeans, we now know, had discovered much that has since been rediscovered by modern Science and much also that has not been rediscovered. The ancient Indians were, at least, no mean astronomers and were always skilful physicians; nor do Hindu medicine and chemistry seem to have been of a foreign origin. It is possible that in other branches also of physical knowledge they were advanced even in early times. But the absolute completeness of scientific revelation asserted by Swami Dayananda will take a great deal of proving.

The hypothesis on which I shall conduct my own enquiry is that the Veda has a double aspect and that the two, though closely related, must be kept apart. The Rishis arranged the substance of their thought in a system of parallelism by which the same deities were at once internal and external Powers of universal Nature, and they managed its expression through a system of double values by which the same language served for their worship in both aspects. But the psychological sense predominates and is more pervading, close-knit and coherent than the physical. The Veda is primarily intended to serve for spiritual enlightenment and self-culture. It is, therefore, this sense which has first to be restored.

---

[4] R.V. I.164.46 and 170.1.

To this task each of the ancient and modern systems of interpretation brings an indispensable assistance. Sayana and Yaska supply the ritualistic framework of outward symbols and their large store of traditional significances and explanations. The Upanishads give their clue to the psychological and philosophical ideas of the earlier Rishis and hand down to us their method of spiritual experience and intuition. European scholarship supplies a critical method of comparative research, yet to be perfected, but capable of immensely increasing the materials available and sure eventually to give a scientific certainty and firm intellectual basis which has hitherto been lacking. Dayananda has given the clue to the linguistic secret of the Rishis and reemphasised one central idea of the Vedic religion, the idea of the One Being with the Devas expressing in numerous names and forms the many-sidedness of His unity.

With so much help from the intermediate past we may yet succeed in reconstituting this remoter antiquity and enter by the gate of the Veda into the thoughts and realities of a prehistoric wisdom.

Chapter IV

The Foundations of the Psychological Theory

A HYPOTHESIS of the sense of Veda must always proceed, to be sure and sound, from a basis that clearly emerges in the language of the Veda itself. Even if the bulk of its substance be an arrangement of symbols and figures, the sense of which has to be discovered, yet there should be clear indications in the explicit language of the hymns which will guide us to that sense. Otherwise, the symbols being themselves ambiguous, we shall be in danger of manufacturing a system out of our own imaginations and preferences instead of discovering the real purport of the figures chosen by the Rishis. In that case, however ingenious and complete our theory, it is likely to be a building in the air, brilliant, but without reality or solidity.

Our first duty, therefore, is to determine whether there is, apart from figure and symbol, in the clear language of the hymns a sufficient kernel of psychological notions to justify us in supposing at all a higher than the barbarous and primitive sense of the Veda. And afterwards we have to find, as far as possible from the internal evidence of the Suktas themselves, the interpretation of each symbol and image and the right psychological function of each of the gods. A firm and not a fluctuating sense, founded on good philological justification and fitting naturally into the context wherever it occurs, must be found for each of the fixed terms of the Veda. For, as has already been said, the language of the hymns is a language fixed and invariable; it is the carefully preserved and scrupulously respected diction consistently expressing either a formal creed and ritual or a traditional doctrine and constant experience. If the language of the Vedic Rishis were free and variable, if their ideas were evidently in a state of flux, shifting and uncertain, a convenient licence and incoherence in the sense we attach to their terminology and the relation we find between their ideas, might be justified or tolerated. But the hymns themselves on the very face of them bear exactly the contrary testimony. We have the right therefore to demand the same fidelity and scrupulousness in the interpreter as in the original he interprets. There is obviously a constant relation between the different notions and cherished terms of the Vedic religion; incoherence and uncertainty in the interpretation will prove, not that the face evidence of the Veda is misleading, but simply that the interpreter has failed to discover the right relations.

If, after this initial labour has been scrupulously and carefully done, it can be shown by a translation of the hymns that the interpretations we had fixed fit in naturally and easily in whatever context, if they are found to illuminate what seemed obscure and to create intelligible and clear coherence where there seemed to be only confusion; if the hymns in their entirety give thus a clear and connected sense and the successive verses show a logical succession of related thoughts, and if the result as a whole be a profound, consistent and antique body of doctrines, then our hypothesis will have a right to stand besides others, to challenge them where they contradict it or to complete them where they are consistent with its findings. Nor will the probability of our hypothesis be lessened, but rather its validity confirmed if it be found that the body of ideas and doctrines thus revealed in the Veda are a more antique form of subsequent Indian thought and religious experience, the natural parent of Vedanta and Purana.

So considerable and minute a labour is beyond the scope of these brief and summary chapters. Their object is only to indicate for those who care to follow the clue I have myself received, the path and its principal turnings, — the results I have arrived at and the main indications by which the Veda itself helps us to arrive at them. And, first, it seems to me advisable to explain the genesis of the theory in my own mind so that the reader may the better understand the line I have taken or, if he chooses, check any prepossessions or personal preferences which may have influenced or limited the right application of reasoning to this difficult problem.

Like the majority of educated Indians I had passively accepted without examination, before myself reading the Veda, the conclusions of European Scholarship both as to the religious and as to the historical and ethnical sense of the ancient hymns. In consequence, following again the ordinary line taken by modernised Hindu opinion, I regarded the Upanishads as the most ancient source of Indian thought and religion, the true Veda, the first Book of Knowledge. The Rig Veda in the modern translations which were all I knew of this profound Scripture, represented for me an important document of our national history, but seemed of small value or importance for the history of thought or for a living spiritual experience.

My first contact with Vedic thought came indirectly while pursuing certain lines of self-development in the way of Indian Yoga, which, without my knowing it, were spontaneously converging towards the ancient and now unfrequented paths followed by our forefathers. At this time there began to arise in my mind an arrangement of symbolic names attached to certain psychological experiences which had begun to regularise themselves; and among them there came the figures of three female energies, Ila, Saraswati, Sarama, representing severally three out of the four faculties of the intuitive reason, — revelation, inspiration and intuition. Two of these names were not well known to me as names of Vedic goddesses, but were connected rather with the current Hindu religion or with old Puranic legend, Saraswati, goddess of learning and Ila, mother of the Lunar dynasty. But Sarama was familiar enough. I was unable, however, to establish any connection between the figure that rose in my mind and the Vedic hound of heaven, who was associated in my memory with the Argive Helen and represented only an image of the physical Dawn entering in its pursuit of the vanished herds of Light into the cave of the Powers of darkness. When once the clue is found, the clue of the physical Light imaging the subjective, it is easy to see that the hound of heaven may be the intuition entering into the dark caverns of the subconscious mind to prepare the delivery and out-flashing of the bright illuminations of knowledge which have there been imprisoned. But the clue was wanting and I was obliged to suppose an identity of name without any identity of the symbol.

It was my stay in Southern India which first seriously turned my thoughts to the Veda. Two observations that were forced on my mind, gave a serious shock to my second-hand belief in the racial division between Northern Aryans and Southern Dravidians. The distinction had always rested for me on a supposed difference between the physical types of Aryan and Dravidian and a more definite incompatibility between the northern Sanskritic and the southern non-Sanskritic tongues. I knew indeed of the later theories which suppose that a single homogeneous race, Dravidian or Indo-Afghan, inhabits the Indian peninsula; but hitherto I had not attached much importance to these speculations. I could not, however, be long in Southern India without being impressed by the general recurrence of northern or "Aryan" types in the Tamil race. Wherever I turned, I seemed to recognise with a startling distinctness, not only among the Brahmins but in all castes and classes, the old familiar faces, features, figures of my friends of Maharashtra, Gujerat, Hindustan, even, though this similarity was less widely spread, of my own province Bengal. The impression I received was as if an army of all the tribes of the North had descended on the South and submerged any previous populations that may have occupied it. A general impression of a Southern type survived, but it was impossible to fix it rigidly while studying the physiognomy of individuals. And in the end I could not but perceive that whatever admixtures might have taken place, whatever regional differences might have been evolved, there remains, behind all variations, a unity of physical as well as of cultural type[1] throughout India. For the rest, this is a conclusion to which ethnological speculation[2] itself has an increasing tendency.

---

[1] I prefer not to use the term race, for race is a thing much more obscure and difficult to determine than is usually imagined. In dealing with it the trenchant distinctions current in the popular mind are wholly out of place.

[2] Always supposing that ethnological speculations have at all any validity. The only firm basis of ethnology is the theory of the hereditary invariability of the human skull which is now being challenged. If it disappears, the whole science disappears with it.

But what then of the sharp distinction between Aryan and Dravidian races created by the philologists? It disappears. If at all an Aryan invasion is admitted, we have either to suppose that it flooded India and determined the physical type of the people, with whatever modifications, or that it was the incursion of small bands of a less civilised race who melted away into the original population. We have then to suppose that entering a vast peninsula occupied by a civilised people, builders of great cities, extensive traders, not without mental and spiritual culture, they were yet able to impose on them their own language, religion, ideas and manners. Such a miracle would be just possible if the invaders possessed a very highly organised language, a greater force of creative mind and a more dynamic religious form and spirit.

And there was always the difference of language to support the theory of a meeting of races. But here also my preconceived ideas were disturbed and confounded. For on examining the vocables of the Tamil language, in appearance so foreign to the Sanskritic form and character, I yet found myself continually guided by words or by families of words supposed to be pure Tamil in establishing new relations between Sanskrit and its distant sister, Latin, and occasionally, between the Greek and the Sanskrit. Sometimes the Tamil vocable not only suggested the connection, but proved the missing link in a family of connected words. And it was through this Dravidian language that I came first to perceive what seems to me now the true law, origins and, as it were, the embryology of the Aryan tongues. I was unable to pursue my examination far enough to establish any definite conclusion, but it certainly seems to me that the original connection between the Dravidian and Aryan tongues was far closer and more extensive than is usually supposed and the possibility suggests itself that they may even have been two divergent families derived from one lost primitive tongue. If so, the sole remaining evidence of an Aryan invasion of Dravidian India would be the indications to be found in the Vedic hymns.

It was, therefore, with a double interest that for the first time I took up the Veda in the original, though without any immediate intention of a close or serious study. It did not take long to see that the Vedic indications of a racial division between Aryans and Dasyus and the identification of the latter with the indigenous Indians were of a far flimsier character than I had supposed. But far more interesting to me was the discovery of a considerable body of profound psychological thought and experience lying neglected in these ancient hymns. And the importance of this element increased in my eyes when I found, first, that the mantras of the Veda illuminated with a clear and exact light psychological experiences of my own for which I had found no sufficient explanation either in European psychology or in the teachings of Yoga or of Vedanta, so far as I was acquainted with them, and, secondly, that they shed light on obscure passages and ideas of the Upanishads to which, previously, I could attach no exact meaning and gave at the same time a new sense to much in the Puranas.

I was helped in arriving at this result by my fortunate ignorance of the commentary of Sayana. For I was left free to attribute their natural psychological significance to many ordinary and current words of the Veda, such as *dhī*, thought or understanding, *manas*, mind, *mati*, thought, feeling or mental state, *manīṣā*, intellect, *ṛtam*, truth; to give their exact shades of sense to *kavi*, seer, *manīṣī*, thinker, *vipra*, *vipaścit*, enlightened in mind, and a number of similar words; and to hazard a psychological sense, justified by more extensive study, for words like *dakṣa* which for Sayana means strength and *śravas* which he renders as wealth, food or fame. The psychological theory of the Veda rests upon our right to concede their natural significance to these vocables.

Sayana gives to the words *dhī*, *ṛtam*, etc., very variable significances. *Ṛtam*, which is almost the key-word of any psychological or spiritual interpretation, is rendered by him sometimes as "truth", more often "sacrifice", occasionally in the sense of water. The psychological interpretation gives it invariably the sense of Truth. *Dhī* is rendered by Sayana variously "thought", "prayer", "action", "food", etc. The psychological interpretation gives it consistently the sense of thought or understanding.

And so with the other fixed terms of Veda. Moreover, Sayana's tendency, is to obliterate all fine shades and distinctions between words and to give them their vaguest general significance. All epithets conveying ideas of mental activity mean for him simply "intelligent", all words suggesting various ideas of force, and the Veda overflows with them, are reduced to the broad idea of strength. I found myself on the contrary impressed by the great importance of fixing and preserving the right shade of meaning and precise association to be given to different words, however close they may be to each other in their general sense. I do not see indeed why we should suppose that the Vedic Rishis, unlike all other masters of poetic style, used words pell-mell and indiscriminately without feeling their just associations and giving them their right and exact force in the verbal combination.

By following this principle I found that without departing from the simple natural and straightforward sense of words and clauses an extraordinarily large body not only of separate verses but of entire passages came at once into evidence which entirely altered the whole character of the Veda. For this Scripture then appeared to have a constant vein of the richest gold of thought and spiritual experience running all through it and appearing sometimes in small streaks, sometimes in larger bands, in the majority of its hymns. Moreover, besides the words that in their plain and ordinary sense give at once a wealth of psychological significance to their context, the Veda is full of others to which it is possible to give either an external and material or an internal and psychological value according to our conception of the general purport of Veda. For instance such words as *rāye*, *rayi*, *rādhas*, *ratna*, may mean either merely material prosperity and riches or internal felicity and plenitude applying itself equally to the subjective and the objective world; *dhana*, *vāja*, *poṣa* may mean either objective wealth, plenty and increase or all possessions internal or external, their plenitude and their growth in the life of the individual. *Rāye* is used in the Upanishads, in a quotation from the Rig Veda, to mean spiritual felicity; why should it be incapable of bearing that sense in the original text? *Vāja* occurs frequently in a context in which every other word has a psychological significance and the mention of physical plenty comes in with a violent jar of incoherency into the homogeneous totality of the thought. Commonsense, therefore, demands that the use of these words with a psychological import should be admitted in the Veda.

But if this is done consistently, not only whole verses and passages, but whole hymns assume at once the psychological complexion. On one condition this transformation is frequently complete, leaving no word or phrase unaffected, — the condition that we should admit the symbolic character of the Vedic sacrifice. We find in the Gita the word *yajña*, sacrifice, used in a symbolic sense for all action, whether internal or external, that is consecrated to the gods or to the Supreme. Was such symbolic use of the word born of a later philosophical intellectuality, or was it inherent in the Vedic idea of sacrifice? I found that in the Veda itself there were hymns in which the idea of the *yajña* or of the victim is openly symbolical, others in which the veil is quite transparent. The question then arose whether these were later compositions developing an incipient symbolism out of old superstitious practices or rather the occasional plainer statement of a sense which is in most hymns more or less carefully veiled by the figure. If there were no constant recurrence of psychological passages in the Veda, the former explanation would, no doubt, have to be accepted. But on the contrary whole hymns took naturally a psychological sense proceeding with a perfect and luminous coherency from verse to verse, where the only points of obscurity were the mention of the sacrifice or of the offering or sometimes of the officiating priest, who might be either a man or a god. If these words could be interpreted symbolically, I found always that the progression of thought became more perfect, more luminous, more coherent and the sense of the hymn in its entirety was victoriously completed. I felt therefore justified by every canon of sound criticism in pursuing my hypothesis farther and including in it the symbolic sense of the Vedic ritual.

Nevertheless here intervenes the first real difficulty of the psychological interpretation. Hitherto I had been proceeding by a perfectly straightforward and natural method of interpretation based on the surface meaning of the words and sentences. Now I came to an element in which the surface meaning had, in a sense, to be overridden, and this is a process in which every critical and conscientious mind must find itself beset by continual scruples. Nor can one always be sure, even with the utmost care, of having hit on the right clue and the just interpretation.

The Vedic sacrifice consists of three features, — omitting for the moment the god and the mantra, — the persons who offer, the offering and the fruits of the offering. If the *yajña* is the action consecrated to the gods, I could not but take the *yajamāna*, the giver of the sacrifice, as the doer of the action. *Yajña* is works, internal or external, the *yajamāna* must be the soul or the personality as the doer. But there were also the officiating priests, *hotā*, *ṛtvij*, *purohita*, *brahmā*, *adhvaryu* etc. What was their part in the symbolism? For if we once suppose a symbolic sense for the sacrifice, we must suppose also a symbolic value for each feature of the ceremony. I found that the gods were continually spoken of as priests of the offering and in many passages it was undisguisedly a non-human power or energy which presided over the sacrifice. I perceived also that throughout Veda the elements of our personality are themselves continually personified. I had only to apply this rule inversely and to suppose that the person of the priest in the external figure represented in the internal activities figured a non-human power or energy or an element of our personality. It remained to fix the psychological sense of the different priestly offices. Here I found that the Veda itself presented a clue by its philological indications and insistences, such as the use of the word *purohita* in its separated form with the sense of the representative "put in front" and a frequent reference to the god Agni who symbolises the divine Will or Force in humanity that takes up the action in all consecration of works.

The offerings were more difficult to understand. Even if the Soma-wine by the context in which it occurred, its use and effect and the philological indication of its synonyms, suggested its own interpretation, what could possibly be indicated by the "ghritam", the clarified butter in the sacrifice? And yet the word as used in the Veda was constantly insisting on its own symbolical significance. What for instance could be made of clarified butter dropping from heaven or dripping from the horses of Indra or dripping from the mind? Obviously, this was grotesque nonsense, if the sense of *ghṛta* as clarified butter was anything more than a symbol used with great looseness, so that often the external sense was wholly or partly put aside in the mind of the thinker. It was possible of course to vary conveniently the sense of the words, to take *ghṛta* sometimes as butter and sometimes as water and *manas* sometimes as the mind, sometimes as food or a cake. But I found that *ghṛta* was constantly used in connection with the thought or the mind, that heaven in Veda was a symbol of the mind, that Indra represented the illuminated mentality and his two horses double energies of that mentality and even that the Veda sometimes speaks plainly of offering the intellect (*manīṣā*) as purified *ghṛta* to the gods, *ghṛtaṁ na pūtaṁ manīṣām.*[3] The word *ghṛta* counts also among its philological significances the sense of a rich or warm brightness. It was by this concurrence of indications that I felt justified in fixing a certain psychological significance for the figure of the clarified butter. And I found the same rule and the same method applicable to other features of the sacrifice.

The fruits of the offering were in appearance purely material — cows, horses, gold, offspring, men, physical strength, victory in battle. Here the difficulty thickened. But I had already found that the Vedic cow was an exceedingly enigmatical animal and came from no earthly herd. The word *go* means both cow and light and in a number of passages evidently meant light even while putting forward the image of the cow. This is clear enough when we have to do with the cows of the sun — the Homeric kine of Helios — and the cows of the Dawn. Psychologically, the physical Light might well be used as a symbol of knowledge and especially of the divine knowledge. But how could this mere possibility be tested and established? I found that passages occurred in which all the surrounding context was psychological and only the image of the cow interfered with its obtrusive material suggestion. Indra is invoked as the maker of perfect forms to drink the wine of Soma; drinking he becomes full of ecstasy and a "giver of cows"; then we can attain to his most intimate or his most ultimate right thinkings, then we question him and his clear discernment brings us our highest good. It is obvious that in such a passage these cows cannot be material herds nor would the giving of physical Light carry any sense in the context. In one instance at least the psychological symbolism of the Vedic cow was established with certainty to my mind. I then applied it to other passages in which the word occurred and always I saw that it resulted in the best sense and the greatest possible coherency in the context.

---

[3] *See Rig Veda I.110.6 and III.2.1. — Ed.*

The cow and horse, *go* and *aśva*, are constantly associated. Usha, the Dawn, is described as *gomatī aśvavatī*; Dawn gives to the sacrificer horses and cows. As applied to the physical dawn *gomatī* means accompanied by or bringing the rays of light and is an image of the dawn of illumination in the human mind. Therefore *aśvavatī* also cannot refer merely to the physical steed; it must have a psychological significance as well. A study of the Vedic horse led me to the conclusion that *go* and *aśva* represent the two companion ideas of Light and Energy, Consciousness and Force, which to the Vedic and Vedantic mind were the double or twin aspect of all the activities of existence.

It was apparent, therefore, that the two chief fruits of the Vedic sacrifice, wealth of cows and wealth of horses, were symbolic of richness of mental illumination and abundance of vital energy. It followed that the other fruits continually associated with these two chief results of the Vedic karma must also be capable of a psychological significance. It remained only to fix their exact purport.

Another all-important feature of Vedic symbolism is the system of the worlds and the functions of the gods. I found the clue to the symbolism of the worlds in the Vedic conception of the *vyāhṛtis*, the three symbolic words of the mantra, "OM Bhur Bhuvah Swah", and in the connection of the fourth Vyahriti, Mahas, with the psychological term "Ritam". The Rishis speak of three cosmic divisions, Earth, the Antariksha or middle region and Heaven (Dyaus); but there is also a greater Heaven (Brihad Dyau) called also the Wide World, the Vast (Brihat), and typified sometimes as the Great Water, Maho Arnas. This "Brihat" is again described as "Ritam Brihat" or in a triple term "Satyam Ritam Brihat". And as the three worlds correspond to the Vyahritis, so this fourth world of the Vastness and the Truth seems to correspond to the fourth Vyahriti mentioned in the Upanishads, Mahas. In the Puranic formula the four are completed by three others, Jana, Tapas and Satya, the three supreme worlds of the Hindu cosmology. In the Veda also we have three supreme worlds whose names are not given. But in the Vedantic and Puranic system the seven worlds correspond to seven psychological principles or forms of existence, Sat, Chit, Ananda, Vijnana, Manas, Prana and Anna. Now Vijnana, the central principle, the principle of Mahas, the great world, is the Truth of things, identical with the Vedic Ritam which is the principle of Brihat, the Vast, and while in the Puranic system Mahas is followed in the ascending order by Jana, the world of Ananda, of the divine Bliss, in the Veda also Ritam, the Truth, leads upward to Mayas, Bliss. We may, therefore, be fairly sure that the two systems are identical and that both depend on the same idea of seven principles of subjective consciousness formulating themselves in seven objective worlds. On this principle I was able to identify the Vedic worlds with the corresponding psychological planes of consciousness and the whole Vedic system became clear to my mind.

With so much established the rest followed naturally and inevitably. I had already seen that the central idea of the Vedic Rishis was the transition of the human soul from a state of death to a state of immortality by the exchange of the Falsehood for the Truth, of divided and limited being for integrality and infinity. Death is the mortal state of Matter with Mind and Life involved in it; Immortality is a state of infinite being, consciousness and bliss. Man rises beyond the two firmaments, Rodasi, Heaven and Earth, mind and body, to the infinity of the Truth, Mahas, and so to the divine Bliss. This is the "great passage" discovered by the Ancestors, the ancient Rishis.

The gods I found to be described as children of Light, sons of Aditi, of Infinity; and without exception they are described as increasing man, bringing him light, pouring on him the fullness of the waters, the abundance of the heavens, increasing the truth in him, building up the divine worlds, leading him against all attacks to the great goal, the integral felicity, the perfect bliss. Their separate functions emerged by means of their activities, their epithets, the psychological sense of the legends connected with them, the indications of the Upanishads and Puranas, the occasional side-lights from Greek myth. On the other hand the demons who opposed them, are all powers of division and limitation, Coverers, Tearers, Devourers, Confiners, Dualisers, Obstructers, as their names indicate, powers that work against the free and unified integrality of the being. These Vritras, Panis, Atris, Rakshasas, Sambara, Vala, Namuchi, are not Dravidian kings and gods, as the modern mind with its exaggerated historic sense would like them to be; they represent a more antique idea better suited to the religious and ethical preoccupations of our forefathers. They represent the struggle between the powers of the higher Good and the lower desire, and this conception of the Rig Veda and the same opposition of good and evil otherwise expressed, with less psychological subtlety, with more ethical directness in the scriptures of the Zoroastrians, our ancient neighbours and kindred, proceeded probably from a common original discipline of the Aryan culture.

Finally, I found that the systematic symbolism of the Veda was extended to the legends related of the gods and of their dealings with the ancient seers. Some of these myths, if not all, may have had, in all probability had, a naturalistic and astronomical origin; but, if so, their original sense had been supplemented by a psychological symbolism. Once the sense of the Vedic symbols is known, the spiritual intention of these legends becomes apparent and inevitable. Every element of the Veda is inextricably bound up with every other and the very nature of these compositions compels us, once we have adopted a principle of interpretation, to carry it to its farthest rational limits. Their materials have been skilfully welded together by firm hands and any inconsistency in our handling of them shatters the whole fabric of their sense and their coherent thinking.

Thus there emerged in my mind, revealing itself as it were out of the ancient verses, a Veda which was throughout the Scripture of a great and antique religion already equipped with a profound psychological discipline, — a Scripture not confused in thought or primitive in its substance, not a medley of heterogeneous or barbarous elements, but one, complete and self-conscious in its purpose and in its purport, veiled indeed by the cover, sometimes thick, sometimes transparent, of another and material sense, but never losing sight even for a single moment of its high spiritual aim and tendency.

Chapter V

The Philological Method of the Veda

NO INTERPRETATION of the Veda can be sound which does not rest on a sound and secure philological basis; and yet this scripture with its obscure and antique tongue of which it is the sole remaining document offers unique philological difficulties. To rely entirely on the traditional and often imaginative renderings of the Indian scholars is impossible for any critical mind. Modern philology strives after a more secure and scientific basis, but has not yet found it.

In the psychological interpretation of the Veda there are, especially, two difficulties which can only be met by a satisfactory philological justification. This interpretation necessitates the acceptance of several new senses for a fair number of fixed technical terms of the Veda, — terms, for example like *ūti*, *avas*, *vayas*. These new renderings satisfy one test we may fairly demand; they fit into every context, clarify the sense and free us from the necessity of attributing quite different significances to the same term in a work of so fixed a form as the Veda. But this test is not sufficient. We must have, besides, a philological basis which will not only account for the new sense, but also explain how a single word came to be capable of so many different meanings, the sense attached to it by the psychological interpretation, those given to it by the old grammarians and those, if any, which are attached to it in later Sanskrit. But this is not easily possible unless we find a more scientific basis for our philological deductions than our present knowledge affords.

Secondly, the theory of the psychological interpretation depends very often on the use of a double meaning for important words, — the key-words of the secret teaching. The figure is one that is traditional in Sanskrit literature and sometimes employed with an excess of artifice in the later classical works; it is the *śleṣa* or rhetorical figure of double entendre. But its very artificiality predisposes us to believe that this poetical device must belong necessarily to a later and more sophisticated culture. How are we to account for its constant presence in a work of the remotest antiquity? Moreover, there is a peculiar extension of it in the Vedic use, a deliberate employment of the "multi-significance" of Sanskrit roots in order to pack as much meaning as possible into a single word, which at first sight enhances the difficulty of the problem to an extraordinary degree. For instance, the word, *aśva*, usually signifying a horse, is used as a figure of the Prana, the nervous energy, the vital breath, the half-mental, half-material dynamism which links mind and matter. Its root is capable, among other senses, of the ideas of impulsion, force, possession, enjoyment, and we find all these meanings united in this figure of the Steed of Life to indicate the essential tendencies of the Pranic energy. Such a use of language would not be possible if the tongue of the Aryan forefathers obeyed the same conventions as our modern speech or were in the same stage of development. But if we can suppose that there was some peculiarity in the old Aryan tongue as it was used by the Vedic Rishis by which words were felt to be more alive, less merely conventional symbols of ideas, more free in their transitions of meaning than in our later use of speech, then we shall find that these devices were not at all artificial or far-fetched to their employers, but were rather the first natural means which would suggest themselves to men anxious at once to find new, brief and adequate formulae of speech for psychological conceptions not understood by the vulgar and to conceal the ideas contained in their formulae from a profane intelligence. I believe that this is the true explanation; it can be established, I think, by a study of the development of Aryan speech that language did pass through a stage peculiarly favourable to this cryptic and psychological use of words which in their popular handling have a plain, precise and physical significance.

I have already indicated that my first study of Tamil words had brought me to what seemed a clue to the very origins and structure of the ancient Sanskrit tongue; and so far did this clue lead that I lost sight entirely of my original subject of interest, the connections between Aryan and Dravidian speech, and plunged into the far more interesting research of the origins and laws of development of human language itself. It seems to me that this great inquiry and not the ordinary preoccupations of linguistic scholars should be the first and central aim of any true science of Philology.

Owing to the failure of the first hopes which attended the birth of modern Philology, its meagre results, its crystallisation into the character of a "petty conjectural science", the idea of a Science of Language is now discredited and its very possibility, on quite insufficient reasoning, entirely denied. It seems to me impossible to acquiesce in such a final negation. If there is one thing that Modern Science has triumphantly established, it is the reign of law and process of evolution in the history of all earthly things. Whatever may be the deeper nature of Speech, in its outward manifestation as human language it is an organism, a growth, a terrestrial evolution. It contains indeed a constant psychological element and is therefore more free, flexible, consciously self-adaptive than purely physical organisms; its secret is more difficult to seize, its constituents yield themselves only to more subtle and less trenchant methods of analysis. But law and process exist in mental no less than in material phenomena in spite of their more volatile and variable appearances. Law and process must have governed the origins and developments of language. Given the necessary clue and sufficient data, they must be discoverable. It seems to me that in the Sanskrit language the clue can be found, the data lie ready for investigation.

The error of Philology which prevented it from arriving at a more satisfactory result in this direction, was its preoccupation in the physical parts of speech with the exterior morphology of language and in its psychological parts with the equally external connections of formed vocables and of grammatical inflexions in kindred languages. But the true method of Science is to go back to the origins, the embryology, the elements and more obscure processes of things. From the obvious only the obvious and superficial results. The profundities of things, their real truth, can best be discovered by penetration into the hidden things that the surface of phenomena conceals, into that past development of which the finished forms present only secret and dispersed indications or into the possibilities from which the actualities we see are only a narrow selection. A similar method applied to the earlier forms of human speech can alone give us a real Science of Language.

It is not in a short chapter of a treatise itself brief and devoted to another subject that it is at all possible to present the results of the work that I have attempted on these lines.[1] I can only briefly indicate the one or two features which bear directly on the subject of Vedic interpretation. And I mention them here solely to avoid any supposition in the minds of my readers that in departing from the received senses of certain Vedic words I have simply taken advantage of that freedom of ingenious conjecture which is at once one of the great attractions and one of the most serious weaknesses of modern Philology.

My researches first convinced me that words, like plants, like animals, are in no sense artificial products, but growths, — living growths of sound with certain seed-sounds as their basis. Out of these seed-sounds develop a small number of primitive root-words with an immense progeny which have their successive generations and arrange themselves in tribes, clans, families, selective groups each having a common stock and a common psychological history. For the factor which presided over the development of language was the association, by the nervous mind of primitive man, of certain general significances or rather of certain general utilities and sense-values with articulate sounds. The process of this association was also in no sense artificial but natural, governed by simple and definite psychological laws.

In their beginnings language-sounds were not used to express what we should call ideas; they were rather the vocal equivalents of certain general sensations and emotion-values. It was the nerves and not the intellect which created speech. To use Vedic symbols, Agni and Vayu, not Indra, were the original artificers of human language. Mind has emerged out of vital and sensational activities; intellect in man has built itself upon a basis of sense-associations and sense-reactions. By a similar process the intellectual use of language has developed by a natural law out of the sensational and emotional. Words, which were originally vital ejections full of a vague sense-potentiality, have evolved into fixed symbols of precise intellectual significances.

---

[1] I propose to deal with them in a separate work on "The Origins of Aryan Speech". [*See* Vedic Studies with Writings on Philology, *volume 14 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.]

In consequence, the word originally was not fixed to any precise idea. It had a general character or quality (*guṇa*), which was capable of a great number of applications and therefore of a great number of possible significances. And this *guṇa* and its results it shared with many kindred sounds. At first, therefore, word-clans, word-families started life on the communal system with a common stock of possible and realised significances and a common right to all of them; their individuality lay rather in shades of expression of the same ideas than in any exclusive right to the expression of a single idea. The early history of language was a development from this communal life of words to a system of individual property in one or more intellectual significances. The principle of partition was at first fluid, then increased in rigidity, until word-families and finally single words were able to start life on their own account. The last stage of the entirely natural growth of language comes when the life of the word is entirely subjected to the life of the idea which it represents. For in the first state of language the word is as living or even a more living force than its idea; sound determines sense. In its last state the positions have been reversed; the idea becomes all-important, the sound secondary.

Another feature of the early history of language is that it expresses at first a remarkably small stock of ideas and these are the most general notions possible and generally the most concrete, such as light, motion, touch, substance, extension, force, speed, etc. Afterwards there is a gradual increase in variety of idea and precision of idea. The progression is from the general to the particular, from the vague to the precise, from the physical to the mental, from the concrete to the abstract, from the expression of an abundant variety of sensations about similar things to the expression of precise difference between similar things, feelings and actions. This progression is worked out by processes of association in ideas which are always the same, always recurrent and, although no doubt due to the environments and actual experiences of the men who spoke the language, wear the appearance of fixed natural laws of development. And after all what is a law but a process which has been worked out by the nature of things in response to the necessities of their environment and has become the fixed habit of their action?

From this past history of language certain consequences derive which are of considerable importance in Vedic interpretation. In the first place by a knowledge of the laws under which the relations of sound and sense formed themselves in the Sanskrit tongue and by a careful and minute study of its word-families it is possible to a great extent to restore the past history of individual words. It is possible to account for the meanings actually possessed by them, to show how they were worked out through the various stages of language-development, to establish the mutual relations of different significances and to explain how they came to be attached to the same word in spite of the wide difference and sometimes even the direct contrariety of their sense-values. It is possible also to restore lost senses of words on a sure and scientific basis and to justify them by an appeal to the observed laws of association which governed the development of the old Aryan tongues, to the secret evidence of the word itself and to the corroborative evidence of its immediate kindred. Thus instead of having a purely floating and conjectural basis for our dealings with the vocables of the Vedic language, we can work with confidence upon a solid and reliable foundation.

Naturally, it does not follow that because a Vedic word may or must have had at one time a particular significance, that significance can be safely applied to the actual text of the Veda. But we do establish a sound sense and a clear possibility of its being the right sense for the Veda. The rest is a matter of comparative study of the passages in which the word occurs and of constant fitness in the context. I have continually found that a sense thus restored illumines always the context wherever it is applied and on the other hand that a sense demanded always by the context is precisely that to which we are led by the history of the word. This is a sufficient basis for a moral, if not for an absolute certainty.

Secondly, one remarkable feature of language in its inception is the enormous number of different meanings of which a single word was capable and also the enormous number of words which could be used to represent a single idea. Afterwards this tropical luxuriance came to be cut down. The intellect intervened with its growing need of precision, its growing sense of economy. The bearing capacity of words progressively diminished; and it became less and less tolerable to be burdened with a superfluous number of words for the same idea, a redundant variety of ideas for the same word. A considerable, though not too rigid economy in these respects, modified by a demand for a temperate richness of variation, became the final law of language. But the Sanskrit tongue never quite reached the final stages of this development; it dissolved too early into the Prakrit dialects. Even in its latest and most literary form it is lavish of varieties of meanings for the same word; it overflows with a redundant wealth of synonyms. Hence its extraordinary capacity for rhetorical devices which in any other language would be difficult, forced and hopelessly artificial, and especially for the figure of double sense, of *śleṣa*.

The Vedic Sanskrit represents a still earlier stratum in the development of language. Even in its outward features it is less fixed than any classical tongue; it abounds in a variety of forms and inflexions; it is fluid and vague, yet richly subtle in its use of cases and tenses. And on its psychological side it has not yet crystallised, is not entirely hardened into the rigid forms of intellectual precision. The word for the Vedic Rishi is still a living thing, a thing of power, creative, formative. It is not yet a conventional symbol for an idea, but itself the parent and former of ideas. It carries within it the memory of its roots, is still conscient of its own history.

The Rishis' use of language was governed by this ancient psychology of the Word. When in English we use the word "wolf" or "cow", we mean by it simply the animal designated; we are not conscious of any reason why we should use that particular sound for the idea except the immemorial custom of the language; and we cannot use it for any other sense or purpose except by an artificial device of style. But for the Vedic Rishi "vrika" meant the tearer and therefore, among other applications of the sense, a wolf; "dhenu" meant the fosterer, nourisher, and therefore a cow. But the original and general sense predominates, the derived and particular is secondary. Therefore, it was possible for the fashioner of the hymn to use these common words with a great pliability, sometimes putting forward the image of the wolf or the cow, sometimes using it to colour the more general sense, sometimes keeping it merely as a conventional figure for the psychological conception on which his mind was dwelling, sometimes losing sight of the image altogether. It is in the light of this psychology of the old language that we have to understand the peculiar figures of Vedic symbolism as handled by the Rishis, even to the most apparently common and concrete. It is so that words like "ghritam", the clarified butter, "soma", the sacred wine, and a host of others are used.

Moreover, the partitions made by the thought between different senses of the same word were much less separative than in modern speech. In English "fleet" meaning a number of ships and "fleet" meaning swift are two different words; when we use "fleet" in the first sense we do not think of the swiftness of the ship's motion, nor when we use it in the second, do we recall the image of ships gliding rapidly over the ocean. But this was precisely what was apt to occur in the Vedic use of language. "Bhaga", enjoyment, and "bhaga", share, were for the Vedic mind not different words, but one word which had developed two different uses. Therefore it was easy for the Rishis to employ it in one of the two senses with the other at the back of the mind colouring its overt connotation or even to use it equally in both senses at a time by a sort of figure of cumulative significance. "Chanas" meant food but also it meant "enjoyment, pleasure"; therefore it could be used by the Rishi to suggest to the profane mind only the food given at the sacrifice to the gods, but for the initiated it meant the Ananda, the joy of the divine bliss entering into the physical consciousness and at the same time suggested the image of the Soma-wine, at once the food of the gods and the Vedic symbol of the Ananda.

We see everywhere this use of language dominating the Word of the Vedic hymns. It was the great device by which the ancient Mystics overcame the difficulty of their task. Agni for the ordinary worshipper may have meant simply the god of the Vedic fire, or it may have meant the principle of Heat and Light in physical Nature, or to the most ignorant it may have meant simply a superhuman personage, one of the many "givers of wealth", satisfiers of human desire. How suggest to those capable of a deeper conception the psychological functions of the God? The word itself fulfilled that service. For Agni meant the Strong, it meant the Bright, or even Force, Brilliance. So it could easily recall to the initiated, wherever it occurred, the idea of the illumined Energy which builds up the worlds and which exalts man to the Highest, the doer of the great work, the Purohit of the human sacrifice.

Or how keep it in the mind of the hearer that all these gods are personalities of the one universal Deva? The names of the gods in their very meaning recall that they are only epithets, significant names, descriptions, not personal appellations. Mitra is the Deva as the Lord of love and harmony, Bhaga as the Lord of enjoyment, Surya as the Lord of illumination, Varuna as the all-pervading Vastness and purity of the Divine supporting and perfecting the world. "The Existent is One," says the Rishi Dirghatamas, "but the sages express It variously; they say Indra, Varuna, Mitra, Agni; they call It Agni, Yama, Matarishwan." The initiate in the earlier days of the Vedic knowledge had no need of this express statement. The names of the gods carried to him their own significance and recalled the great fundamental truth which remained with him always.

But in the later ages the very device used by the Rishis turned against the preservation of the knowledge. For language changed its character, rejected its earlier pliability, shed off old familiar senses; the word contracted and shrank into its outer and concrete significance. The ambrosial wine of the Ananda was forgotten in the physical offering; the image of the clarified butter recalled only the gross libation to mythological deities, lords of the fire and the cloud and the storm-blast, godheads void of any but a material energy and an external lustre. The letter lived on when the spirit was forgotten; the symbol, the body of the doctrine, remained, but the soul of knowledge had fled from its coverings.

Chapter VI

Agni and the Truth

THE RIG VEDA is one in all its parts. Whichever of its ten Mandalas we choose, we find the same substance, the same ideas, the same images, the same phrases. The Rishis are the seers of a single truth and use in its expression a common language. They differ in temperament and personality; some are inclined to a more rich, subtle and profound use of Vedic symbolism; others give voice to their spiritual experience in a barer and simpler diction, with less fertility of thought, richness of poetical image or depth and fullness of suggestion. Often the songs of one seer vary in their manner, range from the utmost simplicity to the most curious richness. Or there are risings and fallings in the same hymn; it proceeds from the most ordinary conventions of the general symbol of sacrifice to a movement of packed and complex thought. Some of the Suktas are plain and almost modern in their language; others baffle us at first by their semblance of antique obscurity. But these differences of manner take nothing from the unity of spiritual experience, nor are they complicated by any variation of the fixed terms and the common formulae. In the deep and mystic style of Dirghatamas Auchathya as in the melodious lucidity of Medhatithi Kanwa, in the puissant and energetic hymns of Vishwamitra as in Vasishtha's even harmonies we have the same firm foundation of knowledge and the same scrupulous adherence to the sacred conventions of the Initiates.

From this peculiarity of the Vedic compositions it results that the method of interpretation which I have described can be equally well illustrated from a number of scattered Suktas selected from the ten Mandalas or from any small block of hymns by a single Rishi. If my purpose were to establish beyond all possibility of objection the interpretation which I am now offering, a much more detailed and considerable work would be necessary. A critical scrutiny covering the whole of the ten Mandalas would be indispensable. To justify for instance the idea I attach to the Vedic term Ritam, the Truth, or my explanation of the symbol of the Cow of Light, I should have to cite all passages of any importance in which the idea of the Truth or the image of the Cow are introduced and establish my thesis by an examination of their sense and context. Or if I wish to prove that Indra in the Veda is really in his psychological functions the master of luminous mind typified by Dyaus, or Heaven, with its three shining realms, Rochana, I should have to examine similarly the hymns addressed to Indra and the passages in which there is a clear mention of the Vedic system of worlds. Nor could this be sufficient, so intertwined and interdependent are the notions of the Veda, without some scrutiny of the other Gods and of other important psychological terms connected with the idea of the Truth and of the mental illumination through which man arrives at it. I recognise the necessity of such a work of justification and hope to follow it out in other studies on the Vedic Truth, on the Gods of the Veda and on Vedic symbols. But a labour of this scope would be beyond the range of the present work, which is confined merely to an illustration of my method and to a brief statement of the results of my theory.

In order to illustrate the method I propose to take the first eleven Suktas of the first Mandala and to show how some of the central ideas of a psychological interpretation arise out of certain important passages or single hymns and how the surrounding context of the passages and the general thought of the hymns assume an entirely new appearance in the light of this profounder thinking.

The Sanhita of the Rig Veda, as we possess it, is arranged in ten books or Mandalas. A double principle is observed in the arrangement. Six of the Mandalas are given each to the hymns of a single Rishi or family of Rishis. Thus the second is devoted chiefly to the Suktas of the Rishi Gritsamada, the third and the seventh similarly to the great names of Vishwamitra and Vasishtha respectively, the fourth to Vamadeva, the sixth to

Bharadwaja. The fifth is occupied by the hymns of the house of Atri. In each of these Mandalas the Suktas addressed to Agni are first collected together and followed by those of which Indra is the deity; the invocations of other gods, Brihaspati, Surya, the Ribhus, Usha etc. close the Mandala. A whole book, the ninth, is given to a single god, Soma. The first, eighth and tenth Mandalas are collections of Suktas by various Rishis, but the hymns of each seer are ordinarily placed together in the order of their deities, Agni leading, Indra following, the other gods succeeding. Thus the first Mandala opens with ten hymns of the seer Madhuchchhandas, son of Vishwamitra, and an eleventh ascribed to Jetri, son of Madhuchchhandas. This last Sukta, however, is identical in style, manner and spirit with the ten that precede it and they can all be taken together as a single block of hymns one in intention and diction.

A certain principle of thought-development also has not been absent from the arrangement of these Vedic hymns. The opening Mandala seems to have been so designed that the general thought of the Veda in its various elements should gradually unroll itself under the cover of the established symbols by the voices of a certain number of Rishis who almost all rank high as thinkers and sacred singers and are, some of them, among the most famous names of Vedic tradition. Nor can it be by accident that the tenth or closing Mandala gives us, with an even greater miscellaneity of authors, the last developments of the thought of the Veda and some of the most modern in language of its Suktas. It is here that we find the Sacrifice of the Purusha and the great Hymn of the Creation. It is here also that modern scholars think they discover the first origins of the Vedantic philosophy, the Brahmavada.

In any case, the hymns of the son and grandson of Vishwamitra with which the Rig Veda opens strike admirably the first essential notes of the Vedic harmony. The first hymn, addressed to Agni, suggests the central conception of the Truth which is confirmed in the second and third Suktas invoking Indra in company with other gods. In the remaining eight hymns with Indra as the sole deity, except for one which he shares with the Maruts, we find the symbols of the Soma and the Cow, the obstructor Vritra and the great role played by Indra in leading man to the Light and overthrowing the barriers to his progress. These hymns are therefore of crucial importance to the psychological interpretation of the Veda.

There are four verses in the Hymn to Agni, the fifth to the eighth, in which the psychological sense comes out with a great force and clearness, escaping from the veil of the symbol.

Agnir hotā kavikratuḥ, satyaś citraśravastamaḥ;
devo devebhir ā gamat.
Yad aṅga dāśuṣe tvam, agne bhadraṁ kariṣyasi;
tavet tat satyam aṅgiraḥ.
Upa tvāgne dive dive, doṣāvastar dhiyā vayam;
namo bharanta emasi.
Rājantam adhvarāṇāṁ, gopām ṛtasya dīdivim;
vardhamānaṁ sve dame.

In this passage we have a series of terms plainly bearing or obviously capable of a psychological sense and giving their colour to the whole context. Sayana, however, insists on a purely ritual interpretation and it is interesting to see how he arrives at it. In the first phrase we have the word *kavi* meaning a seer and, even if we take *kratu* to mean work of the sacrifice, we shall have as a result, "Agni, the priest whose work or rite is that of the seer", a turn which at once gives a symbolic character to the sacrifice and is in itself sufficient to serve as the seed of a deeper understanding of the Veda. Sayana feels that he has to turn the difficulty at any cost and therefore he gets rid of the sense of seer for *kavi* and gives it another and unusual significance. He then explains that Agni is *satya*, true, because he brings about the true fruit of the sacrifice. *Śravas* Sayana renders "fame", Agni has an exceedingly various renown. It would have been surely better to take the word in the sense of wealth so as to avoid the incoherency of this last rendering. We shall then have this result for the fifth verse, "Agni the priest, active in the ritual, who is true (in its fruit) — for his is the most varied wealth, — let him come, a god with the gods."

To the sixth Rik the commentator gives a very awkward and abrupt construction and trivial turn of thought which breaks entirely the flow of the verse. "That good (in the shape of varied wealth) which thou shalt effect for the giver, thine is that. This is true, O Angiras," that is to say, there can be no doubt about this fact, for if Agni does good to the giver by providing him with wealth, he in turn will perform fresh sacrifices to Agni, and thus the good of the sacrificer becomes the good of the god. Here again it would be better to render, "The good that thou wilt do for the giver, that is that truth of thee, O Angiras," for we thus get at once a simpler sense and construction and an explanation of the epithet, *satya*, true, as applied to the god of the sacrificial fire. This is the truth of Agni that to the giver of the sacrifice he surely gives good in return.

The seventh verse offers no difficulty to the ritualistic interpretation except the curious phrase, "we come *bearing* the prostration." Sayana explains that bearing here means simply doing and he renders, "To thee day by day we, by night and by day, come with the thought performing the prostration." In the eighth verse he takes *ṛtasya* in the sense of truth and explains it as the true fruit of the ritual. "To thee shining, the protector of the sacrifices, manifesting always their truth (that is, their inevitable fruit), increasing in thy own house." Again, it would be simpler and better to take *ṛtam* in the sense of sacrifice and to render, "To thee shining out in the sacrifices, protector of the rite, ever luminous, increasing in thy own house." The "own house" of Agni, says the commentator, is the place of sacrifice and this is indeed called frequently enough in Sanskrit, "the house of Agni".

We see, therefore, that with a little managing we can work out a purely ritual sense quite empty of thought even for a passage which at first sight offers a considerable wealth of psychological significance. Nevertheless, however ingeniously it is effected, flaws and cracks remain which betray the artificiality of the work. We have had to throw overboard the plain sense of *kavi* which adheres to it throughout the Veda and foist in an unreal rendering. We have either to divorce the two words *satya* and *ṛta* which are closely associated in the Veda or to give a forced sense to *ṛta*. And throughout we have avoided the natural suggestions pressed on us by the language of the Rishi.

Let us now follow instead the opposite principle and give their full psychological value to the words of the inspired text. *Kratu* means in Sanskrit work or action and especially work in the sense of the sacrifice; but it means also power or strength (the Greek *kratos*) effective of action. Psychologically this power effective of action is the will. The word may also mean mind or intellect and Sayana admits thought or knowledge as a possible sense for *kratu*. *Śravas* means literally hearing and from this primary significance is derived its secondary sense, "fame". But, psychologically, the idea of hearing leads up in Sanskrit to another sense which we find in *śravaṇa*, *śruti*, *śruta*, — revealed knowledge, the knowledge which comes by inspiration. *Dṛṣṭi* and *śruti*, sight and hearing, revelation and inspiration are the two chief powers of that supra-mental faculty which belongs to the old Vedic idea of the Truth, the Ritam. The word *śravas* is not recognised by the lexicographers in this sense, but it is accepted in the sense of a hymn, — the inspired word of the Veda. This indicates clearly that at one time it conveyed the idea of inspiration or of something inspired, whether word or knowledge. This significance, then, we are entitled to give it, provisionally at least, in the present passage; for the other sense of fame is entirely incoherent and meaningless in the context. Again the word *namas* is also capable of a psychological sense; for it means literally "bending down" and is applied to the act of adoring submission to the deity rendered physically by the prostration of the body. When therefore the Rishi speaks of "bearing obeisance to Agni by the thought" we can hardly doubt that he gives to *namas* the psychological sense of the inward prostration, the act of submission or surrender to the deity.

We get then this rendering of the four verses: —

"May Agni, priest of the offering whose will towards action is that of the seer, who is true, most rich in varied inspiration, come, a god with the gods.

"The good that thou wilt create for the giver, that is that truth of thee, O Angiras.

"To thee day by day, O Agni, in the night and in the light we by the thought come bearing our submission, —

"To thee who shinest out from the sacrifices (or, who governest the sacrifices), guardian of the Truth and its illumination, increasing in thy own home."

The defect of the translation is that we have had to employ one and the same word for *satyam* and *ṛtam* whereas, as we see in the formula *satyam ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, there was a distinction in the Vedic mind between the precise significances of the two words.

Who, then, is this god Agni to whom language of so mystic a fervour is addressed, to whom functions so vast and profound are ascribed? Who is this guardian of the Truth, who is in his act its illumination, whose will in the act is the will of a seer possessed of a divine wisdom governing his richly varied inspiration? What is the Truth that he guards? And what is this good that he creates for the giver who comes always to him in thought day and night bearing as his sacrifice submission and self-surrender? Is it gold and horses and cattle that he brings or is it some diviner riches?

It is not the sacrificial Fire that is capable of these functions, nor can it be any material flame or principle of physical heat and light. Yet throughout the symbol of the sacrificial Fire is maintained. It is evident that we are in the presence of a mystic symbolism to which the fire, the sacrifice, the priest are only outward figures of a deeper teaching and yet figures which it was thought necessary to maintain and to hold constantly in front.

In the early Vedantic teaching of the Upanishads we come across a conception of the Truth which is often expressed by formulas taken from the hymns of the Veda, such as the expression already quoted, *satyam ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, — the truth, the right, the vast. This Truth is spoken of in the Veda as a path leading to felicity, leading to immortality. In the Upanishads also it is by the path of the Truth that the sage or seer, Rishi or Kavi, passes beyond. He passes out of the falsehood, out of the mortal state into an immortal existence. We have the right therefore to assume that the same conception is in question in both Veda and Vedanta.

This psychological conception is that of a truth which is truth of divine essence, not truth of mortal sensation and appearance. It is *satyam*, truth of being; it is in its action *ṛtam*, right, — truth of divine being regulating right activity both of mind and body; it is *bṛhat*, the universal truth proceeding direct and undeformed out of the Infinite. The consciousness that corresponds to it is also infinite, *bṛhat*, large as opposed to the consciousness of the sense-mind which is founded upon limitation. The one is described as *bhūmā*, the large, the other as *alpa*, the little. Another name for this supramental or truth consciousness is Mahas which also means the great, the vast. And as for the facts of sensation and appearance which are full of falsehoods (*anṛtam*, not-truth or wrong application of the *satyam* in mental and bodily activity), we have for instruments the senses, the sense-mind (*manas*) and the intellect working upon their evidence, so for the truth-consciousness there are corresponding faculties, — *dṛṣṭi*, *śruti*, *viveka*, the direct vision of the truth, the direct hearing of its word, the direct discrimination of the right. Whoever is in possession of this truth-consciousness or open to the action of these faculties, is the Rishi or Kavi, sage or seer. It is these conceptions of the truth, *satyam* and *ṛtam*, that we have to apply in this opening hymn of the Veda.

Agni in the Veda is always presented in the double aspect of force and light. He is the divine power that builds up the worlds, a power which acts always with a perfect knowledge, for it is *jātavedas*, knower of all births, *viśvāni vayunāni vidvān*, — it knows all manifestations or phenomena or it possesses all forms and activities of the divine wisdom. Moreover it is repeatedly said that the gods have established Agni as the immortal in mortals, the divine power in man, the energy of fulfilment through which they do their work in him. It is this work which is symbolised by the sacrifice.

Psychologically, then, we may take Agni to be the divine will perfectly inspired by divine Wisdom, and indeed one with it, which is the active or effective power of the Truth-consciousness. This is the obvious sense of the word *kavikratuḥ*, he whose active will or power of effectivity is that of the seer, — works, that is to say, with the knowledge which comes by the truth-consciousness and in which there is no misapplication or error. The epithets that follow confirm this interpretation. Agni is *satya*, true in his being; perfect possession of his own truth and the essential truth of things gives him the power to apply it perfectly in all act and movement of force. He has both the *satyam* and the *ṛtam*. Moreover, he is *citraśravastamaḥ*; from the Ritam there proceeds a fullness of richly luminous and varied inspirations which give the capacity for doing the perfect work. For all these are epithets of Agni as the *hotṛ*, the priest of the sacrifice, he who performs the offering. Therefore it is the power of Agni to apply the Truth in the work (*karma* or *apas*) symbolised by the sacrifice, that makes him the object of human invocation. The importance of the sacrificial fire in the outward ritual corresponds to the importance of this inward force of unified Light and Power in the inward rite by which there is communication and interchange between the mortal and the Immortal. Agni is elsewhere frequently described as the envoy, *dūta*, the medium of that communication and interchange.

We see, then, in what capacity Agni is called to the sacrifice. "Let him come, a god with the gods." The emphasis given to the idea of divinity by this repetition, *devo devebhir*, becomes intelligible when we recall the standing description of Agni as the god in human beings, the immortal in mortals, the divine guest. We may give the full psychological sense by translating, "Let him come, a divine power with the divine powers." For in the external sense of the Veda the Gods are universal powers of physical Nature personified; in any inner sense they must be universal powers of Nature in her subjective activities, Will, Mind, etc. But in the Veda there is always a distinction between the ordinary human or mental action of these puissances, *manuṣvat*, and the divine. It is supposed that man by the right use of their mental action in the inner sacrifice to the gods can convert them into their true or divine nature, the mortal can become immortal. Thus the Ribhus, who were at first human beings or represented human faculties, became divine and immortal powers by perfection in the work, *sukṛtyayā*, *svapasyayā*. It is a continual self-offering of the human to the divine and a continual descent of the divine into the human which seems to be symbolised in the sacrifice.

The state of immortality thus attained is conceived as a state of felicity or bliss founded on a perfect Truth and Right, *satyam ṛtam*. We must, I think, understand in this sense the verse that follows. "The good (happiness) which thou wilt create for the giver, that is that truth of thee, O Agni." In other words, the essence of this truth, which is the nature of Agni, is the freedom from evil, the state of perfect good and happiness which the Ritam carries in itself and which is sure to be created in the mortal when he offers the sacrifice by the action of Agni as the divine priest. *Bhadram* means anything good, auspicious, happy and by itself need not carry any deep significance. But we find it in the Veda used, like *ṛtam*, in a special sense. It is described in one of the hymns (V.82) as the opposite of the evil dream (*duḥṣvapnyam*), the false consciousness of that which is not the Ritam, and of *duritam*, false going, which means all evil and suffering. *Bhadram* is therefore equivalent to *suvitam*, right going, which means all good and felicity belonging to the state of the Truth, the Ritam. It is Mayas, the felicity, and the gods who represent the Truth-consciousness are described as *mayobhuvaḥ*, those who bring or carry in their being the felicity. Thus every part of the Veda, if properly understood, throws light upon every other part. It is only when we are misled by its veils that we find in it an incoherence.

In the next verse there seems to be stated the condition of the effective sacrifice. It is the continual resort day by day, in the night and in the light, of the thought in the human being with submission, adoration, self-surrender, to the divine Will and Wisdom represented by Agni. Night and Day, *Naktoṣāsā*, are also symbolical, like all the other gods in the Veda, and the sense seems to be that in all states of consciousness, whether illumined or obscure, there must be a constant submission and reference of all activities to the divine control.

For whether by day or night Agni shines out in the sacrifices; he is the guardian of the Truth, of the Ritam in man and defends it from the powers of darkness; he is its constant illumination burning up even in obscure and besieged states of the mind. The ideas thus briefly indicated in the eighth verse are constantly found throughout the hymns to Agni in the Rig Veda.

Agni is finally described as increasing in his own home. We can no longer be satisfied with the explanation of the own home of Agni as the "fire-room" of the Vedic householder. We must seek in the Veda itself for another interpretation and we find it in the 75th hymn of the first Mandala.

Yajā no mitrāvaruṇā, yajā devān ṛtaṁ bṛhat;
agne yakṣi svaṁ damam.

"Sacrifice for us to Mitra and Varuna, sacrifice to the gods, to the Truth, the Vast; O Agni, sacrifice to thy own home."

Here *ṛtaṁ bṛhat* and *svaṁ damam* seem to express the goal of the sacrifice and this is perfectly in consonance with the imagery of the Veda which frequently describes the sacrifice as travelling towards the gods and man himself as a traveller moving towards the truth, the light or the felicity. It is evident, therefore, that the Truth, the Vast and Agni's own home are identical. Agni and other gods are frequently spoken of as being born in the truth, dwelling in the wide or vast. The sense, then, will be in our passage that Agni the divine will and power in man increases in the truth-consciousness, its proper sphere, where false limitations are broken down, *urāv anibādhe*, in the wide and the limitless.

Thus in these four verses of the opening hymn of the Veda we get the first indications of the principal ideas of the Vedic Rishis, — the conception of a Truth-consciousness supramental and divine, the invocation of the gods as powers of the Truth to raise man out of the falsehoods of the mortal mind, the attainment in and by this Truth of an immortal state of perfect good and felicity and the inner sacrifice and offering of what one has and is by the mortal to the Immortal as the means of the divine consummation. All the rest of Vedic thought in its spiritual aspects is grouped around these central conceptions.

Chapter VII

Varuna-Mitra and the Truth

IF THE idea of the Truth that we have found in the very opening hymn of the Veda really carries in itself the contents we have supposed and amounts to the conception of a supramental consciousness which is the condition of the state of immortality or beatitude and if this be the leading conception of the Vedic Rishis, we are bound to find it recurring throughout the hymns as a centre for other and dependent psychological realisations. In the very next Sukta, the second hymn of Madhuchchhandas addressed to Indra and Vayu, we find another passage full of clear and this time quite invincible psychological suggestions in which the idea of the Ritam is insisted upon with an even greater force than in the hymn to Agni. The passage comprises the last three Riks of the Sukta.

Mitraṁ huve pūtadakṣaṁ, varuṇaṁ ca riśādasam;
dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīṁ sādhantā.
Ṛtena mitrāvaruṇāv, ṛtāvṛdhāv ṛtaspṛśā;
kratuṁ bṛhantam āśāthe.
Kavī no mitrāvaruṇā, tuvijātā urukṣayā;
dakṣaṁ dadhāte apasam.

In the first Rik of this passage we have the word *dakṣa* usually explained by Sayana as strength, but capable of a psychological significance, the important word *ghṛta* in the adjectival form *ghṛtācī* and the remarkable phrase *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīm*. The verse may be translated literally "I invoke Mitra of purified strength (or, purified discernment) and Varuna destroyer of our foes perfecting (or accomplishing) a bright understanding."

In the second Rik we have Ritam thrice repeated and the words *bṛhat* and *kratu*, to both of which we have attached a considerable importance in the psychological interpretation of the Veda. *Kratu* here may mean either work of sacrifice or effective power. In favour of the former sense we have a similar passage in the Veda in which Varuna and Mitra are said to attain to or enjoy by the Truth a mighty sacrifice, *yajñaṁ bṛhantam āśāthe*. But this parallel is not conclusive; for while in one expression it is the sacrifice itself that is spoken of, in the other it may be the power or strength which effects the sacrifice. The verse may be translated, literally, "By Truth Mitra and Varuna, truth-increasing, truth-touching, enjoy (or, attain) a mighty work" or "a vast (effective) power."

Finally in the third Rik we have again *dakṣa*; we have the word *kavi*, seer, already associated by Madhuchchhandas with *kratu*, work or will; we have the idea of the Truth, and we have the expression *urukṣaya*, where *uru*, wide or vast, may be an equivalent for *bṛhat*, the vast, which is used to describe the world or plane of the truth-consciousness, the "own home" of Agni. I translate the verse, literally, "For us Mitra and Varuna, seers, multiply-born, wide-housed, uphold the strength (or, discernment) that does the work."

It will at once be evident that we have in this passage of the second hymn precisely the same order of ideas and many of the same expressions as those on which we founded ourselves in the first Sukta. But the application is different and the conceptions of the purified discernment, the richly-bright understanding, *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīm*, and the action of the Truth in the work of the sacrifice, *apas*, introduce certain fresh precisions which throw further light on the central ideas of the Rishis.

The word *dakṣa*, which alone in this passage admits of some real doubt as to its sense, is usually rendered by Sayana strength. It comes from a root which, like most of its congeners, e.g. *daś*, *diś*, *dah*, suggested originally as one of its characteristic significances an aggressive pressure and hence any form of injury, but especially dividing, cutting, crushing or sometimes burning. Many of the words for strength had originally this idea of a force for injury, the aggressive strength of the fighter and slayer, the kind of force most highly prized by primitive man making a place for himself by violence on the earth he had come to inherit. We see this connection in the ordinary Sanskrit word for strength, *balam*, which is of the same family as the Greek *ballō*, I strike, and *belos*, a weapon. The sense, strength, for *dakṣa* has the same origin.

But this idea of division led up also in the psychology of language-development to quite another order of ideas, for when man wished to have words for mental conceptions, his readiest method was to apply the figures of physical action to the mental movement. The idea of physical division or separation was thus used and converted into that of distinction. It seems to have been first applied to distinguishing by the ocular sense and then to the act of mental separation, — discernment, judgment. Thus the root *vid*, which means in Sanskrit to find or know, signifies in Greek and Latin to see. *Dṛś*, to see, meant originally to rend, tear apart, separate; *paś*, to see, has a similar origin. We have three almost identical roots which are very instructive in this respect, — *pis*, to hurt, injure, be strong; *piṣ*, to hurt, injure, be strong, crush, pound; and *piś*, to form, shape, organise, be reduced to the constituent parts, — all these senses betraying the original idea of separation, division, cutting apart, — with derivatives, *piśāca*, a devil, and *piśuna*, which means on one side harsh, cruel, wicked, treacherous, slanderous, all from the idea of injury, and at the same time "indicatory, manifesting, displaying, making clear" from the other sense of distinction. So *kṝ*, to injure, divide, scatter appears in Greek *krinō*, I sift, choose, judge, determine. *Dakṣa* has a similar history. It is kin to the root *daś* which in Latin gives us *doceo*, I teach and in Greek *dokeō*, I think, judge, reckon, and *dokazō*, I observe, am of opinion. So also we have the kindred root *diś* meaning to point out or teach, Greek *deiknumi*. Almost identical with *dakṣa* itself is the Greek *doxa*, opinion, judgment, and *dexios*, clever, dexterous, right-hand. In Sanskrit the root *dakṣ* means to hurt, kill and also to be competent, able, the adjective *dakṣa* means clever, skilful, competent, fit, careful, attentive; *dakṣiṇa* means clever, skilful, right-hand, like *dexios*, and the noun *dakṣa* means, besides strength and also wickedness from the sense of hurting, mental ability or fitness like other words of the family. We may compare also the word *daśā* in the sense of mind, understanding. All this evidence taken together seems to indicate clearly enough that *dakṣa* must have meant at one time discernment, judgment, discriminative thought-power and that its sense of mental capacity is derived from this sense of mental division and not by transference of the idea of physical strength to power of mind.

We have therefore three possible senses for *dakṣa* in the Veda, strength generally, mental power or especially the power of judgment, discernment. *Dakṣa* is continually associated with *kratu*; the Rishis aspire to them together, *dakṣāya kratve*, which may mean simply, "capacity and effective power" or "will and discernment". Continually we find the word occurring in passages where the whole context relates to mental activities. Finally, we have the goddess Dakshina who may well be a female form of Daksha, himself a god and afterwards in the Purana one of the Prajapatis, the original progenitors, — we have Dakshina associated with the manifestation of knowledge and sometimes almost identified with Usha, the divine Dawn, who is the bringer of illumination. I shall suggest that Dakshina like the more famous Ila, Saraswati and Sarama, is one of four goddesses representing the four faculties of the Ritam or Truth-consciousness, — Ila representing truth-vision or revelation, Saraswati truth-audition, inspiration, the divine word, Sarama intuition, Dakshina the separative intuitional discrimination. Daksha then will mean this discrimination whether as mental judgment on the mind-plane or as intuitional discernment on the plane of the Ritam.

The three riks with which we are dealing occur as the closing passage of a hymn of which the first three verses are addressed to Vayu alone and the next three to Indra and Vayu. Indra in the psychological interpretation of the hymns represents, as we shall see, Mind-Power. The word for the sense-faculties, *indriya*, is derived from his name. His special realm is Swar, a word which means sun or luminous, being akin to *sūra* and *sūrya*, the sun, and is used to indicate the third of the Vedic *vyāhṛtis* and the third of the Vedic worlds corresponding to the principle of the pure or unobscured Mind. Surya represents the illumination of the Ritam rising upon the mind; Swar is that plane of mental consciousness which directly receives the illumination. Vayu on the other hand is always associated with the Prana or Life-Energy which contributes to the system all the ensemble of those nervous activities that in man are the support of the mental energies governed by Indra. Their combination constitutes the normal mentality of man. These two gods are invited in the hymn to come and partake together of the Soma-wine. This wine of Soma represents, as we have abundant proof in the Veda and especially in the ninth book, a collection of more than a hundred hymns addressed to the deity Soma, the intoxication of the Ananda, the divine delight of being, inflowing upon the mind from the supramental consciousness through the Ritam or Truth. If we accept these interpretations, we can easily translate the hymn into its psychological significance.

Indra and Vayu awaken in consciousness (*cetathaḥ*) to the flowings of the Soma-wine; that is to say, the mind-power and life-power working together in human mentality are to awaken to the inflowings of this Ananda, this Amrita, this delight and immortality from above. They receive them into the full plenitude of the mental and nervous energies, *cetathaḥ sutānāṁ vājinīvasū*.[1] The Ananda thus received constitutes a new action preparing immortal consciousness in the mortal and Indra and Vayu are bidden to come and swiftly perfect these new workings by the participation of the thought, *ā yātam upa niṣkṛtaṁ makṣū dhiyā*.[2] For *dhī* is the thought-power, intellect or understanding. It is intermediate between the normal mentality represented by the combination of Indra and Vayu and the Ritam or truth-consciousness.

It is at this point that Varuna and Mitra intervene and our passage begins. Without the psychological clue the connection between the first part of the hymn and the close is not very clear, nor the relation between the couple Varuna-Mitra and the couple Indra-Vayu. With that clue both connections become obvious;

---

[1] V. 5.
[2] V. 6.

indeed they depend upon each other. For the earlier part of the hymn has for its subject the preparation first of the vital forces represented by Vayu who is alone invoked in the three opening Riks, then of the mentality represented by the couple Indra-Vayu for the activities of the Truth-consciousness in the human being; the close has for its subject the working of the Truth on the mentality so as to perfect the intellect and to enlarge the action. Varuna and Mitra are two of the four gods who represent this working of the Truth in the human mind and temperament.

In the style of the Veda when there is a transition of this kind from one movement of thought to another developing out of it, the link of connection is often indicated by the repetition in the new movement of an important word which has already occurred in the close of the movement that precedes. This principle of suggestion by echo, as one may term it, pervades the hymns and is a mannerism common to all the Rishis. The connecting word here is *dhī*, thought or intellect. *Dhī* differs from the more general word, *mati*, which means mentality or mental action generally and which indicates sometimes thought, sometimes feeling, sometimes the whole mental state. *Dhī* is the thought-mind or intellect; as understanding it holds all that comes to it, defines everything and puts it into the right place,[3] or often *dhī* indicates the activity of the intellect, particular thought or thoughts. It is by the thought that Indra and Vayu have been called upon to perfect the nervous mentality, *niṣkṛtaṁ dhiyā*. But this instrument, thought, has itself to be perfected, enriched, clarified before the mind can become capable of free communication with the Truth-consciousness. Therefore Varuna and Mitra, Powers of the Truth, are invoked "accomplishing a richly luminous thought," *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīṁ sādhantā*.

This is the first occurrence in the Veda of the word *ghṛta*, in a modified adjectival form, and it is significant that it should occur as an epithet of the Vedic word for the intellect, *dhī*. In other passages also we find it continually in connection with the words *manas*, *manīṣā* or in a context where some activity of thought is indicated. The root *ghṛ* conveys the idea of a strong brightness or heat such as that of fire or the summer sun. It means also to sprinkle or anoint, Greek *chriō*. It is capable of being used to signify any liquid, but especially a bright, thick liquid. It is the ambiguity of these two possible senses of which the Vedic Rishis took advantage to indicate by the word outwardly the clarified butter in the sacrifice, inwardly a rich and bright state or activity of the brain-power, *medhā*, as basis and substance of illuminated thought. By *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīm* is meant, therefore, the intellect full of a rich and bright mental activity.

---

[3] The root *dhī* means to hold or to place.

Varuna and Mitra who accomplish or perfect this state of the intellect, are distinguished by two several epithets. Mitra is *pūtadakṣa*, possessed of a purified judgment; Varuna is *riśādas*, he destroys all hurters or enemies. In the Veda there are no merely ornamental epithets. Every word is meant to tell, to add something to the sense and bear a strict relation to the thought of the sentence in which it occurs. There are two obstacles which prevent the intellect from being a perfect and luminous mirror of the truth-consciousness; first, impurity of the discernment or discriminative faculty which leads to confusion of the Truth, secondly the many causes or influences which interfere with the growth of the Truth by limiting its full application or by breaking up the connections and harmony of the thoughts that express it and which thus bring about poverty and falsification of its contents. Just as the Gods in the Veda represent universal powers descended from the Truth-consciousness which build up the harmony of the worlds and in man his progressive perfection, so the influences that work against these objects are represented by hostile agencies, Dasyus and Vritras, who seek to break up, to limit, to withhold and deny. Varuna in the Veda is always characterised as a power of wideness and purity; when, therefore, he is present in man as a conscious force of the Truth, all that limits and hurts the nature by introducing into it fault, sin and evil is destroyed by contact with him. He is *riśādas*, destroyer of the enemy, of all that seek to injure the growth. Mitra, a power like Varuna of Light and Truth, especially represents Love, Joy and Harmony, the foundations of Mayas, the Vedic beatitude.

Working with the purity of Varuna and imparting that purity to the discernment, he enables it to get rid of all discords and confusions and establish the right working of the strong and luminous intellect.

This progress enables the Truth-consciousness, the Ritam, to work in the human mentality. With the Ritam as the agency, *ṛtena*, increasing the action of the Truth in man, *ṛtāvṛdhā*, touching or reaching the Truth, enabling, that is to say, the mental consciousness to come into successful contact with and possession of the Truth-consciousness, *ṛtaspṛśā*, Mitra and Varuna are able to enjoy the use of a vast effective will-power, *kratuṁ bṛhantam āśāthe*. For it is the Will that is the chief effective agent of the inner sacrifice, but a will that is in harmony with the Truth, guided therefore by a purified discernment. The Will as it enters more and more into the wideness of the Truth-consciousness becomes itself wide and vast, free from limitation in its view and of hampering impediments in its effectivity. It works *urāv anibādhe*, in the wideness where there is no obstacle or wall of limitation.

Thus the two requisites on which the Vedic Rishis always insist are secured, Light and Power, the Light of the Truth working in the knowledge, *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīm*, the Power of the Truth working in the effective and enlightened Will, *kratuṁ bṛhantam*. As a result Varuna and Mitra are shown to us in the closing verse of the hymn working in the full sense of their Truth, *kavī tuvijātā urukṣayā*. *Kavi*, we have seen, means possessed of the Truth-consciousness and using its faculties of vision, inspiration, intuition, discrimination. *Tuvijāta* is "multiply born", for *tuvi*, meaning originally strength or force, is used like the French word "force" in the sense of many. But by the birth of the gods is meant always in the Veda their manifestation; thus *tuvijātā* signifies "manifested multiply", in many forms and activities. *Urukṣaya* means dwelling in the wideness, an idea which occurs frequently in the hymns; *uru* is equivalent to *bṛhat*, the Vast, and indicates the infinite freedom of the Truth-consciousness. Thus we have as the result of the increasing activities of the Ritam the manifestation in the human being of the Powers of wideness and purity, of joy and harmony, a manifestation rich in forms, seated in the wideness of the Ritam and using the faculties of the supra-mental consciousness.

This manifestation of the Powers of the Truth upholds or confirms the discernment while it does the work, *dakṣaṁ dadhāte apasam*. The discernment, now purified and supported, works in the sense of the Truth, as a power of the Truth and accomplishes the perfection of the activities of Indra and Vayu by freeing the thought and the will from all defect and confusion in their working and results.

To confirm the interpretation we have put on the terms of this passage we may quote a Rik from the tenth Sukta of the fourth Mandala.

Adhā hyagne krator bhadrasya dakṣasya sādhoḥ,
rathīr ṛtasya bṛhato babhūtha.

"Then indeed, O Agni, thou becomest the charioteer of the happy will, the perfecting discernment, the Truth that is the Vast." We have here the same idea as in the first hymn of the first Mandala, the effective will that is the nature of the Truth-consciousness, *kavikratuḥ*, and works out therefore in a state of beatitude the good, *bhadram*. We have in the phrase *dakṣasya sādhoḥ* at once a variant and explanation of the last phrase of the second hymn, *dakṣam apasam*, the discernment perfecting and accomplishing the inner work in man. We have the vast Truth as the consummation of these two activities of power and knowledge, Will and Discernment, *kratu* and *dakṣa*. Always the hymns of the Veda confirm each other by this reproduction of the same terms and ideas and the same relation of ideas. This would not be possible unless they were based on a coherent doctrine with a precise significance for standing terms such as *kavi*, *kratu*, *dakṣa*, *bhadram*, *ṛtam*, etc. The internal evidence of the Riks themselves establishes that this significance is psychological, as otherwise the terms lose their fixed value, their precise sense, their necessary connection, and their constant recurrence in relation to each other has to be regarded as fortuitous and void of reason or purpose.

We see then that in the second hymn we find again the same governing ideas as in the first. All is based on the central Vedic conception of the supra-mental or Truth-consciousness towards which the progressively perfected mentality of the human being labours as towards a consummation and a goal. In the first hymn this is merely stated as the aim of the sacrifice and the characteristic work of Agni. The second hymn indicates the preliminary work of preparation, by Indra and Vayu, by Mitra and Varuna, of the ordinary mentality of man through the force of the Ananda and the increasing growth of the Truth.

We shall find that the whole of the Rig Veda is practically a constant variation on this double theme, the preparation of the human being in mind and body and the fulfilment of the godhead or immortality in him by his attainment and development of the Truth and the Beatitude.

Chapter VIII

The Ashwins — Indra — the Vishwadevas

THE THIRD hymn of Madhuchchhandas is again a hymn of the Soma sacrifice. It is composed, like the second before it, in movements of three stanzas, the first addressed to the Ashwins, the second to Indra, the third to the Vishwadevas, the fourth to the goddess Saraswati. In this hymn also we have in the closing movement, in the invocation to Saraswati, a passage of clear psychological significance, of a far greater clarity indeed than those that have already helped us to understand the secret thought of the Veda.

But this whole hymn is full of psychological suggestions and we find in it the close connection and even identity which the Vedic Rishis sought to establish and perfect between the three main interests of the human soul, Thought and its final victorious illuminations, Action and its last supreme all-achieving puissances, Enjoyment and its highest spiritual ecstasies. The Soma wine symbolises the replacing of our ordinary sense-enjoyment by the divine Ananda. That substitution is brought about by divinising our thought-action, and as it progresses it helps in its turn the consummation of the movement which has brought it about. The Cow, the Horse, the Soma-Wine are the figures of this triple sacrifice. The offering of *ghṛta*, the clarified butter which is the yield of the cow, the offering of the horse, *aśvamedha*, the offering of the wine of Soma are its three principal forms or elements. We have also, less prominent, the offering of the cake which is possibly symbolic of the body, of Matter.

We commence with an invocation of the two Ashwins, the two Riders on the Horse, Castor and Polydeuces of the old Mediterranean mythology. They are supposed by the comparative mythologists to represent twin stars in the heavens which for some reason had a better fortune than the rest of the celestial host and attracted the special adoration of the Aryans. Let us, however, see how they are described in the hymn we are studying. They are first described as "Ashwins, swift-footed lords of bliss, much-enjoying, — *dravatpāṇī śubhaspatī purubhujā*". The word *śubh*, like the words *ratna* and *candra*, is capable of signifying either light or enjoyment; but in this passage it occurs in connection with the adjective *purubhujā*, "much-enjoying", and the verb *canasyatam*, "take delight", and must therefore be taken in the sense of weal or bliss.

Next, these twin gods are described as "Ashwins, divine souls many-actioned, thought-holding" who accept and rejoice in the words of the Mantra "with an energetic thought", — *purudaṁsasā narā śavīrayā dhiyā dhiṣṇyā*. *Nṛ* in the Veda is applicable both to gods and men and does not mean simply a man; it meant originally, I think, strong or active and then a male and is applied to the male gods, active divine souls or powers, *puruṣas*, opposed to the female deities, *gnāḥ* who are their energies. It still preserved in the minds of the Rishis much of its original sense, as we see from the word *nṛmṇa*, strength, and the phrase *nṛtama nṛṇām*, strongest of the divine powers. *Śavas* and its adjective *śavīra* give the idea of energy, but always with an association of the farther idea of flame or light; *śavīra* is therefore a very appropriate epithet for *dhī*, thought full of a shining or flashing energy. *Dhiṣṇyā* is connected with *dhiṣaṇā*, intellect or understanding, and is rendered by Sayana "intellectual", *buddhimantau*.

Again the Ashwins are described as "effectual in action, powers of the movement, fierce-moving in their paths," *dasrā nāsatyā rudravartanī*. The Vedic epithets *dasra* and *dasma* are rendered by Sayana indifferently "destroying" or "beautiful" or "bountiful" according to his caprice or convenience. I connect it with the root *das* not in the sense of cutting, dividing, from which it gets the two significances of destroying and giving, not in the sense of "discerning, seeing" from which it gets Sayana's significance "beautiful", *darśanīya*, but in the sense of doing, acting, shaping, accomplishing, as in *purudaṁsasā* in the second

Rik. *Nāsatya* is supposed by some to be a patronymic; the old grammarians ingeniously fabricated for it the sense of "true, not false"; but I take it from *nas* to move. We must remember that the Ashwins are riders on the horse, that they are described often by epithets of motion, "swift-footed", "fierce-moving in their paths"; that Castor and Pollux in Graeco-Latin mythology protect sailors in their voyages and save them in storm and shipwreck and that in the Rig Veda also they are represented as powers that carry over the Rishis as in a ship or save them from drowning in the ocean. *Nāsatyā* may therefore very well mean lords of the voyage, journey, or powers of the movement. *Rudravartani* is rendered by modern scholars "red-pathed", an epithet supposed to be well-suited to stars and they instance the parallel phrase, *hiraṇyavartani*, having a golden or shining path. Certainly, *rudra* must have meant at one time, "shining, deep-coloured, red" like the roots *ruṣ* and *ruś*, *rudhira*, "blood", "red", the Latin *ruber*, *rutilus*, *rufus*, all meaning red. *Rodasī*, the dual Vedic word for heaven and earth, meant probably, like *rajas* and *rocana*, other Vedic words for the heavenly and earthly worlds, "the shining". On the other hand the sense of injury and violence is equally inherent in this family of words and is almost universal in the various roots which form it. "Fierce" or "violent" is therefore likely to be as good a sense for *rudra* as "red". The Ashwins are both *hiraṇyavartanī* and *rudravartanī*, because they are both powers of Light and of nervous force; in the former aspect they have a bright gold movement, in the latter they are violent in their movement. In one hymn (V.75.3) we have the combination *rudrā hiraṇyavartanī*, violent and moving in the paths of light; we can hardly with any respect for coherence of sense understand it to mean that the stars are red but their movement or their path is golden.

Here then, in these three verses, are an extraordinary series of psychological functions to apply to two stars of a heavenly constellation! It is evident that if this was the physical origin of the Ashwins, they have as in Greek mythology long lost their purely stellar nature; they have acquired like Athene, goddess of dawn, a psychological character and functions. They are riders on the horse, the Ashwa, symbolic of force and especially of life-energy and nervous force, the Prana. Their common character is that they are gods of enjoyment, seekers of honey; they are physicians, they bring back youth to the old, health to the sick, wholeness to the maimed. Another characteristic is movement, swift, violent, irresistible; their rapid and indomitable chariot is a constant object of celebration and they are described here as swift-footed and violent in their paths. They are like birds in their swiftness, like the mind, like the wind (V.77.3 and 78.1). They bring in their chariot ripe or perfected satisfactions to man, they are creators of bliss, Mayas. These indications are perfectly clear. They show that the Ashwins are twin divine powers whose special function is to perfect the nervous or vital being in man in the sense of action and enjoyment. But they are also powers of Truth, of intelligent action, of right enjoyment. They are powers that appear with the Dawn, effective powers of action born out of the ocean of being who, because they are divine, are able to mentalise securely the felicities of the higher existence by a thought-faculty which finds or comes to know that true substance and true wealth: —

> *Yā dasrā sindhumātarā, manotarā rayīṇām;*
> *dhiyā devā vasuvidā.* (I.46.2)

They give that impelling energy for the great work which, having for its nature and substance the light of the Truth, carries man beyond the darkness: —

> *Yā naḥ pīparad aśvinā, jyotiṣmatī tamas tiraḥ;*
> *tām asme rāsāthām iṣam.* (I.46.6)

They carry man in their ship to the other shore beyond the thoughts and states of the human mind, that is to say, to the supramental consciousness, — *nāvā matīnāṁ pārāya* (I.46.7). Suryā, daughter of the Sun, Lord of the Truth, mounts their car as their bride.

In the present hymn the Ashwins are invoked, as swift-moving lords of bliss who carry with them many enjoyments, to take delight in the impelling energies of the sacrifice, — *yajvarīr* *iṣo . . . canasyatam.* These impelling forces are born evidently of the drinking of the Soma wine, that is to say, of the inflow of the divine Ananda. For the expressive words, *giraḥ*, that are to make new formations in the consciousness are already rising, the seat of the sacrifice has been piled, the vigorous juices of the Soma wine are pressed out.[1] The Ashwins are to come as effective powers of action, *purudaṁsasā narā*, to take delight in the Words and to accept them into the intellect where they shall be retained for the action by a thought full of luminous energy.[2] They are to come to the offering of the Soma wine, in order to effect the action of the sacrifice, *dasrā*, as fulfillers of action, by giving to the delight of the action that violent movement of theirs, *rudravartanī*, which carries them irresistibly on their path and overcomes all opposition. They come as powers of the Aryan journey, lords of the great human movement, *Nāsatyā*. We see throughout that it is energy which these Riders on the Horse are to give; they are to take delight in the sacrificial energies, to take up the word into an energetic thought, to bring to the sacrifice their own violent movement on the path. And it is effectiveness of action and swiftness in the great journey that is the object of this demand for energy. I would call the attention of the reader continually to the consistency of conception and coherence of structure, the easy clearness and precision of outline which the thought of the Rishis assumes by a psychological interpretation, so different from the tangled confusion and incoherent abruptness of the interpretations which ignore the supreme tradition of the Veda as a book of wisdom and deepest knowledge.

We have then this rendering for the first three verses:

"O Riders of the Steed, swift-footed, much-enjoying lords of bliss, take delight in the energies of the sacrifice.

"O Riders of the Steed, male souls effecting a manifold action, take joy of the words, O holders in the intellect, by a luminously energetic thought.

"I have piled the seat of sacrifice, I have pressed out the vigorous Soma juices; fulfillers of action, powers of the movement, come to them with your fierce speed on the path."

---

[1] *Yuvākavaḥ sutā vṛktabarhiṣaḥ.*

[2] *Śavīrayā dhiyā dhiṣṇyā vanataṁ giraḥ.*

As in the second hymn, so in the third the Rishi begins by invoking deities who act in the nervous or vital forces. But there he called Vayu who supplies the vital forces, brings his steeds of life; here he calls the Ashwins who use the vital forces, ride on the steed. As in the second hymn he proceeds from the vital or nervous action to the mental, he invokes in his second movement the might of Indra. The out-pressings of the wine of delight desire him, *sutā ime tvāyavaḥ*; they desire the luminous mind to take possession of them for its activities; they are purified, *aṇvībhis tanā*, "by the fingers and the body" as Sayana explains it, by the subtle thought-powers of the pure mind and by extension in the physical consciousness as it seems to me to mean. For these "ten fingers", if they are fingers at all, are the ten fingers of Suryā, daughter of the Sun, bride of the Ashwins. In the first hymn of the ninth Mandala this same Rishi Madhuchchhandas expands the idea which here he passes over so succinctly. He says, addressing the deity Soma, "The daughter of the Sun purifies thy Soma as it flows abroad in her straining-vessel by a continuous extension", *vāreṇa śaśvatā tanā*. And immediately he adds, "The subtle ones seize it in their labour (or, in the great work, struggle, aspiration, *samarye*), the ten Brides, sisters in the heaven that has to be crossed", a phrase that recalls at once the ship of the Ashwins that carries us over beyond the thoughts; for Heaven is the symbol of the pure mental consciousness in the Veda as is Earth of the physical consciousness. These sisters who dwell in the pure mind, the subtle ones, *aṇvīḥ*, the ten brides, *daśa yoṣaṇaḥ*, are elsewhere called the ten Casters, *daśa kṣipaḥ*, because they seize the Soma and speed it on its way. They are probably identical with the ten Rays, *daśa gāvaḥ*, sometimes spoken of in the Veda. They seem to be described as the grandchildren or descendants of the Sun, *naptībhir vivasvataḥ* (IX.14.5). They are aided in the task of purification by the seven forms of Thought-consciousness, *sapta dhītayaḥ*. Again we are told that "Soma advances, heroic with his swift chariots, by the force of the subtle thought, *dhiyā aṇvyā*, to the perfected activity (or perfected field) of Indra and takes many forms of thought to arrive at that vast extension (or, formation) of the godhead where the Immortals are" (IX.15.1, 2).

Eṣa purū dhiyāyate, bṛhate devatātaye;
yatrāmṛtāsa āsate.

I have dwelt on this point in order to show how entirely symbolical is the Soma-wine of the Vedic Rishis and how richly surrounded with psychological conceptions, — as anyone will find who cares to go through the ninth Mandala with its almost overcharged splendour of symbolic imagery and overflowing psychological suggestions.

However that may be, the important point here is not the Soma and its purification but the psychological function of Indra. He is addressed as Indra of the richly-various lustres, *indra citrabhāno*. The Soma-juices desire him. He comes impelled by the thought, driven forward by the illumined thinker within, *dhiyeṣito viprajūtaḥ*, to the soul-thoughts of the Rishi who has pressed out the wine of delight and seeks to manifest them in speech, in the inspired mantras; *sutāvata upa brahmāṇi vāghataḥ*. He comes with the speed and force of the illumined mind-power, in possession of his brilliant horses to those thoughts, *tūtujāna upa brahmāṇi harivaḥ*, and the Rishi prays to him to confirm or hold the delight in the Soma offering, *sute dadhiṣva naś canaḥ*. The Ashwins have brought and energised the pleasure of the vital system in the action of the Ananda. Indra is necessary to hold that pleasure firmly in the illuminated mind so that it may not fall away from the consciousness.

"Come, O Indra, with thy rich lustres, these Soma-juices desire thee; they are purified by the subtle powers and by extension in body.

"Come, O Indra, impelled by the mind, driven forward by the illumined thinker, to my soul-thoughts, I who have poured out the Soma-juice and seek to express them in speech.

"Come, O Indra, with forceful speed to my soul-thoughts, O lord of the bright horses; hold firm the delight in the Soma-juice."

The Rishi next passes to the Vishwadevas, all the gods or the all-gods. It has been disputed whether these Vishwadevas form a class by themselves or are simply the gods in their generality. I take it that the phrase means the universal collectivity of the divine powers; for this sense seems to me best to correspond to the actual expressions of the hymns in which they are invoked. In this hymn they are called for a general action which supports and completes the functions of the Ashwins and Indra. They are to come to the sacrifice in their collectivity and divide among themselves, each evidently for the divine and joyous working of his proper activity, the Soma which the giver of the sacrifice distributes to them; *viśve devāsa ā gata, dāśvāṁso dāśuṣaḥ sutam*. In the next Rik the call is repeated with greater insistence; they are to arrive swiftly, *tūrṇayaḥ*, to the Soma offering or, it may mean, making their way through all the planes of consciousness, "waters", which divide the physical nature of man from their godhead and are full of obstacles to communication between earth and heaven; *apturaḥ sutam ā ganta tūrṇayaḥ*. They are to come like cattle hastening to the stalls of their rest at eveningtide, *usrā iva svasarāṇi*. Thus gladly arriving, they are gladly to accept and cleave to the sacrifice and support it, bearing it up in its journey to its goal, in its ascent to the gods or to the home of the gods, the Truth, the Vast; *medhaṁ juṣanta vahnayaḥ*.

And the epithets of the Vishwadevas, qualifying their character and the functions for which they are invited to the Soma-offering, have the same generality; they are common to all the gods and applied indifferently to any or all of them throughout the Veda. They are fosterers or increasers of man and upholders of his labour and effort in the work, the sacrifice, — *omāsaś carṣaṇīdhṛto*. Sayana renders these words protectors and sustainers of men. I need not enter here into a full justification of the significances which I prefer to give them; for I have already indicated the philological method which I follow. Sayana himself finds it impossible to attribute always the sense of protection to the words derived from the root *av*, *avas*, *ūti*, *ūma*, etc. which are so common in the hymns, and is obliged to give to the same word in different passages the most diverse and unconnected significances. Similarly, while it is easy to attribute the sense of "man" to the two kindred words *carṣaṇi* and *kṛṣṭi* when they stand by themselves, this meaning seems unaccountably to disappear in compound forms like *vicarṣaṇi*, *viśvacarṣaṇi*, *viśvakṛṣṭi*. Sayana himself is obliged to render *viśvacarṣaṇi* "all-seeing" and not "all-man" or "all-human". I do not admit the possibility of such abysmal variations in fixed Vedic terms. *Av* can mean to be, have, keep; contain, protect; become, create; foster, increase, thrive, prosper; gladden, be glad; but it is the sense of increasing or fostering which seems to me to prevail in the Veda. *Carṣ* and *kṛṣ* were originally derivate roots from *car* and *kṛ*, both meaning to do, and the sense of laborious action or movement still remains in *kṛṣ*, to drag, to plough. *Carṣaṇi* and *kṛṣṭi* mean therefore effort, laborious action or work or else the doers of such action. They are two among the many words, (*karma*, *apas*, *kāra*, *kīri*, *duvas* etc.), which are used to indicate the Vedic work, the sacrifice, the toil of aspiring humanity, the *arati* of the Aryan.

The fostering or increasing of man in all his substance and possessions, his continual enlargement towards the fullness and richness of the vast Truth-consciousness, the upholding of him in his great struggle and labour, this is the common preoccupation of the Vedic gods. Then, they are *apturaḥ*, they who cross the waters, or as Sayana takes it, they who give the waters. This he understands in the sense of "rain-givers" and it is perfectly true that all the Vedic gods are givers of the rain, the abundance (for *vṛṣṭi*, rain, has both senses) of heaven, sometimes described as the solar waters, *svarvatīr apaḥ*, or waters which carry in them the light of the luminous heaven, *Svar*. But the ocean and the waters in the Veda, as this phrase itself indicates, are the symbol of conscient being in its mass and in its movements. The gods pour the fullness of these waters, especially the upper waters, the waters of heaven, the streams of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*, across all obstacles into the human consciousness. In this sense they are all *apturaḥ*. But man is also described as crossing the waters over to his home in the Truth-consciousness and the gods as carrying him over; it is doubtful whether this may not be the true sense here, especially as we have the two words *apturaḥ* . . . *tūrṇayaḥ* close to each other in a connection that may well be significant.

Again the gods are all free from effective assailants, free from the harm of the hurtful or opposing powers and therefore the creative formations of their conscious knowledge, their Maya, move freely, pervasively, attain their right goal, — *asridha ehimāyāso adruhaḥ*. If we take into account the numerous passages of the Veda which indicate the general object of the sacrifice, of the work, of the journey, of the increase of the light and the abundance of the waters to be the attainment of the Truth-consciousness, Ritam, with the resultant Bliss, Mayas, and that these epithets commonly apply to powers of the infinite, integral Truth-consciousness we can see that it is this attainment of the Truth which is indicated in these three verses. The all-gods increase man, they uphold him in the great work, they bring him the abundance of the waters of Swar, the streams of the Truth, they communicate the unassailably integral and pervading action of the Truth-consciousness with its wide formations of knowledge, *māyāḥ*.

I have translated the phrase, *usrā iva svasarāṇi*, in the most external sense possible; but in the Veda even poetical similes are seldom or never employed for mere decoration; they too are utilised to deepen the psychological sense and with a figure of symbolic or double meaning. The word *usra* is always used in the Veda, like *go*, with the double sense of the concrete figure or symbol, the Bull or Cow, and at the same time the psychological indication of the bright or luminous ones, the illumined powers of the Truth in man. It is as such illumined powers that the all-gods have to come and they come to the Soma-juice, *svasarāṇi*, as if to seats or forms of peace or of bliss; for the root *svas*, like *sas* and many others, means both to rest and to enjoy. They are the powers of Truth entering into the outpourings of the Ananda in man as soon as that movement has been prepared by the vital and mental activity of the Ashwins and the pure mental activity of Indra.

"O fosterers who uphold the doer in his work, O all-gods, come and divide the Soma-wine that I distribute.

"O all-gods who bring over to us the Waters, come passing through to my Soma-offerings as illumined powers to your places of bliss.

"O all-gods, you who are not assailed nor come to hurt, free-moving in your forms of knowledge, cleave to my sacrifice as its upbearers."

And, finally, in the last movement of the hymn we have the clear and unmistakable indication of the Truth-consciousness as the goal of the sacrifice, the object of the Soma-offering, the culmination of the work of the Ashwins, Indra and the All-gods in the vitality and in the mind. For these are the three Riks devoted to Saraswati, the divine Word, who represents the stream of inspiration that descends from the Truth-consciousness, and thus limpidly runs their sense:

"May purifying Saraswati with all the plenitude of her forms of plenty, rich in substance by the thought, desire our sacrifice.

"She, the impeller to happy truths, the awakener in consciousness to right mentalisings, Saraswati, upholds the sacrifice.

"Saraswati by the perception awakens in consciousness the great flood (the vast movement of the Ritam) and illumines entirely all the thoughts."

This clear and luminous finale throws back its light on all that has preceded it. It shows the intimate connection between the Vedic sacrifice and a certain state of mind and soul, the interdependence between the offering of the clarified butter and the Soma juice and luminous thought, richness of psychological content, right states of the mind and its awaking and impulsion to truth and light. It reveals the figure of Saraswati as the goddess of the inspiration, of *śruti*. And it establishes the connection between the Vedic rivers and psychological states of mind. The passage is one of those luminous hints which the Rishis have left scattered amidst the deliberate ambiguities of their symbolic style to guide us towards their secret.

Chapter IX

Saraswati and Her Consorts

THE SYMBOLISM of the Veda betrays itself with the greatest clearness in the figure of the goddess Saraswati. In many of the other gods the balance of the internal sense and the external figure is carefully preserved. The veil sometimes becomes transparent or its corners are lifted even for the ordinary hearer of the Word; but it is never entirely removed. One may doubt whether Agni is anything more than the personification of the sacrificial Fire or of the physical principle of Light and Heat in things, or Indra anything more than the god of the sky and the rain or of physical Light, or Vayu anything more than the divinity in the Wind and Air or at most of the physical Life-breath. In the lesser gods the naturalistic interpretation has less ground for confidence; for it is obvious that Varuna is not merely a Vedic Uranus or Neptune, but a god with great and important moral functions; Mitra and Bhaga have the same psychological aspect; the Ribhus who form things by the mind and build up immortality by works can with difficulty be crushed into the Procrustean measure of a naturalistic mythology. Still by imputing a chaotic confusion of ideas to the poets of the Vedic hymns the difficulty can be trampled upon, if not overcome. But Saraswati will submit to no such treatment. She is, plainly and clearly, the goddess of the Word, the goddess of a divine Inspiration.

If that were all, this would not carry us much farther than the obvious fact that the Vedic Rishis were not mere naturalistic barbarians, but had their psychological ideas and were capable of creating mythological symbols which represent not only those obvious operations of physical Nature that interested their agricultural, pastoral and open-air life, but also the inner operations of the mind and soul. If we have to conceive the history of ancient religious thought as a progression from the physical to the spiritual, from a purely naturalistic to an increasingly ethical and psychological view of Nature and the world and the gods — and this, though by no means certain, is for the present the accepted view,[1] — we must suppose that the Vedic poets were at least already advancing from the physical and naturalistic conception of the Gods to the ethical and the spiritual. But Saraswati is not only the goddess of Inspiration, she is at one and the same time one of the seven rivers of the early Aryan world. The question at once arises, whence came this extraordinary identification? And how does the connection of the two ideas present itself in the Vedic hymns? And there is more; for Saraswati is important not only in herself but by her connections. Before proceeding farther let us cast a rapid and cursory glance at them to see what they can teach us.

The association of a river with the poetical inspiration occurs also in the Greek mythology; but there the Muses are not conceived of as rivers; they are only connected in a not very intelligible fashion with a particular earthly stream. This stream is the river Hippocrene, the fountain of the Horse, and to account for its name we have a legend that it sprang from the hoof of the divine horse Pegasus; for he smote the rock with his hoof and the waters of inspiration gushed out where the mountain had been thus smitten. Was this legend merely a Greek fairy tale or had it any special meaning? And it is evident that if it had any meaning, it must, since it obviously refers to a psychological phenomenon, the birth of the waters of inspiration, have had a psychological meaning; it must have been an attempt to put into concrete figures certain psychological facts. We may note that the word Pegasus, if we transliterate it into the original Aryan phonetics, becomes Pājasa and is obviously connected with the Sanskrit *pājas*, which meant originally force, movement, or sometimes footing. In Greek itself it is connected with *pēgē*, a stream. There is, therefore, in the terms of this legend a constant association with the image of a forceful movement of inspiration. If we turn to Vedic symbols we see that the Ashwa or Horse is an image of the great dynamic force of Life, of the vital and nervous energy, and is constantly coupled with other images that symbolise the consciousness. *Adri*, the hill or rock, is a symbol of formal existence and especially of the physical nature and it is out of this hill or rock that the herds of the Sun are released and the waters flow. The streams of the *madhu*, the honey, the Soma, are said also to be milked out of this Hill or Rock. The stroke of the Horse's hoof on the rock releasing the waters of inspiration would thus become a very obvious psychological image. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the old Greeks and Indians were incapable either of such psychological observation or of putting it into the poetical and mystic imagery which was the very body of the ancient Mysteries.

---

[1] I do not think we have any real materials for determining the first origin and primitive history of religious ideas. What the facts really point to is an early teaching at once psychological and naturalistic, that is to say with two faces, of which the first came to be more or less obscured, but never entirely effaced even in the barbarous races, even in races like the tribes of North America. But this teaching, though prehistoric, was anything but primitive.

We might indeed go farther and inquire whether there was not some original connection between the hero Bellerophon, slayer of Bellerus, who rides on the divine Horse, and Indra Valahan, the Vedic slayer of Vala, the enemy who keeps for himself the Light. But this would take us beyond the limits of our subject. Nor does this interpretation of the Pegasus legend carry us any farther than to indicate the natural turn of imagination of the Ancients and the way in which they came to figure the stream of inspiration as an actual stream of flowing water. Saraswati means, "she of the stream, the flowing movement", and is therefore a natural name both for a river and for the goddess of inspiration. But by what process of thought or association does the general idea of the river of inspiration come to be associated with a particular earthly stream? And in the Veda it is not a question of one river which by its surroundings, natural and legendary, might seem more fitly associated with the idea of sacred inspiration than any other. For here it is a question not of one, but of seven rivers always associated together in the minds of the Rishis and all of them released together by the stroke of the God Indra when he smote the Python who coiled across their fountains and sealed up their outflow. It seems impossible to suppose that one river only in all this sevenfold outflowing acquired a psychological significance while the rest were associated only with the annual coming of the rains in the Punjab. The psychological significance of Saraswati carries with it a psychological significance for the whole symbol of the Vedic waters.[2]

Saraswati is not only connected with other rivers but with other goddesses who are plainly psychological symbols and especially with Bharati and Ila. In the later Puranic forms of worship Saraswati is the goddess of speech, of learning and of poetry and Bharati is one of her names, but in the Veda Bharati and Saraswati are different deities. Bharati is also called Mahi, the Large, Great or Vast. The three, Ila, Mahi or Bharati and Saraswati are associated together in a constant formula in those hymns of invocation in which the gods are called by Agni to the Sacrifice.

Iḷā sarasvatī mahī, tisro devīr mayobhuvaḥ;
    barhiḥ sīdantvasridhaḥ.

"May Ila, Saraswati and Mahi, three goddesses who give birth to the bliss, take their place on the sacrificial seat, they who stumble not," or "who come not to hurt" or "do no hurt." The epithet means, I think, they in whom there is no false movement with its evil consequences, *duritam*, no stumbling into pitfalls of sin and error. The formula is expanded in Hymn 110 of the tenth Mandala:

Ā no yajñaṁ bhāratī tūyam etu,
    iḷā manuṣvad iha cetayantī;
Tisro devīr barhir edaṁ syonaṁ,
    sarasvatī svapasaḥ sadantu.

---

[2] The rivers have a symbolic sense in later Indian thought; as for instance Ganges, Yamuna and Saraswati and their confluence are in the Tantric imagery Yogic symbols, and they are used, though in a different way, in Yogic symbolism generally.

"May Bharati come speeding to our sacrifice and Ila hither awakening our consciousness (or, knowledge or perceptions) in human wise, and Saraswati, — three goddesses sit on this blissful seat, doing well the Work."

It is clear and will become yet clearer that these three goddesses have closely connected functions akin to the inspirational power of Saraswati. Saraswati is the Word, the inspiration, as I suggest, that comes from the Ritam, the Truth-consciousness. Bharati and Ila must also be different forms of the same Word or knowledge. In the eighth hymn of Madhuchchhandas we have a Rik in which Bharati is mentioned under the name of Mahi.

Evā hyasya sūnṛtā, virapśī gomatī mahī;
pakvā śākhā na dāśuṣe.

"Thus Mahi for Indra full of the rays, overflowing in her abundance, in her nature a happy truth, becomes as if a ripe branch for the giver of the sacrifice."

The rays in the Veda are the rays of Surya, the Sun. Are we to suppose that the goddess is a deity of the physical Light or are we to translate "go" by cow and suppose that Mahi is full of cows for the sacrificer? The psychological character of Saraswati comes to our rescue against the last absurd supposition, but it negatives equally the naturalistic interpretation. This characterisation of Mahi, Saraswati's companion in the sacrifice, the sister of the goddess of inspiration, entirely identified with her in the later mythology, is one proof among a hundred others that light in the Veda is a symbol of knowledge, of spiritual illumination. Surya is the Lord of the supreme Sight, the vast Light, *bṛhaj jyotiḥ*, or, as it is sometimes called, the true Light, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*. And the connection between the words *ṛtam* and *bṛhat* is constant in the Veda.

It seems to me impossible to see in these expressions anything else than the indication of a state of illumined consciousness the nature of which is that it is wide or large, *bṛhat*, full of the truth of being, *satyam*, and of the truth of knowledge and action, *ṛtam*. The gods have this consciousness. Agni, for instance, is termed *ṛtacit*, he who has the truth-consciousness.

Mahi is full of the rays of this Surya; she carries in her this illumination. Moreover she is *sūnṛtā*, she is the word of a blissful Truth, even as it has been said of Saraswati that she is the impeller of happy truths, *codayitrī sūnṛtānām*. Finally, she is *virapśī*, large or breaking out into abundance, a word which recalls to us that the Truth is also a Largeness, *ṛtaṁ bṛhat*. And in another hymn, (I.22.10), she is described as *varūtrī dhiṣaṇā*, a widely covering or embracing Thought-power. Mahi, then, is the luminous vastness of the Truth, she represents the Largeness, *bṛhat*, of the superconscient in us containing in itself the Truth, *ṛtam*. She is, therefore, for the sacrificer like a branch covered with ripe fruit.

Ila is also the word of the truth; her name has become identical in a later confusion with the idea of speech. As Saraswati is an awakener of the consciousness to right thinkings or right states of mind, *cetantī sumatīnām*, so also Ila comes to the sacrifice awakening the consciousness to knowledge, *cetayantī*. She is full of energy, *suvīrā*, and brings knowledge. She also is connected with Surya, the Sun, as when Agni, the Will is invoked (V.4.4) to labour by the rays of the Sun, Lord of the true Light, being of one mind with Ila, *iḷayā sajoṣā yatamāno raśmibhiḥ sūryasya*. She is the mother of the Rays, the herds of the Sun. Her name means she who seeks and attains and it contains the same association of ideas as the words Ritam and Rishi. Ila may therefore well be the vision of the seer which attains the truth.

As Saraswati represents the truth-audition, *śruti*, which gives the inspired word, so Ila represents *dṛṣṭi*, the truth-vision. If so, since *dṛṣṭi* and *śruti* are the two powers of the Rishi, the Kavi, the Seer of the Truth, we can understand the close connection of Ila and Saraswati. Bharati or Mahi is the largeness of the Truth-consciousness which, dawning on man's limited mind, brings with it the two sister Puissances. We can also understand how these fine and living distinctions came afterwards to be neglected as the Vedic knowledge declined and Bharati, Saraswati, Ila melted into one.

We may note also that these three goddesses are said to bring to birth for man the Bliss, Mayas. I have already insisted on the constant relation, as conceived by the Vedic seers, between the Truth and the Bliss or Ananda. It is by the dawning of the true or infinite consciousness in man that he arrives out of this evil dream of pain and suffering, this divided creation into the Bliss, the happy state variously described in Veda by the words *bhadram*, *mayas* (love and bliss), *svasti* (the good state of existence, right being) and by others less technically used such as *vāryam*, *rayiḥ*, *rāyaḥ*. For the Vedic Rishi Truth is the passage and the antechamber, the Bliss of the divine existence is the goal, or else Truth is the foundation, Bliss the supreme result.

Such, then, is the character of Saraswati as a psychological principle, her peculiar function and her relation to her most immediate connections among the gods. How far do these shed any light on her relations as the Vedic river to her six sister streams? The number seven plays an exceedingly important part in the Vedic system, as in most very ancient schools of thought. We find it recurring constantly, — the seven delights, *sapta ratnāni*; the seven flames, tongues or rays of Agni, *sapta arciṣaḥ*, *sapta jvālāḥ*; the seven forms of the Thought-principle, *sapta dhītayaḥ*; the seven Rays or Cows, forms of the Cow unslayable, Aditi, mother of the gods, *sapta gāvaḥ*; the seven rivers, the seven mothers or fostering cows, *sapta mātaraḥ*, *sapta dhenavaḥ*, a term applied indifferently to the Rays and to the Rivers. All these sets of seven depend, it seems to me, upon the Vedic classification of the fundamental principles, the tattvas, of existence. The enquiry into the number of these tattvas greatly interested the speculative mind of the ancients and in Indian philosophy we find various answers ranging from the One upward and running into the twenties. In Vedic thought the basis chosen was the number of the psychological principles, because all existence was conceived by the Rishis as a movement of conscious being. However merely curious or barren these speculations and classifications may seem to the modern mind, they were no mere dry metaphysical distinctions, but closely connected with a living psychological practice of which they were to a great extent the thought-basis, and in any case we must understand them clearly if we wish to form with any accuracy an idea of this ancient and far-off system.

In the Veda, then, we find the number of the principles variously stated. The One was recognised as the basis and continent; in this One there were the two principles divine and human, mortal and immortal. The dual number is also otherwise applied in the two principles, Heaven and Earth, Mind and Body, Soul and Nature, who are regarded as the father and mother of all beings. It is significant, however, that Heaven and Earth, when they symbolise two forms of natural energy, the mental and the physical consciousness, are no longer the father and mother, but the two mothers. The triple principle was doubly recognised, first in the threefold divine principle answering to the later Sachchidananda, the divine existence, consciousness and bliss, and secondly in the threefold mundane principle, Mind, Life, Body, upon which is built the triple world of the Veda and Puranas. But the full number ordinarily recognised is seven. This figure was arrived at by adding the three divine principles to the three mundane and interpolating a seventh or link-principle which is precisely that of the Truth-consciousness, Ritam Brihat, afterwards known as Vijnana or Mahas. The latter term means the Large and is therefore an equivalent of Brihat. There are other classifications of five, eight, nine and ten and even, as it would seem, twelve; but these do not immediately concern us.

All these principles, be it noted, are supposed to be really inseparable and omnipresent and therefore apply themselves to each separate formation of Nature. The seven Thoughts, for instance, are Mind applying itself to each of the seven planes as we would now call them and formulating Matter-mind, if we may so call it, nervous mind, pure mind, truth-mind and so on to the highest summit, *paramā parāvat*. The seven rays or cows are Aditi the infinite Mother, the Cow unslayable, supreme Nature or infinite Consciousness, pristine source of the later idea of Prakriti or Shakti, — the Purusha is in this early pastoral imagery the Bull, Vrishabha, — the Mother of things taking form on the seven planes of her world-action as energy of conscious being. So also, the seven rivers are conscious currents corresponding to the sevenfold substance of the ocean of being which appears to us formulated in the seven worlds enumerated by the Puranas. It is their full flow in the human consciousness which constitutes the entire activity of the being, his full treasure of substance, his full play of energy. In the Vedic image, his cows drink of the water of the seven rivers.

Should this imagery be admitted, and it is evident that if once such conceptions are supposed to exist, this would be the natural imagery for a people living the life and placed in the surroundings of the ancient Aryans, — quite as natural for them and inevitable as for us the image of the "planes" with which theosophical thought has familiarised us, — the place of Saraswati as one of the seven rivers becomes clear. She is the current which comes from the Truth-principle, from the Ritam or Mahas, and we actually find this principle spoken of in the Veda, — in the closing passage of our third hymn for instance, — as the Great Water, *maho arṇas*, — an expression which gives us at once the origin of the later term, Mahas, — or sometimes *mahān arṇavaḥ*. We see in the third hymn the close connection between Saraswati and this great water. Let us examine a little more closely this connection before we proceed to the consideration of the Vedic cows and their relation to the god Indra and Saraswati's close cousin the goddess Sarama. For it is necessary to define these relations before we can progress with the scrutiny of Madhuchchhandas' other hymns addressed without exception to the great Vedic deity, King of Heaven, who, according to our hypothesis, symbolises the Power of Mind and especially the divine or self-luminous Mind in the human being.

Chapter X

The Image of the Oceans and the Rivers

THE THREE riks of the third hymn of Madhuchchhandas in which Saraswati has been invoked, run as follows, in the Sanskrit: —

Pāvakā naḥ sarasvatī, vājebhir vājinīvatī;
yajñaṁ vaṣṭu dhiyāvasuḥ.
Codayitrī sūnṛtānāṁ, cetantī sumatīnām;
yajñaṁ dadhe sarasvatī.
Maho arṇaḥ sarasvatī, pra cetayati ketunā;
dhiyo viśvā vi rājati.

The sense of the first two verses is clear enough when we know Saraswati to be that power of the Truth which we call inspiration. Inspiration from the Truth purifies by getting rid of all falsehood, for all sin according to the Indian idea is merely falsehood, wrongly inspired emotion, wrongly directed will and action. The central idea of life and ourselves from which we start is a falsehood and all else is falsified by it. Truth comes to us as a light, a voice, compelling a change of thought, imposing a new discernment of ourselves and all around us. Truth of thought creates truth of vision and truth of vision forms in us truth of being, and out of truth of being (*satyam*) flows naturally truth of emotion, will and action. This is indeed the central notion of the Veda.

Saraswati, the inspiration, is full of her luminous plenitudes, rich in substance of thought. She upholds the Sacrifice, the offering of the mortal being's activities to the divine by awakening his consciousness so that it assumes right states of emotion and right movements of thought in accordance with the Truth from which she pours her illuminations and by impelling in it the rise of those truths which, according to the Vedic Rishis, liberate the life and being from falsehood, weakness and limitation and open to it the doors of the supreme felicity.

By this constant awakening and impulsion, summed up in the word, perception, *ketu*, often called the divine perception, *daivya ketu*, to distinguish it from the false mortal vision of things, — Saraswati brings into active consciousness in the human being the great flood or great movement, the Truth-consciousness itself, and illumines with it all our thoughts. We must remember that this truth-consciousness of the Vedic Rishis is a supra-mental plane, a level of the hill of being (*adreḥ sānu*) which is beyond our ordinary reach and to which we have to climb with difficulty. It is not part of our waking being, it is hidden from us in the sleep of the superconscient. We can then understand what Madhuchchhandas means when he says that Saraswati by the constant action of the inspiration awakens the Truth to consciousness in our thoughts.

But this line may, so far as the mere grammatical form of it goes, be quite otherwise translated; we may take *maho arṇas* in apposition to Saraswati and render the verse "Saraswati, the great river, awakens us to knowledge by the perception and shines in all our thoughts." If we understand by this expression, "the great river", as Sayana seems to understand, the physical river in the Punjab, we get an incoherence of thought and expression which is impossible except in a nightmare or a lunatic asylum. But it is possible to suppose that it means the great flood of inspiration and that there is no reference to the great ocean of the Truth-Consciousness. Elsewhere, however, there is repeated reference to the gods working by the vast power of the great flood (*mahnā mahato arṇavasya*) where there is no reference to Saraswati and it is improbable that she should be meant. It is true that in the Vedic writings Saraswati is spoken of as the secret self of Indra, — an expression, we may observe, that is void of sense if Saraswati is only a northern river and Indra the god of the sky, but has a very profound and striking significance if Indra be the illumined Mind and Saraswati the inspiration that proceeds from the hidden plane of the supramental Truth. But it is impossible to give Saraswati so important a place with regard to the other gods as would be implied by interpreting the phrase *mahnā mahato arṇavasya* in the sense "by the greatness of Saraswati". The gods act, it is continually stated, by the power of the Truth, *ṛtena*, but Saraswati is only one of the deities of the Truth and not even the most important or universal of them. The sense I have given is, therefore, the only rendering consistent with the general thought of the Veda and with the use of the phrase in other passages.

Let us then start from this decisive fact put beyond doubt by this passage — whether we take the great stream to be Saraswati itself or the Truth-ocean — that the Vedic Rishis used the image of water, a river or an ocean, in a figurative sense and as a psychological symbol, and let us see how far it takes us. We notice first that existence itself is constantly spoken of in the Hindu writings, in Veda, Purana and even philosophical reasoning and illustration as an ocean. The Veda speaks of two oceans, the upper and the lower waters. These are the ocean of the subconscient, dark and inexpressive, and the ocean of the superconscient, luminous and eternal expression but beyond the human mind. Vamadeva in the last hymn of the fourth Mandala speaks of these two oceans. He says that a honeyed wave climbs up from the ocean and by means of this mounting wave which is the Soma (*aṁśu*) one attains entirely to immortality; that wave or that Soma is the secret name of the clarity (*ghṛtasya*, the symbol of the clarified butter); it is the tongue of the gods; it is the nodus (*nābhi*) of immortality.

Samudrād ūrmir madhumān udārad,
upāṁśunā sam amṛtatvam ānaṭ;
Ghṛtasya nāma guhyaṁ yad asti,
jihvā devānām amṛtasya nābhiḥ.

I presume there can be no doubt that the sea, the honey, the Soma, the clarified butter are in this passage at least psychological symbols. Certainly, Vamadeva does not mean that a wave or flood of wine came mounting up out of the salt water of the Indian Ocean or of the Bay of Bengal or even from the fresh water of the river Indus or the Ganges and that this wine is a secret name for clarified butter. What he means to say is clearly that out of the subconscient depths in us arises a honeyed wave of Ananda or pure delight of existence, that it is by this Ananda that we can arrive at immortality; this Ananda is the secret being, the secret reality behind the action of the mind in its shining clarities. Soma, the god of the Ananda, the Vedanta also tells us, is that which has become mind or sensational perception; in other words, all mental sensation carries in it a hidden delight of existence and strives to express that secret of its own being. Therefore Ananda is the tongue of the gods with which they taste the delight of existence; it is the nodus in which all the activities of the immortal state or divine existence are bound together. Vamadeva goes on to say, "Let us give expression to this secret name of the clarity, — that is to say, let us bring out this Soma wine, this hidden delight of existence; let us hold it in this world-sacrifice by our surrenderings or submissions to Agni, the divine Will or Conscious-Power which is the Master of being. He is the four-horned Bull of the worlds and when he listens to the soul-thought of man in its self-expression, he ejects this secret name of delight from its hiding-place."

Vayaṁ nāma pra bravāmā ghṛtasya,
asmin yajñe dhārayāmā namobhiḥ;
Upa brahmā śṛṇavac chasyamānaṁ,
catuḥśṛṅgo avamīd gaura etat.

Let us note, in passing, that since the wine and the clarified butter are symbolic, the sacrifice also must be symbolic. In such hymns as this of Vamadeva's the ritualistic veil so elaborately woven by the Vedic mystics vanishes like a dissolving mist before our eyes and there emerges the Vedantic truth, the secret of the Veda.

Vamadeva leaves us in no doubt as to the nature of the Ocean of which he speaks; for in the fifth verse he openly describes it as the ocean of the heart, *hṛdyāt samudrāt*, out of which rise the waters of the clarity, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*; they flow, he says, becoming progressively purified by the mind and the inner heart, *antar hṛdā manasā pūyamānāḥ*. And in the closing verse he speaks of the whole of existence being triply established, first in the seat of Agni — which we know from other riks to be the Truth-Consciousness, Agni's own home, *svaṁ damam ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, — secondly, in the heart, the sea, which is evidently the same as the heart-ocean, — thirdly, in the life of man.

Dhāman te viśvaṁ bhuvanam adhi śritam,
antaḥ samudre hṛdyantar āyuṣi.

The superconscient, the sea of the subconscient, the life of the living being between the two, — this is the Vedic idea of existence.

The sea of the superconscient is the goal of the rivers of clarity, of the honeyed wave, as the sea of the subconscient in the heart within is their place of rising. This upper sea is spoken of as the Sindhu, a word which may mean either river or ocean; but in this hymn it clearly means ocean. Let us observe the remarkable language in which Vamadeva speaks of these rivers of the clarity. He says first that the gods sought and found the clarity, the *ghṛtam*, triply placed and hidden by the Panis in the cow, *gavi*. It is beyond doubt that *go* is used in the Veda in the double sense of Cow and Light; the Cow is the outer symbol, the inner meaning is the Light. The figure of the cows stolen and hidden by the Panis is constant in the Veda. Here it is evident that as the sea is a psychological symbol — the heart-ocean, *samudre hṛdi*, — and the Soma is a psychological symbol and the clarified butter is a psychological symbol, the cow in which the gods find the clarified butter hidden by the Panis must also symbolise an inner illumination and not physical light. The cow is really Aditi, the infinite consciousness hidden in the subconscient, and the triple *ghṛtam* is the triple clarity of the liberated sensation finding its secret of delight, of the thought-mind attaining to light and intuition and of the truth itself, the ultimate supra-mental vision. This is clear from the second half of the verse in which it is said, "One Indra produced, one Surya, one the gods fashioned by natural development out of Vena"; for Indra is the Master of the thought-mind, Surya of the supra-mental light, Vena is Soma, the master of mental delight of existence, creator of the sense-mind.

We may observe also in passing that the Panis here must perforce be spiritual enemies, powers of darkness, and not Dravidian gods or Dravidian tribes or Dravidian merchants. In the next verse Vamadeva says of the streams of the *ghṛtam* that they move from the heart-ocean shut up in a hundred prisons (pens) by the enemy so that they are not seen. Certainly, this does not mean that rivers of ghee — or of water, either — rising from the heart-ocean or any ocean were caught on their way by the wicked and unconscionable Dravidians and shut up in a hundred pens so that the Aryans or the Aryan gods could not even catch a glimpse of them. We perceive at once that the enemy, Pani, Vritra of the hymns is a purely psychological conception and not an attempt of our forefathers to conceal the facts of early Indian history from their posterity in a cloud of tangled and inextricable myths. The Rishi Vamadeva would have stood aghast at such an unforeseen travesty of his ritual images. We are not even helped if we take *ghṛta* in the sense of water, *hṛdya samudra* in the sense of a delightful lake, and suppose that the Dravidians enclose the water of the rivers with a hundred dams so that the Aryans could not even get a glimpse of them. For even if the rivers of the Punjab all flow out of one heart-pleasing lake, yet their streams of water cannot even so have been triply placed in a cow and the cow hidden in a cave by the cleverest and most inventive Dravidians.

"These move" says Vamadeva "from the heart-ocean; penned by the enemy in a hundred enclosures they cannot be seen; I look towards the streams of the clarity, for in their midst is the Golden Reed. Entirely they stream like flowing rivers becoming purified by the heart within and the mind; these move, waves of the clarity, like animals under the mastery of their driver. As if on a path in front of the Ocean (*sindhu*, the upper ocean) the mighty ones move compact of forceful speed but limited by the vital force (*vāta*, *vāyu*), the streams of clarity; they are like a straining horse which breaks its limits, as it is nourished by the waves." On the very face of it this is the poetry of a mystic concealing his sense from the profane under a veil of images which occasionally he suffers to grow transparent to the eye that chooses to see. What he means is that the divine knowledge is all the time flowing constantly behind our thoughts, but is kept from us by the internal enemies who limit our material of mind to the sense-action and sense-perception so that though the waves of our being beat on banks that border upon the superconscient, the infinite, they are limited by the nervous action of the sense-mind and cannot reveal their secret. They are like horses controlled and reined in; only when the waves of the light have nourished their strength to the full does the straining steed break these limits and they flow freely towards That from which the Soma-wine is pressed out and the sacrifice is born.

Yatra somaḥ sūyate yatra yajño,
ghṛtasya dhārā abhi tat pavante.

This goal is, again, explained to be that which is all honey, — *ghṛtasya dhārā madhumat pavante*; it is the Ananda, the divine Beatitude. And that this goal is the Sindhu, the superconscient ocean, is made clear in the last rik, where Vamadeva says, "May we taste that honeyed wave of thine" — of Agni, the divine Purusha, the four-horned Bull of the worlds — "which is borne in the force of the Waters where they come together."

Apām anīke samithe ya ābhṛtas,
tam aśyāma madhumantaṁ ta ūrmim.

We find this fundamental idea of the Vedic Rishis brought out in the Hymn of Creation (X.129) where the subconscient is thus described. "Darkness hidden by darkness in the beginning was this all, an ocean without mental consciousness . . . out of it the One was born by the greatness of Its energy. It first moved in it as desire which was the first seed of mind. The Masters of Wisdom found out in the non-existent that which builds up the existent; in the heart they found it by purposeful impulsion and by the thought-mind. Their ray was extended horizontally; there was something above, there was something below." In this passage the same ideas are brought out as in Vamadeva's hymn but without the veil of images. Out of the subconscient ocean the One arises in the heart first as desire; he moves there in the heart-ocean as an unexpressed desire of the delight of existence and this desire is the first seed of what afterwards appears as the sense-mind. The gods thus find out a means of building up the existent, the conscious being, out of the subconscient darkness; they find it in the heart and bring it out by the growth of thought and purposeful impulsion, *pratīṣyā*, by which is meant mental desire as distinguished from the first vague desire that arises out of the subconscient in the merely vital movements of nature. The conscious existence which they thus create is stretched out as it were horizontally between two other extensions; below is the dark sleep of the subconscient, above is the luminous secrecy of the superconscient. These are the upper and the lower ocean.

This Vedic imagery throws a clear light on the similar symbolic images of the Puranas, especially on the famous symbol of Vishnu sleeping after the pralaya on the folds of the snake Ananta upon the ocean of sweet milk. It may perhaps be objected that the Puranas were written by superstitious Hindu priests or poets who believed that eclipses were caused by a dragon eating the sun and moon and could easily believe that during the periods of non-creation the supreme Deity in a physical body went to sleep on a physical snake upon a material ocean of real milk and that therefore it is a vain ingenuity to seek for a spiritual meaning in these fables. My reply would be that there is in fact no need to seek for such meanings; for these very superstitious poets have put them there plainly on the very surface of the fable for everybody to see who does not choose to be blind. For they have given a name to Vishnu's snake, the name Ananta, and Ananta means the Infinite; therefore they have told us plainly enough that the image is an allegory and that Vishnu, the all-pervading Deity, sleeps in the periods of non-creation on the coils of the Infinite. As for the ocean, the Vedic imagery shows us that it must be the ocean of eternal existence and this ocean of eternal existence is an ocean of absolute sweetness, in other words, of pure Bliss. For the sweet milk (itself a Vedic image) has, evidently, a sense not essentially different from the *madhu*, honey or sweetness, of Vamadeva's hymn.

Thus we find that both Veda and Purana use the same symbolic images; the ocean is for them the image of infinite and eternal existence. We find also that the image of the river or flowing current is used to symbolise a stream of conscious being. We find that Saraswati, one of the seven rivers, is the river of inspiration flowing from the Truth-consciousness. We have the right then to suppose that the other six rivers are also psychological symbols.

But we need not depend entirely on hypothesis and inference, however strong and entirely convincing. As in the hymn of Vamadeva we have seen that the rivers, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*, are there not rivers of clarified butter or rivers of physical water, but psychological symbols, so we find in other hymns the same compelling evidence as to the image of the seven rivers. For this purpose I will examine one more hymn, the first Sukta of the third Mandala sung by the Rishi Vishwamitra to the god Agni; for here he speaks of the seven rivers in language as remarkable and unmistakable as the language of Vamadeva about the rivers of clarity. We shall find precisely the same ideas recurring in quite different contexts in the chants of these two sacred singers.

Chapter XI

The Seven Rivers

THE VEDA speaks constantly of the waters or the rivers, especially of the divine waters, *āpo devīḥ* or *āpo divyāḥ*, and occasionally of the waters which carry in them the light of the luminous solar world or the light of the Sun, *svarvatīr apaḥ*. The passage of the waters effected by the Gods or by man with the aid of the Gods is a constant symbol. The three great conquests to which the human being aspires, which the Gods are in constant battle with the Vritras and Panis to give to man are the herds, the waters and the Sun or the solar world, *gā apaḥ svaḥ*. The question is whether these references are to the rains of heaven, the rivers of Northern India possessed or assailed by the Dravidians — the Vritras being sometimes the Dravidians and sometimes their gods, the herds possessed or robbed from the Aryan settlers by the indigenous "robbers" — the Panis who hold or steal the herds being again sometimes the Dravidians and sometimes their gods; or is there a deeper, a spiritual meaning? Is the winning of Swar simply the recovery of the sun from its shadowing by the storm-cloud or its seizure by eclipse or its concealment by the darkness of Night? For here at least there can be no withholding of the sun from the Aryans by human "black-skinned" and "noseless" enemies. Or does the conquest of Swar mean simply the winning of heaven by sacrifice? And in either case what is the sense of this curious collocation of cows, waters and the sun or cows, waters and the sky? Is it not rather a system of symbolic meanings in which the herds, indicated by the word *gāḥ* in the sense both of cows and rays of light, are the illuminations from the higher consciousness which have their origin in the Sun of Light, the Sun of Truth? Is not Swar itself the world or plane of immortality governed by that Light or Truth of the all-illumining Sun called in Veda the vast Truth, *ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, and the true Light? and are not the divine waters, *āpo devīḥ*, *divyāḥ* or *svarvatīḥ*, the floods of this higher consciousness pouring on the mortal mind from that plane of immortality?

It is, no doubt, easy to point to passages or hymns in which on the surface there seems to be no need of any such interpretation and the *sūkta* can be understood as a prayer or praise for the giving of rain or an account of a battle on the rivers of the Punjab. But the Veda cannot be interpreted by separate passages or hymns. If it is to have any coherent or consistent meaning, we must interpret it as a whole. We may escape our difficulties by assigning to *svar* or *gāḥ* entirely different senses in different passages — just as Sayana sometimes finds in *gāḥ* the sense of cows, sometimes rays and sometimes, with an admirable light-heartedness, compels it to mean waters.[1] But such a system of interpretation is not rational merely because it leads to a "rationalistic" or "common-sense" result. It rather flouts both reason and common sense. We can indeed arrive by it at any result we please, but no reasonable and unbiassed mind can feel convinced that that result was the original sense of the Vedic hymns.

But if we adopt a more consistent method, insuperable difficulties oppose themselves to the purely material sense. We have for instance a hymn (VII.49) of Vasishtha to the divine waters, *āpo devīḥ*, *āpo divyāḥ*, in which the second verse runs, "The divine waters that flow whether in channels dug or self-born, they whose movement is towards the ocean, pure, purifying, — may those waters foster me." Here, it will be said, the sense is quite clear; it is to material waters, earthly rivers, canals, — or, if the word *khanitrimāḥ* means simply "dug", then wells, — that Vasishtha addresses his hymn and *divyāḥ*, divine, is only an ornamental epithet of praise; or even perhaps we may render the verse differently and suppose that three kinds of water are described, — the waters of heaven, that is to say the rain, the water of wells, the water of rivers. But when we study the hymn as a whole this sense can no longer stand. For thus it runs:

---

[1] So also he interprets the all-important Vedic word *ṛtam* sometimes as sacrifice, sometimes as truth, sometimes as water, and all these different senses in a single hymn of five or six verses!

"May those divine waters foster me, the eldest (or greatest) of the ocean from the midst of the moving flood that go purifying, not settling down, which Indra of the thunderbolt, the Bull, clove out. The divine waters that flow whether in channels dug or self-born, whose movement is towards the Ocean, — may those divine waters foster me. In the midst of whom King Varuna moves looking down on the truth and the falsehood of creatures, they that stream honey and are pure and purifying, — may those divine waters foster me. In whom Varuna the king, in whom Soma, in whom all the Gods have the intoxication of the energy, into whom Agni Vaishwanara has entered, may those divine waters foster me."

It is evident that Vasishtha is speaking here of the same waters, the same streams that Vamadeva hymns, the waters that rise from the ocean and flow into the ocean, the honeyed wave that rises upward from the sea, from the flood that is the heart of things, streams of the clarity, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*. They are the floods of the supreme and universal conscious existence in which Varuna moves looking down on the truth and the falsehood of mortals, — a phrase that can apply neither to the descending rains nor to the physical ocean. Varuna in the Veda is not an Indian Neptune, neither is he precisely, as the European scholars at first imagined, the Greek Ouranos, the sky. He is the master of an ethereal wideness, an upper ocean, of the vastness of being, of its purity; in that vastness, it is elsewhere said, he has made paths in the pathless infinite along which Surya, the Sun, the Lord of Truth and the Light can move. Thence he looks down on the mingled truths and falsehoods of the mortal consciousness. And we have farther to note that these divine waters are those which Indra has cloven out and made to flow upon the earth, — a description which throughout the Veda is applied to the seven rivers.

If there were any doubt whether these waters of Vasishtha's prayer are the same as the waters of Vamadeva's great hymn, *madhumān ūrmiḥ*, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*, it is entirely removed by another Sukta of the sage Vasishtha, (VII.47). In the forty-ninth hymn he refers briefly to the divine waters as honey-streaming, *madhuścutaḥ* and speaks of the Gods enjoying in them the intoxication of the energy, *ūrjaṁ madanti*; from this we can gather that the honey or sweetness is the *madhu*, the Soma, the wine of the Ananda, of which the Gods have the ecstasy. But in the forty-seventh hymn he makes his meaning unmistakably clear.

"O Waters, that supreme wave of yours, the drink of Indra, which the seekers of the Godhead have made for themselves, that pure, inviolate, clarity-streaming, honeyed (*ghṛtapruṣaṁ madhumantam*) wave of you may we today enjoy. O Waters, may the son of the waters (Agni), he of the swift rushings, foster that most honeyed wave of you; that wave of yours in which Indra with the Vasus is intoxicated with ecstasy, may we who seek the Godhead taste today. Strained through the hundred purifiers, ecstatic by their self-nature, they are divine and move to the goal of the movement of the Gods (the supreme ocean); they limit not the workings of Indra: offer to the rivers a food of oblation full of the clarity (*ghṛtavat*). May the rivers which the sun has formed by his rays, from whom Indra clove out a moving wave, establish for us the supreme good. And do ye, O gods, protect us ever by states of felicity."

Here we have Vamadeva's *madhumān ūrmiḥ*, the sweet intoxicating wave, and it is plainly said that this honey, this sweetness is the Soma, the drink of Indra. That is farther made clear by the epithet *śatapavitrāḥ* which can only refer in the Vedic language to the Soma; and let us note that it is an epithet of the rivers themselves and that the honeyed wave is brought flowing from them by Indra, its passage being cloven out on the mountains by the thunderbolt that slew Vritra. Again it is made clear that these waters are the seven rivers released by Indra from the hold of Vritra, the Besieger, the Coverer and sent flowing down upon the earth.

What can these rivers be whose wave is full of Soma wine, full of the *ghṛta*, full of *ūrj*, the energy? What are these waters that flow to the goal of the gods' movement, that establish for man the supreme good? Not the rivers of the Punjab; no wildest assumption of barbarous confusion or insane incoherence in the mentality of the Vedic Rishis can induce us to put such a construction upon such expressions. Obviously these are the waters of the Truth and the Bliss that flow from the supreme ocean. These rivers flow not upon earth, but in heaven; they are prevented by Vritra the Besieger, the Coverer from flowing down upon the earth-consciousness in which we mortals live till Indra, the god-mind, smites the Coverer with his flashing lightnings and cuts out a passage on the summits of that earth-consciousness down which they can flow. Such is the only rational, coherent and sensible explanation of the thought and language of the Vedic sages. For the rest, Vasishtha makes it clear enough to us; for he says that these are the waters which Surya has formed by his rays and which, unlike earthly movements, do not limit or diminish the workings of Indra, the supreme Mind. They are, in other words, the waters of the Vast Truth, *ṛtaṁ bṛhat* and, as we have always seen that this Truth creates the Bliss, so here we find that these waters of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*, as they are plainly called in other hymns (e.g. V.12.2, "O perceiver of the Truth, perceive the Truth alone, cleave out many streams of the Truth"), establish for men the supreme good and the supreme good[2] is the felicity, the bliss of the divine existence.

Still, neither in these hymns nor in Vamadeva's is there an express mention of the seven rivers. We will turn therefore to the first hymn of Vishwamitra, his hymn to Agni, from its second to its fourteenth verse. The passage is a long one, but it is sufficiently important to cite and translate in full.

2. *Prāñcaṁ yajñaṁ cakṛma vardhatāṁ gīḥ,*
   samidbhir agniṁ namasā duvasyan;
   Divaḥ śaśāsur vidathā kavīnāṁ,
   gṛtsāya cit tavase gātum īṣuḥ.
3. *Mayo dadhe medhiraḥ pūtadakṣo,*
   divaḥ subandhur januṣā pṛthivyāḥ;
   Avindan nu darśatam apsvantar,
   devāso agnim apasi svasṝṇām.

---

[2] The word indeed is usually understood as "felicity".

4. *Avardhayan subhagaṁ sapta yahvīḥ,*
śvetaṁ jajñānam aruṣaṁ mahitvā;
Śiśuṁ na jātam abhyārur aśvā,
devāso agniṁ janiman vapuṣyan.
5. *Śukrebhir aṅgai raja ātatanvān,*
kratuṁ punānaḥ kavibhiḥ pavitraiḥ;
Śocir vasānaḥ pari āyur apāṁ,
śriyo mimīte bṛhatīr anūnāḥ.
6. *Vavrāja sīm anadatīr adabdhā,*
divo yahvīr avasānā anagnāḥ;
Sanā atra yuvatayaḥ sayonīr,
ekaṁ garbhaṁ dadhire sapta vāṇīḥ.
7. *Stīrṇā asya saṁhato viśvarūpā,*
ghṛtasya yonau sravathe madhūnām;
Asthur atra dhenavaḥ pinvamānā,
mahī dasmasya mātarā samīcī.
8. *Babhrāṇaḥ sūno sahaso vyadyaud,*
dadhānaḥ śukrā rabhasā vapūṁṣi;
Ścotanti dhārā madhuno ghṛtasya,
vṛṣā yatra vāvṛdhe kāvyena.
9. *Pituś cid ūdhar januṣā viveda,*
vyasya dhārā asṛjad vi dhenāḥ;
Guhā carantaṁ sakhibhiḥ śivebhir,
divo yahvībhir na guhā babhūva.
10. *Pituś ca garbhaṁ janituś ca babhre,*
pūrvīr eko adhayat pīpyānāḥ;
Vṛṣṇe sapatnī śucaye sabandhū,
ubhe asmai manuṣye ni pāhi.
11. *Urau mahān anibādhe vavardha,*
āpo agniṁ yaśasaḥ saṁ hi pūrvīḥ;
Ṛtasya yonāv aśayad damūnā,
jāmīnām agnir apasi svasṝṇām.
12. *Akro na babhriḥ samithe mahīnāṁ,*
didṛkṣeyaḥ sūnave bhā-ṛjīkaḥ;
Ud usriyā janitā yo jajāna,
apāṁ garbho nṛtamo yahvo agniḥ.

13. *Apāṁ garbhaṁ darśatam oṣadhīnāṁ,*
vanā jajāna subhagā virūpam;
Devāsaś cin manasā saṁ hi jagmuḥ,
paniṣṭhaṁ jātaṁ tavasaṁ duvasyan.
14. *Bṛhanta id bhānavo bhā-ṛjīkam,*
agniṁ sacanta vidyuto na śukrāḥ;
Guheva vṛddhaṁ sadasi sve antar,
apāra ūrve amṛtaṁ duhānāḥ.

"We have made the sacrifice to ascend towards the supreme, let the Word increase. With kindlings of his fire, with obeisance of submission they set Agni to his workings; they have given expression in the heaven to the knowings of the seers and they desire a passage for him in his strength, in his desire of the word. (2)

"Full of intellect, purified in discernment, the perfect friend (or, perfect builder) from his birth of Heaven and of Earth, he establishes the Bliss; the gods discovered Agni visible in the Waters, in the working of the sisters. (3)

"The seven Mighty Ones increased him who utterly enjoys felicity, white in his birth, ruddy when he has grown. They moved and laboured about him, the Mares around the newborn child; the gods gave body to Agni in his birth. (4)

"With his pure bright limbs he extended and formed the middle world purifying the will-to-action by the help of the pure lords of wisdom; wearing light as a robe about all the life of the Waters he formed in himself glories vast and without any deficiency. (5)

"He moved everywhere about the Mighty Ones of Heaven, and they devoured not, neither were overcome, — they were not clothed, neither were they naked. Here the eternal and ever young goddesses from one womb held the one Child, they the Seven Words. (6)

"Spread out were the masses of him in universal forms in the womb of the clarity, in the flowings of the sweetnesses; here the fostering Rivers stood nourishing themselves; the two Mothers of the accomplishing god became vast and harmonised. (7)

"Borne by them, O child of Force, thou didst blaze out holding thy bright and rapturous embodiments; out flow the streams of the sweetness, the clarity, where the Bull of the abundance has grown by the Wisdom. (8)

"He discovered at his birth the source of the abundance of the Father and he loosed forth wide His streams and wide His rivers. By his helpful comrades and by the Mighty Ones of Heaven he found Him moving in the secret places of existence, yet himself was not lost in their secrecy. (9)

"He bore the child of the Father and of him that begot him; one, he fed upon his many mothers in their increasing. In this pure Male both these powers in man (Earth and Heaven) have their common lord and lover; do thou guard them both. (10)

"Great in the unobstructed Vast he increased; yea, many Waters victoriously increased Agni. In the source of the Truth he lay down; there he made his home, Agni in the working of the undivided Sisters. (11)

"As the mover in things and as their sustainer he in the meeting of the Great Ones, seeking vision, straight in his lustres for the presser-out of the Soma wine, he who was the father of the Radiances, gave them now their higher birth, — the child of the Waters, the mighty and most strong Agni. (12)

"To the visible Birth of the waters and of the growths of Earth the goddess of Delight now gave birth in many forms, she of the utter felicity. The gods united in him by the mind and they set him to his working who was born full of strength and mighty for the labour. (13)

"Those vast shinings clove to Agni straight in his lustre and were like bright lightnings; from him increasing in the secret places of existence in his own seat within the shoreless Vast they milked out Immortality." (14)

Whatever may be the meaning of this passage, — and it is absolutely clear that it has a mystic significance and is no mere sacrificial hymn of ritualistic barbarians, — the seven rivers, the waters, the seven sisters cannot here be the seven rivers of the Punjab. The waters in which the gods discovered the visible Agni cannot be terrestrial and material streams; this Agni who increases by knowledge and makes his home and rest in the source of the Truth, of whom Heaven and Earth are the wives and lovers, who is increased by the divine waters in the unobstructed Vast, his own seat, and dwelling in that shoreless infinity yields to the illumined gods the supreme Immortality, cannot be the god of physical Fire. In this passage as in so many others the mystical, the spiritual, the psychological character of the burden of the Veda reveals itself not under the surface, not behind a veil of mere ritualism, but openly, insistently, — in a disguise indeed, but a disguise that is transparent, so that the secret truth of the Veda appears here, like the rivers of Vishwamitra's hymn, "neither veiled nor naked".

We see that these Waters are the same as those of Vamadeva's hymn, of Vasishtha's, closely connected with the clarity and the honey, — *ghṛtasya yonau sravathe madhūnām*, *ścotanti dhārā madhuno ghṛtasya*; they lead to the Truth, they are themselves the source of the Truth, they flow in the unobstructed and shoreless Vast as well as here upon the earth. They are figured as fostering cows (*dhenavaḥ*), mares (*aśvāḥ*), they are called *sapta vāṇīḥ*, the seven Words of the creative goddess Vak, — Speech, the expressive power of Aditi, of the supreme Prakriti who is spoken of as the Cow just as the Deva or Purusha is described in the Veda as Vrishabha or Vrishan, the Bull. They are therefore the seven strands of all being, the seven streams or currents or forms of movement of the one conscious existence.

We shall find that in the light of the ideas which we have discovered from the very opening of the Veda in Madhuchchhandas' hymns and in the light of the symbolic interpretations which are now becoming clear to us, this passage apparently so figured, mysterious, enigmatical becomes perfectly straightforward and coherent, as indeed do all the passages of the Veda which seem now almost unintelligible when once their right clue is found. We have only to fix the psychological function of Agni, the priest, the fighter, the worker, the truth-finder, the winner of beatitude for man; and that has already been fixed for us in the first hymn of the Rig Veda by Madhuchchhandas' description of him, — "the Will in works of the Seer true and most rich in varied inspiration." Agni is the Deva, the All-Seer, manifested as conscious-force or, as it would be called in modern language, Divine or Cosmic Will, first hidden and building up the eternal worlds, then manifest, "born", building up in man the Truth and the Immortality.

Gods and men, says Vishwamitra in effect, kindle this divine force by lighting the fires of the inner sacrifice; they enable it to work by their adoration and submission to it; they express in heaven, that is to say, in the pure mentality which is symbolised by Dyaus, the knowings of the Seers, in other words the illuminations of the Truth-consciousness which exceeds Mind; and they do this in order to make a passage for this divine force which in its strength seeking always to find the word of right self-expression aspires beyond mind. This divine will carrying in all its workings the secret of the divine knowledge, *kavikratuḥ*, befriends or builds up the mental and physical consciousness in man, *divaḥ pṛthivyāḥ*, perfects the intellect, purifies the discernment so that they grow to be capable of the "knowings of the seers" and by the superconscient Truth thus made conscient in us establishes firmly the Beatitude (vs. 2-3).

The rest of the passage describes the ascent of this divine conscious-force, Agni, this Immortal in mortals who in the sacrifice takes the place of the ordinary will and knowledge of man, from the mortal and physical consciousness to the immortality of the Truth and the Beatitude. The Vedic Rishis speak of five births for man, five worlds of creatures where works are done, *pañca janāḥ*, *pañca kṛṣṭīḥ* or *kṣitīḥ*. Dyaus and Prithivi represent the pure mental and the physical consciousness; between them is the Antariksha, the intermediate or connecting level of the vital or nervous consciousness. Dyaus and Prithivi are Rodasi, our two firmaments; but these have to be overpassed, for then we find admission to another heaven than that of the pure mind — to the wide, the Vast which is the basis, the foundation (*budhna*) of the infinite consciousness, Aditi. This Vast is the Truth which supports the supreme triple world, those highest steps or seats (*padāni*, *sadāṁsi*) of Agni, of Vishnu, those supreme Names of the Mother, the cow, Aditi. The Vast or Truth is declared to be the own or proper seat or home of Agni, *svaṁ damam*, *svaṁ sadaḥ*. Agni is described in this hymn ascending from earth to his own seat.

This divine Power is found by the gods visible in the Waters, in the working of the Sisters. These are the sevenfold waters of the Truth, the divine waters brought down from the heights of our being by Indra. First it is secret in the earth's growths, *oṣadhīḥ*, the things that hold her heats, and has to be brought out by a sort of force, by a pressure of the two *araṇis*, earth and heaven. Therefore it is called the child of the earth's growths and the child of the earth and heaven; this immortal Force is produced by man with pain and difficulty from the workings of the pure mind upon the physical being. But in the divine waters Agni is found visible and easily born in all his strength and in all his knowledge and in all his enjoyment, entirely white and pure, growing ruddy with his action as he increases (v. 3). From his very birth the Gods give him force and splendour and body; the seven mighty Rivers increase him in his joy; they move about this great newborn child and labour over him as the Mares, *aśvāḥ* (v. 4).

The rivers, usually named *dhenavaḥ*, fostering cows, are here described as *aśvāḥ*, Mares, because while the Cow is the symbol of consciousness in the form of knowledge, the Horse is the symbol of consciousness in the form of force. Ashwa, the Horse, is the dynamic force of Life, and the rivers labouring over Agni on the earth become the waters of Life, of the vital dynamis or kinesis, the Prana, which moves and acts and desires and enjoys. Agni himself begins as material heat and power, manifests secondarily as the Horse and then only becomes the heavenly fire. His first work is to give as the child of the Waters its full form and extension and purity to the middle world, the vital or dynamic plane, *raja ātatanvān*. He purifies the nervous life in man pervading it with his own pure bright limbs, lifting upward its impulsions and desires, its purified will in works (*kratum*) by the pure powers of the super-conscient Truth and Wisdom, *kavibhiḥ pavitraiḥ*. So he wears his vast glories, no longer the broken and limited activity of desires and instincts, all about the life of the Waters (vs. 4-5).

The sevenfold waters thus rise upward and become the pure mental activity, the Mighty Ones of Heaven. They there reveal themselves as the first eternal ever-young energies, separate streams but of one origin — for they have all flowed from the one womb of the super-conscient Truth — the seven Words or fundamental creative expressions of the divine Mind, *sapta vāṇīḥ*. This life of the pure mind is not like that of the nervous life which devours its objects in order to sustain its mortal existence; its waters devour not but they do not fail; they are the eternal truth robed in a transparent veil of mental forms; therefore, it is said, they are neither clothed nor naked (v. 6).

But this is not the last stage. The Force rises into the womb or birthplace of this mental clarity (*ghṛtasya*) where the waters flow as streams of the divine sweetness (*sravathe madhūnām*); there the forms it assumes are universal forms, masses of the vast and infinite consciousness. As a result, the fostering rivers in the lower world are nourished by this descending higher sweetness and the mental and physical consciousness, the two first mothers of the all-effecting Will, become in their entire largeness perfectly equal and harmonised by this light of the Truth, through this nourishing by the infinite Bliss. They bear the full force of Agni, the blaze of his lightnings, the glory and rapture of his universal forms. For where the Lord, the Male, the Bull of the abundance is increased by the wisdom of the super-conscient Truth, there always flow the streams of the clarity and the streams of the bliss (vs. 7-8).

The Father of all things is the Lord and Male; he is hidden in the secret source of things, in the super-conscient; Agni, with his companion gods and with the sevenfold Waters, enters into the super-conscient without therefore disappearing from our conscient existence, finds the source of the honeyed plenty of the Father of things and pours them out on our life. He bears and himself becomes the Son, the pure Kumara, the pure Male, the One, the soul in man revealed in its universality; the mental and physical consciousness in the human being accept him as their lord and lover; but, though one, he still enjoys the manifold movement of the rivers, the multiple cosmic energies (vs. 9-10).

Then we are told expressly that this infinite into which he has entered and in which he grows, in which the many Waters victoriously reaching their goal (*yaśasaḥ*) increase him, is the unobstructed vast where the Truth is born, the shoreless infinite, his own natural seat in which he now takes up his home. There the seven rivers, the sisters, work no longer separated though of one origin as on the earth and in the mortal life, but rather as indivisible companions (*jāmīnām apasi svasṝṇām*). In that entire meeting of these great ones Agni moves in all things and upbears all things; the rays of his vision are perfectly straight, no longer affected by the lower crookedness; he from whom the radiances of knowledge, the brilliant herds, were born, now gives them this high and supreme birth; he turns them into the divine knowledge, the immortal consciousness (vs. 11-12).

This also is his own new and last birth. He who was born as the Son of Force from the growths of earth, he who was born as the child of the Waters, is now born in many forms to the goddess of bliss, she who has the entire felicity, that is to say to the divine conscious beatitude, in the shoreless infinite. The gods or divine powers in man using the mind as an instrument reach him there, unite around him, set him to the great work of the world in this new, mighty and effective birth. They, the outshinings of that vast consciousness, cleave to this divine Force as its bright lightnings and from him in the super-conscient, the shoreless vast, his own home, they draw for man the Immortality.

Such then, profound, coherent, luminous behind the veil of figures is the sense of the Vedic symbol of the seven rivers, of the Waters, of the five worlds, of the birth and ascent of Agni which is also the upward journey of man and the Gods whose image man forms in himself from level to level of the great hill of being (*sānoḥ sānum*). Once we apply it and seize the true sense of the symbol of the Cow and the symbol of the Soma with a just conception of the psychological functions of the Gods, all the apparent incoherences and obscurities and far-fetched chaotic confusion of these ancient hymns disappears in a moment. Simply, easily, without straining there disengages itself the profound and luminous doctrine of the ancient Mystics, the secret of the Veda.

Chapter XII

The Herds of the Dawn

THE SEVEN Rivers of the Veda, the Waters, *āpaḥ*, are usually designated in the figured Vedic language as the seven Mothers or the seven fostering Cows, *sapta dhenavaḥ*. The word *āpaḥ* itself has, covertly, a double significance; for the root *ap* meant originally not only to move from which in all probability is derived the sense of waters, but to be or bring into being, as in *apatya*, a child, and the Southern Indian *appā*, father. The seven Waters are the waters of being; they are the Mothers from whom all forms of existence are born. But we meet also another expression, *sapta gāvaḥ*, the seven Cows or the seven Lights, and the epithet *saptagu*, that which has seven rays. *Gu* (*gavaḥ*) and *go* (*gāvaḥ*) bear throughout the Vedic hymns this double sense of cows and radiances. In the ancient Indian system of thought being and consciousness were aspects of each other, and Aditi, infinite existence from whom the gods are born, described as the Mother with her seven names and seven seats (*dhāmāni*), is also conceived as the infinite consciousness, the Cow, the primal Light manifest in seven Radiances, *sapta gāvaḥ*. The sevenfold principle of existence is therefore imaged from the one point of view in the figure of the Rivers that arise from the ocean, *sapta dhenavaḥ*, from the other in the figure of the Rays of the all-creating Father, Surya Savitri, *sapta gāvaḥ*.

The image of the Cow is the most important of all the Vedic symbols. For the ritualist the word *go* means simply a physical cow and nothing else, just as its companion word, *aśva*, means simply a physical horse and has no other sense, or as *ghṛta* means only water or clarified butter, *vīra* only a son or a retainer or servant. When the Rishi prays to the Dawn, *gomad vīravad dhehi ratnam uṣo aśvāvat*, the ritualistic commentator sees in the invocation only an entreaty for "pleasant wealth to which are attached cows, men (or sons) and horses". If on the other hand these words are symbolic, the sense will run, "Confirm in us a state of bliss full of light, of conquering energy and of force of vitality." It is therefore necessary to decide once for all the significance of the word *go* in the Vedic hymns. If it proves to be symbolic, then these other words, — *aśva*, horse, *vīra*, man or hero, *apatya* or *prajā*, offspring, *hiraṇya*, gold, *vāja*, plenty (food, according to Sayana), — by which it is continually accompanied, must perforce assume also a symbolic and a kindred significance.

The image of the Cow is constantly associated in Veda with the Dawn and the Sun; it also recurs in the legend of the recovery of the lost cows from the cave of the Panis by Indra and Brihaspati with the aid of the hound Sarama and the Angiras Rishis. The conception of the Dawn and the legend of the Angirases are at the very heart of the Vedic cult and may almost be considered as the key to the secret of the significance of Veda. It is therefore these two that we must examine in order to find firm ground for our inquiry.

Now even the most superficial examination of the Vedic hymns to the Dawn makes it perfectly clear that the cows of the Dawn, the cows of the Sun are a symbol for Light and cannot be anything else. Sayana himself is obliged in these hymns to interpret the word sometimes as cows, sometimes as rays, — careless as usual of consistency; sometimes he will even tell us that *go* like *ṛtam*, the word for truth, means water. As a matter of fact it is evident that we are meant to take the word in a double sense, "light" as the true significance, "cow" as the concrete image and verbal figure.

The sense of "rays" is quite indisputable in such passages as the third verse of Madhuchchhandas' hymn to Indra, I.7, "Indra for far vision made the Sun to ascend in heaven: he sped him all over the hill by his rays," *vi gobhir adrim airayat.*[1] But at the same time, the rays of Surya are the herds of the Sun, the kine of Helios slain by the companions of Odysseus in the Odyssey, stolen by Hermes from his brother Apollo in the Homeric hymn to Hermes. They are the cows concealed by the enemy Vala, by the Panis; when Madhuchchhandas says to Indra, "Thou didst uncover the hole of Vala of the Cows", he means that Vala is the concealer, the withholder of the Light and it is the concealed Light that Indra restores to the sacrificer. The recovery of the lost or stolen cows is constantly spoken of in the Vedic hymns and its sense will be clear enough when we come to examine the legend of the Panis and of the Angirases.

---

[1] We may also translate "He sent abroad the thunderbolt with its lights"; but this does not make as good and coherent a sense; even if we take it, *gobhir* must mean "radiances" not "cows".

Once this sense is established, the material explanation of the Vedic prayer for "cows" is at once shaken; for if the lost cows for whose restoration the Rishis invoke Indra, are not physical herds stolen by the Dravidians but the shining herds of the Sun, of the Light, then we are justified in considering whether the same figure does not apply when there is the simple prayer for "cows" without any reference to any hostile interception. For instance in I.4.2 it is said of Indra, the maker of perfect forms who is as a good milker in the milking of the cows, that his ecstasy of the Soma-Wine is verily "cow-giving", *godā id revato madaḥ*. It is the height of absurdity and irrationality to understand by this phrase that Indra is a very wealthy god and, when he gets drunk, exceedingly liberal in the matter of cow-giving. It is obvious that as the cow-milking in the first verse is a figure, so the cow-giving in the second verse is a figure. And if we know from other passages of the Veda that the Cow is the symbol of Light, we must understand here also that Indra, when full of the Soma-ecstasy, is sure to give us the Light.

In the hymns to the Dawn the symbolic sense of the cows of light is equally clear. Dawn is described always as *gomatī*, which must mean, obviously, luminous or radiant; for it would be nonsense to use "cowful" in a literal sense as the fixed epithet of the Dawn. But the image of the cows is there in the epithet; for Usha is not only *gomatī*, she is *gomatī aśvāvatī*; she has always with her her cows and her horses. She creates light for all the world and opens out the darkness as the pen of the Cow, where we have without any possibility of mistake the cow as the symbol of light, (I.92.4). We may note also that in this hymn I.92, the Ashwins are asked to drive downward their chariot on a path that is radiant and golden, *gomad hiraṇyavad*. Moreover Dawn is said to be drawn in her chariot sometimes by ruddy cows, sometimes by ruddy horses. "She yokes her host of the ruddy cows"; *yuṅkte gavām aruṇānām anīkam* (I.124.11), — where the second meaning "her host of the ruddy rays" stands clear behind the concrete image. She is described as the mother of the cows or radiances; *gavāṁ janitrī akṛta pra ketum* (I.124.5), "the Mother of the cows (radiances) has created vision", and it is said elsewhere of her action, "vision" or "perception has dawned now where nought was"; and again it is clear that the cows are the shining herds of the Light. She is also praised as "the leader of the shining herds", *netrī gavām*, VII.76.6; and there is an illuminating verse in which the two ideas are combined, "the Mother of the Herds, the guide of the days", *gavāṁ mātā netrī ahnām* (VII.77.2). Finally, as if to remove the veil of the image entirely, the Veda itself tells us that the herds are a figure for the rays of the Light, "her happy rays come into sight like cows released into movement" — *prati bhadrā adṛkṣata gavāṁ sargā na raśmayaḥ* (IV.52.5). And we have the still more conclusive verse, VII.79.2, "Thy cows (rays) remove the darkness and extend the Light"; *saṁ te gāvas tama ā vartayanti, jyotir yacchanti.*[2]

But Dawn is not only drawn by these shining herds; she brings them as a gift to the sacrificer; she is, like Indra in his Soma-ecstasy, a giver of the Light. In a hymn of Vasishtha (VII.75) she is described as sharing in the action of the gods by which the strong places where the herds are concealed are broken open and they are given to men; "True with the gods who are true, great with the gods who are great, she breaks open the strong places and gives of the shining herds; the cows low towards the dawn," — *rujad dṛḍhāni dadad usriyāṇāṁ, prati*

---

[2] It cannot of course be disputed that *go* means light in the Veda e.g. when it is said that Vritra is slain *gavā*, by light, there is no question of the cow; the question is of the use of the double sense and of the cow as a symbol.

gāva uṣasaṁ vāvaśanta. And in the very next verse she is asked to confirm or establish for the sacrificers *gomad ratnam aśvāvat purubhojaḥ*, a state of bliss full of the light (cows), of the horses (vital force) and of many enjoyments. The herds which Usha gives are therefore the shining troops of the Light recovered by the gods and the Angiras Rishis from the strong places of Vala and the Panis and the wealth of cows (and horses) for which the Rishis constantly pray can be no other than a wealth of this same Light; for it is impossible to suppose that the cows which Usha is said to give in the seventh verse of the hymn are different from the cows which are prayed for in the eighth, — that the word in the former verse means light and in the next physical cows and that the Rishi has forgotten the image he was using the very moment it has fallen from his tongue.

Sometimes the prayer is not for luminous delight or luminous plenitude, but for a luminous impulsion or force; "Bring to us, O daughter of Heaven, luminous impulsions along with the rays of the Sun," *gomatīr iṣa ā vahā duhitar divaḥ, sākaṁ sūryasya raśmibhiḥ*, V.79.8. Sayana explains that this means "shining foods", but it is obviously nonsense to talk of radiant foods being brought by Dawn with the rays of the Sun. If *iṣ* means food, then we have to understand by the phrase "food of cow's flesh", but, although the eating of cow's flesh was not forbidden in the early times, as is apparent from the Brahmanas, still that this sense which Sayana avoids as shocking to the later Hindu sentiment, is not intended — it would be quite as absurd as the other, — is proved by another verse of the Rig Veda in which the Ashwins are invoked to give the luminous impulsion that carries us through to the other side of the darkness, *yā naḥ pīparad aśvinā jyotiṣmatī tamas tiraḥ, tām asme rāsāthām iṣam* (I.46.6).

We can perceive from these typical examples how pervading is this image of the Cow of Light and how inevitably it points to a psychological sense for the Veda. A doubt, however, intervenes. Why should we not, even accepting this inevitable conclusion that the cow is an image for Light, understand it to mean simply the light of day as the language of the Veda seems to intend?

Why suppose a symbol where there is only an image? Why invite the difficulty of a double figure in which "cow" means light of dawn and light of dawn is the symbol of an inner illumination? Why not take it that the Rishis were praying not for spiritual illumination, but for daylight?

The objections are manifold and some of them overwhelming. If we assume that the Vedic hymns were composed in India and the dawn is the Indian dawn and the night the brief Indian night of ten or twelve hours, we have to start with the concession that the Vedic Rishis were savages overpowered by a terror of the darkness which they peopled with goblins, ignorant of the natural law of the succession of night and day — which is yet beautifully hymned in many of the Suktas, — and believed that it was only by their prayers and sacrifices that the Sun rose in the heavens and the Dawn emerged from the embrace of her sister Night. Yet they speak of the undeviating rule of the action of the Gods, and of Dawn following always the path of the eternal Law or Truth! We have to suppose that when the Rishi gives vent to the joyous cry "We have crossed over to the other shore of this darkness!", it was only the normal awakening to the daily sunrise that he thus eagerly hymned. We have to suppose that the Vedic peoples sat down to the sacrifice at dawn and prayed for the light when it had already come. And if we accept all these improbabilities, we are met by the clear statement that it was only after they had sat for nine or for ten months that the lost light and the lost sun were recovered by the Angiras Rishis. And what are we to make of the constant assertion of the discovery of the Light by the Fathers; — "Our fathers found out the hidden light, by the truth in their thoughts they brought to birth the Dawn," *gūḍhaṁ jyotiḥ pitaro anvavindan, satyamantrā ajanayan uṣāsam* (VII.76.4). If we found such a verse in any collection of poems in any literature, we would at once give it a psychological or a spiritual sense; there is no just reason for a different treatment of the Veda.

If, however, we are to give a naturalistic explanation and no other to the Vedic hymns, it is quite clear that the Vedic Dawn and Night cannot be the Night and Dawn of India; it is only in the Arctic regions that the attitude of the Rishis towards these natural circumstances and the statements about the Angirases become at all intelligible. But though it is extremely probable that the memories of the Arctic home enter into the external sense of the Veda, the Arctic theory does not exclude an inner sense behind the ancient images drawn from Nature nor does it dispense with the necessity for a more coherent and straightforward explanation of the hymns to the Dawn.

We have, for instance, the hymn of Praskanwa Kanwa to the Ashwins (I.46) in which there is the reference to the luminous impulsion that carries us through to the other shore of the darkness. This hymn is intimately connected with the Vedic idea of the Dawn and the Night. It contains references to many of the fixed Vedic images, to the path of the Truth, the crossing of the rivers, the rising of the Sun, the connection between the Dawn and the Ashwins, the mystic effect and oceanic essence of the Soma Wine.

"Lo, the Dawn than which there is none higher, opens out full of delight in the Heavens; O Ashwins, the Vast of you I affirm, ye of whom the Ocean is the mother, accomplishers of the work who pass beyond through the mind to the felicities and, divine, find that substance by the thought. . . . O Lords of the Voyage, who mentalise the word, this is the dissolver of your thinkings, — drink ye of the Soma violently; give to us that impulsion, O Ashwins which, luminous, carries us through beyond the darkness. Travel for us in your ship to reach the other shore beyond the thoughts of the mind. Yoke, O Ashwins, your car, — your car that becomes the vast oared ship in Heaven, in the crossing of its rivers. By the thought the powers of Delight have been yoked. The Soma-powers of delight in heaven are that substance in the place of the Waters. But where shall you cast aside the veil you have made to conceal you? Nay, Light has been born for the joy of the Soma; — the Sun that was dark has shot out its tongue towards the Gold. The path of the Truth has come into being by which we shall travel to that other shore; seen is all the wide way through Heaven. The seeker grows in his being towards increasing manifestation after manifestation of the Ashwins when they find satisfaction in the ecstasy of the Soma. Do ye, dwelling (or, shining) in the all-luminous Sun, by the drinking of the Soma, by the Word come as creators of the bliss into our humanity. Dawn comes to us according to your glory when you pervade all our worlds and you win the Truths out of the Nights. Both together drink, O Ashwins, both together extend to us the peace by expandings whose wholeness remains untorn."

This is the straightforward and natural sense of the hymn and its intention is not difficult to follow if we remember the main ideas and images of the Vedic doctrine. The Night is clearly the image of an inner darkness; by the coming of the Dawn the Truths are won out of the Nights. This is the rising of the Sun which was lost in the obscurity — the familiar figure of the lost sun recovered by the Gods and the Angiras Rishis — the sun of Truth, and it now shoots out its tongue of fire towards the golden Light: — for *hiraṇya*, gold is the concrete symbol of the higher light, the gold of the Truth, and it is this treasure not golden coin for which the Vedic Rishis pray to the Gods. This great change from the inner obscuration to the illumination is effected by the Ashwins, lords of the joyous upward action of the mind and the vital powers, through the immortal wine of the Ananda poured into mind and body and there drunk by them. They mentalise the expressive Word, they lead us into the heaven of pure mind beyond this darkness and there by the Thought they set the powers of the Delight to work. But even over the heavenly waters they cross, for the power of the Soma helps them to dissolve all mental constructions, and they cast aside even this veil; they go beyond Mind and the last attaining is described as the crossing of the rivers, the passage through the heaven of the pure mind, the journey by the path of the Truth to the other side. Not till we reach the highest supreme, *paramā parāvat*, do we rest at last from the great human journey.

We shall see that not only in this hymn, but everywhere Dawn comes as a bringer of the Truth, is herself the outshining of the Truth. She is the divine Dawn and the physical dawning is only her shadow and symbol in the material universe.

Chapter XIII

Dawn and the Truth

USHA IS described repeatedly as the Mother of the Cows. If then the cow is a Vedic symbol for the physical light or for spiritual illumination the phrase must either bear this sense that she is the mother or source of the physical rays of the daylight or else that she creates the radiances of the supreme Day, the splendour and clarity of the inner illumination. But we see in the Veda that Aditi, the Mother of the Gods, is described both as the Cow and as the general Mother; she is the Supreme Light and all radiances proceed from her. Psychologically, Aditi is the supreme or infinite Consciousness, mother of the gods, in opposition to Danu or Diti,[1] the divided consciousness, mother of Vritra and the other Danavas — enemies of the gods and of man in his progress. In a more general aspect she is the source of all the cosmic forms of consciousness from the physical upwards; the seven cows, *sapta gāvaḥ*, are her forms and there are, we are told, seven names and seven seats of the Mother. Usha as the mother of the cows can only be a form or power of this supreme Light, of this supreme Consciousness, of Aditi. And in fact, we do find her so described in I.113.19, *mātā devānām aditer anīkam*, "Mother of the gods, form (or, power) of Aditi."

But the illumining dawn of the higher or undivided Consciousness is always the dawn of the Truth; if Usha is that illumining dawn, then we are bound to find her advent frequently associated in the verses of the Rig Veda with the idea of the Truth, the Ritam. And such association we do repeatedly find. For, first of all, Usha is described as "following effectively the path of the Truth," *ṛtasya panthām anveti sādhu*. Here neither the ritualistic nor the naturalistic sense suggested for *ṛtam* can at all apply; there would be no meaning in a constant affirmation that Dawn follows the path of the sacrifice or follows the path of the water. We can only escape from the obvious significance if we choose to understand by *panthā ṛtasya* the path, not of the Truth, but of the Sun. But the Veda describes rather the Sun as following the path of Usha and this would be the natural image suggested to an observer of the physical Dawn. Moreover, even if the phrase did not clearly in other passages mean the path of the Truth, the psychological significance would still intervene; for the sense would then be that the dawn of illumination follows the path of the True or the Lord of the Truth, Surya Savitri.

---

[1] Not that the word Aditi is etymologically the privative of Diti; the two words derive from entirely different roots, *ad* and *di*.

We have precisely the same idea repeated but with still clearer and fuller psychological indications in I.124.3; *ṛtasya panthām anveti sādhu, prajānatīva na diśo mināti*: "She moves according to the path of the Truth and, as one that knows, she limits not the regions." *Disaḥ*, we may note, has a double sense; but it is not necessary to insist upon it here. Dawn adheres to the path of the Truth and because she has this knowledge or perception she does not limit the infinity, the *bṛhat*, of which she is the illumination. That this is the true sense of the verse is proved beyond dispute, expressly, unmistakably, by a Rik of the fifth Mandala (V.80.1) which describes Usha *dyutad-yāmānaṁ bṛhatīm ṛtena ṛtāvarīṁ svar āvahantīm*, "of a luminous movement, vast with the Truth, supreme in (or possessed of) the Truth, bringing with her Swar." We have the idea of the Vast, the idea of the Truth, the idea of the solar light of the world of Swar; and certainly all these notions are thus intimately and insistently associated with no mere physical Dawn! We may compare VII.75.1, *vyuṣā āvo divijā ṛtena, āviṣkṛṇvānā mahimānam āgāt*; "Dawn born in heaven opens out things by the Truth, she comes manifesting the greatness." Again we have Dawn revealing all things by the power of the Truth and the result described as the manifestation of a certain Vastness.

Finally we have the same idea described, but with the use of another word for Truth, *satyā* which does not, like *ṛtam*, lend itself to any ambiguity, *satyā satyebhir mahatī mahadbhir* *devī devebhir* (VII.75.7), "Dawn true in her being with the gods who are true, vast with the Gods who are vast." This "truth" of the Dawn is much insisted upon by Vamadeva in one of his hymns, IV.51; for there not only does he speak of the Dawns "encompassing the worlds immediately with horses yoked by the Truth," *ṛtayugbhir aśvaiḥ* (cf. VI.65.2) but he speaks of them as *bhadrā ṛtajātasatyāḥ*, "happy, and true because born from the Truth"; and in another verse he describes them as "the goddesses who awake from the seat of the Truth."

This close connection of *bhadrā* and *ṛta* reminds us of the same connection of ideas in Madhuchchhandas' Hymn to Agni. In our psychological interpretation of the Veda we are met at every turn by the ancient conception of the Truth as the path to the Bliss. Usha, the dawn of the illumination of the Truth, must necessarily bring also the joy and the beatitude. This idea of the Dawn as the bringer of delight we find constantly in the Veda and Vasishtha gives a very positive expression to it in VII.81.3, *yā vahasi puru spārhaṁ ratnaṁ na dāśuṣe mayaḥ*, "thou who bearest to the giver the beatitude as a manifold and desirable ecstasy."

A common Vedic word is the word *sūnṛtā* which Sayana interprets as "pleasant and true speech"; but it seems to have often the more general sense of "happy truths". Dawn is sometimes described as *ṛtāvarī*, full of the Truth, sometimes as *sūnṛtāvarī*. She comes uttering her true and happy words, *sūnṛtā īrayantī*. As she has been described as the leader of the radiant herds and the leader of the days, so she is described as the luminous leader of happy truths, *bhāsvatī netrī sūnṛtānām* (I.92.7). And this close connection in the mind of the Vedic Rishis between the idea of light, of the rays or cows, and the idea of the truth is even more unmistakable in another Rik, I.92.14, *gomati aśvāvati vibhāvari . . . sūnṛtāvati*, "Dawn with thy shining herds, with thy steeds, widely luminous, full of happy truths." A similar but yet more open phrase in I.48.2 points the significance of this collocation of epithets, *aśvāvatīr gomatīr viśvasuvidaḥ*, "Dawns with their swiftnesses (horses), their radiances (herds), rightly knowing all things."

These are by no means all the indications of the psychological character of the Vedic Dawn that we find in the Rig Veda. Dawn is constantly represented as awakening to vision, perception, right movement. "The goddess," says Gotama Rahugana, "fronts and looks upon all the worlds, the eye of vision shines with an utter wideness; awakening all life for movement she discovers speech for all that thinks," *viśvasya vācam avidan manāyoḥ* (I.92.9). We have here a Dawn that releases life and mind into their fullest wideness and we ignore the whole force of the words and phrases chosen by the Rishi if we limit the suggestion to a mere picture of the reawakening of earthly life in the physical dawning. And even if here the word used for the vision brought by the Dawn, *cakṣuḥ*, is capable of indicating only physical sight, yet in other passages it is *ketuḥ* which means perception, a perceptive vision in the mental consciousness, a faculty of knowledge. Usha is *pracetāḥ*, she who has this perceptive knowledge. Mother of the radiances, she has created this perceptive vision of the mind; *gavāṁ janitrī akṛta pra ketum* (I.124.5). She is herself that vision, — "Now perceptive vision has broken out into its wide dawn where nought was before," *vi nūnam ucchād asati pra ketuḥ* (I.124.11). She is by her perceptive power possessed of the happy truths, *cikitvit-sūnṛtāvarī* (IV.52.4).

This perception, this vision is, we are told, that of the Immortality, *amṛtasya ketuḥ* (III.61.3); it is the light, in other words, of the Truth and the Bliss which constitute the higher or immortal consciousness. Night in the Veda is the symbol of our obscure consciousness full of ignorance in knowledge and of stumblings in will and act, therefore of all evil, sin and suffering; light is the coming of the illuminated higher consciousness which leads to truth and happiness. We find constantly the opposition of the two words *duritam* and *suvitam*. *Duritam* means literally stumbling or wrong going, figuratively all that is wrong and evil, all sin, error, calamity; *suvitam* means literally right or good going and expresses all that is good and happy, it means especially the felicity that comes by following the right path. Thus Vasishtha says of the goddess (VII.78.2), "Dawn comes divine repelling by the Light all darknesses and evils," *viśvā tamāṁsi duritā*; and in a number of verses the goddess is described as awakening, impelling or leading men to right going, to the happiness, *suvitāya*.

Therefore she is the leader not only of happy truths, but of our spiritual wealth and joy, bringer of the felicity which is reached by man or brought to him by the Truth, *eṣā netrī rādhasaḥ sūnṛtānām* (VII.76.7). This wealth for which the Rishis pray is described under the figure of material riches; it is *gomad aśvāvad vīravad* or it is *gomad aśvāvad rathavac ca rādhaḥ*. *Go*, the cow, *aśva*, the horse, *prajā* or *apatya*, the offspring, *nṛ* or *vīra*, the man or hero, *hiraṇya*, gold, *ratha*, the chariot, *śravas*, — food or fame, according to the ritualist interpretation, — these are the constituents of the wealth desired by the Vedic sages. Nothing, it would seem, could be more matter-of-fact, earthy, material; these are indeed the blessings for which a race of lusty barbarians full of vigorous appetite, avid of earth's goods would pray to their primitive gods. But we have seen that *hiraṇya* is used in another sense than that of earthly gold. We have seen that the "cows" return constantly in connection with the Dawn as a figure for the Light and we have seen that this light is connected with mental vision and with the truth that brings the bliss. And *aśva*, the horse, is always in these concrete images of psychological suggestions coupled with the symbolic figure of the cow: Dawn is *gomatī aśvāvatī*. Vasishtha has a verse (VII.77.3) in which the symbolic sense of the Vedic Horse comes out with great power and clearness, —

Devānāṁ cakṣuḥ subhagā vahantī,
    śvetaṁ nayantī sudṛśīkam aśvam;
Uṣā adarśi raśmibhir vyaktā,
    citrāmaghā viśvam anu prabhūtā.

"Happy, bringing the gods' eye of vision, leading the white Horse that has perfect sight, Dawn is seen expressed entirely by the rays, full of her varied riches, manifesting her birth in all things." It is clear enough that the white horse (a phrase applied to the god Agni who is the Seer-Will, *kavikratu*, the perfectly-seeing force of divine will in its works, V.1.4) is entirely symbolical[2] and that the "varied riches" she brings with her are also a figure and certainly do not mean physical wealth.

Dawn is described as *gomatī aśvāvatī vīravatī*; and since the epithets *gomatī* and *aśvāvatī* applied to her are symbolical and mean not "cowful and horsed", but radiant with illuminations of knowledge and accompanied by the swiftnesses of force, so *vīravatī* cannot mean "man-accompanied" or accompanied by heroes or servants or sons, but rather signifies that she is attended by conquering energies or at any rate is used in some kindred and symbolic sense. This becomes quite evident in I.113.18, *yā gomatīr uṣasaḥ sarvavīrāḥ . . . tā aśvadā aśnavat somasutvā*. It does not mean "the Dawns that have cows and all men or all servants, those a man, having offered the Soma, enjoys as horse-givers." The Dawn is the inner dawn which brings to man all the varied fullnesses of his widest being, force, consciousness, joy; it is radiant with its illuminations, it is accompanied by all possible powers and energies, it gives man the full force of vitality so that he can enjoy the infinite delight of that vaster existence.

We can no longer take *gomad aśvāvad vīravad rādhaḥ* in a physical sense; the very language of the Veda points us to quite another truth. Therefore the other circumstances of this god-given wealth must be taken equally in a spiritual significance; the offspring, gold, chariots are symbolical; *śravas* is not fame or food, but bears its psychological sense and means the higher knowledge which comes not to the senses or the intellect, but to the divine hearing and the divine vision of the Truth; *rādho dīrghaśruttamam*, *rayiṁ śravasyum* is that rich state of being, that spiritually opulent felicity which turns towards the knowledge (*śravasyu*) and has a far-extended hearing for the vibrations of the Word that comes to us from the regions (*diśaḥ*) of the Infinite. Thus the luminous figure of the Dawn liberates us from the material, ritual, ignorant misunderstanding of the Veda which would lead us stumbling from pitfall to pitfall in a very night of chaos and obscurity; it opens to us the closed door and admits to the heart of the Vedic knowledge.

---

[2] The symbolism of the horse is quite evident in the hymns of Dirghatamas to the Horse of the Sacrifice, the hymns of various Rishis to the Horse Dadhikravan and again in the opening of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in which "Dawn is the head of the Horse" is the first phrase of a very elaborate figure.

Chapter XIV

The Cow and the Angiras Legend

WE MUST now pursue this image of the Cow which we are using as a key to the sense of the Veda, into the striking Vedic parable or legend of the Angiras Rishis, on the whole the most important of all the Vedic myths.

The Vedic hymns, whatever else they may be, are throughout an invocation to certain "Aryan" gods, friends and helpers of man, for ends which are held by the singers, — or seers, as they call themselves (*kavi*, *ṛṣi*, *vipra*), — to be supremely desirable (*vara*, *vāra*). These desirable ends, these boons of the gods are summed up in the words *rayi*, *rādhas*, which may mean physically wealth or prosperity, and psychologically a felicity or enjoyment which consists in the abundance of certain forms of spiritual wealth. Man contributes as his share of the joint effort the work of the sacrifice, the Word, the Soma Wine and the *ghṛta* or clarified butter. The Gods are born in the sacrifice, they increase by the Word, the Wine and the Ghrita and in that strength and in the ecstasy and intoxication of the Wine they accomplish the aims of the sacrificer. The chief elements of the wealth thus acquired are the Cow and the Horse; but there are also others, *hiraṇya*, gold, *vīra*, men or heroes, *ratha*, chariots, *prajā* or *apatya*, offspring. The very means of the sacrifice, the fire, the Soma, the *ghṛta*, are supplied by the Gods and they attend the sacrifice as its priests, purifiers, upholders, heroes of its warfare, — for there are those who hate the sacrifice and the Word, attack the sacrificer and tear or withhold from him the coveted wealth. The chief conditions of the prosperity so ardently desired are the rising of the Dawn and the Sun and the downpour of the rain of heaven and of the seven rivers, — physical or mystic, — called in the Veda the Mighty Ones of heaven. But even this prosperity, this fullness of cows, horses, gold, men, chariots, offspring, is not a final end in itself; all this is a means towards the opening up of the other worlds, the winning of Swar, the ascent to the solar heavens, the attainment by the path of the Truth to the Light and to the heavenly Bliss where the mortal arrives at Immortality.

Such is the undoubted substance of the Veda. The ritual and mythological sense which has been given to it from very ancient times is well known and need not be particularised; in sum, it is the performance of sacrificial worship as the chief duty of man with a view to the enjoyment of wealth here and heaven hereafter. We know also the modern view of the matter in which the Veda is a worship of the personified sun, moon, stars, dawn, wind, rain, fire, sky, rivers and other deities of Nature, the propitiation of these gods by sacrifice, the winning and holding of wealth in this life, chiefly from human and Dravidian enemies and against hostile demons and mortal plunderers, and after death man's attainment to the Paradise of the gods. We now find, that however valid these ideas may have been for the vulgar, they were not the inner sense of the Veda to the seers, the illumined minds (*kavi*, *vipra*) of the Vedic age. For them these material objects were symbols of the immaterial; the cows were the radiances or illuminations of a divine Dawn, the horses and chariots were symbols of force and movement, gold was light, the shining wealth of a divine Sun — the true light, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*; both the wealth acquired by the sacrifice and the sacrifice itself in all their details symbolised man's effort and his means towards a greater end, the acquisition of immortality. The aspiration of the Vedic seer was the enrichment and expansion of man's being, the birth and the formation of the godheads in his life-sacrifice, the increase of the Force, Truth, Light, Joy of which they are the powers until through the enlarged and ever-opening worlds of his being the soul of man rises, sees the divine doors (*devīr dvāraḥ*) swing open to his call and enters into the supreme felicity of a divine existence beyond heaven and earth. This ascent is the parable of the Angiras Rishis.

All the gods are conquerors and givers of the Cow, the Horse and the divine riches, but it is especially the great deity Indra who is the hero and fighter in this warfare and who wins for man the Light and the Force. Therefore Indra is constantly addressed as the Master of the herds, *gopati*; he is even imaged as himself the cow and the horse; he is the good milker whom the Rishi wishes to milk and what he yields are perfect forms and ultimate thoughts; he is Vrishabha, the Bull of the herds; his is the wealth of cows and horses which man covets. It is even said in VI.28.5, "O people, these that are the cows, they are Indra; it is Indra I desire with my heart and with my mind." This identification of the cows and Indra is important and we shall have to return to it, when we deal with Madhuchchhandas' hymns to that deity.

But ordinarily the Rishis image the acquisition of this wealth as a conquest effected against certain powers, the Dasyus, sometimes represented as possessing the coveted riches which have to be ravished from them by violence, sometimes as stealing them from the Aryan who has then to discover and recover the lost wealth by the aid of the gods. The Dasyus who withhold or steal the cows are called the Panis, a word which seems originally to have meant doers, dealers or traffickers; but this significance is sometimes coloured by its further sense of "misers". Their chief is Vala, a demon whose name signifies probably the circumscriber or "encloser", as Vritra means the opponent, obstructer or enfolding coverer. It is easy to suggest, as do the scholars who would read as much primitive history as possible into the Veda, that the Panis are the Dravidians and Vala is their chief or god. But this sense can only be upheld in isolated passages; in many hymns it is incompatible with the actual words of the Rishis and turns into a jumble of gaudy nonsense their images and figures. We have seen something of this incompatibility already; it will become clearer to us as we examine more closely the mythus of the lost cows.

Vala dwells in a lair, a hole (*bila*) in the mountains; Indra and the Angiras Rishis have to pursue him there and force him to give up his wealth; for he is Vala of the cows, *valaṁ gomantam*. The Panis also are represented as concealing the stolen herds in a cave of the mountain which is called their concealing prison, *vavra*, or the pen of the cows, *vraja*, or sometimes in a significant phrase, *gavyam ūrvam*, literally the cowey wideness or in the other sense of *go* “the luminous wideness”, the vast wealth of the shining herds. To recover this lost wealth the sacrifice has to be performed; the Angirases or else Brihaspati and the Angirases have to chant the true word, the *mantra*; Sarama the heavenly hound has to find out the cows in the cave of the Panis; Indra strong with the Soma wine and the Angirases, the seers, his companions, have to follow the track, enter the cave or violently break open the strong places of the hill, defeat the Panis and drive upward the delivered herds.

Let us, first, take note of certain features which ought not to be overlooked when we seek to determine the interpretation of this parable or this myth. In the first place the legend, however precise in its images, is not yet in the Veda a simple mythological tradition, but is used with a certain freedom and fluidity which betrays the significant image behind the sacred tradition. Often it is stripped of the mythological aspect and applied to the personal need or aspiration of the singer. For it is an action of which Indra is always capable; although he has done it once for all in the type by means of the Angirases, yet he repeats the type continually even in the present, he is constantly the seeker of the cows, *gaveṣaṇa*, and the restorer of the stolen wealth.

Sometimes we have simply the fact of the stolen cows and the recovery by Indra without any reference to Sarama or the Angirases or the Panis. But it is not always Indra who recovers the herds. We have for instance a hymn to Agni, the second of the fifth Mandala, a hymn of the Atris, in which the singer applies the image of the stolen cows to himself in a language which clearly betrays its symbolism. Agni, long repressed in her womb by mother Earth who is unwilling to give him to the father Heaven, held and concealed in her so long as she is compressed into limited form (*peṣī*), at length comes to birth when she becomes great and vast (*mahiṣī*). The birth of Agni is associated with a manifestation or vision of luminous herds. “I beheld afar in a field one shaping his weapons who was golden-tusked and pure-bright of hue; I give to him the Amrita (the immortal essence, Soma) in separate parts; what shall they do to me who have not Indra and have not the word? I beheld in the field as it were a happy herd ranging continuously, many, shining; they seized them not, for *he* was born; even those (cows) that were old, become young again." But if these Dasyus who have not Indra, nor the word, are at present powerless to seize on the luminous herds, it was otherwise before this bright and formidable godhead was born. "Who were they that divorced my strength (*maryakam*; my host of men, my heroes, *vīra*) from the cows? for they (my men) had no warrior and protector of the kine. Let those who took them from me, release them; he knows and comes driving to us the cattle."

What, we may fairly ask, are these shining herds, these cows who were old and become young again? Certainly, they are not physical herds, nor is it any earthly field by the Yamuna or the Jhelum that is the scene of this splendid vision of the golden-tusked warrior god and the herds of the shining cattle. They are the herds either of the physical or of the divine Dawn and the language suits ill with the former interpretation; this mystical vision is surely a figure of the divine illumination. They are radiances that were stolen by the powers of darkness and are now divinely recovered not by the god of the physical fire, but by the flaming Force which was concealed in the littleness of the material existence and is now liberated into the clarities of an illumined mental action.

Indra is not, then, the only god who can break up the tenebrous cave and restore the lost radiances. There are other deities to whom various hymns make the attribution of this great victory. Usha is one of them, the divine Dawn, mother of these herds. "True with the gods who are true, great with the gods who are great, sacrificial godhead with the gods sacrificial, she breaks open the strong places, she gives of the shining herds; the cows low towards the Dawn!" (VII.75.7). Agni is another; sometimes he wars by himself as we have already seen, sometimes along with Indra — "Ye two warred over the cows, O Indra, O Agni" (VI.60.2) — or, again, with Soma, — "O Agni and Soma, that heroic might of yours was made conscient when ye robbed the Pani of the cows" (I.93.4). Soma in another passage is associated in this victory with Indra; "This god born by force stayed, with

Indra as his comrade, the Pani" and performed all the exploits of the gods warring against the Dasyus (VI.44.22). The Ashwins also are credited with the same achievement in VI.62.11, "Ye two open the doors of the strong pen full of the kine" and again in I.112.18, "O Angiras, (the twin Ashwins are sometimes unified in a single appellation), ye two take delight by the mind and enter first in the opening of the stream of the cows," where the sense is evidently the liberated, outflowing stream or sea of the Light.

Brihaspati is more frequently the hero of this victory. "Brihaspati, coming first into birth from the great Light in the supreme ether, seven-mouthed, multiply-born, seven-rayed, dispelled the darknesses; he with his host that possess the *stubh* and the Rik broke Vala into pieces by his cry. Shouting Brihaspati drove upwards the bright herds that speed the offering and they lowed in reply" (IV.50). And again in VI.73.1 and 3, "Brihaspati who is the hill-breaker, the first-born, the Angirasa. . . . Brihaspati conquered the treasures (*vasūni*), great pens this god won full of the kine." The Maruts also, singers of the Rik like Brihaspati, are associated, though less directly in this divine action. "He whom ye foster, O Maruts, shall break open the pen" (VI.66.8), and elsewhere we hear of the cows of the Maruts (I.38.2). Pushan, the Increaser, a form of the sun-god is also invoked for the pursuit and recovery of the stolen cattle, (VI.54); "Let Pushan follow after our kine, let him protect our war-steeds. . . . Pushan, go thou after the kine. . . . Let him drive back to us that which was lost." Even Saraswati becomes a slayer of the Panis. And in Madhuchchhandas' hymn (I.11.5) we have this striking image, "O lord of the thunderbolt, thou didst uncover the hole of Vala of the cows; the gods, unfearing, entered speeding (or putting forth their force) into thee."

Is there a definite sense in these variations which will bind them together into a single coherent idea or is it at random that the Rishis invoke now this and now the other deity in the search and war for their lost cattle? If we will consent to take the ideas of the Veda as a whole instead of bewildering ourselves in the play of separate detail, we shall find a very simple and sufficient answer. This matter of the lost herds is only part of a whole system of connected symbols and images. They are recovered by the sacrifice and the fiery god Agni is the flame, the power and the priest of the sacrifice; — by the Word, and Brihaspati is the father of the Word, the Maruts its singers or Brahmas, *brahmāṇo marutaḥ*, Saraswati its inspiration; — by the Wine, and Soma is the god of the Wine and the Ashwins its seekers, finders, givers, drinkers. The herds are the herds of Light and the Light comes by the Dawn and by the Sun of whom Pushan is a form. Finally, Indra is the head of all these gods, lord of the light, king of the luminous heaven called Swar, — he is, we say, the luminous or divine Mind; into him all the gods enter and take part in his unveiling of the hidden light. We see therefore that there is a perfect appropriateness in the attribution of one and the same victory to these different deities and in Madhuchchhandas' image of the gods entering into Indra for the stroke against Vala. Nothing has been done at random or in obedience to a confused fluidity of ideas. The Veda is perfect and beautiful in its coherence and its unity.

Moreover, the conquest of the Light is only part of the great action of the Vedic sacrifice. The gods have to win by it all the boons (*viśvā vāryā*) which are necessary for the conquest of immortality and the emergence of the hidden illuminations is only one of these. Force, the Horse, is as necessary as Light, the Cow; not only must Vala be reached and the light won from his jealous grasp, but Vritra must be slain and the waters released; the emergence of the shining herds means the rising of the Dawn and the Sun; that again is incomplete without the sacrifice, the fire, the wine. All these things are different members of one action, sometimes mentioned separately, sometimes in groups, sometimes together as if in a single action, a grand total conquest. And the result of their possession is the revelation of the vast Truth and the conquest of Swar, the luminous world, called frequently the wide other world, *urum u lokam* or simply *u lokam*. We must grasp this unity first if we are to understand the separate introduction of these symbols in the various passages of the Rig Veda.

Thus in VI.73 which has already been cited, we find a brief hymn of three verses in which these symbols are briefly put together in their unity; it might almost be described as one of the mnemonic hymns of the Veda which serve to keep in mind the unity of its sense and its symbolism. "He who is the hill-breaker, first-born, possessed of the truth, Brihaspati, the Angirasa, the giver of the oblation, pervader of the two worlds, dweller in the heat and light (of the sun), our father, roars aloud as the Bull to the two firmaments. Brihaspati who for man the voyager has fashioned that other world in the calling of the gods, slaying the Vritra-forces breaks open the cities, conquering foes and overpowering unfriends in his battles. Brihaspati conquers for him the treasures, great pens this god wins full of the kine, seeking the conquest of the world of Swar, unassailable; Brihaspati slays the Foe by the hymns of illumination (*arkaiḥ*)." We see at once the unity of this many-sided symbolism.

Another passage more mystic in its language brings in the idea of the dawn and the restoration or new-birth of light in the sun which are not expressly mentioned in the brief hymn to Brihaspati. It is in the praise of Soma of which the opening phrase has already been cited, VI.44.22; "This god born by force stayed with Indra as his comrade the Pani; he it was wrested from his own unblest father (the divided being) his weapons of war and his forms of knowledge (*māyāḥ*), he it was made the Dawns glorious in their lord, he it was created in the Sun the Light within, he it was found the triple principle (of immortality) in heaven in its regions of splendour (the three worlds of Swar) and in the tripartite worlds the hidden immortality (this is the giving of the Amrita in separate parts alluded to in the Atris' hymn to Agni, the threefold offering of the Soma given on the three levels, *triṣu sānuṣu*, body, life and mind); he it was supported widely heaven and earth, he it was fashioned the car with the seven rays; he it was held by his force the ripe yield (of the *madhu* or *ghṛta*) in the cows, even the fountain of the ten movements." It certainly seems astonishing to me that so many acute and eager minds should have read such hymns as these without realising that they are the sacred poems of symbolists and mystics, not of Nature-worshipping barbarians or of rude Aryan invaders warring with the civilised and Vedantic Dravidians.

Let us now pass rapidly through certain other passages in which there is a more scattered collocation of these symbols. First, we find that in this image of the cavern-pen in the hill, as elsewhere, the Cow and Horse go together. We have seen Pushan called upon to seek for the cows and protect the horses. The two forms of the Aryan's wealth always at the mercy of marauders? But let us see. "So in thy ecstasy of the Soma thou didst break open, O hero (Indra), the pen of the Cow and the Horse, like a city" (VIII.32.5). "Break open for us the thousands of the Cow and the Horse" (VIII.34.14). "That which thou holdest, O Indra, the Cow and the Horse and the imperishable enjoyment, confirm that in the sacrificer and not in the Pani; he who lies in the slumber, doing not the work and seeking not the gods, let him perish by his own impulsions; thereafter confirm perpetually (in us) the wealth that must increase" (VIII.97.2 and 3). In another hymn the Panis are said to withhold the wealth of cows and horses. Always they are powers who receive the coveted wealth but do not use it, preferring to slumber, avoiding the divine action (*vrata*), and they are powers who must perish or be conquered before the wealth can be securely possessed by the sacrificer. And always the Cow and the Horse represent a concealed and imprisoned wealth which has to be uncovered and released by a divine puissance.

With the conquest of the shining herds is also associated the conquest or the birth or illumination of the Dawn and the Sun, but this is a point whose significance we shall have to consider in another chapter. And associated with the Herds, the Dawn and the Sun are the Waters; for the slaying of Vritra with the release of the waters and the defeat of Vala with the release of the herds are two companion and not unconnected myths. In certain passages even, as in I.32.4, the slaying of Vritra is represented as the preliminary to the birth of the Sun, the Dawn and Heaven, and in others the opening of the Hill to the flowing of the Waters. For the general connection we may note the following passages: VII.90.4, "The Dawns broke forth perfect in their shining and unhurt; meditating they (the Angirases) found the wide Light; they who desire opened the wideness of the cows and the waters for them flowed forth from heaven"; I.72.8, "By right thought the seven Mighty Ones of heaven (the seven rivers) knew the truth and knew the doors of bliss; Sarama found the strong wideness of the cows and by that the human creature enjoys"; I.100.18, of Indra and the Maruts, "He with his shining companions won the field, won the Sun, won the waters"; V.14.4, of Agni, "Agni, born, shone out slaying the Dasyus, by the Light the Darkness; he found the cows, the waters and Swar"; VI.60.2, of Indra and Agni, "Ye two warred over the cows, the waters, Swar, the dawns that were ravished; O Indra, O Agni, thou unitest (to us) the regions, Swar, the brilliant dawns, the waters and the cows"; I.32.12, of Indra, "O hero, thou didst conquer the cow, thou didst conquer the Soma; thou didst loose forth to their flowing the seven rivers."

In the last passage we see Soma coupled with the cows among the conquests of Indra. Usually the Soma intoxication is the strength in which Indra conquers the cows; e.g. III.43.7, the Soma "in the intoxication of which thou didst open up the cowpens"; II.15.8, "He, hymned by the Angirases, broke Vala and hurled apart the strong places of the hill; he severed their artificial obstructions; these things Indra did in the intoxication of the Soma." Sometimes, however, the working is reversed and it is the Light that brings the bliss of the Soma wine or they come together as in I.62.5, "Hymned by the Angirases, O achiever of works, thou didst open the dawns with (or by) the Sun and with (or by) the cows the Soma."

Agni is also, like the Soma, an indispensable element of the sacrifice and therefore we find Agni too included in these formulas of association, as in VII.99.4. "Ye made that wide other world for (as the goal of) the sacrifice, bringing into being the Sun and the Dawn and Agni," and we have the same formula in III.31.15 with the addition of the Path and in VII.44.3 with the addition of the cow.

From these examples it will appear how closely the different symbols and parables of the Veda are connected with each other and we shall therefore miss the true road of interpretation if we treat the legend of the Angirases and the Panis as an isolated mythus which we can interpret at our pleasure without careful regard to its setting in the general thought of the Veda and the light that that general thought casts upon the figured language in which the legend is recounted.

Chapter XV

The Lost Sun and the Lost Cows

THE CONQUEST or recovery of the Sun and the Dawn is a frequent subject of allusion in the hymns of the Rig Veda. Sometimes it is the finding of Surya, sometimes the finding or conquest of Swar, the world of Surya. Sayana, indeed, takes the word Swar as a synonym of Surya; but it is perfectly clear from several passages that Swar is the name of a world or supreme Heaven above the ordinary heaven and earth. Sometimes indeed it is used for the solar light proper both to Surya and to the world which is formed by his illumination. We have seen that the waters which descend from Heaven or which are conquered and enjoyed by Indra and the mortals who are befriended by him, are described as *svarvatīr apaḥ*. Sayana, taking these *apaḥ* for physical waters, was bound to find another meaning for *svarvatīḥ* and he declares that it means *saraṇavatīḥ*, moving; but this is obviously a forced sense which the word itself does not suggest and can hardly bear. The thunderbolt of Indra is called the heavenly stone, *svaryam aśmānam*; its light, that is to say, is the light from this world of the solar splendours. Indra himself is *svarpati*, the master of Swar, of the luminous world.

Moreover, as we see that the finding and recovery of the Cows is usually described as the work of Indra, often with the aid of the Angiras Rishis and by the instrumentality of the *mantra* and the sacrifice, of Agni and Soma, so also the finding and recovery of the sun is attributed to the same agencies. Moreover the two actions are continually associated together. We have, it seems to me, overwhelming evidence in the Veda itself that all these things constitute really one great action of which they are parts. The Cows are the hidden rays of the Dawn or of Surya; their rescue out of the darkness leads to or is the sign of the uprising of the sun that was hidden in the darkness; this again is the condition, always with the instrumentality of the sacrifice, its circumstances and its helping gods, of the conquest of Swar, the supreme world of Light. So much results beyond doubt, it seems to me, from the language of the Veda itself; but also that language points to this Sun being a symbol of the divine illumining Power, Swar the world of the divine Truth and the conquest of divine Truth the real aim of the Vedic Rishis and the subject of their hymns. I will now examine as rapidly as possible the evidence which points towards this conclusion.

First of all, we see that Swar and Surya are different conceptions in the minds of the Vedic Rishis, but always closely connected. We have for instance the verse in Bharadwaja's hymn to Soma and Indra, VI.72.1, "Ye found the Sun, ye found Swar, ye slew all darkness and limitations" and in a hymn of Vamadeva to Indra, IV.16, which celebrates this achievement of Indra and the Angirases, "When by the hymns of illumination (*arkaiḥ*) Swar was found, entirely visible, when they (the Angirases) made to shine the great light out of the night, he (Indra) made the darknesses ill-assured (i.e. loosened their firm hold) so that men might have vision." In the first passage we see that Swar and Surya are different from each other and that Swar is not merely another name for Surya; but at the same time the finding of Swar and the finding of Surya are represented as closely connected and indeed one movement and the result is the slaying of all darkness and limitations. So in the second passage the finding and making visible of Swar is associated with the shining of a great light out of the darkness, which we find from parallel passages to be the recovery, by the Angirases, of the Sun that was lying concealed in the darkness. Surya is found by the Angirases through the power of their hymns or true *mantras*; Swar also is found and made visible by the hymns of the Angirases, *arkaiḥ*. It is clear therefore that the substance of Swar is a great light and that that light is the light of Surya the Sun.

We might even suppose that Swar is a word for the sun, light or the sky if it were not clear from other passages that it is the name of a world. It is frequently alluded to as a world beyond the Rodasi, beyond heaven and earth, and is otherwise called the wide world, *uru loka*, or the wide other world, *uru u loka*, or simply that (other) world, *u loka*. This world is described as one of vast light and of a wide freedom from fear where the cows, the rays of Surya, disport themselves freely. So in VI.47.8, we have "Thou in thy knowledge leadest us on to the wide world, even Swar, the Light which is freedom from fear, with happy being," *svar jyotir abhayaṁ svasti*. In III.2.7, Agni Vaishwanara is described as filling the earth and heaven and the vast Swar, *ā rodasī apṛṇad ā svar mahat*; and so also Vasishtha says in his hymn to Vishnu, VII.99, "Thou didst support firmly, O Vishnu, this earth and heaven and uphold the earth all around by the rays (of Surya). Ye two created for the sacrifice (i.e. as its result) the wide other world (*urum u lokam*), bringing into being the Sun, the Dawn and Agni," where we again see the close connection of Swar, the wide world, with the birth or appearance of the Sun and the Dawn. It is described as the result of the sacrifice, the end of our pilgrimage, the vast home to which we arrive, the other world to which those who do well the works of sacrifice attain, *sukṛtām u lokam*. Agni goes as an envoy between earth and heaven and then encompasses with his being this vast home, *kṣayaṁ bṛhantaṁ pari bhūṣati*, (III.3.2). It is a world of bliss and the fullness of all the riches to which the Vedic Rishi aspires: "He for whom, because he does well his works, O Agni Jatavedas, thou willest to make that other world of bliss, attains to a felicity full of the Horses, the Sons, the Heroes, the Cows, all happy being" (V.4.11). And it is by the Light that this Bliss is attained; it is by bringing to Birth the Sun and the Dawn and the Days that the Angirases attain to it for the desiring human race; "Indra who winneth Swar, bringing to birth the days, has conquered by those who desire (*uśigbhiḥ*, a word applied like *nṛ* to express men and gods, but, like *nṛ* also, sometimes especially indicating the Angirases) the armies he attacks, and he has made to shine out for man the vision of the days (*ketum ahnām*) and found the Light for the great bliss," *avindaj jyotir bṛhate raṇāya* (III.34.4).

All this may very well be interpreted, so far as these and other isolated passages go, as a sort of Red Indian conception of a physical world beyond the sky and the earth, a world made out of the rays of the sun, in which the human being, freed from fear and limitation, — it is a wide world, — has his desires satisfied and possesses quite an unlimited number of horses, cows, sons and retainers. But what we have set out to prove is that it is not so, that on the contrary, this wide world, *bṛhad dyau* or Swar, which we have to attain by passing beyond heaven and earth, — for so it is more than once stated, e.g. I.36.8, "Human beings (*manuṣaḥ*) slaying the Coverer have crossed beyond both earth and heaven and made the wide world for their dwelling place," *ghnanto vṛtram ataran rodasī apa uru kṣayāya cakrire*, — that this supra-celestial wideness, this illimitable light is a supramental heaven, the heaven of the supramental Truth, of the immortal Beatitude, and that the light which is its substance and constituent reality, is the light of Truth. But at present it is enough to emphasise this point that it is a heaven concealed from our vision by a certain darkness, that it has to be found and made visible, and that this seeing and finding depends on the birth of the Dawn, the rising of the Sun, the upsurging of the Solar Herds out of their secret cave. The souls successful in sacrifice become *svardṛś* and *svarvid*, seers of Swar and finders of Swar or its knowers; for *vid* is a root which means both to find or get and to know and in one or two passages the less ambiguous root *jñā* is substituted for it and the Veda even speaks of making the light known out of the darkness. For the rest, this question of the nature of Swar or the wide world is of supreme importance for the interpretation of the Veda, since on it turns the whole difference between the theory of a hymnal of barbarians and the theory of a book of ancient knowledge, a real Veda. It can only be entirely dealt with in a discussion of the hundred and more passages speaking of this wide world which would be quite beyond the scope of these chapters. We shall, however, have to return to this question while dealing with the Angiras hymns and afterwards.

The birth of the Sun and the Dawn must therefore be regarded as the condition of seeing or attaining to Swar, and it is this which explains the immense importance attached to this legend or image in the Veda and to the conception of the illumining, finding, bringing to birth of the light out of the darkness by the true hymn, the *satya mantra*. This is done by Indra and the Angirases, and numerous are the passages that allude to it. Indra and the Angirases are described as finding Swar or the Sun, *avindat*, illumining or making it to shine, *arocayat*, bringing it to birth, *ajanayat*, (we must remember that in the Veda the manifestation of the gods in the sacrifice is constantly described as their birth); and winning and possessing it, *sanat*. Often indeed Indra alone is mentioned. It is he who makes light from the nights and brings into birth the Sun, *kṣapāṁ vastā janitā sūryasya* (III.49.4), he who has brought to their birth the Sun and the Dawn (II.12.7), or, in a more ample phrase, brings to birth together the Sun and Heaven and Dawn (VI.30.5). By his shining he illumines the Dawn, by his shining he makes to blaze out the sun, *haryann uṣasam arcayaḥ sūryaṁ haryann arocayaḥ* (III.44.2). These are his great achievements, *jajāna sūryam uṣasaṁ sudaṁsāḥ* (III.32.8), that with his shining comrades he wins for possession the field (is this not the field in which the Atri saw the shining cows?), wins the sun, wins the waters, *sanat kṣetraṁ sakhibhiḥ śvitnyebhiḥ sanat sūryaṁ sanad apaḥ suvajraḥ* (I.100.18). He is also he who winneth Swar, *svarṣā*, as we have seen, by bringing to birth the days. In isolated passages we might take this birth of the Sun as referring to the original creation of the sun by the gods, but not when we take these and other passages together. This birth is his birth in conjunction with the Dawn, his birth out of the Night. It is by the sacrifice that this birth takes place, — *indraḥ suyajña uṣasaḥ svar janat* (II.21.4), "Indra sacrificing well brought to birth the Dawns and Swar"; it is by human aid that it is done, — *asmākebhir nṛbhiḥ sūryaṁ sanat*, by our "men" he wins the sun (I.100.6); and in many hymns it is described as the result of the work of the Angirases and is associated with the delivering of the cows or the breaking of the hill.

It is this circumstance among others that prevents us from taking, as we might otherwise have taken, the birth or finding of the Sun as simply a description of the sky (Indra) daily recovering the sun at dawn. When it is said of him that he finds the light even in the blind darkness, *so andhe cit tamasi jyotir vidat*, it is evident that the reference is to the same light which Agni and Soma found, one light for all these many creatures, *avindataṁ jyotir ekaṁ bahubhyaḥ*, when they stole the cows from the Panis (I.93.4), "the wakeful light which they who increase truth brought into birth, a god for the god" (VIII.89.1), the secret light (*gūḍhaṁ jyotiḥ*) which the fathers, the Angirases, found when by their true mantras they brought to birth the Dawn. It is that which is referred to in the mystic hymn to all the gods (VIII.29.10) attributed to Manu Vaivaswata or to Kashyapa, in which it is said, "Certain of them singing the Rik thought out the mighty Sāman and by that they made the Sun to shine." This is not represented as being done previous to the creation of man; for it is said in VII.91.1, "The gods who increase by our obeisance and were of old, without blame, they for man beset (by the powers of darkness) made the Dawn to shine by the Sun." This is the finding of the Sun that was dwelling in the darkness by the Angirases through their ten months' sacrifice. Whatever may have been the origin of the image or legend, it is an old one and widespread and it supposes a long obscuration of the Sun during which man was beset by darkness. We find it not only among the Aryans of India, but among the Mayas of America whose civilisation was a ruder and perhaps earlier type of the Egyptian culture; there too it is the same legend of the Sun concealed for many months in the darkness and recovered by the hymns and prayers of the wise men (the Angiras Rishis?). In the Veda the recovery of the Light is first effected by the Angirases, the seven sages, the ancient human fathers and is then constantly repeated in human experience by their agency.

It will appear from this analysis that the legend of the lost Sun and its recovery by sacrifice and by the *mantra* and the legend of the lost Cows and their recovery, also by the *mantra*, both carried out by Indra and the Angirases, are not two different myths, they are one. We have already asserted this identity while discussing the relations of the Cows and the Dawn. The Cows are the rays of the Dawn, the herds of the Sun and not physical cattle. The lost Cows are the lost rays of the Sun; their recovery is the forerunner of the recovery of the lost sun. But it is now necessary to put this identity beyond all possible doubt by the clear statement of the Veda itself.

For the Veda does explicitly tell us that the cows are the Light and the pen in which they are hidden is the darkness. Not only have we the passage already quoted, I.92.4, in which the purely metaphorical character of the cows and the pen is indicated, "Dawn uncovered the darkness like the pen of the cow"; not only have we the constant connection of the image of the recovery of the cows with the finding of the light as in I.93.4, "Ye two stole the cows from the Panis. . . . Ye found the one light for many", or in II.24.3, "That is the work to be done for the most divine of the gods; the firm places were cast down, the fortified places were made weak; up Brihaspati drove the cows (rays), by the hymn (*brahmaṇā*) he broke Vala, he concealed the darkness, he made Swar visible"; not only are we told in V.31.3, "He impelled forward the good milkers within the concealing pen, he opened up by the Light the all-concealing darkness"; but, in case any one should tell us that there is no connection in the Veda between one clause of a sentence and another and that the Rishis are hopping about with minds happily liberated from the bonds of sense and reason from the Cows to the Sun and from the darkness to the cave of the Dravidians, we have in answer the absolute identification in I.33.10, "Indra the Bull made the thunderbolt his ally" or perhaps "made it applied (*yujam*), he by the Light milked the rays (cows) out of the darkness," — we must remember that the thunderbolt is the *svarya aśmā* and has the light of Swar in it, — and again in IV.51.2, where there is question of the Panis, "They (the Dawns) breaking into dawn pure, purifying, opened the doors of the pen, even of the darkness," *vrajasya tamaso dvārā*. If in face of all these passages we insist on making a historical myth of the Cows and the Panis, it will be because we are determined to make the Veda mean that in spite of the evidence of the Veda itself. Otherwise we must admit that this supreme hidden wealth of the Panis, *nidhiṁ paṇīnāṁ paramaṁ guhā hitam* (II.24.6), is not wealth of earthly herds, but, as is clearly stated by Paruchchhepa

Daivodasi (I.130.3), "the treasure of heaven hidden in the secret cavern like the young of the Bird, within the infinite rock, like a pen of the cows", *avindad divo nihitaṁ guhā nidhiṁ ver na garbhaṁ parivītam aśmani anante antar aśmani, vrajaṁ vajrī gavām iva siṣāsan.*

The passages in which the connection of the two legends or their identity appear, are numerous; I will only cite a few that are typical. We have in one of the hymns that speak at length of this legend, I.62, "O Indra, O Puissant, thou with the Dashagwas (the Angirases) didst tear Vala with the cry; hymned by the Angirases, thou didst open the Dawns with the Sun and with the Cows the Soma." We have VI.17.3, "Hear the hymn and increase by the words; make manifest the Sun, slay the foe, cleave out the Cows, O Indra." We read in VII.98.6, "All this wealth of cows that thou seest around thee by the eye of the Sun is thine, thou art the sole lord of the cows, O Indra," *gavām asi gopatir eka indra*, and to show of what kind of cows Indra is the lord, we have in III.31, a hymn of Sarama and the Cows, "The victorious (Dawns) clove to him and they knew a great light out of the darkness; knowing the Dawns went upward to him, Indra became the sole lord of the Cows," *patir gavām abhavad eka indraḥ*, and the hymn goes on to tell how it was by the mind and by the discovery of the whole path of the Truth that the seven sages, the Angirases drove up the Cows out of their strong prison and how Sarama, knowing, came to the cavern in the hill and to the voice of the imperishable herds. We have the same connection with the Dawns and the finding of the wide solar light of Swar in VII.90.4, "The Dawns broke forth perfect in light and unhurt, they (the Angirases) meditating found the wide Light (*uru jyotiḥ*); they who desire opened the wideness of the Cows, the waters flowed on them from heaven."

So too in II.19.3 we have the Days and the Sun and the Cows, — "He brought to its birth the Sun, found the Cows, effecting out of the Night the manifestations of the days." In IV.1, the Dawns and the Cows are identified, "The good milkers whose pen was the rock, the shining ones in their concealing prison they drove upward, the Dawns answering their call," unless this means, as is possible, that the Dawns called by the Angirases, "our human fathers", who are mentioned in the preceding verse, drove up for them the Cows. Then in VI.17.5 we have the breaking of the pen as the means of the outshining of the Sun; "Thou didst make the Sun and the Dawn to shine, breaking the firm places; thou didst move from its foundation the great hill that enveloped the Cows"; and finally in III.39 the absolute identification of the two images in their legendary form, "None is there among mortals who can blame (or, as I should rather interpret, no mortal power that can confine or obstruct) these our fathers who fought for the Cows (of the Panis); Indra of the mightiness, Indra of the works released for them the strongly closed cow-pens; when a friend with his friends the Navagwas, following on his knees the cows, when with the ten, the Dashagwas, Indra found the true Sun (or, as I render it, the Truth, the Sun,) dwelling in the darkness." The passage is conclusive; the cows are the Cows of the Panis which the Angirases pursue entering the cave on their hands and knees, the finders are Indra and the Angirases who are spoken of in other hymns as Navagwas and Dashagwas, and that which is found by entering the cow-pens of the Panis in the cave of the hill is not the stolen wealth of the Aryans, but "the sun dwelling in the darkness".

Therefore it is established beyond question that the cows of the Veda, the cows of the Panis, the cows which are stolen, fought for, pursued, recovered, the cows which are desired by the Rishis, the cows which are won by the hymn and the sacrifice, by the blazing fire and the god-increasing verse and the god-intoxicating Soma, are symbolic cows, are the cows of Light, are, in the other and inner Vedic sense of the words *go*, *usrā*, *usriyā*, the shining ones, the radiances, the herds of the Sun, the luminous forms of the Dawn. By this inevitable conclusion the corner-stone of Vedic interpretation is securely founded far above the gross materialism of a barbarous worship and the Veda reveals itself as a symbolic scripture, a sacred allegory whether of Sun-worship and Dawn-worship or of the cult of a higher and inner Light, of the true Sun, *satyaṁ sūryam*, that dwells concealed in the darkness of our ignorance, hidden as the child of the Bird, the divine Hansa, in the infinite rock of this material existence, *anante antar aśmani*.

Although in this chapter I have confined myself with some rigidity to the evidence that the cows are the light of the sun hid in darkness, yet their connection with the light of Truth and the sun of Knowledge has already shown itself in one or two of the verses cited. We shall see that when we examine, not separate verses, but whole passages of these Angiras hymns the hint thus given develops into a clear certainty. But first we must cast a glance at these Angiras Rishis and at the creatures of the cave, the friends of darkness from whom they recover the luminous herds and the lost Sun, — the enigmatic Panis.

Chapter XVI

The Angiras Rishis

THE NAME Angiras occurs in the Veda in two different forms, Angira and Angiras, although the latter is the more common; we have also the patronymic Angirasa applied more than once to the god Brihaspati. In later times Angiras, like Bhrigu and other seers, was regarded as one of the original sages, progenitors of clans of Rishis who went by their names, the Angirasas, Atris, Bhargavas. In the Veda also there are these families of Rishis, the Atris, Bhrigus, Kanwas etc. In one of the hymns of the Atris the discovery of Agni, the sacred fire, is attributed to the Angiras Rishis (V.11.6), but in another to the Bhrigus (X.46.9).[1] Frequently the seven original Angiras Rishis are described as the human fathers, *pitaro manuṣyāḥ*, who discovered the Light, made the sun to shine and ascended to the heaven of the Truth. In some of the hymns of the tenth Mandala they are associated as the Pitris or Manes with Yama, a deity who only comes into prominence in the later Suktas; they take their seats with the gods on the *barhis*, the sacred grass, and have their share in the sacrifice.

If this were all, the explanation of the part taken by the Angiras Rishis in the finding of the Cows, would be simple and superficial enough; they would be the Ancestors, the founders of the Vedic religion, partially deified by their descendants and continually associated with the gods whether in the winning back of the Dawn and the Sun out of the long Arctic night or in the conquest of the Light and the Truth. But this is not all, the Vedic myth has profounder aspects. In the first place, the Angirases are not merely the deified human fathers, they are also brought before us as heavenly seers, sons of the gods, sons of heaven and heroes or powers of the Asura, the mighty Lord, *divas putrāso asurasya vīrāḥ* (III.53.7), an expression which, their number being seven, reminds us strongly, though perhaps only fortuitously, of the seven Angels of Ahura Mazda in the kindred Iranian mythology. Moreover there are passages in which they seem to become purely symbolical, powers and sons of Agni the original Angiras, forces of the symbolic Light and Flame, and even to coalesce into a single seven-mouthed Angiras with his nine and his ten rays of the Light, *navagve aṅgire daśagve saptāsye*, on and by whom the Dawn breaks out with all her joy and opulence. And yet all these three presentations seem to be of the same Angirases, their characteristics and their action being otherwise identical.

---

[1] Very possibly the Angiras Rishis are the flame-powers of Agni and the Bhrigus the solar powers of Surya.

Two entirely opposite explanations can be given of the double character of these seers, divine and human. They may have been originally human sages deified by their descendants and in the apotheosis given a divine parentage and a divine function; or they may have been originally demigods, powers of the Light and Flame, who became humanised as the fathers of the race and the discoverers of its wisdom. Both of these processes are recognisable in early mythology. In the Greek legend, for instance, Castor and Polydeuces and their sister Helen are human beings, though children of Zeus, and only deified after their death, but the probability is that originally all three were gods, — Castor and Polydeuces, the twins, riders of the horse, saviours of sailors on the ocean being almost certainly identical with the Vedic Ashwins, the Horsemen, as their name signifies, riders in the wonderful chariot, twins also, saviours of Bhujyu from the ocean, ferriers over the great waters, brothers of the Dawn, and Helen very possibly the Dawn their sister or even identical with Sarama, the hound of heaven, who is, like Dakshina, a power, almost a figure of the Dawn. But in either case there has been a farther development by which these gods or demigods have become invested with psychological functions, perhaps by the same process which in the Greek religion converted Athene, the Dawn, into the goddess of knowledge and Apollo, the sun, into the divine singer and seer, lord of the prophetic and poetic inspiration.

In the Veda it is possible that another tendency has been at work, — the persistent and all-pervading habit of symbolism dominant in the minds of these ancient Mystics. Everything, their own names, the names of Kings and sacrificers, the ordinary circumstances of their lives were turned into symbols and covers for their secret meaning. Just as they used the ambiguity of the word *go*, which means both ray and cow, so as to make the concrete figure of the cow, the chief form of their pastoral wealth, a cover for its hidden sense of the inner light which was the chief element in the spiritual wealth they coveted from the gods, so also they would use their own names, Gotama "most full of light", Gavisthira "the steadfast in light" to hide a broad and general sense for their thought beneath what seemed a personal claim or desire. Thus too they used the experiences external and internal whether of themselves or of other Rishis. If there is any truth in the old legend of Shunahshepa bound as a victim on the altar of sacrifice, it is yet quite certain, as we shall see, that in the Rig Veda the occurrence or the legend is used as a symbol of the human soul bound by the triple cord of sin and released from it by the divine power of Agni, Surya, Varuna. So also Rishis like Kutsa, Kanwa, Ushanas Kavya have become types and symbols of certain spiritual experiences and victories and placed in that capacity side by side with the gods. It is not surprising, then, that in this mystic symbolism the seven Angiras Rishis should have become divine powers and living forces of the spiritual life without losing altogether their traditional or historic human character. We will leave, however, these conjectures and speculations aside and examine instead the part played by these three elements or aspects of their personality in the figure of the cows and the recovery of the Sun and the Dawn out of the darkness.

We note first that the word Angiras is used in the Veda as an epithet, often in connection with the image of the Dawn and the Cows. Secondly, it occurs as a name of Agni, while Indra is said to become Angiras and Brihaspati is called Angiras and Angirasa, obviously not as a mere decorative or mythological appellation but with a special significance and an allusion to the psychological or other sense attached to the word. Even the Ashwins are addressed collectively as Angiras. It is therefore clear that the word Angiras is used in the Veda not merely as a name of a certain family of Rishis, but with a distinct meaning inherent in the word. It is probable also that even when used as a name it is still with a clear recognition of the inherent meaning of the name; it is probable even that names in the Veda are generally, if not always, used with a certain stress on their significance, especially the names of gods, sages and kings. The word Indra is generally used as a name, yet we have such significant glimpses of the Vedic method as the description of Usha *indratamā aṅgirastamā*, "most-Indra", "most-Angiras", and of the Panis as *anindrāḥ*, "not-Indra", expressions which evidently are meant to convey the possession or absence of the qualities, powers or functionings represented by Indra and the Angiras. We have then to see what may be this meaning and what light it sheds on the nature or functions of the Angiras Rishis.

The word is akin to the name Agni; for it is derived from a root *aṅg* which is only a nasalised form of *ag*, the root of Agni. These roots seem to convey intrinsically the sense of preeminent or forceful state, feeling, movement, action, light,[2] and it is this last sense of a brilliant or burning light that gives us *agni*, fire, *aṅgati*, fire, *aṅgāra*, a burning coal and *aṅgiras*, which must have meant flaming, glowing. Both in the Veda and the tradition of the Brahmanas the Angirases are in their origin closely connected with Agni. In the Brahmanas it is said that Agni is the fire and the Angirases the burning coals, *aṅgārāḥ*; but in the Veda itself the indication seems rather to be that they are the flames or lustres of Agni. In X.62, a hymn to the Angiras Rishis, it is said of them that they are sons of Agni and have been born about him in different forms all about heaven, and in the next clause it is added, speaking of them collectively in the singular:

---

[2] For state we have *agra*, first, top and Greek *agan*, excessively; for feeling, Greek *agapē*, love, and possibly Sanskrit *aṅganā*, a woman; for movement and action several words in Sanskrit and in Greek and Latin.

navagvo nu daśagvo aṅgirastamaḥ sacā deveṣu maṁhate, nine-rayed, ten-rayed, most "Angiras", this Angiras clan becomes together full of plenty with or in the gods; aided by Indra they set free the pen of cows and horses, they give to the sacrificer the mystic eight-eared kine and thereby create in the gods *śravas*, the divine hearing or inspiration of the Truth. It is fairly evident that the Angiras Rishis are here the radiant lustres of the divine Agni which are born in heaven, therefore of the divine Flame and not of any physical fire; they become equipped with the nine rays of the Light and the ten, become most *aṅgiras*, that is to say most full of the blazing radiance of Agni, the divine flame, and are therefore able to release the imprisoned Light and Force and create the supramental knowledge.

Even if this interpretation of the symbolism is not accepted, yet that there is a symbolism must be admitted. These Angirases are not human sacrificers, but sons of Agni born in heaven, although their action is precisely that of the human Angirases, the fathers, *pitaro manuṣyāḥ*; they are born with different forms, *virūpāsaḥ*, and all this can only mean that they are various forms of the power of Agni. The question is of what Agni; the sacrificial flame, the element of fire generally or that other sacred flame which is described as "the priest with the seer-will" or "who does the work of the seer, the true, the rich in varied light of inspiration," *agnir hotā kavikratuḥ satyaś citraśravastamaḥ*? If it is the element of fire, then the blazing lustre they represent must be that of the Sun, the fire of Agni radiating out as the solar rays and in association with Indra the sky creating the Dawn. There can be no other physical interpretation consistent with the details and circumstances of the Angiras myth. But this explanation does not at all account for the farther description of the Angiras Rishis as seers, as singers of the hymn, powers of Brihaspati as well as of the Sun and Dawn.

There is another passage of the Veda (VI.6.3-5) in which the identity of these divine Angirases with the flaming lustres of Agni is clearly and unmistakably revealed. "Wide everywhere, O pure-shining Agni, range driven by the wind thy pure shining lustres (*bhāmāsaḥ*); forcefully overpowering the heavenly Nine-rayed ones (*divyā navagvāḥ*) enjoy the woods[3] (*vanā vananti*, significantly conveying the covert sense, 'enjoying the objects of enjoyment') breaking them up violently. O thou of the pure light, they bright and pure assail[4] (or overcome) all the earth, they are thy horses galloping in all directions. Then thy roaming shines widely vast directing their journey to the higher level of the Various-coloured (the cow, Prishni, mother of the Maruts). Then doubly (in earth and heaven?) thy tongue leaps forward like the lightning loosed of the Bull that wars for the cows." Sayana tries to avoid the obvious identification of the Rishis with the flames by giving *navagva* the sense of "new-born rays", but obviously *divyā navagvāḥ* here and the sons of Agni (in X.62) born in heaven who are *navagva* are the same and cannot possibly be different; and the identification is confirmed, if any confirmation were needed, by the statement that in this ranging of Agni constituted by the action of the Navagwas his tongue takes the appearance of the thunderbolt of Indra, the Bull who wars for the cows, loosed from his hand and leaping forward, undoubtedly to assail the powers of darkness in the hill of heaven; for the march of Agni and the Navagwas is here described as ascending the hill (*sānu pṛśneḥ*) after ranging over the earth.

We have evidently here a symbolism of the Flame and the Light, the divine flames devouring the earth and then becoming the lightning of heaven and the lustre of the solar Powers; for Agni in the Veda is the light of the sun and the lightning as well as the flame found in the waters and shining on the earth. The Angiras Rishis being powers of Agni share this manifold function. The divine flame kindled by the sacrifice supplies also to Indra the material of the lightning, the weapon, the heavenly stone, *svarya aśmā*, by which he destroys the powers of darkness and wins the cows, the solar illuminations.

Agni, the father of the Angirases, is not only the fount and origin of these divine flames, he is also described in the Veda as himself the first, that is to say the supreme and original Angiras, *prathamo aṅgirāḥ*. What do the Vedic poets wish us to understand by this description? We can best understand by a glance at some of the passages in which this epithet is applied to the bright and flaming deity. In the first place it is twice associated with another fixed epithet of Agni, the Son of Force or of Energy, *sahasaḥ sūnuḥ*, *ūrjo napāt*. Thus in VIII.60.2 he is addressed, "O Angiras, Son of Force," *sahasaḥ sūno aṅgiraḥ*, and in VIII.84.4, "O Agni Angiras, Son of Energy," *agne aṅgira ūrjo napāt*. And in V.11.6 it is said, "Thee, O Agni, the Angirases found established in the secret place (*guhā hitam*) lying in wood and wood (*vane vane*)" or, if we accept the indication of a covert sense we have already noted in the phrase *vanā vananti*, "in each object of enjoyment. So art thou born by being pressed (*mathyamānaḥ*), a mighty force; thee they call the Son of Force, O Angiras, *sa jāyase saho mahat tvām āhuḥ sahasas putram aṅgiraḥ*." It is hardly doubtful, then, that this idea of force is an essential element in the Vedic conception of the Angiras and it is, as we have seen, part of the meaning of the word. Force in status, action, movement, light, feeling is the inherent quality of the roots *ag* and *aṅg* from which we have *agni* and *aṅgiraḥ*. Force but also, in these words, Light. Agni, the sacred flame, is the burning force of Light; the Angirases also are burning powers of the Light.

---

[3] The logs of the sacrificial fire, according to Sayana.

[4] Shave the hair of the earth, according to Sayana.

But of what light? physical or figurative? We must not imagine that the Vedic poets were crude and savage intellects incapable of the obvious figure, common to all languages, which makes the physical light a figure of the mental and spiritual, of knowledge, of an inner illumination. The Veda speaks expressly of "luminous sages", *dyumanto viprāḥ* and the word *sūri*, a seer, is associated with Surya, the sun, by etymology and must originally have meant luminous. In I.31.1 it is said of this god of the Flame, "Thou, O Agni, wast the first Angiras, the seer and auspicious friend, a god, of the gods; in the law of thy working the Maruts with their shining spears were born, seers who do the work by the knowledge." Clearly, then, in the conception of Agni Angiras there are two ideas, knowledge and action; the luminous Agni and the luminous Maruts are by their light seers of the knowledge, *ṛṣi*, *kavi*; and by the light of knowledge the forceful Maruts do the work because they are born or manifested in the characteristic working (*vrata*) of Agni. For Agni himself has been described to us as having the seer-will, *kavikratuḥ*, the force of action which works according to the inspired or supramental knowledge (*śravas*), for it is that knowledge and not intellectuality which is meant by the word *kavi*. What then is this great force, Agni Angiras, *saho mahat*, but the flaming force of the divine consciousness with its two twin qualities of Light and Power working in perfect harmony, — even as the Maruts are described, *kavayo vidmanā apasaḥ*, seers working by the knowledge? We have had reason to conclude that Usha is the divine Dawn and not merely the physical, that her cows or rays of the Dawn and the Sun are the illuminations of the dawning divine consciousness and that therefore the Sun is the Illuminer in the sense of the Lord of Knowledge and that Swar, the solar world beyond heaven and earth, is the world of the divine Truth and Bliss, in a word, that Light in the Veda is the symbol of knowledge, of the illumination of the divine Truth. We now begin to have reason for concluding that the Flame, which is only another aspect of Light, is the Vedic symbol for the Force of the divine consciousness, of the supramental Truth.

In another passage, VI.11.3, we have mention of the "seer most illumined of the Angirases", *vepiṣṭho aṅgirasāṁ vipraḥ*, where the reference is not at all clear. Sayana, ignoring the collocation *vepiṣṭho vipraḥ* which at once fixes the sense of *vepiṣṭha* as equivalent to most *vipra*, most a seer, most illumined, supposes that Bharadwaja, the traditional Rishi of the hymn, is here praising himself as the "greatest praiser" of the gods; but this is a doubtful suggestion. Here it is Agni who is the *hotā*, the priest; it is he who is sacrificing to the gods, to his own embodiment, *tanvaṁ tava svām*, to the Maruts, Mitra, Varuna, Heaven and Earth. "For in thee" says the hymn "the thought even though full of riches desires still the gods, the (divine) births, for the singer of the hymn that he may sacrifice to them, when the sage, the most luminous of the Angirases, utters the rhythm of sweetness in the sacrifice." It would almost seem that Agni himself is the sage, the most luminous of the Angirases. On the other hand, the description seems to be more appropriate to Brihaspati.

For Brihaspati is also an Angirasa and one who becomes the Angiras. He is, as we have seen, closely associated with the Angiras Rishis in the winning of the luminous cattle and he is so associated as Brahmanaspati, as the Master of the sacred or inspired word (*brahma*); for by his cry Vala is split to pieces and the cows answer lowing with desire to his call. As powers of Agni these Rishis are like him *kavikratu*; they possess the divine Light, they act by it with the divine force; they are not only Rishis, but heroes of the Vedic war, *divas putrāso asurasya vīrāḥ* (III.53.7), sons of heaven, heroes of the Mighty Lord, they are, as described in VI.75.9, "the Fathers who dwell in the sweetness (the world of bliss), who establish the wide birth, moving in the difficult places, possessed of force, profound,[5] with their bright host and their strength of arrows, invincible, heroes in their being, wide overcomers of the banded foes": but also, they are, as the next verse describes them, *brāhmaṇāsaḥ pitaraḥ somyāsaḥ*, that is, they have the divine word and the inspired knowledge it carries with it.[6] This divine word is the *satya mantra*, it is the thought by whose truth the Angirases bring the Dawn to birth and make the lost Sun to rise in the heavens. This word is also called the *arka*, a vocable which means both hymn and light and is sometimes used of the sun. It is therefore the word of illumination, the word which expresses the truth of which the Sun is the lord, and its emergence from the secret seat of the Truth is associated with the outpouring by the Sun of its herded radiances; so we read in VII.36.1, "Let the Word come forward from the seat of the Truth; the Sun has released wide by its rays the cows," *pra brahmaitu sadanād ṛtasya, vi raśmibhiḥ sasṛje sūryo gāḥ.*

---

[5] Cf. the description in X.62.5 of the Angirases as sons of Agni, different in form, but all profound in knowledge, *gambhīravepasaḥ*.

[6] This seems to be the sense of the word Brahmana in the Veda. It certainly does not mean Brahmans by caste or priests by profession; the Fathers here are warriors as well as sages. The four castes are only mentioned in the Rig Veda once, in that profound but late composition, the Purushasukta.

It has to be won possession of like the Sun itself and the gods have to give their aid for that possession (*arkasya sātau*) as well as for the possession of the Sun (*sūryasya sātau*) and of Swar (*svarṣātau*).

The Angiras, therefore, is not only an Agni-power, he is also a Brihaspati-power. Brihaspati is called more than once the Angirasa, as in VI.73.1, *yo adribhit prathamajā ṛtāvā bṛhaspatir āṅgiraso haviṣmān*, "Brihaspati, breaker of the hill (the cave of the Panis), the first-born who has the Truth, the Angirasa, he of the oblation." And in X.47.6 we have a still more significant description of Brihaspati as the Angirasa; *pra saptagum ṛtadhītiṁ sumedhāṁ bṛhaspatiṁ matir acchā jigāti ya āṅgiraso namasā upasadyaḥ*. "The thought goes towards Brihaspati the seven-rayed, the truth-thinking, the perfect intelligence, who is the Angirasa, to be approached with obeisance." In II.23.18, also, Brihaspati is addressed as Angiras in connection with the release of the cows and the release of the waters; "For the glory of thee the hill parted asunder when thou didst release upward the pen of the cows; with Indra for ally thou didst force out, O Brihaspati, the flood of the waters which was environed by the darkness." We may note in passing how closely the release of the waters, which is the subject of the Vritra legend, is associated with the release of the cows which is the subject of the legend of the Angiras Rishis and the Panis and that both Vritra and the Panis are powers of the darkness. The cows are the light of the Truth, the true illumining sun, *satyaṁ tad . . . sūryam*; the waters released from the environing darkness of Vritra are called sometimes the streams of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ* and sometimes *svarvatīr apaḥ*, the waters of Swar, the luminous solar world.

We see then that the Angiras is in the first place a power of Agni the seer-will; he is the seer who works by the light, by the knowledge; he is a flame of the puissance of Agni, the great force that is born into the world to be the priest of the sacrifice and the leader of the journey, the puissance which the gods are said by Vamadeva (IV.1) to establish here as the Immortal in mortals, the energy that does the great work (*arati*). In the second place, he is a power or at least has the power of Brihaspati, the truth-thinking and seven-rayed, whose seven rays of the light hold that truth which he thinks (*ṛtadhītim*) and whose seven mouths repeat the word that expresses the truth, the god of whom it is said (IV.50.4-5), "Brihaspati coming first to birth out of the great Light in the highest heaven, born in many forms, seven-mouthed, seven-rayed (*saptāsyaḥ saptaraśmiḥ*), by his cry dispelled the darkness; he by his host with the Rik and the Stubh (the hymn of illumination and the rhythm that affirms the gods) broke Vala by his cry." It cannot be doubted that by this host or troop of Brihaspati (*suṣṭubhā ṛkvatā gaṇena*) are meant the Angiras Rishis who by the true mantra help in the great victory.

Indra is also described as becoming an Angiras or as becoming possessed of the Angiras quality. "May he become most Angiras with the Angirases, being the Bull with bulls (the bull is the male power or Purusha, *nṛ*, with regard to the Rays and the Waters who are the cows, *gāvaḥ*, *dhenavaḥ*), the Friend with friends, the possessor of the Rik with those who have the Rik (*ṛgmibhir ṛgmī*), with those who make the journey (*gātubhiḥ*, the souls that advance on the path towards the Vast and True) the greatest; may Indra become associated with the Maruts (*marutvān*) for our thriving." The epithets here (I.100.4) are all the proper epithets of the Angiras Rishis and Indra is supposed to take upon himself the qualities or relations that constitute Angirashood. So in III.31.7, "Most illumined in knowledge (*vipratamaḥ*, answering to the *vepiṣṭho aṅgirasāṁ vipraḥ* of VI.11.3), becoming a friend (*sakhīyan*, the Angirases are friends or comrades in the great battle) he went (*agacchad*, upon the path, cf. *gātubhiḥ*, discovered by Sarama); the hill sped forth its pregnant contents (*garbham*) for the doer of the good work; strong in manhood with the young (*maryo yuvabhiḥ*, the youth also giving the idea of unaging, undecaying force) he sought fullness of riches and won possession (*sasāna makhasyan*); so at once, chanting the hymn (*arcan*), he became an Angiras." This Indra who assumes all the qualities of the Angiras is, we must remember, the Lord of Swar, the wide world of the Sun or the Truth, and descends to us with his two shining horses, *harī*, which are called in one passage *sūryasya ketū*, the sun's two powers of perception or of vision in knowledge, in order to war with the sons of darkness and aid the great journey. If we have been right in all that we have concluded with regard to the esoteric sense of the Veda, Indra must be the Power (*indra*, the Puissant,[7] the powerful lord) of the divine Mind born in man and there increasing by the Word and the Soma to his full divinity. This growth continues by the winning and growth of the Light, till Indra reveals himself fully as the lord of all the luminous herds which he sees by the "eye of the sun", the divine Mind master of all the illuminations of knowledge.

Indra in becoming the Angiras, becomes Marutwan, possessed of or companioned by the Maruts, and these Maruts, luminous and violent gods of the storm and the lightning, uniting in themselves the vehement power of Vayu, the Wind, the Breath, the Lord of Life and the force of Agni, the Seer-Will, are therefore seers who do the work by the knowledge, *kavayo vidmanā apasaḥ*, as well as battling forces who by the power of the heavenly Breath and the heavenly lightning overthrow the established things, the artificial obstructions, *kṛtrimāṇi rodhāṁsi*, in which the sons of Darkness have entrenched themselves, and aid Indra to overcome Vritra and the Dasyus. They seem to be in the esoteric Veda the Life-Powers that support by their nervous or vital energies the action of the thought in the attempt of the mortal consciousness to grow or expand itself into the immortality of the Truth and Bliss. In any case, they also are described in VI.49.11 as acting with the qualities of the Angiras (*aṅgirasvat*), "O young and seers and powers of the sacrifice, Maruts, come uttering the word to the high place (or desirable plane of earth or the hill, *adhi sānu pṛśneḥ*, which is probably the sense of *varasyām*), powers increasing, rightly moving (on the path, *gātu*) like the Angiras,[8] give joy even to that which is not illumined (*acitram*, that which has not received the varied light of the dawn, the night of our ordinary darkness).” We see here the same characteristics of the Angiras action, the eternal youth and force of Agni (*agne yaviṣṭha*), the possession and utterance of the Word, the seerhood, the doing of the work of sacrifice, the right movement on the great path which leads as we shall see to the world of the Truth, to the vast and luminous bliss. The Maruts are even said to be (X.78) as it were “Angirases with their Sama hymns, they who take all forms,” *viśvarūpā aṅgiraso na sāmabhiḥ*.

---

[7] But also perhaps "shining", cf. *indu*, the moon; *ina*, glorious, the sun; *indh*, to kindle.

[8] It is to be noted that Sayana here hazards the idea that Angiras means the moving rays (from *aṅg* to move) *or* the Angiras Rishis. If the great scholar had been able to pursue with greater courage his ideas to their logical conclusion, he would have anticipated the modern theory in its most essential points.

All this action and movement are made possible by the coming of Usha, the Dawn. Usha also is described as *aṅgirastamā* and in addition as *indratamā*. The power of Agni, the Angiras power, manifests itself also in the lightning of Indra and in the rays of the Dawn. Two passages may be cited which throw light on this aspect of the Angiras force. The first is VII.79.2-3. “The Dawns make their rays to shine out in the extremities of heaven, they labour like men who are set to a work. Thy rays set fleeing the darkness, they extend the Light as if the sun were extending its two arms. Usha has become (or, come into being) most full of Indra power (*indratamā*), opulent in riches and has given birth to the inspirations of knowledge for our happy going (or for good and bliss), the goddess, daughter of Heaven, most full of Angirashood (*aṅgirastamā*), orders her riches for the doer of good works.” The riches in which Usha is opulent cannot be anything else than the riches of the Light and the Power of the Truth; full of Indra power, the power of the divine illumined mind, she gives the inspirations of that mind (*śravāṁsi*) which lead us towards the Bliss, and by the flaming radiant Angiras-power in her she bestows and arranges her treasures for those who do aright the great work and thus move rightly on the path, *itthā nakṣanto aṅgirasvat*.

The second passage is in VII.75. “Dawn, heaven-born, has opened up (the veil of darkness) by the Truth and she comes making manifest the vastness (*mahimānam*), she has drawn away the veil of harms and of darkness (*druhas tamaḥ*) and all that is unloved; most full of Angirashood she manifests the paths (of the great journey). Today, O Dawn, awake for us for the journey to the vast bliss (*mahe suvitāya*), extend (thy riches) for a vast state of enjoyment, confirm in us a wealth of varied brightness (*citram*) full of inspired knowledge (*śravasyum*), in us mortals, O human and divine. These are the lustres of the visible Dawn which have come varied-bright (*citrāḥ*) and immortal; bringing to birth the divine workings they diffuse themselves, filling those of the mid-region," *janayanto daivyāni vratāni, āpṛṇanto antarikṣā vyasthuḥ*. Again we have the Angiras power associated with the journey, the revelation of its paths by the removal of the darkness and the bringing of the radiances of the Dawn; the Panis represent the harms (*druhaḥ*, hurts or those who hurt) done to man by the evil powers, the darkness is their cave; the journey is that which leads to the divine happiness and the state of immortal bliss by means of our growing wealth of light and power and knowledge; the immortal lustres of the Dawn which give birth in man to the heavenly workings and fill with them the workings of the mid-regions between earth and heaven, that is to say, the functioning of those vital planes governed by Vayu which link our physical and pure mental being, may well be the Angiras powers. For they too gain and maintain the truth by maintaining unhurt the divine workings (*amardhanto devānāṁ vratāni*). This is indeed their function, to bring the divine Dawn into mortal nature so that the visible goddess pouring out her riches may be there, at once divine and human, *devi marteṣu mānuṣi*, the goddess human in mortals.

Chapter XVII

The Seven-Headed Thought, Swar and the Dashagwas

THE LANGUAGE of the hymns establishes, then, a double aspect for the Angiras Rishis. One belongs to the external garb of the Veda; it weaves together its naturalistic imagery of the Sun, the Flame, the Dawn, the Cow, the Horse, the Wine, the sacrificial Hymn; the other extricates from that imagery the internal sense. The Angirases are sons of the Flame, lustres of the Dawn, givers and drinkers of the Wine, singers of the Hymn, eternal youths and heroes who wrest for us the Sun, the Cows, the Horses and all treasures from the grasp of the sons of darkness. But they are also seers of the Truth, finders and speakers of the word of the Truth and by the power of the Truth they win for us the wide world of Light and Immortality which is described in the Veda as the Vast, the True, the Right and as the own home of this Flame of which they are the children. This physical imagery and these psychological indications are closely interwoven and they cannot be separated from each other. Therefore we are obliged by ordinary common sense to conclude that the Flame of which the Right and the Truth is the own home is itself a Flame of that Right and Truth, that the Light which is won by the Truth and by the force of true thought is not merely a physical light, the cows which Sarama finds on the path of the Truth not merely physical herds, the Horses not merely the wealth of the Dravidians conquered by invading Aryan tribes, nor even merely images of the physical Dawn, its light and its swiftly moving rays and the darkness of which the Panis and Vritra are the defenders not merely the darkness of the Indian or the Arctic night. We have even been able to hazard a reasonable hypothesis by which we can disentangle the real sense of this imagery and discover the true godhead of these shining gods and these divine, luminous sages.

The Angiras Rishis are at once divine and human seers. This double character is not in itself an extraordinary feature or peculiar in the Veda to these sages. The Vedic gods also have a double action; divine and pre-existent in themselves, they are human in their working upon the mortal plane when they grow in man to the great ascension. This has been strikingly expressed in the allocution to Usha, the Dawn, "goddess human in mortals", *devi marteṣu mānuṣi*. But in the imagery of the Angiras Rishis this double character is farther complicated by the tradition which makes them the human fathers, discoverers of the Light, the Path and the Goal. We must see how this complication affects our theory of the Vedic creed and the Vedic symbolism.

The Angiras Rishis are ordinarily described as seven in number: they are *sapta viprāḥ*, the seven sages who have come down to us in the Puranic tradition[1] and are enthroned by Indian astronomy in the constellation of the Great Bear. But they are also described as Navagwas and Dashagwas, and if in VI.22 we are told of the ancient fathers, the seven seers who were Navagwas, *pūrve pitaro navagvāḥ sapta viprāso*, yet in III.39.5 we have mention of two different classes, Navagwas, and Dashagwas, the latter ten in number, the former presumably, though it is not expressly stated, nine. *Sakhā ha yatra sakhibhir navagvair, abhijñvā satvabhir gā anugman; satyaṁ tad indro daśabhir daśagvaiḥ, sūryaṁ viveda tamasi kṣiyantam;* "where, a friend with his friends the Navagwas, following the cows Indra with the ten Dashagwas found that truth, even the Sun dwelling in the darkness." On the other hand we have in IV.51 a collective description of the Angiras seven-faced or seven-mouthed, nine-rayed, ten-rayed, *navagve aṅgire daśagve saptāsye*. In X.108.8 we have another Rishi Ayasya associated with the Navagwa Angirases. In X.67 this Ayasya is described as our father who found the vast seven-headed Thought that was born out of the Truth and as singing the hymn to Indra. According as the Navagwas are seven or nine, Ayasya will be the eighth or the tenth Rishi.

---

[1] Not that the names given them by the Purana need be those which the Vedic tradition would have given.

Tradition asserts the separate existence of two classes of Angiras Rishis, the one Navagwas who sacrificed for nine months, the other Dashagwas whose sessions of sacrifice endured for ten. According to this interpretation we must take Navagwa and Dashagwa as "nine-cowed" and "ten-cowed", each cow representing collectively the thirty Dawns which constitute one month of the sacrificial year. But there is at least one passage of the Rig Veda which on its surface is in direct conflict with the traditional interpretation. For in the seventh verse of V.45 and again in the eleventh we are told that it was the Navagwas, not the Dashagwas, who sacrificed or chanted the hymn for ten months. This seventh verse runs, *Anūnod atra hastayato adrir, ārcan yena daśa māso navagvāḥ; ṛtaṁ yatī saramā gā avindad, viśvāni satyā aṅgirāś cakāra,* "Here cried (or, moved) the stone impelled by the hand, whereby the Navagwas chanted for ten months the hymn; Sarama travelling to the Truth found the cows; all things the Angiras made true." And in verse 11 we have the assertion repeated; *Dhiyaṁ vo apsu dadhiṣe svarṣāṁ, yayātaran daśa māso navagvāḥ; ayā dhiyā syāma devagopā, ayā dhiyā tuturyāma ati aṁhaḥ.* "I hold for you in the waters (i.e. the seven Rivers) the thought that wins possession of heaven[2] (this is once more the seven-headed thought born from the Truth and found by Ayasya), by which the Navagwas passed through the ten months; by this thought may we have the gods for protectors, by this thought may we pass through beyond the evil." The statement is explicit. Sayana indeed makes a faint-hearted attempt to take *daśa māso* in v. 7, ten months, as if it were an epithet *daśamāso*, the ten-month ones i.e. the Dashagwas; but he offers this improbable rendering only as an alternative and abandons it in the eleventh rik.

---

[2] Sayana takes it to mean, "I recite the hymn for water" i.e. in order to get rain; the case however is the locative plural, and *dadhiṣe* means "I place or hold" or, with the psychological sense, "think" or "hold in thought, meditate". *Dhiṣaṇā* like *dhī* means thought; *dhiyaṁ dadhiṣe* would thus mean "I think or meditate the thought."

Must we then suppose that the poet of this hymn had forgotten the tradition and was confusing the Dashagwas and Navagwas? Such a supposition is inadmissible. The difficulty arises because we suppose the Navagwas and Dashagwas to have been in the minds of the Vedic Rishis two different classes of Angiras Rishis; rather these seem to have been two different powers of Angirashood and in that case the Navagwas themselves might well become Dashagwas by extending the period of the sacrifice to ten months instead of nine. The expression in the hymn, *daśa māso ataran*, indicates that there was some difficulty in getting through the full period of ten months. It is during this period apparently that the sons of darkness had the power to assail the sacrifice; for it is indicated that it is only by the confirming of the thought which conquers Swar, the solar world, that the Rishis are able to get through the ten months, but this thought once found they become assured of the protection of the gods and pass beyond the assault of the evil, the harms of the Panis and Vritras. This Swar-conquering thought is certainly the same as that seven-headed thought which was born from the Truth and discovered by Ayasya the companion of the Navagwas; for by it, we are told, Ayasya becoming universal, embracing the births in all the worlds, brought into being a fourth world or fourfold world, which must be the supramental beyond the three lower sessions, Dyaus, Antariksha and Prithivi, that wide world which, according to Kanwa son of Ghora, men reach or create by crossing beyond the two Rodasi after killing Vritra. This fourth world must be therefore Swar. The seven-headed thought of Ayasya enables him to become *viśvajanya*, which means probably that he occupies or possesses all the worlds or births of the soul or else that he becomes universal, identifying himself with all beings born, — and to manifest or give being to a certain fourth world (Swar), *turīyaṁ svij janayad viśvajanyaḥ* (X.67.1); and the thought established in the waters which enables the Navagwa Rishis to pass through the ten months, is also *svarṣā*, that which brings about the possession of Swar. The waters are clearly the seven rivers and the two thoughts are evidently the same. Must we not then conclude that it is the addition of Ayasya to the Navagwas which raises the nine Navagwas to the number of ten and enables them by his discovery of the seven-headed Swar-conquering thought to prolong their nine-months' sacrifice through the tenth month? Thus they become the ten Dashagwas. We may note in this connection that the intoxication of the Soma by which Indra manifests or increases the might of Swar or the Swar-Purusha (*Svarṇara*) is described as ten-rayed and illuminating (*daśagvaṁ vepayantam*).

This conclusion is entirely confirmed by the passage in III.39.5 which we have already cited. For there we find that it is with the help of the Navagwas that Indra pursues the trace of the lost kine, but it is only with the aid of the ten Dashagwas that he is able to bring the pursuit to a successful issue and find that Truth, *satyaṁ tat*, namely, the Sun that was lying in the darkness. In other words, it is when the nine-months' sacrifice is prolonged through the tenth, it is when the Navagwas become the ten Dashagwas by the seven-headed thought of Ayasya, the tenth Rishi, that the Sun is found and the luminous world of Swar in which we possess the truth of the one universal Deva, is disclosed and conquered. This conquest of Swar is the aim of the sacrifice and the great work accomplished by the Angiras Rishis.

But what is meant by the figure of the months? for it now becomes clear that it is a figure, a parable; the year is symbolic, the months are symbolic.[3] It is in the revolution of the year that the recovery of the lost Sun and the lost cows is effected, for we have the explicit statement in X.62.2, *ṛtenābhindan parivatsare valam*, "by the truth, in the revolution of the year, they broke Vala," or, as Sayana interprets it, "by sacrifice lasting for a year." This passage certainly goes far to support the Arctic theory, for it speaks of a yearly and not a daily return of the Sun. But we are not concerned with the external figure, nor does its validity in any way affect our own theory; for it may very well be that the striking Arctic experience of the long night, the annual sunrise and the continuous dawns was made by the Mystics the figure of the spiritual night and its difficult illumination. But that this idea of Time, of the months and years is used as a symbol seems to be clear from other passages of the Veda, notably from Gritsamada's hymn to Brihaspati, II.24.

---

[3] Observe that in the Puranas the Yugas, moments, months, etc. are all symbolic and it is stated that the body of man is the year.

In this hymn Brihaspati is described driving up the cows, breaking Vala by the divine word, *brahmaṇā*, concealing the darkness and making Swar visible. The first result is the breaking open by force of the well which has the rock for its face and whose streams are of the honey, *madhu*, the Soma sweetness, *aśmāsyam avataṁ madhudhāram*. This well of honey covered by the rock must be the Ananda or divine beatitude of the supreme threefold world of bliss, the Satya, Tapas and Jana worlds of the Puranic system based upon the three supreme principles, Sat, Chit-Tapas and Ananda; their base is Swar of the Veda, Mahar of the Upanishads and Puranas, the world of Truth.[4] These four together make the fourfold fourth world and are described in the Rig Veda as the four supreme and secret seats, the source of the "four upper rivers". Sometimes, however, this upper world seems to be divided into two, Swar the base, Mayas or the divine beatitude the summit, so that there are five worlds or births of the ascending soul. The three other rivers are the three lower powers of being and supply the principles of the three lower worlds.

This secret well of honey is drunk by all those who are able to see Swar and they pour out its billowing fountain of sweetness in manifold streams together, *tam eva viśve papire svardṛśo bahu sākaṁ sisicur utsam udriṇam*. These many streams poured out together are the seven rivers poured down the hill by Indra after slaying Vritra, the rivers or streams of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*; and they represent, according to our theory, the seven principles of conscious being in their divine fulfilment in the Truth and

---

[4] In the Upanishads and Puranas there is no distinction between Swar and Dyaus; therefore a fourth name had to be found for the world of Truth, and this is the Mahar discovered according to the Taittiriya Upanishad by the Rishi Mahachamasya as the fourth Vyahriti, the other three being Swar, Bhuvar and Bhur, i.e. Dyaus, Antariksha and Prithivi of the Veda.

Bliss. This is why the seven-headed thought, — that is to say, the knowledge of the divine existence with its seven heads or powers, the seven-rayed knowledge of Brihaspati, *saptagum*, has to be confirmed or held in thought in the waters, the seven rivers, that is to say the seven forms of divine consciousness are to be held in the seven forms or movements of divine being; *dhiyaṁ vo apsu dadhiṣe svarṣām*, I hold the Swar-conquering thought in the waters.

That the making visible of Swar to the eyes of the Swar-seers, *svardṛśaḥ*, their drinking of the honeyed well and their outpouring of the divine waters amounts to the revelation to man of new worlds or new states of existence is clearly told us in the next verse, II.24.5, *sanā tā kā cid bhuvanā bhavītvā, mādbhiḥ śaradbhir duro varanta vaḥ; ayatantā carato anyad anyad id, yā cakāra vayunā brahmaṇaspatiḥ,* "Certain eternal worlds (states of existence) are these which have to come into being, their doors are shut[5] to you (or, opened) by the months and the years; without effort one (world) moves in the other, and it is these that Brahmanaspati has made manifest to knowledge"; *vayunā* means knowledge, and the two forms are divinised earth and heaven which Brahmanaspati created. These are the four eternal worlds hidden in the *guhā*, the secret, unmanifest or superconscient parts of being which although in themselves eternally present states of existence (*sanā bhuvanā*) are for us non-existent and in the future; for us they have to be brought into being, *bhavītvā*, they are yet to be created. Therefore the Veda sometimes speaks of Swar being made visible, as here (*vyacakṣayat svaḥ*), or discovered and taken possession of, *vidat*, *sanat*, sometimes of its being created or made (*bhū*, *kṛ*). These secret eternal worlds have been closed to us, says the Rishi, by the movement of Time, by the months and years; therefore naturally they have to be discovered, revealed, conquered, created in us by the movement of Time, yet in a sense against it. This development in an inner or psychological Time is, it seems to me, that which is symbolised by the sacrificial year and by the ten months that have to be spent before the revealing hymn of the soul (*brahma*) is able to discover the seven-headed, heaven-conquering thought which finally carries us beyond the harms of Vritra and the Panis.

---

[5] Sayana says *varanta* is here "opened", which is quite possible, but *vṛ* means ordinarily to shut, close up, cover, especially when applied to the doors of the hill whence flow the rivers and the cows come forth; Vritra is the closer of the doors. *Vi vṛ* and *apa vṛ* mean to open. Nevertheless, if the word means here to open, that only makes our case all the stronger.

We get the connection of the rivers and the worlds very clearly in I.62 where Indra is described as breaking the hill by the aid of the Navagwas and breaking Vala by the aid of the Dashagwas. Hymned by the Angiras Rishis Indra opens up the darkness by the Dawn and the Sun and the Cows, he spreads out the high plateau of the earthly hill into wideness and upholds the higher world of heaven. For the result of the opening up of the higher planes of consciousness is to increase the wideness of the physical, to raise the height of the mental. "This, indeed," says the Rishi Nodha, "is his mightiest work, the fairest achievement of the achiever," *dasmasya cārutamam asti daṁsaḥ*, "that the four upper rivers streaming honey nourish the two worlds of the crookedness," *upahvare yad uparā apinvan madhvarṇaso nadyaś catasraḥ*. This is again the honey-streaming well pouring down its many streams together; the four higher rivers of the divine being, divine conscious force, divine delight, divine truth nourishing the two worlds of the mind and body into which they descend with their floods of sweetness. These two, the Rodasi, are normally worlds of crookedness, that is to say of the falsehood, — the *ṛtam* or Truth being the straight, the *anṛtam* or Falsehood the crooked, — because they are exposed to the harms of the undivine powers, Vritras and Panis, sons of darkness and division. They now become forms of the truth, the knowledge, *vayunā*, agreeing with outer action and this is evidently Gritsamada's *carato anyad anyad* and his *yā cakāra vayunā brahmaṇaspatiḥ*. The Rishi then proceeds to define the result of the work of Ayasya, which is to reveal the true eternal and unified form of earth and heaven. "In their twofold (divine and human?) Ayasya uncovered by his hymns the two, eternal and in one nest; perfectly achieving he upheld earth and heaven[6] in the highest ether (of the revealed superconscient, *paramaṁ guhyam*) as the Enjoyer his two wives." The soul's enjoyment of its divinised mental and bodily existence upheld in the eternal joy of the spiritual being could not be more clearly and beautifully imaged.

These ideas and many of the expressions are the same as those of the hymn of Gritsamada. Nodha says of the Night and Dawn, the dark physical and the illumined mental consciousness that they new-born (*punarbhuvā*) about heaven and earth move into each other with their own proper movements, *svebhir evaiḥ . . . carato anyānyā* (cf. Gritsamada's *ayatantā carato anyad anyad*, *ayatantā* bearing the same sense as *svebhir evaiḥ*, i.e. spontaneously), in the eternal friendship that is worked out by the high achievement of their son who thus upholds them, *sanemi sakhyaṁ svapasyamānaḥ, sūnur dādhāra śavasā sudaṁsāḥ*. In Gritsamada's hymn as in Nodha's the Angirases attain to Swar, — the Truth from which they originally came, the "own home" of all divine Purushas, — by the attainment of the truth and by the detection of the falsehood. "They who travel towards the goal and attain that treasure of the Panis, the supreme treasure hidden in the secret cave, they, having the knowledge and perceiving the falsehoods, rise up again thither whence they came and enter into that world. Possessed of the truth, beholding the falsehoods they, seers, rise up again into the great path," *mahas pathaḥ*, the path of the Truth, or the great and wide realm, Mahas of the Upanishads.

We begin now to unravel the knot of this Vedic imagery. Brihaspati is the seven-rayed Thinker, *saptaguḥ*, *saptaraśmiḥ*, he is the seven-faced or seven-mouthed Angiras, born in many forms, *saptāsyas tuvijātaḥ*, nine-rayed, ten-rayed. The seven mouths are the seven Angirases who repeat the divine word (*brahma*) which comes from the seat of the Truth, Swar, and of which he is the lord (*brahmaṇaspatiḥ*). Each also corresponds to one of the seven rays of Brihaspati; therefore they are the seven seers, *sapta viprāḥ*, *sapta ṛṣayaḥ*, who severally personify these seven rays of the knowledge. These rays are, again, the seven brilliant horses of the sun, *sapta haritaḥ*, and their full union constitutes the seven-headed Thought of Ayasya by which the lost sun of Truth is recovered. That thought again is established in the seven rivers, the seven principles of being divine and human, the totality of which founds the perfect spiritual existence. The winning of these seven rivers of our being withheld by Vritra and these seven rays withheld by Vala, the possession of our complete divine consciousness delivered from all falsehood by the free descent of the truth, gives us the secure possession of the world of Swar and the enjoyment of mental and physical being lifted into the godhead above darkness, falsehood and death by the in-streaming of our divine elements. This victory is won in twelve periods of the upward journey, represented by the revolution of the twelve months of the sacrificial year, the periods corresponding to the successive dawns of a wider and wider truth, until the tenth secures the victory. What may be the precise significance of the nine rays and the ten, is a more difficult question which we are not yet in a position to solve; but the light we already have is sufficient to illuminate all the main imagery of the Rig Veda.

---

[6] This and many other passages show clearly, conclusively, as it seems to me, that the *anyad anyad*, the two are always earth and heaven, the human based on the physical consciousness and the divine based on the supraphysical, heaven.

The symbolism of the Veda depends upon the image of the life of man as a sacrifice, a journey and a battle. The ancient Mystics took for their theme the spiritual life of man, but, in order both to make it concrete to themselves and to veil its secrets from the unfit, they expressed it in poetical images drawn from the outward life of their age. That life was largely an existence of herdsmen and tillers of the soil for the mass of the people varied by the wars and migrations of the clans under their kings, and in all this activity the worship of the gods by sacrifice had become the most solemn and magnificent element, the knot of all the rest. For by the sacrifice were won the rain which fertilised the soil, the herds of cattle and horses necessary for their existence in peace and war, the wealth of gold, land (*kṣetra*), retainers, fighting-men which constituted greatness and lordship, the victory in the battle, safety in the journey by land and water which was so difficult and dangerous in those times of poor means of communication and loosely organised inter-tribal existence. All the principal features of that outward life which they saw around them the mystic poets took and turned into significant images of the inner life. The life of man is represented as a sacrifice to the gods, a journey sometimes figured as a crossing of dangerous waters, sometimes as an ascent from level to level of the hill of being, and, thirdly, as a battle against hostile nations. But these three images are not kept separate. The sacrifice is also a journey; indeed the sacrifice itself is described as travelling, as journeying to a divine goal; and the journey and the sacrifice are both continually spoken of as a battle against the dark powers.

The legend of the Angirases takes up and combines all these three essential features of the Vedic imagery. The Angirases are pilgrims of the light. The phrase *nakṣantaḥ* or *abhinakṣantaḥ* is constantly used to describe their characteristic action. They are those who travel towards the goal and attain to the highest, *abhinakṣanto abhi ye tam ānaśur nidhiṁ paramam*, "they who travel to and attain that supreme treasure" (II.24.6). Their action is invoked for carrying forward the life of man farther towards its goal, *sahasrasāve pra tiranta āyuḥ* (III.53.7). But this journey, if principally of the nature of a quest, the quest of the hidden light, becomes also by the opposition of the powers of darkness an expedition and a battle. The Angirases are heroes and fighters of that battle, *goṣu yodhāḥ*, "fighters for the cows or rays". Indra marches with them *saraṇyubhiḥ*, as travellers on the path, *sakhibhiḥ*, comrades, *ṛkvabhiḥ* and *kavibhiḥ*, seers and singers of the sacred chant, but also *satvabhiḥ*, fighters in the battle. They are frequently spoken of by the appellation *nṛ* or *vīra*, as when Indra is said to win the luminous herds *asmākebhiḥ nṛbhiḥ*, "by our men". Strengthened by them he conquers in the journey and reaches the goal, *nakṣad-dābhaṁ taturim*. This journey or march proceeds along the path discovered by Sarama, the hound of heaven, the path of the Truth, *ṛtasya panthāḥ*, the great path, *mahas pathaḥ*, which leads to the realms of the Truth. It is also the sacrificial journey; for its stages correspond to the periods of the sacrifice of the Navagwas and it is effected by the force of the Soma-wine and the sacred Word.

The drinking of the Soma-wine as the means of strength, victory and attainment is one of the pervading figures of the Veda. Indra and the Ashwins are the great Soma-drinkers, but all the gods have their share of the immortalising draught. The Angirases also conquer in the strength of the Soma. Sarama threatens the Panis with the coming of Ayasya and the Navagwa Angirases in the keen intensity of their Soma rapture, *eha gamann ṛṣayaḥ somaśitā ayāsyo aṅgiraso navagvāḥ* (X.108.8). It is the great force by which men have the power to follow the path of the Truth. "That rapture of the Soma we desire by which thou, O Indra, didst make to thrive the Might of Swar (or the Swar-soul, *svarṇaram*), that rapture ten-rayed and making a light of knowledge (or, shaking the whole being with its force, *daśagvaṁ vepayantam*) by which thou didst foster the ocean; that Soma-intoxication by which thou didst drive forward the great waters (the seven rivers) like chariots to their sea, — that we desire that we may travel on the path of the truth," *panthām ṛtasya yātave tam īmahe* (VIII.12.2-3). It is in the power of the Soma that the hill is broken open, the sons of darkness overthrown. This Soma-wine is the sweetness that comes flowing from the streams of the upper hidden world, it is that which flows in the seven waters, it is that with which the *ghṛta*, the clarified butter of the mystic sacrifice, is instinct; it is the honeyed wave which rises out of the ocean of life. Such images can have only one meaning; it is the divine delight hidden in all existence which, once manifest, supports all life's crowning activities and is the force that finally immortalises the mortal, the *amṛtam*, ambrosia of the gods.

But it is especially the Word that the Angirases possess; their seerhood is their most distinguishing characteristic. They are *brāhmaṇāsaḥ pitaraḥ somyāsaḥ . . . ṛtāvṛdhaḥ* (VI.75.10), the fathers who are full of the Soma and have the word and are therefore increasers of the Truth. Indra in order to impel them on the path joins himself to the chanted expressions of their thought and gives fullness and force to the words of their soul, *aṅgirasām ucathā jujuṣvān brahmā tūtod gātum iṣṇan* (II.20.5).

It is when enriched in light and force of thought by the Angirases that Indra completes his victorious journey and reaches the goal on the mountain; "In him our primal fathers, the seven seers, the Navagwas, increase their plenty, him victorious on his march and breaking through (to the goal), standing on the mountain, inviolate in speech, most luminous-forceful by his thinkings," *nakṣad-dābhaṁ taturiṁ parvateṣṭhām, adroghavācaṁ matibhiḥ śaviṣṭham* (VI.22.2). It is by singing the Rik, the hymn of illumination, that they find the solar illuminations in the cave of our being, *arcanto*[7] *gā avindan* (I.62.2). It is by the *stubh*, the all-supporting rhythm of the hymn of the seven seers, by the vibrating voice of the Navagwas that Indra becomes full of the power of Swar, *svareṇa svaryaḥ* and by the cry of the Dashagwas that he rends Vala in pieces (I.62.4). For this cry is the voice of the higher heaven, the thunder that cries in the lightning-flash of Indra, and the advance of the Angirases on their path is the forward movement of this cry of the heavens, *pra brahmāṇo aṅgiraso nakṣanta, pra krandanur nabhanyasya vetu* (VII.42.1); for we are told that the voice of Brihaspati the Angirasa discovering the Sun and the Dawn and the Cow and the light of the Word is the thunder of Heaven, *bṛhaspatir uṣasaṁ sūryaṁ gām, arkaṁ viveda stanayann iva dyauḥ* (X.67.5). It is by the *satya mantra*, the true thought expressed in the rhythm of the truth, that the hidden light is found and the Dawn brought to birth, *gūḍhaṁ jyotiḥ pitaro anvavindan, satyamantrā ajanayann uṣāsam* (VII.76.4). For these are the Angirases who speak aright, *itthā vadadbhiḥ aṅgirobhiḥ* (VI.18.5), masters of the Rik who place perfectly their thought, *svādhībhir ṛkvabhiḥ* (VI.32.2); they are the sons of heaven, heroes of the Mighty Lord who speak the truth and think the straightness and therefore they are able to hold the seat of illumined knowledge, to mentalise the supreme abode of the sacrifice, *ṛtaṁ śaṁsanta ṛju dīdhyānā, divas putrāso asurasya vīrāḥ; vipraṁ padam aṅgiraso dadhānā, yajñasya dhāma prathamaṁ mananta* (X.67.2).

---

[7] *Arcati* (*ṛc*) in the Veda means to shine and to sing the Rik; *arka* means sun, light and the Vedic hymn.

It is impossible that such expressions should convey nothing more than the recovery of stolen cows from Dravidian cave-dwellers by some Aryan seers led by a god and his dog or else the return of the Dawn after the darkness of the night. The wonders of the Arctic dawn themselves are insufficient to explain the association of images and the persistent stress on the idea of the Word, the Thought, the Truth, the journey and the conquest of the falsehood which meets us always in these hymns. Only the theory we are enouncing, a theory not brought in from outside but arising straight from the language and the suggestions of the hymns themselves, can unite this varied imagery and bring an easy lucidity and coherence into this apparent tangle of incongruities. In fact, once the central idea is grasped and the mentality of the Vedic Rishis and the principle of their symbolism are understood, no incongruity and no disorder remain. There is a fixed system of symbols which, except in some of the later hymns, does not admit of any important variations and in the light of which the inner sense of the Veda everywhere yields itself up readily enough. There is indeed a certain restricted freedom in the combination of the symbols, as in those of any fixed poetical imagery, — for instance, the sacred poems of the Vaishnavas; but the substance of thought behind is constant, coherent and does not vary.

Chapter XVIII

The Human Fathers

THESE characteristics of the Angiras Rishis seem at first sight to indicate that they are in the Vedic system a class of demigods, in their outward aspect personifications or rather personalities of the Light and the Voice and the Flame, but in their inner aspect powers of the Truth who second the gods in their battles. But even as divine seers, even as sons of Heaven and heroes of the Lord, these sages represent aspiring humanity. True, they are originally the sons of the gods, *devaputrāḥ*, children of Agni, forms of the manifoldly born Brihaspati, and in their ascent to the world of the Truth they are described as ascending back to the place from whence they came; but even in these characteristics they may well be representative of the human soul which has itself descended from that world and has to reascend; for it is in its origin a mental being, son of immortality (*amṛtasya putraḥ*), a child of Heaven born in Heaven and mortal only in the bodies that it assumes. And the part of the Angiras Rishis in the sacrifice is the human part, to find the word, to sing the hymn of the soul to the gods, to sustain and increase the divine Powers by the praise, the sacred food and the Soma-wine, to bring to birth by their aid the divine Dawn, to win the luminous forms of the all-radiating Truth and to ascend to its secret, far and high-seated home.

In this work of the sacrifice they appear in a double form,[1] the divine Angirases, *ṛṣayo divyāḥ*, who symbolise and preside over certain psychological powers and workings like the gods, and the human fathers, *pitaro manuṣyāḥ*, who like the Ribhus, also described as human beings or at least human powers that have conquered immortality by the work, have attained the goal and are invoked to assist a later mortal race in the same divine achievement. Quite apart from the later Yama hymns of the tenth Mandala in which the Angirases are spoken of as Barhishad Pitris along with the Bhrigus and Atharvans and receive their own peculiar portion in the sacrifice, they are in the rest of the Veda also called upon in a less definite but a larger and more significant imagery. It is for the great human journey that they are invoked; for it is the human journey from the mortality to the immortality, from the falsehood to the truth that the Ancestors accomplished, opening the way to their descendants.

---

[1] It is to be noted that the Puranas distinguish specifically between two classes of Pitris, the divine Fathers, a class of deities, and the human Ancestors, to both of whom the *piṇḍa* is offered. The Puranas, obviously, only continue in this respect the original Vedic tradition.

We see this characteristic of their working in VII.42 and VII.52. The first of these two hymns of Vasishtha is a Sukta in which the gods are invoked precisely for this great journey, *adhvara yajña*,[2] the sacrifice that travels or is a travel to the home of the godheads and at the same time a battle: for thus it is sung, "Easy of travelling for thee is the path, O Agni, and known to thee from of old. Yoke in the Soma-offering thy ruddy (or, actively-moving) mares which bear the hero. Seated, I call the births divine" (verse 2). What path is this? It is the path between the home of the gods and our earthly mortality down which the gods descend through the *antarikṣa*, the vital regions, to the earthly sacrifice and up which the sacrifice and man by the sacrifice ascends to the home of the gods. Agni yokes his mares, his variously-coloured energies or flames of the divine Force he represents, which bear the Hero, the battling power within us that performs the journey. And the births divine are at once the gods themselves and those manifestations of the divine life in man which are the Vedic meaning of the godheads. That this is the sense becomes clear from the fourth Rik. "When the

---

[2] Sayana takes *a-dhvara yajña*, the unhurt sacrifice; but "unhurt" can never have come to be used as a synonym of sacrifice. *Adhvara* is "travelling", "moving", connected with *adhvan*, a path or journey from the lost root *adh*, to move, extend, be wide, compact, etc. We see the connection between the two words *adhvan* and *adhvara* in *adhva*, air, sky and *adhvara* with the same sense. The passages in the Veda are numerous in which the *adhvara* or *adhvara yajña* is connected with the idea of travelling, journeying, advancing on the path.

Guest that lodges in the bliss has become conscious in knowledge in the gated house of the hero rich (in felicity), when Agni is perfectly satisfied and firmly lodged in the house, then he gives the desirable good to the creature that makes the journey" or, it may be, for his journeying.

The hymn is therefore an invocation to Agni for the journey to the supreme good, the divine birth, the bliss. And its opening verse is a prayer for the necessary conditions of the journey, the things that are said here to constitute the form of the pilgrim sacrifice, *adhvarasya peśaḥ*, and among these comes first the forward movement of the Angirases; "Forward let the Angirases travel, priests of the Word, forward go the cry of heaven (or, of the heavenly thing, cloud or lightning), forward move the fostering Cows that diffuse their waters, and let the two pressing-stones be yoked (to their work) — the form of the pilgrim sacrifice," *pra brahmāṇo aṅgiraso nakṣanta, pra krandanur nabhanyasya vetu; pra dhenava udapruto navanta, yujyātām adrī adhvarasya peśaḥ*. The Angirases with the divine Word, the cry of Heaven which is the voice of Swar the luminous heaven and of its lightnings thundering out from the Word, the divine waters or seven rivers that are set free to their flowing by that heavenly lightning of Indra the master of Swar, and with the outflowing of the divine waters the outpressing of the immortalising Soma, these constitute the form, *peśaḥ*, of the *adhvara yajña*. And its general characteristic is forward movement, the advance of all to the divine goal, as emphasised by the three verbs of motion, *nakṣanta*, *vetu*, *navanta* and the emphatic *pra*, forward, which opens and sets the key to each clause.

But the fifty-second hymn is still more significant and suggestive. The first Rik runs, "O Sons of the infinite Mother (*ādityāso*), may we become infinite beings (*aditayaḥ syāma*), may the Vasus protect in the godhead and the mortality (*devatrā martyatrā*); possessing may we possess you, O Mitra and Varuna, becoming may we become you, O Heaven and Earth," *sanema mitrāvaruṇā sananto, bhavema dyāvāpṛthivī bhavantaḥ*. This is evidently the sense that we are to possess and become the infinities or children of Aditi, the godheads, *aditayaḥ*, *ādityāso*. Mitra and Varuna, we must remember, are powers of Surya Savitri, the Lord of the Light and the Truth. And the third verse runs, "May the Angirases who hasten through to the goal move in their travelling to the bliss of the divine Savitri; and that (bliss) may our great Father, he of the sacrifice, and all the gods becoming of one mind accept in heart." *Turaṇyavo nakṣanta ratnaṁ devasya savitur iyānāḥ*. It is quite clear therefore that the Angirases are travellers to the light and truth of the solar deity from which are born the luminous cows they wrest from the Panis and to the bliss which, as we always see, is founded on that light and truth. It is clear also that this journey is a growing into the godhead, into the infinite being (*aditayaḥ syāma*), said in this hymn (verse 2) to come by the growth of the peace and bliss through the action in us of Mitra, Varuna and the Vasus who protect us in the godhead and the mortality.

In these two hymns the Angiras Rishis generally are mentioned; but in others we have positive references to the human Fathers who first discovered the Light and possessed the Thought and the Word and travelled to the secret worlds of the luminous Bliss. In the light of the conclusions at which we have arrived, we can now study the more important passages, profound, beautiful and luminous, in which this great discovery of the human forefathers is hymned. We shall find there the summary of that great hope which the Vedic mystics held ever before their eyes; that journey, that victory is the ancient, primal achievement set as a type by the luminous Ancestors for the mortality that was to come after them. It was the conquest of the powers of the circumscribing Night (*rātrī paritakmyā*), Vritras, Sambaras and Valas, the Titans, Giants, Pythons, subconscient Powers who hold the light and the force in themselves, in their cities of darkness and illusion, but can neither use it aright nor will give it up to man, the mental being. Their ignorance, evil and limitation have not merely to be cut away from us, but broken up and into and made to yield up the secret of light and good and infinity. Out of this death that immortality has to be conquered. Pent up behind this ignorance is a secret knowledge and a great light of truth; prisoned by this evil is an infinite content of good; in this limiting death is the seed of a boundless immortality. Vala, for example, is Vala of the radiances, *valaṁ gomantam*, his body is made of the light, *govapuṣaṁ valam*, his hole or cave is a city full of treasures; that body has to be broken up, that city rent open, those treasures seized. This is the work set for humanity and the Ancestors have done it for the race that the way may be known and the goal reached by the same means and through the same companionship with the gods of Light. "Let there be that ancient friendship between you gods and us as when with the Angirases who spoke aright the word, thou didst make to fall that which was fixed and slewest Vala as he rushed against thee, O achiever of works, and thou didst make to swing open all the doors of his city" (VI.18.5). At the beginning of all human traditions there is this ancient memory. It is Indra and the serpent Vritra, it is Apollo and the Python, it is Thor and the Giants, Sigurd and Fafner, it is the mutually opposing gods of the Celtic mythology; but only in the Veda do we find the key to this imagery which conceals the hope or the wisdom of a prehistoric humanity.

The first hymn we will take is one by the great Rishi, Vishwamitra, III.39; for it carries us right into the heart of our subject. It sets out with a description of the ancestral Thought, *pitryā dhīḥ*, the Thought of the fathers which can be no other than the Swar-possessing thought hymned by the Atris, the seven-headed thought discovered by Ayasya for the Navagwas; for in this hymn also it is spoken of in connection with the Angirases, the Fathers. "The thought expressing itself from the heart, formed into the Stoma, goes towards Indra its lord." Indra is, we have supposed, the Power of luminous Mind, master of the world of Light and its lightnings; the words or the thoughts are constantly imaged as cows or women, Indra as the Bull or husband, and the words desire him and are even spoken of as casting themselves upwards to seek him, e.g. I.9.4, *giraḥ prati tvām ud ahāsata vṛṣabhaṁ patim.* The luminous Mind of Swar is the goal sought by the Vedic thought and the Vedic speech which express the herd of the illuminations pressing upward from the soul, from the cave of the subconscient in which they were penned; Indra master of Swar is the Bull, the lord of these herds, *gopatiḥ*.

The Rishi continues to describe the Thought. It is "the thought that when it is being expressed, remains wakeful in the knowledge," does not lend itself to the slumber of the Panis, *yā jāgṛvir vidathe śasyamānā*; "that which is born of thee (or, for thee), O Indra, of that take knowledge." This is a constant formula in the Veda. The god, the divine, has to take cognizance of what rises up to him in man, to become awake to it in the knowledge within us, (*viddhi*, *cetathaḥ*, etc.), otherwise it remains a human thing and does not "go to the gods", (*deveṣu gacchati*). And then, "It is ancient (or eternal), it is born from heaven; when it is being expressed, it remains wakeful in the knowledge; wearing white and happy robes, *this in us is the ancient thought of the fathers*," *seyam asme sanajā pitryā dhīḥ*. And then the Rishi speaks of this Thought as "the mother of twins, who here gives birth to the twins; on the tip of the tongue it descends and stands; the twin bodies when they are born cleave to each other and are slayers of darkness and move in the foundation of burning force." I will not now discuss what are these luminous twins, for that would carry us beyond the limits of our immediate subject: suffice it to say that they are spoken of elsewhere in connection with the Angirases and their establishment of the supreme birth (the plane of the Truth) as the twins in whom Indra places the word of the expression (I.83.3), that the burning force in whose foundation they move is evidently that of the Sun, the slayer of darkness, and this foundation is therefore identical with the supreme plane, the foundation of the Truth, *ṛtasya budhnaḥ*, and, finally, that they can hardly be wholly unconnected with the twin children of Surya, Yama and Yami, — Yama who in the tenth Mandala is associated with the Angiras Rishis.[3]

Having thus described the ancestral thought with its twin children, slayers of darkness, Vishwamitra proceeds to speak of the ancient Fathers who first formed it and of the great victory by which they discovered "that Truth, the sun lying in the darkness". "None is there among mortals who can blame (or, as it rather seems to me to mean, no power of mortality that can confine or bind) our ancient fathers, they who were fighters for the cows; Indra of the mightiness, Indra of the achievement released upward for them the fortified pens, — there where, a comrade with his comrades, the fighters, the Navagwas, following on his knees the cows, Indra with the ten Dashagwas found that Truth, *satyaṁ tad*, even the sun dwelling in the darkness." This is the usual image of the conquest of the luminous cattle and the discovery of the hidden Sun; but in the next verse it is associated with two other related images which also occur frequently in the Vedic hymns, the pasture or field of the cow and the honey found in the cow. "Indra found the honey stored in the Shining One, the footed and hoofed (wealth) in the pasture[4] of the Cow." The Shining One, *usriyā* (also *usrā*), is another word which like *go* means both ray and cow and is used as a synonym of *go* in the Veda. We hear constantly of the *ghṛta* or clarified butter stored in the cow, hidden there by the Panis in three portions according to Vamadeva; but it is sometimes the honeyed *ghṛta* and sometimes simply the honey, *madhumad ghṛtam* and *madhu*. We have seen how closely the yield of the cow, the *ghṛta*, and the yield of the Soma plant are connected in other hymns and now that we know definitely what is meant by the Cow, this strange and incongruous connection becomes clear and simple enough. *Ghṛta* also means shining, it is the shining yield of the shining cow; it is the formed light of conscious knowledge in the mentality which is stored in the illumined consciousness and it is liberated by the liberation of the Cow: Soma is the delight, beatitude, Ananda inseparable from the illumined state of the being; and as there are, according to the Veda, three planes of mentality in us, so there are three portions of the *ghṛta* dependent on the three gods Surya, Indra and Soma, and the Soma also is offered in three parts, on the three levels of the hill, *triṣu sānuṣu*. We may hazard the conjecture, having regard to the nature of the three gods, that Soma releases the divine light from the sense mentality, Indra from the dynamic mentality, Surya from the pure reflective mentality. As for the pasture of the cow we are already familiar with it; it is the field or *kṣetra* which Indra wins for his shining comrades from the Dasyu and in which the Atri beheld the warrior Agni and the luminous cows, those of whom even the old became young again. This field, *kṣetra*, is only another image for the luminous home (*kṣaya*) to which the gods by the sacrifice lead the human soul.

---

[3] It is in the light of these facts that we must understand the colloquy of Yama and Yami in the tenth Mandala in which the sister seeks union with her brother and is put off to later generations, meaning really symbolic periods of time, the word for later signifying rather "higher", *uttara*.

---

[4] *Name goḥ*. *Nama* from *nam* to move, range, Greek *nemō*; *nama* is the range, pasture, Greek *nomos*.

Vishwamitra then proceeds to indicate the real mystic sense of all this imagery. "He having Dakshina with him held in his right hand (*dakṣiṇe dakṣiṇāvān*) the secret thing that is placed in the secret cave and concealed in the waters. May he, knowing perfectly, separate the light from the darkness, *jyotir vṛṇīta tamaso vijānan*, may we be far from the presence of the evil." We have here a clue to the sense of this goddess Dakshina who seems in some passages to be a form or epithet of the Dawn and in others that which distributes the offerings in the sacrifice. Usha is the divine illumination and Dakshina is the discerning knowledge that comes with the dawn and enables the Power in the mind, Indra, to know aright and separate the light from the darkness, the truth from the falsehood, the straight from the crooked, *vṛṇīta vijānan*. The right and left hand of Indra are his two powers of action in knowledge; for his two arms are called *gabhasti*, a word which means ordinarily a ray of the sun but also forearm, and they correspond to his two perceptive powers, his two bright horses, *harī*, which are described as sun-eyed, *sūracakṣasā* and as vision-powers of the Sun, *sūryasya ketū*. Dakshina presides over the right-hand power, *dakṣiṇa*, and therefore we have the collocation *dakṣiṇe dakṣiṇāvān*. It is this discernment which presides over the right action of the sacrifice and the right distribution of the offerings and it is this which enables Indra to hold the herded wealth of the Panis securely, in his right hand. And finally we are told what is this secret thing that was placed for us in the cave and is concealed in the waters of being, the waters in which the Thought of the Fathers has to be set, *apsu dhiyaṁ dadhiṣe*. It is the hidden Sun, the secret Light of our divine existence which has to be found and taken out by knowledge from the darkness in which it is concealed. That this light is not physical is shown by the word *vijānan*, for it is through right knowledge that it has to be found, and by the moral result, viz. that we go far from the presence of evil, *duritād*, literally, the wrong going, the stumbling to which we are subjected in the night of our being before the sun has been found, before the divine Dawn has arisen.

Once we have the key to the meaning of the Cows, the Sun, the Honey-Wine, all the circumstances of the Angiras legend and the action of the Fathers, which are such an incongruous patchwork in the ritualistic or naturalistic and so hopelessly impossible in the historical or Arya-Dravidian interpretation of the hymns, become on the contrary perfectly clear and connected and each throws light on the other. We understand each hymn in its entirety and in relation to other hymns; each isolated line, each passage, each scattered reference in the Vedas falls inevitably and harmoniously into a common whole. We know, here, how the Honey, the Bliss can be said to be stored in the Cow, the shining Light of the Truth; what is the connection of the honey-bearing Cow with the Sun, lord and origin of that Light; why the discovery of the Sun dwelling in the darkness is connected with the conquest or recovery of the cows of the Panis by the Angirases; why it is called the discovery of that Truth; what is meant by the footed and hoofed wealth and the field or pasture of the Cow. We begin to see what is the cave of the Panis and why that which is hidden in the lair of Vala is said also to be hidden in the waters released by Indra from the hold of Vritra, the seven rivers possessed by the seven-headed heaven-conquering thought of Ayasya; why the rescue of the sun out of the cave, the separation or choosing of the light out of the darkness is said to be done by an all-discerning knowledge; who are Dakshina and Sarama and what is meant by Indra holding the hoofed wealth in his right hand. And in arriving at these conclusions we have not to wrest the sense of words, to interpret the same fixed term by different renderings according to our convenience of the moment or to render differently the same phrase or line in different hymns, or to make incoherence a standard of right interpretation; on the contrary, the greater the fidelity to word and form of the Riks, the more conspicuously the general and the detailed sense of the Veda emerge in a constant clearness and fullness.

We have therefore acquired the right to apply the sense we have discovered to other passages such as the hymn of Vasishtha which I shall next examine, VII.76, although to a superficial glance it would seem to be only an ecstatic picture of the physical Dawn. This first impression, however, disappears when we examine it; we see that there is a constant suggestion of a profounder meaning and, the moment we apply the key we have found, the harmony of the real sense appears. The hymn commences with a description of that rising of the Sun into the light of the supreme Dawn which is brought about by the gods and the Angirases. "Savitri, the god, the universal Male, has ascended into the Light that is immortal and of all the births, *jyotir amṛtaṁ viśvajanyam*; by the work (of sacrifice) the eye of the gods has been born (or, by the will-power of the gods vision has been born); Dawn has manifested the whole world (or, all that comes into being, all existences, *viśvaṁ bhuvanam*)." This immortal light into which the sun rises is elsewhere called the true light, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*, Truth and immortality being constantly associated in the Veda. It is the light of the knowledge given by the seven-headed thought which Ayasya discovered when he became *viśvajanya*, universal in his being; therefore this light too is called *viśvajanya*, for it belongs to the fourth plane, the *turīyaṁ svid* of Ayasya, from which all the rest are born and by whose truth all the rest are manifested in their large universality and no longer in the limited terms of the falsehood and crookedness. Therefore it is called also the eye of the gods and the divine dawn that makes manifest the whole of existence.

The result of this birth of divine vision is that man's path manifests itself to him and those journeyings of the gods or to the gods (*devayānāḥ*) which lead to the infinite wideness of the divine existence. "Before me the paths of the journeyings of the gods have become visible, journeyings that violate not, whose movement was formed by the Vasus. The eye of Dawn has come into being in front and she has come towards us (arriving) over our houses." The house in the Veda is the constant image for the bodies that are dwelling-places of the soul, just as the field or habitation means the planes to which it mounts and in which it rests. The path of man is that of his journey to the supreme plane and that which the journeyings of the gods do not violate is, as we see, in the fifth verse where the phrase is repeated, the workings of the gods, the divine law of life into which the soul has to grow. We have then a curious image which seems to support the Arctic theory. "Many were those days which were before the rising of the Sun (or which were of old by the rising of the Sun), in which thou, O Dawn, wert seen as if moving about thy lover and not coming again." This is certainly a picture of continual dawns, not interrupted by Night, such as are visible in the Arctic regions. The psychological sense which arises out of the verse, is obvious.

What were these dawns? They were those created by the actions of the Fathers, the ancient Angirases. "They indeed had the joy (of the Soma) along with the gods,[5] the ancient seers who possessed the truth; the fathers found the hidden Light; they, having the true thought (*satyamantrāḥ*, the true thought expressed in the inspired Word), brought into being the Dawn." And to what did the Dawn, the path, the divine journeying lead the Fathers? To the level wideness, *samāne ūrve*, termed elsewhere the unobstructed vast, *urau anibādhe*, which is evidently the same as that wide being or world which, according to Kanwa, men create when they slay Vritra and pass beyond heaven and earth; it is the vast Truth and the infinite being of Aditi. "In the level wideness they meet together and unite their knowledge (or, know perfectly) and strive not together; they diminish not (limit not or hurt not) the workings of the gods, not violating them they move (to their goal) by (the strength of) the Vasus." It is evident that the seven Angirases, whether human or divine, represent different principles of the Knowledge, Thought or Word, the seven-headed thought, the seven-mouthed word of Brihaspati, and in the level wideness these are harmonised in a universal knowledge; the error, crookedness, falsehood by which men violate the workings of the gods and by which different principles of their being, consciousness, knowledge enter into confused conflict with each other, have been removed by the eye or vision of the divine Dawn.

---

[5] I adopt provisionally the traditional rendering of *sadhamādaḥ* though I am not sure that it is the correct rendering.

The hymn closes with the aspiration of the Vasishthas towards this divine and blissful Dawn as leader of the herds and mistress of plenty and again as leader of the felicity and the truths (*sūnṛtānām*). They desire to arrive at the same achievement as the primal seers, the fathers and it would follow that these are the human and not the divine Angirases. In any case the sense of the Angiras legend is fixed in all its details, except the exact identity of the Panis and the hound Sarama, and we can turn to the consideration of the passages in the opening hymns of the fourth Mandala in which the human fathers are explicitly mentioned and their achievement described. These hymns of Vamadeva are the most illuminating and important for this aspect of the Angiras legend and they are in themselves among the most interesting in the Rig Veda.

Chapter XIX

The Victory of the Fathers

THE HYMNS addressed by the great Rishi Vamadeva to the divine Flame, to the Seer-Will, Agni are among the most mystic in expression in the Rig Veda and though quite plain in their sense if we hold firmly in our mind the system of significant figures employed by the Rishis, will otherwise seem only a brilliant haze of images baffling our comprehension. The reader has at every moment to apply that fixed notation which is the key to the sense of the hymns; otherwise he will be as much at a loss as a reader of metaphysics who has not mastered the sense of the philosophical terms that are being constantly used or, let us say, one who tries to read Panini's Sutras without knowing the peculiar system of grammatical notation in which they are expressed. We have, however, already enough light upon this system of images to understand well enough what Vamadeva has to tell us about the great achievement of the human forefathers.

In order to hold clearly in our minds at the start what that great achievement was we may put before ourselves the clear and sufficient formulas in which Parashara Shaktya expresses them. "Our fathers broke open the firm and strong places by their words, yea, the Angirases broke open the hill by their cry; they made in us the path to the great heaven; they found the Day and Swar and vision and the luminous Cows," *cakrur divo bṛhato gātum asme, ahaḥ svar vividuḥ ketum usrāḥ,* (I.71.2). This path, he tells us, is the path which leads to immortality; "they who entered into all things that bear right fruit formed a path towards the immortality; earth stood wide for them by the greatness and by the Great Ones, the mother Aditi with her sons came (or, manifested herself) for the upholding" (I.72.9).[1] That is to say, the physical being visited by the greatness of the infinite planes above and by the power of the great godheads who reign on those planes breaks its limits, opens out to the Light and is upheld in its new wideness by the infinite Consciousness, mother Aditi, and her sons, the divine Powers of the supreme Deva. This is the Vedic immortality.

---

[1] *Ā ye viśvā svapatyāni tasthuḥ, kṛṇvānāso amṛtatvāya gātum; mahnā mahadbhiḥ pṛthivī vi tasthe, mātā putrair aditir dhāyase veḥ.*

The means of this finding and expanding are also very succinctly stated by Parashara in his mystic, but still clear and impressive style. "They held the truth, they enriched its thought; then indeed, aspiring souls (*aryaḥ*), they, holding it in thought, bore it diffused in all their being," *dadhann ṛtaṁ dhanayann asya dhītim, ād id aryo didhiṣvo vibhṛtrāḥ,* (I.71.3). The image in *vibhṛtrāḥ* suggests the upholding of the thought of the Truth in all the principles of our being or, to put it in the ordinary Vedic image, the seven-headed thought in all the seven waters, *apsu dhiyaṁ dadhiṣe*, as we have seen it elsewhere expressed in almost identical language; this is shown by the image that immediately follows, — "the doers of the work go towards the unthirsting (waters) which increase the divine births by the satisfaction of delight," *atṛṣyantīr apaso yanti acchā, devān janma prayasā vardhayantīḥ*. The sevenfold Truth-consciousness in the satisfied sevenfold Truth-being increasing the divine births in us by the satisfaction of the soul's hunger for the Beatitude, this is the growth of immortality. It is the manifestation of that trinity of divine being, light and bliss which the Vedantins afterwards called Sachchidananda.

The sense of this universal diffusion of Truth and the birth and activity of all the godheads in us assuring a universal and immortal life in place of our present limited mortality is made yet clearer by Parashara in I.68. Agni, the divine Seer-Will, is described as ascending to heaven and unrolling the veil of the nights from all that is stable and all that is mobile, "when he becomes the one God encompassing all these godheads with the greatness of his being. Then indeed all accept and cleave to the Will (or the Work) when, O godhead, thou art born a living soul from the dryness (i.e. from the material being, the desert, as it is called, unwatered by the streams of the Truth);

all enjoy godhead attaining to the truth and the immortality by their movements, *bhajanta viśve devatvaṁ nāma, ṛtaṁ sapanto amṛtam evaiḥ*. The impulse of the Truth, the thinking of the Truth becomes a universal life (or pervades all the life), and in it all fulfil their workings," *ṛtasya preṣā ṛtasya dhītir, viśvāyur viśve apāṁsi cakruḥ*.

And in order that we may not, haunted by the unfortunate misconstruction of the Veda which European scholarship has imposed on the modern mind, carry with us the idea of the seven earthly rivers of the Punjab into the super-terrestrial achievement of the human forefathers, we will note what Parashara in his clear and illuminating fashion tells us about the seven rivers. "The fostering cows of the Truth (*dhenavaḥ*, an image applied to the rivers, while *gāvaḥ* or *usrāḥ* expresses the luminous cows of the Sun) nourished him, lowing, with happy udders, enjoyed in heaven; obtaining right thinking as a boon from the supreme (plane) the rivers flowed wide and evenly over the hill," *ṛtasya hi dhenavo vāvaśānāḥ, smadūdhnīḥ pīpayanta dyubhaktāḥ; parāvataḥ sumatiṁ bhikṣamāṇā, vi sindhavaḥ samayā sasrur adrim,* (I.73.6). And in I.72.8, speaking of them in a phrase which is applied to the rivers in other hymns, he says, "The seven mighty ones of heaven, placing aright the thought, knowing the Truth, discerned in knowledge the doors of felicity; Sarama found the fastness, the wideness of the luminous cows; thereby the human creature enjoys the bliss," *svādhyo diva ā sapta yahvī, rāyo duro vi ṛtajñā ajānan; vidad gavyaṁ saramā dṛḍham ūrvaṁ, yenā nu kaṁ mānuṣī bhojate viṭ.* These are evidently not the waters of the Punjab, but the rivers of Heaven, the streams of the Truth,[2] goddesses like Saraswati, who possess the Truth in knowledge and open by it the doors of the beatitude to the human creature. We see here too what I have already insisted on, that there is a close connection between the finding of the Cows and the outflowing of the Rivers; they are parts of one action, the achievement of the truth and immortality by men, *ṛtaṁ sapanto amṛtam evaiḥ*.

---

[2] Note that in I.32 Hiranyastupa Angirasa describes the waters released from Vritra as "ascending the mind", *mano ruhāṇāḥ*, and elsewhere they are called the waters that have the knowledge, *āpo vicetasaḥ* (I.83.1).

It is now perfectly clear that the achievement of the Angirases is the conquest of the Truth and the Immortality, that Swar called also the great heaven, *bṛhat dyauḥ*, is the plane of the Truth above the ordinary heaven and earth which can be no other than the ordinary mental and physical being; that the path of the great heaven, the path of the Truth created by the Angirases and followed by the hound Sarama is the path to the Immortality, *amṛtatvāya gātum*; that the vision (*ketu*) of the Dawn, the Day won by the Angirases, is the vision proper to the Truth-consciousness; that the luminous cows of the Sun and Dawn wrested from the Panis are the illuminations of this truth-consciousness which help to form the thought of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhītiḥ*, complete in the seven-headed thought of Ayasya; that the Night of the Veda is the obscured consciousness of the mortal being in which the Truth is subconscient, hidden in the cave of the hill; that the recovery of the lost sun lying in this darkness of Night is the recovery of the sun of Truth out of the darkened subconscient condition; and that the downflowing earthward of the seven rivers must be the outstreaming action of the sevenfold principle of our being as it is formulated in the Truth of the divine or immortal existence. Equally then must the Panis be the powers that prevent the Truth from emerging out of the subconscient condition and that constantly strive to steal its illuminations from man and throw him back into the Night, and Vritra must be the power that obstructs and prevents the free movement of the illumined rivers of the Truth, obstructs the impulsion of the Truth in us, *ṛtasya preṣā*, the luminous impulsion, *jyotiṣmatīm iṣam*, which carries us beyond the Night to the immortality. And the gods, the sons of Aditi, must be on the contrary the luminous divine powers, born of the infinite consciousness Aditi, whose formation and activity in our human and mortal being are necessary for our growth into the godhead, into the being of the Deva (*devatvam*) which is the Immortality. Agni, the truth-conscious seer-will, is the principal godhead who enables us to effect the sacrifice; he leads it on the path of the

Truth, he is the warrior of the battle, the doer of the work, and his unity and universality in us comprehending in itself all the other godheads is the basis of the Immortality. The plane of the Truth to which we arrive is his own home and the own home of the other gods, and the final home also of the soul of man. And this immortality is described as a beatitude, a state of infinite spiritual wealth and plenitude, *ratna*, *rayi*, *vāja*, *rādhas*, etc.; the opening doors of our divine home are the doors of the felicity, *rāyo duraḥ*, the divine doors which swing wide open to those who increase the Truth (*ṛtāvṛdhaḥ*) and which are discovered for us by Saraswati and her sisters, by the seven Rivers, by Sarama; to them and to the wide pasture (*kṣetra*) in the unobstructed and equal infinities of the vast Truth Brihaspati and Indra lead upward the shining Herds.

With these conceptions clearly fixed in our minds we shall be able to understand the verses of Vamadeva which only repeat in symbolic language the substance of the thought expressed more openly by Parashara. It is to Agni the Seer-Will that Vamadeva's opening hymns are addressed. He is hymned as the friend or builder of man's sacrifice who awakes him to the vision, the knowledge (*ketu*), *sa cetayan manuṣo yajñabandhuḥ* (IV.1.9); so doing, "he dwells in the gated homes of this being, accomplishing; he, a god, has come to be the means of accomplishment of the mortal," *sa kṣeti asya duryāsu sādhan, devo martasya sadhanitvam āpa.* What is it that he accomplishes? The next verse tells us. "May this Agni lead us in his knowledge towards that bliss of him which is enjoyed by the gods, that which by the thought all the immortals created and Dyauspita the father out-pouring the Truth"; *sa tū no agnir nayatu prajānann, acchā ratnaṁ devabhaktaṁ yad asya; dhiyā yad viśve amṛtā akṛṇvan, dyauṣpitā janitā satyam ukṣan.* This is Parashara's beatitude of the Immortality created by all the powers of the immortal godhead doing their work in the thought of the Truth and in its impulsion, and the out-pouring of the Truth is evidently the out-pouring of the waters as is indicated by the word *ukṣan*, Parashara's equal diffusion of the seven rivers of the truth over the hill.

Vamadeva then goes on to tell us of the birth of this great, first or supreme force, Agni, in the Truth, in its waters, in its original home. "He was born, the first, in the waters, in the foundation of the vast world (Swar), in its womb, (i.e. its seat and birthplace, its original home); without head and feet, concealing his two extremities, setting himself to his work in the lair of the Bull." The Bull is the Deva or Purusha, his lair is the plane of the Truth, and Agni the Seer-Will, working in the truth-consciousness, creates the worlds; but he conceals his two extremities, his head and feet; that is to say, his workings act between the superconscient and the subconscient in which his highest and his lowest states are respectively concealed, one in an utter light, the other in an utter darkness. From that he goes forth as the first and supreme force and is born to the Bull or the Lord by the action of the seven powers of the Bliss, the seven Beloved. "He went forward by illumined knowledge as the first force, in the seat of the Truth, in the lair of the Bull, desirable, young, full in body, shining wide; the seven Beloved bore him to the Lord."

The Rishi then comes to the achievement of the human fathers, *asmākam atra pitaro manuṣyā, abhi pra sedur ṛtam āśuṣāṇāḥ*: "Here our human fathers seeking possession of the Truth went forward to it; the bright cows in their covering prison, the good milkers whose pen is in the rock they drove upward (to the Truth), the Dawns answered their call. They rent the hill asunder and made them bright; others all around them declared wide this (Truth) of theirs; drivers of the herds they sang the hymn to the doer of works (Agni), they found the light, they shone in their thoughts (or, they accomplished the work by their thoughts). They with the mind that seeks the light (the cows, *gavyatā manasā*) rent the firm and compact hill that environed the luminous cows; the souls that desire opened by the divine word, *vacasā daivyena*, the firm pen full of the kine." These are the ordinary images of the Angiras legend, but in the next verse Vamadeva uses a still more mystic language. "They conceived in mind the first name of the fostering cows, they found the thrice seven supreme (seats) of the Mother; the females of the herd knew that and they followed after it; the ruddy one was manifested by the victorious attainment (or, the splendour) of the cow of Light," *te manvata prathamaṁ nāma dhenos, triḥ sapta mātuḥ paramāṇi vindan; taj jānatīr abhyanūṣata vrā, āvirbhuvad aruṇīr yaśasā goḥ*. The Mother here is Aditi, the infinite consciousness, who is the Dhenu or fostering Cow with the seven rivers for her sevenfold streaming as well as Go the Cow of Light with the Dawns for her children; the Ruddy One is the divine Dawn and the herd or rays are her dawning illuminations. The first name of the Mother with her thrice seven supreme seats, that which the dawns or mental illuminations know and move towards, must be the name or deity of the supreme Deva, who is infinite being and infinite consciousness and infinite bliss, and the seats are the three divine worlds, called earlier in the hymn the three supreme births of Agni, Satya, Tapas and Jana of the Puranas, which correspond to these three infinities of the Deva and each fulfils in its own way the sevenfold principle of our existence: thus we get the series of thrice seven seats of Aditi manifested in all her glory by the opening out of the Dawn of Truth.[3] Thus we see that the achievement of the Light and Truth by the human fathers is also an ascent to the Immortality of the supreme and divine status, to the first name of the all-creating infinite Mother, to her thrice seven supreme degrees of this ascending existence, to the highest levels of the eternal hill (*sānu*, *adri*).

This immortality is the beatitude enjoyed by the gods of which Vamadeva has already spoken as the thing which Agni has to accomplish by the sacrifice, the supreme bliss with its thrice seven ecstasies (I.20.7). For he proceeds; "Vanished the darkness, shaken in its foundation; Heaven shone out (*rocata dyauḥ*, implying the manifestation of the three luminous worlds of Swar, *divo rocanāni*); upward rose the light of the divine Dawn; the Sun entered the vast fields (of the Truth) beholding the straight things and the crooked in mortals. Thereafter indeed they awoke and saw utterly (by the sun's separation of the straight from the crooked, the truth from the falsehood); then indeed they held in them the bliss that is enjoyed in heaven, *ratnaṁ dhārayanta dyubhaktam.* Let all the gods be in all our homes, let there be the truth for our thought, O Mitra, O Varuna"; *viśve viśvāsu duryāsu devā, mitra dhiye varuṇa satyam astu.* This is evidently the same idea as has been expressed in different language by Parashara Shaktya, the pervasion of the whole existence by the thought and impulse of the Truth and the working of all the godheads in that thought and impulsion to create in every part of our existence the bliss and the immortality.

---

[3] The same idea is expressed by Medhatithi Kanwa (I.20.7) as the thrice seven ecstasies of the Beatitude, *ratnāni triḥ sāptāni*, or more literally, the ecstasies in their three series of seven, each of which the Ribhus bring out in their separate and complete expression, *ekam ekaṁ suśastibhiḥ*.

The hymn closes thus: "May I speak the word towards Agni shining pure, the priest of the offering greatest in sacrifice who brings to us the all; may he press out both the pure udder of the Cows of Light and the purified food of the plant of delight (the Soma) poured out everywhere. He is the infinite being of all the lords of sacrifice (the gods) and the guest of all human beings; may Agni, accepting into himself the increasing manifestation of the gods, knower of the births, be a giver of happiness."

In the second hymn of the fourth Mandala we get very clearly and suggestively the parallelism of the seven Rishis who are the divine Angirases and the human fathers. The passage is preceded by four verses, IV.2.11-14, which bring in the idea of the human seeking after the Truth and the Bliss. "May he the knower discern perfectly the Knowledge and the Ignorance, the wide levels and the crooked that shut in mortals; and, O God, for a bliss fruitful in offspring, lavish on us Diti and protect Aditi." This eleventh verse is very striking in its significance. We have the opposition of the Knowledge and the Ignorance familiar to Vedanta; and the Knowledge is likened to the wide open levels which are frequently referred to in the Veda; they are the large levels to which those ascend who labour in the sacrifice and they find there Agni seated self-blissful (V.7.5); they are the wide being which he makes for his own body (V.4.6), the level wideness, the unobstructed vast. It is therefore the infinite being of the Deva to which we arrive on the plane of the Truth, and it contains the thrice seven supreme seats of Aditi the Mother, the three supreme births of Agni within the Infinite, *anante antaḥ* (IV.1.7). The Ignorance on the other hand is identified with the crooked or uneven levels[4] which shut in mortals and it is therefore the limited, divided mortal existence. Moreover it is evident that the Ignorance is the Diti of the next half-verse, *ditiṁ ca rāsva aditim uruṣya*, and the Knowledge is Aditi. Diti, called also Danu, means division and the obstructing powers or Vritras are her children, Dānus, Dānavas, Daityas, while Aditi is existence in its infinity and the mother of the gods. The Rishi desires a bliss fruitful in offspring, that is in divine works and their results and this is to be effected through the conquest of all the riches held in itself by our divided mortal being but kept from us by the Vritras and Panis and through the holding of them in the infinite divine being. The latter is to be in us protected from the ordinary tendency of our human existence, from subjection to the sons of Danu or Diti. The idea is evidently identical with that of the Isha Upanishad which declares the possession of the Knowledge and the Ignorance, the unity and the multiplicity in the one Brahman as the condition for the attainment of Immortality.

We then come to the seven divine seers. "The seers unconquered declared the Seer (the Deva, Agni) holding him within in the homes of the human being; thence (from this embodied human being) mayst thou, O Agni, aspiring by the work (*aryaḥ*), behold by thy advancing movements these of whom thou must have the vision, the transcendent ones (the godheads of the Deva)"; *kaviṁ śaśāsuḥ kavayo adabdhā, nidhārayanto duryāsu āyoḥ; atas tvaṁ dṛśyān agna etān, paḍbhiḥ paśyer adbhutān arya evaiḥ*. This is again the journey to the vision of the Godhead. "Thou, O Agni, youngest power, art the perfect guide (on that journey) to him who sings the word and offers the Soma and orders the sacrifice; bring to the illumined who accomplishes the work the bliss with its vast delight for his increasing, satisfying the doer of the work (or, the man, *carṣaṇiprāḥ*). Now, O Agni, of all that we have done with our hands and our feet and our bodies the right thinkers (the Angirases) make as it were thy chariot by the work of the two arms (Heaven and Earth, *bhurijoḥ*); seeking to possess the Truth they have worked their way to it (or won control of it)," *ṛtaṁ yemuḥ sudhya āśuṣāṇāḥ*. "Now as the seven seers of Dawn the Mother, the supreme disposers (of the sacrifice), may we beget for ourselves the gods; may we become the Angirases, sons of Heaven, breaking open the wealth-filled hill, shining in purity." We have here very clearly the seven divine Seers as the supreme ordainers of the world-sacrifice and the idea of the human being "becoming" these seven Seers, that is to say, creating them in himself and growing into that which they mean, just as he becomes the Heaven and Earth and the other gods or, as it is otherwise put, begets or creates or forms (*jan*, *kṛ*, *tan*) the divine births in his own being.

---

[4] *Cittim acittiṁ cinavad vi vidvān, pṛṣṭheva vītā vṛjinā ca martān. Vṛjina* means crooked, and is used in the Veda to indicate the crookedness of the falsehood as opposed to the open straightness of the Truth, but the poet has evidently in his mind the verbal sense of *vṛj*, to separate, screen off, and it is this verbal sense in the adjective that governs *martān*.

Next the example of the human fathers is given as the original type of this great becoming and achievement. "Now also, even as our supreme ancient fathers, O Agni, seeking to possess the Truth, expressing the Word, travelled to the purity and the light; breaking open the earth (the material being) they uncovered the ruddy ones (the Dawns, the Cows); perfected in works and in light, seeking the godheads, gods, forging the Births like iron (or, forging the divine births like iron), making Agni a pure flame, increasing Indra, they attained and reached the wideness of the Light (of the Cows, *gavyam ūrvam*). As if herds of the Cow in the field of riches, that was manifested to vision which is the Births of the Gods within, O puissant One; they both accomplished the wide enjoyments (or, longings) of mortals and worked as aspirers for the increase of the higher being"; *ā yūtheva kṣumati paśvo akhyad, devānāṁ yaj janimā anti ugra; martānāṁ cid urvaśīr akṛpran, vṛdhe cid arya uparasya āyoḥ*. Evidently, this is a repetition in other language of the double idea of possessing the riches of Diti, yet safeguarding Aditi. "We have done the work for thee, we have become perfect in works, the wide-shining Dawns have taken up their home in the Truth (or, have robed themselves with the Truth), in the fullness of Agni and his manifold delight, in the shining eye of the god in all his brightness."

The Angirases are again mentioned in IV.3.11, and some of the expressions which lead up to this verse, are worth noting; for it cannot be too often repeated that no verse in the Veda can be properly understood except by reference to its context, to its place in the thought of the Sukta, to all that precedes and all that follows. The hymn opens with a call to men to create Agni who sacrifices in the truth, to create him in his form of golden light (*hiraṇyarūpam*, the gold being always the symbol of the solar light of the Truth, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*) before the Ignorance can form itself, *purā tanayitnor acittāt*. The god is asked to awaken to the work of man and the truth in him as being himself "the Truth-conscious who places aright the thought", *ṛtasya bodhi ṛtacit svādhīḥ*, — for all falsehood is merely a wrong placing of the Truth. He is to refer all fault and sin and defect in man to the various godheads or divine powers of the Divine Being so that it may be removed and the man declared finally blameless before the Infinite Mother — *aditaye anāgasaḥ*, or for the infinite existence, as it is elsewhere expressed.

Then in the ninth and tenth verses we have, expressed in various formulas, the idea of the united human and divine existence, Diti and Aditi, the latter founding, controlling and flooding with itself the former. "The Truth controlled by the Truth I desire (i.e. the human by the divine), together the unripe things of the Cow and her ripe and honeyed yield (again the imperfect human and the perfect and blissful divine fruits of the universal consciousness and existence); she (the cow) being black (the dark and divided existence, Diti) is nourished by the shining water of the foundation, the water of the companion streams (*jāmaryeṇa payasā*). By the Truth Agni the Bull, the Male, sprinkled with the water of its levels, ranges unquivering, establishing wideness (wide space or manifestation); the dappled Bull milks the pure shining teat." The symbolic opposition between the shining white purity of the One who is the source, seat, foundation and the variegated colouring of the Life manifested in the triple world is frequent in the Veda; this image of the dappled Bull and the pure-bright udder or source of the waters only repeats therefore, like the other images, the idea of the multiple manifestations of the human life purified, tranquillised in its activities, fed by the waters of the Truth and the Infinity.

Finally the Rishi proceeds to the coupling, which we so repeatedly find, of the luminous Cows and the Waters. "By the Truth the Angirases broke open and hurled asunder the hill and came to union with the Cows; human souls, they took up their dwelling in the blissful Dawn, Swar became manifest when Agni was born. By Truth the divine immortal waters, unoppressed, with their honeyed floods, O Agni, like a horse breasting forward in its gallopings ran in an eternal flowing." These four verses in fact are meant to give the preliminary conditions for the great achievement of the Immortality. They are the symbols of the grand Mythus, the mythus of the Mystics in which they hid their supreme spiritual experience from the profane and, alas! effectively enough from their posterity. That they were secret symbols, images meant to reveal the truth which they protected but only to the initiated, to the knower, to the seer, Vamadeva himself tells us in the most plain and emphatic language in the last verse of this very hymn; "All these are secret words that I have uttered to thee who knowest, O Agni, O Disposer, words of leading, words of seer-knowledge that express their meaning to the seer, — I have spoken them illumined in my words and my thinkings"; *etā viśvā viduṣe tubhyaṁ vedho, nīthāni agne niṇyā vacāṁsi; nivacanā kavaye kāvyāni, aśaṁsiṣaṁ matibhir vipra ukthaiḥ*. Secret words that have kept indeed their secret ignored by the priest, the ritualist, the grammarian, the pandit, the historian, the mythologist, to whom they have been words of darkness or seals of confusion and not what they were to the supreme ancient forefathers and their illumined posterity, *niṇyā vacāṁsi nīthāni nivacanā kāvyāni.*

Chapter XX

The Hound of Heaven

THERE yet remain two constant features of the Angiras legend with regard to which we have to acquire a little farther light in order to master entirely this Vedic conception of the Truth and the discovery of the illuminations of the Dawn by the primeval Fathers; we have to fix the identity of Sarama and the exact function of the Panis, two problems of Vedic interpretation which are very closely related to each other. That Sarama is some power of the Light and probably of the Dawn is very clear; for once we know that the struggle between Indra and the original Aryan seers on the one hand and the sons of the Cave on the other is no strange deformation of primitive Indian history but a symbolic struggle between the powers of Light and Darkness, Sarama who leads in the search for the radiant herds and discovers both the path and the secret hold in the mountain must be a forerunner of the dawn of Truth in the human mind. And if we ask ourselves what power among the truth-finding faculties it is that thus discovers out of the darkness of the unknown in our being the truth that is hidden in it, we at once think of the intuition. For Sarama is not Saraswati, she is not the inspiration, even though the names are similar. Saraswati gives the full flood of the knowledge; she is or awakens the great stream, *maho arṇaḥ*, and illumines with plenitude all the thoughts, *dhiyo viśvā vi rājati.* Saraswati possesses and is the flood of the Truth; Sarama is the traveller and seeker on its path who does not herself possess but rather finds that which is lost. Neither is she the plenary word of the revelation, the Teacher of man like the goddess Ila; for even when what she seeks is found, she does not take possession but only gives the message to the seers and their divine helpers who have still to fight for the possession of the light that has been discovered.

Let us see, however, what the Veda itself says of Sarama.

There is a verse, I.104.5, which does not mention her name, nor is the hymn itself about the Angirases or Panis, yet the line describes accurately enough the part attributed to her in the Veda: — "When this guide became visible, she went, knowing, towards the seat that is as if the home of the Dasyu," *prati yat syā nīthā adarśi dasyor, oko na acchā sadanaṁ jānatī gāt.* These are the two essential characteristics of Sarama; the knowledge comes to her beforehand, before vision, springs up instinctively at the least indication and with that knowledge she guides the rest of the faculties and divine powers that seek. And she leads to that seat, *sadanam*, the home of the Destroyers, which is at the other pole of existence to the seat of the Truth, *sadanam ṛtasya*, in the cave or secret place of darkness, *guhāyām*, just as the home of the gods is in the cave or secrecy of light. In other words, she is a power descended from the superconscient Truth which leads us to the light that is hidden in ourselves, in the subconscient. All these characteristics apply exactly to the intuition.

Sarama is mentioned by name only in a few hymns of the Veda, and invariably in connection with the achievement of the Angirases or the winning of the highest planes of existence. The most important of these hymns is the Sukta of the Atris we have already had to take note of in our scrutiny of the Navagwa and Dashagwa Angirases, V.45. The first three verses summarise the great achievement. "Severing the hill of heaven by the words he found them, yea, the radiant ones of the arriving Dawn went abroad; he uncovered those that were in the pen, Swar rose up; a god opened the human doors. The Sun attained widely to strength and glory; the Mother of the Cows (the Dawn), knowing, came from the wideness; the rivers became rushing floods, floods that cleft (their channel), heaven was made firm like a well-shaped pillar. To this word the contents of the pregnant hill (came forth) for the supreme birth of the Great Ones (the rivers or, less probably, the dawns); the hill parted asunder, heaven was perfected (or, accomplished itself); they lodged (upon earth) and distributed the largeness." It is of Indra and the Angirases that the Rishi is speaking, as the rest of the hymn shows and as is indeed evident from the expressions used; for these are the usual formulas of the Angiras mythus and repeat the exact expressions that are constantly used in the hymns of the delivery of the Dawn, the Cows and the Sun. We know already what they mean. The hill of our already formed triple existence which rises into heaven at its summit is rent asunder by Indra and the hidden illuminations go abroad; Swar, the higher heaven of the superconscient, is manifested by the upward streaming of the brilliant herds. The sun of Truth diffuses all the strength and glory of its light, the inner Dawn comes from the luminous wideness instinct with knowledge, — *jānatī gāt*, the same phrase that is used of her who leads to the house of the Dasyu in I.104.5; and of Sarama in III.31.6, — the rivers of the Truth, representing the outflow of its being and its movement (*ṛtasya preṣā*), descend in their rushing streams and make a channel here for their waters; heaven, the mental being, is perfected and made firm like a well-shaped pillar to support the vast Truth of the higher or immortal life that is now made manifest and the largeness of that Truth is lodged here in all the physical being. The delivery of the pregnant contents of the hill, *parvatasya garbhaḥ*, the illuminations constituting the seven-headed thought, *ṛtasya dhītiḥ*, which come forth in answer to the inspired word, leads to the supreme birth of the seven great rivers who constitute the substance of the Truth put into active movement, *ṛtasya preṣā*.

Then after the invocation of Indra and Agni by the "words of perfect speech that are loved of the gods", — for by those words the Maruts[1] perform the sacrifices as seers who by their seer-knowledge do well the sacrificial work, *ukthebhir hi ṣmā kavayaḥ suyajñā . . . maruto yajanti*, — the Rishi next puts into the mouth of men an exhortation and mutual encouragement to do even as the Fathers and attain the same divine results. "Come now, today let us become perfected in thought, let us destroy suffering and unease, let us embrace the higher good," *eto nu adya sudhyo bhavāma, pra ducchunā minavāma ā varīyaḥ*; "far from us let us put always all hostile things (all the things that attack and divide, *dveṣāṁsi*); let us go forward towards the Master of the sacrifice. Come, let us create the Thought, O friends, (obviously, the seven-headed Angiras-thought), which is the Mother (Aditi or the Dawn) and removes the screening pen of the Cow." The significance is clear enough; it is in such passages as these that the inner sense of the Veda half disengages itself from the veil of the symbol.

---

[1] The thought-attaining powers of the Life as will appear hereafter.

Then the Rishi speaks of the great and ancient example which men are called upon to repeat, the example of the Angirases, the achievement of Sarama. "Here the stone was set in motion whereby the Navagwas chanted the hymn for the ten months, Sarama going to the Truth found the cows, the Angiras made all things true. When in the dawning of this vast One (Usha representing the infinite Aditi, *mātā devānām aditer anīkam*) all the Angirases came together with the cows (or rather, perhaps by the illuminations represented in the symbol of the cows or Rays); there was the fountain of these (illuminations) in the supreme world; by the path of the Truth Sarama found the cows." Here we see that it is through the movement of Sarama going straight to the Truth by the path of the Truth, that the seven seers, representing the seven-headed or seven-rayed thought of Ayasya and Brihaspati, find all the concealed illuminations and by force of these illuminations they all come together, as we have been already told by Vasishtha, in the level wideness, *samāne ūrve*, from which the Dawn has descended with the knowledge (*ūrvād jānatī gāt*, v. 2) or, as it is here expressed, in the dawning of this vast One, that is to say, in the infinite consciousness. There, as Vasishtha has said, they, united, agree in knowledge and do not strive together, *saṅgatāsaḥ saṁ jānate na yatante mithas te*, that is to say, the seven become as one, as is indicated in another hymn; they become the one seven-mouthed Angiras, an image corresponding to that of the seven-headed thought, and it is this single unified Angiras who makes all things true as the result of Sarama's discovery (verse 7). The harmonised, united, perfected Seer-Will corrects all falsehood and crookedness and turns all thought, life, action into terms of the Truth. In this hymn also the action of Sarama is precisely that of the Intuition which goes straight to the Truth by the straight path of the Truth and not through the crooked paths of doubt and error and which delivers the Truth out of the veil of darkness and false appearances; it is through the illuminations discovered by her that the Seer-mind can attain to the complete revelation of the Truth. The rest of the hymn speaks of the rising of the seven-horsed Sun towards his "field which spreads wide for him at the end of the long journey", the attainment of the swift Bird to the Soma and of the young Seer to that field of the luminous cows, the Sun's ascent to the "luminous Ocean", its crossing over it "like a ship guided by the thinkers" and the descent upon man of the waters of that ocean in response to their call. In those waters the sevenfold thought of the Angiras is established by the human seer. If we remember that the Sun represents the light of the superconscient or truth-conscious knowledge and the luminous ocean the realms of the superconscient with their thrice seven seats of the Mother Aditi, the sense of these symbolic expressions[2] will not be difficult to understand. It is the highest attainment of the supreme goal which follows upon the complete achievement of the Angirases, their united ascent to the plane of the Truth, just as that achievement follows upon the discovery of the herds by Sarama.

Another hymn of great importance in this connection is the thirty-first of the third Mandala, by Vishwamitra. "Agni (the Divine Force) is born quivering with his flame of the offering for sacrifice to the great Sons of the Shining One (the Deva, Rudra); great is the child of them, a vast birth; there is a great movement of the Driver of the shining steeds (Indra, the Divine Mind) by the sacrifices. The conquering (dawns) cleave to him in his struggle, they deliver by knowledge a great light out of the darkness; knowing the Dawns rise up to him, Indra has become the one lord of the luminous cows. The cows who were in the strong place (of the Panis) the thinkers clove out; by the mind the seven seers set them moving forward (or upwards towards the supreme), they found the entire path (goal or field of travel) of the Truth; knowing those (supreme seats of the Truth) Indra by the obeisance entered into them," *vīḷau satīr abhi dhīrā atṛndan, prācā ahinvan manasā sapta viprāḥ; viśvām avindan pathyām ṛtasya, prajānann it tā namasā viveśa*. This is, as usual, the great birth, the great light, the great divine movement of the Truth-knowledge with the finding of the goal and the entry of the gods and the seers into the supreme planes above. Next we have the part of Sarama in this work. "When Sarama found the broken place of the hill, he (or perhaps she, Sarama) made continuous the great and supreme goal. She, the fair-footed, led him to the front of the imperishable ones (the unslayable cows of the Dawn); first she went, knowing, towards their cry." It is again the Intuition that leads; knowing, she speeds at once and in front of all towards the voice of the concealed illuminations, towards the place where the hill so firmly formed and impervious in appearance (*vīḷu*, *dṛḍha*) is broken and can admit the seekers.

---

[2] It is in this sense that we can easily understand many now obscure expressions of the Veda, e.g. VIII.68.9, "May we conquer by thy aid in our battles the great wealth in the waters and the Sun," *apsu sūrye mahad dhanam*.

The rest of the hymn continues to describe the achievement of the Angirases and Indra. "He went, the greatest seer of them all, doing them friendship; the pregnant hill sent forth its contents for the doer of perfect works; in the strength of manhood he with the young (Angirases) seeking plenitude of riches attained possession, then singing the hymn of light he became at once the Angiras. Becoming in our front the form and measure of each existing thing, he knows all the births, he slays Shushna"; that is to say, the Divine Mind assumes a form answering to each existing thing in the world and reveals its true divine image and meaning and slays the false force that distorts knowledge and action. "Seeker of the cows, traveller to the seat of heaven, singing the hymns, he, the Friend, delivers his friends out of all defect (of right self-expression). With a mind that sought the Light (the cows) they entered their seats by the illumining words, making the path towards Immortality (*ni gavyatā manasā sedur arkaiḥ kṛṇvānāso amṛtatvāya gātum*). This is that large seat of theirs, the Truth by which they took possession of the months (the ten months of the Dashagwas). Harmonised in vision (or, perfectly seeing) they rejoiced in their own (abode, Swar) milking out the milk of the ancient seed (of things). Their cry (of the Word) heated all the earth and heaven (created, that is to say, the burning clarity, *gharma*, *taptaṁ ghṛtam*, which is the yield of the solar cows); they established in that which was born a firm abiding and in the cows the heroes (that is, the battling force was established in the light of the knowledge).

"Indra, the Vritra-slayer, by those who were born (the sons of the sacrifice), by the offerings, by the hymns of illumination released upward the shining ones; the wide and delightful Cow (the cow Aditi, the vast and blissful higher consciousness) bringing for him the sweet food, the honey mixed with the *ghṛta*, yielded it as her milk. For this Father also (for Heaven) they fashioned the vast and shining abode; doers of perfect works, they had the entire vision of it. Wide-upholding by their support the Parents (Heaven and Earth) they sat in that high world and embraced all its ecstasy. When for the cleaving away (of evil and falsehood) the vast Thought holds him immediately increasing in his pervasion of earth and heaven, — then for Indra in whom are the equal and faultless words, there are all irresistible energies. He has found the great, manifold and blissful Field (the wide field of the cows, Swar); and he has sent forth together all the moving herd for his friends. Indra shining out by the human souls (the Angirases) has brought into being, together, the Sun, the Dawn, the Path and the Flame."

And in the remaining verses the same figures continue, with an intervention of the famous image of the rain which has been so much misunderstood. "The Ancient-born I make new that I may conquer. Do thou remove our many undivine hurters and set Swar for our possessing. The purifying rains are extended before us (in the shape of the waters); take us over to the state of bliss that is the other shore of them. Warring in thy chariot protect us from the foe; soon, soon make us conquerors of the Cows. The Vritra-slayer, the Master of the Cows, showed (to men) the cows; he has entered with his shining laws (or lustres) within those who are black (void of light, like the Panis); showing the truths (the cows of truth) by the Truth he has opened all his own doors," *pra sūnṛtā diśamāna ṛtena duraś ca viśvā avṛṇod apa svāḥ*; that is to say, he opens the doors of his own world, Swar, after breaking open by his entry into our darkness (*antaḥ kṛṣṇān gāt*) the "human doors" kept closed by the Panis.

Such is this remarkable hymn, the bulk of which I have translated because it both brings into striking relief the mystic and entirely psychological character of the Vedic poetry and by so doing sets out vividly the nature of the imagery in the midst of which Sarama figures. The other references to Sarama in the Rig Veda do not add anything essential to the conception. We have a brief allusion in IV.16.8, "When thou didst tear the waters out of the hill, Sarama became manifest before thee; so do thou as our leader tear out much wealth for us, breaking the pens, hymned by the Angirases." It is the Intuition manifesting before the Divine Mind as its forerunner when there is the emergence of the waters, the streaming movements of the Truth that break out of the hill in which they were confined by Vritra (verse 7); and it is by means of the Intuition that this godhead becomes our leader to the rescue of the Light and the conquest of the much wealth hidden within in the rock behind the fortress gates of the Panis.

We find another allusion to Sarama in a hymn by Parashara Shaktya, I.72. This is one of the Suktas which most clearly reveal the sense of the Vedic imagery, like most indeed of the hymns of Parashara, a very luminous poet who loves always to throw back something more than a corner of the mystic's veil. It is brief and I shall translate it in full. "He has created, within, the seer-knowings of the eternal Disposer of things, holding in his hand many powers (powers of the divine Purushas, *naryā purūṇi*); Agni creating together all immortalities becomes the master of the (divine) riches. All the immortals, they who are not limited (by ignorance), desiring, found him in us as if the Calf (of the cow Aditi) existing everywhere; labouring, travelling to the Seat, holding the Thought they attained in the supreme seat to the shining (glory) of Agni. O Agni, when through the three years (three symbolic seasons or periods corresponding perhaps to the passage through the three mental heavens) they, pure, had served thee, the pure one, with the *ghṛta*, they held the sacrificial names and set moving (to the supreme heaven) forms well born. They had knowledge of the vast heaven and earth and bore them forward, they the sons of Rudra, the lords of the sacrifice; the mortal awoke to vision and found Agni standing in the seat supreme. Knowing perfectly (or in harmony) they kneeled down to him; they with their wives (the female energies of the gods) bowed down to him who is worthy of obeisance; purifying themselves (or, perhaps, exceeding the limits of heaven and earth) they created their own (their proper or divine) forms, guarded in the gaze, each friend, of the Friend. In thee the gods of the sacrifice found the thrice seven secret seats hidden within; they, being of one heart, protect by them the immortality. Guard thou the herds that stand and that which moves. O Agni, having knowledge of all manifestations (or births) in the worlds (or, knowing all the knowledge of the peoples) establish thy forces, continuous, for life. Knowing, within, the paths of the journeying of the gods thou becamest their sleepless messenger and the bearer of the offerings. The seven mighty ones of heaven (the rivers) placing aright the thought, knowing the Truth, discerned the doors of the felicity; Sarama found the fastness, the wideness of the cows whereby now the human creature enjoys (the supreme riches). They who entered upon all things that bear right issue, made the path to Immortality; by the great ones and by the greatness earth stood wide; the mother Aditi with her sons came for the upholding. The Immortals planted in him the shining glory, when they made the two eyes of heaven (identical probably with the two vision-powers of the Sun, the two horses of Indra); rivers, as it were, flow down released; the shining ones (the cows) who were here below knew, O Agni."

So runs this hymn of Parashara, translated with the utmost possible literalness even at the cost of some uncouthness in the English. It is clear at the very first glance that it is throughout a hymn of knowledge, of the Truth, of a divine Flame which is hardly distinguishable from the supreme Deity, of immortality, of the ascent of the gods, the divine powers, by the sacrifice to their godhead, to their supreme names, to their proper forms, to the shining glory of the supreme state with its thrice seven seats of the Godhead. Such an ascent can have no other meaning than the ascent of the divine powers *in man* out of their ordinary cosmic appearances to the shining Truth beyond, as indeed Parashara himself tells us that by this action of the gods mortal man awakens to the knowledge and finds Agni standing in the supreme seat and goal; *vidan marto nemadhitā cikitvān, agniṁ pade parame tasthivāṁsam.* What is Sarama doing in such a hymn if she is not a power of the Truth, if her cows are not the rays of a divine dawn of illumination? What have the cows of old warring tribes and the sanguinary squabbles of our Aryan and Dravidian ancestors over their mutual plunderings and cattle-liftings to do with this luminous apocalypse of the immortality and the godhead? Or what are these rivers that think and know the Truth and discover the hidden doors? Or must we still say that these were the rivers of the Punjab dammed up by drought or by the Dravidians and Sarama a mythological figure for an Aryan embassy or else only the physical Dawn?

One hymn in the tenth Mandala is devoted entirely to this "embassy" of Sarama, it is the colloquy of Sarama and the Panis; but it adds nothing essential to what we already know about her and its chief importance lies in the help it gives us in forming our conception of the masters of the cavern treasure. We may note, however, that neither in this hymn, nor in the others we have noticed is there the least indication of the figure of the divine hound which was attributed to Sarama in a possibly later development of the Vedic imagery. It is surely the shining fair-footed goddess by whom the Panis are attracted and whom they desire as their sister, — not as a dog to guard their cattle, but as one who will share in the possession of their riches. The image of the hound of heaven is, however, exceedingly apt and striking and was bound to develop out of the legend. In one of the earlier hymns we have mention indeed of a son for whom Sarama "got food" according to an ancient interpretation which accounts for the phrase by a story that the hound Sarama demanded food for her offspring in the sacrifice as a condition of her search for the lost cows. But this is obviously an explanatory invention which finds no place in the Rig Veda itself. The Veda says, "In the sacrifice" or, as it more probably means, "in the seeking of Indra and the Angirases (for the cows) Sarama discovered a foundation for the Son," *vidat saramā tanayāya dhāsim* (I.62.3); for such is the more likely sense here of the word *dhāsim*. The son is in all probability the son born of the sacrifice, a constant element in the Vedic imagery and not the dog-race born of Sarama. We have similar phrases in the Veda as in I.96.4, *mātariśvā puruvārapuṣṭir vidad gātuṁ tanayāya svarvit*, "Matarishwan (the Life-god, Vayu) increasing the many desirable things (the higher objects of life) discovered the path for the Son, discovered Swar," where the subject is evidently the same but the son has nothing to do with any brood of puppies.

The two Sarameya dogs, messengers of Yama, are mentioned in a late hymn in the tenth Mandala, but without any reference to Sarama as their mother. This occurs in the famous "funeral" hymn X.14, and it is worth while noting the real character of Yama and his two dogs in the Rig Veda. In the later ideas Yama is the god of Death and has his own special world; but in the Rig Veda he seems to have been originally a form of the Sun, — even as late as the Isha Upanishad we find the name used as an appellation of the Sun, — and then one of the twin children of the wide-shining Lord of Truth. He is the guardian of the dharma, the law of the Truth, *satyadharma*, which is a condition of immortality, and therefore himself the guardian of immortality. His world is Swar, the world of immortality, *amṛte loke akṣite*, where, as we are told in IX.113, is the indestructible Light, where Swar is established, *yatra jyotir ajasraṁ, yasmin loke svar hitam*. The hymn X.14 is indeed not a hymn of Death so much as a hymn of Life and Immortality. Yama and the ancient Fathers have discovered the path to that world which is a pasture of the Cows whence the enemy cannot bear away the radiant herds, *yamo no gātuṁ prathamo viveda, naiṣā gavyūtir apabhartavā u, yatrā naḥ pūrve pitaraḥ pareyuḥ*. The soul of the heaven-ascending mortal is bidden to "outrun the two four-eyed varicoloured Sarameya dogs on the good (or effective) path." Of that path to heaven they are the four-eyed guardians, protecting man on the road by their divine vision, *yau te śvānau yama rakṣitārau caturakṣau pathirakṣī nṛcakṣasau*, and Yama is asked to give them as an escort to the soul on its way. These dogs are "wide-moving, not easily satisfied" and range as the messengers of the Lord of the Law among men. And the hymn prays, "May they (the dogs) give us back bliss here in the unhappy (world) so that we may look upon the Sun." We are still in the order of the old Vedic ideas, the Light and the Bliss and the Immortality, and these Sarameya dogs have the essential characteristics of Sarama, the vision, the wide-ranging movement, the power to travel on the path by which the goal is reached. Sarama leads to the wideness of the cows; these dogs protect the soul on its journey to the inviolable pasture, the field (*kṣetra*) of the luminous and imperishable herds. Sarama brings us to the truth, to the sun-vision which is the way to the bliss; these dogs bring the weal to man in this world of suffering so that he shall have the vision of the Sun. Whether Sarama figures as the fair-footed goddess speeding on the path or the heavenly hound, mother of these wide-ranging guardians of the path, the idea is the same, a power of the Truth that seeks and discovers, that finds by a divine faculty of insight the hidden Light and the denied Immortality. But it is to this seeking and finding that her function is limited.

Chapter XXI

The Sons of Darkness

WE HAVE seen, not once but repeatedly, that it is impossible to read into the story of the Angirases, Indra and Sarama, the cave of the Panis and the conquest of the Dawn, the Sun and the Cows an account of a political and military struggle between Aryan invaders and Dravidian cave-dwellers. It is a struggle between the seekers of Light and the powers of Darkness; the cows are the illuminations of the Sun and the Dawn, they cannot be physical cows; the wide fear-free field of the Cows won by Indra for the Aryans is the wide world of Swar, the world of the solar Illumination, the threefold luminous regions of Heaven. Therefore equally the Panis must be taken as powers of the cave of Darkness. It is quite true that the Panis are Dasyus or Dāsas; they are spoken of constantly by that name, they are described as the Dāsa Varna as opposed to the Arya Varna, and *varṇa*, colour, is the word used for caste or class in the Brahmanas and later writings, although it does not therefore follow that it has that sense in the Rig Veda. The Dasyus are the haters of the sacred word; they are those who give not to the gods the gift or the holy wine, who keep their wealth of cows and horses and other treasure for themselves and do not give them to the seers; they are those who do not the sacrifice. We may, if we like, suppose that there was a struggle between two different cults in India and that the Rishis took their images from the physical struggle between the human representatives of these cults and applied them to the spiritual conflict, just as they employed the other details of their physical life to symbolise the spiritual sacrifice, the spiritual wealth, the spiritual battle and journey. But it is perfectly certain that in the Rig Veda at least it is the spiritual conflict and victory, not the physical battle and plunder of which they are speaking.

It is either an uncritical or a disingenuous method to take isolated passages and give them a particular sense which will do well enough there only while ignoring the numerous other passages in which that sense is patently inapplicable. We must take as a whole all the references in the Veda to the Panis, their wealth, their characteristics, the victory of the Gods, the seers and the Aryans over them and adopt uniformly that conclusion which arises from all the passages thus taken together. When we follow this method we find that in many of these passages the idea of the Panis as human beings is absolutely impossible and that they are powers either of physical or of spiritual darkness; in others that they cannot at all be powers of physical darkness, but may well be either human enemies of the god-seekers and sacrificers or else enemies of the spiritual Light; in yet others that they cannot be either human enemies or enemies of the physical Light, but are certainly the enemies of the spiritual Light, the Truth and the Thought. From these data there can be only one conclusion, that they are always and only enemies of the spiritual Light.

We may take as the master-clue to the general character of these Dasyus the Rik V.14.4, "Agni born shone out slaying the Dasyus, the darkness by the Light; he found the Cows, the Waters, Swar," *agnir jāto arocata, ghnan dasyūn jyotiṣā tamaḥ; avindad gā apaḥ svaḥ*. There are two great divisions of the Dasyus, the Panis who intercept both the cows and the waters but are especially associated with the refusal of the cows, the Vritras who intercept the waters and the light, but are especially associated with the withholding of the waters; all Dasyus without exception stand in the way of the ascent to Swar and oppose the acquisition of the wealth by the Aryan seers. The refusal of the light is their opposition to the vision of Swar, *svardṛś*, and the vision of the sun, to the supreme vision of knowledge, *upamā ketuḥ*; the refusal of the waters is their opposition to the abundant movement of Swar, *svarvatīr apaḥ*, the movement or streamings of the Truth, *ṛtasya preṣā*, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*; the opposition to the wealth-acquisition is their refusal of the abundant substance of Swar, *vasu*, *dhana*, *vāja*, *hiraṇya*, that great wealth which is found in the sun and in the waters, *apsu sūrye mahad dhanam*. Still since the whole struggle is between the Light and the Darkness, the Truth and the Falsehood, the divine Maya and the undivine, all the Dasyus alike are here identified with the Darkness; and it is by the birth and shining of Agni that the Light is created with which he slays the Dasyus and the Darkness. The historical interpretation will not do at all here, though the naturalistic may pass if we isolate the passage and suppose the lighting of the sacrificial fire to be the cause of the daily sunrise; but we have to judge from a comparative study of the Veda and not on the strength of isolated passages.

The opposition between the Aryans and the Panis or Dasyus is brought out in another hymn of the fifth Mandala and in III.34 we have the expression Arya Varna. We must remember that the Dasyus have been identified with the Darkness; therefore the Aryans must be connected with the Light and we actually find that the light of the Sun is called in the Veda the Aryan Light in contradistinction evidently to the Dāsa darkness. Vasishtha also speaks of the three Aryan peoples who are *jyotiragrāḥ*, led by the light, having the light in their front (VII.33.7). The Aryan-Dasyu question can only be adequately treated by an exhaustive discussion in which all the relevant passages are scrutinised and the difficulties faced, but for my present purpose this is a sufficient starting-point. We must remember also that we have in the Veda the expressions *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*, *hiraṇyaṁ jyotiḥ*, the true light, the golden light, which give us an additional clue. Now these three epithets of the solar light, *ārya*, *ṛta*, *hiraṇya* are, I suggest, mutually illuminative and almost equivalent. The Sun is the Lord of Truth, therefore its light is the *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*; this light of truth is that which the Aryan, god or mortal, possesses, and which constitutes his Arya-hood; again the epithet golden is constantly applied to the Sun and gold is in Veda probably the symbol of the substance of the truth, for its substance is the light which is the golden wealth found in Surya and in the waters of Swar, *apsu sūrye*, — therefore we have the epithet *hiraṇyaṁ jyotiḥ*. This golden or shining light is the hue, *varṇa*, of the truth; it is also the hue of the thoughts full of that illumination won by the Aryan, the cows who are bright in colour, *śukra*, *śveta*, the colour of Light; while the Dasyu, being a power of darkness, is black in hue. I suggest that the brightness of the light of the truth, *jyotiḥ āryam*, is the Arya *varṇa*, the hue of these Aryans who are *jyotiragrāḥ*; the darkness of the night of the ignorance is the hue of the Panis, the Dāsa *varṇa*. In this way *varṇa* would come to mean almost the nature or else all those of that particular nature, the colour being the symbol of the nature; and that this idea was a current notion among the ancient Aryans seems to me to be shown by the later use of different colours to distinguish the four castes, white, red, yellow and black.

The passage in V.34 runs as follows. "He (Indra) desires not to ascend by the five and by the ten; he cleaves not to him who gives not the Soma even though he grow and increase; he overcomes him or else he slays in his impetuous movement; he gives to the god-seeker for his enjoyment the pen full of the Cows. Cleaver (of the foe) in the battle-shock, firm holder of the discus (or the wheel), averse from him who gives not the Soma but increaser of the Soma-giver, terrible is Indra and the tamer of all; Aryan, he brings into utter subjection the Dāsa. He comes driving this enjoyment of the Pani, robbing him of it, and he apportions entirely to the giver for his enjoyment the wealth rich in hero-powers (lit. in men, *sūnaraṁ vasu*, *vīra* and *nṛ* being often used synonymously); that man who makes wroth the strength of Indra is held back manifoldly in a difficult journeying, (*durge*[1] *cana dhriyate ā puru*). When Maghavan has known in the shining cows the Two who are rich in wealth and have all forces, he growing in knowledge makes a third his helper and rushing impetuously looses upward the multitude of the cows (*gavyam*) by the help of his fighters." And the last Rik of the Sukta speaks of the Aryan (god or man) arriving at the highest knowledge-vision (*upamāṁ ketum aryaḥ*), the waters in their meeting nourishing him and his housing a strong and brilliant force of battle, *kṣatram amavat tveṣam*.

From what we already know of these symbols we can easily grasp the inner sense of the hymn. Indra, the Divine Mind-Power takes their secret wealth from the powers of the Ignorance with whom he refuses to ally himself even when they are rich and prosper; he gives the imprisoned herds of the illumined Dawn to the man of the sacrifice who desires the godheads. He is himself the Aryan who brings the life of the ignorance into complete subjection to the higher life so that it yields up to it all the wealth it holds. The use of the words *ārya* and *arya* to signify the gods, not only in this but in other passages, tends to show in itself that the opposition of Arya and Dasyu is not at all a national or tribal or merely human distinction, but has a deeper significance. The fighters are certainly the seven Angirases; for they and not the Maruts, which is Sayana's interpretation of *satvabhiḥ*, are Indra's helpers in the release of the Cows. But the three persons whom Indra finds or comes to know by entering among the bright cows, by possessing the trooping illuminations of the Thought, are more difficult to fix. In all probability it is these three by whom the seven rays of the Angiras-knowledge are raised to ten so that they pass successfully through the ten months and release the sun and the cows; for it is after finding or knowing the two and getting help of the third that Indra releases the cows of the Panis. They may also be connected with the symbolism of the three Aryan peoples led by the light and the three luminous worlds of Swar; for the attainment of the supreme knowledge-vision, *upamā ketuḥ*, is the final result of their action and this supreme knowledge is that which has the vision of Swar and stands in its three luminous worlds, *rocanāni*, as we find in III.2.14, *svardṛśaṁ ketuṁ divo rocanasthām uṣarbudham*, "the knowledge-vision that sees Swar, that stands in the shining worlds, that awakes in the dawn."

---

[1] The Rishis pray always to the gods to make their path to the highest bliss easy of going and thornless, *suga*; *durga* is the opposite of this easy going, it is the path beset by manifold (*puru*) dangers and sufferings and difficulties.

In III.34 Vishwamitra gives us the expression *ārya varṇa* and at the same time the key to its psychological significance. Three verses of the hymn (8-10) run as follows: "(They hymn) the supremely desirable, the ever overcoming, the giver of strength who wins possession of Swar and the divine waters; the thinkers have joy in the wake of Indra who takes possession of the earth and the heaven. Indra wins possession of the Steeds, wins the

Sun, wins the Cow of the many enjoyments; he wins the golden enjoyment, having slain the Dasyus he fosters (or protects) the Aryan *varṇa*; Indra wins the herbs and the days, the trees and the mid-world; he pierces Vala and impels forward the speaker of the words; so he becomes the tamer of those who set against him their will in works, (*abhikratūnām*)." We have here the symbolic elements of all the wealth won by Indra for the Aryan, and it includes the Sun, the days, the earth, the heavens, the middle world, the horses, the growths of earth, herbs and trees (*vanaspatīn* in the double sense, lords of the forest and lords of enjoyment); and we have as against Vala and his Dasyus the Aryan *varṇa*.

But in the verses that precede (4-6) we have already the word *varṇa* as the hue of the Aryan thoughts, the thoughts that are true and full of light. "Indra, Swar-conquering, bringing to birth the days assailed and conquered by the desirers (the Angirases) these armies (of the Dasyus); he made to shine for man the knowledge-vision of the days (*ketum ahnām*), he found the Light for the vast enjoyment; . . . he made conscious in knowledge these thoughts for his adorer, he carried forward (beyond the obstruction of the Dasyus) this bright *varṇa* of these (thoughts), *acetayad dhiya imā jaritre, pra imaṁ varṇam atirac chukram āsām.* They set in action (or, praise) many great and perfect works of the great Indra; by his strength he crushes, in his overwhelming energy, by his workings of knowledge (*māyābhiḥ*) the crooked Dasyus."

We find here the Vedic phrase *ketum ahnām*, the knowledge-vision of the days, by which is meant the light of the Sun of Truth that leads to the vast beatitude; for the "days" are those produced through Indra's conquest of Swar for man following as we know upon his destruction of the Pani armies with the help of the Angirases and the ascent of the Sun and the shining Cows. It is for man and as powers of man that all this is done by the gods, not on their own account since they possess already; — for him that as the *Nṛ*, the divine Man or Purusha, Indra holds many strengths of that manhood, *nṛvad . . . naryā purūṇi*; him he awakes to the knowledge of these thoughts which are symbolised as the shining cows released from the Panis; and the shining hue of these thoughts, *śukraṁ varṇam āsām*, is evidently the same as that *śukra* or *śveta* Aryan hue which is mentioned in verse 9. Indra carries forward or increases the "colour" of these thoughts beyond the opposition of the Panis, *pra varṇam atirac chukram*; in doing so he slays the Dasyus and protects or fosters and increases the Aryan "colour", *hatvī dasyūn pra āryaṁ varṇam āvat.* Moreover these Dasyus are the crooked ones, *vṛjinān*, and are conquered by Indra's works or forms of knowledge, his "*māyā*"s by which, as we are elsewhere told, he overcomes the opposing "*māyā*"s of the Dasyus, Vritra or Vala. The straight and the crooked are constantly synonymous in Veda with the truth and the falsehood. Therefore it is clear that these Pani Dasyus are crooked powers of the falsehood and ignorance who set their false knowledge, their false strength, will and works against the true knowledge, the true strength, will and works of the gods and the Aryans. The triumph of the Light is the triumph of the divine knowledge of the Truth against the darkness of this false or demoniac knowledge; that victory is the ascent of the Sun, the birth of the Days, the advent of the Dawn, the release of the herds of the shining Rays and their mounting to the world of Light.

That the cows are the thoughts of the Truth we are told clearly enough in IX.111, a hymn to Soma. "By this brilliant light he, purifying himself, breaks through all hostile powers by his self-yoked horses, as if by the self-yoked horses of the Sun. He shines, a stream of the outpressed Soma, purifying himself, luminous, the brilliant One, when he encompasses all forms (of things) with the speakers of the Rik, with the seven-mouthed speakers of the Rik (the Angiras powers). Thou, O Soma findest that wealth of the Panis; thou by the Mothers (the cows of the Panis, frequently so designed in other hymns) makest thyself bright in thy own home (Swar), by the thoughts of the Truth in thy home, *saṁ mātṛbhir marjayasi sva ā dama ṛtasya dhītibhir dame.* As if the Sāma (equal fulfilment, *samāne ūrve*, in the level wideness) of the higher world (*parāvataḥ*), is that (Swar) where the thoughts (of the Truth) take their delight. By those shining ones of the triple world (or triple elemental nature) he holds the wide manifestation (of knowledge), shining he holds the wide manifestation." We see that these cows of the Panis by whom Soma becomes clear and bright in his own home, the home of Agni and the other gods, which we know to be the vast Truth of Swar, *ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, these shining cows who have in them the triple nature of the supreme world, *tridhātubhir aruṣībhir*, and by whom Soma holds the birth or wide manifestation of that Truth,[2] are the thoughts which realise the Truth. This Swar with its three shining worlds in whose wideness there is the equal fulfilment of the *tridhātu*, a phrase often used for the supreme triple principle forming the triune highest world, *tisraḥ parāvataḥ*, is elsewhere described as the wide and fear-free pasture in which the Cows range at will and take their delight (*raṇayanti*) and here too it is that region where the thoughts of the Truth take their delight, *yatra raṇanti dhītayaḥ*. And it is said in the next verse that the divine chariot of Soma follows, getting knowledge, the supreme direction and labours forward, having vision, by the rays, *pūrvām anu pradiśaṁ yāti cekitat, saṁ raśmibhir yatate darśato ratho daivyo darśato rathaḥ*. This supreme direction is evidently that of the divine or vast Truth; these rays are evidently the rays of the Dawn or Sun of Truth; they are the cows concealed by the Panis, the illumined thoughts, *dhiyaḥ* of the bright hue, *ṛtasya dhītayaḥ*.

All the internal evidence of the Veda wherever this image of the Panis, the Cows, the Angirases occurs establishes invariably the same conclusion. The Panis are the withholders of the thoughts of the Truth, dwellers in the darkness without knowledge (*tamo avayunam*) which Indra and the Angirases by the Word, by the Sun replace with Light to manifest in its stead the wideness of the Truth. It is not with physical weapons but with words that Indra fights the Panis (VI.39.2), *paṇīn vacobhir abhi yodhad indraḥ*. It will be enough to translate without comment the hymn in which this phrase occurs so as to show finally the nature of this symbolism. "Of this divine and rapturous seer (Soma), bearer of the sacrifice, this honeyed speaker with the illumined thought, O god, join to us, to the speaker of the word the impulsions that are led by the cows of light (*iṣo goagrāḥ*). He it was who desired the shining ones (the cows, *usrāḥ*) all about the hill, truth-yoked, yoking his car with the thoughts of the Truth, *ṛtadhītibhir ṛtayug yujānaḥ*; (then) Indra broke the unbroken hill-level of Vala, by the words he fought against the Panis. He it was (Soma) who as the Moon-Power (Indu) day and night and through the years made the lightless nights to shine out, and they held the vision of the days; he created the dawns pure in their birth. He it was becoming luminous who made full of light the lightless ones; he made the many (dawns) shine by the Truth, he went with horses yoked by the Truth, with the wheel that finds Swar, satisfying (with the wealth) the doer of works." It is always the thought, the Truth, the word that is associated with the Cows of the Panis; by the words of Indra the Divine Mind-Power those who withhold the cows are conquered; that which was dark becomes light; the chariot drawn by the horses yoked by the Truth finds (by knowledge, *svarvidā nābhinā*) the luminous vastnesses of being and consciousness and delight now concealed from our vision. "By the *brahma* Indra pierces Vala, conceals the darkness, makes Swar visible" (II.24.3), *ud gā ājad abhinad brahmaṇā valam agūhat tamo vyacakṣayat svaḥ.*

---

[2] *Vayaḥ*. Cf. VI.21.2-3, where it is said that Indra who has the knowledge and who upholds our words and is by the words increased in the sacrifice, *indraṁ yo vidāno girvāhasaṁ gīrbhir yajñavṛddham*, forms by the Sun into that which has manifestation of knowledge the darkness which had extended itself and in which there was no knowledge, *sa it tamo avayunaṁ tatanvat sūryeṇa vayunavac cakāra*.

The whole Rig Veda is a triumph-chant of the powers of Light, and their ascent by the force and vision of the Truth to its possession in its source and seat where it is free from the attack of the falsehood. "By Truth the cows (illumined thoughts) enter into the Truth; labouring towards the Truth the Truth one conquers; the aggressive force of the Truth seeks the cows of Light and goes breaking through (the enemy); for Truth the two wide ones (Heaven and Earth) become multitudinous and deep, for Truth the two supreme Mothers give their yield," *ṛtena gāva ṛtam ā viveśuḥ; ṛtaṁ yemāna ṛtam id vanoti, ṛtasya śuṣmas turayā u gavyuḥ; ṛtāya pṛthvī bahule gabhīre, ṛtāya dhenū parame duhāte* (IV.23.9-10).

Chapter XXII

The Conquest over the Dasyus

THE DASYUS stand in opposition to both the Aryan gods and the Aryan seers. The Gods are born from Aditi in the supreme Truth of things, the Dasyus or Danavas from Diti in the nether darkness; they are the Lords of Light and the Lords of Night fronting each other across the triple world of earth, heaven and mid-air, body, mind and the connecting breath of life. Sarama in X.108 descends from the supreme realm, *parākāt*; she has to cross the waters of the Rasā, she meets the night which gives place to her for fear of her overleaping it, *atiṣkado bhiyasā*; she arrives at the home of the Dasyus, *dasyor oko na sadanam*, which they themselves describe as the *reku padam alakam*, the world of falsehood beyond the bound of things. The supreme world also surpasses the bound of things by exceeding or transcending it; it is *reku padam*, but *satyam* not *alakam*, the world of the Truth, not the world of the falsehood. The latter is the darkness without knowledge, *tamo avayunaṁ tatanvat*; Indra when his largeness exceeds (*ririce*) heaven and earth and mid-world creates for the Aryan the opposite world of truth and knowledge, *vayunavat*, which exceeds these three domains and is therefore *reku padam*. This darkness, this lower world of Night and the Inconscient in the formed existence of things symbolised in the image of the mountain which rises from the bowels of earth to the back of heaven, is represented by the secret cave at the base of the hill, the cave of the darkness.

But the cave is only the home of the Panis, their field of action is earth and heaven and the mid-world. They are the sons of the Inconscience, but themselves are not precisely inconscient in their action; they have forms of apparent knowledge, *māyāḥ*, but these are forms of ignorance the truth of which is concealed in the darkness of the inconscient and their surface or front is falsehood, not truth. For the world as we see it has come out of the darkness concealed in darkness, the deep and abysmal flood that covered all things, the inconscient ocean, *apraketaṁ salilam* (X.129.3); in that non-existence the seers have found by desire in the heart and thought in the mind that which builds up the true existence. This non-existence of the truth of things, *asat*, is the first aspect of them that emerges from the inconscient ocean; and its great darkness is the Vedic Night, *rātrīṁ jagato niveśanīm* (I.35.1), which holds the world and all its unrevealed potentialities in her obscure bosom. Night extends her realm over this triple world of ours and out of her in heaven, in the mental being, Dawn is born who delivers the Sun out of the darkness where it was lying concealed and eclipsed and creates the vision of the supreme Day in the non-existence, in the Night, *asati ketum*. It is therefore in these three realms that the battle between the Lords of Light and the Lords of the Ignorance proceeds through its continual vicissitudes.

The word *paṇi* means dealer, trafficker, from *paṇ* (also *pan*,[1] cf. Tamil *paṇ*, Greek *ponos*, labour) and we may perhaps regard the Panis as the powers that preside over those ordinary unillumined sense-activities of life whose immediate root is in the dark subconscient physical being and not in the divine mind. The whole struggle of man is to replace this action by the luminous working of mind and life which comes from above through the mental existence. Whoever thus aspires, labours, battles, travels, ascends the hill of being is the Aryan (*ārya*, *arya*, *ari* with the various senses, to toil, to fight, to climb or rise, to travel, to prepare the sacrifice); for the work of the Aryan is a sacrifice which is at once a battle and an ascent and a journey, a battle against the powers of darkness, an ascent to the highest peaks of the mountain beyond earth and heaven into Swar, a journey to the other shore of the rivers and the ocean into the farthest Infinity of things. The Aryan has the will to the work, he is the doer of the work (*kāru*, *kīri*, etc.), the gods who put their force into his work are *sukratu*, perfect in power for the sacrifice; the Dasyu or Pani is the opposite of both, he is *akratu*. The Aryan is the sacrificer, *yajamāna*, *yajyu*; the gods who receive, uphold, impel his sacrifice are *yajata*, *yajatra*, powers of the sacrifice; the Dasyu is the opposite of both, he is *ayajyu*. The Aryan in the sacrifice finds the divine word, *gīḥ*, *mantra*, *brahma*, *uktha*, he is the *brahmā* or singer of the word; the gods delight in and uphold the word, *girvāhas*, *girvaṇas*, the Dasyus are haters and destroyers of the Word, *brahmadviṣaḥ*, spoilers of speech, *mṛdhravācaḥ*. They have no force of the divine breath or no mouth to speak it, they are *anāsaḥ*; and they have no power to think and mentalise the word and the truth it contains, they are *amanyamānāḥ*: but the Aryans are the thinkers of the word, *manyamānāḥ*, holders of the thought, the thought-mind and the seer-knowledge, *dhīra*, *manīṣī*, *kavi*; the gods are also the supreme thinkers of the Thought, *prathamo manotā dhiyaḥ*, *kavayaḥ*. The Aryans are desirers of the godheads, *devayu*, *uśij*; they seek to increase their own being and the godheads in them by the sacrifice, the word, the thought; the Dasyus are god-haters, *devadviṣaḥ*, obstructors of the godhead, *devanidaḥ*, who desire no increase, *avṛdhaḥ*. The gods lavish wealth on the Aryan, the Aryan gives his wealth to the gods; the Dasyu withholds his wealth from the Aryan until it is taken from him by force, and does not press out the immortal Soma wine for the deities who seek its rapture in man; although he is *revān*, although his cave is packed with cows and horses and treasures, *gobhir aśvebhir vasubhir nyṛṣṭam*, still he is *arādhas*, because his wealth gives no prosperity or felicity to man or himself, — the Pani is the miser of existence. And in the struggle between the Aryan and the Dasyu he seeks always to plunder and destroy, to steal the luminous cows of the latter and hide them again in the darkness of the cave. "Slay the devourer, the Pani; for he is the wolf (the tearer, *vṛkaḥ*)" (VI.51.14).

---

[1] Sayana takes *pan* in Veda — to praise, but in one place he admits the sense of *vyavahāra*, dealing. Action seems to me to be its sense in most passages. From *paṇ* in the sense of action we have the earlier names of the organs of action, *pāṇi*, hand, foot or hoof, Lat. *penis*, cf. also *pāyu*.

It is evident that these descriptions could easily be applied to human enemies who hate the cult and the gods of the Aryan, but we shall see that such an interpretation is entirely impossible because in the hymn I.33 in which these distinctions are most clearly drawn and the battle of Indra and his human allies with the Dasyus most elaborately described, these Dasyus, Panis and Vritras, cannot possibly be human fighters, tribes or robbers. In this hymn of Hiranyastupa Angirasa the first ten verses clearly refer to the battle for the Cows and therefore to the Panis. "Come, let us go seeking the cows to Indra; for it is he that increases the thought in us; invincible is he and complete are his felicities, he releases for us (separates from the darkness) the supreme knowledge-vision of the luminous cows, *gavāṁ ketaṁ param āvarjate naḥ*. I fly to the unassailable giver of riches like a bird to its beloved nest, bowing down to Indra with the supreme words of light, to him to whom his affirmers must call in their journey. He comes with all his armies and has fastened firmly his quivers; he is the fighter (the Aryan) who brings the cows to whomsoever he desires. O Indra who hast increased (by our word), hold not back for thyself thy much delight, become not in us the Pani, *coṣkūyamāṇo bhūri vāmaṁ mā paṇir bhūr asmad adhi pravṛddha*." The last phrase is a striking one and in the current interpretation its real force is avoided by rendering "do not become a miser with regard to us." But this is to ignore the fact that the Panis are the withholders of the wealth who keep it for themselves and give it neither to god nor man. The sense obviously is "Having thy much wealth of the delight, do not be a Pani, one who holds his possessions only for himself and keeps them from man; do not hold the delight away from us in thy superconscient as the Panis do in their subconscient secrecy."

Then the hymn describes the Pani, the Dasyu and Indra's battle with him for the possession of earth and heaven. "Nay, thou slayest with thy weapon the wealthy Dasyu, ranging alone with thy powers that serve thee, O Indra; they on thy bow (the powers as arrows) sped diversely in all directions and they who keep possession and sacrifice not went unto their death. Their heads were scattered far from them, they who do not sacrifice yet strove with the sacrificers, when, O lord of the shining steeds, O strong stander in heaven, thou didst cast out from Heaven and Earth those who observe not the law of thy working (*avratān*). They fought against the army of the blameless one; the Navagwas set him on his march; like bullocks who fight against the bull they were cast out, they came to know what was Indra and fled from him down the slopes. O Indra, thou foughtest them who laughed and wept on the other side of the mid-world (*rajasaḥ pāre*, i.e. on the borders of heaven); thou didst burn down the Dasyu out of heaven from on high, thou didst foster the expression of him who affirms thee and gives the Soma. Making the circle of the earth, they shone in the light of the golden gem (an image for the Sun); but for all their rushing they could not pass beyond Indra, for he set spies all around by the Sun. When thou possessedst earth and heaven all around with thy vastness, O Indra, by the speakers of the word (*brahmabhir*) thou didst cast out the Dasyu, attacking those who can think not (the Truth) by those who think, *amanyamānān abhi manyamānaiḥ*. They attained not to the end of heaven and earth; Indra, the bull, made the lightning his helper, by the Light he milked the shining cows out of the darkness."

The battle takes place not on earth but on the other shore of the Antariksha, the Dasyus are driven out of heaven by the flames of the thunderbolt, they circle round the earth and are cast out of both heaven and earth; for they can find no place in either heaven or earth, all being now full of the greatness of Indra, nor can conceal themselves anywhere from his lightnings because the Sun with its rays gives him spies whom he sets all round and in the brightness of those rays the Panis are discovered. This can be no description of an earthly battle between Aryan and Dravidian tribes; neither can the lightning be the physical lightning since that has nothing to do with the destruction of the powers of Night and the milking of the cows of the Dawn out of the darkness. It is clear then that these non-sacrificers, these haters of the word who are incompetent even to think it are not any human enemies of the Aryan cult. They are the powers that strive for possession of heaven and earth in man himself; they are demons and not Dravidians.

It is noteworthy that they strive, but fail to attain the "limit of earth and heaven"; we may suppose that these powers seek without the word or the sacrifice to attain to the higher world beyond earth and heaven which can be conquered only by the word and the sacrifice. They seek to possess the Truth under the law of the Ignorance; but they are unable to attain to the limit of earth or heaven; only Indra and the Gods can so exceed the formula of mind, life and body after filling all three with their greatness. Sarama (X.108.6) seems to hint at this ambition of the Panis; "May your words be unable to attain, may your embodiments be evil and inauspicious; may you not violate the path to travel upon it; may Brihaspati not give you happiness of the two worlds (divine and human)." The Panis indeed offer insolently to be friendly with Indra if he will stay in their cave and be the keeper of their cows, to which Sarama answers that Indra is the overcomer of all and cannot be himself overcome and oppressed, and again they offer brotherhood to Sarama if she will dwell with them and not return to the far world whence she has come by the force of the gods against all obstacles, *prabādhitā sahasā daivyena*. Sarama replies, "I know not brotherhood and sisterhood, Indra knows and the dread Angirases; desiring the Cows they protected me so that I came; depart hence, O Panis, to a better place. Depart hence, O Panis, to a better place, let the Cows ye confine go upward by the Truth, the hidden Cows whom Brihaspati finds and Soma and the pressing-stones and the illumined seers."

We have the idea also of a voluntary yielding up of their store by the Panis in VI.53, a hymn addressed to the Sun as the Increaser Pushan. "O Pushan, Lord of the Path, we yoke thee like a chariot for the winning of the plenitude, for the Thought. . . . O shining Pushan, impel to giving the Pani, even him who giveth not; soften the mind even of the Pani. Distinguish the paths that lead to the winning of the plenitude, slay the aggressors, let our thoughts be perfected. Smite the hearts of the Panis with thy goad, O seer; so make them subject to us. Smite them, O Pushan, with thy goad and desire in the heart of the Pani our delight; so make him subject to us. . . . Thy goad thou bearest that impels the word to rise, O shining seer, with that write thy line on the hearts of all and sever them, (so make them subject to us). Thy goad of which thy ray is the point and which perfects the herds (of thought-vision, *paśusādhanī*, cf. *sādhantāṁ dhiyaḥ* in verse 4), the delight of that we desire. Create for us the thought that wins the cow, that wins the horse, that wins the plenitude of the wealth."

If we are right in our interpretation of this symbol of the Panis, these ideas are sufficiently intelligible without depriving the word of its ordinary sense, as does Sayana, and making it mean only a miserly, greedy human being whom the hunger-stricken poet is thus piteously importuning the Sun-God to turn to softness and charity. The Vedic idea was that the subconscient darkness and the ordinary life of ignorance held concealed in it all that belongs to the divine life and that these secret riches must be recovered first by destroying the impenitent powers of ignorance and then by possessing the lower life subjected to the higher. Of Indra it has been said, as we have seen, that he either slays or conquers the Dasyu and transfers his wealth to the Aryan. So also Sarama refuses peace with alliance to the Panis, but suggests their submission to the gods and the Aryans by the surrender and ascent of the imprisoned cows and their own departure from the darkness to a better place (*ā varīyaḥ*). And it is by the strenuous touch of the goad of the luminous seer, Pushan, lord of the Truth, the goad that drives open the closed heart and makes the sacred word to arise from its depths, it is by this luminous-pointed goad which perfects the radiant cows, accomplishes the luminous thoughts, that the conversion of the Pani is effected; then the Truth-god in his darkened heart also desires that which the Aryan desires. Therefore by this penetrating action of the Light and the Truth the powers of the ordinary ignorant sense-activity become subject to the Aryan.

But, normally, they are his enemies, not *dāsa* in the sense of submission and service (*dāsa*, servant, from *das* to work), but in the sense of destruction and injury (*dāsa*, *dasyu*, an enemy, plunderer, from *das* to divide, hurt, injure). The Pani is the robber who snatches away the cows of light, the horses of the swiftness and the treasures of the divine plenitude, he is the wolf, the eater, *atri*, *vṛka*; he is the obstructor, *nid*, and spoiler of the word. He is the enemy, the thief, the false or evil thinker who makes difficult the Path by his robberies and obstructions; "Cast away utterly far from us the enemy, the thief, the crooked one who places falsely the thought; O master of existence, make our path easy to travel. Slay the Pani for he is the wolf, that devours" (VI.51.13-14). His rising to the attack must be checked by the gods. "This god (Soma) in his birth with Indra for helper held back by force the Pani" and won Swar and the sun and all the riches, (VI.44.22). The Panis have to be slain or routed so that their riches may be ravished from them and devoted to the higher life. "Thou who didst sever the Pani in his continuous ranks, thine are these strong givings, O Saraswati. O Saraswati, crush the obstructors of the gods" (VI.61). "O Agni and Soma, then was your strength awakened when you robbed the Pani of the cows and found the one Light for many" (I.93.4).

When the gods awake in the Dawn for the sacrifice, the Panis must not awake also to interfere with its successful progress; let them sleep in their cavern darkness. "O Dawn, queen of the plenitudes, awaken those who fill us (the gods), but let the Panis sleep unawakening. Richly dawn for the lords of the plenitude, O queen of the Plenitude, richly for him who affirms thee, O Dawn that art Truth. Young she shines out before us, she has created her host of the ruddy cows; in the non-existent vision has dawned out wide" (I.124.10-11). Or again in IV.51, "Lo, in front of us that supreme light full of the knowledge has arisen out of the darkness; daughters of heaven shining wide, the Dawns have created the path for the human being. The Dawns stand in front of us like pillars in the sacrifices; breaking out pure and purifying they have opened the doors of the pen, the darkness. Breaking forth today the dawns awaken to knowledge the enjoyers for the giving of the rich felicity; within where there is no play of light let the Panis sleep unwaking in the heart of the darkness." Into this nether darkness they have to be cast down from the higher planes while the Dawns imprisoned by them in that night have to be lifted to the highest planes. "Panis who make the knot of the crookedness, who have not the will to works, spoilers of speech, who have not faith, who increase not, who do not sacrifice, them has Agni driven farther and farther; supreme, he has made them nethermost who will not sacrifice. And (the Cows, the Dawns) who rejoiced in the nether darkness, by his power he has made to move to the highest. . . . He has broken down by his blows the walls that limit, he has given the Dawns to be possessed by the Aryan," *aryapatnīr uṣasaś cakāra* (VII.6.3-5). The Rivers and Dawns when in the possession of Vritra or Vala are described as *dāsapatnīḥ*; by the action of the gods they become *aryapatnīḥ*, they become the helpmates of the Aryan.

The lords of the ignorance have to be slain or enslaved to the Truth and its seekers, but their wealth is indispensable to the human fulfilment; it is as if "on the most wealth-abounding head of the Panis" (VI.45.31) that Indra takes his stand, *paṇīnāṁ varṣiṣṭhe mūrdhann asthāt*; he becomes himself the Cow of Light and the Horse of Swiftness and lavishes an ever-increasing thousandfold wealth. The fullness of that luminous wealth of the Panis and its ascent heavenward is, as we know already, the Path and the birth of the Immortality. "The Angiras held the supreme manifestation (of the Truth), they who had lit the fire, by perfect accomplishment of the work; they gained the whole enjoyment of the Pani, its herds of the cows and the horses. Atharvan first formed the Path, thereafter Surya was born as the protector of the Law and the Blissful One, *tataḥ sūryo vratapā vena ājani.* Ushanas Kavya drove upward the Cows. With them may we win by the sacrifice the immortality that is born as a child to the Lord of the Law," *yamasya jātam amṛtaṁ yajāmahe* (I.83.4-5). Angira is the Rishi who represents the Seer-Will, Atharvan is the Rishi of the journeying on the Path, Ushanas Kavya is the Rishi of the heavenward desire that is born from the seer-knowledge. The Angiras win the wealth of illuminations and powers of the Truth concealed behind the lower life and its crookednesses; Atharvan forms in their strength the Path and Surya the Lord of Light is then born as the guardian of the divine Law and the Yama-power; Ushanas drives the herded illuminations of our thought up that path of the Truth to the Bliss which Surya possesses; so is born from the law of the Truth the immortality to which the Aryan soul by its sacrifice aspires.

Chapter XXIII

Summary of Conclusions

WE HAVE now closely scrutinised the Angiras legend in the Rig Veda from all possible sides and in all its main symbols and are in a position to summarise firmly the conclusions we have drawn from it. As I have already said, the Angiras legend and the Vritra mythus are the two principal parables of the Veda; they occur and recur everywhere; they run through the hymns as two closely connected threads of symbolic imagery, and around them all the rest of the Vedic symbolism is woven. Not that they are its central ideas, but they are two main pillars of this ancient structure. When we determine their sense, we have determined the sense of the whole Rik Sanhita. If Vritra and the waters symbolise the cloud and the rain and the gushing forth of the seven rivers of the Punjab and if the Angirases are the bringers of the physical dawn, then the Veda is a symbolism of natural phenomena personified in the figure of gods and Rishis and maleficent demons. If Vritra and Vala are Dravidian gods and the Panis and Vritras human enemies, then the Veda is a poetical and legendary account of the invasion of Dravidian India by Nature-worshipping barbarians. If on the other hand this is a symbolism of the struggle between spiritual powers of Light and Darkness, Truth and Falsehood, Knowledge and Ignorance, Death and Immortality, then that is the real sense of the whole Veda.

We have concluded that the Angiras Rishis are bringers of the Dawn, rescuers of the Sun out of the darkness, but that this Dawn, Sun, Darkness are figures used with a spiritual significance. The central conception of the Veda is the conquest of the Truth out of the darkness of Ignorance and by the conquest of the Truth the conquest also of Immortality. For the Vedic Ritam is a spiritual as well as a psychological conception. It is the true being, the true consciousness, the true delight of existence beyond this earth of body, this mid-region of vital force, this ordinary sky or heaven of mind. We have to cross beyond all these planes in order to arrive at the higher plane of that superconscient Truth which is the own home of the gods and the foundation of Immortality. This is the world of Swar, to which the Angirases have found the path for their posterity.

The Angirases are at once the divine seers who assist in the cosmic and human workings of the gods and their earthly representatives, the ancient fathers who first found the wisdom of which the Vedic hymns are a chant and memory and renewal in experience. The seven divine Angirases are sons or powers of Agni, powers of the Seer-Will, the flame of divine Force instinct with divine knowledge which is kindled for the victory. The Bhrigus have found this Flame secret in the growths of the earthly existence, but the Angirases kindle it on the altar of sacrifice and maintain the sacrifice through the periods of the sacrificial year symbolising the periods of the divine labour by which the Sun of Truth is recovered out of the darkness. Those who sacrifice for nine months of this year are Navagwas, seers of the nine cows or nine rays, who institute the search for the herds of the Sun and the march of Indra to battle with the Panis. Those who sacrifice for ten months are the Dashagwas, seers of the ten rays who enter with Indra into the cave of the Panis and recover the lost herds.

The sacrifice is the giving by man of what he possesses in his being to the higher or divine nature and its fruit is the farther enrichment of his manhood by the lavish bounty of the gods. The wealth thus gained constitutes a state of spiritual riches, prosperity, felicity which is itself a power for the journey and a force of battle. For the sacrifice is a journey, a progression; the sacrifice itself travels led by Agni up the divine path to the gods and of this journey the ascent of the Angiras fathers to the divine world of Swar is the type. Their journey of the sacrifice is also a battle, for it is opposed by Panis, Vritras and other powers of evil and falsehood, and of this warfare the conflict of Indra and the Angirases with the Panis is a principal episode.

The principal features of sacrifice are the kindling of the divine flame, the offering of the *ghṛta* and the Soma wine and the chanting of the sacred word. By the hymn and the offering the gods are increased; they are said to be born, created or manifested in man and by their increase and greatness here they increase the earth and heaven, that is to say, the physical and mental existence to their utmost capacity and, exceeding these, create in their turn the higher worlds or planes. The higher existence is the divine, the infinite of which the shining Cow, the infinite Mother, Aditi, is the symbol; the lower is subject to her dark form Diti. The object of the sacrifice is to win the higher or divine being and possess with it and make subject to its law and truth the lower or human existence. The *ghṛta* of the sacrifice is the yield of the shining Cow; it is the clarity or brightness of the solar light in the human mentality. The Soma is the immortal delight of existence secret in the waters and the plant and pressed out for drinking by gods and men. The word is the inspired speech expressing the thought-illumination of the Truth which rises out of the soul, formed in the heart, shaped by the mind. Agni growing by the *ghṛta*, Indra forceful with the luminous strength and joy of the Soma and increased by the Word, aid the Angirases to recover the herds of the Sun.

Brihaspati is the Master of the creative Word. If Agni is the supreme Angiras, the flame from whom the Angirases are born, Brihaspati is the one Angiras with the seven mouths, the seven rays of the illuminative thought and the seven words which express it, of whom these seers are the powers of utterance. It is the complete thought of the Truth, the seven-headed, which wins the fourth or divine world for man by winning for him the complete spiritual wealth, object of the sacrifice. Therefore Agni, Indra, Brihaspati, Soma are all described as winners of the herds of the Sun and destroyers of the Dasyus who conceal and withhold them from man. Saraswati, who is the stream of the Word or inspiration of the Truth, is also a Dasyu-slayer and winner of the shining herds; and they are discovered by Sarama, forerunner of Indra, who is a solar or dawn goddess and seems to symbolise the intuitive power of the Truth. Usha, the Dawn, is at once herself a worker in the great victory and in her full advent its luminous result.

Usha is the divine Dawn, for the Sun that arises by her coming is the Sun of the superconscient Truth; the day he brings is the day of the true life in the true knowledge, the night he dispels is the night of the ignorance which yet conceals the dawn in its bosom. Usha herself is the Truth, *sūnṛtā*, and the mother of Truths. These truths of the divine Dawn are called her cows, her shining herds; while the forces of the Truth that accompany them and occupy the Life are called her horses. Around this symbol of the cows and horses much of the Vedic symbolism turns; for these are the chief elements of the riches sought by man from the gods. The cows of the Dawn have been stolen and concealed by the demons, the lords of darkness in their nether cave of the secret subconscient. They are the illuminations of knowledge, the thoughts of the Truth, *gāvo matayaḥ*, which have to be delivered out of their imprisonment. Their release is the upsurging of the powers of the divine Dawn.

It is also the recovery of the Sun that was lying in the darkness; for it is said that the Sun, "that Truth", was the thing found by Indra and the Angirases in the cave of the Panis. By the rending of that cave the herds of the divine dawn which are the rays of the Sun of Truth ascend the hill of being and the Sun itself ascends to the luminous upper ocean of the divine existence, led over it by the thinkers like a ship over the waters, till it reaches its farther shore.

The Panis who conceal the herds, the masters of the nether cavern, are a class of Dasyus who are in the Vedic symbolism set in opposition to the Aryan gods and Aryan seers and workers. The Aryan is he who does the work of sacrifice, finds the sacred word of illumination, desires the Gods and increases them and is increased by them into the largeness of the true existence; he is the warrior of the light and the traveller to the Truth. The Dasyu is the undivine being who does no sacrifice, amasses a wealth he cannot rightly use because he cannot speak the word or mentalise the superconscient Truth, hates the Word, the gods and the sacrifice and gives nothing of himself to the higher existences but robs and withholds his wealth from the Aryan. He is the thief, the enemy, the wolf, the devourer, the divider, the obstructor, the confiner. The Dasyus are powers of darkness and ignorance who oppose the seeker of truth and immortality. The gods are the powers of Light, the children of Infinity, forms and personalities of the one Godhead who by their help and by their growth and human workings in man raise him to the truth and the immortality.

Thus the interpretation of the Angiras myth gives us the key to the whole secret of the Veda. For if the cows and horses lost by the Aryans and recovered for them by the gods, the cows and horses of which Indra is the lord and giver and indeed himself the Cow and Horse, are not physical cattle, if these elements of the wealth sought by the sacrifice are symbols of a spiritual riches, so also must be its other elements which are always associated with them, sons, men, gold, treasure, etc. If the Cow of which the *ghṛta* is the yield is not a physical cow but the shining Mother, then the *ghṛta* itself which is found in the waters and is said to be triply secreted by the Panis in the Cow, is no physical offering, nor the honey-wine of Soma either which is also said to exist in the rivers and to rise in a honeyed wave from the ocean and to flow streaming up to the gods. And if these, then also the other offerings of the sacrifice must be symbolic; the outer sacrifice itself can be nothing but the symbol of an inner giving. And if the Angiras Rishis are also in part symbolic or are, like the gods, semi-divine workers and helpers in the sacrifice, so also must be the Bhrigus, Atharvans, Ushana and Kutsa and others who are associated with them in their work. If the Angiras legend and the story of the struggle with the Dasyus is a parable, so also should be the other legendary stories we find in the Rig Veda of the help given by the Gods to the Rishis against the demons; for these also are related in similar terms and constantly classed by the Vedic poets along with the Angiras story as on the same footing.

Similarly if these Dasyus who refuse the gift and the sacrifice, and hate the Word and the gods and with whom the Aryans are constantly at war, these Vritras, Panis and others, are not human enemies but powers of darkness, falsehood and evil, then the whole idea of the Aryan wars and kings and nations begins to take upon itself the aspect of spiritual symbol and apologue. Whether they are entirely so or only partly, cannot be decided except by a more detailed examination which is not our present object. Our object is only to see whether there is a prima facie case for the idea with which we started that the Vedic hymns are the symbolic gospel of the ancient Indian mystics and their sense spiritual and psychological. Such a prima facie case we have established; for there is already sufficient ground for seriously approaching the Veda from this standpoint and interpreting it in detail as such a lyric symbolism.

Still, to make our case entirely firm it will be well to examine the other companion legend of Vritra and the waters which we have seen to be closely connected with that of the Angirases and the Light. In the first place Indra the Vritra-slayer is along with Agni one of the two chief gods of the Vedic Pantheon and if his character and functions can be properly established, we shall have the general type of the Aryan gods fixed firmly. Secondly, the Maruts, his companions, singers of the sacred chant, are the strongest point of the naturalistic theory of Vedic worship; they are undoubtedly storm-gods and no other of the greater Vedic deities, Agni or the Ashwins or Varuna and Mitra or Twashtri and the goddesses or even Surya the Sun or Usha the Dawn have such a pronounced physical character. If then these storm-gods can be shown to have a psychological character and symbolism, then there can be no farther doubt about the profounder sense of the Vedic religion and ritual. Finally, if Vritra and his associated demons, Shushna, Namuchi and the rest appear when closely scrutinised to be Dasyus in the spiritual sense and if the meaning of the heavenly waters he obstructs be more thoroughly investigated, then the consideration of the stories of the Rishis and the gods and demons as parables can be proceeded with from a sure starting-point and the symbolism of the Vedic worlds brought nearer to a satisfactory interpretation.

More we cannot at present attempt; for the Vedic symbolism as worked out in the hymns is too complex in its details, too numerous in its standpoints, presents too many obscurities and difficulties to the interpreter in its shades and side allusions and above all has been too much obscured by ages of oblivion and misunderstanding to be adequately dealt with in a single work. We can only at present seek out the leading clues and lay as securely as may be the right foundations.

Part Two

Selected Hymns

Author's Note

These translations are offered here only in their results for the interest of the general reader and as an illustration of the theory advanced. Their philological and critical justification would be interesting only to a limited circle. A few indications, however, may at a later stage be given which will illustrate the method.

I

The Colloquy of Indra and Agastya

Rig Veda I.170

न नूनमस्ति नो श्वः कस्तद्वेद यदद्भुतम् ।
अन्यस्य चित्तमभि संचरेण्यमुताधीतं वि नश्यति ॥ १॥

Indra

1. It is not now, nor is It tomorrow; who knoweth that which is Supreme and Wonderful? It has motion and action in the consciousness of another, but when It is approached by the thought, It vanishes.

किं न इन्द्र जिघांससि भ्रातरो मरुतस्तव ।
तेभिः कल्पस्व साधुया मा नः समरणे वधीः ॥ २॥

Agastya

2. Why dost thou seek to smite us, O Indra? The Maruts are thy brothers. By them accomplish perfection; slay us not in our struggle.

किं नो भ्रातरगस्त्य सखा सन्नति मन्यसे ।
विद्मा हि ते यथा मनोऽस्मभ्यमिन्न दित्ससि ॥ ३॥
अरं कृण्वन्तु वेदिं समग्निमिन्धतां पुरः ।
तत्रामृतस्य चेतनं यज्ञं ते तनवावहै ॥ ४॥

Indra

3. Why, O my brother Agastya, art thou my friend, yet settest thy thought beyond me? For well do I know how to us thou willest not to give thy mind.

4. Let them make ready the altar, let them set Agni in blaze in front. It is there, the awakening of the consciousness to Immortality. Let us two extend for thee thy effective sacrifice.

त्वमीशिषे वसुपते वसूनां त्वं मित्राणां मित्रपते धेष्ठः ।
इन्द्र त्वं मरुद्भिः सं वदस्वाध प्राशान ऋतुथा हवींषि ॥ ५ ॥

Agastya

5. O Lord of substance over all substances of being, thou art the master in force! O Lord of Love over the powers of love, thou art the strongest to hold in status! Do thou, O Indra, agree with the Maruts, then enjoy the offerings in the ordered method of the Truth.

COMMENTARY

The governing idea of the hymn belongs to a stage of spiritual progress when the human soul wishes by the sheer force of Thought to hasten forward beyond in order to reach prematurely the source of all things without full development of the being in all its progressive stages of conscious activity. The effort is opposed by the Gods who preside over the universe of man and of the world and a violent struggle takes place in the human consciousness between the individual soul in its egoistic eagerness and the universal Powers which seek to fulfil the divine purpose of the Cosmos.

The seer Agastya at such a moment confronts in his inner experience Indra, Lord of Swar, the realm of pure intelligence, through which the ascending soul passes into the divine Truth.

Indra speaks first of that unknowable Source of things towards which Agastya is too impatiently striving. That is not to be found in Time. It does not exist in the actualities of the present, nor in the eventualities of the future. It neither is now nor becomes hereafter. Its being is beyond Space and Time and therefore in Itself cannot be known by that which is in Space and Time. It manifests Itself by Its forms and activities in the consciousness of that which is not Itself and through those activities it is meant that It should be realised. But if one tries to approach It and study It in Itself, It disappears from the thought that would seize It and is as if It were not.

Agastya still does not understand why he is so violently opposed in a pursuit which is the eventual aim of all being and which all his thoughts and feelings demand. The Maruts are the powers of Thought which by the strong and apparently destructive motion of their progress break down that which is established and help to the attainment of new formations. Indra, the Power of pure Intelligence, is their brother, kin to them in his nature although elder in being. He should by their means effect the perfection towards which Agastya is striving and not turn enemy nor slay his friend in this terrible struggle towards the goal.

Indra replies that Agastya is his friend and brother, — brother in the soul as children of one Supreme Being, friend as comrades in a common effort and one in the divine love that unites God and man, — and by this friendship and alliance has attained to the present stage in his progressive perfection; but now he treats Indra as an inferior Power and wishes to go beyond without fulfilling himself in the domain of the God. He seeks to divert his increased thought-powers towards his own object instead of delivering them up to the universal Intelligence so that it may enrich its realisations in humanity through Agastya and lead him forward by the way of the Truth. Let the egoistic endeavour cease, the great sacrifice be resumed, the flame of the divine Force, Agni, be kindled in front as head of the sacrifice and leader of the march. Indra and Agastya together, the universal Power and the human soul, will extend in harmony the effective inner action on the plane of the pure Intelligence so that it may enrich itself there and attain beyond. For it is precisely by the progressive surrender of the lower being to the divine activities that the limited and egoistic consciousness of the mortal awakens to the infinite and immortal state which is its goal.

Agastya accepts the will of the God and submits. He agrees to perceive and fulfil the Supreme in the activities of Indra. From his own realm Indra is supreme lord over the substances of being as manifested through the triple world of mind, life and body and has therefore power to dispose of its formations towards the fulfilment, in the movement of Nature, of the divine Truth that expresses itself in the universe, — supreme lord over love and delight manifested in the same triple world and has therefore power to fix those formations harmoniously in the status of Nature. Agastya gives up all that is realised in him into the hands of Indra, as offerings of the sacrifice, to be held by him in the fixed parts of Agastya's consciousness and directed in the motional towards fresh formations. Indra is once more to enter into friendly parley with the upward aspiring powers of Agastya's being and to establish agreement between the seer's thoughts and the illumination that comes to us through the pure Intelligence. That power will then enjoy in Agastya the offerings of the sacrifice according to the right order of things as formulated and governed by the Truth which is beyond.

II

Indra, Giver of Light

Rig Veda I.4

सुरूपकृत्नुमूतये सुदुघामिव गोदुहे ।
जुहूमसि द्यविद्यवि ॥ १ ॥

1. The fashioner of perfect forms, like a good yielder for the milker of the Herds, we call for increase from day to day.

उप नः सवना गहि सोमस्य सोमपाः पिब ।
गोदा इद् रेवतो मदः ॥ २ ॥

2. Come to our Soma-offerings. O Soma-drinker, drink of the Soma-wine; the intoxication of thy rapture gives indeed the Light.

अथा ते अन्तमानां विद्याम सुमतीनाम् ।
मा नो अति ख्य आ गहि ॥ ३ ॥

3. Then may we know somewhat of thy uttermost right thinkings. Show not beyond us, come.

परेहि विग्रमस्तृतमिन्द्रं पृच्छा विपश्चितम् ।
यस्ते सखिभ्य आ वरम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. Come over, question Indra of the clear-seeing mind, the vigorous, the unoverthrown, who to thy comrades has brought the highest good.

उत ब्रुवन्तु नो निदो निरन्यतश्चिदारत ।
दधाना इन्द्र इद् दुवः ॥ ५ ॥

5. And may the Restrainers[1] say to us, "Nay, forth and strive on even in other fields, reposing on Indra your activity."

उत नः सुभगाँ अरिर्वोचेयुर्दस्म कृष्टयः ।
स्यामेदिन्द्रस्य शर्मणि ॥ ६ ॥

6. And may the fighters, doers of the work,[2] declare us entirely blessed, O achiever; may we abide in Indra's peace.

एमाशुमाशवे भर यज्ञश्रियं नृमादनम् ।
पतयन् मन्दयत्सखम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Intense for the intense bring thou this glory of the sacrifice that intoxicates the Man, carrying forward on the way Indra who gives joy to his friend.

अस्य पीत्वा शतक्रतो घनो वृत्राणामभवः ।
प्रावो वाजेषु वाजिनम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. When thou hadst drunk of this, O thou of the hundred activities, thou becamest a slayer of the Coverers and protectedst the rich mind in its riches.

तं त्वा वाजेषु वाजिनं वाजयामः शतक्रतो ।
धनानामिन्द्र सातये ॥ ९ ॥

---

[1] Or Censurers, *Nidaḥ*. The root *nid* bears, I think, in the Veda the sense of "bondage", "confinement", "limitation", which can be assigned to it with entire certainty by philological deduction. It is the base of *nidita*, bound, and *nidāna*, tether. But the root also means to blame. After the peculiar method of the esoteric diction one or other sense predominates in different passages without entirely excluding the other.

[2] *Ariḥ kṛṣṭayaḥ* may also be translated, "the Aryan people", or "the warlike nations". The words *kṛṣṭi* and *carṣaṇi*, interpreted by Sayana as "man", have as their base the roots *kṛṣ* and *carṣ* which originally imply labour, effort or laborious action. They mean sometimes the doer of Vedic Karma, sometimes, the Karma itself, — the worker or the works.

9. Thee thus rich in thy riches we enrich again, O Indra, O thou of the hundred activities, for the safe enjoyment of our havings.

यो रायोऽवनिर्महान्त्सुपारः सुन्वतः सखा ।
तस्मा इन्द्राय गायत ॥ १० ॥

10. He who in his vastness is a continent of bliss, — the friend of the Soma-giver and he carries him safely through, — to that Indra raise the chant.

(SAYANA'S INTERPRETATION)

1. "The doer of (works that have) a good shape, Indra, we call daily for protection as (one calls) for the cow-milker a good milch-cow.
2. "Come to our (three) libations, drink of the Soma, O Soma-drinker; the intoxication of thee, the wealthy one, is indeed cow-giving.
3. "Then (standing) among the intelligent people who are nearest to thee, may we know thee. Do not (go) beyond us (and) manifest (thyself to others, but) come to us.
4. "Come to him and question about me, the intelligent one, (whether I have praised him rightly or not), — to the intelligent and unhurt Indra who gives to thy friends (the priests) the best wealth.
5. "Let of us (i.e. our priests) speak (i.e. praise Indra), — and also, O you who censure, go out (from here) and from elsewhere too, — (our priests) doing service all about Indra.
6. "O destroyer (of foes), may even our enemies speak of us as having good wealth, — men (i.e. our friends will say it of course); may we be in the peace (bestowed) by Indra.
7. "Bring this Soma, that wealth of the sacrifice, the cause of exhilaration to men, (the Soma) that pervades (the three oblations) for Indra who pervades (the Soma-offering), that attains the rites and is friendly to (Indra) who gives joy (to the sacrificer).

8. "Drinking of this, O thou of many actions, thou becamest a slayer of Vritras (i.e. enemies led by Vritra) and didst protect entirely the fighter in the fights.
9. "O Indra of many actions, for enjoyment of riches we make thee abundant in food who art strong in the battles.[3]
10. "Sing to that Indra who is a protector of wealth, great, a good fulfiller (of works) and a friend of the sacrificer."

COMMENTARY

Madhuchchhandas, son of Vishwamitra, invokes in the Soma-offering Indra, the Master of luminous Mind, for increase in the Light. The symbols of the hymn are those of a collective sacrifice. Its subject is the growth of power and delight in Indra by the drinking of the Soma, the wine of immortality, and the consequent illumination of the human being so that the obstructions of his inner knowledge are removed and he attains to the utmost splendours of the liberated mind.

But what is this Soma, called sometimes amrita, the Greek ambrosia, as if it were itself the substance of immortality? It is a figure for the divine Ananda, the principle of Bliss, from which, in the Vedic conception, the existence of Man, this mental being, is drawn. A secret Delight is the base of existence, its sustaining atmosphere and almost its substance. This Ananda is spoken of in the Taittiriya Upanishad as the ethereal atmosphere of bliss without which nothing could remain in being. In the Aitareya Upanishad Soma, as the lunar deity, is born from the sense-mind in the universal Purusha and, when man is produced, expresses himself again as sense-mentality in the human being. For delight is the *raison d'être* of sensation, or, we may say, sensation is an attempt to translate the secret delight of existence into the terms of physical consciousness. But in that consciousness, — often figured as *adri*, the hill, stone, or dense substance, — divine light and divine delight are both of them concealed and confined, and have to be released or extracted. Ananda is retained as *rasa*, the sap, the essence, in sense-objects and sense-experiences, in the plants and growths of the earth-nature, and among these growths the mystic Soma-plant symbolises that element behind all sense activities and their enjoyments which yields the divine essence. It has to be distilled and, once distilled, purified and intensified until it has grown luminous, full of radiance, full of swiftness, full of energy, *gomat*, *āśu*, *yuvāku*. It becomes the chief food of the gods who, called to the Soma-oblation, take their share of the enjoyment and in the strength of that ecstasy increase in man, exalt him to his highest possibilities, make him capable of the supreme experiences. Those who do not give the delight in them as an offering to the divine Powers, preferring to reserve themselves for the sense and the lower life, are adorers not of the gods, but of the Panis, lords of the sense-consciousness, traffickers in its limited activities, they who press not the mystic wine, give not the purified offering, raise not the sacred chant. It is the Panis who steal from us the Rays of the illumined consciousness, those brilliant herds of the sun, and pen them up in the cavern of the subconscient, in the dense hill of matter, corrupting even Sarama, the hound of heaven, the luminous intuition, when she comes on their track to the cave of the Panis.

---

[3] Note that Sayana explains *vājinam* in v. 8 as "fighter in the fights" and the same expression in the very next verse as "strong in the fights" and that in the phrase *vājeṣu vājinaṁ vājayāmaḥ* he takes the base word *vāja* in three different significances, "battle", "strength" and "food". This is a typical example of the deliberate inconsistency of Sayana's method.

I have given the two renderings together so that the reader may make an easy comparison between both methods and results. I enclose within brackets the commentator's explanations wherever they are necessary to complete the sense or to make it intelligible. Even the reader unacquainted with Sanskrit will be able, I think, to appreciate from this single example the reasons which justify the modern critical mind in refusing to accept Sayana as a reliable authority for the interpretation of the Vedic text.

But the conception of this hymn belongs to a stage in our inner progress when the Panis have been exceeded and even the Vritras or Coverers who seclude from us our full powers and activities and Vala who holds back the Light, are already overpassed. But there are even then powers that stand in the way of our perfection. They are the powers of limitation, the Confiners or Censurers, who, without altogether obscuring the rays or damming up the energies, yet seek by constantly affirming the deficiencies of our self-expression to limit its field and set up the progress realised as an obstacle to the progress to come. Madhuchchhandas calls upon Indra to remove the defect and affirm in its place an increasing illumination.

The principle which Indra represents is Mind-Power released from the limits and obscurations of the nervous consciousness. It is this enlightened Intelligence which fashions right or perfect forms of thought or of action not deformed by the nervous impulses, not hampered by the falsehoods of sense. The image presented is that of a cow giving abundantly its yield to the milker of the herds. The word *go* means in Sanskrit both a cow and a ray of light. This double sense is used by the Vedic symbolists to suggest a double figure which was to them more than a figure; for light, in their view, is not merely an apt poetic image of thought, but is actually its physical form. Thus, the herds that are milked are the Herds of the Sun, — Surya, God of the revelatory and intuitive mind, or else of Dawn, the goddess who manifests the solar glory. The Rishi desires from Indra a daily increase of this light of Truth by his fuller activity pouring rays in a rich yield upon the receptive mind.

The activity of the pure illuminated Intelligence is sustained and increased by the conscious expression in us of the delight in divine existence and divine activity typified by the Soma wine. As the Intelligence feeds upon it, its action becomes an intoxicated ecstasy of inspiration by which the rays come pouring abundantly and joyously in. “Light-giving indeed is the intoxication of thee in thy rapture.”

For then it is possible, breaking beyond the limitations still insisted upon by the Confiners, to arrive at something of the finalities of knowledge possible to the illuminated intelligence. Right thoughts, right sensibilities, — this is the full sense of the word *sumati*; for the Vedic *mati* includes not only the thinking, but also the emotional parts of mentality. *Sumati* is a light in the thoughts; it is also a bright gladness and kindness in the soul. But in this passage the stress of the sense is upon right thought and not on the emotions. It is necessary, however, that the progress in right thinking should commence in the field of consciousness already attained; there must not be flashes and dazzling manifestations which by going beyond our powers elude expression in right form and confuse the receptive mind. Indra must be not only illuminer, but a fashioner of right thought-formations, *surūpakṛtnu*.

The Rishi, next, turning to a comrade in the collective Yoga, or, perhaps, addressing his own mind, encourages him or it to pass beyond the obstruction of the adverse suggestions opposed to him and by questioning the divine Intelligence progress to the highest good which it has already given to others. For it is that Intelligence which clearly discerns and can solve or remove all still-existing confusion and obscuration. Swift of movement, intense, energetic, it does not by its energy stumble in its paths like the impulses of the nervous consciousness. Or perhaps it is rather meant that owing to its invincible energy it does not succumb to the attacks whether of the Coverers or of the powers that limit.

Next are described the results towards which the seer aspires. With this fuller light opening on to the finalities of mental knowledge the powers of Limitation will be satisfied and of themselves will withdraw, consenting to the farther advance and to the new luminous activities. They will say, in effect, "Yes, now you have the right which we were hitherto justified in denying. Not only in the fields won already, but in other and untrod provinces pursue then your conquering march. Repose this action wholly on the divine Intelligence, not upon your lower capacities. For it is the greater surrender which gives you the greater right."

The word *ārata*, move or strive, like its congeners *ari*, *arya*, *ārya*, *arata*, *araṇi*, expresses the central idea of the Veda. The root *ar* indicates always a movement of effort or of struggle or a state of surpassing height or excellence; it is applied to rowing, ploughing, fighting, lifting, climbing. The Aryan then is the man who seeks to fulfil himself by the Vedic action, the internal and external *karma* or *apas*, which is of the nature of a sacrifice to the gods. But it is also imaged as a journey, a march, a battle, a climbing upwards. The Aryan man labours towards heights, fights his way on in a march which is at once a progress forward and an ascent. That is his Aryahood, his *aretē*, virtue, to use a Greek word derived from the same root. *Ārata*, with the rest of the phrase, might be translated, "Out and push forward in other fields."

The idea is taken up again, in the subtle Vedic fashion of thought-connections by word-echoes, with the *ariḥ kṛṣṭayaḥ* of the next verse. These are, I think, not the Aryan nations on earth, although that sense too is possible when the idea is that of a collective or national Yoga, but the powers that help man in his ascent, his spiritual kindred bound to him as comrades, allies, brothers, yokefellows (*sakhāyaḥ*, *yujaḥ*, *jāmayaḥ*), for his aspiration is their aspiration and by his completeness they are fulfilled. As the Restrainers are satisfied and give way, so they too, satisfied, must affirm finally their task accomplished by the fullness of human bliss, when the soul shall rest in the peace of Indra that comes with the Light, the peace of a perfected mentality standing as upon heights of consummated consciousness and Beatitude.

Therefore is the divine Ananda poured out to be made swift and intense in the system and offered to Indra for the support of his intensities. For it is this profound joy manifest in the inner sensations that gives the ecstasy by which the man or the God grows strong. The divine Intelligence will be able to move forward in the journey yet uncompleted and will return the gift by fresh powers of the Beatitude descending upon the friend of God.

For it was in this strength that the Divine Mind in man destroyed all that opposed, as Coverers or besiegers, its hundredfold activities of will and of thought; in this strength it protected afterwards the rich and various possessions already won in past battles from the *Atris* and *Dasyus*, devourers and plunderers of our gains.

Although, continues Madhuchchhandas, that Intelligence is already thus rich and variously stored we seek to increase yet more its force of abundance, removing the Restrainers as well as the Vritras, so that we may have the full and assured possession of our riches.

For this Light is, in its entire greatness free from limitation, a continent of felicity; this Power is that which befriends the human soul and carries it safe through the battle, to the end of its march, to the summit of its aspiration.

III

Indra and the Thought-Forces

Rig Veda I.171

प्रति व एना नमसाहमेमि सूक्तेन भिक्षे सुमतिं तुराणाम् ।
रराणता मरुतो वेद्याभिर्नि हेळो धत्त वि मुचध्वमश्वान् ॥ १ ॥

1. To you I come with this obeisance, by the perfect Word I seek right mentality from the swift in the passage. Take delight, O Maruts, in the things of knowledge, lay aside your wrath, unyoke your steeds.

एष वः स्तोमो मरुतो नमस्वान् हृदा तष्टो मनसा धायि देवाः ।
उपेमा यात मनसा जुषाणा यूयं हि ष्ठा नमस इद् वृधासः ॥ २ ॥

2. Lo, the hymn of your affirmation, O Maruts; it is fraught with my obeisance, it was framed by the heart, it was established by the mind, O ye gods. Approach these my words and embrace them with the mind; for of submission[1] are you the increasers.

स्तुतासो नो मरुतो मृळयन्तूत स्तुतो मघवा शम्भविष्ठः ।
ऊर्ध्वा नः सन्तु कोम्या वनान्यहानि विश्वा मरुतो जिगीषा ॥ ३ ॥

3. Affirmed let the Maruts be benign to us, affirmed the lord of plenitude has become wholly creative of felicity. Upward

---

[1] *Namas*. Sayana takes *namas* throughout in his favourite sense, food; for "increasers of salutation" is obviously impossible. It is evident from this and other passages that behind the physical sense of obeisance the word carries with it a psychological significance which here disengages itself clearly from the concrete figure.

may our desirable delights[2] be uplifted, O Maruts, upward all our days by the will towards victory.

अस्मादहं तविषादीषमाण इन्द्राद् भिया मरुतो रेजमानः ।
युष्मभ्यं हव्या निशितान्यासन् तान्यारे चकृमा मृळता नः ॥ ४ ॥

4. I, mastered by this mighty one, trembling with the fear of Indra, O Maruts, put far away the offerings that for you had been made intense. Let your grace be upon us.

येन मानासश्चितयन्त उस्रा व्युष्टिषु शवसा शश्वतीनाम् ।
स नो मरुद्भिर्वृषभ श्रवो धा उग्र उग्रेभिः स्थविरः सहोदाः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Thou by whom the movements of the mind grow conscient and brilliant[3] in our mornings through the bright power[4] of the continuous Dawns, O Bull of the herd,[5] establish by the Maruts inspired knowledge in us — by them in their energy thou energetic, steadfast, a giver of might.

त्वं पाहीन्द्र सहीयसो नॄन् भवा मरुद्भिरवयातहेळाः ।
सुप्रकेतेभिः सासहिर्दधानो विद्यामेषं वृजनं जीरदानुम् ॥ ६ ॥

---

[2] *Vanāni.* The word means both "forests" and "enjoyments" or as an adjective, "enjoyable". It has commonly the double sense in the Veda, the "pleasant growths" of our physical existence, *romāṇi pṛthivyāḥ*.

[3] *Usrāḥ*. In the feminine the word is used as a synonym for the Vedic *go*, meaning at once Cow and ray of light. Usha, the Dawn, also, is *gomatī*, girt with rays or accompanied by the herds of the Sun. There is in the text a significant assonance, *usrā vy-uṣṭiṣu*, one of the common devices used by the Vedic Rishis to suggest a thought or a connection which they do not consider it essential to bring out expressly.

[4] *Śavas*. There are a host of words in the Veda for strength, force, power and each of them carries with it its own peculiar shade of significance. *Śavas* usually conveys the idea of light as well as force.

[5] *Vṛṣabha*. Bull, Male, Lord or Puissant. Indra is constantly spoken of as *Vṛṣabha* or *Vṛṣan*. The word is sometimes used by itself, as here, sometimes with another word governed by it to bring out the idea of the herds, e.g. *Vṛṣabha matīnām*, Lord of the thoughts, where the image of the bull and the herd is plainly intended.

6. Do thou, O Indra, protect the Powers[6] in their increased might; put away thy wrath against the Maruts, by them in thy forcefulness upheld, who have right perceptions. May we find the strong impulsion that shall break swiftly through.

COMMENTARY

A sequel to the colloquy of Indra and Agastya, this Sukta is Agastya's hymn of propitiation to the Maruts whose sacrifice he had interrupted at the bidding of the mightier deity. Less directly, it is connected in thought with the 165th hymn of the Mandala, the colloquy of Indra and the Maruts, in which the supremacy of the Lord of Heaven is declared and these lesser shining hosts are admitted as subordinate powers who impart to men their impulsion towards the high truths which belong to Indra. "Giving the energy of your breath to their thoughts of varied light, become in them impellers to the knowledge of my truths. Whensoever the doer becomes active for the work and the intelligence of the thinker creates us in him, O Maruts, move surely towards that illumined seer," — such is the closing word of the colloquy, the final injunction of Indra to the inferior deities.

These verses fix clearly enough the psychological function of the Maruts. They are not properly gods of thought, rather gods of energy; still, it is in the mind that their energies become effective. To the uninstructed Aryan worshipper, the Maruts were powers of wind, storm and rain; it is the images of the tempest that are most commonly applied to them and they are spoken of as the Rudras, the fierce, impetuous ones, — a name that they share with the god of Force, Agni. Although Indra is described sometimes as the eldest of the Maruts, — *indrajyeṣṭho*

---

[6] *Nṝn.* The word *nṛ* seems to have meant originally active, swift or strong. We have *nṛmṇa*, strength, and *nṛtama nṛṇām*, most puissant of the Powers. It came afterwards to mean male or man and in the Veda is oftenest applied to the gods as the male powers or Purushas presiding over the energies of Nature as opposed to the female powers, who are called *gnā*.

marudgaṇaḥ, — yet they would seem at first to belong rather to the domain of Vayu, the Wind-God, who in the Vedic system is the Master of Life, inspirer of that Breath or dynamic energy, called the Prana, which is represented in man by the vital and nervous activities. But this is only a part of their physiognomy. Brilliance, no less than impetuosity, is their characteristic. Everything about them is lustrous, themselves, their shining weapons, their golden ornaments, their resplendent cars. Not only do they send down the rain, the waters, the abundance of heaven, and break down the things best established to make way for new movements and new formations, — functions which, for the rest, they share with other gods, Indra, Mitra, Varuna, — but, like them, they also are friends of Truth, creators of Light. It is so that the Rishi, Gotama Rahugana, prays to them, "O ye who have the flashing strength of the Truth, manifest that by your might; pierce with your lightning the Rakshasa. Conceal the concealing darkness, repel every devourer, create the Light for which we long." And in another hymn, Agastya says to them, "They carry with them the sweetness (of the Ananda) as their eternal offspring and play out their play, brilliant in the activities of knowledge." The Maruts, therefore, are energies of the mentality, energies which make for knowledge. Theirs is not the settled truth, the diffused light, but the movement, the search, the lightning-flash, and, when Truth is found, the many-sided play of its separate illuminations.

We have seen that Agastya in his colloquy with Indra speaks more than once of the Maruts. They are Indra's brothers, and therefore the god should not strike at Agastya in his struggle towards perfection. They are his instruments for that perfection, and as such Indra should use them. And in the closing formula of submission and reconciliation, he prays to the god to parley again with the Maruts and to agree with them so that the sacrifice may proceed in the order and movement of the divine Truth towards which it is directed. The crisis, then, that left so powerful an impression on the mind of the seer, was in the nature of a violent struggle in which the higher divine Power confronted Agastya and the Maruts and opposed their impetuous advance.

There has been wrath and strife between the divine Intelligence that governs the world and the vehement aspiring powers of Agastya's mind. Both would have the human being reach his goal; but not as the inferior divine powers choose must that march be directed, — rather as it has been firmly willed and settled above by the secret Intelligence that always possesses for the manifested intelligence that still seeks. Therefore the mind of the human being has been turned into a battle-field for greater Powers and is still quivering with the awe and alarm of that experience.

The submission to Indra has been made; Agastya now appeals to the Maruts to accept the terms of the reconciliation, so that the full harmony of his inner being may be restored. He approaches them with the submission he has rendered to the greater god and extends it to their brilliant legions. The perfection of the mental state and its powers which he desires, their clearness, rectitude, truth-observing energy, is not possible without the swift coursing of the Thought-Forces in their movement towards the higher knowledge. But that movement, mistakenly directed, not rightly illumined, has been checked by the formidable opposition of Indra and has departed for a time out of Agastya's mentality. Thus repelled, the Maruts have left him for other sacrificers; elsewhere shine their resplendent chariots, in other fields thunder the hooves of their wind-footed steeds. The Seer prays to them to put aside their wrath, to take pleasure once more in the pursuit of knowledge and in its activities; not passing him by any more, let them unyoke their steeds, descend and take their place on the seat of the sacrifice, assume their share of the offerings.

For he would confirm again in himself these splendid energies, and it is a hymn of affirmation that he offers them, the *stoma* of the Vedic sages. In the system of the Mystics, which has partially survived in the schools of Indian Yoga, the Word is a power, the Word creates. For all creation is expression, everything exists already in the secret abode of the Infinite, *guhā hitam*, and has only to be brought out here in apparent form by the active consciousness. Certain schools of Vedic thought even suppose the worlds to have been created by the goddess Word and sound as first etheric vibration to have preceded formation. In the Veda itself there are passages which treat the poetic measures of the sacred mantras, — *anuṣṭubh*, *triṣṭubh*, *jagatī*, *gāyatrī*, — as symbolic of the rhythms in which the universal movement of things is cast.

By expression then we create and men are even said to create the gods in themselves by the mantra. Again, that which we have created in our consciousness by the Word, we can fix there by the Word to become part of ourselves and effective not only in our inner life but upon the outer physical world. By expression we form, by affirmation we establish. As a power of expression the word is termed *gīḥ* or *vacas*; as a power of affirmation, *stoma*. In either aspect it is named *manma* or *mantra*, expression of thought in mind, and *brahman*, expression of the heart or the soul, — for this seems to have been the earlier sense of the word *brahman*,[7] afterwards applied to the Supreme Soul or universal Being.

The process of formation of the mantra is described in the second verse along with the conditions of its effectivity. Agastya presents the *stoma*, hymn at once of affirmation and of submission, to the Maruts. Fashioned by the heart, it receives its just place in the mentality through confirmation by the mind. The mantra, though it expresses thought in mind, is not in its essential part a creation of the intellect. To be the sacred and effective word, it must have come as an inspiration from the supra-mental plane, termed in Veda, Ritam, the Truth, and have been received into the superficial consciousness either through the heart or by the luminous intelligence, *manīṣā*. The heart in Vedic psychology is not restricted to the seat of the emotions; it includes all that large tract of spontaneous mentality, nearest to the subconscient in us, out of which rise the sensations, emotions, instincts, impulses and all those intuitions and inspirations that travel through these agencies before they arrive at form in the intelligence. This is the "heart" of Veda and Vedanta, *hṛdaya*, *hṛd*, or *brahman*. There in the present state of mankind the Purusha is supposed to be seated centrally. Nearer to the vastness of the subconscient, it is there that, in ordinary mankind, — man not yet exalted to a higher plane where the contact with the Infinite is luminous, intimate and direct, — the inspirations of the Universal Soul can most easily enter in and most swiftly take possession of the individual soul. It is therefore by the power of the heart that the mantra takes form. But it has to be received and held in the thought of the intelligence as well as in the perceptions of the heart; for not till the intelligence has accepted and even brooded upon it, can that truth of thought which the truth of the Word expresses be firmly possessed or normally effective. Fashioned by the heart, it is confirmed by the mind.

---

[7] Also found in the form *bṛh* (Brihaspati, Brahmanaspati); and there seem to have been older forms, *bṛhan* and *brahan*. It is from *brahan* (gen. *brahnas*) that, in all probability, we have the Greek *phren*, *phrenos*, signifying mind.

But another approval is also needed. The individual mind has accepted; the effective powers of the Cosmos must also accept. The words of the hymn retained by the mind form a basis for the new mental posture from which the future thought-energies have to proceed. The Maruts must approach them and take their stand upon them, the mind of these universal Powers approve and unite itself with the formations in the mind of the individual. So only can our inner or our outer action have its supreme effectivity.

Nor have the Maruts any reason to refuse their assent or to persist in the prolongation of discord. Divine powers who themselves obey a higher law than the personal impulse, it should be their function, as it is their essential nature, to assist the mortal in his surrender to the Immortal and increase obedience to the Truth, the Vast towards which his human faculties aspire.

Indra, affirmed and accepted, is no longer in his contact with the mortal a cause of suffering; the divine touch is now utterly creative of peace and felicity. The Maruts too, affirmed and accepted, must put aside their violence. Assuming their gentler forms, benignant in their action, not leading the soul through strife and disturbance, they too must become purely beneficent as well as puissant agencies.

This complete harmony established, Agastya's Yoga will proceed triumphantly on the new and straight path prescribed to it. It is always the elevation to a higher plane that is the end, — higher than the ordinary life of divided and egoistic sensation, emotion, thought and action. And it is to be pursued always with the same puissant will towards victory over all that resists and hampers. But it must be an integral exaltation. All the joys that the human being seeks with his desire, all the active energies of his waking consciousness, — his days, as it is expressed in the brief symbolic language of the Veda, — must be uplifted to that higher plane. By *vanāni* are meant the receptive sensations seeking in all objectivities the Ananda whose quest is their reason for existence. These, too, are not excluded. Nothing has to be rejected, all has to be raised to the pure levels of the divine consciousness.

Formerly Agastya had prepared the sacrifice for the Maruts under other conditions. He had put their full potentiality of force into all in him that he sought to place in the hands of the Thought-Powers; but because of the defect in his sacrifice he had been met midway by the Mighty One as by an enemy and only after fear and strong suffering had his eyes been opened and his soul surrendered. Still vibrating with the emotions of that experience, he has been compelled to renounce the activities which he had so puissantly prepared. Now he offers the sacrifice again to the Maruts, but couples with that brilliant Name the more puissant godhead of Indra. Let the Maruts then bear no wrath for the interrupted sacrifice but accept this new and more justly guided action.

Agastya turns, in the two closing verses, from the Maruts to Indra. The Maruts represent the progressive illumination of human mentality, until from the first obscure movements of mind which only just emerge out of the darkness of the subconscient, they are transformed into an image of the luminous consciousness of which Indra is the Purusha, the representative Being. Obscure, they become conscient; twilit, half-lit or turned into misleading reflections, they surmount these deficiencies and put on the divine brilliance. This great evolution is effected in Time gradually, in the mornings of the human spirit, by the unbroken succession of the Dawns. For Dawn in the Veda is the goddess symbolic of new openings of divine illumination on man's physical consciousness. She alternates with her sister Night; but that darkness itself is a mother of light and always Dawn comes to reveal what the black-browed Mother has prepared. Here, however, the seer seems to speak of continuous dawns, not broken by these intervals of apparent rest and obscurity. By the brilliant force of that continuity of successive illuminations the mentality of man ascends swiftly into fullest light. But always the force which has governed and made possible the transformation, is the puissance of Indra. It is that supreme Intelligence which through the Dawns, through the Maruts, has been pouring itself into the human being. Indra is the Bull of the radiant herd, the Master of the thought-energies, the Lord of the luminous dawns.

Now also let Indra use the Maruts as his instruments for the illumination. By them let him establish the supramental knowledge of the seer. By their energy his energy will be supported in the human nature and he will give that nature his divine firmness, his divine force, so that it may not stumble under the shock or fail to contain the vaster play of puissant activities too great for our ordinary capacity.

The Maruts, thus reinforced in strength, will always need the guidance and protection of the superior Power. They are the Purushas of the separate thought-energies, Indra the one Purusha of all thought-energy. In him they find their fullness and their harmony. Let there then be no longer strife and disagreement between this whole and these parts. The Maruts, accepting Indra, will receive from him the right perception of the things that have to be known. They will not be misled by the brilliance of a partial light or carried too far by the absorption of a limited energy. They will be able to sustain the action of Indra as he puts forth his force against all that may yet stand between the soul and its consummation.

So in the harmony of these divine Powers and their aspirations may humanity find that impulsion which shall be strong enough to break through the myriad oppositions of this world and, in the individual with his composite personality or in the race, pass rapidly on towards the goal so constantly glimpsed but so distant even to him who seems to himself almost to have attained.

IV

Agni, the Illumined Will

Rig Veda I.77

कथा दाशेमाग्नये कास्मै देवजुष्टोच्यते भामिने गीः ।
यो मर्त्येष्वमृत ऋतावा होता यजिष्ठ इत् कृणोति देवान् ॥१॥

1. How shall we give to Agni? For him what Word accepted by the Gods is spoken, for the lord of the brilliant flame? for him who in mortals, immortal, possessed of the Truth, priest of the oblation strongest for sacrifice, creates the gods?

यो अध्वरेषु शंतम ऋतावा होता तमू नमोभिरा कृणुध्वम् ।
अग्निर्यद् वेर्मर्ताय देवान्त्स चा बोधाति मनसा यजाति ॥२॥

2. He who in the sacrifices is the priest of the offering, full of peace, full of the Truth, him verily form in you by your surrenderings; when Agni manifests[1] for the mortals the gods, he also has perception of them and by the mind offers to them the sacrifice.

स हि क्रतुः स मर्यः स साधुर्मित्रो न भूदद्भुतस्य रथीः ।
तं मेधेषु प्रथमं देवयन्तीर्विश उप ब्रुवते दस्ममारीः ॥३॥

3. For he is the will, he is the strength, he is the effecter of perfection, even as Mitra he becomes the charioteer of the Supreme. To him, the first, in the rich-offerings the people seeking the godhead utter the word, the Aryan people to the fulfiller.

---

[1] Or “enters into the gods”.

स नो नृणां नृतमो रिशादा अग्निर्गिरोऽवसा वेतु धीतिम् ।
तना च ये मघवानः शविष्ठा वाजप्रसूता इषयन्त मन्म ॥ ४॥

4. May this strongest of the Powers and devourer of the destroyers manifest[2] by his presence the Words and their understanding, and may they who in their extension are lords of plenitude brightest in energy pour forth their plenty and give their impulsion to the thought.

एवाग्निर्गोतमेभिर्ऋतावा विप्रेभिरस्तोष्ट जातवेदाः ।
स एषु द्युम्नं पीपयत्स वाजं स पुष्टिं याति जोषमा चिकित्वान् ॥ ५॥

5. Thus has Agni possessed of the Truth been affirmed by the masters of light,[3] the knower of the worlds by clarified minds. He shall foster in them the force of illumination, he too the plenty; he shall attain to increase and to harmony by his perceptions.

COMMENTARY

Gotama Rahugana is the seer of this Hymn, which is a *stoma* in praise of Agni, the divine Will at work in the universe.

Agni is the most important, the most universal of the Vedic gods. In the physical world he is the general devourer and enjoyer. He is also the purifier; when he devours and enjoys, then also he purifies. He is the fire that prepares and perfects; he is also the fire that assimilates and the heat of energy that forms. He is the heat of life and creates the sap, the *rasa* in things, the essence of their substantial being and the essence of their delight.

He is equally the Will in Prana, the dynamic Life-energy, and in that energy performs the same functions. Devouring and enjoying, purifying, preparing, assimilating, forming, he rises upwards always and transfigures his powers into the Maruts, the energies of Mind. Our passions and obscure emotions are the smoke of Agni's burning. All our nervous forces are assured of their action only by his support.

---

[2] Or "enter into the words and the thinking".

[3] *Gotamebhiḥ*. In its external sense "by the Gotamas", the family of the Rishi, Gotama Rahugana, the seer of the hymn. But the names of the Rishis are constantly used with a covert reference to their meaning. In this passage there is an unmistakable significance in the grouping of the words, *gotamebhir ṛtāvā*, *viprebhir jātavedāḥ*, as in verse 3 in *dasmam ārīḥ*.

If he is the Will in our nervous being and purifies it by action, he is also the Will in the mind and clarifies it by aspiration. When he enters into the intellect, he is drawing near to his divine birth-place and home. He leads the thoughts towards effective power; he leads the active energies towards light.

His divine birth-place and home, — though he is born everywhere and dwells in all things, — is the Truth, the Infinity, the vast cosmic Intelligence in which Knowledge and Force are unified. For there all Will is in harmony with the truth of things and therefore effective; all thought part of Wisdom, which is the divine Law, and therefore perfectly regulative of a divine action. Agni fulfilled becomes mighty in his own home — in the Truth, the Right, the Vast. It is thither that he is leading upward the aspiration in humanity, the soul of the Aryan, the head of the cosmic sacrifice.

It is at the point where there is the first possibility of the great passage, the transition from mind to supermind, the transfiguration of the intelligence, till now the crowned leader of the mental being, into a divine Light, — it is at this supreme and crucial point in the Vedic Yoga that the Rishi, Gotama Rahugana, seeks in himself for the inspired Word. The Word shall help him to realise for himself and others the Power that must effect the transition and the state of luminous plenitude from which the transfiguration must commence.

The Vedic sacrifice is, psychologically, a symbol of cosmic and individual activity become self-conscious, enlightened and aware of its goal. The whole process of the universe is in its very nature a sacrifice, voluntary or involuntary. Self-fulfilment by self-immolation, to grow by giving is the universal law. That which refuses to give itself, is still the food of the cosmic Powers. "The eater eating is eaten" is the formula, pregnant and terrible, in which the Upanishad sums up this aspect of the universe, and in another passage men are described as the cattle of the gods. It is only when the law is recognised and voluntarily accepted that this kingdom of death can be overpassed and by the works of sacrifice Immortality made possible and attained. All the powers and potentialities of the human life are offered up, in the symbol of a sacrifice, to the divine Life in the Cosmos.

Knowledge, Force and Delight are the three powers of the divine Life; thought and its formations, will and its works, love and its harmonisings are the corresponding human activities which have to be exalted to the divine level. The dualities of truth and falsehood, light and darkness, conceptional right and wrong are the confusions of knowledge born of egoistic division; the dualities of egoistic love and hatred, joy and grief, pleasure and pain are the confusions of Love, perversities of Ananda; the dualities of strength and weakness, sin and virtue, action and inaction are the confusions of will, dissipators of the divine Force. And all these confusions arise and even become necessary modes of our action because the triune powers of the divine Life are divorced from each other, Knowledge from Strength, Love from both, by the Ignorance which divides. It is the Ignorance, the dominant cosmic Falsehood that has to be removed. Through the Truth, then, lies the road to the true harmony, the consummated felicity, the ultimate fulfilment of love in the divine Delight. Therefore, only when the Will in man becomes divine and possessed of the Truth, *amṛto ṛtāvā*, can the perfection towards which we move be realised in humanity.

Agni, then, is the god who has to become conscient in the mortal. Him the inspired Word has to express, to confirm in this gated mansion and on the altar-seat of this sacrifice.

"How must we give to Agni?" asks the Rishi. The word for the sacrificial giving, *dāśema*, means literally distribution; it has a covert connection with the root *daś* in the sense of discernment. The sacrifice is essentially an arrangement, a distribution of the human activities and enjoyments among the different cosmic Powers to whose province they by right belong. Therefore the hymns repeatedly speak of the portions of the gods. It is the problem of the right arrangement and distribution of his works that presents itself to the sacrificer; for the sacrifice must be always according to the Law and the divine ordainment (*ṛtu*, the later *vidhi*). The will to right arrangement is an all-important preparation for the reign of the supreme Law and Truth in the mortal.

The solution of the problem depends on right realisation, and right realisation starts from the right illuminative Word, expression of the inspired Thought which is sent to the seer out of the Vast. Therefore the Rishi asks farther, "What word is uttered to Agni?" What word of affirmation, what word of realisation? Two conditions have to be satisfied. The Word must be accepted by other divine Powers, that is, it must bring out some potentiality in the nature or bring into it some light of realisation by which the divine Workers may be induced to manifest in the superficial consciousness of humanity and embrace openly their respective functions. And it must be illuminative of the double nature of Agni, this Lord of the lustrous flame. *Bhāma* means both a light of knowledge and a flame of action. Agni is a Light as well as a Force.

The Word arrives. *Yo martyeṣu amṛto ṛtāvā*. Agni is, preeminently, the Immortal in mortals. It is this Agni by whom the other bright sons of Infinity are able to work out the manifestation and self-extension of the Divine (*devavīti*, *devatāti*) which is at once aim and process of the cosmic and of the human sacrifice. For he is the divine Will which in all things is always present, is always destroying and constructing, always building and perfecting, supporting always the complex progression of the universe. It is this which persists through all death and change. It is eternally and inalienably possessed of the Truth. In the last obscuration of Nature, in the lowest unintelligence of Matter, it is this Will that is a concealed knowledge and compels all these darkened movements to obey, as if mechanically, the divine Law and adhere to the truth of their Nature. It is this which makes the tree grow according to its seed and each action bear its appropriate fruit. In the obscurity of man's ignorance, — less than material Nature's, yet greater, — it is this divine Will that governs and guides, knows the sense of his blindness and the goal of his aberration and out of the crooked workings of the cosmic Falsehood in him evolves the progressive manifestation of the cosmic Truth. Alone of the brilliant Gods, he burns bright and has full vision in the darkness of Night no less than in the splendours of day. The other gods are *uṣarbudhaḥ*, wakers with the Dawn.

Therefore is he the priest of the offering, strongest or most apt for sacrifice, he who, all-powerful, follows always the law of the Truth. We must remember that the oblation (*havya*) signifies always action (*karma*) and each action of mind or body is regarded as a giving of our plenty into the cosmic being and the cosmic intention. Agni, the divine Will, is that which stands behind the human will in its works. In the conscient offering, he comes in front; he is the priest set in front (*puro-hita*), guides the oblation and determines its effectiveness.

By this self-guided Truth, by this knowledge that works out as an unerring Will in the Cosmos, he fashions the gods in mortals. Agni manifests divine potentialities in a death-besieged body; Agni brings them to effective actuality and perfection. He creates in us the luminous forms of the Immortals.

This work he does as a cosmic Power labouring upon the rebellious human material even when in our ignorance we resist the heavenward impulse and, accustomed to offer our actions to the egoistic life, cannot yet or as yet will not make the divine surrender. But it is in proportion as we learn to subjugate the ego and compel it to bow down in every act to the universal Being and to serve consciously in its least movements the supreme Will, that Agni himself takes form in us. The Divine Will becomes present and conscient in a human mind and enlightens it with the divine Knowledge. Thus it is that man can be said to form by his toil the great Gods.

The Sanskrit expression is here *ā kṛṇudhvam*. The preposition gives the idea of a drawing upon oneself of something outside and the working or shaping it out in our own consciousness. *Ā kṛ* corresponds to the converse expression, *ā bhū*, used of the gods when they approach the mortal with the contact of Immortality and, divine form of godhead falling on form of humanity, "become", take shape, as it were, in him. The cosmic Powers act and exist in the universe; man takes them upon himself, makes an image of them in his own consciousness and endows that image with the life and power that the Supreme Being has breathed into His own divine forms and world-energies.[4]

It is when thus present and conscient in the mortal, like a "house-lord",[5] master in his mansion, that Agni appears in the true nature of his divinity. When we are obscure and revolt against the Truth and the Law, our progress seems to be a stumbling from ignorance to ignorance and is full of pain and disturbance. By constant submission to the Truth, surrenderings, *namobhiḥ*, we create in ourselves that image of the divine Will which is on the contrary full of peace, because it is assured of the Truth and the Law. Equality of soul[6] created by the surrender to the universal Wisdom gives us a supreme peace and calm. And since that Wisdom guides all our steps in the straight paths of the Truth we are carried by it beyond all stumblings (*duritāni*).

Moreover, with Agni conscious in our humanity, the creation of the gods in us becomes a veritable manifestation and no longer a veiled growth. The will within grows conscious of the increasing godhead, awakens to the process, perceives the lines of the growth. Human action intelligently directed and devoted to the universal Powers, ceases to be a mechanical, involuntary or imperfect offering; the thinking and observing mind participates and becomes the instrument of the sacrificial will.

Agni is the power of conscious Being, called by us will, effective behind the workings of mind and body. Agni is the strong God within (*maryaḥ*, the strong, the masculine) who puts out his strength against all assailing powers, who forbids inertia, who repels every failing of heart and of force, who spurns out all lack of manhood. Agni actualises what might otherwise remain as an ineffectual thought or aspiration. He is the doer of the

---

[4] This is the true sense and theory of Hindu image-worship, which is thus a material rendering of the great Vedic symbols.

[5] *Gṛhapati*; also *viśpati*, lord or king in the creature.

[6] *Samatā* of the Gita.

Yoga (*sādhu*); divine smith labouring at his forge, he hammers out our perfection. Here he is said to become the charioteer of the Supreme. The Supreme and Wonderful that moves and fulfils Itself "in the consciousness of another",[7] (we have the same word, *adbhuta*, as in the colloquy of Indra and Agastya), effects that motion with this Power as charioteer holding the reins of the activity. Mitra also, the lord of Love and Light is even such a charioteer. Love illuminated fulfils the harmony which is the goal of the divine movement. But the power of this lord of Will and Light is also needed. Force and Love united and both illumined by Knowledge fulfil God in the world.

Will is the first necessity, the chief actualising force. When therefore the race of mortals turn consciously towards the great aim and, offering their enriched capacities to the Sons of Heaven, seek to form the divine in themselves, it is to Agni, first and chief, that they lift the realising thought, frame the creative Word. For they are the Aryans who do the work and accept the effort, — the vastest of all works, the most grandiose of all efforts, — and he is the power that embraces Action and by Action fulfils the work. What is the Aryan without the divine Will that accepts the labour and the battle, works and wins, suffers and triumphs?

Therefore it is this Will which annihilates all forces commissioned to destroy the effort, this strongest of all the divine Puissances in which the supreme Purusha has imaged Himself, that must bestow its presence on these human vessels. There it will use the mind as instrument of the sacrifice and by its very presence manifest those inspired and realising Words which are as a chariot framed for the movement of the gods, giving to the Thought that meditates the illuminative comprehension which allows the forms of the divine Powers to outline themselves in our waking consciousness.

Then may those other mighty Ones who bring with them the plenitudes of the higher life, Indra and the Ashwins, Usha and Surya, Varuna and Mitra and Aryaman, assume with that formative extension of themselves in the human being their most brilliant energies. Let them create their plenty in us, pouring it forth from the secret places of our being so as to be utilisable in its daylight tracts and let their impulsions urge upward the divinising thought in Mind, till it transfigures itself in the supreme lustres.

---

[7] R.V. I.170.1.

The hymn closes. Thus, in inspired words, has the divine Will, Agni, been affirmed by the sacred chant of the Gotamas. The Rishi uses his name and that of his house as a symbol-word; we have in it the Vedic *go* in the sense "luminous", and Gotama means "entirely possessed of light". For it is only those that have the plenitude of the luminous intelligence by whom the master of divine Truth can be wholly received and affirmed in this world of an inferior Ray, — *gotamebhir ṛtāvā*. And it is upon those whose minds are pure, clear and open, *vipra*, that there can dawn the right knowledge of the great Births which are behind the physical world and from which it derives and supports its energies, — *viprebhir jātavedāḥ*.

Agni is Jatavedas, knower of the births, the worlds. He knows entirely the five worlds[8] and is not confined in his consciousness to this limited and dependent physical harmony. He has access even to the three highest states[9] of all, to the udder of the mystic Cow,[10] the abundance of the Bull[11] with the four horns. From that abundance he will foster the illumination in these Aryan seekers, swell the plenty of their divine faculties. By that fullness and plenty of his illumined perceptions he will unite thought with thought, word with word, till the human Intelligence is rich and harmonious enough to support and become the divine Idea.

---

[8] The worlds in which, respectively, Matter, Life-Energy, Mind, Truth and Beatitude are the essential energies. They are called respectively Bhur, Bhuvar, Swar, Mahas and Jana or Mayas.

[9] Divine Being, Consciousness, Bliss, — Sachchidananda.

[10] Aditi, the infinite Consciousness, Mother of the worlds.

[11] The divine Purusha, Sachchidananda; the three highest states and Truth are his four horns.

V

Surya Savitri, Creator and Increaser

Rig Veda V.81

युञ्जते मन उत युञ्जते धियो विप्रा विप्रस्य बृहतो विपश्चितः ।
वि होत्रा दधे वयुनाविदेक इन्मही देवस्य सवितुः परिष्टुतिः ॥ १ ॥

1. Men illumined yoke their mind and they yoke their thoughts to him who is illumination and largeness and clear perceiving. Knowing all phenomena he orders, sole, the Energies of the sacrifice. Vast is the affirmation in all things of Savitri, the divine Creator.

विश्वा रूपाणि प्रति मुञ्चते कविः प्रासावीद् भद्रं द्विपदे चतुष्पदे ।
वि नाकमख्यत् सविता वरेण्योऽनु प्रयाणमुषसो वि राजति ॥ २ ॥

2. All forms he takes unto himself, the Seer, and he creates from them good for the twofold existence and the fourfold. The Creator, the supreme Good, manifests Heaven wholly and his light pervades all as he follows the march of the Dawn.

यस्य प्रयाणमन्वन्य इद् ययुर्देवा देवस्य महिमानमोजसा ।
यः पार्थिवानि विममे स एतशो रजांसि देवः सविता महित्वना ॥ ३ ॥

3. In the wake of his march the other gods also reach by his force to the greatness of the Divinity. He has mapped out the realms of earthly light by his mightiness, — the brilliant one, the divine Creator.

उत यासि सवितस्त्रीणि रोचनोत सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिः समुच्यसि ।
उत रात्रीमुभयतः परीयस उत मित्रो भवसि देव धर्मभिः ॥ ४ ॥

4. And thou reachest, O Savitri, to the three luminous heavens; and thou art utterly expressed by the rays of the Sun; and thou encompassest the Night upon either side; and thou becomest by the law of thy actions the lord of Love, O God.

उतेशिषे प्रसवस्य त्वमेक इदुत पूषा भवसि देव यामभिः ।
उतेदं विश्वं भुवनं वि राजसि श्यावाश्वस्ते सवितः स्तोममानशे ॥ ५ ॥

5. And thou art powerful for every creation; and thou becomest the Increaser, O God, by thy movings; and thou illuminest utterly all this world of becomings. Shyavashwa has attained to the affirmation of thee, O Savitri.[1]

COMMENTARY

Indra with his shining hosts, the Maruts, Agni, the divine force, fulfiller of the Aryan sacrifice, are the most important deities of the Vedic system. Agni is the beginning and the end. This Will that is knowledge is the initiator of the upward effort of the mortal towards Immortality; to this divine consciousness that is one with divine power we arrive as the foundation of immortal existence. Indra, lord of Swar, the luminous intelligence into which we have to convert our obscure material mentality in order to become capable of the divine consciousness, is our chief helper. It is by the aid of Indra and the Maruts that the conversion is effected. The Maruts take our animal consciousness made up of the impulses of the nervous mentality, possess these impulses with their illuminations and drive them up the hill of being towards the world of Swar and the truths of Indra. Our mental evolution begins with these animal troops, these "Pashus"; they become, as we progress in the ascension, the brilliant herds of the Sun, *gāvaḥ*, rays, the divine cows of the Veda. Such is the psychological sense of the Vedic symbol.

---

[1] For a good idiomatic and literary translation, rendering the sense and rhythm of the original, a certain freedom in turning the Sanskrit is necessary. I have therefore given a more literal version of its phrases in the body of the Commentary.

But who, then, is Surya, the Sun, from whom these rays proceed? He is the Master of Truth, Surya the Illuminator, Savitri the Creator, Pushan the Increaser. His rays in their own nature are supramental activities of revelation, inspiration, intuition, luminous discernment, and they constitute the action of that transcendent principle which the Vedanta calls Vijnana, the perfect knowledge, the Veda Ritam, the Truth. But these rays descend also into the human mentality and form at its summit the world of luminous intelligence, Swar, of which Indra is the lord.

For this Vijnana is a divine and not a human faculty. Man's mind is not constituted of the self-luminous truth, like the divine mind; it is a sense-mentality, Manas, which can receive and understand[2] Truth, but is not one with it. The light of knowledge has to present itself in this human understanding tempered so as to suit its forms to the capacities and limitations of the physical consciousness. And it has to lead up progressively to its own true nature, to manifest successive evolutionary stages for our mental development. Therefore the rays of Surya, as they labour to form our mental existence, create three successive worlds of mentality one superimposed on the other, — the sensational, aesthetic and emotional mind, the pure intellect and the divine intelligence. The fullness and perfection of these triple worlds of mind exists only in the pure mental plane of being,[3] where they shine above the three heavens, *tisro divaḥ*, as their three luminosities, *trīṇi rocanāni*. But their light descends upon the physical consciousness and effects the corresponding formations in its realms, the Vedic *pārthivāni rajāṁsi*, earthly realms of light. They also are triple, *tisraḥ pṛthivīḥ*, the three earths. And of all these worlds Surya Savitri is the creator.

We have in this figure of various psychological levels, each considered as a world in itself, a key to the conceptions of the

---

[2] The Vedic word for the understanding is *dhī*, that which receives and holds in place.

[3] Our natural plane of being is obviously the physical consciousness, but the others also are open to us since part of our being lives in each of them.

Vedic Rishis. The human individual is an organised unit of existence which reflects the constitution of the universe. It repeats in itself the same arrangement of states and play of forces. Man, subjectively, contains in himself all the worlds in which, objectively, he is contained. Preferring ordinarily a concrete to an abstract language, the Rishis speak of the physical consciousness as the physical world, earth, Bhu, Prithivi. They describe the pure mental consciousness as heaven, Dyaus, of which Swar, the luminous mind, is the summit. To the intermediate dynamic, vital or nervous consciousness they give the name either of Antariksha, the intermediate vision, or of Bhuvar, — multiple dynamic worlds formative of the Earth.

For in the idea of the Rishis a world is primarily a formation of consciousness and only secondarily a physical formation of things. A world is a *loka*, a way in which conscious being images itself. And it is the causal Truth, represented in the person of Surya Savitri, that is the creator of all its forms. For it is the causal Idea in the infinite being, — the idea, not abstract, but real and dynamic, — that originates the law, the energies, the formations of things and the working out of their potentialities in determined forms by determined processes. Because the causal Idea is a real force of existence, it is called Satyam, the True in being; because it is the determining truth of all activity and formation, it is called Ritam, the True in movement; because it is broad and infinite in its self-view, in its scope and in its operation, it is called Brihat, the Large or Vast.

Savitri by the Truth is the Creator, but not in the sense of a fabrication or mechanical forming of things. The root of the word means an impulsion, a loosing forth or sending out, — the sense also of the ordinary word for creation, *sṛṣṭi*, — and so a production. The action of the causal Idea does not fabricate, but brings out by Tapas, by the pressure of consciousness on its own being, that which is concealed in it, latent in potentiality and in truth already existent in the Beyond.

Now the forces and processes of the physical world repeat, as in a symbol, the truths of the supraphysical action which produced it. And since it is by the same forces and the same processes, one in the physical worlds and the supraphysical, that our inner life and its development are governed, the Rishis adopted the phenomena of physical Nature as just symbols for those functionings of the inner life which it was their difficult task to indicate in the concrete language of a sacred poetry that must at the same time serve for the external worship of the Gods as powers of the visible universe. The solar energy is the physical form of Surya, Lord of Light and Truth; it is through the Truth that we arrive at Immortality, final aim of the Vedic discipline. It is therefore under the images of the Sun and its rays, of Dawn and day and night and the life of man between the two poles of light and darkness that the Aryan seers represent the progressive illumination of the human soul. It is so that Shyavashwa of the house of Atri hymns Savitri, Creator, Increaser, Revealer.

Surya enlightens the mind and the thoughts with the illuminations of the Truth. He is *vipra*, the illumined. It is he who delivers the individual human mind from the circumscribed consciousness of self and environment and enlarges the limited movement which is imposed on it by its preoccupation with its own individuality. Therefore he is *bṛhat*, the Large. But his illumination is not a vague light, nor does his largeness come by a confused and dissolved view of self and object; it holds in itself a clear discernment of things in their totality, their parts and their relations. Therefore he is *vipaścit*, the clear in perception. Men as soon as they begin to receive something of this solar illumination, strive to yoke their whole mentality and its thought-contents to the conscious existence of the divine Surya within them. That is to say, they apply, as it were, all their obscure mental state and all their erring thoughts to this Light manifested in them so that it may turn the obscurity of the mind into clearness and convert the errors of thought into those truths which they distortedly represent. This yoking (*yuñjate*) becomes their Yoga. “They yoke the mind, and they yoke their thoughts, the enlightened, of (i.e. to, or so that they may be part of or belong to) the Enlightened, the Large, the Clear-perceptioned.”

Then the Lord of Truth orders all the human energies offered up to him in the terms of the Truth; for he becomes in man a sole and sovereign Power governing all knowledge and action. Not interfered with by conflicting agencies, he governs perfectly; for he knows all manifestations, comprehends their causes, contains their law and process, compels their right result. There are seven of these sacrificial energies (Hotras) in the human being, one corresponding to each of the seven constituents of his psychological existence, — body, life, mind, super-mind, bliss, will and essential being. Their irregular action or wrong relation, caused and maintained by the obscuration of knowledge in Mind, is the source of all stumbling and unhappiness, of all evil act and evil state. Surya, Lord of Knowledge, puts each of them to its right place in the Sacrifice. "Knower of phenomena sole he arranges the sacrificial energies."

Man thus arrives at a vast and all-embracing affirmation in himself of this divine Creator. It is implied in this passage and indicated more clearly in the next verse that the result is a right and happy creation — for all our existence is a constant creation — of the universe of man's whole being. "Vast is the comprehensive affirmation of the god Savitri."

Surya is the seer, the revealer. His Truth takes into its illumination all forms of things, all the phenomenal objects and experiences which constitute our world, all the figures of the universal Consciousness within and without us. It reveals the truth in them, their sense, their purpose, their justification and right use. Ordering rightly the energies of the sacrifice it creates or produces good as the law of our whole existence. For all things have their justifiable cause of being, their good use and their right enjoyment. When this truth in them is found and utilised, all things produce good for the soul, increase its welfare, enlarge its felicity. And this divine revolution is effected both in the lower physical existence and in the more complete inner life which uses the physical for its manifestation. "The Seer takes to himself all forms, he brings out (creates or manifests) good for the twofold (two-footed), for the fourfold (four-footed)."[4]

---

[4] The symbolism of the words *dvipade* and *catuṣpade* may be differently interpreted. The discussion of it here would occupy too large a space.

The process of this new creation is described in the rest of the hymn. Surya, as the creator, as the supreme good, manifests in our human consciousness its concealed heavenly summit on the levels of the pure mind, and we are able to look up above from the earth of our physical existence and are delivered from the obscurities of the night of Ignorance. He follows, sunlike, the march of the Dawn, illuminating all the regions of our being on which falls its light; for there is always needed the precursory mental illumination before the Truth itself, the supramental principle, can take possession of this lower existence. "The creator, the supremely desirable, manifests all heaven and shines pervadingly following (after or according to) the movement forward of the Dawn."

All the other gods follow in this march of Surya and they attain to his vastness by the force of his illumination. That is to say, all the other divine faculties or potentialities in man expand with the expansion of the Truth and Light in him; in the strength of the ideal super-mind they attain to the same infinite amplitude of right becoming, right action and right knowledge. The Truth in its largeness moulds all into the terms of the infinite and universal Life, replaces with it the limited individual existence, maps out in the terms of their real being the realms of the physical consciousness which, as Savitri, it has created. This also is in us a creation, although in reality it only manifests what already exists but was concealed by the darkness of our ignorance, — just as the realms of the physical earth are concealed from our eyes by the darkness, but reveal themselves as the sun in his march follows the Dawn and measures them out one by one to the vision. "Following whose march the other gods too reach the vastness of the divinity by his strength, he who maps out entirely — that brilliant one — the earthly realms of light, the god Savitri, by his greatness."

But it is not only the full capacity of our physical or earthly consciousness that this divine Truth illuminates and forms for a perfect action. It pervades the three luminous realms of the pure mind (*trīṇi rocanā*); it puts us in contact with all the divine possibilities of the sensations and emotions, of the intellect, of the intuitive reason and liberating the superior faculties from their limitation and constant reference to the material world fulfils our entire mental being. Its activities receive their completest manifestation; they are gathered up into the life of the complete Truth by the rays of the sun, that is to say, by the full splendour of the divine Super-Mind manifested in us. “And thou goest, O Savitri, to the three luminousnesses, and thou art perfectly expressed by the rays of the Sun (or, art gathered together by means of the rays).”

Then it is that the higher kingdom of the Immortality, Sachchidananda revealed, shines out perfectly in this world. The higher and lower are reconciled in the light of the supra-mental revelation. The Ignorance, the Night, is illumined upon both sides of our complete being, not only as in our present state upon one. This higher kingdom stands confessed in the principle of Beatitude which is for us the principle of Love and Light, represented by the god Mitra. The Lord of Truth, when he reveals himself in the full godhead, becomes the Lord of Bliss. The law of his being, the principle regulating his activities is seen to be Love; for in the right arrangement of knowledge and action everything here comes to be translated into terms of good, felicity, bliss. “And thou encompassest Night upon both sides, and thou becomest, O God, Mitra by the laws of thy action.”

The Truth of the divine existence becomes eventually the sole Lord of all creation in ourselves; and by his constant visitations or by his continual progressions the Creator becomes the Increaser, Savitri becomes Pushan. He aggrandises us by a constantly progressive creation until he has illumined the whole world of our becoming. We grow into the complete, the universal, the infinite. So has Shyavashwa, of the sons of Atri, succeeded in affirming Savitri in his own being as the illuminative Truth, the creative, the progressive, the increaser of man — he who brings him out of egoistic limitation into universality, out of the finite into the infinite. “And thou hast power alone for creation; and thou becomest the Increaser, O God, by the goings; and thou illuminest entirely all this world (literally, becoming). Shyavashwa has attained to the affirmation of thee, O Savitri.”

VI

The Divine Dawn

Rig Veda III.61

उषो वाजेन वाजिनि प्रचेताः स्तोमं जुषस्व गृणतो मघोनि ।
पुराणी देवि युवतिः पुरंधिरनु व्रतं चरसि विश्ववारे ॥ १ ॥

1. Dawn, richly stored with substance, conscious cleave to the affirmation of him who expresses thee, O thou of the plenitudes. Goddess, ancient, yet ever young thou movest many-thoughted following the law of thy activities, O bearer of every boon.

उषो देव्यमर्त्या वि भाहि चन्द्ररथा सूनृता ईरयन्ती ।
आ त्वा वहन्तु सुयमासो अश्वा हिरण्यवर्णां पृथुपाजसो ये ॥ २ ॥

2. Dawn divine, shine out immortal in thy car of happy light sending forth the pleasant voices of the Truth. May steeds well-guided bear thee here who are golden brilliant of hue and wide their might.

उषः प्रतीची भुवनानि विश्वोर्ध्वा तिष्ठस्यमृतस्य केतुः ।
समानमर्थं चरणीयमाना चक्रमिव नव्यस्या ववृत्स्व ॥ ३ ॥

3. Dawn, confronting all the worlds thou standest high-uplifted and art their perception of Immortality; do thou move over them like a wheel, O new Day, travelling over an equal field.

अव स्यूमेव चिन्वती मघोन्युषा याति स्वसरस्य पत्नी ।
स्वर्जनन्ती सुभगा सुदंसा आन्ताद्दिवः पप्रथ आ पृथिव्याः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Dawn in her plenitude like one that lets fall from her a sewn robe moves, the bride of the Bliss; creating Swar, perfect in her working, perfect in her enjoying, she widens from the extremity of Heaven over the earth.

अच्छा वो देवीमुषसं विभातीं प्र वो भरध्वं नमसा सुवृक्तिम् ।
ऊर्ध्वं मधुधा दिवि पाजो अश्रेत् प्र रोचना रुरुचे रण्वसंदृक् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Meet ye the Dawn as she shines wide towards you and with surrender bring forward your complete energy. Exalted in heaven is the force to which she rises establishing the sweetness; she makes the luminous worlds to shine forth and is a vision of felicity.

ऋतावरी दिवो अर्कैरबोध्या रेवती रोदसी चित्रमस्थात् ।
आयतीमग्न उषसं विभातीं वाममेषि द्रविणं भिक्षमाणः ॥ ६ ॥

6. By heaven's illuminings one perceives her a bearer of the Truth and rapturous she comes with its varied light into the two firmaments. From Dawn as she approaches shining out on thee, O Agni, thou seekest and attainest to the substance of delight.

ऋतस्य बुध्न उषसामिषण्यन् वृषा मही रोदसी आ विवेश ।
मही मित्रस्य वरुणस्य माया चन्द्रेव भानुं वि दधे पुरुत्रा ॥ ७ ॥

7. Putting forth his impulsions in the foundation of the Truth, in the foundation of the Dawns, their Lord enters the Vastness of the firmaments. Vast the wisdom of Varuna, of Mitra, as in a happy brightness, orders multitudinously the Light.

COMMENTARY

Surya Savitri in his task of illumination follows the progress of the Dawn. In another hymn the movements of the mind have been described as growing conscient and brilliant by the bright power of the continuous Dawns. Throughout the Veda Usha, daughter of Heaven, has always the same function. She is the medium of the awakening, the activity and the growth of the other gods; she is the first condition of the Vedic realisation. By her increasing illumination the whole nature of man is clarified; through her he arrives at the Truth, through her he enjoys the Beatitude. The divine dawn of the Rishis is the advent of the divine Light throwing off veil after veil and revealing in man's activities the luminous godhead. In that light the Work is done, the sacrifice offered and its desirable fruits gathered by humanity.

Many are the hymns, indeed, in which rich and beautiful figures of the earthly dawn veil this inner truth of the goddess Usha, but in this hymn of the great Rishi Vishwamitra the psychological symbolism of the Vedic Dawn is apparent from beginning to end by open expressions and on the surface of the thought. "O Dawn rich of store in thy substance," he cries to her, "conscient cleave to the affirmation of him who expresses thee, O thou who hast the plenitudes." The word *pracetas* and the related word, *vicetas*, are standing terms of Vedic phraseology; they seem to correspond to the ideas expressed in later language by the Vedantic *prajñāna* and *vijñāna*. Prajnana is the consciousness that cognizes all things as objects confronting its observation; in the divine mind it is knowledge regarding things as their source, possessor and witness. Vijnana is comprehensive knowledge containing, penetrating into things, pervading them in consciousness by a sort of identification with their truth. Usha is to occupy the revealing thought and word of the Rishi as a power of Knowledge conscient of the truth of all that is placed by them before the mind for expression in man. The affirmation, it is suggested, will be full and ample; for Usha is *vājena vājini*, *maghoni*; rich is the store of her substance; she has all the plenitudes.

This dawn moves in her progression always according to the rule of a divine action; many are the thoughts she brings in that motion, but her steps are sure and all desirable things, all supreme boons, the boons of the Ananda, the blessings of the divine existence, — are in her hands. She is ancient and eternal, the dawn of the Light that was from the beginning, *purāṇī*, but in her coming she is ever young and fresh to the soul that receives her.

She is to shine wide, she that is the divine Dawn, as the light of the immortal existence bringing out in man the powers or the voices of Truth and Joy, (*sūnṛtāḥ*, — a word which expresses at once both the true and the pleasant); for is not the chariot of her movement a car at once of light and of happiness? For again, the word *candra* in *candrarathā*, — signifying also the lunar deity Soma, lord of the delight of immortality pouring into man, *ānanda* and *amṛta*, — means both luminous and blissful. And the horses that bring her, figure of the nervous forces that support and carry forward all our action, must be perfectly controlled; golden, bright in hue, their nature (for in this ancient symbolism colour is the sign of quality, of character, of temperament) must be a dynamism of ideal knowledge in its concentrated luminousness; wide in its extension must be the mass of that concentrated force, — *pṛthupājaso ye*.

Divine Dawn comes thus to the soul with the light of her knowledge, *prajñāna*, confronting all the worlds as field of that knowledge, — all provinces, that is to say, of our universal being, — mind, vitality, physical consciousness. She stands uplifted over them on our heights above mind, in the highest heaven, as the perception of Immortality or of the Immortal, *amṛtasya ketuḥ*, revealing in them the eternal and beatific existence or the eternal all-blissful Godhead. So exalted she stands prepared to effect the motion of the divine knowledge, progressing as a new revelation of the eternal truth, *navyasi*, in their harmonised and equalised activities like a wheel moving smoothly over a level field; for they now, their diversities and discords removed, offer no obstacle to that equal motion.

In her plenitude she separates, as it were, and casts down from her the elaborately sewn garment that covered the truth of things and moves as the wife of the Lover, the energy of her all-blissful Lord, *svasarasya patnī*. Full in her enjoyment of the felicity, full in her effectuation of all activities, *subhagā sudaṁsāḥ*, she brings into existence in us by her revelations

Swar, the concealed luminous mind, our highest mental heaven; and thus from the farthest extremities of mental being extends herself over the physical consciousness.

As this divine Dawn pours out widely its light upon them, so have men by submission to the law of her divine act and movement to bring forward for her the fully energised completeness of their being and their capacities as a vehicle for her light or as a seat for her sacrificial activities.

The Rishi then dwells on the two capital works of the divine Dawn in man, — her elevation of him to the full force of the Light and the revelation of the Truth and her pouring of the Ananda, the Amrita, the Soma Wine, the bliss of the immortal being into the mental and bodily existence. In the world of the pure mind, *divi*, she rises into the full force and mass of the Light, *ūrdhvaṁ pājo aśret*, and from those pure and high levels she establishes the sweetness, *madhu*, the honey of Soma. She makes to shine out the three luminous worlds, *rocanā*; she is then or she brings with her the beatific vision. By the effectual illuminations of the pure mentality, through the realising Word, *divo arkaiḥ*, she is perceived as the bearer of Truth and with the Truth she enters from the world above Mind, full of the delight, in a varied play of her multiple thought and activity, into the mental and bodily consciousness, those established limits between which man's action moves. It is from her, as she comes thus richly laden, *vājena vājini*, that Agni, the divine Force labouring here in body and mind to uplift the mortal, prays for and attains to the Soma, the wine of the Beatitude, the delightful substance.

The supramental world in us, foundation of the Truth, is the foundation of the Dawns. They are the descent upon mortal nature of the light of that immortal Truth, *ṛtaṁ jyotis*. The Lord of the Dawns, Master of Truth, Illuminer, Creator, Organiser, putting forth in the foundation of Truth, above mind, the impulsion of his activities, enters with them by this goddess into a bodily and mental existence no longer obscured but released from their limits and capable of vastness, *mahī rodasī*. The Lord of Truth is the sole lord of things. He is Varuna, soul of vastness and purity; he is Mitra, source of love and light and harmony. His creative Wisdom, *mahī mitrasya varuṇasya māyā*, unlimited in its scope, — for he is Varuna, — appearing, *candreva*, as a light of bliss and joy, — for he is Mitra, — arranges, perfectly organises, in multitudinous forms, in the wideness of the liberated nature, the luminous expansions, the serene expressions of the Truth. He combines the various brilliancies with which his Dawn has entered our firmaments; he blends into one harmony her true and happy voices.

Dawn divine is the coming of the Godhead. She is the light of the Truth and the Felicity pouring on us from the Lord of Wisdom and Bliss, *amṛtasya ketuḥ*, *svasarasya patnī.*

VII

To Bhaga Savitri, the Enjoyer

Rig Veda V.82

तत्सवितुर्वृणीमहे वयं देवस्य भोजनम् ।
श्रेष्ठं सर्वधातमं तुरं भगस्य धीमहि ॥ १ ॥

1. Of Savitri divine we embrace that enjoying, that which is the best, rightly disposes all, reaches the goal, even Bhaga's, we hold by the thought.

अस्य हि स्वयशस्तरं सवितुः कच्चन प्रियम् ।
न मिनन्ति स्वराज्यम् ॥ २ ॥

2. For of him no pleasure in things can they diminish, for too self-victorious is it, nor the self-empire of this Enjoyer.

स हि रत्नानि दाशुषे सुवाति सविता भगः ।
तं भागं चित्रमीमहे ॥ ३ ॥

3. 'Tis he that sends forth the delights on the giver, the god who is the bringer forth of things; that varied richness of his enjoyment we seek.

अद्या नो देव सवितः प्रजावत्सावीः सौभगम् ।
परा दुःष्वप्न्यं सुव ॥ ४ ॥

4. Today, O divine Producer, send forth on us fruitful felicity, dismiss what belongs to the evil dream.

विश्वानि देव सवितर्दुरितानि परा सुव ।
यद् भद्रं तन्न आसुव ॥ ५ ॥

5. All evils, O divine Producer, dismiss; what is good, that send forth on us.

अनागसो अदितये देवस्य सवितुः सवे ।
विश्वा वामानि धीमहि ॥ ६ ॥

6. Blameless for infinite being in the outpouring of the divine Producer, we hold by the thought all things of delight.

आ विश्वदेवं सत्पतिं सूक्तैरद्या वृणीमहे ।
सत्यसवं सवितारम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. The universal godhead and master of being we accept into ourselves by perfect words today, the Producer whose production is of the truth —

य इमे उभे अहनी पुर एत्यप्रयुच्छन् ।
स्वाधीर्देवः सविता ॥ ८ ॥

8. He who goes in front of both this day and night never faltering, placing rightly his thought, the divine Producer —

य इमा विश्वा जातान्याश्रावयति श्लोकेन ।
प्र च सुवाति सविता ॥ ९ ॥

9. He who by the rhythm makes heard of the knowledge all births and produces them, the divine Producer.

COMMENTARY

Four great deities constantly appear in the Veda as closely allied in their nature and in their action, Varuna, Mitra, Bhaga, Aryaman. Varuna and Mitra are continually coupled together in the thoughts of the Rishis; sometimes a trio appears together, Varuna, Mitra and Bhaga or Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman. Separate *sūktas* addressed to any of these godheads are comparatively rare, although there are some important hymns of which Varuna is the deity. But the Riks in which their names occur, whether in hymns to other gods or in invocations to the All-gods, the *Viśve Devāḥ*, are by no means inconsiderable in number.

These four deities are, according to Sayana, solar powers, Varuna negatively as lord of the night, Mitra positively as lord of the day, Bhaga and Aryaman as names of the Sun. We need not attach much importance to these particular identifications, but it is certain that a solar character attaches to all the four. In them that peculiar feature of the Vedic gods, their essential oneness even in the play of their different personalities and functions, comes prominently to light. Not only are the four closely associated among themselves, but they seem to partake of each other's nature and attributes, and all are evidently emanations of Surya Savitri, the divine being in his creative and illuminative solar form.

Surya Savitri is the Creator. According to the Truth of things, in the terms of the Ritam, the worlds are brought forth from the divine consciousness, from Aditi, goddess of infinite being, mother of the gods, the indivisible consciousness, the Light that cannot be impaired imaged by the mystic Cow that cannot be slain. In that creation, Varuna and Mitra, Aryaman and Bhaga are four effective Puissances. Varuna represents the principle of pure and wide being, Sat in Sachchidananda; Aryaman represents the light of the divine consciousness working as Force; Mitra representing light and knowledge, using the principle of Ananda for creation, is Love maintaining the law of harmony; Bhaga represents Ananda as the creative enjoyment; he takes the delight of the creation, takes the delight of all that is created. It is the Maya, the formative wisdom of Varuna, of Mitra that disposes multitudinously the light of Aditi brought by the Dawn to manifest the worlds.

In their psychological function these four gods represent the same principles working in the human mind, in the human temperament. They build up in man the different planes of his being and mould them ultimately into the terms and the forms of the divine Truth. Especially Mitra and Varuna are continually described as holding firm the law of their action, increasing the Truth, touching the Truth and by the Truth enjoying its vastness of divine will or its great and uncontracted sacrificial action. Varuna represents largeness, right and purity; everything that deviates from the right, from the purity recoils from his being and strikes the offender as the punishment of sin. So long as man does not attain to the largeness of Varuna's Truth, he is bound to the posts of the world-sacrifice by the triple bonds of mind, life and body as a victim and is not free as a possessor and enjoyer. Therefore we have frequently the prayer to be delivered from the noose of Varuna, from the wrath of his offended purity. Mitra is on the other hand the most beloved of the gods; he binds all together by the fixities of his harmony, by the successive lustrous seats of Love fulfilling itself in the order of things, *mitrasya dhāmabhiḥ*. His name, Mitra, which means also friend, is constantly used with a play upon the double sense; it is as Mitra, because Mitra dwells in all, that the other gods become the friends of man. Aryaman appears in the Veda with but little distinctness of personality, for the references to him are brief. The functions of Bhaga are outlined more clearly and are the same in the cosmos and in man.

In this hymn of Shyavashwa to Savitri we see both the functions of Bhaga and his oneness with Surya Savitri; for it is to the creative Lord of Truth that the hymn is addressed, to Surya, but to Surya specifically in his form as Bhaga, as the Lord of Enjoyment. The word *bhaga* means enjoyment or the enjoyer and that this sense is the one held especially appropriate to the divine name, Bhaga, is emphasised by the use of *bhojanam*, *bhāga*, *saubhagam* in the verses of the hymn. Savitri, we have seen, means Creator, but especially in the sense of producing, emitting from the unmanifest and bringing out into the manifest. Throughout the hymn there is a constant dwelling upon this root-sense of the word which it is impossible to render adequately in a translation. In the very first verse there is a covert play of the kind; for *bhojanam* means both enjoyment and food and it is intended to be conveyed that the "enjoyment of Savitri" is Soma, from the same root *su*, to produce, press out, distil, Soma, the food of divine beings, the supreme distilling, highest production of the great Producer. What the Rishi seeks is the enjoyment in all created things of the immortal and immortalising Ananda.

It is this Ananda which is that enjoyment of the divine Producer, of Surya Savitri, the supreme result of the Truth; for Truth is followed as the path to the divine beatitude. This Ananda is the highest, the best enjoyment. It disposes all aright; for once the Ananda, the divine delight in all things is attained, it sets right all the distortions, all the evil of the world. It carries man through to the goal. If by the truth and right of things we arrive at the Ananda, by the Ananda also we can arrive at the right and truth of things. It is to the divine Creator in the name and form of Bhaga that this human capacity for the divine and right enjoyment of all things belongs. When he is embraced by the human mind and heart and vital forces and physical being, when this divine form is received into himself by man, then the Ananda of the world manifests itself.

Nothing can limit, nothing can diminish, neither god nor demon, friend nor enemy, event nor sensation, whatever pleasure this divine Enjoyer takes in things, in whatever vessel or object of his enjoyment. For nothing can diminish or hedge in or hurt his luminous self-empire, *svarājyam*, his perfect possession of himself in infinite being, infinite delight and the vastnesses of the order of the Truth.

Therefore it is he that brings the seven delights, *sapta ratnā*, to the giver of the sacrifice. He looses them forth on us; for they are all there in the world as in the divine being, in ourselves also, and have only to be loosed forth on our outer consciousness. The rich and varied amplitude of this sevenfold delight, perfect on all the planes of our being, is the *bhāga*, enjoyment or portion of Bhaga Savitri in the completed sacrifice, and it is that varied wealth which the Rishi seeks for himself and his fellows in the sacrifice by the acceptance of the divine Enjoyer.

Shyavashwa then calls on Bhaga Savitri to vouchsafe to him even today a felicity not barren, but full of the fruits of activity, rich in the offspring of the soul, *prajāvat saubhagam*. Ananda is creative, it is *jana*, the delight that gives birth to life and world; only let the things loosed forth on us be of the creation conceived in the terms of the truth and let all that belongs to the falsehood, to the evil dream created by the ignorance of the divine Truth, *duḥṣvapnyam*, be dismissed, dispelled away from our conscious being.

In the next verse he makes clearer the sense of *duḥṣvapnyam*. What he desires to be dispelled is all evil, *viśvāni duritāni*. *Suvitam* and *duritam* in the Veda mean literally right going and wrong going. *Suvitam* is truth of thought and action, *duritam* error or stumbling, sin and perversion. *Suvitam* is happy going, felicity, the path of Ananda; *duritam* is calamity, suffering, all ill result of error and ill doing. All that is evil, *viśvāni duritāni*, belongs to the evil dream that has to be turned away from us. Bhaga sends to us instead all that is good, — *bhadram*, good in the sense of felicity, the auspicious things of the divine enjoying, the happiness of the right activity, the right creation.

For, in the creation of Bhaga Savitri, in his perfect and faultless sacrifice, — there is a double sense in the word *sava*, "loosing forth", used of the creation, and the sacrifice, the libation of the Soma, — men stand absolved from sin and blame by the Ananda, *anāgaso*, blameless in the sight of Aditi, fit for the undivided and infinite consciousness of the liberated soul. The Ananda owing to that freedom is capable of being in them universal. They are able to hold by their thought all things of the delight, *viśvā vāmāni*; for in the *dhī*, the understanding that holds and arranges, there is right arrangement of the world, perception of right relation, right purpose, right use, right fulfilment, the divine and blissful intention in all things.

It is the universal Divine, the master of the Sat, from whom all things are created in the terms of the truth, *satyam*, that the sacrificers today by means of the sacred *mantras* seek to accept into themselves under the name of Bhaga Savitri. It is the creator whose creation is the Truth, whose sacrifice is the outpouring of the truth through the outpouring of his own Ananda, his divine and unerring joy of being, into the human soul. He as Surya Savitri, master of the Truth, goes in front of both this Night and this Dawn, of the manifest consciousness and the unmanifest, the waking being and the subconscient and superconscient whose interaction creates all our experiences; and in his motion he neglects nothing, is never unheeding, never falters. He goes in front of both bringing out of the night of the subconscient the divine Light, turning into the beams of that Light the uncertain or distorted reflections of the conscient, and always the thought is rightly placed. The source of all error is misapplication, wrong placing of truth, wrong arrangement, wrong relation, wrong positing in time and place, object and order. But in the Master of Truth there is no such error, no such stumbling, no such wrong placing.

Surya Savitri, who is Bhaga, stands between the Infinite and the created worlds within us and without. All things that have to be born in the creative consciousness he receives into the Vijnana; there he puts it into its right place in the divine rhythm by the knowledge that listens and receives the Word as it descends and so he looses it forth into the movement of things, *āśrāvayati ślokena pra ca suvāti.* When in us each creation of the active Ananda, the *prajāvat saubhagam*, comes thus out of the unmanifest, received and heard rightly of the knowledge in the faultless rhythm of things, then is our creation that of Bhaga Savitri, and all the births of that creation, our children, our offspring, *prajā*, *apatyam*, are things of the delight, *viśvā vāmāni*. This is the accomplishment of Bhaga in man, his full portion of the world-sacrifice.

VIII

Vayu, the Master of the Life Energies

Rig Veda IV.48

विहि होत्रा अवीता विपो न रायो अर्यः ।
वायवा चन्द्रेण रथेन याहि सुतस्य पीतये ॥ १॥

1. Do thou manifest the sacrificial energies that are unmanifested, even as a revealer of felicity and doer of the work; O Vayu, come in thy car of happy light to the drinking of the Soma wine.

निर्युवाणो अशस्तीर्नियुत्वाँ इन्द्रसारथिः ।
वायवा चन्द्रेण रथेन याहि सुतस्य पीतये ॥ २॥

2. Put away from thee all denials of expression and with thy steeds of the yoking, with Indra for thy charioteer come, O Vayu, in thy car of happy light to the drinking of the Soma wine.

अनु कृष्णे वसुधिती येमाते विश्वपेशसा ।
वायवा चन्द्रेण रथेन याहि सुतस्य पीतये ॥ ३॥

3. The two that, dark, yet hold all substances, shall observe thee in their labour, they in whom are all forms. O Vayu, come in thy car of happy light to the drinking of the Soma wine.

वहन्तु त्वा मनोयुजो युक्तासो नवतिर्नव ।
वायवा चन्द्रेण रथेन याहि सुतस्य पीतये ॥ ४॥

4. Yoked let the ninety and nine bear thee, they who are yoked by the mind. O Vayu, come in thy car of happy light to the drinking of the Soma wine.

वायो शतं हरीणां युवस्व पोष्याणाम् ।
उत वा ते सहस्रिणो रथ आ यातु पाजसा ॥ ५ ॥

5. Yoke, O Vayu, thy hundred brilliant steeds that shall increase, or else with thy thousand let thy chariot arrive in the mass of its force.

COMMENTARY

The psychological conceptions of the Vedic Rishis have often a marvellous profundity and nowhere more than when they deal with the phenomenon of the conscious activities of mind and life emerging out of the subconscient. It may be said, even, that this idea is the whole basis of the rich and subtle philosophy evolved in that early dawn of knowledge by these inspired Mystics. Nor has any other expressed it with a greater subtlety and felicity than the Rishi Vamadeva, at once one of the most profound seers and one of the sweetest singers of the Vedic age. One of his hymns, the last of the fourth Mandala, is indeed the most important key we possess to the symbolism which hid behind the figures of the sacrifice those realities of psychological experience and perception deemed so sacred by the Aryan forefathers.

In that hymn Vamadeva speaks of the ocean of the subconscient which underlies all our life and activities. Out of that ocean rises "the honeyed wave" of sensational existence with its undelivered burden of unrealised delight climbing full of the "Ghrita" and the "Soma", the clarified mental consciousness and the illumined Ananda that descends from above, to the heaven of Immortality. The "secret Name" of the mental consciousness, the tongue with which the gods taste the world, the nexus of Immortality, is the Ananda which the Soma symbolises. For all this creation has been, as it were, ejected into the subconscient by the four-horned Bull, the divine Purusha whose horns are infinite Existence, Consciousness, Bliss and Truth. In images of an energetic incongruity reminding us of the sublime grotesques and strange figures that have survived from the old mystic and symbolic art of the prehistoric world, Vamadeva describes the Purusha in the figure of a man-bull, whose four horns are the four divine principles, his three feet or three legs the three human principles, mentality, vital dynamism and material substance, his two heads the double consciousness of Soul and Nature, Purusha and Prakriti, his seven hands the seven natural activities corresponding to the seven principles. "Triply bound" — bound in the mind, bound in the life-energies, bound in the body — "the Bull roars aloud; great is the Divinity that has entered into mortals."

For the "ghritam", the clear light of the mentality reflecting the Truth, has been hidden by the Panis, the lords of the lower sense-activity, and shut up in the subconscient; in our thoughts, in our desires, in our physical consciousness the Light and the Ananda have been triply established, but they are concealed from us. It is in the cow, symbol of the Light from above, that the gods find the clarified streams of the "ghritam". These streams, says the Rishi, rise from the heart of things, from the ocean of the subconscient, *hṛdyāt samudrāt*, but they are confined in a hundred pens by the enemy, Vritra, so that they may be kept from the eye of discernment, from the knowledge that labours in us to enlighten that which is concealed and deliver that which is imprisoned. They move in the path on the borders of the subconscient, dense if impetuous in their movements, limited by the nervous action, in small formations of the life-energy Vayu, *vātapramiyaḥ*. Purified progressively by the experiences of the conscious heart and mind, these energies of Nature become finally capable of the marriage with Agni, the divine Will-force, which breaks down their boundaries and is himself nourished by their now abundant waves. That is the crisis of the being by which the mortal nature prepares its conversion to immortality.

In the last verse of the hymn Vamadeva describes the whole of existence as established above in the seat of the divine Purusha, below in the ocean of the subconscient and in the Life, *antaḥ samudre hṛdi antar āyuṣi.* The conscious mind is, then, the channel through which there is communication between the upper ocean and the lower, between superconscient and subconscient, the light divine and the original darkness of Nature.

Vayu is the Lord of Life. By the ancient Mystics life was considered to be a great force pervading all material existence and the condition of all its activities. It is this idea that was formulated later on in the conception of the Prana, the universal breath of life. All the vital and nervous activities of the human being fall within the definition of Prana, and belong to the domain of Vayu. Yet this great deity has comparatively few hymns to his share in the Rig Veda and even in those Suktas in which he is prominently invoked, does not usually figure alone but in company with others and as if dependent on them. He is especially coupled with Indra and it would almost seem as if for the functionings demanded from him by the Vedic Rishis he needed the aid of the superior deity. When there is question of the divine action of the Life-forces in man, Agni in the form of the Vedic Horse, Ashwa, Dadhikravan, takes usually the place of Vayu.

If we consider the fundamental ideas of the Rishis, this position of Vayu becomes intelligible. The illumination of the lower being by the higher, the mortal by the divine, was their principal concept. Light and Force, Go and Ashwa, the Cow and the Horse, were the object of the sacrifice. Force was the condition, Light the liberating agency; and Indra and Surya were the chief bringers of Light. Moreover the Force required was the divine Will taking possession of all the human energies and revealing itself in them; and of this Will, this force of conscious energy taking possession of the nervous vitality and revealing itself in it, Agni more than Vayu and especially Agni Dadhikravan was the symbol. For it is Agni who is master of Tapas, the divine Consciousness formulating itself in universal energy, of which the Prana is only a representative in the lower being. Therefore in Vamadeva's hymn, the fifty-eighth of the fourth Mandala, it is Indra and Surya and Agni who effect the great manifestation of the conscious divinity out of the subconscient. Vata or Vayu, the nervous activity, is only a first condition of the emergent Mind. And for man it is the meeting of Life with Mind and the support given by the former to the evolution of the latter which is the important aspect of Vayu. Therefore we find Indra, Master of Mind, and Vayu, Master of Life, coupled together and the latter always somewhat dependent on the former; the Maruts, the thought-forces, although in their origin they seem to be as much powers of Vayu as of Indra, are more important to the Rishis than Vayu himself and even in their dynamic aspect are more closely associated with Agni Rudra than with the natural chief of the legions of the Air.

The present hymn, the forty-eighth of the Mandala, is the last of three in which Vamadeva invokes Indra and Vayu for the drinking of the Soma-wine. They are called in conjointly as the two lords of brilliant force, *śavasaspatī*, as in another hymn, in a former Mandala, they are invoked as lords of thought, *dhiyaspatī*. Indra is the master of mental force, Vayu of nervous or vital force and their union is necessary for thought and for action. They are invited to come in one common chariot and drink together of the wine of the Ananda which brings with it the divinising energies. Vayu, it is said, has the right of the first draught; for it is the supporting vital forces that must first become capable of the ecstasy of the divine action.

In the third hymn, in which the result of the sacrifice is defined, Vayu is alone invoked, but even so his companionship with Indra is clearly indicated. He is to come in a chariot of happy brightness, like Usha in another hymn, to drink of the immortalising wine.[1] The chariot symbolises movement of energy and it is a glad movement of already illuminated vital energies that is invoked in the form of Vayu. The divine utility of this brightly happy movement is indicated in the first three verses.

The god is to manifest — he is to bring into the light of the conscious activity sacrificial energies which are not yet manifested,[2] are yet hidden in the darkness of the subconscient. In the ritualistic interpretation the phrase may be translated, "Eat of offerings that have not been eaten" or, in another sense of the verb *vī*, it may be rendered "Arrive at sacrificial energies which have never been approached"; but all these renderings amount, symbolically, to the same psychological sense. Powers and activities that have not yet been called up out of the subconscient, have to be liberated from its secret cave by the combined action of Indra and Vayu and devoted to the work.

---

[1] *Vāyavā candreṇa rathena yāhi sutasya pītaye.*

[2] *Vihi hotrā avītā.*

For it is not towards an ordinary action of the nervous mentality that they are called. Vayu is to manifest these energies as would "a revealer of the felicity, a doer of the Aryan work", *vipo na rāyo aryaḥ*. These words sufficiently indicate the nature of the energies that are to be evoked. It is possible, however, that the phrase may have a covert reference to Indra and thus indicate what is afterwards clearly expressed, the necessity that Vayu's action should be governed by the illumined and aspiring force of the more brilliant god. For it is Indra's enlightenment that leads to the secret of beatitude being revealed and he is the first labourer in the Work. To Indra, Agni and Surya among the gods is especially applied the term *arya*, which describes with an untranslatable compactness those who rise to the noble aspiration and who do the great labour as an offering in order to arrive at the good and the bliss.

In the second verse the necessity of Indra's guidance is affirmed expressly. Vayu is to come putting away all denials that may be opposed to the manifestation of the unmanifested, *niryuvāṇo aśastīḥ*. The word *aśastīḥ* means literally "not-expressings" and describes the detention by obscuring powers like Vritra of the light and power that are waiting to be revealed, ready to be called out into expression through the influence of the gods and by the instrumentality of the Word. The Word is the power that expresses, *śastram*, *gir*, *vacas*. But it has to be protected and given its right effect by the divine Powers. Vayu is to do this office; he has to expel all powers of denial, of obscuration, of non-manifestation. To do this work he must arrive "with his steeds of the yoking and Indra for charioteer", *niyutvān indrasārathiḥ*. The steeds of Indra, of

Vayu, of Surya have each their appropriate name. Indra's horses are *hari* or *babhru*, red gold or tawny yellow; Surya's *harit*, indicating a more deep, full and intense luminousness; Vayu's are *niyut*, steeds of the yoking, for they represent those dynamic movements which yoke the energy to its action. But although they are the horses of Vayu, they have to be driven by Indra, the movements of the Master of nervous and vital energy guided by the Master of mind.

The third verse[3] would seem at first to bring in an unconnected idea; it speaks of a dark Heaven and Earth with all their forms obeying or following in their labour the movements of Vayu in his Indra-driven car. They are not mentioned by name but described as the two black or dark holders of substance or holders of wealth, *vasudhitī*; but the latter word sufficiently indicates earth and by implication of the dual form Heaven also, its companion. We must note that it is not Heaven the father and Earth the mother that are indicated, but the two sisters, Rodasi, feminine forms of heaven and earth, who symbolise the general energies of the mental and physical consciousness. It is their dark states — the obscured consciousness between its two limits of the mental and the physical, — which by the happy movement of the nervous dynamism begin to labour in accordance with the movement or under the control of Vayu and to yield up their hidden forms; for all forms are concealed in them and they must be compelled to reveal them. Thus we discover that this verse completes the sense of the two that precede. For always when the Veda is properly understood, its verses are seen to unroll the thought with a profound logical coherence and pregnant succession.

The two remaining riks indicate the result produced by this action of Heaven and Earth and by their yielding up of hidden forms and unmanifested energies on the movement of Vayu as his car gallops towards the Ananda. First of all his horses are to attain their normally complete general number. "Let the ninety-nine be yoked and bear thee, those that are yoked by the mind."[4] The constantly recurring numbers ninety-nine, a hundred and a thousand have a symbolic significance in the Veda which it is very difficult to disengage with any precision. The secret is perhaps to be found in the multiplication of the mystic number seven by itself and its double repetition with a unit added before and at the end, making altogether 1+49+49+1=100. Seven is the number of essential principles in manifested Nature, the seven forms of divine consciousness at play in the world. Each, formulated severally, contains the other six in itself; thus the full number is forty-nine, and to this is added the unit above out of which all develops, giving us altogether a scale of fifty and forming the complete gamut of active consciousness. But there is also its duplication by an ascending and descending series, the descent of the gods, the ascent of man. This gives us ninety-nine, the number variously applied in the Veda to horses, cities, rivers, in each case with a separate but kindred symbolism. If we add an obscure unit below into which all descends to the luminous unit above towards which all ascends we have the full scale of one hundred.

---

[3] *Anu kṛṣṇe vasudhitī yemāte viśvapeśasā.*

It is therefore a complex energy of consciousness which is to be the result of Vayu's movement; it is the emergence of the fullest movement of the mental activity now only latent and potential in man, — the ninety and nine steeds that are yoked by the mind. And in the next verse the culminating unit is added. We have a hundred horses, and because the action is now that of complete luminous mentality, these steeds, though they still carry Vayu and Indra, are no longer merely *niyut*, but *hari*, the colour of Indra's brilliant bays.[5] "Yoke, O Vayu, a hundred of the brilliant ones, that are to be increased."

But why to be increased? Because a hundred represents the general fullness of the variously combined movements, but not their utter complexity. Each of the hundred can be multiplied by ten; all can be increased in their own kind: for that is the nature of the increase indicated by the word *poṣyāṇām*. Therefore, says the Rishi, either come with the general fullness of the hundred to be afterwards nourished into their full complexity of a hundred tens or, if thou wilt, come at once with thy thousand and let thy movement arrive in the utter mass of its entire potential energy.[6] It is the completely varied all-ensphering, all-energising mental illumination with its full perfection of being, power, bliss, knowledge, mentality, vital force, physical activity that he desires. For, this attained, the subconscient is compelled to yield up all its hidden possibilities at the will of the perfected mind for the rich and abundant movement of the perfected life.

---

[4] *Vahantu tvā manoyujo yuktāso navatir nava.*

[5] *Vāyo śataṁ harīṇāṁ yuvasva poṣyāṇām.*

---

[6] *Uta vā te sahasriṇo ratha ā yātu pājasā.*

IX

Brihaspati, Power of the Soul

Rig Veda IV.50

यस्तस्तम्भ सहसा वि ज्मो अन्तान् बृहस्पतिस्त्रिषधस्थो रवेण ।
तं प्रत्नास ऋषयो दीध्यानाः पुरो विप्रा दधिरे मन्द्रजिह्वम् ॥१॥

1. He who established in his might the extremities of the earth, Brihaspati, in the triple world of our fulfilment, by his cry, on him the pristine sages meditated and, illumined, set him in their front with his tongue of ecstasy.

धुनेतयः सुप्रकेतं मदन्तो बृहस्पते अभि ये नस्ततस्रे ।
पृषन्तं सृप्रमदब्धमूर्वं बृहस्पते रक्षतादस्य योनिम् ॥२॥

2. They, O Brihaspati, vibrating with the impulse of their movement, rejoicing in perfected consciousness wove for us abundant, rapid, invincible, wide, the world from which this being was born. That do thou protect, O Brihaspati.

बृहस्पते या परमा परावदत आ त ऋतस्पृशो नि षेदुः ।
तुभ्यं खाता अवता अद्रिदुग्धा मध्वः श्चोतन्त्यभितो विरप्शम् ॥३॥

3. O Brihaspati, that which is the highest supreme of existence, thither from this world they attain and take their seat who touch the Truth. For thee are dug the wells of honey which drain this hill and their sweetnesses stream out on every side and break into overflowing.

बृहस्पतिः प्रथमं जायमानो महो ज्योतिषः परमे व्योमन् ।
सप्तास्यस्तुविजातो रवेण वि सप्तरश्मिरधमत् तमांसि ॥४॥

4. Brihaspati first in his birth from the vast light, in the highest heavenly space, with his seven fronts, with his seven rays, with his many births, drives utterly away the darknesses that encompass us with his cry.

स सुष्टुभा स ऋक्वता गणेन वलं रुरोज फलिगं रवेण ।
बृहस्पतिरुस्रिया हव्यसूदः कनिक्रदद् वावशतीरुदाजत् ॥ ५ ॥

5. He with his cohort of the rhythm that affirms, of the chant that illumines has broken Vala into pieces with his cry. Brihaspati drives upward the Bright Ones who speed our offerings; he shouts aloud as he leads them, lowing they reply.

एवा पित्रे विश्वदेवाय वृष्णे यज्ञैर्विधेम नमसा हविर्भिः ।
बृहस्पते सुप्रजा वीरवन्तो वयं स्याम पतयो रयीणाम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Thus to the Father, the universal Godhead, the Bull of the herds, may we dispose our sacrifices and submission and oblations; O Brihaspati, full of energy and rich in offspring may we become masters of the felicities.

स इद् राजा प्रतिजन्यानि विश्वा शुष्मेण तस्थावभि वीर्येण ।
बृहस्पतिं यः सुभृतं बिभर्ति वल्गूयति वन्दते पूर्वभाजम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Verily is he King and conquers by his energy, by his heroic force all that is in the worlds that confront him, who bears Brihaspati in him well-contained and has the exultant dance and adores and gives him the first fruits of his enjoyment.

स इत् क्षेति सुधित ओकसि स्वे तस्मा इळा पिन्वते विश्वदानीम् ।
तस्मै विशः स्वयमेवा नमन्ते यस्मिन् ब्रह्मा राजनि पूर्व एति ॥ ८ ॥

8. Yea, he dwells firmly seated in his proper home and for him Ila at all times grows in richness. To him all creatures of themselves submit, the King, he in whom the Soul-Power goes in front.

अप्रतीतो जयति सं धनानि प्रतिजन्यान्युत या सजन्या ।
अवस्यवे यो वरिवः कृणोति ब्रह्मणे राजा तमवन्ति देवाः ॥ ९ ॥

9. None can assail him, he conquers utterly all the riches of the worlds which confront him and the world in which he dwells; he who for the Soul-Power that seeks its manifestation creates in himself that highest good, is cherished by the gods.

इन्द्रश्च सोमं पिबतं बृहस्पतेऽस्मिन् यज्ञे मन्दसाना वृषण्वसू ।
आ वां विशन्त्विन्दवः स्वाभुवोऽस्मे रयिं सर्ववीरं नि यच्छतम् ॥ १० ॥

10. Thou, O Brihaspati, and Indra, drink the Soma-wine rejoicing in this sacrifice, lavishing substance. Let the powers of its delight enter into you and take perfect form, control in us a felicity full of every energy.

बृहस्पत इन्द्र वर्धतं नः सचा सा वां सुमतिर्भूत्वस्मे ।
अविष्टं धियो जिगृतं पुरन्धीर्जजस्तमर्यो वनुषामरातीः ॥ ११ ॥

11. O Brihaspati, O Indra, increase in us together and may that your perfection of mind be created in us; foster the thoughts, bring out the mind's multiple powers; destroy all poverties that they bring who seek to conquer the Aryan.

COMMENTARY

Brihaspati, Brahmanaspati, Brahma are the three names of the god to whom the Rishi Vamadeva addresses this mystic hymn of praise. In the later Puranic theogonies Brihaspati and Brahma have long become separate deities. Brahma is the Creator, one of the Three who form the great Puranic Trinity; Brihaspati is a figure of no great importance, spiritual teacher of the gods, and incidentally guardian of the planet Jupiter; Brahmanaspati, the middle term which once linked the two, has disappeared. To restore the physiognomy of the Vedic deity we have to reunite what has been disjoined and correct the values of the two separated terms in the light of the original Vedic conceptions.

Brahman in the Veda signifies ordinarily the Vedic Word or mantra in its profoundest aspect as the expression of the intuition arising out of the depths of the soul or being. It is a voice of the rhythm which has created the worlds and creates perpetually. All world is expression or manifestation, creation by the Word. Conscious Being luminously manifesting its contents in itself, of itself, *tmanā*, is the superconscient; holding its contents obscurely in itself it is the subconscient. The higher, the self-luminous descends into the obscure, into the night, into darkness concealed in darkness, *tamas tamasā gūḍham*, where all is hidden in formless being owing to fragmentation of consciousness, *tucchyenābhvapihitam*. It arises again out of the Night by the Word to reconstitute in the conscient its vast unity, *tan mahinājāyataikam*. This vast Being, this all-containing and all-formulating consciousness is Brahman. It is the Soul that emerges out of the subconscient in Man and rises towards the superconscient. And the word of creative Power welling upward out of the soul is also *brahman*.

The Divine, the Deva, manifests itself as conscious Power of the soul, creates the worlds by the Word out of the waters of the subconscient, *apraketaṁ salilaṁ sarvam*, — the inconscient ocean that was this all, as it is plainly termed in the great Hymn of Creation. This power of the Deva is Brahma, the stress in the name falling more upon the conscious soul-power than upon the Word which expresses it. The manifestation of the different world-planes in the conscient human being culminates in the manifestation of the superconscient, the Truth and the Bliss, and this is the office of the supreme Word or Veda. Of this supreme word Brihaspati is the master, the stress in this name falling upon the potency of the Word rather than upon the thought of the general soul-power which is behind it. Brihaspati gives the Word of knowledge, the rhythm of expression of the superconscient, to the gods and especially to Indra, the lord of Mind, when they work in man as "Aryan" powers for the great consummation. It is easy to see how these conceptions came to be specialised in the broader, but less subtle and profound Puranic symbolism into

Brahma, the Creator, and Brihaspati, the teacher of the gods. In the name, Brahmanaspati, the two varying stresses are unified and equalised. It is the link-name between the general and the special aspects of the same deity.

Brihaspati is he who has established firmly the limits and definitions of the Earth, that is to say of the material consciousness. The existence out of which all formations are made is an obscure, fluid and indeterminate movement, — *salilam*, Water. The first necessity is to create a sufficiently stable formation out of this flux and running so as to form a basis for the life of the conscient. This Brihaspati does in the formation of the physical consciousness and its world, *sahasā*, by force, by a sort of mighty constraint upon the resistance of the subconscient. This great creation he effects by establishing the triple principle of mind, life and body, always present together and involved in each other or evolved out of each other in the world of the cosmic labour and fulfilment. The three together form the triple seat of Agni and there he works out the gradual work of accomplishment or perfection which is the object of the sacrifice. Brihaspati forms by sound, by his cry, *raveṇa*, for the Word is the cry of the soul as it awakens to ever-new perceptions and formations. "He who established firmly by force the ends of the earth, Brihaspati in the triple seat of the fulfilment, by his cry."[1]

On him, it is said, the ancient or pristine Rishis meditated; meditating, they became illumined in mind; illumined, they set him in front as the god of the ecstatic tongue, *mandrajihvam*, the tongue that takes joy of the intoxicating wine of Soma, *mada*, *madhu*, of that which is the wave of sweetness, *madhumān ūrmiḥ*, hidden in the conscient existence and out of it progressively delivered.[2] But of whom is there question? The seven divine Rishis, *ṛṣayo divyāḥ*, who fulfilling consciousness in each of its seven principles and harmonising them together superintend the evolution of the world, or the human fathers, *pitaro manuṣyāḥ*, who first discovered the higher knowledge and formulated for man the infinity of the Truth-consciousness? Either may be intended, but the reference seems to be rather to the conquest of the Truth by the human fathers, the Ancients. The word *dīdhyāna* in the Veda means both shining, becoming luminous, and thinking, meditating, fixing in the thought. It is constantly being used with the peculiar Vedic figure of a double or complex sense. In the first sense it must be connected with *viprāḥ*, and the suggestion is that the Rishis became more and more luminous in thought by the triumphant force of Brihaspati until they grew into Illuminates, *viprāḥ*. In the second it is connected with *dadhire* and suggests that the Rishis, meditating on the intuitions that rise up from the soul with the cry of Brihaspati in the sacred and enlightening Word, holding them firmly in the thought, became illuminated in mind, open to the full inflow of the superconscient. They were thus able to bring into the front of the conscious being that activity of the soul-thoughts which works usually in the background, veiled, and to make it the leading activity of their nature. As a result Brihaspati in them became able to taste for them the bliss of existence, the wine of Immortality, the supreme Ananda. The formation of the definite physical consciousness is the first step, this awakening to the Ananda by the bringing forward in mind of the intuitive soul as the leader of our conscious activities is the consummation or, at least, the condition of the consummation.

---

[1] *Yas tastambha sahasā vi jmo antān, bṛhaspatis triṣadhastho raveṇa.*

[2] *Taṁ pratnāsa ṛṣayo dīdhyānāḥ, puro viprā dadhire mandrajihvam.*

The result is the formation of the Truth-consciousness in man. The ancient Rishis attained to the most rapid vibration of the movement; the most full and swift streaming of the flux of consciousness which constitutes our active existence, no longer obscure as in the subconscient, but full of the joy of perfected consciousness, — not *apraketam* like the Ocean described in the Hymn of Creation, but *supraketam*. Thus they are described, *dhunetayaḥ supraketaṁ madantaḥ*. With this attainment of the full rapidity of the activities of consciousness unified with its full light and bliss in the human mentality they have woven for the race by the web of these rapid, luminous and joyous perceptions the Truth-consciousness, Ritam Brihat, which is the womb or birth-place of this conscient being. For it is out of the superconscient that existence descends into the subconscient and carries with it that which emerges here as the individual human being, the conscious soul. The nature of this Truth-consciousness is in itself this that it is abundant in its outflowings, *pṛṣantam*, or, it may be, many-coloured in the variety of its harmonised qualities; it is rapid in its motion, *sṛpram*; by that luminous rapidity it triumphs over all that seeks to quell or break it, it is *adabdham*; above all it is wide, vast, infinite, *ūrvam*. In all these respects it is the opposite of the first limited movement which emerges out of the subconscient; for that is stinted and grey, slow and hampered, easily overcome and broken by the opposition of hostile powers, scanty and bounded in its scope.[3] But this Truth-consciousness manifested in man is capable of being again veiled from him by the insurgence of the powers that deny, the Vritras, Vala. The Rishi therefore prays to Brihaspati to guard it against that obscuration by the fullness of his soul-force.

The Truth-consciousness is the foundation of the superconscient, the nature of which is the Bliss. It is the supreme of the supraconscient, *paramā parāvat*, from which the being has descended, the *parama parārdha* of the Upanishads, the existence of Sachchidananda. It is to that highest existence that those arise out of this physical consciousness, *ataḥ*, who like the ancient Rishis enter into contact with the Truth-consciousness.[4] They make it their seat and home, *kṣaya*, *okas*. For in the hill of the physical being there are dug for the soul those abounding wells of sweetness which draw out of its hard rigidity the concealed Ananda; at the touch of the Truth the rivers of honey, the quick pourings of the wine of Immortality trickle and stream and break out into a flood of abundance over the whole extent of the human consciousness.[5]

Thus Brihaspati, becoming manifest first of the gods out of the vastness of that Light of the Truth-consciousness, in that highest heavenly space of the supreme superconscient, *maho jyotiṣaḥ parame vyoman*, presents himself in the full sevenfold aspect of our conscious being, multiply born in all the forms of the interplay of its seven principles ranging from the material to the purest spiritual, luminous with their sevenfold ray which lights all our surfaces and all our profundities, and with his triumphant cry dispels and scatters all powers of the Night, all encroachments of the Inconscient, all possible darknesses.[6]

---

[3] *Dhunetayaḥ supraketaṁ madanto, bṛhaspate abhi ye nas tatasre; pṛṣantaṁ sṛpram adabdham ūrvaṁ, bṛhaspate rakṣatād asya yonim.*

[4] *Bṛhaspate yā paramā parāvad, ata ā te ṛtaspṛśo ni ṣeduḥ.*

[5] *Tubhyaṁ khātā avatā adridugdhā, madhvaḥ ścotanti abhito virapśam.*

It is by the powers of the Word, by the rhythmic army of the soul-forces that Brihaspati brings all into expression and dispelling all the darknesses that encompass us makes an end of the Night. These are the "Brahma"s of the Veda, charged with the word, the *brahman*, the *mantra*; it is they in the sacrifice who raise heavenward the divine Rik, the Stubh or Stoma. *Ṛk*, connected with the word *arka* which means light or illumination, is the Word considered as a power of realisation in the illuminating consciousness; *stubh* is the Word considered as a power which affirms and confirms in the settled rhythm of things. That which has to be expressed is realised in consciousness, affirmed, finally confirmed by the power of the Word. The "Brahma"s or Brahmana forces are the priests of the Word, the creators by the divine rhythm. It is by their cry that Brihaspati breaks Vala into fragments.

As Vritra is the enemy, the Dasyu, who holds back the flow of the sevenfold waters of conscient existence, — Vritra, the personification of the Inconscient, so Vala is the enemy, the Dasyu, who holds back in his hole, his cave, *bilam*, *guhā*, the herds of the Light; he is the personification of the subconscient. Vala is not himself dark or inconscient, but a cause of darkness. Rather his substance is of the light, *valaṁ gomantam*, *valaṁ govapuṣam*, but he holds the light in himself and denies its conscious manifestation. He has to be broken into fragments in order that the hidden lustres may be liberated. Their escape is expressed by the emergence of the Bright Ones, the herds of the Dawn, from the cavern below in the physical hill and their driving upward by Brihaspati to the heights of our being whither with them and by them we climb. He calls to them with the voice of the superconscient knowledge; they follow him with the response of the conscious intuition. They give in their course the impulsion to the activities which form the material of the sacrifice and constitute the offerings given to the gods and these also are carried upward till they reach the same divine goal.[7]

---

[6] *Bṛhaspatiḥ prathamaṁ jāyamāno, maho jyotiṣaḥ parame vyoman; saptāsyas tuvijāto raveṇa, vi saptaraśmir adhamat tamāṁsi.*

This self-expressive Soul, Brihaspati, is the Purusha, the Father of all things; it is the universal Divinity; it is the Bull of the herds, the Master and fertilizer of all these luminous energies evolved or involved, active in the day or obscurely working in the night of things, which constitute the becoming or world-existence, *bhuvanam*. To the Purusha under the name of Brihaspati the Rishi would have us dispose in the order of a sacrifice all the materials of our being by sacrificial action in which they are given up to the All-Soul as acceptable oblations offered with adoration and surrender. By the sacrifice we shall become through the grace of this godhead full of heroic energy for the battle of life, rich in the offspring of the soul, masters of the felicities which are attained by divine enlightenment and right action.[8]

For the soul's energy and overcoming force are perfected in the human being who bears in himself and is able to bear firmly this conscious Soul-power brought forward as the leading agency in the nature, who arrives by it at a rapid and joyous movement of the inner activities as did the pristine sages, compasses that harmonious bound and gallop of the steed of Life within and adores always this godhead giving it the first fruits of all results and enjoyments. By that energy he throws himself upon and masters all that comes to him in the births, the worlds, the planes of consciousness that open upon his perception in the progress of the being. He becomes the king, the *samrāṭ*, ruler of his world-environment.[9]

---

[7] *Sa suṣṭubhā sa ṛkvatā gaṇena, valaṁ ruroja phaligaṁ raveṇa; bṛhaspatir usriyā havyasūdaḥ, kanikradad vāvaśatīr udājat.*

[8] *Evā pitre viśvadevāya vṛṣṇe, yajñair vidhema namasā havirbhiḥ; bṛhaspate suprajā vīravanto, vayaṁ syāma patayo rayīṇām.*

For such a soul attains to a firmly settled existence in its own proper home, the Truth-consciousness, the infinite totality, and for it at all times Ila, the highest Word, premier energy of the Truth-consciousness, she who is the direct revealing vision in knowledge and becomes in that knowledge the spontaneous self-attainment of the Truth of things in action, result and experience, — Ila grows perpetually in body and richness. To him all creatures of themselves incline, they submit to the Truth in him because it is one with the Truth in themselves. For the conscious Soul-Power that is the universal creator and realiser, leads in all his activities. It gives him the guidance of the Truth in his relations with all creatures and therefore he acts upon them with an entire and spontaneous mastery. This is the ideal state of man that the soul-force should lead him, Brihaspati, Brahma, the spiritual light and counsellor, and he realising himself as Indra, the royal divinity of action, should govern himself and all his environment in the right of their common Truth. *Brahmā rājani pūrva eti.*[10]

For this Brahma, this creative Soul seeks to manifest and increase himself in the royalty of the human nature and he who attains to that royalty of light and power and creates in himself for Brahma that highest human good, finds himself always cherished, fostered, increased by all the divine cosmic powers who work for the supreme consummation. He wins all those possessions of the soul which are necessary for the royalty of the spirit, those that belong to his own plane of consciousness, and those that present themselves to him from other planes of consciousness. Nothing can assail or affect his triumphant progress.[11]

---

[9] *Sa id rājā pratijanyāni viśvā, śuṣmeṇa tasthāv abhi vīryeṇa; bṛhaspatiṁ yaḥ subhṛtaṁ bibharti, valgūyati vandate pūrvabhājam.*

[10] *Sa it kṣeti sudhita okasi sve, tasmā iḷā pinvate viśvadānīm; tasmai viśaḥ svayam evā namante, yasmin brahmā rājani pūrva eti.*

[11] *Apratīto jayati saṁ dhanāni, pratijanyāni uta yā sajanyā; avasyave yo varivaḥ kṛṇoti, brahmaṇe rājā tam avanti devāḥ.*

Indra and Brihaspati are thus the two divine powers whose fullness in us and conscious possession of the Truth are the conditions of our perfection. Vamadeva calls on them to drink in this great sacrifice the wine of immortal Ananda, rejoicing in the intoxication of its ecstasies, pouring out abundantly the substance and riches of the spirit. Those outpourings of the superconscient beatitude must enter into the soul-force and there take being perfectly. Thus a felicity will be formed, a governed harmony, replete with all the energies and capacities of the perfected nature which is master of itself and its world.[12]

So let Brihaspati and Indra increase in us and that state of right mentality which together they build will be manifested; for that is the first condition. Let them foster the growing thoughts and bring into expression those energies of the mental being which by an enriched and multiple thought become capable of the illumination and rapidity of the Truth-consciousness. The powers that attack the Aryan fighter, would create in him poverties of mind and poverties of the emotive nature, all infelicities. Soul force and mental force increasing together, destroy all such poverty and insufficiency. Together they bring man to his crowning and his perfect kinghood.[13]

---

[12] *Indraś ca somaṁ pibataṁ bṛhaspate, asmin yajñe mandasānā vṛṣaṇvasū; ā vāṁ viśantu indavaḥ svābhuvo, asme rayiṁ sarvavīraṁ ni yacchatam.*

[13] *Bṛhaspate indra vardhataṃ naḥ, sacā sā vāṁ sumatir bhūtu asme; aviṣṭaṁ dhiyo jigṛtaṁ purandhīr, jajastam aryo vanuṣām arātīḥ.*

X

The Ashwins, Lords of Bliss

Rig Veda IV.45

एष स्य भानुरुदियर्ति युज्यते रथः परिज्मा दिवो अस्य सानवि ।
पृक्षासो अस्मिन्मिथुना अधि त्रयो दृतिस्तुरीयो मधुनो वि रप्शते ॥१॥

1. Lo, that Light is rising up and the all-pervading car is being yoked on the high level of this Heaven; there are placed satisfying delights in their triple pairs and the fourth skin of honey overflows.

उद् वां पृक्षासो मधुमन्त ईरते रथा अश्वास उषसो व्युष्टिषु ।
अपोर्णुवन्तस्तम आ परीवृतं स्वर्ण शुक्रं तन्वन्त आ रजः ॥२॥

2. Full of honey upward rise the delights; upward horses and cars in the wide-shinings of the Dawn and they roll aside the veil of darkness that encompassed on every side and they extend the lower world into a shining form like that of the luminous heaven.

मध्वः पिबतं मधुपेभिरासभिरुत प्रियं मधुने युञ्जाथां रथम् ।
आ वर्तनिं मधुना जिन्वथस्पथो दृतिं वहेथे मधुमन्तमश्विना ॥३॥

3. Drink of the honey with your honey-drinking mouths, for the honey yoke your car beloved. With the honey you gladden the movement and its paths; full of honey, O Ashwins, is the skin that you bear.

हंसासो ये वां मधुमन्तो अस्रिधो हिरण्यपर्णा उहुव उषर्बुधः ।
उदप्रुतो मन्दिनो मन्दिनिस्पृशो मध्वो न मक्षः सवनानि गच्छथः ॥४॥

4. Full of the honey are the swans that bear you, golden-winged, waking with the Dawn, and they come not to hurt; they rain forth the waters, they are full of rapture and touch that which holds the Rapture. Like bees to pourings of honey you come to the Soma-offerings.

स्वध्वरासो मधुमन्तो अग्नय उस्रा जरन्ते प्रति वस्तोरश्विना ।
यन्निक्तहस्तस्तरणिर्विचक्षणः सोमं सुषाव मधुमन्तमद्रिभिः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Full of the honey the fires lead well the sacrifice and they woo your brightness, O Ashwins, day by day, when one with purified hands, with a perfect vision, with power to go through to the goal has pressed out with the pressing-stones the honeyed Soma-wine.

आकेनिपासो अहभिर्दविध्वतः स्वर्ण शुक्रं तन्वन्त आ रजः ।
सूरश्चिदश्वान् युयुजान ईयते विश्वाँ अनु स्वधया चेतथस्पथः ॥ ६ ॥

6. Drinking the wine near them, the fires ride and run and extend the lower world into a shining form like that of the luminous heaven. The Sun too goes yoking his steeds; by force of Nature's self-arranging you move consciously along all paths.[1]

प्र वामवोचमश्विना धियंधा रथः स्वश्वो अजरो यो अस्ति ।
येन सद्यः परि रजांसि याथो हविष्मन्तं तरणिं भोजमच्छ ॥ ७ ॥

7. I have declared, O Ashwins, holding the Thought in me, your car that is undecaying and drawn by perfect steeds, — your car by which you move at once over all the worlds towards the enjoyment rich in offerings that makes through to the goal.

---

[1] Or, you take knowledge of all the paths in their order.

COMMENTARY

The hymns of the Rig Veda addressed to the two shining Twins, like those addressed to the Ribhus, are full of symbolic expressions and unintelligible without a firm clue to their symbolism. The three leading features of these hymns to the Ashwins are the praise of their chariot, their horses and their rapid all-pervading movement; their seeking of honey and their joy in the honey, *madhu*, and the satisfying delights that they carry in their car; and their close association with the Sun, with Suryā the daughter of the Sun and with the Dawn.

The Ashwins like the other gods descend from the Truth-consciousness, the Ritam; they are born or manifested from Heaven, from Dyaus, the pure Mind; their movement pervades all the worlds, — the effect of their action ranges from the body through the vital being and the thought to the superconscient Truth. It commences indeed from the ocean, from the vague of the being as it emerges out of the subconscient and they conduct the soul over the flood of these waters and prevent its foundering on its voyage. They are therefore *Nāsatyā*, lords of the movement, leaders of the journey or voyage.

They help man with the Truth which comes to them especially by association with the Dawn, with Surya, lord of the Truth, and with Suryā, his daughter, but they help him more characteristically with the delight of being. They are lords of bliss, *śubhaspatī*; their car or movement is loaded with the satisfactions of the delight of being in all its planes; they bear the skin full of the overflowing honey; they seek the honey, the sweetness, and fill all things with it. They are therefore effective powers of the Ananda which proceeds out of the Truth-consciousness and which manifesting itself variously in all the three worlds maintains man in his journey. Hence their action is in all the worlds. They are especially riders or drivers of the Horse, Ashwins, as their name indicates, — they use the vitality of the human being as the motive-force of the journey: but also they work in the thought and lead it to the Truth. They give health, beauty, wholeness to the body; they are the divine physicians. Of all the gods they are the most ready to come to man and to create for him ease and joy, *āgamiṣṭhā*, *śubhaspatī*. For this is their peculiar and perfect function. They are essentially lords of weal, of bliss, *śubhaspatī*.

This character of the Ashwins is brought out with a continual emphasis by Vamadeva in the present hymn. In almost every verse occurs with a constant iteration the words *madhu*, *madhumān*, honey, honied. It is a hymn to the sweetness of existence; it is a chant of the delight of being.

The great Light of lights, the Sun of Truth, the illumination of the Truth-consciousness is rising up out of the movement of life to create the illumined Mind, Swar, which completes the evolution of the lower triple world. *Eṣa sya bhānur udiyarti.* By this rising of the Sun in man, the full movement of the Ashwins becomes possible; for by the Truth comes the realised Delight, the heavenly beatitude. Therefore, the chariot of the Ashwins is being yoked upon the height of this Dyaus, the high level or plane of the resplendent mind. That chariot is all-pervading; its motion goes everywhere; its speed runs freely on all planes of our consciousness. *Yujyate rathaḥ parijmā divo asya sānavi.*

The full all-pervading movement of the Ashwins brings with it the fullness of all the possible satisfactions of the delight of being. This is expressed symbolically in the language of the Veda by saying that in their car are found the satisfactions, *pṛkṣāsaḥ*, in three pairs, *pṛkṣāsa asmin mithunā adhi trayaḥ*. The word *pṛkṣa* is rendered food in the ritual interpretation like the kindred word *prayas*. The root means pleasure, fullness, satisfaction, and may have the material sense of a "delicacy" or satisfying food and the psychological sense of a delight, pleasure or satisfaction. The satisfactions or delicacies which are carried in the car of the Ashwins are, then, in three pairs; or the phrase may simply mean, they are three but closely associated together. In any case, the reference is to the three kinds of satisfaction or pleasure which correspond to the three movements or worlds of our progressive consciousness, — satisfactions of the body, satisfactions of the vitality, satisfactions of the mind. If they are in three pairs, then we must understand that on each plane there is a double action of the delight corresponding to the double and united twinhood of the Ashwins. It is difficult in the Veda itself to distinguish between these brilliant and happy Twins or to discover what each severally represents. We have no such indication as is given us in the case of the three Ribhus. But perhaps the Greek names of these two Dioskouroi, *Divo napātā*, sons of Heaven, contain a clue. Kastor, the name of the elder, seems to be Kashtri, the Shining One; Poludeukes[2] may possibly be Purudansas, a name which occurs in the Veda as an epithet of the Ashwins, the Manifold in activity. If so, the twin birth of the Ashwins recalls the constant Vedic dualism of Power and Light, Knowledge and Will, Consciousness and Energy, Go and Ashwa. In all the satisfactions brought to us by the Ashwins these two elements are inseparably united; where the form is that of the Light or Consciousness, there Power and Energy are contained; where the form is that of the Power or Energy, there Light and Consciousness are contained.

But these three forms of satisfaction are not all that their chariot holds for us; there is something else, a fourth, a skin full of honey and out of this skin the honey breaks and overflows on every side. *Dṛtis turīyo madhuno vi rapśate.* Mind, life and body, these are three; *turīya*, the fourth plane of our consciousness, is the superconscient, the Truth-consciousness. The Ashwins bring with them a skin, *dṛti*, literally a thing cut or torn, a partial formation out of the Truth-consciousness to contain the honey of the superconscient Beatitude; but it cannot contain it; that unconquerably abundant and infinite sweetness breaks out and overflows everywhere drenching with delight the whole of our existence.

With that honey the three pairs of satisfactions, mental, vital, bodily are impregnated by this all-pervasive overflowing plenty and they become full of its sweetness, *madhumantaḥ*. And so becoming, at once they begin to move upward. Touched by the divine delight all our satisfactions in this lower world soar upward irresistibly attracted towards the superconscient, towards the Truth, towards the Beatitude. And with them, — for, secretly or openly, consciously or subconsciously it is the delight of being that is the leader of our activities, — all the chariots and horses of these gods take the same soaring upward movement. All the various movements of our being, all the forms of Force that give them their impulsion, all follow the ascending light of Truth towards its home. *Ud vāṁ pṛkṣāso madhumanta īrate, rathā aśvāsa uṣaso vyuṣṭiṣu.*

---

[2] The *k* of Poludeukes points to an original *ś*; the name would then be *Purudaṁśas*; but such fluctuations between the various sibilants were common enough in the early fluid state of the Aryan tongues.

"In the wide-shinings of the Dawn" they rise; for Dawn is the illumination of the Truth rising upon the mentality to bring the day of full consciousness into the darkness or half-lit night of our being. She comes as Dakshina, the pure intuitive discernment on which Agni the God-force in us feeds when he aspires towards the Truth or as Sarama, the discovering intuition, who penetrates into the cave of the subconscient where the niggard lords of sense-action have hidden the radiant herds of the Sun and gives information to Indra. Then comes the lord of luminous Mind and breaks open the cave and drives upward the herds, *udājat*, upwards towards the vast Truth-consciousness, the own home of the gods. Our conscious existence is a hill (*adri*) with many successive levels and elevations, *sānūni*; the cave of the subconscient is below; we climb upwards towards the godhead of the Truth and Bliss where are the seats of Immortality, *yatrāmṛtāsa āsate*.[3]

By this upward movement of the chariot of the Ashwins with its burden of uplifted and transformed satisfactions the veil of Night that encompasses the worlds of being in us is rolled away. All these worlds, mind, life, body, are opened to the rays of the Sun of Truth. This lower world in us, *rajas*, is extended and shaped by this ascending movement of all its powers and satisfactions into the very brightness of the luminous intuitive mind, Swar, which receives directly the higher Light. The mind, the act, the vital, emotional, substantial existence, all becomes full of the glory and the intuition, the power and the light of the divine Sun, — *tat savitur vareṇyaṁ bhargo devasya.*[4] The lower mental existence is transformed into an image and reflection of the higher Divine. *Aporṇuvantas tama ā parīvṛtaṁ, svar ṇa śukraṁ tanvanta ā rajaḥ.*

---

[3] R.V. IX.15.2.

This verse closes the general description of the perfect and final movement of the Ashwins. In the third the Rishi Vamadeva turns to his own ascension, his own offering of the Soma, his voyage and sacrifice; he claims for it their beatific and glorifying action. The mouths of the Ashwins are made to drink of the sweetness; in his sacrifice, then, let them drink of it. *Madhvaḥ pibataṁ madhupebhir āsabhiḥ.* Let them yoke their chariot for the honey, their chariot beloved of men; *uta priyaṁ madhune yuñjāthāṁ ratham.* For man's movement, his progressive activity, is made by them glad in all its paths with that very honey and sweetness of the Ananda. *Ā vartaniṁ madhunā jinvathas pathaḥ.* For they bear the skin full and overflowing with its honey. *Dṛtiṁ vahethe madhumantam aśvinā.* By the action of the Ashwins man's progress towards the beatitude becomes itself beatific; all his travail and struggle and labour grows full of a divine delight. As it is said in the Veda that by Truth is the progress towards the Truth, that is to say by the growing law of the Truth in the mental and physical consciousness we arrive finally beyond mind and body to the superconscient Truth, so here it is indicated that by Ananda is the progress towards the Ananda, — by a divine delight growing in all our members, in all our activities we arrive at the superconscious beatitude.

In the upward movement the horses that draw the chariot of the Ashwins change into birds, into swans, *haṁsāsaḥ.* The Bird in the Veda is the symbol, very frequently, of the soul liberated and upsoaring, at other times of energies so liberated and upsoaring, winging upwards towards the heights of our being, winging widely with a free flight, no longer involved in the ordinary limited movement or labouring gallop of the Life-energy, the Horse, Ashwa. Such are the energies that draw the free car of the Lords of Delight, when there dawns on us the Sun of the Truth. These winged movements are full of the honey showered from the overflowing skin, *madhumantaḥ*. They are unassailable, *asridhaḥ*, they come to no hurt in their flight; or, the sense may be, they make no false or hurtful movement. And they are golden-winged, *hiraṇyaparṇāḥ*. Gold is the symbolic colour of the light of Surya. The wings of these energies are the full, satisfied, attaining movement, *parṇa*, of his luminous knowledge. For these are the birds that awake with the Dawn; these are the winged energies that come forth from their nests when the feet of the daughter of Heaven press the levels of our human mentality, *divo asya sānavi*. Such are the swans that bear the swift-riding Twins. *Haṁsāso ye vāṁ madhumanto asridho, hiraṇyaparṇā uhuva uṣarbudhaḥ.*

---

[4] The great phrase of the Gayatri, R.V. III.62.10.

Full of the honey these winged energies shower on us as they rise the abundance of the waters of heaven, the full outpouring of the high mental consciousness; they are instinct with ecstasy, with rapture, with the intoxication of the immortal wine; and they touch, they come into conscious contact with that superconscient being which is eternally in possession of the ecstasy, rapturous for ever with its divine intoxication. *Udapruto mandino mandinispṛśaḥ*. Drawn by them the Lords of delight come to the Rishi's Soma-offerings like bees to tricklings of honey; *madhvo na makṣaḥ savanāni gacchathaḥ*. Makers themselves of the sweetness, they like the bees seek whatever sweetness can serve them as their material for more delight.

In the sacrifice the same movement of general illumination already described as the result of the ascending flight of the Ashwins is now described as being effected by the aid of the fires of Agni. For the flames of the Will, the divine Force burning up in the soul, are also drenched with the overflowing sweetness and therefore they perform perfectly from day to day their great office of leading the sacrifice[5] progressively to its goal. For that progress they woo with their flaming tongues the daily visitation of the brilliant Ashwins who are bright with the light of the intuitive illuminations and uphold them with their thought of flashing energy.[6] *Svadhvarāso madhumanta agnaya usrā jarante prati vastor aśvinā.*

---

[5] *Adhvara*, the word for sacrifice, is really an adjective and the full phrase is *adhvara yajña*, sacrificial action travelling on the path, the sacrifice that is of the nature of a progression or journey. Agni, the Will, is the leader of the sacrifice.

This aspiration of Agni happens when the Sacrificer with pure hands, with a perfectly discerning vision, with power in his soul to travel to the end of its pilgrimage, to the goal of the sacrifice through all obstacles, breaking all opposers, has pressed out the immortalising wine with the pressing-stones and that too becomes full of the honey of the Ashwins. *Yan niktahastas taraṇir vicakṣaṇaḥ, somaṁ suṣāva madhumantam adribhiḥ.* For the individual's delight in things is met by the Ashwins' triple satisfactions and by the fourth, the delight pouring from the Truth. The cleansed hands of the Sacrificer, *niktahastaḥ*, are possibly symbolic[7] of the purified physical being; the power comes from a fulfilled life-energy; the force of clear mental vision, *vicakṣaṇa*, is the sign of the truth-illumined mind. These are the conditions in mind, life and body for the overflowing of the honey over the triple satisfactions of the Ashwins.

When the sacrificer has thus pressed out the honey-filled delight of things in his sacrifice, the flames of the Will are able to drink them from near, they are not compelled to bring them meagrely or with pain from a distant and hardly accessible plane of consciousness. Therefore, drinking immediately and freely, they become full of an exultant force and swiftness and run and race about over the whole field of our being to extend and build up the lower consciousness into the shining image of the world of free and luminous Mind. *Ākenipāso ahabhir davidhvataḥ, svar ṇa śukraṁ tanvanta ā rajaḥ.* The formula used is repeated without variation from the second Rik; but here it is the flames of the Will full of the fourfold satisfaction that do the work. There the free upsoaring of the gods by the mere touch of the

---

[6] *Śavīrayā dhiyā*, R.V. I.3.2.

[7] The hand or arm is often, however, otherwise symbolic, especially when it is the two hands or arms of Indra that are in question.

Light and without effort; here the firm labour and aspiration of man in his sacrifice. For then it is by Time, by the days, that the work is perfected, *ahabhiḥ*, by successive dawns of the Truth each with its victory over the night, by the unbroken succession of the sisters of which we have had mention in the hymn to the divine Dawn. Man cannot seize or hold at once all that the illumination brings to him; it has to be repeated constantly so that he may grow in the light.

But not only the fires of the Will are at work to transform the lower consciousness. The Sun of Truth yokes also his lustrous coursers and is in movement; *sūraś cid aśvān yuyujāna īyate.* The Ashwins too take knowledge for the human consciousness of all the paths of its progress so that it may effect a complete, harmonious and many-sided movement. This movement advancing in many paths is combined in the light of the divine knowledge by the spontaneous self-arranging action of Nature which she assumes when the will and the knowledge are wedded in the perfect harmony of a fully self-conscious, intuitively guided action. *Viśvān anu svadhayā cetathas pathaḥ.*

Vamadeva closes his hymn. He has been able to hold firmly the shining Thought with its high illumination and has expressed in himself by the shaping and fixing power of the Word the chariot, that is to say, the immortal movement of the delight of the Ashwins; the movement of a bliss that does not fade or grow old or exhaust itself, — it is ageless and undecaying, *ajaraḥ*, — because it is drawn by perfect and liberated energies and not by the limited and soon exhausted, soon recalcitrant horses of the human vitality. *Pra vām avocam aśvinā dhiyaṁdhā, rathaḥ svaśvo ajaro yo asti.* In this movement they traverse in a moment all the worlds of the lower consciousness, covering it with their speeding delights, and so arrive to that universal enjoyment in man full of his offering of the Soma-wine by which they can lead him, puissantly entering into it, through all opposers and to the great goal. *Yena sadyaḥ pari rajāṁsi yātho, haviṣmantaṁ taraṇiṁ bhojam accha.*

XI

The Ribhus, Artisans of Immortality

Rig Veda I.20

अयं देवाय जन्मने स्तोमो विप्रेभिरासया ।
अकारि रत्नधातमः ॥ १ ॥

1. Lo, the affirmation made for the divine Birth with the breath of the mouth by illumined minds, that gives perfectly the bliss;

य इन्द्राय वचोयुजा ततक्षुर्मनसा हरी ।
शमीभिर्यज्ञमाशत ॥ २ ॥

2. Even they who fashioned by the mind for Indra his two bright steeds that are yoked by Speech, and they enjoy the sacrifice by their accomplishings of the work.

तक्षन्नासत्याभ्यां परिज्मानं सुखं रथम् ।
तक्षन्धेनुं सबर्दुघाम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. They fashioned for the twin lords of the voyage their happy car of the all-pervading movement, they fashioned the fostering cow that yields the sweet milk.

युवाना पितरा पुनः सत्यमन्त्रा ऋजूयवः ।
ऋभवो विष्ट्यक्रत ॥ ४ ॥

4. O Ribhus, in your pervasion you made young again the Parents, you who seek the straight path and have the Truth in your mentalisings.

सं वो मदासो अग्मतेन्द्रेण च मरुत्वता ।
आदित्येभिश्च राजभिः ॥ ५ ॥

5. The raptures of the wine come to you entirely, to you with Indra companioned by the Maruts and with the Kings, the sons of Aditi.

उत त्यं चमसं नवं त्वष्टुर्देवस्य निष्कृतम् ।
अकर्त चतुरः पुनः ॥ ६ ॥

6. And this bowl of Twashtri new and perfected you made again into four.

ते नो रत्नानि धत्तन त्रिरा साप्तानि सुन्वते ।
एकमेकं सुशस्तिभिः ॥ ७ ॥

7. So establish for us the thrice seven ecstasies, each separately by perfect expressings of them.

अधारयन्त वह्नयोऽभजन्त सुकृत्यया ।
भागं देवेषु यज्ञियम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. They sustained and held in them, they divided by perfection in their works the sacrificial share of the enjoyment among the Gods.

COMMENTARY

The Ribhus, it has been suggested, are rays of the Sun. And it is true that like Varuna, Mitra, Bhaga and Aryaman they are powers of the solar Light, the Truth. But their special character in the Veda is that they are artisans of Immortality. They are represented as human beings who have attained to the condition of godhead by power of knowledge and perfection in their works. Their function is to aid Indra in raising man towards the same state of divine light and bliss which they themselves have earned as their own divine privilege. The hymns addressed to them in the Veda are few and to the first glance exceedingly enigmatical; for they are full of certain figures and symbols always repeated. But once the principal clues of the Veda are known, they become on the contrary exceedingly clear and simple and present a coherent and interesting idea which sheds a clear light on the Vedic gospel of immortality.

The Ribhus are powers of the Light who have descended into Matter and are there born as human faculties aspiring to become divine and immortal. In this character they are called children of Sudhanwan,[1] a patronymic which is merely a parable of their birth from the full capacities of Matter touched by the luminous energy. But in their real nature they are descended from this luminous Energy and are sometimes so addressed, "Offspring of Indra, grandsons of luminous Force." For Indra, the divine mind in man, is born out of luminous Force as is Agni out of pure Force, and from Indra the divine Mind spring the human aspirations after Immortality.

The names of the three Ribhus are, in the order of their birth, Ribhu or Ribhukshan, the skilful Knower or the Shaper in knowledge, Vibhwa or Vibhu, the Pervading, the self-diffusing, and Vaja, the Plenitude. Their names indicate their special nature and function, but they are really a trinity, and therefore, although usually termed the Ribhus, they are also called the Vibhus and the Vajas. Ribhu, the eldest is the first in man who begins to shape by his thoughts and works the forms of immortality; Vibhwa gives pervasiveness to this working; Vaja, the youngest, supplies the plenitude of the divine light and substance by which the complete work can be done. These works and formations of immortality they effect, it is continually repeated, by the force of Thought, with the mind for field and material; they are done with power; they are attended by a perfection in the creative and effective act, *svapasyayā sukṛtyayā*, which is the condition of the working out of Immortality. These formations of the artisans of

---

[1] "Dhanwan" in this name does not mean "bow" but the solid or desert field of Matter otherwise typified as the hill or rock out of which the waters and the rays are delivered.

Immortality are, as they are briefly summarised in the hymn before us, the horses of Indra, the car of the Ashwins, the Cow that gives the sweet milk, the youth of the universal Parents, the multiplication into four of the one drinking-bowl of the gods originally fashioned by Twashtri, the Framer of things.

The hymn opens with an indication of its objective. It is an affirmation of the power of the Ribhus made for the divine Birth, made by men whose minds have attained to illumination and possess that energy of the Light from which the Ribhus were born. It is made by the breath of the mouth, the life-power in the world. Its object is to confirm in the human soul the entire delight of the Beatitude, the thrice seven ecstasies of the divine Life.[2]

This divine Birth is represented by the Ribhus who, once human, have become immortal. By their accomplishings of the work, — the great work of upward human evolution which is the summit of the world-sacrifice, — they have gained in that sacrifice their divine share and privilege along with the divine powers. They are the sublimated human energies of formation and upward progress who assist the gods in the divinising of man. And of all their accomplishings that which is central is the formation of the two brilliant horses of Indra, the horses yoked by speech to their movements, yoked by the Word and fashioned by the mind. For the free movement of the luminous mind, the divine mind in man, is the condition of all other immortalising works.[3]

The second work of the Ribhus is to fashion the chariot of the Ashwins, lords of the human journey, — the happy movement of the Ananda in man which pervades with its action all his worlds or planes of being, bringing health, youth, strength, wholeness to the physical man, capacity of enjoyment and action to the vital, glad energy of the light to the mental being, — in a word, the force of the pure delight of being in all his members.[4]

[2] *Ayaṁ devāya janmane, stomo viprebhir āsayā; akāri ratnadhātamaḥ.*
[3] *Ya indrāya vacoyujā, tatakṣur manasā harī; śamībhir yajñam āśata.*
[4] *Takṣan nāsatyābhyāṁ, parijmānaṁ sukhaṁ ratham.*

The third work of the Ribhus is to fashion the cow who gives the sweet milk. It is said elsewhere that this cow has been delivered out of its covering skin, — the veil of Nature's outward movement and action, — by the Ribhus. The fostering cow herself is she of the universal forms and universal impetus of movement, *viśvajuvaṁ viśvarūpām*, in other words she is the first Radiance, Aditi, the infinite Consciousness of the infinite conscious Being which is the mother of the worlds. That consciousness is brought out by the Ribhus from the veiling movement of Nature and a figure of her is fashioned here in us by them. She is, by the action of the powers of the duality, separated from her offspring, the soul in the lower world; the Ribhus restore it to constant companionship with its infinite mother.[5]

Another great work of the Ribhus is in the strength of their previous deeds, of the light of Indra, the movement of the Ashwins, the full yield of the fostering Cow to restore youth to the aged Parents of the world, Heaven and Earth. Heaven is the mental consciousness, Earth the physical. These in their union are represented as lying long old and prostrate like fallen sacrificial posts, worn-out and suffering. The Ribhus, it is said, ascend to the house of the Sun where he lives in the unconcealed splendour of his Truth and there slumbering for twelve days afterwards traverse the heaven and the earth, filling them with abundant rain of the streams of Truth, nourishing them, restoring them to youth and vigour.[6] They pervade heaven with their workings, they bring divine increase to the mentality;[7] they give to it and the physical being a fresh and young and immortal movement.[8] For from the home of the Truth they bring with them the perfection of that which is the condition of their work, the movement in the straight path of the Truth and the Truth itself with its absolute effectivity in all the thoughts and words of the mentality. Carrying this power with them in their pervading entry into the lower world, they pour into it the immortal essence.[9]

---

[5] *Takṣan dhenuṁ sabardughām*. For the other details see R.V. IV.33.4 and 8, 36.4 etc.

[6] R.V. IV.33.2, 3, 7; 36.1, 3; I.161.7.

[7] R.V. IV.33.1, 2.

[8] R.V. V.36.3.

It is the wine of that immortal essence with its ecstasies which they win by their works and bring with them to man in his sacrifice. And with them come and sit Indra and the Maruts, the divine Mind and its Thought-forces, and the four great Kings, sons of Aditi, children of the Infinite, Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga, the purity and vastness of the Truth-consciousness, its law of love and light and harmony, its power and aspiration, its pure and happy enjoyment of things.[10]

And there at the sacrifice the gods drink in the fourfold bowl, *camasaṁ caturvayam*, the pourings of the nectar. For Twashtri, the Framer of things, has given man originally only a single bowl, the physical consciousness, the physical body in which to offer the delight of existence to the gods. The Ribhus, powers of luminous knowledge, take it as renewed and perfected by Twashtri's later workings and build up in him from the material of the four planes three other bodies, vital, mental and the causal or ideal body.[11]

Because they have made this fourfold cup of bliss and enabled him thereby to live on the plane of the Truth-consciousness they are able to establish in the perfected human being the thrice seven ecstasies of the supreme existence poured into the mind, vitality and body. Each of these they can give perfectly by the full expression of its separate absolute ecstasy even in the combination of the whole.[12]

The Ribhus have power to support and contain all these floods of the delight of being in the human consciousness; and they are able to divide it in the perfection of their works among the manifested gods, to each god his sacrificial share. For such perfect division is the whole condition of the effective sacrifice, the perfect work.[13]

[9] *Yuvānā pitarā punaḥ, satyamantrā ṛjūyavaḥ; ṛbhavo viṣṭyakrata.*

[10] *Saṁ vo madāsa agmata, indreṇa ca marutvatā; ādityebhiś ca rājabhiḥ.*

[11] *Uta tyaṁ camasaṁ navaṁ, tvaṣṭur devasya niṣkṛtam; akarta caturaḥ punaḥ.*

[12] *Te no ratnāni dhattana, trir ā sāptāni sunvate; ekam ekaṁ suśastibhiḥ.*

[13] *Adhārayanta vahnayo, abhajanta sukṛtyayā; bhāgaṁ deveṣu yajñiyam.*

Such are the Ribhus and they are called to the human sacrifice to fashion for man the things of immortality even as they fashioned them for themselves. “He becomes full of plenitude and strength for the labour, he becomes a Rishi by power of self-expression, he becomes a hero and a smiter hard to pierce in the battles, he holds in himself increase of bliss and entire energy whom Vaja and Vibhwa, the Ribhus foster. . . . For you are seers and thinkers clear-discerning; as such with this thought of our soul we declare to you our knowledge. Do you in your knowledge moving about our thoughts fashion for us all human enjoyings, — luminous plenitude and fertilising force and supreme felicity. Here issue, here felicity, here a great energy of inspiration fashion for us in your delight. Give to us, O Ribhus, that richly-varied plenitude by which we shall awaken in our consciousness to things beyond ordinary men.”[14]

---

[14] R.V. IV.36.6-9.

XII

Vishnu, the All-Pervading Godhead

Rig Veda I.154

विष्णोर्नु कं वीर्याणि प्र वोचं यः पार्थिवानि विममे रजांसि ।
यो अस्कभायदुत्तरं सधस्थं विचक्रमाणस्त्रेधोरुगायः ॥ १ ॥

1. Of Vishnu now I declare the mighty works, who has measured out the earthly worlds and that higher seat of our self-accomplishing he supports, he the wide-moving, in the threefold steps of his universal movement.

प्र तद्विष्णुः स्तवते वीर्येण मृगो न भीमः कुचरो गिरिष्ठाः ।
यस्योरुषु त्रिषु विक्रमणेष्वधिक्षियन्ति भुवनानि विश्वा ॥ २ ॥

2. That Vishnu affirms on high by his mightiness and he is like a terrible lion that ranges in the difficult places, yea, his lair is on the mountain-tops, he in whose three wide movements all the worlds find their dwelling-place.

प्र विष्णवे शूषमेतु मन्म गिरिक्षित उरुगायाय वृष्णे ।
य इदं दीर्घं प्रयतं सधस्थमेको विममे त्रिभिरित्पदेभिः ॥ ३ ॥

3. Let our strength and our thought go forward to Vishnu the all-pervading, the wide-moving Bull whose dwelling-place is on the mountain, he who being One has measured all this long and far-extending seat of our self-accomplishing by only three of his strides.

यस्य त्री पूर्णा मधुना पदान्यक्षीयमाणा स्वधया मदन्ति ।
य उ त्रिधातु पृथिवीमुत द्यामेको दाधार भुवनानि विश्वा ॥ ४ ॥

4. He whose three steps are full of the honey-wine and they perish not but have ecstasy by the self-harmony of their nature; yea, he being One holds the triple principle and earth and heaven also, even all the worlds.

तदस्य प्रियमभि पाथो अश्यां नरो यत्र देवयवो मदन्ति ।
उरुक्रमस्य स हि बन्धुरित्था विष्णोः पदे परमे मध्व उत्सः ॥ ५ ॥

5. May I attain to and enjoy that goal of his movement, the Delight, where souls that seek the godhead have the rapture; for there in that highest step of the wide-moving Vishnu is that Friend of men who is the fount of the sweetness.

ता वां वास्तून्युश्मसि गमध्यै यत्र गावो भूरिशृङ्गा अयासः ।
अत्राह तदुरुगायस्य वृष्णः परमं पदमव भाति भूरि ॥ ६ ॥

6. Those are the dwelling-places of ye twain which we desire as the goal of our journey where the many-horned herds of Light go travelling; the highest step of wide-moving Vishnu shines down on us here in its manifold vastness.

COMMENTARY

The deity of this hymn is Vishnu the all-pervading, who in the Rig Veda has a close but covert connection and almost an identity with the other deity exalted in the later religion, Rudra. Rudra is a fierce and violent godhead with a beneficent aspect which approaches the supreme blissful reality of Vishnu; Vishnu's constant friendliness to man and his helping gods is shadowed by an aspect of formidable violence, — "like a terrible lion ranging in evil and difficult places", — which is spoken of in terms more ordinarily appropriate to Rudra. Rudra is the father of the vehemently-battling Maruts; Vishnu is hymned in the last Sukta of the fifth Mandala under the name of Evaya Marut as the source from which they sprang, that which they become and himself identical with the unity and totality of their embattled forces. Rudra is the Deva or Deity ascending in the cosmos, Vishnu the same Deva or Deity helping and evoking the powers of the ascent.

It was a view long popularised by European scholars that the greatness of Vishnu and Shiva in the Puranic theogonies was a later development and that in the Veda these gods have a quite minor position and are inferior to Indra and Agni. It has even become a current opinion among many scholars that Shiva was a later conception borrowed from the Dravidians and represents a partial conquest of the Vedic religion by the indigenous culture it had invaded. These errors arise inevitably as part of the total misunderstanding of Vedic thought for which the old Brahmanic ritualism is responsible and to which European scholarship by the exaggeration of a minor and external element in the Vedic mythology has only given a new and yet more misleading form.

The importance of the Vedic gods has not to be measured by the number of hymns devoted to them or by the extent to which they are invoked in the thoughts of the Rishis, but by the functions which they perform. Agni and Indra to whom the majority of the Vedic hymns are addressed, are not greater than Vishnu and Rudra, but the functions which they fulfil in the internal and external world were the most active, dominant and directly effective for the psychological discipline of the ancient Mystics; this alone is the reason of their predominance. The Maruts, children of Rudra, are not divinities superior to their fierce and mighty Father; but they have many hymns addressed to them and are far more constantly mentioned in connection with other gods, because the function they fulfilled was of a constant and immediate importance in the Vedic discipline. On the other hand, Vishnu, Rudra, Brahmanaspati, the Vedic originals of the later Puranic Triad, Vishnu-Shiva-Brahma, provide the conditions of the Vedic work and assist it from behind the more present and active gods, but are less close to it and in appearance less continually concerned in its daily movements.

Brahmanaspati is the creator by the Word; he calls light and visible cosmos out of the darkness of the inconscient ocean and speeds the formations of conscious being upward to their supreme goal. It is from this creative aspect of Brahmanaspati that the later conception of Brahma the Creator arose.

For the upward movement of Brahmanaspati's formations Rudra supplies the force. He is named in the Veda the Mighty One of Heaven, but he begins his work upon the earth and gives effect to the sacrifice on the five planes of our ascent. He is the Violent One who leads the upward evolution of the conscious being; his force battles against all evil, smites the sinner and the enemy; intolerant of defect and stumbling he is the most terrible of the gods, the one of whom alone the Vedic Rishis have any real fear. Agni, the Kumara, prototype of the Puranic Skanda, is on earth the child of this force of Rudra. The Maruts, vital powers which make light for themselves by violence, are Rudra's children. Agni and the Maruts are the leaders of the fierce struggle upward from Rudra's first earthly, obscure creation to the heavens of thought, the luminous worlds. But this violent and mighty Rudra who breaks down all defective formations and groupings of outward and inward life, has also a benigner aspect. He is the supreme healer. Opposed, he destroys; called on for aid and propitiated he heals all wounds and all evil and all sufferings. The force that battles is his gift, but also the final peace and joy. In these aspects of the Vedic god are all the primitive materials necessary for the evolution of the Puranic Shiva-Rudra, the destroyer and healer, the auspicious and terrible, the Master of the force that acts in the worlds and the Yogin who enjoys the supreme liberty and peace.

For the formations of Brahmanaspati's word, for the actions of Rudra's force Vishnu supplies the necessary static elements, — Space, the ordered movements of the worlds, the ascending levels, the highest goal. He has taken three strides and in the space created by the three strides has established all the worlds. In these worlds he the all-pervading dwells and gives less or greater room to the action and movements of the gods. When Indra would slay Vritra, he first prays to Vishnu, his friend and comrade in the great struggle, "O Vishnu, pace out in thy movement with an utter wideness," and in that wideness he destroys Vritra who limits, Vritra who covers. The supreme step of Vishnu, his highest seat, is the triple world of bliss and light, *priyaṁ padam*, which the wise ones see extended in heaven like a shining eye of vision; it is this highest seat of Vishnu that is the goal of the Vedic journey. Here again the Vedic Vishnu is the natural precursor and sufficient origin of the Puranic Narayana, Preserver and Lord of Love.

In the Veda indeed its fundamental conception forbids the Puranic arrangement of the supreme Trinity and the lesser gods. To the Vedic Rishis there was only one universal Deva of whom Vishnu, Rudra, Brahmanaspati, Agni, Indra, Vayu, Mitra, Varuna are all alike forms and cosmic aspects. Each of them is in himself the whole Deva and contains all the other gods. It was the full emergence in the Upanishads of the idea of this supreme and only Deva, left in the Riks vague and undefined and sometimes even spoken of in the neuter as That or the one sole existence, the ritualistic limitation of the other gods and the progressive precision of their human or personal aspects under the stress of a growing mythology that led to their degradation and the enthronement of the less used and more general names and forms, Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, in the final Puranic formulation of the Hindu theogony.

In this hymn of Dirghatamas Auchathya to the all-pervading Vishnu it is his significant activity, it is the greatness of Vishnu's three strides that is celebrated. We must dismiss from our minds the ideas proper to the later mythology. We have nothing to do here with the dwarf Vishnu, the Titan Bali and the three divine strides which took possession of Earth, Heaven and the sunless subterrestrial worlds of Patala. The three strides of Vishnu in the Veda are clearly defined by Dirghatamas as earth, heaven and the triple principle, *tridhātu*. It is this triple principle beyond Heaven or superimposed upon it as its highest level, *nākasya pṛṣṭhe*, which is the supreme stride or supreme seat of the all-pervading deity.

Vishnu is the wide-moving one. He is that which has gone abroad — as it is put in the language of the Isha Upanishad, *sa paryagāt*, — triply extending himself as Seer, Thinker and Former, in the superconscient Bliss, in the heaven of mind, in the earth of the physical consciousness, *tredhā vicakramāṇaḥ*.

In those three strides he has measured out, he has formed in all their extension the earthly worlds; for in the Vedic idea the material world which we inhabit is only one of several steps leading to and supporting the vital and mental worlds beyond. In those strides he supports upon the earth and mid-world, — the earth the material, the mid-world the vital realms of Vayu, Lord of the dynamic Life-principle, — the triple heaven and its three luminous summits, *trīṇi rocanā*. These heavens the Rishi describes as the higher seat of the fulfilling. Earth, the mid-world and heaven are the triple place of the conscious being's progressive self-fulfilling, *triṣadhastha*, earth the lower seat, the vital world the middle, heaven the higher. All these are contained in the threefold movement of Vishnu.[1]

But there is more; there is also the world where the self-fulfilment is accomplished, Vishnu's highest stride. In the second verse the seer speaks of it simply as "that"; "that" Vishnu, moving yet forward in his third pace affirms or firmly establishes, *pra stavate*, by his divine might. Vishnu is then described in language which hints at his essential identity with the terrible Rudra, the fierce and dangerous Lion of the worlds who begins in the evolution as the Master of the animal, Pashupati, and moves upward on the mountain of being on which he dwells, ranging through more and more difficult and inaccessible places, till he stands upon the summits. Thus in these three wide movements of Vishnu all the five worlds and their creatures have their habitation. Earth, heaven and "that" world of bliss are the three strides. Between earth and heaven is the Antariksha, the vital worlds, literally "the intervening habitation". Between heaven and the world of bliss is another vast Antariksha or intervening habitation, Maharloka, the world of the superconscient Truth of things.[2]

The force and the thought of man, the force that proceeds from Rudra the Mighty and the thought that proceeds from

[1] *Viṣṇor nu kaṁ vīryāṇi pra vocaṁ, yaḥ pārthivāni vimame rajāṁsi; yo askabhāyad uttaraṁ sadhasthaṁ, vicakramāṇas tredhorugāyaḥ.*

[2] *Pra tad viṣṇuḥ stavate vīryeṇa, mṛgo na bhīmaḥ kucaro giriṣṭhāḥ; yasyoruṣu triṣu vikramaṇeṣu, adhikṣiyanti bhuvanāni viśvā.*

Brahmanaspati, the creative Master of the Word, have to go forward in the great journey for or towards this Vishnu who stands at the goal, on the summit, on the peak of the mountain. His is this wide universal movement; he is the Bull of the world who enjoys and fertilises all the energies of force and all the trooping herds of the thought. This far-flung extended space which appears to us as the world of our self-fulfilment, as the triple altar of the great sacrifice has been so measured out, so formed by only three strides of that almighty Infinite.[3]

All the three are full of the honey-wine of the delight of existence. All of them this Vishnu fills with his divine joy of being. By that they are eternally maintained and they do not waste or perish, but in the self-harmony of their natural movement have always the unfailing ecstasy, the imperishable intoxication of their wide and limitless existence. Vishnu maintains them unfailingly, preserves them imperishably. He is the One, he alone is, the sole-existing Godhead, and he holds in his being the triple divine principle to which we attain in the world of bliss, earth where we have our foundation and heaven also which we touch by the mental person within us. All the five worlds he upholds.[4] The *tridhātu*, the triple principle or triple material of existence, is the Sachchidananda of the Vedanta; in the ordinary language of the Veda it is *vasu*, substance, *ūrj*, abounding force of our being, *priyam* or *mayas*, delight and love in the very essence of our existence. Of these three things all that exists is constituted and we attain to their fullness when we arrive at the goal of our journey.

That goal is Delight, the last of Vishnu's three strides. The Rishi takes up the indefinite word "*tat*" by which he first vaguely indicated it; it signified the delight that is the goal of Vishnu's movement. It is the Ananda which for man in his ascent is a world in which he tastes divine delight, possesses the full energy of infinite consciousness, realises his infinite existence. There is that high-placed source of the honey-wine of existence of which the three strides of Vishnu are full. There the souls that seek the godhead live in the utter ecstasy of that wine of sweetness. There in the supreme stride, in the highest seat of wide-moving Vishnu is the fountain of the honey-wine, the source of the divine sweetness, — for that which dwells there is the Godhead, the Deva, the perfect Friend and Lover of the souls that aspire to him, the unmoving and utter reality of Vishnu to which the wide-moving God in the cosmos ascends.[5]

---

[3] *Pra viṣṇave śūṣam etu manma, girikṣita urugāyāya vṛṣṇe; ya idaṁ dīrghaṁ prayataṁ sadhastham, eko vimame tribhir it padebhiḥ.*

[4] *Yasya trī pūrṇā madhunā padāni, akṣīyamāṇā svadhayā madanti; ya u tridhātu pṛthivīm uta dyām, eko dādhāra bhuvanāni viśvā.*

These are the two, Vishnu of the movement here, the eternally stable, bliss-enjoying Deva there, and it is those supreme dwelling-places of the Twain, it is the triple world of Sachchidananda which we desire as the goal of this long journey, this great upward movement. It is thither that the many-horned herds of the conscious Thought, the conscious Force are moving — that is the goal, that is their resting-place. There in those worlds, gleaming down on us here, is the vast, full, illimitable shining of the supreme stride, the highest seat of the wide-moving Bull, master and leader of all those many-horned herds, — Vishnu the all-pervading, the cosmic Deity, the Lover and Friend of our souls, the Lord of the transcendent existence and the transcendent delight.[6]

---

[5] *Tad asya priyam abhi pātho aśyāṁ, naro yatra devayavo madanti; urukramasya sa hi bandhur itthā, viṣṇoḥ pade parame madhva utsaḥ.*

[6] *Tā vāṁ vāstūni uśmasi gamadhyai, yatra gāvo bhūriśṛṅgā ayāsaḥ; atrāha tad urugāyasya vṛṣṇaḥ, paramaṁ padam ava bhāti bhūri.*

XIII

Soma, Lord of Delight and Immortality

Rig Veda IX.83

पवित्रं ते विततं ब्रह्मणस्पते प्रभुर्गात्राणि पर्येषि विश्वतः ।
अतप्ततनूर्न तदामो अश्नुते शृतास इद्वहन्तस्तत्समाशत ॥ १॥

1. Wide spread out for thee is the sieve of thy purifying, O Master of the soul; becoming in the creature thou pervadest his members all through. He tastes not that delight who is unripe and whose body has not suffered in the heat of the fire; they alone are able to bear that and enjoy it who have been prepared by the flame.

तपोष्पवित्रं विततं दिवस्पदे शोचन्तो अस्य तन्तवो व्यस्थिरन् ।
अवन्त्यस्य पवीतारमाशवो दिवस्पृष्ठमधि तिष्ठन्ति चेतसा ॥ २॥

2. The strainer through which the heat of him is purified is spread out in the seat of Heaven; its threads shine out and stand extended. His swift ecstasies foster the soul that purifies him; he ascends to the high level of Heaven by the conscious heart.

अरूरुचदुषसः पृश्निरग्रिय उक्षा बिभर्ति भुवनानि वाजयुः ।
मायाविनो ममिरे अस्य मायया नृचक्षसः पितरो गर्भमा दधुः ॥ ३॥

3. This is the supreme dappled Bull that makes the Dawns to shine out, the Male that bears the worlds of the becoming and seeks the plenitude; the Fathers who had the forming knowledge made a form of him by that power of knowledge

which is his; strong in vision they set him within as a child to be born.

गन्धर्व इत्था पदमस्य रक्षति पाति देवानां जनिमान्यद्भुतः ।
गृभ्णाति रिपुं निधया निधापतिः सुकृत्तमा मधुनो भक्षमाशत ॥ ४ ॥

4. As the Gandharva he guards his true seat; as the supreme and wonderful One he keeps the births of the gods; Lord of the inner setting, by the inner setting he seizes the enemy. Those who are utterly perfected in works taste the enjoyment of his honey-sweetness.

हविर्हविष्मो महि सद्म दैव्यं नभो वसानः परि यास्यध्वरम् ।
राजा पवित्ररथो वाजमारुहः सहस्रभृष्टिर्जयसि श्रवो बृहत् ॥ ५ ॥

5. O Thou in whom is the food, thou art that divine food, thou art the vast, the divine home; wearing heaven as a robe thou encompassest the march of the sacrifice. King with the sieve of thy purifying for thy chariot thou ascendest to the plenitude; with thy thousand burning brilliances thou conquerest the vast knowledge.

COMMENTARY

It is a marked, an essential feature of the Vedic hymns that, although the Vedic cult was not monotheistic in the modern sense of the word, yet they continually recognise, sometimes quite openly and simply, sometimes in a complex and difficult fashion, always as an underlying thought, that the many godheads whom they invoke are really one Godhead, — One with many names, revealed in many aspects, approaching man in the mask of many divine personalities. Western scholars, puzzled by this religious attitude which presents no difficulty whatever to the Indian mind, have invented, in order to explain it, a theory of Vedic henotheism. The Rishis, they thought, were polytheists, but to each God at the time of worshipping him they gave preeminence and even regarded him as in a way the sole deity. This invention of henotheism is the attempt of an alien mentality to understand and account for the Indian idea of one Divine Existence who manifests Himself in many names and forms, each of which is for the worshipper of that name and form the one and supreme Deity. That idea of the Divine, fundamental to the Puranic religions, was already possessed by our Vedic forefathers.

The Veda already contains in the seed the Vedantic conception of the Brahman. It recognises an Unknowable, a timeless Existence, the Supreme which is neither today nor tomorrow, moving in the movement of the Gods, but itself vanishing from the attempt of the mind to seize it (R.V. I.170.1). It is spoken of in the neuter as That and often identified with the Immortality, the supreme triple Principle, the vast Bliss to which the human being aspires. The Brahman is the Unmoving, the Oneness of the Gods. "The Unmoving is born as the Vast in the seat of the Cow (Aditi), . . . the vast, the mightiness of the Gods, the One" (III.55.1). It is the one Existent to whom the seers give different names, Indra, Matarishwan, Agni, (I.164.46).

This Brahman, the one Existence, thus spoken of impersonally in the neuter, is also conceived as the Deva, the supreme Godhead, the Father of things who appears here as the Son in the human soul. He is the Blissful One to whom the movement of the Gods ascends, manifest as at once the Male and the Female, *vṛṣan*, *dhenu*. Each of the Gods is a manifestation, an aspect, a personality of the one Deva. He can be realised through any of his names and aspects, through Indra, through Agni, through Soma; for each of them being in himself all the Deva and only in his front or aspect to us different from the others contains all the gods in himself.

Thus Agni is hymned as the supreme and universal Deva. "Thou O Agni, art Varuna when thou art born, thou becomest Mitra when thou art perfectly kindled, in thee are all the Gods, O Son of Force, thou art Indra to the mortal who gives the sacrifice. Thou becomest Aryaman when thou bearest the secret name of the Virgins. They make thee to shine with the radiances (the cows, *gobhiḥ*) as Mitra well-established when thou makest of one mind the Lord of the house and his consort. For the glory of thee, O Rudra, the Maruts brighten by their pressure that which is the brilliant and varied birth of thee. That which is the highest seat of Vishnu, by that thou protectest the secret Name of the radiances (the cows, *gonām*). By thy glory, O Deva, the gods attain to right vision and holding in themselves all the multiplicity (of the vast manifestation) taste Immortality. Men set Agni in them as the priest of the sacrifice when desiring (the Immortality) they distribute (to the Gods) the self-expression of the being. . . . Do thou in thy knowledge extricate the Father and drive away (sin and darkness), he who is borne in us as thy Son, O Child of Force" (V.3). Indra is similarly hymned by Vamadeva and in this eighty-third Sukta of the ninth Mandala, as in several others, Soma too emerges from his special functions as the supreme Deity.

Soma is the Lord of the wine of delight, the wine of immortality. Like Agni he is found in the plants, the growths of earth, and in the waters. The Soma-wine used in the external sacrifice is the symbol of this wine of delight. It is pressed out by the pressing-stone (*adri*, *grāvan*) which has a close symbolic connection with the thunderbolt, the formed electric force of Indra also called *adri*. The Vedic hymns speak of the luminous thunders of this stone as they speak of the light and sound of Indra's weapon. Once pressed out as the delight of existence Soma has to be purified through a strainer (*pavitra*) and through the strainer he streams in his purity into the wine bowl (*camū*) in which he is brought to the sacrifice, or he is kept in jars (*kalaśa*) for Indra's drinking. Or, sometimes, the symbol of the bowl or the jar is neglected and Soma is simply described as flowing in a river of delight to the seat of the Gods, to the home of Immortality. That these things are symbols is very clear in most of the hymns of the ninth Mandala which are all devoted to the God Soma. Here, for instance, the physical system of the human being is imaged as the jar of the Soma-wine and the strainer through which it is purified is said to be spread out in the seat of Heaven, *divas pade*.

The hymn begins with an imagery which closely follows the physical facts of the purifying of the wine and its pouring into the jar. The strainer or purifying instrument spread out in the seat of Heaven seems to be the mind enlightened by knowledge (*cetas*); the human system is the jar. *Pavitraṁ te vitataṁ brahmaṇaspate*, the strainer is spread wide for thee, O Master of the soul; *prabhur gātrāṇi paryeṣi viśvataḥ*, becoming manifest thou pervadest or goest about the limbs everywhere. Soma is addressed here as Brahmanaspati, a word sometimes applied to other gods, but usually reserved for Brihaspati, Master of the creative Word. *Brahman* in the Veda is the soul or soul-consciousness emerging from the secret heart of things, but more often the thought, inspired, creative, full of the secret truth, which emerges from that consciousness and becomes thought of the mind, *manma*. Here, however, it seems to mean the soul itself. Soma, Lord of the Ananda, is the true creator who possesses the soul and brings out of it a divine creation. For him the mind and heart, enlightened, have been formed into a purifying instrument; freed from all narrowness and duality the consciousness in it has been extended widely to receive the full flow of the sense-life and mind-life and turn it into pure delight of the true existence, the divine, the immortal Ananda.

So received, sifted, strained, the Soma-wine of life turned into Ananda comes pouring into all the members of the human system as into a wine-jar and flows through all of them completely in their every part. As the body of a man becomes full of the touch and exultation of strong wine, so all the physical system becomes full of the touch and exultation of this divine Ananda. The words *prabhu* and *vibhu* in the Veda are used not in the later sense, “lord”, but in a fixed psychological significance like *pracetas* and *vicetas* or like *prajñāna* and *vijñāna* in the later language. “Vibhu” means becoming, or coming into existence pervasively, “prabhu” becoming, coming into existence in front of the consciousness, at a particular point as a particular object or experience. Soma comes out like the wine dropping from the strainer and then pervading the jar; it emerges into the consciousness concentrated at some particular point, *prabhu*, or as some particular experience and then pervades the whole being as Ananda, *vibhu*.

But it is not every human system that can hold, sustain and enjoy the potent and often violent ecstasy of that divine delight. *Ataptatanūr na tad āmo aśnute*, he who is raw and his body not heated does not taste or enjoy that; *śṛtāsa id vahantas tat samāśata*, only those who have been baked in the fire bear and entirely enjoy that. The wine of the divine Life poured into the system is a strong, overflooding and violent ecstasy; it cannot be held in the system unprepared for it by strong endurance of the utmost fires of life and suffering and experience. The raw earthen vessel not baked to consistency in the fire of the kiln cannot hold the Soma-wine; it breaks and spills the precious liquid. So the physical system of the man who drinks this strong wine of Ananda must by suffering and conquering all the torturing heats of life have been prepared for the secret and fiery heats of the Soma; otherwise his conscious being will not be able to hold it; it will spill and lose it as soon as or even before it is tasted or it will break down mentally and physically under the touch.

This strong and fiery wine has to be purified and the strainer for its purifying has been spread out wide to receive it in the seat of heaven, *tapoṣ pavitraṁ vitataṁ divas pade*; its threads or fibres are all of pure light and stand out like rays, *śocanto asya tantavo vyasthiran*. Through these fibres the wine has to come streaming. The image evidently refers to the purified mental and emotional consciousness, the conscious heart, *cetas*, whose thoughts and emotions are the threads or fibres. Dyaus or Heaven is the pure mental principle not subjected to the reactions of the nerves and the body. In the seat of Heaven, — the pure mental being as distinguished from the vital and physical consciousness, — the thoughts and emotions become pure rays of true perception and happy psychical vibration instead of the troubled and obscured mental, emotional and sensational reactions that we now possess. Instead of being contracted and quivering things defending themselves from pain and excess of the shocks of experience they stand out free, strong and bright, happily extended to receive and turn into divine ecstasy all possible contacts of universal existence. Therefore it is *divas pade*, in the seat of Heaven, that the Soma-strainer is spread out to receive the Soma.

Thus received and purified these keen and violent juices, these swift and intoxicating powers of the Wine no longer disturb the mind or hurt the body, are no longer spilled and lost but foster and increase, *avanti*, mind and body of their purifier; *avantyasya pavītāram āśavo*. So increasing him in all delight of his mental, emotional, sensational and physical being they rise with him through the purified and blissful heart to the highest level or surface of heaven, that is, to the luminous world of Swar where the mind capable of intuition, inspiration, revelation is bathed in the splendours of the Truth (*ṛtam*), liberated into the infinity of the Vast (*bṛhat*). *Divas pṛṣṭham adhi tiṣṭhanti cetasā.*

So far the Rishi has spoken of Soma in his impersonal manifestation, as the Ananda or delight of divine existence in the human being's conscious experience. He now turns, as is the habit of the Vedic Rishis, from the divine manifestation to the divine Person and at once Soma appears as the supreme Personality, the high and universal Deva. *Arūrucad uṣasaḥ pṛśnir agriyaḥ*; the supreme dappled One, he makes the dawns to shine: *ukṣā bibharti bhuvanāni vājayuḥ*; he, the Bull, bears the worlds, seeking the plenitude. The word *pṛśniḥ*, dappled, is used both of the Bull, the supreme Male, and of the Cow, the female Energy; like all words of colour, *śveta*, *śukra*, *hari*, *harit*, *kṛṣṇa*, *hiraṇyaya*, in the Veda it is symbolic; colour, *varṇa*, has always denoted quality, temperament, etc., in the language of the Mystics. The dappled Bull is the Deva in the variety of his manifestation, many-hued. Soma is that first supreme dappled Bull, generator of the worlds of the becoming, for from the Ananda, from the all-blissful One they all proceed; delight is the parent of the variety of existences. He is the Bull, *ukṣan*, a word which like its synonym *vṛṣan*, means diffusing, generating, impregnating, the father of abundance, the Bull, the Male; it is he who fertilises Force of consciousness, Nature, the Cow, and produces and bears in his stream of abundance the worlds. He makes the Dawns shine out, — the dawns of illumination, mothers of the radiant herds of the Sun; and he seeks the plenitude, that is to say the fullness of being, force, consciousness, the plenty of the godhead which is the condition of the divine delight. In other words it is the Lord of the Ananda who gives us the splendours of the Truth and the plenitudes of the Vast by which we attain to Immortality.

The fathers who discovered the Truth, received his creative knowledge, his Maya, and by that ideal and ideative consciousness of the supreme Divinity they formed an image of Him in man, they established Him in the race as a child unborn, a seed of the godhead in man, a Birth that has to be delivered out of the envelope of the human consciousness. *Māyāvino mamire asya māyayā, nṛcakṣasaḥ pitaro garbham ā dadhuḥ*. The fathers are the ancient Rishis who discovered the Way of the Vedic mystics and are supposed to be still spiritually present presiding over the destinies of the race and, like the gods, working in man for his attainment to Immortality. They are the sages who received the strong divine vision, *nṛcakṣasaḥ*, the Truth-vision by which they were able to find the Cows hidden by the Panis and to pass beyond the bounds of the Rodasi, the mental and physical consciousness, to the Superconscient, the Vast Truth and the Bliss (R.V. I.36.7, IV.1.13-18, IV.2.15-18 etc.).

Soma is the Gandharva, the Lord of the hosts of delight, and guards the true seat of the Deva, the level or plane of the Ananda; *gandharva itthā padam asya rakṣati*. He is the Supreme, standing out from all other beings and over them, other than they and wonderful, *adbhuta*, and as the supreme and transcendent, present in the worlds but exceeding them, he protects in those worlds the births of the gods, *pāti devānāṁ janimāni adbhutaḥ*. The "births of the gods" is a common phrase in the Veda by which is meant the manifestation of the divine principles in the cosmos and especially the formation of the godhead in its manifold forms in the human being. In the last verse the Rishi spoke of the Deva as the divine child preparing for birth, involved in the world, in the human consciousness. Here he speaks of Him as the transcendent guarding the world of the Ananda formed in man and the forms of the godhead born in him by the divine knowledge against the attacks of the enemies, the powers of division, the powers of undelight (*dviṣaḥ*, *arātīḥ*), against the undivine hosts with their formations of a dark and false creative knowledge, Avidya, illusion, (*adevīr māyāḥ*).

For he seizes these invading enemies in the net of the inner consciousness; he is the master of a profounder and truer setting of world-truth and world-experience than that which is formed by the senses and the superficial mind. It is by this inner setting that he seizes the powers of falsehood, obscurity and division and subjects them to the law of truth, light and unity; *gṛbhṇāti ripuṁ nidhayā nidhāpatiḥ*. Men therefore protected by the lord of the Ananda governing this inner nature are able to accord their thoughts and actions with the inner truth and light and are no longer made to stumble by the forces of the outer crookedness; they walk straight, they become entirely perfect in their works and by this truth of inner working and outer action are able to taste the entire sweetness of existence, the honey, the delight that is the food of the soul. *Sukṛttamā madhuno bhakṣam āśata*.

Soma manifests here as the offering, the divine food, the wine of delight and immortality, *haviḥ*, and as the Deva, lord of that divine offering (*haviṣmaḥ*), above as the vast and divine seat, the superconscient bliss and truth, *bṛhat*, from which the wine descends to us. As the wine of delight he flows about and enters into this great march of the sacrifice which is the progress of man from the physical to the superconscient. He enters into it and encompasses it wearing the cloud of the heavenly ether, *nabhas*, the mental principle, as his robe and veil. *Havir haviṣmo mahi sadma daivyaṁ, nabho vasānaḥ pari yāsi adhvaram.* The divine delight comes to us wearing the luminous-cloudy veil of the forms of mental experience.

In that march or sacrificial ascent the all-blissful Deva becomes the King of all our activities, master of our divinised nature and its energies and with the enlightened conscious heart as his chariot ascends into the plenitude of the infinite and immortal state. Like a Sun or a fire, as Surya, as Agni, engirt with a thousand blazing energies he conquers the vast regions of the inspired truth, the superconscient knowledge; *rājā pavitraratho vājam āruhaḥ, sahasrabhṛṣṭir jayasi śravo bṛhat.* The image is that of a victorious king, sun-like in force and glory, conquering a wide territory. It is the immortality that he wins for man in the vast truth-consciousness, *śravas*, upon which is founded the immortal state. It is his own true seat, *itthā padam asya*, that the God concealed in man conquers ascending out of the darkness and the twilight through the glories of the Dawn into the solar plenitudes.

* * *

With this hymn I close this series of selected hymns from the Rig Veda. My object has been to show in as brief a compass as possible the real functions of the Vedic gods, the sense of the symbols in which their cult is expressed, the nature of the sacrifice and its goal, explaining by actual examples the secret of the Veda. I have purposely selected a few brief and easy hymns, and avoided those which have a more striking depth, subtlety and complexity of thought and image, — alike those which bear the psychological sense plainly and fully on their surface and those which by their very strangeness and profundity reveal their true character of mystic and sacred poems. It is hoped that these examples will be sufficient to show the reader who cares to study them with an open mind the real sense of this, our earliest and greatest poetry. By other translations of a more general character it will be shown that these ideas are not merely the highest thought of a few Rishis, but the pervading sense and teaching of the Rig Veda.

Part Three

Hymns of the Atris

Foreword

TO TRANSLATE the Veda is to border upon an attempt at the impossible. For while a literal English rendering of the hymns of the ancient Illuminates would be a falsification of their sense and spirit, a version which aimed at bringing all the real thought to the surface would be an interpretation rather than a translation. I have essayed a sort of middle path, — a free and plastic form which shall follow the turns of the original and yet admit a certain number of interpretative devices sufficient for the light of the Vedic truth to gleam out from its veil of symbol and image.

The Veda is a book of esoteric symbols, almost of spiritual formulae, which masks itself as a collection of ritual poems. The inner sense is psychological, universal, impersonal; the ostensible significance and the figures which were meant to reveal to the initiates what they concealed from the ignorant, are to all appearance crudely concrete, intimately personal, loosely occasional and allusive. To this lax outer garb the Vedic poets are sometimes careful to give a clear and coherent form quite other than the strenuous inner soul of their meaning; their language then becomes a cunningly woven mask for hidden truths. More often they are negligent of the disguise which they use, and when they thus rise above their instrument, a literal and external translation gives either a bizarre, unconnected sequence of sentences or a form of thought and speech strange and remote to the uninitiated intelligence. It is only when the figures and symbols are made to suggest their concealed equivalents that there emerges out of the obscurity a transparent and well-linked though close and subtle sequence of spiritual, psychological and religious ideas. It is this method of suggestion that I have attempted.

It would have been possible to present a literal version on condition of following it up by pages of commentary charged with the real sense of the words and the hidden message of the thought. But this would be a cumbrous method useful only to the scholar and the careful student. Some form of the sense was needed which would compel only so much pause of the intelligence over its object as would be required by any mystic and figurative poetry. To bring about such a form it is not enough to translate the Sanskrit word into the English; the significant name, the conventional figure, the symbolic image have also frequently to be rendered.

If the images preferred by the ancient sages had been such as the modern mind could easily grasp, if the symbols of the sacrifice were still familiar to us and the names of the Vedic gods still carried their old psychological significance, — as the Greek or Latin names of classical deities, Aphrodite or Ares, Venus or Minerva, still bear their sense for a cultured European, — the device of an interpretative translation could have been avoided. But India followed another curve of literary and religious development than the culture of the West. Other names of Gods have replaced the Vedic names or else these have remained but with only an external and diminished significance; the Vedic ritual, well-nigh obsolete, has lost its profound symbolic meaning; the pastoral, martial and rural images of the early Aryan poets sound remote, inappropriate, or, if natural and beautiful, yet void of the old deeper significance to the imagination of their descendants. Confronted with the stately hymns of the ancient dawn, we are conscious of a blank incomprehension. And we leave them as a prey to the ingenuity of the scholar who gropes for forced meanings amid obscurities and incongruities where the ancients bathed their souls in harmony and light.

A few examples will show what the gulf is and how it was created. When we write in a recognised and conventional imagery, “Laxmi and Saraswati refuse to dwell under one roof”, the European reader may need a note or a translation of the phrase into its plain unfigured thought, “Wealth and Learning seldom go together”, before he can understand, but every Indian already possesses the sense of the phrase. But if another culture and religion had replaced the Puranic and Brahminical and the old books and the Sanskrit language had ceased to be read and understood, this now familiar phrase would have been as meaningless in India as in Europe. Some infallible commentator or ingenious scholar might have been proving to our entire satisfaction that Laxmi was the Dawn and Saraswati the Night or that they were two irreconcilable chemical substances — or one knows not what else! It is something of this kind that has overtaken the ancient clarities of the Veda; the sense is dead and only the obscurity of a forgotten poetic form remains. Therefore when we read "Sarama by the path of the Truth discovers the herds", the mind is stopped and baffled by an unfamiliar language. It has to be translated to us, like the phrase about Saraswati to the European, into a plainer and less figured thought, "Intuition by the way of the Truth arrives at the hidden illuminations." Lacking the clue, we wander into ingenuities about the Dawn and the Sun or even imagine in Sarama, the hound of heaven, a mythological personification of some prehistoric embassy to Dravidian nations for the recovery of plundered cattle!

And the whole of the Veda is conceived in such images. The resultant obscurity and confusion for our intelligence is appalling and it will be at once evident how useless would be any translation of the hymns which did not strive at the same time to be an interpretation. "Dawn and Night," runs an impressive Vedic verse, "two sisters of different forms but of one mind, suckle the same divine Child." We understand nothing. Dawn and Night are of different forms, but why of one mind? And who is the child? If it is Agni, the fire, what are we to understand by Dawn and Night suckling alternately an infant fire? But the Vedic poet is not thinking of the physical night, the physical dawn or the physical fire. He is thinking of the alternations in his own spiritual experience, its constant rhythm of periods of a sublime and golden illumination and other periods of obscuration or relapse into normal unillumined consciousness and he confesses the growth of the infant strength of the divine life within him through all these alternations and even by the very force of their regular vicissitude. For in both states there works, hidden or manifest, the same divine intention and the same high-reaching labour. Thus an image which to the Vedic mind was clear, luminous, subtle, profound, striking, comes to us void of sense or poor and incoherent in sense and therefore affects us as inflated and pretentious, the ornament of an inapt and bungling literary craftsmanship.

So too when the seer of the house of Atri cries high to Agni, "O Agni, O Priest of the offering, loose from us the cords," he is using not only a natural, but a richly-laden image. He is thinking of the triple cord of mind, nerves and body by which the soul is bound as a victim in the great world-sacrifice, the sacrifice of the Purusha; he is thinking of the force of the divine Will already awakened and at work within him, a fiery and irresistible godhead that shall uplift his oppressed divinity and cleave asunder the cords of its bondage; he is thinking of the might of that growing Strength and inner Flame which receiving all that he has to offer carries it to its own distant and difficult home, to the high-seated Truth, to the Far, to the Secret, to the Supreme. All these associations are lost to us; our minds are obsessed by ideas of a ritual sacrifice and a material cord. We imagine perhaps the son of Atri bound as a victim in an ancient barbaric sacrifice, crying to the god of Fire for a physical deliverance!

A little later the seer sings of the increasing Flame, "Agni shines wide with vast Light and makes all things manifest by his greatness." What are we to understand? Shall we suppose that the singer released from his bonds, one knows not how, is admiring tranquilly the great blaze of the sacrificial fire which was to have devoured him and wonder at the rapid transitions of the primitive mind? It is only when we discover that the "vast Light" was a fixed phrase in the language of the Mystics for a wide, free and luminous consciousness beyond mind, that we seize the true burden of the Rik. The seer is hymning his release from the triple cord of mind, nerves and body and the uprising of the knowledge and will within him to a plane of consciousness where the real truth of all things transcendent of their apparent truth becomes at length manifest in a vast illumination.

But how are we to bring home this profound, natural and inner sense to the minds of others in a translation? It cannot be done unless we translate interpretatively, "O Will, O Priest of our sacrifice, loose from us the cords of our bondage" and "this Flame shines out with the vast Light of the Truth and makes all things manifest by its greatness." The reader will then at least be able to seize the spiritual nature of the cord, the light, the flame; he will feel something of the sense and spirit of this ancient chant.

The method I have employed will be clear from these instances. I have sometimes thrown aside the image, but not so as to demolish the whole structure of the outer symbol or to substitute a commentary for a translation. It would have been an undesirable violence to strip from the richly jewelled garb of the Vedic thought its splendid ornaments or to replace it by a coarse garment of common speech. But I have endeavoured to make it everywhere as transparent as possible. I have rendered the significant names of the Gods, Kings, Rishis by their half-concealed significances, — otherwise the mask would have remained impenetrable; where the image was unessential, I have sometimes sacrificed it for its psychological equivalent; where it influenced the colour of the surrounding words, I have sought for some phrase which would keep the figure and yet bring out its whole complexity of sense. Sometimes I have even used a double translation. Thus for the Vedic word which means at once light or ray and cow, I have given according to the circumstances "Light", "the radiances", "the shining herds", "the radiant kine", "Light, mother of the herds". Soma, the ambrosial wine of the Veda, has been rendered "wine of delight" or "wine of immortality".

The Vedic language as a whole is a powerful and remarkable instrument, terse, knotted, virile, packed, and in its turns careful rather to follow the natural flight of the thought in the mind than to achieve the smooth and careful constructions and the clear transitions of a logical and rhetorical syntax. But translated without modification into English such a language would become harsh, abrupt and obscure, a dead and heavy movement with nothing in it of the morning vigour and puissant stride of the original. I have therefore preferred to throw it in translation into a mould more plastic and natural to the English tongue, using the constructions and devices of transition which best suit a modern speech while preserving the logic of the original thought; and I have never hesitated to reject the bald dictionary equivalent of the Vedic word for an ampler phrase in the English where that was necessary to bring out the full sense and associations. Throughout I have kept my eye fixed on my primary object — to make the inner sense of the Veda seizable by the cultured intelligence of today.

When all has been done, the aid of some amount of annotation remained still indispensable; but I have tried not to overburden the translation with notes or to indulge in overlong explanations. I have excluded everything scholastic. In the Veda there are numbers of words of a doubtful meaning, many locutions whose sense can only be speculatively or provisionally fixed, not a few verses capable of two or more different interpretations. But a translation of this kind is not the place for any record of the scholar's difficulties and hesitations. I have also prefixed a brief outline of the main Vedic thought indispensable to the reader who wishes to understand.

He will expect only to seize the general trend and surface suggestions of the Vedic hymns. More would be hardly possible. To enter into the very heart of the mystic doctrine, we must ourselves have trod the ancient paths and renewed the lost discipline, the forgotten experience. And which of us can hope to do that with any depth or living power? Who in this Age of Iron shall have the strength to recover the light of the Forefathers or soar above the two enclosing firmaments of mind and body into their luminous empyrean of the infinite Truth? The Rishis sought to conceal their knowledge from the unfit, believing perhaps that the corruption of the best might lead to the worst and fearing to give the potent wine of the Soma to the child and the weakling. But whether their spirits still move among us looking for the rare Aryan soul in a mortality that is content to leave the radiant herds of the Sun for ever imprisoned in the darkling cave of the Lords of the sense-life or whether they await in their luminous world the hour when the Maruts shall again drive abroad and the Hound of Heaven shall once again speed down to us from beyond the rivers of Paradise and the seals of the heavenly waters shall be broken and the caverns shall be rent and the immortalising wine shall be pressed out in the body of man by the electric thunderstones, their secret remains safe to them. Small is the chance that in an age which blinds our eyes with the transient glories of the outward life and deafens our ears with the victorious trumpets of a material and mechanical knowledge many shall cast more than the eye of an intellectual and imaginative curiosity on the passwords of their ancient discipline or seek to penetrate into the heart of their radiant mysteries. The secret of the Veda, even when it has been unveiled, remains still a secret.

The Doctrine of the Mystics

THE VEDA possesses the high spiritual substance of the Upanishads, but lacks their phraseology; it is an inspired knowledge as yet insufficiently equipped with intellectual and philosophical terms. We find a language of poets and illuminates to whom all experience is real, vivid, sensible, even concrete, not yet of thinkers and systematisers to whom the realities of the mind and soul have become abstractions. Yet a system, a doctrine there is; but its structure is supple, its terms are concrete, the cast of its thought is practical and experimental, but in the accomplished type of an old and sure experience, not of one that is crude and uncertain because yet in the making. Here we have the ancient psychological science and the art of spiritual living of which the Upanishads are the philosophical outcome and modification and Vedanta, Sankhya and Yoga the late intellectual result and logical dogma. But like all life, like all science that is still vital, it is free from the armoured rigidities of the reasoning intellect; in spite of its established symbols and sacred formulae it is still large, free, flexible, fluid, supple and subtle. It has the movement of life and the large breath of the soul. And while the later philosophies are books of Knowledge and make liberation the one supreme good, the Veda is a Book of Works and the hope for which it spurns our present bonds and littleness is perfection, self-achievement, immortality.

The doctrine of the Mystics recognises an Unknowable, Timeless and Unnameable behind and above all things and not seizable by the studious pursuit of the mind. Impersonally, it is That, the One Existence; to the pursuit of our personality it reveals itself out of the secrecy of things as the God or Deva, — nameless though he has many names, immeasurable and beyond description, though he holds in himself all description of name and knowledge and all measures of form and substance, force and activity.

The Deva or Godhead is both the original cause and the final result. Divine Existent, builder of the worlds, lord and begetter of all things, Male and Female, Being and Consciousness, Father and Mother of the Worlds and their inhabitants, he is also their Son and ours: for he is the Divine Child born into the Worlds who manifests himself in the growth of the creature. He is Rudra and Vishnu, Prajapati and Hiranyagarbha, Surya, Agni, Indra, Vayu, Soma, Brihaspati, — Varuna and Mitra and Bhaga and Aryaman, all the gods. He is the wise, mighty and liberating Son born from our works and our sacrifice, the Hero in our warfare and Seer of our knowledge, the White Steed in the front of our days who gallops towards the upper Ocean.

The soul of man soars as the Bird, the Hansa, past the shining firmaments of physical and mental consciousness, climbs as the traveller and fighter beyond earth of body and heaven of mind by the ascending path of the Truth to find this Godhead waiting for us, leaning down to us from the secrecy of the highest supreme where it is seated in the triple divine Principle and the source of the Beatitude. The Deva is indeed, whether attracting and exalted there or here helpful to us in the person of the greater Gods, always the Friend and Lover of man, the pastoral Master of the Herds who gives us the sweet milk and the clarified butter from the udder of the shining Cow of the infinitude. He is the source and outpourer of the ambrosial Wine of divine delight and we drink it drawn from the sevenfold waters of existence or pressed out from the luminous plant on the hill of being and uplifted by its raptures we become immortal.

Such are some of the images of this ancient mystic adoration.

The Godhead has built this universe in a complex system of worlds which we find both within us and without, subjectively cognised and objectively sensed. It is a rising tier of earths and heavens; it is a stream of diverse waters; it is a Light of seven rays, or of eight or nine or ten; it is a Hill of many plateaus. The seers often image it in a series of trios; there are three earths and three heavens. More, there is a triple world below, — Heaven, Earth and the intervening mid-region; a triple world between, the shining heavens of the Sun; a triple world above, the supreme and rapturous abodes of the Godhead.

But other principles intervene and make the order of the worlds yet more complex. These principles are psychological; for since all creation is a formation of the Spirit, every external system of worlds must in each of its planes be in material correspondence with some power or rising degree of consciousness of which it is the objective symbol and must house a kindred internal order of things. To understand the Veda we must seize this Vedic parallelism and distinguish the cosmic gradations to which it leads. We rediscover the same system behind the later Puranic symbols and it is thence that we can derive its tabulated series most simply and clearly. For there are seven principles of existence and the seven Puranic worlds correspond to them with sufficient precision, thus: —

	Principle	*World*
1.	Pure Existence — Sat	World of the highest truth of being (Satyaloka)
2.	Pure Consciousness — Chit	World of infinite Will or conscious force (Tapoloka)
3.	Pure Bliss — Ananda	World of creative delight of existence (Janaloka)
4.	Knowledge or Truth — Vijnana	World of the Vastness (Maharloka)
5.	Mind	World of light (Swar)
6.	Life (nervous being)	Worlds of various becoming (Bhuvar)
7.	Matter	The material world (Bhur)

Now this system which in the Purana is simple enough, is a good deal more intricate in the Veda. There the three highest worlds are classed together as the triple divine Principle, — for they dwell always together in a Trinity; infinity is their scope, bliss is their foundation. They are supported by the vast regions of the Truth whence a divine Light radiates out towards our mentality in the three heavenly luminous worlds of Swar, the domain of Indra. Below is ranked the triple system in which we live.

We have the same cosmic gradations as in the Puranas but they are differently grouped, — seven worlds in principle, five in practice, three in their general groupings:

1. The Supreme Sat-Chit-Ananda	The triple divine worlds
2. The Link-World Supermind	The Truth, Right, Vast, manifested in Swar, with its three luminous heavens
3. The triple lower world	
Pure Mind	Heaven (Dyaus, the three heavens)
Life-force	The Mid-Region (Antariksha)
Matter	Earth (the three earths)

And as each principle can be modified by the subordinate manifestation of the others within it, each world is divisible into several provinces according to different arrangements and self-orderings of its creative light of consciousness. Into this framework, then, we must place all the complexities of the subtle vision and fertile imagery of the seers down to the hundred cities which are now in the possession of the hostile kings, the Lords of division and evil. But the gods shall break them open and give them for his free possession to the Aryan worshipper!

But where are these worlds and whence are they created? Here we have one of the profoundest ideas of the Vedic sages. Man dwells in the bosom of the Earth-Mother and is aware of this world of mortality only; but there is a superconscient high beyond where the divine worlds are seated in a luminous secrecy; there is a subconscient or inconscient below his surface waking impressions and from that pregnant Night the worlds as he sees them are born. And these other worlds between the luminous upper and the tenebrous lower ocean? They are here.

Man draws from the life-world his vital being, from the mind-world his mentality; he is ever in secret communication with them; he can consciously enter into them, be born into them, if he will. Even into the solar worlds of the Truth he can rise, enter the portals of the Superconscient, cross the threshold of the Supreme. The divine doors shall swing open to his increasing soul.

This human ascension is possible because every being really holds in himself all that his outward vision perceives as if external to him. We have subjective faculties hidden in us which correspond to all the tiers and strata of the objective cosmic system and these form for us so many planes of our possible existence. This material life and our narrowly limited consciousness of the physical world are far from being the sole experience permitted to man, — be he a thousand times the Son of Earth. If maternal Earth bore him and retains him in her arms, yet is Heaven also one of his parents and has a claim on his being. It is open to him to become awake to profounder depths and higher heights within and such awakening is his intended progress. And as he mounts thus to higher and ever higher planes of himself, new worlds open to his life and his vision and become the field of his experience and the home of his spirit. He lives in contact and union with their powers and godheads and remoulds himself in their image. Each ascent is thus a new birth of the soul, and the Veda calls the worlds "births" as well as seats and dwelling-places.

For as the Gods have built the series of the cosmic worlds, even so they labour to build up the same series of ordered states and ascending degrees in man's consciousness from the mortal condition to the crowning immortality. They raise him from the limited material state of being in which our lowest manhood dwells contented and subject to the Lords of Division, give him a life rich and abundant with the many and rapid shocks and impulsions from the dynamic worlds of Life and Desire where the Gods battle with the demons and raise him yet higher from those troubled rapidities and intensities into the steadfast purity and clarity of the high mental existence. For pure thought and feeling are man's sky, his heaven; this whole vitalistic existence of emotion, passions, affections of which desire is the pivot, forms for him a mid-world; body and material living are his earth.

But pure thought and pure psychic state are not the highest height of the human ascension. The home of the Gods is an absolute Truth which lives in solar glories beyond mind. Man ascending thither strives no longer as the thinker but is victoriously the seer; he is no longer this mental creature but a divine being. His will, life, thought, emotion, sense, act are all transformed into values of an all-puissant Truth and remain no longer an embarrassed or a helpless tangle of mixed truth and falsehood. He moves lamely no more in our narrow and grudging limits but ranges in the unobstructed Vast; toils and zigzags no longer amid these crookednesses, but follows a swift and conquering straightness; feeds no longer on broken fragments, but is suckled by the teats of Infinity. Therefore he has to break through and out beyond these firmaments of earth and heaven; conquering firm possession of the solar worlds, entering on to his highest Height he has to learn how to dwell in the triple principle of Immortality.

This contrast of the mortality we are and the immortal condition to which we can aspire is the key of the Vedic thought and practice. Veda is the earliest gospel we have of man's immortality and these ancient stanzas conceal the primitive discipline of its inspired discoverers.

Substance of being, light of consciousness, active force and possessive delight are the constituent principles of existence; but their combination in us may be either limited, divided, hurt, broken and obscure or infinite, enlightened, vast, whole and unhurt. Limited and divided being is ignorance; it is darkness and weakness, it is grief and pain; in the Vast, in the integral, in the infinite we must seek for the desirable riches of substance, light, force and joy. Limitation is mortality; immortality comes to us as an accomplished self-possession in the infinite and the power to live and move in firm vastnesses. Therefore it is in proportion as he widens and on condition that he increases constantly in substance of his being, brightens an ever loftier flame of will and vaster light of knowledge, advances the boundaries of his consciousness, raises the degrees and enlarges the breadth of his power, force and strength, confirms an intenser beatitude of joy and liberates his soul into immeasurable peace that man becomes capable of immortality.

To widen is to acquire new births. The aspiring material creature becomes the straining vital man; he in turn transmutes himself into the subtle mental and psychical being; this subtle thinker grows into the wide, multiple and cosmic man open on all sides of him to all the multitudinous inflowings of the Truth; the cosmic soul rising in attainment strives as the spiritual man for a higher peace, joy and harmony. These are the five Aryan types, each of them a great people occupying its own province or state of the total human nature. But there is also the absolute Aryan who would conquer and pass beyond these states to the transcendental harmony of them all.

It is the supramental Truth that is the instrument of this great inner transfiguration. That replaces mentality by luminous vision and the eye of the gods, mortal life by breath and force of the infinite existence, obscure and death-possessed substance by the free and immortal conscious-being. The progress of man must be therefore, first, his self-expanding into a puissant vitality capable of sustaining all vibrations of action and experience and a clear mental and psychical purity; secondly, an outgrowing of this human light and power and its transmutation into an infinite Truth and an immortal Will.

Our normal life and consciousness are a dark or at best a starlit Night. Dawn comes by the arising of the Sun of that higher Truth and with Dawn there comes the effective sacrifice. By the sacrifice the Dawn itself and the lost Sun are constantly conquered out of the returning Night and the luminous herds rescued from the darkling cave of the Panis; by the sacrifice the rain of the abundance of heaven is poured out for us and the sevenfold waters of the higher existence descend impetuously upon our earth because the coils of the obscuring Python, the all-enfolding and all-withholding Vritra, have been cloven asunder by the God-Mind's flashing lightnings; in the sacrifice the Soma wine is distilled and uplifts us on the stream of its immortalising ecstasy to the highest heavens.

Our sacrifice is the offering of all our gains and works to the powers of the higher existence. The whole world is a dumb and helpless sacrifice in which the soul is bound as a victim self-offered to unseen Gods. The liberating Word must be found, the illuminating hymn must be framed in the heart and mind of man and his life must be turned into a conscious and voluntary offering in which the soul is no longer the victim, but the master of the sacrifice. By right sacrifice and by the all-creative and all-expressive Word that shall arise out of his depths as a sublime hymn to the Gods man can achieve all things. He shall conquer his perfection; Nature shall come to him as a willing and longing bride; he shall become her seer and rule her as her King.

By the hymn of prayer and God-attraction, by the hymn of praise and God-affirmation, by the hymn of God-attainment and self-expression man can house in himself the Gods, build in this gated house of his being the living image of their deity, grow into divine births, form within himself vast and luminous worlds for his soul to inhabit. By the word of the Truth the all-engendering Surya creates; by that rhythm Brahmanaspati evokes the worlds and Twashtri fashions them; finding the all-puissant Word in his intuitive heart, shaping it in his mind the human thinker, the mortal creature can create in himself all the forms, all the states and conditions he desires and, achieving, can conquer for himself all wealth of being, light, strength and enjoyment. He builds up his integral being and aids his gods to destroy the evil armies; the hosts of his spiritual enemies are slain who have divided, torn and afflicted his nature.

The image of this sacrifice is sometimes that of a journey or voyage; for it travels, it ascends; it has a goal — the vastness, the true existence, the light, the felicity — and it is called upon to discover and keep the good, the straight and the happy path to the goal, the arduous, yet joyful road of the Truth. It has to climb, led by the flaming strength of the divine Will, from plateau to plateau as of a mountain, it has to cross as in a ship the waters of existence, traverse its rivers, overcome their deep pits and rapid currents; its aim is to arrive at the far-off ocean of light and infinity.

And this is no easy or peaceful march; it is for long seasons a fierce and relentless battle. Constantly the Aryan man has to labour and to fight and conquer; he must be a tireless toiler and traveller and a stern warrior, he must force open and storm and sack city after city, win kingdom after kingdom, overthrow and tread down ruthlessly enemy after enemy. His whole progress is a warring of Gods and Titans, Gods and Giants, Indra and the Python, Aryan and Dasyu. Aryan adversaries even he has to face in the open field; for old friends and helpers turn into enemies; the kings of Aryan states he would conquer and overpass join themselves to the Dasyus and are leagued against him in supreme battle to prevent his free and utter passing on.

But the Dasyu is the natural enemy. These dividers, plunderers, harmful powers, these Danavas, sons of the Mother of division, are spoken of by the Rishis under many general appellations. There are Rakshasas; there are Eaters and Devourers, Wolves and Tearers; there are hurters and haters; there are dualisers; there are confiners or censurers. But we are given also many specific names. Vritra, the Serpent, is the grand Adversary; for he obstructs with his coils of darkness all possibility of divine existence and divine action. And even when Vritra is slain by the light, fiercer enemies arise out of him. Shushna afflicts us with his impure and ineffective force, Namuchi fights man by his weaknesses, and others too assail, each with his proper evil. Then there are Vala and the Panis, miser traffickers in the sense-life, stealers and concealers of the higher Light and its illuminations which they can only darken and misuse, — an impious host who are jealous of their store and will not offer sacrifice to the Gods. These and other personalities — they are much more than personifications — of our ignorance, evil, weakness and many limitations make constant war upon man; they encircle him from near or they shoot their arrows at him from afar or even dwell in his gated house in the place of the

Gods and with their shapeless stammering mouths and their insufficient breath of force mar his self-expression. They must be expelled, overpowered, slain, thrust down into their nether darkness by the aid of the mighty and helpful deities.

The Vedic deities are names, powers, personalities of the universal Godhead and they represent each some essential puissance of the Divine Being. They manifest the cosmos and are manifest in it. Children of Light, Sons of the Infinite, they recognise in the soul of man their brother and ally and desire to help and increase him by themselves increasing in him so as to possess his world with their light, strength and beauty. The Gods call man to a divine companionship and alliance; they attract and uplift him to their luminous fraternity, invite his aid and offer theirs against the Sons of Darkness and Division. Man in return calls the Gods to his sacrifice, offers to them his swiftnesses and his strengths, his clarities and his sweetnesses, — milk and butter of the shining Cow, distilled juices of the Plant of Joy, the Horse of the Sacrifice, the cake and the wine, the grain for the God-Mind's radiant coursers. He receives them into his being and their gifts into his life, increases them by the hymn and the wine and forms perfectly — as a smith forges iron, says the Veda — their great and luminous godheads.

All this Vedic imagery is easy to understand when once we have the key, but it must not be mistaken for mere imagery. The Gods are not simply poetical personifications of abstract ideas or of psychological and physical functions of Nature. To the Vedic seers they are living realities; the vicissitudes of the human soul represent a cosmic struggle not merely of principles and tendencies but of the cosmic Powers which support and embody them. These are the Gods and the Demons. On the world-stage and in the individual soul the same real drama with the same personages is enacted.

To what gods shall the sacrifice be offered? Who shall be invoked to manifest and protect in the human being this increasing godhead?

Agni first, for without him the sacrificial flame cannot burn on the altar of the soul. That flame of Agni is the seven-tongued power of the Will, a Force of God instinct with knowledge. This conscious and forceful will is the immortal guest in our mortality, a pure priest and a divine worker, the mediator between earth and heaven. It carries what we offer to the higher Powers and brings back in return their force and light and joy into our humanity.

Indra, the Puissant next, who is the power of pure Existence self-manifested as the Divine Mind. As Agni is one pole of Force instinct with knowledge that sends its current upward from earth to heaven, so Indra is the other pole of Light instinct with force which descends from heaven to earth. He comes down into our world as the Hero with the shining horses and slays darkness and division with his lightnings, pours down the life-giving heavenly waters, finds in the trace of the hound, Intuition, the lost or hidden illuminations, makes the Sun of Truth mount high in the heaven of our mentality.

Surya, the Sun, is the master of that supreme Truth, — truth of being, truth of knowledge, truth of process and act and movement and functioning. He is therefore the creator or rather the manifester of all things — for creation is outbringing, expression by the Truth and Will — and the father, fosterer, enlightener of our souls. The illuminations we seek are the herds of this Sun who comes to us in the track of the divine Dawn and releases and reveals in us night-hidden world after world up to the highest Beatitude.

Of that beatitude Soma is the representative deity. The wine of his ecstasy is concealed in the growths of earth, in the waters of existence; even here in our physical being are his immortalising juices and they have to be pressed out and offered to all the gods; for in that strength these shall increase and conquer.

Each of these primary deities has others associated with him who fulfil functions that arise from his own. For if the truth of Surya is to be established firmly in our mortal nature, there are previous conditions that are indispensable; a vast purity and clear wideness destructive of all sin and crooked falsehood, — and this is Varuna; a luminous power of love and comprehension leading and forming into harmony all our thoughts, acts and impulses, — this is Mitra; an immortal puissance of clear-discerning aspiration and endeavour, — this is Aryaman; a happy spontaneity of the right enjoyment of all things dispelling the evil dream of sin and error and suffering, — this is Bhaga. These four are powers of the Truth of Surya.

For the whole bliss of Soma to be established perfectly in our nature a happy and enlightened and unmaimed condition of mind, vitality and body are necessary. This condition is given to us by the twin Ashwins; wedded to the daughter of Light, drinkers of honey, bringers of perfect satisfactions, healers of maim and malady they occupy our parts of knowledge and parts of action and prepare our mental, vital and physical being for an easy and victorious ascension.

Indra, the Divine Mind, as the shaper of mental forms has for his assistants, his artisans, the Ribhus, human powers who by the work of sacrifice and their brilliant ascension to the high dwelling-place of the Sun have attained to immortality and help mankind to repeat their achievement. They shape by the mind Indra's horses, the Ashwins' chariot, the weapons of the Gods, all the means of the journey and the battle. But as giver of the Light of truth and as Vritra-slayer Indra is aided by the Maruts, who are powers of will and nervous or vital Force that have attained to the light of thought and the voice of self-expression. They are behind all thought and speech as its impellers and they battle towards the Light, Truth and Bliss of the supreme Consciousness.

There are also female energies; for the Deva is both Male and Female and the gods also are either activising souls or passively executive and methodising energies. Aditi, infinite Mother of the gods, comes first; and there are besides five powers of the Truth-consciousness, — Mahi or Bharati, the vast Word that brings us all things out of the divine source; Ila, the strong primal word of the Truth who gives us its active vision; Saraswati, its streaming current and the word of its inspiration; Sarama, the Intuition, hound of heaven who descends into the cavern of the subconscient and finds there the concealed illuminations;

Dakshina, whose function is to discern rightly, dispose the action and the offering and distribute in the sacrifice to each godhead its portion. Each god, too, has his female energy.

All this action and struggle and ascension is supported by Heaven our Father and Earth our Mother, Parents of the Gods, who sustain respectively the purely mental and psychic and the physical consciousness. Their large and free scope is the condition of our achievement. Vayu, Master of life, links them together by the mid-air, the region of vital force. And there are other deities, — Parjanya, giver of the rain of heaven; Dadhikravan, the divine war-horse, a power of Agni; the mystic Dragon of the Foundations; Trita Aptya who on the third plane of existence consummates our triple being; and more besides.

The development of all these godheads is necessary to our perfection. And that perfection must be attained on all our levels, — in the wideness of earth, our physical being and consciousness; in the full force of vital speed and action and enjoyment and nervous vibration, typified as the Horse which must be brought forward to upbear our endeavour; in the perfect gladness of the heart of emotion and a brilliant heat and clarity of the mind throughout our intellectual and psychical being; in the coming of the supramental Light, the Dawn and the Sun and the shining Mother of the herds, to transform all our existence; for so comes to us the possession of the Truth, by the Truth the admirable surge of the Bliss, in the Bliss infinite Consciousness of absolute being.

Three great Gods, origin of the Puranic Trinity, largest puissances of the supreme Godhead, make possible this development and upward evolution; they support in its grand lines and fundamental energies all these complexities of the cosmos. Brahmanaspati is the Creator; by the word, by his cry he creates, — that is to say, he expresses, he brings out all existence and conscious knowledge and movement of life and eventual forms from the darkness of the Inconscient. Rudra, the Violent and Merciful, the Mighty One, presides over the struggle of life to affirm itself; he is the armed, wrathful and beneficent Power of God who lifts forcibly the creation upward, smites all that opposes, scourges all that errs and resists, heals all that is wounded and suffers and complains and submits. Vishnu of the vast pervading motion holds in his triple stride all these worlds; it is he that makes a wide room for the action of Indra in our limited mortality; it is by him and with him that we rise into his highest seats where we find waiting for us the Friend, the Beloved, the Beatific Godhead.

Our earth shaped out of the dark inconscient ocean of existence lifts its high formations and ascending peaks heavenward; heaven of mind has its own formations, clouds that give out their lightnings and their waters of life; the streams of the clarity and the honey ascend out of the subconscient ocean below and seek the superconscient ocean above; and from above that ocean sends downward its rivers of the light and truth and bliss even into our physical being. Thus in images of physical Nature the Vedic poets sing the hymn of our spiritual ascension.

That ascension has already been effected by the Ancients, the human forefathers, and the spirits of these great Ancestors still assist their offspring; for the new dawns repeat the old and lean forward in light to join the dawns of the future. Kanwa, Kutsa, Atri, Kakshiwan, Gotama, Shunahshepa have become types of certain spiritual victories which tend to be constantly repeated in the experience of humanity. The seven sages, the Angirasas, are waiting still and always, ready to chant the word, to rend the cavern, to find the lost herds, to recover the hidden Sun. Thus the soul is a battlefield full of helpers and hurters, friends and enemies. All this lives, teems, is personal, is conscious, is active. We create for ourselves by the sacrifice and by the word shining seers, heroes to fight for us, children of our works. The Rishis and the Gods find for us our luminous herds; the Ribhus fashion by the mind the chariots of the gods and their horses and their shining weapons. Our life is a horse that neighing and galloping bears us onward and upward; its forces are swift-hooved steeds, the liberated powers of the mind are wide-winging birds; this mental being or this soul is the upsoaring Swan or the Falcon that breaks out from a hundred iron walls and wrests from the jealous guardians of felicity the wine of the Soma. Every shining godward Thought that arises from the secret abysses of the heart is a priest and a creator and chants a divine hymn of luminous realisation and puissant fulfilment. We seek for the shining gold of the Truth; we lust after a heavenly treasure.

The soul of man is a world full of beings, a kingdom in which armies clash to help or hinder a supreme conquest, a house where the gods are our guests and which the demons strive to possess; the fullness of its energies and wideness of its being make a seat of sacrifice spread, arranged and purified for a celestial session.

Such are some of the principal images of the Veda and a very brief and insufficient outline of the teaching of the Forefathers. So understood the Rig Veda ceases to be an obscure, confused and barbarous hymnal; it becomes the high-aspiring Song of Humanity; its chants are episodes of the lyrical epic of the soul in its immortal ascension.

This at least; what more there may be in the Veda of ancient science, lost knowledge, old psycho-physical tradition remains yet to be discovered.

Hymns to Agni

Agni, the Divine Will-Force

THE NAME of this flaming godhead, Agni, derives from a root whose quality of significance is a preeminent force or intensity whether in state, action, sensation or movement; but the qualities of this essential significance vary. It means a burning brightness, whence its use for fire; it means movement and especially a curving or serpentine movement; it means strength and force, beauty and splendour, leading and preeminence; it developed also certain emotional values which have perished in Sanskrit, but remain in Greek, angry passion on one side, on the other delight and love.

The Vedic deity Agni is the first of the Powers, the pristine and preeminent, that have issued from the vast and secret Godhead. By conscious force of the Godhead the worlds have been created and are governed from within by that hidden and inner Control; Agni is the form, the fire, the forceful heat and flaming will of this Divinity. As a flaming Force of knowledge he descends to build up the worlds and seated within them, a secret deity, initiates movement and action. This divine Conscious Force contains all the other godheads in itself as the nave of a wheel contains its spokes. All puissance of action, strength in the being, beauty of form, splendour of light and knowledge, glory and greatness are the manifestation of Agni. And when he is entirely delivered and fulfilled out of the envelope of the world's crookednesses, this deity of flame and force is revealed as the solar godhead of love and harmony and light, Mitra, who leads men towards the Truth.

But in the Vedic cosmos Agni appears first as a front of divine Force compact of burning heat and light which forms, assails, enters into, envelops, devours, rebuilds all things in Matter. He is no random fire; his is a flame of force instinct with the light of divine knowledge. Agni is the seer-will in the universe unerring in all its works. Whatever he does in his passion and power is guided by the light of the silent Truth within him. He is a truth-conscious soul, a seer, a priest and a worker, — the immortal worker in man. His mission is to purify all that he works upon and to raise up the soul struggling in Nature from obscurity to the light, from the strife and the suffering to love and joy, from the heat and the labour to the peace and the bliss. He is, then, the Will, the Knowledge-Force of the Deva; secret inhabitant of Matter and its forms, visible and beloved guest of man, it is he that guards the law of the Truth of things in the apparent aberrations and confusions of the world. The other gods awake with the Dawn, but Agni wakes also in the Night; he keeps his divine vision even in the darkness where there is neither moon nor star; the flame of the divine will and knowledge is visible even in the densest obscurity of inconscient or half-conscient things. The infallible worker is there even when we see nowhere the conscious light of the guiding mind.

No sacrifice is possible without Agni. He is at once the flame on the altar and the priest of the oblation. When man, awakened from his night, wills to offer his inner and outer activities to the gods of a truer and higher existence and so to arise out of mortality into the far-off immortality, his goal and his desire, it is this flame of upward aspiring Force and Will that he must kindle; into this fire he must cast the sacrifice. For it is this that offers to the gods and brings down in return all spiritual riches, — the divine waters, the light, the strength, the rain of heaven. This calls, this carries the gods to the house of the sacrifice. Agni is the priest man puts in front as his spiritual representative (*purohita*), a Will, a Force greater, higher, more infallible than his own doing for him the works of the sacrifice, purifying the materials of the oblation, offering them to the gods whom it has summoned to the divine ritual, determining the right order and season of its works, conducting the progress, the march of the sacrificial development. These and other various functions of the symbolic priesthood, represented in the outward sacrifice by different officiating priests, are discharged by the single Agni.

Agni is the leader of the sacrifice and protects it in the great journey against the powers of darkness. The knowledge and purpose of this divine Puissance can be entirely trusted; he is the friend and lover of the soul and will not betray it to evil gods. Even for the man sitting far off in the night, enveloped by the darkness of the human ignorance, this flame is a light which, when it is perfectly kindled and in proportion as it mounts higher and higher, enlarges itself into the vast light of the Truth. Flaming upward to heaven to meet the divine Dawn, it rises through the vital or nervous mid-world and through our mental skies and enters at last the Paradise of Light, its own supreme home above where joyous for ever in the eternal Truth that is the foundation of the sempiternal Bliss the shining Immortals sit in their celestial sessions and drink the wine of the infinite beatitude.

It is true that here the light is concealed. Agni, like other gods, figures here as a child of the universal parents, Heaven and Earth, Mind and Body, Soul and material Nature. This earth holds him concealed in her own materiality and does not release him for the conscious works of the Father. She hides him in all her growths, her plants, herbs, trees — the forms full of her heats, the objects that keep for the soul its delights. But at last she shall yield him up; she is the lower tinder, the mental being is the upper tinder; by the pressure of the upper on the lower the flame of Agni shall be born. But it is by pressure, by a sort of churning that he is born. Therefore he is called the Son of Force.

Even when Agni emerges, he is outwardly obscure in his workings. He becomes, first, not a pure Will, though really he is always pure, but a vital Will, the desire of the Life in us, a smoke-obscured flame, son of our crookednesses, a Beast grazing in its pasture, a force of devouring desire that feeds upon earth's growths, tears and ravages all upon which it feeds and leaves a black and charred line to mark its path where there was the joy and glory of earth's woodlands. But in all this there is a work of purification, which becomes conscious for the man of sacrifice. Agni destroys and purifies. His very hunger and desire, infinite in its scope, prepares the establishment of a higher universal order. The smoke of his passion is overcome and this vital Will, this burning desire in the Life becomes the Steed that carries us up to the highest levels, — the white Steed that gallops in the front of the Dawns.

Delivered from his smoke-enveloped activity he burns high in our skies, scales the ether of the pure mind and mounts upon the back of heaven. There on that rarer level its god Trita Aptya takes this high-flaming force and forges it into a weapon of sharpness that shall destroy all evil and ignorance. This Seer-Will becomes the guardian of the illuminations of knowledge — herds of the Sun that graze in the pastures of life secure from the Sons of division and darkness, protected by the warrior force of the Will that knows. He attains the immortality and maintains unhurt its law of truth and joy in the human creature. In the end we overpass all crookednesses of falsehood and error, emerge from the low and broken and devious ground to the straight path and the high and open levels. Will and Knowledge become one; every impulse of the perfected soul becomes conscious of the essential truth of its own self-being, every act fulfils it consciently, joyously, victoriously. Such is the godhead to which the Vedic Fire exalts the Aryan who does the sacrifice. The Immortal conquers in the mortal and by his sacrifice. Man, the thinker, fighter, toiler, becomes a seer, self-ruler and king over Nature.

The Veda speaks of this divine Flame in a series of splendid and opulent images. He is the rapturous priest of the sacrifice, the God-Will intoxicated with its own delight, the young sage, the sleepless envoy, the ever-wakeful flame in the house, the master of our gated dwelling-place, the beloved guest, the lord in the creature, the seer of the flaming tresses, the divine child, the pure and virgin God, the invincible warrior, the leader on the path who marches in front of the human peoples, the immortal in mortals, the worker established in man by the gods, the unobstructed in knowledge, the infinite in being, the vast and flaming sun of the Truth, the sustainer of the sacrifice and discerner of its steps, the divine perception, the light, the vision, the firm foundation. Throughout the Veda it is in the hymns which celebrate this strong and brilliant deity that we find those which are the most splendid in poetic colouring, profound in psychological suggestion and sublime in their mystic intoxication. It is as if his own flame and cry and light had seized with a burning ecstasy on the imagination of his poets.

Amid this crowd of poetical images there are some of a symbolic character which describe the many births of the divine Flame. They are recounted with an extraordinary variety. Sometimes he is the child of Heaven, the Father — Mind or Soul — and of Earth the Mother — Body or material Nature; sometimes he is the flame born from these two tinders; sometimes Heaven and Earth are called his two mothers, when the figure is more explicitly symbolic of the pure mental and psychical and the physical consciousness. He is also hymned as the child of the seven Mothers — for his complete birth is a result of the manifestation of seven principles which constitute our conscious existence — three spiritual of the infinite, three temporal of the finite, and one intermediate — and which are, respectively, the foundation of the seven worlds. Like other gods, he is said to be born of the Truth; the Truth is at once his birthplace and his home. Sometimes it is said that the Seven Beloved brought him into birth for the Lord; and here the symbol seems to carry back his source to that other principle of pure Bliss which is the original cause of creation. He has one form of the solar light and flame, another heavenly in the mind, a third which dwells in the rivers. Night and Dawn are delivered of him, the Knowledge and the Ignorance suckle alternately the divine Child in their successive occupation of our heavens. And yet again it is Matarishwan, Master of Life, who has planted him for the gods secret in the growths of earth, secret in her creatures, man, animal and plant, secret in the mighty Waters. These Waters are the seven rivers of the luminous world that descend from heaven when Indra, the God-Mind, has slain the enveloping Python; they descend full of the light and the heavenly abundance, instinct with the clarity and the sweetness, the sweet milk and the butter and the honey. Agni's birth here from these fostering Cows, these Mothers of Plenty, is the greatest of his terrestrial births; fostered by them as the swift Mares of Life he grows at once to his divine greatness, fills all the planes with his vast and shining limbs and forms their kingdoms in the soul of man into the image of a divine Truth.

The variety and flexible use of these images — they are sometimes employed in a rapid succession in the same hymn — belongs to a period of conscious symbolism in which the image has not hardened and crystallised into the myth but is constantly a figure and a parable whose sense still lives and is still plastic in the originating imagination.

The actual legends about Agni, the developed parables as distinct from the less elaborate figure, are rare or non-existent — in remarkable contrast with the wealth of myth which crowds about the names of Indra and the Ashwins. He participates in the legendary actions of Indra, the Python-slaying, the recovery of the herds, the slaying of the Dasyus; his own activity is universal but in spite of his supreme greatness or perhaps because of it he seeks no separate end and claims no primacy over the other gods. He is content to be a worker for man and the helpful deities. He is the doer of the great Aryan work and the pure and sublime mediator between earth and heaven. Disinterested, sleepless, invincible this divine Will-force works in the world as a universal Soul of power housed in all beings, Agni Vaishwanara, the greatest, most powerful, most brilliant and most impersonal of all the cosmic Deities.

The name, Agni, is translated here Power, Strength, Will, the God-will, or the Flame according to the context. The names of the Rishis are also given, wherever necessary, their significant value, as in the first hymn Gavisthira which means the Steadfast in the Light or the general name Atri. Atri means either the Eater or the Traveller; Agni himself is the Atri as he is also the Angiras; out of a devouring desire, experience and enjoyment of the forms of the world he advances to the liberated truth and delight of the soul in the possession of its infinite existence.

The First Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE MORNING SACRIFICE

[The Rishi hymns the awakening of Agni the Divine Force to conscious action in the coming of the Dawn. Agni rises towards the luminous Paradise, his goal, feeding on the works of the Discernment which distributes the gifts and activities of the sacrifice, becomes a pure energy leading our days and ascends to the Vastness and the Truth. By the Truth he fashions anew our two firmaments, the physical and mental consciousness. This is the golden Affirmation of him in our heavens.]

अबोध्यग्निः समिधा जनानां प्रति धेनुमिवायतीमुषासम् ।
यह्वा इव प्र वयामुज्जिहानाः प्र भानवः सिस्रते नाकमच्छ ॥ १ ॥

1. Strength is awake by kindling of the peoples and he fronts the Dawn that comes to him as the Cow that fosters; like mightinesses that rush upward to their expanding his lustres advancing mount towards the heavenly level.

अबोधि होता यजथाय देवानूर्ध्वो अग्निः सुमनाः प्रातरस्थात् ।
समिद्धस्य रुशददर्शि पाजो महान् देवस्तमसो निरमोचि ॥ २ ॥

2. The Priest of our oblation has awakened for sacrifice to the gods; with right mentality in him Strength stands up exalted in our mornings; he is entirely kindled, red-flushing the mass of him is seen; a great godhead has been delivered out of the darkness.

यदीं गणस्य रशनामजीगः शुचिरङ्क्ते शुचिभिर्गोभिरग्निः ।
आद् दक्षिणा युज्यते वाजयन्त्युत्तानामूर्ध्वो अधयज्जुहूभिः ॥ ३ ॥

3. When he has uncoiled the long cord of his hosts, Strength shines pure by the pure herd of the radiances.[1] For the goddess who discerns grows in plenitude and is yoked to her works; he exalted, she extended supine, he feeds on her with his flames of the offering.

अग्निमच्छा देवयतां मनांसि चक्षूंषीव सूर्ये सं चरन्ति ।
यदीं सुवाते उषसा विरूपे श्वेतो वाजी जायते अग्रे अह्नाम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. The minds of men who grow in the godhead move entirely towards the flame of Will even as all their seeings converge in the Sun that illumines.[2] When two Dawns[3] of opposite forms are delivered of him, he is born as the White Steed in front of the days.

जनिष्ट हि जेन्यो अग्रे अह्नां हितो हितेष्वरुषो वनेषु ।
दमेदमे सप्त रत्ना दधानोऽग्निर्होता नि षसादा यजीयान् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Yea, he is born victorious in the front of the days, a ruddy worker established in the established delights of things; upholding in house after house the seven ecstasies[4] Strength has taken his seat as the Priest of the offering mighty for sacrifice.

अग्निर्होता न्यसीदद् यजीयानुपस्थे मातुः सुरभा उ लोके ।
युवा कविः पुरुनिःष्ठ ऋतावा धर्ता कृष्टीनामुत मध्य इद्धः ॥ ६ ॥

---

[1] The Cows of the Dawn. Dakshina, the goddess of divine discernment, is here a form of the Dawn herself.

[2] That is to say, instead of the groping thoughts of other men, their mentality tends to convert itself into a luminous flame of Will that is knowledge and all their thoughts become a blaze of direct vision, the rays of the Sun of Truth.

[3] Day and Night, — the latter the state of Ignorance that belongs to our material Nature, the former the state of illumined Knowledge that belongs to the divine Mind of which our mentality is a pale and dulled reflection.

[4] To each principle of our nature there corresponds a certain divine ecstasy and on each plane, in each body or house, Agni establishes these ecstasies.

6. Strength has taken his seat as the Priest of the offering mighty for sacrifice in the lap of the Mother and in that rapturous other world,[5] young and a seer, standing out in his multitudes, possessed of the Truth, the upholder of those that do the work; and also in between he is kindled.

प्र णु त्यं विप्रमध्वरेषु साधुमग्निं होतारमीळते नमोभिः ।
आ यस्ततान रोदसी ऋतेन नित्यं मृजन्ति वाजिनं घृतेन ॥ ७ ॥

7. Men seek with their obeisances of submission this illumined Strength that achieves our perfection in the progressing sacrifices and is the priest of their oblation, because he shapes in the power of the Truth both firmaments of our being. Him they press into brightness by the clarity,[6] the eternal steed of life's plenitude.

मार्जाल्यो मृज्यते स्वे दमूनाः कविप्रशस्तो अतिथिः शिवो नः ।
सहस्रशृङ्गो वृषभस्तदोजा विश्वाँ अग्ने सहसा प्रास्यन्यान् ॥ ८ ॥

8. Bright, he is rubbed bright, expressed by the seer, domiciled in his own home[7] and our beneficent guest. The bull of the thousand horns, because thou hast that force,[8] O Strength, thou precedest in thy puissance all others.

प्र सद्यो अग्ने अत्येष्यन्यानाविर्यस्मै चारुतमो बभूथ ।
ईळेन्यो वपुष्यो विभावा प्रियो विशामतिथिर्मानुषीणाम् ॥ ९ ॥

9. At once, O Strength, thou outstrippest all others, in whomsoever thou art manifested in all the glory of thy beauty,

---

[5] The mother is Earth, our physical being; the other world is the supramental existence; the vital and emotional being is the world in between. Agni manifests in all of these simultaneously.

[6] The clarified butter, yield of the Cow of Light and symbol of the rich clarity that comes to the mind visited by the Light.

[7] That is to say, having taken his place on the plane of the Truth which is his own proper home.

[8] The force of the Truth, the perfect energy that belongs to this perfect knowledge.

desirable, full of body, extended in light, the beloved guest of the human peoples.

तुभ्यं भरन्ति क्षितयो यविष्ठ बलिमग्ने अन्तित ओत दूरात् ।
आ भन्दिष्ठस्य सुमतिं चिकिद्धि बृहत् ते अग्ने महि शर्म भद्रम् ॥१०॥

10. To thee, O Strength, O youngest vigour, all the worlds and their peoples bring from near and bring from afar their offering. Awake in a man's knowledge to that right-mindedness of his happiest state. A vastness, O Strength, is the great and blissful peace of thee.

आद्य रथं भानुमो भानुमन्तमग्ने तिष्ठ यजतेभिः समन्तम् ।
विद्वान् पथीनामुर्वन्तरिक्षमेह देवान् हविरद्याय वक्षि ॥११॥

11. Mount today with the lords of the sacrifice, O luminous Will, thy luminous complete car! Thou who knowest the wide middle world[9] in all its paths, bring hither the gods to eat of our oblation.

अवोचाम कवये मेध्याय वचो वन्दारु वृषभाय वृष्णे ।
गविष्ठिरो नमसा स्तोममग्नौ दिवीव रुक्ममुरुव्यञ्चमश्रेत् ॥१२॥

12. To the Seer, to the Intelligence we have uttered today the word of our adoration, to the Bull that fertilises the herds; the Steadfast in the Light by his surrender rises in the flame of Will as in the heavens to a golden Affirmation manifesting a vastness.

---

[9] The vital or nervous plane is just above our material earth; through it the gods come to commune with man, but it is a confused wideness and its paths are many but intricate and tangled.

The Second Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE LIBERATION OF THE DIVINE FORCE

[Nature in her ordinary limited and material workings holds the Divine Force concealed in her secret or subconscient being; only when consciousness enlarges itself towards the One and Infinite, is it manifested, born for the conscient Mind. The clarities of the higher illumination cannot be kept so long as there is not this Strength to guard them, for hostile powers snatch them away and conceal them again in their secret cavern. Divine Will manifested in man, itself liberated, liberates him from the cords which bind him as a victim in the world-sacrifice; we attain to it by the teaching of Indra, the divine Mind, and it protects the uninterrupted play of the Light and destroys the powers of falsehood whose limitations cannot hem in its growth and its out-flaming; it brings the divine waters from the luminous Heaven, the divine wealth liberated from the attacks of the Enemy, and gives the final peace and perfection.]

कुमारं माता युवतिः समुब्धं गुहा बिभर्ति न ददाति पित्रे ।
अनीकमस्य न मिनज्जनासः पुरः पश्यन्ति निहितमरतौ ॥ १॥

1. The young Mother[1] bears the Boy pressed down in her secret being and gives him not to the Father; but his force is not diminished, the peoples behold him established in front[2] in the upward working of things.

कमेतं त्वं युवते कुमारं पेषी बिभर्षि महिषी जजान ।
पूर्वीर्हिं गर्भः शरदो ववर्धाऽपश्यं जातं यदसूत माता ॥ २॥

---

[1] The Mother and Father are always either Nature and the Soul or the material being and the pure mental being.

[2] As the Purohit who leads and conducts the work of the sacrifice.

2. Who is this Boy whom thou bearest in thyself when thou art compressed into form, but thy vastness gives him birth? For many seasons the Child grew in the womb; I saw him born when the Mother brought him forth.

हिरण्यदन्तं शुचिवर्णमारात् क्षेत्रादपश्यमायुधा मिमानम् ।
ददानो अस्मा अमृतं विपृक्वत् किं मामनिन्द्राः कृणवन्ननुक्थाः ॥ ३ ॥

3. I saw far off in the field of being one tusked with golden light and pure bright of hue who was shaping the weapons of his war. I give to him the immortality in me in all my separate parts[3] and what shall they do to me who have not the Word[4] and the God-Mind is not in them?

क्षेत्रादपश्यं सनुतश्चरन्तं सुमद् यूथं न पुरु शोभमानम् ।
न ता अगृभ्रन्नजनिष्ट हि षः पलिक्नीरिद् युवतयो भवन्ति ॥ ४ ॥

4. I saw in the field as though a happy herd that ranged continuously in many forms of luminous beauty. None could seize on them, for he was born; even they that were old among them, grow young once more.

के मे मर्यकं वि यवन्त गोभिर्न येषां गोपा अरणश्चिदास ।
य ईं जगृभुरव ते सृजन्त्वाजाति पश्व उप नश्चिकित्वान् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Who were they that divorced my strength from the herds of Light? Against them there was no protector nor any worker in this war. Let those that took them from me, release them to me again; for he with his conscious perceptions comes driving to us our lost herds of the radiance.

वसां राजानं वसतिं जनानामरातयो नि दधुर्मर्त्येषु ।
ब्रह्माण्यत्रेरव तं सृजन्तु निन्दितारो निन्द्यासो भवन्तु ॥ ६ ॥

---

[3] Soma, the wine of immortality, is given to the gods in three parts, on three levels of our being, the mind, life and body.

[4] The expressive Word which manifests that which is hidden, brings out into expression that which is unexpressed.

6. The king of those who dwell in creatures, he in whom all creatures dwell, is hidden within mortals by hostile powers; let the soul-thoughts of the Eater of things release him, let the confiners be themselves confined.

शुनश्चिच्छेपं निदितं सहस्राद् यूपादमुञ्चो अशमिष्ट हि षः ।
एवास्मदग्ने वि मुमुग्धि पाशान् होतश्चिकित्व इह तू निषद्य ॥ ७॥

7. Shunahshepa too, head of delight, was bound to the thousandfold post of the sacrifice; him thou didst release, — yea, he accomplished perfection by his works; so do thou take thy seat here in us, O conscious seeing Flame, O Priest of our sacrifice, and loose from us the cords of our bondage.

हृणीयमानो अप हि मदैयेः प्र मे देवानां व्रतपा उवाच ।
इन्द्रो विद्वाँ अनु हि त्वा चचक्ष तेनाहमग्ने अनुशिष्ट आगाम् ॥ ८॥

8. Mayst thou not grow wroth and depart from me! He who guards the law of action of the godheads, told me of thee and, taught by him his knowledge, I came to thee.

वि ज्योतिषा बृहता भात्यग्निराविर्विश्वानि कृणुते महित्वा ।
प्रादेवीर्मायाः सहते दुरेवाः शिशीते शृङ्गे रक्षसे विनिक्षे ॥ ९॥

9. This Flame of Will shines out with the vast light of Truth and makes all things manifest by the greatness of him. He overpowers the formations of knowledge[5] that are undivine and of an evil movement; he sharpens his horns to gore the Rakshasa.

उत स्वानासो दिवि षन्त्वग्नेस्तिग्मायुधा रक्षसे हन्तवा उ ।
मदे चिदस्य प्र रुजन्ति भामा न वरन्ते परिबाधो अदेवीः ॥ १०॥

---

[5] Maya. There are two kinds of Maya, the divine and undivine, the formations of the truth and the formations of the falsehood.

10. May the voices of the Flame in our heavens be sharp-weaponed to slay the Rakshasa! In his ecstasy his angry lustres break all that opposes his advance; the energies undivine that obstruct us from every side cannot pen him in.

एतं ते स्तोमं तुविजात विप्रो रथं न धीरः स्वपा अतक्षम् ।
यदीदग्ने प्रति त्वं देव हर्याः स्वर्वतीरप एना जयेम ॥ ११ ॥

11. O thou who art born in many forms, I illumined in mind, accomplished in understanding, perfect in works, have fashioned for thee this song of thy affirming to be as if thy chariot. If thou, O Strength, take an answering delight in it, by this we may conquer the waters that carry the light of the luminous heaven.[6]

तुविग्रीवो वृषभो वावृधानोऽशत्र्वर्यः समजाति वेदः ।
इतीममग्निममृता अवोचन् बर्हिष्मते मनवे शर्म यंसद् -
धविष्मते मनवे शर्म यंसत् ॥ १२ ॥

12. The strong-necked[7] Bull increases in us and drives to us the treasure of knowledge[8] that was withheld by our enemy; nor is there any to destroy it. For so have the Powers Immortal spoken to the Strength that he work out peace for the man who enlarges the seat of sacrifice, that he work out peace for the man who carries in his hand the oblation.

---

[6] Swar, the divine mind pure to the luminous Truth.
[7] Or, many-necked.
[8] The wealth of the luminous herds.

The Third Hymn to Agni

THE DIVINE FORCE, CONQUEROR OF THE SUPREME GOOD

[The Divine Will-Force is that of which all the other godheads are forms and he manifests all these powers of supreme Truth as he grows in us. Thus the supreme state of conscious being is attained and by that our complex and manifold existence is maintained in the Light and the Joy. The Rishi prays that the evil may not be allowed to express itself again in him, that the secret soul in us who is the Father of things but in us appears as the child of our works and our evolution, may open itself to the vast Truth-consciousness. The Divine Flame will destroy all the powers of falsehood and evil who seek to make us stumble and would rob us of our heavenly treasure.]

त्वमग्ने वरुणो जायसे यत् त्वं मित्रो भवसि यत् समिद्धः ।
त्वे विश्वे सहसस्पुत्र देवास्त्वमिन्द्रो दाशुषे मर्त्याय ॥ १ ॥

1. Thou art he of the Wideness,[1] O Will, when thou art born; thou becomest the Lord of Love[2] when thou art entirely kindled. In thee are all the gods, O son of Force; thou art the Power-in-Mind[3] for the mortal who gives the offering.

त्वमर्यमा भवसि यत् कनीनां नाम स्वधावन् गुह्यं बिभर्षि ।
अञ्जन्ति मित्रं सुधितं न गोभिर्यद् दंपती समनसा कृणोषि ॥ २ ॥

---

[1] Varuna, who represents the ethereal purity and oceanic wideness of the infinite Truth.

[2] Mitra, the all-embracing harmony of the Truth, the Friend of all beings, therefore the Lord of Love.

[3] Indra, Ruler of our being, Master of Swar which is the luminous world of the Divine Mind.

2. O thou who possessest self-ordering Nature, thou becomest the might of the Aspirer[4] when thou bearest the secret Name of the Virgins.[5] They brighten thee with the Light in her rays as Love[6] perfectly founded when thou makest of one mind the Lord and his Spouse[7] in their mansion.

तव श्रिये मरुतो मर्जयन्त रुद्र यत् ते जनिम चारु चित्रम् ।
पदं यद् विष्णोरुपमं निधायि तेन पासि गुह्यं नाम गोनाम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. For the glory of thee, O Violent One, the Thought-Powers make to shine out by their pressure that which is thy rich and beautiful birth.[8] When that highest stride[9] of Vishnu has been established within, thou protectest by it the secret Name of the herds of the Radiance.[10]

तव श्रिया सुदृशो देव देवाः पुरू दधाना अमृतं सपन्त ।
होतारमग्निं मनुषो नि षेदुर्दशस्यन्त उशिजः शंसमायोः ॥ ४ ॥

4. By the glory of thee because thou hast right vision, O godhead, the gods holding all that multiple existence taste immortality and men take their seat in the Force that offers the oblation and, desiring, they distribute to the godheads the self-expression of the being.

न त्वद्धोता पूर्वो अग्ने यजीयान् न काव्यैः परो अस्ति स्वधावः ।
विशश्च यस्या अतिथिर्भवासि स यज्ञेन वनवद् देव मर्तान् ॥ ५ ॥

---

[4] Aryaman, the aspiring power and action of the Truth.

[5] Probably, the unripe Radiances that our aspiration has to prepare for their union with the higher power of the soul; Aryaman holds their secret sense, the Name or Numen, which is manifested when aspiration arrives at the light of knowledge and Mitra harmonises soul and nature.

[6] Mitra.

[7] The Soul and Nature. The mansion is the human body.

[8] The supreme world of Light. Agni is said elsewhere to become in his being the highest of the shining worlds.

[9] Vishnu has three strides or movements, earth, heaven and the supreme world of which Light, Truth and the Sun are the foundation.

[10] The highest divine sense of the illuminations of Knowledge is found in the superconscient worlds of supreme Light.

5. There is none that precedeth thee as the priest of the oblation nor any mightier for sacrifice; O Flame, none is supreme over thee in the things of the Wisdom, thou who possessest the self-ordering power of Nature. The creature of whom thou becomest the guest, O godhead, prevails by sacrifice over all that belong to the mortality.

वयमग्ने वनुयाम त्वोता वसूयवो हविषा बुध्यमानाः ।
वयं समर्ये विदथेष्वह्नां वयं राया सहसस्पुत्र मर्तान् ॥ ६ ॥

6. May we, O Flame, fostered by thee and awakened, seekers of the substance, prevail by the offering, — we in the great struggle, we in the comings of knowledge in our days,[11] we by the felicity, O son of Force, overcome all that are mortal.

यो न आगो अभ्येनो भरात्यधीदघमघशंसे दधात ।
जही चिकित्वो अभिशस्तिमेतामग्ने यो नो मर्चयति द्वयेन ॥ ७ ॥

7. The expresser of evil who seeks to bring sin and transgression into us, his own evil do thou return upon his head; slay, O conscious knower, this hostile self-expression of him who oppresses us with the duality.

त्वामस्या व्युषि देव पूर्वे दूतं कृण्वाना अयजन्त हव्यैः ।
संस्थे यदग्न ईयसे रयीणां देवो मर्तैर्वसुभिरिध्यमानः ॥ ८ ॥

8. Thee, O Godhead, in the dawning of this our Night the Ancients[12] made their messenger and through thee sacrificed by their offerings because thou art the godhead that is being kindled by the mortal dwellers in this substance and thou movest to the meeting-place[13] of all felicities.

[11] The periods of Light visiting the soul.
[12] The ancient seers who discovered the secret wisdom.
[13] The supreme world of Truth and Bliss.

अव स्पृधि पितरं योधि विद्वान् पुत्रो यस्ते सहसः सून ऊहे ।
कदाँ चिकित्वो अभि चक्षसे नोऽग्ने कदा ऋतचिद् यातयासे ॥ ९ ॥

9. Deliver the Father and in thy knowledge put away evil from him who is borne in us as thy son, O child of Force. When wilt thou have that vision for us, O conscious Knower? when wilt thou, O Truth-conscious Will, impel us to the journey?

भूरि नाम वन्दमानो दधाति पिता वसो यदि तज्जोषयासे ।
कुविद् देवस्य सहसा चकानः सुम्नमग्निर्वनते वावृधानः ॥ १० ॥

10. Then indeed the Father adores and holds, O Dweller in the substance, the vast Name[14] when thou makest him to accept and cleave to it. Will in us desires the bliss and, increasing, wins it entirely by the force of the Godhead.[15]

त्वमङ्ग जरितारं यविष्ठ विश्वान्यग्ने दुरिताति पर्षि ।
स्तेना अदृश्रन् रिपवो जनासोऽज्ञातकेता वृजिना अभूवन् ॥ ११ ॥

11. Thou, O Will, O youngest vigour, carriest thy adorer beyond all stumblings into grief and evil; for the creatures are seen of thee who would do hurt to us and are thieves in their hearts, — they whose perceptions are void of the knowledge and therefore they have fallen into the crookedness.

इमे यामासस्त्वद्रिगभूवन् वसवे वा तदिदागो अवाचि ।
नाहायमग्निरभिशस्तये नो न रीषते वावृधानः परा दात् ॥ १२ ॥

12. Lo, all these movements of our journeying have turned their faces towards thee, and for that evil in us, it is declared to the Dweller in our being. O never can this Will in his increasing betray us to the hurter of our self-expression; he will not deliver us into the hands of our enemy!

---

[14] The world of Truth is also called the Wideness or the Vast or the Vast Truth.
[15] The Deva, the supreme Deity, of whom all the gods are different Names and Powers.

The Fourth Hymn to Agni

THE DIVINE WILL, PRIEST, WARRIOR AND LEADER OF OUR JOURNEY

[The Rishi hymns the Divine Force that knows all the successive births of the soul on its ascending planes of existence and as priest of his upward and onward-journeying sacrifice gives him the purity, the power, the knowledge, the increasing riches, the faculty of new formation and spiritual productiveness by which the mortal grows into immortality. It destroys the enemy, the assailants, the powers of evil, enriches the soul with all they try to withhold, gives the triple peace and the triple fulfilment of the mental, vital and physical being and, labouring in the light of the supramental Truth, leads beyond, creating in us the world of immortal felicity.]

त्वामग्ने वसुपतिं वसूनामभि प्र मन्दे अध्वरेषु राजन् ।
त्वया वजं वाजयन्तो जयेमाऽभि ष्याम पृत्सुतीर्मर्त्यानाम् ॥१॥

1. Strength, master over the lords of substance, towards thee I direct my delight in the march of my sacrifices. O King, by thee, increasing thy plenitudes, may we conquer our plenty and overcome the embattled assaults of mortal powers.

हव्यवाळग्निरजरः पिता नो विभुर्विभावा सुदृशीको अस्मे ।
सुगार्हपत्याः समिषो दिदीह्यस्मद्र्यक् सं मिमीहि श्रवांसि ॥२॥

2. Strength unaging that bears the oblation is the Father of us, he in us pervades in being and is extended in light and is perfect in vision. Kindle altogether thy strengths of impulsion

that belong perfectly to the Master in our dwelling,[1] form altogether thy inspirations of knowledge and turn them towards us.

विशां कविं विश्पतिं मानुषीणाम् शुचिं पावकं घृतपृष्ठमग्निम् ।
नि होतारं विश्वविदं दधिध्वे स देवेषु वनते वार्याणि ॥ ३ ॥

3. Will that is the Seer and Lord of the creature in the human peoples, that is pure and purifies, with his surface of the mind's clarities, Will omniscient hold in you as the priest of your oblations, for this is he that wins for you your desirable boons in the godheads.

जुषस्वाग्न इळया सजोषा यतमानो रश्मिभिः सूर्यस्य ।
जुषस्व नः समिधं जातवेद आ च देवान् हविरद्याय वक्षि ॥ ४ ॥

4. Becoming of one heart with the goddess of Truth-vision,[2] labouring by the rays of the Sun of Light, cleave to us with love, O Strength: accept in heart thy fuel in us, O Knower of the Births, and bring to us the gods that they may eat of our offering.

जुष्टो दमूना अतिथिर्दुरोण इमं नो यज्ञमुप याहि विद्वान् ।
विश्वा अग्ने अभियुजो विहत्या शत्रूयतामा भरा भोजनानि ॥ ५ ॥

5. Domiciled in our gated dwelling, the Guest loved and accepted, come to this our sacrifice in all thy knowledge; all these energies slay that set themselves to attack us and bring to us their enjoyments who make themselves our enemies.[3]

वधेन दस्युं प्र हि चातयस्व वयः कृण्वानस्तन्वे स्वायै ।
पिपर्षि यत् सहसस्पुत्र देवान्त्सो अग्ने पाहि नृतम वाजे अस्मान् ॥ ६ ॥

---

[1] Agni is here the supreme Will dwelling in us, Father and Lord of our being; he is to act in us entirely by the divine will and knowledge.

[2] Ila.

[3] All hostile energies that attack the soul of man possess certain riches which he needs and has to wrest from them in order to arrive at his perfect plenitude.

6. Chase from us with thy blow the Divider, make a free space for thine own body! When, O Son of Force, thou art carrying the gods over to their goal,[4] protect us in the plenitude of our possession, O Strength, O mightiest Deity.

वयं ते अग्न उक्थैर्विधेम वयं हव्यैः पावक भद्रशोचे ।
अस्मे रयिं विश्ववारं समिन्वास्मे विश्वानि द्रविणानि धेहि ॥ ७॥

7. May we order aright for thee our sacrifice by our words and by our offerings, O Will that purifiest, O happy flame of purity; in us pervade a felicity of all desirable boons, in us confirm all substance of our riches.

अस्माकमग्ने अध्वरं जुषस्व सहसः सूनो त्रिषधस्थ हव्यम् ।
वयं देवेषु सुकृतः स्याम शर्मणा नस्त्रिवरूथेन पाहि ॥ ८॥

8. O Will, O Son of Force who dwellest in the three worlds[5] of our session, cleave in heart to our sacrifice, cleave to our oblation. May we become perfect in our works in the godheads; protect us by thy peace triple-armoured.[6]

विश्वानि नो दुर्गहा जातवेदः सिन्धुं न नावा दुरिताति पर्षि ।
अग्ने अत्रिवन्नमसा गृणानोऽस्माकं बोध्यविता तनूनाम् ॥ ९॥

9. O Knower of the Births, bear us over every difficult crossing, yea, over all stumblings into evil as in a ship that travels over the waters. O Will, expressed by us with our obeisance of submission as the Eater of things, awake in us, be the fosterer of our embodyings.[7]

---

[4] The divine powers in us are carried to their goal in the Truth and Bliss by the force of the Divine Will working in man.

[5] Mental, vital, physical, the lower "births" all the knowledge of which the Divine Will, knower of our Births, possesses and through which it has to lead the ascending sacrifice to the supramental.

[6] The peace, joy and full satisfaction in the mental, vital and physical being.

[7] Not only the physical body, but the vital and mental sheaths, all the embodied states or forms of the soul.

यस्त्वा हृदा कीरिणा मन्यमानोऽमर्त्यं मर्त्यो जोहवीमि ।
जातवेदो यशो अस्मासु धेहि प्रजाभिरग्ने अमृतत्वमश्याम् ॥ १० ॥

10. I meditate on thee with a heart that does the Work and, mortal, I call to the Immortal. O Will, O Knower of the Births, confirm victory in us; by the children of my works may I enjoy immortality.

यस्मै त्वं सुकृते जातवेद उ लोकमग्ने कृणवः स्योनम् ।
अश्विनं स पुत्रिणं वीरवन्तं गोमन्तं रयिं नशते स्वस्ति ॥ ११ ॥

11. O Knower of the Births, the man perfect in his works for whom thou createst that other blissful world,[8] reaches a felicity that is peopled happily with his life's swiftnesses, his herds of Light, the children of his soul, the armies of his energy.[9]

---

[8] The supramental world has to be formed or created in us by the Divine Will as the result of a constant expansion and self-perfecting.

[9] The constant Vedic symbols of the Horse, Cow, Son, Hero. The sons or children are the new soul-formations which constitute the divine Personality, the new births within us. The heroes are the mental and moral energies which resist the assaults of ignorance, division, evil and falsehood. The vital powers are the motive forces that bear us on our journey and are therefore symbolised by the Horse. The herds are the illuminations that come to us from the supramental Truth, herding rays of the sun of Light.

The Fifth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE SUMMONING OF THE GODS

[The hymn calls to the sacrifice by the summons of the divine Flame the principal godheads. Each is described or invoked in that capacity and functioning in which he is needed and helpful to the perfection of the soul and its divine growth and attaining.]

सुसमिद्धाय शोचिषे घृतं तीव्रं जुहोतन ।
अग्नये जातवेदसे ॥ १॥

1. To the Will that knoweth all the births, to the Flame highly kindled, purely luminous offer a poignant clarity.

नराशंसः सुषूदतीमं यज्ञमदाभ्यः ।
कविर्हि मधुहस्त्यः ॥ २॥

2. This is he that expresses the powers of the gods, the untameable who speeds on its way this our sacrifice, this is the seer who comes with the wine of sweetness in his hands.

ईळितो अग्न आ वहेन्द्रं चित्रमिह प्रियम् ।
सुखै रथेभिरूतये ॥ ३॥

3. O Strength, we have sought thee with our adoration, bring hither the God-Mind[1] bright and dear in his happy chariots[2] for our increasing.

---

[1] Indra.

[2] The plural is used to indicate the manifold movement of the Divine Mind in its completeness.

ऊर्णम्रदा वि प्रथस्वाऽभ्यर्का अनूषत ।
भवा नः शुभ्र सातये ॥ ४॥

4. Widely spread thyself,[3] softly, thickly covering; towards thee lighten the voices of our illumination. Be white and bright in us that we may conquer.

देवीर्द्वारो वि श्रयध्वं सुप्रायणा न ऊतये ।
प्रप्र यज्ञं पृणीतन ॥ ५॥

5. Swing open, O ye Doors divine,[4] and give us easy passage for our expanding; farther, farther lead and fill full our sacrifice.

सुप्रतीके वयोवृधा यह्वी ऋतस्य मातरा ।
दोषामुषासमीमहे ॥ ६॥

6. Darkness and Dawn[5] we desire, two mighty Mothers of the Truth, fairly fronting us, increasers of our spacious being.

वातस्य पत्मन्नीळिता दैव्या होतारा मनुषः ।
इमं नो यज्ञमा गतम् ॥ ७॥

7. And O ye divine Priests of our humanity, O worshipped Twain, approach on the paths of the Life-breath to this our sacrifice.

---

[3] This verse is addressed to Indra, the Power of divine Mind, through whom comes the illumination of the supramental Truth; by the advancing chariots of this giver of Light we conquer our divine possessions.

[4] Man's sacrifice is his labour and aspiration Godwards and is represented as travelling through the opening doors of the concealed heavenly realms, kingdoms conquered in succession by the expanding soul.

[5] Night and Day, symbols of the alternation of the divine and human consciousness in us. The Night of our ordinary consciousness holds and prepares all that the Dawn brings out into conscious being.

इळा सरस्वती मही तिस्रो देवीर्मयोभुवः ।
बर्हिः सीदन्त्वस्रिधः ॥ ८॥

8. She of the vision of knowledge, she of its flowing inspiration, she of its vastness, three goddesses[6] who give birth to the Bliss, they who stumble not,[7] may they take their seats at the altar strewn of the sacrifice.

शिवस्त्वष्टरिहा गहि विभुः पोष उत त्मना ।
यज्ञेयज्ञे न उदव ॥ ९॥

9. O Fashioner of things,[8] beneficent hither come to us; pervader of all in thy being, in thy nourishing of all and with thyself,[9] in sacrifice after sacrifice foster our ascension.

यत्र वेथ वनस्पते देवानां गुह्या नामानि ।
तत्र हव्यानि गामय ॥ १०॥

10. O Master of Delight,[10] to that goal[11] where thou knowest the secret Names of the gods, thither lead our offerings.

स्वाहाग्नये वरुणाय स्वाहेन्द्राय मरुद्भ्यः ।
स्वाहा देवेभ्यो हविः ॥ ११॥

---

[6] Ila, Saraswati, Mahi; their names are translated in order to give the idea of their functions.

[7] Or, who are not assailed, cannot be attacked by the ignorance and darkness, cause of our suffering.

[8] Twashtri.

[9] The Divine as the Fashioner of things pervades all that He fashions both with His immutable self-existence and with that mutable becoming of Himself in things by which the soul seems to grow and increase and take on new forms. By the former He is the indwelling Lord and Maker, by the latter He is the material of his own works.

[10] Soma.

[11] The Ananda, the state of divine Beatitude in which all the powers of our being are revealed in their perfect godhead, here secret and hidden from us.

11. Swaha to the Will and to the Lord of Wideness,[12] Swaha to the God-Mind and to the Thought-Powers,[13] Swaha to the godheads be the food of our oblation.[14]

---

[12] Varuna.

[13] The Maruts, nervous or vital forces of our being which attain to conscious expression in the thought, singers of the hymn to Indra, the God-Mind.

[14] That is, let all in us that we offer to the divine Life be turned into the self-light and self-force of the divine Nature.

The Sixth Hymn to Agni

THE GALLOPING FLAME-POWERS OF THE JOURNEY

[The flames of Agni the divine Will, home and meeting-place of all our increasing and advancing life-powers, are imaged as galloping on our human journey to the supreme good. Divine Will creates in us the divine strength of impulsion, an illumined and undecaying force and flame described as the steed of the plenitude, which brings us that good and carries us to that goal. His flames are coursers on the path who increase by the sacrifice; they hasten uninterruptedly, and race always more swiftly; they bring in the penned-up illuminations of the hidden knowledge. Their entire force and rapidity are accorded when the divine Strength is filled and satisfied with the sacrificial offerings.]

अग्निं तं मन्ये यो वसुरस्तं यं यन्ति धेनवः ।
अस्तमर्वन्त आशवोऽस्तं नित्यासो वाजिन इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥१॥

1. On Strength I meditate who is the dweller in substance and to him as their home go our fostering herds, to him as their home our swift war-steeds,[1] to him as their home our powers of the plenitude.
   Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.[2]

सो अग्निर्यो वसुर्गृणे सं यमायन्ति धेनवः ।
समर्वन्तो रघुद्रुवः सं सुजातासः सूरय इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥२॥

---

[1] The Horse is the symbol of Force in the Veda, especially of vital force. It is variously the Arvat or war-steed in the battle and the Vajin, the steed of the journey which brings us in the plenty of our spiritual wealth.

[2] The power that enables us to make the journey through the night of our being to the divine Light.

2. He is that Strength who is the dweller in substance; him I express in whom come together[3] our fostering herds, in whom meet our swiftly galloping war-steeds, in whom our luminous seers that come to perfect birth in us.
   Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

अग्निर्हि वाजिनं विशे ददाति विश्वचर्षणिः ।
अग्नी राये स्वाभुवं स प्रीतो याति वार्यमिषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ३॥

3. Will, the universal toiler, gives to the creature his steed of the plenitude, Will gives that which comes into entire being in us for the felicity and, satisfied, it journeys to the desirable good.
   Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

आ ते अग्न इधीमहि द्युमन्तं देवाजरम् ।
यद्ध स्या ते पनीयसी समिद् दीदयति द्यवीषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ४॥

4. That fire of thee we kindle O God, O Flame, luminous, unaging, when that more effective force of thy labour blazes in our heavens.
   Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

आ ते अग्न ऋचा हविः शुक्रस्य शोचिषस्पते ।
सुश्चन्द्र दस्म विश्पते हव्यवाट् तुभ्यं हूयत इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ५॥

5. Will, master of the pure-bright flame, thine is the offering cast by the illumining word; bearer of the oblation, to thee it is cast, O master of the creature, achiever of works, perfect in delight.
   Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

प्रो त्ये अग्नयोऽग्निषु विश्वं पुष्यन्ति वार्यम् ।
ते हिन्विरे त इन्विरे त इषण्यन्त्यानुषगिषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ६॥

---

[3] All our growing powers of force and knowledge move towards the manifestation of the divine Knowledge-Force and in it combine and are harmonised.

6. Those are thy flames that in these thy other flames nourish and advance every desirable good; they, they race! they, they run! they drive on in their impulsions without a break.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

तव त्ये अग्ने अर्चयो महि व्राधन्त वाजिनः ।
ये पत्वभिः शफानां व्रजा भुरन्त गोनामिषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ७॥

7. Those are thy fiery rays, O Will, steeds of the plenitude, and they increase into the largeness and with tramplings of their hooves they bring in the pens of the luminous kine.[4]
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

नवा नो अग्न आ भर स्तोतृभ्यः सुक्षितीरिषः ।
ते स्याम य आनृचुस्त्वादूतासो दमेदम इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ८॥

8. Bring, O Will, to those who affirm thee new strengths of impulsion that find aright their dwelling-place;[5] may we be they who because they have thee for their messenger, sing the hymn of illumination in home and home.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

उभे सुश्चन्द्र सर्पिषो दर्वी श्रीणीष आसनि ।
उतो न उत् पुपूर्या उक्थेषु शवसस्पत इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ९॥

9. Both[6] ladles of the running richness thou approachest to thy mouth, O perfect in delight; mayst thou in our speakings utterly fill thyself, O master of shining strength.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

---

[4] The illuminations of the divine Truth penned up in the cavern of the subconscient by the lords of sense-action.

[5] That is, they take us to our home in the world of Truth, the superconscient plane, own home of Agni, in which all these impulsions advancing find their rest and dwelling-place. It is reached by an ascent from plane to plane opened in succession by the power of the divine illumining Word.

[6] Perhaps, the divine and the human delight.

एवाँ अग्निमजुर्यमुर्गीर्भिर्यज्ञेभिरानुषक् ।
दधदस्मे सुवीर्यमुत त्यदाश्वश्व्यमिषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥१०॥

10. So by our words and our sacrifices they without any break drive and control the Strength. May he establish in us an utter energy[7] and that swift galloping force.[8]
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

---

[7] The hero-power of the battling soul.

[8] *Āśu aśvyam*, the swift Horse-Power, with a play on the two words giving it the sense of "swift horse-swiftness".

The Seventh Hymn to Agni

THE DIVINE WILL, DESIRER, ENJOYER, PROGRESSIVE FROM THE ANIMAL TO BLISS AND KNOWLEDGE

[Agni is hymned as the divine Force that brings the bliss and the ray of the truth into the human being and light into the night of our darkness. He leads men in their labour to his own infinite levels; he enjoys and tears up the objects of earthly enjoyment, but all his multitude of desires are for the building of a universality, an all-embracing enjoyment in the divine home of the human being. He is the animal moving as the enjoyer by the progressive movement of Nature, as with an axe through the forest, to the achievement and the bliss. This passionate, emotional, animal being of man is given by him to be purified into the peace and bliss; in it he establishes a divine light and knowledge and the awakened state of the soul.]

सखायः सं वः सम्यञ्चमिषं स्तोमं चाग्नये ।
वर्षिष्ठाय क्षितीनामूर्जो नप्त्रे सहस्वते ॥ १॥

1. O comrades, in you an absolute force of impulsion and an utter affirming for the Strength that lavishes all his abundance on the worlds of our dwelling,[1] for the master of Force, for the son of Energy.

कुत्रा चिद् यस्य समृतौ रण्वा नरो नृषदने ।
अर्हन्तश्चिद् यमिन्धते संजनयन्ति जन्तवः ॥ २॥

---

[1] Or, on the dwellers in the world.

2. Wheresoever man's soul comes to the utter meeting with him, it becomes full of delight in its dwelling-place. Even they who are adepts in the strength continue to kindle the flame of him and all creatures born work to bring him to perfect birth.

सं यदिषो वनामहे सं हव्या मानुषाणाम् ।
उत द्युम्नस्य शवस ऋतस्य रश्मिमा ददे ॥ ३॥

3. When wholly we possess and enjoy our strengths of impulsion, wholly all that men offer as a sacrifice, then I receive the ray of the Truth in its illumination and shining energy.[2]

स स्मा कृणोति केतुमा नक्तं चिद् दूर आ सते ।
पावको यद् वनस्पतीन् प्र स्मा मिनात्यजरः ॥ ४॥

4. Verily he creates the light of perception even for one who sits far off in the night, when himself undecaying the purifier compresses the lords[3] of the woodland of delight.

अव स्म यस्य वेषणे स्वेदं पथिषु जुह्वति ।
अभीमह स्वजेन्यं भूमा पृष्ठेव रुरुहुः ॥ ५॥

5. When in his circling men cast the sweat[4] of their toil as an offering on the paths, then they ascend to him where he sits self-joyous[5] like climbers who arrive upon large levels.[6]

---

[2] Or, "of the light, the luminous force, the truth."

[3] *Vanaspatīn*, in its double sense, the trees, the lords of the forest, growths of the earth, our material existence, and lords of delight. Soma, producer of the immortalising wine, is the typical *vanaspati*.

[4] An equivoque on the double sense of the word, sweat and the rich droppings of the food-offering.

[5] Or, self-victorious.

[6] These are the wide free infinite planes of existence founded on the Truth, the open levels opposed elsewhere to the uneven crookednesses which shut in men limiting their vision and obstructing their journey.

यं मर्त्यः पुरुस्पृहं विदद् विश्वस्य धायसे ।
प्र स्वादनं पितूनामस्ततातिं चिदायवे ॥ ६ ॥

6. Him shall mortal man come to know as the godhead who has this multitude of his desires that he may establish in us the all; for he reaches forward to the sweet taste of all foods and he builds a home[7] for this human being.

स हि ष्मा धन्वाक्षितं दाता न दात्या पशुः ।
हिरिश्मश्रुः शुचिदन्नृभुरनिभृष्टतविषिः ॥ ७ ॥

7. Yea, he teareth to pieces this desert[8] in which we dwell as the Animal that teareth its food; the beard of this Beast is of the golden light, his fang is a purity and the force in him is not afflicted by his heats.

शुचिः ष्म यस्मा अत्रिवत् प्र स्वधितीव रीयते ।
सुषूरसूत माता क्राणा यदानशे भगम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. Pure indeed is he for whom as for the eater of things there is the flowing progression by Nature,[9] as by an axe, and with a happy travail she, his Mother, brought him forth that he may accomplish her works and taste of the enjoyment.[10]

---

[7] The home of man, the higher divine world of his existence which is being formed by the gods in his being through the sacrifice. This home is the complete Beatitude into which all human desires and enjoyings have to be transformed and lose themselves. Therefore Agni, the purifier, devours all the forms of material existence and enjoyment in order to reduce them to their divine equivalent.

[8] The material existence not watered by the streams or rivers which descend from the superconscient Bliss and Truth.

[9] Again an equivoque on the double sense of *svadhiti*, an axe or other cleaving instrument and the self-ordering power of Nature, Swadha. The image is of the progress of the divine Force through the forests of the material existence as with an axe. But the axe is the natural self-arranging progression of Nature, the World-Energy, the Mother from whom this divine Force, son of Energy, is born.

[10] The divine enjoyment, *bhaga*, typified by the god Bhaga, the Enjoyer in the power of the Truth.

आ यस्ते सर्पिरासुतेऽग्ने शमस्ति धायसे ।
ऐषु द्युम्नमुत श्रव आ चित्तं मर्त्येषु धाः ॥९॥

9. O strength, O presser out on us of the running richness, when thou findest one who is a glad peace[11] for the establishing of thy works, in such mortals illumination establish and inspired knowledge and the conscious soul.

इति चिन्मन्युमध्रिजस्त्वादातमा पशुं ददे ।
आदग्ने अपृणतोऽत्रिः सासह्याद् दस्यूनिषः सासह्यान्नॄन् ॥१०॥

10. For to this end I born in the material existence receive as thy gift the emotional mind and the animal being.[12] Yea, O Will, may the eater of things overpower the Dividers[13] who minister not to his fullness; these souls that rush upon him with their impulsions may he overcome.

---

[11] *Śam* and *śarma* in the Veda express the idea of peace and joy, the joy that comes of the accomplished labour, *śamī*, or work of the sacrifice: the toil of the battle and the journey find their rest, a foundation of beatitude is acquired which is already free from the pain of strife and effort.

[12] Literally, passion-mind and the animal; but the word *paśu* may also mean, as it does oftenest in the Veda, the symbolic Cow of light; in that case the sense will be the emotional mind and the illumined mind. But the first rendering agrees better with the general sense of the hymn and with its previous use of the word.

[13] The Dasyus who hack and cut up the growth and unity of the soul and seek to assail and destroy its divine strength, joy and knowledge. They are powers of Darkness, the sons of Danu or Diti the divided being.

The Eighth Hymn to Agni

DIVINE WILL, THE UNIVERSAL FULFILLER

[The Rishi having declared the continuity of the great effort and aspiration from the earliest times hymns divine Will harboured in us, inmate, priest of the sacrifice, master of this dwelling, who fulfils the universal impulse in all its multiplicity and both stimulates and leads it in act and knowledge.]

त्वामग्न ऋतायवः समीधिरे प्रत्नं प्रत्नास ऊतये सहस्कृत ।
पुरुश्चन्द्रं यजतं विश्वधायसं दमूनसं गृहपतिं वरेण्यम् ॥ १॥

1. Will who art by force created in us, thee the pristine Power the pristine seekers of the Truth kindled entirely that they might grow in their being, the god in the sacrifice, who because he has the multitude of his delights establishes the all,[1] domiciled in us, master of the dwelling, inmate supremely desirable.

त्वामग्ने अतिथिं पूर्व्यं विशः शोचिष्केशं गृहपतिं नि षेदिरे ।
बृहत्केतुं पुरुरूपं धनस्पृतं सुशर्माणं स्ववसं जरद्विषम् ॥ २॥

2. Will, in thee the supreme[2] guest and master of the house with his locks of light the peoples take their foundation because thou hast with thee vast vision and the multitude of thy forms and the extraction of our riches and the perfect peace and perfect being and the destruction of enemies.[3]

---

[1] Or, fosters all.

[2] "First", both original and supreme.

[3] The hostile powers who try to break up the unity and completeness of our being and from whom the riches which rightly belong to us have to be rescued, not human enemies.

त्वामग्ने मानुषीरीळते विशो होत्राविदं विविचिं रत्नधातमम् ।
गुहा सन्तं सुभग विश्वदर्शतं तुविष्वणसं सुयजं घृतश्रियम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. Will, thee the human peoples seek with their adoration who hast knowledge of the powers[4] of the sacrifice and rightly discriminating holdest for us utterly the delight and thou art seated in our secret being, O perfect enjoyer, seeing with a universal vision, pouring the multitude of thy voices, doing aright the sacrifice, agleam with the glory of the clarity.

त्वामग्ने धर्णसिं विश्वधा वयं गीर्भिर्गृणन्तो नमसोप सेदिम ।
स नो जुषस्व समिधानो अङ्गिरो देवो मर्तस्य यशसा सुदीतिभिः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Will who sustainest the law of things in their universality, thee we approach with obeisance of submission and express thee by the words; so do thou, O puissant seer, approve and cleave to us, a godhead set high-blazing by the victory[5] of the mortal, by his right illuminings.

त्वमग्ने पुरुरूपो विशेविशे वयो दधासि प्रत्नथा पुरुष्टुत ।
पुरूण्यन्ना सहसा वि राजसि त्विषिः सा ते तित्विषाणस्य नाधृषे ॥ ५ ॥

5. Will multiply affirmed, thou takest many forms according to the man and establishest for each his wide manifestation even as of old; thou illuminest in thy force the many things that are thy food and none can do violence to that blaze of thy light when so thou blazest up.

त्वामग्ने समिधानं यविष्ठ्य देवा दूतं चक्रिरे हव्यवाहनम् ।
उरुज्रयसं घृतयोनिमाहुतं त्वेषं चक्षुर्दधिरे चोदयन्मति ॥ ६ ॥

6. Will, youngest vigour, thee the gods have kindled high and made their envoy to man and the bearer of his offerings; wide in thy rapidities, born from the clarity, receiver of the

---

[4] Or, the process of the oblation.
[5] Attainment, or the splendour or glory.

oblation, thee they have set in him as a keen and burning eye that urges his mentality.

त्वामग्ने प्रदिव आहुतं घृतैः सुम्नायवः सुषमिधा समीधिरे ।
स वावृधान ओषधीभिरुक्षितोऽभि ज्रयांसि पार्थिवा वि तिष्ठसे ॥ ७॥

7. Will, thee men who seek the bliss kindle high with an entire kindling, fed by their clarities in the front of heaven;[6] so increasing, diffused by its growths that hold its heats, thou enterest widely into all the earth-life's speeding movements.

---

[6] Heaven and earth, the pure mental being and the material consciousness.

The Ninth Hymn to Agni

DIVINE WILL ASCENDENT
FROM THE ANIMAL TO MENTALITY

[The Rishi speaks of the birth of the divine Will by the working of the pure mental on the material consciousness, its involved action in man's ordinary state of mortal mind emotional, nervous, passionate marked by crooked activities and perishable enjoyments and its emergence on the third plane of our being where it is forged and sharpened into a clear and effective power for liberation and spiritual conquest. It knows all the births or planes of our existence and leads the sacrifice and its offerings by a successive and continuous progress to the divine goal and home.]

त्वामग्ने हविष्मन्तो देवं मर्तास ईळते ।
मन्ये त्वा जातवेदसं स हव्या वक्ष्यानुषक् ॥१॥

1. Thee the godhead mortals with the oblation seek, O Will; on thee I meditate who knowest the births; therefore thou carriest to the goal our offerings without a break.

अग्निर्होता दास्वतः क्षयस्य वृक्तबर्हिषः ।
सं यज्ञासश्चरन्ति यं सं वाजासः श्रवस्यवः ॥२॥

2. Will is the priest of the oblation for man who gives the offering and forms the seat of sacrifice and attains to his home; for in him our works of sacrifice converge and in him our plenitudes of the Truth's inspirations.

उत स्म यं शिशुं यथा नवं जनिष्टारणी ।
धर्तारं मानुषीणां विशामग्निं स्वध्वरम् ॥३॥

3. True too it is that thou art born from the two Workings[1] like a new-born infant, thou who art the upholder of the human peoples, Will that leads aright the sacrifice.

उत स्म दुर्गृभीयसे पुत्रो न ह्वार्याणाम् ।
पुरू यो दग्धासि वनाग्ने पशुर्न यवसे ॥ ४॥

4. True too it is that thou art hard to seize as a son of crookednesses[2] when thou devourest the many growths of delight like an Animal that feeds in his pasture.

अध स्म यस्यार्चयः सम्यक् संयन्ति धूमिनः ।
यदीमह त्रितो दिव्युप ध्मातेव धमति शिशीते ध्मातरी यथा ॥ ५॥

5. But afterwards thy fiery rays with their smoky passion meet together entirely; oh then, the third Soul[3] forges him in our heavens like a smith in his smithy; 'tis as if in the smith himself that he whets him into a weapon of sharpness.[4]

तवाहमग्न ऊतिभिर्मित्रस्य च प्रशस्तिभिः ।
द्वेषोयुतो न दुरिता तुर्याम मर्त्यानाम् ॥ ६॥

6. O Will, may I by thy expandings and thy expressings of the Lord of Love, — yea, may we, as men assailed by enemies, so besieged by discords, pass through and beyond these stumblings of mortals.

---

[1] The two Aranis or tinders by which the fire is struck out; the word can also mean workings and is related to *arya*. Heaven and Earth are the two Aranis which produce Agni; Heaven his father, Earth his mother.

[2] Literally, of the crooked ones, possibly the seven rivers or movements of our being winding through the obstructions of our mortal existence.

[3] Trita Aptya, the Third or Triple, apparently the Purusha of the mental plane. In the tradition he is a Rishi and has two companions significantly named Eka, one or single, and Dwita, second or double, who must be the Purushas of the material and the vital or dynamic consciousness. In the Veda he seems rather to be a god.

[4] The original is very compressed in style and suggestion beyond even the common Vedic pregnancy of structure and phrase, "When, oh, him Trita forges in heaven like a smith, sharpens as in the smith". In English we have to expand in order to bring out the meaning.

तं नो अग्ने अभी नरो रयिं सहस्व आ भर ।
स क्षेपयत् स पोषयद् भुवद् वाजस्य सातय उतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥७॥

7. Bring to us human souls that felicity, O Will, thou forceful one! May he shoot us forward on our path, may he nourish and increase us and be in us for the conquest of the plenitude. March with us in our battles that we may grow.

The Tenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE SPLENDID SOULS WHO ATTAIN

[The Rishi prays to the divine Flame to work in him by the triple force of Power, Knowledge and Delight. He speaks of the splendid souls of knowledge in our humanity who attain to the Truth and Vastness; they are the burning and overpowering flame-rays of this transcendent Conscious-Force of the Divine that is at work in us to climb to divine mastery. Some have become such souls, others are still hampered but growing. He desires the increasing affirmation of Agni so that all may advance to a rich and all-comprehending universality.]

अग्न ओजिष्ठमा भर द्युम्नमस्मभ्यमध्रिगो ।
प्र नो राया परीणसा रत्सि वाजाय पन्थाम् ॥१॥

1. O Flame, O Ray in our limited existence, bring for us an illumination full of utter energy, by an all-encompassing felicity cleave forward our path towards the plenitude.

त्वं नो अग्ने अद्भुत क्रत्वा दक्षस्य मंहना ।
त्वे असुर्यमारुहत् क्राणा मित्रो न यज्ञियः ॥२॥

2. O Flame, thou supreme and wonderful thing, it is thou who by force of will becomest in us the greatness of discerning power; in thee the all-harmonising Friend[1] in the sacrifice accomplishes the work and climbs to divine mastery.[2]

---

[1] Mitra, the Lord of Love, who introduces the principle of harmony into the workings of the divine effort in us and thus combines all the lines of our advance, all the strands of our sacrifice until the work is accomplished in the supreme unity of Knowledge, Power and Delight.

[2] *Asuryam*, the god-power, the mastering force of the Lord, the divine “Asura” in us.

त्वं नो अग्न एषां गयं पुष्टिं च वर्धय ।
ये स्तोमेभिः प्र सूरयो नरो मघान्यानशुः ॥ ३॥

3. Thou, O Strength, increase the advancing[3] and the growth of these who are splendid souls of knowledge that by their affirmations of thee attain to our fullnesses.

ये अग्ने चन्द्र ते गिरः शुम्भन्त्यश्वराधसः ।
शुष्मेभिः शुष्मिणो नरो दिवश्चिद् येषां बृहत्
सुकीर्तिर्बोधति त्मना ॥ ४॥

4. These are they, O Strength, O Delight, who have a happy richness of the swift forces of life and turn to a happy light the words of the thought, souls puissant with hero-puissances, for whom even in heaven[4] is the Vastness; of itself its perfect working awakes to knowledge for these.

तव त्ये अग्ने अर्चयो भ्राजन्तो यन्ति धृष्णुया ।
परिज्मानो न विद्युतः स्वानो रथो न वाजयुः ॥ ५॥

5. These are thy flaming rays, O Strength, that go blazing violently and are like lightnings that run over all the quarters and are like a resonant chariot that speeds towards the plenitude.

नू नो अग्न ऊतये सबाधसश्च रातये ।
अस्माकासश्च सूरयो विश्वा आशास्तरीषणि ॥ ६॥

6. Now, O Strength, alike may those that are beset and hampered attain to expansion and the soul's riches and may these our splendid souls of knowledge traverse all the regions[5] and beyond.

---

[3] Or attainment.

[4] That is to say, on the heights of the pure mentality where it meets with and passes into the vastness of the superconscient.

[5] The regions of the heavens of the mental existence which have all to be embraced in our consciousness and overpassed.

त्वं नो अग्ने अङ्गिरः स्तुतः स्तवान आ भर ।
होतर्विभ्वासहं रयिं स्तोतृभ्यः स्तवसे च न उतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥ ७ ॥

7. O Strength, O Soul of Puissance, when thou art affirmed and in thy affirming, bring to us, O priest of the offering, felicity[6] of an all-pervading forcefulness for all that affirm thee and for thy affirmation again. March with us in our battles that we may grow.

---

[6] That richness and abundance in the soul full of divine possessions which is its spiritual prosperity or felicity, an image of the infinite store of the divine Bliss and by which it advances to an ever greater and more richly-equipped wideness of its being.

The Eleventh Hymn to Agni

A HYMN TO THE DIVINE PRIEST
AND SACRIFICIAL FLAME

[The Rishi hymns the birth of the wakeful and discerning sacrificial Flame who is vision and will-power, the seer whose passion of effort turns into a divine knowledge, in the heavens of mind. This seer-will the inspired words of the Thought have to increase. It is a thing of puissance, the Son of Force, and found by the ancient Souls of luminous puissance concealed in the growths of earth, in all the experiences that the soul here seeks to enjoy.]

जनस्य गोपा अजनिष्ट जागृविरग्निः सुदक्षः सुविताय नव्यसे ।
घृतप्रतीको बृहता दिविस्पृशा द्युमद् वि भाति भरतेभ्यः शुचिः ॥ १॥

1. The protector of the creature is born, the Flame that is wakeful and perfect in discernment, for a new march to felicity. His front is of the clarities, luminously he shines wide so that the vastness of him touches the heavens, he is pure for the bringers of the riches.

यज्ञस्य केतुं प्रथमं पुरोहितमग्निं नरस्त्रिषधस्थे समीधिरे ।
इन्द्रेण देवैः सरथं स बर्हिषि सीदन्नि होता यजथाय सुक्रतुः ॥ २॥

2. Men have kindled high in the triple world[1] of the session the Flame supreme to be vision in the sacrifice and the vicar set in front; he comes in one chariot with the God-Mind and the divine Powers and sits on the seat of sacrifice, the Priest of the oblation perfect in will-power for the sacrificing.

---

[1] The triple world of mind, life and body in which the session of our sacrifice takes place or in which the work of self-perfection proceeds.

असंमृष्टो जायसे मात्रोः शुचिर्मन्द्रः कविरुदतिष्ठो विवस्वतः ।
घृतेन त्वावर्धयन्नग्न आहुत धूमस्ते केतुरभवद् दिवि श्रितः ॥ ३॥

3. Unovercome and pure[2] thou art born from thy mothers twain; thou hast risen up a rapturous seer from the all-luminous sun; they have increased thee with the clarity, O Flame, and the passion-smoke of thee becomes vision when it reaches and lodges in the heavens.

अग्निर्नो यज्ञमुप वेतु साधुयाऽग्निं नरो वि भरन्ते गृहेगृहे ।
अग्निर्दूतो अभवद्धव्यवाहनोऽग्निं वृणाना वृणते कविक्रतुम् ॥ ४॥

4. May the Flame come to our sacrifice with power to accomplish; the Flame men carry into every room of their dwelling-place; the Flame has become our messenger and the bearer of our offering; when men accept the Flame into themselves, it is the seer-will that they accept.

तुभ्येदमग्ने मधुमत्तमं वचस्तुभ्यं मनीषा इयमस्तु शं हृदे ।
त्वां गिरः सिन्धुमिवावनीर्महीरा पृणन्ति शवसा वर्धयन्ति च ॥ ५॥

5. For thee, O Flame, this Word fraught fullest with the honey,[3] for thee this Thought and may it be the peace and bliss in thy heart. For the words of the Thought satisfy and increase thee as those great fostering streams[4] fill and increase that ocean.

त्वामग्ने अङ्गिरसो गुहा हितमन्वविन्दञ्छिश्रियाणं वनेवने ।
स जायसे मथ्यमानः सहो महत् त्वामाहुः सहसस्पुत्रमङ्गिरः ॥ ६॥

---

[2] Or, pure without cleansing.

[3] The honeyed Soma-wine, outflowing of the principle of Delight in things.

[4] The seven rivers or movements which descend from the superconscient being and fill the conscious ocean of our existence. They are called the Mothers, the fostering Cows, the Mighty Ones of Heaven, the Waters of Knowledge, the streams of the Truth, etc.

6. O Flame, the souls of puissance[5] discovered thee hidden in the secret place,[6] lodging in every object of delight; by our pressure on thee thou art born, a mighty force; the Son of Force they have called thee, O Puissance.

---

[5] The seven ancient seers or fathers, the Angiras Rishis, sons of Agni and divine or human types of the seer-will.

[6] The subconscient heart in things.

The Twelfth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF MAN'S ASPIRATION TO THE TRUTH

[The Rishi invokes this flame of the Divine Force, this vast Lord of the superconscient Truth, this Truth-conscious One, to accept thought and word into himself, become truth-conscient in man and cleave out the many streams of the Truth. Not by mere force of effort nor under the law of the duality can the Truth be attained, but by the Truth itself. But there are not only powers of this Force that battle with the falsehood and guard and conquer, there are others also who have helped so far in the march, but who would keep to the foundation of the falsehood because they cling to the present self-expression of man and refuse to advance beyond it; these in their self-will speak the word of crookedness to the Truth-seeker. By the sacrifice and by submission in the sacrifice man, the ever-advancing pilgrim, brings near to him his wide dwelling-place beyond, the seat and home of the Truth.]

प्राग्नये बृहते यज्ञियाय ऋतस्य वृष्णे असुराय मन्म ।
घृतं न यज्ञ आस्ये सुपूतं गिरं भरे वृषभाय प्रतीचीम् ॥१॥

1. To Will, master of sacrifice, the Mighty One, the vast lord and diffuser of the Truth I bring forward my thought as an offering and it is as the clarified butter of the sacrifice purified in the mouth of the flame; my word[1] I bring forward that goes to meet its lord.[2]

---

[1] To turn thought and word into form and expression of the superconscient Truth which is hidden beyond the division and duality of the mental and physical existence was the central idea of the Vedic discipline and the foundation of its mysteries.

[2] The Bull; the thought is symbolised as the shining cow fronting and offering itself to the Godhead.

ऋतं चिकित्व ऋतमिच्चिकिद्ध्यृतस्य धारा अनु तृन्धि पूर्वीः ।
नाहं यातुं सहसा न द्वयेन ऋतं सपाम्यरुषस्य वृष्णः ॥ २ ॥

2. O conscious seer of the Truth, the Truth alone perceive in my consciousness; cleave out[3] many flowing streams of the Truth.[4] Not by force, nor by the duality can I achieve the journey nor attain to the Truth of the shining Worker, the fertilising Lord.

कया नो अग्न ऋतयन्नृतेन भुवो नवेदा उचथस्य नव्यः ।
वेदा मे देव ऋतुपा ऋतूनां नाहं पतिं सनितुरस्य रायः ॥ ३ ॥

3. By what thought in me, O Will, shalt thou seeking the Truth by the Truth become the impeller to knowledge of a new word? The godhead who guards the times and seasons[5] of the Truth, knows all in me, but him I know not, the lord of that all-possessing felicity.

के ते अग्ने रिपवे बन्धनासः के पायवः सनिषन्त द्युमन्तः ।
के धासिमग्ने अनृतस्य पान्ति क आसतो वचसः सन्ति गोपाः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Who are they, O Will, that are thy binders of the Enemy? who are the shining ones, the guardians, the seekers after possession and conquest? Who, O Will, protect the foundations of the falsehood? who are the keepers of a present[6] word?

सखायस्ते विषुणा अग्न एते शिवासः सन्तो अशिवा अभूवन् ।
अधूर्षत स्वयमेते वचोभिरृजूयते वृजिनानि ब्रुवन्तः ॥ ५ ॥

---

[3] From the rock in the hill where they are guarded by the opposing powers.

[4] The descent of the superconscient into our life was imaged as the rain of heaven; it formed the seven celestial rivers that flow down upon the earth-consciousness.

[5] The periods, sometimes described as years, sometimes as the twelve symbolic months of the progress of the sacrifice.

[6] Or, false word. In either case it means the old falsehood as opposed to the "new word" of the Truth of which Agni has to create the knowledge.

5. These are comrades of thine, O Will, who have gone astray from thee; benignant were they, they have become malignant. These do violence to themselves by their words speaking crooked things to the seeker after straightness.

यस्ते अग्ने नमसा यज्ञमीट्ट ऋतं स पात्यरुषस्य वृष्णः ।
तस्य क्षयः पृथुरा साधुरेतु प्रसर्स्राणस्य नहुषस्य शेषः ॥ ६॥

6. But he, O Will, who desires with submission thy sacrifice, guards the truth of the shining Worker, the Fertiliser.[7] To him may there come that wide habitation[8] in which all is perfected, even that which is left[9] for man the pilgrim to accomplish in his forward journeying.

---

[7] "The shining Bull or Male", but the latter word means also the rainer, fertiliser or diffuser of abundance and sometimes the strong and abundant, the former seems to bear also the sense of active or moving.

[8] The plane of the superconscient Truth or world of Swar beyond mental Heaven and physical earth in which all is accomplished that here we strive after; it is described as the wide habitation and the wide and fear-free pasture of the shining cows.

[9] This world is sometimes described as what is left or the excess; it is the additional field of being beyond this triplicity of mind, life and body which constitute our normal state of existence.

The Thirteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF AFFIRMATION OF THE DIVINE WILL

[The Rishi declares the power of the Word affirming the Divine Will who attains to the touch of heaven for man. That Will affirmed in us by the word becomes the priest of our sacrifice and the winner in us of the divine riches and of the energy that conquers. This godhead contains all the others in its being as the nave of a wheel contains the spokes and therefore brings us all the varied wealth of the spiritual felicity.]

अर्चन्तस्त्वा हवामहेऽर्चन्तः समिधीमहि ।
अग्ने अर्चन्त ऊतये ॥ १ ॥

1. Chanting the word that illumines we call to thee, chanting the word that illumines we kindle thee, O Will, chanting the word that illumines for our increase.

अग्नेः स्तोमं मनामहे सिध्रमद्य दिविस्पृशः ।
देवस्य द्रविणस्यवः ॥ २ ॥

2. Today we seize with the mind the affirmation all-effective, the hymn of the Will, of the godhead that seeks for us our divine substance,[1] of him who touches the heavens.

अग्निर्जुषत नो गिरो होता यो मानुषेष्वा ।
स यक्षद् दैव्यं जनम् ॥ ३ ॥

---

[1] The divine riches which are the object of the sacrifice.

3. May the Will accept with love our words, he who is here as the priest in men; may he offer the sacrifice to the divine people.

त्वमग्ने सप्रथा असि जुष्टो होता वरेण्यः ।
त्वया यज्ञं वि तन्वते ॥ ४॥

4. Very wide and vast art thou, O Will, the priest of our offering desirable and beloved; by thee men extend wide the form of their sacrifice.

त्वामग्ने वाजसातमं विप्रा वर्धन्ति सुष्टुतम् ।
स नो रास्व सुवीर्यम् ॥ ५॥

5. Thee, once rightly affirmed, the illumined increase, O Will, so that thou conquerest utterly the plenitude; therefore do thou lavish on us a complete hero-energy.

अग्ने नेमिरराँ इव देवाँस्त्वं परिभूरसि ।
आ राधश्चित्रमृञ्जसे ॥ ६॥

6. O Will, as the nave of a wheel contains the spokes, so thou containest in thy being all the gods; thou shalt bring to us a varied joy of those riches.

The Fourteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE FINDER OF LIGHT AND TRUTH

[The Rishi declares Agni as the Priest of the sacrifice, the slayer of the powers of Darkness, the finder of the world of the Sun of Truth, of his radiant herds and of his luminous waters; he is the seer in us who is increased by the clarities of right thought and speech.]

अग्निं स्तोमेन बोधय समिधानो अमर्त्यम् ।
हव्या देवेषु नो दधत् ॥ १॥

1. Awaken the Flame by the word that affirms him, kindle high the Immortal; let him place our offerings in the godheads.

तमध्वरेष्वीळते देवं मर्ता अमर्त्यम् ।
यजिष्ठं मानुषे जने ॥ २॥

2. Him in their pilgrim sacrifices mortal men desire and adore, the divine, the immortal, who is strongest for sacrifice in the human creature.

तं हि शश्वन्त ईळते स्रुचा देवं घृतश्चुता ।
अग्निं हव्याय वोळ्हवे ॥ ३॥

3. Him, the godhead, man's continuous generations adore with the ladle[1] dripping with the clarities; the Will they adore that he may bear their offering.

---

[1] This ladle is the constantly lifted movement of man's aspiration towards the Truth and the Godhead.

अग्निर्जातो अरोचत घ्नन् दस्यूञ्ज्योतिषा तमः ।
अविन्दद् गा अपः स्वः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Born, the Flame shines out slaying the Destroyers,[2] yea, he smites the Darkness with the Light and he finds the shining Herds[3] and those Waters and the luminous world.[4]

अग्निमीळेन्यं कविं घृतपृष्ठं सपर्यत ।
वेतु मे शृणवद्धवम् ॥ ५ ॥

5. The Will serve and seek, the object of our adoration, the Seer with his surface of the clarities; may he come, may he hearken to my call.

अग्निं घृतेन वावृधुः स्तोमेभिर्विश्वचर्षणिम् ।
स्वाधीभिर्वचस्युभिः ॥ ६ ॥

6. The Will men increase by the offering of their clarities, they increase the universal doer of their works by their hymns of affirmation which place aright the thought, which find the revealing word.

---

[2] The Titans, dividers of our unity and completeness of being and sons of the Mother of Division, who are powers of the nether cave and the darkness.

[3] The Herds and the Waters are the two principal images of the Veda; the former are the trooping Rays of the divine Sun, herds of the luminous Consciousness; the waters are the outpouring of the luminous movement and impulse of the divine or supramental existence.

[4] Swar, the world of divine solar light to which we have to ascend and which is revealed by the release of the luminous herds from the nether cave and the consequent uprising of the divine Sun.

The Fifteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE DIVINE UPHOLDER AND CONQUEROR

[The Rishi hymns the Divine Will as the Seer and the Mighty One, the upholder of the Bliss and the Truth, by which men attain to the supreme-seated godheads. He breaks leonine through an army of opposers, sees and confirms for man all the possible births and manifestations of the soul, forms in him the secret superconscient plane and by knowledge delivers him into that vast beatitude.]

प्र वेधसे कवये वेद्याय गिरं भरे यशसे पूर्व्याय ।
घृतप्रसत्तो असुरः सुशेवो रायो धर्ता धरुणो वस्वो अग्निः ॥१॥

1. To the Seer and Ordainer who is the object of knowledge I bring the offering of the Word, to the glorious and victorious, to the pristine and supreme. He is the Mighty One accomplished in joy who goes forward to the clarities, the strength that is holder of the bliss and holder of the substance.

ऋतेन ऋतं धरुणं धारयन्त यज्ञस्य शाके परमे व्योमन् ।
दिवो धर्मन् धरुणे सेदुषो नॄञ्जातैरजाताँ अभि ये ननक्षुः ॥२॥

2. By the Truth they uphold the Truth that holds all, in the power of the Sacrifice, in the supreme ether, even they who by the godheads born in them travel to the godheads unborn, to the Powers who are seated for ever in the Law that upholds the heavens.

अंहोयुवस्तन्वस्तन्वते वि वयो महद् दुष्टरं पूर्व्याय ।
स संवतो नवजातस्तुतुर्यात् सिंहं न क्रुद्धमभितः परि ष्ठुः ॥ ३॥

3. Putting evil away from them they create wide-extended forms and embodiments of the soul that are a vast birth and indestructible manifestation for this first and supreme godhead; new-born he shall break through armies that join like converging floods; they stand encompassing him like hunters who enring an angry lion.

मातेव यद् भरसे पप्रथानो जनंजनं धायसे चक्षसे च ।
वयोवयो जरसे यद् दधानः परि त्मना विषुरूपो जिगासि ॥ ४॥

4. Thou art even as a mother when in thy wideness thou bearest in thy arms birth after birth to the firm foundation and to the vision. When thou holdest in thee and enjoyest manifestation after manifestation, thou movest abroad with thy self in many different forms.

वाजो नु ते शवसस्पात्वन्तमुरुं दोघं धरुणं देव रायः ।
पदं न तायुर्गुहा दधानो महो राये चितयन्नत्रिमस्पः ॥ ५॥

5. May our plenitude possess the furthest limit of thy might, O godhead, where in its wideness and all-yielding abundance it upholds the bliss. Thou art he that forms and upholds in himself that secret abode to which we move; by thy awakening of him into knowledge thou hast rescued the enjoyer of things for a vast beatitude.

The Sixteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN TO THE BRINGER OF ALL DESIRABLE GOOD

[The Rishi affirms the Divine Will in man as the offering and representative priest who brings light and strength and inspired knowledge and every desirable good; for he is the aspirer by works in whom is the puissance of all the gods and the full plenitude of their force.]

बृहद् वयो हि भानवेऽर्चा देवायाग्नये ।
यं मित्रं न प्रशस्तिभिर्मर्तासो दधिरे पुरः ॥१॥

1. Sing thou out by the word a vast manifestation for the shining Light, for the divine, for the Will whom mortals by their expressions of his godhead as the Friend[1] put in their front.

स हि द्युभिर्जनानां होता दक्षस्य बाह्वोः ।
वि हव्यमग्निरानुषग्भगो न वारमृण्वति ॥२॥

2. The Will is the priest of offering of the peoples; by the illuminations of the discerning mind he bears abroad in both his arms the continuous order[2] of their offerings and as the divine enjoyer[3] he moves to his good.

---

[1] Mitra. Agni contains and is all the gods. Mortals have to discover in the action of the divine Will the light, love and harmony of the true knowledge and true existence, the Mitra-power; it is in this aspect that he has to be set in front of the human consciousness as the representative priest in the sacrifice.

[2] As the Purohit, the representative priest in the sacrifice and the leader in the van of its march. He stands in front of our consciousness, leader of all our powers, to guide and carry on our Godward work, so that there shall be no interruption, no gap in the order of the sacrifice, the right stages of its march to the gods, the right placing of its works according to the times and seasons of the Truth.

[3] The Divine Will becomes the Enjoyer Bhaga, brother power of Mitra, who enjoys all delight of existence but by Mitra's power of pure discernment and according to the light, truth and harmony of the divine living.

अस्य स्तोमे मघोनः सख्ये वृद्धशोचिषः ।
विश्वा यस्मिन् तुविष्वणि समर्ये शुष्ममादधुः ॥ ३ ॥

3. In the affirmation of him and in his comradeship when he has increased his flame of purity are all the lords of the plenitude;[4] for all things are in the sound of his many voices and on him, the aspirer in his works, they have laid the burden of their strength.

अधा ह्यग्न एषां सुवीर्यस्य मंहना ।
तमिद् यह्वं न रोदसी परि श्रवो बभूवतुः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Even now, O Will, may there be the full plenitude of their utter force. Around this mighty Will earth and heaven have become as if one voice of inspired knowledge.[5]

नू न एहि वार्यमग्ने गृणान आ भर ।
ये वयं ये च सूरयः स्वस्ति धामहे सचोतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥ ५ ॥

5. Even now come to us, O Will, hymned by our words and bring to us our desirable good. May we who are here and those luminous masters of knowledge together found that blissful state of our being. March with us in our battles that we may grow.

---

[4] The gods; the Divine Force contains and sustains all the other divine powers in their working; in him resides therefore the power of all the other godheads.

[5] The whole physical and the whole mental consciousness become full of the knowledge which streams into them from the supramental plane and they, as it were, turn into the supramental light and action around the divine Seer-Will as he moves about in them at his work of transfiguration.

The Seventeenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF ENLARGEMENT
AND ULTIMATE ASPIRATION

[A state arrives in which man goes beyond the mere subtlety and fineness of the intelligence and reaches to a rich and manifold largeness of soul. Even then though he has now the wide law of his being which is our right foundation, he needs a force greater than his to lead him; for largeness and multiplicity of soul-force and knowledge are not enough, there must be the divine truth in thought, word and act. For we have to attain beyond the enlarged mental being to the beatitude of a state beyond mind. Agni has the light and the force, the Word and the true impulsion, the embracing knowledge and the achieving power. He shall bring the divine wealth in his chariot and carry us towards the blissful state and the supreme good.]

आ यज्ञैर्देव मर्त्य इत्था तव्यांसमूतये ।
अग्निं कृते स्वध्वरे पूरुरीळीतावसे ॥ १ ॥

1. I am mortal who call thee, O godhead, for thy strength is greater than mine and it is righteous in its acts. Let the man of multiple soul when he has made perfect his sacrifice, adore the Will for his increasing.

अस्य हि स्वयशस्तर आसा विधर्मन् मन्यसे ।
तं नाकं चित्रशोचिषं मन्द्रं परो मनीषया ॥ २ ॥

2. Man, thou who hast won to the wide law of thy being,[1] by

---

[1] The larger working of consciousness and power in the being by which the rigid limitations of the ordinary mind and life and physical being are broken and man is able to experience a full inner life and open himself to communication with all the planes of his own and of the cosmic existence.

the mouth of this flame thou shalt be self-mightier to attain and shalt mentalise the paradise of his richest flamings, the paradise of rapture beyond the thought of the mind.[2]

अस्य वासा उ अर्चिषा य आयुक्त तुजा गिरा ।
दिवो न यस्य रेतसा बृहच्छोचन्त्यर्चयः ॥ ३॥

3. For by the mouth and radiance of his flame he has yoked himself with the impelling force and the word, and vast as if with the seed of heaven blazes out the purity of his rays.

अस्य क्रत्वा विचेतसो दस्मस्य वसु रथ आ ।
अधा विश्वासु हव्योऽग्निर्विक्षु प्र शस्यते ॥ ४॥

4. Because by the force of his workings he has the embracing knowledge and the achieving power, his chariot carries a divine wealth; therefore in all creatures he is the godhead to be expressed and the helper to whom men call.

नू न इद्धि वार्यमासा सचन्त सूरयः ।
ऊर्जो नपादभिष्टये पाहि शग्धि स्वस्तय उतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥ ५॥

5. Even now and even for us may the luminous masters of knowledge be firm by the mouth of the flame to our supreme good.[3] O Son of Energy, guard us so that we may enter in, be mighty to attain our blissful state. March with us in our battles that we may grow.

---

[2] The state of bliss of which Swar, the supramental plane of existence, is the basis.

[3] The luminous gods in us must keep our consciousness firmly attached to the light and truth that is brought by the workings of the Will so that we may not fall away from the right movement and its divine joy.

The Eighteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE LORDS OF THE PLENITUDE

[The Divine Will is invoked to complete the manifestation of the divine powers after the second state of the soul when it has passed beyond the mere physical being and is full of the perfect energy of the vital plane; for the gods have given all the life's fifty steeds of swiftness, Agni is there as the light and flame of its far-extended existence which has broken the limitations of the material being and he is full of the joys of this new and rich supra-physical life. Now the third state, the free mental being, is to be perfected by a richly varied and luminous play of thought and word ending in the manifestation of the highest reach of the mental realms, the power of the supramental Light in the mentality; there begins the manifestation of the intuitive and inspired mind. Agni has to create that vastness and light and divinity of the Truth-knowledge and so crown with it the already attained free swiftness of force and wide range of life and enjoyment proper to the perfected and god-filled vitality.]

प्रातरग्निः पुरुप्रियो विशः स्तवेतातिथिः ।
विश्वानि यो अमर्त्यो हव्या मर्तेषु रण्यति ॥१॥

1. Let the Will be affirmed in the dawning,[1] guest of the creature with his many delights who, immortal in mortals, takes joy in all their offerings.

द्विताय मृक्तवाहसे स्वस्य दक्षस्य मंहना ।
इन्दुं स धत्त आनुषक् स्तोता चित् ते अमर्त्य ॥२॥

---

[1] The dawning of the divine Dawn of the higher knowledge in the mind.

2. He is the plenitude of his own discerning mind for the second soul[2] when it bears the purified intelligence; then it holds in itself the continual wine of delight and affirms thee, O Immortal.

तं वो दीर्घायुशोचिषं गिरा हुवे मघोनाम् ।
अरिष्टो येषां रथो व्यश्वदावन्नीयते ॥ ३॥

3. Such art thou I call, the pure flame of this far-extending existence for the lords of the plenitude whose chariot inviolate ranges wide,[3] O giver of the steeds of swiftness, —

चित्रा वा येषु दीधितिरासन्नुक्था पान्ति ये ।
स्तीर्णं बर्हिः स्वर्णरे श्रवांसि दधिरे परि ॥ ४॥

4. The lords of the plenitude in whom is rich light of the thought and they keep the words of our utterance in their mouth;[4] the fullness of the soul has been spread as a seat of sacrifice in the power[5] of the luminous world and all its inspirations are set round about.

ये मे पञ्चाशतं ददुरश्वानां सधस्तुति ।
द्युमदग्ने महि श्रवो बृहत् कृधि मघोनां नृवदमृत नृणाम् ॥ ५॥

---

[2] Dwita, the god or Rishi of the second plane of the human ascent. It is that of the Life-force, the plane of fulfilled force, desire, free range of the vital powers which are no longer limited by the strict limitations of this mould of Matter. We become conscious of and conscious in new realms, immense ranges of life, the "far-extending existence" of the next verse, which are screened off from our ordinary physical consciousness. Trita is the god or Rishi of the third plane, full of luminous mental kingdoms unknown to the physical mind.

[3] In these new worlds of life the divine movement is now fulfilled there and ranges unpierced by the "harms" of the powers of Death and Darkness.

[4] This verse describes the farther ascent of the movement from the realms of Dwita to the realms of Trita.

[5] Swarnara, often spoken of as if it were a country; it is not Swar itself, the utter superconscient plane, but the power of itself which the light of that world forms in the pure mentality. Here its inspirations and illuminations descend and take their place round the seat of the sacrifice. These are elsewhere called the scouts, "éclaireurs", of the solar Deity, Varuna.

5. They who have given me fifty steeds of swiftness[6] with a perfect affirming, the divine souls that are lords of the plenitude, for them, O Flame-Immortal, create the large, the vast, the luminous knowledge full of the godheads.

---

[6] The Ashwa or Horse is the symbol of the Life-Force as the Cow is the symbol of the Light. Fifty, hundred, a thousand are numbers symbolic of completeness.

The Nineteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE REVEALING RAY AND CONQUERING WILL

[That epiphany of the soul is sung in which all the coverings of its higher states are penetrated and open to the divine light. It is the opening of the whole third plane of our existence which was before as a fortified city with its gates closed to the soul embodied in Matter. By this new action of the Divine Force the mental and physical consciousness are wedded to the high supramental which was till now separated from them and the life-force blazing in its works with the heat of the divine Sun is harmonised with the play of the sun-ray of the divine knowledge.]

अभ्यवस्थाः प्र जायन्ते प्र वव्रेर्वव्रिश्चिकेत ।
उपस्थे मातुर्वि चष्टे ॥ १॥

1. State upon state is born, covering upon covering opens to consciousness of knowledge; in the lap of its Mother[1] the soul sees.[2]

जुहुरे वि चितयन्तोऽनिमिषं नृम्णं पान्ति ।
आ दृळ्हां पुरं विविशुः ॥ २॥

2. Awakened to an embracing knowledge men cast in thee the offering, they guard a sleepless manhood, they enter into the fortified city.

आ श्वैत्रेयस्य जन्तवो द्युमद् वर्धन्त कृष्टयः ।
निष्कग्रीवो बृहदुक्थ एना मध्वा न वाजयुः ॥ ३॥

---

[1] Aditi, the infinite consciousness, Mother of all things.
[2] With the all-embracing vision of the supramental infinite consciousness.

3. Men who are born in the world and labour at the work increase the luminous state of the son of the white-shining Mother,[3] he wears the golden necklace,[4] he utters the vast word; with that and with the honey wine of delight he becomes a seeker of the plenitude.

प्रियं दुग्धं न काम्यमजामि जाम्योः सचा ।
घर्मो न वाजजठरोऽदब्धः शश्वतो दभः ॥ ४ ॥

4. He is as the delightful and desirable yield of the Mother,[5] he is that which being without a fellow[6] yet dwells with the two companions, he is the heat of the Light and the belly of the plenitude, he is the eternal unconquerable who tramples all things under his feet.

क्रीळन् नो रश्म आ भुवः सं भस्मना वायुना वेविदानः ।
ता अस्य सन् धृषजो न तिग्माः सुसंशिता वक्ष्यो वक्षणेस्थाः ॥ ५ ॥

5. O Ray, be born in us and dwell there at play harmonising thy knowledge with the blazing life-god.[7] May these flames of the will that bear our works be violent and keen and sharpened to a perfect intensity and firmly founded in the Bearer of all things.

---

[3] Aditi; her dark state or black form is Diti, mother of the powers of Darkness.
[4] Of the rays of the divine Sun of Truth.
[5] The milk of the Cow, Aditi.
[6] The all-creating and self-sufficing Supermind high and remote and separated in our consciousness from the mental and physical planes; yet it is really there behind their action and reaction upon each other and in the liberated state of man the separation is abolished.
[7] Vayu.

The Twentieth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE WORK AND THE ATTAINMENT

[The Rishi desires a state of spiritual wealth full of the divine working in which nothing shall fall away to the division and the crookedness. So, increasing by our works the divine Force in us daily, we shall attain to the Bliss and the Truth, the rapture of the Light and the rapture of the Force.]

यमग्ने वाजसातम त्वं चिन् मन्यसे रयिम् ।
तं नो गीर्भिः श्रवाय्यं देवत्रा पनया युजम् ॥१॥

1. O Will, O conqueror of our plenitude, the felicity which thou alone canst conceive in the mind, that make full of inspiration by our words and set it to labour in the gods as our helper.

ये अग्ने नेरयन्ति ते वृद्धा उग्रस्य शवसः ।
अप द्वेषो अप ह्वरोऽन्यव्रतस्य सश्चिरे ॥२॥

2. They who are powers increased of thee in the fierceness of thy flame and strength, yet impel us not on the path, they fall away to the division, they cleave to the crookedness of a law that is other than thine.

होतारं त्वा वृणीमहेऽग्ने दक्षस्य साधनम् ।
यज्ञेषु पूर्व्यं गिरा प्रयस्वन्तो हवामहे ॥३॥

3. Thee, O Will, we take to us as the priest of the offering and the accomplisher of a discerning knowledge; holding for thee all our delights we call thee the ancient and supreme to our sacrifices by the word;

इत्था यथा त ऊतये सहसावन् दिवेदिवे ।
राय ऋताय सुक्रतो गोभिः ष्याम सधमादो
वीरैः स्याम सधमादः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Rightly and in such wise that, O forceful god, O perfect power of works, we may increase thee day by day, that we may have the Bliss, that we may have the Truth, that we may have perfect rapture by the Rays of the knowledge, that we may have perfect rapture by the Heroes of the Force.

The Twenty-First Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE DIVINE FLAME IN HUMANITY

[The Rishi invokes the divine Flame to burn as the divine Man in humanity and to raise us to our perfection in the seats of the Truth and the Bliss.]

मनुष्वत् त्वा नि धीमहि मनुष्वत् समिधीमहि ।
अग्ने मनुष्वदङ्गिरो देवान् देवयते यज ॥१॥

1. As the human[1] we set thee within us, as the human we kindle thee; O Flame, O Seer-Puissance, as the human offer sacrifice to the gods for the seeker of the godheads.

त्वं हि मानुषे जनेऽग्ने सुप्रीत इध्यसे ।
स्रुचस्त्वा यन्त्यानुषक् सुजात सर्पिरासुते ॥२॥

2. O Flame, thou burnest in the human creature when thou art satisfied with his offerings; his ladles go to thee unceasingly, O perfect in thy birth, O presser out of the running richness.

त्वां विश्वे सजोषसो देवासो दूतमक्रत ।
सपर्यन्तस्त्वा कवे यज्ञेषु देवमीळते ॥३॥

3. Thee all the gods with one heart of love made their envoy; O seer, men serve and adore thee in their sacrifices as the godhead.

---

[1] The godhead descending into man assumes the veil of humanity. The god is eternally perfect, unborn, fixed in the Truth and Joy; descending, he is born in man, grows, gradually manifests his completeness, attains as if by battle and difficult progress to the Truth and Joy. Man is the thinker, the god is the eternal seer; but the Divine veils his seerhood in the forms of thought and life to assist the development of the mortal into immortality.

देवं वो देवयज्ययाऽग्निमीळीत मर्त्यः ।
समिद्धः शुक्र दीदिहि ऋतस्य योनिमासदः
ससस्य योनिमासदः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Let mortal man adore the Will, the divine, by sacrifice to the powers divine; but thou, O Brightness, shine out high-kindled; enter into the home of the Truth, enter into the home of the Bliss.

The Twenty-Second Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE JOURNEY TO THE PERFECT JOY

[Man, the eater of things, seeks a fulfilment of his desires in a final equality of delight. To this end he has to be purified by the divine Flame, the Seer-Will who holds in himself the conscious vision and the utter rapture. By increasing him in us we shall journey forward with our progressing sacrifice and the gods will utterly manifest themselves. We must entertain this divine Force as the master of our house, our physical and mental body, and give it all the objects of our enjoyment as its food.]

प्र विश्वसामन्नत्रिवदर्चा पावकशोचिषे ।
यो अध्वरेष्वीड्यो होता मन्द्रतमो विशि ॥१॥

1. Man who seekest thy equal fulfilment in all, sing as the enjoyer of things the word of illumination to him of the bright purifying flame, to the object of our adoration in the march of our sacrifices, to the priest of the offering most rapturous in the creature.

न्यग्निं जातवेदसं दधाता देवमृत्विजम् ।
प्र यज्ञ एत्वानुषगद्या देवव्यचस्तमः ॥२॥

2. Set within thee Will that knows all the births, the divine sacrificer in the seasons; today let thy sacrifice march forward unceasingly, thy sacrifice shall open to thee the whole epiphany of the godheads.

चिकित्विन्मनसं त्वा देवं मर्तास ऊतये ।
वरेण्यस्य तेऽवस इयानासो अमन्महि ॥३॥

3. Mortals, we have set our mind on thee the divine, for thou hast the mind of conscious vision; we meditate on thee as we journey, that we may increase and for the increase too of thee, the supremely desirable.

अग्ने चिकिद्ध्यस्य न इदं वचः सहस्य ।
तं त्वा सुशिप्र दंपते स्तोमैर्वर्धन्त्यत्रयो गीर्भिः शुम्भन्त्यत्रयः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Awake then, O Will, to the vision of this within us; this is our word to thee, O Lord of Force. Strong-jawed enjoyer, master of our house, the eaters of things increase thee by their affirmations and by their words they make thee a thing of bright gladness.

The Twenty-Third Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE RICH AND CONQUERING SOUL

[The Rishi desires through Agni that opulence of the divine Light against which the armies of darkness cannot stand; for it overpowers them by its plenitude and force. This it does on all the successive planes of the soul's labour and in each of them man gets, by this divine Force that is the true and transcendent Being, all the objects of his desire that they contain.]

अग्ने सहन्तमा भर द्युम्नस्य प्रासहा रयिम् ।
विश्वा यश्चर्षणीरभ्यासा वाजेषु सासहत् ॥१॥

1. Bring to us, O Strength most forcefully prevailing, that forceful opulence of the Light which in all the fields of our labour shall by force prevail with thy mouth of flame to enter into the plenitudes.

तमग्ने पृतनाषहं रयिं सहस्व आ भर ।
त्वं हि सत्यो अद्भुतो दाता वाजस्य गोमतः ॥२॥

2. O Flame, O Might, that rich felicity bring which shall violently overpower the armies that are embattled against us; for thou art the true in being, the transcendent and wonderful, who gives to man the luminous plenitude.

विश्वे हि त्वा सजोषसो जनासो वृक्तबर्हिषः ।
होतारं सद्मसु प्रियं व्यन्ति वार्या पुरु ॥३॥

3. All these peoples who with one heart of love have made

clear their seat of sacrifice, find in the dwelling-places[1] of the soul thee, the priest of sacrifice, the beloved, and they reach in them their many objects of desire.

स हि ष्मा विश्वचर्षणिरभिमाति सहो दधे ।
अग्न एषु क्षयेष्वा रेवन्नः शुक्र दीदिहि द्युमत् पावक दीदिहि ॥ ४ ॥

4. This is the labourer in all man's works and he holds in himself an all-besieging force. O pure-brilliant Flame, shine out full of joy and opulence in these our habitations, shine out full of light, O our purifier.

---

[1] The "seats" or homes of the soul, which progresses from plane to plane and makes of each a habitation. They are sometimes called the cities. There are seven such planes each with its seven provinces and one additional above. Usually we hear of a hundred cities, the double number perhaps representing the downward gaze in each of the Soul upon Nature and the upward aspiration of Nature to the Soul.

The Twenty-Fourth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN TO THE DELIVERER AND PROTECTOR

[The Rishi invokes the Divine Will for protection from evil and for the fullness of the divine light and substance.]

अग्ने त्वं नो अन्तम उत त्राता शिवो भवा वरूथ्यः ।
वसुरग्निर्वसुश्रवा अच्छा नक्षि द्युमत्तमं रयिं दाः ॥१॥२॥

1-2. O Will, become our inmost inmate, become auspicious to us, become our deliverer and our armour of protection. Thou who art the lord of substance and who of that substance hast the divine knowledge, come towards us, give us its most luminous opulence.

स नो बोधि श्रुधी हवमुरुष्या णो अघायतः समस्मात् ।
तं त्वा शोचिष्ठ दीदिवः सुम्नाय नूनमीमहे सखिभ्यः ॥३॥४॥

3-4. Awake! hear our call! keep us far from all that seeks to turn us to evil. O shining One, O flame of purest Light, thee for our comrades we desire that even now they may have the bliss and peace.

The Twenty-Fifth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN TO THE LORD OF LIGHT
AND CREATOR OF GODHEAD

[The Rishi hymns Agni as the Seer-Will whose whole being is the light and the truth and the lavishing of the substance of divinity. He is the son born to the thought of the seers and he gives himself as the godhead born in man who is the son of our works opulent with the divine Truth and the divine Power and as the conquering steed of the journey and the battle. The whole movement of the Seer-Will is upward to the light and vastness of the superconscient; his voice is as if the thunder-chant of those heavens. He shall carry us by his perfect working beyond the siege of darkness and limitation.]

अच्छा वो अग्निमवसे देवं गासि स नो वसुः ।
रासत् पुत्र ऋषूणामृतावा पर्षति द्विषः ॥१॥

1. Raise thy song towards the Will, towards the divine for thy increasing, for he is our lord of substance and he lavishes; he is the son of the seekers of knowledge; he is the keeper of the Truth who ferries us beyond the surge of our destroyers.

स हि सत्यो यं पूर्वे चिद् देवासश्चिद्यमीधिरे ।
होतारं मन्द्रजिह्वमित् सुदीतिभिर्विभावसुम् ॥२॥

2. This is the true in his being whom the seers of old kindled, yea, the gods too kindled him with perfect outshinings into his wide substance of the light, the priest of the oblation with his tongue of ecstasy.

स नो धीती वरिष्ठया श्रेष्ठया च सुमत्या ।
अग्ने रायो दिदीहि नः सुवृक्तिभिर्वरेण्य ॥ ३ ॥

3. O Flame supremely desirable, so by our supreme thinking, by our brightest perfected mentality, by its utter cleaving away of all evil let thy light give unto us the bliss.

अग्निर्देवेषु राजत्यग्निर्मर्तेष्वाविशन् ।
अग्निर्नो हव्यवाहनोऽग्निं धीभिः सपर्यत ॥ ४ ॥

4. The Will is that which shines out in the gods, the Will is that which enters with its light into mortals, the Will is the carrier of our oblation; the Will seek and serve in all your thoughts.

अग्निस्तुविश्रवस्तमं तुविब्रह्माणमुत्तमम् ।
अतूर्तं श्रावयत्पतिं पुत्रं ददाति दाशुषे ॥ ५ ॥

5. The Will gives to the giver of sacrifice the Son[1] born of his works who teems with the many inspirations and the many voices of the soul, the highest, the unassailable, the Master of things who opens our ears to the knowledge.

अग्निर्ददाति सत्पतिं सासाह यो युधा नृभिः ।
अग्निरत्यं रघुष्यदं जेतारमपराजितम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Yea, ’tis the Will gives to us the Lord of existences who conquers in the battle by his souls of power; Will gives to us our swift-galloping steed of battle ever conquering, never conquered.

यद् वाहिष्ठं तदग्नये बृहदर्च विभावसो ।
महिषीव त्वद् रयिस्त्वद् वाजा उदीरते ॥ ७ ॥

---

[1] The Son of the sacrifice is a constant image in the Veda. Here it is the godhead himself, Agni who gives himself as a son to man, a Son who delivers his father. Agni is also the War-Horse and the steed of the journey, the White Horse, the mystic galloping Dadhikravan who carries us through the battle to the goal of our voyaging.

7. That which is strongest in us to upbear, we give it to the Will. Sing out the Vast, O thou whose wide substance is its light. Thy opulence is as if the largeness of the Goddess[2] herself; upward is the rush of thy plenitudes.

तव द्युमन्तो अर्चयो ग्रावेवोच्यते बृहत् ।
उतो ते तन्यतुर्यथा स्वानो अर्त त्मना दिवः ॥ ८ ॥

8. Luminous are thy flaming radiances; there rises from thee a vast utterance like the voice of the pressing-stone of delight; yea, thy cry of itself rises up like a thunder-chant from the heavens.

एवाँ अग्निं वसूयवः सहसानं ववन्दिम ।
स नो विश्वा अति द्विषः पर्षन्नावेव सुक्रतुः ॥ ९ ॥

9. Thus, desiring substance, we adore the Will who is forceful to conquer. May he who has the perfect power of his workings, carry us beyond all the forces that seek to destroy us, like a ship over the waters.

---

[2] Aditi, the vast Mother.

The Twenty-Sixth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE PRIEST AND SACRIFICIAL FLAME

[The Rishi invokes the Divine Flame in all its usual attributes as the sacrificer, the luminous seer who has the vision of the luminous world, the bringer of the gods, the carrier of the offering, the envoy, conqueror, increaser of the divine workings in man, the knower of the Births, the leader of the march of the sacrifice with its progressive epiphany of the godheads.]

अग्ने पावक रोचिषा मन्द्रया देव जिह्वया ।
आ देवान् वक्षि यक्षि च ॥१॥

1. O Flame, O purifier, bring to us by thy tongue of rapture, O god, the gods and offer to them sacrifice.

तं त्वा घृतस्नवीमहे चित्रभानो स्वर्दृशम् ।
देवाँ आ वीतये वह ॥२॥

2. Thou who drippest the clarity, thou of the rich and varied luminousness, we desire thee because thou hast the vision of our world of the Truth. Bring to us the gods for their manifesting.[1]

वीतिहोत्रं त्वा कवे द्युमन्तं समिधीमहि ।
अग्ने बृहन्तमध्वरे ॥३॥

3. O Seer, we kindle thee in thy light and thy vastness in the march of our sacrifice who carriest the offerings on their journey.

---

[1] Or "for the journeying" to the luminous world of the Truth, or "for the eating" of the oblations.

अग्ने विश्वेभिरा गहि देवेभिर्हव्यदातये ।
होतारं त्वा वृणीमहे ॥ ४॥

4. Come, O Will, with all the godheads for the giving of the oblation; thee we accept as the priest of the offering.

यजमानाय सुन्वत आग्ने सुवीर्यं वह ।
देवैरा सत्सि बर्हिषि ॥ ५॥

5. For the sacrificer who presses the wine of his delight, bring, O Flame, a perfect energy. Sit with the gods on the seat of the soul's fullness.

समिधानः सहस्रजिदग्ने धर्माणि पुष्यसि ।
देवानाँ दूत उक्थ्यः ॥ ६॥

6. O Flame, thou burnest high and increasest the divine laws and art the conqueror of a thousandfold riches; thou art the messenger of the gods who hast the word.

न्यग्निं जातवेदसं होत्रवाहं यविष्ठ्यम् ।
दधाता देवमृत्विजम् ॥ ७॥

7. Set within you the Flame who knows the births, bearer of the offering, youngest vigour, divine sacrificer in the seasons of the Truth.

प्र यज्ञ एत्वानुषगद्या देवव्यचस्तमः ।
स्तृणीत बर्हिरासदे ॥ ८॥

8. Today let thy sacrifice march forward unceasingly, thy sacrifice that shall bring the whole epiphany of the godheads. Strew the seat of thy soul that there they may sit.

एदं मरुतो अश्विना मित्रः सीदन्तु वरुणः ।
देवासः सर्वया विशा ॥ ९॥

9. There let the Life-powers[2] take their seat and the Riders of the Horse[3] and the Lord of Love[4] and the Lord of Wideness,[5] even the gods with all their nation.

---

[2] The Maruts.
[3] The twin Ashwins.
[4] Mitra.
[5] Varuna.

The Twenty-Seventh Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE STRENGTH AND ILLUMINATION

[The Rishi under the figure of the demigod, Traivrishna Tryaruna Trasadasyu, and the seer Ashwamedha, symbolises the fulfilment in the human mentality of the illumination of the God-Mind Indra, and the power of the God-Will, Agni, in the vitality. The Mind-Soul, destroyer of the demons, awakened to knowledge as the human-born Indra, has given to the seer his two cows of light that draw his wain, his two shining horses that draw his chariot and the ten times twelve cows of the dawn of knowledge. He has assented to and confirmed the desire with which the Life-Soul has given the sacrifice of the Life-Horse to the gods. The Rishi prays that this Mind-Soul, lord of the triple dawn, may give to the journeying Life that seeks the truth, the mental intelligence and power of possession needed and may itself in return receive from Agni the peace and bliss. The Life-Soul on the other hand has given the hundred powers, the vital strength needed for the upward journey; the Rishi prays that this Life-Soul may attain to that vast strength which is the power of the Sun of Truth on the superconscient plane.]

अनस्वन्ता सत्पतिर्मामहे मे गावा चेतिष्ठो असुरो मघोनः ।
त्रैवृष्णो अग्ने दशभिः सहस्रैर्वैश्वानर त्र्यरुणश्चिकेत ॥ १ ॥

1. O Will, O Universal Power,[1] the mighty One supreme in vision, master of his being, lord of his plenitudes has given me his two cows of the Light that draw his wain. He of

---

[1] Or, Godhead.

the triple dawn, son of the triple Bull,[2] has awakened to knowledge with the ten thousands[3] of his plenitude.

यो मे शता च विंशतिं च गोनां हरी च युक्ता सुधुरा ददाति ।
वैश्वानर सुष्टुतो वावृधानोऽग्ने यच्छ त्र्यरुणाय शर्म ॥ २॥

2. He gives to me the hundred and twenty[4] of the cows of dawn; his two shining[5] horses he gives, yoked to the car, that bear aright the yoke. O Will, O Universal Power, do thou rightly affirmed and increasing extend peace and bliss to the lord of the triple dawn.

एवा ते अग्ने सुमतिं चकानो नविष्ठाय नवमं त्रसदस्युः ।
यो मे गिरस्तुविजातस्य पूर्वीर्युक्तेनाभि त्र्यरुणो गृणाति ॥ ३॥

3. For thus has he done desiring thy grace of mind, new-given for him new-manifested, — he, the disperser of the destroyers,[6] the lord of the triple dawn who with attentive mind gives response to the many words of my many births.[7]

---

[2] The Triple Bull is Indra, lord of the three luminous realms of Swar, the Divine Mind; Tryaruna Trasadasyu is the half-god, man turned into the Indra type; therefore he is described by all the usual epithets of Indra, "Asura", "Satpati", "Maghavan". The triple dawn is the dawn of these three realms on the human mentality.

[3] Thousand symbolises absolute completeness, but there are ten subtle powers of the illumined mind each of which has to have its entire plenitude.

[4] The symbolic figure of the illuminations of divine knowledge as the series of dawns (cows) of the twelve months of the year and twelve periods of the sacrifice. There are again ten times twelve to correspond to the ten subtle sisters, powers of the illumined mentality.

[5] The two shining horses of Indra identical probably with the two cows of light of the first verse; they are the two vision-powers of the supramental Truth-consciousness, right-hand and left-hand, probably direct truth-discernment and intuition. As cows symbolising light of knowledge they yoke themselves to the material mind, the wain; as horses symbolising power of knowledge to the chariot of Indra, the liberated pure mind.

[6] Trasadasyu; in all things he reproduces the characteristics of Indra.

[7] The seer by this self-fulfilment on the higher plane is born, as it were, into many realms of consciousness and from each of these there go up its words that express the impulses in it which seek a divine fulfilment. The Mind-Soul answers to these and gives assent, it supplies to the word of expression the answering word of illumination and to the Life that seeks the Truth it gives the power of intelligence that finds and holds the Truth.

यो म इति प्रवोचत्यश्वमेधायसूरये ।
दददृचा सनिं यते ददन्मेधामृतायते ॥ ४ ॥

4. May he who answers to me with assent give to the illumined giver of the Horse-sacrifice,[8] by the word of illumination possession of the goal of his journey; may he give power of intelligence to the seeker of the Truth.

यस्य मा परुषाः शतमुद्धर्षयन्त्युक्षणः ।
अश्वमेधस्य दानाः सोमा इव त्र्याशिरः ॥ ५ ॥

5. A hundred strong bulls of the diffusion[9] raise me up to joy; the gifts of the sacrificer of the steed are as outpourings of the wine of delight with their triple infusions.[10]

इन्द्राग्नी शतदाव्न्यश्वमेधे सुवीर्यम् ।
क्षत्रं धारयतं बृहद् दिवि सूर्यमिवाजरम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. May the God-Mind and the God-Will uphold in the sacrificer of the Horse and giver of his hundred a perfect energy and a vast force of battle even as in heaven the Sun of Light indestructible.[11]

---

[8] The Horse-sacrifice is the offering of the Life-power with all its impulses, desires, enjoyments to the divine existence. The Life-soul (Dwita) is itself the giver of this sacrifice which it performs when by the power of Agni it attains to vision on its own vital plane, when it becomes, in the figure of the hymn, the illumined seer Ashwamedha.

[9] The complete hundred powers of the Life by whom all the abundance of the vital plane is showered upon the growing man. The vital forces being the instrument of desire and enjoyment, this diffusion is like the outpouring of the wine of delight that raises the soul to new and intoxicating joys.

[10] The delight extracted from existence is typified by the honey wine of the Soma; it is mixed with the milk, the curds and the grain, the milk being that of the luminous cows, the curds the fixation of their yield in the intellectual mind and the grain the formulation of the light in the force of the physical mind. These symbolic senses are indicated by the double meaning of the words used, *go*, *dadhi* and *yava*.

[11] Perfect and vast energy in the vital being corresponding to the infinite and immortal light of the Truth in the mental being.

The Twenty-Eighth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE HIGH-BLAZING FLAME, KING OF IMMORTALITY

[The Rishi celebrates the flame of the Will high-blazing in the dawn of knowledge as the King of Immortality, the giver to the soul of its spiritual riches and felicity and of a well-governed mastery of Nature. He is the bearer of our oblation, the illumined guide of our sacrifice to its divine and universal goal.]

समिद्धो अग्निर्दिवि शोचिरश्रेत् प्रत्यङ्ङुषसमुर्विया वि भाति ।
एति प्राची विश्ववारा नमोभिर्देवाँ ईळाना हविषा घृताची ॥१॥

1. The Flame of Will burning high rises to his pure light in the heaven of mind; wide he extends his illumination and fronts the Dawn. She comes, moving upward, laden with all desirable things, seeking the gods with the oblation, luminous with the clarity.

समिध्यमानो अमृतस्य राजसि हविष्कृण्वन्तं सचसे स्वस्तये ।
विश्वं स धत्ते द्रविणं यमिन्वस्यातिथ्यमग्ने नि च धत्त इत् पुरः ॥२॥

2. When thou burnest high thou art king of immortality and thou cleavest to the doer of sacrifice to give him that blissful state; he to whom thou comest to be his guest, holds in himself all substance and he sets thee within in his front.

अग्ने शर्ध महते सौभगाय तव द्युम्नान्युत्तमानि सन्तु ।
सं जास्पत्यं सुयममा कृणुष्व शत्रूयतामभि तिष्ठा महांसि ॥३॥

3. O Flame, put forth thy battling might for a vast enjoyment[1] of bliss, may there be thy highest illumination; create a well-governed union of the Lord and his Spouse, set thy foot on the greatness of hostile powers.

समिद्धस्य प्रमहसोऽग्ने वन्दे तव श्रियम् ।
वृषभो द्युम्नवाँ असि समध्वरेष्विध्यसे ॥ ४ ॥

4. I adore, O Flame, the glory of thy high-blazing mightiness. Thou art the Bull with the illuminations; thou burnest up in the march of our sacrifices.

समिद्धो अग्न आहुत देवान् यक्षि स्वध्वर ।
त्वं हि हव्यवाळसि ॥ ५ ॥

5. O Flame that receivest our offerings, perfect guide of the sacrifice, high-kindled offer our oblation to the godheads; for thou art the bearer of our offerings.

आ जुहोता दुवस्यताऽग्निं प्रयत्यध्वरे ।
वृणीध्वं हव्यवाहनम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Cast the offering, serve the Will with your works[2] while your sacrifice moves forward to its goal, accept the carrier of our oblation.[3]

---

[1] The Vedic immortality is a vast beatitude, a large enjoyment of the divine and infinite existence reposing on a perfect union between the Soul and Nature; the soul becomes King of itself and its environment, conscious on all its planes, master of them, with Nature for its bride delivered from divisions and discords into an infinite and luminous harmony.

[2] Or, set the Will to its workings.

[3] This hymn closes the series addressed to Agni and forming the first twenty-eight hymns of the fifth Mandala of the Rig Veda.

Hymns to the Lords of Light

The Guardians of the Light

SURYA, LIGHT AND SEER

THE RIG VEDA rises out of the ancient Dawn with the sound of a thousand-voiced hymn lifted from the soul of man to an all-creative Truth and an all-illumining Light. Truth and Light are synonymous or equivalent words in the thought of the Vedic seers even as are their opposites, Darkness and Ignorance. The battle of the Vedic Gods and Titans is a perpetual conflict between Day and Night for the possession of the triple world of heaven, mid-air and earth and for the liberation or bondage of the mind, life and body of the human being, his mortality or his immortality. It is waged by the Powers of a supreme Truth and Lords of a supreme Light against other dark Powers who struggle to maintain the foundation of this falsehood in which we dwell and the iron walls of these hundred fortified cities of the Ignorance.

This antinomy between the Light and the Darkness, the Truth and the Falsehood has its roots in an original cosmic antinomy between the illumined Infinite and the darkened finite consciousness. Aditi the infinite, the undivided is the mother of the Gods, Diti or Danu, the division, the separative consciousness the mother of the Titans; therefore the gods in man move towards light, infinity and unity, the Titans dwell in their cave of the darkness and issue from it only to break up, make discordant, wounded, limited his knowledge, will, strength, joy and being. Aditi is originally the pure consciousness of infinite existence one and self-luminous; she is the Light that is Mother of all things. As the infinite she gives birth to Daksha, the discriminating and distributing Thought of the divine Mind, and is herself born to Daksha as the cosmic infinite, the mystic Cow whose udders feed all the worlds.

It is this divine daughter of Daksha who is the mother of the gods. In the cosmos Aditi is the undivided infinite unity of things, free from the duality, *advaya*, and has Diti the separative dualising consciousness for the obverse side of her cosmic creation, — her sister and a rival wife in the later myth. Here in the lower being where she is manifested as the earth-principle, her husband is the lower or inauspicious Father who is slain by their child Indra, the power of the divine Mind manifested in the inferior creation. Indra, says the hymn, slays his father, dragging him by the feet, and makes his mother a widow. In another image, forcible and expressive though repugnant to the decorousness of our modern taste, Surya is said to be the lover of his sister Dawn and the second husband of his mother Aditi, and by a variation of the same image Aditi is hymned as the wife of the all-pervading Vishnu who is in the cosmic creation one of the sons of Aditi and the younger brother of Indra. These images which seem gross and confused when we lack the key to their mystic significance, become clear enough the moment that is recovered. Aditi is the infinite consciousness in the cosmos espoused and held by the lower creative power which works through the limited mind and body, but delivered from this subjection by the force of the divine or illumined Mind born of her in the mentality of man. It is this Indra who makes Surya the light of the Truth rise in heaven and dispel the darknesses and falsehoods and limited vision of the separative mentality. Vishnu is the vaster all-pervading existence which then takes possession of our liberated and unified consciousness, but he is born in us only after Indra has made his puissant and luminous appearance.

This Truth is the light, the body of Surya. It is described as the True, the Right, the Vast; as the luminous supramental heaven of Swar — "vast Swar, the great Truth" — concealed beyond our heaven and our earth; and as Surya, the Sun, "that Truth" which dwells lost in the darkness, withheld from us in the secret cave of the subconscient. This hidden Truth is the Vast because it dwells free and manifest only on the supramental plane where existence, will, knowledge, joy move in a rapturous and boundless infinity and are not limited and hedged as in this many-walled existence of the mind, life and body which form the lower being. That is the wideness of the higher being to which we have to ascend breaking beyond the two enclosing firmaments of the mental and physical; it is described as a divine existence free and large in its unbounded range; it is a wideness where there is no obstacle nor any siege of limitation; it is the fear-free pasture of the luminous herds of the Sun; it is the seat and house of the Truth, the own home of the Gods, the solar world, the true light where there is no fear for the soul, no possibility of any wound to the large and equal bliss of its existence.

This supramental vastness is also the fundamental truth of being, *satyam*, out of which its active truth wells out naturally and without strife of effort into a perfect and faultless movement because there is upon those heights no division, no gulf between consciousness and force, no divorce of knowledge and will, no disharmonising of our being and its action; everything there is the "straight" and there is no least possibility of crookedness. Therefore this supramental plane of vastness and true being is also Ritam, the true activity of things; it is a supreme truth of movement, action, manifestation, an infallible truth of will and heart and knowledge, a perfect truth of thought and word and emotion; it is the spontaneous Right, the free Law, the original divine order of things untouched by the falsehoods of the divided and separative consciousness. It is the vast divine and self-luminous synthesis born of a fundamental unity, of which our petty existence is only the poor, partial, broken and perverted cutting up and analysis. Such was the Sun of the Vedic worship, the paradise of light to which the Fathers aspired, the world, the body of Surya son of Aditi.

Aditi is the infinite Light of which the divine world is a formation and the gods, children of the infinite Light, born of her in the Ritam, manifested in that active truth of her movement guard it against Chaos and Ignorance. It is they who maintain the invincible workings of the Truth in the universe, they who build its worlds into an image of the Truth. They, bounteous givers, loose out upon man its floods variously imaged by the mystic poets as the sevenfold solar waters, the rain of heaven, the streams of the Truth, the seven mighty Ones of heaven, the waters that have knowledge, the floods that breaking through the control of Vritra the Coverer ascend and overflow the mind. They, seers and revealers, make the light of the Truth to arise on the darkened sky of his mentality, fill with its luminous and honey-sweet satisfactions the atmosphere of his vital existence, transform into its vastness and plenitude by the power of the Sun the earth of his physical being, create everywhere the divine Dawn.

Then are established in man the seasons of the Truth, the divine workings, called sometimes the Aryan workings; the law of the Truth seizes and guides his action, the word of the Truth is heard in his thought. Then appear the straight undeviating paths of the Truth, the road and ford of Heaven, the way of going of the gods and of the fathers; for by this path where no violence is done to the divine workings, straight, thornless, happy, easy to tread once our feet are set upon it and the manifested divinities are our guard, the luminous fathers ascended by the power of the Word, by the power of the Wine, by the power of the Sacrifice into the fearless light and stood upon the wide and open levels of the supramental existence. So must man, their posterity, exchange the crooked movements of the separative consciousness for the straight things of the truth-conscious mind.

For always the courses of the Sun, the gallopings of the divine horse Dadhikravan, the movement of the chariot-wheels of the gods travel on the straight path over wide and level ranges where all is open and the vision is not confined; but the ways of the lower being are crooked windings beset with pits and stumbling-blocks and they crawl unvisited by the divine impulsion over a rugged and uneven ground which screens in from men their goal, their road, their possible helpers, the dangers that await them, their ambushed enemies. Travelling on the path of the Truth with the straight and perfect leading of the gods the limitations of mind and body are at length transcended; we take possession of the three luminous worlds of the higher heaven, enjoy the beatific immortality, grow into the epiphany of the gods and build in our human existence the universal formations of the higher or divine creation. Man then possesses both the divine and the human birth; he is lord of the double movement, he holds Aditi and Diti together, realises the universal in the individual, becomes the Infinite in the finite.

It is this conception that Surya embodies. He is the light of the Truth rising on the human consciousness in the wake of the divine Dawn whom he pursues as a lover follows after his beloved and he treads the paths she has traced for him. For Dawn the daughter of Heaven, the face or power of Aditi, is the constant opening out of the divine light upon the human being; she is the coming of the spiritual riches, a light, a power, a new birth, the pouring out of the golden treasure of heaven into his earthly existence. Surya means the illumined or the luminous, as also the illumined thinker is called *sūri*; but the root means, besides, to create or, more literally, to loose, release, speed forth, — for in the Indian idea creation is a loosing forth of what is held back, a manifestation of what is hidden in the infinite Existence. Luminous vision and luminous creation are the two functions of Surya. He is Surya the creator and he is Surya the revealing vision, the all-seer.

What does he create? First the worlds; for everything is created out of the burning light and truth of the infinite Being, loosed out of the body of Surya who is the light of His infinite self-vision, formed by Agni, the seer-will, the omniscient creative force and flaming omnipotence of that self-vision. Secondly, into the night of man's darkened consciousness this Father of things, this Seer of the truth manifests out of himself in place of the inauspicious and inferior creation, which he then looses away from us, the illimitable harmony of the divine worlds governed by the self-conscious supramental Truth and the living law of the manifested godhead. Still, the name Surya is seldom used when there is question of this creation; it is reserved for his passive aspects as the body of the infinite Light and the revelation. In his active power he is addressed by other names; then he is Savitri, from the same root as Surya, the Creator; or he is Twashtri the Fashioner of things; or he is Pushan, the Increaser, — appellations that are sometimes used as if identical with Surya, sometimes as if expressing other forms and even other personalities of this universal godhead. Savitri, again, manifests himself, especially in the formation of the Truth in man, through four great and active deities Mitra, Varuna, Bhaga and Aryaman, the Lords of pure Wideness, luminous Harmony, divine Enjoyment, exalted Power.

But if Surya is the creator, he who is, as the Veda says, the self of all that moves and all that is stable, and if this Surya is also the divine, "the wide-burning Truth that is lodged in the law which upholds heaven", then all the worlds should manifest that law of the Truth and all of them should be so many heavens. Whence then comes this falsehood, sin, death, suffering of our mortal existence? We are told that there are eight sons of the cosmic Aditi who are born from her body; by seven she moves to the gods, but the eighth son is Martanda, of the mortal creation, whom she casts away from her; with the seven she moves to the supreme life, the original age of the gods, but Martanda is brought back out of the Inconscient into which he had been cast to preside over mortal birth and death.

This Martanda or eighth Surya is the black or dark, the lost, the hidden sun. The Titans have taken and concealed him in their cavern of darkness and thence he must be released into splendour and freedom by the gods and seers through the power of the sacrifice. In less figurative language the mortal life is governed by an oppressed, a hidden, a disguised Truth; just as Agni the divine seer-will works at first upon earth concealed or obscured by the smoke of human passion and self-will, so Surya the divine Knowledge lies concealed and unattainable in the night and darkness, is enveloped and contained in the ignorance and error of the ordinary human existence. The Seers by the power of truth in their thoughts discover this Sun lying in the darkness, they liberate this knowledge, this power of undivided and all-embracing vision, this eye of the gods concealed in our subconscient being; they release his radiances, they create the divine Dawn. Indra the divine Mind-power, Agni the Seer-Will, Brihaspati the Master of the inspired word, Soma the immortal Delight born in man aid them to shatter the strong places of the mountain, the artificial obstructions of the Titans are broken and this Sun soars up radiant into our heavens. Arisen he mounts to the supramental Truth. "He goes where the gods have made a path for him cleaving like an eagle to his goal"; he ascends with his seven shining horses to the utter luminous ocean of the higher existence; he is led over it by the seers as in a ship. Surya, the Sun, is himself perhaps the golden ship in which Pushan the Increaser leads men beyond evil and darkness and sin to the Truth and the Immortality.

This is the first aspect of Surya that he is the supreme Light of the truth attained by the human being after his liberation from the Ignorance. "Beholding a higher Light beyond this darkness we have followed it and reached the highest Light of all, Surya divine in the divine Being." This is the Vedic way of putting the idea which we find more openly expressed in the Upanishads, the fairest form of Surya in which man sees everywhere the one Purusha with the liberated vision "He am I." The higher light of Surya is that by which vision rises on our darkness and moves towards the superconscient, the highest that other greater Truth-vision which, having attained, moves in the farthest supreme world of the Infinite.

This brilliant Surya is made by the godward will of man; he is perfectly fashioned by the doers of divine works. For this light is the vision of the highest to which man arrives by the Yajna or Yoga of his being, by its union through a long labour of self-uplifting and self-giving to the powers of the concealed Truth. "O Sun, thou all-seeing Intelligence," cries the Rishi, "may we, living creatures, behold thee bringing to us the great Light, blazing out on us for vision upon vision of the beatitude, ascending to the bliss in the vast mass of thy strength above!" The Life-powers in us, the purifying storm-gods who battle for the knowledge, they who are created by the divine Mind Indra and taught by Varuna who is the divine Purity and Wideness, are to attain to their enjoyment by the light of this Surya.

The light of Surya is the form, the body of that divine vision. He is described as the pure and visioned force of the Truth which shines out in his rising like the gold of Heaven. He is the great godhead who is the vision of Mitra and Varuna; he is the large and invincible eye of that Wideness and that Harmony; the eye of Mitra and Varuna is the great ocean of vision of Surya. His is that large truth-vision which makes us give to its possessors the name of seer. Himself the "wide-seeing", "the Sun, the Seer who knows the triple knowledge of these gods and their more eternal births", he sees all that is in the gods and all that is in men; "beholding the straight things and the crooked in mortals he looks down upon their movements." It is by this eye of light that Indra, who has made him arise in heaven for far vision, distinguishes the Aryan powers from the Dasyu, separating the children of light from the children of darkness so that he may destroy these but raise those to their perfection.

But seerhood brings with it not only the far vision but the far hearing. As the eyes of the sage are opened to the light, so is his ear unsealed to receive the vibrations of the Infinite; from all the regions of the Truth there comes thrilling into him its Word which becomes the form of his thoughts. It is when "the thought rises from the seat of the Truth" that Surya by his rays releases into the wideness the mystic Cow of Light. Surya himself is not only "the son of Heaven who is the far-seeing eye of knowledge born of the gods", but he is the speaker also of the supreme word and the impeller of the illumined and illuminating thought. "The truth that thou rising free from sin, O Sun, speakest today to Mitra and Varuna, that may we speak and abide in the Godhead dear to thee, O Aditi, and thee, O Aryaman." And in the Gayatri, the chosen formula of the ancient Vedic religion, the supreme light of the godhead Surya Savitri is invoked as the object of our desire, the deity who shall give his luminous impulsion to all our thoughts.

Surya Savitri, the Creator; for the seer and the creator meet again in this apotheosis of the divine vision in man. The victory of that vision, the arising of this Light to "its own home of the truth", the outflooding of this great ocean of vision of Surya which is the eye of the infinite Wideness and the infinite Harmony, is in fact nothing else than the second or divine creation. For then Surya in us beholds with a comprehensive vision all the worlds, all the births as herds of the divine Light, bodies of the infinite Aditi; and this new-seeing of all things, this new-moulding of thought, act, feeling, will, consciousness in the terms of the Truth, the Bliss, the Right, the Infinity is a new creation. It is the coming into us of "that greater existence which is beyond on the other side of this smaller and which, even if it be also a dream of the Infinite, puts away from it the falsehood."

To prepare that new birth and new creation for man by his illumination and upward voyaging is the function of Surya, the divine Light and Seer.

THE DIVINE DAWN

As the Sun is image and godhead of the golden Light of the divine Truth, so Dawn is image and godhead of the opening out of the supreme illumination on the night of our human ignorance. Dawn daughter of Heaven and Night her sister are obverse and reverse sides of the same eternal Infinite. Utter Night out of which the worlds arise is the symbol of the Inconscient. That is the inconscient Ocean, that the darkness concealed within darkness out of which the One is born by the greatness of His energy. But in the world of our darkened mortal view of things there reigns the lesser Night of the Ignorance which envelops heaven and earth and the mid-region, our mental and physical consciousness and our vital being. It is here that Dawn the daughter of Heaven rises with the radiances of her Truth, with the bliss of her boons; putting off the darkness like a black woven robe, as a young maiden garbed in light, this bride of the luminous Lord of beatitude unveils the splendours of her bosom, reveals her shining limbs and makes the Sun ascend upon the upclimbing tier of the worlds.

This night of our darkness is not entirely unillumined. If there be nothing else, if all is deep gloom, yet the divine flame of the seer-will Agni burns through the dense murk giving light to him who sits afar in its shadow; though not yet kindled, as it shall be at dawn, on a sacrificial altar, yet even so it fulfils on our earth as the lowest and greatest of the gods the will and works of the hidden Light in spite of all this enveloping smoke of passion and desire. And the stars shine out and the moon comes at night making manifest the invincible workings of the infinite King. Moreover, always Night holds hidden in her bosom her luminous sister; this life of our ignorance taught by the gods in their veiled human working prepares the birth of the divine Dawn so that, sped forth, she may manifest the supreme creation of the luminous Creator. For the divine Dawn is the force or face of Aditi; she is the mother of the gods; she gives them birth into our humanity in their true forms no longer compressed into our littleness and veiled to our vision.

But this great work is to be done according to the ordered gradations of the Truth, in its fixed seasons, by the twelve months of the sacrifice, by the divine years of Surya Savitri. Therefore there is a constant rhythm and alternation of night and dawn, illuminations of the Light and periods of exile from it, openings up of our darkness and its settling upon us once more, till the celestial Birth is accomplished and again till it is fulfilled in its greatness, knowledge, love and power. These later nights are other than those utter darknesses which are dreaded as the occasion of the enemy, the haunt of the demons of division who devour; these are rather the pleasant nights, the divine and blessed ones who equally labour for our growth. Night and Dawn are then of different forms but one mind and suckle alternately the same luminous Child. Then the revealing lustres of the brighter goddess are known in the pleasant nights even through the movements of the darkness. Therefore Kutsa hymns the two sisters, “Immortal, with a common lover, agreeing, they move over heaven and earth forming the hue of the Light; common is the path of the sisters, infinite; and they range it, the one and the other, taught by the gods; common they, though different their forms.” For one is the bright Mother of the herds, the other the dark Cow, the black Infinite, who can yet be made to yield us the shining milk of heaven.

Thus the Dawns come with a constant alternation, thrice ten — the mystic number of our mentality — making the month, till some day there shall break out upon us the wondrous experience of our forefathers in a long bygone age of humanity when the dawns succeeded each other without the intervention of any night, when they came to the Sun as to a lover and circled round him, not returning again and again in his front as a precursor of his periodical visitations. That shall be when the supramental consciousness shines out fulfilled in the mentality and we shall possess the year-long day enjoyed by the gods on the summit of the eternal mountain. Then shall be the dawning of the "best" or highest, most glorious Dawn, when "driving away the Enemy, guardian of the Truth, born in the Truth, full of the bliss, uttering the highest truths, fulfilled in all boons she brings the birth and manifestation of the godheads." Meanwhile each dawn comes as the first of a long succession that shall follow and pursues the path and goal of those that have already gone forward; each in her coming impels the life upwards and awakens in us "someone who was dead". "Mother of the gods, force of the Infinite, the vast vision that awakes from the sacrifice she creates expression for the thought of the soul" and gives us the universal birth in all that is born.

The Vedic Rishis, inspired poets penetrated with the beauty and glory of physical Nature, could not fail to make the most of the figures given to them by this splendid and attractive symbol of the earthly dawning, so that if we read carelessly or with too much attachment to the poetical figure we may miss or repel their deeper meaning. But in no hymn to their beautiful goddess do they forget to give us shining hints, illuminating epithets, profound mystical phrases which shall recall us to the divine sense of the symbol. Especially do they use that figure of the rays that are herds of shining cows around which they have woven the mystic parable of the Angiras Rishis. Dawn is invoked to shine out on us as when she shone upon the seven-mouthed Angiras, on the unity of the nine-rayed and the ten-rayed seers who by the utter thought of the soul, by the word that illumines broke open the fortified pens, "pens of the darkness" in which the Panis, misers and traffickers of the Night, had shut up the Sun's radiant herds. Her rays are as loosings forth of these shining ones; the Dawns themselves are as if the released upward movements of those herded illuminations. Pure and purifying, they break open the doors of the pen. Dawn is the truth-possessing mother of the herds; she is herself the shining Cow and her milk is the divine yield of heaven, the luminous milk which is mixed with the wine of the gods.

This Dawn illumines not only our earth but all the worlds. She brings out into expression the successive planes of our existence so that we may look upon all "the diverse lives" of which we are capable. She reveals them by the eye of the Sun and fronting "the worlds of the becoming she stands aloft over them all as the vision of immortality." She is herself that which shines out widely as the Eye, and like her lover the Sun she gives not only the vision, but also the word; "she finds speech for every thinker," she creates expression for the thought in the soul. To those who saw only a little she gives wide vision and brings out into expression for them all the worlds. For she is a godhead of thought, the "young and ancient goddess of many thoughts who moves according to the divine law." She is the goddess of the perceptive knowledge who has the perfect truth; she is the supreme light of all lights and is born as a varied and all-embracing conscient vision. She is the light full of knowledge which rises up out of the darkness. "We have crossed through to the other shore of this darkness," cries the Rishi, "Dawn is breaking forth and she creates and forms the births of knowledge."

Constantly the idea of the Truth is associated with this luminous goddess Usha. She awakens full of the Truth by the illuminations of heaven; she comes uttering words of truth; her dawns are luminous in their entering in because they are true as being born from the Truth; it is from the seat of the Truth that the dawns awake. She is the shining leader of perfect truths who awakens in perception to things of varied light and opens all doors. Agni, the mighty one, enters into a great wideness of our heaven and earth receiving his impulsion in the foundation of the Truth which is the foundation of the Dawns; for the outshining of this Dawn is "the vast knowledge of Mitra and Varuna and like a thing of delight it orders the light everywhere in many forms."

Moreover she gives the riches we seek and leads man on the divine path. She is the queen of all boons and the wealth she gives, expressed in the mystic symbols of the Cow and the Horse, is the bright abundance of the higher planes; Agni begs from her and attains in her luminous coming their delightful substance; she gives to the mortal inspired knowledge and plenitude and impelling force and vast energy. It is she who creates the Path for mortals by her light; she makes for them the good paths that are happy and easy of going. She moves man to his journey; "Thou" says the Rishi "art there for strength and knowledge and great impulsion, thou art our movement to the goal, thou makest us set forth on the journey." Her path is a path of light and she moves on it with horses yoked by the Truth, herself possessed of the Truth and vast by its power. She follows effectively the path of the Truth and as one that knows she destroys not its directions. "Therefore," runs the chant, "O Dawn divine, shine out on us immortal, in thy chariot of bliss, uttering the words of Truth; let horses bring thee that are well-governed, golden of hue, wide in their strength."

Like all the leaders of the Path, she is a destroyer of enemies. While the Aryan wakes in the dawn, the Panis, misers of Life and Light, sleep unawakening in the heart of the darkness where there are not her varied rays of knowledge. Like an armed hero she drives away our enemies and dispels the darkness like a charging war-horse. The daughter of heaven comes with the light driving away the enemy and all darknesses. And this Light is the light of the world of Swar, the luminous world that Surya Savitri shall create for us. For because she is divine Dawn of the luminous paths, vast with the Truth and bringing to us its bright world, therefore the illumined adore her with their thoughts. Removing, as it were, a woven robe the bride of the Lord of beatitude by her perfect works and her perfect enjoyment creates Swar and spreads wide in her glory from the ends of heaven over all the earth; she attains to a high-uplifted strength in heaven establishing the honey of the sweetness and the three luminous regions of that world are made to shine out by the delightful vision of this great Dawn.

Therefore cries the Rishi, “Arise, life and force have come to us, the darkness has departed, the Light arrives; she has made empty the path for the journey of the Sun; thither let us go where the gods shall carry forward our being beyond these limits.”

PUSHAN THE INCREASER

Since the divine work in us cannot be suddenly accomplished, the godhead cannot be created all at once, but only by a luminous development and constant nurture through the succession of the dawns, through the periodic revisitings of the illumining Sun, Surya the Sun-Power manifests himself in another form as Pushan, the Increaser. The root of this name means to increase, foster, nourish. The spiritual wealth coveted by the Rishis is one that thus increases “day by day”, that is, in each return of this fostering Sun; increase or growth (*puṣṭi*) is a frequent object of their prayers. Pushan represents this aspect of the Surya-power. He is the “lord and master of plenitudes, lord of our growings, our comrade”. Pushan is the enricher of our sacrifice. Vast Pushan shall advance our chariot by his energy; he shall become for the increase of our plenitudes. Pushan is described as himself a stream of the divine riches and a lavish heap of its substance. He is lord of the vast treasure of its joy and companion of our felicity.

The return of the night of ignorance which intervenes between the successive dawns is imaged as the loss of the radiant herds of the Sun frequently stolen from the seer by the Panis and sometimes as the loss of the Sun itself hidden by them again in their tenebrous cavern of the subconscient. The increase which Pushan gives depends on the recovery of these disappearing illuminations of the Truth. Therefore this god is associated with Indra the Power of divine Mind, his brother, friend, ally in battle, in their forceful recovery. He perfects and accomplishes our host that seeks for the herds so that they conquer and possess. “Let Pushan pursue after our luminous herds, let Pushan guard our war-horses, let Pushan conquer for us the plenitude. O Pushan, go after our cows. . . . Let Pushan hold his right hand over us in front; let him drive back to us that which we have lost." So also he brings back the lost Surya. "O shining Pushan, bring to us, as if our lost herd, the God of the varied fullness of flame who upholds our heavens. Pushan finds the shining King who was hidden from us and concealed in the cave." And we are told of the luminous goad which this resplendent deity bears, the goad that urges the thoughts of the soul and is the means of accomplishment of the herd of the radiant illuminations. What he gives to us is secure; for because he has the knowledge, he loses not the herd and is the guardian of the world of our becoming. He has the variously ordaining and comprehensive no less than the complete unified vision of all our worlds and therefore he is our fosterer and increaser. He is the lord of our felicity who loses not our possession of knowledge and so long as we abide in the law of his workings we shall suffer no hurt nor diminution. The happy state of the soul that he gives removes from it all sin and evil and makes today and makes tomorrow for the building up of the whole godhead in our universal being.

Since Surya is the lord of the Knowledge, Pushan also is especially the knower and thinker and guardian of the shining thoughts of the seer — the keeper of the herds delighting in the thought who is immanent in the whole world and all-pervading fosters all the forms of creative knowledge. It is this Increaser who stirs and impels the minds of the illumined and is the means of accomplishment and perfection of their thoughts; he is the seer set in man the thinker, the comrade of his illumined mind who moves him upon the path. He manifests in us the thought which wins the Cow and the Horse and all the plenitude of the wealth. He is the friend of every thinker; he cherishes the thought in its increase as a lover cherishes his bride. The thoughts that seek the supreme felicity are the forces that the Increaser yokes to his car, they are the "unborn ones"[1] who take upon them the yoke of his chariot.

---

[1] The word has the double meaning of goat and unborn. The words meaning sheep and goat are used with a covert sense in the Veda like that which means cow. Indra is called both the Ram and the Bull.

The image of the chariot, of the journey, of the path occurs constantly in association with Pushan because this growth which he gives is a journey towards the fullness of the Truth that lies beyond. The Path in the Veda is always the path of this Truth. Thus the Rishi prays to Pushan to become for us the charioteer of the Truth and the idea of the Vedic thought and knowledge and the idea of the Path are frequently interwoven with each other. Pushan is the lord of the Path whom we yoke as if a chariot for thought, for the winning of the plenitude; he distinguishes our paths so that the thoughts may be accomplished and perfected; he leads us on them by knowledge, forcefully teaching us, saying "thus it is and thus" so that we learn from him of the homes to which we travel; it is as the seer that he is the impeller of the horses of our chariots. Like Usha he makes for us happy paths of an easy going, — for he finds for us the will and strength, — and by his traversing of them rids us of evil. The wheel of his chariot comes not to harm, nor is there any trouble or suffering in its movement. There are indeed enemies on the way, but he shall slay these oppressors of our journey. "O Pushan, the wolf, the troubler of our bliss who teaches us evil, him smite from the Path. The adversary, the robber perverse of heart, drive him far from the road of our journeying. Set thy foot on the distressful force of whatsoever power of duality expresses evil in us."

Thus beyond all the obstacles that cling to our wheels Pushan, the divine and luminous increaser of man's soul, shall lead us to the light and bliss which Surya Savitri creates. "The Life that is the life of all shall guard thee; Pushan shall guard thee in thy forward path in front, and where the doers of the good work are seated, where they have gone, there shall the divine Savitri set thee. Pushan knoweth all the regions and he shall lead us by the way which is freest from peril. Let the giver of felicity, the blazing god who has all the energies lead steadily in our front by his knowledge. Pushan has been born in thy forward travelling on the paths through earth and through heaven; for he moves in both the worlds which are made full of delight for us; here he ranges in his knowledge and he journeys beyond."

SAVITRI THE CREATOR

The result of the procession of the shining dawns, of the divine returns of Surya, of the increasings of Pushan and his leading on the Path is summed up in the creation of Savitri the luminous Creator. It is the god Savitri who sets us there where the ancient doers of the Work have preceded us; that is the desirable flame and splendour of the divine Creator on which the seer has to meditate and towards which this god impels our thoughts, that the bliss of the creative godhead on the forms of which our soul must meditate as it journeys towards it. It is the supreme creation in which the goddess undivided and infinite speaks out her Word and the all-ruling kings Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman; to that consummation the power of all these godheads turns with a united acceptance.

That divine word is the word of the Truth; for a superconscient Truth lies concealed and is the basis of the infinite being which stands revealed on those higher altitudes of our ascension. What we now accept as life is the evil dream, the death that governs us because we live in a false knowledge, a limited and divided existence exposed to every devourer. That is not real life. For life we have to be able to look long upon the Sun; for life we have to be able to hold in our thought a knowledge and a word full of the consummate perception; we have to bring forward the Truth as an offering so that the luminous god with his golden hands full of the Light may rise high in our heavens and hear our word. We must choose and take into ourselves that supreme and vast state of this Mighty One who has the thought of the knowledge, he who creates for the gods the immortality and the highest enjoyment; we must widen out the cord of Savitri so that it shall release us into higher states of life made accessible to men and harmonised with their being. To hold that felicity we have to become free from sin and evil in the wideness and purity of Varuna, in the all-embracing harmony of Mitra, in the supreme creation of Savitri.

Then Savitri shall loose away from us, shall uncreate the suffering of the evil dream. For the seeker of the straightness he shall create an increasing wideness of his existence so that even with our incomplete knowledge we shall grow in our being towards the gods. By the godheads he will foster our knowledge and lead us towards that universal formation of them in the undivided consciousness of the infinite Aditi which we have chosen as our goal. All that we have done in our ignorance, in our divided and oppressed discernment of things, in our mere mortal becoming and humanity, against gods or men, he shall uncreate and make us free from the sin. For he is the creator of the Right, he is the creator who creates the Truth.

That Truth he shall create in a great wideness and force of our physical being, in a rich abundance of our mental and by its undiminishable vastness he shall uphold all the worlds of our existence. Thus in the working of Savitri whose creation is the Truth and of Mitra and Varuna the gods shall uphold in us its substance of varied light, the felicity of its energies and illuminations till all existence is that godhead of Savitri behind us and before, below as well as above, till we possess the far-extended life and have built up the universal form of our being, — the universal form which he creates for us when with hands of golden light, with the tongue that tastes the wine of sweetness he moves in the triple knowledge of the highest heaven of Truth, attains in the gods to the divine rhythm which he creates for his accomplished Law and takes up his abode in that golden strength of his, the Seer robed in light who first stretched out his two arms of knowledge and power to create the world. He who as Twashtri the Fashioner of things attended always by the male godheads and their female energies, powers of Purusha and powers of Prakriti, made and makes all things, shall as Savitri create for man the thinker born in a body that Truth and Immortality.

THE FOUR KINGS

The creation of Surya Savitri starts from the repeated risings of the divine Dawn and grows by the constant nourishing of her spiritual gifts and possessions through the work in us of Surya

Pushan. But the actual formation, the perfected fullness depend on the birth and growth in us of all the gods, the children of Aditi, the All-Gods (*Viśve Devāḥ*) and especially of the four great luminous Kings, Varuna, Mitra, Bhaga, Aryaman. Indra and the Maruts and the Ribhus, Vayu, Agni, Soma and the Ashwins are indeed the principal agents; Vishnu, Rudra, Brahmanaspati, the future mighty Triad, preside over the indispensable conditions, — for the one paces out the vast framework of the inner worlds in which our soul-action takes place, the other in his wrath and might and violent beneficence forces onward the great evolution and smites the opponent and the recusant and the ill-doer, and the third administers always the seed of the creative word from the profundities of the soul; so too Earth and Heaven and the divine Waters and the great goddesses and Twashtri the Fashioner of things on whom they attend, either provide the field or bring and shape the material; but over the utter creation, over its perfect vast space and pure texture, over the sweet and ordered harmony of its steps, over the illumined force and power of its fulfilment, over its rich, pure and abundant enjoyment and rapture the Sun-gods Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga cast the glory and protection of their divine gaze.

The sacred poems in which the All-Gods and the Adityas, the sons of the Infinite, and Aryaman, Mitra and Varuna are praised, — not the mere hymns of formal invocation to the sacrifice, — are among the most beautiful, solemn and profound that the imagination of man has conceived. The Adityas are described in formulas of an incomparable grandeur and sublimity. No mythic barbarian gods of cloud, sun and shower are these, no confused allegories of wonder-stricken savages, but the objects of worship to men far more inwardly civilised and profound in self-knowledge than ourselves. They may not have yoked the lightning to their chariots, nor weighed sun and star, nor materialised all the destructive forces in Nature to aid them in massacre and domination, but they had measured and fathomed all the heavens and earths within us, they had cast their plummet into the Inconscient and the subconscient and the superconscient; they had read the riddle of death and found the secret of immortality; they had sought for and discovered the One and known and worshipped Him in the glories of His light and purity and wisdom and power. These were their gods, as great and deep conceptions as ever informed the esoteric doctrine of the Egyptians or inspired the men of an older primitive Greece, the fathers of knowledge who founded the mystic rites of Orpheus or the secret initiation of Eleusis. But over it all there was the "Aryan light", a confidence and joy and a happy, equal friendliness with the Gods which the Aryan brought with him into the world, free from the sombre shadows that fell upon Egypt from contact with the older races, Sons of deep-brooding Earth. These claimed Heaven as their father and their seers had delivered his Sun out of our material darkness.

The self-luminous One is the goal of the Aryan-minded; therefore the seers worshipped him in the image of the Sun. One existent, him have the seers called by various names, Indra, Agni, Yama, Matarishwan. The phrases "That One", "That Truth",[2] occur constantly in the Veda in connection with the Highest and with the image of His workings here, the Sun. In one sublime and mystic chant the refrain returns perpetually, "The vast mightiness of the Gods, — That One." There is the goal of that journey of the Sun by the path of the Truth which we have seen to be also the journey of the awakened and illumined soul. "Concealed by this truth is that Truth of you," of Mitra and Varuna, "where they unyoke the horses of the Sun. The ten hundreds meet there together, — That One, I have seen the supreme God of the embodied gods." But in itself the One is timeless and our mind and being exist in Time. "It is neither today nor tomorrow; who knoweth That which is transcendent? When it is approached, it vanishes from us." Therefore we have to grow towards it by giving birth to the gods in ourselves,[3] increasing their strong and radiant forms, building up their divine bodies, and this new birth and self-building is the true nature of the sacrifice, — the sacrifice through which there is the awakening of our consciousness to immortality.[4]

---

[2] *Tad ekam*, *tat satyam* — phrases always carefully misinterpreted by the commentators.

[3] *Devavīti*, *devatāti*.

The sons of the Infinite have a twofold birth. They are born above in the divine Truth as creators of the worlds and guardians of the divine Law; they are born also here in the world itself and in man as cosmic and human powers of the Divine. In the visible world they are the male and female powers and energies of the universe and it is this external aspect of them as gods of the Sun, Fire, Air, Waters, Earth, Ether, the conscious-forces ever present in material being which gives us the external or psycho-physical side of the Aryan worship. The antique view of the world as a psycho-physical and not merely a material reality is at the root of the ancient ideas about the efficacy of the *mantra* and the relation of the gods to the external life of man; hence the force of prayer, worship, sacrifice for material ends; hence the use of them for worldly life and in so-called magic rites which comes out prominently in the Atharva Veda and is behind much of the symbolism of the Brahmanas.[5] But in man himself the gods are conscious psychological powers. "Will-powers, they do the works of will; they are the thinkings in our hearts; they are the lords of delight who take delight; they travel in all the directions of the thought." Without them the soul of man cannot distinguish its right nor its left, what is in front of it nor what is behind, the things of foolishness or the things of wisdom; only if led by them can it reach and enjoy "the fearless Light". For this reason Dawn is addressed "O thou who art human and divine" and the gods constantly described as the "Men" or human powers (*manuṣaḥ*, *naraḥ*); they are our "luminous seers", "our heroes", "our lords of plenitude". They conduct the sacrifice in their human capacity (*manuṣvat*) as well as receive it in their high divine being. Agni is the priest of the oblation, Brihaspati the priest of the word. In this sense Agni is said to be born from the heart of man; all the gods are thus born by the sacrifice, grow and out of their human action assume their divine bodies. Soma, the wine of the world-delight, rushing through the mind which is its "luminous wide-extended" strainer of purification, cleansed there by the ten sisters, pours forth giving birth to the gods.

---

[4] *Amṛtasya cetanam.*

[5] This is the real secret of the external sense of Veda which is all that the modern scholars have seen and so imperfectly understood. Even the exoteric religion was much more than a mere Nature worship.

But the nature of these inner powers is always divine and therefore their tendency is upward to Light and immortality and infinity. They are "the Sons of the Infinite, one in their will and work, pure, purified in the streams, free from crookedness, free from defect, unhurt in their being. Wide, profound, unconquered, conquering, with many organs of vision, they behold within the crooked things and the perfect; all is near to the Kings, even the things that are highest. Sons of the Infinite, they dwell in the movement of the world and uphold it; gods, they are the guardians of all that becomes as universe; far-thoughted, full of the Truth, they guard the Might." They are kings of the universe and of man and of all its peoples (*nṛpati*, *viśpati*), self-emperors, world-emperors, not as the Titans strive to be in the falsehood and the division, but because they are kings of the Truth. For their mother is Aditi "in whom there is no duality", Aditi "the luminous undivided who upholds the divine habitation that is of the world of Light" and to her her sons "cleave ever waking". They are "most straight" in their being, will, thought, delight, action, movement, they are "thinkers of the Truth whose law of nature is the law of the Truth", they are "seers and hearers of the Truth". They are "charioteers of the Truth, whose seat is in its mansions, purified in discernment, unconquerable, the Men wide-visioned". They are the "Immortals who know the Truth". Thus free from the falsehood and the crookedness, these inner divinities rise in us to their natural level, home, plane, world. "Of a double birth they are true in their being and lay hold on the Truth, very vast and one in the Light and are possessed of its luminous world."

In this upward movement they cleave away from us the evil and the ignorance. These are they who "cross beyond into the sinlessness and the undivided existence". Therefore they are "the gods who deliver". For the enemy, the assailant, the doer of harm their knowledge becomes as if snares wide-spread, for to him light is a cause of blindness, the divine movement of good an occasion of evil and a stumbling-block; but the soul of the Aryan seer passes beyond these dangers like a mare hastening with a chariot. In the leading of the gods he avoids all stumblings into evil like so many pitfalls. Aditi, Mitra and Varuna forgive him whatever sin he may have committed against their vast oneness, purity, harmony so that he can hope to enjoy the wide and fearless Light and the long nights shall not come upon him. That the Vedic gods are no mere physical Nature-powers, but the psychic conscious forces behind and within all cosmic things, is made clear enough by the connection between their cosmic character and this deliverance from sin and falsehood: "Since ye are they who rule over the world by the power of their mind of knowledge, thinkers of all that is stable and mobile, therefore, O gods, carry us beyond the sin of that which we have done and that which we have not done to the felicity."

There is always the image of the path and the journey, the Path of the Truth on which we are led forward by a divine leading. "O Sons of the Infinite, effect for us the fearless peace, make us good paths of an easy going to the felicity." "Easy of going is your path, O Aryaman, O Mitra, it is thornless, O Varuna, and perfect." "They whom the Sons of Infinity lead with good leadings pass beyond all sin and evil to the felicity." Always that goal is the felicity, the wide bliss and peace, the unbroken Light, the vast Truth, the Immortality. "O ye gods, put far from us the hostile (dividing) force, give us wide peace for the felicity." "The Sons of Infinity give us the imperishable Light." "Create the Light, O ye minds of knowledge of our sacrifice." "That increasing birth of you we would know today, O sons of the Infinite, which creates, O Aryaman, even in this world of fear the beatitude." For it is the "fearless Light" that is created, where there is no peril of death, sin, suffering, ignorance, — the light of the undivided, infinite, immortal, rapturous Soul of things. For "these are the rapturous lords of Immortality, even Aryaman and Mitra and Varuna all-pervading."

Still, it is in the image of Swar, the world of the divine

Truth that the goal is concretely figured. “Let us reach” is the aspiration “the Light that is of Swar, the Light which none can tear asunder.” Swar is the great, inviolable birth of Mitra, Varuna, Aryaman which is contained in the luminous heavens of the soul. The all-ruling Kings, because they grow perfectly and there is no crookedness in them, hold our habitation in heaven. That is the triple world in which the uplifted consciousness of man reflects the three divine principles of being, its infinite existence, its infinite conscious-force, its infinite bliss.[6] “Three earths they hold, three heavens, three workings of these gods in the Knowledge within; by the Truth, O Sons of Infinity, great is that vastness of yours, O Aryaman, O Mitra, O Varuna, great and beautiful. Three heavenly worlds of light they hold, the gods golden-shining who are pure and purified in the streams; sleepless, unconquerable they close not their lids, they express the wideness to the mortal who is straight.” These all-purifying streams are those of the rain, the abundance, the rivers of the heaven of Truth. “Charioted in light are they, aggressive in knowledge, sinless and they clothe themselves in the rain and abundance of heaven for the felicity.” By the pouring out of that abundance they prepare our souls to ascend to its source, the higher ocean from which the luminous waters descend.

It will be seen how largely the great triad, Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman figure in the hymns to the All-Gods and to the sons of the Infinite Mother. With Bhaga as a consummating fourth they dominate the thought of the Rishis in their culminant aspiration to the mass and apex of the perfect truth and infinity. This pre-eminence they owe to their particular character and functions which appear, not often indeed with any great prominence, but as a background to their common action, their united nature of light, their undifferentiated achievement. For they have one light, one work, they perfect in us one indivisible Truth; and it is this union of all the godheads in our consenting universality[7] that is the objective of the Vedic thought in these Aditya hymns.

---

[6] *Tridhātu.*

[7] *Viśvadevyam.*

Still the union comes about by a combination of their powers and therefore each has in it his own proper nature and function. That of the Four is to build up the whole divine state into its perfection by the natural interaction of its four essential elements. The Divine is existence all-embracing, infinite and pure; Varuna brings to us the infinite oceanic space of the divine soul and its ethereal, elemental purity. The Divine is boundless consciousness, perfect in knowledge, pure and therefore luminously right in its discernment of things, perfectly harmonious and happy in its concordance of their law and nature; Mitra brings us this light and harmony, this right distinction and relation and friendly concord, the happy laws of the liberated soul concordant with itself and the Truth in all its rich thought, shining actions and thousandfold enjoyment. The Divine is in its own being pure and perfect power and in us the eternal upward tendency in things to their source and truth; Aryaman brings to us this mighty strength and perfectly-guided happy inner upsurging. The Divine is the pure, the faultless, the all-embracing, the untroubled ecstasy that enjoys its own infinite being and enjoys equally all that it creates within itself; Bhaga gives us sovereignly that ecstasy of the liberated soul, its free and unfallen possession of itself and the world.

This quaternary is practically the later essential trinity of Sachchidananda, — Existence, Consciousness, Bliss with self-awareness and self-force, Chit and Tapas, for double terms of Consciousness; but it is here translated into its cosmic terms and equivalents. Varuna the King has his foundation in the all-pervading purity of Sat; Mitra the Happy and the Mighty, most beloved of the Gods, in the all-uniting light of Chit; many-charioted Aryaman in the movement and all-discerning force of Tapas; Bhaga in the all-embracing joy of Ananda. Yet as all these things form one in the realised godhead, as each element of the trinity contains the others in itself and none of them can exist separately from the rest, therefore each of the Four also possesses by force of his own essential quality every general attribute of his brothers. For this reason if we do not read the Veda as carefully as it was written, we shall miss its distinctions and see only the indistinguishable common functions of these luminous Kings,

— as indeed throughout the hymns the unity in difference of all the gods makes it difficult for the mind not accustomed to the subtleties of psychological truth to find in the Vedic divinities anything but a confused mass of common or interchangeable attributes. But the distinctions are there and have as great a force and importance as in the Greek and Egyptian symbolism. Each god contains in himself all the others, but remains still himself in his peculiar function.

This nature of the difference between the Four explains their varying prominence in the Veda. Varuna is easily the first and most considerable of them all, for realisation of infinite existence is the basis of the Vedic perfection: the wideness and purity of the divine being once attained, all the rest comes inevitably contained in it as possession and power and attribute. Mitra is seldom hymned except in union with Varuna or else as a name and form of the other gods, — oftenest of the cosmic worker Agni, — when arriving in their action to the harmony and the light they reveal in themselves the divine Friend. To the twin-power Mitra-Varuna the greater number of the hymns to the luminous Kings are addressed, a certain number to Varuna separately or to Varuna-Indra, one to Mitra, two or three to Bhaga, none at all to Aryaman. For the infinite wideness and purity being founded, the luminous harmony of the workings of the gods by the correlated laws of the different planes of our being from the spiritual to the material has to be realised in that continent and on that foundation; and this is the combination Mitra-Varuna. The power of Aryaman is hardly viewed as an independent principle, — just as force in the world is only a manifestation, movement or dynamic value of existence, is only a working out, a liberation of consciousness, of knowledge, of the inherent Truth of things into stuff of energy and form of effect, or is only the effective term of the self-discovering and self-seizing movement by which Being and Consciousness realise themselves as Bliss. Therefore Aryaman is invoked always in conjunction with Aditi or Varuna or Mitra or in the great realising Triad or in the realised quaternary or in the general invocation of the All-Gods and the Adityas.

Bhaga on the other hand is the crown of our movement to the possession of the hidden divine Truth of our existence; for the essence of that Truth is beatitude. Bhaga is Savitri himself; the All-Enjoyer is the Creator fulfilled in the divine purpose of his creation. Therefore he is the result more than the agent, or else the last agent of all, the possessor more than the giver of our spiritual plenitude.

⁂

The hymn of the Rishi Vamadeva to the All-Gods shows with a clear lucidity the high-aspiring hope which these Vedic deities were invoked to favour and bring to a happy culmination: —

"Who of you is our deliverer? who our defender? O Earth and Heaven, free from division, deliver us; rescue, O Mitra, O Varuna, from the mortality that is too strong for us! Who of you, O gods, confirms for us the supreme good in the march of the sacrifice? They who illumine our high original seats, they who limitless in knowledge dawn out putting away our darkness, it is they, imperishable all-ordainers, who order them for us; thinkers out of the Truth, they shine forth in light, achievers. I seek for my companion by the words illumining the flowing river Aditi, she who is the divine felicity. O Night and Dawn unconquerable, so do ye make it that both the Days shall utterly protect us. Aryaman and Varuna distinguish the Path, and Agni lord of the impulsion, the path of the happy goal. O Indra and Vishnu, affirmed, extend to us perfectly the peace in which are the Powers, the mighty protection. I embrace the increasings of Parvata and of the Maruts and of Bhaga, our divine deliverer. May the master of things protect us from the sin of the world and Mitra keep us far from the sin against Mitra. Now shall one affirm the goddesses Earth and Heaven with the Dragon of the foundation by all the things desired that we must obtain; as if to possess that Ocean by their wide ranging they have uncovered the (hidden) rivers that are voiceful with the burning Light. May goddess Aditi with the gods protect us, may the divine Deliverer deliver us, unremitting; let us not diminish the foundation of

Mitra and Varuna and the high level of Agni. Agni is the lord of that vast substance of riches and perfected enjoyment; he lavishes on us those abundances. O Dawn, voice of the Truth, queen of plenitude, bring to us the many desirable boons, thou who hast in thee all their plenty. To that goal may Savitri, Bhaga, Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, Indra move aright for us with riches of our felicity."

VARUNA

We have the word Varuna from a root which means to surround, cover or pervade. From these significances of the name there emerged before the poetic eye of the ancient mystics the images that are our nearest concrete representation of the Infinite. They saw God as a highest covering Heaven, felt divine existence like an encompassing ocean, lived in its boundless presence as in a pure and pervading ether. Varuna is this highest heaven, this soul-surrounding ocean, this ethereal possession and infinite pervasion.

The same root had given them an appellation for the dark Coverer, the adversary Vritra; for to obstruct and resist, screen or hedge, besiege and hem in are also some of its many kindred senses. But dark Vritra is the thick cloud and the enveloping shadow. His knowledge — for he too has a knowledge, a Maya, — is the sense of limited being and the hiding away in subconscient Night all the rest of the rich and vast existence that should be ours, and for this negation and contrary power of creative knowledge he stands up stiffly against the Gods, — his undivine right against the divine right of God and man. Varuna by his wide being and ample vision rolls back these limits; surrounding us with light his possession reveals what dark Vritra's obsession had withheld and obscured. His godhead is the form or spiritual image of an embracing and illuminating Infinity.

For this reason the physical figure of Varuna is much less definite than the burning Fire or the radiant Sun or the luminous Dawn. The old commentators thought strangely enough that he was the God of Night. In the Puranas he is the deity of the waters and his noose, which in the Veda never pretends to be anything more than a psychological metaphor, has become the violent lasso of the ocean-god. European scholars have identified him with the Greek Uranus and perceiving something of his original ethereal nature have supposed a conceptual transference, a sort of fall or even a deposition from azure above to azure below. Indra, perhaps, becoming master of the skies and king of the gods, Varuna the original King had to be satisfied with the dominion of the waters. If we understand the symbolic method of the mystics, we shall see that these suppositions are unnecessary. Their method is to combine various ideas and images contained together in a general conception which gives all the links. So, Varuna of the Veda is at once King — not of the heavens as such, for that is Dyaushpita, nor of the heavens of light, for that is Indra, — but of the highest covering ether and all oceans. All expanses are Varuna's; every infinity is his property and estate.

Ether and ocean meet together and become one in the mystic conception; and the origin of this unity is not far to seek. The ancient concept of creation, held all over the world from the Himalayas to the Andes, conceived of the stuff of things as a formless expanse of waters covered over in the beginning by darkness out of which day and night and heaven and earth and all worlds have emerged. "Darkness," says the Hebrew Genesis, "was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved on the waters." By the word he divided the waters with Heaven, the firmament; so that now there are two waters, one earthly below the firmament, the other heavenly above. The mystics seized on this universal belief or this universal image and crowded into it their opulent psychological values. Instead of one firmament they saw two, the earthly and the celestial; instead of two oceans, three spread out before their unsealed vision.

What they saw, was what man will ever see when he changes the physical for the psychical vision of Nature and the world. Below them they looked down on an unfathomable night and surging obscurity, darkness hidden within darkness, the inconscient waters from which by the mighty energy of the One their existence had arisen. Above them they beheld a remote ocean of light and sweetness, a highest ether, the supreme step of all-blissful Vishnu, to which their attracted being must ascend. One of these was the dense dark ether, an unformed material inconscient Non-existence; the other a luminous ethereal All-conscient and the absolute of existence. These two were the dark and the shining extension of the One.

Between these two unknown infinities, infinite potential zero and infinite plenary *x*, they saw around them, before their eyes, below, above, a third sea of ever-developing conscious being, a sort of boundless wave, which they spoke of by a hardy metaphor as climbing up or flowing up beyond heaven to the supreme seas. It is this perilous ocean which we have to navigate. There Bhujyu, the seeker of enjoyment, son of King Tugra the Forceful-Hastening, was about to sink, cast in by his false companions, souls of an evil movement; but the marvellous chariot-ship of the Ashwins came hastening to his succour. Varuna must teach with his vast Right and Truth our limited will and judgment, if we would escape such perils: we must embark in no human galley, but "ascend the divine ship, the blameless and well-oared vessel that sinketh not, by which may we voyage safe beyond sin and evil." Into this intermediate ocean, *above* our earth, we have seen the sun of Knowledge rise out of the inconscient cave and voyage led by the seers. For this too is an ocean-ether. Or, let us say, it is a tier of ethers. To follow the Vedic imagery we must suppose ocean superimposed upon ocean. This world is a series of heights that are depths and a mutual involution and evolution of vastnesses that have no ending: ether below rises to ever more luminous ether above, every stratum of consciousness rests upon many inferior and aspires to many higher strata.

But beyond our farthest skies in the supreme ocean of light and expanse of the highest superconscient ether our haven awaits us in a Truth hidden by lesser truth, even as in the inconscient Night darkness is enwrapped and protected by an ever greater darkness. That is the truth of King Varuna. Thither the Dawns shining arise, the rivers travel and the Sun unyokes there the horses of his chariot. And Varuna contains, sees, governs all this in his vast being and by his illimitable knowledge. All these oceans are his, even to the Inconscient and its nights so opposite in their seeming to his nature which is that of the extended radiance of one eternal, vast sun of happy light and truth. Day and Night, light and darkness are symbols in his infinity. "Luminous Varuna has embraced the nights; he holds the Dawns within him by his creative knowledge; visioned, he is around every object."

From this idea of the oceans arose naturally the psychological concept of the Vedic rivers. These rivers are everywhere. They are the waters which flow down from the mountain and ascend the mind ranging through and illuminating with their flow the dark subconscient secrets of Vritra; they are the mighty ones of Heaven whom Indra brings down on the Earth; they are the streams of the Truth; they are the rain from its luminous heavens; they are the seven eternal sisters and companions; they are the divine waters who have knowledge. They descend upon the earth, they rise from the ocean, they flow to the ocean, they break out from the doors of the Panis, they ascend to the supreme seas.

Oceanic Varuna is king of all these waters. "In the uprising of the rivers" it is said "he is a brother of seven sisters, he is in their middle." And another Rishi has sung, "In the rivers Varuna is seated upholding the law of his works, perfect in will for empire." Vasishtha speaks with a more explicit crowding of psychological suggestions, of "the divine, pure and purifying waters, honey-pouring, in the midst of whom King Varuna marches looking down on the truth and the falsehood in creatures." Varuna too, like Indra with whom he is often associated, releases the waters; sped from his mighty hands they too, like him, become all-pervading and flow to a limitless goal. "The son of Infinity, the wide upholder, has loosed them forth everywhere; the rivers journey to the truth of Varuna."

Not only the goal, the march too is his. "Varuna of the puissance and the thousandfold vision beholds the goal of these rivers; he is the king of the kingdoms, he is the form of the rivers, for him is a strength supreme and universal." His oceanic movement envelops all the kingdoms of being and ascends to the Paradise of the heaven of heavens. "He is the hidden ocean" it is said "and he climbs passing beyond heaven; when he has set the sacrificial word in these dawns, then with his luminous foot he tramples asunder illusions and ascends to Paradise." Varuna, we see, is the oceanic surge of the hidden Divine as he rises, progressively manifested, to his own infinite wideness and ecstasy in the soul of the god-liberated seer.

The illusions which he shatters with his tread are the false formations of the Lords of Evil. Varuna, because he is this ether of divine Truth and ocean of divine being, is what no personified physical sea or sky could ever become, the pure and majestic King who strikes down evil and delivers from sin. Sin is a violation of the purity of the divine Right and Truth; its reaction is the wrath of the Pure and Puissant. Against those who like the Sons of Darkness serve self-will and ignorance, the king of the divine Law hurls his weapons; the cord descends upon them; they fall into the snare of Varuna. But those who seek after the Truth with sacrifice are delivered from bondage to sin like a calf released from the rope or a victim set free from the slaying-post. The Rishis deprecate frequently the retributive violence of Varuna and pray to him to deliver them from sin and its wages, death. "Repel the Destruction away from us," they cry, "loose from us even the sin that we have done"; or, always with the same sense of a chain and a bondage, "Cleave away sin from me like a cord."

The crude conception of sin as a result of natural wickedness found no place in the thought of these deep thinkers and subtle psychologists. What they perceived, was a great insistent force of Ignorance; either a non-perception of right and truth in the mind or a non-seizing of it in the will, or an inability of the life instincts and desires to follow after it, or the sheer inefficiency of the physical being to rise to the greatness of the divine law. Vasishtha cries to mighty Varuna in a passionate litany, "It is from poverty of the will that we have gone contrary to thee, O pure and puissant One: be gracious to us, have grace. Thirst found thy adorer though he stood in the middle of the waters;

be gracious, O puissant Lord, have grace. Whatever this be, O Varuna, that we human beings act, a treason against the Divine Birth, wheresoever by the Ignorance we have put away thy laws, smite us not for that sin, O God."

Ignorance, this matrix of sin, has in its substantial effect the appearance of a triple cord of limited mind, inefficient life, obscure physical animality, the three ropes with which the Rishi Shunahshepa in the parable was bound as a victim to the sacrificial post. The whole result is a struggling or inert poverty of being; it is the meagreness of a mortal undelight and the insufficiency of a being that collapses at every moment towards death. When Varuna the Mighty comes and sunders this threefold restraint, we are freed towards riches and immortality. Uplifted, the real man arises to his true kingship in the undivided being. The upper cord flies upward releasing the wings of the Soul into superconscient heights; the middle cord parts both ways and all ways, the constrained life breaking out into a happy breadth of existence; the lower cord collapses downward taking with it the alloy of our physical being to disappear and be dissolved in the stuff of the Inconscient. This liberation is the purport of the parable of Shunahshepa and his two great hymns to Varuna.

As ignorance or falsehood in the being — the Veda prefers usually the less abstract phrase — is the cause of wrong and suffering, so Knowledge or Truth is the agent which purifies and liberates. It is because of the eye with which he sees, — the luminous symbolic Sun, — that Varuna is the purifier. And unless he governs the will and teaches the judgment while the divine Thought is being learned, we cannot ascend on to the ship of the gods to be borne by it over the life-ocean beyond all this stumbling and evil. Dwelling in us as the thinker with knowledge Varuna cleaves away the sin that we have committed; he abolishes by his royal power our debts of the Ignorance. Or, using a different image, the Veda tells us that this King has in his service a thousand physicians; it is by their healing of our mental and moral infirmities that we get a secure foundation in Varuna's wide and deep right-mindedness.

The Kingship of great Varuna is an unbounded empire over all being. He is a mighty world-ruler, an emperor, *samrāṭ*. His epithets and descriptions are those which a mind at once religious and philosophic could apply with little or no change to the supreme and universal Godhead. He is the vastness and the multiplicity; among his usual epithets are vast Varuna, abundant Varuna, Varuna of whom wideness is the habitation, Varuna of many births. But his puissant being is not only a universal wideness; it is a universal force and might. The Veda says of him in words that have both an outward and an inward significance: "Thy force and might and passion neither these Birds in their travelling can attain, nor these Waters ranging sleeplessly, nor they who hedge in the hugeness of the wind." It is a force of universal existence which is active around and in all that lives.[8] Behind this vast universality of force and being there watches and acts a vast universality of knowledge. The epithet of kinghood is constantly coupled with the epithet of seerhood, not otiosely but in the strong, pregnant antique style. Varuna has a manifold energy, — the hero's, — and wide expression, — the thinker's; he comes to us as a godhead of the glory of force and in the same movement we find in him a soul of wide vision.

The full significance of this constant coupling of epithets appears in the double character of his sovereignty; he is *svarāṭ* and *samrāṭ*, self-ruler and emperor. They are the two faces of Aryan kingship. In man they are a royalty of thought and action and the plenitude of wisdom and will; the King-Sage, the Hero-Thinker. In the Godhead, in Varuna "almighty, omniscient, thousand-visioned, whose form is the Truth", they lift us up to supreme and universal principles; we see revealed a divine and eternal majesty, the plenitude of consciousness and the plenitude of Force, Wisdom omnipotent, Power omniscient, Law justified, Truth fulfilled.

Varuna, the Vedic symbol of this grandiose conception, is described finely as a vast thinker and guardian of the Truth. In him, it is said, all wisdoms are lodged and gathered up into their nodus; he is the divine Seer who nurtures the seer-knowings of man as if heaven were increasing its form. We find here the key to the symbol of the luminous cows. For it is said of him that, upholder of the worlds, he knows the hidden names of these shining ones and the thoughts of the seers go beyond like cows to the pastures desiring the wide-visioned. It is said of him too that he guards for the Maruts, greatened in knowledge, the thoughts of men like the cows of a herd.

---

[8] *Viśvāyu.*

That is the side of thought; there are parallel descriptions for the side of action. Great Varuna is the continent and nodus of the world's uplifted puissances no less than of its arising thoughts. The unconquered workings that fall not from the Truth are established in him as upon a mountain. Because he thus knows the things that are transcendent, he is able to cast his majestic eye of sovereignty upon our existence and see there "the things that are done and those that remain to be done". The things that remain to be done — and also to be known. The wisdom of Varuna shapes in us the divine word which, inspired, intuitive, opens the doors to new knowledge. "We desire him" cries the Rishi "as the finder of the Path because he unveils the thought by the heart; let new truth be born." For this King is no whirler of a brute and stupid wheel; his are not the unfruitful cycles of a meaningless Law. There is a Path; there is a constant progress; there is a goal.

Varuna is the leader on this path. "Perfect in will" cries Shunahshepa "let the son of Infinity make us by the good path and carry our life forward. Varuna puts on his golden robe of light and his scouts are all around." These detect the ambushed foes of the Light, the piercers of our hearts — who would prevent, it is to be supposed, the unveiling of the Truth-thought by the heart. For this journey which we saw as a march of the waters, we see also as a journey of the sun with the all-wise and all-powerful King for its Guide. In the vast where there is no foundation Varuna has built a high pyramid of the fuel of sacrifice for the fire that must be the blazing material of a divine Sun. "Its rays are directed downward, their foundation is above; let their perceptions of knowledge be established in us within. King Varuna has made a wide path for the Sun to follow; where there is no footing he has made places for him to set his feet. He shall make manifest too those who pierce the heart." His purity is a great devourer of the hurters of the soul.

The Path is a constant making and building of new truth, new powers, higher realisations, new worlds. All heights to which we can climb from the basis of our physical existence are described in symbolic figure as mountain summits upon the earth and Varuna of the vision holds them all in himself. World after world is reached as level and ever higher level of a great mountain; the voyager in the forward march of Varuna is said to lay his grasp on all things that are born in all the statuses. But his final goal must be the highest triple world of the Deva. "Three delightful Dawns increase according to the law of his workings. He of the all-seeing wisdom dwells in three white-shining earths; three are the higher worlds of Varuna whence he rules over the harmonies of seven and seven. He is the builder of the original seat, 'That Truth' of Varuna; and he is the guardian and the mover."

In sum, then, Varuna is the ethereal, oceanic, infinite King of wide being, wide knowledge and wide might, a manifestation of the one God's active omniscience and omnipotence, a mighty guardian of the Truth, punisher and healer, Lord of the noose and Releaser from the cords, who leads thought and action towards the vast light and power of a remote and high-uplifted Truth. Varuna is the King of all kingdoms and of all divine and mortal beings; earth and heaven and every world are only his provinces.

MITRA

If the purity, infinity, strong royalty of Varuna are the grand framework and majestic substance of the divine being, Mitra is its beauty and perfection. To be infinite, pure, a king over oneself and a master-soul must be the nature of the divine man because so he shares in the nature of God. But the Vedic ideal is not satisfied simply with a large, unfulfilled plan of the divine image. There must be noble and rich contents in this vast continent; the many-roomed tenement of our being contained in Varuna has to be ordered by Mitra in the right harmony of its utility and its equipment.

For the godhead is a plenitude as well as an infinity; Varuna is an ocean no less than an ethereal heaven. Pure and subtle as the ether, his strong substance is yet no serene void or easy vague of inactive peace, but rather we have seen in it a surging march of thought and action; he has been described to us as a nodus in which all wisdom is upgathered and a hill upon which the original, unfallen workings of the gods are supported. King Varuna is one who sleeps not, but is awake and mighty forever, eternally an effective force and worker for the Truth and the Right. Still he acts as the guardian of the Truth rather than constitutes it, or constitutes rather through the action of other godheads who avail themselves of his wideness and surging force. He keeps, drives even the shining herds, but does not assemble them in the pastures, an upholder of our powers and remover of obstacles and enemies much more than a builder of our parts.

Who then gathers knowledge into this nodus or links divine action in this sustainer of works? Mitra is the harmoniser, Mitra the builder, Mitra the constituent Light, Mitra the god who effects the right unity of which Varuna is the substance and the infinitely self-enlarging periphery. These two Kings are complementary to each other in their nature and their divine works. In them we find and by them we gain harmony in largeness: we see in the Godhead and increase in ourselves purity without defect basing love faultless in wisdom. Therefore these two are a great duo of the self-fulfilling godhead and the Vedic word calls them together to a vaster and vaster sacrifice to which they arrive as the inseparable builders of an increasing Truth. Madhuchchhandas gives us the keynote of their united divinity. "Mitra I call, the pure in judgment, and Varuna, devourer of the foe. By Truth, Mitra and Varuna, Truth-increasers who get to the touch of Truth, you attain to a vast working of the will. Seers, dwellers in the wideness, born with many births, they uphold the judgment at its works."

The name Mitra comes from a root which meant originally to contain with compression and so to embrace and has given us the ordinary Sanskrit word for friend, *mitra*, as well as the archaic Vedic word for bliss, *mayas*. Upon the current sense of the word *mitra*, the Friend, the Vedic poets continually rely for their covert key to the psychological function of this apparent sungod. When the other deities and especially the brilliant Agni are spoken of as helpful friends to the human sacrificer, they are said to be Mitra, or to be like Mitra, or to become Mitra, — as we should now say, the divine Will-force, or whatever other power and personality of the godhead, reveals itself eventually as the divine Love. Therefore we must suppose that to these symbolists Mitra was essentially the Lord of Love, a divine friend, a kindly helper of men and immortals. The Veda speaks of him as the most beloved of the gods.

The Vedic seers looked at Love from above, from its source and root and saw it and received it in their humanity as an outflowing of the divine Delight. The Taittiriya Upanishad expounding this spiritual and cosmic bliss of the godhead, Vedantic Ananda, Vedic Mayas, says of it, "Love is its head." But the word it chooses for Love, *priyam*, means properly the delightfulness of the objects of the soul's inner pleasure and satisfaction. The Vedic singers used the same psychology. They couple *mayas* and *prayas*, — *mayas*, the principle of inner felicity independent of all objects, *prayas*, its outflowing as the delight and pleasure of the soul in objects and beings. The Vedic happiness is this divine felicity which brings with it the boon of a pure possession and sinless pleasure in all things founded upon the unfailing touch of the Truth and Right in the freedom of a large universality.

Mitra is the most beloved of the gods because he brings within our reach this divine enjoyment and leads us to this perfect happiness. Varuna makes directly for strength; we discover a force and a will vast in purity; Aryaman the Aspirer is secured in the amplitude of his might by Varuna's infinity; he does his large works and effects his great movement by the power of Varuna's universality. Mitra makes directly for bliss, — Bhaga the Enjoyer is established in a blameless possession and divine enjoyment by the all-reconciling harmony of Mitra, by his purifying light of right discernment, his firmly-basing law. Therefore it is said of Mitra that all perfected souls adhere or are firmly fixed "to the bliss of this Beloved in whom there is no hurt", for in him there is no sin or wound or falling. All mortal delight has its mortal danger; but the immortal light and law secures the soul of man in a fearless joy. That mortal, says Vishwamitra, who learns by Mitra's law, the law of this Son of Infinity, is possessed of *prayas*, the soul's satisfaction in its objects; such a soul cannot be slain, nor overcome, nor can any evil take possession of it from near or from afar. For Mitra fashions in gods and men impulsions whose action spontaneously fulfils all the soul's seekings.

That happy freedom of all-possession comes to us out of this godhead's universality and his reconciling luminous embrace of things: Mitra's is the principle of harmony by which the manifold workings of the Truth agree together in a perfectly wedded union. The root of the name means both to embrace and to contain and hold and, again, to build or form in the sense of linking together the parts or materials of a whole. Adorable Mitra is born in us as a blissful ordainer of things and a king full of might. Mitra holds up heaven and earth and looks sleeplessly upon the worlds and the peoples, and his vigilant and perfect ordinances create in us a happy rightness of mind and feeling — *sumati*, a state of grace, we might almost say, — which becomes for us an unhurt abiding-place. "Free from all undelightfulness," says the Vedic verse, "rejoicing with rapture in the goddess of the Word, bowing the knee in the wideness of earth, may we attain to our abiding-place in the law of working of Mitra, son of Infinity, and dwell in his grace." It is when Agni becomes Mitra, when the divine Will realises the divine Love that, in the Vedic image, the Lord and his Spouse agree in their mansion.

The well-accorded happiness of the Truth is Mitra's law of working; for it is upon Truth and divine Knowledge that this harmony and perfect temperament are founded; they are formed, secured and guarded by the Maya of Mitra and Varuna. That well-known word comes from the same root as Mitra. Maya is the comprehending, measuring, forming Knowledge which whether divine or undivine, secure in the undivided being of Aditi or labouring in the divided being of Diti, builds up the whole scene, environment, confines, and defines the whole condition, law and working of our existence. Maya is the active, originative, determinative view which creates for each being according to his own consciousness his own world. But Mitra is a Lord of the Light, a Son of Infinity and a Guardian of the Truth and his Maya part of an infinite, supreme and faultless creative wisdom. He builds, he joins together in an illuminated harmony all the numerous planes, all the successive steps, all the graded seats of our being. Whatsoever Aryaman aspires to on his path, has to be effected by the 'holdings' or laws of Mitra or by his foundations, statuses, placings, *mitrasya dharmabhiḥ*, *mitrasya dhāmabhiḥ*. For *dharma*, the law is that which holds things together and to which we hold; *dhāma*, the status is the placing of the law in a founded harmony which creates for us our plane of living and the character of our consciousness, action and thought.

Mitra, like the other sons of Aditi, is a master of Knowledge. He possesses a light which is full of a varied inspiration, or, to keep closer to the Vedic term, a richly diversified hearing of the knowledge. In the wideness of existence which he enjoys in common with Varuna, he acquires possession of heaven by that greatness of the being of the Truth and enlarges his conquering mastery over the earth by these inspirations or hearings of its Knowledge. All the five Aryan peoples labour therefore and travel for this bright and beautiful Mitra who comes into them with his luminous force and bears in his wideness all the Gods. He is the great and blissful one who sets and leads creatures born into the world upon their path. The distinction is drawn in one verse that Varuna is the masterful traveller to the soul's supreme seat, Mitra makes men advance in that march. "Even now" says the Rishi "may I attain the movement to the goal and journey on Mitra's path."

Since Mitra cannot fulfil his harmony except in the wideness and purity of Varuna, he is constantly invoked in company with that great godhead. Theirs are the supreme statuses or planes of the soul; it is the bliss of Mitra and Varuna that has to increase in us. By their law that vast plane of our consciousness shines out upon us and heaven and earth are the two paths of their journey. For Aditi of the Truth, their mother, has borne them omniscient and great for almightiness; and it is luminous Aditi, the undivided being, whom they, wakeful from day to day, cleave to, she who holds for us our habitations in that world of light and they attain to its luminous forcefulness. They are the two Sons perfect in their birth from of old who support the law of our action; children are they of a vast luminous power, offspring of the divine discerning thought and perfect in will. They are the guardians of Truth, possessed of its law in the supreme ether. Swar is their golden home and birth-place.

Mitra and Varuna have an unwounded vision and are better knowers of the Path than our sight; for in the Knowledge they are seers of Swar. They take by the passion of their discerning thought the concealing falsehood away from the Truth to which the path has to lead. They proclaim the vast Truth of which they are possessed. It is because they possess it and with it the perfection of the will which is its effect, that they are seated in us for empire and uphold our action as the masters of might. By Truth they come to the Truth, nourishing in their lordship of things our thoughts, and in their purified judgment they open the eye of consciousness to all wisdom by the perception in men. Thus all-seeing and all-knowing they by the law, by the Maya of the mighty Lord, guard our actions, even as they govern the whole world in the power of the Truth. That Maya is established in the heavens, it ranges there as a Sun of light; it is their rich and wonderful weapon. They are far-hearers, masters of true being, true themselves and increasers of truth in each human creature. They nourish the shining herds and loose forth the abundance of heaven; they make heaven to rain down by the Maya of the Mighty Lord. And that celestial rain is the wealth of the spiritual felicity which the seers desire; it is the immortality.[9]

---

[9] *Vṛṣṭiṁ vāṁ rādho amṛtatvam īmahe.*

ARYAMAN

Aryaman, third of the four great solar godheads, is the least prominent of them all in the invocations of the seers. No separate hymn is addressed to him and, if his name occurs not unfrequently, it is in scattered verses; there is no strong body of Riks from which we can construct firmly our idea of his functions or recompose his physiognomy. Most often he is simply invoked by his bare name along with Mitra and Varuna or in the larger group of the sons of Aditi, almost always in adjunction to other kindred deities. Still there are half a dozen or more half-riks from which his one chief and characteristic action emerges accompanied by the usual epithets of the Lords of the Truth, epithets expressive of Knowledge, Joy, Infinity and Power.

In the later tradition the name of Aryaman is placed at the head of the Fathers to whom as their appropriate offering is given the symbolic food, the *piṇḍa* of the Puranic funeral and memorial rites. In the Puranic traditions the Fathers are of two classes, divine and human, the latter being the ancestors, the Manes. But it is in connection with the Fathers as the souls who have attained to heaven, to immortality that we must think of Aryaman. Krishna in the Gita, enumerating the chief powers or manifestations of the eternal Godhead in things and beings, speaks of himself as Ushanas among the seers, Bhrigu among the Rishis, Vyasa among the sages, Vishnu among the children of Aditi, Aryaman among the Fathers. Now in the Veda the Fathers are the ancient illumined ones who discovered the Knowledge, created and followed the Path, reached the Truth, conquered Immortality; and in the few Riks in which Aryaman's separate personality emerges, it is as the God of the Path that he is hymned.

His name Aryaman, kin etymologically to the words *arya*, *ārya*, *ari*, by which are distinguished the men or peoples who follow the Vedic culture and the Gods who assist them in their battles and their aspirations, is similarly indicative. The Aryan is the traveller on the Path, the aspirant to immortality by divine sacrifice, one of the shining children of Light, a worshipper of the

Masters of the Truth, a fighter in the battle against the powers of darkness who obstruct the human journey. Aryaman is the godhead in whose divine power this Aryahood is rooted; he is this Force of sacrifice, aspiration, battle, journey towards perfection and light and celestial bliss by which the path is created, travelled, pursued beyond all resistance and obscuration to its luminous and happy goal.

In consequence, the action of Aryaman takes up the attributes of Mitra and Varuna as leaders of the Path. This Force fulfils the happy impulsions of that Light and Harmony and the movement of infinite knowledge and power of that pure Vastness. Like Mitra and Varuna he makes men travel on the path; he is full of the perfect happiness of Mitra; he is complete in the will and the works of sacrifice; he and Varuna distinguish the path for mortals. He is like Varuna a godhead manifold in his births; like him he oppresses the wrath of the hurter of men. It is by the great path of Aryaman that we shall cross beyond the souls of a false or evil thought who obstruct our path. Aditi, mother of the Kings, and Aryaman carry us by paths of a happy travelling beyond all inimical powers. The man who seeks the straightness of Mitra's and Varuna's workings and by the force of the word and the affirmation embraces their law with all his being, is guarded in his progress by Aryaman.

But the Rik most distinctive of the function of Aryaman is that which describes him as "Aryaman of the unbroken path, of the many chariots, who dwells as the sevenfold offerer of sacrifice in births of diverse forms." He is the deity of the human journey who carries it forward in its irresistible progress which the attacks of the enemy cannot overcome or successfully interrupt so long as this divine Force is our leader. The journey is effected through a manifold movement of our evolution, the many chariots of Aryaman. It is the journey of the human sacrifice which has a sevenfold energy of its action because there is a sevenfold principle in our being which has to be fulfilled in its integral perfection; Aryaman is the master of the sacrificial action who offers this sevenfold working to the godheads of the Divine Birth. Aryaman within us develops our various forms of birth in the ascending planes of our existence by which the Fathers climbed, travellers on his path, and by which it must be the aspiration of the Aryan soul to climb, to the highest summit of Immortality.

Thus Aryaman sums up in himself the whole aspiration and movement of man in a continual self-enlargement and self-transcendence to his divine perfection. By his continuous movement on the unbroken path Mitra and Varuna and the sons of Aditi fulfil themselves in the human birth.

BHAGA

The goal of the path is the divine beatitude, the illimitable joy of the Truth, of the infinity of our being. Bhaga is the godhead who brings this joy and supreme felicity into the human consciousness; he is the divine enjoyer in man. All being has this divine enjoyment of existence for its aim and end, whether it seeks for it with knowledge or with ignorance, with the divine strength or the weakness of our yet undeveloped powers. "On Bhaga the strong calls for his increasing, on Bhaga he who has not the strength; then he moves towards the Delight." "Let us call in the Dawn on Bhaga strong and victorious, the son of Aditi who is the wide-upholder, on whom the afflicted and the fighter and the king meditate and they say to the Enjoyer, Give us thy enjoyment." "Let it be the divine Enjoyer who possesses the enjoyment and by him let us be its possessors; to thee every man calls, O Bhaga; do thou become, O Enjoyer, the leader of our journey." An increasing and victorious felicity of the soul rejoicing in the growth of its divine possessions which gives us strength to journey on and overcome till we reach the goal of our perfection in an infinite beatitude, this is the sign of the birth of Bhaga in man and this his divine function.

All enjoyment comes indeed from Bhaga Savitri, the mortal as well as the divine; "creating a wide and vast force he brings forth for men their mortal enjoyment." But the Vedic ideal is the inclusion of all life and all joy, divine and human, the wideness and plenty of earth and the vastness and abundance of heaven, the treasures of the mental, vital, physical existence uplifted, purified, perfected in the form of the infinite and divine Truth. It is this all-including felicity which is the gift of Bhaga. The Enjoyer is to be called on by men because he has many riches and ordains perfectly all delights, — the thrice seven delights upheld by him in the being of his mother Aditi. It is by creating in us "the wide and vast force", it is when the Divine as Bhaga, Pushan, Aditi, the infinite, the undivided puts on the radiances of the infinite consciousness like a robe and distributes without division all desirable boons that divine felicity comes to us in its fullness. Then he gives to the human being full enjoyment of that greatest delight. Therefore Vasishtha cries to him, "O Bhaga, our leader, Bhaga who hast the wealth of the Truth, giving unto us, raise up and increase, O Bhaga, this thought in us," — the Truth-thought by which the felicity is attained.

Bhaga is Savitri the Creator, he who brings forth from the unmanifest Divine the truth of a divine universe, dispelling from us the evil dream of this lower consciousness in which we falter amidst a confused tangle of truth and falsehood, strength and weakness, joy and suffering. An infinite being delivered out of imprisoning limits, an infinite knowledge and strength receiving in thought and working out in will a divine Truth, an infinite beatitude possessing and enjoying all without division, fault or sin, this is the creation of Bhaga Savitri, this that greatest Delight. "This creation of the divine Creator goddess Aditi speaketh forth to us, this the all-kings Varuna and Mitra and Aryaman with one mind and heart." The four Kings find themselves fulfilled with their infinite Mother by the delightful perfection in man of Bhaga the Enjoyer, the youngest and greatest of them all. Thus is the divine creation of the fourfold Savitri founded on Varuna, combined and guided by Mitra, achieved by Aryaman, enjoyed in Bhaga: Aditi the infinite Mother realises herself in the human being by the birth and works of her glorious children.

The First Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE LORDS OF THE THOUSAND-PILLARED HOME OF TRUTH AND BLISS

[The Rishi hymns the eternal and immutable Truth of which the Truth in mutable things is the veil; that is the goal of the journey of the manifested Sun of divine knowledge; it is the eternal unity of all things that are and the supreme Divine of which the Gods are various forms. Into it unite all the wealth of being and knowledge and power and bliss won by the sacrifice. It is the large vastness of the wide purities of Varuna and of the shining harmonies of Mitra. There, eternally stable, dwell the herds of the divine radiances of knowledge; for that is the happy field to which they here are travelling. The Impeller of the cosmic movement and journey pours out knowledge in us, the milk of the herds, by the dawns of the inner light and there descend the streams of the immortal existence followed by the single and perfect movement of Mitra-Varuna, the Light and the Purity, the Harmony and the Infinity. It is the rain of heaven which these two Godheads pour down, upholding the physical existence in its fruits and the celestial in its herding radiances of illumination. They thus create in man a force full of divine knowledge and a wide being which they guard and increase, a strewn seat for the sacrifice. This thousand-pillared force of knowledge they make a home for themselves and dwell there in the revelations of the Word. It is luminous in its form and its pillars of life have an iron strength and stability. They ascend to it in the dawning, in the rising of the Sun of knowledge and look with that eye of their divine vision on the infinite existence and the finite, the indivisible unity of things and their multiplicity. It is a home full and large with the sweetness and ecstasy of the supreme and inviolable peace and bliss which by their cherishing and fostering protection we seek to conquer and possess.]

ऋतेन ऋतमपिहितं ध्रुवं वां सूर्यस्य यत्र विमुचन्त्यश्वान् ।
दश शता सह तस्थुस्तदेकं देवानां श्रेष्ठं वपुषामपश्यम् ॥ १ ॥

1. By the Truth[1] is veiled that ever-standing Truth of yours where they unyoke the horses of the Sun;[2] there the ten hundreds[3] stand still together; That One, — I have beheld the greatest of the embodied gods.[4]

तत्सु वां मित्रावरुणा महित्वमीर्मा तस्थुषीरहभिर्दुदुह्रे ।
विश्वाः पिन्वथः स्वसरस्य धेना अनु वामेकः पविरा ववर्त ॥ २ ॥

2. That is the utter vastness of you, O Mitra and Varuna; there the Lord of the movement milks the herds of his stable radiances by the days. Lo, you twain swell all the streams of the Blissful One and your one wheel[5] moves in their path.

अधारयतं पृथिवीमुत द्यां मित्रराजाना वरुणा महोभिः ।
वर्धयतमोषधीः पिन्वतं गा अव वृष्टिं सृजतं जीरदानू ॥ ३ ॥

3. You uphold earth and heaven, O Mitra King and King Varuna, by your greatnesses; you increase the growths of earth, you nourish the shining herds of heaven, you pour forth the rain of its waters, O swift in strength.

---

[1] The active cosmic Truth of things diffused and arranged in their mutability and divisibility of Time and Space veils the eternal and unchanging Truth of which it is a manifestation.

[2] The eternal Truth is the goal of the divine Light which arises in us and journeys upward into higher and higher heavens through the shining upper ocean.

[3] The entire plenitude of the divine wealth in its outpourings of knowledge, force and joy.

[4] The One, the Deva veiled by his form of the divine Sun. Cf. Isha Upanishad, "That splendour which is thy fairest form, O Sun, that let me behold. The Purusha who is there and there, He am I."

[5] The unified movement, when the lower wheel of the Sun is struck away; the inferior truth is taken up into the unity of the higher truth from which it now seems to be separate in its motion.

आ वामश्वासः सुयुजो वहन्तु यतरश्मय उप यन्त्वर्वाक् ।
घृतस्य निर्णिगनु वर्तते वामुप सिन्धवः प्रदिवि क्षरन्ति ॥ ४ ॥

4. Let horses perfectly yoked with their well-governed reins of light bear you down to us; the form of the clarity follows in your coming and the Rivers flow in the front of heaven.

अनु श्रुताममतिं वर्धदुर्वीं बर्हिरिव यजुषा रक्षमाणा ।
नमस्वन्ता धृतदक्षाधि गर्ते मित्रासाथे वरुणेळास्वन्तः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Increasing the strength that comes to our ear of knowledge, guarding by the sacrificial word[6] your wide realm[7] as if our seat of sacrifice, bringing obeisance, holding fast to judgment, you take your seat in your home, O Mitra, within the revealings of knowledge, O Varuna.

अक्रविहस्ता सुकृते परस्पा यं त्रासाथे वरुणेळास्वन्तः ।
राजाना क्षत्रमहृणीयमाना सहस्रस्थूणं बिभृथः सह द्वौ ॥ ६ ॥

6. With hands that spare not, protectors of the beyond for the doer of perfect works whom you deliver and he dwells within the revealings of knowledge, kings free from passion, together you uphold a thousand-pillared strength.

हिरण्यनिर्णिगयो अस्य स्थूणा वि भ्राजते दिव्यश्वाजनीव ।
भद्रे क्षेत्रे निमिता तिल्विले वा सनेम मध्वो अधिगर्त्यस्य ॥ ७ ॥

7. Its form is of golden light, iron is its pillar and shines in heaven as if the swift lightning;[8] in the happy field[9] it is shaped or in the field of the gleaming.[10] May we win possession of the sweet honey[11] which is in that home.

---

[6] Yajur. The Rik is the word which brings with it the illumination, the Yajur the word which guides the sacrificial action in accordance with the Rik.

[7] Or, "increasing and guarding the wide strength".

[8] Or, "the Mare", the energy of the Horse of Life.

[9] The Ananda, the Bliss-World.

[10] The field of the gleaming of the Dawns, the world of the Light.

[11] Madhu, the Soma.

हिरण्यरूपमुषसो व्युष्टावयःस्थूणमुदिता सूर्यस्य ।
आ रोहथो वरुण मित्र गर्तमतश्चक्षाथे अदितिं दितिं च ॥ ८॥

8. To that home whose form is of the gold, whose pillars are of the iron, in the breaking of the Dawn, in the uprising of the Sun you ascend, O Varuna, O Mitra, and thence you behold the Infinite and the Finite.[12]

यद् बंहिष्ठं नातिविधे सुदानू अच्छिद्रं शर्म भुवनस्य गोपा ।
तेन नो मित्रावरुणावविष्टं सिषासन्तो जिगीवांसः स्याम ॥ ९॥

9. That bliss of yours which is most large and full and without a gap, O strong guardians of the world, so that none can pierce through and beyond it, by that cherish us, Mitra and Varuna; may we be victorious, who would take possession of that peace.

---

[12] Aditi and Diti.

The Second Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE GIVERS OF THE RAIN

[Mitra and Varuna are by their united universality and harmony the guardians of the divine Truth and its divine Law eternally perfect in the ether of our supreme being; thence they rain down the abundance of the heavens and its bliss upon the favoured soul. Seers in man of that world of Truth, as they are by their guardianship of its law rulers of all this becoming, they give us its rain of spiritual wealth and immortality. The Life-powers range with the voice of the truth-seeking thought through earth and heaven and the two Kings come to their cry with the brilliant clouds full of the creative waters. It is by the Maya, the divine truth-knowledge of the Lord, that they thus rain down heaven; that divine knowledge is the Sun, the Light, the weapon of Mitra and Varuna ranging abroad to destroy the ignorance. At first the Sun, the body of the Truth, is concealed in the very storm of its outpourings and only the sweetness of their streaming into the life is felt; but the Maruts as Life-Powers and Thought-Powers range abroad seeking in all the worlds of our being for the brilliant rays of the concealed knowledge to be gathered as a shining wealth; the voice of the Rain is full of the flashings of the Light and the movement of the divine Waters; its clouds become robes for the Life-Powers. Through it all by the formative knowledge of the mighty Master of Truth and by the law of the Truth, the two kings maintain the divine workings in us, governing by the Truth all our being, and finally set in its sky the Sun, now revealed, as a chariot of the richly varied splendours of the knowledge, the chariot of the journey of the spirit to the highest heavens.]

ऋतस्य गोपावधि तिष्ठथो रथं सत्यधर्माणा परमे व्योमनि ।
यमत्र मित्रावरुणावथो युवं तस्मै वृष्टिर्मधुमत्पिन्वते दिवः ॥१॥

1. Guardians of the Truth, you ascend your car and the law of the Truth is yours in the supreme ether.[1] He whom here you cherish, Masters of the wideness and the harmony, for him increases full of the honey the rain of heaven.

सम्राजावस्य भुवनस्य राजथो मित्रावरुणा विदथे स्वर्दृशा ।
वृष्टिं वां राधो अमृतत्वमीमहे द्यावापृथिवी वि चरन्ति तन्यवः ॥२॥

2. Emperors,[2] you rule over this world of our becoming, O Mitra and Varuna, in the getting of knowledge you are seers of the realm of Light; we desire from you the rain, the felicitous wealth, the immortality, and lo! the Thunderers[3] range abroad through earth and heaven.

सम्राजा उग्रा वृषभा दिवस्पती पृथिव्या मित्रावरुणा विचर्षणी ।
चित्रेभिरभ्रैरुप तिष्ठथो रवं द्यां वर्षयथो असुरस्य मायया ॥३॥

3. Emperors, strong Bulls of the abundance, Masters of earth and heaven, O Mitra and Varuna, universal in your workings, you approach their cry with your clouds of varied light and you rain down Heaven by the power of the knowledge[4] of the Mighty One.[5]

---

[1] The infinity of the superconscient being.

[2] *Samrāṭ*, having perfect kingship over the subjective and objective existence.

[3] The Maruts, Life-Powers and Thought-Powers who find out the light of truth for all our activities. The word may also mean formers or builders.

[4] Maya, the creative knowledge-will of the Deva.

[5] Asura, a word used in the Veda as in the Avesta for the Deva (Ahuramazda), but also for the gods, His manifestations; it is only in a few hymns that it is used for the dark Titans, by another and fictitious derivation, *a-sura*, the not-luminous, the not-gods.

माया वां मित्रावरुणा दिवि श्रिता सूर्यो ज्योतिश्चरति चित्रमायुधम् ।
तमभ्रेण वृष्ट्या गूहथो दिवि पर्जन्य द्रप्सा मधुमन्त ईरते ॥ ४ ॥

4. This is your knowledge, O Mitra and Varuna, that is lodged in heaven; it is the Sun, it is the Light; it ranges abroad as your rich and varied weapon. You hide it in heaven with the cloud and with the raining. O Rain, full of the honey start forth thy streamings.

रथं युञ्जते मरुतः शुभे सुखं शूरो न मित्रावरुणा गविष्टिषु ।
रजांसि चित्रा वि चरन्ति तन्यवो दिवः सम्राजा पयसा न उक्षतम् ॥ ५ ॥

5. The Life-Powers yoke their happy car for the bliss, even as might a hero for battle, O Mitra and Varuna, in their seekings for the herds of Light; thundering they range the varied worlds, and you pour out on us, rulers imperial, the water of Heaven.

वाचं सु मित्रावरुणाविरावतीं पर्जन्यश्चित्रां वदति त्विषीमतीम् ।
अभ्रा वसत मरुतः सु मायया द्यां वर्षयतमरुणामरेपसम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. O Mitra and Varuna, the Rain speaks its language[6] rich and varied and full of the light and the movement; the Life-Powers have put on your clouds for raiment. Utterly by the knowledge you rain down Heaven ruddy-shining and sinless.

धर्मणा मित्रावरुणा विपश्चिता व्रता रक्षेथे असुरस्य मायया ।
ऋतेन विश्वं भुवनं वि राजथः सूर्यमा धत्थो दिवि चित्र्यं रथम् ॥ ७ ॥

---

[6] Here we see the subjective sense of the thunder in the symbol of the storm; it is the outcrashing of the word of the Truth, the Shabda, as the lightning is the outflashing of its sense.

7. O Mitra and Varuna illumined in consciousness, by the Law, by the knowledge of the Mighty One you guard the workings;[7] by the Truth you govern widely all the world of our becoming; you set the Sun in heaven, a chariot of various splendour.

---

[7] *Vratāni*, called the Aryan or divine workings, those of the divine law of the Truth to be revealed in man. The Dasyu or un-Aryan, whether human or superhuman, is he who is void of these diviner workings, opposes them in his darkened consciousness and tries to destroy them in the world. The Lords of Darkness are therefore called Dasyus, the Destroyers.

The Third Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE LEADERS TO THE BLISSFUL HOME

[The Rishi invokes the Lords of the infinite wideness and harmony whose arms embrace the soul's highest plane of the Truth and Bliss, to extend to him those arms of awakened consciousness and knowledge, so that he may have their all-embracing delight. He aspires by the path of Mitra to the joy of his harmonies in which there is no wound nor hurt; conceiving and holding the highest by the power of the illumining word, he would aspire to an increase in that plane, the proper home of the gods. Let the two great gods create in his being that wide world of their divine strength and vastness; let them bring to him its plenitude and felicity in the dawning of the divine light and the divine force.]

वरुणं वो रिशादसमृचा मित्रं हवामहे ।
परि व्रजेव बाह्वोर्जगन्वांसा स्वर्णरम् ॥१॥

1. Varuna, destroyer of the foe, and Mitra we call to you by the word of illumination; their arms encompass the world of the power of Light[1] as if cast around the pens of the shining herds.

ता बाहवा सुचेतुना प्र यन्तमस्मा अर्चते ।
शेवं हि जार्यं वां विश्वासु क्षासु जोगुवे ॥२॥

---

[1] Swarnara. Swar is the solar world of the Truth and the herds are the rays of its solar illuminations, therefore it is compared to the pens of these shining Vedic cattle.

2. Stretch out your arms of awakened knowledge[2] to the human being when he chants to you the illumining word; your bliss adorable shall reach through all our earths.[3]

यन्नूनमश्यां गतिं मित्रस्य यायां पथा ।
अस्य प्रियस्य शर्मण्यहिंसानस्य सश्चिरे ॥ ३॥

3. May I go by the path of the Friend[4] that even now I may attain to the goal[5] of my journey; so men cling firmly to the bliss of that Beloved in whom there is no wounding.

युवाभ्यां मित्रावरुणोपमं धेयामृचा ।
यद्ध क्षये मघोनां स्तोतॄणां च स्पूर्धसे ॥ ४॥

4. O Mitra and Varuna, may my thought hold by the illumining word that highest which is your possession, so that it shall aspire[6] to the home of the masters of plenitude for them and for men who affirm you.

आ नो मित्र सुदीतिभिर्वरुणश्च सधस्थ आ ।
स्वे क्षये मघोनां सखीनां च वृधसे ॥ ५॥

5. O Mitra, come to us with thy perfect givings and Varuna in the world of our session, for increase in their own home of the masters of plenitude[7] and for increase of your companions.

---

[2] The epithet shows how entirely symbolic are the bodies and members of the Gods as well as their other physical belongings, weapons, chariots, horses.

[3] All the planes of our being.

[4] Mitra, who creates the perfect and unhurt harmonies of our higher, divine existence.

[5] *Gati.* The word is still used for the spiritual or supraterrestrial status gained by man's conduct or efforts upon earth. But it may also mean the movement to the goal or the way, "May I even now attain to the Way, go by the path of Mitra."

[6] That is, manifesting in men it shall strive to raise them up to its own proper station, the Truth-plane.

[7] The gods. Swar is the "own house" of the Gods.

युवं नो येषु वरुण क्षत्रं बृहच्च बिभृथः ।
उरु णो वाजसातये कृतं राये स्वस्तये ॥ ६॥

6. For in them you twain bring to us, O Varuna, the might[8] and the vastness; form in us the wide world for the conquest of our plenitudes, for bliss, for our soul's happiness.

उच्छन्त्यां मे यजता देवक्षत्रे रुशद्गवि ।
सुतं सोमं न हस्तिभिरा पड्भिर्धावतं नरा बिभ्रतावर्चनानसम् ॥ ७॥

7. To me, O lords of sacrifice, in the breaking of the dawn, in the flashing of the ray, in the force of the gods, to my wine pressed out as if[9] by men with hands come racing with your trampling steeds, O gods who bring, — to the pilgrim of the Light.[10]

---

[8] The divine force of the Truth-conscious being, called in the next verse "the force of the gods"; the Vast, *bṛhat*, is the constant description of that plane or "wide world", — the Truth, the Right, the Vast.

[9] "As if", — showing, as often, that the wine and its pressing are figures and symbols.

[10] *Arcanānas*, he who travels to the illumination created by the word, the significant name of the Rishi of this hymn, one of the line of Atri.

The Fourth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE LORDS OF THE JOURNEY

[The Rishi invokes the two great increasers of the truth in our being to lead us in our journey to the plenitudes, to the vastness of our true existence which they conquer for us out of the narrow limits of our present ignorant and imperfect mentality.]

यश्चिकेत स सुक्रतुर्देवत्रा स ब्रवीतु नः ।
वरुणो यस्य दर्शतो मित्रो वा वनते गिरः ॥१॥

1. He who has awakened to the knowledge, becomes perfect in will; let him speak for us among the gods: Varuna of the vision and Mitra take delight in his words.

ता हि श्रेष्ठवर्चसा राजाना दीर्घश्रुत्तमा ।
ता सत्पती ऋतावृध ऋतावाना जनेजने ॥२॥

2. They are the Kings most glorious in light and most far in their hearing;[1] they are the masters of being in creature and creature and the increasers of the Truth in us, for the Truth is theirs.

ता वामियानोऽवसे पूर्वा उप ब्रुवे सचा ।
स्वश्वासः सु चेतुना वाजाँ अभि प्र दावने ॥३॥

3. Travelling on the path I call to them, the twain together, the ancient and first; with perfect steeds[2] as we travel we

---

[1] They have the divine sight and the divine hearing, the Light and the Word.

[2] As usual, the symbol of the dynamic energies, life-powers, etc., by which our will and works and aspiration proceed.

call to them, the perfect in knowledge, for the giving of the plenitudes.

मित्रो अंहोश्चिदादुरु क्षयाय गातुं वनते ।
मित्रस्य हि प्रतूर्वतः सुमतिरस्ति विधतः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Even out of our narrow existence Mitra conquers for us the vastness, he conquers the path to our home; for the perfect mind[3] is of Mitra when he harmonises all and hastens forward through to the goal.

वयं मित्रस्यावसि स्याम सप्रथस्तमे ।
अनेहसस्त्वोतयः सत्रा वरुणशेषसः ॥ ५ ॥

5. May we abide in the increasing of Mitra which gives us our perfect breadth; then are we free from hurt and sin, fostered by thee, children of the Lord of Wideness.

युवं मित्रेमं जनं यतथः सं च नयथः ।
मा मघोनः परि ख्यतं मो अस्माकमृषीणां गोपीथे न उरुष्यतम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. You twain, O Mitra, set this human creature travelling on your path and wholly you lead him. Set not your hedge around our lords of plenitude and our seers of the truth. Guard us in our drinking of the light.[4]

---

[3] *Aṁhoḥ*, the narrowness full of suffering and evil, is the unenlightened state of our limited mentality; the perfect mentality, *sumati*, given by the grace of Mitra admits us to the wideness.

[4] *Go*, the Light or the Cow, meaning here the "milk" or yield of the Mother of Light.

The Fifth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE GIVERS OF SELF-RULE

[The Rishi invokes Varuna, the vast form of the Truth, and Mitra the beloved, godhead of its harmonies and large bliss, who conquer for us the perfect force of our true and infinite being, to change our imperfect human nature into the image of their divine workings. Then the solar Heaven of the Truth is manifested within us, its wide pasture of herding illuminations becomes the field of journeying of our chariots, the high thoughts of the seers, their purified discernment, their rapid inspirations become ours, our very earth becomes the world of that vast Truth. For then there is the perfect movement, the transcendence of this darkness of sin and suffering. We arrive at self-empire, a rich, full and vast possession of our infinite being.]

आ चिकितान सुक्रतू देवौ मर्त रिशादसा ।
वरुणाय ऋतपेशसे दधीत प्रयसे महे ॥ १ ॥

1. O mortal who awakenest to knowledge, call to thee the two godheads who are perfect in will and destroyers of thy enemy. Direct your thoughts to Varuna of whom Truth is the form and to the great Delight.[1]

ता हि क्षत्रमविह्रुतं सम्यगसुर्यमाशाते ।
अध व्रतेव मानुषं स्वर्ण धायि दर्शतम् ॥ २ ॥

---

[1] The satisfaction given by Mitra, founding the large bliss of the Truth-plane. Varuna of the infinities gives the wide form, Mitra of the harmonies the perfect joy of the energies of the Truth, its complete mightiness.

2. For it is they who attain to the undistorted force and the entire mightiness. Then shall thy humanity become as if the workings of these gods; it is as if the visible heaven of light[2] were founded in thee.

ता वामेषे रथानामुर्वीं गव्यूतिमेषाम् ।
रातहव्यस्य सुष्टुतिं दधृक्स्तोमैर्मनामहे ॥ ३ ॥

3. Therefore you, O gods, I desire, — for the rushing of these chariots your wide pasture of the herds. Forcefully by our hymns our minds seize on his perfect affirmation when the god receives our bounteous offerings.

अधा हि काव्या युवं दक्षस्य पूर्भिरद्भुता ।
नि केतुना जनानां चिकेथे पूतदक्षसा ॥ ४ ॥

4. Then indeed, O transcendent godheads, you conquer the seer-wisdoms by the full floodings of the illumined discernment; you perceive knowledge for these human creatures by a perception in which the judgment is purified.

तदृतं पृथिवि बृहच्छ्रवएष ऋषीणाम् ।
ज्रयसानावरं पृथ्वति क्षरन्ति यामभिः ॥ ५ ॥

5. O wide Earth, that Vast, that Truth for the movement of inspired knowledge of the sages! Widely the Twain speed with full capacity, our chariots pass streaming beyond[3] in their travellings.

आ यद्वामीयचक्षसा मित्र वयं च सूरयः ।
व्यचिष्ठे बहुपाय्ये यतेमहि स्वराज्ये ॥ ६ ॥

---

[2] Or Swar of the vision, the world of light where is the full vision of the Truth.
[3] Beyond the darkness and the enemies, the suffering and evil of the lower existence.

6. When, O Mitra, you have your far-voyaging vision and we are the illumined seers, may we arrive in the effort of our journey to a self-empire[4] spread out widely open and governing its multitudes.

---

[4] Swarajya. Swarajya and Samrajya, perfect empire within and without, rule of our inner being and mastery of our environment and circumstances, was the ideal of the Vedic sages, attainable only by ascending beyond our mortal mentality to the luminous Truth of our being, the supramental infinities on the spiritual plane of our existence.

The Sixth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE TWIN UPHOLDERS AND PROTECTORS

[Mitra and Varuna perfect the vastness of the superconscient being which is the object of sacrifice; they possess the full abundance of its force. When they reach that luminous origin and home, they give men, labourers in the sacrificial work, its peace and bliss; on the way to it they protect the mortal from his spiritual enemies who would stand in the way of his immortality; for they keep firm to their higher workings and to the seats of the higher consciousness to which those workings belong and to which man rises in his ascent; universal and all-knowing they destroy these enemies who are the forces of egoism and limiting ignorance. True in their being, they are the powers that possess and touch the Truth in each individual being; leaders of the journey and the battle they create the wideness of that higher consciousness even out of our narrow and distressed mortality. It is that highest which the thought in the Atris desires and reaches to by affirming Mitra, Varuna and Aryaman, the godheads, in the "bodies" inhabited by the human soul.]

बळित्था देव निष्कृतमादित्या यजतं बृहत् ।
वरुण मित्रार्यमन्वर्षिष्ठं क्षत्रमाशाथे ॥१॥

1. In truth, O godheads, ye two sons of the infinite Mother, rightly perfected by you is the Vastness for which we sacrifice. O Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, you possess its most abundant force.

आ यद्योनिं हिरण्ययं वरुण मित्र सदथः ।
धर्तारा चर्षणीनां यन्तं सुम्नं रिशादसा ॥२॥

2. When you enter into your original home of golden light, O Varuna, O Mitra, upholders of men in their labour, destroyers of the enemy, reach for them the bliss.

विश्वे हि विश्ववेदसो वरुणो मित्रो अर्यमा ।
व्रता पदेव सश्चिरे पान्ति मर्त्यँ रिषः ॥ ३॥

3. Universal and all-knowing are Varuna and Mitra and Aryaman; they keep firm to the law of their workings, even as to the seats to which they arrive, and guard mortal man from his foes.

ते हि सत्या ऋतस्पृश ऋतावानो जनेजने ।
सुनीथासः सुदानवोंऽहोश्चिदुरुचक्रयः ॥ ४॥

4. For because they are true in their being, they touch the Truth and hold the Truth in creature and creature; perfect leaders in the journey, perfect in force for the battle, they create the wideness even out of this narrow being.

को नु वां मित्रास्तुतो वरुणो वा तनूनाम् ।
तत्सु वामेषते मतिरत्रिभ्य एषते मतिः ॥ ५॥

5. Which of you, O Mitra, is unaffirmed, thou or Varuna, in our bodies?[1] Wholly our thought seeks That from you, That for the Enjoyers[2] our Thought desires.

---

[1] Not the physical body only; the soul dwells here in five sheaths or embodyings.
[2] The Atris, — literally, eaters; the word may also mean Travellers.

The Seventh Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE LORDS OF THE GREAT FORCE

[Because they hold the great battle-force of the Truth, Mitra and Varuna lead us to the vastness of that Truth. By that force they rule all imperially, contain the Truth's clarities and their powers are manifested in all the godheads. Therefore should they put forth their power in these godheads for the human possession of the great felicity and wealth of the Truth in earth and heaven. They reach the Truth by the Truth; for they have its discernment full of the impulsion that goes straight to the knowledge; therefore they increase divinely without falling into the harms of the Ignorance. As lords of that powerful impulsion they bring down the heavens in a luminous rain upon the mortal and take possession of the vast as a home.]

प्र वो मित्राय गायत वरुणाय विपा गिरा ।
महिक्षत्रावृतं बृहत् ॥ १॥

1. Sing ye to Mitra and Varuna with the word that enlightens; because they have that great force, theirs is the Truth, the Vast.

सम्राजा या घृतयोनी मित्रश्चोभा वरुणश्च ।
देवा देवेषु प्रशस्ता ॥ २॥

2. All-rulers are they, yes, both of them, Mitra and Varuna, homes of the clarity, gods, manifested by the word in the gods.

ता नः शक्तं पार्थिवस्य महो रायो दिव्यस्य ।
महि वां क्षत्रं देवेषु ॥ ३॥

3. Therefore put forth strength for our great felicity[1] heavenly and earthly; for great is your force in the gods.

ऋतमृतेन सपन्तेषिरं दक्षमाशाते ।
अद्रुहा देवौ वर्धेते ॥ ४ ॥

4. By the Truth you attain knowledge of the Truth, you possess a judgment of impelling force;[2] O gods, you grow and come not to hurt.

वृष्टिद्यावा रीत्यापेषस्पती दानुमत्याः ।
बृहन्तं गर्तमाशाते ॥ ५ ॥

5. Turning heaven to rain, winners of the streaming movement, masters of that forceful impulsion, you take possession of your vast home.

---

[1] The felicity or happy wealth of the wide Truth-consciousness manifested not only in the higher mental planes of our consciousness, but in our physical being.

[2] The straight impulsion which the gods possess; man, moving from the ignorance to the Truth by the ignorance, follows a crooked and wavering movement, has a judgment distressed by the falsehood and in his growth stumbles constantly into sin and suffering. By the growth of the gods in him, he is able to move without stumbling and suffering from Truth to greater Truth, straight, felicitously.

The Eighth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE HOLDERS OF THE LUMINOUS WORLDS

[The Rishi invokes Mitra and Varuna as the upholders of the worlds or planes of being, especially the three luminous worlds in which the triple mental, the triple vital, the triple physical find the light of their truth and the divine law of their powers. The strength of the Aryan warrior is increased by them and guarded in that imperishable law. From the luminous worlds the rivers of the truth descend with their yield of bliss. In each of them a luminous Purusha fertilises a form of the triple thought-consciousness of the Truth; these, which make the luminous day of the soul, found in man the divine and infinite consciousness and in that the divine peace and the activity by which in the extended universality of our being there is the rich felicity and the creation of the godhead. The divine workings are impaired and restricted by the gods in the ordinary life of the vital and the physical being, but when Mitra and Varuna uphold in us the luminous worlds in which each of these finds its truth and power, they become complete and firm for ever.]

त्री रोचना वरुण त्रीँरुत द्यून् त्रीणि मित्र धारयथो रजांसि ।
वावृधानावमतिं क्षत्रियस्याऽनु व्रतं रक्षमाणावजुर्यम् ॥ १ ॥

1. Three worlds of the Light you two uphold, O Varuna, three heavens, three mid-worlds, O Mitra, and you increase the might of the Warrior and guard him in the imperishable law of your working.

इरावतीर्वरुण धेनवो वां मधुमद् वां सिन्धवो मित्र दुह्रे ।
त्रयस्तस्थुर्वृषभासस्तिसृणां धिषणानां रेतोधा वि द्युमन्तः ॥ २ ॥

2. Your fostering cows[1] have their streams, O Varuna, O Mitra, the rivers milk out their honeyed yield. There stand wide three luminous Bulls[2] and cast their seed into the three Thoughts.

प्रातर्देवीमदितिं जोह्वीमि मध्यंदिन उदिता सूर्यस्य ।
राये मित्रावरुणा सर्वतातेळे तोकाय तनयाय शं योः ॥ ३ ॥

3. In the dawn I call to the divine Mother infinite, in the midday and at the rising of the sun. I desire of Mitra and Varuna the peace and the movement in the forming of the all[3] for felicity and for the creation and the begetting.[4]

या धर्तारा रजसो रोचनस्योतादित्या दिव्या पार्थिवस्य ।
न वां देवा अमृता आ मिनन्ति व्रतानि मित्रावरुणा ध्रुवाणि ॥ ४ ॥

4. Because you are the upholders of the luminous sphere of the mid-world and the luminous sphere of the earth, O divine Sons of Infinity, O Mitra and Varuna, the immortal gods impair not your workings which are firm for ever.[5]

---

[1] *Dhenavaḥ*, the rivers of the Truth, as *gāvaḥ*, the luminous cows, are the rays of its light.

[2] The Bull is the Purusha, soul or conscious being; the Cow is the Prakriti, the power of consciousness. The creation of the godhead, the Son, comes by the fertilising of the triple luminous consciousness by the triple luminous soul of the Truth-being so that that higher consciousness becomes active, creative and fruitful in man.

[3] The action of the sacrifice consists in the formation or "extension" of the universal being, *sarvatāti*, and of the divine being, *devatāti*.

[4] Of the Son, the godhead created within the humanity.

[5] That is, in the ordinary workings of the life-plane and the material plane, because they are unilluminated, full of ignorance and defect, the law of our divine and infinite being is impaired or spoiled, works under restrictions and with perversions; it manifests fully, steadfastly and faultlessly only when the ideal, supramental truth-plane is upheld in us by the pure wideness and harmony of Varuna and Mitra and takes up the vital and the physical consciousness into its power and light.

The Ninth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE INCREASERS OF BEING AND DELIVERERS

[The Rishi desires the wide and multiple fostering of our being and its powers which Varuna and Mitra give and their complete impulsion of our strength towards the perfect foundation of the divine status. He prays to them to protect and deliver him from the Destroyers and prevent their adverse control from impairing the growth of the godhead in our various sheaths or bodies.]

पुरूरुणा चिद्ध्यस्त्यवो नूनं वां वरुण ।
मित्र वंसि वां सुमतिम् ॥१॥

1. Multiple indeed by the wideness[1] is now your fostering of our being, O Varuna. O Mitra, I would enjoy your perfect-mindedness.

ता वां सम्यगद्रुह्वाणेषमश्याम धायसे ।
वयं ते रुद्रा स्याम ॥२॥

2. You are they who betray not to harm;[2] may we enjoy your complete force of impulsion for our founding; may we be they, O you violent godheads.

पातं नो रुद्रा पायुभिरुत त्रायेथां सुत्रात्रा ।
तुर्याम दस्यून् तनूभिः ॥३॥

---

[1] The wideness of the infinite Truth-plane with the manifold wealth of its spiritual contents. Its condition is the perfection of the thought-mind and psychic mentality proper to a divine nature, which comes to man as the grace of the gods, *sumati*.

[2] The harms of the Dasyus, destroyers of our being and enemies of its divine progress, the sons of Limitation and Ignorance.

3. Protect us, O violent ones,[3] with your protectings and deliver us with a perfect deliverance. May we in our embodyings break through the Destroyers.

मा कस्याद्भुतक्रतू यक्षं भुजेमा तनूभिः ।
मा शेषसा मा तनसा ॥ ४ ॥

4. O transcendent in will-power, let us not in our embodyings suffer the control of any,[4] nor in our begetting, nor our creation.

---

[3] Rudras. Rudra is the Divine as the master of our evolution by violence and battle, smiting and destroying the Sons of Darkness and the evil they create in man. Varuna and Mitra as helpers in the upward struggle against the Dasyus assume this Rudrahood.

[4] That is, any of the Destroyers.

The Tenth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

AN INVOCATION TO THE SACRIFICE

[The Rishi invokes Mitra and Varuna to the Soma offering as destroyers of the enemy and greateners of our being and as helpers of our thoughts by their mastery and wisdom.]

आ नो गन्तं रिशादसा वरुण मित्र बर्हणा ।
उपेमं चारुमध्वरम् ॥१॥

1. O destroyers of the Enemy, come with your greatenings,[1] O Varuna, O Mitra, to this our delightful sacrifice.

विश्वस्य हि प्रचेतसा वरुण मित्र राजथः ।
ईशाना पिप्यतं धियः ॥२॥

2. O Varuna, O Mitra, you govern every man and are the wise thinkers; you are the rulers, nourish our thoughts.

उप नः सुतमा गतं वरुण मित्र दाशुषः ।
अस्य सोमस्य पीतये ॥३॥

3. Come, O Varuna, O Mitra, to our Soma offering, to the sacrifice of the giver, that you may drink of this wine.

---

[1] By destroying the enemy, the hurters, who pervert and diminish our being, will and knowledge, they increase in us the largenesses proper to the "vast Truth". When they govern, the control of the Dasyus is removed and the knowledge of the Truth increases in our thoughts.

The Eleventh Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

AN INVOCATION TO THE SACRIFICE

[The Rishi invokes Mitra and Varuna to the sacrifice as the godheads who lead man on the path according to the law of the truth and confirm our spiritual gains by its workings.]

आ मित्रे वरुणे वयं गीर्भिर्जुहुमो अत्रिवत् ।
नि बर्हिषि सदतं सोमपीतये ॥१॥

1. With the words we sacrifice to Mitra and to Varuna as the Atri.
Sit on the seat of the largeness for the drinking of the wine.

व्रतेन स्थो ध्रुवक्षेमा धर्मणा यातयज्जना ।
नि बर्हिषि सदतं सोमपीतये ॥२॥

2. By your working you keep firm the gettings of good and you make men to walk the path by your law.
Sit on the seat of the largeness for the drinking of the wine.

मित्रश्च नो वरुणश्च जुषेतां यज्ञमिष्टये ।
नि बर्हिषि सदतां सोमपीतये ॥३॥

3. May Mitra and Varuna take delight in our sacrifice that we may have our desire.
Sit on the seat of the largeness for the drinking of the wine.

Hymn to Varuna

[In this hymn there is throughout a sustained double sense. In the exoteric Varuna is hymned as the Asura, omniscient and omnipotent lord and creator, the Godhead in his creative wisdom and might forming the world and maintaining the law of things in the earth and mid-air and heavens. In the esoteric, in which the physical phenomena of the exoteric become symbols, the infinite Godhead is hymned in his all-pervading wisdom and purity opening the three worlds of our being to the Sun of knowledge, pouring down the streams of the Truth, purifying the soul from the falsehood of the lower being and its sin. The hymn is rendered here successively in its exoteric and its esoteric significance.]

(1)

TO THE OMNISCIENT CREATOR

प्र सम्राजे बृहदर्चा गभीरं ब्रह्म प्रियं वरुणाय श्रुताय ।
वि यो जघान शमितेव चर्मोपस्तिरे पृथिवीं सूर्याय ॥१॥

1. Sing thou the word vast and profound and dear to renowned Varuna, the All-ruler, to him who clove away, even as the cleaver of beasts a skin, that he might spread out the earth under the sun.

वनेषु व्यन्तरिक्षं ततान वाजमर्वत्सु पय उस्रियासु ।
हृत्सु क्रतुं वरुणो अप्स्वग्निं दिवि सूर्यमदधात्सोममद्रौ ॥२॥

2. He spread out the mid-air on the tree-tops, he put strength in

the battle-steeds and milk in the cows; in hearts he put will, the fire in the waters,[1] the sun in heaven and the Soma-plant on the mountain.

नीचीनबारं वरुणः कवन्धं प्र ससर्ज रोदसी अन्तरिक्षम् ।
तेन विश्वस्य भुवनस्य राजा यवं न वृष्टिर्व्युनत्ति भूम ॥ ३॥

3. Varuna poured forth over earth and heaven and the mid-air the holder of the waters whose windows open downward; by him the King of all the world floods the earth as the rain floods a field of barley.

उनत्ति भूमिं पृथिवीमुत द्यां यदा दुग्धं वरुणो वष्ट्यादित् ।
समभ्रेण वसत पर्वतासस्तविषीयन्तः श्रथयन्त वीराः ॥ ४॥

4. Varuna floods the wide earth and heaven, yea, when he desires the milk of heaven, he pours it forth; the mountains are clothed utterly with cloud, the heroes of storm[2] put forth their strength and all is cast down before them.

इमामू ष्वासुरस्य श्रुतस्य महीं मायां वरुणस्य प्र वोचम् ।
मानेनेव तस्थिवाँ अन्तरिक्षे वि यो ममे पृथिवीं सूर्येण ॥ ५॥

5. I have declared this vast creative wisdom[3] of the famous and mighty One, even Varuna, he who stood in mid-air as with a measuring-rod and wide he measured out the earth with the sun.

इमामू नु कवितमस्य मायां महीं देवस्य नकिरा दधर्ष ।
एकं यदुद्ना न पृणन्त्येनीरासिञ्चन्तीरवनयः समुद्रम् ॥ ६॥

---

[1] Sayana explains, either the electric fire in the water of the clouds or the submarine fire in the ocean.

[2] *Vīrāḥ*, the Heroes, here the Maruts as storm-gods.

[3] Maya, with a strong sense of its root-significance, to measure, form, build or plan out.

6. Vast is this wisdom of the divine and the greatest of seers and there is none who can do violence against it; therefore the Ocean is one, yet all these rushing rivers pour themselves into it and cannot fill it.

अर्यम्यं वरुण मित्र्यं वा सखायं वा सदमिद् भ्रातरं वा ।
वेशं वा नित्यं वरुणारणं वा यत्सीमागश्चकृमा शिश्रथस्तत् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Whatsoever sin we have done against the law of Aryaman or the law of Mitra, against brother or friend, against constant neighbour or enemy,[4] cast it away from us, O Varuna.

कितवासो यद्रिरिपुर्न दीवि यद्वा घा सत्यमुत यन्न विद्म ।
सर्वा ता वि ष्य शिथिरेव देवाऽधा ते स्याम वरुण प्रियासः ॥ ८ ॥

8. The sin we have done like cunning gamesters who break the law of the play, or have done against the truth or what we have sinned in ignorance, all these cleave far from us, O god, like loose-hanging fruits: then shall we be beloved of thee, O Varuna.

(2)

THE MIGHTY MASTER OF INFINITE WISDOM

[The Rishi hymns Varuna as the Lord of infinite purity and wisdom who opens our earthly being to the unclouded light of the sun of knowledge, pours out the waters of the Truth upon all our triple existence mental, vital and physical and by its power removes all sin and evil and falsehood from our lives. He creates the free wideness of our vital being above our broken search for the delightful objects of our desire, sets the plenitude in our battling life-forces, the yield of heaven in the shining herds of thought; he has put will in our hearts, Agni the divine force in the waters of existence, the Sun of divine knowledge in the highest heaven of mind and the plant that yields the wine of delight on the many-plateaued mountain of our being. All these are the means by which we attain to immortality. He plans out all our physical existence by his wisdom according to the truth-light of the sun of knowledge and creates in us the unity of his own infinite existence and consciousness with all the seven rivers of the Truth-plane pouring their streams of knowledge into it without filling its infinity.]

---

[4] Or, stranger.

1. To Varuna of the far-heard inspirations, the all-ruling,[5] sing bright the inspired word of the soul in its vastness and depth and delight; for he has cloven wide away the darkness, as one that cleaves away a skin, that he may spread out our earth under his illumining sun.[6]
2. He has spread wide the mid-world above the forests of earth-delight;[7] he has put his plenitude in our battle-steeds of life[8] and their heavenly milk in our shining herds of knowledge.[9] Varuna has put the will[10] in our hearts, the divine fire[11] in the waters,[12] the Sun of Light in our heavens, the plant of Delight on the mountain of our being.[13]
3. Varuna has poured forth over our earth and heaven and

---

[5] The two epithets are intended to give the two sides of the divine being, all-knowledge and all-power; *māyām āsurasya śrutasya*. Man divinising himself has to become in the image of the godhead seer and king.

[6] The limitations of the physical mentality are rolled away and it is spread out in a great wideness to receive the revelations and inspirations of the light of the gnosis.

[7] The forests or delightful growths of earth (*vana* means also pleasure) are the basis of the mid-world, the vital world in us which is the realm of Vayu, the Life-God. That is the world of the satisfaction of desires. This also is spread out in its full wideness, free from limitation, to receive the Ananda or divine delight by means of the knowledge and law of the Truth.

[8] *Arvatsu*, meaning both "battlers, strivers" and "horses".

[9] *Usriyāsu*, meaning both "bright ones" and "cows".

[10] *Kratu*, the will to the divine work, the sacrificial will.

[11] Agni, the fire of the divine Will which receives the sacrifice and becomes its priest.

[12] The ocean of being or else the waters of Truth which descend from above.

[13] Our existence is compared always to a mountain with many plateaus, each a level or plane of being.

mid-world the holder of wisdom with his doors opening downward;[14] with him the king of all our being floods our earth like rain flooding the barley.

4. He floods our earth in its wideness and our heaven, yea, Varuna when he desires that milk,[15] pours it forth; the mountains are covered with the cloud, his heroes[16] put forth their strength and cast it away.
5. Vast is this wisdom which I declare of Varuna the far-heard, the mighty Lord, for he stands in our mid-world as with a measuring-rod and wide he measures out our earth with his illumining Sun.[17]
6. Vast is this wisdom of the godhead greatest in seer-knowledge and none can do violence to it; for into him, the one, the ocean, the bright fostering rivers[18] pour their waters, yet they cannot fill him.
7. All the sin that we have done against thee in thy power of Aryaman or thy power of Mitra or as brother or friend or the eternal indweller or the warrior,[19] that cast away from us.
8. The sin we have done as cunning gamesters offend in their play, our sin against the truth and our sin by ignorance, all these cleave away like loosened things; then may we be dear to thee, O Varuna.

---

[14] The gnosis opens upward to receive the Infinite in its will and knowledge; here its doors open downwards to flood the lower being.

[15] The milk of the Cow Aditi, the infinite consciousness.

[16] The Maruts as life-powers attaining to full thought-knowledge; they help Indra to break the cloud or coverer, Vritra, and pour out the waters of Truth and also to bring the light hidden by Vala, that of the hidden sun. Here the two ideas are combined in another image.

[17] Man lives in the physical being; Varuna brings the light of the gnosis into it and measures it out, that is, shapes and plans out our earth-existence in the measures of the Truth by means of the mind enlightened by the sun of gnosis: he takes his stand as the Asura in our vital plane, the link between mental and physical, there to receive the light and pass it on to the earth as a creative and determining force.

[18] The seven rivers that descend from the Truth-plane, here called *avanayaḥ*, which has the same root-sense as *dhenavaḥ*, the fostering cows.

[19] Against the Dasyus.

The First Hymn to the Dawn

[The Rishi prays for the full epiphany of the Dawn of the light of Truth in all its lavish splendour, with all the bountiful companies of its gods and seers, the shining herds of its thought, the rushing steeds of its force, the luminous impulsions with which it comes — companioned, as they are, by the burning rays of the Sun of gnosis. Let the Dawn arrive and the work will no longer be long and tardy.]

महे नो अद्य बोधयोषो राये दिवित्मती ।
यथा चिन्नो अबोधयः सत्यश्रवसि वाय्ये सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥१॥

1. O Dawn, come with all thy splendours of heaven, awaken us today to the great felicity, even as once thou awakenedst us, — *in the sonhood of the birth of knowledge, in the inspired hearing of the Truth.*[1]
   O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

या सुनीथे शौचद्रथे व्यौच्छो दुहितर्दिवः ।
सा व्युच्छ सहीयसि सत्यश्रवसि वाय्ये सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥२॥

2. Thou who breakest forth into dawning, O daughter of heaven, in him who has the perfect leading of the flaming chariot of light,[2] so break forth today, — O *greater still in thy force, in the sonhood of the birth of knowledge, in the inspired hearing of the Truth.*

---

[1] The name of the Rishi is here a covert figure for the characteristics of the Sun-birth in man.

[2] The same figure, with another name; it gives the result of the Sun-birth.

O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

सा नो अद्याभरद्वसुर्व्युच्छा दुहितर्दिवः ।
यो व्यौच्छः सहीयसि सत्यश्रवसि वाय्ये सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ३ ॥

3. Break forth into light a bearer of treasures, O daughter of heaven, as once thou brokest forth, — *O greater still in thy force, in the sonhood of the birth of knowledge, in the inspired hearing of the Truth.*
   O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

अभि ये त्वा विभावरि स्तोमैर्गृणन्ति वह्नयः ।
मघैर्मघोनि सुश्रियो दामन्वन्तः सुरातयः सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ४ ॥

4. There are bearers of the sacrifice[3] who bring thee out in their speech, by their hymns they manifest thee, O wide and lustrous Dawn; they are glorious with thy plenty, O queen, their gifts are lavish, their boons are full.
   O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

यच्चिद्धि ते गणा इमे छदयन्ति मघत्तये ।
परि चिद्वष्टयो दधुर्ददतो राधो अह्रयं सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ५ ॥

5. When these companies of thy godheads seek to pleasure thee in hope of thy plenitudes, they set their desires all around, they lavish thy undeviating felicity.
   O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

---

[3] Not human priests, but divine powers, the hosts or companies of the Dawn, "*gaṇas*", at once priests, seers and patrons of the inner sacrifice, winners and givers of the celestial wealth.

ऐषु धा वीरवद्यश उषो मघोनि सूरिषु ।
ये नो राधांस्यह्रया मघवानो अरासत सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ६ ॥

6. These are thy seers; O Dawn, queen of plenty, set in them the splendour of thy heroic powers; lords of thy plenty, they shall lavish on us thy undeviating riches.
   O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

तेभ्यो द्युम्नं बृहद्यश उषो मघोन्या वह ।
ये नो राधांस्यश्व्या गव्या भजन्त सूरयः सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ७ ॥

7. O Dawn, our lady of plenty, bring to them thy illumination, a vast glory; they shall give us enjoyment of the felicity of thy steeds and the felicity of thy herds.
   O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

उत नो गोमतीरिष आ वहा दुहितर्दिवः ।
साकं सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिः शुक्रैः शोचद्भिरर्चिभिः सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ८ ॥

8. Bring to us too, O daughter of heaven, powers of impulse full of the troopings of thy light; let them come companioned with the rays of thy Sun, linked with the purity of his bright and burning light-givings.
   O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

व्युच्छा दुहितर्दिवो मा चिरं तनुथा अपः ।
नेत् त्वा स्तेनं यथा रिपुं तपाति सूरो अर्चिषा सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ९ ॥

9. Break forth into light, O daughter of heaven! And spin not out too long the work. For thee thy sun afflicts not with his

burning ray as he afflicts the foe and the thief.[4]
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

एतावद्वेदुषस्त्वं भूयो वा दातुमर्हसि ।
या स्तोतृभ्यो विभावर्युच्छन्ती न प्रमीयसे सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ १० ॥

10. So much thou shouldst give or more than this; for to thy adorers thou breakest forth into the full wideness of thy glories and thou art not limited in thy dawning.
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

---

[4] The labour towards the being of the Truth is long and tedious, because the powers of darkness and division, the lower powers of our being, seize on and appropriate, keep idle or misuse the gains of the knowledge. They are not bearers of the sacrifice, but its spoilers; they are hurt by the full ray of the sun. But this Dawn of knowledge can bear the full illumination and bring to a rapid conclusion the great work.

The Second Hymn to the Dawn

[The Rishi hymns the divine Dawn, daughter of Heaven, as the bringer of the Truth, the bliss, the heavens of light, creator of the Light, giver of vision, maker, follower, leader of the paths of Truth, remover of the darkness, the eternal and ever youthful goddess of our godward journeying.]

द्युतद्यामानं बृहतीमृतेन ऋतावरीमरुणप्सुं विभातीम् ।
देवीमुषसं स्वरावहन्तीं प्रति विप्रासो मतिभिर्जरन्ते ॥१॥

1. Dawn of the luminous journey, Dawn queen of truth, large with the Truth, how wide is the gleam from her rosy limbs, — Dawn divine who brings with her the heaven of light! Her the seers adore with their thoughts.

एषा जनं दर्शता बोधयन्ती सुगान्पथः कृण्वती यात्यग्रे ।
बृहद्रथा बृहती विश्वमिन्वोषा ज्योतिर्यच्छत्यग्रे अह्नाम् ॥२॥

2. This is she who has the vision and she awakens man and makes his paths easy to travel and walks in his front. How large is her chariot, how vast and all-pervading the goddess, how she brings Light in the front of the days!

एषा गोभिररुणेभिर्युजानाऽस्रेधन्ती रयिमप्रायु चक्रे ।
पथो रदन्ती सुविताय देवी पुरुष्टुता विश्ववारा वि भाति ॥३॥

3. This is she who yokes her cows of rosy light; her journey does not fail and such is the treasure she makes that it passes not away. She hews out our paths to happiness; divine is she, far-shining her glory, many the hymns that rise to her, she brings with her every boon.

एषा व्येनी भवति द्विबर्हा आविष्कृण्वाना तन्वं पुरस्तात् ।
ऋतस्य पन्थामन्वेति साधु प्रजानतीव न दिशो मिनाति ॥ ४ ॥

4. Behold her in her biune energy of earth and heaven, how she comes into being in her whiteness and discloses her body in our front. She follows perfectly the paths of Truth, as one who is wise and knows, and she hedges not in our regions.

एषा शुभ्रा न तन्वो विदानोर्ध्वेव स्नाती दृशये नो अस्थात् ।
अप द्वेषो बाधमाना तमांस्युषा दिवो दुहिता ज्योतिषागात् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Lo, how brilliant is her body when she is found and known! how she stands on high as if bathing in light that we may have vision! Driving away all enemies and all darknesses Dawn, the daughter of Heaven, has come with the Light.

एषा प्रतीची दुहिता दिवो नॄन्योषेव भद्रा नि रिणीते अप्सः ।
व्यूर्ण्वती दाशुषे वार्याणि पुनर्ज्योतिर्युवतिः पूर्वथाकः ॥ ६ ॥

6. Lo, the daughter of Heaven like a woman full of happiness moves to meet the gods and her form travels ever nearer to them. Unveiling all blessings for the giver of sacrifice the goddess young for ever has created the Light once more even as in the beginning.

A Hymn to Savitri

[The Rishi hymns the Sun-God as the source of divine knowledge and the creator of the inner worlds. To him, the Seer, the seekers of light yoke their mind and thoughts; he, the one knower of all forms of knowledge, is the one supreme ordainer of the sacrifice. He assumes all forms as the robes of his being and his creative sight and creates the supreme good and happiness for the two forms of life in the worlds. He manifests the heavenly world, shining in the path of the dawn of divine knowledge; in that path the other godheads follow him and it is his greatness of light that they make the goal of all their energies. He has measured out for us our earthly worlds by his power and greatness: but it is in the three worlds of light that he attains to his real greatness of manifestation in the rays of the divine sun; then he encompasses the night of our darkness with his being and his light and becomes Mitra who by his laws produces the luminous harmony of our higher and lower worlds. Of all our creation he is the one author, and by his forward marches he is its increaser until the whole world of our becoming grows full of his illumination.]

युञ्जते मन उत युञ्जते धियो विप्रा विप्रस्य बृहतो विपश्चितः ।
वि होत्रा दधे वयुनाविदेक इन्मही देवस्य सवितुः परिष्टुतिः ॥१॥

1. The illumined yoke their mind and they yoke their thoughts to the illumined godhead, to the vast, to the luminous in consciousness; the one knower of all manifestation of knowledge, he alone orders the things of the sacrifice. Great is the praise of Savitri, the creating godhead.

विश्वा रूपाणि प्रति मुञ्चते कविः प्रासावीद् भद्रं द्विपदे चतुष्पदे ।
वि नाकमख्यत् सविता वरेण्योऽनु प्रयाणमुषसो वि राजति ॥२॥

2. All forms are robes the Seer puts on that he may create the good and bliss for the double and the quadruple[1] creature. Savitri describes by his light our heavenly world; supreme is he and desirable, wide is the light of his shining in the march of the Dawn.

यस्य प्रयाणमन्वन्य इद् ययुर्देवा देवस्य महिमानमोजसा ।
यः पार्थिवानि विममे स एतशो रजांसि देवः सविता महित्वना ॥ ३ ॥

3. And in that march all the other gods in their might follow after the greatness of this godhead. This is that bright god Savitri who by his power and greatness has measured out our earthly worlds of light.

उत यासि सवितस्त्रीणि रोचनोत सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिः समुच्यसि ।
उत रात्रीमुभयतः परीयस उत मित्रो भवसि देव धर्मभिः ॥ ४ ॥

4. But also thou goest, O Savitri, to the three shining worlds of heaven and thou art made manifest by the rays of the Sun, and thou encirclest on both sides the Night, and thou becomest Mitra, O god, with his settled laws of Truth.

उतेशिषे प्रसवस्य त्वमेक इदुत पूषा भवसि देव यामभिः ।
उतेदं विश्वं भुवनं वि राजसि श्यावाश्वस्ते सवितः स्तोममानशे ॥ ५ ॥

5. And thou alone hast power for the creation and thou becomest the Increaser, O god, by thy marchings in thy path, and thou illuminest all this world of the becoming. Shyavashwa, O Savitri, has found the affirmation of thy godhead.

---

[1] Literally, two-footed and four-footed, but *pad* also means the step, the principle on which the soul founds itself. The esoteric meaning is four-principled, those who dwell in the fourfold principle of the lower world, and two-principled, those who dwell in the double principle of the divine and the human.

Part Four

Other Hymns

A Vedic Hymn

Rig Veda VII.60

O Sun, O Light, because today blameless in thy rising thou hast declared the Truth to the Lord of Love and the Lord of Purity, so may we abide in the godhead, dear to thee, O Mother infinite, dear to thee, O Lord of Strength, in all our speaking. O Mitra, O Varuna, this is he that seeth for the soul, the Sun that rises over earth and heaven in the pervading wideness, and he guards all that is in motion and all that is stable; for he beholds the straight things and the crooked in mortals. Seven shining energies has this Bright One yoked today in the world of our achievement and they bear him on in their clarity, and he beholds the homes of the soul and the places of its birth like a herdsman who watches over his herds.

Upward rise your honied satisfactions; for our sun has climbed into the ocean of pure Light and for him the Children of the Infinite hew out his paths, even the Lord of Love and the Lord of Strength and the Lord of Purity in one harmony. These are they that discern and separate all the much falsehood in us; they are the Lords of Love and Strength and Purity. These grow in the house of Truth, puissant and unvanquished Sons of the Infinite. These are the Love and the Purity hard to repress who by their discernings give knowledge to him who has no knowledge; they bring to him their impulses of a will that has right vision and they lead him by the good path beyond the evil. These with sleepless eyes see and know in his earth for man that is ignorant and lead him: in his forward faring he comes to the fathomless pit in the river, yet shall they bear him across to the other shore of this wideness. The peace and the protection and the happiness which the infinite Mother and the Lords of Love and Purity give to the servant of the sacrifice, in that let us found all our creation and building, let us do no violence to the godhead, O ye swift Wayfarers.

He whom the Lord of Purity upholds, puts away from his altar by the powers of sacrifice whatsoever hurters: cut away, O Lord of Strength, from the servant of the sacrifice the hurt and the division, form in him that vast other world, O givers of the abundance. A blazing strength and a world of illumination is the coming together of these Godheads and they overcome by their near and approaching force. Lo, we quiver with the fear of you; set us at ease by the greatness of your discerning. For when a man by sacrifice wins right-mindedness in the getting of the plenitude, in the conquest of the supreme Felicity, the strong Warriors, the Lords of the Treasure cleave to his heart of emotion and they form there the Vast for his dwelling-place making it of a perfect temper. For you we have made in front this work of the divine representative in our sacrifices; lead us safe through all difficult places. Keep us always with constant felicities.

यदद्य सूर्य ब्रवोऽनागा उद्यन्मित्राय वरुणाय सत्यम् ।
वयं देवत्रादिते स्याम तव प्रियासो अर्यमन् गृणन्तः ॥ १॥

एष स्य मित्रावरुणा नृचक्षा उभे उदेति सूर्यो अभि ज्मन् ।
विश्वस्य स्थातुर्जगतश्च गोपा ऋजु मर्तेषु वृजिना च पश्यन् ॥ २॥

अयुक्त सप्त हरितः सधस्थाद्या ईं वहन्ति सूर्यं घृताचीः ।
धामानि मित्रावरुणा युवाकुः सं यो यूथेव जनिमानि चष्टे ॥ ३॥

उद्वां पृक्षासो मधुमन्तो अस्थुरा सूर्यो अरुहच्छुक्रमर्णः ।
यस्मा आदित्या अध्वनो रदन्ति मित्रो अर्यमा वरुणः सजोषाः ॥ ४॥

इमे चेतारो अनृतस्य भूरेर्मित्रो अर्यमा वरुणो हि सन्ति ।
इम ऋतस्य वावृधुर्दुरोणे शग्मासः पुत्रा अदितेरदब्धाः ॥ ५॥

इमे मित्रो वरुणो दूळभासोऽचेतसं चिच्चितयन्ति दक्षैः ।
अपि क्रतुं सुचेतसं वतन्तस्तिरश्चिदंहः सुपथा नयन्ति ॥ ६॥

इमे दिवो अनिमिषा पृथिव्याश्चिकित्वांसो अचेतसं नयन्ति ।
प्रव्राजे चिन्नद्यो गाधमस्ति पारं नो अस्य विष्पितस्य पर्षन् ॥ ७ ॥

यद् गोपावददितिः शर्म भद्रं मित्रो यच्छन्ति वरुणः सुदासे ।
तस्मिन्ना तोकं तनयं दधाना मा कर्म देवहेळनं तुरासः ॥ ८ ॥

अव वेदिं होत्राभिर्यजेत रिपः काश्चिद्वरुणध्रुतः सः ।
परि द्वेषोभिरर्यमा वृणक्तूरुं सुदासे वृषणा उ लोकम् ॥ ९ ॥

सस्वश्चिद्धि समृतिस्त्वेष्येषामपीच्येन सहसा सहन्ते ।
युष्मद्भिया वृषणो रेजमाना दक्षस्य चिन्महिना मृळता नः ॥ १० ॥

यो ब्रह्मणे सुमतिमायजाते वाजस्य सातौ परमस्य रायः ।
सीक्षन्त मन्युं मघवानो अर्य उरु क्षयाय चक्रिरे सुधातु ॥ ११ ॥

इयं देव पुरोहितिर्युवभ्यां यज्ञेषु मित्रावरुणावकारि ।
विश्वानि दुर्गा पिपृतं तिरो नो यूयं पात स्वस्तिभिः सदा नः ॥ १२ ॥

A Hymn of the Thought-Gods

The shining host has arisen in my soul, the host of the Thought-gods and they sing a hymn as they march upward, a hymn of the heart's illumination. March thou on, O my soul, impetuously to their violent and mighty music. For they are drunken with the joy of an inspiration that betrays not to falsehood, because the truth of eternal Nature is its guide. They are the comrades of a firm and blazing Light and in the force of the Light they work out their lofty aggressions; conquerors, violently they march on their path, self-protecting they guard of themselves the soul against falsehood; for they are many and march without a gap in their brilliant ranks. Violent are they as a herd of rushing bulls; the nights come against them, but they overleap the nights; they possess the earth in our thoughts and they rise with them to the heavens. No half-lights, no impotent things are they, but mighty in aggression and puissant to attain. Spears of light they hold and they loose them from their hands at the children of Darkness; the flashing lightnings of the Thought-gods search the night and the light of heaven rises of itself on our souls at their battle-call. Truth is their shining strength; the hosts of the Thought-gods are the artificers of the soul and they fashion its immortality; themselves they yoke their coursers to the chariot of our life and they drive galloping to the joy that is its goal.

They have bathed their limbs in the waters of Parushni, in the stream that has a multitude of currents, they have put on their divine raiment and now with the wheels of their chariots they break open all Nature's secret caves. Sometimes they march on a thousand branching paths, sometimes they rush direct at their goal; sometimes their paths are within, sometimes they follow outward Nature's thousand ways; the world-sacrifice fulfils itself by the many names of their godhead and by their ever-widening march. Now they make themselves as galloping forces of our life, now they are gods and powers of the soul; at last they put on forms of a supreme world, forms of vision, forms of light. They have attained to the goal, they support the rhythms of the world, chanting they weave their glorious dance round the very fountain of things; they are creators of supreme forms, they expand the soul in vision and make it a divine blaze of light. For these are rushing seekers of the Truth; for the Truth their lightnings stab and search; they are seers, they are creators and ordainers; their aggressions are inspired by the might and force of heaven, therefore affirmed in our thoughts they speed carrying us confidently on their way. When the mind is full of them, it is borne on towards godhead, for they have the radiant inspiration of the path.

Who has known the place of their birth or who has sat in their high beatitudes? Who desires and seeks his Friend beyond? A Mother bore them many-hued in her soul and of her they tell him; a Violent One was their Father whose impulse drives all beings that are born, and him they reveal. Seven and seven the Thought-gods came to me and seven times they gave a hundredfold; in Yamuna I will bathe the shining herds of my thoughts which they have given, I will purify my swiftnesses in the river of my soul.

Lo, they march on in their cohorts and their companies; let us follow in their steps with the pace of our thinkings. For they bear with them an imperishable seed of creation and the grain of immortal forms and this if they plant in the fields of the soul, there shall grow as its harvest life universal and bliss transcendent. They will put by all that derides our aspiration and pass beyond all that limits us; they will destroy all fault and dumbness and the soul's poverties. For theirs is the rain of the abundance of heaven and theirs the storms that set flowing the rivers of life; their thunders are the chant of the hymn of the gods and the proclamations of the Truth. They are the eye that leads us on a happy path and he who follows them shall not stumble, nor have pain nor hurt, nor decay nor die; their plenitudes are not destroyed nor their felicities diminished; they make of man a seer and a king. Their vastness is the blazing of a divine Sun; they shall place us in the seats of Immortality.

Of all that was of old and of all that is new, of all that rises from the soul and all that seeks expression they are the impellers. They stand in the upper and the lower and the middle heaven; they have descended from the highest supreme. They are born of the Truth; they are luminous leaders of the mind; they shall drink the sweet wine of delight and give us the supreme inspirations. The Woman, the Divine is with them who shall put away from us hurt and thirst and desire and refashion man's mind in the form of the godhead. Lo, these are knowers of the Truth, seers whom the Truth inspires, vast in expression, vast in diffusion, young for ever and immortal.

The God of the Mystic Wine

Rig Veda IX.75 and 42

These two hymns are rendered as literally as possible so as to show the original symbolism of the Veda untranslated into its psychological equivalents.

I

अभि प्रियाणि पवते चनोहितो नामानि यह्वो अधि येषु वर्धते ।
आ सूर्यस्य बृहतो बृहन्नधि रथं विश्वञ्चमरुहद्विचक्षणः ॥ १॥

1. Placed in delight he flows to the pleasant Names in which he increases; vast and wise he ascends the chariot of the vast sun, the chariot of a universal movement.

ऋतस्य जिह्वा पवते मधु प्रियं वक्ता पतिर्धियो अस्या अदाभ्यः ।
दधाति पुत्रः पित्रोरपीच्यं नाम तृतीयमधि रोचने दिवः ॥ २॥

2. Tongue of the Truth, a pleasant honey,[1] he flows speaker and lord of this Thought and invincible; the Son places the third hidden Name of the Parents[2] in the luminous world of Heaven.

अव द्युतानः कलशाँ अचिक्रदन्नृभिर्येमानः कोश आ हिरण्यये ।
अभीमृतस्य दोहना अनूषताऽधि त्रिपृष्ठ उषसो वि राजति ॥ ३॥

---

[1] The sweet wine of the Soma.

[2] Heaven and Earth; there are three heavens and three earths and at the summit is the triple luminous world of Heaven called Swar and described lower down as the triple back or threefold level in the Dawn. That is the world of the "vast sun" and is itself described as the Truth, the Right, the Vast.

3. Breaking into light he cries down into the jars, guided by men, in the golden sheath; in him the milkings of the Truth dawn out,[3] he shines wide on the triple back of the Dawn.

अद्रिभिः सुतो मतिभिश्चनोहितः प्ररोचयन् रोदसी मातरा शुचिः ।
रोमाण्यव्या समया वि धावति मधोर्धारा पिन्वमाना दिवेदिवे ॥ ४ ॥

4. Pressed out by the stones, placed in delight by the thoughts, pure, making to shine out the two mothers, Earth and Heaven, he runs evenly through all the hairs of the Sheep;[4] his stream of honey goes on increasing day by day.

परि सोम प्र धन्वा स्वस्तये नृभिः पुनानो अभि वासयाशिरम् ।
ये ते मदा आहनसो विहायसस्तेभिरिन्द्रं चोदय दातवे मघम् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Race everywhere, O Soma, for our happiness, purified by men clothe thyself with the mixings; with those thy raptures that are smiting and wide-extended, impel Indra to give his plenty.[5]

II

जनयन् रोचना दिवो जनयन्नप्सु सूर्यम् ।
वसानो गा अपो हरिः ॥ १ ॥

1. Giving birth to the luminous worlds of heaven,[6] giving birth to the Sun in the waters,[7] the Brilliant One clothes himself with the waters and the rays.[8]

---

[3] Or, "to him the milkers of the Truth cry out the chant."

[4] The strainer in which the Soma is purified is made of the fleece of the Ewe. Indra is the Ram; the Ewe must therefore be an energy of Indra, probably the divinised sense-mind, *indriyam*.

[5] The Soma was mixed with water, milk and other ingredients: Soma is said to clothe himself with the Waters and with the "cows", that is, the illuminations or yield of Dawn, the shining Cow.

[6] The three worlds of Swar.

[7] Agni, Surya and Soma himself are said to be found in the waters or seven rivers.

[8] *Gāḥ*, meaning both cows and rays.

एष प्रत्नेन मन्मना देवो देवेभ्यस्परि ।
धारया पवते सुतः ॥ २॥

2. He by the ancient thought flows pressed out in a stream, a god around the gods.

वावृधानाय तूर्वये पवन्ते वाजसातये ।
सोमाः सहस्रपाजसः ॥ ३॥

3. For one increasing and swiftly advancing[9] there flow for his winning of the plenty the Soma-juices with their thousand strengths.

दुहानः प्रत्नमित्पयः पवित्रे परि षिच्यते ।
क्रन्दन्देवाँ अजीजनत् ॥ ४॥

4. Milked out, the ancient food, he is poured into the strainer that purifies and shouting he brings to birth the gods.

अभि विश्वानि वार्याऽभि देवाँ ऋतावृधः ।
सोमः पुनानो अर्षति ॥ ५॥

5. Soma, purifying himself, travels to all desirable boons, to the gods who increase the Truth.

गोमन्नः सोम वीरवदश्वावद्वाजवत्सुतः ।
पवस्व बृहतीरिषः ॥ ६॥

6. Stream on us, O Soma, when thou art pressed out, that in which are the Cows, the Heroes, the Steeds, the Plenty; stream impulsions vast.[10]

---

[9] On the path, through all obstacles; the sacrifice is figured both as a growth of man and as a journey.

[10] "Large foods", according to the ritualist commentator; as there are here two words meaning food in his usual rendering, *iṣ* and *vāja*, he gives another meaning to *vāja* and explains the verse "give us a wealth along with which there are cows, men, horses and battle and give us plentiful food."

The Vedic Fire

Rig Veda I.94 and 97

I

इमं स्तोममर्हते जातवेदसे रथमिव सं महेमा मनीषया ।
भद्रा हि नः प्रमतिरस्य संसद्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥१॥

This is the omniscient who knows the law of our being and is sufficient to his works; let us build the song of his truth by our thought and make it as if a chariot on which he shall mount. When he dwells with us, then a happy wisdom becomes ours. With him for friend we cannot come to harm.

यस्मै त्वमायजसे स साधत्यनर्वा क्षेति दधते सुवीर्यम् ।
स तूताव नैनमश्नोत्यंहतिरग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥२॥

Whosoever makes him his priest of the sacrifice, reaches the perfection that is the fruit of his striving, a home on a height of being where there is no warring and no enemies; he confirms in himself an ample energy; he is safe in his strength, evil cannot lay its hand upon him.

शकेम त्वा समिधं साधया धियस्त्वे देवा हविरदन्त्याहुतम् ।
त्वमादित्याँ आ वह तान् ह्युश्मस्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥३॥

This is the fire of our sacrifice! May we have strength to kindle it to its height, may it perfect our thoughts. In this all that we give must be thrown that it may become a food for the gods; this shall bring to us the godheads of the infinite consciousness who are our desire.

भरामेध्मं कृणवामा हवींषि ते चितयन्तः पर्वणापर्वणा वयम् ।
जीवातवे प्रतरं साधया धियोऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ४ ॥

Let us gather fuel for it, let us prepare for it offerings, let us make ourselves conscious of the jointings of its times and its seasons. It shall so perfect our thoughts that they shall extend our being and create for us a larger life.

विशां गोपा अस्य चरन्ति जन्तवो द्विपच्च यदुत चतुष्पदक्तुभिः ।
चित्रः प्रकेत उषसो महाँ अस्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ५ ॥

This is the guardian of the world and its peoples, the shepherd of all these herds; all that is born moves by his rays and is compelled by his flame, both the two-footed and the four-footed creatures. This is the rich and great thought-awakening of the Dawn within.

त्वमध्वर्युरुत होतासि पूर्व्यः प्रशास्ता पोता जनुषा पुरोहितः ।
विश्वा विद्वाँ आर्त्विज्या धीर पुष्यसि
अग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ६ ॥

This is the priest who guides the march of the sacrifice, the first and ancient who calls to the gods and gives the offerings; his is the command and his the purification; from his birth he stands in front, the vicar of our sacrifice. He knows all the works of this divine priesthood, for he is the Thinker who increases in us.

यो विश्वतः सुप्रतीकः सदृङ्ङसि दूरे चित् सन्तळिदिवाति रोचसे ।
रात्र्याश्चिदन्धो अति देव पश्यस्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ७ ॥

The faces of this God are everywhere and he fronts all things perfectly; he has the eye and the vision: when we see him from afar, yet he seems near to us, so brilliantly he shines across the gulfs. He sees beyond the darkness of our night, for his vision is divine.

पूर्वो देवा भवतु सुन्वतो रथोऽस्माकं शंसो अभ्यस्तु दूढ्यः ।
तदा जानीतोत पुष्यता वचोऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ८॥

O you godheads, let our chariot be always in front, let our clear and strong word overcome all that thinks the falsehood. O you godheads, know for us, know in us that Truth, increase the speech that finds and utters it.

वधैर्दुःशंसाँ अप दूढ्यो जहि दूरे वा ये अन्ति वा के चिदत्रिणः ।
अथा यज्ञाय गृणते सुगं कृध्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ९॥

With blows that slay cast from our path, O thou Flame, the powers that stammer in the speech and stumble in the thought, the devourers of our power and our knowledge who leap at us from near and shoot at us from afar. Make the path of the sacrifice a clear and happy journeying.

यदयुक्था अरुषा रोहिता रथे वातजूता वृषभस्येव ते रवः ।
आदिन्वसि वनिनो धूमकेतुनाऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ १०॥

Thou hast bright red horses for thy chariot, O Will divine, who are driven by the stormwind of thy passion; thou roarest like a bull, thou rushest upon the forests of life, on its pleasant trees that encumber thy path, with the smoke of thy passion in which there is the thought and the sight.

अध स्वनादुत बिभ्युः पतत्रिणो द्रप्सा यत् ते यवसादो व्यस्थिरन् ।
सुगं तत् ते तावकेभ्यो रथेभ्योऽग्नेसख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ११॥

At the noise of thy coming even they that wing in the skies are afraid, when thy eaters of the pasture go abroad in their haste. So thou makest clear thy path to thy kingdom that thy chariots may run towards it easily.

अयं मित्रस्य वरुणस्य धायसेऽवयातां मरुतां हेळो अद्भुतः ।
मृळा सु नो भूत्वेषां मनः पुनरग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥१२॥

This dread and tumult of thee, is it not the wonderful and exceeding wrath of the gods of the Life rushing down on us to found here the purity of the Infinite, the harmony of the Lover? Be gracious, O thou fierce Fire, let their minds be again sweet to us and pleasant.

देवो देवानामसि मित्रो अद्भुतो वसुर्वसूनामसि चारुरध्वरे ।
शर्मन्त्स्याम तव सप्रथस्तमेऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥१३॥

God art thou of the gods, for thou art the lover and friend; richest art thou of the masters of the Treasure, the founders of the home, for thou art very bright and pleasant in the pilgrimage and the sacrifice. Very wide and far-extending is the peace of thy beatitudes; may that be the home of our abiding!

तत् ते भद्रं यत् समिद्धः स्वे दमे सोमाहुतो जरसे मृळयत्तमः ।
दधासि रत्नं द्रविणं च दाशुषेऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥१४॥

That is the bliss of him and the happiness; for then is this Will very gracious and joy-giving when in its own divine house, lit into its high and perfect flame, it is adored by our thoughts and satisfied with the wine of our delight. Then it lavishes its deliciousness, then it returns in treasure and substance all that we have given into its hands.

यस्मै त्वं सुद्रविणो ददाशोऽनागास्त्वमदिते सर्वताता ।
यं भद्रेण शवसा चोदयासि प्रजावता राधसा ते स्याम ॥१५॥
स त्वमग्ने सौभगत्वस्य विद्वानस्माकमायुः प्र तिरेह देव ।
तन्नो मित्रो वरुणो मामहन्तामदितिः सिन्धुः पृथिवी उत द्यौः ॥१६॥

O thou infinite and indivisible Being, it is thou ever that formest the sinless universalities of the spirit by our sacrifice; thou compellest and inspirest thy favourites by thy happy and luminous forcefulness, by the fruitful riches of thy joy. Among them may we be numbered. Thou art the knower of felicity and the increaser here of our life and advancer of our being! Thou art the godhead!

II

अप नः शोशुचदघमग्ने शुशुग्ध्या रयिम् ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ १॥

Burn away from us the sin, flame out on us the bliss. Burn away from us the sin!

सुक्षेत्रिया सुगातुया वसूया च यजामहे ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ २॥

For the perfect path to the happy field, for the exceeding treasure when we would do sacrifice, — burn away from us the sin!

प्र यद् भन्दिष्ठ एषां प्रास्माकासश्च सूरयः ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ३॥

That the happiest of all these many godheads may be born in us, that the seers who see in our thought may multiply, — burn away from us the sin!

प्र यत् ते अग्ने सूरयो जायेमहि प्र ते वयम् ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ४॥

That thy seers, O Flame divine, may multiply and we be newborn as thine, — burn away from us the sin!

प्र यद् अग्नेः सहस्वतो विश्वतो यन्ति भानवः ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ५॥

When the flaming rays of thy might rush abroad on every side violently, — burn away from us the sin!

त्वं हि विश्वतोमुख विश्वतः परिभूरसि ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ६ ॥

O God, thy faces are everywhere! thou besiegest us on every side with thy being. Burn away from us the sin!

द्विषो नो विश्वतोमुखाति नावेव पारय ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ७ ॥

Let thy face front the Enemy wherever he turns; bear us in thy ship over the dangerous waters. Burn away from us the sin!

स नः सिन्धुमिव नावयाति पर्षा स्वस्तये ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ८ ॥

As in a ship over the ocean, bear us over into thy felicity. Burn away from us the sin!

A Vedic Hymn to the Fire

A HYMN OF THE UNIVERSAL DIVINE FORCE AND WILL[1]

वया इदग्ने अग्नयस्ते अन्ये त्वे विश्वे अमृता मादयन्ते ।
वैश्वानर नाभिरसि क्षितीनां स्थूणेव जनाँ उपमिद् ययन्थ ॥ १॥

Other flames are only branches of thy stock, O Fire. All the immortals take in thee their rapturous joy. O universal Godhead, thou art the navel-knot of the earths and their inhabitants; all men born thou controllest and supportest like a pillar.

मूर्धा दिवो नाभिरग्निः पृथिव्या अथाभवदरती रोदस्योः ।
तं त्वा देवासोऽजनयन्त देवं वैश्वानर ज्योतिरिदार्याय ॥ २॥

The Flame is the head of heaven and the navel of the earth and he is the power that moves at work in the two worlds. O Vaishwanara, the gods brought thee to birth a god to be a light to Aryan man.

आ सूर्ये न रश्मयो ध्रुवासो वैश्वानरे दधिरेऽग्ना वसूनि ।
या पर्वतेष्वोषधीष्वप्सु या मानुषेष्वसि तस्य राजा ॥ ३॥

As the firm rays sit steadfast in the Sun, all treasures have been placed in the universal godhead and flame. King art thou of all the riches that are in the growths of the earth and the hills and the waters and all the riches that are in men.

---

[1] A hymn of Nodha Gautama to Agni Vaishwanara in the Rig Veda.

बृहती इव सूनवे रोदसी गिरो होता मनुष्यो न दक्षः ।
स्वर्वते सत्यशुष्माय पूर्वीर्वैश्वानराय नृतमाय यह्वीः ॥ ४ ॥

Heaven and Earth grow as if vaster worlds to the Son. He is the priest of our sacrifice and sings our words even as might a man of discerning skill. To Vaishwanara, for this most strong god who brings with him the light of the sun-world, its many mighty waters because his strength is of the truth.

दिवश्चित् ते बृहतो जातवेदो वैश्वानर प्र रिरिचे महित्वम् ।
राजा कृष्टीनामसि मानुषीणां युधा देवेभ्यो वरिवश्चकर्थ ॥ ५ ॥

O universal godhead, O knower of all things born, thy excess of greatness overflows even the Great Heaven. Thou art the king of the toiling human peoples and by battle madest the supreme good for the gods.

वैश्वानरो महिम्ना विश्वकृष्टिर्भरद्वाजेषु यजतो विभावा ।
शातवनेये शतिनीभिरग्निः पुरुनीथे जरते सूनृतावान् ॥ ७ ॥

This is the universal godhead who by his greatness labours in all the peoples, the lustrous master of sacrifice, the Flame with his hundred treasures. This is he who has the word of the Truth.

Parashara's Hymns to the Lord of the Flame

1

पश्वा न तायुं गुहा चतन्तं नमो युजानं नमो वहन्तम् ।
सजोषा धीराः पदैरनु ग्मन्नुप त्वा सीदन्विश्वे यजत्राः ॥ १॥

He hides himself like a thief with the Cow of vision in the secret cavern of being taking to himself and bearing thither our adoration. The thinkers nurse a common joy in him in their hearts and follow in his way by her footprints. All the Masters of sacrifice come to thee, O Flame, in the secrecy.

ऋतस्य देवा अनु व्रता गुर्भुवत्परिष्टिर्द्यौर्न भूम ।
वर्धन्तीमापः पन्वा सुशिश्विमृतस्य योना गर्भे सुजातम् ॥ २॥

The Gods follow after him the ways and works of the Truth. He shall stand encompassing the earth like heaven. The Waters increase by their toil growing in his bulk the Flame because he was born perfect in their womb in the house of Truth.

पुष्टिर्न रण्वा क्षितिर्न पृथ्वी गिरिर्न भुज्म क्षोदो न शंभु ।
अत्यो नाज्मन्त्सर्गप्रतक्तः सिन्धुर्न क्षोदः क ईं वराते ॥ ३॥

He is like delightful increase and like the wide earth our dwelling-place. He is enjoyable like a hill and bliss-giving like fast-running water. He is like a horse in the battle-charge urged to the gallop and like a rushing river, and who then shall hedge in his course?

जामिः सिन्धूनां भ्रातेव स्वस्रामिभ्यान्न राजा वनान्यत्ति ।
यद्वातजूतो वना व्यस्थादग्निर्ह दाति रोमा पृथिव्याः ॥ ४॥

He is the close comrade of the Rivers as a brother of his sisters. He devours Earth's pleasant woods as a king devours his enemies. When driven by the breath of the wind he stands about in all the woodland, the Flame tears asunder the hairs of earth's body.

श्वसित्यप्सु हंसो न सीदन् क्रत्वा चेतिष्ठो विशामुषर्भुत् ।
सोमो न वेधा ऋतप्रजातः पशुर्न शिश्वा विभुर्दूरेभाः ॥ ५ ॥

He breathes in the Waters like a seated swan. Awake in the dawn he has power by the will of his works to give knowledge to the peoples. He is like the god of the nectar-wine and born of Truth and a creator. He is like the Cow with her child. He is all-pervading and his light is seen from a far distance.

2

वनेषु जायुर्मर्तेषु मित्रो वृणीते श्रुष्टिं राजेवाजुर्यम् ।
क्षेमो न साधुः क्रतुर्न भद्रो भुवत्स्वाधीर्होता हव्यवाट् ॥ १ ॥

He is the conqueror in the forests, he is the friend in mortals. He chooses for himself inspired knowledge as a king an unaging councillor. He is like a perfect good, he is like a happy will just in its thoughts. He has become to us the priest of our sacrifice and the carrier of our offerings.

हस्ते दधानो नृम्णा विश्वान्यमे देवान्धाद् गुहा निषीदन् ।
विदन्तीमत्र नरो धियंधा हृदा यत्तष्टान्मन्त्राँ अशंसन् ॥ २ ॥

He holds in his hands all mights: sitting in the secret cave of being he founds the gods in strength. And it is there that men who hold the thought in their minds, when they have given utterance to its sacred words carved into shape by the heart, discover the god.

अजो न क्षां दाधार पृथिवीं तस्तम्भ द्यां मन्त्रेभिः सत्यैः ।
प्रिया पदानि पश्वो नि पाहि विश्वायुरग्ने गुहा गुहं गाः ॥ ३ ॥

He holds like one unborn the wide earth our dwelling-place and pillars heaven with the truth of the sacred words of his thinking. O Flame, thou art universal life; guard the pleasant footholds of the Cow of vision; watch over the herd of the rays in the secrecy of the secret cavern.

य ईं चिकेत गुहा भवन्तमा यः ससाद धारामृतस्य ।
वि ये चृतन्त्यृता सपन्त आदिद्वसूनि प्र ववाचास्मै ॥ ४ ॥

He who has known him in the secret cave, he who has come to the stream of the Truth, all who touch and penetrate into the things of the Truth, to such he speaks the word of his treasures.

वि यो वीरुत्सु रोधन्महित्वोत प्रजा उत प्रसूष्वन्तः ।
चित्तिरपां दमे विश्वायुः सद्मेव धीराः संमाय चक्रुः ॥ ५ ॥

This is the Flame who besieges us with his greatness in all the growths of the earth and who is all the children of the worlds and who is within in all the mothers. He is knowledge in the house of the Waters and he is universal life. The thinkers have measured and constructed him like a mansion.

3

श्रीणन्नुप स्थाद्दिवं भुरण्युः स्थातुश्चरथमक्तून्व्यूर्णोत् ।
परि यदेषामोको विश्वेषाम् भुवद्देवो देवानां महित्वा ॥ १ ॥

The Carrier of our gifts speeds on his way and reaches up towards heaven. He unravels out of the nights all that is stable and all that moves. This is he that becomes the one God who is around all the gods in his greatness.

आदित्ते विश्वे क्रतुं जुषन्त शुष्काद्यद्देव जीवो जनिष्ठाः ।
भजन्त विश्वे देवत्वं नाम ऋतं सपन्तो अमृतमेवैः ॥ २॥

All serve with gladness thy will to works when, O God, thou art born as the living being from a dry matter. All by thy movings get touch of the Truth and touch of immortality and they enjoy the Name, the Godhead.

ऋतस्य प्रेषा ऋतस्य धीतिर्विश्वायुर्विश्वे अपांसि चक्रुः ।
यस्तुभ्यं दाशाद्यो वा ते शिक्षात्तस्मै चिकित्वान्रयिं दयस्व ॥ ३॥

He is the missioned impulse of Truth and the thinking of the Truth. He is the universal life and all do in him their works. To him who gives to thee and to him who takes of thee be knower of the knowledge and give him his portion of thy treasure.

होता निषत्तो मनोरपत्ये स चिन्न्वासां पती रयीणाम् ।
इच्छन्त रेतो मिथस्तनूषु सं जानत स्वैर्दक्षैरमूराः ॥ ४॥

He is the priest of the sacrifice who is seated in the Son of Man: he is the lord of these riches. The wise desire mutually his seed in their bodies and they come altogether to know him by their own discerning minds.

पितुर्न पुत्राः क्रतुं जुषन्त श्रोषन्ये अस्य शासं तुरासः ।
वि राय और्णोद् दुरः पुरुक्षुः पिपेश नाकं स्तृभिर्दमूनाः ॥ ५॥

Those who listen to his word of instruction, those who are swift to the journey, serve gladly his will as sons the will of a father. He is the house of a multitude of riches and flings wide the door of his felicitous treasure. He is the dweller in the home and gives form to Paradise by the light of his stars.

4

रयिर्न चित्रा सूरो न संदृगायुर्न प्राणो नित्यो न सूनुः ।
तक्वा न भूर्णिर्वना सिषक्ति पयो न धेनुः शुचिर्विभावा ॥ १॥

He is as if a marvellous shining riches and like the wide seeing of the sun. He is as if life and the breath of our existence and he is as if our eternal child. He is like a galloper that bears us. He fastens on the woodlands. He gives of his substance as the cow its milk. He is wide and lustrous, he is very bright and pure.

दाधार क्षेममोको न रण्वो यवो न पक्वो जेता जनानाम् ।
ऋषिर्न स्तुभ्वा विक्षु प्रशस्तो वाजी न प्रीतो वयो दधाति ॥ २॥

He is pleasant like a home and holds all our good. He is to us like ripe corn. He is a conqueror of men and like a chanting Rishi; the word of him is among the folk. He is like an exulting steed and he lays on us our birth to knowledge.

दुरोकशोचिः क्रतुर्न नित्यो जायेव योनावरं विश्वस्मै ।
चित्रो यदभ्राट् छ्वेतो न विक्षु रथो न रुक्मी त्वेषः समत्सु ॥ ३॥

He is light in a house difficult to inhabit.[1] He is as an eternal will that acts in us; he is like a wife in our chamber and sufficient to every man. When he burns out wonderful and manifold, he is as if the white horse in the peoples. He is like a chariot made of gold: he is like a keen flame in the battles.

सेनेव सृष्टामं दधात्यस्तुर्न दिद्युत् त्वेषप्रतीका ।
यमो ह जातो यमो जनित्वं जारः कनीनां पतिर्जनीनाम् ॥ ४॥

---

[1] Or, "He is a light difficult to kindle."

He is like an army running to the charge and puts strength in us: he is like the flaming shaft of the Archer that has a keen burning face. He is the twin that is born and the twin who is that which is to be born. He is the lover of the virgins and the husband of the mothers.

तं वश्चराथा वयं वसत्यास्तं न गावो नक्षन्त इद्धम् ।
सिन्धुर्न क्षोदः प्र नीचीरैनोन्नवन्त गावः स्वर्दृशीके ॥ ५ ॥

When his light is kindled, we come to him as the herds come to their home: we come to him by your journeying, O gods, and we come to him by your sitting still. He is like a river running in its channel and sends in front the downward Waters: the herd of the Rays move to him in the seeing of the world of the Sun.

5

शुक्रः शुशुक्वाँ उषो न जारः पप्रा समीची दिवो न ज्योतिः ।
परि प्रजातः क्रत्वा बभूथ भुवो देवानां पिता पुत्रः सन् ॥ १ ॥

He burns out bright as if the lover of Dawn and fills the two equal worlds like the light of heaven. He is born by our will to works and he comes into being all around us. He is the son and becomes the father of the Gods.

वेधा अदृप्तो अग्निर्विजानन्नूधर्न गोनां स्वाद्मा पितूनाम् ।
जने न शेव आहूर्यः सन्मध्ये निषत्तो रण्वो दुरोणे ॥ २ ॥

This is the Fire that has perfect knowledge and is a creator whom none can rend asunder. He is as if the teat of the cows of light and the sweetness of the draughts of the wine. He is as if one happy in the creature and must be laid hands on where he sits blissful in the middle of the house.

पुत्रो न जातो रण्वो दुरोणे वाजी न प्रीतो विशो वि तारीत् ।
विशो यदह्वे नृभिः सनीळा अग्निर्देवत्वा विश्वान्यश्याः ॥ ३ ॥

He is as if our rapturous son born to us in the house and he is like a courser pleased and glad that carries to safety the peoples. When I call to the Nations who dwell in one lair with the Strong Ones, the Flame enjoys all the godheads.

नकिष्ट एता व्रता मिनन्ति नृभ्यो यदेभ्यः श्रुष्टिं चकर्थ ।
तत्तु ते दंसो यदहन्त्समानैर्नृभिर्यद्युक्तो विवे रपांसि ॥ ४ ॥

None can impair the ways of thy works when thou hast created inspired knowledge for the Strong Ones. This is thy work that yoked with the equal Gods thou smitest and scatterest the powers of evil.

उषो न जारो विभावोस्रः संज्ञातरूपश्चिकेतदस्मै ।
त्मना वहन्तो दुरो व्यृण्वन्नवन्त विश्वे स्वर्दृशीके ॥ ५ ॥

Very bright and lustrous is he like the paramour of Dawn. Let his form be known and his knowledge awake for this human being, let all bear him in themselves, swing wide the gates and walk in the vision of the world of the Sun.

6

वनेम पूर्वीरर्यो मनीषा अग्निः सुशोको विश्वान्यश्याः ।
आ दैव्यानि व्रता चिकित्वाना मानुषस्य जनस्य जन्म ॥ १ ॥

Men battling by our mind of thought may we make conquest of many powers and Agni burning brightly enjoy and possess in us all things that are, know the divine workings and know the births of the human creature.

गर्भो यो अपां गर्भो वनानां गर्भश्च स्थातॉं गर्भश्चरथाम् ।
अद्रौ चिदस्मा अन्तर्दुरोणे विशां न विश्वो अमृतः स्वाधीः ॥ २ ॥

He is the child of the waters and the child of the forests and the child of things stable and the child of things that move. He is there for man in the stone of the mountain and within in the house. He is one universal to the peoples and the Immortal and the right-thinking One.

स हि क्षपावाँ अग्नी रयीणां दाशद्यो अस्मा अरं सूक्तैः ।
एता चिकित्वो भूमा नि पाहि देवानां जन्म मर्तांश्च विद्वान् ॥ ३ ॥

The Fire is master of the nights and imparts to man sufficiency of his treasures by the power of perfect words. O knower, who hast knowledge of the births of the gods and knowledge of mortals, guard these earths.

वर्धान्यं पूर्वीः क्षपो विरूपाः स्थातुश्च रथंऋतप्रवीतम् ।
अराधि होता स्वर्निषत्तः कृण्वन्विश्वान्यपांसि सत्या ॥ ४ ॥

Many nights that are different in form increase one who is the moving and the stable, one who has come from the Truth. He is a priest of sacrifice and enriches us where he sits in the world of the sun making our works things of truth.

गोषु प्रशस्तिं वनेषु धिषे भरन्त विश्वे बलिं स्वर्णः ।
वि त्वा नरः पुरुत्रा सपर्यन्पितुर्न जिव्रेर्वि वेदो भरन्त ॥ ५ ॥

Thou thinkest out thy hymn of utterance in the rays and in the forests and all the gods carry to us the light of the sun-world as a sacrifice. Men do thee service in the manifoldness and come bringing from thee riches of knowledge as from an aged father.

साधुर्न गृध्नुरस्तेव शूरो यातेव भीमस्त्वेषः समत्सु ॥ ६ ॥

He is like a perfecter of works, one who is a hungry seizer. He is like a hero shooting arrows and like a terrible assailant in the battle.

7

उप प्र जिन्वन्नुशतीरुशन्तं पतिं न नित्यं जनयः सनीळाः ।
स्वसारः श्यावीमरुषीमजुष्रञ्चित्रमुच्छन्तीमुषसं न गावः ॥१॥

The Mothers desire and are desired by him, sisters dwelling in one mansion, and come to him with joy as to their eternal husband, even as the rays to the Dawn, — Dawn dusk and flushing and breaking into rich lustres.

वीळु चिद् दृळ्हा पितरो न उक्तैरद्रिं रुजन्नङ्गिरसो रवेण ।
चक्रुर्दिवो बृहतो गातुमस्मे अहः स्वर्विविदुः केतुमुस्राः ॥२॥

Our fathers by their word, the Angiras seers, broke the strong and stubborn places, our fathers burst by their cry the rock of the mountain, made within us the path to the Great Heaven, discovered the Day and the sun-world and thought-vision and the herds of light.

दधन्नृतं धनयन्नस्य धीतिमादिदर्यो दिधिष्वो विभृत्राः ।
अतृष्यन्तीरपसो यन्त्यच्छा देवाञ्जन्म प्रयसा वर्धयन्तीः ॥३॥

Then the battling and thinking peoples held the Truth and enriched the thought of the human being and bore it in all its breadth; unthirsting, doers of the work increasing the divine birth by the delight-offering, their walk is towards the gods.

मथीद्यदीं विभृतो मातरिश्वा गृहेगृहे श्येतो जेन्यो भूत् ।
आदीं राज्ञे न सहीयसे सचा सन्ना दूत्यं भृगवाणो विवाय ॥४॥

When Matarishwan the Breath borne variously within us churned him into being, the Lord of Fire became the white and blissful one in every house. Man was a seer and kindler of the divine Fire and he dwelt with him like a companion and sent him on his messages like an envoy to a powerful king.

महे यत्पित्र ईं रसं दिवे करव त्सरत्पृशन्यश्चिकित्वान् ।
सृजदस्ता धृषता दिद्युमस्मै स्वायां देवो दुहितरि त्विषिं धात् ॥ ५ ॥

When he had made this sap of essence for the great Father Heaven, he came down, one close in touch, one who has knowledge. The Archer loosed violently on him his arrow of lightning, but the god set the keen lustre in his own daughter.

स्व आ यस्तुभ्यं दम आ विभाति नमो वा दाशादुशतो अनु द्यून् ।
वर्धो अग्ने वयो अस्य द्विबर्हा यासद्राया सरथं यं जुनासि ॥ ६ ॥

O Fire, increase, twofold in thy mass, the birth into knowledge of every one who is luminous to thy flame in thy own house or gives thee worship to thy desire day by day. Whomsoever thou makest to haste in one chariot with thee, travels with felicity of thy riches.

अग्निं विश्वा अभि पृक्षः सचन्ते समुद्रं न स्रवतः सप्त यह्वीः ।
न जामिभिर्वि चिकिते वयो नो विदा देवेषु प्रमतिं चिकित्वान् ॥ ७ ॥

All satisfying things join themselves to the Fire as the seven mighty rivers join themselves to the ocean. Our birth to knowledge was not discovered by the companion lords of life: but thou knowest it; impart thy mind of wisdom to the gods.

आ यदिषे नृपतिं तेज आनट् छुचि रेतो निषिक्तं द्यौरभीके ।
अग्निः शर्धमनवद्यं युवानं स्वाध्यं जनयत्सूदयच्च ॥ ८ ॥

When flaming force comes to the King of men to give him strength, when Heaven is cast before him as a pure seed, the Fire begets faultless, right-thinking, young the gods of life and hastens their armies.

मनो न योऽध्वनः सद्य एत्येकः सत्रा सूरो वस्व ईशे ।
राजाना मित्रावरुणा सुपाणी गोषु प्रियममृतं रक्षमाणा ॥ ९ ॥

One who goes immediately on the paths and alone like the mind, the Sun, ever is master of the treasure. The kings Mitra and Varuna with their beautiful hands are guarding delight and immortality amid the rays.

मा नो अग्ने सख्या पित्र्याणि प्र मर्षिष्ठा अभि विदुष्कविः सन् ।
नभो न रूपं जरिमा मिनाति पुरा तस्या अभिशस्तेरधीहि ॥ १० ॥

O Flame, violate not our ancestral comradeship; be still to us a knower and a seer. Age wastes the form of man like a cloud: know before that assault on our being.

8

नि काव्या वेधसः शश्वतस्कर्हस्ते दधानो नर्या पुरूणि ।
अग्निर्भुवद्रयिपती रयीणां सत्रा चक्राणो अमृतानि विश्वा ॥ १ ॥

He creates within us the poet-wisdoms of the eternal Creator and holds in his hand many strengths of the gods. The Fire becomes to us a master of riches, creating together all immortal things.

अस्मे वत्सं परि षन्तं न विन्दन्निच्छन्तो विश्वे अमृता अमूराः ।
श्रमयुवः पदव्यो धियंधास्तस्थुः पदे परमे चार्वग्नेः ॥ २ ॥

All the limitlessly wise immortals desired and found the Child within us who is everywhere around us. The gods who put thought in us toiling and travelling in his footing-places stood in the supreme seat and they came to the delightful house of the Flame.

तिस्रो यदग्ने शरदस्त्वामिच्छुचिं घृतेन शुचयः सपर्यान् ।
नामानि चिद्दधिरे यज्ञियान्यसूदयन्त तन्वः सुजाताः ॥ ३ ॥

When for three years they had served thee, O Fire, with the clear-offering and were pure to thy purity, then they held the sacrificial names, they sped their bodies come to perfect birth.

आ रोदसी बृहती वेविदानाः प्र रुद्रिया जभ्रिरे यज्ञियासः ।
विदन्मर्तो नेमधिता चिकित्वानग्निं पदे परमे तस्थिवांसम् ॥ ४ ॥

The Masters of sacrifice discovered the vast Earth and Heaven and gathered to man the powers of the Violent One, and now the mortal knows and discovers by the founder of the hemisphere the Flame where he stands in the world of his supreme session.

संजानाना उप सीदन्नभिज्ञु पत्नीवन्तो नमस्यं नमस्यन् ।
रिरिक्वांसस्तन्वः कृण्वत स्वाः सखा सख्युर्निमिषि रक्षमाणाः ॥ ५ ॥

The gods and their wives altogether knew him and they came to him kneeling and bowed to the one who must be adored; and they exceeded themselves and made their own divine bodies and each friend was guarded in the gaze of his friend.

त्रिः सप्त यद् गुह्यानि त्वे इत्पदाविदन्निहिता यज्ञियासः ।
तेभी रक्षन्ते अमृतं सजोषाः पशूञ्च स्थातॄञ्चरथं च पाहि ॥ ६ ॥

The Masters of sacrifice found hidden in thee the thrice seven secret seats and with one common will in their hearts they guard by them the immortality. O Fire, keep the herds and all that stand and all that moves.

विद्वाँ अग्ने वयुनानि क्षितीनां व्यानुषक्छुरुधो जीवसे धाः ।
अन्तर्विद्वाँ अध्वनो देवयानानतन्द्रो दूतो अभवो हविर्वाट् ॥ ७ ॥

O Fire, thou knowest all the revelations of knowledge of the dwellers upon earth; hold their strengths to uninterrupted continuity that they may live. And thou knowest the roads between, the paths of the gods, and thou art the sleepless messenger and the bearer of sacrifice.

स्वाध्यो दिव आ सप्त यह्वी रायो दुरो व्यृतज्ञा अजानन् ।
विदद् गव्यं सरमा दृळ्हमूर्वं येना नु कं मानुषी भोजते विट् ॥ ८॥

The seven right-thinking mighty Rivers of Heaven that know the Truth knew the doors of the felicitous treasure: Sarama discovered the strong fortified place, the largeness, the herded mass of the rays, and now the human creature enjoys by that wideness of the light.

आ ये विश्वा स्वपत्यानि तस्थुः कृण्वानासो अमृतत्वाय गातुम् ।
मह्ना महद्भिः पृथिवी वि तस्थे माता पुत्रैरदितिर्धायसे वेः ॥ ९॥

The great gods set their steps on all things that have fair issue, making our path to immortality. Earth stood wide in her greatness by the great Ones and the Mother Infinite came with her sons to uphold her.

अधि श्रियं नि दधुश्चारुमस्मिन्दिवो यदक्षी अमृता अकृण्वन् ।
अध क्षरन्ति सिन्धवो न सृष्टाः प्र नीचीरग्ने अरुषीरजानन् ॥ १०॥

The Immortals set in him splendour and beauty when they made the two eyes of heaven. The rivers of Truth are flowing, they have been let loose to their courses; their downward waters shone and knew, O Fire.

9

रयिर्न यः पितृवित्तो वयोधाः सुप्रणीतिश्चिकितुषो न शासुः ।
स्योनशीरतिथिर्न प्रीणानो होतेव सद्म विधतो वि तारीत् ॥ १॥

A divine Fire was the treasure discovered by our fathers: he sets on us our birth to knowledge and is as if the excellent leading of a wise teacher, and he is like a guest well pleased lying happy in our house, and he is like a priest come to our house of session and brings to safety those that do him worship.

देवो न यः सविता सत्यमन्मा क्रत्वा निपाति वृजनानि विश्वा ।
पुरुप्रशस्तो अमतिर्न सत्य आत्मेव शेवो दिधिषाय्यो भूत् ॥ २ ॥

He is like the god that creates, the Sun; his thought is truth and he guards all strengths by his will. He is a true force that is expressed by many and is to be pondered on like a blissful self.

देवो न यः पृथिवीं विश्वधाया उपक्षेति हितमित्रो न राजा ।
पुरःसदः शर्मसदो न वीरा अनवद्या पतिजुष्टेव नारी ॥ ३ ॥

He is as if the Godhead that foundeth all things lodging on the wide earth like a king with many loving friends. He is like a band of heroes marching in our front, marching to the house of bliss. He is like a woman faultless and beloved of her lord.

तं त्वा नरो दम आ नित्यमिद्धमग्ने सचन्त क्षितिषु ध्रुवासु ।
अधि द्युम्नं नि दधुर्भूर्यस्मिन्भवा विश्वायुर्धरुणो रयीणाम् ॥ ४ ॥

Therefore men cling to thee, O Fire, kindled eternal in the house, in the abiding worlds of thy habitation; for they have placed in thee a great light. Be our universal life; be the hold of our treasure.

वि पृक्षो अग्ने मघवानो अश्युर्वि सूरयो ददतो विश्वमायुः ।
सनेम वाजं समिथेष्वर्यो भागं देवेषु श्रवसे दधानाः ॥ ५ ॥

O Fire, let the masters of the wealth enjoy thy satisfying things and the illumined seers, the givers the universal life. Warriors in the clashes of the battle, let us conquer plenitude, let us set our portion in the gods for an inspired knowledge.

ऋतस्य हि धेनवो वावशानाः स्मदूध्नीः पीपयन्त द्युभक्ताः ।
परावतः सुमतिं भिक्षमाणा वि सिन्धवः समया सस्रुरद्रिम् ॥ ६ ॥

The cows of the Truth, the cows enjoyed in heaven, have given us to drink lowing with happy udders; its rivers have flowed evenly over the mountain and claim right thinking as an alms from the Truth's supreme region.

त्वे अग्ने सुमतिं भिक्षमाणा दिवि श्रवो दधिरे यज्ञियासः ।
नक्ता च चक्रुरुषसा विरूपे कृष्णं च वर्णमरुणं च सं धुः ॥ ७ ॥

O Fire, praying in thee for right thinking as for an alms from on high, the masters of sacrifice set inspired knowledge in the heavens: they made night and day of two different forms and joined together the black and the rosy hue.

यान्राये मर्तान्त्सुषूदो अग्ने ते स्याम मघवानो वयं च ।
छायेव विश्वं भुवनं सिसक्ष्यापप्रिवान् रोदसी अन्तरिक्षम् ॥ ८ ॥

The mortals whom thou makest to haste to felicity, make us of them, even us and the masters of riches. Fill earth and air and heaven; cling to the whole world like a shadow.

अर्वद्भिरग्ने अर्वतो नृभिर्नॄन्वीरैर्वीरान्वनुयामा त्वोताः ।
ईशानासः पितृवित्तस्य रायो वि सूरयः शतहिमा नो अश्युः ॥ ९ ॥

O Fire, give us thy protection; may we vanquish their war-horses by our war-horses, their strong men by our strong men, their heroes by our heroes: may the seers have the mastery of the riches discovered by our fathers and may they enjoy them living a hundred winters.

एता ते अग्न उचथानि वेधो जुष्टानि सन्तु मनसे हृदे च ।
शकेम रायः सुधुरो यमं तेऽधि श्रवो देवभक्तं दधानाः ॥ १० ॥

O creator, O Fire, may these words be pleasant to thy mind and to thy heart. Let our yoke be firm and our strength control the reins of thy opulence; let us hold the inspired knowledge that is enjoyed by the gods.

Appendix

The following letter was written in response to criticisms of the opening chapter of *The Secret of the Veda* made in a review of the first issue of the *Arya*. The review appeared in the *Hindu* of Madras on 24 August 1914. Sri Aurobindo's letter was written on 26 August and published the next day in the *Hindu*.

Interpretation of the Veda

MR. AUROBINDO GHOSE writes to us from Pondicherry: —

While thanking you for the generous appreciation in your review of the "Arya", may I also crave the indulgence of your columns, — if indeed you can spare so much space at such a time when the whole world is absorbed in the gigantic homicidal conflict convulsing Europe, — for an answer to your criticisms on my "Secret of the Veda", or rather to an explanation of my standpoint which the deficiencies of my expression and the brief and summary character of my article in the "Arya" have led you, in some respects, to misconceive?

Surely, I have nowhere said that "knowledge of which no origin can be traced to previous sources must necessarily be disregarded or discarded"! That would be indeed a monstrous proposition! My point was that such knowledge, when it expressed a developed philosophy and psychology, stood in need of historical explanation, — a very different matter. If we accept the European idea of an evolving knowledge in humanity, — and it is on that basis that my argument proceeded — we must find the source of the Brahmavada either in an extraneous origin such as a previous Dravidian culture — a theory which I cannot admit, since I regard the so-called Aryans and Dravidians as one homogeneous race — or in a previous development, of which the records have either been lost or are to be found in the Veda itself. I cannot see how this argument involves a *regressus ad infinitum* except in so far as the whole idea of evolution and progressive causality lies open to that objection. As to the origins of the Vedic religion, that is a question which cannot be solved at present for lack of data. It does not follow that it had no origins or in other words that humanity was not prepared by a progressive spiritual experience for the Revelation.

Again, I certainly did not intend to express my own idea in the description of the Upanishads as a revolt of philosophic minds against the ritualistic materialism of the Vedas. If I held that view, I could not regard the earlier Sruti as an inspired scripture or the Upanishads as Vedanta and I would not have troubled myself about the secret of the Veda. It is a view held by European scholars and I accepted it as the logical consequence, if the ordinary interpretations of the hymns, whether Indian or European, are to be maintained. If the Vedic hymns are, as represented by Western scholarship, the ritualistic compositions of joyous and lusty barbarians the Upanishads "have then to be conceived as a revolt . . . against the ritualistic materialism of the Vedas." From both premiss and conclusion I have dissented and I have finally described, not only the Upanishads, but all later forms, as a development from the Vedic religion and not a revolt against its tenets.

Our Indian doctrine avoids the difficulty in another way, by interpreting the Veda as a book of ritual hymns and revering it as a book of knowledge. It puts together two ancient truths without reconciling them effectively. In my view, that reconciliation can only be effected by seeing even in the exterior aspect of the hymns not a ritualistic materialism, but a symbolic ritualism. No doubt the karmakanda was regarded as an indispensable stepping-stone to the knowledge of the Atman. That was an article of religious faith, and as an article of faith I do not dispute its soundness. But it becomes valid for the intellect — and in an intellectual inquiry I must proceed by intellectual means, — only if the karmakanda is so interpreted as to show how its performance assists, prepares or brings about the higher knowledge. Otherwise, however much the Veda may be revered in theory, it will be treated in practice as neither indispensable nor helpful and will come in the end to be practically set aside — as has actually happened.

I am aware that some hymns of the Veda are interpreted in a sense other than the ritualistic; even the European scholars admit higher religious and spiritual ideas in the "later hymns" of the Vedas. I am aware also that separate texts are quoted in support of philosophical doctrines. My point was that such exceptional passages do not alter the general tone and purport given to the hymns in the actual interpretations we possess. With those interpretations, we cannot use the Rig Veda as a whole, as the Upanishads can be used as a whole, as the basis of a high spiritual philosophy. Now, it is to the interpretation of the Veda as a whole and to its general character that I have addressed myself.

I quite acknowledge that there has always been a side-stream of tendency making for the adhyatmic interpretation of the Veda even as a whole. It would be strange if in a nation so spiritually minded such attempts had been entirely lacking. But still these are side-currents and have not received general recognition. For the Indian intellect in general, there are only two interpretations, Sayana's and the European. Addressing myself to that general opinion, it is with these two that I am practically concerned.

I am still of the opinion that the method and results of the early Vedantins differed entirely from the method and results of Sayana, for reasons I shall give in the second and third numbers of "Arya". Practically, not in theory, what is the result of Sayana's commentary? What is the general impression it leaves on the mind? Is it the impression of "Veda", a great Revelation, a book of highest knowledge? Is it not rather that which the European scholars received and from which their theories started, a picture of primitive worshippers praying to friendly gods, friendly but of a doubtful temper, gods of fire, rain, wind, dawn, night, earth and sky, for wealth, food, oxen, horses, gold, the slaughter of their enemies, even of their critics, victory in battle, the plunder of the conquered? And if so, how can such hymns be an indispensable preparation for the Brahmavidya? Unless, indeed, it is a preparation by contraries, by exhaustion or dedication of the most materialistic and egoistic tendencies, somewhat as the grim old Hebrew Pentateuch may be described as a preparation for the mild evangel of Christ. My position is that they were indispensable not by a mechanical virtue in the sacrifice, but because the experiences to which they are the key and which were symbolised by the ritual, are necessary to an integral knowledge and realisation of Brahman in the universe and prepare the knowledge and realisation of the transcendent Brahman. They are, to paraphrase Shankara's description, mines of all knowledge, knowledge on all the planes of consciousness, and do fix the conditions and relations of the divine, the human and the animal element in the being.

I do not claim that mine is the first attempt to give an adhyatmic interpretation of the Veda. It is an attempt — the first or the hundredth matters little — to give the esoteric and psychological sense of the Veda based throughout on the most modern method of critical research. Its interpretation of Vedic vocables is based on a re-examination of a large part of the field of comparative Philology and a reconstruction on a new basis which I have some hope will bring us nearer to a true science of Language. This I propose to develop in another work, the "Origins of Aryan Speech". I hope also to lead up to a recovery of the sense of the ancient spiritual conceptions of which old symbol and myth give us the indications and which I believe to have been at one time a common culture covering a great part of the globe with India, perhaps, as a centre. In its relation to this methodical attempt lies the only originality of the "Secret of the Veda".

The Hindu, 27 August 1914

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

In August 1914, Sri Aurobindo began to publish *The Secret of the Veda* in the first issue of the philosophical review *Arya*. This series was accompanied by a related one, *Selected Hymns*. *Selected Hymns* was followed a year later by *Hymns of the Atris*. These works, written and published in monthly instalments between 1914 and 1917, form Parts One to Three of the present volume.

Besides *Selected Hymns* and *Hymns of the Atris*, other Vedic translations appeared in the *Arya* at various times between 1915 and 1920. They were usually introduced when a page or two had to be filled at the end of a 64-page issue. These translations have been placed in the order of their original publication in Part Four, "Other Hymns".

Thus this volume contains all writings on and translations of the Veda published by Sri Aurobindo in the *Arya*. Some of what appeared in the *Arya* was prefigured by essays, translations and notes on the Veda written between 1912 and 1914. However, none of this earlier material was incorporated directly in the works that came out in the *Arya*. Sri Aurobindo's manuscript writings on the Veda are included in *Vedic Studies with Writings on Philology*, volume 14 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. His translations of hymns to Agni are published in volume 16, *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*.

The Secret of the Veda. This, Sri Aurobindo's most important expository work on the Veda, appeared in the *Arya* in twenty-four consecutive instalments between August 1914 and July 1916. (The second chapter was printed in two instalments.) Sri Aurobindo never revised it, apart from minor alterations in Chapter 17. The last instalment of this work in the *Arya* ended with the following footnote:

> We propose for the present to discontinue the Secret of the Veda so as to make room in the third year of the Arya for other matter, but we shall subsequently resume and complete the series.

Sri Aurobindo never found time to resume the series, and left *The Secret of the Veda* incomplete.

Selected Hymns. These thirteen translations with commentaries were published in the first twelve issues of the *Arya*, from August 1914 to July 1915. (Two appeared in the first issue.) A footnote at the beginning of the first instalment, explaining the nature of the translations, is printed as an Author's Note in the present edition. At the end of the last instalment, Sri Aurobindo noted that he had selected "a few brief and easy hymns" with the idea of "explaining by actual examples the secret of the Veda", but that "other translations of a more general character" would be necessary to show that this was "the pervading sense and teaching of the Rig Veda." It was evidently for this purpose that he began *Hymns of the Atris* in the next issue of the *Arya*.

Hymns of the Atris. In July 1915, Sri Aurobindo announced in "The 'Arya's' Second Year" that he intended, from the following issue,

> to replace the *Selected Hymns* by a translation of the Hymns of the Atris (the fifth Mandala of the Rig Veda) so conceived as to make the sense of the Vedic chants at once and easily intelligible without the aid of a commentary to the general reader.

Hymns of the Atris began to appear in the *Arya* in August 1915 and continued until December 1917. This work consists of translations of two series of Suktas ("hymns") from the fifth Mandala ("book") of the Rig Veda, along with introductory chapters, a summary of each hymn and interpretative notes. The introductory chapters consist of a foreword, a general introduction entitled "The Doctrine of the Mystics", and two essays on the gods to whom the hymns are addressed: "Agni, the Divine Will-Force" and "The Guardians of the Light". The fifth Mandala of the Rig Veda comprises eighty-seven hymns composed by Rishis of the Atri clan. Sri Aurobindo translated forty-three of these: all twenty-eight hymns to Agni (V.1–28), all eleven hymns to Mitra-Varuna (V.62–72), both hymns to Usha (V.79, 80), the hymn to Surya Savitri (V.81) already translated and commented upon in *Selected Hymns*, and a hymn to Varuna (V.85), rendered in two versions to show its "exoteric" as well as its "esoteric" sense. (See also "A Hymn of the

Thought-Gods" in the next section.) Sri Aurobindo later retranslated the hymns to Agni from the fifth Mandala; the versions that appeared in the *Arya* are reproduced here, while the revised translations are published in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*.

Other Hymns. These sixteen translations from various books of the Rig Veda were published in the *Arya* at different times between 1915 and 1920. They are reproduced here in the order in which they originally appeared. The last nine form a series. Apart from two pairs of related hymns, the rest have no obvious connection with each other, but illustrate a wide range of approaches to rendering the Veda into English.

A Vedic Hymn (Rig Veda VII.60). This translation of a hymn of Vasishtha to Surya and Mitra-Varuna, arranged in three paragraphs, was published in the *Arya* in August 1915.

A Hymn of the Thought-Gods. Published in the *Arya* in February 1916. This is not a translation but a paraphrase of the hymns to the Maruts by the Rishi Shyavashwa of the Atri clan; it is based on Rig Veda V.52 and, in the last three paragraphs, on scattered verses from V.53–61. It appeared in the *Arya* while *Hymns of the Atris* was running, but did not form part of that series.

The God of the Mystic Wine (Rig Veda IX.75, 42). Published in the *Arya* in September 1916. These two hymns to Soma were "rendered as literally as possible", in contrast to the method of interpretative translation usually employed in the *Arya*. The Sanskrit text in transliteration was printed at the bottom of the page in the *Arya*. It has been replaced in this edition by the text in Devanagari before each verse, as has been supplied for the other translations.

The Vedic Fire (Rig Veda I.94, 97). These two hymns to Agni were published in the *Arya* in September 1917. In translating the first hymn, Sri Aurobindo joined the first half of the last verse with the preceding verse. He omitted the second half of the verse, a formula which occurs at the end of most of the hymns of Kutsa Angirasa and is unrelated to the rest of this hymn.

A Vedic Hymn to the Fire (Rig Veda I.59). Published in the *Arya* in January 1920, after a gap of two years during which no Vedic translations came out in the review. The translation is missing the sixth verse, probably due to lack of space on the last page of the *Arya* issue. A complete translation is published in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*.

Parashara's Hymns to the Lord of the Flame (Rig Veda I.65 – 73). These nine hymns were published in the *Arya* in February, June, July and August 1920. They were numbered from 1 to 9 in the order of their appearance: I.65, 67, 68, 66 and 69 – 73. Subsequently Sri Aurobindo revised them for inclusion in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* (1946). In the present volume they are reproduced as originally published in the *Arya*, in the order indicated above.

Appendix: *Interpretation of the Veda*. This letter was written on 26 August 1914, according to an entry in Sri Aurobindo's *Record of Yoga*. In the letter, Sri Aurobindo addressed himself to some remarks on his theory of Vedic interpretation made in an article that appeared in the *Hindu*, a daily newspaper of Madras, on 24 August. The *Hindu* printed Sri Aurobindo's letter on the 27th under the title "Interpretation of the Veda". The present text has been checked against the files of the *Hindu*.

Publishing history. After their appearance in the *Arya*, none of the writings in this volume were reprinted during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. He expressed some dissatisfaction with them in their existing state and wished to revise them thoroughly before allowing them to be published in book-form. As early as 1920 he wrote to someone who wished to translate *The Secret of the Veda* into Gujarati:

> The "Secret of the Veda" is not complete and there are besides many imperfections and some errors in it which I would have preferred to amend before the book or any translation was published.

In the Foreword to the first edition of *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* (1946), Sri Aurobindo explained why *The Secret of the Veda* and the accompanying translations had not been reprinted:

> The interpretation I have put forward was set out at length in a series of articles with the title "The Secret of the Veda" in the monthly philosophical magazine, "Arya", some thirty years ago; written in serial form while still developing the theory and not quite complete in its scope or composed on

> a preconceived and well-ordered plan it was not published in book-form and is therefore not yet available to the reading public. It was accompanied by a number of renderings of the hymns of the Rig Veda which were rather interpretations than translations. . . .

Finally, when it was proposed in 1949 to bring out *The Secret of the Veda* as a book, Sri Aurobindo dictated in reply:

> The publication of the Secret of the Veda as it is does not enter into my intention. It was published in a great hurry and at a time when I had not studied the Rig Veda as a whole as well as I have since done. Whole chapters will have to be rewritten or written otherwise and a considerable labour gone through; moreover it was never finished and considerable additions in order to make it complete are indispensable.

Sri Aurobindo never found time for the necessary revision. After his passing, however, aware of the value of the material that had appeared in the *Arya*, the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre published in 1956 *The Secret of the Veda*, *Selected Hymns*, *Hymns of the Atris*, and seven of the "Other Hymns" under the title *On the Veda*. A new edition of the same text was brought out by the same publisher (renamed Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education) in 1964. Both these editions included as an appendix an essay from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts, "The Origins of Aryan Speech".

In 1971, most of the same material was published as *The Secret of the Veda*, volume 10 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. In that edition, "The Doctrine of the Mystics" was omitted from *Hymns of the Atris* and printed in full in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, in place of the excerpt originally included in that book; the section of "Other Hymns" was augmented by the reproduction of a number of translations from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts; and the letter "Interpretation of the Veda" was added. The Centenary edition has been reprinted several times.

The present edition. *The Secret of the Veda with Selected Hymns* differs in content from earlier editions of the corresponding book (*On the Veda* and *The Secret of the Veda*) in that it contains all writings on and translations of the Veda published by Sri Aurobindo in the *Arya*. Writings reproduced from manuscripts in previous editions — "The Origins of Aryan Speech" and certain translations — have been placed in a new volume, *Vedic Studies with Writings on Philology*. "The Doctrine of the Mystics" has been restored to the text of *Hymns of the Atris*. The series entitled "Parashara's Hymns to the Lord of the Flame" is reproduced for the first time since it appeared in the *Arya*; the revised translations of these hymns brought out by Sri Aurobindo in 1946 remain in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*. Three other *Arya* translations of hymns to Agni, omitted from *The Secret of the Veda* in 1971 when they were added to *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, are also reproduced in the present volume. All texts have been carefully checked against the *Arya*.

Vedic quotations. Vedic quotations and references have been checked against a standard edition of the Rig Veda and corrected if necessary. Sri Aurobindo sometimes adapted Sanskrit quotations to suit his context, particularly with regard to case endings, number and word order. Moreover, he often separated the words in transliteration for clarity or for metrical reasons. (See his remarks on pp. 17–18 concerning the "euphonic combination of separate words" in the Veda.) Where other discrepancies were found, the received text of the Rig Veda has generally been followed.

In *The Secret of the Veda* (Part One), Sri Aurobindo often identified quotations from the Rig Veda by references to the Mandala, Sukta and Rik. In passages where most quotations are so identified, the editors have supplied missing references in parentheses according to Sri Aurobindo's own style. But in other texts, where Sri Aurobindo provided few or no references, references have not been inserted in this edition. This applies in particular to the chapters introducing the translations in Part Three — especially "The Guardians of the Light", where the *Arya* text contains dozens of unidentified Vedic allusions and quotations, with or without the use of quotation marks. The sources of these are identified in a table in the reference volume (volume 35) for the convenience of readers who wish to consult the original verses.

In Parts Two to Four, the *Saṁhitā* text of the translated hymns has been supplied in Devanagari (without accents), as in the previous edition.

Isha Upanishad

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 17
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2003
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Isha Upanishad

Publisher's Note

This volume contains Sri Aurobindo's translations of and commentaries on the Isha Upanishad. His translations of and commentaries on other Upanishads and Vedantic texts, and his writings on the Upanishads and Vedanta philosophy in general, are published in *Kena and Other Upanishads*, volume 18 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

The present volume is divided into two parts. The first consists of Sri Aurobindo's final translation and analysis of the Isha Upanishad. This is the only work in this volume that was published during his lifetime. It contains his definitive interpretation of the Isha Upanishad.

Before publishing this final translation and analysis, Sri Aurobindo wrote ten incomplete commentaries on the Isha Upanishad. These appear in approximate chronological order in Part Two. Ranging in length from a few pages to more than a hundred, they show the development of his interpretation of this Upanishad from around 1900 to the middle of 1914, when he began work on his final translation and analysis.

The texts in both parts have been checked against the relevant manuscript and printed versions.

Guide to Editorial Notation

The contents of Part Two of this volume were never prepared by Sri Aurobindo for publication. They have been transcribed from manuscripts that sometimes present textual difficulties. In this edition these problems have been indicated as far as possible by means of the notation shown below.

Notation	**Textual Problem**
[.......]	Word(s) lost through damage to the manuscript (at the beginning of a piece, sometimes indicates that a page or pages of the manuscript have been lost)
[word]	Word(s) omitted by the author or lost through damage to the manuscript that are required by grammar or sense, and that could be supplied by the editors
[*note*]	Situations requiring textual explication; all such information is printed in italics

CONTENTS

Part One
Translation and Commentary Published by Sri Aurobindo

Isha Upanishad 3

Part Two
Incomplete Commentaries from Manuscripts

Isha Upanishad:
    All that is world in the Universe 95
The Ishavasyopanishad
    with a commentary in English 101
The Karmayogin:
    A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad 169
Ish and Jagat 303
The Secret of the Isha 307
Chapters for a Work on the Isha Upanishad 311
The Upanishad in Aphorism 351
The Life Divine [Draft A] 361
The Life Divine [Draft B] 429
The Life Divine [Draft C] 551

Sri Aurobindo in 1908

Part One

Translation and Commentary
Published by Sri Aurobindo

Isha Upanishad

Isha Upanishad

ईशा वास्यमिदं सर्वं यत् किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् ।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्यस्विद् धनम् ॥ १ ॥

1. All this is for habitation[1] by the Lord, whatsoever is individual universe of movement in the universal motion. By that renounced thou shouldst enjoy; lust not after any man's possession.

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समाः ।
एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥ २ ॥

2. Doing verily[2] works in this world one should wish to live a hundred years. Thus it is in thee and not otherwise than this; action cleaves not to a man.[3]

---

[1] There are three possible senses of *vāsyam*, "to be clothed", "to be worn as a garment" and "to be inhabited". The first is the ordinarily accepted meaning. Shankara explains it in this significance, that we must lose the sense of this unreal objective universe in the sole perception of the pure Brahman. So explained the first line becomes a contradiction of the whole thought of the Upanishad which teaches the reconciliation, by the perception of essential Unity, of the apparently incompatible opposites, God and the World, Renunciation and Enjoyment, Action and internal Freedom, the One and the Many, Being and its Becomings, the passive divine Impersonality and the active divine Personality, the Knowledge and the Ignorance, the Becoming and the Not-Becoming, Life on earth and beyond and the supreme Immortality. The image is of the world either as a garment or as a dwelling-place for the informing and governing Spirit. The latter significance agrees better with the thought of the Upanishad.

[2] *Kurvanneva*. The stress of the word *eva* gives the force, "doing works indeed, and not refraining from them".

[3] Shankara reads the line, "Thus in thee — it is not otherwise than thus — action cleaves not, a man." He interprets *karmāṇi* in the first line in the sense of Vedic sacrifices which are permitted to the ignorant as a means of escaping from evil actions and their results and attaining to heaven, but the second *karma* in exactly the opposite sense, "evil action". The verse, he tells us, represents a concession to the ignorant; the enlightened soul abandons works and the world and goes to the forest. The whole expression and construction in this rendering become forced and unnatural. The rendering I give seems to me the simple and straightforward sense of the Upanishad.

असूर्या नाम ते लोका अन्धेन तमसावृताः ।
तांस्ते प्रेत्याभिगच्छन्ति ये के चात्महनो जनाः ॥ ३ ॥

3. Sunless[4] are those worlds and enveloped in blind gloom whereto all they in their passing hence resort who are slayers of their souls.

अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो नैनद् देवा आप्नुवन् पूर्वमर्षत् ।
तद् धावतोऽन्यानत्येति तिष्ठत् तस्मिन्नपो मातरिश्वा दधाति ॥ ४ ॥

4. One unmoving that is swifter than Mind, That the Gods reach not, for It progresses ever in front. That, standing, passes beyond others as they run. In That the Master of Life[5] establishes the Waters.[6]

तदेजति तन्नैजति तद् दूरे तद्वन्तिके ।
तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः ॥ ५ ॥

---

[4] We have two readings, *asūrya*, sunless, and *asurya*, Titanic or undivine. The third verse is, in the thought structure of the Upanishad, the starting-point for the final movement in the last four verses. Its suggestions are there taken up and worked out. The prayer to the Sun refers back in thought to the sunless worlds and their blind gloom, which are recalled in the ninth and twelfth verses. The sun and his rays are intimately connected in other Upanishads also with the worlds of Light and their natural opposite is the dark and sunless, not the Titanic worlds.

[5] *Mātariśvan* seems to mean "he who extends himself in the Mother or the container" whether that be the containing mother element, Ether, or the material energy called Earth in the Veda and spoken of there as the Mother. It is a Vedic epithet of the God Vayu, who, representing the divine principle in the Life-energy, Prana, extends himself in Matter and vivifies its forms. Here, it signifies the divine Life-power that presides in all forms of cosmic activity.

[6] *Apas*, as it is accentuated in the version of the White Yajurveda, can mean only "waters". If this accentuation is disregarded, we may take it as the singular *apas*, work, action. Shankara, however, renders it by the plural, works. The difficulty only arises because the true Vedic sense of the word had been forgotten and it came to be taken as referring to the fourth of the five elemental states of Matter, the liquid. Such a reference would be entirely irrelevant to the context. But the Waters, otherwise called the seven streams or the seven fostering Cows, are the Vedic symbol for the seven cosmic principles and their activities, three inferior, the physical, vital and mental, four superior, the divine Truth, the divine Bliss, the divine Will and Consciousness, and the divine Being. On this conception also is founded the ancient idea of the seven worlds in each of which the seven principles are separately active by their various harmonies. This is, obviously, the right significance of the word in the Upanishad.

5. That moves and That moves not; That is far and the same is near; That is within all this and That also is outside all this.

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥ ६ ॥

6. But he who sees everywhere the Self in all existences and all existences in the Self, shrinks not thereafter from aught.

यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद् विजानतः ।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥ ७ ॥

7. He in whom it is the Self-Being that has become all existences that are Becomings,[7] for he has the perfect knowledge, how shall he be deluded, whence shall he have grief who sees everywhere oneness?

स पर्यगाच्छुक्रमकायमव्रणमस्नाविरं शुद्धमपापविद्धम् ।
कविर्मनीषी परिभूः स्वयम्भूर्याथातथ्यतोऽर्थान् व्यदधाच्छाश्वतीभ्यः
समाभ्यः ॥ ८ ॥

8. It is He that has gone abroad — That which is bright, bodiless, without scar of imperfection, without sinews, pure, unpierced by evil. The Seer, the Thinker,[8] the One who becomes everywhere, the Self-existent has ordered objects perfectly according to their nature from years sempiternal.

---

[7] The words *sarvāṇi bhūtāni*, literally, "all things that have become", are opposed to Atman, self-existent and immutable being. The phrase means ordinarily "all creatures", but its literal sense is evidently insisted on in the expression *bhūtāni abhūt* "became the Becomings". The idea is the acquisition in man of the supreme consciousness by which the one Self in him extends itself to embrace all creatures and realises the eternal act by which that One manifests itself in the multiple forms of the universal motion.

[8] There is a clear distinction in Vedic thought between *kavi*, the seer, and *manīṣī*, the thinker. The former indicates the divine supra-intellectual Knowledge which by direct vision and illumination sees the reality, the principles and the forms of things in their true relations, the latter the labouring mentality which works from the divided consciousness through the possibilities of things downward to the actual manifestation in form and upward to their reality in the self-existent Brahman.

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते ।
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ विद्यायां रताः ॥ ९ ॥

9. Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after the Ignorance, they as if into a greater darkness who devote themselves to the Knowledge alone.

अन्यदेवाहुर्विद्यया अन्यदाहुरविद्यया ।
इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद् विचचक्षिरे ॥ १० ॥

10. Other, verily,[9] it is said, is that which comes by the Knowledge, other that which comes by the Ignorance; this is the lore we have received from the wise who revealed That to our understanding.

विद्याञ्च अविद्याञ्च यस्तद् वेदोभयं सह ।
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते ॥ ११ ॥

11. He who knows That as both in one, the Knowledge and the Ignorance, by the Ignorance crosses beyond death and by the Knowledge enjoys Immortality.

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसम्भूतिमुपासते ।
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ सम्भूत्यां रताः ॥ १२ ॥

12. Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after the Non-Birth, they as if into a greater darkness who devote themselves to the Birth alone.

अन्यदेवाहुः सम्भवादन्यदाहुरसम्भवात् ।
इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद् विचचक्षिरे ॥ १३ ॥

13. Other, verily, it is said, is that which comes by the Birth,

---

[9] *Anyadeva — eva* here gives to *anyad* the force, "Quite other than the result described in the preceding verse is that to which lead the Knowledge and the Ignorance." We have the explanation of *anyad* in the verse that follows. The ordinary rendering, "Knowledge has one result, Ignorance another", would be an obvious commonplace announced with an exaggerated pompousness, adding nothing to the thought and without any place in the sequence of the ideas.

other that which comes by the Non-Birth; this is the lore we have received from the wise who revealed That to our understanding.

सम्भूतिञ्च विनाशञ्च यस्तद् वेदोभयं सह।
विनाशेन मृत्युं तीर्त्वा सम्भूत्यामृतमश्नुते ॥ १४ ॥

14. He who knows That as both in one, the Birth and the dissolution of Birth, by the dissolution crosses beyond death and by the Birth enjoys Immortality.

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम्।
तत् त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥ १५ ॥

15. The face of Truth is covered with a brilliant golden lid; that do thou remove, O Fosterer,[10] for the law of the Truth, for sight.

पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्य प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन् समूह।
तेजो यत् ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत् ते पश्यामि
योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥ १६ ॥

16. O Fosterer, O sole Seer, O Ordainer, O illumining Sun, O power of the Father of creatures, marshal thy rays, draw together thy light; the Lustre which is thy most blessed form

---

[10] In the inner sense of the Veda Surya, the Sun-God, represents the divine Illumination of the Kavi which exceeds mind and forms the pure self-luminous Truth of things. His principal power is self-revelatory knowledge, termed in the Veda "Sight". His realm is described as the Truth, the Law, the Vast. He is the Fosterer or Increaser, for he enlarges and opens man's dark and limited being into a luminous and infinite consciousness. He is the sole Seer, Seer of Oneness and Knower of the Self, and leads him to the highest Sight. He is Yama, Controller or Ordainer, for he governs man's action and manifested being by the direct Law of the Truth, *satyadharma*, and therefore by the right principle of our nature, *yāthātathyataḥ*. A luminous power proceeding from the Father of all existence, he reveals in himself the divine Purusha of whom all beings are the manifestations. His rays are the thoughts that proceed luminously from the Truth, the Vast, but become deflected and distorted, broken up and disordered in the reflecting and dividing principle, Mind. They form there the golden lid which covers the face of the Truth. The Seer prays to Surya to cast them into right order and relation and then draw them together into the unity of revealed truth. The result of this inner process is the perception of the oneness of all beings in the divine Soul of the Universe.

of all, that in Thee I behold. The Purusha there and there, He am I.

वायुरनिलममृतमथेदं भस्मान्तं शरीरम् ।
ॐ क्रतो स्मर कृतं स्मर क्रतो स्मर कृतं स्मर ॥ १७ ॥

17. The Breath of things[11] is an immortal Life, but of this body ashes are the end. OM! O Will,[12] remember, that which was done remember! O Will, remember, that which was done remember.

अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान् विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् ।
युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठां ते नमउक्तिं विधेम ॥ १८ ॥

18. O god Agni, knowing all things that are manifested, lead us by the good path to the felicity; remove from us the devious attraction of sin.[13] To thee completest speech of submission we would dispose.[14]

---

[11] Vayu, called elsewhere Matarishwan, the Life-Energy in the universe. In the light of Surya he reveals himself as an immortal principle of existence of which birth and death and life in the body are only particular and external processes.

[12] The Vedic term *kratu* means sometimes the action itself, sometimes the effective power behind action represented in mental consciousness by the will. Agni is this power. He is divine force which manifests first in matter as heat and light and material energy and then, taking different forms in the other principles of man's consciousness, leads him by a progressive manifestation upwards to the Truth and the Bliss.

[13] Sin, in the conception of the Veda, from which this verse is taken bodily, is that which excites and hurries the faculties into deviation from the good path. There is a straight road or road of naturally increasing light and truth, *ṛjuḥ panthāḥ*, *ṛtasya panthāḥ*, leading over infinite levels and towards infinite vistas, *vītāni pṛṣṭhāni*, by which the law of our nature should normally take us towards our fulfilment. Sin compels it instead to travel with stumblings amid uneven and limited tracts and along crooked windings (*duritāni*, *vṛjināni*).

[14] The word *vidhema* is used of the ordering of the sacrifice, the disposal of the offerings to the God and, generally, of the sacrifice or worship itself. The Vedic *namas*, internal and external obeisance, is the symbol of submission to the divine Being in ourselves and in the world. Here the offering is that of completest submission and the self-surrender of all the faculties of the lower egoistic human nature to the divine Will-force, Agni, so that, free from internal opposition, it may lead the soul of man through the truth towards a felicity full of the spiritual riches, *rāye*. That state of beatitude is intended, self-content in the principle of pure Love and Joy, which the Vedic initiates regarded as the source of the divine existence in the universe and the foundation of the divine life in the human being. It is the deformation of this principle by egoism which appears as desire and the lust of possession in the lower worlds.

Analysis

PREFATORY

Plan of the Upanishad

THE UPANISHADS, being vehicles of illumination and not of instruction, composed for seekers who had already a general familiarity with the ideas of the Vedic and Vedantic seers and even some personal experience of the truths on which they were founded, dispense in their style with expressed transitions of thought and the development of implied or subordinate notions.

Every verse in the Isha Upanishad reposes on a number of ideas implicit in the text but nowhere set forth explicitly; the reasoning also that supports its conclusions is suggested by the words, not expressly conveyed to the intelligence. The reader, or rather the hearer, was supposed to proceed from light to light, confirming his intuitions and verifying by his experience, not submitting the ideas to the judgment of the logical reason.

To the modern mind this method is invalid and inapplicable; it is necessary to present the ideas of the Upanishad in their completeness, underline the suggestions, supply the necessary transitions and bring out the suppressed but always implicit reasoning.

The central idea of the Upanishad, which is a reconciliation and harmony of fundamental opposites, is worked out symmetrically in four successive movements of thought.

FIRST MOVEMENT

In the first, a basis is laid down by the idea of the one and stable Spirit inhabiting and governing a universe of movement and of the forms of movement. (*Verse 1, line 1*)

On this conception the rule of a divine life for man is founded, — enjoyment of all by renunciation of all through the exclusion of desire. (*Verse 1, line 2*)

There is then declared the justification of works and of the physical life on the basis of an inalienable freedom of the soul, one with the Lord, amidst all the activity of the multiple movement. (*Verse 2*)

Finally, the result of an ignorant interference with the right manifestation of the One in the multiplicity is declared to be an involution in states of blind obscurity after death. (*Verse 3*)

SECOND MOVEMENT

In the second movement the ideas of the first verse are resumed and amplified.

The one stable Lord and the multiple movement are identified as one Brahman of whom, however, the unity and stability are the higher truth and who contains all as well as inhabits all. (*Verses 4, 5*)

The basis and fulfilment of the rule of life are found in the experience of unity by which man identifies himself with the cosmic and transcendental Self and is identified in the Self, but with an entire freedom from grief and illusion, with all its becomings. (*Verses 6, 7*)

THIRD MOVEMENT

In the third movement there is a return to the justification of life and works (the subject of verse 2) and an indication of their divine fulfilment.

The degrees of the Lord's self-manifestation in the universe of motion and in the becomings of the one Being are set forth and the inner law of all existences declared to be by His conception and determination. (*Verse 8*)

Vidya and Avidya, Becoming and Non-becoming are reconciled by their mutual utility to the progressive self-realisation which proceeds from the state of mortality to the state of Immortality. (*Verses 9 – 14*)

FOURTH MOVEMENT

The fourth movement returns to the idea of the worlds and under the figures of Surya and Agni the relations of the Supreme Truth and Immortality (*Verses 15, 16*), the activities of this life (*Verse 17*), and the state after death (*Verse 18*) are symbolically indicated.

I

First Movement

The Inhabiting Godhead: Life and Action

Verses 1 – 3*

THE BASIS OF COSMIC EXISTENCE

God and the world, Spirit and formative Nature are confronted and their relations fixed.

COSMOS

All world is a movement of the Spirit in Itself and is mutable and transient in all its formations and appearances; its only eternity is an eternity of recurrence, its only stability a semblance caused by certain apparent fixities of relation and grouping.

Every separate object in the universe is, in truth, itself the whole universe presenting a certain front or outward appearance of its movement. The microcosm is one with the macrocosm.

Yet in their relation of principle of movement and result of movement they are continent and contained, world in world, movement in movement. The individual therefore partakes of the nature of the universal, refers back to it for its source of activity, is, as we say, subject to its laws and part of cosmic Nature.

---

* 1. All this is for habitation by the Lord, whatsoever is individual universe of movement in the universal motion. By that renounced thou shouldst enjoy; lust not after any man's possession.

2. Doing verily works in this world one should wish to live a hundred years. Thus it is in thee and not otherwise than this; action cleaves not to a man.

3. Sunless are those worlds and enveloped in blind gloom whereto all they in their passing hence resort who are slayers of their souls.

SPIRIT

Spirit is lord of Its movement, one, immutable, free, stable and eternal.

The Movement with all its formed objects has been created in order to provide a habitation for the Spirit who, being One, yet dwells multitudinously in the multiplicity of His mansions.

It is the same Lord who dwells in the sum and the part, in the Cosmos as a whole and in each being, force or object in the Cosmos.

Since He is one and indivisible, the Spirit in all is one and their multiplicity is a play of His cosmic consciousness.

Therefore each human being is in his essence one with all others, free, eternal, immutable, lord of Nature.

TRANSITIONAL THOUGHT

AVIDYA

The object of habitation is enjoyment and possession; the object of the Spirit in Cosmos is, therefore, the possession and enjoyment of the universe. Yet, being thus in his essence one, divine and free, man seems to be limited, divided from others, subject to Nature and even its creation and sport, enslaved to death, ignorance and sorrow. His object in manifestation being possession and enjoyment of his world, he is unable to enjoy because of his limitation. This contrary result comes about by Avidya, the Ignorance of oneness: and the knot of the Ignorance is egoism.

EGO

The cause of ego is that while by Its double power of Vidya and Avidya the Spirit dwells at once in the consciousness of multiplicity and relativity and in the consciousness of unity and identity and is therefore not bound by the Ignorance, yet It can, in mind, identify Itself with the object in the movement, absorbingly, to the apparent exclusion of the Knowledge which remains behind, veiled at the back of the mentality. The movement of Mind in Nature is thus able to conceive of the object as the reality and the Inhabitant as limited and determined by the appearances of the object. It conceives of the object, not as the universe in one of its frontal appearances, but as itself a separate existence standing out from the Cosmos and different in being from all the rest of it. It conceives similarly of the Inhabitant. This is the illusion of ignorance which falsifies all realities. The illusion is called *ahaṁkāra*, the separative ego-sense which makes each being conceive of itself as an independent personality.

The result of the separation is the inability to enter into harmony and oneness with the universe and a consequent inability to possess and enjoy it. But the desire to possess and enjoy is the master impulse of the Ego which knows itself obscurely to be the Lord, although owing to the limitations of its relativity, it is unable to realise its true existence. The result is discord with others and oneself, mental and physical suffering, the sense of weakness and inability, the sense of obscuration, the straining of energy in passion and in desire towards self-fulfilment, the recoil of energy exhausted or disappointed towards death and disintegration.

Desire is the badge of subjection with its attendant discord and suffering. That which is free, one and lord, does not desire, but inalienably contains, possesses and enjoys.

THE RULE OF THE DIVINE LIFE

Enjoyment of the universe and all it contains is the object of world-existence, but renunciation of all in desire is the condition of the free enjoyment of all.

The renunciation demanded is not a moral constraint of self-denial or a physical rejection, but an entire liberation of the spirit from any craving after the forms of things.

The terms of this liberation are freedom from egoism and, consequently, freedom from personal desire. Practically, this renunciation implies that one should not regard anything in the universe as a necessary object of possession, nor as possessed by another and not by oneself, nor as an object of greed in the heart or the senses.

This attitude is founded on the perception of unity. For it has already been said that all souls are one possessing Self, the Lord; and although the Lord inhabits each object as if separately, yet all objects exist in that Self and not outside it.

Therefore by transcending Ego and realising the one Self, we possess the whole universe in the one cosmic consciousness and do not need to possess physically.

Having by oneness with the Lord the possibility of an infinite free delight in all things, we do not need to desire.

Being one with all beings, we possess, in their enjoyment, in ours and in the cosmic Being's, delight of universal self-expression. It is only by this Ananda at once transcendent and universal that man can be free in his soul and yet live in the world with the full active Life of the Lord in His universe of movement.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF WORKS

This freedom does not depend upon inaction, nor is this possession limited to the enjoyment of the inactive Soul that only witnesses without taking part in the movement.

On the contrary, the doing of works in this material world and a full acceptance of the term of physical life are part of its completeness.

For the active Brahman fulfils Itself in the world by works and man also is in the body for self-fulfilment by action. He cannot do otherwise, for even his inertia acts and produces effects in the cosmic movement. Being in this body or any kind of body, it is idle to think of refraining from action or escaping the physical life. The idea that this in itself can be a means of liberation, is part of the Ignorance which supposes the soul to be a separate entity in the Brahman.

Action is shunned because it is thought to be inconsistent with freedom. The man when he acts, is supposed to be necessarily entangled in the desire behind the action, in subjection to the formal energy that drives the action and in the results of the action. These things are true in appearance, not in reality.

Desire is only a mode of the emotional mind which by ignorance seeks its delight in the object of desire and not in the Brahman who expresses Himself in the object. By destroying that ignorance one can do action without entanglement in desire.

The Energy that drives is itself subject to the Lord, who expresses Himself in it with perfect freedom. By getting behind Nature to the Lord of Nature, merging the individual in the Cosmic Will, one can act with the divine freedom. Our actions are given up to the Lord and our personal responsibility ceases in His liberty.

The chain of Karma only binds the movement of Nature and not the soul which, by knowing itself, ceases even to appear to be bound by the results of its works.

Therefore the way of freedom is not inaction, but to cease from identifying oneself with the movement and recover instead our true identity in the Self of things who is their Lord.

THE OTHER WORLDS

By departing from the physical life one does not disappear out of the Movement, but only passes into some other general state of consciousness than the material universe.

These states are either obscure or illuminated, some dark or sunless.

By persisting in gross forms of ignorance, by coercing perversely the soul in its self-fulfilment or by a wrong dissolution of its becoming in the Movement, one enters into states of blind darkness, not into the worlds of light and of liberated and blissful being.

II

SECOND MOVEMENT

[1]

Brahman: Oneness of God and the World

Verses 4–5*

BRAHMAN — THE UNITY

The Lord and the world, even when they seem to be distinct, are not really different from each other; they are one Brahman.

"ONE UNMOVING"

God is the one stable and eternal Reality. He is One because there is nothing else, since all existence and non-existence are He. He is stable or unmoving, because motion implies change in Space and change in Time, and He, being beyond Time and Space, is immutable. He possesses eternally in Himself all that is, has been or ever can be, and He therefore does not increase or diminish. He is beyond causality and relativity and therefore there is no change of relations in His being.

---

* 4. One unmoving that is swifter than Mind; That the Gods reach not, for It progresses ever in front. That, standing, passes beyond others as they run. In That the Master of Life establishes the Waters.

5. That moves and That moves not; That is far and the same is near; That is within all this and That also is outside all this.

"SWIFTER THAN MIND"

The world is a cyclic movement (*saṁsāra*) of the Divine Consciousness in Space and Time. Its law and, in a sense, its object is progression; it exists by movement and would be dissolved by cessation of movement. But the basis of this movement is not material; it is the energy of active consciousness which, by its motion and multiplication in different principles (different in appearance, the same in essence), creates oppositions of unity and multiplicity, divisions of Time and Space, relations and groupings of circumstance and Causality. All these things are real in consciousness, but only symbolic of the Being, somewhat as the imaginations of a creative Mind are true representations of itself, yet not quite real in comparison with itself, or real with a different kind of reality.

But mental consciousness is not the Power that creates the universe. That is something infinitely more puissant, swift and unfettered than the mind. It is the pure omnipotent self-awareness of the Absolute unbound by any law of the relativity. The laws of the relativity, upheld by the gods, are Its temporary creations. Their apparent eternity is only the duration, immeasurable to us, of the world which they govern. They are laws regularising motion and change, not laws binding the Lord of the movement. The gods, therefore, are described as continually running in their course. But the Lord is free and unaffected by His own movement.

"THAT MOVES, THAT MOVES NOT"

The motion of the world works under the government of a perpetual stability. Change represents the constant shifting of apparent relations in an eternal Immutability.

It is these truths that are expressed in the formulae of the one Unmoving that is swifter than Mind, That which moves and moves not, the one Stable which outstrips in the speed of its effective consciousness the others who run.

TRANSITIONAL THOUGHT

THE MANY[1]

If the One is pre-eminently real, "the others", the Many are not unreal. The world is not a figment of the Mind.

Unity is the eternal truth of things, diversity a play of the unity. The sense of unity has therefore been termed Knowledge, Vidya, the sense of diversity Ignorance, Avidya. But diversity is not false except when it is divorced from the sense of its true and eternal unity.

Brahman is one, not numerically, but in essence. Numerical oneness would either exclude multiplicity or would be a pluralistic and divisible oneness with the Many as its parts. That is not the unity of Brahman, which can neither be diminished nor increased, nor divided.

The Many in the universe are sometimes called parts of the universal Brahman as the waves are parts of the sea. But, in truth, these waves are each of them that sea, their diversities being those of frontal or superficial appearances caused by the sea's motion. As each object in the universe is really the whole universe in a different frontal appearance, so each individual soul is all Brahman regarding Itself and world from a centre of cosmic consciousness.

For That is identical, not single. It is identical always and everywhere in Time and Space, as well as identical beyond Time and Space. Numerical oneness and multiplicity are equally valid terms of its essential unity.

These two terms, as we see them, are like all others, representations in Chit, in the free and all-creative self-awareness of the Absolute regarding itself variously, infinitely, innumerably and formulating what it regards. Chit is a power not only of knowledge, but of expressive will, not only of receptive vision, but of formative representation; the two are indeed one power. For Chit is an action of Being, not of the Void. What it sees, that becomes. It sees itself beyond Space and Time; that becomes in the conditions of Space and Time.

---

[1] The series of ideas under this heading seem to me to be the indispensable metaphysical basis of the Upanishad. The Isha Upanishad does not teach a pure and exclusive Monism; it declares the One without denying the Many and its method is to see the One in the Many. It asserts the simultaneous validity of Vidya and Avidya and upholds as the object of action and knowledge an immortality consistent with Life and Birth in this world. It regards every object as itself the universe and every soul as itself the divine Purusha. The ensemble of these ideas is consistent only with a synthetic or comprehensive as opposed to an illusionist or exclusive Monism.

Creation is not a making of something out of nothing or of one thing out of another, but a self-projection of Brahman into the conditions of Space and Time. Creation is not a making, but a becoming in terms and forms of conscious existence.

In the becoming each individual is Brahman variously represented and entering into various relations with Itself in the play of the divine consciousness; in being, each individual is all Brahman.

Brahman as the Absolute or the Universal has the power of standing back from Itself in the relativity. It conceives, by a subordinate movement of consciousness, the individual as other than the universal, the relative as different from the Absolute. Without this separative movement, the individual would always tend to lose itself in the universal, the relative to disappear into the Absolute. Thus, It supports a corresponding reaction in the individual who regards himself as "other" than the transcendent and universal Brahman and "other" than the rest of the Many. He puts identity behind him and enforces the play of Being in the separative Ego.

The individual may regard himself as eternally different from the One, or as eternally one with It, yet different, or he may go back entirely in his consciousness to the pure Identity.[2] But he can never regard himself as independent of some kind of Unity, for such a view would correspond to no conceivable truth in the universe or beyond it.

These three attitudes correspond to three truths of the

---

[2] The positions, in inverse order, of the three principal philosophical schools of Vedanta, Monism, Qualified Monism and Dualism.

Brahman which are simultaneously valid and none of them entirely true without the others as its complements. Their coexistence, difficult of conception to the logical intellect, can be experienced by identity in consciousness with Brahman.

Even in asserting Oneness, we must remember that Brahman is beyond our mental distinctions and is a fact not of Thought that discriminates, but of Being which is absolute, infinite and escapes discrimination. Our consciousness is representative and symbolic; it cannot conceive the thing-in-itself, the Absolute, except by negation, in a sort of void, by emptying it of all that it seems in the universe to contain. But the Absolute is not a void or negation. It is all that is here in Time and beyond Time.

Even oneness is a representation and exists in relation to multiplicity. Vidya and Avidya are equally eternal powers of the supreme Chit. Neither Vidya nor Avidya by itself is the absolute knowledge. (See verses 9–11.)

Still, of all relations oneness is the secret base, not multiplicity. Oneness constitutes and upholds the multiplicity, multiplicity does not constitute and uphold the oneness.

Therefore we have to conceive of oneness as our self and the essential nature of Being, multiplicity as a representation of Self and a becoming. We have to conceive of the Brahman as One Self of all and then return upon the Many as becomings of the One Being (*bhūtāni . . . ātman*). But both the Self and the becomings are Brahman; we cannot regard the one as Brahman and the others as unreal and not Brahman. Both are real, the one with a constituent and comprehensive, the others with a derivative or dependent reality.

THE RUNNING OF THE GODS

Brahman representing Itself in the universe as the Stable, by Its immutable existence (Sat), is Purusha, God, Spirit; representing Itself as the Motional, by Its power of active Consciousness (Chit), is Nature, Force or World-Principle (Prakriti, Shakti, Maya).[3] The play of these two principles is the Life of the universe.

The Gods are Brahman representing Itself in cosmic Personalities expressive of the one Godhead who, in their impersonal action, appear as the various play of the principles of Nature.

The "others" are *sarvāṇi bhūtāni* of a later verse, all becomings, Brahman representing itself in the separative consciousness of the Many.

Everything in the universe, even the Gods, seems to itself to be moving in the general movement towards a goal outside itself or other than its immediate idea of itself. Brahman is the goal; for it is both the beginning and the end, the cause and the result of all movement.

But the idea of a final goal in the movement of Nature itself is illusory. For Brahman is Absolute and Infinite. The Gods, labouring to reach him, find, at every goal that they realise, Brahman still moving forward in front to a farther realisation. Nothing in the appearances of the universe can be entirely That to the relative consciousness; all is only a symbolic representation of the Unknowable.

All things are already realised in Brahman. The running of the Others in the course of Nature is only a working out (Prakriti), by Causality, in Time and Space, of something that Brahman already possesses.

Even in Its universal being Brahman exceeds the Movement. Exceeding Time, It contains in Itself past, present and future simultaneously and has not to run to the end of conceivable Time. Exceeding Space, It contains all formations in Itself coincidently and has not to run to the end of conceivable Space. Exceeding Causality, It contains freely in Itself all eventualities as well as all potentialities without being bound by the apparent chain of causality by which they are linked in the universe. Everything is already realised by It as the Lord before it can be accomplished by the separated Personalities in the movement.

---

[3] Prakriti, executive Nature as opposed to Purusha, which is the Soul governing, taking cognizance of and enjoying the works of Prakriti. Shakti, the self-existent, self-cognitive, self-effective Power of the Lord (Ishwara, Deva or Purusha), which expresses itself in the workings of Prakriti. Maya, signifying originally in the Veda comprehensive and creative knowledge, Wisdom that is from of old; afterwards taken in its second and derivative sense, cunning, magic, Illusion. In this second significance it can really be appropriate only to the workings of the lower Nature, *aparā prakṛti*, which has put behind it the Divine Wisdom and is absorbed in the experiences of the separative Ego. It is in the more ancient sense that the word Maya is used in the Upanishads, where, indeed, it occurs but rarely.

THE PRINCIPLE OF LIFE

MATARISHWAN AND THE WATERS

What then is Its intention in the movement?

The movement is a rhythm, a harmony which That, as the Universal Life, works out by figures of Itself in the terms of conscious Being. It is a formula symbolically expressive of the Unknowable, — so arranged that every level of consciousness really represents something beyond itself, depth of depth, continent of continent. It is a play[4] of the divine Consciousness existing for its own satisfaction and adding nothing to That, which is already complete. It is a fact of conscious being, justified by its own existence, with no purpose ulterior to itself. The idea of purpose, of a goal is born of the progressive self-unfolding by the world of its own true nature to the individual Souls inhabiting its forms; for the Being is gradually self-revealed within its own becomings, real Unity emerges out of the Multiplicity and changes entirely the values of the latter to our consciousness.

This self-unfolding is governed by conditions determined by the complexity of consciousness in its cosmic action.

For consciousness is not simple or homogeneous, it is septuple. That is to say, it constitutes itself into seven forms or grades of conscious activity descending from pure Being to physical being. Their interplay creates the worlds, determines all activities, constitutes all becomings.

---

[4] This is the Vaishnava image of the Lila applied usually to the play of the Personal Deity in the world, but equally applicable to the active impersonal Brahman.

Brahman is always the continent of this play or this working. Brahman self-extended in Space and Time is the universe.

In this extension Brahman represents Itself as formative Nature, the universal Mother of things, who appears to us, first, as Matter, called Prithivi, the Earth-Principle.

Brahman in Matter or physical being represents Itself as the universal Life-Power, Matarishwan, which moves there as a dynamic energy, Prana, and presides effectively over all arrangement and formation.

Universal Life establishes, involved in Matter, the septuple consciousness; and the action of Prana, the dynamic energy, on the Matrix of things evolves out of it its different forms and serves as a basis for all their evolutions.

TRANSITIONAL THOUGHT

THE WATERS

There are, then, seven constituents of Chit active in the universe.

We are habitually aware of three elements in our being, Mind, Life and Body. These constitute for us a divided and mutable existence which is in a condition of unstable harmony and works by a strife of positive and negative forces between the two poles of Birth and Death. For all life is a constant birth or becoming (*sambhava*, *sambhūti* of verses 12 – 14). All birth entails a constant death or dissolution of that which becomes, in order that it may change into a new becoming. Therefore this state of existence is called Mrityu, Death, and described as a stage which has to be passed through and transcended. (*Verses 11, 14*)

For this is not the whole of our being and, therefore, not our pure being. We have, behind, a superconscious existence which has also three constituents, Sat, Chit-Tapas and Ananda.

Sat is essence of our being, pure, infinite and undivided, as opposed to this divisible being which founds itself on the constant changeableness of physical substance. Sat is the divine counterpart of physical substance.

Chit-Tapas is pure energy of Consciousness, free in its rest or its action, sovereign in its will, as opposed to the hampered dynamic energies of Prana which, feeding upon physical substances, are dependent on and limited by their sustenance.[5] Tapas is the divine counterpart of this lower nervous or vital energy.

Ananda is Beatitude, the bliss of pure conscious existence and energy, as opposed to the life of the sensations and emotions which are at the mercy of the outward touches of Life and Matter and their positive and negative reactions, joy and grief, pleasure and pain. Ananda is the divine counterpart of the lower emotional and sensational being.

This higher existence, proper to the divine Sachchidananda, is unified, self-existent, not confused by the figures of Birth and Death. It is called, therefore, Amritam, Immortality, and offered to us as the goal to be aimed at and the felicity to be enjoyed when we have transcended the state of death. (*Verses 11, 14, 17, 18*)

The higher divine is linked to the lower mortal existence by the causal Idea[6] or supramental Knowledge-Will, Vijnana. It is the causal Idea which, by supporting and secretly guiding the confused activities of the Mind, Life and Body, ensures and compels the right arrangement of the universe. It is called in the Veda the Truth because it represents by direct vision the truth of things both inclusive and independent of their appearances; the Right or Law, because, containing in itself the effective power of Chit, it works out all things according to their nature with a perfect knowledge and prevision; the Vast, because it is of the nature of an infinite cosmic Intelligence comprehensive of all particular activities.

Vijnana, as the Truth, leads the divided consciousness back to the One. It also sees the truth of things in the multiplicity. Vijnana is the divine counterpart of the lower divided intelligence.

---

[5] Therefore physical substance is called in the Upanishads Annam, Food. In its origin, however, the word meant simply being or substance.

[6] Not the abstract mental idea, but the supramental Real-Idea, the Consciousness, Force and Delight of the Being precipitated into a comprehensive and discriminative awareness of all the truths and powers of its own existence, carrying in its self-knowledge the will of self-manifestation, the power of all its potentialities and the power of all its forms. It is power that acts and effectuates, as well as knowledge master of its own action.

These seven powers of Chit are spoken of by the Vedic Rishis as the Waters, they are imaged as currents flowing into or rising out of the general sea of Consciousness in the human being.[7]

They are all coexistent in the universe eternally and inseparably, but capable of being involved and remanifested in each other. They are actually involved in physical Nature and must necessarily evolve out of it. They can be withdrawn into pure infinite Being and can again be manifested out of it.

The infolding and unfolding of the One in the Many and the Many in the One is therefore the law of the eternally recurrent cosmic Cycles.

THE VISION OF THE BRAHMAN

The Upanishad teaches us how to perceive Brahman in the universe and in our self-existence.

We have to perceive Brahman comprehensively as both the Stable and the Moving. We must see It in eternal and immutable Spirit and in all the changing manifestations of universe and relativity.

We have to perceive all things in Space and Time, the far and the near, the immemorial Past, the immediate Present, the infinite Future with all their contents and happenings as the One Brahman.

We have to perceive Brahman as that which exceeds, contains and supports all individual things as well as all universe, transcendentally of Time and Space and Causality. We have to perceive It also as that which lives in and possesses the universe and all it contains.

This is the transcendental, universal and individual Brahman, Lord, Continent and Indwelling Spirit, which is the object of all knowledge. Its realisation is the condition of perfection and the way of Immortality.

---

[7] *Hṛdya samudra*, Ocean of the Heart. R.V. IV. 58. 5.

III

SECOND MOVEMENT

[2]

Self-Realisation

Verses 6 – 7*

SELF-REALISATION

Brahman is, subjectively, Atman, the Self or immutable existence of all that is in the universe. Everything that changes in us, mind, life, body, character, temperament, action, is not our real and unchanging self, but becomings of the Self in the movement, *jagatī*.

In Nature, therefore, all things that exist, animate or inanimate, are becomings of the one Self of all. All these different creatures are one indivisible existence. This is the truth each being has to realise.

When this unity has been realised by the individual in every part of his being, he becomes perfect, pure, liberated from ego and the dualities, possessed of the entire divine felicity.

ATMAN

Atman, our true self, is Brahman; it is pure indivisible Being, self-luminous, self-concentrated in consciousness, self-concentrated in force, self-delighted. Its existence is light and bliss. It is timeless, spaceless and free.

---

* 6. But he who sees everywhere the Self in all existences and all existences in the Self, shrinks not thereafter from aught.

7. He in whom it is the Self-Being that has become all existences that are Becomings, for he has the perfect knowledge, how shall he be deluded, whence shall he have grief who sees everywhere oneness?

THE THREEFOLD PURUSHA[1]

Atman represents itself to the consciousness of the creature in three states, dependent on the relations between Purusha and Prakriti, the Soul and Nature. These three states are Akshara, unmoving or immutable; Kshara, moving or mutable; and Para or Uttama, Supreme or Highest.

Kshara Purusha is the Self reflecting the changes and movements of Nature, participating in them, immersed in the consciousness of the movement and seeming in it to be born and die, increase and diminish, progress and change. Atman, as the Kshara, enjoys change and division and duality; controls secretly its own changes but seems to be controlled by them; enjoys the oppositions of pleasure and pain, good and bad, but appears to be their victim; possesses and upholds the action of Nature, by which it seems to be created. For, always and inalienably, the Self is Ishwara, the Lord.

Akshara Purusha is the Self standing back from the changes and movements of Nature, calm, pure, impartial, indifferent, watching them and not participating, above them as on a summit, not immersed in these Waters. This calm Self is the sky that never moves and changes looking down upon the waters that are never at rest. The Akshara is the hidden freedom of the Kshara.

Para Purusha or Purushottama is the Self containing and enjoying both the stillness and the movement, but conditioned and limited by neither of them. It is the Lord, Brahman, the All, the Indefinable and Unknowable.

It is this supreme Self that has to be realised in both the unmoving and the mutable.

PURUSHA IN PRAKRITI[2]

Atman, the Self, represents itself differently in the sevenfold movement of Nature according to the dominant principle of the consciousness in the individual being.

---

[1] Gita XV. 16, 17. See also XIII passim.

[2] Taittiriya Upanishad II. 1 – 6.

In the physical consciousness Atman becomes the material being, *annamaya puruṣa*.

In the vital or nervous consciousness Atman becomes the vital or dynamic being, *prāṇamaya puruṣa*.

In the mental consciousness Atman becomes the mental being, *manomaya puruṣa*.

In the supra-intellectual consciousness, dominated by the Truth or causal Idea (called in Veda Satyam, Ritam, Brihat, the True, the Right, the Vast), Atman becomes the ideal being or great Soul, *vijñānamaya puruṣa* or *mahat ātman*.[3]

In the consciousness proper to the universal Beatitude, Atman becomes the all-blissful being or all-enjoying and all-productive Soul, *ānandamaya puruṣa*.

In the consciousness proper to the infinite divine self-awareness which is also the infinite all-effective Will (Chit-Tapas), Atman is the all-conscious Soul that is source and lord of the universe, *caitanya puruṣa*.

In the consciousness proper to the state of pure divine existence Atman is *sat puruṣa*, the pure divine Self.

Man, being one in his true Self with the Lord who inhabits all forms, can live in any of these states of the Self in the world and partake of its experiences. He can be anything he wills from the material to the all-blissful being. Through the Anandamaya he can enter into the Chaitanya and Sat Purusha.

SACHCHIDANANDA

Sachchidananda is the manifestation of the higher Purusha; its nature of infinite being, consciousness, power and bliss is the higher Nature, *parā prakṛti*. Mind, life and body are the lower nature, *aparā prakṛti*.

The state of Sachchidananda is the higher half of universal existence, *parārdha*, the nature of which is Immortality, Amritam. The state of mental existence in Matter is the lower half,

---

[3] The *mahat ātman* or Vast Self is frequently referred to in the Upanishads. It is also called *bhūmā*, the Large.

aparārdha, the nature of which is death, Mrityu.

Mind and life in the body are in the state of Death because by Ignorance they fail to realise Sachchidananda. Realising perfectly Sachchidananda, they can convert themselves, Mind into the nature of the Truth, Vijnana, Life into the nature of Chaitanya, Body into the nature of Sat, that is, into the pure essence.

When this cannot be done perfectly in the body, the soul realises its true state in other forms of existence or worlds, the "sunlit" worlds and states of felicity, and returns upon material existence to complete its evolution in the body.

A progressively perfect realisation in the body is the aim of human evolution.

It is also possible for the soul to withdraw for an indefinable period into the pure state of Sachchidananda.

The realisation of the Self as Sachchidananda is the aim of human existence.

THE CONDITION OF SELF-REALISATION[4]

Sachchidananda is always the pure state of Atman; it may either remain self-contained as if apart from the universe or overlook, embrace and possess it as the Lord.

In fact, it does both simultaneously. (*Verse 8*)

The Lord pervades the universe as the Virat Purusha, the Cosmic Soul (*paribhū* of the eighth verse, the One who becomes everywhere); He enters into each object in the movement, to the Knowledge as Brahman supporting individual consciousness and individual form, to the Ignorance as an individualised and limited being. He manifests as the Jivatman or individual self in the living creature.

From the standpoint of our lower state in the kingdom of death and limitation Atman is Sachchidananda, supra-mental, but reflected in the mind. If the mind is pure, bright and still, there is the right reflection; if it is unpurified, troubled and obscured, the reflection is distorted and subjected to the crooked action of the Ignorance.

---

[4] I have collected under this and the preceding headings the principal ideas of the Upanishads with regard to the Self, although not expressly mentioned or alluded to in our text, because they are indispensable to an understanding of the complete philosophy of these Scriptures and to the relations of the thought which is developed in the Isha.

According to the state of the reflecting mind we may have either purity of self-knowledge or an obscuration and distortion of knowledge in the dualities of truth and error; a pure activity of unegoistic Will or an obscuration and deflection of Will in the dualities of right and wrong action, sin and virtue; a pure state and unmixed play of beatitude or an obscuration and perversion of it in the dualities of right and wrong enjoyment, pleasure and pain, joy and grief.

It is the mental ego-sense that creates this distortion by division and limitation of the Self. The limitation is brought about through the Kshara Purusha identifying itself with the changeable formations of Nature in the separate body, the individual life and the egoistic mind, to the exclusion of the sense of unity with all existence and with all existences.

This exclusion is a fixed habit of the understanding due to our past evolution in the movement, not an ineffugable law of human consciousness. Its diminution and final disappearance are the condition of self-realisation.

The beginning of wisdom, perfection and beatitude is the vision of the One.

THE STAGES OF SELF-REALISATION

THE VISION OF THE ALL

The first movement of self-realisation is the sense of unity with other existences in the universe. Its early or crude form is the attempt to understand or sympathise with others, the tendency of a widening love or compassion or fellow-feeling for others, the impulsion of work for the sake of others.

The oneness so realised is a pluralistic unity, the drawing together of similar units resulting in a collectivity or solidarity rather than in real oneness. The Many remain to the consciousness as the real existences; the One is only their result.

Real knowledge begins with the perception of essential oneness, — one Matter, one Life, one Mind, one Soul playing in many forms.

When this Soul of things is seen to be Sachchidananda, then knowledge is perfected. For we see Matter to be only a play of Life, Life a play of Mind energising itself in substance, Mind a play of Truth or causal Idea representing truth of being variously in all possible mental forms, Truth a play of Sachchidananda, Sachchidananda the self-manifestation of a supreme Unknowable, Para-Brahman or Para-Purusha.

We perceive the soul in all bodies to be this one Self or Sachchidananda multiplying itself in individual consciousness. We see also all minds, lives, bodies to be active formations of the same existence in the extended being of the Self.

This is the vision of all existences in the Self and of the Self in all existences which is the foundation of perfect internal liberty and perfect joy and peace.

For by this vision, in proportion as it increases in intensity and completeness, there disappears from the individual mentality all *jugupsā*, that is to say, all repulsion, shrinking, dislike, fear, hatred and other perversions of feeling which arise from division and personal opposition to other beings or to the objectivities that surround us. Perfect equality[5] of soul is established.

THE VISION OF THE SELF IN ITS BECOMINGS

Vision is not sufficient; one must become what inwardly one sees. The whole inner life must be changed so as to represent perfectly in all parts of the being what is understood by the intellect and seen by the inner perception.

---

[5] The state described in the Gita as *samatva*. *Jugupsā* is the feeling of repulsion caused by the sense of a want of harmony between one's own limited self-formation and the contacts of the external with a consequent recoil of grief, fear, hatred, discomfort, suffering. It is the opposite of attraction which is the source of desire and attachment. Repulsion and attraction removed, we have *samatva*.

In the individual soul extending itself to the All by the vision of unity (*ekatvam anupaśyataḥ*, seeing everywhere oneness), arranging its thoughts, emotions and sensations according to the perfect knowledge of the right relation of things which comes by the realisation of the Truth (*vijānataḥ*, having the perfect knowledge), there must be repeated the divine act of consciousness by which the one Being, eternally self-existent, manifests in itself the multiplicity of the world (*sarvāṇi bhūtāni ātmaiva abhūt*, the Self-Being became all Becomings).

That is to say, the human or egoistic view is that of a world of innumerable separate creatures each self-existent and different from the others, each trying to get its utmost possible profit out of the others and the world, but the divine view, the way in which God sees the world, is Himself, as the sole Being, living in innumerable existences that are Himself, supporting all, helping all impartially, working out to a divine fulfilment and under terms fixed from the beginning, from years sempiternal, a great progressive harmony of Becoming whose last term is Sachchidananda or Immortality. This is the view-point of the Self as Lord inhabiting the whole movement. The individual soul has to change the human or egoistic for the divine, supreme and universal view and live in that realisation.

It is necessary, therefore, to have the knowledge of the transcendent Self, the sole unity, in the equation *so'ham*, I am He, and in that knowledge to extend one's conscious existence so as to embrace the whole Multiplicity.

This is the double or synthetic ideal of the Isha Upanishad; to embrace simultaneously Vidya and Avidya, the One and the Many; to exist in the world, but change the terms of the Death into the terms of the Immortality; to have the freedom and peace of the Non-Birth simultaneously with the activity of the Birth. (*Verses 9–14*)

All parts of the lower being must consent to this realisation; to perceive with the intellect is not enough. The heart must consent in a universal love and delight, the sense-mind in a sensation of God and self everywhere, the life in the comprehension of all aims and energies in the world as part of its own being.

THE ACTIVE BEATITUDE

This realisation is the perfect and complete Beatitude, embracing action, but delivered from sorrow and self-delusion.

There is no possibility of self-delusion (*moha*); for the soul, having attained to the perception of the Unknowable behind all existence, is no longer attached to the Becoming and no longer attributes an absolute value to any particularity in the universe, as if that were an object in itself and desirable in itself. All is enjoyable and has a value as the manifestation of the Self and for the sake of the Self which is manifested in it, but none for its own.[6] Desire and illusion are removed; illusion is replaced by knowledge, desire by the active beatitude of universal possession.

There is no possibility of sorrow; for all is seen as Sachchidananda and therefore in the terms of the infinite conscious existence, the infinite will, the infinite felicity. Even pain and grief are seen to be perverse terms of Ananda, and that Ananda which they veil here and for which they prepare the lower existence (for all suffering in the evolution is a preparation of strength and bliss) is already seized, known and enjoyed by the soul thus liberated and perfected. For it possesses the eternal Reality of which they are the appearances.

Thus it is possible, by the realisation of the unity of God and the world (*īś* and *jagatī*) in the complete knowledge of the Brahman, to renounce desire and illusion through the ascent to the pure Self and the Non-Becoming and yet to enjoy by means of all things in the manifestation God in the universe through a free and illuminated self-identification with Sachchidananda in all existences.

CONCLUSION

We have, therefore, in the second movement the explanation of the first verse of the Upanishad. The first line, asserting that all souls are the one Lord inhabiting every object in the universe and that every object is universe in universe, movement in the general movement, has been explained in the terms of complete oneness by the Brahman, transcendental and universal even in the individual, One in the Many, Many in the One, Stable and Motional, exceeding and reconciling all opposites. The second line, fixing as the rule of divine life universal renunciation of desire as the condition of universal enjoyment in the spirit, has been explained by the state of self-realisation, the realisation of the free and transcendent Self as one's own true being, of that Self as Sachchidananda and of the universe seen as the Becoming of Sachchidananda and possessed in the terms of the right knowledge and no longer in the terms of the Ignorance which is the cause of all attraction and repulsion, self-delusion and sorrow.

---

[6] Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

IV

THIRD MOVEMENT

[1]

The Lord

Verse 8*

"HE"

In its third movement the Upanishad takes up the justification of works already stated in general terms in its second verse and founds it more precisely upon the conception of Brahman or the Self as the Lord, — Ish, Ishwara, Para Purusha, Sa (He) — who is the cause of personality and governs by His law of works the rhythm of the Movement and the process of the worlds that He conceives and realises throughout eternal Time in His own self-existence.

It is an error to conceive that the Upanishads teach the true existence only of an impersonal and actionless Brahman, an impersonal God without power or qualities. They declare rather an Unknowable that manifests itself to us in a double aspect of Personality and Impersonality. When they wish to speak of this Unknowable in the most comprehensive and general way, they use the neuter and call It *Tat*, That; but this neuter does not exclude the aspect of universal and transcendent Personality acting and governing the world (cf. Kena Upanishad III). Still, when they intend to make prominent the latter idea they more often prefer to use the masculine Sa, He, or else they employ the term Deva, God or the Divine, or Purusha, the conscious Soul, of whom Prakriti or Maya is the executive Puissance, the Shakti.

---

* 8. It is He that has gone abroad — That which is bright, bodiless, without scar of imperfection, without sinews, pure, unpierced by evil. The Seer, the Thinker, the One who becomes everywhere, the Self-existent has ordered objects perfectly according to their nature from years sempiternal.

The Isha Upanishad, having declared the Brahman as the sole reality manifesting itself in many aspects and forms, having presented this Brahman subjectively as the Self, the one Being of whom all existences are Becomings, and as that which we have to realise in ourselves and in all things and beyond all things, now proceeds to assert the same Brahman more objectively as the Lord, the Purusha who both contains and inhabits the universe.

It is He that went abroad. This Brahman, this Self is identical with the Lord, the Ish, with whose name the Upanishad opens, the Inhabitant of all forms: and, as we shall find, identical with the universal Purusha of the 16th verse, — "The Purusha there and there, He am I." It is He who has become all things and beings, — a conscious Being, the sole Existent and Self-existent, who is Master and Enjoyer of all He becomes. And the Upanishad proceeds to formulate the nature and manner, the general law of that becoming of God which we call the world. For on this conception depends the Vedic idea of the two poles of death and immortality, the reason for the existence of Avidya, the Ignorance, and the justification of works in the world.

TRANSITIONAL THOUGHT

THE DIVINE PERSONALITY

The Vedantic idea of God, "He", Deva or Ishwara, must not be confused with the ordinary notions attached to the conception of a Personal God. Personality is generally conceived as identical with individuality and the vulgar idea of a Personal God is a magnified individual like man in His nature but yet different, greater, more vast and all-overpowering. Vedanta admits the human manifestation of Brahman in man and to man, but does not admit that this is the real nature of the Ishwara.

God is Sachchidananda. He manifests Himself as infinite existence of which the essentiality is consciousness, of which again the essentiality is bliss, is self-delight. Delight cognizing variety of itself, seeking its own variety, as it were, becomes the universe. But these are abstract terms; abstract ideas in themselves cannot produce concrete realities. They are impersonal states; impersonal states cannot in themselves produce personal activities.

This becomes still clearer if we consider the manifestation of Sachchidananda. In that manifestation Delight translates itself into Love; Consciousness translates itself into double terms, conceptive Knowledge, executive Force; Existence translates itself into Being, that is to say, into Person and Substance. But Love is incomplete without a Lover and an object of Love, Knowledge without a Knower and an object of Knowledge, Force without a Worker and a Work, Substance without a Person cognizing and constituting it.

This is because the original terms also are not really impersonal abstractions. In delight of Brahman there is an Enjoyer of delight, in consciousness of Brahman a Conscient, in existence of Brahman an Existent; but the object of Brahman's delight and consciousness and the term and stuff of Its existence are Itself. In the divine Being Knowledge, the Knower and the Known and, therefore, necessarily also Delight, the Enjoyer and the Enjoyed are one.

This Self-Awareness and Self-Delight of Brahman has two modes of its Force of consciousness, its Prakriti or Maya, — intensive in self-absorption, diffusive in self-extension. The intensive mode is proper to the pure and silent Brahman; the diffusive to the active Brahman. It is the diffusion of the Self-existent in the term and stuff of His own existence that we call the world, the becoming or the perpetual movement (*bhuvanam, jagat*). It is Brahman that becomes; what He becomes is also the Brahman. The object of Love is the self of the Lover; the work is the self-figuration of the Worker; Universe is body and action of the Lord.

When, therefore, we consider the abstract and impersonal aspect of the infinite existence, we say, "That"; when we consider the Existent self-aware and self-blissful, we say, "He". Neither conception is entirely complete. Brahman itself is the Unknowable beyond all conceptions of Personality and Impersonality. We may call it "That" to show that we exile from our affirmation all term and definition. We may equally call it "He", provided we speak with the same intention of rigorous exclusion. "Tat" and "Sa" are always the same, One that escapes definition.

In the universe there is a constant relation of Oneness and Multiplicity. This expresses itself as the universal Personality and the many Persons, and both between the One and the Many and among the Many themselves there is the possibility of an infinite variety of relations. These relations are determined by the play of the divine existence, the Lord, entering into His manifested habitations. They exist at first as conscious relations between individual souls; they are then taken up by them and used as a means of entering into conscious relation with the One. It is this entering into various relations with the One which is the object and function of Religion. All religions are justified by this essential necessity; all express one Truth in various ways and move by various paths to one goal.

The Divine Personality reveals Himself in various forms and names to the individual soul. These forms and names are in a sense created in the human consciousness; in another they are eternal symbols revealed by the Divine who thus concretises Himself in mind-form to the multiple consciousness and aids it in its return to its own Unity.[1]

HE THAT WENT ABROAD

It is He that has extended Himself in the relative consciousness whose totality of finite and changeable circumstances dependent on an equal, immutable and eternal Infinity is what we call the Universe. *Sa paryagāt.*

In this extension we have, therefore, two aspects, one of pure infinite relationless immutability, another of a totality of objects in Time and Space working out their relations through causality. Both are different and mutually complementary expressions of the same unknowable "He".

---

[1] It would be an error to suppose that these conceptions are in their essence later developments of philosophical Hinduism. The conception of the many forms and names of the One is as old as the Rig Veda.

To express the infinite Immutability the Upanishad uses a series of neuter adjectives, "Bright, bodiless, without scar, without sinews, pure, unpierced by evil." To express the same Absolute as cause, continent and governing Inhabitant of the totality of objects and of each object in the totality (*jagatyāṁ jagat*) it uses four masculine epithets, "The Seer, the Thinker, the One who becomes everywhere, the Self-existent" or "the Self-Becoming".

The Immutable is the still and secret foundation of the play and the movement, extended equally, impartially in all things, *samaṁ brahma*,[2] lending its support to all without choice or active participation. Secure and free in His eternal immutability the Lord projects Himself into the play and the movement, becoming there in His self-existence all that the Seer in Him visualises and the Thinker in Him conceives. *Kavir manīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhūḥ*.

THE PURE IMMUTABLE

The pure immutability of the Lord is "bright". It is a luminosity of pure concentrated Self-awareness, not broken by refractions, not breaking out into colour and form. It is the pure self-knowledge of the Purusha, the conscious Soul, with his Power, his executive Force contained and inactive.

It is "bodiless", — without form, indivisible and without appearance of division. It is one equal Purusha in all things, not divided by the divisions of Space and Time, — a pure self-conscious Absolute.

It is without scar, that is, without defect, break or imperfection. It is untouched and unaffected by the mutabilities. It supports their clash of relations, their play of more and less, of increase and diminution, of irruption and interpenetration.

---

[2] "The equal Brahman." — Gita.

For Itself is without action, *acalaḥ sanātanaḥ*,[3] "motionless, sempiternal".

It is without sinews. The reason for Its being without scar is that It does not put out Power, does not dispense Force in multiple channels, does not lose it here, increase it there, replenish its loss or seek by love or by violence its complementary or its food. It is without nerves of force; It does not pour itself out in the energies of the Pranic dynamism, of Life, of Matarishwan.

It is pure, unpierced by evil. What we call sin or evil, is merely excess and defect, wrong placement, inharmonious action and reaction. By its equality, by its inaction even while it supports all action, the conscious Soul retains its eternal freedom and eternal purity. For it is unmodified; It watches as the Sakshi, the witness, the modifications effected by Prakriti, but does not partake of them, does not get clogged with them, receives not their impression. *Na lipyate.*

THE SOUL INALIENABLY FREE

What is the relation of the active Brahman and of the human soul to this pure Inactive? They too are That. Action does not change the nature of the Self, but only the nature of the diverse forms. The Self is always pure, blissful, perfect, whether inactive or participating in action.

The Self is all things and exceeds them. It exceeds always that in which the mind is engrossed, that which it takes in a particular time and space as a figure of itself. The boundless whole is always perfect. The totality of things is a complete harmony without wound or flaw. The view-point of the part taken for a whole, in other words the Ignorance, is the broken reflection which creates the consciousness of limitation, incompleteness and discord. We shall see that this Ignorance has a use in the play of the Brahman; but in itself it appears at first to be only a parent of evil.

Ignorance is a veil that separates the mind, body and life from their source and reality, Sachchidananda. Thus obscured the mind feels itself pierced by the evil that Ignorance creates. But the Active Brahman is always Sachchidananda using for its self-becoming the forms of mind, body and life. All their experiences are therefore seen by It in the terms of Sachchidananda. It is not pierced by the evil. For It also is the One and sees everywhere Oneness. It is not mastered by the Ignorance that It uses as a minor term of its conception.

---

[3] Gita II. 24.

The human soul is one with the Lord; it also is in its completeness Sachchidananda using Ignorance as the minor term of its being. But it has projected its conceptions into this minor term and established there in limited mind its centre of vision, its view-point. It assumes to itself the incompleteness and the resultant sense of want, discord, desire, suffering. The Real Man behind is not affected by all this confusion; but the apparent or exterior Man is affected. To recover its freedom it must recover its completeness; it must identify itself with the divine Inhabitant within, its true and complete self. It can then, like the Lord, conduct the action of Prakriti without undergoing the false impression of identification with the results of its action. It is this idea on which the Upanishad bases the assertion, "Action cleaveth not to a man."

To this end it must recover the silent Brahman within. The Lord possesses always His double term and conducts the action of the universe, extended in it, but not attached to or limited by His works. The human soul, entangled in mind, is obscured in vision by the rushing stream of Prakriti's works and fancies itself to be a part of that stream and swept in its currents and in its eddies. It has to go back in its self-existence to the silent Purusha even while participating in its self-becoming in the movement of Prakriti. It becomes, then, not only like the silent Purusha, the witness and upholder, but also the Lord and the free enjoyer of Prakriti and her works. An absolute calm and passivity, purity and equality within, a sovereign and inexhaustible activity without is the nature of Brahman as we see it manifested in the universe.

There is therefore no farther objection to works. On the contrary, works are justified by the participation or self-identification of the soul with the Lord in His double aspect of passivity and activity. Tranquillity for the Soul, activity for the energy, is the balance of the divine rhythm in man.

THE LAW OF THINGS

The totality of objects (*arthān*) is the becoming of the Lord in the extension of His own being. Its principle is double. There is consciousness; there is Being. Consciousness dwells in energy (*tapas*) upon its self-being to produce Idea of itself (*vijñāna*) and form and action inevitably corresponding to the Idea. This is the original Indian conception of creation, self-production or projection into form (*sṛṣṭi*, *prasava*). Being uses its self-awareness to evolve infinite forms of itself governed by the expansion of the innate Idea in the form. This is the original Indian conception of evolution, prominent in certain philosophies such as the Sankhya (*pariṇāma*, *vikāra*, *vivarta*). It is the same phenomenon diversely stated.

In the idea of some thinkers the world is a purely subjective evolution (*vivarta*), not real as objective fact; in the idea of others it is an objective fact, a real modification (*pariṇāma*), but one which makes no difference to the essence of Being. Both notions claim to derive from the Upanishads as their authority, and their opposition comes in fact by the separation of what in the ancient Vedanta was viewed as one, — as we see in this passage.

Brahman is His own subject and His own object, whether in His pure self-existence or in His varied self-becoming. He is the object of His own self-awareness; He is the Knower of His own self-being. The two aspects are inseparable, even though they seem to disappear into each other and emerge again from each other. All appearance of pure subjectivity holds itself as an object implicit in its very subjectivity; all appearance of pure objectivity holds itself as subject implicit in its very objectivity.

All objective existence is the Self-existent, the Self-becoming, "Swayambhu", becoming by the force of the Idea within it. The Idea is, self-contained, the Fact that it becomes. For Swayambhu sees or comprehends Himself in the essence of the Fact as "Kavi", thinks Himself out in the evolution of its possibilities as "Manishi", becomes form of Himself in the movement in Space and Time as "Paribhu". These three are one operation appearing as successive in the relative, temporal and spatial Consciousness.

It follows that every object holds in itself the law of its own being eternally, *śāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ*, from years sempiternal, in perpetual Time. All relations in the totality of objects are thus determined by their Inhabitant, the Self-existent, the Self-becoming, and stand contained in the nature of things by the omnipresence of the One, the Lord, by His self-vision which is their inherent subjective Truth, by His self-becoming which, against a background of boundless possibilities, is the Law of their inevitable evolution in the objective Fact.

Therefore all things are arranged by Him perfectly, *yāthātathyataḥ*, as they should be in their nature. There is an imperative harmony in the All, which governs the apparent discords of individualisation. That discord would be real and operate in eternal chaos, if there were only a mass of individual forms and forces, if each form and force did not contain in itself and were not in its reality the self-existent All, the Lord.

THE PROCESS OF THINGS

The Lord appears to us in the relative notion of the process of things first as Kavi, the Wise, the Seer. The Kavi sees the Truth in itself, the truth in its becoming, in its essence, possibilities, actuality. He contains all that in the Idea, the Vijnana, called the Truth and Law, Satyam Ritam. He contains it comprehensively, not piecemeal; the Truth and Law of things is the Brihat, the Large. Viewed by itself, the realm of Vijnana would seem a realm of predetermination, of concentration, of compelling seed-state. But it is a determination not in previous Time, but in perpetual Time; a Fate compelled by the Soul, not compelling it, compelling rather the action and result, present in the expansion of the movement as well as in the concentration of the Idea.

Therefore the truth of the Soul is freedom and mastery, not subjection and bondage. Purusha commands Prakriti, Prakriti does not compel Purusha. *Na karma lipyate nare.*

The Manishi takes his stand in the possibilities. He has behind him the freedom of the Infinite and brings it in as a background for the determination of the finite. Therefore every action in the world seems to emerge from a balancing and clashing of various possibilities. None of these, however, are effective in the determination except by their secret consonance with the Law of that which has to become. The Kavi is in the Manishi and upholds him in his working. But viewed by itself the realm of the Manishi would seem to be a state of plasticity, of free-will, of the interaction of forces, but of a free-will in thought which is met by a fate in things.

For the action of the Manishi is meant to eventuate in the becoming of the Paribhu. The Paribhu, called also Virat, extends Himself in the realm of eventualities. He fulfils what is contained in the Truth, what works out in the possibilities reflected by the mind, what appears to us as the fact objectively realised. The realm of Virat would seem, if taken separately, to be that of a Law and Predetermination which compels all things that evolve in that realm, — the iron chain of Karma, the rule of mechanical necessity, the despotism of an inexplicable Law.

But the becoming of Virat is always the becoming of the self-existent Lord, — *paribhūḥ svayambhūḥ*. Therefore to realise the truth of that becoming we have to go back and re-embrace all that stands behind; — we have to return to the full truth of the free and infinite Sachchidananda.

This is the truth of things as seen from above and from the Unity. It is the divine standpoint; but we have to take account of the human standpoint which starts from below, proceeds from the Ignorance, and perceives these principles successively, not comprehensively, as separate states of consciousness. Humanity is that which returns in experience to Sachchidananda, and it must begin from below, in Avidya, with the mind embodied in Matter, the Thinker imprisoned and emerging from the objective Fact. This imprisoned Thinker is Man, the "Manu".

He has to start from death and division and arrive at unity and immortality. He has to realise the universal in the individual and the Absolute in the relative. He is Brahman growing self-conscious in the objective multiplicity. He is the ego in the cosmos vindicating himself as the All and the Transcendent.

V

THIRD MOVEMENT

[2]

Knowledge and Ignorance

Verses 9 – 11*

VIDYA AND AVIDYA

All manifestation proceeds by the two terms, Vidya and Avidya, the consciousness of Unity and the consciousness of Multiplicity. They are the two aspects of the Maya, the formative self-conception of the Eternal.

Unity is the eternal and fundamental fact, without which all multiplicity would be unreal and an impossible illusion. The consciousness of Unity is therefore called Vidya, the Knowledge.

Multiplicity is the play or varied self-expansion of the One, shifting in its terms, divisible in its view of itself, by force of which the One occupies many centres of consciousness, inhabits many formations of energy in the universal Movement. Multiplicity is implicit or explicit in unity. Without it the Unity would be either a void of non-existence or a powerless, sterile limitation to the state of indiscriminate self-absorption or of blank repose.

But the consciousness of multiplicity separated from the true knowledge in the many of their own essential oneness, — the view-point of the separate ego identifying itself with the divided form and the limited action, — is a state of error and delusion. In man this is the form taken by the consciousness of multiplicity. Therefore it is given the name of Avidya, the Ignorance.

---

* 9. Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after the Ignorance, they as if into a greater darkness who devote themselves to the Knowledge alone.

10. Other, verily, it is said, is that which comes by the Knowledge, other that which comes by the Ignorance; this is the lore we have received from the wise who revealed That to our understanding.

11. He who knows That as both in one, the Knowledge and the Ignorance, by the Ignorance crosses beyond death and by the Knowledge enjoys Immortality.

Brahman, the Lord, is one and all-blissful, but free from limitation by His unity; all-powerful, He is able to conceive Himself from multiple centres in multiple forms from which and upon which flow multiple currents of energy, seen by us as actions or play of forces. When He is thus multiple, He is not bound by His multiplicity, but amid all variations dwells eternally in His own oneness. He is Lord of Vidya and Avidya. They are the two sides of His self-conception (Maya), the twin powers of His Energy (Chit-Shakti).

Brahman, exceeding as well as dwelling in the play of His Maya, is Ish, lord of it and free. Man, dwelling in the play, is Anish, not lord, not free, subject to Avidya. But this subjection is itself a play of the Ignorance, unreal in essential fact (*paramārtha*), real only in practical relation (*vyavahāra*), in the working out of the actions of the divine Energy, the Chit-Shakti. To get back to the essential fact of his freedom he must recover the sense of Oneness, the consciousness of Brahman, of the Lord, realise his oneness in Brahman and with the Lord. Recovering his freedom, realising his oneness with all existences as becomings of the One Being who is always himself (*so'ham asmi*, He am I), he is able to carry out divine actions in the world, no longer subject to the Ignorance, because free in the Knowledge.

The perfection of man, therefore, is the full manifestation of the Divine in the individual through the supreme accord between Vidya and Avidya. Multiplicity must become conscious of its oneness, Oneness embrace its multiplicity.

THE EXTREME PATHS

The purpose of the Lord in the world cannot be fulfilled by following Vidya alone or Avidya alone.

Those who are devoted entirely to the principle of multiplicity and division and take their orientation away from oneness enter into a blind darkness of Ignorance. For this tendency is one of increasing contraction and limitation, disaggregation of the gains of knowledge and greater and greater subjection to the mechanical necessities of Prakriti and finally to her separative and self-destructive forces. To turn away from the progression towards Oneness is to turn away from existence and from light.

Those who are devoted entirely to the principle of indiscriminate Unity and seek to put away from them the integrality of the Brahman, also put away from them knowledge and completeness and enter as if into a greater darkness. They enter into some special state and accept it for the whole, mistaking exclusion in consciousness for transcendence in consciousness. They ignore by choice of knowledge, as the others are ignorant by compulsion of error. Knowing all to transcend all is the right path of Vidya.

Although a higher state than the other, this supreme Night is termed a greater darkness, because the lower is one of chaos from which reconstitution is always possible, the higher is a conception of Void or Asat, an attachment to non-existence of Self from which it is more difficult to return to fulfilment of Self.

THE GAINS IN EITHER PATH

Pursued with a less entire attachment the paths of Vidya and Avidya have each their legitimate gains for the human soul, but neither of these are the full and perfect thing undertaken by the individual in the manifestation.

By Vidya one may attain to the state of the silent Brahman or the Akshara Purusha regarding the universe without actively participating in it or to His self-absorbed state of Chit in Sat from which the universe proceeds and towards which it returns. Both these states are conditions of serenity, plenitude, freedom from the confusions and sufferings of the world.

But the highest goal of man is neither fulfilment in the movement as a separate individual nor in the Silence separated from the movement, but in the Uttama Purusha, the Lord, He who went abroad and upholds in Himself both the Kshara and the

Akshara as modes of His being. The self of man, the Jivatman, is here in order to realise in the individual and for the universe that one highest Self of all. The ego created by Avidya is a necessary mechanism for affirming individuality in the universal as a starting-point for this supreme achievement.

By Avidya one may attain to a sort of fullness of power, joy, world-knowledge, largeness of being, which is that of the Titans or of the Gods, of Indra, of Prajapati. This is gained in the path of self-enlargement by an ample acceptance of the multiplicity in all its possibilities and a constant enrichment of the individual by all the materials that the universe can pour into him. But this also is not the goal of man; for though it brings transcendence of the ordinary human limits, it does not bring the divine transcendence of the universe in the Lord of the universe. One transcends confusion of Ignorance, but not limitation of Knowledge, — transcends death of the body, but not limitation of being, — transcends subjection to sorrow, but not subjection to joy, — transcends the lower Prakriti, but not the higher. To gain the real freedom and the perfect Immortality one would have to descend again to all that had been rejected and make the right use of death, sorrow and ignorance.

The real knowledge is that which perceives Brahman in His integrality and does not follow eagerly after one consciousness rather than another, is no more attached to Vidya than to Avidya. This was the knowledge of the ancient sages who were *dhīra*, steadfast in the gaze of their thought, not drawn away from the completeness of knowledge by one light or by another and whose perception of Brahman was consequently entire and comprehensive and their teaching founded on that perception equally entire and comprehensive (*vicacakṣire*). It is the knowledge handed down from these Ancients that is being set forth in the Upanishad.

THE COMPLETE PATH

Brahman embraces in His manifestation both Vidya and Avidya and if they are both present in the manifestation, it is because they are both necessary to its existence and its accomplishment. Avidya subsists because Vidya supports and embraces it; Vidya depends upon Avidya for the preparation and the advance of the soul towards the great Unity. Neither could exist without the other; for if either were abolished, they would both pass away into something which would be neither the one nor the other, something inconceivable and ineffable beyond all manifestation.

In the worst Ignorance there is some point of the knowledge which constitutes that form of Ignorance and some support of Unity which prevents it in its most extreme division, limitation, obscurity from ceasing to exist by dissolving into nothingness. The destiny of the Ignorance is not that it should be dissolved out of existence, but that its elements should be enlightened, united, that which they strive to express delivered, fulfilled and in the fulfilment transmuted and transfigured.

In the uttermost unity of which knowledge is capable the contents of the Multiplicity are inherent and implicit and can any moment be released into activity. The office of Vidya is not to destroy Avidya as a thing that ought never to have been manifested but to draw it continually towards itself, supporting it the while and helping it to deliver itself progressively from that character of Ignorance, of the oblivion of its essential Oneness, which gives it its name.

Avidya fulfilled by turning more and more to Vidya enables the individual and the universal to become what the Lord is in Himself, conscious of His manifestation, conscious of His non-manifestation, free in birth, free in non-birth.

Man represents the point at which the multiplicity in the universe becomes consciously capable of this turning and fulfilment. His own natural fulfilment comes by following the complete path of Avidya surrendering itself to Vidya, the Multiplicity to the Unity, the Ego to the One in all and beyond all, and of Vidya accepting Avidya into itself, the Unity fulfilling the Multiplicity, the One manifesting Himself unveiled in the individual and in the universe.

MORTALITY AND IMMORTALITY

MORTALITY

By Avidya fulfilled man passes beyond death, by Vidya accepting Avidya into itself he enjoys immortality.

By death is meant the state of mortality which is a subjection to the process of constant birth and dying as a limited ego bound to the dualities of joy and sorrow, good and evil, truth and error, love and hatred, pleasure and suffering.

This state comes by limitation and self-division from the One who is all and in all and beyond all and by attachment of the idea of self to a single formation in Time and Space of body, life and mind, by which the Self excludes from its view all that it verily is with the exception of a mass of experiences flowing out from and in upon a particular centre and limited by the capacities of a particular mental, vital and bodily frame. This mass of experiences it organises around the ego-centre in the mind and linking them together in Time by a double action of memory, passive in state, active in work, says continually, "This is I."

The result is that the soul attributes to itself a certain portion only of the play of Prakriti or Chit-Shakti and consequently a certain limited capacity of force of consciousness which has to bear all the impact of what the soul does not regard as itself but as a rush of alien forces; against them it defends its separate formation of individuality from dissolution into Nature or mastery by Nature. It seeks to assert in the individual form and by its means its innate character of Ish or Lord and so to possess and enjoy its world.

But by the very definition of the ego its capacity is limited. It accepts as itself a form made of the movement of Nature which cannot endure in the general flux of things. It has to form it by the process of the movement and this is birth, it dissolves it by the process of the movement and this is death.

It can master by the understanding only so much of its experiences as assimilate with its own view-point and in a way which must always be imperfect and subject to error because it is not the view of all or the view-point of the All. Its knowledge is partly error and all the rest it ignores.

It can only accept and harmonise itself with a certain number of its experiences, precisely because these are the only ones it can understand sufficiently to assimilate. This is its joy; the rest is sorrow or indifference.

It is only capable of harmonising with the force in its body, nerves and mind a certain number of impacts of alien forces. In these it takes pleasure. The rest it receives with insensibility or pain.

Death therefore is the constant denial by the All of the ego's false self-limitation in the individual frame of mind, life and body.

Error is the constant denial by the All of the ego's false sufficiency in a limited knowledge.

Suffering of mind and body is the constant denial by the All of the ego's attempt to confine the universal Ananda to a false and self-regarding formation of limited and exclusive enjoyments.

It is only by accepting the oneness of the All that the individual can escape from this constant and necessary denial and attain beyond. Then All-being, All-force, All-consciousness, All-truth, All-delight take possession of the individual soul. It changes mortality for immortality.

MORTALITY AND AVIDYA

But the way of attaining to immortality is not by the self-dissolution of the individual formation into the flux of Prakriti, neither is it by prematurely dissolving it into the All-soul which Prakriti expresses. Man moves towards something which fulfils the universe by transcending it. He has to prepare his individual soul for the transcendence and for the fulfilment.

If Avidya is the cause of mortality, it is also the path out of mortality. The limitation has been created precisely in order that the individual may affirm himself against the flux of Prakriti in order eventually to transcend, possess and transform it.

The first necessity is therefore for man continually to enlarge himself in being, knowledge, joy, power in the limits of the ego so that he may arrive at the conception of something which progressively manifests itself in him in these terms and becomes more and more powerful to deal with the oppositions of Prakriti and to change, individually, more and more the terms of ignorance, suffering and weakness into the terms of knowledge, joy and power and even death into a means of wider life.

This self-enlargement has then to awaken to the perception of something exceeding itself, exceeding the personal manifestation. Man has so to enlarge his conception of self as to see all in himself and himself in all (*verse* 6). He has to see that this "I" which contains all and is contained in all, is the One, is universal and not his personal ego. To That he has to subject his ego, That he has to reproduce in his nature and become, That is what he has to possess and enjoy with an equal soul in all its forms and movements.

He has to see that this universal One is something entirely transcendent, the sole Being, and that the universe and all its forms, actions, egos are only becomings of that Being (*verse* 7). World is a becoming which seeks always to express in motion of Time and Space, by progression in mind, life and body what is beyond all becoming, beyond Time and Space, beyond mind, life and body.

Thus Avidya becomes one with Vidya. By Avidya man passes beyond that death, suffering, ignorance, weakness which were the first terms he had to deal with, the first assertions of the One in the birth affirming Himself amid the limitations and divisions of the Multiplicity. By Vidya he enjoys even in the birth the Immortality.

IMMORTALITY

Immortality does not mean survival of the self or the ego after dissolution of the body. The Self always survives the dissolution of the body, because it always pre-existed before the birth of the body. The Self is unborn and undying. The survival of the ego is only the first condition by which the individual soul is able to continue and link together its experiences in Avidya so as to pursue with an increasing self-possession and mastery that process of self-enlargement which culminates in Vidya.

By immortality is meant the consciousness which is beyond birth and death, beyond the chain of cause and effect, beyond all bondage and limitation, free, blissful, self-existent in conscious-being, the consciousness of the Lord, of the supreme Purusha, of Sachchidananda.

IMMORTALITY AND BIRTH

On this realisation man can base his free activity in the universe.

But having so far attained, what further utility has the soul for birth or for works? None for itself, everything for God and the universe.

Immortality beyond the universe is not the object of manifestation in the universe, for that the Self always possessed. Man exists in order that through him the Self may enjoy Immortality in the birth as well as in the non-becoming.

Nor is individual salvation the end; for that would only be the sublime of the ego, not its self-realisation through the Lord in all.

Having realised his own immortality, the individual has yet to fulfil God's work in the universe. He has to help the life, the mind and the body in all beings to express progressively Immortality and not mortality.

This he may do by the becoming in the material body which we ordinarily call birth, or from some status in another world or even, it is possible, from beyond world. But birth in the body is the most close, divine and effective form of help which the liberated can give to those who are themselves still bound to the progression of birth in the lowest world of the Ignorance.

VI

THIRD MOVEMENT

[3]

Birth and Non-Birth

Verses 12–14*

THE BIRTH AND THE NON-BIRTH

The Self outside Nature does not become; it is immutable as well as eternal. The Self in Nature becomes, it changes its states and forms. This entry into various states and forms in the succession of Time is Birth in Nature.

Because of these two positions of the Self, in Nature and out of Nature, moving in the movement and seated above the movement, active in the development and eating the fruits of the tree of Life or inactive and simply regarding, there are two possible states of conscious existence directly opposed to each other of which the human soul is capable, the state of Birth, the state of Non-Birth.

Man starts from the troubled state of Birth, he arrives at that tranquil poise of conscious existence liberated from the movement which is the Non-Birth. The knot of the Birth is the ego-sense; the dissolution of the ego-sense brings us to the Non-Birth. Therefore the Non-Birth is also called the Dissolution (Vinasha).

---

* 12. Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after the Non-Birth, they as if into a greater darkness who devote themselves to the Birth alone.

13. Other, verily, it is said, is that which comes by the Birth, other that which comes by the Non-Birth; this is the lore we have received from the wise who revealed That to our understanding.

14. He who knows That as both in one, the Birth and the dissolution of Birth, by the dissolution crosses beyond death and by the Birth enjoys Immortality.

Birth and Non-Birth are not essentially physical conditions, but soul-states. A man may break the knot of the ego-sense and yet remain in the physical body; but if he concentrates himself solely in the state of dissolution of ego, then he is not born again in the body. He is liberated from birth as soon as the present impulse of Nature which continues the action of the mind and body has been exhausted. On the other hand if he attaches himself to the Birth, the ego-principle in him seeks continually to clothe itself in fresh mental and physical forms.

THE EVIL OF THE EXTREMES

Neither attachment to Non-Birth nor attachment to Birth is the perfect way. For all attachment is an act of ignorance and a violence committed upon the Truth. Its end also is ignorance, a state of blind darkness.

Exclusive attachment to Non-Birth leads to a dissolution into indiscriminate Nature or into the Nihil, into the Void, and both of these are states of blind darkness. For the Nihil is an attempt not to transcend the state of existence in birth, but to annul it, not to pass from a limited into an illimitable existence, but from existence into its opposite. The opposite of existence can only be the Night of negative consciousness, a state of ignorance and not of release.

On the other hand, attachment to Birth in the body means a constant self-limitation and an interminable round of egoistic births in the lower forms of egoism without issue or release. This is, from a certain point of view, a worse darkness than the other; for it is ignorant even of the impulse of release. It is not an error in the grasping after truth, but a perpetual contentment with the state of blindness. It cannot lead even eventually to any greater good, because it does not dream of any higher condition.

THE GOOD OF THE EXTREMES

On the other hand each of these tendencies, pursued with a certain relativeness to the other, has its own fruit and its own good.

Non-Birth pursued as the goal of Birth and a higher, fuller and truer existence may lead to withdrawal into the silent Brahman or into the pure liberty of the Non-Being. Birth, pursued as a means of progress and self-enlargement, leads to a greater and fuller life which may, in its turn, become a vestibule to the final achievement.

THE PERFECT WAY

But neither of these results is perfect in itself nor the true goal of humanity. Each of them brings its intended portion into the perfect good of the human soul only when it is completed by the other.

Brahman is both Vidya and Avidya, both Birth and Non-Birth. The realisation of the Self as the unborn and the poise of the soul beyond the dualities of birth and death in the infinite and transcendent existence are the conditions of a free and divine life in the Becoming. The one is necessary to the other. It is by participation in the pure unity of the Immobile (Akshara) Brahman that the soul is released from its absorption in the stream of the movement. So released it identifies itself with the Lord to whom becoming and non-becoming are only modes of His existence and is able to enjoy immortality in the manifestation without being caught in the wheel of Nature's delusions. The necessity of birth ceases, its personal object having been fulfilled; the freedom of becoming remains. For the Divine enjoys equally and simultaneously the freedom of His eternity and the freedom of His becoming.

It may even be said that to have had the conscious experience of a dissolution of the very idea of Being into the supreme Non-Being is necessary for the fullest and freest possession of Being itself. This would be from the synthetic standpoint the justification of the great effort of Buddhism to exceed the conception of all positive being even in its widest or purest essentiality.

Thus by dissolution of ego and of the attachment to birth the soul crosses beyond death; it is liberated from all limitation in the dualities. Having attained this liberation it accepts becoming as a process of Nature subject to the soul and not binding upon it and by this free and divine becoming enjoys Immortality.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF LIFE

Thus, the third movement of the Upanishad is a justification of life and works, which were enjoined upon the seeker of the Truth in its second verse. Works are the essence of Life. Life is a manifestation of the Brahman; in Brahman the Life Principle arranges a harmony of the seven principles of conscious being by which that manifestation works out its involution and evolution. In Brahman Matarishwan disposes the waters, the sevenfold movement of the divine Existence. That divine Existence is the Lord who has gone abroad in the movement and unrolled the universe in His three modes as All-Seer of the Truth of things, Thinker-out of their possibilities, Realiser of their actualities. He has determined all things sovereignly in their own nature, development and goal from years sempiternal.

That determination works out through His double power of Vidya and Avidya, consciousness of essential unity and consciousness of phenomenal multiplicity.

The Multiplicity carried to its extreme limit returns upon itself in the conscious individual who is the Lord inhabiting the forms of the movement and enjoying first the play of the Ignorance. Afterwards by development in the Ignorance the soul returns to the capacity of Knowledge and enjoys by the Knowledge Immortality.

This Immortality is gained by the dissolution of the limited ego and its chain of births into the consciousness of the unborn and undying, the Eternal, the Lord, the ever-free. But it is enjoyed by a free and divine becoming in the universe and not outside the universe; for there it is always possessed, but here in the material body it is to be worked out and enjoyed by the divine Inhabitant under circumstances that are in appearance the most opposite to its terms, in the life of the individual and in the multiple life of the universe.

Life has to be transcended in order that it may be freely accepted; the works of the universe have to be overpassed in order that they may be divinely fulfilled.

The soul even in apparent bondage is really free and only plays at being bound; but it has to go back to the consciousness of freedom and possess and enjoy universally not this or that but the Divine and the All.

VII

FOURTH MOVEMENT

[1]

The Worlds — Surya

Verses 15 – 16*

THE WORLDS AFTER DEATH

In the third verse the Upanishad has spoken of sunless worlds enveloped in blind gloom. In its third movement it also speaks twice of the soul entering into a blind gloom, but here it is a state of consciousness that seems to be indicated and not a world. Nevertheless, the two statements differ little in effect; for in the Vedantic conception a world is only a condition of conscious being organised in the terms of the seven constituent principles of manifested existence. According to the state of consciousness which we reach here in the body, will be our state of consciousness and the surroundings organised by it when the mental being passes out of the body. For the individual soul out of the body must either disappear into the general constituents of its existence, merge itself into Brahman or persist in an organisation of consciousness other than the terrestrial and in relations with the universe other than those which are appropriate to life in the body. This state of consciousness and the relations belonging to it are the other worlds, the worlds after death.

---

* 15. The face of Truth is covered with a brilliant golden lid; that do thou remove, O Fosterer, for the law of the Truth, for sight.

16. O Fosterer, O sole Seer, O Ordainer, O illumining Sun, O power of the Father of creatures, marshal thy rays, draw together thy light; the Lustre which is thy most blessed form of all, that in Thee I behold. The Purusha there and there, He am I.

THE THREE STATES

The Upanishad admits three states of the soul in relation to the manifested universe, — terrestrial life by birth in the body, the survival of the individual soul after death in other states and the immortal existence which being beyond birth and death, beyond manifestation can yet enter into forms as the Inhabitant and embrace Nature as its lord. The two former conditions appertain to the Becoming; Immortality stands in the Self, in the Non-Birth, and enjoys the Becoming.

The Upanishad, although it does not speak expressly of rebirth in an earthly body, yet implies that belief in its thought and language, — especially in the 17th verse. On the basis of this belief in rebirth man may aim at three distinct objects beyond death, — a better or more fortunate life or lives upon earth, eternal enjoyment of bliss in an ultra-terrestrial world of light and joy or a transcendence exclusive of all universal existence, merged in the Supreme as in one's true self, but having no relation with the actual or possible contents of its infinite consciousness.

REBIRTH

The attainment of a better life or lives upon earth is not the consummation offered to the soul by the thought of the Upanishad. But it is an important intermediate object so long as the soul is in a state of growth and self-enlargement and has not attained to liberation. The obligation of birth and death is a sign that the mental being has not yet unified itself with its true supramental self and spirit, but is dwelling "in Avidya and enclosed within it".[1] To attain that union the life of man upon earth is its appointed means. After liberation the soul is free, but may still participate in the entire movement and return to birth no longer for its own sake but for the sake of others and according to the will in it of its divine Self, the Lord of its movement.

---

[1] *Avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ.* — Katha Upanishad I. 2. 5; Mundaka I. 2. 8.

HEAVEN AND HELL

The enjoyment of beatitude in a heaven beyond is also not the supreme consummation. But Vedantic thought did not envisage rebirth as an immediate entry after death into a new body; the mental being in man is not so rigidly bound to the vital and physical, — on the contrary, the latter are ordinarily dissolved together after death, and there must therefore be, before the soul is attracted back towards terrestrial existence, an interval in which it assimilates its terrestrial experiences in order to be able to constitute a new vital and physical being upon earth. During this interval it must dwell in states or worlds beyond and these may be favourable or unfavourable to its future development. They are favourable in proportion as the light of the Supreme Truth of which Surya is a symbol enters into them, but states of intermediate ignorance or darkness are harmful to the soul in its progress. Those enter into them, as has been affirmed in the third verse, who do hurt to themselves by shutting themselves to the light or distorting the natural course of their development. The Vedantic heavens are states of light and the soul's expansion; darkness, self-obscuration and self-distortion are the nature of the Hells which it has to shun.

In relation to the soul's individual development, therefore, the life in worlds beyond, like the life upon earth, is a means and not an object in itself. After liberation the soul may possess these worlds as it possesses the material birth, accepting in them a means towards the divine manifestation in which they form a condition of its fullness, each being one of the parts in a series of organised states of conscious being which is linked with and supports all the rest.

TRANSCENDENCE

Transcendence is the goal of the development, but it does not exclude the possession of that which is transcended. The soul need not and should not push transcendence so far as to aim at its own extinction. Nirvana is extinction of the ego-limitations, but not of all possibility of manifestation, since it can be possessed even in the body.

The desire of the exclusive liberation is the last desire that the soul in its expanding knowledge has to abandon; the delusion that it is bound by birth is the last delusion that it has to destroy.

SURYA AND AGNI

On the basis of this conception of the worlds and the relation of these different soul-states to each other the Upanishad proceeds to indicate the two lines of knowledge and action which lead to the supreme vision and the divine felicity. This is done under the form of an invocation to Surya and Agni, the Vedic godheads, representative one of the supreme Truth and its illuminations, the other of the divine Will raising, purifying and perfecting human action.

THE ORDER OF THE WORLDS

To understand entirely the place and function of Surya we must enter a little more profoundly into the Vedic conception of the seven worlds and the principles of consciousness they represent.

All conscious being is one and indivisible in itself, but in manifestation it becomes a complex rhythm, a scale of harmonies, a hierarchy of states or movements. For what we call a state is only the organisation of a complex movement. This hierarchy is composed by a descending or involutive and an ascending or evolutive movement of which Spirit and Matter are the highest and lowest terms.

Spirit is Sat or pure existence, pure in self-awareness (Chit), pure in self-delight (Ananda). Therefore Spirit can be regarded as a triune basis of all conscious being. There are three terms, but they are really one. For all pure existence is in its essence pure self-conscience and all pure self-conscience is in its essence pure self-delight. At the same time our consciousness is capable of separating these three by the Idea and the Word and even of creating for itself in its divided or limited movements the sense of their apparent opposites.

An integral intuition into the nature of conscious being shows us that it is indeed one in essence, but also that it is capable of an infinite potential complexity and multiplicity in self-experience. The working of this potential complexity and multiplicity in the One is what we call from our point of view manifestation or creation or world or becoming — (*bhuvana*, *bhāva*). Without it no world-existence is possible.

The agent of this becoming is always the self-conscience of the Being. The power by which the self-conscience brings out of itself its potential complexities is termed Tapas, Force or Energy, and, being self-conscious, is obviously of the nature of Will. But not Will as we understand it, something exterior to its object, other than its works, labouring on material outside itself, but Will inherent in the Being, inherent in the becoming, one with the movement of existence, — self-conscious Will that becomes what it sees and knows in itself, Will that is expressed as Force of its own work and formulates itself in the result of its work. By this Will, Tapas or Chit-Shakti, the worlds are created.

THE HIGHER WORLDS

All organisation of self-conscient being which takes as its basis the unity of pure existence belongs to the world of the highest creation, *parārdha*, — the worlds of the Spirit.

We can conceive three principal formations.

When Tapas or energy of self-conscience dwells upon Sat or pure existence as its basis, the result is Satyaloka or world of true existence. The soul in Satyaloka is one with all its manifestations by oneness of essence and therefore one in self-conscience and in energy of self-conscience and one also in bliss.

When Tapas dwells upon active power of Chit as its basis, the result is Tapoloka or world of energy of self-conscience. The soul in Tapoloka is one with all manifestations in this Energy and therefore enjoys oneness also in the totality of their bliss and possesses equally their unity of essence.

When Tapas dwells upon active Delight of being as its basis, the result is Janaloka, world of creative Delight. The soul in Janaloka is one in delight of being with all manifestation and through that bliss one also in conscious energy and in essence of being.

All these are states of consciousness in which unity and multiplicity have not yet been separated from each other. All is in all, each in all and all in each, inherently, by the very nature of conscious being and without effort of conception or travail of perception. There is no night, no obscurity. Neither is there, properly speaking, any dominant action of illuminating Surya. For the whole of consciousness there is self-luminous and needs no light other than itself. The distinct existence of Surya is lost in the oneness of the Lord or Purusha; that luminous oneness is Surya's most blessed form of all.

THE LOWER CREATION

In the lower creation also there are three principles, Matter, Life, and Mind. Sat or pure existence appears there as extended substance or Matter; Will or Force appears as Life which is in its nature creative or manifesting Force and that Force is in its nature a self-conscient will involved and obscure in the forms of its creation. It is liberated from the involution and obscurity by delight of being struggling to become conscious of itself in desire and sensation; the result is the emergence of Mind. So at least it appears to us in the ascending or evolutive movement.

Wherever there is Matter, Life and Mind are present involved or evolving. So also, Life and Mind have some kind of material form as the condition of their activities. These three appear not as triune, owing to their domination by the dividing principle of Avidya, but as triple.

In the organisation of consciousness to which we belong, Tapas dwells upon Matter as its basis. Our consciousness is determined by the divisibility of extended substance in its apparent forms. This is Bhurloka, the material world, the world of formal becoming.

But we may conceive of a world in which dynamic Life-force with sensation emergent in it is the basis and determines without the gross obstacle of Matter the forms that it shall take. This organisation of consciousness has for its field Bhuvarloka, the worlds of free vital becoming in form.

We may conceive also of an organised state of consciousness in which Mind liberates itself from subjection to material sensation and becoming dominant determines its own forms instead of being itself determined by the forms in which it finds itself as a result of life evolution. This formation is Swarloka or world of free, pure and luminous mentality.

In these lower worlds consciousness is normally broken up and divided. The light of Surya, the Truth, is imprisoned in the night of the subconscient or appears only reflected in limited centres or with its rays received by those centres and utilised according to their individual nature.

THE INTERMEDIATE WORLD

Between these two creations, linking them together, is the world or organisation of consciousness of which the infinite Truth of things is the foundation. There dominant individualisation no longer usurps the all-pervading soul and the foundation of consciousness is its own vast totality arranging in itself individualised movements which never lose the consciousness of their integrality and total oneness with all others. Multiplicity no longer prevails and divides, but even in the complexity of its movements always refers back to essential unity and its own integral totality. This world is therefore called Maharloka or world of large consciousness.

The principle of Maharloka is Vijnana, the Idea. But this Vijnana is intuitional or rather gnostic Idea,[2] not intellectual conception. The difference is that intellectual conception not only tends towards form, but determines itself in the form of the idea and once determined distinguishes itself sharply from other conceptions. But pure intuitional or gnostic Idea sees itself in the Being as well as in the Becoming. It is one with the existence which throws out the form as a symbol of itself and it therefore carries with it always the knowledge of the Truth behind the form. It is in its nature self-conscience of the being and power of the One, aware always of its totality, starting therefore from the totality of all existence and perceiving directly its contents. Its nature is *dṛṣṭi*, seeing, not conceiving. It is the vision at once of the essence and the image. It is this intuition or gnosis which is the Vedic Truth, the self-vision and all-vision of Surya.

---

[2] Intuition (revelation, inspiration, intuitive perception, intuitive discrimination) is Vijnana working in mind under the conditions and in the forms of mind. Gnosis or true supermind is a power above mind working in its own law, out of the direct identity of the supreme Self, his absolute self-conscious Truth knowing herself by her own power of absolute Light without any need of seeking, even the most luminous seeking.

THE LAW OF THE TRUTH

The face of this Truth is covered as with a brilliant shield, as with a golden lid; covered, that is to say, from the view of our human consciousness. For we are mental beings and our highest ordinary mental sight is composed of the concepts and percepts of the mind, which are indeed a means of knowledge, rays of the Truth, but not in their nature truth of existence, only truth of form. By them we arrange our knowledge of the appearances of things and try to infer the truth behind. The true knowledge is truth of existence, *satyam*, not mere truth of form or appearance.

We can only arrive at the true Truth, if Surya works in us to remove this brilliant formation of concepts and percepts and replaces them by the self-vision and all-vision.

For this it is necessary that the law and action of the Truth should be manifested in us. We must learn to see things as they are, see ourselves as we are. Our present action is one in which self-knowledge and will are divided. We start with a fundamental falsehood, that we have a separate existence from others and we try to know the relations of separate beings in their separateness and act on the knowledge so formed for an individual utility. The law of the Truth would work in us if we saw the totality of our existence containing all others, its forms created by the action of the totality, its powers working in and by the action of the totality. Our internal and external action would then well naturally and directly out of our self-existence, out of the very truth of things and not in obedience to an intermediate principle which is in its nature a falsifying reflection.

THE FULFILMENT OF SURYA IN MAN

Nevertheless even in our ordinary action there is the beginning or at least the seed of the Truth which must liberate us. Behind every act and perception there is an intuition, a truth which, if it is continually falsified in the form, yet preserves itself in the essence and works to lead us by increasing light and largeness to truth in the manifestation. Behind all this travail of differentiation and division there is an insistent unifying tendency which is also continually falsified in the separate result, but yet leads persistently towards our eventual integrality in knowledge, in being and in will.

Surya is Pushan, fosterer or increaser. His work must be to effect this enlargement of the divided self-perception and action of will into the integral will and knowledge. He is sole seer and replacing other forms of knowledge by his unifying vision enables us to arrive finally at oneness. That intuitive vision of the totality, of one in All and All in one, becomes the ordainer of the right law of action in us, the law of the Truth. For Surya is Yama, the Ordainer or Controller who assures the law, the dharma. Thus we arrive at the fullness of action of the Illuminer in us, accomplish the entirety of the Truth-Consciousness. We are then able to see that all that is contained in the being of Surya, in the Vijnana which builds up the worlds is becoming of existence in the one existence and one Lord of all becoming, the Purusha, Sachchidananda. All becoming is born in the Being who himself exceeds all becomings and is their Lord, Prajapati.

By the revelation of the vision of Surya the true knowledge is formed. In this formation the Upanishad indicates two successive actions. First, there is an arrangement or marshalling of the rays of Surya, that is to say, the truths concealed behind our concepts and percepts are brought out by separate intuitions of the image and the essence of the image and arranged in their true relations to each other. So we arrive at totalities of intuitive knowledge and can finally go beyond to unity. This is the drawing together of the light of Surya. This double movement is necessitated by the constitution of our minds which cannot, like the original Truth-consciousness, start at once from the totality and perceive its contents from within. The mind can hardly conceive unity except as an abstraction, a sum or a void. Therefore it has to be gradually led from its own manner to that which exceeds it. It has to carry out its own characteristic action of arrangement, but with the help and by the operation of the higher faculty, no longer arbitrarily, but following the very action of the Truth of existence itself. Afterwards, by thus gradually correcting the manner of its own characteristic action it can succeed in reversing that characteristic action itself and learn to proceed from the whole to the contents instead of proceeding from "parts"[3] mistaken for entities to an apparent whole which is still a "part" and still mistaken for an entity.

THE ONE EXISTENT

Thus by the action of Surya we arrive at that light of the supreme superconscient in which even the intuitive knowledge of the truth of things based upon the total vision passes into the self-luminous self-vision of the one existent, one in all infinite complexities of a self-experience which never loses its unity or its self-luminousness. This is Surya's goodliest form of all. For it is the supreme Light, the supreme Will, the supreme Delight of existence.

This is the Lord, the Purusha, the self-conscient Being. When we have this vision, there is the integral self-knowledge, the perfect seeing, expressed in the great cry of the Upanishad, *so'ham*. The Purusha there and there, He am I. The Lord manifests Himself in the movements and inhabits many forms, but it is One who inhabits all. This self-conscient being, this real “I” whom the mental being individualised in the form is aware of as his true self — it is He. It is the All; and it is that which transcends the All.

---

[3] There are really no parts, existence being indivisible.

VIII

FOURTH MOVEMENT

[2]

Action and the Divine Will

Verses 17–18*

THE SIDE OF ACTION

Through Surya then, through the growth of the illumination in the mind which enables it eventually to pass beyond itself, we have the first principle of progress from mortality to immortality. It is by the Sun as a door or gate[1] that the individual, the limited consciousness attains to the full consciousness and life in the one, supreme and all-embracing Soul.

Both consciousness and life are included in the formula of Immortality; Knowledge is incomplete without action. Chit fulfils itself by Tapas, Consciousness by energy. And as Surya represents the divine Light, so Agni to the ancient Rishis represented divine Force, Power or Will-in-Consciousness. The prayer to Agni completes the prayer to Surya.

THE INDIVIDUAL WILL

As in knowledge, so in action, unity is the true foundation. The individual, accepting division as his law, isolating himself in his own egoistic limits, is necessarily mortal, obscure and ignorant in his workings. He follows in his aims and in his methods a knowledge that is personal, governed by desire, habits of thought, obscure subconscious impulses or, at best, a broken partial and shifting light. He lives by rays and not in the full blaze of the Sun. His knowledge is narrow in its objectivity, narrow in its subjectivity, in neither one with the integral knowledge and the total working and total will in the universe. His action, therefore, is crooked, many-branching, hesitating and fluctuating in its impulsion and direction; it beats about among falsehoods to find the Truth, tosses or scrapes fragments together to piece out the whole, stumbles among errors and sins to find the right. Being neither one-visioned nor whole-visioned, having neither the totality of the universal Will nor the concentrated oneness of the transcendent, the individual will cannot walk straight on the right or good path towards the Truth and the Immortality. Governed by desire, exposed to the shock of the forces around it with which its egoism and ignorance forbid it to put itself in harmony, it is subject to the twin children of the Ignorance, suffering and falsehood. Not having the divine Truth and Right, it cannot have the divine Felicity.

---

* 17. The Breath of things is an immortal life, but of this body ashes are the end. OM! O Will, remember, that which was done remember! O Will, remember, that which was done remember.

18. O god Agni, knowing all things that are manifested, lead us by the good path to the felicity; remove from us the devious attraction of sin. To thee completest speech of submission we address.

[1] *Sūryadvāreṇa.* — Mundaka Upanishad I. 2. 11.

AGNI, THE DIVINE WILL

But as there is in and behind all the falsehoods of our material mind and reason a Light that prepares by this twilight the full dawn of the Truth in man, so there is in and behind all our errors, sins and stumblings a secret Will, tending towards Love and Harmony, which knows where it is going and prepares and combines our crooked branchings towards the straight path which will be the final result of their toil and seeking. The emergence of this Will and that Light is the condition of immortality.

This Will is Agni. Agni is in the Rig Veda, from which the closing verse of the Upanishad is taken, the flame of the Divine Will or Force of Consciousness working in the worlds. He is described as the immortal in mortals, the leader of the journey, the divine Horse that bears us on the road, the "son of crookedness" who himself knows and is the straightness and the Truth. Concealed and hard to seize in the workings of this world because they are all falsified by desire and egoism, he uses them to transcend them and emerges as the universal in Man or universal Power, Agni Vaishwanara, who contains in himself all the gods and all the worlds, upholds all the universal workings and finally fulfils the godhead, the Immortality. He is the worker of the divine Work. It is these symbols which govern the sense of the two final verses of the Upanishad.

THE IMMORTAL LIFE-PRINCIPLE

Life is the condition from which the Will and the Light emerge. It is said in the Veda that Vayu or Matarishwan, the Life-principle, is he who brings down Agni from Surya in the high and far-off supreme world. Life calls down the divine Will from the Truth-consciousness into the realm of mind and body to prepare here, in Life, its own manifestation. Agni, enjoying and devouring the things of Life, generates the Maruts, nervous forces of Life that become forces of thought; they, upheld by Agni, prepare the action of Indra, the luminous Mind, who is for our life-powers their Rishi or finder of the Truth and Right. Indra slays Vritra, the Coverer, dispels the darkness, causes Surya to rise upon our being and go abroad over its whole field with the rays of the Truth. Surya is the Creator or manifester, Savitri, who manifests in this mortal world the world or state of immortality, dispels the evil dream of egoism, sin and suffering and transforms Life into the Immortality, the good, the beatitude. The Vedic gods are a parable of human life emerging, mounting, lifting itself towards the Godhead.

Life, body, action, will, these are our first materials. Matter supplies us with the body; but it is only a temporary knot of the movement, a dwelling-place of the Purusha in which he presides over the activities generated out of the Life-principle. Once it is thrown aside by the Life-principle it is dissolved; ashes are its end. Therefore the body is not ourselves, but only an outer tool and instrument. For Matter is the principle of obscurity and division, of birth and death, of formation and dissolution. It is the assertion of death. Immortal man must not identify himself with the body.

The Life-principle in us survives. It is the immortal Breath[2] or, as the phrase really means, the subtle force of existence which is superior to the principle of birth and death. At first sight it may appear that birth and death are attributes of the Life, but it is not really so: birth and death are processes of Matter, of the body. The Life-principle is not formed and dissolved in the formulation and dissolution of the body; if that were so, there could be no continuity of the individual existence and all would go back at death into the formless. Life forms body, it is not formed by it. It is the thread upon which the continuity of our successive bodily lives is arranged, precisely because it is itself immortal. It associates itself with the perishable body and carries forward the mental being, the Purusha in the mind, upon his journey.

WILL AND MEMORY

This journey consists in a series of activities continued from life to life in this world with intervals of life in other states. The Life-principle maintains them; it supplies their material in the formative energy which takes shape in them. But their presiding god is not the Life-principle; it is the Will. Will is Kratu, the effective power behind the act. It is of the nature of consciousness; it is energy of consciousness, and although present in all forms, conscious, subconscious or superconscious, vital, physical or mental, yet comes into its kingdom only when it emerges in Mind. It uses the mental faculty of memory to link together and direct consciously the activities towards the goal of the individual.

In man the use of consciousness by the mental will is imperfect, because memory is limited. Our action is both dispersed and circumscribed because mentally we live from hour to hour in the current of Time, holding only to that which attracts or seems immediately useful to our egoistic mind. We live in what we are doing, we do not control what has been done, but are rather controlled by our past works which we have forgotten. This is because we dwell in the action and its fruits instead of living in the soul and viewing the stream of action from behind it. The Lord, the true Will, stands back from the actions and therefore is their lord and not bound by them.

---

[2] *Anilam amṛtam.*

The Upanishad solemnly invokes the Will to remember the thing that has been done, so as to contain and be conscious of the becoming, so as to become a power of knowledge and self-possession and not only a power of impulsion and self-formulation. It will thus more and more approximate itself to the true Will and preside over the co-ordination of the successive lives with a conscious control. Instead of being carried from life to life in a crooked path, as by winds, it will be able to proceed more and more straight in an ordered series, linking life to life with an increasing force of knowledge and direction until it becomes the fully conscious Will moving with illumination on the straight path towards the immortal felicity. The mental will, *kratu*, becomes what it at present only represents, the divine Will, Agni.

WILL AND KNOWLEDGE

The essentiality of the divine Will is that in it Consciousness and Energy, Knowledge and Force are one. It knows all manifestations, all things that take birth in the worlds. It is Jatavedas, that which has right knowledge of all births. It knows them in the law of their being, in their relation to other births, in their aim and method, in their process and goal, in their unity with all and their difference from all. It is this divine Will that conducts the universe; it is one with all the things that it combines and its being, its knowledge, its action are inseparable from each other. What it is, it knows; what it knows, that it does and becomes.

But as soon as egoistic consciousness emerges and interferes, there is a disturbance, a division, a false action. Will becomes an impulsion ignorant of its secret motive and aim, knowledge becomes a dubious and partial ray not in possession of the will, the act and the result, but only striving to possess and inform them. This is because we are not in possession of our self,[3] our true being, but only of the ego. What we are, we know not; what we know, we cannot effect. For knowledge is real and action in harmony with true knowledge only when they proceed naturally out of the conscious, illumined and self-possessing soul, in which being, knowledge and action are one movement.

SURRENDER TO THE DIVINE WILL

This is the change that happens when, the mental will approximating more and more to the divine, Agni burns out in us. It is that increasing knowledge and force which carries us finally into the straight or good path out of the crookedness. It is the divine Will, one with the divine knowledge, which leads us towards felicity, towards the state of Immortality. All that belongs to the deviations of the ego, all that obscures and drives or draws us into this or that false path with its false lures and stumblings are put away from us by it. These things fall away from the divinised Will and cease to find lodging in our consciousness.

Therefore the sign of right action is the increasing and finally the complete submission of the individual to the divine Will which the illumination of Surya reveals in him. Although manifested in his consciousness, this Will is not individual. It is the will of the Purusha who is in all things and transcends them. It is the will of the Lord.

Knowledge of the Lord as the One in the fully self-conscious being, submission to the Lord as the universal and transcendent in the fully self-conscious action, are the two keys of the divine gates, the gates of Immortality.

And the nature of the two united is an illuminated Devotion which accepts, aspires to and fulfils God in the human existence.

---

[3] *Ātmavān.*

CONCLUSION

Thus the fourth movement indicates psychologically the double process of that attainment of Immortality which is the subject of the third movement, the state of bliss and truth within and the worlds of Light after death culminating in the identity of the self-luminous One. At the same time it particularises under the cover of Vedic symbols the process of that self-knowledge and identification with the Self and all its becomings which is the subject of the second movement and of that liberated action in the assertion of which the first culminates. It is thus a fitting close and consummation to the Upanishad.

IX

Conclusion and Summary

THE ISHA Upanishad is one of the more ancient of the Vedantic writings in style, substance and versification, subsequent certainly to the Chhandogya, Brihadaranyaka and perhaps to the Taittiriya and Aitareya, but certainly the most antique of the extant metrical Upanishads. Upanishadic thought falls naturally into two great periods; in one, the earlier, it still kept close to its Vedic roots, reflected the old psychological system of the Vedic Rishis and preserved what may be called their spiritual pragmatism; in the other and later, in which the form and thought became more modern and independent of early symbols and origins, some of the principal elements of Vedic thought and psychology begin to be omitted or to lose their previous connotation and the foundations of the later ascetic and anti-pragmatic Vedanta begin to appear. The Isha belongs to the earlier or Vedic group. It is already face to face with the problem of reconciling human life and activity with the Monistic standpoint and its large solution of the difficulty is one of the most interesting passages of Vedantic literature. It is the sole Upanishad which offered almost insuperable difficulties to the extreme illusionism and anti-pragmatism of Shankaracharya and it was even, for this reason, excised from the list of authoritative Upanishads by one of his greatest followers.

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE UPANISHAD

The principle it follows throughout is the uncompromising reconciliation of uncompromising extremes. Later thought took one series of terms, — the World, Enjoyment, Action, the Many, Birth, the Ignorance, — and gave them a more and more secondary position, exalting the opposite series, God, Renunciation, Quietism, the One, Cessation of Birth, the Knowledge, until this trend of thought culminated in Illusionism and the idea of existence in the world as a snare and a meaningless burden imposed inexplicably on the soul by itself, which must be cast aside as soon as possible. It ended in a violent cutting of the knot of the great enigma. This Upanishad tries instead to get hold of the extreme ends of the knots, disengage and place them alongside of each other in a release that will be at the same time a right placing and relation. It will not qualify or subordinate unduly any of the extremes, although it recognises a dependence of one on the other. Renunciation is to go to the extreme, but also enjoyment is to be equally integral; Action has to be complete and ungrudging, but also freedom of the soul from its works must be absolute; Unity utter and absolute is the goal, but this absoluteness has to be brought to its highest term by including in it the whole infinite multiplicity of things.

So great is this scruple in the Upanishad that having so expressed itself in the formula "By the Ignorance having crossed over death by the Knowledge one enjoys Immortality" that Life in the world might be interpreted as only a preliminary to an existence beyond, it at once rights the balance by reversing the order in the parallel formula "By dissolution having crossed over death by birth one enjoys Immortality", and thus makes life itself the field of the immortal existence which is the goal and aspiration of all life. In this conclusion it agrees with the early Vedic thought which believed all the worlds and existence and non-existence and death and life and immortality to be here in the embodied human being, there evolvent, there realisable and to be possessed and enjoyed, not dependent either for acquisition or enjoyment on the renunciation of life and bodily existence. This thought has never entirely passed out of Indian philosophy, but has become secondary and a side admission not strong enough to qualify seriously the increasing assertion of the extinction of mundane existence as the condition of our freedom and our sole wise and worthy aim.

THE OPPOSITES

The pairs of opposites successively taken up by the Upanishad and resolved are, in the order of their succession:

1. The Conscious Lord and phenomenal Nature.
2. Renunciation and Enjoyment.
3. Action in Nature and Freedom in the Soul.
4. The One stable Brahman and the multiple Movement.
5. Being and Becoming.
6. The Active Lord and the indifferent Akshara Brahman.
7. Vidya and Avidya.
8. Birth and Non-Birth.
9. Works and Knowledge.

These discords are thus successively resolved:

GOD AND NATURE

1. Phenomenal Nature is a movement of the conscious Lord. The object of the movement is to create forms of His consciousness in motion in which He as the one Soul in many bodies can take up his habitation and enjoy the multiplicity and the movement with all their relations.[1]

ENJOYMENT AND RENUNCIATION

2. Real integral enjoyment of all this movement and multiplicity in its truth and in its infinity depends upon an absolute renunciation; but the renunciation intended is an absolute renunciation of the principle of desire founded on the principle of egoism and not a renunciation of world-existence.[2] This solution depends on the idea that desire is only an egoistic and vital deformation of the divine Ananda or delight of being from which the

---

[1] This is also the view of the Gita and generally accepted.

[2] This again is the central standpoint of the Gita, which, however, admits also the renunciation of world-existence. The general trend of Vedantic thought would accept the renunciation of desire and egoism as the essential but would hold that renunciation of egoism means the renunciation of all world-existence, for it sees desire and not Ananda as the cause of world-existence.

world is born; by extirpation of ego and desire Ananda again becomes the conscious principle of existence. This substitution is the essence of the change from life in death to life in immortality. The enjoyment of the infinite delight of existence free from ego, founded on oneness of all in the Lord, is what is meant by the enjoyment of Immortality.

ACTION AND FREEDOM

3. Actions are not inconsistent with the soul's freedom. Man is not bound by works, but only seems to be bound. He has to recover the consciousness of his inalienable freedom by recovering the consciousness of unity in the Lord, unity in himself, unity with all existence.[3] This done, life and works can and should be accepted in their fullness; for the manifestation of the Lord in life and works is the law of our being and the object of our world-existence.

THE QUIESCENCE AND THE MOVEMENT

4. What then of the Quiescence of the Supreme Being and how is persistence in the Movement compatible with that Quiescence which is generally recognised as an essential condition of the supreme Bliss?

The Quiescence and the Movement are equally one Brahman and the distinction drawn between them is only a phenomenon of our consciousness. So it is with the idea of space and time, the far and the near, the subjective and the objective, internal and external, myself and others, one and many. Brahman, the real existence, is all these things to our consciousness, but in itself ineffably superior to all such practical distinctions. The Movement is a phenomenon of the Quiescence, the Quiescence itself may be conceived as a Movement too rapid for the gods, that is to say, for our various functions of consciousness to follow in its real nature. But it is no formal, material, spatial, temporal movement, only a movement in consciousness. Knowledge sees it all as one, Ignorance divides and creates oppositions where there is no opposition but simply relations of one consciousness in itself. The ego in the body says, “I am within, all else is outside; and in what is outside, this is near to me in Time and Space, that is far.” All this is true in present relation; but in essence it is all one indivisible movement of Brahman which is not material movement but a way of seeing things in the one consciousness.

---

[3] This truth would, again, be generally admitted, but not the conclusion that is drawn from it.

BEING AND BECOMING

5. Everything depends on what we see, how we look at existence in our soul’s view of things. Being and Becoming, One and Many are both true and are both the same thing: Being is one, Becomings are many; but this simply means that all Becomings are one Being who places Himself variously in the phenomenal movement of His consciousness. We have to see the One Being, but we have not to cease to see the many Becomings, for they exist and are included in Brahman’s view of Himself. Only, we must see with knowledge and not with ignorance. We have to realise our true self as the one unchangeable, indivisible Brahman. We have to see all becomings as developments of the movement in our true self and this self as one inhabiting all bodies and not our body only. We have to be consciously, in our relations with this world, what we really are, — this one self becoming everything that we observe. All the movement, all energies, all forms, all happenings we must see as those of our one and real self in many existences, as the play of the Will and Knowledge and Delight of the Lord in His world-existence.

We shall then be delivered from egoism and desire and the sense of separate existence and therefore from all grief and delusion and shrinking; for all grief is born of the shrinking of the ego from the contacts of existence, its sense of fear, weakness, want, dislike, etc.; and this is born from the delusion of separate existence, the sense of being my separate ego exposed to all these contacts of so much that is not myself.

Get rid of this, see oneness everywhere, be the One manifesting Himself in all creatures; ego will disappear; desire born of the sense of not being this, not having that, will disappear; the free inalienable delight of the One in His own existence will take the place of desire and its satisfactions and dissatisfactions.[4] Immortality will be yours, death born of division will be overcome.

THE ACTIVE AND INACTIVE BRAHMAN

6. The Inactive and the Active Brahman are simply two aspects of the one Self, the one Brahman, who is the Lord. It is He who has gone abroad in the movement. He maintains Himself free from all modifications in His inactive existence. The inaction is the basis of the action and exists in the action; it is His freedom from all He does and becomes and in all He does and becomes. These are the positive and negative poles of one indivisible consciousness. We embrace both in one quiescence and one movement, inseparable from each other, dependent on each other. The quiescence exists relatively to the movement, the movement to the quiescence. He is beyond both. This is a different point of view from that of the identity of the Movement and Quiescence which are one in reality; it expresses rather their relation in our consciousness once they are admitted as a practical necessity of that consciousness. It is obvious that we also by becoming one with the Lord would share in this biune conscious existence.[5]

VIDYA AND AVIDYA

7. The knowledge of the One and the knowledge of the Many are a result of the movement of the one consciousness, which

---

[4] In the ordinary view all this would be admitted, but the practical possibility of maintaining this state of consciousness and birth in the world together would be doubted.

[5] In the ordinary view the Jiva cannot exist in both at the same time; his dissolution is into the Quiescence and not into unity with the Lord in the action and inaction.

sees all things as One in their truth-Idea but differentiates them in their mentality and formal becoming. If the mind (Manishi) absorbs itself in God as the formal becoming (Paribhu) and separates itself from God in the true Idea (Kavi), then it loses Vidya, the knowledge of the One, and has only the knowledge of the Many which becomes no longer knowledge at all but ignorance, Avidya. This is the cause of the separate ego-sense.

Avidya is accepted by the Lord in the Mind (Manishi) in order to develop individual relations to their utmost in all the possibilities of division and its consequences and then through these individual relations to come back individually to the knowledge of the One in all. That knowledge has remained all along unabrogated in the consciousness of the true seer or Kavi. This seer in ourselves stands back from the mental thinker; the latter, thus separated, has to conquer death and division by a developing experience as the individual Inhabitant and finally to recover by the reunited knowledge of the One and the Many the state of Immortality. This is our proper course and not either to devote ourselves exclusively to the life of Avidya or to reject it entirely for motionless absorption in the One.

BIRTH AND NON-BIRTH

8. The reason for this double movement of the Thinker is that we are intended to realise immortality in the Birth. The self is uniform and undying and in itself always possesses immortality. It does not need to descend into Avidya and Birth to get that immortality of Non-Birth; for it possesses it always. It descends in order to realise and possess it as the individual Brahman in the play of world-existence. It accepts Birth and Death, assumes the ego and then dissolving the ego by the recovery of unity realises itself as the Lord, the One, and Birth as only a becoming of the Lord in mental and formal being; this becoming is now governed by the true sight of the Seer and, once this is done, becoming is no longer inconsistent with Being, birth becomes a means and not an obstacle to the enjoyment of immortality by

the lord of this formal habitation.[6] This is our proper course and not to remain for ever in the chain of birth and death, nor to flee from birth into a pure non-becoming. The bondage does not consist in the physical act of becoming, but in the persistence of the ignorant sense of the separate ego. The Mind creates the chain and not the body.

WORKS AND KNOWLEDGE

9. The opposition between works and knowledge exists as long as works and knowledge are only of the egoistic mental character. Mental knowledge is not true knowledge; true knowledge is that which is based on the true sight, the sight of the Seer, of Surya, of the Kavi. Mental thought is not knowledge, it is a golden lid placed over the face of the Truth, the Sight, the divine Ideation, the Truth-Consciousness. When that is removed, sight replaces mental thought, the all-embracing truth-ideation, Mahas, Veda, Drishti, replaces the fragmentary mental activity. True Buddhi (Vijnana) emerges from the dissipated action of the Buddhi which is all that is possible on the basis of the sense-mind, the Manas. Vijnana leads us to pure knowledge (Jnana), pure consciousness (Chit). There we realise our entire identity with the Lord in all at the very roots of our being.

But in Chit, Will and Seeing are one. Therefore in Vijnana or truth-ideation also which comes luminously out of Chit, Will and Sight are combined and no longer as in the mind separated from each other. Therefore when we have the sight and live in the truth-consciousness, our will becomes the spontaneous law of the truth in us and, knowing all its acts and their sense and objective, leads straight to the human goal, which was always the enjoyment of the Ananda, the Lord's delight in self-being, the state of Immortality. In our acts also we become one with all beings and our life grows into a representation of oneness, truth and divine joy and no longer proceeds on the crooked path of egoism full of division, error and stumbling. In a word, we attain to the object of our existence which is to manifest in itself whether on earth in a terrestrial body and against the resistance of Matter or in the worlds beyond or enter beyond all world the glory of the divine Life and the divine Being.

---

[6] This is the stumbling-block to the ordinary philosophies which are impregnated with the idea of the illusoriness of the world, even when they do not go the whole way with the Mayavada. Birth, they would say, is a play of ignorance, it cannot subsist along with entire knowledge.

Part Two

Incomplete Commentaries from Manuscripts

Isha Upanishad

All that is world in the Universe

The Sanscrit word जगत् is in origin a reduplicated & therefore frequentative participle from the root गम् to go. It signifies "that which is in perpetual motion", and implies in its neuter form the world, universe, and in its feminine form the earth. World therefore is that which eternally vibrates, and the Hindu idea of the cosmos reduces itself to a harmony of eternal vibrations; form as we see it is simply the varying combination of different vibrations as they affect us through our perceptions & establish themselves to the concept. So far then Hinduism has reached by analysis to the last & simplest material expression of this complex universe. The question then arises, "Does anything lie beyond? If matter is all, then this is the last & there is no beyond. But is matter all?"

Our first verse is the answer of the Upanishad to this question. "All that is world in the Universe by the Lord must be pervaded." The very object of our existence is to pierce beyond this last & thinnest veil of matter to Spirit, the Lord who is behind every manifestation of matter, even the simplest & therefore is he the Lord, he is the Self of all things, matter being merely the body. When we have realised that all this universe of vibration is full of the Spirit, we have set our feet on the right road that will lead us to the goal of existence. This is what we "must" do, in other words to realise God in the universe is the object of our existence. But why does the Upanishad say "must be pervaded"; why does it not say simply "is pervaded"? Is this pervasion then not a fact, but a possibility which each individual soul has to turn into a fact for itself? In what sense is it said that the object of the individual soul is to pervade the Universe with the Lord? We must remember that according to the Upanishad there are only two entities in existence which are not phenomena or manifestations, but eternal facts, and these two are in reality not two but one, the illimitable & infinite Self behind phenomena, and the finite self which perceives phenomena. The Adwaita or Monistic Vedanta affirms the entire unity of these two & explains their apparent separation by Maya, Illusion or Ignorance, in other words by the theory that the Indivisible Eternal has deliberately imagined himself as divisible (I speak in metaphors, the only way of approaching such subtle inquiries) & hence created an illusion of multiplicity where the only real fact is Unity. We may take the metaphor of a sea & its waves; if each wave were to imagine itself separate from all other waves & from the sea of which it is a part, that would be an illusion similar to that of the finite self when it imagines itself as different from other finite selves and from the Infinite. The wave is not really different from the sea but is sea (not *the* sea) and the next moment will be indistinguishable from sea; in fact the word "wave" merely expresses a momentary perception, an idea of change or modification which the next moment we perceive not to exist, and not a real object; the only real object is the sea.

The Visishta Adwaita or modified-Monistic Vedanta on the other hand recognises that the infinite Self & the finite Self are eventually One, but still there is a distinction, a certain limitation of the Oneness. The finite Self is of & in the infinite Self & therefore one with it but it does not coincide with it or disappear into it; the goal of its existence is the delight of feeling its oneness with the Eternal, but still the very feeling of delight implies a limitation, a difference, & this limitation is not temporary but eternal. An image may be taken from the phenomenon of Light & its vibrations; it is all light, there is no real difference, & yet each of the vibrations is in a sense separate & continues its own existence on its own line for ever through infinity. Lastly the Dwaita or Dualistic Vedanta affirms, on the contrary, that the finite selves & the Infinite are for ever different & the whole riddle of the world lies in their difference & in their attraction to each other. To become one with the Eternal is here also the goal of the finite but the oneness is emotional & not essential; it is Union & not fusion. It is difficult to find a close image here, but for want of a better we may take that of a river & the sea to which it is hasting. It is water hasting to water & the whole aim of the river is to fling itself into the sea & towards that it strives with all its might & with all its soul; & finally it reaches the sea & mixes with it. And yet there it is still, a river & not the sea. So the two live in a perpetual embrace, ever united & yet ever different & feeling their separate existence. Now these three philosophies really image three different states of soul & three different roads to the realisation of God. There is the intellectual state of soul which reaches God through knowledge; this naturally attaches itself to Monism, for it seeks only the knowledge of its identity with God & its tendency is to discourage all action & emotion which interfere with this aim. Then there is the actional state of soul which reaches God through action leading to knowledge & inspired by emotion; this aims at the knowledge of its identity with God, but its actional state requires a certain sense of difference from God without which action becomes meaningless; its tendency therefore, if the knowledge-impulse predominates over the emotional, is to rest for a time in modified Monism, though it recognises pure Monism as a far goal beyond; but if the emotional impulse predominates over the intellectual, its tendency is to adopt modified Monism as a final solution. Lastly there is the emotional state of soul which reaches God through divine love; this naturally attaches itself to Dualism; for the only desire of love is to attain the loved one & go on loving for ever; an impossibility unless the feeling of difference in Union goes on for ever. The three philosophies are therefore simply three different standpoints from which we envisage one single truth, that nothing eventually matters in the world except God & the goal of existence is to attain Him. And I may add my own conviction that all three are necessary soul-stages. By pausing too long in Dualism or even in modified Monism, we debar ourselves too long from our final emancipation; but by leaping too quickly to Monism we fall into a dangerous tendency towards the premature dissolution of phenomena which if largely followed upsets the fine balance of the world. The right progress of the soul is first to realise its difference from God, so that we may feel attracted towards Him, then to realise that that difference is a temporary or at least not an entire difference, that there is unity beyond, so that we may advance towards Him by the right road & under the laws of that phenomenal existence through which he reveals himself to us, and finally to perceive that we and God are One & all phenomena temporary & illusory, so that escaping from name & form we may lose ourselves in Him and attain our soul's salvation. Well then, here are three standpoints; which is the standpoint of the Upanishads? They do not, in fact, confine themselves to any, but regarding them as three necessary stages, speak now from one, now from another, now from a third. Here it is speaking in a spirit of very slightly modified Monism. There are two nonphenomenal existences, the Infinite Self & the Finite Self; from the point of view of the Infinite, Eternal Self, the universe is already pervaded with God; but we must also consider the point of view of the Finite Self, — which is really Infinite but considers itself to be Finite. To this Finite Self the Universe is only the mass of its own perceptions. If it perceives the Universe as mere matter, then for its purposes the Universe is Matter & not pervaded by the Lord; if I consider yonder tree as so much wood & pith & sap & leaves, such it is & no more so far as I am concerned; if I look within & perceive God there then it is I who have put him there; for the moment before He was not there for me & now He is. In more Monistic language the Self at first imagines itself to be confined within its own body, but as it grows in thought it looks into object after object & perceives itself there & so it goes on putting itself into everything until it has pervaded all that is in the world with itself; it then realises that there is no self or non-self but all is God. We see that it is merely a difference of language, of outlook, of perception; but these are the things through which human thought proceeds & they must be given their due place. To recognize the differences they involve & yet to perceive the unity into which they merge, is the law & goal of all Hindu thought.

But whatever the standpoint we take, for dualist, monist or semimonist the Vedanta lays this down as the great essential step to realise that when we have resolved this universe of forms

& names into a great harmony of vibrations, we must still go beyond & perceive that the whole is but the material expression of one pervading Spirit. And when we have realised this, what is the practical result; for it must be remembered that the Vedanta is always profoundly practical[.]

The Ishavasyopanishad

with a commentary in English

1.

With God all this must be invested, even all that is world in this moving universe; abandon therefore desire and enjoy and covet no man's possession.

THE GURU

The Upanishad sets forth by pronouncing as the indispensable basis of its revelations the universal nature of God. This universal nature of Brahman the Eternal is the beginning and end of the Vedanta and if it is not accepted, nothing the Vedanta says can have any value, as all its propositions either proceed from it or at least presuppose it; deprived of this central and highest truth, the Upanishads become what Mleccha scholars & philosophers think them to be, — a mass of incoherent though often sublime speculations; with this truth in your hand as a lamp to shed light on all the obscurest sayings of the Scriptures, you soon come to realise that the Upanishads are a grand harmonious and perfectly luminous whole, expressing in its various aspects the single and universal Truth; for under the myriad contradictions of phenomena (prapancha) there is one Truth and one only. All the Smritis, the Puranas, the Darshanas, the Dharmashastras, the writings of Shaktas, Shaivas, Vaishnavas, Sauras, as well as the whole of Buddhism and its Scriptures are merely so many explanations, comments and interpretations from different sides, of these various aspects of the one and only Truth. This Truth is the sole foundation on which all religions can rest as on a sure and impregnable rock; — and more than a rock, for a rock may perish but this endures for ever. Therefore is the religion of the Aryas called the Sanatana Dharma, the Law Sempiternal. Nor are the Hindus in error when they declare the Sruti to be eternal and without beginning and the Rishis who composed the hymns to be only the witnesses who saw the truth and put it in human language; for this seeing was not mental sight, but spiritual. Therefore the Vedas are justly called Sruti or revelation. Of these the Rig, Yajur, Sama & Atharvan are the fertilising rain which gave the plant of the Truth nourishment and made it grow, the Brahmanas are the forest in which the plant is found, the Aranyakas are the soil in which it grows, the Upanishads are the plant itself, roots, stalk, leaves, calix and petals, and the flower which manifests itself once and for ever is the great saying SO AHAM — I AM HE which is the culmination of the Upanishads. Salutation to the SO AHAM. Salutation to the Eternal who is without place, time, cause or limit, Salutation to my Self who am the Eternal.

THE STUDENT

I salute the Eternal and my Self who am the Eternal. Swaha!

THE GURU

The Upanishad therefore begins by saying that all this must be clothed or invested with the Lord. By this expression it is meant that the individual Jivatman or human soul in order to attain salvation must cover up all this universe with the Lord, as one might cover the body with a garment. By the Lord we mean obviously not the Unknowable Parabrahman, for of the Unknowable we cannot speak in terms of place, time or difference, but the Brahman knowable by Yoga, the luminous shadow of the One put forth by the Shakti of the One, which by dividing itself into the Male and Female, Purusha and Prakriti, has created this world of innumerable forms and names. Brahman is spoken of as the Lord; that is, we best think of Him as the Ruler & Sovran of the Universe. He is the still ocean of spiritual force, its mere presence sets working the creative, preservative, and destructive Shakti or Will of the Eternal Parabrahman. By her means he forms the Ocean of Prakriti, which is the substratum of all form or matter. Of these two, the Ocean of spiritual force and the Ocean of material form, the latter is contained in the other & could not be without it. It may be said to be surrounded by it or clothed by it. The Lord himself is present on the Ocean in various forms, Prajna, Hiranyagarbha & Virat, or Vishnu, Brahma and Maheshwara. This is what the Puranas represent as Vishnu on the Serpent of Time & Space in the Causal Ocean & Brahma growing out of the lotus in his navel etc. This is the Lord, the King & Ruler. We must therefore realise all things in this universe to be the creation of that ocean of Brahman or spiritual force which surrounds them as a robe surrounds its wearer.

THE STUDENT

Surely all things [are] Brahman himself; why then should he be said to surround all things as if he were different from them?

THE GURU

It is meant by this expression that the universal & undivided consciousness which we call Brahman, surrounds and includes all the limited individual consciousnesses which present themselves to us in the shape of things.

THE STUDENT

Still I do not understand. How can the one indivisible consciousness be divided, or if it is divided how can it at the same time remain one and surround its own parts? A thing cannot be at the same time one and indivisible and yet divisible and multifold.

THE GURU

On the contrary this is precisely the nature of consciousness to be eternally one & indivisible, & yet always divisible at will. A man's consciousness has often been split up into two states, each with its own history and memory, so that when he is in one state, he does not know what he has been thinking and doing in the other. Persons ignorant of the Truth imagine from this circumstance that a man's consciousness must be not single and homogeneous but a bundle of different personalities, just as the Sankhyas & others imagine that there must be an infinite number of Purushas, souls & not One, for otherwise, they say, all would have the same knowledge, the same pleasure & pain etc. (This is so in a sense, as his present personality contains also in a submerged state the personalities of his previous births, and an unwise hypnosis may throw him back into a bygone state of personality.) But this is merely Avidya, Ignorance, & when the apparently individual Purusha puts himself into the complete state of Yoga with the Eternal he discovers that all the time there was only One Purusha who was cognizant of & contained the others, in the sense that they were simply projections (सृष्टिs) from him. These states of split consciousness are only different states of one personality and not separate personalities. This will at once be clear if a skilful and careful hypnotiser put the man in the right state of sleep; for then a third state of personality will often evolve which has known all along what the other two were doing and saying & is in itself sufficient proof that all along the unity of consciousness was there, submerged indeed but constant and subliminally active. The division of this one consciousness into two separate states results from a particular & unusual action of Avidya, the same universal Nescience which in its general & normal action makes men imagine that they are a different self from the Universal Consciousness and not merely states or conditions projected (सृष्ट) of that consciousness. We see here then an established example of the one and indivisible consciousness becoming divided and multifold, yet remaining one and indivisible all the time. This single consciousness itself, the I of the waking man, is only a division or rather a state of a still wider consciousness more independent of gross matter which gets some play in the condition of dream (and of dream hypnosis is only a particular and capricious form), but is more permanently & coherently liberated from the gross body at or after death. This wider consciousness is called the Dream Condition and the body or upadhi in which it works is called the Subtle Body. The Dream Consciousness may be said to surround the waking consciousness and its body as a robe surrounds its wearer, for it is wider & less trammelled in its nature & range; it is the selecting agency from which & by which a part is selected for waking purposes in the material life. The Dream Consciousness is itself [surrounded] by a still wider consciousness which we call the Sleep Condition or the Causal Body and from this & by this it is selected for life before birth & after death. This Sleep Condition is again surrounded by Brahman from whom & by whom it is selected for causal purposes, — just as a robe surrounds its wearer. Thus you will realise that Brahman is a wide eternally one & indivisible Consciousness which yet limits itself at will and yet remains illimitable surrounding like a robe all its various states or illusory limitations.

THE STUDENT

True but that which surrounds is always a separate thing from that which is surrounded, the robe is different from its wearer.

THE GURU

Let us consider a nut with the kernel in it, we see that ether in the form or *upadhi* of the nut, surrounds ether in the *upadhi* of the kernel as a robe surrounds its wearer; but the two are the same; there is one ether, not two.

THE STUDENT

Now I understand.

THE GURU

Consider next what the Upanishad goes on to indicate more definitely as the thing to be clothed or invested — whatever is *jagat* in *jagati*, or literally whatever is moving thing in her that moves. Now *jagati*, she who moves, is an old name for Earth, Prithivi, and afterwards for the whole *wide* universe, of which the Earth with which alone we human beings are at present concerned, is the type. Why then is the universe called *jagati*, she that moveth? Because it is a form of Prakriti whose essential characteristic is motion; for by motion she creates this material world, and indeed all object-matter is only a form, that is to say a visible, audible or sensible result of motion; every material object is *jagat*, full of infinite motion, — even the stone, even the clod. This material world, our senses tell us, is the only existing reality; but the Upanishad warns us against the false evidence of our senses and bids us realise in our hearts and minds Brahman the Ocean of spiritual force, drawing him in our imaginations like a robe round each sensible thing.

The Student

But the Upanishad does not say that the material world is itself Brahman.

The Guru

It will yet say that. It tells us next by abandonment of this (all that is in the world) to enjoy and not covet any man's wealth. We are to enjoy the whole world, but not to covet the possessions of others. How is this possible? If I, Devadatta, am told to enjoy all that is in the world, but find that I have very little to enjoy while my neighbour Harischandra has untold riches, how can I fail to envy him his wealth and why should I not try to get it for my own enjoyment, if I safely can? I shall not try, because I cannot, because I have realized that there is nothing in this world but Brahman manifesting the universe by his Shakti, and that there is no Devadatta, no Harischandra, but only Brahman in various states of consciousness to which these names are given. If therefore Harischandra enjoys his riches, then it is I who am enjoying them, for Harischandra is myself, — not my body in which I am imprisoned or my desires by which my body is made miserable, but my true self, the Purusha within me who is the witness & enjoyer of all this sweet, bitter, tender, grand, beautiful, terrible, pleasant, horrible and wholly wonderful and enjoyable drama of the world which Prakriti enacts for his delectation. Now if as the Sankhyas and other philosophies and the Christians and other religions declare, there are innumerable Purushas and not one, there would be no ground for the Christian injunction to love others as oneself or for the description by the Sruti & Smriti of the perfect sage as सर्वभूतहितरतः, busied with and delighting in the good of all creatures; for then Harischandra would be in no way connected with me and there would be no point of contact between us except the material, from which hatred & envy are far more ready to arise than love and sympathy. How then could I prefer him to myself? But from the point of view of Vedanta, such preference is natural, right and in the end inevitable.

THE STUDENT

That is a large view.

THE GURU

And a true view.

THE STUDENT

How is the preference of others to myself inevitable, natural, right?

THE GURU

It is inevitable because as I have risen from the beast to the man, so must I rise from the man to the God & of Godhead this preference is the perennial well & fountain, evolution meaning simply the wider and wider revelation of Brahman, the universal spirit, the progress from the falsehood of matter to the truth of spirit; — and this progress, however slow, is inevitable. It is natural because I am not really preferring another to myself, but my true self to my false, God who is in all to my single body and mind, myself in Devadatta and Harischandra, to myself in Devadatta alone. It is right because it is better for me to enjoy the enjoyment of Harischandra than to enjoy my own, since in this way I shall make my knowledge of Brahman a reality and not a mere intellectual conception or assent; I shall turn it into an experience — anubhav, and anubhav, the Smritis tell us, is the essence of true Jnana. For this reason perfect love, by which I do not mean the mere sensual impulse of man towards woman, is a great and ennobling thing, for by its means two separated conditions of the Universal Consciousness come together and become one. Still nobler and more ennobling is the love of the patriot who lives & dies for his country, for in this way he becomes one with millions of divine units and still greater, nobler, more exalting the soul of the philanthropist, who without forgetting family or country lives and dies for mankind or for all creatures. He is the wisest Muni, the greatest Yogi, who not only reaches Brahman by the way of Jnana, not only soars to Him on the wings of Bhakti, but becomes He through God-devoted Karma, who gives himself up utterly for his family and friends, for his country, for all humanity, for the world, yes & when he can, the solar system & systems upon systems, — for the whole universe.

Therefore the Upanishad tells us that we must enjoy by abandonment, by *tyaga* or renunciation. This is a curious expression, तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः; it is a curious thing to tell a man that he must abandon & what he has abandoned enjoy by the very sacrifice. The natural man shrinks from the statement as a dangerous paradox. Yet the seer of the Upanishad is wiser than we, for his statement is literally true. Think what it means. It means that we give up our own petty personal joy and pleasure, to bathe up to the eyes in the joys of others; and the joys of one man may be as great as you please, the united joys of a hundred must needs be greater. By renunciation you can increase your enjoyments a hundredfold; if you are a true patriot, you will feel the joys, not of one man, but of three hundred millions; if you are a true philanthropist, all the joys of the countless millions of the earth will flow through your soul like an ocean of nectar. But, you say, their sorrows will flow there too? That too is an agony of sweetness which exalts the soul to Paradise, that you can turn into joy, the unparalleled joy of relieving and turning into bliss the woes of the nation for which you sacrifice yourself or of the humanity in whom you are trying to realise God. Even the mere continuous patient resolute effort to do this is a joy unspeakable; even defeat in such a cause is a stern pleasure when it strengthens the soul for new and ceaseless endeavour. And the souls worthy of the sacrifice, derive equal strength from defeat & victory. Remember that [it] is not the weak in spirit to whom the Eternal gives himself wholly; it is the strong heroic soul that reaches God. Others can only touch His shadow from afar. In this way the man who renounces the little he can call his own for the good of others, gets in return and can utterly enjoy all that is world in this moving universe.

If you cannot rise so high, still the words of the Upanishad are true in other ways. You are not asked necessarily to give up the objects of your enjoyments physically; it is enough if you give them up in your heart, if you enjoy them in such spirit that you will neither be overjoyed by gain nor cast down by loss. That enjoyment is clear, deep and calm; fate cannot break it, robbers cannot take it away, enemies cannot overwhelm it. Otherwise your enjoyment is chequered and broken with fear, sorrow, trouble & passion, the passion for its increase, the trouble of keeping it, the sorrow of diminution, the fear of its utter loss. It is far better by abandoning to enjoy. If you wish to abandon physically, that too is well, so long as you take care that you are not cherishing the thought of the enjoyment in your mind. Nay, it will often be a quicker road to enjoyment. Wealth and fame and success naturally flee from the man who pursues them; he breaks his heart or perishes without gaining them; or if he gains them, it is often after a very hell of difficulty, a very mountain of toil. But when a man turns his back on wealth & glory, then, unless his past actions forbid, they come crowding to lay themselves at his feet. And if they come, will he enjoy or reject them? He may reject them — that is a great path & the way of innumerable saintly sages — but you need not reject them, you may take & enjoy them. How will you enjoy them then? Not for your personal pleasure, certainly not for your false self; for you have already abandoned that kind of enjoyment in your heart; but you may enjoy God in them and them for God. As a king merely touching the nuzzerana, passes it on into the public treasury, so you may, merely touching the wealth that comes to you, pour it out for those around you, for the country, for humanity, seeing Brahman in these. Glory again he may conceal with humility, but use the influence it gives him in order to lead men upwards to the divine. Such a man will quickly rise above joy & sorrow, victory & defeat; for in sorrow as in joy he will feel himself to be near God, with God, like God and finally God himself. Therefore the Upanishads go on to say

> कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समाः ।

Do thy deeds in this world and wish to live thy hundred years. A hundred years is the full span of man's natural life according to the Vedas. The Sruti therefore tells us that we must not turn our backs on life, must not fling it from us untimely or even long for early release from our body but willingly fill out our term, even be most ready to prolong it to the full period of man's ordinary existence so that we may go on doing our deeds in this world. Mark the emphasis laid on the word कुर्वन् by adding to it *eva*. Verily we must *do* our deeds in the world and not avoid doing them; there is no need to flee to the mountains in order to find the Self, since He is here, in you and in all around you. And if you flee there, not to find Him, but to escape from the misery & misfortune of the world which you are too weak to face, then you lose the Self for this life and perhaps many to come. I repeat to you that it is not the weak and the coward who can climb up to God, but the strong and brave alone. Every individual Jivatman must become the perfect Kshatriya before he can be the Brahmin.

THE STUDENT

All this is opposed to what the wisest men have taught and those we most delight to revere, still teach and practise.

THE GURU

Are you sure that it is? What do they teach?

THE STUDENT

That *vairagya*, disgust with the world is the best way and its entry into a man's soul is his first call to the way of *mukti*, which is not by action but by knowledge.

THE GURU

Vairagya is a big word and it has come to mean many things, and it is because these are confused and jumbled together by the men of Aryavarta, that tamas and Anaryan cowardice, weakness & selfishness have spread over this holy & ancient land, covering it with a thick pall of darkness. There is one vairagya, the truest and noblest, of the strong man who having tasted the sweets of this world finds that there is no permanent and abiding sweetness in them, that they are not the true and immortal joy which his true and immortal self demands and turns to something in himself which is deeper, holier and imperishable. Then there is the vairagya of the weakling who has lusted and panted and thirsted for the world's sweets but has been pushed & hustled from the board by fate or by stronger men than himself; and would use Yoga and Vedanta as the drunkard uses his bottle and the opium-maniac his pill or his laudanum. Not for such ignoble uses were these great things meant by the Rishis who disclosed them to the world. If such a man came to me for initiation, I would send him back with the fiery rebuke of Srikrishna to the son of Pritha

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम्।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन॥
क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत् त्वय्युपपद्यते।

Truly is such weakness unworthy of one who is no other than Brahma, the Eternal, the Creator and Destroyer of the worlds. Yet I would not be understood to decry the true vairagya of sorrow and disappointment; for sometimes when men have tried in ignorance for ignoble things and failed, not from weakness but because these things were beneath their true greatness and high destiny, then their eyes are opened and they seek meditation, solitude and samadhi not as a dram to drown their sorrow and still unsated longing, but to realise their divine strength and use it for divine purposes; sometimes great spirits seek the way of the Sannyasin, because in the solitude alone with God and the Guru, they can best develop Brahmatejah. Once attained they pour it in a stream over the world; such was Shankaracharya; and sometimes it is the sorrow of others or the misery of the world that finds them in ease & felicity & drives them out, as Buddha was driven out, to seek help for sufferers in the depths of their own being. True Sannyasins are the greatest of all men because they are the strongest unto work, the most mighty in God to do the works of God.

THE STUDENT

I repeat that all this is opposed to the teaching of the great Adwaitavadin Acharyas, Sri Shankara and the rest.

THE GURU

It is not opposed to the teaching of Srikrishna who is the greatest of all teachers and the best of Jagatgurus. For he tells Sanjay in the Mahabharata that between the creed of salvation by works and the creed of salvation by no works, that of salvation by works is the true creed and he condemns the other as the idle talk of a weakling; and again and again in the Bhagavadgita he lays stress on the superiority of works.

THE STUDENT

This is true, but he also says that Jnana is superior to all things and there is nothing equal to it.

THE GURU

Nor is there; for Jnana is indispensable. Jnana is first & greatest; works without Jnana will not save a man but only plunge him deeper and deeper into bondage. The works of which the Upanishad speaks are to be done after you have invested all this universe with God; after, that is to say, you have realised that all is the one Brahman and that your actions are but the dramatic illusions unrolled by Prakriti for the delight of the Purusha. You will then do your works तेन त्यक्तेन; or as Srikrishna tells you to do, after giving up the desire for the fruits of your works and devoting all your actions to Him, — not to your lower not-self which feels pleasure & pain but to the Brahman in you which works only लोकसंग्रहार्थ that instead of the uninstructed multitudes being bewildered and led astray by your inactivity, the world may rather be helped, strengthened and maintained by the godlike nature of your works. This is what the Upanishad goes on to say

"Thus to you there is no other way than this, action clingeth not to a man." This means that desireless actions, actions performed after renunciation and devoted to God, — these & these only — do not cling to a man, do not bind him in their invisible chains but fall from him as the water from the wings of the swan. They cannot bind him, because he is freed from the woven net of causality. Causality springs from the idea of duality, the idea of sorrow & happiness, love & hate, heat & cold which arises from Avidya and he, having renounced desire and realised Unity, is above Avidya and above duality. Bondage has no meaning for him. It is not in reality he that is doing the actions, but Prakriti inspired by the presence of the Purusha in him.

THE STUDENT

Why then does Shankara say that it is necessary to give up works in order to attain absolute unity? Those who do works, in his opinion, only reach सालोक्य with Brahman, relative and not absolute unity.

THE GURU

There was a reason for what Shankara said and it was necessary in his age that Jnana should be exalted at the expense of works; for the great living force with which he had to struggle, was not the heresies of later Buddhism — Buddhism decayed and senescent, but the triumphant doctrines of the Karmakanda which made the faithful performance of Vedic rites & ceremonies the one path and heaven the only goal. In his continual anxiety to show that works — of which these rites & ceremonies were a part, — could not be the one path to heaven, he bent the bow as far as he could the other way and argued that works were not the path to the last and greatest *mukti* at all. Let us however consider what the depreciation of the Karmamarga means in the mouths of Shankara and other Jnanamargis. It may mean that Karma in the sense of Vedic rites & ceremonies are not the way to Mukti and if this is the meaning, then Shankara has done his work effectually; for I think no one of authority will now try to maintain the opposite thesis. We all agree that Swarga, the sole final result of the Karmakanda, is not Mukti, is much below Mukti and ends as soon as its cause is exhausted. We all agree also that the only spiritual usefulness of Vedic ceremonies is to purify the mind and fit it for starting on the true path of Mukti which lies through Jnana. But if you say that works in the sense of कर्तव्य कर्म are not a path to Mukti, then I demur; for I say that Karma is not different from Jnana, but is Jnana, is the necessary fulfilment and completion of Jnana; that Bhakti, Karma and Jnana are not three but one and go inseparably together. Therefore Srikrishna says that Sankhya (Jnanayog) and Yoga (Bhakti Karma Yoga) are not two but one and only बालाः, undeveloped minds, make a difference.

The Student

But how can Shankaracharya be called an undeveloped mind?

The Guru

He was not an undeveloped mind, but he was dealing with undeveloped minds and had to speak their language. If he had given his sanction to Karma, however qualified, the general run of people would not have understood him and would have clung to their rites and ceremonies; it is indeed to this difficulty of language, its natural imperfection and the imperfection of the minds that employ language, to which all the confusion and sense of difference in religion & philosophy is due, for religion & philosophy are one & above difference. Nor was Shankara so entirely opposed to Karma as is ordinarily imagined from the vehemence of his argument in some places. For what do you mean when you say that Karma is no path to Mukti? Is it that Karma prompted by desire is inconsistent with *mukti*, because it necessarily leads to bondage and must therefore be abandoned? On this head there is no dispute. We all agree that works prompted by desire, lead to nothing but the fulfilment of desire followed by fresh works in another life. Is it that Karma without desire is inconsistent with Mukti, prevents *mukti* by fresh bondage and must be abandoned? This is not consistent with reason, for bondage is the result of desire & ignorance and disappears with desire & ignorance; therefore in *nishkam karma* there can be no bondage. It is inconsistent with Sruti त्रिणाचिकेतस्त्रिभिरेत्य सन्धिं त्रिकर्मकृत्तरति जन्ममृत्यू इत्यादि. It is inconsistent with facts for Srikrishna did works, Janaka and others did works, but none will say that they fell into the bondage of their works; for they were जीवन्मुक्त. Is it meant that *nishkam karma* may be done as a step towards ब्रह्मप्राप्ति by Jnan but must be abandoned as soon as Jnan is acquired? This also will not stand because Janaka and the others did works after they had acquired Jnan as well as before. For the same reason Shankara's argument that कर्म must cease as a matter of sheer necessity as soon as one gains Brahma, because Brahma is अकर्ता, will not stand; for Janaka gained Brahma, Srikrishna *was* Brahma, and yet both did works; nay, Srikrishna in one place speaks of him as doing works; for indeed Brahman is both अकर्ता as Purusha and कर्ता as Prakriti; and if it be said that Parabrahman the Turiya Atma in whom all *bhed* disappears is अकर्ता, I answer that he is neither कर्ता nor अकर्ता, He is नेति नेति, the Unknowable and the Jivatma does not merge finally in Him while it is in the body; though it may do so at any time by Yoga. लय takes place आदेहनिपातात्, that is to say by the Muktatma after leaving its body, not willing to return to another; the Jivanmukta is made one with the luminous shadow of Parabrahman which we call the Sacchidananda. If it be said that this is not Mukti, I answer that there can be no greater Mukti than becoming the Sacchidananda, and that *laya* in the Parabrahman is स्वेच्छाधीन to the Jivatman when it has ceased to be Jivatman and become Sacchidananda; for Parabrahman can always & at will draw Sacchidananda into Itself and Sacchidananda can always and at will draw into Parabrahman; since the two are in no sense two but one, in no sense subject to Avidya but on the other side of Avidya. Then if it be said that निष्काम कर्म can only lead to Brahmaloka and not mukti, I still answer that in that case we must suppose that Srikrishna after he left his body, remained separate from the Supreme and therefore was not Bhagavan at all but only a great philosopher & devotee, not wise enough to attain Mukti, and that Janak and other Jivanmuktas were falsely called muktas or only in the sense of the आपेक्षिक *mukti*. This however would contradict Scripture and the uniform teaching of Sruti and Smriti, and cannot therefore be upheld by any Hindu, still less by any Vedantin; for if there is no authority in Sruti, then there is no truth in Vedanta, and the doctrine of the Charvakas has as much force as any. Moreover it would contradict reason, since it would make mukti which is a spiritual change, dependent on a mere mechanical & material change like death, which is absurd. Shankara himself therefore admits that in these cases निष्काम कर्म was not inconsistent with मुक्ति or with being the Brahman; and he would have admitted it still more unreservedly if he had not been embarrassed by his relations of intellectual hostility to the Purvamimansa. It is proved therefore that कर्म is not inconsistent with मुक्ति but that on the contrary both the teaching and practice of the greatest Jivanmuktas and of Bhagavan himself have combined Jnana and निष्काम कर्म as one single path to *mukti*.

One argument, however, remains; it may be said that कर्म may be not inconsistent with *mukti*, may be one path to *mukti*, but in the last stage it is not necessary to *mukti*. I readily admit that particular works are not necessary to *mukti*; it is not necessary to continue being a householder in order to gain *mukti*. But no one who possesses a body, can be free of karma. This is clearly and incontrovertibly stated by Srikrishna in the Bhagavadgita.

> [न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
> कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥]

And this statement in the Gita is perfectly consistent with reason; for the man who leaves the world behind him and sits on a mountaintop or in an asram has not therefore, it is quite clear, got rid of Karma; if nothing else, he has to maintain his body, to eat, to walk, to move his limbs or to sit in *asan* and meditate; and all this is Karma. If he is not yet mukta, this karma will moreover bind him and bear its fruits in relation to himself as well as to others; even if he is mukta, his body & mind are not free from Karma until his body is dropped off, but go on under the impulse of prarabdha until the prarabdha & its fruit are complete. Nay even the greatest Yogi by his mere bodily presence in the phenomenal world, is pouring out a stream of spiritual force on all sides, and this action though it does not bind him, has a stupendous influence on others. He is सर्वभूतहिते रतः though he wills it not; he too with regard to his body is अवशः and must let the gunas of prakriti work. Since this is so, let every man who wishes to throw his कर्तव्य कर्म behind him, see that he is not merely postponing the completion of his प्रारब्ध to a future life and thereby condemning himself to the rebirth he wishes to avoid.

THE STUDENT

But how can this be that the jivanmukta is still bound by his past deeds? Does not *mukti* burn up one's past deeds as in a fire? For how can one be at the same time free and yet bound?

THE GURU

Mukti prevents one's future deeds from creating bondage; but what of the past deeds which have already created bondage? The Jivanmukta is not indeed bound, for he is one with God and God is the Master of His *prakriti*, not its slave; but the Prakriti attached to this Jivatman has created causes while in the illusion of bondage and must be allowed to work out its effects, otherwise the chain of causation is snapped and the whole economy of nature is disturbed and thrown into chaos. उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोकाः etc. In order to maintain the worlds therefore, the Jivanmukta remains working like a prisoner on parole, not bound indeed by others, but detained by himself until the period previously appointed for his captivity shall have elapsed.

THE STUDENT

This is indeed a new light on the subject.

THE GURU

It is no new light but as old as the sun; for it is clearly laid down in the Gita and of the teaching of the Gita, Srikrishna says that it was told by him to Vivasvan, the Vishnu of the solar system and by him to Manou, the original Thinker in man, and by Manou handed down to the great king-sages, his descendants. Nay, it plainly arises from the nature of things. The whole confusion in this matter proceeds from an imperfect understanding of *mukti*; for why do men fly from action and shun their कर्तव्य कर्म in the pursuit of mukti? It is because they dread to be cast again into bondage, to lose their chance of मुक्ति. Yet what is mukti? It is release, — from what? From Avidya, from the great Nescience, from the belief that you are limited & bound, who are illimitable Brahman and cannot be bound. The moment you have realised that Avidya is an illusion, that there is nothing but Brahman and never was nor will be anything but Brahman, realised it, I say, had अनुभव of it, not merely intellectually grasped the idea, from that moment you are free and always have been free. Avidya consists precisely in this that the Jivatman thinks there is something beside himself, he himself being other than Brahman, something which binds him; but in reality He, being Brahman, is not bound, never was bound nor could be bound and never will be bound. Once this is realised, the Jivatman can have no farther fear of *karma*; for he knows that there is no such thing as bondage. He will be quite ready to do his deeds in this world; nay, he will even be ready to be reborn, as Srikrishna himself has promised to be reborn again and again; for of rebirth also he has no farther fear, since he knows he cannot again fall under the dominion of Avidya, unless he himself deliberately wills it; once free, always free. Even if he is reborn, he will be reborn with full knowledge of what he really is, of his past lives and of the whole future and will act as a Jivanmukta.

THE STUDENT

But if this statement once free, always free hold, what of the statements about great Rishis & Yogis falling again under the dominion of Avidya?

THE GURU

A man may be a great Rishi or Yogi without being Jivanmukta. Yog and spiritual learning are means to Mukti, not Mukti itself. For the Sruti says नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन।

THE STUDENT

Will then the Jivanmukta actually wish to live a hundred years, as the Sruti says? Can one who is मुक्त have a desire?

THE GURU

The Jivanmukta will be perfectly ready to live a hundred years or more if needs be; but this recommendation is given not to the Jivanmukta or to any particular class of person but generally. You should desire to live your allotted term of life, because you in the body are the Brahman who by the force of His own Shakti is playing for Himself by Himself this *lila* of creation, preservation and destruction; in this view Brahman is Isha, the Lord, Creator & Destroyer; and you also are Isha, Creator & Destroyer; only for your own amusement, to use a violent metaphor, you have imagined yourself limited by a particular body for the purposes of the play, just as an actor imagines himself to be Dushyanta or Rama or Ravana; and often the actor loses himself in the part and really feels himself to be what he is playing, forgetting that he is really not Dushyanta or Rama, but that Devadatta who plays a hundred parts besides. Still when he shakes off this illusion & remembers that he is Devadatta, he does not therefore walk off from the stage and by refusing to act, break up the play but goes on playing his best till the proper time for the curtain to fall. And so we should all do, whether as householder or Sannyasi, as Jivanmukta or as mumukshu, remembering always that the object of this *sansara* is creation and that it is our business so long as we are in this body to create. The only difference is this, that so long as we forget our Self, we create like servants under the compulsion of our Prakriti or Nature, and are, as it were, slaves & bound by her actions which we imagine to be ours; but when we know the Self and experience our true Self, then we are masters of our Prakriti and not bound by her creations; our soul becomes the Sakshi, the silent spectator, of the actions of our Nature; thus are we both spectator & actor, and yet because we know the whole to be merely the illusion of an action and not action itself, because we know that Rama is not really killing Ravana nor Ravana being killed, for indeed Ravana lives as much after the supposed death as before; so are we neither actor nor spectator but the Self only and all we see only visions of the Self — as indeed the Sruti frequently uses the word ऐक्षद्, saw, in preference to any other for those conceptions with which the Brahman peoples with Himself the Universe of Himself. The mumukshu therefore will not try or wish to leave his life before the time, just as he will not try or wish to leave actions in this life, but only the desire for their fruit. For if he breaks impatiently the thread of his life before it is spun out, he will be no Jivanmukta but a mere suicide and attain the very opposite result of what he desires. The Upanishad says

> असुर्या नाम ते लोका अन्धेन तमसावृताः ।
> तांस्ते प्रेत्याभिगच्छन्ति ये के चात्महनो जनाः ॥

Shankara takes this verse in a very peculiar way. He interprets आत्महनो as slayers of the Self, and since this is obviously an absurdity, for the Self is eternal and unslayable, he says that it is a metaphor for casting the Self under the delusion of ignorance which leads to birth. Now this is a very startling and violent metaphor and quite uncalled for, since the idea might easily have been expressed in any other natural way. Still the Sruti is full of metaphor and we shall therefore not be justified in rejecting Shankara's interpretation on that ground only. We must see whether the rest of the verse is in harmony with the interpretation. Now we find that in order to support his view Shankara is obliged to strain astonishingly the plain meaning of other words in the sentence also; for he takes लोका as meaning various kinds of birth, so that असुर्या लोका means the various births as man, animal etc, called आसुरा because Rajas predominates in them and they are accompanied with Asuric dispositions.[1] All this is a curious and unparalleled meaning for Asuric worlds. The expression लोका is never applied to the various kinds of forms the Jivatman assumes, but to the various surroundings of the different conditions through which it passes, of which life in this world is one; we say इहलोक or मर्त्यलोक, परलोक or स्वर्गलोक, ब्रह्मलोक, गोलोक etc, but we do not say पशुलोक, पक्षिलोक, कीटलोक. If we say आसुर लोक we can mean nothing but the regions of Asuric gloom as opposed to the divine लोकs, Brahmalok, Golok, Swarga. This is the ordinary meaning when we speak of going to a world after death, and we must not take it in any other sense here just to suit our own argument. Moreover the expression ये के loses its peculiar force if we apply it to all living beings except the few who obtain mukti partial or complete; it obviously means some out of many. We must therefore refuse to follow even Shankara, when his interpretation involves so many violences to the language of Sruti and so wide a departure from the recognized meaning of words.

The ordinary sense of the words gives a perfectly clear and consistent meaning. The Sruti tells us that it is no use taking refuge in suicide or the shortening of your life, because those who kill themselves instead of finding freedom, plunge by death into a worse prison of darkness — the Asuric worlds enveloped in blind gloom.

THE STUDENT

Are then worlds of Patala beneath the earth a reality and do the souls go down there after death? But we know now that there is no beneath to the earth, which is round & encircled by nothing worse than air.

---

[1] *Another version which duplicates some of the last part of this sentence reads as follows, beginning after "other words in the sentence also;" —*
for he says that असुर्या लोका means the various kinds of birth; even the Devas being considered Asuric births as opposed to the Paratman; but this is a misuse of words because the Devas cannot be Asura births as opposed to the Daiva birth of Paratman, Paratman is above birth & above Devahood. Asurya can only mean Asuric as opposed to Devic.

THE GURU

Do not be misled by words. The Asuric worlds are a reality, the worlds of gloom in the nether depths of your own being. A world is not a place with hills & trees & stones, but a condition of the Jivatman, all the rest being only circumstances & details of a dream; this is clear from the language of the Sruti when it speaks of the spirit's *lok* in the next world, अमुष्मिन् लोके, as being good or otherwise. Obviously लोक means state or condition. मर्त्यलोक is not essentially this Earth we see, for there may & must be other abodes of mortal beings but the condition of mortality in the gross body, Swargalok is the condition of bliss in the subtle body, Narak the condition of misery in the subtle body, Brahmalok the condition of being near to Hiranyagarbha in the causal body. Just as the Jivatman like a dreamer sees the Earth & all its features when it is in the condition of mortality, and regards itself as in a particular place, so when it is in a condition of complete *tamas* in the subtle body, it believes itself to be in a place surrounded by thick darkness, a place of misery unspeakable. This world of darkness is imagined as being beneath the earth, beneath the condition of mortality, because the side of the earth turned away from the Sun is regarded as the nether side, while Swarga is above the Earth, because the side of earth turned to the Sun is considered the upper side, the place of light & pleasure. So the worlds of utter bliss begin from the Sun and rise above the Sun to Brahmalok. But these are all words & dreams, since Hell & Patal & Earth & Paradise & Heaven are all in the Jivatma itself and not outside it. Nevertheless while we are still dreamers, we must speak in the language & terms of the dream.

THE STUDENT

What then are these worlds of nether gloom?

THE GURU

When a man dies in great pain, or in great grief or in great agitation of mind and his last thoughts are full of fear, rage, pain or horror, then the Jivatman in the Sukshmasharir is unable to shake off these impressions from his mind for years, sometimes for centuries. The reason of this is the law of death; death is a moment of great concentration when the departing spirit gathers up the impressions of its mortal life, as a host gathers provender for its journey, and whatever impressions are predominant at that moment, govern its condition afterwards. Hence the importance, even apart from Mukti, of living a clean and noble life and dying a calm & strong death. For if the ideas & impressions then uppermost are such as associate the self with this gross body and the vital functions, ie to say, with the lower upadhi, then the soul remains long in a tamasic condition of darkness & suffering, which we call Patal or in its worst forms Hell. If the ideas & impressions uppermost are such as associate the self with the mind and the higher desires then the soul passes quickly through a short period of blindness to a rajaso-sattwic condition of light & pleasure and wider knowledge, which we call Paradise, Swarga or Behesta, from which it will return to birth in this world; if the ideas & impressions are such as to associate the self with the higher understanding & the bliss of the Self, the soul passes quickly to a sattwic condition of highest bliss which we call Heaven or Brahmaloka and thence it does not return. But if we have learned to identify for ever the self with the Self, then before death we become God and after death we shall not be other. For there are three states of Maya, tamasic illusion, rajasic illusion, & sattwic illusion; and each in succession we must shake off to reach that which is no illusion, but the one and only truth.

The Sruti says then that those who slay themselves go down into the nether world of gloom, for they have associated the Self with body and fancied that by getting rid of this body, they will be free, but they have died full of impressions of grief, impatience, disgust and pain. In that state of gloom they are continually repeating the last scene of their life, its impressions and its violent disquiet, and until they have worn off these, there is no possibility of *shanti* for their minds. Let no man in his folly or impatience court such a doom.

THE STUDENT

I understand then that these three verses form a clear & connected exposition. But in the next verse the Upanishad goes on suddenly to something quite disconnected.

THE GURU

No. It says

> अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो नैनद्देवा आप्नुवन् पूर्वमर्षत्।
> तद्धावतोऽन्यानत्येति तिष्ठत्तस्मिन्नपो मातरिश्वा दधाति॥

The Sruti has said that you must invest all things with the Lord. But of course that really means, you must realise how all things are already invested with Him. It now proceeds to show how this is and to indicate that the Lord is the Brahman, the One who, regarded in his creative activity through Purusha & Prakriti, is called the Lord. Therefore it now uses the neuter form of the pronoun, speaking of Him as That and This; because Brahman is above sex & distinction. He is One, yet he is at once unmoving & swifter than mind. He is both Purusha & Prakriti, and yet at the same time He is neither, but One and indivisible; Purusha & Prakriti being merely conceptions in His mind deliberately raised for the sake of creating multiplicity. As Prakriti, He is swifter than the mind; for Prakriti is His creative force making matter & its forms through motion. All creation is motion, all activity is motion. All this apparently stable universe is really in a state of multifold motion, everything is whirling with inconceivable rapidity through motion, and even thought which is the swiftest thing we know, cannot keep pace with the velocity of the cosmic stir. And all this motion, all this ever evolving Cosmos & Universe is Brahman. The Gods in their swiftest movements, the lords of the senses, cannot reach him, for He rushes far in front. The eye, the ear, the mind, nothing material can reach or conceive the inconceivable creative activity of the Brahman. We try to follow Him pouring as light through the solar system and lo! while we are striving He is whirling universes into being far beyond the reach of eye or telescope, far beyond the farthest flights of thought itself. Material senses quail before the thought of the wondrous stir and stupendous unimaginable activity that the existence of the Universe implies. And yet all the time He who outstrips all others, is not running, but standing. While we are toiling after Him, He is all the time here, at our side, before, behind us, with us, *in* us. Really He does not move at all; all this motion is the result of our own Avidya which by persuading us to imagine ourselves as limited, subjects our thoughts to the conditions of Time & Space. Brahman in all his creative activity is really in one place; He is at the same time in the Sun & here; but we in order to realise Him have to follow Him from the Sun to the Earth; and this motion of our thoughts, this sensitory impression of a space covered & a time spent we attribute not to our thought, but to Brahman, just as a man in a railway-train has a sensitory impression that everything is rushing past, but that the train is still. Vidya, Knowledge tells him that this is not so. So that the stir of the Cosmos is really the stir of our own minds — and yet even our own mind does not really stir. What we call mind is simply the play of conception sporting with the idea of multiplicity which is in form the idea of motion. The Purusha is really unmoving; he is the motionless & silent spectator of a drama of which He himself is the stage, the theatre, the scenery, the actors and the acting. He is the poet Shakespeare watching Desdemona & Othello, Hamlet & the murderous Uncle, Rosalind & Jacques & Viola and all the other hundred multiplicities of himself acting & talking & rejoicing & suffering, all Himself & yet not himself, who sits there a silent witness, their Creator who has no part in their actions and yet without Him not one of them could exist. This is the mystery of the world and its paradox, yet its one plain, simple & easy truth.

THE STUDENT

Now I see. But what is this suddenly thrown in about Matariswun & the waters? Shankara interprets अप: as actions. Will not this bring it more into harmony with the rest of the verse?

THE GURU

Perhaps; waters is the proper sense of अपः but let us see first whether by taking it in its proper sense we cannot arrive at a clear meaning. The Sruti says that this infinitely motionless yet infinitely moving Brahman is that in which Matariswun setteth the waters. Now we know the conception which the Scripture gives us of this Universe. Everything that we call creation, putting forth & Science calls evolution is in reality a limitation, a *srishti*, as we say, that is a letting loose of a part from the whole, or a selection, as the Scientists say, a natural selection they call it or, as we should put it, selection by the action of Prakriti, of a small portion from a larger stock, of the particular from the general. Thus we have seen that the Sleep Condition or Prajna is a letting loose or let us say selection of one part of consciousness from the wider Universal Consciousness; the Dream Consciousness or Hiranyagarbha is a selection from the wider Sleep Consciousness, and the Waking Consciousness Virat or Vaisvanor is a selection from the wider Dream Consciousness; similarly each individual consciousness is only a selection from the wider Universal Waking Consciousness, each step involving a narrower & ever narrowing consciousness until we come to that extremely narrow bit of consciousness which is only conscious of a bit out of the material & outward world of phenomena. It is the same with the process of material creation. Out of the unformed Prakriti which the Sankhya calls Pradhana or primary idea, substance, plasm or what you will, of matter, one aspect or force is selected which is called Akash and of which ether is the visible manifestation; this *akash* or ether is the substratum of all form & material being. Out of ether a narrower force is selected or let loose which is called Vaiou or Matariswun, the Sleeper in the Mother, because he sleeps or rests directly in the mother-principle, Ether. This is the great God who in the Brahman setteth the waters in their place.

THE STUDENT

You speak of it as a God, I think, metaphorically. Science has done away with the Gods of the old crude mythology.

THE GURU

The Gods are; — they are the Immortals and cannot be done away with by Science however vehemently she denies them; only the knowledge of the One Brahman can do away with them. For behind every great & *elemental* natural phenomenon there is a vast living force which is a manifestation, an aspect of Brahman and can therefore be called nothing less than a God. Of these Matariswun is one of the mightiest.

THE STUDENT

Is Air then a God or Wind a God? But it is only a conglomeration of gases.

THE GURU

That and nothing more in the terms of material analysis, but look beyond to the synthesis; matter is not everything and analysis is not everything. By material analysis you can prove that man is nothing but a conglomeration of animalcules, and so materialism with an obstinate and learned silliness persists in asseverating; but man will never consent to regard himself as a conglomeration of animalcules, because he knows that he is more. He looks beyond the analysis to the synthesis, beyond the house to the dweller in the house, beyond the parts to the force that holds the parts together. So with the Air, which is only one of the manifestations of Matariswun proper to this earth, one of the houses in which he dwells; but Matariswun is in all the worlds and built all the worlds; he has numberless houses for his dwelling. The principle of his being is *motion* materially manifested, and we know that it is by motion creation becomes possible. Matariswun therefore is the Principle of Life, the universal and all pervading ocean of Prana, of which the most important manifestation in man is the force which presides over that distribution of gases in the body to which we give the name of Breath.

THE STUDENT

Still, most people would call this a natural force, not a God.

THE GURU

Call him what you like, only realise that Matariswun is a force of Brahman, nay, Brahman Himself, who in himself setteth the waters to their places. Now just as Matariswun was a selection from Akasha or ether, so is Agni, Fire, a selection from Matariswun and the Waters a selection from fire. Now notice that it is the plural word अप: which is used; just as often you find the Sruti instead of the name Agni of the presiding principle, using the plural *jyotinshi*, lights, splendours, shining things, of the various manifestations of Agni, so it uses आप:, all fluidities, of the various manifestations of Varouna, the presiding force behind them. You must not think that the waters of the ocean or of the rain are the only manifestations of this principle, just as you must not suppose that the fire in yonder brazier or the sun in heaven is the only manifestation of the fiery principle. All the phenomena of light and everything from which heat proceeds have their immediate basis or substratum in Agni. So with the waters which are selected out of Agni by the operations of heat etc. So again all *earth*, all forms of solidity have their basis or substratum in Prithivi, the earth-force, which is again a selection out of Jala or Varouna, the fluid principle. Now life proceeds in this way; it arises on the substratum of ether with Matariswun or the Air Force as its principle & essential condition, by the operation of the fiery or light principle through heat, out of the fluid to solidity which is its body. The material world is therefore often said in the Sruti to be produced out of the waters, because so long as it does not emerge from the fluid state, there is as yet no Cosmos. When Science instead of following the course of Nature upstream by analysis, resolving the solid into fluid, the fluid into the fiery, and the fiery into the aerial, shall begin to follow it downstream, imitating the processes of Prakriti, and especially studying & utilising critical stages of transition, then the secret of material creation will be solved, and Science will be able to create material *life* and not as now merely destroy it. We can now understand what the Sruti means when it says that Matariswun in Brahman setteth the waters to their places. Brahman is the reality behind all material life, and the operations of creation are only a limited part of His universal consciousness and cannot go on without that consciousness as its basis. Shankara is not perhaps wrong when he reads the meaning "actions" into अप:; for the purposes of mankind, actions are the most important of all the various vital operations over which Matariswun presides. Remember therefore that all you do, create, destroy you are doing, creating & destroying in Brahman, that He is the condition of all your deeds; the more you realise & intensify in yourself Brahman as an ocean of spiritual force, the mightier will be your creation & your destruction, you will approach nearer and nearer to Godhead. For the Spirit is all & not the body, of which you should only be careful as a vehicle of the Spirit, for without the presence of Spirit, which gives Prakriti the force to act, Prakriti would be inert, nay could not exist. For what is Prakriti itself but the creation of the mighty Shakti, who is without end & without beginning, the Shakti of the Eternal? Without some Jnana, some knowledge & feeling of the Spirit within you, your work cannot be great; and the deeper your Jnana the greater your work. All the great creators have been men who felt powerfully God within them, whether they were Daivic, of the Olympian type like Shankara, or Asuric, of the Titanic type like Napoleon; only the Asura, his Jnana being limited and muddied, is always confusing the Eternal with the grosser & temporary manifestations of Prakriti such as his own vital passions of lust & ambition; the Deva, being sattwic & a child of light, sees clearer. When Napoleon cried out, "What is the French Revolution? I am the French Revolution," he gave utterance to that sense of his being more than a mere man, of his being the very force & power of God in action, which gave him such a stupendous energy & personality; but his mind being muddied by rajas, passion & desire, he could not see that the very fact of his being the French Revolution should have pointed him to higher & grander ideals than the mere satisfaction of his vital part in empire & splendour, that it should have spurred him to be the leader of insurgent humanity, not the trampler down of the immortal spirit of nationality, which was a yet greater and more energetic manifestation of the Eternal Shakti than himself. Therefore he fell; therefore the Adyashakti, the mighty Devi Chandi Ranarangini Nrimundamalini, withdrew from him her varabhaya and fought against him till she had crushed and torn him with the claws of her lion. Had he fallen as the leader of humanity, — he could not have fallen then, but yet if he had fallen, — his spirit would have conquered after his death and ruled & guided the nations for centuries to come. Get therefore Jnana, the pure knowledge of Brahman within you and show it forth in nishkam karma, in selfless work for your people, for your country, for humanity, for the world, then will you surely become Brahman even in this mortal body and by death take upon yourself eternity.

The Sruti then having set forth the nature of the Lord & identified Him with the Brahman, proceeds to sum up the apparent paradoxes attending his twofold aspect as the Unknowable Parabrahman and the Master of the Universe, as the Self within the Universe and the Self within your body. That moveth and That moveth not, — as has already been explained; That is far and the same That is quite near, That is within all this and the same That is without all this.

THE STUDENT

There is no difficulty in this statement.

THE GURU

No, there is no difficulty, once you have the key. But try to realise what it means. Lift your eyes towards the Sun; He is there in that wonderful heart of life & light and splendour. Watch at night the innumerable constellations glittering like so many solemn watchfires of the Eternal in the limitless silence which is no void but throbs with the presence of a single calm and tremendous existence; see there Orion with his sword and belt shining as he shone to the Aryan fathers ten thousand years ago at the beginning of the Aryan era, Sirius in his splendour, Lyra sailing billions of miles away in the ocean of space. Remember that these innumerable worlds, most of them mightier than our own, are whirling with indescribable speed at the beck of that

Ancient of Days whither none but He knoweth, and yet that they are a million times more ancient than your Himalaya, more steady than the roots of your hills and shall so remain until He at his will shakes them off like withered leaves from the eternal tree of the Universe. Imagine the endlessness of Time, realise the boundlessness of Space; and then remember that when these worlds were not, He was, the Same as now, and when these are not, He shall be, still the Same; perceive that beyond Lyra He is and far away in Space where the stars of the Southern Cross cannot be seen, still He is there. And then come back to the Earth & realise who this He is. He is quite near to you. See yonder old man who passes near you crouching & bent, with his stick. Do you realise that it is God who is passing? There a child runs laughing in the sunlight. Can you hear Him in that laughter? Nay, He is nearer still to you. He is in you, He is you. It is yourself that burns yonder millions of miles away in the infinite reaches of Space, that walks with confident steps on the tumbling billows of the ethereal sea; it is you who have set the stars in their places and woven the necklace of the suns not with hands but by that Yoga, that silent actionless impersonal Will which has set you here today listening to yourself in me. Look up, O child of the ancient Yoga, and be no longer a trembler and a doubter; fear not, doubt not, grieve not; for in your apparent body is One who can create & destroy worlds with a breath.

Yes, He is within all this as a limitless ocean of spiritual force; for if He were not, neither this outer you nor this outer I nor this Sun nor all these worlds could last for even a millionth part of the time that is taken by a falling eyelid. But He is outside it too. Even in His manifestation, He is outside it in the sense of exceeding it, अत्यतिष्ठद्दशांगुलं, in His unmanifestation, He is utterly apart from it. This truth is more difficult to grasp than the other, but it is necessary to grasp it. There is a kind of Pantheism which sees the Universe as God and not God as the Universe; but if the Universe is God, then is God material, divisible, changeable, the mere flux & reflux of things; but all these are not God in Himself, but God in His shadows & appearances; they are, to repeat our figure, the shadows and figments of Shakespeare's mind, Shakespeare is not only vaster than all his drama-world put together, he is not only both in it and outside it, but apart from it and other than it.

THE STUDENT

Do you mean that these are emanations from His Mind?

THE GURU

I do not. Emanation is a silly word and a silly idea. God is not a body emitting vapours. If they have emanated from Him, where, pray, have they emanated to? Which is their locality and where is their habitation? You cannot go anywhere where you will be outside God; you cannot go out of your Self. For though you flee to the uttermost parts of space, He is there. Are Hamlet & the rest of them emanations from Shakespeare's mind? Will you tell me then where they have emanated to? Is it on to those pages, those corruptions of pulp which are made today and destroyed tomorrow? Is it into those combinations of those letters of the English alphabet with which the pages are covered? Put them into combinations of any other alphabet, or relate them in any language to a man who knows not what letters are, and still Hamlet will live for him. Is it in the sounds that the letters represent? sounds that are heard this moment and forgotten the next? But Hamlet is not forgotten — he lives on in your mind for ever. Is it in the impressions made on the material brain by the forgotten sounds? Nay the Sleep Self within you, even if you have never heard or read the play of Hamlet, will, if it is liberated by any adequate process of Yoga or powerful hypnosis, tell you about Hamlet. Shakespeare's drama-world never emanated from Shakespeare's mind, because it was in his mind and is in his mind; and you can know of Hamlet because your mind is part of the same universal mind as Shakespeare's — part, I say, in appearance, but in reality that mind is one and indivisible. All knowledge belongs to it by its nature perpetually and from perpetuity, and the knowledge that we get in the waking condition through such vehicles as speech & writing are mere fragments created (let loose) from it & yet within it, just as the worlds are mere fragments created (let loose) from the Brahman, in the sense of being consciousness selected & set apart from the Universal Consciousness, but always within the Brahman. Emanation is a metaphor, like the metaphor in the Sruti about the spider & his web, — convenient for certain purposes, but not the truth, very poor ground therefore on which to build a philosophy.

To realise God in the Universe & in yourself, is true Pantheism and it is the necessary step for approaching the Unknowable, but to mistake the Universe for God, is a mistaken & inverted Pantheism. This inverted Pantheism is the outer aspect of the Rigveda, and it is therefore that the Rigveda unlike the Upanishad may lead either to the continuation of bondage or to Brahmaloka, while the Upanishad can lead only to Brahmaloka or to the Brahman Himself.

THE STUDENT

But the new scholarship tells us that the Rigveda is either henotheistic or polytheistic, not real Pantheism.

THE GURU

Nay, if you seek the interpretation of your religion from Christians, atheists and agnostics, you will hear more wonderful things than that. What do you think of Charvak's interpretation of Vedic religion as neither pantheistic nor polytheistic but a plutotheistic invention of the Brahmins? An European or his disciple in scholarship can no more enter into the spirit of the Veda than the wind can blow freely in a closed room. And pedants especially can never go beyond the manipulation of words. Men like Max Muller presume to lecture us on our Veda & Vedanta because they know something of Sanscrit grammar; but when we come to them for light, we find them playing marbles on the doorsteps of the outer court of the temple. They had not the adhikar to enter, because they came in a spirit of arrogance with preconceived ideas to teach & not to learn; and their learning was therefore not helpful towards truth, but only towards grammar. Others ignorant of the very rudiments of Sanscrit, have seen more deeply than they, — even if some *have* seen more than there was to see. What for instance is this *henotheism*, this new word, the ill begotten of pedantry upon error? If it is meant that various sections of the Aryas consider different Gods as *the* God above all & the others false or comparatively false Gods, there would have been inevitably violent conflicts between the various sects and perpetual wars of religion but such there were not. If on the other hand, it is meant that different worshippers preferred to worship the Lord of the Universe in different particular forms, then are we still henotheist; for there is hardly one of us who has not his ishta-devata, Vishnou, Siva, Ganapati, Maruti, Rama, Krishna or Shakti; yet we all recognize but one Lord of the Universe behind the form we worship. If on the other hand the same man worshipped different nature-forces, but each in its turn as the Lord of the Universe, then is this Pantheism, pure and simple. And this was indeed the outer aspect of the Vedic religion; but when the seers of the Veda left their altars to sit in meditation, they perceived that Brahman was neither the Visvadevas nor the synthesis of the Visvadevas but something other than they; then was the revelation made that is given us in the Upanishads. ते ध्यानयोगानुगता अपश्यन् देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैर्निगूढाम्। This is what is meant by saying that Brahman is outside all this; he is neither the synthesis of Nature nor anything that the Universe contains, but himself contains the Universe which is only a shadow of His own Mind in His own Mind.

THE STUDENT

I understand.

THE GURU

If you really understand, then are you ready for the next step which the Sruti takes when it draws from the unity of the Brahman, the sublimest moral principle to be found in any religion.

> यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मन्येवानुपश्यति।
> सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते॥

To man finding himself in the midst of the paradoxes created by the twofold nature of the Self, of himself, the Shakti that knows & the Shakti that plays at not knowing, the Sruti gives an unfailing guide, a sure staff and a perfect ideal. See all creatures in thy Self.[2] Yes, all; wife, children, friends, enemies, joy, sorrow, victory, defeat, beauty and ugliness, animation and inanimation — all these are but moods of One Consciousness and that Consciousness is our own. If you come to think of it, you have no friends or enemies, no joys or sorrows but of your own making. Scientists tell you that it is by the will to adapt itself in a particular way to its surroundings, one species differentiates itself from another. That is but one application of an universal principle. The Will is the root of all things; you will to have wife & children, friends & enemies and they arise. You will to be sick & sorry and sickness & sorrow seize you; you will to be strong & beautiful and happy, and the world becomes brighter with your radiance. This whole Universe is but the result of One universal Will which having resolved to create multitude in itself has made itself into all the forms you see within it.

THE STUDENT

The idea is difficult to grasp, too vast & yet too subtle.

THE GURU

Because Avidya, the sense of difference is your natural condition in the body. Think a little. This body is built by the protoplasm multiplying itself; it does not *divide* itself, for by division it could not grow. It produces another itself out of itself, the same in appearance, in size, in nature and so it builds up the body which is only itself multiplied in itself. Take that as an imperfect example, which may yet help you to understand.

---

[2] *Here the following sentences which occur again in a rewritten form twelve pages later are found in the manuscript, enclosed within parentheses but not cancelled:*
If thy mind fails thee, if the anguish of thy coverings still conceals the immortal Spirit within, dash away tears, ay be they very tears of blood, wipe them from thy eye and look out on the Universe. There is thy Self, that is Brahman, and all these things, thy self, thy joy, thy sorrow, thy friends & enemies are in Him. तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः.

THE STUDENT

But it multiplies not in itself, but out of itself, as a man & woman create a son out of themselves.

THE GURU

So it appears to you because it is working in Time & Space, — for the same reason that there seem to you [to] be many Jivatmans outside each other, while deeper knowledge shows you one only, or that you imagine two separate consciousnesses in one man, while more skilful hypnosis shows you that they are one consciousness working variously within itself. In one sense the One seems to us to multiply himself like the protoplasm, because the One Jivatman is the same in all, hence the fundamental similarity of consciousness in all beings; in one sense He seems to divide himself like the human consciousness because He is the unit & all seem to be partial expressions of the comprehensive unit; again he seems to add pieces of Himself together, because you the consciousness who are He add yourself to your wife the consciousness who is again He and become one, and so the process goes on till of the vyashti, analysis in parts, you get the samashti or synthesis of all; finally He seems to subtract Himself from Himself, because as I have told you, each step in creation is a letting loose or separating of part from a wider entity. All these are however figures and appearances and whatever He does, it must be in Himself, because He has nowhere else to do it in, since He is all Space & all Time. Realise therefore that all these around you, wife, children, friends, enemies, men, animals, animate things & inanimate are in you, the Universal Mind, like actors on a stage, and seem to be outside you only for appearance' sake, for the convenience of the play. If you realise this, you will be angry with none, therefore you will hate none & therefore you will try to injure none. For how can you be angry with any; if your enemies injure you, it is yourself who are injuring yourself; whatever they are, you have made them that; whatever they do, you are the root of their action. Nor will you injure them, because you will be injuring none but yourself. Why indeed should you hate them & try to injure them any more than Shakespeare hated Iago for injuring Othello; do you think that Shakespeare shared the feelings of [Lodovico] when he condemned the successful villain to death & torture? If Shakespeare did hate Iago, you would at once say that it was illusion, Avidya, on the part of Shakespeare — since it is Shakespeare himself who set Iago there to injure Othello, since indeed there is no Othello or Iago, but only Shakespeare creating himself in himself. Why then should you consider your hatred of yourself made enemy more reasonable than Shakespeare's hatred of his own creation? No, all things being in yourself, are your own creation, are yourself, and you cannot hate your own creation, you cannot loathe yourself. Loathing and hatred are the children of illusion, of ignorance. This is the negative side of morality; but there is a positive for which the Sruti next proceeds to lay down the basis. You must for the purpose of withdrawing yourself from unrealities see all creatures in the Self; but if you did that only, you would soon arrive at the Nirvana of all action and ring down the curtain on an unfinished play. For the purpose of continuing the play till the proper time for your final exit, you must also see yourself in all creatures. The nature of the Self in a state of Vidya is bliss; now the state of Vidya is a state of self-realisation, the realisation of oneness & universality. The nature of the Self in the state of Avidya, the false sense of diversity and limitation is a state not of pure bliss but of pleasure & pain, for pleasure is different from bliss, as it is limited & involves pain, while the nature of bliss is illimitable and above duality; it is when pain itself becomes pleasure, is swallowed up in pleasure, that bliss is born. Every thing therefore which removes even partially the sense of difference and helps towards the final unity, brings with it a touch of bliss by a partial oblivion of pain. But that which brings you bliss, you cannot help but delight in ecstatically, you cannot help but *love*. If therefore you see yourself in another, you spontaneously love that other; for in yourself you must delight. If you see yourself in all creatures, you cannot but love all creatures. Universal love is the inevitable consequence of the realisation of the One in Many, and with Universal Love how shall any shred of hate, disgust, dislike, loathing coexist? They dissolve in it like the night mists in the blaze of the risen sun. Take it in another way and we get a new facet of the one truth. All hatred & repulsion arises from the one cause, Avidya, which begot Will, called Desire, which begot Ahankar, which begot desire called Hunger. From Desire-Hunger are born liking & dislike, liking for whatever satisfies or helps us to our desire, dislike for whatever obstructs or diminishes the satisfaction of desire. This liking in this way created is the liking of the protoplasmic sheath for whatever gives it sensual gratification, the liking of the vital sheath for whatever gives it emotional gratification, the liking of the mind sheath for whatever gives it aesthetic gratification, the liking of the knowledge sheath for whatever gives it intellectual gratification. But beyond these there is something else not so intelligible, beyond my liking for the beautiful body of a woman or for a fine picture or a pleasant companion or an exciting play or a clever speaker or a good poem or an illuminative and well-reasoned argument there is my liking for somebody which has no justification or apparent reason. If sensual gratification were all, then it is obvious that I should have no reason to prefer one woman over another and after the brute gratification liking would cease; I have seen this brute impulse given the name of love; perhaps I myself used to give it that name when the protoplasmic animal predominated in me. If emotional gratification were all, then I might indeed cling for a time to the woman who had pleased my body, but only so long as she gave me emotional pleasure, by her obedience, her sympathy with my likes & dislikes, her pleasant speech, her admiration or her answering love. But the moment these cease, my liking also will begin to fade away. This sort of liking too is persistently given the great name and celebrated in poetry & romance. Then if aesthetic gratification were all, my liking for a woman of great beauty or great charm might well outlast the loss of all emotional gratification, but when the wrinkles began to trace the writing of age on her face or when accident marred her beauty, my liking would fade or vanish since the effect would lose the nutrition of a present cause. Intellectual gratification seldom enters into the love of a man for a woman; even if it did so, more frequently the intellectual gratification to be derived from a single mind is soon exhausted in daylong and nightlong companionship. Whence then comes that love which is greater than life and stronger than death, which survives the loss of beauty and the loss of charm, which defies the utmost pain & scorn the object of love can deal out to it, which often pours out from a great & high intellect on one infinitely below it? What again is that love of woman which nothing can surpass, which lives on neglect and thrives on scorn & cruelty, whose flames rise higher than the red tongues of the funeral pyre, which follows you into heaven or draws you out of hell? Say not that this love does not exist and that all here is based on appetite, vanity, interest or selfish pleasure, that Rama & Sita, Ruru & Savitri are but dreams & imaginations. Human nature conscious of its divinity throws back the libel in scorn, and poetry blesses & history confirms its verdict. That Love is nothing but the Self recognizing the Self dimly or clearly and therefore seeking to realise oneness & the bliss of oneness. What again is a friend? Certainly I do not seek from my friend the pleasure of the body or choose him for his good looks; nor for that similarity of tastes & pursuits I would ask in a mere comrade; nor do I love him because he loves me or admires me, as I would perhaps love a disciple; nor do I necessarily demand of him a clever brain, as if he were only an intellectual helper or teacher. All these feelings exist, but they are not the soul of friendship. No, I love my friend for the woman's reason, because I love him, because in the old imperishable phrase, he is my *other self*. There by intuition the old Roman hit on the utter secret of Love. Love is the turning of the Self from its false self in the mind or body to its true Self in another; I love him because I have discovered the very Self of me in him, not my body or mind or tastes or feelings, but my very Self of love & bliss, of the outer aspect of whom the Sruti has beautifully said "Love is his right side" etc. So is it with the patriot; he has seen himSelf in his nation & seeks to lose his lower self in that higher national Self; because he can do so, we have a Mazzini, a Garibaldi, a Joan of Arc, a Washington, a Pratap Singh or a Sivaji; the lower material self could not have given us these; you do not manufacture such men in the workshop of utility, on the forge of Charvaka or grow them in the garden of Epicurus. So is it with the lover of humanity, who loses or seeks to lose his lower self in mankind; no enlightened selfishness could have given us Father Damien or Jesus or Florence Nightingale. So is it finally with the lover of the whole world, of whom the mighty type is Buddha, the one unapproachable ideal of Divine Love in man, he who turned from perfect divine bliss as he had turned from perfect human bliss that not he alone but all creatures might be saved.

To see your Self in all creatures and all creatures in your Self — that is the unshakeable foundation of all religion, love, patriotism, philanthropy, humanity, of everything which rises above selfishness and gross utility. For what is selfishness? it is mistaking the body & the vital impulses for your true self and seeking their gratification, a gross, narrow and transient pleasure, instead of the stainless bliss of your true self which is the whole Universe & more than the Universe. Selfishness arises from Avidya, from the great fundamental ignorance which creates Ahankara, the sense of your individual existence, the preoccupation with your own individual existence, which at once leads to Desire, to Hunger which is Death, death to yourself and death to others. The sense that this is I and that is you, and that I must take this or that, or else you will take it, that is the basis of all selfishness; the sense that this I must eat that you, in order to live & avoid being eaten, that is the principle of material existence from which arises strife and hatred. And so long as the difference between I and you exists, hatred cannot cease, covetousness cannot cease, war cannot cease, evil & sin cannot cease, and because sin cannot cease, sorrow & misery cannot cease. This is the eternal Maya that makes a mock of all materialistic schemes for a materialistic Paradise upon earth. Paradise cannot be made upon the basis of food and drink, upon the equal division of goods or even upon the common possession of goods, for always the *mine* & *thine*, the greed, the hate, will return again if not between this man & that man, yet between this community and that community. Christianity hopes to make men live together like brothers — a happy family, loving and helping each other; perhaps it still hopes, though there is little in the state of the modern world to flatter its dreams. But that millennium too will not come, not though Christ should descend with all his angels and cut the knot, after banishing the vast majority of mankind to the outer darkness where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth, by setting up this united family of mankind with the meagre remnants of the pure and faithful. What a mad dream of diseased imaginations that men could be really and everlastingly happy while mankind was everlastingly suffering! How would the everlasting hatred breathing out from the innumerably-peopled furnaces of pain blast & mar with unconquerable smoke of Hell the light & peace of the saints! And how strangely was the slight, but sweet and gracious shadow of Buddhism distorted in the sombre & cruel minds of those fierce Mediterranean races, when they pictured the saints as drawing added bliss from the contemplation of the eternal tortures in which those they had lived with and perhaps loved, were agonizing. Divine love, divine pity, the nature of the Buddha, that was the message which India sent to Europe through the lips of Jesus, and this is how the European mind interpreted divine love & divine pity! The fires of Hell aptly and piously anticipated on earth by the fires of Smithfield, the glowing splendours of the Auto-da-fé, the unspeakable reek of agony that steams up thro' history from the dungeons of the Holy Office — nay, there are wise men who find an apology for these pious torturers; it *was* divine love after all seeking to save the soul at the cost of the perishable body! But the Aryan spirit of the East, the spirit of Buddha struggles for ever with European barbarism and surely in the end it shall conquer. Already Europe does homage to humanity with her lips and in the gateways of her mind; perhaps some day she will do so with her heart also. At any rate the millennium of Tertullian is out of date. But still it is the Christian ideal, the Syrian interpretation of the truth and not the truth itself, which dominates the best European thought and the Christian ideal is the ideal of the *united family*.

THE STUDENT

Surely it is a noble ideal.

THE GURU

Very noble and we have it among ourselves in a noble couplet वसुधैव कुटुम्बकं; but everything which implies difference is based upon Avidya and the inevitable fruits of Avidya. Have you ever watched a big united family, a joint-family in Bengal especially in days when the Aryan discipline is lost? Behind its outward show of strength and unity, what jarring, what dissensions, what petty malice & hatred, what envy & covetousness! And then finally one day a crash, a war, a case in the law-courts, a separation for ever. What the joint-family is on a small scale, that on a big scale is an united nation, Russia or Austria or Germany or the *United* Kingdom. Mankind as an united family would mean in practice mankind as an united nation. How much would you gain by it? You would get rid of war, — for a time — of the mangling of men's bodies by men, but the body though to be respected as the chosen vehicle or the favourite dress of Brahman, is not of the first importance. You would not get rid of the much more cruel mangling of the human Self by hatred, greed and strife. The Europeans attach too much importance to the body, shrink too much from physical sin and are far too much at their ease with mental sin. It is enough for them if a woman abstain from carrying out her desire in action, if a man abstain from physical violence, then is the one chaste, the other self-controlled. This if not sheer unAryanism or Mlecchahood is at best the half baked virtue of the semi-Aryanised. Be you who are born in the Aryan discipline, however maimed by long bondage, an Aryan indeed, chaste in mind & spirit, & not merely careful in speech & body, gentle in heart & thought and not merely decent in words & actions. That is true self-control and real morality. No Paradise therefore can exist, no Paradise even if it existed, can last, until that which makes sin and hell is conquered. We may never have a Paradise on earth, but if it is ever to come, it will come not when all mankind are as brothers, for brothers jar and hate as much & often more than mere friends or strangers, but when all mankind has realised that it is one Self. Nor can that be until mankind has realised that all existence is oneself, for if an united humanity tyrannise over bird & beast & insect, the atmosphere of pain, hatred & fear breathing up from the lower creation will infect & soil the purity of the upper. The law of Karma is inexorable, and whatever you deal out to others, even such shall be the effect on yourself, in this life or in another. Do you think then that this strange thing will ever come about that mankind in general, will ever come to see in the dog and the vulture, nay, in the snake that bites and the scorpion that stings, their own Self, that they will say unto Death my brother & to Destruction my sister, nay that they will know these things as themself? सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं, the Sruti will not spare you the meanest insect that crawls or the foulest worm that writhes.

THE STUDENT

It does not seem possible.

THE GURU

It does not; and yet the impossible repeatedly happens. At any rate, if you must have an ideal, of the far-off event to which humanity moves, cherish this. Distrust all Utopias that seek to destroy sin or scrape away part of the soil in which it grows while preserving intact the very roots of sin, Ahankar born of Ignorance & Desire. For once Ahankar is there, likes and dislikes are born, रागद्वेषौ the primal couple of dualities, liking for what farthers the satisfaction of desire, dislike for what hinders it, the sense of possession, the sense of loss, attraction, repulsion, charm, repugnance, love, hatred, pity, cruelty, kindness, wrath, — the infinite and eternal procession of the dualities. Admit but one pair, and all the others come tumbling in in its wake. But the man who sees himself in all creatures, cannot hate; he shrinks from none, he has neither repulsion nor fear. ततो न विजुगुप्सते. Yonder leper whom all men shun — but shall I shun him, who know that from this strange disguise the Brahman looks out with smiling eyes? This foeman who comes with a sword to pierce me through the heart, — I look beyond the sharp threatening sword, beyond the scowling brow and the eyes of hate, and I recognize the mask of my Self; thereafter I shall neither fear the sword nor hate the bearer. O myself who foolishly callest thyself mine enemy, how canst thou be my enemy unless I choose; friend & enemy are but creations of the Mind that myriad-working magician, that great dreamer & artist; and if I will not to regard thee as my enemy, thou canst no more be such than a dream or shadow can, as indeed thy flashing sword is but a dream and thy scowling brow but a shadow. But thou wilt divide me with thy sword, thou wilt slay me, pierce me with bullets, torture me with fire, blow me from the mouth of thy cannon? Me thou canst not pierce, for I am unslayable, unpierceable, indivisible, unburnable, immovable. Thou canst but tear this dress of me, this foodsheath or multiplied protoplasm which I wear — *I* am what I was before. I will not be angry with thee even, for who would trouble himself to be angry with a child because in its play or little childish wrath it has torn his dress? Perhaps I valued the dress and would not so soon have parted with it; I will try then to save it, if I may, and even punish thee without anger so that thou mayst not tear more dresses; but if I cannot — well, it was but a cloth and another can soon be had from the merchant; nay, have I not already paid the purchase-money? O my judge, thou who sittest pronouncing that I be hanged by the neck till I be dead, because I have broken *thy* laws perchance to give bread to starving thousands, perchance to help the men of my country whom thou wouldst keep as slaves for thy pleasure — Me wilt thou hang? When thou canst shake the sun from heaven or wrap up the skies like a garment, then shall power be given thee to hang me. Who or what is this thou deemest will die by hanging? A bundle of animalculae, no more. This outward thou & I are but stage masks; behind them is One who neither slayeth nor is slain. Mask called a judge, play thou thy part; I have played mine. O son of the ancient Yoga, realise thy Self in all things; fear nothing, loathe nothing; dread none, hate none, but do thy part with strength and courage; so shalt thou be what thou truly art, God in thy victory, God in thy defeat, God in thy very death & torture, — God who will not be defeated & who cannot die.

Shall God fear any? shall He despair? shall He tremble & shake? Nay 'tis the insects that form thy body & brain which shake & tremble; Thou within them sittest looking with calm eyes at their pain & terror; for they are but shadows that dream of themselves as a reality. Realise the Self in all creatures, realise all creatures in the Self; then in the end terror shall flee from thee in terror, pain shall not touch thee, lest itself be tortured by thy touch; death shall not dare to come near to thee lest he be slain.

> यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।
> तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

He who discerneth, in whom all creatures have become himSelf, how shall he be deluded, whence shall he have sorrow, in whose eyes all things are One. That is the realisation of the mighty ideal, the moral and practical result of perfected Vedanta, that in us all things will become ourself. There, says the Sruti, in the man whose Self has become all creatures, what delusion can there be or what sorrow, for wherever he looks (अनुपश्यतः), he sees nothing but the great Oneness, nothing but God, nothing but his own Self of love and bliss. Delusion (मोह) is the mistaking of the appearance for the reality, bewilderment by the force of Maya. "This house that my fathers had was mine and alas, I have lost it." "This was my wife whom I loved, and she is lost to me for ever." "Alas, how has my son disappointed me from whom I hoped so much." "This office for which I hoped and schemed, my rival, the man I hated has got it." All these are the utterances of delusion and the result of delusion is शोक, sorrow. But to one whose Self has become all creatures, there can be no delusion and therefore no sorrow. He does not say "I, Devadatta, have lost this house. What a calamity!" He says "I, Devadatta, have lost this house, but it has gone to me, Harischandra. That is fortunate." *I* can lose nothing except to myself. Nor shall I weep because my wife is dead & lost, who is not lost at all, but as near to me as ever, since she is still my Self, in my Self, with my Self, as much after death as when her body was underneath my hands. *I* cannot lose my Self. My son has disappointed me? He has taken his own way & not mine, but he has not disappointed himSelf who is my Self, he has only disappointed the sheath, the case, the mental cell in which I was imprisoned. The vision of the One Self dispels all differences; an infinite calm, an infinite love, an infinite charity, an infinite tolerance, is the very nature of the strong soul that has seen God. The sin, the stain, the disease, the foulness of the world cannot pollute his mind nor repel his sympathy; as he stoops to lift the sinner from the dung heap in which he wallows, he does not shrink from the ordure that stains his own hands; his eyes are not bedimmed by tears, when he lifts up the shrieking sufferer out of his pit of pain; he lifts him as a father lifts his child who has tumbled in the mire and is crying; the child chooses to think he is hurt & cries; the father knows he is not really hurt, therefore he does not grieve, but neither does he chide him, rather he lifts him up & soothes the wilful imaginary pain. Such a soul has become God, mighty & loving to help and save, not weak to weep and increase the ocean of human tears with his own. Buddha did not weep when he saw the suffering of the world; he went forth to save. And surely such a soul will not grieve over the buffets the outward world seems to give to his outward self; for how can He grieve who is all this Universe? The pain of his petty personal Self is no more to his consciousness than the pain of a crushed ant to a king as he walks musing in his garden bearing on his shoulders the destiny of nations. He cannot feel sorrow for himself even if he would, for he has the sorrow of a whole world to relieve; his own joy is nothing to him, for he has the joy of the whole Universe at his command.

There are two ways of attaining to Jnana, to the Vision. One is the way of Insight, the other the way of World-Sight. There are two ways of Bhakti, one by devotion to the Self as Lord of all concentrated within you, the other by devotion to the Self as Lord of all extended in the Universe. There are two ways of Karma, one by Yoga, quiescence of the sheaths & the ineffable unacting, yet all-enveloping omnipotence of the Self within; the other by quiescence of desire and selfless activity of the sheaths for the wider Self in the Universe. For the first you must turn your eyes within instead of without, put from you the pleasures of contact & sense, hush the mind & its organs and rising above the dualities become One in yourself, आत्मतुष्टिरात्मारामः. Is this too difficult for thee? Does thy mind fail thee, the anguish of thy coverings still conceal the immortal Spirit within? Dash the tears from thine eyes; though they be tears of blood, still persist in wiping them away as they ooze out and look *out* on the Universe. That is thy self, that is Brahman. Realise all this Cosmic Stir, this rolling of the suns, this light, this life, this ceaseless activity. It is thou thyself that art stirring through all this Universe, thou art this Sun and this moon and these Constellations. The Ocean rolls in thee, the storm blows in thee, the hills stand firm in thee. If thou wert not, these things would not be. Canst thou grieve over the miseries of this little speck in the Brahman, this little insect-sheath, of whose miseries thou art the maker and thou canst be the ender? Is the vision too great for thee? Look round thee then, limit the vision there. These men & women and living things that are round thee, their numberless joys & sorrows, amongst which what are thine? they are all thy Self and they are all in Thee. Thou art their Creator, Disposer & Destroyer. Thou canst break them if thou wilt and thou canst rescue them from their griefs and miseries if thou wilt, for power infinite is within thee. Thou wilt not be the Asura to injure thyself in others? Be then the Deva to help thy Self in others. Learn the sorrows of those who live near thee and remove them; thou wilt soon feel what a joy has been so long lost to thee, a joy in which thy own sorrows grow like an unsubstantial mist. Wrestle with mighty wrongdoers, succour the oppressed, free the slave and the bound and thou shalt soon know something of the joy that is more than any pleasure, thou shalt soon be initiated into the bliss of the One who is in all. Even in death thou shalt know that ecstasy and rejoice in the blood as it flows from thee.

THE STUDENT

These ideals are too high. Where is the strength to follow them and the way to find that strength?

THE GURU

The strength is in yourself and the way to find that strength has been laid down from the times of old. But accept that ideal first or you will have no spur to help you over the obstacles in the way.

THE STUDENT

But how many will accept the ideal, when there are so many easier ideals to give them strength & comfort?

THE GURU

But are those ideals true? Delusions may give you strength & comfort for a while, but after all they break down & leave you tumbling through Chaos. Truth alone is a sure & everlasting rock of rest, an unfailing spear of strength. The whole universe rests upon Truth, on the Is, not on the Is Not. To be comfortable in delusion is the nature of man in his tamasic covering of gross matter-stuff; it is the business of philosophy & religion to dispel his delusion & force him to face the truth.

THE STUDENT

But many wise men are of the opinions that these smaller ideals are the truth, not religion and philosophy which are a delusion.

THE GURU

Tell me one of these newborn truths that profess to dispel the knowledge that is without end & without beginning; for you know more of the science of the West than I.

THE STUDENT

There is the doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number, which has something finite, certain and attainable about it — nothing metaphysical, nothing abstract.

THE GURU

We have heard something about it in this country, a system of morality by arithmetic called utilitarianism which would have man pass his life with a pair of scales in his hand weighing good

& evil. It did good in its time, but it was not true, and could not last.

THE STUDENT

In what is it not true?

THE GURU

It is not true, because it is not in human nature; no human being ever made or ever will make an arithmetical calculation of the pain & pleasure to result from an action and the numbers of the people diversely affected by them, before doing the action. This sort of ethical algebra, this system of moral accounts needs a different planet for its development; a qualified accountant has yet to be born on the human plane. You cannot assess pleasure & pain, good and evil in so many ounces & pounds; human feelings, abstract emotions are elusive and variable from moment to moment. Utilitarianism with all its appearance of extreme practicality and definiteness, is really empty of any definite truth and impotent to give any sound and helpful guidance; it is in itself as barren of light as of inspiration, a creed arid, dry and lifeless, and what is worse, *false*. Whatever it has of value, it has copied or rather caricatured from altruism. It gives us standards of weight & measure which are utterly impossible to fix; and it fails to provide any philosophical justification for self-sacrifice nor any ardent inspiration towards it. Utilitarian hedonism — is not that the phrase — suggests, I think, that by doing good to others, we really provide a rarer and deeper pleasure for ourselves than any purely self-limited gratification can give us. Most true — and a truth we needed not to learn from either hedonist or utilitarian. The Buddhists knew it 2000 years ago and the Aryans of India practised it before that; the whole life of Srikrishna was a busy working for the good of others, of his friends, his country and the world, and Srikrishna never knew grief or pain. But there are three kinds of pleasure to be had from charity and beneficence; there is the satisfaction of vanity, the vanity of hearing oneself praised, the vanity of feeling "How very good I am." This, I think, is at the bottom of much charity in India and more in Europe, and it is here that hedonism comes most into play, but it is a poor spring and will break down under any strain; it may lead to charity but never to self-sacrifice. Then there is the joy of having done a good work and brought oneself nearer to heaven which used to be and perhaps still is the most common incentive to beneficence in Aryaland. That is a more powerful spring, but it is narrow and does not reach the true self; its best value is that it is helpful towards purification. Then there are the natures born for love & unselfishness who in the mere joy of helping others, of suffering for others, of seeing the joy return to tear-worn faces & pain-dimmed eyes, feel the bliss that comes from the upsurging of God within. To these hedonism is as vanity and the babbling of children. The hedonistic element in utilitarianism is an imperfect & blundering effort to grope for a great truth which it has neither been able to grasp itself nor set forth with scientific accuracy. That truth is found only in the clear & luminous teaching of the Vedanta; it is this, that the compound result we call man *is* a compound result and not the single simple homogeneous being our senses would believe; he is composed of several elements, corporeal, vital, mental, intellectual and essential; and his true self is none of these heterogeneous factors of the element the Self lives in, but something beyond & transcendent. Pain & pleasure, good & evil are therefore not permanent and definite entities; the former are a heterogeneous conglomeration, sometimes a warring agglomeration of the feelings & impulses belonging to the various husks in which the true Self is wrapped. Good & evil are relative & depend on the standpoint we take with reference to the true locality of Self in this little cosmos of man; if we locate that Self low down our "good" will be a poor thing, of the earth, earthy, little distinguishable from evil; if we locate it in its true place, our good will be as high, vast & pure as the heavens. All pain & pleasure, all good & evil have their birth, their existence and their end in the Self. It follows therefore that even the highest love & altruism are bounded by the Self. Altruism is not the sacrifice of self to others, but the sacrifice of our false self to our true Self, which unless we are Yogins we can best see in others. True love is not the love of others but the love of our Self; for we cannot possibly love what is not ourself. If we love what is not ourself, it must be as a result of contact; but we cannot love by स्पर्श, by mere contact; because contact is temporary in its nature and in its results, and cannot give rise to a permanent feeling such as love. Yajnavalkya well said, "We desire the wife, not for the sake of the wife but for the sake of the Self." Only if we mistake things for the Self which are not the true Self, we shall, as a result, mistake things for love which are not real love. If we mistake the food-husk for Self, we shall desire the wife for corporeal gratification; if we mistake the vital emotion-husk for Self we shall desire the wife for emotional gratification; if we mistake the mind husk for the self we shall desire the wife for aesthetic gratification & the pleasurable sense of her presence, her voice, looks etc about the house; if we mistake the intellect husk for the self, we shall desire the wife for her qualities & virtues, her capacities & mental gifts, for the gratification of the understanding. If we see the Self, in the bliss Sheath, where the element of error reaches the vanishing point, we shall then desire the wife for the gratification of the true Self, the bliss of the sense of Union, of becoming One. And if we have seen & understood our true Self without husk or covering, we shall not desire her at all, because we shall possess her, we shall know that she is already our Self and therefore not to be desired in her sheaths, since *She* is already possessed. It follows that the more inward the sheath with which we confuse the Self, the purer the pleasure, the more exalted the conception of Good, until in the real naked Self we rise beyond good & evil because we have no longer any need of good or any temptation to evil. Emotional pleasure is higher than corporeal, aesthetic than emotional, intellectual than aesthetic, ethical than intellectual, spiritual than ethical. This is the whole truth and the whole philosophy of ethics; all else is practical arrangement and balancing of forces, economising of energies for the purposes of social stability or some other important but impermanent end.

Utilitarianism gets a partial & confused view of the truth and being unable properly to correlate it, groping about for some law, some standard and principle of order, thinks it has found it in utility. But what utility? I, this perfected animal, with desires, thoughts, sensations and a pressing need for their gratification, can very well understand what is personal utility; utility for this vital, sensational, conceptual me. My utility is to get as much sensual, emotional & intellectual gratification as I may out of life consistent with my own ease & safety; if utility is to be my standard of ethics, that is my ethics. But when you ask me in the name of utility & rationalism to sacrifice these things for some higher or wider utility, for others, for the greater number, for society, I no longer follow you. So much as is necessary to keep up government, law & order and a good police, I can understand, for these things are necessary to my safety & comfort; society has given me these & I must see to & pay for their maintenance by myself & others. That is businesslike, both utilitarian & rational. But beyond this society has not any claim on me; society exists for me, not I for society. If then I have to sacrifice what I perhaps most deeply cherish for society, my life, my goods, my domestic peace, my use for society ceases; I regard society then as a fraudulent depositor who wishes to draw from my ethical bank more than he has deposited. So might argue the average man who is neither immoral nor deeply moral but only respectable; and utilitarianism can give him no satisfactory answer.

Moreover, if I have other instincts than those of the respectable citizen, and ability to carry them out, why should I refrain? What holds me? If I can earn a huge fortune rapidly by some safe form of swindling, by gambling, by speculation or by the merciless methods of the American capitalist, why should I refrain? The charge of anti-social conduct; but that has no terrors for an egotist of strong character; he knows well that he can hush the disapproval of society under a shower of gold coin. Morality with the vital sensational man becomes in an utilitarian age merely the *fear* of social or legal punishment, and strong men do not fear; nor unless their acts shake the social framework will an utilitarian society care to condemn them, for they are breaking no powerful sanctions, outraging no deep-rooted sentiments — utilitarianism deliberately parts company with sentiment and except force & fear it has no sanctions to replace those of religion & ancient prejudice which it has destroyed. It is useless to tell these people that they will find a deeper & truer bliss in good moral conduct and altruism than in their present selfish and anti-social career. Where is the proof or even the philosophic justification of what these philosophers allege? Their own experience? That is not valid for the average sensational man; *his* deepest pleasure is necessarily vital and sensational; it is only valid for the men who make the statement, they being the intellectual self with an ethical training that has survived from a dead Christianity. In order for it to be true of the sensational man, he must cease to be sensational, he must undergo a process of spiritual regeneration to which utilitarian philosophy cannot give him either the key or even the motive-impulse. For in the mouth of the utilitarian, this statement of the deeper & truer bliss, is a piece of secondhand knowledge; not his own earning, but part of that store of ethical coin rifled by rationalism from the coffers of Christianity on which European civilisation is precariously living at the present day. One trembles to think of the day when that coin shall be exhausted — already we see some signs of growing moral vulgarity, coarseness, almost savagery in the European mind, which, if it increases, if the open worship of brutal force & unscrupulous strength which is rampant in politics & in commerce taint, as it must eventually do, the deeper heart of society, may lead to an orgy of the vital & sensational impulses such as has not been since the worst days of the Roman Empire.

THE STUDENT

But Lecky has proved that the moral improvement of Europe was due entirely to the rise of rationalism.

THE GURU

My son, there is one great capacity of the learned & cultured mind both in Europe & Asia which one should admire without imitating — it is the capacity of dextrous juggling with words. If you choose to give an extension of meaning to a particular word, a meaning it cannot & ought not to have, you can easily build on it a very glittering edifice of theory, which will charm the eye until someone comes by with a more effective word more effectively extended in meaning and knocks down the old house to build a newer & more glittering mansion. Thus the old eternal truths are overlaid by trashy superstructures until some day some salutary earthquake swallows up the building & builders & reveals the old truth which no change or chance can injure. Amid the giddy round of ever shifting theories Europe gives us, there are only two fundamental truths, often misapplied, but nevertheless true in the sphere of phenomena, — Evolution, which is taught in different ways by our Sankhya & Vedanta, and the Law of Invariable Causality, which is implied in our theories of Kal & Karma. These receive & hold fast to, — for it is by working them out not always well, but always suggestively that Europe has made her real contribution to the eternal store of knowledge. But in their isms and schisms trust not — they contain scant grain of truth hidden in a very bushelful of error.

THE STUDENT

Still it seems to me that Lecky is not altogether wrong.

THE GURU

On the contrary he is entirely right, — if we consent to lump together all enlightenment without regard to its nature & source, as rationalism; that the moral improvement of Europe was due to increasing enlightenment is entirely true, for Knowledge, by which I mean not the schoolmaster's satchelful of information or even the learning of the Universities, but Jnana, the perception & realisation of truth, is the eternal enemy and slayer of sin; for sin is descended of ignorance through her child, egoism. It is true that the so-called Christian ages in Europe were times of sin and darkness; Europe had accepted Christ only to crucify him afresh; she had entombed him alive with his pure & gracious teaching and over that living tomb she had built a thing called the Church. What we know as Christendom was a strange mixture of Roman corruption, German barbarism and fragments of ancient culture all bathed in the pale light that flowed upward from the enhaloed brows of the entombed and crucified Christ. The great spiritual hoard he had opened to the West was kept locked up and unavailable except to individuals whose souls were too bright to be swallowed up in the general darkness. All knowledge was under taboo, not because there was any natural conflict between Religion & Science, but because there was natural & irreconcilable antipathy between the obscurantism of political ecclesiastics & resurgent knowledge. Again Asia came to the rescue of Europe and from the liberal civilisation of the Arabs, Science was reborn into her mediaeval night, and the light of Science, persecuted & tortured, struggled up until the darkness was overpowered & wounded to death. The intellectual history of Europe has outwardly been a struggle between Science & the Church, with which has been confounded the Christian religion which the Church professed with its lips & attempted to strangle with its hands; inwardly it was the ancient struggle between Deva and Asura, sattwa & tamas. Now Religion is sattwic with a natural impulse towards light, it cannot be tamasic, it can have no dealings with the enemies of the Devas; and if something calling itself religion, attempts to suppress light, you may be sure it is not religion but an impostor masquerading in her name. Consider what were the ideas under which as under a banner, the modern spirit overthrew the mediaeval Titan; the final uprush of those ideas we see in the French revolution. The motto of the Revolution we know, liberty, equality & fraternity; the spirit it professed but could not attain we know, humanity. In liberty the union of the individual moral liberty of Christianity with the civic liberty of Greece; in equality, the democratic spiritual equality of Christianity applied to society; fraternity, the aspiration to universal brotherhood, which is the peculiar and distinguishing idea of Christianity; in humanity, the Buddhistic spirit of mercy, pity, love, of which Europe knew nothing till Christianity breathed it forth over the Mediterranean and with greater purity over Ireland, mingled with the sense of the divinity in man, borrowed from India through the old Gnostics

& Platonists, these are the ideas which still profoundly influence Europe, many of which Scientific materialism has been obliged to borrow or tolerate, none of which it has as yet availed entirely to root out. Rationalism did not create these ideas, but found and adopted them. Rationalism is the spirit which subjects all beliefs & opinions to the test of logic from observed facts, it is indeed the intellectual sheath, mostly the lower or merely logical half of the intellectual sheath attempting to establish itself as the Self. This is what we call Science and the scientific spirit. Wherever it has been able to work in the light of pure dry intellect, not distorted by irruptions of the lower selves in the shape of interest, vanity, passions, prejudices, it has produced invaluable results; in the sphere therefore of the passionless observation, classification and correlation of facts we may follow Science without distrust or fear of stumbling; but whenever it tries to theorize from what it has observed about human nature, human affairs & spiritual development, Science is always tumbling into the pits of the lower selves; in attempting to range things above the material level under the law of the material self, it is trying to walk upon water, to float upon air; it is doing something essentially unscientific. Still more is this the case when it deals with the higher things of the spirit in the same terms; its theories then become so amazingly paradoxical, one stands astonished at the wilful blindness to facts to which prejudice & prepossession can lead the trained observers of facts. Follow them not there, there are the blind leading the blind who go round and round battering themselves like a blind bird at night against the same eternal walls and never seeing the window open to it for its escape.

THE STUDENT

But you have said that Evolution is an eternal truth. On the basis of Evolution the scientists have discovered a moral sanction, which does replace the old religious sanctions, the paramount claim of the race upon the individual.

THE GURU

What race? The English or German or Russian or the great

Anglo-Saxon race, which it appears is to inherit the world, God's Englishmen and, we must now add, God's Americans — or is it the whole white race? To whom must the individual bow his head as the head & front of Evolution?

THE STUDENT

I mean the whole human race. The individual is ephemeral, the species endures, the genus lasts almost for ever. On this basis your duty to yourself, your duty to society, your duty to your country, your duty to mankind, all fall into a beautifully ranged, orderly & symmetrical arrangement. All morality is shown to be a historical inevitable evolution, and you have only to recognise it and farther that evolution by falling into its track instead of going backward on the track.

THE GURU

And getting called atavistic and degenerate and other terrible names? Still I should like to be better satisfied as to the basis of this symmetrical and inevitable arrangement; for if I were convinced that I am an ephemeral animal, I should like to enjoy myself during my day like other ephemeral animals and cannot see why I should trouble myself about the eternal future; & even tho' science should hurl the most formidable polysyllables in its vocabulary at me, I do not know that I should greatly care, and I think Mess^{rs} Rockefeller & Jay Gould & millions more were or are in hearty agreement with me. You say the genus is eternal? But I believe this is not the teaching of Science. As I understand it, man is only an animal, a particular sort of monkey which developed suddenly for some inexplicable reason & shot forward 10,000 miles ahead of every animal yet born upon earth. If this is so, there is no reason why some other animal, say, some particular kind of ant, should not suddenly for some inexplicable reason develop & shoot forward 100,000 miles ahead and make as short work of man as man made of the mammoth. Or in some other way the human race will certainly be replaced. Now what good is it to the mammoth whose bones science has recently disinterred, that a race has developed which can disinter him and dissertate in numerous polysyllables upon his remains? And if a scientific mammoth in his days had placed before him this prospect and bid him give up in the interest of the mammoth race, his unsocial & selfish ways, would that have seemed even to the most reasonable tusker a sufficient motive for his self-sacrifice? Where would his *benefit* in the affair come in?

THE STUDENT

It is not precisely a question of personal benefit; it is a question of inevitable law. You would be setting yourself against the inevitable law.

THE GURU

Verily? and what do I care, if my opposition to the inevitable brings me no harm, but rather content & prosperity in my day? After my death nothing can injure me, if I am but clay.

THE STUDENT

The individual may be immoral, but morality progresses inevitably.

THE GURU

Truly? I do not think the present state of Europe favourable to that conception. Why, we had thought that Science would make the cultured nations dominate & people the earth. And we find them stationary or absolutely retrograding in population, degenerating in nerve & hardiness, losing in the true imperial qualities. We had thought that sacking of cities, massacre, torture & foul rape were blotted by civilisation from the methods of war. The enlightened peoples of Europe march into China and there takes place an orgy of filth & blood & cold delight in agony which all but the most loathsome savages would shrink from in disgust. Is that the inevitable moral advance or Red Indian savagery improved upon? We had thought that with increasing education & intellectuality must come increasing chastity or at least refinement. In a great American city the police sweeps the brothels and gathers in its net hundreds of educated, cultured, gracious & stately women who had carried their education, beauty and culture *there*. Is that the inevitable moral advance, or rather the days of Messalina returned? These are not isolated phenomena but could be multiplied infinitely. Europe is following in the footsteps of ancient Rome.

THE STUDENT

There are these periods of retrogression. Evolution advances in a curve, not in a straight line.

THE GURU

And mark that these retrogressions are most inevitable when the world, abandoning religion, plunges into philosophic materialism. Not immediately do they come; while the spirit of the old religion still survives the death of its body, the nations seem perhaps to gain in strength & power; but very soon the posthumous force is exhausted. All the old nations perished because in the pride of intellect they abandoned their *dharma*, their religion. India, China still live. What was the force that enabled India beaten down & trampled by mailed fist & iron hoof ever to survive immortally, ever to resist, ever to crush down the conqueror of the hour at last beneath her gigantic foot, ever to raise her mighty head again to the stars? It is because she never lost hold of religion, never gave up her faith in the spirit. Therefore the promise of Srikrishna ever holds good; therefore the Adyashakti, the mighty Chandi, ever descends when the people turn to her and tramples the Asura to pieces. Times change and a new kind of outer power rules over India in place of the Asuras of the East. But woe to India if she cast from her her eternal *dharma*. The fate of the old nations shall then overtake her, her name shall be cast out from the list of nations and her peoples become a memory and a legend upon the earth. Let her keep true to her Self, and the *Atmashakti*, the eternal Force of the Self shall again strengthen & raise her. Modern Science has engaged itself deeply in two cardinal errors; it has built out of the Law of Causation a new and more inexorable fate than Greek or Hindu or Arab ever imagined. Engrossed with this predestination, Science has come to believe that the human will is a mere servant, nay, a mere creation of eternal inanimate forces. Science is mistaken & unless it widen its view it may easily be convinced of its mistake in a very ugly fashion before long. The Will is mightier than any law, fate or force. The Will is eternal, omnipotent, it has created the law of causation and governs it; it has made the laws of matter and it can override them; it is itself all the forces which seem to govern and bind it. There is no compulsion on the human will to evolve towards progression; if it chooses to regress, back it will go and all the world reeling and shrieking with it into barbarism and chaos; if it chooses to go forward, no force can stop it. The other mistake Science has made, it borrows from Christianity; it is that action and emotion can be directed towards beings distinct from oneself; all action and emotion are for the self, in the self. But if Science teaches men to regard themselves as distinct and purely corporeal beings, with no connection with others except such as may be created by physical contact and the communication of the senses, it is obvious that the human Will under the obsession of this belief, will inevitably shape its action & thought in accordance passing over the more shadowy moral generalities of evolutionary theorists or play with them only as intellectual marbles. And that spells in the end a colossal selfishness, an increasing sensuality, lust of power, riches, comfort & dominion, a monstrous & egoistic brutality like that of a hundred-armed Titan wielding all the arms of the Gods in those hundred hands. If man believes himself to be an animal he will act like an animal & exalt the animal impulse into his guide. That Europe does not approach more swiftly to this condition is due to the obstinate refusal of Jnana, Religion, true enlightenment, maimed & wounded tho' it be, to perish and make an end; it will not allow the human Will to believe that it is no more than nerve & flesh & body, animal & transitory. It persists & takes a hundred forms to elude the pursuit of materialistic Science, calling upon the Eternal Mother to come down and save; and surely before long she shall come. All bases of morality which do not go back to the original divine and sempiternal nature of man, must be erroneous and fleeting. Not from the instincts & customs of the ape & savage did the glories of religion & virtue arise, — they are the perennial light of the concealed godhead revealing themselves ever with clearer lines, with floods of more beautiful rainbow lustre, to culminate at last in the pure white light of the supreme realisation, when all creatures have become our Self and our Self realises its own Unity.

यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानतः।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः॥

The Upanishad having posited this Unity which is at once the justification of all religion & morality and the culmination in which religion & morality disappear into something higher than either, proceeds again to sum up and describe the Eternal under this new light. In the fourth verse He has been described only as the mighty Force which creates & surrounds all this universe; He is now to be described as the mighty Unity which in its unmanifestation is the source of all existence and in its manifestation governs these innumerable worlds.

स पर्यगाच्छुक्रमकायमव्रणमस्नाविरं शुद्धमपापविद्धम्।
कविर्मनीषी परिभूः स्वयंभूर्याथातथ्यतोऽर्थान्व्यदधाच्छाश्वतीभ्यः
समाभ्यः॥

This is He that went round, the brightness, unbodied, unscarred, without sinews, pure, untouched by sin; He is the Seer, the Thinker, the Selfborn that pervadeth; He from years sempiternal hath ordered perfectly all things.

The verse begins by repeating a position already taken, of the Lord surrounding all things as a robe surrounds its wearer, creating all things by the appearance of motion, which is however an appearance, a phenomenon and not a reality of the Eternal. "This is He that went round." In other words the whirl of motion which the manifested Eternal set at work created the worlds; he poured forth from himself as Prajna the Eternal Wisdom and entered & encompassed each thing as he created it. But who is this He? In answering this question the Sruti immediately reverts to the neuter gender, because it has to go back to the luminous Parabrahman who is beyond the idea of sex or characteristic. He the Creator of the Worlds is in reality That Brightness, the luminous shadow of the Unknowable of which we can only speak in negatives. That has not a body or form, form being created by Him and therefore this side of Him; He has no scars or imperfections, but is one faultless & perfect light; He has no sinews or muscles; ie He is that side of matter and creation is produced from him not by physical means or physical strength & skill, but by the mere flowing forth of his Shakti or Will. Finally He is not only that side of Matter, but He is that side of Mind also, for He is pure and untouched by evil. It is mind that creates impurity & evil, by desire which produces duality; but the Eternal is not subject to desire. What is evil or Sin? It is merely the preference of the more gross to the more subtle, of tamas to rajas and of rajas to sattwa; it operates therefore in the sphere of the *gunas* and the Eternal being above the *gunas* cannot be touched by Sin. Having established the identity of the Lord who creates & rules, with the pure luminous Parabrahman, who is neither lord nor subject, the Sruti describes the Lord in his capacity of the All-wise Governor; he is the Seer & Poet, who by his illumined inspirations creates as Hiranyagarbha the whole world in His own infinite Mind, He is the Thinker, Prajna, the Wise One, from whose essential mass of equipoised consciousness all existence and its laws draw their perennial strength and being and flow forth to their works, and He is also that which flows forth, Virat, the pervading spirit which enters into all things and encompasses. In all these capacities He is selfborn; for He is Prajna who came forth by His own strength from the luminous Parabrahman & is Parabrahman, He is Hiranyagarbha who comes forth by His own strength from Prajna & is Prajna; He is Virat who comes forth by His own strength from Hiranyagarbha & is Hiranyagarbha. He is the Self born out of the Self by the Self. In other words all these are merely names of the One Spirit in different aspects or states of universal & infinite consciousness. Why then is the Lord spoken of, unlike Parabrahman, in the masculine gender? Because he is now considered in His capacity as the great ruler & ordainer, not in His capacity as the source from which all things flow. As the source, substratum & container of things He is the Trinity, Prajna-Hiranyagarbha-Virat, in whom the Male & Female, Spirit & Matter, the Soul & its Shakti are still one & undivided. He is therefore best spoken of in the neuter. But when we see Him as the Ruler & Ordainer, the Manifested Brahman dealing with a world of phenomena already created, then division has taken place, the Shakti has gone forth to its works, and the great male Trinity, Brahma-Vishnu-Maheshwara, filled with the force of that Shakti are creating, preserving & destroying the countless worlds and the innumerable myriads of their inhabiting forms. Both these Trinities are in reality one Trinity, it is only the point of view that makes the difference. From this standpoint the Sruti goes on then to describe the Lord. He is *kavi*, the great seer & *poet* in the true sense of the word poet; the *kavi* is he who divines things luminously & distinctly by sheer intuition and whose divinations become, by their own overflow, creations. Paramatman as Sat-Brahma-Hiranyagarbha has this divine quality of poethood,— which men call the power of creation and it is therefore that his Shakti is described as Saraswati. Then the Lord is described as *manishi*, the Thinker. It is the thought of the Lord that is the basis or substratum of all this creation; it is therefore that the inanimate object forms faultlessly, that the tree grows unerringly, that the animal acts with infallible instinct towards his dominant needs, that the star moves in its course & the mountain holds to its base. All the creations of the great Kavi would be inconstant in their relations and clash & collide till they destroyed each other if there were not this imperative Wisdom, with stability & equipoise as its characteristic, underlying all things & keeping them to their places, actions & nature. This Wisdom, be it noted, is the very nature of things; it is no deliberate invention, no thing of afterthoughts, adjustments & alterations, but unchangeable & the essential basis of existence from the beginning. Whatever form it take, of gravitation, or of attraction and repulsion, or of evolution, it is an eternal presence & the very nature of the world, प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म. This power of divine instinctive thought is one capacity of Paramatman as Chit-Mahadev-Prajna (Tamas, Sthanu). His other capacity is that of destruction, for He is the Spirit of immobility to whom the deep sleep of perfect unconditioned thought is the culmination (Chit) and if it were not for the activity of the Kavi in the Eternal, if the Thinker in Him were to blot out the Poet, all this pulsating world of phenomena would be stilled & resolve by inaction into the womb of undetermined condensed existence. Then again He is *paribhu*, He who exists all round, the great pervading Bliss of existence (Ananda). For the works of the Poet even though upheld by the Thinker, could not last, if it were not that the bliss of existence [is] poured through all created things like a stream of heavenly nectar & makes life, being, their first imperative need. This is that Will to Live of the German philosopher, which because like all Europeans, he could see Truth only in one of her limbs and not as a divine whole, gave so pessimistic a note to his thought. All things are supported & eternalized by this Bliss, for it is the unchanging & eternal Paramatman. Manifesting as the will to live finitely, it must be broadened into the will to live infinitely in order to fulfil itself & recover its own deepest & essential nature. We will first to live as individuals, then to live in the family, then to live in the tribe or clan, then to live in the race or nation, then to live in mankind, then to live in the Universe, then to live in God, the one Eternal; this is the natural evolution of humanity & its course is determined by the very nature of the Self. Science the Apara Vidya traces for us the course & byelaws of evolution, but it is only the Para Vidya that bases it for us, gives us its reason, source, law & culmination. This Bliss is the capacity of Vishnu-Virat who is Ananda. By his very existence in all beings the Lord preserves & saves. Remember that, though you cry out to the Heavens for help in your misery, it is not the blue sky that hears, it is nothing outside you that comes to save, but He within you alone can protect. Art thou oppressed, O man, by ogre & giant, by fiend & foeman? Seek His mighty Shakti, Bhavani Mahishamardini, in yourself and She will externalize armed with sword & trident to crush the triumphing Asura. This is the law & the gospel. The Poet, the Thinker, the Pervading

Presence, these three are the Swayambhu, the eternal Selfborn who is born by HimSelf out of HimSelf into HimSelf. The Gods are not different from each other, for they are all one God, & there is no other. This is He who has ordered from eternal years perfectly all things. याथातथ्यतः, each duly as it should be & must be because of its own nature, for the nature of a thing is its origin, its law, its destiny, its end; and harmony with its nature is its perfection. All this mighty universe where various things acting according to their various natures harmonise & melt into a perfect unity, all this wonderful Kingdom of a single Law in its manifold aspects He has ordered, व्यदधात्, he has arranged diversely; he has set each thing in its own place, working in its own orbit & according to its own overmastering & inexorable nature. All this He has done from years eternal, not in time, not at a particular date & season, but eternally, before Time was. The Law did not spring into being, but was, is & for ever shall be. The forms of objects, it is true, vary in Time, but the law of their nature is of eternal origin. In the act you do today, you are obeying a Law which has existed during the whole of eternity. Try to realise it, and you will see Time & Space vanishing into Infinity, you will hear the boom of the eternal waters & the great voice crying for ever on the waters "Tapas, tapas", and feel yourself in the presence of the One unchangeable & eternal God. Maya & her works have no ending, because they had no beginning, but the soul of Man can rise above Maya and her works & stand over her & free from her watching her as her master for whose joy she labours unto all eternity. For verily Man is God and as by his own Will he has cast himself into the illusory bonds of the Enchantress, so by His own will He can shake off the bonds & rule her. The play of the Soul with the Maya is the play of the lover & his beloved, one feigning to be the slave of the other, rejoicing in her favour or weeping at her feet in her anger, and now resuming his rightful rôle of lord & master, yea, turning away from her at will to a fairer & more wonderful face; and now Krishna wears the blue dress & shining jewels, and now Radha the yellow cloth & fragrant garlands of the green wood and the brilliant feather of the peacock; for He is She, and She is He; they are only playing at difference, for in real truth they have been and are one to all Eternity.

THE STUDENT

Here then the first part of the Upanishad seems to be ended and some very obscure & disconnected utterances follow.

THE GURU

The utterances of the Upanishad are never disconnected, but the connection is usually beneath the surface, not openly declared by explicit statement or grammatical construction. The Upanishad has said that the Eternal has arranged all objects of the Universe perfectly from years eternal. Maya therefore is eternal, Avidya is eternal. The question will at once be put, what then of Vidya & Avidya? the Eternal and the Transient? the Is & the Seems to Be? If Avidya is eternal, let us rejoice in her wonders & glories & never strive to escape from her bonds. But if Vidya alone be eternal, then is Avidya a curse and a bondage, what have we to do with it, but shake it off with disgust as soon as possible? These are the extremes of the Materialist and Nihilist, the Charvak & the Sunyavadin; but the Vedanta gives its sanction to neither. The Unconditioned Brahman is, but of the Conditioned also we cannot say that He is not and the Conditioned Brahman is what we call Maya. Brahman is eternal & Maya therefore is eternal; but the Conditioned Brahman obviously rests on the Unconditioned and cannot be except in Him. As are the reverse & obverse of a coin, so are the Conditioned and Unconditioned, and the aspirant to Knowledge must know both and not one only or he will know but little indeed of the true nature of the Eternal.

THE STUDENT

The followers of Adwaita will call this rank heresy. Maya is illusion, unreality and is slain by knowledge, it cannot therefore be eternal.

THE GURU

You cannot slay Maya; you can only slay Moha, the illusion of Maya; her you can only conquer and put her under your feet. You remember that Shankara after conquering Ubhayabharati, made her living body his *asan* of meditation; that is the symbol of the Yogi and the wonderful twofold Maya of the Eternal. He has conquered her & put her beneath him, but it is still upon her that his *asan* is based even when he is unconscious of Her and in union with the Eternal. If this were not so, then the whole of phenomena would cease the moment a man becomes a Buddha and enters into Nirvana; for He & the Eternal are One. If Parabrahman therefore were limited either to Vidya or Avidya, obviously Avidya would cease the moment Vidya began and the salvation of one Jivatma would bring about the end of the world for all; just as the Christians say that the crucifixion of Christ saved the world. But this is not so. The power of Shakti of Brahman is twofold & simultaneous; He is able to exercise Vidya & Avidya at the same moment; he eternally realises His own transcendental nature; and at the very same time He realises this wonderful universe of His imagination. He is like a great poet who shadows forth a world of his own creation made in himself and of himself and yet knows that He is different from it & independent of it. It is for this reason only that the salvation of a particular Jivatman does not bring the world to an end. Nor does Shankara really say anything different; for he does not assert that Maya is unreal; he says it is a mysterious something of which you cannot say that it is and yet you cannot say that it is not. This indeed is the only description that the finite mind can make of this mysterious Shakti of the Illimitable, Unconditioned, Unknowable Brahman. Maya in its forms may be unreal & transitory but Maya in its essence as a Shakti of the Eternal, must itself be eternal, from of old & for ever.

The Karmayogin

A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad

NOTE

Sri Aurobindo modified the structure of *The Karmayogin: A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad* while he was working on it. He began with a two-tier division: "Chapters" and sections. Later he introduced a superior division, the "Part", and began calling the lowest-level divisions "Chapters". The intermediate divisions, earlier called "Chapters", became known as "Books". The numbering of these divisions is neither consistent nor complete. The table on the opposite page shows the structure as marked by Sri Aurobindo in the manuscript and printed in the text and, italicised and within square brackets, how it would be if the final three-tier division were applied consistently throughout.

In the right margin are indicated the places where the discussions of the first six verses begin. The other twelve verses were not discussed.

- [*Part I*] [*No title*]
  - [*Book I*] Chapter I. The Law of Renunciation.
    - [*Chapter*] I. God All and God Everywhere [*Start verse 1*]
    - [*Chapter*] II. Isha, the Lord.
    - [*Chapter*] III. Isha and His Universe.
    - [*Chapter*] IV. God in Man and in all Creatures
    - [*Chapter*] V. Selflessness, the Basic Rule of Karma-Yoga
    - [*Chapter*] VI. The Philosophical Justification of Altruism
    - [*Chapter*] VII. The Meaning of Renunciation
  - [*Book II*] Chapter II. Salvation through Works
    - [*Chapter*] I [*No title*] [*Start verse 2*]
    - [*Chapter*] II. Vairagya.
    - [*Chapter*] III. One Road and not Three.
    - [*Chapter*] IV. The denial of salvation by works
    - [*Chapter*] V. Mukti and the Jivanmukta.
    - [*Chapter*] VI. Suicide and the other World. [*Start verse 3*]
    - [*Chapter*] VII. Retrospect
- Part II Karmayoga; the Ideal
  - [*Book III*] Chapter IV. The Eternal in His Universe
    - I. Eternal Truth the Basis of Ethics / I / The Root of Ethical Ideals
    - Chapter I. Brahman. [*Start verse 4*]
    - Chapter II. Spiritual Evolution in Brahman
    - Chapter III. Psychical evolution — downward to matter
    - Chapter IV. Psychical Evolution — Upward to Self.
    - [*No Chapters V or VI*]
    - [*Chapter*] VII. Elemental Evolution.
    - [*Chapter*] VIII. Matariswan and the Waters.
    - [*Chapter*] IX. Spirit and Matter
    - [*Chapter*] X. [*No title*]
    - [*Chapter*] XI. [*No title*]
    - [*Chapter*] XII. [*No title*] [*Start verse 5*]
  - Book [*IV*] III. [*No title*]
    - Chapter I. [*No title*] [*Start verse 6*]
    - [*Chapter*] II. Ethics in primitive society.
    - Chapter III. Social Evolution.
    - Chapter IV. The place of Religion in ethics.

Chapter I.

The Law of Renunciation.

I. God All and God Everywhere

GURU

Salutation to the Eternal who is without place, time, cause or limit. Salutation to Him who rules the Universe, the Lord of the Illusion, the Master of manifold life. Salutation to the Self in me, who is the Self in all creatures. Brahman, Isha, Atman, under whatever aspect He manifests Himself or manifests not, to Him the One and Only Existence, Consciousness, Bliss, salutation.

The Upanishad begins; —

"With the Lord all this must be clothed (as with a garment), even all that is world in this moving universe; abandon the world that thou mayest enjoy it, neither covet any man's possessions."

The Upanishad first sets forth the universality of the Supreme Being; whatever we see, hear or are in any way sensible of, we must feel the presence of the Lord surrounding it. This tree that I am sitting under, I must not consider as only so many leaves, bark, pith, sap and roots encased in earth and air; I must realise that it is a manifestation in the Supreme who is the only reality. This voice that I am uttering, vibrates in the atmosphere of the Divine Reality; only because it vibrates there, is it capable of sound, articulation and meaning. No action I do or watch others do, but the Lord is there surrounding and upholding it; otherwise it could not be done. Whatever I see, I am seeing God; whatever I hear, I am hearing God; whatever I do, it is the Energy of God which is governing my actions. This is the first thing the Karmayogin has to realise and until he has set his mind on the realisation, Karmayoga is impossible. The Lord is everywhere; the Lord surrounds everything with His presence; the Lord is all. वासुदेवः सर्वमिति। This Karma that I do, I do it in the Lord; this subjective I who act, exist only in the Lord; this objective he, she, it to whom the action is done, exists only in the Lord. It is the omnipresent universality of the Supreme, that has first to be realized. When the Yogin has had spiritual experience of this universality, then only is he fit for Karmayoga; for not till then can he sink the constant feeling of I and thou and he in a single higher and wider Existence; not till then can he escape from apparent self to true Self, and without such escape Karmayoga cannot really begin. To clothe all things with the Supreme, to be conscious of Him in all you say, do, think, feel or are sensible of, — this experience is the beginning of Karmayoga. The transformation of this experience into the habitual condition of the soul, is the consummation of Karmayoga; for it leads straight to the knowledge of Brahman and the ecstasy of union with Him, Karma melting into and becoming one with Jnana and Bhakti. Karma, Bhakti, Jnana, — Action, Love, Knowledge, are the three paths which lead out of phenomenal existence to the eternal reality, and where the three meet & become one, is the end of the great journey, that highest home of Vishnu towards which it is the one object of the Upanishad to turn and guide us. The Isha Upanishad is the Scripture of the Karmayogin; of the three paths it teaches the way of Action, and therefore begins with this first indispensable condition of all Godward action, to see all things, creatures, causes, effects, changes & evolutions as so many transitory phenomena enveloped with the presence of the Supreme Being and existing in Him and by Him only. Not I but He, for He is my real self and what I call I is only so much covering and semblance, — this is Vedanta; the first feeling of this truth is the beginning of Jnana, the beginning of Bhakti, the beginning of Karma. सोऽहं. He is the true & only I.

II. Isha, the Lord.

Let us now look closely into the language of the Scripture, for in the Upanishad every word is of infinite importance and is chosen in preference to others for some profound and significant reason. *Ishâ* is the first word of the Upanishad; it is with the Lord that we must clothe all things in this Universe, it is the Lord whose presence, will, energy we must realize in whatever we see, feel, do or think. It is in other words the Supreme Being not in His aspect as the actionless, unknowable Parabrahman, transcendental and beyond realization by senses, mind or speech; it is not even Sacchidananda, that absolute self-centred Existence, Consciousness, Bliss with whom the Jnanayogin seeks to unite himself in Samadhi; it is the Eternal in His aspect as Ruler of the Universe, He who keeps the wheel of phenomena turning and guides its motions as the mechanician controls his machine. The Karmamargin aims at living disillusionized, but yet using the illusions of Maya as the materials of his Yoga; he seeks to free himself from phenomena while yet living among phenomena; it is therefore Isha, Maheshwara, the Lord of the Illusion, the Master of multiple phenomenal life whom he must seek and in whom he must lose his lower self. Since he works through actions, it is the Master of actions whom he must worship with the flowers and incense of a selfless life.

Is there then a difference between Parabrahman and Isha? Are there two Supreme Beings and not one? No difference, really; the distinction is one of appearance, of semblance. Parabrahman, the absolute, transcendental, eternal reality is unknowable to human reason; That which is above reason in man can reach Parabrahman and experience Parabrahman, because It is Parabrahman, but this is in the state of Samadhi and from the state of Samadhi the human understanding can bring back no record intelligible to the reason or explicable in terms of speech. Parabrahman in His Essence is therefore realizable but not intelligible; He can be experienced, He cannot be explained or understood. Still Parabrahman presents to the understanding two semblances or aspects by which He can be relatively though not absolutely known. These two aspects correspond to the two powers inherent in Parabrahman as the Knower of Himself, the powers of Vidya and Avidya, the power to know and the power not to know, the faculty of Knowledge and the faculty of Illusion. Parabrahman can know Himself as He really is; this is Vidya. He can also imagine

Himself as He is not; this is Avidya. In the first aspect He is Sacchidananda, absolute Existence, Consciousness and Bliss; He exists to Himself alone, because there *is* no other existence but Himself; He is conscious of His own existence only, because there *is* no other existence to be conscious of; He is the bliss of His own self-conscious existence, because there is nothing outside or other than Him to give Him external bliss. That is the eternal reality, that is His aspect to Vidya or true Knowledge. But there is also the eternal unreality, His aspect to Avidya or False Knowledge. Then He is a great Will, Shakti or Force pouring itself out in a million forms and names and keeping for ever in motion the eternal wheel of phenomenal Evolution, which He guides and governs. He is then Isha, the Lord or Ruler. To use a human parallel, Shakespeare pouring himself out in a hundred names and forms, Desdemona, Othello, Iago, Viola, Rosalind, Macbeth, Hamlet, Lear, Cymbeline is using his power of Avidya to become the lord and ruler of a wonderful imaginary world. Shakespeare putting aside his works and returning to his own single & sufficient existence is using his power of Vidya to recover his own constant single reality. But there is one Shakespeare and not two. Now the Karmamargin has to deal with this great multifold phenomenal universe and when he seeks to feel the presence of the Eternal round every single thing it contains, it must necessarily be not in His unconditioned, unphenomenal aspect of Sacchidananda but in His conditioned, phenomenal aspect as Isha, Lord of the Universe. As Isha the Karmayogin may worship Him in various sub-aspects. Isha is a double being as Purusha-Prakriti; Purusha, the great male ocean of spiritual force which sets Prakriti to produce and watches her workings, and Prakriti, the mighty female energy which produces and works unweariedly for the pleasure of Purusha. He is the triple Being, Prajna, Hiranyagarbha, Virat; Prajna, Lord of Sleep-Life, the intelligent force which lives and wakes in what would otherwise seem inert and inanimate existence or the mere blind play of mechanical forces; Hiranyagarbha, the Lord of Dream-Life who takes from this ocean of subconsciously intelligent spiritual being those conscious psychic forces which

He materializes or encases in various forms of gross living matter; and Virat, Lord of Waking-Life, who governs, preserves and maintains the sensible creation which Hiranyagarbha has shaped. He is triple again as Shiva, Brahma, Vishnu; Shiva, the destroyer, the Yogin, the Lord of brute or inert life; the Master of Samadhi, the Refuge of the outcast & of those who have no refuge; Brahma, the Creator, who puts forth life and stays not his hand for a moment; Vishnu, the Preserver & Saviour, the Master of Power & Love and Life and Light and Sweetness. With all these aspects of Isha, the Lord, Hindu worship has associated names & forms and in these names and forms He shows Himself to His worshippers. The Jnanayogin loves to worship Him as Shiva, the Master of utter Samadhi; to the Bhakta He appears in whatever form appeals most to the spiritual emotions of His devotee. But the Karmayogin should devote himself to those forms of the Supreme Lord in which His mighty Shakti, His Will to live and create has expressed itself in its highest, purest and most inspiring and energetic virility; for Karma is merely Shakti in motion and the Karmayogin must be a pure conductor of divine energy, a selfless hero and creator in the world. Isha Himself in His Avatars, Buddha, Rama, Srikrishna, has given us the highest types of this selfless divine energy and it is therefore to these mighty spirits, God-in-man, that the Karmayogin may well direct his worship. Or he may worship Isha in His Shakti, in the form of Durga-Kali, the most powerful realisation of His cosmic energy which the human mind has yet envisaged. If he is able to dispense with forms, he may worship the idea of Isha Himself, the Almighty Lord, whom the Hindu adores as Hari, the Christian as God, the Mahomedan as Allah. Even the atheist, if he recognizes a mighty Power at work in all life and existence and yields up his self and actions to the will and ends of that Power, or if he recognizes in men the godhead he refuses to recognize in the Universe and devotes himself to the selfless service of his kind, has set his foot on the path of Karmayoga and cannot fail to reach the Lord whom he denies. It is of no importance that the Karmayogin should recognize a particular name or form as the greater Self to win whom he must lose his smaller self; but it is of importance & essential that he should recognize the existence of a Power inside and outside himself to the law of whose Will and Workings he can sacrifice the self-will and self-worship of the natural man. Whatever name he gives to this Power or whether he gives it a name or not, it is Isha, the Lord, whose presence he must feel around every object and movement in the Universe.

III. Isha and His Universe.

Next let us take note of the word वास्यं. All this Universe must be clothed with Isha; we must draw the feeling of His presence round every object in the Universe and envelop it with Isha, as a robe is drawn round and envelops the wearer. For the Lord is greater than His universe. This tree is not the Lord, it is in the Lord. We must avoid the materialistic Pantheism which identifies the visible Universe with the Supreme Being. It is true that He is both the final and material Cause of the universe, and in one sense He is His Universe and His Universe is He, just as Shakespeare's creations are really Shakespeare himself, woven by him out of his own store of psychic material; and yet it would be obviously a mistake to identify, say, Iago with Shakespeare. This tree is evolved out of original ether, ether pervades it and surrounds it, but the tree cannot be described as ether, nor ether as the tree; so, going deeper down, we find it is evolved out of the existence of the Lord who pervades it and surrounds it with His presence; but the tree is not the Lord, nor the Lord the tree. The Hindu is no idolater; he does not worship stocks or stones, the tree as tree or the stone as stone or the idol as a material thing, but he worships the presence of the Lord which fills & surrounds the tree, stone or idol, and of which the tree, stone or idol is merely a manifestation or seeming receptacle. We say for the convenience of language and mental realization that God is in His creature, but really it is the creature who is in God, न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि. "I am not in them, they are in Me."

We find European scholars when they are confronted with the metaphors of the Sruti, always stumbling into a blunder which we must carefully avoid if we wish to understand our Scriptures. Their reason, hard, logical and inflexible, insists on fixing the metaphor to its literal sense and having thus done violence to the spirit of the Upanishad, they triumphantly point to the resultant incoherence and inconsistency of our revealed writings and cry out, "These are the guesses, sometimes sublime, generally infantile, of humanity in its childhood." But the metaphors of the Sruti are merely helps to a clearer understanding; you are intended to take their spirit and not insist on the letter. They are conveniences for the hand in climbing, not supports on which you are to hang your whole weight. Here is a metaphor वास्यं, clothe, as with a garment. But the garment is different from the wearer, & limited in the space it occupies: is the Lord then different from His creation and limited in His being? That would be the letter; the spirit is different. The presence of the Lord who is infinite, must be thought of as surrounding each object and not confined to the limits of the object, — this and no more is the force of वास्यं. When we see the tree, we do not say, "This is the Lord", but we say "Here is the Lord". The tree exists only in Him & by Him; He is in it and around it, even as the ether is.

All this, says the Sruti, is to be thought of as surrounded by the presence of the Lord, सर्वमिदं, all this that is present to our senses, all in fact that we call the Universe. But to avoid misunderstanding the Upanishad goes on to point out that it is not only the Universe as a whole, but each thing that is in the Universe which we must feel to be encompassed with the divine Presence, यत्किंच जगत्यां जगत्। everything and anything that is moving thing in Her who moves. *Jagati*, she that moves, in the ancient Sanscrit, was a word applied to the whole Universe; afterwards it meant rather this moving earth,[1] that part of the cosmos with which we human beings are mainly concerned and the neuter *jagat*, that which moves, came to be the ordinary expression for world or universe. But why is the universe called

---

[1] The ancient Rishis knew that the earth moves, चला पृथ्वी स्थिरा भाति, "The earth moves, but seems to be still".

"she that moves"? Because it is the result of the working of Prakriti, the visible form of Prakriti, the great female material energy of the Lord, and the essence of Prakriti is motion; for by motion she creates this material world. Indeed all object matter is only a form, that is to say a visible, audible or in some way sensible result of motion. Every material object is what it is here called, *jagat*, a world of infinite motion; even the stone, even the clod. Our senses tell us that the material world is the only reality, the only steadfast thing of whose rule and order we can be sure and by which we can abide; but our senses are in error and the Upanishad warns us against their false evidence. The material world is a transitory and changing whirl of motion on the surface of Brahman, the great ocean of spiritual existence, who alone is, in His depths, eternal, real and steadfast. It is He who as the Lord gives order, rule and abidingness to the infinite motion we call the Universe; and if we wish to be in touch with reality, we must train our souls to become aware of His presence sustaining, pervading and surrounding this moving Prakriti and every objective form to which her varying rates of vibration have given rise. Thus placed in constant touch with reality, the Karmayogin will escape from the false shows and illusions of Prakriti; Karma or action which also is merely her motion, energy at work, will not master him and drive him as a storm drives a ship, but he will rather be the master of action, both his own and that of others. For it is only by understanding practically the reality of a thing and its law of working that one can become its master and make use of it for his own purposes.

IV. God in Man and in all Creatures.

But when the Karmayogin has seen the Lord surrounding all things with His presence and all things existing only as transitory manifestations, idols or images in this divine Reality, what follows? It follows that just as this tree or that mountain exists only as an image or manifestation in the divine Reality, so also all creatures, men included, are merely images or manifestations in the same divine Reality. In other words what is real, living, eternal in you and me, is not our body, nor our vitality & its desires, nor our mind, nor our reason and understanding, but just the divine presence which pervades me and you as much as it pervades the tree and the mountain. And it is not the body, vitality, mind, reason or understanding which constitutes the presence of the Lord within us; for my body differs from yours, my vitality differs from yours, my mind differs from yours, my reason and understanding differ from yours; they differ even from themselves according to time and circumstances; but the Lord is one and unchanging. There must therefore be something deeper hidden within us than any of these things, something which is alone real, living and eternal. This something is called in the Vedanta the Self; it is Brahman or the Lord within each of his creatures. The Self is in the microcosm what Sacchidananda is in the macrocosm; it is the great pure luminous existence, self-conscious and self-blissful, which acts not, neither desires, but watches the infinite play of Prakriti in the life of the creature It informs. And just as by the power of Avidya Sacchidananda takes the semblance of a mighty Will or Force, Isha, creating endless multiplicity and governing, guiding and rejoicing in the interplay of worlds, so by the same power this Self or Witness in Man takes the semblance of a sublime Will creating for itself action and inaction, pleasure & pain, joy & sorrow, victory & defeat, guiding, governing & rejoicing in the activity of the apparent creature it informs, but unaffected and unbound by his works. This Will, which the Vedanta calls Ananda or Bliss and not will, must not be confused with mere volition or desire, for volition belongs to the outer & apparent man and not to the inner and real. This Self is in me, it is also in you and every other being and in all it is the same Self, only the Will or Shakti manifests in different degrees, with a different intensity and manner of working and so with different qualities & actions in each separate creature. Hence the appearance of diversity and divisibility in what is really One and indivisible.

This divisibility of the Indivisible is one of those profound paradoxes of Vedantic thought which increasing Knowledge will show to be deep and far-reaching truths. It used to be implicitly believed that human personality was a single and indivisible thing; yet recently a school of psychologists has grown up who consider man as a bundle of various personalities rather than a single, homogeneous and indivisible consciousness. For it has been found that a single man can divide himself or be divided into several personalities, each living its own life and unconscious of the other, while yet again another personality may emerge in him which is conscious of the others and yet separate from all of them. This is true; nevertheless, the *man* all through remains one and the same, not only in body but in his psychical existence; for there is a deeper substratum in him which underlies all these divided personalities and is wider than all of them put together. The truth is that the waking personality is only the apparent man, not the real. Personality is the creation of memory, for memory is its basis and pedestal. If the pedestal, then, be divided and put apart, the superstructure also must be in the same act divided and put apart. But the waking memory is only a part, a selection of a wider latent memory which has faithfully recorded all that happens not in the man's present life only, but in all his past. The personality which corresponds with this latent unerring memory is the true personality of the man; it is his soul, one infinite and indivisible, and its apparent divisions are merely the result of Avidya, false knowledge, due to defective action of the waking memory. So the apparent division of the divine Self into many human selves, of the indivisible Paramatman into many Jivatmans, is simply the result of Avidya due to the action of the Maya or self-imposed illusion of Isha, the great Force who has willed that the One by this force of Maya should become phenomenally manifold. In reality, there is no division and the Self in me is the same as the Self in you and the same as the Self up yonder in the Sun. The unity of spiritual existence is the basis of all true religion and true morality. We know indeed that as God is not contained in His universe, but the universe is in Him, so also God is not contained within a man. When the Sruti says elsewhere that the Purusha lies hidden in the heart of our being and is no larger than the size of a man's thumb, it simply means that to the mind of man under the dominion of Avidya his body, vitality, mind, reason bulk so largely, the Spirit seems a small and indistinguishable thing indeed inside so many and bulky sheaths and coverings. But in reality, it is body, vitality, mind & reason forming the apparent man that are small and trifling and it is the Spirit or real man that is large, grandiose & mighty. The apparent man exists in & by the real, not the real in the apparent; the body is in the soul, not the soul in the body. Yet for the convenience of language and our finite understanding we are compelled to say that the soul is in the body and that God is within the man; for that is how it naturally presents itself to us who use the mental standpoint and the language of a finite intelligence. The Lord, from our standpoint, is within all His creatures and He is the real self of all His creatures. My self and yourself are not really two but one. This is the second truth proceeding logically from the first, on which the Karmayogin has to lay fast hold.

V. Selflessness, the Basic Rule of Karma-Yoga

From the fundamental truth of one divine Reality pervading and surrounding all phenomenal objects and from its implied corollary, the identity of my Self with your Self, the Upanishad deduces a principle of action which holds good for all Karmayogins. "Abandon the world that thou mayst enjoy it, neither covet any man's possession." He that would save his soul, must first lose it. He who would enjoy the world, must first abandon it. Thus from an intellectual paradox the Upanishad proceeds to a moral paradox, and yet both are profound and accurate statements of fact. At first the reason revolts against an assertion so self-contradictory. If I put my food away from me, how can I enjoy it? If I throw away the sovereign in my hand, another may have the joy of it but how can I? I, Devadatta, am told to enjoy the world, yes, all that is in the world; yet I find that I have little enough to enjoy while my neighbour Harischandra has untold wealth. If I am to enjoy the world, how shall I proceed to my object? Not surely by abandoning the little I have, but by keeping fast hold on it and adding to it the much that Harischandra has. So would argue the natural man, rationally enough from his point of view, but so would not argue the Karmayogin. He will covet no man's possession, because he knows such terms as possession, mine, thine, to be false and illusory in the light of the secret tremendous truth he has got hold of, that there is nothing in this world real, desirable and worth calling by the name of bliss except Brahman, the eternal reality of things. Self-gratification and the possession of wealth and its enjoyments are transitory, illusory and attended with inevitable trouble and pain, but the enjoyment of one's identity with Brahman and the possession of Brahman are pure and undisturbed bliss. The more I possess of Him, the wider and nearer perfection will be my enjoyment. Brahman then is the only wealth the Karmayogin will covet. But how can we possess Brahman? By surrounding all things in the world with Him, by realizing Him in all things. If I am wealthy, the Lord is there in my wealth, but if I am poor, the Lord is there too in my poverty; because of His presence I can enjoy my poverty as much as I did my wealth. For it is not the wealth and the poverty which matter or are real, but only the feeling of the presence of the Lord in all things. That is one way in which I can enjoy the world by abandoning it; for the world is Brahman, the world is the Lord, and to him who has experience of it, all things are bliss, all things are enjoyment. What ground then is there left for coveting another man's possessions? Harischandra possesses merely so much gold, estates, houses, Government paper; but I, Devadatta, in my cottage, possess the Lord of the Universe and am the master & enjoyer of the whole world. It is I who am rich and not Harischandra. That is the fulfilment of his discipline for the Karmayogin.

But let us go down many steps lower. I have not yet ascended the ladder, but am still climbing. I have not yet acquired the habitual consciousness of the presence of the Lord surrounding all things as the only reality for whose sake alone transitory phenomena are precious or desirable. How in this imperfect stage of development can the Karmayogin escape from covetousness and the desire for other men's possessions? By realising more &

more the supreme bliss of a selfless habit of mind and selfless work. This is the way to his goal; this is his ladder. Unselfishness is usually imagined as the abnegation of self, a painful duty, a "mortification", something negative, irksome and arduous. That is a Western attitude, not Hindu; the European temperament is dominated by the body and the vital impulses; it undertakes altruism as a duty, a law imposed from outside, a standard of conduct and discipline; it is, in this light, something contrary to man's nature, something against which the whole man is disposed to rebel. That is not the right way to look at it. Unselfishness is not something outside the nature, but in the nature, not negative but positive, not a self-mortification and abnegation but a self-enlargement and self-fulfilment; not a law of duty but a law of self-development, not painful, but pleasurable. It is in the nature, only latent, and has to be evolved from inside, not tacked on from outside. The lion's whelp in the fable who was brought up among sheep, shrank from flesh when it was placed before him, but once he had eaten of it, the lion's instincts awoke and the habits of the sheep had no more delight for him. So it is with man. Selflessness is his true nature, but the gratification of the body and the vital impulses has become his habit, his second or false nature, because he has been accustomed to identify his body & vital impulses with himself. He, a lion, has been brought up to think himself a sheep; he, a god, has been trained to be an animal. But let him once get the taste of his true food, and the divinity in him awakes; the habits of the animal can please him no longer and he hungers after selflessness and selfless work as a lion hungers after his natural food. Only the feeling has to be evolved as a fulfilment of his nature, not painfully worked up to as a contravention of his nature. The man who regards selflessness as a duty, has not yet learned the alphabet of true altruism; it is the man who feels it as a delight and a natural craving, who has taken the right way to learn. The Hindu outlook here is the true outlook. The Hindu does not call the man who has risen above the gratification of desire a selfless man; he calls him आत्मवान्, the selfful man; that man is अनात्मवान्, that man has not found himself who still clings to the gratification of his body & vital impulses. Read that great drama of self-sacrifice, the Nagananda, and you will feel how different is the Hindu outlook from the Western; there self-sacrifice is not a painful and terrible struggle but a glorious outpouring of the nature, a passionate delight. "It is only human nature," we say indulgently of any act of selfishness. But that is an error and thrice an error. It is not human nature, but animal nature; human nature is divine & selfless and the average selfish man is selfish not because of his humanity, but because his humanity is as yet undeveloped & imperfect. Christ, Buddha, these are the perfect men; Tom, Dick & Harry are merely animals slowly shaping into men.

VI. The Philosophical Justification of Altruism

The philosophical justification for this outlook is provided for in the fundamental position of Vedanta. सोऽहं, I am He; Thou too art He; there is therefore no I and Thou, but only He. Brahman, Isha is my true self, the real Devadatta; Brahman, Isha is the true self of my neighbour, the real Harischandra. There is therefore really no Devadatta, no Harischandra, but my Self in the mental and bodily case called Devadatta and my Self in the mental and bodily case called Harischandra. If therefore Harischandra enjoys untold riches, it is I who am enjoying them; for Harischandra is my Self, — not my body in which I am imprisoned or my desires by which my body is made miserable, but my true self, the Purusha or real Man within me, who is the witness and enjoyer of all this sweet, bitter, tender, grand, beautiful, terrible, pleasant, horrible and wholly wonderful and enjoyable drama of the world which Prakriti enacts for his delectation. Once I experience this truth, I can take as much pleasure in the riches of Harischandra as if I myself were enjoying them; for I can thenceforth go out of my own self and so enter into the self of Harischandra, that his pleasure becomes my own. To do that I have simply to break down the illusory barrier of associations which confines my sense of self to my own body, mind & vitality. That this can be done, is a common experience of humanity, to which the name of love is given. Human evolution rises through love and towards love. This truth is instinctively recognised by all the great religions, even when they cannot provide any philosophical justification for a tenet to which they nevertheless attach the highest importance. The one law of Christianity which replaces all the commandments is to love one's neighbour as oneself, the moral ideal of Buddhism is selfless benevolence & beneficence to others; the moral ideal of Hinduism is the perfect sage whose delight and occupation is the good of all creatures (सर्वभूतहितरतः). It is always the same great ideal expressed with varying emphasis. But love in the sense which religion attaches to the word, depends on the realization of oneself in others. If, as Sankhya and Christian theology say, there are millions of different Purushas, if the real man in me is different and separate from the real man in another, one in kind but not in essence, there can be no feeling of identity; there can only be mental or material contact. From material contact nothing but animal feelings of passion & hatred can arise; from mental contact repulsion is as likely to arise as attraction. A separate individual Self will live its own life, pursue its own gratification or its own salvation; it can have no ground, no impulse to love another as itself, because it cannot feel that the other is itself. The Vedanta provides in the realisation of a single Self and the illusory character of all division the only real explanation of this higher or spiritual love. Altruism in the light of this one profound revealing truth becomes natural, right and inevitable. It is natural because I am not really preferring another to myself, but my wider truer self to my narrower false self, God who is in all to my single mind and body, myself in Devadatta and Harischandra to myself in Devadatta alone. It is right because by embracing in my range of feelings the enjoyment of Harischandra in addition to my own I shall make my knowledge of the universality of Brahman an experience, and not merely an intellectual conception or assent; for experience and not intellectual conception is true knowledge. It is inevitable because that is my way of evolution. As I have risen from the animal to the man, so must I rise from the man to the God; but the basis of godhead is the realisation of oneself in all things. The true aim and end of evolution is the wider and wider realisation of the universal Brahman. Towards that goal we progress, with whatever tardiness, with whatever lapses, yet inevitably, from the falsehood of matter to the truth of spirit. We leave behind, first, the low animal stage of indolence, brutishness, ignorance, wrath, lust, greed and beast violence, or as we call it in our philosophy the *tamasic* condition and rise to various human activity and energy, the *rajasic* condition; from that again we must rise to the *sattwic* condition of divine equipoise, clarity of mind, purity of soul, high selflessness, pity, love for all creatures, truth, candour, tranquillity. Even this divine height is not the highest; we must leave it behind and climb up to the peak of all things where sits the bright and passionless Lord of all, lighting up with a single ray of His splendour a million universes. On that breathless summit we shall experience the identity of our Self not only with the Self of others, but with the All-Self who is the Lord and who is Brahman. In Brahman our evolution finds its vast end and repose.

VII. The Meaning of Renunciation

The Karmayogin therefore will abandon the world that he may enjoy; he will not seek, as Alexander did, to possess the whole world with a material lordship, but, as Gods do, to possess it in his soul. He will lose himself in his own limited being, that he may find himself illimitably in the being of others. The abandonment of the world means nothing less than this, that we give up our own petty personal joy and pleasure to bathe up to the eyes in the joy of others; and the joys of one man may be as great as you please, the united joys of a hundred must needs be greater. By renouncing enjoyment you can increase your enjoyment a hundredfold. That was ever the privilege of the true lover. If you are [a] true lover of a woman, it is her joys far more than your own that make your happiness; if you are a true lover of your friends, their prosperity and radiant faces will give you a delight which you could never have found in your own small and bounded pleasures; if you are a true lover of your nation, the joy, glory and wealth of all its millions will be yours; if you are a true lover of mankind, all the joys of the countless millions of the earth will flow like an ocean of nectar through your soul. You will say that their sorrows too will be yours. But is not the privilege of sharing the sorrows of those you love a more precious thing than your own happiness? Count too the other happinesses which that partnership in sorrow can bring to you. If you have power, — and Yoga always brings some power with it, — you may have the unsurpassable joy of solacing or turning into bliss the sorrow of your friend or lover, or the sufferings and degradation of the nation for which you sacrifice yourself or the woes of the humanity in whom you are trying to realize God. Even the mere continuous patient resolute effort to do this is a joy unspeakable; even defeat in such a cause is a stern pleasure that strengthens you for new and invincible endeavour. And if you have not the power to relieve or the means to carry on the struggle, there is still left you the joy of suffering or dying for others. "Greater love than this has no man, that he should die for his friend." Yes, but that greatest love of all means also the greatest joy of all. "It is a sweet and noble thing to die for one's country." How many a patriot in his last moments has felt that this was no empty poetical moralising, but the feeble understatement of a wonderful and inexpressible reality. They say that Christ suffered on the cross! The body suffered, doubtless, but did Christ suffer or did he not rather feel the joy of godhead in his soul? The agony of Gethsemane was not the agony of the coming crucifixion, the cup which he prayed might be taken from his lips, was not the cup of physical suffering, but the bitter cup of the sins of mankind which he had been sent to drink. If it were not so, we should have to say that this Jesus was not the Christ, not the Son of God, not the avatar who dared to say "I and my Father are one", but a poor weak human being who under the illusion of Maya mistook his body for himself. Always remember that it is not the weak in spirit to whom the Eternal gives himself wholly; it is the strong heroic soul that reaches God. Others can only touch his shadow from afar. नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यो न च प्रमादात्तपसो वाप्यलिङ्गात्।

The abandonment of the world which is demanded of the

Karmayogin is not necessarily a physical abandonment. You are not asked to give up your house and wealth, your wife, your children, your friends. What you have to give up is your selfish desire for them and your habit of regarding them as your possessions and chattels who are yours merely in order to give you pleasure. You are not asked to throw away the objects of your desire, but to give them up in your heart. It is the desire you have to part with and not the objects of the desire. The abandonment demanded of you is therefore a spiritual abandonment; the power to enjoy your material possessions in such spirit of detachment that you will not be overjoyed by gain, nor cast down by loss, is the test of its reality, — not the mere flight from their presence, which is simply a flight from temptation. The Karmayogin has to remain in the world & conquer it; he is not allowed to flee from the scene of conflict and shun the battle. His part in life is the part of the hero, — the one quality he must possess, is the lionlike courage that will dare to meet its spiritual enemies in their own country and citadel and tread them down under its heel. A spiritual abandonment then, — for the body only matters as the case of the spirit; it is the spirit on which the Karmayogin must concentrate his effort. To purify the body is well, only because it makes it easier to purify the spirit; in itself it is of no importance; but if the soul is pure, the body cannot be touched by uncleanness. If the spirit itself is not stained by desire, the material enjoyment of the objects of desire cannot stain it. For if my spirit does not lust after new wealth or cling to the wealth I have, then my use of riches must necessarily be selfless and without blame; and having parted with them in spirit and given them into the treasury of God, I can then truly enjoy their possession. That enjoyment is clear, deep and calm; fate cannot break it, robbers cannot take it away, enemies cannot overwhelm it. All other joy of possession is chequered and broken with fear, sorrow, trouble and passion, — the passion for its increase, the trouble of keeping it unimpaired, the sorrow for its diminution, the fear of its utter loss. Passionless enjoyment alone is pure & unmixed delight. If indeed you choose to abandon riches physically as well as in spirit, that too is well, provided you take care that you are not cherishing the thought of them in your mind. There is another curious law of which many who follow the path of spiritual renunciation, have had experience. It is this that such renunciation is often followed by a singular tendency for wealth to seek him who has ceased to seek wealth. A strong capable will bent on money-making, will doubtless win its desire, but at least as often wealth, fame and success flee from the man who longs after them and come to him who has conquered his longing. Their lover perishes without winning them or reaches them through deep mire of sin or a hell of difficulty or over mountains of toil, while the man who has turned his back on them, finds them crowding to lay themselves at his feet. He may then either enjoy or reject them. The latter is a great path and has been the chosen way of innumerable saintly sages. But the Karmayogin may enjoy them, not for his personal pleasure certainly, not for his false self, since that sort of enjoyment he has abandoned in his heart, but God in them and them for God. As a king merely touching the nazzerana passes it on to the public treasury, so shall the Karmayogin, merely touching the wealth that comes to him, pour it out for those around him, for the poor, for the worker, for his country, for humanity because he sees Brahman in all these. Glory, if it comes to him, he will veil in many folds of quiet and unobtrusive humility and use the influence it gives not for his own purposes but to help men more effectively in their needs or to lead them upward to the divine. Such a man will quickly rise above joy and sorrow, success and failure, victory and defeat; for in sorrow as in joy he will feel himself to be near God. That nearness will deepen into continual companionship and by companionship he will grow ever liker God in his spiritual image until he reaches the last summit of complete identity when man, the God who has forgotten his godhead, remembers utterly and becomes the Eternal. Selflessness then is the real & only law of renunciation; in the love of one's wider self in others, it has its rise; by the feeling of the divine presence in all earthly objects, it becomes rooted & unshakeable; the realization of the Brahman is its completion and goal.

Chapter II

Salvation through Works

I

The law of spiritual abandonment in preference to mere physical abandonment, is the solution enounced by Srikrishna, the greatest of all teachers, for a deep and vexed problem which has troubled the Hindu consciousness from ancient times. There are, as we know, three means of salvation; salvation by knowledge, the central position in Buddhism; salvation by faith & love, the central position in Christianity; salvation by faith & works, the central position in Mahomedanism. In Hinduism, the Sanatandharma, all these three paths are equally accepted. But in all three the peculiar and central religious experience of Hinduism, — the reality & eternity of the Self, the transience & unreality of all else, — is insisted upon as the guiding principle & indispensable idea. This is the bridge which carries you over to immortality; this is the gate of salvation. The Jnanamargin envisages only one reality, the Brahman, and by turning away from all that is phenomenal and seeking the One reality in himself, enters into the being of the Eternal. The Bhakta envisages only two realities, God & himself, and by the ecstatic union of himself with God through love and adoration, enters into the pure and unmixed presence of the Eternal. The Karmamargin envisages three realities which are one; the Eternal in Itself, pure and without a second, the Eternal as a transcendent Will or Force manifesting Himself phenomenally but not really in cosmic work & the Eternal in the Jivatman, manifesting Himself similarly in individual work in a finite body; and he too, by abandoning desire and laying his works upon God, attains likeness to the Eternal and through that gate enters into identity with the Eternal. In one thing all these agree, the transience & unreality of phenomenal existence. But if phenomenal existence is unreal, of what use is it to remain in the world? Let us abandon house and wealth and wife and friends and children; let us flee from them to the solitude of mountain & forest and escape as soon as possible by knowledge & meditation from the world of phenomena. Such was the cry that arose in India before and after the days of Buddha, when the power of the Jnanamarga was the strongest on the Hindu consciousness. The language of the Bhakta is not very different; "Let us leave the things of the world," he cries, "let us forget all else and think and speak only of the name of Hari." Both have insisted that works and the world are a snare & a bondage from which it is best to flee. The Karmayogin alone has set himself against the current and tried to stand in the midmost of the cosmic stir, in the very surge and flux of phenomena without being washed away in the tide. Few, he has said, who remain in the world, can be above the world and live in communion with the Eternal; but few also who flee to the mountains, really attain Him, and few of those who spend their days in crying Lord, Lord, are accepted by Him to whom they cry. It is always the many who are called, the few who are chosen. And if Janak could remain in the world and be ever with God in the full luxury, power & splendour of the life of a great king, if Rama & Srikrishna lived in the world and did the works of the world, yet were God, who shall say that salvation cannot be attained in the midst of actions, nay, even through the instrumentality of actions? To this dispute the answer of Srikrishna is the one solution. To abandon desire in the spirit is the one thing needful; if one fail to do this, it is vain for him to practise Yoga in mountain or forest solitude, it is vain to sing the name of Hari and cry Lord, Lord, from morn to night, it is vain to hope for safety by "doing one's duty in the world". The man unpurified of desire, whatever way he follows, will not find salvation. But if he can purify his spirit of desire, then whether on solitary mountain and in tiger-haunted forest, or in Brindavun the beautiful, or in the king's court, the trader's shop or the hut of the peasant, salvation is already in his grasp. For the condition of salvation is to leave the lower unreal self and turn to the real Self; and the stain & brand of the lower self is desire. Get rid of desire and the doors of the

Eternal stand wide open for your soul to enter in. The way of the Sannyasin who leaves the world and devotes all himself to Jnana or Bhakti, is a good way, and there is none better; but the way of the Tyagin who lives among sense-objects and in the whirl of action without cherishing the first or yielding to the rush of the second, is the right way for the Karmayogin. This is what the Upanishad with great emphasis proceeds to establish as the second rule of conduct for the Karmamargin.

"Do, verily, thy deeds in this world and wish to live thy hundred years, for thus to thee and there is no other way than this, action cleaveth not to a man."

A hundred years is the full span of a man's natural life when he observes all the laws of his nature and keeps his body and mind pure by the use of pure food, by pure ways of living, by purity of thought and by self-restraint in the satisfaction of his desires. The term is ordinarily diminished by heedlessness, sin, contamination or the effects of our past action in other lives; it may, on the other hand, be increased to hundreds of years by Yoga. But the Karmayogin will neither desire to increase his term of life nor to diminish it. To increase his term of life would show a desire for and clinging to phenomenal existence quite inconsistent with that abandonment of desire which we have seen to be the fundamental law of Karmayoga. A few great Yogis have prolonged their lives without personal desire merely to help the world by their presence or example. These are exceptional cases which the ordinary Karmamargin need not keep in view. On the other hand we must not turn our backs on life; we must not fling it from us untimely or even long for an early release from our body, but willingly fill out our term and even be most ready to prolong it to the full period of man's ordinary existence so that we may go on doing our deeds in this world. Mark the emphasis laid on the word कुर्वन् "doing" by adding to it the particle एव, the force of which is to exclude any other action, state, person or thing than the one expressed by the word to which it is attached. Verily we must do our deeds in this world and not avoid doing them. There is no need to flee to the mountains in order to find God. He is not a hill-man or a serpent that we should seek for Him only in cave & on summit; nor a deer or tiger that the forest only can harbour Him. He is here, in you and around you; He is in these men and women whom you see daily, with whom you talk & pass your life. In the roar of the city you can find Him and in the quiet of the village, He is there. You may go to the mountains for a while, if the din of life deafens you & you wish to seek solitude to meditate; for to the Karmayogin also Jnana is necessary and solitude is the nurse of knowledge. You may sit by the Ganges or the Narmada near some quiet temple or in some sacred asram to adore the Lord; for to the Karmayogin also *bhakti* is necessary, and places like these which are saturated with the *bhakti* of great saints and impassioned God-lovers best feed and strengthen the impulse of adoration in the soul. But if Karmayoga be your path, you must come back and live again in the stir of the world. In no case flee to solitude and inaction as a coward and weakling, — not in the hope of finding God, but because you think you can by this means escape from the miseries and misfortunes of your life which you are too weak to face. It is not the weak and the coward who can climb up to God, but the strong and brave alone. Every individual Jivatman must become the perfect Kshatriya before he can become the Brahmin. For there is a caste of the soul which is truer and deeper than that of the body. Through four soul-stages a man must pass before he can be perfect; first, as a Sudra, by service and obedience to tame the brute in his being; then, as a Vaishya to satisfy within the law of morality the lower man in him and evolve the higher man by getting the first taste of delight in well-doing to others than himself and his; then, as the Kshatriya, to be trained in those first qualities without which the pursuit of the Eternal is impossible, courage, strength, unconquerable tenacity and self-devotion to a great task; last, as the Brahmin, so to purify body & mind and nature that he may see the Eternal reflected in himself as in an unsoiled mirror. Having once seen God, man can have no farther object in life than to reach and possess Him. Now the Karmayogin is a soul that is already firmly established in the Kshatriya stage and is rising from it through an easily-attained

Brahminhood straight & swift to God. If he loses hold of his courage & heroism, he loses his footing on the very standing-ground from which he is to heighten himself in his spiritual stature until his hand can reach up to and touch the Eternal. Let his footing be lost, & what can he do but fall?

II. Vairagya.

Disgust with the world, the shrinking from the phenomenal life and the desire to escape from it to the Eternal, is called, in our terminology, *vairagya*. *Vairagya* is the turning of the soul to its salvation; but we must be on our guard against the false shows and imitations of it to which our minds are subject. "I am continually battered with the siege of sorrows & miseries; I cannot cope with the world; let me therefore get away from the world, put on the saffron robe and be at peace from anxiety and grief"; that is not the language of real *vairagya*. Just as you recognize a genuine article from the imitation by its trademark, so there is a mark by which you recognize the true Sannyasin. Not weariness of the phenomenal world by itself, but this world-weariness accompanied by a thirst for the Eternal, that is the real *vairagya*. The thirst for the Eternal is the trademark; look for it always and see that it is the real trademark, not an imperfect & fraudulent reproduction. The saffron robe nowadays covers a great deal of selfishness, a great deal of idleness, a great deal of hypocrisy. It is not the robe which is the trademark, but the longing for the Eternal. Nor is it the talk and the outward action which is the trademark, for that may be a mere imitation. Look in the eyes, watch the slighter, less observed habits, wait for a light on the face; then you will find the trademark. Apply the same test to yourself. When you think you have *vairagya*, ask yourself, "Is this mere weariness & disgust, a weak fainting of the soul, or can I detect in it even in a slight degree an awakening of the Self and a desire for that which is not transient but eternal, not bound to sin and chequered with sorrow, but pure and free?" If after severe self-examination, you can detect this desire in yourself, know that your salvation has begun.

There are many kinds of *vairagya*, some true, some false. There is one *vairagya*, deep, intense & energetic, when the strong man having tasted the sweets of the world finds that there is in them no permanent and abiding sweetness; they are not the true and immortal joy which his true and immortal self demands, so he turns from them to something in his being which is deeper and holier, the joy of the inexhaustible and imperishable spirit within. Then there is the *vairagya*, false or transient, of the hypocrite or weakling, who has lusted and panted and thirsted for the world's sweets, but has been pushed and hustled from the board by Fate or by stronger men than himself, and seeks in the outward life of the Sannyasin a slothful and thornless road to honour and ease and the satisfaction of greed, or else would use Yoga and Sannyas as the drunkard uses his bottle or the slave of opium his pill or his daily draught. Not for such ignoble purpose were these great things meant by the Rishis who disclosed them to the world. Beware of such weakness. क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते। Truly is such base weakness unworthy of one who is no other than Brahman, the Eternal, the Creator, Protector and Destroyer of worlds. But on the other hand there is a true *vairagya* of sorrow and disappointment; sometimes men have tried in their ignorance for ignoble things and failed, not from weakness but because these things were not in their nature, were unfit for them and below their true greatness and high destiny. The sorrow and disappointment were necessary to open their eyes to their true selves; then they seek solitude, meditation & Samadhi, not as a dram to drown their sorrow and yet unsated longing, but because their yearning is no longer for unworthy things but for the love of God or the knowledge of the Eternal. Sometimes great spirits enter the way of the Sannyasin, because in the solitude alone with the Eternal they can best develop their divine strength (*Brahmatej*) to use it for divine purposes. Once attained they pour it in a stream of divine knowledge or divine love over the world; such were Shankaracharya and Ramakrishna. Sometimes it is the sorrows & miseries of the world that find them in ease & felicity and drive them out, as Buddha & Christ were driven out, to seek light for the ignorant and help for sufferers in the depths of their own being. True Sannyasins are the greatest of all workers, because they have the most unalloyed & inexhaustible strength and are the mightiest in God to do the works of God.

Whatever be the precise nature of the *vairagya* or its immediate & exciting cause, if the thirst for the Eternal mingle in it, know that it is real *vairagya* and the necessary impulse towards your salvation. You must pass through this stage if you are to reach the Eternal at all. For if you do not get weary of the phenomenal, your mind cannot turn to the Eternal; the attraction of the phenomenal, keeps your eyes turned downward & not upward, outward & not inward. Welcome therefore the first inrush of *vairagya* into your life, but remember it is a first stage on the road, not the goal. Swami Bhaskarananda was driven into Sannyas by a keen & overmastering disgust of life in the world, but when he had attained *mukti*, the state of his mind so changed that if his wife had been living, he would have lived with her in the world as one in the world; an idea shocking to priestly & learnèd orthodoxy, but natural to the Jivanmukta. Sri Ramakrishna, when he had attained identity with the Lord, could not indeed return to the world as a householder or bear the touch of worldly things, — for he was the incarnation of utter Bhakti, — but he took as much delight in the Eternal manifested in phenomena & especially in man as in the pure actionless Brahman with whom he became one in Samadhi. The Karmamargin must pass through the condition of Vairagya, but he will not abide in it. Or to speak more accurately he will retain the spiritual element in it and reject the physical. The spiritual element of *vairagya* is the turning away from the selfish desire for phenomenal objects and actions; the physical element is the fear of and shrinking from the objects & actions themselves. The retention of the spiritual element is necessary to all Yogins; the retention of the physical element, though often a sign of great physical purity and saintliness, is not essential to salvation.

Do not be shaken by the high authority of many who say that to leave the world is necessary to the seeker after Brahman and that salvation cannot come by works. For we have a greater authority than any to set against them, the teaching of Srikrishna himself. He tells Sanjay in the Mahabharata that as between the gospel of action and the gospel of inaction, it is the former that is to his mind and the latter strikes him as the idle talk of a weakling. So too, in the Gita, while laying stress on Jnana & Bhakti, he will by no means banish Karma nor relegate it to an inferior place; the most significant portion of the Gita is its eulogy of Karmayoga and inspired exposition of its nature & principles. Jnana, of course, is indispensable; Jnana is first & best. Works without knowledge will not save a man but only plunge him deeper & deeper into bondage. The Upanishad, before it speaks of the necessity of works, takes care first to insist that you must realise the presence of the Lord enveloping this universe & each object that it contains. When you have got this Jnana that all is the One Brahman and your actions are but the dramatic illusions unrolled by Prakriti for the delight of the Purusha, you will then be able to do works without desire or illusion, abandoning the world that you may enjoy it, as the Upanishad tells you, or as Sri Krishna advises, giving up all hankering for the fruits of your work. You will devote all your actions to the Lord; not to the lower false self, which feels pleasure & pain in the results of your actions, but to the Brahman in you which works लोकसंग्रहार्थं, for the keeping together of the peoples, so that instead of the uninstructed multitudes being bewildered and led astray by your inactivity, the world may be rather helped, strengthened and maintained by the godlike character of your works. And your works must be godlike if they are done without desire or attachment to their fruits. For this is how God works. The world is His *lila*, His play & sport, not a purposeful stir and struggle out of which He is to gain something and be benefited. The great empire in which you glory & think it is to be eternal, is to Him no more than the house of sand which a child has built in his play. He has made it and He will break it, and, one day, it will be as if it had never been. The very Sun and its glorious wheeling planets are but momentary toys in His hands. Once they were not, now they are, a day will come & they will no longer be. Yet while

He works on these things, He works like the boy when he is building his castle of sand, as if the work were to be permanent and for all time.

> न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय।
> उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु॥

"And yet these actions bind Me not, Dhanunjoy, for I sit as one unconcerned and I have no attachment to these My works." Actions performed after renunciation, actions devoted to God, these only do not cling to a man nor bind him in their invisible chains, but rather fall from him as water from the wings of a swan. They cannot bind him because he is free from the woven net of causality. Cause and effect exist only in the idea of duality which has its root in Avidya; the Yogin when he has renounced desire and experienced unity, rises above Avidya & her children, and bondage has no farther meaning for him. This is the goal of the Karmayogin as of all Yoga, but the path for him is through spiritual Vairagya, the renunciation of desire, not through physical separation from the objects of desire. This the Upanishad emphasizes in the second line of the verse. "Thus to thee; and there is no other way than this, action clingeth not to a man." एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे। This is conclusive and beyond appeal.

III. One Road and not Three.

"There is no other way than this." By this expression it is not intended that Karmayoga is the only path of salvation for all men, but that the renunciation of desire is essential to salvation; every Yogin, be he Jnani, Bhakta, or Karmi, must devote whatever work he may be doing to the Eternal. To the Karmayogin indeed this path is the only possible way; for it is the *swabhava* or nature of a man which decides the way he shall take. If a born Jnani becomes the disciple of a great Bhakta, however submissively he may accept his Master's teachings, however largely he may infuse his Jnana with Bhakti, yet eventually it is the way of Jnana he must take and no other. For that is his *swabhava* or nature, his *dharma* or the law of his being. If the Brahmin predominates in him, he will be drawn into Jnana; if the Kshatriya, into works; if the Sudra or Vaisya, the child or woman, to Bhakti. If he is born saint or avatar, he will harmonize all three, but still with one predominant over the others and striking the main note of his life and teaching. It is always the predominance of one or other, not its unmixed control, which decides the path; for as with the Karmayogin, the devotion of works to God brings inevitably the love of God, and love gives knowledge, so it is with the Bhakta; the love of God will of itself direct all his works to God and bring him straight to knowledge. So it is even with the Jnani; the knowledge of the Brahman means delight in Him, and that is Bhakti; and this love & knowledge cannot let him live to himself but will make him live to Brahman, and that is divine Karma. The three paths are really one, but the Jnani takes the right hand, the Bhakta the left hand and the Karmayogin walks in the middle; while on the way each prefers his own choice as best and thinks the others inferior, but when they reach the goal, they find that none was inferior or superior, but it was one road they were following which only seemed to be three.

The Jnani & Bhakta shrink from the idea of Karma as a means of salvation. Unillumined Karma is such a stumbling block in the path of the seeker that they can hardly regard even illumined & desireless Karma as anything but a subordinate discipline whose only value is to prepare a man for Bhakti or Jnan. They will not easily concede that *karma* can be by itself a direct and sufficient road to Brahman. So Shankaracharya disparages *karma*, and Shankaracharya's is an authority which no man can dare to belittle. Nevertheless even the greatest are conditioned by their nature, by the times they work in and by the kind of work they have come to do. In the age that Shankara lived in, it was right that Jnana should be exalted at the expense of works. The great living force with which he had to deal, was not the heresies of later Buddhism, Buddhism decayed and senescent, but the triumphant Karmakanda which made the faithful performance of Vedic ceremonies the one path and heaven the highest goal. In his continual anxiety to prove that these ceremonies could not be the path, he bent the bow as far as he could in the other direction and left the impression that works could not be the path to salvation at all. Had he laid stress on Karma as one of the ways to salvation, the people would not have understood him; they would have thought that they had one more authority for their belief in rites and ceremonies as all-sufficient for salvation. These things must be remembered when we find Shankara and Ramanuja and Madhwa differing so widely from each other in their interpretation of the Upanishad. It was necessary that the Scripture should be interpreted by Shankara wholly in the light of Adwaita, the Monistic conception of the Eternal, so that the Monistic idea might receive its definite and consummate philosophical expression; for a similar reason it was necessary that Madhwa should interpret them wholly in the light of the Dwaita or dualistic conception and that Ramanuja should find a reconciliation in Visishtadwaita, a modified Monism. All these conceptions of the Eternal have their own truth and their own usefulness to the soul in its effort to reach Him. But the Upanishad is not concerned only with the ultimate reality of the Brahman to Himself, but also with His reality in His universe and His reality to the Jivatman or individual self. It is therefore sometimes Adwaitic, sometimes Dwaitic, sometimes Visishtadwaitic, and we should have the courage now to leave the paths which the mighty dead have trod out for us, discharge from our mind all preconceived philosophies and ask only, "What does the Upanishad actually say?" Never mind whether the interpretation arrived at seems to be self-contradictory to the logician or incoherent to the metaphysical reasoner; it will be enough if it is true in the experience of the seeker after God. For the Eternal is infinite and cannot be cabined within the narrow limits of a logical formula.

IV. The denial of salvation by works

What is it, after all, to which the denial of salvation by works amounts, when looked at not from the standpoint of logic only but of actual spiritual experience? Some people when they talk of Karma or works, think only of rites and ceremonies, Vedic, Puranic or Tantric. That kind of works, certainly, do not bring us to salvation. They may give success & great joy, power and splendour in this world. Or they may lead to enjoyment after death in Paradise; but Paradise is not salvation; it is a temporary joyous condition of the soul, the pleasure of which ceases when the cause is exhausted. Or these rites may lead to the conscious possession and use of occult powers, latent in ordinary men, by which you may help or harm others; but the possession of occult powers cannot be an assistance, it is indeed often a hindrance to salvation. Or rites and ceremonies may purify and prepare the mind and fit it for starting on one of the paths to salvation. This indeed is their only helpfulness for the true aim of our existence. They are no more than an infant or preparatory class in the school of Brahmavidya.

It is evident again that works done with desire, works done without knowledge and not devoted to God, cannot lead to salvation, but only to continued bondage. Works prompted by desire, lead only to the fulfilment of desire; nor do they disappear in that consummation. For all work that we do, has, besides its effect on ourselves, infinite effects on others and on the general course of phenomena; these in their turn become causes and produce fresh effects; so the ripple continues widening till we lose sight of it in the distance of futurity. For all the effects of our action we are responsible and by each new thing we do, we are entering into so many debts which we must discharge before we can be released from the obligation of phenomenal existence. Existence in phenomena may be imaged as a debtor's prison in which the soul is detained by a million creditors not one of whom will forgive one farthing of his claims. But those claims we can never discharge; each sum we get to pay off our old creditors, we can only procure by entering into fresh debts which put us at the mercy of new and equally implacable claimants. Nature, the great judge and gaoler, is ever giving fresh decrees against us, for her law is inexorable and will not admit of remission or indulgence. We can obtain our release only by escaping from her jurisdiction into the divine sanctuary where the slave of Nature, by his very entry, becomes free and her master.

But the works of the Karmayogin are works done with knowledge and without desire. These certainly cannot prevent release or lead to fresh debt and fresh bondage. For bondage is the result of desire and ignorance and disappears with desire and ignorance. Desire & ignorance are indeed the boundaries of Nature's jurisdiction and once we have left them behind, we have passed out of her kingdom; we have taken sanctuary from her pursuit and are freemen released from the action of her laws. To deny the innocence of works without desire would be to deny reason, to deny Sruti, to deny facts. For Janaka and others did works, Srikrishna did works, but none will say that either the *avatar* or the *jivanmukta* were bound by his works; for their *karma* was done with knowledge and without desire. Works without desire, then, cannot prevent salvation or lead to fresh bondage.

It may be argued, however, that if they do not prevent salvation, neither do they help towards salvation. The works of the Bhakta or Jnani do not bind him because he has attained the Eternal and by the strength of that attainment becomes free from desire and ignorance; but works done before attainment can be nothing but means of bondage; only the pursuit of God-knowledge and the worship & adoration of God, to which the name of works does not properly apply, are free from responsibility. But this reasoning too is not consistent with divine teaching, with experience or with reason. For divine teaching distinctly tells us that works done after abandonment of the world and devoted to God only, do lead to salvation. We know also that a single action done without desire and devoted to the Lord, gives us strength for fresh actions of the same kind, and the persistent repetition of such works must form the habit of desirelessness & self-devotion to Him, which then become our nature and atmosphere. We have already seen that desirelessness necessarily takes us outside the jurisdiction of Nature, and when we are outside the jurisdiction of Nature, where can we be if not in the presence of the Eternal? Nor can self-devotion to the Lord be reasonably said not to lead to the Lord; for where else can it lead? It is clear therefore that works without desire not only do not prevent salvation but are a mighty help towards salvation.

It may still be argued that works without desire help only because they lead to devotion and knowledge and there their function ceases; they bring the soul to a certain stage but do not carry it direct to God. It is therefore devotion and knowledge, bhakti and jnana, which alone bring us to God. As soon as either of these takes him by the hand, karma must leave him, just as rites & ceremonies must leave him, and its function is therefore not essentially higher than that of rites & ceremonies. But if this were good reasoning, the Karmayogin might equally well say that Bhakti leads to knowledge and the devotion of one's works to the Lord; therefore knowledge and works without desire bring a man to the Eternal and *bhakti* is only a preliminary means; or that *jnana* leads to adoration of the Eternal and devotion of all one does to him, therefore *bhakti* and works without desire alone bring the soul direct to God and *jnana* is only a preliminary means. Or if it is said that works must cease at a certain stage while Bhakti and Jnana do not cease, this too is inconsistent with experience. For Janaka and others did works after they attained the Eternal and while they were in the body, did not cease from works. It cannot even be said that works though they need not necessarily cease after the attainment of the Eternal, yet need not continue. Particular works need not continue; rites & ceremonies need not continue; the life of the householder need not continue. But work continues so long as the body gross or subtle continues; for both the gross body and the subtle body, both the physical case & the soul-case are always part of Prakriti, and whatever is Prakriti, must do work. The Gita says this plainly

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत्।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः॥

"For no man verily remaineth even for a moment without doing works, for all are helplessly made to do work by the moods to which Nature has given birth." And again सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि। "Even the Jnani moveth & doeth after the semblance of his own nature; for created things follow after their nature and what can forcing it do?" A man works according to his nature and cannot help doing work; but he can choose to what he shall direct his works, whether to his lower self or his higher, whether to desire or to God. The man who leaves the world behind him and sits on a mountaintop or in an asram, has not therefore got rid of works. If nothing else he has to maintain his body, to eat, to walk, to move his limbs, to sit in *asan* and meditate; all this is work. And not only his body works; his mind is far more active than his body. If he is not released from desire, his work will bind him and bear fruit in relation to himself and others. Even if he is released from desire, his body & mind are not free from Karma until he is able to get rid of them finally, and that will not be till his *prarabdha karma* has worked itself out and the debts he has written against his name are wiped off. Even the greatest Yogi by his mere bodily presence in the world, is pouring out a stream of spiritual force on all sides; this action does not bind him, it is true, yet it is work and work which exercises a stupendous influence on others. He is सर्वभूतहितरतः, busy doing good to all creatures by his very nature, even though he does not lift a finger or move a step. He too with regard to his body, gross & subtle, is अवशः, he must let the gunas, the moods of Nature, work. He may control that work, for he is no longer the slave of Prakriti, but he cannot stop it except by finally leaving his body & mind through Yoga with the Eternal. Work therefore does not cease any more than Bhakti or Jnana.

Shankara indeed says that when we have got Jnana, we necessarily cease to do works, for Jnana makes us one with the Eternal who is actionless अकर्ता. Yet Janaka knew the Eternal and did works; Sri Krishna was the Eternal and did works. For Brahman the Eternal, is both कर्ता and अकर्ता; He works and He does not work. As Sacchidananda, He is above works, but He is also above knowledge and above devotion. When the Jivatman becomes Sacchidananda, devotion is lost in Ananda or absolute bliss, knowledge is lost in Chit or absolute Consciousness, works are lost in Sat or absolute Existence. But as Isha or Shakti, He does works by which He is not bound and the Jivatman also when he is made one with Isha or Shakti continues to do works without being bound.

Works therefore do not cease in the body, nor do they cease after we have left the body except by union with the actionless Sacchidananda or *laya* in the Unknowable Brahman, where Jnana and Bhakti also are swallowed up in unfathomable being. Even of the Unknowable Parabrahman too it cannot be said that It is actionless; It is neither कर्ता nor अकर्ता. It is néti, néti, not this, not that, unexplicable and inexpressible in terms of speech and mind. We need not therefore fear that works without desire will not lead us straight to the Eternal; we need not think that we must give up works in order that we may develop the love of God or attain the knowledge of God.

V. Mukti and the Jivanmukta.

The ideal of the Karmayogin is the Jivanmukta, the self who has attained salvation but instead of immediately passing out of phenomenal existence, remains in it, free from its bondage. There are three kinds of salvation which are relative & partial; *salokya* or constant companionship with the Lord, *sadrishya*, or permanent resemblance to Him in one's nature & actions, and *sayujya* or constant union of the individual self with the Eternal. It is supposed by some schools that entire salvation consists in *laya* or absorption into the Eternal, in other words entire self-removal from phenomena and entrance into the utter being of the unconditioned and unknowable Parabrahman. Such *laya* is not possible in the body, but can only begin, *adehanipatat*, as soon as the Self throws away all its bodies and reenters into its absolute existence. It is not indeed the mere mechanical change of death that brings about this result, but the will of the Self to throw aside all its bodies and never returning to them pass rather out of that state of consciousness in the Eternal in which He looks upon Himself as a Will or Force. This, however, is an extreme attitude. Complete self-identification with the Eternal, such as we find in the Jivanmukta, is complete *mukti*; for the Jivanmukta can at will withdraw himself in Samadhi into the being of Sacchidananda, who is actionless and turned away from phenomena; and can at will look again towards phenomena, dealing with them as their Lord who puts them to work without being touched by their stir and motion. For the Jivanmukta *laya*, absorption into the Unknowable, can be accomplished at his will; but he does not will it.

The reason for his not willing this utter departure brings us to the very essence of Mukti. Why do men hanker after complete absorption into the unphenomenal? why do they flee from Karma and dread lest it should interfere with their salvation? Because they feel that phenomenal life and works are a bondage and they desire to be free and not bound. This state of mind can only last so long as the seeker is the *mumukshu*, the self desirous of freedom, but when he is actually *mukta*, the free self, the terror of Maya and her works cannot abide with him. *Mukti*, which we have to render in English by salvation, means really release. But release from what bondage, salvation from what tyranny? From the bondage of Maya, from the tyranny of Avidya which will have us believe that we are finite, mortal and bound, who are not finite, but infinite, not mortal, but deathless & immutable, not bound, but always free. The moment you have realised that Avidya is illusion and there is nothing but the Eternal, and never was anything but the Eternal and never will be anything but the Eternal, the moment you have not merely intellectually grasped the idea but come to have habitual experience of the fact, from that moment you will know that you are not bound, never were bound and never will be bound. Avidya consists precisely in this that the Jivatman thinks there is something else than the Eternal which can throw him into bondage and that he himself is something else than the Eternal and can be bound. When the Jivatman shakes off these illusory impressions of Avidya, he realises that there is nothing but Brahman the Eternal who is in His very nature *nityamukta*, from ever and forever free. He can therefore have no fear of Karma nor shrink from it lest it should bind him, for he knows that the feeling of bondage is itself an illusion. He will be ready not only to do his deeds in this world and live out his hundred years, but to be reborn as Srikrishna himself has promised to be reborn again and again and as other avatars have promised to be reborn. For however often he may enter into phenomenal life, he has no farther terror of Maya and her bondage. Once free, always free.

Even if he does not will to be reborn, he will be careful not to leave the world of phenomena until his *prarabdha karma* is worked out. There are certain debts standing against his name in the ledger of Nature and these he will first absolve. Of course the Jivanmukta is not legally bound by his debts to Nature, for all the promissory notes he has executed in her name have been burned up in the fire of Mukti. He is now free and lord, the master of Prakriti, not its slave. But the Prakriti attached to this Jivatman has created, while in the illusion of bondage, causes which must be allowed to work out their effects; otherwise the chain of causation is snapped and a disturbance is brought about in the economy of Nature. उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोकाः. In order therefore to maintain the law of the world unimpaired, the Jivanmukta remains amid works like a prisoner on parole, not bound by the fetters of Prakriti, but detained by his own will until the time appointed for his captivity shall have elapsed.

The Jivanmukta is the ideal of the Karmayogin and though he may not reach his ideal in this life or the next, still he must always strive to model himself upon it. Do therefore your deeds in this world and wish to live your hundred years. You should be willing to live your allotted term of life not for the sake of long living, but because the real you in the body is Brahman who by the force of His own Shakti is playing for Himself and by Himself this dramatic *lila* of creation, preservation and destruction. He is Isha, the Lord, Creator, Preserver and Destroyer; and you also in the field of your own Prakriti are the lord, creator, preserver and destroyer. You are He; only for your own amusement you have imagined yourself limited to a particular body for the purposes of the play, just as an actor imagines himself to be Dushyanta, Rama or Ravana. The actor has lost himself in the play and for a moment thinks that he is what he is acting; he has forgotten that he is really not Dushyanta or Rama, but Devadatta who has played & will yet play a hundred parts besides. When he shakes off this illusion and remembers that he is Devadatta, he does not therefore walk off the stage and by refusing to act, break up the play, but goes on playing his best till the proper time comes for him to leave the stage. The object of this phenomenal world is creation and it is our business, while we are in the body, to create. Only, so long as we forget our true Self, we create like servants under the compulsion of Prakriti and are slaves and bound by her actions which we falsely imagine to be our own. But when we know and experience our true Self, then we are masters of Prakriti and not bound by her creations. Our Self becomes the Sakshi, the silent spectator of the actions of our Nature which she models in the way she thinks would best please it. So are we at once spectator and actor; and yet because we know the whole to be merely an illusion of apparent actions, because we know that Rama is not really killing Ravana, nor Ravana being killed, for Ravana lives as much after the supposed death as before, so are we neither spectator nor actor, but the Self only and all we see nothing but visions of the Self. The Karmamargin therefore will not try or wish to abandon actions while he is in this world, but only the desire for their fruits; neither will he try or wish to leave his life in this world before its appointed end. The man who violently breaks the thread of his life before it is spun out, will obtain a result the very opposite to what he desires. The Karmamargin aims at being a Jivanmukta, he will not cherish within himself the spirit of the suicide.

VI. Suicide and the other World.

In the early days of spiritualism in America, there were many who were so charmed by the glowing description of the other world published by spiritualists that they committed suicide in order to reach it. It would almost seem as if in the old days when the pursuit of the Eternal dominated the mind of the race and disgust of the transitory was common, there were many who rather than live out their hundred years preferred a self-willed exit from the world of phenomena. To these the Upanishad addresses a solemn warning. “Godless verily are those worlds and with blind gloom enveloped, thither they depart when they have passed away, whatso folk are slayers of self." One has to be peculiarly careful in rendering the exact words of the Upanishad, because Shankara gives a quite unexpected and out-of-the-way interpretation of the verse. He does not accept आत्महनो, self-slayers, in the sense of suicides, the natural and ordinary meaning, but understands it to signify slayers of the eternal Self within them. Since this is a startlingly unnatural & paradoxical sense, for the Self neither slays nor is slain, he farther interprets his interpretation in a figurative sense. To kill the Self means merely to cast the Self under the delusion of ignorance which leads to birth and rebirth; the Self is in a way killed because it is made to disappear into the darkness of Maya. Farther लोकाः has always the sense of worlds as in गोलोक ब्रह्मलोक द्युलोक but Shankara forces it to mean births, for example birth as a man, birth as a beast, birth as a God. Then there is a third and equally violent departure from the common & understood use of words; असुर्या or आसुरा would mean ordinarily Asuric of the Daityas in opposition to Daivic of the Devas; Shankara takes आसुरा as Rajasic and applicable to birth in the form of men, beasts and even of gods in opposition to दैव which is pure Sattwic and applicable only to Parabrahman. He thus gets the verse to mean, "Rajasic verily are those births and enveloped with blind darkness to which those depart when they pass away, whoso are slayers of the Self." All those who put themselves under the yoke of Ignorance, lose hold of their true Self and are born as men, beasts or gods, instead of returning to the pure existence of Parabrahman.

The objections to this interpretation are many and fatal. The rendering of आत्महनो substitutes a strained and unparalleled interpretation for the common and straightforward sense of the word. The word लोकः cannot mean a particular kind of birth but either a world or the people in the world; and in these senses it is always used both in the Sruti and elsewhere. We say स्वर्गलोक, द्युलोक, मर्त्यलोक, इहलोक, परलोक; we do not say कीटलोक, पशुलोक, पक्षिलोक. We say indeed मनुष्यलोक, but it means the world of men & never birth as a man. The word असुर्या may very well mean

Rajasic but not in the way Shankara applies to it; for असुर्या लोका cannot signify the births of beasts, men, gods as opposed to the divine birth of Parabrahman, who is above birth and above condition. Moreover, Daivic and Asuric are always opposed terms referring to the gods and Titans, precisely as Titanic and Olympian are opposed terms in English. For instance in the Gita

> मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः।
> राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः॥
> महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः।
> भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम्॥

In this passage Asuric and Rakshasic nature are rajasic nature as of the Titans and tamasic nature as of the Rakshasa; daivic nature implies sattwic nature as of the Gods. Such is always the sense wherever the terms are opposed in Sanscrit literature. It may be urged, in addition, that the expression ये के loses its strong limiting force if it is applied to all beings but the very few who have found salvation. There are other flaws besides the straining of word-senses. The verse as rendered by Shankara does not logically develop from what went before and the fault of incoherence is imported into the Upanishad which, if taken in its straightforward sense, we rather find to be strictly logical in its structure and very orderly in the development of its thought. On the other hand, the plain rendering of the words of the Upanishad in their received and ordinary sense gives a simple and clear meaning which is both highly appropriate in itself and develops naturally from what has gone before. Shankara's rendering involves so many and considerable faults, that even his authority cannot oblige us to accept it. We will therefore take the verse in its plain sense: it is a warning to those who imagine that by the self-willed shortening of their days upon earth they can escape from the obligation of phenomenal existence.

The Asuric or godless worlds to which the suicide is condemned, are the worlds of deep darkness & suffering at the other pole from the worlds of the gods, the world of light and joy which is the reward of virtuous deeds. Patala under the earth, Hell under Patala, these are Asuric worlds: Swarga on the mountaintops of existence in the bright sunshine is a world of the gods. All this is of course mythology and metaphor, but the Asuric worlds are a reality; they are the worlds of gloom and suffering in the nether depths of our own being. A world is not a place with hills, trees and stones, but a condition of the Jivatman, all the rest being only circumstances and details of a dream. The Sruti speaks of the spirit's *loka* in the next world, अमुष्मिन् लोके लोकः, where the word is used in its essential meaning of the spirit's state or condition and again in its figurative meaning of the world corresponding to its condition. The apparent surroundings, the sum of sensible images & appearances into which the spirit under the influence of Illusion materializes its mental state, makes the world in which it lives. *Martyaloka* is not essentially this Earth we men live in, for there may be other abodes of mortal beings, but the condition of mortality in the gross body; Swargaloka is the condition of bliss in the subtle body; Narak, Hell, the condition of misery in the subtle body; Brahmalok the condition of abiding with God in the causal body. Just as the Jivatman like a dreamer sees the Earth and all it contains when it is in the condition of mortality and regards itself as in a particular region with hills, trees, rivers, plains, so when it is in a condition of complete *tamas* in the subtle body, it believes itself to be in a place surrounded by thick darkness, a place of misery unspeakable. This world of darkness is imaged as under the earth on the side turned away from the sun; because earth is our mortal condition and this world is a state lower than our mortal condition; it is a world of thick darkness because the light created by the splendour of the Eternal in the consciousness of the Jivatman is entirely eclipsed with the extreme thickening of the veil of Maya which intercepts from us the full glory of His lustre. Hell, Patal, Earth, Paradise, the Lunar & Solar Worlds, Golok, Brahmalok, — these are all imagery and dreams, since they are all in the Jivatman itself and exist outside it only as pictures & figures: still while we are dreamers, let us speak in the language and think the thoughts of dream.

This then is the Asuric world. When a man dies in great pain or in great grief or in fierce agitation of mind and his last thoughts are full of fear, rage, pain or horror, then the Jivatman in the Sukshmasharir is unable to shake off these impressions from his mind for years, perhaps for centuries. So it is with the suicide; he sinks into this condition because of the feelings of disgust, impatience and pain or rage & fear which govern his last moments; for suicide is not the passionless & divine departure at his appointed time of the Yogin centred in samadhi, but a passionate and disgustful departure; and where there is disturbance or bitterness of the soul in its departure, there can be no tranquillity & sweetness in the state to which it departs. This is the law of death; death is a moment of intense concentration when the departing spirit gathers up the impressions of its mortal life as a host gathers provender for its journey, and whatever impressions are dominant at the moment, govern its condition afterwards.

> यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।
> तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥

"Or indeed whatever (collective) impressions of mind one remembering leaveth his body at the last, to that state and no other it goeth, O son of Kunti, and is continually under the impress of those impressions." Hence the importance, even apart from Mukti, of living a clean and noble life and dying a calm and strong death. For if the ideas and impressions then uppermost are such as to associate the self with this gross body and the vital functions or the base, vile & low desires of the mind, then the soul remains long in a *tamasic* condition of darkness and suffering which we call Patala or in its acute forms Hell. If the ideas and impressions uppermost are such as to associate the self with the higher desires of the mind, then the soul passes quickly to a rajasic condition of light & pleasure which we call Swarga, Behesta or Paradise and from which it will return to the state of mortality in the body. If the ideas and impressions uppermost are such as to associate the self with the higher understanding and bliss of the Self, the soul passes quickly to a condition of highest bliss which we call variously Kailas, Vaikuntha, Goloka or Brahmaloka, from which it does not return in this aeon of the universe. But if we have learned to identify for ever the self with the Self, then before death we become the Eternal and after death we shall not be other. There are three states of Maya, tamasic illusion, rajasic illusion, sattwic illusion, and each in succession we must surmount before we reach utterly that which is no illusion but the one eternal truth and, leaving our body in the state of Samadhi, rise into the unrevealed & imperishable bliss of which the Lord has said, “That is my highest seat of all.”

VII. Retrospect

The Isha Upanishad logically falls into four portions, the first of which is comprised in the three verses we have already explained. It lays down for us those first principles of Karmayoga which must govern the mental state and actions of the Karmamargin in his upward progress to his ideal. In the next five verses we shall find the Upanishad enunciating the final goal of the Karmamargin and the ideal state of his mind and emotional part when his Yoga is perfected and he becomes a Yogin in very truth, the Siddha or perfected man and no longer the Sadhak or seeker after perfection.

While he is still a seeker, his mind must be governed by the idea of the Eternal as the mighty Lord and Ruler who pervades and encompasses the Universe. He must see him in all and around all, informing each object and encompassing it. On all that he sees, he must throw the halo of that presence; around all creatures and things, he must perceive the nimbus and the light.

His mind being thus governed by the idea of the divine omnipresence, he must not and cannot covet or desire, for possessing the Lord, what is it that he does not possess? what is it he needs to covet or desire? He cannot wish to injure or deprive others of their wealth, for who are others? are they other than himself? The Karmamargin must strive to abandon desire and make selflessness the law of his life and action. Seeing God in others, he will naturally love them and seek to serve them. By abnegation of desire he will find the sublime satisfaction the divinity in him demands and by the abandonment of the world in spirit, he will enjoy the whole world as his kingdom with a deep untroubled delight instead of embracing a few limited possessions with a chequered and transient pleasure.

Whatever others may do, the Karmamargin must not remove himself from the field of action and give up work in the world; he is not called upon to abandon the objects of enjoyment, but to possess them with a heart purified of longing and passion. In this spirit he must do his work in this world and not flee from the struggle. Neither must he shrink from life as a bondage. He must realise that there is no bondage to him who is full of God, for God is free and not bound. He must therefore be ready to live out his life and work out his work calmly and without desire, seeking only through his life and actions to get nearer to Him who is the Lord of life and Master of all actions.

Least of all will he allow disgust of life and work so to master him as to make him seek release by shortening his days upon earth. For the suicide does not escape from phenomenal being in this world but passes into a far darker & more terrible prison of Maya than any that earthly existence can devise for the soul.

If his nature can expand to the greatness of this discipline, if his eyes can avail never to lose sight of God, if he can envisage the godhead in his fellowmen, if he can empty his soul of its lust & longing, if he can feel all the glory & joy & beauty of the world passionlessly & disinterestedly as his own, if he can do his works in the world however humble or however mighty not for himself but for God in man and God in the world, if he can slay the sense of egoism in his works and feel them to be not his own but the Lord's, if he can put from him alike the coward's shrinking from death and the coward's longing for death, suffering neither the lust of long life nor impatience of its vanities & vexations, but live out his full term bravely, modestly, selflessly and greatly, then indeed he becomes the Karmayogin who lives ever close to the eternal & almighty Presence, moving freely in the courts of God, admitted hourly to His presence and growing always liker & liker in his spiritual image to the purity, majesty, might and beauty of the Lord. To love God in His world and approach God in himself is the discipline of the Karmayogin; to embrace all created things in his heart and divinely become God in his spirit, is his goal and ideal.

Part II

Karmayoga; the Ideal

Chapter IV

The Eternal in His Universe

अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो नैनद्देवा आप्नुवन्पूर्वमर्षत्।
तद्धावतोऽन्यानत्येति तिष्ठत्तस्मिन्नपो मातरिश्वा दधाति॥

I. ETERNAL TRUTH THE BASIS OF ETHICS

"There is the One and It moveth not, yet is It swifter than thought, the Gods could not overtake It as It moved in front. While It standeth still, It outstrippeth others as they run. In It Matariswan ordereth the waters."

I

The Root of Ethical Ideals

Everything that has phenomenal existence, takes its stand on the Eternal and has reality only as a reflection in the pure mirror of His infinite existence. This is no less true of the affections of mind and heart and the formations of thought than of the affections of matter and the formations of the physical ether-stuff out of which this material Universe is made. Every ethical ideal and every religious ideal must therefore depend for its truth and permanence on its philosophical foundation; in other words, on the closeness of its fundamental idea to the ultimate truth of the Eternal. If the ideal implies a reading of the Eternal which is only distantly true and confuses Him with

His physical or psychical manifestations in this world, then it is a relatively false and impermanent ideal. Of all the ancient nations the Hindus, for this reason only, attained to the highest idea and noblest practice of morality. The Greeks confused the Eternal with His physical manifestations and realised Him in them on the side of beauty; beauty therefore was the only law of morality which governed their civilization. Ethics in their eyes was a matter of taste, balance and proportion; it hinged on the avoidance of excess in any direction, of excessive virtue no less than of excessive vice. The fine development of personality under the inspiration of music and through the graceful play of intellect was the essential characteristic of their education; justice, in the sense of a fine balance between one's obligations to oneself and one's obligations to others, the ideal of their polity; decorum, the basis of their public morality; the sense of proportion the one law of restraint in their private ethics. Their idea of deity was confined to the beautiful and brilliant rabble of their Olympus. Hence the charm and versatility of Greek civilisation; hence also its impermanence as a separate culture. The Romans also confused the Eternal with His manifestations in physical Nature, but they read Him on the side not of beauty but of force governed by law; the stern and orderly restraint which governs the Universe, was the feature in Nature's economy which ruled their thought. Jupiter was to them the Governor & great Legislator whose decrees were binding on all; the very meaning of the word religion which they have left to the European world was "binding back" and indicated as the essence of religion restraint and tying down to things fixed and decreed. Their ethics were full of a lofty strength & sternness. Discipline stood as the keystone of their system; discipline of the actions created an inelastic faithfulness to domestic & public duties; discipline of the animal impulses an orderly courage and a cold, hard purity; discipline of the mind a conservative practical type of intellect very favourable to the creation of a powerful and well ordered State but not to the development of a manysided civilization. Their type too, though more long lived than the Greek, could not last, because of the imperfection of the ideal on which it was based.[1] The Chinese seem to have envisaged the Eternal in a higher aspect than these Mediterranean races; they found Him not in the manifested physical Universe itself, but in its origination and arrangement out of the primal material from which it arose. Heaven, Akasha or the Eternal in the element of Ether, creates in the womb of Earth or formal Matter which is the final element developed out of Ether, this arranged and orderly Universe, — He is therefore the Father, Originator, Disposer and Arranger. Veneration for parents and those who stand in the place of parents became the governing idea of their ethics; orderly disposition, the nice care of ceremony, manners, duties the law of their daily life; origination and organization the main characteristics of their intellectual activity. The permanence and unconquerable vitality of their civilization is due to their having seized on an interpretation of the Eternal which, though not His ultimate truth to humanity, is at least close to that truth and a large aspect of it. It is really Himself in his relation to the Universe, but not the whole of Himself. But the ancient Aryans of India raised the veil completely and saw Him as the Universal Transcendent Self of all things who is at the same time the particular present Self in each. They reached His singleness aloof from phenomena, they saw Him in every one of His million manifestations in phenomena. God in Himself, God in man, God in Nature were the "ideas" which their life expressed. Their civilisation was therefore more manysided and complete and their ethical and intellectual ideals more perfect and permanent than those of any other nation. They had in full measure the sense of filial duty, the careful regulation of ceremony, manners and duties, the characteristics of origination and organization which distinguished the Chinese. They had in full measure the Roman discipline, courage, purity, faithfulness to duty, careful conservatism; but these elements of character & culture which in the Roman were hard, cold, narrow and without any touch of the spirit in man or the sense of his divine individuality, the Hindus warmed & softened with emotional & spiritual meaning and made broad and elastic by accepting the supreme importance of the soul's individual life as overriding and governing the firm organization of morals and society. They were not purely devoted to the worship and culture of beauty like the Greeks and their art was not perfect, yet they had the sense of beauty & art in a greater degree than any other ancient people; unlike the Greeks they had a perfect sense of spiritual beauty and were therefore able to realise the delight & glory of Nature hundreds of years before the sense of it developed in Europe. On the ethical side they had a finer justice than the Greeks, a more noble public decorum, a keener sense of ethical & social balance, but they would not limit the infinite capacities of the soul; they gave play therefore to personal individuality but restrained and ordered its merely lawless ebullitions by the law of the type (caste). In addition to these various elements which they shared with one civilization or another they possessed a higher spiritual ideal which governed & overrode the mere ethics (*mores* or customary morality) which the other nations had developed. Humanity, pity, chivalry, unselfishness, philanthropy, love of and self-sacrifice for all living things, the sense of the divinity in man, the Christian virtues, the modern virtues were fully developed in India at a time when in all the rest of the world they were either non-existent or existent only in the most feeble beginnings. And they were developed, because the Aryan Rishis had been able to discover the truth of the Eternal and give to the nation the vision of the Eternal in all things and the feeling of His presence in themselves and in all around them. They had discovered the truth that morality is not for its own sake, nor for the sake of society, but a preparation and purification of the soul by which the limited human self must become fit to raise itself out of the dark pit of bodily, mental and emotional selfishness into the clear heaven of universal love and benevolence and enlarge itself until it came into conscious contact, entered into and became one with the Supreme and Sempiternal Self. Some hold the aim of morality to be a placing of oneself in harmony with the eternal laws that govern the Universe, others hold it to be the fulfilment under self-rule and guidance of man's nature, others a natural evolution of man in the direction of his highest faculties. The Hindus perceived that it was all these at once but they discovered that the law with which the soul must put itself in relation was the law of the Eternal Self, that man's nature must seek its fulfilment in that which is permanent & eternal in the Universe and that it is to which his evolution moves. They discovered that his higher self was the Self of his Universe and that by a certain manner of action, by a certain spirit in action, man escaped from his limitations and realised his higher Self. This way of Works is Karmayoga and Karmayoga therefore depends on the Hindu conception of Brahman, the Transcendent Self and its relations to the Universe. From this all Hindu ethics proceeds.[2]

---

[1] *The following passage was written in the top margin of the manuscript page. Its place of insertion was not marked:*

Beauty is not the ultimate truth of the Eternal but only a partial manifestation of Him in phenomena which is externalised for our enjoyment and possession but not set before us as our standard or aim, and the soul which makes beauty its only end is soon cloyed & sated and fails for want of nourishment and of the growth which is impossible without an ever widening & progressive activity. Power & Law are not the ultimate truth of the Eternal, but manifestations of Himself in phenomena which are set within us to develop and around us to condition our works, but this also is not set before us as our standard or aim. The soul which follows Power as its whole end must in the long run lose measure and perish from hardness and egoism and that which sees nothing but Law wither for dryness or fossilise from the cessation of individual expansion.

Chapter I. Brahman.

The first four verses of the Upanishad have given the general principle of Karmayoga; the next four provide its philosophical justification and of these four the first two express in a few phrases the Vedantic philosophy of God and Cosmos as a necessary preliminary to the formation of a true and permanent ethical ideal.

The close dependence of ethical ideals on the fundamental philosophy of the Eternal and Real to which they go back, is a law which the ancient Yogins had well understood. Therefore the Upanishad when it has to set forth an ethical rule or ethical ideal or intellectual attitude towards life, takes care to preface it with that aspect of the Eternal Reality on which its value and truth depend. The first principles of Karmayoga arise from the realization of the Eternal as a great and divine Presence which pervades and surrounds all things, so that it is impossible to direct one's thought, speech or actions to thing or person without directing them to Him. With the declaration of the Eternal as the Universal and Omnipresent Lord the Upanishad must, therefore, begin. Now it is about to take a step farther & set forth the ideal of the Karmayogin and the consummation of his yoga. It preludes the new train of thought by identifying Isha the Lord with Parabrahman the Eternal and Transcendent Reality. Not only does He surround and sustain as the supreme Will by which and in which alone all things exist, but He is really the immutable and secret Self in all things which is ultimately Parabrahman. This Isha whose Energy vibrates through the worlds, is really the motionless and ineffable Tranquillity towards which the Yogins & the sages strive.

---

[2] *The last six sentences of this paragraph, beginning "They had discovered the truth", were written separately. They seem to have been intended for insertion here. — Ed.*

"There is One and It unmoving is swifter than thought; the gods could not reach It moving in front; standing still It passes others as they run; 'tis in This that Matariswan setteth the waters. It moves, It moveth not; It is far, the same It is near; It is within everyone, the same It is also outside everyone."

There is only One existence, one Reality in apparent multiplicity. The unimaginable Presence which is manifest in the infinite variety of the Universe, is alone and alone Is. The variety of things is in fact merely the variety of forms which the play or energy of the Will only seems, by its rapidity of motion, to create; so when the blades of an electric fan go whirling with full velocity, round & round, there seem to be not four blades or two, but a whole score; so, also, when Shiva in His mood begins His wild dance and tosses His arms abroad, He seems to have not two arms but a million. It is the motion of the play of Will, it is the velocity of His Energy vibrating on the surface of His own existence which seems to create multiplicity. All creation is motion, all activity is motion. All this apparently stable universe is really in a state of multifold motion; everything is whirling with inconceivable rapidity in its own orbit, and even thought which is the swiftest thing we know, cannot keep pace with the velocity of the cosmic stir. And all this motion, all this ever evolving cosmos and universe is Brahman the Eternal. The Gods in their swiftest movements, the lords of the mind & senses cannot reach Him, for He rushes far in front. The eye, the ear, the mind, nothing material can reach or conceive the inconceivable creative activity of this Will which is Brahman. We try to follow Him pouring as light through the solar system and lo! while you are striving He is whirling universes into being far beyond reach of eye or telescope, far beyond the farthest flights of thought itself. तन्मनसो जवीयो। Material senses quail before the thought of the wondrous stir and stupendous unimaginable activity that the existence of the Universe implies. And yet all the time He does not really move. All the time He who outstrips all others, is not running but standing. It is the others, the forms and things His Energy has evolved, who are running and because He outstrips them, they think that He too moves. While we are toiling after Him, He is all the time here, at our side, before us, behind us, with us, in us, His presence pervading us like the ether, clothing us like a garment. "Standing still, He outstrips others as they run." It is our mind & senses that are running and this universal motion is the result of the Avidya to which they are subject; for Avidya by persuading us to imagine ourselves limited, creates the conditions of Time, Space & Causality and confines us in them as in a prisoning wall beyond which our thoughts cannot escape. Brahman in all His creative activity is really standing still in His own being outside and inside Time & Space. He is at the same time in the Sun and here, because neither here nor the Sun are outside Himself; He has not therefore to move any more than a man has to move in order to pass from one thought to another. But we in order to realise His creative activity have to follow Him from the Sun to the Earth and from the Earth to the Sun; and this motion of our limited consciousness, this sensitory impression of a space covered and a time spent, we cannot dissociate from Brahman and must needs attribute the limitations of our own thought to Him; just as a man in a railway-train has a sensitory impression that everything is rushing past him and the train is still. The stir of the Cosmos is really the stir of our own minds, and yet even that is a mere phenomenon. What we call mind is simply one play of the Will sporting with the idea of multiplicity which is, in form, the idea of motion. The Purusha, the Real Man in us and in the world, is really unmoving; He is the motionless and silent spectator of a drama of which He himself is the stage, the theatre, the scenery, the actors and the acting. He is the poet Shakespeare watching Desdemona and Othello, Hamlet and the murderous Uncle, Rosalind and Jacques and Viola, and all the other hundred multiplicities of himself acting and talking and rejoicing and suffering, all himself and yet not himself, who sits there a silent witness, their Creator who has no part in their actions, and yet without Him not one of them could exist. This is the mystery of the world and its paradox and yet its plain and easy truth.

But what really is this Will which as Purusha watches the motion and the drama and as Prakriti is the motion and the drama? It is the One motionless, unconditioned, inexpressible Parabrahman of whom, being beyond mark and feature, the Upanishad speaks always as It, while of Isha, the Lord, it speaks as He; for Isha as Purusha is the male or spiritual presence which generates forms in Prakriti the female or material Energy. The spiritual entity does not work, but merely is and has a result; it is the material Energy, the manifestation of Spirit, which works or ceases from work. Eventually however Spirit and Matter are merely aspects of each other & of something which is behind both; that something is the motionless, actionless It. This which without moving is swifter than thought, is It; this which mind & senses cannot reach, for it moves far in front, is It; this which stands still & yet outstrips others as they run is It. Will, Energy, Isha, the play of Prakriti for Purusha, are all merely the manifestation of that unmanifested It. What we envisage as the manifested Brahman is, in His reality to Himself, the unmanifest Parabrahman. It is only in His reality to us that He is the manifested Brahman. And according as a man comes nearer to the truth of Him or loses himself in Him, so will be his spiritual condition. While we think of Him as Isha, the one in innumerable aspects, the idea of difference remains though it can be subordinated to the idea of Oneness; that is the beginning of Yoga. When we realize Isha as one with Parabrahman, the idea of Oneness has sway & rules; that is the culmination of Yoga. When we realize Parabrahman Itself, that is the cessation of Yoga; for we depart utterly from Oneness & difference and no longer envisage the world of phenomena at all; that is Nirvana.

Chapter II. Spiritual Evolution in Brahman

It is in this infinitely motionless, yet infinitely moving Brahman that Matariswan or Prana, the great Breath of things, the mighty principle of Life, disposes forms and solidities rescuing them out of the undifferentiated state from which the world arose. To understand these two verses it is necessary to grasp clearly the ideas of creation & evolution which the Upanishads seek to formulate. What in Europe is called creation, the Aryan sages preferred to call *srishti*, projection of a part from the whole, the selection, liberation and development of something that is latent and potentially exists. Creation means the bringing into existence of something which does not already exist; *srishti* the manifestation of something which is hidden and unmanifest. The action of Prakriti proceeds upon the principle of selection leading naturally to development; she selects the limited out of the unlimited, the particular out of the general, the small portion out of the larger stock. This limited, particular & fractional having by the very nature of limitation a *swabhav*, an own-being or as it is called in English a nature, which differentiates it from others of its kind, develops under the law of its nature; that is its *swadharma*, its own law & religion of being, and every separate & particular existence, whether inanimate thing or animal or man or community or nation must follow & develop itself under the law of its nature and act according to its own *dharma*. It cannot follow a nature or accept a *dharma* alien to itself except on peril of deterioration, decay and death. This nature is determined by the balance in its composition of the three *gunas* or essential qualities of Prakriti, passivity, activity and equipoise, which reveal themselves under different shapes in the animate as well as the inanimate, in the mind as well as in the body. In matter they appear as passive reception, reaction and retention, in human soul as the brutal animal, the active, creative man and the calm, clear-souled god. It must always be remembered that Prakriti is no other than Avidya, the great Illusion. She is that impalpable indeterminable source of subtle and gross matter, Matter in the abstract, the idea of difference and duality, the impression of Time, Space and Causality. The limited is limited not in reality, but by walls of Avidya which shut it in and give it an impression of existence separate from that of the illimitable, just as a room is shut off from the rest of the house by walls and has its separate existence and its separate nature small or large, close or airy, coloured white or coloured blue. Break down the walls and the separate existence and separate nature disappear; the very idea of a room is lost and there is nothing left but the house. The sense of limitation and the consequent impulse towards development & self-enlargement immediately create desire which takes the form of hunger and so of a reaching after other existences for the satisfaction of hunger; and from desire & the contact with other existences there arise the two opposite forces of attraction and repulsion which on the moral plane are called liking and dislike, love and hatred. Thus [the] necessity of absorbing mental and aesthetic food for the material of one's works; this too is hunger. The instinct of self-enlargement shows itself in the physical craving for the absorption of other existences to strengthen oneself, in the emotional yearning to other beings, in the intellectual eagerness to absorb the minds of others and the aesthetic desire to possess or enjoy the beauty of things & persons, in the spiritual passion of love & beneficence, and all other activity which means the drawing of the self of others into one's own self and pouring out of oneself on others. Desire is thus the first principle of things. Under the force of attraction and repulsion hunger begins to differentiate itself & develop the various senses in order the better to master its food and to feel & know the other existences which repel or attract it. So out of the primal consciousness of Will dealing with matter is developed form and organism, vitality, receptive mind, discriminating mind, Egoism. Out of this one method of Prakriti, selection, liberation and development, the whole evolution of the phenomenal world arises. Creation therefore is not a making of something where nothing existed, but a selection and new formation out of existing material; not a sudden increase, but a continual rearrangement and substitution; not an arbitrary manufacture, but an orderly development.

The idea of creation as a selection and development from preexisting material which is common to the Upanishads & the Sankhya philosophy, is also the fundamental idea of the modern theory of Evolution. The theory of Evolution is foreshadowed in the Veda, but nowhere clearly formulated. In the Aitareya Upanishad we find a luminous hint of the evolution of various animal forms until in the course of differentiation by selection the body of man was developed as a perfect temple for the gods and a satisfactory instrument for sensational, intellectual and spiritual evolution. When the Swetaswatara sums up the process of creation in the pregnant formula "One seed developed into many forms", it is simply crystallizing the one general idea on which the whole of Indian thought takes its stand and to which the whole tendency of modern science returns. The opening of the Brihadaranyakopanishad powerfully foreshadows the theory that hunger & the struggle for life (ashanaya mrityu) are the principle agents in life-development. But it was not in this aspect of the law of creation that the old Hindu thought interested itself. Modern Science has made it its business to investigate and master the forces and laws of working of the physical world; it has sought to know how man as a reasoning animal developed into what he is, how he is affected in detail by the laws of external nature and what is the rule of his thought and action in things physical & psycho-physical whether as an individual or in masses. Outside the limits of this inquiry it has been sceptical or indifferent. Hindu thought, on the contrary, has made it its business to investigate the possibilities of man's escape from the animal and physical condition, from his subjection to the laws of external nature and from his apparent limitations as a mere creature of surroundings & sensational impact from outside. Its province has been the psychical and spiritual world. It has not concerned itself minutely with man's physical sheath, but rather with what is vital & elemental in the matter of which he is made, the law of the workings of the breath and the elemental forces within him, the relation of the various parts of his psychical anatomy to each other, and the law of his thought and action as a spiritual being having one side of itself turned to phenomena and this transient life in society and the world, the other to the single and eternal verity of things.

Speculating and experimenting on these psychical and spiritual relations, the ancient Rishis arrived at what they believed to be the fundamental laws respectively of spiritual, psychical and elemental evolution. Spiritually, the beginning of all things is the Turiya Atman, spirit in its fourth or transcendental state, intellectually unknowable and indefinable, infinite, indivisible, immutable and supra-conscious. This Turiya Atman may be imaged as the infinite ocean of spirit which evolves in itself spiritual manifestations and workings by that process of limitation or selection on which all creation or manifestation depends. By this Turiya Atman there is conceived or there is selected out of its infinite capacity a state of spirit less unknowable and therefore less indefinable, in which the conceptions of finity and division preexist in a potential state and in which consciousness is self-gathered and as yet inoperative. This state of Spirit is called variously Avyakta, the unmanifestation, or the seed-condition or the condition of absolute Sleep, because as yet phenomena and activity are not manifest but preexist gathered-together and undeveloped, just as all the infinite potentialities of organic life upon earth preexist gathered-together and undeveloped in the protoplasm; just as leaf and twig, trunk and branches, sap and pith and bark, root and flower and fruit preexist, gathered-together and undeveloped in the seed. The State of Sleep may be envisaged as Eternal Will and Wisdom on the brink of creation, with the predestined evolution of a million universes, the development of sun & star and nebula and the shining constellations and the wheeling orbits of satellite and planet, the formation of metals and the life of trees, the motions and actions of fish and bird and beast and the infinite spiritual, mental and physical stir & activities of man already pre-ordained, pre-arranged and pre-existent, before Time was or Space existed or Causality began. Spirit in this state of Sleep is called Prajna, the Wise One or He who knows and orders things beforehand. The next state of Spirit, evolved out of Prajna, is the pure psychical or Dream State in which Spirit is in a condition of ceaseless psychical activity imagining, willing, selecting out of the matter which Prajna provides, and creating thought-forms to clothe the abundant variety of its multitudinous imaginations. The Dream-State is the psychical condition of Spirit and operates in a world of subtle matter finer and more elastic than gross physical matter and therefore not subject to the heavy restrictions and slow processes with which the latter is burdened. For this reason while physical workings are fixed, slow and confined by walls within walls, thought, psychical manifestation and other operations in subtle matter are in comparison volatile, rapid and free, reacting more elastically against the pressure of Time, Condition and Space. This State of Dream may be envisaged as Eternal Will and Energy in the process of creation with the whole activity of the Universe teeming and fructuating within it; it is that psychical matrix out of which physical form and life are evolved and to which in sleep it partially returns so that it may recuperate and drink in a fresh store of psychical energy to support the heavy strain of physical processes in gross matter. Spirit in the middle or Dream-State is called Taijasa or Hiranyagarbha, the Shining Embryon. It is Taijasa, Energy of Light, and Hiranya the Shining because in psychical matter luminous energy is the chief characteristic, colour and light predominating over fluid or solid form. It is Garbha, Embryon, because out of psychical matter physical life and form are selected and evolved into the final or Waking State in which Spirit manifests itself as physically visible, audible & sensible form and life, and arrives at last at an appearance of firm stability & solidity in gross matter. Spirit in the Waking State is called Vaisvanor, the Universal Male, He who informs and supports all forms of energy in this physical universe; for it is a root idea of Hindu philosophy that Spirit is the Male which casts its seed into Matter and Matter the female Energy which receives the seed and with it creates and operates. Spirit and Matter are not different entities, but simply the positive and negative poles in the creative operation of the All-Self or Universal which evolves in Itself and out of Itself the endless procession of things.

All things in the Universe are of one texture & substance and subject to a single law; existence is a fundamental unity under a superficial diversity. Each part of the Universe is therefore a little Universe in itself repeating under different conditions and in different forms the nature and operations of the wider Cosmos. Every individual man must be in little what the Cosmos is in large. Like the Cosmos therefore each individual man has been created by the evolution of Spirit from its pure essence through the three states of Sleep, Dream and Waking. But this evolution has been a downward evolution; he has descended spiritually from pure Spirit into physical matter, from self-existent, self-knowing, self-delighting God into the reasoning animal. In other words each new condition of Spirit, as it evolved, has overlaid and obscured its predecessor. In the physical condition, which is the ultimate term of the downward evolution, man realizes himself as a body moving among and affected by other bodies and he readily understands, masters and employs physical organs, physical processes and physical forces, but he finds it difficult to understand, master or employ psychical organs, psychical processes and psychical forces, — so difficult that he has come to be sceptical of the existence of the psychical and doubt whether he is a soul at all, whether he is not merely an animal body with an exceptional brain-evolution. In his present state any evolution of the psychical force within is attended with extraordinary disturbances of the physical instruments; such as the development of delusions, hallucinations, eccentricities, mania and disease side by side with the development of genius or exceptional mental & spiritual powers in family or individual. Man has not yet discovered his soul; his main energies have been directed towards realizing and mastering the physical world in which he moves.

It is indeed, as some are beginning dimly to perceive, the soul within him which has all along been using the body for its own ends on the physical plane, but the soul has been working from behind the veil, unrealized and unseen. The Waking-State has overlaid and obscured the Dream-State. When he has mastered, as in the course of his evolution he must master, the psychical world within him, man will find that there is another & deeper self which is overlaid and obscured by the psychical, — the Sleep-world within or as it is called, the causal self. At present, even when he admits the existence of the soul, he sees nothing beyond his psychical self and speaks of soul and spirit as if they were identical. In reality, there are three spirit-states, spirit, soul and body, the sleep-state, the dream-state and the waking-state. Body has overlaid and obscured soul, soul overlays & obscures spirit, spirit in its turn obscures & overlays the pure self from which & towards which the circle of evolution moves.

Creation, then, has been a downward evolution which has for its object to create a body fit for an upward evolution into the region of pure spirit. It is in this direction that the future of human evolution lies. When man has mastered the physical world and its forces, when the earth is his and the fullness thereof, he must turn his efforts towards mastering the world within himself. Instead of allowing the soul to use the body for its own ends, he must learn to master both soul and body and use them consciously for the purposes of the spirit, that Eternal Will & Wisdom which at present operates in secrecy, veiled with darkness within darkness and seeming even to be blind and hidden from itself. In the end he will be master of spirit, soul and body, a Jivanmukta using them at will for cosmic purposes or transcending them to feel his identity with the Self who is pure and absolute existence, consciousness and bliss.

Chapter III. Psychical evolution — downward to matter

In their enquiry into the spiritual nature of man the ancient thinkers and Yogins discovered that he has not only three spiritual states but three bodies or cases of matter corresponding to the spiritual states. This was in accordance with the nature of phenomenal existence as determined by their inquiries. Spirit and matter, the inner inspiring presence and outward acting substance-energy, are the two necessary terms of this existence. When phenomena are transcended we come to a Self independent of Spirit or Matter; but the moment Self descends into phenomenal existence, it must necessarily create for itself a form or body and a medium in which it manifests and through which it acts. Directly, therefore, the pure transcendent Self evolves one aspect of itself as a definable spiritual condition, it must in the nature of things evolve also a form or body and a medium through and in which Spirit in that condition can manifest itself. Matter, in other words, evolves coevally and coincidently with Spirit. As soon as the Sleep-State appears, Spirit surrounds itself with matter in that most refined & least palpable condition, to which the name of causal matter may be given, — the material seed state, single and elemental in its nature, from which the material universe is evolved. With the evolution of the Dream-State matter also evolves from the causal into the subtle, a condition compound, divisible and capable of definite form but too fine to be perceived by ordinary physical senses. It is only when the Waking-State is evolved that matter concentrates into that gross physical condition which is all that Science has hitherto been able to analyse and investigate.

In man also as in the larger Cosmos each spiritual State lives in and uses its corresponding medium of matter and out of that matter shapes for itself its own body or material case. He has therefore a causal body for his Sleep-State or causal self, a subtle body for his Dream-State or psychical self and a gross body for his Waking-State or physical self. When he dies, what happens is simply the disintegration of the physical body and the return of the Waking into the Dream-State from which it was originally projected. Death, in the ordinary view, is a delivery from matter; body is destroyed and only spirit or soul remains: but this view is rejected by Hindu philosophy as an error resulting from confused and inadequate knowledge of man's psychical nature. The Waking-State having disappeared into the Dream-State and no longer existing, the physical body must necessarily disintegrate since it has no longer a soul to support it and keep naturally together the gross material atoms out of which it is constructed. But because the physical body is destroyed or dropped off, it does not follow that no body is left. Man goes on existing after death in his Dream-State and moves & acts with his subtle body; it is this dream-state in the subtle body to which the name soul or spirit is popularly given. Even the disintegration of the subtle body and the return of the Dream-State into the Sleep-State from which it was projected, would not imply a release from all restrictions of matter; for the causal body would still remain. It is only when the Sleep-State is also transcended, that phenomenal existence with its necessary duality of Spirit-Matter is left behind and transcended. Then spirit & body are both dissolved into pure and transcendent self-existence.

In examining and analysing these spiritual conditions in their respective bodies the Rishis arrived at a theory of psychical evolution contained within and dependent on the spiritual evolution already described. The basis of psychical as of spiritual existence is the pure Self called the Paramatman or Supreme Self when it manifests in the Cosmos and the Jivatman or individual Self when it manifests in man. The Self first manifests as Will or as the Rishis preferred to call it Ananda, Bliss, Delight. Ananda is the pure delight of existence and activity and may be identified in one of its aspects with the European Will-to-live, but it has a double tendency, the Will to be phenomenally and the Will to be transcendentally, the Will to live and the Will to cease from phenomenal life. It is also the Will to know and the Will to enjoy and in each aspect the double tendency is repeated. The Will to know eternal reality is balanced by the Will to know phenomenal diversity; the Will to absolute delight by the Will to phenomenal delight. Will must be clearly distinguished from volition which is only one of the operations of Will acting in phenomena. The impacts from external things upon the mind result in sensations and the reactions of the Will upon these sensations when conveyed to it, take the form of desires. Volition is simply the impulse of the Will operating through the intelligence to satisfy or curb the desires created in the medium between itself and the mind. But the Will itself is antecedent to mind and intelligence and all the operations of body, mind and intelligence are ultimately operations of material energy ordained by the Will. Self manifesting as Will or Bliss is, spiritually, the Sleep-State and operates absolutely & directly in the Causal body as the creative force behind Nature, but indirectly & under limitations in the subtle & gross bodies as the cause of all thought, action and feeling.

The next evolutionary form of Will, put forth by itself from itself as an instrument or operative force in the creation of the worlds, is Buddhi or Supra-intelligence, an energy which is above mind and reason and acts independently of any cerebral organ. It is Will acting through the Supra-intelligence that guides the growth of the tree and the formation of the animal and gives to all things in the Universe the appearance of careful and abundant workmanship and orderly arrangement from which the idea of an Almighty Artificer full of fecund and infinite imaginations has naturally grown up in the human mind; but from the point of view of the Vedanta Will and Supra-Intelligence are not attributes of an anthropomorphic Deity endowed with a colossal brain but aspects of a spiritual presence manifesting itself cosmically in phenomenal existence. Will, through Buddhi, creating and operating on phenomena in subtle matter evolves Mind, which by reception of external impacts & impressions evolves sensation; by reaction to impressions received, evolves desire and activity; by retention of impressions with their reactions, evolves memory; by coordination of impressions & reactions memorized, evolves the sense of individuality; by individual arrangement of impressions and reactions with the aid of memory evolves understanding; and by the action of supra-intelligence on developed mind evolves reason. Mind & Supra-intelligence with reason as an intermediate link are, spiritually, the Dream-State and operate absolutely and directly in the subtle body but indirectly, under limitations and as a governing and directing force in the gross body.

So far spirit and soul only have been evolved; the evolution of the Will has not manifested itself in physical forms. But in Mind Will has evolved a grand primal sense by which it is able to put itself into conscious relations with external objects; before the development of mind it has been operating by methods of self-contained consciousness through the supra-intelligence. Mind is in a way the one true and real sense; it is Mind that sees, Mind that hears, Mind that smells, Mind that feels, Mind that acts; but for the purposes of varied experience Mind evolves from itself ten potencies, five potencies of knowledge, sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste by which the Will receives impressions of external objects and five potencies of action, grasp, locomotion, utterance, emission and ecstasy, by which it reacts on what it receives; and for each of these potencies it evolves an instrument of potency or sense-organ, making up the ten *indriyas* with the Mind, which is alone self-acting and introspective, as the eleventh. So far however the Mind acts with rapidity and directness under the comparatively light restrictions of subtle matter in the Dream State; it is a psychical sense, an instrument of the soul for knowing and dealing with life in the psychical world of subtle matter. Only in the physical evolution of gross matter do the sense-organs receive their consummate development and become of supreme importance; for Will in the Waking State acts mainly through them and not directly through the Mind. Soul-evolution precedes physical evolution. This theory directly contradicts those conclusions of modern Science which make soul an evolution of physical life and activities, not an all-important and enduring evolution, but merely their temporary efflorescence and dependent on them for its existence. Arguing from the facts of physical evolution which alone it has studied and excluding all possibilities outside this limit, Science is justified in coming to this conclusion, and, as a logical corollary, it is justified in denying the immortality of the soul. For if psychical activities are merely a later and temporary operation of physical life and dependent on the physical for their own continuance, it follows that when physical life ceases with the arrest of bodily operations by the mysterious agency of death, human personality which is a psychical activity must also come to an end. When the body dies, the soul dies also; it can no more outlast the body than the flower can outlast the plant on which it grows or a house survive the destruction of its foundations. Body is the stem, soul the flower; body the foundation, soul a light and temporary superstructure. To all this Hindu thought gives a direct denial. It claims to have discovered means of investigating psychical life as thoroughly as Science can investigate physical nature and in the light of its investigations it declares that soul exists before body and outlasts it. It is physical life that is an evolution from psychical, and no more than a later and temporary operation of psychical activities. Body is the flower, soul the stem; soul is the foundation, body the fragile and transient superstructure.

For the purposes of physical evolution Will evolves a new aspect of itself which is called Prana or vital energy. Prana exists in the physical state also, but there it is simple, undifferentiated, gathered up in mind and not acting as a separate agent. Prana in gross matter is an all-pervading energy which subsists wherever there is physical existence and is the principle agent in maintaining existence and furthering its activities. It is present in what seems inert and inanimate no less than in what is manifestly endowed with life. It lives concealed in the metal and the sod, it begins to emerge in the plant, it reveals itself in the animal. Prana is the agent of Will in all physical evolution. It is the mainspring of every hunger-impulse and presides over every process of alimentation. It creates life, it fills it with vital needs, desires, longings; it spurs it to the satisfaction of its needs & desires; and it evolves the means and superintends and conducts the processes of that satisfaction. In the course of evolution it reveals itself with an ever-rounding fulness, vibrates with an ever swifter and more complex energy, differentiates and enriches its activity with a more splendid opulence until the crescendo reaches its highest note in man. In this, the noblest type of physical evolution, Prana manifests itself in five distinct vital powers, to which the names, Prana, Samana, Vyana, Apana and Udana have been given by the ancient writers. Prana, the vital force *par excellence* has its seat in the upper part of the body and conducts all mental operations, the indrawing and the outdrawing of the breath and the induction of food. Samana, seated centrally in the body, balances, equalizes and harmonizes the vital operations and is the agent for the assimilation of food. Vyana pervades the whole body; on it depends the circulation of the blood and the distribution of the essential part of the food eaten and digested throughout the body. Apana, situated in the lower part of the trunk, presides over the lower functions, especially over the emission of such parts of the food as are rejected by the body and over procreation, it is intimately connected with the processes of decay and death. Udana is the vital power which connects bodily life with the spiritual element in man. As in the purely vital operations, so also in the motional and volitional Prana is still the great agent of Will, and conducts such operations of Mind also as depend on the sense-organs for their instruments. Prana is the regent of the body, ministering to the Mind and through that great intermediary executing the behests of the concealed sovereign of existence, the Will.

As Prana is the first term in the physical evolution of the Self, so Anna, Food or gross visible matter is the second term. "I am food that devours the eater of food" says the Taittiriya Upanishad, and no formula could express more pregnantly and tersely the fundamental law of all phenomenal activity especially on the physical plane. The fundamental principle of vitality is hunger and all gross matter forms the food with which Prana satisfies this, its root-impulse. Hence the universality of the struggle for life. This hungry Prana first needs to build up a body in which it can subsist and in order to do so, it devours external substances so as to provide itself with the requisite material. This body once found it is continually eating up by the ceaselessness of its vital activity and has to repair its own ravages by continually drawing in external substances to form fresh material for an ever-wasting and ever-renewing frame. Unable to preserve its body for ever under the exhausting stress of its own activity, it has to procreate fresh forms which will continue vital activity and for the purpose concentrates itself in a part of its material which it throws out of itself to lead a similar but independent life even after the parent form decays. To satisfy its hunger it is ever evolving fresh means and new potencies for mastery & seizure of its food. Dissatisfied with the poor sustenance a stationary existence can supply, it develops the power & evolves various means of locomotion. To perceive its food more & more thoroughly & rapidly it develops the five senses and evolves the organs of perception through which they can act. To deal successfully with the food perceived, it develops the five potencies of action and evolves the active organs which enable them to work. As a centre of all this sensational and actional activity it evolves the central mind-organ in the brain and as channels of communication between the central & the outer organs it develops a great nerve-system centred in seven plexuses, through which it moves with a ceaseless stir and activity, satisfying hunger, satisfying lust, satisfying desire. At the base of all is the impulse of Life to survive, to prolong itself for the purposes of the Will-to-live of which it is the creature and the servant. Prana & Anna, Vitality and physical form are, spiritually, the Waking-State and operate entirely in gross matter, — the last term of that downward evolution which is the descent of Spirit from the original purity of absolute existence into the impurity and multiplicity of matter.

Chapter IV. Psychical Evolution — Upward to Self.

In this downward psychical evolution, as in the downward spiritual evolution, each succeeding and newly-evolved state of the original Self obscures and overlays that which preceded it, until the last state of the Self appears to be an inert brute and inanimate condition of gross physical matter devoid of life, mental consciousness or spiritual possibilities. From this state of inert and lifeless matter the upward evolution starts and, as in our spiritual evolution the course set down for us is to recover from a firm footing in the Waking State mastery over the obscured and latent Dream and Sleep States and so return into the presence of that pure and unimaginable Self from whom the process of our evolution began, so in our psychical evolution we have to recover out of the inertia of gross physical materiality Life, Mind, Supra-Intelligence, Will until we know our infinite and eternal Self who is one with the Supreme Self of the Universe.

With inanimate matter the world began, says evolutionary Science; but in inanimate matter there is no evidence of life or mind or spirit, no apparent possibility of the evolution of animate conscious existence. Into this inanimate world at some unknown period, by some unknown means, perhaps from some unknown source, a mysterious thing called Life entered or began to stir and all this mighty evolution we have discovered became in a moment possible. Grant one infinitesimal seed of life and everything else becomes possible, but life itself we cannot explain nor can we discover as yet how it came originally into being. We can only suppose that life is some chemical process or develops from some chemical process we shall ultimately discover. Even what life is, has not been satisfactorily settled. The term is sometimes rigidly confined to animal life, — surely a crude and unscientific limitation, since the peculiarities of animal life, — consciousness and organic growth —, exist quite as evidently in the highest forms of plant-life as in the animalcule or the jelly-fish. Or if we confine life to organic growth, we do so arbitrarily, for recent discoveries have shown the beginning of one element of vital activity, the one which forms the very basis of consciousness, viz. reception of & reaction to outward impressions and the phenomena of vigour and exhaustion, in a substance so apparently inanimate as metal. So obscure is the whole subject that many are inclined to regard life as a divine mystery, breathed by God into the world or introduced, as if it were a sort of psychical meteoric dust, from some other planet. Upanishadic philosophy accounts for the appearance of Life in a more calm and rational manner. Life, it would say, is in a sense a divine mystery but no more and no less so than the existence of inanimate matter. God did not breathe it from outside into an inert and created body, neither did it drift hither from some mystic and superior planet. Nor did it come into sudden being by some fortuitous chemical process which marked off suddenly all existences into two rigidly distinct classes, animate and inanimate, organic and inorganic. All such ideas are, when carefully examined, irrational and inconsistent with the unity and harmonious development of the world under fixed and invariable laws. Life is evolved naturally and not mysteriously out of matter itself, because it is already latent and preexistent in matter. Prana is involved in anna, matter cannot exist without latent life, and the first step in evolution is the liberation of the latent life out of the heavy obscuration of matter in its grossest and densest forms. This evolution is effected by the three gunas, the triple principle of reception, retention and reaction to outward impacts; as fresh forms of matter are evolved in which the power of retaining impacts received in the shape of impressions becomes more and more declared, consciousness slowly and laboriously develops; as the power of reacting on external objects becomes more pronounced and varied, organic life-growth begins its marvellous career; and the two, helping and enriching each other, evolve complete, well-organized and richly-endowed Life.

Prana receives its perfect development in animal life and when man, the highest term of animal life, has been reached, there is no farther need for its development. The true evolution of Man therefore lies not in the farther development of vitality, but in the complete & triumphant liberation of mind out of the overlaying obscuration of the vital energies. Just as Prana is involved in Anna and has to be evolved out of it, so Mind is involved in Prana and has to be evolved out of it. The moment Life begins to liberate itself from the obscuration of gross matter, the first step has been taken towards the evolution of Mind. We see the gradual development of Mind in animal evolution; the highest animal forms below man seem to possess not only memory and individuality, but a considerable degree of understanding and even the rudiments of reason. In man the development is much more rapid and triumphant, but it is by no means, as yet, complete or perfect. Prana still to an immense extent obscures Mind, the gross body dominates the subtle. Mind is dominated by the instruments which Prana has created for it; the body, the nerve-system, the sense-organs, the brain hamper and hinder its operations even more than they help them; for the Mind is bound within the narrow circle of their activity and limited by their deficiencies. The continual stir of the vital energies in the brain and throughout the whole system, disturb the Mind, the continual siege of external impressions distract it, the insistent urgency of the senses towards the external world impede the turning of the energies inward; calm and purity, concentration and introspection are rendered so difficult that the majority of men do not attempt them or only compass them spasmodically and imperfectly. Any powerful and unusual development of mind, in its intellectual and spiritual tendencies, is apt to be resented by the vital part of man and to impair or seriously disturb his vital energies and physical health. Along with the intellectual development of the race, there has been a marked deterioration of vital vigour & soundness and of the bodily organs. Moral and spiritual development is continually at war with the needs of our physical life, our hungers, desires, lusts, longings and the insistent urgency of the instincts of self-preservation and self-gratification. It is therefore towards the conquest and control of Prana and the free development of Mind that the energies of Man ought in future to be directed. He must arrive at some arrangement of his social and individual life which, while satisfying the legitimate demands of his body and his vital impulses, will admit of the extreme and unhampered perfection of his intellectual, moral and spiritual being. He must discover and practise some method of maintaining the harmony and soundness of the vital and bodily instruments and processes without for a moment allowing the care for them to restrict the widest possible range, the most bold and powerful exercise and the most intense and fiery energisms of which the higher principle in his being is capable. He must learn how to transcend the limitations and errors of the physical senses and train his mind to act even in the physical body with the rapidity, directness and unlimited range proper to a psychical organ whose function is to operate in subtle as well as in gross matter. To see where the physical eye is blind, to hear where the physical ear is deaf, to feel where the physical sense is callous, to understand thoughts unexpressed, are legitimate functions of the mind; but they must be exercised, not as a rare power or in moments of supreme excitation, but as a regular and consciously willed operation, the processes of which have been mastered and known. Reason, at present fallible, imperfect and enslaved to desire and prejudice, must be trained into its highest possibilities of clarity, sanity and calm energy. The Mind must be tranquillised and purified by control of the senses and the five Pranas, and trained to turn itself wholly inward, excluding at will all outward impressions, so that Man may become master of the inner world no less than of the outer, a conscious soul using the body and no longer a body governed by a self-concealing and self-guiding psychical entity. We think we have done wonders in the way of mental evolution; in reality we have made no more than a feeble beginning. The infinite possibilities of that evolution still lie unexplored in front.

As Mind is involved in Prana, so is Supra-Intelligence involved and latent in all the operations of Mind. With the evolution of the Mind, some rudimentary beginnings have been unconsciously made towards the liberation of this higher & far grander force. As the mental development foreshadowed above proceeds to its goal, man will begin to evolve and realize himself as a mighty and infinite Intelligence, not limited by sense-perception or the laborious and clumsy processes of the reason, but capable of intuitive and infinite perception. And when the evolution of Mind is complete and the evolution of Supra-Intelligence proceeds, the liberation of the Will involved in its operations will lead man to the highest evolution of all when he realizes himself as a potent and scient Will, master of creation and not its slave, whose infinite delight in its own existence is lifted far beyond the thraldom of pain and pleasure and uses them with as unalloyed a pleasure as the poet when he weaves joy and sorrow, delight and pain and love and fear and horror into one perfect and pleasurable masterpiece or the painter when he mixes his colours and blends light and shade to create a wedded harmony of form and hue. This state of unfettered Will and infinite Delight once realized, he cannot fail to know his real Self, absolute and calm, omnipotent and pure, the eternal Brahman in whom this evolution has its root and resting-place.

VII. Elemental Evolution.

The evolution of the cosmos has not only spiritual and psychical aspects; it has also from the moment of its inception a material element. Spirit exists from the beginning and was before any beginning, infinite and sempiternal; but Matter also is an eternal entity. In the Parabrahman, the absolute inconceivable Self, Spirit and Matter are one and undifferentiated, but the moment evolution begins Spirit and Matter manifest equally and coevally. We have seen that the first spiritual evolution from the pure self-existent Atman is Prajna of the Sleep-State, Eternal Wisdom, a supporting spiritual presence which contains in itself the whole course of cosmic evolution even as a single seed contains in itself the complete banyan-tree with all its gigantic progeny. We have seen that corresponding to this Eternal Wisdom, there is a first psychic evolution, Ananda or Will, an inspiring psychical force in man & the cosmos which makes all the workings of Nature possible. Spirit however, even when operating as Will, is not a working force in the sense that it itself carries on the operations of Nature; it is an inspiring, impelling force, whose function is to set in motion a powerful material energy of the Self; and it is this material energy which under the inspiration of Will and at the bidding of Prajna sets about the evolution of the Cosmos. Self in its dealings with the Cosmos is a dual entity, underlying spiritual presence and superficially active material energy, or as they are called in the terminology of the Sankhya philosophy, Purusha and Prakriti; — Purusha, that which lies concealed in the Vast of universal existence, Prakriti, active or operative energy thrown forward from the concealed spiritual source. The whole of Evolution spiritual, psychical, material, is the result of Purusha and Prakriti acting upon each other; the three evolutions are really one, coincident and coeval, because throughout it is one Reality that is manifesting and not three. It is Self manifesting as spirit, Self manifesting as soul, Self manifesting as matter or body. The three manifestations are coincident in Time and Space and each condition of phenomena is a triple state with Spirit and Matter for its extreme terms and Soul for its middle. In the evolution of the spirit-states Purusha determines itself so as to inform and support the progressive manifestations of Self as soul and body; in the evolution of the psychic states Prakriti worked on by Purusha creates for the manifestations of Self as spirit psychic sheaths or coverings which will at the same time inform and support the manifestations of Self as matter; in the evolution of the causal, subtle and gross bodies Prakriti shapes itself so as to create the material out of which the psychical coverings of Self as spirit may be made and the medium in which the Self as soul may operate. The three evolutions are dependent on each other, and that it is really one entity and not three which is evolving, is shown by the fact that while in the first stage of the downward evolution and the last of the upward Matter seems so refined as to appear identical with Spirit, in the last of the downward and first of the upward Spirit seems so densified as to appear identical with Matter. This possibility of evolution from and involution into each other would not be conceivable if they were not in essence one entity; and we may legitimately deduce from the oneness of such diverse phenomena that they *are* no more than phenomena, merely apparent changes in one unchanging reality.

In the first stage of evolution Matter appears as an aspect or shadow of Spirit, and like Spirit it is infinite, unanalysable, undifferentiated. Just as Spirit then has only three positive attributes, infinite and undefinable existence, consciousness and bliss, so original Matter has only three positive attributes, infinite and undefinable Time, Space and Causality — or, as Hindu thought phrases it, Condition. For the essence of Condition being change from one state to another, and each change standing in the relation of cause or origin to the one that follows it, Condition and Causality become convertible terms. From this indefinable noumenal condition of Prakriti the Self forms for its uses matter in its most refined and simple form, undifferentiated and undeveloped, but pregnant with the whole of material evolution. The causal state is called by the Sankhyas Pradhana, the first state or arrangement of matter and its essential principle. The relation of Spirit and Matter in this causal or seed-state is admirably expressed in the Puranic image of Vishnu, the eternal Purusha, asleep on the waveless causal ocean with the endless coils of the snake Ananta, the Infinite, for his couch. The sea of causal matter is then motionless and it is only when Vishnu awakes, the snake Ananta stirs and the first ever widening ripples are created on the surface of the waters that the actual evolution of matter has begun. The first ripple or vibration in causal matter creates a new & exceedingly fine and pervasive condition of matter called akasha or ether; more complex motion evolves out of ether a somewhat intenser condition which is called Vayu, Air; and so by ever more complex motion with increasing intensity of condition for result, yet three other matter-states are successively developed, Agni or Fire, Apah or Water and Prithivi or Earth. These are the five *tanmatras* or subtle elements of Sankhya philosophy by the combination of which subtle forms in subtle matter are built.

Here it is necessary to enter a caution against possible misunderstandings to which the peculiar nomenclature used by the Rishis & the common rendering of *tanmatra* & *bhuta* by the English word elements may very easily give rise. When we speak of elements in English in a scientific sense, we always imply elemental *substances*, those substances which when analysed by chemical processes, cannot be resolved into substances simpler than themselves. But when Hindu philosophy speaks of the five elements, it is not dealing with substances at all but with elemental states or conditions of matter, which are not perceptible or analysable by chemical inquiry but underlie substances and forms as basic principles of material formation. The old thinkers accepted the atomic theory of the formation of objects and substances but they did not care to carry the theory farther and inquire by what particular combinations of atoms this or that substance came into being or by what variations and developments in detail bodies animate or inanimate came to be what they are. This did not seem to them to be an inquiry of the first importance; they were content with laying down some main principles of material evolution and there they left the matter. But they were anxious to resolve not substances into their original atoms but matter into its original condition and so discover its ultimate relations to the psychical and spiritual life of man. They saw that perpetual motion involving perpetual change was the fundamental characteristic of matter and that each new motion was attended by a new condition which stood to the immediately preceding condition in the relation of effect to cause or at least of a new birth to the matrix in which it had been enembryoed. Behind the solid condition of matter, they found a condition less dense which was at the basis of all fluid forms; behind the fluid condition, another still less dense which was at the basis of all igneous or luminous forms; behind the igneous, yet another and finer which was at the basis of all aerial or gaseous forms; and last of all one finest and most pervasive condition of all which they called Akash or Ether. Ether was, they found, the primary substance out of which all this visible Universe is evolved and beyond ether they were unable to go without matter losing all the characteristics associated with it in the physical world and lapsing into a quite different substance of which the forms and motions were much more vague, subtle, elastic and volatile than any of which the physical world is aware. This new world of matter they called subtle matter and analysed the subtle as they had analysed the gross until by a similar procession from denser to subtler they came to a finest condition of all which they described as subtle ether. Out of this subtle ether a whole world of subtle forms and energies are evolved which constitute psychical existence. Beyond subtle ether matter lost its subtle characteristics and lapsed into a new kind which they could not analyse but which seemed to be the matrix out of which all material evolution proceeded. This they termed causal matter.

In the course of this analysis they could not help perceiving that consciousness in each world of matter assumed a different form and acted in a different way corresponding to the characteristics of the matter in which it moved. In its operations in gross matter the forms it assumed were more firm, solid and durable but at the same time more slow, difficult and hampered, just as are the motions and acts of a man in his waking state as compared with what he does in his dreams. In its operations in subtle matter the forms consciousness assumed were freer and more rapid, but more volatile, elastic & swiftly mutable, as are the motions and acts of a man in a dreaming state compared to the activities of his waking condition. To consciousness acting on gross matter they gave therefore the name of the Waking State, to consciousness acting on subtle matter the name of the Dream State. In causal matter they found that consciousness took the shape merely of the pure sense of blissful existence; they could discover no other distinguishing sensation. This therefore they called the Sleep State. They farther discovered that the various faculties and functions of man belonged properly some to one, some to another of the three states of consciousness and its corresponding state of matter. His vital and physical functions operated only in gross matter, and they determined accordingly that his physical life was the result of consciousness working in the Waking State on gross matter. His mental and intuitional processes were found to operate freely and perfectly in subtle matter, but in gross matter with a hampered and imperfect activity; they considered therefore that man's mental life belonged properly to the Dream State and only worked indirectly and under serious limitations in the Waking State. They determined accordingly that mental life must be the result of Consciousness working in the Dream State on subtle matter. There remained the fundamental energy of consciousness, Will-to-be or shaping Delight of existence: this, they perceived, was free and pure in causal matter, but worked if consciously, yet through a medium and under limitations in subtle matter, in hampered & half effectual fashion when the subtle self acted through the gross and sub-consciously only in gross matter. They considered therefore that man's causal faculty or spiritual life belonged properly to the Sleep State and worked indirectly and through less & less easy mediums in the Dream and Waking States; and accordingly determined that it must be the result of Consciousness working in the Sleep State on causal matter. The whole of creation amounted therefore to a natural outcome from the mutual relations of Spirit and Matter; these two they regarded as two terms — call them forces, energies, substances, or what you will, — of phenomenal existence; and psychical life only as one result of their interaction. They refused however to accept any dualism in their cosmogony and, as has been pointed out, regarded Spirit and Matter as essentially one and their difference as no more than an apparent duality in one real entity. This one entity is not analysable or intellectually knowable, yet it is alone the real, immutable and sempiternal Self of things.

It will be clear even from this brief and condensed statement of the Vedic analysis of existence that the elements of the Upanishad are not the elementary substances of modern chemistry but five general states of matter to which all its actual or substantial manifestations belong. It will also be clear that the names of the five elements have a conventional, not a literal value, but it may be as well to indicate why these particular names have been chosen. The first and original state of subtle matter is the pure ethereal of which the main characteristics are extreme tenuity and pervasiveness and the one sensible property, sound. Sound, according to the Vedic inquirers, is the first evolved property of material substance; it precedes form and has the power both to create it and to destroy it. Looking around them in the physical universe for a substance with these characteristics they found it in Akash or Vyom (sky), implying not our terrestrial atmosphere but that which is both beyond it and pervades it, — the fine pervasive connecting substance in which, as it were, the whole universe floats. They therefore gave this name, Akash, to the ethereal condition of matter.

The next matter-condition evolved from Ether and moving in it, was the pure aerial or gaseous. Here to pervasiveness was added a new potency of sensible and varied motion bringing with it, as increased complexity of motion necessarily must do, increased differentiation and complexity of substance. All the variety and evolutions of gaseous matter with their peculiar activities, functions and combinations have this second state or power of matter as their substratum; it is the basis also of that universal Prana or vital energy, starting from action, retention and reaction and culminating in organized consciousness, which we have seen to be so all-important an agent in the Vedic theory of the Cosmos. In this second power of matter a new property of material substance is evolved, touch or contact, which was not fully developed in pure ether owing to its extreme tenuity and primary simplicity of substance. Seeking for a physical substance gaseous in nature, sensible by sound and contact, but without form and characterized chiefly by varied motion and an imperfect pervasiveness, the Rishis found it in Vayu, Wind or Air. Vayu, therefore, is the conventional term for the second condition of matter.

Evolved out of the pure gaseous state and moving in it is the third or pure igneous condition of matter, which is also called Tejah, light and heat energy. In the igneous stage pervasiveness becomes still less subtle, sensible motion no longer the paramount characteristic, but energy, especially formative energy, attains full development and creation and destruction, formation and new-formation are at last in readiness. In addition to sound and contact matter has now evolved a third property, form, which could not be developed in pure Air owing to its insufficient density and the elusive vagueness and volatility of gaseous manifestations. The third power of matter is at the basis of all phenomena of light and heat and Prana by its aid so develops that birth and growth now become possible; for light and heat are the necessary condition of animate life-development and in their absence we have the phenomenon of death or inert and inanimate existence: when the energy of light and heat departs from a man, says the Upanishad, then it is that Prana, the vital energy, retires into mind, his subtle or psychical part, and withdraws from the physical frame. The physical substance which seemed to the Rishis to typify the igneous state was fire; for it is sensible by sound, contact and form and, less pervasive than air, is distinguished by the utmost energy of light and heat. Fire therefore is the conventional or symbolic name of the third power of matter.

Next upon the igneous state follows the liquid or fluid, less pervasive, less freely motional or energetic, and distinguishingly marked by a kind of compromise between fixity and volatility. In this state matter evolves a fourth property, taste. The liquid state is the substratum of all fluid forms and activities, and in its comparative fixity life-development finds its first possibility of a sufficiently stable medium. All life is gathered out of "the waters" and depends on the fluid principle within it for its very sustenance. Water as the most typical fluid, half-volatile, half-fixed, perceptible by sound, contact, form and taste, has given a symbolical name to the fourth condition of matter.

The solid state is the last to develop in this progression from tenuity to density, for in this state pervasiveness reaches its lowest expression and fixity predominates. It is the substratum of all solid forms and bodies and the last necessity for the development of life; for it provides life with a fixed form or body in which it can endure and work itself out and which it can develop into organism. The last new property of matter evolved in the solid state is odour; and since earth is the typical solid substance, containing all the five properties sound, contact, form, taste and smell, Earth is the conventional name selected for the fifth and final power of matter.

These five elemental states are only to be found in their purity and with their characteristic qualities distinct and unblended in the world of subtle matter. The five elemental states of gross matter are impure; they are formed out of subtle matter by the combination of the five subtle elements in certain fixed proportions, that one being given the characteristic name of ether, air, fire, water or earth in which the subtle ethereal, gaseous, igneous, fluid or solid element prevails overwhelmingly over the others. Even the last and subtlest condition to which gross matter can be reduced is not a final term; when realised into its constituents, the last term of gross matter disintegrates and matter reaches a stage at which many of the most urgent and inexorable laws of physics no longer operate. It is at this point where chemical analysis and reasoning can no longer follow Nature into her recesses that the Hindu system of Yoga by getting behind the five Pranas or gross vital breaths through which Life manifests in gross physical matter, is able to take up the pursuit and investigate the secrets of psychic existence in a subtler and freer world.

VIII. Matariswan and the Waters.

We are now in a position to consider what may [be] the precise meaning of the Upanishad when it says that in It Matariswan ordereth the waters. Shankara takes *apah* in a somewhat unusual and peculiar sense and interprets, "Air orders or arranges actions"; in other words, all the activity in the Cosmos is dependent upon the aerial or gaseous element in matter which enters into and supports all objects and, as Prana, differentiates and determines their proper functions. Prana, as we have seen, is the great vital energy breathing and circulating through all existence whose activity is the principal instrument of Will in the evolution of the Universe and whose mediation is necessary for all the operations of mind and body in gross matter. In psychic life also Prana is inherent in mind and supports those activities of subtle matter which are necessary for psychic existence. The intimate connection between Prana and vital activity may be best illustrated in its most obvious and fundamental function in the living organism, the regulation of breathing. So important is this function that Breath and Prana are generally identified; the usual signification of the word Prana is, indeed, breath and the five differentiated vital energies supporting the human frame are called the five breaths. So important is it, that even the searching analysis of modern science has not been able to get behind it, and it is held as an incontrovertible fact that the maintenance of respiration is necessary to the maintenance of life. In reality, this is not so. Ordinarily, of course, the regular inhalation of oxygen into the system and exhalation of corrupted breath out of it, is so necessary to the body that an abrupt interruption of the process, if continued for two minutes will result in death by suffocation. But this is merely due to a persistent vital habit of the body. It needs only a careful training in the regulation of the breath to master this habit and make respiration subservient to the will.

Anyone who has for a long time practised this art of breath-regulation or Pranayam can suspend inhalation and exhalation for many minutes and some not only for minutes but for hours together without injury to the system or the suspension of bodily life; for internal respiration and the continuance of the vital activities within the body still maintain the functions necessary to life. Even the internal respiration may be stopped and the vital activities entirely suspended without subjecting the body to the process of death and disintegration. The body may be kept intact for days, months and years while all the functions of breath and vitality are suspended, until the Will in its psychical sheaths chooses to resume its interrupted communications with the world of gross matter and recommence physical life at the precise point at which it was discontinued. And this is possible because Prana, the vital energy, instead of being allowed to circulate through the system under the necessary conditions of organic physical activity, can be gathered up into the mind-organ and from there in its simple undifferentiated form support and hold together the physical case.

But if respiration is not necessary to the maintenance of life, it certainly is necessary to the maintenance of activity. The first condition of Pranayam is the suspension of conscious physical activity and the perfect stillness of the body, which is the primary object of the various *asans* or rigidly set positions of the body assumed by the Yogin as a necessary preliminary in the practice of his science. In the first stages of Yoga the sub-conscious activity of the body due to the life of the cells, continues; in the later stages when internal respiration and vital activities are suspended, even this ceases, and the life of the body becomes like that of the stone or any other inert object. It is held together and exists by the presence of Prana in its primary state, the only connection of Will with the physical frame being the will to subsist physically. This is the first outstanding fact of Yoga which proves that Prana is the basis of all physical activity; the partial or complete quiescence of Prana brings with it the partial or complete quiescence of physical activity, the resumption of its functions by Prana is inevitably attended by the resumption of physical activity. The second outstanding fact is the peculiar effect of Pranayam and Yoga on mental activity. The first condition of Yogic exercises is, as has been said, the stillness of the body, which implies the suspension of the five *indriyas* or potencies of action, grasp, locomotion, utterance, emission and physical ecstasy. It is a significant fact that the habit of suspending these *indriyas* is attended by an extraordinary activity of the five *indriyas* of knowledge, sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, and an immense heightening of mental power and energy. In its higher stages this increase of power intensifies into clairvoyance, clairaudience, the power of reading other minds and knowing actions distant in space and time, conscious telepathy and other psychical powers. The reason for this development is to be found in the habit of gathering Prana or vitality into the mind-organ. Ordinarily the psychical life is overlaid and hampered by the physical life, the activity of Prana in the physical body. As soon as this activity becomes even partially quiescent, the gross physical obstruction of Anna and Prana is rarefied and mind becomes more self-luminous, shining out through the clouds that concealed it; vital energy is not only placed mainly at the service of the mind as in the concentration of the poet and the thinker, but is so much subtilised by the effect of Pranayam that the mind can operate far more vigorously and rapidly than in ordinary conditions. For mind operates freely and naturally in subtle matter only and the subtler the matter, the freer the workings of the mind. At an intenser stage of Yogic exercise all the vital functions are stilled and Prana entirely withdrawn from bodily functions into mind which can then retire into the subtle world and operate with perfect freedom and detachment from physical matter. Here again we see that just as Prana, differentiated and working physically, was the basis of all physical activity, so Prana, intermediate and working psycho-physically, is at the basis of all mental activity, and Prana, pure and working psychically is at the basis of all psychical activity.

The third outstanding fact of Yoga is that while in its earlier processes it stimulates mental activity, in its later stages it overpasses mental activity. At first the mind drawn inward from active reactions to external impacts, is able to perfect its passive reactions or powers of reception and its internal reactions or powers of retention and combination. Next it is drawn inward from external phenomena altogether and becomes aware of the internal processes and finally succeeds in concentrating entirely within itself. This is followed by the entire quieting of the subtle or psychical *indriyas* or sense-potencies followed by the entire quiescence of the mind itself. The reception of psychical impacts and the vibrations of subtle thought-matter are suspended; mind concentrates on a single thought and finally thought itself is surmounted and the Supra-Intelligence is potent, free and active. It is at this stage that Yoga develops powers which are so unlimited as to appear like omnipotence. The true Yogin, however, does not linger in this stage which is still within the confines of psychical existence, but withdraws the Will beyond Supra-Intelligence entirely into itself. The moment the Will passes out of subtle matter, activity ceases. Will has then three courses open to it; either to realize itself as the eternal Sakshi or witness and behold the vision of the Universe as a phenomenon within itself which it *sees but does not enact*; or to disappear into the Sunya Brahman, Supreme Nothingness, the great Void of unconscious mere-existence with which the Parabrahman is veiled; or to return into the Self and, liberated from even the vision of phenomena, exist in its own infinity of pure consciousness and supreme bliss. If we follow Prana through this process of Yogic liberation, we shall find that Prana ends where activity ceases. For Prana is a material entity arising out of the aerial state of subtle matter and as soon as that state is overpassed, Prana is impossible. Throughout there is this close identification of Prana with activity. It may well be said, therefore, that Matariswan is that which arranges actions.

Matariswan is the philosophical expression for Vayu, the aerial principle. It means that which moves in the mother or matrix and the word implies the three main characteristics of the aerial element. It is evolved directly out of ether, the common matrix, which is therefore its own mother and ultimately the mother of all elements, forces, substances, objects; its predominant characteristic is motion, and this characteristic of motion operates in the matrix, ether. Moving in ether, developing, combining, it creates the substances out of which sun and nebula and planet are made; it evolves fire and water and atmosphere, earth, stone and metal, plant, fish, bird and beast. Moving in ether, acting and functioning through its energy Prana, it determines the nature, motions, powers, activities of all those infinite forms which it has created. By the combinations & operations of this aerial element the sun is built up, fire is struck forth, clouds are formed, a molten globe cools and solidifies into earth. By the energy of the aerial element the sun gives light and heat, fire burns, clouds give rain, earth revolves. Not only all animate, but all inanimate existence owes its life and various activity to Matariswan and its energy Prana.

But it owes not only its life and activity, but the very materials out of which it is made. Here lies the insufficiency of Shankara's interpretation. The word *apah* naturally and usually signifies "waters", and it is a law of interpretation not lightly to be set aside that when the natural and usual meaning of a word gives a satisfactory or even a possible and not unsuitable sense, it should be preferred to an artificial and unusual meaning. In this case "waters" may have two meanings one of which gives a sense possible and not unsuitable, the other a sense even more satisfactory than Shankara's interpretation. By waters may be indicated the various fluid forms which are evolved by the fluid element, and, involved in the solid, sustain organic life; for the word *apah* is commonly used to indicate the fourth element of matter. Prana, the vital energy, may be said so to dispose these "waters" as to originate, sustain and develop all solidities and all forms of organic life. But this would be a narrow interpretation out of harmony with the vast sweep and significance of this verse which sums up the Supreme Entity in its aspects as the stable substratum of cosmic existence, the mighty sum of cosmic motion and energy and the infinite continent of cosmic energy. It is better therefore to take *apah* in the sense of the original ocean of cosmic matter, a figure which is so common as to have become a commonplace of Hindu thought. In It, in Brahman, Matariswan, the aerial element took and disposed the infinite supply of causal matter so as to provide the substance, evolve the forms and coordinate the activities of this vast and complex Universe.

IX. Spirit and Matter

But Matariswan does not conduct these numberless cosmic operations vast and minute by virtue of its own intrinsic and unborrowed power. Otherwise we might well ask, If there is a material substance which provides all the wherewithal necessary for the evolution of this Universe and a material energy by whose existence all the operations implied in its evolution can be explained, then the whole Universe can be understood as a development out of eternal Matter with its two properties substance and energy, and no second term of existence other than Matter need be brought in to account for the evolution of Consciousness. But the Upanishad emphatically negatives the material origination of things by stating that it is in Brahman, the Supreme Entity, that Matariswan orders the waters. By this, as Shankara points out, it is meant that only so long as the Supreme Self is there, can the activity of Matariswan be conceived as possible. As ether, the matrix, is the continent and condition of Matariswan and his works, so is Brahman the continent and condition of ether and its evolution. Matariswan is born out of ether and works in ether, but ether is itself only an intermediate evolution; in reality, Matariswan is born out of Brahman the Self and works in Brahman the Self.

The materialistic theory of cosmic origins has a great superficial plausibility of its own and it is popular with scientists because analytical Science knows thoroughly the evolutions of matter and does not know thoroughly the evolutions of soul and spirit; it is therefore inevitably led to explain what it knows imperfectly or not at all by what it does know and understand. The materialistic tendency is immensely assisted by the universal interdependence of Spirit, Soul and Matter. Every spiritual and psychical activity involves a material operation and this Science has clearly seen. It is natural therefore for the Scientist to argue that the material operation is the cause of the spiritual and psychical activity, nay, that the material operation is the activity and spirit and soul do not exist, but are essentially matter. It is equally true that every material operation involves a spiritual and psychical activity, but this Science has not yet seen. When therefore idealistic philosophies argue in precisely the opposite sense and urge that the spiritual activity is the cause of the material operation, nay that the activity is the material operation and matter does not exist but is essentially spirit, it is natural for Science to brush aside the argument as metaphysical, mystical and irrational. I argue from the firm basis of well-tested certainties, thinks the Scientist, my opponent from mere ideas the truth of which cannot be demonstrated by definite evidence or actual experiment.

All Hindu philosophies, however, not only the Vedantic, but Sankhya and Buddhism agree in rejecting the materialistic reading of the Universe and oppose to the well-tested certainties of Science certainties as well-tested of their own. Hindu thought has its own analysis of the Universe arrived at by processes and experiments in which its faith is as assured and unshakeable as the confidence of the Scientist in his modern methods of analysis and observation. To a certain extent Hindu philosophy goes hand in hand with the materialistic. Prakriti or Nature, an original energy manifesting in substance is the origin, the material and the agent of evolution. This original energy is not Prana, the vital energy, for Prana is not original but a later evolution, arising out of the aerial condition of matter and subsequent in time to the ethereal; there must therefore have been a previous energy which evolved ether out of causal matter. To this original Matter Sankhya gives the name of Prakriti, while Vedanta & Buddhism, admitting the term Prakriti, prefer to call it Maya. But Prakriti is not in itself sufficient to explain the origin of the universe; another force is required which will account for the activity of Prakriti in Pradhana or original substance. This force is Purusha or Spirit. It is the presence of Purusha and Prakriti together, says Sankhya, that can alone account for cosmic evolution.

Vedanta agrees and emphasizes what Sankhya briefly assumes, — that Purusha & Prakriti are themselves merely aspects, obverse and reverse sides, of a single Supreme entity or Self of Things. Buddhism, still more trenchant, does away with the reality of Purusha and Prakriti altogether and regards Cosmic Evolution as a cosmic illusion.

The necessity for positing another force than Prakriti arises from the very nature of Prakriti and its operations. The fundamental characteristic of Prakriti as soon as it manifests is eternal motion, — motion without beginning, without end, without limit, without cessation or respite. Its cosmic stir is like an eternally troubled ocean, a ceaseless rush, foam and clamour of perpetual restlessness, infinite activity. And the rapidity, the variability, the unimaginably complex coincidence and simultaneousness of different rates and forms of motion in the same material, in the same limits of space and time, are such as to baffle realization. We can only realize it in sections by picking the web of Nature to pieces and regarding as separable and self-sufficient what are really simultaneous and coincident motions. The first result of this infinite complexity of motion is an infinite mutability. Wherever we turn our eyes, there is something evolving and developing, something decaying and disintegrating. Nothing at this moment is precisely what it was the moment before; every ripple in the sea of Time means a disturbance however small in the coincident sea of Space, a change however infinitesimal in the condition of the largest or most apparently stable parts of Nature as well as of the minutest or most volatile. Causality, infinite and without beginning or end, cannot cease from its perpetuity of persistent action, its infinite progression of effects which are the causes of other effects, causes which are the effects of other causes; it is an endless chain, moving through Space & Time, working in Substance, forged by an eternal and indefinable Energy. And this eternal motion and mutability means inevitably an infinite multiplicity. Every inch of Space is thronged with an infinite variety of animate and inanimate existences, countless in number, multitudinous in kind, myriadly various in motion and action. An infinite multiplicity of motions make up the world creating endless variety of substance, form, function; an infinite multiplicity of change is the condition of its activity. Remove this eternal motion, eternal mutability, eternal multiplicity from the idea of Prakriti and we arrive at something we cannot recognize, an inactive energy, an immaterial substance. Without motion, Time, Space, Causality, as things in themselves, cease to be. We are face to face with blank void and nothingness — or else, since this is unimaginable and impossible, we must suppose something which cannot cease to be, an absolute Infinity undivided by Space or Time, an absolute Immutability unconditioned by cause and effect, an absolute Stillness unaffected by the illusive mobilities of Energy, an absolute Spirit ultimately real behind the phenomenon of substance.

If we do not accept this transcendental reality, we must suppose that an eternal Prakriti with eternal motion, mutability, multiplicity as its characteristics is the Alpha & Omega of existence. But a consideration of the Universe does not justify our resting secure in that hypothesis. In this eternal motion there is something perpetually stable, in this eternal mutability a sum and reality which is immutable; in this eternal multiplicity an initial, persistent and final Unity. Eternal motion in itself would lead to nothing but eternal chaos and confusion. We know that the Cosmos is made up of an infinite number of motions simultaneously occupying the same Space and simultaneously existent in the same substance; but the result is not clash or confusion, but harmony. In other words, the condition of this unending motion is an eternal stability. Everywhere we see variety of motion resulting in a harmonious balance, in the orbits of the revolving planets round the moving sun woven into one solar system we have a striking instance out of myriads of this law which governs every object and every organism. There is therefore not only the mobile Prakriti, but something else which is eternally stable.

Eternal mutability, likewise, can lead to nothing but eternal unrest and disorder. What is it that imposes an unchanging law of persistence and orderly development on this mass of infinitely shifting, unquiet and impermanent parts and combines into one harmony this confused strife of changing and interchanging phenomena? In its details the universe is restlessly mutable, momentarily changing, in its broad masses it is more fixed and permanent, in its sum it is immutable. The class is less mutable and impermanent than the man, the community than the class, the race than the community, mankind than the race; and so it is with all existences. The parts change, the whole persists. And it is well known that while matter goes through infinite changes of form, its sum never changes; unincreasing it develops, undiminishing it disintegrates. But not only is the sum of things immutable, the laws of their development are immutable; phenomena vary but the law governing them remains the same, and for this reason that the nature of things is immutable. Whatever the variety of forms, the thing in itself preserves its characteristics and remains unchanged. Electricity works in various shapes and in many activities, but it is always electricity preserving its true characteristics whatever work it may do or whatever body it may wear and always working and changing under the fixed laws of its being which cannot change. Electricity again is only one form and function of the igneous element which takes many forms, but in all of them preserves its true characteristics and its own law of work. We see therefore that the parts are impermanent, the whole permanent; forms of things change, the reality is immutable. The condition of this unending mutability and impermanence is an eternal immutability and permanence. There is therefore not only this mutable Prakriti, but something else which is eternally immutable.

The apparent multiplicity of the Universe is equally deceptive. For the very condition of this infinite multiplicity, is a persistent Unity which precedes it and towards which it moves. There are many substances, but they are all evolutions from one substance; one seed disposes itself in many forms. There are many laws governing the workings of that substance in its evolution but they resolve themselves into one law to which all existence is subject. As substances and forms develop, there seem to be many things with many natures, but they go back into one thing with one nature. There are many forms of electricity, but all resolve themselves into the one substance electricity; there are many forms of the igneous element, of which electricity is one, but they all resolve themselves into one igneous element; there are many elements besides the igneous, but they all resolve themselves into one causal and universal substance. This is the bottom fact of the universe; all complexities and varieties resolve themselves into a precedent simplicity, and all simplicities into an original Unity. There is therefore not only this ever-multiplying Prakriti, but something else which is eternally One. In this mobile, mutable, multitudinous Prakriti, there is then a persistent element which is stable, immutable and one. We have arrived again at that One infinitely Immutable, Immobile Sum and Reality of Things which is Parabrahman.

Materialistic Analysis insists however that the eternal unity, immutability and immobility supporting and making possible the eternal multiplicity, mutability and motion are themselves characteristics of Eternal Matter. They are the two opposing lines of force whose action and reaction preserve the equibalance of cosmic existence, but the eternal reality in which they act is not spiritual but material. For material energy working in material substance is quite enough to explain all the evolutions of Nature and these in themselves make Eternal Matter. Hindu thought, however, has always been unable to accept this conclusion because its analysis of cosmic existence has convinced it that substance and energy are not things in themselves, but merely phenomena. Substance increases with density until it reaches its highest expression in solid physical matter; but as it is analysed and resolved nearer and nearer to its origin, its density becomes less and less, its tenuity increases, it becomes more and more unsubstantial, until, on the farther brink of causal matter, it disappears into something which is not substance. Moreover, when examined it appears that substance is really another term for energy; the conditions of density and tenuity which constitute material substance, correspond with the conditions of motional intensity and vagueness which constitute material energy. As, therefore, matter is resolved nearer and nearer to its origins, energy like substance becomes less and less intense, its vagueness increases until it comes to a standstill or rather dissipates in something which is not energy. The conclusion is irresistible that substance and energy are merely a single phenomenon with a double aspect, and that in the origin of things this phenomenon, to which we may give the name of Matter, does not exist. The question remains, into what do substance and energy disappear? out of what were they born? We are confronted again with the necessity of choosing between the unimaginable impossibility of blank void and nothingness, for which we have no warrant in reason or experience, or the One, Immutable, Immobile, Infinite and Eternal Reality which is Parabrahman. This Supreme Entity is not matter, we have seen. But it may be argued that it cannot be certainly called Spirit, since it is so absolute an entity as to be indefinable except by negatives. Vedanta concedes this caution, asserting only that Parabrahman is not a negative entity, but an eternal and positive Reality, defined by negatives simply because it is not expressible to the finite intellect, and containing in itself the unity of Spirit and Matter, which is neither material nor spiritual.

One argument remains open to material Analysis. Granted Parabrahman as the reality of things, yet phenomenal existence itself is purely material and there is no need to call in the assistance of any other and different entity. For material energy in material substance is sufficient to explain all phenomena. Hindu thought holds however that it is not sufficient to explain the ultimate phenomena of Consciousness. At the beginning of material evolution matter is in itself inanimate, consciousness, to all appearance, non-existent. How and whence, then, did it appear? By the interaction of the three *gunas* inherent in Prakriti, reception, reaction, retention. But the interaction of the three *gunas* did not create Consciousness, they only liberated it from the dense obscuration of gross matter. For if consciousness were not involved in Matter, it could never be evolved from it. For if it be evolved from matter as an entirely new birth, it must be either some already existent material substance in a new form — say, some kind of gas or electricity, or it must be a new substance formed by the union of two or more substances, just as water is formed out of hydrogen and oxygen. No such gas or electricity has been discovered, no such new substance exists. Indeed the evolution of a mighty, reasoning, aspiring, conquering, irrepressible Consciousness, capable of something like omnipotence and omniscience, out of mere material gases and chemical substance is a paradox so hardy, so colossally and impossibly audacious that mankind has rightly refused to accept it even when advanced with the prestige of Science and her triumphant analysis and the almost irresistible authority of her ablest exponents to support the absurdity. Christian theology was inconsistent enough when it degraded man to the dust as a worm and clod, yet declared him capable of divinity by the easy process of belief in an irrational dogma; but the materialistic paradox, which lodges no hidden angel in the flesh, is even more startling, more naked, more inexorably irrational. Man, says materialistic Science, is an utterly insignificant unit in the universe; the infinitesimal creature of a day, he lives his short span of life and is then decomposed into the gases out of which he was made. He derives his mind, body and moral nature from his brother the chimpanzee and his father the gorilla. In his organism he is merely a mass of animalculae which belong individually to the lowest stage of animal life; but by combining into a republic with the cells of the brain as a sort of despotic senate or council, these undeveloped forms of life have been able to master the world. What has not this republic of animalculae, this Rome of protoplasms, been able to effect? It has analysed the elements; it has weighed the suns and measured the orbits of the stars; it has written the dramas of Shakespeare, the epics of Valmekie and Homer and Vyasa, the philosophies of Kant and Shankara; it has harnessed the forces of Nature to do its bidding; it has understood existence and grasped the conception of infinity. There is something fascinatingly romantic and interesting in the conception and it is not surprising that the human intellect should have been captured for a while by its cheerful audacity. But how long can unreason prevail? Even if we regard man as a limited being and take what the race has done for the utmost measure of what the individual can do, the disproportion between the results achieved and the means supplied by this theory is too great to be overlooked. It was inevitable that the religions formerly crushed down and almost smothered by the discoveries of Science, — even those creeds most philosophically insufficient and crude, — should be raising their heads and showing an unexpected vitality. Science prevailed for a time over religion by exposing the irrationalities and prejudices which had overgrown and incrusted spiritual truth. But when it sought to replace them by a more astounding irrationality than any religion had been guilty of and began to contract its own hard crust of dogmas and prejudices, it exposed itself to an inevitable reaction. Mankind for a time believed because it was incredible at the bidding of theologians who ruled reason out of court; the experiment is not likely to be repeated for long on the authority of scientists who profess to make reason their judge.

If it be still contended that, however paradoxical, consciousness is the result of impressions and vibrations in the brain, or that consciousness is merely a material energy manifested at a particular intensity of ethereal vibration, like light or sound, the answer is that consciousness operates more powerfully when the brain is quiescent and unimpressed from without and survives cellular decomposition, and that when energy is quiescent and ether dissolved into its origin, consciousness abides. To the Hindu mind this is an insuperable obstacle to the acceptance of the material origin of consciousness. From its long acquaintance with Yoga and the results of Yoga, it has learned that conscious Will in the human body can not only override the laws of gross physical matter and come appreciably nearer, within its sphere, to omnipotence and omniscience, but that this conscious Will can impose absolute quietude on and detach itself from the animalcule republic which is erroneously supposed to originate and contain it and that it does, as a habitual law of Nature, survive the disintegration of the body. These two facts are fatal to the materialistic theory and, so long as the practice of Yoga subsists in India, the Hindu mind will never accept materialism. For they show that, although undeniably consciousness is evolved out of gross matter, it can only be because it was involved into gross matter by a previous downward evolution; it is not being created, it is being merely liberated from its prison. Neither can consciousness be taken as a function of subtle matter; for just as it can exist apart from and survives the disintegration of its gross body, so also it can exist apart from and survives the disintegration of its subtle body. Before subtle matter evolves, consciousness preexists in causal matter; and after subtle matter dissolves, consciousness survives in causal matter. And since matter at the stage of causality neither functions, nor evolves, consciousness is not a function or evolution of causal matter, but other and different from it. It is clear therefore that from the first appearance of matter, consciousness operates coevally with it, but is not dependent on it for its origin.

X.

Original consciousness, as distinct from Matter, is termed Spirit. Spirit must never be confused with the apparent manifestations of it, which are merely the action and reaction of Matter and Spirit on each other. The characteristics of true Spirit can be determined by distinguishing what is essential, characteristic and permanent in consciousness throughout all its stages from what is merely condition, form or function of consciousness affected by the medium in which it is working. There are three such characteristics which appear rudimentarily the moment consciousness itself appears and seem more and more pronounced as liberated Spirit develops to its highest self-expression. The first of the trio is the impulse of existence, the will to preserve self, to survive and be, not merely temporarily but unendingly. Showing itself at first physically in the instinct of self-preservation and the instinct of self-reproduction, it develops psychically in the desire to outlast death and become "immortal" by whatever way, by a book, a song, a picture, a statue, a discovery, an invention, an immortal act or remembered career no less than by psychical persistence of personality after the death of the body, and it culminates spiritually in the Will to surmount both death and life and persist eternally and transcendentally. The second characteristic of consciousness is the capacity of knowledge or awareness, the Will to know. Showing itself at first physically in sensation and response to external objects, it develops psychically in personality with memory, its basis, and understanding, reason and intuition, its superstructure, and culminates spiritually in self-knowledge and the awareness of one's own eternal and unabridged reality. The third characteristic of consciousness is the emotion of pleasure in existence, primarily in one's own, sympathetically in all existence, the Will to enjoy. This is the most powerful and fundamental of emotions, — so powerful as to persistently outlast all the pain and struggle which the hampered existence of Spirit in Matter brings to the personality. Showing itself physically at first in mere sense-pleasure and the clinging to life, it develops psychically in the emotions of love and joy, and culminates spiritually in the delight of our psychical personality in contact with or entering into the impersonal existence of our real and infinite Self. These three characteristics constitute the conception of Spirit, which by throwing its will-to-be, its power of awareness and its delight in existence into the medium of Matter sets evolution going. This is what Sankhya philosophy means when it says that Purusha imparts activity to Prakriti by its mere presence or propinquity without thereby becoming itself active. Spirit remains what it essentially is, pure existence, consciousness and delight; it is Prakriti that vibrating to the touch of this conscious delight in existence, begins to act, to move, change and evolve. The limitations of consciousness, the phenomena of consciousness are merely phenomenal results of the vibrations of Prakriti in Consciousness and not changes in Spirit itself. Purusha is the eternally immutable, immobile and singly real condition of Universal Evolution; Prakriti in action is its eternal motion, mutability, multiplicity.

Sankhya does not go beyond this conclusion which it finds sufficient for its purposes; it considers Purusha and Prakriti to be both ultimate eternal entities in the Supreme Reality and their propinquity a satisfactory explanation of the Universe. Vedic philosophy, going deeper, was driven both by philosophical reasoning and the ultimate experience of Yoga to the conception of the one Supreme Entity transcending the distinction between

Spirit and Matter, Purusha and Prakriti, which are merely its noumenal self-expressions. Nor could Vedanta be satisfied with mere propinquity as a sufficient explanation of the manner in which immutability, stability and unity continually interpenetrate, surround and govern the infinite motion, mutability and multiplicity of Matter, still less of the manner in which Purusha identifies itself with the merely phenomenal changes of consciousness. But if Spirit informs, conditions and governs Matter, just as energy informs, conditions and governs substance, it would be possible for it to impress its own nature on the motions of Prakriti at every point of its evolutions without itself moving and acting. And if Spirit and Matter are not entirely different and separate entities but various expressions of a single supreme Ens, Matter a noumenon of apparent self phenomenally evolving as substance and energy, Spirit, a sense of Its real self supporting and therefore pervading and conditioning phenomena, it is then not only possible but inevitable that Spirit should be so constantly and closely aware of the perpetual activity of Matter as to attribute that activity to itself. In this interpretation of the Universe Vedanta consummated its analysis.

Time, Space, Condition reposing in the sense of actual Infinity and Immutability, — this is Prakriti, Origin-of-Matter working in Spirit; and all philosophic analysis of existence must inevitably culminate in this noumenon; for without it the Universe as it is, cannot be conceived; it is the very condition of thought and knowledge; it is the ultimate fact of cosmic existence. The triune noumenon of Time, Space, Condition or, in one word, Prakriti, immediately generates the noumenon of motion characterized by change and relation of parts and we have at once motion, mutability, multiplicity operating in the Infinite and Immutable. The triune noumenon of motion, mutability, multiplicity or, in one word, Energy generates the noumenon of substance moving, changing, relatively shifting in the Infinity and Immutability of Spirit. The noumenon of energy-substance constitutes Pradhana, original matter, and nothing farther is needed for the evolution of the cosmos. Prakriti with its evolution Pradhana is the material cause of the Universe; the presence of Spirit containing, supporting and pervading Prakriti and its evolutions is the efficient cause of the Universe.

Noumenon leads naturally to phenomenon. Consciousness and Existence in the Eternal Self being one, every noumenon of Consciousness must translate itself into an Existence of which the Consciousness is aware. The conception of Time, Space, Condition creates the appearance of Time, Space, Condition by that fundamental power of Consciousness which shows itself physically as formation, psychically as imagination and spiritually as Avidya, the power of conceiving what is Not-Self. The conception of motion creates the appearance of energy at work. The conception of motion-intensity as substance creates the appearance of matter worked upon. All Matter is phenomenal; all evolution the result of Avidya. Spirit is not phenomenal, but owing to its continual immanency in matter, attributes phenomenal existence to itself, so creating the phenomenon of soul or spirit working in matter. Thus Cosmos originates.

It will be seen that in this explanation of the Universe Spirit is taken as nearer to the Supreme Reality of things than Matter; it is not absolutely the real Self of things, but it is the noumenon or sense of the real Self persisting throughout all the obscurations of Avidya. This view is triply necessitated by the truths of elemental, psychical & spiritual evolution. When we consider the relations of Spirit to elemental matter, we see that as the obscuration of Matter thickens, Spirit becomes more and more concealed until, in gross inanimate matter, it is utterly covered in; but as the obscuration of Matter lessens, Spirit is more and more liberated until in the origin of things Matter seems a mere appearance in the reality of Spirit. It is therefore through Spirit and not through Matter that we are likely to get nearest to the Supreme Reality. So too, when we study our psychical evolution and follow Consciousness in its progressive liberation until it becomes Will in causal matter, we find it characterized in this last stage by the Will to be, the Will to know, the Will to enjoy; and when we get behind will and matter to our pure unconditioned Self, we still envisage Consciousness as pure existence, awareness and bliss. But our pure unconditioned Self is, we have seen, the

Reality of Things unaffected by Prakriti or its phenomena. We may therefore safely conclude that so far as the Supreme Reality can be positively envisaged by us in its purity, it is envisaged as existence, awareness, bliss, — in terms of Spirit and not of Matter. Lastly, when we analyse the evolution of Purusha in its three States, we find that it consists in the reflection of Prakriti as if by the Spirit. Spirit follows Prakriti through her three stages of material evolution, informing and sustaining them and mirrors their changes in itself as the changes of the sky may be mirrored in a clear and motionless pool; but the changes of the sky are not changes in the water. Purusha is immutable, immobile and One, just as the Supreme Reality is immutable, immobile and One. Purusha or Spirit is therefore the noumenon of the true Self, Prakriti the noumenon of not-Self or apparent Self. It is in this true Self of Parabrahman that the evolutions of apparent Self take place. In It Matariswan ordereth the waters.

XI.

Long and difficult to follow as has been this account of the Nature of Things according to Vedic philosophy, it was necessary so that we might understand minutely and comprehensively the meaning of these two verses, which in the second chapter of this book we could only adumbrate. The verses describe Parabrahman in Its truth with respect to the Cosmos, not in the absolute reality which is Its truth in Itself, but at the same time they indicate that it is the absolute and real Self of things which manifests in the Cosmos and not any Other, for there is no Other. It is anejad Ekam, the *One* who moveth not. The root *ejri*, as Shankara points out, means to shake or vibrate, and the reference is obviously to those vibrations of Prakriti on the tranquil surface of Self which are the beginning and cause of matter and its evolutions. But the Self does not vibrate and is not affected by the vibrations of Prakriti, even when It is supporting the cosmos and seems to be moving in it. Throughout it remains the One and is not broken up into multiplicity; even when by its immanence in many forms it seems to be many. These opening words of the first verse identify the One Immutable Immobile Infinity called Self or Spirit in the Cosmos with the Supreme Entity, Parabrahman.

This Supreme Entity which, as Self or Spirit, is immobile and one, is yet, without moving, swifter than thought. Swiftness implies motion; but the motion of Spirit in Cosmos is the illusory motion we see in the landscape as it whirls swiftly past the quiet watcher in the railway-carriage. The individual Self in Man is the watcher in the train, the train is Prakriti, the landscape the Universal Self in the Cosmos. The watcher is not moving, the landscape is not moving; it is the train which is moving and carries the sitter with it. In this second phrase of the verse the Parabrahman is identified with the Supreme Will in the Cosmos which without lifting a finger or stirring a foot creates and encompasses the Universe. This Supreme Will is simply Self or Spirit envisaging itself as the immanent Cause and Director of cosmical evolution in matter. The Will does not move but causes and conditions the infinitely complex cosmic motions; the Will does not act, but causes and determines actions; the Will does not divide or multiply itself, but plays with the multiplicity of cosmic forms and energies and impresses or mirrors itself in each. Being essentially the Self, it is, like the Self, One and Immobile, but as seen in the moving Cosmos, pervading, informing and governing it, It is, even in its motionlessness, swifter than thought.

The Gods could not reach It going in front. In the terminology of the Upanishads the Gods are the Potencies of the Universe which govern the Mind and the Senses in the microcosm Man and the Elements and their manifestations in the macrocosm Universe. Brahman, the One, precedes all these multiple potencies. It existed before they came into being and is therefore beyond their grasp. The rapid and stupendous effects of Will, omnipotent and omniscient, are such that the Mind, Sight, Hearing, all the senses together cannot comprehend their origination; limited and finite, they cannot grasp that which transcends limit. To the finite intelligence reasoning within prescribed limits it appears that there is no Will in action; all that happens and becomes is the inevitable working of material cause and effect, or of the Elements combining and working on each other. But Will is the cause of Causation and the disposer of Effect; Will preceded and dictated the workings of the Elements and arranged their combinations beforehand. This is He that from years sempiternal hath ordered perfectly all things. But the mind and senses cannot come near to and apprehend the nature of the Will or realize the how of its workings, because the mind and the senses can only understand what is done through their instrumentality or within the elemental medium to which they are limited and confined. They can analyse the physical forces of Nature and formulate the laws under which they work; they can dissect thought and sentiment and classify the mental functions and the laws of reasoning. But Brahman, the Will, they cannot reach and analyse; for He does not work through them, nor does He act in phenomena. He has arranged the motions of Prakriti beforehand, from years sempiternal; He has mapped out the law of those motions before ever they began to stir; and He now abides concealed in them, not acting but simply by His presence necessitating that the Law shall be observed and His dispositions followed. Will creates effects, outside Time, Space and Condition in a way the Mind cannot comprehend, by *Iccha* or Wish, in other words, by Itself. Will by Will necessitates phenomena in Itself, atmanyatmana. But when Prakriti translates Will into phenomena in the terms of Time, Space, Causality, she does it under limitations and by limited instruments. The preordainment was immediate, unhindered and perfect, but the carrying out seems to be slow, imperfect and the result of ceaseless effort and struggle, a web of failures, incomplete realizations and transient successes, a maze of forces acting and reacting on each other, helping, hindering and repulsing and always with a partial and mechanical or only half-intelligent action. Somehow a result is worked out, progress is made, but nowhere is there any finality or completeness, nowhere the repose of consummation. This incompleteness is an illusion created by the nature of finite Consciousness. The Mind and the Senses, through whom we become aware of the workings of the Universe, are themselves limited and imperfect; functioning only under limits and with effort they cannot envisage the work accomplished except in parts and with a restricted, disturbed and broken vision. To see life steadily and see it whole is only permitted to a Perfect and Infinite Consciousness standing outside Time, Space and Conditions. To such a divine Vision the working out of preordainment may present itself as a perfect, immediate and unhindered consummation. God said, "Let there be Light" and, straightway, there was Light; and when the Light came into being, God saw that it was good. But to the imperfect finite consciousness, Light seems in its inception to have come into being by a slow material evolution completed by a fortuitous shock of forces; in its operation to be lavished with a prodigal wastefulness since only a small part is used for the purposes of life; in its presentation to be conveyed to a blinking and limited vision, hampered by obstacles and chequered with darkness. Limitation, imperfection, progression and retrogression are inseparable from phenomenal work, phenomenal intelligence, phenomenal pleasure and satisfaction. To Brahman the Will who measures all Time in a moment, covers all Space with one stride, embraces the whole chain of causation in one glance, there is no limitation, imperfection, progression or retrogression. He looks upon his work as a whole and sees that it is good. But the Gods cannot reach to His completeness, even though they toil after it; for ever He outruns their pursuit, moving far in front.

Brahman, standing still, overtakes and passes the others as they run. While the Mind and Senses pressing onward through Time, look before and after and see sections of the past and dim apparitions of the future from the standpoint of their moment in the present, the Will from its position beyond the beginning of the past speeds beyond them into the future and to the end of things. It has in that moment apprehended, decided and accomplished in Itself all that is to be and leaves the mind and senses to toil after It and work out the preordained ideas and forms left impressed on the mould of that future which to It already exists. It does this standing still, because to the Will Past, Present and Future are but one moment and It lives in all of them simultaneously; they do not contain Brahman but are contained in Him. The Mind and senses hasten through Space, measuring the distance between star and star; but the Will passes them, traverses Space from one end to the other, knows it as a Whole and creates in Itself all its forms present, past and future; it leaves the Mind and senses to gather slowly, toilfully and by parts the single comprehensive knowledge It acquired without any process and to experience under the law of Time the immediately complete Universe It has perfected without any labour. It does this also standing still, for to Brahman here and there do not exist; all is here, since He is not in Space, but Space is in Him. While the Mind and senses run in the winding & twisted line of causation, the Will from the beginning of the chain passes them and has in a moment formed and surveyed it to its very end; It leaves them to count out the chain link by link by the imperfect aid of reason, piecing what is past to what is to come, and to trace out by the slow and endless process of work generating work and life generating life the complete and single Evolution which is already a predestined and therefore an accomplished fact. This too It does standing still; for to Brahman there is no succession of cause and effect, since cause and effect exist simultaneously in the Will; cause does not precede Him nor effect follow, but are both embraced in the single and mere existence of Himself as Will.

In It Matariswan ordereth the waters. We have here Brahman in a third relation to Cosmos. Brahman is the stable and immutable Unity which is immanent in the Cosmos as its real self of existence, awareness and bliss and which supports all phenomenal objects and forces as their omnipresent substratum of reality. Secondly, Brahman, this immobile Unity, is also, as Will, that which stands still and is yet swifter than mind and the potencies of mind; for Will, the Ordainer, Disposer and Cause, traverses all Time, Space and Causation, without motion, by the mere fact of being. Lastly, Brahman, this Self and Omnipresent Lord of things, is also that which contains all evolution and determines every object and force evolved by Prana out of original matter. Brahman is Vaisvanor, the Waking Self, in whom is contained and by whom exists all this evolution of physical world; Brahman is Taijasa, the Dream Self, in whom is contained and by whom exists all the psychical evolution from which the physical draws its material; Brahman is Prajna, the Sleep Self, in whom all evolution psychical & physical is for ever self-existent and preordained; Brahman is the Turiya Atman in whom and by whom Prajna-Taijasa-Vaisvanor are. He pervades the Cosmos and contains the Cosmos, as ether pervades the earth and contains the earth, and not only the Cosmos as a whole but every particular object and force in the Cosmos. This tree is pervaded and surrounded by the Divine Presence, — not, be it clearly understood, by a part of It but by Brahman one and indivisible. The presence of God is as complete in one small flower as in the whole measureless Universe. So also the Spirit in man is not a fragment of Deity, but the Eternal Himself in His imminuable majesty. The Self in me is not merely a brother to the Self in you or of one kind with it but is completely and utterly yourself; for there is no you or I, but One Eternal Immutable in many names and forms, One Reality in many transient and perishable frames.

XII.

It moves, It moveth not; It is far, the same It is near; It is within all this, the same It is outside all.

This second verse only brings out more emphatically what is implied in the first or presents the same truth from a slightly different standpoint. Brahman moves or vibrates, and Brahman does not move or vibrate. As the One Immutable and Immobile, He does not move, but He moves as mobile and multiple Prakriti. When it is said that Brahman is One and Unmoving, it is not meant that the mobile and multiple element in the Universe is other than Brahman; the Gods who cannot reach Brahman, whom He precedes and outstrips, are yet appearances of Himself; Matariswan and the Waters, whom He contains, are also of His substance. Purusha alone is not Brahman, Prakriti also is Brahman; for He is not only the efficient cause of His Cosmos, but its material Cause as well. It is true that the motion and multiplicity of Prakriti are phenomenal and superficial, the stability and immutability of Purusha fundamental and real; but the phenomenal has a truth and existence of its own and is not utterly unreal. To take the suggestive human parallel, Shakespeare in himself is one and immutable, in his creations he is mutable and many; the personages of his dramas and their words and actions are not Shakespeare in the ultimate truth of himself, yet they are not other than Shakespeare; for they live in him, by him and are of his substance. It is easy to say they are unreal, but they have a reality of their own; they are true psychical images and live as phenomena in the consciousness of Shakespeare though not as separate and independent entities. So also the multiple Cosmos has a true phenomenal existence and reality in the Brahman, though no separate existence as independent entities. The tree and the river are not real as tree and river, but they are real as images, eidolons of the Brahman. In Himself He is calm, quiescent and unmoved, in them He moves and energises.

It is far and It is at the same time near. Physically near and far; the Sun and the distant constellations and Orion and Aldebaran and Lyra and whatever utmost star glitters on the outermost mesh of this network of suns and systems, all that is Brahman; and equally this earth which is our dwelling-place, and this country which is our mother and nurse, and this village or city in which we live and do business, and this house which shelters us, and these trees and tanks which were part of our childhood, and the faces we familiarly know and the voices we daily hear, all in which we habitually live and move, all this is Brahman. Emotionally & mentally near and far; for our love and our hatred, and what we love and hate, things forgotten and things remembered, things we cherish until death and things we put from us with loathing, friend and enemy, injurer and injured, our work and the daily web of our fears and hopes and longings, this is Brahman; and that which is so far from us that it cannot stir a single emotion or create a ripple of sensation in the mind, whether because it is remote in the distance of Time or hidden in the distance of Space or lost to the blindness of indifference, that too is Brahman. Intellectually near and far; for the unknown and the little known, that which is too vast or too small for us to perceive, or which our most powerful instruments cannot bring near to us or our keenest reasonings analyse or our widest comprehension embrace, that is Brahman; all we daily perceive and note, the myriad forms that Science analyses, the delight of the eye and ear and taste and smell and touch, this is Brahman; and the subjective world in ourselves which is nearest to us of all, thought and memory and sensation and feeling, volitions and aspirations and desires, these too are Brahman. Spiritually near and far; for the Omniscient and Omnipotent Cause and Ruler who creates universes with the indrawing of its breath and destroys universes with its outthrowing, beside whom we feel ourselves to be too vile and weak and feeble to partake even infinitesimally of His divine nature, that is Brahman; the ineffable and unimaginable Spirit whom our senses cannot perceive, nor our minds comprehend, nor our reason touch, that is Brahman; and our own Self who eternally enthroned in the cavern-heart of our being, smiles at our pleasures and pains, mighty in our strength, as mighty in our weakness, pure in our virtues, unstained by our sins, no less omniscient and omnipotent than Isha, no less calm, immutable and ineffable than the Supreme Being, — this our Self too is Brahman. The Karmayogin who has realised it, must hold all existence divine, all life a sacrament, all thought and action a self-dedication to the Eternal.

It is within all this, It too is without all. Brahman is within the whole Universe; every object however inanimate, every form of life however vile, is brim-full with the presence of God. The heathen who worships stocks and stones has come nearer to the truth of things, than the enlightened professor of "rational" religion, who declares God to be omnipresent and yet in the next breath pronounces the objects in which He is present to be void of anything that can command religious reverence. There is no error in "idolatry"; the error is in the mind of the idolater who worships the stone as stone and the stock as stock, thinking that is God, and forgets or does not realise that it is the Divine

Presence in them which is alone worship-worthy. The stock or the stone is not God, for it is only an eidolon, a symbol of His presence; but the worship of it as a symbol is not superstitious or degrading; it is true and ennobling. Every ceremony which reminds us of the presence of the Eternal in the transient, is, if performed with a religious mind, a spiritual help and assists in the purification of consciousness from the obscuration of the senses. To the ordinary intelligence, however, the idea of Brahman's omnipresence, if pushed home, becomes a stumbling-block. How can that which is inert, senseless and helpless be full of that which is divine and almighty? Is it not a sacrilege to see Him in what is vile and repulsive? Is it not a blasphemy to envisage Him in the vicious and the criminal? Hence the popular Manicheanism which pervades every religion; hence the persistent idea of a twofold creative power, God and devil, Ormuzd and Ahriman, Allah and Iblis, the one responsible for all that is good, the other for all that is evil. This kind of spiritual and intellectual weakness loves to see God in everything good and pleasant and beautiful, but ignores Him in what is evil, ugly or displeasing. But it is an imperfect religion which thus yields to the domination of the mind and senses and allows them to determine what is or is not God. Good is a mask and evil is a mask; both are eidola, valid for the purposes of life in phenomena, but when we seek that which is beyond phenomena, we must resolutely remove the mask and see only the face of God behind it. To the Karmayogin there should be nothing common or unclean. There is nothing from which he has the right to shrink; there is none whom he can dare to loathe. For God is within us all; as the Self pure, calm and eternal, and as the Antaryamin or Watcher within, the Knower with all thought, action and existence for His field of observation, the Will behind every movement, every emotion, every deed, the Enjoyer whose presence makes the pain and pleasure of the world. Mind, Life and all our subjective consciousness and the elements of our personal existence and activity, depend on His presence for the motive-force of their existence. And He is not only within us, but within all that is. What we value within ourselves, we must not belittle in others;

what we cherish within ourselves, we must not hurt in others; what we love in ourselves, we must not hate in others. For that which is within us, is the Divine Presence, and that which is in others, is the same Divine Presence. To remember this is worth all the moral teachings and ethical doctrines in the world. Vedanta has been declared by those who have not chosen to understand it, a non-moral or even immoral philosophy. But the central truth of Vedanta enfolds in a single phrase all the highest ethics of the world. Courage, magnanimity, purity, justice, charity, mercy, beneficence, loving kindness, forgiveness, tolerance, all the highest demands that the most exalted ethical teacher can make on humanity are contained in that single doctrine; and find in it their one adequate philosophical justification and sole natural basis.

That is not only within all this, It is also outside all. We have already seen that Brahman is outside all in the sense of containing the Universe and not only pervading but surrounding every object with His presence. He is also outside in the sense that He is apart from it and other than it. He is not confined in Time, Space and Condition, but is quite above and outside Time, Space and Condition: Cosmos is within Him only as the shadow of a cloud is in the water; He is in Cosmos only as the water is in the shadow and causes and contains the shadow; but He is not the Cosmos in His nature or in His substance any more than the water is in nature or substance the shadow. The Cosmos exists in Him phenomenally and as a transient appearance, just as the shadow exists phenomenally in the water and after a time passes away. But there is this difference that the appearance in the water is the shadow of something else cast from outside, but the Cosmos is a shadow or eidolon of Himself created by Brahman in His own being. The materialistic Pantheism so natural to the sense-dominated intelligence of the West, is not Vedanta. God is not in nature or substance His Universe; but the Universe is He phenomenally and as a manifestation. Spirit-Matter is Brahman, but Brahman is not Spirit-Matter. This distinction must be carefully kept in mind or the doctrine of entire identity between Brahman and the Self of Things, may lead to disastrously false conclusions. The truth that Brahman is in all this, must be carefully balanced by the truth that Brahman is outside it all.

Yet to the Karmayogin the negative side of this dual truth is only necessary as a safeguard against error and confusion; it is the positive side which must be his inspiration. In its light the whole world becomes a holy place and all cause of fear or grief or hatred disappear, all reason for selfishness, grasping, greed and lust are eliminated, all excuses for ignoble desire or ignoble action are taken away. In their stead he receives the mightiest stimulus to self-purification and self-knowledge, which will lead him to the liberation of the divine in himself, to that subdual of the bodily and vital impulses which disciplines the body into the triune strength of purity, abstemiousness and quietude; to courage, magnanimity, justice, truth, the four elements of strength; and mercy, charity, love, beneficence, the four elements of sweetness, making that harmony of perfect sweetness & strength which is perfect character, to a mind, pure of passion and disturbance and prepared against the delusions of sense and the limitations of intellect, such a mind as is alone capable of self-knowledge. In this disciplined body, a perfect heart and a pure mind he will have erected a fitting temple for the Eternal within him in which he can offer the worship of works to the Lord and of selflessness to the Self. For by that worship he will become himself the Lord and find release from phenomenal life into the undisturbed tranquillity of the Spirit. The dictum, Theos ouk estin alla gignetai, God is not but is becoming, has been used to express the imperfect evolution of the cosmos but is better applied to the present spiritual progress of humanity. In the race the progress is still rudimentary, but each man has that within him which is empowered to fulfil his evolution and even in this life become no longer an animal, or a mind, a heart, an intellect, but the supreme and highest of all things — Himself.

Book III.

Chapter I.

"But he who sees all creatures in his very Self and the Self in all creatures, thereafter shrinketh not away in loathing. He who discerneth, in whom all creatures have become Himself, how shall he be deluded, whence shall he have sorrow in whose eyes all are one?"

In these two stanzas the Upanishad formulates the ethical ideal of the Karmayogin. It has set forth as its interpretation of life the universality of the Brahman as the sole reality and true self of things; all things exist only in Him and He abides in all as the Self. Every creature is His eidolon or manifestation and every body His temple and dwelling-place. From Him all things began, in Him they develop and mature themselves, to Him they must in their nature strive to return. The mutual relations of all beings to each other may be summed up in the single phrase, "One Self in all creatures, all creatures in one Self"; for He is both within all and contains all. But this Self exists in each creature not partially or fragmentarily but in Its indivisible completeness. Therefore the Self in one creature is precisely the same as the Self in another, not merely kin by origin as in the Christian theology, not merely of the same kind and nature as in the Sankhya teaching, but absolutely identical. The sense of personal separation in space and substance and difference in nature has been illusorily brought about by the play of Prakriti, the noumenon of false self, on the one eternal Reality, creating an illusion of multiplicity and mutability. Self identifies itself with the phenomena of the evolved universe; habitually feeling the play of the three gunas, the principles of material reception, reaction and retention, on the body, the vital impulses, the mind, the intellect, the supra-intelligence it mistakes the continuity of conscious impressions for the real self, forgetting that these are merely aspects of consciousness in relation to matter and not the true and eternal reality of consciousness. But the end of evolution is to liberate the permanent from the impermanent, the spiritual from the material, the Self from its bondage to the three gunas and the false conceptions which that bondage creates. This liberation or release must therefore be the final aim of religion and ethics, otherwise religion and ethics will be out of harmony with the truth of things and therefore false or imperfect. Religion and ethics must train the individual self in a man to discover its universality, to see himself in all creatures and all creatures in himself, and the ideal or ethically perfect man is the one who has attained to this vision and observes it habitually in his thoughts and actions as the one law of his life.

In order to realize this vision, it has been found by experience that a man must attain freedom from the lower impulses which identify the body and the vital impulses with self; he must practise cleanliness and purity in mind, body and speech, — abstinence from gross gratifications and freedom from the domination of passions and desires; indifference to cold, heat, hunger, thirst, fatigue and other affections from external influences. In other words he must be completely master of his own body. The Christian virtue of purity, the Pagan virtue of endurance, lie therefore at the very root of Vedantic morality.

To see oneself in others is impossible without completely identifying oneself with others; a perfect sympathy is essential and perfect sympathy brings with it perfect love, perfect charity and forgiveness, perfect pity for sin and suffering, perfect tolerance, a universal benevolence with its counterpart in action universal beneficence. The Jivanmukta, the Rishi, the sage must be, by their very nature, sarvabhutahitarata; men who make it their business and pleasure to do good to all creatures, not only all men, but all creatures, — the widest possible ideal of universal charity and beneficence. To do as one would be done by, to love your enemies and those who hate you, to return good for evil are the first ethical inferences from the Vedantic teaching; they were fully expressed in their highest and noblest form by Buddhism five hundred years before they received a passionately emotional and lyrical phrasing in Judaea and were put widely into practice in India more than two thousand years before Christian Europe took even slightly to heart what it had so long been professing with its lips. And not only perfect love and beneficence, but perfect justice with its necessary counterpart in action, honest dealing and faithful discharge of duty are the natural outcome of the Vedantic teaching. For if we see ourself in others, we shall not only be willing but delighted to yield them all that is due to them and must shrink from wronging or doing hurt to them as naturally as we would shrink from doing hurt to ourselves. The debts we owe to parents, family, friends, the caste, the community, the nation we shall discharge not as an irksome obligation, but as a personal pleasure. The Christian virtue of charity, the Pagan virtue of justice are the very sap and life of Vedantic morality.

Seeing the Self in all creatures, implies seeing the Lord everywhere. The ideal man of Vedanta will accept pain as readily as pleasure, hatred, wrong, insult and injustice as composedly as love, honour and kindness, death as courageously as life. For in all things he will see the mighty Will which governs the Universe and which wills not only his own good and pleasure and success, but the good and pleasure and success of others equally with his own; which decrees that his own good and the good of others shall be worked out not only by his victories and joys, but by his defeats and sufferings. He will not be terrified by the menace of misfortune or the blows dealt him by man or nature, nor even by his own sins and failures, but walk straight forward in the implicit faith that the Supreme Will is guiding his steps aright and that even his stumblings are necessary in order to reach the goal. If his Yoga is perfect, his faith and resignation will also be perfectly calm and strong; for he will then fully realize that the Supreme Will is his own Will. Whatever happens to me, it is I that am its cause and true doer and not my friend or enemy who is merely the agent of my own Karma. But the faith and resignation of the Karmayogin will not be a passive and weak submission. If he sees God in his sufferings and overthrow, he will also see God in his resistance to injustice and evil, a resistance dictated not by selfishness and passion, but undertaken for the sake of right and truth and the maintenance of that moral order on which the stability of life and the happiness of the peoples depend. And his resistance like all his actions will be marked by a perfect fearlessness, a godlike courage. For when a man sees God in all things and himself in all beings, it is impossible for him to fear. What is it that can cause him terror? Not danger or defeat, not death or torture, not hatred or ingratitude, not the worse death of humiliation and the fiercer torture of shame and disgrace. Not the apparent wrath of God Himself; for what is God but his own self in the Cosmos? There is nothing that he can fear. The Christian virtue of faith and resignation, the Pagan virtue of courage are the strong stem and support of Vedic morality.

The ignorant censure of Vedanta as an immoral doctrine because it confuses the limits between good and evil or rejects the one necessary motive to action and virtue, proceeds from unwillingness or inability to understand the fine truth and harmony of its teachings. Vedanta does indeed teach that virtue and vice, good and evil are relative terms, things phenomenal and not real; it does ask the seeker to recognize the Supreme Will in what is evil no less than in what is good; but it also shows how the progression of the soul rises out of the evil into the good and out of the good into that which is higher than good and evil. Vedanta does reject the lower self of desire as a motive to action and virtue, but it replaces it by the far more powerful stimulus of selflessness which is only the rising to our higher and truer Self. It does declare phenomenal life to be an illusion and a bondage, but it lays down the practice of courage, strength, purity, truth and beneficence as the first step towards liberation from that bondage, and it demands a far higher standard of perfection in these qualities than any other creed or system of ethics. What to many moralists is the highest effort of feeble human nature is to Vedanta only the first imperfect manifestation of the divine self in humanity. Vedanta embraces, harmonizes and yet overtops and exceeds all other moralities; as Vedic religion is the eternal and universal religion, so is Vedic ethics the eternal and universal morality. Esha dharmah sanâtanah.

II. Ethics in primitive society.

Every system of ethics must have a sanction to validate its scheme of morals and an aim which will provide man the stimulus he needs, if he is to surmount his anti-ethical instincts and either subdue them or eradicate. Man is not a purely ethical being; he has immoral and nonmoral impulses which are primarily stronger than his ethical tendencies. To check the former, to liberate, strengthen and train the latter is the first object of all practical ethics religious or non-religious. The first requisite to this end is a true knowledge of human nature and its psychology; for if an ethical system is psychologically untrue, if it is seriously mistaken in its view of human nature or fails to discern and reach his highest and noblest instincts, it will either be ineffective or possibly even do as much harm as good to the moral growth of humanity. But even a psychologically sound morality will not command general assent in practice unless there is a sanction behind it which the reason or the prejudices of mankind will accept as sufficiently strong to make a necessity of obedience. Armed with such a sanction it will influence the thoughts and the thoughts the actions of the race, but even then it will be only a repressive and disciplinary influence; to be an active stimulus or powerful moral lever it must be able to set in our front an aim which will enlist strong natural forces on the side of virtue or an ideal which will appeal to instincts deepseated and persistent in universal humanity.

In its origin it is more than probable that morality was a social growth and limited to communal habits and communal necessities. The aim set before the individual was the continued privilege of abiding in the community and enjoying all-important advantages of security, assistance and social life which membership of the community could alone provide. The sanction was again a communal sanction; the custom-code of the tribe or community commanded assent and obedience precisely because it was the tribe and community that commanded and could enforce them with severe social punishments, death, ostracism, excommunication. This origin of ethics from the customs of the tribe, themselves originating from the fundamental necessities of self-preservation, is warranted by the facts of sociology as rendered by modern investigation. It agrees also with the view of nature and evolution held by the Vedic inquirers. For if we consider the history of communities and nations so far as we know them, we shall find that it consists so far in a progression from the society to the individual in society, from a basis of tamas to an outgrowth of rajas in the tamasic basis; while sattwa perfected in a few individuals, is, as a social force, not yet emancipated.

We have seen that Prakriti or nature in all its operations works through three inherent *gunas* or qualities which repeat themselves in all stages and forms of her multifold activity; they are present as much in psychic and spiritual evolution as in the physical; and so all-important are they that all activity of any kind whatsoever, all life mental, vital, physical are said to be merely the natural operation of the three *gunas* interacting upon each other. These three *gunas* are called in the Sankhya terminology *sattwa*, *rajas*, *tamas*; comprehension, activity, passivity, or as they manifest in physical substance, retention, active reaction and passive reception. None of these *gunas* can exist or act by themselves; the activity of each involves the activity of the other two; but according as one or the other predominates, an action, a state of things, a substance, a character, is called tamasic, rajasic, or sattwic. In the early stages of upward evolution tamas predominates, in the medial rajas, in the final sattwa. In the early evolution of man it is inevitable, therefore, that the obscuration of tamas should be very heavy and that the characteristic of passive receptivity to outside surroundings should be markedly predominant. Early man is active only under the pressure of hunger, or when moved by the primitive impulses of sense and vitality and the needs of self-preservation. His senses are keen and his power of activity great because keen senses and a strong, hardy, agile body are necessary to self-preservation; but in the absence of necessity or stimulus he is profoundly indolent, even inert. His sensibility, physical or mental, is small, for sensibility depends on and increases with rajas, the power of reaction and this power is in the savage comparatively undeveloped. His emotional reactions are also weak and primitive; in their predominantly physical character and in the helpless spontaneousness of their response to impressions they reveal the domination of tamasic passivity. The centres of individuality, a characteristically sattwo-rajasic function, are too weak as yet to control, regulate and rationalize the response. Hence the emotional nature shows itself on one side in a childishly unruly gratification of the pleasure of pleasant impressions, — the savage is easily mastered by gluttony and drunkenness but also capable of childlike worship and doglike fidelity when brought into close contact with a higher nature; on the other it is manifested in a brutally violent response to unpleasant impressions. Anger is the primitive reaction to an unpleasant impact which is not unfamiliar, fear the primitive reaction to an unpleasant impact which is new and surprising. The savage is therefore prone to childish terror in presence of the unknown, to ferocious anger and vindictive cruelty when his hatred is aroused by injury or the presence of what, though not unfamiliar in form, is alien and therefore hateful in its features. The habit of self-indulgence in anger by an organization of great passivity and low physical and mental sensibility creates the characteristic of a quiet unimpassioned cruelty, — the savage is, as a rule, calmly cruel. The Red-Indian's stoicism, impassivity, immobility, quiet endurance of pain are merely the inertia of the tamasic mind and body systematized and become part of his tribal morality. But the height of passivity is reached in his intellectual organization of which the only strong reaction is the primitive mental response to outside impressions, curiosity. This curiosity is different from the desire to know, for it consists in a childish amused wonder and a desire merely to repeat the experience, not to learn from it. Such curiosity is at the root of the practice of torture; for the primitive mind finds a never-failing delight in the physical response evoked by intense and violent pain. This pleasure in crude physical, moral, aesthetic or intellectual reactions because of their raw intensity and violence is a sure sign of the undeveloped tamasic mind and is still common enough in the most civilized communities. Originality and independence of mind and character spring from a strong rajasic development and are therefore unknown to the savage who is the creature and slave of his environments. By far the most powerful and insistent of these environments is the community in which he lives and which is necessary to him at every turn for his security and his self-gratification. His passive mentality therefore not only accepts but welcomes rigid control by the community; it receives the hereditary custom-law of the tribe as an inviolable natural law, and has too weak an individuality to react against it or to desire change and progress. The primitive community is therefore stationary; the individual exists in it not as an individual, but as an undetachable fragment of the whole. The social organization, even at its best, is in type and level on a par with that of the beehive and the ant-hill.

The tamasic state of society reaches its highest development when the community, entirely outgrowing the attractions of the nomadic instinct, settles down to a fixed habitation for centuries and adds to its original reason for existence, — communal self-preservation, — the more fruitful impulse towards communal accumulation. It has then the necessary condition for progress from the tamasic stage to the sub-tamasic in which the individual first begins to emerge although he is still subordinated to the community and lives chiefly for the general advantage, not for his own. The settled state of society and the expansion of the community which a more prosperous and stable life brings with it, involve an increasing complexity of the social organization. Specialization of function becomes pronounced, for the larger needs of the community demand an increasing division of labour. Rank and private property begin to emerge; inequality has begun. The more various activities, the more varied experience, the less primitive range of desires and the need of a wider knowledge of things and men create a greater mental alertness and increased mental differentiation. This in its turn means the growth of individuality. Personality, we have seen, has memory for its basis and is determined by memory; individuality or difference of personality is originally created by difference in the nature and range of the impressions experienced and retained by the mind, which naturally results in different habits of emotional and mental reaction. The fundamental self in all men is the same, the action of external Prakriti in its broad masses is the same all over the world; therefore human personality is necessarily the same in its general nature wherever we meet it. Difference in personality arises purely from difference in the range of mental and emotional experience; from the different distribution of various kinds of experience, and from differently developed habits or ways of reaction to impressions received. For character is nothing but habit; and habit is nothing but an operation of memory. The mind remembers that it received this particular impact before and reacted on it in this particular way and it repeats the familiar experience. The repetition becomes a habit of the mind ingrained in the personality and so a permanent characteristic. Difference of experience thus creates difference of personality, and difference of experience depends on difference in life, pursuits, occupations. So long as life is bounded by the desires of alimentation, self-preservation and self-reproduction, there can be no real individuality within the species, for the processes required and the experiences involved in these functions are practically the same for each member of the species. Even the gratification of primitive sensuous desires does not involve anything more than minute and unnoticeable differences. Hence one savage very much resembles any other savage just as one animal of a species very much resembles another of the same species, and one savage community differs from another only as one animal sub-species differs from a kindred sub-species. It is only when desires and needs multiply, that difference of life and occupation can bring difference of experience and develop individuality. The increasing complexity of the community means the growth of individuality and the liberation of rajas in the human psychology.

Rajas is the principle of activity and increases with the intensity and rapidity of the reactions of Will upon external things; it is not content like tamas with passively receiving impressions and obeying its environments, but seizes on the impressions and strives ever to turn them to the service of individual personality, to master its environments and use them for its own enjoyment. Everything which it experiences, it utilizes for the pleasure and pain of the individuality. The rajasic man is the creator, the worker, the man of industry, enterprise, invention, originality, the lover of novelty, progress and reform. The growth of rajas therefore necessarily meant the inception of a great problem for society. In the tamasic and sub-tamasic states man develops the all-important faculty of conservatism, reverence for the past, fidelity to the communal inheritance, subordination of the interests and passions of the particular, be it class or individual, to the stability and safety of the whole. But here was a new element likely to disturb and upset the old state of things. The rajasic individuality was not likely to accept the traditional sanction, the communal aim as a satisfying aim and a binding sanction. The more and more he developed, the more and more strongly it would crave for the satisfaction of its expanding individual desires, ideas, activities with less and less regard to the paramount importance of social stability. How should society deal with this element? From that single difficulty arose the whole sociological problem involving difficulties of ethics, legislation and politics which after so many thousands of years mankind has not solved to its permanent satisfaction.

Chapter III. Social Evolution.

In the early stages of the sub-tamasic state the question was not so acute, for differentiation in the society was not at first very complex; it proceeded upon broad lines, and as soon as it took definite form, usually as a result of intermixture with alien elements, it developed classes or castes, the priest, the warrior, the people, — merchant, tiller or artisan — and the thrall or servant. Character developed at first more on these broad lines than by individual irregularities, in types rather than in persons; for each kind of life, each broad line of pursuits and occupations would naturally mean the same general range of experience and the same habits of reaction to external impressions and so evolve broad developments of character falling into caste-types, within whose general predominance personal idiosyncrasy would be at first comparatively ill-developed and of minor importance. The priest-type would develop favourably in the direction of purity, learning, intellectual ability and acuteness, unfavourably in the direction of jealous exclusiveness, spiritual and intellectual pride, a tendency to trade on the general ignorance. The warrior type would evolve courage, honour, governing power as its qualities, arrogance, violence and ruthless ambition as its defects. The earning class would develop on the one side honesty, industry and enterprise, on the other desire of gain. Obedience and fidelity would be the virtues of the thrall. Society accommodating itself to the altered circumstances modified its single and rigid social morality and admitted the validity of the newly-formed habits of mind and action as within the caste to which it properly belonged. Thus arose the ethical phenomenon of caste morality. Outside the limits of the caste ethics the general social code remained in full force. As the life of the individual in the community expanded in extent and became more varied and complex in content, the social custom-code also became more complex in its details and wider in its comprehensiveness, in its attempt to pursue him into every detail of his life and control not only his broad lines of life but his particular actions, allowing no distinction between private and public life. Its nature had not changed; it was as rigid and inexorable in its demands, as intolerant of individual originality and independence; its sanctions were unaltered, the ancestral tradition of the community and the fear of social punishments, death, ostracism, excommunication or other penalties which if less drastic were yet sufficiently formidable. The object to be fulfilled was still predominantly the same, the satisfaction of communal demands as the price of communal privileges.

In this attempt society could not permanently succeed and had either to abandon it or to call in the aid of other forces and stronger sanctions. The community grew into the nation; social divisions became more intricately complex, the priest-class breaking up into schools, the warriors into clans, the people into guilds and professions; the organization was growing too vast in size, too intricate in detail. Class began to push its individual claims against class, individuals began to question the old sanctions or doubt the sacredness of tradition. In small villages the old tyranny of society might be possible, in great towns it must necessarily become increasingly lax and ineffective. Above all, as the individual's mental life became enriched and vigorous, society found itself baffled by an insurmountable difficulty; it could control his outward acts by its rigour, but it could not ultimately control his mental and spiritual life, yet this inner life psychical and spiritual tended irresistibly to master and mould outer physical actions. No sanction by which society could enforce its decrees, is of any ultimate utility against the victorious advance of the individual life pressing forward in its irresistible demand for progress and freedom. Society may command the homage of conformance in speech and act to its fixed and conventional ideals; it may control a man's bodily organs; it has no jurisdiction over his heart and mind or only so much as he chooses to allow it. But speech and act cannot long remain divorced from the heart and mind without affecting the soundness of society itself by a dry rot of hypocrisy and falseness; the end of which is either the decay and death of the community or a purifying revolt. Society can save itself only by conceding within limits the claim for individual freedom; outside those limits it must persuade or compel him to conformity by influencing his mind and heart, not by direct coercion of his words and acts.

In the later stages of the subtamasic social period we find that society has to a less or greater extent contracted its demands on the individual. Over his inner life and a certain part of his conduct, it exercises no other coercive influence than that of social disapproval expressed but not enacted; over another part of his conduct it exercises the right of enacting that disapproval in the shape of ostracism or excommunication; but that part of his life which most strongly concerns the community, it still insists on regulating by the infliction or menace of social penalties more or less severe. Social disapproval unenacted is, however, an ineffective control over mind and spirit. Society therefore, by no means content to leave the inner life of the individual free from the demands of its moral code, since any such abdication of its rule would lead, it instinctively felt, to moral anarchy, sought to dominate the individual intellect and imagination by the more radical process of education. Its view of life and its unwritten code of customs, manners, traditions had always been naturally accepted as sacrosanct, now the individual was consciously habituated and trained from his childhood to retain this impression of venerable and inviolable sanctity. Social morality was no longer unwritten but gathered into codes and systems of life associated either with the names of the primitive makers of the nation or with the deified or half-deified historic individuals who first harmonised and perfected its traditionary ideals and routine of life and expressed the consciousness of the race in their political or ethico-legal systems. Such were Lycurgus, Confucius, Menes, Manu. For in those days individual greatness and perfection commanded a sacred reverence from the individual consciousness, because in each man it was to this greatness and perfection that individuality impelled to achieve its complete emancipation was painfully striving forward. Thus in the subtamasic state even at its highest development the social code retained its sacrosanct character in the new form of a consciously cherished and worshipped national tradition; and the repositories of that tradition became the dominant class of the community, whether an oligarchy as in Sparta and early republican Rome or a theocracy as in Egypt. For in order to control not only the heart and imagination but the deepest self in the individual society called in the aid of a spiritual force rapidly growing in its midst, the power of religion. In some communities, it strove even to give the religious sanction to all its own ideas, traditions, demands, sanctions.

In the older races and nations Mongolian, Dravidic, Mediterranean the subtamasic stage of social culture was of long duration and has left its impress in the only civilizations which have survived unbroken from that period, the Indian and Chinese. In the younger races, Aryan and Semitic, the development of the individual was far more rapid and urgent and left no time for the peculiarities of the later subtamasic period to crystallize and endure. Their evolution passed quickly into the rajaso-tamasic or even into the rajasic stage. In the rajasic state the individual forces himself into predominance and gets that emancipation and free play for his personality which his evolution demands, while the society degenerates into a mere frame for a mass of individuals. Social morality, once so rigid and compelling, dissolves into a loose bundle of superstitions and prejudices; tradition is broken into pieces by the desire for progress & novelty and free play of mind. The individual is governed in his conduct not by social sanctions or religious obligations and ideals, but by his personal idiosyncrasy and the stress of his own ideas, desires, passions, capacities and ambitions, which clamantly demand satisfaction. Individual originality being given free rein, there is an immense outburst of genius, talent, origination, invention or of splendid personal force and activity. Periods such as the revolutionary epoch in France when the rajasic element gets free play and communities like the Ionian democracies of which Athens was the head and type, are not only the most interesting from their fascinating abundance of stir, passion, incident, brilliance of varied personality, but also among the most fruitful and useful to humanity. In such periods, in the brief history of such communities the work of centuries is done in a few years or in a few decades and future ages are fertilized from the seeds of a single epoch. But the history of rajasic communities is necessarily brief, the course of rajasic periods is soon run. Rajas has in itself no principle of endurance; if it is to work steadily and enduringly, it must either be weighted down by a heavy load of tamas or sustained and uplifted by a great strength of sattwa. But sattwa as a social force has not yet liberated itself; it operates on society through a chosen and select few and is only rudimentary as yet in the many. For the preservation of a people tamas is absolutely necessary; a mass of blind conservatism, intolerance of innovations, prejudice, superstition, even gross stupidity are elements essential to the safety of society. The Athenian thinkers themselves dimly realized this, hence their dislike to the mobile spirit of old democracy and their instinctive preference for the Spartan constitution in spite of its rigid, unprogressive and unintellectual character. They felt the transience and insecurity of the splendid and brilliant life of Athens. Politically the predominance of the individual was dangerous to the state and the evil might be checked but could not be mended by occasional resort to ostracism; the excessively free and varied play of intellect turned out a corrodent which too rapidly ate away the old beliefs and left the people without any fixed beliefs at all; the old prejudices, predilections, superstitions were exposed to too rapid a tide of progress: for a time they acted as some feeble check on the individual, but when the merciless questioning of Socrates and his followers crumbled them to pieces, nothing was left for society to live by. Reason, justice and enlightened virtue which Socrates and his successors offered as a substitute, could not take their place because the world was not, nor is it yet sattwic enough for society to subsist entirely or mainly by the strength of reason, justice and enlightenment. The history of Athens may be summed up from the Vedic standpoint as rajas too rapidly developed destroying tamas and in its turn leading to a too rapid development of sattwa; till by an excess of the critical and judging faculty of sattwa, the creative activity of rajas was decomposed and came to an end. As a result the Athenian social organism lost its vitality, fell a prey to stronger organisms and perished.

Those communities have a better chance of survival which linger in the rajaso-tamasic stage. For that is a social period when the claims of the individual are being constantly balanced and adjusted in a manner which strongly resembles the replacement in the physical organism of waste tissue by sound, bad blood by good, corrupted breath by fresh inhalations; the individual is given legitimate scope, but those irreducible demands of society which are necessary to its conservation, are thoroughly enforced; progress is constantly made, but the past and its traditions are, as far as is consistent with progress, jealously preserved and cherished. England with its rapid alternations of progress safeguarded by conservatism and conservatism vivified by progress is an excellent example of the rajaso-tamasic community. The English race is preeminently rajaso-tamasic; tamasic by its irrational clinging to what it possesses not because it is inherently good or satisfying but simply because it is there, because it is part of its past and its national traditions; tamasic by its habit of changing not in obedience to any inner voice of ethical aspiration or sense of intellectual fitness but in answer to the pressure of environment; but rajasic by the open field it gives to individual character and energy, rajasic by its reliance on the conflicts and final balance of passions and interests as the main agents of progress and conservation political and social. Japan with her periods of splendid and magnificently fruitful progress and activity when she is absorbing new thoughts and new knowledge, followed by periods of calm and beautiful conservation in which she thoroughly assimilates what she has absorbed and suits it to her system, — Japan with the unlimited energy and personality of her individuals finely subservient to the life of the nation is an instance of a fundamentally rajaso-tamasic nation which has acquired by its assimilation of Indian and Chinese civilisation the immortalizing strength of sattwa.

Sattwa is present indeed in all communities as a natural force, for without it nothing could exist; but as a conscious governing strength, it exists only in India and China. Sattwa is physically the principle of retention which instead of merely reacting to impressions retains them as part of its inner life; it is therefore the natural force which most helps consciousness to develop. As rajogune is the basic principle of desire, so sattwagune is the basic principle of knowledge. It is sattwa that forms memory and evolves judgment. Morally it shows itself as selfless sympathy, intellectually as disinterested enlightenment and dispassionate wisdom, spiritually as a calm self-possessing peacefulness as far removed from the dull tamasic inertia as from the restless turbidity of rajas. The growth of sattwa in a community will show itself by the growing predominance of these characteristics. The community will be more peaceful and unaggressive than the ordinary rajasic race or nation, it will present a more calm and unbroken record of culture and enlightenment, it will record its life-history not in wars and invasions, not in conquests and defeats, not by the measure of the births and deaths of kings and the downfall of dynasties but by spiritual and intellectual evolutions and revolutions. The history of tamasic nations is a record of material impacts thrown out from the organism or suffered by it; its life is measured by the duration of dynasties or outward forms of government. The history of rajasic nations is a bundle of biographies; the individual predominates. The history of sattwic nations would be the story of the universal human self in its advance to knowledge and godhead. Most of all, the sattwic leaven will show itself in an attempt to order society not to suit material requirements or in obedience to outward environments or under the pressure of inward passions and interests, but in accordance with a high spiritual and intellectual ideal applied to life. And until *sattwa* is fully evolved, the community will try to preserve all the useful forces and institutions gathered by the past social evolution, neither destroying them nor leaving them intact, but harmonising and humanising them by the infusion of a higher ideal and vivifying them from time to time by a fresh review in the light of new experience and wider knowledge. The sattwic nation will avoid the dead conservatism of tamasic communities, it will avoid the restless progress of rajasic nations; it will endeavour to arrive at a living and healthy stability, high, calm and peaceful, in which man may pursue undisturbed his nobler destiny.

The true sattwic community in which life shall be naturally regulated by calm wisdom, enlightenment and universal sympathy, exists only as an Utopia or in the Aryan tradition of the Sattwayuga, the Golden Age. We have not evolved even the rajaso-sattwic community in which the licentious play of individual activity and originality will be restrained not by the heavy brake of tamasic indolence, ignorance and prejudice, but by the patient and tolerant control and guidance of the spirit of true science, sympathy and wisdom. The farthest advance made by human evolution is the sub-rajaso-tamasic stage in which sattwa partially evolved tries to dominate its companions. Of this kind of community China, India and more recently Japan are the only known instances. In China the tamasic element is very strong; the passionate conservatism of the race, the aggregativeness of the Chinese character which seems unable to live to itself and needs a guild, an organization or some sort of collective existence to support it, the low physical and emotional sensibility which permits the survival of a barbarous and senselessly cruel system of punishment, are striking evidences of prevalent tamas. The rajasic element is weaker but evident enough in the religious, intellectual and, in one sense, political liberty allowed to the individual and in the union of Mongolian industry and inventiveness with the democratic individualism which allows every man the chance his individual capacity and energy deserve. Sattwa finds its place in the high place immemorially assigned to wisdom, learning and culture and in the noble and perfect Buddhist-Confucian system of ethics and ideal of life which regulates Chinese politics, society and individual life. In India on the other hand, as we shall perceive, we have an unique and remarkable instance of sattwic, rajasic, tamasic influences acting upon the community in almost equal degrees and working at high pressure side by side; tamasic constraint and conservatism governs the arrangement of daily life, rajasic liberty, progress and originality brilliantly abound in the affairs of the mind and spirit, a high sattwic ideal and spirit dominate the national temperament, humanise and vivify all its life, social polity, institutions and return almost periodically, a fresh wave of life and strength, to save the community when it appears doomed to decay and oblivion.

From sattwa springs the characteristic indestructibility which Chinese and Indian society, alone of historic civilizations, have evinced under the pressure of the ages and the shocks of repeated, even incessant national disaster. Sattwa is the principle of conservation. The passive tamasic organism perishes by decay of its unrepaired tissues or disintegrates under the shock of outward forces against which it has not sufficient elasticity to react. The restless rajasic organism dies by exhaustion of its too rapidly expended vitality and vigour. But sattwic spirit in the rajaso-tamasic body is the nectar of the gods which makes for immortality. China and India have suffered much for their premature evolution of the sattwic element; they have repeatedly undergone defeat and subjugation by the more restless and aggressive communities of the world, while Japan by keeping its rajasic energy intact has victoriously repelled the aggressor. At present both these great countries are under temporary obscuration, they seem to be overweighted with tamas and passing through a process of disintegration and decay. In India especially long continuation of foreign subjection, a condition abhorred by Nature and accursed by Heaven, has brought about disastrous deterioration. Conquering Europe on the other hand, for the first time flooded with sattwa as a distinct social influence by the liberating outburst of the French Revolution, has moved forward. The sattwic impulse of the 18th century, though sorely abused and pressed into the service of rajasic selfishness and tamasic materialism, has yet been so powerful an agent to humanize and illuminate that it has given the world's lead to the European. But these two great Oriental civilizations are not likely to perish; always they have conquered their conquerors, asserted their free individuality and resumed their just place in the forefront of the nations, nor is the future likely to differ materially from the past. So long as the sattwic ideal is not renounced, it is always there to renew itself in extremity and to save. Preeminently sattwic is the Universal Self in man which if realized and held fast to, answers unfailingly the call for help and incarnating in its full season brings with it light, strength and healing. "For the deliverance of the good and the destruction of evil doers, for the restoration of righteousness I am born from age to age."

Chapter IV. The place of Religion in ethics.

If the view of human development as set forth in the last two chapters is correct, we shall have to part with several notions long cherished by humanity. One of these is the pristine perfection of man and his degradation from his perfect state by falling into the domination of sin; God made man perfect but man by his own fault brought sin and death into the world. This Semitic tradition passed from Judaism into Christianity and less prominently into Mahomedanism became for a long time part and parcel of the fixed beliefs of half humanity. Yet it is doubtful whether the original legend which enshrined and prolonged this tradition, quite bears the interpretation which has been put on it. If rightly understood, it supports rather than conflicts with the theory of trigunic development. The legend does not state that man was unfailingly virtuous by choice, but that he was innocent because he did not yet know good and evil. Innocence of this kind is possible only in the primitive state of man and the description of man as naked and unashamed shows that it is precisely the primitive state of society before arts and civilization were developed, to which the legend alludes. Man was then innocent, because being unable to distinguish between good and evil he could not choose evil of free choice and therefore had no sense of sin and no more responsibility for his actions than the pure animal. His fall from the state of innocence was the result of the growth of rajasic individuality in his mind which led him to assert his own will and desires and disobey the law imposed on him by an external Power. In this first stage of his evolution he is not guided by a law within himself, but by prohibitions which his environment imposes on him without his either understanding or caring to understand the reason for their imposition. Certain things are forbidden to him, and it is as much a necessity for him to refrain from them as to refrain from putting his hand in the fire lest he should be burned; all others are allowed to him and he does them freely without questioning whether, apart from their legality, they are bad or good. Sin comes by disobedience and disobedience by the assertion of an inner standard as against the external standard hitherto obeyed; but it is still a standard not of right and wrong, but of licit and illicit. “What I desire, what my individual nature demands, should be allowed me”, reasons the rajasic man; the struggle is between an external negation and an internal assertion, not between two conflicting internal assertions. But once the former begins, the latter must in time follow; the physical conflict must create its psychical counterpart. From the opposition of punished and unpunished evolves the opposition of licit and illicit;

from the opposition of licit and illicit evolves the opposition of right and wrong. Originally the sanction which punishes or spares, allows or disallows, approves or disapproves, is external and social; society is the individual's judge. Finally, in the higher stage of evolution, the sanction is internal and individual; the individual is his own judge. The indulgence of individual desire in disobedience to a general law is the origin of sin.

With the rejection of this theory of an originally perfect humanity, the tradition of an infallible inner conscience which reflects a divinely-ordained canon of absolute right and wrong must be also rejected. If morality is a growth, the moral sense is also a growth and conscience is nothing more than activity of the moral sense, the individual as judge of his own actions. If conscience be a divine and infallible judge, it must be the same in all men; but we know perfectly well that it is not. The conscience of the Red Indian finds nothing immoral in murder and torture; the conscience of the modern civilised man vehemently condemns them. Even in the same man conscience is an uncertain and capricious quantity changing and deciding inconsistently under the influence of time, place and circumstances. The conscience of one age or country varies from the conscience of another age or country. It is therefore contrary to all experience to assert the divinity or infallibility of conscience. A man must be guided ordinarily by his moral sense, not because it is infallible or perfect, but because moral growth depends upon development from within and to this end the independent use of the "inner monitor", when once evolved, is the first necessity.

Ish and Jagat

The Isha Upanishad in its very inception goes straight to the root of the problem the Seer has set out to resolve; he starts at once with the two supreme terms of which our existence seems to be composed and in a monumental phrase, cast into the bronze of eight brief but sufficient words, he confronts them and sets them in their right & eternal relation. Ishá vásyam idam sarvam yat kincha jagatyám jagat. Ish and Jagat, God and Nature, Spirit and World, are the two poles of being between which our consciousness revolves. This double or biune reality is existence, is life, is man. The Eternal seated sole in all His creations occupies the ever-shifting Universe and its innumerable whorls and knots of motion, each called by us an object, in all of which one Lord is multitudinously the Inhabitant. From the brilliant suns to the rose and the grain of dust, from the God and the Titan in their dark or their luminous worlds to man and the insect that he crushes thoughtlessly under his feet, everything is His temple and mansion. He is the veiled deity in the temple, the open householder in the mansion; for Him and His enjoyment of the multiplicity & the unity of His being, all were created and they have no other reason for their existence. For habitation by the Lord is all this, everything whatsoever that is moving thing in her that moves.

The problem of a perfect life upon earth, a life free from those ills of which humanity seems to be the eternal and irredeemable prisoner & victim, can only be solved, in the belief of the Vedantins, if we go back to the fundamental nature of existence; for there alone can we find the root of the evil and the hint of the remedy. They are here in the two words Ish & Jagat. The Inhabitant is the Lord; in this truth, in the knowledge of it by our minds, in the realisation of it by our whole nature and being is the key of escape for the victim of evil, the prisoner of limitation and death. On the other hand, Nature is a fleeting & inconstant motion preserved by the harmonious fixity of the laws which govern its particular motions. This subjection and inconstancy of Nature is the secret of our bondage, death, limitation and suffering. We who entangle ourselves in the modalities of Nature, must, if we would escape from her confounding illusions, realise the other pole of our existence, unqualified Spirit or God. By rising to the God within us, we become free, liberated from the bondage of the world and the snare of death. For God is freedom, God is immortality. Mrityum tírtwá amritam asnute. Crossing over death, we enjoy immortality.

This relation of Nature & Spirit, World & God, on which the Seer fixes, Nature the mansion, God the occupant, is their practical, not their essential relation. Conscious existence is Brahman, single & indivisible; Spirit & Nature, World and God are one; anejad ekam manaso javíyas, — they are One unmoving swifter than mind. But for life, whether bound or free, and for the movement from bondage to freedom, this One must always be conceived as a double or biune term in which God is the reverse side of Nature, Nature the obverse side of God. The distinction has been made by Spirit itself in its own being for the object which the Seer expresses in the single word vásyam. God has thrown out His own being in the spatial & temporal movement of the Universe, building up forms in His mobile extended self-consciousness which He conceives as different from His still & eternal, regarding, occupying & enjoying self-consciousness, so that He as soul, the subject, may have an objective existence which it can regard, occupy & enjoy, the householder of its self-mansion, the god of its self-temple, the king of its self-empire. In this cosmic relation of Spirit to Nature the word Ishá expresses the perfect and absolute freedom, eternally uninfringed, with which the Spirit envisages its objects and occupies its kingdom. World is not a material shell in which Spirit is bound, nor is Spirit a roving breath of things ensnared to which the object it inspires is a prison-house. The indwelling God is the lord of His creations and not their servant or prisoner; as a householder is lord of his dwelling-places to enter them and go forth from them at his will and to pull down what he has built up whenever it ceases to please him or be serviceable to his needs, so the Spirit is free to enter or go forth from its bodies and has power to build, destroy and rebuild whatever it pleases in this universe. The very universe itself It is free at any moment to destroy and recreate. God is not bound; He is the free and unopposed master of His creations.

This word Ishá, the Lord, is placed designedly at the opening of this great strain of Vedantic thought to rule as with a master-tone all its rhythms. It is the key to everything that follows in the eighteen verses of the Upanishad. Not only does it contradict all mechanical theories of the Universe and assert the preexistence, omnipotence, majesty and freedom of the transcendent Soul of things within, but by identifying the Lord of the universe with the Spirit in all bodies it asserts the greatness, freedom and secret omnipotence of the soul of man that seems here to wander thus painfully entangled and bewildered. Behind all the veils of his nature, the soul in man also is master, not slave, not bound, but free. Grief, death and limitation are instruments of some activity it is here to fulfil for its own delight, and the user is not bound to his instruments; he can modify them, he can reject, he can change. If, then, we appear as though bound, by the fixed nature of our minds and bodies, by the nature of the visible universe, by the dualities of grief & joy, pleasure and pain, by the chain of cause and effect or by any other chain, shackle or tie whatsoever, the bondage is a semblance and can be nothing more. It is Maya, a willed illusion of bondage, or it is Lila, a self-chosen play at bondage. Like a child pretending to be this or that and identifying itself with its role the Purusha, this divine inhabitant within, may seem to forget his freedom, but even when he forgets, the freedom is still there, self-existent, therefore inalienable. Never lost except in appearance, it is recoverable even in appearance. The game of the world-existence is not a game of bondage alone, but equally of freedom & the liberation from bondage.

The Secret of the Isha

It is now several thousands of years since men ceased to study Veda and Upanishad for the sake of Veda or Upanishad. Ever since the human mind in India, more & more intellectualised, always increasingly addicted to the secondary process of knowledge by logic & intellectual ratiocination, increasingly drawn away from the true & primary processes of knowledge by experience and direct perception, began to dislocate & dismember the manysided harmony of ancient Vedic truth & parcel it out into schools of thought & systems of metaphysics, its preoccupation has been rather with the later opinions of Sutras & Bhashyas than with the early truth of Scripture. Veda & Vedanta ceased to be guides to knowledge & became merely mines & quarries from which convenient texts might be extracted, regardless of context, to serve as weapons in the polemic disputes of metaphysicians. The inconvenient texts were ignored or explained away by distortion of their sense or by depreciation of their value. Those that neither helped nor hindered the polemical purpose of the exegete were briefly paraphrased or often left in a twilit obscurity. For the language of the Vedantic writers ceased to be understood; their figures, symbols of thought, shades of expression became antique & unintelligible. Hence passages which, when once fathomed, reveal a depth of knowledge & delicacy of subtle thought almost miraculous in its wealth & quality, strike the casual reader today as a mass of childish, obscure & ignorant fancies characteristic of an unformed and immature thinking. Rubbish & babblings of humanity's nonage an eminent Western scholar has termed them not knowing that it was not the text but his understanding of it that was rubbish & the babblings of ignorance. Worst of all, the spiritual & psychological experiences of the Vedic seekers were largely lost to India as the obscurations of the Iron Age grew upon her, as her knowledge contracted, her virtue dwindled & her old spiritual valiancy lost its daring & its nerve. Not altogether lost indeed for its sides of knowledge & practice still lived in cave & hermitage, its sides of feeling & emotion, narrowed by a more exclusive & self-abandoned fervour, remained, quickened even in the throbbing intensity of the Bhakti Marga and the violent inner joys of countless devotees. But even here it remained dim & obscure, shorn of its fullness, dimmed in its ancient and radiant purity. Yet we think, however it may be with the Vedas we have understood & possess the Upanishads! We have understood a few principal texts & even those imperfectly; but of the mass of the Upanishads we understand less than we do of the Egyptian hieroglyphics and of the knowledge these great writings hold enshrined we possess less than we do of the wisdom of the ancient Egyptians. Dabhram evapi twam vettha Brahmano rupam!

I have said that the increasing intellectualisation of the Indian mind has been responsible for this great national loss. Our forefathers who discovered or received Vedic truth, did not arrive at it either by intellectual speculation or by logical reasoning. They attained it by actual & tangible experience in the spirit, — by spiritual & psychological observation, as we may say, & what they thus experienced, they understood by the instrumentality of the intuitive reason. But a time came when men felt an imperative need to give an account to themselves & to others of this supreme & immemorial Vedic truth in the terms of logic, in the language of intellectual ratiocination. For the maintenance of the intuitive reason as the ordinary instrument of knowledge demands as its basis an iron moral & intellectual discipline, a colossal disinterestedness of thinking, — otherwise the imagination and the wishes pollute the purity of its action, replace, dethrone it and wear flamboyantly its name & mask; Vedic knowledge begins to be lost & the practice of life & symbol based upon it are soon replaced by formalised action & unintelligent rite & ceremony. Without tapasya there can be no Veda. This was the course that the stream of thought followed among us, according to the sense of our Indian tradition. The capacity for tapasya belongs to the Golden Age of man's fresh virility; it fades as humanity ages & the cycle takes its way towards the years that are of Iron, and with tapasya, the basis, divine knowledge, the superstructure, also collapses or dwindles. The place of truth is then taken by superstition, irrational error that takes its stand upon the place where truth lies buried builds its tawdry & fantastic palace of pleasure upon those concealed & consecrated foundations, & even uses the ruins of old truth as stones for its irregular building. But such an usurpation can never endure. For, since the need of man's being is truth & light, the divine law, whose chief article it is that no just demand of the soul shall remain always unsatisfied, raises up Reason to clear away Superstition. Reason arrives as the Angel of the Lord, armed with her sword of doubt & denial (for it is the nature of intellectual Reason that beyond truth of objective appearance she cannot confidently & powerfully affirm anything, but must always remain with regard to fundamental truth agnostic and doubtful, her highest word of affirmation "probably", her lowest "perhaps"), — comes & cuts away whatever she can, often losing herself in a fury of negation, denying superstition indeed, but doubting & denying also even Truth because it has been a foundation for superstition or formed with some of its stones part of the building. But at any rate she clears the field for sounder work; she makes tabula rasa for a more correct writing. The ancient Indian mind felt instinctively — I do not say it realised or argued consciously — the necessity, as the one way to avoid such a reign of negation, of stating to the intellectual reason so much of Vedic truth as could still be grasped and justifying it logically. The Six Darshanas were the result of this mighty labour. Buddhism, the inevitable rush of negation, came indeed but it was prevented from destroying spirituality as European negation destroyed it for a time in the eighteenth & nineteenth centuries by the immense & unshakeable hold the work of the philosophers had taken upon the Indian temperament. So firm was this grasp that even the great Masters of negation — for Brihaspati who affirmed matter was a child & weakling in denial compared with the Buddhists, — could not wholly divest themselves of this characteristic Indian realisation that subjective experience is the basis of existence & the objective only an outward term of that existence.

But admirable & necessary as was this vast work of intellectual systemisation, subtle, self-grasped & successful beyond parallel, supreme glory as it is now held and highest attainment of Indian mentality, it had from the standpoint of Vedantic truth three capital disadvantages.

Chapters for a Work on the Isha Upanishad

[1]

The Isha Upanishad

The Puranic account supposes us to have left behind the last Satya period, the age of harmony, and to be now in a period of enormous breakdown, disintegration and increasing confusion in which man is labouring forward towards a new harmony which will appear when the spirit of God descends again upon mankind in the form of the Avatara called Kalki, destroys all that is lawless, dark and confused and establishes the reign of the saints, the Sadhus, those, that is to say, — if we take the literal meaning of the word Sadhu, who are strivers after perfection. Translated, again, into modern language — more rationalistic but, again, let me say, not necessarily more accurate — this would mean that the civilisation by which we live is not the result of a recent hotfooted gallop forward from the condition of the Caribbee and Hottentot, but the detritus and uncertain reformation of a great era of knowledge, balance and adjustment which lives for us only in tradition but in a universal tradition, the Golden Age, the Saturnia regna, of the West, our Satyayuga or age of the recovered Veda. What then are these savage races, these epochs of barbarism, these Animistic, Totemistic, Naturalistic and superstitious beliefs, these mythologies, these propitiatory sacrifices, these crude conditions of society? Partly, the Hindu theory would say, the ignorant & fragmentary survival of defaced & disintegrated beliefs & customs, originally deeper, simpler, truer than the modern, — even as a broken statue by Phidias or Praxiteles or a fragment of an Athenian dramatist is

The six chapters comprising this work have been numbered [1] to [6] by the editors. Sri Aurobindo's own chapter divisions have been reproduced as written in the manuscript.

at once simpler & nobler or more beautiful and perfect than the best work of the moderns, — partly, a reeling back into the beast, an enormous movement of communal atavism brought about by worldwide destructive forces in whose workings both Nature and man have assisted. Animism is the obscure memory of an ancient discipline which put us into spiritual communion with intelligent beings and forces living behind the veil of gross matter sensible to our limited material organs. Nature-worship is another side of the same ancient truth. Fetishism remembers barbarously the great Vedic dogma that God is everywhere and God is all and that the inert stone & stock, things mindless & helpless & crude, are also He; in them, too, there is the intelligent Force that has built the Himalayas, filled with its flaming glories the sun and arranged the courses of the planets. The mythologies are ancient traditions, allegories & symbols. The savage and the cannibal are merely the human beast, man hurled down from his ascent and returning from the sattwic or intelligent state into the tamasic, crumbling into the animal and almost into the clod by that disintegration through inertia which to the Hindu idea is the ordinary road to disappearance into the vague & rough material of Nature out of which we were made. The ascent of man, according to this theory, is not a facile and an assured march; on the contrary, it is a steep, a strenuous effort, the ascent difficult, though the periods of attainment & rest yield to us ages of a golden joy, the descent frightfully easy. Even in such a descent something is preserved, unless indeed we are entirely cut off from the great centres of civilisation, all energetic spirits withdrawn from our midst and we ourselves wholly occupied with immediate material needs. An advanced race, losing its intelligent classes and all its sources of intelligence and subjected to these conditions, would be in danger of descending to the same level as the Maori or the Basuto. On the other hand individuals of the most degraded race — a son of African cannibals, for instance — could under proper conditions develop the intellectual activity and high moral standard of the most civilised races. The spirit of man, according to the Vedic idea, is capable of everything wherever it is placed; it has an infinite capacity both for the highest and the lowest; but because he submits to the matter in which he dwells and matter is dominated by its surrounding contacts, therefore his progress is slow, uncertain and liable to these astounding relapses. Such is the Hindu explanation of the world and, so expressed, freed from the Puranic language & symbols which make it vivid & concrete to us, I can find nothing in it that is irrational. Western thought with its dogmatic materialism, its rigid insistence on its own hastily formed idea of evolution, its premature arrangements of the eras of earth, animal and man, may be impatient of it, but I see no reason why we Hindus, heirs of that ancient and wise tradition, should so long as there is no definite disproof rule it out of court in obedience to Western opinion. We can afford at least to suspend judgment. Modern research is yet in its infancy. We, a calm, experienced & thoughtful nation, always deep & leisurely thinkers, ought not to be carried away by its eager and immature conclusions.

I will take this Puranic theory as a working hypothesis and suppose at least that there was a great Vedic age of advanced civilisation broken afterwards by Time and circumstance and of which modern Hinduism presents us only some preserved, collected or redeveloped fragments; I shall suppose that the real meaning & justification of Purana, Tantra, Itihasa & Yoga can only be discovered by a rediscovery of their old foundation and harmonising secret in the true sense of the Veda, and in this light I shall proceed, awaiting its confirmation or refutation and standing always on the facts of Veda, Vedanta & Yoga. We need not understand by an advanced civilisation a culture or a society at all resembling what our modern notions conceive to be the only model of a civilised society — the modern European; neither need or indeed can we suppose it to have been at all on the model of the modern Hindu. It is probable that this ancient culture had none of those material conveniences on which we vaunt ourselves, — but it may have had others of a higher, possibly even a more potent kind. (Perfection of the memory and the non-accumulation of worthless books might have dispensed with the necessity of large libraries. Other means of receiving information and the habit of thinking for oneself might have prevented the growth of anything corresponding to the newspaper, — it is even possible that the men of those times would have looked down on that crude and vulgar organ. Possibly the power of telepathy organised — it seems to persist disorganised, — in some savage races, — might make the telegraph, even the wireless telegraph unnecessary.) The social customs of the time might seem strange or even immoral to our modern sanskaras, — just as, no doubt, many of ours will seem incredible and shocking to future ages. The organisation of Government may have been surprisingly different from our own and yet not inconsistent with civilisation; there may have been a simple communism without over-government, large armies or wars of aggression, or even an entire absence of government, a human freedom & natural coordination such as Tolstoy & other European idealists have seen again in their dreams, — for it is at least conceivable that, given certain spiritual conditions which would constitute, in the language of religion, a kingdom of Heaven on earth or a government of God among men, the elaborate arrangements of modern administration, — whose whole basis is human depravity & the needs of an Iron Age, — would become unnecessary. The old tradition runs that in the Satyayuga there was neither the desire nor the need of modern devices; the organised arrangement of men's actions, duties and institutions by an external compulsion representing the community's collective will began in the Bronze Age with the institution of government in Kingship. The Vishnu Purana tells us, conformably with this idea, that Vishnu in the Satya incarnates as Yajna, that is to say as the divine Master in man to whom men offer up all their actions as a sacrifice, reserving nothing for an egoistic satisfaction, but in the Treta he descends [as] the Chakravarti Raja, the King & standing forward as sustainer of society's righteousness, its sword of justice & defence, its preserver of the dharma gathers a number of human communities under his unifying sway. But it is unnecessary to my present purpose to consider these speculations, for which much might be said and many indications collected. It is sufficient that an ancient society might differ in every respect from our modern communities and yet be called advanced if it possessed a deep, scientific and organised knowledge and if it synthetised in the light of large & cultured conceptions all human institutions, relations and activities. This is all with which I am here and at present concerned. For I have only to inquire whether we have not at any rate some part of such a profound and organised knowledge in the surviving Upanishads and the still extant Sanhitas of the Veda; — written long afterwards, mostly in the Dwapara & Kali when, chiefly, men sought the aid of the written word & the material device to eke out their failing powers & their declining virility of mind & body, we need expect from them no picture of that ancient civilisation, nor even the whole of its knowledge, for the great mass of that knowledge has been lost to us with the other numberless Sanhitas of Veda. The whole of it we cannot reconstitute, since a great mass of Vedic material has been lost to us, possibly beyond hope of recovery until Vishnu descends once more as the Varaha into the sea of oblivion and lifts up the lost Veda on his mighty tusks into the light of our waking consciousness and on to the firm soil of our externalised knowledge.

Not therefore the conception of semi-savages or half civilised philosophers, but the disjecta membra of a profound spiritual culture, a high and complex Yogic discipline and a well-founded theory of our relations with the unseen is what we shall expect in Veda & Vedanta. It is here that Comparative Philology intervenes. For it professes to have fixed for the Vedas a meaning which will bring them well within the savage theory and for the Vedanta an ambiguous character, half of it barbarous foolishness and half of it sublime philosophy such as we might expect from a highly gifted nation emerging out of a very primitive culture into a premature and immature activity of the higher intellectual faculties. A worship of the personified Sun, Moon, Fire, Wind, Dawn, Sky and other natural phenomena by means of a system of animal sacrifices, this is the Veda; high religious thinking & profound Monistic ideas forcibly derived from Vedic Nature-worship marred by the crudest notions about physics, psychology, cosmology and material origins & relations generally and mixed up with a great mass of unintelligible mystical jargon, this is the Upanishads. If that be so, our preoccupation with these works is misplaced. We must put them away as lumber of the past, interesting records of the beginnings and crude origins of religion and philosophy but records only, not authorities for our thought or lamps for our steps in life. We must base ourself not on the Vedas and Upanishads, but, as for that matter many of us are well inclined to do, on Badarayana, Kapila, Shankara and Buddha, not on the ancient Rishis but on the modern philosophers and logicians.

Such an abandonment is only obligatory on us after we have fixed the precise scientific value of these philological conclusions, the view of this modern naturalistic interpretation of which so much is made. We are too apt in India to take the European sciences at their own valuation. The Europeans themselves are often more sceptical. In ethnology the evidence of philology is increasingly disregarded. The ethnologists tend to disregard altogether, for example, the philological distinction between Aryan and Dravidian with its accompanying corollary of an immigration from the sub-Arctic regions or the regions of the Hindu-Kush and to affirm the existence of a single homogeneous Indo-Afghan race in immemorial occupation of the peninsula. Many great scientific thinkers deny the rank of a science to philology or are so much impressed by the failure of this branch of nineteenth-century inquiry that they doubt or deny even the possibility of a science of language. We need not therefore yield a servile assent to the conclusions of the philologists from any fear of being denounced as deniers of modern enlightenment and modern science; for we shall be in excellent company, supported by the authority of protagonists of that enlightenment and science.

When we examine the work of the philologists, our suspicions will receive an ample confirmation; for we shall find no evidence of any true scientific method, but only a few glimpses of it eked out by random speculation sometimes of a highly ingenious and forcible character but sometimes also in the last degree hasty and flimsy. A long time ago European scholars comparing what are now called the Indo-Aryan tongues were struck by the close resemblance amounting to identity of common domestic and familiar terms in these languages. “Pitar, patêr, pater, vater, father”, “mâtar, mêtêr, mater, mutter, mother”, — here, they thought, was the seed of a new science and the proof of an affiliation of different languages to our parent source which might lead to the explanation of the whole development of human speech. And indeed there was a coincidence & a discovery which might have been as important to human knowledge as the fall of Newton’s apple and the discovery of gravitation. But this great possibility never flowered into actuality. On the contrary the after results were disappointingly meagre. One or two bye-laws of the modification of sounds as between the Aryan languages were worked out, the identity of a certain number of terms as between these kindred tongues well-established and a few theories hazarded or made out as to the classification not scientific but empirical of the various extant dialects of man. No discovery of the laws governing the structure of language, no clear light on the associations between sound and idea, no wide, careful and searching analysis of the origins and development even of the Aryan tongues resulted from this brilliant beginning. Philology is an enquiry that has failed to result in the creation of a science.

In its application to the Vedas modern philology has followed two distinct methods, the philological method proper and the scholastic, derivation of words and the observation of the use of words. From comparative philology in its present imperfect & rudimentary condition all that Vedic research can gain is the discovery of a previously unsuspected identity of meaning as between some peculiarly Vedic words or forms or the Vedic use of Sanscrit words or forms and the sense of the same vocable or form, whether intact or modified, in other Aryan tongues. Wherever Philology goes beyond this limit, its work is conjectural, not scientific and cannot command from us an implicit assent. Unfortunately, also, European scholars permit themselves a licence of speculation and suggestion which may sometimes be fruitful but which renders their work continually unconvincing. I may instance — my limits forbid more detail

— Max Muller's extraordinary dealings in his Preface to the Rig Veda with the Vedic form uloka (for loka). He derives this ancient form without an atom or even a shadow of proof or probability from an original uruloka or urvaloka, rejecting cavalierly the obvious & fruitful Tamil parallel uloka — the same word with the same meaning — on the strength of an argument which proceeds from his ignorance of the Tamil tongue and its peculiar phonetic principles. The example is typical. These scholars are on firmer ground when they attempt to establish new meanings of words by legitimate derivation from Sanscrit roots and careful observation of the sense suitable to a particular word in the various contexts in which it occurs. But here also we may be permitted to differ from their arguments and reject their conclusions. For their work is conjectural; not only is the new meaning assigned to particular words conjectural but the interpretation of the context on which its correctness depends is also very often either doubtful or conjectural. We are moving in a field of uncertainty and the imposing careful method and systematisation of the European scholars must not blind us to the fact that it is a method of conjecture and a systematisation of uncertainties.

Is a more certain application of philology to the Veda at all possible? I believe it is. I believe that by following a different clue we can arrive at least at the beginnings of a true science which will explain in its principles & details the origin, structure and development first of the Sanscrit, and then of the other Aryan & Dravidian tongues, if not of human speech generally in its various families. The scholars erred because they took the identity "pitar, pater, vater, father" as the master-clue to the identities of these languages. But this resemblance of familiar terms is only an incident, a tertiary result of a much deeper, more radical, more fruitful identity. The real clue is not yet discovered, but I believe that it is discoverable. Until, however, it is found and followed up, a task which demands great leisure and a gigantic industry, I am content to insist on the inconclusiveness of the initial work of the philologists. I repeat, the common assumption in Europe and among English-educated Indians that the researches of European scholarship have fixed for us correctly, conclusively & finally the meaning of Veda and the origin & process of development of Vedanta, is an assumption not yet justified and until it is justified no one is bound by it who does not choose to be bound. The field is still open, the last word still remains to be pronounced. I refuse, therefore, at this stage, my assent to the European idea of Veda and Vedanta and hold myself free to propound another interpretation and a more searching theory.

[2]

Chapter [ ][1]

I have combated the supremacy of the European theory — not seeking actually to refute it but to open the door for other possibilities, because the notions generated by it are a stumbling block to the proper approach to Vedanta. Under their influence we come to the Upanishads with a theory of their origin and in a spirit hostile to the sympathetic insight to which alone they will render up their secret. The very sense of the word Vedanta indicates clearly the aim of the seers who composed the Upanishads as well as the idea they entertained, — the true & correct idea, I believe, of their relations to the Veda. They were, they thought, recording a fulfilment of Vedic knowledge, giving shape to the culmination to which the sacred hymns pointed, and bringing out the inner and essential meaning of the practical details of the Karmakanda. The word, Upanishad, itself meant, I would suggest, originally not a session of speculative inquirers (the ingenious & plausible German derivation) but an affirmation and arrangement of essential truths & principles. The sense, it would almost seem, was at first general but afterwards, by predominant practice, applied exclusively to the Brahmi Upanishad, in which we have the systematisation particularly of the Brahmavidya. In any case such a systematisation of Vedic Knowledge was what these Rishis thought themselves to be effecting. But the modern theory denies the claim and compels us to approach the Upanishads from a different standpoint and both to judge and to interpret them by the law of a mentality which is as far as the two poles asunder from the mentality of the writers. We shall therefore certainly fail to understand the workings of their minds even if we are right in our history.

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo did not write a chapter number. — Ed.*

But I am convinced that the claim was neither a pretence nor an error. I believe the Vedas to hold a sense which neither mediaeval India nor modern Europe has grasped, but which was perfectly plain to the early Vedantic thinkers. Max Muller has understood one thing by the Vedic mantras, Sayana has understood another, Yaska had his own interpretations of their antique diction, but none of them understood what Yajnavalkya and Ajatashatru understood. We shall yet have to go back from the Nature-worship and henotheism of the Europeans, beyond the mythology and ceremonial of Sayana, beyond even the earlier intimations of Yaska and recover — nor is it the impossible task it seems — the knowledge of Yajnavalkya and Ajatashatru. It is because we do not understand the Vedas that three fourths of the Upanishads are a sealed book to us. Even of the little we think we can understand, much has been insecurely grasped and superficially comprehended, so that these sublimest of all Scriptures have become, latterly, more often a ground for philosophic wranglings than an illumination to the soul. For want of this key profound scholars have fumbled and for want of this guidance great thinkers gone astray, — Max Muller emitted his wonderful utterance about the babblings of humanity's nonage, Shankara left so much of his text unexplained or put it by as inferior truth for the ignorant, Vivekananda found himself compelled to admit his non-comprehension of the Vedantins' cosmological ideas & mention them doubtfully as curious speculations. It is only Veda that can give us a complete insight into Vedanta. Only when we thoroughly know the great Vedic ideas in their totality shall we be able entirely to appreciate the profound, harmonious and grandiose system of thought of our early forefathers. By ignoring the Vedas we lose all but a few rays of the glorious sun of Vedanta.

But whether this view is sound or unsound, whether we decide that the sense of those ancient writings was best known to the ancient Hindus or to the modern Europeans, to Yajnavalkya or to Max Muller, two things are certain that the Vedantic Rishis believed themselves to be in possession of the system of their Vedic predecessors and that they surely did not regard this system as merely a minute collection of ritual practices or merely an elaborate worship of material Nature-Powers. Minds that saw the world steadily as a whole, they did not repel that worship or disown that ritual. Surya was to them the god of the Sun; Agni they regarded as the master of fire; but they were not — and this is the important point — simply the god of the sun and simply the master of fire. They were not even merely a Something behind both, unknown & vague, although deep, mighty & subtle; but because of the nature & origin of the sun, Surya was also a god of a higher moral & spiritual function & Agni possessed of diviner & less palpable masteries. I will cite the single example of the Isha Upanishad in support of my point. The bulk of this poem is occupied with the solution of problems which involve the most abstruse and ultimate questions of metaphysics, ethics and psychology; yet after a series of profound and noble pronouncements on these deep problems the Upanishad turns, suddenly, without any consciousness of descent, without any lowering of tone to appeal with passion and power not to some Supernal Power but to Surya, to Agni. Is it to the earthly Fire and the material Sun that the Rishi lifts his mighty song? Does he pray to Surya to give him the warmth of his beams or to drive away night from the sky? Does he entreat Agni to nourish the sacrificial fire or to receive for the gods on his flaming tongues the clarified butter and the Soma-juice? Not even for a moment, not even by allusion; but rather to Surya to remove — from the sight of his mind — the distracting brilliance which veils from mankind the highest truth and form of things, to enable him to realise his perfect identity with God and to Agni to put aside this siege of the devious attractions of ignorance and desire and raise our kind to that sublime felicity reserved for purified souls. It is for the fulfilment of the loftiest spiritual ends that he calls upon Surya; it is for support in the noblest moral victories that he appeals to Agni. This is not Helios Hyperion but another Vivusvan, master of this sun & its beams (that is also evident) but master too of the soul's illumination, sa no dhiyah prachodayat; this is not the limping blacksmith Hephaistos, but another Hiranyaretas, master no doubt of this fire and its helpful & consuming flames, but master also of purified & illuminated action and force, hota kavikratuh satyas chitrasravastamah — agnih purvebhir rishibhir idyo nutanair uta, the priest, the seer, the true, the full of rich inspirations, Agni adorable to the sages of the past, adorable to the great minds of today. Here is no lapse of a great philosophic mind into barbarous polytheistic superstition, no material and primitive Nature-worship, no extraordinary intellectual compromise and vague henotheism. We are in the presence of an established system of spiritual knowledge and an ordered belief in which matter, mind and spirit are connected and coordinated by the common action of great divine powers. When we know according to what idea of cosmic principle Surya and Agni could be at once material gods and great spiritual helpers, we shall have some clue to the system of the early Vedantins and at the same time, as I believe, to the genuine significance and spiritual value of that ancient & eternal bedrock of Hinduism, the Vedas.

But European scholars have their own explanation of the development of this remarkable speculative system out of the superstitious ritual and unintelligent worship which is all they find in the Vedas and, since the utmost respect in intellectual matters ought to be paid to the king of the day even when we seek to persuade him to abdicate, I must deal with it before I close this introductory portion & pass to the methods & substance of the Upanishads. It is held that there was a development of religious thought from polytheism to henotheism and from henotheism to pantheism which we can trace to some extent in the Vedas themselves and of which the Upanishads are the culmination. Some, notably the Indian disciples of European scholarship — interpreting these ancient movements by the light of our very different modern intellectuality or pushed by the besetting Occidental impulse to search in our Indian origins for parallels to European history — even assert that the Upanishads represent a protestant and rationalistic movement away from the cumbrous ritual, the polytheistic superstition and the blind primitive religiosity of the Vedas and towards a final rationalistic culmination in the six Darshanas, in the agnosticism of Buddha, in the atheism of Charvaka & in the loftiness of the modern Adwaita philosophy. It would almost seem as if this old Indian movement contains in itself at one & the same time the old philosophic movement of [the Greeks], Luther's Protestant reformation and the glories of modern free thought.[2] These are indeed exhilarating notions and they have been attractively handled — some of them can be read, developed with great lucidity and charm in that remarkable compilation of European discoveries and fallacies, Mr Romesh Chandra Dutt's History of Ancient Indian Civilisation. Nothing indeed can be more ingenious and inspiriting, nothing more satisfactory at once to the patriotic imagination and our natural human yearning for the reassuringly familiar. But are such ideas as sound as they are ingenious? are they as true as they are exhilarating? One may surely be permitted to entertain some doubt! I profess myself wholly unable to find any cry of revolutionary protest, any note of rationalism in the Upanishads. I can find something one might almost call rationalism in Shankara's commentary — but an Indian rationalism entirely different in spirit from its European counterpart. But in the Upanishads the whole method is supra-rational; it is the method of intuition and revelation expressed in a language and with a substance that might be characterised rather as the language of mysticism than of rationality. These sages do not protest against polytheism; they affirm the gods.

---

[2] *The following sentence was written in the top margin of the manuscript page. Its place of insertion was not marked:*
One would sometimes almost think that this upheaval of thought anticipated at once Plato & Empedocles, Luther, Erasmus and Melanchthon, Kant, Hegel & Berkeley, Hume, Haeckel & Huxley — that we have at one fell blast Graeco-Roman philosophy, Protestant Reformation & modern rationalistic tendency anticipated by the single movement from Janaka to Buddha.

These spiritual Titans do not protest against ritual and ceremony, they insist on the necessity of ritual and ceremony. It is true that they deny emphatically the sufficiency of material sacrifices for the attainment of the highest; but where does the Rigveda itself assert any such efficacy? From this single circumstance no protestant movement against ritual and sacrifice can be inferred, but at the most we can imagine rather than deduce a spiritual movement embracing while it exceeded ritual and sacrifice. But even this seems to me more than we can either infer or hazard without more light on the significance of early Vedic worship & the attitude on the subject of the Vedic Rishis. It is also true that certain scattered expressions have been caught at by Theistic minds as significant of a denial of polytheistic worship. I have heard the phrase, nedam yad idam upasate, not this to which men devote themselves, of the Kena Upanishad given this sense by reading the modern sense of upasana, worship, into the old Vedantic text. It can easily be shown from other passages in the Upanishads that upasate here has not the sense of religious worship, but quite another significance. We have enough to be proud of in our ancient thought & speculation without insisting on finding an exact anticipation of modern knowledge or modern thought & religion in these early Scriptures written thousands of years ago in the dim backwards of our history.

The theory of a natural and progressive development of Pantheistic ideas is far more rational and probable than this adhyaropa of European ideas & history onto the writings of the ancient world. But that theory also I cannot accept. Because the clearly philosophical passages in the Vedas, — those that are recognised as such, — occur in the later hymns, — in which the language is nearest to modern Sanscrit, — it is generally supposed that such a development is proved. It is, however, at least possible that we do not find philosophical ideas in the more ancient hymns merely because we are not mentally prepared to find them there. Not understanding their obscure and antique diction we interpret conjecturally with a confidence born of modern theories, led by our preconceived ideas to grasp only at what, we conceive, ought to be the primitive notions of a half-savage humanity. Any indications of more developed religious motives, if they exist, will from this method get no chance of revealing themselves & no quarter even if they insisted on lifting their luminous heads out of the waves of oblivion. In hymns with an almost modern diction, we have on the contrary no choice but to recognise their presence.

We cannot then say that there was no philosophy in the earlier & obscurer hymns unless we are sure that we have rightly interpreted their difficult language. But there are also certain positive considerations. The Vedantic thinkers positively believed that they were proceeding on a Vedic basis. They quote Vedic authority, appeal to Vedic ideas, evidently thinking themselves standing on the secure rock of Veda. Either, then, they were indulging in a disingenuous fiction, inconsistent with spiritual greatness & that frank honesty, arjavam, on which the nation prided itself, — either they were consciously innovating under a pretence of Vedic orthodoxy or else quite honestly they were reading their own notions into a text which meant something entirely different, as has often been done even by great & sincere intellects. The first suggestion — it has, I think, been made, — is inadmissible except on conclusive evidence; the second deserves consideration.

If it were only a matter of textual citation or a change of religious notions, there would be no great difficulty in accepting the theory of an unconscious intellectual fiction. But I find in the Upanishads abounding indications of a preexisting philosophical system, minute & careful at least & to my experience profound as well as elaborate. Where is the indication of any other than a Vedic origin for this well-appointed metaphysics, science, cosmology, psychology? Everywhere it is the text of the Veda that is alluded to or quoted, the knowledge of Veda that is presupposed. The study of Veda is throughout considered as the almost indispensable preliminary for the understanding of Vedanta. How came so colossal, persistent & all-pervading a mistake to have been committed by thinkers of so high a capacity? Or when, under what impulsion & by whom was this great & careful system originated & developed? Where shall we find any documents of that speculation, — its initial steps, its gradual clarifying, its stronger & more assured progress? The Upanishads are usually supposed themselves to be such documents. But the longer I study these profound compositions, the less I feel able to accept this common and very natural hypothesis. If we do not prejudge their more recondite ideas as absurd, if we try sympathetically to enter into the thoughts & beliefs of these Rishis, to understand what precise facts or experiences stand behind their peculiar language, especially if we can renew those experiences by the system they themselves used, the system of Yoga, — a method still open to us — it will, I think, very soon dawn upon our minds that these works are of a very different nature from the speculative experiments they are generally supposed to be. They represent neither a revolt nor a fresh departure. We shall find that we are standing at a goal, not assisting at a starting-point. The form of the Upanishads is the mould not of an initial speculation but of an ultimate thinking. It is a consummation, not a beginning, the soul of an existing body, not the breath of life for a body yet to come into being. Line after line, passage after passage indicates an unexpressed metaphysical, scientific or psychological knowledge which the author thinks himself entitled to take for granted, just as a modern thinker addressing educated men on the ultimate generalisations of Science takes for granted their knowledge of the more important data and ideas accepted by modern men. All this mass of thought so taken for granted must have had a previous existence and history. It is indeed possible that it was developed between the time of the Vedas and the appearance of these Vedantic compositions but left behind it no substantial literary trace of its passage and progress. But it is also possible that the Vedas themselves when properly understood, contain these beginnings or even most of the separate data of these early mental sciences. It is possible that the old teachers of Vedanta were acting quite rationally & understood their business better than we understand it for them when they expected a knowledge of Veda from their students, sometimes even insisting on this preliminary knowledge, not dogmatically, not by a blind tradition, but because the Veda contained that basis of experimental knowledge upon which the generalisations of Vedanta were built. There is a chance, a considerable chance — I must lay stress again and more strongly on a suggestion already hazarded, — that minds so much closer to the Vedas in time and in the possibility of spiritual affinity may have known better the meaning of their religion than the inhabitant of different surroundings and of another world of thought speculating millenniums afterwards in the light of possibly fanciful Greek and German analogies. So far as I have been able to study & to penetrate the meaning of the Rigvedic hymns, it seems to me that the Europeans are demonstrably wrong in laying so predominant a stress on the material aspects of the Vedic gods. I find Varuna and Mitra to be mainly moral and not material powers; Surya, Agni, Indra have great psychical functions; even Sarasvati, in whom the scholars insist on seeing, wherever they can, an Aryan river, presents herself as a moral and intellectual agency, — "Pâvakâ nah Sarasvatî Vâjebhir vâjinîvatî, Yajnam vashtu *dhiyâvasuh. Chodayitrî sûnritânâm Chetantî sumatînâm*, Yajnam dadhe Sarasvatî. Maho arnas Sarasvatî Prachetayati ketunâ, *dhiyo visvâ virâjati.*" If we accept the plain meaning of the very plain & simple words italicised, we are in the presence not of personified natural phenomena, but of a great purifying, strengthening and illuminating goddess. But every word in the passage, pavaka, yajnam dadhe, maho arnas, ketuna, it seems to me, has a moral or intellectual significance. It would be easy to multiply passages of this kind. I am even prepared to suggest that the Vritras of the Veda (for the Sruti speaks not of a single Vritra but of many) are not — at least in many hymns — forces either of cloud or of drought, but Titans of quite another & higher order. The insight of Itihasa and Purana in these matters informed by old tradition seems to me often more correct than the conjectural scholarship of the Europeans. But there is an even more important truth than the high moral and spiritual significance of the Vedic gods and the Vedic religion which results to my mind from a more careful & unbiassed study of the Rigveda. We shall find that the moral functions assigned to these gods are arranged not on a haphazard, poetic or mythological basis, but in accordance with a careful, perhaps even a systematised introspective psychology and that at every step the details suggested agree with the experiences of the practical psychology which has gone in India from time immemorial by the name of Yoga. The line Maho Arnas Sarasvati prachetayati ketuna dhiyo visva virajati is to the Yogin a profound and at the same time lucid, accurate and simple statement of a considerable Yogic truth and most important Yogic experience. The psychological theory & principle involved, a theory unknown to Europe and obscured in later Hinduism, depends on a map of human psychology which is set forth in its grand lines in the Upanishads. If I am right, we have here an illuminating fact of the greatest importance to the Hindu religion, a fact which will light up, I am certain, much in the Veda that European scholarship has left obscure and will provide our modern study of the development of Hindu Civilisation with a scientific basis and a principle of unbroken continuity; we may find the earliest hymns of the Veda linked in identity of psychological experience to the modern utterances of Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna. Meanwhile the theory I have suggested of the relations of Veda to Vedanta receives, I contend, from these Vedic indications a certain character of actuality.

But I have to leave aside for the present these great & interesting but difficult questions. Although I believe the knowledge of Veda to be requisite for a full understanding of Vedanta, although I have considered it necessary to lay great stress on that relation, I shall myself in this book follow a different method. I shall confine my inquiry principally to the evidence of the Upanishads themselves and use them to shed their light on the Veda, instead of using the light of the written Veda to illumine the Upanishads. The amount & quality of truth I shall arrive at by this process may be inferior in fullness and restricted in quantity; instead of the written mantras, authoritative to many and open to all, I shall have to appeal largely to Yogic experiences as yet accessible only to a few; but I shall have in compensation this advantage that I shall proceed from the less disputed to the more disputed, from the nearer & better known to the obscurer & more remote, advancing, therefore, by a path not so liberally set with thorns and strewn with impeding boulders. By the necessity of the times my object must be different from that of the mighty ones who went before us. The goal Shankara and other thinkers had in view was the intellectual assurance of the Brahmavada; ours will be the knowledge of the Veda. Mighty Jnanis and Bhaktas, they sought in the Upanishads only those metaphysical truths which base upon reason and Vedic authority the search for the Highest; all else they disregarded as mean or of little moment. From those secure & noble heights, facile of ascent to our ancestors, we of the present generation are compelled to descend. Obliged by the rationalistic assault to enquire into much which they, troubled only by internal & limited disputes, by Buddhism & Sankhya, could afford to take for granted, called upon by modern necessity to study the ideas of the Upanishads in their obscure details no less than in their clear & inspiring generalities, in their doubtful implications no less than in their definite statements, in physical and psychological limb and member no less than in their heart of metaphysical truth, we must seek to know not only the Brahman in Its Universality, but the special functions of Surya and the particular powers of Agni; devote thought to the minor & preliminary "Vyuha rashmin samuha" as well as to the ultimate and capital So'ham asmi; neglect neither the heavenly fire of Nachicatus nor the bricks of his triple flame of sacrifice nor his necklace of many colours. We have behind the Upanishads a profound system of psychology. We must find our way back into that system. We perceive indications of equally elaborate ideas about the processes underlying physical existence, human action and the subtle connections of mind, body and spirit. We must recover in their fullness these ideas and recreate, if possible, this ancient system of psychical mechanics & physics. We find also a cosmology, a system of gods and of worlds. We must know what were the precise origin and relations of this cosmology, on what experiences subjective or objective they rested for their justification. We shall then have mastered not only Vedantadarshana but Vedanta, not only the truth that Badarayana or Shankara arrived at but the revelation that Yajnavalkya & Ajatashatru saw. We may even be compensated for our descent by a double reward. By discovering the early Vedantic interpretation of Veda, we may pour out a great illumination on the meaning of Veda itself, — to be confirmed, possibly, by the larger & more perfect Nirukta which the future will move inevitably to discover. By recovering the realisations of Yajnavalkya & Ajatashatru, we shall recover perhaps the inspired thoughts of Vasishta and Viswamitra, of Ghora from whom perhaps Srikrishna heard the word of illumination, of Madhuchchhandas, Vamadeva and Atri. And we may even find ourself enriched in spiritual no less than in psychological knowledge; rejoice in the sense of being filled with a wider & more potent knowledge & energy, with jnanam, with tapahshakti, & find ourselves strengthened & equipped for the swifter pursuit & mightier attainment of the One whom both Veda & Vedanta aspire to know & who is alone utterly worth possessing.

[3]

Chapter V.

The Interpretation of Vedanta.

In an inquiry of this kind, so far as we have to use purely intellectual means — and I have not concealed my opinion that intellectual means are not sufficient and one has to trust largely the intuitions of a quiet and purified mind and the experiences of an illuminated and expanding soul, — but still, so far as we are to use purely intellectual means, the first, most important, most imperative must be a submissive acceptance of the text of the Sruti in its natural suggestion and in its simple and straightforward sense. To this submissiveness we ought to attach the greatest importance & to secure it think no labour or self-discipline wasted. It is the initial tapasya necessary before we are fit to approach the Sruti. Any temperamental rebellion, any emotional interference, any obstinacy of fixed mental association, any intellectual violation of the text seems to me to vitiate the work of the interpreter and deprive it, even when otherwise noble and brilliant, of some of its value. It is for this reason that the mind, that restless lake of sanskaras, preferences, prejudices, prejudgments, habitual opinions, intellectual & temperamental likes & dislikes, ought to be entirely silent in this matter; its role is to be submissive and receptive, detached, without passion; passivity, not activity, should be its state, na kinchid api chintayet. For the Sruti carries with it, in its very words, a certain prakash, a certain illumination. The mind ought to wait for that illumination and receiving it, should not because it is contrary to our expectation or our desire, labour to reject or alter what has been seen. Our pitfalls are many. One man has an active, vital & energetic temperament; he is tempted to read into Sruti the praise of action, to slur over anything that savours of quietism. Another is temperamentally quietistic; any command enjoining action as a means towards perfection his heart, his nerves cannot endure, he must get rid of it, belittle it, put it aside on whatever pretext. This is the interference of temperamental preference with the text of the Sruti. A man is attached to a particular thinker or teacher, enamoured of a definite view of life & God. Any contradiction of that thinker, teacher or view irritates his heart & cannot be borne, even though the contradiction seems to stand there plainly on the face of sacred writ; the mind at once obeying the heart sets about proving to itself that the words do not mean what they seem to mean. This is the interference of emotional preference. Or else the mind has always been accustomed to a particular philosophy, mode of thinking, idea of religion or dogma. Whatever contradicts these notions, strikes our fixed mental idea as necessarily wrong. Surely, it says, the philosophy, the thought, the dogma to which I am accustomed must be the thought of the Scriptures; there cannot, in the nature of things, be anything in them inconsistent with what I believe; for what I believe is true and the Scriptures are repositories of truth. So begins the interference which arises from association & fixed opinions. There is, finally, the intervention of the intellect when a speculative philosopher with a theory or a scholar reaching out after novelty or conscious of an opening for scholastic ingenuities, meddles powerfully with the plain drift of the text. All these interferences, however brilliantly they may be managed, are injuries to the truth of Veda; they diminish its universality and limit its appeal. It is for others to judge whether I have myself been able to avoid all of them, — especially the intellectual interference to which my temperament is most open, but I have had certainly the will to avoid it if not the power, the intention if not its successful performance.

I do not mean, however, that the received or dictionary sense of the word has to be always accepted. In dealing with these ancient writings such a scholastical puritanism would be less dangerous indeed than the licence of the philosophic commentators, but would still be seriously limiting. But in departing from the dictionary sense one must not depart from the native and etymological sense of the word; one ought to abide within its clear grammatical connotation as in a hedge of defence against one's own intellectual self-will and any superstructure of special sense or association must be consistent with that connotation and with the general usage of the Upanishads or of the Veda on which they rest. I have myself suggested that the scope of dhanam in the first verse of the Isha exceeds the contracted idea of material wealth and embraces all sorts of possessions; *eno* in the last verse still keeps to me its etymological association and is different from papa; the word vayunani meaning no doubt actions or activities, has been supposed by me to keep a colour of its proper etymological sense "phenomena" and to denote universal activities and not solely the individual or human; but none of these suggestions in the least meddle with the grammatical connotation, the etymological force or even the dictionary meaning of the words used; only a deeper or more delicate shade of meaning is made to appear than can ordinarily be perceived by a careless or superficial reader. A more serious doubt may arise when I suggest special associations for drishtaye and satya in the [fifteenth] verse. It will be seen however that in neither case do I depart from the basic meaning of the words, sight for drishti, truth for satya. It will be seen also, as I proceed in my larger task, that I have good Vedic warrant for supposing these special senses to be applied sometimes & indeed often to sight and to Truth in the Sruti and that they agree with the whole drift & logical development of this & other Upanishads.

For the fixing of the actual sense of separate words in Sruti is not the only condition of the interpretation nor is the acceptance of their natural sense the only standard for the interpreter. A great value, indeed an immense value must be attached, in my opinion, to the rhythm & structure and the logical connection with each other in thought of the separate clauses & shlokas. The language of the Upanishads is largely regarded by the modern readers as sublime and poetical indeed, full of imagery & suggestion, but not to be too much insisted on, not always to be pressed as having a definite meaning but often allowed to pass vaguely as rather reaching out at truths than accurately expressing them. My experience forbids me to assent to this view, in itself very natural and superficially reasonable. I have been forced to believe in the plenary inspiration of the Upanishads in word as well as in thought; I have been continually obliged to see that the expressions they use are the inevitable expression for the thought that has to be conveyed, and even when using poetical language the Rishis use it with a definite purpose, not vaguely reaching out at truth, but keeping before their vision a clear and firm thought or experience which they clearly & firmly express. No interpretation would impress me with a sense of satisfaction which did not give its clear & due weight to each word or account for the choice of one word over another where the choice is unusual. In accordance with this fullness of inspiration is the perfection of the chhandas, the rhythm & structure of verse & sentence which corresponds felicitously with the rhythm & structure of the thought. I may instance for this importance of the rhythm & structure of sentence such a juxtaposition as jagatyam jagat in the first verse; while the remarkable development & balance, supremely wedded to the thought, of the six verses about Vidya & Avidya may stand as an example of the importance of rhythm & structure of both sentence & verse. The jagatyam jagat of the first verse already alluded to, is a striking instance of the perfect & pregnant use of language, but there are numerous other examples such as the powerful collocation of kavir manishi paribhuh swayambhur in one of the most noble & profound of the revelatory shlokas, the [eighth]. It is easy for a careless translator or interpreter to accept kavir & manishi loosely as words with the same essential meaning used a little tautologically for a rhetorical effect. In reality, they differ widely in sense, are used in this passage with great correctness and pregnancy and on a right understanding of them depends our right understanding of the whole system of philosophy developed in the Isha. Much depends on whether we take the hiranmaya patra of the [fifteenth] shloka as mere vague poetical rhetoric or an image used with a definite intention and a lucid idea. But almost every step in the Isha will give us examples.

Even an observation of formal metre as an element of the rhythm is of some importance to the Vedantic interpreter. The writers of the Upanishads handle their metres, whether Anushtup or Tristubh, not entirely in the manner of the Vedic Rishis, but very largely on Vedic principles. They permit themselves to avoid elision even in the middle of a pada, eg vidyancha avidyancha, and always avoid it between the different padas; their principle is to keep not only the two lines of the shloka but all its four parts separate and not to run them into each other by sandhi. This peculiarity disappears in the manuscript & printed copies where the post-Vedic sandhi is observed usually though not with absolute consistency. But the disregard of Vedic practice is ruinous to the rhythm and sweetness of the verse, for it disregards the first conditions of the Vedic appeal to the ear. What for instance can be more clumsy than the junction of the padas in the seventh shloka, with its heavy obstruction & jar as of a carriage wheel jolting momentarily over a sudden obstacle,

yasmin sarvani bhutanyatmaivabhud vijanatah

or what can be more rhythmical, sweet & harmonious than the same verse properly written & read with an observation of the pause between the padas

yasmin sarvani bhutani atmaivabhud vijanatah?

There are other antique peculiarities, the use of two short matras as the equivalent of one long syllable, the occasional introduction of one or more excessive feet into a pada, resembling the use of the Alexandrine in English dramatic verse, the optional quantity of the vowel before a conjunct consonant of which the second element is a liquid, especially the semivowels y or v, and, — although this is more doubtful, — the Vedic use of these semivowels optionally as actual vowels which turns a dissyllable frequently into a trisyllable — a freedom possible only in a living language appealing to an ear tuned to the flexibility of living & daily intonations. It is possible that we have an example of this use in vidyancha avidyancha, but although it would introduce a very beautiful and delicate poetical effect, we cannot speak with certainty. These minutiae are not merely interesting to the literary critic and the philologist. Their importance will appear when we find that Max Muller would almost tempt us, for the sake of regularity of metre, to eject the important, if not indispensable yathatathyato, which gives such profundity, so many reverberations of meaning to the closing thought in the majestic [eighth] shloka, kavir manishi paribhuh swayambhur, yathatathyato'rthan vyadadhach chhaswatibhyah samabhyah; or that Shankara's desperate dealings with the line, from his point of view almost unmanageable,

vinashena mrityum tirtwa sambhutyamritam asnute

his forcing of vinasha to mean sambhava and reading of tirtwa asambhutya are negatived by the metre & rhythm of the verse no less than by the rhythm & structure of the thought throughout these six crucial verses.

The ordinary view of the Upanishads ignores another equally important, if not more important characteristic, the closeness of their logical structure, the intimate subjective linking of clause with clause, the logical stride from shloka to shloka, the profound relations of passage to passage. The usual treatment of these works seems to go on the assumption that this high logical strenuousness does not exist. They might often be loose collections of ill connected speculations, haphazard & illogical structures, for all the importance that is given to this element of their divine inspiration. I shall try to show how mighty are the architectonics of thought in the Isha, how movement leads on to movement, how intimately, for instance, the closing invocations to Surya & Agni are related to the whole thought-structure and how perfectly they develop from what precedes. The importance of the logical relation in the interpretation will be manifest, if I mistake not, at every step of our progress.[3]

[I have spoken so far of the intellectual tests that we can employ. Before I pass from this subject, it may be well to insert a word of explanation, of self-defence, almost of apology. Among the intellectual interpreters of Sruti, Shankara towers like an unreachable giant above his fellows. As a philosopher, as a metaphysician, as a powerful logician & victorious disputant his greatness can hardly be measured. For a thousand years and more he has stood in the heavens of Indian thought, his head far away in the altitudes of Adwaita, his feet firmly planted on the lifeless remnants of crushed systems and broken philosophies, the wreckage of his logical conquests, his mouth like Trishira's swallowing up the world, lokan grasantam, annihilating it in the white flame of the Mayavada, his shadow covering our intellects & stunting the efforts of all who have dared to think originally & dispute his conclusions. Not Madhwa, not even Ramanuja can prevail against this colossal shadow. Yet I have ventured throughout to differ from this king of commentators — almost even to ignore this great & invincible disputant. If I have done so, it is because I think the decree of our liberty has already been pronounced by another giant of thought. When the great Vivekananda, potent seedsower of the future, in answer to the objection of the Pundits, "But Shankara does not say that," replied simply but finally, "No, but I, Vivekananda, say it," he pronounced the decree of liberation not only for himself but for all of us from the yoke, the golden but heavy yoke, of the mighty Dravidian. For this was Vivekananda's mission to smite away all obstacles, however great & venerable, & open the path to the resurgence of Indian originality & the direct confrontation of the soul of man with the living Truth. He was our deliverer not only from ignorance & weakness, but from the systems of knowledge that would limit us and impose a premature finality.

---

[3] *The paragraph that follows was cancelled in the manuscript by Sri Aurobindo.—Ed.*

In truth,]

[4]

Part II.

The Instruments and Field of Vedanta.

Chapter I.

Textual Inference.

The three principal means of intellectual knowledge are anumana, pratyaksha and aptavakya. Anumana, inference from data, depends for its value on the possession of the right data, on the right observation of the data including the drawing of the right analogies, the unerring perception of true identity & rejection of false identity, the just estimate of difference & contrast, and finally on the power of right reasoning from the right data. Pratyaksha is the process by which the things themselves about which we gather data are brought into our ken; aptavakya is evidence, the testimony of men who have themselves been in possession of the knowledge we seek. An error in pratyaksha, an error committed by the apta, an error of data or of reasoning from the data may, if serious in its bearing or extent, vitiate all our conclusions even if all our other means are correct and correctly used. Especially is this danger present to us when we are reasoning not from things but from words; when we are using the often artificial counters of traditional logic & metaphysics, we are apt to lose ourselves in a brilliant cloud, to be lifted from the earth, our pratistha, into some nebulous region where even if we win high victories we are not much advanced, since we get thereby nothing but an intellectual satisfaction and cannot apply our knowledge to life. This is the great advantage of the scientist over the metaphysician that he is always near to facts & sensible things which, when the truth of them is outraged by the freaks of the mind, present a much more formidable & tangible protest than words, those vague & flexible symbols of things which have been habituated to misuse ever since human thinking began. The metaphysician is too apt to forget that he is dealing with the symbols of things and not with the things themselves; he should but is not always careful to compare his intellectual results with the verities of experience; he is apt to be more anxious that his conclusions should be logical than that they should be in experience true. Much of the argumentation of the great Dravidian thinkers, though perfect in itself, seems to be vitiated by this tendency to argue about words rather than about the realities which alone give any value to words. On the other hand scientists as soon as they go beyond the safe limits of observation & classification of data, as soon as they begin to reason & generalise on the basis of their science, show themselves to be as much subject to the errors of the intellect as ordinary mortals. They too like the metaphysicians use words in a fixed sense established upon insufficient data and forge these premature fixatures into fetters upon thought and inquiry. We seem hardly yet to possess the right & sufficient data for a proper understanding of the universe in which we find ourselves; the habit & power of right reasoning from data, even if with insufficient materials right reasoning were possible, seem yet to be beyond the reach of our human weakness. The continued wrangles of philosophy, dogmatisms of science and quarrels of religion are so many proofs that we are yet unripe for the highest processes of thought and inquiry. How few of us have even the first elementary condition of truth-seeking, a quiet heart and a silent, patient & purified understanding. For the Vedantins were surely right in thinking that in order to be a discoverer & teacher of truth one must first be absolutely dhira, — live that is to say in a luminous calm of both heart & understanding.

[5]

Part II

The Field and Instruments of Vedanta

Chapter I

Historically, then, we have our Hindu theory of the Vedanta. It is the systematised affirmation, the reaffirmation, perhaps, of that knowledge of God, man and the universe, the Veda or Brahmavidya, on which the last harmony of man's being with his surroundings was effected. What the Vedanta is, intrinsically, I have already hinted. It is the reaffirmation of Veda or Brahmavidya, not by metaphysical speculation or inferential reasoning, but by spiritual experience and supra-intellectual inspiration. If this idea be true, then by interpreting correctly the Vedanta, we shall come to some knowledge of what God is, what man, of the nature and action of the great principles of our being, matter, life, mind, spirit and whatever else this wonderful world of ours may hold. In fact, this is my sole object in undertaking the explanation of the Upanishads. The essential relations of God & the world, so far as they affect our existence here, this is my subject. A philological enquiry into the meaning of ancient Hindu documents, an antiquarian knowledge of the philosophising of ancient generations, although in itself a worthy object of labour and a patriotic occupation, — since those generations were our forefathers and the builders of our race, — would not to me be a sufficient motive for devoting much time & labour out of a life lived in these pregnant & fruitful times when each of us is given an opportunity of doing according to our powers a great work for humanity. I hold with my forefathers that this is an age of enormous disintegration & reconstitution from which we look forward to a new Satyayuga. That Satyayuga can only be reconstituted by the efforts of the sadhus, the seekers after human perfection, by maintaining in however small a degree that harmony of man's being with his surrounding & containing universe which is the condition of our perfection. The knowledge of the principles of that harmony is therefore man's greatest need and should be the first preoccupation of his lovers and helpers. This knowledge, this perfection is within us and must ultimately be found and manifested by plunging into the depths of our own being, into that karanasamudra or causal ocean from which our beings emerge and bringing out from thence the lost Veda and the already existing future. Within us is all Veda and all Vedanta, within us is God & perfected humanity — two beatitudes that are the same and yet different. But to effect this great deliverance, to push aside the golden shield of our various thought from the face of Truth, to rescue the concealed Purusha, future Man, out of those waters in which he lies concealed and give him form by the intensity of our tapas, let no man think that it is a brief or an easy task in which we can dispense with the help that the wisdom of the past still offers us. We must link our hands to the sages of the past in order that we may pass on the sacred Vedic fire, agnir idyah, to the Rishis of the future. The best beginning for this great inquiry is, therefore, to know what the Vedanta has to say on these profound problems. Afterwards we may proceed to confirmation from other sources.

Three questions at the very beginning confront us. What is the nature of the truth that the Vedanta sets out to teach, — what, that is to say, are its relations to the actual thought and labour of humanity? What are these methods of inspiration and experience by which they arrive at the truths of which they are the repositories? And granting that they are inspired in word & thought, how are we to arrive at the right meaning of words written long ago, in the Sanscrit language, by ancient thinkers with ideas that are not ours and a knowledge from which we have receded? Is it the method of the darshanik, the logical philosopher, that we must follow? Shall we arrive by logic at this knowledge of the Eternal? Or is [it] the scientist and scholar, who must be our guides? Shall grammar and analysis from outside help us? But the scientist does not admit inspiration, the logician does not use it.

[6]

Part II

The Field and Instruments of Vedanta

Chapter I

Intellect and Revelation

If in the progression of the ages there are always golden periods in which man recovers self-knowledge and attunes the truth of himself to the truth of his surroundings — or may it not even be, may not this be the true secret of his evolution — attunes his surroundings to his fulfilled and triumphant self, not being merely determined by his environment, but using it freely for infinite purposes & determining it, and if the Veda keeps, even fragmentarily, the practical application and the Vedanta, the theoretical statement of that self-knowledge, the importance of the inner meaning of these books to the progress of humanity will be self-evident. It is perfectly true, or so at least the Indian Yogin has always held, that we have in ourselves the eternal Veda. Available by God's grace or our own effort there is always in each human being that hidden salvation. But it is hard to arrive at, harder to apply. Many of the greatest, not seeing how it can be applied to the conditions of phenomenal life, carry it away with them into the eternal Silence. They put away from them the Veda, they seek in the Vedanta or in their souls only so much knowledge as will help them to loosen the coils of thought & sense wound round them by the Almighty Magician. But the Vedanta is not useful only for the denial of life; it is even more useful for the affirmation of life. If it affirms the evil of bondage to the idea of this world, it also affirms the bliss of harmony between the world & God. Neither Shankara nor Schopenhauer have for us the entirety of its knowledge.

It is this supreme utility of Vedanta for life, for man's individual and racial evolution that I hope to rescue from the obscuration of quietistic philosophies born of the pessimism of the iron age. I have said that I do not deny the truth of these philosophies. The Asad Brahman, Nirvana, annihilation of the manifest soul in the unmanifest are all of them great truths and, if we regard them without the fear & shrinking of the ignorant existence-loving mind, they are not only great but also blissful truths; they are an eternal part of Vedanta and it is well that they should have been brought out though with exaggeration & the exclusion of other verities. But they are only a part, a side of Vedantic truth. There are other sides, in a way even greater and more blissful, and at any rate much more helpful to mankind as a whole. God & the World is my subject, — not the incompatibility of God with the world He has created in Himself, but the fulfilment of Himself in it for which it was created — the conditions in which the kingdom of heaven on earth can be converted from a dream into a possibility, — by the willed evolution in man of his higher nature, by a steady self-purification and a development in the light of this divine knowledge towards the fulfilment of his own supra-material, supra-intellectual nature. For that purpose he must know God and not only the physical laws of Nature. He must know his soul and not only the open or secret machinery of his body. This knowledge he can only get from his own soul or from Vedanta explained to him by the Master, the one who knows, and awakening by its contact the knowledge in his own soul. He cannot get it from Science or from speculative Philosophy, but only from God's revelation. Nayam atma pravachanena labhyah. If Vedanta had not this high utility, if it only brought a philosophical satisfaction or were good for logical disputation, I should not think it worth while to write a word about it, much less to delve deep for its meaning.

We wish to know, we enlightened moderns, what man is, what God, the nature & relation of matter, mind, life in order to satisfy an intellectual craving. If we can systematise our guesses about these things, if we can present the world with a theory intellectually interesting or logically flawless, we are satisfied. But the ancients wished to know these things because they thought they were of the greatest importance for man's life and being. Whether they had their knowledge by thought or by religion, from the judgment or from the heart, their first preoccupation was to live according to their knowledge, — the Stoic & the Epicurean quite as much as the Christian or the Jew held his knowledge as a means towards life, towards the highest fulfilment of his being. It has been left for enlightened Europe to profess a religion, yet avowedly separate its precepts from practical life, and it has been first the privilege of Teutonic thinkers to speculate in the void, using great words & high ideas as if these were ornaments of a bright lustre & great costliness but of no living utility. The Vedanta is above all a rule of life, a law of being and a determination of relation and conduct; for its ideas are sovereign, potent, insistent to remould a man's whole outlook upon existence; it is at once a philosophy & a religion and it owes this sovereign force & double mastery not only to the substance of its message, but to the instrumentality of that message, the sources from which it is drawn and the principles of knowledge & activity in our complex being to which it appeals.

For although the determination to live by the best light we have is important, it is equally important to know what that light is and how we came by it, whether by the inspiration of the heart & the satisfaction of the emotional being, as in ordinary religion, or by the working of the observation and the logical faculties as in ordinary Science or by intellectual revelation as Newton discovered gravitation or by spiritual intuition as in the methods of the great founders of religion or by a higher principle in us which sums up and yet transcends all these mighty channels of the Jnanam Brahma. It is such a higher undivided principle from which Vedanta professes to derive its knowledge. For the ancient Hindus, alone of earth's nations, seem to have not only trusted the internal revelation in preference to the external, which, however, they also recognized & highly valued, but to have known & commanded the psychological sources of internal revelation and mastered to a certain extent its secret, its science and its workings. They claim to have found a principle of knowledge as superior to reason as reason itself is to sensational perception and animal instinct — to have laid their grasp on workings and results which can satisfy the demands of the intellect but transcend intellectual ideation, meet the test of observation & logic but act in a sense wider, more direct & more penetrating than observation & logic, and fulfil all the demands of the heart while preserving our freedom from the heart's vagaries. All existence is a staircase by which we are climbing in God & through God Godwards. We start here at the bottom rung, from the involution, the obscuration in matter and ascend from the obscurer manifestation to the less obscure, from an air in which light comes to us from above to emergence in the very light itself. The spirit in the stone, clod and metal is at the bottom of that ladder; tree & plant and all vegetable life a little higher; animal life dwelling in vitality but using from below the lower functions of mind and a reason which entirely depends on memory & observation & almost consists in memory & observation climbs yet higher; man dwelling in the lower mind but using matter & vitality from above and from below taking possession of reason and imagination, seems, of all beings on earth, to be at the top. But above man's present position, above the heart in which he dwells & the imagination & reason to which he rises there opens out a wider atmosphere of life, there shoots down on him a more full & burning splendour of strength & knowledge, a more nectarous lustre of joy & beauty. There there is another sun, another moon, other lightnings than ours. To this the poet and the artist aspire in the intoxication of the vision and the hearing, chakshush cha shrotran cha; from this the prophet & the Pythoness draw the exaltation of their inspiration or its frenzy; genius is a beggar at the doors of that bounty. But all these are like men that dream and utter ill-understood fragments of their dream. For man in his heart is awake; in his reason & imagination, half awake, not yet buddha, but in that higher principle he is asleep. It is to him a state of sushupti. Yet secretly, subliminally, unknown to the egoistic mind he takes from this slumber his waking thought & knowledge, though he is compelled by the limitations of mind to mistake & misuse it. For that slumber is the real waking and our waking is a state of dream and delusion in which we use a distorted truth & establish a world of false relations. Therefore the Gita says, "Yasyam jagrati bhutani sa nisha pashyato muneh." In that which is night to all creatures, he who has mastered his own being is awake; that in which these creatures are awake, is night to the eye of the awakened seer. The Vedantists call this principle by the name, vijnanam, an entire & pervading principle of knowledge which puts everything in its true light & its right relations. It is from vijnanam that Veda descends to us; the movement of this higher principle is the source of all internal revelation. It is the drishti of which the Veda is the result, it is the sruti which in its expression the Veda is, it is the smriti of the Rishi which gives to the intelligent part, the manishi in him a perfect account of the vision & inspired hearing of the seer in him, the Kavi.

For mankind although evolving towards vijnana yet dwells in the mind. He has to be fulfilled in mind before he can rise taking up mind with him into the vijnanamaya self, — the mahan atma, — just as, in his animal state, he had to be fulfilled in body & vitality before he could develop freely in mind. Thus it comes about that even when Veda manifests in the mental world, it has although the higher & truer, to give an account of itself to the lower & more fallible, to Science, to Philosophy & to Religion. It must answer their doubts & questions, it must satisfy all their right and permissible demands. For although from the ideal point of view it is an anomaly that the higher should be cross-questioned by the lower, the source of truth by the propagators of half-truth and error, yet from the evolutionary point of view an anomaly is often the one right and indispensable process. For if we act otherwise, if we deny for instance the claims of the reason in order to serve revelation only & exclusively — though we ought to serve her first and chiefly — we are in danger of defeating man's evolution, which consists in self-fulfilment and not, except as a temporary means to an end, in self-mortification. Otherwise, we are in danger of becoming by a one-sided exaggeration self-injurers, self-slayers, atmaha, and incurring that condemnation to the sunless & gloomy states beyond of which the Isha Upanishad speaks. Religion makes this mistake when she attempts to destroy the body & the vitality in order to satisfy the aspirations of the heart; philosophy, when she stifles the heart in order to enthrone the pure intellect; Science when she denies the power of vision of the heart and the pure intellect in order to strengthen & serve solely the analytical reason — denying herself thus the benefit of the great benediction "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God," denying herself the fullness of the great secular effort of humanity summed up in the gnothi seauton of the sages, binding herself to a barren Agnosticism, urging mankind towards the gran rifiuto, the great refusal & renunciation of its past and its future. Mayavada commits this error when not content with trampling the tyranny of cosmic Illusion underfoot, it seeks to deny and destroy the world in order to attain That which has chosen to express itself through the world. For God has expressed us in many principles & not one. He has ranged them one over the other & commanded us not to destroy one in order to satisfy another, not to sanction internal civil war and perpetrate spiritual suicide, but to rise from one principle to the other, taking it up with us as we go, fulfilling the lower first in itself and then in the higher. We have to dissociate our sense of being from body & vitality and become mind, to dissociate it from mind and become vijnanam, to dissociate it from vijnanam and become divine bliss, awareness & being, Sachchidanandam manifest in phenomenal existence, to dissociate it from Sachchidanandam and become That which is in the world Sachchidanandam, not in order to destroy body, vitality, mind, knowledge, manifested bliss & being but to transcend and satisfy them more mightily, without being limited by their conditions, to become through them yet beyond them infinite, divine & universal. Destroy them we cannot without blotting out ourselves and entering into the Sunyam Brahma; but we can maim ourselves in the world by the attempt to destroy them. For thus are we made and we can be no other, — evam twayi nanyatheto'sti. "Thus is it in thee and it is not otherwise." Purnata, fullness is the true law of our progression.

Therefore all attempts to deny and slaughter the reason are reprehensible and should be strongly opposed & discouraged. The revolt of Rationalism against the tyranny of the creeds & the Churches is justified by God's law and truth. And not only the

Churches & creeds, but Veda must bend down from its altitudes & justify itself before reason even as God descends from his heavens of infinity to humour our weakness & limitations and take us into His embrace. On the other hand, to deny Veda in order to give reason a supremacy which its natural limitations, its stumbling imperfections make impossible to it, is to go against Nature and restrict our evolution. It has been well said that to deny Veda by hetuvada, divine revelation by intellectual rationality, is, in the end, to become a pashanda, — a word which has now acquired only the significance of an abusive epithet but meant originally and etymologically a materialist, one who denies his higher self in order to enthrone & worship the brute matter in which he is cased. A harmony is needed in which the higher shall illumine the lower, the lower recognise & rise to the higher. The ancient Hindus, therefore, insisted on Veda as the supreme authority, allowing Philosophy, Science & Religion only as subordinate helps to knowledge, because they perceived the danger of giving too unlicensed a freedom to these great but inferior powers. Religion, putting Veda away into a sacred oblivion, follows the impulses of the undisciplined heart, not purified, but full of the vital impulses, chittam pranair otam, and becomes spasmodic, ignorant, narrow, obscurantist, sectarian, cruel, violent. Philosophy acknowledging Veda in theory but relying instead on her own intellectual self-sufficiency, ends by living in words, a thing of vain disputations & exultant logic-splitting, abstract, unpractical and visionary. Science, denying Veda altogether, arrogant & bigoted in her own conceit, makes man a materialist, a pashanda. For all her analytical knowledge she knows not that that in man which believes only in matter is the beast in him, — the beast so long & with such difficulty subdued & disciplined by Philosophy, Religion & Veda; she keeps telling him, "Thou, O brute body & nerve system, art Brahman," Annam vai Brahma, Prano vai Brahma, until his whole nature begins to believe it. One day, while she yet reigns, he is sure to rise, — the egoistic heartless lust of power & pleasure in man, — and demand that she shall be his servant with her knowledge, her sophistries, her organisation, her appliances, shall justify to him his selfishness, lusts & cruel impulses and arm them with engines of irresistible potency. Already the shadow of this terrible revival is cast upon the world; already Science is bowing her head to this tremendous demand. What the Hindus foresaw and dreaded and strove to organise their society against it, erecting barrier upon artificial barrier as their own knowledge & grasp upon Veda diminished, is now growing actual and imminent. The way to avoid it is not to deny the truth of Science, but to complete, correct and illuminate it. For the Veda also says with Science, Annam vai Brahma, Prano vai Brahma; it acknowledges the animal, the Pashu in man & God as the Master of the Animal, the Pashupati; but by completing the knowledge and putting it in its right relations, it completes him also & liberates him, lifts the Pashu to the Pashupati and enables him to satisfy himself divinely by enjoying even in matter the supramaterial and replacing egoistic and selfish power by an universal mastery & helpfulness and egoistic & unsatisfying pleasures by a bliss in which he can become one with his fellows, a bliss divine & universal.

In any explanation, therefore, that we may offer of Veda and Vedanta we must give an account to Science, Philosophy & Religion in their own terms of that which we mean by Veda & Vedanta and our reasons for attaching a supreme importance to the conclusions we reach by them. In order that this satisfaction may be given the Vedantist must make it clear what he means by knowledge, what he holds to be the value of the criteria relied on respectively by Science, Philosophy & Religion and how he determines their relation to the standards used by Vedanta. Science takes her stand upon two means of knowledge only; she admits observation by the physical senses aided by physical instruments and she admits inference from this observation, or to use our Indian terms physical pratyaksha & anumana from physical pratyaksha. All else she puts by as misleading and unreliable. She admits neither aptavakya nor analogy, neither the statements of well-equipped & credible witnesses nor argument from the perception of like circumstances as between the various objects or movements observed. Aptavakya is in this system only an uncertain makeshift, a secondhand pratyaksha; analogy is only a doubtful and often a false inference. But the Vedantist in common with all Indian thinkers admits in intellectual reasoning aptavakya and analogy as well as pratyaksha and anumana.

At bottom all human thinking is some sort of perception; either perception by the mind of something that seems to be outside itself or of something that seems to be within itself, either, as we say, physical perception or mental perception. Logic itself is only the science of placing our perceptions in their proper order, — nothing more. If we take things physical with which alone the modern scientific method is really at home, it must be clear to us that the whole basis of knowledge is the right perception of objects. We have first to bring it under observation by the mind through some sense-organ usually or predominantly the eye, — we have to bring not only the eye, but the mind into concentrated contact with the object; for if only the eye dwells on it, the mind is likely to retain nothing in memory or only a vague impression of what has been seen. This process I may be allowed to call simply bodha or taking into the observation. Once I have the object in my mind's grasp, I proceed to separate it clearly in my observation from all surrounding object or circumstance foreign to it even if contiguous or attached — by separation in observation, by prithagbodha. Finally, I take it completely into my mind by a perfect observation of it in its parts, its circumstance & its entirety, by totality in observation, by samyagbodha. Only if I have accomplished these three movements of perception perfectly, can I be said to have properly or scientifically observed the object; only then can I be sure of its dwelling in my memory or of my power to reproduce it accurately before my imagination.

The Upanishad in Aphorism

THE ISHA UPANISHAD

For the Lord all this is a habitation whatsoever is moving thing in her that moves.

Why dost thou say there is a world? There is no world, only One who moves.

What thou callest world is the movement of Kali; as such embrace thy world-existence. In thy all-embracing stillness of vision thou art Purusha and inhabitest; in thy outward motion and action thou art Prakriti and the builder of the habitation. Thus envisage thy being.

There are many knots of the movement and each knot thy eyes look upon as an object; many currents and each current thy mind sees as force and tendency. Forces and objects are the forms of Kali.

To each form of her we give a name. What is this name? It is word, it is sound, it is vibration of being, the child of infinity & the father of mental idea. Before form can be, name & idea must have existed.

The half-enlightened say "Whatever form is built, the Lord enters to inhabit"; but the Seer knows that whatever the Lord sees in His own being, becomes Idea and seeks a form and a habitation.

The universe is a rhythmic vibration in infinite existence which multiplies itself into many harmonies and holds them well ordered in the original type of motion.

Thou lookest upon a stone and sayest, "It is still." So it is, but to the sense-experience only. To the eye that sees, it is built out of motion and composed of motion. In the ordered repetition of the atomic movements that compose it, consists its appearance of stillness.

All stability is a fixed equilibrium of rhythm. Disturb the rhythm, the stability dissolves & becomes unstable.

No single rhythm can be eternally stable; therefore the universe is an ocean always in flow, and everything in it is mutable & transient. Each thing in Nature endures till the purpose of Kali in it is fulfilled; then it is dissolved and changed into a constituent of some other harmony.

Prakriti is eternal, but every universe passes. The fact of universe endures for ever, but no particular world of things can last; for each universe is only one rhythm out of an infinite number of possible movements. Whatsoever system in Nature or of Nature is thoroughly worked out, must give place to a new harmony.

Nevertheless all world and everything in world is eternal in its essential being; for all essential existence is Brahman without end or beginning.

Forms and names are also Brahman and eternal; but, in world, theirs is an eternity of recurrence, not of unbroken persistence. Every form & every idea that has once been, exists still and can again recur; every form or idea that is to be, already exists and was from the beginning. Time is a convention of movement, not a condition of existence.

That which inhabits the forms of Kali is Self and Lord of the Movement. Purusha is master of Prakriti, not her subject; Soul determines Form & Action & is not determined by them. Spirit reflects in its knowledge the activity of Nature, but only those activities which it has itself compelled Nature to initiate.

The soul in the body is master of body and not subject to its laws or limited by its experiences.

The soul is not constituted by mind and its activities, for these also are parts of Nature and movements only.

Mind and body are instruments of the secret all-knowing and omnipotent Self within us.

The soul in the body is not limited in space by the body or in experience by the mind; the whole universe is its habitation.

There is only one Self of things, one soul in multitudinous forms. By body & mind I am separated even from my brother or my lover, but by exceeding body & mind I can become one with all things in being & in experience, even with the stone & the tree.

My universal soul need no more be limited by my individual mind and body, than my individual consciousness is limited by the experiences of a single cell in my body. The walls which imprison us have been built up by Prakriti in her movement and exist only in her inferior kingdoms. As one rises higher they become conventional boundaries which we can always stride across and, on the summits, they merely mark off compartments in our universal consciousness.

The soul does not move, but motion of Nature takes place in its perfect stillness.

The motion of Nature is not real or material motion, but vibration of the soul's self-consciousness.

Nature is Chit-Shakti, the Lord's expressive power of self-awareness, by which whatever He sees in Himself, becomes in form of consciousness.

Every thing in Nature is a becoming of the one Spirit who alone is Being. We and all things in Nature are God's becomings, sarvabhutani.

Although there are to world-experience multitudinous souls (Purushas) in the universe, all these are only one Purusha masked in many forms of His consciousness.

Each soul in itself is God entirely, every group of souls is collectively God; the modalities of Nature's movement create their separation and outward differences.

God transcends world and is not bound by any law of Nature. He uses laws, laws do not use Him.

God transcends world and is not bound to any particular state of consciousness in the world. He is not unity-consciousness nor multiple consciousness, not Personality nor Impersonality, not stillness, nor motion, but simultaneously includes all these self-expressions of His absolute being.

God simultaneously transcends world, contains it and informs it; the soul in the body can arrive at the God-consciousness and at once transcend, contain and inform its universe.

God-consciousness is not exclusive of world-consciousness; Nature is not an outcast from Spirit, but its Image, world is not a falsity contradicting Brahman, but the symbol of a divine Existence.

God is the reverse side of Nature, Nature the obverse side of God.

Since the soul in the body is eternally & inalienably free, its bondage to egoism, law of bodily nature, law of mental nature, law of pleasure and pain, law of life and death, can only be an apparent & not a real bondage. Our chains are either a play or an illusion or both play & illusion.

The secret of our apparent bondage is the Spirit's play by which It consents to forget God-consciousness in the absorption of Nature's movement.

The movement of Nature is a sevenfold flow, each stream subject to its own law of motion but containing latent, expressed or half-apparent in itself its six sisters or companions.

Nature is composed of Being, Will or Force, Creative Bliss, Pure Idea, Mind, Life and Matter, — Sat, Chit or Tapas, Ananda, Vijnanam, Manas, Prana and Annam.

The Soul, Purusha, can seat itself in any of these principles and, according to its situation, its outlook changes and it sees a different world; all world is merely arranged and harmonised outlook of the Spirit.

What God sees, that exists; what He sees with order & harmony, becomes a world.

There are seven worlds, Satya, of pure being, Tapas, of pure will or force, Jana, of pure delight, Mahas, of pure idea, Swar, of pure mentality, Bhuvah, of pure vitality, Bhuh, of pure matter.

The soul in Sat is pure truth of being and perceives itself as one in the world's multiplicity.

The soul in Tapas is pure force of divine will & knowledge and possesses universe omnisciently and omnipotently as its extended self.

The soul in Ananda is pure delight and multiplies itself in universal self-creation and unmixed joy of being.

The soul in Mahas is pure idea, perceives itself in order and arrangement of comprehensive unity in multiplicity, all things in their unity & each thing in its right place, time and circumstance. It is not subject to the tyranny of impressions, but contains & comprehends the objects it knows.

The soul in Manas is pure mentality & receives the pure impression of separate objects & from their sum receives the impression of the whole. It is Manas that measures, limits & divides.

The soul in Prana is pure vitality & pours itself out in various life-energy.

The soul in Annam is pure matter & forgets force of consciousness in the form of consciousness.

Matter is the lowest rung of the ladder and the soul that has descended into Matter tends by its secret nature & inevitable self-impulsion to reemerge out of form towards the freedom of pure universal being. These are the two movements that govern world-existence, adhogati, the descent towards matter or mere form and urdhwagati, the ascent towards Spirit and God.

Man is a mental being, manu or manomaya purusha, who has entered into a vitalised material body and is seeking to make it capable of infinite mentality & infinite ideality so that it may become the perfect instrument, seat and temple of the manifest Sacchidananda.

Mind in the material world is attentive to two kinds of knowledge, impacts from outside, corporeal or mental, received into the individual mentality and translated into mental values and knowledge from within, spiritual, ideal or mental similarly translated.

Inert physical bodies receive all the impacts that the mind receives, but being devoid of organised mentality, retain them only in the involved mind in matter and are incapable of translating them into mental symbols.

Our bodies are naturally inert physical bodies moved by life & mind. They also receive all impacts, but not all of them are translated into mental values. Of those which are translated, some are rendered imperfectly, some perfectly, some immediately, some only after a longer or shorter incubation in the involved mind in matter. There are the same variable phenomena with the internal knowledge. All the knowledge translated here into mental values forms the stuff of our waking consciousness. This waking consciousness accepted by the manomaya purusha as itself & organised round a central I-sense is the waking ego.

The Jiva or embodied mental being is in its consciousness much wider than the waking ego; it has a wide range of knowledge & experience of the past, present and future, the near & the distant, this life & other lives, this world & other worlds which is not available to the waking ego. The waking ego fails to notice many things & forgets what it notices; the Jiva notices & remembers all experience.

That which goes on in our life-energy & bodies below the level of waking mind is our subconscious self in the world; that which goes on in our mind & higher principles above the level of our waking mind is our superconscious self. The waking ego often receives intimations, more or less obscure, from either source which it fails to trace to their origin.

Man progresses in proportion as he widens his consciousness & renders ever wider & finer experiences available for the perception & delight of the waking consciousness & in proportion as he can ascend to higher reaches of mind & beyond mind to ideality & spirit.

The swiftest & most effective means of his advance & self-fulfilment is to dissolve his waking ego in the enjoyment of an infinite consciousness, at first mental of the universal manomaya Purusha, but afterwards ideal and spiritual of the high vijnana & highest Sacchidananda.

The transcendence & dissolution of the waking mental ego in the body is therefore the first object of all practical Vedanta.

This transcendence & dissolution may result either in loss of the waking self & relapse into some sleepbound principle, undifferentiated Prakriti, sushupta Purusha, Sunyam Brahma (Nihil), etc or in loss of the world self in Parabrahman or in universalisation of the waking self & the joy of God's divine being in & beyond the world, Amritam. The last is the goal proposed for man by the Isha Upanishad.

The waking ego, identifying the Jiva with its bodily, vital & mental experiences which are part of the stream of Nature's movement & subject to Nature & the process of the movement, falsely believes the soul to be the subject of Nature & not its lord, anish and not Ish. This is the illusion of bondage which the manomaya Purusha either accepts or seeks to destroy. Those who accept it are called baddha Jivas, souls in bondage; those who seek to destroy it mumukshu Jivas, self-liberating souls, — those who have destroyed it are mukta Jivas, souls free from illusion & limitation.

In reality, no soul is bound & therefore none seeking liberation or liberated from bondage; these are all conditions of the waking mind and not of the self or spirit which is Ish, eternally lord & free.

The essence of bondage is limitation & the chief circumstances of limitation are death, suffering and ignorance.

Death, suffering & ignorance are circumstances of the mind in the vitalised body and do not touch the consciousness of the soul in vijnana, ananda, chit & sat. The combination of the three lower members, mind, life & body, is called therefore aparardha, the lower kingdom or in Christian parlance the kingdom of death & sin, the four higher members are called parardha, the higher kingdom, or in Christian parlance, the kingdom of heaven. To liberate man from death, suffering & ignorance and impose the all-blissful & luminous nature of the higher kingdom upon the lower is the object of the Seer in the Isha Upanishad.

This liberation is to be effected by dissolving the waking ego into the Lord's divine being and experiencing entirely our unity with all other existences & with Him who is God, Atman & Brahman.

All individual existences are jagat in jagati, object of motion in stream of motion & obey the laws & processes of that motion.

Body is an object of motion in the stream of material consciousness, of which the principal law is birth & death. All bodies are subject therefore to formation and dissolution.

Life is a current of motion in the stream of vital consciousness composed of eternal life-energy. Life is not itself subject to death, — death not being a law of life-energy, — but only to expulsion from the form which it occupies and therefore to the physical experience of death of its body.

All matter here is filled with life-energy of a greater or less intensity of action, but the organisation of life in individual animation begins later in the process of the material world by the appearance first of the plant, then of the animal. This evolution of life is caused & supported by the pressure of the gods of the Bhuvar or life-world upon Bhu.

Life entering into body is dominated partly by the laws of body; it is therefore unable to impart its own full & uninterrupted energy to its form. Consequently there is no physical immortality.

The organisation of individual animated life tends to hasten the period of dissolution by introducing shocks of an intensity of force alien to matter which wastes the material form by its activity. Therefore the plant dissolves while the stone & metal endure in their own equilibrium.

Mind entering into the vitalised body tends still farther to hasten the period of dissolution by the higher demands of its vibrations upon the body.

Mind is a knot of motion in the stream of mental consciousness. Like life, it is not itself subject to death, but only to expulsion from the vitalised body it has occupied. But because the mental ego identifies itself with the body and understands by its life only this residence in its present perishable gross corporeal body, therefore it has the mental experience of a bodily death.

The experience of death is therefore combined of the apparently mortal mind's ignorance of its own true immortal nature and of the limitation of energy in the body by which the form we inhabit wears out under the shocks of vibrating life-energy & vibrating mentality. We mean by death not dissolution of life or of mind, but dissolution of the form or body.

The dissolution of body is not true death for the mental being called man; it is only a change of media & of the surroundings of consciousness. Matter of body changes its constituents and groupings, mental being persists both in essence and personality and passes into other forms & environments.

The Life Divine

A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad

[Draft A]

Foreword

Veda & Vedanta are the inexhaustible fountains of Indian spirituality. With knowledge or without knowledge, every creed in India, sect, school of philosophy, outburst of religious life, great or petty, brilliant or obscure, draws its springs of life from these ancient and ever flowing waters. Conscious or unwitting each Indian religionist stirs to a vibration that reaches him from those far off ages. Darshana and Tantra and Purana, Shaivism & Vaishnavism, orthodoxy & heresy are merely so many imperfect understandings of Vedic truth & misunderstandings of each other; they are eager half-illuminated attempts to bring some ray of that great calm & perfect light into our lives & make of the stray beam an illumination on our path or a finger laid on the secret & distant goal of our seeking. Our greatest modern minds are mere tributaries of the old Rishis. Shankara, who seems to us a giant, had but a fragment of their knowledge. Buddha wandered away on a bypath in their universal kingdom. These compositions of an unknown antiquity are as the many breasts of the eternal Mother of Knowledge from which our succeeding ages have been fed & the imperishable life in us fostered. The Vedas hold more of that knowledge than the Vedanta, hold it more amply, practically and in detail; but they come to us in a language we have ceased to understand, a vocabulary which often, by the change of meaning to ancient terms, misleads most where it seems most easy & familiar, a scheme of symbols of which the key has been taken from us. Indians do not understand the Vedas at all; Europeans have systematised a gross misunderstanding of them. The old knowledge in the Vedas is to us, therefore, as a river wandering in dark caverns inaccessible to the common tread. It is in the Upanishads that the stream first emerges into open country. It is there that it is most accessible to us. But even this stream flows through obscure forest & difficult mountain reaches and we only have it for our use at favourable points where the forest thins or the mountain opens. It is there that men have built their little artificial cities of metaphysical thought and spiritual practice, in each of which the inhabitants pretend to control the whole river. They call their dwelling places Vedanta or Sankhya, Adwaita or Dwaita, Shaivism or Vaishnavism, with a hundred names beside and boast that theirs is the way & theirs is the knowledge. But, in reality, each of us can only command a little of the truth of the Sanatana Dharma, because none of us understands more than a little of the Upanishads.

They become, indeed, easier to us as they come nearer to us in date & the modernity of their language — the stream more accessible as it draws farther away from the original sources and descends more into the plain and the lowlands. But even the secret of these more modern revelations is not wholly ours and we delude ourselves if we think we have understood them entirely & need not plunge deeper for their meaning. There is much gold in the sands of the bed which no man has thought of disinterring.

The Isha Upanishad is simpler in form & expression than such writings as the Chhandogya & Brihad Aranyaka which contain in their symbolic expressions, — to us obscure & meaningless, disparaged by many as violently bizarre in idea & language & absurd in substance, — more of the detail of old Vedic knowledge. The diction of the Upanishad is, for the most part, plain & easy; the ideas expressed by it, when they are not wrested from their proper sense, seem to be profound, yet lucid and straightforward. Yet even in the Isha the real import of the closing passage is a sealed book to the commentators, and I am convinced that the failure to understand this culminating strain in the noble progressive harmony of the thoughts has resulted for us in a failure to grasp the real & complete sense of the whole Upanishad. We understand, more or less clearly, the separate sense of the different slokas, but their true connection & relation of the thoughts to each other has been almost entirely missed. We have hold of some of its isolated truths; we have lost the totality of its purport.

For the Isha Upanishad is one of the most perfectly worked out, one of the most finely and compactly stated inspired arguments the world possesses — an argument not in the sense of a train of disputatious reasoning, logical not in the fashion of an intellectual passage from syllogism to syllogism, but a statement of inspired thought each part of which has been perfectly seen by the revelatory faculty & perfectly stated by inspired expression in itself, in relation to the others & to its place in the whole. Not only every sloka, but every word in each sloka has been perfectly chosen & perfectly placed. There is a consummate harmony in the rhythm of the thought as well as in the rhythm of the language & the verse. The result is a whole system of knowledge & spiritual experience stated with the utmost pregnant brevity, with an epic massiveness & dignity, but yet in itself full and free from omission. We have in this Upanishad no string of incoherent thoughts thrown out at random, no loose transitions from one class of ideas to another, but a single subject greatly treated, with completeness, with precision, with the inspiration of a poet possessed by divine truth & the skill of a consummate architect of thought & language. The Isha Upanishad is the gospel of a divine life in the world and a statement of the conditions under which it is possible and the spirit of its living.

It is this harmonious totality of meaning which it is the sole object of my commentary to bring to light. It has not been my object to support a particular philosophy or to read Adwaita or Dwaita or Visishtadwaita into its separate verses, and make it useful for metaphysical polemics. I hold firmly the belief that the truths of the Upanishads were not arrived at by intellectual speculation, cannot be interpreted by disputation according to the rules of logic and are misused when they are employed merely as mines & quarries for the building of metaphysical systems. I hold them to have been arrived at by revelation & spiritual experience, to be records of things seen, heard & felt, drishta, sruta, upalabdha, in the soul and to stand for their truth not on logic which they transcend but on vision to which they aspire. Those supra-intellectual faculties by which they received the Veda & developed its implications, drishti, sruti & smriti, are also the only means by which their thoughts can be perfectly understood. What is it that the Upanishad reveals — this is the question I have set myself to answer; I am indifferent for what set of warring philosophical dogmas its texts can be made an armoury.

Nevertheless in the course of exegesis I have been compelled to come into conflict with the opinions of the Mayavada. The collision was inevitable rather than desired, for the Mayavada was the opinion with which I commenced my study of Vedanta. It is a system which still attracts the abstract intellectuality in me and represents to me what I may call an intervening & mediary truth of realisation which can never lose its validity. But when it seeks to govern human thought & life, to perpetuate itself as the sole truth of Vedanta, I feel that it is in conflict with the old Vedanta, stultifies the Upanishad & endangers or sterilises all our highest human activities without giving us the highest spiritual truth in its place. Even so I would have preferred to leave aside all negative criticism of it in these commentaries. But that is not possible. For it has so possessed India's ideas about the Upanishads that it has to be cleared away in order that the true sense of this Upanishad at least may shine out from the obscuration. For the Isha at least does not support the Mayavada as is indeed evident from the struggle & sense of difficulty in Shankara's own commentary which reduces its fine thought & admirable expression to incoherence & slipshod clumsiness. The error, however lofty, must be removed in order that the plain & simple Truth may reveal itself.

In following the end I have had in view there are a few plain and binding rules by which I have endeavoured always to be guided. My method does not allow me to deal with the language of the Upanishads in the spirit of the scholar, — not the pride of the Pandit dealing with words as he chooses, but the humility of the seeker after truth in the presence of one of its masters is, I have thought, the proper attitude of the exegete. In the presence of these sacred writings, so unfathomably profound, so infinitely vast in their sense, so subtly perfect in their language, we must be obedient to the text and not presume to subject it ignorantly to our notions. To follow the plain & simple meaning of the words has been therefore the first rule of my exegesis. Vidya & Avidya are plain words, with a well-ascertained sense; I cannot turn aside from it to interpret them as knowledge of the gods & ignorance. Sambhuti, asambhuti, vinasha are words with fixed meanings; my interpretation must arise directly & simply from those meanings. The rhythm and metre of the Upanishads, the balance of the sentences demand their place in the interpretation; for chhandas is of primary importance in all Veda, — I must not disturb that rhythm, metre & balance in order to get over a philosophical difficulty. The anustup of the Isha, for instance, is Vedic in its form & principle & not classical; it demands, that is to say, a stanza of two couplets and admits of sandhi in the middle of the pada but not between two padas: I must not take advantage of a possibility of sandhi between two padas possible only in the classical anustup in order to extract from the Upanishad the opposite of its apparent sense. And when the meaning of a verse is determined, when it stands without qualification as an integral part of the teaching, I am not at liberty to read in a gloss of my own "for the ignorant" in order to depreciate or annul the validity of the doctrine. I am bound by the thoughts of the Sage; I cannot force upon him any ideas of my own to govern & override his apparent meaning — all that I am allowed to do, is to explain his evident textual meaning in the light of my inward spiritual experience but I must not use that experience which may be imperfect to contradict the text.

Shankara has permitted himself all these departures from the attitude of subjection to the text. He has dealt with the Upanishad, and with this Upanishad more than any other, as a master of the Sruti & not its servant. He has sought to include it among his grandiose intellectual conquests. But the Sruti cannot be mastered by the intellect, and although the great Dravidian has enslaved men's thoughts about the Sruti to his victorious intellectual polemic, the Sruti itself still preserves its inalienable freedom, rising into its secret heights of knowledge & being superior to the clouds & lightnings of the intellect, awaiting & admitting only the tread of the spirit, opening itself only to experience in the soul & vision in the supra-intellectual faculty of ideal knowledge. I trust I shall not be considered as wanting in reverence for the greatest of Indian philosophers, — in my opinion, the greatest of all philosophers. Nevertheless the greatest have their limitations. In profundity, subtlety & loftiness Shankara has no equal; he is not so supreme in breadth & flexibility of understanding. His was a spirit visited with some marvellous intuitions & realisations, but it would be to limit the capacities of the human soul to suppose that his intuitions exclude others equally great or that his realisations are the only or final word of spiritual knowledge. Shankara of the Commentaries on the Upanishad, — although the greatest commentaries on them that we have, — is not so great as Shankara of the Bhashya on the Vedanta Sutras. In the latter he is developing in full freedom his own philosophy, which even those who disagree with it must recognise as one of humanity's most marvellous intellectual achievements; in the former he is attempting to conquer for his own system the entire & exclusive authority of the Sruti. A commentary on the Upanishads should be a work of exegesis; Shankara's is a work of metaphysical philosophy. He does not really approach the Sruti as an exegete; his intention is not to use the philosophical mind in order to arrive at the right explanation of the old Vedanta, but to use explanation of the Vedanta in order to support the right system of philosophy. His main authority is therefore his own preconceived view of Vedantic truth, — a standard external to the text & in so far illegitimate. Accordingly he leaves much of the text unexplained, because it does not either support or conflict with the conclusions which he is interested in establishing; he gives merely a verbal paraphrase or a conventional scholastic rendering. Where he is interested, he compels the Sruti to agree with him. Without going quite to the same extent of self-will as the Dwaita Commentator who does not hesitate to turn the famous Tat twam asi into Atat twam asi, "Thou art *not* that, O Swetaketu," he goes far enough & uses a fatal masterfulness. The Isha especially, it seems to me, is vitiated by the defects of his method, because in the Isha the clear & apparent meaning of the text conflicts most decisively with some of his favourite tenets. The great passage on Vidya & Avidya, Sambhuti & Asambhuti bristles for him with stumbling blocks. We find him walking amid these difficulties with the powerful but uneasy steps of Milton's angels striding over the burning marl of their prison house. I for my part am unwilling to keep to the trace of his footsteps. For, after all, no human intellect can be permitted to hold the keys of the Sruti & fix for us our gate of entrance & the paths of our passage. The Sruti itself is the only eternal authority on the Sruti.

I have also held it as a rule of sound interpretation that any apparent incoherence, any want of logical relation & succession of thought in the text must exist in my deficiency of understanding & not in the Seer's deficiency of thinking. This view I base upon my constant experience of the Upanishads; for I have always found in the end that the writers thought clearly & connectedly & with a perfect grasp of their subject & my own haste, ignorance & immaturity of spiritual experience has always been convicted in the end of the sole responsibility for any defect imputed by the presumption of the logical understanding to the revealed Scripture. The text has to be studied with a great patience, a great passivity, waiting for experience, waiting for light & then waiting for still more light. Insufficient data, haste of conclusions, wilful ramming of one's own favourite opinions into the text, wilful grasping at an imperfect or unfinished experience, wilful reading of a single narrow truth as the sole meaning of this complex harmony of thought, experience & knowledge which we call the Veda, — these are fruitful sources of error. But if a man can make his mind like a blank slate, if he can enter into the condition of bottomless passivity proper to the state of the calm all-embracing Chaitanya Atma, not attempting to fix what the Truth shall be, but allowing Truth to manifest herself in his soul, then he will find that it is the nature of the Sruti to reveal perfectly its own message.

For ultimately, as I have already insisted, we can know the subject of the Veda only by the soul & its pure faculty of knowledge, not by verbal scholarship, metaphysical reasoning or intellectual discrimination. By entering into communion with the soul of the thinker which still broods behind the inspired language, we come to realise what he saw, and what he put into his words, what waits there to make itself known to us. By communion with the soul of the Universe which is behind the soul of the thinker & one with it, we get those experiences which illumine & confirm or correct by amplifying our vision of truth in the Sruti. And since no man should lightly hope that he has been able always to think, act & know in this supreme method, it is fitting always to bow down in utter self-surrender to the Master of All, the Lord who as the Knower dwells in himself as name & form & offer to him the truth we have found in the Sruti & the error we have imported in it to do both with the truth & the error whatso He wills in His infinite power, love & wisdom for the purpose of His eternal & infinite Lila.

Chapter I

The Subject & Plan of the Upanishad.

The Upanishads have but one subject without a second and yet by the very nature of that subject they take all life & being & knowledge for their portion. Their theme is the One who is Many. It is an error which the Adwaitins have popularised to suppose that all the aim of the Upanishads is to arrive at the unconditioned Brahman. A very cursory examination of their contents reveals a much wider and more complex purpose. They strive rather to develop from various standpoints the identity of the One & the Many & the relations of the conditioned to the unconditioned. Granting the unconditioned One, they show us how this conditioned & manifold existence consists with, stands in and is not really different from the original unity. Starting from the multitudinous world they resolve it back into a single transcendental existence, starting back from the transcendental they show us its extension within itself in phenomena. Both the multitudinousness & the Unity, the manifestation & the Manifested they establish in the unknowable Absolute of which nothing can be proposed except that in some way different from any existence conceivable to mind or transferable to the symbols of speech, beyond all conception of Time & Space & Circumstance, beyond Personality & Impersonality, beyond Finite & Infinity It Is. They seek not only to tell us of the way of withdrawal from life into unconditioned existence, but also of the way to dwell here in the knowledge & bliss of the Supreme. They show us the path to heaven & the true joy of the earth. Dwelling on the origin of things & the secret of life & movement, they have their parts of science, — their physics, their theory of evolution, their explanation of heredity. Proceeding from the human soul to the Universal, they have their minutely scrupulous, subtle & profound system of psychology. Asserting the existence of worlds & beings other than those that live within the compass of our waking senses, they have their cosmogony, theogony, philosophy of Nature & of mental & material nature powers. The relations of mind to matter & soul to mind, of men to the gods & the illimitable Master Soul to the souls apparently limited in bodies, have all their authority in the Upanishads. The philosophical analysis of Sankhya, the practices of Tantra, the worship & devotion of Purana, the love of the formed Divinity & the aspiration to the Formless, the atomic structure of Vaisheshika & the cardinal principles of Yoga, — whatever has been afterwards strong in development & influential on the Indian Mind, finds here its authority & sanction. Not the unmanifested & unconditioned alone but the identity of the Transcendental & the phenomenal, their eternal relations, the play of their separation & the might of their union, is the common theme of the Upanishads. They are not only for the anchorite but for the householder. They do not reject life but embrace it to fulfil it. They build for mankind a bridge by which we can cross over from the limited to the illimitable, the recurrent & transitory to the persistent & eternal, but by which also we can recross & cross again with delight & without danger that once unfathomable & irremeable abyss. They are God's lamps that illumine the stairs by which we ascend & descend no longer bound but freely & at will the whole scale of existence, finding Him there in His ineffability, concealed in utter luminousness, but also here in the garden of light & shade, manifest in every being.

The Upanishads have therefore a common field of thought, experience & knowledge; but in that field each has its own peculiar corner or province. There is nothing vague or ill-connected in their contents, nothing random in their structure. Each sets out with a certain definite thought & aim which it progressively develops & brings to a perfect culmination. The Aitareya for instance has for its subject the workings of the Self in the world as creator and master of evolution; creation, evolution, birth, heredity, death, our present human development are the matter of its brief & pregnant sentences. The Taittiriya takes for its subject the Anandam Brahman, the constitution of the soul in relation to the Infinite Delight in Conscious Being which is God & the reality of existence & reveals the way & the result of its attainment; it develops for us our gospel of eternal Bliss. The Kena starting from the present constitution of consciousness in man affirms the universal Brahman & teaches knowledge & self-surrender to Him as the inscrutable Self & the ever-present Master. Similarly, the Isha has for its subject the nature of human life & action lived & done in the light of Vedantic knowledge & supreme realisation. It is the gospel of a divine life on earth, a consecration of works, the seed & foundation of Karmayoga.

The Upanishads are works of inspiration, not of reasoning; therefore we shall not find in them the development of thought or the logical connection of the sentences managed on the system of modern writers. The principle of our modern writing borrowed from the Greeks, who were the first nation to replace inspiration by intellect, resembles the progress of the serpent over a field, slow, winding, insinuating, covering perfectly every inch of the ground. The literary method of the ancients resembles the steps of a Titan striding from reef to reef over wide & unfathomable waters. The modern method instructs the intellect, the ancient illumines the soul. In the latter also there is a perfect logical sequence but this logic demands for our understanding & capacity to follow it something of the same illumination which presided at its construction. So profoundly characteristic is this difference that the Greek governs even his poetry by the law & style of the logical intellect, the Indian tends to subject even his prose to the law & style of the illuminated vision. The Sage of the Isha is an inspired poet writing of God & life in a style of clear, but massive & epic sublimity, lofty & grandiose, but without the European epical tendency to amplitude & period, exceedingly terse, pregnant, compactly decisive, — every word stored with meaning & leaving behind it a thousand solemn echoes. These conditions of his method of composition must be taken into full account when we try to interpret his thinking.

The theme which he has to develop arises from the fundamental doctrine of the Vedanta, Sarvam khalu idam Brahma, Verily all this is the Brahman. To realise that everything of which we have separate knowledge by the limited & dividing movement of the mind & senses, is limited & separate only in appearance, but in its reality transcends its appearance and is a manifestation, a form in consciousness, an eidolon, a mask of something absolute, transcendental & without limit, — this is the first necessity of true knowledge according to the early thinkers. But when we have realised it, when we know that earth is not earth except in form & idea but the Brahman, man is not man except in form & idea but the Brahman, what then? Can we live in the light of that knowledge or must we abandon life to possess it? For it is obvious that all actions are done through mind with its two great instruments of name & form and if we are to look beyond name & form we must transcend mind & ignore its limitations. How can we do that & still act & live in this world as men act & live? Can one keep one's eyes fixed on the transcendent & yet move with any ease or safety in the phenomenal? Must we not remove our thoughts from That (Tat) in order to deal with this (sarvam idam), — just as a man cannot walk safely on earth if he keeps his eyes fixed on the heavens, but must constantly be removing his gaze from the lofty object of his contemplation? And another & deeper question arises. Is life worth living when we know the Brahman? is there any joy & use in the phenomenal when we know the transcendent, in the recurrent & transient when we know the persistent & eternal, in the apparent when we know the real? Immense is the attraction of the infinite & unlimited, why should we take pleasure in the finite & fleeting? Does not the charm of phenomena disappear with the advent of this supreme knowledge & is it possible to busy ourselves with the phenomenal when its attraction & apparent necessity are removed? Is not persistence in life caused by ignorance and possible only if there is persistence in ignorance? Must we not abandon the world, if we would possess God? forsake Maya if we would become one in the Atman? For who can serve at the same time two masters & such different masters? We know the answer of Shankara, the answer of the later Adwaitin, the Mayavadin; and the answer of most religious minds in India since Buddhism conquered our intellects has not been substantially different. To flee the world & seek God, sums up their attitude. There have been notable exceptions, but the general trend hardly varies. The majority of the pre-Buddhistic Hindus answered the question, if I am not mistaken, in a different sense & attained to a deeper consummation. They answered it in the sense of the Isha Upanishad & the Gita; they held divine life in the Brahman here to be a possibility.

The supreme importance of the question is apparent. If the theory of the Illusionist is true, life is an inexplicable breach of Truth, an unjustifiable disturbance in the silence & stillness of the Eternal. It is a freak to be corrected, a snare to be escaped from, a delusion to be renounced, a mighty cosmic whim & blunder. The results upon the nation which produced this tremendous negation, have been prodigious. India has become the land of saints & ascetics, but progressively also of a decaying society and an inert, effete & helpless people. The indignant denunciation of the Vishnu Purana against the certain results to society of the Buddhist heresy has been fulfilled in the fate of our strongly Buddhicised Hindu nation. We see increasing upon it through the centuries the doom announced in the grave warnings of the Gita against the consequences of inaction, "utsideyur ime lokah . . sarirayatrapi akarmanah . . sankarasya cha karta syam upahanyam imah prajah . . buddhibhedam janayed ajnanam karmasanginam" etc. The religious life of this country has divided itself into two distinct & powerful tendencies, the Hinduism of the withdrawal from life which has organised itself in the monastery & the hermitage and the Hinduism of social life which has resolved itself into a mass of minute ceremony & unintelligent social practice. Neither is pure; both are afflicted with sankara, mixture & confusion of dharmas; for the life of the monastery is stricken with the tendency towards a return to the cares & corruptions of life, the life of society sicklied over & rendered impotent by the sense of its own illusion & worthlessness faced with the superiority of the monastic ideal. If a man or a nation becomes profoundly convinced that this phenomenal life is an illusion, its aims & tendencies of a moment & its values all false values, you cannot expect either the man or the nation to flourish here, whatever may be gained in Nirvana. For the nation any sustained & serious greatness of aim & endeavour becomes impossible. To get through the years of life, to maintain the body and propagate the race, since for some unreasonable reason that is demanded of us, but to get done with the business as soon as possible & escape by sannyasa into the unconditioned, this must obviously be the sole preoccupation of man in a society governed by this negative ideal. What is chiefly needed by it is an elaborate set of rules, the more minute & rigid the better, which will determine every action of life both social & religious, so as to save men the labour of thought & action & give them the assurance that they are doing only the nityakarma necessary to life in the body or the shastric karma which creates the least bondage for future lives & are not heaping up on themselves the burden of long continued existence in this terrible & inexplicable nightmare of the phenomenal world. But the attachment to works remains & it tends to satisfy itself by an excessive insistence on the petty field still left to it. We see an exclusive preoccupation with a petty money-getting, with the mere maintenance of a family, with the sordid cares of a narrow personal existence. The great ideals, the universalising & liberating movements which have continually swept rajasic Europe & revivified it, have been more & more unknown to us in the later history of our country. We have had but one world-forgetting impulse & one world-conquering passion, — the impulse of final renunciation & the passion of self-devotion to the Master of all or to a spiritual teacher. It is this habit of bhakti that alone has saved us alive; preserving an imperishable core of strength in the midst of our weakness & darkness it has returned upon us from age to age and poured its revivifying stream always through our inert mass and our petrifying society. But for all that our great fundamental mistake about life has told heavily; it has cursed our rajasic activity with continual inefficiency and our sattwic tendencies with a perpetual weight of return to tamas. Andham tamah pravishanti ye avidyam upasate. Tato bhuya iva te tamo ya u vidyayam ratah. Both these sentences of gloom have weighed upon us; we have divided ourselves into the exclusive seekers after the unconditioned knowledge & the exclusive lingerers in the phenomenal ignorance. We have made the life divine well nigh impossible in the world, possible only in remote hermitage, desolate forest or lonely mountain. We have not known the harmony which the early Vedantins practised; we have given ourselves instead to a great negation which, however inspiring and strength giving by its positive side — for it has its strong positive side — to a few exceptional spirits, cannot be grasped by the ordinary soul even when it is accepted by the ordinary intellect, is not man's swadharma, and must therefore tend only to destroy his strength & delight in life by imposing upon him an effort beyond our average human capacity, from which it sinks back dispirited, weakened and nerveless. No nation, not even a chosen race, can with impunity build its life on a fundamental error about the meaning of life. We are here to manifest God in our mundane existence; our business is to express & formulate in phenomenal activity such truth as we can command about the Eternal; and in order to do that effectively we must answer the riddle set for us of the coexistence of the eternal & the phenomenal — we must harmonise God & Nature on peril of our destruction. The European nations have invariably decayed after a few centuries of efflorescence because they have persisted in ignorance, & been obstinate in Avidya. We who possess the secret but misunderstand it, have taken two millenniums to decay, but in the end we have decayed & brought ourselves to the verge of actual death & decomposition. We can preserve ourselves only by returning to the full & harmonious truth of our religion, truth of Purana & Tantra which we have mistranslated into a collection of fables and of magic formulae, truth of Veda which we have mistranslated into the idea of vacant & pompous ceremonial & the truth of Vedanta which we have mistranslated into the inexplicable explanation, the baffling mystery of an incomprehensible Maya. Veda & Vedanta are not only the Bible of hermits or the textbook of metaphysicians, but a gospel of life and a guide to life for the individual, for the nation & for all humanity.

The Isha Upanishad stands first in the order of the Upanishads we should read as of a supreme importance for us & more almost than any of the others, because it sets itself with express purpose to solve that fundamental difficulty of life to which since Buddha & Shankara we have persisted in returning so lofty but so misleading an answer. The problem resolves itself into a few primary & fundamental questions. Since we have here a great unconditioned unity and a great phenomenal multitudinous manifestation, what is the essential relation between this unity & this manifestation? Given the coexistence & identity of the reality & the phenomenon where is the key to their identity? what is the principle which harmonises them? and wherein lies the purpose & justification of their coexistence & apparent differentiation? The essential relation being known, what is that practical aspect of the relation upon which we can build securely our life here in this world? Is it possible to do the ordinary works of our human life upon earth consistently with the higher knowledge or in such a way as to embody in our every action the soul of the divine knowledge & the divine guna? What is that attitude towards God & the world which secures us in such a possibility? Or what the rule of life which we must keep before us to govern our practice and what the practical results that flow from its observance? The present curses of phenomenal life seem always to have been the sorrowful trinity of pain, death & limitation; will these practical results of a Vedantic life include the acceptance of this great burden and this besetting darkness or has mankind even here, even in this body & in this society, an escape from death & sorrow? As human beings what is our aim here or what our hope hereafter? These are the great questions that arise from the obscured soul of man to the Infinite & the conflicting & partial answers to them have eternally perplexed humanity. But if they can once be answered, simply, embracingly, satisfyingly — so as to leave no true demand of the God in man upon the world unsatisfied, then the riddle of existence is solved. The Isha Upanishad undertakes to answer them all. Setting out with a declaration of God's purpose in manifestation for which the world was made & the golden rule of life by which each man individually can utterly consummate that divine purpose, the mighty Sage to whom as an instrument & channel we owe this wise & noble solution asserts the possibility of human works without sin, grief & stain in the light of the one spiritual attitude that is consistent with the conscious & true knowledge of things & in the strength of the golden rule by which alone a divine life here can be maintained. In explaining & justifying these original positions he answers incidentally all the other great human questions.

The structure of the Upanishad is built up, the harmony of its thought worked out in four successive movements, with the initial verse of each swelling passage linking it in the motion of thought to the strain that precedes. Before we proceed to any work of analysis or isolate each note in order to obtain its full value, it will be convenient to have a synthetical understanding of the main ideas that run through the symphony and perceive something of the manner with which they pass into or help each other and build up by their agreement a great and harmonious philosophy of life.

II The First Movement

"For the Lord all this is a habitation, yea, whatsoever single thing is moving in this universe of motion: by that abandoned thou shouldst enjoy; neither do thou covet any man's possession. Doing verily works in this world thou should wish to live a hundred years, for thus it is with thee & not otherwise; action clingeth not to a man. Sunless, truly are those worlds and enveloped in blind gloom whither they passing hence arrive who are hurters of their own souls." So runs the first movement of the Upanishad.

In the very beginning the Rishi strikes the master note to which all the rest of the harmony vibrates, lays down the principle of which every Upanishad is an exposition. God & the World, — these are the two terms of all our knowledge. From their relation we start, to their relation in union or withdrawal from union all our life & activity return. When we have known what the world is, when we have exhausted Science & sounded all the fathomless void, we have still to know what God is, & unless we know what God is, we know nothing fundamental about the world. Tasmin vijnate sarvam vijnatam. He being known, all the rest is known. Material Philosophy & Science have to admit in the end that because they do not know the Transcendental, therefore they cannot be sure about the phenomenal. They can only say that there are these phenomena which represent themselves as acting in these processes to the thought & senses, but whether their appearance is their reality, no man can say. The end of all Science is Agnosticism.

The Rishi takes these two great terms, God, one, stable & eternal, the world shifting, multitudinous, transient. For this great flux of Nature, by which we mean a great cosmic motion & activity, shows us nowhere a centre of knowledge & intelligent control, yet its every movement, denoting law, pointing to harmony, speaks of a centre somewhere of knowledge & intelligent control. It shows nowhere any definite unity except that of sum and process, yet every little portion of it the more we analyse, cries out more loudly, “There is One & not many.” Every single thing in it is perishable & mutable, yet for ever its ancient & inevitable movements thunder in our ears the chant of the immutable & eternal. She is one term, Prakriti, jagati, the ever moving, with every object, small or great, a mere knot of motion, jagat; that which she obeys & worships & of which she speaks to us always & yet seems always by the whirl of her motions in mind & matter to conceal, is the Lord, the Purusha. He is that One, Eternal & Immutable; it is He that is the centre of knowledge & eternal control. He is Ish, the Lord. The relation between the world & its Lord on which the Rishi bids us fix as the one on whose constant & established realisation we can best found the thoughts & activities of the Life Divine, is the relation of the Inhabitant & His inhabitation. For habitation by Him it was made, not only as a whole, but every object which it has built up, is building or will build in the whirl & race of its eternal movement, from the god to the worm, from the Sun to the atom & the grain of dust to the constellations & their group, each, small or great, mean or mighty, sweet or sombre, beautiful or repulsive, is his dwelling place & that which dwells in it, is the Lord.[1]

We start then with this truth. We have seen that the problem of life involves two essential questions; first, the essential relation between the Transcendent & the phenomenal, secondly, that practical aspect of the relation on which we can build securely our life & action in the world. The Rishi starts with the practical relation. This is the knowledge which we must win, the attitude which having attained we must guard & keep. Looking around upon the multitude of objects in the world, we have to see so many houses & in each an inhabitant, one inhabitant only, He who has built also the whole & inhabits the whole, its Lord. When we see the infinite ether containing this multitude of suns & solar systems, we are not to forget or ignore what we see but we must look on infinity as a house of manifest being & in it one great infinite indwelling Consciousness, Allah, Shiva, Krishna, Narayana, God. When we see around us man & animal & leaf & clod, king & beggar, philosopher & peasant, saint & criminal, we must look on these names & forms as so many houses of being and within each the same great inhabitant, Allah, Shiva, Krishna, Narayana, the Lord. Manhood & animality, animation & inanimation, wealth & poverty, wisdom & ignorance, sainthood & criminality are the robes he wears, but the wearer is One. In every man I meet, I must recognise the Lord I adore. In friend & stranger, in my lover & my slayer, I must see equally, since I also must be He, myself. This is the great secret of existence & the condition which we must first satisfy if we wish to live divinely & be divine.

---

[1] *In the manuscript, the above paragraph is followed by one that is bracketed and struck through. This is reproduced as piece [1] of the Appendix. Piece [2] of the Appendix, a passage written separately, is related to the above paragraph in theme.— Ed.*

This is, internally, our necessary attitude towards God & the world. But to translate an internal attitude into the terms of action, it is our experience that a rule of life is needed. The purpose for which a householder builds himself a mansion & dwells in it, can only be one; it is to live & enjoy. So it is with the Purusha & Prakriti; their relation is the enjoyment of the one by the other. God has made this world in His own being that He may in mind & other principles live phenomenally in phenomena & enjoy this phenomenal existence even while secretly or openly He enjoys also His transcendent existence. The Soul or God is, says the Gita, Ishwara, bharta, jnata, anumanta; the Master for whose pleasure Prakriti acts, the Indweller who fills her with his being & supports her actions, the Knower who watches & takes into His cognisance her activities, the anumanta who gives or withholds or after giving withdraws His consent and as He gives, continues or withdraws it, things begin, endure or cease. But He is also & preeminently bhokta, her enjoyer. For all this is bhogartham — for the sake of enjoyment. But in practice we find that we are not Ish, but anish, not master, but slave; not jnata & anumanta, but ajna, not knowing & controlling, but ignorant, clouded, struggling for knowledge & mastery; not an immortal enjoyer in delight, but victim of sorrow, death & limitation. Limited, we struggle to enlarge ourselves & our scope; unpossessed of our desire, we demand & we strive; unattaining, reacted upon by hostile forces, we are full of sorrow & racked by pain. We see others possess & ourselves lack & we struggle to dispossess them and possess in their stead. The facts of life as we live it contradict at every turn the sublime dogma of the Vedantist. What are we to do? To struggle with God in others & God in the world or live only for God in others & not at all for God in ourselves?

In his second line the Rishi utters his golden rule of life which supplies us with the only practical solution of the difficulty. To enjoy as we enjoy now is to lift to our lips a cup of mixed honey & poison; to abandon the world is to contradict God's purpose by avoiding the problem instead of solving it; to sacrifice self to others is a half solution which, by itself, limits the divine lila & stultifies our occupation of the body. The fulfilment of self both in our own joy & in the joy of others & in the joy of the whole world is the object of our life. How then is the problem to be solved? By that abandoned thou shouldst enjoy; do not thou covet any man's possession. Tena, that, refers back to yat kincha jagat. By that you have to enjoy — for the world and all in it is meant for the purpose of enjoyment, it is the means, movement & medium created by the Lord for the purpose, but by that abandoned, by that renounced. You have not to cast the world & its objects themselves away from you, for then you defeat your own object. It is a deeper, a truer renunciation that is asked of us. Everything in the world has to be renounced and yet, through the thing so renounced, tena tyaktena, you have to enjoy, bhunjithah.[2]

Shankara translates "possess", not "enjoy". Essentially this makes no difference, for possession implies enjoyment. But the ordinary sense of the root is to enjoy, & it is clearly the sense which the Rishi intended; for the collocation of the strongly opposite ideas of tyaga & bhoga can no more be an accident than the significant collocation of jagati & jagat in the preceding lines. Nowhere in this Upanishad is there random writing; rather every word is made to carry its entire weight & even run over with fullness of meaning.

---

[2] *Sri Aurobindo wrote the paragraph that follows on a separate page of the manuscript but marked it for insertion here. Two other separately written passages whose points of insertion were not marked are reproduced as pieces [3] and [4] of the Appendix. — Ed.*

In order to make his meaning perfectly clear the Rishi adds "Do not covet". This then is the renunciation demanded, not the renunciation of the thing itself, but the renunciation of the attachment, the craving, the demand — when that is renounced, then only is enjoyment possible, then only can the bitterness be cast out of the cup & only the pure honey remain. For the reason that we are anisha is because we demand. He who is Lord & Master, does not struggle & demand; he does not need even to command; for Prakriti knows His will & hastens to obey it. If we would live divinely, we must realise the Lord in ourselves, we must have sadharmya with Him & be as He. What the Lord wills for His lila in this habitation, Prakriti will bring; what Prakriti brings for our lila, is what the Lord wills. That which struggles in us, craves, fights, covets, struggles, weeps, is not the pure Self but the mind, — which, as we shall find, weeps & struggles because ensnared in limitations it does not understand, — not Ish, but jagat, the movement, the whirl, one eddy in the shifting & struggling movement & clash of forces — perfectly guided by Isha, but to our human understandings unguided or ill-guided — which we call Prakriti. In this great knowledge & its practice we can become desireless & calm, august, joyous, free from anxiety, pain, grief, sama, udasina, yet full of delight in all that we here in Prakriti, — Purushah Prakritistha, — say, see & do.

Immediately the great recurring problem presents itself of works and the cessation from works, — the ancient crux which it is so easy to get rid of by a trenchant act of logic, so hard to solve in harmony with the actual facts of existence. To the ordinary mind action seems impossible or purposeless without desire; to the logical mind it seems inevitable that the more one penetrates into the supreme calm, the farther one must move from all impulse to action, — that pravritti & nivritti, shama & karma are eternally opposed. Shankara, therefore, deciding all things by his triumphant & inexorable logic, insists that action is inconsistent with the state divine. In practice the seeker after perfection finds that calm, renunciation, joy, peace seem only to be secure when one rests motionlessly established in the impersonal Brahman; freedom of desire is only easy by freedom from activity. Does not then enjoyment without demand or craving, does not enjoyment by the thing renounced mean enjoyment of the renunciation & not of the thing itself? Is it not the enjoyment of the eremite, eremite in soul if not in body, the spectator watching the action of the world but himself no part of it, that is alone possible to the desireless mind? And even if it is not the sole possible enjoyment, is it not the superior & preferable? Who that has self-enjoyment in the soul, would condescend to the enjoyment of external objects? Or if he condescended, it is the greater bliss of other worlds that would attract him and not the broken shreds which are all this world's joys, the hampered fulfilments which are all this world's actualisation of infinite possibility.

To all these ancient questionings the reply of the Upanishad is categorical, explicit, unflinching. "Doing verily works here one should wish to live a hundred years; thus it is with thee & it is not otherwise than this; action cleaveth not to a man." It is not surprising that the great Shankara with his legacy of Buddhist pessimism, his rejection of action, his sense of the nullity of the world, faced by this massive & tremendous asseveration should have put it aside by his favourite device of devoting it to the service of unenlightened minds, although it occurs apparently as an integral portion of the argument & there is not a hint or a trace of its being intended as a contradiction or qualification of the main teaching, although too this interpretation is stultified both by the run of the two lines & by the immediate occurrence of the next verse, — but every incongruity & impossibility is to be accepted rather than suffer such an assertion to stand as the teaching of the Sruti. Nor is it surprising that Shankara's greatest follower, Vidyaranya, feeling perhaps that his master's dealings with the text in this commentary were of the most arbitrary & violent, should have preferred to exclude the Isha from his list of authoritative Upanishads. But to us, uncommitted to any previous theory, this sloka offers no difficulty but is rather an integral & most illumining step in the development of a great & liberating doctrine.

Kurvanneva, says the Rishi, having his eye on the great dispute. Thou shalt do works & not abstain from doing them and the works are the works of this material world, those that are to be done iha, here, in this life & body. Doing his works in this world a man shall be joyously willing to live the full span of years allowed to the mortal body. If he grows weary, if he seeks to abridge it, if he has haste in his soul for the side beyond death, he is not yet an enlightened soul, not yet divine. With this great admission the Vedanta can no longer be a mere ascetic gospel. Life — full & unabridged in its duration, — full and uncontracted in its activity is accepted, welcomed, consecrated to divine use. And the Rishi affirms his reason for acceptance — because so it is with thee & it is not otherwise than this. Because in other words this is the law of our being and this is the will of the Eternal. No man, as the Gita clearly teaches, can abstain from works, for even the state of withdrawal of the ascetic, even the self-collected existence of the silent Yogin is an act and an act of tremendous effect & profoundest import. So long as we are in manifest existence, so long we are in the jagati using, influencing & impressing ourselves on the jagat and we cannot escape from the necessity self-imposed on Himself by God within us. And it is so imposed for the reason already stated, because He has made this world for His habitation & as a means for His enjoyment & a thing for His delight — & this his great will & purpose no man can be allowed to frustrate. The wise mind, the illumined soul knowing this truth makes no vain attempt to square this circle; he accepts that which God intends fully & frankly and only seeks the best way to fulfil God in this existence which he occupies on the way to another. For he knows that bondage and freedom are states of the outer mind, not of the inner spirit; for there is none free & none bound, none panting after liberation

& none fleeing from bondage, but only the Eternal rejoicing secretly or manifestly in His innumerable habitations.

But in that case we are eternally bound by the chain of our works, nailed helplessly to the wheel of karma? Not so; for the wheel of karma is an error and the chain of our works is a grand illusion. "Action clingeth not to a man." Bondage is not the result of works, & liberation is not the result of cessation of works. Bondage is a state of the mind; liberation is another state of the mind. When through the principle of desire in the mind the soul, the Ish, the lord, mixes himself up in the whirl of Prakriti, he sees himself in mental consciousness as if carried forward in the stream of causality; he seems to the mind in him to be bound by the effects of his works; when he relinquishes desire, then he recovers his lordship — which in his higher being he has never lost — and appears to himself what he has always been in reality, free in his being, swarat, samrat. It follows then that the way to liberate oneself is not to renounce works but to rise from mind to Supra-mind, from the consciousness of mental being, sambhava, to the consciousness of self-being, swayambhava or asambhuti. It is necessary to remember oneself, but it is not necessary to forget phenomena. For action is the movement of Prakriti and the chain of action is nothing more terrible or mystic than the relation of cause & effect. That chain does not bind the Master; action leaves no stain on the soul. The works of the liberated man produce an effect indeed, but on the stream of Prakriti, not on the soul which is above its action and not under it, uses action & is not victimised by it, determines action & is not determined by it. But if action in its nature bound the soul, then freedom here would be impossible. It does not & cannot; the soul allows mind to mix itself up with its works, buddhir lipyate, but the action does not adhere to the soul, na karma lipyate nare. The fear of action is Maya; the impossibility of combining action with calm & renunciation is a false sanskara. Nivritti or calm is the eternal state & very nature of the soul, pravritti is in manifestation the eternal state and very nature of Prakriti. Their coexistence & harmony is not only possible, but it is the secret of the world obscured only by ignorance in the mind. The enemy therefore is not action, but ignorance; not works bind us, but works done in the state of ignorance give us the illusion of bondage. The idea of separateness, of limitation with its fruit of desire, internal struggle, disappointment, grief, pain, — this alone is our stumbling block. Abolish it, see God alone everywhere & all difficulty disappears. Nivritti & Pravritti, tyaga & bhoga move harmoniously to the perfect fulfilment of the divine purpose.

Those important enunciations completed, the Sage proceeds to a minor, but not inessential effect of the knowledge he is developing — the life after this one which we have to use here, our progress into worlds beyond. The gati, trans-mortal journey or destination of the soul, occupied profoundly the Vedantic mind as it has occupied humanity in all except in its brief periods of entire materialistic this-worldliness. As yet the Sage does not proceed to any positive statement; but by a negative movement he indicates the importance of the question. Our life here is only one circumstance in our progress — the fundamental circumstance, indeed, since earth is the pratistha or pedestal of our consciousness in manifest being, — but still the fundamental is not the final, the pratistha is not the consummation but only the means to the consummation. It is the first step in our journey, the initial movement in the triple stride of Vishnu. There is beyond it a second step, from which we constantly return till we are ready here for the third, for the consummation. Our future state depends on our fullness at the time of our passage, on our harmonious progress towards divine being. That is the hidden thing in us which we have to develop. We are to become atmavan, to possess our divine being, to disengage & fulfil our real self. Those who fall from this development, who turn aside from it are self-hurters or, to take the full vigorous sense of the word used, self-slayers. Not that God in us can be slain, for death of the soul is impossible, — but there may be temporary perdition of the apparent divinity by the murder of its self-expression. And to this we may arrive either by wilfulness of passion or by intellectual wilfulness. Instead of becoming gods, Suras, images of the Most High, the Paratpara Purusha in His effulgent glory, we may become misrepresentations of Him, false because distorted images, distorted by imperfection, distorted by onesidedness, Titans, Asuras or else souls unillumined by the sun of Knowledge & if illumined at all then only by false lights which eventually become eclipsed in darkness. Our after state will be Asurya, sunless, unillumined. To what worlds do we then journey?

The ordinary reading of the first word in the third verse of the Upanishad, is Asŭrya, Titanic, but there is a possible variation Asûrya, sunless. The substantial sense resulting from both readings is the same, but the colour given will be different. The Titans or Asuras of the Veda are souls of mere undisciplined might. They are those who found themselves not on light & calm but on asu, the vital force & might which is the basis of all energetic & impetuous feeling & action. The self-willed ones, who from temperamental passion wreck themselves by the furious pursuit in desire of a false object or from intellectual passion wreck themselves by the blind pursuit in belief of a false idea, they follow a path because it is their own from Titanical attachment, from an immense though possibly lofty egoism. Mole ruit sua. They fall by their own mass, they collapse by excess of greatness. They need not be ignoble souls, but may even seem sometimes more noble than the gods & their victorious legions. When they hack & hew at the god within them, it may be in tremendous devotion to a principle; when they subdue, cloud & torture themselves till they stumble forward into misery & night, till they become demoniac in nature, it may be in furious & hungry insistence on a great aspiration. They may be grandiosely mighty like Hiranyakashipu, ostentatiously largehearted like Bali, fiercely self-righteous like the younger Prahlada. But they fall whether great or petty, noble or ignoble & in their fall they are thrust down by Vishnu to Patala, to the worlds of delusion & shadow, or of impenetrable gloom, because they have used the heart or intellect to serve passion & ignorance, enslaved the spiritual to the material & vital elements & subordinated the man in them to the Naga, the serpent. The Naga is the symbol of the mysterious earthbound force in man. Wisest he of the beasts of the field, but still a beast of the field, not the winged Garuda revered to be the upbearer of divinity who opens his vans to the sunlight and soars to the highest seat of Vishnu. If we read Asŭrya we shall then have to translate "Verily it is to the worlds of the Titans, worlds enveloped in blind gloom, that they after passing hence resort who are self-slayers." Otherwise it is the worlds farthest removed from the Sun, our symbol & principle of divine Knowledge. There are materialised states of darkness in the conscious being in which they must work out the bewilderment & confusion they have fastened on themselves by an obstinate persistence in self-will & ignorance. In either case the intention of the Sage is evident from the later passages of this Upanishad. Whether we follow exclusively after Avidya or exclusively after Vidya, we go equally astray, exclusiveness means ignorance, exclusiveness means confusion & division of the indivisible Brahman, & persistence in such error is an obstinacy fatal to the soul in its immediate prospects. Temporarily — because eternal perdition is impossible, — it fails to cross successfully over death & enters into trans-mortal darkness. Those who accept the unity of the Brahman, who see in Vidya & Avidya only vyavahara, light & shadow reflected in Him for the use of self-expression in phenomena, who live in the knowledge of the One in the Many, embracing like Brahman all being in themselves, rejecting nothing, preferring nothing, bearing everything, effecting everything, infinite in calm by renunciation, infinite in might & bliss by enjoyment, they are men perfected, they are the siddhas. Even those who not yet attaining, follow faithfully this law & this ideal journey onwards in the way of their self-fulfilment and are lifted by all-purifying Agni to the regions of the Sun where they possess their perfect oneness & receive their consummate felicity.... With this warning (for the promise comes afterward) closes the first movement of the Upanishad.

III

God then & the world are before us, the Inhabitant to be recognised as the Lord of things even when He appears otherwise &

His habitation to be regarded merely as a movement set going by Him for phenomenal purposes, a stream of form & action by which He can enjoy His own conditioned being, — God & the world are to be possessed by a pure & infinite enjoyment, Ananda, or bliss which depends on a perfect renunciation not of the world, but of the limited struggle & the ignorant attachment, of the demand & the groping. These poor & imperfect movements [are] to be replaced by a mighty calm and a divine satisfaction. We are not to renounce works, which do not & cannot stain the soul or bind it, but to be liberated through acceptance of works in a luminous knowledge of their divine use & nature; not mutilation of life is to be our ideal, but fulfilment through life of the intention of the Most High in His phenomenal manifestation. If we mutilate life through self-will & ignorance we imprison ourselves after death in worlds of confusion & darkness and here like a ship befogged & astray in dense sea mists are hindered & long delayed in our divine voyage.

But now farther questions arise. Stated by itself & without development or qualification the first line of this great teaching, although fundamental to the practical living of the divine life and the sufficient & right attitude for its fulfilment might yet, like all trenchant assertions, too positively & exclusively taken, lead us into a profound error & misunderstanding. God & the World, the Movement & the Dweller in the movement, that is the practical relation between the unconditioned & the phenomenal which we have to accept as the unalterable basis of our rule of right living. But this general movement, with the particular knots in it of apparent movement & apparent status which we call formations or objects, — what is it? Movement of Mahat or movement of what nature, — real or unreal? And the inhabitant, is he different from His habitation? If He is different & the habitation is real, what becomes of the universal unity Vedanta teaches and how are we not handed over to duality and a fundamental disparity, if not a fundamental opposition? It is to remove this possible misunderstanding that the Rishi now proceeds to a completer though not yet entirely complete statement of universal existence. He has stated the practical relation, he now states the essential relation. It amounts in effect to the fundamental tenet of Vedanta in the Upanishads "Sarvam khalu idam Brahma." All this, in truth, is the Brahman. He says "There is One who unmoving is swifter than mind, neither have the gods reached It for it goes always in front. Standing, it outstrips others as they run. In It Matariswan sets activity. That moves & that does not move; that is far & the same that is verily near; That is within all this, the same that is outside all this."

Not only the stable but the unstable; not only the constant, but the recurrent; not only the Inhabitant but His habitation; not only Purusha but Prakriti. It is ekam, not a number [of] different beings, as in the dogma of the Sankhyas, but One being; not two separate categories, the real & the unreal, Brahman & Maya, but only One, the Brahman. That which moves not is the Brahman but also that which moves is the Brahman, not merely Maya, not merely a base & ugly dream. We know already by the first verse that the innumerable inhabitants of this moving universe are not essentially many, but are one Soul disporting in many bodies or not really disporting but supporting the multiform play of Prakriti; eko achalah sanatanah, in the solemn language of the Gita, one, motionless, without beginning or end. He is this man & that woman, yonder ancient leaning on his staff, this blue winged bird, that scarlet winged. But now we learn that also the name & form & property, the manhood & the womanhood, the age & the youth, the blueness & the scarlet hue, the staff, the attitude of leaning, the bird, the wing, all is the Brahman. The Inhabitant is not different from His habitation.

This is a difficult point for the ordinary mind to admit intellectually; it is difficult, even for minds not ordinary, really to grasp the intellectual conception, take it into the soul & realise it there in feeling & consciousness. Even the greatest materialist in theory regards himself in his feelings as a mind or a soul and is aware of a gulf between himself & the inanimate. His opinions contradict his heart's consciousness. In Yoga also one of our first realisations is the separateness of the body by the practical removal of the dehatmabuddhi, — a sensation the psychology of which is not well understood & being misunderstood gives rise to many errors. Hence we have a proneness to regard the inanimate as undivine, the material as gross & even foul and the objective as unreal — as if all this were not merely arrangement & vyavahara, as if the material was not also Atman & spirit, Brahman equally present in clod & man, body & soul, thought & action, as if all were not essentially equal in their divinity, and apparently so diverse merely because of the infinite variation of form & guna! By this cardinal error the intellectual man comes to despise & neglect the body, the religious man to treat the body & often the intellect also as an impediment, praising the heart only, the contemplative spiritual man to aim at casting out both mind & body & banishing from him the very thought & perception of the objective. All are ruled or driven by this dim sensation or clear belief that the subjective soul seated within them alone is God, alone the Self, that the objective movement of Spirit seeming to the movement of mind & senses to be outside & apart from us, is not God & is therefore worthless & evil. They all insist on a mental attitude to things, an attitude of analysis, separation & logical distinction instead of rising beyond mind-limitations & mind-methods to God's transcendent embracing vision which sees all things & states & is affected & bound by none. They all therefore make the essential error of duality, from which eventually every kind of ignorance & confusion arises. It is for this reason, to discourage this error that the Sage insists on his ekam in the neuter — not only is He divine, Sa, God regarding Himself subjectively as universal cognisant Personality, but That is divine, Tat, Brahman realising Himself by identity both beyond & in and as all phenomenal existences, at will & coexistently transcendental & phenomenal, conditioned & unconditioned, One in the One & One in the Many.

Brahman is spoken of here, not as the absolute Parabrahman outside all relation to life & phenomena, for to the unknowable utterness of Parabrahman such phrases as "swifter than the mind" or such ideas as outrunning the gods or going in their front cannot be applied, — It is the Brahman as we see It in Its relation to phenomena, God in the world, conditioned to our awareness in vyavahara, unconditioned to our awareness in paramartha, which is the subject of this & the following shloka.[3] That is the One & sole Existence which, though indeed It does not move, is swifter than the mind & therefore the Gods cannot attain to It because It goes always in front. For the mind served by the senses is the instrument which men use to grasp & measure the world & the gods are the presiding powers of all mental & physical functions, but neither the mind nor the senses, neither sensation nor reason can attain to the Brahman. It always goes far in front of any swiftest agency by which we can pursue It.

What is the precise significance of this imagery? The intention can only be understood if we remember the nature of mental action upon which such enormous stress is here laid and the limitations of that action. Mind always starts from a point, the thinker or the object of thought; it works in space or time on particular objects or groups of objects or at most on the sum of all objects known. It can only seek to know the movement & process of the world, but of that which is beyond & behind movement & process, what can it know? At most it can feel or be told that He the eternal & ineffable exists. Ordinarily, it can only go as far back as itself and say "I, mind, am He; because I think, I am; because I am & think, things are" — propositions which as the expression of a relative & intermediate fact have their validity but are as an universal & ultimate statement untrue. But even the movement of God in nature is too vast & swift for the mind to grasp. It catches at & seizes petty surrounding eddies or even great masses of movement at a little distance; it seizes, arranges to itself in its own terms of vision & classes them triumphantly as ultimate laws of Nature. But who has sailed all these waters or can tell where, if at all, they end? Who shall say that those laws are not byelaws only, or the charter & constitution of a single dependency only or province? Follow

---

[3] *The following sentence was written in the top margin of the manuscript page. Its place of insertion was not marked:*

Of the Absolute all we can say is "It is not that, it is not that"; it is unknowable in Itself, knowable only in our existence here or in relation to our existence here, not to be characterised by any epithet, description or suggestion.

God to the utmost confines of observable space, — He is sure to be whirling universes into being far in front. Pursue Him into the deepest recesses of experimentable being, there are unguessed universes of consciousness behind to which you have no present access. Infinity is only one of His aspects, but the very nature of Infinity is that the mind cannot grasp it, though the reason deduces it. Who measured Space? Can any vastest Mind find out when Things began or know when & how they shall end? Nay, there may be near to us universes of another Time, Space & arrangement to which our material dimensions & mind & sense limitations forbid us entrance. Even here who has traced out the purpose of creation or systematised the ways of Providence? Of a hundred things that happen immediately around us, can we even in a dozen instances tell more than fragmentarily & at a hazard why the thing has happened, to what end it conduced, or of what ordering of things it was a piece & movement? Yet, as the eye opens to the innermost secret of things, one realises that an infinite Wisdom presides over the smallest happening & eternally links today's trifling action to the grandiose movement of the centuries — nay, that every thought which passes through our minds however weak, trivial or absurd, has its mark, in the depths of itself its purpose, even its necessity. But of all this how much can the gods of mind, reason & sense ascertain? They run, they gallop, they outstrip the arrow, the bullet, the lightning, the meteor, all material swiftnesses, but That though it moves not, travels still in front. Yes, even when we think we are in front of Him, have fathomed His ways, classified His laws, understood existence, ascertained & determined the future by the past, suddenly we stumble & come across a new landmark or footprint which shows where That has passed; a touch of His finger surprises us as He speeds past & our theories crumble, our knowledge is turned into foolishness, our enlightenment becomes the laughingstock of better enlightened generations. It standing outstrips others as they run, yet all the time, had no need to move. Already God was in front of us, as He is behind, above, below, on every side. Our latest knowledge will always be a candle burning in the mists of the night; our discoveries pebbles picked up on the shore of a boundless ocean. Not only can we not know That in all Its absolute, transcendent reality, but we cannot know It in all the vastness of Its phenomenal workings. Much we may yet know by the mind, but not all, not more than a corner or a system. All that we can do is to seek the boundless Lord of a boundless universe & here & elsewhere to know each habitation and recognise its Inhabitant. The dweller is divine, but the house too divine, a temple of God, sukritam, well built, delightful & holy — my God Himself manifested as name & form.

That stands really & does not run. What then is the movement by which He outstrips others or is far in front? The clue is given in the expression swifter than mind. It is the mind that runs in us but what is it that runs swifter than mind just as mind runs swifter than any material force? Something of which mind & matter are lower movements, — that which is the essence of the jagati, the essential conscious being of which mind, life & matter are particular currents. This conscious-being is That — the sole Reality which assumes so many appearances. It does not run, for where should it run when it does not exist in time & space, but time & space exist in the Brahman. All things are created in God's consciousness which has no more to move than a man has to move when he follows a particular train of thought. He who was before Time, is still just what He was after Time is finished — drawn back, that is to say, into supratemporal consciousness. He has not moved in His being an inch, He has not changed in His being by the shadow of a shadow. He is still eko achalah sanatanah, one, motionless, without change or end. This side of the Sun or that side of Lyra are to Him one point, or rather no point at all. Space is a symbol into which Thought has translated an arrangement in supraspatial Consciousness. Time & Causality are not different. Therefore it appears that both jagati & jagat are no movement of matter or material force, (that is expressly excluded in the [eighth] verse), nor of mind, (that is expressly excluded here) but of Conscious being in itself, a mysterious activity the essence of which is limitless & absolute Awareness not expressible in language, but translated in the symbols of our Thought here into a movement in Time, Space & Causality. This universal tenet of Vedanta, although not expressly stated, is yet implied in the Rishi's thought & follows inevitably from his expression. He could very well in his age & surroundings take it for granted, but we have to state it explicitly; for, unless it is assumed, the second movement of the Sage's thought cannot be entirely understood by us. It is, indeed, the foundation of all Vedantic thinking.

In this Brahman Matariswan sets activity. Tasminn apo Matariswa dadhati. Tasmin, in the containing, stable & fulfilling active Brahman already described; Apas, work or activity (Latin opus), this Vedic word being used in preference to karmani, because karmani expresses individual actions & it is here the general universe-activity of Brahman that is intended, not indeed all Prakriti, but that which is manifest as work productive & creative, the movement of the sun & star, the growth of the tree, the flowing of the waters, the progress of life in all its multitude; Matariswa, he that rests in the matrix of things, that is to say Vayu, the motional or first energetic principle of Nature founded in Akasha, the static principle of extension which is the eternal matrix of things, working in it as Prana, the universal life-activity; dadhati, (τίθησι) establishes, sets in its place & manages. For the root dha has always the idea of arrangement, management, working out of things.

The reason for introducing this final and more limiting idea about the Brahman as the culminating phrase of this shloka, is the Sage's intention to emphasise the divineness of that particular movement of Prakriti which is the basis of karmani, human action in this mortal life. Matariswan is the energy of God in Prakriti which enters into as into a womb or matrix (Matar), is first concealed in, — as a child in the womb — & then emerges out of the static condition of extension, represented to our senses in matter as ether. It emerges in the motional principle of expansion & contraction represented to the senses as the gaseous state, especially as breath & as air, called by us therefore Vayu, which by disturbing the even, self-contained vibration (shabda) of the ether, produces vibratory waves (kshobha), generates action &

reaction (rajas) on which ether behind is continually impressing a tendency to equipoise (sattwa), the failure of which is the only cause of disintegration of movement (death, mrityu, tamoguna) & creates contact (sparsha) which is the basis of mental & material sensation & indeed of all relation in phenomenal existence. Matariswan, identifying himself with Vayu, supporting himself on these principles of wave-vibration, action-reaction & contact, valid not only in matter but in life & mind, using the other three elementary or fundamental states known to Vedic enquiry, — agni (fire), the formatory principle of intension, represented to our senses in matter as heat, light & fire, apas or jala (water), the materialising or outward flowing principle of continuation, represented to our senses in matter as sap, seed, rasa, & prithwi (earth), the stabilising principle of condensation, represented to us in matter as earth, the basis of all solids, — Matariswan, deploying existence in settled forms by the fivefold (panchabhautic) complex movement of the material Brahman, of conscious being as the essential substance of things, reveals himself as universal life activity, upholder of our vitality, prompter & cause of our actions. He as Life, is latently active in the utter inanimate, present, but unorganised in the metal, organised for life and growth only in the plant, for sense & feeling & thought in the animal creation, for reason & illumination & progress to godhead in man, for sempiternal immortality in the gods. But who, ultimately, is this Matariswan? Brahman himself, as the Rigvedic Rishis already knew, manifesting himself in relation to His other movements as the cause, condition & master of vitality.

Life-action, then, is not indeed the whole action of the universe; nor is our human life-action, our apas, work, task here, its culminatory activity. There are more developed beings, superior states, other worlds. But it is, whether here or in other planets, the central activity of this universe. It is of this apparently insignificant pebble, the stone that builders not Almighty, not All-wise would have rejected, that God has made the keystone of this work of His construction. In this the movement of our universe finds the means for its central purpose, through it fulfils itself, in it culminates or from it falls away. When God has fulfilled himself here, under these conditions, with prithivi as his pratistha, then we may pass away finally into other conditions or into the unconditioned, but till then, till God here is satisfied, Brahman here manifested, we come here to fulfil him. Till then, so it must be with us & not otherwise. And this principle is not undivine but divine, not something utterly delusive or diabolical, not the kingdom of a lower spirit or an aberration in knowledge, but God's movement, mahimanam asya, the manifest might, the apparent extension in Itself of the Brahman. Life here is God, the materials of Life here are God. The work is not separate from the worker nor the thought from the thinker. All is the play of a divine Unity.

We can now grasp what the Sage intends when he says, Tad ejati tannaijati. Tat or That, the suggestive vague name for the Brahman whether impersonal or above personality or impersonality, moves & That does not move. It moves or appears to move, — as action of Prakriti & the corresponding knowledge in Purusha, — in the conception of Time, Space & Causality; it does not move in reality, because these are mere symbols, conceptual translations of the actual truth, & movement itself is only such a symbol. The Habitation is the creation of a formative movement of Prakriti, who is indeed always recurrent in her doings because she & her ways are eternal, but also always mutable & inconstant because she works in Time, Space & Causality, terms of perception which have no meaning except as measures of movement or progression from one moment to another, one point to another, one state or event to another. Succession & therefore change is the fundamental law of God's ideative & formative activity in the terms of these three great symbols. But the inhabitant is one & constant, because He is beyond Time & Space. Surrounded apparently by the whirl of Prakriti, to the ignorant tossed about in it, He in reality exists both as its continent & creator as well as its informing soul, master & guide. That therefore in Itself is unmoving, immutable and eternal; in Its movement in Itself, Time-movement, Space-movement, Condition-movement (although as we shall see governed by durable patterns or general processes of conscious being which ensure order & recurrence from one state or form to another) That is mobile, active, inconstant & fleeting. Sooner or later, all here passes out of our view, except the Inhabitant, the eternal Existence-Consciousness, Him we see seated for ever. On Him in this flux of things we have our sure foundation.

Thus we have the essential reality of things, we have the practical relation of God in Impersonality or Personality as the Inhabitant of His own objective being. We have the principle of unity by which the practical relation refers back always to the essential & derives from it. We have the fundamental justification of works briefly indicated in the identity of the working principle with the eternal Reality behind our works. But the justification of the harmony of tyaga & bhoga on this basis has now to be prepared. After stating, therefore, the identity of the eternal who moveth not, with the eternal who moves, of the Timeless, Spaceless, Conditionless, with the Timed, Spaced & Conditioned, the Sage proceeds with a consideration of the latter only with which our vyavahara or practical life has to deal & emphasises the unity of all things near & far, subjective & objective. That is the near, the same That is the far. He is near to us in our subjective experience, he removes to a distance in the objective where our mind & senses pursue him until they have to cease or return. In the subjective also, he is not only the unknown, but the known, ourselves, that which is seated in our hearts, not only the ungrasped, but the grasped, that which we have & that which we seem not to have, that which we have reached or passed or are approaching & that towards which we vaguely or blindly move. Nothing should we think, feel or observe without saying of it "It is He; it is the Brahman." That is within every creature as all the continent of body & mind & what is more than mind; That is outside every creature as that in which it moves, lives & has its being; not only are our surroundings near or far but that which contains our surroundings, is outside & inside them, alike their continent & their content, sarvam Brahma. For That is the content of all this Universe; That also exceeds & Is apart from every Universe. The Pantheism or Monism which, unable to rise beyond the unity of attainable data or manifest appearance, makes God conterminous with the world, is not Vedanta. The Pluralism which makes God merely a sum of realised experiences, a growing & diminishing, a fluctuating unknown quantity, X sometimes equal to a + b and sometimes equal to a - b, is not our conception of the Universe. These things are He, but He is not these things. To us the world is only a minor term in God's absolute & limitless existence. God is not even infinite, though finity & infinity both are He; He is beyond finity & infinity. He is sarvam Brahma, the All, but he is inexpressibly more than the sarvam. To our highest conception He is One, but in Himself He is beyond conception. Neither Unity nor multiplicity can describe Him, for He is not limited by numbers. Unity is His parabhava, it is His supreme manifestation of being, but it is after all a manifestation, not the utter & unknowable reality.

IV

The object of these two verses which have amplified the idea of monistic Unity in the universe, so as to remove any essential opposition between the world movement & the Inhabitant of the movement, is to lead up to the two verses that follow, — verses of a still higher importance for the purpose of the Upanishad. The Sage has laid down his fundamental positions in the first three verses, — (1) the oneness of all beings in the universe, (2) the harmony of renunciation & enjoyment by freedom from desire & demand, (3) the necessity of action for the fulfilment of the one purpose for which the One inhabits this multitude of names & forms, — the enjoyment of this phenomenal & in its consummation the liberated being. The remainder of the Upanishad is explanatory & justificatory of these original & fundamental positions. In this second movement the object is to establish the possibility of absolutely sorrowless & fearless enjoyment here in this world & in this body on the eternal & unassailable foundations of the Vedantic truth, sarvam khalu idam Brahma. For from that truth the Seer's golden rule of life derives all its validity & practical effectiveness.

These are the words, words of a rich & moving beauty, in which he discharges this part of his argument. "But he who sees all existences in the self and the self in all existences, thereafter shrinketh not at all. He who knows, in whom all existences have become the self, how shall he have grief, how shall he be deluded, who seeth all things as one."

The connecting word तु (the Greek δε) does not in Vedic Sanscrit always imply entire opposition, it suggests a new circumstance or suggests an additional fact or a different point of view. The new circumstance introduced in this verse is the idea of the Atman. The knowledge that the impersonal Brahman is all, need not of itself bring peace & a joyous activity; for the all includes sorrow, includes death, fear, weariness, disgust. Matariswan in establishing action, has also established reaction. He has established that inequality between the force acting & the force acted upon, that want of harmony which is the cause of pain, recoil, disintegration, mutual fear & oppression. We may recognise that all these are one coordinated movement in a single existence, are themselves all one existence but how does that help us if in the movement itself there are these inequalities, these discords, these incapacities which impose on us so much that is painful & sorrowful? We may be calm, resigned, stoical, but how can we be free from pain & sorrow? It is here that Mayavada comes in with its great gospel of liberation. "All this discord" it says in effect "is not Brahman, it is Maya, it is an illusion, a dream, it does not exist in the pure Atman. That is the unmoving; the movement is a cosmic nightmare affecting the mind only. Renounce life, take refuge in the pure, unconditioned, dreamless Atman, mind will dissolve, the world will vanish from you as a dream vanishes & with the world its pain, its useless striving, its miserable joys, its ineffugable sorrow." That is an escape, but it is not the escape which the Seer of the Upanishad meditates for us. He holds to his point. "All this is Brahman, the movement no less than the moving." A few may escape by the wicket gates of the Buddhist & the Mayavadin. Not by denial of fundamental Vedantic truth is mankind intended to be saved.

The worship of a Personal God different from ourselves &

the world brings with it a better chance of joyful activity in the world. "God's will, be it joy or sorrow; God's will, be it the triumph of good or the siege of the evil." This is a great mantra & has mighty effects. But it does not by itself give a secure abiding place. God's will may bring doubt & then there is anguish; may bring loss of the Divine presence, separation from the Beloved & then there is a greater agony. The intellectual man has the intellect God has given him to satisfy. The active man has the impulse to work, but at every step is faced with the difficulties of religion & ethics. He has to slay as a soldier, condemn as a judge, inflict pain, inflict anguish, choose between two courses which seem both to be evil in their nature or their results. Sin enters his heart, or there are ensnaring spirits of doubt which suggest sin where sin is not, he feels that he is acting from passion, not from God. His body suffers, pain distracts, his own pain, the pain of others. In this maelstrom it is only those whose hearts are mightier than their intellects & their devotion a part of their nature who can overcome all the winds that blow upon them. Therefore most devotees withdraw from life or from the greater part of life like the Mayavadin; those who remain have more resignation than happiness. They bear the cross here in the conviction that the aureole awaits them hereafter. But where then is that perfect bliss & that perfect activity which the Sage promises us, doing verily our works here in the ordinary life of mankind? The thing can be done on the devotional foundation, but only by a peculiar & rare temperament aided by God's special grace & favour. We need a wider pedestal, a securer foundation.

He finds that foundation who sees wheresoever he looks (that is the force of anu in anupashyati) only the Atman, only the Self. He watches the bird flying through the air, but what he is aware of is the Self watching the movement of the Self through the Self — air & bird & flight & watcher are only name & form, presentations of the one Reality to itself in itself by itself atmani atmanam atmana. He is stung by the scorpion but what he is aware of is only the touch of the Self on the Self; the scorpion that stings is Brahman, the stung is Brahman, the sting is Brahman, the pain is Brahman. And this he not only thinks as a metaphysical truth, for mere metaphysical opinion or intellectual attitude never yet brought salvation to living man, — but knows it, feels it & is aware of it utterly with his whole single & complex knowing existence. Body, senses, heart & brain are at one in that experience. Thus to the soul perfected in this knowledge everything that is, seems or is experienced, thinker & thought, action, doer, sufferer, object, field, result, becomes only one reality, Brahman, Self, God and all this variety is only play, only movement of conscious-self in conscious-self. That moves, God has His lila, the Self rejoices in its own inner experiences of itself seen & objectivised. There arises in the soul not merely calm, resignation, desirelessness, heart's joy in God's presence, but with the perfect knowledge comes a perfect bliss in the conditioned & the unconditioned, in the transcendent & in the phenomenal, in action & in resting from action, in Ishwara & in apparent anIshwara, in God's nearness & in God's remoteness, in what men call joy & what men call pain. Grief falls away from the soul, pain becomes rapture, doubt & darkness disappear in an assured & brilliant luminosity. Mukti is fulfilled, the soul is perfectly liberated here & in this body ihaiva, — for this & not renunciation of phenomenal existence is the true Vedantic moksha. This is what is meant by all existing things becoming the Self in a man, this is the result which is predicated of such a divine realisation. "Whence shall he have grief, how shall he be deluded who seeth all things as one?"

There are certain stages in the realisation, two of which are indicated in these slokas, and although the indication is only a minor & incidental movement of the Rishi's thought, the subject is of sufficient practical importance to be dwelt upon for a little even in this necessarily rapid examination. Brahman, Atman, Ishwara — these are the three great names, the three grand realisations we have here about the Absolute Existence. That existence, Paratparam Brahma, in its absolute truth (if such an expression is admissible where the ideas of truth & falsehood, absolute & relative no longer apply & knowledge itself disappears in an unconceivable & unimaginable Identity) — is unknowable by any, even the highest faculty of conscious mind. Arriving at the farthest limits of our existence here we may become & do become aware of it as a thing beyond our experience. It presents itself to us here as some ultimate shadow of itself which we feel sometimes as Sat, sometimes as Asat, sometimes as both Sat & Asat, & then we perceive that it is none of these things, but something beyond both existence & non-existence which are merely uncertain symbols of it & we end by the formula of the Rishis renouncing all vain attempts at knowledge, Neti, neti, not this not that. We must not go beyond this formula or seek to explain & amplify it. To describe It by negative epithets is as illegitimate & presumptuous as to describe it by positive epithets. We can say of Brahman that it is shuddha, pure; we cannot say of the Paratparam that it is shuddha. How can we know what It is? We can only say that here It translates itself into an utter purity. Neither can we say of It that it is alakshanam, without feature. How do we know what It is not? We can only say that we cannot describe It by any lakshanas, for the features we perceive here are those of a movement in which all opposites present themselves as equally true.

But here in this manifest universal existence we do perceive certain universal states & certain still more fundamental realisations which transcend all phenomena & all oppositions & antinomies. We perceive, for example, a state of Universal Being, the Sad Atman of the Upanishads, the goal of the Adwaitins; we perceive a state of Universal Non-Being, the Asad Atman of the Upanishads, Sunyam, the goal of the Madhyamika Buddhists. Then we perceive that both of these are the same thing differently experienced in the soul. It is That which expresses itself in our experience of Being & forgetfulness of Being, of Consciousness & forgetfulness of Consciousness, of Bliss & forgetfulness of Bliss, of Sacchidananda conditioned & Sacchidananda unconditioned. We call it the Brahman, that which extends itself here in space & time & fills its extension. We feel our identity with it & we realise that it is our true Self & the true Self of everything in the universe & of the universe both in its sum & in its entirety. We call it then the Atman, a word which originally meant true Being or true

Substance. We become aware of It as extending itself & filling its extension here for a purpose, the purpose of Ananda, delight in Vidya, delight in Avidya & governing all things towards that purpose, — self-aware as the One & self-aware as the Many, self-aware as Sat & self-aware as Asat. This great self-aware transcendent more than universal existence we call Sa, Ishwara, "He", God, the Paratpara Purusha, the Higher than the Highest. We see therefore that these three names merely try to express in human language certain fundamental conceptions we have here of That which is not perfectly expressible. The greatest names, tremendous as is their power, — how tremendous only those can know who have made the test without flinching — are only symbols, — I will not say shadows, for that is a word which may be misunderstood. But very great & blissful symbols in which we are meant to find a perfect content & satisfaction.

Through these symbols & the realisations which they try to represent, we have to work out our divine fulfilment here, & the Rishi gives all three of them to us in this Upanishad. For all three are supremely helpful &, in a way, necessary. Until we realise Ishwara, the mighty Inhabitant, as one with ourself, as the Atman, we find a difficulty in identifying Him with all that Is. We fall into these ideas of an extra-Cosmic God which satisfy the early & immature stages of soul development; or we see a God who pervades & upholds all existences but has put them forth in His being as eternally apart from Himself. That is a great practical realisation with immense results to the soul, the realisation of the Bhakta who rests in some kind of Dualism, but it is not the supreme goal which we are seeking. If we realise the Ishwara as the Atman, our Self, without realising Him as the Brahman we run, unless our souls have first become purified, another peril, the peril of the Asura who misapplies the mighty formula So Aham & identifies God with his own unregenerated ignorant Ego, — extending the Inhabitant only to some transient circumstances of the movement in which He dwells. He forgets the other equally important formula, Tat twam asi; he does not realise others as Narayan, does not become one self with all existences, forgets that the very idea of his egoistic self is inconsistent with the true Adwaita and to extend that in imagination & call it the whole Universe is a caricature of Adwaita. It is like the error of the unphilosophical Idealist who concludes that the objective Universe exists only in his individual Mind, forgetting that it exists equally in other individual minds & not knowing that in reality there is no individual Mind, but only one sea of mind with its self-formed solid bed of sanskaras, waves of which are constantly flowing through him, rising & breaking there & leaving their marks in the sands of his mental, infra-mental & supramental being. Even if we realise all beings as Narayan and one Self, there is a difficulty in realising all things as God & self. The Inhabitant is the Atman, good — but the name & form? We can realise that God dwells in the stone as well as under the stone & around it, but how can the stone be God, — this clod, that rusty piece of iron, this clot of filth? With difficulty the mind unreleased from dwandwa & sanskaras can believe that God logically must be in the piece of filth He has created, but how can He be that filth? The seeker can eventually realise God in the criminal who is to be hanged no less than in the executioner who hangs him & the saint who has pity for both, in the harlot no less than the Sati, in all of the filth no less than in the glorious star that shines in Heaven & the petals of the rose or jasmine that intoxicates our soul with its fragrance, but the crime of the criminal, the sin of the harlot, the corporeality of the filth, must not that be kept separate? The sattwic mere lover of virtue, the lover of beauty, the devotee reverently bowing before the throne, must they not revolt eternally from such conceptions? We shall see that for certain practical reasons we must in action preserve a kind of separateness, — not only between the criminal & his crime, but between the saint & his virtue, — for this reason the Rishi has fixed on the relation of world of Movement & world's Inhabitant as the basis of his system, — but the distinction must be one of vyavahara only, for practice only & must not interfere with our conception of All as Brahman. We must not yield to the limitations of the sattwic mind, the moha or delusions of the sattwic ahankara. For if we yield, we cannot proceed to that greater goal of bliss, which attaining the soul shrinks not at all, has no delusion, is not touched by any grief. Therefore we must realise the Ishwara not only as the true Self of things, but as Brahman, that which extends itself here equally in all things, in the beautiful but also in the ugly, in the holy & great but also in that which we look on as base & impure. Looking on Brahman moving & Brahman unmoving we have to say with the Mundaka Upanishad, Tad etat satyam (That yonder is this here & the Truth), & looking on Ishwara & Brahman moving & unmoving we have to say with the same Upanishad, "Purusha evedam sarvam karma tapo brahma paramritam." "It is the divine Soul that is all this, even all action and all active force and Brahman & the supreme immortality."

We have to realise the Self everywhere, but we have also to remember always in all our being, to feel always in every fibre of our existence that this Self is Brahman & the Lord. In the realisation of Atman by itself there is this danger that as we human beings stand in the subjective mind, that represents itself to us as our true Self and we are first in danger of identifying our subjective consciousness which is only one movement of Chit, with the Sarva Brahman. Even when we go beyond to the Sad Atman or Pure Existence, we, approaching it necessarily through our subjective being, tend to realise it as pure *subjective* existence & are in danger of not realising the real & ultimate Sat which is pure Existence itself beyond subjectivity & objectivity, but expressing itself here subjectively because of the Purusha & objectively because of the Prakriti, — the mingled strain of our subjective-objective existence here being the result of the interaction & mutual enjoyment of His Male & His Female principle. Hence arise the misconceptions of the Idealists, Illusionists & Mayavadins. If we halt in subjective mind, we see the objective world as a mere dream or vision of our conscious subjective activity. That is the dogma of the Idealist, nor can anyone fathom the depths of our mental being without passing through this experience. If we halt in our pure subjective existence, then not only the objective world, but the mind & its perceptions seem to be a dream, & the only truth is the subjective Nirguna Brahman aware only of his pure subjective existence. When this subjective

Nirguna Brahman looks out from the truth of himself & watches the perceptions of the mind, the great dream of the objective, then It alone as the sakshi seems to be real — but we get rid of the sakshi too & retire into the perfect samadhi in which Brahman is aware only of Itself as self-existent, self-conscious pure Atman. This is the dogma of the Mayavadin & no one can fathom all the depths of our subjective being who has not passed through this experience. Then comes the Buddhist, who turns upon this sakshi, this subjective Atman & says "Thou too art only a dream, for the same thing that tells me thou art, tells me the world is. I have no other evidence of the existence of Atman than I have of the existence of the world without, as both are equally dreams." And without going farther, he says with the Madhyamikas "The truth is the Asat, the Nihil, the universal Non-being", or he says with the Buddha — "There is Nirvana of all this subjective & objective; what there is beyond, we need not ask" — so as to say "we cannot know", "we need only to know that it releases from all pain & grief & death & all return of egoism." This experience too, if one can have it & not be bound by it, is of great use, of a rich fruitfulness to the soul. He can hardly gaze out of the manifest towards Parabrahman who has never stood face to face with the Asat & launched his soul into the fathomless & shoreless Negation. But we come back to the truth. That which is beyond is Parabrahman & that which represents Him here as the basis of our existence is the absolute existence, neither subjective, nor objective, turned both towards the world & away from it, capable of manifesting everything, capable of manifesting nothing, capable of universality, capable of nullity, capable of putting forth all antinomies, capable of reconciling them, capable therefore both of cosmos & chaos, which is expressed in the formula OM Tat Sat. But this is no other than the Brahman. Is it enough then to realise the Atman as the Brahman? Yes, if we realise that the absolute Brahman, who is rather beyond both Guna & absence of Guna than Nirguna, is also that which expresses itself as Guna, extends itself in space & informs its own extension. We must say with the Mandukya, Sarvam hyetad Brahma — Ayam Atma Brahma — So'yam atma chatushpat. All this world is Brahman, this Self is Brahman, & this Self which is Brahman is fourfold. Fourfold, not only the Transcendent Turiya, but also He who sees Himself the gross & sees Himself the subtle & sees His own single & blissful being in the states to which we have only access now in the deep trance of sushupti. Nor is this enough. For the realisation goes still too much towards abstraction, towards remoteness. It is necessary to remember that this great Self-Aware Being is the Lord, that He has created & entered into His own movement, with a mighty purpose & for the enjoyment of His own phenomenal being in the worlds. Otherwise we shall not be so much both spectators & masters of our worlds, but its spectators only — & a mere spectator tarries not long at a spectacle, he is soon sated of his inactive joy & withdraws. The movement of withdrawal is necessary for a certain number of souls, it is, so effected, a great, blissful & supremely satisfied movement, but it is not the purpose for which God is in us here. We must realise our true Self as Brahman-Ishwara. We must be one with the Ekah sarvabhutantaratma rupam rupam pratirupo bahishcha, the one Self within all existences who shapes Himself to form & form & is outside all of them, & understand the intention of the Aitareya in its great opening, Atma va idam eka evagra asit — Sa ikshata — Sa iman lokan asrijata. In the beginning this was all the Atman, He alone, He looked & put forth these worlds.

Finally, it is not even enough for the Sage's purpose that we should realise the Brahman except as the Atman & Ishwara. For if we do not realise Brahman as the Self & our Self we shall be in danger of losing the subjective aspect of existence & laying too much stress on That as the substratum of our objective existence in which I stand merely as a single unimportant movement. The result is a tamasic, an inert calm, a tendency to merge in the jada Prakriti, the apparent unintelligently active aspect of things which the Europeans call Nature or at the highest a resolution of our selves into that substratum of the objective in the Impersonal Brahman. The denial of the Transcendent Personality, the Paratpara Purusha is a strong tendency of the present-day Adwaita. "God", say these modern Adwaitins, "is a myth, or at most a dream like ourselves. Just as there is no I, so there is no God." Under this figure of thought, there lies a philosophical blunder. Personality is not necessarily individual Personality, neither is it a selection & arrangement of qualities, any more than existence is necessarily individual existence or a selection & arrangement of movements in our being. Personality can be & is Universal; this Universal Personality is God in relation to our individual experiences. Personality also can be & is Transcendent, self-existent, beyond individuality & Universality, — this transcendent Personality, a blissful unlimited self-conscious Awareness in self-existence is the Paratpara Purusha — adityavarnas tamasah parastat, drawing us like a sun beyond the darkness of ignorance & the darkness of the Asat. This is He — God universal, but also God transcendent — the Lilamaya Krishna who transcends His lila. Therefore the Upanishads everywhere insist not upon mere Existence, like the later Adwaitin, but on the sole Existent; and they speak continually on the Brahman as the creator, Master, enjoyer of the worlds, by meditating on whom we shall attain to perfect liberation. Neither Buddha nor Jada Bharata are the true guides & fulfillers of our destiny; it is Yajnavalkya, it is Janaka &, most of all, it is Krishna son of Devaki who takes us most surely & entirely into the presence & into the being of the Eternal.

Atman, Brahman, Ishwara, on this triune aspect here of the Transcendent depend all our spiritual realisations and as we take one or the other & in its realisation stop a little this side or proceed a little to that side, our realisations, our experiences & our creeds & systems will vary from each other; & we shall be Buddhists or Adwaitins or Mayavadins or Dualists, followers of Ramanuja or Madhwa, followers of Christ, of Mahomed, of whosoever will give us such light on the Eternal as we are ready to receive. The Rishi of the Isha wishes us to realise all three, but for the sake of divine life in the world to dwell upon Ishwara, but on Ishwara neither extracosmic nor different from His creatures but rather in & about all beings as their indwelling Self, their containing Brahman and that material Brahman also or Prakriti which is the formal continent of the indwelling Self and the formal content of the containing Brahman. In this realisation there are many stages of progress, many necessary first steps & later approximations; but the Rishi, his work being to throw out brief fundamental & important suggestions only & not to fill in details, to indicate & illumine, not to educate or instruct, gives us for the present only two of the final realisations which are the most essential for his purpose. We shall find, however, that there is more beyond.

We are first to realise this one divine Self, (which is *our*self also) in all existences and all existences in the Self. We have, therefore, in this realisation three terms, Self within, Self without, which are the same & invariable samam Brahma, & all existences, of which each separate existence is fundamentally the same, but in generic or individual play & movement different from other genera & individuals. All existences — not only animate but inanimate, for sarvabhuteshu does not mean sarvapranishu — not only the man, the animal, the insect, but in the tree, plant & flower & not only in the tree, plant & flower which have a sort of life, but in the mountain, the metal, the diamond, the pebble which seem not to have life, & not only in these bhutas which if they have not an organised life, have at least an organised or a manifest form, but in those which have no organised form, or no form at all to the eye or to any sense. The wind & sea also are He & the gases which constitute the air which moves as wind & the water which flows as the sea. He is ether that contains all & He is that which contains the ether.

Swami Vivekananda in a passage of his works, makes a striking or, as the French say better, a seizing distinction between the locomotive & the worm that it crushes, between the animate which has conscious life in it, however weak, & the inanimate which has only in it, however powerful, a blind & undeveloping power. But, however useful & true this distinction may be for certain practical purposes, certain vyavahara, it is not allowed us by the pure Adwaita of the Upanishads. God is not only in the worm that is crushed, but in the engine that crushes it — the engine too & the power of the engine are Brahman and as much Brahman as the life & consciousness in the worm. He is samam

Brahma. We have a right to make certain practical distinctions for vyavahara but none to make any essential difference. For the Vedanta is inexorable in its positiveness; as it will not spare us the most loathsome worm that crawls but insists that that too is Brahman, so also it will not spare us the most inert or sordid speck of matter, but insists that that too is Brahman. If we stop short anywhere, we create bheda & lose our full spiritual heritage. The seer anupashyati — he follows Prakriti in her movement from the greatest to the most infinitesimal, from the noblest to the meanest & everywhere finds only Brahman, God, the Self. Bhuteshu bhuteshu vichitya dhirah, says the Kena. We must have dhairyam, utter patience, utter understanding. To no weakness, no repugnance, no recoil even of the saint in us or the artist & poet in us, much less of our mere nervous & sensational parts or of the conventional mind with its fixed associations can we stop to listen, if we would attain. Love & hate, joy & grief must not interfere to warp our knowledge. All, all, all without exception is He. He breathes out sweetness upon us in the rose, He touches our cheeks with coolness in the Wind, He fills with His favouring breath the sails of the sailing-ship that carries our merchandise to its market, He tramples down into the Ocean depths the latest marvel & monstrosity of scientific construction in which travel the great ones of the world or in which our beloved are coming to our arms. The wrong that is done to us, it is He that does it — and to whom is it done? To Himself. The blow that is struck, is of His striking. Brahman is the striker, Brahman the instrument, Brahman the stricken. The insult that is cast on us, it is He that has flung it in our face. The disgrace, the defeat, the injustice are of His doing. That crime which we abhor, it is Brahman who has committed it, — it is our Self's, our own doing though we do it in another body. For the least sin that is committed in the world, each one of us is as responsible as the sinner. Our self-righteousness is a Pharisaical error, our hatred of the sinner & our contempt & loathing convict us of ignorance and limit, not increase our power to rectify or to help. The seer, the freed & illuminated soul hates none, condemns nothing but loves all and helps all; he is sarvabhutahite ratah, his occupation

& delight are to do good to all creatures. He is the Self seeing the Self in all, loving the Self in all, enjoying the Self in all, helping the Self in all. That is the ethics & morality of the Vedanta.

For what is the first result of this universal vision? Tato na vijugupsate. Jugupsa is not merely fear but includes all kinds of shrinking, fear, disgust, contempt, loathing in the nerves, hatred in the heart, shrinking of dislike or reluctance from thing or person or action. Raga & dwesha being the motives of all our ordinary feeling & action, jugupsa expresses that movement of recoil in the system which proceeds from dwesha of any kind, — the desire to protect ourselves against or ward off the unwelcome thing that presents itself to the mind, nerves or senses. We see therefore how wide a field the promise of the Upanishad covers. We shall not hate, fear, loathe, despise or shrink from anything whatsoever which the world can present us. It is evident, if this is possible, how all that constitutes real misery will fall from the soul & leave it pure & blissful.

We shall not have any contempt, hatred or disgust for any person, nor shall we fear anyone, however powerful or inimical; for in all we shall see Narayan, we shall know the Lord, we shall recognise ourself. One equal regard will fall from us on the tiger & the lamb, the saint & the sinner, the tyrant who threatens us and the slave who is subject to our lightest caprice. Squalor, sin, disease will not conceal from us the god within nor wrath & cruelty from us God's love working by strange ways under grotesque & fearful masks. No sort of foulness or ugliness will repel us. An universal charity, a wide & tolerant love, a calm & blissful impulse of beneficence to all will be the ethical first fruits of our realisation. We shall make no distinctions, we shall be no respecters of persons. We shall not despise the hut of the peasant nor bow down in the courts of the princes, neither shall we have wrath or scorn against the palace & partiality for the cottage. All these things will be equal to us. The touch of the outcaste will be the same to us as the sprinkling of holy water by the Brahmin — for how shall God pollute God? Every human or living body will be to us a temple & dwelling place of the most High. None shall be to us vile or contemptible. And yet none shall be too sacred for us, too dear or too inviolable; for it is the house of our Friend & Playmate; nay, it is our own House, for the Lover is not different from the Beloved, & it is a house, jagat not sthanu, a thing that can be changed & has to be changed, for which therefore we shall have deep love, but no fettering attachment. The sword of our enemy will have no terrors for us. For enmity is a play of the Lord & death & life make up one of His games of hide & seek. How shall God slay God? Even as our vision deepens, the touch of the sword shall be to us as much the kiss of His Love as the touch from the lips of a lover — one sharp, poignant & fierce, the other soft & wooing but the manner is the only difference. For we shall have torn aside the grotesque & unreal mask of hatred & seen in the apparent fulfilment of enmity & evil, the real fulfilment of love & good. By the divination of the heart & the vision of the higher knowledge we shall have found out the way of the Lord in His movement.

And because we shall have found out His way & seen everywhere Himself, things also will cause no kind of shrinking in us. We shall exceed the limitations of the senses & the ordinary aesthetic faculties, — we shall have gone beyond the poet & the artist. We shall know why the sages have called Him sarvasundara, the All-Beautiful. For things beautiful will have a more wonderful, intense, ecstatic beauty to us, but things foul, illshapen & ugly will also be to us beautiful, with a larger, more marvellous, more universal beauty than the artistic. We shall exceed the limitations of the mind & heart & conscience; we shall have gone beyond the saint & the moralist. For we shall no more be repelled by the sin of the sinner than by the dirt on our child who has fallen or wallowed in the mud of the roadside. We shall know why the Lord has put on the mask of the sinner & the perfect purpose that is served by sin & crime in the world's economy, & while knowing that it has to be put aside or transformed into good, we shall not be revolted by it, but rather view it with perfect calm & charity. This realisation, although it lifts us beyond the ordinary conceptions of morality & conventional ethics, does not incapacitate us for normal action, as it might seem to the thought which holds all action impossible except that which proceeds from desire & liking & disliking. Whatever morality the Vedantist practises will be based on a higher & truer ground than the ethics of the ordinary man in love, sympathy & oneness. For an ethics proceeding in its practical action on contempt, dislike or repulsion is an immoral or imperfectly moralised ethics which seeks to drive out poison by poison & it has always failed & will always fail to eradicate sin & evil, — just as the ordinary methods of society have failed to eradicate or even diminish crime & vice, because its method & its spirit are ignorant & paradoxical. Only perfect knowledge & sympathy can give perfect help and these are impossible without oneness.

At the same time it is true that the jivanmukta is not governed by ordinary moral considerations. He shrinks from no actions which the divine purpose demands or the divine impulse commands. He has no wish to kill, but he will not shrink from slaying when it is demanded, for he is bound neither by the rajasic ahankara nor by the sattwic; sattwic obstacles to slaying are therefore taken from him and his knowledge delivers him both from the desire to take life which is the evil of hinsa [and] from the emotional horror of taking life & the nervous fear of taking life which are the rajasic & tamasic basis of outward ahinsa. So also with other actions. For this morality or dharma is of the soul & does not depend upon the action which is a mere outward symbol of the soul & has different values according to the times, the social ideas & environments, the religious creed or the actual circumstances. To men who are not free a conventional morality is an absolute necessity, for there must be a fixed standard to which they can appeal. It is as necessary for the ordinary practice of the world as a standard value of coin for the ordinary commerce of a country. The coin has not really an immutable value; the pound is not perhaps really worth 15 Rs but fluctuates owing to circumstances; nevertheless to allow a fluctuating value is to bring a certain amount of confusion, uncertainty & disorder into finance & commerce. Therefore the liberated man though he knows the truth will not contravene the fixed rules of society unless he is impelled by divine command or unless the divine purpose is moving towards a change in the fixed morality. Then, if it is the part given to him, he will act as fearlessly against social rules as under ordinary circumstances he will adhere firmly to the law of the environment in which he dwells. For his one care & purpose will be to observe the divine purpose & carry out the divine will.

Neither will events bring to him grief or disappointment, fear or disgust with things, because he follows that divine will & purpose in himself & in others, in the inner world & the outer, watching everywhere the play of the Self. He has divined God's movement. Disgrace & dishonour, obloquy & reproach cannot move him. He is equal in soul to honour & dishonour, respect & insult, mana & apamana, because both come from himself to himself & not from another. Success & failure are equal to him, since he knows that both are equally necessary for the fulfilment of the divine intention. He will no more quarrel with them than with the cold of winter or the breath of the stormblast. They are part of the jagat, part of God's play, of the Self's action on the Self. He acquires a perfect titiksha or power to bear; he moves towards more than titiksha, towards an equal & perfect enjoyment.

Such, then, are some of the practical fruits of the realisation of God as the Self in all existences & the Brahman containing all existences. It raises us towards a perfect calm, resignation, peace & joy; a perfect love, charity & beneficence; a perfect courage, boldness & effectiveness of action; a divine equality to all men & things & equanimity towards all events & actions. And not only perfect, but free. We are not bound by these things we acquire. Our calm does not stay us from even the most colossal activity, for the calm is within us, of the soul & is not an activity in the jagat, in the movement. Our resignation is of the soul & does not mean acquiescence in defeat, but acceptance of it as a circumstance in the struggle towards a divine fulfilment; our peace & joy do not prevent us from understanding & sympathising with the trouble & grief of others; our love does not prevent an outward necessary sternness, our charity a just appreciation of men & motives nor does our beneficence hold back the sword when it is necessary that it should strike — for sometimes to strike is the highest beneficence, as those only can thoroughly realise who know that God is Rudra as well as Shiva, Chamunda Kali with the necklace of skulls no less than Durga, the protectress & Gauri, the wife & mother. Our courage does not bind itself by the ostentations of the fighter, but knows when flight & concealment are necessary, our boldness does not interfere with skill & prudence, nor our activity forbid us to rest & be passive. Finally our equality of soul leaves room to the other instruments to deal with each thing in the vyavahara according to its various dharma & utility, the law of its being & the law of its purpose.

These are the perfect results of the perfect realisation. But in practice it is difficult for these perfect results to be attained or for this perfect realisation to be maintained, unless after we have attained to it, we go farther & exceed it. In practice we find that there is a flaw, somewhere, which causes us either not perfectly to attain or to slip back after we have attained. The reason is that we are still removed by one considerable step from perfect oneness. We have realised oneness of the self within & the self without, of the self in us & the self in all other existences. But we still regard the jagat, the movement, as not entirely the Self — as movement & play of God, but not itself God, as action of the Lord, but not itself all the Lord expressed to Himself in His own divine awareness. Therefore when things come to us, when action or event affects us, we have to adopt an attitude towards it as something different from ourselves, something that comes, something that affects us. As the result of that attitude we have jugupsa. We have realised oneness, but by what kind of realisation? By seeing, — anupashyati, by action of the seeing faculty in the buddhi or the feeling faculty in the heart — for both these things are vision. Our realisation is a realisation of identity by attitude, not of absolute identity by nature, realisation through instruments of knowledge, not through our conscious being in itself. Subtle as the distinction may seem, it is not really so fine as it appears; it makes a wide difference, it is of first rate importance in its results. For so long as our divine state depends on our attitude, the least failure or deficiency in that attitude means a waning of the divine state or a defect in its fullness. So long as it rests on a continued act of knowledge in mind & heart, the least discontinuity or defect of that knowledge means a defect of or a falling from our divine fullness. Only if identity with all existences has become our whole nature & being of our being, is the divine state perfected, is its permanent and unbroken enjoyment assured. And so complete & exacting is the oneness of Brahman, so absolute is the law of this Adwaita that if even the name & form & the play & the movement are regarded as Brahman's & not themselves as Brahman, an element of bheda, difference & dissonance, is preserved which tends to prevent this absolute identity of being & preserve the necessity of attitude & the identity only through the instruments of knowledge.

Therefore in his next verse the Rishi gives us a higher & completer realisation which includes the missing elements & perfects the Adwaita. "He in whom Self & all existences have become one and perfectly he knoweth, how shall he be deluded, whence shall he have pain who sees in all things oneness." If we read this verse loosely, we may err by taking it as a justification of that Adwaita which denies the sarvabhutani and affirms only the Atma. In that case we shall have not only to translate "All existences have become Self", but to suppose that "become" means "disappeared into", "blotted themselves out in", — an extension of meaning which is justified by nothing, either in the language or in the context. It is contradicted by the immediately following passage in which the Seer insists on the necessity of the simultaneous view of Vidya & Avidya, while the exclusion of the world & its existences can only be effected in the state of sleep or trance and would be broken every time the mind returned to the state of waking. No such broken & truncated realisation is intended. The Mayavada demands that every time we look out on the world & its creatures, we shall say "This is not Brahman, it is a dream, a lie"; Adwaita of the Isha demands that looking out on the world & its creatures we shall say "This is Brahman, it is God, it is myself." There is a wide difference between the two attitudes. The one rests a metaphysical & argumentative Adwaita on a tremendous essential Dwaita of Satya & Asatya, that which is true & that which is false; the other rests a practical Adwaita on an apparent Dwaita, all being Satyam, eternal Truth, but Truth seen & recurrent presenting itself to Truth seeing & persistent — the sthanu & the jagat, an apparent difference of appearance to knowledge, not an actual difference of essential reality & unreality. Apart from this divergence, the language of the sloka is such as not to admit of the negation sought by the Mayavadin, but to contradict it. I have not translated the verse literally yet, but now I give the literal translation, "In whom the Self (of him) verily knowing by vijnana has become all creatures, there what delusion, what grief, of him seeing wherever he looks (anu) oneness." It is evident that the Mayavadin's position vanishes. The words are sarvani bhutani atmaivabhud — not sarvabhutani atmaivabhuvan — a singular verb demanding a singular subject. Therefore it is the Self that becomes, not the bhutas; and we cannot say that this is the attitude of a man still ignorant, ajna, for it is the Self of one who knows entirely, has that knowledge which in the Upanishads is called vijnana & who has attained to the vision of oneness. In him his Self has become all creatures.

Let us understand thoroughly the sense of this important sloka. Yasmin, in whom. The soul has become one with all existence, all existence it feels to be itself containing the creation & exceeding it, — therefore yasmin, not yasya. In him his Self, that which he feels to be his true I has become all creatures. Not only does he feel himself or perceive himself to be *in* all creatures as the divine presence in them & around them, but he is they, — he is each bhuta. The word bhuta means that which has become as opposed to that which eternally is & it includes therefore name & form & play of mind & play of action. The last barrier is broken; ahankara, the sense of separate self, utterly disappears & the soul is all that it sees or is in any way aware of. It is not only the seer in all, but it is the seen; not only the Lord, but his habitation, not only Ish but jagat. In fact, just as the Lord himself, as Brahman itself becomes all things & all creatures in itself, just as all creatures are only Brahman's becomings, bhutani, just as Brahman is the ejat and the anejat, the moving & the unmoving, God & his world, so is it now with the soul that sees. Of it too it can be said Tad ejati tannaijati. It moves & it moves not, it is the near & the far, it is within all things & outside all things. The man thus liberated undergoes a tremendous change of consciousness; he ceases to feel himself as within his body & feels rather his body as within himself & not only his but all bodies; he feels himself at the same time in his body & in all bodies not separately like a piece of water in a jar, but as an unity like one ether undivided in many vessels, & at the same time he feels that they are not in him nor he in them, but that this idea of within & without is merely a way of looking, a way of expressing to the mind a truth in itself beyond expression by space & time — just as we say "I have this in my mind" when we do not really intend to express any location in space but mean rather "This is my mental knowledge as it just now expresses itself." Pashya me yogam aishwaram. For he now feels that these things in which & outside which he seems to be are himself, his becomings in the motion of awareness, jagat, bhutani. This is the first important difference between the preceding realisation of knowledge & this fuller realisation of being. His self has become all existences; they & he are all merely becomings of himself.

But if this realisation is only by the heart through love or only by the purified reason through intellectual perception, then it is not the realisation which this shloka contemplates. For so long as we have not become that which we are realising, realisation is not complete & its moral effects cannot be securely held. For what use is it if we merely understand that all is one when if there is a touch from outside it, the body cries "Something has struck me, I am hurt" or the heart says "Someone has injured me, I am in grief" or the vital spirits cry "Someone means ill to me, I am in fear"? And if the heart realises, but the reason & other instruments fail, how shall we not, feeling one with the grief of others, fail to be crushed by them & overborne? The lower organs must also consent to the absolute sense of oneness or no sure and perfect result can be gained. How is this to be done? By the force of the vijnana, our ideal self. Therefore the Upanishad adds "vijanatah", when he knows, not by ordinary knowledge, jnanam, or by intellectual knowledge, prajnanam, but by the ideal knowledge, vijanatah.

What is this vijnana? Vedantic commentators have identified it with buddhi; it is, they think, the discriminating intellect or the pure reason. But in the psychological system of the Veda intellectual vichara, reason, even pure reason, is not the highest nor does it lead to the highest results. The real buddhi is not in mind at all, but above mind. For beyond & behind this intellect, heart, nervous system, body, there is, says the Veda, a level, a sea of being out of which all these descend & here take form, a plane of consciousness in which the soul dwells by the power of perfect truth, in a condition of pure existence of knowledge, satyam, pure arrangement of its nature in that knowledge, ritam or vratam, pure satisfying wideness in being of that knowledge-nature, brihat. This is the soul's kingdom of heaven, its ideal state, immortality, amritatwam. All things here are in the language of [the Vishnu Purana] vijnanavijrimbhitani; they live here in fragments of that wide & mighty truth, but because of bheda, because they are broken up & divide truth against truth, they cannot enjoy Truth of knowledge, Truth of Nature, Truth of being & bliss, but have to strive towards it with much failure, pain & relapse. But if man can rise in himself to that plane and pour down its knowledge upon the lower system, then the whole system becomes remoulded in the mould of the vijnana. Man can get himself a new heart, a new mind, a new life, navyam ayu, even a new body, punah kritam. This whole system will then consent & be compelled to live in the truth — & that truth to which vijnana itself is the door, is Brahman as Sacchidananda. All things here will be Sacchidananda. This is the second superiority of this high realisation as this shloka describes it, that it is vijanatah, attained not by intellectual discernment or feeling of the heart or concentration of the mind, not depending therefore on any state such as sushupti or on any attitude, but itself determining the attitude, & attained through direct ideal knowledge with the result of becoming all that is in our being, not merely the mind or thought or feeling, in our very nature. The practical consequence will be that body, mind & heart will no longer admit any bahyasparsha, but will utterly feel that nothing can come to them, nothing touch them but only Brahman. To every touch there will be but one response from heart & mind & nerve alike — "This is Brahman." Nanyat pashyati, nanyach chrinoti. They will see nothing else, hear nothing else, smell nothing else, feel nothing else, taste nothing else, but only Brahman. Of such a state it can be truly & utterly said, & not merely relatively, not subject to any qualification, ekatwam anupashyatah.

That oneness is the oneness of Sacchidananda, one being, one knowledge, one bliss, being that is consciousness, knowledge that is identity, both of them in their essence & reality bliss, — therefore not three separate qualities, but one existence, even though presented to the intellect as a trinity, yet always one. Whatever therefore is felt, seen, heard, thought, it will be bliss that is felt, bliss that is seen, bliss that is heard, bliss that is thought — a bliss which is in its essence & inseparably existence & knowledge. For the intellect we have to use all three words, for on the level of our mental action these three are or seem to be divided & different from each other, but to the illumined being of the Jivanmukta there is no difference, they are one. It is ekatwam. It is Brahman. The highest heights of this realisation are, indeed, not easily attained, but even on its lower levels there is a perfect freedom & an ineffable joy. Swalpam apyasya dharmasya. To these levels, tatra, neither fear, nor grief, nor illusion can come. Tatra ko mohah kah shoka ekatwam anupashyatah. How shall he be deluded, whence shall he have grief, to whose eyes wheresoever they turn all things are one? For grief is born of illusion, shoka proceeds from moha, & the essence of moha is that bewilderment, that stultification of the conscious mind by which we forget oneness. By forgetting oneness, the idea of limitation is fixed on our being; by limitation comes the idea of not being this, not having that; from this idea arises the desire to be this, to have that; by the disappointment of desire comes disappointment, dislike of that which disappoints, hatred & anger against that which withholds, fear of that which gives contrary experience — the whole brood of earthly ills. Moha shouts "Here is one I love, she is dying"; "Here is one who will kill me, I am terrified"; "Here is a touch too strong for me to bear, it is pain." "This is virtue, that is sin; if I do not gain one I am lost, if I fall into the other I shall suffer by God's wrath & judgment. This is fair, that is foul. This is sweet, that is bitter. This I have not which another has, I must have it, even if it be depriving him of his possession." But he who sees oneness sees only Sacchidananda, only bliss that is conscious being. Just as the mind that has taught itself to see only matter everywhere, says even of mind & soul, even of itself, It is not mind, it is not soul, it is matter, just as it sees everywhere only the play of matter upon matter, in matter, by matter, so the liberated soul says of body & nerve & mind, It is not mind, it is not body, it is not nerve, it is Brahman, it is conscious existence that is bliss and so he sees everywhere this bliss only & the play of bliss upon bliss, in bliss, by bliss. Ananda is the term through which he reconciles himself with the world. Into delight his soul is delivered, by delight he supports in himself the great world movement & dwells in it, in delight he is for ever one with, yet plays with God.

The second movement of the Upanishad is finished. In his first movement the Rishi advanced four propositions, — that the purpose of our existence is the fulfilment of God in the world, realising that the Lord & his movement alone exist, He is the only inhabitant, His movement the only cause of the forms in which He inhabits; secondly that the golden rule of life is to enjoy all God's movement or God in all his movement but only after the renunciation of demand & desire, for only so can it all be enjoyed; thirdly, that life & action in this world are intended, must be maintained & do not interfere with divine freedom

& bliss; fourthly, that any self-marring movement leads only to confusion & darkness here & beyond & not to our divine realisation. In order to lay down on a firm basis his justification of these teachings, he shows us first that God & the world are one, both are Brahman & therefore the world also is our divine Self compassing by a certain divine power movement of action & phenomenon in its still unmoving Self & without parting with its superiority to the movement, on this basis he shows us that existence & bliss not only can be made one, but if we realise this one Brahman who is our divine Self & God (antar asya sarvasya), all existence must necessarily become bliss & cannot be anything else; grief & fear & dislike & delusion have no farther place in us. It is to this realisation we shall arrive by realising God as we give up desire, renounce everything to Him and enjoy the world in Him & by Him, as His movement, as His enjoyment. For we shall then realise that all beings are one with ourself, the renunciation of desire will become possible and we shall not shrink from anything in life, because we shall know that it is God & his movement. Finally, the high & complete realisation will be ours in which the very cause of desire & demand will disappear & all will be utterly the Self, God, Brahman, Sacchidananda.

Chapter V

A question may arise. It is true then that enjoyment of all things here in oneness is possible; that renunciation of desire & self-surrender are the way & the realisation of the Lord in all forms & movements & self-surrender to him the method, — involving also action according to His will, enjoyment according to His will. But when the final realisation is accomplished, when oneness is utterly attained, then what farther need of enjoyment & action? The goal is realised, let the method be abandoned. Why keep the distinction of God & the world, why act any more in the world when the purpose of action is accomplished? It may still be possible, it is not necessary; it is not even desirable. Lose yourself in Sacchidananda, if not the impersonal unconditioned Brahman. Is it not that in which the vision of oneness logically culminates? Therefore not only the golden rule of conduct has to be justified, but the teaching of a liberated activity has to be justified. It is this to which the Sage next proceeds. He is about to establish the foundations of action in the liberated soul, to show the purpose of the One & the Many, — to reconcile Vidya & Avidya in God's supreme & blissful unity. The eighth verse is the introductory & fundamental verse of this movement.

APPENDIX

[1]

[*Bracketed and struck through in the manuscript. See the footnote on page 378.*]

From the choice of terms in this opening line certain intellectual consequences arise which we have to accept if we wish to understand the teaching of the Upanishad. First, the Personality of God & His unity. Not only is the impersonal God one Brahman without a second, but the Personal God is one without a second. There is no other person besides God in the universe. Whatever different masks He may wear, from house to house of His habitation, it is always He. The disguises may be utterly concealing. He may manifest as Brahma & Vishnu, Surya & Agni or as the Yaksha & the Pishacha; he may dwell here as the man or dwell here as the animal; he may shine out as the saint or lust in Himself as the criminal; but all these are He.

[2]

[*Written on a separate sheet of the manuscript. See the footnote on page 378.*]

The world & God. What is the world? It is jagati, says the Rishi, she who is constantly moving. The essence of the world is not Space nor Time nor Circumstance which we call Causality — its essence is motion. Not only so, but every single force & object in it is of the same nature, it is a jagat, a knot of habitual motion. The ancient Hindus knew that the earth moves & therefore the earth also was designated in ancient times by a number of words meaning motion of which jagati itself is one — ga, go, jagati, ila. They knew of the physical movement of the universe. They would not have rejected the scientific hypothesis which sees in every object a mass & arrangement, a sort of cosmos of anus, atoms in constant movement with regard to [each] other. But the movement here contemplated is not, as we see in the fifth verse, tad ejati & the eighth verse, sa paryagat, movement of matter, but of divine being & conscious force of which matter is only an appearance. But for the present, the Rishi is content to envisage the world as a world of motion & multitude. In essence the kshobha or formative movement called active Prakriti, in universality it is this force ordering & arranging its objects by motion, jagati; in detail it is a multitude of single objects, forces, ideas, sensations etc, all in their nature motion of this moving universe, jagat, the apparently motionless stone no less than the ever circling & rotating earth. In this motion, in the objects, forces, sensations created by it He dwells who is its Lord.

[3]

[*Written in the top margin of two pages of the manuscript. Point of insertion not marked. See the footnote on page 380.*]

Moreover we must realise the Lord in others as one with Him in ourselves. Then we shall not need to covet any man's possessions. "Do not covet" says the Sage "the possession of any man whomsoever." Dhanam means any kind of possession whatever, not only material wealth — neither the glory of the king, nor the wealth of the merchant, nor the temperament of the sage, nor the strength of elephants, nor the swiftness of eagles. For whom are we envying, whose goods are we coveting? Ourselves, our own goods. If we realise divine unity, we can enjoy them as perfectly in another's experience as in our own. Moreover, being divine in power ourselves we can get them whenever our supreme self wills without anyone else in the world being the poorer for our gain. There must be no demand, no coveting. Not when or if the mind wills, but when or if He wills.

[4]

[*Written separately; point of insertion not marked. See the footnote on page 380.*]

Practically, therefore, the renunciation demanded of us is the renunciation by the lower unreal & incomplete self, mind, senses, vitality, intellect, will, egoism of all that they are & seek to our real, complete & transcendental Self, the Lord. And that renunciation we make not by substituting another demand, the demand to be rid of all these things & released from the fulfilment of His cosmic purpose, but in order the better to fulfil His purpose & enjoy Him utterly in His movement, in all experience & all action that He in us & through us is manifesting & perfecting. For that which we have to enjoy is not only Ish but jagat, — for as we shall see both are one Brahman & by enjoying Him entirely we must come to enjoy all His movement, since He is here as the Lord of his own movement. For this reason the word Ish has been selected as the fundamental relation of God to ourselves & the world — the master of all our existence to whom we renounce, the Lord who for his purposes has made & governs the world — for in this relation of "Lord" he is inseparable from His movement. It is a relation that depends on the existence & play of the world of which He is the ruler & master. Envisaging the ruler, we envisage that which he rules, the habitation for the sake of the inhabitant indeed, but still the habitation. We get therefore in this first verse of the Upanishad the foundations of the great principle of activity with renunciation with which the teaching of the Gita begins & the still greater principle of atmasamarpana or entire surrender to God, the uttamam rahasyam with which it culminates. We get the reason & spirit of the command to Arjuna from which all the moral teaching of the Gita starts & to which it returns, jitva shatrun bhunkshva rajyam samriddham, the command of activity, the command of enjoyment — but activity for God only, yajnartham, without ahankara, enjoyment in God only, mayi sannyasya, without desire or attachment, neither demanding what He does not take for Himself in us, nor rejecting what He is here to enjoy, whether the enjoyment be of victory or defeat, of the patched loin cloth of the beggar or the imperial crown.

[5]

[*Written in a different notebook; beginning lost or point of insertion unknown. Related thematically to Draft A of "The Life Divine"*.]

[.....] existence, lies the justification of all that is said in the scriptures of the liberated & perfected soul. He who would be free in this world, must be detached from it, though belonging to it, above it though in it, above it in his inward conscious self-being, though in it in his outward action of Nature. He must combine with a blissful enjoyment of all things in the world, a joyous indifference to all things in the world. He must be not un-mundane but supramundane, not inhuman but superhuman. In all his acts he must have in his soul the loud laughter, the attahasyam, of Kali. He must love with that inner laughter, slay with that laughter, save with that laughter, himself perish or reign, take joy or take torture with that secret & divine laughter. For he knows that the whole world is but a divine play of the eternal Child-God Srikrishna with Himself in the playground of His self-existence. All this he cannot have unless in the roots of his conscious being he feels not concealed or subliminal, but manifest & always present to him, the Bright, Calm, Unconcerned, Unbound, Unrelated Divine Existence.

This Pure Existence is not only an impersonal state of divine being, it is God Himself in His pure personality. For in all the divine manifestation, there is always this double aspect of Personality & Impersonality. God Impersonal manifests Himself, both in the universe & transcendent of the Universe, transcending it as infinite pure Existence, infinite pure Consciousness, infinite pure Delight, the triune Sachchidananda of our Scriptures, entering world existence. He manifests in it all this quality of existence, variation of Consciousness, multiplicity of delight which with its changes, perversities & apparent self-contradictions makes up the marvellous web of the world. But He is also, transcending existence, the infinite Pure Existent, the infinite Pure Conscious, the infinite Pure Blissful, — not anyone, no person or individual, for He alone is, but still neither a mere abstraction or state of Being. Entering into world existence, He is All-being, God, Shiva, Vishnu, Krishna, Kali, Allah, the Mighty One, the Humble, the Loving, the Merciful, the Ruthless. These things are aspects of Himself to His own consciousness. Just as Sacchidananda is Triune, — not three, but One, — for when we enter deep into the Trinity we find only Unity since Existence is Consciousness & nothing but Consciousness, & Consciousness is Delight & nothing but Delight, so the Personal & Impersonal God are Biune, not two, but one, since when we enter into the depths of this Biune, we find only Unity, Existence nothing but the Existent, the Existent nothing but Existence. The distinction between them is a necessary convention or arrangement of His truth for world manifestation; it does not amount to a difference. The metaphysician fixes his concentration of Will in Knowledge only on the Impersonal & pursuing it through the world & beyond, he affirms the Impersonal God but tends to deny the Personal. The devotee, fixing his concentration on the Personal & pursuing it through the world & beyond, affirms the Personal God but tends to deny or ignore the Impersonal. Both affirmations are true, both denials are false. Neither is one greater than the other, the Impersonal than the Personal, just as in the Personal, Shiva is not greater than Vishnu, nor Vishnu than Shiva, nor the All-Being than Krishna or Kali. Such exaggerated distinctions are the errors of partial or selective Yoga fastening on aspects & ignoring the true being of God in His self-manifestation. We must accept, for our perfection's sake, the multitude of His aspects & even of His divine impersonations, but we must not make them an excuse for breaking up the inalienable unity of God.

The Life Divine

[Draft B]

Part II
The First Movement

Chapter I
God and Nature

I

The Isha Upanishad opens with a monumental phrase in which, by eight brief and sufficient words, two supreme terms of existence are confronted and set forth in their real and eternal relation. Ish is wedded with Jagati, God with Nature, the Eternal seated sole in all His creations with the ever-shifting Universe and its innumerable whorls and knots of motion, each of them called by us an object, in all of which one Lord is multitudinously the Inhabitant. From the brilliant suns to the rose and the grain of dust, from the God and the Titan in their dark or their luminous worlds to man and the insect that he crushes thoughtlessly under his feet, everything is His temple and mansion. He is the veiled deity in the temple, the open householder in the mansion and for Him and His enjoyment of the multiplicity and the unity of His being, all were created and they have no other reason for their existence. Ishá vásyam idam sarvam yat kincha jagatyám jagat. For habitation by the Lord is all this, everything whatsoever that is moving thing in her that moves.

This relation of divine Inhabitant and objective dwelling-place is the fundamental truth of God and the World for life. It is not indeed the whole truth; nor is it their original relation in the terms of being; it is rather relation in action than in being, for purpose of existence than in nature of existence. This practical relation of the Soul to its world thus selected by the Seer as his starting point is from the beginning and with the most striking emphasis affirmed as a relation not of coordinate equality or simple interaction but of lordship and freedom on one side, of instrumentality on the other, Soul in supreme command of Nature, God in untrammelled possession of His world, not limited by anything in its nature or His nature, but free & Lord. For, since it is the object of the Upanishad to build up a practical rule of life here in the Brahman rather than a metaphysical philosophy for the satisfaction of the intellect, the Seer of the Upanishad selects inevitably the practical rather than the essential relation of God & the world as the starting point of his thought, use & subordination rather than identity. The grammatical form in vásyam expresses a purpose or object which has to be fulfilled, — in this instance the object of habitation; the choice of the word Ishá implies an absolute control and therefore an absolute freedom in that which has formed the object, envisaged the purpose. Nature, then, is not a material shell in which Spirit is bound, nor is Spirit a roving breath of things ensnared to which the object it inspires is a prisonhouse. The indwelling God is the Lord of His creations and not their servant or prisoner, and as a householder is master of his dwelling-places to enter them and go forth from them at his will or to pull down what he has built up when it ceases to please him or be serviceable to his needs, so the Spirit is free to enter or go forth from Its bodies and has power to build and destroy and rebuild whatsoever It pleases in this universe. The very universe itself It is free to destroy and recreate. God is not bound; He is the entire master of His creations.

The word Ishá, starting forward at once to meet us in this opening vibration of the Seer's high strain of thought, becomes the master tone of all its rhythms. It is the key to all that follows in the Upanishad. For not only does it contradict at once all mechanical theories of the Universe and assert the pre-existence, omnipotence, majesty and freedom of the transcendent Soul of things within, but by identifying the Spirit in the universe with the Spirit in all bodies, it asserts what is of equal importance to its gospel of a divine life for humanity, that the soul in man also is master, not really a slave, not bound, not a prisoner, but free — not bound to grief and death and limitation, but the master, the user of grief and death and limitation and free to pass on from them to other and more perfect instruments. If then we seem to be bound, as undoubtedly we do seem, by a fixed nature of our minds and bodies, by the nature of the universe, by the duality of grief and joy, pleasure and pain, by the chain of cause and effect or by any other chain or tie whatsoever, the seeming is only a seeming and nothing more. It is Maya, illusion of bondage, or it is Lila, a play at being bound. The soul, for its own purposes, may seem to forget its freedom, but even when it forgets, the freedom is there, self-existent, inalienable and, since never lost except in appearance, therefore always recoverable even in that appearance. This is the first truth of Vedanta assumed by the Upanishad in its opening words and from this truth we must start and adhere to it always in our minds, if we would understand in its right bearing & complete suggestion the Seer's gospel of life: —

That which dwells in the body of things is God, Self and Spirit; the Spirit is not the subject of its material, but the master; the soul in the body or in Nature is not the prisoner of its dwelling-place, but has moulded the body and its dharmas, fixed Nature and its processes and can remould, manipulate and arrange them according to its power and pleasure.

Idam sarvam yat kincha, the Seer has said, emphasising the generality of *idam sarvam* by the comprehensive particularity of *yat kincha*. He brings us at once by this expression to the Adwaitic truth in Vedanta that there is a multitude of objects in the universe, (it may be, even, a multitude of universes,) but only one soul of things and not many. Eko 'chalah sanátanah. The Soul in all this and in each particular form is one, still and sempiternal, one in the multitude of its habitations, still and unshifting in the perpetual movement of Nature, sempiternally the same in this constant ceasing and changing of forms. God sits in the centre of this flux of the universe, eternal, still and immutable. He pervades its oceanic heavings and streamings; therefore it endures. Nature is the multiplicity of God, Spirit is

His unity; Nature is His mobility, Spirit is His fixity; Nature is His variation, Spirit is His constant sameness. These truths are not stated at once; the Seer waits for a later verse to arrive at them. In this opening phrase he limits himself to the statement of the unity of God, and the multiplicity and mobility of Nature; for this relation in opposition is all that is immediately necessary to base the rule of divine living which it is his one object in the Upanishad to found upon a right knowledge of God & existence.

The self then of every man, every animal and every object, whether animate or inanimate, is God; the soul in us, therefore, is something divine, free and self-aware. If it seems to be anything else, — bound, miserable, darkened, — that is inevitably some illusion, some freak of the divine consciousness at play with its experiences; if this Soul seems to be other than God or Spirit, what seems is only a name and a form or, to keep to the aspect of the truth here envisaged, is only movement of Nature, jagat, which God has manifested in Himself for the purpose of various enjoyment in various mansions, — it is an image, a mask, a shape or eidolon created in the divine movement, formed by the divine self-awareness, instrumentalised by the divine activity. Therefore He is "this man and yonder woman, a boy and a girl, that old man leaning on his staff, this blue bird and that scarlet-eyed". We have, asserted in the comprehensiveness of the phrase, not only an entire essential omnipresence of God in us & in the world, but a direct and a practical omnipresence, possessing and insistent, not vague, abstract or elusive. The language of the Sruti is trenchant and inexorable. We must exclude no living being because it seems to us weak, mean, noxious or vile, no object because it seems to us inert, useless or nauseous. The hideous crawling worm or snake no less than the beautiful winged bird and the strong or gracious forms of four-footed life, the dull stone and foul mire and evil-smelling gas no less than man, the divine fighter and worker, are motions of the supreme Spirit; they contain in themselves and are in their secret reality the living God. This is the second general truth of Vedanta which arises inevitably from the pregnant verse of the Seer and, always present to him in his brief and concentrated thinking, must also accompany us throughout our pursuit of his sense and doctrine.

God is One; Self, Spirit, Soul is one; even when It presents Itself multitudinously in Its habitations as if It were many souls and so appears in the motion of Nature, Its universality and unity are not abrogated nor infringed. In all there is That which by coming out of its absorption in form of movement, recovers its unity. As the soul in man, though seeming to be bound, is always free and can realise its freedom, so, though seeming divided, limited and many, it is always universal, illimitable and one and can realise its universality and unity.

This creature born in a moment of time and bound in an atom of Space, is really in his secret consciousness the universal Spirit who contains the whole universe of things and dwells as the self of all things in these myriad forms of man & bird & beast, tree & earth & stone which my mind regards as outside me & other than myself. In the name of myself God inhabits this form of my being — but it is God that inhabits and the apparent "I" is but a centre of His personality & a knot in the infinite coilings of His active world existence. My ego is a creation of the Jagati in a form of mind; my Self stands behind, possesses and exceeds the universe.

II

This is Spirit in relation to Nature, one in multiplicity, the Lord of nature and process, free in the bound, conscious in the unconscious, inhabitant, master and enjoyer of all forms and movements of life, mind and body. Nature in relation to Spirit is its motion and the result of its motion, jagatyam jagat, phenomenon and everything that exists as phenomenon, universe and everything that constitutes universe. There are two terms in this brief and puissant formula, jagati and jagat. The second, jagat, is particular and multiple and includes whatsoever is separate existence, individual thing or form of motion, yat kincha; the first, jagati, is general and indicates both the resultant sum and the formative principle of all these particular existences, sarvam idam yat kincha. Sarvam idam is Nature regarded objectively as the sum of her creations; jagati is Nature regarded subjectively and essentially as that divine principle, expressed in motion of being and observed by us as force or Energy, which generates all these forms and variations. For Existence in itself is existence in a state of repose or stillness; indeterminate, infinite, inactive, it generates nothing: it is movement of energy in Existence which is active, which determines forms, which generates appearances of finite being and brings about phenomena of Becoming as opposed to fixed truth of Being. Therefore every objective existence in the world and all subjective forms, being forms of Existence in motion, being inconstant, being always mutable and always changing, progressing from a past of change to a future of change, are not truly different beings at all, but becomings of the one and only Being; each is the result of its previous motion, stands by its continued motion and if that motion were pretermitted or its rhythm disturbed, must change, disintegrate or transmute itself into some other form of becoming. Spirit or God is eternal Being, Nature in its sum & principle is the becoming of God and in its particulars a mass of His becomings, real as becomings, falsely valued as beings. The knowledge of the Upanishads takes its stand on this supreme distinction of Being and its Becomings; we find, indeed, in this Upanishad itself, another and more convenient collective term used to express all that is here defined as yat kincha jagatyam jagat, — one which brings us straight to this great distinction. The soul is Atman,[1] Being; everything else is sarvabhútáni, all becomings or, literally, all things that have become. This phrase is the common Sanscrit expression for created beings and though often referring in ordinary parlance to animate and self-conscious existences only, yet must in its philosophical sense and especially in the Upanishads, be accepted as inclusive of all existences whether they are or seem animate or inanimate, self-conscious or veiled in consciousness. The tree, flower & stone no less than the animal, heaven and wind and the sun and rain no less than man, invisible gas and force & current no less than the things we can see and feel fall within its all-embracing formula.

---

[1] The scholars hold erroneously that Atman meant first breath, then self; it meant, on the contrary, being, from the old root â, to be, still extant in Tamil, and the suffix tman, which expresses substance or substantial embodiment.

God is the only Being and all other existences are only His becomings; the souls informing them are but one Spirit individualised in forms and forces by the play and movement of Its own self-consciousness.

We see, then, whose this energy is and of what the universe is the motion. But already from the little we have said there begins to emerge clearly another truth which in the Upanishad itself the Seer leaves in shadow for the present and only shapes into clear statement in his fourth and eighth couplets; he emphasises in the fourth couplet the unity of Soul & Nature, the stillness & the motion are not separate from each other, not one of them Brahman and the other an illusion, but both of them equally the one sole Existence, which moves & yet is still even in its motion, *Tad ejati tannaijati, anejad ekam manaso javíyas*. In the eighth verse he indicates that Brahman & the Lord[2] are not different from each other or from the motion, but are the reality of the motion as the motion itself is the play of the stillness; for to *Tad ejati*, That moves, comes as an echo & response, *Sa paryagát*, He went abroad. *Nature is motion of the Spirit, the world is motion of God; but also Nature is Spirit in motion, the world is God at play.*

All our inefficient envisagings of the world, all our ignorant questions fall away from this supreme Vedantic conception. We cannot ask ourselves, "Why has God brought about this great flux of things, this enormous and multitudinous world-movement? what can have been His purpose in it? Or is it a law of His nature and was He under an inner compulsion to create? Who then or what compelled Him?" These questions fall away from the decisive & trenchant solution, Ishá vásyam jagat. He has no purpose in it except habitation, except delight, an ordered and harmonised delight, — therefore there is what we call universe, law, progression, the appearance of a method and a goal; but the order effected feels always its neighbourhood to the grandiose licence of the infinite and the harmony achieved thrills at once with the touch of the Transcendent's impulse to pass out of every rhythm and exceed every harmony. For this is a self-delight which in no way limits or binds Him; He has brought it about and He conducts it in perfect freedom; there is no compulsion on Him & none can compel Him, for He alone exists and Nature is only a play of time-movement in His being, proceeding from Him, contained in Him, governed by Him, not He by it or proceeding from it or coeval with it and therefore capable of being its subject, victim or instrument. Neither is there any inner compulsion limiting Him either as to the nature of the work or its method. The movement of the universe is not the nature of God, nor are its processes the laws of God's being; for Spirit is absolute and has no fixed or binding nature, God is supreme & transcendent and is not bound by state, law or process, — so free is He, rather, that He is not bound even to His own freedom. The laws of Nature, as we have seen, cannot be laws of being at all, since Nature itself is a becoming; they are processes which regulate the harmonies of becoming, processes which are, in the Vedic image, chhandas, rhythms of the movement and not in their own being rigid, inexorable & eternal because self-existent verities; they are results of the tendency to order & harmony, not sempiternal fetters on Existence. Even the most fundamental laws are only modes of activity conceived & chosen by Spirit in the universe. We arrive then at this farther all-important truth: —

---

[2] The Mayavadins hold that God is only the first myth of Maya & not the truth of Brahman, — the language of the Upanishad shows that this was not the view of the old Vedantic Rishis.

Nature is a divine motion of becoming of which Spirit is the origin, substance and control as well as the inhabitant and enjoyer. Laws of Nature are themselves general movements & developments of becoming and conditions of a particular order, rhythm and harmony of the universe, but not inexorably preexistent or recognisable as the very grain of existence. The Laws of Evolution are themselves evolutions and progressive creations of the Spirit.

Since Spirit, transcendent and original of the universe, is the sole existence, the motion of the universe can only take place in the Spirit. Therefore the indwelling of the Spirit in forms is not only a free indwelling rather than an imprisonment, but also it is not the whole or essential truth of this mutual relation of God & Nature; indwelling but not confined, like the presence of the ether in the jar, it is symbolical and a figment of divine conception rather than the essential relation of body and spirit. We get the fuller statement of the truth in the fifth couplet of the Upanishad, Tad antar asya sarvasya tad u sarvasyásya báhyatah; That, the inexpressible Reality of things, is within this universe and each thing it contains, but equally it is outside of this universe and each thing that it contains, — outside it as continent, outside it as transcendent. The omnipresent Inhabitant of the world is equally its all-embracing continent. If form is the vessel in which Spirit dwells, Spirit is the sphere in which form exists & moves. But, essentially, It transcends form and formation, movement and relation, & even while It is inhabitant & continent, stands apart from what It inhabits and contains, self-existent, self-sufficient, divine and eternally free. Spirit is the cause, world is the effect, but this cause is not bound to this effect. Na cha mám táni karmáni nibadhnanti, says the Lord in the Gita; I am not bound by these works that I do, even while I do them. The soul of man, one with God, has the same transcendency and the same freedom.

Spirit contains, dwells in and transcends this body of things. It acts in the world but is not bound by Its actions. The same essential freedom must be true of this soul in the body, even though it may seem to be confined in the body and compelled by Nature's results and its own works. The soul in us has the inherent power not only of becoming in this outward & waking consciousness what it is in reality, the continent of the body which seems to contain it, but of transcending in consciousness all bodily relation and relation with the universe.

From the action of Nature in the Spirit, as from the action of the Spirit in Nature, the same formula of freedom emerges. I have, in God and by God, made myself and my world what we now are; I can, in God and by God, change them and make them what I would have them be. I am not the sport and puppet of Nature and her laws, but their creator and her master. She accommodates herself to me and pretends to herself & me that she is ruling my whole existence, when she is really following, however late, stumblingly and with feigned reluctance, the motion of my will. Instrument of my actions, she pretends to be the mistress of my being. The identity of the soul and God behind all veils is the Vedantic charter of man's freedom. Science, observing only the movement, seeing fixed process everywhere, is obsessed by what she studies and declares the iron despotism of mechanical Law. Vedanta, studying the Force that makes the movement and its cause, arrives at the perception and experience of Spirit everywhere and declares our eternal and indefeasible freedom. It passes beyond the Law to the Liberty of which the Law itself is the creation & expression.

III

It is not enough, however, to know the inner fact and the outer possibility of our freedom; we must also look at and take into account the apparent actuality of our bondage. The debit side of the human ledger must be taken into the reckoning as well as the credit account. The explanation and seed of this bondage is contained in the formula jagatyam jagat; for, if our freedom results from the action of Spirit in Nature and of Nature in Spirit, our bondage results from the action of Nature on all that she has created and contains. Every mundane existence is jagatyam jagat, not a separate and independent motion by itself, but part of and dependent on the universal movement. From this dependence by inclusion derives the great law that every form of things engendered in the motional universe shall be subject to the processes of that particular stream of movement to which it belongs; each individual body subject to the general processes of matter, each individual life to the general processes of vitality, each individual mind to the general processes of mentality, because the individual is only a whorl of motion in the general motion and its individual variation therefore can only be a speciality of the general motion and not contradictory of it.

The multiplicity of God in the universe is only a circumstance of His unity and is limited and governed by the unity; therefore the animal belongs to its species, the tree, the rock and the star each to its kind and man to humanity. If machinery of existence were all, if there were no Spirit in the motion or that Spirit were not Ish, the Master, origin, continent and living transcendence of the motion, this law is of so pressing a nature that the subjection would be absolute, the materialist's reign of iron Law complete, the Buddhist's rigid chain of causation ineffugable. This generality, this pressure of tyrannous insistence is necessary in order that the harmony of the universe may be assured against all disturbing vibrations. It is the bulwark of cosmos against chaos, of the realised actuality against that inconstant & ever-pulsating material of infinite possibility out of which it started, of the finite against the dangerous call and attraction of the Infinite.

The unity of God governs His multiplicity; therefore the more general motion of Nature as representative of or nearest to that unity governs the multiple individual products of the movement. To each motion its law and to each inhabitant of that motion subjection to the law. Therefore Man, being human in Nature, is bound first by Nature, then by his humanity.

But because God is also the transcendence of Nature & Nature moves towards God, therefore, even in Nature itself a principle of freedom and a way of escape have been provided. Avidyayá mrityum tírtwá. For, in reality, the motion of Nature is only the apparent or mechanical cause of our bondage; the real and essential cause arises from the relation of Spirit to Nature. God having descended into Nature, Spirit cast itself out in motion, allows Himself as part of the play to be bewitched by His female energy and seems to accept on Himself in the principle of mind isolated from the higher spiritual principles, her absorption in her work and her forgetfulness of her reality. The soul in mind identifies itself with its form, allows itself apparently to float on the oceanic stream of Nature and envisages itself as carried away by the current. Spirit veils itself from Mind; Ish wraps Himself up in jagat & seems to its own outer consciousness to be jagat. This is the principle of our bondage; the principle of our freedom is to draw back from that absorption & recover our real self-consciousness as the containing, constituting and transcendent Spirit.

Spirit, absorbed in the motion and process of Nature, appears to be bound by the process of becoming as if it were law of being; it is therefore said to be bound by Karma, that is to say, by the chain of particular cause and effect, the natural chain of active energy and its results. But by drawing back upon itself & ceasing to identify itself with its form, it can get rid of this appearance and recover its lordship and freedom. Incidentally, the soul of Man by drawing more and more towards God, becomes more & more Ish and can more and more control the processes of becoming in himself and in others, in the subjective and in the objective, in the mental and in the material world.

This final conclusion of freedom & power in the world is of the last importance for our immediate purpose. Merely to draw back from all identification with form is to draw away towards the Stillness, the Infinity & the cessation of all this divine play of motion. Ever since Buddhism conquered Vedic India and assured the definite enthronement of the ideal of Sannyasa in opposition to the ideal of Tyaga, this consummation has been constantly praised and held up before us in this country as the highest ideal of man and his only path to salvation. But even if for the few this goal be admitted, yet for the majority of men it must still & always remain God's ultimate purpose in them to realise Him manifest in the world, — since that is His purpose in manifestation, — & not only & exclusively unmanifest in His transcendental stillness. It must be possible then to find God as freedom & immortality in the world and not only aloof from the world. There must be a way of escape provided in Nature itself out of our bondage to Nature. Man must be able to find in Nature itself and in his humanity a way of escape into divinity & freedom from Nature, avidyayá mrityum tírtwá. This would not be possible if God and Nature, Brahman and the Universe, were two hostile & incompatible entities, the one real and the other false or non-existent. But Spirit and Universe, God and Nature are one Brahman; therefore there must always be a point at which the two meet; their apparent divergence in consciousness must be somewhere corrected in consciousness, Nature must at some point become God and the apparently material Universe stand revealed as Spirit.

In the profound analysis of the human soul built by the ancient Vedantic thinkers upon the most penetrating self-observation and the most daring & far-reaching psychological experiments, this point of escape, this bridge of reconciliation was discovered in the two supramental principles, Ideal Consciousness & Bliss Consciousness, both of them disengaged from the confusions of the mind involved in matter. Just as modern Scientists, not satisfied with the ordinary processes & utilities of Nature, not satisfied with the observation of her surface forces & daily activities, penetrated further, analysed, probed, discovered hidden forces & extraordinary activities, not satisfied with Nature's obvious use of wind as a locomotive force, found & harnessed the unutilised propulsive energy of steam, not satisfied with observing the power of electricity in the glare & leap of the thunderflash, disengaged & used it for the lighting of our houses & thoroughfares, for the driving of our engines & printing presses, for the alleviation of disease or for the judicial murder of our fellow-creatures, so the old Vedantic Yogins, not satisfied with observing the surface activities and ordinary processes of our subjective nature, penetrated further, analysed, probed, discovered hidden forces & extraordinary activities by which our whole active mentality could be manipulated and rearranged as one manipulates a machine or rearranges a set of levers; pressing yet farther towards the boundaries of existence they discovered whence this energy proceeded & whitherward this stir and movement tended & worked. They found beyond the manifest & obvious triple bond of body, life & mind, two secret states & powers of consciousness which supported them in their works — beyond this limited, groping and striving mind & life which only fumble after right knowledge & labour after the right use of power & even attaining them can possess & wield them only as indirect & secondhand agents, they discovered a principle of ideal consciousness, vijnana, which saw Truth face to face & unerringly, looking on the sun with unshaded eyes, and a principle of all-blissful power & being which possessed in itself, by the very right of its eternal existence & inalienable nature, right joy, right awareness & right action as the very self-atmosphere of its manifestation in the universe. Above this inferior trilogy of matter, life & mind (Annam Prana Manas), there is a superior trilogy of Infinite Being, Force & Bliss (Sat, Chit, Ananda) accessible to us & working on us inhabitants of the lower spheres from the symbol of divine beatific consciousness, the Anandatattwa, as its throne of world rule, the home & fortress of the divine Master, and employing as its distributing & arranging minister the truth-seeing ideal mind to feed, supply & compel the activities of the lower being. They saw, then, being arranged in seven stairs, seven worlds, seven streams of world movement, seven bodies of things, seven states of consciousness which inform & contain the bodies. They saw this material consciousness & this material world as the lowest stair, the least in plenitude & power & joy of these seven divine rivers. Man they saw as a soul dwelling in matter, deriving his activities from mind & holding them in mind but going back in the roots of his being to the divine trilogy. Earth, in the language of their thought, was the footing & pedestal of the human unit, but the heavens of Ananda concealed the secret & ungrasped crown of his world-existence. This conception of the sevenfold form of our being & of world-being helps to constitute the very kernel of the doctrine in the Upanishads. It is the key to their sense in many passages where there is no direct mention or precise reference to any of its seven terms. It is because we miss these clues that so much in these scriptures comes to our mind as a mystery or even as a vague & confused extravagance of disordered mysticism.

In this septuple system of our Scriptures every individual body obeys the laws of matter, every life the processes of vitality, every mind the processes of mentality, every ideal being the processes of ideality and every free soul the processes of Beatitude. The seven worlds are indeed different kingdoms, each with its own nations & creatures, praját, bhútáni. But since God is always one, each separate motion contains in itself the presence and potentiality of all the others; moreover, since it contains the potentiality, it is irresistibly led to develop under its own conditions that which it contains. For this reason Matter in the world tends to manifest Life, Life in Matter to rise into Mind, Mind in vitalised body to be released into Pure Idea, Pure Idea in matter-housed Mind to be consummated in divine Beatitude. The pervading law, therefore, which confines each species to the rule of its kind is only one general rhythm of the movement; it is crossed by a higher upward and liberating movement which leads the becoming we now are to strive for development towards that other, freer & larger scale of becoming which is immediately above it. This fresh rule of Nature, then, appears & constitutes the rule of our freedom as the other was the rule of our servitude.

The principle, "To each motion its law & to each inhabitant of the motion subjection to the law" is crossed and corrected by this other principle, "Each motion contains a tendency towards the motion above it and to each type of becoming, therefore, there comes in the progress of time the impulse to strain beyond the mould it has realised to that which is higher than itself."

In this complex arrangement of Nature where is man's exact position? He is a mental being housed in a vitalised body & he tends through pure idea towards divine beatitude. Now just as matter informed with life, no longer obeys the processes of matter only, but, even while it affects life-processes, is also affected by them and finds its complete liberation in the conquest of matter by life, just as mind in a life body is affected, limited and hampered by vital & bodily processes, but still governs them and would find its own liberation and theirs in the perfect conquest of life & matter by mind, so, since this mental being is really a soul imprisoned in mind, its perfect liberation comes by rising out of the mould of mind through pure idea into beatitude; escaping into beatitude, this mental existence is able to liberate the whole lower system of being by renewing every part of it in the mould and subjecting every part of it to the process of that which we have now become. The mould and process of Ananda is freedom, God, bliss, immortality, universality, & these, therefore, are the laws of being, the *dharmas*, the sum of a divine beatific existence which we put on by rising out of mental ego into infinite Ananda. The motion of pure Idea, vijnana, is the door of our escape in Avidya; for it is the kingdom within us of Truth and Illumination, domain, in the Vedic symbol, of the god of the Sun, the prophetic Apollo, the burning and enlightening Surya. Sa no dhiyah prachodayát.

The base of our being is in Matter, its knot is in mentality, its escape into divine Bliss. Our aim as human beings must be to rise through the pure Idea into divine bliss and there freed from mental egoism & vital and material limitations spiritualise and beatify our whole existence from the base to the summit.

We are a double birth, God the Spirit, God in Nature, Ish and Jagat. In Nature we are bound in our consciousness, because we are there a whorl of its motion, a wave in its sea; in Spirit we are free, for there we are a part of nothing, but one with the indivisible Spirit. But this double is really biune. God, unbound by His divisibility, unbound by His indivisibility, weds the One to the Many in the play of His consciousness, in His ineffable beatitude. There God and Nature meet, Vidya and Avidya embrace each other, our real freedom governs and uses consciously our apparent bondage, the bliss of Transcendence joins hands with the bliss of manifestation, God shows Himself in humanity and man realises himself as divine.

The joy of that reconciliation dwells in the Immortality to which the Vedanta is our guide and its starting point is the recognition by mind of the one Lord in all bodies, the one Spiritual Being in all becomings, átmánam sarvabhúteshu. Since it is the all-blissful Lord who dwells within and Nature is for His habitation and enjoyment, then a state of Nature which is a state of bondage, sorrow-pursued, death-besieged, wrestling with limitations, is convicted of being only a temporary mask and a divinely willed starting-point for the Energy confined in the triple bonds of mortal Mind, Life & Matter to work out its own immortal freedom. The object of life is self-liberation, the only aim of human existence consistent with the dignity and fullness of our being is the escape through Nature to God, out of grief, bondage & death into joy, freedom and immortality. Avidyayá mrityum tírtwá vidyayámritam asnute.

APPENDIX

[*The following passage, written on a loose sheet, seems to be related to the above section.*]

In our observation of the workings of law & freedom in cosmic Nature we cannot fail to be struck by the principle of gradated and progressive freedom by which she climbs up from an apparent rigidity of law to an apparent elasticity of freedom. We observe that matter inert or informed only by an inert principle of motion is the field of rigid law & of fixed process. We observe next that in proportion as life develops in matter, the principle of variation, of flexible adaptability, even of instinctive, if unconscious self-adaptation manifests & increases in her workings. We observe that in proportion as mind develops in living matter this variation, this flexibility & self-adaptation grow into a conscious struggle with & partial domination of the life & matter in which mind operates. From this we arrive easily at certain large corollaries.

(1) Mind, life & matter are, in all probability, one essence, but not one principle. They are three different principles of Nature, each with its separate rhythm, principle of process & mode of working.

(2) Consciousness is the principle of freedom, form is the principle of law; the necessity of dealing with the rigidity of form and its processes is the cause of the limitations of the freedom inherent in consciousness.

(3) Consciousness and life evolve out of matter; they must then have been all the time inherent & involved in matter.

(4) Life itself seems to be an operation of involved consciousness working itself out of the imprisonment in matter. It is therefore conceivable that matter itself may be only a form of involved consciousness.

(5) Mind is a principle of mental self-conscious sensation, action-comprehension, reaction, attraction-repulsion rising into a luminosity (prakasha) we call knowledge of which thought is only the partial system or formula. In Life we notice in the plant & metal a vital sensation, action-comprehension, reaction, attraction-repulsion, essentially the same as the mental but expressed in a different system of values, — values of involved consciousness. In Matter we do not observe sensation, but we do observe the other common activities of Nature. Experimental Yogic psychists assert that matter does also receive & store blind sensations & that the mind of man can discover records of past events in material objects & convert them into values of knowledge. Science even goes so far as to assert that all sensations are an activity of matter & are stored in the brain & can always be turned by memory under some stimulus into values of knowledge. We may say therefore that the essence of consciousness is at least present in matter, but it only organises itself by evolution, through life in mind.

We cannot assert that the present state of consciousness [which is] the consciousness of limited freedom & derived knowledge in man is the last possible evolution of consciousness. It is at least possible that an entirely free consciousness bringing with it a spontaneous instead of a derived knowledge & an entirely free mastery instead of a partially free manipulation of mind, life & matter is concealed in Nature & its unveiling is the final goal of her evolution.

If such a free consciousness exists, there must be a principle in Nature superior to mind as mind is superior to life & matter & this can be nothing else than the Vedic principle called vijnana.

This free consciousness, entire mastery, must be a power of cosmic Nature & cannot be acquired by the individual except by breaking down the habits of consciousness & exceeding the fixed processes by which the individual action is separated & differentiated from cosmic action.

The ultimate evolution must therefore end in the openness of the individual for cosmic or infinite consciousness-being, not limited by individual ego-sense, the workings of free infinite cosmic force, not limited by individual will; possessing entire freedom, knowledge & mastery it must be in its nature an infinite joy & bliss in oneself & in all the cosmic workings which enter into our experience. The highest state of Nature & goal of evolution must be infinite Sacchidananda.

So much we can reasonably infer from the facts of the cosmos as we see them. We then arrive at the Vedanta results without starting from Vedanta; but if we accept the Vedantic premise that all world is only a formation & operation of consciousness, these inferences become inevitable conclusions.

Chapter II

The Golden Rule of Living — Enjoyment & Renunciation

The first line of the Seer's first couplet has given us very briefly and suggestively the base & starting point of the whole thought of the Upanishad; the second line of the same couplet opens to us, with equal brevity, with equal suggestiveness the consummation of the whole thought of the Upanishad. The rest of the eighteen shlokas fill out, complete, play variations; they add much thought that is necessary to avoid error, to perceive supplementary and collateral truths or to guide oneself aright in the path that has been hewn out or to walk with unstumbling footsteps through the doors that have been opened to us; but all the practical need of man and the central gist of the Seer's thought about human life is compressed into these two lines with their few brief words and their thousand echoes.

All the underlying Vedantic conceptions which we have had to bring out in our first chapter, have had reference to the three great practical factors of the human problem as it presented itself to Vedantic thinkers, the reality of spiritual freedom, the appearance of material bondage and the means of escape out of the appearance and into the reality, out of matter into Spirit, out of Nature into God. But these expressions, freedom and bondage, are intellectual, ideal or spiritual terms. This human being though he lays hold on intellect as a guide and aspires to ideality and spirit, does not live centred in those superior movements of consciousness; brain leads his thought when it can, but he lives in the heart & lives in it, too, besieged by the nerves and body. His mentality is, therefore, emotional, sensational and temperamental, not intellectual or ideal, and the practical aspect of his own problem is not limitation or infinity, but the pressure of pain, grief, sorrow and suffering and the possibility of escape from these his ruthless and omnipresent persecutors. He could even be content for a while with death and limitation if, free from this admixture of pain & suffering, his short span of life & circumscribed sphere of action could be assured of that limited happiness which the race at large is vainly pursuing. It was the agony of this problem that seized on Buddha and drove him from his kingly home & rich domestic joys to wander through the world as a beggar and ascetic; to escape from the insistent pain, grief and suffering of the world the Lord of Pity discovered for man the eightfold path, the law of compassion & self-sacrifice, the heavenly door of renunciation and the silent and blindly luminous haven of Nirvana. The Seer of the Upanishad sets before himself the same problem but arrives at a very different solution; for he proceeds not from pity, but from a clear strength and a steady knowledge, perceiving the problem but not overpowered by it, samáhita, dhíra. Dwelling in a world of grief, pain, death and limitation, anityam asukham imam lokam prápya, yet irresistibly impelled by Nature to aspire after joy, immortality and freedom, bound not to renounce that apparently impossible ideal on peril of forfeiting our highest, most consoling and most exalting impulses, how are we to reconcile this ineffugable contradiction or to escape from this unending struggle? This is the problem which the Seer solves in three brief words, tena tyaktena bhunjítháh, again a monumental phrase whose echoes travel the whole of existence. It is because it provides the true practical basis for the solution he is going to suggest that he has preferred to announce at the outset the immediate and active relation of our twofold existence, God inhabiting Nature, rather than the remoter essential relation, God and Nature one Brahman. For the first practical step towards freedom must always be to distinguish between the Inhabitant and the habitation and withdraw from the motion towards the Lord of the motion. It is in the motion that these shadows of limitation, grief and death appear; the Inhabitant is free, blissful and immortal. To escape, then, we must turn from the world to the Master of the world; in ordinary religious parlance, we must renounce the world in order to find and possess God. So also the Gita, after describing our condition, arrived in this transient and troubled world, anityam asukham imam lokam prápya, immediately points out the remedy, bhajaswa Mám. Turn & cleave rather to me, the Lord. But the world was made by its Lord for divine habitation & possession; the object of the renunciation, therefore, cannot be to turn away utterly from the world after abandoning it in itself & in the lower consciousness, but to conquer and repossess it through the divine Krishna and in the supreme & all-blissful conscious being of the Lord. Nivasishyasi mayyeva. Thou shalt dwell in Me utterly, in My illimitable being & not in a limited & mortal experience of the world. To form the basis of the rule of life which the Seer enunciates, we have, then, this practical corollary from the language of his first line: —

To escape from grief, death and limitation we must renounce the world, to enjoy bliss, freedom & immortality we must possess ourselves in the Lord; but since His object in manifesting is habitation of the universe and not its destruction, the bliss must be enjoyed in this universe, through the Lord, and not in the Lord apart from and exclusive of life in the universe.

This is the difference, the capital difference between the Buddhistic solution — with all those later solutions affected & governed by Buddhistic thought, such as Mayavada & monastic Christianity — and the ancient answer of Hinduism to the problem put to man by life. These say, "Abandon life, put away all possession & enjoyment; absolute asceticism is your only salvation"; that said "Abandon the world that you may possess and enjoy it." One is an escape, the other a recoil and an aggression; one is a divorce, the other a reconciliation. Both solutions are heroic; but one is a mighty heroism of difficult retreat and flight; the other a mightier heroism of self-perfection and conquest. The one is the retreat of the Ten Thousand; the other is Caesar's movement from Dyrrhachium to [Pharsalus]. One path culminates in Buddha, the other in Janaka and Srikrishna. The language of the Seer is perfectly framed, as in the first line, to bring about a confrontation of two giant opposites. Tyaktena in the instrumental case suggests a means, and the very first word after tyaktena, undivided from it by any other vocable or particle, the word which gives the object and work of this instrument, the word which sets ringing from the outset the conclusive note and culminating cry of the Upanishad and is suggested again and again in jijivishet, in ko mohah kah shokah, in amritam, in kalyanatamam, in raye, is the magnificent bhunjithah, Thou shouldst enjoy. Tyaga and bhoga, renunciation and enjoyment, have always been presented to us as the two conflicting ideals of human life & thought, — inevitably, for they are the two master impulses of Nature — both of them eternal — and through the ages they have perplexed and tormented humanity by their perpetual companionship in an always unfinished and inconclusive strife, dividing us into Puritan and Pagan, Stoic and Epicurean, worldling and ascetic, & perpetuating an opposition that rests on a false division of a double unity, maintaining a strife that can lead to no final victory. The Seer has deliberately brought these two great opposites & enemies together and using a pointed and unequivocal language, has put them side by side no longer as enemies but as friends and mutual helpers; his aim is by a fearless and puissant confrontation to reconcile and wed them eternally to each other, as he has already in the first line confronted, reconciled and eternally wedded the two apparent opposites, Spirit and world-Nature. Had he said not "Tyaktena" but "Tyagena bhunjithah", from which we might have concluded that he pointed us to renunciation of the world for the enjoyment of God aloof from the world, there would then have been no real confrontation & no great monumental phrase but only a skilful verbal turn of words pointing a contrast rather than effecting a reconciliation. But the instrument of the enjoyment is not renunciation in itself and for itself but the world we have renounced, tena, & the enjoyment is not the self-sufficient joy of renunciation & escape, but the enjoyment of Spirit in the world, the Lord in the motion. By means of all that is thing of world in this moving universe we are to enjoy God &, through Him, no longer as now apart from Him, to enjoy His universal motion, — all this that is moving thing in her that moves becomes the instrument of a divine delight, because the world is God and part of His totality, so that by possessing & enjoying Him we possess and enjoy world also. Enjoyment is to be reconciled then to renunciation & even wedded to it, made to depend upon it as the effect depends upon the cause, to stand upon it as a statue stands upon its pedestal or the roof of a house on its foundations, walls and pillars. Renunciation the means, enjoyment the end, but renunciation of the world as mere undivine, ignorant & fettered motion & becoming, enjoyment of God in Himself & of the world only as a symbol, a formal expression of God; this reconciliation founded on a knowledge of the true nature & purpose of existence is the gospel of the Seer.

The ascetic gospel of renunciation is incomplete by itself; the Pagan gospel of enjoyment is incomplete by itself. Renunciation and enjoyment of the world must be reconciled by substituting inward for outward bliss, the bliss that goes from within outward for the pleasure which seeks to appeal from without inward, joy of God in the form & name of things for joy of the finite appearance and the isolated idea. The reconciliation is to be effected through the consummate experience of Ananda, the divine beatitude at which we arrive by true seeing in the kingdom of the pure Idea, satyadharmena drishtyá.

Let us examine successively this renunciation and this enjoyment. We see, first, that tena refers back to the expression in the first line, so wide, so carefully comprehensive, idam sarvam yat kincha jagatyam jagat, by which the absolute unity of the Inhabitant is affirmed. We are to abandon utterly the world; we are to renounce every least or greatest detail of phenomenal existence, whether held by us in possession or aimed at in our desire; we are to surrender everything whatsoever that we have or may hope to possess or dream of possessing in the universe. We see that the demand in this second line is as sweeping and unsparing as the all-comprehensive description in its base & predecessor. We are to keep back nothing; all that is dearest to us in our outward environment, wife, children, home, friends, wealth, country, position, fame, honour, success, the respect of men, the love of those we cherish, — all that is dearest to us in our inward life; our loves, hates, jealousies, ambitions, sins, virtues, principles, opinions, tastes, preferences, ideals, — these and all we are, our body, life, mind, soul, personality, ego, all, all have to be sacrificed and laid upon a single altar. We must keep back nothing either of our outer or of our inner wealth; for if, professing to make the complete surrender, we consciously

& willingly keep back one doit or farthing, we are thieves before God, committing the Biblical sin of Ananias & Sapphira, — stena eva sah, — conscious or half-conscious hypocrites, — mithyáchárah sa uchyate, — and, even if the holding back be unwilled or unconscious, still are we imperfect sadhakas not yet having the right to grasp our crown. For the natural principle of this surrender is precise: —

As one gives so one receives. God is All & he who would gain all, must give all. The final sacrifice admits of no reservation and even a slight defect of renunciation, however seemingly lofty the scruple, vitiates the purity and effectiveness of the sacrifice.

But since the renunciation asked of us is not the objective renunciation, — although that too is not excluded so far as it is necessary for the real surrender, — since it is not an outward process of flight from the objects of pleasure, it can only be, in essence, an inner sacrifice to the Master of the world, to Ish, the Lord. Since there is only One Lord in multitudinous bodies & to Him the entire world belongs, everything that is offered to the enjoyment not of the one Lord of the world, but to the mind, senses, body as part of the motion, the jagat, is an ignorant sacrifice on a false altar. It may be justified by the great cosmic ignorance so long as that principle of consciousness keeps its hold on us, but it can never bring the supreme good or the divine bliss. A perverse & broken movement, it brings a perverse and broken result.[3] So long as we feel ourselves to be at all separate existences from God and others, anyán, we are here as His deputies and instruments to receive out of what the world possesses so much as the Lord of the world sends or brings to us, and to offer them up not to our mind and senses but to the Master of the Universe seated in ourselves and in others, bhoktáram yajnatapasám sarvalokamaheshwaram. He is the true enjoyer of all sacrifices and works of askesis, the mighty lord of all the worlds. For this reason the Gita directs us to offer up as an utter sacrifice to the Supreme all our actions, all our efforts, all our enjoyments, yat tapasyasi, yat karoshi yad aśnási. Demanding nothing for ourselves, but receiving for Him all that He wills to give us through the action of others or our own, we are to refer them all to Him again for His acceptance. Even what we do, we are to do not for our sake, but for God's sake, not for our personal & self-regarding aims, but for what we see, rightly or wrongly, in the light we have, to be His aim in us, concentrating on the action, not reaching out to its fruit. This rule of life is the greatest we are capable of while still at work in the ignorance and moving subject to the dualities; but if we wish to go beyond, we must proceed to a yet more unsparing sacrifice. The Gita begins with the sacrifice to God of our desires and the fruits of our action; but it goes on to the giving up *into* God, mayi sannyasya, of action itself and even the least internal or external movement towards action, sarvarambhah; it insists, above all & to the end, on the supreme renunciation of the ego-sense, the ahankara, as the one all-satisfying and divine sacrifice demanded by the ego-transcendent Universal Being from the ego-besieged and ego-ridden human soul. We must, in this consummation, fall perfectly passive in mind, life & body & allow the Divine Power to use them from above, as a man uses a machine, wields a sword or hurls a ball to its mark. These formulae of the Gita are, also, the true sense of the inner sacrifice imposed on the seeker by the Isha Upanishad. It is the sacrifice of the lower or motional parts of our being to the higher or divine part — the offering of jagat into the Lord.

---

[3] Gita

The renunciation demanded of us is an inner sacrifice, effected in the surrender to God of all desire and attachment, of all self-will and self-action, and of all ego-sense and separate personality. Desire & attachment to possessions have to be cast & dissolved into the mould of a desireless and all-possessing bliss (Ananda or Jana); self-will & self-action cast & dissolved into the mould of a divine action of the universal Shakti or World Force (Chit or Tapas) which shall use the mind, body and life as a passive, obedient and perfected instrument; ego-sense cast and dissolved into the mould of divine & undivided being (Sat) which regards itself as one in all things & the multiplicity of minds, lives & bodies as only a varied motion of its own divine *unity. This divine being, force & bliss constitute the higher part of man's being centred in the principle of Ananda; they represent the direct, unveiled and unperverted action of the free & blissful Sacchidananda. To this last and supreme Immortality (Amrita) these lower mortal parts of man must be given up as the victims of a high & ultimate spiritual sacrifice in the upward movement of world-Nature.*

Renunciation once determined for us in its spirit & type, we arrive naturally at the other term of this great reconciliation, the enjoyment pointed at in bhunjíthāh. To understand the place and relation of the Seer's gospel of divine immortality & bliss in the thought and development of Hinduism, we must return for a moment to the fundamental Hindu idea of sacrifice. For it is in the light of this original idea of sacrifice that we must understand the ancient transition from Veda to Vedanta. Sacrifice to the gods was from the earliest times the central idea of the Hindu religion, under the name of renunciation, sacrifice to God still remains its whole spirit and teaching. The gods, Masters of natural forces, act in Nature under God in the motional being of the Master of all and distribute their energies to individual movements and creatures; from their store, the individual receives whatever he possesses of capacities, desires & enjoyments; at their hands he must seek whatever, not possessing, he desires firmly to acquire. But the principle of Nature, that great motion and complex rhythm, stands in the harmony & interdependence of the individual & general, jagatyam jagat; the individual, therefore, can neither gain what he has not nor keep what he has except by sacrifice of his personal energies & possessions into the world-substance & the world-energies. By expenditure of what he has, offering it into the general stream of the corresponding force or substance in the perpetual flux and movement of Nature, he is kept safe by the gods or he increases. If it is my purpose to improve my muscular strength, I must first consent to an output, an expenditure in exercise of the strength I already have, allowing it to escape as energy into the world-sum of energy, sacrificing to Vayu and Prithivi; I must accept temporary loss of power, weariness and exhaustion, losing a little that I may gain more; then, what I have given is taken up by the deities in the Jagati and, if the sacrifice has been properly conducted, returned increased, doubled, trebled or even decupled to the giver. As it is in our physical, so it is in our mental & emotional being. I must pour love from myself in feeling & action into the world-stream of love, sacrificing to Mitra; then only what I have given may return to me increased, doubled, trebled, decupled in the love and affection of others or in my own enlarged capacity for loving. The rule, being fundamental & universal, holds good with all internal & external possessions and holdings, the dhanani of the Rigveda. "Foster by sacrifice the gods," says the Gita, "and let those gods foster you; fostering each other ye shall attain the supreme good, — param sreyah." Attaining the supreme good we pass beyond the gods and come to God; we leave Veda to arrive at Vedanta or, rather, fulfil Veda in Vedanta. Then we are no longer content to sacrifice this or that possession, giving a share, making reservations, but offer unreservedly & unconditionally the supreme sacrifice, yielding up on the highest of all altars all that we are and possess; we give no longer to Agni, Indra, Varuna or Mitra, but to the supreme & universal Lord, bhoktáram yajnatapasám. Then, too, we receive in return not wealth, nor cattle nor horses nor lands nor empire, not joys nor powers nor brilliances nor capacities, but God Himself & the world with all these things in them as trifles and playthings for the soul to enjoy as God enjoys, possessing them and yet not possessing, wholly unbound by possession.

Renunciation of some kind, voluntary or involuntary, is the condition of all growth and all existence; by expenditure acquisition, by sacrifice security, by renunciation enjoyment, this is God's universal law of sacrifice. The gods who are Powers of Nature, receiving our due sacrifice, give us the partial gains & enjoyments which come within their jurisdiction; God, receiving our due sacrifice, gives us Himself and in Himself everything that exists in Nature or beyond it.

There is a common agreement in the different schools of Hinduism that to the man who has renounced, God gives Himself in return for his renunciation; our difficulty has been to settle among our many conflicting conceptions what that is in soul existence which God intends to reveal as His very self and to what, therefore, we are called to aspire. The ascetic sees Him in impersonal Being and actionless peace; he believes therefore that we receive in return for renunciation release from phenomena and the bliss of the unconditioned Brahman. The devotee sees Him in divine Personality; he hopes to get, in return for what he offers, Shiva or Rama, Krishna or Kali. Some aspire to the Pure & Bright Stillness beyond, others like the Tantriks, seeing Him as Universal Power, attempt to acquire & feel Him here in a superior & divine power and mastery, yet others would have God in Himself and yet God playing also in His garden of the universe. The reason of these differences lies in our human variation of temperament — for we live in heart and temperament — and therefore of knowledge and approach — for with us mental being seated in the heart temperament determines our knowledge & action, — variations produced by the differently distributed motion in us of Prakriti, of Jagati, of the process of our world-nature. According to our nature we seek God. It is always, in fact, by some principle in Avidya itself that we are moved to exceed Avidya. Even as a man approaches me, says the Gita, precisely in that spirit & in that way I accept and possess him. Ye yathá mám prapadyante táns tathaiva bhajámyaham. The spirit in which the Seer would have us approach the Lord, is an all-embracing universality and the way he chooses for us is to embrace the all-blissful One in the world and in transcendence of the world, as the unity and as the multiplicity, through Vidya & through Avidya, in the Spirit and in the world, by God above Nature and by Nature in God. Ishwara, Brahman, the Life-principle Matariswan, the Bright and Pure Stillness, the supreme & absolute Personality, the triple Purusha, Surya, Sachchidananda, Agni, — successively he presents to us in the course of his thought these names, aspects or images of the Eternal, not that we may accept one and exclude others, but for our soul experience to embrace them all in a multiple & blissful unity. Everywhere he reconciles, everywhere he includes, seeking to understand and not to divide. In this world he gives us the supreme felicity and in that world our joy shall not be other. Why should we refuse to God in ourselves any form of His divine sweetness? There is no dragon watching at the gates of God to deny to us any of the fruits of Paradise; the law of divisibility and opposition ceases when we have shaken from our necks His leaden yoke of Avidya. But in these initial couplets the Seer is insisting especially on a divine life in this world, iha, as the necessary basis of the fulfilment which is held in store for us at the end of the utter & perfect sacrifice. All that we have renounced to Him, action and struggle, thought and knowledge, the rose and the breeze and the moonlight, bird and beast & human being, man and woman and children and land and houses and gold and silver and oxen and raiment, books and poetry and learning and science, mind, body and life are, when renounced, to become the material, instrument and medium of a divine enjoyment, objectively, by all that he keeps for us or gives back to us physically during and after the discipline of renunciation, subjectively, by the whole universe and all that it contains, possessed through a man's senses so far as God in him accepts their action and in a man's soul by sympathy and identity with all beings & with universal Nature. Still, these things will always remain the instrument of enjoyment; the object of the enjoyment, the true object of all bhoga, for the liberated soul, is God, — not Nature, although God in Nature & through Nature. We shall enjoy God in & through His universal manifestation, but always God and never the universe falsely experienced as a thing existent & enjoyable for its own sake, apart from God and different from Him.

The possession of God in the world-transcending height of His being does not exclude possession of God in His world-containing wideness. To the liberated soul there is no high and base, but only one equal divine bliss and perfection.

In the ideal of the Seer we do not cast away life and mind and body into an eternal sleep; removal from universe is not prescribed as a necessary condition before we can take possession of the supreme & ineffable bliss of the Brahman. The Seer asserts on the contrary a liberated bliss in the world and in human life. "He whose Self has become all existences, how shall he be deluded, whence shall he have grief", so rings his cry of triumphant freedom; it does not run "He whose Self is dead to the knowledge of all becomings". The most powerful support and argument of purely ascetic philosophies is the Buddhistic idea, foreign to Vedic Hinduism, that true freedom and true bliss are impossible in the universe and can only become possible if we escape out of it into some world-shunning secrecy of being, whether Nihil or Nirvana. The soul handling objects, it is thought, must be attracted to them; or else the freedom from attraction is so difficult and so rare that it is presumptuous to reckon on it as a practical possibility; in Samadhi the spirit is blissful & free, awaking from Samadhi it is bound to feel or be always susceptible to touches of limitation and of grief; the duality of pain & grief is an irrevocable law of the universe and where there is bliss in the world, there must also be as its companion grief in the world, for unmixed bliss is only possible where mind and its laws are excluded. These are the fundamental ideas of Asceticism and if they were true with this scope and this force, the very foundations of the thought in the Isha Upanishad would be vitiated and annulled; but, although generally held and insisted on by numbers of great saints and lofty thinkers, they are an instance of partial truths, perfectly valid, even perfectly general in their own province, carried in practice beyond their province and so by a false extension becoming, like all exaggerated truths, the foundation of error. They are perfectly true in the field where they apply but they apply only in the limits of mind & so long as the soul is subjected in the world to mind and its processes. But it is not a fact that mind is the supreme principle in the world and its movement & processes the dominant & ineffugable motion and process of the universe. It is only true that mind is the present centre of humanity & to humanity therefore seems, falsely, the supreme principle of the active universe. It is no doubt extremely difficult, without divine aid, for man to escape from mind & living in the world, yet to remain superior to the mental duality of joy & grief, pleasure & pain, which is the ordinary law of our mundane existence. The difficulty of the escape is the justification of Sannyasa. But the escape, though difficult, is not only possible, it is the one real road to our self-fulfilment as the human type of God-existence upon this earth, evam twayi nányatheto'sti. It is possible because the supreme principle and movement of the universe is not mind; the supreme principle is Sat working out through Chit in Ananda, Infinite Being working out through Infinite Force in Infinite Beatitude. The Upanishads demand of us, and not only the Isha but the Taittiriya & other Upanishads, not to dwell in mind untouched by its laws, which would be a laborious & improbable achievement, but to raise ourselves beyond mind through Surya or pure Idea into Ananda and live centred in that principle. From this superior centre, seated free, imperial, Swarat, Samrat, in the mountain citadel of our existence, we can, remaining in the universe, yet govern our use of a subject and no longer rebellious mind, life & body by the process and laws of our blissful spirit and our divine Nature. The superior movement then controls and uses the lower for its own purposes. But since the principle of the superior movement is unmixed bliss, our purposes and activities also must be purposes & activities of unmixed bliss. If we are released only on the levels of mind, then indeed sleep of Samadhi is our one safe & perfect state, for coming out of that sure refuge & retreat, we are again naked in mind and exposed to the efforts of mind to recover its natural supremacy in its own kingdom. Rising to Ananda, liberated in Ananda, living in Ananda, there is no such peril. The kingdom of heaven imposes the will of God on the kingdom of earth, the parardha takes possession of the aparardha, Sacchidananda seizes & revels in the ecstasies of a liberated Manas, Prana and Annam. In opposition, therefore, to the Buddhistic declaration of the omnipresence of grief & pain outside Nirvana, we have in the Vedanta the soul's declaration of its ultimate & eternal independence: —

To live in the world is not necessarily to live in the duality of grief and joy. The soul seated in Ananda, even though it lives the life of the universe, possesses as its dominant principle unmixed *bliss and can use in this world & this human life mind, life & body, sarvam idam, as instruments of God-enjoyment without enduring the dominion of their dualities.*

For the rest, these truths are a matter of experience. Those who have attempted to enjoy the universe before renunciation and, escaping from that error & delusion, have afterwards enjoyed God in the universe after renunciation, know, know with a silent & inexpressible rapture, the alteration & seizing revolution, the immense and ineffable change, the seated sublimity and all-penetrating intensity of that bliss of the Brahman towards which the Upanishad points our faltering and doubt-besieged footsteps. Before renunciation we enjoyed Nature ignorantly as a thing in itself and we worshipped mind and the things of the mind, followed after body and the things of the body, indulged in life and the things of the life; after renunciation we enjoy with knowledge, not the rose, but God in colour and petal and perfume, not a poem but God in the beauty of sound and the beauty of words, not food, but God in taste and in vital satisfaction. That which before renunciation was pleasure, has become after renunciation bliss; pleasure which was transient, mutable and fading, has become bliss lasting and inalienable; pleasure which was uncertain, because dependent on circumstances & objects, has become bliss self-existent and secure; pleasure which was uneven, strained towards preferences, balanced by dislikes, has become bliss equal and universal; pleasure which was even at its highest impure and haunted, held with difficulty and insecurely against a background of loss, deficiency and pain, has become bliss pure, satisfying and perfect as God Himself. Before renunciation we besought objects to yield us a petty joy we did not ourselves possess; after renunciation we perceive in the object & receive from it the immeasurable bliss eternally seated in ourselves. Before renunciation, we enjoyed with desire, seeking and effort; after renunciation we enjoy desirelessly, not in the satisfaction of desire, but in eternal possession, not as *anish*, struggling to gain possession of what does not belong to us, but as *ish*, already possessing all that the world contains. Before renunciation we enjoyed, with egoism, only what the greedy but easily tired mind and senses could grasp, possessing for ourselves and that too only with our own lame, limited and selfish enjoyment; after renunciation we enjoy, without ego-sense, all that we outwardly possess, all that others possess and all that none but God possesses, and we enjoy it not only with our own enjoyment but with the individual and collective enjoyment of all our fellow beings animate and inanimate and with the divine enjoyment of God in the universe. Finally, we enjoyed before renunciation many separate things all of a limited pleasurableness; after renunciation we enjoy one thing in its multiplicity which is all-blissful everywhere. Such is the enjoyment in the world to which the Seer points us in the word, bhunjíthâh; and we have always in addition, — for that transcendence is the condition of this secure universality, — the bliss of the Lord's pure being in His self-existence beyond and above the motion of the universe.

Chapter III

The Golden Rule of Life — Desire, Egoism and Possession

Ma gridhah kasyaswid dhanam.

Immediately after this great fundamental reconciliation, the Seer proceeds to a phrase which under a form of familiar commonness conceals an immoderate wealth of spiritual suggestion. "Lust not after any man's possession." Má gridhah kasyaswid dhanam.

We seem to have stumbled out of deep and strange waters into a very familiar shallow. Read superficially and without an eye to the words that precede or to the whole serried thought of the Upanishad, this closing cadence of the Seer's opening sloka would suggest only a commonplace ethical suggestion identical in form & spirit with the last of the Mosaic commandments, — just as read superficially and apart from the coherent & interwoven thought of the Upanishad tyaktena bhunjítháh need not go beyond a rule of moral self-discipline in which the aim of the Epicurean finds itself married to the method of the Stoic. But the Upanishads are never, like Greek epic & Jewish scripture, simply ethical in their intention. Their transcendence of the ethical plane is part of their profounder observation of life & soul-experience. The Greeks sought always for a rule of moral training & self-discipline; the Mosaic Law imposed always a rule of outward conduct; and both aimed at an ethical balance of mind or an ethical balance of action; but the Vedanta rejects all mere balancing and arrangement. The Vedic thinkers went straight towards the soul and an inner rebirth. A radical change of outlook on life was their motive force for the change, if any, of outward conduct; a complete revolution & renovation of the soul was its demand on the inner life of man. Troubling themselves little with the management of conduct & feeling always for the springs of life & action, they left the care of ethics to other Shastras; neglecting comparatively the regulation of temperament, they searched for that within from which temperament proceeds and by which it can be automatically regulated. When once that secret spring is touched, when once the soul is found & the lord of the temple manifests himself, ethics with its outer intellectual & emotional sanctions becomes superfluous; the outward life then flows spontaneously out of the sweetness, power & fullness of a supreme inner change. To the Vedantin the ethical stage is only important as a preliminary clearing in the jungle of desires & passions which prevents us from even attempting seriously to find our way through to the temple of the Lord.

Is there here the indication of such a preliminary ethical self-preparation? No; for it is the constant literary principle of these inspired writings that each phrase in Veda, as in the motion of the universe itself, lives not to itself but goes back to all that has gone before and reaches out to all that is coming; all moreover obey an unexpressed central unity which once grasped, illumines the whole text, but without which these writings break up into a mass of disconnected thoughts. In this Upanishad the one central thought is multiplicity of existence unified and freed from the sense of the dividing ego. The Seer does not allow himself for a moment either to ignore or to deny the multiple existences of the universe, but neither will he for a moment allow us to forget that all these many are really one, all this variety exists in its own unity, Jagat in Ish, the moving Brahman in the stillness, sarvabhutani in Atman, the many Purushas in the One. The present phrase, understood as an ordinary ethical rule, would be a contradiction and not an affirmation of the one ever-present and unifying thought of the Isha Upanishad. It would provide us with a preliminary rule of life founded upon the acceptance & not the denial of the dividing ego-sense. The ethical rule against covetousness is an ordinary human rule and stands on a strong affirmation of the ego-sense & it has no meaning in a gospel of divine life & universal consciousness. The phrase can only stand here, not as an ethical rule, but a rule of the inner life, tending not to the confirmation but to the annulment of the ego.

The Mosaic commandment is consistent in itself & with the spirit of the Decalogue. These Judaic moral Ten Tables start from an uncompromising dualism; their conception of righteousness is the straight road decreed for our walking by a personal Deity as different from His ephemeral creatures as the great eternal ocean from the soon-dried & inconsiderable puddles in a rainswept highway. The particular prohibition of covetousness stands partly on the idea of the morally seemly, the epieikes of the Greeks; much more (and in the Jewish temperament entirely) it rests on the stronger & more mechanical conception of legal justice between man and man, the Greek dikaion. In either case, it proceeds, like all ethics, from an original acceptance of the egoistic outlook on the universe; starting from the symbols I and thou, mine and thine, its aim and business is not to get rid of the ego-sense but to regulate and check those of its fierce and disorderly movements which poison individual peace and disturb social well-being. Even altruistic ethics starts from this fundamental recognition of egoism. Except in the Vedantised teachings of the Buddha, it does not seek to annul, — rather altruism lives & satisfies itself by an inverse satisfaction of the ego. But the whole aim and spirit of the Vedanta is to annul, to kill, to root out the ego-sense. Similarly ordinary ethics seeks to check, scold and limit desire, as an unruly servant, but would shrink from killing it as an enemy. We are, indeed, allowed by some systems to extend and pasture this eternal hunger, others permit us to satisfy it under severe restrictions; but always we must satisfy desire ethically, with justice & decency, with the sense of measure of the Greeks, avoiding the aischron, the adikon, the perversion, or with the religious enthusiasm of the Jews, shunning offence to the Lord of Righteousness. We must indulge it [in] what we possess or can lawfully acquire, our own wives, not the wives of others, our own wealth, not others' gold and silver and horses and cattle. But in Vedanta, it is wholly improbable that we should have any such ethical & social preaching of the epieikes & the dikaion. The principle of the Vedanta is to make no compromise with the inner enemy, but rather merciless war ending in its utter extinction, jahi shatrum durásadam.

In this Upanishad we have just had a tremendous and sweeping exclusion of all desire, an inexorable demand to give up the whole world spiritually to the Lord. It is incredible that immediately, without transition, warning or explanation of his purpose the Seer, this great master of language & its effects, should immediately weaken his thought & hamstring the great impulse he has created by the intrusion of a shallow and minor injunction, that he should say in effect, "Seeing God everywhere, abandon the whole world in Spirit that thou mayst enjoy the whole of divine existence, — but take care not to lust after other people's property." Such an interjection would be either a grotesquely unneeded warning to a soul free from desire and already enjoying the whole world in a free and pure satisfaction, or the suggestion of a preliminary discipline so awkwardly introduced as to break the effect of the great rule towards which it was intended to lead. We could have understood if the Seer had written, reversing the order of the clauses, "Covet not any man's possession, nay, abandon the whole world and all it contains", or even, though this would be contrary to his effective & cumulative style, "Abandon the whole world &, first of all, abandon the desire for other men's possessions." But he could not have written as it must stand now without link or clue; "Abandoning the whole world, enjoy by the whole world; covet not any man's possession." Even if permissible in any other style, such a vicious stumble is impossible to the divine Muse. The moment we read the line in the light of the whole structure & thought of the Upanishad, the difficulty at once vanishes, the real meaning of the clause emerges. Like all the others it is a smooth and clear surface covering many waters. In the careful structure of the Upanishad it starts naturally from the opening Ishá vásyam and its conclusion tyaktena bhunjítháh and points forward to átmaivábhút sarvabhútáni of the seventh couplet.[4]

Thus understood in its right place as a link between this starting point and the yet deferred conclusion, the thought of the Seer is seen, as he intended it, perfectly simple & straightforward in substance, admirably rich in suggestion. “All forms are various dwelling-places of one self; sorrow proceeds out of desire and egoism contradicting this truth of oneness, ekatwam, from the consequent lust of possession, from the sense that he is he, I am I, his is not mine, the sense that others are kaschid anyah and objects kasyaswid dhanam. This sorrow misbegotten of desire disappears if the mind’s outlook on world can be remoulded in a form of the truth of things & not their false appearance, if it can be made to see that these others, anye, are not at all others, but entirely myself in the world-supporting reality, &, here in world, becomings of myself. Atmaivábhút sarvabhútáni. The decisive mental step to the true perception and practical sign of the true realisation is the selfless purity of the once impure & desiring heart when, possessing by abandonment of desire and by realisation of the one Inhabitant in all persons & bodies, — for person is only persona, a mask, a dramatic role of the sole & universal Personality, — it has ceased to hunger & thirst after what others have in their keeping from the false idea that they are different from myself and their possessions are not already my possessions.” The difference of ideas between the Jew & the Indian becomes at once palpable. “Lust not after thy neighbour’s goods,” says the Jewish lawgiver in effect, “for he is he, thou thou, and thou hast no righteous claim to another man’s possessions.” “Lust not after thy neighbour’s possessions,” cries the Vedantic Seer, “for he is not thy neighbour other than thou, he is thyself & in him it is thy own self that already possesses. Thou hast no need for this desire & this lust.” The object of the injunction is not to accept right ego-sense & discourage greed as wrong ego-sense, but to persuade & lead us to denial of the whole attitude of egoism implied in the lusting after possessions which this particular mind & body do not in the apparent movement of Nature possess, but which are so possessed by us in another mind & body, another habitation of our indwelling Self. In the words of men the letter is nothing. It is the spirit, the supporting stress of thought & the temperament behind which give to the spoken symbol its import & its effect.

---

[4] I have written on this point at a perhaps disproportionate length as an example of the great care necessary in studying the Upanishads. It is not enough to have a correct verbal rendering, everything must be understood in the spirit of the entire unity, not as a separate text apart from its setting. It is only by a strict adherence to this rule that we can really get the secret of the Upanishads.

Let me observe in passing, for the observation is needed in these days of the siege of our religion and philosophy by inadequate European conceptions, that we have here the key to an important difference between Vedantic & Western thought, which is not to the discredit of our great national Scripture. We need not be too sensitive to the reproach that the Vedanta is non-ethical or too eager to vindicate an ethical intention for its teachings. Non-ethical may be either infra-ethical or supra-ethical. Let us beware lest in vindicating the claim of Vedanta to an European eminence & elevation, we bring it down from its own heaven touching domain upon its Asiatic and Himalayan mountain tops. Ancient Indian thought and life regularised in teaching a practical difference which the West admits in practice and denies in theory; it admitted three distinct standards determinant of conduct, the customary law, ethical rule and spiritual state; the mass of our pre-classical literature with its greatness of law & custom, its rich abundance & delicacy of moral aspiration & perfection & its great spiritual altitude faithfully reflects this triple recognition. But in the many provinces, the varying levels of human conduct the Vedanta seeks always the summits; its consistent search is for spiritual truth and spiritual standards. Seeking always that which exceeds & includes the lower life, it exceeded also the limits of ethics, finding Brahman in the all & not in the part, anyatra dharmád anyatrádharmát, otherwhere than in virtue and otherwhere than in unrighteousness, & it fixed its eyes only on so much of conduct as helps us to realise the universality of God, the divine oneness of mankind & the unity of all existences. Avoiding these modern pitfalls, we find the full and profound sense of this final phrase disengaging itself naturally by the light of its surroundings.

In this path the cessation from all lusting after things as the possessions of others is the sign of the dissolution of ego in the heart; for it proceeds from the heart's recognition of the truth that one Lord inhabits all bodies. It shows that the truth is no longer only an idea in the intellect but is being lived in the whole being. The possessions of the one and only Self in one body are also his possessions in all other bodies; what the self in Shyâma owns, that the self in Râma possesses.

The exhortation to freedom from the desire of the heart, Ma gridhah, is the answer to all practical difficulties that may arise from the initial teaching of the Seer. Enjoyment by the world precludes physical abandonment of the world; yet physical abandonment is what we usually contemplate when we use the term renunciation; for although we are mental beings, yet ours is a mentality emmeshed in matter and impelled by that physical Maya to give a materialised or sensible value and a material expression to all our mental conceptions. We hardly admit a truth until we see it cloaked in an outward form or in an outward event & action. What then is this new rule of abandonment which impels not to denial and cessation of world-life, but to a free and perfect enjoyment? We have, at once, the answer in this phrase of the Seer, Ma gridhah. Thou shalt not have the greed of desire in thy heart, — that is the practical effect of the call to renunciation. Mental beings, souls throned in mind, it is in mind our centre not in matter which is to us a mere case, circumference and result of mind, that we should seek our secret of bondage and our means of deliverance. All outward material action is in itself Maya, a thing without self-existent reality. Action is effected only as the outflow and physical symbol of mind; it has no inherent moral or spiritual value, but is capable only of bearing such values as are put on it by the manomaya purusha, the spirit centred and veiled in mind. Humanity still imprisoned in its surroundings, servilely reflects in its mind the habitual impact of outward things, the bahyasparshah, & gives to them a fixed & conventional mental value. The more humanity moves towards freedom & perfection, the more it will live in the mind itself, use outward circumstances of life & matter only as symbols of a free mental existence & fix their values by the mentality they express and not by some conventional standard determined by the action itself in its outward appearances. Therefore tyaga, the inner renunciation, is preferable to sannyasa, the physical renunciation; for the latter takes resignedly account of the present weakness of humanity and its false preoccupation with body and helps indeed that weakness to pass out from itself by the extinction of active existence, freeing us from life, but not freeing life for us; but the inner renunciation leads us through our real nature as mental beings, takes account of our strength and teaches us to insist upon it and realise its perfection in God. Sannyasa is a rapid road of escape for our self-accepted weakness; tyaga is a path of fulfilment, the strait and narrow road, for our slowly-realised divine strength. By this road, supathá, Agni Vaisvanara, God's pure force in man, leads us to our felicity. Nayati ráye asmán.

Bodily action is useful as a pressure on the materialised mind, but the better way is to act from within outwards, not from outwards within. To the man who lives the inner life, mind-state is all-important, bodily action only a variable symbol or a theatrical demonstration. Great spirits have yearned after Sannyasa as a symbol of inner renunciation and freedom; but the truth that has to be symbolised is selflessness in God, not renunciation, which is only a means towards that selflessness.

When desire is driven from the heart, the only necessary renunciation is already accomplished; all other self-mortification is, then, a superfluous austerity which may be severely lofty or even gracious, but can no longer be serviceable for the perfect aim of human existence.

The main intellectual difficulties opposed to the practice of renunciation disappear before this but there is also a more concrete obstacle. We have this high doctrine that the soul in itself is free and God, but bound and divided in world-motion; in the sense of division from God and its fellows it is bound and by its realisation of oneness with God and all beings it recovers its freedom, — ekatwam anupashyatah. But in practice some obscure obstacle interposes itself and baffles of their expected results the intellectual recognition and the emotional surge towards unity. Mankind has constantly been groping for this obscure and elusive knot of our bondage; but though it plucks at this twist and loosens that complexity, it reaches no better result than a temporary easing of the strings of that disastrous net in which the world-Magician has caught our labouring minds. In the midst of our unprofitable labour we hear the inspired voice and receive the illuminating word of the Vedantic Seer, "Má gridhah. Desire founded on egoism is the knot of your bondage; cut through that complexity, undo that twist and you are free." All other loosening of knots is a fumbling search or an incidental labour; desire and egoism slain, every other knot is of itself dissolved and collapses. We have seen that by our very nature as human beings, the knot must be hidden somewhere in our minds, and, particularly, it should be sought in the emotional part of our minds. For where the centre of our active being is, there must be the knot of our bondage, and there also must we seek for the secret of its unloosing. If we had been material beings or centred in matter, the knot would have been in some material habit and the release dependent on a material adjustment; for the individual, perhaps, Hathayoga and the conquest of the body by the physically effective Will would have been the one effective instrument. If we had been vital beings or centred in vitality, the knot would have been some vital obstruction and the release dependent on a vital adjustment; perhaps, then, Pranayama and the conquest by the vitally effective Will of the dualities which affect the nervous life and energy of man would rather have been the true instrument of our freedom. But our centre is mind and especially that part of mind which is sensational in its reaction to outward things & emotional in its valuation of them & in its moral response. We live in that subtle heart in us which taking up into itself the lower bodily and nervous impacts turns them into objects and media of dislike and desire, pleasure and pain and bringing down into itself the higher formations of thought and reason makes them subservient to the same imperative emotional & sensational dualism. We get therefore this law of disciplinary practice: —

Although ego-sense is the cause of the soul's bondage, yet the knot of the bondage in man is in the subtle heart where his active being is centred and it consists in the emotional egoism of desire. To get rid of ego-sense, we must, practically, labour to get rid of desire, for until that liberation is accomplished, the mere intellectual rejection of ego-sense, from which we have to start, *cannot be perfectly operative upon the lower mentality and the vital and bodily existence.*

Desire, the cause of our pain, has itself its cause or rather its secret essence in the ego-sense transferred from the discriminating mind to the responsive heart. Vedantic psychology sums up the motion of the Jagati in our mentality, — the complex thing we call mind, — in a quadruple knot; — the nodus of sense-forming mind reactive to outward impacts, the nodus of discriminating mind receptive and critical of these reactions, the nodus of responsive & formative heart or temperamental mind setting in motion waves of emotional or temperamental consciousness which first forms the stuff of the others & shapes itself out as their reaction and their criticism, the nodus of ego-sense which centralises & relates to one mental self-idea all these functionings; — buddhi, manas, chitta, ahankara. Formed in the discriminating mind, egoism enslaves its creator & descends to dominate the heart. "I am I" cries the discriminating mind, enslaved by egoism, "he is he; mine is mine & not his; his is his & so long as I cannot have or take, I can never regard it as mine." Thus discriminative ego shuts up man in his one bodily habitation and prevents him from enjoying his proper estate, the rich universe, rájyam samriddham, full of beautiful and noble possessions. Egoistic reason turns man into a sort of monomaniac emperor self-confined & limited who fancies himself a prisoner in his single palace, although, really, & if he chose, the wide earth is freely his and all that it contains. The heart accepts from the discriminating mind this false limitation & delusion, undergoes sense of want, sense of confinement, sense of difference & is tortured by their evil emotional results. While desire is our counsellor, pain and suffering must always be our heritage.

We must always remember that if ego were the truth of our being, limitation would not be painful, grief would not be the reaction of our activity. The heart, incapable of excessive yearnings, would rest in its proper circle. But we are capable of excessive yearnings because we ourselves exceed our bodies & circumstances. We are driven by an infinite stress towards increase, because we are ourselves elastic and really infinite. There is always something within us which is dissatisfied with the Is & gropes for the May be, something which is soon tired of present accomplishment & possession & reaches out for something larger, better or at the lowest new. It is the universe, it is infinity that the hidden Angel within us seeks. The Self within us knows its own infinity & sees itself as the lord of its [creation] [.....................................] the heart, more passive & therefore more responsive, receives dimly & without understanding — for it is not its function to understand, but to feel — the silent message. Hence it has this striving, this dissatisfaction, this torture of pain, unease & grief. God puts the heart upon the rack of desire so that it may not be satisfied with smallness. He forces it to aspire towards the greatness & infinity of the Spirit, the mahat, brihat, bhúmá. "Nalpena sukham asti, bhumna sukham asti," cries the Upanishad. There is no abiding happiness in the small; happiness comes by the vast & free.

From the strife of this secret truth & this open falsehood desire in the heart contracts its disquieting double nature of wants terribly unlimited & capacities for enjoyment & satisfaction terribly limited & soon exhausted. The Nature-force available to the individual through his ego-centre is normally confined to the small amount of energy necessary for the maintenance of body, life & mind in their habitual & indispensable activities; there is no real provision in this limited nature for the greater things to which man in his expansion aspires. That he must seek from the infinite; that he must acquire from God or the gods, by effort, by sacrifice. The sound, sane, normal, animal man hardly aspires, perhaps would not aspire at all, but for the stress of hunger, the irritation of other men pressing upon his little share of the world & above all the stimulus of that class of beings just above him whom God has partially or entirely awakened to the beyond. But when we strain beyond the normal circle of our energies, — unless we have sought refuge in God first, — then, after the first fervent joy of struggle and partial success, our instruments begin to fail us, the pleasure we are seeking loses itself or turns into pain, pain of effort, pain of longing, pain of disappointment, pain of incapacity. We advance by suffering, & water the tree of our growth with our blood & tears.

All this pain would be unnecessary, the journey as well as the goal would be Ananda, not suffering but delight, if the ego-sense had not taken possession of our heart & reason. We seek our infinity not only through the finite, but by insisting on the conditions of the finite & exaggerating them. Physical, vital & mental man, acting & striving under these conditions, must always be limited in his realisation and in his best satisfactions never entirely or permanently satisfied. He reaches towards physical, vital and emotional satisfactions which, in the quantity, range or intensity he covets, are & must be forbidden or opposed by his habitual capacities, by his imprisoning & determining environment and by his constant clash with the equally outreaching egoistic desires of other men. He escapes perhaps into mind and seeks an unlimited satisfaction in the enjoyments belonging to that more elastic principle, in art, science or literature; but there too, though freer & better satisfied, he is both fettered by his nerves and body and hedged in by the limitations of the mind itself. The mind in sensational & vital man, incapable of an universal catholicity of possession and enjoyment, measures, divides, erects standards & hedges, rooted customary habits of capacity, fixed associations of enjoyment and fixed associations of failure in enjoyment, till we have built up a whole system of conventional values of pleasant and unpleasant, good and bad, beautiful and ugly, attractive and repellent, and in this mighty forest of conventions, this jungle of dualities move & live; as the forest is unseen for its trees so the fictions of mind, — mind, the purblind stumbler among details, — obscure from us the truth and real bliss of existence. The mentalised body, too, has its own habitual standards of contacts which it can bear and contacts which it cannot or does not wish to bear; therefore we are divided between bodily pleasure and pain and those neutral sensations which conform decidedly to neither of these values. The mentalised nervous energy has, no less, its standards of contacts which it can assimilate and contacts which it wishes to reject, and we have, therefore, to reckon among the links of our life-chain vital enjoyments & vital sufferings, these also divided by their neutral borders. Even when busy with its own proper experiences, the mind has its standard of contacts with which it can harmonise itself and contacts with which it is at discord or else remains unattracted, — grief, joy and indifference are the resultant emotional responses. Based upon these standards each individual or species has built up its own system of habitual wants & cravings and its own arrangement of accumulated conventions. So has grown the huge tree of desire and its associations, sanskaras as they are termed in our philosophies, which has grown out of the seed of ego-sense in the heart and conceals that seed in every part of its flowerings and branchings. Nor is the uprooting of that upas tree a facile undertaking. For desire does not perish easily by enjoyment; it seeks always to renew enjoyment or go beyond; hardly it perishes by surfeit, for it revives or it seeks other objects; nor is it, either, readily slain by coercion, for it sulks concealed in some invisible den awaiting for a treacherous or violent re-emergence and revenge. To finish with desire altogether by attacking & destroying its seed of ego-sense in the heart, is our only escape from present pain and our only safety from renewed suffering.

Man desires because he is infinite Self seated in the ego-ridden heart. The self is one in being and its nature is bliss; therefore the heart confined by ego seeks to reach out to the unity & to realise the bliss but it seeks, mistakenly, through physical and emotional enjoyment in the jagat. Man desires illimitably because he is universal and illimitable; he cannot satisfy his desires illimitably because egoistic self-division persuades him to limit himself to his individual mind, life and body. Man desires with pain & weeping because by creating habitual wants, conventional dualistic standards of delight and false values of grief and joy, pleasure and pain he has bound himself not to recognise infinite Ananda in the world, not to perceive that to the secret self, because it is unegoistic, all things are delight, even those touches which to the mind and body present themselves falsely & unnecessarily as grief and pain. While he persists in these conditions, desire, failure, discontent & pain must be always his *portion. He must recognise the Truth, for the Truth only can set him free.*

Throughout the human ages we seek an escape or a remedy, but all our solutions fail because either they seek escape from the results of ego by affirming the ego or else deny or unduly limit God's purpose in the ego. "Accept your limitations, work and enjoy as perfectly as you may within boundaries," is the creed of a practical Paganism. For a century or two it may serve man's need indifferently, but he is infinite and universal and after a time Nature in him heaves restlessly and strains out towards its element. She accepted the Greek ideal for a century, then rose up and broke it to pieces. "Recognise that you are yourself, others not yourself, and make a rule of life out of the moral consequences of that distinction; desire only that to which you have a right," — this is the solution of ordinary ethics. But still man remains universal; if egoistic vice is the poison of his life, egoistic virtue is not its fulfilment; he breaks back towards sin and unregulated desire or forwards towards something beyond vice and virtue. "Desire what you please, enjoy what you can, but without violating my laws and conventions," is the dyke raised by society; but man is a universal as well as a social unit and the societies he creates are a Procrustean bed which he moulds and remoulds without ever finding his measure. He supports himself on social conventions, laws & equities, but cannot limit himself by his supports. "Desire is sinful; observe duty and the Shastra, discourage & punish enjoyment," is the Puritan's law of self-repression; but duty is only one instinct of our nature and duty satisfied cannot eradicate the need of bliss. Asceticism digs deeper into the truth of things, "Compromise will not do" it cries; "flee utterly from the objects of desire, escape from the field of ego, shun the world." It is an escape, not a solution; God in man may admit escape for the few, but He denies it to the many, for He will not allow His purpose in life and world to be frustrated. Religion digs still deeper: "Replace many desires by one, drive out the desires of this miserable earth by the desire of God and of a future world not besieged by these unsatisfied yearnings." But to postpone the problem to another life is not to solve it; and to desire God apart from life and not in life is to divide the unity of His being. He will indulge a few in that evasion, but not the mass of mankind; therefore the many have to return with hearts still hungry from the doors of the temple; therefore the successive moulds of religion fail, lose their virtue and are cast away and broken. For Truth is imperative and demands inexorably its satisfaction. And the truth is always this that man is universal being seeking an universal bliss and self-realisation and cannot repose permanently on the wayside, in hedged gardens, or in any imperfect prison whatsoever or bounded resting place.

Universal Ananda & possession is our secret nature, to move towards it till it is reached, God's inexorable impulse in His creation. All solutions that deny or conflict with our nature, can only be palliatives, evasions or individual remedies.

It remains, therefore, to accept the two factors of the problem in their entirety and work out a solution on the basis of a reconciliation. This is the aim of the Seer. By the enjoyment of the whole of universal being in God, the legitimacy of the secret demand in us is recognised, by the renunciation of the attempt to enjoy through egoistic desire and in physical possession, the stumbling-block in the way of fulfilment is distinguished and removed. Mind and heart desire the universe; Self alone can possess it and already possesses it. Therefore the whole secret is to shift our centre from mind and heart to the all-blissful Self, from Jagat to Ish, from our temporary place in Nature besieged by the movement, to our eternal seat in the Godhead possessing, overtopping and controlling the movement. We can take the universe and all it contains into our self and possess it, — nay, we need not take, for it is already there; we have only to reveal it to ourselves; but we cannot take it into our hands or permanently keep any slightest part of it in our personal possession. It is too vast for our grasp and too slippery. We can possess the joy of the whole world physically, mentally & emotionally only by possessing it in the Spirit and through the Spirit; the desire to possess its form instead of its joy, or to claim it for the heart, mind & body in us and not for God in heart, mind and body, indriyartham and not atmartham, is the capital error of our egoism. The remedy therefore is to get rid of this desire of false possession and ascend into the truth of real possession. Were we to put this in modern language we should say: Man is evolutionary, not evolved; his present state of mentality in heart guided by reason is a transition, not his final nature; in mentality he is tied to desire, in body to limitation and in both to suffering, but when he evolves from the mental into the spiritual being, he will be free from grief because, living in infinite Spirit, he will have done with desire and limitation. In the true Vedantic view of things we must express it otherwise.

Man is Anandamaya Purusha not yet or always manifested, but in course of manifestation. At present he is manomaya, tied to mind and living by desire; he is besieged therefore by pain and limitation, from which, so long as he remains on the mental level, he can only escape entirely by Sannyasa. But if he has the will, he can even in this life and body manifest his true anandamaya self and become in Nature all-possessing & in life all-blissful.

Since then desire is the knot of our bondage and the seat of our sorrow, the seat must be abolished, the knot cut through or loosened. Chidyate hridaya-granthih, says the Upanishad, speaking of the state of liberation, "the knot of the heart is cut asunder." For the heartstrings are the cords that bind us through emotions of love and hate, attraction and repulsion, to the desire-created falsehoods of the world and hold back the soul from rising to its throne in the Vastness, the natural Righteousness of things, the Love, the Bliss. Desire binds to sorrow because it is the sentinel of egoism, the badge of the soul's subjection to its self-created environment and the veil of our absorption in the limited and fleeting. Egoism is the cause of sorrow, but desire is its seat. "I am I, thou art thou, mine is mine, thine is thine"; this false conception of things is the seed of all evil; but its hold would be transitory, if there were not this compelling emotion of desire which adds, "Thou art not I, therefore thee I must control or possess; mine is mine, therefore mine I must cling to and keep; thine is not mine, therefore thine too I must acquire or seize." If this reaching out to our not-selves is inevitable because our nature is a seeming particularity reaching out to its own real universality, if desire is the sign of the soul emerging out of matter and articulating, with whatever falsehood and stammering, its secret sense that it is the Lord of the universe, yet must it deny & transform itself, if it is to effect its grandiose object. The mighty Asura, Hiranyakashipu or Ravana, Attila, Alexander, Napoleon or Jenghiz, reaching out to possess the whole world physically as the not-self, is the Godhead in man aiming at self-realisation, but a godhead blind and misdirected. The Seer seeks instead to possess in the Spirit and through the Spirit; afterwards what shall be physically possessed or not possessed, is the Lord's business. The first step therefore must always be to get rid definitely of this craving for objects as the not-self in the possession of not-selves. Má gridhah kasyaswid dhanam.

Egoism, seated in the sense of personal difference, is the first element of the heart's error that has to be eliminated. Kasyaswid in the Seer's phrase is absolute and all-embracing like yat kincha and tena; there can be no limitation, no casuistry, no question of legal right or social justice, no opposition of legitimate claims and illegitimate covetings. Nor does dhanam in the Vedic sense include only physical objects, but all possessions, courage, joy, health, fame, position, capacity, genius as well as land, gold, cattle and houses. If we wish to understand the spirit of the rule, we may recall the example of the great Sannyasin who ran after the frightened thief with the vessels dropped in his flight, crying, "Lord, pardon me & take them; I knew not Thou hadst need of them." It is not, indeed, the form of this action that has to be observed and imitated, — the form is a mere symbol, — but the spirit it symbolises; for it breathes of the sense that there is one Lord only in all these habitations and nothing belongs to this body or to that mind or to the mental ego in which their motions are summed and coordinated; but all only to the Lord, one in all bodies. Ishá vásyam idam sarvam. It is immaterial whether a particular object belongs physically to myself or another, is kept with me or stolen from me, surrendered by me or recovered by me; that shall be according to the Lord's play and pleasure. Whether He plays in me outwardly the part of a beggar or the part of a king, of the philanthropist or the conqueror, is not the essential; the essential is that I should know Him in myself and others and live seated in His being and not in my mental ego. Then instead of coveting, enjoying with egoism & sorrowing over loss and disappointment, I shall desire nothing and possess everything in myself, in God and in others, freely, perfectly and universally.

Subjection, seated in the sense of non-possession, is the second element that has to be eliminated. The Lord, the Ish, does not desire, He possesses; desiring objects, we are anish, not lord, pursued by the false dream of non-possession; we see things withheld, things to be acquired, anaváptam aváptavyam. Regarding the object as not-myself, we struggle to possess it, against men, against circumstances, against forces of Nature in the midst of which our body is a straw in a whirlwind, our life an insect fluttering candlewards, our mind a bubble in an eddy. All the while, we are in our souls the Lord and possess everything; all this is our estate. Therefore we have to correct our false idea of not having and, shifting our centre from the anish to the Ish, replace temporary acquisition by eternal possession. Má gridhah dhanam. Liberated in Ananda, I cannot fail to possess all things in myself inalienably and eternally, without being bound to possession or loss as are those who seek & acquire only with personal possession & through the physical body.

The concentration of our vision on the form of things & in the outward motion of desire is the third element of error that has to be eliminated. We desire and suffer because we mistake form and name for essential existence; we fix on the perishable parts of things, a rose, a piece of gold, an acre of land, a horse, a picture, fame, lordship, reputation. All this is jagatyám jagat, myself an object in Nature reaching out to objects in Nature. But the principle of form and name in Nature is motion, separation, flux; therefore my desire & enjoyment in Nature must necessarily be limited, mutable & transient. It is only by shifting the motion of desire to whatever is eternal in the form and name that I can escape from this limitation and this mutability. But the eternal in the form & name of all objects is the eternal in myself

& need not be desired outside myself, or in each thing separately, since it has only to be found in myself to be possessed in all beings & objects. Once more, the universal spiritual possession proves to be all and to include or render immaterial the particular physical possession. Má gridhah kasyaswid dhanam. The treasure you have to seek is in yourself; its possession includes all other possessions. Not only the kingdom of heaven, but all the riches of the earth are within you.

At the same time we must not from this great & vital truth stride forward by a false rigidity of logic into the error of asceticism. Because universal spiritual possession renders immaterial and dispensable the material possession, we must not presume that material possession is worthless & evil. On the contrary by rendering it dispensable and immaterial, it renders it also good and worth having. For so long as the material possession is to our desires & knowledge indispensable for enjoyment, it becomes a bondage & renders life to us a curse & action in the world an evil; but once spiritual possession becomes the root of the matter to us, we become free in the material enjoyment of the object. It no longer binds us, since we no longer either strain after it or suffer by its absence or loss. By that abandoned we enjoy. Even our pursuit of objects becomes a play, the racing or wrestling of boys in a meadow in which there is no evil thought, no harm intended, no possibility of sorrow experienced. Material possession & enjoyment also is intended by God in the human being; for material enjoyment & possession He created this world and made matter its formal basis; but eventually He intends the enjoyment of the object as a symbol of the spirit in the spirit, freely. God in us is the poet, is the musician who throws out some few forms of the infinite world within him into symbols of word or sound, so that the material enjoyment of the sound ceases to be material & becomes a form of spiritual enjoyment and an extension of spirit into matter. I am free at any moment to begin it, at any moment to suspend it; & even when I throw away the temporary outward form of the enjoyment, I keep always the inward eternal form of it in my spirit. So a man who has once seen the Matterhorn rising into the Swiss heavens, keeps always that for which he was sent by the spirit within him to the toils & perils of Alpine climbing; he keeps in his soul the image of the white and naked peak, hard, firm and detached, a supreme image of matter which seeks to persist by solidity, yet is transient in the end like the rose and the insect, which rises towards but never attains that vaulted azure form above of the unsubstantial, unseen but eternal ether in which & by which it lives. He has done that for which the world of form was created. He has seen & enjoyed God in the symbol of the material object. He has embraced & possessed in his soul through the material organ one becoming of the only & eternal Being.

Chapter IV

The next stride of the Upanishad brings us to one of the greatest and most resounding controversies in Indian metaphysics, the quarrel between pragmatism & quietism, action and inaction, as the goal of man's existence or the condition of his highest self. Here, as always, the Seer solves the problem by a reconciliation of the two opposites. The substance of his teaching may be summed up in three mutually complementary & indispensable formulae, the one fulfilling utterly the pragmatic instinct in man, the other fulfilling utterly his quietistic instinct, & the third reconciling these ancient enemies.

In enjoyment continuance of action, in renunciation continuation of action; for continuance of action is the continuance of God's will in the universe.

The secret Spirit in man is always infinitely calm and free from the touches of its action; the sphere of disturbance is always on the surface only of the ocean of being in the waking consciousness. We should attain in waking mind, too, to that stillness; for without it there can be no freedom in our outward living. We should be perfectly & consciously still in the soul even though a whirlwind of action outwardly.

Since we are in the spirit inalienably free & untouched by action, but in the mind seemingly bound and subject to its stains, our true and only way is not to renounce action but to vindicate that secret spiritual freedom hidden within us as a possession for our outward and active mental consciousness. So shall a man be free, calm & joyous and yet through action accomplish God's purpose in him in the motional universe.

The strife between quietism and pragmatism in philosophy and religion is the intellectual symbol of an unaccomplished harmony in man. The universe and all things in it are the manifest Brahman and in the manifest Brahman there are always two eternal aspects, the aspect of incessant and all-pervading action and energy and the aspect of sempiternal and inalienable stillness and peace. The world of matter in which the mental being called man finds himself dwelling is a sensible manifestation of the principle of energy supported by the secret and non-manifest presence of the principle of rest and stability. This world is a manifestation of Force which is never at rest and even the apparent stabilities of Nature prove when analysed to be whorls of motion. All here is jagatyám jagat, motion in her that moves. Yet invisibly filling all her motion, supporting her activities and inspiring them, imposing an essential stability on the apparent flux and reflux of her infinite movement we perceive, not discoverable by the analysing reason, but real enough to the synthetic vision and the perceiving mind, the Sthanu, the eternal, imminuable immutable on which & from which all this motion works and in which all its actions result. Because this Eternal & Immutable is there, the parts & constituents of Nature vary, but its sum is unalterable; its appearances are a whirl of mutable forms, its essence is stable and immutable. Nature herself, manifest to the senses & the material reason only as motion and knowable only in the terms of motion, is equally manifest to the poised & considering soul, dhíra, samáhita, as an infinite power of peace & stillness. On a basis of eternal stability the world exists, to the expression of the stable Eternal it feels itself to be proceeding. Imperfection is its apparent starting point & medium, and the essential term of imperfection is mobility; perfection is its aspiration & goal and the essential term of perfection is acquired status. Through imperfection therefore Nature moves, in perfection it rests. But the perfections which are attainable in the movements of Nature are only perfections of the part and therefore their stability is temporary, illusory and precedent to a fresh motion. Only in an infinite perfection can there be an eternal stability. This perfection is a concealed completeness in us which we have to manifest; we are already an infinite perfection in our being, we have to manifest that hidden thing in our becoming. It is towards this infinite perfection that all things in Nature are, consciously or unconsciously, by her inborn tendency and movement irresistibly impelled. The whole problem of existence therefore resolves itself into some harmony or at least some settlement between these two terms. Whatever ignores either term, be it victorious Science or be it supreme Buddhistic Nihilism, has not understood the terms of the problem and cannot find its solution.

Man dwelling in Nature is compelled towards action and demands rest, lives in imperfection and progresses towards his ungrasped perfection; for action & motion are convertible terms. Action is the motion of man, motion is the action of Nature. All mobility, all change, all play of cause & effect, whether in the mind or the body, whether in animate or inanimate Nature, is therefore karma, action or work, — work is the essential characteristic of Jagati, universal Nature, infinite Force in its universal play. But where then in Nature shall man find rest? Lassitude is not the rest he seeks, sleep is not the rest he seeks; all lassitude, all inertia is still movement but movement of disintegration; sleep is a mass of dreams, sometimes half lit by fugitive and incoherent perceptions, sometimes shut up in a dark shell of bodily unconsciousness. Neither in his bodily nor in his subjective being is a man ever at rest while he lives in this body; what he calls rest is only a change of occupation or a shifting of the action from the waking to the subliminal sleep-consciousness which is always at work behind the waking self. Neither is death the rest he seeks; for death, like sleep, is only a shifting of the habitation, a transference of activity to another field. It is no more rest than the passing of a labourer reaping in a field of corn to work in a field of barley. His temporary & partial realisations of that he seeks are also not man's rest, for from these halting places he moves forwards towards a new activity and a continued journey. Like everything else in Nature man's motion, known to him or unknown, moves towards rest in a perfection which shall be eternal and really stable, not partial and apparently stable. To seek this higher perfection he is eternally moved and if he ever tries at all to rest in the material and temporary, he is soon driven forward again by the inexorable law of his nature to the old imperative endeavour. The frequent attempt of man to escape from his own soul by plunging his head into the running waters of Matter, is one of the recurrent jests, one of the constantly laughable mysteries of the universe. He cannot keep his head down in that alien medium; after some moments he must come up gasping for the necessary breath of his natural existence.

Since we cannot find a real & ultimate peace in material world, that great flux & whirl of movement, we are driven to look within for a principle of eternal stability. To look within is to look behind the veil of our material life. The very movement supposes that material existence is not everything, that our waking consciousness is not the whole field of our consciousness, but only one outward movement of our being & there is something more in us that is curtained and can be unveiled. This attempt necessitates in practice our acceptance of all subjective experiences as realities, not hallucinations, — as much realities as our experience, which is after all itself subjective, of life & death, of hunger & thirst, of wind & sun & rain. All experience, called by us subjective or called by us objective, corresponds in this view to some reality whether of this world or of another or of something beyond world, to some fact which it represents or misrepresents, and the truth of which has, in either case, to be discovered. Now in this inward looking, as we proceed from experience to yet deeper experience, we do come across a principle of eternal stability, a principle of eternal peace within ourselves which we perceive also to be omnipresent and pervasive of all time & space & to exceed & go beyond all time & all space, a principle we can not only perceive, feel & possess but in which we can live. Hallucination or no hallucination, this is a thing which can be seen, can be grasped, can be sensed by the mind, can be entered into, can be lived. Fact of material existence or no, it is an indubitable fact of spiritual experience and seems for a time to be the only wholly blissful fact, the one thing of which we can say Anandam Brahma, Delight is the eternal Reality, Bliss is Brahman. It is as described in the Upanishad, shukram akáyam avranam asnáviram shuddham apápaviddham, luminous, bodiless, invulnerable, without sinews of force & action, pure, unpenetrated by evil, — whether evil of sin or evil of suffering. The soul in this state has for the world, at first & inalienably, either a peaceful or a joyous indifference, — not a repugnance, but an equal-souled acceptance or an equal-souled rejection of all things in the world which it regards not as binding fact but as vision of form and name in itself. What has happened when the soul enters into this stable peace & quiet bliss? It has risen out of action into that principle of Brahman manifest in us which is essentially the principle of transcendent self-stability, Sthanu, anejad, fixed and unmoving, in which & by which this world of apparent motion exists. Passing into that inexpressible peace & stillness, we are liberated from the world; we have entered out of the whirling universe of Nature into Brahman's eternal calm.

The whole of our later Hindu philosophy is full of this mighty realisation of the still, self-luminous & inactive Brahman. In those preBuddhistic ascetics, naked of the world and utterly calm, whom the unresting Macedonian found in the Asiatic ultima Thule of his insatiable march, in the all-conquering soul of Buddha, in the victorious intellect of Shankara, in the aspiration and self-fulfilment of a million saints and hermits before and afterwards our race has aspired with an ultimate and limitless sacrifice, with a sovran self-giving, to the boundless Master of peace. Even the latest of the mighty Ones, the great Vivekananda, who was in outward seeming a storm of speech and thought & force and action, was yet reaching always to the rare, remote & icy-pure linga of Amarnath, the still & silent Mahadeva, as his inmost self & goal; in him too the millennial endeavour, the irresistible yearning endured. But is then this sacrifice really the ultimate sacrifice, this yearning the supreme human tendency, this goal the final & unsurpassable resting-place? If so, the gospel of the Isha Upanishad is either a vain message or a halting place for inferior souls. But the Seer will not have it so. Thou shalt act, he says; for thus has God made thee & not otherwise; other is the fruit of Vidya alone & not the supreme gain, the param sreyah. Nor is he in this insistence departing from the highest teaching of Vedanta. For this sacrifice is not really the ultimate sacrifice; the ultimate sacrifice is the renunciation even of mumukshutva, the giving up to God even of the desire for stillness & peace and of the attachment to inaction and the acceptance in its place, no longer with desire, attachment and passion, but with a free soul, of the Lila as well as the Silence, the great eternal play of the Ishwara no less than his vast eternal peace, the complex and progressively self-fulfilling movement of the Jagati no less than the single & ever-fulfilled immutability of the Ish, the joy of the ejad as well as the calm of the anejad Brahman. That, say the sages, is the final perception of the Vedantin and the supreme consummation of his knowledge when he discovers that there is none bound, none freed, none desiring freedom, but only Brahman variously manifesting, only God in the infinite rest & play of His own Being & becomings, — God & Brahman whom none can bind & who, therefore, even when figured to Himself as man in this apparent cage of a mind and body is still in Himself free — infinitely and for ever. The yearning towards stillness and peace is not then man's supreme tendency; not peace is his goal but divine Ananda of which peace is only the flooring and the threshold. If our ordinary world-existence is that of the Kshara Brahman, which seems to move & change, to be born & grow and perish, & our ordinary soul-state that of the Kshara Purusha who seems to lose himself in the world and to move and change with it, to be born and grow and pass with the mind and body, if the higher existence beyond the mutability of the world is that of the Akshara Brahman, calm, still, unmoving, indifferent, at peace and the soul-state through which we move subjectively to freedom is that of the Akshara Purusha who sits above all this flux & reflux of world-energy at its work, careless of it & untouched by it, udásínavad ásínah, yet is not that the last goal nor the unsurpassable resting-place. Beyond & containing the Kshara and the Akshara Brahman we perceive the supreme existence of the Param Brahma which, transcendent, realises in Itself the harmony of [the] stillness & the movement; beyond and containing the Kshara & the Akshara Purusha we arrive at & inhabit the supreme soul-state of the Purushottama, the Para Purusha, Ishwara & Bhagavan, who, transcendent, is the possessor, user and sovran reality of the movement and the eternal self of the stillness. In Him we find our rest and in Him simultaneously we find our active self-fulfilment; for He alone is our complete and utter being. Buddha and Shankara and our immense ascetic impulse of three thousand years are not the last word of our race nor of humanity; they are the expression of a salutary and violent necessity seizing on man & driving him to abandon utterly the world in its false appearances, by renunciation of all that here we perceive only as motion of Nature, sarvam idam yat kincha jagatyám jagat, they are a divine inspiration and a compelling impulse which will have us by any means and at any cost open our eyes to the truth that not in besotted attachment to the name and form of things, not in the blind, unillumined or falsely-illumined movements of the Jagati, not in that ignorant state of the soul in which it seems to the mind to be anish & not Ish and acts as anish, not Ish, subject and not Lord of the Jagati, is the ultimate fulfilment God intends for us, but there is a stillness beyond the movement which we have to reach, a self-luminousness of the soul in its true peace, freedom & wideness to which we have to aspire. Anyad áhur Avidyayá. But when we have obeyed the impulse, it should, normally, lead us beyond itself; for when we have conquered & transcended the movement, we have yet to surpass and transcend the stillness. Beyond the Kshara & Akshara we rise into the comprehensive infinity of the uttama; lifted above Buddha & Shankara stand Janaka & Krishna, the supreme Yogin & the entire Avatar; they in full action are in entire possession of peace and, conquerors of desire & ego or eternally superior to them, keep their hold on the real and divine bliss of God's triple self-manifestation; they know and exercise the simultaneous & harmonious enjoyment of His transcendent being, His universal Self and His individual play of becoming.

This then is the fundamental position assumed by the Seer, not denying the realisations of the quietistic sages but exceeding the goal of quietism, not preaching attachment to the world, but fulfilling desirelessly & happily, as eternal inhabitant & possessor, God in the world, it asks us to live in God's peace while embracing God's action. Kurvanneveha karmáni; thou shalt verily do actions in the world and not abstain from them; thou shalt not renounce thy human activity among these many kinds of races of thy fellow beings, for God's will in thee is towards action, kurvanneva, not inaction. Evam twayi nányathásti. Therefore, jijívishet shatam samáh, doing all human actions one should accept the full term of human life, not seek to flee untimely from the sambhuti, the birth & becoming in this world or in the human body, not, like the Nihilist, mistake freedom for a silent nothingness, not blindly & impatiently cut short by physical or spiritual means one's full term of life or full measure of human activity. For those who do these things are, inasmuch as they maim the fullness of God's intended self-fulfilment in man, átmahano janáh, self-slaying births, — not less, but in a way even more so, bhúya iva, than the more numerous herd of beings who by an ignorant attachment to bodily life and outward objects maim that self-fulfilment on its other necessary side. To renounce the condition of self-fulfilment is no less a blind darkness, andham tamas, than to be bewildered by the condition and by attaching oneself to the path, sacrifice the goal. All exclusive knowledge is a form & manner of ignorance; all narrow seeking is a mutilation of our secret and ultimate vastness and infinity.

The emphasis with which the Seer enounces the necessity of life and action, kurvanneva, nányatheto'sti, is demanded from him by the truth of things as a necessary counterpoise to the emphasis with which he has declared the necessity of renunciation and the abandonment of desire in the immediately precedent phrases. For the first natural result of renunciation and the abandonment of desire is a tendency to pure peace and stillness, a disinclination to action as the source of all grief & disturbance and an attachment to inaction as the condition of peace, the sango akarmani of the Gita. Desire, in the ordinary machinery of our nature, is the motive-spring to action; by the touch on this spring the whole machine is set and kept working. Nor does God slacken or destroy that human spring till the machine has written out for Him in dual letters of pleasure & pain, joy & grief, sin & virtue, success and failure, upward evolution and backward sliding, the harmony of His inferior rhythms and His lila as the Ego in the kingdoms of Ignorance. But if the spring is destroyed or if the divine finger no longer falls upon it, then the machine no longer works. Egoistic action, the only activity to which mortal mind is habituated or which it understands, is impossible without desire or at least without its essential feature, liking and disliking, emotional, sensational and intellectual preference and rejection. Hence, the first result of unsparing inner renunciation, is not only peace & calm, but inaction. If, departing from that calm of inaction, we seek again to act, the force of habit in past Nature associates with that rhythm of action its old triple gamut, ego, desire and suffering. It is the old keys that again are struck, the old painful music that again quivers through our being. This force of habit in past Nature mistaken for ineluctable law of eternal Nature, this obstinately persistent experience mistaken for ultimate and imperative experience is the root and basis of the quietistic gospel which declares action incompatible with peace & joy in Brahman, the false music of an original Illusion, the morbid throb of a great cosmic disease or, in its law, the ordering link of an incoherent series of sensations and to an unreal soul in its whirl of births a rigorous double chain. It is these phantasms that the Seer of the Isha Upanishad has to conjure, — phantasms of an overhasty metaphysical generalisation, imperfect conclusions of the soul escaping from its fever & mistaking the inactive repose of convalescence for its ultimate state of health. Not inaction & inert repose, but a healthful activity is our final state & release. We escape from this fever and struggle in which we live not by the drastic remedy of extinction but by emergence into right form of action and our true life in God. The Seer justifies God in the world to man by declaring His whole purpose in it, His complete action behind & beyond material appearances and our true infinite & cosmic being. The whole error arises from mistaking the root of our suffering and bondage; the doctors of metaphysics have deluded themselves and us with a false diagnosis. This error the Seer sets right in one of [his] brief, mighty and ample phrases, Na karma lipyate nare, Action cleaveth not to a man.

Action is not the cause of our bondage; attachment is the cause of our bondage. Inaction binds as much as action, if it is stained with attachment; action binds no more than inaction, if we are free from attachment to our works.

The constant association of ego & desire with action is due *to the relapse of the mind back into its egoistic workings, sahankara, sakama. It is this twin relapse which the seeker after perfection has entirely to overcome. We have not either to descend back from non-ego into ego or to take refuge in world-oblivion, but to ascend into God's infinity whose action is eternally unegoistic, cosmic & purely self-fulfilling, nirahankara and nishkama. There we shall find & repeat in our own lives at once the utter reality of His self-collected calm and the perfection of His divine force at work, shama & tapas united in an action which is the fulfilment of a mighty Silence expressing itself in waves of power & bliss. That harmony & oneness of divine calm & divine work is man's ultimate experience & the true nature of God active in the world.*

This high teaching of the Seer, na karma lipyate nare, seems to contradict violently the great current doctrine of the bondage of Karma which Buddha found as an important but subordinate tenet of our early Vedantic philosophy and brought forward from the second to the first plane of our current metaphysical ideas, impressing it in the process so forcibly on the general Indian mind that it has left a dominant and indelible mark on all our subsequent thinking. In order, therefore, to recover the early thought of Vedanta, it is necessary to understand precisely the intellectual basis of the great Buddhistic doctrine and the point at which it separated from the lesser idea of Karma we find indicated in the Brahmanas and Upanishads. In the world as we see it, there are two fundamental aspects or faces in which existence presents itself to our ultimate mental perceptions, first, self-conscious, self-governing existence, secondly, mechanical Force. According to our view of the mutual relation of these two grand entities will be the nature of our philosophy and our outlook on life. If we hold the self-conscious, self-governing existence to be subordinate to mechanical Force, contained in it and one of its appearances and results, then we are naturally & inevitably driven towards the conception of a tyrannous self-existent Necessity as the true nature & governing force of existence; the self-conscious, self-governing entity dwindles into a side play of that Necessity, governed by it & not really self-governing;

conscious only of its movement by that movement itself and not inherently, it yet mistakenly erects one nodus or one stream of mechanical Nature into the false idea of a self. This is the attitude towards life and existence of Buddhism, of materialistic Rationalism and, with one all-important modification, of Mayavada. On the other hand, if we hold the mechanical Force to be subordinate to the self-conscious, self-governing existence, contained in it and one of its appearances and conscious creations, then we are naturally & inevitably guided towards the conception of an all-constituting Self-Conscious Existence & Power, — Brahman, Ish, popularly conceived as Bhagavan, as God, which is the true being & governing force of existence, — then the apparent mechanical Force reveals itself as no blind or mechanical movement of dead life, that insoluble riddle, that ultra-Eleusinian mystery of modern Rationalism, but the conscious Will of the Sole Existence, its Tapas, its Atmashakti or Chit-Shakti which formulates itself freely into laws and processes — the daivyá adabdhá vratá of the Rigveda — for the ordering of the universe. This is the attitude towards life & existence of the Veda & Upanishads. All other philosophies are halting-places or compromises between these two master-conceptions of existence. The wide divergence between the Vedic & the Buddhistic conceptions of Karma arises as the inevitable result of this direct opposition between their fundamental conceptions of existence itself. Both admit that all active existence is of the nature of energy or work. Vedanta uses the terms Shakti, Force, Power, or Prakriti, Processive Working, for the energy, Karma, Apas, work, or the plural Karmani, works, for the activities & effects of the energy; Buddha ignores Shakti & Prakriti, because he denies the existence of God and soul or of any essential unity, but he sums up the work done in the general singular word Karma and elevates this ever indeterminate, ever increasing sum of work, into a determining conception which governs & constitutes our phenomenal existence. He is bound to this position by his idea of the world as void of unity & existence as consisting of a successive continuity of habitual subjective sensations, — sanskaras, — not an inherent continuity of self-existent Being, — whether that being be a self-conscious existence or unconscious Force. For Buddha therefore all phenomenal existence is determined by Karma, the sum of previous works; for the Vedanta all phenomenal existence is determined by the working of Shakti or Prakriti, Force of Nature, under the will & choice of Soul, Self or Spirit. This Soul or Spirit, variously termed Deva, self-luminous conscious Being behind the Force of Nature, or Purusha, informing Male inhabitant and possessor of this female executive Energy, or Ishwara, omnipresent Lord of this Will Power, this Shakti formulated in Force of Nature, is the beginning & end, the continent & inhabitant, the source & material of all objects & existences; for this Shakti, Prakriti or Nature produces all its works, objects & happenings only in the Ishwara's self-extended conscious existence. So, the Swetaswatara Upanishad defines Prakriti as Devátmashaktim swagunair nigúdhám, Self-Power of the Divinity concealed by its own modes of working. The Self in Vedanta is not only Swayambhu, self-existent; it is Swarat and Samrat, self-governing and world-governing. The Ishwara is master and user of his works, not Himself their slave, creature or instrument. Therefore, while Vedanta accepts the law of works as a subordinate and external instrument of rebirth and prolonged phenomenal existence, a bond unreal in itself & even in its action many-sided, elastic and flexible, Buddhism imposes it as the one cause of rebirth & a mechanical and in its action an ineluctable Necessity & rigid chain; while Vedanta becomes by its fundamental conception the gospel of a recovery by self-realisation in outward consciousness of an always existing freedom & mastery in a world which is secretly anandamaya, all-blissful, Buddhism becomes by its fundamental conception a gospel of escape by self-extinction from a sorrowful, intolerable & otherwise ineffugable bondage.

When we go behind metaphysical conceptions and look at the concrete facts of existence on which they stand, we shall find that the law of Karma is nothing else than a statement of the soul's entire subjection to the law of cause and effect. The idea belongs both to ancient Buddhism and modern Rationalism, but is stated in either philosophy on different grounds. Buddhism denies the real existence of soul, Rationalism denies it existence altogether, trenchantly & simply. To the modern rationalist the whole world is simply a working out of material Force and mind itself is a particular working of matter. Mind, in this conception, is a sort of automatical electrical apparatus which receives so many various kinds and degrees of shock, beats out mechanical responses & converts them, also mechanically, into so many forms of sound and idea. Ideas themselves must then be entirely material phenomena, although because they do not assume any of the ordinary visible objectual forms of matter, they falsely appear non-material to our consciousness. That consciousness itself is, indeed, only a subjective & quite subordinate activity of matter. Since the machine is automatic, there is no need to suppose the existence of an intelligent operator. Ego is a fiction of the mind, the soul an ignorant theory invented by the uninformed intellect to explain to itself its own existence. What then is the cause of these thinkings, doings, happenings? Obviously, they must be the workings of material Force of which the chief process is a mechanical causality. Previous workings produce as causes by an unchanging, inherent law of action other workings of Force which stand to them as effects; they in their turn join the general sum of causation, helping to produce new effects. The sum of past workings of Force yet in operation, — so far at least as they are concentrated round the object, — are figured for man as heredity, environment, education, past actions and produce a parent state of things or predisposing condition; its present workings, acting as immediate cause, or the sum of immediate causes, produce out of that condition all new states, actions & events, not intentionally but mechanically, by the joint force or interplay of cumulative and special causes. This is the modern materialistic theory of Karma to which, I presume, the majority of modern thinkers would give some kind of assent. Denying the survival of personality after death, it perceives no need to fathom deeper complexities or enter into more subtle problems. The bondage of Law is inexorable but need not greatly trouble us, since death after a short span of activity acts automatically as a release. To ego in the mind, to our falsely self-imagined soul, even if that ego be so foolish as to chafe and resent the bondage & limitation which is the law of all being, there is always this consolation of a speedy self-extinction in the sum of Matter. But any such resentment is a morbid folly of our intellect. To accept our chains, manipulate, rearrange and use them for our own welfare & that of the race is the gospel of scientific rationalism.

Buddhism views the same set of facts from the other end of thought. Not self-working material force, but a mass of subjective sensations is its reading of the universe. Material existence & action only exist in sensational consciousness and as terms of sensational consciousness; and sensational consciousness only exists as a phenomenon in the void. But behind this sensation-troubled void, there is another state, entity or what you will, Nirvana, in which there is neither this continual birth in phenomena, nor the sensational activity of which continual birth is the nodus. Later Buddhistic schools have supposed Nirvana itself to be void or Nihil, but it does not appear that this was the actual teaching of the Buddha. He left the ultimate metaphysical question aside and fastened only on the practical fact of this bound & troubled sensational existence and that ineffable bliss of release & escape. To escape, that is the goal & end of man. But who escapes? Buddhism denies God, denies the existence of the Atman. There is no one who escapes, only the escape itself. Buddha avoided always the logical difficulty & seized on the practical fact. There is here, undeniably, the phenomenal existence of something which feels, desires, sins & suffers, and the great principle of divine Compassion in him which far more than reason & logic was the master key of his thinking, compelled him only to take hold of this great sufferer, this tormented self-deluder & turn it into that path by which alone it could escape from its own false existence. The path of escape is that moral & intellectual discipline which leads it out of the dual stream of good and bad Karma. To Buddha also the sum of past workings still operative on us is the great preexisting condition which is causal of continued state, action & happenings, past working as cause produces fresh working as effect which again constitutes itself into fresh cause. From this chain there is no escape in

Nature except by perceiving existence as a streaming activity of successive sensational associations or sanskaras and climbing out of the stream by a supreme act of knowledge. For, unlike the modern Rationalist, Buddha's problem was complicated by the belief inherited from Vedic Hinduism that death is not a release; personality survives & in other states, other births, continues to suffer & enjoy, enjoy & suffer through unending Time unless & until the knot is cut, the renunciation of the self-idea envisaged and effected. Then we escape from these running figments of heaven & earth & hell, pleasure & pain, life & death, self & not-self into the shoreless & streamless peace of Nirvana.

Shankara, one of the mightiest of metaphysical intellects, a far greater intellect than the Buddha, though a less mighty soul, built up by his intuitions and reasonings a third position which reconciles Vedic Brahmavada and the Karmavada of Buddhistic rationalism & Rationalistic materialism. Shankara asserts the real existence of the Atman, self or soul which alone exists and is indeed the essential substratum & continent of this phenomenal universe. But he admits with Buddha the absolute rule of Karma, of the law of works, the law of cause & effect over the conscious soul immersed in the phenomenal universe. Is then the soul eternally coerced by its own phenomena, eternally bound to the revolving wheel of its own phenomenal manifestations? No, for freedom is the ultimate spiritual experience. Where then is the point of escape, the door, the egress? The point of escape is for Shankara, as for Buddha, in an ultimate act of knowledge which denies the real existence of the phenomenal world. He erects a rigid antagonism between essential truth and practical truth, paramartha & vyavahara, the one alone we must admit to be true truth, the other we must reject as only apparent truth. This world is a world of action, of karma, & in a world of action the governing practical truth is the law of karma which drives the soul through the endless chain of birth & death & rebirth, whirling for ever betwixt heaven & earth & hell, tossed from good to evil & evil to good, pain to joy & joy to pain, like a tennis ball kept continually at play between two equally skilful players. But all action depends upon and is only rendered possible by relation, and all relation depends upon and is only rendered possible by self-division, by bheda, by dwaita, by the false conception in the soul of itself as not one, but many, by Avidya therefore, by Maya, a great original sin of Ignorance, a mighty cosmic self-deception. Where there are many, relation and action are possible; where there is one, there can be no relation and therefore no action. Atman or Soul is one, therefore relationless and actionless, shantam avyavaharyam, therefore free from karma, from rebirth, from Maya. The rest is a phenomenon of creation produced by the play of active consciousness, jagati, & cast by it like a shadow or reflected image on the surface of the still, actionless & relationless soul. This play, this jagati is Maya which is and is not, — is in itself, for its works are there, but is not, for those works are unrealities; they are a mass of self-deceptions starting from an original self-deception rooted in the principle of mind. What the mind sees is a reality, it is Atman, Brahman, but the ideas, the terms in which mind sees it are falsehoods.[5] All practice therefore, however true for practical purposes in world, is really the plausible & well-arranged play of a falsehood; & practical truth & action are only so far useful that out of them, properly handled, emerges the impulse which leads to cessation from action & the knowledge which denies practical existence. In that cessation, in that denial is man's only escape from his false mental self into the calm essential reality, objectless bliss & relationless self-knowledge of the Atman. We see then that Shankara has practically transmuted or replaced Buddha's vague & undefined Nirvana by this actionless & peaceful Atman, the shanta akriya Sacchidananda, substituted for Buddha's false world of subjective sensations a false world of erroneous ideas starting from the original self-deception of duality, and accepting Buddha's law of karma as applicable only to this false world and Buddha's means of escape by an ultimate act of knowledge, substituted knowledge of real self for Buddha's knowledge of non-self as the essence of that act & the true culmination of inner experience & meditative reason. Shankara like Buddha refuses to explain or discuss how active consciousness came at all to exist on the surface of a sole Self-existence which is in its very being shanta and inactive; he drives, like Buddha, straight at the actual fact of our bondage, the practical cause of bondage and the most direct path of escape from the bondage. These he states for us as he holds them to be established by Scripture, experience & reason & then, the fact once thus triply established, our business is not to account for its existence, which, moreover, must in the nature of things be inexplicable to the mind, since Maya is an original mystery & therefore incapable of solution, but to grasp at the one means of escape, of release, of the great & final liberation. The intellectual difference between the two systems is immense, their temperamental kinship is close. Yet we have this curious result, due to Buddha's stress on the means of self-denial provided by life & its ethical & altruistic possibilities as a preliminary training, that Shankara's system, less intellectually Nihilistic than Buddha's, has been practically more fatal to the activities of the divine power & joy in life in the nation which has so largely accepted his teachings. By denying God in life, by withdrawing the best souls from life, by discouraging through their thought & example, — the thought & example of the best, yad yad acharati sreshthah, — the sraddha of life, the full confident self-acting of Matariswan even in those who have practically accepted & cling to the burden of worldly existence, he has enlarged the original Vedantic seed of ascetic tendency into a gigantic growth of stillness & world-disgust which has overshadowed for centuries the lives & souls of hundreds of millions of human beings. On one side the race & the world have gained immensely, on the other it has suffered an immense impoverishment. The world-fleeing saint & the hermit have multiplied, the world-helping saint & the divine warrior of life come rarely & fail for want of the right atmosphere & environment. The Avatars of moral purity & devotional love abound, the Avatars of life, Krishna

---

[5] The explanations given by modern Adwaitins of Shankara's views, their interpretations in modern thought of his philosophical formulae, are so various & mutually contradictory, that it is becoming as difficult to know the real truth of his views as to know the real & original teaching of Buddha. I give what seems to me to be his teaching & at any rate it is the only logical basis for Mayavada.

& Balarama, manifest themselves no more. Gone are Janaka & Ajatashatru, Arjuna & Vyasa, the great scientists, the great lawgivers. The cry of OM Tapas with which God creates has grown faint in the soul of India, the cry of OM Shanti with which He withdraws from life alone arouses & directs the best energies of a national consciousness to whose thought all life is sorrow, self-delusion & an undivine blunder. Chilled is that marvellous & mighty vigour which flowed out from the Veda & Upanishads on the Indian consciousness & produced the grand & colossal forms of life eternally portrayed for us in the fragments of our ancient art & history & in the ideal descriptions of the Epics.

In Buddhism & modern Rationalism we have the denial of God, the grand negation, remedied for the purposes of life by a subordinate or substitutory conception which encourages the active impulses in humanity; in Rationalism the negation is corrected by a covert reaffirmation of Him in the disguise of a blindly purposeful Nature full of a supreme mechanical intelligence and working out an evolutionary intention in humanity, in Buddhism, by the strong & fruitful affirmation of Karma and of Dharma or ethical religion as the indispensable first condition of escape from Karma; in Mayavada we get back to the affirmation of God, but an ill-balanced affirmation ending for the purposes of life in a practical negation, since God in the world is presented to us as a dream of Maya and God aloof from the world as the only real reality. To get back to the full affirmation we have to return to the ancient Veda. There, we find stated or indicated in every Upanishad, but most succinctly and practically in the Isha Upanishad, Ish, Purusha, Deva as the supreme good; we recover there the perfect affirmation of God & return to the grand, original & eternal negation of all these succeeding negations. There can be no more direct contradiction to the negative element in Shankara's teaching than the uncompromising phrases of the Isha Upanishad, kurvanneveha karmani, nanyatheto'sti, na karma lipyate nare. Both Shankara and the Seer of the Upanishad start from the same premises, the universality of Brahman, the bondage of desire and ignorance, the necessity of escape through the dissolution of the dividing ego-sense in our mentality; but the practical conclusions they draw from these premises reveal somewhere an abyss of divergence. Abstain from actions, cries Shankara, except, for a time, from those that are indispensable and Shastra-enjoined, — and even these do with a view to their early cessation; for action is the master-key of the chain of Maya and only by ceasing from action can a man escape from the grand Illusion of things; only by cessation in relationless knowledge & the eternal stillness of the actionless Brahman can there come the great release from good & evil, from joy & pain, from birth & death, from living & non-living. Verily do actions, cries the ancient Seer, accept thy full term of human life and endeavour; for action is not in itself a chain nor a result of ignorance, but rather a manifestation of the Most High. Action cleaveth not to a man. The difference arises from a divergence in the fundamental conception of God in the world. To the Mayavadin, Ishwara, God in relation to the world, is a supreme term of Maya and therefore like all things in Maya existent yet not existent; to the Seer God is an eternal reality standing behind Chit-Shakti in its works, embracing it, possessing it, fulfilling Himself in it through the world rhythm. Action to the Mayavadin can only be motived by individual ignorance and must always be a knot of that ignorance; action to the Seer can even in our outward consciousness be motived & in the secret consciousness of God always is motived by the divine & universal Force & Bliss at free play in the divine & universal Being. The world is to the Mayavadin a freak of knowledge, an error on the surface of Self, a misconception of mind about Brahman; the world to the Seer is a running symbol of God and a means for His phenomenal self-manifestation in His own active being & to His own active knowledge. God, being unbound by His own activity and its free lord & disposer, man also, being one in self with God, is unbound by his works and, in God, their free master and disposer. Na karma lipyate nare.

Yet, in this divergence of views the dominant sense of our later Indian spirituality has been with the conclusion of Shankara and against the conclusion of the early, the inspired, the supraratational Vedanta. To the modern Indian mind unaffected by European pragmatism it has been untrue that action cleaveth not to a man, — na karma lipyate nare — ; & it has been true that all action results imperatively in bondage, — yah karoti sa lipyate, whoever acts is entangled in his action. The reason for this preference is obvious. Bondage & sorrow in the world are a fact of our daily experience, withdrawal from life an obvious and logical escape; freedom & bliss in the world are only a statement of Scripture, an experience abnormal to ordinary humanity and if eternally existent, then existent in our supraliminal self and not in our waking consciousness. Therefore India failing in the ancient power of Vedic tapasya has inertly accepted & combined the Buddhist Law of Karma & Rebirth & Shankara's gospel of cosmic Illusion & actionless Peace.

We have seen that the statement of the law of Karma is, at bottom, an assertion of the supremacy, complete & effectual in all forms of activity, of the grand cosmic principle of cause & effect. It formalises the subjection of the human life or even the human soul, at least in all its active parts, to the ineluctable dominion of an unending causality. If it can be shown that the dominion is not ineluctable or man himself is or may be above causality, its master and not under its control, then the whole elaborate chain forged for us by outward world-appearances crumbles in a moment to pieces. For Indian philosophy the main practical application for man of the chain of causality was the Law of Rebirth, — a law of the Soul in Nature; for modern Science, which denies the soul and knows nothing about rebirth, its practical application for man as for plant & stone & animal is, simply, the invariable working of material Force or, using a more popular language, mechanical Law of Nature. Even if the soul exists & rebirth be proved a fact, the Law of Rebirth can be to modern conceptions nothing but a particular working of Force, one, therefore, of the many subordinate Laws of Nature. As locomotion is the effect, electricity or steam the cause or motive force, so rebirth, continuity of personality in a material form, is the effect, past action is the cause; it is a law of Nature, on a par in the psychological field with the law of gravitation in physical Nature, that the soul which acts shall be subjected to rebirth as the ineluctable result of its actions.

So stated, and given the necessary premise that individual personality is itself no eternal mystery but only a result and a nodus of natural energies working through the mind, the Buddhists' ineffugable law of Karma becomes a luminous, simple, rational, rigidly logical solution of the problem of personal existence, and like all that is simple and trenchantly logical, it attracts sovereignly at the first glance & tempts the thought to find rest in its symmetry & security. But to a mind on the alert for the infinite surprises of our complex world-existence this simplicity, this rigid logic is itself a danger signal, a warning of error. The more largely & patiently we consider existence, the more we perceive its extraordinary complexity, the multitude of its strands and the variability of its formulae, the more we begin to distrust all simple & onesided conclusions. Even though the world be one in substance and unitarian in principle, it is always infinitely manifold in manifestation and infinitely complex in working. When therefore we have arrived at a conclusion which, attracting by its simplicity, convincing by its force of logical dogmatism, coerces all these complexities to fit a single formula, yet we shall do wisely if we survey our position once again, if we ask ourselves what side of the truth we have omitted from our review of things and whether there are not somewhere incompatible facts which we have too forcefully dismissed or too dexterously got rid of in the haste to reach some goal. As Buddhism by logical dexterity got rid of the human perception of self-existence or Mayavada of the human perception of world-existence or Rationalism of the human perception of a psychic life in us & outside us that overtops our material and bodily activities, our thought can only arrive at the whole truth of things when it learns to ignore and evade nothing, to leave out nothing that God has included but rather to give patiently, justly, dispassionately every fact & every aspect of existence its right value and full place in His scheme of things. If we do not perform the necessary work of self-criticism for ourselves, mankind will eventually do it for us and cast away as falsehoods those exclusive religions or those onesided philosophies which on their too narrow pedestals we have erected with so much & so immature a fervour of self-satisfaction. For Truth in the end is invincible and gets the better of all mankind's temporarily triumphant violences upon her. There are already signs that the mind of the race in India is beginning to react against the exaggeration of the Buddhistic generalisation of Karma to which modern Hinduism has been so long subjected both in life & in thought. The weakness of the Karma theory lies in its absolutist & exclusive generalisation of a great, a fundamental, but still a partial truth, — its overstress on outward human action as a determining factor of the soul's experiences, its insufficient stress on those vaster & more subtle workings of God in man of which outward action is only the partial symbol and the external machinery. It is here that the Upanishads recall us to a wider & sounder view of God in the world & His purpose in action & birth.

Not action but our past soul-states are the womb of our future; not action but desire, attachment and self-immersion of the individualised Soul in mind in a limited stream of the workings of its own executive Nature form the knot in the bondage of rebirth; action, whether of the thought, the speech or the body, is only an outward mechanical process by which the soul-state shadows out or symbolises itself in material life. It has no essential value of its own, but only the value of what it expresses; it can therefore have no binding power upon the soul which originates & determines it. What it does and can help to alter, are merely the mental & emotional values & terms in which soul-state expresses itself and even this function it performs as a partial agent and not as the real determining factor.

If that be true, then we have been grossly exaggerating the power of our actions over our souls, grossly & wilfully accepting in our mental & outward life the tyranny claimed over us by our individual nature, when our hidden relation to her & God's open ultimate intention in us is the very opposite of such a submission to the brute & despotic control of Matter. The relation of the

Swarat to his being, of the Samrat to his environment is our secret & true relation. To conquer one's own nature & fulfil God in world-nature, standing back from her in the soul, free & desireless, but not turning utterly away from her, is the true divine impulse of God in humanity. Life of Nature is intended to be to the soul of man as the Indian wife to her husband, not all in all, for it is to God that he should turn supremely & live in God perpetually, but yet always the half of himself through whose help alone as his sahadharmini, his comrade in works, he can fulfil the divine purpose of his living. The soul to Prakriti is intended to be as the Indian husband to his wife, the image of God in life, for whom she lives & through whom she arrives at the Divinity. We should seek first & live always in God beyond Nature, but God as Nature we should also cherish & enjoy as His symbol of that which is beyond & the appointed means of His active self-manifestation.

In Vedanta, therefore, the true & early Vedanta, the practical freedom of the soul is not to be gained as in Buddhism by self-abolition, — for the ego alone can be abolished, the soul is eternal, began not and cannot end, — nor, as in Mayavada, only by extinction of its activities in actionless self-knowledge, — for God expresses Himself in action no less than in rest; — but rather the soul is eternally free in its nature and its freedom has only to be entirely realised by the mind in all its parts in order to be possessed, whether in action or in inaction, in withdrawal from life or possession & mastery of life, by this outer consciousness which we call our waking self as it is eternally possessed in our wide & true effulgent spiritual being which lives concealed behind the clouded or twilit shiftings of our mental nature and our bodily existence.

Chapter V

The Soul, Causality and Law of Nature.

What then of this causality that we see everywhere? What then of this law and fixed process in all Nature which is at least the indispensable condition of all human activities? How can the supposed freedom of the soul be reconciled with the actual despotism in fact of an ordered Cosmic Energy?

Vedanta does not deny either Law of Causality or Law of Nature nor their fixity nor their imperative control over individual activities; it rather affirms them categorically and, as we shall see, with an inexorable thoroughness far more unsparing than the affirmations of modern Rationalism. But it states these laws in a formula far wider than the rationalist's; it sees not only law of life & law of matter, but law of mind and law of supermind; and it bases the stability and imperative force of all law in the world on an ultimate truth & source of freedom. It is this ultimate conclusion that gives to the Vedantic conception of Causality and Law of Nature an entirely different force and essential meaning from the vast generalisation of mechanical Energy popularised by modern Science. Law of Nature is to Science the tyranny of a self-existent habit in mechanical World-Force which Intelligence, the indulged & brilliant youngest child of material Energy, can use indeed, can convert in its forms or divert in its processes, but from which it has no door of escape. Law of Nature in Vedanta is the normality of a regular or habitual process in self-intelligent World-Force; in other words, — for Chit-Shakti, self-intelligent World-Force can mean nothing else than this, — in the cosmic Will-Power of universal self-existent Being, — of God, of Brahman. The process of Force, then, however fixed, however imperative, is neither mystically self-existent nor mechanically self-determined. On the contrary it depends upon certain relations, exists in certain conditions, amounts to certain fixed motions of the cosmic Will-Power which have been selected from the beginning in the universal Wisdom and, once selected, are manifested, evolved, established and maintained in the workings of cosmic Energy until the fixed moment arrives for their variation or for their temporary or final dissolution. Laws of Nature are, in the pregnant phrase of the Rig-Veda, adabdhá vratá dhruvá yá devá akrinvata; they are the rules fixed and unovercome of active world-being which the gods have made and which they maintain eternally against the powers of dissolution. For the world in the old Vedic conception is a rhythm of action and movement in God's conscious being; or rather it is a combination and concord of rhythms; it is chhandas, it is metre, it is a choral symphony of Jagati & Gayatri, Brihati & Pankti, Tristubh & Anustubh; it is Vak, a formation of His Word, a formal harmony of His self-expressive consciousness, a harmony discovered and selected out of God's infinite possibilities and exposed therefore to the perpetual attack of those infinite possibilities. Therefore even the most well-established laws of Nature, the most general, persistent, apparently eternal and unvariable processes of world-Force, being formations of Jagati, being rhythms and harmonies of God's active Energy, truths of recurrent motion and not truths of eternal status, are none of them indestructible like the sempiternal Being out of which they emerge, but alterable and dissoluble and, since alterable and dissoluble, therefore ever attacked by powers of disorder and world-dissolution, ever maintained by the divine Powers consciously obedient to eternal Will & expressive of It through whom Ishwara has manifested Himself in material, moral and spiritual Nature.

Law of Nature is in God's being what social Law is in man's action & experience, not indestructible essence of that being or indispensable condition of that action, but formed, evolved and willed condition of a regular, ordered, complex and intricately combined self-expression in a harmony of various relations and grouped workings of energy. All existing natural conditions express a realised status and frame and base a farther evolution out of realised status.

Nature itself is Prakriti, working (literally, forward working) of world-Force, called by us Shakti, the cosmic or divine Power of cosmic or divine Will. And because that Shakti is, in the phrase of the Swetáswatara Upanishad, Devátmashaktih swagunair nigúdhá, the self-power of Divine Being hidden by the modes of its own workings, because it is, to use another Sanscrit formula, Chit-Shakti of the Sat-Purusha, Conscious Power of Conscious Being, & because that Conscious Being is infinite, absolute and unlimited in its possibilities and its Conscious Power infinitely, absolutely and illimitably a Free Will choosing freely Its own harmonies and not bound in their rhythms as though in fetters imposed by an alien will, forming, observing and using Its own laws and not compelled, enslaved and used by them, therefore is Prakriti or working of Nature in its laws a self-imposed system, a mighty and ordered Wisdom and not an eternal and inexplicable mechanical necessity. Its laws are formed & fixed processes of world-Force, selected and "loosed forth" by God, srishta, (created, as we loosely say,) out of the illimitable potentialities of self-existence, brought into play out of the depths of His self-being as a rhythm of music is brought out, manifested and arranged, srishta, vyakta, vihita, out of the infinite possibilities of indefinite sound. Self-luminous conscious being precedes, contains and manifests in self-intelligent & self-effective Force; self-intelligent and self-effective Force at once conceals and manifests itself in the mask of Prakriti, the mask of a motional and mechanical working of Nature. We arrive then at this formula of the conception of Law in Nature.

Law of Nature is a fixed process formed by the universal self-conscious Will of Ishwara; it is in its nature a particular or a general movement of that Force. So long as it is maintained, it is binding on things in Nature, but not binding except by His own Will on Ishwara. Fundamental or "eternal" Laws of Nature are those general processes or movements in Conscious Being in which the rhythm of the universe is framed and they would naturally endure unabrogated so long as that rhythm itself is sustained, as it is, in the Will and Being of God.

The Vedantic conception of Causality is equally determined by this initial and fundamental idea of the relation between mechanical process of Nature and the living Will of God. Cause, to the Vedantin, is nimitta, determining means, special determining factor; it is the particular manipulation, impact or application of motive force which brings out of a preexistent arrangement or condition of things new or modified condition and arrangement, the difference effected constituting result. Oxygen & hydrogen as separately manifest gases, the atmosphere, the ether, — or to put it in the old concrete symbolical language of Indian philosophy, the combined presence of Agni, Vayu and Akasha, form in their arranged shapes & relations the preexistent condition; contact & mixture of the two forces with the new vibrations set up by the new relation, sparsha and shabda, are the nimitta, the determining means; the new apparent condition of things, the rupa, shape of water, is the result. Agni latent in the ether & atmosphere is the preexistent condition; friction of the two aranis and the resultant vibrations, sparsha & shabda, are the nimitta; the sacrificial fire is the result. A seed planted in favourable ground is the preexistent condition, sun & rain, agni & jala, are the nimitta; the appearance of an oak tree is the result. In each case what has really happened is that in a certain arrangement of the current workings and a certain relation of the worked out shapes of Force — in this case of the active Life-Energy in the material world — a new arrangement was always potential and latent, water involved in hydrogen, fire involved in the tinderwood, the oak tree involved in the seed and a particular process, that is to say a particular working (karma or apas) of the same Force, the same Life-Energy, has been used to evoke the new shape of things out of latency, out of avyakta, and bring it into manifestation, into vyakta. The previous existence of the oak tree in the seed is not admitted by us because it is not there in realised form and to our erroneous notions realised form is alone reality. But realised form is only the material appearance of a truer reality which is not shaped in matter but only in consciousness: the oak tree is in the seed not in form but in being; for the form is only a circumstance of being and it is contained & latent in the being out of which it is born & which it expresses to formal vision. This latency and this process of manifestation in varying time and place by varying nimitta is, says Vedanta, the whole sense of phenomenal existence.

All cause and result are merely the evocation of a latent and potential shape or condition of things out of the previous condition or status in which it was latent, by some particular movement of a Conscious Force which is progressively passing from status to status and thus manifesting in form all that it holds in itself in being. Cause is only a means of manifestation and not itself a creative power. The real cause is only the Will of God working through its own fixed and chosen processes.

Are we to say, as it is often said, that the preexistent condition of things or arranged sum of force is the real cause out of which the event, the change, the new appearance must inevitably come and the advent of the nimitta a sort of accidental or at least subordinate & variable factor by which the inevitable result happens actually to be induced to manifest itself in outward eventuality? We have no right to say so; for it is not true as a matter of perceived fact that a given preexistent condition of things must lead inevitably in its own nature to a fixed result. In all the cases we have cited the preexistent condition did not necessitate the result and could not have produced it, but for the interference of the nimitta or determining factor, just as the determining factor could not have produced the result but for the preexistent condition. Shall we say, then, that granted a given preexistent condition and a given determining factor we shall have with mechanical certainty a given inevitable result? Again, we have no right to say so. The formula seems at first to hold good where the material of the workings of Force is the most rigid & unpliable and the workings themselves are the most mechanical & regular in their recurrence. But even there the inevitability of things is illusory. The aranis may be to hand, the friction occur, yet the sacrificial fire may never be lit; the seed may be planted, the soil favourable, sun and rain perfectly adjusted in their bounty, but the oak tree may not appear. We cannot even say that any given preexistent condition of things is the sole condition under which a given result can be effected. We say, indeed, taking actual fact for necessary fact, that only by the incubation of favourable soil on the right seed can an oak tree appear; but what we are justified in saying is only that, as yet, we know no other conditions under which an oak tree has appeared. So also we thought that only by the incubation of the earth on the carbon could the diamond be produced; now, other conditions have been found under which this rare formation can be effected. Where the material which the force of Nature uses is more pliant and flexible, the idea of a mechanical Necessity becomes still less credible, is even more feebly substantiated by facts or is directly contradicted. A nation is in its last stage of moral and material decline; the preexistent conditions are precisely the same as in a score of instances in which destruction has followed or are even worse and more favourable to dissolution; the same determining nimitta is applied; but whereas in the previous score of cases the shock of the new impact has determined the anticipated result of destruction, in this worse case the selfsame shock, baffling anticipation, determines the entirely contrary result of rejuvenation, restored strength, energy of expansion, energy even of domination. Either some new factor has entered in unexpectedly or was already existent and even active, but concealed, or else a latent potentiality, which in the other cases remained latent, has here unexpectedly reacted, risen into the active superficial movement and become its dominant and deciding factor. Looking at these things, we are tempted sometimes to say that the whole sum of the past and the whole sum of the present was necessary for any given result in the world to be brought about; we are tempted to speculate that the whole cumulative stream of past active forces, past Apas or Karma, is the one real and inevitable cause of the future. But this is really only a statement of our ignorance; it is only an assertion that what has been, has been and since it has been, must, in any case, have become. It is an attempt to disguise from ourselves a fact that it really confesses, the fact that an infinite possibility of negation or modification, of non-happening or otherwise happening pursues and surrounds every actuality & eventuality in the universe and that we can relate how and under what conditions a thing has happened once or repeatedly and may be expected, if nothing interferes, to happen again, but we cannot fix inevitable cause to inevitable effect.

All event and all process of event is a selection out of infinite *possibility which surrounds the actual past as the Might Have Been and the actual future as the May Be. Of every cause, process & result we can say justly that the result might have been otherwise or the same result spring from some other cause or be effected by some other process. This perception in mind of an omnipresent infinite possibility is a shadow of the soul's perception of the infinite freedom of God.*

What then is it that in any given working of result out of precedent condition by nimitta, fixes the combination of the forces at work, governs their manipulation, selects in one case to be the determining factor a force which in other cases was impotent to decide the eventuality? Is it Chance? Is it Fate? Is it some inexplicable mechanical self-guidance? Or is it supreme intelligent Will, Will that is in its nature Intelligence? Is there a conscious Will or rather a Will-Consciousness which contains, informs, constitutes these apparent forces and objects, but is hidden from our eyes by their multitudinous whirl of motion, by their clamorous demand on the attention of the mind and senses, by their insistent claim that we should submit in thought and act to the tyranny of their workings? This last answer is the solution proposed by Vedanta. It rejects the concept of Chance as only a specious name covering our self-satisfied ignorance of the cause and process of things; Chance is really the free action, not pursuable by us in its details, of a mighty cosmic Providence which is one with cosmic Force. It accepts the reality of Fate, but rejects as a void and baseless imagination the idea of an inexplicable mechanical Necessity; Fate is merely the inevitable working out in itself by a cosmic Will of its own fixed and predetermined self-perceptions. It accepts the idea of a principle of unerring self-guidance in Nature, but is unable to regard that principle as in any way a mysterious agency or an inexplicable birth; Nature guides itself unerringly only because Nature is the self-working of a Self-luminous conscious Existence formulating its Will in fixed processes of things and combined arrangement of event actualised in its own eternal and illimitable being. Nature to Vedanta is only the mask of a divine cosmic Will, devátmashaktih swagunair nigúdhá; Prakriti of Vedanta is no separate power, no self-existent mechanical entity, but the executive force of the divine Purusha at once self-revealed and self-concealed in the mechanism of its own workings. Purusha, conscious Soul, is the divine Poet and Maker; Nature, conscious Force, is His poetic faculty; but the material of His works is always Himself and their stage & scene are in His own conscious being.

Pre-ordered selection out of infinite possibility is the real nature of the power we call Fate. Chance is a secret Providence and Providence the constantly active Self-Knowledge of cosmic Existence and cosmic Will always fulfilling in actuality its foreseen selection of event and means, — foreseen in knowledge, — and preventing the pressure of infinite possibility from disturbing that pre-ordered arrangement. So a poet might work out in execution the original plot and characters as arranged in his mind and reject at every step the infinite possible variations which suggest themselves to him as he writes.

Law of Nature is the fixed system of conventional or habitual relations under which the Purusha has agreed with Himself to work out His pre-ordered selection and harmony. Causality is the willed arrangement of successive states & events and the choice of particular means in accordance with this fixed system of relations by which pre-ordered Fate of things is worked out in actual event.

Fate, Law and fixed Causality bind things in the movement of the Jagati; they do not bind the Purusha or conscious Soul but are the modes and instruments of His free self-working.

We must be on our guard against the idea that in this statement of the problem of predestination the infinite possibility we assert is an otiose and practically non-existent conception, — a thing that Is Not, a mere mental perception, — or that because the course of the world is fixed, the infinite freedom of God which supports and contains that fixity, is an abstraction of no practical moment or no practical potency. Among the many superficial fallacies of the practical man, there is none more superficial or fallacious than the assumption that in face of what has been, it is idle to consider what might have been. The Might Have Been in the past is the material out of which much of the future is shaped. It would not be so if the material life were a self-existent thing, proceeding out of itself, sufficient to itself, ending with itself. But the material life is only a selection, a formation, a last result of an infinite conscious life behind which far exceeds the sum of all that actually exists in form and happens in event. Infinite Possibility is a living entity, a positive force; it is the material out of which God is constantly throwing up the positive and finite actuality. It is therefore all-important for a full and real knowledge of the world to know & see this infinite material as well as the actual finite result and ultimately determined shape of things. God Himself in His foreknowledge foresees the infinite possibilities that surround the event as well as the event itself. The forces that we spend vainly for an unrealised result, have always their ultimate end and satisfaction, and often form the most important determinants of a near or a distant future. The future carries in it all the failures of the past and keeps them for its use and for their success in other time, place and circumstance. Even our attempts to alter fixed process, when that process seems to be a fixed & unalterable law of Nature, are not lost & vain; they modify the active vibrations of the fixed current of things and may even lead to an entire alteration of the long-standing processes of things. The refusal of great minds to accept the idea of impossibility, with which they are not unoften reproached by the slaves of present actuality, is a just recognition of the omnipotence divinely present in us by right of the one supreme Inhabitant in these forms; nor does their immediate failure to externalise their dreams prove to the eye that sees that their faith was an error or a self-delusion. The attempt is often more important than the success, the victim more potent than the victor, not to the limited narrowly utilitarian human mind fixed on the immediate step, the momentary result, but to God's all-knowing Fate in its universal and millennial workings. From another standpoint, it is the infinite possibilities that surround the act or the event which give to act and event their full meaning and value. It may be said that Arjuna's hesitation and refusal to fight at Kurukshetra was of no practical moment since eventually he did take up his bow and slay the Dhritarashtrians & the otiose incident might well have been omitted by God in His drama; but if it had not been possible for Arjuna to hesitate, to fling down the bow Gandiva or to have retired from the fight but for the command of the incarnate God beside him, then his subsequent action in fighting & slaying would have had an entirely different value, the battle of Kurukshetra would have meant something entirely different to humanity & its results on the future life of the nation & the world would have been, comparatively, almost a zero. We can see this truth even with regard to slighter incidents. The fatality which in Shakespeare's drama wills the death of Romeo & Juliet as the result of a trivial and easily avoidable accident, receives all its value from the possibilities surrounding the actual event, the possibilities of escape from fate, reconciliation & for these tragic lovers the life of an ordinary conjugal happiness. These unrealised possibilities & the secret inevitability — of Spirit, not of matter, — which prevents their realisation, which takes advantage of every trivial accident and makes use of it for the swift & terrible conclusion, make the soul of the tragedy. A mechanical fatality must always be a thing banal, dead, inert and meaningless. It is their perception of these things behind the veil, their transcendence of the material fact, their inspired presentation of human life that ranks the great poets among the sophoi, kavis, vates, and places poetry next to the Scriptures & the revelations of the Seer and the prophets as one subtle means God has given us of glimpsing His hidden truths.

The unrealised possibility is as much a part of Fate as the actual event. The infinite possibilities surrounding an event are not only the materials out of which the event is made and help to modify or determine the more distant future, but alone give its true & full value to every human or cosmic action.

God or Spirit then is the Master of His processes and their results; He is the law of natural law, therefore free from that law, nityamukta, the cause of Fate, therefore not bound by Fate but its ruler. Action is the free play in His eternal Being, therefore that Being is not bound by the action. Action does not compel in Him any results which He is not free to accept or to avoid;

it does not entail fresh action unless He so chooses, nor does it produce any modification either in His conscious existence or in the modes & phenomena of His conscious existence except so far as He allows those modes or phenomena to be affected or varied. In His essential being God or Spirit is ever immutable, since nothing ever essentially changes even in the universe, much less beyond the universe; and it is only phenomena in the cosmic motion of consciousness that seem to change. Here too sages have perceived that the change is not really a change, but only a successive presentation of ever recurrent phenomena to the Time-governed eye of conscious Mind. These changes are a play of self-ideas in Conscious Being existing for ever beyond Time & Space, but represented for us in the symbols of Time & Space. Such as they are, the succession of these changes affected by action of man or action of Nature are not binding on Spirit, not an inexorable stream of cause & result which Spirit has passively & helplessly to endure, but a harmony or progressive rhythm of successive states which Spirit has freely arranged in itself. Na karma lipyate.

God acts or rather produces action, produces, that is to say, process & succession of manifested energies in His own being without being bound either by the action itself or by its process or by its succession or by its causes or by its results. In action or out of action He is entirely, infinitely & absolutely free.

But then there arises the difficulty caused to our darkened minds by the false conception that God & world, God & the human soul are different entities. From this division of the indivisible there arises the notion, the fatal noumenal error, the illogical logic, that God beyond the world is free but God in the world is bound, bound to action, bound to sorrow, bound to death and birth, — the great fundamental error which seals our eyes & creates needlessly the insoluble problem of suffering & evil and death and limitation, — insoluble because we have created a false first premise for all our conclusions about the world. God in the world is not bound, but only pretends to mind that He is bound. Mind so envisages Him because it sees Him observing freely the arrangements & processes that He has made &, always associating fixed observance in Nature with inevitable observance, supposes Him to be observing His own laws inevitably, helplessly, not freely. All the more then is man, apparently limited, apparently bound in the meshes of a hundred woven laws, supposed to differ precisely in this from the transcendental Being that That is free & untouched by the world & its works, he a slave and moulded by their pressure into what he is now & will hereafter become. Thence the conclusion of so many philosophies that man here can never be anything but a suffering victim of his works & slave of illusion & only by annulling his existence in cosmos can become free, — free not in the cosmos but from the cosmos. But it is not so. For man is the Lord inhabiting His human temple, enjoying his own play in this mortal mansion built by himself out of his own cosmic being; he has determined what he is and is determining now by his play in works as he has previously determined by his play in internal consciousness what he shall become.

God in the world is not different in nature from God beyond the world but the same. Yad amutra tad eveha. God beyond is eternally free; God here is also eternally free. Spirit in all things & spirit in man are one spirit and not different entities or natures; therefore all spirit being eternally free, the soul of man also is eternally free. Mind in its multiple and dual play is, by its non-illumined state, the creator of this illusion of bondage.

We have in the Gita a striking illustration of God's workings in man which raises in a concrete instance and drives home to the mind the whole difficulty with an incomparable mastery and vividness. The armies of the Pandava and the Kaurava stand facing each other on the sacred plain of Kurukshetra; the whole military strength of India & all its political future have been thrown down upon that vast battlefield as upon a dice board. On one side we see the eleven mighty armies of Duryodhana, greatly superior in numbers, led by the three most renowned warriors & tacticians of the day; on the other the lesser host of Yudhisthira commanded indeed by notable fighters but fixing all its hope of eventual victory on the strong arm and invincible fortunes of Arjuna with Krishna, the incarnate Lord of the world, as his charioteer. But Arjuna, their supreme hope, is on the point of failing them; he is overcome by the magnitude of the approaching slaughter, afflicted by the fratricidal nature of the conflict he has cast down his bow; he has refused to fight. In the great colloquy that follows & forms the substance of the Gita, the incarnate Master of things, among a host of profound & subtle reasonings, uses also this striking exhortation which has become a commonplace of Indian thought, Mayaivaite nihatáh púrvam eva, Nimittamátram bhava, Savyasáchin. “By Me are these already slain & dead, do thou become only immediate means & determining cause, O Savyasachin.” The Universal Will has seen and arranged from the beginning of this great world-act, this vastly planned cycle of natural happenings, the bodily destruction of Duryodhana and his mighty captains; the bow Gandiva in the hand of Arjuna is only the predestined nimitta. By the stream of successive events it has brought about an arrangement of forces in which the nimitta can become operative. There is the preexisting condition; there is the arranged result; there is the determining factor. But supposing this human instrument Arjuna, rejecting the command of the Lord of all things, preferring some hope of spiritual weal, preferring his own moral self-satisfaction, obstinately refuses to be the engine of God’s will in him, in a work so thankless, bloody & terrible. What if he listens only to the natural cry of the human heart, Kim karmani ghore mám niyojayasi Keshava, “Why dost Thou appoint me, O Lord, to a dreadful work?” We say from our human standpoint, that even then the Will of God can & will inevitably be fulfilled by Bhima, by the combined exaltation of the Panchala heroes, by the sudden greatness, even, — for “He makes the dumb man eloquent & the lame to overpass the hills”, — of some inferior fighter; and, in the thought & language of the great infinite Potentiality that stands behind the material actuality of things, this would be the truth, — but not in the actuality itself. For in the God-foreseen actuality of things not only the event, but the nimitta is fixed beforehand. The Cosmic Being is no blind & chance bungler who misses His expected tool & has gropingly to improvise another. Arjuna, too, is the vessel of the universal Will and can only act as It chooses. "The Lord is seated in the heart of all existences, O Arjuna, and He whirls round all existences mounted upon a machine by Maya." Even if Arjuna's mind resists, even if his heart revolts, even if his members fail him, eventually there is a Force greater than the individual & mental will which will, if so destined, prevail upon his mind, his heart, his members. What is that Force? "Prakriti", answers the Gita, "Prakritis twâm niyokshyati." The phrase is nowadays ordinarily interpreted to mean that Arjuna's warrior nature will whip him back to the fight. But the thought of the Gita is more profound & far-reaching. By Prakriti is meant the executive World Force, agent of the will of the Ishwara seated in the heart of all existences, that compels the tree to grow, man to think, the king to rule, the poet to create, the warrior to fight. The character of Arjuna is only one means towards her action, & even that acts not by itself, but in conjunction with the character of Duryodhana, of Karna, of Bhishma, of a million others even to the meanest soldier in either army. Yet left to itself the warrior nature of Arjuna might drive him back indeed to the fight but too late to determine its issue; even, it might be, his personal nature, were that God's will, would abdicate its functions, seized & overcome by universal nature, by pity, by vairagya, by fear of sin, and the fateful battle lose its fated nimitta. What is it that, not in free universal potentiality, but in the fixed fact must inevitably determine his return to his normal action? It is the executive Force of the universal Will which not only fixes personal nature, swabhava or swa-prakriti, but fixes too its working in each individual case, not only prepares the circumstance & the means but determines the action & the event. We seem to have here an overriding Fate, an ineluctable Ananke, even a self-acting mechanism of Nature; but it is not a mechanical inevitability, the result of the sum of our & others' past actions, not even a natural inevitability, the result of either a habitual or an ingrained working of our individual nature moved complexly by internal impulses, outward events & the actions of others; but a willed inevitability, seen beforehand in Its universal pre-knowledge by that sole Existence which is expressing itself here in mind & body, in event & circumstance, and executed by It as its own Will-Force & universal Nature which works out automatically through arranged process & perfectly managed interaction of individual forces that which was foreseen by It & fixed from the beginning of things, vyadadhách chháswatíbhyah samábhyah.[6]

We see then that working of Law of Nature & succession of cause & effect are the process of fulfilment of a Will, a self-effective Intelligence which is superior to working of law & governs, not obeys, succession of cause & effect. That Will is the Lord who inhabits all these animate & inanimate existences, hriddeshe tisthati, the one universal Soul & is master of the Jagati, not bound by her motions & actions. Na cha mám táni karmáni nibadhnanti Dhananjaya. All these actions, O Arjuna, of which I am the cause, bind me not at all; actions do not cleave to me, na mám karmáni limpanti. Still, in the universal Soul of things, we can understand such a freedom & omnipotence; but the affirmation of the Seer has reference not only to the universal Ishwara, but to the individual soul, na karma lipyate nare, action fastens not on the man. How can it be affirmed that man, the individual soul, has any control over the activity of the universal Prakriti of which his action is a part, if that action is predetermined, as the Gita asserts it to be determined, by a higher all-knowing Will? And if he has no control of any kind, what freedom can he have from his actions, from their subjective pressure, from their objective results except the inner freedom of renunciation, of quietism, of indifference? Man, it would seem, can only be free by sitting still in his soul and allowing the great executive world-Force to act out the predestined Will of God, himself caring not for it & in no way mixing himself in the action. Is it not this freedom that the Gita recommends & is not this the action that the Upanishad enjoins, — action worked out mechanically by Prakriti while the soul watches only & knows that it is not the actor? And as for any other & greater freedom, it can only be the freedom by self-extinction of Nara in Narayana, of the individual man in the universal all-inhabiting Ishwara — if indeed the real goal be not some transcendental Impersonality in which man & world & God are all & for ever extinguished.

---

[6] *The following paragraph was written at the top of the manuscript page. Its place of insertion was not marked*:
Causality consists merely in the successive conditions of things in the world, one emerging out of another, & the successive groupings, relations & interactions of forces & processes, by which the Will acts out its rhythm [of] prearranged eventualities. The mechanism is a mechanism of self-possessed & continually waking consciousness that knows its whole future, present & past. The fixity of things & events is merely the term of practical executive wisdom in an original & inalienable freedom.

We might accept this conclusion but for the distinct injunction of the Seer, bhunjítháh, thou shouldst enjoy. Divine Ananda in God at play & God at rest, not loss of interest and a quietistic indifference is the human fulfilment contemplated by the Upanishads. The first error of the human mind is to suppose that because our emotions, our desires, our personal will have an apparent effect upon event & fruit of action, they are themselves the real determinants of those events & the sufficient winners of that fruit; they are neither of these things; they are only one spring of the machinery, only one subordinate working of the universal Will. It is what the universal Will beyond all mentality decides & works out, not what the personally acting will in the material brain & heart hungers after, that determines event. Karmanyevádhikáras te, says the Gita, má phaleshu kadáchana, Thou hast a right to action, but no claim at all on the fruits of action; for the fruits belong to God, they belong to the world-working, they belong to the universal will, they belong to the great purposes of the cosmos & not to any clamorous individual hunger. The second error of the human mind when it perceives itself to be the instrument only of a supreme universal Force or Will, its action to be only a whorl in the stream of universal energy and result to be a predestined event of universal Will partly executable by us, but not independently governable or alterable by our effort, is to argue falsely, confusing the Purusha with the Prakriti, that because our action is subject to universal Nature, therefore the soul also is subject to law of Nature & its only refuge is in quietistic renunciation, in indifference or in the withdrawal from phenomenal living. The real refuge is altogether different; it is the blissful withdrawal from personal hunger & desire, it is the detached but joyous contemplation of individual will as a working of divine or universal Will, it is the withdrawal from egoistic being & the perception of the individual as only a convenient term of the universal Ishwara, of the Jiva as only a form in consciousness of the Ishwara, it is the equal enjoyment of the fruits favourable or adverse not only of individual will, but of the universal will, not only our own joys, but the joys of all creatures, not only the gains which come to our minds & bodies, but those which come to the minds and bodies of all existences; it is to make the joy & fulfilment of God in the world our joy & fulfilment, it is to see one Lord seated in all creatures. This is the delight-filled equality of mind, anandamaya samata, that is in the world our ultimate prize & supreme state in mortal nature, fulfilling itself in a divine freedom equally from desire for the fruit of the action and from attachment to the action itself; the fruit is to be what the Lord has willed, the action is God's action in us for His great cosmic purpose. God Himself, the Gita tells us, has essentially this immortal freedom from desire, & yet He acts entirely; He has this divine non-attachment to the work itself & yet He works & enjoys in the universe & the individual, na me karmaphale sprihá, asaktam teshu karmasu, varta eva cha karmani; for in Purusha He contemplates, blissful & free, Himself in Prakriti executing inevitably His own eternal will in the universe known to Him before the ages began in that timeless, time-regarding conscious self of which we all are the habitations. So is the divine attitude towards existence constituted, the attitude of the Ishwara; a perfect & blissful calm & quietism of the divine soul harmonised & become one with a colossal activity of the divine Power driving before it the ordered whirl of a myriad forces occupying limitless Space & Time towards an eternally predestined end.

It may be objected, that while the divine Purusha standing back from the workings of His Prakriti, not only can be the free upholder, enjoyer & giver of an original & continued sanction to the world-workings, bharta bhokta anumanta, but also, by His eternal immanence as Master of the Will everywhere, is the present Ishwara, the controlling Lord of the action, man, by standing back from the Prakriti as the Soul or Purusha, may be indeed, secondarily to God, the upholder of his individual system, — that formal vessel, adhara, of his soul-states, — may be in some sort sanction-giver to its activities, may be, secretly always & here eventually, the free enjoyer of all world-activities that come within its experience, but is not & because of his individuality cannot be or ever realise in himself the Ishwara, the present Lord and master of Nature. He has freedom, not lordship, — the passive freedom of God in the unmoving Brahman he may indeed acquire or share, but not His active lordship in the moving Brahman. To be mukta but never *ish* would seem to be his destiny. Yet the Gita asserts that the Jivatman also is the Ishwara and the Upanishad declares the identity of the human soul with the divine Lord who inhabits all these motion-built forms of Nature.

In this disparity there is no contradiction. There are two aspects of all existence, the Being & the Becoming, Atman & Sarvabhutani. According as the soul of man either stands out in its human becoming & lives in the twisted triple strand of the mind, body & vital being, of which we are conscious now & here, or, on the contrary, stands back in the divine unity of Sacchidananda, it enjoys either of two states of conscious experience, the individual self-consciousness of the separate Jivatman or the universal divine consciousness of the Jivatman merged or dwelling in God. In the former & inferior self-poise, our status is that of a separate soul, different from the Ishwara & always in some personal relation with Him; a type usually of our human connections with each other & the world, connection of child with parent, servant with master, teacher with taught, friend with friend, enemy with enemy, mechanist & instrument, harp & harpist, or a combination of several kinds of interplay at once, answering to the tangled relations we see in our human existence. This relation, created by the fundamental duality of God's play with His becomings, can be realised by us in our waking consciousness or exist unconscious in our secret soul; but in any case it is a condition of subjection, conscious or unconscious, to the sole Ishwara, since even as enemy or rebel we can act after all only as He chooses, however much, for the delight of the play, He gives us a certain length of rope, a certain range of subjective freedom and lets us believe that we are acting independently of Him or in opposition to His will. But what is it that builds up or constitutes in us these relations of the duality? It is not the soul itself but the activities of the mind, life, body, our thoughts, emotions, sensations; it is not the Purusha but our parts of Nature or parts of Prakriti. The soul or Purusha enjoys these relations because it identifies itself with the activities of Nature working in a special name & form & regards all her other workings from that centre of special consciousness; but since that nature, subject to the universal mechanism and a part of it, is anish, not lord, the soul in mind identifying itself with it is also to its outward consciousness anish, not lord. Nevertheless all the time the soul itself is aware, — not in mind, but beyond it, superconsciously in the veiled, secret & higher parts of our nature where it lives guhahita, — of playing a play, of being itself universal, one with God and lord of Nature as well as its enjoyer. The more we detach ourself from Nature, the more, even in Nature itself, our lordship over her increases, our lordship first over her in our own being, our lordship, secondly, over her in her world-actions. We become more & more in our outward consciousness what the soul really is in the secret caverns of its luminous self-concealment, Swarat Samrat, Self-Ruler & Emperor of existence. Still, until the veil is entirely removed, we are indeed the Ishwara by the present immanence of our will in Life, but partially only, and not only secondarily to God, but in a limited degree. We are indeed always subject entirely to the universal Will or Shakti in Prakriti even when we are increasing our individual control over the processes of her individual and universal working. Still as we become purer channels, more & more of the divine Power pours through us & our motions are invested with a more swift, easy & victorious knowledge & effectiveness upon their environment. But it is only when we stand entirely apart from Nature, yet entirely immanent in her by conscious identification with the universal being, power & bliss of God that we become also entirely Ishwara; for then all walls break down, then with the false separation of individual being from God-being breaks down also the false separation of individual power from God-power and it becomes possible for that divine Knowledge-Will working in us to fulfil infallibly & inevitably its foreseen & intended result, as it fulfils it in the universal working of Nature — foreseen & intended in our waking consciousness, always indeed with a less extended working but still essentially & typically as God works, with a divine science if not the extended divine omniscience, a partial divine victoriousness if not the extended divine omnipotence.

We shall be able to arrive at the precise & practical meaning of this identification & this separation, this detachment & freedom & shall discover the secret of action & rebirth if we look at the actual facts of material life & then at the Vedantic explanation of our conscious existence. We have, to start with, this fundamental divergence already noted between ordinary psychology & the psychology of Vedanta, — the former recognising only three principles, Mind, Life and Matter, or adding at most a fourth, Soul or Spirit, while the latter, with a deeper inlook, a wider outlook, a firmer foundation of daring experiment and probing analysis, distinguishes between various workings of the supra-mental or spiritual principle and encounters in its search seven in the place of three prime elements of conscious being. Sat, Chit, Ananda, Vijnana are four divine unmodifiable principles; they constitute the divine being, divine nature & divine life, and are called in their sum Amritam, Immortality; Manas, Prana, Annam, Mind, Life & Matter, are inferior & modifying principles constituting in their sum in this material world mortal being, mortal nature, mortal life and are called Mrityu or Martya, mortality. The doctrine and instruction of the possibility, the means and the necessity for man of climbing from Mrityu to Amritam, out of Death into divine Life, — mrityum tírtwámritam asnute, is Veda & Vedanta.

The world in which we live seems to our normal experience of it to be a material world; matter is its first term, matter is its last. Life-energy and mind-energy seem to exist as middle terms; but though their existence and activity cannot be denied or ignored, so omnipresent, insistent & victorious is the original element out of which they have emerged that we are led to view them as terms of matter only; originated out of matter, formulated in matter, resolved back into matter, what else can they be than modifications of the sole-existing material principle? The human mind seeks a unity always, and the one unity which seems reasonably established here, is this unity of matter. Therefore, in the fine & profound apologue of the Taittiriya Upanishad, we are told that when Bhrigu Varuni was bidden by his father Varuna to discover, entering into tapas in his thought, what is Brahman, his first conclusion was naturally & inevitably this that Matter is the Sole Existence, — Annam Brahma. "For verily out of Matter are these existences born, by Matter they live, into Matter they pass away and enter in." We arrive, then, by reason considering only the forms of things and the changes & developments and disintegrations of form, at the culmination of materialistic Rationalism and a Monism of Matter. Annam Brahmeti vyajánát.

But here we cannot rest; driven by the Tapas, the self-force of the eternal Truth within, to an ever increasing self-knowledge & world-knowledge, we begin to analyse, to sound, to look at the insides of existence as well as its outsides. We then find that Matter seems to be only a term of something else, of Force, we say, or Energy which, the more we analyse it, assumes a more & more subtle immateriality and at last all material objects resolve themselves into constructions & forms of this subtle energy. Hoping to reconcile our old conceptions & our new results, we make, at first, a dualism of Force & Matter, but we know in our hearts that the two are one & we are driven at last to admit that ultimate unity. But what is this energy? It is, says the Vedanta, Prana, Matariswan, Life-Force or Vital Energy, that which organises itself in man as nervous energy & creates & carries on the processes & activities of life in material form. We find this same nervous & vital energy present also in the animal, the plant; it exists obscurely, it has been discovered, even in the metal. We have, therefore, in the world we inhabit, a unity of Life-Energy in its actions as well as a unity of matter in its formal changes. For modern thinking the problem is complicated by the narrow restriction of the idea of life first, popularly, to the material vessels of a conscious nervous activity, man, the animal, the insect, & then, more widely, to all forms of which organic growth and nervous response are the characteristic activities. Vedantic thought sees, on the contrary, that all energy apparent in matter is one Life-energy; nervous force, electric force, even mental force so far as it works in matter are different forms of one working, which it calls Pranashakti, Energy of Life, formulated force of Existence throwing itself out in the currents & knotting itself into the vessels of its self-adaptive material workings. Life, as we know it, is the characteristic fulfilment of this stream of being. According to the Vedantic idea the characteristic form of any energy is to be recognised by us not in its lowest, but in its highest expression. The higher form is not a new-creation of something previously non-existent out of the lower form,— for such a principle is essentially Nihilistic & leads inexorably to Nothingness as the starting point of existence, and to the Vedantic idea nothing can be created which does not already exist, nothing can be evolved which is not already involved. Life-energy of man is involved in life-energy of plant, metal and sod; it is that which manifests itself by veiled and obscure workings in these more imperfect vessels. We see, then, by closer scrutiny, Matter as only a form of Life, organic or inorganic, perfected in nervous action or obscure in mechanical energies. Obsessed by this discovery, living in this medial term of our consciousness, seeing all things from our new standpoint we come to regard Mind also as a term or working of Life. Bhrigu Varuni, bidden by his father back to his austerities of thought, finds a second and, it would seem, a truer formula. He sees Life as the Sole Existence, Pranam Brahma. “For from the Life, verily, are all these existences born; being born they live by the Life, to the life they pass away and enter in.” Our physical body at death is resolved into various forms of energy, the mind which inhabits the nervous system dissolves also and is or seems to be no more, except in its posthumous effect on others, an organised active force in the material world. We arrive, then, by reason considering the energies of things in their forms & the movement [of] forces that constitute their changes, activities, development & disintegration, at the culmination of Vitalistic Rationalism and a Monism of the Life-Energy. Práno Brahmeti vyajánát.

Here too the mind of man, after finding this second goal of its journeyings, discovers that which it took for a final haven to be only a resting place. Life-Energy & Material Form or Substance of Life-Energy constitute together the outward body of sensible things, the sthula sharira or gross body of Brahman. But, as we pursue our analysing and probing, we begin to suspect that Mind is an entity different from either Matter or Life-Energy. Matter & Life reveal themselves to the mind through the senses. Mind, self-existent, self-perceptive, has on the contrary two evidences of its existence; it knows itself by the senses through its own results & outward workings, — it knows itself also both independently of the workings & in their more subtle movements, by itself, in itself, atmanyatmanam atmana. We perceive, besides, that man is essentially a mental and not a vital being; he lives for himself in the mind, is aware of his existence through the mind, knows & judges all things only as they form themselves to his mind. The speculation then inevitably arises whether as we found Life to be concealed in apparently inert matter and eventually knew Life to be the parent & constituent of material forms, we shall not, as the next step of knowledge, find Mind to be concealed in apparently unconscious forms of life-matter, the parent, constituent & motor impulse both of all life-energies & of all forms & forces in which Life here is either formulated or embodied. But there are difficulties in the way of this conception. First, mind knows itself by itself only in the individual body which possesses it; it is unable, normally, to watch itself in other bodies or perceive there, directly, its own presence & workings, it only knows itself there by analogy, by deduction, by perceiving through the senses the outward or formal effects of its presence & workings. All that is outside the individual form it inhabits, my mind knows by the senses only, & its own workings seem to consist simply of the nervous reception of this sense knowledge, the nervous reaction to it, the formulation of this experience in mental values & the various arrangement & rearrangement of the values formulated. Secondly, these values do not appear to be fixed independently by mind, as they would be if mind were the creator of forces and objects; mind appears to us to be not their master but their servant, although sometimes a rebellious servant, not their creator, poietes, but their translator and interpreter. Thirdly, mind seems unable to create life or to create or change material forms by its direct action. I cannot, by willing, add to my stature or change my features, much less alter forms external to my own. Just as it knows only by the senses, the jnanendriyas, so mind seems able to affect life & matter only through its bodily instruments of action, — the karmendriyas. The instances to the contrary are so exceptional, obscure and fragmentary that no conclusion can be formed upon such scattered & ill-understood data.

Nevertheless Vedantic thought insists. Knowledge, taught by experience, distrusts all first appearances & looks always behind them for the true truth of things. What is exceptional we must examine, what is ill-combined we must arrange, what is obscure we must illuminate. For it is often only by pursuing & examining the obscure & exceptional action of a force that we can come to know the real nature of the force itself & the rule of its obvious & ordinary action. It is not through the leap of the lightning, but through the study of the electric wire & the action of the wireless current that we get near to the true nature & the fixed laws of electricity. As life is obscure & imperfect in the plant & metal & its full character only eventually appears in man, so also mind is imperfect, if not obscure in man's present mental workings; its full character can emerge only in a better evolved humanity or else in a more developed &, to present ideas, an abnormal and improbable working of its now hampered forces even in our present humanity. The ancient Vedantins therefore experimented as daringly & insatiably with mind as modern scientists with life-force; they deployed in this research an imaginative audacity & a boundless credulity in the possibilities of mind as extreme as the imaginative audacity &

the boundless credulity in the possibilities of force working in matter deployed by the modern in his more external experiments & researches; they had too the same insatiable appetite for verification & more verification, — for without this harmony of boundless belief & inexorable scrutiny there can be no fruitful science; reason in man cannot accomplish knowledge without force of faith; faith cannot be secure in knowledge without force of reason.

Thus experimenting, the Vedantin discovered above mind in life the principle of pure Mind. He found that mind exists in the cosmos pure & untrammelled, but manifests in material forms imprisoned and trammelled. Mind subject to life & matter, erring in the circle of life & matter, he perceived as mortal mind, martya or manu of the Veda, the human thinker; mind pure & free he perceived as divine mind, deva or daivya ketu of the Veda, the divine seer & knower. He found first that mind really exists in man in its own self-sufficient consciousness, independently of the sense life turned upon the outer material world, even when it can only work or actually only works through the senses. Secondly, he found that mind in one form or body subconsciously & superconsciously knows & can watch mind & mind's working in other bodies directly or by means independent of sense-communication & the watching of speech & action, and can, more or less perfectly, bring this subconscious & superconscious knowledge into the field of our waking or life-consciousness. He found, thirdly, that mind can know external objects also without using the ordinary channel of the senses. He found, fourthly, that the values put by mind upon outer impacts & its reactions to them are determined not by the impacts themselves but by the general formulations & habitual responses of Mind itself in the universal Being and these fixed & formulated values & reactions can be varied by it, can be suspended, can be entirely reversed, can be infinitely combined at will in the individual vessel called the human being. Fifthly, mind can & does by will, ketu can by kratu, used actively or passively, consciously, subconsciously or superconsciously, without the aid of the karmendriyas, modify even life-forms &

action of life-forces, & does it even now, swiftly or slowly, to a greater or less degree, — as is evident from the phenomena of heredity & hypnotism, — can determine directly the action of energy in other bodies, animate or even inanimate, can modify existing forms of things and can even arrive, though with much greater difficulty, at the direct creation of forms by the mental will. All these powers, however, are powers of the pure or divine mind and can only be consciously exercised in our mortality, so long as they are abnormal to it, if & so far as the universal Being originates & sanctions their use in the individual; they can be possessed as normal faculties only by a humanity which has climbed out of its present struggling entanglement in mortal being & the subjection of the motion of mind to the motion of life & matter, by a humanity in other words which has divinised itself & reached the high & free term of its evolution. If these ancient results are at all correct — and the whole trend of modern scientific experiment as soon as it consents at all to dissect practically & analyse and manipulate experimentally mind as a separate force, tends, however dimly and initially, towards their confirmation, — then we can enter on a third stage of the march of knowledge. The intellectual difficulties in the way of our surpassing the vitalistic conception of world have disappeared. We begin to move, at first, towards a noumenistic monism of the universe. For if mind in man can determine, manipulate, modify & create not only the sensational values of forms and forces and impacts, but the forms and forces and impacts themselves, it is because in the universe these values, these forms, these forces have, originally and secretly, been fixed, created and moved by universal mind and are really its evolutions & formations. All forms of life-energy in this world are thus formations of mental force in which the principle of mind broods self-absorbed in work of life and concealed in form of life to emerge in man, the mental being. Just as life, working but form-absorbed and concealed in the clod & metal, has emerged in the plant and the animal to organise its full character and activity, so it is with mind. Mind is omnipresent; it does mechanically the works of intelligence in bodies not organised for its self-conscious workings;

in the animal it is partly self-conscious but not yet perfectly able to stand apart from its works and contemplate them; for the animal has more of sanjna than of prajna, more of sensational perceptive consciousness than of contemplative conceptual consciousness. In man first it stands back, contemplates & becomes truly "prajna", knowledge working with its forms & forces placed before it as objects of its scrutiny. But this evolution is the result and sign of a previous involution. Mind in the universe precedes, contains & constitutes life-action and material formation. Bhrigu Varuni, once more bidden by his father back to his austerity of thought, perceives a third and profounder formula of things. He sees Mind as that Sole Existence, Mano Brahma. "For from mind these existences are born, being born by mind they live, into mind they pass away & enter in." For as all forms that dissolve go back into the life-forces that constitute and build their shapes, so all forces that dissolve must go back into the sea of mental being by which and out of which they are formulated, impelled and conducted. We arrive, by reason investigating the essential causes, governance and constituting intelligence of all these energies & forms which determines & manifests in their functions, methods and purposes, at the culmination of pure idealistic Rationalism & the Monism of mind. Mano Brahmeti vyajánát.

But Vedanta is not satisfied with the noumenal conception of being; it journeys yet farther back. Studying & experimenting with mind it perceives that mind, too, is a special force manifested out of being and not itself the ultimate nature of being. Moreover it sees that we have crudely put together in the single confused concept of mind, a number of very different principles of which the one common characteristic is the possession of a luminous instead of a darkened consciousness informing its waters, not hidden in the cell of its own forms & motions. We have then still to analyse & probe the nature & limits of mind, & we have to sound and discern the nature & limits if any of what is beyond mind. Carrying the conception of knowledge far beyond the mental principle, discovering a Force more puissant and essential than mind-force, arriving at an essential existence other and purer than the mental self-consciousness which is, at present, man's ordinary & common subjective experience of himself, Vedanta finds that Life & Matter are not so much developments of universal Mind, as the subordinate formations and movements, — cooperative with it, although evolved out of it and formed by it, — of a supramental, supravital, supramaterial Something which no terms we have yet understood can describe to our intelligence. In the noumenal conception, the formula of the mental Brahman, we have not, then, yet reached the essential term of the reality of things.

Still, we have already in this triple formula of Mind, Life and Body, corrected by the statement of a more real and potent existence behind them, a sufficient present clue, at least, to the nature, the workings and the goal of mental life in this material universe. The basis of our existence here is Matter, but Matter with life and mind involved in it. Every cell of the human body, every fibre of bark & leaf, every grain of earth treasures in itself a secret life & mind, is the hiding-place of Prajapati, the cocoon of the eternal butterfly. In the lowest inert or inanimate status of matter just so much & such a nature of life-energy has been at work as is sufficient for the creation of its different forms and their maintenance & functioning in the convergent & divergent whirl and shock of all these cosmic forces, and this multiform correlation of an inert substance of energy and an apparently inanimate driving force of energy has constituted material being & established for its purposes both a general nature, swabhava or own being of matter and particular fixed processes of inherent self-action, the vratáni of the Veda, which present themselves to us as the eternal laws of physical Nature.

But since Life is involved in Matter, things cannot rest here: the Truth within things, the pure Idea at work in the world which, secret as well as mind & life in force of matter and form of matter, originates & guides evolution, demands & compels, perhaps by the pull from a higher world where life is the predominant power and basic principle, the evocation of an organised & self-fulfilling Life out of this inert substance and inanimate Life-force. That Life then eventually appears, but naturally &

necessarily, it comes as a stranger into its surrounding. Confronted there with a set of laws imposed by the native sovereign, not at ease with them as it would be with the processes of a world of which it was itself, from the beginning, the sovereign and omnipresent ruler & lawgiver, it has to work on the unfit & rebellious material to raise, vitalise & fit it for its own workings as a slave power or a subordinate energy. It has come in that process, like an alien invader & conqueror, to give and take, to make concessions, to conciliate its stubborn material in order eventually to dominate & use it. By slow processes, by long evolution, by multitudinous experiment Life arrives at the creation of a myriad forms of organised vitality in matter, in which the form has been trained & accustomed to bear & to answer to the workings of life in many varying degrees of intensity or complexity. But, in the end, Life itself has come to be fettered by its material. The processes of matter pursue it, enter into its action, encase and limit its processes. They are intolerant of any attempt to increase the complexity of the life-workings or to raise the intensity of its shocks beyond the limit of the rhythm already established between the form & its inhabitant. As a result of this resistance, the form tends to deteriorate or break in any upward or extensive endeavour. Ordinarily also, it comes about that the more intense & organised the life, the more brittle & easily disturbed in its functions becomes the material form which contains it, unless & until a new harmony is established, a new & higher or subtler rhythm effected.

But the upward evolutionary movement has only begun with the appearance of life; it is not ended. The Truth of things, the pure Idea at work in matter knows that Mind also is involved in Matter & the Truth of things demands & compels its evolution. It procures, again perhaps by the pull from a higher world where mind is the predominant power and basic principle, the liberation of this second and greater prisoner. Mind, like Life, appears but as a stranger and invader in a world in which it has to deal with already established processes of matter and already established processes of life in matter, and is not at ease with them as it would be with the processes of a world in which it was from the beginning a sovereign and omnipresent ruler. Mind, like Life, has to raise its material, mentalise it & make it fit for its own workings, Mind, like Life, to make concessions & conciliate its material. By long evolution, by slow process & multitudinous experiment it arrives at the creation of manifold forms of organised mind consciousness in vitalised matter, which have been trained to harbour & bear its workings. But in the process Mind, like Life, has become to a large extent a slave to its instruments; the processes of matter & material life enter into its action, encase, condition and limit its workings, are intolerant of increasing complexity & intensity, tend to damage or break the form & the functions when subjected to the increasing demand, resist rapid progress. Here too, ordinarily, the more intense the mental action, the more highly organised its faculties, the more brittle and easily disturbed in their functions become the material form and the nervous life, its case & instruments, unless & until a new harmony is established & a new & higher or subtler rhythm effected.

It is now clear that the entire freedom and lordship in Nature of life over matter or of mind over living body can only come if one or more of three essential conditions is satisfied. The inhabitant principle must either develop such a form or establish such an essential harmony with its case & instruments or else get such a hold upon the lower principles that it can at once maintain them in perfect undisturbed existence and compel them to bear a wide, vast, richly filled, even perhaps an infinite intensity & complexity of the functionings of cosmic life-energy or cosmic mind-energy rushing upon its instrument, informing it and using it for its own delight of self-fulfilment. Such a form, such a harmony, such a hold, life would presumably possess in a world where it was the dominant factor, mind in a world similarly subject to its sovereignty. The Veda supposes such worlds to exist; it perceives several births, dwelling places, kingdoms, jana, kshitayah, rajansi, — to the kingdom of matter it gives the name of Bhu, to the kingdom of Life or Life-Consciousness the name of Bhuvar, to the kingdom of pure Mind the name of Swar. It supposes also that the powers of the higher worlds, figured in the three & thirty gods of the Veda & their subordinate deities, support their representative and instrumental beings in Bhu and favour their attempt to establish an increasing & ultimately perfect similar mastery here for Life or Mind over the material world. For such a growth, such a perfection, the invasion [and] subjection of the lower by the higher principle is the first necessity. For we see that Matter here only realises its highest and most complex potentialities even of material development & organisation when it is invaded, possessed & raised by life, Life its highest & most complex potentialities even of vital development & organisation when it is invaded, possessed & raised by mind, and, — although, owing to our clumsy conceptions about mind, this is not so apparent to us, — Mind also can realise its highest & most complex potentialities even of mental development & organisation only when it is invaded, possessed & raised by that which is higher than itself.

Man is, here, the typical mental being. Imprisoned in the vitalised matter he has invaded & struggling, with his real being in Swar and aided by the gods of Swar, to impose the mastery of Mind on the material world, he has, for the achievement of his object, two alternative principles to follow, either to conquer matter by matter, life by life or else to get behind both of them, discover pure mind & its powers & apply them to his eternal object. His achievements in the struggle with the laws of physical Nature on the physical plane itself are even now considerable; he has been able to seize on her physical forces & harness them to processes & results which she with all her large & gigantic movements has never attempted, — and these processes & utilities are all of them stamped with the subtlety, regularity, & conscious purposefulness of liberated mind. Modern man has not yet succeeded in discovering or using the laws of Life, but there is no reason to suppose that he will not one day make that discovery also. The day must inevitably come when he will be able even to originate no less than to modify freely both plant life & animal life in matter & govern them for his purposes as he now originates mechanisms of material force and modifies & governs its currents, combinations and separate workings so as to abridge distance, to invade the air, to economise the expenditure of his own life-energies or to serve a hundred other purposes of human construction, destruction or development. All these efforts are marked, however, by one characteristic & pregnant limitation — they proceed on the assumption that we can only master physical Nature by manipulating & turning against her laws, movements & processes which she herself has originally established for very different objects & to suit a very different status of world-existence. Even, therefore, in conquering, he is compelled to obey and to confine his achievement within the limited capacities of the physical instruments and the physical processes. Having passed in a curiously imperfect & illegitimate fashion beyond his original slavery to her simple & elemental workings, he is menaced with a worse slavery to his own monstrous mechanisms & in danger of missing the path of the Gods, following only the path of the Bhutas. The true process of enfranchisement is rather, having discovered [and] separated the life-principle & its workings from the material processes in which they are fettered so that our vital life & forces may be raised into a sufficient instrument for infinite Mind, having the true pranayama or control of his vital being, to discover & separate also the principle & workings of pure mind from both life & matter and use them for the attainment of an entire mastery over our internal & our external world. In the eyes of the Vedantin a little progress, a minor achievement on the real path is of more value in the end than the vastest & most airy achievements of modern Science. For the latter is only clanking of gymnastics in self-multiplied chains by a strong and agile prisoner, the former is a step, however faltering, on the true path of freedom.

Nevertheless, even if we could so master the laws of mind as to entirely control our vital & physical being & its environment, the end of God in man is not achieved; for we ought not only to control life & matter by mind, but mind by a higher principle. Mind can only become free by self-subjection to God above mind and without freedom there is no true mastery. Samrajya is unreal without Swarajya. Mind that has mastered its inferior principles without obeying the law of a higher Truth, is figured for us in epos and Puran as the victorious Titan, Hiranyakashipu or Ravana, — victorious but doomed in the end to a sudden successful revolt of the lower principles or to direct destruction by Power descending from on high because the mastery it holds is artificial, mechanical, not the aim of Nature in the world & therefore, if eternalised, bound to obstruct the higher destinies of the race. What though it has enslaved the god to its will and compels fire to come at its need or wind to blow where it lists, what though it can control despotically men & things & events? It is not for all that divine nor free nor supreme. Essentially, it does with higher instruments what modern man is now accomplishing with lower instruments; it is using a mental instead of a physical machinery to establish a precarious, temporary & apparent mastery over Nature which only veils a more subtle & tyrannous form of subjection. The Daedalus who multiplies machines, is dependent on his creations, bound by his engines, often destroyed by them and in any case limited & shackled & his gains of one kind balanced by pauperisation in other directions. Not until we have gone beyond machinery, gained self-power, self-being, self-bliss of God, can we hold ourselves secure in the right path and fulfilled in the right object of our ascension. And for this reason, that mind is in its nature bound up with limitation & form and dependent on the centre from which it works. Universal Manas, like universal Life & universal Matter, exists indeed & contains all things in itself, but it contains without comprehending. Its nature is not comprehension, but division, & what it calls comprehension is merely the seizing on details, on fractions and arriving by addition or multiplication at their sum. The integer as mind sees it is not a true integer, for mind is essentially manas, that which measures, contains & is bound by its function of containing. It can by itself arrive only at a pluralist, not an essential unity, or else at a zero. If it passes out of limitation, out of its form, out of its centre, it must be either dissolved into Nirvana, dispersed into the chaos of its unformed & discriminate mental nature or reduced to quietism & immobility. Mind can either rest voiceless & actionless, lost to itself, in the shantam Brahma or it can find itself in the ejad Brahma; but it cannot combine the two opposites, it cannot at once live in the silent stability of God & throw itself into the voiceful motion of things. That is a privilege of the divine and not of the mortal nature. Acting, mind must use the machinery of the triloka, the triple system of mind, life & matter & must submit to it while using it; it can get behind life & matter, it cannot get behind itself into the true & essential infinity. Therefore, of the soul seated in the triple principle, Shankara's dictum is entirely true that it can escape from bondage only by actionless quiescence of the mental self; Buddha's dictum is entirely justified that it cannot find any ultimate solution except by denying & annulling itself in an ineffable Nirvana. Bhrigu Varuni was not allowed by his father Varuna to rest in the formula of the mental Brahma. Sent back to the austerity of his self-contemplation he had to arrive at the perception no longer of the mind but of the pure Idea as the Sole Existence, Vijnanam Brahma.

We arrive, now, at states of being, consciousness & living experience which are far remote from ordinary human life & thinking, for the expression of which human language has neither been framed nor yet adapted. These higher states of being are the guha, the cavern or secret place, of Vedic imagery, and to express their knowledge & experience of them men have always been compelled to resort to arbitrarily conventional word symbols, parables or concrete metaphors which can only serve as hints, signposts, hieroglyphic figures, not as a means of adequate expression. Those who can divine & follow these signposts find the path for themselves & arrive in experience at the truths the figures are meant to indicate. We can only form some idea of the Vijnana by the use of language & terms which properly belong to mental being and thinking and may therefore when applied to another order of facts quite as easily mislead as help to right understanding. Experience is here the only sure means of knowledge; for we have reached a kingdom of being where already nature of knowledge is beginning to pass into nature of identity, separate consciousness of things into luminous oneness with things, basis of external or sensuous observation into basis of internal self-identification and comprehension in a common self-existent & self-same truth of things.

Vijnana, like mind, is a principle fundamentally of knowledge, & not like life a principle of force, or like matter, a principle of substance. Force, knowledge & substance of being are the trinity constituting the activity of the divine Bliss of Being & Will to Becoming in the universe. In the system of Vedanta, pure Being exists as the background, beginning & foundation of all cosmic existence, containing in itself in eternal latency & potentiality of becoming all things that become or do not become in this universe. Becoming, or becoming of any form or force in the cosmos, is subject to the will of God or Brahman, that Unknowable which has manifested Itself in this fundamental term of Atman, Pure Being, Sad Brahman. Pure Being is Pure-Self-Awareness; Sat = Chit, — this is the first formula on which becoming depends. Atman extends itself in the secondary terms of Space & Time, which are conscious values of this biune Being that is Consciousness, Space in this formula representing the term of Being, Time the term of Consciousness; but when analysed or realised, they inevitably reduce themselves back into mere figures of extension of this Being-Consciousness & are seen to have no real existence in themselves. In an universe of consciousness-symbols, they are the first symbols. Chit or Self-Awareness of Brahman has again a double status, a status of rest in self-conscious being and a status of apparent motion in self-conscious being. In this double status it has the value in Conscious Being of a self-existent omnipotent Will manifesting in the extension of Brahman or retaining concealed in its unextension whatever it chooses in whatever process or order of things it prefers. Nimitta,[7] process or order, figured in relation, succession & causality, is the third symbol of consciousness by which cosmos is rendered possible; for it makes possible arrangement of things in the idea of Space & arrangement of happenings in the idea of Time. Will is in its nature Power of Knowledge or Act of Knowledge; therefore, when analysed and realised, divine or cosmic Will is perceived to be Chid Brahman, self-conscious Being, Chaitanya, conscious Spirit, which takes into its possession in being of cosmic self-knowledge and effects in force of self-knowledge figures of Its own concealed & unknowable reality. We see, then, that all becoming in universe is a formal or symbolic manifestation of unknowable God or Brahman effected by Tapas, by the dwelling of self-knowledge on latent truth of being & the consequent forcing it out of its latency in figure of truth for the joy of God's cosmic self-knowledge. That which is to us unknowable X beyond thought & sensation is expressed here by Tapas of cosmic consciousness in theorem & formula of progression constituting the order of forms in the universe. The loosing of the latent out of latency by Tapas is the whole nature of creation in the idea of the Vedantin. The symbol of the creative Ishwara is always the Kavi, the poet-seer who by Tapas, by concentration of self-knowledge figured as creative Will, brings out from latency in his infinite unmanifest consciousness varied forms of himself. Therefore, it is said that when Brahma the Creator was born on the sea of essential substance, the kshirasamudra, it was in answer to a cry of OM Tapas, pealing out over the moveless ocean, that he set himself to the work of creation. The Kavi creates for his self-delight in self-expression and for no other reason. For when we say that the Will chooses, the Will prefers, when we speak of the icchashakti or omnipotent Will of God, we are expressing in terms of Force what is fundamentally in consciousness a movement of Delight or Ananda. For the nature of conscious-Being is bliss. That which the pure unrelated Sad Brahman, not looking towards cosmic self-expression, is aware of about Itself is unrelated self-Bliss; that which the creative Chid Brahman, looking towards cosmos, is aware of in the Sat, is the cosmic delight of self-expression in general & in particular symbols of consciousness, in extension of infinite being & conscious force & in their concentration into determined form of being & determined action of force. When we say that Brahman as Chaitanya, as Consciousness, dwells upon a figure of Itself & brings it out of its latency there where it dwells cavern-housed, guhahita, we imply, — Chaitanya & Ananda, Consciousness & Bliss being one entity, — that Brahman as Ananda, as Self-Delight, fixes on that figure for Its symbolic self-expression. What God delights in, that is His will-to-be in cosmos, that becomes. In the more ancient Vedic terminology this divine principle of Ananda was designated sometimes as mayas, a word which means both love or joy and creative comprehension and sometimes as jana, a word which means at once delight, especially the delight of procreation, productiveness, birth and world. God's delight in things is their birth, their seed of production, their coming into world. Chit Tapas, Consciousness working as Will is the condition & agent of cosmic existence, Ananda is its cause.

---

[7] The word nimitta means literally, measured arrangement; ordering in time & space is the essence of the concept of nimitta.

Still, we do not yet see clearly what it is that brings about the difference between self-being & symbolic being or becoming. Where is the principle that bridges the gulf between the pure & the figured Brahman? Or what power of consciousness enables the formless to pour itself into forms? It is, says Vedanta, a special principle, a selective power of pure consciousness which all Being possesses, the principle, the faculty of Vijnana. Sacchidananda is a Trinity; Being is in its very essence Bliss [&] Consciousness, Consciousness is in its very essence Being & Bliss, Bliss is in its very essence Consciousness & Being. It is the faculty of Vijnana which, while always resting in their eternal, indefeasible & indivisible oneness, yet casts them into triune figures of being & originates in world their mutual play & their multiplicity. It is vijnana that expresses & arranges the cosmic self-expression of being by looking at Brahman now predominantly in one aspect, now predominantly in another aspect even while it perceives all the others inherently contained in the predominant self-conception. When the vijnana in us dwells thus on the principle of divine Ananda, we see & we work out all things in terms of Ananda; still we are aware all the time of the nature of Ananda as infinite Conscious-Being and the ideas of Consciousness & Being attend & support the Ananda & work themselves out through its workings. When the divine Idea dwells rather on the principle of divine Force or Will in us, then we see & we work out all things in the terms of Force or Will; still the ideas of Consciousness & Bliss always attend & support Will & work themselves out through its workings. We see, then, that essentially Vijnana when analysed & realised reduces itself to the selective & disposing self-action of Chit-Tapas omnisciently aware of the eternally stable unity & eternally potential multiplicity of Brahman and omnipotently able to arrange the terms of that multiplicity from any & every standpoint of Brahman's self-consciousness. It is essential act of knowledge in an essential status of knowledge; its movement is not in the veiled objective manner of mental knowing, but a primary & comprehensive subjective movement in which universal Knowledge sees objects of itself within itself without any veil by reason of an essential identity in motional difference, self-aware self-existent inalienable identity manifested & not contradicted or abrogated [by] difference of form and action, just as a man sees his thoughts & his actions as movements of himself, as self-expression of himself in his own being. There are therefore three essential attributes of the Vedantic conception of vijnana. Vijnana is satyam; it is knowledge proceeding out of an essential identity of being & consciousness between the known & the knower, — the true ideal knowledge may come to a man either through identity of being with the object contemplated or through unity in consciousness with the object or through self-delight in the object, but always it will be self-revealing truth of fact, self-existent truth of being & not formed truth of thought or opinion. Vijnana is also brihat; it is knowledge comprehensive of & containing the object of knowledge in the knower; it possesses, it does not approach — its process moves from the essence to the appearance, from the unit to the parts, from the greater unit to the lesser unit, not from the attribute to the thing, from the fraction to the integer. Vijnana is ritam, is knowledge perfectly self-arranged & self-guided; spontaneously self-arranged in perception & in action spontaneously self-fulfilled through the law of inevitable manifestation of the Truth in its own nature & by its own force, it is the faultless instrument of an unerring omnipotence & omniscience. Satyam ritam brihat, the True, the Right, the

Large, describes God in His being of pure ideal knowledge and self-efficiency.

What is the practical value of this conception of vijnana? The thing we call mind is the knowledge of the individual about himself and of the world only as it affects or reaches his individual consciousness. It is the view of things which a man shut up in a dungeon with glazed & coloured windows may have about the world and his own dwelling place. In the colours of the senses he sees the objects outside, in the light of the few objects it sees through its small & scanty windows & by reasoning from their appearances mind forms its idea of the world; even of this house which it inhabits, it knows only one room with a locked door & all that is outside that door it can only guess at by analogy or infer from the sounds, smells, vibrations which come to its senses from the rest of the building or the occasional visits, messages & descriptions which it may receive from its other inhabitants. For it is now an ascertained truth even to modern psychological observation & experiment, — and was known thousands of years ago to the Vedantin, — that only a small part of our active conscious being is revealed to our waking mental consciousness; a vast amount of work of action, work of impulse, work of knowledge goes either under or above the lower & the upper level of our waking existence and faculty. In the nature of things, therefore, mental knowledge starts from limitation, lives in limitation & ends in limitation. It is dabhram, alpam, says the Veda, not, like the vijnana, brihat; in its nature truncated, oppressed, little. We know nothing certainly except that certain phenomena present themselves in a certain regular way to our senses and are valid within certain limits for our life; on the basis of that sensational experience we can make out a practical rule and order of living. All the rest of mental knowledge may be described [as] a selection of probabilities out of a mass of possibilities. But because mental knowledge is limited & subject to mixed truth & error, therefore also the feelings & impulses of mind in man are subject to falsehood, error, wrong placement, corruption & perversion; in a word, to evil & sin. And since action is only a mechanical expression of mind and feeling, his action also is subject to a resulting falsehood and wrong placement, to evil and sin. Ignorance of self & world is the original error; out of that seed proceeds all evil & suffering. Man, born as a mental being, cannot arrive at right action, right feeling, right knowledge; he can only struggle towards them and approximate to some blundering, limited & imperfect standard of right & truth formed by him out of his fixed notions and habitual feelings. These standards he is continually changing according to the shiftings of his knowledge & the circlings of his knowledge in pursuit of that eternal self-existent Truth & Right which the soul in him knows to exist but the mind & body in him fail to find and accomplish. For mind cannot see the Truth, — the goal & the condition of our journey, — it has to grope after it & feel it; for it has sense of things but not vision of things, mati, not drishti. It does not know the Right, the way of our journey, but has to seek for it; therefore it cannot proceed straight to its goal, but follows a devious & wandering journey. The lower mental life is not only dabhram & alpam, says the Veda, but it is hvaram & vrijinam, in action of knowledge & action of heart & action of body a crooked going, not like the action of vijnana, riju, straight-moving.

We distinguish then between vijnana & manas. Vijnana is brihat, limitless & comprehensive in its nature and process, because free from individuality, apaurusheya, and universal in its movement and origin; therefore it is true, satyam, in essence and true, ritam, in arrangement. Mind is alpam, limited in its nature because proceeding from an individual centre [and] standpoint and bound in its movement and origin; therefore it admits of asatyam and anritam, error & falsehood or misplacement, — for all falsehood & error is misplacement of truth, all manas diverted action of vijnanam — in the essence & arrangement. Vijnana is, because ritam, therefore riju, right or rectum, the straight — because it is in its nature right arrangement in right being, therefore it proceeds straight by the right way to the right goal with an assured, luminous & self-existent rightness of impulse, rightness of feeling & rightness of action. Mind is hvara; not knowing but seeking, it gropes & circles through falsehood either to truth or a worse falsehood; through sin & stumbling either to righteousness or to a worse sinfulness. Vijnana has for its process of knowledge drishti; thought of vijnana sees, it does not search; it starts from knowledge, it does not start from ignorance; it starts from the essence, not from the appearance; it begins with the essential truth, Brahman, & sees in it the general truth, the idea, the kavya of the kavi, which creates the mental, vital & material symbol, from the general truth it proceeds to detail & particular, from the idea to the working out of the idea in process, attribute, quality & variation. Reasoning in vijnana is only an arranged statement of already possessed knowledge; it is not a means of arriving at truth, but only of orderly stating of truth. Mind has for its process, mati; mind feels & senses, it does not see, for what it calls sight is only a form of touch or contact with its object from outside, not the internal knowledge of the object as a thing contained in the knower. It starts from ignorance & struggles towards knowledge, it grasps only appearance and can do no more than speculate about essence; starts from the fragments & pieces the whole, starts from the particular & perceives the general as a mental abstraction, not a living reality; proceeds from its abstract generalisation & infers essence but cannot come into the real presence of Being. Reasoning in mind is a statement of successive perceptions of data to arrive at a conditionally valid inference, not at a self-existent and for ever indubitable truth. Mind starts with a dark ignorance in the shape of non-knowledge or false knowledge & ends with a twilit ignorance in the shape of agnostic uncertainty.

Clearly, then, if this faculty of vijnana exists, is of this nature & has these relations to mind, then the path of our evolution and, consequently, also the right direction of our efforts is clear; it is, having exceeded nervous life & body, to exceed mind also and arrive at the culmination of right knowledge, right feeling, right works in the spontaneous & infinite mastery & liberty of the vijnana. It is rational to suppose that such a principle exists; for, given the existence of a self-existent Truth at all, supposing that all is not, as the Nihilistic Buddhist contends, a sensation-troubled void, then a self-acting faculty of knowledge responding to & perceptive of the self-existent Truth is at least probable and seems to be demanded. If, moreover, we consent to the Vedantic idea of the world as a creative form & rhythm of consciousness, this logical probability becomes an obvious and inevitable necessity. Self-existent Truth of things can in that theory be nothing else than self-perceptive Truth of conscious being. The existence of a world of objects of universal consciousness arranged in fixed relations & processes presupposes the existence of this principle of Vijnana & therefore of the faculty of Vijnana. It may, however, be reasonably questioned whether, even if the faculty exists, it is not a divine privilege denied to man as much as to the tree and the insect. Is not man unchangeably a mental being, not only at present fixed in mind as his centre, but eternally imprisoned in it as his element, continent and condition of existence? But such a rigid limitation is inconsistent with what we know of man and of Nature. Nature moves by steps & gradations out of one stream of her movement into a higher law. She has established a rudimentary reason in the animal which has perfected itself in the supreme animal, man. Equally she has established a rudimentary form of vijnana in man which has to be perfected in the inevitable course of her evolution, and must perforce be perfected here in no other being than a supreme humanity or supreme man. She has first arranged an illegitimate form of vijnana in the intellect, the mental buddhi or human reason, which has all the movements of the vijnana, perception, arrangement, synthesis, analysis, but is unable to arrive at its proper methods & results because it limits itself to the province of the senses and has for its one right function to train these mental servants & purify them from the control of yet lower elements of our being, the grosser life functions, the body, the nervous heart-movements. Above the reason & sending down its higher rays into the human intellect she has seated the vijnana-buddhi, the intuitional mind. Animals have an intuitional sense, they have not the intuitional intellect; man has access to a true intuitional mentality, and there is his right door to release from subjection to the sensational mentality he shares with the lower creatures. When he has fulfilled reason,

— not before, — he has to surmount reason, to silence it just as reason has silenced the brute passions, and lift up its faculties nearer to their true nature, mode and function, to the intuitional mind, which then, unbesieged by the sense mind & the erring intellect, can receive the pure rays from above of the luminous & divine Vijnana.

The evolution of vijnana out of mind is inevitable for the same reason that the evolution of life out of matter was inevitable or the evolution of mind out of life, because the vijnana or pure Idea, already involved in matter, life and mind, demands & will procure, perhaps by the pull from a higher world where the Idea would be the dominant power & basic principle, its own release out of the limitations of sensational mentality. Just as we found matter to be a formation out of life-energy, & life-energy to be a formation out of mind, so mind is a formation out of vijnana. That which has constituted & governs stone or tree, animal or man, is not matter, nor life, nor mind, but the Idea involved in these three masks of conscious being. The idea of the tree in Brahman's consciousness is hidden involved in that form of life-energy which our senses see as a seed. In reality, the seed of the oak tree holds at the back of its intended evolution the potential seminality of all trees that have existed or can exist, because the Idea, the Brihat, by which it exists, is the Brahman in all Its vastness, Brahman whose process in Nature is to dispose variously one seed of things so as to form a myriad various existences. Ekam bíjam bahudhá vidadháti. But by successive selective processes of vijnana the form specially fixed in the seed, inherent & latent in it & bound to develop out of it, is first tree and then oak tree. For this reason and no other, an oak tree & no other existence must develop out of the seed the earth has received. It is the involved Idea, is the Vijnana Consciousness of God, which dwells in the seed, has chosen and prepared this form and supports, governs & directs by the mere fact of its inherent existence there the processes, arrangements, life & functionings of the oak tree. We do not see this truth because the form God takes is still a material form without an organised mental consciousness. It is only when we arrive at human life that, a little more clearly, & yet still very dimly, this truth begins to show itself. To our lower or material mind, for instance, a nation is an intellectual fiction; the reality is only a number of men agreeing for certain material ends to call itself a nation and living in an artificial idea of unity created by the associations born of a mere word. But, first, the intuition-sense we share with the animals by means of the emotional heart, then the reason seeking to find a cause, a formula and justification for the vitality of the nation-idea and, finally, the intuitive mind, looking behind the phenomena of the senses, begin to draw near to the real truth. In real truth a nation is an existence in the universal Consciousness, an Idea-Force in the universal Will that is knowledge, not constituted by geographical boundaries, nor by a given sum or combination of human units, nor by a common language, religion, custom, laws, government, — for all these conditions may be satisfied without a nation existing or dispensed with or exceeded without the nation ceasing to exist, — but created by the idea & living in the idea. Born of the idea in the Brahman, it exists by the force of the idea and only so long as that force supports it & needs the form for its self-fulfilment; the force withdrawn, the form departs into the general Idea force which is constantly grouping men and animals, plants & worlds into figures of corporative Brahman-consciousness, and entering into it either there dissolves or waits for fresh emergence in other time, place & conditions. What is true of the corporate mind-life of the nation is true of the individual mind-life also, of man, the animal, tree, stone, insect. "From the Idea all these existences were born; being born, by the idea they live; to the idea they pass away & enter in." But not till man appears in the material world, does it begin to be possible for the Idea to produce a form of mind, life and body which will be able to house & express the vijnanamaya ideal being, the god in the universe and can be prepared to bear the activity of a divine force & divine joy and, breaking the walls of the mental ego, enlarge into the wideness of a cosmic consciousness. The gods, it is said in the Upanishad, presented by the Spirit with successive forms of animal life for their habitation, returned always the answer, "This is not enough for us." Only when human life appeared, did they utter the cry of assent, "This indeed is well & wonderfully made," and enter satisfied into their fit dwelling. But to fulfil the great purpose of its being, humanity has first to learn how to break down the dungeon of mind and unlocking the doors of the one room in its dwelling-place vindicate for himself a free movement in his seven storied mansion. By passing from mind to vijnana, he will possess in his nature that toward which he now only gropes & aspires, a being that has conquered the limitations of ego, a cosmic knowledge that looks at truth direct & unveiled, a perfectly tuned heart whose emotions & impulses are in harmony with the diviner truth of things, an inner & outer action which, free from the duality of sin & virtue, is unstumbling in its spontaneous movement, confident in its pure & inalienable joy, self-effective of its own God-given objects without passing through the pangs of personal desire, straining and disappointment born of wrong aim, wrong method or wrong emotional reaction. Human life & being will then be moulded into the forms of the satyam, ritam, brihat. For man knowing himself & the world, man will work out his life spontaneously as the sun moves or the oak tree grows, by the force of the idea working out the swabhava, own nature, own or proper becoming. For dharma, right life & action in man and in every other existence, is swabhavaniyatam karma, works directed & governed by the inborn nature to fulfil the divine idea symbolised in the type & embodied in the individual. But in the sun & oak tree it works mechanically without an organised consciousness & joy of the work expressed in the form inhabited. Man fulfilled will enjoy consciously the perfect workings of God's Prakriti in him.

The Life Divine

[Draft C]

Chapter II

The perfect truth of the Veda, where it is now hidden, can only be recovered by the same means by which it was originally possessed. Revelation and experience are the doors of the Spirit. It cannot be attained either by logical reasoning or by scholastic investigation, — na pravachanena, na bahuná srutena . . . na tarkenaishá matir apaneyá. “Not by explanation of texts nor by much learning” . . . “not by logic is this realisation attainable.” Logical reasoning and scholastic research can only be aids useful for confirming to the intellect what has already been acquired by revelation and spiritual experience. This limitation, this necessity are the inexorable results of the very nature of Veda.

It is ordinarily assumed by the rationalistic modern mind, itself accustomed to arrive at its intellectual results either by speculation or observation, the metaphysical method or the scientific, that the sublime general ideas of the Upanishads, which are apparently of a metaphysical nature, must have been the result of active metaphysical speculation emerging out of an attempt to elevate and intellectualise the primitively imaginative and sensational religious concepts of the Veda. I hold this theory to be an error caused by the reading of our own modern mental processes into the very different mentality of the Vedic Rishis. The higher mental processes of the ancient world were not intellectual, but intuitive. Those inner operations, the most brilliant, the most effective, the most obscure, are our grandest and most powerful sources of knowledge, but to the logical reason, have a very obscure meaning and doubtful validity. Revelation, inspiration, intuition, intuitive discrimination, were the capital processes of ancient enquiry. To the logical reason of modern men revelation is a chimera, inspiration only a rapid intellectual selection of thoughts or words, intuition a swift and obscure process of reasoning, intuitive discrimination a brilliant and felicitous method of guessing. But to the Vedic mind they were not only real and familiar, but valid processes; our Indian ancients held them to be the supreme means of arriving at truth, and, if any Vedic Rishi had composed, after the manner of Kant, a Critique of Veda, he would have made the ideas underlying the ancient words drishti, sruti, smriti, ketu, the principal substance of his critique; indeed, unless these ideas are appreciated, it is impossible to understand how the old Rishis arrived so early in human history at results which, whether accepted or questioned, excite the surprise and admiration even of the self-confident modern intellect. I shall try to show at a later stage what I hold to be, in the light of the psychological experience of Yoga, the exact processes involved in these ancient terms and their practical and philosophical justification. But, whatever the validity attached to them or the lack of validity, it is only by reproducing the Vedic processes and recovering the original starting point that we can recover also whatever is, to the intellect, hopelessly obscure in the Veda and Vedanta. If we know of the existence of a buried treasure, but have no proper clue to its exact whereabouts, there are small chances of our enjoying those ancient riches; but if we have a clue, however cryptic, left behind them by the original possessors, the whole problem is then to recover the process of their cryptogram, set ourselves at the proper spot and arrive at their secret cache by repeating the very paces trod out by them in their lost centuries.

All processes of intellectual discovery feel the necessity of reposing upon some means of confirmation and verification which will safeguard their results, deliver us from the persistent questioning of intellectual doubt & satisfy, however incompletely, its demand for a perfectly safe standing-ground, for the greatest amount of surety. Each therefore has a double movement, one swift, direct, fruitful, but unsafe, the other more deliberate and certain. The direct process of metaphysics is speculation, its confirmatory process is reasoning under strict rules of verbal logic; the direct process of science is hypothesis, its confirmatory process is proof by physical experiment or by some kind of sensational evidence or demonstration. The method of Veda may be said to have in the same way a double movement; the revelatory processes are its direct method, experience by the mind and body is the confirmatory process. The relation between them cannot, indeed, be precisely the same as in the intellectual methods of metaphysics & science; for the revelatory processes are supposed to be self-illumining and self-justifying. The very nature of revelation is to be a supra-intellectual activity occurring on the plane of that self-existent, self-viewing Truth, independent of our searching & finding, the presumed existence of which is the sole justification for the long labour of the intellect to arrive at truth. In Veda drishti & sruti illumine & convey, the intellect has only to receive & understand. Experience by the mind & body is necessary not for confirmation, but for realisation in the lower plane of consciousness on which we mental and physical beings live. We see a truth self-existent above this plane, self-existent in the satyam ritam brihat of the Veda, the True, the Right, the Vast which is the reality behind phenomena, but we have to actualise it on the levels on which we live, levels of imperfection & uncertainty, striving & seeking; otherwise it does not become serviceable to us; it remains merely a truth seen and does not become a truth lived. But when we moderns attempt to repeat the Vedic revelatory processes, experience by the mind and body becomes an indispensable confirmatory process, even a necessary preliminary process for their acquisition; for the use of these supreme instruments of intuitive & revelatory knowledge is naturally attended, for those to whom the intellect is and has always been the chief and ordinary mental organ, by dangers and difficulties which did not to the same extent pursue the knowledge of the ancient Rishis. To them it was natural in its possession, easily purified in its use; to us it is a difficult acquisition, hampered in its use by the interference of the lower movements. Experience is, for us, indispensable; we may not be certain of excluding by its means all false sight and false intuition, but we can correct much that has been imperfectly seen and confirm beyond the possibility of all intellectual scepticism that which does clearly come down to us as illumination from our Higher self to be confirmed in life & experience, constantly and regularly, by our lower instruments.

We have, for instance, the remarkable passages in the Isha Upanishad about the sunless worlds, the luminous lid concealing Truth, the marshalling & concentration of the rays of Surya & his goodliest form of all, that form which, once seen, leads direct to the supreme realisation of oneness, So'ham asmi. Our intellect sees in these expressions a brilliant poetry, but no determinable philosophical sense; yet no one can follow thoughtfully the succession of the phrases without feeling that the Seer of the Upanishad did not really intend to lead up to the direct clarity of his supreme philosophical statement by a flight of vague poetical images; he has a more serious meaning, detailed, definite, precise, pregnant, in the carefully arranged procession of these splendid images. How are we to discover it? Using the scholastic method we may hunt for a clue in the other Upanishads; we may find it or imagine we have found it and by the aid of speculative inference and a liberal dose of fancy we may construct a brilliant or even a plausible theory of the Rishi's meaning. Or, without any such clue, by the aid of a clear intelligence and putting together of the ascertainable ideas of Veda or Vedanta, we may fix a meaning which will adequately explain the text, fit into the course of the argument and, in addition, justify itself by shedding light on other passages where there is a reference to the Sun, to its rays or to its revelatory function. These means, however, can only conduct us to a plausible hypothesis, a twilight certainty, or at most a convincing probability. Nor, in this passage at least, will the metaphysical methods of Shankara at all assist us; for it is a question not of metaphysical logic but of the meaning of an ancient symbol, the connotation of certain antique figures. On the other hand, if we have been able to revive by Yoga the old methods used by the ancients themselves, we may, either in the ordinary course of our experiments or guided by the suggestion of the Upanishad, arrive at the actual experiences on which, in Vedic times, the use of this symbol and these figures was founded. We may perceive in our own selves the interposition of the golden vessel, the action of the rays, their disposition, their concentration; we may have the vision of the goodliest form of all, tejo yat te rupam kalyanatamam, and know, by luminous experience, the link between that vision and the realisation of the supreme Vedantic truth, So'ham asmi. We shall then be certain of our knowledge, our unity with the one & only existence. If the ancient ideas of our psychology are correct, by process of revelation and intuition we could have arrived at the same results; the old Rishis, accustomed to use that process habitually and follow its progressive action with as much surety and confidence as we follow the steps of a logician, would have needed nothing more for certainty, though much more for realisation; but we, habitually intellectual, pursued into the higher processes, when we can arrive at them, by those more brilliant and specious movements of the intellect which ape their luminosity & certainty, could not feel entirely safe & even, one might say, ought not to feel entirely safe against the possibility of error. The confirmation of experience is needed for our intellectual security.

This method, by which, as I hold, the meaning of Veda can alone be entirely recovered, is, then, a process of psychological experiment and spiritual experience aided by the higher intuitive or revelatory faculties, — the vijnana of Hindu psychology, — of which mankind has not yet, indeed, anything but a fitful and disordered use, but which are capable of being, within certain limits, educated and put into action even in our present transitional & unsatisfactory stage of evolution. It differs from the method by which the ancient Rishis received Vedic truth, — revelation confirmed by experience, — only by the side of approach which must be for us from below, not from above, and the weight of the emphasis which must rest for a mentality preponderatingly intellectual and only subordinately intuitional, on experience more than on intuition. For the rest, the common consent of humanity has agreed that only by higher than intellectual faculties can the truths of a supra-human or supra-sensuous order, if at all they exist, be really known. Religion, except in ethical & rationalistic creeds like Buddhism and Confucianism which have put aside all such questionings as outside the human domain, has always insisted that revelation is the indispensable angel and intermediary and the intellect at best only its servant, assistant and pupil. Science & rationalism have virtually agreed to this distinction; they have accepted the idea that all knowledge, which does not reach us through the doors of the senses and, on its arrival, submit its pretensions to the judgment of the reason, is incapable of solution by the intellect; but they add that, for this very reason, precisely because the senses are our only doors of experience and the reason our only safe counsellor, the questions raised by religion and metaphysics are utterly vain and insoluble; they relate either to the unknowable or the non-existent; either the material only exists, or, if there is any other existence, the material only can be known and therefore alone exists for the purview of humanity. As man marches upon the dust and is circumscribed by the pressure of the terrestrial atmosphere, so also his thought moves only in the material ether and is circumscribed within the laws & results of material form and motion. Recently we see, even in Europe or chiefly in Europe, — for Asia is too busy imitating Europe of yesterday to perceive whither Europe of today is tending, — a revolt against this arbitrary denial of the rarest parts of human experience. The existence of the supra-sensuous & the infinite is reconquering belief and, at the same time, it is coming again to be admitted that there are faculties of intuitive & supra-rational knowledge which answer in the domain of Consciousness to these supra-sensuous facts of the domain of Being. The belief & the admission go together rationally. For to every order of facts in Nature there should be in the same Nature, inevitably, a corresponding order of faculties in knowledge by which they can be comprehended; if we have no certain knowledge of the facts, it is because we have not as yet the clear and steady use of the faculties.

In three of the external aids by which Veda has been perpetuated in India, religion, Yoga, the guru-parampara, this fundamental principle is amply admitted. Religion starts from revelation; it rests upon spiritual and moral experience. Yoga, admitting the truth of verbal revelation, the word of God & the word of the Master, yet starts from experience and rises, as a result of experimental development by fixed methods, to the use of intuitive and revelatory knowledge. The Guru-parampara starts with the word of the Guru, accepted as the knowledge of one who has seen, and proceeds to personal mastery by the experience of the disciple who may indeed go beyond his master & even modify his knowledge, but is not allowed to disown his starting-point. But there is one of our great Indian spiritual activities which has developed progressively in the direction of rationalistic methods and given the responsibility for nine-tenths of its work in these supra-sensuous fields to the very organ, pronounced by the consensus of human opinion insufficient for such inquiries, — the intellect. It is in Darshana, in the path of metaphysics, that this paradoxical phenomenon has been permitted. It is true that our metaphysical thinkers, unlike the European, do not launch themselves into the full flood of metaphysical rationalism; they hug the coast. They admit the supreme authority of revelation, but only of verbal revelation, of the spoken Veda. But the sense and the bearing of the Vedic text has long been doubtful and warring philosophies have founded themselves on the sacred Word; how is doubt to be resolved, dispute to be decided? By appeal to other texts? But if there is still dissonance, not entire consonance? By the aptavakya, the word of the fit authority. If that fails or there is, here also, a conflict? By logic; the intellect is called in as the arbiter of the sense of the Sruti. The word of the adept, the aptavakya, is admitted; but different Masters seem to have taught different doctrines. Who or what is to decide? Let it be settled by logical argument. Once more the intellect is called in as supreme judge; neither the Sruti, nor aptavakya, but logical judgment becomes the real master of our knowledge. Psychological experience also is admitted in certain fields of the argument; but men have different experiences, even different ultimate experiences. Adwaita asserts the pure self as an ultimate experience of consciousness; Buddhism denies it, holds it to be an illusion and goes beyond to the experience of psychological Nothingness. Yet again, logical argument is called in to decide the question. Therefore we find that our metaphysical method of arriving at the higher truth is practically, — though in theory this is subject to certain qualifications, — as much an intellectual & logical method as the method of European metaphysics or the method of scientific rationalism. Only, the Indian metaphysician admits certain data, values certain orders of evidence, which are ruled out of court as invalid or irrelevant by European thinkers. The scientific rationalist observes the sensible facts of life & Nature; these are the data on which alone he feels himself entitled to build his conclusions. The European metaphysician observes the general facts of sensible existence and adds to them the study of words, abstract concepts & categories which answer to no concrete existence, but are the general forms into which human thought has cast itself; these vast nebulae are the metaphysician's data. It is in this ethereal void that he disports himself in a grandiose freedom. The Indian thinker adds to the generalities of natural phenomenon and the abstractions of thought two other classes of evidence, the facts of psychological experience and the word of the revealed Scripture or of competent authorities. But he uses them sparingly & as a last resort. All that is really solid in our metaphysics (I except Patanjali's Yoga Shastra which stands by itself in the six Darshanas,) consists in its parts of logical inference and analogy; — we value in it not what it builds on revelation & experience, but its strenuous manner of justifying certain great assertions of Veda & high experiences of spiritual seekers by the reason and by logical disputation. The method of Darshana, the way of Shankara and Buddha, although it works round and upon certain grand psychological experiences, Maya, Nirvana, is essentially speculative and logical, not intuitive and experiential.

How came this method to be substituted for the old Vedic tradition and what is its real validity? The question has a great practical importance; for every Indian thinker[1] who approaches these questions feels himself naturally impelled to be metaphysical in his method or his atmosphere and follow, with whatever modern variations, the path of Shankara, Buddha and the Sankhyas. The way of knowledge has become in India the way of metaphysical disquisition. Are we really bound to continue this tradition or is the more ancient method also the right method, to which humanity must eventually return; and, if so, what have we gained or lost by this more than millennial substitution of speculation for revelation and verbal logic for actual experience? The substitution itself has come about by a powerful general movement of humanity, simultaneous throughout the world, although it most thoroughly affected Greece and through Greece extended to the general temperament & thought of modern Europe. It cannot quite be said that Greece invented the intellect or the intellectual temperament, but it is certain that the Hellenic race first began the application of reason, inexorably, to the remoulding of thought & life in the temperament of intellectuality. Mankind can never be wholly rational, because our race is essentially built up of various elements, none of which can be eliminated from its system of being. It is our nature to be physical, animal, emotional & sensational as well as intellectual and the coldest thinker or most inexorable rationalist cannot escape from the constitution of our common nature. But mankind, under the great impulse which overtook it at a certain stage of its conscious activity, felt the need of rationalising, as far as that could with safety be done, its other irrational members, the heart, the senses, the life-action, even the body. This tendency, pursued simultaneously by Graeco-Roman civilisation, by Confucian China, by philosophical & Post-Buddhistic India, combated in India by the vitality of Yoga and religion, in Europe by the great united floods of barbarism and Catholic Christianity, has finally triumphed and reached a pitch of success, an extent of victorious propagation which, in human movements, is usually the precursor of arrest and decay. The movement of pure intellectualism has itself, indeed, no clear premonition of its own end. It hopes to conquer, to perpetualise itself, to bring under its sway the nations that are still exempt from its yoke or only imperfectly subdued to it; outwardly it seems to be on the point of success. It still holds the mind of Europe, although the soul of Europe begins to attempt uneasily an escape from its narrowing rigidity & dryness; it has seized on Mongolian Japan & is revivifying the traditional intellectualism of China by a flood of fresh ideas, by the inspiration of a new & wider horizon; it has touched already the Mahomedan world; the political subjugation of India has been followed by a pervasive invasion of European intellectualism which is striving hard to substitute itself progressively for the ancient law & nature of our Indian temperament and being. But these manifestations, however overwhelming in appearance, however conclusive they seem of approaching victory, conceal the seeds of a profound revolution in the inverse sense. An outward conquest is often the means of an inward defeat. What is happening now, has happened before on a smaller scale and under less developed conditions. When the combined intellectuality of Greece and practical materialism of the Latins, supported by the conquering military force of the Roman Republic and Empire, came into contact with the old tradition of Asia, the result was the collapse of the politically victorious civilisation under the assault of an Oriental religion which in its tenets & methods not only exceeded but trampled alike on the vital force of the body & on the free play of the intellect, alike on Greece & on Rome. And it was from a part of Asia which underwent directly the Roman yoke, but persisted with the most deep-rooted perseverance in its spiritual traditions that the revanche proceeded; conquered Judaea took captive the victorious civilisation. Once more Europe, much more profoundly intellectualised, much more profoundly materialised in its intellectualism, throws itself upon Asia with a yet more supreme military force, compelling a yet more widespread political subjugation; once more a penetrating eye can discover the preparation of the same result obscurely outlining itself behind the deceptive appearances of the moment. The first effect on the West from this impingement of the mental atmosphere of Europe on the mental atmosphere of Asia and the breaking down of the walls that separated them has been the revival of the invincible intuitionalism of the Aryan or Aryanised races. The philological tripartite division of the Old World into the Aryan, Semitic & Mongolian peoples, even if it be ethnologically untenable, does correspond roughly to real divisions in the cultural temperament of the human race, the result much less of original race than of historical formations & past influences. The Mongolian is predominantly intellectual, his lower nature is largely tamed & rationalised, the intuitive parts of his mind are slow and their beats tepid in their impulse; there is much less in his temperament to resist the intellectualising process of rationalism than in any other portion of humanity; in the Semite intellect is subordinated, he is intuitional, but intuitional through his lower members only, with as much of the higher activity as the heart & senses allow; the Aryan is intuitional either directly or through and by the heart and the intellect. The Aryan is therefore unfitted by his temperament to persevere in the relentless rationalising of our whole being; always there comes a time when he pauses, listens to a voice within that he has disregarded and, convinced by that inner daemon, departs from the paths hewn for him by the sceptical intellect with the same speed and enthusiasm with which he has followed their straight & level vistas. The very nations which are today the hope of a purely intellectual civilisation, hold in themselves that which can never remain satisfied with the pure reason, and this ineradicable betraying force is now being powerfully stimulated by the mental currents which for almost a century have been consciously or subconsciously reaching Europe with a slowly increasing force from the East. Therefore, the repetition, no doubt in a very different form & to very different issues, of the miracle of Christianity is psychologically inevitable.

---

[1] The only exception, to my knowledge, is Swami Vivekananda and even he has not entirely escaped the necessity of his environment.

If indeed, as modern thought imagines, intellectual reason were the last & highest term of evolution, this consummation need not have been inevitable, or, if inevitable, it would have been deplorable; for perfection depends on the rule of our highest member over its inferior cohabitants. But our evolution is only the progressive unfolding of our nature and faculties, & in the list of those faculties reason does not hold the highest place; it is not even a separate and independent power, but a link, servant and intermediary. Its business, when it is allowed to rule, is to train the lower man so as to make him a fit vessel for an activity higher than its own. The animal is content to follow his impulses under the flashlight of instinct. If ever, as is likely, there was a time when man also was a supreme animal, he must have been guided by an instinct different, perhaps, in its special kind but as trustworthy as animal instinct & of the same essential nature. It was, then, the development in us of that reason which we see ill developed in the animal which deprived man of his sure animal instinct & compelled him to seek for a higher guide. Everything goes to show that he must have sought it at first in the lower intuition & revelation which works in the heart, the aesthetic impulses, the senses. Again, it is the insistent development of reason that has served to make him dissatisfied with these powerful, but still inferior guides. But not until reason, without lapsing back to the lower movements, yet becomes permanently dissatisfied with its own limitations, can it fulfil its work of preparation. For there is a faculty in us superior to the rational, there is that direct seeing & touch of things which shows itself in the higher revelation & intuition & works obscurely, like a fire enveloped in smoke, in the phenomena of intellectual genius & unusual personality. Beyond direct seeing there is a faculty of direct being, if I may so express it, which, if we can entirely reach & hold to it, makes us one with God, brahmabhúta, can reveal in this material life the perfection of Brahman as it is intended to be manifested in humanity, so that man on the human level, in the human cadre, becomes perfect as God is perfect. The intellect itself cannot reach these heights. It can only discipline, chasten & prepare the lower members to receive & hold without harm or disintegration that higher force which has alone the power to raise us to the summits. In the intellectual ages of mankind, reason forgets these limitations; it tries to do a double work, to judge correctly all the knowledge which presents itself to the sensorium & its instruments and also to know things directly & in their essence. The former is its legitimate work & deserves the name of Science; the latter is an illegitimate attempt to go beyond its sphere and conceals an error under the name of Metaphysics. The intellect can know & judge phenomena; by its labour in examining them it arrives, in spite of much presumption & error, at a considerable number of phenomenal certainties; but it cannot know & judge the essence of things; by attempting to examine that field, whether unaided or as the principal inquirer, it only arrives, if it is honest with itself, at this one truth, that it can be certain of nothing; — all the rest is appearance, asseveration or opinion. We can know things as they seem to be in the order of the physical Nature in which they live; by the reason we cannot be sure what anything is, in itself, in that order of realities of which physical Nature is only the external seeming. Therefore the last refuge of reason, when it becomes conscious of its blunder, is to deny that such an order of realities exists at all, & to confine itself to the knowledge of material & phenomenal certainties. But such a restriction of knowledge brings with it a lowering, narrowing & petrifying of our humanity, because contrary to the whole nature and ineradicable tendency of our kind & sure therefore to falsify & slow down the springs of our action & being. Therefore Nature, mightier & wiser than the Scientist, compels man to revolt against the cold & debasing tyranny of a negative scepticism. She compels him back to the way to his internal skies & compels him to recover, in whatever new terms, the promise of his Scriptures & his Gospels. She makes him listen again for some indirect echo, if not for the actual resonance of the eternal, immutable chant, the ever-rhythmic unwritten Veda.

The European attempt must, therefore, come to nought the moment it is brought face to face, as daily it is being brought more & more nearly face to face with its own inalienable insufficiency. The tradition of Asia will again impose itself on humanity, & it is probable that it will be again a country politically subject to Europe but more than any other tenacious of its spiritual temperament & tradition, which will be the instrument of the revanche. But the revelation that will conquer this time the forces of material rationalism must be one which includes the intellect in exceeding it, fulfils, not annuls it; for the conditions demand this greater consummation. In the Roman days the intellect was attacked before its constructive work had proceeded beyond the first insufficient paces; today the intellect has done its constructive work and the work must be accepted. It is India alone that can satisfy this double claim of the human reason & the divine intelligence; & the new reconquest will differ as much and in the same way from the old as India differs from old Judaea.

It is true that in this country the reason has never fulfilled itself, triumphed & held undisputed sway to the same extent as in modern Europe. If we take in its general results in India the great intellectual movement of humanity, we see that it broke up & scattered about in fragments the ancient catholic tradition & knowledge, placed its stamp on much that yet remains, destroyed a great deal which it could not assimilate, left a little surviving under veils & in our remote & secret places. On the mental temperament of our people, the long struggle had a disastrous effect; for it has deprived all except the few of the higher supra-intellectual inner life of our forefathers, it has made impossible any general resort to that discipline which gave them the use to a certain extent, at least, of the higher intuitive mentality, the satyadrishti, the direct sight, and has driven the many to be content rather with the irregular intuitions of the heart, the aesthetic faculties & the senses; we have kept those faculties which receive the actual touch of the higher truth obscurely, with the eyes of the intellect closed but lost those which receive them directly, with the eyes of the intellect open and luminously transmitting them to the mind imprisoned in matter. We have therefore neither been able to organise the intellectual efficiency of the Europeans, nor retain the principles of inner greatness known to our forefathers. Nevertheless, we still have among us important remnants of the old knowledge & discipline & we have firm hold in our schools of Yoga on the supreme means by which its lost parts can be recovered. The key of a divine life upon earth lies, rusted indeed in an obscure corner of our mansion, used only by a few, but still it lies there & is still used. It has to be singled out from amid much waste matter, made fit for complete & general use and given freely to mankind. We have kept, fortunately, the intuitional temperament to which its use is easy & natural. The failure of the intellect to assume complete sway and entirely rationalise our life, was a necessary condition for the preservation of that temperament, itself necessary for the appointed work & God-decreed life of our nation. On the other hand, the indispensable work of Buddha and his predecessors & successors has not been entirely lost on our nation. Their great movement which denied, limiting itself in rationality, the capacity or the need of the human mind to know beyond the laws of phenomena, seized in metaphysical philosophy upon only so much as was necessary for conduct, sought to establish on pure logic & reason the few fundamental principles it needed and, feeling obscurely the necessity of completing itself by physical science, as soon as it entered that field, far outpaced the accomplishment of Europe or Arabia, ended in a defeat & collapse necessary for the final salvation of humanity. Its defeat necessitated in the divine scheme the later arrival in India of an intellectual & rationalistic civilisation, armed, organised, politically dominant, culturally aggressive, so that we might be forced, against our will & natural tendency, to hear from the rational intellect that which it was entitled to say to us & to perceive at last that the indirect & inferior intuition, great, divine & inspiring as it is in its more intense individual results, is still insufficient for humanity & that we must turn back to a higher guide & recover a lost & superior state. When, without falling into the European error, we have recognised this truth, — and the logical & rationalistic capacity developed in us by Buddha & Shankara gives us the power to recognise it & the tendency, — we shall be ready both for our national survival and for that greater world-work for which, alone among the nations, we keep still the necessary materials and the necessary capacity. Children of the Rishis, not entirely disinherited, repositories of the Veda, still clinging to our trust, we alone can recover in our experience its half lost truths for the growing need of humanity. We have acquired, too, by our long philosophical discipline, the power of stating supra-intellectual knowledge in that language of the intellect on which the modern world insists as the proper vehicle of understanding and the first condition of acceptance.

We can see, from this point of view, the causes of the general substitution of the logical & speculative method for the intuitional & experiential; it was an incident in the inevitable recurrence of one of those periods in which pure intellectuality dominates & which have for their function to refine & chasten the lower nature in the general mass of humanity. We can see what we have gained, — the power of ratiocination, the openness to the processes of reason, the ability to express intellectually — so far as that is possible — supra-intellectual knowledge & experience, the control of the lower members by the reason. We can see, too, the natural limitations of the intellect & the inevitably inferior validity of the metaphysical method to the experiential in the attempt to grasp the truths of Veda, in that the certainty of these truths cannot be acquired either by speculation or logic. We can see how this inferiority has worked for the obscuration or elimination of much that was potent, active & living in the more ancient knowledge; for the intellect tends to reject in its self-confidence what it cannot grasp & define, just as the heart tends to reject in its self-will what it does not desire or enjoy; yet what the intellect cannot grasp & define, includes often the most valuable parts of experience and knowledge.

The seeds of this movement of the intellect are contained in the Sanhitas & Upanishads themselves, although the movement itself is foreign to the Scriptures. The Sanhitas are Karmakanda; their object is not the enunciation of the general Truths of Brahman, but the practice of its particulars; they are the perfect monuments, sufficient to themselves, of especial moments, stages, movements in the progress of the individual towards his divine goal; they are instruments by thought & speech for the stabilisation of his increasing gains in light, force & joy; they are the praise & invocation of the gods who preside over particular functionings in our nature & in world-nature; they are statements of experience packed full of psychological detail and minute spiritual realisation, which confirm the seer & help the seeker. They are truth of experience & have therefore no room for speculation; they are ascertained truth & give therefore no room to doubt, debate & logical reasoning. But there are passages, rare seeds of the method pursued by the Upanishads, in which a general question is put and the suggestion of an answer offered. The Upanishads, on the contrary, are Jnanakanda; they have for their object the enunciation of the Truth of Brahman & the fundamental principles of Brahman's self-manifestation in universe. But with one remarkable exception they do not use, in order to arrive at this truth, these principles, the method of logical reasoning. Unlike the Sanhitas, they admit, not so much of doubt, as of debate; they move by positive questioning and the positive answer to questioning. But, again, the answer to questioning does not move by logic either in its inception, in its process or in its consummation. When Yajnavalkya holds his grand debate with the Brahmavadins at the court of King Janaka, when the proud Balaki vails his pride to the superior knowledge of King Ajatashatru, it is not by the field of logic or with the arms of metaphysic disquisition that they encounter each other. The question one puts to another is not "What thinkest thou of this?" but "What dost thou know?" and he whose knowledge proves to be deeper than his adversary's, is the conqueror in the discussion. Nor has this superior knowledge been arrived at by a more just or a more brilliant speculation, but by deeper sight, by a more powerful concentration. He has arrived at it, tapas taptwa; that is the method laid down by Varuna to his son Bhrigu in the Taittiriya Upanishad; for, he adds, tapo Brahma, Tapas is Brahman. Tapas, in other words, is the dwelling of the soul on its object, by which Brahman originally created the world through vision — sa ikshata — saw Itself, that is to say, as world & what It saw, became, — the dwelling of the soul on its object whether, prospectively, in creative vision, outwardly realising, as the poet & the genius of action dwells, or, retrospectively, in perceptive vision of the thing created, inwardly realising, as the prophet dwells; tapas is the very foundation of the method of revelation & intuition. Therefore, as in the acquisition of knowledge, speculation & logic are not used, so also in the imparting of knowledge, disquisition and logic are not used.

The thing has been seen by the seer, he is the drashta & to him Veda is drishti; it is spoken to the hearer & he sees, indirectly, through the medium of the word what the seer has seen by the self-vision, directly; to the hearer, Veda is Sruti. Yajnavalkya speaks his knowledge, his adversaries do not dispute it; they, too, see, being themselves habituated to these supreme processes, and the thing seen they silently & without debate acknowledge. If they are to dispute, since dispute is only a comparison of knowledge, of sight, of Veda, of drishti,[2] they must themselves first see farther, more profoundly, more subtly; and to see farther, they must first plunge into farther tapas, remain long constant in a farther dwelling of the soul on its object.

Still, just as in the Sanhitas there is the seed of the Upanishadic method, so in the Upanishads there is the seed of the later philosophical & intellectual method; we have, very occasionally, an obscure & casual preparation for the Darshanas. One passage, indeed a line, entirely typifies this secret bridging of the two methods; by a slight glance at it we can see how the mighty many-branching tree of the metaphysical philosophies burgeoned out from a very insignificant grain of tendency. Gautama in the Chhandogya, declares to his son Swetaketu the fundamental principle that all existence apparent to us here comes out of one anterior & ultimate existence, and he immediately notices the opposite appreciation, accepted as a starting point in the Aitareya, that existence originally emerges out of an original state of non-being, but only to reject it on the ground of a logical difficulty, "How could existence be created or create itself out of the non-existent";[3] it is the earliest statement of the metaphysical principle common to all our positive & orthodox philosophies that nothing comes out of Nothing. The logic is large, axiomatic & elemental; we have a perception of logic rather than a process of logic or a generalisation from one perception & a priori exclusion of another as evidently impossible, not a logical demonstration of the impossibility. We are still within the four walls of the Upanishadic process, but stand already in the cadre of the doorway leading out into metaphysical disquisition. When we come to the sermons of Buddha, one knows not how many centuries later, and the formal foundation of the six orthodox philosophies we see, in spite of an immense logical & rationalistic development, that they proceed, initially, on this method of Gautama; they start from an act of logical discrimination, the acceptance of one statement of general perception & the rejection of another which seems to be inconsistent with the first or its contrary. All the ancient philosophies refer back to the Veda for the justification of the fundamental formulas in which they differ most obstinately & irreconcilably from each other. They are right in their positive claim; where they are wrong, where Shankara himself goes so hopelessly astray, is in founding on the same authority not only their own ultimate justification, but the confutation of their adversaries. The Veda is not logical, does not really confute anything; its method is experiential, intuitional; its principle is to receive all experiences, all perceptions of truth about the Brahman, and either to place them side by side in order of experience & occasional relation, as in the Sanhitas, or to arrange them in order of perception and fundamental relation, as in the Upanishads, putting each in its place, correcting misplacement & exaggeration, but not excluding, not destroying. This is admirably seen in the colloquy of Ajatashatru & the proud Balaki; Ajatashatru does not deny the experiences & perceptions of Balaki; he accepts them, denies only their claim to represent the ultimate truth, gives them their true character, puts them in their right place & leads up by this purificatory process to his own deeper knowledge. Harmony, synthesis is the law of the Veda, not discord & a disjection of the members of truth in order to replace the manysided reality of existence by a narrower logical symmetry. But the metaphysical philosophies are compelled by the law of their being to effect precisely this disjection. Veda can admit two propositions that are logically contradictory, so long as they are statements of fundamental experience & perception; it does not get rid of the contradiction by denying experience but seeks instead the higher truth in which the apparent contradiction is reconciled. Logic, by its very nature, is intolerant even of apparent contradiction; its method is verbal, ideative; it accepts words & thoughts as rigid & iron facts instead of what they really are, imperfect symbols & separate sidelights on truth. Being & Non-Being are ideas opposed to each other; therefore, in logic, one or the other must be excluded. The One cannot be at the same time the many; therefore, in logic, either the Many is an illusion, or Duality is the fundamental reality of things. Brahman is Nirguna, without qualities, beyond definition; therefore, to the rigid Adwaitins, the Saguna Brahman, the Infinite Personality of God becomes a supreme myth of Maya, a basic & effective fact indeed, but basic & effective only in and of the grand cosmic illusion which It directs. Logic, the tyrant of the metaphysician, is satisfied by these abstract processes, but Truth is hurt & dismembered. Illusions of truth, dogmas of syllogism, take its place, and war upon each other, as indeed, so long as they live, they must go on warring for ever, since none can ever be established as undisputedly true, resting, as they do, on pure opinion of Smriti poured into the mould of Opinion, having, as they all have, a part only of Truth which they pretend vainly to be the whole.

---

[2] The word for knowledge, vid, veda, is the Latin word for sight &, for the early Rishis, had probably not yet lost entirely all colour of its physical & more primitive meaning.

[3] The language of the Sruti is remarkable, Asat ekam evadwitiyam, Non-Being one without a second, & shows that the old use of not-being differs essentially from our idea of nothingness.

We see, as a result, a progressive disjection of the fundamental truths of Veda, &, curiously enough, a disjection of the various parts of method which make up the totality of the Veda. The totality of Vedantic knowledge consists of several processes; first, Vedanta, the direct perception of the fundamental reality out of which all emerges & to which all returns; secondly, Sankhya, the analysis, by the discriminating perception, of the fundamental principles of being & knowledge in which the Reality manifests itself as world, as subject, & as object; thirdly, Yoga, the psychological basis of experience, experiment, practical analysis, synthesis which verifies the discriminative analysis; fourthly, Vaisheshika, the physical analysis of the form or matter in which the manifesting world-energy is expressed & established to our outgoing perceptions; fifthly, Nyaya, the analysis of the processes of discrimination whether by the intellect or by higher functions; sixthly, Karma of Veda, the application of the knowledge acquired in formulas of life-action by which the individual & the community can ensure the highest phenomenal expression of the fundamental Reality of which their special nature is capable, — by which, let us say, man can express Brahman in his superior & more plastic kind as the bee or the ant expresses Brahman in its inferior & more rigid & limited nature; — these six rank among other processes, — for life of Veda is supple, flexible and wide, — some of which are the foundation of Purana & Itihasa. The fundamental perception, separating, narrowed itself and became the Uttara Mimansa of Badarayana; the discriminative analysis, separating, narrowed itself and became Sankhya of Kapila; the psychological experimentation, separating, narrowed itself & became Yoga of Patanjali; the physical analysis, separating, narrowed itself and became Vaisheshika of Kanada; the analysis of discriminative processes, separating, narrowed itself and became Nyaya of Gautama; the application in formulas of life-action, separating, narrowed itself extremely & became the Purva Mimansa of Jaimini; yet each of the six arrogated to itself the functions & the sufficiency of the other five. Other parts of knowledge & process, ejected by the ever-narrowing tendency of logical exclusiveness, established themselves in other philosophies and branches of practice & knowledge and have come down to us, changed, often disfigured, in Shastra, in Purana, in legend & history, in different schools of Yoga.

The original method of all these differences was the method of Gautama in the episode of the Chhandogya, the exclusive affirmation of one's own seeing, the logical exclusion, by process of verbal & ideative distinction, of that which has [been] seen by others. We perceive very well this root of the evil in the grand example, supreme in its kind, of the Buddha. Unhelped by the conflicting philosophies of the schools, dissatisfied with the too rigorously materialised methods of the Yogins, he takes the right, the supreme step, he retires into himself & gives his soul the charge of the Truth. Sa tapo atapyata. He emerges from this concentration of soul, tapas taptwa, with the great illumination received in the ever-memorable night under the Bo tree. What is this illumination of Buddha? It is the perception of the chain of Karma, of the impermanence of sanskaras, of the illusoriness of the mental ego, of the release into the motionless peace of Nirvana. There was nothing new in these things considered merely as tenets; they belong, in one form or another, to Vedanta; they cannot have been unknown to the philosophers of the age. What was new in them was their puissant revivification in a supreme soul and a great personality, their removal from the category of metaphysical dogmas & abstractions, into realities of life, concrete, human, vivid, which could once more be pursued by all, realised, practised and lived. It was this return to the sources, this puissant reconnection of Vedanta with ordinary life which was the secret of the Buddha's tremendous effectuality. New also was the particular connection & interlinking of all these central ideas in the thought of the Buddha, the singular cast given to them by his unique, yet universal temperament & the formulation in the mould of that temperament of a system of Vedantic ethics. Still, in his fundamental method, in his approach to truth & his handling of truth, Buddha had not, so far, gone beyond the method of the Vedantic Rishis; Yajnavalkya or Pippalada would have so sought in themselves for the truth, received illumination in the same fashion, equally cast that knowledge into well-linked formulae of experience which could be lived and practised. But Yajnavalkya or Pippalada would not have shot the iron bolt of logic on the knowledge they had gained and shut themselves in a prison of ratiocination to the experiences of others and to fresh vision. It was here that, owing, perhaps, to the very strenuousness of Buddha's search as well as to the limits of the question with which he had started, "How shall one escape from the pain & grief of the world," he turned from the ancient path and allowed the metaphysical & logical training of his past [to] lay its heavy hand upon him. He built up walls of logic; he shut himself up in a creed. Thus it came about that this great destroyer of the ego, sanctioned in his disciples the supreme act of intellectual egoism and this giant render of chains imposed on his Sangha, without positively intending it, deprecating it indeed, the bondage to a single personality & the chain of a specific formula of thought. The movement of the metaphysical philosophies, more purely intellectual, far less temperamental & personal than the Buddha's, yet followed the same limiting process. They obeyed not a personal illumination, but the logic of their starting point. Sankhya, for instance, proceeded on a discriminative analysis of the world, proceeded indeed to the last limit of that analysis and found that, fundamentally, Existence starts & maintains its manifestation of world on the basis, first, of the Unity of Nature, — the unity, the Yogin would say, of the energy of the Lord, — and, secondly, of the multiplicity of souls observing & reflecting the works of Nature, — the multiplicity, the Vedantin would say, of the individual souls, in which Brahman, the Lord, the one Supreme soul, puts Himself forth to enjoy the works of His energy. Of these two fundamental principles the Sankhya metaphysician made a formula, an ultimate perception; he refused to go beyond; he built up a wall of logical disquisition to shelter himself from wider perceptions and a more complex experience. Such was the method of all these schools, the developed method of which we find so indistinct a seed in the Upanishads.

Still, it was from some fundamental experience or revelation that the metaphysicians started; the logical element intervened only as a second term of knowledge. Moreover, the method of the aphorism preserved the suggestive profundity of the intuition or revelatory experience & tended to maintain in the practice of knowledge the original closeness of the intellectual concept to that vision in the soul which thought can only translate very imperfectly to the reason. But about a thousand years later we find a new movement of the intellect in force, illustrated by the names of Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa, in which logic covers the whole field, leaving only a narrow corner to experience & intuition; but, for that very reason, the experience, the intuition assumes a character of much more eager intensity, exclusiveness, monotone of emphasis and steeps itself more fervently in the personality & temperament of the thinker. Hence a passion of dispute, an intolerance in logomachy which leaves far behind the measure of more ancient disputants. The battle is, finally, a civil strife between Vedantist & Vedantist; temporarily victorious over rival schools, they turn to rend each other; but the strife is still mainly about fundamental perceptions. The great question now is the fundamental unity or difference between the supreme soul & the individual or another, which would have astonished greatly the ancient Rishis, the question whether the world is false or real, — false, not only in its appearance to the senses, but per se, in itself, in its essence & its being. In the Mayavada of Shankara, Buddha, the rationalist, completes his work in India. He has led the reason to a great act of self-slaughter, the denial of existence to the world which alone it can study, more, the denial of Brahman in the world on the authority of that very Veda which spends so much time in affirming & elaborately explaining Brahman in the world. In other countries, in other ages, the Buddhistic agnostic train of thought led to a still more supreme suicide of reason; for it came to the denial of its own power to know anything real & fundamental, came almost, like Buddhistic Nihilism, to deny the existence of anything real & fundamental. In India the farther advance after Shankara & his successors has been mechanical & practical rather than theoretic; it has led towards the final divorce of intellect from experience. The metaphysician, devoted to intellect, has abandoned experience in favour of the authority of departed Acharyas. The schools of Yoga devoted to experience, have practised their psychological methods according to a fixed tradition without the harmonising touch, the generalising light; Sankhya dispensed with Yoga, Yoga divided itself from Sankhya. Thus has the spiritual life of India, by a misplaced & intolerant action of Intellect & its servant, rash-moving, light-winged, — the chameleon-hued phantasm Opinion, been shredded, parcelled out, narrowed into many streams & shallows, like the Oxus of the poet. Thus has it come down to our own age, ever narrowing more & more, shorn of its victorious streams, awaiting its return to a wider flood and a more grandiose motion.

Chapter III

We have, then, to choose between two methods, one historic & modern, in possession of the field, easily applied in its fullness, the other ancient, difficult to employ, impossible indeed for us to utilise safely except by an inversion of the process of knowledge known to the Rishis. According as we choose the one or the other, we shall arrive at a logical and symmetrical result, a private room hired for ourselves in the mansion of Truth & marked out by us as her sole temple, or shall be free to range in all her domain, gleaning wide & various results, but not soon or easily sure of possessing her entirety. I have indicated the disadvantages of the intellectual & logical method for the interpretation of Vedanta, but, in view of its long dominion & wide acceptance, it will be as well to consider & convince ourselves of the more important of them clearly and in some detail before we proceed.

In the first place, by the method of intellectual reasoning we are compelled to apply the processes of logic to entities which are beyond the grasp of logic. A single instance will suffice. We find, as a matter of experience, that existence is one and yet existence is multiple; everywhere, to whatever nook or corner of being we penetrate, we find this riddle presenting itself, undeniable & ineffugable, of a multiplicity which appears, a unity concealed which yet the mind insists on as the sole truth of the multiplicity. Nor is the unity which our mind thus asks us to perceive, a sum of factors; that oneness exists, but behind it there is an essential unity out of which both the sum & its factors emerge. Yet, divorce that essential unity from all notion of multiplicity expressed or latent, & it ceases to be unity; it becomes something else of which unity & multiplicity are mutually related aspects. But when we have arrived at this coexistent & coincident unity & multiplicity, before we can proceed to the something else which is neither one nor many, logic has already taken alarm. It cannot be, it says, that two opposites really coexist & coincide as the nature of Being. If we ask why not, — since after all, it is an universal experience, — the answer is that the thing is illogical & irrational; — unintelligible & contradictory to the view of logic & reason, it is, therefore, to them impossible of credence. A sum and its factors, may & must coexist, but not a thing which is at once one and many. Therefore Logic sets to work to get rid of one or both of the two irreconcilable, yet strangely reconciled opposites. Buddhism dismisses the Many as phenomena of sensation, the One as an ideative illusion of sensation; it gets rid of the unity in sum as a mere combination of sensational factors in the figure of the chariot and its parts, having no existence apart from the factors, no real existence at all; it gets rid of the essential unity as a mere illusion of continuity created by the uninterrupted succession of sensations, in the figure of the flame & the wick. It drives by logical process towards a Nullity, although not all its schools are bold enough to arrive at that void & yawning haven. For the rest, its final conclusion is illogical, for though it claims to be the pure concept of Nullity, it is in reality, when examined, a something that is nothing. Therefore, originally, Buddha seems to have turned aside from the problem and declared to his disciples, Seek not to know, for to know, even if it be possible, helps not at all & leads to no useful result. Buddhism was satisfied with having got rid of the original, actual & pressing contradiction in this world here & now which it had set out to destroy. Adwaita asserts the One on the ground of ultimate experience; it dismisses the Many as an illusion; yet since both are ineffugable, since the soul escaping from the illusion, escapes from it merely & does not destroy it, it has to be admitted that the substratum of multiplicity exists eternally. Here again we are led by logical process to a result which is illogical; we have, in the end, a Maya that at once exists and does not exist. This difficulty is at once put aside as beyond enquiry; the contradiction exists, inexplicable but true; we need not enquire farther, for we have got rid of the original contradiction in which we were entangled & cutting through this Gordian knot of Nature, we have released the individual soul from the illusion of multiplicity & therefore from the necessity of phenomenal existence. In both cases the process & result are similar & a like subterfuge is utilised. In both cases Logic, like

Cato at Utica, has committed suicide in order to assert its rights & liberties; but it has died, as the patients of Molière's doctors had the felicity of dying, according to the rules of the science; therefore it is satisfied. It is not, however, Buddhism & Adwaita alone, but every logical philosophy that arrives at a similar result; we find always that when we would explain existence in an ultimate term which shall be subject to logic, we fail; we arrive either at a term which is plainly illogical, or at an explanation which fails to explain or a success which seems to succeed only because it ignores or suppresses or juggles away an important part of the data. The suggestion irresistibly arises whether this is not so, whether it must not be always so merely because the formulae of logic, a creature as it is & a limited movement of intellectual ideation, which is itself a creature and a limited movement of existence, useful enough within the sphere of their birth & movement, & in the circle of their jurisdiction, cannot control that which is beyond & wider than ideation, yet farther beyond & wider than its creature logic? Invaluable in relating correctly the particulars of the universe and purging our ideas about them, it may be of less sovereign efficacy in dealing with the fundamental things which underlie phenomena and of no efficacy at all in discovering the Reality which lies farther back behind phenomena.

Much of the luminous confusion of Metaphysics is due to the self-satisfied content with which it leans upon words & abstract ideas & uses them not merely as instruments, but as data, forgetting that these are merely useful to symbolise & formulate very imperfectly truths of experience & perception. Therefore in dealing with abstract ideas & conceptions we are unsafe unless we insist always on returning to the thing itself which they symbolise. Otherwise we lose ourselves in facile words or in confusing abstractions. For instance, in order to get rid of the anomaly of a Maya that exists & exists not, we say sometimes that the Many have a relative reality, but no essential reality. But what have we said, after all? Merely this, that we do not find the Many existing except in some relation to a unity behind, established in that Unity and, as far as we can see, existent by that unity, as indeed the unity itself exists in a certain relation to the eternally existent Many either in their manifestation or in their substratum of Maya. How much farther have we got by this manipulation of words? We have found a fresh formula which expresses the difficulty, but does not solve the difficulty. We have taken refuge in a disingenuous phrase which suggests [to] us that phenomena are unreal, but tries to escape from the consequences of its admission. As well may we say, that water is in any sense unreal because it only exists by the mixture of oxygen & hydrogen; oxygen & hydrogen unreal, because they only exist by the congregation of atoms; atoms unreal because they only exist by some obscure principle of the transformation of energy into forms; energy unreal because it exists to us only in its works & manifestations. In all this we are playing with words, we are making an argument of our own ideative limitations. So again, in a different way, with the question of the Personality & Impersonality of God. Personality is to us a word which we use too lightly without fathoming the depth of the thing which it indicates. We confuse it perhaps with the idea of a separate ego, we imagine God in His personality as one Ego among millions separate from all the others, superior & anterior to them; we refuse to extend or to subtilise our conception, and according to our personal predilections we argue that such a Personal God cannot exist or that He must exist. But the whole method was illegitimate. We ought rather to fathom in experience all the possibilities of human personality & of divine personality, if such a thing exists, in order to know them & arrive at sure results about them instead of battling over a verbal symbol or an arbitrary abstraction & ending only in an eternal war of ill-grounded opinions.

This danger of intellectual predilections thrusting out Truth is the third disadvantage of the logical method. Logic claims & even honestly attempts to get rid of predilection and to see things in the sure light of truth, but it is not equal to its task; our nature is full of subtle disguises and, the moment we form an opinion, attaches itself to it & secretly takes it under its protection under pretence of an exclusive attachment to Truth or a militant zeal for reason & the right opinion. We come to our subject with a predisposition towards a particular kind of solution established either in our feelings, in our previous education & formed ways of thinking or in our temperament & very cast of character. We seize passionately or we select deliberately & reasonably the arguments that favour our conclusion; we reject, whether with impatience or after scrupulous & fair attention, the arguments that would shake it. Logic, a malleable & pliant servitor behind all its air of dry & honest rigidity, asks only that it should be provided with suitable premises, unsuitable premises excluded or explained away, & its conscience is entirely satisfied. We perform the comedy with perfect sincerity, but it is still a comedy which Nature plays with us; our garb of intellectual stoicism has concealed from ourselves, the epicure of his own dish of thoughts, the mind enamoured of its favourite ideas. Shankara comes to the Upanishads with a judgment already formed; he is an Adwaitin, his temperament predisposes him to Mayavada. But the Sruti does not contain the Mayavada, at least explicitly; it does contain, side by side with the fundamental texts of Adwaita, a mass of texts which foster the temper & views of the Dualist. But the Sruti is the supreme & infallible authority; it contains nothing but truth; it can inculcate, therefore, nothing but Adwaita. Obviously, then, these dualistic texts must have a meaning & a bearing different from their surface meaning or their apparent bearing; it is Shankara's business, as a commentator in search of truth, to put always the right, that is to say always the Adwaitic interpretation on Sruti. Watch him then seize the text in his mighty hands and, with a swift effort, twist & shape & force it to assume a meaning or a bearing which will either support or at least be consistent with Adwaita, — a giant victoriously wrestling with & twisting into a shape a mass of obstinate iron! There is no insincerity in the process, rather the fervour of a too passionate sincerity. Still, Truth often veils her face with a tear or a smile, when Shankara comments on the Sruti. He is the greatest; the others are not likely to escape from the snare into which he casts himself headlong. Nor do I think the philosopher has yet been born who has escaped from these original meshes of intellectual preference, predestined belief & ineffugable personal temperament.

In fact, the supreme failing of the metaphysical method is that, owing to the paucity, abstract uncertainty and doubtful bearing of its most essential data, it becomes almost entirely a domain of opinion. The absolute contempt of scientific rationalism for metaphysics which for a long time past has conquered general opinion in Europe & put an end to fruitful philosophical thinking, is almost certainly exaggerated & unjustified. The emergence of a new metaphysical thinking, more practical & realistic than the old abstract philosophies, presaged by Nietzsche, fulfilled in James & Bergson, is a sign at once of the return of Europe upon this dangerous error and of a perception, subconscious perhaps, of that real defect in the character of metaphysics which gave a hold to the destructive criticisms of modern realism. The long and imposing labours of the highest human intellects in the region of metaphysics, has not been a vain waste of priceless energy. Nature makes no such mistakes; her glance, though it seems to rove & fall at random and vary capriciously, is surer & more infallible in its selection than our human reason. Metaphysics have fulfilled a necessary and, when all has been said, a right & true function in our evolution; the materials of the great systems she has built have been general truths and not abstract errors. But the systems themselves are not final expressions of truth; they are the mould of the philosopher's personality, the stamp of his temperament and type of intellect. If we examine the method & substance of our own philosophies, we shall see why this must be so and cannot be otherwise. Their most important data are vast & vague conceptions, infinite in their nature, Being, Non-Being, Consciousness, Prakriti & Purusha (Nature & Soul), Mind, Matter. How can these entities be compelled to give us their secret except by a profound & exhaustive interrogatory such as modern Science has applied to the lowest principle of Being, analysing & experimenting in every possible way with Matter? But the metaphysician does not base his process on the sure steps of experience. He starts with an ideal definition of these great indefinables and he argues logically from the abstract idea to results which are faultless, indeed, in logic; — but how can we be sure of an equal faultlessness in the reality of things which is after all our proper business? We cannot be; for each thinker handles according to his own light this vague & plastic material of ideas: there is nothing to check him; he asserts his opinion & his opinion is dominated by his education or his temperament. Shankara asserts that works are incompatible with salvation, Jaimini that works are indispensable to salvation. Who shall decide, when each proceeds with a perfect logic from his premises? Therefore, a second class of data have to be called in, the texts of the Sruti. But Jaimini & Shankara appeal equally to the texts of the Sruti; for there are some which, if pressed in their separate meaning, seem to declare the inutility of works, there are others which, if pressed in their separate meaning, seem to declare the indispensability of works. It is a question of interpretation and, where different interpretations are possible, we interpret, again, according to our opinion which is decided, as we have seen, by our education or our temperament. Even when an interpretation in the sense of our opinion seems to be impossible, an ingenious scholarship, a curious & intrepid learning can make it possible. Sa atma tattwamasi Swetaketo, cries Gautama to his son; "That is the Truth, that is the Self, that art thou, O Swetaketu." The evidence of Revealed Scripture seems to be conclusive for the Adwaitic view of existence. No, cries the Dualist, you have read it wrongly, you have separated átmátattwam into three distinct uncompounded words when there is really an euphonic combination of átmá atat twam, which gives us this result, "Thou art *not* that, O Swetaketu." Our inalienable perception of right, the satyam ritam in us, tells us that the Dualist's device is wrong, a desperate expedient only; but how shall we convince the Dualist, whose business it is, as a dualist, not to be convinced? For grammatically, textually, he is within his rights. Nor can Shankara at least complain of this amazing tour-de-force; for he himself has used the very same device, in his commentary on the Isha Upanishad, in order to read, for the convenience of his philosophy, asambhútyá, by the not coming into birth, where tradition, metre, sentence-structure & context demand sambhútyá, by the coming into birth. In this confusion, is there any other class of data handled by metaphysics which will help us out of the difficulty? Certain psychological experiences are so handled; notably, the phenomena of sleep, the phenomena of samadhi, the phenomena of ultimate experience in consciousness. But how are we to know that these experiences bear the construction put on them or justify the conclusions drawn from them? how are we to know, for instance, that the experiences in consciousness which we find advanced as ultimate are really ultimate or even that they are not entirely illusory & deceptive? As metaphysics handles them, isolating them from each other, advancing them to demonstrate particular views & opinions, we cannot have any certainty. And, indeed, we find that each builder of a metaphysical system has a different formula of ultimate consciousness, ultimate to him, from which he starts; this difference of the ultimate step in experience which is also the starting-point for the chain of our logical systematising, is the strong foundation of all these age long jarrings in religious sect and school of philosophy. Here again opinion is master, very clearly founded not on data, not on pure truth, but on truth as seen in the colouring & with the limitation of our education & temperament. We can see from examples in modern Science how these differences work out & where their remedy is to be found. Physicists & geologists have disagreed in their view of the age of the earth; the geologists had certain data of experience before them which pointed to one conclusion, the physicists had a different set of data before them which pointed to a different conclusion. The difference here [is] a difference of education; the education of each had trained his mind to look only at a certain set of considerations, to move only in a certain way of thinking & reasoning. If physicist & geologist are combined in one mind, the age of the earth will not even then be indisputably fixed, for the necessary data are still wanting, but a juster perception will be gained, a better preparation for considering the problem, a superior chance of arriving as near to the truth as is now possible. Again, we see two scientists, absolutely agreed on all positive physical problems, confronted with the phenomena of the psychical world, partly true, partly the conscious or half conscious frauds of exploiters & illusions of enthusiasts. One turns eagerly to the new subject, examines widely, believes readily, is discouraged by no disappointments; the other refuses contemptuously to investigate or, if he investigates, hastens as rapidly as he can to the conclusion that the whole business is a sink of fraud, imposture & mystification. It is difference of temperament, not of the facts, that has determined these conflicting opinions. In the positive questions on which they are agreed, in the conclusions of their respective sciences where the geologist & physicist would not dream of disputing each other's conclusions, intellectual type & temperament are by no means entirely banished as factors, but their play is restricted, a mass of actual fact & experience is there to check them & keep them in order. It is this check that is wanting to the method of the metaphysicians.

If, then, our object is to take a number of general truths, a number of abstract conceptions, a few general statements of Vedanta and wide facts of consciousness, and out of these materials build ourselves a bright, aerial house of speculation in which our intellect can live satisfied with the sense of finality and our personal temperament assert itself as the ultimate truth of things, the method of abstract speculation supporting itself on logic will be sufficient for our purpose. But if we wish rather to know anything for certain about God & the ultimate reality of the world and the foundations of our life & existence, it is not by logic and speculation that we shall arrive at our desire. Experience is the first necessity; an experiential method, not a speculative & logical method. What is the utility of logical discussion & the marshalling of Vedic texts to decide whether works are incompatible with salvation or indispensable to it or neither incompatible nor indispensable, but only useful & permissible? What we need is experience. If once it is established by the experience of the Jivanmuktas that works & salvation are compatible, by the experience of the Karmayogins that works also lead to freedom in the Infinite & Divine Existence, — although they need not be the only path, nor the only requisite, although, even, it may be difficult to harmonise an active existence with the calm & peace of Infinity, — then no amount of logic to the contrary can be of any avail. Nor will Vedic texts avail, since the bearing of the texts has itself to be first decided. And what is the use of proving by logic & a curious scholarship that Tattwam asi should be read atattwam asi or that Vidya & Avidya in a particular Upanishad do not mean what they mean in every other Upanishad or that amritatwam in one text means the state of the gods & in others the state of Brahman? We need rather to experience always, to experience our unity with the One Truth of things and our difference from it and the relations of the unity to the difference; having experienced we shall understand. We need by practice & experiment, under a fit human guide or guided by the Divinity within, if we have strength & faith in Him, to fathom the outer dissonances & the secret harmonies of Vidya & Avidya, to achieve & enjoy immortality instead of arguing about immortality, to realise the thing the Veda speaks instead of disputing about the words of the text. In the absence of knowledge of the object, touch with the object, direct experience of the object, argument tends to become a vain jangling and speculation a highsounding jargon. These things may be useful to awaken our intellectual interest in the subject and move us to the acquisition of knowledge, but only if we become dissatisfied with them & see the necessity of proceeding farther. The Greek philosophers argued, of old, that the world was made out of water or made out of fire, and their speculations & the logical ingenuities of the sophists awakened a widespread curiosity on the subject; but the moment the experimental methods of physical science give us actual experience of the constituents of the material world, such speculations become valueless; the simple relation of connected facts takes the place of abstract logic. No one would dream of trying to settle the constituents of water or the processes of water by speculative logic; the experiential method is there to forbid that inutility. Even if the right experiential method has to be found, it is still by progressive experience step after step aided by the eye of intuition that it has to be discovered. Argument from first principles can only be of a minor and almost an accidental assistance; its function is always to awaken the mind & attach it to the object, so that the intuition attracted by the mental demand may fall upon the point desired with its light & bright electric shock and its divinely illuminating swiftness.

It might seem to follow that as the scientific method has been used to elucidate the problems of matter, so it should be used to elucidate the problems of mind & spirit. Certainly, in the absence of another, the scientific method would be the best, — the method of patient and courageous experiment & observation aided by a scrupulous use of hypothesis & exact reasoning. A beginning has been made in this direction in Europe by the examination of the abnormal conditions of hypnosis, divided personality & rare mental & psychic phenomena as well as in the tendency of psychology towards the abandonment of the superficial, academic and unfruitful methods of the past. But it is doubtful whether the scientific method will bear as great fruit in the things of mind as it has borne in the things of matter; it is certain that it is wholly unsuited to the investigation of the things of the spirit, because here we come into touch with Infinity & even cross the borders that divide the definite from the indefinable. The more we progress in that direction, the more the methods of scientific reasoning become inapplicable, unfruitful & misleading. Even the Mind gives a very limited hold to the scientist. In the first place, experiment is much more dangerous & difficult than in the physical sciences; in the latter we risk death & suffering, in the former we have to go out of the normal, face the dangers of the beyond from which man draws back shuddering, risk even the loss of that very reason which we have chosen for our instrument. The repugnance of mankind to take this step is much greater than that fear & repugnance which set the mass of mankind against the early experiments of science as diabolical sorcery & magic. Similarly, we find denounced as quackery, dupery, hallucination, superstition, the modern attempts to deal with the obscure phenomena of mind, — those in which observation of the familiar & normal is not enough & experiment with the abnormal is necessary. But the difficulty of convincing the ignorant or the reluctant is here infinitely greater, because of the elusive nature of mind as compared with matter. This is the second capital disadvantage of the scientific method, — that our only field for full experiment is ourselves. In matter we can examine any object by bringing it sufficiently near to be within the vicinity of our senses; but in mind we are unable to see the movements & processes of the minds of others except in so far as we can judge them from their gestures, action & physical expression, — indices unutterably perilous to the reasoner, inconceivably misleading. Unless, therefore, we can discover & use mental instruments, answering to the microscope, telescope, retorts of the astronomer, chemist & physicist, by which we can see, study & analyse the mental processes of thought, feeling & sensation in others as well as in ourselves, we may know indeed the physical movements & organs corresponding to some of the motions of mind, but we shall never know mind itself. It is an obscure perception of this truth that explains the powerful revival in our own day of the occult. Erratic & ignorant as much of it is, it was inevitable & it is salutary. Nature, unerring in her action, is filling mankind with an instinctive sense, a sort of dim subterranean intuition that, now that Science has almost completed its analysis of Matter, the next subject of inquiry must be Mind & Mind cannot be known except by as yet undiscovered or little-used introscopic instruments. Even if these are found, the most dangerous, intricate, difficult & varied experiments will be necessary; for mind is infinitely more elusive & elastic than matter. Where physical Nature confines herself rigidly & stubbornly to a single process, psychical Nature uses, versatilely & intricately, a hundred. To have sufficient experience, to be sure of one's results, one must take oneself & others experimentally to pieces, combine & recombine, put in order & put in disorder one's mental & emotional functions in a way & to an extent which humanity of the present day would pronounce chimerical and impossible. Still our own philosophy founding itself on experiments repeated continually through many millenniums declares that it is possible. Our Yoga, if its pretensions are true, enables us to do these things &, given certain difficult precautions, to do them with an eventual impunity; it separates the various functions, keeps some inactive while others are acting, experimentally analyses & creates new syntheses of mind and feeling, so that we are able to know the constituents, process & function at least of our own internal forces, with some perfection. Certain forms of Yoga claim to develop faculties by which we can not only know & watch the internal processes of others, but silently control them. If these pretensions are found to be justified, if we can really master & use such methods & instruments, a scientific knowledge & control of the forces of mind may become as possible as our present scientific knowledge & control of the forces of Nature. But how much shall we have gained? A knowledge of constituents, processes, functions we shall have, not, any more than in physical nature, a knowledge of things in themselves. The reality & spirit of objects & forces will still escape us, leaving us only their forms & phenomena. Reason will once more find herself baffled; with regard to the one thing that really matters, the one thing humanity is driven eternally to seek as necessary, supreme & the highest good, we shall have to return, as now, to the sterile result of agnosticism.

Experience, yes; but experience illumined by Veda & vijnana. We must by experiment & experience develop those faculties which see the Truth face to face & do not have to approach it indirectly & by inference only. The results of experience will then be illumined by this higher truth; the truth acquired will be confirmed & enlarged by experience. We shall be able to recover our lost kingdoms of the spirit, know the unknowable, enter into relations with the Infinite, be ourselves the reality of the Infinite as well as, if we so choose, its expression in the apparent Finite. We shall not be confined to the silver & copper of mind & matter, but handle also the gold of the Spirit. We shall use indeed the smaller currency in which the Spirit makes itself negotiable in material form & mental impression, not despising even the most apparently insignificant cent or cowrie, since all are divine, but shall use them only as lesser symbols of the higher currency which is alone of a true & self-determined value. This knowledge & possession of the things of the Spirit is the promise of Veda &

Vedanta, — a promise not delayed for its fulfilment to another life & world, but offered, ihaiva, in the present life & in this perishable body, nor only offered, but continually realised since prehistoric times by elect spirits in our Indian generations. Yoga, which offers us the knowledge & control of mental processes & forces in ourselves & others, offers us what is infinitely more valuable & the one thing worth pursuing for its own sake, the knowledge & possession of the truth of forms mental & material in the reality of the Self and the realisation of life in the world as the phenomena of a divine epiphany. We can know God, we can become the Brahman.

This promise long confined to the few, to the initiates in India, is once more being placed before the whole world for its acceptance. Of this supreme offer a life recently lived in an obscure corner of the earth seems to me to be the very incarnation & illuminating symbol, — the life of the Paramhansa Ramakrishna of Dakshineswar. Not for any body of teachings that he left behind, not for any restricted type of living, peculiar system of ethics or religious panacea for the ills of existence, — but because it brought once more into the world with an unexampled thoroughness & liberality the great Vedantic method of experience & inner revelation & showed us its possibilities. An illiterate, poor & obscure Bengali peasant, one who to the end of his life used a patois full of the most rustic forms & expressions, ignorant of Sanscrit, of any language but his own provincial dialect, ignorant of philosophy & science, ignorant of the world, yet realised in himself all the spiritual wisdom of the ages, shed in his brief sayings a light so full, so deep on the most difficult profundities of our inner being, the most abstruse questions of metaphysics that the most strenuous thinkers & the most learned Pandits were impressed by his superiority. By what process did he arrive at this great store of living knowledge? Never by any intellectual process, by any steps of reasoning. In all the things of the intellect, even the most elementary, he was as simple as a child, more unsophisticated than the most ignorant peasant of his native village. He could turn indeed an eye of infallible keenness on the hearts & intentions of men, but it was the eye of vision, not the eye of thought. Never indeed, in modern times or since the intellectualising of mankind began were reasoning & intellectual processes so rigidly excluded from the process of knowledge with such astonishing results. The secret of his success was that always he lived & saw; where most men only reason and translate thought into sentiment, feel and translate emotion into terms of thinking, he saw with the heart or a higher faculty & threw out his vision into experience with a power of realisation of which modern men have long ceased to be capable; thus living everything to its full conclusion of mental & physical experience his soul opened more & more to knowledge, to direct truth, to the Satyam in things, until the depths hid nothing from him & the heights became accessible to his tread. He first has shown us clearly, entirely & without reserve or attenuating circumstance, the supreme importance of being over thinking, but being, not in terms of the body & life merely, like the sensational & emotional man or the man of action, but in the soul as well and the soul chiefly, in the central entity of this complex human symbol. Therefore he was able to liberate us from the chains imposed by the makeshifts of centuries. He broke through the limitations of the Yogic schools, practised each of them in turn & would reach in three days the consummation which even to powerful Yogins is the accomplishment of decades or even of more lives than one; broke through the limitations of religion and fulfilled himself in experience as a worshipper of Christ and of Allah while all the time remaining in the individual part of him a Hindu of the sect of the Shaktas; broke through the limitations of the Guruparampara, &, while using human teachers for outward process & discipline, yet received his first & supreme initiation from the eternal Mother herself and all his knowledge from the World-Teacher within; broke through the logical limitations of the metaphysical schools and showed us Dwaita & Adwaita inextricably yet harmoniously one in experience, even as they are shown to us in Veda & Vedanta. All that at the time still governed our spiritual life he took typically into his soul & into his mental & physical experience, swallowed up its defects &

imperfections in the infinite abyss of his personality and brought out through these masks & forms always the something beyond that is perfect and supreme. Thus establishing experience and inward revelation as the supreme means of the highest knowledge, his became one of the seed-lives of humanity; and the seed it held was the loosening of the bonds of the rational intellect & the return of humanity's journey from its long detour on the mid-plateaus of reason towards the footpath that winds up to the summits of the spirit.

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

ISHA UPANISHAD comprises Sri Aurobindo's translations of and commentaries on the Isha Upanishad. His translations of and commentaries on other Upanishads, as well as his translations of later Vedantic texts and writings on the Upanishads and Vedanta in general, are published in *Kena and Other Upanishads*, volume 18 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Sri Aurobindo had a special interest in the Isha Upanishad, whose principle of "uncompromising reconciliation of uncompromising extremes" (p. 83) underlies his own philosophy as well. He first translated the Isha around 1900, and over the next fourteen years returned to it again and again, citing, translating, and writing commentaries on this eighteen-verse text. None of these commentaries was completed, but each served as a step in the development of his interpretation.

Between August 1914 and May 1915 Sri Aurobindo published a translation and analysis of the Isha in the monthly review *Arya*. These were issued as a book in 1920 or 1921; a revised edition came out in 1924. This work contains Sri Aurobindo's last word on the Isha Upanishad; it may also be said to represent the quintessence of his Upanishadic interpretation. His final translation and analysis are published in Part One of the present volume. Part Two contains the various incomplete commentaries he wrote before August 1914.

PART ONE: TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY PUBLISHED BY SRI AUROBINDO

This part comprises Sri Aurobindo's final translation and analysis of the Isha Upanishad.

Isha Upanishad. This work, consisting of a translation (with Sanskrit text) and an analysis in four "movements", was published in the monthly review *Arya* in ten instalments between August 1914 (the

Arya's first issue) and May 1915. It was brought out as a book around 1921. New editions appeared in 1924, 1941, 1945, and subsequently. The 1924 edition contained some comparatively minor revisions by the author.

PART TWO: INCOMPLETE COMMENTARIES FROM MANUSCRIPTS

Before publishing his final translation and analysis in 1914–15, Sri Aurobindo made ten different efforts to write commentaries on the Isha Upanishad. The earliest dates from around 1902, the last from mid-1914, that is, just before the time he started publishing his final translation and analysis in the *Arya*. They are arranged here in approximate chronological order. Some of them are of considerable length but none was completed or revised for publication. All were discovered among his manuscripts after his passing and subsequently transcribed and published in various journals and books.

Isha Upanishad: All that is world in the Universe. Circa 1902. Sri Aurobindo abandoned this work after a few pages. There is no full stop after the last word written.

The Ishavasyopanishad with a commentary in English. Circa 1905. The title page of this work reads in full: "Materials for Bhavani Grantha-/Mala. /1. The Ishavasyopanishad /with a commentary in English." The Sanskrit phrase "Bhavani Grantha-Mala" means "Garland of books for the goddess Bhavani". This commentary apparently was intended to be the first of a series of works for the use of students of Bhawani Mandir, a "temple to the goddess Bhawani" where young men would be trained to do selfless work for Mother India. The idea of Bhawani Mandir was primarily that of Barindra Kumar Ghose, Sri Aurobindo's younger brother, though Sri Aurobindo did write a manifesto setting forth its ideals around 1905 (see *Bhawani Mandir* in *Bande Mataram: Political Writings 1890–1908*, volume 6 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO). Shortly after writing the pamphlet, Sri Aurobindo lost interest in the project, and does not appear to have written any other works for the proposed "Grantha-Mala".

The text of the commentary ends abruptly at the bottom of the last page of the notebook. It may have been continued in another notebook that has been lost. Inside the back cover, facing the last page of text, Sri Aurobindo wrote the following: "Hunger is in its nature cannibal, you eat protoplasm & nothing else because you are protoplasm".

The Karmayogin: A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad. Circa 1905–6. This lengthy but still incomplete commentary was written sometime after Sri Aurobindo took up the practice of yoga in 1905, and no later than May 1908, when the second of the two notebooks in which it is written was seized by the Calcutta police at the time of his arrest in connection with the Alipore Bomb Conspiracy. He began it, as he had begun "The Ishavasyopanishad", as a guru-student dialogue, but dropped this form after the first page. The commentary contains several passages, totalling around 400 lines or ten printed pages, that are the same as or very similar to passages in "The Ishavasyopanishad". He apparently copied them from that work while writing this one.

Sri Aurobindo modified the structure of the commentary while he was working on it. See the note on page 170 for details. The first two "Chapters", dealing with verses 1 to 3 of the Upanishad, occupy the first of the two manuscript notebooks that were used for writing the commentary. (For some reason Sri Aurobindo wrote "Chapters I to III" on the first page of this notebook. This may explain why the first "Chapter" in the second notebook is numbered "IV".) This second notebook contains the second "Part", which deals with verses 4 to 6 of the Upanishad.

Ish and Jagat. Circa 1912. Editorial title. This piece is quite incomplete.

The Secret of the Isha. Circa 1912. In the manuscript, "Chapter I" is written above the title. Only this fragmentary first chapter was written.

Chapters for a Work on the Isha Upanishad. Circa 1912. Editorial title. These six draft chapters for a proposed "book" (see the last paragraph of chapter [2]) have been reproduced in the order in which they occur in Sri Aurobindo's notebook. The chapters are numbered editorially [1] to [6]. Sri Aurobindo's own working titles and numbers are given. Although headed "The Isha Upanishad", the piece deals with the text of the Upanishad only in chapter [3] and more briefly in chapter [6]. Elsewhere it deals, among other things, with Puranic cosmology, the savage and the ascent of the human being, philology, the Veda, and Sri Aurobindo's method of Vedic and Vedantic exegesis. The suggestion on the scope of "dhanam" in chapter [3] may refer to

Sri Aurobindo's discussion of this word in Appendix [3] of Draft A of "The Life Divine" (see below). This would indicate that this chapter was written after that draft.

The Upanishad in Aphorism: The Isha Upanishad. Circa 1913–14 (placed before the next piece in order to keep the three drafts of "The Life Divine" together). The first paragraph of this "commentary" consists of a translation of the first verse of the Isha Upanishad. The rest is an exploration, in aphorisms, of various related ideas.

The Life Divine: A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad [Draft A]. Circa 1912. Sri Aurobindo wrote this draft in pencil on unused pages or parts of pages of two notebooks that he had used a number of years earlier to make fair copies of literary works. He originally headed the piece "The Isha Upanishad". Later he changed the heading to "The Secret of Divine Life/A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad", and still later to "The Life Divine/A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad". "Introduction", written below the heading, was at one point changed to "Foreword". In the 18 July 1912 entry of *Record of Yoga*, his yogic diary, Sri Aurobindo wrote: "the Life Divine commenced". It was probably to this draft that he was referring. Note also the indirect reference to the *Titanic* disaster, which took place in April 1912. Several passages written for this piece but not worked into the text are reproduced in an appendix published at the end of the text.

The Life Divine [Draft B]. Circa 1913–14. Sri Aurobindo wrote this draft in pen in three notebooks. The five chapters of which it is composed are the beginning of "Part II/The First Movement" of a planned complete commentary. The following outline, written on the first page of the manuscript, shows the structure of this proposed work:

Part I. The Upanishad
Part II The First Movement – God, Life & Nature
Part III The Second Movement – Brahman Self Blissful and All-Blissful
Part [IV] The Third Movement – God in World – Vidya & Avidya
Part [V] The Fourth Movement – Surya & Agni
Part [VI] The Divine Life

Of these six parts, only "Part II The First Movement" was worked on.

The Life Divine [Draft C]. 1914. This draft consists of two chapters, numbered II and III by the author. Although they have the same heading as "Draft A" and "Draft B", they seem to be destined not so much for a commentary on the Isha Upanishad as for an independent philosophical writing. (They contain no direct commentary on the Upanishad but occasionally mention it.) They seem in fact to represent a transitional stage between the "Life Divine" commentary on the Isha Upanishad and *The Life Divine*, Sri Aurobindo's principal philosophical work, which began to be published in the *Arya* in August 1914. The first instalment of Sri Aurobindo's final translation and analysis of the Isha Upanishad (see Part One above) appeared in the same issue.

PUBLISHING HISTORY

Sri Aurobindo published a translation of the Isha Upanishad on 19 June 1909 in the first issue of the *Karmayogin*, a weekly review of politics and culture. This was a revised version of a translation he had completed and typed around 1900. He published his final translation and analysis in the *Arya* between August 1914 and May 1915. Around 1921, the *Arya* text was reprinted by the Arya Publishing House, Calcutta. The same publisher brought out an "authorised edition", which was said to be "revised and enlarged", in 1924. That edition in fact contained no real enlargement (other than the restoration of the analysis of verses 4–5, which had inadvertently been omitted in 1921) and only slight authorial revision. Two more editions were brought out by the Arya Publishing House during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime, in 1941 and 1945. These contained a few minor changes. Several more editions were brought out after 1950. In 1971 the work was included in *The Upanishads*, volume 12 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. The text in the present volume has been checked against the texts printed in the *Arya* and in the first four editions.

None of the ten incomplete commentaries published in Part Two appeared during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. All have been transcribed from his manuscripts. Four were published in 1971 in *The Upanishads*, one in the *Supplement* to the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (1973), and the other five in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* between 1977 and 1983.

Kena and Other Upanishads

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 18
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2001
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Kena and Other Upanishads

Publisher's Note

This volume comprises Sri Aurobindo's translations of and commentaries on Upanishads other than the Isha Upanishad. (His writings on that Upanishad appear in *Isha Upanishad*, volume 17 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.) It also includes his translations of later Vedantic texts and writings on the Upanishads and Vedanta philosophy in general.

The volume is divided into three parts. The first consists of translations and commentaries that were published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. The pieces in this part, along with his final translation of and commentary on the Isha Upanishad, are his most mature works of Upanishadic interpretation. The second and third parts consist of material from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts. The second includes early translations of the Prashna, Mandukya, Aitareya and Taittiriya Upanishads, and incomplete translations of and commentaries on some other Upanishads and Vedantic texts. The third part comprises incomplete and fragmentary writings on the Upanishads and Vedanta in general.

All the texts have been checked against the relevant manuscript and printed versions.

Guide to Editorial Notation

The contents of Parts Two and Three of this volume were never prepared by Sri Aurobindo for publication. They have been transcribed from manuscripts that sometimes present textual difficulties. In this edition these problems have been indicated as far as possible by means of the notation shown below.

Notation	**Textual Problem**
[.......]	Word(s) lost through damage to the manuscript (at the beginning of a piece, sometimes indicates that a page or pages of the manuscript have been lost)
[word]	Word(s) omitted by the author or lost through damage to the manuscript that are required by grammar or sense, and that could be supplied by the editors
[ ]	Blank left by the author to be filled in later but left unfilled, which the editors were not able to fill
[*note*]	Situations requiring textual explication; all such information is printed in italics

CONTENTS

Part One
Translations and Commentaries Published by Sri Aurobindo

Kena Upanishad 3
Katha Upanishad 99
Mundaka Upanishad 129
Readings in the Taittiriya Upanishad 149

Part Two
Translations and Commentaries from Manuscripts

Section One. Introduction

On Translating the Upanishads 163

Section Two. Complete Translations (circa 1900–1902)

The Prusna Upanishad of the Athurvaveda 175
The Mandoukya Upanishad 193
The Aitereya Upanishad 197
Taittiriya Upanishad 206

Section Three. Incomplete Translations and Commentaries (circa 1902–1912)

Svetasvatara Upanishad 235
Chhandogya Upanishad 250
Notes on the Chhandogya Upanishad 258
The Brihad Aranyak Upanishad 268
The Great Aranyaka: A Commentary on the Brihad Aranyak Upanishad 273
The Kaivalya Upanishad 288
Nila Rudra Upanishad 290

Section Four. Incomplete Commentaries on the Kena Upanishad (circa 1912–1914)

Kena Upanishad: An Incomplete Commentary 297
A Commentary on the Kena Upanishad 311
Three Fragments of Commentary 313
Kena Upanishad: A Partial Translation with Notes 315

Section Five. Incomplete Translations of Two Vedantic Texts (circa 1900 – 1902)

The Karikas of Gaudapada 319
Sadananda's Essence of Vedanta 330

Part Three
Writings on Vedanta

Four Fragments 337
The Spirit of Hinduism 340
The Philosophy of the Upanishads 345
An Incomplete Work of Vedantic Exegesis 400
The Religion of Vedanta 413
Evolution in the Vedantic View 414
The Means of Realisation 421
A Fragmentary Chapter for a Work on Vedanta 424
God and Immortality 433

Part One

Translations and Commentaries Published by Sri Aurobindo

These texts were first published between 1909 and 1920. Sri Aurobindo later revised most of them. The revised versions are printed here.

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry, c. 1915–1918

Kena Upanishad

The Kena Upanishad

FIRST PART

केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रैति युक्तः ।
केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुः श्रोत्रं क उ देवो युनक्ति ॥ १॥

1. By whom missioned falls the mind shot to its mark? By whom yoked moves the first life-breath forward on its paths? By whom impelled is this word that men speak? What god set eye and ear to their workings?

श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मनो यद् वाचो ह वाचं स उ प्राणस्य प्राणः ।
चक्षुषश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥ २॥

2. That which is hearing of our hearing, mind of our mind, speech of our speech, that too is life of our life-breath and sight of our sight. The wise are released beyond and they pass from this world and become immortal.

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग् गच्छति नो मनः ।
न विद्मो न विजानीमो यथैतदनुशिष्यात् ।
अन्यदेव तद्विदितादथो अविदितादधि ।
इति शुश्रुम पूर्वेषां ये नस्तद् व्याचचक्षिरे ॥ ३॥

3. There sight travels not, nor speech, nor the mind. We know It not nor can distinguish how one should teach of It: for It is other than the known; It is there above the unknown. It is so we have heard from men of old who declared That to our understanding.

यद्वाचानभ्युदितं येन वागभ्युद्यते ।
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ४॥

4. That which is unexpressed by the word, that by which the

word is expressed, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनो मतम्।
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ५ ॥

5. That which thinks not by the mind,[1] that by which the mind is thought, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

यच्चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षूंषि पश्यति।
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ६ ॥

6. That which sees not with the eye,[2] that by which one sees the eye's seeings, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

यच्छ्रोत्रेण न शृणोति येन श्रोत्रमिदं श्रुतम्।
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ७ ॥

7. That which hears not with the ear,[3] that by which the ear's hearing is heard, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

यत्प्राणेन न प्राणिति येन प्राणः प्रणीयते।
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ८ ॥

8. That which breathes not with the breath,[4] that by which the life-breath is led forward in its paths, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

---

[1] Or, "that which one thinks not with the mind".
[2] Or, "that which one sees not with the eye".
[3] Or, "that which one hears not with the ear".
[4] Or, "that which one breathes not (i.e. smells not) with the breath".

SECOND PART

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति दभ्रमेवापि नूनं त्वं वेत्थ ब्रह्मणो रूपम्।
यदस्य त्वं यदस्य देवेष्वथ नु मीमांस्यमेव ते मन्ये विदितम्॥ १॥

1. If thou thinkest that thou knowest It well, little indeed dost thou know the form of the Brahman. That of It which is thou, that of It which is in the gods, this thou hast to think out. I think It known.

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च।
यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च॥ २॥

2. I think not that I know It well and yet I know that It is not unknown to me. He of us who knows It, knows That; he knows that It is not unknown to him.

यस्यामतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः।
अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातमविजानताम्॥ ३॥

3. He by whom It is not thought out, has the thought of It; he by whom It is thought out, knows It not. It is unknown to the discernment of those who discern of It, by those who seek not to discern of It, It is discerned.

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते।
आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम्॥ ४॥

4. When It is known by perception that reflects It, then one has the thought of It, for one finds immortality; by the self one finds the force to attain and by the knowledge one finds immortality.

इह चेदवेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टिः।
भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति॥ ५॥

5. If here one comes to that knowledge, then one truly is; if here one comes not to the knowledge, then great is the perdition.

The wise distinguish That in all kinds of becomings and they pass forward from this world and become immortal.

THIRD PART

ब्रह्म ह देवेभ्यो विजिग्ये तस्य ह ब्रह्मणो विजये देवा अमहीयन्त ।
त ऐक्षन्तास्माकमेवायं विजयोऽस्माकमेवायं महिमेति ॥ १ ॥

1. The Eternal conquered for the gods and in the victory of the Eternal the gods grew to greatness. They saw, "Ours the victory, ours the greatness."

तद्धैषां विजज्ञौ तेभ्यो ह प्रादुर्बभूव तन्न व्यजानत किमिदं यक्षमिति ॥ २ ॥

2. The Eternal knew their thought and appeared before them; and they knew not what was this mighty Daemon.

तेऽग्निमब्रुवञ्जातवेद एतद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति ॥ ३ ॥

3. They said to Agni, "O thou that knowest all things born, learn of this thing, what may be this mighty Daemon," and he said, "So be it."

तदभ्यद्रवत् तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीत्यग्निर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीज्जातवेदा
वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ४ ॥

4. He rushed towards the Eternal and It said to him, "Who art thou?" "I am Agni," he said, "I am he that knows all things born."

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वं दहेयं यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥ ५ ॥

5. "Since such thou art, what is the force in thee?" "Even all this I could burn, all that is upon the earth."

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतद्दहेति तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न शशाक दग्धुं स
तत एव निववृते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ ६ ॥

6. The Eternal set before him a blade of grass; “This burn;” and he made towards it with all his speed, but could not burn it. There he ceased, and turned back; “I could not know of It, what might be this mighty Daemon.”

अथ वायुमब्रुवन् वायवेतद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति ॥ ७ ॥

7. Then they said to Vayu, “O Vayu, this discern, what is this mighty Daemon.” He said, “So be it.”

तदभ्यद्रवत् तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीति वायुर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीन्मातरिश्वा
वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ८ ॥

8. He rushed upon That; It said to him, “Who art thou?” “I am Vayu,” he said, “and I am he that expands in the Mother of things.”

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वमाददीय यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥ ९ ॥

9. “Since such thou art, what is the force in thee?” “Even all this I can take for myself, all this that is upon the earth.”

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतदादत्स्वेति तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न शशाकादातुं
स तत एव निववृते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ १० ॥

10. That set before him a blade of grass; “This take.” He went towards it with all his speed and he could not take it. Even there he ceased, even thence he returned; “I could not discern of That, what is this mighty Daemon.”

अथेन्द्रमब्रुवन् मघवन्नेतद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति तदभ्यद्रवत्
तस्मात्तिरोदधे ॥ ११ ॥

11. Then they said to Indra, “Master of plenitudes, get thou the knowledge, what is this mighty Daemon.” He said, “So be it.” He rushed upon That. That vanished from before him.

स तस्मिन्नेवाकाशे स्त्रियमाजगाम बहुशोभमानामुमां हैमवतीं तां
होवाच किमेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ १२ ॥

12. He in the same ether came upon the Woman, even upon Her who shines out in many forms, Uma daughter of the snowy summits. To her he said, “What was this mighty Daemon?”

FOURTH PART

सा ब्रह्मेति होवाच ब्रह्मणो वा एतद्विजये महीयध्वमिति ततो हैव विदांचकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ १ ॥

1. She said to him, “It is the Eternal. Of the Eternal is this victory in which ye shall grow to greatness.” Then alone he came to know that this was the Brahman.

तस्माद्वा एते देवा अतितरामिवान्यान् देवान् यदग्निर्वायुरिन्द्रस्ते ह्येनन्नेदिष्ठं पस्पर्शुस्ते ह्येनत्प्रथमो विदांचकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ २ ॥

2. Therefore are these gods as it were beyond all the other gods, even Agni and Vayu and Indra, because they came nearest to the touch of That...[5]

तस्माद्वा इन्द्रोऽतितरामिवान्यान्देवान् स ह्येनन्नेदिष्ठं पस्पर्श स ह्येनत् प्रथमो विदांचकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ ३ ॥

3. Therefore is Indra as it were beyond all the other gods because he came nearest to the touch of That, because he first knew that it was the Brahman.

तस्यैष आदेशो यदेतद्विद्युतो व्यद्युतदा३ इतीन्न्यमीमिषदा३ इत्यधिदैवतम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. Now this is the indication of That, — as is this flash of the lightning upon us or as is this falling of the eyelid, so in that which is of the gods.

---

[5] By some mistake of early memorisers or later copyists the rest of the verse has become hopelessly corrupted. It runs, “They he first came to know that it was the Brahman,” which is neither fact nor sense nor grammar. The close of the third verse has crept into and replaced the original close of the second.

अथाध्यात्मं यदेतद्गच्छतीव च मनोऽनेन चैतदुपस्मरत्यभीक्ष्णं संकल्पः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Then in that which is of the Self, — as the motion of this mind seems to attain to That and by it afterwards the will in the thought continually remembers It.

तद्ध तद्वनं नाम तद्वनमित्युपासितव्यं स य एतदेवं वेदाभि हैनं सर्वाणि भूतानि संवाञ्छन्ति ॥ ६ ॥

6. The name of That is “That Delight”; as That Delight one should follow after It. He who so knows That, towards him verily all existences yearn.

उपनिषदं भो ब्रूहीत्युक्ता त उपनिषद् ब्राह्मीं वाव त उपनिषदमब्रूमेति ॥ ७ ॥

7. Thou hast said “Speak to me Upanishad”;[6] spoken to thee is Upanishad. Of the Eternal verily is the Upanishad that we have spoken.

तस्यै तपो दमः कर्मेति प्रतिष्ठा वेदाः सर्वाङ्गानि सत्यमायतनम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. Of this knowledge austerity and self-conquest and works are the foundation, the Vedas are all its limbs, truth is its dwelling place.

यो वा एतामेवं वेदापहत्य पाप्मानमनन्ते स्वर्गे लोके ज्येये प्रतितिष्ठति प्रतितिष्ठति ॥ ९ ॥

9. He who knows this knowledge, smites evil away from him and in that vaster world and infinite heaven finds his foundation, yea, he finds his foundation.

---

[6] Upanishad means inner knowledge, that which enters into the final Truth and settles in it.

Commentary

I

The Subject of the Upanishad

THE TWELVE great Upanishads are written round one body of ancient knowledge; but they approach it from different sides. Into the great kingdom of the Brahmavidya each enters by its own gates, follows its own path or detour, aims at its own point of arrival. The Isha Upanishad and the Kena are both concerned with the same grand problem, the winning of the state of Immortality, the relations of the divine, all-ruling, all-possessing Brahman to the world and to the human consciousness, the means of passing out of our present state of divided self, ignorance and suffering into the unity, the truth, the divine beatitude. As the Isha closes with the aspiration towards the supreme felicity, so the Kena closes with the definition of Brahman as the Delight and the injunction to worship and seek after That as the Delight. Nevertheless there is a variation in the starting-point, even in the standpoint, a certain sensible divergence in the attitude.

For the precise subject of the two Upanishads is not identical. The Isha is concerned with the whole problem of the world and life and works and human destiny in their relation to the supreme truth of the Brahman. It embraces in its brief eighteen verses most of the fundamental problems of Life and scans them swiftly with the idea of the supreme Self and its becomings, the supreme Lord and His workings as the key that shall unlock all gates. The oneness of all existences is its dominating note.

The Kena Upanishad approaches a more restricted problem, starts with a more precise and narrow inquiry. It concerns itself only with the relation of mind-consciousness to Brahman-consciousness and does not stray outside the strict boundaries of its subject. The material world and the physical life are taken for granted, they are hardly mentioned. But the material world and the physical life exist for us only by virtue of our internal self and our internal life. According as our mental instruments represent to us the external world, according as our vital force in obedience to the mind deals with its impacts and objects, so will be our outward life and existence. The world is for us, not fundamentally but practically at any rate, what our mind and senses declare it to be; life is what our mentality or at least our half-mentalised vital being determines that it shall become. The question is asked by the Upanishad, what then are these mental instruments? what is this mental life which uses the external? Are they the last witnesses, the supreme and final power? Are mind and life and body all or is this human existence only a veil of something greater, mightier, more remote and profound than itself?

The Upanishad replies that there is such a greater existence behind, which is to the mind and its instruments, to the life-force and its workings what they are to the material world. Matter does not know Mind, Mind knows Matter; it is only when the creature embodied in Matter develops mind, becomes the mental being that he can know his mental self and know by that self Matter also in its reality to Mind. So also Mind does not know That which is behind it, That knows Mind; and it is only when the being involved in Mind can deliver out of its appearances his true Self that he can become That, know it as himself and by it know also Mind in its reality to that which is more real than Mind. How to rise beyond the mind and its instruments, enter into himself, attain to the Brahman becomes then the supreme aim for the mental being, the all-important problem of his existence.

For given that there is a more real existence than the mental existence, a greater life than the physical life, it follows that the lower life with its forms and enjoyments which are all that men here ordinarily worship and pursue, can no longer be an object of desire for the awakened spirit. He must aspire beyond; he must free himself from this world of death and mere phenomena to become himself in his true state of immortality beyond them. Then alone he really exists when here in this mortal life itself he can free himself from the mortal consciousness and know and be the Immortal and Eternal. Otherwise he feels that he has lost himself, has fallen from his true salvation.

But this Brahman-consciousness is not represented by the Upanishad as something quite alien to the mental and physical world, aloof from it and in no way active upon it or concerned with its activities. On the contrary, it is the Lord and ruler of all the world; the energies of the gods in the mortal consciousness are its energies; when they conquer and grow great, it is because Brahman has fought and won. This world therefore is an inferior action, a superficial representation of something infinitely greater, more perfect, more real than itself.

What is that something? It is the All-Bliss which is infinite being and immortal force. It is that pure and utter bliss and not the desires and enjoyments of this world which men ought to worship and to seek. How to seek it is the one question that matters; to follow after it with all one's being is the only truth and the only wisdom.

II

The Question. *What Godhead?*

MIND IS the principal agent of the lower or phenomenal consciousness; vital force or the life-breath, speech and the five senses of knowledge are the instruments of the mind. Prana, the life-force in the nervous system, is indeed the one main instrument of our mental consciousness; for it is that by which the mind receives the contacts of the physical world through the organs of knowledge, sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, and reacts upon its object by speech and the other four organs of action; all these senses are dependent upon the nervous Life-force for their functioning. The Upanishad therefore begins by a query as to the final source or control of the activities of the Mind, Life-Force, Speech, Senses.

The question is, *kena*, by whom or what? In the ancient conception of the universe our material existence is formed from the five elemental states of Matter, the ethereal, aerial, fiery, liquid and solid; everything that has to do with our material existence is called the elemental, *adhibhūta*. In this material there move non-material powers manifesting through the Mind-Force and Life-Force that work upon Matter, and these are called Gods or devas; everything that has to do with the working of the non-material in us is called *adhidaiva*, that which pertains to the Gods. But above the non-material powers, containing them, greater than they is the Self or Spirit, *ātman*, and everything that has to do with this highest existence in us is called the spiritual, *adhyātma*. For the purpose of the Upanishads the *adhidaiva* is the subtle in us; it is that which is represented by Mind and Life as opposed to gross Matter; for in Mind and Life we have the characteristic action of the Gods.

The Upanishad is not concerned with the elemental, the *adhibhūta*; it is concerned with the relation between the subtle existence and the spiritual, the *adhidaiva* and *adhyātma*. But the

Mind, the Life, the speech, the senses are governed by cosmic powers, by Gods, by Indra, Vayu, Agni. Are these subtle cosmic powers the beginning of existence, the true movers of mind and life, or is there some superior unifying force, one in itself behind them all?

By whom or what is the mind missioned and sent on its errand so that it falls on its object like an arrow shot by a skilful archer at its predetermined mark, like a messenger, an envoy sent by his master to a fixed place for a fixed object? What is it within us or without us that sends forth the mind on its errand? What guides it to its object?

Then there is the Life-force, the Prana, that works in our vital being and nervous system. The Upanishad speaks of it as the first or supreme Breath; elsewhere in the sacred writings it is spoken of as the chief Breath or the Breath of the mouth, *mukhya*, *āsanya*; it is that which carries in it the Word, the creative expression. In the body of man there are said to be five workings of the life-force called the five Pranas. One specially termed Prana moves in the upper part of the body and is preeminently the breath of life, because it brings the universal Life-force into the physical system and gives it there to be distributed. A second in the lower part of the trunk, termed Apana, is the breath of death; for it gives away the vital force out of the body. A third, the Samana, regulates the interchange of these two forces at their meeting-place, equalises them and is the most important agent in maintaining the equilibrium of the vital forces and their functions. A fourth, the Vyana, pervasive, distributes the vital energies throughout the body. A fifth, the Udana, moves upward from the body to the crown of the head and is a regular channel of communication between the physical life and the greater life of the spirit. None of these are the first or supreme Breath, although the Prana most nearly represents it; the Breath to which so much importance is given in the Upanishads, is the pure life-force itself, — first, because all the others are secondary to it, born from it and only exist as its special functions. It is imaged in the Veda as the Horse; its various energies are the forces that draw the chariots of the Gods. The Vedic image is recalled by the choice of the terms employed in the Upanishad, *yukta*, yoked, *praiti*, goes forward, as a horse driven by the charioteer advances in its path.

Who then has yoked this Life-force to the many workings of existence or by what power superior to itself does it move forward in its paths? For it is not primal, self-existent or its own agent. We are conscious of a power behind which guides, drives, controls, uses it.

The force of the vital breath enables us to bring up and speed outward from the body this speech that we use to express, to throw out into a world of action and new-creation the willings and thought-formations of the mind. It is propelled by Vayu, the life-breath; it is formed by Agni, the secret will-force and fiery shaping energy in the mind and body. But these are the agents. Who or what is the secret Power that is behind them, the master of the word that men speak, its real former and the origin of that which expresses itself?

The ear hears the sound, the eye sees the form; but hearing and vision are particular operations of the life-force in us used by the mind in order to put itself into communication with the world in which the mental being dwells and to interpret it in the forms of sense. The life-force shapes them, the mind uses them, but something other than the life-force and the mind enables them to shape and to use their objects and their instruments. What God sets eye and ear to their workings? Not Surya, the God of light, not Ether and his regions; for these are only conditions of vision and hearing.

The Gods combine, each bringing his contribution, the operations of the physical world that we observe as of the mental world that is our means of observation; but the whole universal action is one, not a sum of fortuitous atoms; it is one, arranged in its parts, combined in its multiple functionings by virtue of a single conscient existence which can never be constructed or put together (*akṛta*) but is for ever, anterior to all these workings. The Gods work only by this Power anterior to themselves, live only by its life, think only by its thought, act only for its purposes. We look into ourselves and all things and become aware of it there, an "I", an "Is", a Self, which is other, firmer, vaster than any separate or individual being.

But since it is not anything that the mind can make its object or the senses throw into form for the mind, what then is it — or who? What absolute Spirit? What one, supreme and eternal Godhead? *Ko devaḥ*.

III

The Supramental Godhead

THE ETERNAL question has been put which turns man's eyes away from the visible and the outward to that which is utterly within, away from the little known that he has become to the vast unknown he is behind these surfaces and must yet grow into and be because that is his Reality and out of all masquerade of phenomenon and becoming the Real Being must eventually deliver itself. The human soul once seized by this compelling direction can no longer be satisfied with looking forth at mortalities and seemings through those doors of the mind and sense which the Self-existent has made to open outward upon a world of forms; it is driven to gaze inward into a new world of realities.

Here in the world that man knows, he possesses something which, however imperfect and insecure, he yet values. For he aims at and to some extent he procures enlarged being, increasing knowledge, more and more joy and satisfaction and these things are so precious to him that for what he can get of them he is ready to pay the price of continual suffering from the shock of their opposites. If then he has to abandon what he here pursues and clasps, there must be a far more powerful attraction drawing him to the Beyond, a secret offer of something so great as to be a full reward for all possible renunciation that can be demanded of him here. This is offered, — not an enlarged becoming, but infinite being; not always relative piecings of knowledge mistaken in their hour for the whole of knowledge, but the possession of our essential consciousness and the flood of its luminous realities; not partial satisfactions, but *the* delight. In a word, Immortality.

The language of the Upanishad makes it strikingly clear that it is no metaphysical abstraction, no void Silence, no indeterminate Absolute which is offered to the soul that aspires, but rather the absolute of all that is possessed by it here in the relative world of its sojourning. All here in the mental is a growing light, consciousness and life; all there in the supramental is an infinite life, light and consciousness. That which is here shadowed, is there found; the incomplete here is there the fulfilled. The Beyond is not an annullation, but a transfiguration of all that we are here in our world of forms; it is sovran Mind of this mind, secret Life of this life, the absolute Sense which supports and justifies our limited senses.

We renounce ourselves in order to find ourselves; for in the mental life there is only a seeking, but never an ultimate finding till mind is overpassed. Therefore there is behind all our mentality a perfection of ourselves which appears to us as an antinomy and contrast to what we are. For here we are a constant becoming; there we possess our eternal being. Here we conceive of ourselves as a changeful consciousness developed and always developing by a hampered effort in the drive of Time; there we are an immutable consciousness of which Time is not the master but the instrument as well as the field of all that it creates and watches. Here we live in an organisation of mortal consciousness which takes the form of a transient world; there we are liberated into the harmonies of an infinite self-seeing which knows all world in the light of the eternal and immortal. The Beyond is our reality; that is our plenitude; that is the absolute satisfaction of our self-existence. It is immortality and it is "That Delight".

Here in our imprisoned mentality the ego strives to be master and possessor of its inner field and its outer environment, yet cannot hold anything to enjoy it, because it is not possible really to possess what is not-self to us. But there in the freedom of the eternal our self-existence possesses without strife by the sufficient fact that all things are itself. Here is the apparent man, there the real man, the Purusha: here are gods, there is the Divine: here is the attempt to exist, Life flowering out of an all-devouring death, there Existence itself and a dateless immortality.

The answer that is thus given is involved in the very form of the original question. The Truth behind Mind, Life, Sense must be that which controls by exceeding it; it is the Lord, the all-possessing Deva. This was the conclusion at which the Isha Upanishad arrived by the synthesis of all existences; the Kena arrives at it by the antithesis of one governing self-existence to all this that exists variously by another power of being than its own. Each follows its own method for the resolution of all things into the one Reality, but the conclusion is identical. It is the All-possessing and All-enjoying, who is reached by the renunciation of separate being, separate possession and separate delight.

But the Isha addresses itself to the awakened seeker; it begins therefore with the all-inhabiting Lord, proceeds to the all-becoming Self and returns to the Lord as the Self of the cosmic movement, because it has to justify works to the seeker of the Uncreated and to institute a divine life founded on the joy of immortality and on the unified consciousness of the individual made one with the universal. The Kena addresses itself to the soul still attracted by the external life, not yet wholly awakened nor wholly a seeker; it begins therefore with the Brahman as the Self beyond Mind and proceeds to the Brahman as the hidden Lord of all our mental and vital activities, because it has to point this soul upward beyond its apparent and outward existence. But the two opening chapters of the Kena only state less widely from this other view-point the Isha's doctrine of the Self and its becomings; the last two repeat in other terms of thought the Isha's doctrine of the Lord and His movement.

IV

The Eternal Beyond the Mind

THE UPANISHAD first affirms the existence of this profounder, vaster, more puissant consciousness behind our mental being. That, it affirms, is Brahman. Mind, Life, Sense, Speech are not the utter Brahman; they are only inferior modes and external instruments. Brahman-consciousness is our real self and our true existence.

Mind and body are not our real self; they are mutable formations or images which we go on constructing in the drive of Time as a result of the mass of our past energies. For although those energies seem to us to lie dead in the past because their history is behind us, yet are they still existent in their mass and always active in the present and the future.

Neither is the ego-function our real self. Ego is only a faculty put forward by the discriminative mind to centralise round itself the experiences of the sense-mind and to serve as a sort of lynchpin in the wheel which keeps together the movement. It is no more than an instrument, although it is true that so long as we are limited by our normal mentality, we are compelled by the nature of that mentality and the purpose of the instrument to mistake our ego-function for our very self.

Neither is it the memory that constitutes our real self. Memory is another instrument, a selective instrument for the practical management of our conscious activities. The ego-function uses it as a rest and support so as to preserve the sense of continuity without which our mental and vital activities could not be organised for a spacious enjoyment by the individual. But even our mental self comprises and is influenced in its being by a host of things which are not present to our memory, are subconscious and hardly grasped at all by our surface existence. Memory is essential to the continuity of the ego-sense, but it is not the constituent of the ego-sense, still less of the being.

Neither is moral personality our real self. It is only a changing formation, a pliable mould framed and used by our subjective life in order to give some appearance of fixity to the constantly mutable becoming which our mental limitations successfully tempt us to call ourselves.

Neither is the totality of that mutable conscious becoming, although enriched by all that subconsciously underlies it, our real self. What we become is a fluent mass of life, a stream of experience pouring through time, a flux of Nature upon the crest of which our mentality rides. What we are is the eternal essence of that life, the immutable consciousness that bears the experience, the immortal substance of Nature and mentality.

For behind all and dominating all that we become and experience, there is something that originates, uses, determines, enjoys, yet is not changed by its origination, not affected by its instruments, not determined by its determinations, not worked upon by its enjoyings. What that is, we cannot know unless we go behind the veil of our mental being which knows only what is affected, what is determined, what is worked upon, what is changed. The mind can only be aware of that as something which we indefinably are, not as something which it definably knows. For the moment our mentality tries to fix this something, it loses itself in the flux and the movement, grasps at parts, functions, fictions, appearances which it uses as planks of safety in the welter or tries to cut out a form from the infinite and say "This is I." In the words of the Veda, "when the mind approaches That and studies it, That vanishes."

But behind the Mind is this other or Brahman-consciousness, Mind of our mind, Sense of our senses, Speech of our speech, Life of our life. Arriving at that, we arrive at Self; we can draw back from mind the image into Brahman the Reality.

But what differentiates that real from this apparent self? Or — since we can say no more than we have said already in the way of definition, since we can only indicate that "That" is not what "this" is, but is the mentally inexpressible absolute of all that is here, — what is the relation of this phenomenon to that reality? For it is the question of the relation that the Upanishad makes its starting-point; its opening question assumes that there is a relation and that the reality originates and governs the phenomenon.

Obviously, Brahman is not a thing subject to our mind, senses, speech or life-force; it is no object seen, heard, expressed, sensed, formed by thought, nor any state of body or mind that we become in the changing movement of the life. But the thought of the Upanishad attempts to awaken deeper echoes from our gulfs than this obvious denial of the mental and sensuous objectivity of the Brahman. It affirms that not only is it not an object of mind or a formation of life, but it is not even dependent on our mind, life and senses for the exercise of its lordship and activity. It is that which does not think by the mind, does not live by the life, does not sense by the senses, does not find expression in the speech, but rather makes these things themselves the object of its superior, all-comprehending, all-knowing consciousness.

Brahman thinks out the mind by that which is beyond mind; it sees the sight and hears the hearing by that absolute vision and audition which are not phenomenal and instrumental but direct and inherent; it forms our expressive speech out of its creative word; it speeds out this life we cling to from that eternal movement of its energy which is not parcelled out into forms but has always the freedom of its own inexhaustible infinity.

Thus the Upanishad begins its reply to its own question. It first describes Brahman as Mind of the mind, Sight of the sight, Hearing of the hearing, Speech of the speech, Life of the life. It then takes up each of these expressions and throws them successively into a more expanded form so as to suggest a more definite and ample idea of their meaning, so far as that can be done by words. To the expression "Mind of the mind" corresponds the expanded phrase "That which thinks not with the mind, that by which mind is thought" and so on with each of the original descriptive expressions to the closing definition of the Life behind this life as "That which breathes not with the life-breath, that by which the life-power is brought forward into its movement."

And each of these exegetic lines is emphasised by the reiterated admonition, “That Brahman seek to know and not this which men follow after here.” Neither Mind, Life, Sense and Speech nor their objects and expressions are the Reality which we have to know and pursue. True knowledge is of That which forms these instruments for us but is itself independent of their utilities. True possession and enjoyment is of that which, while it creates these objects of our pursuit, itself makes nothing the object of its pursuit and passion, but is eternally satisfied with all things in the joy of its immortal being.

V

The Supreme Word

THE UPANISHAD, reversing the usual order of our logical thought which would put Mind and Sense first or Life first and Speech last as a subordinate function, begins its negative description of Brahman with an explanation of the very striking phrase, Speech of our speech. And we can see that it means a Speech beyond ours, an absolute expression of which human language is only a shadow and as if an artificial counterfeit. What idea underlies this phrase of the Upanishad and this precedence given to the faculty of speech?

Continually, in studying the Upanishads, we have to divest ourselves of modern notions and to realise as closely as possible the associations that lay behind the early Vedantic use of words. We must recollect that in the Vedic system the Word was the creatrix; by the Word Brahma creates the forms of the universe. Moreover, human speech at its highest merely attempts to recover by revelation and inspiration an absolute expression of Truth which already exists in the Infinite above our mental comprehension. Equally, then, must that Word be above our power of mental construction.

All creation is expression by the Word; but the form which is expressed is only a symbol or representation of the thing which is. We see this in human speech which only presents to the mind a mental form of the object; but the object it seeks to express is itself only a form or presentation of another Reality. That reality is Brahman. Brahman expresses by the Word a form or presentation of himself in the objects of sense and consciousness which constitute the universe, just as the human word expresses a mental image of those objects. That Word is creative in a deeper and more original sense than human speech and with a power of which the utmost creativeness of human speech can be only a far-off and feeble analogy.

The word used here for utterance means literally a raising up to confront the mind. Brahman, says the Upanishad, is that which cannot be so raised up before the mind by speech.

Human speech, as we see, raises up only the presentation of a presentation, the mental figure of an object which is itself only a figure of the sole Reality, Brahman. It has indeed a power of new creation, but even that power only extends to the creation of new mental images, that is to say of adaptive formations based upon previous mental images. Such a limited power gives no idea of the original creative puissance which the old thinkers attributed to the divine Word.

If, however, we go a little deeper below the surface, we shall arrive at a power in human speech which does give us a remote image of the original creative Word. We know that vibration of sound has the power to create — and to destroy — forms; this is a commonplace of modern Science. Let us suppose that behind all forms there has been a creative vibration of sound.

Next, let us examine the relation of human speech to sound in general. We see at once that speech is only a particular application of the principle of sound, a vibration made by pressure of the breath in its passage through the throat and mouth. At first, beyond doubt, it must have been formed naturally and spontaneously to express the sensations and emotions created by an object or occurrence and only afterwards seized upon by the mind to express first the idea of the object and then ideas about the object. The value of speech would therefore seem to be only representative and not creative.

But, in fact, speech is creative. It creates forms of emotion, mental images and impulses of action. The ancient Vedic theory and practice extended this creative action of speech by the use of the Mantra. The theory of the Mantra is that it is a word of power born out of the secret depths of our being where it has been brooded upon by a deeper consciousness than the mental, framed in the heart and not originally constructed by the intellect, held in the mind, again concentrated on by the waking mental consciousness and then thrown out silently or vocally — the silent word is perhaps held to be more potent than the spoken — precisely for the work of creation. The Mantra can not only create new subjective states in ourselves, alter our psychical being, reveal knowledge and faculties we did not before possess, can not only produce similar results in other minds than that of the user, but can produce vibrations in the mental and vital atmosphere which result in effects, in actions and even in the production of material forms on the physical plane.

As a matter of fact, even ordinarily, even daily and hourly we do produce by the word within us thought-vibrations, thought-forms which result in corresponding vital and physical vibrations, act upon ourselves, act upon others, and end in the indirect creation of actions and of forms in the physical world. Man is constantly acting upon man both by the silent and the spoken word and he so acts and creates though less directly and powerfully even in the rest of Nature. But because we are stupidly engrossed with the external forms and phenomena of the world and do not trouble to examine its subtle and non-physical processes, we remain ignorant of all this field of science behind.

The Vedic use of the Mantra is only a conscious utilisation of this secret power of the word. And if we take the theory that underlies it together with our previous hypothesis of a creative vibration of sound behind every formation, we shall begin to understand the idea of the original creative Word. Let us suppose a conscious use of the vibrations of sound which will produce corresponding forms or changes of form. But Matter is only, in the ancient view, the lowest of the planes of existence. Let us realise then that a vibration of sound on the material plane presupposes a corresponding vibration on the vital without which it could not have come into play; that again presupposes a corresponding originative vibration on the mental; the mental presupposes a corresponding originative vibration on the supramental at the very root of things. But a mental vibration implies thought and perception and a supramental vibration implies a supreme vision and discernment. All vibration of sound on that higher plane is, then, instinct with and expressive of this supreme discernment of a truth in things and is at the same time creative, instinct with a supreme power which casts into forms the truth discerned and eventually, descending from plane to plane, reproduces it in the physical form or object created in Matter by etheric sound. Thus we see that the theory of creation by the Word which is the absolute expression of the Truth, and the theory of the material creation by sound-vibration in the ether correspond and are two logical poles of the same idea. They both belong to the same ancient Vedic system.

This, then, is the supreme Word, Speech of our speech. It is vibration of pure Existence, instinct with the perceptive and originative power of infinite and omnipotent consciousness, shaped by the Mind behind mind into the inevitable word of the Truth of things; out of whatever substance on whatever plane, the form or physical expression emerges by its creative agency. The Supermind using the Word is the creative Logos.

The Word has its seed-sounds — suggesting the eternal syllable of the Veda, A U M, and the seed-sounds of the Tantriks — which carry in them the principles of things; it has its forms which stand behind the revelatory and inspired speech that comes to man's supreme faculties, and these compel the forms of things in the universe; it has its rhythms, — for it is no disordered vibration, but moves out into great cosmic measures, — and according to the rhythm is the law, arrangement, harmony, processes of the world it builds. Life itself is a rhythm of God.

But what is it that is expressed or raised up before the mental consciousness by the Word in the phenomenal world? Not Brahman, but truths, forms and phenomena of Brahman. Brahman is not, cannot be expressed by the Word; he does not use the word here to express his very self, but is known only to his own self-awareness. And even the truths of himself that stand behind the forms of cosmic things are in their true reality always self-expressed to his eternal vision in a higher than the mental vibration, a rhythm and voice of themselves that is their own very soul of movement. Speech, a lesser thing, creates, expresses, but is itself only a creation and expression. Brahman is not expressed by speech, but speech is itself expressed by Brahman. And that which expresses speech in us, brings it up out of our consciousness with its strivings to raise up the truth of things to our mind, is Brahman himself as the Word, a Thing that is in the supreme superconscience. That Word, Speech of our speech, is in its essence of Power the Eternal himself and in its supreme movements a part of his very form and everlasting spiritual body, *brahmaṇo rūpam*.

Therefore it is not the happenings and phenomena of the world that we have to accept finally as our object of pursuit, but That which brings out from itself the Word by which they were thrown into form for our observation by the consciousness and for our pursuit by the will. In other words, the supreme Existence that has originated all.

Human speech is only a secondary expression and at its highest a shadow of the divine Word, of the seed-sounds, the satisfying rhythms, the revealing forms of sound that are the omniscient and omnipotent speech of the eternal Thinker, Harmonist, Creator. The highest inspired speech to which the human mind can attain, the word most unanalysably expressive of supreme truth, the most puissant syllable or mantra can only be its far-off representation.

VI

The Necessity of Supermind

AS THE Upanishad asserts a speech behind this speech, which is the expressive aspect of the Brahman-consciousness, so it asserts a Mind behind this mind which is its cognitive aspect. And as we asked ourselves what could be the rational basis for the theory of the divine Word superior to our speech, so we have now to ask ourselves what can be the rational basis for this theory of a cognitive faculty or principle superior to Mind. We may say indeed that if we grant a divine Word creative of all things, we must also grant a divine Mind cognitive of the Word and of all that it expresses. But this is not a sufficient foundation; for the theory of the divine Word presents itself only as a rational possibility. A cognition higher than Mind presents itself on the other hand as a necessity which arises from the very nature of Mind itself, a necessity from which we cannot logically escape.

In the ancient system which admitted the soul's survival of the body, Mind was the man, in a very profound and radical sense of the phrase. It is not only that the human being is the one reasoning animal upon earth, the thinking race; he is essentially the mental being in a terrestrial body, the *manu*. Quite apart from the existence of a soul or self one in all creatures, the body is not even the phenomenal self of man; the physical life also is not himself; both may be dissolved, man will persist. But if the mental being also is dissolved, man as man ceases to be; for this is his centre and the nodus of his organism.

On the contrary, according to the theory of a material evolution upheld by modern Science, man is only matter that has developed mind by an increasing sensibility to the shocks of its environment; and matter being the basis of existence there is nothing, except the physical elements, that can survive the dissolution of the body. But this formula is at most the obverse and inferior side of a much larger truth. Matter could not develop Mind if in or behind the force that constitutes physical forms there were not already a principle of Mind striving towards self-manifestation. The will to enlighten and consciously govern the life and the form must have been already existent in that which appears to us inconscient; it must have been there before mind was evolved. For, if there were no such necessity of Mind in Matter, if the stuff of mentality were not there already and the will to mentalise, Mind could not possibly have come into being out of inconscient substance.

But in the mere chemical elements which go to constitute material forms or in electricity or in any other purely physical factor, whatever unconscious will or sensation they may be possessed by or possess, we can discover nothing which could explain the emergence of conscious sensation, which could constitute a will towards the evolution of thought or which could impose the necessity of such an evolution on inconscient physical substance. It is not then in the form of Matter itself, but in the Force which is at work in Matter, that we must seek the origin of Mind. That Force must either be itself conscient or contain the grain of mental consciousness inherent in its being and therefore the potentiality and indeed the necessity of its emergence. This imprisoned consciousness, though originally absorbed in the creation first of forms and then of physical relations and reactions between physical forms, must still have held in itself from the beginning, however long kept back and suppressed, a will to the ultimate enlightenment of these relations by the creation of corresponding conscious or mental values. Mind is then a concealed necessity which the subconscient holds in itself from the commencement of things; it is the thing that must emerge once the attractions and repulsions of Matter begin to be established; it is the suppressed secret and cause of the reactions of life in the metal, plant and animal.

If on the other hand we say that Mind in some such secret and suppressed form is not already existent in Matter, we must then suppose that it exists outside Matter and embraces it or enters into it. We must suppose a mental plane of existence which presses upon the physical and tends to possess it. In that case the mental being would be in its origin an entity which is formed outside the material world; but it prepares in that world bodies which become progressively more and more able to house and express Mind. We may image it forming, entering into and possessing the body, breaking into it, as it were, — as the Purusha in the Aitareya Upanishad is said to form the body and then to enter in by breaking open a door in Matter. Man would in this view be a mental being incarnate in the living body who at its dissolution leaves it with full possession of his mentality.

The two theories are far from being incompatible with each other; they can be viewed as complements forming a single truth. For the involution of Mind, its latency in the material Force of the physical universe and in all its movements does not preclude the existence of a mental world beyond and above the reign of the physical principle. In fact, the emergence of such a latent Mind might well depend upon and would certainly profit by the aid and pressure of forces from a supra-physical kingdom, a mental plane of existence.

There are always two possible views of the universe. The one supposes, with modern Science, Matter to be the beginning of things and studies everything as an evolution from Matter; or, if not Matter, then, with the Sankhya philosophy, an indeterminate inconscient active Force or Prakriti of which even mind and reason are mechanical operations, — the Conscious Soul, if any exists, being a quite different and, although conscient, yet inactive entity. The other supposes the conscious soul, the Purusha, to be the material as well as the cause of the universe and Prakriti to be only its Shakti or the Force of its conscious being which operates upon itself as the material of forms.[1] The latter is the view of the Upanishads. Certainly if we study the material world only, excluding all evidence of other planes as a dream or a hallucination, if we equally exclude all evidence of operations in mind which exceed the material limitation and study only its ordinary equation with Matter, we must necessarily accept the theory of Matter as the origin and as the indispensable basis and continent. Otherwise, we shall be irresistibly led towards the early Vedantic conclusions.

---

[1] Cf. for example, the Aitareya Upanishad which shows us the Atman or Self using the Purusha as that in which all the operations of Nature are formed.

However this may be, even from the standpoint of the sole material world Man in the substance of his manhood is a mind occupying and using the life of the body — a mind that is greater than the Matter in which it has emerged. He is the highest present expression of the will in the material universe; the Force that has built up the worlds, so far as we are able to judge of its intention from its actual operations as we see them in their present formula upon earth, arrives in him at the thing it was seeking to express. It has brought out the hidden principle of Mind that now operates consciously and intelligently on the life and the body. Man is the satisfaction of the necessity which Nature bore secretly in her from the very commencement of her works; he is the highest possible Name or Numen on this planet; he is the realised terrestrial godhead.

But all this is true only if we assume that for Nature's terrestrial activities Mind is the ultimate formula. In reality and when we study more deeply the phenomena of consciousness, the facts of mentality, the secret tendency, aspiration and necessity of man's own nature, we see that he cannot be the highest term. He is the highest realised here and now; he is not the highest realisable. As there is something below him, so there is something, if even only a possibility, above. As physical Nature concealed a secret beyond herself which in him she has released into creation, so he too conceals a secret beyond himself which he in turn must deliver to the light. That is his destiny.

This must necessarily be so because Mind too is not the first principle of things and therefore cannot be their last possibility. As Matter contained Life in itself, contained it as its own secret necessity and had to be delivered of that birth, and as Life contained Mind in itself, contained it as its own secret necessity and had to be delivered of the birth it held, so Mind too contains in itself that which is beyond itself, contains it as its own secret necessity and presses to be delivered, it also, of this supreme birth.

What is the rational necessity which forbids us to suppose Mind to be Nature's last birth and compels us to posit something beyond it of which itself is the indication? A consideration of the nature and working of mentality supplies us with the answer. For mentality is composed of three principal elements, thought, will and sensation. Sensation may be described as an attempt of divided consciousness to seize upon its object and enjoy it, thought as its attempt to seize upon the truth of the object and possess it, will as its attempt to seize upon the potentiality of the object and use it. At least these three things are such an attempt in their essentiality, in their instinct, in their subconscious purpose. But obviously the attempt is imperfect in its conditions and its success; its very terms indicate a barrier, a gulf, an incapacity. As Life is limited and hampered by the conditions of its synthesis with Matter, so Mind is limited and hampered by the conditions of its synthesis with Life in Matter. Neither Matter nor Life has found anything proper to their own formula which could help to conquer or sufficiently expand its limitations; they have been compelled each to call in a new principle, Matter to call into itself Life, Life to call into itself Mind. Mind also is not able to find anything proper to its own formula which can conquer or sufficiently expand the limitations imposed upon its workings; Mind also has to call in a new principle beyond itself, freer than itself and more powerful.

In other words, Mind does not exhaust the possibilities of consciousness and therefore cannot be its last and highest expression. Mind tries to arrive at Truth and succeeds only in touching it imperfectly with a veil between; there must be in the nature of things a faculty or principle which sees the Truth unveiled, an eternal faculty of knowledge which corresponds to the eternal fact of the Truth. There is, says the Veda, such a principle; it is the Truth-Consciousness which sees the truth directly and is in possession of it spontaneously. Mind labours to effect the will in it and succeeds only in accomplishing partially, with difficulty and insecurely the potentiality at which it works; there must be a faculty or principle of conscious effective force which corresponds to the unconscious automatic principle of self-fulfilment in Nature, and this principle must be sought for in the form of consciousness that exceeds Mind. Mind, finally, aspires to seize and enjoy the essential delight-giving quality, the *rasa* of things, but it succeeds only in attaining to it indirectly, holding it in an imperfect grasp and enjoying it externally and fragmentarily; there must be a principle which can attain directly, hold rightly, enjoy intimately and securely. There is, says the Veda, an eternal Bliss-consciousness which corresponds to the eternal *rasa* or essential delight-giving quality of all experience and is not limited by the insecure approximations of the sense in Mind.

If, then, such a deeper principle of consciousness exists, it must be that and not mind which is the original and fundamental intention concealed in Nature and which eventually and somewhere must emerge. But is there any reason for supposing that it must emerge here and in Mind, as Mind has emerged in Life and Life in Matter? We answer in the affirmative because Mind has in itself, however obscurely, that tendency, that aspiration and, at bottom, that necessity. There is one law from the lowest to the highest. Matter, when we examine it closely, proves to be instinct with the stuff of Life — the vibrations, actions and reactions, attractions and repulsions, contractions and expansions, the tendencies of combination, formation and growth, the seekings and responses which are the very substance of life; but the visible principle of life can only emerge when the necessary material conditions have been prepared which will permit it to organise itself in Matter. So also Life is instinct with the stuff of Mind, abounds with an unconscious[2] sensation, will, intelligence, but the visible principle of Mind can only emerge when the necessary vital conditions have been prepared which will permit it to organise itself in living Matter. Mind too is instinct with the stuff of supermind — sympathies, unities, intuitions, emergences of preexistent knowledge, instincts, imperative lights and movements, inherent self-effectivities of will which disguise themselves in a mental form; but the visible principle of supermind can only emerge when the necessary mental conditions are prepared which will permit it to organise itself in man, the mental living creature.

---

[2] I use the language of the materialist Haeckel in spite of its paradoxical form.

This necessary preparation is proceeding in human development as the corresponding preparations were developed in the lower stages of the evolution, — with the same gradations, retardations, inequalities; but still it is more enlightened, increasingly self-conscious, nearer to a conscious sureness. And the very fact that this progress is attended by less absorption in the detail, less timidity of error, a less conservative attachment to the step gained suggests as much as it contradicts the hope and almost the assurance that when the new principle emerges it will not be by the creation of a new and quite different type which, separated after its creation, will leave the rest of mankind in the same position to it as are the animals to man, but, if not by the elevation of humanity as a whole to a higher level, yet by an opening of the greater possibility to all of the race who have the will to rise. For Man, first among Nature's children, has shown the capacity to change himself by his own effort and the conscious aspiration to transcend.

These considerations justify to the reason the idea of a Mind beyond our mind, but only as a final evolution out of Matter. The Upanishad, however, enthrones it as the already existing creator and ruler of Mind; it is a secret principle already conscient and not merely contained inconsciently in the very stuff of things. But this is the natural conclusion — even apart from spiritual experience — from the nature of the supramental principle. For it is at its highest an eternal knowledge, will, bliss and conscious being and it is more reasonable to conclude that it is eternally conscious, though we are not conscious of it, and the source of the universe, than that it is eternally inconscient and only becomes conscient in Time as a result of the universe. Our inconscience of it is no proof that it is inconscient of us: and yet our own incapacity is the only real basis left for the denial of an eternal Mind beyond mind superior to its creations and originative of the cosmos.

All other foundations for the rejection of this ancient wisdom have disappeared or are disappearing before the increasing light of modern knowledge.

VII

Mind and Supermind

WE ARRIVE then at this affirmation of an all-cognitive Principle superior to Mind and exceeding it in nature, scope and capacity. For the Upanishad affirms a Mind beyond mind as the result of intuition and spiritual experience and its existence is equally a necessary conclusion from the facts of the cosmic evolution. What then is this Mind beyond mind? how does it function? or by what means shall we arrive at the knowledge of it or possess it?

The Upanishad asserts about this supreme cognitive principle, first, that it is beyond the reach of mind and the senses; secondly, that it does not itself think with the mind; thirdly, that it is that by which mind itself is thought or mentalised; fourthly, that it is the very nature or description of the Brahman-consciousness.

When we say, however, that "Mind of mind" is the nature or description of the Brahman-consciousness, we must not forget that the absolute Brahman in itself is held to be unknowable and therefore beyond description. It is unknowable, not because it is a void and capable of no description except that of nothingness, nor because, although positive in existence, it has no content or quality, but because it is beyond all things that our present instruments of knowledge can conceive and because the methods of ideation and expression proper to our mentality do not apply to it. It is the absolute of all things that we know and of each thing that we know and yet nothing nor any sum of things can exhaust or characterise its essential being. For its manner of being is other than that which we call existence; its unity resists all analysis, its multiple infinities exceed every synthesis. Therefore it is not in its absolute essentiality that it can be described as Mind of the mind, but in its fundamental nature in regard to our mental existence.

Brahman-consciousness is the eternal outlook of the Absolute upon the relative.

But even of this outlook we may say that it is beyond the reach of mind and speech and senses. Yet mind, speech and senses seem to be our only available means for acquiring and expressing knowledge. Must we not say then that this Brahman-consciousness also is unknowable and that we can never hope to know it or possess it while in this body? Yet the Upanishad commands us to *know* this Brahman and by knowledge to possess it — for the knowledge intended by the words *viddhi*, *avedīt*, is a knowledge that discovers and takes possession, — and it declares later on that it is here, in this body and on this earth that we must thus possess Brahman in knowledge, otherwise great is the perdition. A good deal of confusion has been brought into the interpretation of this Upanishad by a too trenchant dealing with the subtlety of its distinctions between the knowability and the unknowability of the Brahman. We must therefore try to observe exactly what the Upanishad says and especially to seize the whole of its drift by synthetic intuition rather than cut up its meaning so as to make it subject to our logical mentality.

The Upanishad sets out by saying that this Ruler of the mind, senses, speech and life is Mind of our mind, Life of our life, Sense of our senses, Speech of our speech; and it then proceeds to explain what it intends by these challenging phrases. But it introduces between the description and the explanation a warning that neither the description nor the explanation must be pushed beyond their proper limits or understood as more than guide-posts pointing us towards our goal. For neither Mind, Speech nor Sense can travel to the Brahman; therefore Brahman must be beyond all these things in its very nature, otherwise it would be attainable by them in their function. The Upanishad, although it is about to teach of the Brahman, yet affirms, "we know It not, we cannot distinguish how one should teach of It." The two Sanskrit words that are here used, *vidmaḥ* and *vijānīmaḥ*, seem to indicate the one a general grasp and possession in knowledge, the other a total and exact comprehension in whole and detail, by synthesis and analysis. The reason of this entire inability is next given, "because Brahman is other than the known and It is there over the unknown," possessing it and, as it were, presiding over it. The known is all that we grasp and possess by our present mentality; it is all that is not the supreme Brahman but only form and phenomenon of it to our sense and mental cognition. The unknown is that which is beyond the known and though unknown is not unknowable if we can enlarge our faculties or attain to others that we do not yet possess.

Yet the Upanishad next proceeds to maintain and explain its first description and to enjoin on us the knowledge of the Brahman which it so describes. This contradiction is not at once reconciled; it is only in the second chapter that the difficulty is solved and only in the fourth that the means of knowledge are indicated. The contradiction arises from the nature of our knowledge itself which is a relation between the consciousness that seeks and the consciousness that is sought; where that relation disappears, knowledge is replaced by sheer identity. In what we call existence, the highest knowledge can be no more than the highest relation between that which seeks and that which is sought, and it consists in a modified identity through which we may pass beyond knowledge to the absolute identity. This metaphysical distinction is of importance because it prevents us from mistaking any relation in knowledge for the absolute and from becoming so bound by our experience as to lose or miss the fundamental awareness of the absolute which is beyond all possible description and behind all formulated experience. But it does not render the highest relation in our knowledge, the modified identity in experience worthless or otiose. On the contrary, it is that we must aim at as the consummation of our existence in the world. For if we possess it without being limited by it, — and if we are limited by it we have not true possession of it, — then in and through it we shall, even while in this body, remain in touch with the Absolute.

The means for the attainment of this highest knowledge is the constant preparation of the mind by the admission into it of a working higher than itself until the mind is capable of giving itself up to the supramental action which exceeds it and which will finally replace it. In fact, Mind also has to follow the law of natural progression which has governed our evolution in this world from matter into life and life into mind. For just as life-consciousness is beyond the imprisoned material being and unattainable by it through its own instruments, just as mind-consciousness is beyond the first inconscient movements of life, so too this supramental consciousness is beyond the divided and dividing nature of Mind and unattainable by it through its own instruments. But as Matter is constantly prepared for the manifestation of Life until Life is able to move in it, possess it, manage in it its own action and reaction, and as Life is constantly prepared for the manifestation of Mind until Mind is able to use it, enlighten its actions and reactions by higher and higher mental values, so must it be with Mind and that which is beyond Mind.

And all this progression is possible because these things are only different formations of one being and one consciousness. Life only reveals in Matter that which is involved in Matter, that which is the secret meaning and essence of Matter. It reveals, as it were, to material existence its own soul, its own end. So too Mind reveals in Life all that Life means, all that it obscurely is in essence but cannot realise because it is absorbed in its own practical motion and its own characteristic form. So also Supermind must intervene to reveal Mind to itself, to liberate it from its absorption in its own practical motion and characteristic form and enable the mental being to realise that which is the hidden secret of all its formal practice and action. Thus shall man come to the knowledge of that which rules within him and missions his mind to its mark, sends forth his speech, impels the life-force in its paths and sets his senses to their workings.

This supreme cognitive Principle does not think by the mind. Mind is to it an inferior and secondary action, not its own proper mode. For Mind, based on limitation and division, can act only from a given centre in the lower and obscured existence; but Supermind is founded on unity and it comprehends and pervades; its action is in the universal and is in conscious communion with a transcendent source eternal and beyond the formations of the universe. Supermind regards the individual in the universal and does not begin with him or make of him a separate being. It starts from the Transcendent and sees the universal and individual as they are in relation to it, as its terms, as its formulas; it does not start from the individual and universal to arrive at the Transcendent. Mind acquires knowledge and mastery; it reaches it by a constant mentalising and willing: Supermind possesses knowledge and mastery; possessing, it throws itself out freely in various willing and knowing. Mind gropes by divided sensation; it arrives at a sort of oneness through sympathy: Supermind possesses by a free and all-embracing sense; it lives in the unity of which various love and sympathy are only a secondary play of manifestation. Supermind starts from the whole and sees in it its parts and properties, it does not build up the knowledge of the whole by an increasing knowledge of the parts and properties; and even the whole is to it only a unity of sum, only a partial and inferior term of the higher unity of infinite essence.

We see, then, that these two cognitive Principles start from two opposite poles and act in opposite directions by opposite methods. Yet it is by the higher cognitive that the lower is formed and governed. Mind is thought by that which is beyond Mind; the mentalising consciousness shapes and directs its movement according to the knowledge and impulse it receives from this higher Supermind and even the stuff of which it is formed belongs to that Principle. Mentality exists because that which is beyond Mind has conceived an inverse action of itself working in a thinner, poorer, darker, less powerful substance of conscious being and founded upon its self-concentration on different points in its own being and in different forms of its own being. Supermind fixes these points, sees how consciousness must act from them on other forms of itself and in obedience to the pressure of those other forms, once a particular rhythm or law of universal action is given; it governs the whole action of mentality according to what it thus fixes and sees. Even our ignorance is only the distorted action of a truth projected from the Supermind and could not exist except as such a distortion; and so likewise all our dualities of knowledge, sensation, emotion, force proceed from that higher vision, obey it and are a secondary and, as one might say, perverse action of the concealed Supermind itself which governs always this lower action in harmony with its first conception of a located consciousness, divided indeed and therefore not in possession of its world or itself, but feeling out towards that possession and towards the unity which, because of the Supermind in us, it instinctively, if obscurely, knows to be its true nature and right.

But, for this very reason, the feeling out, the attempt at acquisition can only succeed in proportion as the mental being abandons his characteristic mentality and its limitations in order to rise beyond to that Mind of the mind which is his origin and his secret governing principle. His mentality must admit Supramentality as Life has admitted Mind. So long as he worships, follows after, adheres to all this that he now accepts as the object of his pursuit, to the mind and its aims, to its broken methods, its constructions of will and opinion and emotion dependent on egoism, division and ignorance, he cannot rise beyond this death to that immortality which the Upanishad promises to the seeker. That Brahman we have to know and seek after and not this which men here adore and pursue.

VIII

The Supreme Sense

THE UPANISHAD is not satisfied with the definition of the Brahman-consciousness as Mind of the mind. Just as it has described it as Speech of the speech, so also it describes it as Eye of the eye, Ear of the ear. Not only is it an absolute cognition behind the play of expression, but also an absolute Sense behind the action of the senses. Every part of our being finds its fulfilment in that which is beyond its present forms of functioning and not in those forms themselves.

This conception of the all-governing supreme consciousness does not fall in with our ordinary theories about sense and mind and the Brahman. We know of sense only as an action of the organs through which embodied mind communicates with external Matter, and these sense-organs have been separately developed in the course of evolution; the senses therefore are not fundamental things, but only subordinate conveniences and temporary physical functionings of the embodied Mind. Brahman, on the other hand, we conceive of by the elimination of all that is not fundamental, by the elimination even of the Mind itself. It is a sort of positive zero, an x or unknowable which corresponds to no possible equation of physical or psychological quantities. In essence this may or may not be true; but we have now to think not of the Unknowable but of its highest manifestation in consciousness; and this we have described as the outlook of the Absolute on the relative and as that which is the cause and governing power of all that we and the universe are. There in that governing cause there must be something essential and supreme of which all our fundamental functionings here are a rendering in the terms of embodied consciousness.

Sense, however, is not or does not appear to be fundamental; it is only an instrumentation of Mind using the nervous system. It is not even a pure mental functioning, but depends so much upon the currents of the Life-force, upon its electric energy vibrating up and down the nerves, that in the Upanishads the senses are called Pranas, powers or functionings of the Life-force. It is true that Mind turns these nervous impressions when communicated to it into mental values, but the sense-action itself seems to be rather nervous than mental. In any case there would, at first sight, appear to be no warrant in reason for attributing a Sense of the sense to that which is not embodied, to a supramental consciousness which has no need of any such instrumentation.

But this is not the last word about sense; this is only its outward appearance behind which we must penetrate. What, not in its functioning, but in its essence, is the thing we call sense? In its functioning, if we analyse that thoroughly, we see that it is the contact of the mind with an eidolon of Matter, — whether that eidolon be of a vibration of sound, a light-image of form, a volley of earth-particles giving the sense of odour, an impression of *rasa* or sap that gives the sense of taste, or that direct sense of disturbance of our nervous being which we call touch. No doubt, the contact of Matter with Matter is the original cause of these sensations; but it is only the eidolon of Matter, as for instance the image of the form cast upon the eye, with which the mind is directly concerned. For the mind operates upon Matter not directly, but through the Life-force; that is its instrument of communication and the Life-force, being in us a nervous energy and not anything material, can seize on Matter only through nervous impressions of form, through contactual images, as it were, which create corresponding values in the energy-consciousness called in the Upanishads the Prana. Mind takes these up and replies to them with corresponding mental values, mental impressions of form, so that the thing sensed comes to us after a triple process of translation, first the material eidolon, secondly the nervous or energy-image, third the image reproduced in stuff of mind.

This elaborate process is concealed from us by the lightning-like rapidity with which it is managed, — rapidity in our impressions of Time; for in another notation of Time by a creature differently constituted each part of the operation might be distinctly sensible. But the triple translation is always there, because there are really three sheaths of consciousness in us, the material, *annakoṣa*, in which the physical contact and image are received and formed, the vital and nervous, *prāṇakoṣa*, in which there is a nervous contact and formation, the mental, *manaḥkoṣa*, in which there is mental contact and imaging. We dwell centred in the mental sheath and therefore the experience of the material world has to come through the other two sheaths before it can reach us.

The foundation of sense, therefore, is contact, and the essential contact is the mental without which there would not be sense at all. The plant, for instance, feels nervously, feels in terms of life-energy, precisely as the human nervous system does, and it has precisely the same reactions; but it is only if the plant has rudimentary mind that we can suppose it to be, as we understand the word, sensible of these nervous or vital impressions and reactions. For then it would feel not only nervously, but in terms of mind. Sense, then, may be described as in its essence mental contact with an object and the mental reproduction of its image.

All these things we observe and reason of in terms of this embodiment of mind in Matter; for these sheaths or *koṣas* are formations in a more and more subtle substance reposing on gross Matter as their base. Let us imagine that there is a mental world in which Mind and not Matter is the base. There sense would be quite a different thing in its operation. It would feel mentally an image in Mind and throw it out into form in more and more gross substance; and whatever physical formations there might already be in that world would respond rapidly to the Mind and obey its modifying suggestions. Mind would be masterful, creative, originative, not as with us either obedient to Matter and merely reproductive or else in struggle with it and only with difficulty able to modify a material predetermined and dully reluctant to its touch. It would be, subject to whatever supramental power might be above it, master of a ductile and easily responsive material. But still Sense would be there, because contact in mental consciousness and formation of images would still be part of the law of being.

Mind, in fact, or active consciousness generally has four necessary functions which are indispensable to it wherever and however it may act and of which the Upanishads speak in the four terms, *vijñāna*, *prajñāna*, *saṁjñāna* and *ājñāna*. *Vijñāna* is the original comprehensive consciousness which holds an image of things at once in its essence, its totality and its parts and properties; it is the original, spontaneous, true and complete view of it which belongs properly to the supermind and of which mind has only a shadow in the highest operations of the comprehensive intellect. *Prajñāna* is the consciousness which holds an image of things before it as an object with which it has to enter into relations and to possess by apprehension and a combined analytic and synthetic cognition. *Saṁjñāna* is the contact of consciousness with an image of things by which there is a sensible possession of it in its substance; if *prajñāna* can be described as the outgoing of apprehensive consciousness to possess its object in conscious energy, to know it, *saṁjñāna* can be described as the inbringing movement of apprehensive consciousness which draws the object placed before it back to itself so as to possess it in conscious substance, to feel it. *Ājñāna* is the operation by which consciousness dwells on an image of things so as to hold, govern and possess it in power. These four, therefore, are the basis of all conscious action.

As our human psychology is constituted, we begin with *saṁjñāna*, the sense of an object in its image; the apprehension of it in knowledge follows. Afterwards we try to arrive at the comprehension of it in knowledge and the possession of it in power. There are secret operations in us, in our subconscient and superconscient selves, which precede this action, but of these we are not aware in our surface being and therefore for us they do not exist. If we knew of them, our whole conscious functioning would be changed. As it is what happens is a rapid process by which we sense an image and have of it an apprehensive percept and concept, and a slower process of the intellect by which we try to comprehend and possess it. The former process is the natural action of the mind which has entirely developed in us; the latter is an acquired action, an action of the intellect and the intelligent will which represent in Mind an attempt of the mental being to do what can only be done with perfect spontaneity and mastery by something higher than Mind. The intellect and intelligent will form a bridge by which the mental being is trying to establish a conscious connection with the supramental and to prepare the embodied soul for the descent into it of a supramental action. Therefore the first process is comparatively easy, spontaneous, rapid, perfect; the second slow, laboured, imperfect. In proportion as the intellectual action becomes associated with and dominated by a rudimentary supramental action, — and it is this which constitutes the phenomenon of genius, — the second process also becomes more and more easy, spontaneous, rapid and perfect.

If we suppose a supreme consciousness, master of the world, which really conducts behind the veil all the operations the mental gods attribute to themselves, it will be obvious that that consciousness will be the entire Knower and Lord. The basis of its action or government of the world will be the perfect, original and all-possessing *vijñāna* and *ājñāna*. It will comprehend all things in its energy of conscious knowledge, control all things in its energy of conscious power. These energies will be the spontaneous inherent action of its conscious being creative and possessive of the forms of the universe. What part then will be left for the apprehensive consciousness and the sense? They will be not independent functions, but subordinate operations involved in the action of the comprehensive consciousness itself. In fact, all four there will be one rapid movement. If we had all these four acting in us with the unified rapidity with which the *prajñāna* and *saṁjñāna* act, we should then have in our notation of Time some inadequate image of the unity of the supreme action of the supreme energy.

If we consider, we shall see that this must be so. The supreme consciousness must not only comprehend and possess in its conscious being the images of things which it creates as its self-expression, but it must place them before it — always in its own being, not externally — and have a certain relation with them by the two terms of apprehensive consciousness. Otherwise the universe would not take the form that it has for us; for we only reflect in the terms of our organisation the movements of the supreme Energy. But by the very fact that the images of things are there held in front of an apprehending consciousness within the comprehending conscious being and not externalised as our individual mind externalises them, the supreme Mind and supreme Sense will be something quite different from our mentality and our forms of sensation. They will be terms of an entire knowledge and self-possession and not terms of an ignorance and limitation which strives to know and possess.

In its essential and general term our sense must reflect and be the creation of this supreme Sense. But the Upanishad speaks of a Sight behind our sight and a Hearing behind our hearing, not in general terms of a Sense behind our sense. Certainly eye and ear are only taken as typical of the senses, and are chosen because they are the highest and subtlest of them all. But still the differentiation of sense which forms part of our mentality is evidently held to correspond with a differentiation of some kind in the supreme Sense. How is this possible? It is what we have next to unravel by examining the nature and source of the functioning of the separate senses in ourselves, — their source in our mentality and not merely their functioning in the actual terms of our life-energy and our body. What is it in Mind that is fundamental to sight and hearing? Why do we see and hear and not simply sense with the mind?

IX

Sense of Our Senses

MIND WAS called by Indian psychologists the eleventh and ranks as the supreme sense. In the ancient arrangement of the senses, five of knowledge and five of action, it was the sixth of the organs of knowledge and at the same time the sixth of the organs of action. It is a commonplace of psychology that the effective functioning of the senses of knowledge is inoperative without the assistance of the mind; the eye may see, the ear may hear, all the senses may act, but if the mind pays no attention, the man has not heard, seen, felt, touched or tasted. Similarly, according to psychology, the organs of action act only by the force of the mind operating as will or, physiologically, by the reactive nervous force from the brain which must be according to materialistic notions the true self and essence of all will. In any case, the senses or all senses, if there are other than the ten, — according to a text in the Upanishad there should be at least fourteen, seven and seven, — all senses appear to be only organisations, functionings, instrumentations of the mind-consciousness, devices which it has formed in the course of its evolution in living Matter.

Modern psychology has extended our knowledge and has admitted us to a truth which the ancients already knew but expressed in other language. We know now or we rediscover the truth that the conscious operation of mind is only a surface action. There is a much vaster and more potent subconscious mind which loses nothing of what the senses bring to it; it keeps all its wealth in an inexhaustible store of memory, *akṣitaṁ śravaḥ*. The surface mind may pay no attention, still the subconscious mind attends, receives, treasures up with an infallible accuracy. The illiterate servant-girl hears daily her master reciting Hebrew in his study; the surface mind pays no attention to the unintelligible gibberish, but the subconscious mind hears, remembers and, when in an abnormal condition it comes up to the surface, reproduces those learned recitations with a portentous accuracy which the most correct and retentive scholar might envy. The man or mind has not heard because he did not attend; the greater man or mind within has heard because he always attends, or rather sub-tends, with an infinite capacity. So too a man put under an anaesthetic and operated upon has felt nothing; but release his subconscious mind by hypnosis and he will relate accurately every detail of the operation and its appropriate sufferings; for the stupor of the physical sense-organ could not prevent the larger mind within from observing and feeling.

Similarly we know that a large part of our physical action is instinctive and directed not by the surface but by the subconscious mind. And we know now that it is a mind that acts and not merely an ignorant nervous reaction from the brute physical brain. The subconscious mind in the catering insect knows the anatomy of the victim it intends to immobilise and make food for its young and it directs the sting accordingly, as unerringly as the most skilful surgeon, provided the more limited surface mind with its groping and faltering nervous action does not get in the way and falsify the inner knowledge or the inner will-force.

These examples point us to truths which western psychology, hampered by past ignorance posing as scientific orthodoxy, still ignores or refuses to acknowledge. The Upanishads declare that the Mind in us is infinite; it knows not only what has been seen but what has not been seen, not only what has been heard but what has not been heard, not only what has been discriminated by the thought but what has not been discriminated by the thought. Let us say, then, in the tongue of our modern knowledge that the surface man in us is limited by his physical experiences; he knows only what his nervous life in the body brings to his embodied mind; and even of those bringings he knows, he can retain and utilise only so much as his surface mind-sense attends to and consciously remembers; but there is a larger subliminal consciousness within him which is not thus limited. That consciousness senses what has not been sensed by the surface mind and its organs and knows what the surface mind has not learned by its acquisitive thought. That in the insect knows the anatomy of its victim; that in the man outwardly insensible not only feels and remembers the action of the surgeon's knife, but knows the appropriate reactions of suffering which were in the physical body inhibited by the anaesthetic and therefore non-existent; that in the illiterate servant-girl heard and retained accurately the words of an unknown language and could, as Yogic experience knows, by a higher action of itself understand those superficially unintelligible sounds.

To return to the Vedantic words we have been using, there is a vaster action of the Sanjnana which is not limited by the action of the physical sense-organs; it was this which sensed perfectly and made its own through the ear the words of the unknown language, through the touch the movements of the unfelt surgeon's knife, through the sense-mind or sixth sense the exact location of the centres of locomotion in the victim insect. There is also associated with it a corresponding vaster action of Prajnana, Ajnana and Vijnana not limited by the smaller apprehensive and comprehensive faculties of the external mind. It is this vaster Prajnana which perceived the proper relation of the words to each other, of the movement of the knife to the unfelt suffering of the nerves and of the successive relation in space of the articulations in the insect's body. Such perception was inherent in the right reproduction of the words, the right narration of the sufferings, the right successive action of the sting. The Ajnana or Knowledge-Will originating all these actions was also vaster, not limited by the faltering force that governs the operations directed by the surface mind. And although in these examples the action of the vaster Vijnana is not so apparent, yet it was evidently there working through them and ensuring their coordination.

But at present it is with the Sanjnana that we are concerned. Here we should note, first of all, that there is an action of the sense-mind which is superior to the particular action of the senses and is aware of things even without imaging them in forms of sight, sound, contact, but which also as a sort of subordinate operation, subordinate but necessary to completeness of presentation, does image in these forms. This is evident in psychical phenomena. Those who have carried the study and experimentation of them to a certain extent, have found that we can sense things known only to the minds of others, things that exist only at a great distance, things that belong to another plane than the terrestrial but have here their effects; we can both sense them in their images and also feel, as it were, all that they are without any definite image proper to the five senses.

This shows, in the first place, that sight and the other senses are not mere results of the development of our physical organs in the terrestrial evolution. Mind, subconscious in all Matter and evolving in Matter, has developed these physical organs in order to apply its inherent capacities of sight, hearing etc., on the physical plane by physical means for a physical life; but they are inherent capacities and not dependent on the circumstance of terrestrial evolution and they can be employed without the use of the physical eye, ear, skin, palate. Supposing that there are psychical senses which act through a psychical body and we thus explain these psychical phenomena, still that action also is only an organisation of the inherent functioning of the essential sense, the Sanjnana, which in itself can operate without bodily organs. This essential sense is the original capacity of consciousness to feel in itself all that consciousness has formed and to feel it in all the essential properties and operations of that which has form, whether represented materially by vibration of sound or images of light or any other physical symbol.

The trend of knowledge leads more and more to the conclusion that not only are the properties of form, even the most obvious such as colour, light etc., merely operations of Force, but form itself is only an operation of Force. This Force again proves to be self-power of conscious-being[1] in a state of energy and activity. Practically, therefore, all form is only an operation of consciousness impressing itself with presentations of its own workings. We see colour because that is the presentation which consciousness makes to itself of one of its own operations; but colour is only an operation of Force working in the form of Light, and Light again is only a movement, that is to say an operation of Force. The question is what is essential to this operation of Force taking on itself the presentation of form? For it is this that must determine the working of Sanjnana or Sense on whatever plane it may operate.

---

[1] *Devātmaśaktiṁ svaguṇair nigūḍhām*, self-power of the divine Existent hidden by its own modes. Swetaswatara Upanishad.

Everything begins with vibration or movement, the original *kṣobha* or disturbance. If there is no movement of the conscious being, it can only know its own pure static existence. Without vibration[2] or movement of being in consciousness there can be no act of knowledge and therefore no sense; without vibration or movement of being in force there can be no object of sense. Movement of conscious being as knowledge becoming sensible of itself as movement of force, in other words the knowledge separating itself from its own working to watch that and take it into itself again by feeling, — this is the basis of universal Sanjnana. This is true both of our internal and external operations. I become anger by a vibration of conscious force acting as nervous emotion and I feel the anger that I have become by another movement of conscious force acting as light of knowledge. I am conscious of my body because I have myself become the body; that same force of conscious being which has made this form of itself, this presentation of its workings, knows it in that form, in that presentation. I can know nothing except what I myself am; if I know others, it is because they also are myself, because my self has assumed these apparently alien presentations as well as that which is nearest to my own mental centre. All sensation, all action of sense is thus the same in essence whether external or internal, physical or psychical.

But this vibration of conscious being is presented to itself by various forms of sense which answer to the successive operations of movement in its assumption of form. For first we have intensity of vibration creating regular rhythm which is the basis or constituent of all creative formation; secondly, contact or intermiscence of the movements of conscious being which constitute the rhythm; thirdly, definition of the grouping of movements which are in contact, their shape; fourthly, the constant welling up of the essential force to support in its continuity the movement that has been thus defined; fifthly, the actual enforcement and compression of the force in its own movement which maintains the form that has been assumed. In Matter these five constituent operations are said by the Sankhyas to represent themselves as five elemental conditions of substance, the etheric, atmospheric, igneous, liquid and solid; and the rhythm of vibration is seen by them as *śabda*, sound, the basis of hearing, the intermiscence as contact, the basis of touch, the definition as shape, the basis of sight, the upflow of force as *rasa*, sap, the basis of taste, and the discharge of the atomic compression as *gandha*, odour, the basis of smell. It is true that this is only predicated of pure or subtle matter; the physical matter of our world being a mixed operation of force, these five elemental states are not found there separately except in a very modified form. But all these are only the physical workings or symbols. Essentially all formation, to the most subtle and most beyond our senses such as form of mind, form of character, form of soul, amount when scrutinised to this five-fold operation of conscious-force in movement.

---

[2] The term is used not because it is entirely adequate or accurate, no physical term can be, but because it is most suggestive of the original outgoing of consciousness to seek itself.

All these operations, then, the Sanjnana or essential sense must be able to seize, to make its own by that union in knowledge of knower and object which is peculiar to itself. Its sense of the rhythm or intensity of the vibrations which contain in themselves all the meaning of the form, will be the basis of the essential hearing of which our apprehension of physical sound or the spoken word is only the most outward result; so also its sense of the contact or intermiscence of conscious force with conscious force must be the basis of the essential touch; its sense of the definition or form of force must be the basis of the essential sight; its sense of the upflow of essential being in the form, that which is the secret of its self-delight, must be the basis of the essential taste; its sense of the compression of force and the self-discharge of its essence of being must be the basis of the essential inhalation grossly represented in physical substance by the sense of smell. On whatever plane, to whatever kind of formation these essentialities of sense will apply themselves and on each they will seek an appropriate organisation, an appropriate functioning.

This various sense will, it is obvious, be in the highest consciousness a complex unity, just as we have seen that there the various operation of knowledge is also a complex unity. Even if we examine the physical senses, say, the sense of hearing, if we observe how the underlying mind receives their action, we shall see that in their essence all the senses are in each other. That mind is not only aware of the vibration which we call sound; it is aware also of the contact and interchange between the force in the sound and the nervous force in us with which that intermixes; it is aware of the definition or form of the sound and of the complex contacts or relations which make up the form; it is aware of the essence or outwelling conscious force which constitutes and maintains the sound and prolongs its vibrations in our nervous being; it is aware of our own nervous inhalation of the vibratory discharge proceeding from the compression of force which makes, so to speak, the solidity of the sound. All these sensations enter into the sensitive reception and joy of music which is the highest physical form of this operation of force, — they constitute our physical sensitiveness to it and the joy of our nervous being in it; diminish one of them and the joy and the sensitiveness are to that extent dulled. Much more must there be this complex unity in a higher than the physical consciousness and most of all must there be unity in the highest. But the essential sense must be capable also of seizing the secret essence of all conscious being in action, in itself and not only through the results of the operation; its appreciation of these results can be nothing more than itself an outcome of this deeper sense which it has of the essence of the Thing behind its appearances.

If we consider these things thus subtly in the light of our own deeper psychology and pursue them beyond the physical appearances by which they are covered, we shall get to some intellectual conception of the sense behind our senses or rather the Sense of our senses, the Sight of our sight and the Hearing of our hearing. The Brahman-consciousness of which the Upanishad speaks is not the Absolute withdrawn into itself, but that Absolute in its outlook on the relative; it is the Lord, the Master-Soul, the governing Transcendent and All, He who constitutes and controls the action of the gods on the different planes of our being. Since it constitutes them, all our workings can be no more than psychical and physical results and representations of something essential proper to its supreme creative outlook, our sense a shadow of the divine Sense, our sight of the divine Sight, our hearing of the divine Hearing. Nor are that divine sight and hearing limited to things physical, but extend themselves to all forms and operations of conscious being.

The supreme Consciousness does not depend on what we call sight and hearing for its own essential seeing and audition. It operates by a supreme Sense, creative and comprehensive, of which our physical and psychical sight and hearing are external results and partial operations. Neither is it ignorant of these, nor excludes them; for since it constitutes and controls, it must be aware of them but from a supreme plane, *paraṁ dhāma*, which includes all in its view; for its original action is that highest movement of Vishnu which, the Veda tells us, the seers behold like an eye extended in heaven. It is that by which the soul sees its seeings and hears its hearings; but all sense only assumes its true value and attains to its absolute, its immortal reality when we cease to pursue the satisfactions of the mere external and physical senses and go beyond even the psychical being to this spiritual or essential which is the source and fountain, the knower, constituent and true valuer of all the rest.

This spiritual sense of things, secret and superconscient in us, alone gives their being, worth and reality to the psychical and physical sense; in themselves they have none. When we attain to it, these inferior operations are as it were taken up into it and the whole world and everything in it changes to us and takes on a different and a non-material value. That Master-consciousness in us senses our sensations of objects, sees our seeings, hears our hearings no longer for the benefit of the senses and their desires, but with the embrace of the self-existent Bliss which has no cause, beginning or end, eternal in its own immortality.

X

The Superlife — Life of Our Life

BUT THE Brahman-consciousness is not only Mind of our mind, Speech of our speech, Sense of our sense; it is also Life of our life. In other words, it is a supreme and universal energy of existence of which our own material life and its sustaining energy are only an inferior result, a physical symbol, an external and limited functioning. That which governs our existence and its functionings, does not live and act by them, but is their superior cause and the supra-vital principle out of which they are formed and by which they are controlled.

The English word life does duty for many very different shades of meaning; but the word Prana familiar in the Upanishad and in the language of Yoga is restricted to the life-force whether viewed in itself or in its functionings. The popular significance of Prana was indeed the breath drawn into and thrown out from the lungs and so, in its most material and common sense, the life or the life-breath; but this is not the philosophic significance of the word as it is used in the Upanishads. The Prana of the Upanishads is the life-energy itself which was supposed to occupy and act in the body with a fivefold movement, each with its characteristic name and each quite as necessary to the functioning of the life of the body as the act of respiration. Respiration in fact is only one action of the chief movement of the life-energy, the first of the five, — the action which is most normally necessary and vital to the maintenance and distribution of the energy in the physical frame, but which can yet be suspended without the life being necessarily destroyed.

The existence of a vital force or life-energy has been doubted by western Science, because that Science concerns itself only with the most external operations of Nature and has as yet no true knowledge of anything except the physical and outward. This Prana, this life-force is not physical in itself; it is not material energy, but rather a different principle supporting Matter and involved in it. It supports and occupies all forms and without it no physical form could have come into being or could remain in being. It acts in all material forces such as electricity and is nearest to self-manifestation in those that are nearest to pure force; material forces could not exist or act without it, for from it they derive their energy and movement and they are its vehicles. But all material aspects are only field and form of the Prana which is in itself a pure energy, their cause and not their result. It cannot therefore be detected by any physical analysis; physical analysis can only resolve for us the combinations of those material happenings which are its results and the external signs and symbols of its presence and operation.

How then do we become aware of its existence? By that purification of our mind and body and that subtilisation of our means of sensation and knowledge which become possible through Yoga. We become capable of analysis other than the resolution of forms into their gross physical elements and are able to distinguish the operations of the pure mental principle from those of the material and both of these from the vital or dynamic which forms a link between them and supports them both. We are then able to distinguish the movements of the Pranic currents not only in the physical body which is all that we are normally aware of, but in that subtle frame of our being which Yoga detects underlying and sustaining the physical. This is ordinarily done by the process of Pranayama, the government and control of the respiration. By Pranayama the Hathayogin is able to control, suspend and transcend the ordinary fixed operation of the Pranic energy which is all that Nature needs for the normal functioning of the body and of the physical life and mind, and he becomes aware of the channels in which that energy distributes itself in all its workings and is therefore able to do things with his body which seem miraculous to the ignorant, just as the physical scientist by his knowledge of the workings of material forces is able to do things with them which would seem to us magic if their law and process were not divulged. For all the workings of life in the physical form are governed by the Prana and not only those which are normal and constant and those which, being always potential, can be easily brought forward and set in action, but those which are of a more remote potentiality and seem to our average experience difficult or impossible.

But the Pranic energy supports not only the operations of our physical life, but also those of the mind in the living body. Therefore by the control of the Pranic energy it is not only possible to control our physical and vital functionings and to transcend their ordinary operation, but to control also the workings of the mind and to transcend its ordinary operations. The human mind in fact depends always on the pranic force which links it with the body through which it manifests itself, and it is able to deploy its own force only in proportion as it can make that energy available for its own uses and subservient to its own purposes. In proportion, therefore, as the Yogin gets back to the control of the Prana, and by the direction of its batteries opens up those nervous centres (*cakras*) in which it is now sluggish or only partially operative, he is able to manifest powers of mind, sense and consciousness which transcend our ordinary experience. The so-called occult powers of Yoga are such faculties which thus open up of themselves as the Yogin advances in the control of the Pranic force and, purifying the channels of its movement, establishes an increasing communication between the consciousness of his subtle subliminal being and the consciousness of his gross physical and superficial existence.

Thus the Prana is vital or nervous force which bears the operations of mind and body, is yoked by them as it were like a horse to a chariot and driven by the mind along the paths on which it wishes to travel to the goal of its desire. Therefore it is described in this Upanishad as yoked and moving forward and again as being led forward, the images recalling the Vedic symbol of the Horse by which the pranic force is constantly designated in the Rig Veda. It is in fact that which does all the action of the world in obedience to conscious or subconscious mind and in the conditions of material force and material form. While the mind is that movement of Nature in us which represents in the mould of our material and phenomenal existence and within the triple term of the Ignorance the knowledge aspect of the Brahman, the consciousness of the knower, and body is that which similarly represents the being of the existent in the mask of phenomenally divisible substance, so Prana or life-energy represents in the flux of phenomenal things the force, the active dynamis of the Lord who controls and enjoys the manifestation of His own being.[1] It is a universal energy present in every atom and particle of the universe and active in every stirring and current of the constant flux and interchange which constitutes the world.

But just as mind is only an inferior movement of the supreme Conscious-Being and above mind there is a divine and infinite principle of consciousness, will and knowledge which controls the ignorant action of mind, and it is by this superior principle and not by mind that Brahman cognises His own being whether in itself or in its manifestation, so also it must be with this Life-force. The characteristics of the life-force as it manifests itself in us are desire, hunger, an enjoyment which devours the object enjoyed and a sensational movement and activity of response which gropes after possession and seeks to pervade, embrace, take into itself the object of its desire.[2] It is not in this breath of desire and mortal enjoyment that the true life can consist or the highest, divine energy act, any more than the supreme knowledge can think in the terms of ignorant, groping, limited and divided mind. As the movements of mind are merely representations in the terms of the duality and the ignorance, reflections of a supreme consciousness and knowledge, so the movements of this life-force can only be similar representations of a supreme energy expressing a higher and truer existence possessed of that consciousness and knowledge and therefore free from desire, hunger, transient enjoyment and hampered activity. What is desire here must there be self-existent Will or Love; what is hunger here must there be desireless satisfaction; what is here enjoyment must there be self-existent delight; what is here a groping action and response, must be there self-possessing and all-possessing energy, — such must be the Life of our life by which this inferior action is sustained and led to its goal. Brahman does not breathe with the breath, does not live by this Life-force and its dual terms of birth and death.

---

[1] The three are the reverse aspects of Chit, Sat and Chit-Tapas.

[2] All these significances are intended by the Vedic Rishis in their use of the word Ashwa, Horse, for the Prana, the root being capable of all of them as we see from the words *āśā*, hope; *aśanā*, hunger; *aś*, to eat; *aś*, to enjoy; *āśu*, swift; *aś*, to move, attain, pervade, etc.

What then is this Life of our life? It is the supreme Energy[3] which is nothing but the infinite force in action of the supreme conscious Being in His own illumined self. The Self-existent is luminously aware of Himself and full of His own delight; and that self-awareness is a timeless self-possession which in action reveals itself as a force of infinite consciousness omnipotent as well as omniscient; for it exists between two poles, one of eternal stillness and pure identity, the other of eternal energy and identity of All with itself, the stillness eternally supporting the energy. That is the true existence, the Life from which our life proceeds; that is the immortality, while what we cling to as life is "hunger that is death". Therefore the object of the wise must be to pass in their illumined consciousness beyond the false and phenomenal terms of life and death to this immortality.

Yet is this Life-force, however inferior its workings, instinct with the being, will, light of that which it represents, of that which transcends it; by That it is "led forward" on its paths to a goal which its own existence implies by the very imperfection of its movements and renderings. This death called life is not only a dark figure of that light, but it is the passage by which we pass through transmutation of our being from the death-sleep of Matter into the spirit's infinite immortality.

---

[3] Tapas or Chit-Shakti.

XI

The Great Transition

THE THOUGHT of the Upanishad, as expressed in its first chapter in the brief and pregnant sentences of the Upanishadic style, amounts then to this result that the life of the mind, senses, vital activities in which we dwell is not the whole or the chief part of our existence, not the highest, not self-existent, not master of itself. It is an outer fringe, a lower result, an inferior working of something beyond; a superconscient Existence has developed, supports and governs this partial and fragmentary, this incomplete and unsatisfying consciousness and activity of the mind, life and senses. To rise out of this external and surface consciousness towards and into that superconscient is our progress, our goal, our destiny of completeness and satisfaction.

The Upanishad does not assert the unreality, but only the incompleteness and inferiority of our present existence. All that we follow after here is an imperfect representation, a broken and divided functioning of what is eternally in an absolute perfection on that higher plane of existence. This mind of ours unpossessed of its object, groping, purblind, besieged by error and incapacity, its action founded on an external vision of things, is only the shadow thrown by a superconscient Knowledge which possesses, creates and securely uses the truth of things because nothing is external to it, nothing is other than itself, nothing is divided or at war within its all-comprehensive self-awareness. That is the Mind of our mind. Our speech, limited, mechanical, imperfectly interpretative of the outsides of things, restricted by the narrow circle of the mind, based on the appearances of sense is only the far-off and feeble response, the ignorant vibration returned to a creative and revelatory Word which has built up all the forms which our mind and speech seek to comprehend and express. Our sense, a movement in stuff of consciousness vibratory to outward impacts, attempting imperfectly to grasp them by laboured and separately converging reactions, is only the faulty image of a supreme Sense which at once, fully, harmoniously unites itself with and enjoys all that the supreme Mind and Speech create in the self-joyous activity of the divine and infinite existence. Our life, a breath of force and movement and possession attached to a form of mind and body and restricted by the form, limited in its force, hampered in its movement, besieged in its possession and therefore a thing of discords at war with itself and its environment, hungering and unsatisfied, moving inconstantly from object to object and unable to embrace and retain their multiplicity, devouring its objects of enjoyment and therefore transient in its enjoyments, is only a broken movement of the one, undivided, infinite Life which is all-possessing and ever satisfied because in all it enjoys its eternal self unimprisoned by the divisions of space, unoccupied by the moments of Time, undeluded by the successions of Cause and Circumstance.

This superconscient Existence, one, conscious of itself, conscious both of its eternal peace and its omniscient and omnipotent force, is also conscious of our cosmic existence which it holds in itself, inspires secretly and omnipotently governs. It is the Lord of the Isha Upanishad who inhabits all the creations of His Force, all form of movement in the ever mobile principle of cosmos. It is our self and that of which and by which we are constituted in all our being and activities, the Brahman. The mortal life is a dual representation of That with two conflicting elements in it, negative and positive. Its negative elements of death, suffering, incapacity, strife, division, limitation are a dark figure which conceal and serve the development of that which its positive elements cannot yet achieve, — immortality hiding itself from life in the figure of death, delight hiding itself from pleasure in the figure of suffering, infinite force hiding itself from finite effort in the figure of incapacity, fusion of love hiding itself from desire in the figure of strife, unity hiding itself from acquisition in the figure of division, infinity hiding itself from growth in the figure of limitation. The positive elements suggest what the Brahman is, but never are what the Brahman is, although their victory, the victory of the gods, is always the victory of the Brahman over its own self-negations, always the self-affirmation of His vastness against the denials of the dark and limiting figure of things. Still, it is not this vastness merely, but the absolute infinity which is Brahman itself. And therefore within this dual figure of things we cannot attain to our self, our Highest; we have to transcend in order to attain. Our pursuit of the positive elements of this existence, our worship of the gods of the mind, life, sense is only a preparatory to the real travail of the soul, and we must leave this lower Brahman and know that Higher if we are to fulfil ourselves. We pursue, for instance, our mental growth, we become mental beings full of an accomplished thought-power and thought-acquisition, *dhīrāḥ*, in order that we may by thought of mind go beyond mind itself to the Eternal. For always the life of mind and senses is the jurisdiction of death and limitation; beyond is the immortality.

The wise, therefore, the souls seated and accomplished in luminous thought-power put away from them the dualities of our mind, life and senses and go forward from this world; they go beyond to the unity and the immortality. The word used for going forward is that which expresses the passage of death; it is also that which the Upanishad uses for the forward movement of the Life-force yoked to the car of embodied mind and sense on the paths of life. And in this coincidence we can find a double and most pregnant suggestion.

It is not by abandoning life on earth in order to pursue immortality on other more favourable planes of existence that the great achievement becomes possible. It is here, *ihaiva*, in this mortal life and body that immortality must be won, here in this lower Brahman and by this embodied soul that the Higher must be known and possessed. "If here one find it not, great is the perdition." This life-force in us is led forward by the attraction of the supreme Life on its path of constant acquisition through types of the Brahman until it reaches a point where it has to go entirely forward, to go across out of the mortal life, the mortal vision of things to some Beyond. So long as death is not entirely conquered, this going beyond is represented in the terms of death and by a passing into other worlds where death is not present, where a type of immortality is tasted corresponding to that which we have found here in our soul-experience; but the attraction of death and limitation is not overpassed because they still conceal something of immortality and infinity which we have not yet achieved; therefore there is a necessity of return, an insistent utility of farther life in the mortal body which we do not overcome until we have passed beyond all types to the very being of the Infinite, One and Immortal.

The worlds of which the Upanishad speaks are essentially soul-conditions and not geographical divisions of the cosmos. This material universe is itself only existence as we see it when the soul dwells on the plane of material movement and experience in which the spirit involves itself in form, and therefore all the framework of things in which it moves by the life and which it embraces by the consciousness is determined by the principle of infinite division and aggregation proper to Matter, to substance of form. This becomes then its world or vision of things. And to whatever soul-condition it climbs, its vision of things will change from the material vision and correspond to that other condition, and in that other framework it will move in its living and embrace it in its consciousness. These are the worlds of the ancient tradition.

But the soul that has entirely realised immortality passes beyond all worlds and is free from frameworks. It enters into the being of the Lord; like this supreme superconscient Self and Brahman, it is not subdued to life and death. It is no longer subject to the necessity of entering into the cycle of rebirth, of travelling continually between the imprisoning dualities of death and birth, affirmation and negation; for it has transcended name and form. This victory, this supreme immortality it must achieve here as an embodied soul in the mortal framework of things. Afterwards, like the Brahman, it transcends and yet embraces the cosmic existence without being subject to it. Personal freedom, personal fulfilment is then achieved by the liberation of the soul from imprisonment in the form of this changing personality and by its ascent to the One that is the All. If afterwards there is any assumption of the figure of mortality, it is an assumption and not a subjection, a help brought to the world and not a help to be derived from it, a descent of the ensouled superconscient existence not from any personal necessity, but from the universal need in the cosmic labour for those yet unfree and unfulfilled to be helped and strengthened by the force that has already described the path up to the goal in its experience and achieved under the same conditions the Work and the Sacrifice.

XII

Mind and the Brahman

BEFORE we can proceed to the problem how, being what we are and the Brahman being what it is, we can effect the transition from the status of mind, life and senses proper to man over to the status proper to the supreme Consciousness which is master of mind, life and senses, another and prior question arises. The Upanishad does not state it explicitly, but implies and answers it with the strongest emphasis on the solution and the subtlest variety in its repetition of the apparent paradox that is presented.

The Master-Consciousness of the Brahman is that for which we have to abandon this lesser status of the mere creature subject to the movement of Nature in the cosmos; but after all this Master-Consciousness, however high and great a thing it may be, has a relation to the universe and the cosmic movement; it cannot be the utter Absolute, Brahman superior to all relativities. This Conscious-Being who originates, supports and governs our mind, life, senses is the Lord; but where there is no universe of relativities, there can be no Lord, for there is no movement to transcend and govern. Is not then this Lord, as one might say in a later language, not so much the creator of Maya as himself a creation of Maya? Do not both Lord and cosmos disappear when we go beyond all cosmos? And is it not beyond all cosmos that the only true reality exists? Is it not this only true reality and not the Mind of our mind, the Sense of our sense, the Life of our life, the Word behind our speech, which we have to know and possess? As we must go behind all effects to the Cause, must we not equally go beyond the Cause to that in which neither cause nor effects exist? Is not even the immortality spoken of in the Veda and Upanishads a petty thing to be overpassed and abandoned? and should we not reach towards the utter Ineffable where mortality and immortality cease to have any meaning?

The Upanishad does not put to itself the question in this form and language which only became possible when Nihilistic Buddhism and Vedantic Illusionism had passed over the face of our thought and modified philosophical speech and concepts. But it knows of the ineffable Absolute which is the utter reality and absoluteness of the Lord even as the Lord is the absolute of all that is in the cosmos. Of That it proceeds to speak in the only way in which it can be spoken of by the human mind.

Its answer to the problem is that That is precisely the Unknowable[1] of which no relations can be affirmed[2] and about which therefore our intellect must for ever be silent. The injunction to know the utterly Unknowable would be without any sense or practical meaning. Not that That is a Nihil, a pure Negative, but it cannot either be described by any of the positives of which our mind, speech or perception is capable, nor even can it be indicated by any of them. It is only a little that we know; it is only in the terms of the little that we can put the mental forms of our knowledge. Even when we go beyond to the real form of the Brahman which is not this universe, we can only indicate, we cannot really describe. If then we think we have known it perfectly, we betray our ignorance; we show that we know very little indeed, not even the little that we can put into the forms of our knowledge. For the universe seen as our mind sees it is the little, the divided, the parcelling out of existence and consciousness in which we know and express things by fragments, and we can never really cage in our intellectual and verbal fictions that infinite totality. Yet it is through the principles manifested in the universe that we have to arrive at That, through the life, through the mind and through that highest mental knowledge which grasps at the fundamental Ideas that are like doors concealing behind them the Brahman and yet seeming to reveal Him.

Much less, then, if we can only thus know the Master-Consciousness which is the form of the Brahman, can we pretend to know its utter ineffable reality which is beyond all knowledge.

---

[1] *Ajñeyam atarkyam.*

[2] *Avyavahāryam.*

But if this were all, there would be no hope for the soul and a resigned Agnosticism would be the last word of wisdom. The truth is that though thus beyond our mentality and our highest ideative knowledge, the Supreme does give Himself both to this knowledge and to our mentality in the way proper to each and by following that way we can arrive at Him, but only on condition that we do not take our mentalising by the mind and our knowing by the higher thought for the full knowledge and rest in that with a satisfied possession.

The way is to use our mind rightly for such knowledge as is open to its highest, purified capacity. We have to know the form of the Brahman, the Master-Consciousness of the Lord through and yet beyond the universe in which we live. But first we must put aside what is mere form and phenomenon in the universe; for that has nothing to do with the form of the Brahman, the body of the Self, since it is not His form, but only His most external mask. Our first step therefore must be to get behind the forms of Matter, the forms of Life, the forms of Mind and go back to that which is essential, most real, nearest to actual entity. And when we have gone on thus eliminating, thus analysing all forms into the fundamental entities of the cosmos, we shall find that these fundamental entities are really only two, ourselves and the gods.

The gods of the Upanishad have been supposed to be a figure for the senses, but although they act in the senses, they are yet much more than that. They represent the divine power in its great and fundamental cosmic functionings whether in man or in mind and life and matter in general; they are not the functionings themselves but something of the Divine which is essential to their operation and its immediate possessor and cause. They are, as we see from other Upanishads, positive self-representations of the Brahman leading to good, joy, light, love, immortality as against all that is a dark negation of these things. And it is necessarily in the mind, life, senses, and speech of man that the battle here reaches its height and approaches to its full meaning. The gods seek to lead these to good and light; the Titans, sons of darkness, seek to pierce them with ignorance and evil.[3] Behind the gods is the Master-Consciousness of which they are the positive cosmic self-representations.

The other entity which represents the Brahman in the cosmos is the self of the living and thinking creature, man. This self also is not an external mask; it is not form of the mind or form of the life or form of the body. It is something that supports these and makes them possible, something that can say positively like the gods, "I am" and not only "I seem". We have then to scrutinise these two entities and see what they are in relation to each other and to the Brahman; or, as the Upanishad puts it, "That of it which is thou, that of it which is in the gods, *this* is what thy mind has to resolve." Well, but what then of the Brahman is myself? and what of the Brahman is in the Gods? The answer is evident. I am a representation in the cosmos, but for all purposes of the cosmos a real representation of the Self; and the gods are a representation in the cosmos — a real representation since without them the cosmos could not continue — of the Lord. The one supreme Self is the essentiality of all these individual existences; the one supreme Lord is the Godhead in the gods.

The Self and the Lord are one Brahman, whom we can realise through our self and realise through that which is essential in the cosmic movement. Just as our self constitutes our mind, body, life, senses, so that Self constitutes all mind, body, life, senses; it is the origin and essentiality of things. Just as the gods govern, supported by our self, the cosmos of our individual being, the action of our mind, senses and life, so the Lord governs as Mind of the mind, Sense of the sense, Life of the life, supporting His active divinity by His silent essential self-being, all cosmos and all form of being. As we have gone behind the forms of the cosmos to that which is essential in their being and movement and found our self and the gods, so we have to go behind our self and the gods and find the one supreme Self and the one supreme Godhead. Then we can say, "I think that I know."

---

[3] Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads.

But at once we have to qualify our assertion. I think not that I know perfectly, for that is impossible in the terms of our instruments of knowledge. I do not think for a moment that I know the Unknowable, that that can be put into the forms through which I must arrive at the Self and Lord; but at the same time I am no longer in ignorance, I know the Brahman in the only way in which I can know Him, in His self-revelation to me in terms not beyond the grasp of my psychology, manifest as the Self and the Lord. The mystery of existence is revealed in a way that utterly satisfies my being because it enables me first to comprehend it through these figures as far as it can be comprehended by me and, secondly, to enter into, to live in, to be one in law and being with and even to merge myself in the Brahman.

If we fancy that we have grasped the Brahman by the mind and in that delusion fix down our knowledge of Him to the terms our mentality has found, then our knowledge is no knowledge; it is the little knowledge that turns to falsehood. So too those who try to fix Him into our notion of the fundamental ideas in which we discern Him by the thought that rises above ordinary mental perception, have no real discernment of the Brahman, since they take certain idea-symbols for the Reality. On the other hand if we recognise that our mental perceptions are simply so many clues by which we can rise beyond mental perception and if we use these fundamental idea-symbols and the arrangement of them which our uttermost thought makes in order to go beyond the symbol to that reality, then we have rightly used mind and the higher discernment for their supreme purpose. Mind and the higher discernment are satisfied of the Brahman even in being exceeded by Him.

The mind can only reflect in a sort of supreme understanding and experience the form, the image of the supreme as He shows Himself to our mentality. Through this reflection we find, we know; the purpose of knowledge is accomplished, for we find immortality, we enter into the law, the being, the beatitude of the Brahman-consciousness. By self-realisation of Brahman as our self we find the force, the divine energy which lifts us beyond the limitation, weakness, darkness, sorrow, all-pervading death of our mortal existence; by the knowledge of the one Brahman in all beings and in all the various movement of the cosmos we attain beyond these things to the infinity, the omnipotent being, the omniscient light, the pure beatitude of that divine existence.

This great achievement must be done here in this mortal world, in this limited body; for if we do it, we arrive at our true existence and are no longer bound down to our phenomenal becoming. But if here we find it not, great is the loss and perdition; for we remain continually immersed in the phenomenal life of the mind and body and do not rise above it into the true supramental existence. Nor, if we miss it here, will death give it to us by our passage to another and less difficult world. Only those who use their awakened self and enlightened powers to distinguish and discover that One and Immortal in all existences, the all-originating self, the all-inhabiting Lord, can make the real passage which transcends life and death, can pass out of this mortal status, can press beyond and rise upward into a world-transcending immortality.

This, then, and no other is the means to be seized on and the goal to be reached. "There is no other path for the great journey." The Self and the Lord are that indeterminable, unknowable, ineffable Parabrahman and when we seek rather that which is indeterminable and unknowable to us, it is still the Self and the Lord always that we find, though by an attempt which is not the straight and possible road intended for the embodied soul seeking here to accomplish its true existence.[4] They are the self-manifested Reality which so places itself before man as the object of his highest aspiration and the fulfilment of all his activities.

---

[4] Gita.

XIII

The Parable of the Gods

FROM its assertion of the relative knowableness of the unknowable Brahman and the justification of the soul's aspiration towards that which is beyond its present capacity and status the Upanishad turns to the question of the means by which that high-reaching aspiration can put itself into relation with the object of its search. How is the veil to be penetrated and the subject consciousness of man to enter into the master-consciousness of the Lord? What bridge is there over this gulf? Knowledge has already been pointed out as the supreme means open to us, a knowledge which begins by a sort of reflection of the true existence in the awakened mental understanding. But Mind is one of the gods; the Light behind it is indeed the greatest of the gods, Indra. Then, an awakening of all the gods through their greatest to the essence of that which they are, the one Godhead which they represent. By the mentality opening itself to the Mind of our mind, the sense and speech also will open themselves to the Sense of our sense and to the Word behind our speech and the life to the Life of our life. The Upanishad proceeds to develop this consequence of its central suggestion by a striking parable or apologue.

The gods, the powers that affirm the Good, the Light, the Joy and Beauty, the Strength and Mastery have found themselves victorious in their eternal battle with the powers that deny. It is Brahman that has stood behind the gods and conquered for them; the Master of all who guides all has thrown His deciding will into the balance, put down his darkened children and exalted the children of Light. In this victory of the Master of all the gods are conscious of a mighty development of themselves, a splendid efflorescence of their greatness in man, their joy, their light, their glory, their power and pleasure. But their vision is as yet sealed to their own deeper truth; they know of themselves, they know not the Eternal; they know the godheads, they do not know God. Therefore they see the victory as their own, the greatness as their own. This opulent efflorescence of the gods and uplifting of their greatness and light is the advance of man to his ordinary ideal of a perfectly enlightened mentality, a strong and sane vitality, a well-ordered body and senses, a harmonious, rich, active and happy life, the Hellenic ideal which the modern world holds to be our ultimate potentiality. When such an efflorescence takes place whether in the individual or the kind, the gods in man grow luminous, strong, happy; they feel they have conquered the world and they proceed to divide it among themselves and enjoy it.

But such is not the full intention of Brahman in the universe or in the creature. The greatness of the gods is His own victory and greatness, but it is only given in order that man may grow nearer to the point at which his faculties will be strong enough to go beyond themselves and realise the Transcendent. Therefore Brahman manifests Himself before the exultant gods in their well-ordered world and puts to them by His silence the heart-shaking, the world-shaking question, “If ye are all, then what am I? for see, I am and I am here.” Though He manifests, He does not reveal Himself, but is seen and felt by them as a vague and tremendous presence, the Yaksha, the Daemon, the Spirit, the unknown Power, the Terrible beyond good and evil for whom good and evil are instruments towards His final self-expression. Then there is alarm and confusion in the divine assembly; they feel a demand and a menace; on the side of the evil the possibility of monstrous and appalling powers yet unknown and unmastered which may wreck the fair world they have built, upheave and shatter to pieces the brilliant harmony of the intellect, the aesthetic mind, the moral nature, the vital desires, the body and senses which they have with such labour established; on the side of the good the demand of things unknown which are beyond all these and therefore are equally a menace, since the little which is realised cannot stand against the much that is unrealised, cannot shut out the vast, the infinite that presses against the fragile walls we have erected to define and shelter our limited being and pleasure. Brahman presents itself to them as the Unknown; the gods knew not what was this Daemon.

Therefore Agni first arises at their bidding to discover its nature, limits, identity. The gods of the Upanishad differ in one all-important respect from the gods of the Rig Veda; for the latter are not only powers of the One, but conscious of their source and true identity; they know the Brahman, they dwell in the supreme Godhead, their origin, home and proper plane is the superconscient Truth. It is true they manifest themselves in man in the form of human faculties and assume the appearance of human limitations, manifest themselves in the lower cosmos and assume the mould of its cosmic operations; but this is only their lesser and lower movement and beyond it they are for ever the One, the Transcendent and Wonderful, the Master of Force and Delight and Knowledge and Being. But in the Upanishads the Brahman idea has grown and cast down the gods from this high preeminence so that they appear only in their lesser human and cosmic workings. Much of their other Vedic aspects they keep. Here the three gods Indra, Vayu, Agni represent the cosmic Divine on each of its three planes, Indra on the mental, Vayu on the vital, Agni on the material. In that order, therefore, beginning from the material they approach the Brahman.

Agni is the heat and flame of the conscious force in Matter which has built up the universe; it is he who has made life and mind possible and developed them in the material universe where he is the greatest deity. Especially he is the primary impeller of speech of which Vayu is the medium and Indra the lord. This heat of conscious force in Matter is Agni Jatavedas, the knower of all births: of all things born, of every cosmic phenomenon he knows the law, the process, the limit, the relation. If then it is some mighty Birth of the cosmos that stands before them, some new indeterminate developed in the cosmic struggle and process, who shall know him, determine his limits, strength, potentialities if not Agni Jatavedas?

Full of confidence he rushes towards the object of his search and is met by the challenge "Who art thou? What is the force in thee?" His name is Agni Jatavedas, the Power that is at the basis of all birth and process in the material universe and embraces and knows their workings and the force in him is this that all that is thus born, he as the flame of Time and Death can devour. All things are his food which he assimilates and turns into material of new birth and formation. But this all-devourer cannot devour with all his force a fragile blade of grass so long as it has behind it the power of the Eternal. Agni is compelled to return, not having discovered. One thing only is settled that this Daemon is no Birth of the material cosmos, no transient thing that is subject to the flame and breath of Time; it is too great for Agni.

Another god rises to the call. It is Vayu Matarishwan, the great Life-Principle, he who moves, breathes, expands infinitely in the mother element. All things in the universe are the movement of this mighty Life; it is he who has brought Agni and placed him secretly in all existence; for him the worlds have been upbuilded that Life may move in them, that it may act, that it may riot and enjoy. If this Daemon be no birth of Matter, but some stupendous Life-force active whether in the depths or on the heights of being, who shall know it, who shall seize it in his universal expansion if not Vayu Matarishwan?

There is the same confident advance upon the object, the same formidable challenge "Who art thou? What is the force in thee?" This is Vayu Matarishwan and the power in him is this that he, the Life, can take all things in his stride and growth and seize on them for his mastery and enjoyment. But even the veriest frailest trifle he cannot seize and master so long as it is protected against him by the shield of the Omnipotent. Vayu too returns, not having discovered. One thing only is settled that this is no form or force of cosmic Life which operates within the limits of the all-grasping vital impulse; it is too great for Vayu.

Indra next arises, the Puissant, the Opulent. Indra is the power of the Mind; the senses which the Life uses for enjoyment, are operations of Indra which he conducts for knowledge and all things that Agni has upbuilt and supports and destroys in the universe are Indra's field and the subject of his functioning. If then this unknown Existence is something that the senses can grasp or, if it is something that the mind can envisage, Indra shall know it and make it part of his opulent possessions. But it is nothing that the senses can grasp or the mind envisage, for as soon as Indra approaches it, it vanishes. The mind can only envisage what is limited by Time and Space and this Brahman is that which, as the Rig Veda has said, is neither today nor tomorrow and though it moves and can be approached in the conscious being of all conscious existences, yet when the mind tries to approach it and study it in itself, it vanishes from the view of the mind. The Omnipresent cannot be seized by the senses, the Omniscient cannot be known by the mentality.

But Indra does not turn back from the quest like Agni and Vayu; he pursues his way through the highest ether of the pure mentality and there he approaches the Woman, the many-shining, Uma Haimavati; from her he learns that this Daemon is the Brahman by whom alone the gods of mind and life and body conquer and affirm themselves, and in whom alone they are great. Uma is the supreme Nature from whom the whole cosmic action takes its birth; she is the pure summit and highest power of the One who here shines out in many forms. From this supreme Nature which is also the supreme Consciousness the gods must learn their own truth; they must proceed by reflecting it in themselves instead of limiting themselves to their own lower movement. For she has the knowledge and consciousness of the One, while the lower nature of mind, life and body can only envisage the many. Although therefore Indra, Vayu and Agni are the greatest of the gods, the first coming to know the existence of the Brahman, the others approaching and feeling the touch of it, yet it is only by entering into contact with the supreme consciousness and reflecting its nature and by the elimination of the vital, mental, physical egoism so that their whole function shall be to reflect the One and Supreme that Brahman can be known by the gods in us and possessed. The conscious force that supports our embodied life must become simply and purely a reflector of that supreme Consciousness and Power of which its highest ordinary action is only a twilight figure; the Life must become a passively potent reflection and pure image of that supreme Life which is greater than all our utmost actual and potential vitality; the Mind must resign itself to be no more than a faithful mirror of the image of the superconscient Existence. By this conscious surrender of mind, life and senses to the Master of our senses, life and mind who alone really governs their action, by this turning of the cosmic existence into a passive reflection of the eternal being and a faithful reproductor of the nature of the Eternal we may hope to know and through knowledge to rise into that which is superconscient to us; we shall enter into the Silence that is master of an eternal, infinite, free and all-blissful activity.

XIV

The Transfiguration of the Self and the Gods

THE MEANS of the knowledge of Brahman are, we have seen, to get back behind the forms of the universe to that which is essential in the cosmos — and that which is essential is twofold, the gods in Nature and the self in the individual, — and then to get behind these to the Beyond which they represent. The practical relation of the gods to Brahman in this process of divine knowledge has been already determined. The cosmic functionings through which the gods act, mind, life, speech, senses, body, must become aware of something beyond them which governs them, by which they are and move, by whose force they evolve, enlarge themselves and arrive at power and joy and capacity; to that they must turn from their ordinary operations; leaving these, leaving the false idea of independent action and self-ordering which is an egoism of mind and life and sense they must become consciously passive to the power, light and joy of something which is beyond themselves. What happens then is that this divine Unnameable reflects Himself openly in the gods. His light takes possession of the thinking mind, His power and joy of the life, His light and rapture of the emotional mind and the senses. Something of the supreme image of Brahman falls upon the world-nature and changes it into divine nature.

All this is not done by a sudden miracle. It comes by flashes, revelations, sudden touches and glimpses; there is as if a leap of the lightning of revelation flaming out from those heavens for a moment and then returning into its secret source; as if the lifting of the eyelid of an inner vision and its falling again because the eye cannot look long and steadily on the utter light. The repetition of these touches and visitings from the Beyond fixes the gods in their upward gaze and expectation, constant repetition fixes them in a constant passivity; not moving out any longer to grasp at the forms of the universe mind, life and senses will more and more be fixed in the memory, in the understanding, in the joy of the touch and vision of that transcendent glory which they have now resolved to make their sole object; to that only they will learn to respond and not to the touches of outward things. The silence which has fallen on them and which is now their foundation and status will become their knowledge of the eternal silence which is Brahman; the response of their functioning to a supernal light, power, joy will become their knowledge of the eternal activity which is Brahman. Other status, other response and activity they will not know. The mind will know nothing but the Brahman, think of nothing but the Brahman, the Life will move to, embrace, enjoy nothing but the Brahman, the eye will see, the ear hear, the other senses sense nothing but the Brahman.

But is then a complete oblivion of the external the goal? Must the mind and senses recede inward and fall into an unending trance and the life be for ever stilled? This is possible, if the soul so wills, but it is not inevitable and indispensable. The Mind is cosmic, one in all the universe; so too are the Life, and the Sense, so too is Matter of the body; and when they exist in and for the Brahman only, they will not only know this but will sense, feel and live in that universal unity. Therefore to whatever thing they turn which to the individual sense and mind and life seems now external to them, there also it is not the mere form of things which they will know, think of, sense, embrace and enjoy, but always and only the Brahman. Moreover, the external will cease to exist for them, because nothing will be external but all things internal to us, even the whole world and all that is in it. For the limit of ego, the wall of individuality will break; the individual Mind will cease to know itself as individual, it will be conscious only of universal Mind one everywhere in which individuals are only knots of the one mentality; so the individual life will lose its sense of separateness and live only in and as the one life in which all individuals are simply whirls of the indivisible flood of pranic activity; the very body and senses will be no longer conscious of a separated existence, but the real body which the man will feel himself to be physically will be the whole Earth and the whole universe and the whole indivisible form of things wheresoever existent, and the senses also will be converted to this principle of sensation so that even in what we call the external, the eye will see Brahman only in every sight, the ear will hear Brahman only in every sound, the inner and outer body will feel Brahman only in every touch and the touch itself as if internal in the greater body. The soul whose gods are thus converted to this supreme law and religion, will realise in the cosmos itself and in all its multiplicity the truth of the One besides whom there is no other or second. Moreover, becoming one with the formless and infinite, it will exceed the universe itself and see all the worlds not as external, not even as commensurate with itself, but as if within it.

And in fact, in the higher realisation it will not be Mind, Life, Sense of which even the mind, life and sense themselves will be originally aware, but rather that which constitutes them. By this process of constant visiting and divine touch and influence the Mind of the mind, that is to say, the superconscient Knowledge will take possession of the mental understanding and begin to turn all its vision and thinking into luminous stuff and vibration of light of the Supermind. So too the sense will be changed by the visitings of the Sense behind the sense and the whole sense-view of the universe itself will be altered so that the vital, mental and supramental will become visible to the senses with the physical only as their last, outermost and smallest result. So too the Life will become a superlife, a conscious movement of the infinite Conscious-Force; it will be impersonal, unlimited by any particular acts and enjoyment, unbound to their results, untroubled by the dualities or the touch of sin and suffering, grandiose, boundless, immortal. The material world itself will become for these gods a figure of the infinite, luminous and blissful Superconscient.

This will be the transfiguration of the gods, but what of the self? For we have seen that there are two fundamental entities, the gods and the self, and the self in us is greater than the cosmic Powers, its God-ward destination more vital to our perfection and self-fulfilment than any transfiguration of these lesser deities. Therefore not only must the gods find their one Godhead and resolve themselves into it; that is to say, not only must the cosmic principles working in us resolve themselves into the working of the One, the Principle of all principles, so that they shall become only a unified existence and single action of That in spite of all play of differentiation, but also and with a more fundamental necessity the self in us which supports the action of the gods must find and enter into the one Self of all individual existences, the indivisible Spirit to whom all souls are no more than dark or luminous centres of its consciousness.

This the self of man, since it is the essentiality of a mental being, will do through the mind. In the gods the transfiguration is effected by the Superconscient itself visiting their substance and opening their vision with its flashes until it has transformed them; but the mind is capable of another action which is only apparently movement of mind, but really the movement of the self towards its own reality. The mind seems to go to That, to attain to it; it is lifted out of itself into something beyond and, although it falls back, still by the mind the will of knowledge in the mental thought continually and at last continuously remembers that into which it has entered. On this the Self through the mind seizes and repeatedly dwells and so doing it is finally caught up into it and at last able to dwell securely in that transcendence. It transcends the mind, it transcends its own mental individualisation of the being, that which it now knows as itself; it ascends and takes foundation in the Self of all and in the status of self-joyous infinity which is the supreme manifestation of the Self. This is the transcendent immortality, this is the spiritual existence which the Upanishads declare to be the goal of man and by which we pass out of the mortal state into the heaven of the Spirit.

What then happens to the gods and the cosmos and all that the Lord develops in His being? Does it not all disappear? Is not the transfiguration of the gods even a mere secondary state through which we pass towards that culmination and which drops away from us as soon as we reach it? And with the disappearance of the gods and the cosmos does not the Lord too, the Master-Consciousness, disappear so that nothing is left but the one pure indeterminate Existence self-blissful in an eternal inaction and non-creation? Such was the conclusion of the later Vedanta in its extreme monistic form and such was the sense which it tried to read into all the Upanishads; but it must be recognised that in the language whether of the Isha or the Kena Upanishad there is absolutely nothing, not even a shade or a nuance pointing to it. If we want to find it there, we have to put it in by force; for the actual language used favours instead the conclusion of other Vedantic systems, which considered the goal to be the eternal joy of the soul in a Brahmaloka or world of the Brahman in which it is one with the infinite existence and yet in a sense still a soul able to enjoy differentiation in the oneness.

In the next verse we have the culmination of the teaching of the Upanishad, the result of the great transcendence which it has been setting forth and afterwards the description of the immortality to which the souls of knowledge attain when they pass beyond the mortal status. It declares that Brahman is in its nature "That Delight", Tadvanam. "Vana" is the Vedic word for delight or delightful, and "Tadvanam" means therefore the transcendent Delight, the all-blissful Ananda of which the Taittiriya Upanishad speaks as the highest Brahman from which all existences are born, by which all existences live and increase and into which all existences arrive in their passing out of death and birth. It is as this transcendent Delight that the Brahman must be worshipped and sought. It is this beatitude therefore which is meant by the immortality of the Upanishads. And what will be the result of knowing and possessing Brahman as the supreme Ananda? It is that towards the knower and possessor of the Brahman is directed the desire of all creatures. In other words, he becomes a centre of the divine Delight shedding it on all the world and attracting all to it as to a fountain of joy and love and self-fulfilment in the universe.

This is the culmination of the teaching of the Upanishad;

there was a demand for the secret teaching that enters into the ultimate truth, for the "Upanishad", and in response this doctrine has been given. It has been uttered, the Upanishad of the Brahman, the hidden ultimate truth of the supreme Existence; its beginning was the search for the Lord, Master of mind, life, speech and senses in whom is the absolute of mind, the absolute of life, the absolute of speech and senses and its close is the finding of Him as the transcendent Beatitude and the elevation of the soul that finds and possesses it into a living centre of that Delight towards which all creatures in the universe shall turn as to a fountain of its ecstasies.

* * *

The Upanishad closes with two verses which seem to review and characterise the whole work in the manner of the ancient writings when they have drawn to their close. This Upanishad or gospel of the inmost Truth of things has for its foundation, it is said, the practice of self-mastery, action and the subdual of the sense-life to the power of the Spirit. In other words, life and works are to be used as a means of arriving out of the state of subjection proper to the soul in the ignorance into a state of mastery which brings it nearer to the absolute self-mastery and all-mastery of the supreme Soul seated in the knowledge. The Vedas, that is to say, the utterances of the inspired seers and the truths they hold, are described as all the limbs of the Upanishad; in other words, all the convergent lines and aspects, all the necessary elements of this great practice, this profound psychological self-training and spiritual aspiration are set forth in these great Scriptures, channels of supreme knowledge and indicators of a supreme discipline. Truth is its home; and this Truth is not merely intellectual verity, — for that is not the sense of the word in the Vedic writings, — but man's ultimate human state of true being, true consciousness, right knowledge, right works, right joy of existence, all indeed that is contrary to the falsehood of egoism and ignorance. It is by these means, by using works and self-discipline for mastery of oneself and for the generation of spiritual energy, by fathoming in all its parts the knowledge and repeating the high example of the great Vedic seers and by living in the Truth that one becomes capable of the great ascent which the Upanishad opens to us.

The goal of the ascent is the world of the true and vast existence of which the Veda speaks as the Truth that is the final goal and home of man. It is described here as the greater infinite heavenly world, (Swargaloka, Swarloka of the Veda), which is not the lesser Swarga of the Puranas or the lesser Brahmaloka of the Mundaka Upanishad, its world of the sun's rays to which the soul arrives by works of virtue and piety, but falls from them by the exhaustion of their merit; it is the higher Swarga or Brahman-world of the Katha which is beyond the dual symbols of birth and death, the higher Brahman-worlds of the Mundaka which the soul enters by knowledge and renunciation. It is therefore a state not belonging to the Ignorance, but to Knowledge. It is, in fact, the infinite existence and beatitude of the soul in the being of the all-blissful existence; it is too the higher status, the light of the Mind beyond the mind, the joy and eternal mastery of the Life beyond the life, the riches of the Sense beyond the senses. And the soul finds in it not only its own largeness but finds too and possesses the infinity of the One and it has firm foundation in that immortal state because there a supreme Silence and eternal Peace are the secure foundation of eternal Knowledge and absolute Joy.

XV

A Last Word

WE HAVE now completed our review of this Upanishad; we have considered minutely the bearings of its successive utterances and striven to make as precise as we can to the intelligence the sense of the puissant phrases in which it gives us its leading clues to that which can never be entirely expressed by human speech. We have some idea of what it means by that Brahman, by the Mind of mind, the Life of life, the Sense of sense, the Speech of speech, by the opposition of ourselves and the gods, by the Unknowable who is yet not utterly unknowable to us, by the transcendence of the mortal state and the conquest of immortality.

Fundamentally its teaching reposes on the assertion of three states of existence, the human and mortal, the Brahman-consciousness which is the absolute of our relativities, and the utter Absolute which is unknowable. The first is in a sense a false status of misrepresentation because it is a continual term of apparent opposites and balancings where the truth of things is a secret unity; we have here a bright or positive figure and a dark or negative figure and both are figures, neither the Truth; still in that we now live and through that we have to move to the Beyond. The second is the Lord of all this dual action who is beyond it; He is the truth of Brahman and not in any way a falsehood or misrepresentation, but the truth of it as attained by us in our eternal supramental being; in Him are the absolutes of all that here we experience in partial figures. The Unknowable is beyond our grasp because though it is the same Reality, yet it exceeds even our highest term of eternal being and is beyond Existence and Non-existence; it is therefore to the Brahman, the Lord who has a relation to what we are that we must direct our search if we would attain beyond what temporarily seems to what eternally is.

The attainment of the Brahman is our escape from the mortal status into Immortality, by which we understand not the survival of death, but the finding of our true self of eternal being and bliss beyond the dual symbols of birth and death. By immortality we mean the absolute life of the soul as opposed to the transient and mutable life in the body which it assumes by birth and death and rebirth and superior also to its life as the mere mental being who dwells in the world subjected helplessly to this law of death and birth or seems at least by his ignorance to be subjected to this and to other laws of the lower Nature. To know and possess its true nature, free, absolute, master of itself and its embodiments is the soul's means of transcendence, and to know and possess this is to know and possess the Brahman. It is also to rise out of mortal world into immortal world, out of world of bondage into world of largeness, out of finite world into infinite world. It is to ascend out of earthly joy and sorrow into a transcendent Beatitude.

This must be done by the abandonment of our attachment to the figure of things in the mortal world. We must put from us its death and dualities if we would compass the unity and immortality. Therefore it follows that we must cease to make the goods of this world or even its right, light and beauty our object of pursuit; we must go beyond these to a supreme Good, a transcendent Truth, Light and Beauty in which the opposite figures of what we call evil disappear. But still, being in this world, it is only through something in this world itself that we can transcend it; it is through its figures that we must find the absolute. Therefore, we scrutinise them and perceive that there are first these forms of mind, life, speech and sense, all of them figures and imperfect suggestions, and then behind them the cosmic principles through which the One acts. It is to these cosmic principles that we must proceed and turn them from their ordinary aim and movement in the world to find their own supreme aim and absolute movement in their own one Godhead, the Lord, the Brahman; they must be drawn to leave the workings of ordinary mind and find the superconscient Mind, to leave the workings of ordinary speech and sense and find the supra-mental Sense and original Word, to leave the apparent workings of mundane Life and find the transcendent Life.

Besides the gods, there is our self, the spirit within who supports all this action of the gods. Our spirit too must turn from its absorption in its figure of itself as it sees it involved in the movement of individual life, mind, body and subject to it and must direct its gaze upward to its own supreme Self who is beyond all this movement and master of it all. Therefore the mind must indeed become passive to the divine Mind, the sense to the divine Sense, the life to the divine Life and by receptivity to constant touches and visitings of the highest be transfigured into a reflection of these transcendences; but also the individual self must through the mind's aspiration upwards, through upliftings of itself beyond, through constant memory of the supreme Reality in which during these divine moments it has lived, ascend finally into that Bliss and Power and Light.

But this will not necessarily mean the immersion into an all-oblivious Being eternally absorbed in His own inactive self-existence. For the mind, sense, life going beyond their individual formations find that they are only one centre of the sole Mind, Life, Form of things and therefore they find Brahman in that also and not only in an individual transcendence; they bring down the vision of the superconscient into that also and not only into their own individual workings. The mind of the individual escapes from its limits and becomes the one universal mind, his life the one universal life, his bodily sense the sense of the whole universe and even more as his own indivisible Brahman-body. He perceives the universe in himself and he perceives also his self in all existences and knows it to be the one, the omnipresent, the single-multiple all-inhabiting Lord and Reality. Without this realisation he has not fulfilled the conditions of immortality. Therefore it is said that what the sages seek is to distinguish and see the Brahman in all existences; by that discovery, realisation and possession of Him everywhere and in all they attain to their immortal existence.

Still although the victory of the gods, that is to say, the progressive perfection of the mind, life, body in the positive terms of good, right, joy, knowledge, power is recognised as a victory of the Brahman and the necessity of using life and human works in the world as a means of preparation and self-mastery is admitted, yet a final passing away into the infinite heavenly world or status of the Brahman-consciousness is held out as the goal. And this would seem to imply a rejection of the life of the cosmos. Well then may we ask, we the modern humanity more and more conscious of the inner warning of that which created us, be it Nature or God, that there is a work for the race, a divine purpose in its creation which exceeds the salvation of the individual soul, because the universal is as real or even more real than the individual, we who feel more and more, in the language of the Koran, that the Lord did not create heaven and earth in a jest, that Brahman did not begin dreaming this world-dream in a moment of aberration and delirium, — well may we ask whether this gospel of individual salvation is all the message even of this purer, earlier, more catholic Vedanta. If so, then Vedanta at its best is a gospel for the saint, the ascetic, the monk, the solitary, but it has not a message which the widening consciousness of the world can joyfully accept as the word for which it was waiting. For there is evidently something vital that has escaped it, a profound word of the riddle of existence from which it has turned its eyes or which it was unable or thought it not worth while to solve.

Now certainly there is an emphasis in the Upanishads increasing steadily as time goes on into an over-emphasis, on the salvation of the individual, on his rejection of the lower cosmic life. This note increases in them as they become later in date, it swells afterwards into the rejection of all cosmic life whatever and that becomes finally in later Hinduism almost the one dominant and all-challenging cry. It does not exist in the earlier Vedic revelation where individual salvation is regarded as a means towards a great cosmic victory, the eventual conquest of heaven and earth by the superconscient Truth and Bliss and those who have achieved the victory in the past are the conscious helpers of their yet battling posterity. If this earlier note is missing in the Upanishads, then, — for great as are these Scriptures, luminous, profound, sublime in their unsurpassed truth, beauty and power, yet it is only the ignorant soul that will make itself the slave of a book, — then in using them as an aid to knowledge we must insistently call back that earlier missing note, we must seek elsewhere a solution for the word of the riddle that has been ignored. The Upanishad alone of extant scriptures gives us without veil or stinting, with plenitude and a noble catholicity the truth of the Brahman; its aid to humanity is therefore indispensable. Only, where anything essential is missing, we must go beyond the Upanishads to seek it, — as for instance when we add to its emphasis on divine knowledge the indispensable ardent emphasis of the later teachings upon divine love and the high emphasis of the Veda upon divine works.

The Vedic gospel of a supreme victory in heaven and on earth for the divine in man, the Christian gospel of a kingdom of God and divine city upon earth, the Puranic idea of progressing Avataras ending in the kingdom of the perfect and the restoration of the golden Age, not only contain behind their forms a profound truth, but they are necessary to the religious sense in mankind. Without it the teaching of the vanity of human life and of a passionate fleeing and renunciation can only be powerful in passing epochs or else on the few strong souls in each age that are really capable of these things. The rest of humanity will either reject the creed which makes that its foundation or ignore it in practice while professing it in precept or else must sink under the weight of its own impotence and the sense of the illusion of life or of the curse of God upon the world as mediaeval Christendom sank into ignorance and obscurantism or later India into stagnant torpor and the pettiness of a life of aimless egoism. The promise for the individual is well but the promise for the race is also needed. Our father Heaven must remain bright with the hope of deliverance, but also our mother Earth must not feel herself for ever accursed.

It was necessary at one time to insist even exclusively on the idea of individual salvation so that the sense of a Beyond might be driven into man's mentality, as it was necessary at one time to insist on a heaven of joys for the virtuous and pious so that man might be drawn by that shining bait towards the practice of religion and the suppression of his unbridled animality. But as the lures of earth have to be conquered, so also have the lures of heaven. The lure of a pleasant Paradise of the rewards of virtue has been rejected by man; the Upanishads belittled it ages ago in India and it is now no longer dominant in the mind of the people; the similar lure in popular Christianity and popular Islam has no meaning for the conscience of modern humanity. The lure of a release from birth and death and withdrawal from the cosmic labour must also be rejected, as it was rejected by Mahayanist Buddhism which held compassion and helpfulness to be greater than Nirvana. As the virtues we practise must be done without demand of earthly or heavenly reward, so the salvation we seek must be purely internal and impersonal; it must be the release from egoism, the union with the Divine, the realisation of our universality as well as our transcendence, and no salvation should be valued which takes us away from the love of God in his manifestation and the help we can give to the world. If need be, it must be taught for a time, "Better this hell with our other suffering selves than a solitary salvation."

Fortunately, there is no need to go to such lengths and deny one side of the truth in order to establish another. The Upanishad itself suggests the door of escape from any over-emphasis in its own statement of the truth. For the man who knows and possesses the supreme Brahman as the transcendent Beatitude becomes a centre of that delight to which all his fellows shall come, a well from which they can draw the divine waters. Here is the clue that we need. The connection with the universe is preserved for the one reason which supremely justifies that connection; it must subsist not from the desire of personal earthly joy, as with those who are still bound, but for help to all creatures. Two then are the objects of the high-reaching soul, to attain the Supreme and to be for ever for the good of all the world, — even as Brahman Himself; whether here or elsewhere, does not essentially matter. Still where the struggle is thickest, there should be the hero of the spirit, that is surely the highest choice of the son of Immortality; the earth calls most, because it has most need of him, to the soul that has become one with the universe.

And the nature of the highest good that can be done is also indicated, — though other lower forms of help are not therefore excluded. To assist in the lesser victories of the gods which must prepare the supreme victory of the Brahman may well be and must be in some way or other a part of our task; but the greatest helpfulness of all is this, to be a human centre of the Light, the Glory, the Bliss, the Strength, the Knowledge of the Divine Existence, one through whom it shall communicate itself lavishly to other men and attract by its magnet of delight their souls to that which is the Highest.

Katha Upanishad

The Katha Upanishad

of the Black Yajurveda

THE FIRST CYCLE; FIRST CHAPTER

उशन् ह वै वाजश्रवसः सर्ववेदसं ददौ। तस्य ह नचिकेता नाम पुत्र आस ॥ १ ॥

1. Vajasravasa, desiring, gave all he had. Now Vajasravasa had a son named Nachiketas.

तं ह कुमारं सन्तं दक्षिणासु नीयमानासु श्रद्धाविवेश सोऽमन्यत ॥ २ ॥

2. As the gifts were led past, faith took possession of him who was yet a boy unwed and he pondered:

पीतोदका जग्धतृणा दुग्धदोहा निरिन्द्रियाः।
अनन्दा नाम ते लोकास्तान् स गच्छति ता ददत् ॥ ३ ॥

3. "Cattle that have drunk their water, eaten their grass, yielded their milk, worn out their organs, of undelight are the worlds which he reaches who gives such as these."

स होवाच पितरं तत कस्मै मां दास्यसीति। द्वितीयं तृतीयं तं होवाच मृत्यवे त्वा ददामीति ॥ ४ ॥

4. He said to his father, "Me, O my father, to whom wilt thou give?" A second time and a third he said it, and he replied, "To Death I give thee."

बहूनामेमि प्रथमो बहूनामेमि मध्यमः।
किं स्विद्यमस्य कर्तव्यं यन्मयाद्य करिष्यति ॥ ५ ॥

5. "Among many I walk the first, among many I walk the midmost; something Death means to do which today by me he will accomplish.

अनुपश्य यथा पूर्वे प्रतिपश्य तथापरे।
सस्यमिव मर्त्यः पच्यते सस्यमिवाजायते पुनः ॥ ६॥

6. “Look back and see, even as were the men of old, — look round! — even so are they that have come after. Mortal man withers like the fruits of the field and like the fruits of the field he is born again.”

वैश्वानरः प्रविशत्यतिथिर्ब्राह्मणो गृहान्।
तस्यैतां शान्तिं कुर्वन्ति हर वैवस्वतोदकम्॥ ७॥

His attendants say to Yama:

7. “Fire is the Brahmin who enters as a guest the houses of men; him thus they appease. Bring, O son of Vivasvan,[1] the water of the guest-rite.

आशाप्रतीक्षे संगतं सूनृतां चेष्टापूर्ते पुत्रपशूंश्च सर्वान्।
एतद् वृङ्क्ते पुरुषस्याल्पमेधसो यस्यानश्नन् वसति ब्राह्मणो गृहे॥ ८॥

8. “That man of little understanding in whose house a Brahmin dwells fasting, all his hope and his expectation and all he has gained and the good and truth that he has spoken and the wells he has dug and the sacrifices he has offered and all his sons and his cattle are torn from him by that guest unhonoured.”

तिस्रो रात्रीर्यदवात्सीर्गृहे मेऽनश्नन् ब्रह्मन्नतिथिर्नमस्यः।
नमस्तेऽस्तु ब्रह्मन् स्वस्ति मेऽस्तु तस्मात्प्रति त्रीन्वरान्वृणीष्व॥ ९॥

9. “Because for three nights thou hast dwelt in my house, O Brahmin, a guest worthy of reverence, — salutation to thee, O Brahmin, on me let there be the weal, — therefore three boons do thou choose; for each night a boon.”

---

[1] Yama, lord of death, is also the master of the Law in the world, and he is therefore the child of the Sun, luminous Master of Truth from which the Law is born.

शान्तसंकल्पः सुमना यथा स्याद् वीतमन्युर्गौतमो माभि मृत्यो।
त्वत्प्रसृष्टं माभिवदेत्प्रतीत एतत् त्रयाणां प्रथमं वरं वृणे ॥ १० ॥

10. “Tranquillised in his thought and serene of mind be the Gautama, my father, let his passion over me pass away from him; assured in heart let him greet me from thy grasp delivered; this boon I choose, the first of three.”

यथा पुरस्ताद् भविता प्रतीत औद्दालकिरारुणिर्मत्प्रसृष्टः।
सुखं रात्रीः शयिता वीतमन्युस्त्वां ददृशिवान्मृत्युमुखात्प्रमुक्तम् ॥ ११ ॥

11. “Even as before assured in heart and by me released shall he be, Auddalaki Aruni, thy father; sweetly shall he sleep through the nights and his passion shall pass away from him, having seen thee from death’s jaws delivered.”

स्वर्गे लोके न भयं किंचनास्ति न तत्र त्वं न जरया बिभेति।
उभे तीर्त्वाशनायापिपासे शोकातिगो मोदते स्वर्गलोके ॥ १२ ॥

12. “In heaven fear is not at all, in heaven, O Death, thou art not, nor old age and its terrors; crossing over hunger and thirst as over two rivers, leaving sorrow behind the soul in heaven rejoices.

स त्वमग्निं स्वर्ग्यमध्येषि मृत्यो प्रब्रूहि त्वं श्रद्दधानाय मह्यम्।
स्वर्गलोका अमृतत्वं भजन्त एतद् द्वितीयेन वृणे वरेण ॥ १३ ॥

13. “Therefore that heavenly Flame[2] which thou, O Death, studiest, expound unto me, for I believe. They who win their world of heaven, have immortality for their portion. This for the second boon I have chosen.”

प्र ते ब्रवीमि तदु मे निबोध स्वर्ग्यमग्निं नचिकेतः प्रजानन्।
अनन्तलोकाप्तिमथो प्रतिष्ठां विद्धि त्वमेतं निहितं गुहायाम् ॥ १४ ॥

---

[2] The celestial force concealed subconsciently in man’s mortality by the kindling of which and its right ordering man transcends his earthly nature; not the physical flame of the external sacrifice to which these profound phrases are inapplicable.

14. "Hearken to me and understand, O Nachiketas; I declare to thee that heavenly Flame, for I know it. Know this to be the possession of infinite existence and the foundation and the thing hidden in the secret cave of our being."

लोकादिमग्निं तमुवाच तस्मै या इष्टका यावतीर्वा यथा वा ।
स चापि तत्प्रत्यवदद् यथोक्तमथास्य मृत्युः पुनरेवाह तुष्टः ॥ १५ ॥

15. Of the Flame that is the world's beginning[3] he told him and what are the bricks to him and how many and the way of their setting; and Nachiketas too repeated it even as it was told; then Death was pleased and said to him yet farther;

तमब्रवीत्प्रीयमाणो महात्मा वरं तवेहाद्य ददामि भूयः ।
तवैव नाम्ना भवितायमग्निः सृङ्कां चेमामनेकरूपां गृहाण ॥ १६ ॥

16. Yea; the Great Soul was gratified and said to him, "Yet a farther boon today I give thee; for even by thy name shall this Fire be called; this necklace also take unto thee, a necklace[4] of many figures.

त्रिणाचिकेतस्त्रिभिरेत्य संधिं त्रिकर्मकृत् तरति जन्ममृत्यू ।
ब्रह्मजज्ञं देवमीड्यं विदित्वा निचाय्येमां शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ॥ १७ ॥

17. "Whoso lights the three fires[5] of Nachiketas and comes to union with the Three[6] and does the triple works,[7] beyond birth and death he crosses; for he finds the God of our

---

[3] The Divine Force concealed in the subconscient is that which has originated and built up the worlds. At the other end in the superconscient it reveals itself as the Divine Being, Lord and Knower who has manifested Himself out of the Brahman.

[4] The necklace of many figures is Prakriti, creative Nature which comes under the control of the soul that has attained to the divine existence.

[5] Probably, the divine force utilised to raise to divinity the triple being of man.

[6] Possibly, the three Purushas, soul-states or Personalities of the divine Being, indicated by the three letters AUM. The highest Brahman is beyond the three letters of the mystic syllable.

[7] The sacrifice of the lower existence to the divine, consummated on the three planes of man's physical, vital and mental consciousness.

adoration, the Knower[8] who is born from the Brahman, whom having beheld he attains to surpassing peace.

त्रिणाचिकेतस्त्रयमेतद् विदित्वा य एवं विद्वांश्चिनुते नाचिकेतम्।
स मृत्युपाशान्पुरतः प्रणोद्य शोकातिगो मोदते स्वर्गलोके ॥ १८ ॥

18. “When a man has the three flames of Nachiketas and knows this that is Triple, when so knowing he beholds the Flame of Nachiketas, then he thrusts from in front of him the meshes of the snare of death; leaving sorrow behind him he in heaven rejoices.

एष तेऽग्निर्नचिकेतः स्वर्ग्यो यमवृणीथा द्वितीयेन वरेण।
एतमग्निं तवैव प्रवक्ष्यन्ति जनासस्तृतीयं वरं नचिकेतो वृणीष्व ॥ १९ ॥

19. “This is the heavenly Flame, O Nachiketas, which thou hast chosen for the second boon; of this Flame the peoples shall speak that it is thine indeed. A third boon choose, O Nachiketas.”

येयं प्रेते विचिकित्सा मनुष्येऽस्तीत्येके नायमस्तीति चैके।
एतद् विद्यामनुशिष्टस्त्वयाहं वराणामेष वरस्तृतीयः ॥ २० ॥

20. “This debate that there is over the man who has passed and some say ‘This he is not’ and some that he is, that, taught by thee, I would know; this is the third boon of the boons of my choosing.”

देवैरत्रापि विचिकित्सितं पुरा न हि सुज्ञेयमणुरेष धर्मः।
अन्यं वरं नचिकेतो वृणीष्व मा मोपरोत्सीरति मा सृजैनम् ॥ २१ ॥

21. “Even by the gods was this debated of old; for it is not easy of knowledge, since very subtle is the law of it. Another boon choose, O Nachiketas; importune me not, nor urge me; this, this abandon.”

---

[8] The Purusha or Divine Being, Knower of the Field, who dwells within all and for whose pleasure Prakriti fulfils the cosmic play.

देवैरत्रापि विचिकित्सितं किल त्वं च मृत्यो यन्न सुज्ञेयमात्थ।
वक्ता चास्य त्वादृगन्यो न लभ्यो नान्यो वरस्तुल्य एतस्य
कश्चित् ॥ २२ ॥

22. “Even by the gods was this debated, it is sure, and thou thyself hast said that it is not easy of knowledge; never shall I find another like thee[9] to tell of it, nor is there any other boon that is its equal.”

शतायुषः पुत्रपौत्रान्वृणीष्व बहून्पशून् हस्तिहिरण्यमश्वान्।
भूमेर्महदायतनं वृणीष्व स्वयं च जीव शरदो यावदिच्छसि ॥ २३ ॥

23. “Choose sons and grandsons who shall live each a hundred years, choose much cattle and elephants and gold and horses; choose a mighty reach of earth and thyself live for as many years as thou listest.

एतत्तुल्यं यदि मन्यसे वरं वृणीष्व वित्तं चिरजीविकां च।
महाभूमौ नचिकेतस्त्वमेधि कामानां त्वा कामभाजं करोमि ॥ २४ ॥

24. “This boon if thou deemest equal to that of thy asking, choose wealth and long living; possess thou, O Nachiketas, a mighty country; I give thee thy desire of all desirable things for thy portion.

ये ये कामा दुर्लभा मर्त्यलोके सर्वान्कामांश्छन्दतः प्रार्थयस्व।
इमा रामाः सरथाः सतूर्या न हीदृशा लम्भनीया मनुष्यैः।
आभिर्मत्प्रत्ताभिः परिचारयस्व नचिकेतो मरणं मानुप्राक्षीः ॥ २५ ॥

25. “Yea, all desires that are hard to win in the world of mortals, all demand at thy pleasure; lo, these delectable women with their chariots and their bugles, whose like are not to be won by men, these I will give thee; live with them for thy handmaidens. But of death question not, O Nachiketas.”

---

[9] Yama is the knower and keeper of the cosmic Law through which the soul has to rise by death and life to the freedom of Immortality.

श्वोभावा मर्त्यस्य यदन्तकैतत् सर्वेन्द्रियाणां जरयन्ति तेजः ।
अपि सर्वं जीवितमल्पमेव तवैव वाहास्तव नृत्यगीते ॥ २६ ॥

26. “Until the morrow mortal man has these things, O Ender, and they wear away all this keenness and glory of his senses; nay, all life is even for a little. Thine are these chariots and thine the dancing of these women and their singing.

न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्यो लप्स्यामहे वित्तमद्राक्ष्म चेत्त्वा ।
जीविष्यामो यावदीशिष्यसि त्वं वरस्तु मे वरणीयः स एव ॥ २७ ॥

27. “Man is not to be satisfied by riches, and riches we shall have if we have beheld thee and shall live as long as thou shalt be lord of us.[10] This boon and no other is for my choosing.

अजीर्यताममृतानामुपेत्य जीर्यन्मर्त्यः क्वधःस्थः प्रजानन् ।
अभिध्यायन् वर्णरतिप्रमोदानतिदीर्घे जीविते को रमेत ॥ २८ ॥

28. “Who that is a mortal man and grows old and dwells down upon the unhappy earth, when he has come into the presence of the ageless Immortals and knows, yea, who when he looks very close at beauty and enjoyment and pleasure, can take delight in overlong living?

यस्मिन्निदं विचिकित्सन्ति मृत्यो यत्सांपराये महति ब्रूहि नस्तत् ।
योऽयं वरो गूढमनुप्रविष्टो नान्यं तस्मान्नचिकेता वृणीते ॥ २९ ॥

29. “This of which they thus debate, O Death, declare to me, even that which is in the great passage; than this boon which enters in into the secret that is hidden from us, no other chooses Nachiketas.”

---

[10] Life being a figure of death and Death of life, the only true existence is the infinite, divine and immortal.

The First Cycle; Second Chapter

अन्यच्छ्रेयोऽन्यदुतैव प्रेयस्ते उभे नानार्थे पुरुषं सिनीतः ।
तयोः श्रेय आददानस्य साधु भवति हीयतेऽर्थाद्य उ प्रेयो वृणीते ॥ १ ॥

Yama speaks:

1. One thing is the good and quite another thing is the pleasant, and both seize upon a man with different meanings. Of these whoso takes the good, it is well with him; he falls from the aim of life who chooses the pleasant.

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्तौ संपरीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः ।
श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभि प्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद् वृणीते ॥ २ ॥

2. The good and the pleasant come to a man and the thoughtful mind turns all around them and distinguishes. The wise chooses out the good from the pleasant, but the dull soul chooses the pleasant rather than the getting of his good and its having.

स त्वं प्रियान्प्रियरूपांश्च कामानभिध्यायन् नचिकेतोऽत्यस्राक्षीः ।
नैतां सृङ्कां वित्तमयीमवाप्तो यस्यां मज्जन्ति बहवो मनुष्याः ॥ ३ ॥

3. And thou, O Nachiketas, hast looked close at the objects of desire, at pleasant things and beautiful, and thou hast cast them from thee; thou hast not entered into the net of riches in which many men sink to perdition.

दूरमेते विपरीते विषूची अविद्या या च विद्येति ज्ञाता ।
विद्याभीप्सिनं नचिकेतसं मन्ये न त्वा कामा बहवोऽलोलुपन्त ॥ ४ ॥

4. For far apart are these, opposite, divergent, the one that is known as the Ignorance and the other the Knowledge. But Nachiketas I deem truly desirous of the knowledge whom so many desirable things could not make to lust after them.

अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितंमन्यमानाः ।
दन्द्रम्यमाणाः परियन्ति मूढा अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः ॥ ५ ॥

5. They who dwell in the ignorance, within it, wise in their own wit and deeming themselves very learned, men bewildered are they who wander about round and round circling like blind men led by the blind.

न सांपरायः प्रतिभाति बालं प्रमाद्यन्तं वित्तमोहेन मूढम् ।
अयं लोको नास्ति पर इति मानी पुनः पुनर्वशमापद्यते मे ॥ ६ ॥

6. The childish wit bewildered and drunken with the illusion of riches cannot open its eyes to see the passage to heaven; for he that thinks this world is and there is no other, comes again and again into Death's thraldom.

श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यं न विद्युः ।
आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धाऽऽश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ॥ ७ ॥

7. He that is not easy even to be heard of by many, and even of those that have heard they are many who have not known Him, — a miracle is the man that can speak of Him wisely or is skilful to win Him, and when one is found, a miracle is the listener who can know God even when taught of Him by the knower.

न नरेणावरेण प्रोक्त एष सुविज्ञेयो बहुधा चिन्त्यमानः ।
अनन्यप्रोक्ते गतिरत्र नास्त्यणीयान् ह्यतर्क्यमणुप्रमाणात् ॥ ८ ॥

8. An inferior man cannot tell you of Him; for thus told thou canst not truly know Him, since He is thought of in many aspects. Yet unless told of Him by another thou canst not find thy way there to Him; for He is subtler than subtlety and that which logic cannot reach.

नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया प्रोक्तान्येनैव सुज्ञानाय प्रेष्ठ ।
यां त्वमापः सत्यधृतिर्बतासि त्वादृङ् नो भूयान्नचिकेतः प्रष्टा ॥ ९ ॥

9. This wisdom is not to be had by reasoning, O beloved Nachiketas; only when told thee by another it brings real knowledge, — the wisdom which thou hast gotten. Truly thou art steadfast in the Truth! Even such a questioner as thou art may I meet with always.

जानाम्यहं शेवधिरित्यनित्यं न ह्यध्रुवैः प्राप्यते हि ध्रुवं तत्।
ततो मया नाचिकेतश्चितोऽग्निरनित्यैर्द्रव्यैः प्राप्तवानस्मि नित्यम् ॥ १० ॥

Nachiketas speaks:

10. I know of treasure that it is not for ever; for not by things unstable shall one attain That which is stable; therefore I heaped the fire of Nachiketas, and by the sacrifice of transitory things I won the Eternal.

कामस्याप्तिं जगतः प्रतिष्ठां क्रतोरनन्त्यमभयस्य पारम्।
स्तोमं महदुरुगायं प्रतिष्ठां दृष्ट्वा धृत्या धीरो नचिकेतोऽत्यस्राक्षीः ॥ ११ ॥

Yama speaks:

11. When thou hast seen in thy grasp, O Nachiketas, the possession of desire and firm foundation of this world and an infinity of power and the other shore of security and praise and scope and wide moving and firm foundation,[11] wise and strong in steadfastness thou didst cast these things from thee.

तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गह्वरेष्ठं पुराणम्।
अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति ॥ १२ ॥

12. Realising God by attainment to Him through spiritual Yoga, even the Ancient of Days who hath entered deep into that which is hidden and is hard to see, for he is established in our secret being and lodged in the cavern heart of things, the wise and steadfast man casts far from him joy and sorrow.

---

[11] Or, “and great fame chanted through widest regions”.

एतच्छ्रुत्वा संपरिगृह्य मर्त्यः प्रवृह्य धर्म्यमणुमेतमाप्य ।
स मोदते मोदनीयं हि लब्ध्वा विवृतं सद्म नचिकेतसं मन्ये ॥ १३ ॥

13. When mortal man has heard, when he has grasped, when he has forcefully separated the Righteous One from his body and won that subtle Being, then he has delight, for he has got that which one can indeed delight in. Verily I deem of Nachiketas as a house wide open.

अन्यत्र धर्मादन्यत्राधर्मादन्यत्रास्मात् कृताकृतात् ।
अन्यत्र भूताच्च भव्याच्च यत्तत्पश्यसि तद्वद ॥ १४ ॥

Nachiketas speaks:

14. Tell me of That which thou seest otherwhere than in virtue and otherwhere than in unrighteousness, otherwhere than in the created and the uncreated, otherwhere than in that which has been and that which shall be.

सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति तपांसि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति ।
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण ब्रवीम्योमित्येतत् ॥ १५ ॥

Yama speaks:

15. The seat and goal that all the Vedas glorify and which all austerities declare, for the desire of which men practise holy living, of That will I tell thee in brief compass. OM is that goal, O Nachiketas.

एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं ब्रह्म एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं परम् ।
एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं ज्ञात्वा यो यदिच्छति तस्य तत् ॥ १६ ॥

16. For this Syllable is Brahman, this Syllable is the Most High: this Syllable if one know, whatsoever one shall desire, it is his.

एतदालम्बनं श्रेष्ठमेतदालम्बनं परम् ।
एतदालम्बनं ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्मलोके महीयते ॥ १७ ॥

17. This support is the best, this support is the highest, knowing

this support one grows great in the world of the Brahman.

न जायते म्रियते वा विपश्चिन्नायं कुतश्चिन्न बभूव कश्चित् ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥ १८ ॥

18. That Wise One is not born, neither does he die; he came not from anywhere, neither is he anyone; he is unborn, he is everlasting, he is ancient and sempiternal, he is not slain in the slaying of the body.

हन्ता चेन्मन्यते हन्तुं हतश्चेन्मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥ १९ ॥

19. If the slayer think that he slays, if the slain think that he is slain, both of these have not the knowledge. This slays not, neither is He slain.

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्य जन्तोर्निहितो गुहायाम् ।
तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको धातुप्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ॥ २० ॥

20. Finer than the fine, huger than the huge the Self hides in the secret heart of the creature: when a man strips himself of will and is weaned from sorrow, then he beholds Him, purified from the mental elements he sees the greatness of the Self-being.

आसीनो दूरं व्रजति शयानो याति सर्वतः ।
कस्तं मदामदं देवं मदन्यो ज्ञातुमर्हति ॥ २१ ॥

21. Seated He journeys far off, lying down He goes everywhere. Who other than I is fit to know God, even Him who is rapture and the transcendence of rapture?

अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितम् ।
महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥ २२ ॥

22. Realising the Bodiless in bodies, the Established in things unsettled, the Great and Omnipresent Self, the wise and steadfast soul grieves no longer.

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूं स्वाम् ॥ २३ ॥

23. The Self is not to be won by eloquent teaching, nor by brain power, nor by much learning: but only he whom this being chooses can win Him, for to him this Self bares His body.

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।
नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥ २४ ॥

24. None who has not ceased from doing evil, or who is not calm, or not concentrated in his being, or whose mind has not been tranquillised, can by wisdom attain to Him.

यस्य ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं च उभे भवत ओदनः ।
मृत्युर्यस्योपसेचनं क इत्था वेद यत्र सः ॥ २५ ॥

25. He to whom the sages are as meat and heroes as food for His eating and Death is an ingredient of His banquet, how thus shall one know of Him where He abideth?

THE FIRST CYCLE; THIRD CHAPTER

ऋतं पिबन्तौ सुकृतस्य लोके गुहां प्रविष्टौ परमे परार्धे ।
छायातपौ ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति पञ्चाग्नयो ये च त्रिणाचिकेताः ॥ १ ॥

Yama speaks:

1. There are two that drink deep of the Truth in the world of work well accomplished: they are lodged in the secret plane of being and in the highest kingdom of the most High is their dwelling: as of light and shade the knowers of the Brahman speak of them and those of the five fires and those who have the three fires of Nachiketas.

यः सेतुरीजानानामक्षरं ब्रह्म यत्परम् ।
अभयं तितीर्षतां पारं नाचिकेतं शकेमहि ॥ २ ॥

2. May we have strength to kindle Agni Nachiketas, for he is the bridge of those who do sacrifice and he is Brahman supreme and imperishable, and the far shore of security to those who would cross this ocean.

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥ ३ ॥

3. Know the body for a chariot and the soul for the master of the chariot: know Reason for the charioteer and the mind for the reins only.

इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् ।
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥ ४ ॥

4. The senses they speak of as the steeds and the objects of sense as the paths in which they move; and One yoked with Self and the mind and the senses is the enjoyer, say the thinkers.

यस्त्वविज्ञानवान् भवत्ययुक्तेन मनसा सदा ।
तस्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानि दुष्टाश्वा इव सारथेः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Now he that is without knowledge with his mind ever unapplied, his senses are to him as wild horses and will not obey the driver of the chariot.

यस्तु विज्ञानवान् भवति युक्तेन मनसा सदा ।
तस्येन्द्रियाणि वश्यानि सदश्वा इव सारथेः ॥ ६ ॥

6. But he that has knowledge with his mind ever applied, his senses are to him as noble steeds and they obey the driver.

यस्त्वविज्ञानवान् भवत्यमनस्कः सदाऽशुचिः ।
न स तत्पदमाप्नोति संसारं चाधिगच्छति ॥ ७ ॥

7. Yea, he that is without knowledge and is unmindful and is ever unclean, reaches not that goal, but wanders in the cycle of phenomena.

यस्तु विज्ञानवान् भवति समनस्कः सदा शुचिः ।
स तु तत्पदमाप्नोति यस्माद् भूयो न जायते ॥ ८ ॥

8. But he that has knowledge and is mindful and pure always, reaches that goal whence he is not born again.

विज्ञानसारथिर्यस्तु मनःप्रग्रहवान् नरः ।
सोऽध्वनः पारमाप्नोति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥ ९ ॥

9. That man who uses the mind for reins and the knowledge for the driver, reaches the end of his road, the highest seat of Vishnu.

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्था अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्बुद्धेरात्मा महान्परः ॥ १० ॥

10. Than the senses the objects of sense are higher; and higher than the objects of sense is the Mind; and higher than the Mind is the faculty of knowledge; and than that is the Great Self higher.

महतः परमव्यक्तमव्यक्तात् पुरुषः परः ।
पुरुषान्न परं किंचित्सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥ ११ ॥

11. And higher than the Great Self is the Unmanifest and higher than the Unmanifest is the Purusha: than the Purusha there is none higher: He is the culmination, He is the highest goal of the journey.

एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोऽऽत्मा न प्रकाशते ।
दृश्यते त्वग्र्यया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ॥ १२ ॥

12. The secret Self in all existences does not manifest Himself to the vision: yet is He seen by the seers of the subtle by a subtle and perfect understanding.

यच्छेद् वाङ्मनसी प्राज्ञस्तद्यच्छेज्ज्ञान आत्मनि ।
ज्ञानमात्मनि महति नियच्छेत् तद्यच्छेच्छान्त आत्मनि ॥ १३ ॥

13. Let the wise man restrain speech in his mind and mind in his self of knowledge, and knowledge in the Great Self, and that again let him restrain in the Self that is at peace.

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।
क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्गं पथस्तत् कवयो वदन्ति ॥ १४ ॥

14. Arise, awake, find out the great ones and learn of them; for sharp as a razor's edge, hard to traverse, difficult of going is that path, say the sages.

अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययं तथारसं नित्यमगन्धवच्च यत् ।
अनाद्यनन्तं महतः परं ध्रुवं निचाय्य तन्मृत्युमुखात् प्रमुच्यते ॥ १५ ॥

15. That in which sound is not, nor touch, nor shape, nor diminution, nor taste, nor smell, that which is eternal, and It is without end or beginning, higher than the Great Self and stable, — that having seen, from the mouth of death there is deliverance.

नाचिकेतमुपाख्यानं मृत्युप्रोक्तं सनातनम् ।
उक्त्वा श्रुत्वा च मेधावी ब्रह्मलोके महीयते ॥ १६ ॥

16. The man of intelligence having spoken or heard the eternal story of Nachiketas wherein Death was the speaker, grows great in the world of the Brahman.

य इमं परमं गुह्यं श्रावयेद् ब्रह्मसंसदि ।
प्रयतः श्राद्धकाले वा तदानन्त्याय कल्पते ।
तदानन्त्याय कल्पत इति ॥ १७ ॥

17. He who being pure recites this supreme secret at the time of the Shraddha in the assembly of the Brahmins, that turns for him to infinite existence.

THE SECOND CYCLE; FIRST CHAPTER

पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत् स्वयम्भूस्तस्मात्पराङ् पश्यति नान्तरात्मन्।
कश्चिद्धीरः प्रत्यगात्मानमैक्षदावृत्तचक्षुरमृतत्वमिच्छन् ॥ १ ॥

Yama said:

1. The Self-born hath set the doors of the body to face outward, therefore the soul of a man gazeth outward and not at the Self within; hardly a wise man here and there desiring immortality turneth his eyes inward and seeth the Self within him.

पराचः कामाननुयन्ति बालास्ते मृत्योर्यन्ति विततस्य पाशम्।
अथ धीरा अमृतत्वं विदित्वा ध्रुवमध्रुवेष्विह न प्रार्थयन्ते ॥ २ ॥

2. The rest childishly follow after desire and pleasure and walk into the snare of Death who gapeth wide for them. But calm souls having learned of immortality seek not for permanence in the things of this world that pass and are not.

येन रूपं रसं गन्धं शब्दान् स्पर्शांश्च मैथुनान्।
एतेनैव विजानाति किमत्र परिशिष्यते। एतद्वै तत् ॥ ३ ॥

3. By the Self one knoweth taste and form and smell, by the Self one knoweth sound and touch and the joy of man with woman; what is there left in this world of which the Self not knoweth? This is the thing thou seekest.

स्वप्नान्तं जागरितान्तं चोभौ येनानुपश्यति।
महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥ ४ ॥

4. The calm soul having comprehended the great Lord, the omnipresent Self by whom one beholdeth both to the end of dream and to the end of waking, ceaseth from grieving.

य इमं मध्वदं वेद आत्मानं जीवमन्तिकात्।
ईशानं भूतभव्यस्य न ततो विजुगुप्सते। एतद्वै तत् ॥ ५ ॥

5. He that hath known from very close this Eater of sweetness, the Jiva, the Self within that is lord of what was and what shall be, shrinketh not thereafter from aught nor abhorreth any. This is the thing thou seekest.

यः पूर्वं तपसो जातमद्भ्यः पूर्वमजायत।
गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तं यो भूतेभिर्व्यपश्यत। एतद्वै तत्॥ ६॥

6. He is the seer that seeth Him who came into being before austerity and was before the waters; deep in the heart of the creature he seeth Him, for there He standeth by the mingling of the elements. This is the thing thou seekest.

या प्राणेन संभवत्यदितिर्देवतामयी।
गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तीं या भूतेभिर्व्यजायत। एतद्वै तत्॥ ७॥

7. This is Aditi, the mother of the Gods, who was born through the Prana and by the mingling of the elements had her being; deep in the heart of things she has entered, there she is seated. This is the thing thou seekest.

अरण्योर्निहितो जातवेदा गर्भ इव सुभृतो गर्भिणीभिः।
दिवे दिव ईड्यो जागृवद्भिर्हविष्मद्भिर्मनुष्येभिरग्निः।
एतद्वै तत्॥ ८॥

8. As a woman carrieth with care the unborn child in her womb, so is the Master of knowledge lodged in the tinders, and day by day should men worship him who live their waking life and stand before him with sacrifice; for he is that Agni. This is the thing thou seekest.

यतश्चोदेति सूर्योऽस्तं यत्र च गच्छति।
तं देवाः सर्वेऽर्पितास्तदु नात्येति कश्चन। एतद्वै तत्॥ ९॥

9. He from whom the sun riseth and to whom the sun returneth, and in Him are all the Gods established, — none passeth beyond Him. This is the thing thou seekest.

यदेवेह तदमुत्र यदमुत्र तदन्विह।
मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति ॥ १० ॥

10. What is in this world is also in the other, and what is in the other, that again is in this; who thinketh he sees difference here, from death to death he goeth.

मनसैवेदमाप्तव्यं नेह नानास्ति किंचन।
मृत्योः स मृत्युं गच्छति य इह नानेव पश्यति ॥ ११ ॥

11. Through the mind must we understand that there is nothing in this world that is really various; who thinketh he sees difference here, from death to death he goeth.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो मध्य आत्मनि तिष्ठति।
ईशानो भूतभव्यस्य न ततो विजुगुप्सते। एतद्वै तत् ॥ १२ ॥

12. The Purusha who is seated in the midst of ourself is no larger than the finger of a man. He is the lord of what was and what shall be; Him having seen one shrinketh not from aught nor abhorreth any. This is the thing thou seekest.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो ज्योतिरिवाधूमकः।
ईशानो भूतभव्यस्य स एवाद्य स उ श्वः। एतद्वै तत् ॥ १३ ॥

13. The Purusha that is within is no larger than the finger of a man; He is like a blazing fire that is without smoke, He is lord of His past and His future. He alone is today and He alone shall be tomorrow. This is the thing thou seekest.

यथोदकं दुर्गे वृष्टं पर्वतेषु विधावति।
एवं धर्मान्पृथक् पश्यंस्तानेवानुविधावति ॥ १४ ॥

14. As water that raineth in the rough and difficult places, runneth to many sides on the mountain-tops, so he that seeth separate law and action of the one Spirit, followeth in the track of what he seeth.

यथोदकं शुद्धे शुद्धमासिक्तं तादृगेव भवति ।
एवं मुनेर्विजानत आत्मा भवति गौतम ॥ १५ ॥

15. But as pure water that is poured into pure water, even as it was such it remaineth, so is it with the soul of the thinker who knoweth God, O seed of Gotama.

The Second Cycle; Second Chapter

पुरमेकादशद्वारमजस्यावक्रचेतसः ।
अनुष्ठाय न शोचति विमुक्तश्च विमुच्यते । एतद्वै तत् ॥ १ ॥

Yama said:

1. The Unborn who is not devious-minded hath a city with eleven gates; when He taketh up his abode in it, He grieveth not, but when He is set free from it, that is His deliverance. This is the thing thou seekest.

हंसः शुचिषद् वसुरन्तरिक्षसद्धोता वेदिषदतिथिर्दुरोणसत् ।
नृषद्वरसदृतसद् व्योमसदब्जा गोजा ऋतजा अद्रिजा ऋतं बृहत् ॥ २ ॥

2. Lo, the Swan whose dwelling is in the purity, He is the Vasu in the interregions, the Sacrificer at the altar, the Guest in the vessel of the drinking; He is in man and in the Great Ones and His home is in the Law and His dwelling is in the firmament; He is all that is born of water and all that is born of earth and all that is born of the mountains. He is the Truth and He is the Mighty One.

ऊर्ध्वं प्राणमुन्नयत्यपानं प्रत्यगस्यति ।
मध्ये वामनमासीनं विश्वे देवा उपासते ॥ ३ ॥

3. This is He that draweth the main breath upward and casteth the lower breath downward. The Dwarf that sitteth in the centre, to Him all the Gods do homage.

अस्य विस्रंसमानस्य शरीरस्थस्य देहिनः ।
देहाद् विमुच्यमानस्य किमत्र परिशिष्यते । एतद्वै तत् ॥ ४ ॥

4. When this encased spirit that is in the body falleth away from it, when He is freed from its casing, what is there then that remaineth? This is the thing thou seekest.

न प्राणेन नापानेन मर्त्यो जीवति कश्चन ।
इतरेण तु जीवन्ति यस्मिन्नेतावुपाश्रितौ ॥ ५ ॥

5. Man that is mortal liveth not by the breath, no, nor by the lower breath; but by something else we live in which both these have their being.

हन्त त इदं प्रवक्ष्यामि गुह्यं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।
यथा च मरणं प्राप्य आत्मा भवति गौतम ॥ ६ ॥

6. Surely, O Gautama, I will tell thee of this secret and eternal Brahman and likewise what becometh of the soul when one dieth.

योनिमन्ये प्रपद्यन्ते शरीरत्वाय देहिनः ।
स्थाणुमन्येऽनुसंयन्ति यथाकर्म यथाश्रुतम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. For some enter a womb to the embodying of the Spirit and others follow after the Immovable; according to their deeds is their goal and after the measure of their revealed knowledge.

य एष सुप्तेषु जागर्ति कामं कामं पुरुषो निर्मिमाणः ।
तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म तदेवामृतमुच्यते ।
तस्मिँल्लोकाः श्रिताः सर्वे तदु नात्येति कश्चन । एतद्वै तत् ॥ ८ ॥

8. This that waketh in the sleepers creating desire upon desire, this Purusha, Him they call the Bright One, Him Brahman, Him Immortality, and in Him are all the worlds established; none goeth beyond Him. This is the thing thou seekest.

अग्निर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च ॥ ९ ॥

9. Even as one Fire hath entered into the world but it shapeth itself to the forms it meeteth, so there is one Spirit within all creatures but it shapeth itself to form and form; it is likewise outside these.

वायुर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च ॥ १० ॥

10. Even as one Air hath entered into the world but it shapeth itself to the forms it meeteth, so there is one Spirit within all creatures but it shapeth itself to form and form; it is likewise outside these.

सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुर्न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैर्बाह्यदोषैः।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्यः ॥ ११ ॥

11. Even as the Sun is the eye of all this world, yet it is not soiled by the outward blemishes of the visual, so there is one Spirit within all creatures, but the sorrow of this world soils it not, for it is beyond grief and his danger.

एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति।
तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषाम् ॥ १२ ॥

12. One calm and controlling Spirit within all creatures that maketh one form into many fashions; the calm and strong who see Him in the self as in a mirror, theirs is eternal felicity and ’tis not for others.

नित्योऽनित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानामेको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान्।
तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वती नेतरेषाम् ॥ १३ ॥

13. The One Eternal in many transient, the One Conscious in many conscious beings, who being One ordereth the desires of many; the calm and strong who behold Him in the self as in a mirror, theirs is eternal peace and ’tis not for others.

तदेतदिति मन्यन्तेऽनिर्देश्यं परमं सुखम्।
कथं नु तद्विजानीयां किमु भाति विभाति वा ॥ १४ ॥

14. “This is He,” is all they can realise of Him, a highest felicity which none can point to nor any define it. How shall I know of Him whether He shineth or reflecteth one light and another?

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः।
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥ १५ ॥

15. There the Sun cannot shine and the moon has no lustre; all the stars are blind; there our lightnings flash not, neither any earthly fire. For all that is bright is but the shadow of His brightness and by His shining all this shineth.

THE SECOND CYCLE; THIRD CHAPTER

ऊर्ध्वमूलोऽवाक्शाख एषोऽश्वत्थः सनातनः।
तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म तदेवामृतमुच्यते।
तस्मिँल्लोकाः श्रिताः सर्वे तदु नात्येति कश्चन। एतद्वै तत् ॥ १ ॥

Yama said:

1. This is the eternal uswattha tree whose roots are aloft, but its branches are downward. It is He that is called the Bright One and Brahman and Immortality, and in Him are all the worlds established; none goeth beyond Him. This is the thing thou seekest.

यदिदं किंच जगत्सर्वं प्राण एजति निःसृतम्।
महद् भयं वज्रमुद्यतं य एतद् विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥ २ ॥

2. All this universe of motion moveth in the Prana and from the Prana also it proceeded; a mighty terror is He, yea, a thunderbolt uplifted. Who know Him are the immortals.

भयादस्याग्निस्तपति भयात्तपति सूर्यः ।
भयादिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चमः ॥ ३ ॥

3. For fear of Him the fire burneth, for fear of Him the sun giveth heat, for fear of Him Indra and Vayu and Death hasten in their courses.

इह चेदशकद्बोद्धुं प्राक् शरीरस्य विस्रसः ।
ततः सर्गेषु लोकेषु शरीरत्वाय कल्पते ॥ ४ ॥

4. If in this world of men and before thy body fall from thee, thou art able to apprehend it, then thou availest for embodiment in the worlds that are His creations.

यथादर्शे तथात्मनि यथा स्वप्ने तथा पितृलोके ।
यथाप्सु परीव ददृशे तथा गन्धर्वलोके छायातपयोरिव ब्रह्मलोके ॥ ५ ॥

5. In the self one seeth God as in a mirror but as in a dream in the world of the fathers, and as in water one seeth the surface of an object, so one seeth Him in the world of the Gandharvas; but He is seen as light and shade in the heaven of the Spirit.

इन्द्रियाणां पृथग्भावमुदयास्तमयौ च यत् ।
पृथगुत्पद्यमानानां मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥ ६ ॥

6. The calm soul having comprehended the separateness of the senses and the rising of them and their setting and their separate emergence putteth from him pain and sorrow.

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनो मनसः सत्त्वमुत्तमम् ।
सत्त्वादधि महानात्मा महतोऽव्यक्तमुत्तमम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. The mind is higher than the senses, and above the mind is the thought, and above the thought is the mighty Spirit, and above the Mighty One is the Unmanifest.

अव्यक्तात्तु परः पुरुषो व्यापकोऽलिङ्ग एव च।
यं ज्ञात्वा मुच्यते जन्तुरमृतत्वं च गच्छति ॥ ८ ॥

8. But highest above the Unmanifest is the Purusha who pervadeth all and alone hath no sign nor feature. Mortal man knowing Him is released into immortality.

न संदृशे तिष्ठति रूपमस्य न चक्षुषा पश्यति कश्चनैनम्।
हृदा मनीषा मनसाभिक्लृप्तो य एतद् विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥ ९ ॥

9. He hath not set His body within the ken of seeing, neither doth any man with the eye behold Him, but to the heart and mind and the supermind He is manifest. Who know Him are the immortals.

यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह।
बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टति तामाहुः परमां गतिम् ॥ १० ॥

10. When the five senses cease and are at rest and the mind resteth with them and the Thought ceaseth from its workings, that is the highest state, say thinkers.

तां योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम्।
अप्रमत्तस्तदा भवति योगो हि प्रभवाप्ययौ ॥ ११ ॥

11. The state unperturbed when the senses are imprisoned in the mind, of this they say "it is Yoga". Then man becomes very vigilant, for Yoga is the birth of things and their ending.[12]

नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न चक्षुषा।
अस्तीति ब्रुवतोऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥ १२ ॥

12. Not with the mind hath man the power to see God, no, nor by speech nor with the eye. Unless one saith "He is," how can one become sensible of Him?

---

[12] Shankara interprets, "As Yoga hath a beginning (birth) so hath it an ending." But this is not what the Sruti says.

अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धव्यस्तत्त्वभावेन चोभयोः ।
अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धस्य तत्त्वभावः प्रसीदति ॥ १३ ॥

13. One must apprehend Him in the concept "He is" and also in His essential principle, but when he hath grasped Him as the Is, then the essential of Him dawneth upon a man.

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः ।
अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥ १४ ॥

14. When every desire that harboureth in the heart of a man hath been loosened from its moorings, then this mortal putteth on immortality; even here he enjoyeth Brahman in this human body.

यदा सर्वे प्रभिद्यन्ते हृदयस्येह ग्रन्थयः ।
अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्येतावद्ध्यनुशासनम् ॥ १५ ॥

15. When all the strings of the heart are rent asunder, even here in this human birth, then the mortal becometh immortal. This is the whole teaching of the Scriptures.

शतं चैका च हृदयस्य नाड्यस्तासां मूर्धानमभिनिःसृतैका ।
तयोर्ध्वमायन्नमृतत्वमेति विश्वङ्ङन्या उत्क्रमणे भवन्ति ॥ १६ ॥

16. A hundred and one are the nerves of the heart and of all these only one issueth out through the head of a man; by this the soul mounteth up to its immortal home but the rest lead him to all sorts and conditions of births in his passing.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषोऽन्तरात्मा सदा जनानां हृदये संनिविष्टः ।
तं स्वाच्छरीरात् प्रवृहेन्मुञ्जादिवेषीकां धैर्येण ।
तं विद्याच्छुक्रममृतं तं विद्याच्छुक्रममृतमिति ॥ १७ ॥

17. The Purusha, the Spirit within, who is no larger than the finger of a man is seated for ever in the heart of creatures; one must separate Him with patience from one's own body as one separates from a blade of grass its main fibre. Thou

shalt know Him for the Bright Immortal, yea, for the Bright Immortal.

मृत्युप्रोक्तां नचिकेतोऽथ लब्ध्वा विद्यामेतां योगविधिं च कृत्स्नम्।
ब्रह्मप्राप्तो विरजोऽभूद् विमृत्युरन्योऽप्येवं यो विदध्यात्ममेव॥ १८॥

18. Thus did Nachiketas with Death for his teacher win the God-knowledge; he learned likewise the whole ordinance of the Yoga: thereafter he obtained Brahman and became void of stain and void of death. So shall another be who cometh likewise to the science of the Spirit.

Mundaka Upanishad

Mundaka Upanishad

CHAPTER ONE: SECTION I

ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथमः संबभूव विश्वस्य कर्ता भुवनस्य गोप्ता।
स ब्रह्मविद्यां सर्वविद्याप्रतिष्ठामथर्वाय ज्येष्ठपुत्राय प्राह ॥ १॥

1. Brahma first of the Gods was born, the creator of all, the world's protector; he to Atharvan, his eldest son, declared the God-knowledge in which all sciences have their foundation.

अथर्वणे यां प्रवदेत ब्रह्माथर्वा तां पुरोवाचाङ्गिरे ब्रह्मविद्याम्।
स भारद्वाजाय सत्यवहाय प्राह भारद्वाजोऽङ्गिरसे परावराम् ॥ २॥

2. The God-knowledge by Brahma declared to Atharvan, Atharvan of old declared to Angir; he to Satyavaha the Bharadwaja told it, the Bharadwaja to Angiras, both the higher and the lower knowledge.

शौनको ह वै महाशालोऽङ्गिरसं विधिवदुपसन्नः पप्रच्छ। कस्मिन्नु
भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवतीति ॥ ३॥

3. Shaunaka, the great house-lord, came to Angiras in the due way of the disciple and asked of him, "Lord, by knowing what does all this that is become known?"

तस्मै स होवाच। द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म यद् ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति
परा चैवापरा च ॥ ४॥

4. To him thus spoke Angiras: Twofold is the knowledge that must be known of which the knowers of the Brahman tell, the higher and the lower knowledge.

तत्रापरा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः शिक्षा कल्पो व्याकरणं
निरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषमिति। अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते ॥ ५॥

5. Of which the lower, the Rig Veda and the Yajur Veda and the Sama Veda and the Atharva Veda, chanting, ritual, grammar, etymological interpretation, and prosody and astronomy. And then the higher by which is known the Immutable.

यत् तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णमचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम्। नित्यं विभुं
सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तदव्ययं यद् भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति धीराः॥ ६॥

6. That the invisible, that the unseizable, without connections, without hue, without eye or ear, that which is without hands or feet, eternal, pervading, which is in all things and impalpable, that which is Imperishable, that which is the womb of creatures sages behold everywhere.

यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः संभवन्ति।
यथा सतः पुरुषात्केशलोमानि तथाक्षरात्संभवतीह विश्वम्॥ ७॥

7. As the spider puts out and gathers in, as herbs spring up upon the earth, as hair of head and body grow from a living man, so here all is born from the Immutable.

तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभिजायते।
अन्नात्प्राणो मनः सत्यं लोकाः कर्मसु चामृतम्॥ ८॥

8. Brahman grows by his energy at work, and then from Him is Matter born, and out of Matter life, and mind and truth and the worlds, and in works immortality.

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद् यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः।
तस्मादेतद् ब्रह्म नाम रूपमन्नं च जायते॥ ९॥

9. He who is the Omniscient, the all-wise, He whose energy is all made of knowledge, from Him is born this that is Brahman here, this Name and Form and Matter.

CHAPTER ONE: SECTION II

तदेतत्सत्यं मन्त्रेषु कर्माणि कवयो यान्यपश्यंस्तानि त्रेतायां बहुधा संततानि ।
तान्याचरथ नियतं सत्यकामा एष वः पन्थाः सुकृतस्य लोके ॥ १ ॥

1. This is That, the Truth of things: works which the sages beheld in the Mantras[1] were in the Treta[2] manifoldly extended. Works do ye perform religiously with one passion for the Truth; this is your road to the heaven of good deeds.

यदा लेलायते ह्यर्चिः समिद्धे हव्यवाहने ।
तदाज्यभागावन्तरेणाहुतीः प्रतिपादयेच्छ्रद्धया हुतम् ॥ २ ॥

2. When the fire of the sacrifice is kindled and the flame sways and quivers, then between the double pourings of butter cast therein with faith thy offerings.

यस्याग्निहोत्रमदर्शमपौर्णमासमचातुर्मास्यमनाग्रयणमतिथिवर्जितं च ।
अहुतमवैश्वदेवमविधिना हुतमासप्तमांस्तस्य लोकान् हिनस्ति ॥ ३ ॥

3. For he whose altar-fires are empty of the new-moon offering and the full-moon offering and the offering of the rains and the offering of the first fruits, or unfed, or fed without right ritual, or without guests or without the dues to the Vishwa-Devas, destroys his hope of all the seven worlds.

काली कराली च मनोजवा च सुलोहिता या च सुधूम्रवर्णा ।
स्फुलिङ्गिनी विश्वरुची च देवी लेलायमाना इति सप्त जिह्वाः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Kali, the black, Karali, the terrible, Manojava, thought-swift, Sulohita, blood-red, Sudhumravarna, smoke-hued, Sphulingini, scattering sparks, Vishwaruchi, the all-beautiful, these are the seven swaying tongues of the fire.

---

[1] The inspired verses of the Veda.

[2] The second of the four ages.

एतेषु यश्चरते भ्राजमानेषु यथाकालं चाहुतयो ह्याददायन्।
तं नयन्त्येताः सूर्यस्य रश्मयो यत्र देवानां पतिरेकोऽधिवासः ॥ ५ ॥

5. He who in these when they are blazing bright performs the rites, in their due season, him his fires of sacrifice take and they lead him, these rays of the Sun, there where the Overlord of the gods is the Inhabitant on high.

एह्येहीति तमाहुतयः सुवर्चसः सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिर्यजमानं वहन्ति।
प्रियां वाचमभिवदन्त्योऽर्चयन्त्य एष वः पुण्यः सुकृतो ब्रह्मलोकः ॥ ६ ॥

6. "Come with us", "Come with us", they cry to him, these luminous fires of sacrifice, and they bear him by the rays of the Sun speaking to him pleasant words of sweetness, doing him homage, "This is your holy world of Brahman and the heaven of your righteousness."

प्लवा ह्येते अदृढा यज्ञरूपा अष्टादशोक्तमवरं येषु कर्म।
एतच्छ्रेयो येऽभिनन्दन्ति मूढा जरामृत्युं ते पुनरेवापि यन्ति ॥ ७ ॥

7. But frail are the ships of sacrifice, frail these forms of sacrifice, all the eighteen of them, in which are declared the lower works; fools are they who hail them as the highest good and they come yet again to this world of age and death.

अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितंमन्यमानाः।
जङ्घन्यमानाः परियन्ति मूढा अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः ॥ ८ ॥

8. They who dwell shut within the Ignorance and they hold themselves for learned men thinking "We, even we are the wise and the sages" — fools are they and they wander around beaten and stumbling like blind men led by the blind.

अविद्यायां बहुधा वर्तमाना वयं कृतार्था इत्यभिमन्यन्ति बालाः।
यत्कर्मिणो न प्रवेदयन्ति रागात् तेनातुराः क्षीणलोकाश्च्यवन्ते ॥ ९ ॥

9. They dwell in many bonds of the Ignorance, children thinking, "We have achieved our aim of Paradise"; for when the

men of works are held by their affections, and arrive not at the Knowledge, then they are overtaken by anguish, then their Paradise wastes by enjoying and they fall from their heavens.

इष्टापूर्तं मन्यमाना वरिष्ठं नान्यच्छ्रेयो वेदयन्ते प्रमूढाः ।
नाकस्य पृष्ठे ते सुकृतेऽनुभूत्वेमं लोकं हीनतरं वा विशन्ति ॥ १० ॥

10. Minds bewildered who hold the oblation offered and the well dug for the greatest righteousness and know not any other highest good, on the back of heaven they enjoy the world won by their righteousness and enter again this or even a lower world.

तपःश्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्ष्यचर्यां चरन्तः ।
सूर्यद्वारेण ते विरजाः प्रयान्ति यत्रामृतः स पुरुषो ह्यव्ययात्मा ॥ ११ ॥

11. But they who in the forest follow after faith and self-discipline, calm and full of knowledge, living upon alms, cast from them the dust of their passions, and through the gate of the Sun they pass on there where is the Immortal, the Spirit, the Self undecaying and imperishable.

परीक्ष्य लोकान्कर्मचितान् ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन ।
तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ॥ १२ ॥

12. The seeker of the Brahman, having put to the test the worlds piled up by works, arrives at world-distaste, for not by work done is reached He who is Uncreated.[3] For the knowledge of That, let him approach, fuel in hand, a Guru, one who is learned in the Veda and is devoted to contemplation of the Brahman.

तस्मै स विद्वानुपसन्नाय सम्यक् प्रशान्तचित्ताय शमान्विताय ।
येनाक्षरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम् ॥ १३ ॥

---

[3] Or, "He, the uncreated, lives not by that which is made." Literally, "not by the made (or, by that which is done) the Unmade (He who is uncreated)".

13. To him because he has taken entire refuge with him, with a heart tranquillised and a spirit at peace, that man of knowledge declares in its principles the science of the Brahman by which one comes to know the Immutable Spirit, the True and Real.

CHAPTER TWO: SECTION I

तदेतत्सत्यं यथा सुदीप्तात्पावकाद् विस्फुलिङ्गाः सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते
सरूपाः ।
तथाक्षराद् विविधाः सोम्य भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापि यन्ति ॥ १ ॥

1. This is That, the Truth of things: as from one high-kindled fire thousands of different sparks are born and all have the same form of fire, so, O fair son, from the immutable manifold becomings are born and even into that they depart.

दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः स बाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः ।
अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः ॥ २ ॥

2. He, the divine, the formless Spirit, even he is the outward and the inward and he the Unborn; he is beyond life, beyond mind, luminous, Supreme beyond the immutable.

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।
खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥ ३ ॥

3. Life and mind and the senses are born from Him and the sky, and the wind, and light, and the waters and earth upholding all that is.

अग्निर्मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्रसूर्यौ दिशः श्रोत्रे वाग् विवृताश्च वेदाः ।
वायुः प्राणो हृदयं विश्वमस्य पद्भ्यां पृथिवी ह्येष
सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ॥ ४ ॥

4. Fire is the head of Him and his eyes are the Sun and Moon, the quarters his organs of hearing and the revealed Vedas are his voice, air is his breath, the universe is his heart, Earth lies at his feet. He is the inner Self in all beings.

तस्मादग्निः समिधो यस्य सूर्यः सोमात्पर्जन्य ओषधयः पृथिव्याम् ।
पुमान् रेतः सिञ्चति योषितायां बह्वीः प्रजाः पुरुषात्संप्रसूताः ॥ ५ ॥

5. From Him is fire, of which the Sun is the fuel, then rain

from the Soma, herbs upon the earth, and the male casts his seed into woman: thus are these many peoples born from the Spirit.

तस्मादृचः साम यजूंषि दीक्षा यज्ञाश्च सर्वे क्रतवो दक्षिणाश्च।
संवत्सरश्च यजमानश्च लोकाः सोमो यत्र पवते यत्र सूर्यः॥ ६॥

6. From Him are the hymns of the Rig Veda, the Sama and the Yajur, initiation, and all sacrifices and works of sacrifice, and dues given, the year and the giver of the sacrifice and the worlds, on which the moon shines and the sun.

तस्माच्च देवा बहुधा संप्रसूताः साध्या मनुष्याः पशवो वयांसि।
प्राणापानौ व्रीहियवौ तपश्च श्रद्धा सत्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं विधिश्च॥ ७॥

7. And from Him have issued many gods, and demi-gods and men and beasts and birds, the main breath and downward breath, and rice and barley, and askesis and faith and Truth, and chastity and rule of right practice.

सप्त प्राणाः प्रभवन्ति तस्मात्सप्तार्चिषः समिधः सप्त होमाः।
सप्त इमे लोका येषु चरन्ति प्राणा गुहाशया निहिताः सप्त सप्त॥ ८॥

8. The seven breaths are born from Him and the seven lights and kinds of fuel and the seven oblations and these seven worlds in which move the life-breaths set within with the secret heart for their dwelling-place, seven and seven.

अतः समुद्रा गिरयश्च सर्वेऽस्मात्स्यन्दन्ते सिन्धवः सर्वरूपाः।
अतश्च सर्वा ओषधयो रसश्च येनैष भूतैस्तिष्ठते ह्यन्तरात्मा॥ ९॥

9. From Him are the oceans and all these mountains and from Him flow rivers of all forms, and from Him are all plants, and sensible delight which makes the soul to abide with the material elements.

पुरुष एवेदं विश्वं कर्म तपो ब्रह्म परामृतम्।
एतद्यो वेद निहितं गुहायां सोऽविद्याग्रन्थिं विकिरतीह सोम्य॥ १०॥

10. The Spirit is all this universe; He is works and askesis and the Brahman, supreme and immortal. O fair son, he who knows this hidden in the secret heart, scatters even here in this world the knot of the Ignorance.

CHAPTER TWO: SECTION II

आविः संनिहितं गुहाचरं नाम महत्पदमत्रैतत् समर्पितम्।
एजत्प्राणन्निमिषच्च यदेतज्जानथ सदसद्वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानाद् यद्वरिष्ठं
प्रजानाम् ॥ १ ॥

1. Manifested, it is here set close within, moving in the secret heart, this is the mighty foundation and into it is consigned all that moves and breathes and sees. This that is that great foundation here, know, as the Is and Is-not, the supremely desirable, greatest and the Most High, beyond the knowledge of creatures.

यदर्चिमद् यदणुभ्योऽणु च यस्मिँल्लोका निहिता लोकिनश्च।
तदेतदक्षरं ब्रह्म स प्राणस्तदु वाङ्मनः। तदेतत्सत्यं तदमृतं तद्वेद्धव्यं
सोम्य विद्धि ॥ २ ॥

2. That which is the Luminous, that which is smaller than the atoms, that in which are set the worlds and their peoples, That is This, — it is Brahman immutable: life is That, it is speech and mind. That is This, the True and Real, it is That which is immortal: it is into That that thou must pierce, O fair son, into That penetrate.

धनुर्गृहीत्वौपनिषदं महास्त्रं शरं ह्युपासानिशितं संधयीत।
आयम्य तद्भावगतेन चेतसा लक्ष्यं तदेवाक्षरं सोम्य विद्धि ॥ ३ ॥

3. Take up the bow of the Upanishad, that mighty weapon, set to it an arrow sharpened by adoration, draw the bow with a heart wholly devoted to the contemplation of That, and O fair son, penetrate into That as thy target, even into the Immutable.

प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते ।
अप्रमत्तेन वेद्धव्यं शरवत् तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ ४ ॥

4. OM is the bow and the soul is the arrow, and That, even the Brahman, is spoken of as the target. That must be pierced with an unfaltering aim; one must be absorbed into That as an arrow is lost in its target.

यस्मिन्द्यौः पृथिवी चान्तरिक्षमोतं मनः सह प्राणैश्च सर्वैः ।
तमेवैकं जानथ आत्मानमन्या वाचो विमुञ्चथामृतस्यैष सेतुः ॥ ५ ॥

5. He in whom are inwoven heaven and earth and the mid-region, and mind with all the life-currents, Him know to be the one Self; other words put away from you: this is the bridge to immortality.

अरा इव रथनाभौ संहता यत्र नाड्यः स एषोऽन्तश्चरते बहुधा जायमानः ।
ओमित्येवं ध्यायथ आत्मानं स्वस्ति वः पाराय तमसः परस्तात् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Where the nerves are brought close together like the spokes in the nave of a chariot-wheel, this is He that moves within, — there is He manifoldly born. Meditate on the Self as OM and happy be your passage to the other shore beyond the darkness.

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद् यस्यैष महिमा भुवि ।
दिव्ये ब्रह्मपुरे ह्येष व्योम्न्यात्मा प्रतिष्ठितः ॥ ७ ॥

7. The Omniscient, the All-wise, whose is this might and majesty upon the earth, is this self enthroned in the divine city of the Brahman, in his ethereal heaven.

मनोमयः प्राणशरीरनेता प्रतिष्ठितोऽन्ने हृदयं संनिधाय ।
तद्विज्ञानेन परिपश्यन्ति धीरा आनन्दरूपममृतं यद्विभाति ॥ ८ ॥

8. A mental being, leader of the life and the body, has set a heart in matter, in matter he has taken his firm foundation.

By its knowing the wise see everywhere around them That which shines in its effulgence, a shape of Bliss and immortal.

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥ ९ ॥

9. The knot of the heart-strings is rent, cut away are all doubts, and a man's works are spent and perish, when is seen That which is at once the being below and the Supreme.

हिरणमये परे कोशे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम् ।
तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिस्तद्यदात्मविदो विदुः ॥ १० ॥

10. In a supreme golden sheath the Brahman lies, stainless, without parts. A Splendour is That, It is the Light of Lights, It is That which the self-knowers know.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥ ११ ॥

11. There the sun shines not and the moon has no splendour and the stars are blind; there these lightnings flash not, how then shall burn this earthly fire? All that shines is but the shadow of his shining; all this universe is effulgent with his light.

ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्ताद् ब्रह्म पश्चाद् ब्रह्म दक्षिणतश्चोत्तरेण ।
अधश्चोर्ध्वं च प्रसृतं ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम् ॥ १२ ॥

12. All this is Brahman immortal, naught else; Brahman is in front of us, Brahman behind us, and to the south of us and to the north of us[4] and below us and above us; it stretches everywhere. All this is Brahman alone, all this magnificent universe.

---

[4] Or, "to the right and the left of us".

CHAPTER THREE: SECTION I

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥ १ ॥

1. Two birds, beautiful of wing, close companions, cling to one common tree: of the two one eats the sweet fruit of the tree, the other eats not but watches his fellow.

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः ।
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः ॥ २ ॥

2. The soul is the bird that sits immersed on the one common tree; but because he is not lord he is bewildered and has sorrow. But when he sees that other who is the Lord and beloved, he knows that all is His greatness and his sorrow passes away from him.

यदा पश्यः पश्यते रुक्मवर्णं कर्तारमीशं पुरुषं ब्रह्मयोनिम् ।
तदा विद्वान्पुण्यपापे विधूय निरञ्जनः परमं साम्यमुपैति ॥ ३ ॥

3. When, a seer, he sees the Golden-hued, the maker, the Lord, the Spirit who is the source of Brahman,[5] then he becomes the knower and shakes from his wings sin and virtue; pure of all stain he reaches the supreme identity.[6]

प्राणो ह्येष यः सर्वभूतैर्विभाति विजानन् विद्वान्भवते नातिवादी ।
आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिः क्रियावानेष ब्रह्मविदां वरिष्ठः ॥ ४ ॥

4. This is the life in things that shines manifested by all these beings; a man of knowledge coming wholly to know this, draws back from creeds and too much disputings. In the Self his delight, at play in the Self, doing works, — the best is he among the knowers of the Eternal.

---

[5] Or, "whose source is Brahman"; Shankara admits the other meaning as an alternative, but explains it as "the source of the lower Brahman".

[6] Or, "pure of all staining tinge he reaches to a supreme equality."

सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम्।
अन्तःशरीरे ज्योतिर्मयो हि शुभ्रो यं पश्यन्ति यतयः क्षीणदोषाः ॥ ५ ॥

5. The Self can always be won by truth, by self-discipline, by integral knowledge, by a life of purity, — this Self that is in the inner body, radiant, made all of light whom by the perishing of their blemishes the doers of askesis behold.

सत्यमेव जयते नानृतं सत्येन पन्था विततो देवयानः।
येनाक्रमन्त्यृषयो ह्याप्तकामा यत्र तत्सत्यस्य परमं निधानम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. It is Truth that conquers and not falsehood; by Truth was stretched out the path of the journey of the gods, by which the sages winning their desire ascend there where Truth has its supreme abode.

बृहच्च तद्दिव्यमचिन्त्यरूपं सूक्ष्माच्च तत्सूक्ष्मतरं विभाति।
दूरात्सुदूरे तदिहान्तिके च पश्यत्स्विहैव निहितं गुहायाम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Vast is That, divine, its form unthinkable; it shines out subtler than the subtle:[7] very far and farther than farness, it is here close to us, for those who have vision it is even here in this world; it is here, hidden in the secret heart.

न चक्षुषा गृह्यते नापि वाचा नान्यैर्देवैस्तपसा कर्मणा वा।
ज्ञानप्रसादेन विशुद्धसत्त्वस्ततस्तु तं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः ॥ ८ ॥

8. Eye cannot seize, speech cannot grasp Him, nor these other godheads; not by austerity can he be held nor by works: only when the inner being is purified by a glad serenity of knowledge, then indeed, meditating, one beholds the Spirit indivisible.

एषोऽणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यो यस्मिन्प्राणः पञ्चधा संविवेश।
प्राणैश्चित्तं सर्वमोतं प्रजानां यस्मिन्विशुद्धे विभवत्येष आत्मा ॥ ९ ॥

9. This Self is subtle and has to be known by a thought-mind

---

[7] Or, "minuter than the minute".

into which the life-force has made its fivefold entry: all the conscious heart of creatures is shot through and inwoven with the currents of the life-force and only when it is purified can this Self manifest its power.[8]

यं यं लोकं मनसा संविभाति विशुद्धसत्त्वः कामयते यांश्च कामान्।
तं तं लोकं जयते तांश्च कामांस्तस्मादात्मज्ञं ह्यर्चयेद् भूतिकामः ॥ १० ॥

10. Whatever world the man whose inner being is purified sheds the light of his mind upon, and whatsoever desires he cherishes, that world he takes by conquest, and those desires. Then, let whosoever seeks for success and well-being approach with homage a self-knower.

CHAPTER THREE: SECTION II

स वेदैतत्परमं ब्रह्म धाम यत्र विश्वं निहितं भाति शुभ्रम्।
उपासते पुरुषं ये ह्यकामास्ते शुक्रमेतदतिवर्तन्ति धीराः ॥ १ ॥

1. He knows this supreme Brahman as the highest abiding place in which shines out, inset, the radiant world. The wise who are without desire and worship the Spirit pass beyond this sperm.[9]

कामान् यः कामयते मन्यमानः स कामभिर्जायते तत्र तत्र।
पर्याप्तकामस्य कृतात्मनस्तु इहैव सर्वे प्रविलीयन्ति कामाः ॥ २ ॥

2. He who cherishes desires and his mind dwells with his longings, is by his desires born again wherever they lead him, but the man who has won all his desire[10] and has found his soul, for him even here in this world vanish away all desires.

---

[8] The verb *vibhavati* seems here to have a complex sense and to mean, "to manifest its full power and pervading presence".

[9] Shankara takes it so in the sense of semen virile, which is the cause of birth into the cosmos. But it is possible that it means rather "pass beyond this brilliant universe", the radiant world which has just been spoken of, to the greater Light which is its abiding place and source, the supreme Brahman.

[10] Or, "finished with desires".

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन।
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनुं स्वाम्॥ ३॥

3. This Self is not won by exegesis, nor by brain-power, nor by much learning of Scripture. Only by him whom It chooses can It be won; to him this Self unveils its own body.

नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यो न च प्रमादात्तपसो वाप्यलिङ्गात्।
एतैरुपायैर्यतते यस्तु विद्वांस्तस्यैष आत्मा विशते ब्रह्मधाम॥ ४॥

4. This Self cannot be won by any who is without strength, nor with error in the seeking, nor by an askesis without the true mark: but when a man of knowledge strives by these means his self enters into Brahman, his abiding place.

संप्राप्यैनमृषयो ज्ञानतृप्ताः कृतात्मानो वीतरागाः प्रशान्ताः।
ते सर्वगं सर्वतः प्राप्य धीरा युक्तात्मानः सर्वमेवाविशन्ति॥ ५॥

5. Attaining to him, seers glad with fullness of knowledge, perfected in the Self, all passions cast from them, tranquillised, — these, the wise, come to the all-pervading from every side, and, uniting themselves with him, enter utterly the All.

वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः संन्यासयोगाद् यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः।
ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे॥ ६॥

6. Doers of askesis who have made sure of the aim[11] of the whole-knowledge of Vedanta, the inner being purified by the Yoga of renunciation, all in the hour of their last end passing beyond death are released into the worlds of the Brahman.

गताः कलाः पञ्चदश प्रतिष्ठा देवाश्च सर्वे प्रतिदेवतासु।
कर्माणि विज्ञानमयश्च आत्मा परेऽव्यये सर्व एकीभवन्ति॥ ७॥

---

[11] Or, "meaning".

7. The fifteen parts return into their foundations, and all the gods pass into their proper godheads, works and the Self of Knowledge, — all become one in the Supreme and Imperishable.

यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रेऽस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाय ।
तथा विद्वान् नामरूपाद्विमुक्तः परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. As rivers in their flowing reach their home[12] in the ocean and cast off their names and forms, even so one who knows is delivered from name and form and reaches the Supreme beyond the Most High, even the Divine Person.

स यो ह वै तत्परमं ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति नास्याब्रह्मवित् कुले भवति ।
तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं गुहाग्रन्थिभ्यो विमुक्तोऽमृतो भवति ॥ ९ ॥

9. He, verily, who knows that Supreme Brahman becomes himself Brahman; in his lineage none is born who knows not the Brahman. He crosses beyond sorrow, he crosses beyond sin, he is delivered from the knotted cord of the secret heart and becomes immortal.

तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम् —
क्रियावन्तः श्रोत्रिया ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः स्वयं जुह्वत एकर्षिं श्रद्धयन्तः ।
तेषामेवैतां ब्रह्मविद्यां वदेत शिरोव्रतं विधिवद् यैस्तु चीर्णम् ॥ १० ॥

10. This is That declared by the Rig Veda. Doers of works, versed in the Veda, men absorbed in the Brahman, who putting their faith in the sole-seer offer themselves to him sacrifice, — to them one should speak this Brahman-knowledge, men by whom the Vow of the Head has been done according to the rite.

तदेतत्सत्यमृषिरङ्गिराः पुरोवाच नैतदचीर्णव्रतोऽधीते ।
नमः परमऋषिभ्यो नमः परमऋषिभ्यः ॥ ११ ॥

---

[12] Or, "come to their end".

11. This is That, the Truth of things, which the seer Angiras spoke of old. This none learns who has not performed the Vow of the Head. Salutation to the seers supreme! Salutation to the seers supreme!

Readings in the Taittiriya Upanishad

The Knowledge of Brahman

The knower of Brahman reacheth that which is supreme.
This is that verse which was spoken; “Truth, Knowledge, Infinity the Brahman,
He who knoweth that hidden in the secrecy in the supreme ether,
Enjoyeth all desires along with the wise-thinking Brahman.”

This is the burden of the opening sentences of the Taittiriya Upanishad’s second section; they begin its elucidation of the highest truth. Or in the Sanskrit,

brahmavid āpnoti param —
tad eṣābhyuktā — satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ brahma —
yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyām — parame vyoman —
so ’śnute sarvān kāmān saha — brahmaṇā vipaściteti.

But what is Brahman?

Whatever reality is in existence, by which all the rest subsists, that is Brahman. An Eternal behind all instabilities, a Truth of things which is implied, if it is hidden in all appearances, a Constant which supports all mutations, but is not increased, diminished, abrogated, — there is such an unknown *x* which makes existence a problem, our own self a mystery, the universe a riddle. If we were only what we seem to be to our normal self-awareness, there would be no mystery; if the world were only what it can be made out to be by the perceptions of the senses and their strict analysis in the reason, there would be no riddle; and if to take our life as it is now and the world as it has so far developed to our experience were the whole possibility of our knowing and doing, there would be no problem. Or at best there would be but a shallow mystery, an easily solved riddle, the problem only of a child's puzzle. But there is more, and that more is the hidden head of the Infinite and the secret heart of the Eternal. It is the highest and this highest is the all; there is none beyond and there is none other than it. To know it is to know the highest and by knowing the highest to know all. For as it is the beginning and source of all things, so everything else is its consequence; as it is the support and constituent of all things, so the secret of everything else is explained by its secret; as it is the sum and end of all things, so everything else amounts to it and by throwing itself into it achieves the sense of its own existence.

This is the Brahman.

⁂

If this unknown be solely an indecipherable, only indefinable *x*, always unknown and unknowable, the hidden never revealed, the secret never opened to us, then our mystery would for ever remain a mystery, our riddle insoluble, our problem intangible. Its existence, even while it determines all we are, know and do, could yet make no practical difference to us; for our relation to it would then be a blind and helpless dependence, a relation binding us to ignorance and maintainable only by that ignorance. Or again, if it be in some way knowable, but the sole result of knowledge were an extinction or cessation of our being, then within our being it could have no consequences; the very act and fructuation of knowledge would bring the annihilation of all that we now are, not its completion or fulfilment. The mystery, riddle, problem would not be so much solved as abolished, for it would lose all its data. In effect we should have to suppose that there is an eternal and irreconcilable opposition between Brahman and what we now are, between the supreme cause and all its effects or between the supreme source and all its derivations. And it would then seem that all that the Eternal originates, all he supports, all he takes back to himself is a denial or contradiction of his being which, though in itself a negative of that which alone is, has yet in some way become a positive. The two could not coexist in consciousness; if he allowed the world to know him, it would disappear from being.

But the Eternal is knowable, He defines himself so that we may seize him, and man can become, even while he exists as man and in this world and in this body, a knower of the Brahman.

The knowledge of the Brahman is not a thing luminous but otiose, informing to the intellectual view of things but without consequence to the soul of the individual or his living; it is a knowledge that is a power and a divine compulsion to change; by it his existence gains something that now he does not possess in consciousness. What is this gain? it is this that he is conscious now in a lower state only of his being, but by knowledge he gains his highest being.

The highest state of our being is not a denial, contradiction and annihilation of all that we now are; it is a supreme accomplishment of all things that our present existence means and aims at, but in their highest sense and in the eternal values.

⁂

To live in our present state of self-consciousness is to live and to act in ignorance. We are ignorant of ourselves, because we know as yet only that in us which changes always, from moment to moment, from hour to hour, from period to period, from life to life, and not that in us which is eternal. We are ignorant of the world because we do not know God; we are aware of the law of appearances, but not of the law and truth of being.

Our highest wisdom, our minutest most accurate science, our most effective application of knowledge can be at most a thinning of the veil of ignorance, but not a going beyond it, so long as we do not get at the fundamental knowledge and the consciousness to which that is native. The rest are effective for their own temporal purposes, but prove ineffective in the end, because they do not bring to the highest good; they lead to no permanent solution of the problem of existence.

The ignorance in which we live is not a baseless and wholesale falsehood, but at its lowest the misrepresentation of a Truth, at its highest an imperfect representation and translation into inferior and to that extent misleading values. It is a knowledge of the superficial only and therefore a missing of the secret essential which is the key to all that the superficial is striving for; a knowledge of the finite and apparent, but a missing of all that the apparent symbolises and the finite suggests; a knowledge of inferior forms, but a missing of all that our inferior life and being has above it and to which it must aspire if it is to fulfil its greatest possibilities. The true knowledge is that of the highest, the inmost, the infinite. The knower of the Brahman sees all these lower things in the light of the Highest, the external and superficial as a translation of the internal and essential, the finite from the view of the Infinite. He begins to see and know existence no longer as the thinking animal, but as the Eternal sees and knows it. Therefore he is glad and rich in being, luminous in joy, satisfied of existence.

⁂

Knowledge does not end with knowing, nor is it pursued and found for the sake of knowing alone. It has its full value only when it leads to some greater gain than itself, some gain of being. Simply to know the eternal and to remain in the pain, struggle and inferiority of our present way of being, would be a poor and lame advantage.

A greater knowledge opens the possibility and, if really possessed, brings the actuality of a greater being. To be is the first verb which contains all the others; knowledge, action, creation, enjoyment are only a fulfilment of being. Since we are incomplete in being, to grow is our aim, and that knowledge, action, creation, enjoyment are the best which most help us to expand, grow, feel our existence.

Mere existence is not fullness of being. Being knows itself as power, consciousness, delight; a greater being means a greater power, consciousness and delight.

If by greater being we incurred only a greater pain and suffering, this good would not be worth having. Those who say that it is, mean simply that we get by it a greater sense of fulfilment which brings of itself a greater joy of the power of existence, and an extension of suffering or a loss of other enjoyment is worth having as a price for this greater sense of wideness, height and power. But this could not be the perfection of being or the highest height of its fulfilment; suffering is the seal of a lower status. The highest consciousness is integrally fulfilled in wideness and power of its existence, but also it is integrally fulfilled in delight.

The knower of Brahman has not only the joy of light, but gains something immense as the result of his knowledge, *brahmavid āpnoti.*

What he gains is that highest, that which is supreme; he gains the highest being, the highest consciousness, the highest wideness and power of being, the highest delight; *brahmavid āpnoti param.*

* * *

The Supreme is not something aloof and shut up in itself. It is not a mere indefinable, prisoner of its own featureless absoluteness, impotent to define, create, know itself variously, eternally buried in a sleep or a swoon of self-absorption. The Highest is the Infinite and the Infinite contains the All. Whoever attains the highest consciousness, becomes infinite in being and embraces the All.

To make this clear the Upanishad has defined the Brahman as the Truth, Knowledge, Infinity and has defined the result of the knowledge of Him in the secrecy, in the cave of being, in the supreme ether as the enjoyment of all its desires by the soul of the individual in the attainment of its highest self-existence.

Our highest state of being is indeed a becoming one with Brahman in his eternity and infinity, but it is also an association with him in delight of self-fulfilment, *aśnute saha brahmaṇā*. And that principle of the Eternal by which this association is possible, is the principle of his knowledge, his self-discernment and all-discernment, the wisdom by which he knows himself perfectly in all the world and all beings, *brahmaṇā vipaścitā*.

Delight of being is the continent of all the fulfilled values of existence which we now seek after in the forms of desire. To know its conditions and possess it purely and perfectly is the infinite privilege of the eternal Wisdom.

Truth, Knowledge, Infinity

Truth, Knowledge, Infinity, not as three separate things, but in their inseparable unity, are the supernal conscious being of the Eternal. It is an infinite being, an infinite truth of being, an infinite self-knowledge of self-being. Take one of these away and the idea of the Eternal fails us; we land ourselves in half-lights, in dark or shining paradoxes without issue or in a vain exaggeration and apotheosis of isolated intellectual conceptions.

Infinity is the timeless and spaceless and causeless infinity of the eternal containing all the infinities of space and time and the endless succession which humanly we call causality. But in fact causality is only an inferior aspect and translation into mental and vital terms of something which is not mechanical causality, but the harmonies of a free self-determination of the being of the Eternal.

Truth is truth of the infinite and eternal, truth of being, and truth of becoming only as a self-expression of the being. The circumstances of the self-expression appear to the mind as the finite, but nothing is really finite except the way the mind has of experiencing all that appears to its view. All things are, each thing is the Brahman.

Knowledge is the Eternal's inalienable self-knowledge of his infinite self-existence and of all its truth and reality and, in that truth, of all things as seen not by the mind, but by the self-view of the Spirit. This knowledge is not possible to the mind; it can only be reflected inadequately by it when it is touched by a ray from the secret luminous cavern of our superconscient being; yet of that ray we can make a shining ladder to climb into the source of this supreme self-viewing wisdom.

To know the eternal Truth, Knowledge, Infinity is to know the Brahman.

* * *

Part Two

Translations and Commentaries from Manuscripts

These texts written between c. 1900 and 1914 were found among Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts and typescripts. He did not revise them for publication.

Section One

Introduction

On Translating the Upanishads

OM TAT SAT

This translation of a few of the simpler & more exoteric Upanishads to be followed by other sacred and philosophical writings of the Hindus not included in the Revealed Scriptures, all under the one title of the Book of God, has been effected on one definite and unvarying principle, to present to England and through England to Europe the religious message of India only in those parts of her written thought which the West is fit to hear and to present these in such a form as should be attractive & suggestive to the Occidental intellect. The first branch of this principle necessitated a rigid selection on definite lines, the second dictated the choice of a style & method of rendering which should be literary rather than literal.

The series of translations called the Sacred Books of the East, edited by the late Professor Max Muller, was executed in a scholastic and peculiar spirit. Professor Max Muller, a scholar of wide attainments, great versatility and a refreshingly active, ingenious & irresponsible fancy, has won considerable respect in India by his attachment to Vedic studies, but it must fairly be recognized that he was more of a grammarian and philologist, than a sound Sanscrit scholar. He could construe Sanscrit well enough, but he could not feel the language or realise the spirit behind the letter. Accordingly he committed two serious errors of judgment; he imagined that by sitting in Oxford and evolving new meanings out of his own brilliant fancy he could understand the Upanishads better than Shankaracharya or any other Hindu of parts and learning; and he also imagined that what was important for Europe to know about the Upanishads was what he and other European scholars considered they ought to mean. This, however, is a matter of no importance to anybody but the scholars themselves. What it is really important for Europe to know is in the first place what the Upanishads really do mean, so far as their exoteric teaching extends, and in a less degree what philosophic Hinduism took them to mean. The latter knowledge may be gathered from the commentaries of Shankaracharya and other philosophers which may be studied in the original or in the translations which the Dravidian Presidency, ignorantly called benighted by the materialists, has been issuing with a truly noble learning & high-minded enterprise. The former this book makes some attempt to convey.

But it may be asked, why these particular Upanishads alone, when there are so many others far larger in plan and of a not inferior importance? In answer I may quote a sentence from Professor Max Muller's Preface to the Sacred Books of the East. "I confess" he says "it has been for many years a problem to me, aye, and to a great extent is so still, how the Sacred Books of the East should, by the side of so much that is fresh, natural, simple, beautiful and true, contain so much that is not only unmeaning, artificial and silly, but even hideous and repellent." Now I am myself only a poor coarseminded Oriental and therefore not disposed to deny the gross physical facts of life & nature or able to see why we should scuttle them out of sight and put on a smug, respectable expression which suggests while it affects to hide their existence. This perhaps is the reason why I am somewhat at a loss to imagine what the Professor found in the Upanishads that is hideous and repellent. Still I was brought up almost from my infancy in England and received an English education, so that sometimes I have glimmerings. But as to what he intends by the unmeaning, artificial and silly elements, there can be no doubt. Everything is unmeaning in the Upanishads which the Europeans cannot understand, everything is artificial which does not come within the circle of their mental experience and everything is silly which is not explicable by European science and wisdom. Now this attitude is almost inevitable on the part of an European, for we all judge according to our lights and those who keep their minds really open, who can realise that there may be lights which are not theirs and yet as illuminating or more illuminating than theirs, are in any nation a very small handful. For the most part men are the slaves of their associations.

Let us suppose that the ceremonies & services of the Roman Catholic were not mere ceremonies and formularies, borrowed for the most part from Eastern occultisms without understanding them, — that they had been arranged so as to be perfect symbols of certain deep metaphysical truths and to produce certain effects spiritual and material according to a scientific knowledge of the power of sound over both mind and matter; let us suppose that deep philosophical works had been written in the terminology of these symbols and often in a veiled allusive language; and let us suppose finally that these were translated into Bengali or Hindustani and presented to an educated Pundit who had studied both at Calcutta & at Nuddea or Benares. What would he make of them? It will be as well to take a concrete instance. Jesus Christ was a great thinker, a man who had caught, apparently by his unaided power, though this is not certain, something of the divine knowledge, but the writers who recorded his sayings were for the most part ordinary men of a very narrow culture and scope of thought and they seem grossly to have misunderstood his deepest sayings. For instance when he said "I and my Father are one" expressing the deep truth that the human self and the divine self are identical, they imagined that he was setting up an individual claim to be God; hence the extraordinary legend of the Virgin Mary & all that followed from it. Well, we all know the story of the Last Supper and Jesus' marvellously pregnant utterance as he broke the bread and gave of the wine to his disciples "This is my body and this is my blood" and the remarkable rite of the Eucharist and the doctrine of Transubstantiation which the Roman Catholic Church has founded upon it. "Corruption! superstition! blasphemous nonsense!" cries the Protestant. "Only a vivid Oriental metaphor and nothing more." If so, it was certainly an "unmeaning, artificial and silly" metaphor, nay, "even a hideous and repellent" one. But I prefer to believe that Jesus' words had always a meaning & generally a true & beautiful one. On the other hand the Transubstantiation doctrine is one which the Catholics themselves do not understand, it is to them a "mystery". And yet how plain the meaning is to an Oriental intelligence! The plasm of matter, the foodsheath of the universe to which bread and wine belong, is indeed the blood and body of God and typifies the great primal sacrifice by which God crucified himself so that the world might exist. The Infinite had to become finite, the Unconditioned to condition himself, Spirit to evolve matter. In the bread and the wine which the communicant eats, God actually is but he is not present to our consciousness, and he only becomes so present by an act of faith; this is the whole doctrine of the Transubstantiation. For as the Upanishad says, we must believe in God before we can know him; we must realise him as the "He is" before we realise him in his essential. And indeed if the child had not believed in what his teacher or his book told him, how could the grown man know anything? But if a deep philosophical work were written on the Eucharist hinting at great truths but always using the symbol of the bread and wine and making its terminology from the symbol & from the doctrine of Transubstantiation based upon the symbol, what would our Hindu Pundit make of it? Being a scholar & philosopher, he would find there undoubtedly much that was fresh, natural, simple, beautiful & true but also a great deal that was unmeaning, artificial & silly & even to his vegetarian imagination hideous & repellent. As for the symbol itself, its probable effect on the poor vegetarian would be to make him vomit. "What hideous nonsense," says the Protestant, "we are to believe that we are eating God!" But that is exactly what the Protestant himself does believe if he is sincere & not a parrot when he says "God is everywhere", which is true enough, though it would be truer to say everything is in God. If God is everywhere, He must be in the food we eat. Not only is God the eaten, but He is the eater and eventually, says the Vedanta, when you come to the bottom fact of existence there is neither eaten or eater, but all is God. These are hard sayings for the rationalist who insists on limiting knowledge within the circle of the five senses. "God to whom the sages are as meat & princes as excellent eating & Death is the spice of his banquet, how shall such an one know of Him where He abideth?"

Many of the Upanishads are similarly written round symbols and in a phraseology and figures which have or had once a deep meaning and a sacred association to the Hindus but must be unintelligible and repellent to the European. What possible use can be served by presenting to Europe such works as the Chandogya or Aitareya Upanishads in which even the majority of Hindus find it difficult or impossible to penetrate every symbol to its underlying truth? Only the few Upanishads have been selected which contain the kernel of the matter in the least technical and most poetical form; the one exception is the Upanishad of the Questions which will be necessarily strange and not quite penetrable to the European mind. It was, however, necessary to include it for the sake of a due presentation of Upanishad philosophy in some of its details as well as in its main ideas, and its technical element has a more universal appeal than that of the Chandogya or Taittiriya.

An objection may be urged to the method of translation that has been adopted. Professor Max Muller in his translation did not make any attempt to render into English the precise shades of Aryan philosophical terms like Atman & Prana which do not correspond to any philosophical conception familiar to the West; he believed that the very unfamiliarity of the terms he used to translate them would be like a bracing splash of cold water to the mind forcing it to rouse itself and think. In this I think the Professor was in error; his proposition may be true of undaunted philosophical intellects such as Schopenhauer's or of those who are already somewhat familiar with the Sanscrit language, but to the ordinary reader the unfamiliar terminology forms a high & thick hedge of brambles shutting him off from the noble palace & beautiful gardens of the Upanishads. Moreover the result of a scholastic faithfulness to the letter has been to make the style of the translation intolerably uncouth and unworthy of the solemn rhythmic grandeur and ineffable poetical depth and beauty of these great religious poems. I do not say that this translation is worthy of them, for in no other human tongue than Sanscrit is such grandeur & beauty possible. But there are ways and their degrees. For instance *Étadwaitad*, the refrain of the

Katha Upanishad has a deep & solemn ring in Sanscrit because *étad* and *tad* so used have in Sanscrit a profound and grandiose philosophical signification which everybody at once feels; but in English "This truly is That" can be nothing but a juggling with demonstrative pronouns; it is far better and renders more nearly both rhythm & meaning to translate "This is the God of your seeking" however inadequate such a translation may be.

It may, however, fairly be said that a version managed on these lines cannot give a precise & accurate idea of the meaning. It is misleading to translate Prâna sometimes by life, sometimes by breath, sometimes by life breath or breath of life, because breath & life are merely subordinate aspects of the Prâna. Atman again rendered indifferently by soul, spirit & self, must mislead, because what the West calls the soul is really the Atman yoked with mind & intelligence, and spirit is a word of variable connotation often synonymous with soul; even "self" cannot be used precisely in that way in English. Again the Hindu idea of "immortality" is different from the European; it implies not life after death, but freedom from both life and death, for what we call life is after all impossible without death. Similarly Being does not render *Purusha*, nor "matter" *rayi*, nor askesis the whole idea of "tapas". To a certain extent all this may be admitted, but at the same time I do not think that any reader who can think & feel will be seriously misled, and at any rate he will catch more of the meaning from imperfect English substitutes than from Sanscrit terms which will be a blank to his intelligence. The mind of man demands, and the demand is legitimate, that new ideas shall be presented to him in words which convey to him some association, with which he will not feel like a foreigner in a strange country where no one knows his language nor he theirs. The new must be presented to him in the terms of the old; new wine must be put to some extent in old bottles. What is the use of avoiding the word "God" and speaking always of the Supreme as "It" simply because the Sanscrit usually, — but not, be it observed, invariably — employs the neuter gender? The neuter in Sanscrit applies not only to what is inanimate but to what is beyond such terms as animate and inanimate, not only to what is below gender but to what is above gender. In English this is not the case. The use of "It" may therefore lead to far more serious misconceptions than to use the term "God" & the pronoun "He". When Matthew Arnold said that God was a stream of tendency making towards righteousness, men naturally scoffed because it seemed to turn God into an inanimate force; yet surely such was not Arnold's meaning. On the other side if the new ideas are presented with force and power, a reader of intelligence will soon come to understand that something different is meant by "God" from the ideas he attaches to that word. And in the meanwhile we gain this distinct advantage that he has not been repelled at the outset by what would naturally seem to him bizarre, repulsive or irreverent.

It is true however that this translation will not convey a precise, full and categorical knowledge of the truths which underlie the Upanishads. To convey such knowledge is not the object of this translation, neither was it the object of the Upanishads themselves. It must always be remembered that these great treatises are simply the gate of the Higher Knowledge; there is much that lies behind the gate. Srikrishna has indeed said that the knowledge in the Vedas is sufficient for a holy mind that is capable of knowing God, just as the water in a well is sufficient for a man's purpose though there may be whole floods of water all around. But this does not apply to ordinary men. The ordinary man who wishes to reach God through knowledge, must undergo an elaborate training. He must begin by becoming absolutely pure, he must cleanse thoroughly his body, his heart and his intellect, he must get himself a new heart and be born again; for only the twiceborn can understand or teach the Vedas. When he has done this he needs yet four things before he can succeed, the Sruti or recorded revelation, the Sacred Teacher, the practice of Yoga and the Grace of God. The business of the Sruti and especially of the Upanishads is to seize the mind and draw it into a magic circle, to accustom it to the thought of God and aspirations after the Supreme, to bathe it in certain ideas, surround it with a certain spiritual atmosphere; for this purpose it plunges & rolls the mind over & over in an ocean of marvellous sound thro' which a certain train of associations goes ever rolling. In other words it appeals through the intellect, the ear and the imagination to the soul. The purpose of the Upanishad cannot therefore be served by a translation; a translation at best prepares him for & attracts him to the original. But even when he has steeped himself in the original, he may have understood what the Upanishad suggests, but he has not understood all that it implies, the great mass of religious truth that lies behind, of which the Upanishad is but a hint or an echo. For this he must go to the Teacher. "Awake ye, arise & learn of God seeking out the Best who have the knowledge." Hard is it in these days to find the Best; for the Best do not come to us, we have to show our sincerity, patience and perseverance by seeking them. And when we have heard the whole of the Brahmavidya from the Teacher, we still know of God by theory only; we must farther learn from a preceptor the practical knowledge of God, the vision of Him and attainment of Him which is Yoga and the goal of Yoga. And even in that we cannot succeed unless we have the Grace of God, for Yoga is beset with temptations not the least of which are the powers it gives us, powers which the ignorant call supernatural. "Then must a man be very vigilant for Yoga, as it hath a beginning, so hath it an ending." Only the Grace of God, the blessing of triumphant self-mastery that comes from long and patient accumulation of soul-experience, can keep us firm and help us over these temptations. "The Spirit is not to be won by eloquent teaching, nor by brain power, nor by much learning: but he whom the Spirit chooseth, he getteth the Spirit, and to him God discovereth His body." Truly does the Upanishad say "for sharp as a razor's edge is the path, difficult & hard to traverse, say the seers." Fortunately it is not necessary & indeed it is not possible for all to measure the whole journey in a single life, nor can we, or should we abandon our daily duties like Buddha and flee into the mountain or the forest. It is enough for us to make a beginning.

Section Two

Complete Translations

Circa 1900 – 1902

The Upanishads

rendered into simple and rhythmic English.

(comprising six Upanishads namely the Isha, Kena, Katha, Moondaca, Prusna, and Mandoukya).

Swulpumupyusya dhurmusya trayate mahato bhayat

Bhagavudgeta.

Even a little of this Law delivereth one out of great fear

X

Quel Ch'ella par quando un poco sorride
Non si può dicer ne tener è a mente,
Sì è novo miracolo e gentile.

Dante

What She appears when She smiles a little,
Cannot be spoken of, neither can the mind lay hold on it,
It is so sweet and strange and sublime a miracle.

---o:o:o:---------

The Prusna Upanishad

of the Athurvaveda

being the Upanishad of the Six Questions.

Before which one repeats the Mantra.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः ।
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

OM. May we hear what is auspicious with our ears, O ye Gods; may we see what is auspicious with our eyes, O ye of the sacrifice; giving praise with steady limbs, with motionless bodies, may we enter into that life which is founded in the Gods.

Ordain weal unto us Indra of high-heaped glories; ordain weal unto us Pushan, the all-knowing Sun; ordain weal unto us Tarkshya Arishtanemi; Brihaspati ordain weal unto us. OM. Peace! peace! peace!

Then the Chapter of the First Question.

ॐ नमः परमात्मने। हरिः ॐ ॥ सुकेशा च भारद्वाजः शैव्यश्च सत्यकामः सौर्यायणी च गार्ग्यः कौसल्यश्चाश्वलायनो भार्गवो वैदर्भिः कबन्धी कात्यायनस्ते हैते ब्रह्मपरा ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः परं ब्रह्मान्वेषमाणा एष ह वै तत्सर्वं वक्ष्यतीति ते ह समित्पाणयो भगवन्तं पिप्पलादमुपसन्नाः ॥ १ ॥

1. OM! Salutation to the Supreme Spirit. The Supreme is OM.
   Sukesha the Bharadwaja; the Shaivya, Satyakama; Gargya,

son of the Solar race; the Coshalan, son of Uswal; the Bhargove of Vidurbha; and Cobundhy Catyaian; — these sought the Most High God, believing in the Supreme and to the Supreme devoted. Therefore they came to the Lord Pippalada, for they said "This is he that shall tell us of that Universal."

तान् ह स ऋषिरुवाच भूय एव तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया संवत्सरं
संवत्स्यथ यथाकामं प्रश्नान्पृच्छत यदि विज्ञास्यामः सर्वं ह वो वक्ष्याम
इति ॥ २ ॥

2. The Rishi said to them, "Another year do ye dwell in holiness and faith and askesis; then ask what ye will, and if I know, surely I will conceal nothing."

अथ कबन्धी कात्यायन उपेत्य पप्रच्छ। भगवन् कुतो ह वा इमाः
प्रजाः प्रजायन्त इति ॥ ३ ॥

3. Then came Cobundhy, son of Katya, to him and asked: "Lord, whence are all these creatures born?"

तस्मै स होवाच प्रजाकामो वै प्रजापतिः स तपोऽतप्यत स तपस्तप्त्वा
स मिथुनमुत्पादयते रयिं च प्राणं चेत्येतौ मे बहुधा प्रजाः करिष्यत
इति ॥ ४ ॥

4. To him answered the Rishi Pippalada: "The Eternal Father desired children, therefore he put forth his energy and by the heat of his energy produced twin creatures, Prana the Life, who is Male, and Rayi the Matter, who is Female. 'These' said he 'shall make for me children of many natures.'

आदित्यो ह वै प्राणो रयिरेव चन्द्रमा रयिर्वा एतत्सर्वं यन्मूर्तं चामूर्तं
च तस्मान्मूर्तिरेव रयिः ॥ ५ ॥

5. "The Sun verily is Life and the Moon is no more than Matter; yet truly all this Universe formed and formless is Matter; therefore Form and Matter are One.

अथादित्य उदयन् यत्प्राचीं दिशं प्रविशति तेन प्राच्यान्प्राणान् रश्मिषु
संनिधत्ते। यद्दक्षिणां यत्प्रतीचीं यदुदीचीं यदधो यदूर्ध्वं यदन्तरा दिशो
यत्सर्वं प्रकाशयति तेन सर्वान्प्राणान् रश्मिषु संनिधत्ते॥ ६॥

6. “Now when the Sun rising entereth the East, then absorbeth he the eastern breaths into his rays. But when he illumineth the south and west and north, and below and above and all the angles of space, yea, all that is, then he taketh all the breaths into his rays.

स एष वैश्वानरो विश्वरूपः प्राणोऽग्निरुदयते। तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम्॥ ७॥

7. “Therefore is this fire that riseth, this Universal Male, of whom all things are the bodies, Prana the breath of existence. This is that which was said in the Rigveda.

विश्वरूपं हरिणं जातवेदसं परायणं ज्योतिरेकं तपन्तम्।
सहस्ररश्मिः शतधा वर्तमानः प्राणः प्रजानामुदयत्येष सूर्यः॥ ८॥

8. “‘Fire is this burning and radiant Sun, he is the One lustre and all-knowing Light, he is the highest heaven of spirits. With a thousand rays he burneth and existeth in a hundred existences; lo this Sun that riseth, he is the Life of all his creatures.’

संवत्सरो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्यायने दक्षिणं चोत्तरं च। तद्ये ह वै तदिष्टापूर्ते
कृतमित्युपासते ते चान्द्रमसमेव लोकमभिजयन्ते। त एव पुनरावर्तन्ते
तस्मादेत ऋषयः प्रजाकामा दक्षिणं प्रतिपद्यन्ते। एष ह वै रयिर्यः
पितृयाणः॥ ९॥

9. “The year also is that Eternal Father and of the year there are two paths, the northern solstice and the southern. Now they who worship God with the well dug and the oblation offered, deeming these to be righteousness, conquer their heavens of the Moon; these return again to the world of birth. Therefore do the souls of sages who have not yet put from them the desire of offspring, take the way of the southern solstice which is the road of the Fathers. And this also is Matter, the Female.

अथोत्तरेण तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया विद्ययात्मानमन्विष्यादित्यमभिजयन्ते। एतद्वै प्राणानामायतनमेतदमृतमभयमेतत् परायणमेतस्मान्न पुनरावर्तन्त इत्येष निरोधस्तदेष श्लोकः ॥ १० ॥

10. "But by the way of the northern solstice go the souls that have sought the Spirit through holiness and knowledge and faith and askesis; for they conquer their heavens of the Sun. There is the resting place of the breaths, there immortality casteth out fear, there is the highest heaven of spirits; thence no soul returneth; therefore is the wall and barrier. Whereof this is the Scripture.

पञ्चपादं पितरं द्वादशाकृतिं दिव आहुः परे अर्धे पुरीषिणम्।
अथेमे अन्य उ परे विचक्षणं सप्तचक्रे षडर आहुरर्पितमिति ॥ ११ ॥

11. "'Five-portioned, some say, is the Father and hath twelve figures and he floweth in the upper hemisphere beyond the heavens; but others speak of him as the Wisdom who standeth in a chariot of six spokes and seven wheels.'

मासो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्य कृष्णपक्ष एव रयिः शुक्लः प्राणस्तस्मादेत ऋषयः शुक्ल इष्टं कुर्वन्तीतर इतरस्मिन् ॥ १२ ॥

12. "The month also is that Eternal Father, whereof the dark fortnight is Matter the Female and the bright fortnight is Life the Male. Therefore do one manner of sages offer sacrifice in the bright fortnight and another in the dark.

अहोरात्रो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्याहरेव प्राणो रात्रिरेव रयिः प्राणं वा एते प्रस्कन्दन्ति ये दिवा रत्या संयुज्यन्ते ब्रह्मचर्यमेव तद्यद् रात्रौ रत्या संयुज्यन्ते ॥ १३ ॥

13. "Day and night also are the Eternal Father, whereof the day is Life and the night is Matter. Therefore do they offend against their own life who take joy with woman by day; by night who take joy, enact holiness.

अन्नं वै प्रजापतिस्ततो ह वै तद् रेतस्तस्मादिमाः प्रजाः प्रजायन्त इति ॥ १४ ॥

14. "Food is the Eternal Father; for of this came the seed and of the seed is the world of creatures born.

तद्ये ह वै तत्प्रजापतिव्रतं चरन्ति ते मिथुनमुत्पादयन्ते। तेषामेवैष
ब्रह्मलोको येषां तपो ब्रह्मचर्यं येषु सत्यं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ १५ ॥

15. "They therefore who perform the vow of the Eternal Father produce the twin creature. But theirs is the heaven of the spirit in whom are established askesis and holiness and in whom Truth has her dwelling.

तेषामसौ विरजो ब्रह्मलोको न येषु जिह्ममनृतं न माया चेति ॥ १६ ॥

16. "Theirs is the heaven of the Spirit, the world all spotless, in whom there is neither crookedness nor lying nor any illusion."

And afterwards

The Chapter of the Second Question.

अथ हैनं भार्गवो वैदर्भिः पप्रच्छ। भगवन् कत्येव देवाः प्रजां विधारयन्ते
कतर एतत्प्रकाशयन्ते कः पुनरेषां वरिष्ठ इति ॥ १ ॥

1. Then the Bhargove, the Vidurbhan, asked him: "Lord, how many Gods maintain this creature, and how many illumine it, and which of these again is the mightiest?"

तस्मै स होवाचाकाशो ह वा एष देवो वायुरग्निरापः पृथिवी
वाङ्मनश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रं च। ते प्रकाश्याभिवदन्ति वयमेतद् बाणमवष्टभ्य
विधारयामः ॥ २ ॥

2. To him answered the Rishi Pippalada: "These are the Gods, even Ether and Wind and Fire and Water and Earth and Speech and Mind and Sight and Hearing. These nine illumine the creature; therefore they vaunted themselves, — We, even we support this harp of God and we are the preservers.

तान् वरिष्ठः प्राण उवाच। मा मोहमापद्यथाहमेवैतत् पञ्चधात्मानं
प्रविभज्यैतद् बाणमवष्टभ्य विधारयामीति तेऽश्रद्दधाना बभूवुः ॥ ३ ॥

3. “Then answered Breath, their mightiest: ‘Yield not unto delusion; I dividing myself into this fivefold support this harp of God, I am its preserver.’ But they believed him not.

सोऽभिमानादूर्ध्वमुत्क्रमत इव तस्मिन्नुत्क्रामत्यथेतरे सर्व एवोत्क्रामन्ते तस्मिंश्च प्रतिष्ठमाने सर्व एव प्रातिष्ठन्ते। तद्यथा मक्षिका मधुकरराजानमुत्क्रामन्तं सर्वा एवोत्क्रामन्ते तस्मिंश्च प्रतिष्ठमाने सर्वा एव प्रातिष्ठन्त एवं वाङ्मनश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रं च ते प्रीताः प्राणं स्तुवन्ति ॥ ४ ॥

4. “Therefore offended he rose up, he was issuing out from the body. But when the Breath goeth out, then go all the others with him, and when the Breath abideth all the others abide; therefore as bees with the kingbee: when he goeth out all go out with him, and when he abideth all abide, even so was it with Speech and Mind and Sight and Hearing; then were they well-pleased and hymned the Breath to adore him.

एषोऽग्निस्तपत्येष सूर्य एष पर्जन्यो मघवानेष वायुः।
एष पृथिवी रयिर्देवः सदसच्चामृतं च यत् ॥ ५ ॥

5. “‘Lo this is he that is Fire and the Sun that burneth, Rain and Indra and Earth and Air, Matter and Deity, Form and Formless, and Immortality.

अरा इव रथनाभौ प्राणे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम्।
ऋचो यजूंषि सामानि यज्ञः क्षत्रं ब्रह्म च ॥ ६ ॥

6. “‘As the spokes meet in the nave of a wheel, so are all things in the Breath established, the Rigveda and the Yajur and the Sama, and Sacrifice and Brahminhood and Kshatriyahood.

प्रजापतिश्चरसि गर्भे त्वमेव प्रतिजायसे।
तुभ्यं प्राण प्रजास्त्विमा बलिं हरन्ति यः प्राणैः प्रतितिष्ठसि ॥ ७ ॥

7. “‘As the Eternal Father thou movest in the womb and art born in the likeness of the parents. To thee, O Life, the world of creatures offer the burnt offering, who by the breaths abidest.

देवानामसि वह्नितमः पितॄणां प्रथमा स्वधा।
ऋषीणां चरितं सत्यमथर्वाङ्गिरसामसि ॥ ८ ॥

8. “‘Of all the Gods thou art the strongest and fiercest and to the fathers thou art the first oblation; thou art the truth and virtue of the sages and thou art Athurvan among the sons of Ungirus.

इन्द्रस्त्वं प्राण तेजसा रुद्रोऽसि परिरक्षिता।
त्वमन्तरिक्षे चरसि सूर्यस्त्वं ज्योतिषां पतिः ॥ ९ ॥

9. “‘Thou art Indra, O Breath, by thy splendour and energy and Rudra because thou preservest; thou walkest in the welkin as the Sun, that imperial lustre.

यदा त्वमभिवर्षस्यथेमाः प्राण ते प्रजाः।
आनन्दरूपास्तिष्ठन्ति कामायान्नं भविष्यतीति ॥ १० ॥

10. “‘When thou, O Breath, rainest, thy creatures stand all joy because there shall be grain to the heart’s desire.

व्रात्यस्त्वं प्राणैकऋषिरत्ता विश्वस्य सत्पतिः।
वयमाद्यस्य दातारः पिता त्वं मातरिश्व नः ॥ ११ ॥

11. “‘Thou art, O Breath, the unpurified and thou art Fire, the only purity, the devourer of all and the lord of existences. We are the givers to thee of thy eating; for thou, O Matariswun, art our Father.

या ते तनूर्वाचि प्रतिष्ठिता या श्रोत्रे या च चक्षुषि।
या च मनसि संतता शिवां तां कुरु मोत्क्रमीः ॥ १२ ॥

12. “‘That body of thine which is established in the speech, sight and hearing, and in the mind is extended, that make propitious; O Life, go not out from our midst!

प्राणस्येदं वशे सर्वं त्रिदिवे यत्प्रतिष्ठितम्।
मातेव पुत्रान् रक्षस्व श्रीश्च प्रज्ञां च विधेहि न इति ॥ १३ ॥

13. "'For all this Universe, yea, all that is established in the heavens to the Breath is subject; guard us as a mother watches over her little children; give us fortune and beauty, give us Wisdom.' "

And afterwards

The Chapter of the Third Question.

अथ हैनं कौसल्यश्चाश्वलायनः पप्रच्छ। भगवन् कुत एष प्राणो जायते कथमायात्यस्मिञ्शरीर आत्मानं वा प्रविभज्य कथं प्रातिष्ठते केनोत्क्रमते कथं बाह्यमभिधत्ते कथमध्यात्ममिति ॥ १ ॥

1. Then the Coshalan, the son of Uswal, asked him: "Lord, whence is this Life born? How comes it in this body or how stands by self-division? By what departeth, or how maintaineth the outward and how the inward spiritual?"

तस्मै स होवाचातिप्रश्नान् पृच्छसि ब्रह्मिष्ठोऽसीति तस्मात् तेऽहं ब्रवीमि ॥ २ ॥

2. To him answered the Rishi Pippalada: "Many and difficult things thou askest; but because thou art very holy, therefore will I tell thee.

आत्मन एष प्राणो जायते। यथैषा पुरुषे छायैतस्मिन्नेतदाततं मनोकृतेनायात्यस्मिञ्शरीरे ॥ ३ ॥

3. "Of the Spirit is this breath of Life born; even as a shadow is cast by a man, so is this Life extended in the Spirit and by the action of the Mind it entereth into this body.

यथा सम्राडेवाधिकृतान् विनियुङ्क्ते। एतान्ग्रामानेतान्ग्रामानधितिष्ठस्वेत्येवमेवैष प्राण इतरान्प्राणान् पृथक्पृथगेव संनिधत्ते ॥ ४ ॥

4. "As an Emperor commandeth his officers, and he sayeth to one 'Govern for me these villages', and to another 'Govern for me these others', so this breath, the Life, appointeth the other breaths each in his province.

पायूपस्थेऽपानं चक्षुःश्रोत्रे मुखनासिकाभ्यां प्राणः स्वयं प्रातिष्ठते मध्ये तु समानः। एष ह्येतद्धुतमन्नं समं नयति तस्मादेताः सप्तार्चिषो भवन्ति ॥ ५ ॥

5. “In the anus and the organ of pleasure is the lower breath, and in the eyes and the ears, the mouth and the nose, the main breath itself is seated; but the medial breath is in the middle. This is he that equally distributeth the burnt offering of food; for from this are the seven fires born.

हृदि ह्येष आत्मा। अत्रैतदेकशतं नाडीनां तासां शतं शतमेकैकस्यां द्वासप्ततिर्द्वासप्ततिः प्रतिशाखानाडीसहस्राणि भवन्त्यासु व्यानश्चरति ॥ ६ ॥

6. “The Spirit in the heart abideth, and in the heart there are one hundred and one nerves, and each nerve hath a hundred branch-nerves and each branch-nerve hath seventy two thousand sub-branch-nerves; through these the breath pervasor moveth.

अथैकयोर्ध्व उदानः पुण्येन पुण्यं लोकं नयति पापेन पापमुभाभ्यामेव मनुष्यलोकम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. “Of these many there is one by which the upper breath departeth that by virtue taketh to the heaven of virtue, by sin to the hell of sin, and by mingled sin and righteousness back to the world of men restoreth.

आदित्यो ह वै बाह्यः प्राण उदयत्येष ह्येनं चाक्षुषं प्राणमनुगृह्णानः। पृथिव्यां या देवता सैषा पुरुषस्यापानमवष्टभ्यान्तरा यदाकाशः स समानो वायुर्व्यानः ॥ ८ ॥

8. “The Sun is the main breath outside this body, for it cherisheth the eye in its rising. The divinity in the earth, she attracteth the lower breath of man, and the ether between is the medial breath; air is the breath pervasor.

तेजो ह वा उदानस्तस्मादुपशान्ततेजाः। पुनर्भवमिन्द्रियैर्मनसि संपद्यमानैः ॥ ९ ॥

9. “Light, the primal energy, is the upper breath; therefore when the light and heat in a man hath dwindled, his senses retire into the mind and with these he departeth into another birth.

यच्चित्तस्तेनैष प्राणमायाति प्राणस्तेजसा युक्तः। सहात्मना यथासंकल्पितं लोकं नयति ॥ १० ॥

10. “Whatsoever be the mind of a man, with that mind he seeketh refuge with the breath when he dieth, and the breath and the upper breath lead him with the Spirit within him to the world of his imaginings.

य एवं विद्वान् प्राणं वेद। न हास्य प्रजा हीयतेऽमृतो भवति तदेष श्लोकः ॥ ११ ॥

11. “The wise man that knoweth thus of the breath, his progeny wasteth not and he becometh immortal. Whereof this is the Scripture.

उत्पत्तिमायतिं स्थानं विभुत्वं चैव पञ्चधा।
अध्यात्मं चैव प्राणस्य विज्ञायामृतमश्नुत इति ॥ १२ ॥

12. “‘By knowing the origin of the Breath, his coming and his staying and his lordship in the five provinces, likewise his relation to the Spirit, one shall taste immortality.’ ”

And afterwards
The Chapter of the Fourth Question.

अथ हैनं सौर्यायणी गार्ग्यः पप्रच्छ। भगवन्नेतस्मिन् पुरुषे कानि स्वपन्ति कान्यस्मिञ्जाग्रति कतर एष देवः स्वप्नान्पश्यति कस्यैतत् सुखं भवति कस्मिन्नु सर्वे संप्रतिष्ठिता भवन्तीति ॥ १ ॥

1. Then Gargya of the Solar race asked him, “Lord, what are they that slumber in this Existing and what that keep vigil? Who is this god who seeth dreams or whose is this felicity? Into whom do all they vanish?”

तस्मै स होवाच। यथा गार्ग्य मरीचयोऽर्कस्यास्तं गच्छतः सर्वा एतस्मिंस्तेजोमण्डल एकीभवन्ति। ताः पुनः पुनरुदयतः प्रचरन्त्येवं ह वै तत्सर्वं परे देवे मनस्येकीभवति। तेन तर्ह्येष पुरुषो न शृणोति न पश्यति न जिघ्रति न रसयते न स्पृशते नाभिवदते नादत्ते नानन्दयते न विसृजते नेयायते स्वपितीत्याचक्षते ॥ २ ॥

2. To him answered the Rishi Pippalada: "O Gargya, as are the rays of the sun in its setting, for they retire and all become one in yonder circle of splendour, but when he riseth again once more they walk abroad, so all the man becomes one in the highest god, even the mind. Then indeed this being seeth not, neither heareth, nor doth he smell, nor taste, nor touch, nor speaketh he aught, nor taketh in or giveth out, nor cometh nor goeth; he feeleth not any felicity. Then they say of him, 'He sleepeth'.

प्राणाग्नय एवैतस्मिन् पुरे जाग्रति। गार्हपत्यो ह वा एषोऽपानो व्यानोऽन्वाहार्यपचनो यद् गार्हपत्यात् प्रणीयते प्रणयनादाहवनीयः प्राणः ॥ ३ ॥

3. "But the fires of the breath keep watch in that sleeping city. The lower breath is the householder's fire and the breath pervasor the fire of the Lares that burneth to the southward. The main breath is the orient fire of the sacrifice; and even as the eastern fire taketh its fuel from the western, so in the slumber of a man the main breath taketh from the lower.

यदुच्छ्वासनिश्वासावेतावाहुती समं नयतीति स समानः। मनो ह वाव यजमान इष्टफलमेवोदानः स एनं यजमानमहरहर्ब्रह्म गमयति ॥ ४ ॥

4. "But the medial breath is the priest, the sacrificant; for he equaliseth the offering of the inbreath and the offering of the outbreath. The Mind is the giver of the sacrifice and the upper breath is the fruit of the sacrifice, for it taketh the sacrificer day by day into the presence of the Eternal.

अत्रैष देवः स्वप्ने महिमानमनुभवति। यद् दृष्टं दृष्टमनुपश्यति श्रुतं
श्रुतमेवार्थमनुशृणोति देशदिगन्तरैश्च प्रत्यनुभूतं पुनः पुनः प्रत्यनुभवति
दृष्टं चादृष्टं च श्रुतं चाश्रुतं चानुभूतं चाननुभूतं च सच्चासच्च सर्वं
पश्यति सर्वः पश्यति ॥ ५ ॥

5. “Now the Mind in dream revelleth in the glory of his imaginings. All that it hath seen it seemeth to see over again, and of all that it hath heard it repeateth the hearing; yea, all that it hath felt and thought and known in many lands and in various regions, these it liveth over again in its dreaming. What it hath seen and what it hath not seen, what it hath heard and what it hath not heard, what it hath known and what it hath not known, what is and what is not, all, all it seeth; for the Mind is the Universe.

स यदा तेजसाभिभूतो भवति। अत्रैष देवः स्वप्नान् न पश्यत्यथ
तदैतस्मिञ्शरीर एतत्सुखं भवति ॥ ६ ॥

6. “But when he is overwhelmed with light, then Mind, the God, dreameth no longer; then in this body he hath felicity.

स यथा सोम्य वयांसि वासोवृक्षं संप्रतिष्ठन्ते। एवं ह वै तत्सर्वं पर
आत्मनि संप्रतिष्ठते ॥ ७ ॥

7. “O fair son, as birds wing towards their resting tree, so do all these depart into the Supreme Spirit:

पृथिवी च पृथिवीमात्रा चापश्चापोमात्रा च तेजश्च तेजोमात्रा च वायुश्च
वायुमात्रा चाकाशश्चाकाशमात्रा च चक्षुश्च द्रष्टव्यं च श्रोत्रं च श्रोतव्यं
च घ्राणं च घ्रातव्यं च रसश्च रसयितव्यं च त्वक् च स्पर्शयितव्यं च
वाक् च वक्तव्यं च हस्तौ चादातव्यं चोपस्थश्चानन्दयितव्यं च पायुश्च
विसर्जयितव्यं च पादौ च गन्तव्यं च मनश्च मन्तव्यं च बुद्धिश्च बोद्धव्यं
चाहंकारश्चाहंकर्तव्यं च चित्तं च चेतयितव्यं च तेजश्च विद्योतयितव्यं
च प्राणश्च विधारयितव्यं च ॥ ८ ॥

8. “Earth and the inner things of earth; water and the inner things of water; light and the inner things of light; air and

the inner things of air; ether and the inner things of ether; the eye and its seeings; the ear and its hearings; smell and the objects of smell; taste and the objects of taste; the skin and the objects of touch; speech and the things to be spoken; the two hands and their takings; the organ of pleasure and its enjoyings; the anus and its excretions; the feet and their goings; the mind and its feelings; the intelligence and what it understandeth; the sense of Ego and that which is felt to be Ego; the conscious heart and that of which it is conscious; light and what it lighteneth; Life and the things it maintaineth.

एष हि द्रष्टा स्प्रष्टा श्रोता घ्राता रसयिता मन्ता बोद्धा कर्ता विज्ञानात्मा
पुरुषः। स परेऽक्षर आत्मनि संप्रतिष्ठते ॥ ९ ॥

9. "For this that seeth and toucheth, heareth, smelleth, tasteth, feeleth, understandeth, acteth, is the reasoning self, the Male within. This too departeth into the Higher Self which is Imperishable.

परमेवाक्षरं प्रतिपद्यते स यो ह वै तदच्छायमशरीरमलोहितं शुभ्रमक्षरं
वेदयते यस्तु सोम्य। स सर्वज्ञः सर्वो भवति तदेष श्लोकः ॥ १० ॥

10. "He that knoweth the shadowless, colourless, bodiless, luminous and imperishable Spirit, attaineth to the Imperishable, even to the Most High. O fair son, he knoweth the All and becometh the All. Whereof this is the Scripture.

विज्ञानात्मा सह देवैश्च सर्वैः प्राणा भूतानि संप्रतिष्ठन्ति यत्र।
तदक्षरं वेदयते यस्तु सोम्य स सर्वज्ञः सर्वमेवाविवेशेति ॥ ११ ॥

11. "'He, O fair son, that knoweth the Imperishable into whom the understanding self departeth, and all the Gods, and the life-breaths and the elements, he knoweth the Universe!' "

And afterwards

The Chapter of the Fifth Question.

अथ हैनं शैव्यः सत्यकामः पप्रच्छ। स यो ह वै तद् भगवन् मनुष्येषु
प्रायणान्तमोंकारमभिध्यायीत। कतमं वाव स तेन लोकं जयतीति ॥१॥

1. Then the Shaivya Satyakama asked him: “Lord, he among men that meditate unto death on OM the syllable, which of the worlds doth he conquer by its puissance?”

तस्मै स होवाच। एतद्वै सत्यकाम परं चापरं च ब्रह्म यदोंकारः।
तस्माद् विद्वानेतेनैवायतनेनैकतरमन्वेति ॥ २ ॥

2. To him answered the Rishi Pippalada: “This imperishable Word that is OM, O Satyakama, is the Higher Brahman and also the Lower. Therefore the wise man by making his home in the Word, winneth to one of these.

स यद्येकमात्रमभिध्यायीत स तेनैव संवेदितस्तूर्णमेव जगत्यामभिसंपद्यते।
तमृचो मनुष्यलोकमुपनयन्ते स तत्र तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया
संपन्नो महिमानमनुभवति ॥ ३ ॥

3. “If he meditate on the one letter of OM the syllable, by that enlightened he attaineth swiftly in the material universe, and the hymns of the Rigveda escort him to the world of men; there endowed with askesis and faith and holiness he experienceth majesty.

अथ यदि द्विमात्रेण मनसि संपद्यते सोऽन्तरिक्षं यजुर्भिरुन्नीयते
सोमलोकम्। स सोमलोके विभूतिमनुभूय पुनरावर्तते ॥ ४ ॥

4. “Now if by the two letters of the syllable he in the mind attaineth, to the skies he is exalted and the hymns of the Yajur escort him to the Lunar World. In the heavens of the Moon he feeleth his soul’s majesty; then once more he returneth.

यः पुनरेतं त्रिमात्रेणोमित्येतेनैवाक्षरेण परं पुरुषमभिध्यायीत स तेजसि
सूर्ये संपन्नः। यथा पादोदरस्त्वचा विनिर्मुच्यत एवं ह वै स पाप्मना
विनिर्मुक्तः स सामभिरुन्नीयते ब्रह्मलोकं स एतस्माज्जीवघनात्परात्परं
पुरिशयं पुरुषमीक्षते तदेतौ श्लोकौ भवतः ॥ ५ ॥

5. "But he who by all the three letters meditateth by this syllable, even by OM on the Most High Being, he in the Solar World of light and energy is secured in his attainings; as a snake casteth off its slough, so he casteth off sin, and the hymns of the Samaveda escort him to the heaven of the Spirit. He from that Lower who is the density of existence beholdeth the Higher than the Highest of whom every form is one city. Whereof these are the verses.

तिस्रो मात्रा मृत्युमत्यः प्रयुक्ता अन्योन्यसक्ता अनविप्रयुक्ताः।
क्रियासु बाह्याभ्यन्तरमध्यमासु सम्यक्प्रयुक्तासु न कम्पते ज्ञः ॥ ६ ॥

6. "'Children of death are the letters when they are used as three, the embracing and the inseparable letters; but the wise man is not shaken; for there are three kinds of works, outward deed and inward action and another which is blended of the two, and all these he doeth rightly without fear and without trembling.

ऋग्भिरेतं यजुर्भिरन्तरिक्षं सामभिर्यत्तत्कवयो वेदयन्ते।
तमोंकारेणैवायतनेनान्वेति विद्वान् यत्तच्छान्तमजरममृतमभयं
परं चेति ॥ ७ ॥

7. "'To the earth the Rigveda leadeth, to the skies the Yajur, but the Sama to That of which the sages know. Thither the wise man by resting on OM the syllable attaineth, even to that Supreme Quietude where age is not and fear is cast out by immortality.'"

And afterwards

The Chapter of the Sixth Question.

अथ हैनं सुकेशा भारद्वाजः पप्रच्छ। भगवन् हिरण्यनाभः कौसल्यो राजपुत्रो मामुपेत्यैतं प्रश्नमपृच्छत। षोडशकलं भारद्वाज पुरुषं वेत्थ। तमहं कुमारमब्रुवं नाहमिमं वेद। यद्यहमिममवेदिषं कथं ते नावक्ष्यमिति। समूलो वा एष परिशुष्यति योऽनृतमभिवदति तस्मान्नार्हाम्यनृतं वक्तुम्। स तूष्णीं रथमारुह्य प्रवव्राज। तं त्वा पृच्छामि क्वासौ पुरुष इति ॥ १॥

1. Then Sukesha the Bharadwaja asked him, “Lord, Hiranyanabha of Coshala, the king’s son, came to me and put me this question, ‘O Bharadwaja, knowest thou the Being and the sixteen parts of Him?’ and I answered the boy, ‘I know Him not; for if I knew Him, surely I should tell thee of Him: but I cannot tell thee a lie; for from the roots he shall wither who speaketh falsehood.’ But he mounted his chariot in silence and departed from me. Of Him I ask thee, who is the Being?”

तस्मै स होवाच। इहैवान्तःशरीरे सोम्य स पुरुषो यस्मिन्नेताः षोडश कलाः प्रभवन्तीति ॥ २॥

2. To him answered the Rishi Pippalada: “O fair son, even here is that Being, in the inner body of every creature for in Him are the sixteen members born.

स ईक्षांचक्रे। कस्मिन्नहमुत्क्रान्त उत्क्रान्तो भविष्यामि कस्मिन् वा प्रतिष्ठिते प्रतिष्ठास्यामीति ॥ ३॥

3. “He bethought Him. ‘What shall that be in whose issuing forth I shall issue forth from the body and in his abiding I shall abide?’

स प्राणमसृजत प्राणाच्छ्रद्धां खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः पृथिवीन्द्रियं मनः। अन्नमन्नाद्वीर्यं तपो मन्त्राः कर्म लोका लोकेषु च नाम च ॥ ४॥

4. “Then he put forth the Life, and from the Life faith, next ether and then air, and then light, and then water, and then earth, the senses and mind and food, and from food virility

and from virility askesis, and from askesis the mighty verses and from these action, and the worlds from action and name in the worlds; in this wise were all things born from the Spirit.

स यथेमा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रायणाः समुद्रं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति भिद्येते तासां नामरूपे समुद्र इत्येवं प्रोच्यते। एवमेवास्य परिद्रष्टुरिमाः षोडश कलाः पुरुषायणाः पुरुषं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति भिद्येते चासां नामरूपे पुरुष इत्येवं प्रोच्यते स एषोऽकलोऽमृतो भवति तदेष श्लोकः ॥ ५ ॥

5. “Therefore as all these flowing rivers move towards the sea, but when they reach the sea they are lost in it and name and form break away from them and all is called only the sea, so all the sixteen members of the silent witnessing Spirit move towards the Being, and when they have attained the Being they are lost in Him and name and form break away from them and all is called only the Being; then is He without members and immortal. Whereof this is the Scripture.

अरा इव रथनाभौ कला यस्मिन्प्रतिष्ठिताः।
तं वेद्यं पुरुषं वेद यथा मा वो मृत्युः परिव्यथा इति ॥ ६ ॥

6. “‘He in whom the members are set as the spokes of a wheel are set in its nave, Him know for the Being who is the goal of knowledge, so shall death pass away from you and his anguish.’ ”

तान् होवाचैतावदेवाहमेतत् परं ब्रह्म वेद। नातः परमस्तीति ॥ ७ ॥

7. And Pippalada said to them: “Thus far do I know the Most High God; than He there is none Higher.”

ते तमर्चयन्तस्त्वं हि नः पिता योऽस्माकमविद्यायाः परं पारं तारयसीति। नमः परमऋषिभ्यो नमः परमऋषिभ्यः ॥ ८ ॥

8. And they worshipping him: “For thou art our father who hast carried us over to the other side of the Ignorance.”

Salutation to the mighty sages, salutation!

After which one repeats the Mantra.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः ।
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

OM. May we hear what is auspicious with our ears, O ye Gods; may we see what is auspicious with our eyes, O ye of the sacrifice; giving praise with steady limbs, with motionless bodies, may we enter into that life which is founded in the Gods.

Ordain weal unto us Indra of high-heaped glories; ordain weal unto us Pushan, the all-knowing Sun; ordain weal unto us Tarkshya Arishtanemi; Brihaspati ordain weal unto us. OM. Peace! peace! peace!

The Mandoukya Upanishad

Before which one repeats the Mantra.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः ।
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

OM. May we hear what is auspicious with our ears, O ye Gods; may we see what is auspicious with our eyes, O ye of the sacrifice; giving praise with steady limbs, with motionless bodies, may we enter into that life which is founded in the Gods.

Ordain weal unto us Indra of high-heaped glories; ordain weal unto us Pushan, the all-knowing Sun; ordain weal unto us Tarkshya Arishtanemi; Brihaspati ordain weal unto us. OM. Peace! peace! peace!

ओमित्येतदक्षरमिदं सर्वं तस्योपव्याख्यानं भूतं भवद् भविष्यदिति सर्वमोंकार एव। यच्चान्यत् त्रिकालातीतं तदप्योंकार एव ॥ १ ॥

1. OM is this imperishable Word, OM is the Universe, and this is the exposition of OM. The past, the present and the future, all that was, all that is, all that will be, is OM. Likewise all else that may exist beyond the bounds of Time, that too is OM.

सर्वं ह्येतद् ब्रह्मायमात्मा ब्रह्म सोऽयमात्मा चतुष्पात् ॥ २ ॥

2. All this Universe is the Eternal Brahman, this Self is the Eternal, and the Self is fourfold.

जागरितस्थानो बहिष्प्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग एकोनविंशतिमुखः स्थूलभुग् वैश्वानरः प्रथमः पादः ॥ ३ ॥

3. He whose place is the wakefulness, who is wise of the outward, who has seven limbs, to whom there are nineteen doors, who feeleth and enjoyeth gross objects, Vaiswanor, the Universal Male, He is the first.

> स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्तःप्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग एकोनविंशतिमुखः प्रविविक्तभुक् तैजसो
> द्वितीयः पादः ॥ ४ ॥

4. He whose place is the dream, who is wise of the inward, who has seven limbs, to whom there are nineteen doors, who feeleth and enjoyeth subtle objects, Taijasa, the Inhabitant in Luminous Mind, He is the second.

> यत्र सुप्तो न कंचन कामं कामयते न कंचन स्वप्नं पश्यति तत्सुषुप्तम्।
> सुषुप्तस्थान एकीभूतः प्रज्ञानघन एवानन्दमयो ह्यानन्दभुक् चेतोमुखः
> प्राज्ञस्तृतीयः पादः ॥ ५ ॥

5. When one sleepeth and yearneth not with any desire, nor seeth any dream, that is the perfect slumber. He whose place is the perfect slumber, who is become Oneness, who is wisdom gathered into itself, who is made of mere delight, who enjoyeth delight unrelated, to whom conscious mind is the door, Prajna, the Lord of Wisdom, He is the third.

> एष सर्वेश्वर एष सर्वज्ञ एषोऽन्तर्याम्येष योनिः सर्वस्य प्रभवाप्ययौ हि
> भूतानाम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. This is the Almighty, this is the Omniscient, this is the Inner Soul, this is the Womb of the Universe, this is the Birth and Destruction of creatures.

> नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम्।
> अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारं
> प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥ ७ ॥

7. He who is neither inward-wise, nor outward-wise, nor both inward and outward wise, nor wisdom self-gathered, nor possessed of wisdom, nor unpossessed of wisdom, He Who

is unseen and incommunicable, unseizable, featureless, unthinkable, and unnameable, Whose essentiality is awareness of the Self in its single existence, in Whom all phenomena dissolve, Who is Calm, Who is Good, Who is the One than Whom there is no other, Him they deem the fourth; He is the Self, He is the object of Knowledge.

> सोऽयमात्माध्यक्षरमोंकारोऽधिमात्रं पादा मात्रा मात्राश्च पादा अकार उकारो मकार इति ॥ ८ ॥

8. Now this the Self, as to the imperishable Word, is OM; and as to the letters, His parts are the letters and the letters are His parts, namely, A U M.

> जागरितस्थानो वैश्वानरोऽकारः प्रथमा मात्राप्तेरादिमत्त्वाद्वाप्नोति ह वै सर्वान्कामानादिश्च भवति य एवं वेद ॥ ९ ॥

9. The Waker, Vaiswanor, the Universal Male, He is A, the first letter, because of Initiality and Pervasiveness; he that knoweth Him for such pervadeth and attaineth all his desires; he becometh the source and first.

> स्वप्नस्थानस्तैजस उकारो द्वितीया मात्रोत्कर्षादुभयत्वाद्वोत्कर्षति ह वै ज्ञानसंततिं समानश्च भवति नास्याब्रह्मवित् कुले भवति य एवं वेद ॥ १० ॥

10. The Dreamer, Taijasa, the Inhabitant in Luminous Mind, He is U, the second letter, because of Advance and Centrality; he that knoweth Him for such, advanceth the bounds of his knowledge and riseth above difference; nor of his seed is any born that knoweth not the Eternal.

> सुषुप्तस्थानः प्राज्ञो मकारस्तृतीया मात्रा मितेरपीतेर्वा मिनोति ह वा इदं सर्वमपीतिश्च भवति य एवं वेद ॥ ११ ॥

11. The Sleeper, Prajna, the Lord of Wisdom, He is M, the third letter, because of Measure and Finality; he that knoweth Him for such measureth with himself the Universe and becometh the departure into the Eternal.

अमात्रश्चतुर्थोऽव्यवहार्यः प्रपञ्चोपशमः शिवोऽद्वैत एवमोंकार आत्मैव
संविशत्यात्मनात्मानं य एवं वेद य एवं वेद ॥ १२ ॥

12. Letterless is the fourth, the Incommunicable, the end of phenomena, the Good, the One than Whom there is no other; thus is OM. He that knoweth is the Self and entereth by his self into the Self, he that knoweth, he that knoweth.

Here ends the Mandoukya Upanishad.

After which one repeats the Mantra.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः ।
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यों अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

OM. May we hear what is auspicious with our ears, O ye Gods; may we see what is auspicious with our eyes, O ye of the sacrifice; giving praise with steady limbs, with motionless bodies, may we enter into that life which is founded in the Gods.

Ordain weal unto us Indra of high-heaped glories; ordain weal unto us Pushan, the all-knowing Sun; ordain weal unto us Tarkshya Arishtanemi; Brihaspati ordain weal unto us. OM. Peace! peace! peace!

The Aitereya Upanishad

Chapter I

आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीत्। नान्यत्किंचन मिषत्। स ईक्षत लोकान्नु सृजा इति॥ १॥

1. In the beginning the Spirit was One and all this (universe) was the Spirit; there was nought else that saw. The Spirit thought, “Lo, I will make me worlds from out my being.”

स इमाँल्लोकानसृजत। अम्भो मरीचीर्मरमापोऽदोऽम्भः परेण दिवं द्यौः प्रतिष्ठान्तरिक्षं मरीचयः पृथिवी मरो या अधस्तात् ता आपः॥ २॥

2. These were the worlds he made; Ambhah, of the ethereal waters, Marichih of light, Mara, of death and mortal things, Apah, of the lower waters. Beyond the shining firmament are the ethereal waters and the firmament is their base and resting-place; Space is the world of light; the earth is the world mortal; and below the earth are the lower waters.

स ईक्षतेमे नु लोका लोकपालान्नु सृजा इति। सोऽद्भ्य एव पुरुषं समुद्धृत्यामूर्छयत्॥ ३॥

3. The Spirit thought, “Lo, these are the worlds; and now will I make me guardians for my worlds.” Therefore he gathered the Purusha out of the waters and gave Him shape and substance.

तमभ्यतपत् तस्याभितप्तस्य मुखं निरभिद्यत यथाण्डम्। मुखाद्वाग् वाचोऽग्निर्नासिके निरभिद्येतां नासिकाभ्यां प्राणः प्राणाद्वायुरक्षिणी निरभिद्येतामक्षिभ्यां चक्षुश्चक्षुष आदित्यः कर्णौ निरभिद्येतां कर्णाभ्यां श्रोत्रं श्रोत्राद्दिशस्त्वङ् निरभिद्यत त्वचो लोमानि लोमभ्य ओषधिवनस्पतयो हृदयं निरभिद्यत हृदयान्मनो मनसश्चन्द्रमा नाभिर्निरभिद्यत नाभ्या अपानोऽपानान्मृत्युः शिश्नं निरभिद्यत शिश्नाद्रेतो रेतस आपः॥ ४॥

4. Yea, the Spirit brooded over Him and of Him thus brooded over the mouth broke forth, as when an egg is hatched and breaketh; from the mouth brake Speech and of Speech fire was born. The nostrils brake forth and from the nostrils Breath and of Breath air was born. The eyes brake forth and from the eyes Sight and of Sight the Sun was born. The ears brake forth and from the ears Hearing and of Hearing the regions were born. The skin brake forth and from the skin hairs and from the hairs herbs of healing and all trees and plants were born. The heart brake forth and from the heart Mind and of Mind the moon was born. The navel brake forth and from the navel Apana and of Apana Death was born. The organ of pleasure brake forth and from the organ seed and of seed the waters were born.

Chapter II

ता एता देवताः सृष्टा अस्मिन्महत्यर्णवे प्रापतन् । तमशनायापिपासाभ्यामन्ववार्जत् । ता एनमब्रुवन्नायतनं नः प्रजानीहि यस्मिन्प्रतिष्ठिता अन्नमदामेति ॥ १ ॥

1. These were the Gods that He created; they fell into this great Ocean, and Hunger and Thirst leaped upon them. Then they said to Him, "Command unto us an habitation that we may dwell secure and eat of food."

ताभ्यो गामानयत् ता अब्रुवन्न वै नोऽयमलमिति । ताभ्योऽश्वमानयत् ता अब्रुवन्न वै नोऽयमलमिति ॥ २ ॥

2. He brought unto them the cow, but they said, "Verily, it is not sufficient for us." He brought unto them the horse, but they said, "Verily, it is not enough for us."

ताभ्यः पुरुषमानयत् ता अब्रुवन् सुकृतं बतेति पुरुषो वाव सुकृतम् । ता अब्रवीद्यथायतनं प्रविशतेति ॥ ३ ॥

3. He brought unto them Man, and they said, "O well fashioned truly! Man indeed is well and beautifully made." Then

the Spirit said unto them, “Enter ye in each according to his habitation.”

अग्निर्वाग्भूत्वा मुखं प्राविशद् वायुः प्राणो भूत्वा नासिके प्राविशदादित्यश्चक्षुर्भूत्वाक्षिणी प्राविशद् दिशः श्रोत्रं भूत्वा कर्णौ प्राविशन्नोषधिवनस्पतयो लोमानि भूत्वा त्वचं प्राविशंश्चन्द्रमा मनो भूत्वा हृदयं प्राविशन्मृत्युरपानो भूत्वा नाभिं प्राविशदापो रेतो भूत्वा शिश्नं प्राविशन् ॥ ४ ॥

4. Fire became Speech and entered into the mouth; Air became Breath and entered into the nostrils; the Sun became Sight and entered into the eyes; the Quarters became Hearing and entered into the ears; Herbs of healing and the plants and trees became Hairs and entered into the skin; the Moon became Mind and entered into the heart; Death became Apana, the lower breathing, and entered into the navel; the Waters became Seed and entered into the organ.

तमशनायापिपासे अब्रूतामावाभ्यामभिप्रजानीहीति ते अब्रवीदेतास्वेव वां देवतास्वाभजाम्येतासु भागिन्यौ करोमीति । तस्माद्यस्यै कस्यै च देवतायै हविर्गृह्यते भागिन्यावेवास्यामशनायापिपासे भवतः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Then Hunger and Thirst said unto the Spirit, “Unto us too command an habitation.” But He said unto them, “Even among these gods do I apportion you; lo! I have made you sharers in their godhead.” Therefore to whatever god the oblation is offered, Hunger and Thirst surely have their share in the offering.

Chapter III

स ईक्षतेमे नु लोकाश्च लोकपालाश्चान्नमेभ्यः सृजा इति ॥ १ ॥

1. The Spirit thought, “These verily are my worlds and their guardians; and now will I make me food for these.”

सोऽपोऽभ्यतपत् ताभ्योऽभितप्ताभ्यो मूर्तिरजायत । या वै सा मूर्तिरजायतान्नं वै तत् ॥ २ ॥

2. The Spirit brooded in might upon the waters and from the waters brooded mightily over Form was born. Lo, all this that was born as form, is no other than Food.

तदेनत्सृष्टं पराङ्त्यजिघांसत् तद्वाचाजिघृक्षत् तन्नाशक्नोद्वाचा ग्रहीतुं
स यद्धैनद् वाचाग्रहैष्यदभिव्याहृत्य हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥ ३ ॥

3. Food being created fled back from his grasp. By speech He would have seized it, but He could not seize it by speech. Had He seized it by speech, then would a man be satisfied by merely speaking food.

तत्प्राणेनाजिघृक्षत् तन्नाशक्नोत्प्राणेन ग्रहीतुं स यद्धैनत् प्राणेनाग्रहैष्यदभिप्राण्य
हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥ ४ ॥

4. By the breath He would have seized it, but He could not seize it by the breath. Had He seized it by the breath, then would a man be satisfied by merely breathing food.

तच्चक्षुषाजिघृक्षत् तन्नाशक्नोच्चक्षुषा ग्रहीतुं स यद्धैनच्चक्षुषाग्रहैष्यद्
दृष्ट्वा हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥ ५ ॥

5. By the eye He would have seized it, but He could not seize it by the eye. Had He seized it by the eye, then would a man be satisfied by merely seeing food.

तच्छ्रोत्रेणाजिघृक्षत् तन्नाशक्नोच्छ्रोत्रेण ग्रहीतुं स यद्धैनच्छ्रोत्रेणाग्रहैष्यच्छ्रुत्वा
हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥ ६ ॥

6. By the ear He would have seized it, but He could not seize it by the ear. Had He seized it by the ear, then would a man be satisfied by merely hearing food.

तत्त्वचाजिघृक्षत् तन्नाशक्नोत्त्वचा ग्रहीतुं स यद्धैनत्त्वचाग्रहैष्यत् स्पृष्ट्वा
हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥ ७ ॥

7. By the skin He would have seized it, but He could not seize it by the skin. Had He seized it by the skin, then would a man be satisfied by merely touching food.

तन्मनसाजिघृक्षत् तन्नाशक्नोन्मनसा ग्रहीतुं स यद्धैनन्मनसाग्रहैष्यद् ध्यात्वा हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥ ८ ॥

8. By the mind He would have seized it, but He could not seize it by the mind. Had He seized it by the mind, then would a man be satisfied by merely thinking food.

तच्छिश्नेनाजिघृक्षत् तन्नाशक्नोच्छिश्नेन ग्रहीतुं स यद्धैनच्छिश्नेनाग्रहैष्यद् विसृज्य हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥ ९ ॥

9. By the organ He would have seized it, but He could not seize it by the organ. Had He seized it by the organ, then would a man be satisfied by merely emitting food.

तदपानेनाजिघृक्षत् तदावयत् सैषोऽन्नस्य ग्रहो यद्वायुरन्नायुर्वा एष यद्वायुः ॥ १० ॥

10. By the Apana He would have seized it, and it was seized. Lo this is the seizer of food which is also Breath of the Life, and therefore all that is Breath hath its life in food.

स ईक्षत कथं न्विदं मदृते स्यादिति स ईक्षत कतरेण प्रपद्या इति । स ईक्षत यदि वाचाभिव्याहृतं यदि प्राणेनाभिप्राणितं यदि चक्षुषा दृष्टं यदि श्रोत्रेण श्रुतं यदि त्वचा स्पृष्टं यदि मनसा ध्यातं यद्यपानेनाभ्यपानितं यदि शिश्नेन विसृष्टमथ कोऽहमिति ॥ ११ ॥

11. The Spirit thought, “Without Me how should all this be?” and He thought, “By what way shall I enter in?” He thought also, “If utterance is by Speech, if breathing is by the Breath, if sight is by the Eye, if hearing is by the Ear, if thought is by the Mind, if the lower workings are by Apana, if emission is by the organ, who then am I?”

स एतमेव सीमानं विदार्यैतया द्वारा प्रापद्यत । सैषा विदृतिर्नाम द्वास्तदेतन्नान्दनम् । तस्य त्रय आवसथास्त्रयः स्वप्ना अयमावसथो ऽयमावसथोऽयमावसथ इति ॥ १२ ॥

12. It was this bound that He cleft, it was by this door that He entered in. ’Tis this that is called the gate of the cleaving; this is the door of His coming and here is the place of His delight.

He hath three mansions in His city, three dreams wherein He dwelleth, and of each in turn He saith, “Lo, this is my habitation” and “This is my habitation” and “This is my habitation.”

स जातो भूतान्यभिव्यैख्यत् किमिहान्यं वावदिषदिति। स एतमेव पुरुषं
ब्रह्म ततममपश्यत्। इदमदर्शमिती३ ॥ १३ ॥

13. Now when He was born, He thought and spoke only of Nature and her creations; in this world of matter of what else should He speak or reason? Thereafter He beheld that Being who is the Brahman and the last Essence. He said, “Yea, this is He; verily, I have beheld Him.”

तस्मादिदन्द्रो नामेदन्द्रो ह वै नाम। तमिदन्द्रं सन्तमिन्द्र इत्याचक्षते
परोक्षेण। परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः ॥ १४ ॥

14. Therefore is He Idandra; for Idandra is the true name of Him. But though He is Idandra, they call Him Indra because of the veil of the Unrevelation; for the gods love the veil of the Unrevelation, yea, verily, the gods love the Unrevelation.

Chapter IV

पुरुषे ह वा अयमादितो गर्भो भवति यदेतद् रेतः। तदेतत् सर्वेभ्यो
ऽङ्गेभ्यस्तेजः संभूतमात्मन्येवात्मानं बिभर्ति तद्यदा स्त्रियां सिञ्चत्यथैनज्जनयति
तदस्य प्रथमं जन्म ॥ १ ॥

1. In the male first the unborn child becometh. This which is seed is the force and heat of him that from all parts of the creature draweth together for becoming; therefore he beareth himself in himself, and when he casteth it into the woman, ’tis himself he begetteth. And this is the first birth of the Spirit.

तत् स्त्रिया आत्मभूयं गच्छति यथा स्वमङ्गं तथा। तस्मादेनां न
हिनस्ति। सास्यैतमात्मानमत्र गतं भावयति ॥ २ ॥

2. It becometh one self with the woman, therefore it doeth her no hurt and she cherisheth this self of her husband that hath got into her womb.

सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या भवति। तं स्त्री गर्भं बिभर्ति। सोऽग्र एव कुमारं जन्मनोऽग्रेऽधिभावयति। स यत्कुमारं जन्मनोऽग्रेऽधिभावयत्यात्मानमेव तद् भावयत्येषां लोकानां संतत्या एवं संतता हीमे लोकास्तदस्य द्वितीयं जन्म ॥ ३ ॥

3. She the cherisher must be cherished. So the woman beareth the unborn child and the man cherisheth the boy even from the beginning ere it is born. And whereas he cherisheth the boy ere it is born, 'tis verily himself that he cherisheth for the continuance of these worlds and their peoples; for 'tis even thus the thread of these worlds spinneth on unbroken. And this is the second birth of the Spirit.

सोऽस्यायमात्मा पुण्येभ्यः कर्मभ्यः प्रतिधीयते। अथास्यायमितर आत्मा कृतकृत्यो वयोगतः प्रैति। स इतः प्रयन्नेव पुनर्जायते तदस्य तृतीयं जन्म ॥ ४ ॥

4. Lo this is the spirit and self of him and he maketh it his vicegerent for the works of righteousness. Now this his other self when it hath done the works it came to do and hath reached its age, lo! it goeth hence, and even as it departeth, it is born again. And this is the third birth of the Spirit.

तदुक्तमृषिणा —
गर्भे नु सन्नन्वेषामवेदमहं देवानां जनिमानि विश्वा।
शतं मा पुर आयसीररक्षन्नधः श्येनो जवसा निरदीयमिति।
गर्भ एवैतच्छयानो वामदेव एवमुवाच ॥ ५ ॥

5. Therefore it was said by the sage Vamadeva: "I, Vamadeva, being yet in the womb, knew all the births of these gods and their causes. In a hundred cities of iron they held me down and kept me; I broke through them all with might & violence, like a hawk I soared up into my heavens." While yet he lay in the womb, thus said Vamadeva.

स एवं विद्वानस्माच्छरीरभेदादूर्ध्व उत्क्रम्यामुष्मिन् स्वर्गे लोके सर्वान् कामानाप्त्वामृतः समभवत्समभवत् ॥ ६ ॥

6. And because he knew this, therefore when the strings of the body were snapped asunder, lo he soared forth into yonder world of Paradise & there having possessed all desires, put death behind him, yea, he put death behind him.

Chapter V

कोऽयमात्मेति वयमुपास्महे कतरः स आत्मा। येन वा पश्यति येन वा शृणोति येन वा गन्धानाजिघ्रति येन वा वाचं व्याकरोति येन वा स्वादु चास्वादु च विजानाति ॥ १ ॥

1. Who is this Spirit that we may adore Him? and which of all these is the Spirit? by whom one seeth or by whom one heareth or by whom one smelleth all kinds of perfume or by whom one uttereth clearness of speech or by whom one knoweth the sweet and bitter.

यदेतद्धृदयं मनश्चैतत्। संज्ञानमाज्ञानं विज्ञानं प्रज्ञानं मेधा दृष्टिर्धृतिर्मतिर्मनीषा जूतिः स्मृतिः संकल्पः क्रतुरसुः कामो वश इति। सर्वाण्येवैतानि प्रज्ञानस्य नामधेयानि भवन्ति ॥ २ ॥

2. This which is the heart, is mind also. Concept and will and analysis and wisdom and intellect and vision and continuity of purpose and feeling and understanding, pain and memory and volition and operation of thought and vitality and desire and passion, all these, yea all, are but names of the Eternal Wisdom.

एष ब्रह्मैष इन्द्र एष प्रजापतिरेते सर्वे देवा इमानि च पञ्च महाभूतानि पृथिवी वायुराकाश आपो ज्योतींषीत्येतानीमानि च क्षुद्रमिश्राणीव। बीजानीतराणि चेतराणि चाण्डजानि च जारुजानि च स्वेदजानि चोद्भिज्जानि चाश्वा गावः पुरुषा हस्तिनो यत्किंचेदं प्राणि जङ्गमं च पतत्रि च यच्च स्थावरं सर्वं तत् प्रज्ञानेत्रं प्रज्ञाने प्रतिष्ठितं प्रज्ञानेत्रो लोकः प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठा प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म ॥ ३ ॥

3. This creating Brahma; this ruling Indra; this Prajapati Father of his peoples; all these Gods and these five elemental substances, even earth, air, ether, water and the shining principles; and these great creatures and those small; and seeds of either sort; and things egg-born and things sweat-born and things born of the womb and plants that sprout; and horses and cattle and men and elephants; yea, whatsoever thing here breatheth and all that moveth and everything that hath wings and whatso moveth not; by Wisdom all these are guided and have their firm abiding in Wisdom. For Wisdom is the eye of the world, Wisdom is the sure foundation, Wisdom is Brahman Eternal.

स एतेन प्रज्ञेनात्मनास्माल्लोकादुत्क्रम्यामुष्मिन् स्वर्गे लोके सर्वान्
कामानाप्त्वामृतः समभवत्समभवत् ॥ ४ ॥

4. By the strength of the wise and seeing Self the sage having soared up from this world ascended into his other world of Paradise; and there having possessed desire, put death behind him, yea, he put death behind him.

Taittiriya Upanishad

Shiksha Valli

Chapter I

हरिः ॐ। शं नो मित्रः शं वरुणः। शं नो भवत्वर्यमा। शं न इन्द्रो बृहस्पतिः। शं नो विष्णुरुरुक्रमः। नमो ब्रह्मणे। नमस्ते वायो। त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि। त्वामेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्म वदिष्यामि। ऋतं वदिष्यामि। सत्यं वदिष्यामि। तन्मामवतु। तद्वक्तारमवतु। अवतु माम्। अवतु वक्तारम्। ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः॥

Hari OM. Be peace to us Mitra. Be peace to us Varouna. Be peace to us Aryaman. Be peace to us Indra & Brihaspati. May far-striding Vishnu be peace to us. Adoration to the Eternal. Adoration to thee, O Vaiou. Thou, thou art the visible Eternal and as the visible Eternal I will declare thee. I will declare Righteousness! I will declare Truth! May that protect me! May that protect the Speaker! Yea, may it protect me! May it protect the Speaker. OM Peace! Peace! Peace!

Chapter II

ॐ शीक्षां व्याख्यास्यामः। वर्णः स्वरः। मात्रा बलम्। साम संतानः। इत्युक्तः शीक्षाध्यायः॥

OM. We will expound Shiksha, the elements. Syllable and Accent, Pitch and Effort, Even Tone and Continuity, in these six we have declared the chapter of the elements.

Chapter III

सह नौ यशः। सह नौ ब्रह्मवर्चसम्। अथातः संहिताया उपनिषदं व्याख्यास्यामः। पञ्चस्वधिकरणेषु। अधिलोकमधिज्यौतिषमधिविद्यमधिप्रजमध्यात्मम्। ता महासंहिता इत्याचक्षते।

अथाधिलोकम्। पृथिवी पूर्वरूपम्। द्यौरुत्तररूपम्। आकाशः
संधिः। वायुः संधानम्। इत्यधिलोकम्।
अथाधिज्यौतिषम्। अग्निः पूर्वरूपम्। आदित्य उत्तररूपम्।
आपः संधिः। वैद्युतः संधानम्। इत्यधिज्यौतिषम्।
अथाधिविद्यम्। आचार्यः पूर्वरूपम्। अन्तेवास्युत्तररूपम्। विद्या
संधिः। प्रवचनं संधानम्। इत्यधिविद्यम्।
अथाधिप्रजम्। माता पूर्वरूपम्। पितोत्तररूपम्। प्रजा संधिः।
प्रजननं संधानम्। इत्यधिप्रजम्।
अथाध्यात्मम्। अधरा हनुः पूर्वरूपम्। उत्तरा हनुरुत्तररूपम्।
वाक् संधिः। जिह्वा संधानम्। इत्यध्यात्मम्।
इतीमा महासंहिताः। य एवमेता महासंहिता व्याख्याता वेद।
संधीयते प्रजया पशुभिः। ब्रह्मवर्चसेनान्नाद्येन सुवर्ग्येण लोकेन॥

Together may we attain glory, together to the radiance of holiness. Hereupon we will expound next the secret meaning of Sanhita whereof there are five capitals; Concerning the Worlds: Concerning the Shining Fires: Concerning the Knowledge: Concerning Progeny: Concerning Self. These are called the great Sanhitas.

Now concerning the worlds. Earth is the first form; the heavens are the second form; ether is the linking; air is the joint of the linking. Thus far concerning the worlds.

Next concerning the shining fires. Fire is the first form; the Sun is the latter form; the waters are the linking; electricity is the joint of the linking. Thus far concerning the shining fires.

Next concerning the Knowledge. The Master is the first form; the disciple is the latter form; Knowledge is the linking; exposition is the joint of the linking. Thus far concerning the Knowledge.

Next concerning progeny. The mother is the first form; the father is the latter form; progeny is the linking; act of procreation is the joint of the linking. Thus far concerning progeny.

Next concerning Self. The upper jaw is the first form; the lower jaw is the latter form; speech is the linking; the tongue is the joint of the linking. Thus far concerning Self.

These are the great Sanhitas. He who knoweth thus the great Sanhitas as we have expounded them, to him are linked progeny and wealth of cattle and the radiance of holiness and food and all that is of food and the world of his high estate in heaven.

Chapter IV

यश्छन्दसामृषभो विश्वरूपः। छन्दोभ्योऽध्यमृतात्संबभूव। स मेन्द्रो मेधया स्पृणोतु। अमृतस्य देव धारणो भूयासम्। शरीरं मे विचर्षणम्। जिह्वा मे मधुमत्तमा। कर्णाभ्यां भूरि विश्रुवम्। ब्रह्मणः कोशोऽसि मेधया पिहितः। श्रुतं मे गोपाय।

आवहन्ती वितन्वाना। कुर्वाणाचीरमात्मनः। वासांसि मम गावश्च। अन्नपाने च सर्वदा। ततो मे श्रियमावह। लोमशां पशुभिः सह स्वाहा।

आ मा यन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा।
वि मायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा।
प्र मायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा।
दमायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा।
शमायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा।
यशो जनेऽसानि स्वाहा।
श्रेयान् वस्यसोऽसानि स्वाहा।
तं त्वा भग प्रविशानि स्वाहा।
स मा भग प्रविश स्वाहा।
तस्मिन् सहस्रशाखे। नि भगाहं त्वयि मृजे स्वाहा।

यथापः प्रवता यन्ति। यथा मासा अहर्जरम्। एवं मां ब्रह्मचारिणः। धातरायन्तु सर्वतः स्वाहा।

प्रतिवेशोऽसि प्र मा भाहि प्र मा पद्यस्व॥

The bull of the hymns of Veda whose visible form is all this Universe, he above the Vedas who sprang from that which is deathless, may Indra increase intellect unto me for my strengthening. O God, may I become a vessel of immortality. May my body be swift to all works, may my tongue drop pure honey. May I hear vast and manifold lore with my ears. O Indra, thou art the sheath of the Eternal and the veil that the workings of brain have drawn over Him; preserve whole unto me the sacred lore that I have studied.

She bringeth unto me wealth and extendeth it, yea, she maketh speedily my own raiment and cattle and drink and food now and always; therefore carry to me Fortune of much fleecy wealth and cattle with her. Swaha!

May the Brahmacharins come unto me. Swaha!

From here and there may the Brahmacharins come unto me. Swaha!

May the Brahmacharins set forth unto me. Swaha!

May the Brahmacharins attain self-mastery. Swaha!

May the Brahmacharins attain to peace of soul. Swaha!

May I be a name among the folk! Swaha!

May I be the first of the wealthy! Swaha!

O Glorious Lord, into That which is Thou may I enter. Swaha!

Do thou also enter into me, O Shining One. Swaha!

Thou art a river with a hundred branching streams, O Lord of Grace, in thee may I wash me clean. Swaha!

As the waters of a river pour down the steep, as the months of the year hasten to the old age of days, O Lord that cherisheth, so may the Brahmacharins come to me from all the regions. Swaha!

O Lord, thou art my neighbour, thou dwellest very near me. Come to me, be my light and sun.

Chapter V

भूर्भुवः सुवरिति वा एतास्तिस्रो व्याहृतयः। तासामु ह स्मैतां चतुर्थीम्। माहाचमस्यः प्रवेदयते। मह इति। तद् ब्रह्म। स आत्मा। अङ्गान्यन्या देवताः।

भूरिति वा अयं लोकः। भुव इत्यन्तरिक्षम्। सुवरित्यसौ लोकः। मह इत्यादित्यः। आदित्येन वाव सर्वे लोका महीयन्ते।

भूरिति वा अग्निः। भुव इति वायुः। सुवरित्यादित्यः। मह इति चन्द्रमाः। चन्द्रमसा वाव सर्वाणि ज्योतींषि महीयन्ते।

भूरिति वा ऋचः। भुव इति सामानि। सुवरिति यजूंषि। मह इति ब्रह्म। ब्रह्मणा वाव सर्वे वेदा महीयन्ते।

भूरिति वै प्राणः। भुव इत्यपानः। सुवरिति व्यानः। मह इत्यन्नम्। अन्नेन वाव सर्वे प्राणा महीयन्ते।

ता वा एताश्चतस्रश्चतुर्धा । चतस्रश्चतस्रो व्याहृतयः । ता यो वेद । स वेद ब्रह्म । सर्वेऽस्मै देवा बलिमावहन्ति ॥

Bhûr, Bhuvar and Suvar, these are the three Words of His naming. Verily the Rishi Mahachamasya made known a fourth to these, which is Mahas. It is Brahman, it is the Self, and the other gods are his members.

Bhûr, it is this world; Bhuvar, it is the sky; Suvar, it is the other world: but Mahas is the Sun. By the Sun all these worlds increase and prosper.

Bhûr, it is Fire; Bhuvar, it is Air; Suvar, it is the Sun: but Mahas is the Moon. By the Moon all these shining fires increase and prosper.

Bhûr, it is the hymns of the Rigveda; Bhuvar, it is the hymns of the Sâma; Suvar, it is the hymns of the Yajur: but Mahas is the Eternal. By the Eternal all these Vedas increase and prosper.

Bhûr, it is the main breath; Bhuvar, it is the lower breath; Suvar, it is the breath pervasor: but Mahas is food. By food all these breaths increase and prosper.

These are the four & they are fourfold; — four Words of His naming and each is four again. He who knoweth these knoweth the Eternal, and to him all the Gods carry the offering.

Chapter VI

स य एषोऽन्तर्हृदय आकाशः । तस्मिन्नयं पुरुषो मनोमयः । अमृतो हिरण्मयः । अन्तरेण तालुके । य एष स्तन इवावलम्बते । सेन्द्रयोनिः । यत्रासौ केशान्तो विवर्तते । व्यपोह्य शीर्षकपाले ।

भूरित्यग्नौ प्रतितिष्ठति । भुव इति वायौ । सुवरित्यादित्ये । मह इति ब्रह्मणि । आप्नोति स्वाराज्यम् । आप्नोति मनसस्पतिम् । वाक्पतिश्चक्षुष्पतिः । श्रोत्रपतिर्विज्ञानपतिः । एतत्ततो भवति । आकाशशरीरं ब्रह्म । सत्यात्म प्राणारामं मनआनन्दम् । शान्तिसमृद्धममृतम् । इति प्राचीनयोग्योपास्स्व ॥

Lo this heaven of ether which is in the heart within, there dwelleth the Being who is all Mind, the radiant & golden Immortal. Between the two palates, this that hangeth down like the breast of a woman, is the womb of Indra; yea where the hair at its end whirleth round like an eddy, there it divideth the skull and pusheth through it.

As Bhûr He is established in Agni, as Bhuvar in Vaiou, as Suvar in the Sun, as Mahas in the Eternal. He attaineth to the kingdom of Himself; He attaineth to be the Lord of Mind; He becometh Lord of Speech, Lord of Sight, Lord of Hearing, Lord of the Knowledge. Thereafter this too He becometh, — the Eternal whose body is all ethereal space, whose soul is Truth, whose bliss is in Mind, who taketh His ease in Prana, the Rich in Peace, the Immortal. As such, O son of the ancient Yoga, do thou adore Him.

Chapter VII

पृथिव्यन्तरिक्षं द्यौर्दिशोऽवान्तरदिशः। अग्निर्वायुरादित्यश्चन्द्रमा नक्षत्राणि। आप ओषधयो वनस्पतय आकाश आत्मा। इत्यधिभूतम्।

अथाध्यात्मम्। प्राणो व्यानोऽपान उदानः समानः। चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाक् त्वक्। चर्म मांसं स्नावास्थि मज्जा। एतदधिविधाय ऋषिरवोचत्। पाङ्क्तं वा इदं सर्वम्। पाङ्क्तेनैव पाङ्क्तं स्पृणोतीति॥

Earth, sky, heaven, the quarters and the lesser quarters; Fire, Air, Sun, Moon and the Constellations; Waters, herbs of healing, trees of the forest, ether and the Self in all; these three concerning this outer creation.

Then concerning the Self. The main breath, the middle breath, the nether breath, the upper breath and the breath pervasor; eye, ear, mind, speech and the skin; hide, flesh, muscle, bone and marrow. Thus the Rishi divided them and said, "In sets of five is this universe; five and five with five and five He relateth."

Chapter VIII

ओमिति ब्रह्म। ओमितीदं सर्वम्। ओमित्येतदनुकृतिर्ह स्म वा अप्यो श्रावयेत्याश्रावयन्ति। ओमिति सामानि गायन्ति। ओं शोमिति शस्त्राणि शंसन्ति। ओमित्यध्वर्युः प्रतिगरं प्रतिगृणाति। ओमिति ब्रह्मा

प्रसौति। ओमित्यग्निहोत्रमनुजानाति। ओमिति ब्राह्मणः प्रवक्ष्यन्नाह ब्रह्मोपाप्नवानीति। ब्रह्मैवोपाप्नोति ॥

OM is the Eternal, OM is all this universe. OM is the syllable of assent: saying OM! let us hear, they begin the citation. With OM they sing the hymns of the Sama; with OM SHOM they pronounce the Shastra. With OM the priest officiating at the sacrifice sayeth the response. With OM Brahma beginneth creation (or With OM the chief priest giveth sanction). With OM one sanctioneth the burnt offering. With OM the Brahmin ere he expound the Knowledge, crieth "May I attain the Eternal." The Eternal verily he attaineth.

Chapter IX

ऋतं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। सत्यं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। तपश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। दमश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। शमश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। अग्नयश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। अग्निहोत्रं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। अतिथयश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। मानुषं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। प्रजा च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। प्रजनश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। प्रजातिश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। सत्यमिति सत्यवचा राथीतरः। तप इति तपोनित्यः पौरुशिष्टिः। स्वाध्यायप्रवचने एवेति नाको मौद्गल्यः। तद्धि तपस्तद्धि तपः ॥

Righteousness with the study & teaching of Veda; Truth with the study and teaching of Veda; askesis with the study and teaching of Veda; self-mastery with the study and teaching of Veda. Peace of soul with the study and teaching of Veda. The household fires with the study and teaching of Veda. The burnt offering with the study and teaching of Veda. Progeny with the study and teaching of Veda. Act of procreation with the study and teaching of Veda. Children of thy children with the study and teaching of Veda — *these duties*. "Truth is first" said the truth-speaker, the Rishi son of Rathitar. "Askesis is first" said the constant in austerity, the Rishi son of Purushishta. "Study and teaching of Veda is first" said Naka son of Mudgala. For this too is austerity and this too is askesis.

Chapter X

अहं वृक्षस्य रेरिवा। कीर्तिः पृष्ठं गिरेरिव। ऊर्ध्वपवित्रो वाजिनीव स्वमृतमस्मि। द्रविणं सवर्चसम्। सुमेधा अमृतोऽक्षितः। इति त्रिशङ्कोर्वेदानुवचनम्।

"I am He that moveth the Tree of the Universe & my glory is like the shoulders of a high mountain. I am lofty and pure like sweet nectar in the strong, I am the shining riches of the world, I am the deep thinker, the deathless One who decayeth not from the beginning." This is Trishanku's voicing of Veda and the hymn of his self-knowledge.

Chapter XI

वेदमनूच्याचार्योऽन्तेवासिनमनुशास्ति।

सत्यं वद। धर्मं चर। स्वाध्यायान्मा प्रमदः। आचार्याय प्रियं धनमाहृत्य प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः। सत्यान्न प्रमदितव्यम्। धर्मान्न प्रमदितव्यम्। कुशलान्न प्रमदितव्यम्। भूत्यै न प्रमदितव्यम्। स्वाध्यायप्रवचनाभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यम्।

देवपितृकार्याभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यम्। मातृदेवो भव। पितृदेवो भव। आचार्यदेवो भव। अतिथिदेवो भव। यान्यनवद्यानि कर्माणि। तानि सेवितव्यानि। नो इतराणि। यान्यस्माकं सुचरितानि। तानि त्वयोपास्यानि। नो इतराणि।

ये के चास्मच्छ्रेयांसो ब्राह्मणाः। तेषां त्वयासनेन प्रश्वसितव्यम्। श्रद्धया देयम्। अश्रद्धयाऽदेयम्। श्रिया देयम्। ह्रिया देयम्। भिया देयम्। संविदा देयम्। अथ यदि ते कर्मविचिकित्सा वा वृत्तविचिकित्सा वा स्यात्। ये तत्र ब्राह्मणाः संमर्शिनः। युक्ता आयुक्ताः। अलूक्षा धर्मकामाः स्युः। यथा ते तत्र वर्तेरन्। तथा तत्र वर्तेथाः। अथाभ्याख्यातेषु। ये तत्र ब्राह्मणाः संमर्शिनः। युक्ता आयुक्ताः। अलूक्षा धर्मकामाः स्युः। यथा ते तेषु वर्तेरन्। तथा तेषु वर्तेथाः।

एष आदेशः। एष उपदेशः। एषा वेदोपनिषत्। एतदनुशासनम्। एवमुपासितव्यम्। एवमु चैतदुपास्यम्॥

When the Master hath declared Veda, then he giveth the commandments to his disciple.

Speak truth, walk in the way of thy duty, neglect not the study of Veda. When thou hast brought to the Master the wealth that he desireth, thou shalt not cut short the long thread of thy race. Thou shalt not be negligent of truth; thou shalt not be negligent of thy duty; thou shalt not be negligent of welfare; thou shalt not be negligent towards thy increase and thy thriving; thou shalt not be negligent of the study & teaching of Veda.

Thou shalt not be negligent of thy works unto the Gods or thy works unto the Fathers. Let thy father be unto thee as thy God and thy mother as thy Goddess whom thou adorest. Serve the Master as a God and as a God the stranger within thy dwelling. The works that are without blame before the people, thou shalt do these with diligence and no others. The deeds we have done that are good and righteous, thou shalt practise these as a religion and no others.

Whosoever are better and nobler than we among the Brahmins, thou shalt refresh with a seat to honour them. Thou shalt give with faith and reverence; without faith thou shalt not give. Thou shalt give with shame, thou shalt give with fear; thou shalt give with fellow-feeling. Moreover if thou doubt of thy course or of thy action, then whatsoever Brahmins be there who are careful thinkers, devout, not moved by others, lovers of virtue, not severe or cruel, even as they do in that thing, so do thou. Then as to men accused & arraigned by their fellows, whatsoever Brahmins be there who are careful thinkers, devout, not moved by others, lovers of virtue, not severe or cruel, even as they are towards these, so be thou.

This is the law & the teaching. These are the Commandments. In such wise shalt thou practise religion, yea, verily in such wise do ever religiously.

Chapter XII

शं नो मित्रः शं वरुणः। शं नो भवत्वर्यमा। शं न इन्द्रो बृहस्पतिः। शं नो विष्णुरुरुक्रमः। नमो ब्रह्मणे। नमस्ते वायो। त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि। त्वामेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मावादिषम्। ऋतमवादिषम्। सत्यमवादिषम्।

तन्मामावीत्। तद्वक्तारमावीत्। आवीन्माम्। आवीद्वक्तारम्। ॐ
शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः। हरिः ॐ॥

Be peace to us Mitra. Be peace to us Varouna. Be peace to us Aryaman. Be peace to us Indra and Brihaspati. May far-striding Vishnu be peace to us. Adoration to the Eternal. Adoration to thee, O Vaiou. Thou, thou art the visible Eternal & as the visible Eternal I have declared thee. I have declared Righteousness; I have declared Truth. That has protected me. That has protected the Speaker. Yea it protected me; it protected the Speaker. OM. Peace. Peace. Peace. Hari OM.

Brahmananda Valli

हरिः ॐ। सह नाववतु। सह नौ भुनक्तु। सह वीर्यं करवावहै। तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै। ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः॥

Hari OM. Together may He protect us, together may He possess us, together may we make unto us strength and virility. May our study be full to us of light and power. May we never hate. OM! Peace, peace, peace.

Chapter I

ॐ ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम्। तदेषाभ्युक्ता। सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म। यो वेद निहितं गुहायां परमे व्योमन्। सोऽश्नुते सर्वान्कामान् सह। ब्रह्मणा विपश्चितेति।

तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः संभूतः। आकाशाद् वायुः। वायोरग्निः। अग्नेरापः। अद्भ्यः पृथिवी। पृथिव्या ओषधयः। ओषधीभ्योऽन्नम्। अन्नात्पुरुषः। स वा एष पुरुषोऽन्नरसमयः। तस्येदमेव शिरः। अयं दक्षिणः पक्षः। अयमुत्तरः पक्षः। अयमात्मा। इदं पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

OM. The knower of Brahman attaineth the Highest; for this is the verse that was declared of old, “Brahman is Truth, Brahman is Knowledge, Brahman is the Infinite, he that findeth Him hidden in the cavern heart of being; in the highest heaven of His creatures, lo he enjoyeth all desire and he abideth with the Eternal, even with that cognisant and understanding Spirit.”

This is the Self, the Spirit, and from the Spirit ether was born; and from the ether, air; and from the air, fire; and from the fire, the waters; and from the waters, earth; and from the earth, herbs and plants; and from the herbs and plants, food; and from food man was born. Verily, man, this human being, is made of the essential substance of food. And this that we see is the head of him, and this is his right side and this is his left; and this is his spirit & the self of him; and this is his lower member whereon he resteth abidingly. Whereof this is the Scripture.

Chapter II

> अन्नाद्वै प्रजाः प्रजायन्ते। याः काश्च पृथिवीं श्रिताः। अथो अन्नेनैव जीवन्ति। अथैनदपि यन्त्यन्ततः। अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम्। तस्मात् सर्वौषधमुच्यते। सर्वं वै तेऽन्नमाप्नुवन्ति। येऽन्नं ब्रह्मोपासते। अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम्। तस्मात्सर्वौषधमुच्यते। अन्नाद् भूतानि जायन्ते। जातान्यन्नेन वर्धन्ते। अद्यतेऽत्ति च भूतानि। तस्मादन्नं तदुच्यत इति।
>
> तस्माद्वा एतस्मादन्नरसमयात्। अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा प्राणमयः। तेनैष पूर्णः। स वा एष पुरुषविध एव। तस्य पुरुषविधताम्। अन्वयं पुरुषविधः। तस्य प्राण एव शिरः। व्यानो दक्षिणः पक्षः। अपान उत्तरः पक्षः। आकाश आत्मा। पृथिवी पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

Verily all sorts and races of creatures that have their refuge upon earth, are begotten from food; thereafter they live also by food and 'tis to food again that they return at the end and last. For food is the eldest of created things and therefore they name it the Green Stuff of the Universe. Verily they who worship the Eternal as food, attain the mastery of food to the uttermost; for food is the eldest of created things and therefore they name it the Green Stuff of the Universe. From food all creatures are born and being born they increase by food. Lo it is eaten and it eateth; yea it devoureth the creatures that feed upon it, therefore it is called food from the eating.

Now there is a second and inner Self which is other than this that is of the substance of food; and it is made of the vital stuff called Prana. And the Self of Prana filleth the Self of food. Now the Self of Prana is made in the image of a man; according as is the human image of the other, so is it in the image of the man. The main Breath is the head of him, the breath pervasor is his right side and the lower breath is his left side; ether is his spirit which is the self of him, earth is his lower member whereon he resteth abidingly. Whereof this is the Scripture.

Chapter III

प्राणं देवा अनु प्राणन्ति। मनुष्याः पशवश्च ये। प्राणो हि भूतानामायुः। तस्मात्सर्वायुषमुच्यते। सर्वमेव त आयुर्यन्ति। ये प्राणं ब्रह्मोपासते। प्राणो हि भूतानामायुः। तस्मात्सर्वायुषमुच्यत इति। तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा। यः पूर्वस्य।

तस्माद्वा एतस्मात्प्राणमयात्। अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा मनोमयः। तेनैष पूर्णः। स वा एष पुरुषविध एव। तस्य पुरुषविधताम्। अन्वयं पुरुषविधः। तस्य यजुरेव शिरः। ऋग्दक्षिणः पक्षः। सामोत्तरः पक्षः। आदेश आत्मा। अथर्वाङ्गिरसः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

The Gods live and breathe under the dominion of Prana and men and all these that are beasts; for Prana is the life of created things & therefore they name it the Life-Stuff of the All. Verily they who worship the Eternal as Prana attain mastery of Life to the uttermost; for Prana is the life of created things and therefore they name it the Life-Stuff of the All. And this Self of Prana is the soul in the body of the former one which was of food.

Now there is yet a second and inner Self which is other than this that is of Prana, and it is made of Mind. And the Self of Mind filleth the Self of Prana. Now the Self of Mind is made in the image of a man; according as is the human image of the other, so is it in the image of the man. Yajur is the head of him and the Rigveda is his right side and the Samaveda is his left side: the Commandment is his spirit which is the self of him, Atharvan Ungirus is his lower member whereon he resteth abidingly. Whereof this is the Scripture.

Chapter IV

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते। अप्राप्य मनसा सह। आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान्। न बिभेति कदाचनेति। तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा। यः पूर्वस्य।

तस्माद्वा एतस्मान्मनोमयात्। अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा विज्ञानमयः। तेनैष पूर्णः। स वा एष पुरुषविध एव। तस्य पुरुषविधताम्। अन्वयं पुरुषविधः। तस्य श्रद्धैव शिरः। ऋतं दक्षिणः पक्षः। सत्यमुत्तरः पक्षः। योग आत्मा। महः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

The delight of the Eternal from which words turn away without attaining and the mind also returneth baffled, who knoweth the delight of the Eternal? He shall fear nought now or hereafter. And this Self of Mind is the soul in the body to the former one which was of Prana.

Now there is yet a second and inner Self which is other than this which is of Mind and it is made of Knowledge. And the Self of Knowledge filleth the Self of Mind. Now the Knowledge-Self is made in the image of a man; according as is the human image of the other, so is it in the image of the man. Faith is the head of him, Law is his right side, Truth is his left side; Yoga is his spirit which is the self of him; Mahas (the material world) is his lower member whereon he resteth abidingly. Whereof this is the Scripture.

Chapter V

> विज्ञानं यज्ञं तनुते। कर्माणि तनुतेऽपि च। विज्ञानं देवाः सर्वे। ब्रह्म ज्येष्ठमुपासते। विज्ञानं ब्रह्म चेद्वेद। तस्माच्चेन्न प्रमाद्यति। शरीरे पाप्मनो हित्वा। सर्वान्कामान् समश्नुत इति। तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा। यः पूर्वस्य।
>
> तस्माद्वा एतस्माद्विज्ञानमयात्। अन्योऽन्तर आत्मानन्दमयः। तेनैष पूर्णः। स वा एष पुरुषविध एव। तस्य पुरुषविधताम्। अन्वयं पुरुषविधः। तस्य प्रियमेव शिरः। मोदो दक्षिणः पक्षः। प्रमोद उत्तरः पक्षः। आनन्द आत्मा। ब्रह्म पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

Knowledge spreadeth the feast of sacrifice and knowledge spreadeth also the feast of works; all the gods offer adoration to him as to Brahman and the Elder of the Universe. For if one worship Brahman as the knowledge and if one swerve not from it neither falter, then he casteth sin from him in this body and tasteth all desire. And this Self of Knowledge is the soul in the body to the former one which was of Mind.

Now there is yet a second and inner self which is other than this which is of Knowledge and it is fashioned out of Bliss. And the Self of Bliss filleth the Self of Knowledge. Now the Bliss

Self is made in the image of a man; according as is the human image of the other, so is it made in the image of the man. Love is the head of Him; Joy is His right side; pleasure is His left side; Bliss is His spirit which is the self of Him; the Eternal is His lower member wherein He resteth abidingly. Whereof this is the Scripture.

Chapter VI

असन्नेव स भवति। असद् ब्रह्मेति वेद चेत्। अस्ति ब्रह्मेति चेद्वेद।
सन्तमेनं ततो विदुरिति। तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा। यः पूर्वस्य।
अथातोऽनुप्रश्नाः। उताविद्वानमुं लोकं प्रेत्य। कश्चन गच्छती३। आहो
विद्वानमुं लोकं प्रेत्य। कश्चित्समश्नुता३ उ।

सोऽकामयत। बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति। स तपोऽतप्यत। स
तपस्तप्त्वा। इदं सर्वमसृजत। यदिदं किंच। तत्सृष्ट्वा। तदेवानुप्राविशत्।
तदनुप्रविश्य। सच्च त्यच्चाभवत्। निरुक्तं चानिरुक्तं च। निलयनं
चानिलयनं च। विज्ञानं चाविज्ञानं च। सत्यं चानृतं च सत्यमभवत्।
यदिदं किंच। तत्सत्यमित्याचक्षते। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

One becometh as the unexisting, if he know the Eternal as negation; but if one knoweth of the Eternal that He is, then men know him for the saint & the one reality. And this Self of Bliss is the soul in the body to the former one which was of Knowledge. And thereupon there arise these questions. "When one who hath not the Knowledge, passeth over to that other world, doth any such travel farther? Or when one who knoweth, hath passed over to the other world, doth any such enjoy possession?"

The Spirit desired of old "I would be manifold for the birth of peoples." Therefore He concentrated all Himself in thought, and by the force of His brooding He created all this universe, yea all whatsoever existeth. Now when He had brought it forth, He entered into that He had created, He entering in became the Is here and the May Be there; He became that which is defined and that which hath no feature; He became this housèd thing and that houseless; He became Knowledge and He became Ignorance; He became Truth and He became falsehood. Yea He became all truth, even whatsoever here existeth. Therefore they say of Him that He is Truth. Whereof this is the Scripture.

Chapter VII

असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत्। ततो वै सदजायत। तदात्मानं स्वयमकुरुत। तस्मात् तत्सुकृतमुच्यत इति। यद्वै तत्सुकृतम्। रसो वै सः। रसं ह्येवायं लब्ध्वानन्दी भवति। को ह्येवान्यात्कः प्राण्यात्। यदेष आकाश आनन्दो न स्यात्। एष ह्येवानन्दयाति। यदा ह्येवैष एतस्मिन्नदृश्येऽनात्म्येऽनिरुक्तेऽनिलयनेऽभयं प्रतिष्ठां विन्दते। अथ सोऽभयं गतो भवति। यदा ह्येवैष एतस्मिन्नुदरमन्तरं कुरुते। अथ तस्य भयं भवति। तत् त्वेव भयं विदुषोऽमन्वानस्य। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

In the beginning all this Universe was Non-Existent and Unmanifest, from which this manifest Existence was born. Itself created itself; none other created it. Therefore they say of it the well and beautifully made. Lo this that is well and beautifully made, verily it is no other than the delight behind existence. When he hath gotten him this delight, then it is that this creature becometh a thing of bliss; for who could labour to draw in the breath or who could have strength to breathe it out, if there were not that Bliss in the heaven of his heart, the ether within his being? It is He that is the fountain of bliss; for when the Spirit that is within us findeth his refuge and firm foundation in the Invisible Bodiless Undefinable and Unhoused Eternal, then he hath passed beyond the reach of Fear. But when the Spirit that is within us maketh for himself even a little difference in the Eternal, then he hath fear, yea the Eternal himself becometh a terror to such a knower who thinketh not. Whereof this is the Scripture.

Chapter VIII

भीषास्माद् वातः पवते। भीषोदेति सूर्यः। भीषास्मादग्निश्चेन्द्रश्च। मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चम इति। सैषानन्दस्य मीमांसा भवति। युवा स्यात् साधुयुवाध्यायकः। आशिष्ठो दृढिष्ठो बलिष्ठः। तस्येयं पृथिवी सर्वा

वित्तस्य पूर्णा स्यात्। स एको मानुष आनन्दः। ते ये शतं मानुषा आनन्दाः। स एको मनुष्यगन्धर्वाणामानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। ते ये शतं मनुष्यगन्धर्वाणामानन्दाः। स एको देवगन्धर्वाणामानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। ते ये शतं देवगन्धर्वाणामानन्दाः। स एकः पितॄणां चिरलोकलोकानामानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। ते ये शतं पितॄणां चिरलोकलोकानामानन्दाः। स एक आजानजानां देवानामानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। ते ये शतमाजानजानां देवानामानन्दाः। स एकः कर्मदेवानां देवानामानन्दः। ये कर्मणा देवानपियन्ति। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। ते ये शतं कर्मदेवानां देवानामानन्दाः। स एको देवानामानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। ते ये शतं देवानामानन्दाः। स एक इन्द्रस्यानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। ते ये शतमिन्द्रस्यानन्दाः। स एको बृहस्पतेरानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। ते ये शतं बृहस्पतेरानन्दाः। स एकः प्रजापतेरानन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य। ते ये शतं प्रजापतेरानन्दाः। स एको ब्रह्मण आनन्दः। श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य।

स यश्चायं पुरुषे। यश्चासावादित्ये। स एकः। स य एवंवित्। अस्माल्लोकात् प्रेत्य। एतमन्नमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति। एतं प्राणमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति। एतं मनोमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति। एतं विज्ञानमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति। एतमानन्दमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

Through the fear of Him the Wind bloweth; through the fear of Him the Sun riseth; through the fear of Him Indra and Agni and Death hasten in their courses. Behold this exposition of the Bliss to which ye shall hearken. Let there be a young man, excellent & lovely in his youth, a great student; let him have fair manners and a most firm heart and great strength of body, and let all this wide earth be full of wealth for his enjoying. That is the measure of bliss of one human being. Now a hundred and a hundredfold of the human measure of bliss, is one bliss of men that have become angels in heaven. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth. A hundred and a hundredfold of this measure of angelic bliss is one bliss of Gods that are angels in heaven. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth. A hundred and a hundredfold of this measure of divine angelic bliss is one bliss of the Fathers whose world of heaven is their world for ever. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth. A hundred and a hundredfold of this measure of bliss of the Fathers whose worlds are for ever, is one bliss of the Gods who are born as Gods in heaven. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth. A hundred and a hundredfold of this measure of bliss of the firstborn in heaven, is one bliss of the Gods of work who are Gods, for by the strength of their deeds they depart and are Gods in heaven. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth. A hundred and a hundredfold of this measure of bliss of the Gods of work, is one bliss of the great Gods who are Gods for ever. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth. A hundred and a hundredfold of this measure of divine bliss, is one bliss of Indra, the King in Heaven. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth. A hundred and a hundredfold of this measure of Indra's bliss is one bliss of Brihaspati, who taught the Gods in heaven. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth. A hundred and a hundredfold of this measure of Brihaspati's bliss, is one bliss of Prajapati, the Almighty Father. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth. A hundred and a hundredfold of this measure of Prajapati's bliss, is one bliss of the Eternal Spirit. And this is the bliss of the Vedawise whose soul the blight of desire not toucheth.

The Spirit who is here in a man and the Spirit who is there in the Sun, it is one Spirit and there is no other. He who knoweth this, when he hath gone away from this world, passeth to this Self which is of food; he passeth to this Self which is of Prana; he passeth to this Self which is of Mind; he passeth to this Self which is of Knowledge; he passeth to this Self which is of Bliss. Whereof this is the Scripture.

Chapter IX

> यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते। अप्राप्य मनसा सह। आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान्।
> न बिभेति कुतश्चनेति। एतं ह वाव न तपति। किमहं साधु नाकरवम्।
> किमहं पापमकरवमिति। स य एवं विद्वानेते आत्मानं स्पृणुते। उभे
> ह्येवैष एते आत्मानं स्पृणुते। य एवं वेद। इत्युपनिषत्।
>
> सह नाववतु। सह नौ भुनक्तु। सह वीर्यं करवावहै। तेजस्वि
> नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै। ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः। हरिः
> ॐ ॥

The Bliss of the Eternal from which words turn back without attaining and mind also returneth baffled, who knoweth the Bliss of the Eternal? He feareth not for aught in this world or elsewhere. Verily to him cometh not remorse and her torment saying "Why have I left undone the good & why have I done that which was evil?" For he who knoweth the Eternal, knoweth these that they are alike his Spirit; yea, he knoweth both evil and good for what they are and delivereth Spirit, who knoweth the Eternal. And this is Upanishad, the secret of the Veda.

Together may He protect us, together may He possess us, together may we make unto us strength & virility. May our reading be full of light and power. May we never hate. OM Peace! Peace! Peace! Hari OM!

Bhrigu Valli

हरिः ॐ । सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै । तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै । ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Hari OM. Together may He protect us, together may He possess us, together may we make unto us force & virility. May our reading be full of light and power. May we never hate. OM Peace! Peace! Peace!

Chapter I

भृगुर्वै वारुणिः । वरुणं पितरमुपससार । अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति । तस्मा एतत् प्रोवाच । अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचमिति । तं होवाच । यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन जातानि जीवन्ति । यत् प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति । तद् विजिज्ञासस्व । तद् ब्रह्मेति । स तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा ॥

Bhrigu, Varouna's son, came unto his father Varouna and said "Lord, teach me the Eternal." And his father declared it unto him thus "Food and Prana and Eye and Ear and Mind — even these." Verily he said unto him "Seek thou to know that from which these creatures are born, whereby being born they live and to which they go hence and enter again; for that is the Eternal." And Bhrigu concentrated himself in thought and by the askesis of his brooding

Chapter II

अन्नं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । अन्नाद्ध्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । अन्नेन जातानि जीवन्ति । अन्नं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति । तद्विज्ञाय । पुनरेव वरुणं पितरमुपससार । अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति । तं होवाच । तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व । तपो ब्रह्मेति । स तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा ॥

He knew food for the Eternal. For from food alone, it appeareth, are these creatures born and being born they live by food, and into food they depart and enter again. And when he had known this, he came again to Varouna his father and said “Lord, teach me the Eternal.” And his father said to him “By askesis do thou seek to know the Eternal, for concentration in thought is the Eternal.” He concentrated himself in thought and by the energy of his brooding

Chapter III

प्राणो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्। प्राणाद्ध्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते। प्राणेन जातानि जीवन्ति। प्राणं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति। तद्विज्ञाय। पुनरेव वरुणं पितरमुपससार। अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति। तं होवाच। तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व। तपो ब्रह्मेति। स तपोऽतप्यत। स तपस्तप्त्वा॥

He knew Prana for the Eternal. For from Prana alone, it appeareth, are these creatures born and being born they live by Prana and to Prana they go hence and return. And when he had known this, he came again to Varouna his father and said “Lord, teach me the Eternal.” But his father said to him “By askesis do thou seek to know the Eternal, for askesis in thought is the Eternal.” He concentrated himself in thought and by the energy of his brooding

Chapter IV

मनो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्। मनसो ह्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते। मनसा जातानि जीवन्ति। मनः प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति। तद्विज्ञाय। पुनरेव वरुणं पितरमुपससार। अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति। तं होवाच। तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व। तपो ब्रह्मेति। स तपोऽतप्यत। स तपस्तप्त्वा॥

He knew mind for the Eternal. For from mind alone, it appeareth, are these creatures born and being born they live by mind, and to mind they go hence and return. And when he had known this, he came again to Varouna his father and said "Lord, teach me the Eternal." But his father said to him "By askesis do thou seek to know the Eternal, for concentration of force is the Eternal." He concentrated himself in thought and by the energy of his brooding

Chapter V

विज्ञानं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्। विज्ञानाद्ध्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते। विज्ञानेन जातानि जीवन्ति। विज्ञानं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति। तद्विज्ञाय। पुनरेव वरुणं पितरमुपससार। अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति। तं होवाच। तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व। तपो ब्रह्मेति। स तपोऽतप्यत। स तपस्तप्त्वा॥

He knew Knowledge for the Eternal. For from Knowledge alone, it appeareth, are these creatures born and being born they live by Knowledge and to Knowledge they go hence and return. And when he had known this, he came again to Varouna his father and said "Lord, teach me the Eternal." But his father said to him "By askesis do thou seek to know the Eternal, for concentration of force is the Eternal." He concentrated himself in thought and by the energy of his brooding

Chapter VI

आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्। आनन्दाद्ध्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते। आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति। आनन्दं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति। सैषा भार्गवी वारुणी विद्या। परमे व्योमन्प्रतिष्ठिता। स य एवं वेद प्रतितिष्ठति। अन्नवानन्नादो भवति। महान्भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन। महान्कीर्त्या॥

He knew Bliss for the Eternal. For from Bliss alone, it appeareth, are these creatures born and being born they live by Bliss and to Bliss they go hence and return. This is the lore of Bhrigu, the lore of Varouna, which hath its firm base in the highest heaven.

Who knoweth, getteth his firm base, he becometh the master of food and its eater, great in progeny, great in cattle, great in the splendour of holiness, great in glory.

Chapter VII

अन्नं न निन्द्यात्। तद् व्रतम्। प्राणो वा अन्नम्। शरीरमन्नादम्। प्राणे
शरीरं प्रतिष्ठितम्। शरीरे प्राणः प्रतिष्ठितः। तदेतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितम्।
स य एतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितं वेद प्रतितिष्ठति। अन्नवानन्नादो भवति।
महान्भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन। महान्कीर्त्या॥

Thou shalt not blame food; for that is thy commandment unto labour. Verily Prana also is food, and the body is the eater. The body is established upon Prana and Prana is established upon the body. Therefore food here is established upon food. He who knoweth this food that is established upon food, getteth his firm base, he becometh the master of food and its eater, great in progeny, great in cattle, great in the radiance of holiness, great in glory.

Chapter VIII

अन्नं न परिचक्षीत। तद् व्रतम्। आपो वा अन्नम्। ज्योतिरन्नादम्।
अप्सु ज्योतिः प्रतिष्ठितम्। ज्योतिष्यापः प्रतिष्ठिताः। तदेतदन्नमन्ने
प्रतिष्ठितम्। स य एतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितं वेद प्रतितिष्ठति। अन्नवानन्नादो
भवति। महान्भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन। महान्कीर्त्या॥

Thou shalt not reject food; for that too is the vow of thy labour. Verily the waters also are food, and the bright fire is the eater. The fire is established upon the waters and the waters are established upon the fires. Here too is food established upon food. He who knoweth this food that is established upon food, getteth his firm base, he becometh the master of food and its eater, great in progeny, great in cattle, great in the radiance of holiness, great in glory.

Chapter IX

अन्नं बहु कुर्वीत। तद् व्रतम्। पृथिवी वा अन्नम्। आकाशोऽन्नादः। पृथिव्यामाकाशः प्रतिष्ठितः। आकाशे पृथिवी प्रतिष्ठिता। तदेतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितम्। स य एतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितं वेद प्रतितिष्ठति। अन्नवानन्नादो भवति। महान्भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन। महान्कीर्त्या॥

Thou shalt increase and amass food; for that too is thy commandment unto labour. Verily, earth also is food and ether is the eater. Ether is established upon earth and earth is established upon ether. Here too is food established upon food. He who knoweth this food that is established upon food, getteth his firm base. He becometh the master of food and its eater, great in progeny, great in cattle, great in the radiance of holiness, great in glory.

Chapter X

न कंचन वसतौ प्रत्याचक्षीत। तद् व्रतम्। तस्माद् यया कया च विधया बह्वन्नं प्राप्नुयात्। अराध्यस्मा अन्नमित्याचक्षते। एतद्वै मुखतोऽन्नं राद्धम्। मुखतोऽस्मा अन्नं राध्यते। एतद्वै मध्यतोऽन्नं राद्धम्। मध्यतोऽस्मा अन्नं राध्यते। एतद्वा अन्ततोऽन्नं राद्धम्। अन्ततोऽस्मा अन्नं राध्यते। य एवं वेद। क्षेम इति वाचि। योगक्षेम इति प्राणापानयोः। कर्मेति हस्तयोः। गतिरिति पादयोः। विमुक्तिरिति पायौ। इति मानुषीः समाज्ञाः। अथ दैवीः। तृप्तिरिति वृष्टौ। बलमिति विद्युति। यश इति पशुषु। ज्योतिरिति नक्षत्रेषु। प्रजातिरमृतमानन्द इत्युपस्थे। सर्वमित्याकाशे। तत्प्रतिष्ठेत्युपासीत। प्रतिष्ठावान् भवति। तन्मह इत्युपासीत। महान् भवति। तन्मन इत्युपासीत। मानवान् भवति। तन्नम इत्युपासीत। नम्यन्तेऽस्मै कामाः। तद् ब्रह्मेत्युपासीत। ब्रह्मवान् भवति। तद् ब्रह्मणः परिमर इत्युपासीत। पर्येणं म्रियन्ते द्विषन्तः सपत्नाः। परि येऽप्रिया भ्रातृव्याः। स यश्चायं पुरुषे। यश्चासावादित्ये। स एकः। स य एवंवित्। अस्माल्लोकात् प्रेत्य। एतमन्नमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य। एतं प्राणमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य। एतं मनोमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य। एतं विज्ञानमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य। एतमानन्दमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य। इमाँल्लोकान् कामान्नी कामरूप्यनुसंचरन्। एतत् साम गायन्नास्ते। हा३वु हा३वु हा३वु। अहमन्नमहमन्नमहमन्नम्। अहमन्नादो३ऽहमन्नादो३ऽहमन्नादः। अहं श्लोककृदहं

श्लोककृदहं श्लोककृत्। अहमस्मि प्रथमजा ऋता३स्य। पूर्वं देवेभ्यो अमृतस्य ना३भायि। यो मा ददाति स इदेव मा३वाः। अहमन्नमन्नमदन्तमा३द्मि। अहं विश्वं भुवनमभ्यभवा३म्। सुवर्न ज्योतीः। य एवं वेद। इत्युपनिषत्॥

सह नाववतु। सह नौ भुनक्तु। सह वीर्यं करवावहै। तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै। ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः। हरिः ॐ॥

Thou shalt not reject any man in thy habitation, for that too is thy commandment unto labour. Therefore in whatsoever sort do thou get thee great store of food. They say unto the stranger in their dwelling "Arise, the food is ready." Was the food made ready at the beginning? To him also is food made ready in the beginning. Was the food made ready in the middle? To him also is food made ready in the middle. Was the food made ready at the end & last? To him also is the food made ready at the end and last, who hath this knowledge. As prosperity in speech, as getting & having in the main breath and the nether, as work in the hands, as movement in the feet, as discharge in the anus, these are the cognitions in the human. Then in the divine; as satisfaction in the rain, as force in the lightning, as splendour in the beasts, as brightness in the constellations, as procreation and bliss and death conquered in the organ of pleasure, as the All in Ether. Pursue thou Him as the firm foundation of things & thou shalt get thee firm foundation. Pursue Him as Mahas, thou shalt become Mighty; pursue Him as Mind, thou shalt become full of mind; pursue Him as adoration, thy desires shall bow down before thee; pursue Him as the Eternal, thou shalt become full of the Spirit; pursue Him as the destruction of the Eternal that rangeth abroad, thou shalt see thy rivals and thy haters perish thick around thee and thy kin who loved thee not. The Spirit who is here in man & the Spirit who is there in the Sun, lo, it is One Spirit and there is no other. He who hath this knowledge, when he goeth from this world having passed to the Self which is of food; having passed to the Self which is of Prana; having passed to the Self which is of Mind; having passed to the Self which is of Knowledge; having passed to the Self which is of

Bliss, lo he rangeth about the worlds & eateth what he will and taketh what shape he will and ever he singeth the mighty Sama. "Ho! ho! ho! I am food! I am food! I am food! I am the eater of food! I am the eater! I am the eater! I am he who maketh Scripture! I am he who maketh! I am he who maketh! I am the firstborn of the Law; before the gods were, I am, yea at the very heart of immortality. He who giveth me, verily he preserveth me; for I being food, eat him that eateth. I have conquered the whole world and possessed it, my light is as the sun in its glory." Thus he singeth, who hath the knowledge. This verily is Upanishad, the secret of the Veda.

Together may He protect us, together may He possess us, together may we make unto us strength and virility! May our study be full of light and power! May we never hate! OM Peace! Peace! Peace! Hari OM!

Section Three

Incomplete Translations and Commentaries

Circa 1902–1912

Svetasvatara Upanishad

Chapter IV

य एकोऽवर्णो बहुधा शक्तियोगाद् वर्णाननेकान्निहितार्थो दधाति ।
वि चैति चान्ते विश्वमादौ स देवः स नो बुद्ध्या शुभया संयुनक्तु ॥ १॥

1. He who is one and without hue, but has ordained manifoldly many hues by the Yoga of his Force and holds within himself all objects, and in Him the universe dissolves in the end, that Godhead was in the beginning. May He yoke us with a good and bright understanding.

तदेवाग्निस्तदादित्यस्तद्वायुस्तदु चन्द्रमाः ।
तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म तदापस्तत्प्रजापतिः ॥ २॥

2. That alone is the fire and That the sun and That the wind and That too the moon; That is the Luminous, That the Brahman, That the waters, That the Father and Lord of creatures.

त्वं स्त्री त्वं पुमानसि त्वं कुमार उत वा कुमारी ।
त्वं जीर्णो दण्डेन वञ्चसि त्वं जातो भवसि विश्वतोमुखः ॥ ३॥

3. Thou art the woman and Thou the man; Thou art a boy and again a young virgin; Thou art yonder worn and aged man that walkest bent with thy staff. Lo, Thou becomest born and the world is full of thy faces.

नीलः पतङ्गो हरितो लोहिताक्षस्तडिद्गर्भ ऋतवः समुद्राः ।
अनादिमत् त्वं विभुत्वेन वर्तसे यतो जातानि भुवनानि विश्वा ॥ ४॥

4. Thou art the blue bird and the green and the scarlet-eyed, the womb of lightning and the seasons and the oceans. Thou

art that which is without beginning and thou movest with thy pervasive extension whence all the worlds are born.

अजामेकां लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां बह्वीः प्रजाः सृजमानां सरूपाः ।
अजो ह्येको जुषमाणोऽनुशेते जहात्येनां भुक्तभोगामजोऽन्यः ॥ ५ ॥

5. There is One, unborn, white and black and red, who is ever bringing forth many creatures with forms and her one unborn loves and cleaves to and lies with her; another unborn abandons, when all her enjoyments have been enjoyed.

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥ ६ ॥

6. Two winged birds cling about a common tree, comrades, yoke-fellows; and one eats the sweet fruit of the tree, the other eats not, but watches.

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः ।
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः ॥ ७ ॥

7. The Soul upon a common tree is absorbed and because he is not lord, grieves and is bewildered; but when he sees and cleaves to that other who is the Lord, he knows that all is His greatness and his sorrow passes away from him.

ऋचो अक्षरे परमे व्योमन् यस्मिन्देवा अधि विश्वे निषेदुः ।
यस्तं न वेद किमृचा करिष्यति य इत् तद्विदुस्त इमे समासते ॥ ८ ॥

8. In the highest immutable Heaven where all the gods have taken up their session, there are the verses of the Rigveda, and he who knows Him not, what shall he do with the Rik? They who know That, lo, it is they who thus are seated.

छन्दांसि यज्ञाः क्रतवो व्रतानि भूतं भव्यं यच्च वेदा वदन्ति ।
अस्मान्मायी सृजते विश्वमेतत् तस्मिंश्चान्यो मायया संनिरुद्धः ॥ ९ ॥

9. Rhythms and sacrifices and ritual and vows, what has been and what is to be and what the Vedas declare, — the Master

of Maya brings forth from that all this that is and there is another whom within it his Maya holds imprisoned.

मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम्।
तस्यावयवभूतैस्तु व्याप्तं सर्वमिदं जगत् ॥ १० ॥

10. Thou shalt know Maya to be Force of Nature and the Master of Maya to be the great Lord; this whole universe is occupied by His becomings that are His members.

यो योनिं योनिमधितिष्ठत्येको यस्मिन्निदं सं च वि चैति सर्वम्।
तमीशानं वरदं देवमीड्यं निचाय्येमां शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ॥ ११ ॥

11. He who being One enters every womb and in whom all this comes together and goes apart, the adorable Godhead who rules as lord and gives us our desirable boons, one having seen comes exceedingly unto this peace.

यो देवानां प्रभवश्चोद्भवश्च विश्वाधिपो रुद्रो महर्षिः।
हिरण्यगर्भं पश्यत जायमानं स नो बुद्ध्या शुभया संयुनक्तु ॥ १२ ॥

12. He who is the coming to birth of the gods and the arising of their being, the master of the universe, the Violent One, the Great Seer and beheld Hiranyagarbha born, — may he yoke us with a bright and good understanding.

यो देवानामधिपो यस्मिँल्लोका अधिश्रिताः।
य ईशे अस्य द्विपदश्चतुष्पदः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥ १३ ॥

13. He who is the master of the gods, in whom the worlds are lodged and who rules over this two-footed and four-footed, to what god should we offer the worship of our oblation?

सूक्ष्मातिसूक्ष्मं कलिलस्य मध्ये विश्वस्य स्रष्टारमनेकरूपम्।
विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारं ज्ञात्वा शिवं शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ॥ १४ ॥

14. Subtle beyond the subtle in the midst of the hurtling chaos, the creator of the universe who has many forms and being

one encompasses all, knowing as the Benign, one comes exceedingly to the peace.

स एव काले भुवनस्य गोप्ता विश्वाधिपः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः ।
यस्मिन् युक्ता ब्रह्मर्षयो देवताश्च तमेवं ज्ञात्वा मृत्युपाशां-
श्छिनत्ति ॥ १५ ॥

15. He in Time is the guardian of the world of existence and the master of the universe secret in all existences, — in whom have union of Yoga the holy sages and the gods; thus knowing him one cuts asunder the snares of Death.

घृतात्परं मण्डमिवातिसूक्ष्मं ज्ञात्वा शिवं सर्वभूतेषु गूढम् ।
विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारं ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥ १६ ॥

16. Knowing him who is exceedingly subtle like the cream above the clarified butter, the Benign secret in all existences, knowing the God who being one encompasses all, one is released from every bondage.

एष देवो विश्वकर्मा महात्मा सदा जनानां हृदये संनिविष्टः ।
हृदा मनीषा मनसाभिक्लृप्तो य एतद् विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥ १७ ॥

17. This is the God, the mighty Soul, the Architect of all, seated for ever in the hearts of creatures and he is realised by the heart and the intellect and the mind; who know this, they become immortal.

यदाऽतमस्तन्न दिवा न रात्रिर्न सन्न चासञ्शिव एव केवलः ।
तदक्षरं तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं प्रज्ञा च तस्मात्प्रसृता पुराणी ॥ १८ ॥

18. When there is no darkness, that is neither day nor night, nor being nor non-being, it is the absolute Benign alone; That is the immutable, that the supreme light of the Creating Sun and from it the Wisdom went forth that is of old.

नैनमूर्ध्वं न तिर्यञ्चं न मध्ये परिजग्रभत् ।
न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति यस्य नाम महद्यशः ॥ १९ ॥

19. Him one shall not seize as on high nor as one on a level plane nor in the middle; there is no image for him whose name is a mighty glory.

न संदृशे तिष्ठति रूपमस्य न चक्षुषा पश्यति कश्चनैनम्।
हृदा हृदिस्थं मनसा य एनमेवं विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥ २० ॥

20. The form of Him stands not within the vision and none beholdeth Him by the eye; but by the heart and the mind, for in the heart is His station; who thus know Him, they become immortal.

अजात इत्येवं कश्चिद् भीरुः प्रपद्यते।
रुद्र यत्ते दक्षिणं मुखं तेन मां पाहि नित्यम् ॥ २१ ॥

21. One here and there approaches him with awe thinking of him as the Unborn. O Violent One, that which is thy auspicious right-hand face, with that protect me ever.

मा नस्तोके तनये मा न आयुषि मा नो गोषु मा नो अश्वेषु रीरिषः।
वीरान् मा नो रुद्र भामितो वधीर्हविष्मन्तः सदमित् त्वा हवामहे ॥ २२ ॥

22. Do no hurt to our son nor our grandson nor our life nor our cattle nor our horses. O Violent One, slay not in thy anger our heroes; ever to Thee with the oblation we call.

Chapter V

द्वे अक्षरे ब्रह्मपरे त्वनन्ते विद्याविद्ये निहिते यत्र गूढे।
क्षरं त्वविद्या ह्यमृतं तु विद्या विद्याविद्ये ईशते यस्तु सोऽन्यः॥ १॥

1. Both of these in the Transcendent, the Knowledge & the Ignorance, yea both have their hidden being in the Eternal & Infinite Who dwelleth beyond Brahman of the Veda, & are set in it for ever. But of these Ignorance dieth and Knowledge liveth for ever; and He who is master of both is other than they.

यो योनिं योनिमधितिष्ठत्येको विश्वानि रूपाणि योनीश्च सर्वाः।
ऋषिं प्रसूतं कपिलं यस्तमग्रे ज्ञानैर्बिभर्ति जायमानं च पश्येत्॥ २॥

2. He being One entereth upon womb & womb, yea upon all forms of being and upon all wombs of creatures. This was He that of old filled with many sorts of Knowledge Kapila, the seer, after his mother bore him; yea He saw Kapila shaping.

एकैकं जालं बहुधा विकुर्वन्नस्मिन्क्षेत्रे संहरत्येष देवः।
भूयः सृष्ट्वा यतयस्तथेशः सर्वाधिपत्यं कुरुते महात्मा॥ ३॥

3. God weaveth Him one net or He weaveth Him another and He maketh it of manifold meshes & casteth it abroad in this field of the body; then He draweth it in again. Also He created Yatis, great Seekers, & thus the Mighty Mind wieldeth the sceptre of His universal Lordship.

सर्वा दिश ऊर्ध्वमधश्च तिर्यक् प्रकाशयन्भ्राजते यद्वनड्वान्।
एवं स देवो भगवान्वरेण्यो योनिस्वभावानधितिष्ठत्येकः॥ ४॥

4. The Sun riseth & driveth the world's wain, then he blazeth illumining all the regions and above and below and the level grow one lustre, even so this glorious & shining God, being One, entereth upon & ruleth nature that clingeth to the womb, to each womb its nature.

यच्च स्वभावं पचति विश्वयोनिः पाच्यांश्च सर्वान् परिणामयेद्यः ।
सर्वमेतद् विश्वमधितिष्ठत्येको गुणांश्च सर्वान् विनियोजयेद्यः ॥ ५ ॥

5. For He who is the Womb of the World bringeth each nature to its perfection and He matureth all those that are yet to be perfected. He indwelleth & presideth over all this His world and setteth all the modes of Nature to their workings.

तद् वेदगुह्योपनिषत्सु गूढं तद् ब्रह्मा वेदते ब्रह्मयोनिम् ।
ये पूर्वदेवा ऋषयश्च तद्विदुस्ते तन्मया अमृता वै बभूवुः ॥ ६ ॥

6. This is that secret mystery which is hidden in Upanishads; for the Upanishad is the secret of the Veda. This is that which Brahma knoweth for the Womb of the Eternal and the older Gods and the sages who knew of This, became This & were immortal.

गुणान्वयो यः फलकर्मकर्ता कृतस्य तस्यैव स चोपभोक्ता ।
स विश्वरूपस्त्रिगुणस्त्रिवर्त्मा प्राणाधिपः संचरति स्वकर्मभिः ॥ ७ ॥

7. There is One who maketh works and their fruits to them, for the moods of Nature cleave to Him; this is He that enjoyeth the works He hath done; and the World is His body and He hath three modes of His natures & the roads of His travel are likewise three. Lo, the Master of Life, by the momentum of His own works He moveth in the centuries.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रो रवितुल्यरूपः संकल्पाहंकारसमन्वितो यः ।
बुद्धेर्गुणेनात्मगुणेन चैव आराग्रमात्रो ह्यपरोऽपि दृष्टः ॥ ८ ॥

8. His size is as the size of a man's thumb but His aspect as the Sun in its glory; and He hath Volition and He hath Personality; but there is another whom we see by virtue of the Understanding & by virtue of the Spirit for the point of a cobbler's awl is not finer to vision.

वालाग्रशतभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य च ।
भागो जीवः स विज्ञेयः स चानन्त्याय कल्पते ॥ ९ ॥

9. Take thou the hundredth part of the point of a hair, divide it into a hundred parts again; then as is a part of this hundredth part of a hundredth, such shalt thou find this Spirit in man, if thou seek to separate Him; yet 'tis this in thee that availeth towards Infinity.

नैव स्त्री न पुमानेष न चैवायं नपुंसकः ।
यद्यच्छरीरमादत्ते तेन तेन स रक्ष्यते ॥ १० ॥

10. Not woman is He, nor man either, nor yet sexless; but whatsoever body He take, that confineth & preserveth Him.

संकल्पनस्पर्शनदृष्टिमोहैर्ग्रासाम्बुवृष्ट्या चात्मविवृद्धिजन्म ।
कर्मानुगान्यनुक्रमेण देही स्थानेषु रूपाण्यभिसंप्रपद्यते ॥ ११ ॥

11. As body is born and groweth by food and drink and plenty, so also the Spirit in body progressively attaineth to successive forms in their fit places — by the allurements of sight, by the witcheries of touch, by the magic of volition, for according to his works he progresseth and his forms shape themselves to his works.

स्थूलानि सूक्ष्माणि बहूनि चैव रूपाणि देही स्वगुणैर्वृणोति ।
क्रियागुणैरात्मगुणैश्च तेषां संयोगहेतुरपरोऽपि दृष्टः ॥ १२ ॥

12. Forms gross and forms subtle, forms many, — the Spirit in body evolveth them all by his own nature in its working; by the law of action of his works & the law of action of the Spirit in man, by these he evolveth them. But there is Another in Whom we behold Cause whereby all these meet together.

अनाद्यनन्तं कलिलस्य मध्ये विश्वस्य स्रष्टारमनेकरूपम् ।
विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारं ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥ १३ ॥

13. Without beginning, without end in the welter and the chaos, who createth the world by taking many figures & as the One girdeth & encompasseth it. He is the Lord &

if thou know Him thou shalt break free from all kinds of bondage.

भावग्राह्यमनीडाख्यं भावाभावकरं शिवम् ।
कलासर्गकरं देवं ये विदुस्ते जहुस्तनुम् ॥ १४ ॥

14. Shiva the Master of all becomings and not-becomings and from Him this whole creation floweth and it is only one part of Shiva; but He is not named after any nest of the wingèd Spirit, and the heart alone can apprehend Him. They who know Shiva, the Blessed One, abandon body for ever.

Chapter VI

स्वभावमेके कवयो वदन्ति कालं तथान्ये परिमुह्यमानाः ।
देवस्यैष महिमा तु लोके येनेदं भ्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रम् ॥ १ ॥

1. 'Tis Nature and Self-existence, say one school of the Seers. Nay, 'tis Time, say another; both are deceived and bewildered. 'Tis the Majesty of the Lord in the world of His creatures whereby the Wheel of the Eternal whirleth about continually.

येनावृतं नित्यमिदं हि सर्वं ज्ञः कालकारो गुणी सर्वविद्यः ।
तेनेशितं कर्म विवर्तते ह पृथ्व्याप्यतेजोऽनिलखानि चिन्त्यम् ॥ २ ॥

2. He envelopeth this whole Universe with Himself for ever, He that knoweth, Maker of Time, & the Modes of Nature dwell in Him; yea, all things He discerneth and by His governance the Law of Works revolveth in its cycle. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, of these thou shalt consider (as the substance wherein it turneth).

तत्कर्म कृत्वा विनिवर्त्य भूयस्तत्त्वस्य तत्त्वेन समेत्य योगम् ।
एकेन द्वाभ्यां त्रिभिरष्टभिर्वा कालेन चैवात्मगुणैश्च सूक्ष्मैः ॥ ३ ॥

3. The Lord doeth works and resteth again from His works, one or two or three or eight He yoketh Himself with the Principle of things in their essence & with Time He yoketh Himself and with Self in its subtle workings.

आरभ्य कर्माणि गुणान्वितानि भावांश्च सर्वान् विनियोजयेद्यः ।
तेषामभावे कृतकर्मनाशः कर्मक्षये याति स तत्त्वतोऽन्यः ॥ ४ ॥

4. So He beginneth works, that are subject to the modes of Nature, and setteth all existences to their workings: & when these things are not, thereby cometh annihilation of work that hath been done; and with the perishing of work, He departeth out of them; for in His final truth He is other than they.

आदिः स संयोगनिमित्तहेतुः परस्त्रिकालादकलोऽपि दृष्टः ।
तं विश्वरूपं भवभूतमीड्यं देवं स्वचित्तस्थमुपास्य पूर्वम् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Lo we have beheld Him & He is the Beginning and the Cause of all Causes whereby these elements meet together & form ariseth; the past, the present and the future are this side of Him and Time hath no part in Him. Let us worship the Ancient of Days in our own hearts who sitteth. Let us wait upon God who must be adored, for the world is His shape and the Universe is but His becoming.

स वृक्षकालाकृतिभिः परोऽन्यो यस्मात्प्रपञ्चः परिवर्ततेऽयम् ।
धर्मावहं पापनुदं भगेशं ज्ञात्वात्मस्थममृतं विश्वधाम ॥ ६ ॥

6. Time & Form and the Tree of Things, none of these is He for He is more than they & it is from Him that this Cosmos beginneth. We will know this Master of grace & glory for He cometh to us carrying righteousness in His hand & He driveth Sin from its strong places. We will know Him for He is in our Self & immortal & the World's foundation.

तमीश्वराणां परमं महेश्वरं तं देवतानां परमं च दैवतम् ।
पतिं पतीनां परमं परस्ताद् विदाम देवं भुवनेशमीड्यम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. We will know this Mightiest one who is far above all the mighty — this summit of the gods & their godhead, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who towereth high above all summits & greatnesses. Let us learn of God for He is this World's Master & all shall adore Him.

न तस्य कार्यं करणं च विद्यते न तत्समश्चाभ्यधिकश्च दृश्यते ।
परास्य शक्तिर्विविधैव श्रूयते स्वाभाविकी ज्ञानबलक्रिया च ॥ ८ ॥

8. God needeth not to do anything neither hath He any organ of doing; there is none greater than He nor do we see any that is His equal — for His power is far over all, only men hear of it under a thousand names & various fashions. Lo the strength of Him and the works of Him and

His Knowledge, they are self-efficient & their own cause & nature.

न तस्य कश्चित् पतिरस्ति लोके न चेशिता नैव च तस्य लिङ्गम्।
स कारणं करणाधिपाधिपो न चास्य कश्चिज्जनिता न चाधिपः ॥ ९ ॥

9. He hath no master in all this world, there is none that shall rule over Him. Nor feature nor distinction hath He; for He is begetting cause and sovran over the lords of these natural organs, but Himself hath no begetter neither any sovran.

यस्तन्तुनाभ इव तन्तुभिः प्रधानजैः स्वभावतः।
देव एकः स्वमावृणोत् स नो दधाद् ब्रह्माप्ययम् ॥ १० ॥

10. Even as is the spider that out of himself fashioneth his own web, so is God One & nought else existeth but by his own nature covereth Himself up in the threads He hath spun out of primal matter. May the One God ordain unto us departure into His Eternal.

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा।
कर्माध्यक्षः सर्वभूताधिवासः साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च ॥ ११ ॥

11. One God who alone is & He lurketh hidden in every creature for He pervadeth and is the inmost Self of all beings, He presideth over all work and is the home of all things living. He is the Mighty Witness who relateth thought with thought and again He is the Absolute in whom mood is not nor any attribute.

एको वशी निष्क्रियाणां बहूनामेकं बीजं बहुधा यः करोति।
तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषाम् ॥ १२ ॥

12. One God & alone He controlleth the many who have themselves no separate work nor purpose; and He developeth one seed into many kinds of creatures; the strong-hearted behold God in their own Self, therefore for them is everlasting bliss and not for others.

नित्योऽनित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानामेको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान्।
तत्कारणं सांख्ययोगाधिगम्यं ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥ १३ ॥

13. One Eternal of all these that pass & are not, One conscious in all consciousnesses; He being One ordereth the desires of many; He alone is the great Source to which Sankhya and Yoga bring us. If thou know God thou shalt break free from every sort of bondage.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः।
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥ १४ ॥

14. There the sun cannot shine and the moon has no splendour; the stars are blind; there our lightnings flash not neither any earthly fire; all that is bright is but the shadow of His brightness and by His shining all this shineth.

एको हंसो भुवनस्यास्य मध्ये स एवाग्निः सलिले संनिविष्टः।
तमेव विदित्वाति मृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥ १५ ॥

15. One Swan of Being in the heart of all this Universe & He is Fire that lieth deep in the heart of water. By Knowledge of Him, the soul passeth beyond the pursuit of Death and there is no other road for the great passage.

स विश्वकृद् विश्वविदात्मयोनिर्ज्ञः कालकारो गुणी सर्वविद्यः।
प्रधानक्षेत्रज्ञपतिर्गुणेशः संसारमोक्षस्थितिबन्धहेतुः ॥ १६ ॥

16. He hath made all and knoweth all; for He is the womb out of which Self ariseth, & being possessed of the Nature Moods He becometh Time's Maker and discerneth all things. And Matter is subject to Him & the Spirit in Man that cogniseth His field of matter & the modes of Nature are His servants. He therefore is the cause of this coming into phenomena & of the release from phenomena — & because of Him is their endurance & because of Him is their bondage.

स तन्मयो ह्यमृत ईशसंस्थो ज्ञः सर्वगो भुवनस्यास्य गोप्ता।
य ईशेऽस्य जगतो नित्यमेव नान्यो हेतुर्विद्यत ईशनाय॥ १७॥

17. Lo He is Immortal because He is utter existence; but He houseth Himself in the Lord & is the Knower, the Omnipresent that standeth on guard over this His universe, yea He ruleth all this moving world for ever and for ever, and there is no other source of lordship and kingliness.

यो ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्वं यो वै वेदांश्च प्रहिणोति तस्मै।
तं ह देवमात्मबुद्धिप्रकाशं मुमुक्षुर्वै शरणमहं प्रपद्ये॥ १८॥

18. He ordained Brahma the Creator from of old and sent forth unto him the Veda, I will hasten unto God who standeth self-revealed in the Spirit & in the Understanding. I will take refuge in the Lord for my salvation;

निष्कलं निष्क्रियं शान्तं निरवद्यं निरञ्जनम्।
अमृतस्य परं सेतुं दग्धेन्धनमिवानलम्॥ १९॥

19. Who hath neither parts nor works for He is utterly tranquil, faultless, stainless, therefore He is the one great bridge that carrieth us over to Immortality, even as when a fire hath burnt all its fuel.

यदा चर्मवदाकाशं वेष्टयिष्यन्ति मानवाः।
तदा देवमविज्ञाय दुःखस्यान्तो भविष्यति॥ २०॥

20. When the sons of men shall fold up ether like a skin and wrap the heavens round them like a garment, then alone without knowledge of the Lord our God shall the misery of the World have an ending.

तपःप्रभावाद् देवप्रसादाच्च ब्रह्म ह श्वेताश्वतरोऽथ विद्वान्।
अत्याश्रमिभ्यः परमं पवित्रं प्रोवाच सम्यगृषिसङ्घजुष्टम्॥ २१॥

21. By the might of his devotion & the grace of God in his being Svetasvatara hereafter knew the Eternal & he came to the

renouncers of the worldly life and truly declared unto them the Most High & Pure God, to whom the companies of seers resort for ever.

वेदान्ते परमं गुह्यं पुराकल्पे प्रचोदितम् ।
नाप्रशान्ताय दातव्यं नापुत्रायाशिष्याय वा पुनः ॥ २२ ॥

22. This is the great secret of the Vedanta which was declared in former times, not on hearts untranquilled to be squandered nor men sonless nor on one who hath no disciples.

यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ ।
तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः ॥ २३ ॥

23. But whosoever hath supreme love & adoration for the Lord and as for the Lord, so likewise for the Master, to that Mighty Soul these great matters when they are told become clear of themselves, yea to the Great Soul of him they are manifest.

Chhandogya Upanishad

Chapter I

and the first section

ओमित्येतदक्षरमुद्गीथमुपासीत। ओमिति ह्युद्गायति तस्योपव्याख्यानम् ॥ १॥

1. Worship ye OM, the eternal syllable. OM is Udgitha, the chant of Samaveda; for with OM they begin the chant of Sama. And this is the exposition of OM.

एषां भूतानां पृथिवी रसः पृथिव्या आपो रसः। अपामोषधयो रस ओषधीनां पुरुषो रसः पुरुषस्य वाग्रसो वाच ऋग्रस ऋचः साम रसः साम्न उद्गीथो रसः ॥ २॥

2. Earth is the substantial essence of all these creatures and the waters are the essence of earth; herbs of the field are the essence of the waters; man is the essence of the herbs. Speech is the essence of man, Rigveda the essence of Speech, Sama the essence of Rik. Of Sama OM is the essence.

स एष रसानां रसतमः परमः परार्ध्योऽष्टमो यदुद्गीथः ॥ ३॥

3. This is the eighth essence of the essences and the really essential, the highest and it belongeth to the upper hemisphere of things.

कतमा कतमर्क् कतमत् कतमत्साम कतमः कतम उद्गीथ इति विमृष्टं भवति ॥ ४॥

4. Which among things & which again is Rik; which among things and which again is Sama; which among things and which again is OM of the Udgitha — this is now pondered.

वागेवर्क् प्राणः सामोमित्येतदक्षरमुद्गीथः । तद्वा एतन्मिथुनं यद्वाक् च प्राणश्चर्क् च साम च ॥ ५ ॥

5. Speech is Rik, Breath is Sama; the Imperishable is OM of Udgitha. These are the divine lovers, Speech & Breath, Rik & Sama.

तदेतन्मिथुनमोमित्येतस्मिन्नक्षरे संसृज्यते यदा वै मिथुनौ समागच्छत आपयतो वै तावन्योन्यस्य कामम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. As a pair of lovers are these and they cling together in OM the eternal syllable; now when the beloved and her lover meet, verily they gratify each the desire of the other.

आपयिता ह वै कामानां भवति य एतदेवं विद्वानक्षरमुद्गीथमुपास्ते ॥ ७ ॥

7. He becometh a gratifier of the desires of men who with this knowledge worshippeth OM the eternal syllable.

तद् वा एतदनुज्ञाक्षरं यद्धि किंचानुजानात्योमित्येव तदाहैषो एव समृद्धिर्यदनुज्ञा समर्धयिता ह वै कामानां भवति य एतदेवं विद्वानक्षरमुद्गीथमुपास्ते ॥ ८ ॥

8. Now this OM is the syllable of Assent; for to whatsoever one assenteth, one sayeth OM; and assent is blessing of increase. Verily he becometh a blesser and increaser of the desires of men who with this knowledge worshippeth OM the eternal syllable.

तेनेयं त्रयी विद्या वर्तत ओमित्याश्रावयत्योमिति शंसत्योमित्युद्गायत्येतस्यैवाक्षरस्यापचित्यै महिम्ना रसेन ॥ ९ ॥

9. By OM the triple knowledge proceedeth; with OM the priest reciteth the Rik, with OM he pronounceth the Yajur, with OM he chanteth the Sama. And all this is for the heaping up of the Imperishable and by the greatness of It and the delightfulness.

तेनोभौ कुरुतो यश्चैतदेवं वेद यश्च न वेद। नाना तु विद्या चाविद्या च यदेव विद्यया करोति श्रद्धयोपनिषदा तदेव वीर्यवत्तरं भवतीति खल्वेतस्यैवाक्षरस्योपव्याख्यानं भवति ॥ १० ॥

10. He doeth works by OM who hath the knowledge, and he also who hath it not; but these are diverse, the Knowledge and the Ignorance. Whatso work one doeth with knowledge, with faith and with the secret of Veda, it becometh to him more virile and mighty. This is the exposition of the eternal letters.

And the second section

देवासुरा ह वै यत्र संयेतिर उभये प्राजापत्यास्तद्ध देवा उद्गीथमाजह्रुरनेनैनानभिभविष्याम इति ॥ १ ॥

1. The Gods and the Demons strove together and both were children of the Almighty Father. Then the Gods took up for weapon OM of Udgitha, for they said "With this we shall overcome these Titans."

ते ह नासिक्यं प्राणमुद्गीथमुपासांचक्रिरे तं हासुराः पाप्मना विविधुस्तस्मात्तेनोभयं जिघ्रति सुरभि च दुर्गन्धि च पाप्मना ह्येष विद्धः ॥ २ ॥

2. The Gods worshipped OM as Breath in the nostrils; but the Demons came and smote it with the arrow of Evil; therefore it smelleth both alike, the sweet scent and the evil odour. For it is smitten through and through with Evil.

अथ ह वाचमुद्गीथमुपासांचक्रिरे तां हासुराः पाप्मना विविधुस्तस्मात् तयोभयं वदति सत्यं चानृतं च पाप्मना ह्येषा विद्धा ॥ ३ ॥

3. Then the Gods worshipped OM as Speech; but the Demons came and smote it with the arrow of Evil; therefore it speaketh both alike, Truth and Falsehood. For it is smitten through and through with Evil.

अथ ह चक्षुरुद्गीथमुपासांचक्रिरे तद्धासुराः पाप्मना विविधुस्तस्मात्
तेनोभयं पश्यति दर्शनीयं चादर्शनीयं च पाप्मना ह्येतद् विद्धम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. Then the Gods worshipped OM as the Eye; but the Demons came and smote it with the arrow of Evil; therefore it beholdeth both alike, the fair to see and the foul of favour. For it is smitten through and through with Evil.

अथ ह श्रोत्रमुद्गीथमुपासांचक्रिरे तद्धासुराः पाप्मना विविधुस्तस्मात्
तेनोभयं शृणोति श्रवणीयं चाश्रवणीयं च पाप्मना ह्येतद् विद्धम् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Then the Gods worshipped OM as the Ear; but the Demons came and smote it with the arrow of Evil; therefore it heareth both alike, that which is well to hear and that which is harsh and unseemly. For it is smitten through and through with Evil.

अथ ह मन उद्गीथमुपासांचक्रिरे तद्धासुराः पाप्मना विविधुस्तस्मात्
तेनोभयं संकल्पयते संकल्पनीयं चासंकल्पनीयं च पाप्मना ह्येतद्
विद्धम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Then the Gods worshipped Udgitha as Mind; but the Demons came and smote it with the arrow of Evil; therefore it conceiveth both alike, right thoughts and unlawful imaginations. For it is smitten through and through with Evil.

अथ ह य एवायं मुख्यः प्राणस्तमुद्गीथमुपासांचक्रिरे तं हासुरा ऋत्वा
विदध्वंसुर्यथाश्मानमाखणमृत्वा विध्वंसेत ॥ ७ ॥

7. Then the Gods worshipped OM as this which is Breath in the mouth and the Demons rushing against it dashed themselves to pieces; as when an object striketh against firm and solid rock, it dasheth to pieces upon the rock.

एवं यथाश्मानमाखणमृत्वा विध्वंसत एवं हैव स विध्वंसते य एवंविदि
पापं कामयते यश्चैनमभिदासति स एषोऽश्माखणः ॥ ८ ॥

8. And even as an object hurling against firm and solid rock

dasheth itself to pieces, so he hurleth himself upon destruction whososo desireth evil against the Knower or whoso doeth him hurt; for the Knower is as that firm and solid rock.

नैवैतेन सुरभि न दुर्गन्धि विजानात्यपहतपाप्मा ह्येष तेन यदश्नाति
यत्पिबति तेनेतरान् प्राणानवति। एतमु एवान्ततोऽवित्त्वोत्क्रामति
व्याददात्येवान्तत इति ॥ ९ ॥

9. With this Breath one cogniseth neither sweet scent nor ill odour, for it hath flung Evil from it. Whatsoever one eateth with this or drinketh, thereby it cherisheth the other breaths. At the end and last when he findeth not the breath, the Spirit goeth out from the body; verily he openeth wide the mouth as he goeth.

तं हाङ्गिरा उद्गीथमुपासांचक्र एतमु एवाङ्गिरसं मन्यन्तेऽङ्गानां यद्
रसः ॥ १० ॥

10. Angiras worshipped OM of Udgitha as Breath in the mouth and men think of Breath in the mouth as Angiras because it is essence of the members of the body.

तेन तं ह बृहस्पतिरुद्गीथमुपासांचक्र एतमु एव बृहस्पतिं मन्यन्ते वाग्घि
बृहती तस्या एष पतिः ॥ ११ ॥

11. By the strength of Angiras, Brihaspati worshipped OM as Breath in the mouth, and men think of the Breath as Brihaspati, because Speech is the great goddess and Breath is the lord of Speech.

तेन तं हायास्य उद्गीथमुपासांचक्र एतमु एवायास्यं मन्यन्त आस्याद्
यदयते ॥ १२ ॥

12. By the strength of Brihaspati, Ayasya worshipped OM as Breath in the mouth and men think of the Breath as Ayasya, because 'tis from the mouth it cometh.

तेन तं ह बको दाल्भ्यो विदांचकार। स ह नैमिषीयाणामुद्गाता बभूव
स ह स्मैभ्यः कामानागायति ॥ १३ ॥

13. By the strength of Ayasya, Baka the son of Dalbha knew the Breath. And he became the Chanter of the Sama among the Naimishiyas and he chanteth their desires for them unto fulfilment.

आगाता ह वै कामानां भवति य एतदेवं विद्वानक्षरमुद्गीथमुपास्त इत्यध्यात्मम् ॥ १४ ॥

14. Verily he becometh a chanter unto fulfilment of the desires of men who with this knowledge worshippeth OM of Udgitha, the eternal syllable. Thus far concerning Self is the exposition.

And the third section

अथाधिदैवतं य एवासौ तपति तमुद्गीथमुपासीतोद्यन्वा एष प्रजाभ्य उद्गायति। उद्यंस्तमो भयमपहन्त्यपहन्ता ह वै भयस्य तमसो भवति य एवं वेद ॥ १ ॥

1. Thereafter concerning the Gods. Lo yonder burning fire in the heavens, worship ye Him as the Udgitha; for the Sun riseth & singeth his bright hymn unto the peoples. Yea he riseth, & darkness is slain & its terror — therefore shall he be a slayer of the terror & the darkness, he who thus knoweth.

समान उ एवायं चासौ चोष्णोऽयमुष्णोऽसौ स्वर इतीममाचक्षते स्वर इति प्रत्यास्वर इत्यमुं तस्माद्वा एतमिमममुं चोद्गीथमुपासीत ॥ २ ॥

2. Breath & the Sun are one & alike — for the one is heat & the other is heat, and they call Breath the mover and the Sun too they call the mover & they call him also the mover that returneth upon his paths — therefore ye shall worship both the one & the other as Udgitha.

अथ खलु व्यानमेवोद्गीथमुपासीत यद्वै प्राणिति स प्राणो यदपानिति सोऽपानः। अथ यः प्राणापानयोः संधिः स व्यानो यो व्यानः सा वाक्। तस्मादप्राणन्ननपानन् वाचमभिव्याहरति ॥ ३ ॥

3. Thereafter verily ye shall worship Vyana the middle breath as Udgitha. For when one breathes forth it is Prana, the Main Breath, & when one breathes down it is Apana, the lower breath. Now this which is the joint & linking of the main breath & the lower breath, is Vyana — & Vyana, it is Speech. Therefore 'tis when one neither breatheth forth nor breatheth down that one giveth utterance to Speech.

या वाक् सर्क् तस्मादप्राणन्ननपानन्नृचमभिव्याहरति यर्क् तत्साम तस्मादप्राणन्ननपानन् साम गायति यत्साम स उद्गीथस्तस्मादप्राणन्ननपानन्नुद्गायति ॥ ४ ॥

4. But Speech is the Rik — therefore 'tis when one neither breatheth out nor breatheth in that one uttereth the Rik. And Rik it is Sama — therefore 'tis when one neither breatheth out nor breatheth in that one chanteth the Sama. But Sama it is Udgitha — therefore 'tis when one neither breatheth out nor breatheth in that one singeth Udgitha.

अतो यान्यन्यानि वीर्यवन्ति कर्माणि यथाग्नेर्मन्थनमाजेः सरणं दृढस्य धनुष आयमनमप्राणन्ननपानंस्तानि करोत्येतस्य हेतोर्व्यानमेवोद्गीथमुपासीत ॥ ५ ॥

5. Hence whatsoever actions there be that are of might & forcefulness as smiting out fire from the tinder or leaping a great barrier or bending a stark & mighty bow, it is when one neither breatheth out nor breatheth in that one doeth these. And for this cause ye shall worship the middle breath as Udgitha.

अथ खलूद्गीथाक्षराण्युपासीतोद्गीथ इति प्राण एवोत् प्राणेन ह्युत्तिष्ठति वाग् गीर्वाचो ह गिर इत्याचक्षतेऽन्नं थमन्ने हीदं सर्वं स्थितम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Thereafter verily ye shall worship the syllables of the Udgitha saying Udgitha & Prana is the first syllable, because one riseth up with the main breath & Speech is the second syllable, because they call Speech that which goeth forth &

food is the third syllable, because in food all this Universe is established.

द्यौरेवोदन्तरिक्षं गीः पृथिवी थमादित्य एवोद् वायुर्गीरग्निस्थं सामवेद एवोद् यजुर्वेदो गीर्ऋग्वेदस्थं दुग्धेऽस्मै वाग् दोहं यो वाचो दोहोऽन्नवानन्नादो भवति य एतान्येवं विद्वानुद्गीथाक्षराण्युपास्त उद्गीथ इति ॥ ७ ॥

7. Heaven is the first syllable, the middle air is the second syllable, earth is the third syllable. The Sun is the first syllable, Air is the second syllable, Fire is the third syllable. The Samaveda is the first syllable, Yajurveda is the second syllable, Rigveda is the third syllable. To him Speech is a cow that yieldeth sweet milk — & what is this milking of Speech? — even that he becometh rich in food & the eater of food who knoweth these & worshippeth the syllables of Udgitha saying lo even this is Udgitha.

Notes on the Chhandogya Upanishad

First Adhyaya

ओमित्येतदक्षरमुद्गीथमुपासीत। ओमिति ह्युद्गायति तस्योपव्याख्यानम् ॥ १ ॥

OM is the syllable (the Imperishable One); one should follow after it as the upward Song (movement); for with OM one sings (goes) upwards; of which this is the analytical explanation.

So, literally translated in its double meaning, both its exoteric, physical and symbolic sense and its esoteric symbolised reality, runs the initial sentence of the Upanishad. These opening lines or passages of the Vedanta are always of great importance; they are always so designed as to suggest or even sum up, if not all that comes afterwards, yet the central and pervading idea of the Upanishad. The Isha Vasyam of the Vajasaneyi, the Keneshitam manas of the Talavakara, the Sacrificial Horse of the Brihad Aranyaka, the solitary Atman with its hint of the future world vibrations in the Aitareya are of this type. The Chhandogya, we see from its first and introductory sentence, is to be a work on the right & perfect way of devoting oneself to the Brahman; the spirit, the methods, the formulae are to be given to us. Its subject is the Brahman, but the Brahman as symbolised in the OM, the sacred syllable of the Veda; not, therefore, the pure state of the Universal Existence only, but that Existence in all its parts, the waking world & the dream self and the sleeping, the manifest, half-manifest and hidden, Bhurloka, Bhuvar & Swar, — the right means to win all of them, enjoy all of them, transcend all of them, is the subject of the Chhandogya. OM is the symbol and the thing symbolised. It is the symbol, aksharam, the syllable in which all sound of speech is brought back to its wide, pure indeterminate state; it is the symbolised, aksharam, the changeless, undiminishing, unincreasing, unappearing, undying Reality which shows itself to experience in all the change, increase, diminution, appearance, departure which in a particular sum & harmony of them we call the world, just as OM the pure eternal sound-basis of speech shows itself to the ear in the variations and combinations of impure sound which in a particular sum and harmony of them we call the Veda. We are to follow after this OM with all our souls, upásíta, — to apply ourselves to it and devote ourselves to its knowledge and possession, but always to OM as the Udgitha. Again in this word we have the symbolic sense and the truth symbolised expressed, as in aksharam and OM, in a single vocable with a double function and significance.

The Sanscrit has always been a language in which one word is naturally capable of several meanings and therefore carries with it a number of varied associations. It lends itself, therefore, with peculiar ease and naturalness to the figure called slesha or embrace, the marriage of different meanings in a single form of words. Paronomasia in English is mere punning, a tour-de-force, an incongruity, a grotesque and artificial play of humour. Paronomasia, slesha, in Sanscrit, though in form precisely the same thing, is not punning, not incongruous but easily appropriate, not grotesque or artificial, but natural and often inevitable, not used for intellectual horseplay, but with a serious, often a high and worthy purpose. It has been abused by rhetorical writers; yet great and noble poetical effects have been obtained by its aid, as, for instance, when the same form of words has been used to convey open blame & cover secret praise. Nevertheless in classical Sanscrit, the language has become a little too rigid for the perfect use of the figure; it is too literary, too minutely grammatised; it has lost the memory of its origins. A sense of cleverness and artifice suggests itself to us because meanings known to be distinct and widely separate are brought together in a single activity of the word which usually suggests them only in different contexts. But in the Vedic slesha we have no sense of cleverness or artifice, because the writers themselves had none. The language was still near to its origins and had, not perhaps an intellectual, but still an instinctive memory of them. With less grammatical and as little etymological knowledge as

Panini and the other classical grammarians, the Rishis had better possession of the soul of Sanscrit speech. The different meanings of a word, though distinct, were not yet entirely separate; many links yet survived between them which were afterwards lost; the gradations of sense remained, the hint of the word's history, the shading off from one sense to another. Ardha now means half and it means nothing else. To the Vedic man it carried other associations. Derived from the root ridh which meant originally to go and join, then to add, to increase, to prosper, it bore the sense of place of destination, the person to whom I direct myself, or simply place; increase, also addition, a part added and so simply a part or half. To have used it in any other sense than "place of destination" or as at once "half, part" and "a place of destination" would not be a violence to the Vedic mind, but a natural association of ideas. So when they spoke of the higher worlds of Sacchidananda as Parardha, they meant at once the higher half of man's inner existence & the param dháma or high seat of Vishnou in other worlds and, in addition, thought of that high seat as the destination of our upward movement. All this rose at once to their mind when the word was uttered, naturally, easily and, by long association, inevitably.

OM is a word in instance. When the word was spoken as a solemn affirmation, everyone thought of the Pranava in the Veda, but no one could listen to the word OM without thinking also of the Brahman in Its triple manifestation and in Its transcendent being. The word, aksharam, meaning both syllable & unshifting, when coupled with OM, is a word in instance; "OM the syllable" meant also, inevitably, to the Vedic mind "Brahman, who changes not nor perishes". The words udgítha and udgáyati are words in instance. In classical Sanscrit the prepositional prefix to the verb was dead and bore only a conventional significance or had no force at all; udgáyati or pragáyati is not very different from the simple gáyati; all mean merely sing or chant. But in Veda the preposition is still living & joins its verb or separates itself as it pleases; therefore it keeps its full meaning always. In Vedanta the power of separation is lost, but the separate force remains. Again the roots gí and gá in classical Sanscrit mean to sing and have resigned the sense of going to their kinsman gam; but in Vedic times, the sense of going was still active and common. They meant also to express, to possess, to hold; but these meanings once common to the family are now entrusted to particular members of it, gir, for expression, grih, for holding. Gáthá, gíthá, gána, gáyati, gátá, gátu, meant to the Vedic mind both going and singing, udgítha meant ascension as well as casting upward the voice or the soul in song. When the Vedic singer said Ud gáyámi, the physical idea was that, perhaps, of the song rising upward, but he had also the psychical idea of the soul rising up in song to the gods and fulfilling in its meeting with them and entering into them its expressed aspiration. To show that this idea is not a modern etymological fancy of my own, it is sufficient to cite the evidence of the Chhandogya Upanishad itself in this very chapter where Baka Dalbhya is spoken of as the Udgata of the Naimishiyas who obtained their desires for them by the Vedic chant, ebhya ágáyati kámán; so, adds the Upanishad, shall everyone be a "singer to" & a "bringer to" of desires, ágátá kámánám, who with this knowledge follows after OM, the Brahman, as the Udgitha.

This then is the meaning of the Upanishad that OM, the syllable, technically called the Udgitha, is to be meditated on as a symbol of the fourfold Brahman with two objects, the "singing to" of one's desires & aspirations in the triple manifestation and the spiritual ascension into the Brahman Itself so as to meet and enter into heaven after heaven & even into Its transcendent felicity. For, it says, with the syllable OM one begins the chant of the Samaveda, or, in the esoteric sense, by means of the meditation on OM one makes this soul-ascension and becomes master of all the soul desires. It is in this aspect & to this end that the Upanishad will expound OM. To explain Brahman in Its nature & workings, to teach the right worship and meditation on Brahman, to establish what are the different means of attainment of different results and the formulae of the meditation and worship, is its purpose. All this work of explanation has to be done in reference to Veda & Vedic sacrifice and ritual of which OM is the substance. In a certain sense, therefore, the Upanishad is an explanation of the purpose & symbology of Vedic formulae & ritual; it sums up the results of the long travail of seeking by which the first founders & pioneers of Vedantism in an age when the secret & true sense of Veda had been largely submerged in the ceremonialism & formalism of the close of the Dwapara Yuga, attempted to recover their lost heritage partly by reference to the adepts who still remained in possession of it, partly by the traditions of the great seekers of the past Yuga, Janaka, Yajnavalkya, Krishna and others, partly by their own illuminations and spiritual experience. The Chhandogya Upanishad is thus the summary history of one of the greatest & most interesting ages of human thought.

Satyakama Jabala

The story of Satyakama Jabala occupies five sections, the third to the eighth, of the fourth chapter in the Chhandogya Upanishad. The Chhandogya seems to be the most ancient of the extant Upanishads. It speaks of Krishna, son of Devaki, and Dhritarashtra Vaichitravirya in a tone that would justify us in assuming that it regarded them not as ancient and far-off names but as men who had walked the earth in living memory. The movement of philosophic speculation of which the Upanishads are the extant record, was an attempt to pass from the old ritualistic *karma* to the freedom of the *jnanamarga*. According to the writer of the Gita, this was not a new movement, but a return to a past and lost discipline; for Sri Krishna says to Arjuna of the true or *sajnan karmamarga* he reveals to him, "This is the imperishable Yoga I declared unto Vivaswan, Vivaswan revealed it to Manu and Manu to Ixvacu told it. Thus was it known to the royal sages by hereditary transmission, till by the great lapse of time this yoga was lost, O scourge of thy foes. This is the same ancient Yoga that I have told unto [thee] today, because thou art my lover and my friend; for this is the highest of all the inner truths."

The Dwapara Yuga was the age of Kuru preeminence and the Kurus were a great practical, warlike, ritualistic, juristic race of the Roman type, with little of the speculative temper or moral enthusiasm of the eastern Coshalas, Videhas, Kashis, Chedis. The West of India has always been noted for its practical, soldierly, commercial bent of mind in comparison with the imaginative and idealistic Eastern races and the scholastic, logical and metaphysical South. According to the Hindu theory of the Yugas, it is in the Dwapara that everything is codified, ritualised, formalised. In the Satya Vishnu descends among men as Yajna. Yajna is the spirit of adoration and sacrifice, and in the Satya yajna reigns in the hearts of men, and there is no need of external ritual, external sacrifices, elaborate law, government, castes, classes and creeds. Men follow the law by the necessity of their purified nature and their complete knowledge. The kingdom of God & the Veda are in the hearts of His people. In the Treta the old perfect order begins to break and Vishnu descends as the *chakravarti raja*, the warrior and ruler, Kartavirya, Parsurama, Rama, and the sword, the law and the written Veda are instituted to govern men. But there is still great elasticity and freedom and within certain limits men follow the healthy impulse of their nature, only slightly corrupted by the first descent from purity. It is in the Dwapara that form and rule have to take the place of the idea and the spirit as the true governors of religion, ethics and society. Vishnu then descends as Vyasa, the great codifier and systematiser of knowledge.

At the end of the Dwapara, when Sri Krishna came, this tendency had reached its extreme development, and the form tended to take the place of the idea and the rule to take the place of the spirit not only in the outward conduct but in the hearts of men. Nevertheless an opposite tendency had already begun. Dhritarashtra himself was an earnest inquirer into the inner meaning of things. Great Vedantists were living and teaching, such as the rishi Ghora to whom Sri Krishna himself went for the word of illumination. Sri Krishna was the intellectual force that took up all these scattered tendencies and, by breaking down the strong formalism of the Dwapara, prepared the work of the Kali. In the Gita he denounces those who will not go outside the four corners of the Veda and philosophises the whole theory of the sacrificial system; he contemptuously dismisses the guidance of the set ethical systems and establishes an inward and spiritual rule of conduct. To many of his time he seems to have appeared as a baneful and destructive portent; like all great revolutionary innovators, he is denounced by Bhurisravas as a well known misleader of men and corrupter of morals. It is the work of the Kali Yuga to destroy everything by questioning everything in order to establish after a struggle between the forces of purity and impurity a new harmony of life and knowledge in another Satyayuga.

After the destruction of the conservative Kurus and Panchalas at Kurukshetra, the development of the Vedanta commenced and went on progressing till in its turn it reached its extreme & excessive development in the teachings of Buddha and Shankaracharya. But at the period of the Chhandogya it is in its early stage of development. The first sections of the Upanishad are taken up with an esoteric development of the inner meaning of certain parts of the sacrificial formulae, which in itself is sufficient to show that the work belongs to the first stratum of Vedantic formation.

The story of Satyakama is one of the most typical in the Upanishad. It is full of sidelights on early Vedantic teaching, Yogic sadhan and that deep psychical knowledge which the writer took for granted in the hearers of his work. So much knowledge, indeed, is thus taken for granted that it is impossible for anyone not himself a practiser of Yoga, to understand anything but its broad conclusions. The modern commentators, Shankara included, have approached it in order to establish particular metaphysical doctrines, not to elucidate its entire significance. I shall take the side that has been neglected; for what to the European inquirer are merely "the babblings of children", bear to the Yogin an aspect of infinite truth, value and significance.

Chapter II

"Now Satyakama Jabala spoke unto his mother Jabala and said 'Mother, I shall go and lead the life of the Brahmacharin; tell me what is my *gotra*.' But she answered him, 'This I know not, my son, of what gotra thou art; resorting to many as a serving woman in my youth I got thee, therefore I know not of what gotra thou art. But Jabala is my name and Satyakama is thine, Satyakama Jabala therefore call thyself.' So he came to Haridrumata the Gautama and said, 'I would stay with my Lord as a Brahmacharin, let me therefore enter under thee.' And he said to him, 'My son, of what gotra art thou?' But the other answered, 'This, alas, I know not of what gotra I am; I asked my mother and she answered me, Resorting to many in my youth as a serving woman I got thee, therefore I know not of what gotra thou art, but Jabala is my name and Satyakama is thine; Satyakama Jabala therefore am I.' And he said to him, 'None who is not a Brahmin can be strong enough to say this; gather the firewood, my son, I will take thee under me, for thou didst not depart from the truth.' He admitted him and put forth four hundred cows weak and lean and said, 'These, my son, do thou follow as a herd,' and he set the cows in motion and said, 'Return not until they are a thousand.' And he fared abroad with them during the years till they were a thousand."

So the story opens, and simple as it seems, it already contains several points of capital importance in understanding the ideas of the time and the principles of the old Vedantic *sadhana*. Satyakama, as we gather from other passages, was one of the great Vedantic teachers of the time immediately previous to the composition of the Chhandogya Upanishad. But his birth is the meanest possible. His mother is a serving girl, not a *dasi* attached to a permanent household whose son could have named his father and his gotra, but a *paricharika*, serving for hire at various houses, "resorting to many", and therefore unable to name her son's father. Satyakama has, therefore, neither caste, nor gotra, nor any position in life. It appears from this story as from others that, although the system of the four castes was firmly established, it counted as no obstacle in the pursuit of knowledge and spiritual advancement. The Kshatriya could teach the Brahmin, the illegitimate and fatherless son of the serving girl could be guru to the purest and highest blood in the land. This is nothing new or improbable, for it has been so throughout the history of Hinduism and the shutting out of anyone from spiritual truth and culture on the ground of caste is an invention of later times. In the nature of things the usual rule would be for the greater number of spiritual preceptors to be found in the higher castes, but this was the result of natural laws and not of a fixed prohibition. It is noticeable also from this and other instances that it was the father's position that fixed the son's, and the mother's seems to have been of very minor importance. The question about the gotra was of importance, probably, with regard to the rites and other circumstances of initiation. Satyakama must have known perfectly well that he was the illegitimate son of a serving woman, but he wished to know his father's name and gotra because he would have to tell it to his guru. Even after knowing the worst, he persisted in his intention of taking up spiritual studies, so that he can have had no fear of being rejected on account of his base origin. His guru, impressed by his truthfulness, says, "None but a Brahmin would have the moral strength to make such an avowal." It can hardly be meant by this that Satyakama's father must have been a Brahmin, but that since he had the Brahmin qualities, he must be accepted as a Brahmin. Even the Kshatriya would have hesitated to speak so truthfully, because the Kshatriya is by nature a lover of honour and shuns dishonour, he has the sense of *mana* and *apamana*; but the true Brahmin is *samo manapamanayoh*, he accepts indifferently worldly honour and dishonour and cares only for the truth and the right. In short the Gautama concludes that, whatever may be Satyakama's physical birth, spiritually he is of the highest order and especially fitted for a sadhaka; *na satyad agat*, he did not depart from the truth.

The second point is the first action of the guru after the ceremony of initiation. Instead of beginning the instruction of this promising disciple he sends him out with four hundred miserable kine, more likely to die than prosper and increase, and forbids him to return till he has increased them to a thousand. Wherefore this singular arrangement? Was it a test? Was it a discipline? But Haridrumata had already seen that his new disciple had the high Brahmin qualities. What more did he require?

The perfect man is a fourfold being and one object of Vedantic discipline is to be the perfect man, *siddha*. When Christ said, "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," he was only repeating in popular language the Vedantic teaching of *sadharmya*, likeness to God.

The Brihad Aranyak Upanishad

Chapter One: Section I

उषा वा अश्वस्य मेध्यस्य शिरः। सूर्यश्चक्षुर्वातः प्राणो व्यात्तमग्नि-
वैंश्वानरः संवत्सर आत्माश्वस्य मेध्यस्य। द्यौः पृष्ठमन्तरिक्षमुदरं
पृथिवी पाजस्यं दिशः पार्श्वे अवान्तरदिशः पर्शव ऋतवोऽङ्गानि
मासाश्चार्धमासाश्च पर्वाण्यहोरात्राणि प्रतिष्ठा नक्षत्राण्यस्थीनि नभो
मांसानि। ऊवध्यं सिकताः सिन्धवो गुदा यकृच्च क्लोमानश्च पर्वता
ओषधयश्च वनस्पतयश्च लोमान्युद्यन्पूर्वार्धो निम्लोचञ्जघनार्धो यद्
विजृम्भते तद्विद्योतते यद्विधूनुते तत्स्तनयति यन्मेहति तद्वर्षति
वागेवास्य वाक्॥ १॥

1. Dawn is the head[1] of the horse sacrificial.[2] The sun is his eye,[3] his breath is the wind, his wide open mouth is Fire, the master might universal, Time is the self of the horse sacrificial.[4] Heaven is his back & the midworld his belly, earth is his footing, — the regions are his flanks & the lesser regions their ribs, the seasons his members, the months & the half months are their joints, the days & nights are his standing place, the stars his bones & the sky is the flesh of his body. The strands are the food in his belly, the rivers are his veins, his liver & his lungs are the mountains, herbs & plants are his hairs, the rising is his front & the setting his hinder portion, when he stretches himself, then it lightens,

---

[1] Because it is the front and beginning.

[2] Aswa meant originally "being, existence, substance". From the sense of speed & strength it came to mean "horse". The word is therefore used to indicate material existence & the horse (the image usually conveyed by this name) is taken as the symbol of universal existence in annam.

The horse is symbolic & the sacrifice is symbolic. We have in it an image of the Virat Purusha, of Yajniya Purusha, God expressing himself in the material universe.

[3] Because the sun is the master of sight.

[4] Air is the basis of life, Fire of strength & expansion. Time is that which upholds existence in material space & is the soul of it.

when he shakes his frame, then it thunders, when he urines, then it rains. Speech, verily, is the sound of him.

अहर्वा अश्वं पुरस्तान्महिमान्वजायत तस्य पूर्वे समुद्रे योनी रात्रिरेनं पश्चान्महिमान्वजायत तस्यापरे समुद्रे योनिरेतौ वा अश्वं महिमानावभितः संबभूवतुः। हयो भूत्वा देवानवहद् वाजी गन्धर्वानर्वासुरानश्वो मनुष्यान् समुद्र एवास्य बन्धुः समुद्रो योनिः ॥ २ ॥

2. Day was the grandeur that was born before the horse as he galloped, the eastern ocean gave it birth; night was the grandeur that was born behind him & its birth was from the other waters. These are the grandeurs that came into being on either side of the horse. He became Haya & bore the gods, Vaja & bore the Gandharvas, Arvan & bore the Titans, Aswa & bore mankind. The sea was his brother & the sea was his birthplace.

Chapter One: Section II

नैवेह किंचनाग्र आसीन्मृत्युनैवेदमावृतमासीत्। अशनाययाशनाया हि मृत्युस्तन्मनोऽकुरुतात्मन्वी स्यामिति। सोऽर्चन्नचरत् तस्यार्चत आपोऽजायन्तार्चते वै मे कमभूदिति तदेवार्कस्यार्कत्वं कं ह वा अस्मै भवति य एवमेतदर्कस्यार्कत्वं वेद ॥ १ ॥

1. Formerly there was nothing here; this was concealed by Death — by Hunger, for it is Hunger that is Death. That created Mind, & he said, Let me have substance. He moved about working & as he worked the waters were born & he said, Felicity was born to me as I worked. This verily is the activity in action. Therefore felicity cometh to him who thus knoweth this soul of activity in action.

आपो वा अर्कस्तद्यदपां शर आसीत् तत्समहन्यत। सा पृथिव्यभवत् तस्यामश्राम्यत् तस्य श्रान्तस्य तप्तस्य तेजोरसो निरवर्तताग्निः ॥ २ ॥

2. The waters verily (in their movement) are action; that which was a lake of waters was contracted & became compact. This became earth — upon earth he grew weary — in his

weariness he was heated & the Essence of energy went out from him, even Fire.

स त्रेधात्मानं व्यकुरुतादित्यं तृतीयं वायुं तृतीयं स एष प्राणस्त्रेधा विहितः । तस्य प्राची दिक् शिरोऽसौ चासौ चेर्मौ । अथास्य प्रतीची दिक् पुच्छमसौ चासौ च सक्थ्यौ दक्षिणा चोदीची च पार्श्वे द्यौः पृष्ठमन्तरिक्षमुदरमियमुरः स एषोऽप्सु प्रतिष्ठितो यत्र क्व चैति तदेव प्रतितिष्ठत्येवं विद्वान् ॥ ३ ॥

3. Fire divided himself into three — the sun one of the three & Vayu one of the three; this is that force of life arranged triply. The east is his head and the northeast & the southeast are his arms. Now the west is his seat & the southwest & the northwest are his thighs; his sides are the south & the north; heaven is his back & the middle region is his belly; this earth is his bosom. This is he that is established in the waters wheresoever thou turn. And as that is he established who thus knoweth.

सोऽकामयत द्वितीयो म आत्मा जायेतेति स मनसा वाचं मिथुनं समभवदशनाया मृत्युस्तद्यद्रेत आसीत् स संवत्सरोऽभवत् । न ह पुरा ततः संवत्सर आस तमेतावन्तं कालमबिभः । यावान् संवत्सरस्तमेतावतः कालस्य परस्तादसृजत । तं जातमभिव्याददात् स भाणकरोत् सैव वागभवत् ॥ ४ ॥

4. He desired “Let a second self be born to me.” He by mind had intercourse with speech, even Hunger that is Death; the seed that was of that union became Time. For before this Time was not (period of Time) but so long He had borne him in Himself. So long as is Time’s period, after so long He gave it birth. He yawned upon him as soon as it was born; it cried out & that became speech.

स ऐक्षत यदि वा इममभिमंस्ये कनीयोऽन्नं करिष्य इति स तया वाचा तेनात्मनेदं सर्वमसृजत यदिदं किंचर्चो यजूंषि सामानि छन्दांसि यज्ञान्प्रजाः पशून् । स यद्यदेवासृजत तत्तदत्तुमध्रियत सर्वं वा अत्तीति तददितेरदितित्वं सर्वस्यैतस्यात्ता भवति सर्वमस्यान्नं भवति य एवमेतददितेरदितित्वं वेद ॥ ५ ॥

5. He saw, If I devour this, I shall diminish food; therefore by that speech & by that self he created all this that we see, the Riks & the Yajus & the Samas & the rhythms & sacrifices & animals & these nations. Whatsoever he created, that he set about devouring, verily he devoureth all; this is the substantiality of being in substance (that it can be destroyed[5]). He becometh the eater of all the world & everything becometh his food who thus knoweth the substantiality of being in substance.

> सोऽकामयत भूयसा यज्ञेन भूयो यजेयेति। सोऽश्राम्यत् स तपोऽतप्यत तस्य श्रान्तस्य तप्तस्य यशो वीर्यमुदक्रामत्। प्राणा वै यशो वीर्यं तत्प्राणेषूत्क्रान्तेषु शरीरं श्वयितुमध्रियत तस्य शरीर एव मन आसीत् ॥ ६ ॥

6. He desired "Let me sacrifice more richly with richer sacrifice." He laboured & put forth heat of force, & of him thus laboured & heated splendour & strength came forth. The life-forces are that splendour & strength, therefore when the life-forces go forth, the body sets about to rot, yet in his body even so mind was.

> सोऽकामयत मेध्यं म इदं स्यादात्मन्व्यनेन स्यामिति। ततोऽश्वः समभवद् यदश्वत् तन्मेध्यमभूदिति तदेवाश्वमेधस्याश्वमेधत्वम्। एष ह वा अश्वमेधं वेद य एनमेवं वेद। तमनवरुध्यैवामन्यत। तं संवत्सरस्य परस्तादात्मन आलभत। . . . ॥ ७ ॥

7. He desired "Let this have sacrificial capacity for me, by this let me be provided with a body." That which has expressed power & being, that is fit for the sacrifice. This verily is the secret of the Aswamedha & he knoweth indeed the Aswamedha who thus knoweth it. He gave him free course & thought, then after a year (a fixed period of time) he dedicated him to the self. [*The rest of this section was not translated.*]

---

[5] Destroyed, ie enjoyed by absorption.

Chapter One: Section III

द्वया ह प्राजापत्या देवाश्चासुराश्च। ततः कानीयसा एव देवा ज्यायसा असुरास्त एषु लोकेष्वस्पर्धन्त ते ह देवा ऊचुर्हन्तासुरान् यज्ञ उद्गीथेनात्ययामेति ॥ १॥

1. Two were the races of the Sons of God, the gods & the Titans. Thereafter the gods were weaker, mightier the Titans. They in these worlds strove together, & the gods said, Let us by the udgitha overpass the Titans in the yajna.

ते ह वाचमूचुस्त्वं न उद्गायेति तथेति तेभ्यो वागुदगायत्। यो वाचि भोगस्तं देवेभ्य आगायद् यत्कल्याणं वदति तदात्मने। ते विदुरनेन वै न उद्गात्रात्येष्यन्तीति तमभिद्रुत्य पाप्मनाविध्यन् स यः स पाप्मा यदेवेदमप्रतिरूपं वदति स एव स पाप्मा ॥ २॥

2. They said to Speech, Do thou go upward (by the udgitha) for us. "So be it" said Speech and he went upward for them; the enjoyment that is in speech, he reached for the gods, the good that it speaks, he reached for the self. They thought it was by this singer they would overpass them, but they ran at him and penetrated him with evil. The evil that one speaketh this that hath no correspondence (to the thing or fact to be expressed), — this is that evil.

The Great Aranyaka

A Commentary on the Brihad Aranyak Upanishad

Foreword

The Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, at once the most obscure and the profoundest of the Upanishads, offers peculiar difficulties to the modern mind. If its ideas are remote from us, its language is still more remote. Profound, subtle, extraordinarily rich in rare philosophical suggestions and delicate psychology, it has preferred to couch its ideas in a highly figurative and symbolical language, which to its contemporaries, accustomed to this suggestive dialect, must have seemed a noble frame for its riches, but meets us rather as an obscuring veil. To draw aside this curtain, to translate the old Vedic language and figures into the form contemporary thought prefers to give to its ideas is the sole object of this commentary. The task is necessarily a little hazardous. It would have been easy merely to reproduce the thoughts & interpretations of Shankara in the modern tongue — if there were an error, one could afford to err with so supreme an authority. But it seems to me that both the demands of truth and the spiritual need of mankind in this age call for a restoration of old Vedantic truth rather than for the prolonged dominion of that single side of it systematised by the mediaeval thinker. The great Shankaracharya needs no modern praise and can be hurt by no modern disagreement. Easily the first of metaphysical thinkers, the greatest genius in the history of philosophy, his commentary has also done an incalculable service to our race by bridging the intellectual gulf between the sages of the Upanishads and ourselves. It has protected them from the practical oblivion in which our ignorance & inertia have allowed the Veda to rest for so many centuries — only to be dragged out by the rude hands of the daringly speculative Teuton. It has kept these ancient grandeurs of thought, these high repositories of spirituality under the safe-guard of that temple of metaphysics, the Adwaita philosophy — a little in the background, a little too much veiled & shrouded, but nevertheless safe from the iconoclasm and the restless ingenuities of modern scholarship. Nevertheless, it remains true that Shankara's commentary is interesting not so much for the light it sheds on the Upanishad as for its digressions into his own philosophy. I do not think that Shankara's rational intellect, subtle indeed to the extreme, but avid of logical clearness and consistency, could penetrate far into that mystic symbolism and that deep & elusive flexibility which is characteristic of all the Upanishads, but rises to an almost unattainable height in the Brihad Aranyaka. He has done much, has shown often a readiness and quickness astonishing in so different a type of intellectuality but more is possible and needed. The time is fast coming when the human intellect, aware of the mighty complexity of the universe, will be more ready to learn & less prone to dispute & dictate; we shall be willing then to read ancient documents of knowledge for what they contain instead of attempting to force into them our own truth or get them to serve our philosophic or scholastic purposes. To enter passively into the thoughts of the old Rishis, allow their words to sink into our souls, mould them & create their own reverberations in a sympathetic & responsive material — submissiveness, in short, to the Sruti — was the theory the ancients themselves had of the method of Vedic knowledge — giram upasrutim chara, stoman abhi swara, abhi grinihi, a ruva — to listen in soul to the old voices and allow the Sruti in the soul to respond, to vibrate first obscurely in answer to the Vedantic hymn of knowledge, to give the response, the echo & last to let that response gain in clarity, intensity & fullness. This is the principle of interpretation that I have followed — mystical perhaps but not necessarily more unsound than the insistence & equally personal standards of the logician & the scholar. And for the rest, where no inner experience of truth sheds light on the text, to abide faithfully by the wording of the Upanishad and trust my intuitions. For I hold it right to follow the intuitions especially in interpreting this Upanishad, even at the risk of being accused of reading mysticism into the Vedanta, because the early Vedantists, it seems to me, were mystics — not in the sense of being vague & loose-thoughted visionaries, but in the sense of being intuitional symbolists — who regarded the world as a movement of consciousness & all material forms & energies as external symbols & shadows of deeper & ever deeper internal realities. It is not my intention here nor is it in my limits possible to develop the philosophy of the Great Aranyaka Upanishad, but only to develop with just sufficient amplitude for entire clearness the ideas contained in its language & involved in its figures. The business of my commentary is to lay a foundation; it is for the thinker to build the superstructure.

The Horse of the Worlds

The Upanishad begins with a grandiose abruptness in an impetuous figure of the Horse of the Aswamedha. "OM" it begins "Dawn is the head of the horse sacrificial. The sun is his eye, his breath is the wind, his wide-open mouth is Fire, the universal energy; Time is the self of the horse sacrificial. Heaven is his back and the mid-region is his belly, earth is his footing, — the quarters are his flanks and their intermediate regions are his ribs; the seasons are his members, the months and the half months are their joints, the days and nights are that on which he stands, the stars are his bones and the sky is the flesh of his body. The strands are the food in his belly, the rivers are his veins, the mountains are his liver and lungs, herbs and plants are the hairs of his body; the rising day is his front portion and the setting day is his hinder portion. When he stretches himself, then it lightens; when he shakes himself, then it thunders; when he urines, then it rains. Speech verily is the voice of him. Day was the grandeur that was born before the horse as he galloped, the eastern ocean gave it birth. Night was the grandeur that was born in his rear and its birth was in the western waters. These were the grandeurs that arose to being on either side of the horse. He became Haya and carried the gods, — Vajin and bore the Gandharvas, — Arvan and bore the Titans, — Aswa and carried mankind. The sea was his brother and the sea his birthplace."

This passage, full of a gigantic imagery, sets the key to the Upanishad and only by entering into the meaning of its symbolism can we command the gates of this many-mansioned city of Vedantic thought. There is never anything merely poetic or ornamental in the language of the Upanishads. Even in this passage which would at first sight seem to be sheer imagery, there is a choice, a selecting eye, an intention in the images. They are all dependent not on the author's unfettered fancy, but on the common ideas of the early Vedantic theosophy. It is fortunate, also, that the attitude of the Upanishads to the Vedic sacrifices is perfectly plain from this opening. We shall not stand in danger of being accused of reading modern subtleties into primitive minds or of replacing barbarous superstitions by civilised mysticism. The Aswamedha or Horse-Sacrifice is, as we shall see, taken as the symbol of a great spiritual advance, an evolutionary movement, almost, out of the dominion of apparently material forces into a higher spiritual freedom. The Horse of the Aswamedha is, to the author, a physical figure representing, like some algebraical symbol, an unknown quantity of force & speed. From the imagery it is evident that this force, this speed, is something worldwide, something universal; it fills the regions with its body, it occupies Time, it gallops through Space, it bears on in its speed men and gods and the Titans. It is the Horse of the Worlds, — and yet the Horse sacrificial.

Let us regard first the word Aswa and consider whether it throws any light on the secret of this image. For we know that the early Vedantins attached great importance to words in both their apparent and their hidden meaning and no one who does not follow them in this path, can hope to enter into the associations with which their minds were full. Yet the importance of associations in colouring and often in determining our thoughts, determining even philosophic and scientific thought when it is most careful to be exact & free, should be obvious to the most superficial psychologist. Swami Dayananda's method with the Vedas, although it may have been too vigorously applied and more often out of the powerful mind of the modern Indian thinker than out of the recovered mentality of the old Aryan Rishis, would nevertheless, in its principle, have been approved by these Vedantins. Now the word Aswa must originally have implied strength or speed or both before it came to be applied to a horse. In its first or root significance it means to exist pervadingly and so to possess, have, obtain or enjoy. It is the Greek echo (OS. [*Old Sanskrit*] ashâ), the ordinary word in Greek for "I have". It means, also and even more commonly, to eat or enjoy. Beside this original sense inherent in the roots of its family it has its own peculiar significance of existence in force — strength, solidity, sharpness, speed, — in ashan and ashma, a stone, ashani, a thunderbolt, asri, a sharp edge or corner, (Latin acer, acris, sharp, acus, a point etc) and finally aswa, the strong, swift horse. Its fundamental meanings are, therefore, pervading existence, enjoyment, strength, solidity, speed. Shall we not say, therefore, that aswa to the Rishis meant the unknown power made up of force, strength, solidity, speed and enjoyment that pervades and constitutes the material world?

But there is a danger that etymological fancies may mislead us. It is necessary, therefore, to test our provisional conclusion from philology by a careful examination of the images of this parable. Yet before we proceed to this inquiry, it is as well to note that in the very opening of his second Brahmana, the Rishi passes on immediately from aswa the horse to Ashanaya mrityu, Hunger that is death and assigns this hunger that is death as the characteristic, indeed the very nature of the Force that has arranged and developed — evolved, as the moderns would say — the material worlds.

"Dawn" says the Rishi, "is the head of the horse sacrificial." Now the head is the front, the part of us that faces and looks out upon our world, — and Dawn is that part to the Horse of the worlds. This goddess must therefore be the opening out of the world to the eye of being — for as day is the symbol of a time of activity, night of a time of inactivity, so dawn images the imperfect but pregnant beginnings of regular cosmic action; it is the Being's movement forward, it is its impulse to look out at the universe in which it finds itself and looking towards it, to yearn, to desire to enter upon possession of a world which looks so bright because of the brightness of the gaze that is turned upon it. The word Ushas means etymologically coming into manifested being; and it could mean also desire or yearning. Ushas or Dawn to the early thinkers was the impulse towards manifest existence, no longer a vague movement in the depths of the Unmanifest, but already emerging and on the brink of its satisfaction. For we must remember that we are dealing with a book full of mystical imagery, which starts with & looks on psychological and philosophical truths in the most material things and we shall miss its meaning altogether, if in our interpretation we are afraid of mysticism.

The sun is the eye of this great Force, the wind is its life-breath or vital energy, Fire is its open mouth. We are here in the company of very familiar symbols. We shall have to return to them hereafter but they are, in their surface application, obvious and lucid. By themselves they are almost sufficient to reveal the meaning of the symbol, — yet not altogether sufficient. For, taken by themselves, they might mislead us into supposing the Horse of the Worlds to be an image of the material universe only, a figure for those movements of matter & in matter with which modern Science is so exclusively preoccupied. But the next image delivers us from passing by this side-gate into materialism. "Time in its period is the self of the Horse Sacrificial." If we accept for the word *atma* a significance which is also common and is, indeed, used in the next chapter, if we understand by it, as I think we ought here to understand by it, "substance" or "body", the expression, in itself remarkable, will become even more luminous and striking. Not Matter then, but Time, a mental circumstance, is the body of this force of the material universe whose eye is the sun and his breath the wind. Are we then to infer that the Seer denies the essential materiality of matter? does he assert it to be, as Huxley admitted it to be, "a state of consciousness"? We shall see. Meanwhile it is evident already that this Horse of the Worlds is not an image merely of matter or material force, but, as we had already supposed it to be, an image of the power which pervades and constitutes the material universe. We get also from this image about Time the idea of it as an unknown power — for Time which is its self or body, is itself an unknown quantity. The reality which expresses itself to us through Time — its body — but remains itself ungrasped, must be still what men have always felt it to be, the unknown God.

In the images that immediately follow we have the conception of Space added to the conception of Time and both are brought together side by side as constituents of the being of the horse. For the sky is the flesh of his body, the quarters his flanks & the intermediate regions his ribs — the sky, nabhas, the ether above us in which the stellar systems are placed, — and these stellar systems themselves, concentrations of ether, are the bones which support the flesh and of which life in this spatial infinity takes advantage in order more firmly to place & organise itself in matter. But side by side with this spatial image is that of the seasons reminding us immediately & intentionally of the connection of Time to Space. The seasons, determined for us by the movements of the sun & stars, are the flanks of the horse and he stands upon the months and the fortnights — the lunar divisions. Space, then, is the flesh constituting materially this body of Time which the Sage attributes to his Horse of the worlds, — by movement in Space its periods are shaped & determined. Therefore we return always to the full idea of the Horse — not as an image of matter, not as a symbol of the unknown supra-material Power in its supra-material reality, but of that Power expressing itself in matter — materially, we might almost say, pervading & constituting the universe. Time is its body, — yes, but sanvatsara not kala, Time in its periods determined by movement in Space, not Time in its essentiality.

Moreover, it is that Power imaging itself in Cosmos, it is the Horse of the Worlds. For, we read, "Heaven is its back, the mid-region is its belly, earth is its footing” — pajasyam, the four feet upon which it stands. We must be careful not to confuse the ancient Seer’s conception of the universe with our modern conception. To us nothing exists except the system of gross material worlds — annamayam jagat, — this earth, this moon, this sun & its planets, these myriad suns and their systems. But to the Vedantic thinkers the universe, the manifest Brahman, was a harmony of worlds within worlds; they beheld a space within our space but linked with it, they were aware of a Time connected with our Time but different from it. This earth was Bhur. Rising in soul into the air above the earth, the antariksham, they thought they came into contact with other sevenfold earths in which just as here matter is the predominant principle, so there nervous or vital energy is the main principle or else manas, still dependent on matter & vital energy; these earths they called Bhuvar. And rising beyond this atmosphere into the ethereal void they believed themselves to be aware of other worlds which they called Swar or heaven, where again in its turn mind, free, blithe, delivered from its struggle to impose itself in a world not its own upon matter & nerve-life, is the medium of existence & the governing Force. If we keep in mind these ideas, we shall easily understand why the images are thus distributed in the sentence I have last quoted. Heaven is the back of the Horse, because it is on mind that we rest, mind that bears up the Gods & Gandharvas, Titans & men; — the mid-region is the belly because vital energy is that which hungers & devours, moves restlessly everywhere seizing everything and turning it into food or else because mind is the womb of all our higher consciousness; — earth is the footing because matter here, outward form, is the fundamental condition for the manifestation of life, mind and all higher forces. On Matter we rest and have our firm stand; out of Matter we rise to our fulfilment in Spirit.

Then once again, after these higher & more remote suggestions, we are reminded that it is some Force manifesting in matter which the Horse symbolises; the material manifestation constitutes the essence of its symbolism. The images used are of an almost gross materiality. Some of them are at the same time of a striking interest to the practical student of Yoga, for he recognises in them allusions to certain obscure but exceedingly common Yogic phenomena. The strands of the rivers are imaged as the undigested food in the horse's belly — earth not yet assimilated or of sufficient consistency for the habitual works of life; the rivers, distributing the water that is the life blood of earth's activities, are his veins; the mountains, breathing in health for us from the rarer altitudes and supporting by the streams born from them the works of life, are his lungs and liver; herbs and plants, springing up out of the sap of earth, are the hairs covering & clothing his body. All that is clear enough and designedly superficial. But then the Upanishad goes on to speak no longer of superficial circumstances but of the powers of the Horse. Some of these are material powers, the thunder, the lightning, the rain. When he stretches himself, then it lightens; when he shakes himself, then it thunders; when he urines, then it rains — vijrimbhate, extends himself by intensity, makes the most of his physical bulk & force; vidhunute, throws himself out by energy, converts his whole body into a motion & force; these two words are of a great impetuosity & vehemence, and taken in conjunction with what they image, extremely significant. The Yogin will at once recognise the reference to the electrical manifestations visible or felt which accompany so often the increase of concentration, thought & inner activity in the waking condition — electricity, vidyutas, the material symbol, medium & basis of all activities of knowledge, sarvani vijnanavijrimbhitani. He will recognise also the meghadhwani, one of the characteristic sounds heard in the concentration of Yoga, symbolical of kshatratejas and physically indicative of force gathering itself for action. The first image is therefore an image of knowledge expressing itself in matter, the second is an image of power expressing itself in matter. The third, the image of the rain, suggests that it is from the mere waste matter of his body that this great Power is able to fertilise the world & produce sustenance for the myriad nations of his creatures. "Speech verily is the voice of him." Vagevasya vak. Speech with its burden of definite thought, is the neighing of this mighty horse of sacrifice; by that this great Power in matter expresses materially the uprush of his thought & yearning & emotion, visible sparks of the secret universal fire that is in him — guhahitam.

But the real powers, the wonderful fundamental greatnesses of the Horse are, the Sage would have us remember, not the material. What are they then? The sunrise & sunset, day & night are their symbols, not the magnitudes of space, but the magnitudes of Time, — Time, that mysterious condition of universal mind which alone makes the ordering of the universe in Space possible, although its own particular relations to matter are necessarily determined by material events & movements — for itself subtle as well as infinite it offers no means by which it can be materially measured. Sunrise & sunset, that is to say birth & death, are the front & hind part of the body of the horse, Time expressed in matter. But on Day & Night the sage fixes a deeper significance. Day is the symbol of the continual manifestation of material things [in] the vyakta, the manifest or fundamentally in Sat, in infinite being; Night is the symbol of their continual disappearance in Avyakta, the unmanifest or finally into Asat, into infinite non-being. They appear according to the swift movement of this Horse of the Worlds, anu ajayata, or, as I have written, translating the idea & rhythm of the Upanishad rather than the exact words, as he gallops. Day is the greatness that appears in his front, Night is the greatness that appears in his rear, — whatever this Time-Spirit, this Zeitgeist, turns his face towards or arrives at as he gallops through Time, that appears or, as we say, comes into being, whatever he passes away from & leaves, that disappears out of being or, as we say, perishes. Not that things are really destroyed, for nothing that is can be destroyed — nabhavo vidyate satah, but they no longer appear, they are swallowed up in this darkness of his refusal of consciousness; for the purposes of manifestation they cease to exist. All things exist already in Parabrahman, but all are not here manifest. They are already there in Being, not in Time. The universal Thought expressing itself as Time reaches them, they seem to be born; It passes away from them, they seem to perish; but there they still are, in Being, but not in Time. These two greatnesses of the appearance of things in Time & Space & their disappearance in Time & Space act always & continuously so long as the Horse is galloping, are his essential greatnesses. Etau vai mahimanau. The birth of one is in the eastern ocean, of the other in the western, that is to say in Sat & Asat, in the ocean of Being & the ocean of denial of Being or else in Vyakrita Prakriti & Avyakrita Prakriti, occult sea of Chaos, manifest sea of Cosmos.

Then the sage throws out briefly a description, not exhaustive but typical, of the relations of the Horse to the different natural types of being that seem to possess this universe. For all of them He is the vahana, He bears them up on His infinite strength & speed & motion. He bears all of them without respect of differences, samabhavena, with the divine impartiality and equality of soul — samam hi Brahma. To the type of each individual being this Universal Might adapts himself & seems to take upon himself their image. He is Haya to the Gods, Arvan to the Asura, Vajin to the Gandharvas, Aswa to men. Ye yatha mam prapadyante tans tathaiva bhajamyaham, mama vartmanuvartante manushyah Partha sarvashah. In reality, they are made in his image, not He in theirs, & though he seems to obey them & follow their needs & impulses, though they handle the whip, ply the spur & tug the reins, it is he who bears them on in the courses of Time that are marked out for him by his hidden Self; He is free & exults in the swiftness of his galloping.

But what are these names, Haya, Vajin, Arvan, Aswa? Certainly, they must suggest qualities which fit the Horse in each case to the peculiar type of its rider; but the meaning depends on associations & an etymology which in modern Sanscrit have gone below the surface & are no longer easily seizable. Haya is especially difficult. For this reason Shankara, relying too much on scholarship & intellectual inference & too little on his intuitions, is openly at a loss in this passage. He sees that the word haya for horse must arise from the radical sense of motion borne by the root *hi*; but every horse has motion for his chief characteristic & utility, Arvan & Vajin no less than Haya. Why then should Haya alone be suitable for riding by the gods, why

Arvan for the Asuras? He has, I think, the right intuition when he suggests that it is some peculiar & excelling kind of motion (visishtagati) which is the characteristic of Haya. But then, unable to fix on that peculiarity, unable to read any characteristic meaning in the names that follow, he draws back from his intuition and adds that after all, these names may have merely indicated particular kinds of horses attributed mythologically to these various families of riders. But this suggestion would make the passage mere mythology; but the Upanishads, always intent on their deeper object, never waste time over mere mythology. We must therefore go deeper than Shankara and follow out the intuition he himself has abandoned.

I am dwelling on this passage at a length disproportionate to its immediate importance, not only because Shankara's failure in handling it shows the necessity & fruitfulness of trusting our intuitions when in contact with the Upanishads, but because the passage serves two other important uses. It illustrates the Vedantic use of the etymology of words and it throws light on the precise notions of the old thinkers about those superterrestrial beings with whom the vision of the ancient Hindus peopled the universe. The Vedantic writers, we continually find, dwelt deeply & curiously on the innate & on the concealed meaning of words; vyakarana, always considered essential to the interpretation of the Vedas, they used not merely as scholars, but much more as intuitive thinkers. It was not only the actual etymological sense or the actual sense in use but the suggestions of the sound & syllables of the words which attracted them; for they found that by dwelling on them new & deep truths arose into their understandings. Let us see how they use this method in assigning the names assumed by the sacrificial Horse.

Here modern philology comes to our help, for, by the clue it has given, we can revive in its principle the Nirukta of our ancestors and discover by induction & inference the old meaning of the Vedic vocables. I will leave Haya alone for the present; because philology unaided does not help us very much in getting at the sense of its application, — in discovering the visishtagati which the word conveyed to the mind of the sage. But Vajin &

Arvan are very illuminative. Vaja & Vajin are common Vedic words; they recur perpetually in the Rigveda. The sense of Vaja is essentially substantiality of being attended with plenty, from which it came to signify full force, copiousness, strength, and by an easy transition substance & plenty in the sense of wealth and possessions. There can be no doubt about Vajin. But European scholarship has confused for us the approach to the sense of Arvan. *Ar* is a common Sanscrit root, the basis of ari, Arya, Aryama and a number of well known words. But the scholars tell us that it means to till or plough & the Aryans so called themselves because they were agriculturists and not nomads & hunters. Starting from this premise one may see in Arvan a horse for ploughing as opposed to a draught-animal or a warhorse, & support the derivation by instancing the Latin arvum, a tilled field! But even if the Aryans were ploughmen, the Titans surely were not — Hiranyakashipu & Prahlad did not pride themselves on the breaking of the glebe & the honest sweat of their brow! There is no trace of such an association in arvan here, — I know not whether there is any elsewhere in the Vedas. Indeed, this agriculturist theory of the Aryans seems one of the worst of the many irresponsible freaks which scholastic fancifulness has perpetrated in the field of Sanscrit learning. No ancient race would be likely so to designate itself. *Ar* signifies essentially any kind of preeminence in fact or force in act. It means therefore to be strong, high, swift or active, preeminent, noble, excellent or first; to raise, lead, begin or rule; it means also to struggle, fight, to drive, to labour, to plough. The sense of struggle & combat appears in ari, an enemy; the Greek Ares, the war-god, arete, virtue, meaning originally like the Latin virtus, valour; the Latin arma, weapons. Arya means strong, high, noble or warlike, as indeed its use in literature constantly indicates. We can now discover the true force of Arvan, — it is the strong one in command, it is the stallion, or the bull, ie master of the herd, the leader, master or fighter. The word Asura also means the strong or mighty one. The Gandharvas are cited here briefly, so as to suit the rapidity of the passage, as the type of a particular class of beings, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Kinnaras whose unifying characteristic is material ease, prosperity and a beautiful, happy & undisturbed self-indulgence; they are angels of joy, ease, art, beauty & pleasure. For them the Horse becomes full of ease & plenty, the support of these qualities, the vahana of the Gandharvas. The Asuras are, similarly, angels of might & force & violent struggle, — self-will is their characteristic, just as an undisciplined fury of self-indulgence is the characteristic of their kindred Rakshasas. It is a self-will capable of discipline, but always huge & impetuous even in discipline, always based on a colossal egoism. They struggle gigantically to impose that egoism on their surroundings. It is for these mighty but imperfect beings that the Horse adapts himself to their needs, becomes full of force & might and bears up their gigantic struggle, their unceasing effort. And Haya? In the light of these examples we can hazard a suggestion. The root meaning is motion; but from certain kindred words, *hil*, to swing, *hind*, to swing, *hiṇḍ*, to roam about freely & from another sense of *hi*, to exhilarate or gladden, we may, perhaps, infer that haya indicated to the sage a swift, free & joyous, bounding motion, fit movement for the bearer of the gods. For the Aryan gods were devas, angels of joy & brightness, fulfilled in being, in harmony with their functions & surroundings, not like the Titans imperfect, dispossessed, struggling. Firmly seated on the bounding joy of the Horse, they deliver themselves confidently to the exultation of his movements. The sense here is not so plain & certain as with Vajin & Arvan; but Haya must certainly have been one in character with the Deva in order to be his vahana; the sense I have given certainly belongs to the word Deva, is discoverable in Haya from its roots, & that this brightness & joyousness was the character of the Aryan gods, I think every reader of Veda & Purana must feel and admit. Last of all, the Horse becomes Aswa for men. But is he not Aswa for all? why particularly for men? The answer is that the Rishi is already moving forward in thought to the idea of Ashanaya Mrityu with which he opens the second Brahmana of the Upanishad. Man, first & supreme type of terrestrial creatures, is most of all subject to this mystery of wasting & death which the Titans bear with difficulty & the gods

& Gandharvas entirely overcome. For in man that characteristic of enjoyment which by enjoying devours & wastes both its object & itself is especially developed & he bears the consequent pressure of Ashanaya Mrityu which can only lighten & disappear if we rise upward in the scale of Being towards Brahman & become truly sons of immortality, Amritasya putrah. That form of force in matter that is self-wasting because it wastes or preys upon others, is man's vahana.

Of this Horse of the Worlds, who bears up all beings, the sea is the brother & the sea is the birthplace. There can be no doubt of the meaning of this symbol. It is the upper ocean of the Veda in which it imaged the superior & divine existence, these are the waters of supramaterial causality. From that this lower ocean of our manifestation derives its waters, its flowing energies, apah; from that when the Vritras are slain & the firmaments opened, it is perpetually replenished, prati samudram syandamanah and of that it is the shadow & the reproduction of its circumstances under the conditions of mental illusion, — Avidya, mother of limitation & death. This image not only consummates this passage but opens a door of escape from that which is to follow. Deliverance from the dominion of Ashanaya Mrityu is possible because of this circumstance that the sea of divine being is bandhu, kin & friend to the Horse. The aparardha proves to be of the same essential nature as the parardha, our mortal part is akin to our unlimited & immortal part, because the Horse of the Worlds comes to us from that divine source & in his essence partakes of its nature, & from what other except this Ocean can the Horse of the Worlds who is material yet supramaterial be said to have derived his being? We, appearing bound, mortal & limited, are manifestations of a free & infinite reality & from that from which we were born comes friendship & assistance for that which we are, towards making us that which we shall be. From our kindred heavens the Love descends always that works to raise up the lower to its brother, the higher.

The Kaivalya Upanishad

ॐ अथाश्वलायनो भगवन्तं परमेष्ठिनमुपसमेत्योवाच ।
अधीहि भगवन् ब्रह्मविद्यां वरिष्ठां सदा सद्भिः सेव्यमानां निगूढाम् ।
यथाचिरात् सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य परात्परं पुरुषं याति विद्वान् ॥ १॥

OM. Aswalayana to the Lord Parameshthi came and said, Teach me, Lord, the highest knowledge of Brahman, the secret knowledge ever followed by the saints, how the wise man swiftly putting from him all evil goeth to the Purusha who is higher than the highest.

Commentary

The Lord Parameshthi is Brahma — not the Creator Hiranyagarbha, but the soul who in this kalpa has climbed up to be the instrument of Creation, the first in time of the Gods, the Pitamaha or original & general Prajapati, the Pitamaha, because all the fathers or special Prajapatis, Daksha and others, are his mind born children. The confusion between the Grandsire and the Creator, who is also called Brahma, is common; but the distinction is clear. Thus in the Mundaka Upanishad ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथमः संबभूव, it is the first of Gods, the earliest birth of Time, the father of Atharva, and not the unborn eternal Hiranyagarbha. In the Puranas Brahma is described as in fear of his life from Madhu and Kaitabha, and cannot be the fearless and immortal Hiranyagarbha. Nor would it be possible for Aswalayana to come to Hiranyagarbha and say "Teach me, Lord," for Hiranyagarbha has no form nor is He approachable nor does He manifest Himself to men as Shiva and Vishnu do. He is millionfold, Protean, intangible, and for that reason He places in each cycle a Brahma or divine Man between Him and the search and worship of men. It is Brahma or divine Man who is called Parameshthi or the one full of Parameshtham, that which is superlative and highest,— Hiranyagarbha. The power of Hiranyagarbha is in Brahma and creates through him the nama and rupa of things in this cycle.

To Brahma Parameshthi Aswalayana comes as a disciple to a master and says to him, Lord, teach me the Brahmavidya. He specifies the kind of knowledge he requires. It is varishtha, the best or highest, because it goes beyond the triple Brahman to the Purushottam or Most High God; it is secret, because even in the ordinary teaching of Vedanta, Purana and Tantra it is not expressed, it is always followed by the saints, the initiates. The *santah* or saints are those who are pure of desire and full of knowledge, and it is to these that the secret knowledge has been given सदा, from the beginning. He makes his meaning yet clearer by stating the substance of the knowledge—यथा, how, by what means won by knowledge, विद्वान्, one can swiftly put sin from him and reach Purushottam.

There are three necessary elements of the path to Kaivalya, —first, the starting point, vidya, right knowledge, implying the escape from ignorance, non-knowledge and false knowledge; next, the process or means, escape from सर्वपापं, all evil, ie, sin, pain and grief; last, the goal, Purushottam, the Being who is beyond the highest, that is, beyond Turiya, being the Highest. By the escape from sin, pain and grief one attains absolute ananda, and by ananda, the last term of existence, we reach that in which ananda exists. What is that? It is not Turiya who is shivam, shantam, adwaitam, sacchidanandam, but that which is beyond shivam and ashivam, good and evil, shantam and kalilam, calm and chaos, dwaitam and adwaitam, duality and unity. Sat, Chit and Ananda are in this Highest, but He is neither Sat, Chit nor Ananda nor any combination of these. He is All and yet He is neti, neti, He is One and yet He is many. He is Parabrahman and He is Parameswara. He is Male and He is Female. He is Tat and He is Sa. This is the Higher than the Highest. He is the Purusha, the Being in whose image the world and all the Jivas are made, who pervades all and underlies all the workings of Prakriti as its reality and self. It is this Purusha that Aswalayana seeks.

Nila Rudra Upanishad

First Part

Translation

ॐ अपश्यं त्वावरोहन्तं दिवितः पृथिवीमवः।
अपश्यमस्यन्तं रुद्रं नीलग्रीवं शिखण्डिनम्॥ १॥

1. OM. Thee I beheld in thy descending down from the heavens to the earth, I saw Rudra, the Terrible, the azure-throated, the peacock-feathered, as he hurled.

दिव उग्रो अवारुक्षत्प्रत्यष्ठाद् भूम्यामधि।
जनासः पश्यते महं नीलग्रीवं विलोहितम्॥ २॥

2. Fierce he came down from the sky, he stood facing me on the earth as its lord, — the people behold a mass of strength, azure-throated, scarlet-hued.

एष एत्यवीरहा रुद्रो जलासभेषजाः।
यत्तेऽक्षेममनीनशद् वातीकारोऽप्येतु ते॥ ३॥

3. This that cometh is he that destroyeth evil, Rudra the Terrible, born of the tree that dwelleth in the waters; let the globe of the stormwinds come too, that destroyeth for thee all things of evil omen.

नमस्ते भवभावाय नमस्ते भाममन्यवे।
नमस्ते अस्तु बाहुभ्यामुतो त इषवे नमः॥ ४॥

4. Salutation to thee who bringeth the world into being, salutation to thee, the passionate with mighty wrath. Salutation be to thy arms of might, salutation be to thy angry shaft.

यामिषुं गिरिशन्त हस्ते बिभर्ष्यस्तवे ।
शिवां गिरित्र तां कृणु मा हिंसीत्पुरुषान् मम ॥ ५ ॥

5. The arrow thou bearest in thy hand for the hurling, O thou that liest on the mountains, make an arrow of blessing, O keeper of the hills, let it not slay my armed men.

शिवेन वचसा त्वा गिरिशाच्छावदामसि ।
यथा नः सर्वमिज्जगदयक्ष्मं सुमना असत् ॥ ६ ॥

6. With fair speech, O mountain-dweller, we sue to thee in the assembly of the folk, that the whole world may be for us a friendly and sinless place.

या ते इषुः शिवतमा शिवं बभूव ते धनुः ।
शिवा शरव्या या तव तया नो मृड जीवसे ॥ ७ ॥

7. That thy arrow which is the kindliest of all and thy bow which is well-omened and that thy quiver which beareth blessing, by that thou livest for us, O lord of slaughter.

या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूरघोरा पापकाशिनी ।
तया नस्तन्वा शन्तमया गिरिश त्वाभिचाकशत् ॥ ८ ॥

8. That thy body, O Terrible One, which is fair and full of kindness and destroyeth sin, not thy shape of terrors, in that thy body full of peace, O mountaineer, thou art wont to be seen among our folk.

असौ यस्ताम्रो अरुण उत बभ्रुर्विलोहितः ।
ये चेमे अभितो रुद्रा दिक्षु श्रिताः सहस्रशो वैषां हेड ईमहे ॥ ९ ॥

9. This Aruna of the dawn that is tawny and copper-red and scarlet-hued, and these thy Violent Ones round about that dwell in the regions in their thousands, verily, it is these whom we desire.

Commentary

1. अपश्यं. I beheld. The speaker is the author of the Upanishad, a prince of the Aryan people, as we see from the fifth verse. He records a vision of Rudra descending from the heavens to the earth. अव:, down, is repeated for the sake of vividness. In the second half of the sloka the murti or image in which he beheld the Divine Manifestation is described, Rudra, the God of might and wrath, the neck and throat blue, a peacock's feather as a crest, in the act of hurling a shaft.

2. He proceeds to describe the descent. He descended fiercely, that is, with wrath in his face, gesture and motion and stood facing the seer, प्रत्यष्ठात्, on the earth, and over it, अधि, in a way expressive of command or control. This image of Divine Power, seen by the prince in Yoga, becomes visible to the people in general as a mass of strength, मह, scarlet in colour, deep blue in the neck and throat. मह is strength, bulk, greatness. The manifestation is that of wrath and might. The people see Rudra as a mass of brilliance, scarlet-ringed and crested with blue, the scarlet in Yoga denoting violent passion of anger or desire, the blue sraddha, bhakti, piety or religion.

3. Rudra, whom we know as the slayer of evil, comes. The Rajarshi describes him as born of the tree that is in the waters. भेष is by philology identical with the Latin ficus or figtree, aswattha. The aswattha is the Yogic emblem of the manifested world, as in the Gita, the tree of the two birds in the Swetaswatara Upanishad, the single tree in the blue expanse of the Song of Liberation. The jala is the apah or waters from which the world rises. The rishi then prays that the वातीकार:, mass of winds of which Rudra is lord and which in the tempest of their course blow away all calamity, such as pestilence etc, may come with him.

4. In the fourth verse he salutes the God. Rudra is the Supreme Ishwara, Creator of the World, He is the dreadful, wrathful and destroying Lord, swift to slay and punish. भाम is passionate

anger, and the word मन्युः denotes a violent disturbed state of mind, passion, either of grief or of anger. भाममन्यवे therefore means, one who is full of the passion of violent anger. Rudra is being saluted as a God of might and wrath, it is therefore to the arms as the seat of strength and the arrow as the weapon of destruction that salutation is made.

5. Rudra is coming in a new form of wrath and destruction in which the Aryans are not accustomed to see him. Apprehensive of the meaning of this vision, the King summons the people and in assembly prayer is offered to Rudra to avert possible calamity. The shaft is lifted to be hurled from the bow; it is prayed that it may be turned into a shaft of blessing, not of wrath. In this verse the Prince prays the God not to slay his men, meaning evidently, the armed warriors of the clan.

Section Four

Incomplete Commentaries on the Kena Upanishad

Circa 1912–1914

Kena Upanishad

An Incomplete Commentary

Foreword

As the Isha Upanishad is concerned with the problem of God & the world and consequently with the harmonising of spirituality & ordinary human action, so the Kena is occupied with the problem of God & the Soul and the harmonising of our personal activity with the movement of infinite energy & the supremacy of the universal Will. We are not here in this universe as independent existences. It is evident that we are limited beings clashing with other limited beings, clashing with the forces of material Nature, clashing too with forces of immaterial Nature of which we are aware not with the senses but by the mind. The Upanishad takes for granted that we are souls, not merely life-inspired bodies — into that question it does not enter. But this soul in us is in relation with the outside world through the senses, through the vitality, through mind. It is entangled in the mesh of its instruments, thinks they alone exist or is absorbed in their action with which it identifies itself — it forgets itself in its activities. To recall it to itself, to lift it above this life of the senses, so that even while living in this world, it shall always refer itself & its actions to the high universal Self & Deity which we all are in the ultimate truth of our being — so that we may be free, may be pure & joyous, may be immortal, that is the object of the seer in the Kena Upanishad. Briefly to explain the steps by which he develops and arrives at his point and the principal philosophical positions underlying his great argument, is as always the purpose of this commentary. There is much that might & should be said for the full realisation of this ancient gospel of submission & self-surrender to the Infinite, but it is left to be said in a work of greater amplitude and capacity. Exegesis in faithful subordination to the strict purport & connotation of the text will be here as always my principle.

The First Part

The Self & the Senses

"By whom controlled, by whom commissioned & sent forth falleth the mind on its object, by whom yoked to its activity goeth abroad this chief of the vital forces? By whom controlled is this word that men speak, and what god set ear & eye to their workings? That which is hearing within hearing, mind of the mind, speech behind the word, he too is the life of vitality & the sight within vision; the calm of soul are liberated from these instruments and passing beyond this world become Immortals... There the eye goes not & speech cannot follow nor the mind; we know it not nor can we decide by reason how to teach of it; for verily it is other than the known & it is beyond the unknown; so have we heard from the men that went before us by whom to us this Brahman was declared. That which is not uttered by speech, but by which speech is expressed, know thou that to be the Soul of things and not this which men here pursue. That which thinketh not by the mind, but by which mind itself is realised, know thou that to be the Soul of things, not this which men here pursue. That which seeth not by sight, but by which one seeth things visible, know thou that to be the Soul of things and not this which men here pursue. That which heareth not by hearing but by which hearing becomes subject to knowledge through the ear, know thou that to be the Soul of things & not this which men here pursue. That which liveth not by the breathing, but by which the breath becometh means of vitality, know thou that to be the Soul of things & not this which men here pursue."

I

In order to understand the question with which the Upanishad opens its train of thought, it is necessary to remember the ideas of the Vedantic thinkers about the phenomena of sensation, life, mind and ideas which are the elements of all our activity in the body. It is noticeable that the body itself and matter, [the] principle of which the body is a manifestation, are not even mentioned in this Upanishad. The problem of matter the Seer supposes to have been so far solved for the inquirer that he no longer regards the physical state of consciousness as fundamental and no longer considers it as a reality separate from consciousness. All this world is only one conscious Being. Matter to the Vedantist is only one of several states — in reality, movements — of this conscious being, — a state in which this universal consciousness, having created forms within & out of itself as substance, absorbs & loses itself by concentration in the idea of being as substance of form. It is still conscious, but, as form, ceases to be self-conscious. The Purusha in matter, the Knower in the leaf, clod, stone, is involved in form, forgets himself in this movement of his Prakriti or Mode of Action and loses hold in outgoing knowledge of his self of conscious being & delight. He is not in possession of himself; He is not Atmavan. He has to get back what he has lost, to become Atmavan, and that simply means that He has to become gradually aware in matter of that which He has hidden from Himself in matter. He has to evolve what He has involved. This recovery in knowledge of our full and real self is the sole secret meaning & purpose of evolution. In reality it is no evolution, but a manifestation. We are already what we become. That which is still future in matter, is already present in Spirit. That which the mind in matter does not yet know, it is hiding from itself — that in us which is behind mind & informs it already knows — but it keeps its secret.

For that which we regard as matter, cannot be, if the Vedantic view is right, mere matter, mere inert existence, eternally bound by its own inertness. Even in a materialistic view of the world matter cannot be what it seems, but is only a form or movement of Force which the Indians call Prakriti. This Force, according to the Upanishads, is composed in its action & capable in its potentiality of several principles, of which matter, mind & life are those already manifestly active in this world, and where one of these principles is active, the others must also be there, involved in it; or, to put it in another way, Force acting as one of its own principles, one of its movements, is inherently capable even in that movement of all the others. If in the leaf, clod, stone & metal life and mind are not active, it is not because they are not present, but because they are not yet brought forward (prakrita) and organised for action. They are kept concealed, in the background of the consciousness-being which is the leaf, stone or clod; they are not yet viḷu, as the Rigveda would say, but guha, not vyakta, but avyakta. It is a great error to hold that that which is not just now or in this or that place manifest or active, does not there & then exist. Concealment is not annihilation; non-action is not non-being nor does the combination of secrecy & inaction constitute non-existence.

If it is asked how we know that there is the Purusha or Knower in the leaf, clod or stone, — the Vedantin answers that, apart from the perceptions of the Seer & the subjective & objective experiences by which the validity of the perceptions is firmly established in the reason, the very fact that the Knower emerges in matter shows that He must have been there all the time. And if He was there in some form of matter He must be there generally & in all; for Nature is one & knows no essential division, but only differences of form, circumstance and manifestation. There are not many substances in this world, but one substance variously concentrated in many forms; not many lives, but one liver variously active in many bodies; not many minds, but one mind variously intelligent in many embodied vitalities.

It is, at first sight, a plausible theory that life & mind are only particular movements of matter itself under certain conditions & need not therefore be regarded as independent immaterial movements of consciousness involved in matter but only as latent material activities of which matter is capable. But this view can only be held so long as it appears that mind and life can only exist in this body & cease as soon as the body is broken up, can only know through the bodily instruments and can only operate in obedience to and as the result of certain material movements. The sages of the Upanishads had already proved by their own experience as Yogins that none of these limitations are inherent in the nature of life & mind. The mind & life which are in this body can depart from it, intact & still organised, and act more freely outside it; mind can know even material things without the help of the physical eye, touch or ear; life itself is not conditioned necessarily, and mind is not even conditioned usually, though it is usually affected, by the state of the body or its movements. It can always and does frequently in our experience transcend them. It can entirely master & determine the condition of the body. Therefore mind is capable of freedom from the matter in which it dwells here, — freedom in being, freedom in knowledge, freedom in power.

It is true that while working in matter, every movement of mind produces some effect & consequently some state or movement in the body, but this does not show that the mind is the material result of matter any more than steam is the mechanical result of the machine. This world in which mind is at present moving, in the system of phenomena to which we are now overtly related, is a world of matter, where, to start with, it is true to say Annam vai sarvam; All is matter. Mind and life awaken in it & seek to express themselves in it. Since & when they act in it, every movement they make, must have an effect upon it and produce a movement in it, just as the activity of steam must produce an effect in the machine in which its force is acting. Mind and life also use particular parts of the bodily machine for particular functions and, when these parts are injured, those workings of life & mind are correspondingly hampered, rendered difficult or for a time impossible — & even altogether impossible unless life & mind are given time, impulse & opportunity to readjust themselves to the new circumstances & either recreate or patch up the old means or adopt a new system of function. It is obvious that such a combination of time, impulse & opportunity cannot usually or even often occur, —

cannot occur at all unless men have the faith, the nistha — unless that is to say, they know beforehand that it can be done & have accustomed themselves to seek for the means. Bodies, drowned & "lifeless", — nothing is really lifeless in the world, — can now be brought back to life because men believe & know that it can be done & have found a means to do it before the organised mind & life have had time to detach themselves entirely from the unorganised life which is present in all matter. So it is with all powers & operations. They are only impossible so long as we do not believe in their possibility & do not take the trouble or have not the clarity of mind to find their right process.

Life & mind are sometimes believed to descend, — or the hypothesis is advanced — into this world from another where they are more at home. If by world is meant not another star or system in this material universe, but some other systematisation of universal consciousness, the Vedantin who follows the Vedas & Upanishads, will not disagree. Life & mind in another star or system of this visible universe might, it is conceivable, be more free and, therefore, at home; but they would still be acting in a world whose basis & true substance was matter. There would therefore be no essential alteration in the circumstances of their action nor would the problem of their origin here be at all better solved. But it is reasonable to suppose that just as here Force organises itself in matter as its fundamental continent & movement, so there should be — the knowledge & experience of the ancient thinkers showed them that there are — other systems of consciousness where Force organises itself in life and in mind as its fundamental continent & movement. — It is not necessary to consider here what would be the relations in Time & Space of such worlds with ours. Life & mind might descend, ready organised, from such worlds and attach themselves to forms of matter here; but not in the sense of occupying physically these material forms & immediately using them, but in the sense of rousing by the shock of their contact & awakening to activity the latent life & mind in matter. That life & mind in matter would then proceed, under the superior help & impulse, to organise a nervous system for the use of life and a system of life-movements in the nerves for the use of mind fit to express in matter the superior organisations who have descended here. It was indeed the belief of the ancients that — apart from the government of each living form by a single organised personality — such help from the worlds of life & mind was necessary to maintain & support all functionings of life & mind here below because of the difficulty otherwise of expressing & perfecting them in a world which did not properly belong to them but to quite other movements. This was the basis of the idea of Devas, Daityas, Asuras, Rakshasas, Pisachas, Gandharvas etc, with which the Veda, Upanishad & Itihasa have familiarised our minds. There is no reason to suppose that all worlds of this material system are the home of living things — on the contrary the very reverse is likely to be the truth. It is, probably, with difficulty & in select places that life & mind in matter are evolved.

If it were otherwise, if life & mind were to enter, organised or in full power, (such as they must be in worlds properly belonging to them) into material forms, those forms would immediately begin to function perfectly & without farther trouble. We should not see this long & laborious process of gradual manifestation, so laboured, so difficult, the result of so fierce a struggle, of such a gigantic toil of the secret Will in matter. Everywhere we see the necessity of a gradual organisation of forms. What is it that is being organised? A suitable system for the operations of life, a suitable system for the operations of mind. There are stirrings similar to those that constitute life in inanimate things, in metals — as Science has recently discovered, — vital response & failure to respond, but no system for the regular movement of vitality has been organised; therefore metals do not live. In the plant we have a vital system, one might almost say a nervous system, but although there is what might be called an unconscious mind in plants, although in some there are even vague movements of intelligence, the life system organised is suitable only for the flow of rasa, sap, sufficient for mere life, not for prana, nerve force, necessary for the operation in matter of mind. Apah is sufficient for life, vayu is necessary for life capable of mind. In the animal life is organised on a different plan and a nervous system capable of carrying currents of pranic force is developed as one rises in the scale of animal creation, until it becomes perfect in man. It is, therefore, life & mind awakening in matter & manifesting with difficulty that is the truth of this material world, not the introduction of a ready made life entirely foreign to it in its own potentiality.

If it be said that the life & mind attaching themselves to matter only enter it by degrees as the system becomes more fit, putting more & more of itself into the body which is being made ready for it, that also is possible & conceivable. We are indeed led to see, as we progress in self-knowledge, that there is a great mental activity belonging to us only part of which is imperfectly expressed in our waking thoughts & perceptions — a sub-conscious or super-conscious Self which stores everything, remembers everything, foresees everything, in a way knows everything knowable, has possession of all that is false & all that is true, but only allows the waking mind into a few of its secrets. Similarly our life in the body is only a partial expression of the immortal life of which we are the assured possessors. But this only proves that we ourselves are not in our totality or essentiality the life & mind in the body, but are using that principle for our purpose or our play in matter. It does not prove that there is no principle of life & mind in matter. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that matter is similarly involved in mind & life & that wherever there is movement of life & mind, it tends to develop for itself some form of body in which securely to individualise itself. By analogy we must suppose life & mind to be similarly involved & latent in matter & therefore evolvable in it & capable of manifestation.

We know then the theory of the early Vedantins with regard to the relations of life, mind and matter & we may now turn to the actual statements of the Upanishad with regard to the activities of life & mind and their relation to the soul of things, the Brahman.

———

II

Mind

If the Upanishads were no more than philosophical speculations, it would be enough in commenting upon them to state the general thought of a passage and develop its implications in modern language and its bearing upon the ideas we now hold. Or if they only expressed in their ancient language general conclusions of psychological experience, which are still easily accessible & familiar, nothing would be gained by any minute emphasis on the wording of our Vedantic texts. But these great writings are not the record of ideas; they are a record of experiences; and those experiences, psychological and spiritual, are as remote from the superficial psychology of ordinary men as are the experiments and conclusions of Science from the ordinary observation of the peasant driving his plough through a soil only superficially known or the sailor of old guiding his bark by the few stars important to his rudimentary investigation. Every word in the Upanishads arises out of a depth of psychological experience and observation we no longer possess and is a key to spiritual truths which we can no longer attain except by discipline of a painful difficulty. Therefore each word, as we proceed, must be given its due importance. We must consider its place in the thought and discover the ideas of which it was the spoken symbol.

The opening phrase of the Kena Upanishad, keneshitam patati preshitam manah, is an example of this constant necessity. The Sage is describing not the mind in its entirety, but that action of it which he has found the most characteristic and important, that which, besides, leads up directly to the question of the secret source of all mental action, its president and impelling power. The central and common experience of this action is expressed by the word patati, falls. Motion forward and settling upon an object are the very nature of mind when it acts.

Our modern conception of mind is different; while acknowledging its action of movement and forward attention, we are apt to regard its essential & common action to be rather receptivity of objects, than research of objects. The scientific explanation of mental activity helps to confirm this notion. Fixing its eye on the nervous system & the brain, the physical channels of thought, Physiology insists on the double action of the afferent and the efferent nerves as constituting the action of thought. An object falls on the sense-organ, — instead of mind falling on the object, — the afferent nerves carry the impact to the brain-cells, their matter undergoes modification, the brain-filaments respond to the shock, a message — the will of the cell-republic — returns through the efferent nerves and that action of perception, — whether of an object or the idea of an object or the idea of an idea, which is the essence of thinking — is accomplished. What else the mind does is merely the internal modification of the grey matter of the brain and the ceaseless activity of its filaments with the store of perceptions & ideas already amassed by these miraculous bits of organised matter. These movements of the bodily machine are all, according to Physiology. But it has been necessary to broach the theory of thought-waves or vibrations created by those animalcular amusements in order to account for the results of thought.

However widely & submissively this theory has been received by a hypnotised world, the Vedantist is bound to challenge it. His research has fixed not only on the physiological action, the movement of the bodily machine, but on the psychological action, the movement of the force that holds the machine, — not only on what the mind does, but on what it omits to do. His observation supported by that careful analysis & isolation in experiment of the separate mental constituents, has led him to a quite different conclusion. He upholds the wisdom of the sage in the phrase patati manas. An image falls on the eye, — admittedly, the mere falling of an image on the eye will not constitute mental perception — the mind has to give it attention; for it is not the eye that sees, it is the mind that sees through the eye as an instrument, just as it is not the telescope that sees an otherwise invisible sun, but the astronomer behind the telescope who sees. Therefore, physical reception of images is not sight; physical reception of sounds is not hearing. For how many sights & sounds besiege us, fall on our retina, touch the tympanum of the ear, yet are to our waking thought non-existent! If the body were really a self-sufficient machine, this could not happen. The impact must be admitted, the message must rush through the afferent nerve, the cells must receive the shock, the modification, the response must occur. A self-sufficient machine has no choice of action or non-action; unless it is out of order, it must do its work. But here we see there is a choice, a selection, an ample power of refusal; the practical researches of the Yogins have shown besides that the power of refusal can be absolute, that something in us has a sovereign & conscious faculty of selection or total prohibition of perception & thought & can even determine how, if at all, it shall respond, can even see without the eye & hear without the ear. Even European hypnotism points to similar phenomena. The matter cannot be settled by the rough & ready conclusions of impatient Physiology eager to take a shortcut to Truth & interpret the world in the light of its first astonished discoveries.

Where the image is not seen, the sound is not heard, it is because the mind does not settle on its object — na patati. But we must first go farther & inquire what it is that works in the afferent & efferent nerves & insures the attention of the nerves. It is not, we have seen, mere physical shock, a simple vibration of the bodily matter in the nerve. For, if it were, attention to every impact would be automatically & inevitably assured. The Vedantins say that the nerve system is an immensely intricate organised apparatus for the action of life in the body; what moves in them is prana, the life principle, materialised, aerial (vayavya) in its nature and therefore invisible to the eye, but sufficiently capable of self-adaptation both to the life of matter & the life of mind to form the meeting place or bridge of the two principles. But this action of life-principle is not sufficient in itself to create thought, for if it were mind could be organised in vegetable as readily as in animal life. It is only when prana has developed a sufficient intensity of movement to form a medium for the rapid activities of mind and mind, at last possessed of a physical instrument, has poured itself into the life-movement and taken possession of it that thought becomes possible. That which moves in the nerve system is the life-current penetrated & pervaded with the habitual movement of mind. When the movement of mind is involved in the life-movement, as it usually is in all forms, there is no response of mental knowledge to any contact or impression. For just as even in the metal there is life, so even in the metal there is mind; but it is latent, involved, its action secret, — unconscious, as we say, and confined to a passive reception into matter of the mind-forms created by these impacts. This will become clearer as we penetrate deeper into the mysteries of mind; we shall see that even though the clod, stone & tree do not think, they have in them the secret matrix of mind and in that matrix forms are stored which can be translated into mental symbols, into perception, idea and word. But it is only as the life-currents gain in intensity, rapidity & subtlety, making the body of things less durable but more capable of works, that mind-action becomes increasingly possible & once manifested more & more minutely & intricately effective. For body & life here are the pratistha, the basis of mind. A point, however, comes at which mind has got in life all that it needs for its higher development; and from that time it goes on enlarging itself & its activities out of all proportion to the farther organisation of its bodily & vital instruments or even without any such farther organisation in the lower man.

But even in the highest forms here in this material world, matter being the basis, life an intermediary and mind the third result, the normal rule is that matter & life (where life is expressed) shall always be active, mind only exceptionally active *in the body*. In other words, the ordinary action of mind is subconscious and receptive, as in the stone, clod & tree. The image that touches the eye, the sound that touches the ear is immediately taken in by the mind-informed life, the mind-informed & life-informed matter & becomes a part of the experience of Brahman in that system. Not only does it create a vibration in body, a stream of movement in life but also an impression in mind. This is inevitable, because mind, life & matter are one. Where one is, the others are, manifest or latent, involved or evolved, supraliminally active or subliminally active. The sword which has struck in the battle, retains in itself the mental impression of the stroke, the striker & the stricken and that ancient event can be read centuries afterwards by the Yogin who has trained himself to translate its mind-forms into the active language of mind. Thus everything that occurs around us leaves on us its secret stamp & impression. That this is so, the recent discoveries of European psychology have begun to prove & from the ordinary point of view, it is one of the most amazing & stupendous facts of existence; but from the Vedantist's it is the most simple, natural & inevitable. This survival of all experience in a mighty & lasting record, is not confined to such impressions as are conveyed to the brain through the senses, but extends to all that can in any way come to the mind, — to distant events, to past states of existence & old occurrences in which our present selves had no part, to the experiences garnered in dream & in dreamless sleep, to the activities that take place during the apparent unconsciousness or disturbed consciousness of slumber, delirium, anaesthesia & trance. Unconsciousness is an error; cessation of awareness is a delusion.

It is for this reason that the phenomenon on which the sage lays stress as the one thing important & effective in mental action here & in the waking state, is not its receptiveness, but its outgoing force — patati. In sense-activity we can distinguish three kinds of action — first, when the impact is received subconsciously & there is no message by the mind in the life current to the brain, — even if the life current itself carry the message — secondly, when the mind is aware of an impact, that is to say, falls on its object, but merely with the sensory part of itself & not with the understanding part; thirdly, when it falls on the object with both the sensory & understanding parts of itself. In the first case, there is no act of mental knowledge, no attention of eye or mind; as when we pass, absorbed in thought, through a scene of Nature, yet have seen nothing, been aware of nothing. In the second, there is an act of sensory knowledge, the mind in the eye attends & observes, however slightly; the thing is perceived but not conceived or only partly conceived, as when the maidservant going about her work, listens to the Hebrew of her master, hearing all, but distinguishing & understanding nothing, not really attending except through the ear alone. In the third, there is true mental perception & conception or the attempt at perception & conception, and only the last movement comes within the description given by the Sage — ishitam preshitam patati manas. But we must observe that in all these cases somebody is attending, something is both aware & understands. The man, unconscious under an anaesthetic drug in an operation, can in hypnosis when his deeper faculties are released, remember & relate accurately everything that occurred to him in his state of supposed unconsciousness. The maidservant thrown into an abnormal condition, can remember every word of her master's Hebrew discourse, & repeat in perfect order & without a single error long sentences in the language she did not understand. And, it may surely be predicted, one day we shall find that the thing our minds strove so hard to attend to and fathom, this passage in a new language, that new & unclassed phenomenon, was perfectly perceived, perfectly understood, automatically, infallibly, by something within us which either could not or did not convey its knowledge to the mind. We were only trying to make operative on the level of mind, a knowledge we already in some recess of our being perfectly possessed.

From this fact appears all the significance of the sage's sentence about the mind.

A Commentary on the Kena Upanishad

Foreword

The Upanishads are an orchestral movement of knowledge, each of them one strain in a great choral harmony. The knowledge of the Brahman, which is the Universality of our existence, and the knowledge of the world, which is the multiplicity of our existence, but the world interpreted not in the terms of its appearances as in Science, but in the terms of its reality, is the one grand and general subject of the Upanishads. Within this cadre, this general framework each Upanishad has its smaller province; each takes its own standpoint of the knower and its resulting aspect of the known; to each there belongs a particular motive and a distinguishing ground-idea. The Isha Upanishad, for example, is occupied with the problem of spirituality and life, God and the world; its motive is the harmonising of these apparent opposites and the setting forth of their perfect relations in the light of Vedantic knowledge. The Kena is similarly occupied with the problem of the relations between God and the soul and its motive is to harmonise our personal activities of mental energy and human will with the movement of the infinite divine Energy and the supremacy of the universal Will. The Isha, therefore, has its eye more upon the outward Brahman and our action in and with regard to the world we see outside us; the Kena fixes rather on our psychological action and the movements within us. For on this internal relation with the Brahman must evidently depend, from it must evidently arise that attitude towards the external world, the attitude of oneness with all these multitudinous beings which the Isha gives to us as the secret of a perfect & liberated existence. For we are not here in the phenomenal world as independent existences; we appear as limited beings clashing with other limited beings, clashing with the forces of material Nature, clashing too with forces of immaterial Nature of which we are aware not with the physical senses but with the mind. We must become this multitudinous world, become it in our souls, obviously, not in our body & senses. The body & senses are intended to keep the multitudinousness, — they are there to prevent God's worldwide time-filling play from sinking back into the vague & inchoate. But in the soul there must be nothing but the sense & rapture of oneness in the various joy of multitude. How is that possible? It is possible because our relations with others are not in reality those of separate life-inspired bodies, but of the great universal movement of a single soul — ekah sanatanah, — broken up into separate waves by concentration in these many life-inspired bodies which we see appearing like temporary crests, ridges and bubbles in the divine ocean, apah. This soul in us is in relation to the outside world through the senses, through vitality, through mind. But it is entangled in the meshes of its instruments; it thinks they alone exist or is absorbed in their action with which it tends to identify itself preponderatingly or wholly; — it forgets itself in its activities. To recall the soul in man to self-knowledge, to lift it above the life of the senses [..] always refer its activities to that highest Self and Deity which [we] ultimately are, so that we may be free and great, may be pure and joyous, be fulfilled and immortal, — this is the governing aim of the Kena Upanishad. I propose in my commentary to follow with some minuteness & care the steps by which the Upanishad develops its aim, to bring out carefully the psychological ideas on which the ancient system was founded and to suggest rather than work out the philosophical positions which are presupposed in the ancient sage's treatment of his subject. To work them out in a volume of the present size and purpose would not be possible, nor, if possible, would it be convenient, since it would need a freer and ampler method delivered from the necessity of faithful subordination to the text. The first principle of a commentary must be to maintain the order of ideas and adhere to the purpose and connotation of the text which it takes as its authority.

Three Fragments of Commentary

The first two words of the Kena, like the first two words of the Isha, concentrate into a single phrase the subject of the Upanishad and settle its bounds & its spirit. By whom is our separate mental existence governed? Who is its Lord & ruler? Who sends forth the mind — kena preshitam, who guides it so that it falls in its ranging on a particular object and not another (kena patati)? The mind is our centre; in the mind our personal existence is enthroned. Manomayah pranasariraneta pratisthito 'nne, a mental guide and leader of the life & body has been established in matter, and we suppose & feel ourselves to be that mental being. But what guides the mind itself? Is it the mental ego as the unreflecting thinker usually & naturally supposes? As a matter of fact, it is perfectly within our knowledge and experience that the mental [ego] guides our actions only partially and imperfectly; it is governed by other forces, it is driven often by impulses that it cannot understand, it receives indications from a superconscious source; it is associated in the body with an immense amount of subconscious action of which it is ignorant or over which it has only a partial control. Guide & leader, perhaps, but certainly not the master. Who then is the master? Mind is not all we are. There is a vital force in us independent of mind. For although the two work together & act upon each other, they are still different movements. Our life goes on or ceases, rests or is active caring nothing, after all, about the mind & its notions. It serves it as a master whose interests it cannot afford to neglect, but does not always obey it & insists on the rights of its own separate existence. Who sent out this life force, who yoked it or applied it to these bodies & these actions, kena praiti yuktah Pranah prathamah — the epithet is used to indicate the essential life force as distinct from the particular life-functions called in Vedantic psycho-physics the five pranas.

*

The Kena Upanishad is remarkable for its omissions. It omits to tell us what in relation to the transcendent & immanent Brahman this mind, life, sense activity really are. It omits even to mention one tattwa which one would think as important as mind, life & sense-activity — there is no least reference to matter. These omissions are remarkable; they are also significant. The Sage of the Kena Upanishad has a distinct object in view; he has selected a particular province of knowledge. He is careful not to admit anything which does not bear upon that object or to overstep the strict limits of that province. Matter is beyond his immediate field, therefore he makes no reference to matter. Careless of comprehensiveness, he keeps to the exact matter of his revelation — the working relations between man's mental life and his supreme Existence. With the same scrupulous reserve he abstains from the discussion of the nature of these organs & their essential relation to the supreme Existence. For this knowledge we have to resort to other Scriptures.

*

The subject of the Talavakara Upanishad is indicated and precisely determined by its opening word, Kena, very much as we have seen the subject of the Isha Upanishad to be indicated and precisely determined by its opening words Isha Vasyam. To reveal the true Master of our mental life, the real Force of the Vitality which supports it and of the sense-activities which minister to it and of the mentality which fulfils it in this material existence, is the intention of the Upanishad.

Kena Upanishad

A Partial Translation with Notes

I

1. By whom willed falleth the Mind when it is sent on its mission? By whom yoked goeth forth the primal Breath? By whom controlled is this Speech that men utter? What God yokes the vision[1] and the hearing?

2. That which is the Hearing behind hearing, the Mind of mind, utters the Speech behind speech, — He too is the Life of the life-breath and the Vision behind seeing. The wise put these away and pass beyond; departing from this world they become immortal.

3. There Sight goes not, nor there Speech, nor the Mind arrives. We know it not, nor can we discern how one should teach of this. Other verily is That from the known and then it is beyond the unknown, — so do we hear[2] from those of old by whom That was expounded unto us.

4. That which remaineth unexpressed by Speech, by which Speech is expressed, know thou That Brahman and not this which men follow[3] after here.

---

[1] The words *chakshuh śrotram* do not refer to the physical eye & ear but to the sense activity that uses the organ. This is evident from the expressions in verses 6 & 7, *chakshúnshi pashyati* & *śrotram śrutam* — which cannot mean, "one sees the eyes" or "the ear is heard."

[2] *Púrve* is used here in the Vedic sense, the ancient sages before us and *śuśruma* means not the physical hearing but the reception by the Sruti, the inspired Word.

[3] *Upásate* is by some understood in the sense of adoration; but the force of the word is here the same as in the Isha Upanishad, *ye avidyám upásate*, which does not mean "those who adore Ignorance", but those who devote themselves to the state of Ignorance and make it the sole object of their consciousness.

5. That which thinketh[4] not with the Mind, by which, they say, Mind was made subject to mental perception, know thou that Brahman[5] and not this which men follow after here.

---

[4] Here and in the verses that follow my rendering differs from the received interpretation which runs, “That which one cannot think with the mind”, “That which one cannot see with the eye”, etc and in verse 8, “That which one cannot smell by the breath”, *yat práṇena na práṇiti. Práṇa* is undoubtedly used sometimes of the breath as the medium of the sense of smell & *práṇiti* to express the action of that sense. But in this Upanishad Prana has been used to indicate the nervous or vital force, the primal or principal Life-Energy, *práṇah prathamah*, and not a subordinate sense function; the expressions employed almost reconstitute the image of the Horse by which the Life-Energy is symbolised in the language of the Veda and in the opening of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. It is difficult to believe that one & the same word means the Life-Breath in the question proposed, verse 1, and the sense of smell in an integral part of the answer given, verse 8. But if Prana means the Life-Energy typified by its obvious physical function, the life-breath, verse 8 can only mean, “He who liveth (breatheth) not by the life-breath”, & the other verses must follow suit. For a kindred idea we may compare Katha Upanishad II.2.5. “No mortal lives by the superior or the inferior life-energy, but by another thing men live in which both these have their foundation.”

[5] The received interpretation runs “Know that to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here,” and by this text Shankara supports his metaphysical doctrine that the objective world is not Brahman and is therefore an illusion. The objections to the interpretation seem to me insuperable. The words are not Tadeva Brahmeti twam viddhi, but Tadeva Brahma twam viddhi, which we should naturally interpret “Seek to know that Brahman” ie, “seek to know Brahman in That Consciousness” and not in the form of this objective world to which most men are attached. Moreover, we ought to give their full value to the remarkable expressions “That by which the mind is thought, seeings seen, hearing heard.” Such phrases can hardly refer to the pure Absolute remote from all relativity or to the pure Self of Shankara to whom the objective world is non-existent. They indicate another state of consciousness, intermediate, if you will, in which the universe exists not as an objective and external reality, but within the percipient consciousness and is no longer perceived only through the objective organs and their functions, but known directly to the power from which those organs & functions are derived. This idea is confirmed by the apologue in which Brahman appears as a Power governing the universe, the Ish or Lord of the Isha Upanishad, in whom and by whose existence the gods exist, but also by whose active might and its victories they conquer and reign. It is therefore a self-Existence which is active in its stability and conscious in the multiplicity of the universe as well as in its self-unity. The Upanishads, I think, nowhere deny but rather affirm that the objective world also is Brahman. The error of Ignorance is to accept it as represented by the mind & senses in their inadequate symbols and as if they were real in themselves, each in its own separate reality. The wise put from them the error of the mind and the senses and in the self-luminous & self-effective Consciousness beyond attain to that freedom, unity & immortality which we have seen set before humanity as its goal in the Isha Upanishad.

Section Five

Incomplete Translations of Two Vedantic Texts

Circa 1900–1902

The Karikas of Gaudapada

The Karikas of Gaudapada are a body of authoritative verse maxims and reasonings setting forth in a brief and closely-argued manual the position of the extreme Monistic school of Vedanta philosophy. The monumental aphorisms of the Vedantasutra are meant rather for the master than the learner. Gaudapada's clear, brief and businesslike verses are of a wider utility; they presuppose only an elementary knowledge of philosophic terminology and the general trend of Monistic and Dualistic discussion. This preliminary knowledge granted they provide the student with an admirably lucid and pregnant nucleus of reasoning which enables him at once to follow the Monistic train of thought and to keep in memory its most notable positions. It has also had the advantage, due no doubt to its preeminent merit and the long possession of authority and general use, of a full and powerful commentary by the great Master himself and a farther exposition by the Master's disciple, the clearminded and often suggestive Anandagiri. To modern students there can be no better introduction to Vedanta philosophy — after some brooding over the sense of the Upanishads — than a study of Gaudapada's Karikas and Shankara's commentary with Deussen's System of the Vedanta in one hand and any brief & popular exposition of the Six Darshanas in the other. It is only after the Monistic School has been thoroughly understood that the Modified-Monistic and Dualistic-Monistic with their intermediary shades can be profitably studied. When the Vedantic theory has been mastered, the Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya & Vaisheshika can in its light be easily mastered in succession with Vijnanabhikshu's work & the great synthesis of the Bhagavadgita to crown the whole structure. The philosophical basis will then be properly laid and the Upanishads can be studied with new interest, verifying or modifying as one goes one's original interpretation of the Sacred Books.

This will bring to a close the theoretical side of the Jnanakanda; its practical and more valuable side can only be mastered in the path of Yoga and under the guidance of a Sadguru.

Gaudapada begins his work by a short exposition in clear philosophic terms of the poetical and rhythmic phraseology of the Upanishad. He first defines precisely the essential character of the triune nature of the Self as manifested in the macrocosm & the microcosm, the Waker, the Dreamer & the Sleeper, who all meet and disappear in the Absolute.

बहिष्प्रज्ञो विभुर्विश्वो ह्यन्तःप्रज्ञस्तु तैजसः ।
घनप्रज्ञस्तथा प्राज्ञ एक एव त्रिधा स्मृतः ॥ १ ॥

1. Visva being the Lord who pervades and is conscious of the external, Taijasa he who is conscious of the internal, Prajna he in whom consciousness is (densified and) drawn into itself, the Self presents himself to the memory as One under three conditions.

Shankara: The position taken is this, as *the entity which cognizes* enters into three conditions one after another *and not simultaneously*, and is moreover *in all three* connected by the memory *which persists in feeling* “This is I” “This is I” “This is I”, it is obvious that it is something beyond and above the three conditions, & therefore one, absolute and without attachment to its conditions. And this is supported by the illustrations like that of the large fish given in the Scripture.

दक्षिणाक्षिमुखे विश्वो मनस्यन्तस्तु तैजसः ।
आकाशे च हृदि प्राज्ञस्त्रिधा देहे व्यवस्थितः ॥ २ ॥

2. Visva in the gate of the right eye, Taijasa within in the mind, Prajna in the ether, the heart, this is its threefold station in the body.

Shankara: 1. The object of this verse is to show that these three, Visva, Taijasa & Prajna, are experienced even in the waking state. The right eye is the door, *the means*, through which especially Visva, the seer of gross objects, becomes subject to experience. The Sruti saith "Verily and of a truth Indha is he, even this Being as he standeth here in the right eye." Vaisvanor is Indha, because his essential principle is light and is at once the macrocosmic Self within the Sun and the seer in the eye.

2. "But" it will be objected "Hiranyagarbha is one and the cognizer of the material field, the guide and seer in the right eye is quite another, the master of the body." Not so; for in itself —*if we look into the real nature of our perceptions*—we do not realise any difference between them. And the Scripture saith "One God hidden in all creatures" and the Smriti also:

> Know me, O son of Bharat, for the knower of the body in all bodies. I stand undivided in all creatures and only seem to be divided.

3. *Be it noted that* though Visva works indeed in all the organs of sense without distinction, yet because the perceptions of [the] right eye are noticed to be superior in acuteness and clearness it is for that reason only specifically mentioned as his abiding-place. After this Visva then dwelling in the right eye has seen a shape or appearance, he remembers it when he has closed his eyes and still sees within in the mind, as if in a dream, the same shape or appearance as manifested in the form of the idea or impression it has left. And it is just the same in a dream, *the impression or idea preserved by memory reproduces in sleep the same shape or appearance that was seen in waking.* It follows that this Taijasa who is within in the mind is no other than Visva himself.

4. Then by cessation of the process called memory Prajna in the ether or heart becomes unified or as it is said densified consciousness drawn into itself. And this happens because the processes of the mind are absent; for sight and memory are vibrations of the mind and in their absence the Self in the form of Prana takes its abode in the ether or heart without possibility of separation or distinction. For the Scripture saith "It is Prana that swalloweth up all these into itself." Taijasa is the same

as Hiranyagarbha because it has its abode in the mind, and the mind is the subtle part of the body, as is clear from the verse, "This *purusha* is all mind", and from other like sayings of Scripture.

5. It may be objected that Prana in the state of Sleep is really differenced and manifest & the senses become one with Prana, so how do you predicate of it absence of manifestation and differentia *by saying it becomes One*? But there is no real fault in the reasoning, since in the undifferenced the particularising conditions of space and time are absent *and the same is the case with Prana in the state of Sleep*. Although indeed the Prana is *in a sense* differenced because the idea of separate existence as Prana remains, yet the more special sense of separate existence as circumscribed by the body is brought to a stop in Prana and Prana is therefore undifferenced and unmanifest in the Sleep in relation *at least* to the possessors of this circumscribed egoism. And just as the Prana of those who have the circumscribed bodily egoism becomes undifferenced when it is absorbed *at the end of the world*, so it is with him who has the sense of existence as Prana only in the condition *of Sleep* which is *in reality* precisely the same *as that of the temporary disappearance of phenomena at the end of a world*; both states alike are void of differentia and manifestation and *both alike* are pregnant with the seeds of *future* birth. The *Self* governing either state is one & the same, it is *Self* in an undifferenced and unmanifest condition. It follows that the governing Self in each case and the experiencers of the circumscribed bodily egoism are one and the same; therefore the descriptions previously given *of Prajna* become One or become densified & self-concentrated consciousness etc are quite applicable; and the arguments already advanced support the same conclusion.

6. "But" you will say "why is the name, Prana, given to the Undifferenced?" On the ground of the Scripture "For, O fair son, the cord and fastening of the mind is Prana." "O but" you answer "there the words 'O fair son, Existence itself *is Prana*' show that it is Brahman Existent which being the subject of the verses must be intended by the word Prana." However, my

reasoning is not thereby vitiated, because we all understand the Existent to be pregnant with the seed *of future birth*. Although, then, it is Brahman Existent which is meant by Prana, all the same the name Prana is given to the Existent because the idea of pregnancy with the seed from which the Jiva or life-conditioned human spirit is to be born, has not been eliminated from it and *indeed* it is only when this idea is not eliminated from the idea of Brahman that he can be called Brahman Existent. For if it were the absolute seedless Brahman of which the Scripture had meant to speak, it would have used such expressions as "He is not this, nor that nor anything which we can call him"; "From whom words return baffled"; "He is other than the known and different from the Unknown." The Smriti also says "He (the Absolute) is called neither Existent nor non-Existent." Besides if the Existent be seedless, then there would be no ground for supposing that those who have coalesced with and become absorbed into the Existent in the state of Sleep or the destruction of a world can again awake *out of either of these conditions*. Or if they can, then we should immediately have the contingency of liberated souls again coming into phenomenal existence; for *on this hypothesis* the condition *of souls liberated into the Absolute and those absorbed into the Existent* would be alike, neither having seed *or cause of future phenomenal existence. And if to remove this objection you say that* it is the seed *of ignorance* which has to be burnt away in the fire of Knowledge *that is absent in the case of liberated souls and some other seed of things in the other case*, you are in danger of proving that Knowledge (*of the Eternal*) is without use or unnecessary *as a means of salvation*.

7. It is clear then that it is on the understanding that the Existent is pregnant with the seed of phenomenal life that in all the Scripture it is represented as Prana and the cause of things. Consequently it is by elimination of this idea of the seed that it is designated by such phrases as "He is the unborn in whom the objective & subjective are One", "From whom words return baffled", "He is not this nor that nor anything we can call him", and the rest. Our author will speak separately of this seedless condition of the Same Self which has been designated

by the term Prajna. This condition by its being the Fourth or Absolute is devoid of all relations such as body, *Prana* etc and is alone finally and transcendentally true. Now the condition of undifferenced seedfulness also is *like the two others* experienced in this body in the form of the idea of the awakened man which tells him "*For so long* I felt and knew nothing". Thus then the Self is said to have a threefold station in the body.

विश्वो हि स्थूलभुङ् नित्यं तैजसः प्रविविक्तभुक् ।
आनन्दभुक् तथा प्राज्ञस्त्रिधा भोगं निबोधत ॥ ३ ॥

3. Visva is the enjoyer of gross objects, Taijasa of subtle, and Prajna of pure (unrelated) pleasure, thus shall ye understand the threefold enjoyment *of the Self in the body.*

स्थूलं तर्पयते विश्वं प्रविविक्तं तु तैजसम् ।
आनन्दश्च तथा प्राज्ञं त्रिधा तृप्तिं निबोधत ॥ ४ ॥

4. The gross utterly satisfieth Visva, but the subtle Taijasa and pure pleasure satisfieth Prajna, thus shall ye understand the threefold satisfaction *of the Self in the body.*

Shankara: The meaning of these two verses has been explained.

त्रिषु धामसु यद् भोज्यं भोक्ता यश्च प्रकीर्तितः ।
वेदैतदुभयं यस्तु स भुञ्जानो न लिप्यते ॥ ५ ॥

5. That which is enjoyed in the three conditions and that which is the enjoyer, he who knoweth both these as one enjoyeth & receiveth no stain.

Shankara: That which is enjoyed under the names of gross objects, subtle objects and pure pleasure in the three conditions, waking, dream and sleep is one and the same thing although it has taken a threefold aspect. And that which enjoys under the names of Visva, Taijasa & Prajna, has been declared to be one because they are connected by the sense of oneness expressed in the continual feeling "This is I, This is I" and because the nature of cognition is one and without difference throughout. Whoever knows both these to be one though split up into multiplicity by the sense of being enjoyer or enjoyed, does not receive any stain from enjoyment, because the subject of enjoyment is the One universal and the enjoyer too is not different from the enjoyed. For *note that* whoever be the enjoyer or whatever his object of enjoyment, he does not increase with it or diminish with it, just as in the case of fire when it has burnt up its object in the shape of wood or other fuel; *it remains no less or greater than it was before.*

> प्रभवः सर्वभावानां सतामिति विनिश्चयः ।
> सर्वं जनयति प्राणश्चेतोंशून् पुरुषः पृथक् ॥ ६ ॥

6. It is a certain conclusion that all existences which take birth are already in being; Prana brings the All into phenomenal being, it is this *Prana or* Purusha which *sends* its separate rays of consciousness abroad.

Shankara: All existences (divided as Visva, Taijasa & Prajna) are already in being, that is, they existed before and it is only by their own species & nature, an illusion of name and form created by Ignorance, that they take birth or in other words [are] put forth into phenomenal existence. As indeed the writer says later on "A son from a barren woman is not born either in reality or by illusion". For if birth of the nonexistent — *that is something coming out of nothing* — were possible, then there would be no means of grasping this world of usage and experience and the Eternal itself would become an unreality. Moreover we have seen that the snake in the rope and other appearances born of the seed of illusion created by Ignorance do really exist as the self of the rope *or other substratum in the case.* For the snake in the rope, the mirage and other *hallucinations of the sort* are never experienced by anybody unless there is some substratum. Just as before the coming into phenomenal being of the snake it existed already in the rope as the rope's self, so before the coming to birth of all phenomenal existences, they already existed as the self of the seed of things called Prana. And the Scripture also saith, "This universe is the Eternal", "In the beginning all this was the Spirit." The Prana gives birth to the All as separate rays of consciousness; — just as the rays of the Sun, so are these consciousness-rays of the Purusha who is Chid or conscious existence and they are clearly distinguished in different bodies of gods, animals, etc under three different lights as Visva, Taijasa & Prajna, in the same way as reflections of the sun are clearly seen in different pieces of water; they are thrown from the Purusha and though they differ according to the separate existences which are their field of action & enjoyment, yet they are all alike like sparks from a fire being all Jiva or conditioned Self. Thus the Prana or causal Self gives phenomenal birth to all other existences as the spider to his web. Compare the Scripture "As a fire sendeth forth sparks."

विभूतिं प्रसवं त्वन्ये मन्यन्ते सृष्टिचिन्तकाः ।
स्वप्नमायासरूपेति सृष्टिरन्यैर्विकल्पिता ॥ ७ ॥

7. Some who concern themselves with the *cause of* creation think that Almighty Power is the origin of things and by others creation is imagined as like to illusion or a dream.

Shankara: Those who concern themselves with creation think that creation is the pervading Power, the extension, so to speak, of God; but it is implied, those who concern themselves with final and transcendental truth do not care about speculations on creation. For when men see a conjurer throw a rope into the air and ascend it armed & accoutred and then after he has climbed out of sight fall hewn to pieces in battle and rise again *whole*, they do not care about inquiring into the illusion he has created with all its properties and origins. Just so this evolution of the Sleep, Dream and Waking conditions is just like the self-lengthening of the juggler's rope and the Prajna, Taijasa and Visva self abiding in the three conditions is like the conjurer climbing up the rope, but the real conjurer is other than the rope or its climber. Just as he stands on the ground invisible and hidden in illusion, so is it with the real and transcendental fact called the Fourth. Therefore it is for Him that the Aryan-minded care, those who follow after salvation, and they do not care for speculations about creation which are of no importance to them. Accordingly the writer implies that all these theories are only imaginations of those who concern themselves with the origin of creation and then goes on to say that by others creation is imagined as like to an illusion or again as like to a dream.

इच्छामात्रं प्रभोः सृष्टिरिति सृष्टौ विनिश्चिताः ।
कालात्प्रसूतिं भूतानां मन्यन्ते कालचिन्तकाः ॥ ८ ॥

8. Those who have made up their minds on the subject of creation say it is merely the Will of the Lord; those who concern themselves about Time think that from Time is the birth of creatures.

Shankara: Creation is the Will of the Lord because the divine ideas must be true facts — pots etc are ideas only and nothing more than ideas. Some say that creation is the result of Time.

भोगार्थं सृष्टिरित्यन्ये क्रीडार्थमिति चापरे ।
देवस्यैष स्वभावोऽयमाप्तकामस्य का स्पृहा ॥ ९ ॥

9. Others say that creation is for the sake of enjoyment, yet others say it is for play. *Really,* this is the very nature of the Lord; *as for other theories, well,* He has all He can desire and why should He crave for anything?

Shankara: Others think creation *was made* for enjoyment or for play. These two theories are criticised by the line “This is the very nature of the Lord”. Or, it may be, that the theory of Divine Nature is resorted to in order to criticise all *other* theories *by the argument*, He has all He can desire and why should He crave for anything? For no cause can be alleged for the appearance of the snake etc in the rope and other substrata except the very nature of Ignorance.

निवृत्तेः सर्वदुःखानामीशानः प्रभुरव्ययः ।
अद्वैतः सर्वभावानां देवस्तुर्यो विभुः स्मृतः ॥ १० ॥

10. He who is called the Fourth is the Master of the cessation of all ills, the Strong Lord and undecaying, the One without second of all existences, the Shining One who pervadeth.

Shankara: The Fourth Self *or transcendental* is the master of the cessation of all ills, which belong to the conditions of Prajna, Taijasa & Visva. The expression Strong Lord is an explanation of the word Master; it is implied that His strength & lordship are in relation to the cessation of ills, because the cessation of ills results from the knowledge of Him. Undecaying, because He does not pass away, swerve or depart, ie, from His essential nature. How is this? Because He is the One without a second owing to the vanity of all phenomenal existences. He is also called God, the Shining One, because of effulgence, the Fourth and He who pervades, exists everywhere.

कार्यकारणबद्धौ ताविष्येते विश्वतैजसौ ।
प्राज्ञः कारणबद्धस्तु द्वौ तौ तुर्ये न सिध्यतः ॥ ११ ॥

11. Visva & Taijasa are acknowledged to be bound by cause & effect, Prajna is bound by cause only; both of these are held not to exist in the Fourth.

Shankara: The common and particular characteristics of Visva & the two others are now determined in order that the real self of the Fourth may become clear. Effect, that which is made or done, is existence as result. Cause, that which makes or does, is existence as seed. By inapprehension and misapprehension of the Truth the aforesaid Visva & Taijasa are, it is agreed, bound or imprisoned by existence as result and seed. But Prajna is bound by existence as seed only. For the seed state which lies in unawakening to the Truth alone *and not in misreading of Him* is the reason of the state of Prajna. Therefore both of these, existence as cause and existence as effect, inapprehension and misapprehension of the Truth are held not to apply to the Fourth, ie do not exist & cannot happen in Him.

नात्मानं न परांश्चैव न सत्यं नापि चानृतम् ।
प्राज्ञः किंचन संवेत्ति तुर्यं तत्सर्वदृक् सदा ॥ १२ ॥

12. Prajna cogniseth nought, neither self nor others, neither truth nor falsehood; the Fourth seeth all things for ever.

Shankara: But how then is Prajna bound by Cause, while in the Fourth the two kinds of bondage conditioned by inapprehension & misapprehension of the Truth are said to be impossible? Because Prajna does not cognize at all this duality of an outside universe born from Ignorance and conditioned as distinct from Self, so that like Visva & Taijasa he also is bound by inapprehension of the Truth, by that blind darkness which becomes the seed of misapprehension; and because the Fourth seeth all things for ever. That is to say, since nothing *really* exists except the Fourth, He is necessarily a seer of all that is, Omniscient & All-cognizant at all times & for ever; in Him therefore the seed state of which the conditioning feature is inapprehension of the Truth, cannot possibly exist. Absence of the misapprehension which arises out of inapprehension naturally follows. The Sun is for ever illuminative by its nature and non-illumination or misillumination as contrary to its nature cannot happen to it; *and the same train of reasoning applies to the Omniscience of the Turiya*. The Scripture also says "For of the Sight of the Seer there is no annihilation." Or indeed, since it is the Fourth that in the Waking and Dream State dwelling in all creatures is the light or reflection in them to which all objects *present themselves as* visible *ie cognizable objects*, it is *in this way too* the seer of all things for ever. The Scripture says "There is nought else than This that seeth."

Sadananda's Essence of Vedanta

INVOCATION

To the Absolute

अखण्डं सच्चिदानन्दमवाङ्मनसगोचरम् ।
आत्मानमखिलाधारमाश्रयेऽभीष्टसिद्धये ॥ १ ॥

1. I take refuge with Him who is *sheer* Existence, Intelligence and Bliss, impartible, beyond the purview of speech and mind, the Self in whom the whole Universe exists — may my desire & purpose attain fulfilment.

To the Masters

अर्थतोऽप्यद्वयानन्दानतीतद्वैतभानतः ।
गुरूनाराध्य वेदान्तसारं वक्ष्ये यथामति ॥ २ ॥

2. After homage to the Masters who in deed as well as word delight in the One without second and from whom the seemings of duality have passed away, I will declare the Essence of Vedanta according to my intellectual capacity.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

The Training of the Vedantin

वेदान्तो नामोपनिषत्प्रमाणं तदुपकारीणि शारीरकसूत्रादीनि च ॥ ३ ॥

3. By Vedanta is meant the Upanishads as authoritative basis of the philosophy and as useful supplementary inquiries the Aphoristic Books that treat of the Embodied Soul.

अस्य वेदान्तप्रकरणत्वात् तदीयैरेवानुबन्धैस्तद्वत्तासिद्धेर्न ते पृथगालोचनीयाः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Now since Vedanta is the subject of this work, its circumstantiae — the conclusions sought to be established being similar in both, — are the same as those of the Vedanta and need not be separately discussed.

तत्रानुबन्धो नामाधिकारिविषयसंबन्धप्रयोजनानि ॥ ५ ॥

5. In circumstantia we include four things, the fit hearer, the subject, the logical relation, the object of the work.

अधिकारी तु विधिवदधीतवेदवेदाङ्गत्वेनापाततोऽधिगताखिलवेदार्थोऽस्मिन् जन्मनि जन्मान्तरे वा काम्यनिषिद्धवर्जनपुरःसरं नित्यनैमित्तिकप्रायश्चित्तोपासनानुष्ठानेन निर्गतनिखिलकल्मषतया नितान्तनिर्मलस्वान्तः साधनचतुष्टयसंपन्नः प्रमाता ॥ ६ ॥

6. Now the fit hearer of Vedanta must be one who is competent to form a right judgment of it. He must therefore have mastered [ ] by proper study of Veda and its accessory sciences the entire meaning of Veda; he must in this life or another have begun by abandoning forbidden actions and actions prompted by desire and then by the performance of daily observances, occasional observances, penance and adoration freed himself from all sin and stain and attained to perfect purity of the mind and heart; and he must be in possession of the four Ways & Means.

काम्यानि स्वर्गादीष्टसाधनानि ज्योतिष्टोमादीनि ॥ ७ ॥

7. By actions of desire is understood all ways and means by which we pursue various kinds of happiness from Paradise downward — the Jyotisthom sacrifice for example.

निषिद्धानि नरकाद्यनिष्टसाधनानि ब्रह्महननादीनि ॥ ८ ॥

8. By forbidden actions is meant all ways & means by which we compass all our ills from the torments of Hell downward, — Brahminicide for example & other sins & disobediences.

नित्यान्यकरणे प्रत्यवायसाधनानि संध्यावन्दनादीनि ॥ ९ ॥

9. By regular observances is meant ceremonies like the evening prayer etc, the non-performance of which turns them into means of offence & stumbling blocks.

नैमित्तिकानि पुत्रजन्माद्यनुबन्धीनि जातेष्ट्यादीनि ॥ १० ॥

10. By occasional observances is understood ceremonies circumstantial to particular occasions, such as the Blessing of the New-born attendant on the birth of a son.

प्रायश्चित्तानि पापक्षयमात्रसाधनानि चान्द्रायणादीनि ॥ ११ ॥

11. By penances is understood vows & forms of self-discipline such as the Chandrayan vow which are means *only* towards the purging away of sin.

उपासनानि सगुणब्रह्मविषयकमानसव्यापाररूपाणि शाण्डिल्यविद्यादीनि ॥ १२ ॥

12. By adoration is understood the various forms of mental working which have for their whole subject and purpose the Eternal in His aspect as a Personal Deity — Sandilya's Art of Divine Love, for example.

एतेषां नित्यादीनां बुद्धिशुद्धिः परं प्रयोजनमुपासनानां तु चित्तैकाग्र्यम्। तमेतमात्मानं वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेनेत्यादिश्रुतेः तपसा कल्मषं हन्तीत्यादिस्मृतेश्च ॥ १३ ॥

13. The main object of the first three, observances regular and occasional and penance, is the purification of the Understanding; but the main object of adoration is singleness of heart & mind towards one object. This is proved by such passages as these from Revealed Scripture — "This is that Self of whom the Brahmins shall seek to know by exposition of Veda and by Sacrifice shall they seek to know Him" — and by other passages from the Unrevealed Scripture such as "By Tapasya (energism of will) one slayeth sin."

नित्यनैमित्तिकयोरुपासनानां चावान्तरफलं पितृलोकसत्यलोकप्राप्तिः ।
कर्मणा पितृलोको विद्यते देवलोक इत्यादिश्रुतेः ॥ १४ ॥

14. A secondary result of observances regular and occasional and of adoration & worship is attainment to the world of the fathers and to the world of the Living Truth. For so the Scripture says "By action the World of the Fathers is found and the World of the Gods also."

साधनानि नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकेहामुत्रफलभोगविरागशमदमादिसंपत्तिमुमुक्षुत्वानि ॥ १५ ॥

15. By Ways & Means we understand, Discrimination of eternal objects from the transient; Disattachment from enjoyment in this world or another; Calm, Self-Conquest & the other moral excellences; and Desire of Salvation.

नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकस्तावद् ब्रह्मैव नित्यं वस्तु ततोऽन्यदखिलमनित्यमिति विवेचनम् ॥ १६ ॥

16. By Discrimination of eternal objects from the transient we understand the discernment of Brahman as the one thing eternal and of everything other than Brahman as transient and perishable.

Part Three

Writings on Vedanta

These incomplete writings (c. 1902–1916) were not revised by Sri Aurobindo for publication. They have been transcribed from his manuscripts and arranged in chronological order.

Four Fragments

1

The answer to all philosophical problems hinges on the one question, What is myself? It is only by knowing man's real self that we can know God; for whatever we may think or know, the value of the thought and the knowledge must hinge upon the knower, the means of knowledge and

Vedanta's final & single answer to all the questions of philosophy is contained in a single mighty & ever-memorable phrase, So 'ham. I am He or more explicitly or to the question of the inquirer अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, I am Brahman. Cutting through all tremors & hesitations, scorning all doubt or reserve it announces with a hardy & daring incisiveness the complete identity of man & God. This is its gospel that the individual Self who seems so limited, thwarted, befouled, shamed & obscured with the bonds & shackles, the mud & stains of earthly life and the pure, perfect and illimitable Being who possesses & supports all existence, to Whom this vast and majestic Universe is but an inconsiderable corner of His mind and infinite Time cannot end and infinite Space cannot confine and the infinite net of cause and effect is powerless to trammel are equal, are of one nature, power, splendour, bliss, are One. It seems the very madness of megalomania, the very delirium of egoism. And yet if it be true?

And it is true. Reason can come to no other conclusion, Yoga ends in no less an experience, the voices of a hundred holy witnesses who have seen God face to face, bring to us no less wonderful a message. And since it is true, what eagerness should not fill us to

2

Ego or Self is an Ens which is not knowable by sight or any of the senses; it can only be grasped in the innate conception, "I am". This intuitive and inherent self-perception is called, subjective illumination; for there are two kinds of direct knowledge, one called subjective, the other objective illumination and the difference is that while objective illumination or as it is called the Supra-intelligence has for its object both the known & unknown, the object of subjective illumination is that which is perpetually & inevitably known, since even the supra-intelligence is illumined or revealed by the light of the Ego. For as it is said "The subtle self has consciousness for its

3

It has been said with a singularly subtle ineptitude that the existence of the One Formless Nameless Indivisible without Qualities & without desires may be admitted; and the existence of a multifold world of phenomena may be admitted; but that the one excludes the other. Since it is not possible that the Absolute should limit itself even illusorily; for any such limitation is an act and an act implies an object; but an Existence without desires can have no object to serve and cannot therefore act. Moreover the Infinite excludes the possibility of the Finite. This is a juggling with words. The Infinite instead of excluding the Finite supposes the Finite. When we think of the Infinite, it is not at first as a blind & limitless expanse but as the Finite Existence we know spreading on & on without beginning or limit. Having once formed the idea of the Infinite, we may then by an effort of the Mind blot out that vision of finite things informing it and imagine infinity as a blind & limitless expanse; but even so Infinity only exists to us on condition of the possibility of the Finite; it is there possible, latent, manifested in the past, to be yet manifested in the future. Destroy the possibility of the Finite and the Infinite becomes unimaginable. This is expressed in the Puranic philosophy of the Parabrahma absorbing all things into himself for a while only to put them forth again. Nor is the objection that an Act implies an object, in itself tenable; an act may be pure & objectless, ceasing indeed to be an action in the ordinary human sense of the word but not in the philosophic or scientific sense. The sun acts when it shines though it has no object in doing so (जडवत् समाचरेत्).

The Visishtadwait recognizing that the Infinite implies the Finite within it, bases its ontology on the fact; the Adwait points out however that the existence of the Finite is only a possibility and when it occurs implies no real change in the Infinite, nothing essential and permanent, but the objectless action of the Absolute, the working of a force which as it creates nothing real and lasting may well be called Maya or illusion. All turns on whether the Finite is a real ie an essential & permanent existence or a mere condition of thought. If the former, the Visishtadwaita view is correct, but if the latter the Adwaita must claim our adherence.

4

[.....] the next few centuries. This issue I prefer to call the issue between Science and Hinduism, not because there are not in the world other great embodiments of the old religious & moral spirit, but because Hinduism alone has shown an eternal & indestructible vitality and still more because Hinduism alone does not on the side of reason stand naked to the assaults of Science. And when I speak of Hinduism, I do not refer to the ignorant & customary Hinduism of today, which is largely a Buddhicised and vulgarised edition of the old faith, but the purer form which under the pressure of Science is now reasserting its empire over the Hindu mind.

The Spirit of Hinduism

God

OM *ityetad akṣaram idaṁ sarvam*; OM is the syllable, OM is the Universe; all that was, all that is, all that will be is OM. With this pregnant confession of faith Hinduism begins its interpretation of the Universe.

Metaphysical systems arise and metaphysical systems fall; Hegel disappears and Kant arrives; Pantheism, Theism, Atheism pursue their interminable round, and there is no finality. Then Science comes and declares the whole vanity, for all is physical and there is nothing metaphysical save in the brain of the dreamer; and yet tho' Science has spoken still there is no finality. For the soul of man refuses to be dissolved into a force or a procession of sensations or a composite effect created by the action of outward things on the neurons of the brain. It persists in saying "I am"; it persists in demanding an explanation of its existence, and will not be satisfied without an answer. But where is that answer to come from or how is it possible to arrive at any conclusion? The rock on which all metaphysics come to shipwreck is the same unsurpassable barrier before which Science itself becomes a baffled and impotent thing; it is that behind everything, beyond everything, when all knowledge has been acquired, when matter has been pursued into its subtlest unanalysable element, there is always an Inexplicable Something which remains. Metaphysics seeks to tell us What the Universe is and Why it is; in other words to explain the Inexplicable; but the end of this process is inevitably a juggling with words which must repel all clear-minded thinkers. At the end of all metaphysical systems we find an enthroned word which apparelled in the purple of finality professes to explain the Universe, and yet when we look into it, we find that it stands itself in need of explanation, that it is merely a Word which stands for the

Inexplicable. Science avoids the difficulty by professing that the ultimate results of its analysis are a sufficient description of the Universe, a sufficient answer to the What, and as to the Why it rests in the great fact of Evolution. Again we find that we have landed ourselves in unexplained words beyond which lies the same region of darkness involved in yet deeper darkness; the *tamas tamasā gūḍham* of the Scriptures; Evolution, Force, Kinesis, these are words in which we gather up our observation of certain phenomena; they are the sum of the workings of a nameless, unintelligible Thing, but what that Thing is and why It is, remains an unsolved mystery. Whether it is that the human mind is intrinsically unable to pierce beyond the veil or whether it has the power latent or potential but as yet unevolved, we may at least safely assert that so far man has not been able to understand Finality; he is constitutionally incapable of imagining a Final Cause which his reason when faithfully interrogated will not refuse to accept as Final, will not be forced by its own nature to subject to the query How & Why. There are only two ways of meeting the difficulty; one is to assert that the reason of man as at present constituted is imperfect and by reason of its imperfection unable to grasp Finality which for all that exists; the other is to assert that the reason of man is right and that Finality is inconceivable because it does not exist. The latter is the answer which Hinduism has selected; the human mind cannot arrive at anything final because there is nothing final, for all the universe is OM and OM is Infinite, without beginning and without end either in Time or in Space. It has indeed been advanced that the human mind can realise only the Finite and not the Infinite, — a sorry paradox, for it is truer to say that the only fact which the human mind can realise is Infinity; the Finite it grasps only as a phenomenon, the very conception of which depends on the wider conception of the Infinite. A finite thing, such as a house, we conceive as a limited phenomenon in relation to that which is not the house; limit is only imaginable in relation to something beyond the limit; a final limit to everything is unimaginable whether in Time or Space. Outside the house is the province and outside the limits of the province is the country and outside the limits of the country is the earth and outside the limits of the earth is the Universe and to the Universe we can only imagine limits if we imagine it as surrounded by other Universes, and so the mind of man goes travelling forward & ever forward without reaching an end. Having realised that there is no end the Mind refuses to proceed farther and returns on its traces into the world of phenomena. It is this refusal, this return which is meant when it is stated that the human mind cannot conceive Infinity. And yet what does the statement amount to? Simply to this that there is no end to the Infinite, in other words that the Infinite *is* infinite, that the boundless *has* no bound. The human mind works within limits, that is to say, within the Absolute apparently conditioned by phenomena because it is itself the Absolute apparently conditioned by phenomena. This fundamental idea of the Vedanta I shall have occasion to return upon in its proper place; here I follow out the argument so far in order to establish that the working of the human mind within limits does not militate against the undoubted experience that if rigidly interrogated it realises phenomena only as phenomena and the only fact to which it can give assent is the fact of infinity. If therefore we take reason or mental Experience as the final authority, the Hindu proposition demonstrates itself. The alternative proposition like the Roman Curia calls upon us to put reason out of Court and makes discussion of the question impossible. Although one cannot dogmatically declare it to be untrue, it is certainly contrary to all scientific probability; Hinduism does not deny, but rather asserts that the powers of the human mind can & will enlarge indefinitely, but it believes that this will be by the process of development, not by a radical alteration of its essential nature. To assert that man must believe in finality although he is constitutionally unable to grasp any finality, is to leave the terra firma on which all thought moves & reposes, the collective mental experience of the race affecting & affected by the mental experience of each individual and to launch into the void of dogmatic & irrational belief. Credo quia incredibile est, I believe because it is incomprehensible.

We come back therefore to the Hindu confession of faith, OM is the syllable, OM is the Universe; the past, the present and the future, — all that was, all that is, all that will be is OM. Likewise all that may exist beyond the bounds of Time, that too is OM.

Mark the determination to drive the idea of Infinity to its logical conclusion. *All that may exist beyond the bounds of Time, that too is OM.* Man can conceive nothing that is neither in the past, present nor future, but if there be such inconceivable thing, it does not by becoming beyond Time place itself beyond OM. That too is OM. In a similar spirit another verse of the Upanishad declares of God "He moves & He moveth not, He is near & He is far, He is within the Universe and He is outside the Universe." The Universe is all that exists, all that Man can know or conceive & there can be nothing outside it because it has no limits; but if there does exist such inconceivable thing as is beyond illimitable Space it does not by becoming beyond Space, put itself beyond OM. *He is within the Universe and He is outside the Universe.* All Hindu Scripture is precise upon this point, our God is not a gigantic polypus, not a term for infinite & Eternal Matter, not a stream of Tendency that makes for righteousness, or for the survival of the fittest, or for the goal of Evolution, whatever that may be. He is the Infinite and the Absolute, and what seems to be finite and conditioned, seems & is not; is phenomenon & not fact. God is the only fact, God is the only reality; God is the One than whom there is no other. He alone exists, all else appears. But of these things later. At present the conclusion which I wish to present is this that there is an Infinite who is the one fact; there is no Final Cause, because Final Cause implies an Effect different from itself & must therefore be finite, but the human mind cannot conceive of anything ultimate & finite; for there is no such thing; it cannot conceive of a beginning to all things because there was no beginning, or an end to all things because there is no end. There is only One Infinite who is without beginning and without End.

But if He is Infinite, He must be Unknowable, for knowledge implies limit & division. The human mind as has been said, works within limits; in order to know, we must define and analyse; but definition and analysis imply limits, imply conditions. The Infinite is conceivable to us, but not being measurable, it is also not knowable. This is the second great philosophical truth on which Hinduism insists. OM *tat sat* is its formula, OM, That is what Is. “That”, the most non-committing expression discoverable in the language, is the one selected to express the idea of the Infinite One. “That is the one thing that is”, but *what* That is and *why* That is, lies beyond the scope of our knowledge. Again and again the Scriptures asseverate our ultimate ignorance.[1]

---

[1] *The notes that follow were written by Sri Aurobindo at the top of the last page of this manuscript*:

Infinite, therefore Unknowable, Unknowable therefore Absolute. Prove the Existence of God. Known by Becoming.

The Philosophy of the Upanishads

Chapter I

Prefatory

The philosophy of the Upanishads is the basis of all Indian religion and morals and to a considerable extent of Hindu politics, legislation and society. Its practical importance to [our] race is therefore immense. But it has also profoundly [affected] the thought of the West in many of the most critical stages of [its] development; at first through Pythagoras and other Greek philosophers, then through Buddhism working into Essene, Gnostic and Roman Christianity and once again in our own times through German metaphysics, Theosophy, and a hundred strange and irregular channels. One can open few books now at all in the latest stream of thought without seeing the old Vedantism busy at its work of moulding and broadening the European mind, sometimes by direct and conscious impact as a force, more often by an unacknowledged and impalpable pressure as an atmosphere. This potent influence [in] modern times of a way of thinking many thousands of years old, is due to [a] singular parallelism between the fundamental positions arrived [at by] ancient Vedantism and modern Science. Science in its [researches] amid matter has stumbled on the basal fact of the [Unity] of all things; the Unity of all things is the rock on which the Upanishads have been built. Evolution has been discovered and [analyzed] by Science; Evolution of a kind is implied at every turn by the Vedanta. Vedantism like Science, [but] after its own fashion, [is] severely conscientious in its logical processes and rigorously experimental; [Vedantism] has mastered physical and psychical laws which Science [is] now beginning to handle.

But the parallelism is no more than a parallelism, [there is] no real point of contact; for the Hindu or Southern Asiatic mind differs fundamentally in its processes from either [the] Teutonic or the Mediterranean. The former is diffuse and comprehensive; the latter compact and precise. The Asiatic acquires a [deeper] and truer view of things in their totality, the European a more accurate and practically serviceable conception of their parts. [The] European seizes on an aspect and takes it for the whole; he is [a] fanatic of single ideas and the preacher of the finite: the Asiatic passes at once to the whole and slurs rapidly over the aspects; he [is] eclectic, inveterately flexible and large-minded, the priest of [the Infinite]. The European is an analytical reasoner proceeding from observations, the Asiatic a synthetic diviner, leaping to intuitions. Even [when] both analyze, the European prefers to dissect his observations, [the] Asiatic to distinguish his experiences: or when both [synthetize, the] European generalises and classifies what he has [observed,] the Asiatic masses into broad single truths what he [has seen] within. The one deals as a master with facts, but halts over [ideas and] having mastered an idea works round it in a circle; the other [masters ideas] unerringly [.........] but stumbles among facts and applications. The mind of the European is an Iliad or an Odyssey, fighting rudely but heroically forward, or, full of a rich curiosity, wandering as an accurate and vigorous observer in landlocked seas of thought; the mind of the Asiatic is a Ramayan or a Mahabharat, a gleaming infinity of splendid and inspiring imaginations and idealisms or else an universe of wide moral aspiration and ever varying and newly-grouped masses of thought. The mind of the Westerner is a Mediterranean full of small and fertile islands, studded with ports to which the owner, a private merchant, eagerly flees with his merchandise after a little dashing among the billows, and eagerly he disembarks and kisses his dear mother earth; the mind of the Eastern man is an Ocean, and its voyager an adventurer and discoverer, a Columbus sailing for months over an illimitable Ocean out of reach of land, and his ports of visit are few and far between, nor does he carry in his bottoms much merchandise you can traffick in; yet he opens for the trader new horizons, new worlds with new markets. By his intuitions and divinations he helps to widen the circles the European is always obstinately tracing. The European is essentially scientific, artistic and commercial; the Asiatic is essentially a moralist, pietist and philosopher. Of course the distinction is not rigid or absolute; there is much that is Asiatic in numbers of Europeans, and in particular races, notably the South Germans, the Celt and the Slav; there is much that is European in numbers of Asiatics, and in particular nations, notably the Arabs and the Japanese. But the fundamental divergence in speculative habits is very noticeable, for in the things of the mind the South imposes its law on the whole Continent.

We shall therefore expect to find, as we do find, that Vedantic Evolution and Monism are very different things from Evolution and Monism as European Science understands them. European thought seizes on Evolution as manifested in the outward facts of our little earth and follows it into its details with marvellous minuteness, accuracy and care. The Vedanta slurs over this part of the scheme with a brief acknowledgement, but divines the whole course of Evolution in the Universe and lays down with confident insight its larger aspects in the inward facts of the soul. In its Monism also Vedanta is far more profound and searching than the European scientific observer, for while the latter is aware only of this gross material world and resolves everything into the monism of gross Matter, the Vedanta, which is perfectly aware that gross matter can all be resolved into a single principle, does not pause at this discovery; it has pursued its investigations into two other worlds which surround & interpenetrate ours like two concentric but larger circles, the psychic or dream world of subtle Matter and the spiritual or sleep world of causal Matter, each with its own monistic unity; these three parallel monisms it resolves into a Supreme, Absolute and Transcendent Unity which is alone real and eternal. To the Indian consciousness at least these are no mere speculations; they are conclusions based on the actual experiences and observations of investigators who had themselves entered into these inner and yet wider worlds. The good faith of their observations cannot seriously be doubted and their accuracy can only be impugned when Science itself consents to explore the same fields of being whether by the methods hitherto practised in the East or by any other adequate means of its own invention.

We need not expect in the Upanishads a full statement of the facts on which its more grandiose statements of religious and philosophic truth are built, nor should we hope to find in them complete or reasoned treatises marshalling in a comprehensive and orderly manner the whole scheme of Vedantic philosophy. That is seldom the way in which the true Asiatic goes to work. He is a poet and a *divine* in the real sense of the word. His peculiar faculty is apparent in the very form of his philosophic books. The Aphorisms, that peculiarly Indian instrument of thought, by which our philosophers later on packed tons of speculation into an inch of space, give only the fundamental illuminations on which their philosophy depends. The Exegeses (*Karikas*) of Gaudapada and others are often a connected and logical array of concise and pregnant thoughts each carrying its burden of endless suggestion, each starting its own reverberating echo of wider and wider thought; but they are not comprehensive treatises. Nor can such a term be applied to the Commentaries (Bhashyas) of Shankara, Ramanuja and other powerful and original minds; they are, rather, forceful excursions into terse and strenuous logic, basing, strengthening, building up, adding a wing here and a story there to the cunning and multiform, yet harmonic structure of Indian thought. Nowhere will you find an exhaustive and systematic statement of a whole philosophy interpreting every part of the universe in the terms of a single line of thought. This habit of suggestiveness & reserve in thought leaves the old philosophies still as inspiring and full of intention and potential development as when the glowing divinations and massive spiritual experiences stored in the Upanishads were first annealed & hammered into philosophic form. It is the reason of the Vedanta's surprising vitality, of the extent to which it enters and the potency with which it governs Indian life, in a way that no European philosophy except recently the Evolutionary has entered into or governed the life of the West. The European metaphysician has something in him of the pedagogue, something indeed of the mechanic, at least of the geometrician;

his philosophies are masterpieces of consistent logic, admirable constructions of a rigid symmetry. But their very perfection militates against the vitality of the truth they set forth; for Life is not built on the lines of consistent logic, Nature does not proceed on the principle of a rigid symmetry: even where she seems most formal she loves to assert herself in even the slightest, just perceptible, perhaps hardly perceptible deflection from a strict correspondence. Nothing indeed can live permanently which has not in itself the potentiality of an unending Evolution; nothing — nothing finite at least — is completely true which is not incomplete. The moment a poem or work of art becomes incapable of fresh interpretation, or a philosophy of fruitful expansion or a species of change & variety, it ceases from that moment to be essential to existence and is therefore doomed, sooner or later, to extinction. The logical intellect may rebel against this law and insist passionately on finality in truth,[1] but it rebels vainly; for this *is* the law of all life and all truth.

This is the secret of the Upanishads and their undying fruitfulness. They are, to begin with, inspired poems, — not less so when they are couched in prose form than when they are poured into solemn and far-sounding verse, — grand and rhythmic intuitions where the speakers seem to be conveyors only of informing ideas cast out from a full and complete vision in the eternal guardian Mind of the race. The style in which they are couched is wonderfully grave, penetrating and mighty, suffused with strange light as if from another world, its rhythms unequalled for fathomless depth of sound and the rolling sea of solemn echoes they leave behind them. Here only in literature have philosophy and poetry at their highest met together and mingled their beings in the unison of a perfect love and understanding. For the Upanishads stand, as poetry, with the greatest productions of creative force and harmonic beauty. As philosophy, they have borne the weight of three millenniums of thought and may well suffice for an equal period of future speculation. But exhaustive and balanced exposition is not to be expected; you must piece together their glowing jewels of thought if you would arrive at the forced symmetry of a system; and perhaps to the end of the world different minds will construct from them a different mosaic. To the systematic intellect this inevitably detracts from their philosophic value, but to the Indian mind, flexible, illimitable, unwilling to recognize any finality in philosophy or religion, it enhances their claim to reverence as Scriptures for the whole world and for all time to come.

---

[1] Observe for instance the phenomenon of Theosophy. The Western intellect seizes upon the profound researches of the East into the things behind the veil, the things of the soul & spirit — researches admirably firm in the outline of their results but incomplete in detail — and lo and behold! everything is arranged, classified, manualized, vulgarized, all gaps filled in, finality insisted on and the infinite future with its infinite possibilities and uncertainties audaciously barred out of its heritage.

Chapter II

Discovery of the Absolute Brahman

The idea of transcendental Unity, Oneness & Stability behind all the flux and variety of phenomenal life is the basal idea of the Upanishads: this is the pivot of all Indian metaphysics, the sum and goal of our spiritual experience. To the phenomenal world around us stability and singleness seem at first to be utterly alien; nothing but passes and changes, nothing but has its counterparts, contrasts, harmonised and dissident parts; and all are perpetually shifting and rearranging their relative positions and affections. Yet if one thing is certain, it is that the sum of all this change and motion is absolutely stable, fixed and unvarying; that all this heterogeneous multitude of animate & inanimate things are fundamentally homogeneous and one. Otherwise nothing could endure, nor could there be any certainty in existence. And this unity, stability, unvarying fixity which reason demands & ordinary experience points to, is being ascertained slowly but surely by the investigations of Science. We can no longer escape from the growing conviction that however the parts may change and shift and appear to perish, yet the sum and whole remains unchanged, undiminished and imperishable; however multitudinous, mutable and mutually irreconcilable forms and compounds may be, yet the grand substratum is one, simple and enduring; death itself is not a reality but a seeming, for what appears to be destruction, is merely transformation and a preparation for rebirth. Science may not have appreciated the full import of her own discoveries; she may shrink from an unflinching acceptance of the logical results to which they lead; and certainly she is as yet far from advancing towards the great converse truths which they for the present conceal, — for instance the wonderful fact that not only is death a seeming, but life itself is a seeming, and beyond life and death there lies a condition which is truer and therefore more permanent than either. But though Science dreams not as yet of her goal, her feet are on the road from which there is no turning back, — the road which Vedanta on a different plane has already trod before it.

Here then is a great fundamental fact which demands from philosophy an adequate explanation of itself; — that all variations resolve themselves into an unity; that within the flux of things and concealed by it is an indefinable, immutable Something, at once the substratum and sum of all, which Time cannot touch, motion perturb, nor variation increase or diminish; and that this substratum and sum has been from all eternity and will be for all eternity. A fundamental fact to which all Thought moves, and yet is it not, when narrowly considered, an acute paradox? For how can the sum of infinite variations be a sempiternally fixed amount which has never augmented or decreased and can never augment or decrease? How can that whole be fixed and eternal of which every smallest part is eternally varying and perishing? Given a bewildering whirl of motion, how does the result come to be not merely now or as a result, but from beginning to end a perfect fixity? Impossible, unless either there be a guiding Power, for which at first sight there seems to be no room in the sempiternal chain of causation; or unless that sum and substratum be the one reality, imperishable because not conditioned by Time, indivisible because not conditioned by Space, immutable because not conditioned by Causality, — in a word absolute & transcendent and *therefore* eternal, unalterable and undecaying. Motion and change and death and division would then be merely transitory phenomena, masks and seemings of the One and Absolute, the as yet undefined and perhaps indefinable It which alone *is*.

To such a conclusion Indian speculation had turned at a very early period of its conscious strivings — uncertainly at first and with many gropings and blunders. The existence of some Oneness which gives order and stability to the multitudinous stir of the visible world, the Aryan thinkers were from the first disposed to envisage and they sought painfully to arrive at the knowledge of that Oneness in its nature or its essentiality. The living Forces of the Cosmos which they had long worshipped, yet always with a floating but persistent perception of an Unity in their multitude, melted on closer analysis into a single concept, a single Force or Presence, one and universal. The question then arose, Was that Force or Presence intelligent or non-intelligent? God or Nature? "He alone" hazarded the Rigveda "knoweth, or perhaps He knoweth not." Or might it not be that the Oneness which ties together and governs phenomena and rolls out the evolution of the worlds, is really the thing we call *Time*, since of the three original conditions of phenomenal existence, Time, Space and Causality, Time is a necessary part of the conception of Causality and can hardly be abstracted from the conception of Space, but neither Space nor Causality seems necessary to the conception of Time? Or if it be not Time, might it not be *Swabhava*, the essential Nature of Things taking various conditions and forms? Or perhaps *Chance*, some blind principle working out an unity and law in things by infinite experiment, — this too might be possible. Or since from eternal uncertainty eternal certainty cannot come, might it not be *Fate*, a fixed and unalterable law in things in subjection to which this world evolves itself in a preordained procession of phenomena from which it cannot deviate? Or perhaps in the original atomic fountain of things certain *Elements* might be discovered which by perpetual and infinite combinations and permutations keep the universe to its workings? But if so, these elements must themselves proceed from something which imposes on them the law of their being, and what could that be but the *Womb*, the matrix of original and indestructible Matter, the plasm which moulds the universe and out of which it is moulded? And yet in whatever scheme of things the mind might ultimately rest, some room surely must be made for these conscious, thinking and knowing *Egos* of living beings, of whom knowledge and thought seem to be the essential selves and without whom this world of perceivable and knowable things could not be perceived and known; — and if not perceived and known, might it not be that without them it could not even exist?

Such were the gurges of endless speculation in which the old Aryan thinkers, tossed and perplexed, sought for some firm standing-ground, some definite clue which might save them from being beaten about like stumbling blind men led by a guide as blind. They sought at first to liberate themselves from the tyranny of appearances by the method which Kapila, the ancient prehistoric Master of Thought, had laid down for mankind, the method called Sankhya or the law of Enumeration. The method of Kapila consisted in guidance by pure discriminative reason and it took its name from one of its principal rules, the law of enumeration and generalisation. They enumerated first the immediate Truths-in-Things which they could distinguish or deduce from things obviously phenomenal, and from these by generalisation they arrived at a much smaller number of ulterior Truths-in-Things of which the immediate were merely aspects. And then having enumerated these ulterior Truths-in-Things, they were able by generalisation to reduce them to a very small number of ultimate Truths-in-Things, the Tattwas (literally Thenesses) of the developed Sankhya philosophy. And these Tattwas once enumerated with some approach to certainty, was it not possible to generalise yet one step farther? The Sankhya did so generalise and by this supreme and final generalisation arrived at the very last step on which, in its own unaided strength, it could take safe footing. This was the great principle of Prakriti, the single eternal indestructible principle and origin of Matter which by perpetual evolution rolls out through aeons and aeons the unending panorama of things.[2] And for whose benefit? Surely for those conscious knowing and perceiving Egos, the army of witnesses, who, each in his private space of reasoning and perceiving Mind partitioned off by an enveloping medium of gross matter, sit for ever as spectators in the theatre of the Universe! For ever, thought the Sankhyas, since the Egos, though their partitions are being continually broken down and built anew and the spaces occupied never remain permanently identical, yet seem themselves to be no less eternal and indestructible than Prakriti.

This then was the wide fixed lake of ascertained philosophical knowledge into which the method of Sankhya, pure intellectual reasoning on definite principles, led in the mind of ancient India. Branchings off, artificial canals from the reservoir were not, indeed, wanting. Some by resolving that army of witnesses into a single Witness, arrived at the dual conception of God and Nature, Purusha & Prakriti, Spirit and Matter, Ego and Non-ego. Others, more radical, perceived Prakriti as the creation, shadow or aspect of Purusha, so that God alone remained, the spiritual or ideal factor eliminating by inclusion the material or real. Solutions were also attempted on the opposite side; for some eliminated the conscious Egos themselves as mere seemings; not a few seem to have thought that each ego is only a series of successive shocks of consciousness and the persistent sense of identity no more than an illusion due to the unbroken continuity of the shocks. If these shocks of consciousness are borne in on the brain from the changes of Prakriti in the multitudinous stir of evolution, then is consciousness one out of the many terms of Prakriti itself, so that Prakriti alone remains as the one reality, the material or real factor eliminating by inclusion the spiritual or ideal. But if we deny, as many did, that Prakriti is an ultimate reality apart from the perceptions of Purushas and yet apply the theory of a false notion of identity created by successive waves of sensation, we arrive at the impossible & sophistic position of the old Indian Nihilists whose reason by a singular suicide landed itself in Nothingness as the cradle & bourne, nay, the very stuff and reality of all existence. And there was a third direction in which thought tended and which led it to the very threshold of Vedanta; for this also was a possible speculation that Prakriti & Purusha might both be quite real & yet not ultimately different aspects or sides of each other and so, after all, of a Oneness higher than either. But these speculations, plausible or imperfect, logical or sophistic, were yet mere speculations; they had no basis either in observed fact or in reliable experience. Two certainties seemed to have been arrived at, Prakriti was testified to by a close analysis of phenomenal existence; it was the basis of the phenomenal world which without a substratum of original matter could not be accounted for and without a fundamental oneness and indestructibility in that substratum could not be, what observation showed it to be, subject, namely, to fixed laws & evidently invariable in its sum and substance. On the other hand Purushas were testified to by the eternal persistence of the sense of individuality and identity whether during life or after death[3] and by the necessity of a perceiving cause for the activity of Prakriti; they were the receptive and contemplative Egos within the sphere of whose consciousness Prakriti, stirred to creative activity by their presence, performed her long drama of phenomenal Evolution.

---

[2] Note that Matter here not only includes gross matter with which Western Science is mainly concerned, but subtle matter, the material in which thought & feeling work, and causal matter in which the fundamental operations of the Will-to-live are conducted.

But meanwhile the seers of ancient India had, in their experiments and efforts at spiritual training and the conquest of the body, perfected a discovery which in its importance to the future of human knowledge dwarfs the divinations of Newton and Galileo; even the discovery of the inductive and experimental method in Science was not more momentous; for they discovered down to its ultimate processes the method of Yoga and by the method of Yoga they rose to three crowning realisations. They realised first as a fact the existence under the flux and multitudinousness of things of that supreme Unity and immutable Stability which had hitherto been posited only as a necessary theory, an inevitable generalisation. They came to know that It is the one reality and all phenomena merely its seemings and appearances, that It is the true Self of all things and phenomena are merely its clothes and trappings. They learned that It is absolute and transcendent and, because absolute and transcendent, therefore eternal, immutable, imminuable and indivisible. And looking back on the past progress of speculation they perceived that this also was the goal to which pure intellectual reasoning would have led them. For that which is in Time must be born and perish; but the Unity and Stability of things is eternal and must therefore transcend Time. That which is in Space must increase & diminish, have parts & relations, but the Unity and Stability of things is imminuable, not augmentable, independent of the changefulness of its parts and untouched by the shifting of their relations, and must therefore transcend Space; — and if it transcends Space, cannot really have parts, since Space is the condition of material divisibility; divisibility therefore must be, like death, a seeming and not a reality. Finally that which is subject to Causality, is necessarily subject to Change; but the Unity and Stability of things is immutable, the same now as it was aeons ago and will be aeons hereafter, and must therefore transcend Causality.

---

[3] Survival of the human personality after death has always been held in India to be a proved fact beyond all dispute; the Charvaka denial of it was contemned as mere irrational & wilful folly. Note however that survival after death does not necessarily to the Indian mind imply immortality, but only raises a presumption in its favour.

This then was the first realisation through Yoga, NITYO 'NITYÂNÂM, the One Eternal in many transient.

At the same time they realised one truth more, — a surprising truth; they found that the transcendent absolute Self of things was also the Self of living beings, the Self too of man, that highest of the beings living in the material plane on earth. The Purusha or conscious Ego in man which had perplexed and baffled the Sankhyas, turned out to be precisely the same in his ultimate being as Prakriti the apparently non-conscious source of things; the non-consciousness of Prakriti, like so much else, was proved a seeming and no reality, since behind the inanimate form a conscious Intelligence at work is to the eyes of the Yogin luminously self-evident.

This then was the second realisation through Yoga, CHÉTANAŞ CHÉTANÂNÂM, the One Consciousness in many Consciousnesses.

Finally at the base of these two realisations was a third, the most important of all to our race, — that the Transcendent Self in individual man is as complete *because identically the same* as the Transcendent Self in the Universe; for the Transcendent is indivisible and the sense of separate individuality is only one of the fundamental seemings on which the manifestation of phenomenal existence perpetually depends. In this way the Absolute which would otherwise be beyond knowledge, becomes knowable; and the man who knows his whole Self knows the whole Universe. This stupendous truth is enshrined to us in the two famous formulae of Vedanta, SO 'HAM, He am I, and AHAM BRAHM' ÂSMI, I am Brahman the Eternal.

Based on these four grand truths, NITYO 'NITYÂNÂM, CHÉTANAŞ CHÉTANÂNÂM, SO 'HAM, AHAM BRAHM' ÂSMI, as upon four mighty pillars the lofty philosophy of the Upanishads raises its front among the distant stars.

Chapter III

Nature of the Absolute Brahman

Viewed in the light of these four great illuminations the utterances of the Upanishads arrange themselves and fall into a perfect harmony. European scholars like Max Muller have seen in these Scriptures a mass of heterogeneous ideas where the sublime jostles the childish, the grandiose walks arm-in-arm with the grotesque, the most petty trivialities feel at home with the rarest and most solemn philosophical intuitions, and they have accordingly declared them to be the babblings of a child humanity; inspired children, idiots endowed with genius, such to the Western view are the great Rishis of the Aranyaka. But the view is suspect from its very nature. It is not likely that men who handle the ultimate and most difficult intellectual problems with such mastery, precision and insight, would babble mere folly in matters which require the use of much lower faculties. Their utterances in this less exalted sphere may be true or they may be erroneous, but, it may fairly be assumed, they gave them forth with a perfectly clear idea of their bearing and signification. To an understanding totally unacquainted with the methods by which they are arrived at, many of the established conclusions of modern Science would seem unutterably grotesque and childish, — the babblings if not of a child humanity, at least of humanity in its dotage; yet only a little accurate knowledge is needed to show that these grotesque trivialities are well-ascertained and irrefragable truths.

In real truth the Upanishads are in all their parts, allowing for imaginative language and an occasional element of symbolism, quite rational, consistent and homogeneous. They are not concerned indeed to create an artificial impression of consistency by ignoring the various aspects of this manifold Universe and reducing all things to a single denomination; for they are not metaphysical treatises aiming at mathematical abstractness or geometrical precision and consistency. They are a great store of observations and spiritual experiences with conclusions and generalisations from those observations and experiences, set down without any thought of controversial caution or any anxiety to avoid logical contradictions. Yet they have the consistency of all truthful observation and honest experience; they arrange themselves naturally and without set purpose under one grand universal truth developed into a certain number of wide general laws within whose general agreement there is room for infinite particular variations and even anomalies. They have in other words a scientific rather than a logical consistency.

To the rigorous logician bound in his narrow prison of verbal reasoning, the Upanishads seem indeed to base themselves on an initial and fundamental inconsistency. There are a number of passages in these Scriptures which dwell with striking emphasis on the unknowableness of the Absolute Brahman. It is distinctly stated that neither mind nor senses can reach the Brahman and that words return baffled from the attempt to describe It; more, — that we do not discern the Absolute and Transcendent in Its reality, nor can we discriminate the right way or perhaps any way of teaching the reality of It to others; and it is even held, that It can only be properly characterised in negative language and that to every challenge for definition the only true answer is NÉTI NÉTI, *It is not this, It is not that.* Brahman is not definable, not describable, not intellectually knowable. And yet in spite of these passages the Upanishads constantly declare that Brahman is the one true object of knowledge and the whole Scripture is in fact an attempt not perhaps to define, but at least in some sort to characterise and present an idea, and even a detailed idea, of the Brahman.

The inconsistency is more apparent than real. The Brahman in Its ultimate reality is transcendent, absolute, infinite; but the senses and the intellect, which the senses supply with its material, are finite; speech also is limited by the deficiencies of the intellect; Brahman must therefore in Its very nature be unknowable to the intellect and beyond the power of speech to describe, — yet only in Its ultimate reality, not in Its aspects or manifestations. The Agnostic Scientist also believes that there must be some great ultimate Reality unknown and probably unknowable to man (ignoramus et ignorabimus) from which this Universe proceeds and on which all phenomena depend, but his admission of Unknowableness is confined to the ultimate Nature of this supreme Ens and not to its expression or manifestation in the Universe. The Upanishad, proceeding by a profounder method than material analysis, casts the net of knowledge wider than the modern Agnostic, yet in the end its attitude is much the same; it differs only in this important respect that it asserts even the ultimate Brahman to be although inexpressible in the terms of finite knowledge, yet realisable and attainable.

The first great step to the realisation of the Brahman is by the knowledge of Him as manifested in the phenomenal Universe; for if there is no reality but Brahman, the phenomenal Universe which is obviously a manifestation of *something* permanent and eternal, must be a manifestation of Brahman and of nothing else, and if we know it completely, we do to a certain extent and in a certain way, know Him, not as an Absolute Existence, but under the conditions of phenomenal manifestation. While, however, European Science seeks only to know the phenomena of gross matter, the Yogin goes farther. He asserts that he has discovered an universe of subtle matter penetrating and surrounding the gross; this universe to which the spirit withdraws partially and for a brief time in sleep but more entirely and for a longer time through the gates of death, is the source whence all psychic processes draw their origin; and the link which connects this universe with the gross material world is to be found in the phenomena of life and mind. His assertion is perfectly positive and the Upanishad proceeds on it as on an ascertained and indisputable fact quite beyond the limits of mere guesswork, inference or speculation. But he goes yet farther and declares that there is yet a third universe of causal matter penetrating and surrounding both the subtle and the gross, and that this universe to which the spirit withdraws in the deepest and most abysmal states of sleep and trance and also in a remote condition beyond the state of man after death, is the source whence all phenomena take their rise. If we are to understand the Upanishads we must accept these to us astounding statements, temporarily at least; for on them the whole scheme of Vedanta is built. Now Brahman manifests Himself in each of these Universes, in the Universe of Causal Matter as the Cause, Self and Inspirer, poetically styled Prajna the Wise One; in the universe of subtle matter as the Creator, Self and Container, styled Hiranyagarbha the Golden Embryo of life and form, and in the universe of gross matter as the Ruler, Guide, Self and Helper, styled Virat the Shining and Mighty One. And in each of these manifestations He can be known and realised by the spirit of Man.

Granted the truth of these remarkable assertions, what then is the relation between the Supreme Self and man? The position has already been quite definitely taken that the transcendent Self in man is identically the same as the transcendent Self in the Universe and that this identity is the one great key to the knowledge of the Absolute Brahman. Does not this position rule out of court any such differences between the Absolute and the human Self as is implied in the character of the triple manifestation of Brahman? On the one hand completest identity of the Supreme Self and the human is asserted as an ascertained & experienced fact, on the other hand widest difference is asserted as an equally well-ascertained and experienced fact; there can be no reconciliation between these incompatible statements. Yet are they both facts, answers Vedanta; identity *is* a fact in the reality of things; difference *is* a fact in the appearance of things, the world of phenomena; for phenomena are in their essence nothing but seemings and the difference between the individual Self and the Universal Self is the fundamental seeming which makes all the rest possible. This difference grows as the manifestation of Brahman proceeds. In the world of gross matter, it is complete; the difference is so acute, that it is impossible for the material sensual being to conceive of the Supreme Soul as having any point of contact with his own soul and it is only by a long process of evolution that he arrives at the illumination in which some kind of identity becomes to him conceivable. The basal conception for Mind as conditioned by gross matter is Dualistic; the knower here must be different from the Known and his whole intellectual development consists in the discovery, development and perfected use of ever new media and methods of knowledge. Undoubtedly the ultimate knowledge he arrives at brings him to the fundamental truth of identity between himself and the Supreme Self, but in the sphere of gross phenomena this identity can never be more than an intellectual conception, it can never be verified by personal realisation. On the other hand it can be *felt* by the supreme sympathy of love and faith, either through love of humanity and of all other fellow-beings or directly through love of God. This feeling of identity is very strong in religions based largely on the sentiment of Love and Faith. I and my Father are One, cried the Founder of Christianity; I and my brother man & my brother beast are One, says Buddhism; St Francis spoke of Air as his brother and Water as his sister; and the Hindu devotee when he sees a bullock lashed falls down in pain with the mark of the whip on his own body. But the feeling of Oneness remaining only a feeling does not extend into knowledge and therefore these religions while emotionally pervaded with the sense of identity, tend in the sphere of intellect to a militant Dualism or to any other but always unMonistic standpoint. Dualism is therefore no mere delusion; it is a truth, but a phenomenal truth and not the ultimate reality of things.

As it proceeds in the work of discovering and perfecting methods of knowledge, the individual self finds an entry into the universe of subtle phenomena. Here the difference that divides it from the Supreme Self is less acute; for the bonds of matter are lightened and the great agents of division and disparity, Time and Space, diminish in the insistency of their pressure. The individual here comes to realise a certain unity with the great Whole; he is enlarged and aggrandized into a part of the Universal Self, but the sense of identity is not complete and cannot be complete. The basal conception for Mind in this subtle Universe is Dualo-Monistic; the knower is not quite different from the known; he is like and of the same substance but inferior, smaller and dependent; his sense of oneness may amount to similarity and consubstantiality but not to coincidence and perfect identity.

From the subtle Universe the individual self rises in its evolution until it is able to enter the universe of Causal matter, where it stands near to the fountain-head. In this universe media and methods of knowledge begin to disappear, Mind comes into almost direct relations with its source and the difference between the individual and the Supreme Self is greatly attenuated. Nevertheless there is here too a wall of difference, even though it wears eventually thin as the thinnest paper. The knower is aware that he is coeval and coexistent with the Supreme Self, he is aware in a sense of omnipresence, for wherever the Supreme Self is, there also he is; he is, moreover, on the other side of phenomena and can see the Universe at will without him or within him; but he has still not necessarily realised the Supreme as utterly himself, although the perfect realisation is now for the first time in his grasp. The basal perception for Mind in this Universe is Monism with a difference, but the crowning perception of Monism becomes here possible.

And when it is no longer only possible but grasped? Then the individual Self entering into full realisation, ceases in any sense to be the individual Self, but merges into & becomes again the eternal and absolute Brahman, without parts, unbeginning, undecaying, unchanging. He has passed beyond causality and phenomena and is no longer under the bondage of that which is only by seeming. This is the *laya* or utter absorption of Hinduism, the highest *nirvana* or extinction from phenomena of the Upanishads and of Buddhist metaphysics. It is obviously a state which words fail to describe, since words which are created to express relations and have no meaning except when they express relations, cannot deal successfully with a state which is perfectly pure, absolute and unrelated; nor is it a condition which the bounded & finite intellect of man on this plane can for a moment envisage. This unintelligibility of the supreme state is naturally a great stumblingblock to the undisciplined imagination of our present-day humanity which, being sensuous, emotional and intellectual, inevitably recoils from a bliss in which neither the senses, emotions nor intellect have any place. Surely, we cry, the extinction or quietude of all these sources & means of sensation and pleasure implies not supreme bliss but absolute nothingness, blank annihilation. "An error", answers the Vedanta, "a pitiful, grovelling error! Why is it that the senses cease in that supreme condition? Because the senses were evolved in order to sense external being and where externality ceases, they having no action cease to exist. The emotions too are directed outwards and need another for their joy, they can only survive so long as we are incomplete. The intellect similarly is and works only so long as there is something external to it and ungrasped. But to the Most High there is nothing ungrasped, the Most High depends on none for His joy. He has therefore neither emotions nor intellect, nor can he either who merges in and becomes the Most High, possess them for a moment after that high consummation. The deprivation of the limited senses in His boundlessness is not a loss or an extinction, but must be a fulfilment, a development into Being which rejoices in its own infinity. The disappearance of our broken & transient emotions in His completeness must bring us not into a cold void but rather into illimitable bliss. The culmination of knowledge by the supersession of our divided

& fallible intellect must lead not to utter darkness and blank vacuity but to the luminous ecstasy of an infinite Consciousness. Not the annihilation of Being, but utter fullness of Being is our Nirvana." And when this ecstatic language is brought to the touchstone of reason, it must surely be declared just and even unanswerable. For the final absolution of the intellect can only be at a point where the Knower, Knowledge and the Known become one, Knowledge being there infinite, direct and without media. And where there is this infinite and flawless knowledge, there must be, one thinks, infinite and flawless existence and bliss. But by the very conditions of this state, we can only say of it that it is, we cannot define it in words, precisely because we cannot realize it with the intellect. The Self can be realized only with the Self; there is no other instrument of realization.

Granted, it may be said, that such a state is conceivably possible, — as certainly it is, starting from your premises, the only and inevitable conclusion, — but what proof have we that it exists as a reality? what proof can even your Yoga bring to us that it exists? For when the individual Self becomes identified with the Supreme, its evolution is over and it does not return into phenomena to tell its experiences. The question is a difficult one to handle, partly because language, if it attempts to deal with it at all precisely, must become so abstract and delicate as to be unintelligible, partly because the experiences it involves are so far off from our present general evolution and attained so rarely that dogmatism or even definite statement appears almost unpardonable. Nevertheless with the use of metaphorical language, or, in St Paul's words, speaking as a fool, one may venture to outline what there is at all to be said on the subject. The truth then seems to be that there are even in this last or fourth state of the Self, stages and degrees, as to the number of which experience varies; but for practical purposes we may speak of three, the first when we stand at the entrance of the porch and look within; the second when we stand at the inner extremity of the porch and are really face to face with the Eternal; the third when we enter into the Holy of Holies. Be it remembered that the language I am using is the language of metaphor and must not be pressed with a savage literalness. Well then, the first stage is well within the possible experience of man and from it man returns to be a Jivanmukta, one who lives & is yet released in his inner self from the bondage of phenomenal existence; the second stage once reached, man does not ordinarily return, unless he is a supreme Buddha, — or perhaps as a world Avatar; from the third stage none returns nor is it attainable in the body. Brahman as realised by the Jivanmukta, seen from the entrance of the porch, is that which we usually term Parabrahman, the Supreme Eternal and the subject of the most exalted descriptions of the Vedanta. There are therefore five conditions of Brahman. Brahman Virat, Master of the Waking Universe; Brahman Hiranyagarbha, of the Dream Universe; Brahman Prajna or Avyakta of the Trance Universe of Unmanifestation; Parabrahman, the Highest; and that which is higher than the highest, the Unknowable. Now of the Unknowable it is not profitable to speak, but something of Parabrahman can be made intelligible to the human understanding because — always if the liberal use of loose metaphors is not denied, — it can be partially brought within the domain of speech.

Chapter IV

Parabrahman

So far the great Transcendent Reality has been viewed from the standpoint of the human spirit as it travels on the upward curve of evolution to culminate in the Supreme. It will now be more convenient to view the Absolute from the other end of the cycle of manifestation where, in a sense, evolution begins and the great Cause of phenomena stands with His face towards the Universe He will soon create. At first of course there is the Absolute, unconditioned, unmanifested, unimaginable, of Whom nothing can be predicated except negatives. But as the first step towards manifestation the Absolute — produces, shall we say? let the word serve for want of a better! — produces in Itself a luminous Shadow of Its infinite inconceivable Being, — the image is trivial and absurd, but one can find none adequate, — which is Parabrahman or if we like so to call Him, God, the Eternal, the Supreme Spirit, the Seer, Witness, Wisdom, Source, Creator, Ancient of Days. Of Him Vedanta itself can only speak in two great trilogies, subjective and objective, Sacchidanandam, Existence, Consciousness, Bliss; Satyam Jnanam Anantam, Truth, Knowledge, Infinity.

SACCHIDANANDAM. The Supreme is Pure Being, Absolute Existence, SAT. He is Existence because He alone *Is*, there being nothing else which has any ultimate reality or any being independent of His self-manifestation. And He is *Absolute* Existence because since He alone is and nothing else exists in reality, He must necessarily exist by Himself, in Himself and to Himself. There can be no cause for His existence, nor object to His existence; nor can there be any increase or diminution in Him, since increase can only come by addition from something external and diminution by loss to something external, and there is nothing external to Brahman. He cannot change in any way, for then He would be subject to Time and Causality; nor have parts, for then He would be subject to the law of Space. He is beyond the conceptions of Space, Time and Causality which He creates phenomenally as the conditions of manifestation but which cannot condition their Source. Parabrahman, then, is Absolute Existence.

The Supreme is also Pure Awareness, Absolute Consciousness, CHIT. We must be on our guard against confusing the ultimate consciousness of Brahman with our own modes of thought and knowledge, or calling Him in any but avowedly metaphorical language the Universal Omniscient Mind and by such other terminology; Mind, Thought, Knowledge, Omniscience, Partial Science, Nescience are merely modes in which Consciousness figures under various conditions and in various receptacles. But the Pure Consciousness of the Brahman is a conception which transcends our modes of thinking. Philosophy has done well to point out that consciousness is in its essence purely subjective. We are not conscious of external objects; we are only conscious of certain perceptions and impressions in our brains which by the separate or concurrent operation of our senses we are able to externalise into name and form; and in the very nature of things and to the end of Time we cannot be conscious of anything except these impressions & perceptions. The fact is indubitable, though Materialism and Idealism explain it in diametrically opposite directions. We shall eventually know that this condition is imperative precisely because consciousness *is* the fundamental thing from which all phenomenal existence proceeds, so much so that all phenomena have been called by a bold metaphor distortions or corruptions (*vikaras*) of the absolute consciousness. Monistic philosophers tell us however that the true explanation is not corruption but illation (*adhyaropa*), first of the idea of not-self into the Self, and of externality into the internal, and then of fresh and ever more complex forms by the method of Evolution. These metaphysical explanations it is necessary indeed to grasp, but even when we have mastered their delicate distinctions, refined upon refinement and brought ourselves to the verge of infinite ideas, there at least we must pause; we are moored to our brains and cannot in this body cut the rope in order to spread our sails over the illimitable ocean. It is enough if we satisfy ourselves with some dim realisation of the fact that all sentience is ultimately self-sentience.

The Upanishads tell us that Brahman is not a blind universal Force working by its very nature mechanically, nor even an unconscious Cause of Force; He is conscious or rather is Himself Consciousness, CHIT, as well as SAT. It necessarily follows that SAT and CHIT are really the same; Existence is Consciousness and cannot be separated from Consciousness. Phenomenally we may choose to regard existence as proceeding from sentience or culminating in it or being in and by it; but culmination is only a return to a concealed source, an efflorescence already concealed in the seed, so that from all these three standpoints sentience is eventually the condition of existence; they are only three different aspects of the mental necessity which forbids us to imagine the great Is as essentially unaware that He Is. We may of course choose to believe that things are the other way about, that existence proceeds from insentience through sentience back again to insentience. Sentience is then merely a form of insentience, a delusion or temporary corruption (*vikara*) of the eternal and insentient. In this case Sentience, Intelligence, Mind, Thought and Knowledge, all are Maya and either insentient Matter or Nothingness the only eternal reality. But the Nihilist's negation of existence is a mere reductio ad absurdum of all thought and reason, a metaphysical *harakiri* by which Philosophy rips up her own bowels with her own weapons. The Materialist's conclusion of eternal insentient Matter seems to stand on firmer ground; for we have certainly the observed fact that evolution seems to start from inanimate Matter, and consciousness presents itself in Matter as a thing that appears for a short time only to disappear, a phenomenon or temporary seeming. To this argument also Vedanta can marshal a battalion of replies. The assertion of eternally insentient Matter (*Prakriti*) without any permanently sentient reality (*Purusha*) is, to begin with, a paradox far more startling than the Monistic paradox of Maya and lands us in a conclusion mentally inconceivable. Nor is the materialistic conclusion indisputably proved by observed facts; rather facts seem to lead us to a quite different conclusion, since the existence of anything really insentient behind which there is no concealed Sentience is an assumption (for we cannot even positively say that inanimate things are absolutely inanimate,) and the one fact we surely and indisputably know is our own sentience and animation. In the workings of inanimate Matter we everywhere see the operations of Intelligence operating by means and adapting means to an end and the intelligent use of means by an unconscious entity is a thing paradoxical in itself and unsupported by an atom of proof; indeed the wider knowledge of the Universe attainable to Yoga actually does reveal such a Universal Intelligence everywhere at work.

Brahman, then, is Consciousness, and this once conceded, it follows that He must be in His transcendental reality Absolute Consciousness. His Consciousness is from itself and of itself like His existence, because there is nothing separate and other than Him; not only so but it does not consist in the knowledge of one part of Himself by another, or of His parts by His whole, since

His transcendental existence is one and simple, without parts. His consciousness therefore does not proceed by the same laws as our consciousness, does not proceed by differentiating subject from object, knower from known, but simply *is*, by its own right of pure and unqualified existence, eternally and illimitably, in a way impure and qualified existences cannot conceive.

The Supreme is, finally, Pure Ecstasy, Absolute Bliss, ÂNANDA. Now just as SAT and CHIT are the same, so are SAT and CHIT not different from ÂNANDA; just as Existence is Consciousness and cannot be separated from Consciousness, so Conscious Existence is Bliss and cannot be separated from Bliss. I think we feel this even in the very finite existence and cramped consciousness of life on the material plane. Conscious existence at least cannot endure without pleasure; even in the most miserable sentient being there must be pleasure in existence though it appear small as a grain of mustard seed; blank absolute misery entails suicide and annihilation as its necessary and immediate consequence. The will to live, — the desire of conscious existence and the instinct of self-preservation, — is no mere teleological arrangement of Nature with a particular end before it, but is fundamental and independent of end or object; it is merely a body and form to that pleasure of existence which is essential and eternal; and it cannot be forced to give way to anything but that will to live *more* fully and widely which is the source on one side of all personal ambition and aspiration, on the other of all love, self-sacrifice and self-conquest. Even suicide is merely a frenzied revolt against limitation, a revolt not the less significant because it is without knowledge. The pleasure of existence can consent to merge only in the greater pleasure of a widened existence, and religion, the aspiration towards God, is simply the fulfilment of this eternal elemental force, its desire to merge its separate & limited joy in the sheer bliss of infinite existence. The Will to live individually embodies the pleasure of individual existence which is the outer phenomenal self of all creatures; but the will to live infinitely can only proceed straight from the transcendent, ultimate Spirit in us which is our real Self; and it is this that availeth towards immortality. Brahman, then, being infinity of conscious existence, is also infinite bliss. And the bliss of Brahman is necessarily absolute both in its nature and as to its object. Any mixture or coexistence with pain would imply a cause of pain either the same or other than the cause of bliss, with the immediate admission of division, struggle, opposition, of something inharmonious and self-annulling in Brahman; but division and opposition which depend upon relation cannot exist in the unrelated Absolute. Pain is, properly considered, the result of limitation. When the desires and impulses are limited in their satisfaction or the matter, physical or mental, on which they act is checked, pressed inward, divided or pulled apart by something alien to itself, then only can pain arise. Where there is no limitation, there can be no pain. The Bliss of Brahman is therefore absolute in its nature.

It is no less absolute with regard to its object; for the subject and object are the same. It is inherent in His own existence and consciousness and cannot possibly have any cause within or without Him who alone Is and Is without parts or division. Some would have us believe that a self-existent bliss is impossible; bliss, like pain, needs an object or cause different from the subject and therefore depends on limitation. Yet even in this material or waking world any considerable and deep experience will show us that there is a pleasure which is independent of surroundings and does not rely for its sustenance on temporary or external objects. The pleasure that depends on others is turbid, precarious and marred by the certainty of diminution and loss; it is only as one withdraws deeper and deeper into oneself that one comes nearer and nearer to the peace that passeth understanding. An equally significant fact is to be found in the phenomena of satiety; of which this is the governing law that the less limited and the more subjective the field of pleasure, the farther is it removed from the reach of satiety and disgust. The body is rapidly sated with pleasure; the emotions, less limited and more subjective, can take in a much deeper draught of joy; the mind, still wider and more capable of internality, has a yet profounder gulp and untiring faculty of assimilation; the pleasures of the intellect and higher understanding, where we move in a very rare and wide atmosphere, seldom pall and, even then, soon repair themselves; while the infinite spirit, the acme of our subjectiveness, knows not any disgust of spiritual ecstasy and will be content with nothing short of infinity in its bliss. The logical culmination of this ascending series is the transcendent and absolute Parabrahman whose bliss is endless, self-existent and pure.

This then is the Trinity of the Upanishads, Absolute Existence; which is *therefore* Absolute Consciousness; which is therefore Absolute Bliss.

And then the second Trinity SATYAM JNANAM ANANTAM. This Trinity is not different from the first but merely its objective expression. Brahman is *Satyam*, Truth or Reality because Truth or Reality is merely the subjective idea of existence viewed objectively. Only that which fundamentally exists is real and true, and Brahman being absolute existence is also absolute truth and reality. All other things are only relatively real, not indeed false in every sense since they are appearances of a Reality, but impermanent and therefore not in themselves ultimately true.

Brahman is also JNÂNAM, Knowledge; for Knowledge is merely the subjective idea of consciousness viewed objectively. The word *Jnâna* as a philosophic term has an especial connotation. It is distinguished from *samjnâna* which is awareness by contact; from *âjnâna* which is perception by receptive and central Will and implies a command from the brain; from *prajnâna* which is Wisdom, teleological will or knowledge with a purpose; and from *vijnâna* or knowledge by discrimination. *Jnâna* is knowledge direct and without the use of a medium. Brahman is absolute *Jnâna*, direct & self-existent, without beginning, middle or end, in which the Knower is also the Knowledge and the Known.

Finally, Brahman is ANANTAM, Endlessness, including all kinds of Infinity. His Infinity is of course involved in His absolute existence and consciousness, but it arises directly from His absolute bliss, since bliss, as we have seen, consists objectively in the absence of limitation. Infinity therefore is merely the subjective idea of bliss viewed objectively. It may be otherwise expressed by the word Freedom or by the word Immortality. All phenomenal things are bound by laws and limitations imposed by the triple idea of Time, Space and Causality; in Brahman alone there is absolute Freedom; for He has no beginning, middle or end in Time or Space nor, being immutable, in Causality. Regarded from the point of view of Time, Brahman is Eternity or Immortality, regarded from the point of view of Space He is Infinity or Universality, regarded from the point of view of Causality He is absolute Freedom. In one word He is ANANTAM, Endlessness, Absence of Limitation.

Chapter V

Maya: the Principle of Phenomenal Existence

Brahman then, let us suppose, has projected in Itself this luminous Shadow of Itself and has in the act (speaking always in the language of finite beings with its perpetual taint of Time, Space & Causality) begun to envisage Itself and consider Its essentialities in the light of attributes. He who is Existence, Consciousness, Bliss envisages Himself as existent, conscious, blissful. From that moment phenomenal manifestation becomes inevitable; the Unqualified chooses to regard Himself as qualified. Once this fundamental condition is granted, everything else follows by the rigorous logic of evolution; it is the one postulate which Vedanta demands. For this postulate once granted, we can see how the Absolute when it projects in itself this luminous Shadow called the Parabrahman, prepares the way for and as it were necessitates the evolution of this manifest world, — by bringing into play the great fundamental principle of Maya or Illusion. Under the play of that one principle translating itself into motion, the great transformation spoken of by the Upanishad becomes possible, — the One becomes the Many.

(But this one fundamental postulate is not easily conceded. The question which will at once spring up armed and gigantic in the European mind is the teleological objection, Why? All action implies a purpose; with what purpose did Brahman regard Himself as qualified? All Evolution is prompted by a desire, implies development, moves to an intelligible goal. What did Brahman who, being Absolute, is self-sufficing, desire, of what development did He stand in need or to what goal does He move? This is, from the teleological standpoint, the great crux of any theory of the Universe which tries to start from an essential and original Unity; a gulf is left which the intellect finds it impossible to bridge. Certain philosophies do indeed attempt to bridge it by a teleological explanation. The Absolute One, it is argued, passes through the cycle of manifestation, because He then returns to His original unity *enriched* with a new store of experiences and impressions, richer in love, richer in knowledge, richer in deed. It is truly amazing that any minds should be found which can seriously flatter themselves with the serene illusion that this is philosophy. Anything more unphilosophical, more vicious in reasoning cannot be imagined. When the Veda, speaking not of the Absolute but of Brahman Hiranyagarbha, says that He was alone and grew afraid of His loneliness, it passes, as a daring poetical fancy; and this too might pass as a poetical fancy, but not as serious reasoning. It is no more than an unreasoning recoil from the European idea of absolute, impersonal Unity as a blank and empty Negation. To avoid this appalling conclusion, an Unity is imagined which can be at the same time, not phenomenally but in its ultimate reality, manifold, teeming with myriad memories. It is difficult to understand the precise argumentation of the idea, whether the One when He has reentered His unity, preserves His experiences in detail or in the mass, say, as a pulp or essence. But at any rate several radical incoherences are in its conception. The Absolute is imaged as a thing incomplete and awaking to a sense of Its incompleteness which It proceeds in a business-like way to remedy; subject therefore to Desire and subject also to Time in which It is now contained! As to the source whence these new impressions are derived which complete the incompleteness of Brahman, that is a still greater mystery. If it was out of Himself, then it was latent in Him, already existing unknown to Himself.

One therefore presumes He produced in Himself, since there was no other place to produce them from, things which had no existence previously but now are; that which was not, became; out of nothing, something arose. This is not philosophy but theology; not reasoning, but faith. As faith it might pass; that God is omnipotent and can therefore literally create something out of nothing, is a dogma which one is at liberty to believe or reject, but it is outside the sphere of reasoning.)

There seems at first to be a fatal objection to the concession of this postulate; it seems really to evade the fundamental question of the problem of Existence or merely carry the beginning of the problem two steps farther back. For the great crux of the Universe is precisely the difficulty of understanding How and Why the One became Many, and we do not get rid of the difficulty by saying that it proceeds from the Unqualified willing to regard Himself as qualified. Even if the question How were satisfactorily met by the theory of Maya, the Why of the whole process remains. The goal of Evolution may have been determined, — it is, let us concede, the return of the Infinite upon Itself through the cycle of manifestation; but the beginning of Evolution is not accounted for, its utility is not made manifest. Why did the Absolute turn His face towards Evolution? There seems to be no possible answer to this inquiry; it is impossible to suggest any teleological reason why the Unqualified should will to look on Himself as qualified and so set the wheel of Evolution rolling, — at any rate any reason which would not be hopelessly at variance with the essential meaning of Absoluteness; and it is only an unphilosophic or imperfectly philosophic mind which can imagine that it has succeeded in the attempt. But the impossibility does not vitiate the theory of Maya; for the Vedantist parries this question of the Why with an unanswerable retort. The question itself, he says, as directed to the Brahman, is inadmissible and an impertinence. He, being Absolute, is in His very nature beyond Causality on which all ideas of need, utility, purpose depend, and to suppose purpose in Him is to question His transcendent and absolute nature: That which is beyond causality, has no need to act on a purpose. To catechise the Mighty Infinite as to why It chose to veil Its infinity in Maya, or to insist that the Universe shall choose between being utilitarian or not being at all, is absurd; it betrays a want of perfect intellectual lucidity. The question Why simply cannot arise.

But even when the question of utility is set aside, the intelligibility of the process is not established. The Unqualified willing to regard Himself as qualified is, you say, His Maya. But what is the nature of the process, intellectual or volitional, and how can an intellectual or volitional process be consistently attributed to the Absolute? — on this head at least one expects intellectual satisfaction. But the Vedantist strenuously denies the legitimacy of the expectation. If the "Will to regard" were put forward as a literal statement of a definable fact and its terms as philosophically precise, then the expectation would be justifiable. But the terms are avowedly poetical and therefore logically inadequate; they were merely intended to present the fact of Maya to the intellect in the imperfect and totally inadequate manner which is alone possible to finite speech and thought in dealing with the infinite. No intellectual or volitional process as we conceive will and intellect has really taken place. What then has happened? What is Maya? How came it into existence?

The Vedanta answers this question with its usual uncompromising candour and imperturbable clearness of thought; — we cannot tell, it says, for we do not and cannot know; at least we cannot intelligibly define; and this for the simple reason that the birth of Maya, if it had any birth, took place on the other side of phenomena, before the origin of Time, Space and Causality; and is therefore not cognizable by the intellect which can only think in terms of Time, Space and Causality. A little reflection will show that the existence of Maya is necessarily involved even in the casting of the luminous shadow called Parabrahman. A thing so far removed in the dark backward and abysm before Time, a state, force or process (call it what we will) operating directly in the Absolute Who is but cannot be thought of, may be perceived as a fact, but cannot be explained or defined. We say therefore that Maya is a thing *anirdeshyam*, impossible to define, of which we cannot say that it is, — for it is Illusion, —

and we cannot say that it is not, — for it is the Mother of the Universe; we can only infer that it is a something inherent in the being of Brahman and must therefore be not born but eternal, not in Time, but out of Time. So much arises from our premises; more it would be dishonest to pretend to know.

Still Maya is no mere assumption or its existence unprovable! Vedanta is prepared to prove that Maya is; prepared to show *what* it is, not ultimately but as involved in Parabrahman and manifested in the Universe; prepared to describe *how* it set about the work of Evolution, prepared to present Maya in terms of the intellect as a perfectly possible explanation of the entire order of the Universe; prepared even to contend that it is the only explanation perfectly consistent with the nature of being and the recognized bases of scientific and philosophical truth. It is only not prepared to represent the ultimate infinite nature and origin of Maya in precise terms comprehensible to finite mind; for to attempt philosophical impossibilities constitutes an intellectual pastime in which the Vedantist is too much attached to clear thinking to indulge.

What then is Maya? It is, intellectually envisaged, a subjective necessity involved in the very nature of Parabrahman. We have seen that Parabrahman is visible to us in the form of three subjective conceptions with three corresponding objective conceptions, which are the essentialities of His being. But Parabrahman is the Brahman as envisaged by the individual self in the act of returning to its source; Brahman externalized by His own will in the form of Maya is looking at Himself with the curtains of Maya half-lifted but not yet quite thrown back. The forms of Maya have disappeared, but the essentiality stands behind the returning Self at the entrance of the porch, and it is only when he reaches the inner end of the porch that he passes utterly out of the control of Maya. And the essentiality of Maya is to resolve Existence, Consciousness and Bliss which are really one, into three, the Unity appearing as a Trinity and the single Essentiality immediately breaking up into manifold properties or attributes. The Absolute Brahman at the inner entrance is the bright triune Parabrahman, absolute also, but cognizable; at the threshold of the porch He is Parabrahman envisaging Maya, and the next step carries Him into Maya, where Duality begins, Purusha differentiates from Prakriti, Spirit from Matter, Force from Energy, Ego from Non-Ego; and as the descent into phenomena deepens, single Purusha differentiates itself into multitudinous receptacles, single Prakriti into innumerable forms. This is the law of Maya.

But the first step, speaking in the terms of pure intellect, is the envisaging of the Essentiality as possessing Its three subjective and three objective properties, — Existence; Consciousness; Bliss: Truth; Knowledge; Infinity. The moment this happens, by inevitable necessity, the opposite attributes, Nothingness, Non-Sentience, Pain, present themselves as inseparable shadows of the three substances, and with them come the objective triad, Falsehood, Ignorance, Limitation; Limitation necessitates Divisibility, Divisibility necessitates Time and Space; Time and Space necessitate Causality; Causality, the source from which definite phenomena arise, necessitates Change. All the fundamental laws of Duality have sprung into being, necessitated in a moment by the appearance of Saguna Brahman, the Unqualified Infinite become Qualified. They do not really or ultimately exist, because they are inconsistent with the absolute nature of Parabrahman, for even in the sphere of phenomena we can rise to the truth that annihilation is an illusion and only form is destroyed; nothingness is an impossibility, and the Eternal cannot perish; nor can He become non-sentient in whose being sentience and non-sentience are one; nor can He feel pain who is infinite and without limitation. Yet these things, which we know cannot exist, must be conceived and therefore have phenomenally an existence and a reality in impermanence. For this is the paradox of Maya and her works that we cannot say they exist, because they are in reality impossible, and we cannot say they do not exist, because we must conceive them subjectively and, knowledge being now turned outward, envisage them objectively.

Surely this is to land ourselves in a metaphysical morass! But the key of the tangle is always in our hands; — it is to remember that Parabrahman is Himself only the aspect of the indefinable Absolute who is beyond Science and Nescience, Existence and Non-existence, Limitation and Infinity, and His sixfold attributes are not really six but one, not really attributes of Brahman, but in their unity Brahman Himself. It is only when we conceive of them as attributes that we are driven to regard Annihilation, Non-sentience and Limitation and their correspondings subjective or objective, as realities. But we are driven so to conceive them by something datelessly inherent in the infinite Will to live, in Brahman Himself. To leave for a moment the difficult language of metaphysics which on this dizzy verge of infinity, eludes and bewilders our giddy understanding and to use the trenchant symbolic style of the Upanishads, Parabrahman is the luminous shadow of the Absolute projected in Itself by Itself, and Maya is similarly the dark shadow projected by the Absolute in Parabrahman; both are real because eternal, but sheer reality is neither the light nor the darkness but the Thing-in-itself which they not merely like phenomena represent, but which in an inexplicable way they are. This, then, is Maya in its subjective relation to Parabrahman.

In phenomena Maya becomes objectivised in a hundred elusive forms, amid whose complex variety we long strive vainly to find the one supreme clue. The old thinkers long followed various of the main threads, but none led them to the mysterious starting point of her motions. "Then" says the Svetasvatara "they followed after concentration of Yoga and saw the Might of the Spirit of the Lord hidden deep in the modes of working of its own nature;" *Devatmashakti*, the Energy of the Divine Self, Parabrahman, is Maya; and it is in another passage stated to have two sides, obverse & reverse, Vidya and Avidya, Science and Nescience. Nescience eternally tends to envelop Science, Science eternally tends to displace Nescience. Avidya or Nescience is Parabrahman's power of creating illusions or images, things which seem but are not in themselves; Vidya or Science is His power of shaking off His own imaginations and returning upon His real and eternal Self. The action and reaction of these two great Energies doing work upon each other is the secret of Universal activity. The power of Nescience is evident on every plane of existence; for the whole Universe is a series of images. The sun rises up in the morning, mounts into the cusp of the blue Heavens and descends at evening trailing behind it clouds of glory as it disappears. Who could doubt this irrefragable, overwhelmingly evidenced fact? Every day, through myriads of years, the eyes of millions of men all over the world have borne concurrent and unvarying testimony to the truth of these splendid voyagings. Than such universal ocular testimony, what evidence can be more conclusive? Yet it all turns out to be an image created by Nescience in the field of vision. Science comes & undeterred by prison & the stake tells us that the sun never voyages through our heavens, is indeed millions of miles from our heavens, and it is we who move round the Sun, not the Sun round us. Nay those Heavens themselves, the blue firmament into which poetry and religion have read so much beauty and wonder, is itself only an *image*, in which Nescience represents our atmosphere to us in the field of vision. The light too which streams upon us from our Sun and seems to us to fill Space turns out to be no more than an image. Science now freely permitted to multiply her amazing paradoxes, forces us at last to believe that it is only motion of matter affecting us at a certain pitch of vibration with that particular impression on the brain. And so she goes on resolving all things into mere images of the great cosmic ether which alone is. Of such unsubstantialities is this marvellous fabric of visible things created! Nay, it would even appear that the more unsubstantial a thing seems, the nearer it is to ultimate reality. This, which Science proves, says the Vedantist, is precisely what is meant by Maya.

Never dream, however, that Science will end here and that we have come to the last of her unveilings. She will yet go on and tell us that the cosmic ether itself is only an image, that this universe of sensible things and things inferable from sense is only a selection of translations from a far vaster universe of forms built out of subtler matter than our senses can either show or imply to us. And when she has entered into that subtler world with fit instruments of observation and analysis, that too she will relentlessly resolve into mere images of the subtler ether out of which it is born. Behind that subtler universe also there looms a profounder and vaster, but simpler state of existence where there is only the undetermined universality of things as yet involved in their causes. Here Science must come to her latest dealings with matter and show us that this indeterminate universality of things is after all only an image of something in our own self. Meanwhile with that very self she is busy, continually and potently trying to persuade us that all which we believe to be ourselves, all in which our Nescience would have us contentedly dwell, is mere imagery and form. The animal in us insists that this body is the real Self and the satisfaction of its needs our primal duty; but Science (of whom Prof. Haeckel's Riddle of the Universe is not the concluding utterance) bids us beware of identifying our Self with a mere mass of primitive animal forms associated together by an aggregating nucleus of vital impulses; this surely is not the reality of Shakespeare & Newton, Buddha & St Francis! Then in those vital impulses we seek the bedrock of our being. But these too Science resolves into a delusion or image created by Nescience; for in reality these vital impulses have no existence by themselves but are merely the link established between that material aggregation of animal forms and something within us which we call Mind. Mind too she will not permit us long to mistake for anything more than an image created by the interaction of sensations and response to sensations between the material aggregation of the body and something that governs and informs the material system. This governing power in its action upon mind reveals itself in the discriminating, selecting, ordering and purposeful entity called by Vedanta the Buddhi, of which reason is only one aspect, intellect only one image. Buddhi also turns out eventually to be no entity, only an image, and Science must end by showing us that body, vitality, mind, buddhi are all images of what Philosophy calls Ananda, the pleasure of existence or Will to live; and she reveals to us at last that although this Will divides itself into innumerable forms which represent themselves as individual selves, yet all these are images of one great Cosmic Will to live, just as all material forms are merely images of one great undifferentiated Universality of cosmic matter, causal ether, if we so choose to describe it. That Will is Purusha, that Universality is Prakriti; and both are but images of Parabrahman.

So, very briefly and inadequately stated in some of its main principles, runs the Vedantic theory of Maya, for which analytic Science is, without quite knowing it, multiplying a stupendous mass of evidence. Every fresh certainty which this Science adds, swells the mass, and it is only where she is incomplete and therefore should be agnostic, that Vedanta finds no assistance from her analysis. The completion of Science means the final conquest over Nescience and the unveiling of Maya.

Chapter VI

Maya; the Energy of the Absolute

Maya then is the fundamental fact in the Universe, her dualistic system of balanced pairs of opposites is a necessity of intellectual conception; but the possibility of her existence as an inherent energy in the Absolute, outside phenomena, has yet to be established. So long as Science is incomplete and Yoga a secret discipline for the few, the insistent questions of the metaphysician can never be ignored, nor his method grow obsolete. The confident and even arrogant attempt of experimental Science to monopolise the kingdom of Mind, to the exclusion of the metaphysical and all other methods, was a rash and premature aggression, — rash because premature; successful at first its victorious usurping onrush is beginning to stagger and fail, even to lose hold on positions once thought to be permanently secured. The slow resurgence of metaphysics has already begun. Certainly, no metaphysic can be admissible which does not take count of the standards and undoubted results of Science; but until experimental analysis has solved the whole mystery of the Universe, not by speculation through logic (a method stolen from metaphysics with which Science has no business) but by experimental proof and hypotheses checked & confirmed by experimental proof, leaving no phenomenon unaccounted for and no fact ignored, — until then metaphysics must reign where analytic experiment leaves a void. Vedanta, though it bases itself chiefly on the subjective experimental methods of Yoga and admits no metaphysical hypothesis as valid which is not in agreement with its results, is yet willing to submit its own conclusions to the tests of metaphysical logic. The Vedantic Yogin shrinks at present, because of certain moral scruples, from divulging his arcana to the crowd, but he recognises that so long as he refuses, he has no right to evade the inquisition of the metaphysical logician. Atharvan & Svetasvatara having spoken, Shankara and Ramanuja must be allowed their arena of verbal discussion.

The metaphysical question involved turns upon the nature of Avidya, Nescience, and its possibility in Parabrahman who is, after all, absolute, — Absolute Consciousness and therefore Absolute Knowledge. It is not sound to say that Parabrahman envisaging Maya, *becomes* capable of Avidya; for envisagement of Maya is simply a metaphorical expression for Avidya itself. Neither can the Vedantist take refuge in the theologian's evasion of reason by an appeal to lawless Omnipotence, to the Credo quia Impossibile. The Eternal is undoubtedly in His own nature free and unlimited, but, as undoubtedly, He has deliberately bound Himself in His relation to phenomena by certain fundamental principles; He has willed that certain things shall not and cannot be, and to use a human parallel He is like a King who having promulgated a certain code is as much bound by his own laws as the meanest subject, or like a poet whose imaginations in themselves free, are limited by laws the moment they begin to take shape. We may say, theoretically, that God being Omnipotent can create something out of nothing, but so long as no single clear instance can be given of a something created out of nothing, the rule of ex nihilo nihil fit remains an universal and fundamental law and to suppose that God has based the Universe on a violation of a fundamental law of the Universe, is to kick Reason out of the house and slam the door against her return. Similarly, if the coexistence of Avidya with Vidya in the same field and as it were interpenetrating each other, is against the Law, it does by that very fact become impossible and the theory of Maya will then be proved an error; no appeal to Omnipotence will save it.

The objection to Avidya may be stated thus that Absolute Knowledge cannot at the same time not know, cannot imagine a thing to be real which is not real; for such imagination involves an element of self-deception, and self-deception is not possible in the Absolute. But is it really a law of consciousness — for there lies the point — that things can in no sense be at the same time real and unreal, that you cannot by any possibility imagine things to be real which *at the same time* you know perfectly well to be unreal? The dualist objector may contend that this impossibility is a law of consciousness. The Vedantin replies at once, Negatur, your statement is refuted by a host of examples; it is inconsistent with universal experience. The most utter and avowed unrealities can be and are firmly imagined as realities, seen as realities, sensed as realities, conceived as realities without the mind for a moment admitting that they are indeed real. The mirage of the desert we know after a time to be unreal, but even then we see & firmly image it as a reality, admire the green beauty of those trees and pant for the cool shining delight of those waters. We see dreams and dreams are unrealities, and yet some of them at least are at the same time not positive unrealities, for they image, and sometimes very exactly, events which have happened, are happening or will happen in the future. We see the juggler throw a rope in the air, climb up it, kill the boy who has preceded him and throw down his bleeding limbs piecemeal on the earth; every detail and circumstance of the unreal event corresponding to the event as it would have been, were it real; we do not imagine it to be unreal while it lasts, and we cannot so imagine it; for the visualisation is too clear & consistent, the feelings it awakes in us are too vivid, and yet all the time we perfectly well know that no such thing is happening. Instances of this sort are not easily numbered.

But these are distant, unimmediate things, and for some of them the evidence may not be considered ample. Let us come nearer to our daily life. We see a stone and we note its properties of solidity and immobility, nor can we by any persuasion be induced to imagine it as anything else but solid and immobile; and we are right, for it is both: and yet we know that its immobility and solidity are not real, that it is, and to a vision sensible of the infinitesimal would appear, a world of the most active motion, of myriads of atoms *with spaces between them*. Again, if there is one thing that is real to me, it is this, that I am vertical and upright, whatever the people at the Antipodes may be and that I walk in all directions horizontally along the earth; and yet alas! I know that I am in reality not vertical but nearer the horizontal, walking often vertically up and down the earth, like a fly on the wall. I know it perfectly, yet if I were constantly to translate my knowledge into imagination, a padded room in Bedlam would soon be the only place for me. This is indeed the singular and amazing law of our consciousness that it is perfectly capable of holding two contradictory conceptions at the same time and with equal strength. We accept the knowledge which Science places at our disposal, but we perpetually act upon the images which Nescience creates. I know that the sun does not rise or set, does not move round the earth, does not sail through the heavens marking the time of day as it proceeds, but in my daily life I act precisely on the supposition that this unreality really happens; I hourly and momently conceive it and firmly image it as real and sometimes regulate on it my every movement. The eternal belligerents, Science and Nescience, have come in this matter of the sun's motion, as in so many others, to a working compromise. To me as an untrammelled Will to live who by the subtle intellectual part of me, can wander through Eternity and place myself as a spectator in the centre of the sun or even outside the material Universe the better to observe its motions, the phenomenon of the earth's movement round the sun is the reality, and even Nescience consents that I shall work on it as an acknowledged fact in the operations of pure intellect; but to me as a trammelled body unable to leave the earth and bound down in my daily life to the ministry of my senses, the phenomenon of the sun's movement round the earth is the reality and to translate my intellectual knowledge into the stuff of my daily imaginations would be intolerably inconvenient; it would take my secure resting-place, the earth, from under my feet and make havoc of my life in sensation; even Science therefore consents that I shall work on the evidence of my senses as an acknowledged fact in my material life of earth-bounded existence. In this duplicity of standpoint we see as in a glass darkly some image of the manner in which the Absolute wills to be phenomenally conditioned; at once knows perfectly what is, yet chooses to image what is not, having infinite Science, yet makes room for self-limiting Nescience. It is not necessary to labour the point, or to range through all scientific knowledge for instances; in the light of modern knowledge the objection to the coexistence of Vidya & Avidya cannot stand; it is a perpetual fact in the daily economy of Consciousness.

Yes, it may be argued, but this does not establish it as anything more than a possibility in regard to the Absolute. A state of things true throughout the range of phenomenal existence, may cease to operate at the point where phenomena themselves cease. The possibility, however, once granted, Vedanta is entitled to put forward Maya as the one successful explanation yet advanced of this manifold existence; first, because Maya does explain the whole of existence metaphysically and is at the same time an universal, scientifically observable fact ranging through the whole Universe and fundamentally present in every operation of Consciousness; secondly, because it does transcend phenomena as well as inform them, it has its absolute as well as its conditioned state and is therefore not only possible in the Absolute but must be the Absolute Himself in manifestation; and thirdly, because no other possible explanation can logically contain *both* the truth of sheer transcendent Absoluteness of the Brahman and the palpable, imperative existence of the phenomenal Universe.[4] Illogical theories, theories which part company with reason, theories which, instead of basing themselves in observed laws, take their stand in the void, may be had in plenty. Maya is no theory but a fact; no mere result of logic or speculation, but of careful observation, and yet unassailable by logic and unsurpassable by speculation.

---

[4] Of course I am not prepared, in these limits, to develop the final argument; that would imply a detailed examination of all metaphysical systems, which would be in itself the labour of a lifetime.

One of the most remarkable manifestations of Avidya in human consciousness, presenting in its nature and laws of working a close analogy to its parent is the power of imagination, — the power of bodying forth images which may either be reabsorbed into the individual consciousness which gave them forth or outlast it. Of the latter kind poetical creation is a salient example. At a certain time in a certain country one named Shakespeare created a new world by the force of his Avidya, his faculty of imagining what is not. That world is as real and unreal today as it was when Shakespeare created it or in more accurate Vedantic language *asrijata*, loosed it forth from the causal world within him. Within the limits of that world Iago is real to Othello, Othello to Desdemona, and all are real to any and every consciousness which can for a time abstract itself from this world [of] its self-created surroundings and enter the world of Shakespeare. We are aware of them, observe them, grow in knowledge about them, see them act, hear them speak, feel for their griefs and sorrows; and even when we return to our own world, they do not always leave us, but sometimes come with us and influence our actions. The astonishing power of poetical creation towards moulding life and history, has not yet been sufficiently observed; yet it was after all Achilles, the swift-footed son of Peleus, who thundered through Asia at the head of his legions, dragged Batis at his chariot-wheels and hurled the Iranian to his fall, — Achilles, the son of Peleus, who never lived except as an image, — nay, does not omniscient learning tell us, that even his creator never lived, or was only a haphazard assortment of poets who somehow got themselves collectively nicknamed Homer! Yet these images, which we envisage as real and confess by our words, thoughts, feelings, and sometimes even by our actions to be real, are, all the time and we know them perfectly well to be as mythical as the dream, the mirage and the juggler on his rope. There is no Othello, no Iago, no Desdemona but all these are merely varieties of name & form, not of Shakespeare, but in which Shakespeare is immanent and which still exist merely because Shakespeare is immanent in them. Nevertheless he who best succeeds in imaging forth these children of illusion, this strange harmonic Maya, is ever adjudged by us to be the best poet, Creator or Maker, even though others may link words more sweetly together or dovetail incidents more deftly. The parallel between this work of imagination and the creation of phenomena and no less between the relation of the author to his creatures and the relation of the Conditioned Brahman to His creatures is astonishingly close in most of their details no less than in their general nature. Observe for instance that in all that multitude of figures vicious & virtuous, wise and foolish, he their creator who gave them forth, their Self and reality without whom they cannot exist, is unaffected by their crimes and virtues, irresponsible and free. The Lord [*sentence left incomplete*]

What then? Is this analogy anything more than poetic fancy, or is not after all, the whole idea of Brahman and Maya itself a mere poetic fancy? Perhaps, but not more fanciful or unreal, in that case, than the Universe itself and its motions; for the principle & working of the two are identical.

Let us ask ourselves, what it is that has happened when a great work of creation takes place and how it is that Shakespeare's creatures are still living to us, now that Shakespeare himself is dead and turned to clay. Singular indeed that Shakespeare's creations should be immortal and Shakespeare himself a mere shortlived conglomeration of protoplasmic cells! We notice first that Shakespeare's dramatic creatures are only a selection or anthology from among the teeming images which peopled that wonderful mind; there were thousands of pictures in that gallery which were never produced for the admiration of the ages. This is a truth to which every creator whether he use stone or colour or words for his thought-symbols will bear emphatic testimony. There was therefore a subtler and vaster world in Shakespeare than the world we know him to have bodied forth into tangible material of literature. Secondly we note that all these imaginations already existed in Shakespeare unmanifested and unformed before they took shape and body; for certainly they did not come from outside. Shakespeare took his materials from this legend or that play, this chronicle or that history? His framework possibly, but not his creations; Hamlet did not come from the legend or the play, nor Cassius or King Henry from the history or the chronicle. No, Shakespeare contained in himself all his creatures, and therefore transcended & exceeded them; he was and is more than they or even than their sum and total; for they are merely limited manifestations of him under the conditions of time & space, and he would have been the same Shakespeare, even if we had not a scene or a line of him to know him by; only the world of imagination would have remained latent in him instead of manifest, *avyakta* instead of *vyakta*. Once manifest, his creatures are preserved immortally, not by print or manuscript, for the Veda has survived thousands of years without print or manuscript, — but, by words, shall we say? no, for words or sounds are only the physical substance, the atoms out of which their shapes are built, and can be entirely rearranged, — by translation, for example — without our losing Othello and Desdemona, just as the indwelling soul can take a new body without being necessarily changed by the transmigration. Othello and Desdemona are embodied in sounds or words, but thought is their finer and immortal substance. It is the subtler world of thought in Shakespeare from which they have been selected and bodied forth in sounds, and into the world of thought they originally proceeded from a reservoir of life deeper than thought itself, from an ocean of being which our analysis has not yet fathomed.

Now, let us translate these facts into the conceptions of Vedanta. Parabrahman self-limited in the name and form of Shakespeare, dwells deepest in him invisible to consciousness, as the unmanifest world of that something more elemental than thought (may it not be causal, elemental Will?), in which Shakespeare's imaginations lie as yet unformed and undifferentiated; then he comes to a surface of consciousness visible to Shakespeare as the inwardly manifest world of subtle matter or thought in which those imaginations take subtle thought-shapes

& throng; finally, he rises to a surface of consciousness visible to others besides Shakespeare as the outwardly manifest world, manifest in sound, in which a select number of these imaginations are revealed to universal view. These mighty images live immortally in our minds because Parabrahman in Shakespeare is the same as Parabrahman in ourselves; and because Shakespeare's thought is, therefore, water of the same etheric ocean as that which flows through our brains. Thought, in fact, is one, although to be revealed to us, it has to be bodied forth and take separate shapes in sound forms which we are accustomed to perceive and understand. Brahman-Brahma as Thought Creative in Shakespeare brings them forth, Brahman-Vishnu as Thought Preservative in us maintains them, Brahman-Rudra as Thought Destructive or Oblivion will one day destroy them; but in all these operations Brahman is one, Thought is one, even as all the Oceans are one. Shakespeare's world is in every way a parable of ours. There is, however, a distinction — Shakespeare could not body forth his images into forms palpable in gross matter either because, as other religions believe, that power is denied to man, [or] because, as Vedantism suggests, mankind has not risen as yet to that pitch of creative force.

There is one class of phenomena however in which this defect of identity between individual Imagination and universal Avidya seems to be filled up. The mind can create under certain circumstances images surviving its own dissolution or departure, which do take some kind of form in gross matter or at least matter palpable to the gross senses. For the phenomena of apparition there is an accumulating mass of evidence. Orthodox Science prefers to ignore the evidence, declines to believe that a prima facie case has been made out for investigation and shuts the gate on farther knowledge with a triple polysyllabic key, mysticism, coincidence, hallucination. Nevertheless, investigated or not, the phenomena persist in occurring! Hauntings, for example, for which there are only scattered indications in Europe, are in India, owing to the more strenuous psychical force and more subtle psychical sensitiveness of our physical organisation, fairly common. In these hauntings we have a signal instance of the triumph of imagination. In the majority of cases they are images created by dying or doomed men in their agony which survive the creator, some of them visible, some audible, some both visible and audible, and in rare cases in an unearthly, insufficient, but by no means inefficient manner, palpable. The process of their creation is in essence the same as attends the creation of poetry or the creation of the world; it is *tapas* or *tapasya*, — not penance as English scholars will strangely insist on translating it, but HEAT, a tremendous concentration of will, which sets the whole being in a flame, masses all the faculties in closed ranks and hurls them furiously on a single objective. By *tapas* the world was created; by *tapas*, says the Moondaca, creative Brahman is piled up, *chiyate*, gathered & intensified; by *tapas* the rush of inspiration is effected. This *tapas* may be on the material plane associated with purpose or entirely dissociated from purpose. In the case of intense horror or grief, fierce agony or terrible excitement on the verge of death it is totally dissociated from any material purpose, it is what would be ordinarily called involuntary, but it receives from its origin an intensity so unparalleled as to create living images of itself which remain & act long after the source has been dissolved or stilled by death. Such is the ultimate power of imagination, though at present it cannot be fully used on the material plane except in a random, fortuitous and totally unpurposed manner.

In the manner of its working, then, Imagination is a carefully executed replica of Avidya; and if other marks of her essential identity with Avidya are needed, they can be found. Both are, for instance, preponderatingly purposeless. The workings of imagination are often totally dissociated, on the material plane at least, from any intelligible purpose and though it is quite possible that the latent part of our consciousness which works below the surface, may have sometimes a purpose of which the superficial part is not aware, yet in the most ordinary workings of Imagination, an absolute purposelessness is surely evident. Certainly, if not purposelessness there is colossal waste. A few hundreds of images were selected from Shakespeare's mind for a definite artistic purpose, but the thousands that never found verbal expression, many of them with as splendid potentialities as those which did materialize in Hamlet and Macbeth seem to have risen & perished without any useful purpose. The same wastefulness is shown by Nature in her works; how many millions of lives does she not shower forth that a few may be selected for the purposes of evolution! Yet when she chooses to work economically and with set purpose, she like Imagination can become a scrupulous miser of effort and show herself possessed of a magical swiftness and sureness in shaping the means to the end. Neither Nature nor Imagination, therefore, can be supposed to be blind, random energies proceeding from an ungoverned force and teleological only by accident. Their operations are obviously guided by an Intelligence as perfectly capable, when it so wills, of purposing, planning, fitting its means to its ends, economising its materials and labour as any intelligent and careful workman in these days of science and method. We need therefore some explanation why this great universal Intelligence should not be, as a careful workman, always, not occasionally, economical of its materials and labour. Is not the truth this that Nature is not universally and in all her works teleological, that purpose is only one minor part of existence more concentrated than most and therefore more intense and triumphant, while for the greater part of her universal operation we must find another explanation than the teleological? or rather [one that] will at once contain and exceed the teleological? If it had only been Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Edison, Beethoven, Napoleon, Schopenhauer, the creators in poetry, art, science, music, life or thought, who possessed imagination, we might then have found an use for their unused imaginations in the greater preparatory richness they gave to the soil from which a few exquisite flowers were to spring. The explanation might not be a good one, little more indeed than a poetical fancy, but it could have passed for want of a better. But every human being possesses the divine faculty, more or less developed; every mind is a teeming world of imaginations; and indeed, imagination for imagination the opium-smoker's is more vivid, fertile and gorgeous than Shakespeare's. Yet hardly in one case out of a thousand are these imaginations of use to the world or anything but a practical hindrance or at best a purposeless pastime to the dreamer. Imagination is a fundamental energy of consciousness, and this marvellous, indomitable energy works on without caring whether she is put to use or misuse or no use at all; she exists merely for the sake of delight in her own existence. Here I think we touch bottom. Imagination is outside purpose, sometimes above, sometimes below it, sometimes united with it, because she is an inherent energy not of some great teleological Master-Workman, but of Ananda, the Bliss of existence or Will to live, and beyond this delight in existence she has no reason for being. In the same way Maya, the infinite creative energy which peoples the phenomenal Universe, is really some force inherent in the infinite Will to be; and it is for this reason that her operations seem so wasteful from the standpoint of utilitarian economy; for she cares nothing about utilitarianism or economy and is only obeying her fundamental impulse towards phenomenal existence, consciousness, and the pleasure of conscious existence. So far as she has a purpose, it is this, and all the teleologic element in Nature has simply this end, to find more perfect surroundings or more exquisite means or wider opportunities or a grander gust and scope for the pleasure of conscious phenomenal existence. Yet the deepest bliss is after all that which she left and to which she will return, not the broken and pain-bounded bliss of finite life, but the perfect and infinite Bliss of transcendent undivided and illimitable consciousness. She seeks for a while to find perfect bliss by finite means and in finite things, the heaven of the socialist or anarchist, the heaven of the artist, the heaven of knowledge, the heaven of thought, or a heaven in some other world; but one day she realises that great truth, “The Kingdom of Heaven is within you,” and to that after all she returns. *This* is Maya.

One metaphysical test remains to be satisfied before we can be sure that Avidya and Vidya, the outcurve and incurve of Maya, go back to something eternally existent in the Absolute and are not created by phenomenal causes. If inherent in the Absolute, Maya must culminate in conceptions that are themselves absolute, infinite and unconditioned. Vidya tapers off into infinity in the conceptions, SAT or Pure Existence, CHIT or Pure Consciousness, ANANDA or Pure Bliss; Avidya rises at her apex into ASAT, Nothingness, ACHETANAM, Non-sentience, NIRANANDAM, Blisslessness or Misery. Nothingness & Non-sentience are certainly absolute conceptions, infinite and unconditioned; but the third term of the negative Trinity gives us pause. Absolute pain, blank infinite unconditioned and unrelieved Misery is a conception which Reason shies at and Consciousness refuses, violently refuses to admit as a possibility. A cypher if you like to make metaphysical calculations with, but by itself sheer nought, nowhere discoverable as existing or capable of existence. Yet if infinite misery could be, it would in the very act of being merge into Nothingness, it would lose its name in the very moment of becoming absolute. As a metaphysical conception we may then admit Absolute Blisslessness as a valid third term of the negative Trinity, not as a real or possible state, for no one of the three is a real or possible state. The unreality comes home to us most in the third term, just as reality comes home to us most in the third term of the positive Trinity, because Bliss and its negative blisslessness appeal to us on the material plane vividly and sensibly; the others touch us more indirectly, on the psychic & causal planes. Yet the Nothingness of nothingness is taught us by Science, and the unreality of non-sentience will become clear when the nature of sentience is better understood.

It will be said that the escape from pleasure as well as pain is after all the common goal of Buddhism & Vedanta. True, escape from limited pleasure which involves pain, escape from pain which is nothing but the limitation of pleasure. Both really seek absolute absence of limitation which is not a negative condition, but a positive, infinity and its unspeakable, unmixed bliss; their escape from individuality does not lead them into nothingness, but into infinite existence, their escape from sensation does not purpose the annihilation of sentience but pure absolute consciousness as its goal. Not ASAD ACHETANAM NIRANANDAM, but SACCHIDANANDAM is the great Reality to which Jivatman rises to envisage, the TAT or sole Thing-in-itself to whom by the force of Vidya he tends ever to return.

Chapter VII

The Triple Brahman

Parabrahman is now on the way to phenomenal manifestation; the Absolute Shakespeare of Existence, the infinite *Kavi*, Thinker & Poet, is, by the mere existence of the eternal creative force Maya, about to shadow forth a world of living realities out of Himself which have yet no independent existence. He becomes phenomenally a Creator & Container of the Universe, though really He is what He ever was, absolute and unchanged. To understand why and how the Universe appears what it is, we have deliberately to abandon our scientific standpoint of transcendental knowledge and speaking the language of Nescience, represent the Absolute as limiting Itself, the One becoming the Many, the pure ultra-Spiritual unrefining Itself into the mental and material. We are like the modern astrologer who, knowing perfectly well that the earth moves round the sun, must yet persist in speaking of the Sun as moving and standing in this part of the heavens or that other, because he has to do with the relative *positions* of the Sun and planets with regard to men living in the earth and not with the ultimate astronomical realities.

From this point of view we have to begin with a dualism of the thing and its shadow, Purusha & Prakriti, commonly called spirit and matter. Properly speaking, the distinction is illusory, since there is nothing which is exclusively spirit or exclusively matter, nor can the Universe be strictly parcelled out between these; from the point of view of Reality spirit and matter are not different but the same. We may say, if we like, that the entire Universe is matter and spirit does not exist; we may say, if we like, that the entire Universe is spirit and matter does not exist. In either case we are merely multiplying words without counsel, ignoring the patent fact visible throughout the Universe that both spirit and matter exist and are indissolubly welded, precisely because they are simply one thing viewed from two sides. The distinction between them is one of the primary dualisms and a first result of the great Ignorance. Maya works out in name and form as material; Maya works out in the conceiver of name and form as spiritual. Purusha is the great principle or force whose presence is necessary to awake creative energy and send it out working into and on shapes of matter. For this reason Purusha is the name usually applied to the Conditioned Brahman in His manifestations; but it is always well to remember that the Primal Existence turned towards manifestation has a double aspect, Male and Female, positive and negative; He is the origin of the birth of things and He is the receptacle of the birth and it is to the Male aspect of Himself that the word Purusha predominatingly applies. The image often applied to these relations is that of the man casting his seed into the woman; his duty is merely to originate the seed and deposit it, but it is the woman's duty to cherish the seed, develop it, bring it forth and start it on its career of manifested life. The seed, says the Upanishad, is the self of the Male, it is spirit, and being cast into the Female, Prakriti, it becomes one with her and therefore does her no hurt; spirit takes the shaping appearance of matter and does not break up the appearances of matter, but develops under their law. The Man and the Woman, universal Adam and Eve, are really one and each is incomplete without the other, barren without the other, inactive without the other. Purusha the Male, God, is that side of the One which gives the impulse towards phenomenal existence; Prakriti the Female, Nature, is that side which is and evolves the material of phenomenal existence; both of them are therefore unborn & eternal. The Male is Purusha, he who lurks in the Wide; the Female is Prakriti, the working of the Male, and sometimes called Rayi, the universal movement emanating from the quiescent Male. Purusha is therefore imaged as the Enjoyer, Prakriti as the enjoyed; Purusha as the Witness, Prakriti as the phenomena he witnesses; Purusha as the *getter* or father of things, Prakriti as their *bearer* or mother. And there are many other images the Upanishad employs, Purusha, for instance, symbolising Himself in the Sun, the father of life, and Prakriti in the Earth, the bearer of life. It is necessary thus clearly to define Purusha from the first in order to avoid confusion in endeavouring to grasp the development of Maya as the Upanishads describe it.

Parabrahman in the course of evolving phenomena enters into three states or conditions which are called in one passage his three habitations and, by a still more suggestive figure, his three states of dream. The first condition is called *avyakta*, the state previous to manifestation, in which all things are involved, but in which nothing is expressed or imaged, the state of ideality, undifferentiated but pregnant of differentiation, just as the seed is pregnant of the bark, sap, pith, fibre, leaf, fruit and flower and all else that unites to make the conception of a tree; just as the protoplasm is pregnant of all the extraordinary variations of animal life. It is, in its objective aspect, the seed-state of things. The objective possibility, and indeed necessity of such a condition of the whole Universe, cannot be denied; for this is the invariable method of development which the operations of Nature show to us. Evolution does not mean that out of protoplasm as a material so many organisms have been created or added by an outside power, but that they have been developed out of the protoplasm; and if developed, they were already there existent, and have been manifested by some power dwelling and working in the protoplasm itself. But open up the protoplasm, as you will, you will not find in it the rudiments of the organs and organisms it will hereafter develop. So also though the protoplasm and everything else is evolved out of ether, yet no symptom of them would yield themselves up to an analytical research into ether. The organs and organisms are in the protoplasm, the leaf, flower, fruit in the seed and all forms in the ether from which they evolve, in an undifferentiated condition and therefore defy the method of analysis which is confined to the discovery of differences. This is the state called involution. So also ether itself, gross or subtle, and all that evolves from ether is involved in Avyakta; they are present but they can never be discovered there because there [they] are undifferentiated. Plato's world of ideas is a confused attempt to arrive at this condition of things, confused because it unites two incompatible things, the conditions of Avyakta and those of the next state presided over by Hiranyagarbha.

The question then arises, what is the subjective aspect of

Parabrahman in the state of Avyakta? The organs and organisms are evolved out of protoplasm and forms out of ether by a power which resides and works in them, and that power must be intelligent consciousness unmanifested; *must*, because it is obviously a power that can plan, arrange and suit means to ends; *must* because otherwise the law of subtler involving grosser cannot obtain. If matter is all, then from the point of view of matter, the gross is more real because more palpable than the subtle and unreality cannot develop reality; it is intelligent consciousness and nothing else we know of that not only has the power of containing at one and the same time the gross & the subtle, but does consistently proceed in its method of creation or evolution from vagueness to precision, from no-form to form and from simple form to complex form. If the discoveries of Science mean anything and are not a chaos, an illusion or a chimaera, they can only mean the existence of an intelligent consciousness present and working in all things. Parabrahman therefore is present subjectively even in the condition of Avyakta no less than in the other conditions as intelligent consciousness and therefore as bliss.

For the rest, we are driven to the use of metaphors, and since metaphors must be used, one will do as well as another, for none can be entirely applicable. Let us then image Avyakta as an egg, the golden egg of the Puranas, full of the waters of undifferentiated existence and divided into two halves, the upper or luminous half filled with the upper waters of subjective ideation, the lower or tenebrous half with the lower waters of objective ideation. In the upper half Purusha is concealed as the final cause of things; it is there that is formed the idea of undifferentiated, eternal, infinite, universal Spirit. In the lower half he is concealed as Prakriti, the material cause of things; it is there that is formed the idea of undifferentiated, eternal, infinite, universal matter, with the implications Time, Space and Causality involved in its infinity. It is represented mythologically by Vishnu on the causal Ocean sitting on the hood of Ananta, the infinite snake whose endless folds are Time, and are also Space and are also Causality, these three being fundamentally one, — a Trinity. In the upper half Parabrahman is still utterly Himself, but with a Janus face, one side contemplating the Absolute Reality which He *is*, the other envisaging Maya, looking on the endless procession of her works not yet as a reality, but as a phantasmagoria. In the lower half, if we may use a daring metaphor, Parabrahman forgets Himself. He is subjectively in the state corresponding to utter sleep or trance from which when a man awakes he can only realise that he was and that he was in a state of bliss resulting from the complete absence of limitation; that he was conscious in that state, follows from his realisation of blissful existence, but the consciousness is not a part of his realisation. This concealment of Consciousness is a characteristic of the seed-state of things and it is what is meant by saying that when Parabrahman enters into matter as Prakriti, He forgets Himself.

Of such a condition, the realisations of consciousness do not return to us, we can have no particular information. The Yogin passes through it on his way to the Eternal, but he hastens to this goal and does not linger in it; not only so, but absorption in this stage is greatly dreaded except as a temporary necessity; for if the soul finally leaves the body in that condition, it must recommence the cycle of evolution all over again; for it has identified itself with the seed state of things and must follow the nature of Avyakta which is to start on the motions of Evolution by the regular order of universal manifestation. This absorption is called the Prakriti laya or absorption in Prakriti. The Yogin can enter into this state of complete Nescience or Avidya and remain there for centuries, but if by any chance his body is preserved and he returns to it, he brings nothing back to the store of our knowledge on this side of Avyakta.

Parabrahman in the state of Avyakta Purusha is known as Prâjna, the Master of Prajnâ, Eternal Wisdom or Providence, for it is here that He orders and marshals before Himself like a great poet planning a wonderful masterpiece in his mind, the eternal laws of existence and the unending procession of the worlds. Vidya and Avidya are here perfectly balanced, the former still and quiescent though comprehensive, the latter not yet at active work, waiting for the command, Let there be darkness. And then the veil of darkness, Vidya seems to be in abeyance, and from the disturbance of the balance results inequality; then out of the darkness Eternal Wisdom streams forth to its task of creation and Hiranyagarbha, the Golden Child, is born.

An Incomplete Work of Vedantic Exegesis

Book II

The Nature of God

Chapter I

The view of cosmic evolution which has been set forth in the first book of this exegesis,[1] may seem deficient to the ordinary religious consciousness which is limited & enslaved by its creeds and to which its particular way of worship is a master and not a servant, because it leaves no room for a "Personal" God. The idea of a Personal God is, however, a contradiction in terms. God is Universal, he is Omnipresent, Infinite, not subject to limits. This all religions confess, but the next moment they nullify their confession by assuming in Him a Personality. The Universal cannot be personal, the Omnipresent cannot be excluded from any thing or creature in the world He universally pervades and possesses. The moment we attribute certain qualities to God, we limit Him and create a double principle in the world. Yet no religion[2]

Brahman, we have seen, is the Universal Consciousness which Is and delights in Being; impersonal, infinite, eternal, omnipresent, sole-existing, the One than whom there is no other, and all things and creatures have only a phenomenal existence [in] Brahman and by Brahman.

In the Vedantic theory of this Universe and its view of the nature of the Brahman and Its relations to the phenomena that make up this Universe, there is one initial paradox from which the whole Vedantic philosophy, religion and ethics take their start. We have seen that in existence as we see it there is Something that is eternal, immutable and one, to which we give the name of Brahman, amidst an infinite deal that is transient, mutable and multifold. Brahman as the eternal, immutable and one, is not manifest but latent; It supports, contains and pervades the changing & unstable Universe and gives it eternity as a whole in spite [of the] transience of its parts, unity as a whole in spite of the multiplicity of its parts, immutability as a whole in spite of the mutability of its parts. Without It the persistence of the Universe would be inexplicable, but itself is not visible, nameable or definable except as Sacchidanandam, absolute and therefore unnameable and indefinable self-existence, self-awareness, self-bliss. But when we ask what is it then which is mutable, transient, multiple, and whether this is something other than and different from Brahman, we get the reply that this also is Brahman and that there can be nothing other than Brahman, because Brahman is the One without a second, ekamevadwitiyam. This one, eternal, immutable became the many who are transient and mutable, but this becoming is not real, only phenomenal. Just as all objects & substances are phenomena of and in the single, eternal & unchanging ether, so are all existences animate or inanimate, corporeal, psychical or spiritual phenomena of and in Brahman. This phenomenal change of the One into the Many, the Eternal into the perishable, the Immutable into the everchanging, is a supreme paradox but a paradox which all scientific investigation shows to be the one fundamental fact of the Universe. Science considers the One eternal & permanent reality to be eternal Matter, Vedanta for reasons already stated holds it to be eternal Consciousness of which Spirit-Matter are in phenomena the positive-negative aspects. This Brahman, this Sacchidanandam, this eternal Consciousness unknowable, unnameable and indefinable, which reason cannot analyse, nor imagination put into any shape, nor the mind and senses draw within their jurisdiction, is the Transcendent Reality which alone truly exists. The sole existence of this Turiya Brahman or Transcendent Eternal Consciousness is the basis of the Adwaita philosophy.

---

[1] *This first book was not written or has not survived. — Ed.*

[2] *After this incomplete sentence, the rest of the notebook page was left blank. — Ed.*

But where in all this is there any room for religion, for the spirit of man, for any idea of God? Who is the Lord, Isha, Maheshwar, Vishnu, Rudra, Indra, the Lord of the Illusion, the Ruler, the Mighty One of which all the Upanishads speak? Who is this triple Prajna-Hiranyagarbha-Virat? Who is this twofold Purusha-Prakriti, God & Nature, without which the existence of the phenomenal world and consciousness in matter would not be intelligible or conceivable? To whom does the Bhakti of the Bhakta, to whom do the works of the Karmayogin direct themselves? Why and Whom do men worship? What is it to which the human self rises in Yoga? The answer is that this also is Brahman, — Brahman not in His absolute Self but in relation to the infinite play of multiplicity, mobility, mortality which He has phenomenally created for His own delight on the surface of His really eternal immutable & single existence. Above is the eternal surge, the innumerable laughters of the million-crested, multitudinous, ever-marching, ever-shifting wilderness of waves; below is the silent, motionless, unchanging rest of the Ocean's immeasurable and unvisited depths. The rest and immobility is the Sea, and the mutable stir and motion of the waves is also the Sea, and as the Sea is to its waves, so is Brahman to His creation. What is the relation of the Sea of Brahman to its waves? Brahman is the One Self and all the rest, innumerable souls of creatures and innumerable forms of things are His Maya, illusions which cannot be eternal and therefore cannot be true, because there is only One Eternal; the One Self is real, all else is unreal and ends. This is Adwaita. But even though Brahman be the One Self, He has become Many by His own Iccha or Will and the exercise of His Will is not for a moment or limited by time & space or subject to fatigue, but for ever. He is eternal and therefore His Iccha is eternal and the Many Selves which live in Him by His Iccha are eternal and do not perish, for they also being really Brahman the Self are indistinguishable from Him in nature and though their bodies, mind-forms and all else may perish, cannot themselves perish. He may draw them into Himself in utter communion, but He can also release them again into separate communion, and this is actually what happens. All else is transient and changes & passes, but the Self that is One and the Self that is Many are both of them real and eternal; and still they are One Self. This is Visishtadwaita. This eternity of the One Self and eternity of the Many-Selves shows that both are real without beginning and without end and the difference between them is therefore without beginning and end. The One is true and the Many are true, and the One is not and cannot be the Many, though the Many live in and for the One. This is Dwaita.

The only tests to which we can subject these three interpretations of the relation between the One and the Many, all of which are equally logical and therefore equally valid to the reason, are the statements of the Upanishads and the Gita and the experiences of Yoga when the Jivatman or individual Self is in direct communion with the Paramatman or Supreme Universal Self and aware therefore of its real relations to Him. The supreme experience of Yoga is undoubtedly the state of complete identification in Sacchidananda in which the Jivatman becomes purely self-existent, self-aware and self-joyous and phenomenal existence no longer is. Adwaita, therefore, is true according to the experience of Yoga. On the other hand the Jivatman can come out of this state and return into phenomenal existence, and there is also another Yogic state in which it is doubly conscious of its reality apart from the world and its reality in the world or can see the Universe at will in itself or outside itself possessing and enjoying it as an omniscient, omnipotent, all-seeing, all-hearing, all-conscious Being; Visishtadwaita therefore is also true. Finally, there is the state in which the Jivatman is entirely aware only of itself and the Paramatman and lives in a state of exalted love and adoration of the Eternal Being; and without this state[3]

To put the individual Self in intimate relation with the Eternal is the aim of Hindu life, its religion, its polity, its ethics. Morality is not for its own sake, nor for the pleasures of virtue, nor for any reward here or in another life, nor for the sake of society; these are false aims and false sanctions. Its true aim is a preparation and purification of the soul to fit it for the presence of God. The sense-obscured, limited and desire-driven individual self must raise itself out of the dark pit of sense-obsession into the clear air of the spirit, must disembarrass itself of servile bondage to bodily, emotional & intellectual selfishness and assume the freedom & royalty of universal love and beneficence, must expand itself from the narrow, petty, inefficient ego till it becomes commensurate with the infinite, all-powerful, omnipresent Self of All; then is its aim of existence attained, then is its pilgrimage ended. This may be done by realising the Eternal in oneself by knowledge, by realising oneself in Him by Love as God the Beloved, or by realising Him as the Lord of all in His universe and all its creatures by works. This realisation is the true crown of any ethical system. For whether we hold the aim of morality to be the placing of oneself in harmony with eternal laws, or the fulfilment of man's nature, or the natural evolution of man in the direction of his highest faculties, Hinduism will not object but it insists that the Law with which man must put himself into relation is the Eternal in the universe, that in this permanent and stable Truth man's nature fulfils itself out of the transient seemings of his daily existence and that to this goal his evolution moves. This consummation may be reached by ethical means through a certain manner of action and a certain spirit in action which is the essence of Karmamarga, the Way of Works, one of the three ways by which the spirit of man may see, embrace & become God. The first law of Karmamarga is to give up the natural desire for the fruits of our works and surrender all we do, think, feel and are into the keeping of the Eternal, and the second is to identify ourself with all creatures in the Universe both individually and collectively, realising our larger Self in others. These two laws of action together make what is called Karmayoga or the putting of ourselves into relation with that which is Eternal by means of and in our works. Before, then, we can understand what Karmayoga is, we must understand entirely and utterly what is this Eternal Being with whom we must put ourselves in relation and what are His relations with our self, with the phenomena of the Universe and with the creatures that people it. The Vedantic knowledge of Brahman, the Vedantic Cosmogony, the Vedantic explanation of the coexistence of Brahman with the Universe, the Eternal with the Transient, the Transcendent with the Phenomenal, the One with the Many, are what we have first to study.

---

[3] *This sentence was not completed; the rest of this notebook page and the next were left blank. — Ed.*

Chapter II

The Brahman in His Universe

Three verses of the Isha Upanishad describe directly the Brahman & His relations with the Universe, the [fourth] and [fifth:]

> *Anejad ekaṁ manaso javīyo nainad devā āpnuvan pūrvam arṣat*
> *Tad dhāvato 'nyān atyeti tiṣṭhat tasminn apo mātariśvā dadhāti.*
> *Tad ejati tannaijati tad dūre tadvantike*
> *Tad antar asya sarvasya tad u sarvasyāsya bāhyataḥ.*

and the [eighth:]

> *Sa paryagācchukram akāyam avraṇam asnāviraṁ śuddham apāpaviddham*
> *Kavir manīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhūr yāthātathyato 'rthān vyadadhācchāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ.*

We may for the present postpone the minuter consideration of the last verse and proceed on the basis of the earlier two alone.

The first conclusion of Vedanta is that the Brahman in this shifting, multifold, mutable Universe is One, stable & unmoving, therefore permanent and unchanging.

* * *

The second conclusion of Vedanta is that Brahman pervades this Universe & possesses it.

* * *

The third conclusion of Vedanta is that Brahman which pervades, possesses, causes and governs the world is the same as the Absolute Transcendental Existence of which metaphysics speaks. Of this Transcendental Existence Vedanta always speaks in the neuter as Tat, that or it; of the Eternal Will which pervades & governs the Universe it speaks in the masculine as स, He. But in the [fourth] verse we find that to Tat are attributed that universal action and pervasiveness which is properly only attributable to स, the Eternal & Universal Will; the identification of the two could not be more complete. It is yet more strikingly brought out in the [eighth] verse where the description of the cosmical action of Brahman begins with स but the negative attributes of this masculine subject immediately following are in the neuter as appropriate only to the Conditionless Brahman and those that follow later on & apply to the Universal Will revert to the masculine, — all without any break in the sentence.

* * *

The fourth conclusion of the Vedanta is that Brahman [is] not only the Absolute Transcendental Self, not only the One, Stable Immutable Reality in the phenomenal Universe, not only pervades, possesses, causes and governs it as an Eternal Universal Will, but contains and in a figurative sense is it as its condition, continent, material cause and informing force. *Tasminnapo mātariśvā dadhāti.* It is in this infinitely motionless etc.

Book III

Brahman in the individual Self

Chapter I

We have now ascertained in some detail the nature of the Vedantic Cosmogony and have some idea of the relations of Brahman to His universe; but to us human beings, the crown and last glorious evolution of conscious phenomenal existence in psychophysical matter, the real question of interest is not a knowledge of the nature of the Universe for its own sake, but a knowledge of our selves. γνῶθι σεαυτόν, Know thyself, is still and always the supreme command for humanity, and if we seek to know the universe, it is because that knowledge is necessary to the more important knowledge of ourselves. Science has adopted a different view; looking only at man as a separate bodily organism it fairly enough regards the Universe as more important than man and seeks to study its laws for their own sake. But still it remains true that humanity persists in its claim and that only those discoveries of the physicist, the zoologist and the chemist have been really fruitful which have helped man practically to master physical nature or to understand the laws of his own life and progress. Whatever moralist or philosopher may say, Yajnavalkya's great dictum remains true that whatever man thinks or feels or does he thinks, feels & does not for any other purpose or creature but for the sake of his Self. The supreme question therefore yet remains imperfectly answered, "So much then for Brahman and the Universe; but what of the things we have cherished so long, what of religion, what of God, what of the human soul?" To some extent the answer to this question has been foreshadowed, but before we get our foundations right for the structure of a higher ethical conception of life and conduct, we must probe to the core in comparison with the current and longstanding ideas on the subject the nature of the Supreme Being as set forth by the Vedanta and His relations to the individual self in man which are the chief preoccupation of religion. We may postpone till later the question whether ethics can or cannot be satisfactorily based on a materialistic interpretation of the world and nonreligious sanctions and aims.

A question of the first importance arises at once, how far does the Vedanta sanction the ordinary ideas of God as a Personal Active Being with definite qualities which is all the average religionist understands by the Divine Idea? Whether we regard him with the Jews as a God of Power and Might & Wrath and Justice, or with the Moslems as God the Judge and Governor and Manager of the world or with the early Christians as a God of Love, yet all agree in regarding Him as a Person, definable, imaginable, limited in His Nature by certain qualities though not limited in His Powers, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent & yet by a mysterious paradox quite separate from His creatures and His world. He creates, judges, punishes, rewards, favours, condemns, loves, hates, is pleased, is angry, for all the world like a man of unlimited powers, and is indeed a Superior Man, a shadow of man's soul thrown out on the huge background of the Universe. The intellectual and moral difficulties of this conception are well-known. An Omnipotent God of Love, in spite of all glosses, remains inconsistent with the anguish and misery, the red slaughter and colossal sum of torture and multitudinous suffering which pervades this world and is the condition of its continuance; an Omnipotent God of Justice who created & caused sin, yet punishes man for falling into the traps He has Himself set, is an infinite & huge inconsistency, an insane contradiction in terms; a God of wrath, a jealous God, who favours & punishes according to His caprice, fumes over insults and preens Himself at the sound of praise is much lower than the better sort of men and, as an inferior, unworthy of the adoration of the saints. An omnipresent God cannot be separate from His world, an infinite God cannot be limited in Time or Space or qualities. Intellectually the whole concept becomes incredible. Science, Philosophy, the great creeds which have set Knowledge as the means of salvation, have always been charged with atheism because they deny these conceptions of the Divine Nature. Science and Philosophy & Knowledge take their revenge by undermining the faith of the believers in the ordinary religions through an exposure of the crude and semi-savage nature of the ideas which religion has woven together into a bizarre texture of clumsy paradoxes and dignified with the name of God. They show triumphantly that the ordinary conceptions of God when analysed are incredible to the intellect, unsatisfactory and sometimes revolting to the moral sense and, if they succeed in one or two cases in satisfying the heart, succeed only by magnificently ignoring the claims of the reason. They find it an easy task to show that the attempts of theologians to reconcile the difficulties they have created are childish to the trained reason and can find no acceptance with any honest and candid intellect. Theology in vain denies the right of reason to speak in matters of spiritual truth, and demands that the incredible should be believed. Reason is too high a faculty to be with impunity denied its rights. In thus destroying the unsatisfactory intellectual conceptions with which it has been sought to bring the Eternal Being into the province of the reasoning powers, the core & essence of popular religion which is true and necessary to humanity is discredited along with its imperfect coverings; materialism establishes itself for a while as the human creed and the intellect of man holds despotic empire for a while at the expense of his heart and his ethical instincts, until Nature revenges itself and saves the perishing soul of mankind by flooding the world with a religious belief which seeks to satisfy the heart and the ethical instincts only and mocks at and tramples upon the claims of the intellect. In this unnatural duel between faculties which should work harmoniously for our development, the internal peace and progress of the human self is marred & stunted. Much that has been gained is repeatedly being lost and has to be recovered with great difficulty and not always in its entirety.

If reason unaided could solve the enigma of the world, it would be a different matter. But the reason is able only to form at the best an intellectually possible or logically consistent conception of the Eternal in the Universe; it is not able to bring Him home to the human consciousness and relate the human soul to Him as it should be related if He exists. For nothing is more certain than this that if a universal & eternal Consciousness exists, the life and development of the human soul must be towards It and governed by the law of Its nature; and a philosophy which cannot determine these relations so as to bring light and help to humanity in its long road is merely an intellectual plaything and might just as well have been kept as a private amusement when minds of a ratiocinative turn meet in the lecture-room or the study. Philosophy can see clearly that the Universe can be explicable only in the terms of the Eternal Consciousness by which it exists. Either God is the material universe in which case the name is a mere convenient abstraction like the materialist's "Nature", or He is the Self within the Universe. If the Self, then He is either transcendent and beyond phenomena and the phenomenal Universe can only be Maya, an imagination in the Universal Mind, or else He is involved in phenomena, Consciousness His soul, the Universe His form, Consciousness the witnessing and inspiring Force, the Universe the work or Energy of the Consciousness. But whichever of these possibilities be the truth, Knowledge is not complete if it stops with this single conception and does not proceed to the practical consequences of the conception. If the universe is Maya, what of the human soul? Is that also Maya, a phenomenon like the rest which disappears with the dissolution of the body or is it permanent and identical with the Eternal Consciousness? If permanent, why then has it confused itself with phenomena and how does it escape from the bondage of this confusion? On the other hand if He is involved in phenomena, what is the relation of the human consciousness to the Eternal? Are our souls parts of Him or manifestations or emanations? And if so do they return into Him at the dissolution of the body or do they persist? And if they persist, what is their ultimate goal? Do they remain by individuality separated from Him for ever even after the end of phenomena or are both the Universe and the individual soul eternal? Or is the individual soul only phenomenally different from the eternal, and the phenomenal difference terminable at the pleasure of the Eternal or by the will of the individual Ego?

What are the present relations of the self to the Eternal? What are sin & virtue? pleasure & pain? What are we to do with our emotions, desires, imaginations? Has the Eternal Consciousness any direct action on the phenomenal Universe and, if so, how is He different from the popular conception of God?

These are the questions which Philosophy has to answer, and in answering them the great difficulty it has to meet is its inability to find any better sanction for its conclusions than the play of speculative logic or to evolve anything better than a speculative system of metaphysics which may satisfy the argumentative faculty of the mind but cannot satisfy the reason of the heart or find its way to a mastery of that inner self in man which controls his life. Religion, however imperfect, has the secret of that mastery; religion can conquer the natural instincts and desires of man, metaphysics can only convince him logically that they ought to be conquered — an immense difference. For this reason philosophy has never been able to satisfy any except the intellectual few and was even for a time relegated to oblivion by the imperious contempt of Science which thought that it had discovered a complete solution of the Universe, a truth and a law of life independent of religion and yet able to supersede religion in its peculiar province of reaching & regulating the sources of conduct and leading mankind in its evolution. But it has now become increasingly clear that Science has failed to substantiate its claims, and that a belief in evolution or the supremacy of physical laws or the subjection of the ephemeral individual to the interests of the slightly less ephemeral race is no substitute for a belief in Christ or Buddha, for the law of Divine Love or the trust in Divine Power & Providence. If Philosophy failed to be an ethical control or a spiritual force, Science has failed still more completely, and for a very simple reason — the intellect does not control the conduct. There is quite another mental force which controls it and which turns into motives of action only those intellectual conceptions of which it can be got to approve. We arrive therefore at this dilemma that Philosophy & Science can satisfy the reason but cannot satisfy the heart or get mastery of the source of conduct; while Religion which satisfies the heart and controls conduct, cannot in its average conceptions permanently satisfy the reason and thus exposes itself to gradual loss of empire over the mind.

A religion therefore which claims to be eternal, must not be content with satisfying the heart and imagination, it must answer to the satisfaction of the intellect the questions with which philosophy is preoccupied. A philosophy which professes to explain the world-problem once for all, must not be satisfied with logical consistency and comprehensiveness; it must like Science base its conclusions not merely on speculative logic, but on actual observation and its truths must always be capable of verification by experiment so that they may be not merely conceivable truth but ascertained truth; it must like religion seize on the heart & imagination and without sacrificing intellectual convincingness, comprehensiveness & accuracy impregnate with itself the springs of human activity; and it must have the power of bringing the human self into direct touch with the Eternal. The Vedantic religion claims to be the eternal religion because it satisfies all these demands. It is intellectually comprehensive in its explanation of all the problems that perplex the human mind; it brings the contradictions of the world into harmony by a single luminous law of being; it has developed in Yoga a process of spiritual experience by which its assertions can be tested and confirmed; the law of being it has discovered seizes not only on the intellect but on the deepest emotions of man and calls into activity his highest ethical instincts; and its whole aim and end is to bring the individual self into a perfect and intimate union with the Eternal.

Chapter II

[*This chapter was not written.*]

The Religion of Vedanta

If it were asked by anyone what is this multitudinous, shifting, expanding, apparently amorphous or at all events multimorphous sea of religious thought, feeling, philosophy, spiritual experience we call Hinduism, what it is characteristically and essentially, we might answer in one word, the religion of Vedanta. And if it were asked what are the Hindus with their unique and persistent difference from all other races, we might again answer, the children of Vedanta. For at the root of all that we Hindus have done, thought and said through these thousands of years of our race-history, behind all we are and seek to be, there lies concealed, the fount of our philosophies, the bedrock of our religions, the kernel of our thought, the explanation of our ethics and society, the summary of our civilisation, the rivet of our nationality, this one marvellous inheritance of ours, the Vedanta. Nor is it only to Hindu streams that this great source has given of its life-giving waters. Buddhism, the teacher of one third of humanity, drank from its inspiration. Christianity, the offspring of Buddhism, derived its ethics and esoteric teaching at second-hand from the same source. Through Persia Vedanta put its stamp on Judaism, through Judaism, Christianity and Sufism on Islam, through Buddha on Confucianism, through Christ and mediaeval mysticism and Catholic ceremonial, through Greek and German philosophy, through Sanscrit learning and [*sentence left incomplete*]

Evolution in the Vedantic View

We must not however pass from this idea,[1] as it is easy to pass, into another which is only a popular error, — that evolution is the object of existence. Evolution is not an universal law, it is a particular process, nor as a process has it any very wide applicability. Some would affirm that every particle of matter in the universe is bound to evolve life, mind, an individualised soul, a finally triumphant spirit. The idea is exhilarating, but impossible. There is no such rigid law, no such self-driven & unintelligent destiny in things. In the conceptions of the Upanishads Brahman in the world is not only Prajna, but Ishwara. He is not subject to law, but uses process. It is only the individual soul in a state of ignorance on which process seems to impose itself as law. Brahman on the other hand has an omnipotent power of selection and limitation. He is not bound to develop self-conscious individuality in every particle of matter, nor has He any object in such a colossal and monotonous application of one particular movement of things. He has nothing to gain by evolving, nothing to lose by not evolving. For to Him all being is only a play of His universal self-consciousness, the will so to exist the only reason of this existence and its own pleasurability its only object in existence. In that play He takes an equal delight in all, He is sama in ananda — an equal delight in the evolved state, the unevolved & the evolving. He is equal also in Being; when He has evolved Himself in the perfect man, He is no more than He already was in the leaf & clod. To suppose that all existence has one compelling purpose of growth, of progress, of consummation is to be guilty of the Western error and misunderstand the nature of being. Existence is already consummate, all change

---

[1] *It is not known what "idea" Sri Aurobindo is referring to here, or whether the writing in which he discussed it has survived. — Ed.*

& variety in it is for delight, not for a gain or a development. The Vedantist cannot admit that anything is really developed in the sense of something new emerging into existence by whatever combination or accident which had no previous being. Nasato vidyate bhavah. That which was not cannot come into existence. The play of Brahman is not in its real nature an evolution, but a manifestation, it is not an adding of something that was wanting or a developing of something that was non-existent, but merely a manifesting of something that was hidden. We are already what we shall become. That which is still future in matter, is present in spirit.

We say, then, in the Vedanta that if the human form appears on earth or the tree grows out of the seed, it is because the human form already exists in the seed that is cast into the womb and the form and nature of the tree already exists in the seed that is cast into the earth. If there were not this preexistence as idea or implied form in the seed, there would be no reason why any seed should bring forth according to its kind. The form does not indeed exist sensibly in the form of consciousness which we see as matter, but in the consciousness itself it is there, and therefore there is a predisposition in the matter to produce that form & no other, which is much more than tendency, which amounts to a necessity. But how came this preconception into unintelligent matter? The question itself is erroneous in form; for matter is not unintelligent, but itself a movement of conceiving Spirit. This conceiving Spirit which in man conceives the idea of human form, being one in the mind of the man, in his life principle, in every particle of his body, stamps that conception on the life principle so that it becomes very grain of it, stamps it on the material part so that it becomes very grain of it, so that when the seed is cast into the woman, it enters full of the conception, impregnated with it in the whole totality of its being. We can see how this works in man; we know how the mental conceptions of the father & mother work powerfully to shape body, life & temperament of the son. But we do not perceive how this works in the tree, because we are accustomed to dissociate from the tree all idea of mind & even of life. We therefore talk vaguely of the law of Nature that the tree shall produce according to its kind without understanding why such a law should exist. Vedanta tells us that the process in the tree is the same as in man, except that mind not being active & self-conscious cannot produce those variations of delicate possibility which are possible in the human being. The supramental conceiving Spirit stamps, through unconscious mind, on the life principle in the tree and on all matter in the tree the conception of its nature & kind so that the seed falls into earth with every atom of its being full of that secret conception and every moment of the tree's growth is presided over by the same fixed idea. Not only in thinking man & living tree but in substances in which life & mind are inactive, this conceiving Spirit presides & determines its law & form. So 'rthan vyadadhach chhaswatibhyah samabhyah.

We must not for a moment imagine that Brahman of the Upanishads is either an extracosmic God entering into a cosmos external to Him or that last refuge of the dualising intellect, an immanent God. When Brahman the conceiving Spirit is said to be in life & mind and matter, it is only as the poet is said to be in his own thought and creations; as a man muses in his mind, as the river pours forward in swirls & currents. It would be easy, by quoting isolated texts from the Upanishads, to establish on them any system whatever; for the sages of the Upanishads have made it their business to see Brahman in many aspects, from many standpoints, to record all the most important fundamental experiences which the soul has when it comes into contact with the All, the Eternal. This they did with the greater freedom because they knew that in the fundamental truth of this All & Eternal, the most varied & even contradictory experiences found their harmony & their relative truth and necessity to each other. The Upanishads are Pantheistic, because they consider the whole universe to be Brahman, yet not Pantheistic because they regard Brahman as transcendental, exceeding the universe & in his final truth other than phenomena. They are Theistic because they consider Brahman as God & Lord of His universe, immanent in it, containing it, governing & arranging it; yet not Theistic because they regard the world also as God, containing

Himself & dwelling in Himself. They are polytheistic because they acknowledge the existence, power & adorability of Surya-Agni, Indra and a host of other deities; yet not polytheistic, because they regard them as only powers and names & personalities of the one Brahman. Thus it is possible for the Isha Upanishad to open with the idea of the indwelling God, Isha vasyam jagat, to continue with the idea of the containing Brahman, Tasminn apo Matariswa dadhati, and at the same time to assert the world, the jagat, also as Brahman, Tad ejati, sa paryagat. That this catholicity was not born of incoherence of thinking is evident from the deliberate & precise nicety [of] statement both in the Gita & the Upanishad. The Gita continually dwells on God in all things, yet it says Naham teshu te mayi, "I am not in them, they are in me"; and again it says God is Bhutabhrit not bhutastha, and yet na cha matsthani bhutani pashya me yogam aishwaram. "I bear up creatures in myself, I do not dwell in them; they exist in me, & yet they do not exist in me; behold my divine Yoga." The Upanishads similarly dwell on the coexistence of contradictory attributes in Brahman, nirguno guni, anejad ekam manaso javiyo, tadejati tannaijati. All this is perfectly intelligible & reconcilable, provided we never lose sight of the key word, the master thought of the Upanishads, that Brahman is not a Being with fixed attributes, but absolute Being beyond attributes yet, being absolute, capable of all, and the world a phenomenal arrangement of attributes in Intelligent Being, arranged not logically & on a principle of mutual exclusion, but harmoniously on a principle of mutual balancing & reconciliation. God's immanence & God's extramanence, God's identity with things & God's transcendence of things, God's personality & God's impersonality, God's mercy & God's cruelty & so on through all possible pairs of opposites, all possible multiplicity of aspects, are but the two sides of the same coin, are but different views of the same scene & incompatible or inharmonious to our ideas only so long as we do not see the entire entity, whole vision.

In Himself therefore God has arranged all objects according to their nature from years sempiternal. He has fixed from the beginning the relations of his movements in matter, mind and life. The principle of diversity in unity governs all of them. The world is not comprised of many substances combining variously into many forms, — like the elements of the chemist, which now turn out not to be elements, — nor yet of many substances composing by fusion one substance, — as hydrogen & oxygen seem to compose water, — but is always & eternally one substance variously concentrated into many elements, innumerable atoms, multitudinous forms. There are not many lives composing by their union & fusion or by any other sort of combination one composite life, as pluralistic theories tend to suppose, but always & eternally one Life variously active in multitudinous substantial bodies. There are not many minds acting upon each other, mutually penetrative and tending to or consciously seeking unity, as romantic theories of being suppose, but always & eternally one mind variously intelligent in innumerable embodied vitalities. It is because of this unity that there is the possibility of contact, interchange, interpenetration and recovery of unity by & between substance & substance, life & life, mind and mind. The contact & union is the result of oneness; the oneness is not the result of contact & union. This world is not in its reality a sum of things but one unalterable transcendental integer showing itself to us phenomenally as many apparent fractions of itself, — fractional appearances simultaneous in manifestation, related in experience. The mind & sense deal with the fractions, proceed from the experience of fractions to the whole; necessarily, therefore, they arrive at the idea of an eternal sum of things; but this totality of sum is merely a mental symbol, necessary to the mind's computations of existence. When we rise higher, we find ourselves confronted with a unity which is transcendental, an indivisible and incomputable totality. That is Parabrahman, the Absolute. All our thoughts, perceptions, experiences are merely symbols by which the Absolute is phenomenally represented to the movements of its own Awareness conditioned as matter, life, mind or supermind.

Just as each of these tattwas, principles of being, movements of Chit, conditions of Ananda which we call life, matter, mind, are eternally one in themselves embracing a diversity of mere transient forms & individual activities which emerge from, abide in & one day return into their totality, material form into the substance of the pancha bhutas, individual life into the oceanic surge of the world-pervading life principle, individual mind, whenever that is dissolved, into the secret sukshmatattwa or sea of subtle mind-existence, so also these three tattwas & all others that may exist are a diversity embraced in an eternal unity — the unity of Brahman. It is Brahman who moves densely as the stability of matter, forcefully as the energy of life, elastically in the subtlety of mind. Just as different vibrations in ether produce the appearances to sense which we call light & sound, so different vibrations in Chit produce the various appearances to Chit which we call matter, life & mind. It is all merely the extension of the same principle through stair & higher stair of apparent existence until, overcoming all appearances, we come to the still & unvibrating Brahman who, as we say in our gross material language, contains it all. The Sankhya called this essential vibration the kshobha, disturbance in Prakriti, cosmic ripple in Nature. The Vedanta continually speaks of the world as a movement. The Isha speaks of things as jagatyam jagat, particular movement in the general movement of conscious Being steadily *viewed* by that Being in His own self-knowledge, atmani atmanam atmana, self by self in self. This is the motion & nature of the Universe.

This then is Matter, a particular movement of the Brahman, one stream, one ocean of His consciousness fixed in itself as the substance of form. This is life, mind; other movements, other such streams or oceans active as material of thought & vitality. But if they are separate, though one, how is it that they do not flow separately — for obviously in some way they meet, they intermingle, they have relations. Life here evolves in body; mind here evolves in vitalised substance. It is not enough to say, as we have said, that the conception of Brahman is stamped in grain of mind, through mind in grain of life, through life in grain of matter & so produces particular form. For what we actually start with seems to be not life moulding matter, but life evolving out of matter or at least in matter. Afterwards, no doubt, its needs & circumstances react on matter & help to mould it. Even if we suppose the first moulding to be only latent life and mind, the primacy of matter has to be explained.

The Means of Realisation

Vedanta is merely an intellectual assent, without Yoga. The verbal revelation of the true relations between the One and the Many, the intellectual acceptance of the revelation and the dogmatic acknowledgement of the relations do not lead us beyond metaphysics, and there is no human pursuit more barren and frivolous than metaphysics practised merely as an intellectual pastime, a play with words & thoughts, when there is no intention of fulfilling thought in life or of moulding our inner state and outer activity by the knowledge which we have intellectually accepted. It is only by Yoga that the fulfilment and moulding of our life and being in the type of the true relations between God and the soul can become possible. Therefore every Upanishad has in it an element of Yoga as well as an element of Sankhya, the scientific psychology on which Yoga is founded. Vedanta, the perception of the relations between God in Himself and God in the world, Sankhya, the scientific, philosophical and psychological analysis of those relations and Yoga, called also by the Rishis Yajna, their practical application in social life, religious worship and individual discipline & self-perfection, is and has always been the whole substance of the Hindu religion. Whatever we know of God, that we ought in every way to be and live, is almost the only common dogma of all Hindu sects and schools of every description.

If then we know this of God and ourselves that we and He are one, So 'ham asmi, but divided by a movement of self-awareness which differentiates our forward active movement of waking life from the great life behind that knows and embraces all, then to recover that oneness in our waking state becomes the supreme aim and meaning of every individual existence. Nothing connected only with the movement of division can be of any moment to us, neither our bodily life and health, nor our family welfare, nor our communal wellbeing compared with this immense self-fulfilment; they can only be of importance as means or movements in the self-fulfilment. If, farther, we know that by recovering our secret oneness with God we shall also be at one with the world and that hatred, grief, fear, limitation, sickness, mortality, the creations of the divided movement, will no longer be able to exercise their yoke upon us, then the abandonment of all else, if necessary, for the one thing needful, becomes not only the supreme aim and meaning of human life, but our only true interest. Even if, as is quite probable, we cannot in one birth attain to the fullness of this grand result yet it is clear that even a little progress towards it must mean an immense change in our life & inner experience and be well worth the sacrifice and the labour. As the Gita says with force, "A little of this rule of life saves man out of his great fear." If farther a man knows that all mankind is intended to attain this consummation, he being one life with that divine movement called humanity, it must also be part of his self-fulfilment to pour whatever fullness of being, knowledge, power or bliss he may attain, out on his fellow beings. It is his interest also, for humanity being one piece, it is difficult for the individual to attain fullness of life here when the race creates for him an atmosphere of darkness, unrest and base preoccupation with the cares of a half-intellectualised animal existence. So strong has this atmosphere become in the Iron Age, that it is the rule for the individual who seeks his own salvation to sever himself from life and society and content himself with only the inner realisation. Modern Hinduism has become, therefore, in all but its strongest spirits, absorbed in the idea of an individual salvation. But our Vedic forefathers were of a different stuff. They had always their eye on the individual in the race. Nothing is more remarkable in the Veda than the absolute indifference & even confusion with which the singular and plural are used by the Singer, as if "I" & "we" were identical in meaning, and the persistence with which the Rishi regards himself as a representative soul, as it were, of the *vishám devayatínám*, the peoples in their seeking after the Godhead. We find the same transition in the Isha from the singular "pashyami" of the successful representative soul realising his oneness with God to the plural asman when he turns to pray for the equal purification and felicity of his fellows. Our ideal, therefore, is fixed, — to become one with God and lead individually the divine life, but also to help others to the divine realisation and prepare, by any means, humanity for the kingdom of God on earth, — satyadharma, satyayuga.

Our means is Yoga. Yoga is not, as the popular mind too often conceives, shutting oneself in a room or isolating oneself in a monastery or cave and going through certain fixed mental and bodily practices. These are merely particular and specialised types of Yogic practice. The mental and bodily practices of Rajayoga and Hathayoga are exercises of great force and utility, but they are not indispensable. Even solitude is not indispensable, and absolute solitude limits our means and scope of self-fulfilment. Yoga is the application, by whatever means, of Vedanta to life so as to put oneself in some kind of touch with the high, one, universal and transcendent Existence in us & without us in our progress towards a final unity. All religious worship, sincerely done, all emotional, intellectual and spiritual realisation of that which is higher than ourselves, all steadily practised increase of essential power, purity, love or knowledge, all sacrifice and self-transcending amounts to some form of Yoga. But Yoga can be done with knowledge or without knowledge, with a higher immediate object or with a lower immediate object, for a partial higher result or for the fullest divine perfection and bliss. Yoga without knowledge can never have the force of Yoga with knowledge, Yoga with the lower object the force of Yoga with the higher object, Yoga for a partial result the force of Yoga for the full & perfect result. But even in its lowest, most ignorant or narrowest forms, it is still a step towards God.

A Fragmentary Chapter for a Work on Vedanta

[.....] Each of the great authoritative Upanishads has its own peculiar character and determined province as well as the common starting point of thought and supreme truth in the light of which all their knowledge has to be understood. The unity of universal existence in the transcendental Being who alone is manifested here or elsewhere forms their common possession & standpoint.

All thought & experience here rest upon this great enigma of a multiplicity that when questioned resolves itself to a unity of sum, of nature & of being, of a unity that when observed seems to be a mere sum or convention for a collection of multiples. The mind when it starts its business of experience in sensation and thought, finds itself stumbling about in a forest of details of each of which it becomes aware individually by knocking up against it, like a wayfarer in a thick and midnight forest stumbling & dashing himself against the trees, — by the shock & the touch only he knows of them. Mind cannot discriminate & put these details into their place except, imperfectly, by the aid of memory — the habit of the [mind] of sensations. Like the women imprisoned in the magic forests of the old Tantra the mind is a prisoner in the circle of its own sensations wandering round & round in that narrow area and always returning to the original source of its bondage, — its inability to go beyond its data, the compulsion under which it lies of returning to the object it meets merely the image of that object as mirrored through the senses & in the mind. It is reason, the faculty that can discriminate as objects, that first attempts to deliver mind from its bondage by standing apart from the object and its mental reflection and judging them in its own terms & by its own measurements and not in the terms & measurements of the senses. The knowledge which the mind gives is sanjna, awareness not passing beyond contact with and response to the thing known, the knowledge which reason gives is prajna, awareness placing the object in front of it and studying it as a thing affecting but yet apart from and unconnected with the feelings & needs of that which experiences. Therefore it is, according to our philosophy, in buddhi & not in manas that ahankara, the discriminative ego-sense is born. Mind like matter has an inert unity of all things in experience born of non-discrimination; the perception of an object outside & a sensation within it stand on the same footing to sanjna. We must discriminate and reflect, in order to be aware of separate multiplicity as distinguished from a multitude [of] sensations in the unity of our consciousness. Afterwards when we rise through reason but above it, to Veda, we recover, however rudimentarily, the original unity, but discriminating, knowing the tattwa of things, perceiving them to be circumstances not of an individual & sense bound [but] of universal & sense delivered consciousness. This consummation of knowledge & the ordering of life on that knowledge is man's summit of evolution, the business for which he is here upon the earth. To climb to it from the animal mentality [*sentence left incomplete*]

The first thing that this discriminating reason effects is to put each detail in its place & then to arrange the details in groups. It travels from the individual to the group, from the group to the class, from the class to the kind, from the kind to the mass. And there until help arrives it has to pause. It has done much. It has distinguished each individual tree in the magical forest from its neighbour; it has arranged them in groves and thickets; it has distinguished & numbered the various species of trees and fixed their genus. It has mapped them out collectively & known the whole mass as the forest. But it is not yet free. It has not escaped from the ensorcelled gyre of the Almighty Magician. It knows every detail of its prison, nothing more. It has discovered the vyashti & the samashti; it has arrived only at a collective & not at a real unity. It has discovered the relations of unit to unit, the units to the smaller group and the smaller group to the larger group & the whole to the mass. It has its laws of life fixed upon that knowledge, its duties of individual to individual, of man to the family, of the man & family to the class, of [all] three to the nation, of the nation & its constituents to humanity. It has ordered excellently our life in the prison house. But it still travels in the magic circle, it is still a prisoner & a [......] It has even discovered one pregnant truth that the farther we travel from the many, the nearer we draw to the one, the less is the transience, the greater the permanence. The family outlasts the individual, the class endures when the single family has perished, the kind survives the disappearance of the class, the collective whole endures & outlives all the revolutions of its component parts. Therefore a final law and morality is found, the sacrifice & consummation of the less in the greater, of the few for the many, — an evolutionary utility, a consummate altruism. And when all is said and done, we are still in the prison house. For even the most permanent is here transient, the world perishes as inevitably as the midge & the ant & to our ranging vision seems hardly mightier in its ultimate reality or the importance of its fate. For who has made individual follow individual & nation follow nation & world follow world through the brilliant mirage of life into the incomprehensible mystery of death; and when all is ended, what profit has a man had of all his labour that he has done under the sun?

Reason cannot deliver us. The day of our freedom dawns when we transcend reason, not by imagination, which is itself only an intellectual faculty, not [by] the intuition even, but by illumination. The intuitive reason can do much for us, can indicate to us the higher truth. The intellectual reason can only arrive, as we have seen, at a collective unity; it is still bound by its data. The intuitive reason first suggests to us a unity which is not collective but essential, the Brahman of the Veda [..] It is intuitive reason that [.............] infinity. We [...................................] its non-existence to the observing intellect. [None] has ever [travelled] beyond the uttermost limit of the stars and assured [himself that] there is always a beyond, or lived from all time before the stars shone out in the heavens so that he can say, Time never began. The imagination can indeed add tract to tract of Space and millennium to millennium of Time and, returning tired &

appalled, say "I at least find no end and infinity is possible." But still we have no proof — there are no data on which we can stand. Infinity remains to the intellect a surmise, a hypothesis, a powerful inference. Reason is essentially a measuring & arranging faculty & can only deal with the finite. It is ensorcelled within the limits of the forest. Yet we have an intuitive perception of the truth of infinity, not collectively, not as a never ending sum of miles or moments but as a thing in itself not dependent on that which it contains. We have, if we examine ourselves, other such intuitive perceptions, of immortality although we cannot look beyond the black wall of death, of freedom although the facts of the world seem to load us with chains.

Are we yet free by the force of this intuitive reason? We cannot say so, — for this reason that it gives us suggestions, but not realisations. It is in its nature what the old psychologists would have called smriti, a memory of truth, rather than a perception. There is a suggestion to us in ourselves of infinity, of immortality, of freedom and knowledge in us replies, Yes, I know that to be true, though I do not see it, there is something in me that has always known it, it is in me like some divine memory. The reason of this movement is that the intuitive reason works in the intellect. It is the memory of freedom coming to the woman in the forest which tells her that there is something outside this green & leafy, but yet to her dark, fatal & dismal forest of imprisonment, some world of wide & boundless skies where a man can move freely doing what he wills, *kamachari*. And because it works in the intellect, its movement can be imitated by the other inhabitants of the intellect, by the brilliancy of imagination, by the fond thought that is only the image of our wish. The rationalist is right in distrusting intuition although it gave him Newton's theory of gravitation and most of the brilliant beginnings of Science & Free Thought, — right, yet not right; right from the standpoint of a scepticism that asks for intellectual certainty, wrong from the standpoint of ultimate truth & the imperative needs of humanity. Faith rests upon the validity of this faculty of intuitive reason, and faith has been the great helper and consoler of humanity in its progress, the indispensable staff on which he supports his thought & his action. But because the divine smriti is aped by the voices of desire & fancy, faith has also been the parent & perpetuator of many errors.

It is knowledge that loosens our bonds, that snaps asunder the toils of sense & dispels the force of the world-enchantment. In order to be free, we must pass from intuition to illumination. We must get the direct perception of the knowledge of which intuitive reason is the memory. For within us there are unawakened folds in folds of conscious experience which we have yet to set in action in order to fulfil our nature's possibilities. In these inner realms we are sushupta, asleep; but the whole movement of humanity is towards the awakening of these centres. Science is in error when it imagines that man is from all time & to all time a rational animal & the reason the end & summit of his evolution. Man did not begin with reason, neither will he end with it. There are faculties within us which transcend reason and are asleep to our waking consciousness, just as life is asleep in the metal, consciousness in the tree, reason in the animal. Our evolution is not over, we have not completed even half of the great journey. And if now we are striving to purify the intellect & to carry reason to its utmost capacities, it is in order that we may discourage the lower movements of passion and desire, self-interest and prejudice and dogmatic intolerance which stand in the way of the illumination. When the intellectual buddhi is pure by vichara & abhyasa of these things, then it becomes ready to rise up out of the mind into the higher levels of consciousness and there lose itself in a much mightier movement which because of its greatness & perfection is called in the Rigveda mahas and in the Vedanta vijnana. This is what [is] meant in the Veda by Saraswati awakening the great ocean. Pavaka nah saraswati maho arnash chetayati. This is the justification of the demand in our own Yoga that desire shall be expelled, the mind stilled, the very play of reason & imagination silenced before a man shall attain to knowledge, — as the Gita puts it, na kinchid api chintayet.

The illumination of the vijnana, when it is complete, shows us not a collective material unity, a sum of physical units, but a real unity. It reveals to us Space, Time and the chain of apparent circumstance to be merely conventions & symbols seen in His own being by One Seer and dependent purely on a greater transcendental existence of which they are not separate realities & divisions but the manifold expressions of its single Truth. It is this knowledge that gives us freedom. We escape from the enchanted forest, we know once more the world outside this petty world, see the boundless heavens above & breast the wide & circumambient air of our infinite existence. The first necessity is to know the One, to be in possession of the divine Existence; afterwards we can have all the knowledge, joy & power for action that is intended for our souls, — for He being known all is known, tasmin vijnate sarvam vijnatam, not at once by any miraculous revelation, but by a progressive illumination or rather an application of the single necessary illumination to God's multiplicity in manifestation, by the movement of the mahat & the bhuma, not working from petty details to the whole, but from the knowledge of the one to the knowledge of relation & circumstance, by a process of knowledge that is sovereign & free, not painful, struggling & bound. This is the central truth of Veda & Upanishad & the process by which they have been revealed to men.

This free & great movement of illumination descending from above to us below and not like our thought here which climbs painfully up the mountain peaks of thought only to find at the summit that it is yet far removed from the skies to which it aspires, this winged & mighty descent of Truth is what we call Sruti or revelation. There are three words which are used of illumined thought, drishti, sruti & smriti, sight, hearing and remembrance. The direct vision or experience of a truth or the thought-substance of a truth is called drishti, and because they had that direct vision or experience, that pratyaksha not of the senses, but of the liberated soul, the Rishis are called drashtas. But besides the truth and its artha or thought-substance in which it is represented to the mind, there is the vak or sound symbol, the inevitable word in which the truth is naturally enshrined & revealed & not as in ordinary speech half concealed or only suggested. The revelation of the vak is sruti. The revealed word is also revelatory and whoever has taken it into his soul, though the mind may not understand it, has the Truth ready prepared in the higher or sushupta reaches of his being from whence it must inevitably descend at a future date or in another life to his lower & darkened consciousness in order to liberate & illumine. It is this psychological truth which is the foundation of the Hindu's trust in the Name of God, the vibrations of the mantra and the sound of the Veda. For the vak carries, in the right state of the soul, an illumination with it of the truth which it holds, an inspiration of its force of satyam which is less than drishti but must in the end lead to drishti. A still more indirect action of the vijnana is smriti; when the truth is presented to the soul and its truth immediately & directly recognised by a movement resembling memory — a perception that this was always true and already known to the higher consciousness. It is smriti that is nearest to intellect action and forms the link between vijnanam & prajnanam, ideal thought & intellectual thought, by leading to the higher forms of intellectual activity, such as intuitive reason, inspiration, insight & prophetic revelation, the equipment of the man of genius.

But what proof have we that this illumination exists? how can we say that this illuminated sight, this revelatory hearing, this confirming remembrance of eternal knowledge is not a self-delusion or a peculiarly brilliant working of imagination and of rapid intellectuality? To those who have the illumination, the question does not arise. The prisoner released from his fetters does not doubt the reality of the file that undid their rivets; the woman escaped from the forest does not ask herself whether this amazing sunlight & wide-vaulted blue sky is not a dream and a delusion. The scientist himself would not be patient with one who began the study of science by questioning the reality of the revealing power of microscope and telescope and suggesting that the objects as seen underneath were so presented merely by an optical illusion. Those who have experienced & seen, know [....................................] sceptic. "Learn how to use the instruments [.........] yourself, study all these wonders invisible to the ordinary eye, examine their constancy, coherency, fidelity to fixed wide & general laws, and then judge; do not vitiate inquiry from the beginning by denying on a priori grounds its utility or the right to inquire." It is only by faith in the instruments of our knowledge that we can acquire knowledge, — by faith in the evidence of the senses that we can think at all, by faith in the validity of reason that we can deduce, infer and argue. So also it is only by faith in illumination that we can see truth from above & come face to [face with God.] It is true that all faith must have its limits. The faith in the senses must be transcended & checked by the faith in our reason. The faith in the reason itself is checked by agnosticism [and] will one day be transcended & checked by the faith in the vijnana. The faith in the vijnana must be checked & harmonised by a faith in a still higher form of knowledge, — knowledge by identity. But within its own province each instrument is supreme and must be trusted. In relying, therefore, upon the vijnana, in asserting and demanding a preliminary faith in it, the Yogin is making no mystic, irrational or obscurantist claim. He is not departing from the universal process of knowledge. He claims to exceed reason, just as the scientist claims to exceed the evidence of the senses. When he asserts that things are not what they seem, that there are invisible forces and agencies at work about us and that the whole of our apparent existence and environment is only phenomenal, he is no more departing from rationality or advancing anything wild or absurd than the scientist when he asserts that the earth moves round the sun and the sun is relatively still, affirms the existence of invisible gases or invisible bacilli, or finds in matter only a form of energy. Nor are faith in the Guru & faith in the Sruti irrational demands, any more than the scientist is irrational in saying to his pupil "Trust my expert knowledge, trust my method of experiment & the books that are authoritative and when you have made the experiments, you can use your intellect to confirm, refute, amend or enlarge whatever scientific knowledge is presented to you in book or lecture or personal instruction," — or than the man of the Indian village who has been to London is irrational in expecting his fellow villagers to accept his statement of the existence, sights, scenes and characteristics of London or in supporting [it] by any book that may have been written with authority on the subject. If the Indian Teacher similarly demands faith in himself as an expert, faith in the Sruti as the evidence of ancient experts, drishti as revealed truth coming direct to them by vijnanam from the divine Knowledge, he is following the common, the necessary rule. He has the right to say, Trust these, follow these, afterwards you will yourself look on the unveiled face of Truth & see God. In each case there is a means of confirmation, — the evidence of the observation & deduction has to be confirmed by observation & deduction; the evidence of the senses by the senses, the evidence of the vijnanam by the vijnanam. One cannot exceed one's instrument.

There is also the evidence of common experience — there is this eternal witness to the truth of the vijnana, that men who have used it, in whatever clime & whatever age, however they may differ in their intellectual statement or the conclusions of the reason about what they have seen, are at one in the substance of their experience & vision. Whoever follows in these days the paths indicated, makes the experiments prescribed, goes through the training needed, cannot go beyond, in the substance of his knowledge, or depart from what the ancients observed. He may not go beyond [*sentence left incomplete*]

God and Immortality

Chapter I

The Upanishad

The Upanishads stand out from the dim background of Vedic antiquity like stupendous rock cathedrals of thought hewn out of the ancient hills by a race of giant builders the secret of whose inspiration and strength has passed away with them into the Supreme. They are at once Scripture, philosophy and seer-poetry; for even those of them that dispense with the metrical form, are prose poems of a rhythmically mystic thought. But whether as Scripture, philosophical theosophy or literature, there is nothing like them in ancient, mediaeval or modern, in Occidental or Oriental, in Egyptian, Chaldean, Semitic or Mongolian creation; they are unique in style, structure and motive, entirely *sui generis*. After them there were philosophic poems, aphorisms, verse and prose treatises in great number, Sutras, Karikas, Gitas, their intellectual children; but these are a human progeny very different in type from their immortal ancestors. Pseudo-Upanishads there have been in plenty, a hundred or more of them; some have arrived at a passable aping of the more external features of the type, but always betray themselves by the pseudo-style, the artificial falsetto, the rasping creak of the machine; others are pastiches; others are fakes. The great Upanishads stand out always serene, grand, inimitable with their puissant and living breath, with that phrase which goes rolling out a thousand echoes, with that faultless spontaneous sureness of the inevitable expression, with that packed yet easy compression of wide and rich wisdom into a few revelatory syllables by which they justify their claim to be the divine word. Neither this inspiration nor this technique has been renewed or repeated in later human achievement.

And if we look for their secret, we shall find it best expressed in the old expression of them as the impersonal *shabdabrahman*. They are that is to say, the accents of the divine Gnosis, — a revelatory word direct and impersonal from the very heart of a divine and almost superconscious self-vision. All supreme utterance which is the inspired word and not merely speech of the mind, does thus come from a source beyond the human person through whom it is uttered; still it comes except in rare moments through the personal thought, coloured by it, a little altered in the transit, to some extent coloured by the intellect or the temperament. But these seers seem to have possessed the secret of the rapt passivity in which is heard faultlessly the supreme word; they speak the language of the sons of Immortality. Its truth is entirely revelatory, entirely intuitive; its speech altogether a living breath of inspiration; its art sovereignly a spontaneous and unwilled discerning of perfection.

The plan and structure of their thought corresponds; it has a perfection of supra-intellectual cohesion in its effortless welling of sound and thought, a system of natural and unsystematic correspondences. There is no such logical development, explicitly or implicitly satisfying the demands of the intellect, such as we find in other philosophical thought or the best architectonic poetry; but there is at the same time a supreme logic, only it is the logic of existence expressing itself self-luminously rather than of thought carefully finding out its own truth. It is the logic of the Himalayas or of a causeway of giants, not the painful and meticulous construction effected with labour by our later intellectual humanity. There is in the whole a unity of vision; the Upanishad itself rather than a human mind sees with a single glance, hears the word that is the natural body of the truth it has seen, perceives and listens again, and still again, till all has been seen and heard: this is not the unity of the intellect carefully weaving together its connections of thought, choosing, rejecting, pruning to get terseness, developing to get fullness. And yet there is a perfect coherence; for every successive movement takes up the echoes of the old and throws out new echoes which are taken up in their turn. A wave of seeing rises and ends to rise into another wave and so on till the final fall and natural ceasing of the whole sea of thought on its shore. Perhaps the development of a great and profound strain of music is the nearest thing we have to this ancient poetry of pure intuitive thought. This at least is the method of the metrical Upanishads; and even the others approximate to it, though more pliant in their make.

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

KENA AND OTHER UPANISHADS comprises Sri Aurobindo's translations of and commentaries on Upanishads other than the Isha Upanishad, as well as translations of later Vedantic texts, and writings on the Upanishads and Vedanta philosophy in general. Translations of and commentaries on the Isha Upanishad are published in *Isha Upanishad*, volume 17 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Sri Aurobindo's work on the Upanishads occupied more than twenty years, from around 1900 until the early 1920s. (One translation was revised some twenty-five years after that.) Between 1914 and 1920, he published translations of the Isha, the Kena and the Mundaka Upanishads, along with commentaries on the Isha and the Kena, in the monthly review *Arya*. These, along with the translation of the Katha Upanishad, which was published in 1909 and subsequently revised, may be said to represent his Upanishadic interpretation in its most definitive form. His other translations and commentaries were not published during his lifetime. Most of them belong to an earlier period and only a few are complete. Some were used in producing the final translations and commentaries published in Part One. They are of interest as steps in the development of his thought, as well as for their own inherent value.

In the present volume, the editors have placed material published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime in Part One, and material found among his manuscripts in Parts Two and Three. The Sanskrit texts have been included for the convenience of Sanskrit-knowing readers.

PART ONE: TRANSLATIONS AND COMMENTARIES PUBLISHED BY SRI AUROBINDO

This part contains the final versions of Sri Aurobindo's translations of three Upanishads, the Kena, Katha and Mundaka, and commentaries on the Kena and parts of the Taittiriya.

The Kena Upanishad. Sri Aurobindo first translated the Kena Upanishad in Baroda around 1900. (This translation forms part of a typewritten manuscript, hereafter referred to as TMS, which Sri Aurobindo entitled "The Upanishads rendered into simple and rhythmic English".) The TMS translation of the Kena was lightly revised and published in the weekly review *Karmayogin* in June 1909. In 1920 the *Karmayogin* translation was reproduced in *The Seven Upanishads*, published by Ashtekar & Co., Poona. (Only three of the seven translations in this book were by Sri Aurobindo: Isha, Kena and Mundaka.)

Between 1912 and 1914, Sri Aurobindo began three commentaries on and one annotated translation of the Kena. All of these pieces were left incomplete. They are published in Part Two, Section Four.

Between June 1915 and July 1916, Sri Aurobindo published a new translation of the Kena Upanishad and a fifteen-chapter commentary on it in the *Arya*. He wrote each of the instalments immediately before its publication. Sometime between 1916 and 1920, he lightly revised the *Arya* translation and commentary. Their publication in book-form was planned, and production was actually begun in the summer of 1920; but the proposed book was never issued. Questioned about the possibility of publishing *Kena Upanishad* in December 1927, Sri Aurobindo wrote: "My present intention is not to publish it as it stands. This must be postponed for the present." He never found time to return to this work.

When the publication of Sri Aurobindo's Upanishadic translations and commentaries was undertaken after his passing, the existence of the revised versions of his translation of and commentary on the Kena Upanishad was not known. The unrevised *Arya* versions were published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram as *Kena Upanishad* in 1952, and included in the same publisher's *Eight Upanishads* in 1953. The revised translation (but unrevised commentary) first appeared in the second edition of *Kena Upanishad* in 1970. The same texts were reproduced in *The Upanishads: Texts, Translations and Commentaries*, volume 12 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, in 1971. The revised commentary first appeared in *The Upanishads: Part One*, published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1981.

The *Arya* text of the commentary had no chapter-titles. While revising the work, Sri Aurobindo gave titles to all the chapters except

8, 9 and 12. In the present edition, the editors have provided titles for these three chapters.

The Katha Upanishad of the Black Yajurveda. Sri Aurobindo first translated this Upanishad in Baroda around 1900; it forms part of TMS. He later said that he had tried "to convey the literary merit of the original". The translation, slightly revised, was published in the *Karmayogin* in July and August 1909. The *Karmayogin* translation was published as *The Katha Upanishad* by Ashtekar & Co., Poona, in 1919. Sometime during the early part of his stay in Pondicherry (1910–20), Sri Aurobindo began a more extensive revision of TMS, but reached only the end of the First Cycle. When it was proposed to bring out the translation in a book during the late 1920s, he replied that he did not have the time to make the necessary revisions. A new edition of *Katha Upanishad* was published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1952. In that edition, in *Eight Upanishads* (1953), and in *The Upanishads* (1971), the partially revised TMS version was used as text, with some editorial modernisation of the language. The *Karmayogin* version, containing the last revision of the Second Cycle, was disregarded. In the present volume, the revised TMS is followed for the First Cycle, and the *Karmayogin* text for the Second.

Mundaka Upanishad. Sri Aurobindo first translated this Upanishad in Baroda around 1900; it forms part of TMS. A revised version of the translation was published in the *Karmayogin* in February 1910. (This revised translation was included in *The Seven Upanishads*.) A further revised translation was published in the *Arya* in the issue of November/December 1920. Sri Aurobindo thoroughly revised the *Arya* translation during the late 1940s. This version was used when the translation was published in *Eight Upanishads* in 1953 and in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

Readings in the Taittiriya Upanishad. Sri Aurobindo translated the Taittiriya Upanishad in Baroda around 1902 (see below), but never revised it for publication. He wrote "The Knowledge of Brahman: Readings in the Taittiriya Upanishad" in 1918 for publication in the *Arya*. It appeared in the November 1918 issue of the review. "Truth, Knowledge, Infinity" was apparently intended for a later issue, but it was never completed and not published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. Its first appearance in a book was in the 1981 edition of *The Upanishads*.

PART TWO: TRANSLATIONS AND COMMENTARIES FROM MANUSCRIPTS

The texts in this part were not published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. Several of the translations and all the commentaries are incomplete. They have been arranged in five sections, the first comprising an introductory essay.

Section One. Introduction

On Translating the Upanishads. Editorial title. Sri Aurobindo wrote this text in Baroda around 1900–1902 under the heading "OM TAT SAT". He evidently intended it to be the introduction to a collection of his translations, probably "The Upanishads rendered into simple and rhythmic English". It was first published in a book as the introduction to *Eight Upanishads* in 1953, and was included in *The Upanishads* in 1971 and subsequently.

Section Two. Complete Translations (circa 1900–1902)

"The Upanishads rendered into simple and rhythmic English". This is the title page of the typewritten manuscript (TMS), which dates from around the turn of the century. Two of the six translations in the manuscript — those of the Prashna ("Prusna") and Mandukya ("Mandoukya") Upanishads — were never revised or published by Sri Aurobindo. These two are published here in their original form.

The Prusna Upanishad of the Athurvaveda. Circa 1900. From TMS. The translation was published in *Eight Upanishads* in 1953 and was included in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

The Mandoukya Upanishad. Circa 1900. From TMS. The translation was first published in *Eight Upanishads* in 1953 and was included in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

The Aitereya Upanishad. Sri Aurobindo translated this Upanishad in Baroda around 1902. (It does not form part of TMS.) The translation was never revised and is published here in its original form. It was first published in *Eight Upanishads* in 1953 and was included in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

Taittiriya Upanishad. Sri Aurobindo translated this Upanishad in Baroda around 1902. (It does not form part of TMS.) It was never revised and is published here in its original form. It was first published in *Eight Upanishads* in 1953 and was included in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

Section Three. Incomplete Translations and Commentaries
(circa 1902–1912)

Svetasvatara Upanishad. Sri Aurobindo translated the fourth to sixth chapters of this Upanishad sometime during the first decade of the century. (It is not known whether he ever translated the first three chapters.) Judging by the notebook and handwriting, it would appear that he did the translation during the period of his stay in Baroda; yet he is recorded as saying, "I translated the Shwetashwatara Upanishad while I was in Bengal." It is possible that he did the translation in Bengal during one of his vacations from Baroda College between 1902 and 1906. He retranslated the fourth chapter in Pondicherry several years later. The early translation of chapters 4 to 6 was first published in the 1971 edition of *The Upanishads*. The revised version of the fourth chapter first appeared in the 1981 edition.

Chhandogya Upanishad. Around 1902 Sri Aurobindo translated the first two sections and part of the third section of the first chapter of this Upanishad in the margins of his copy of *The Chhándogya Upanishad* (Madras, 1899). He later recopied and revised the first two sections in the notebook he used for his translations of the Aitareya and Taittiriya. The editors have reproduced the recopied translation for sections 1–2, and fallen back on the marginal translation for section 3, verses 1–7. The translation of the first two sections was first published in *The Upanishads* in 1971; the translation of the opening of section 3 first appeared in 1986 in the second impression of the second edition of that book.

Notes on the Chhandogya Upanishad. Circa 1912. Sri Aurobindo wrote these two passages of commentary separately in Pondicherry. The first is entitled in the manuscript "Notes on the Chhandogya Upanishad/ First Adhyaya" (but only the first sentence is treated). Part of the first page was included in *The Upanishads* in 1971; the full text was published in the 1981 edition. The second commentary, also incomplete, is entitled in the manuscript "Vedic Interpretations/ Satyakama Jabala". In most editions of the Chhandogya Upanishad, the story of Satyakama Jabala occupies sections 4–9 of the fourth chapter, not sections 3–8 as in the edition Sri Aurobindo used. The commentary was first published in the 1981 edition of *The Upanishads*.

The Brihad Aranyak Upanishad. Around 1912 Sri Aurobindo translated the first two sections and part of the third section of the first chapter of this Upanishad in the margins of his copy of the text (Poona: Ananda Ashram, 1902). This marginal translation was first reproduced in the 1981 edition of *The Upanishads*.

The Great Aranyaka. Circa 1912. Shortly after writing the above translation, Sri Aurobindo began a commentary on the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that he entitled "The Great Aranyaka/ A Commentary on the Brihad Aranyak Upanishad". This was not completed even to the extent of what had been translated. The commentary was included in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

The Kaivalya Upanishad. Sri Aurobindo wrote this translation and commentary, which cover only the first verse of the Upanishad, in Pondicherry around 1912. It was first published in *The Upanishads* in 1971. The commentary in English is followed by a commentary in Sanskrit, which is published in *Writings in Bengali and Sanskrit*, volume 9 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Nila Rudra Upanishad. Sri Aurobindo translated the first of the three parts of this Upanishad, with a commentary on the first five verses, in Pondicherry around 1912. It was first published in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

Section Four. Incomplete Commentaries on the Kena Upanishad

(circa 1912–1914)

Kena Upanishad: An Incomplete Commentary. Circa 1912. Editorial subtitle. Sri Aurobindo wrote only the "foreword" and portions of one "part" of this planned commentary before abandoning it. It was first published in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

A Commentary on the Kena Upanishad: Foreword. Circa 1912. This fragmentary work appears to be a rewriting of the foreword of the preceding incomplete commentary. The manuscript has been damaged and one entire line is missing. This piece is being published here for the first time in a book.

Three Fragments of Commentary. Circa 1912–13. Sri Aurobindo wrote these three untitled fragments on sheets used otherwise for linguistic notes, undated entries for the *Record of Yoga* and the essay "The Origin of Genius". They are being published here for the first time in a book.

Kena Upanishad: A Partial Translation with Notes. Editorial subtitle. Sri Aurobindo wrote this on 23 May 1914. The *Record of Yoga* for that day states: "Kena Upanishad I Kh [Khanda] translated with notes". It is being published here for the first time.

Section Five. Incomplete Translations of Two Vedantic Texts
(circa 1900–1902)

The Karikas of Gaudapada. Editorial title. Circa 1900. This classic Vedantic text was written by Gaudapada in or around the eighth century. Sri Aurobindo translated only the first twelve verses, along with Shankaracharya's commentary on them. The words italicised in his translation were supplied by him to make the meaning of the Sanskrit more clear. It was first published in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

Sadananda's Essence of Vedanta. Circa 1902. The *Vedāntasāra* or "Essence of Vedanta" was written by Sadananda in the fifteenth century. Sri Aurobindo translated only the first sixteen of the work's 227 aphorisms. The incomplete translation was first published in *The Upanishads* in 1971.

PART THREE: WRITINGS ON VEDANTA

These pieces found among Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts were not completed or published by him. Written at various times from around 1902 to 1916, they have been arranged chronologically from earlier to later.

With the exception of *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, the writings in this part are being published here for the first time in a book. Most of them previously appeared in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* between 1978 and 1984.

Four Fragments. Circa 1902–4. These jottings are among Sri Aurobindo's earliest independent philosophical writings. Before revision, the last sentence of the final fragment ended: ". . . the purer form in which Vedanta, Sankhya & Yoga are harmonised". This final fragment is being published here for the first time, the other three for the first time in a book.

The Spirit of Hinduism: God. Circa 1903–4. This piece opens with the first words of the Mandukya Upanishad.

The Philosophy of the Upanishads. Circa 1904–6. Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece during the latter part of his stay in Baroda. (He seems to have left the manuscript in western India when he came to Bengal in February 1906.) After completing six chapters and part of a seventh, he broke off work and never took it up again. The second to the seventh chapters of this work were included in *The Upanishads* in 1971, where they were numbered from one to six. The full text was published as a book in 1994.

The present text has been checked carefully against the manuscript, which unfortunately lacks its first two pages. For those pages the editors have relied on a typewritten transcript that was made before the pages were lost. The transcript contains several blanks, which occur in such a way as to suggest that the outer edge of the missing leaf of the manuscript was broken off. Making use of the indications found in the transcript, the editors have filled in the blanks with conjectural reconstructions; these have been printed within square brackets if they admitted of any doubt.

An Incomplete Work of Vedantic Exegesis. Circa 1906–8. Editorial title. This piece seems to have been written during the same period as "The Karmayogin: A Commentary on the Isha Upanishad", an extensive work published in *Isha Upanishad*, volume 17 of THE COMPLETE WORKS. It is quite incomplete. Not all the projected chapters were finished, and some of the completed chapters contain unfinished passages. Sri Aurobindo wrote the following outline at the end of the notebook:

II. God
    Turiya Brahman. Swayambhu.
    Prajna. Kavih.

    Sacchidananda.
    The Sakshi.
    Isha in contemplation. Maheshwara.
    Ananda. The Seed State. Sleep.
  Hiranyagarbha. Manishi
    The Will in Buddhi
    God Manifold. The Saguna Brahman.
    The Qualities of God. The Dream State.
  Virat. Paribhu
    The Almighty. Mahat.
    The Self in creatures. God in Man (Avatars.)
    The Self in Nature.
    Images
    God as Fate
    God as Providence
    Worship (Prayer & Praise)
  Purusha & Prakritih.
III. Vidya & Avidya
  Salvation. Escape from Avidya.
    Knowledge, Love & Works. Nirguna & Saguna Brahman.
    Self-realisation in Virat.
    States of moksha (Hir[anyagarbha]). Laya (Prajna).
  Yoga.
IV. I The Law of Karma. Sin & Virtue. Heaven & Hell. Salvation by Works
V. Ethics of Vedanta.

The Religion of Vedanta. 1906–8. An earlier draft of this fragment is published in the Reference Volume, volume 35 of The Complete Works. That draft continues slightly beyond the point where this version stops. After work on the present draft was broken off, Sri Aurobindo wrote the following, apparently a chapter-outline for a planned work:

1. Vedantic Cosmos	4.5
2. God in the Vedanta	1.8
3. Salvation by Works	1.2.3

4. The Ethics of Vedanta	6.7
5. The Twofold Will	9.10.11.12.13.14.15.16
6. Works and Immortality	17.18
7. The Great Release.	

It would appear that the proposed work was to be based on the Isha Upanishad, which has eighteen verses.

Evolution in the Vedantic View. Circa 1912. Editorial title. It is evident from the first sentence that the piece was written as part of a larger work, which either was not completed or has not survived.

The Means of Realisation. Circa 1912. The actual heading in the manuscript is "Chapter XI/ The Means of Realisation". The ten chapters that presumably preceded this one have not been found or identified.

A Fragmentary Chapter for a Work on Vedanta. Circa 1912–13. Editorial title. The manuscript of this piece is badly damaged in places. The opening lines are lost, as are a number of words and parts of sentences written near the edges and especially at the tops and bottoms of the pages.

God and Immortality. Circa 1916. This incomplete chapter is all that was written of a proposed book.

PUBLISHING HISTORY

Sri Aurobindo published translations of the Kena, Katha and Mundaka Upanishads in the *Karmayogin*, a weekly journal of political opinion, during the years 1909 and 1910. Between 1914 and 1920 he published revised or new translations of the Kena and Mundaka, and commentaries on all of the Kena and parts of the Taittiriya in the *Arya*, a monthly review of philosophy. He revised most of these works with a view to publishing them in books, but never did so. The unrevised *Karmayogin* translation of the Katha Upanishad was reprinted by Ashtekar & Co., Poona, in 1919; the unrevised *Karmayogin* translations of the Isha, Kena and Mundaka were included in the same publisher's *Seven Upanishads* in 1920. It is uncertain whether or not Sri Aurobindo authorised these publications.

The pieces published in Parts Two and Three of the present volume were found among Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts after his passing in 1950. Many of them were first published in journals connected with the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. In 1953 Sri Aurobindo's published translations of the Isha, Kena, Katha and Mundaka Upanishads and his unpublished translations of the Prashna, Mandukya, Aitareya and Taittiriya were brought out by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram as *Eight Upanishads*. In 1971 all these translations, the *Arya* commentaries on the Isha and Kena, the first of the "Readings in the Taittiriya Upanishad", and a number of pieces from the author's notebooks, were published in *The Upanishads*, volume 12 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. This book was reprinted several times. In 1981 most of the contents of the volume were rearranged and republished under the title *The Upanishads: Part One*. Several pieces that had appeared in the 1971 edition were removed from the 1981 edition with the intention of including them, along with other, recently discovered pieces, in a proposed second volume; but this was never brought out. The 1981 edition was reprinted in 1986 (when the translation of Chapter One, Section 3 of the Chhandogya Upanishad was included) and subsequently.

The present edition is the first to appear under the title *Kena and Other Upanishads*. In it, two pieces are published for the first time: "Kena Upanishad: A Partial Translation with Notes" and the last of the "Four Fragments" in Part Three. Several other pieces in Parts Two and Three have previously appeared only in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* and are included here for the first time in a book.

Essays on the Gita

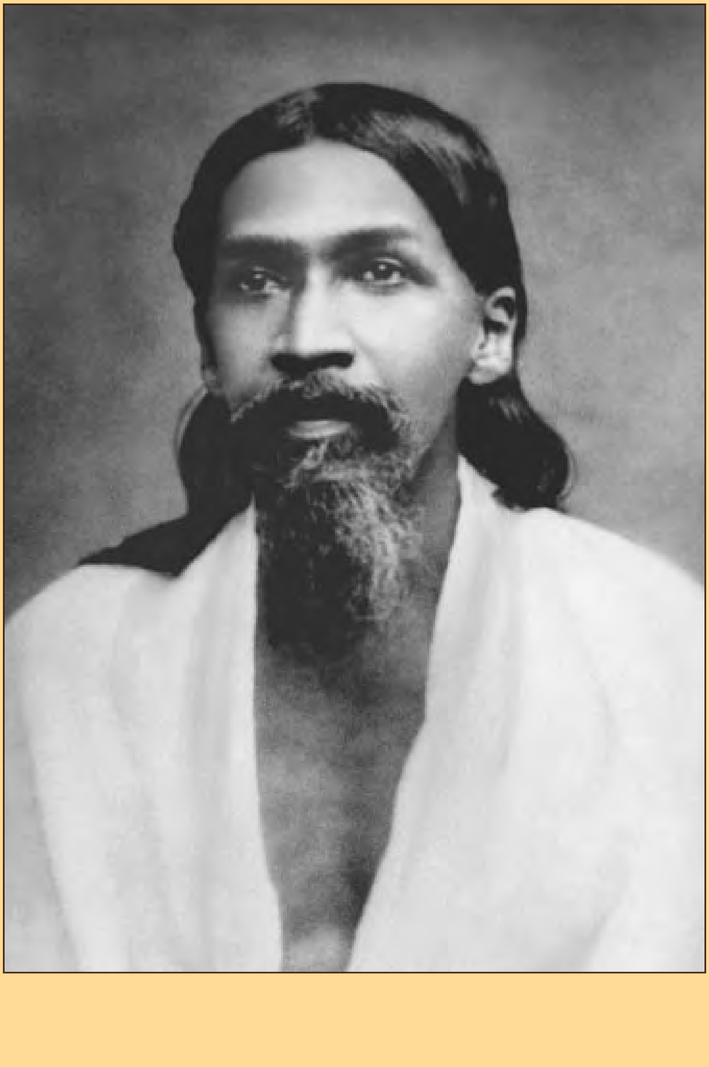

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 19
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1997
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Essays on the Gita

Publisher's Note

The first series of *Essays on the Gita* appeared in the monthly review *Arya* between August 1916 and July 1918. It was revised by Sri Aurobindo and published as a book in 1922.

The second series appeared in the *Arya* between August 1918 and July 1920. In 1928 Sri Aurobindo brought out an extensively revised edition in book form.

For the present edition, the text has been thoroughly checked against all previous editions and against the manuscripts of the revised *Arya*.

CONTENTS

FIRST SERIES

I
Our Demand and Need from the Gita 3

II
The Divine Teacher 12

III
The Human Disciple 20

IV
The Core of the Teaching 29

V
Kurukshetra 39

VI
Man and the Battle of Life 47

VII
The Creed of the Aryan Fighter 57

VIII
Sankhya and Yoga 68

IX
Sankhya, Yoga and Vedanta 81

X
The Yoga of the Intelligent Will 94

XI
Works and Sacrifice 105

XII
The Significance of Sacrifice 114

XIII
The Lord of the Sacrifice 124

XIV
The Principle of Divine Works 134

XV
The Possibility and Purpose of Avatarhood 145

XVI
The Process of Avatarhood 158

XVII
The Divine Birth and Divine Works 168

XVIII
The Divine Worker 177

XIX
Equality 188

XX
Equality and Knowledge 200

XXI
The Determinism of Nature 212

XXII
Beyond the Modes of Nature 224

XXIII
Nirvana and Works in the World 234

XXIV
The Gist of the Karmayoga 247

SECOND SERIES

Part I — The Synthesis of Works, Love and Knowledge

I
The Two Natures 263

II
The Synthesis of Devotion and Knowledge 278

III
The Supreme Divine 289

IV
The Secret of Secrets 301

V
The Divine Truth and Way 311

VI
Works, Devotion and Knowledge 322

VII
The Supreme Word of the Gita 337

VIII
God in Power of Becoming 355

IX
The Theory of the Vibhuti 366

X
The Vision of the World-Spirit — Time the Destroyer 377

XI
The Vision of the World-Spirit — The Double Aspect 388

XII
The Way and the Bhakta 396

Part II — The Supreme Secret

XIII
The Field and its Knower 409

XIV
Above the Gunas 421

XV
The Three Purushas 435

CONTENTS

XVI
The Fullness of Spiritual Action 450

XVII
Deva and Asura 463

XVIII
The Gunas, Faith and Works 477

XIX
The Gunas, Mind and Works 493

XX
Swabhava and Swadharma 507

XXI
Towards the Supreme Secret 526

XXII
The Supreme Secret 540

XXIII
The Core of the Gita's Meaning 562

XXIV
The Message of the Gita 572

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry, c. 1915

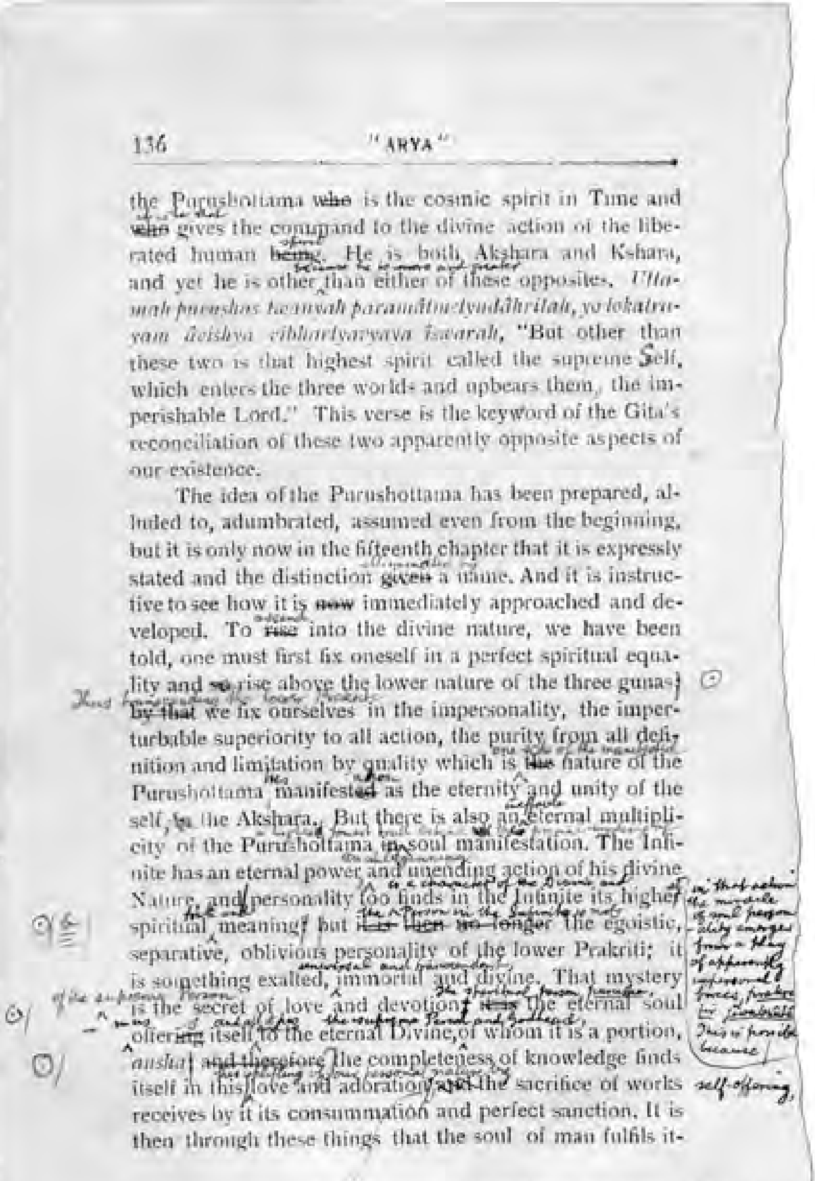

the Purushottama ~~who~~ is the cosmic spirit in Time and ~~who~~ it is he that gives the command to the divine action of the liberated human ~~being~~ spirit. He is both Akshara and Kshara, and yet he is other because he is more and greater than either of these opposites. *Uttamah purushas tvanyah paramâtmetyudâhritah, yo lokatrayam âvishya vibhartyavyaya îswarah,* "But other than these two is that highest spirit called the supreme Self, which enters the three worlds and upbears them, the imperishable Lord." This verse is the keyword of the Gita's reconciliation of these two apparently opposite aspects of our existence.

The idea of the Purushottama has been prepared, alluded to, adumbrated, assumed even from the beginning, but it is only now in the fifteenth chapter that it is expressly stated and the distinction ~~given~~ distinguished by a name. And it is instructive to see how it is ~~now~~ immediately approached and developed. To ~~rise~~ ascend into the divine nature, we have been told, one must first fix oneself in a perfect spiritual equality and ~~so~~ rise above the lower nature of the three gunas; Thus transcending the lower Prakriti ~~by that~~ we fix ourselves in the impersonality, the imperturbable superiority to all action, the purity from all definition and limitation by quality which is ~~the~~ one side of the manifested nature of the Purushottama his manifest~~ed~~ when as the eternity and unity of the self, ~~in~~ the Akshara. But there is also an infinite eternal multiplicity of the Purushottama ~~in~~ soul manifestation. The Infinite has an eternal power and unending action of his divine Nature, and personality too finds in the Infinite its higher spiritual truth and meaning; It is a character of the Divine and but ~~it is then no longer~~ the Person in the Infinite is not the egoistic, separative, oblivious personality of the lower Prakriti; it is something exalted, universal and transcendent, immortal and divine. That mystery of the supreme Person is the secret of love and devotion; ~~it is~~ the spiritual person, purusha, the eternal soul offer~~ing~~s itself and all it has to the eternal Divine, the supreme Person and Godhead, of whom it is a portion, *ansha*; ~~and therefore~~ the completeness of knowledge finds itself in this offering of our personal nature this love and adoration ~~and~~ the sacrifice of works receives by it its consummation and perfect sanction. It is then through these things that the soul of man fulfils it-

in that action the miracle of soul personality emerges from a play of apparently impersonal forces, qualities, [illegible]. This is possible because

self-offering,

* to the ineffable Master of our personality and our acts

Essays on the Gita

First Series

I

Our Demand and Need from the Gita

THE WORLD abounds with scriptures sacred and profane, with revelations and half-revelations, with religions and philosophies, sects and schools and systems. To these the many minds of a half-ripe knowledge or no knowledge at all attach themselves with exclusiveness and passion and will have it that this or the other book is alone the eternal Word of God and all others are either impostures or at best imperfectly inspired, that this or that philosophy is the last word of the reasoning intellect and other systems are either errors or saved only by such partial truth in them as links them to the one true philosophical cult. Even the discoveries of physical Science have been elevated into a creed and in its name religion and spirituality banned as ignorance and superstition, philosophy as frippery and moonshine. And to these bigoted exclusions and vain wranglings even the wise have often lent themselves, misled by some spirit of darkness that has mingled with their light and overshadowed it with some cloud of intellectual egoism or spiritual pride. Mankind seems now indeed inclined to grow a little modester and wiser; we no longer slay our fellows in the name of God's truth or because they have minds differently trained or differently constituted from ours; we are less ready to curse and revile our neighbour because he is wicked or presumptuous enough to differ from us in opinion; we are ready even to admit that Truth is everywhere and cannot be our sole monopoly; we are beginning to look at other religions and philosophies for the truth and help they contain and no longer merely in order to damn them as false or criticise what we conceive to be their errors. But we are still apt to declare that our truth gives us *the* supreme knowledge which other religions or philosophies have missed or only imperfectly grasped so that they deal either with subsidiary and inferior aspects of the truth of things or can merely prepare less evolved minds for the heights to which we have arrived. And we are still prone to force upon ourselves or others the whole sacred mass of the book or gospel we admire, insisting that all shall be accepted as eternally valid truth and no iota or underline or diaeresis denied its part of the plenary inspiration.

It may therefore be useful in approaching an ancient Scripture, such as the Veda, Upanishads or Gita, to indicate precisely the spirit in which we approach it and what exactly we think we may derive from it that is of value to humanity and its future. First of all, there is undoubtedly a Truth one and eternal which we are seeking, from which all other truth derives, by the light of which all other truth finds its right place, explanation and relation to the scheme of knowledge. But precisely for that reason it cannot be shut up in a single trenchant formula, it is not likely to be found in its entirety or in all its bearings in any single philosophy or scripture or uttered altogether and for ever by any one teacher, thinker, prophet or Avatar. Nor has it been wholly found by us if our view of it necessitates the intolerant exclusion of the truth underlying other systems; for when we reject passionately, we mean simply that we cannot appreciate and explain. Secondly, this Truth, though it is one and eternal, expresses itself in Time and through the mind of man; therefore every Scripture must necessarily contain two elements, one temporary, perishable, belonging to the ideas of the period and country in which it was produced, the other eternal and imperishable and applicable in all ages and countries. Moreover, in the statement of the Truth the actual form given to it, the system and arrangement, the metaphysical and intellectual mould, the precise expression used must be largely subject to the mutations of Time and cease to have the same force; for the human intellect modifies itself always; continually dividing and putting together it is obliged to shift its divisions continually and to rearrange its syntheses; it is always leaving old expression and symbol for new or, if it uses the old, it so changes its connotation or at least its exact content and association that we can never be quite sure of understanding an ancient book of this kind precisely in the sense and spirit it bore to its contemporaries. What is of entirely permanent value is that which besides being universal has been experienced, lived and seen with a higher than the intellectual vision.

I hold it therefore of small importance to extract from the Gita its exact metaphysical connotation as it was understood by the men of the time, — even if that were accurately possible. That it is not possible, is shown by the divergence of the original commentaries which have been and are still being written upon it; for they all agree in each disagreeing with all the others, each finds in the Gita its own system of metaphysics and trend of religious thought. Nor will even the most painstaking and disinterested scholarship and the most luminous theories of the historical development of Indian philosophy save us from inevitable error. But what we can do with profit is to seek in the Gita for the actual living truths it contains, apart from their metaphysical form, to extract from it what can help us or the world at large and to put it in the most natural and vital form and expression we can find that will be suitable to the mentality and helpful to the spiritual needs of our present-day humanity. No doubt in this attempt we may mix a good deal of error born of our own individuality and of the ideas in which we live, as did greater men before us, but if we steep ourselves in the spirit of this great Scripture and, above all, if we have tried to live in that spirit, we may be sure of finding in it as much real truth as we are capable of receiving as well as the spiritual influence and actual help that, personally, we were intended to derive from it. And that is after all what Scriptures were written to give; the rest is academical disputation or theological dogma. Only those Scriptures, religions, philosophies which can be thus constantly renewed, relived, their stuff of permanent truth constantly reshaped and developed in the inner thought and spiritual experience of a developing humanity, continue to be of living importance to mankind. The rest remain as monuments of the past, but have no actual force or vital impulse for the future.

In the Gita there is very little that is merely local or temporal and its spirit is so large, profound and universal that even this little can easily be universalised without the sense of the teaching suffering any diminution or violation; rather by giving an ampler scope to it than belonged to the country and epoch, the teaching gains in depth, truth and power. Often indeed the Gita itself suggests the wider scope that can in this way be given to an idea in itself local or limited. Thus it dwells on the ancient Indian system and idea of sacrifice as an interchange between gods and men, — a system and idea which have long been practically obsolete in India itself and are no longer real to the general human mind; but we find here a sense so entirely subtle, figurative and symbolic given to the word "sacrifice" and the conception of the gods is so little local or mythological, so entirely cosmic and philosophical that we can easily accept both as expressive of a practical fact of psychology and general law of Nature and so apply them to the modern conceptions of interchange between life and life and of ethical sacrifice and self-giving as to widen and deepen these and cast over them a more spiritual aspect and the light of a profounder and more far-reaching Truth. Equally the idea of action according to the Shastra, the fourfold order of society, the allusion to the relative position of the four orders or the comparative spiritual disabilities of Shudras and women seem at first sight local and temporal, and, if they are too much pressed in their literal sense, narrow so much at least of the teaching, deprive it of its universality and spiritual depth and limit its validity for mankind at large. But if we look behind to the spirit and sense and not at the local name and temporal institution, we see that here too the sense is deep and true and the spirit philosophical, spiritual and universal. By Shastra we perceive that the Gita means the law imposed on itself by humanity as a substitute for the purely egoistic action of the natural unregenerate man and a control on his tendency to seek in the satisfaction of his desire the standard and aim of his life. We see too that the fourfold order of society is merely the concrete form of a spiritual truth which is itself independent of the form; it rests on the conception of right works as a rightly ordered expression of the nature of the individual being through whom the work is done, that nature assigning him his line and scope in life according to his inborn quality and his self-expressive function. Since this is the spirit in which the Gita advances its most local and particular instances, we are justified in pursuing always the same principle and looking always for the deeper general truth which is sure to underlie whatever seems at first sight merely local and of the time. For we shall find always that the deeper truth and principle is implied in the grain of the thought even when it is not expressly stated in its language.

Nor shall we deal in any other spirit with the element of philosophical dogma or religious creed which either enters into the Gita or hangs about it owing to its use of the philosophical terms and religious symbols current at the time. When the Gita speaks of Sankhya and Yoga, we shall not discuss beyond the limits of what is just essential for our statement, the relations of the Sankhya of the Gita with its one Purusha and strong Vedantic colouring to the non-theistic or "atheistic" Sankhya that has come down to us bringing with it its scheme of many Purushas and one Prakriti, nor of the Yoga of the Gita, many-sided, subtle, rich and flexible to the theistic doctrine and the fixed, scientific, rigorously defined and graded system of the Yoga of Patanjali. In the Gita the Sankhya and Yoga are evidently only two convergent parts of the same Vedantic truth or rather two concurrent ways of approaching its realisation, the one philosophical, intellectual, analytic, the other intuitional, devotional, practical, ethical, synthetic, reaching knowledge through experience. The Gita recognises no real difference in their teachings. Still less need we discuss the theories which regard the Gita as the fruit of some particular religious system or tradition. Its teaching is universal whatever may have been its origins.

The philosophical system of the Gita, its arrangement of truth, is not that part of its teaching which is the most vital, profound, eternally durable; but most of the material of which the system is composed, the principal ideas suggestive and penetrating which are woven into its complex harmony, are eternally valuable and valid; for they are not merely the luminous ideas or striking speculations of a philosophic intellect, but rather enduring truths of spiritual experience, verifiable facts of our highest psychological possibilities which no attempt to read deeply the mystery of existence can afford to neglect. Whatever the system may be, it is not, as the commentators strive to make it, framed or intended to support any exclusive school of philosophical thought or to put forward predominantly the claims of any one form of Yoga. The language of the Gita, the structure of thought, the combination and balancing of ideas belong neither to the temper of a sectarian teacher nor to the spirit of a rigorous analytical dialectics cutting off one angle of the truth to exclude all the others; but rather there is a wide, undulating, encircling movement of ideas which is the manifestation of a vast synthetic mind and a rich synthetic experience. This is one of those great syntheses in which Indian spirituality has been as rich as in its creation of the more intensive, exclusive movements of knowledge and religious realisation that follow out with an absolute concentration one clue, one path to its extreme issues. It does not cleave asunder, but reconciles and unifies.

The thought of the Gita is not pure Monism although it sees in one unchanging, pure, eternal Self the foundation of all cosmic existence, nor Mayavada although it speaks of the Maya of the three modes of Prakriti omnipresent in the created world; nor is it qualified Monism although it places in the One his eternal supreme Prakriti manifested in the form of the Jiva and lays most stress on dwelling in God rather than dissolution as the supreme state of spiritual consciousness; nor is it Sankhya although it explains the created world by the double principle of Purusha and Prakriti; nor is it Vaishnava Theism although it presents to us Krishna, who is the Avatara of Vishnu according to the Puranas, as the supreme Deity and allows no essential difference nor any actual superiority of the status of the indefinable relationless Brahman over that of this Lord of beings who is the Master of the universe and the Friend of all creatures. Like the earlier spiritual synthesis of the Upanishads this later synthesis at once spiritual and intellectual avoids naturally every such rigid determination as would injure its universal comprehensiveness. Its aim is precisely the opposite to that of the polemist commentators who found this Scripture established as one of the three highest Vedantic authorities and attempted to turn it into a weapon of offence and defence against other schools and systems. The Gita is not a weapon for dialectical warfare; it is a gate opening on the whole world of spiritual truth and experience and the view it gives us embraces all the provinces of that supreme region. It maps out, but it does not cut up or build walls or hedges to confine our vision.

There have been other syntheses in the long history of Indian thought. We start with the Vedic synthesis of the psychological being of man in its highest flights and widest rangings of divine knowledge, power, joy, life and glory with the cosmic existence of the gods, pursued behind the symbols of the material universe into those superior planes which are hidden from the physical sense and the material mentality. The crown of this synthesis was in the experience of the Vedic Rishis something divine, transcendent and blissful in whose unity the increasing soul of man and the eternal divine fullness of the cosmic godheads meet perfectly and fulfil themselves. The Upanishads take up this crowning experience of the earlier seers and make it their starting-point for a high and profound synthesis of spiritual knowledge; they draw together into a great harmony all that had been seen and experienced by the inspired and liberated knowers of the Eternal throughout a great and fruitful period of spiritual seeking. The Gita starts from this Vedantic synthesis and upon the basis of its essential ideas builds another harmony of the three great means and powers, Love, Knowledge and Works, through which the soul of man can directly approach and cast itself into the Eternal. There is yet another, the Tantric,[1] which though less subtle and spiritually profound, is even more bold and forceful than the synthesis of the Gita, — for it seizes even upon the obstacles to the spiritual life and compels them to become the means for a richer spiritual conquest and enables us to embrace the whole of Life in our divine scope as the Lila[2] of the Divine; and in some directions it is more immediately rich and fruitful, for it brings forward into the foreground along with divine knowledge, divine works and an enriched devotion of divine Love, the secrets also of the Hatha and Raja Yogas, the use of the body and of mental askesis for the opening up of the divine life on all its planes, to which the Gita gives only a passing and perfunctory attention. Moreover it grasps at that idea of the divine perfectibility of man, possessed by the Vedic Rishis but thrown into the background by the intermediate ages, which is destined to fill so large a place in any future synthesis of human thought, experience and aspiration.

---

[1] All the Puranic tradition, it must be remembered, draws the richness of its contents from the Tantra.

We of the coming day stand at the head of a new age of development which must lead to such a new and larger synthesis. We are not called upon to be orthodox Vedantins of any of the three schools or Tantrics or to adhere to one of the theistic religions of the past or to entrench ourselves within the four corners of the teaching of the Gita. That would be to limit ourselves and to attempt to create our spiritual life out of the being, knowledge and nature of others, of the men of the past, instead of building it out of our own being and potentialities. We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future. A mass of new material is flowing into us; we have not only to assimilate the influences of the great theistic religions of India and of the world and a recovered sense of the meaning of Buddhism, but to take full account of the potent though limited revelations of modern knowledge and seeking; and, beyond that, the remote and dateless past which seemed to be dead is returning upon us with an effulgence of many luminous secrets long lost to the consciousness of mankind but now breaking out again from behind the veil. All this points to a new, a very rich, a very vast synthesis; a fresh and widely embracing harmonisation of our gains is both an intellectual and a spiritual necessity of the future. But just as the past syntheses have taken those which preceded them for their starting-point, so also must that of the future, to be on firm ground, proceed from what the great bodies of realised spiritual thought and experience in the past have given. Among them the Gita takes a most important place.

---

[2] The cosmic Play.

Our object, then, in studying the Gita will not be a scholastic or academical scrutiny of its thought, nor to place its philosophy in the history of metaphysical speculation, nor shall we deal with it in the manner of the analytical dialectician. We approach it for help and light and our aim must be to distinguish its essential and living message, that in it on which humanity has to seize for its perfection and its highest spiritual welfare.

II

The Divine Teacher

THE PECULIARITY of the Gita among the great religious books of the world is that it does not stand apart as a work by itself, the fruit of the spiritual life of a creative personality like Christ, Mahomed or Buddha or of an epoch of pure spiritual searching like the Veda and Upanishads, but is given as an episode in an epic history of nations and their wars and men and their deeds and arises out of a critical moment in the soul of one of its leading personages face to face with the crowning action of his life, a work terrible, violent and sanguinary, at the point when he must either recoil from it altogether or carry it through to its inexorable completion. It matters little whether or no, as modern criticism supposes, the Gita is a later composition inserted into the mass of the Mahabharata by its author in order to invest its teaching with the authority and popularity of the great national epic. There seem to me to be strong grounds against this supposition for which, besides, the evidence, extrinsic or internal, is in the last degree scanty and insufficient. But even if it be sound, there remains the fact that the author has not only taken pains to interweave his work inextricably into the vast web of the larger poem, but is careful again and again to remind us of the situation from which the teaching has arisen; he returns to it prominently, not only at the end, but in the middle of his profoundest philosophical disquisitions. We must accept the insistence of the author and give its full importance to this recurrent preoccupation of the Teacher and the disciple. The teaching of the Gita must therefore be regarded not merely in the light of a general spiritual philosophy or ethical doctrine, but as bearing upon a practical crisis in the application of ethics and spirituality to human life. For what that crisis stands, what is the significance of the battle of Kurukshetra and its effect on Arjuna's inner being, we have first to determine if we would grasp the central drift of the ideas of the Gita.

Very obviously a great body of the profoundest teaching cannot be built round an ordinary occurrence which has no gulfs of deep suggestion and hazardous difficulty behind its superficial and outward aspects and can be governed well enough by the ordinary everyday standards of thought and action. There are indeed three things in the Gita which are spiritually significant, almost symbolic, typical of the profoundest relations and problems of the spiritual life and of human existence at its roots; they are the divine personality of the Teacher, his characteristic relations with his disciple and the occasion of his teaching. The teacher is God himself descended into humanity; the disciple is the first, as we might say in modern language, the representative man of his age, closest friend and chosen instrument of the Avatar, his protagonist in an immense work and struggle the secret purpose of which is unknown to the actors in it, known only to the incarnate Godhead who guides it all from behind the veil of his unfathomable mind of knowledge; the occasion is the violent crisis of that work and struggle at the moment when the anguish and moral difficulty and blind violence of its apparent movements forces itself with the shock of a visible revelation on the mind of its representative man and raises the whole question of the meaning of God in the world and the goal and drift and sense of human life and conduct.

India has from ancient times held strongly a belief in the reality of the Avatara, the descent into form, the revelation of the Godhead in humanity. In the West this belief has never really stamped itself upon the mind because it has been presented through exoteric Christianity as a theological dogma without any roots in the reason and general consciousness and attitude towards life. But in India it has grown up and persisted as a logical outcome of the Vedantic view of life and taken firm root in the consciousness of the race. All existence is a manifestation of God because He is the only existence and nothing can be except as either a real figuring or else a figment of that one reality. Therefore every conscious being is in part or in some way a descent of the Infinite into the apparent finiteness of name and form. But it is a veiled manifestation and there is a gradation between the supreme being[1] of the Divine and the consciousness shrouded partly or wholly by ignorance of self in the finite. The conscious embodied soul[2] is the spark of the divine Fire and that soul in man opens out to self-knowledge as it develops out of ignorance of self into self-being. The Divine also, pouring itself into the forms of the cosmic existence, is revealed ordinarily in an efflorescence of its powers, in energies and magnitudes of its knowledge, love, joy, developed force of being,[3] in degrees and faces of its divinity. But when the divine Consciousness and Power, taking upon itself the human form and the human mode of action, possesses it not only by powers and magnitudes, by degrees and outward faces of itself but out of its eternal self-knowledge, when the Unborn knows itself and acts in the frame of the mental being and the appearance of birth, that is the height of the conditioned manifestation; it is the full and conscious descent of the Godhead, it is the Avatara.

The Vaishnava form of Vedantism which has laid most stress upon this conception expresses the relation of God in man to man in God by the double figure of Nara-Narayana, associated historically with the origin of a religious school very similar in its doctrines to the teaching of the Gita. Nara is the human soul which, eternal companion of the Divine, finds itself only when it awakens to that companionship and begins, as the Gita would say, to live in God. Narayana is the divine Soul always present in our humanity, the secret guide, friend and helper of the human being, the "Lord who abides within the heart of creatures" of the Gita; when within us the veil of that secret sanctuary is withdrawn and man speaks face to face with God, hears the divine voice, receives the divine light, acts in the divine power, then becomes possible the supreme uplifting of the embodied human conscious-being into the unborn and eternal. He becomes capable of that dwelling in God and giving up of his whole consciousness into the Divine which the Gita upholds as the best or highest secret of things, *uttamaṁ rahasyam*. When this eternal divine Consciousness always present in every human being, this God in man, takes possession partly[4] or wholly of the human consciousness and becomes in visible human shape the guide, teacher, leader of the world, not as those who living in their humanity yet feel something of the power or light or love of the divine Gnosis informing and conducting them, but out of that divine Gnosis itself, direct from its central force and plenitude, then we have the manifest Avatar. The inner Divinity is the eternal Avatar in man; the human manifestation is its sign and development in the external world.

---

[1] *para bhāva.* [2] *dehī.* [3] *vibhūti.*

When we thus understand the conception of Avatarhood, we see that whether for the fundamental teaching of the Gita, our present subject, or for spiritual life generally the external aspect has only a secondary importance. Such controversies as the one that has raged in Europe over the historicity of Christ, would seem to a spiritually-minded Indian largely a waste of time; he would concede to it a considerable historical, but hardly any religious importance; for what does it matter in the end whether a Jesus son of the carpenter Joseph was actually born in Nazareth or Bethlehem, lived and taught and was done to death on a real or trumped-up charge of sedition, so long as we can know by spiritual experience the inner Christ, live uplifted in the light of his teaching and escape from the yoke of the natural Law by that atonement of man with God of which the crucifixion is the symbol? If the Christ, God made man, lives within our spiritual being, it would seem to matter little whether or not a son of Mary physically lived and suffered and died in Judea. So too the Krishna who matters to us is the eternal incarnation of the Divine and not the historical teacher and leader of men.

In seeking the kernel of the thought of the Gita we need, therefore, only concern ourselves with the spiritual significance of the human-divine Krishna of the Mahabharata who is presented to us as the teacher of Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukshetra. The historical Krishna, no doubt, existed. We meet the name first in the Chhandogya Upanishad where all we can gather about him is that he was well known in spiritual tradition as a knower of the Brahman, so well known indeed in his personality and the circumstances of his life that it was sufficient to refer to him by the name of his mother as Krishna son of Devaki for all to understand who was meant. In the same Upanishad we find mention of King Dhritarashtra son of Vichitravirya, and since tradition associated the two together so closely that they are both of them leading personages in the action of the Mahabharata, we may fairly conclude that they were actually contemporaries and that the epic is to a great extent dealing with historical characters and in the war of Kurukshetra with a historical occurrence imprinted firmly on the memory of the race. We know too that Krishna and Arjuna were the object of religious worship in the pre-Christian centuries; and there is some reason to suppose that they were so in connection with a religious and philosophical tradition from which the Gita may have gathered many of its elements and even the foundation of its synthesis of knowledge, devotion and works, and perhaps also that the human Krishna was the founder, restorer or at the least one of the early teachers of this school. The Gita may well in spite of its later form represent the outcome in Indian thought of the teaching of Krishna and the connection of that teaching with the historical Krishna, with Arjuna and with the war of Kurukshetra may be something more than a dramatic fiction. In the Mahabharata Krishna is represented both as the historical character and the Avatar; his worship and Avatarhood must therefore have been well established by the time — apparently from the fifth to the first centuries B.C. — when the old story and poem or epic tradition of the Bharatas took its present form. There is a hint also in the poem of the story or legend of the Avatar's early life in Vrindavan which, as developed by the Puranas into an intense and powerful spiritual symbol, has exercised so profound an influence on the religious mind of India. We have also in the Harivansha an account of the life of Krishna, very evidently full of legends, which perhaps formed the basis of the Puranic accounts.

---

[4] Chaitanya, the Avatar of Nadiya, is said to have been thus partly or occasionally occupied by the divine Consciousness and Power.

But all this, though of considerable historical importance, has none whatever for our present purpose. We are concerned only with the figure of the divine Teacher as it is presented to us in the Gita and with the Power for which it there stands in the spiritual illumination of the human being. The Gita accepts the human Avatarhood; for the Lord speaks of the repeated, the constant[5] manifestation of the Divine in humanity, when He the eternal Unborn assumes by his Maya, by the power of the infinite Consciousness to clothe itself apparently in finite forms, the conditions of becoming which we call birth. But it is not this upon which stress is laid, but on the transcendent, the cosmic and the internal Divine; it is on the Source of all things and the Master of all and on the Godhead secret in man. It is this internal divinity who is meant when the Gita speaks of the doer of violent Asuric austerities troubling the God within or of the sin of those who despise the Divine lodged in the human body or of the same Godhead destroying our ignorance by the blazing lamp of knowledge. It is then the eternal Avatar, this God in man, the divine Consciousness always present in the human being who manifested in a visible form speaks to the human soul in the Gita, illumines the meaning of life and the secret of divine action and gives it the light of the divine knowledge and guidance and the assuring and fortifying word of the Master of existence in the hour when it comes face to face with the painful mystery of the world. This is what the Indian religious consciousness seeks to make near to itself in whatever form, whether in the symbolic human image it enshrines in its temples or in the worship of its Avatars or in the devotion to the human Guru through whom the voice of the one world-Teacher makes itself heard. Through these it strives to awaken to that inner voice, unveil that form of the Formless and stand face to face with that manifest divine Power, Love and Knowledge.

Secondly, there is the typical, almost the symbolic significance of the human Krishna who stands behind the great action of the Mahabharata, not as its hero, but as its secret centre and hidden guide. That action is the action of a whole world of men and nations, some of whom have come as helpers of an effort and result by which they do not personally profit, and to these he is a leader, some as its opponents and to them he also is an opponent, the baffler of their designs and their slayer and he seems even to some of them an instigator of all evil and destroyer of their old order and familiar world and secure conventions of virtue and good; some are representatives of that which has to be fulfilled and to them he is counsellor, helper, friend. Where the action pursues its natural course or the doers of the work have to suffer at the hands of its enemies and undergo the ordeals which prepare them for mastery, the Avatar is unseen or appears only for occasional comfort and aid, but at every crisis his hand is felt, yet in such a way that all imagine themselves to be the protagonists and even Arjuna, his nearest friend and chief instrument, does not perceive that he is an instrument and has to confess at last that all the while he did not really know his divine Friend. He has received counsel from his wisdom, help from his power, has loved and been loved, has even adored without understanding his divine nature; but he has been guided like all others through his own egoism and the counsel, help and direction have been given in the language and received by the thoughts of the Ignorance. Until the moment when all has been pushed to the terrible issue of the struggle on the field of Kurukshetra and the Avatar stands at last, still not as fighter, but as the charioteer in the battle-car which carries the destiny of the fight, he has not revealed Himself even to those whom he has chosen.

---

[5] *bahūni me vyatītāni janmāni . . . sambhavāmi yuge yuge.*

Thus the figure of Krishna becomes, as it were, the symbol of the divine dealings with humanity. Through our egoism and ignorance we are moved, thinking that we are the doers of the work, vaunting of ourselves as the real causes of the result, and that which moves us we see only occasionally as some vague or even some human and earthly fountain of knowledge, aspiration, force, some Principle or Light or Power which we acknowledge and adore without knowing what it is until the occasion arises that forces us to stand arrested before the Veil.

And the action in which this divine figure moves is the whole wide action of man in life, not merely the inner life, but all this obscure course of the world which we can judge only by the twilight of the human reason as it opens up dimly before our uncertain advance the little span in front. This is the distinguishing feature of the Gita that it is the culmination of such an action which gives rise to its teaching and assigns that prominence and bold relief to the gospel of works which it enunciates with an emphasis and force we do not find in other Indian Scriptures. Not only in the Gita, but in other passages of the Mahabharata we meet with Krishna declaring emphatically the necessity of action, but it is here that he reveals its secret and the divinity behind our works.

The symbolic companionship of Arjuna and Krishna, the human and the divine soul, is expressed elsewhere in Indian thought, in the heavenward journey of Indra and Kutsa seated in one chariot, in the figure of the two birds upon one tree in the Upanishad, in the twin figures of Nara and Narayana, the seers who do *tapasyā* together for the knowledge. But in all three it is the idea of the divine knowledge in which, as the Gita says, all action culminates that is in view; here it is instead the action which leads to that knowledge and in which the divine Knower figures himself. Arjuna and Krishna, this human and this divine, stand together not as seers in the peaceful hermitage of meditation, but as fighter and holder of the reins in the clamorous field, in the midst of the hurtling shafts, in the chariot of battle. The Teacher of the Gita is therefore not only the God in man who unveils himself in the word of knowledge, but the God in man who moves our whole world of action, by and for whom all our humanity exists and struggles and labours, towards whom all human life travels and progresses. He is the secret Master of works and sacrifice and the Friend of the human peoples.

III

The Human Disciple

SUCH then is the divine Teacher of the Gita, the eternal Avatar, the Divine who has descended into the human consciousness, the Lord seated within the heart of all beings, He who guides from behind the veil all our thought and action and heart's seeking even as He directs from behind the veil of visible and sensible forms and forces and tendencies the great universal action of the world which He has manifested in His own being. All the strife of our upward endeavour and seeking finds its culmination and ceases in a satisfied fulfilment when we can rend the veil and get behind our apparent self to this real Self, can realise our whole being in this true Lord of our being, can give up our personality to and into this one real Person, merge our ever-dispersed and ever-converging mental activities into His plenary light, offer up our errant and struggling will and energies into His vast, luminous and undivided Will, at once renounce and satisfy all our dissipated outward-moving desires and emotions in the plenitude of His self-existent Bliss. This is the world-Teacher of whose eternal knowledge all other highest teaching is but the various reflection and partial word, this the Voice to which the hearing of our soul has to awaken.

Arjuna, the disciple who receives his initiation on the battlefield, is a counterpart of this conception; he is the type of the struggling human soul who has not yet received the knowledge, but has grown fit to receive it by action in the world in a close companionship and an increasing nearness to the higher and divine Self in humanity. There is a method of explaining the Gita in which not only this episode but the whole Mahabharata is turned into an allegory of the inner life and has nothing to do with our outward human life and action, but only with the battles of the soul and the powers that strive within us for possession. That is a view which the general character and the actual language of the epic does not justify and, if pressed, would turn the straightforward philosophical language of the Gita into a constant, laborious and somewhat puerile mystification. The language of the Veda and part at least of the Puranas is plainly symbolic, full of figures and concrete representations of things that lie behind the veil, but the Gita is written in plain terms and professes to solve the great ethical and spiritual difficulties which the life of man raises, and it will not do to go behind this plain language and thought and wrest them to the service of our fancy. But there is this much of truth in the view, that the setting of the doctrine though not symbolical, is certainly typical, as indeed the setting of such a discourse as the Gita must necessarily be if it is to have any relation at all with that which it frames. Arjuna, as we have seen, is the representative man of a great world-struggle and divinely-guided movement of men and nations; in the Gita he typifies the human soul of action brought face to face through that action in its highest and most violent crisis with the problem of human life and its apparent incompatibility with the spiritual state or even with a purely ethical ideal of perfection.

Arjuna is the fighter in the chariot with the divine Krishna as his charioteer. In the Veda also we have this image of the human soul and the divine riding in one chariot through a great battle to the goal of a high-aspiring effort. But there it is a pure figure and symbol. The Divine is there Indra, the Master of the World of Light and Immortality, the power of divine knowledge which descends to the aid of the human seeker battling with the sons of falsehood, darkness, limitation, mortality; the battle is with spiritual enemies who bar the way to the higher world of our being; and the goal is that plane of vast being resplendent with the light of the supreme Truth and uplifted to the conscious immortality of the perfected soul, of which Indra is the master. The human soul is Kutsa, he who constantly seeks the seer-knowledge, as his name implies, and he is the son of Arjuna or Arjuni, the White One, child of Switra the White Mother; he is, that is to say, the sattwic or purified and light-filled soul which is open to the unbroken glories of the divine knowledge. And when the chariot reaches the end of its journey, the own home of Indra, the human Kutsa has grown into such an exact likeness of his divine companion that he can only be distinguished by Sachi, the wife of Indra, because she is "truth-conscious". The parable is evidently of the inner life of man; it is a figure of the human growing into the likeness of the eternal divine by the increasing illumination of Knowledge. But the Gita starts from action and Arjuna is the man of action and not of knowledge, the fighter, never the seer or the thinker.

From the beginning of the Gita this characteristic temperament of the disciple is clearly indicated and it is maintained throughout. It becomes first evident in the manner in which he is awakened to the sense of what he is doing, the great slaughter of which he is to be the chief instrument, in the thoughts which immediately rise in him, in the standpoint and the psychological motives which make him recoil from the whole terrible catastrophe. They are not the thoughts, the standpoint, the motives of a philosophical or even of a deeply reflective mind or a spiritual temperament confronted with the same or a similar problem. They are those, as we might say, of the practical or the pragmatic man, the emotional, sensational, moral and intelligent human being not habituated to profound and original reflection or any sounding of the depths, accustomed rather to high but fixed standards of thought and action and a confident treading through all vicissitudes and difficulties, who now finds all his standards failing him and all the basis of his confidence in himself and his life shorn away from under him at a single stroke. That is the nature of the crisis which he undergoes.

Arjuna is, in the language of the Gita, a man subject to the action of the three gunas or modes of the Nature-Force and habituated to move unquestioningly in that field, like the generality of men. He justifies his name only in being so far pure and sattwic as to be governed by high and clear principles and impulses and habitually control his lower nature by the noblest Law which he knows. He is not of a violent Asuric disposition, not the slave of his passions, but has been trained to a high calm and self-control, to an unswerving performance of his duties and firm obedience to the best principles of the time and society in which he has lived and the religion and ethics to which he has been brought up. He is egoistic like other men, but with the purer or sattwic egoism which regards the moral law and society and the claims of others and not only or predominantly his own interests, desires and passions. He has lived and guided himself by the Shastra, the moral and social code. The thought which preoccupies him, the standard which he obeys is the *dharma*, that collective Indian conception of the religious, social and moral rule of conduct, and especially the rule of the station and function to which he belongs, he the Kshatriya, the high-minded, self-governed, chivalrous prince and warrior and leader of Aryan men. Following always this rule, conscious of virtue and right dealing he has travelled so far and finds suddenly that it has led him to become the protagonist of a terrific and unparalleled slaughter, a monstrous civil war involving all the cultured Aryan nations which must lead to the complete destruction of the flower of their manhood and threatens their ordered civilisation with chaos and collapse.

It is typical again of the pragmatic man that it is through his sensations that he awakens to the meaning of his action. He has asked his friend and charioteer to place him between the two armies, not with any profounder idea, but with the proud intention of viewing and looking in the face these myriads of the champions of unrighteousness whom he has to meet and conquer and slay "in this holiday of fight" so that the right may prevail. It is as he gazes that the revelation of the meaning of a civil and domestic war comes home to him, a war in which not only men of the same race, the same nation, the same clan, but those of the same family and household stand upon opposite sides. All whom the social man holds most dear and sacred, he must meet as enemies and slay, — the worshipped teacher and preceptor, the old friend, comrade and companion in arms, grandsires, uncles, those who stood in the relation to him of father, of son, of grandson, connections by blood and connections by marriage, — all these social ties have to be cut asunder by the sword. It is not that he did not know these things before, but he has never realised it all; obsessed by his claims and wrongs and by the principles of his life, the struggle for the right, the duty of the Kshatriya to protect justice and the law and fight and beat down injustice and lawless violence, he has neither thought it out deeply nor felt it in his heart and at the core of his life. And now it is shown to his vision by the divine charioteer, placed sensationally before his eyes, and comes home to him like a blow delivered at the very centre of his sensational, vital and emotional being.

The first result is a violent sensational and physical crisis which produces a disgust of the action and its material objects and of life itself. He rejects the vital aim pursued by egoistic humanity in its action, — happiness and enjoyment; he rejects the vital aim of the Kshatriya, victory and rule and power and the government of men. What after all is this fight for justice when reduced to its practical terms, but just this, a fight for the interests of himself, his brothers and his party, for possession and enjoyment and rule? But at such a cost these things are not worth having. For they are of no value in themselves, but only as a means to the right maintenance of social and national life and it is these very aims that in the person of his kin and his race he is about to destroy. And then comes the cry of the emotions. These are they for whose sake life and happiness are desired, our "own people". Who would consent to slay these for the sake of all the earth, or even for the kingdom of the three worlds? What pleasure can there be in life, what happiness, what satisfaction in oneself after such a deed? The whole thing is a dreadful sin, — for now the moral sense awakens to justify the revolt of the sensations and the emotions. It is a sin, there is no right nor justice in mutual slaughter; especially are those who are to be slain the natural objects of reverence and of love, those without whom one would not care to live, and to violate these sacred feelings can be no virtue, can be nothing but a heinous crime. Granted that the offence, the aggression, the first sin, the crimes of greed and selfish passion which have brought things to such a pass came from the other side; yet armed resistance to wrong under such circumstances would be itself a sin and crime worse than theirs because they are blinded by passion and unconscious of guilt, while on this side it would be with a clear sense of guilt that the sin would be committed. And for what? For the maintenance of family morality, of the social law and the law of the nation? These are the very standards that will be destroyed by this civil war; the family itself will be brought to the point of annihilation, corruption of morals and loss of the purity of race will be engendered, the eternal laws of the race and moral law of the family will be destroyed. Ruin of the race, the collapse of its high traditions, ethical degradation and hell for the authors of such a crime, these are the only practical results possible of this monstrous civil strife. "Therefore," cries Arjuna, casting down the divine bow and inexhaustible quiver given to him by the gods for that tremendous hour, "it is more for my welfare that the sons of Dhritarashtra armed should slay me unarmed and unresisting. I will not fight."

The character of this inner crisis is therefore not the questioning of the thinker; it is not a recoil from the appearances of life and a turning of the eye inward in search of the truth of things, the real meaning of existence and a solution or an escape from the dark riddle of the world. It is the sensational, emotional and moral revolt of the man hitherto satisfied with action and its current standards who finds himself cast by them into a hideous chaos where they are in violent conflict with each other and with themselves and there is no moral standing-ground left, nothing to lay hold of and walk by, no *dharma*.[1] That for the soul of action in the mental being is the worst possible crisis, failure and overthrow. The revolt itself is the most elemental and simple possible; sensationally, the elemental feeling of horror, pity and disgust; vitally, the loss of attraction and faith in the recognised and familiar objects of action and aims of life; emotionally, the recoil of the ordinary feelings of social man, affection, reverence, desire of a common happiness and satisfaction, from a stern duty outraging them all; morally, the elementary sense of sin and hell and rejection of "blood-stained enjoyments"; practically, the sense that the standards of action have led to a result which destroys the practical aims of action. But the whole upshot is that all-embracing inner bankruptcy which Arjuna expresses when he says that his whole conscious being, not the thought alone but heart and vital desires and all, are utterly bewildered and can find nowhere the *dharma*, nowhere any valid law of action. For this alone he takes refuge as a disciple with Krishna; give me, he practically asks, that which I have lost, a true law, a clear rule of action, a path by which I can again confidently walk. He does not ask for the secret of life or of the world, the meaning and purpose of it all, but for a *dharma*.

---

[1] *Dharma* means literally that which one lays hold of and which holds things together, the law, the norm, the rule of nature, action and life.

Yet it is precisely this secret for which he does not ask, or at least so much of the knowledge as is necessary to lead him into a higher life, to which the divine Teacher intends to lead this disciple; for he means him to give up all *dharmas* except the one broad and vast rule of living consciously in the Divine and acting from that consciousness. Therefore after testing the completeness of his revolt from the ordinary standards of conduct, he proceeds to tell him much that has to do with the state of the soul, but nothing of any outward rule of action. He must be equal in soul, abandon the desire of the fruits of work, rise above his intellectual notions of sin and virtue, live and act in Yoga with a mind in Samadhi, firmly fixed, that is to say, in the Divine alone. Arjuna is not satisfied: he wishes to know how the change to this state will affect the outward action of the man, what result it will have on his speech, his movements, his state, what difference it will make in this acting, living human being. Krishna persists merely in enlarging upon the ideas he has already brought forward, on the soul-state behind the action, not on the action itself. It is the fixed anchoring of the intelligence in a state of desireless equality that is the one thing needed. Arjuna breaks out impatiently, — for here is no rule of conduct such as he sought, but rather, as it seems to him, the negation of all action, — "If thou holdest the intelligence to be greater than action, why then dost thou appoint me to an action terrible in its nature? Thou bewilderest my understanding with a mingled word: speak one thing decisively by which I can attain to what is the best." It is always the pragmatic man who has no value for metaphysical thought or for the inner life except when they help him to his one demand, a *dharma*, a law of life in the world or, if need be, of leaving the world; for that too is a decisive action which he can understand. But to live and act in the world, yet be above it, this is a "mingled" and confusing word the sense of which he has no patience to grasp.

The rest of Arjuna's questions and utterances proceed from the same temperament and character. When he is told that once the soul-state is assured there need be no apparent change in the action, he must act always by the law of his nature, even if the act itself seem faulty and deficient compared with that of another law than his own, he is troubled. The nature! but what of this sense of sin in the action with which he is preoccupied? is it not this very nature which drives men as if by force and even against their better will into sin and guilt? His practical intelligence is baffled by Krishna's assertion that it was he who in ancient times revealed to Vivasvan this Yoga, since lost, which he is now again revealing to Arjuna, and by his demand for an explanation he provokes the famous and oft-quoted statement of Avatarhood and its mundane purpose. He is again perplexed by the words in which Krishna continues to reconcile action and renunciation of action and asks once again for a decisive statement of that which is the best and highest, not this "mingled" word. When he realises fully the nature of the Yoga which he is bidden to embrace, his pragmatic nature accustomed to act from mental will and preference and desire is appalled by its difficulty and he asks what is the end of the soul which attempts and fails, whether it does not lose both this life of human activity and thought and emotion which it has left behind and the Brahmic consciousness to which it aspires and falling from both perish like a dissolving cloud?

When his doubts and perplexities are resolved and he knows that it is the Divine which must be his law, he aims again and always at such clear and decisive knowledge as will guide him practically to this source and this rule of his future action. How is the Divine to be distinguished among the various states of being which constitute our ordinary experience? What are the great manifestations of its self-energy in the world in which he can recognise and realise it by meditation? May he not see even now the divine cosmic Form of That which is actually speaking to him through the veil of the human mind and body? And his last questions demand a clear distinction between renunciation of works and this subtler renunciation he is asked to prefer; the actual difference between Purusha and Prakriti, the Field and the Knower of the Field, so important for the practice of desireless action under the drive of the divine Will; and finally a clear statement of the practical operations and results of the three modes of Prakriti which he is bidden to surmount.

To such a disciple the Teacher of the Gita gives his divine teaching. He seizes him at a moment of his psychological development by egoistic action when all the mental, moral, emotional values of the ordinary egoistic and social life of man have collapsed in a sudden bankruptcy, and he has to lift him up out of this lower life into a higher consciousness, out of ignorant attachment to action into that which transcends, yet originates and orders action, out of ego into Self, out of life in mind, vitality and body into that higher nature beyond mind which is the status of the Divine. He has at the same time to give him that for which he asks and for which he is inspired to seek by the guidance within him, a new Law of life and action high above the insufficient rule of the ordinary human existence with its endless conflicts and oppositions, perplexities and illusory certainties, a higher Law by which the soul shall be free from this bondage of works and yet powerful to act and conquer in the vast liberty of its divine being. For the action must be performed, the world must fulfil its cycles and the soul of the human being must not turn back in ignorance from the work it is here to do. The whole course of the teaching of the Gita is determined and directed, even in its widest wheelings, towards the fulfilment of these three objects.

IV

The Core of the Teaching

WE KNOW the divine Teacher, we see the human disciple; it remains to form a clear conception of the doctrine. A clear conception fastening upon the essential idea, the central heart of the teaching is especially necessary here because the Gita with its rich and many-sided thought, its synthetical grasp of different aspects of the spiritual life and the fluent winding motion of its argument lends itself, even more than other scriptures, to one-sided misrepresentations born of a partisan intellectuality. The unconscious or half-conscious wresting of fact and word and idea to suit a preconceived notion or the doctrine or principle of one's preference is recognised by Indian logicians as one of the most fruitful sources of fallacy; and it is perhaps the one which it is most difficult for even the most conscientious thinker to avoid. For the human reason is incapable of always playing the detective upon itself in this respect; it is its very nature to seize upon some partial conclusion, idea, principle, become its partisan and make it the key to all truth, and it has an infinite faculty of doubling upon itself so as to avoid detecting in its operations this necessary and cherished weakness. The Gita lends itself easily to this kind of error, because it is easy, by throwing particular emphasis on one of its aspects or even on some salient and emphatic text and putting all the rest of the eighteen chapters into the background or making them a subordinate and auxiliary teaching, to turn it into a partisan of our own doctrine or dogma.

Thus, there are those who make the Gita teach, not works at all, but a discipline of preparation for renouncing life and works: the indifferent performance of prescribed actions or of whatever task may lie ready to the hands, becomes the means, the discipline; the final renunciation of life and works is the sole real object. It is quite easy to justify this view by citations from the book and by a certain arrangement of stress in following out its argument, especially if we shut our eyes to the peculiar way in which it uses such a word as *sannyāsa*, renunciation; but it is quite impossible to persist in this view on an impartial reading in face of the continual assertion to the very end that action should be preferred to inaction and that superiority lies with the true, the inner renunciation of desire by equality and the giving up of works to the supreme Purusha.

Others again speak of the Gita as if the doctrine of devotion were its whole teaching and put in the background its monistic elements and the high place it gives to quietistic immergence in the one self of all. And undoubtedly its emphasis on devotion, its insistence on the aspect of the Divine as Lord and Purusha and its doctrine of the Purushottama, the Supreme Being who is superior both to the mutable Being and to the Immutable and who is what in His relation to the world we know as God, are the most striking and among the most vital elements of the Gita. Still, this Lord is the Self in whom all knowledge culminates and the Master of sacrifice to whom all works lead as well as the Lord of Love into whose being the heart of devotion enters, and the Gita preserves a perfectly equal balance, emphasising now knowledge, now works, now devotion, but for the purposes of the immediate trend of the thought, not with any absolute separate preference of one over the others. He in whom all three meet and become one, He is the Supreme Being, the Purushottama.

But at the present day, since in fact the modern mind began to recognise and deal at all with the Gita, the tendency is to subordinate its elements of knowledge and devotion, to take advantage of its continual insistence on action and to find in it a scripture of the Karmayoga, a Light leading us on the path of action, a Gospel of Works. Undoubtedly, the Gita is a Gospel of Works, but of works which culminate in knowledge, that is, in spiritual realisation and quietude, and of works motived by devotion, that is, a conscious surrender of one's whole self first into the hands and then into the being of the Supreme, and not at all of works as they are understood by the modern mind, not at all an action dictated by egoistic and altruistic, by personal, social, humanitarian motives, principles, ideals. Yet this is what present-day interpretations seek to make of the Gita. We are told continually by many authoritative voices that the Gita, opposing in this the ordinary ascetic and quietistic tendency of Indian thought and spirituality, proclaims with no uncertain sound the gospel of human action, the ideal of disinterested performance of social duties, nay, even, it would seem, the quite modern ideal of social service. To all this I can only reply that very patently and even on the very surface of it the Gita does nothing of the kind and that this is a modern misreading, a reading of the modern mind into an ancient book, of the present-day European or Europeanised intellect into a thoroughly antique, a thoroughly Oriental and Indian teaching. That which the Gita teaches is not a human, but a divine action; not the performance of social duties, but the abandonment of all other standards of duty or conduct for a selfless performance of the divine will working through our nature; not social service, but the action of the Best, the God-possessed, the Master-men done impersonally for the sake of the world and as a sacrifice to Him who stands behind man and Nature.

In other words, the Gita is not a book of practical ethics, but of the spiritual life. The modern mind is just now the European mind, such as it has become after having abandoned not only the philosophic idealism of the highest Graeco-Roman culture from which it started, but the Christian devotionalism of the Middle Ages; these it has replaced by or transmuted into a practical idealism and social, patriotic and philanthropic devotion. It has got rid of God or kept Him only for Sunday use and erected in His place man as its deity and society as its visible idol. At its best it is practical, ethical, social, pragmatic, altruistic, humanitarian. Now all these things are good, are especially needed at the present day, are part of the divine Will or they would not have become so dominant in humanity. Nor is there any reason why the divine man, the man who lives in the Brahmic consciousness, in the God-being should not be all of these things in his action; he will be, if they are the best ideal of the age, the Yugadharma, and there is no yet higher ideal to be established, no great radical change to be effected. For he is, as the Teacher points out to his disciple, the best who has to set the standard for others; and in fact Arjuna is called upon to live according to the highest ideals of his age and the prevailing culture, but with knowledge, with understanding of that which lay behind, and not as ordinary men, with a following of the merely outward law and rule.

But the point here is that the modern mind has exiled from its practical motive-power the two essential things, God or the Eternal and spirituality or the God-state, which are the master conceptions of the Gita. It lives in humanity only, and the Gita would have us live in God, though for the world in God; in its life, heart and intellect only, and the Gita would have us live in the spirit; in the mutable Being who is "all creatures", and the Gita would have us live also in the Immutable and the Supreme; in the changing march of Time, and the Gita would have us live in the Eternal. Or if these higher things are now beginning to be vaguely envisaged, it is only to make them subservient to man and society; but God and spirituality exist in their own right and not as adjuncts. And in practice the lower in us must learn to exist for the higher, in order that the higher also may in us consciously exist for the lower, to draw it nearer to its own altitudes.

Therefore it is a mistake to interpret the Gita from the standpoint of the mentality of today and force it to teach us the disinterested performance of duty as the highest and all-sufficient law. A little consideration of the situation with which the Gita deals will show us that this could not be its meaning. For the whole point of the teaching, that from which it arises, that which compels the disciple to seek the Teacher, is an inextricable clash of the various related conceptions of duty ending in the collapse of the whole useful intellectual and moral edifice erected by the human mind. In human life some sort of a clash arises fairly often, as for instance between domestic duties and the call of the country or the cause, or between the claim of the country and the good of humanity or some larger religious or moral principle. An inner situation may even arise, as with the Buddha, in which all duties have to be abandoned, trampled on, flung aside in order to follow the call of the Divine within. I cannot think that the Gita would solve such an inner situation by sending Buddha back to his wife and father and the government of the Sakya State, or would direct a Ramakrishna to become a Pundit in a vernacular school and disinterestedly teach little boys their lessons, or bind down a Vivekananda to support his family and for that to follow dispassionately the law or medicine or journalism. The Gita does not teach the disinterested performance of duties but the following of the divine life, the abandonment of all dharmas, *sarvadharmān*, to take refuge in the Supreme alone, and the divine activity of a Buddha, a Ramakrishna, a Vivekananda is perfectly in consonance with this teaching. Nay, although the Gita prefers action to inaction, it does not rule out the renunciation of works, but accepts it as one of the ways to the Divine. If that can only be attained by renouncing works and life and all duties and the call is strong within us, then into the bonfire they must go, and there is no help for it. The call of God is imperative and cannot be weighed against any other considerations.

But here there is this farther difficulty that the action which Arjuna must do is one from which his moral sense recoils. It is his duty to fight, you say? But that duty has now become to his mind a terrible sin. How does it help him or solve his difficulty, to tell him that he must do his duty disinterestedly, dispassionately? He will want to know which is his duty or how it can be his duty to destroy in a sanguinary massacre his kin, his race and his country. He is told that he has right on his side, but that does not and cannot satisfy him, because his very point is that the justice of his legal claim does not justify him in supporting it by a pitiless massacre destructive to the future of his nation. Is he then to act dispassionately in the sense of not caring whether it is a sin or what its consequences may be so long as he does his duty as a soldier? That may be the teaching of a State, of politicians, of lawyers, of ethical casuists; it can never be the teaching of a great religious and philosophical Scripture which sets out to solve the problem of life and action from the very roots. And if that is what the Gita has to say on a most poignant moral and spiritual problem, we must put it out of the list of the world's Scriptures and thrust it, if anywhere, then into our library of political science and ethical casuistry.

Undoubtedly, the Gita does, like the Upanishads, teach the equality which rises above sin and virtue, beyond good and evil, but only as a part of the Brahmic consciousness and for the man who is on the path and advanced enough to fulfil the supreme rule. It does not preach indifference to good and evil for the ordinary life of man, where such a doctrine would have the most pernicious consequences. On the contrary it affirms that the doers of evil shall not attain to God. Therefore if Arjuna simply seeks to fulfil in the best way the ordinary law of man's life, disinterested performance of what he feels to be a sin, a thing of Hell, will not help him, even though that sin be his duty as a soldier. He must refrain from what his conscience abhors though a thousand duties were shattered to pieces.

We must remember that duty is an idea which in practice rests upon social conceptions. We may extend the term beyond its proper connotation and talk of our duty to ourselves or we may, if we like, say in a transcendent sense that it was Buddha's duty to abandon all, or even that it is the ascetic's duty to sit motionless in a cave! But this is obviously to play with words. Duty is a relative term and depends upon our relation to others. It is a father's duty, as a father, to nurture and educate his children; a lawyer's to do his best for his client even if he knows him to be guilty and his defence to be a lie; a soldier's to fight and shoot to order even if he kill his own kin and countrymen; a judge's to send the guilty to prison and hang the murderer. And so long as these positions are accepted, the duty remains clear, a practical matter of course even when it is not a point of honour or affection, and overrides the absolute religious or moral law. But what if the inner view is changed, if the lawyer is awakened to the absolute sinfulness of falsehood, the judge becomes convinced that capital punishment is a crime against humanity, the man called upon to the battlefield feels, like the conscientious objector of today or as a Tolstoy would feel, that in no circumstances is it permissible to take human life any more than to eat human flesh? It is obvious that here the moral law which is above all relative duties must prevail; and that law depends on no social relation or conception of duty but on the awakened inner perception of man, the moral being.

There are in the world, in fact, two different laws of conduct each valid on its own plane, the rule principally dependent on external status and the rule independent of status and entirely dependent on the thought and conscience. The Gita does not teach us to subordinate the higher plane to the lower, it does not ask the awakened moral consciousness to slay itself on the altar of duty as a sacrifice and victim to the law of the social status. It calls us higher and not lower; from the conflict of the two planes it bids us ascend to a supreme poise above the mainly practical, above the purely ethical, to the Brahmic consciousness. It replaces the conception of social duty by a divine obligation. The subjection to external law gives place to a certain principle of inner self-determination of action proceeding by the soul's freedom from the tangled law of works. And this, as we shall see, — the Brahmic consciousness, the soul's freedom from works and the determination of works in the nature by the Lord within and above us, — is the kernel of the Gita's teaching with regard to action.

The Gita can only be understood, like any other great work of the kind, by studying it in its entirety and as a developing argument. But the modern interpreters, starting from the great writer Bankim Chandra Chatterji who first gave to the Gita this new sense of a Gospel of Duty, have laid an almost exclusive stress on the first three or four chapters and in those on the idea of equality, on the expression *kartavyaṁ karma*, the work that is to be done, which they render by duty, and on the phrase "Thou hast a right to action, but none to the fruits of action" which is now popularly quoted as the great word, *mahāvākya*, of the Gita. The rest of the eighteen chapters with their high philosophy are given a secondary importance, except indeed the great vision in the eleventh. This is natural enough for the modern mind which is, or has been till yesterday, inclined to be impatient of metaphysical subtleties and far-off spiritual seekings, eager to get to work and, like Arjuna himself, mainly concerned for a workable law of works, a *dharma*. But it is the wrong way to handle this Scripture.

The equality which the Gita preaches is not disinterestedness, — the great command to Arjuna given *after* the foundation and main structure of the teaching have been laid and built, "Arise, slay thy enemies, enjoy a prosperous kingdom," has not the ring of an uncompromising altruism or of a white, dispassionate abnegation; it is a state of inner poise and wideness which is the foundation of spiritual freedom. With that poise, in that freedom we have to do the "work that is to be done," a phrase which the Gita uses with the greatest wideness including in it all works, *sarvakarmāṇi*, and which far exceeds, though it may include, social duties or ethical obligations. What is the work to be done is not to be determined by the individual choice; nor is the right to the action and the rejection of claim to the fruit the great word of the Gita, but only a preliminary word governing the first state of the disciple when he begins ascending the hill of Yoga. It is practically superseded at a subsequent stage. For the Gita goes on to affirm emphatically that the man is not the doer of the action; it is Prakriti, it is Nature, it is the great Force with its three modes of action that works through him, and he must learn to see that it is *not* he who does the work. Therefore the "right to action" is an idea which is only valid so long as we are still under the illusion of being the doer; it must necessarily disappear from the mind like the claim to the fruit, as soon as we cease to be to our own consciousness the doer of our works. All pragmatic egoism, whether of the claim to fruits or of the right to action, is then at an end.

But the determinism of Prakriti is not the last word of the Gita. The equality of the will and the rejection of fruits are only means for entering with the mind and the heart and the understanding into the divine consciousness and living in it; and the Gita expressly says that they are to be employed as a means as long as the disciple is unable so to live or even to seek by practice the gradual development of this higher state. And what is this Divine, whom Krishna declares himself to be? It is the Purushottama beyond the Self that acts not, beyond the Prakriti that acts, foundation of the one, master of the other, the Lord of whom all is the manifestation, who even in our present subjection to Maya sits in the heart of His creatures governing the works of Prakriti, He by whom the armies on the field of Kurukshetra have already been slain while yet they live and who uses Arjuna only as an instrument or immediate occasion of this great slaughter. Prakriti is only His executive force. The disciple has to rise beyond this Force and its three modes or *guṇas*; he has to become *triguṇātīta*. Not to her has he to surrender his actions, over which he has no longer any claim or "right", but into the being of the Supreme. Reposing his mind and understanding, heart and will in Him, with self-knowledge, with God-knowledge, with world-knowledge, with a perfect equality, a perfect devotion, an absolute self-giving, he has to do works as an offering to the Master of all self-energisings and all sacrifice. Identified in will, conscious with that consciousness, That shall decide and initiate the action. This is the solution which the Divine Teacher offers to the disciple.

What the great, the supreme word of the Gita is, its *mahāvākya*, we have not to seek; for the Gita itself declares it in its last utterance, the crowning note of the great diapason. "With the Lord in thy heart take refuge with all thy being; by His grace thou shalt attain to the supreme peace and the eternal status. So have I expounded to thee a knowledge more secret than that which is hidden. Further hear the most secret, the supreme word that I shall speak to thee. Become my-minded, devoted to Me, to Me do sacrifice and adoration; infallibly, thou shalt come to Me, for dear to me art thou. Abandoning all laws of conduct seek refuge in Me alone. I will release thee from all sin; do not grieve."

The argument of the Gita resolves itself into three great steps by which action rises out of the human into the divine plane leaving the bondage of the lower for the liberty of a higher law. First, by the renunciation of desire and a perfect equality works have to be done as a sacrifice by man as the doer, a sacrifice to a deity who is the supreme and only Self though by him not yet realised in his own being. This is the initial step. Secondly, not only the desire of the fruit, but the claim to be the doer of works has to be renounced in the realisation of the Self as the equal, the inactive, the immutable principle and of all works as simply the operation of universal Force, of the Nature-Soul, Prakriti, the unequal, active, mutable power. Lastly, the supreme Self has to be seen as the supreme Purusha governing this Prakriti, of whom the soul in Nature is a partial manifestation, by whom all works are directed, in a perfect transcendence, through Nature. To him love and adoration and the sacrifice of works have to be offered; the whole being has to be surrendered to Him and the whole consciousness raised up to dwell in this divine consciousness so that the human soul may share in His divine transcendence of Nature and of His works and act in a perfect spiritual liberty.

The first step is Karmayoga, the selfless sacrifice of works, and here the Gita's insistence is on action. The second is Jnanayoga, the self-realisation and knowledge of the true nature of the self and the world; and here the insistence is on knowledge; but the sacrifice of works continues and the path of Works becomes one with but does not disappear into the path of Knowledge. The last step is Bhaktiyoga, adoration and seeking of the supreme Self as the Divine Being, and here the insistence is on devotion; but the knowledge is not subordinated, only raised, vitalised and fulfilled, and still the sacrifice of works continues; the double path becomes the triune way of knowledge, works and devotion. And the fruit of the sacrifice, the one fruit still placed before the seeker, is attained, union with the divine Being and oneness with the supreme divine nature.

V

Kurukshetra

BEFORE we can proceed, following in the large steps of the Teacher of the Gita, to watch his tracing of the triune path of man, — the path which is that of his will, heart, thought raising themselves to the Highest and into the being of that which is the supreme object of all action, love and knowledge, we must consider once more the situation from which the Gita arises, but now in its largest bearings as a type of human life and even of all world-existence. For although Arjuna is himself concerned only with his own situation, his inner struggle and the law of action he must follow, yet, as we have seen, the particular question he raises, in the manner in which he raises it, does really bring up the whole question of human life and action, what the world is and why it is and how possibly, it being what it is, life here in the world can be reconciled with life in the Spirit. And all this deep and difficult matter the Teacher insists on resolving as the very foundation of his command to an action which must proceed from a new poise of being and by the light of a liberating knowledge.

But what, then, is it that makes the difficulty for the man who has to take the world as it is and act in it and yet would live, within, the spiritual life? What is this aspect of existence which appals his awakened mind and brings about what the title of the first chapter of the Gita calls significantly the Yoga of the dejection of Arjuna, the dejection and discouragement felt by the human being when he is forced to face the spectacle of the universe as it really is with the veil of the ethical illusion, the illusion of self-righteousness torn from his eyes, before a higher reconciliation with himself is effected? It is that aspect which is figured outwardly in the carnage and massacre of Kurukshetra and spiritually by the vision of the Lord of all things as Time arising to devour and destroy the creatures whom it has made.

This is the vision of the Lord of all existence as the universal Creator but also the universal Destroyer, of whom the ancient Scripture can say in a ruthless image, "The sages and the heroes are his food and death is the spice of his banquet." It is one and the same truth seen first indirectly and obscurely in the facts of life and then directly and clearly in the soul's vision of that which manifests itself in life. The outward aspect is that of world-existence and human existence proceeding by struggle and slaughter; the inward aspect is that of the universal Being fulfilling himself in a vast creation and a vast destruction. Life a battle and a field of death, this is Kurukshetra; God the Terrible, this is the vision that Arjuna sees on that field of massacre.

War, said Heraclitus, is the father of all things, War is the king of all; and the saying, like most of the apophthegms of the Greek thinker, suggests a profound truth. From a clash of material or other forces everything in this world, if not the world itself, seems to be born; by a struggle of forces, tendencies, principles, beings it seems to proceed, ever creating new things, ever destroying the old, marching one knows not very well whither, — to a final self-destruction, say some; in an unending series of vain cycles, say others; in progressive cycles, is the most optimistic conclusion, leading through whatever trouble and apparent confusion towards a higher and higher approximation to some divine apocalypse. However that may be, this is certain that there is not only no construction here without destruction, no harmony except by a poise of contending forces won out of many actual and potential discords, but also no continued existence of life except by a constant self-feeding and devouring of other life. Our very bodily life is a constant dying and being reborn, the body itself a beleaguered city attacked by assailing, protected by defending forces whose business is to devour each other: and this is only a type of all our existence. The command seems to have gone out from the beginning, "Thou shalt not conquer except by battle with thy fellows and thy surroundings; thou shalt not even live except by battle and struggle and by absorbing into thyself other life. The first law of this world that I have made is creation and preservation by destruction."

Ancient thought accepted this starting-point so far as it could see it by scrutiny of the universe. The old Upanishads saw it very clearly and phrased it with an uncompromising thoroughness which will have nothing to do with any honeyed glosses or optimistic scuttlings of the truth. Hunger that is Death, they said, is the creator and master of this world, and they figured vital existence in the image of the Horse of the sacrifice. Matter they described by a name which means ordinarily food and they said, we call it food because it is devoured and devours creatures. The eater eating is eaten, this is the formula of the material world, as the Darwinians rediscovered when they laid it down that the struggle for life is the law of evolutionary existence. Modern science has only rephrased the old truths that had already been expressed in much more forcible, wide and accurate formulas by the apophthegm of Heraclitus and the figures employed by the Upanishads.

Nietzsche's insistence upon war as an aspect of life and the ideal man as a warrior, — the camel-man he may be to begin with and the child-man hereafter, but the lion-man he must become in the middle, if he is to attain his perfection, — these now much-decried theories of Nietzsche have, however much we may differ from many of the moral and practical conclusions he drew from them, their undeniable justification and recall us to a truth we like to hide out of sight. It is good that we should be reminded of it; first, because to see it has for every strong soul a tonic effect which saves us from the flabbiness and relaxation encouraged by a too mellifluous philosophic, religious or ethical sentimentalism, that which loves to look upon Nature as love and life and beauty and good, but turns away from her grim mask of death, adoring God as Shiva but refusing to adore him as Rudra; secondly, because unless we have the honesty and courage to look existence straight in the face, we shall never arrive at any effective solution of its discords and oppositions. We must see first what life and the world are; afterwards, we can all the better set about finding the right way to transform them into what they should be. If this repellent aspect of existence holds in itself some secret of the final harmony, we shall by ignoring or belittling it miss that secret and all our efforts at a solution will fail by fault of our self-indulgent ignoring of the true elements of the problem. If, on the other hand, it is an enemy to be beaten down, trampled on, excised, eliminated, still we gain nothing by underrating its power and hold upon life or refusing to see how firmly it is rooted in the effective past and the actually operative principles of existence.

War and destruction are not only a universal principle of our life here in its purely material aspects, but also of our mental and moral existence. It is self-evident that in the actual life of man intellectual, social, political, moral we can make no real step forward without a struggle, a battle between what exists and lives and what seeks to exist and live and between all that stands behind either. It is impossible, at least as men and things are, to advance, to grow, to fulfil and still to observe really and utterly that principle of harmlessness which is yet placed before us as the highest and best law of conduct. We will use only soul-force and never destroy by war or any even defensive employment of physical violence? Good, though until soul-force is effective, the Asuric force in men and nations tramples down, breaks, slaughters, burns, pollutes, as we see it doing today, but then at its ease and unhindered, and you have perhaps caused as much destruction of life by your abstinence as others by resort to violence; still you have set up an ideal which may some day and at any rate ought to lead up to better things. But even soul-force, when it is effective, destroys. Only those who have used it with eyes open, know how much more terrible and destructive it is than the sword and the cannon; and only those who do not limit their view to the act and its immediate results, can see how tremendous are its after-effects, how much is eventually destroyed and with that much all the life that depended on it and fed upon it. Evil cannot perish without the destruction of much that lives by the evil, and it is no less destruction even if we personally are saved the pain of a sensational act of violence.

Moreover, every time we use soul-force we raise a great force of Karma against our adversary, the after-movements of which we have no power to control. Vasishtha uses soul-force against the military violence of Vishwamitra and armies of Huns and Shakas and Pallavas hurl themselves on the aggressor. The very quiescence and passivity of the spiritual man under violence and aggression awakens the tremendous forces of the world to a retributive action; and it may even be more merciful to stay in their path, though by force, those who represent evil than to allow them to trample on until they call down on themselves a worse destruction than we would ever think of inflicting. It is not enough that our own hands should remain clean and our souls unstained for the law of strife and destruction to die out of the world; that which is its root must first disappear out of humanity. Much less will mere immobility and inertia unwilling to use or incapable of using any kind of resistance to evil, abrogate the law; inertia, tamas, indeed, injures much more than can the rajasic principle of strife which at least creates more than it destroys. Therefore, so far as the problem of the individual's action goes, his abstention from strife and its inevitable concomitant destruction in their more gross and physical form may help his own moral being, but it leaves the Slayer of creatures unabolished.

For the rest the whole of human history bears witness to the inexorable vitality and persistent prevalence of this principle in the world. It is natural that we should attempt to palliate, to lay stress on other aspects. Strife and destruction are not all; there is the saving principle of association and mutual help as well as the force of dissociation and mutual strife; a power of love no less than a power of egoistic self-assertion; an impulse to sacrifice ourselves for others as well as the impulse to sacrifice others to ourselves. But when we see how these have actually worked, we shall not be tempted to gloss over or ignore the power of their opposites. Association has been worked not only for mutual help, but at the same time for defence and aggression, to strengthen us against all that attacks or resists in the struggle for life. Association itself has been a servant of war, egoism and the self-assertion of life against life. Love itself has been constantly a power of death. Especially the love of good and the love of God, as embraced by the human ego, have been responsible for much strife, slaughter and destruction. Self-sacrifice is great and noble, but at its highest it is an acknowledgment of the law of Life by death and becomes an offering on the altar of some Power that demands a victim in order that the work desired may be done. The mother bird facing the animal of prey in defence of its young, the patriot dying for his country's freedom, the religious martyr or the martyr of an idea, these in the lower and the superior scale of animal life are highest examples of self-sacrifice, and it is evident to what they bear witness.

But if we look at after results, an easy optimism becomes even less possible. See the patriot dying in order that his country may be free, and mark that country a few decades after the Lord of Karma has paid the price of the blood and the suffering that was given; you shall see it in its turn an oppressor, an exploiter and conqueror of colonies and dependencies devouring others that it may live and succeed aggressively in life. The Christian martyrs perish in their thousands, setting soul-force against empire-force that Christ may conquer, Christianity prevail. Soul-force does triumph, Christianity does prevail, — but not Christ; the victorious religion becomes a militant and dominant Church and a more fanatically persecuting power than the creed and the empire which it replaced. The very religions organise themselves into powers of mutual strife and battle together fiercely to live, to grow, to possess the world.

All which seems to show that here is an element in existence, perhaps the initial element, which we do not know how to conquer either because it cannot be conquered or because we have not looked at it with a strong and impartial gaze so as to recognise it calmly and fairly and know what it is. We must look existence in the face if our aim is to arrive at a right solution, whatever that solution may be. And to look existence in the face is to look God in the face; for the two cannot be separated, nor the responsibility for the laws of world-existence be shifted away from Him who created them or from That which constituted it. Yet here too we love to palliate and equivocate. We erect a God of Love and Mercy, a God of good, a God just, righteous and virtuous according to our own moral conceptions of justice, virtue and righteousness, and all the rest, we say, is not He or is not His, but was made by some diabolical Power which He suffered for some reason to work out its wicked will or by some dark Ahriman counterbalancing our gracious Ormuzd, or was even the fault of selfish and sinful man who has spoiled what was made originally perfect by God. As if man had created the law of death and devouring in the animal world or that tremendous process by which Nature creates indeed and preserves but in the same step and by the same inextricable action slays and destroys. It is only a few religions which have had the courage to say without any reserve, like the Indian, that this enigmatic World-Power is one Deity, one Trinity, to lift up the image of the Force that acts in the world in the figure not only of the beneficent Durga, but of the terrible Kali in her blood-stained dance of destruction and to say, "This too is the Mother; this also know to be God; this too, if thou hast the strength, adore." And it is significant that the religion which has had this unflinching honesty and tremendous courage, has succeeded in creating a profound and wide-spread spirituality such as no other can parallel. For truth is the foundation of real spirituality and courage is its soul. *Tasyai satyam āyatanam.*

All this is not to say that strife and destruction are the alpha and omega of existence, that harmony is not greater than war, love more the manifest divine than death or that we must not move towards the replacement of physical force by soul-force, of war by peace, of strife by union, of devouring by love, of egoism by universality, of death by immortal life. God is not only the Destroyer, but the Friend of creatures; not only the cosmic Trinity, but the Transcendent; the terrible Kali is also the loving and beneficent Mother; the lord of Kurukshetra is the divine comrade and charioteer, the attracter of beings, incarnate Krishna. And whithersoever he is driving through all the strife and clash and confusion, to whatever goal or godhead he may be attracting us, it is — no doubt of that — to some transcendence of all these aspects upon which we have been so firmly insisting. But where, how, with what kind of transcendence, under what conditions, this we have to discover; and to discover it, the first necessity is to see the world as it is, to observe and value rightly his action as it reveals itself at the start and now; afterwards the way and the goal will better reveal themselves. We must acknowledge Kurukshetra; we must submit to the law of Life by Death before we can find our way to the life immortal; we must open our eyes, with a less appalled gaze than Arjuna's, to the vision of our Lord of Time and Death and cease to deny, hate or recoil from the universal Destroyer.

VI

Man and the Battle of Life

THUS, if we are to appreciate in its catholicity the teaching of the Gita, we must accept intellectually its standpoint and courageous envisaging of the manifest nature and process of the world. The divine charioteer of Kurukshetra reveals himself on one side as the Lord of all the worlds and the Friend and omniscient Guide of all creatures, on the other as Time the Destroyer "arisen for the destruction of these peoples." The Gita, following in this the spirit of the catholic Hindu religion, affirms this also as God; it does not attempt to evade the enigma of the world by escaping from it through a side-door. If, in fact, we do not regard existence merely as the mechanic action of a brute and indifferent material Force or, on the other hand, as an equally mechanical play of ideas and energies arising out of an original Non-Existence or else reflected in the passive Soul or the evolution of a dream or nightmare in the surface consciousness of an indifferent, immutable Transcendence which is unaffected by the dream and has no real part in it, — if we accept at all, as the Gita accepts, the existence of God, that is to say of the omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, yet always transcendent Being who manifests the world and Himself in the world, who is not the slave but the lord of His creative Consciousness, Nature or Force (Maya, Prakriti or Shakti), who is not baffled or thwarted in His world-conception or design by His creatures, man or devil, who does not need to justify Himself by shifting the responsibility for any part of His creation or manifestation on that which is created or manifested, then the human being has to start from a great, a difficult act of faith. Finding himself in a world which is apparently a chaos of battling powers, a clash of vast and obscure forces, a life which subsists only by constant change and death, menaced from every side by pain, suffering, evil and destruction, he has to see the omnipresent

Deity in it all and conscious that of this enigma there must be a solution and beyond this Ignorance in which he dwells a Knowledge that reconciles, he has to take his stand upon this faith, "Though Thou slay me, yet will I trust in Thee." All human thought or faith that is active and affirmative, whether it be theistic, pantheistic or atheistic, does in fact involve more or less explicitly and completely such an attitude. It admits and it believes: admits the discords of the world, believes in some highest principle of God, universal Being or Nature which shall enable us to transcend, overcome or harmonise these discords, perhaps even to do all three at once, to harmonise by overcoming and transcending.

Then, as to human life in its actualities, we have to accept its aspect of a struggle and a battle mounting into supreme crises such as that of Kurukshetra. The Gita, as we have seen, takes for its frame such a period of transition and crisis as humanity periodically experiences in its history, in which great forces clash together for a huge destruction and reconstruction, intellectual, social, moral, religious, political, and these in the actual psychological and social stage of human evolution culminate usually through a violent physical convulsion of strife, war or revolution. The Gita proceeds from the acceptance of the necessity in Nature for such vehement crises and it accepts not only the moral aspect, the struggle between righteousness and unrighteousness, between the self-affirming law of Good and the forces that oppose its progression, but also the physical aspect, the actual armed war or other vehement physical strife between the human beings who represent the antagonistic powers. We must remember that the Gita was composed at a time when war was even more than it is now a necessary part of human activity and the idea of its elimination from the scheme of life would have been an absolute chimera. The gospel of universal peace and goodwill among men — for without a universal and entire mutual goodwill there can be no real and abiding peace — has never succeeded for a moment in possessing itself of human life during the historic cycle of our progress, because morally, socially, spiritually the race was not prepared and the poise of

Nature in its evolution would not admit of its being immediately prepared for any such transcendence. Even now we have not actually progressed beyond the feasibility of a system of accommodation between conflicting interests which may minimise the recurrence of the worst forms of strife. And towards this consummation the method, the approach which humanity has been forced by its own nature to adopt, is a monstrous mutual massacre unparalleled in history; a universal war, full of bitterness and irreconcilable hatred, is the straight way and the triumphant means modern man has found for the establishment of universal peace! That consummation, too, founded not upon any fundamental change in human nature, but upon intellectual notions, economic convenience, vital and sentimental shrinkings from the loss of life, discomfort and horror of war, effected by nothing better than political adjustments, gives no very certain promise of firm foundation and long duration. A day may come, must surely come, we will say, when humanity will be ready spiritually, morally, socially for the reign of universal peace; meanwhile the aspect of battle and the nature and function of man as a fighter have to be accepted and accounted for by any practical philosophy and religion. The Gita, taking life as it is and not only as it may be in some distant future, puts the question how this aspect and function of life, which is really an aspect and function of human activity in general, can be harmonised with the spiritual existence.

The Gita is therefore addressed to a fighter, a man of action, one whose duty in life is that of war and protection, war as a part of government for the protection of those who are excused from that duty, debarred from protecting themselves and therefore at the mercy of the strong and the violent, war, secondly and by a moral extension of this idea, for the protection of the weak and the oppressed and for the maintenance of right and justice in the world. For all these ideas, the social and practical, the moral and the chivalrous enter into the Indian conception of the Kshatriya, the man who is a warrior and ruler by function and a knight and king in his nature. Although the more general and universal ideas of the Gita are those which are the most important to us, we ought not to leave out of consideration altogether the colouring and trend they take from the peculiar Indian culture and social system in the midst of which they arose. That system differed from the modern in its conception. To the modern mind man is a thinker, worker or producer and a fighter all in one, and the tendency of the social system is to lump all these activities and to demand from each individual his contribution to the intellectual, economical and military life and needs of the community without paying any heed to the demands of his individual nature and temperament. The ancient Indian civilisation laid peculiar stress on the individual nature, tendency, temperament and sought to determine by it the ethical type, function and place in the society. Nor did it consider man primarily as a social being or the fullness of his social existence as the highest ideal, but rather as a spiritual being in process of formation and development and his social life, ethical law, play of temperament and exercise of function as means and stages of spiritual formation. Thought and knowledge, war and government, production and distribution, labour and service were carefully differentiated functions of society, each assigned to those who were naturally called to it and providing the right means by which they could individually proceed towards their spiritual development and self-perfection.

The modern idea of a common obligation in all the main departments of human activity has its advantages; it helps to greater solidarity, unity and fullness in the life of the community and a more all-round development of the complete human being as opposed to the endless divisions and over-specialisation and the narrowing and artificial shackling of the life of the individual to which the Indian system eventually led. But it has also its disadvantages and in certain of its developments the too logical application of it has led to grotesque and disastrous absurdities. This is evident enough in the character of modern war. From the idea of a common military obligation binding on every individual to defend and fight for the community by which he lives and profits, has arisen the system by which the whole manhood of the nation is hurled into the bloody trench to slay and be slain, thinkers, artists, philosophers, priests, merchants, artisans all torn from their natural functions, the whole life of the community disorganised, reason and conscience overridden, even the minister of religion who is salaried by the State or called by his function to preach the gospel of peace and love forced to deny his creed and become a butcher of his fellow-men! Not only are conscience and nature violated by the arbitrary fiat of the military State, but national defence carried to an insane extreme makes its best attempt to become a national suicide.

Indian civilisation on the contrary made it its chief aim to minimise the incidence and disaster of war. For this purpose it limited the military obligation to the small class who by their birth, nature and traditions were marked out for this function and found in it their natural means of self-development through the flowering of the soul in the qualities of courage, disciplined force, strong helpfulness and chivalrous nobility for which the warrior's life pursued under the stress of a high ideal gives a field and opportunities. The rest of the community was in every way guarded from slaughter and outrage; their life and occupations were as little interfered with as possible and the combative and destructive tendencies of human nature were given a restricted field, confined in a sort of lists so as to do the minimum amount of harm to the general life of the race, while at the same time by being subjected to high ethical ideals and every possible rule of humanity and chivalry the function of war was obliged to help in ennobling and elevating instead of brutalising those who performed it. It must be remembered that it is war of this kind and under these conditions that the Gita had in view, war considered as an inevitable part of human life, but so restricted and regulated as to serve like other activities the ethical and spiritual development which was then regarded as the whole real object of life, war destructive within certain carefully fixed limits of the bodily life of individual men but constructive of their inner life and of the ethical elevation of the race. That war in the past has, when subjected to an ideal, helped in this elevation, as in the development of knighthood and chivalry, the

Indian ideal of the Kshatriya, the Japanese ideal of the Samurai, can only be denied by the fanatics of pacifism. When it has fulfilled its function, it may well disappear; for if it tries to survive its utility, it will appear as an unrelieved brutality of violence stripped of its ideal and constructive aspects and will be rejected by the progressive mind of humanity; but its past service to the race must be admitted in any reasonable view of our evolution.

The physical fact of war, however, is only a special and outward manifestation of a general principle in life and the Kshatriya is only the outward manifestation and type of a general characteristic necessary to the completeness of human perfection. War typifies and embodies physically the aspect of battle and struggle which belongs to all life, both to our inner and our outer living, in a world whose method is a meeting and wrestling of forces which progress by mutual destruction towards a continually changing adjustment expressive of a progressive harmonising and hopeful of a perfect harmony based upon some yet ungrasped potentiality of oneness. The Kshatriya is the type and embodiment of the fighter in man who accepts this principle in life and faces it as a warrior striving towards mastery, not shrinking from the destruction of bodies and forms, but through it all aiming at the realisation of some principle of right, justice, law which shall be the basis of the harmony towards which the struggle tends. The Gita accepts this aspect of the world-energy and the physical fact of war which embodies it, and it addresses itself to the man of action, the striver and fighter, the Kshatriya, — war which is the extreme contradiction of the soul's high aspiration to peace within and harmlessness[1] without, the striver and fighter whose necessary turmoil of struggle and action seems to be the very contradiction of the soul's high ideal of calm mastery and self-possession, — and it seeks for an issue from the contradiction, a point at which its terms meet and a poise which shall be the first essential basis of harmony and transcendence.

---

[1] *ahiṁsā.*

Man meets the battle of life in the manner most consonant with the essential quality most dominant in his nature. There are, according to the Sankhya philosophy accepted in this respect by the Gita, three essential qualities or modes of the world-energy and therefore also of human nature, *sattva*, the mode of poise, knowledge and satisfaction, *rajas*, the mode of passion, action and struggling emotion, *tamas*, the mode of ignorance and inertia. Dominated by *tamas*, man does not so much meet the rush and shock of the world-energies whirling about him and converging upon him as he succumbs to them, is overborne by them, afflicted, subjected; or at the most, helped by the other qualities, the tamasic man seeks only somehow to survive, to subsist so long as he may, to shelter himself in the fortress of an established routine of thought and action in which he feels himself to a certain extent protected from the battle, able to reject the demand which his higher nature makes upon him, excused from accepting the necessity of farther struggle and the ideal of an increasing effort and mastery. Dominated by *rajas*, man flings himself into the battle and attempts to use the struggle of forces for his own egoistic benefit, to slay, conquer, dominate, enjoy; or, helped by a certain measure of the sattwic quality, the rajasic man makes the struggle itself a means of increasing inner mastery, joy, power, possession. The battle of life becomes his delight and passion partly for its own sake, for the pleasure of activity and the sense of power, partly as a means of his increase and natural self-development. Dominated by *sattva*, man seeks in the midst of the strife for a principle of law, right, poise, harmony, peace, satisfaction. The purely sattwic man tends to seek this within, whether for himself alone or with an impulse to communicate it, when won, to other human minds, but usually by a sort of inner detachment from or else an outer rejection of the strife and turmoil of the active world-energy; but if the sattwic mind accepts partly the rajasic impulse, it seeks rather to impose this poise and harmony upon the struggle and apparent chaos, to vindicate a victory for peace, love and harmony over the principle of war, discord and struggle. All the attitudes adopted by the human mind towards the problem of life either derive from the domination of one or other of these qualities or else from an attempt at balance and harmony between them.

But there comes also a stage in which the mind recoils from the whole problem and, dissatisfied with the solutions given by the threefold mode of Nature, *traiguṇya*, seeks for some higher solution outside of it or else above it. It looks for an escape either into something which is outside and void of all qualities and therefore of all activity or in something which is superior to the three qualities and master of them and therefore at once capable of action and unaffected, undominated by its own action, in the *nirguṇa* or the *triguṇātīta*. It aspires to an absolute peace and unconditioned existence or to a dominant calm and superior existence. The natural movement of the former attitude is towards the renunciation of the world, *sannyāsa*; of the latter towards superiority to the claims of the lower nature and its whirl of actions and reactions, and its principle is equality and the inner renunciation of passion and desire. The former is the first impulse of Arjuna recoiling from the calamitous culmination of all his heroic activity in the great cataclysm of battle and massacre, Kurukshetra; losing his whole past principle of action, inaction and the rejection of life and its claims seem to him the only issue. But it is to an inner superiority and not to the physical renunciation of life and action that he is called by the voice of the divine Teacher.

Arjuna is the Kshatriya, the rajasic man who governs his rajasic action by a high sattwic ideal. He advances to this gigantic struggle, to this Kurukshetra with the full acceptance of the joy of battle, as to “a holiday of fight”, but with a proud confidence in the righteousness of his cause; he advances in his rapid chariot tearing the hearts of his enemies with the victorious clamour of his war-conch; for he wishes to look upon all these Kings of men who have come here to champion against him the cause of unrighteousness and establish as a rule of life the disregard of law, justice and truth which they would replace by the rule of a selfish and arrogant egoism. When this confidence is shattered within him, when he is smitten down from his customary attitude and mental basis of life, it is by the uprush of the tamasic quality into the rajasic man, inducing a recoil of astonishment, grief, horror, dismay, dejection, bewilderment of the mind and the war of reason against itself, a collapse towards the principle of ignorance and inertia. As a result he turns towards renunciation. Better the life of the mendicant living upon alms than this *dharma* of the Kshatriya, this battle and action culminating in undiscriminating massacre, this principle of mastery and glory and power which can only be won by destruction and bloodshed, this conquest of blood-stained enjoyments, this vindication of justice and right by a means which contradicts all righteousness and this affirmation of the social law by a war which destroys in its process and result all that constitutes society.

Sannyāsa is the renunciation of life and action and of the threefold modes of Nature, but it has to be approached through one or other of the three qualities. The impulse may be tamasic, a feeling of impotence, fear, aversion, disgust, horror of the world and life; or it may be the rajasic quality tending towards tamas, an impulse of weariness of the struggle, grief, disappointment, refusal to accept any longer this vain turmoil of activity with its pains and its eternal discontent. Or the impulse may be that of rajas tending towards sattwa, the impulse to arrive at something superior to anything life can give, to conquer a higher state, to trample down life itself under the feet of an inner strength which seeks to break all bonds and transcend all limits. Or it may be sattwic, an intellectual perception of the vanity of life and the absence of any real goal or justification for this ever-cycling world-existence or else a spiritual perception of the Timeless, the Infinite, the Silent, the nameless and formless Peace beyond. The recoil of Arjuna is the tamasic recoil from action of the sattwa-rajasic man. The Teacher may confirm it in its direction, using it as a dark entry to the purity and peace of the ascetic life; or he may purify it at once and raise it towards the rare altitudes of the sattwic tendency of renunciation. In fact, he does neither. He discourages the tamasic recoil and the tendency to renunciation and enjoins the continuance of action and even of the same fierce and terrible action, but he points the disciple towards another and inner renunciation which is the real issue from his crisis and the way towards the soul's superiority to the world-Nature and yet its calm and self-possessed action in the world. Not a physical asceticism, but an inner askesis is the teaching of the Gita.

VII

The Creed of the Aryan Fighter[1]

THE ANSWER of the divine Teacher to the first flood of Arjuna's passionate self-questioning, his shrinking from slaughter, his sense of sorrow and sin, his grieving for an empty and desolate life, his forecast of evil results of an evil deed, is a strongly-worded rebuke. All this, it is replied, is confusion of mind and delusion, a weakness of the heart, an unmanliness, a fall from the virility of the fighter and the hero. Not this was fitting in the son of Pritha, not thus should the champion and chief hope of a righteous cause abandon it in the hour of crisis and peril or suffer the sudden amazement of his heart and senses, the clouding of his reason and the downfall of his will to betray him into the casting away of his divine weapons and the refusal of his God-given work. This is not the way cherished and followed by the Aryan man; this mood came not from heaven nor can it lead to heaven, and on earth it is the forfeiting of the glory that waits upon strength and heroism and noble works. Let him put from him this weak and self-indulgent pity, let him rise and smite his enemies!

The answer of a hero to a hero, shall we say, but not that which we should expect from a divine Teacher from whom we demand rather that he shall encourage always gentleness and saintliness and self-abnegation and the recoil from worldly aims and cessation from the ways of the world? The Gita expressly says that Arjuna has thus lapsed into unheroic weakness, "his eyes full and distressed with tears, his heart overcome by depression and discouragement," because he is invaded by pity, *kṛpayāviṣṭam*. Is this not then a divine weakness? Is not pity a divine emotion which should not thus be discouraged with harsh rebuke? Or are we in face of a mere gospel of war and heroic action, a Nietzschean creed of power and high-browed strength, of Hebraic or old Teutonic hardness which holds pity to be a weakness and thinks like the Norwegian hero who thanked God because He had given him a hard heart? But the teaching of the Gita springs from an Indian creed and to the Indian mind compassion has always figured as one of the largest elements of the divine nature. The Teacher himself enumerating in a later chapter the qualities of the godlike nature in man places among them compassion to creatures, gentleness, freedom from wrath and from the desire to slay and do hurt, no less than fearlessness and high spirit and energy. Harshness and hardness and fierceness and a satisfaction in slaying enemies and amassing wealth and unjust enjoyments are Asuric qualities; they come from the violent Titanic nature which denies the Divine in the world and the Divine in man and worships Desire only as its deity. It is not then from any such standpoint that the weakness of Arjuna merits rebuke.

---

[1] Gita, II. 1-38.

"Whence has come to thee this dejection, this stain and darkness of the soul in the hour of difficulty and peril?" asks Krishna of Arjuna. The question points to the real nature of Arjuna's deviation from his heroic qualities. There is a divine compassion which descends to us from on high and for the man whose nature does not possess it, is not cast in its mould, to pretend to be the superior man, the master-man or the superman is a folly and an insolence, for he alone is the superman who most manifests the highest nature of the Godhead in humanity. This compassion observes with an eye of love and wisdom and calm strength the battle and the struggle, the strength and weakness of man, his virtues and sins, his joy and suffering, his knowledge and his ignorance, his wisdom and his folly, his aspiration and his failure and it enters into it all to help and to heal. In the saint and philanthropist it may cast itself into the mould of a plenitude of love or charity; in the thinker and hero it assumes the largeness and the force of a helpful wisdom and strength. It is this compassion in the Aryan fighter, the soul of his chivalry, which will not break the bruised reed, but helps and protects the weak and the oppressed and the wounded and the fallen. But it is also the divine compassion that smites down the strong tyrant and the confident oppressor, not in wrath and with hatred, — for these are not the high divine qualities, the wrath of God against the sinner, God's hatred of the wicked are the fables of half-enlightened creeds, as much a fable as the eternal torture of the Hells they have invented, — but, as the old Indian spirituality clearly saw, with as much love and compassion for the strong Titan erring by his strength and slain for his sins as for the sufferer and the oppressed who have to be saved from his violence and injustice.

But such is not the compassion which actuates Arjuna in the rejection of his work and mission. That is not compassion but an impotence full of a weak self-pity, a recoil from the mental suffering which his act must entail on himself, — "I see not what shall thrust from me the sorrow that dries up the senses," — and of all things self-pity is among the most ignoble and un-Aryan of moods. Its pity for others is also a form of self-indulgence; it is the physical shrinking of the nerves from the act of slaughter, the egoistic emotional shrinking of the heart from the destruction of the Dhritarashtrians because they are "one's own people" and without them life will be empty. This pity is a weakness of the mind and senses, — a weakness which may well be beneficial to men of a lower grade of development, who have to be weak because otherwise they will be hard and cruel; for they have to cure the harsher by the gentler forms of sensational egoism, they have to call in tamas, the debile principle, to help sattwa, the principle of light, in quelling the strength and excess of their rajasic passions. But this way is not for the developed Aryan man who has to grow not by weakness, but by an ascension from strength to strength. Arjuna is the divine man, the master-man in the making and as such he has been chosen by the gods. He has a work given to him, he has God beside him in his chariot, he has the heavenly bow Gandiva in his hand, he has the champions of unrighteousness, the opponents of the divine leading of the world in his front. Not his is the right to determine what he shall do or not do according to his emotions and his passions, or to shrink from a necessary destruction by the claim of his egoistic heart and reason, or to decline his work because it will bring sorrow and emptiness to his life or because its earthly result has no value to him in the absence of the thousands who must perish. All that is a weak falling from his higher nature. He has to see only the work that must be done, *kartavyaṁ karma*, to hear only the divine command breathed through his warrior nature, to feel only for the world and the destiny of mankind calling to him as its god-sent man to assist its march and clear its path of the dark armies that beset it.

Arjuna in his reply to Krishna admits the rebuke even while he strives against and refuses the command. He is aware of his weakness and yet accepts subjection to it. It is poorness of spirit, he owns, that has smitten away from him his true heroic nature; his whole consciousness is bewildered in its view of right and wrong and he accepts the divine Friend as his teacher; but the emotional and intellectual props on which he had supported his sense of righteousness have been entirely cast down and he cannot accept a command which seems to appeal only to his old standpoint and gives him no new basis for action. He attempts still to justify his refusal of the work and puts forward in its support the claim of his nervous and sensational being which shrinks from the slaughter with its sequel of blood-stained enjoyments, the claim of his heart which recoils from the sorrow and emptiness of life that will follow his act, the claim of his customary moral notions which are appalled by the necessity of slaying his gurus, Bhishma and Drona, the claim of his reason which sees no good but only evil results of the terrible and violent work assigned to him. He is resolved that on the old basis of thought and motive he will not fight and he awaits in silence the answer to objections that seem to him unanswerable. It is these claims of Arjuna's egoistic being that Krishna sets out first to destroy in order to make place for the higher law which shall transcend all egoistic motives of action.

The answer of the Teacher proceeds upon two different lines, first, a brief reply founded upon the highest ideas of the general Aryan culture in which Arjuna has been educated, secondly, another and larger founded on a more intimate knowledge, opening into deeper truths of our being, which is the real starting-point of the teaching of the Gita. This first answer relies on the philosophic and moral conceptions of the Vedantic philosophy and the social idea of duty and honour which formed the ethical basis of Aryan society. Arjuna has sought to justify his refusal on ethical and rational grounds, but he has merely cloaked by words of apparent rationality the revolt of his ignorant and unchastened emotions. He has spoken of the physical life and the death of the body as if these were the primary realities; but they have no such essential value to the sage and the thinker. The sorrow for the bodily death of his friends and kindred is a grief to which wisdom and the true knowledge of life lend no sanction. The enlightened man does not mourn either for the living or the dead, for he knows that suffering and death are merely incidents in the history of the soul. The soul, not the body, is the reality. All these kings of men for whose approaching death he mourns, have lived before, they will live again in the human body; for as the soul passes physically through childhood and youth and age, so it passes on to the changing of the body. The calm and wise mind, the *dhīra*, the thinker who looks upon life steadily and does not allow himself to be disturbed and blinded by his sensations and emotions, is not deceived by material appearances; he does not allow the clamour of his blood and his nerves and his heart to cloud his judgment or to contradict his knowledge. He looks beyond the apparent facts of the life of the body and senses to the real fact of his being and rises beyond the emotional and physical desires of the ignorant nature to the true and only aim of the human existence.

What is that real fact? that highest aim? This, that human life and death repeated through the aeons in the great cycles of the world are only a long progress by which the human being prepares and makes himself fit for immortality. And how shall he prepare himself? who is the man that is fit? The man who rises above the conception of himself as a life and a body, who does not accept the material and sensational touches of the world at their own value or at the value which the physical man attaches to them, who knows himself and all as souls, learns himself to live in his soul and not in his body and deals with others too as souls and not as mere physical beings. For by immortality is meant not the survival of death, — that is already given to every creature born with a mind, — but the transcendence of life and death. It means that ascension by which man ceases to live as a mind-informed body and lives at last as a spirit and in the Spirit. Whoever is subject to grief and sorrow, a slave to the sensations and emotions, occupied by the touches of things transient cannot become fit for immortality. These things must be borne until they are conquered, till they can give no pain to the liberated man, till he is able to receive all the material happenings of the world whether joyful or sorrowful with a wise and calm equality, even as the tranquil eternal Spirit secret within us receives them. To be disturbed by sorrow and horror as Arjuna has been disturbed, to be deflected by them from the path that has to be travelled, to be overcome by self-pity and intolerance of sorrow and recoil from the unavoidable and trivial circumstance of the death of the body, this is un-Aryan ignorance. It is not the way of the Aryan climbing in calm strength towards the immortal life.

There is no such thing as death, for it is the body that dies and the body is not the man. That which really is, cannot go out of existence, though it may change the forms through which it appears, just as that which is non-existent cannot come into being. The soul is and cannot cease to be. This opposition of is and is not, this balance of being and becoming which is the mind's view of existence, finds its end in the realisation of the soul as the one imperishable self by whom all this universe has been extended. Finite bodies have an end, but that which possesses and uses the body, is infinite, illimitable, eternal, indestructible. It casts away old and takes up new bodies as a man changes worn-out raiment for new; and what is there in this to grieve at and recoil and shrink? This is not born, nor does it die, nor is it a thing that comes into being once and passing away will never come into being again. It is unborn, ancient, sempiternal; it is not slain with the slaying of the body. Who can slay the immortal spirit? Weapons cannot cleave it, nor the fire burn, nor do the waters drench it, nor the wind dry. Eternally stable, immobile, all-pervading, it is for ever and for ever. Not manifested like the body, but greater than all manifestation, not to be analysed by the thought, but greater than all mind, not capable of change and modification like the life and its organs and their objects, but beyond the changes of mind and life and body, it is yet the Reality which all these strive to figure.

Even if the truth of our being were a thing less sublime, vast, intangible by death and life, if the self were constantly subject to birth and death, still the death of beings ought not to be a cause of sorrow. For that is an inevitable circumstance of the soul's self-manifestation. Its birth is an appearing out of some state in which it is not non-existent but unmanifest to our mortal senses, its death is a return to that unmanifest world or condition and out of it it will again appear in the physical manifestation. The to-do made by the physical mind and senses about death and the horror of death whether on the sick-bed or the battlefield, is the most ignorant of nervous clamours. Our sorrow for the death of men is an ignorant grieving for those for whom there is no cause to grieve, since they have neither gone out of existence nor suffered any painful or terrible change of condition, but are beyond death no less in being and no more unhappy in circumstance than in life. But in reality the higher truth is the real truth. All are that Self, that One, that Divine whom we look on and speak and hear of as the wonderful beyond our comprehension, for after all our seeking and declaring of knowledge and learning from those who have knowledge no human mind has ever known this Absolute. It is this which is here veiled by the world, the master of the body; all life is only its shadow; the coming of the soul into physical manifestation and our passing out of it by death is only one of its minor movements. When we have known ourselves as this, then to speak of ourselves as slayer or slain is an absurdity. One thing only is the truth in which we have to live, the Eternal manifesting itself as the soul of man in the great cycle of its pilgrimage with birth and death for milestones, with worlds beyond as resting-places, with all the circumstances of life happy or unhappy as the means of our progress and battle and victory and with immortality as the home to which the soul travels.

Therefore, says the Teacher, put away this vain sorrow and shrinking, fight, O son of Bharata. But wherefore such a conclusion? This high and great knowledge, this strenuous self-discipline of the mind and soul by which it is to rise beyond the clamour of the emotions and the cheat of the senses to true self-knowledge, may well free us from grief and delusion; it may well cure us of the fear of death and the sorrow for the dead; it may well show us that those whom we speak of as dead are not dead at all nor to be sorrowed for, since they have only gone beyond; it may well teach us to look undisturbed upon the most terrible assaults of life and upon the death of the body as a trifle; it may exalt us to the conception of all life's circumstances as a manifestation of the One and as a means for our souls to raise themselves above appearances by an upward evolution until we know ourselves as the immortal Spirit. But how does it justify the action demanded of Arjuna and the slaughter of Kurukshetra? The answer is that this is the action required of Arjuna in the path he has to travel; it has come inevitably in the performance of the function demanded of him by his *svadharma*, his social duty, the law of his life and the law of his being. This world, this manifestation of the Self in the material universe is not only a cycle of inner development, but a field in which the external circumstances of life have to be accepted as an environment and an occasion for that development. It is a world of mutual help and struggle; not a serene and peaceful gliding through easy joys is the progress it allows us, but every step has to be gained by heroic effort and through a clash of opposing forces. Those who take up the inner and the outer struggle even to the most physical clash of all, that of war, are the Kshatriyas, the mighty men; war, force, nobility, courage are their nature; protection of the right and an unflinching acceptance of the gage of battle is their virtue and their duty. For there is continually a struggle between right and wrong, justice and injustice, the force that protects and the force that violates and oppresses, and when this has once been brought to the issue of physical strife, the champion and standard-bearer of the Right must not shake and tremble at the violent and terrible nature of the work he has to do; he must not abandon his followers or fellow-fighters, betray his cause and leave the standard of Right and Justice to trail in the dust and be trampled into mire by the blood-stained feet of the oppressor, because of a weak pity for the violent and cruel and a physical horror of the vastness of the destruction decreed. His virtue and his duty lie in battle and not in abstention from battle; it is not slaughter, but non-slaying which would here be the sin.

The Teacher then turns aside for a moment to give another answer to the cry of Arjuna over the sorrow of the death of kindred which will empty his life of the causes and objects of living. What is the true object of the Kshatriya's life and his true happiness? Not self-pleasing and domestic happiness and a life of comfort and peaceful joy with friends and relatives, but to battle for the right is his true object of life and to find a cause for which he can lay down his life or by victory win the crown and glory of the hero's existence is his greatest happiness. "There is no greater good for the Kshatriya than righteous battle, and when such a battle comes to them of itself like the open gate of heaven, happy are the Kshatriyas then. If thou doest not this battle for the right, then hast thou abandoned thy duty and virtue and thy glory, and sin shall be thy portion." He will by such a refusal incur disgrace and the reproach of fear and weakness and the loss of his Kshatriya honour. For what is worst grief for a Kshatriya? It is the loss of his honour, his fame, his noble station among the mighty men, the men of courage and power; that to him is much worse than death. Battle, courage, power, rule, the honour of the brave, the heaven of those who fall nobly, this is the warrior's ideal. To lower that ideal, to allow a smirch to fall on that honour, to give the example of a hero among heroes whose action lays itself open to the reproach of cowardice and weakness and thus to lower the moral standard of mankind, is to be false to himself and to the demand of the world on its leaders and kings. "Slain thou shalt win Heaven, victorious thou shalt enjoy the earth; therefore arise, O son of Kunti, resolved upon battle."

This heroic appeal may seem to be on a lower level than the stoical spirituality which precedes and the deeper spirituality which follows; for in the next verse the Teacher bids him to make grief and happiness, loss and gain, victory and defeat equal to his soul and then turn to the battle, — the real teaching of the Gita. But Indian ethics has always seen the practical necessity of graded ideals for the developing moral and spiritual life of man. The Kshatriya ideal, the ideal of the four orders is here placed in its social aspect, not as afterwards in its spiritual meaning. This, says Krishna in effect, is my answer to you if you insist on joy and sorrow and the result of your actions as your motive of action. I have shown you in what direction the higher knowledge of self and the world points you; I have now shown you in what direction your social duty and the ethical standard of your order point you, *svadharmam api cāvekṣya*. Whichever you consider, the result is the same. But if you are not satisfied with your social duty and the virtue of your order, if you think that leads you to sorrow and sin, then I bid you rise to a higher and not sink to a lower ideal. Put away all egoism from you, disregard joy and sorrow, disregard gain and loss and all worldly results; look only at the cause you must serve and the work that you must achieve by divine command; "so thou shalt not incur sin." Thus Arjuna's plea of sorrow, his plea of the recoil from slaughter, his plea of the sense of sin, his plea of the unhappy results of his action, are answered according to the highest knowledge and ethical ideals to which his race and age had attained.

It is the creed of the Aryan fighter. "Know God," it says, "know thyself, help man; protect the Right, do without fear or weakness or faltering thy work of battle in the world. Thou art the eternal and imperishable Spirit, thy soul is here on its upward path to immortality; life and death are nothing, sorrow and wounds and suffering are nothing, for these things have to be conquered and overcome. Look not at thy own pleasure and gain and profit, but above and around, above at the shining summits to which thou climbest, around at this world of battle and trial in which good and evil, progress and retrogression are locked in stern conflict. Men call to thee, their strong man, their hero for help; help then, fight. Destroy when by destruction the world must advance, but hate not that which thou destroyest, neither grieve for all those who perish. Know everywhere the one self, know all to be immortal souls and the body to be but dust. Do thy work with a calm, strong and equal spirit; fight and fall nobly or conquer mightily. For this is the work that God and thy nature have given to thee to accomplish."

VIII

Sankhya and Yoga

IN THE moment of his turning from this first and summary answer to Arjuna's difficulties and in the very first words which strike the keynote of a spiritual solution, the Teacher makes at once a distinction which is of the utmost importance for the understanding of the Gita, — the distinction of Sankhya and Yoga. "Such is the intelligence (the intelligent knowledge of things and will) declared to thee in the Sankhya, hear now this in the Yoga, for if thou art in Yoga by this intelligence, O son of Pritha, thou shalt cast away the bondage of works." That is the literal translation of the words in which the Gita announces the distinction it intends to make.

The Gita is in its foundation a Vedantic work; it is one of the three recognised authorities for the Vedantic teaching and, although not described as a revealed Scripture, although, that is to say, it is largely intellectual, ratiocinative, philosophical in its method, founded indeed on the Truth, but not the directly inspired Word which is the revelation of the Truth through the higher faculties of the seer, it is yet so highly esteemed as to be ranked almost as a thirteenth Upanishad. But still its Vedantic ideas are throughout and thoroughly coloured by the ideas of the Sankhya and the Yoga way of thinking and it derives from this colouring the peculiar synthetic character of its philosophy. It is in fact primarily a practical system of Yoga that it teaches and it brings in metaphysical ideas only as explanatory of its practical system; nor does it merely declare Vedantic knowledge, but it founds knowledge and devotion upon works, even as it uplifts works to knowledge, their culmination, and informs them with devotion as their very heart and kernel of their spirit. Again its Yoga is founded upon the analytical philosophy of the Sankhyas, takes that as a starting-point and always keeps it as a large element of its method and doctrine; but still it proceeds far beyond it, negatives even some of its characteristic tendencies and finds a means of reconciling the lower analytical knowledge of Sankhya with the higher synthetic and Vedantic truth.

What, then, are the Sankhya and Yoga of which the Gita speaks? They are certainly not the systems which have come down to us under these names as enunciated respectively in the Sankhya Karika of Ishwara Krishna and the Yoga aphorisms of Patanjali. This Sankhya is not the system of the Karikas, — at least as that is generally understood; for the Gita nowhere for a moment admits the multiplicity of Purushas as a primal truth of being and it affirms emphatically what the traditional Sankhya strenuously denies, the One as Self and Purusha, that One again as the Lord, Ishwara or Purushottama, and Ishwara as the cause of the universe. The traditional Sankhya is, to use our modern distinctions, atheistic; the Sankhya of the Gita admits and subtly reconciles the theistic, pantheistic and monistic views of the universe.

Nor is this Yoga the Yoga system of Patanjali; for that is a purely subjective method of Rajayoga, an internal discipline, limited, rigidly cut out, severely and scientifically graded, by which the mind is progressively stilled and taken up into Samadhi so that we may gain the temporal and eternal results of this self-exceeding, the temporal in a great expansion of the soul's knowledge and powers, the eternal in the divine union. But the Yoga of the Gita is a large, flexible and many-sided system with various elements, which are all successfully harmonised by a sort of natural and living assimilation, and of these elements Rajayoga is only one and not the most important and vital. This Yoga does not adopt any strict and scientific gradation but is a process of natural soul-development; it seeks by the adoption of a few principles of subjective poise and action to bring about a renovation of the soul and a sort of change, ascension or new birth out of the lower nature into the divine. Accordingly, its idea of Samadhi is quite different from the ordinary notion of the Yogic trance; and while Patanjali gives to works only an initial importance for moral purification and religious concentration, the Gita goes so far as to make works the distinctive characteristic of Yoga. Action to Patanjali is only a preliminary, in the Gita it is a permanent foundation; in the Rajayoga it has practically to be put aside when its result has been attained or at any rate ceases very soon to be a means for the Yoga, for the Gita it is a means of the highest ascent and continues even after the complete liberation of the soul.

This much has to be said in order to avoid any confusion of thought that might be created by the use of familiar words in a connotation wider than the technical sense now familiar to us. Still, all that is essential in the Sankhya and Yoga systems, all in them that is large, catholic and universally true, is admitted by the Gita, even though it does not limit itself by them like the opposing schools. Its Sankhya is the catholic and Vedantic Sankhya such as we find it in its first principles and elements in the great Vedantic synthesis of the Upanishads and in the later developments of the Puranas. Its idea of Yoga is that large idea of a principally subjective practice and inner change, necessary for the finding of the Self or the union with God, of which the Rajayoga is only one special application. The Gita insists that Sankhya and Yoga are not two different, incompatible and discordant systems, but one in their principle and aim; they differ only in their method and starting-point. The Sankhya also is a Yoga, but it proceeds by knowledge; it starts, that is to say, by intellectual discrimination and analysis of the principles of our being and attains its aim through the vision and possession of the Truth. Yoga, on the other hand, proceeds by works; it is in its first principle Karmayoga; but it is evident from the whole teaching of the Gita and its later definitions that the word *karma* is used in a very wide sense and that by Yoga is meant the selfless devotion of all the inner as well as the outer activities as a sacrifice to the Lord of all works, offered to the Eternal as Master of all the soul's energies and austerities. Yoga is the practice of the Truth of which knowledge gives the vision, and its practice has for its motor-power a spirit of illumined devotion, of calm or fervent consecration to that which knowledge sees to be the Highest.

But what are the truths of Sankhya? The philosophy drew its name from its analytical process. Sankhya is the analysis, the enumeration, the separative and discriminative setting forth of the principles of our being of which the ordinary mind sees only the combinations and results of combination. It did not seek at all to synthetise. Its original standpoint is in fact dualistic, not with the very relative dualism of the Vedantic schools which call themselves by that name, Dwaita, but in a very absolute and trenchant fashion. For it explains existence not by one, but by two original principles whose inter-relation is the cause of the universe, — Purusha, the inactive, Prakriti, the active. Purusha is the Soul, not in the ordinary or popular sense of the word, but of pure conscious Being immobile, immutable and self-luminous. Prakriti is Energy and its process. Purusha does nothing, but it reflects the action of Energy and its processes; Prakriti is mechanical, but by being reflected in Purusha it assumes the appearance of consciousness in its activities, and thus there are created those phenomena of creation, conservation, dissolution, birth and life and death, consciousness and unconsciousness, sense-knowledge and intellectual knowledge and ignorance, action and inaction, happiness and suffering which the Purusha under the influence of Prakriti attributes to itself although they belong not at all to itself but to the action or movement of Prakriti alone.

For Prakriti is constituted of three *guṇas* or essential modes of energy; sattwa, the seed of intelligence, conserves the workings of energy; rajas, the seed of force and action, creates the workings of energy; tamas, the seed of inertia and non-intelligence, the denial of sattwa and rajas, dissolves what they create and conserve. When these three powers of the energy of Prakriti are in a state of equilibrium, all is in rest, there is no movement, action or creation and there is therefore nothing to be reflected in the immutable luminous being of the conscious Soul. But when the equilibrium is disturbed, then the three gunas fall into a state of inequality in which they strive with and act upon each other and the whole inextricable business of ceaseless creation, conservation and dissolution begins, unrolling the phenomena of the cosmos. This continues so long as the Purusha consents to reflect the disturbance which obscures his eternal nature and attributes to it the nature of Prakriti; but when he withdraws his consent, the gunas fall into equilibrium and the soul returns to its eternal, unchanging immobility; it is delivered from phenomena. This reflection and this giving or withdrawal of consent seem to be the only powers of Purusha; he is the witness of Nature by virtue of reflection and the giver of the sanction, *sākṣī* and *anumantā* of the Gita, but not actively the Ishwara. Even his giving of consent is passive and his withdrawing of consent is only another passivity. All action subjective or objective is foreign to the Soul; it has neither an active will nor an active intelligence. It cannot therefore be the sole cause of the cosmos and the affirmation of a second cause becomes necessary. Not Soul alone by its nature of conscious knowledge, will and delight is the cause of the universe, but Soul and Nature are the dual cause, a passive Consciousness and an active Energy. So the Sankhya explains the existence of the cosmos.

But whence then come this conscious intelligence and conscious will which we perceive to be so large a part of our being and which we commonly and instinctively refer not to the Prakriti, but to the Purusha? According to the Sankhya this intelligence and will are entirely a part of the mechanical energy of Nature and are not properties of the soul; they are the principle of Buddhi, one of the twenty-four *tattvas*, the twenty-four cosmic principles. Prakriti in the evolution of the world bases herself with her three gunas in her as the original substance of things, unmanifest, inconscient, out of which are evolved successively five elemental conditions of energy or matter, — for Matter and Force are the same in the Sankhya philosophy. These are called by the names of the five concrete elements of ancient thought, ether, air, fire, water and earth; but it must be remembered that they are not elements in the modern scientific sense but subtle conditions of material energy and nowhere to be found in their purity in the gross material world. All objects are created by the combination of these five subtle conditions or elements. Again, each of these five is the base of one of five subtle properties of energy or matter, sound, touch, form, taste and smell, which constitute the way in which the mind-sense perceives objects. Thus by these five elements of Matter put forth from primary energy and these five sense relations through which Matter is known is evolved what we would call in modern language the objective aspect of cosmic existence.

Thirteen other principles constitute the subjective aspect of the cosmic Energy, — Buddhi or Mahat, Ahankara, Manas and its ten sense-functions, five of knowledge, five of action. Manas, mind, is the original sense which perceives all objects and reacts upon them; for it has at once an inferent and an efferent activity, receives by perception what the Gita calls the outward touches of things, *bāhya sparśa*, and so forms its idea of the world and exercises its reactions of active vitality. But it specialises its most ordinary functions of reception by aid of the five perceptive senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell, which make the five properties of things their respective objects, and specialises certain necessary vital functions of reaction by aid of the five active senses which operate for speech, locomotion, the seizing of things, ejection and generation. Buddhi, the discriminating principle, is at once intelligence and will; it is that power in Nature which discriminates and coordinates. Ahankara, the ego-sense, is the subjective principle in Buddhi by which the Purusha is induced to identify himself with Prakriti and her activities. But these subjective principles are themselves as mechanical, as much a part of the inconscient energy as those which constitute her objective operations. If we find it difficult to realise how intelligence and will can be properties of the mechanical Inconscient and themselves mechanical (*jaḍa*), we have only to remember that modern Science itself has been driven to the same conclusion. Even in the mechanical action of the atom there is a power which can only be called an inconscient will and in all the works of Nature that pervading will does inconsciently the works of intelligence. What we call mental intelligence is precisely the same thing in its essence as that which discriminates and coordinates subconsciously in all the activities of the material universe, and conscious Mind itself, Science has tried to demonstrate, is only a result and transcript of the mechanical action of the inconscient. But Sankhya explains what modern Science leaves in obscurity, the process by which the mechanical and inconscient takes on the appearance of consciousness. It is because of the reflection of Prakriti in Purusha; the light of consciousness of the Soul is attributed to the workings of the mechanical energy and it is thus that the Purusha, observing Nature as the witness and forgetting himself, is deluded with the idea generated in her that it is he who thinks, feels, wills, acts, while all the time the operation of thinking, feeling, willing, acting is conducted really by her and her three modes and not by himself at all. To get rid of this delusion is the first step towards the liberation of the soul from Nature and her works.

There are certainly plenty of things in our existence which the Sankhya does not explain at all or does not explain satisfactorily, but if all we need is a rational explanation of the cosmic processes in their principles as a basis for the great object common to the ancient philosophies, the liberation of the soul from the obsession of cosmic Nature, then the Sankhya explanation of the world and the Sankhya way of liberation seem as good and as effective as any other. What we do not seize at first is why it should bring in an element of pluralism into its dualism by affirming one Prakriti, but many Purushas. It would seem that the existence of one Purusha and one Prakriti should be sufficient to account for the creation and procession of the universe. But the Sankhya was bound to evolve pluralism by its rigidly analytical observation of the principles of things. First, actually, we find that there are many conscious beings in the world and each regards the same world in his own way and has his independent experience of its subjective and objective things, his separate dealings with the same perceptive and reactive processes. If there were only one Purusha, there would not be this central independence and separativeness, but all would see the world in an identical fashion and with a common subjectivity and objectivity. Because Prakriti is one, all witness the same world; because her principles are everywhere the same, the general principles which constitute internal and external experience are the same for all; but the infinite difference of view and outlook and attitude, action and experience and escape from experience, — a difference not of the natural operations which are the same but of the witnessing consciousness, — are utterly inexplicable except on the supposition that there is a multiplicity of witnesses, many Purushas. The separative ego-sense, we may say, is a sufficient explanation? But the ego-sense is a common principle of Nature and need not vary; for by itself it simply induces the Purusha to identify himself with Prakriti, and if there is only one Purusha, all beings would be one, joined and alike in their egoistic consciousness; however different in detail might be the mere forms and combinations of their natural parts, there would be no difference of soul-outlook and soul-experience. The variations of Nature ought not to make all this central difference, this multiplicity of outlook and from beginning to end this separateness of experience in one Witness, one Purusha. Therefore the pluralism of souls is a logical necessity to a pure Sankhya system divorced from the Vedantic elements of the ancient knowledge which first gave it birth. The cosmos and its process can be explained by the commerce of one Prakriti with one Purusha, but not the multiplicity of conscious beings in the cosmos.

There is another difficulty quite as formidable. Liberation is the object set before itself by this philosophy as by others. This liberation is effected, we have said, by the Purusha's withdrawal of his consent from the activities of Prakriti which she conducts only for his pleasure; but, in sum, this is only a way of speaking. The Purusha is passive and the act of giving or withdrawing consent cannot really belong to it, but must be a movement in Prakriti itself. If we consider, we shall see that it is, so far as it is an operation, a movement of reversal or recoil in the principle of Buddhi, the discriminative will. Buddhi has been lending itself to the perceptions of the mind-sense; it has been busy discriminating and coordinating the operations of the cosmic energy and by the aid of the ego-sense identifying the Witness with her works of thought, sense and action. It arrives by the process of discriminating things at the acid and dissolvent realisation that this identity is a delusion; it discriminates finally the Purusha from Prakriti and perceives that all is mere disturbance of the equilibrium of the gunas; the Buddhi, at once intelligence and will, recoils from the falsehood which it has been supporting and the Purusha, ceasing to be bound, no longer associates himself with the interest of the mind in the cosmic play. The ultimate result will be that Prakriti will lose her power to reflect herself in the Purusha; for the effect of the ego-sense is destroyed and the intelligent will becoming indifferent ceases to be the means of her sanction: necessarily then her gunas must fall into a state of equilibrium, the cosmic play must cease, the Purusha return to his immobile repose. But if there were only the one Purusha and this recoil of the discriminating principle from its delusions took place, all cosmos would cease. As it is, we see that nothing of the kind happens. A few beings among innumerable millions attain to liberation or move towards it; the rest are in no way affected, nor is cosmic Nature in her play with them one whit inconvenienced by this summary rejection which should be the end of all her processes. Only by the theory of many independent Purushas can this fact be explained. The only at all logical explanation from the point of view of Vedantic monism is that of the Mayavada; but there the whole thing becomes a dream, both bondage and liberation are circumstances of the unreality, the empirical blunderings of Maya; in reality there is none freed, none bound. The more realistic Sankhya view of things does not admit this phantasmagoric idea of existence and therefore cannot adopt this solution. Here too we see that the multiplicity of souls is an inevitable conclusion from the data of the Sankhya analysis of existence.

The Gita starts from this analysis and seems at first, even in its setting forth of Yoga, to accept it almost wholly. It accepts Prakriti and her three gunas and twenty-four principles; accepts the attribution of all action to the Prakriti and the passivity of the Purusha; accepts the multiplicity of conscious beings in the cosmos; accepts the dissolution of the identifying ego-sense, the discriminating action of the intelligent will and the transcendence of the action of the three modes of energy as the means of liberation. The Yoga which Arjuna is asked to practise from the outset is Yoga by the Buddhi, the intelligent will. But there is one deviation of capital importance, — the Purusha is regarded as one, not many; for the free, immaterial, immobile, eternal, immutable Self of the Gita, but for one detail, is a Vedantic description of the eternal, passive, immobile, immutable Purusha of the Sankhyas. But the capital difference is that there is One and not many. This brings in the whole difficulty which the Sankhya multiplicity avoids and necessitates a quite different solution. This the Gita provides by bringing into its Vedantic Sankhya the ideas and principles of Vedantic Yoga.

The first important new element we find is in the conception of Purusha itself. Prakriti conducts her activities for the pleasure of Purusha; but how is that pleasure determined? In the strict Sankhya analysis it can only be by a passive consent of the silent Witness. Passively the Witness consents to the action of the intelligent will and the ego-sense, passively he consents to the recoil of that will from the ego-sense. He is Witness, source of the consent, by reflection upholder of the work of Nature, *sākṣī anumantā bhartā*, but nothing more. But the Purusha of the Gita is also the Lord of Nature; he is Ishwara. If the operation of the intelligent will belongs to Nature, the origination and power of the will proceed from the conscious Soul; he is the Lord of Nature. If the act of intelligence of the Will is the act of Prakriti, the source and light of the intelligence are actively contributed by the Purusha; he is not only the Witness, but the Lord and Knower, master of knowledge and will, *jñātā īśvaraḥ*. He is the supreme cause of the action of Prakriti, the supreme cause of its withdrawal from action. In the Sankhya analysis Purusha and Prakriti in their dualism are the cause of the cosmos; in this synthetic Sankhya Purusha by *his* Prakriti is the cause of the cosmos. We see at once how far we have travelled from the rigid purism of the traditional analysis.

But what of the one self immutable, immobile, eternally free, with which the Gita began? That is free from all change or involution in change, *avikārya*, unborn, unmanifested, the Brahman, yet it is that "by which all this is extended." Therefore it would seem that the principle of the Ishwara is in its being;

if it is immobile, it is yet the cause and lord of all action and mobility. But how? And what of the multiplicity of conscious beings in the cosmos? They do not seem to be the Lord, but rather very much not the Lord, *anīśa*, for they are subject to the action of the three gunas and the delusion of the ego-sense, and if, as the Gita seems to say, they are all the one self, how did this involution, subjection and delusion come about or how is it explicable except by the pure passivity of the Purusha? And whence the multiplicity? or how is it that the one self in one body and mind attains to liberation while in others it remains under the delusion of bondage? These are difficulties which cannot be passed by without a solution.

The Gita answers them in its later chapters by an analysis of Purusha and Prakriti which brings in new elements very proper to a Vedantic Yoga, but alien to the traditional Sankhya. It speaks of three Purushas or rather a triple status of the Purusha. The Upanishads in dealing with the truths of Sankhya seem sometimes to speak only of two Purushas. There is one unborn of three colours, says a text, the eternal feminine principle of Prakriti with its three gunas, ever creating; there are two unborn, two Purushas, of whom one cleaves to and enjoys her, the other abandons her because he has enjoyed all her enjoyments. In another verse they are described as two birds on one tree, eternally yoked companions, one of whom eats the fruits of the tree, — the Purusha in Nature enjoying her cosmos, — the other eats not, but watches his fellow, — the silent Witness, withdrawn from the enjoyment; when the first sees the second and knows that all is his greatness, then he is delivered from sorrow. The point of view in the two verses is different, but they have a common implication. One of the birds is the eternally silent, unbound Self or Purusha by whom all this is extended and he regards the cosmos he has extended, but is aloof from it; the other is the Purusha involved in Prakriti. The first verse indicates that the two are the same, represent different states, bound and liberated, of the same conscious being, — for the second Unborn has descended into the enjoyment of Nature and withdrawn from her; the other verse brings out what we would not gather from the former, that in its higher status of unity the self is for ever free, inactive, unattached, though it descends in its lower being into the multiplicity of the creatures of Prakriti and withdraws from it by reversion in any individual creature to the higher status. This theory of the double status of the one conscious soul opens a door; but the process of the multiplicity of the One is still obscure.

To these two the Gita, developing the thought of other passages in the Upanishads,[1] adds yet another, the supreme, the Purushottama, the highest Purusha, whose greatness all this creation is. Thus there are three, the Kshara, the Akshara, the Uttama. Kshara, the mobile, the mutable is Nature, *svabhāva*, it is the various becoming of the soul; the Purusha here is the multiplicity of the divine Being; it is the Purusha multiple not apart from, but in Prakriti. Akshara, the immobile, the immutable, is the silent and inactive self, it is the unity of the divine Being, Witness of Nature, but not involved in its movement; it is the inactive Purusha free from Prakriti and her works. The Uttama is the Lord, the supreme Brahman, the supreme Self, who possesses both the immutable unity and the mobile multiplicity. It is by a large mobility and action of His nature, His energy, His will and power, that He manifests Himself in the world and by a greater stillness and immobility of His being that He is aloof from it; yet is He as Purushottama above both the aloofness from Nature and the attachment to Nature. This idea of the Purushottama, though continually implied in the Upanishads, is disengaged and definitely brought out by the Gita and has exercised a powerful influence on the later developments of the Indian religious consciousness. It is the foundation of the highest Bhaktiyoga which claims to exceed the rigid definitions of monistic philosophy; it is at the back of the philosophy of the devotional Puranas.

The Gita is not content, either, to abide within the Sankhya analysis of Prakriti; for that makes room only for the ego-sense and not for the multiple Purusha, which is there not a part of

---

[1] *Puruṣaḥ . . . akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ*, — although the Akshara is supreme, there is a supreme Purusha higher than it, says the Upanishad.

Prakriti, but separate from her. The Gita affirms on the contrary that the Lord by His nature becomes the Jiva. How is that possible, since there are only the twenty-four principles of the cosmic Energy and no others? Yes, says the divine Teacher in effect, that is a perfectly valid account for the apparent operations of the cosmic Prakriti with its three gunas, and the relation attributed to Purusha and Prakriti there is also quite valid and of great use for the practical purposes of the involution and the withdrawal. But this is only the lower Prakriti of the three modes, the inconscient, the apparent; there is a higher, a supreme, a conscient and divine Nature, and it is that which has become the individual soul, the Jiva. In the lower nature each being appears as the ego, in the higher he is the individual Purusha. In other words multiplicity is part of the spiritual nature of the One. This individual soul is myself, in the creation it is a partial manifestation of me, *mamaiva aṁśaḥ*, and it possesses all my powers; it is witness, giver of the sanction, upholder, knower, lord. It descends into the lower nature and thinks itself bound by action, so to enjoy the lower being: it can draw back and know itself as the passive Purusha free from all action. It can rise above the three gunas and, liberated from the bondage of action, yet possess action, even as I do myself, and by adoration of the Purushottama and union with him it can enjoy wholly its divine Nature.

Such is the analysis, not confining itself to the apparent cosmic process but penetrating into the occult secrets of superconscious Nature, *uttamaṁ rahasyam*, by which the Gita founds its synthesis of Vedanta, Sankhya and Yoga, its synthesis of knowledge, works and devotion. By the pure Sankhya alone the combining of works and liberation is contradictory and impossible. By pure Monism alone the permanent continuation of works as a part of Yoga and the indulgence of devotion after perfect knowledge and liberation and union are attained, become impossible or at least irrational and otiose. The Sankhya knowledge of the Gita dissipates and the Yoga system of the Gita triumphs over all these obstacles.

IX

Sankhya, Yoga and Vedanta

THE WHOLE object of the first six chapters of the Gita is to synthetise in a large frame of Vedantic truth the two methods, ordinarily supposed to be diverse and even opposite, of the Sankhyas and the Yogins. The Sankhya is taken as the starting-point and the basis; but it is from the beginning and with a progressively increasing emphasis permeated with the ideas and methods of Yoga and remoulded in its spirit. The practical difference, as it seems to have presented itself to the religious minds of that day, lay first in this that Sankhya proceeded by knowledge and through the Yoga of the intelligence, while Yoga proceeded by works and the transformation of the active consciousness and, secondly, — a corollary of this first distinction, — that Sankhya led to entire passivity and the renunciation of works, *sannyāsa*, while Yoga held to be quite sufficient the inner renunciation of desire, the purification of the subjective principle which leads to action and the turning of works Godwards, towards the divine existence and towards liberation. Yet both had the same aim, the transcendence of birth and of this terrestrial existence and the union of the human soul with the Highest. This at least is the difference as it is presented to us by the Gita.

The difficulty which Arjuna feels in understanding any possible synthesis of these oppositions is an indication of the hard line that was driven in between these two systems in the normal ideas of the time. The Teacher sets out by reconciling works and the Yoga of the intelligence: the latter, he says, is far superior to mere works; it is by the Yoga of the Buddhi, by knowledge raising man out of the ordinary human mind and its desires into the purity and equality of the Brahmic condition free from all desire that works can be made acceptable. Yet are works a means of salvation, but works thus purified by knowledge.

Filled with the notions of the then prevailing culture, misled by the emphasis which the Teacher lays upon the ideas proper to Vedantic Sankhya, conquest of the senses, withdrawal from mind into the Self, ascent into the Brahmic condition, extinction of our lower personality in the Nirvana of impersonality, — for the ideas proper to Yoga are as yet subordinated and largely held back, — Arjuna is perplexed and asks, “If thou holdest the intelligence to be greater than works, why then dost thou appoint me to a terrible work? Thou seemest to bewilder my intelligence with a confused and mingled speech; tell me then decisively that one thing by which I may attain to my soul’s weal.”

In answer Krishna affirms that the Sankhya goes by knowledge and renunciation, the Yoga by works; but the real renunciation is impossible without Yoga, without works done as a sacrifice, done with equality and without desire of the fruit, with the perception that it is Nature which does the actions and not the soul; but immediately afterwards he declares that the sacrifice of knowledge is the highest, all work finds its consummation in knowledge, by the fire of knowledge all works are burnt up; therefore by Yoga works are renounced and their bondage overcome for the man who is in possession of his Self. Again Arjuna is perplexed; here are desireless works, the principle of Yoga, and renunciation of works, the principle of Sankhya, put together side by side as if part of one method, yet there is no evident reconciliation between them. For the kind of reconciliation which the Teacher has already given, — in outward inaction to see action still persisting and in apparent action to see a real inaction since the soul has renounced its illusion of the worker and given up works into the hands of the Master of sacrifice, — is for the practical mind of Arjuna too slight, too subtle and expressed almost in riddling words; he has not caught their sense or at least not penetrated into their spirit and reality. Therefore he asks again, “Thou declarest to me the renunciation of works, O Krishna, and again thou declarest to me Yoga; which one of these is the better way, that tell me with a clear decisiveness.”

The answer is important, for it puts the whole distinction very clearly and indicates though it does not develop entirely the line of reconciliation. “Renunciation and Yoga of works both bring about the soul’s salvation, but of the two the Yoga of works is distinguished above the renunciation of works. He should be known as always a Sannyasin (even when he is doing action) who neither dislikes nor desires; for free from the dualities he is released easily and happily from the bondage. Children speak of Sankhya and Yoga apart from each other, not the wise; if a man applies himself integrally to one, he gets the fruit of both,” because in their integrality each contains the other. “The status which is attained by the Sankhya, to that the men of the Yoga also arrive; who sees Sankhya and Yoga as one, he sees. But renunciation is difficult to attain without Yoga; the sage who has Yoga attains soon to the Brahman; his self becomes the self of all existences (of all things that have become), and even though he does works, he is not involved in them.” He knows that the actions are not his, but Nature’s and by that very knowledge he is free; he has renounced works, does no actions, though actions are done through him; he becomes the Self, the Brahman, *brahmabhūta*, he sees all existences as becomings (*bhūtāni*) of that self-existent Being, his own only one of them, all their actions as only the development of cosmic Nature working through their individual nature and his own actions also as a part of the same cosmic activity. This is not the whole teaching of the Gita; for as yet there is only the idea of the immutable self or Purusha, the Akshara Brahman, and of Nature, Prakriti, as that which is responsible for the cosmos and not yet the idea, clearly expressed, of the Ishwara, the Purushottama; as yet only the synthesis of works and knowledge and not yet, in spite of certain hints, the introduction of the supreme element of devotion which becomes so important afterwards; as yet only the one inactive Purusha and the lower Prakriti and not yet the distinction of the triple Purusha and the double Prakriti. It is true the Ishwara is spoken of, but his relation to the self and nature is not yet made definite. The first six chapters only carry the synthesis so far as it can be carried without the clear expression and decisive entrance of these all-important truths which, when they come in, must necessarily enlarge and modify, though without abolishing, these first reconciliations.

Twofold, says Krishna, is the self-application of the soul by which it enters into the Brahmic condition: "that of the Sankhyas by the Yoga of knowledge, that of the Yogins by the Yoga of works." This identification of Sankhya with Jnanayoga and of Yoga with the way of works is interesting; for it shows that quite a different order of ideas prevailed at that time from those we now possess as the result of the great Vedantic development of Indian thought, subsequent evidently to the composition of the Gita, by which the other Vedic philosophies fell into desuetude as practical methods of liberation. To justify the language of the Gita we must suppose that at that time it was the Sankhya method which was very commonly[1] adopted by those who followed the path of knowledge. Subsequently, with the spread of Buddhism, the Sankhya method of knowledge must have been much overshadowed by the Buddhistic. Buddhism, like the Sankhya non-Theistic and anti-Monistic, laid stress on the impermanence of the results of the cosmic energy, which it presented not as Prakriti but as Karma because the Buddhists admitted neither the Vedantic Brahman nor the inactive Soul of the Sankhyas, and it made the recognition of this impermanence by the discriminating mind its means of liberation. When the reaction against Buddhism arrived, it took up not the old Sankhya notion, but the Vedantic form popularised by Shankara who replaced the Buddhistic impermanence by the cognate Vedantic idea of illusion, Maya, and the Buddhistic idea of Non-Being, indefinable Nirvana, a negative Absolute, by the opposite and yet cognate Vedantic idea of the indefinable Being, Brahman, an ineffably positive Absolute in which all feature and action and energy cease because in That they never really existed and are mere illusions of the mind. It is the method of Shankara based upon these concepts of his philosophy, it is the renunciation of life as an illusion of which we ordinarily think when we speak now of the Yoga of knowledge. But in the time of the Gita Maya was evidently not yet quite the master word of the Vedantic philosophy, nor had it, at least with any decisive clearness, the connotation which Shankara brought out of it with such a luminous force and distinctness; for in the Gita there is little talk of Maya and much of Prakriti and, even, the former word is used as little more than an equivalent of the latter but only in its inferior status; it is the lower Prakriti of the three gunas, *traiguṇyamayī māyā*. Prakriti, not illusive Maya, is in the teaching of the Gita the effective cause of cosmic existence.

---

[1] The systems of the Puranas and Tantras are full of the ideas of the Sankhya, though subordinated to the Vedantic idea and mingled with many others.

Still, whatever the precise distinctions of their metaphysical ideas, the practical difference between the Sankhya and Yoga as developed by the Gita is the same as that which now exists between the Vedantic Yogas of knowledge and of works, and the practical results of the difference are also the same. The Sankhya proceeded like the Vedantic Yoga of knowledge by the Buddhi, by the discriminating intelligence; it arrived by reflective thought, *vicāra*, at right discrimination, *viveka*, of the true nature of the soul and of the imposition on it of the works of Prakriti through attachment and identification, just as the Vedantic method arrives by the same means at the right discrimination of the true nature of the Self and of the imposition on it of cosmic appearances by mental illusion which leads to egoistic identification and attachment. In the Vedantic method Maya ceases for the soul by its return to its true and eternal status as the one Self, the Brahman, and the cosmic action disappears; in the Sankhya method the working of the *guṇas* falls to rest by the return of the soul to its true and eternal status as the inactive Purusha and the cosmic action ends. The Brahman of the Mayavadins is silent, immutable and inactive; so too is the Purusha of the Sankhya; therefore for both ascetic renunciation of life and works is a necessary means of liberation. But for the Yoga of the Gita, as for the Vedantic Yoga of works, action is not only a preparation but itself the means of liberation; and it is the justice of this view which the Gita seeks to bring out with such an unceasing force and insistence, — an insistence, unfortunately, which could not prevail in India against the tremendous tide of Buddhism,[2] was lost afterwards in the intensity of ascetic illusionism and the fervour of world-shunning saints and devotees and is only now beginning to exercise its real and salutary influence on the Indian mind. Renunciation is indispensable, but the true renunciation is the inner rejection of desire and egoism; without that the outer physical abandoning of works is a thing unreal and ineffective, with it it ceases even to be necessary, although it is not forbidden. Knowledge is essential, there is no higher force for liberation, but works with knowledge are also needed; by the union of knowledge and works the soul dwells entirely in the Brahmic status not only in repose and inactive calm, but in the very midst and stress and violence of action. Devotion is all-important, but works with devotion are also important; by the union of knowledge, devotion and works the soul is taken up into the highest status of the Ishwara to dwell there in the Purushottama who is master at once of the eternal spiritual calm and the eternal cosmic activity. This is the synthesis of the Gita.

But, apart from the distinction between the Sankhya way of knowledge and the Yoga way of works, there was another and similar opposition in the Vedanta itself, and this also the Gita has to deal with, to correct and to fuse into its large restatement of the Aryan spiritual culture. This was the distinction between Karmakanda and Jnanakanda, between the original thought that led to the philosophy of the Purva Mimansa, the Vedavada, and that which led to the philosophy of the Uttara Mimansa,[3] the Brahmavada, between those who dwelt in the tradition of the Vedic hymns and the Vedic sacrifice and those who put these aside as a lower knowledge and laid stress on the lofty metaphysical knowledge which emerges from the Upanishads.

---

[2] At the same time the Gita seems to have largely influenced Mahayanist Buddhism and texts are taken bodily from it into the Buddhist Scriptures. It may therefore have helped largely to turn Buddhism, originally a school of quietistic and illuminated ascetics, into that religion of meditative devotion and compassionate action which has so powerfully influenced Asiatic culture.

[3] Jaimini's idea of liberation is the eternal Brahmaloka in which the soul that has come to know Brahman still possesses a divine body and divine enjoyments. For the Gita the Brahmaloka is not liberation; the soul must pass beyond to the supracosmic status.

For the pragmatic mind of the Vedavadins the Aryan religion of the Rishis meant the strict performance of the Vedic sacrifices and the use of the sacred Vedic mantras in order to possess all human desires in this world, wealth, progeny, victory, every kind of good fortune, and the joys of immortality in Paradise beyond. For the idealism of the Brahmavadins this was only a preliminary preparation and the real object of man, true *puruṣārtha*, began with his turning to the knowledge of the Brahman which would give him the true immortality of an ineffable spiritual bliss far beyond the lower joys of this world or of any inferior heaven. Whatever may have been the true and original sense of the Veda, this was the distinction which had long established itself and with which therefore the Gita has to deal.

Almost the first word of the synthesis of works and knowledge is a strong, almost a violent censure and repudiation of the Vedavada, "this flowery word which they declare who have not clear discernment, devoted to the creed of the Veda, whose creed is that there is nothing else, souls of desire, seekers of Paradise, — it gives the fruits of the works of birth, it is multifarious with specialities of rites, it is directed to enjoyment and lordship as its goal." The Gita even seems to go on to attack the Veda itself which, though it has been practically cast aside, is still to Indian sentiment intangible, inviolable, the sacred origin and authority for all its philosophy and religion. "The action of the three gunas is the subject matter of the Veda; but do thou become free from the triple guna, O Arjuna." The Vedas in the widest terms, "all the Vedas", — which might well include the Upanishads also and seems to include them, for the general term *Śruti* is used later on, — are declared to be unnecessary for the man who knows. "As much use as there is in a well with water in flood on every side, so much is there in all the Vedas for the Brahmin who has the knowledge." Nay, the Scriptures are even a stumbling-block; for the letter of the Word — perhaps because of its conflict of texts and its various and mutually dissentient interpretations — bewilders the understanding, which can only find certainty and concentration by the light within. "When thy intelligence shall cross beyond the whorl of delusion, then shalt thou become indifferent to Scripture heard or that which thou hast yet to hear, *gantāsi nirvedaṁ śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*. When thy intelligence which is bewildered by the Sruti, *śrutivipratipannā*, shall stand unmoving and stable in Samadhi, then shalt thou attain to Yoga." So offensive is all this to conventional religious sentiment that attempts are naturally made by the convenient and indispensable human faculty of text-twisting to put a different sense on some of these verses, but the meaning is plain and hangs together from beginning to end. It is confirmed and emphasised by a subsequent passage in which the knowledge of the knower is described as passing beyond the range of Veda and Upanishad, *śabdabrahmātivartate*.

Let us see, however, what all this means; for we may be sure that a synthetic and catholic system like the Gita's will not treat such important parts of the Aryan culture in a spirit of mere negation and repudiation. The Gita has to synthetise the Yoga doctrine of liberation by works and the Sankhya doctrine of liberation by knowledge; it has to fuse *karma* with *jñāna*. It has at the same time to synthetise the Purusha and Prakriti idea common to Sankhya and Yoga with the Brahmavada of the current Vedanta in which the Purusha, Deva, Ishwara, — supreme Soul, God, Lord, — of the Upanishads all became merged in the one all-swallowing concept of the immutable Brahman; and it has to bring out again from its overshadowing by that concept but not with any denial of it the Yoga idea of the Lord or Ishwara. It has too its own luminous thought to add, the crown of its synthetic system, the doctrine of the Purushottama and of the triple Purusha for which, though the idea is there, no precise and indisputable authority can be easily found in the Upanishads and which seems indeed at first sight to be in contradiction with that text of the Sruti where only two Purushas are recognised. Moreover, in synthetising works and knowledge it has to take account not only of the opposition of Yoga and Sankhya, but of the opposition of works to knowledge in Vedanta itself, where the connotation of the two words and therefore their point of conflict is not quite the same as the point of the Sankhya-Yoga opposition. It is not surprising at all, one may observe in passing, that with the conflict of so many philosophical schools all founding themselves on the texts of the Veda and Upanishads, the Gita should describe the understanding as being perplexed and confused, led in different directions by the Sruti, *śrutivipratipannā*. What battles are even now delivered by Indian pundits and metaphysicians over the meaning of the ancient texts and to what different conclusions they lead! The understanding may well get disgusted and indifferent, *gantāsi nirvedam*, refuse to hear any more texts new or old, *śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*, and go into itself to discover the truth in the light of a deeper and inner and direct experience.

In the first six chapters the Gita lays a large foundation for its synthesis of works and knowledge, its synthesis of Sankhya, Yoga and Vedanta. But first it finds that *karma*, works, has a particular sense in the language of the Vedantins; it means the Vedic sacrifices and ceremonies or at most that and the ordering of life according to the Grihyasutras in which these rites are the most important part, the religious kernel of the life. By works the Vedantins understood these religious works, the sacrificial system, the *yajña*, full of a careful order, *vidhi*, of exact and complicated rites, *kriyā-viśeṣa-bahulām*. But in Yoga works had a much wider significance. The Gita insists on this wider significance; in our conception of spiritual activity all works have to be included, *sarva-karmāṇi*. At the same time it does not, like Buddhism, reject the idea of the sacrifice, it prefers to uplift and enlarge it. Yes, it says in effect, not only is sacrifice, *yajña*, the most important part of life, but all life, all works should be regarded as sacrifice, are *yajña*, though by the ignorant they are performed without the higher knowledge and by the most ignorant not in the true order, *avidhi-pūrvakam*. Sacrifice is the very condition of life; with sacrifice as their eternal companion the Father of creatures created the peoples. But the sacrifices of the Vedavadins are offerings of desire directed towards material rewards, desire eager for the result of works, desire looking to a larger enjoyment in Paradise as immortality and highest salvation. This the system of the Gita cannot admit; for that in its very inception starts with the renunciation of desire, with its rejection and destruction as the enemy of the soul. The Gita does not deny the validity even of the Vedic sacrificial works; it admits them, it admits that by these means one may get enjoyment here and Paradise beyond; it is I myself, says the divine Teacher, who accept these sacrifices and to whom they are offered, I who give these fruits in the form of the gods since so men choose to approach me. But this is not the true road, nor is the enjoyment of Paradise the liberation and fulfilment which man has to seek. It is the ignorant who worship the gods, not knowing whom they are worshipping ignorantly in these divine forms; for they are worshipping, though in ignorance, the One, the Lord, the only Deva, and it is he who accepts their offering. To that Lord must the sacrifice be offered, the true sacrifice of all the life's energies and activities, with devotion, without desire, for His sake and for the welfare of the peoples. It is because the Vedavada obscures this truth and with its tangle of ritual ties man down to the action of the three gunas that it has to be so severely censured and put roughly aside; but its central idea is not destroyed; transfigured and uplifted, it is turned into a most important part of the true spiritual experience and of the method of liberation.

The Vedantic idea of knowledge does not present the same difficulties. The Gita takes it over at once and completely and throughout the six chapters quietly substitutes the still immutable Brahman of the Vedantins, the One without a second immanent in all cosmos, for the still immutable but multiple Purusha of the Sankhyas. It accepts throughout these chapters knowledge and realisation of the Brahman as the most important, the indispensable means of liberation, even while it insists on desireless works as an essential part of knowledge. It accepts equally Nirvana of the ego in the infinite equality of the immutable, impersonal Brahman as essential to liberation; it practically identifies this extinction with the Sankhya return of the inactive immutable Purusha upon itself when it emerges out of identification with the actions of Prakriti; it combines and fuses the language of the Vedanta with the language of the Sankhya, as had already indeed been done by certain of the

Upanishads.[4] But still there is a defect in the Vedantic position which has to be overcome. We may, perhaps, conjecture that at this time the Vedanta had not yet redeveloped the later theistic tendencies which in the Upanishads are already present as an element, but not so prominent as in the Vaishnava philosophies of the later Vedantins where they become indeed not only prominent but paramount. We may take it that the orthodox Vedanta was, at any rate in its main tendencies, pantheistic at the basis, monistic at the summit.[5] It knew of the Brahman, one without a second; it knew of the Gods, Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma and the rest, who all resolve themselves into the Brahman; but the one supreme Brahman as the one Ishwara, Purusha, Deva — words often applied to it in the Upanishads and justifying to that extent, yet passing beyond the Sankhya and the theistic conceptions — was an idea that had fallen from its pride of place;[6] the names could only be applied in a strictly logical Brahmavada to subordinate or inferior phases of the Brahman-idea. The Gita proposes not only to restore the original equality of these names and therefore of the conceptions they indicate, but to go a step farther. The Brahman in its supreme and not in any lower aspect has to be presented as the Purusha with the lower Prakriti for its Maya, so to synthetise thoroughly Vedanta and Sankhya, and as Ishwara, so to synthetise thoroughly both with Yoga; but the Gita is going to represent the Ishwara, the Purushottama, as higher even than the still and immutable Brahman, and the loss of ego in the impersonal comes in at the beginning as only a great initial and necessary step towards union with the Purushottama. For the Purushottama is the supreme Brahman. It therefore passes boldly beyond the Veda and the Upanishads as they were taught by their best authorised exponents and affirms a teaching of its own which it has developed from them, but which may not be capable of being fitted in within the four corners of their meaning as ordinarily interpreted by the Vedantins.[7] In fact without this free and synthetic dealing with the letter of the Scripture a work of large synthesis in the then state of conflict between numerous schools and with the current methods of Vedic exegesis would have been impossible.

---

[4] Especially the Swetaswatara.

[5] The pantheistic formula is that God and the All are one, the monistic adds that God or Brahman alone exists and the cosmos is only an illusory appearance or else a real but partial manifestation.

[6] This is a little doubtful, but we may say at least that there was a strong tendency in that direction of which Shankara's philosophy was the last culmination.

The Gita in later chapters speaks highly of the Veda and the Upanishads. They are divine Scriptures, they are the Word. The Lord himself is the knower of Veda and the author of Vedanta, *vedavid vedāntakṛt*; the Lord is the one object of knowledge in all the Vedas, *sarvair vedair aham eva vedyaḥ*, a language which implies that the word Veda means the book of knowledge and that these Scriptures deserve their appellation. The Purushottama from his high supremacy above the Immutable and the mutable has extended himself in the world and in the Veda. Still the letter of the Scripture binds and confuses, as the apostle of Christianity warned his disciples when he said that the letter killeth and it is the spirit that saves; and there is a point beyond which the utility of the Scripture itself ceases. The real source of knowledge is the Lord in the heart; "I am seated in the heart of every man and from me is knowledge," says the Gita; the Scripture is only a verbal form of that inner Veda, of that self-luminous Reality, it is *śabdabrahma*: the mantra, says the Veda, has risen from the heart, from the secret place where is the seat of the truth, *sadanād ṛtasya*, *guhāyām*. That origin is its sanction; but still the infinite Truth is greater than its word. Nor shall you say of any Scripture that it alone is all-sufficient and no other truth can be admitted, as the Vedavadins said of the Veda, *nānyad astīti vādinaḥ*. This is a saving and liberating word which must be applied to all the Scriptures of the world. Take all the Scriptures that are or have been, Bible and Koran and the books of the Chinese, Veda and Upanishads and Purana and Tantra and Shastra and the Gita itself and the sayings of thinkers and sages, prophets and Avatars, still you shall not say that there is nothing else or that the truth your intellect cannot find there is not true because you cannot find it there. That is the limited thought of the sectarian or the composite thought of the eclectic religionist, not the untrammelled truth-seeking of the free and illumined mind and God-experienced soul. Heard or unheard before, that always is the truth which is seen by the heart of man in its illumined depths or heard within from the Master of all knowledge, the knower of the eternal Veda.

---

[7] In reality the idea of the Purushottama is already announced in the Upanishads, though in a more scattered fashion than in the Gita and, as in the Gita, the Supreme Brahman or Supreme Purusha is constantly described as containing in himself the opposition of the Brahman with qualities and without qualities, *nirguṇo guṇī*. He is not one of these things to the exclusion of the other which seems to our intellect to be its contrary.

X

The Yoga of the Intelligent Will

I HAVE had to deviate in the last two essays and to drag the reader with me into the arid tracts of metaphysical dogma, — however cursorily and with a very insufficient and superficial treatment, — so that we might understand why the Gita follows the peculiar line of development it has taken, working out first a partial truth with only subdued hints of its deeper meaning, then returning upon its hints and bringing out their significance until it rises to its last great suggestion, its supreme mystery which it does not work out at all, but leaves to be lived out, as the later ages of Indian spirituality tried to live it out in great waves of love, of surrender, of ecstasy. Its eye is always on its synthesis and all its strains are the gradual preparation of the mind for its high closing note.

I have declared to you the poise of a self-liberating intelligence in Sankhya, says the divine Teacher to Arjuna. I will now declare to you another poise in Yoga. You are shrinking from the results of your works, you desire other results and turn from your right path in life because it does not lead you to them. But this idea of works and their result, desire of result as the motive, the work as a means for the satisfaction of desire, is the bondage of the ignorant who know not what works are, nor their true source, nor their real operation, nor their high utility. My Yoga will free you from all bondage of the soul to its works, *karmabandhaṁ prahāsyasi*. You are afraid of many things, afraid of sin, afraid of suffering, afraid of hell and punishment, afraid of God, afraid of this world, afraid of the hereafter, afraid of yourself. What is it that you are not afraid of at this moment, you the Aryan fighter, the world's chief hero? But this is the great fear which besieges humanity, its fear of sin and suffering now and hereafter, its fear in a world of whose true nature it is ignorant, of a God whose true being also it has not seen and whose cosmic purpose it does not understand. My Yoga will deliver you from the great fear and even a little of it will bring deliverance. When you have once set out on this path, you will find that no step is lost; every least movement will be a gain; you will find there no obstacle that can baulk you of your advance. A bold and absolute promise and one to which the fearful and hesitating mind beset and stumbling in all its paths cannot easily lend an assured trust; nor is the large and full truth of it apparent unless with these first words of the message of the Gita we read also the last, "Abandon all laws of conduct and take refuge in Me alone; I will deliver you from all sin and evil; do not grieve."

But it is not with this deep and moving word of God to man, but rather with the first necessary rays of light on the path, directed not like that to the soul, but to the intellect, that the exposition begins. Not the Friend and Lover of man speaks first, but the guide and teacher who has to remove from him his ignorance of his true self and of the nature of the world and of the springs of his own action. For it is because he acts ignorantly, with a wrong intelligence and therefore a wrong will in these matters, that man is or seems to be bound by his works; otherwise works are no bondage to the free soul. It is because of this wrong intelligence that he has hope and fear, wrath and grief and transient joy; otherwise works are possible with a perfect serenity and freedom. Therefore it is the Yoga of the buddhi, the intelligence, that is first enjoined on Arjuna. To act with right intelligence and, therefore, a right will, fixed in the One, aware of the one self in all and acting out of its equal serenity, not running about in different directions under the thousand impulses of our superficial mental self, is the Yoga of the intelligent will.

There are, says the Gita, two types of intelligence in the human being. The first is concentrated, poised, one, homogeneous, directed singly towards the Truth; unity is its characteristic, concentrated fixity is its very being. In the other there is no single will, no unified intelligence, but only an endless number of ideas many-branching, coursing about, that is to say, in this or that direction in pursuit of the desires which are offered to it by life and by the environment. Buddhi, the word used, means, properly speaking, the mental power of understanding but it is evidently used by the Gita in a large philosophic sense for the whole action of the discriminating and deciding mind which determines both the direction and use of our thoughts and the direction and use of our acts; thought, intelligence, judgment, perceptive choice and aim are all included in its functioning: for the characteristic of the unified intelligence is not only concentration of the mind that knows, but especially concentration of the mind that decides and persists in the decision, *vyavasāya*, while the sign of the dissipated intelligence is not so much even discursiveness of the ideas and perceptions as discursiveness of the aims and desires, therefore of the will. Will, then, and knowledge are the two functions of the Buddhi. The unified intelligent will is fixed in the enlightened soul, it is concentrated in inner self-knowledge; the many-branching and multifarious, busied with many things, careless of the one thing needful is on the contrary subject to the restless and discursive action of the mind, dispersed in outward life and works and their fruits. "Works are far inferior," says the Teacher, "to Yoga of the intelligence; desire rather refuge in the intelligence; poor and wretched souls are they who make the fruit of their works the object of their thoughts and activities."

We must remember the psychological order of the Sankhya which the Gita accepts. On one side there is the Purusha, the soul calm, inactive, immutable, one, not evolutive; on the other side there is Prakriti or Nature-force inert without the conscious Soul, active but only by juxtaposition to that consciousness, by contact with it, as we would say, not so much one at first as indeterminate, triple in its qualities, capable of evolution and involution. The contact of soul and nature generates the play of subjectivity and objectivity which is our experience of being; what is to us the subjective first evolves, because the soul-consciousness is the first cause, inconscient Nature-force only the second and dependent cause; but still it is Nature and not Soul which supplies the instruments of our subjectivity. First in order come Buddhi, discriminative or determinative power evolving out of Nature-force, and its subordinate power of self-discriminating ego. Then as a secondary evolution there arises out of these the power which seizes the discriminations of objects, sense-mind or Manas, — we must record the Indian names because the corresponding English words are not real equivalents. As a tertiary evolution out of sense-mind we have the specialising organic senses, ten in number, five of perception, five of action; next the powers of each sense of perception, sound, form, scent, etc., which give their value to objects for the mind and make things what they are to our subjectivity, — and, as the substantial basis of these, the primary conditions of the objects of sense, the five elements of ancient philosophy or rather elementary conditions of Nature, *pañca bhūta*, which constitute objects by their various combination.

Reflected in the pure consciousness of Purusha these degrees and powers of Nature-force become the material of our impure subjectivity, impure because its action is dependent on the perceptions of the objective world and on their subjective reactions. Buddhi, which is simply the determinative power that determines all inertly out of indeterminate inconscient Force, takes for us the form of intelligence and will. Manas, the inconscient force which seizes Nature's discriminations by objective action and reaction and grasps at them by attraction, becomes sense-perception and desire, the two crude terms or degradations of intelligence and will, — becomes the sense-mind sensational, emotive, volitional in the lower sense of wish, hope, longing, passion, vital impulsion, all the deformations (*vikāra*) of will. The senses become the instruments of sense-mind, the perceptive five of our sense-knowledge, the active five of our impulsions and vital habits, mediators between the subjective and objective; the rest are the objects of our consciousness, *viṣayas* of the senses.

This order of evolution seems contrary to that which we perceive as the order of the material evolution; but if we remember that even Buddhi is in itself an inert action of inconscient Nature and that there is certainly in this sense an inconscient will and intelligence, a discriminative and determinative force even in the atom, if we observe the crude inconscient stuff of sensation, emotion, memory, impulsion in the plant and in the subconscient forms of existence, if we look at these powers of Nature-force assuming the forms of our subjectivity in the evolving consciousness of animal and man, we shall see that the Sankhya system squares well enough with all that modern enquiry has elicited by its observation of material Nature. In the evolution of the soul back from Prakriti towards Purusha, the reverse order has to be taken to the original Nature-evolution, and that is how the Upanishads and the Gita following and almost quoting the Upanishads state the ascending order of our subjective powers. "Supreme, they say," beyond their objects "are the senses, supreme over the senses the mind, supreme over the mind the intelligent will: that which is supreme over the intelligent will, is he," — is the conscious self, the Purusha. Therefore, says the Gita, it is this Purusha, this supreme cause of our subjective life which we have to understand and become aware of by the intelligence; in that we have to fix our will. So holding our lower subjective self in Nature firmly poised and stilled by means of the greater really conscient self, we can destroy the restless ever-active enemy of our peace and self-mastery, the mind's desire.

For evidently there are two possibilities of the action of the intelligent will. It may take its downward and outward orientation towards a discursive action of the perceptions and the will in the triple play of Prakriti, or it may take its upward and inward orientation towards a settled peace and equality in the calm and immutable purity of the conscious silent soul no longer subject to the distractions of Nature. In the former alternative the subjective being is at the mercy of the objects of sense, it lives in the outward contact of things. That life is the life of desire. For the senses excited by their objects create a restless or often violent disturbance, a strong or even headlong outward movement towards the seizure of these objects and their enjoyment, and they carry away the sense-mind, "as the winds carry away a ship upon the sea"; the mind subjected to the emotions, passions, longings, impulsions awakened by this outward movement of the senses carries away similarly the intelligent will, which loses therefore its power of calm discrimination and mastery. Subjection of the soul to the confused play of the three gunas of Prakriti in their eternal entangled twining and wrestling, ignorance, a false, sensuous, objective life of the soul, enslavement to grief and wrath and attachment and passion, are the results of the downward trend of the buddhi, — the troubled life of the ordinary, unenlightened, undisciplined man. Those who like the Vedavadins make sense-enjoyment the object of action and its fulfilment the highest aim of the soul, are misleading guides. The inner subjective self-delight independent of objects is our true aim and the high and wide poise of our peace and liberation.

Therefore, it is the upward and inward orientation of the intelligent will that we must resolutely choose with a settled concentration and perseverance, *vyavasāya*; we must fix it firmly in the calm self-knowledge of the Purusha. The first movement must be obviously to get rid of desire which is the whole root of the evil and suffering; and in order to get rid of desire, we must put an end to the cause of desire, the rushing out of the senses to seize and enjoy their objects. We must draw them back when they are inclined thus to rush out, draw them away from their objects, — as the tortoise draws in his limbs into the shell, so these into their source, quiescent in the mind, the mind quiescent in intelligence, the intelligence quiescent in the soul and its self-knowledge, observing the action of Nature, but not subject to it, not desiring anything that the objective life can give.

It is not an external asceticism, the physical renunciation of the objects of sense that I am teaching, suggests Krishna immediately to avoid a misunderstanding which is likely at once to arise. Not the renunciation of the Sankhyas or the austerities of the rigid ascetic with his fasts, his maceration of the body, his attempt to abstain even from food; that is not the self-discipline or the abstinence which I mean, for I speak of an inner withdrawal, a renunciation of desire. The embodied soul, having a body, has to support it normally by food for its normal physical action; by abstention from food it simply removes from itself the physical contact with the object of sense, but does not get rid of the inner relation which makes that contact hurtful. It retains the pleasure of the sense in the object, the *rasa*, the liking and disliking, — for *rasa* has two sides; the soul must, on the contrary, be capable of enduring the physical contact without suffering inwardly this sensuous reaction. Otherwise there is *nivṛtti*, cessation of the object, *viṣayā vinivartante*, but no subjective cessation, no *nivṛtti* of the mind; but the senses are of the mind, subjective, and subjective cessation of the *rasa* is the only real sign of mastery. But how is this desireless contact with objects, this unsensuous use of the senses possible? It is possible, *paraṁ dṛṣṭvā*, by the vision of the supreme, — *param*, the Soul, the Purusha, — and by living in the Yoga, in union or oneness of the whole subjective being with that, through the Yoga of the intelligence; for the one Soul is calm, satisfied in its own delight, and that delight free from duality can take, once we see this supreme thing in us and fix the mind and will on that, the place of the sensuous object-ridden pleasures and repulsions of the mind. This is the true way of liberation.

Certainly self-discipline, self-control is never easy. All intelligent human beings know that they must exercise some control over themselves and nothing is more common than this advice to control the senses; but ordinarily it is only advised imperfectly and practised imperfectly in the most limited and insufficient fashion. Even, however, the sage, the man of clear, wise and discerning soul who really labours to acquire complete self-mastery finds himself hurried and carried away by the senses. That is because the mind naturally lends itself to the senses; it observes the objects of sense with an inner interest, settles upon them and makes them the object of absorbing thought for the intelligence and of strong interest for the will. By that attachment comes, by attachment desire, by desire distress, passion and anger when the desire is not satisfied or is thwarted or opposed, and by passion the soul is obscured, the intelligence and will forget to see and be seated in the calm observing soul; there is a fall from the memory of one's true self, and by that lapse the intelligent will is also obscured, destroyed even. For, for the time being, it no longer exists to our memory of ourselves, it disappears in a cloud of passion; we become passion, wrath, grief and cease to be self and intelligence and will. This then must be prevented and all the senses brought utterly under control; for only by an absolute control of the senses can the wise and calm intelligence be firmly established in its proper seat.

This cannot be done perfectly by the act of the intelligence itself, by a merely mental self-discipline; it can only be done by Yoga with something which is higher than itself and in which calm and self-mastery are inherent. And this Yoga can only arrive at its success by devoting, by consecrating, by giving up the whole self to the Divine, "to Me", says Krishna; for the Liberator is within us, but it is not our mind, nor our intelligence, nor our personal will, — they are only instruments. It is the Lord in whom, as we are told in the end, we have utterly to take refuge. And for that we must at first make him the object of our whole being and keep in soul-contact with him. This is the sense of the phrase "he must sit firm in Yoga, wholly given up to Me"; but as yet it is the merest passing hint after the manner of the Gita, three words only which contain in seed the whole gist of the highest secret yet to be developed. *Yukta āsīta matparaḥ*.

If this is done, then it becomes possible to move among the objects of sense, in contact with them, acting on them, but with the senses entirely under the control of the subjective self, — not at the mercy of the objects and their contacts and reactions, — and that self again obedient to the highest self, the Purusha. Then, free from reactions, the senses will be delivered from the affections of liking and disliking, escape the duality of positive and negative desire, and calm, peace, clearness, happy tranquillity, *ātmaprasāda*, will settle upon the man. That clear tranquillity is the source of the soul's felicity; all grief begins to lose its power of touching the tranquil soul; the intelligence is rapidly established in the peace of the self; suffering is destroyed. It is this calm, desireless, griefless fixity of the buddhi in self-poise and self-knowledge to which the Gita gives the name of Samadhi.

The sign of the man in Samadhi is not that he loses consciousness of objects and surroundings and of his mental and physical self and cannot be recalled to it even by burning or torture of the body, — the ordinary idea of the matter; trance is a particular intensity, not the essential sign. The test is the expulsion of all desires, their inability to get at the mind, and it is the inner state from which this freedom arises, the delight of the soul gathered within itself with the mind equal and still and high-poised above the attractions and repulsions, the alternations of sunshine and storm and stress of the external life. It is drawn inward even when acting outwardly; it is concentrated in self even when gazing out upon things; it is directed wholly to the Divine even when to the outward vision of others busy and preoccupied with the affairs of the world. Arjuna, voicing the average human mind, asks for some outward, physical, practically discernible sign of this great Samadhi; how does such a man speak, how sit, how walk? No such signs can be given, nor does the Teacher attempt to supply them; for the only possible test of its possession is inward and that there are plenty of hostile psychological forces to apply. Equality is the great stamp of the liberated soul and of that equality even the most discernible signs are still subjective. “A man with mind untroubled by sorrows, who has done with desire for pleasures, from whom liking and wrath and fear have passed away, such is the sage whose understanding has become founded in stability.” He is “without the triple action of the qualities of Prakriti, without the dualities, ever based in his true being, without getting or having, possessed of his self.” For what gettings and havings has the free soul? Once we are possessed of the Self, we are in possession of all things.

And yet he does not cease from work and action. There is the originality and power of the Gita, that having affirmed this static condition, this superiority to nature, this emptiness even of all that constitutes ordinarily the action of Nature for the liberated soul, it is still able to vindicate for it, to enjoin on it even the continuance of works and thus avoid the great defect of the merely quietistic and ascetic philosophies, — the defect from which we find them today attempting to escape. “Thou hast a right to action, but only to action, never to its fruits; let not the fruits of thy works be thy motive, neither let there be in thee any attachment to inactivity.” Therefore it is not the works practised with desire by the Vedavadins, it is not the claim for the satisfaction of the restless and energetic mind by a constant activity, the claim made by the practical or the kinetic man, which is here enjoined. "Fixed in Yoga do thy actions, having abandoned attachment, having become equal in failure and success; for it is equality that is meant by Yoga." Action is distressed by the choice between a relative good and evil, the fear of sin and the difficult endeavour towards virtue? But the liberated who has united his reason and will with the Divine, casts away from him even here in this world of dualities both good doing and evil doing; for he rises to a higher law beyond good and evil, founded in the liberty of self-knowledge. Such desireless action can have no decisiveness, no effectiveness, no efficient motive, no large or vigorous creative power? Not so; action done in Yoga is not only the highest but the wisest, the most potent and efficient even for the affairs of the world; for it is informed by the knowledge and will of the Master of works: "Yoga is skill in works." But all action directed towards life leads away from the universal aim of the Yogin which is by common consent to escape from bondage to this distressed and sorrowful human birth? Not so, either; the sages who do works without desire for fruits and in Yoga with the Divine are liberated from the bondage of birth and reach that other perfect status in which there are none of the maladies which afflict the mind and life of a suffering humanity.

The status he reaches is the Brahmic condition; he gets to firm standing in the Brahman, *brāhmī sthiti*. It is a reversal of the whole view, experience, knowledge, values, seeings of earth-bound creatures. This life of the dualities which is to them their day, their waking, their consciousness, their bright condition of activity and knowledge, is to him a night, a troubled sleep and darkness of the soul; that higher being which is to them a night, a sleep in which all knowledge and will cease, is to the self-mastering sage his waking, his luminous day of true being, knowledge and power. They are troubled and muddy waters disturbed by every little inrush of desire; he is an ocean of wide being and consciousness which is ever being filled, yet ever motionless in its large poise of his soul; all the desires of the world enter into him as waters into the sea, yet he has no desire nor is troubled. For while they are filled with the troubling sense of ego and mine and thine, he is one with the one Self in all and has no "I" or "mine". He acts as others, but he has abandoned all desires and their longings. He attains to the great peace and is not bewildered by the shows of things; he has extinguished his individual ego in the One, lives in that unity and, fixed in that status at his end, can attain to extinction in the Brahman, Nirvana, — not the negative self-annihilation of the Buddhists, but the great immergence of the separate personal self into the vast reality of the one infinite impersonal Existence.

Such, subtly unifying Sankhya, Yoga and Vedanta, is the first foundation of the teaching of the Gita. It is far from being all, but it is the first indispensable practical unity of knowledge and works with a hint already of the third crowning intensest element in the soul's completeness, divine love and devotion.

XI

Works and Sacrifice

THE YOGA of the intelligent will and its culmination in the Brahmic status, which occupies all the close of the second chapter, contains the seed of much of the teaching of the Gita, — its doctrine of desireless works, of equality, of the rejection of outward renunciation, of devotion to the Divine; but as yet all this is slight and obscure. What is most strongly emphasised as yet is the withdrawal of the will from the ordinary motive of human activities, desire, from man's normal temperament of the sense-seeking thought and will with its passions and ignorance, and from its customary habit of troubled many-branching ideas and wishes to the desireless calm unity and passionless serenity of the Brahmic poise. So much Arjuna has understood. He is not unfamiliar with all this; it is the substance of the current teaching which points man to the path of knowledge and to the renunciation of life and works as his way of perfection. The intelligence withdrawing from sense and desire and human action and turning to the Highest, to the One, to the actionless Purusha, to the immobile, to the featureless Brahman, that surely is the eternal seed of knowledge. There is no room here for works, since works belong to the Ignorance; action is the very opposite of knowledge; its seed is desire and its fruit is bondage. That is the orthodox philosophical doctrine, and Krishna seems quite to admit it when he says that works are far inferior to the Yoga of the intelligence. And yet works are insisted upon as part of the Yoga; so that there seems to be in this teaching a radical inconsistency. Not only so; for some kind of work no doubt may persist for a while, the minimum, the most inoffensive; but here is a work wholly inconsistent with knowledge, with serenity and with the motionless peace of the self-delighted soul, — a work terrible, even monstrous, a bloody strife, a ruthless battle, a giant massacre. Yet it is this that is enjoined, this that it is sought to justify by the teaching of inner peace and desireless equality and status in the Brahman! Here then is an unreconciled contradiction. Arjuna complains that he has been given a contradictory and confusing doctrine, not the clear, strenuously single road by which the human intelligence can move straight and trenchantly to the supreme good. It is in answer to this objection that the Gita begins at once to develop more clearly its positive and imperative doctrine of Works.

The Teacher first makes a distinction between the two means of salvation on which in this world men can concentrate separately, the Yoga of knowledge, the Yoga of works, the one implying, it is usually supposed, renunciation of works as an obstacle to salvation, the other accepting works as a means of salvation. He does not yet insist strongly on any fusion of them, on any reconciliation of the thought that divides them, but begins by showing that the renunciation of the Sankhyas, the physical renunciation, Sannyasa, is neither the only way, nor at all the better way. *Naiṣkarmya*, a calm voidness from works, is no doubt that to which the soul, the Purusha has to attain; for it is Prakriti which does the work and the soul has to rise above involution in the activities of the being and attain to a free serenity and poise watching over the operations of Prakriti, but not affected by them. That, and not cessation of the works of Prakriti, is what is really meant by the soul's *naiṣkarmya*. Therefore it is an error to think that by not engaging in any kind of action this actionless state of the soul can be attained and enjoyed. Mere renunciation of works is not a sufficient, not even quite a proper means for salvation. "Not by abstention from works does a man enjoy actionlessness, nor by mere renunciation (of works) does he attain to his perfection," — to *siddhi*, the accomplishment of the aims of his self-discipline by Yoga.

But at least it must be one necessary means, indispensable, imperative? For how, if the works of Prakriti continue, can the soul help being involved in them? How can I fight and yet in my soul not think or feel that I the individual am fighting, not desire victory nor be inwardly touched by defeat? This is the teaching of the Sankhyas that the intelligence of the man who engages in the activities of Nature, is entangled in egoism, ignorance and desire and therefore drawn to action; on the contrary, if the intelligence draws back, then the action must cease with the cessation of the desire and the ignorance. Therefore the giving up of life and works is a necessary part, an inevitable circumstance and an indispensable last means of the movement to liberation. This objection of a current logic, — it is not expressed by Arjuna, but it is in his mind as the turn of his subsequent utterances shows, — the Teacher immediately anticipates. No, he says, such renunciation, far from being indispensable, is not even possible. "For none stands even for a moment not doing work; everyone is made to do action helplessly by the modes born of Prakriti." The strong perception of the great cosmic action and the eternal activity and power of the cosmic energy which was so much emphasised afterwards by the teaching of the Tantric Shaktas who even made Prakriti or Shakti superior to Purusha, is a very remarkable feature of the Gita. Although here an undertone, it is still strong enough, coupled with what we might call the theistic and devotional elements of its thought, to bring in that activism which so strongly modifies in its scheme of Yoga the quietistic tendencies of the old metaphysical Vedanta. Man embodied in the natural world cannot cease from action, not for a moment, not for a second; his very existence here is an action; the whole universe is an act of God, mere living even is His movement.

Our physical life, its maintenance, its continuance is a journey, a pilgrimage of the body, *śarīra-yātrā*, and that cannot be effected without action. But even if a man could leave his body unmaintained, otiose, if he could stand still always like a tree or sit inert like a stone, *tiṣṭhati*, that vegetable or material immobility would not save him from the hands of Nature; he would not be liberated from her workings. For it is not our physical movements and activities alone which are meant by works, by *karma*; our mental existence also is a great complex action, it is even the greater and more important part of the works of the unresting energy, — subjective cause and determinant of the physical. We have gained nothing if we repress the effect but retain the activity of the subjective cause. The objects of sense are only an occasion for our bondage, the mind's insistence on them is the means, the instrumental cause. A man may control his organs of action and refuse to give them their natural play, but he has gained nothing if his mind continues to remember and dwell upon the objects of sense. Such a man has bewildered himself with false notions of self-discipline; he has not understood its object or its truth, nor the first principles of his subjective existence; therefore all his methods of self-discipline are false and null.[1] The body's actions, even the mind's actions are nothing in themselves, neither a bondage, nor the first cause of bondage. What is vital is the mighty energy of Nature which will have her way and her play in her great field of mind and life and body; what is dangerous in her, is the power of her three *guṇas*, modes or qualities to confuse and bewilder the intelligence and so obscure the soul. That, as we shall see later, is the whole crux of action and liberation for the Gita. Be free from obscuration and bewilderment by the three *guṇas* and action can continue, as it must continue, and even the largest, richest or most enormous and violent action; it does not matter, for nothing then touches the Purusha, the soul has *naiṣkarmya.*

But at present the Gita does not proceed to that larger point. Since the mind is the instrumental cause, since inaction is impossible, what is rational, necessary, the right way is a controlled action of the subjective and objective organism. The mind must bring the senses under its control as an instrument of the intelligent will and then the organs of action must be used for their proper office, for action, but for action done as Yoga. But what is the essence of this self-control, what is meant by action done as Yoga, *Karmayoga*? It is non-attachment, it is to do works without clinging with the mind to the objects of sense and the fruit of the works. Not complete inaction, which is an error, a confusion, a self-delusion, an impossibility, but action full and free done without subjection to sense and passion, desireless and unattached works, are the first secret of perfection. Do action thus self-controlled, says Krishna, *niyataṁ kuru karma tvam*: I have said that knowledge, the intelligence, is greater than works, *jyāyasī karmaṇo buddhiḥ*, but I did not mean that inaction is greater than action; the contrary is the truth, *karma jyāyo akarmaṇaḥ*. For knowledge does not mean renunciation of works, it means equality and non-attachment to desire and the objects of sense; and it means the poise of the intelligent will in the Soul free and high-uplifted above the lower instrumentation of Prakriti and controlling the works of the mind and the senses and body in the power of self-knowledge and the pure objectless self-delight of spiritual realisation, *niyataṁ karma*.[2] *Buddhiyoga* is fulfilled by *karmayoga*; the Yoga of the self-liberating intelligent will finds its full meaning by the Yoga of desireless works. Thus the Gita founds its teaching of the necessity of desireless works, *niṣkāma karma*, and unites the subjective practice of the Sankhyas — rejecting their merely physical rule — with the practice of Yoga.

---

[1] I cannot think that *mithyācāra* means a hypocrite. How is a man a hypocrite who inflicts on himself so severe and complete a privation? He is mistaken and deluded, *vimūḍhātmā*, and his *ācāra*, his formally regulated method of self-discipline, is a false and vain method, — this surely is all that the Gita means.

But still there is an essential difficulty unsolved. Desire is the ordinary motive of all human actions, and if the soul is free from desire, then there is no farther rationale for action. We may be compelled to do certain works for the maintenance of the body, but even that is a subjection to the desire of the body which we ought to get rid of if we are to attain perfection. But granting that this cannot be done, the only way is to fix a rule for action outside ourselves, not dictated by anything in our subjectivity, the *nityakarma* of the Vedic rule, the routine of ceremonial sacrifice, daily conduct and social duty, which the man who seeks liberation may do simply because it is enjoined upon him, without any personal purpose or subjective interest in them, with an absolute indifference to the doing, not because he is compelled by his nature but because it is enjoined by the Shastra. But if the principle of the action is not to be external to the nature but subjective, if the actions even of the liberated and the sage are to be controlled and determined by his nature, *svabhāva-niyatam*, then the only subjective principle of action is desire of whatever kind, lust of the flesh or emotion of the heart or base or noble aim of the mind, but all subject to the *guṇas* of Prakriti. Let us then interpret the *niyata karma* of the Gita as the *nityakarma* of the Vedic rule, its *kartavya karma* or work that has to be done as the Aryan rule of social duty and let us take too its work done as a sacrifice to mean simply these Vedic sacrifices and this fixed social duty performed disinterestedly and without any personal object. This is how the Gita's doctrine of desireless work is often interpreted. But it seems to me that the Gita's teaching is not so crude and simple, not so local and temporal and narrow as all that. It is large, free, subtle and profound; it is for all time and for all men, not for a particular age and country. Especially, it is always breaking free from external forms, details, dogmatic notions and going back to principles and the great facts of our nature and our being. It is a work of large philosophic truth and spiritual practicality, not of constrained religious and philosophical formulas and stereotyped dogmas.

---

[2] Again, I cannot accept the current interpretation of *niyataṁ karma* as if it meant fixed and formal works and were equivalent to the Vedic *nityakarma*, the regular works of sacrifice, ceremonial and the daily rule of Vedic living. Surely, *niyata* simply takes up the *niyamya* of the last verse. Krishna makes a statement, "he who controlling the senses by the mind engages with the organs of action in Yoga of action, he excels," *manasā niyamya ārabhate karmayogam*, and he immediately goes on to draw from the statement an injunction, to sum it up and convert it into a rule. "Do thou do controlled action," *niyataṁ kuru karma tvam*: *niyatam* takes up the *niyamya*, *kuru karma* takes up the *ārabhate karmayogam*. Not formal works fixed by an external rule, but desireless works controlled by the liberated *buddhi*, is the Gita's teaching.

The difficulty is this, how, our nature being what it is and desire the common principle of its action, is it possible to institute a really desireless action? For what we call ordinarily disinterested action is not really desireless; it is simply a replacement of certain smaller personal interests by other larger desires which have only the appearance of being impersonal, virtue, country, mankind. All action, moreover, as Krishna insists, is done by the *guṇas* of Prakriti, by our nature; in acting according to the Shastra we are still acting according to our nature, — even if this Shastric action is not, as it usually is, a mere cover for our desires, prejudices, passions, egoisms, our personal, national, sectarian vanities, sentiments and preferences; but even otherwise, even at the purest, still we obey a choice of our nature, and if our nature were different and the *guṇas* acted on our intelligence and will in some other combination, we would not accept the Shastra, but live according to our pleasure or our intellectual notions or else break free from the social law to live the life of the solitary or the ascetic. We cannot become impersonal by obeying something outside ourselves, for we cannot so get outside ourselves; we can only do it by rising to the highest in ourselves, into our free Soul and Self which is the same and one in all and has therefore no personal interests, to the Divine in our being who possesses Himself transcendent of cosmos and is therefore not bound by His cosmic works or His individual action. That is what the Gita teaches and desirelessness is only a means to this end, not an aim in itself. Yes, but how is it to be brought about? By doing all works with sacrifice as the only object, is the reply of the divine Teacher. "By doing works otherwise than for sacrifice, this world of men is in bondage to works; for sacrifice practise works, O son of Kunti, becoming free from all attachment." It is evident that all works and not merely sacrifice and social duties can be done in this spirit; any action may be done either from the ego-sense narrow or enlarged or for the sake of the Divine. All being and all action of Prakriti exist only for the sake of the Divine; from that it proceeds, by that it endures, to that it is directed. But so long as we are dominated by the ego-sense we cannot perceive or act in the spirit of this truth, but act for the satisfaction of the ego and in the spirit of the ego, otherwise than for sacrifice. Egoism is the knot of the bondage. By acting Godwards, without any thought of ego, we loosen this knot and finally arrive at freedom.

At first, however, the Gita takes up the Vedic statement of the idea of sacrifice and phrases the law of sacrifice in its current terms. This it does with a definite object. We have seen that the quarrel between renunciation and works has two forms, the opposition of Sankhya and Yoga which is already in principle reconciled and the opposition of Vedism and Vedantism which the Teacher has yet to reconcile. The first is a larger statement of the opposition in which the idea of works is general and wide. The Sankhya starts from the notion of the divine status as that of the immutable and inactive Purusha which each soul is in reality and makes an opposition between inactivity of Purusha and activity of Prakriti; so its logical culmination is cessation of all works. Yoga starts from the notion of the Divine as Ishwara, lord of the operations of Prakriti and therefore superior to them, and its logical culmination is not cessation of works but the soul's superiority to them and freedom even though doing all works. In the opposition of Vedism and Vedantism works, *karma*, are restricted to Vedic works and sometimes even to Vedic sacrifice and ritualised works, all else being excluded as not useful to salvation. Vedism of the Mimansakas insisted on them as the means, Vedantism taking its stand on the Upanishads looked on them as only a preliminary belonging to the state of ignorance and in the end to be overpassed and rejected, an obstacle to the seeker of liberation. Vedism worshipped the Devas, the gods, with sacrifice and held them to be the powers who assist our salvation. Vedantism was inclined to regard them as powers of the mental and material world opposed to our salvation (men, says the Upanishad, are the cattle of the gods, who do not desire man to know and be free); it saw the Divine as the immutable Brahman who has to be attained not by works of sacrifice and worship but by knowledge. Works only lead to material results and to an inferior Paradise; therefore they have to be renounced.

The Gita resolves this opposition by insisting that the Devas are only forms of the one Deva, the Ishwara, the Lord of all Yoga and worship and sacrifice and austerity, and if it is true that sacrifice offered to the Devas leads only to material results and to Paradise, it is also true that sacrifice offered to the Ishwara leads beyond them to the great liberation. For the Lord and the immutable Brahman are not two different beings, but one and the same Being, and whoever strives towards either, is striving towards that one divine Existence. All works in their totality find their culmination and completeness in the knowledge of the Divine, *sarvaṁ karmākhilaṁ pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate*. They are not an obstacle, but the way to the supreme knowledge.

Thus this opposition too is reconciled with the help of a large elucidation of the meaning of sacrifice. In fact its conflict is only a restricted form of the larger opposition between Yoga and Sankhya. Vedism is a specialised and narrow form of Yoga; the principle of the Vedantists is identical with that of the Sankhyas, for to both the movement of salvation is the recoil of the intelligence, the *buddhi*, from the differentiating powers of Nature, from ego, mind, senses, from the subjective and the objective, and its return to the undifferentiated and the immutable. It is with this object of reconciliation in his mind that the Teacher first approaches his statement of the doctrine of sacrifice; but throughout, even from the very beginning, he keeps his eye not on the restricted Vedic sense of sacrifice and works, but on their larger and universal application, — that widening of narrow and formal notions to admit the great general truths they unduly restrict which is always the method of the Gita.

XII

The Significance of Sacrifice

THE GITA'S theory of sacrifice is stated in two separate passages; one we find in the third chapter, another in the fourth; the first gives it in language which might, taken by itself, seem to be speaking only of the ceremonial sacrifice; the second interpreting that into the sense of a large philosophical symbolism, transforms at once its whole significance and raises it to a plane of high psychological and spiritual truth. "With sacrifice the Lord of creatures of old created creatures and said, By this shall you bring forth (fruits or offspring), let this be your milker of desires. Foster by this the gods and let the gods foster you; fostering each other, you shall attain to the supreme good. Fostered by sacrifice the gods shall give you desired enjoyments; who enjoys their given enjoyments and has not given to them, he is a thief. The good who eat what is left from the sacrifice, are released from all sin; but evil are they and enjoy sin who cook (the food) for their own sake. From food creatures come into being, from rain is the birth of food, from sacrifice comes into being the rain, sacrifice is born of work; work know to be born of Brahman, Brahman is born of the Immutable; therefore is the all-pervading Brahman established in the sacrifice. He who follows not here the wheel thus set in movement, evil is his being, sensual is his delight, in vain, O Partha, that man lives." Having thus stated the necessity of sacrifice, — we shall see hereafter in what sense we may understand a passage which seems at first sight to convey only a traditional theory of ritualism and the necessity of the ceremonial offering, — Krishna proceeds to state the superiority of the spiritual man to works. "But the man whose delight is in the Self and who is satisfied with the enjoyment of the Self and in the Self he is content, for him there exists no work that needs to be done. He has no object here to be gained by action done and none to be gained by action undone;

he has no dependence on all these existences for any object to be gained."

Here then are the two ideals, Vedist and Vedantist, standing as if in all their sharp original separation and opposition, on one side the active ideal of acquiring enjoyments here and the highest good beyond by sacrifice and the mutual dependence of the human being and the divine powers and on the other, facing it, the austerer ideal of the liberated man who, independent in the Spirit, has nothing to do with enjoyment or works or the human or the divine worlds, but exists only in the peace of the supreme Self, joys only in the calm joy of the Brahman. The next verses create a ground for the reconciliation between the two extremes; the secret is not inaction as soon as one turns towards the higher truth, but desireless action both before and after it is reached. The liberated man has nothing to gain by action, but nothing also to gain by inaction, and it is not at all for any personal object that he has to make his choice. "Therefore without attachment perform ever the work that is to be done (done for the sake of the world, *lokasaṅgraha*, as is made clear immediately afterward); for by doing work without attachment man attains to the highest. For it was even by works that Janaka and the rest attained to perfection." It is true that works and sacrifice are a means of arriving at the highest good, *śreyaḥ param avāpsyatha*; but there are three kinds of works, that done without sacrifice for personal enjoyment which is entirely selfish and egoistic and misses the true law and aim and utility of life, *moghaṁ pārtha sa jīvati*, that done with desire, but with sacrifice and the enjoyment only as a result of sacrifice and therefore to that extent consecrated and sanctified, and that done without desire or attachment of any kind. It is the last which brings the soul of man to the highest, *param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ*.

The whole sense and drift of this teaching turns upon the interpretation we are to give to the important words, *yajña*, *karma*, *brahma*, sacrifice, work, Brahman. If the sacrifice is simply the Vedic sacrifice, if the work from which it is born is the Vedic rule of works and if the *brahman* from which the work itself is born is the *śabdabrahman* in the sense only of the letter of the Veda, then all the positions of the Vedist dogma are conceded and there is nothing more. Ceremonial sacrifice is the right means of gaining children, wealth, enjoyment; by ceremonial sacrifice rain is brought down from heaven and the prosperity and continuity of the race assured; life is a continual transaction between the gods and men in which man offers ceremonial gifts to the gods from the gifts they have bestowed on him and in return is enriched, protected, fostered. Therefore all human works have to be accompanied and turned into a sacrament by ceremonial sacrifice and ritualistic worship; work not so dedicated is accursed, enjoyment without previous ceremonial sacrifice and ritual consecration is a sin. Even salvation, even the highest good is to be gained by ceremonial sacrifice. It must never be abandoned. Even the seeker of liberation has to continue to do ceremonial sacrifice, although without attachment; it is by ceremonial sacrifice and ritualistic works done without attachment that men of the type of Janaka attained to spiritual perfection and liberation.

Obviously, this cannot be the meaning of the Gita, for it would be in contradiction with all the rest of the book. Even in the passage itself, without the illumining interpretation afterwards given to it in the fourth chapter, we have already an indication of a wider sense where it is said that sacrifice is born from work, work from *brahman*, *brahman* from the Akshara, and therefore the all-pervading Brahman, *sarvagataṁ brahma*, is established in the sacrifice. The connecting logic of the "therefore" and the repetition of the word *brahma* are significant; for it shows clearly that the *brahman* from which all work is born has to be understood with an eye not so much to the current Vedic teaching in which it means the Veda as to a symbolical sense in which the creative Word is identical with the all-pervading Brahman, the Eternal, the one Self present in all existences, *sarvabhūteṣu*, and present in all the workings of existence. The Veda is the knowledge of the Divine, the Eternal, — "I am He who is to be known in all the books of the Knowledge," *vedaiś ca vedyaḥ*, Krishna will say in a subsequent chapter; but it is the knowledge of him in the workings of Prakriti, in the workings of the three *guṇas*, first qualities or modes of Nature, *traiguṇyaviṣayā vedāḥ*. This Brahman or Divine in the workings of Nature is born, as we may say, out of the Akshara, the immutable Purusha, the Self who stands above all the modes or qualities or workings of Nature, *nistraiguṇya*. The Brahman is one but self-displayed in two aspects, the immutable Being and the creator and originator of works in the mutable becoming, *ātman*, *sarvabhūtāni*; it is the immobile omnipresent Soul of things and it is the spiritual principle of the mobile working of things, Purusha poised in himself and Purusha active in Prakriti; it is *akṣara* and *kṣara*. In both of these aspects the Divine Being, Purushottama, manifests himself in the universe; the immutable above all qualities is His poise of peace, self-possession, equality, *samaṁ brahma*; from that proceeds His manifestation in the qualities of Prakriti and their universal workings; from the Purusha in Prakriti, from this Brahman with qualities, proceed all the works[1] of the universal energy, Karma, in man and in all existences; from that work proceeds the principle of sacrifice. Even the material interchange between gods and men proceeds upon this principle, as typified in the dependence of rain and its product food on this working and on them the physical birth of creatures. For all the working of Prakriti is in its true nature a sacrifice, *yajña*, with the Divine Being as the enjoyer of all energisms and works and sacrifice and the great Lord of all existences, *bhoktāraṁ yajñatapasāṁ sarvaloka-maheśvaram*, and to know this Divine all-pervading and established in sacrifice, *sarvagataṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam*, is the true, the Vedic knowledge.

---

[1] That this is the right interpretation results also from the opening of the eighth chapter where the universal principles are enumerated, *akṣara (brahma)*, *svabhāva*, *karma*, *kṣara bhāva*, *puruṣa*, *adhiyajña*. Akshara is the immutable Brahman, spirit or self, Atman; swabhava is the principle of the self, *adhyātma*, operative as the original nature of the being, "own way of becoming", and this proceeds out of the self, the Akshara; Karma proceeds from that and is the creative movement, *visarga*, which brings all natural beings and all changing subjective and objective shapes of being into existence; the result of Karma therefore is all this mutable becoming, the changes of nature developed out of the original self-nature, *kṣara bhāva* out of *svabhāva*; Purusha is the soul, the divine element in the becoming, *adhidaivata*, by whose presence the workings of Karma become a sacrifice, *yajña*, to the Divine within; *adhiyajña* is this secret Divine who receives the sacrifice.

But he may be known in an inferior action through the *devas*, the gods, the powers of the divine Soul in Nature and in the eternal interaction of these powers and the soul of man, mutually giving and receiving, mutually helping, increasing, raising each other's workings and satisfaction, a commerce in which man rises towards a growing fitness for the supreme good. He recognises that his life is a part of this divine action in Nature and not a thing separate and to be held and pursued for its own sake. He regards his enjoyments and the satisfaction of his desires as the fruit of sacrifice and the gift of the gods in their divine universal workings and he ceases to pursue them in the false and evil spirit of sinful egoistic selfishness as if they were a good to be seized from life by his own unaided strength without return and without thankfulness. As this spirit increases in him, he subordinates his desires, becomes satisfied with sacrifice as the law of life and works and is content with whatever remains over from the sacrifice, giving up all the rest freely as an offering in the great and beneficent interchange between his life and the world-life. Whoever goes contrary to this law of action and pursues works and enjoyment for his own isolated personal self-interest, lives in vain; he misses the true meaning and aim and utility of living and the upward growth of the soul; he is not on the path which leads to the highest good. But the highest only comes when the sacrifice is no longer to the gods, but to the one all-pervading Divine established in the sacrifice, of whom the gods are inferior forms and powers, and when he puts away the lower self that desires and enjoys and gives up his personal sense of being the worker to the true executrix of all works, Prakriti, and his personal sense of being the enjoyer to the Divine Purusha, the higher and universal Self who is the real enjoyer of the works of Prakriti. In that Self and not in any personal enjoyment he finds now his sole satisfaction, complete content, pure delight; he has nothing to gain by action or inaction, depends neither on gods nor men for anything, seeks no profit from any, for the self-delight is all-sufficient to him, but does works for the sake of the Divine only, as a pure sacrifice, without attachment or desire. Thus he gains equality and becomes free from the modes of Nature, *nistraiguṇya*; his soul takes its poise not in the insecurity of Prakriti, but in the peace of the immutable Brahman, even while his actions continue in the movement of Prakriti. Thus is sacrifice his way of attaining to the Highest.

That this is the sense of the passage is made clear in what follows, by the affirmation of *lokasaṅgraha* as the object of works, of Prakriti as the sole doer of works and the divine Purusha as their equal upholder, to whom works have to be given up even in their doing, — this inner giving up of works and yet physical doing of them is the culmination of sacrifice, — and by the affirmation that the result of such active sacrifice with an equal and desireless mind is liberation from the bondage of works. "He who is satisfied with whatever gain comes to him and equal in failure and success, is not bound even when he acts. When a man liberated, free from attachment, acts for sacrifice, all his action is dissolved," leaves, that is to say, no result of bondage or after-impression on his free, pure, perfect and equal soul. To these passages we shall have to return. They are followed by a perfectly explicit and detailed interpretation of the meaning of *yajña* in the language of the Gita which leaves no doubt at all about the symbolic use of the words and the psychological character of the sacrifice enjoined by this teaching. In the ancient Vedic system there was always a double sense physical and psychological, outward and symbolic, the exterior form of the sacrifice and the inner meaning of all its circumstances. But the secret symbolism of the ancient Vedic mystics, exact, curious, poetic, psychological, had been long forgotten by this time and it is now replaced by another, large, general and philosophical in the spirit of Vedanta and a later Yoga. The fire of sacrifice, *agni*, is no material flame, but *brahmāgni*, the fire of the Brahman, or it is the Brahman-ward energy, inner Agni, priest of the sacrifice, into which the offering is poured; the fire is self-control or it is a purified sense-action or it is the vital energy in that discipline of the control of the vital being through the control of the breath which is common to Rajayoga and Hathayoga, or it is the fire of self-knowledge, the flame of the supreme sacrifice. The food eaten as the leavings of the sacrifice is, it is explained, the nectar of immortality, *amṛta*, left over from the offering; and here we have still something of the old Vedic symbolism in which the Soma-wine was the physical symbol of the *amṛta*, the immortalising delight of the divine ecstasy won by the sacrifice, offered to the gods and drunk by men. The offering itself is whatever working of his energy, physical or psychological, is consecrated by him in action of body or action of mind to the gods or God, to the Self or to the universal powers, to one's own higher Self or to the Self in mankind and in all existences.

This elaborate explanation of the Yajna sets out with a vast and comprehensive definition in which it is declared that the act and energy and materials of the sacrifice, the giver and receiver of the sacrifice, the goal and object of the sacrifice are all the one Brahman. "Brahman is the giving, Brahman is the food-offering, by Brahman it is offered into the Brahman-fire, Brahman is that which is to be attained by samadhi in Brahman-action." This then is the knowledge in which the liberated man has to do works of sacrifice. It is the knowledge declared of old in the great Vedantic utterances, "I am He", "All this verily is the Brahman, Brahman is this Self." It is the knowledge of the entire unity; it is the One manifest as the doer and the deed and the object of works, knower and knowledge and the object of knowledge. The universal energy into which the action is poured is the Divine; the consecrated energy of the giving is the Divine; whatever is offered is only some form of the Divine; the giver of the offering is the Divine himself in man; the action, the work, the sacrifice is itself the Divine in movement, in activity; the goal to be reached by sacrifice is the Divine. For the man who has this knowledge and lives and acts in it, there can be no binding works, no personal and egoistically appropriated action; there is only the divine Purusha acting by the divine Prakriti in His own being, offering everything into the fire of His self-conscious cosmic energy, while the knowledge and the possession of His divine existence and consciousness by the soul unified with Him is the goal of all this God-directed movement and activity. To know that and to live and act in this unifying consciousness is to be free.

But all even of the Yogins have not attained to this knowledge. "Some Yogins follow after the sacrifice which is of the gods; others offer the sacrifice by the sacrifice itself into the Brahman-fire." The former conceive of the Divine in various forms and powers and seek him by various means, ordinances, *dharmas*, laws or, as we might say, settled rites of action, self-discipline, consecrated works; for the latter, those who already know, the simple fact of sacrifice, of offering whatever work to the Divine itself, of casting all their activities into the unified divine consciousness and energy, is their one means, their one *dharma*. The means of sacrifice are various; the offerings are of many kinds. There is the psychological sacrifice of self-control and self-discipline which leads to the higher self-possession and self-knowledge. "Some offer their senses into the fires of control, others offer the objects of sense into the fires of sense, and others offer all the actions of the sense and all the actions of the vital force into the fire of the Yoga of self-control kindled by knowledge." There is, that is to say, the discipline which receives the objects of sense-perception without allowing the mind to be disturbed or affected by its sense-activities, the senses themselves becoming pure fires of sacrifice; there is the discipline which stills the senses so that the soul in its purity may appear from behind the veil of mind-action, calm and still; there is the discipline by which, when the self is known, all the actions of the sense-perceptions and all the action of the vital being are received into that one still and tranquil soul. The offering of the striver after perfection may be material and physical, *dravya-yajña*, like that consecrated in worship by the devotee to his deity, or it may be the austerity of his self-discipline and energy of his soul directed to some high aim, *tapo-yajña*, or it may be some form of Yoga like the Pranayama of the Rajayogins and Hathayogins, or any other *yoga-yajña*. All these tend to the purification of the being; all sacrifice is a way towards the attainment of the highest.

The one thing needful, the saving principle constant in all these variations, is to subordinate the lower activities, to diminish the control of desire and replace it by a superior energy, to abandon the purely egoistic enjoyment for that diviner delight which comes by sacrifice, by self-dedication, by self-mastery, by the giving up of one's lower impulses to a greater and higher aim. "They who enjoy the nectar of immortality left over from the sacrifice attain to the eternal Brahman." Sacrifice is the law of the world and nothing can be gained without it, neither mastery here, nor the possession of heavens beyond, nor the supreme possession of all; "this world is not for him who doeth not sacrifice, how then any other world?" Therefore all these and many other forms of sacrifice have been "extended in the mouth of the Brahman," the mouth of that Fire which receives all offerings; they are all means and forms of the one great Existence in activity, means by which the action of the human being can be offered up to That of which his outward existence is a part and with which his inmost self is one. They are "all born of work"; all proceed from and are ordained by the one vast energy of the Divine which manifests itself in the universal *karma* and makes all the cosmic activity a progressive offering to the one Self and Lord and of which the last stage for the human being is self-knowledge and the possession of the divine or Brahmic consciousness. "So knowing thou shalt become free."

But there are gradations in the range of these various forms of sacrifice, the physical offering the lowest, the sacrifice of knowledge the highest. Knowledge is that in which all this action culminates, not any lower knowledge, but the highest, self-knowledge and God-knowledge, that which we can learn from those who know the true principles of existence, that by possessing which we shall not fall again into the bewilderment of the mind's ignorance and into its bondage to mere sense-knowledge and to the inferior activity of the desires and passions. The knowledge in which all culminates is that by which "thou shalt see all existences (becomings, *bhūtāni*) without exception in the Self, then in Me." For the Self is that one, immutable, all-pervading, all-containing, self-existent reality or Brahman hidden behind our mental being into which our consciousness widens out when it is liberated from the ego; we come to see all beings as becomings, *bhūtāni*, within that one self-existence.

But this Self or immutable Brahman we see too to be the self-presentation to our essential psychological consciousness of a supreme Being who is the source of our existence and of whom all that is mutable or immutable is the manifestation. He is God, the Divine, the Purushottama. To Him we offer everything as a sacrifice; into His hands we give up our actions; in His existence we live and move; unified with Him in our nature and with all existence in Him, we become one soul and one power of being with Him and with all beings; with His supreme reality we identify and unite our self-being. By works done for sacrifice, eliminating desire, we arrive at knowledge and at the soul's possession of itself; by works done in self-knowledge and God-knowledge we are liberated into the unity, peace and joy of the divine existence.

XIII

The Lord of the Sacrifice

WE HAVE, before we can proceed further, to gather up all that has been said in its main principles. The whole of the Gita's gospel of works rests upon its idea of sacrifice and contains in fact the eternal connecting truth of God and the world and works. The human mind seizes ordinarily only fragmentary notions and standpoints of a many-sided eternal truth of existence and builds upon them its various theories of life and ethics and religion, stressing this or that sign or appearance, but to some entirety of it it must always tend to reawaken whenever it returns in an age of large enlightenment to any entire and synthetic relation of its world-knowledge with its God-knowledge and self-knowledge. The gospel of the Gita reposes upon this fundamental Vedantic truth that all being is the one Brahman and all existence the wheel of Brahman, a divine movement opening out from God and returning to God. All is the expressive activity of Nature and Nature a power of the Divine which works out the consciousness and will of the divine Soul master of her works and inhabitant of her forms. It is for his satisfaction that she descends into the absorption of the forms of things and the works of life and mind and returns again through mind and self-knowledge to the conscious possession of the Soul that dwells within her. There is first an involving of self and all it is or means in an evolution of phenomena; there is afterwards an evolution of self, a revelation of all it is and means, all that is hidden and yet suggested by the phenomenal creation. This cycle of Nature could not be what it is but for the Purusha assuming and maintaining simultaneously three eternal poises each of which is necessary to the totality of this action. It must manifest itself in the mutable, and there we see it as the finite, the many, all existences, *sarvabhūtāni*. It appears to us as the finite personality of these million creatures with their infinite diversities and various relations and it appears to us behind these as the soul and force of the action of the gods, — that is to say, the cosmic powers and qualities of the Divine which preside over the workings of the life of the universe and constitute to our perception different universal forms of the one Existence, or, it may be, various self-statements of personality of the one supreme Person. Then, secret behind and within all forms and existences, we perceive too an immutable, an infinite, a timeless, an impersonal, a one unchanging spirit of existence, an indivisible Self of all that is, in which all these many find themselves to be really one. And therefore by returning to that the active, finite personality of the individual being discovers that it can release itself into a silent largeness of universality and the peace and poise of an immutable and unattached unity with all that proceeds from and is supported by this indivisible Infinite. Or even he may escape into it from individual existence. But the highest secret of all, *uttamaṁ rahasyam*, is the Purushottama. This is the supreme Divine, God, who possesses both the infinite and the finite and in whom the personal and the impersonal, the one Self and the many existences, being and becoming, the world-action and the supracosmic peace, *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*, meet, are united, are possessed together and in each other. In God all things find their secret truth and their absolute reconciliation.

All truth of works must depend upon the truth of being. All active existence must be in its inmost reality a sacrifice of works offered by Prakriti to Purusha, Nature offering to the supreme and infinite Soul the desire of the multiple finite Soul within her. Life is an altar to which she brings her workings and the fruits of her workings and lays them before whatever aspect of the Divinity the consciousness in her has reached for whatever result of the sacrifice the desire of the living soul can seize on as its immediate or its highest good. According to the grade of consciousness and being which the soul has reached in Nature, will be the Divinity it worships, the delight which it seeks and the hope for which it sacrifices. And in the movement of the mutable Purusha in Nature all is and must be interchange; for existence is one and its divisions must found themselves on some law of mutual dependence, each growing by each and living by all. Where sacrifice is not willingly given, Nature exacts it by force, she satisfies the law of her living. A mutual giving and receiving is the law of Life without which it cannot for one moment endure, and this fact is the stamp of the divine creative Will on the world it has manifested in its being, the proof that with sacrifice as their eternal companion the Lord of creatures has created all these existences. The universal law of sacrifice is the sign that the world is of God and belongs to God and that life is his dominion and house of worship and not a field for the self-satisfaction of the independent ego; not the fulfilment of the ego, — that is only our crude and obscure beginning, — but the discovery of God, the worship and seeking of the Divine and the Infinite through a constantly enlarging sacrifice culminating in a perfect self-giving founded on a perfect self-knowledge, is that to which the experience of life is at last intended to lead.

But the individual being begins with ignorance and persists long in ignorance. Acutely conscious of himself he sees the ego as the cause and whole meaning of life and not the Divine. He sees himself as the doer of works and does not see that all the workings of existence including his own internal and external activities are the workings of one universal Nature and nothing else. He sees himself as the enjoyer of works and imagines that for him all exists and him Nature ought to satisfy and obey his personal will; he does not see that she is not at all concerned with satisfying him or at all careful of his will, but obeys a higher universal will and seeks to satisfy a Godhead who transcends her and her works and creations; his finite being, his will and his satisfactions are hers and not his, and she offers them at every moment as a sacrifice to the Divine of whose purpose in her she makes all this the covert instrumentation. Because of this ignorance whose seal is egoism, the creature ignores the law of sacrifice and seeks to take all he can for himself and gives only what Nature by her internal and external compulsion forces him to give. He can really take nothing except what she allows him to receive as his portion, what the divine Powers within her yield to his desire. The egoistic soul in a world of sacrifice is as if a thief or robber who takes what these Powers bring to him and has no mind to give in return. He misses the true meaning of life and, since he does not use life and works for the enlargement and elevation of his being through sacrifice, he lives in vain.

Only when the individual being begins to perceive and acknowledge in his acts the value of the self in others as well as the power and needs of his own ego, begins to perceive universal Nature behind his own workings and through the cosmic godheads gets some glimpse of the One and the Infinite, is he on his way to the transcendence of his limitation by the ego and the discovery of his soul. He begins to discover a law other than that of his desires, to which his desires must be more and more subordinated and subjected; he develops the purely egoistic into the understanding and ethical being. He begins to give more value to the claims of the self in others and less to the claims of his ego; he admits the strife between egoism and altruism and by the increase of his altruistic tendencies he prepares the enlargement of his own consciousness and being. He begins to perceive Nature and divine Powers in Nature to whom he owes sacrifice, adoration, obedience, because it is by them and by their law that the workings both of the mental and the material world are controlled, and he learns that only by increasing their presence and their greatness in his thought and will and life can he himself increase his powers, knowledge, right action and the satisfactions which these things bring to him. Thus he adds the religious and supraphysical to the material and egoistic sense of life and prepares himself to rise through the finite to the Infinite.

But this is only a long intermediate stage. It is still subject to the law of desire, to the centrality of all things in the conceptions and needs of his ego and to the control of his being as well as his works by Nature, though it is a regulated and governed desire, a clarified ego and a Nature more and more subtilised and enlightened by the sattwic, the highest natural principle. All this is still within the domain, though the very much enlarged domain, of the mutable, finite and personal. The real self-knowledge and consequently the right way of works lies beyond; for the sacrifice done with knowledge is the highest sacrifice and that alone brings a perfect working. That can only come when he perceives that the self in him and the self in others are one being and this self is something higher than the ego, an infinite, an impersonal, a universal existence in whom all move and have their being, — when he perceives that all the cosmic gods to whom he offers his sacrifice are forms of one infinite Godhead and when again, leaving all his limited and limiting conceptions of that one Godhead, he perceives him to be the supreme and ineffable Deity who is at once the finite and the infinite, the one self and the many, beyond Nature though manifesting himself through Nature, beyond limitation by qualities though formulating the power of his being through infinite quality. This is the Purushottama to whom the sacrifice has to be offered, not for any transient personal fruit of works, but for the soul's possession of God and in order to live in harmony and union with the Divine.

In other words, man's way to liberation and perfection lies through an increasing impersonality. It is his ancient and constant experience that the more he opens himself to the impersonal and infinite, to that which is pure and high and one and common in all things and beings, the impersonal and infinite in Nature, the impersonal and infinite in life, the impersonal and infinite in his own subjectivity, the less he is bound by his ego and by the circle of the finite, the more he feels a sense of largeness, peace, pure happiness. The pleasure, joy, satisfaction which the finite by itself can give or the ego in its own right attain, is transitory, petty and insecure. To dwell entirely in the ego-sense and its finite conceptions, powers, satisfactions is to find this world for ever full of transience and suffering, *anityam asukham*; the finite life is always troubled by a certain sense of vanity for this fundamental reason that the finite is not the whole or the highest truth of life; life is not entirely real until it opens into the sense of the infinite. It is for this reason that the Gita opens its gospel of works by insisting on the Brahmic consciousness, the impersonal life, that great object of the discipline of the ancient sages. For the impersonal, the infinite, the One in which all the impermanent, mutable, multiple activity of the world finds above itself its base of permanence, security and peace, is the immobile Self, the Akshara, the Brahman. If we see this, we shall see that to raise one's consciousness and the poise of one's being out of limited personality into this infinite and impersonal Brahman is the first spiritual necessity. To see all beings in this one Self is the knowledge which raises the soul out of egoistic ignorance and its works and results; to live in it is to acquire peace and firm spiritual foundation.

The way to bring about this great transformation follows a double path; for there is the way of knowledge and there is the way of works, and the Gita combines them in a firm synthesis. The way of knowledge is to turn the understanding, the intelligent will away from its downward absorption in the workings of the mind and the senses and upward to the self, the Purusha or Brahman; it is to make it dwell always on the one idea of the one Self and not in the many-branching conceptions of the mind and many-streaming impulses of desire. Taken by itself this path would seem to lead to the complete renunciation of works, to an immobile passivity and to the severance of the soul from Nature. But in reality such an absolute renunciation, passivity and severance are impossible. Purusha and Prakriti are twin principles of being which cannot be severed, and so long as we remain in Nature, our workings in Nature must continue, even though they may take a different form or rather a different sense from those of the unenlightened soul. The real renunciation — for renunciation, *sannyāsa*, there must be — is not the fleeing from works, but the slaying of ego and desire. The way is to abandon attachment to the fruit of works even while doing them, and the way is to recognise Nature as the agent and leave her to do her works and to live in the soul as the witness and sustainer, watching and sustaining her, but not attached either to her actions or their fruits. The ego, the limited and troubled personality is then quieted and merged in the consciousness of the one impersonal Self, while the works of Nature continue to our vision to operate through all these "becomings" or existences who are now seen by us as living and acting and moving, under her impulsion entirely, in this one infinite Being; our own finite existence is seen and felt to be only one of these and its workings are seen and felt to be those of Nature, not of our real self which is the silent, impersonal unity. The ego claimed them as its own doings and therefore we thought them ours; but the ego is now dead and henceforth they are no longer ours, but Nature's. We have achieved by the slaying of ego impersonality in our being and consciousness; we have achieved by the renunciation of desire impersonality in the works of our nature. We are free not only in inaction, but in action; our liberty does not depend on a physical and temperamental immobility and vacancy, nor do we fall from freedom directly we act. Even in a full current of natural action the impersonal soul in us remains calm, still and free.

The liberation given by this perfect impersonality is real, is complete, is indispensable; but is it the last word, the end of the whole matter? All life, all world-existence, we have said, is the sacrifice offered by Nature to the Purusha, the one and secret soul in Nature, in whom all her workings take place; but its real sense is obscured in us by ego, by desire, by our limited, active, multiple personality. We have risen out of ego and desire and limited personality and by impersonality, its great corrective, we have found the impersonal Godhead; we have identified our being with the one self and soul in whom all exist. The sacrifice of works continues, conducted not by ourselves any longer, but by Nature, — Nature operating through the finite part of our being, mind, senses, body, — but in our infinite being. But to whom then is this sacrifice offered and with what object? For the impersonal has no activity and no desires, no object to be gained, no dependence for anything on all this world of creatures; it exists for itself, in its own self-delight, in its own immutable eternal being. We may have to do works without desire as a means in order to reach this impersonal self-existence and self-delight, but, that movement once executed, the object of works is finished; the sacrifice is no longer needed. Works may even then continue because Nature continues and her activities; but there is no longer any further object in these works. The sole reason for our continuing to act after liberation is purely negative; it is the compulsion of Nature on our finite parts of mind and body. But if that be all, then, first, works may well be whittled down and reduced to a minimum, may be confined to what Nature's compulsion absolutely will have from our bodies; and secondly, even if there is no reduction to a minimum, — since action does not matter and inaction also is no object, — then the nature of the works also does not matter. Arjuna, once having attained knowledge, may continue to fight out the battle of Kurukshetra, following his old Kshatriya nature, or he may leave it and live the life of the Sannyasin, following his new quietistic impulse. Which of these things he does, becomes quite indifferent; or rather the second is the better way, since it will discourage more quickly the impulses of Nature which still have a hold on his mind owing to past created tendency and, when his body has fallen from him, he will securely depart into the Infinite and Impersonal with no necessity of returning again to the trouble and madness of life in this transient and sorrowful world, *anityam asukham imaṁ lokam.*

If this were so, the Gita would lose all its meaning; for its first and central object would be defeated. But the Gita insists that the nature of the action does matter and that there is a positive sanction for continuance in works, not only that one quite negative and mechanical reason, the objectless compulsion of Nature. There is still, after the ego has been conquered, a divine Lord and enjoyer of the sacrifice, *bhoktāraṁ yajñatapasām*, and there is still an object in the sacrifice. The impersonal Brahman is not the very last word, not the utterly highest secret of our being; for impersonal and personal, finite and infinite turn out to be only two opposite, yet concomitant aspects of a divine Being unlimited by these distinctions who is both these things at once. God is an ever unmanifest Infinite ever self-impelled to manifest himself in the finite; he is the great impersonal Person of whom all personalities are partial appearances; he is the Divine who reveals himself in the human being, the Lord seated in the heart of man. Knowledge teaches us to see all beings in the one impersonal self, for so we are liberated from the separative ego-sense, and then through this delivering impersonality to see them in this God, *ātmani atho mayi*, "in the Self and then in Me." Our ego, our limiting personalities stand in the way of our recognising the Divine who is in all and in whom all have their being; for, subject to personality, we see only such fragmentary aspects of Him as the finite appearances of things suffer us to seize. We have to arrive at him not through our lower personality, but through the high, infinite and impersonal part of our being, and that we find by becoming this self one in all in whose existence the whole world is comprised. This infinite containing, not excluding all finite appearances, this impersonal admitting, not rejecting all individualities and personalities, this immobile sustaining, pervading, containing, not standing apart from all the movement of Nature, is the clear mirror in which the Divine will reveal His being. Therefore it is to the Impersonal that we have first to attain; through the cosmic deities, through the aspects of the finite alone the perfect knowledge of God cannot be totally obtained. But neither is the silent immobility of the impersonal Self, conceived as shut into itself and divorced from all that it sustains, contains and pervades, the whole all-revealing all-satisfying truth of the Divine. To see that we have to look through its silence to the Purushottama, and he in his divine greatness possesses both the Akshara and the Kshara; he is seated in the immobility, but he manifests himself in the movement and in all the action of cosmic Nature; to him even after liberation the sacrifice of works in Nature continues to be offered.

The real goal of the Yoga is then a living and self-completing union with the divine Purushottama and is not merely a self-extinguishing immergence in the impersonal Being. To raise our whole existence to the Divine Being, to dwell in him (*mayyeva nivasiṣyasi*), to be at one with him, unify our consciousness with his, to make our fragmentary nature a reflection of his perfect nature, to be inspired in our thought and sense wholly by the divine knowledge, to be moved in will and action utterly and faultlessly by the divine will, to lose desire in his love and delight, is man's perfection; it is that which the Gita describes as the highest secret. It is the true goal and the last sense of human living and the highest step in our progressive sacrifice of works. For he remains to the end the master of works and the soul of sacrifice.

XIV

The Principle of Divine Works

THIS THEN is the sense of the Gita's doctrine of sacrifice. Its full significance depends on the idea of the Purushottama which as yet is not developed, — we find it set forth clearly only much later in the eighteen chapters, — and therefore we have had to anticipate, at whatever cost of infidelity to the progressive method of the Gita's exposition, that central teaching. At present the Teacher simply gives a hint, merely adumbrates this supreme presence of the Purushottama and his relation to the immobile Self in whom it is our first business, our pressing spiritual need to find our poise of perfect peace and equality by attainment to the Brahmic condition. He speaks as yet not at all in set terms of the Purushottama, but of himself, — "I", Krishna, Narayana, the Avatar, the God in man who is also the Lord in the universe incarnated in the figure of the divine charioteer of Kurukshetra. "In the Self, then in Me," is the formula he gives, implying that the transcendence of the individual personality by seeing it as a "becoming" in the impersonal self-existent Being is simply a means of arriving at that great secret impersonal Personality, which is thus silent, calm and uplifted above Nature in the impersonal Being, but also present and active in Nature in all these million becomings. Losing our lower individual personality in the Impersonal, we arrive finally at union with that supreme Personality which is not separate and individual, but yet assumes all individualities. Transcending the lower nature of the three gunas and seating the soul in the immobile Purusha beyond the three gunas, we can ascend finally into the higher nature of the infinite Godhead which is not bound by the three gunas even when it acts through Nature. Reaching the inner actionlessness of the silent Purusha, *naiṣkarmya*, and leaving Prakriti to do her works, we can attain supremely beyond to the status of the divine Mastery which is able to do all works and yet be bound by none. The idea of the Purushottama, seen here as the incarnate Narayana, Krishna, is therefore the key. Without it the withdrawal from the lower nature to the Brahmic condition leads necessarily to inaction of the liberated man, his indifference to the works of the world; with it the same withdrawal becomes a step by which the works of the world are taken up in the spirit, with the nature and in the freedom of the Divine. See the silent Brahman as the goal and the world with all its activities has to be forsaken; see God, the Divine, the Purushottama as the goal, superior to action yet its inner spiritual cause and object and original will, and the world with all its activities is conquered and possessed in a divine transcendence of the world. It can become instead of a prison-house an opulent kingdom, *rājyaṁ samṛddham*, which we have conquered for the spiritual life by slaying the limitation of the tyrant ego and overcoming the bondage of our gaoler desires and breaking the prison of our individualistic possession and enjoyment. The liberated universalised soul becomes *svarāṭ samrāṭ*, self-ruler and emperor.

The works of sacrifice are thus vindicated as a means of liberation and absolute spiritual perfection, *saṁsiddhi*. So Janaka and other great Karmayogins of the mighty ancient Yoga attained to perfection, by equal and desireless works done as a sacrifice, without the least egoistic aim or attachment — *karmaṇaiva hi saṁsiddhim āsthitā janakādayaḥ*. So too and with the same desirelessness, after liberation and perfection, works can and have to be continued by us in a large divine spirit, with the calm high nature of a spiritual royalty. "Thou shouldst do works regarding also the holding together of the peoples, *lokasaṅgraham evāpi sampaśyan kartum arhasi*. Whatsoever the Best doeth, that the lower kind of man puts into practice; the standard he creates, the people follows. O son of Pritha, I have no work that I need to do in all the three worlds, I have nothing that I have not gained and have yet to gain, and I abide verily in the paths of action," *varta eva ca karmaṇi*, — *eva* implying, I abide in it and do not leave it as the Sannyasin thinks himself bound to abandon works. "For if I did not abide sleeplessly in the paths of action, men follow in every way my path, these peoples would sink to destruction if I did not works and I should be the creator of confusion and slay these creatures. As those who know not act with attachment to the action, he who knows should act without attachment, having for his motive to hold together the peoples. He should not create a division of their understanding in the ignorant who are attached to their works; he should set them to all actions, doing them himself with knowledge and in Yoga." There are few more important passages in the Gita than these seven striking couplets.

But let us clearly understand that they must not be interpreted, as the modern pragmatic tendency concerned much more with the present affairs of the world than with any high and far-off spiritual possibility seeks to interpret them, as no more than a philosophical and religious justification of social service, patriotic, cosmopolitan and humanitarian effort and attachment to the hundred eager social schemes and dreams which attract the modern intellect. It is not the rule of a large moral and intellectual altruism which is here announced, but that of a spiritual unity with God and with this world of beings who dwell in him and in whom he dwells. It is not an injunction to subordinate the individual to society and humanity or immolate egoism on the altar of the human collectivity, but to fulfil the individual in God and to sacrifice the ego on the one true altar of the all-embracing Divinity. The Gita moves on a plane of ideas and experiences higher than those of the modern mind which is at the stage indeed of a struggle to shake off the coils of egoism, but is still mundane in its outlook and intellectual and moral rather than spiritual in its temperament. Patriotism, cosmopolitanism, service of society, collectivism, humanitarianism, the ideal or religion of humanity are admirable aids towards our escape from our primary condition of individual, family, social, national egoism into a secondary stage in which the individual realises, as far as it can be done on the intellectual, moral and emotional level, — on that level he cannot do it entirely in the right and perfect way, the way of the integral truth of his being, — the oneness of his existence with the existence of other beings. But the thought of the Gita reaches beyond to a tertiary condition of our developing self-consciousness towards which the secondary is only a partial stage of advance.

The Indian social tendency has been to subordinate the individual to the claims of society, but Indian religious thought and spiritual seeking have been always loftily individualistic in their aims. An Indian system of thought like the Gita's cannot possibly fail to put first the development of the individual, the highest need of the individual, his claim to discover and exercise his largest spiritual freedom, greatness, splendour, royalty, — his aim to develop into the illumined seer and king in the spiritual sense of seerdom and kingship, which was the first great charter of the ideal humanity promulgated by the ancient Vedic sages. To exceed himself was their goal for the individual, not by losing all his personal aims in the aims of an organised human society, but by enlarging, heightening, aggrandising himself into the consciousness of the Godhead. The rule given here by the Gita is the rule for the master man, the superman, the divinised human being, the Best, not in the sense of any Nietzschean, any one-sided and lopsided, any Olympian, Apollonian or Dionysian, any angelic or demoniac supermanhood, but in that of the man whose whole personality has been offered up into the being, nature and consciousness of the one transcendent and universal Divinity and by loss of the smaller self has found its greater self, has been divinised.

To exalt oneself out of the lower imperfect Prakriti, *traiguṇyamayī māyā*, into unity with the divine being, consciousness and nature,[1] *madbhāvam āgatāḥ*, is the object of the Yoga. But when this object is fulfilled, when the man is in the Brahmic status and sees no longer with the false egoistic vision himself and the world, but sees all beings in the Self, in God, and the Self in all beings, God in all beings, what shall be the action, — since action there still is, — which results from that seeing, and what shall be the cosmic or individual motive of all his works? It is the question of Arjuna,[2] but answered from a standpoint other than that from which Arjuna had put it. The motive cannot be personal desire on the intellectual, moral, emotional level, for that has been abandoned, — even the moral motive has been abandoned, since the liberated man has passed beyond the lower distinction of sin and virtue, lives in a glorified purity beyond good and evil. It cannot be the spiritual call to his perfect self-development by means of disinterested works, for the call has been answered, the development is perfect and fulfilled. His motive of action can only be the holding together of the peoples, *cikīrṣur lokasaṅgraham*. This great march of the peoples towards a far-off divine ideal has to be held together, prevented from falling into the bewilderment, confusion and utter discord of the understanding which would lead to dissolution and destruction and to which the world moving forward in the night or dark twilight of ignorance would be too easily prone if it were not held together, conducted, kept to the great lines of its discipline by the illumination, by the strength, by the rule and example, by the visible standard and the invisible influence of its Best. The best, the individuals who are in advance of the general line and above the general level of the collectivity, are the natural leaders of mankind, for it is they who can point to the race both the way they must follow and the standard or ideal they have to keep to or to attain. But the divinised man is the Best in no ordinary sense of the word and his influence, his example must have a power which that of no ordinarily superior man can exercise. What example then shall he give? What rule or standard shall he uphold?

---

[1] *Sāyujya*, *sālokya* and *sādṛśya* or *sādharmya*. *Sādharmya* is becoming of one law of being and action with the Divine.

In order to indicate more perfectly his meaning, the divine Teacher, the Avatar gives his own example, his own standard to Arjuna. "I abide in the path of action," he seems to say, "the path that all men follow; thou too must abide in action. In the way I act, in that way thou too must act. I am above the necessity of works, for I have nothing to gain by them; I am the Divine who possess all things and all beings in the world and I am myself beyond the world as well as in it and I do not depend upon anything or anyone in all the three worlds for any object; yet I act. This too must be thy manner and spirit of working. I, the Divine, am the rule and the standard; it is I who make the path in which men tread; I am the way and the goal. But I do all this largely, universally, visibly in part, but far more invisibly; and men do not really know the way of my workings. Thou, when thou knowest and seest, when thou hast become the divinised man, must be the individual power of God, the human yet divine example, even as I am in my avatars. Most men dwell in the ignorance, the God-seer dwells in the knowledge; but let him not confuse the minds of men by a dangerous example, rejecting in his superiority the works of the world; let him not cut short the thread of action before it is spun out, let him not perplex and falsify the stages and gradations of the ways I have hewn. The whole range of human action has been decreed by me with a view to the progress of man from the lower to the higher nature, from the apparent undivine to the conscious Divine. The whole range of human works must be that in which the God-knower shall move. All individual, all social action, all the works of the intellect, the heart and the body are still his, not any longer for his own separate sake, but for the sake of God in the world, of God in all beings and that all those beings may move forward, as he has moved, by the path of works towards the discovery of the Divine in themselves. Outwardly his actions may not seem to differ essentially from theirs; battle and rule as well as teaching and thought, all the various commerce of man with man may fall in his range; but the spirit in which he does them must be very different, and it is that spirit which by its influence shall be the great attraction drawing men upwards to his own level, the great lever lifting the mass of men higher in their ascent."

---

[2] *kiṁ prabhāṣeta kim āsīta vrajeta kim.*

The giving of the example of God himself to the liberated man is profoundly significant; for it reveals the whole basis of the Gita's philosophy of divine works. The liberated man is he who has exalted himself into the divine nature and according to that divine nature must be his actions. But what is the divine nature? It is not entirely and solely that of the Akshara, the immobile, inactive, impersonal self; for that by itself would lead the liberated man to actionless immobility. It is not characteristically that of the Kshara, the multitudinous, the personal, the Purusha self-subjected to Prakriti; for that by itself would lead him back into subjection to his personality and to the lower nature and its qualities. It is the nature of the Purushottama who holds both these together and by his supreme divinity reconciles them in a divine reconciliation which is the highest secret of his being, *rahasyaṁ hyetad uttamam*. He is not the doer of works in the personal sense of our action involved in Prakriti; for God works through his power, conscious nature, effective force, — Shakti, Maya, Prakriti, — but yet above it, not involved in it, not subject to it, not unable to lift himself beyond the laws, workings, habits of action it creates, not affected or bound by them, not unable to distinguish himself, as we are unable, from the workings of life, mind and body. He is the doer of works who acts not, *kartāram akartāram*. "Know me," says Krishna, "for the doer of this (the fourfold law of human workings) who am yet the imperishable non-doer. Works fix not themselves on me (*na limpanti*), nor have I desire for the fruits of action." But neither is he the inactive, impassive, unpuissant Witness and nothing else; for it is he who works in the steps and measures of his power; every movement of it, every particle of the world of beings it forms is instinct with his presence, full of his consciousness, impelled by his will, shaped by his knowledge.

He is, besides, the Supreme without qualities who is possessed of all qualities, *nirguṇo guṇī*.[3] He is not bound by any mode of nature or action, nor consists, as our personality consists, of a sum of qualities, modes of nature, characteristic operations of the mental, moral, emotional, vital, physical being, but is the source of all modes and qualities, capable of developing any he wills in whatever way and to whatever degree he wills; he is the infinite being of which they are ways of becoming, the immeasurable quantity and unbound ineffable of which they are measures, numbers and figures, which they seem to rhythmise and arithmise in the standards of the universe. Yet neither is he merely an impersonal indeterminate, nor a mere stuff of conscious existence for all determinations and personalisings to draw upon for their material, but a supreme Being, the one original conscious Existent, the perfect Personality capable of all relations even to the most human, concrete and intimate; for he is friend, comrade, lover, playmate, guide, teacher, master, ministrant of knowledge or ministrant of joy, yet in all relations unbound, free and absolute. This too the divinised man becomes in the measure of his attainment, impersonal in his personality, unbound by quality or action even when maintaining the most personal and intimate relations with men, unbound by any *dharma* even when following in appearance this or that *dharma*. Neither the dynamism of the kinetic man nor the actionless light of the ascetic or quietist, neither the vehement personality of the man of action nor the indifferent impersonality of the philosophic sage is the complete divine ideal. These are the two conflicting standards of the man of this world and the ascetic or the quietist philosopher, one immersed in the action of the Kshara, the other striving to dwell entirely in the peace of the Akshara; but the complete divine ideal proceeds from the nature of the Purushottama which transcends this conflict and reconciles all divine possibilities.

---

[3] *Swetaswatara Upanishad.*

The kinetic man is not satisfied with any ideal which does not depend upon the fulfilment of this cosmic nature, this play of the three qualities of that nature, this human activity of mind and heart and body. The highest fulfilment of that activity, he might say, is my idea of human perfection, of the divine possibility in man; some ideal that satisfies the intellect, the heart, the moral being, some ideal of our human nature in its action can alone satisfy the human being; he must have something that he can seek in the workings of his mind and life and body. For that is his nature, his *dharma*, and how can he be fulfilled in something outside his nature? For to his nature each being is bound and within it he must seek for his perfection. According to our human nature must be our human perfection; and each man must strive for it according to the line of his personality, his *svadharma*, but in life, in action, not outside life and action. Yes, there is a truth in that, replies the Gita; the fulfilment of God in man, the play of the Divine in life is part of the ideal perfection. But if you seek it only in the external, in life, in the principle of action, you will never find it; for you will then not only act according to your nature, which is in itself a rule of perfection, but you will be — and this is a rule of the imperfection — eternally subject to its modes, its dualities of liking and dislike, pain and pleasure and especially to the rajasic mode with its principle of desire and its snare of wrath and grief and longing, — the restless, all-devouring principle of desire, the insatiable fire which besieges your worldly action, the eternal enemy of knowledge by which it is covered over here in your nature as is a fire by smoke or a mirror by dust and which you must slay in order to live in the calm, clear, luminous truth of the spirit. The senses, mind and intellect are the seat of this eternal cause of imperfection and yet it is within this sense, mind and intellect, this play of the lower nature that you would limit your search for perfection! The effort is vain. The kinetic side of your nature must first seek to add to itself the quietistic; you must uplift yourself beyond this lower nature to that which is above the three gunas, that which is founded in the highest principle, in the soul. Only when you have attained to peace of soul, can you become capable of a free and divine action.

The quietist, the ascetic, on the other hand cannot see any possibility of perfection into which life and action enter. Are they not the very seat of bondage and imperfection? Is not all action imperfect in its nature, like a fire that must produce smoke, is not the principle of action itself rajasic, the father of desire, a cause that must have its effect of obscuration of knowledge, its round of longing and success and failure, its oscillations of joy and grief, its duality of virtue and sin? God may be in the world, but he is not of the world; he is a God of renunciation and not the Master or cause of our works; the master of our works is desire and the cause of works is ignorance. If the world, the Kshara is in a sense a manifestation or a *līlā* of the Divine, it is an imperfect play with the ignorance of Nature, an obscuration rather than a manifestation. That is surely evident from our very first glance at the nature of the world and does not the fullest experience of the world teach us always the same truth? is it not a wheel of the ignorance binding the soul to continual birth by the impulse of desire and action until at last that is exhausted or cast away? Not only desire, but action also must be flung away; seated in the silent self the soul will then pass away into the motionless, actionless, imperturbable, absolute Brahman. To this objection of the impersonalising quietist the Gita is at more pains to answer than to that of the man of the world, the kinetic individual. For this quietism having hold of a higher and more powerful truth which is yet not the whole or the highest truth, its promulgation as the universal, complete, highest ideal of human life is likely to be more confusing and disastrous to the advance of the human race towards its goal than the error of an exclusive kinetism. A strong one-sided truth, when set forth as the whole truth, creates a strong light but also a strong confusion; for the very strength of its element of truth increases the strength of its element of error. The error of the kinetic ideal can only prolong the ignorance and retard the human advance by setting it in search of perfection where perfection cannot be found; but the error of the quietistic ideal contains in itself the very principle of world-destruction. Were I to act upon it, says Krishna, I should destroy the peoples and be the author of confusion; and though the error of an individual human being, even though a nearly divine man, cannot destroy the whole race, it may produce a widespread confusion which may be in its nature destructive of the principle of human life and disturbing to the settled line of its advance.

Therefore the quietistic tendency in man must be got to recognise its own incompleteness and admit on an equality with itself the truth which lies behind the kinetic tendency, — the fulfilment of God in man and the presence of the Divine in all the action of the human race. God is there not only in the silence, but in the action; the quietism of the impassive soul unaffected by Nature and the kinetism of the soul giving itself to Nature so that the great world-sacrifice, the Purusha-Yajna, may be effected, are not a reality and a falsehood in perpetual struggle nor yet two hostile realities, one superior, the other inferior, each fatal to the other; they are the double term of the divine manifestation. The Akshara alone is not the whole key of their fulfilment, not the very highest secret. The double fulfilment, the reconciliation is to be sought in the Purushottama represented here by Krishna, at once supreme Being, Lord of the worlds and Avatar. The divinised man entering into his divine nature will act even as he acts; he will not give himself up to inaction. The Divine is at work in man in the ignorance and at work in man in the knowledge. To know Him is our soul's highest welfare and the condition of its perfection, but to know and realise Him as a transcendent peace and silence is not all; the secret that has to be learned is at once the secret of the eternal and unborn Divine and the secret of the divine birth and works, *janma karma ca me divyam*. The action which proceeds from that knowledge, will be free from all bondage; "he who so knoweth me," says the Teacher, "is not bound by works." If the escape from the obligation of works and desire and from the wheel of rebirth is to be the aim and the ideal, then this knowledge is to be taken as the true, the broad way of escape; for, says the Gita, "he who knows in their right principles my divine birth and works, comes when he leaves his body, not to rebirth, but to Me, O Arjuna." Through the knowledge and possession of the divine birth he comes to the unborn and imperishable Divine who is the self of all beings, *ajo avyaya ātmā*; through the knowledge and execution of divine works to the Master of works, the lord of all beings, *bhūtānām īśvara*. He lives in that unborn being; his works are those of that universal Mastery.

XV

The Possibility and Purpose of Avatarhood

IN SPEAKING of this Yoga in which action and knowledge become one, the Yoga of the sacrifice of works with knowledge, in which works are fulfilled in knowledge, knowledge supports, changes and enlightens works, and both are offered to the Purushottama, the supreme Divinity who becomes manifest within us as Narayana, Lord of all our being and action seated secret in our hearts for ever, who becomes manifest even in the human form as the Avatar, the divine birth taking possession of our humanity, Krishna has declared in passing that this was the ancient and original Yoga which he gave to Vivasvan, the Sun-God, Vivasvan gave it to Manu, the father of men, Manu gave it to Ikshvaku, head of the Solar line, and so it came down from royal sage to royal sage till it was lost in the great lapse of Time and is now renewed for Arjuna, because he is the lover and devotee, friend and comrade of the Avatar. For this, he says, is the highest secret, — thus claiming for it a superiority to all other forms of Yoga, because those others lead to the impersonal Brahman or to a personal Deity, to a liberation in actionless knowledge or a liberation in absorbed beatitude, but this gives the highest secret and the whole secret; it brings us to divine peace and divine works, to divine knowledge, action and ecstasy unified in a perfect freedom; it unites into itself all the Yogic paths as the highest being of the Divine reconciles and makes one in itself all the different and even contrary powers and principles of its manifested being. Therefore this Yoga of the Gita is not, as some contend, only the Karmayoga, one and the lowest, according to them, of the three paths, but a highest Yoga synthetic and integral directing Godward all the powers of our being.

Arjuna takes the declaration about the transmission of the Yoga in its most physical sense, — there is another significance in which it can be taken, — and asks how the Sun-God, one of the first-born of beings, ancestor of the Solar dynasty, can have received the Yoga from the man Krishna who is only now born into the world. Krishna does not reply, as we might have expected him to have done, that it was as the Divine who is the source of all knowledge that he gave the Word to the Deva who is his form of knowledge, giver of all inner and outer light, — *bhargaḥ savitur devasya yo no dhiyaḥ pracodayāt*; he accepts instead the opportunity which Arjuna gives him of declaring his concealed Godhead, a declaration for which he had prepared when he gave himself as the divine example for the worker who is not bound by his works, but which he has not yet quite explicitly made. He now openly announces himself as the incarnate Godhead, the Avatar.

We have had occasion already, when speaking of the divine Teacher, to state briefly the doctrine of Avatarhood as it appears to us in the light of Vedanta, the light in which the Gita presents it to us. We must now look a little more closely at this Avatarhood and at the significance of the divine Birth of which it is the outward expression; for that is a link of considerable importance in the integral teaching of the Gita. And we may first translate the words of the Teacher himself in which the nature and purpose of Avatarhood are given summarily and remind ourselves also of other passages or references which bear upon it. "Many are my lives that are past, and thine also, O Arjuna; all of them I know, but thou knowest not, O scourge of the foe. Though I am the unborn, though I am imperishable in my self-existence, though I am the Lord of all existences, yet I stand upon my own Nature and I come into birth by my self-Maya. For whensoever there is the fading of the Dharma and the uprising of unrighteousness, then I loose myself forth into birth. For the deliverance of the good, for the destruction of the evil-doers, for the enthroning of the Right I am born from age to age. He who knoweth thus in its right principles my divine birth and my divine work, when he abandons his body, comes not to rebirth, he comes to Me, O Arjuna. Delivered from liking and fear and wrath, full of me, taking refuge in me, many purified by austerity of knowledge have arrived at my nature of being (*madbhāvam*, the divine nature of the Purushottama). As men approach me, so I accept them to my love (*bhajāmi*); men follow in every way my path, O son of Pritha."

But most men, the Gita goes on to say, desiring the fulfilment of their works, sacrifice to the gods, to various forms and personalities of the one Godhead, because the fulfilment (*siddhi*) that is born of works, — of works without knowledge, — is very swift and easy in the human world; it belongs indeed to that world alone. The other, the divine self-fulfilment in man by the sacrifice with knowledge to the supreme Godhead, is much more difficult; its results belong to a higher plane of existence and they are less easily grasped. Men therefore have to follow the fourfold law of their nature and works and on this plane of mundane action they seek the Godhead through his various qualities. But, says Krishna, though I am the doer of the fourfold works and creator of its fourfold law, yet I must be known also as the non-doer, the imperishable, the immutable Self. "Works affect me not, nor have I desire for the fruit of works;" for God is the impersonal beyond this egoistic personality and this strife of the modes of Nature, and as the Purushottama also, the impersonal Personality, he possesses this supreme freedom even in works. Therefore the doer of divine works even while following the fourfold law has to know and live in that which is beyond, in the impersonal Self and so in the supreme Godhead. "He who thus knows me is not bound by his works. So knowing was work done by the men of old who sought liberation; do therefore, thou also, work of that more ancient kind done by ancient men."

The second portion of these passages which has here been given in substance, explains the nature of divine works, *divyaṁ karma*, with the principle of which we have had to deal in the last essay; the first, which has been fully translated, explains the way of the divine birth, *divyaṁ janma*, the Avatarhood. But we have to remark carefully that the upholding of Dharma in the world is not the only object of the descent of the Avatar, that great mystery of the Divine manifest in humanity; for the upholding of the Dharma is not an all-sufficient object in itself, not the supreme possible aim for the manifestation of a Christ, a Krishna, a Buddha, but is only the general condition of a higher aim and a more supreme and divine utility. For there are two aspects of the divine birth; one is a descent, the birth of God in humanity, the Godhead manifesting itself in the human form and nature, the eternal Avatar; the other is an ascent, the birth of man into the Godhead, man rising into the divine nature and consciousness, *madbhāvam āgataḥ*; it is the being born anew in a second birth of the soul. It is that new birth which Avatarhood and the upholding of the Dharma are intended to serve. This double aspect in the Gita's doctrine of Avatarhood is apt to be missed by the cursory reader satisfied, as most are, with catching a superficial view of its profound teachings, and it is missed too by the formal commentator petrified in the rigidity of the schools. Yet it is necessary, surely, to the whole meaning of the doctrine. Otherwise the Avatar idea would be only a dogma, a popular superstition, or an imaginative or mystic deification of historical or legendary supermen, not what the Gita makes all its teaching, a deep philosophical and religious truth and an essential part of or step to the supreme mystery of all, *rahasyam uttamam*.

If there were not this rising of man into the Godhead to be helped by the descent of God into humanity, Avatarhood for the sake of the Dharma would be an otiose phenomenon, since mere Right, mere justice or standards of virtue can always be upheld by the divine omnipotence through its ordinary means, by great men or great movements, by the life and work of sages and kings and religious teachers, without any actual incarnation. The Avatar comes as the manifestation of the divine nature in the human nature, the apocalypse of its Christhood, Krishnahood, Buddhahood, in order that the human nature may by moulding its principle, thought, feeling, action, being on the lines of that Christhood, Krishnahood, Buddhahood transfigure itself into the divine. The law, the Dharma which the Avatar establishes is given for that purpose chiefly; the Christ, Krishna, Buddha stands in its centre as the gate, he makes through himself the way men shall follow. That is why each Incarnation holds before men his own example and declares of himself that he is the way and the gate; he declares too the oneness of his humanity with the divine being, declares that the Son of Man and the Father above from whom he has descended are one, that Krishna in the human body, *mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam*, and the supreme Lord and Friend of all creatures are but two revelations of the same divine Purushottama, revealed there in his own being, revealed here in the type of humanity.

That the Gita contains as its kernel this second and real object of the Avatarhood, is evident even from this passage by itself rightly considered; but it becomes much clearer if we take it, not by itself, — always the wrong way to deal with the texts of the Gita, — but in its right close connection with other passages and with the whole teaching. We have to remember and take together its doctrine of the one Self in all, of the Godhead seated in the heart of every creature, its teaching about the relations between the Creator and his creation, its strongly emphasised idea of the *vibhūti*, — noting too the language in which the Teacher gives his own divine example of selfless works which applies equally to the human Krishna and the divine Lord of the worlds, and giving their due weight to such passages as that in the ninth chapter, "Deluded minds despise me lodged in the human body because they know not my supreme nature of being, Lord of all existences"; and we have to read in the light of these ideas this passage we find before us and its declaration that by the knowledge of his divine birth and divine works men come to the Divine and by becoming full of him and even as he and taking refuge in him they arrive at his nature and status of being, *madbhāvam*. For then we shall understand the divine birth and its object, not as an isolated and miraculous phenomenon, but in its proper place in the whole scheme of the world-manifestation; without that we cannot arrive at its divine mystery, but shall either scout it altogether or accept it ignorantly and, it may be, superstitiously or fall into the petty and superficial ideas of the modern mind about it by which it loses all its inner and helpful significance.

For to the modern mind Avatarhood is one of the most difficult to accept or to understand of all the ideas that are streaming in from the East upon the rationalised human consciousness. It is apt to take it at the best for a mere figure for some high manifestation of human power, character, genius, great work done for the world or in the world, and at the worst to regard it as a superstition, — to the heathen a foolishness and to the Greeks a stumbling-block. The materialist, necessarily, cannot even look at it, since he does not believe in God; to the rationalist or the Deist it is a folly and a thing of derision; to the thoroughgoing dualist who sees an unbridgeable gulf between the human and the divine nature, it sounds like a blasphemy. The rationalist objects that if God exists, he is extracosmic or supracosmic and does not intervene in the affairs of the world, but allows them to be governed by a fixed machinery of law, — he is, in fact, a sort of far-off constitutional monarch or spiritual King Log, at the best an indifferent inactive Spirit behind the activity of Nature, like some generalised or abstract witness Purusha of the Sankhyas; he is pure Spirit and cannot put on a body, infinite and cannot be finite as the human being is finite, the ever unborn creator and cannot be the creature born into the world, — these things are impossible even to his absolute omnipotence. To these objections the thoroughgoing dualist would add that God is in his person, his role and his nature different and separate from man; the perfect cannot put on human imperfection; the unborn personal God cannot be born as a human personality; the Ruler of the worlds cannot be limited in a nature-bound human action and in a perishable human body. These objections, so formidable at first sight to the reason, seem to have been present to the mind of the Teacher in the Gita when he says that although the Divine is unborn, imperishable in his self-existence, the Lord of all beings, yet he assumes birth by a supreme resort to the action of his Nature and by force of his self-Maya; that he whom the deluded despise because lodged in a human body, is verily in his supreme being the Lord of all; that he is in the action of the divine consciousness the creator of the fourfold Law and the doer of the works of the world and at the same time in the silence of the divine consciousness the impartial witness of the works of his own Nature, — for he is always, beyond both the silence and the action, the supreme Purushottama. And the Gita is able to meet all these oppositions and to reconcile all these contraries because it starts from the Vedantic view of existence, of God and the universe.

For in the Vedantic view of things all these apparently formidable objections are null and void from the beginning. The idea of the Avatar is not indeed indispensable to its scheme, but it comes in naturally into it as a perfectly rational and logical conception. For all here is God, is the Spirit or Self-existence, is Brahman, *ekamevādvitīyam*, — there is nothing else, nothing other and different from it and there can be nothing else, can be nothing other and different from it; Nature is and can be nothing else than a power of the divine consciousness; all beings are and can be nothing else than inner and outer, subjective and objective soul-forms and bodily forms of the divine being which exist in or result from the power of its consciousness. Far from the Infinite being unable to take on finiteness, the whole universe is nothing else but that; we can see, look as we may, nothing else at all in the whole wide world we inhabit. Far from the Spirit being incapable of form or disdaining to connect itself with form of matter or mind and to assume a limited nature or a body, all here is nothing but that, the world exists only by that connection, that assumption. Far from the world being a mechanism of law with no soul or spirit intervening in the movement of its forces or the action of its minds and bodies, — only some original indifferent Spirit passively existing somewhere outside or above it, — the whole world and every particle of it is on the contrary nothing but the divine force in action and that divine force determines and governs its every movement, inhabits its every form, possesses here every soul and mind; all is in God and in him moves and has its being, in all he is, acts and displays his being; every creature is the disguised Narayana.

Far from the unborn being unable to assume birth, all beings are even in their individuality unborn spirits, eternal without beginning or end, and in their essential existence and their universality all are the one unborn Spirit of whom birth and death are only a phenomenon of the assumption and change of forms. The assumption of imperfection by the perfect is the whole mystic phenomenon of the universe; but the imperfection appears in the form and action of the mind or body assumed, subsists in the phenomenon, — in that which assumes it there is no imperfection, even as in the Sun which illumines all there is no defect of light or of vision, but only in the capacities of the individual organ of vision. Nor does God rule the world from some remote heaven, but by his intimate omnipresence; each finite working of force is an act of infinite Force and not of a limited separate self-existent energy labouring in its own underived strength; in every finite working of will and knowledge we can discover, supporting it, an act of the infinite all-will and all-knowledge. God's rule is not an absentee, foreign and external government; he governs all because he exceeds all, but also because he dwells within all movements and is their absolute soul and spirit. Therefore none of the objections opposed by our reason to the possibility of Avatarhood can stand in their principle; for the principle is a vain division made by the intellectual reason which the whole phenomenon and the whole reality of the world are busy every moment contradicting and disproving.

But still, apart from the possibility, there is the question of the actual divine working, — whether actually the divine consciousness does appear coming forward from beyond the veil to act at all directly in the phenomenal, the finite, the mental and material, the limited, the imperfect. The finite is indeed nothing but a definition, a face-value of the Infinite's self-representations to its own variations of consciousness; the real value of each finite phenomenon is an infinite value, is indeed the very Infinite. Each being is infinite in its self-existence, whatever it may be in the action of its phenomenal nature, its temporal self-representation. The man is not, when we look closely, himself alone, a rigidly separate self-existent individual, but humanity in a mind and body of itself; and humanity too is no rigidly separate self-existent species or genus, it is the All-existence, the universal Godhead figuring itself in the type of humanity; there it works out certain possibilities, develops, evolves, as we now say, certain powers of its manifestations. What it evolves, is itself, is the Spirit.

For what we mean by Spirit is self-existent being with an infinite power of consciousness and unconditioned delight in its being; it is either that or nothing, or at least nothing which has anything to do with man and the world or with which, therefore, man or the world has anything to do. Matter, body is only a massed motion of force of conscious being employed as a starting-point for the variable relations of consciousness working through its power of sense; nor is Matter anywhere really void of consciousness, for even in the atom, the cell there is, as is now made abundantly clear in spite of itself by modern Science, a power of will, an intelligence at work; but that power is the power of will and intelligence of the Self, Spirit or Godhead within it, it is not the separate, self-derived will or idea of the mechanical cell or atom. This universal will and intelligence, involved, develops its powers from form to form, and on earth at least it is in man that it draws nearest to the full divine and there first becomes, even in the outward intelligence in the form, obscurely conscious of its divinity. But still there too there is a limitation, there is that imperfection of the manifestation which prevents the lower forms from having the self-knowledge of their identity with the Divine. For in each limited being the limitation of the phenomenal action is accompanied by a limitation also of the phenomenal consciousness which defines the nature of the being and makes the inner difference between creature and creature. The Divine works behind indeed and governs its special manifestation through this outer and imperfect consciousness and will, but is itself secret in the cavern, *guhāyām*, as the Veda puts it, or as the Gita expresses it, "In the heart of all existences the Lord abides turning all existences as if mounted on a machine by Maya." This secret working of the Lord hidden in the heart from the egoistic nature-consciousness through which he works, is God's universal method with creatures. Why then should we suppose that in any form he comes forward into the frontal, the phenomenal consciousness for a more direct and consciously divine action? Obviously, if at all, then to break the veil between himself and humanity which man limited in his own nature could never lift.

The Gita explains the ordinary imperfect action of the creature by its subjection to the mechanism of Prakriti and its limitation by the self-representations of Maya. These two terms are only complementary aspects of one and the same effective force of divine consciousness. Maya is not essentially illusion, — the element or appearance of illusion only enters in by the ignorance of the lower Prakriti, Maya of the three modes of Nature, — it is the divine consciousness in its power of various self-representation of its being, while Prakriti is the effective force of that consciousness which operates to work out each such self-representation according to its own law and fundamental idea, *svabhāva* and *svadharma*, in its own proper quality and particular force of working, *guṇa-karma*. "Leaning — pressing down upon my own Nature (Prakriti) I create (loose forth into various being) all this multitude of existences, all helplessly subject to the control of Nature." Those who know not the Divine lodged in the human body, are ignorant of it because they are grossly subject to this mechanism of Prakriti, helplessly subject to its mental limitations and acquiescent in them, and dwell in an Asuric nature that deludes with desire and bewilders with egoism the will and the intelligence, *mohinīṁ prakṛtiṁ śritāḥ*. For the Purushottama within is not readily manifest to any and every being; he conceals himself in a thick cloud of darkness or a bright cloud of light, utterly he envelops and wraps himself in his Yogamaya.[1] "All this world," says the Gita, "because it is bewildered by the three states of being determined by the modes of Nature, fails to recognise me, for this my divine Maya of the modes of Nature is hard to get beyond; those cross beyond it who approach Me; but those who dwell in the Asuric nature of being, have their knowledge reft from them by Maya." In other words, there is the inherent consciousness of the divine in all, for in all the Divine dwells; but he dwells there covered by his Maya and the essential self-knowledge of beings is reft from them, turned into the error of egoism by the action of Maya, the action of the mechanism of Prakriti. Still by drawing back from the mechanism of Nature to her inner and secret Master man can become conscious of the indwelling Divinity.

---

[1] *nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya yogamāyā-samāvṛtaḥ.*

Now it is notable that with a slight but important variation of language the Gita describes in the same way both the action of the Divine in bringing about the ordinary birth of creatures and his action in his birth as the Avatar. "Leaning upon my own Nature, *prakṛtiṁ svām avaṣṭabhya*," it will say later, "I loose forth variously, *visṛjāmi*, this multitude of creatures helplessly subject owing to the control of Prakriti, *avaśaṁ prakṛter vaśāt*." "Standing upon my own Nature," it says here, "I am born by my self-Maya, *prakṛtiṁ svām adhiṣṭhāya . . . ātmamāyayā*, I loose forth myself, *ātmānaṁ sṛjāmi*." The action implied in the word *avaṣṭabhya* is a forceful downward pressure by which the object controlled is overcome, oppressed, blocked or limited in its movement or working and becomes helplessly subject to the controlling power, *avaśaṁ vaśāt*; Nature in this action becomes mechanical and its multitude of creatures are held helpless in the mechanism, not lords of their own action. On the contrary the action implied in the word *adhiṣṭhāya* is a dwelling in, but also a standing upon and over the Nature, a conscious control and government by the indwelling Godhead, *adhiṣṭhātrī devatā*, in which the Purusha is not helplessly driven by the Prakriti through ignorance, but rather the Prakriti is full of the light and the will of the Purusha. Therefore in the normal birth that which is loosed forth, — created, as we say, — is the multitude of creatures or becomings, *bhūtagrāmam*; in the divine birth that which is loosed forth, self-created, is the self-conscious self-existent being, *ātmānam*; for the Vedantic distinction between *ātmā* and *bhūtāni* is that which is made in European philosophy between the Being and its becomings. In both cases Maya is the means of the creation or manifestation, but in the divine birth it is by self-Maya, *ātmamāyayā*, not the involution in the lower Maya of the ignorance, but the conscious action of the self-existent Godhead in its phenomenal self-representation, well aware of its operation and its purpose, — that which the Gita calls elsewhere Yogamaya. In the ordinary birth Yogamaya is used by the Divine to envelop and conceal itself from the lower consciousness, so it becomes for us the means of the ignorance, *avidyā-māyā*; but it is by this same Yogamaya that self-knowledge also is made manifest in the return of our consciousness to the Divine, it is the means of the knowledge, *vidyā-māyā*; and in the divine birth it so operates — as the knowledge controlling and enlightening the works which are ordinarily done in the Ignorance.

The language of the Gita shows therefore that the divine birth is that of the conscious Godhead in our humanity and essentially the opposite of the ordinary birth even though the same means are used, because it is not the birth into the Ignorance, but the birth of the knowledge, not a physical phenomenon, but a soul-birth. It is the Soul's coming into birth as the self-existent Being controlling consciously its becoming and not lost to self-knowledge in the cloud of the ignorance. It is the Soul born into the body as Lord of Nature, standing above and operating in her freely by its will, not entangled and helplessly driven round and round in the mechanism; for it works in the knowledge and not, as most do, in the ignorance. It is the secret Soul in all coming forward from its governing secrecy behind the veil to possess wholly in a human type, but as the Divine, the birth which ordinarily it possesses only from behind the veil as the Ishwara while the outward consciousness in front of the veil is rather possessed than in possession because there it is a partially conscious being, the Jiva lost to self-knowledge and bound in its works through a phenomenal subjection to Nature. The Avatar[2] therefore is a direct manifestation in humanity by Krishna the divine Soul of that divine condition of being to which Arjuna, the human soul, the type of a highest human being, a Vibhuti, is called upon by the Teacher to arise, and to which he can only arise by climbing out of the ignorance and limitation of his ordinary humanity. It is the manifestation from above of that which we have to develop from below; it is the descent of God into that divine birth of the human being into which we mortal creatures must climb; it is the attracting divine example given by God to man in the very type and form and perfected model of our human existence.

---

[2] The word Avatara means a descent; it is a coming down of the Divine below the line which divides the divine from the human world or status.

XVI

The Process of Avatarhood

WE SEE that the mystery of the divine Incarnation in man, the assumption by the Godhead of the human type and the human nature, is in the view of the Gita only the other side of the eternal mystery of human birth itself which is always in its essence, though not in its phenomenal appearance, even such a miraculous assumption. The eternal and universal self of every human being is God; even his personal self is a part of the Godhead, *mamaivāṁśaḥ*, — not a fraction or fragment, surely, since we cannot think of God as broken up into little pieces, but a partial consciousness of the one Consciousness, a partial power of the one Power, a partial enjoyment of world-being by the one and universal Delight of being, and therefore in manifestation or, as we say, in Nature a limited and finite being of the one infinite and illimitable Being. The stamp of that limitation is an ignorance by which he forgets, not only the Godhead from which he came forth, but the Godhead which is always within him, there living in the secret heart of his own nature, there burning like a veiled Fire on the inner altar in his own temple-house of human consciousness.

He is ignorant because there is upon the eyes of his soul and all its organs the seal of that Nature, Prakriti, Maya, by which he has been put forth into manifestation out of God's eternal being; she has minted him like a coin out of the precious metal of the divine substance, but overlaid with a strong coating of the alloy of her phenomenal qualities, stamped with her own stamp and mark of animal humanity, and although the secret sign of the Godhead is there, it is at first indistinguishable and always with difficulty decipherable, not to be really discovered except by that initiation into the mystery of our own being which distinguishes a Godward from an earthward humanity. In the Avatar, the divinely-born Man, the real substance shines through the coating; the mark of the seal is there only for form, the vision is that of the secret Godhead, the power of the life is that of the secret Godhead, and it breaks through the seals of the assumed human nature; the sign of the Godhead, an inner soul-sign, not outward, not physical, stands out legible for all to read who care to see or who can see; for the Asuric nature is always blind to these things, it sees the body and not the soul, the external being and not the internal, the mask and not the Person. In the ordinary human birth the Nature-aspect of the universal Divine assuming humanity prevails; in the incarnation the God-aspect of the same phenomenon takes its place. In the one he allows the human nature to take possession of his partial being and to dominate it; in the other he takes possession of his partial type of being and its nature and divinely dominates it. Not by evolution or ascent like the ordinary man, the Gita seems to tell us, not by a growing into the divine birth, but by a direct descent into the stuff of humanity and a taking up of its moulds.

But it is to assist that ascent or evolution the descent is made or accepted; that the Gita makes very clear. It is, we might say, to exemplify the possibility of the Divine manifest in the human being, so that man may see what that is and take courage to grow into it. It is also to leave the influence of that manifestation vibrating in the earth-nature and the soul of that manifestation presiding over its upward endeavour. It is to give a spiritual mould of divine manhood into which the seeking soul of the human being can cast itself. It is to give a dharma, a religion, — not a mere creed, but a method of inner and outer living, — a way, a rule and law of self-moulding by which he can grow towards divinity. It is too, since this growth, this ascent is no mere isolated and individual phenomenon, but like all in the divine world-activities a collective business, a work and the work for the race, to assist the human march, to hold it together in its great crises, to break the forces of the downward gravitation when they grow too insistent, to uphold or restore the great dharma of the Godward law in man's nature, to prepare even, however far off, the kingdom of God, the victory of the seekers of light and perfection, *sādhūnām*, and the overthrow of those who fight for the continuance of the evil and the darkness. All these are recognised objects of the descent of the Avatar, and it is usually by his work that the mass of men seek to distinguish him and for that that they are ready to worship him. It is only the spiritual who see that this external Avatarhood is a sign, in the symbol of a human life, of the eternal inner Godhead making himself manifest in the field of their own human mentality and corporeality so that they can grow into unity with that and be possessed by it. The divine manifestation of a Christ, Krishna, Buddha in external humanity has for its inner truth the same manifestation of the eternal Avatar within in our own inner humanity. That which has been done in the outer human life of earth, may be repeated in the inner life of all human beings.

This is the object of the incarnation, but what is the method? First, we have the rational or minimising view of Avatarhood which sees in it only an extraordinary manifestation of the diviner qualities moral, intellectual and dynamic by which average humanity is exceeded. In this idea there is a certain truth. The Avatar is at the same time the Vibhuti. This Krishna who in his divine inner being is the Godhead in a human form, is in his outer human being the leader of his age, the great man of the Vrishnis. This is from the point of view of the Nature, not of the soul. The Divine manifests himself through infinite qualities of his nature and the intensity of the manifestation is measured by their power and their achievement. The *vibhūti* of the Divine is therefore, impersonally, the manifest power of his quality, it is his outflowing, in whatever form, of Knowledge, Energy, Love, Strength and the rest; personally, it is the mental form and the animate being in whom this power is achieved and does its great works. A pre-eminence in this inner and outer achievement, a greater power of divine quality, an effective energy is always the sign. The human *vibhūti* is the hero of the race's struggle towards divine achievement, the hero in the Carlylean sense of heroism, a power of God in man. "I am Vasudeva (Krishna) among the Vrishnis," says the Lord in the Gita, "Dhananjaya (Arjuna) among the Pandavas, Vyasa among the sages, the seer-poet Ushanas among the seer-poets," the first in each category, the greatest of each group, the most powerfully representative of the qualities and works in which its characteristic soul-power manifests itself. This heightening of the powers of the being is a very necessary step in the progress of the divine manifestation. Every great man who rises above our average level, raises by that very fact our common humanity; he is a living assurance of our divine possibilities, a promise of the Godhead, a glow of the divine Light and a breath of the divine Power.

It is this truth which lies behind the natural human tendency to the deification of great minds and heroic characters; it comes out clearly enough in the Indian habit of mind which easily sees a partial (*aṁśa*) Avatar in great saints, teachers, founders, or most significantly in the belief of southern Vaishnavas that some of their saints were incarnations of the symbolic living weapons of Vishnu, — for that is what all great spirits are, living powers and weapons of the Divine in the upward march and battle. This idea is innate and inevitable in any mystic or spiritual view of life which does not draw an inexorable line between the being and nature of the Divine and our human being and nature; it is the sense of the divine in humanity. But still the Vibhuti is not the Avatar; otherwise Arjuna, Vyasa, Ushanas would be Avatars as well as Krishna, even if in a less degree of the power of Avatarhood. The divine quality is not enough; there must be the inner consciousness of the Lord and Self governing the human nature by his divine presence. The heightening of the power of the qualities is part of the becoming, *bhūtagrāma*, an ascent in the ordinary manifestation; in the Avatar there is the special manifestation, the divine birth from above, the eternal and universal Godhead descended into a form of individual humanity, *ātmānaṁ sṛjāmi*, and conscious not only behind the veil but in the outward nature.

There is an intermediary idea, a more mystical view of Avatarhood which supposes that a human soul calls down this descent into himself and is either possessed by the divine consciousness or becomes an effective reflection or channel of it. This view rests upon certain truths of spiritual experience. The divine birth in man, his ascent, is itself a growing of the human into the divine consciousness, and in its intensest culmination is a losing of the separate self in that. The soul merges its individuality in an infinite and universal being or loses it in the heights of a transcendent being; it becomes one with the Self, the Brahman, the Divine or, as it is sometimes more absolutely put, becomes the one Self, the Brahman, the Divine. The Gita itself speaks of the soul becoming the Brahman, *brahmabhūta*, and of its thereby dwelling in the Lord, in Krishna, but it does not, it must be marked, speak of it as becoming the Lord or the Purushottama, though it does declare that the Jiva himself is always Ishwara, the partial being of the Lord, *mamaivāṁśaḥ*. For this greatest union, this highest becoming is still part of the ascent; while it is the divine birth to which every Jiva arrives, it is not the descent of the Godhead, not Avatarhood, but at most Buddhahood according to the doctrine of the Buddhists, it is the soul awakened from its present mundane individuality into an infinite superconsciousness. That need not carry with it either the inner consciousness or the characteristic action of the Avatar.

On the other hand, this entering into the divine consciousness may be attended by a reflex action of the Divine entering or coming forward into the human parts of our being, pouring himself into the nature, the activity, the mentality, the corporeality even of the man; and that may well be at least a partial Avatarhood. The Lord stands in the heart, says the Gita, — by which it means of course the heart of the subtle being, the nodus of the emotions, sensations, mental consciousness, where the individual Purusha also is seated, — but he stands there veiled, enveloped by his Maya. But above, on a plane within us but now superconscient to us, called heaven by the ancient mystics, the Lord and the Jiva stand together revealed as of one essence of being, the Father and the Son of certain symbolisms, the Divine Being and the divine Man who comes forth from Him born of the higher divine Nature,[1] the virgin Mother, *parā prakṛti*, *parā*

---

[1] In the Buddhist legend the name of the mother of Buddha makes the symbolism clear; in the Christian the symbol seems to have been attached by a familiar mythopoeic process to the actual human mother of Jesus of Nazareth.

māyā, into the lower or human nature. This seems to be the inner doctrine of the Christian incarnation; in its Trinity the Father is above in this inner Heaven; the Son or supreme Prakriti become Jiva of the Gita descends as the divine Man upon earth, in the mortal body; the Holy Spirit, pure Self, Brahmic consciousness is that which makes them one and that also in which they communicate; for we hear of the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus and it is the same descent which brings down the powers of the higher consciousness into the simple humanity of the Apostles.

But also the higher divine consciousness of the Purushottama may itself descend into the humanity and that of the Jiva disappear into it. This is said by his contemporaries to have happened in the occasional transfigurations of Chaitanya when he who in his normal consciousness was only the lover and devotee of the Lord and rejected all deification, became in these abnormal moments the Lord himself and so spoke and acted, with all the outflooding light and love and power of the divine Presence. Supposing this to be the normal condition, the human receptacle to be constantly no more than a vessel of this divine Presence and divine Consciousness, we should have the Avatar according to this intermediary idea of the incarnation. That easily recommends itself as possible to our human notions; for if the human being can elevate his nature so as to feel a unity with the being of the Divine and himself a mere channel of its consciousness, light, power, love, his own will and personality lost in that will and that being, — and this is a recognised spiritual status, — then there is no inherent impossibility of the reflex action of that Will, Being, Power, Love, Light, Consciousness occupying the whole personality of the human Jiva. And this would not be merely an ascent of our humanity into the divine birth and the divine nature, but a descent of the divine Purusha into humanity, an Avatar.

The Gita, however, goes much farther. It speaks clearly of the Lord himself being born; Krishna speaks of his many births that are past and makes it clear by his language that it is not merely the receptive human being but the Divine of whom he makes this affirmation, because he uses the very language of the Creator, the same language which he will employ when he has to describe his creation of the world. "Although I am the unborn Lord of creatures, I create (loose forth) my *self* by my Maya," presiding over the actions of my Prakriti. Here there is no question of the Lord and the human Jiva or of the Father and the Son, the divine Man, but only of the Lord and his Prakriti. The Divine descends by his own Prakriti into birth in its human form and type and brings into it the divine Consciousness and the divine Power, though consenting, though willing to act in the form, type, mould of humanity, and he governs its actions in the body as the indwelling and over-dwelling Soul, *adhiṣṭhāya*. From above he governs always, indeed, for so he governs all nature, the human included; from within also he governs all nature, always, but hidden; the difference here is that he is manifest, that the nature is conscious of the divine Presence as the Lord, the Inhabitant, and it is not by his secret will from above, "the will of the Father which is in heaven," but by his quite direct and apparent will that he moves the nature. And here there seems to be no room for the human intermediary; for it is by resort to his own nature, *prakṛtiṁ svām*, and not the special nature of the Jiva that the Lord of all existence thus takes upon himself the human birth.

This doctrine is a hard saying, a difficult thing for the human reason to accept; and for an obvious reason, because of the evident humanity of the Avatar. The Avatar is always a dual phenomenon of divinity and humanity; the Divine takes upon himself the human nature with all its outward limitations and makes them the circumstances, means, instruments of the divine consciousness and the divine power, a vessel of the divine birth and the divine works. But so surely it must be, since otherwise the object of the Avatar's descent is not fulfilled; for that object is precisely to show that the human birth with all its limitations can be made such a means and instrument of the divine birth and divine works, precisely to show that the human type of consciousness can be compatible with the divine essence of consciousness made manifest, can be converted into its vessel, drawn into nearer conformity with it by a change of its mould and a heightening of its powers of light and love and strength and purity; and to show also how it can be done. If the Avatar were to act in an entirely supernormal fashion, this object would not be fulfilled. A merely supernormal or miraculous Avatar would be a meaningless absurdity; not that there need be an entire absence of the use of supernormal powers such as Christ's so-called miracles of healing, for the use of supernormal powers is quite a possibility of human nature; but there need not be that at all, nor in any case is it the root of the matter, nor would it at all do if the life were nothing else but a display of supernormal fireworks. The Avatar does not come as a thaumaturgic magician, but as the divine leader of humanity and the exemplar of a divine humanity. Even human sorrow and physical suffering he must assume and use so as to show, first, how that suffering may be a means of redemption, — as did Christ, — secondly, to show how, having been assumed by the divine soul in the human nature, it can also be overcome in the same nature, — as did Buddha. The rationalist who would have cried to Christ, "If thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross," or points out sagely that the Avatar was not divine because he died and died too by disease, — as a dog dieth, — knows not what he is saying: for he has missed the root of the whole matter. Even, the Avatar of sorrow and suffering must come before there can be the Avatar of divine joy; the human limitation must be assumed in order to show how it can be overcome; and the way and the extent of the overcoming, whether internal only or external also, depends upon the stage of the human advance; it must not be done by a non-human miracle.

The question then arises, and it is the sole real difficulty, for here the intellect falters and stumbles over its own limits, how is this human mind and body assumed? For they were not created suddenly and all of a piece, but by some kind of evolution, physical or spiritual or both. No doubt, the descent of the Avatar, like the divine birth from the other side, is essentially a spiritual phenomenon, as is shown by the Gita's *ātmānaṁ sṛjāmi*, it is a soul-birth; but still there is here an attendant physical birth. How then were this human mind and body of the Avatar created? If we suppose that the body is always created by the hereditary evolution, by inconscient Nature and its immanent Life-spirit without the intervention of the individual soul, the matter becomes simple. A physical and mental body is prepared fit for the divine incarnation by a pure or great heredity and the descending Godhead takes possession of it. But the Gita in this very passage applies the doctrine of reincarnation, boldly enough, to the Avatar himself, and in the usual theory of reincarnation the reincarnating soul by its past spiritual and psychological evolution itself determines and in a way prepares its own mental and physical body. The soul prepares its own body, the body is not prepared for it without any reference to the soul. Are we then to suppose an eternal or continual Avatar himself evolving, we might say, his own fit mental and physical body according to the needs and pace of the human evolution and so appearing from age to age, *yuge yuge*? In some such spirit some would interpret the ten incarnations of Vishnu, first in animal forms, then in the animal man, then in the dwarf man-soul, Vamana, the violent Asuric man, Rama of the axe, the divinely-natured man, a greater Rama, the awakened spiritual man, Buddha, and, preceding him in time, but final in place, the complete divine manhood, Krishna, — for the last Avatar, Kalki, only accomplishes the work Krishna began, — he fulfils in power the great struggle which the previous Avatars prepared in all its potentialities. It is a difficult assumption to our modern mentality, but the language of the Gita seems to demand it. Or, since the Gita does not expressly solve the problem, we may solve it in some other way of our own, as that the body is prepared by the Jiva but assumed from birth by the Godhead or that it is prepared by one of the four Manus, *catvāro manavaḥ*, of the Gita, the spiritual Fathers of every human mind and body. This is going far into the mystic field from which the modern reason is still averse; but once we admit Avatarhood, we have already entered into it and, once entered, may as well tread in it with firm footsteps.

There the Gita's doctrine of Avatarhood stands. We have had to advert to it at length in this aspect of its method, as we did to the question of its possibility, because it is necessary to look at it and face the difficulties which the reasoning mind of man is likely to offer to it. It is true that the physical Avatarhood does not fill a large space in the Gita, but still it does occupy a definite place in the chain of its teachings and is implied in the whole scheme, the very framework being the Avatar leading the *vibhūti*, the man who has risen to the greatest heights of mere manhood, to the divine birth and divine works. No doubt, too, the inner descent of the Godhead to raise the human soul into himself is the main thing, — it is the inner Christ, Krishna or Buddha that matters. But just as the outer life is of immense importance for the inner development, so the external Avatarhood is of no mean importance for this great spiritual manifestation. The consummation in the mental and physical symbol assists the growth of the inner reality; afterwards the inner reality expresses itself with greater power in a more perfect symbolisation of itself through the outer life. Between these two, spiritual reality and mental and physical expression, acting and returning upon each other constantly the manifestation of the Divine in humanity has elected to move always in the cycles of its concealment and its revelation.

XVII

The Divine Birth and Divine Works

THE WORK for which the Avatar descends has like his birth a double sense and a double form. It has an outward side of the divine force acting upon the external world in order to maintain there and to reshape the divine law by which the Godward effort of humanity is kept from decisive retrogression and instead decisively carried forward in spite of the rule of action and reaction, the rhythm of advance and relapse by which Nature proceeds. It has an inward side of the divine force of the Godward consciousness acting upon the soul of the individual and the soul of the race, so that it may receive new forms of revelation of the Divine in man and may be sustained, renewed and enriched in its power of upward self-unfolding. The Avatar does not descend merely for a great outward action, as the pragmatic sense in humanity is too often tempted to suppose. Action and event have no value in themselves, but only take their value from the force which they represent and the idea which they symbolise and which the force is there to serve.

The crisis in which the Avatar appears, though apparent to the outward eye only as a crisis of events and great material changes, is always in its source and real meaning a crisis in the consciousness of humanity when it has to undergo some grand modification and effect some new development. For this action of change a divine force is needed; but the force varies always according to the power of consciousness which it embodies; hence the necessity of a divine consciousness manifesting in the mind and soul of humanity. Where, indeed, the change is mainly intellectual and practical, the intervention of the Avatar is not needed; there is a great uplifting of consciousness, a great manifestation of power in which men are for the time being exalted above their normal selves, and this surge of consciousness and power finds its wave-crests in certain exceptional individuals, *vibhūtis*, whose action leading the general action is sufficient for the change intended. The Reformation in Europe and the French Revolution were crises of this character; they were not great spiritual events, but intellectual and practical changes, one in religious, the other in social and political ideas, forms and motives, and the modification of the general consciousness brought about was a mental and dynamic, but not a spiritual modification. But when the crisis has a spiritual seed or intention, then a complete or a partial manifestation of the God-consciousness in a human mind and soul comes as its originator or leader. That is the Avatar.

The outward action of the Avatar is described in the Gita as the restoration of the Dharma; when from age to age the Dharma fades, languishes, loses force and its opposite arises, strong and oppressive, then the Avatar comes and raises it again to power; and as these things in idea are always represented by things in action and by human beings who obey their impulsion, his mission is, in its most human and outward terms, to relieve the seekers of the Dharma who are oppressed by the reign of the reactionary darkness and to destroy the wrong-doers who seek to maintain the denial of the Dharma. But the language used can easily be given a poor and insufficient connotation which would deprive Avatarhood of all its spiritual depth of meaning. Dharma is a word which has an ethical and practical, a natural and philosophical and a religious and spiritual significance, and it may be used in any of these senses exclusive of the others, in a purely ethical, a purely philosophical or a purely religious sense. Ethically it means the law of righteousness, the moral rule of conduct, or in a still more outward and practical significance social and political justice, or even simply the observation of the social law. If used in this sense we shall have to understand that when unrighteousness, injustice and oppression prevail, the Avatar descends to deliver the good and destroy the wicked, to break down injustice and oppression and restore the ethical balance of mankind.

Thus the popular and mythical account of the Krishna avatar is that the unrighteousness of the Kurus as incarnated in Duryodhana and his brothers became so great a burden to the earth that she had to call upon God to descend and lighten her load; accordingly Vishnu incarnated as Krishna, delivered the oppressed Pandavas and destroyed the unjust Kauravas. A similar account is given of the descent of the previous Vishnu avatars, of Rama to destroy the unrighteous oppression of Ravana, of Parashurama to destroy the unrighteous license of the military and princely caste, the Kshatriyas, of the dwarf Vamana to destroy the rule of the Titan Bali. But obviously the purely practical, ethical or social and political mission of the Avatar which is thus thrown into popular and mythical form, does not give a right account of the phenomenon of Avatarhood. It does not cover its spiritual sense, and if this outward utility were all, we should have to exclude Buddha and Christ whose mission was not at all to destroy evil-doers and deliver the good, but to bring to all men a new spiritual message and a new law of divine growth and spiritual realisation. On the other hand, if we give to the word dharma only its religious sense, in which it means a law of religious and spiritual life, we shall indeed get to the kernel of the matter, but we shall be in danger of excluding a most important part of the work done by the Avatar. Always we see in the history of the divine incarnations the double work, and inevitably, because the Avatar takes up the workings of God in human life, the way of the divine Will and Wisdom in the world, and that always fulfils itself externally as well as internally, by inner progress in the soul and by an outer change in the life.

The Avatar may descend as a great spiritual teacher and saviour, the Christ, the Buddha, but always his work leads, after he has finished his earthly manifestation, to a profound and powerful change not only in the ethical, but in the social and outward life and ideals of the race. He may, on the other hand, descend as an incarnation of the divine life, the divine personality and power in its characteristic action, for a mission ostensibly social, ethical and political, as is represented in the story of Rama or Krishna; but always then this descent becomes in the soul of the race a permanent power for the inner living and the spiritual rebirth. It is indeed curious to note that the permanent, vital, universal effect of Buddhism and Christianity has been the force of their ethical, social and practical ideals and their influence even on the men and the ages which have rejected their religious and spiritual beliefs, forms and disciplines; later Hinduism which rejected Buddha, his *saṅgha* and his *dharma*, bears the ineffaceable imprint of the social and ethical influence of Buddhism and its effect on the ideas and the life of the race, while in modern Europe, Christian only in name, humanitarianism is the translation into the ethical and social sphere and the aspiration to liberty, equality and fraternity the translation into the social and political sphere of the spiritual truths of Christianity, the latter especially being effected by men who aggressively rejected the Christian religion and spiritual discipline and by an age which in its intellectual effort of emancipation tried to get rid of Christianity as a creed. On the other hand the life of Rama and Krishna belongs to the prehistoric past which has come down only in poetry and legend and may even be regarded as myths; but it is quite immaterial whether we regard them as myths or historical facts, because their permanent truth and value lie in their persistence as a spiritual form, presence, influence in the inner consciousness of the race and the life of the human soul. Avatarhood is a fact of divine life and consciousness which may realise itself in an outward action, but must persist, when that action is over and has done its work, in a spiritual influence; or may realise itself in a spiritual influence and teaching, but must then have its permanent effect, even when the new religion or discipline is exhausted, in the thought, temperament and outward life of mankind.

We must then, in order to understand the Gita's description of the work of the Avatar, take the idea of the Dharma in its fullest, deepest and largest conception, as the inner and the outer law by which the divine Will and Wisdom work out the spiritual evolution of mankind and its circumstances and results in the life of the race. Dharma in the Indian conception is not merely the good, the right, morality and justice, ethics; it is the whole government of all the relations of man with other beings, with Nature, with God, considered from the point of view of a divine principle working itself out in forms and laws of action, forms of the inner and the outer life, orderings of relations of every kind in the world. Dharma[1] is both that which we hold to and that which holds together our inner and outer activities. In its primary sense it means a fundamental law of our nature which secretly conditions all our activities, and in this sense each being, type, species, individual, group has its own dharma. Secondly, there is the divine nature which has to develop and manifest in us, and in this sense dharma is the law of the inner workings by which that grows in our being. Thirdly, there is the law by which we govern our outgoing thought and action and our relations with each other so as to help best both our own growth and that of the human race towards the divine ideal.

Dharma is generally spoken of as something eternal and unchanging, and so it is in the fundamental principle, in the ideal, but in its forms it is continually changing and evolving, because man does not already possess the ideal or live in it, but aspires more or less perfectly towards it, is growing towards its knowledge and practice. And in this growth dharma is all that helps us to grow into the divine purity, largeness, light, freedom, power, strength, joy, love, good, unity, beauty, and against it stands its shadow and denial, all that resists its growth and has not undergone its law, all that has not yielded up and does not will to yield up its secret of divine values, but presents a front of perversion and contradiction, of impurity, narrowness, bondage, darkness, weakness, vileness, discord and suffering and division, and the hideous and the crude, all that man has to leave behind in his progress. This is the *adharma*, not-dharma, which strives with and seeks to overcome the dharma, to draw backward and downward, the reactionary force which makes for evil, ignorance and darkness. Between the two there is perpetual battle and struggle, oscillation of victory and defeat in which sometimes the upward and sometimes the downward forces prevail. This has been typified in the Vedic image of the struggle between the divine and the Titanic powers, the sons of the Light and the undivided Infinity and the children of the Darkness and Division, in Zoroastrianism by Ahuramazda and Ahriman, and in later religions in the contest between God and his angels and Satan or Iblis and his demons for the possession of human life and the human soul.

---

[1] The word means "holding" from the root *dhṛ*, to hold.

It is these things that condition and determine the work of the Avatar. In the Buddhistic formula the disciple takes refuge from all that opposes his liberation in three powers, the *dharma*, the *saṅgha*, the Buddha. So in Christianity we have the law of Christian living, the Church and the Christ. These three are always the necessary elements of the work of the Avatar. He gives a dharma, a law of self-discipline by which to grow out of the lower into the higher life and which necessarily includes a rule of action and of relations with our fellowmen and other beings, endeavour in the eightfold path or the law of faith, love and purity or any other such revelation of the nature of the divine in life. Then because every tendency in man has its collective as well as its individual aspect, because those who follow one way are naturally drawn together into spiritual companionship and unity, he establishes the *saṅgha*, the fellowship and union of those whom his personality and his teaching unite. In Vaishnavism there is the same trio, *bhāgavata*, *bhakta*, *bhagavān*, — the *bhāgavata*, which is the law of the Vaishnava dispensation of adoration and love, the *bhakta* representing the fellowship of those in whom that law is manifest, *bhagavān*, the divine Lover and Beloved in whose being and nature the divine law of love is founded and fulfils itself. The Avatar represents this third element, the divine personality, nature and being who is the soul of the dharma and the *saṅgha*, informs them with himself, keeps them living and draws men towards the felicity and the liberation.

In the teaching of the Gita, which is more catholic and complex than other specialised teachings and disciplines, these things assume a larger meaning. For the unity here is the all-embracing Vedantic unity by which the soul sees all in itself and itself in all and makes itself one with all beings. The dharma is therefore the taking up of all human relations into a higher divine meaning; starting from the established ethical, social and religious rule which binds together the whole community in which the God-seeker lives, it lifts it up by informing it with the Brahmic consciousness; the law it gives is the law of oneness, of equality, of liberated, desireless, God-governed action, of God-knowledge and self-knowledge enlightening and drawing to itself all the nature and all the action, drawing it towards divine being and divine consciousness, and of God-love as the supreme power and crown of the knowledge and the action. The idea of companionship and mutual aid in God-love and God-seeking which is at the basis of the idea of the *saṅgha* or divine fellowship, is brought in when the Gita speaks of the seeking of God through love and adoration, but the real *saṅgha* of this teaching is all humanity. The whole world is moving towards this dharma, each man according to his capacity, — "it is my path that men follow in every way," — and the God-seeker, making himself one with all, making their joy and sorrow and all their life his own, the liberated made already one self with all beings, lives in the life of humanity, lives for the one Self in humanity, for God in all beings, acts for *lokasaṅgraha*, for the maintaining of all in their dharma and the Dharma, for the maintenance of their growth in all its stages and in all its paths towards the Divine. For the Avatar here, though he is manifest in the name and form of Krishna, lays no exclusive stress on this one form of his human birth, but on that which it represents, the Divine, the Purushottama, of whom all Avatars are the human births, of whom all forms and names of the Godhead worshipped by men are the figures. The way declared by Krishna here is indeed announced as the way by which man can reach the real knowledge and the real liberation, but it is one that is inclusive of all paths and not exclusive. For the Divine takes up into his universality all Avatars and all teachings and all dharmas.

The Gita lays stress upon the struggle of which the world is the theatre, in its two aspects, the inner struggle and the outer battle. In the inner struggle the enemies are within, in the individual, and the slaying of desire, ignorance, egoism is the victory. But there is an outer struggle between the powers of the Dharma and the Adharma in the human collectivity. The former is supported by the divine, the godlike nature in man, and by those who represent it or strive to realise it in human life, the latter by the Titanic or demoniac, the Asuric and Rakshasic nature whose head is a violent egoism, and by those who represent and strive to satisfy it. This is the war of the Gods and Titans, the symbol of which the old Indian literature is full, the struggle of the Mahabharata of which Krishna is the central figure being often represented in that image; the Pandavas who fight for the establishment of the kingdom of the Dharma, are the sons of the Gods, their powers in human form, their adversaries are incarnations of the Titanic powers, they are Asuras. This outer struggle too the Avatar comes to aid, directly or indirectly, to destroy the reign of the Asuras, the evil-doers, and in them depress the power they represent and to restore the oppressed ideals of the Dharma. He comes to bring nearer the kingdom of heaven on earth in the collectivity as well as to build the kingdom of heaven within in the individual human soul.

The inner fruit of the Avatar's coming is gained by those who learn from it the true nature of the divine birth and the divine works and who, growing full of him in their consciousness and taking refuge in him with their whole being, *manmayā mām upāśritāḥ*, purified by the realising force of their knowledge and delivered from the lower nature, attain to the divine being and divine nature, *madbhāvam*. The Avatar comes to reveal the divine nature in man above this lower nature and to show what are the divine works, free, unegoistic, disinterested, impersonal, universal, full of the divine light, the divine power and the divine love. He comes as the divine personality which shall fill the consciousness of the human being and replace the limited egoistic personality, so that it shall be liberated out of ego into infinity and universality, out of birth into immortality. He comes as the divine power and love which calls men to itself, so that they may take refuge in that and no longer in the insufficiency of their human wills and the strife of their human fear, wrath and passion, and liberated from all this unquiet and suffering may live in the calm and bliss of the Divine.[2] Nor does it matter essentially in what form and name or putting forward what aspect of the Divine he comes; for in all ways, varying with their nature, men are following the path set to them by the Divine which will in the end lead them to him and the aspect of him which suits their nature is that which they can best follow when he comes to lead them; in whatever way men accept, love and take joy in God, in that way God accepts, loves and takes joy in man. *Ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmyaham.*

---

[2] *janma karma ca me divyam evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ,*
tyaktvā dehaṁ punarjanma naiti mām eti so'rjuna.
vītarāgabhayakrodhā manmayā mām upāśritāḥ,
bahavo jñānatapasā pūtā madbhāvam āgatāḥ.

XVIII

The Divine Worker

TO ATTAIN to the divine birth, — a divinising new birth of the soul into a higher consciousness, — and to do divine works both as a means towards that before it is attained and as an expression of it after it is attained, is then all the Karmayoga of the Gita. The Gita does not try to define works by any outward signs through which it can be recognisable to an external gaze, measurable by the criticism of the world; it deliberately renounces even the ordinary ethical distinctions by which men seek to guide themselves in the light of the human reason. The signs by which it distinguishes divine works are all profoundly intimate and subjective; the stamp by which they are known is invisible, spiritual, supra-ethical.

They are recognisable only by the light of the soul from which they come. For, it says, "what is action and what is inaction, as to this even the sages are perplexed and deluded," because, judging by practical, social, ethical, intellectual standards, they discriminate by accidentals and do not go to the root of the matter; "I will declare to thee that action by the knowledge of which thou shalt be released from all ills. One has to understand about action as well as to understand about wrong action and about inaction one has to understand; thick and tangled is the way of works." Action in the world is like a deep forest, *gahana*, through which man goes stumbling as best he can, by the light of the ideas of his time, the standards of his personality, his environment, or rather of many times, many personalities, layers of thought and ethics from many social stages all inextricably confused together, temporal and conventional amidst all their claim to absoluteness and immutable truth, empirical and irrational in spite of their aping of right reason. And finally the sage seeking in the midst of it all a highest foundation of fixed law and an original truth finds himself obliged to raise the last supreme question, whether all action and life itself are not a delusion and a snare and whether cessation from action, *akarma*, is not the last resort of the tired and disillusioned human soul. But, says Krishna, in this matter even the sages are perplexed and deluded. For by action, by works, not by inaction comes the knowledge and the release.

What then is the solution? what is that type of works by which we shall be released from the ills of life, from this doubt, this error, this grief, from this mixed, impure and baffling result even of our purest and best-intentioned acts, from these million forms of evil and suffering? No outward distinctions need be made, is the reply; no work the world needs, be shunned; no limit or hedge set round our human activities; on the contrary, all actions should be done, but from a soul in Yoga with the Divine, *yuktaḥ kṛtsna-karma-kṛt. Akarma*, cessation from action is not the way; the man who has attained to the insight of the highest reason, perceives that such inaction is itself a constant action, a state subject to the workings of Nature and her qualities. The mind that takes refuge in physical inactivity, is still under the delusion that it and not Nature is the doer of works; it has mistaken inertia for liberation; it does not see that even in what seems absolute inertia greater than that of the stone or clod, Nature is at work, keeps unimpaired her hold. On the contrary in the full flood of action the soul is free from its works, is not the doer, not bound by what is done, and he who lives in the freedom of the soul, not in the bondage of the modes of Nature, alone has release from works. This is what the Gita clearly means when it says that he who in action can see inaction and can see action still continuing in cessation from works, is the man of true reason and discernment among men. This saying hinges upon the Sankhya distinction between Purusha and Prakriti, between the free inactive soul, eternally calm, pure and unmoved in the midst of works, and ever active Nature operative as much in inertia and cessation as in the overt turmoil of her visible hurry of labour. This is the knowledge which the highest effort of the discriminating reason, the *buddhi*, gives to us, and therefore whoever possesses it is the truly rational and discerning man, *sa* *buddhimān manuṣyeṣu*, — not the perplexed thinker who judges life and works by the external, uncertain and impermanent distinctions of the lower reason. Therefore the liberated man is not afraid of action, he is a large and universal doer of all works, *kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*; not as others do them in subjection to Nature, but poised in the silent calm of the soul, tranquilly in Yoga with the Divine. The Divine is the lord of his works, he is only their channel through the instrumentality of his nature conscious of and subject to her Lord. By the flaming intensity and purity of this knowledge all his works are burned up as in a fire and his mind remains without any stain or disfiguring mark from them, calm, silent, unperturbed, white and clean and pure. To do all in this liberating knowledge, without the personal egoism of the doer, is the first sign of the divine worker.

The second sign is freedom from desire; for where there is not the personal egoism of the doer, desire becomes impossible; it is starved out, sinks for want of a support, dies of inanition. Outwardly the liberated man seems to undertake works of all kinds like other men, on a larger scale perhaps with a more powerful will and driving-force, for the might of the divine will works in his active nature; but from all his inceptions and undertakings the inferior concept and nether will of desire is entirely banished, *sarve samārambhāḥ kāmasaṅkalpavarjitāḥ*. He has abandoned all attachment to the fruits of his works, and where one does not work for the fruit, but solely as an impersonal instrument of the Master of works, desire can find no place, — not even the desire to serve successfully, for the fruit is the Lord's and determined by him and not by the personal will and effort, or to serve with credit and to the Master's satisfaction, for the real doer is the Lord himself and all glory belongs to a form of his Shakti missioned in the nature and not to the limited human personality. The human mind and soul of the liberated man does nothing, *na kiñcit karoti*; even though through his nature he engages in action, it is the Nature, the executive Shakti, it is the conscious Goddess governed by the divine Inhabitant who does the work.

It does not follow that the work is not to be done perfectly, with success, with a right adaptation of means to ends: on the contrary a perfect working is easier to action done tranquilly in Yoga than to action done in the blindness of hopes and fears, lamed by the judgments of the stumbling reason, running about amidst the eager trepidations of the hasty human will: Yoga, says the Gita elsewhere, is the true skill in works, *yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*. But all this is done impersonally by the action of a great universal light and power operating through the individual nature. The Karmayogin knows that the power given to him will be adapted to the fruit decreed, the divine thought behind the work equated with the work he has to do, the will in him, — which will not be wish or desire, but an impersonal drive of conscious power directed towards an aim not his own, — subtly regulated in its energy and direction by the divine wisdom. The result may be success, as the ordinary mind understands it, or it may seem to that mind to be defeat and failure; but to him it is always the success intended, not by him, but by the all-wise manipulator of action and result, because he does not seek for victory, but only for the fulfilment of the divine will and wisdom which works out its ends through apparent failure as well as and often with greater force than through apparent triumph. Arjuna, bidden to fight, is assured of victory; but even if certain defeat were before him, he must still fight because that is the present work assigned to him as his immediate share in the great sum of energies by which the divine will is surely accomplished.

The liberated man has no personal hopes; he does not seize on things as his personal possessions; he receives what the divine Will brings him, covets nothing, is jealous of none: what comes to him he takes without repulsion and without attachment; what goes from him he allows to depart into the whirl of things without repining or grief or sense of loss. His heart and self are under perfect control; they are free from reaction and passion, they make no turbulent response to the touches of outward things. His action is indeed a purely physical action, *śārīraṁ kevalaṁ karma*; for all else comes from above, is not generated on the human plane, is only a reflection of the will, knowledge, joy of the divine Purushottama. Therefore he does not by a stress on doing and its objects bring about in his mind and heart any of those reactions which we call passion and sin. For sin consists not at all in the outward deed, but in an impure reaction of the personal will, mind and heart which accompanies it or causes it; the impersonal, the spiritual is always pure, *apāpaviddham*, and gives to all that it does its own inalienable purity. This spiritual impersonality is a third sign of the divine worker. All human souls, indeed, who have attained to a certain greatness and largeness are conscious of an impersonal Force or Love or Will and Knowledge working through them, but they are not free from egoistic reactions, sometimes violent enough, of their human personality. But this freedom the liberated soul has attained; for he has cast his personality into the impersonal, where it is no longer his, but is taken up by the divine Person, the Purushottama, who uses all finite qualities infinitely and freely and is bound by none. He has become a soul and ceased to be a sum of natural qualities; and such appearance of personality as remains for the operations of Nature, is something unbound, large, flexible, universal; it is a free mould for the Infinite, it is a living mask of the Purushottama.

The result of this knowledge, this desirelessness and this impersonality is a perfect equality in the soul and the nature. Equality is the fourth sign of the divine worker. He has, says the Gita, passed beyond the dualities; he is *dvandvātīta*. We have seen that he regards with equal eyes, without any disturbance of feeling, failure and success, victory and defeat; but not only these, all dualities are in him surpassed and reconciled. The outward distinctions by which men determine their psychological attitude towards the happenings of the world, have for him only a subordinate and instrumental meaning. He does not ignore them, but he is above them. Good happening and evil happening, so all-important to the human soul subject to desire, are to the desireless divine soul equally welcome since by their mingled strand are worked out the developing forms of the eternal good. He cannot be defeated, since all for him is moving towards the divine victory in the Kurukshetra of Nature, *dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre*, the field of doings which is the field of the evolving Dharma, and every turn of the conflict has been designed and mapped by the foreseeing eye of the Master of the battle, the Lord of works and Guide of the dharma. Honour and dishonour from men cannot move him, nor their praise nor their blame; for he has a greater clear-seeing judge and another standard for his action, and his motive admits no dependence upon worldly rewards. Arjuna the Kshatriya prizes naturally honour and reputation and is right in shunning disgrace and the name of coward as worse than death; for to maintain the point of honour and the standard of courage in the world is part of his dharma: but Arjuna the liberated soul need care for none of these things, he has only to know the *kartavyaṁ karma*, the work which the supreme Self demands from him, and to do that and leave the result to the Lord of his actions. He has passed even beyond that distinction of sin and virtue which is so all-important to the human soul while it is struggling to minimise the hold of its egoism and lighten the heavy and violent yoke of its passions, — the liberated has risen above these struggles and is seated firmly in the purity of the witnessing and enlightened soul. Sin has fallen away from him, and not a virtue acquired and increased by good action and impaired or lost by evil action, but the inalienable and unalterable purity of a divine and selfless nature is the peak to which he has climbed and the seat upon which he is founded. There the sense of sin and the sense of virtue have no starting-point or applicability.

Arjuna, still in the ignorance, may feel in his heart the call of right and justice and may argue in his mind that abstention from battle would be a sin entailing responsibility for all the suffering that injustice and oppression and the evil karma of the triumph of wrong bring upon men and nations, or he may feel in his heart the recoil from violence and slaughter and argue in his mind that all shedding of blood is a sin which nothing can justify. Both of these attitudes would appeal with equal right to virtue and reason and it would depend upon the man, the circumstances and the time which of these might prevail in his mind or before the eyes of the world. Or he might simply feel constrained by his heart and his honour to support his friends against his enemies, the cause of the good and just against the cause of the evil and oppressive. The liberated soul looks beyond these conflicting standards; he sees simply what the supreme Self demands from him as needful for the maintenance or for the bringing forward of the evolving Dharma. He has no personal ends to serve, no personal loves and hatreds to satisfy, no rigidly fixed standard of action which opposes its rock-line to the flexible advancing march of the progress of the human race or stands up defiant against the call of the Infinite. He has no personal enemies to be conquered or slain, but sees only men who have been brought up against him by circumstances and the will in things to help by their opposition the march of destiny. Against them he can have no wrath or hatred; for wrath and hatred are foreign to the divine nature. The Asura's desire to break and slay what opposes him, the Rakshasa's grim lust of slaughter are impossible to his calm and peace and his all-embracing sympathy and understanding. He has no wish to injure, but on the contrary a universal friendliness and compassion, *maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca*: but this compassion is that of a divine soul overlooking men, embracing all other souls in himself, not the shrinking of the heart and the nerves and the flesh which is the ordinary human form of pity: nor does he attach a supreme importance to the life of the body, but looks beyond to the life of the soul and attaches to the other only an instrumental value. He will not hasten to slaughter and strife, but if war comes in the wave of the Dharma, he will accept it with a large equality and a perfect understanding and sympathy for those whose power and pleasure of domination he has to break and whose joy of triumphant life he has to destroy.

For in all he sees two things, the Divine inhabiting every being equally, the varying manifestation unequal only in its temporary circumstances. In the animal and man, in the dog, the unclean outcaste and the learned and virtuous Brahmin, in the saint and the sinner, in the indifferent and the friendly and the hostile, in those who love him and benefit and those who hate him and afflict, he sees himself, he sees God and has at heart for all the same equal kindliness, the same divine affection. Circumstances may determine the outward clasp or the outward conflict, but can never affect his equal eye, his open heart, his inner embrace of all. And in all his actions there will be the same principle of soul, a perfect equality, and the same principle of work, the will of the Divine in him active for the need of the race in its gradually developing advance towards the Godhead.

Again, the sign of the divine worker is that which is central to the divine consciousness itself, a perfect inner joy and peace which depends upon nothing in the world for its source or its continuance; it is innate, it is the very stuff of the soul's consciousness, it is the very nature of divine being. The ordinary man depends upon outward things for his happiness; therefore he has desire; therefore he has anger and passion, pleasure and pain, joy and grief; therefore he measures all things in the balance of good fortune and evil fortune. None of these things can affect the divine soul; it is ever satisfied without any kind of dependence, *nitya-tṛpto nirāśrayaḥ*; for its delight, its divine ease, its happiness, its glad light are eternal within, ingrained in itself, *ātma-ratiḥ*, *antaḥ-sukho 'ntar-ārāmas tathāntar-jyotir eva yaḥ*. What joy it takes in outward things is not for their sake, not for things which it seeks in them and can miss, but for the self in them, for their expression of the Divine, for that which is eternal in them and which it cannot miss. It is without attachment to their outward touches, but finds everywhere the same joy that it finds in itself, because its self is theirs, has become one self with the self of all beings, because it is united with the one and equal Brahman in them through all their differences, *brahmayoga-yuktātmā*, *sarvabhūtātma-bhūtātmā*. It does not rejoice in the touches of the pleasant or feel anguish in the touches of the unpleasant; neither the wounds of things, nor the wounds of friends, nor the wounds of enemies can disturb the firmness of its outgazing mind or bewilder its receiving heart; this soul is in its nature, as the Upanishad puts it, *avraṇam*, without wound or scar. In all things it has the same imperishable Ananda, *sukham akṣayam aśnute*.

That equality, impersonality, peace, joy, freedom do not depend on so outward a thing as doing or not doing works. The Gita insists repeatedly on the difference between the inward and the outward renunciation, *tyāga* and *sannyāsa*. The latter, it says, is valueless without the former, hardly possible even to attain without it, and unnecessary when there is the inward freedom. In fact *tyāga* itself is the real and sufficient Sannyasa. "He should be known as the eternal Sannyasin who neither hates nor desires; free from the dualities he is happily and easily released from all bondage." The painful process of outward Sannyasa, *duḥkham āptum*, is an unnecessary process. It is perfectly true that all actions, as well as the fruit of action, have to be given up, to be renounced, but inwardly, not outwardly, not into the inertia of Nature, but to the Lord in sacrifice, into the calm and joy of the Impersonal from whom all action proceeds without disturbing his peace. The true Sannyasa of action is the reposing of all works on the Brahman. "He who, having abandoned attachment, acts reposing (or founding) his works on the Brahman, *brahmaṇyādhāya karmāṇi*, is not stained by sin even as water clings not to the lotus-leaf." Therefore the Yogins first "do works with the body, mind, understanding, or even merely with the organs of action, abandoning attachment, for self-purification, *saṅgaṁ tyaktvātmaśuddhaye*. By abandoning attachment to the fruits of works the soul in union with Brahman attains to peace of rapt foundation in Brahman, but the soul not in union is attached to the fruit and bound by the action of desire." The foundation, the purity, the peace once attained, the embodied soul perfectly controlling its nature, having renounced all its actions by the mind, inwardly, not outwardly, "sits in its nine-gated city neither doing nor causing to be done." For this soul is the one impersonal Soul in all, the all-pervading Lord, *prabhu*, *vibhu*, who, as the impersonal, neither creates the works of the world, nor the mind's idea of being the doer, *na kartṛtvaṁ na karmāṇi*, nor the coupling of works to their fruits, the chain of cause and effect. All that is worked out by the Nature in the man, *svabhāva*, his principle of self-becoming, as the word literally means. The all-pervading Impersonal accepts neither the sin nor the virtue of any: these are things created by the ignorance in the creature, by his egoism of the doer, by his ignorance of his highest self, by his involution in the operations of Nature, and when the self-knowledge within him is released from this dark envelope, that knowledge lights up like a sun the real self within him; he knows himself then to be the soul supreme above the instruments of Nature. Pure, infinite, inviolable, immutable, he is no longer affected; no longer does he imagine himself to be modified by her workings. By complete identification with the Impersonal he can, too, release himself from the necessity of returning by birth into her movement.

And yet this liberation does not at all prevent him from acting. Only, he knows that it is not he who is active, but the modes, the qualities of Nature, her triple *guṇas*. "The man who knows the principles of things thinks, his mind in Yoga (with the inactive Impersonal), 'I am doing nothing'; when he sees, hears, touches, smells, eats, moves, sleeps, breathes, speaks, takes, ejects, opens his eyes or closes them, he holds that it is only the senses acting upon the objects of the senses." He himself, safe in the immutable, unmodified soul, is beyond the grip of the three gunas, *triguṇātīta*; he is neither sattwic, rajasic nor tamasic; he sees with a clear untroubled spirit the alternations of the natural modes and qualities in his action, their rhythmic play of light and happiness, activity and force, rest and inertia. This superiority of the calm soul observing its action but not involved in it, this *traiguṇātītya*, is also a high sign of the divine worker. By itself the idea might lead to a doctrine of the mechanical determinism of Nature and the perfect aloofness and irresponsibility of the soul; but the Gita effectively avoids this fault of an insufficient thought by its illumining supertheistic idea of the Purushottama. It makes it clear that it is not in the end Nature which mechanically determines its own action; it is the will of the Supreme which inspires her; he who has already slain the Dhritarashtrians, he of whom Arjuna is only the human instrument, a universal Soul, a transcendent Godhead is the master of her labour. The reposing of works in the Impersonal is a means of getting rid of the personal egoism of the doer, but the end is to give up all our actions to that great Lord of all, *sarva-loka-maheśvara*. "With a consciousness identified with the Self, renouncing all thy actions into Me, *mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi* *sannyasyādhyātmacetasā*, freed from personal hopes and desires, from the thought of 'I' and 'mine', delivered from the fever of the soul, fight," work, do my will in the world. The Divine motives, inspires, determines the entire action; the human soul impersonal in the Brahman is the pure and silent channel of his power; that power in the Nature executes the divine movement. Such only are the works of the liberated soul, *muktasya karma*, for in nothing does he act from a personal inception; such are the actions of the accomplished Karmayogin. They rise from a free spirit and disappear without modifying it, like waves that rise and disappear on the surface of conscious, immutable depths. *Gata-saṅgasya muktasya jñānāvasthita-cetasaḥ, yajñāyācarataḥ karma samagraṁ pravilīyate.*

XIX

Equality

SINCE knowledge, desirelessness, impersonality, equality, the inner self-existent peace and bliss, freedom from or at least superiority to the tangled interlocking of the three modes of Nature are the signs of the liberated soul, they must accompany it in all its activities. They are the condition of that unalterable calm which this soul preserves in all the movement, all the shock, all the clash of forces which surround it in the world. That calm reflects the equable immutability of the Brahman in the midst of all mutations, and it belongs to the indivisible and impartial Oneness which is for ever immanent in all the multiplicities of the universe. For an equal and all-equalising spirit is that Oneness in the midst of the million differences and inequalities of the world; and equality of the spirit is the sole real equality. For in all else in existence there can only be similarity, adjustment and balance; but even in the greatest similarities of the world we find difference of inequality and difference of unlikeness and the adjusted balancings of the world can only come about by a poising of combined unequal weights.

Hence the immense importance attached by the Gita in its elements of Karmayoga to equality; it is the nodus of the free spirit's free relations with the world. Self-knowledge, desirelessness, impersonality, bliss, freedom from the modes of Nature, when withdrawn into themselves, self-absorbed, inactive, have no need of equality; for they take no cognisance of the things in which the opposition of equality and inequality arises. But the moment the spirit takes cognisance of and deals with the multiplicities, personalities, differences, inequalities of the action of Nature, it has to effectuate these other signs of its free status by this one manifesting sign of equality. Knowledge is the consciousness of unity with the One; and in relation with the many different beings and existences of the universe it must show itself by an equal oneness with all. Impersonality is the one immutable spirit's superiority to the variations of its multiple personality in the world; in its dealings with the personalities of the universe it must show itself in the equal and impartial spirit of its action with regard to all, however various that action may be made by the variety of relations into which it is moulded or of the conditions under which it has to take place. So Krishna in the Gita says that none is dear to him, none hated, to all he is equal in spirit; yet is the God-lover the special receiver of his grace, because the relation he has created is different and the one impartial Lord of all yet meets each soul according to its way of approach to him. Desirelessness is the illimitable Spirit's superiority to the limiting attraction of the separate objects of desire in the world; when it has to enter into relations with those objects, it must show it either by an equal and impartial indifference in their possession or by an equal and impartial unattached delight in all and love for all which, because it is self-existent, does not depend upon possession or non-possession, but is in its essence unperturbed and immutable. For the spirit's bliss is in itself, and if this bliss is to enter into relations with things and creatures, it is only in this way that it can manifest its free spirituality. *Traiguṇātītya*, transcendence of the gunas, is the unperturbed spirit's superiority to that flux of action of the modes of Nature which is in its constant character perturbed and unequal; if it has to enter into relations with the conflicting and unequal activities of Nature, if the free soul is to allow its nature any action at all, it must show its superiority by an impartial equality towards all activities, results or happenings.

Equality is the sign and also for the aspirant the test. Where there is inequality in the soul, there there is in evidence some unequal play of the modes of Nature, motion of desire, play of personal will, feeling and action, activity of joy and grief or that disturbed and disturbing delight which is not true spiritual bliss but a mental satisfaction bringing in its train inevitably a counterpart or recoil of mental dissatisfaction. Where there is inequality of soul, there there is deviation from knowledge, loss of steadfast abiding in the all-embracing and all-reconciling oneness of the Brahman and unity of things. By his equality the Karmayogin knows in the midst of his action that he is free.

It is the spiritual nature of the equality enjoined, high and universal in its character and comprehension, which gives its distinctive note to the teaching of the Gita in this matter. For otherwise the mere teaching of equality in itself as the most desirable status of the mind, feelings and temperament in which we rise superior to human weakness, is by no means peculiar to the Gita. Equality has always been held up to admiration as the philosophic ideal and the characteristic temperament of the sages. The Gita takes up indeed this philosophic ideal, but carries it far beyond into a higher region where we find ourselves breathing a larger and purer air. The Stoic poise, the philosophic poise of the soul are only its first and second steps of ascension out of the whirl of the passions and the tossings of desire to a serenity and bliss, not of the Gods, but of the Divine himself in his supreme self-mastery. The Stoic equality, making character its pivot, founds itself upon self-mastery by austere endurance; the happier and serener philosophic equality prefers self-mastery by knowledge, by detachment, by a high intellectual indifference seated above the disturbances to which our nature is prone, *udāsīnavad āsīnaḥ*, as the Gita expresses it; there is also the religious or Christian equality which is a perpetual kneeling or a prostrate resignation and submission to the will of God. These are the three steps and means towards divine peace, heroic endurance, sage indifference, pious resignation, *titikṣā*, *udāsīnatā*, *namas* or *nati*. The Gita takes them all in its large synthetic manner and weaves them into its upward soul-movement, but it gives to each a profounder root, a larger outlook, a more universal and transcendent significance. For to each it gives the values of the spirit, its power of spiritual being beyond the strain of character, beyond the difficult poise of the understanding, beyond the stress of the emotions.

The ordinary human soul takes a pleasure in the customary disturbances of its nature-life; it is because it has this pleasure and because, having it, it gives a sanction to the troubled play of the lower nature that the play continues perpetually; for the

Prakriti does nothing except for the pleasure and with the sanction of its lover and enjoyer, the Purusha. We do not recognise this truth because under the actual stroke of the adverse disturbance, smitten by grief, pain, discomfort, misfortune, failure, defeat, blame, dishonour, the mind shrinks back from the blow, while it leaps eagerly to the embrace of the opposite and pleasurable disturbances, joy, pleasure, satisfactions of all kinds, prosperity, success, victory, glory, praise; but this does not alter the truth of the soul's pleasure in life which remains constant behind the dualities of the mind. The warrior does not feel physical pleasure in his wounds or find mental satisfaction in his defeats; but he has a complete delight in the godhead of battle which brings to him defeat and wounds as well as the joy of victory, and he accepts the chances of the former and the hope of the latter as part of the mingled weft of war, the thing which the delight in him pursues. Even, wounds bring him a joy and pride in memory, complete when the pain of them has passed, but often enough present even while it is there and actually fed by the pain. Defeat keeps for him the joy and pride of indomitable resistance to a superior adversary, or, if he is of a baser kind, the passions of hatred and revenge which also have their darker and crueller pleasures. So it is with the pleasure of the soul in the normal play of our life.

The mind recoils by pain and dislike from the adverse strokes of life; that is Nature's device for enforcing a principle of self-protection, *jugupsā*, so that the vulnerable nervous and bodily parts of us may not unduly rush upon self-destruction to embrace it: it takes joy in the favourable touches of life; that is Nature's lure of rajasic pleasure, so that the force in the creature may overcome the tamasic tendencies of inertia and inactivity and be impelled fully towards action, desire, struggle, success, and by its attachment to these things her ends may be worked out. Our secret soul takes a pleasure in this strife and effort, and even a pleasure in adversity and suffering, which can be complete enough in memory and retrospect, but is present too behind at the time and often even rises to the surface of the afflicted mind to support it in its passion; but what really attracts the soul is the whole mingled weft of the thing we call life with all its disturbance of struggle and seeking, its attractions and repulsions, its offer and its menace, its varieties of every kind. To the rajasic desire-soul in us a monotonous pleasure, success without struggle, joy without a shadow must after a time become fatiguing, insipid, cloying; it needs a background of darkness to give full value to its enjoyment of light: for the happiness it seeks and enjoys is of that very nature, it is in its very essence relative and dependent on the perception and experience of its opposite. The joy of the soul in the dualities is the secret of the mind's pleasure in living.

Ask it to rise out of all this disturbance to the unmingled joy of the pure bliss-soul which all the time secretly supports its strength in the struggle and makes its own continued existence possible, — it will draw back at once from the call. It does not believe in such an existence; or it believes that it would not be life, that it would not be at all the varied existence in the world around it in which it is accustomed to take pleasure; it would be something tasteless and without savour. Or it feels that the effort would be too difficult for it; it recoils from the struggle of the ascent, although in reality the spiritual change is not at all more difficult than the realisation of the dreams the desire-soul pursues, nor entails more struggle and labour in the attainment than the tremendous effort which the desire-soul expends in its passionate chase after its own transient objects of pleasure and desire. The true cause of its unwillingness is that it is asked to rise above its own atmosphere and breathe a rarer and purer air of life, whose bliss and power it cannot realise and hardly even conceives as real, while the joy of this lower turbid nature is to it the one thing familiar and palpable. Nor is this lower satisfaction in itself a thing evil and unprofitable; it is rather the condition for the upward evolution of our human nature out of the tamasic ignorance and inertia to which its material being is most subject; it is the rajasic stage of the graded ascent of man towards the supreme self-knowledge, power and bliss. But if we rest eternally on this plane, the *madhyamā gatiḥ* of the Gita, our ascent remains unfinished, the evolution of the soul incomplete.

Through the sattwic being and nature to that which is beyond the three gunas lies the way of the soul to its perfection.

The movement which will lead us out of the disturbances of the lower nature must be necessarily a movement towards equality in the mind, in the emotional temperament, in the soul. But it is to be noted that, although in the end we must arrive at a superiority to all the three gunas of the lower nature, it is yet in its incipience by a resort to one or other of the three that the movement must begin. The beginning of equality may be sattwic, rajasic or tamasic; for there is a possibility in the human nature of a tamasic equality. It may be purely tamasic, the heavy equability of a vital temperament rendered inertly irresponsive to the shocks of existence by a sort of dull insensibility undesirous of the joy of life. Or it may result from a weariness of the emotions and desires accumulated by a surfeit and satiety of the pleasure or else, on the contrary, a disappointment and a disgust and shrinking from the pain of life, a lassitude, a fear and horror and dislike of the world: it is then in its nature a mixed movement, rajaso-tamasic, but the lower quality predominates. Or, approaching the sattwic principle, it may aid itself by the intellectual perception that the desires of life cannot be satisfied, that the soul is too weak to master life, that the whole thing is nothing but sorrow and transient effort and nowhere in it is there any real truth or sanity or light or happiness; this is the sattwo-tamasic principle of equality and is not so much equality, though it may lead to that, as indifference or equal refusal. Essentially, the movement of tamasic equality is a generalisation of Nature's principle of *jugupsā* or self-protecting recoil extended from the shunning of particular painful effects to a shunning of the whole life of Nature itself as in sum leading to pain and self-tormenting and not to the delight which the soul demands.

In tamasic equality by itself there is no real liberation; but it can be made a powerful starting-point, if, as in Indian asceticism, it is turned into the sattwic by the perception of the greater existence, the truer power, the higher delight of the immutable Self above Nature. The natural turn of such a movement, however, is towards Sannyasa, the renunciation of life and works, rather than to that union of inner renunciation of desire with continued activity in the world of Nature which the Gita advocates. The Gita, however, admits and makes room for this movement; it allows as a recoiling starting-point the perception of the defects of the world-existence, birth and disease and death and old age and sorrow, the historic starting-point of the Buddha, *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi-duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam*, and it accepts the effort of those whose self-discipline is motived by a desire for release, even in this spirit, from the curse of age and death, *jarā-maraṇa-mokṣāya mām āśritya yatanti ye*. But that, to be of any profit, must be accompanied by the sattwic perception of a higher state and the taking delight and refuge in the existence of the Divine, *mām āśritya*. Then the soul by its recoil comes to a greater condition of being, lifted beyond the three gunas and free from birth and death and age and grief, and enjoys the immortality of its self-existence, *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-duḥkhair vimukto 'mṛtam aśnute*. The tamasic unwillingness to accept the pain and effort of life is indeed by itself a weakening and degrading thing, and in this lies the danger of preaching to all alike the gospel of asceticism and world-disgust, that it puts the stamp of a tamasic weakness and shrinking on unfit souls, confuses their understanding, *buddhibhedaṁ janayet*, diminishes the sustained aspiration, the confidence in living, the power of effort which the soul of man needs for its salutary, its necessary rajasic struggle to master its environment, without really opening to it — for it is yet incapable of that — a higher goal, a greater endeavour, a mightier victory. But in souls that are fit this tamasic recoil may serve a useful spiritual purpose by slaying their rajasic attraction, their eager preoccupation with the lower life which prevents the sattwic awakening to a higher possibility. Seeking then for a refuge in the void they have created, they are able to hear the divine call, "O soul that findest thyself in this transient and unhappy world, turn and put thy delight in Me," *anityam asukhaṁ lokam imaṁ prāpya bhajasva mām*.

Still, in this movement, the equality consists only in an equal recoil from all that constitutes the world; and it arrives at indifference and aloofness, but does not include that power to accept equally all the touches of the world pleasurable or painful without attachment or disturbance which is a necessary element in the discipline of the Gita. Therefore, even if we begin with the tamasic recoil, — which is not at all necessary, — it can only be as a first incitement to a greater endeavour, not as a permanent pessimism. The real discipline begins with the movement to mastery over these things from which we were first inclined merely to flee. It is here that the possibility of a kind of rajasic equality comes in, which is at its lowest the strong nature's pride in self-mastery, self-control, superiority to passion and weakness; but the Stoic ideal seizes upon this point of departure and makes it the key to an entire liberation of the soul from subjection to all weakness of its lower nature. As the tamasic inward recoil is a generalisation of Nature's principle of *jugupsā* or self-protection from suffering, so the rajasic upward movement is a generalisation of Nature's other principle of the acceptance of struggle and effort and the innate impulse of life towards mastery and victory; but it transfers the battle to the field where alone complete victory is possible. Instead of a struggle for scattered outward aims and transient successes, it proposes nothing less than the conquest of Nature and the world itself by a spiritual struggle and an inner victory. The tamasic recoil turns from both the pains and pleasures of the world to flee from them; the rajasic movement turns upon them to bear, master and rise superior to them. The Stoic self-discipline calls desire and passion into its embrace of the wrestler and crushes them between its arms, as did old Dhritarashtra in the epic the iron image of Bhima. It endures the shock of things painful and pleasurable, the causes of the physical and mental affections of the nature, and breaks their effects to pieces; it is complete when the soul can bear all touches without being pained or attracted, excited or troubled. It seeks to make man the conqueror and king of his nature.

The Gita, making its call on the warrior nature of Arjuna, starts with this heroic movement. It calls on him to turn on the great enemy desire and slay it. Its first description of equality is that of the Stoic philosopher. "He whose mind is undisturbed in the midst of sorrows and amid pleasures is free from desire, from whom liking and fear and wrath have passed away, is the sage of settled understanding. Who in all things is without affection though visited by this good or that evil and neither hates nor rejoices, his intelligence sits firmly founded in wisdom." If one abstains from food, it says, giving a physical example, the object of sense ceases to affect, but the affection itself of the sense, the *rasa*, remains; it is only when, even in the exercise of the sense, it can keep back from seeking its sensuous aim in the object, *artha*, and abandon the affection, the desire for the pleasure of taste, that the highest level of the soul is reached. It is by using the mental organs on the objects, "ranging over them with the senses," *viṣayān indriyaiś caran*, but with senses subject to the self, freed from liking and disliking, that one gets into a large and sweet clearness of soul and temperament in which passion and grief find no place. All desires have to enter into the soul, as waters into the sea, and yet it has to remain immovable, filled but not disturbed: so in the end all desires can be abandoned. To be freed from wrath and passion and fear and attraction is repeatedly stressed as a necessary condition of the liberated status, and for this we must learn to bear their shocks, which cannot be done without exposing ourselves to their causes. "He who can bear here in the body the velocity of wrath and desire, is the Yogin, the happy man." *Titikṣā*, the will and power to endure, is the means. "The material touches which cause heat and cold, happiness and pain, things transient which come and go, these learn to endure. For the man whom these do not trouble nor pain, the firm and wise who is equal in pleasure and suffering, makes himself apt for immortality." The equal-souled has to bear suffering and not hate, to receive pleasure and not rejoice. Even the physical affections are to be mastered by endurance and this too is part of the Stoic discipline. Age, death, suffering, pain are not fled from, but accepted and vanquished by a high indifference.[1] Not to flee appalled from Nature in her lower masks, but to meet and conquer her is the true instinct of the strong nature, *puruṣarṣabha*, the leonine soul among men. Thus compelled, she throws aside her mask and reveals to him his true nature as the free soul, not her subject but her king and lord, *svarāṭ*, *samrāṭ*.

---

[1] *Dhīras tatra na muhyati*, says the Gita; the strong and wise soul is not perplexed, troubled or moved by them. But still they are accepted only to be conquered, *jarā-maraṇa-mokṣāya yatanti*.

But the Gita accepts this Stoic discipline, this heroic philosophy, on the same condition that it accepts the tamasic recoil, — it must have above it the sattwic vision of knowledge, at its root the aim at self-realisation and in its steps the ascent to the divine Nature. A Stoic discipline which merely crushed down the common affections of our human nature, — although less dangerous than a tamasic weariness of life, unfruitful pessimism and sterile inertia, because it would at least increase the power and self-mastery of the soul, — would still be no unmixed good, since it might lead to insensibility and an inhuman isolation without giving the true spiritual release. The Stoic equality is justified as an element in the discipline of the Gita because it can be associated with and can help to the realisation of the free immutable Self in the mobile human being, *paraṁ dṛṣṭvā*, and to status in that new self-consciousness, *eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ*. "Awakening by the understanding to the Highest which is beyond even the discerning mind, put force on the self by the self to make it firm and still, and slay this enemy who is so hard to assail, Desire." Both the tamasic recoil of escape and the rajasic movement of struggle and victory are only justified when they look beyond themselves through the sattwic principle to the self-knowledge which legitimises both the recoil and the struggle.

The pure philosopher, the thinker, the born sage not only relies upon the sattwic principle in him as his ultimate justification, but uses it from the beginning as his instrument of self-mastery. He starts from the sattwic equality. He too observes the transitoriness of the material and external world and its failure to satisfy the desires or to give the true delight, but this causes in him no grief, fear or disappointment. He observes all with an eye of tranquil discernment and makes his choice without repulsion or perplexity. "The enjoyments born of the touches of things are causes of sorrow, they have a beginning and an end; therefore the sage, the man of awakened understanding, *budhaḥ*, does not place his delight in these." "The self in him is unattached to the touches of external things; he finds his happiness in himself." He sees, as the Gita puts it, that he is himself his own enemy and his own friend, and therefore he takes care not to dethrone himself by casting his being into the hands of desire and passion, *nātmānam avasādayet*, but delivers himself out of that imprisonment by his own inner power, *uddhared ātmanātmānam*; for whoever has conquered his lower self, finds in his higher self his best friend and ally. He becomes satisfied with knowledge, master of his senses, a Yogin by sattwic equality, — for equality is Yoga, *samatvaṁ yoga ucyate*, — regarding alike clod and stone and gold, tranquil and self-poised in heat and cold, suffering and happiness, honour and disgrace. He is equal in soul to friend and enemy and to neutral and indifferent, because he sees that these are transitory relations born of the changing conditions of life. Even by the pretensions of learning and purity and virtue and the claims to superiority which men base upon these things, he is not led away. He is equal-souled to all men, to the sinner and the saint, to the virtuous, learned and cultured Brahmin and the fallen outcaste. All these are the Gita's descriptions of the sattwic equality, and they sum up well enough what is familiar to the world as the calm philosophic equality of the sage.

Where then is the difference between this and the larger equality taught by the Gita? It lies in the difference between the intellectual and philosophic discernment and the spiritual, the Vedantic knowledge of unity on which the Gita founds its teaching. The philosopher maintains his equality by the power of the buddhi, the discerning mind; but even that by itself is a doubtful foundation. For, though master of himself on the whole by a constant attention or an acquired habit of mind, in reality he is not free from his lower nature, and it does actually assert itself in many ways and may at any moment take a violent revenge for its rejection and suppression. For, always, the play of the lower nature is a triple play, and the rajasic and tamasic qualities are ever lying in wait for the sattwic man. "Even the mind of the wise man who labours for perfection is carried away by the vehement insistence of the senses." Perfect security can only be had by resorting to something higher than the sattwic quality, something higher than the discerning mind, to the Self, — not the philosopher's intelligent self, but the divine sage's spiritual self which is beyond the three gunas. All must be consummated by a divine birth into the higher spiritual nature.

And the philosopher's equality is like the Stoic's, like the world-fleeing ascetic's, inwardly a lonely freedom, remote and aloof from men; but the man born to the divine birth has found the Divine not only in himself, but in all beings. He has realised his unity with all and his equality is therefore full of sympathy and oneness. He sees all as himself and is not intent on his lonely salvation; he even takes upon himself the burden of their happiness and sorrow by which he is not himself affected or subjected. The perfect sage, the Gita more than once repeats, is ever engaged with a large equality in doing good to all creatures and makes that his occupation and delight, *sarvabhūtahite rataḥ*. The perfect Yogin is no solitary musing on the Self in his ivory tower of spiritual isolation, but *yuktaḥ kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*, a many-sided universal worker for the good of the world, for God in the world. For he is a *bhakta*, a lover and devotee of the Divine, as well as a sage and a Yogin, a lover who loves God wherever he finds Him and who finds Him everywhere; and what he loves, he does not disdain to serve, nor does action carry him away from the bliss of union, since all his acts proceed from the One in him and to the One in all they are directed. The equality of the Gita is a large synthetic equality in which all is lifted up into the integrality of the divine being and the divine nature.

XX

Equality and Knowledge

YOGA and knowledge are, in this early part of the Gita's teaching, the two wings of the soul's ascent. By Yoga is meant union through divine works done without desire, with equality of soul to all things and all men, as a sacrifice to the Supreme, while knowledge is that on which this desirelessness, this equality, this power of sacrifice is founded. The two wings indeed assist each other's flight; acting together, yet with a subtle alternation of mutual aid, like the two eyes in a man which see together because they see alternately, they increase one another mutually by interchange of substance. As the works grow more and more desireless, equal-minded, sacrificial in spirit, the knowledge increases; with the increase of the knowledge the soul becomes firmer in the desireless, sacrificial equality of its works. The sacrifice of knowledge, says the Gita therefore, is greater than any material sacrifice. "Even if thou art the greatest doer of sin beyond all sinners, thou shalt cross over all the crookedness of evil in the ship of knowledge. . . . There is nothing in the world equal in purity to knowledge." By knowledge desire and its first-born child, sin, are destroyed. The liberated man is able to do works as a sacrifice because he is freed from attachment through his mind, heart and spirit being firmly founded in self-knowledge, *gata-saṅgasya jñānāvasthita-cetasaḥ*. All his work disappears completely as soon as done, suffers *laya*, as one might say, in the being of the Brahman, *pravilīyate*; it has no reactionary consequence on the soul of the apparent doer. The work is done by the Lord through his Nature, it is no longer personal to the human instrument. The work itself becomes but power of the nature and substance of the being of the Brahman.

It is in this sense that the Gita is speaking when it says that all the totality of work finds its completion, culmination, end in knowledge, *sarvaṁ karmākhilaṁ jñāne parisamāpyate*. "As a fire kindled turns to ashes its fuel, so the fire of knowledge turns all works to ashes." By this it is not at all meant that when knowledge is complete, there is cessation from works. What is meant is made clear by the Gita when it says that he who has destroyed all doubt by knowledge and has by Yoga given up all works and is in possession of the Self is not bound by his works, *yoga-sannyasta-karmāṇam ātmavantaṁ na karmāṇi nibadhnanti*, and that he whose self has become the self of all existences, acts and yet is not affected by his works, is not caught in them, receives from them no soul-ensnaring reaction, *kurvann api na lipyate*. Therefore, it says, the Yoga of works is better than the physical renunciation of works, because, while Sannyasa is difficult for embodied beings who must do works so long as they are in the body, Yoga of works is entirely sufficient and it rapidly and easily brings the soul to Brahman. That Yoga of works is, we have seen, the offering of all action to the Lord, which induces as its culmination an inner and not an outer, a spiritual, not a physical giving up of works into the Brahman, into the being of the Lord, *brahmaṇi ādhāya karmāṇi*, *mayi sannyasya*. When works are thus "reposed on the Brahman," the personality of the instrumental doer ceases; though he acts, he does nothing; for he has given up not only the fruits of his works, but the works themselves and the doing of them to the Lord. The Divine then takes the burden of works from him; the Supreme becomes the doer and the act and the result.

This knowledge of which the Gita speaks, is not an intellectual activity of the mind; it is a luminous growth into the highest state of being by the outshining of the light of the divine sun of Truth, "that Truth, the Sun lying concealed in the darkness" of our ignorance of which the Rigveda speaks, *tat satyaṁ sūryaṁ tamasi kṣiyantam*. The immutable Brahman is there in the spirit's skies above this troubled lower nature of the dualities, untouched either by its virtue or by its sin, accepting neither our sense of sin nor our self-righteousness, untouched by its joy and its sorrow, indifferent to our joy in success and our grief in failure, master of all, supreme, all-pervading, *prabhu vibhu*, calm, strong, pure, equal in all things, the source of Nature, not the direct doer of our works, but the witness of Nature and her works, not imposing on us either the illusion of being the doer, for that illusion is the result of the ignorance of this lower Nature. But this freedom, mastery, purity we cannot see; we are bewildered by the natural ignorance which hides from us the eternal self-knowledge of the Brahman secret within our being. But knowledge comes to its persistent seeker and removes the natural self-ignorance; it shines out like a long-hidden sun and lights up to our vision that self-being supreme beyond the dualities of this lower existence, *ādityavat prakāśayati tat param*. By a long whole-hearted endeavour, by directing our whole conscious being to that, by making that our whole aim, by turning it into the whole object of our discerning mind and so seeing it not only in ourselves but everywhere, we become one thought and self with that, *tad-buddhayas tad-ātmānaḥ*, we are washed clean of all the darkness and suffering of the lower man by the waters of knowledge,[1] *jñāna-nirdhūta-kalmaṣāḥ*.

The result is, says the Gita, a perfect equality to all things and all persons; and then only can we repose our works completely in the Brahman. For the Brahman is equal, *samaṁ brahma*, and it is only when we have this perfect equality, *sāmye sthitaṁ manaḥ*, "seeing with an equal eye the learned and cultured Brahmin, the cow, the elephant, the dog, the outcaste" and knowing all as one Brahman, that we can, living in that oneness, see like the Brahman our works proceeding from the nature freely without any fear of attachment, sin or bondage. Sin and stain then cannot be; for we have overcome that creation full of desire and its works and reactions which belongs to the ignorance, *tair jitaḥ sargaḥ*, and living in the supreme and divine Nature there is no longer fault or defect in our works; for these are created by the inequalities of the ignorance. The equal Brahman is faultless, *nirdoṣaṁ hi samaṁ brahma*, beyond the confusion of good and evil, and living in the Brahman we too rise beyond good and evil; we act in that purity, stainlessly, with an equal and single purpose of fulfilling the welfare of all existences, *kṣīṇa-kalmaṣāḥ sarvabhūta-hite ratāḥ*. The Lord in our hearts is in the ignorance also the cause of our actions, but through his Maya, through the egoism of our lower nature which creates the tangled web of our actions and brings back upon our egoism the recoil of their tangled reactions affecting us inwardly as sin and virtue, affecting us outwardly as suffering and pleasure, evil fortune and good fortune, the great chain of Karma. When we are freed by knowledge, the Lord, no longer hidden in our hearts, but manifest as our supreme self, takes up our works and uses us as faultless instruments, *nimitta-mātram*, for the helping of the world. Such is the intimate union between knowledge and equality; knowledge here in the *buddhi* reflected as equality in the temperament; above, on a higher plane of consciousness, knowledge as the light of the Being, equality as the stuff of the Nature.

---

[1] The Rigveda so speaks of the streams of the Truth, the waters that have perfect knowledge, the waters that are full of the divine sunlight, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*, *āpo vicetasaḥ*, *svarvatīr apaḥ*. What are here metaphors, are there concrete symbols.

Always in this sense of a supreme self-knowledge is this word *jñāna* used in Indian philosophy and Yoga; it is the light by which we grow into our true being, not the knowledge by which we increase our information and our intellectual riches; it is not scientific or psychological or philosophic or ethical or aesthetic or worldly and practical knowledge. These too no doubt help us to grow, but only in the becoming, not in the being; they enter into the definition of Yogic knowledge only when we use them as aids to know the Supreme, the Self, the Divine, — scientific knowledge, when we can get through the veil of processes and phenomena and see the one Reality behind which explains them all; psychological knowledge, when we use it to know ourselves and to distinguish the lower from the higher, so that this we may renounce and into that we may grow; philosophical knowledge, when we turn it as a light upon the essential principles of existence so as to discover and live in that which is eternal; ethical knowledge, when by it having distinguished sin from virtue we put away the one and rise above the other into the pure innocence of the divine Nature; aesthetic knowledge, when we discover by it the beauty of the Divine;

knowledge of the world, when we see through it the way of the Lord with his creatures and use it for the service of the Divine in man. Even then they are only aids; the real knowledge is that which is a secret to the mind, of which the mind only gets reflections, but which lives in the spirit.

The Gita in describing how we come by this knowledge, says that we get first initiation into it from the men of knowledge who have *seen*, not those who know merely by the intellect, its essential truths; but the actuality of it comes from within ourselves: "the man who is perfected by Yoga, finds it of himself in the self by the course of Time," it grows within him, that is to say, and he grows into it as he goes on increasing in desirelessness, in equality, in devotion to the Divine. It is only of the supreme knowledge that this can altogether be said; the knowledge which the intellect of man amasses, is gathered laboriously by the senses and the reason from outside. To get this other knowledge, self-existent, intuitive, self-experiencing, self-revealing, we must have conquered and controlled our mind and senses, *saṁyatendriyaḥ*, so that we are no longer subject to their delusions, but rather the mind and senses become its pure mirror; we must have fixed our whole conscious being on the truth of that supreme reality in which all exists, *tat-paraḥ*, so that it may display in us its luminous self-existence.

Finally, we must have a faith which no intellectual doubt can be allowed to disturb, *śraddhāvān labhate jñānam*. "The ignorant who has not faith, the soul of doubt goeth to perdition; neither this world, nor the supreme world, nor any happiness is for the soul full of doubts." In fact, it is true that without faith nothing decisive can be achieved either in this world or for possession of the world above, and that it is only by laying hold of some sure basis and positive support that man can attain any measure of terrestrial or celestial success and satisfaction and happiness; the merely sceptical mind loses itself in the void. But still in the lower knowledge doubt and scepticism have their temporary uses; in the higher they are stumbling-blocks: for there the whole secret is not the balancing of truth and error, but a constantly progressing realisation of revealed truth. In intellectual knowledge there is always a mixture of falsehood or incompleteness which has to be got rid of by subjecting the truth itself to sceptical inquiry; but in the higher knowledge falsehood cannot enter and that which intellect contributes by attaching itself to this or that opinion, cannot be got rid of by mere questioning, but will fall away of itself by persistence in realisation. Whatever incompleteness there is in the knowledge attained, it must be got rid of, not by questioning in its roots what has already been realised, but by proceeding to further and more complete realisation through a deeper, higher and wider living in the Spirit. And what is not yet realised must be prepared for by faith, not by sceptical questioning, because this truth is one which the intellect cannot give and which is indeed often quite opposed to the ideas in which the reasoning and logical mind gets entangled: it is not a truth which has to be proved, but a truth which has to be lived inwardly, a greater reality into which we have to grow. Finally, it is in itself a self-existent truth and would be self-evident if it were not for the sorceries of the ignorance in which we live; the doubts, the perplexities which prevent us from accepting and following it, arise from that ignorance, from the sense-bewildered, opinion-perplexed heart and mind, living as they do in a lower and phenomenal truth and therefore questioning the higher realities, *ajñāna-sambhūtaṁ hṛtsthaṁ saṁśayam*. They have to be cut away by the sword of knowledge, says the Gita, by the knowledge that realises, by resorting constantly to Yoga, that is, by living out the union with the Supreme whose truth being known all is known, *yasmin vijñāte sarvaṁ vijñātam*.

The higher knowledge we then get is that which is to the knower of Brahman his constant vision of things when he lives uninterruptedly in the Brahman, *brahmavid brahmaṇi sthitaḥ*. That is not a vision or knowledge or consciousness of Brahman to the exclusion of all else, but a seeing of all in Brahman and as the Self. For, it is said, the knowledge by which we rise beyond all relapse back into the bewilderment of our mental nature, is "that by which thou shalt see all existences without exception in the Self, then in Me." Elsewhere the Gita puts it more largely, "Equal-visioned everywhere, he sees the Self in all existences and all existences in the Self. He who sees Me everywhere and all and each in Me, is never lost to Me nor I to him. He who has reached oneness and loves Me in all beings, that Yogin, howsoever he lives and acts, is living and acting in Me. O Arjuna, he who sees all equally everywhere as himself, whether it be happiness or suffering, I hold him to be the supreme Yogin." That is the old Vedantic knowledge of the Upanishads which the Gita holds up constantly before us; but it is its superiority to other later formulations of it that it turns persistently this knowledge into a great practical philosophy of divine living. Always it insists on the relation between this knowledge of oneness and Karmayoga, and therefore on the knowledge of oneness as the basis of a liberated action in the world. Whenever it speaks of knowledge, it turns at once to speak of equality which is its result; whenever it speaks of equality, it turns to speak too of the knowledge which is its basis. The equality it enjoins does not begin and end in a static condition of the soul useful only for self-liberation; it is always a basis of works. The peace of the Brahman in the liberated soul is the foundation; the large, free, equal, world-wide action of the Lord in the liberated nature radiates the power which proceeds from that peace; these two made one synthesise divine works and God-knowledge.

We see at once what a profound extension we get here for the ideas which otherwise the Gita has in common with other systems of philosophic, ethical or religious living. Endurance, philosophic indifference, resignation are, we have said, the foundation of three kinds of equality; but the Gita's truth of knowledge not only gathers them all up together, but gives them an infinitely profound, a magnificently ample significance. The Stoic knowledge is that of the soul's power of self-mastery by fortitude, an equality attained by a struggle with one's nature, maintained by a constant vigilance and control against its natural rebellions: it gives a noble peace, an austere happiness, but not the supreme joy of the liberated self living not by a rule, but in the pure, easy, spontaneous perfection of its divine being, so that "however it may act and live, it acts and lives in the Divine," because here perfection is not only attained but possessed in its own right and has no longer to be maintained by effort, for it has become the very nature of the soul's being. The Gita accepts the endurance and fortitude of our struggle with the lower nature as a preliminary movement; but if a certain mastery comes by our individual strength, the freedom of mastery only comes by our union with God, by a merging or dwelling of the personality in the one divine Person and the loss of the personal will in the divine Will. There is a divine Master of Nature and her works, above her though inhabiting her, who is our highest being and our universal self; to be one with him is to make ourselves divine. By union with God we enter into a supreme freedom and a supreme mastery. The ideal of the Stoic, the sage who is king because by self-rule he becomes master also of outward conditions, resembles superficially the Vedantic idea of the self-ruler and all-ruler, *svarāṭ samrāṭ*; but it is on a lower plane. The Stoic kingship is maintained by a force put upon self and environment; the entirely liberated kingship of the Yogin exists naturally by the eternal royalty of the divine nature, a union with its unfettered universality, a finally unforced dwelling in its superiority to the instrumental nature through which it acts. His mastery over things is because he has become one soul with all things. To take an image from Roman institutions, the Stoic freedom is that of the *libertus*, the freedman, who is still really a dependent on the power that once held him enslaved; his is a freedom allowed by Nature because he has merited it. The freedom of the Gita is that of the freeman, the true freedom of the birth into the higher nature, self-existent in its divinity. Whatever he does and however he lives, the free soul lives in the Divine; he is the privileged child of the mansion, *bālavat*, who cannot err or fall because all he is and does is full of the Perfect, the All-blissful, the All-loving, the All-beautiful. The kingdom which he enjoys, *rājyaṁ samṛddham*, is a sweet and happy dominion of which it may be said, in the pregnant phrase of the Greek thinker, "The kingdom is of the child."

The knowledge of the philosopher is that of the true nature of mundane existence, the transience of outward things, the vanity of the world's differences and distinctions, the superiority of the inner calm, peace, light, self-dependence. It is an equality of philosophic indifference; it brings a high calm, but not the greater spiritual joy; it is an isolated freedom, a wisdom like that of the Lucretian sage high in his superiority upon the cliff-top whence he looks down on men tossed still upon the tempestuous waters from which he has escaped, — in the end something after all aloof and ineffective. The Gita admits the philosophic motive of indifference as a preliminary movement; but the indifference to which it finally arrives, if indeed that inadequate word can be at all applied, has nothing in it of the philosophic aloofness. It is indeed a position as of one seated above, *udāsīnavat*, but as the Divine is seated above, having no need at all in the world, yet he does works always and is present everywhere supporting, helping, guiding the labour of creatures. This equality is founded upon oneness with all beings. It brings in what is wanting to the philosophic equality; for its soul is the soul of peace, but also it is the soul of love. It sees all beings without exception in the Divine, it is one self with the Self of all existences and therefore it is in supreme sympathy with all of them. Without exception, *aśeṣeṇa*, not only with all that is good and fair and pleases; nothing and no one, however vile, fallen, criminal, repellent in appearance, can be excluded from this universal, this whole-souled sympathy and spiritual oneness. Here there is no room, not merely for hatred or anger or uncharitableness, but for aloofness, disdain or any petty pride of superiority. A divine compassion for the ignorance of the struggling mind, a divine will to pour forth on it all light and power and happiness there will be, indeed, for the apparent man; but for the divine Soul within him there will be more, there will be adoration and love. For from all, from the thief and the harlot and the outcaste as from the saint and the sage, the Beloved looks forth and cries to us, "This is I." "He who loves Me in all beings," — what greater word of power for the utmost intensities and profundities of divine and universal love, has been uttered by any philosophy or any religion?

Resignation is the basis of a kind of religious equality, submission to the divine will, a patient bearing of the cross, a submissive forbearance. In the Gita this element takes the more ample form of an entire surrender of the whole being to God. It is not merely a passive submission, but an active self-giving; not only a seeing and an accepting of the divine Will in all things, but a giving up of one's own will to be the instrument of the Master of works, and this not with the lesser idea of being a servant of God, but, eventually at least, of such a complete renunciation both of the consciousness and the works to him that our being becomes one with his being and the impersonalised nature only an instrument and nothing else. All result good or bad, pleasing or unpleasing, fortunate or unfortunate, is accepted as belonging to the Master of our actions, so that finally not only are grief and suffering borne, but they are banished: a perfect equality of the emotional mind is established. There is no assumption of personal will in the instrument; it is seen that all is already worked out in the omniscient prescience and omnipotent effective power of the universal Divine and that the egoism of men cannot alter the workings of that Will. Therefore, the final attitude is that enjoined on Arjuna in a later chapter, "All has been already done by Me in my divine will and foresight; become only the occasion, O Arjuna," *nimitta-mātraṁ bhava savyasācin*. This attitude must lead finally to an absolute union of the personal with the Divine Will and, with the growth of knowledge, bring about a faultless response of the instrument to the divine Power and Knowledge. A perfect, an absolute equality of self-surrender, the mentality a passive channel of the divine Light and Power, the active being a mightily effective instrument for its work in the world, will be the poise of this supreme union of the Transcendent, the universal and the individual.

Equality too there will be with regard to the action of others upon us. Nothing that they can do will alter the inner oneness, love, sympathy which arises from the perception of the one Self in all, the Divine in all beings. But a resigned forbearance and submission to them and their deeds, a passive non-resistance, will be no necessary part of the action; it cannot be, since a constant instrumental obedience to the divine and universal Will must mean in the shock of opposite forces that fill the world a conflict with personal wills which seek rather their own egoistic satisfaction. Therefore Arjuna is bidden to resist, to fight, to conquer; but, to fight without hatred or personal desire or personal enmity or antagonism, since to the liberated soul these feelings are impossible. To act for the *lokasaṅgraha*, impersonally, for the keeping and leading of the peoples on the path to the divine goal, is a rule which rises necessarily from the oneness of the soul with the Divine, the universal Being, since that is the whole sense and drift of the universal action. Nor does it conflict with our oneness with all beings, even those who present themselves here as opponents and enemies. For the divine goal is their goal also, since it is the secret aim of all, even of those whose outward minds, misled by ignorance and egoism, would wander from the path and resist the impulsion. Resistance and defeat are the best outward service that can be done to them. By this perception the Gita avoids the limiting conclusion which might have been drawn from a doctrine of equality impracticably overriding all relations and of a weakening love without knowledge, while it keeps the one thing essential unimpaired. For the soul oneness with all, for the heart calm universal love, sympathy, compassion, but for the hands freedom to work out impersonally the good, not of this or that person only without regard to or to the detriment of the divine plan, but the purpose of the creation, the progressing welfare and salvation of men, the total good of all existences.

Oneness with God, oneness with all beings, the realisation of the eternal divine unity everywhere and the drawing onwards of men towards that oneness are the law of life which arises from the teachings of the Gita. There can be none greater, wider, more profound. Liberated oneself, to live in this oneness, to help mankind on the path that leads towards it and meanwhile to do all works for God and help man also to do with joy and acceptance all the works to which he is called, *kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*, *sarvakarmāṇi joṣayan*, no greater or more liberal rule of divine works can be given. This freedom and this oneness are the secret goal of our human nature and the ultimate will in the existence of the race. It is that to which it must turn for the happiness all mankind is now vainly seeking, when once men lift their eyes and their hearts to see the Divine in them and around, in all and everywhere, *sarveṣu*, *sarvatra*, and learn that it is in him they live, while this lower nature of division is only a prison-wall which they must break down or at best an infant-school which they must outgrow, so that they may become adult in nature and free in spirit. To be made one self with God above and God in man and God in the world is the sense of liberation and the secret of perfection.

XXI

The Determinism of Nature

WHEN we can live in the higher Self by the unity of works and self-knowledge, we become superior to the method of the lower workings of Prakriti. We are no longer enslaved to Nature and her gunas, but, one with the Ishwara, the master of our nature, we are able to use her without subjection to the chain of Karma, for the purposes of the Divine Will in us; for that is what the greater Self in us is, he is the Lord of her works and unaffected by the troubled stress of her reactions. The soul ignorant in Nature, on the contrary, is enslaved by that ignorance to her modes, because it is identified there, not felicitously with its true self, not with the Divine who is seated above her, but stupidly and unhappily with the ego-mind which is a subordinate factor in her operations in spite of the exaggerated figure it makes, a mere mental knot and point of reference for the play of the natural workings. To break this knot, no longer to make the ego the centre and beneficiary of our works, but to derive all from and refer all to the divine Supersoul is the way to become superior to all the restless trouble of Nature's modes. For it is to live in the supreme consciousness, of which the ego-mind is a degradation, and to act in an equal and unified Will and Force and not in the unequal play of the gunas which is a broken seeking and striving, a disturbance, an inferior Maya.

The passages in which the Gita lays stress on the subjection of the ego-soul to Nature, have by some been understood as the enunciation of an absolute and a mechanical determinism which leaves no room for any freedom within the cosmic existence. Certainly, the language it uses is emphatic and seems very absolute. But we must take, here as elsewhere, the thought of the Gita as a whole and not force its affirmations in their solitary sense quite detached from each other, — as indeed every truth, however true in itself, yet, taken apart from others which at once limit and complete it, becomes a snare to bind the intellect and a misleading dogma; for in reality each is one thread of a complex weft and no thread must be taken apart from the weft. Everything in the Gita is even so interwoven and must be understood in its relation to the whole. The Gita itself makes a distinction between those who have not the knowledge of the whole, *akṛtsnavidaḥ*, and are misled by the partial truths of existence, and the Yogin who has the synthetic knowledge of the totality, *kṛtsna-vit*. To see all existence steadily and see it whole and not be misled by its conflicting truths, is the first necessity for the calm and complete wisdom to which the Yogin is called upon to rise. A certain absolute freedom is one aspect of the soul's relations with Nature at one pole of our complex being; a certain absolute determinism by Nature is the opposite aspect at its opposite pole; and there is also a partial and apparent, therefore an unreal eidolon of liberty which the soul receives by a contorted reflection of these two opposite truths in the developing mentality. It is the latter to which we ordinarily give, more or less inaccurately, the name of free will; but the Gita regards nothing as freedom which is not a complete liberation and mastery.

We have always to keep in mind the two great doctrines which stand behind all the Gita's teachings with regard to the soul and Nature, — the Sankhya truth of the Purusha and Prakriti corrected and completed by the Vedantic truth of the threefold Purusha and the double Prakriti of which the lower form is the Maya of the three gunas and the higher is the divine nature and the true soul-nature. This is the key which reconciles and explains what we might have otherwise to leave as contradictions and inconsistencies. There are, in fact, different planes of our conscious existence, and what is practical truth on one plane ceases to be true, because it assumes a quite different appearance, as soon as we rise to a higher level from which we can see things more in the whole. Recent scientific discovery has shown that man, animal, plant and even the metal have essentially the same vital reactions and they would, therefore, if each has a certain kind of what for want of a better word we must call nervous consciousness, possess the same basis of mechanical psychology. Yet if each of these could give its own mental account of what it experiences, we should have four quite different and largely contradictory statements of the same reactions and the same natural principles, because they get, as we rise in the scale of being, a different meaning and value and have to be judged by a different outlook. So it is with the levels of the human soul. What we now call in our ordinary mentality our free will and have a certain limited justification for so calling it, yet appears to the Yogin who has climbed beyond and to whom our night is day and our day night, not free will at all, but a subjection to the modes of Nature. He regards the same facts, but from the higher outlook of the whole-knower, *kṛtsna-vit*, while we view it altogether from the more limited mentality of our partial knowledge, *akṛtsnavidaḥ*, which is an ignorance. What we vaunt of as our freedom is to him bondage.

The perception of the ignorance of our assumption of freedom while one is all the time in the meshes of this lower nature, is the view-point at which the Gita arrives and it is in contradiction to this ignorant claim that it affirms the complete subjection of the ego-soul on this plane to the gunas. “While the actions are being entirely done by the modes of Nature,” it says, “he whose self is bewildered by egoism thinks that it is his ‘I’ which is doing them. But one who knows the true principles of the divisions of the modes and of works, realises that it is the modes which are acting and reacting on each other and is not caught in them by attachment. Those who are bewildered by the modes, get attached to the modes and their works; dull minds, not knowers of the whole, let not the knower of the whole disturb them in their mental standpoint. Giving up thy works to Me, free from desire and egoism, fight delivered from the fever of thy soul.” Here there is the clear distinction between two levels of consciousness, two standpoints of action, that of the soul caught in the web of its egoistic nature and doing works with the idea, but not the reality of free will, under the impulsion of Nature, and that of the soul delivered from its identification with the ego, observing, sanctioning and governing the works of Nature from above her.

We speak of the soul being subject to Nature; but on the other hand the Gita in distinguishing the properties of the soul and Nature affirms that while Nature is the executrix, the soul is always the lord, *īśvara*. It speaks here of the self being bewildered by egoism, but the real Self to the Vedantin is the divine, eternally free and self-aware. What then is this self that is bewildered by Nature, this soul that is subject to her? The answer is that we are speaking here in the common parlance of our lower or mental view of things; we are speaking of the apparent self, of the apparent soul, not of the real self, not of the true Purusha. It is really the ego which is subject to Nature, inevitably, because it is itself part of Nature, one functioning of her machinery; but when the self-awareness in the mind-consciousness identifies itself with the ego, it creates the appearance of a lower self, an ego-self. And so too what we think of ordinarily as the soul is really the natural personality, not the true Person, the Purusha, but the desire-soul in us which is a reflection of the consciousness of the Purusha in the workings of Prakriti: it is, in fact, itself only an action of the three modes and therefore a part of Nature. Thus there are, we may say, two souls in us, the apparent or desire-soul, which changes with the mutations of the gunas and is entirely constituted and determined by them, and the free and eternal Purusha not limited by Nature and her gunas. We have two selves, the apparent self, which is only the ego, that mental centre in us which takes up this mutable action of Prakriti, this mutable personality, and which says "I am this personality, I am this natural being who am doing these works," — but the natural being is simply Nature, a composite of the gunas, — and the true self which is, indeed, the upholder, the possessor and the lord of Nature and figured in her, but is not itself the mutable natural personality. The way to be free must then be to get rid of the desires of this desire-soul and the false self-view of this ego. "Having become free from desire and egoism," cries the Teacher, "fight with all the fever of thy soul passed away from thee," — *nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā*.

This view of our being starts from the Sankhya analysis of the dual principle in our nature, Purusha and Prakriti. Purusha is inactive, *akartā*; Prakriti is active, *kartrī*: Purusha is the being full of the light of consciousness; Prakriti is the Nature, mechanical, reflecting all her works in the conscious witness, the Purusha. Prakriti works by the inequality of her three modes, gunas, in perpetual collision and intermixture and mutation with each other; and by her function of ego-mind she gets the Purusha to identify himself with all this working and so creates the sense of active, mutable, temporal personality in the silent eternity of the Self. The impure natural consciousness overclouds the pure soul-consciousness; the mind forgets the Person in the ego and the personality; we suffer the discriminating intelligence to be carried away by the sense-mind and its outgoing functions and by the desire of the life and the body. So long as the Purusha sanctions this action, ego and desire and ignorance must govern the natural being.

But if this were all, then the only remedy would be to withdraw altogether the sanction, suffer or compel all our nature by this withdrawal to fall into a motionless equilibrium of the three gunas and so cease from all action. But this is precisely the remedy, — though it is undoubtedly a remedy, one which abolishes, we might say, the patient along with the disease, — which the Gita constantly discourages. Especially, to resort to a tamasic inaction is just what the ignorant will do if this truth is thrust upon them; the discriminating mind in them will fall into a false division, a false opposition, *buddhibheda*; their active nature and their intelligence will be divided against each other and produce a disturbance and confusion without true issue, a false and self-deceiving line of action, *mithyācāra*, or else a mere tamasic inertia, cessation of works, diminution of the will to life and action, not therefore a liberation, but rather a subjection to the lowest of the three gunas, to *tamas*, the principle of ignorance and of inertia. Or else they will not be able to understand at all, they will find fault with this higher teaching, assert against it their present mental experience, their ignorant idea of free will and, yet more confirmed by the plausibility of their logic in their bewilderment and the deception of ego and desire, lose their chance of liberation in a deeper, more obstinate confirmation of the ignorance.

In fact, these higher truths can only be helpful, because there only they are true to experience and can be lived, on a higher and vaster plane of consciousness and being. To view these truths from below is to mis-see, misunderstand and probably to misuse them. It is a higher truth that the distinction of good and evil is indeed a practical fact and law valid for the egoistic human life which is the stage of transition from the animal to the divine, but on a higher plane we rise beyond good and evil, are above their duality even as the Godhead is above it. But the unripe mind, seizing on this truth without rising from the lower consciousness where it is not practically valid, will simply make it a convenient excuse for indulging its Asuric propensities, denying the distinction between good and evil altogether and falling by self-indulgence deeper into the morass of perdition, *sarva-jñāna-vimūḍhān naṣṭān acetasaḥ*. So too with this truth of the determinism of Nature; it will be mis-seen and misused, as those misuse it who declare that a man is what his nature has made him and cannot do otherwise than as his nature compels him. It is true in a sense, but not in the sense which is attached to it, not in the sense that the ego-self can claim irresponsibility and impunity for itself in its works; for it has will and it has desire and so long as it acts according to its will and desire, even though that be its nature, it must bear the reactions of its Karma. It is in a net, if you will, a snare which may well seem perplexing, illogical, unjust, terrible to its present experience, to its limited self-knowledge, but a snare of its own choice, a net of its own weaving.

The Gita says, indeed, "All existences follow their nature and what shall coercing it avail?" which seems, if we take it by itself, a hopelessly absolute assertion of the omnipotence of Nature over the soul; "even the man of knowledge acts according to his own nature." And on this it founds the injunction to follow faithfully in our action the law of our nature. "Better is one's own law of works, *svadharma*, though in itself faulty than an alien law well wrought out; death in one's own law of being is better, perilous is it to follow an alien law." What is precisely meant by this *svadharma* we have to wait to see until we get to the more elaborate disquisition in the closing chapters about Purusha and Prakriti and the gunas; but certainly it does not mean that we are to follow any impulse, even though evil, which what we call our nature dictates to us. For between these two verses the Gita throws in this further injunction, "In the object of this or that sense liking and disliking are set in ambush; fall not into their power, for they are the besetters of the soul in its path." And immediately after this, in answer to Arjuna's objection who asks him, if there is no fault in following our Nature, what are we then to say of that in us which drives a man to sin, as if by force, even against his own struggling will, the Teacher replies that this is desire and its companion wrath, children of rajas, the second guna, the principle of passion, and this desire is the soul's great enemy and has to be slain. Abstention from evil-doing it declares to be the first condition for liberation, and always it enjoins self-mastery, self-control, *saṁyama*, control of the mind, senses, all the lower being.

There is therefore a distinction to be made between what is essential in the nature, its native and inevitable action, which it avails not at all to repress, suppress, coerce, and what is accidental to it, its wanderings, confusions, perversions, over which we must certainly get control. There is a distinction implied too between coercion and suppression, *nigraha*, and control with right use and right guidance, *saṁyama*. The former is a violence done to the nature by the will, which in the end depresses the natural powers of the being, *ātmānam avasādayet*; the latter is the control of the lower by the higher self, which successfully gives to those powers their right action and their maximum efficiency, — *yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*. This nature of *saṁyama* is made very clear by the Gita in the opening of its sixth chapter, "By the self thou shouldst deliver the self, thou shouldst not depress and cast down the self (whether by self-indulgence or suppression); for the self is the friend of the self and the self is the enemy. To the man is his self a friend in whom the (lower) self has been conquered by the (higher) self, but to him who is not in possession of his (higher) self, the (lower) self is as if an enemy and it acts as an enemy." When one has conquered one's self and attained to the calm of a perfect self-mastery and self-possession, then is the supreme self in a man founded and poised even in his outwardly conscious human being, *samāhita*. In other words, to master the lower self by the higher, the natural self by the spiritual is the way of man's perfection and liberation.

Here then is a very great qualification of the determinism of Nature, a precise limitation of its meaning and scope. How the passage from subjection to mastery works out is best seen if we observe the working of the gunas in the scale of Nature from the bottom to the top. At the bottom are the existences in which the principle of tamas is supreme, the beings who have not yet attained to the light of self-consciousness and are utterly driven by the current of Nature. There is a will even in the atom, but we see clearly enough that it is not free will, because it is mechanical and the atom does not possess the will, but is possessed by it. Here the *buddhi*, the element of intelligence and will in Prakriti, is actually and plainly what the Sankhya asserts it to be, *jaḍa*, a mechanical, even an inconscient principle in which the light of the conscious Soul has not at all struggled to the surface: the atom is not conscious of an intelligent will; tamas, the inert and ignorant principle, has its grip on it, contains *rajas*, conceals *sattva* within itself and holds a high holiday of mastery, Nature compelling this form of existence to act with a stupendous force indeed, but as a mechanical instrument, *yantrārūḍhaṁ māyayā*. Next, in the plant the principle of *rajas* has struggled to the surface, with its power of life, with its capacity of the nervous reactions which in us are recognisable as pleasure and suffering, but *sattva* is quite involved, has not yet emerged to awaken the light of a conscious intelligent will; all is still mechanical, subconscient or half-conscient, tamas stronger than rajas, both gaolers of the imprisoned sattwa.

In the animal, though tamas is still strong, though we may still describe him as belonging to the tamasic creation, *tāmasa sarga*, yet rajas prevails much more against tamas, brings with it its developed power of life, desire, emotion, passion, pleasure, suffering, while sattwa, emerging, but still dependent on the lower action, contributes to these the first light of the conscious mind, the mechanical sense of ego, conscious memory, a certain kind of thought, especially the wonders of instinct and animal intuition. But as yet the buddhi, the intelligent will, has not developed the full light of consciousness; therefore, no responsibility can be attributed to the animal for its actions. The tiger can be no more blamed for killing and devouring than the atom for its blind movements, the fire for burning and consuming or the storm for its destructions. If it could answer the question, the tiger would indeed say, like man, that it had free will, it would have the egoism of the doer, it would say, "I kill, I devour"; but we can see clearly enough that it is not really the tiger, but Nature in the tiger that kills, it is Nature in the tiger that devours; and if it refrains from killing or devouring, it is from satiety, from fear or from indolence, from another principle of Nature in it, from the action of the guna called tamas. As it was Nature in the animal that killed, so it is Nature in the animal that refrained from killing. Whatever soul is in it, sanctions passively the action of Nature, is as much passive in its passion and activity as in its indolence or inaction. The animal like the atom acts according to the mechanism of its Nature, and not otherwise, *sadṛśaṁ ceṣṭate svasyāḥ prakṛteḥ*, as if mounted on a machine, *yantrārūḍho māyayā*.

Well, but in man at least there is another action, a free soul, a free will, a sense of responsibility, a real doer other than Nature, other than the mechanism of Maya? So it seems, because in man there is a conscious intelligent will; *buddhi* is full of the light of the observing Purusha, who through it, it seems, observes, understands, approves or disapproves, gives or withholds the sanction, seems indeed at last to begin to be the lord of his nature. Man is not like the tiger or the fire or the storm; he cannot kill and say as a sufficient justification, "I am acting according to my nature", and he cannot do it, because he has not the nature and not, therefore, the law of action, *svadharma*, of the tiger, storm or fire. He has a conscious intelligent will, a *buddhi*, and to that he must refer his actions. If he does not do so, if he acts blindly according to his impulses and passions, then the law of his being is not rightly worked out, *svadharmaḥ su-anuṣṭhitaḥ*, he has not acted according to the full measure of his humanity, but even as might the animal. It is true that the principle of *rajas* or the principle of *tamas* gets hold of his *buddhi* and induces it to justify any and every action he commits or any avoidance of action; but still the justification or at least the reference to the buddhi must be there either before or after the action is committed. And, besides, in man *sattva* is awake and acts not only as intelligence and intelligent will, but as a seeking for light, for right knowledge and right action according to that knowledge, as a sympathetic perception of the existence and claims of others, as an attempt to know the higher law of his own nature, which the sattwic principle in him creates, and to obey it, and as a conception of the greater peace and happiness which virtue, knowledge and sympathy bring in their train. He knows more or less imperfectly that he has to govern his rajasic and tamasic by his sattwic nature and that thither tends the perfection of his normal humanity.

But is the condition of the predominantly sattwic nature freedom and is this will in man a free will? That the Gita from the standpoint of a higher consciousness in which alone is true freedom, denies. The buddhi or conscious intelligent will is still an instrument of Nature and when it acts, even in the most sattwic sense, it is still Nature which acts and the soul which is carried on the wheel by Maya. At any rate, at least nine-tenths of our freedom of will is a palpable fiction; that will is created and determined not by its own self-existent action at a given moment, but by our past, our heredity, our training, our environment, the whole tremendous complex thing we call Karma, which is, behind us, the whole past action of Nature on us and the world converging in the individual, determining what he is, determining what his will shall be at a given moment and determining, as far as analysis can see, even its action at that moment. The ego associates itself always with its Karma and it says "I did" and "I will" and "I suffer", but if it looks at itself and sees how it was made, it is obliged to say of man as of the animal, “Nature did this in me, Nature wills in me”, and if it qualifies by saying “my Nature”, that only means “Nature as self-determined in this individual creature”. It was the strong perception of this aspect of existence which compelled the Buddhists to declare that all is Karma and that there is no self in existence, that the idea of self is only a delusion of the ego-mind. When the ego thinks “I choose and will this virtuous and not that evil action”, it is simply associating itself, somewhat like the fly on the wheel, or rather as might a cog or other part of a mechanism if it were conscious, with a predominant wave or a formed current of the sattwic principle by which Nature chooses through the buddhi one type of action in preference to another. Nature forms itself in us and wills in us, the Sankhya would say, for the pleasure of the inactive observing Purusha.

But even if this extreme statement has to be qualified, and we shall see hereafter in what sense, still the freedom of our individual will, if we choose to give it that name, is very relative and almost infinitesimal, so much is it mixed up with other determining elements. Its strongest power does not amount to mastery. It cannot be relied upon to resist the strong wave of circumstance or of other nature which either overbears or modifies or mixes up with it or at the best subtly deceives and circumvents it. Even the most sattwic will is so overborne or mixed up with or circumvented by the rajasic and tamasic gunas as to be only in part sattwic, and thence arises that sufficiently strong element of self-deception, of a quite involuntary and even innocent make-believe and hiding from oneself which the merciless eye of the psychologist detects even in the best human action. When we think that we are acting quite freely, powers are concealed behind our action which escape the most careful self-introspection; when we think that we are free from ego, the ego is there, concealed, in the mind of the saint as in that of the sinner. When our eyes are really opened on our action and its springs, we are obliged to say with the Gita “*guṇā guṇeṣu vartante*”, “it was the modes of Nature that were acting upon the modes.”

For this reason even a high predominance of the sattwic principle does not constitute freedom. For, as the Gita points out, the sattwa binds, as much as the other gunas, and binds just in the same way, by desire, by ego; a nobler desire, a purer ego, — but so long as in any form these two hold the being, there is no freedom. The man of virtue, of knowledge, has his ego of the virtuous man, his ego of knowledge, and it is that sattwic ego which he seeks to satisfy; for his own sake he seeks virtue and knowledge. Only when we cease to satisfy the ego, to think and to will from the ego, the limited "I" in us, then is there a real freedom. In other words, freedom, highest self-mastery begin when above the natural self we see and hold the supreme Self of which the ego is an obstructing veil and a blinding shadow. And that can only be when we see the one Self in us seated above Nature and make our individual being one with it in being and consciousness and in its individual nature of action only an instrument of a supreme Will, the one Will that is really free. For that we must rise high above the three gunas, become *triguṇātīta*; for that Self is beyond even the sattwic principle. We have to climb to it through the sattwa, but we attain to it only when we get beyond sattwa; we reach out to it from the ego, but only reach it by leaving the ego. We are drawn towards it by the highest, most passionate, most stupendous and ecstatic of all desires; but we can securely live in it only when all desire drops away from us. We have at a certain stage to liberate ourselves even from the desire of our liberation.

XXII

Beyond the Modes of Nature

SO FAR then extends the determinism of Nature, and what it amounts to is this that the ego from which we act is itself an instrument of the action of Prakriti and cannot therefore be free from the control of Prakriti; the will of the ego is a will determined by Prakriti, it is a part of the nature as it has been formed in us by the sum of its own past action and self-modification, and by the nature in us so formed and the will in it so formed our present action also is determined. It is said by some that the first initiating action is always free to our choice however much all that follows may be determined by that, and in this power of initiation and its effect on our future lies our responsibility. But where is that first action in Nature which has no determining past behind it, where that present condition of our nature which is not in sum and detail the result of the action of our past nature? We have that impression of a free initial act because we are living at every moment from our present on towards our future and we do not live back constantly from our present into our past, so that what is strongly vivid to our minds is the present and its consequences while we have a much less vivid hold of our present as entirely the consequence of our past; this latter we are apt to look on as if it were dead and done with. We speak and act as if we were perfectly free in the pure and virgin moment to do what we will with ourselves using an absolute inward independence of choice. But there is no such absolute liberty, our choice has no such independence.

Certainly, the will in us has always to choose between a certain number of possibilities, for that is the way in which Nature always acts; even our passivity, our refusal to will, is itself a choice, itself an act of the will of Nature in us; even in the atom there is a will always at its work. The whole difference is the extent to which we associate our idea of self with the action of the will in Nature; when we so associate ourselves, we think of it as our will and say that it is a free will and that it is we who are acting. And error or not, illusion or not, this idea of our will, of our action is not a thing of no consequence, of no utility; everything in Nature has a consequence and a utility. It is rather that process of our conscious being by which Nature in us becomes more and more aware of and responsive to the presence of the secret Purusha within her and opens by that increase of knowledge to a greater possibility of action; it is by the aid of the ego-idea and the personal will that she raises herself to her own higher possibilities, rises out of the sheer or else the predominant passivity of the tamasic nature into the passion and the struggle of the rajasic nature and from the passion and the struggle of the rajasic nature to the greater light, happiness and purity of the sattwic nature. The relative self-mastery gained by the natural man over himself is the dominion achieved by the higher possibilities of his nature over its lower possibilities, and this is done in him when he associates his idea of self with the struggle of the higher guna to get the mastery, the predominance over the lower guna. The sense of free will, illusion or not, is a necessary machinery of the action of Nature, necessary for man during his progress, and it would be disastrous for him to lose it before he is ready for a higher truth. If it be said, as it has been said, that Nature deludes man to fulfil her behests and that the idea of a free individual will is the most powerful of these delusions, then it must also be said that the delusion is for his good and without it he could not rise to his full possibilities.

But it is not a sheer delusion, it is only an error of standpoint and an error of placement. The ego thinks that it is the real self and acts as if it were the true centre of action and as if all existed for its sake, and there it commits an error of standpoint and placement. It is not wrong in thinking that there is something or someone within ourselves, within this action of our nature, who is the true centre of its action and for whom all exists; but this is not the ego, it is the Lord secret within our hearts, the divine Purusha, and the Jiva, other than ego, who is a portion of his being. The self-assertion of ego-sense is the broken and distorted shadow in our minds of the truth that there is a real Self within us which is the master of all and for whom and at whose behest Nature goes about her works. So too the ego's idea of free will is a distorted and misplaced sense of the truth that there is a free Self within us and that the will in Nature is only a modified and partial reflection of its will, modified and partial because it lives in the successive moments of Time and acts by a constant series of modifications which forget much of their own precedents and are only imperfectly conscious of their own consequences and aims. But the Will within, exceeding the moments of Time, knows all these, and the action of Nature in us is an attempt, we might say, to work out under the difficult conditions of a natural and egoistic ignorance what is foreseen in full supramental light by the inner Will and Knowledge.

But a time must come in our progress when we are ready to open our eyes to the real truth of our being, and then the error of our egoistic free will must fall away from us. The rejection of the idea of egoistic free will does not imply a cessation of action, because Nature is the doer and carries out her action after this machinery is dispensed with even as she did before it came into usage in the process of her evolution. In the man who has rejected it, it may even be possible for her to develop a greater action; for his mind may be more aware of all that his nature is by the self-creation of the past, more aware of the powers that environ and are working upon it to help or to hinder its growth, more aware too of the latent greater possibilities which it contains by virtue of all in it that is unexpressed, yet capable of expression; and this mind may be a freer channel for the sanction of the Purusha to the greater possibilities that it sees and a freer instrument for the response of Nature, for her resultant attempt at their development and realisation. But the rejection of free will must not be a mere fatalism or idea of natural determinism in the understanding without any vision of the real Self in us; for then the ego still remains as our sole idea of self and, as that is always the instrument of Prakriti, we still act by the ego and with our will as her instrument, and the idea in us brings no real change, but only a modification of our intellectual attitude. We shall have accepted the phenomenal truth of the determination of our egoistic being and action by Nature, we shall have seen our subjection: but we shall not have seen the unborn Self within which is above the action of the gunas; we shall not have seen wherein lies our gate of freedom. Nature and ego are not all we are; there is the free soul, the Purusha.

But in what consists this freedom of the Purusha? The Purusha of the current Sankhya philosophy is free in the essence of his being, but because he is the non-doer, *akartā*; and in so far as he permits Nature to throw on the inactive Soul her shadow of action, he becomes bound phenomenally by the actions of the gunas and cannot recover his freedom except by dissociation from her and by cessation of her activities. If then a man casts from him the idea of himself as the doer or of the works as his, if, as the Gita enjoins, he fixes himself in the view of himself as the inactive non-doer, *ātmānam akartāram*, and all action as not his own but Nature's, as the play of her gunas, will not a like result follow? The Sankhya Purusha is the giver of the sanction, but a passive sanction only, *anumati*, the work is entirely Nature's; essentially he is the witness and sustainer, not the governing and active consciousness of the universal Godhead. He is the Soul that sees and accepts, as a spectator accepts the representation of a play he is watching, not the Soul that both governs and watches the play planned by himself and staged in his own being. If then he withdraws the sanction, if he refuses to acknowledge the illusion of doing by which the play continues, he ceases also to be the sustainer and the action comes to a stop, since it is only for the pleasure of the witnessing conscious Soul that Nature performs it and only by his support that she can maintain it. Therefore it is evident that the Gita's conception of the relations of the Purusha and Prakriti are not the Sankhya's, since the same movement leads to a quite different result, in one case to cessation of works, in the other to a great, a selfless and desireless, a divine action. In the Sankhya Soul and Nature are two different entities, in the Gita they are two aspects, two powers of one self-existent being; the Soul is not only giver of the sanction, but lord of Nature, Ishwara, through her enjoying the play of the world, through her executing divine will and knowledge in a scheme of things supported by his sanction and existing by his immanent presence, existing in his being, governed by the law of his being and by the conscious will within it. To know, to respond to, to live in the divine being and nature of this Soul is the object of withdrawing from the ego and its action. One rises then above the lower nature of the gunas to the higher divine nature.

The movement by which this ascension is determined results from the complex poise of the Soul in its relations with Nature; it depends on the Gita's idea of the triple Purusha. The Soul that immediately informs the action, the mutations, the successive becomings of Nature, is the Kshara, that which seems to change with her changes, to move in her motion, the Person who follows in his idea of his being the changes of his personality brought about by the continuous action of her Karma. Nature here is Kshara, a constant movement and mutation in Time, a constant becoming. But this Nature is simply the executive power of the Soul itself; for only by what he is, can she become, only according to the possibilities of his becoming, can she act; she works out the becoming of his being. Her Karma is determined by Swabhava, the own-nature, the law of self-becoming of the soul, even though, because it is the agent and executive of the becoming, the action rather seems often to determine the nature. According to what we are, we act, and by our action we develop, we work out what we are. Nature is the action, the mutation, the becoming, and it is the Power that executes all these; but the Soul is the conscious Being from which that Power proceeds, from whose luminous stuff of consciousness she has drawn the variable will that changes and expresses its changes in her actions. And this Soul is One and Many; it is the one Life-being out of which all life is constituted and it is all these living beings; it is the cosmic Existent and it is all this multitude of cosmic existences, *sarvabhūtāni*, for all these are One; all the many Purushas are in their original being the one and only

Purusha. But the mechanism of the ego-sense in Nature, which is part of her action, induces the mind to identify the soul's consciousness with the limited becoming of the moment, with the sum of her active consciousness in a given field of space and time, with the result from moment to moment of the sum of her past actions. It is possible to realise in a way the unity of all these beings even in Nature herself and to become aware of a cosmic Soul which is manifest in the whole action of cosmic Nature, Nature manifesting the Soul, the Soul constituting the Nature. But this is to become aware only of the great cosmic Becoming, which is not false or unreal, but the knowledge of which alone does not give us the true knowledge of our Self; for our true Self is always something more than this and something beyond it.

For, beyond the soul manifest in Nature and bound up with its action, is another status of the Purusha, which is entirely a status and not at all an action; that is the silent, the immutable, the all-pervading, self-existent, motionless Self, *sarvagatam acalam*, immutable Being and not Becoming, the Akshara. In the Kshara the Soul is involved in the action of Nature, therefore it is concentrated, loses itself, as it were, in the moments of Time, in the waves of the Becoming, not really, but only in appearance and by following the current; in the Akshara Nature falls to silence and rest in the Soul, therefore it becomes aware of its immutable Being. The Kshara is the Sankhya's Purusha when it reflects the varied workings of the gunas of Nature, and it knows itself as the Saguna, the Personal; the Akshara is the Sankhya's Purusha when these gunas have fallen into a state of equilibrium, and it knows itself as the Nirguna, the Impersonal. Therefore while the Kshara, associating itself with the work of Prakriti, seems to be the doer of works, *kartā*, the Akshara dissociated from all the workings of the gunas is the inactive non-doer, *akartā*, and witness. The soul of man, when it takes the poise of the Kshara, identifies itself with the play of personality and readily clouds its self-knowledge with the ego-sense in Nature, so that he thinks of himself as the ego-doer of works; when it takes its poise in the Akshara, it identifies itself with the Impersonal and is aware of Nature as the doer and itself as the inactive witnessing Self, *akartāram*. The mind of man has to tend to one of these poises, it takes them as alternatives; it is bound by Nature to action in the mutations of quality and personality or it is free from her workings in immutable impersonality.

But these two, the status and immutability of the Soul and the action of the Soul and its mutability in Nature, actually coexist. And this would be an anomaly irreconcilable except by some such theory as that of Maya or else of a double and divided being, if there were not a supreme reality of the Soul's existence of which these are the two contrary aspects, but which is limited by neither of them. We have seen that the Gita finds this in the Purushottama. The supreme Soul is the Ishwara, God, the Master of all being, *sarvaloka-maheśvara*. He puts forth his own active nature, his Prakriti, — *svāṁ prakṛtim*, says the Gita, — manifest in the Jiva, worked out by the *svabhāva*, "own-becoming", of each Jiva according to the law of the divine being in it, the great lines of which each Jiva must follow, but worked out too in the egoistic nature by the bewildering play of the three gunas upon each other, *guṇā guṇeṣu vartante*. That is the *traiguṇyamayī māyā*, the Maya hard for man to get beyond, *duratyayā*, — yet can one get beyond it by transcending the three gunas. For while all this is done by the Ishwara through his Nature-Power in the Kshara, in the Akshara he is untouched, indifferent, regarding all equally, extended within all, yet above all. In all three he is the Lord, the supreme Ishwara in the highest, the presiding and all-pervading Impersonality, *prabhu* and *vibhu*, in the Akshara, and the immanent Will and present active Lord in the Kshara. He is free in his impersonality even while working out the play of his personality; he is not either merely impersonal or personal, but one and the same being in two aspects; he is the impersonal-personal, *nirguṇo guṇī*, of the Upanishad. By him all has been willed even before it is worked out, — as he says of the still living Dhartarashtrians, "already have they been slain by Me," *mayā nihatāḥ pūrvam eva*, — and the working out by Nature is only the result of his Will; yet by virtue of his impersonality behind he is not bound by his works, *kartāram akartāram*.

But man as the individual self, owing to his ignorant self-identification with the work and the becoming, as if that were all his soul and not a power of his soul, a power proceeding from it, is bewildered by the ego-sense. He thinks that it is he and others who are doing all; he does not see that Nature is doing all and that he is misrepresenting and disfiguring her works to himself by ignorance and attachment. He is enslaved by the gunas, now hampered in the dull case of tamas, now blown by the strong winds of rajas, now limited by the partial lights of sattwa, not distinguishing himself at all from the nature-mind which alone is thus modified by the gunas. He is therefore mastered by pain and pleasure, happiness and grief, desire and passion, attachment and disgust: he has no freedom.

He must, to be free, get back from the Nature action to the status of the Akshara; he will then be *triguṇātīta*, beyond the gunas. Knowing himself as the Akshara Brahman, the unchanging Purusha, he will know himself as an immutable impersonal self, the Atman, tranquilly observing and impartially supporting the action, but himself calm, indifferent, untouched, motionless, pure, one with all beings in their self, not one with Nature and her workings. This self, though by its presence authorising the works of Nature, though by its all-pervading existence supporting and consenting to them, *prabhu vibhu*, does not itself create works or the state of the doer or the joining of the works to their fruit, *na kartṛtvaṁ na karmāṇi sṛjati na karma-phala-saṁyogam*, but only watches nature in the Kshara working out these things, *svabhāvas tu pravartate*; it accepts neither the sin nor the virtue of the living creatures born into this birth as its own, *nādatte kasyacit pāpaṁ na caiva sukṛtam*; it preserves its spiritual purity. It is the ego bewildered by ignorance which attributes these things to itself, because it assumes the responsibility of the doer and chooses to figure as that and not as the instrument of a greater power, which is all that it really is; *ajñānenāvṛtaṁ jñānaṁ tena muhyanti jantavaḥ*. By going back into the impersonal self the soul gets back into a greater self-knowledge and is liberated from the bondage of the works of Nature, untouched by her gunas, free from her shows of good and evil, suffering and happiness. The natural being, the mind, body, life, still remain, Nature still works; but the inner being does not identify himself with these, nor while the gunas play in the natural being, does he rejoice or grieve. He is the calm and free immutable Self observing all.

Is this the last state, the utmost possibility, the highest secret? It cannot be, since this is a mixed or divided, not a perfectly harmonised status, a double, not a unified being, a freedom in the soul, an imperfection in the Nature. It can only be a stage. What then is there beyond it? One solution is that of the Sannyasin who rejects the nature, the action altogether, so far at least as action can be rejected, so that there may be an unmixed undivided freedom; but this solution, though admitted, is not preferred by the Gita. The Gita also insists on the giving up of actions, *sarvakarmāṇi sannyasya*, but inwardly to the Brahman. Brahman in the Kshara supports wholly the action of Prakriti, Brahman in the Akshara, even while supporting, dissociates itself from the action, preserves its freedom; the individual soul, unified with the Brahman in the Akshara, is free and dissociated, yet, unified with the Brahman in the Kshara, supports but is not affected. This it can do best when it sees that both are aspects of the one Purushottama. The Purushottama, inhabiting all existences as the secret Ishwara, controls the Nature and by his will, now no longer distorted and disfigured by the ego-sense, the Nature works out the actions by the swabhava; the individual soul makes the divinised natural being an instrument of the divine Will, *nimitta-mātram*. He remains even in action *triguṇātīta*, beyond the gunas, free from the gunas, *nistraiguṇya*, he fulfils entirely at last the early injunction of the Gita, *nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna*. He is indeed still the enjoyer of the gunas, as is the Brahman, though not limited by them, *nirguṇaṁ guṇabhoktṛ ca*, unattached, yet all-supporting, even as is that Brahman, *asaktaṁ sarvabhṛt*: but the action of the gunas within him is quite changed; it is lifted above their egoistic character and reactions. For he has unified his whole being in the Purushottama, has assumed the divine being and the higher divine nature of becoming, *madbhāva*, has unified even his mind and natural consciousness with the Divine, *manmanā maccittaḥ*. This change is the final evolution of the nature and the consummation of the divine birth, *rahasyam uttamam*. When it is accomplished, the soul is aware of itself as the master of its nature and, grown a light of the divine Light and will of the divine Will, is able to change its natural workings into a divine action.

XXIII

Nirvana and Works in the World

THE UNION of the soul with the Purushottama by a Yoga of the whole being is the complete teaching of the Gita and not only the union with the immutable Self as in the narrower doctrine which follows the exclusive way of knowledge. That is why the Gita subsequently, after it has effected the reconciliation of knowledge and works, is able to develop the idea of love and devotion, unified with both works and knowledge, as the highest height of the way to the supreme secret. For if the union with the immutable Self were the sole secret or the highest secret, that would not at all be possible; for then at a given point our inner basis for love and devotion, no less than our inner foundation of works, would crumble away and collapse. Union utter and exclusive with the immutable Self alone means the abolition of the whole point of view of the mutable being, not only in its ordinary and inferior action but in its very roots, in all that makes its existence possible, not only in the works of its ignorance, but in the works of its knowledge. It would mean the abolition of all that difference in conscious poise and activity between the human soul and the Divine which makes possible the play of the Kshara; for the action of the Kshara would become then entirely a play of the ignorance without any root or basis of divine reality in it. On the contrary, union by Yoga with the Purushottama means the knowledge and enjoyment of our oneness with him in our self-existent being and of a certain differentiation in our active being. It is the persistence of the latter in a play of divine works which are urged by the motive power of divine love and constituted by a perfected divine Nature, it is the vision of the Divine in the world harmonised with a realisation of the Divine in the self which makes action and devotion possible to the liberated man, and not only possible but inevitable in the perfect mode of his being.

But the direct way to union lies through the firm realisation of the immutable Self, and it is the Gita's insistence on this as a first necessity, after which alone works and devotion can acquire their whole divine meaning, that makes it possible for us to mistake its drift. For if we take the passages in which it insists most rigorously upon this necessity and neglect to observe the whole sequence of thought in which they stand, we may easily come to the conclusion that it does really teach actionless absorption as the final state of the soul and action only as a preliminary means towards stillness in the motionless Immutable. It is in the close of the fifth and throughout the sixth chapter that this insistence is strongest and most comprehensive. There we get the description of a Yoga which would seem at first sight to be incompatible with works and we get the repeated use of the word Nirvana to describe the status to which the Yogin arrives.

The mark of this status is the supreme peace of a calm self-extinction, *śāntiṁ nirvāṇa-paramām*, and, as if to make it quite clear that it is not the Buddhist's Nirvana in a blissful negation of being, but the Vedantic loss of a partial in a perfect being that it intends, the Gita uses always the phrase *brahma-nirvāṇa*, extinction in the Brahman; and the Brahman here certainly seems to mean the Immutable, to denote primarily at least the inner timeless Self withdrawn from active participation even though immanent in the externality of Nature. We have to see then what is the drift of the Gita here, and especially whether this peace is the peace of an absolute inactive cessation, whether the self-extinction in the Akshara means the absolute excision of all knowledge and consciousness of the Kshara and of all action in the Kshara. We are accustomed indeed to regard Nirvana and any kind of existence and action in the world as incompatible and we might be inclined to argue that the use of the word is by itself sufficient and decides the question. But if we look closely at Buddhism, we shall doubt whether the absolute incompatibility really existed even for the Buddhists; and if we look closely at the Gita, we shall see that it does not form part of this supreme Vedantic teaching.

The Gita after speaking of the perfect equality of the

Brahman-knower who has risen into the Brahman-consciousness, *brahmavid brahmaṇi sthitaḥ*, develops in nine verses that follow its idea of Brahmayoga and of Nirvana in the Brahman. "When the soul is no longer attached to the touches of outward things," it begins, "then one finds the happiness that exists in the Self; such a one enjoys an imperishable happiness, because his self is in Yoga, *yukta*, by Yoga with the Brahman." The non-attachment is essential, it says, in order to be free from the attacks of desire and wrath and passion, a freedom without which true happiness is not possible. That happiness and that equality are to be gained entirely by man in the body: he is not to suffer any least remnant of the subjection to the troubled lower nature to remain in the idea that the perfect release will come by a putting off of the body; a perfect spiritual freedom is to be won here upon earth and possessed and enjoyed in the human life, *prāk śarīra-vimokṣaṇāt*. It then continues, "He who has the inner happiness and the inner ease and repose and the inner light, that Yogin becomes the Brahman and reaches self-extinction in the Brahman, *brahma-nirvāṇam*." Here, very clearly, Nirvana means the extinction of the ego in the higher spiritual, inner Self, that which is for ever timeless, spaceless, not bound by the chain of cause and effect and the changes of the world-mutation, self-blissful, self-illumined and for ever at peace. The Yogin ceases to be the ego, the little person limited by the mind and the body; he becomes the Brahman; he is unified in consciousness with the immutable divinity of the eternal Self which is immanent in his natural being.

But is this a going in into some deep sleep of samadhi away from all world-consciousness, or is it the preparatory movement for a dissolution of the natural being and the individual soul into some absolute Self who is utterly and for ever beyond Nature and her works, *laya*, *mokṣa*? Is that withdrawal necessary before we can enter into Nirvana, or is Nirvana, as the context seems to suggest, a state which can exist simultaneously with world-consciousness and even in its own way include it? Apparently the latter, for in the succeeding verse the Gita goes on to say, "Sages win Nirvana in the Brahman, they in whom the stains of sin are effaced and the knot of doubt is cut asunder, masters of their selves, who are occupied in doing good to all creatures, *sarvabhūta-hite ratāḥ*." That would almost seem to mean that to be thus is to be in Nirvana. But the next verse is quite clear and decisive, "*Yatis* (those who practise self-mastery by Yoga and austerity) who are delivered from desire and wrath and have gained self-mastery, for them Nirvana in the Brahman exists all about them, encompasses them, they already live in it because they have knowledge of the Self." That is to say, to have knowledge and possession of the self is to exist in Nirvana. This is clearly a large extension of the idea of Nirvana. Freedom from all stain of the passions, the self-mastery of the equal mind on which that freedom is founded, equality to all beings, *sarvabhūteṣu*, and beneficial love for all, final destruction of that doubt and obscurity of the ignorance which keeps us divided from the all-unifying Divine and the knowledge of the One Self within us and in all are evidently the conditions of Nirvana which are laid down in these verses of the Gita, go to constitute it and are its spiritual substance.

Thus Nirvana is clearly compatible with world-consciousness and with action in the world. For the sages who possess it are conscious of and in intimate relation by works with the Divine in the mutable universe; they are occupied with the good of all creatures, *sarvabhūta-hite*. They have not renounced the experiences of the Kshara Purusha, they have divinised them; for the Kshara, the Gita tells us, is all existences, *sarvabhūtāni*, and the doing universal good to all is a divine action in the mutability of Nature. This action in the world is not inconsistent with living in Brahman, it is rather its inevitable condition and outward result because the Brahman in whom we find Nirvana, the spiritual consciousness in which we lose the separative ego-consciousness, is not only within us but within all these existences, exists not only above and apart from all these universal happenings, but pervades them, contains them and is extended in them. Therefore by Nirvana in the Brahman must be meant a destruction or extinction of the limited separative consciousness, falsifying and dividing, which is brought into being on the surface of existence by the lower Maya of the three gunas, and entry into Nirvana is a passage into this other true unifying consciousness which is the heart of existence and its continent and its whole containing and supporting, its whole original and eternal and final truth. Nirvana when we gain it, enter into it, is not only within us, but all around, *abhito vartate*, because this is not only the Brahman-consciousness which lives secret within us, but the Brahman-consciousness in which we live. It is the Self which we are within, the supreme Self of our individual being but also the Self which we are without, the supreme Self of the universe, the self of all existences. By living in that self we live in all, and no longer in our egoistic being alone; by oneness with that self a steadfast oneness with all in the universe becomes the very nature of our being and the root status of our active consciousness and root motive of all our action.

But again we get immediately afterwards two verses which might seem to lead away from this conclusion. "Having put outside of himself all outward touches and concentrated the vision between the eyebrows and made equal the *prāṇa* and the *apāna* moving within the nostrils, having controlled the senses, the mind and the understanding, the sage devoted to liberation, from whom desire and wrath and fear have passed away is ever free." Here we have a process of Yoga that brings in an element which seems quite other than the Yoga of works and other even than the pure Yoga of knowledge by discrimination and contemplation; it belongs in all its characteristic features to the system, introduces the psycho-physical askesis of Rajayoga. There is the conquest of all the movements of the mind, *cittavṛtti-nirodha*; there is the control of the breathing, Pranayama; there is the drawing in of the sense and the vision. All of them are processes which lead to the inner trance of Samadhi, the object of all of them *mokṣa*, and *mokṣa* signifies in ordinary parlance the renunciation not only of the separative ego-consciousness, but of the whole active consciousness, a dissolution of our being into the highest Brahman. Are we to suppose that the Gita gives this process in that sense as the last movement of a release by dissolution or only as a special means and a strong aid to overcome the outward-going mind? Is this the finale, the climax, the last word? We shall find reason to regard it as both a special means, an aid, and at least one gate of a final departure, not by dissolution, but by an uplifting to the supracosmic existence. For even here in this passage this is not the last word; the last word, the finale, the climax comes in a verse that follows and is the last couplet of the chapter. "When a man has known Me as the Enjoyer of sacrifice and tapasya (of all askesis and energisms), the mighty lord of all the worlds, the friend of all creatures, he comes by the peace." The power of the Karmayoga comes in again; the knowledge of the active Brahman, the cosmic supersoul, is insisted on among the conditions of the peace of Nirvana.

We get back to the great idea of the Gita, the idea of the Purushottama, — though that name is not given till close upon the end, it is always that which Krishna means by his "I" and "Me", the Divine who is there as the one self in our timeless immutable being, who is present too in the world, in all existences, in all activities, the master of the silence and the peace, the master of the power and the action, who is here incarnate as the divine charioteer of the stupendous conflict, the Transcendent, the Self, the All, the master of every individual being. He is the enjoyer of all sacrifice and of all tapasya, therefore shall the seeker of liberation do works as a sacrifice and as a tapasya; he is the lord of all the worlds, manifested in Nature and in these beings, therefore shall the liberated man still do works for the right government and leading on of the peoples in these worlds, *lokasaṅgraha*; he is the friend of all existences, therefore is the sage who has found Nirvana within him and all around, still and always occupied with the good of all creatures, — even as the Nirvana of Mahayana Buddhism took for its highest sign the works of a universal compassion. Therefore too, even when he has found oneness with the Divine in his timeless and immutable self, is he still capable, since he embraces the relations also of the play of Nature, of divine love for man and of love for the Divine, of bhakti.

That this is the drift of the meaning, becomes clearer when we have fathomed the sense of the sixth chapter which is a large comment on and a full development of the idea of these closing verses of the fifth, — that shows the importance which the Gita attaches to them. We shall therefore run as briefly as possible through the substance of this sixth chapter. First the Teacher emphasises — and this is very significant — his often repeated asseveration about the real essence of Sannyasa, that it is an inward, not an outward renunciation. "Whoever does the work to be done without resort to its fruits, he is the Sannyasin and the Yogin, not the man who lights not the sacrificial fire and does not the works. What they have called renunciation (Sannyasa), know to be in truth Yoga; for none becomes a Yogin who has not renounced the desire-will in the mind." Works are to be done, but with what purpose and in what order? They are first to be done while ascending the hill of Yoga, for then works are the cause, *kāraṇam*. The cause of what? The cause of self-perfection, of liberation, of nirvana in the Brahman; for by doing works with a steady practice of the inner renunciation this perfection, this liberation, this conquest of the desire-mind and the ego-self and the lower nature are easily accomplished.

But when one has got to the top? Then works are no longer the cause; the calm of self-mastery and self-possession gained by works becomes the cause. Again, the cause of what? Of fixity in the Self, in the Brahman-consciousness and of the perfect equality in which the divine works of the liberated man are done. "For when one does not get attached to the objects of sense or to works and has renounced all will of desire in the mind, then is he said to have ascended to the top of Yoga." That, as we know already, is the spirit in which the liberated man does works; he does them without desire and attachment, without the egoistic personal will and the mental seeking which is the parent of desire. He has conquered his lower self, reached the perfect calm in which his highest self is manifest to him, that highest self always concentrated in its own being, *samāhita*, in Samadhi, not only in the trance of the inward-drawn consciousness, but always, in the waking state of the mind as well, in exposure to the causes of desire and of the disturbance of calm, to grief and pleasure, heat and cold, honour and disgrace, all the dualities, *śītoṣṇa-sukhaduḥkheṣu tathā mānāpamānayoḥ*. This higher self is the Akshara, *kūṭastha*, which stands above the changes and the perturbations of the natural being; and the Yogin is said to be in Yoga with it when he also is like it, *kūṭastha*, when he is superior to all appearances and mutations, when he is satisfied with self-knowledge, when he is equal-minded to all things and happenings and persons.

But this Yoga is after all no easy thing to acquire, as Arjuna indeed shortly afterwards suggests, for the restless mind is always liable to be pulled down from these heights by the attacks of outward things and to fall back into the strong control of grief and passion and inequality. Therefore, it would seem, the Gita proceeds to give us in addition to its general method of knowledge and works a special process of Rajayogic meditation also, a powerful method of practice, *abhyāsa*, a strong way to the complete control of the mind and all its workings. In this process the Yogin is directed to practise continually union with the Self so that that may become his normal consciousness. He is to sit apart and alone, with all desire and idea of possession banished from his mind, self-controlled in his whole being and consciousness. "He should set in a pure spot his firm seat, neither too high, nor yet too low, covered with a cloth, with a deer-skin, with sacred grass, and there seated with a concentrated mind and with the workings of the mental consciousness and the senses under control he should practise Yoga for self-purification, *ātma-viśuddhaye*." The posture he takes must be the motionless erect posture proper to the practice of Rajayoga; the vision should be drawn in and fixed between the eye-brows, "not regarding the regions." The mind is to be kept calm and free from fear and the vow of Brahmacharya observed; the whole controlled mentality must be devoted and turned to the Divine so that the lower action of the consciousness shall be merged in the higher peace. For the object to be attained is the still peace of Nirvana. "Thus always putting himself in Yoga by control of his mind the Yogin attains to the supreme peace of Nirvana which has its foundation in Me, *śāntiṁ nirvāṇa-paramāṁ matsaṁsthām.*"

This peace of Nirvana is reached when all the mental consciousness is perfectly controlled and liberated from desire and remains still in the Self, when, motionless like the light of a lamp in a windless place, it ceases from its restless action, shut in from its outward motion, and by the silence and stillness of the mind the Self is seen within, not disfigured as in the mind, but in the Self, seen, not as it is mistranslated falsely or partially by the mind and represented to us through the ego, but self-perceived by the Self, *svaprakāśa*. Then the soul is satisfied and knows its own true and exceeding bliss, not that untranquil happiness which is the portion of the mind and the senses, but an inner and serene felicity in which it is safe from the mind's perturbations and can no longer fall away from the spiritual truth of its being. Not even the fieriest assault of mental grief can disturb it; for mental grief comes to us from outside, is a reaction to external touches, and this is the inner, the self-existent happiness of those who no longer accept the slavery of the unstable mental reactions to external touches. It is the putting away of the contact with pain, the divorce of the mind's marriage with grief, *duḥkha-saṁyoga-viyogam*. The firm winning of this inalienable spiritual bliss is Yoga, it is the divine union; it is the greatest of all gains and the treasure beside which all others lose their value. Therefore is this Yoga to be resolutely practised without yielding to any discouragement by difficulty or failure until the release, until the bliss of Nirvana is secured as an eternal possession.

The main stress here has fallen on the stilling of the emotive mind, the mind of desire and the senses which are the recipients of outward touches and reply to them with our customary emotional reactions; but even the mental thought has to be stilled in the silence of the self-existent being. First, all the desires born of the desire-will have to be wholly abandoned without any exception or residue and the senses have to be held in by the mind so that they shall not run out to all sides after their usual disorderly and restless habit; but next the mind itself has to be seized by the buddhi and drawn inward. One should slowly cease from mental action by a buddhi held in the grasp of fixity and having fixed the mind in the higher self one should not think of anything at all. Whenever the restless and unquiet mind goes forth, it should be controlled and brought into subjection in the Self. When the mind is thoroughly quieted, then there comes upon the Yogin the highest, stainless, passionless bliss of the soul that has become the Brahman. "Thus freed from stain of passion and putting himself constantly into Yoga, the Yogin easily and happily enjoys the touch of the Brahman which is an exceeding bliss."

And yet the result is not, while one yet lives, a Nirvana which puts away every possibility of action in the world, every relation with beings in the world. It would seem at first that it ought to be so. When all the desires and passions have ceased, when the mind is no longer permitted to throw itself out in thought, when the practice of this silent and solitary Yoga has become the rule, what farther action or relation with the world of outward touches and mutable appearances is any longer possible? No doubt, the Yogin for a time still remains in the body, but the cave, the forest, the mountain-top seem now the fittest, the only possible scene of his continued living and constant trance of Samadhi his sole joy and occupation. But, first, while this solitary Yoga is being pursued, the renunciation of all other action is not recommended by the Gita. This Yoga, it says, is not for the man who gives up sleep and food and play and action, even as it is not for those who indulge too much in these things of the life and the body; but the sleep and waking, the food, the play, the putting forth of effort in works should all be *yukta*. This is generally interpreted as meaning that all should be moderate, regulated, done in fit measure, and that may indeed be the significance. But at any rate when the Yoga is attained, all this has to be *yukta* in another sense, the ordinary sense of the word everywhere else in the Gita. In all states, in waking and in sleeping, in food and play and action, the Yogin will then be in Yoga with the Divine, and all will be done by him in the consciousness of the Divine as the self and as the All and as that which supports and contains his own life and his action. Desire and ego and personal will and the thought of the mind are the motives of action only in the lower nature; when the ego is lost and the Yogin becomes Brahman, when he lives in and is, even, a transcendent and universal consciousness, action comes spontaneously out of that, luminous knowledge higher than the mental thought comes out of that, a power other and mightier than the personal will comes out of that to do for him his works and bring its fruits:[1] personal action has ceased, all has been taken up into the Brahman and assumed by the Divine, *mayi sannyasya karmāṇi.*

For when the Gita describes the nature of this self-realisation and the result of the Yoga which comes by Nirvana of the separative ego-mind and its motives of thought and feeling and action into the Brahman-consciousness, it includes the cosmic sense, though lifted into a new kind of vision. "The man whose self is in Yoga, sees the self in all beings and all beings in the self, he sees all with an equal vision." All that he sees is to him the Self, all is his self, all is the Divine. But is there no danger, if he dwells at all in the mutability of the Kshara, of his losing all the results of this difficult Yoga, losing the Self and falling back into the mind, of the Divine losing him and the world getting him, of his losing the Divine and getting back in its place the ego and the lower nature? No, says the Gita; "he who sees Me everywhere and sees all in Me, to him I do not get lost, nor does he get lost to Me." For this peace of Nirvana, though it is gained through the Akshara, is founded upon the being of the Purushottama, *mat-saṁsthām*, and that is extended, the Divine, the Brahman is extended too in the world of beings and, though transcendent of it, not imprisoned in its own transcendence. One has to see all things as He and live and act wholly in that vision; that is the perfect fruit of the Yoga.

But why act? Is it not safer to sit in one's solitude looking out upon the world, if you will, seeing it in Brahman, in the Divine, but not taking part in it, not moving in it, not living in it, not acting in it, living rather ordinarily in the inner Samadhi? Should not that be the law, the rule, the dharma of this highest spiritual condition? No, again; for the liberated Yogin there is no other law, rule, dharma than simply this, to live in the Divine and love the Divine and be one with all beings; his freedom is an absolute and not a contingent freedom, self-existent and not dependent any longer on any rule of conduct, law of life or limitation of any kind. He has no longer any need of a process of Yoga, because he is now perpetually in Yoga. "The Yogin who has taken his stand upon oneness and loves Me in all beings, however and in all ways he lives and acts, lives and acts in Me." The love of the world spiritualised, changed from a sense-experience to a soul-experience, is founded on the love of God and in that love there is no peril and no shortcoming. Fear and disgust of the world may often be necessary for the recoil from the lower nature, for it is really the fear and disgust of our own ego which reflects itself in the world. But to see God in the world is to fear nothing, it is to embrace all in the being of God; to see all as the Divine is to hate and loathe nothing, but love God in the world and the world in God.

---

[1] *yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmyaham.*

But at least the things of the lower nature will be shunned and feared, the things which the Yogin has taken so much trouble to surmount? Not this either; all is embraced in the equality of the self-vision. "He, O Arjuna, who sees with equality everything in the image of the Self, whether it be grief or it be happiness, him I hold to be the supreme Yogin." And by this it is not meant at all that he himself shall fall from the griefless spiritual bliss and feel again worldly unhappiness, even in the sorrow of others, but seeing in others the play of the dualities which he himself has left and surmounted, he shall still see all as himself, his self in all, God in all and, not disturbed or bewildered by the appearances of these things, moved only by them to help and heal, to occupy himself with the good of all beings, to lead men to the spiritual bliss, to work for the progress of the world Godwards, he shall live the divine life, so long as days upon earth are his portion. The God-lover who can do this, can thus embrace all things in God, can look calmly on the lower nature and the works of the Maya of the three gunas and act in them and upon them without perturbation or fall or disturbance from the height and power of the spiritual oneness, free in the largeness of the God-vision, sweet and great and luminous in the strength of the God-nature, may well be declared to be the supreme Yogin. He indeed has conquered the creation, *jitaḥ sargaḥ*.

The Gita brings in here as always bhakti as the climax of the Yoga, *sarvabhūtasthitaṁ yo māṁ bhajati ekatvam āsthitaḥ*; that may almost be said to sum up the whole final result of the Gita's teaching — whoever loves God in all and his soul is founded upon the divine oneness, however he lives and acts, lives and acts in God. And to emphasise it still more, after an intervention of Arjuna and a reply to his doubt as to how so difficult a Yoga can be at all possible for the restless mind of man, the divine Teacher returns to this idea and makes it his culminating utterance. "The Yogin is greater than the doers of askesis, greater than the men of knowledge, greater than the men of works; become then the Yogin, O Arjuna," the Yogin, one who seeks for and attains, by works and knowledge and askesis or by whatever other means, not even spiritual knowledge or power or anything else for their own sake, but the union with God alone; for in that all else is contained and in that lifted beyond itself to a divinest significance. But even among Yogins the greatest is the Bhakta. "Of all Yogins he who with all his inner self given up to Me, for Me has love and faith, *śraddhāvān bhajate*, him I hold to be the most united with Me in Yoga." It is this that is the closing word of these first six chapters and contains in itself the seed of the rest, of that which still remains unspoken and is nowhere entirely spoken; for it is always and remains something of a mystery and a secret, *rahasyam*, the highest spiritual mystery and the divine secret.

XXIV

The Gist of the Karmayoga

THE FIRST six chapters of the Gita form a sort of preliminary block of the teaching; all the rest, all the other twelve chapters are the working out of certain unfinished figures in this block which here are seen only as hints behind the large-size execution of the main motives, yet are in themselves of capital importance and are therefore reserved for a yet larger treatment on the other two faces of the work. If the Gita were not a great written Scripture which must be carried to its end, if it were actually a discourse by a living teacher to a disciple which could be resumed in good time, when the disciple was ready for farther truth, one could conceive of his stopping here at the end of the sixth chapter and saying, "Work this out first, there is plenty for you to do to realise it and you have the largest possible basis; as difficulties arise, they will solve themselves or I will solve them for you. But at present live out what I have told you; work in this spirit." True, there are many things here which cannot be properly understood except in the light thrown on them by what is to come after. In order to clear up immediate difficulties and obviate possible misunderstandings, I have had myself to anticipate a good deal, to bring in repeatedly, for example, the idea of the Purushottama, for without that it would have been impossible to clear up certain obscurities about the Self and action and the Lord of action, which the Gita deliberately accepts so that it may not disturb the firmness of the first steps by reaching out prematurely to things too great as yet for the mind of the human disciple.

Arjuna, himself, if the Teacher were to break off his discourse here, might well object: "You have spoken much of the destruction of desire and attachment, of equality, of the conquest of the senses and the stilling of the mind, of passionless and impersonal action, of the sacrifice of works, of the inner as preferable to the outer renunciation, and these things I understand intellectually, however difficult they may appear to me in practice. But you have also spoken of rising above the gunas, while yet one remains in action, and you have not told me how the gunas work, and unless I know that, it will be difficult for me to detect and rise above them. Besides, you have spoken of bhakti as the greatest element in Yoga, yet you have talked much of works and knowledge, but very little or nothing of bhakti. And to whom is bhakti, this greatest thing, to be offered? Not to the still impersonal Self, certainly, but to you, the Lord. Tell me, then, what you are, who, as bhakti is greater even than this self-knowledge, are greater than the immutable Self, which is yet itself greater than mutable Nature and the world of action, even as knowledge is greater than works. What is the relation between these three things? between works and knowledge and divine love? between the soul in Nature and the immutable Self and that which is at once the changeless Self of all and the Master of knowledge and love and works, the supreme Divinity who is here with me in this great battle and massacre, my charioteer in the chariot of this fierce and terrible action?" It is to answer these questions that the rest of the Gita is written, and in a complete intellectual solution they have indeed to be taken up without delay and resolved. But in actual *sādhanā* one has to advance from stage to stage, leaving many things, indeed the greatest things to arise subsequently and solve themselves fully by the light of the advance we have made in spiritual experience. The Gita follows to a certain extent this curve of experience and puts first a sort of large preliminary basis of works and knowledge which contains an element leading up to bhakti and to a greater knowledge, but not yet fully arriving. The six chapters present us with that basis.

We may then pause to consider how far they have carried the solution of the original problem with which the Gita started. The problem in itself, it may be useful again to remark, need not necessarily have led up to the whole question of the nature of existence and of the replacement of the normal by the spiritual life. It might have been dealt with on a pragmatical or an ethical basis or from an intellectual or an ideal standpoint or by a consideration of all of these together; that in fact would have been our modern method of solving the difficulty. By itself it raises in the first instance just this question, whether Arjuna should be governed by the ethical sense of personal sin in slaughter or by the consideration equally ethical of his public and social duty, the defence of the Right, the opposition demanded by conscience from all noble natures to the armed forces of injustice and oppression? That question has been raised in our own time and the present hour, and it can be solved, as we solve it now, by one or other of very various solutions, but all from the standpoint of our normal life and our normal human mind. It may be answered as a question between the personal conscience and our duty to the society and the State, between an ideal and a practical morality, between "soul-force" and the recognition of the troublesome fact that life is not yet at least all soul and that to take up arms for the right in a physical struggle is sometimes inevitable. All these solutions are, however, intellectual, temperamental, emotional; they depend upon the individual standpoint and are at the best our own proper way of meeting the difficulty offered to us, proper because suitable to our nature and the stage of our ethical and intellectual evolution, the best we can, with the light we have, see and do; it leads to no final solution. And this is so because it proceeds from the normal mind which is always a tangle of various tendencies of our being and can only arrive at a choice or an accommodation between them, between our reason, our ethical being, our dynamic needs, our life-instincts, our emotional being and those rarer movements which we may perhaps call soul-instincts or psychical preferences. The Gita recognises that from this standpoint there can be no absolute, only an immediate practical solution and, after offering to Arjuna from the highest ideals of his age just such a practical solution, which he is in no mood to accept and indeed is evidently not intended to accept, it proceeds to quite a different standpoint and to quite another answer.

The Gita's solution is to rise above our natural being and normal mind, above our intellectual and ethical perplexities into another consciousness with another law of being and therefore another standpoint for our action; where personal desire and personal emotions no longer govern it; where the dualities fall away; where the action is no longer our own and where therefore the sense of personal virtue and personal sin is exceeded; where the universal, the impersonal, the divine spirit works out through us its purpose in the world; where we are ourselves by a new and divine birth changed into being of that Being, consciousness of that Consciousness, power of that Power, bliss of that Bliss, and, living no longer in our lower nature, have no works to do of our own, no personal aim to pursue of our own, but if we do works at all, — and that is the one real problem and difficulty left, — do only the divine works, those of which our outward nature is only a passive instrument and no longer the cause, no longer provides the motive; for the motive-power is above us in the will of the Master of our works. And this is presented to us as the true solution, because it goes back to the real truth of our being and to live according to the real truth of our being is evidently the highest solution and the sole entirely true solution of the problems of our existence. Our mental and vital personality is a truth of our natural existence, but a truth of the ignorance, and all that attaches itself to it is also truth of that order, practically valid for the works of the ignorance, but no longer valid when we get back to the real truth of our being. But how can we actually be sure that this is the truth? We cannot so long as we remain satisfied with our ordinary mental experience; for our normal mental experience is wholly that of this lower nature full of the ignorance. We can only know this greater truth by living it, that is to say, by passing beyond the mental into the spiritual experience, by Yoga. For the living out of spiritual experience until we cease to be mind and become spirit, until, liberated from the imperfections of our present nature, we are able to live entirely in our true and divine being is what in the end we mean by Yoga.

This upward transference of our centre of being and the consequent transformation of our whole existence and consciousness, with a resultant change in the whole spirit and motive of our action, the action often remaining precisely the same in all its outward appearances, makes the gist of the Gita's Karmayoga. Change your being, be reborn into the spirit and by that new birth proceed with the action to which the Spirit within has appointed you, may be said to be the heart of its message. Or again, put otherwise, with a deeper and more spiritual import, — make the work you have to do here your means of inner spiritual rebirth, the divine birth, and, having become divine, do still divine works as an instrument of the Divine for the leading of the peoples. Therefore there are here two things which have to be clearly laid down and clearly grasped, the way to the change, to this upward transference, this new divine birth, and the nature of the work or rather the spirit in which it has to be done, since the outward form of it need not at all change, although really its scope and aim become quite different. But these two things are practically the same, for the elucidation of one elucidates the other. The spirit of our action arises from the nature of our being and the inner foundation it has taken, but also this nature is itself affected by the trend and spiritual effect of our action; a very great change in the spirit of our works changes the nature of our being and alters the foundation it has taken; it shifts the centre of conscious force from which we act. If life and action were entirely illusory, as some would have it, if the Spirit had nothing to do with works or life, this would not be so; but the soul in us develops itself by life and works and, not indeed so much the action itself, but the way of our soul's inner force of working determines its relations to the Spirit. This is, indeed, the justification of Karmayoga as a practical means of the higher self-realisation.

We start from this foundation that the present inner life of man, almost entirely dependent as it is upon his vital and physical nature, only lifted beyond it by a limited play of mental energy, is not the whole of his possible existence, not even the whole of his present real existence. There is within him a hidden Self, of which his present nature is either only an outer appearance or is a partial dynamic result. The Gita seems throughout to admit its dynamic reality and not to adopt the severer view of the extreme Vedantists that it is only an appearance, a view which strikes at the very roots of all works and action. Its way of formulating this element of its philosophical thought, — it might be done in a different way, — is to admit the Sankhya distinction between the Soul and Nature, the power that knows, supports and informs and the power that works, acts, provides all the variations of instrument, medium and process. Only it takes the free and immutable Soul of the Sankhyas, calls it in Vedantic language the one immutable omnipresent Self or Brahman, and distinguishes it from this other soul involved in Nature, which is our mutable and dynamic being, the multiple soul of things, the basis of variation and personality. But in what then consists this action of Nature?

It consists in a power of process, Prakriti, which is the interplay of three fundamental modes of its working, three qualities, gunas. And what is the medium? It is the complex system of existence created by a graded evolution of the instruments of Prakriti, which, as they are reflected here in the soul's experience of her workings, we may call successively the reason and the ego, the mind, the senses and the elements of material energy which are the basis of its forms. These are all mechanical, a complex engine of Nature, *yantra*; and from our modern point of view we may say that they are all involved in material energy and manifest themselves in it as the soul in Nature becomes aware of itself by an upward evolution of each instrument, but in the inverse order to that which we have stated, matter first, then sensation, then mind, next reason, last spiritual consciousness. Reason, which is at first only preoccupied with the workings of Nature, may then detect their ultimate character, may see them only as a play of the three gunas in which the soul is entangled, may distinguish between the soul and these workings; then the soul gets a chance of disentangling itself and of going back to its original freedom and immutable existence. In Vedantic language, it sees the spirit, the being; it ceases to identify itself with the instruments and workings of Nature, with its becoming; it identifies itself with its true Self and being and recovers its immutable spiritual self-existence. It is then from this spiritual self-existence, according to the Gita, that it can freely and as the master of its being, the Ishwara, support the action of its becoming.

Looking only at the psychological facts on which these philosophical distinctions are founded, — philosophy is only a way of formulating to ourselves intellectually in their essential significance the psychological and physical facts of existence and their relation to any ultimate reality that may exist, — we may say that there are two lives we can lead, the life of the soul engrossed in the workings of its active nature, identified with its psychological and physical instruments, limited by them, bound by its personality, subject to Nature, and the life of the Spirit, superior to these things, large, impersonal, universal, free, unlimited, transcendent, supporting with an infinite equality its natural being and action, but exceeding them by its freedom and infinity. We may live in what is now our natural being or we may live in our greater and spiritual being. This is the first great distinction on which the Karmayoga of the Gita is founded.

The whole question and the whole method lie then in the liberation of the soul from the limitations of our present natural being. In our natural life the first dominating fact is our subjection to the forms of material Nature, the outward touches of things. These present themselves to our life through the senses, and the life through the senses immediately returns upon these objects to seize upon them and deal with them, desires, attaches itself, seeks for results. The mind in all its inner sensations, reactions, emotions, habitual ways of perceiving, thinking and feeling obeys this action of the senses; the reason too carried away by the mind gives itself up to this life of the senses, this life in which the inner being is subject to the externality of things and cannot for a moment really get above it or outside the circle of its action upon us and its psychological results and reactions within us. It cannot get beyond them because there is the principle of ego by which the reason differentiates the sum of the action of Nature upon our mind, will, sense, body from her action in other minds, wills, nervous organisms, bodies; and life to us means only the way she affects our ego and the way our ego replies to her touches. We know nothing else, we seem to be nothing else; the soul itself seems then only a separate mass of mind, will, emotional and nervous reception and reaction. We may enlarge our ego, identify ourselves with the family, clan, class, country, nation, humanity even, but still the ego remains in all these disguises the root of our actions, only it finds a larger satisfaction of its separate being by these wider dealings with external things.

What acts in us is still the will of the natural being seizing upon the touches of the external world to satisfy the different phases of its personality, and the will in this seizing is always a will of desire and passion and attachment to our works and their results, the will of Nature in us; our personal will, we say, but our ego personality is a creation of Nature, it is not and cannot be our free self, our independent being. The whole is the action of the modes of Nature. It may be a tamasic action, and then we have an inert personality subject to and satisfied with the mechanical round of things, incapable of any strong effort at a freer action and mastery. Or it may be the rajasic action, and then we have the restless active personality which throws itself upon Nature and tries to make her serve its needs and desires, but does not see that its apparent mastery is a servitude, since its needs and desires are those of Nature, and while we are subject to them, there can be for us no freedom. Or it may be a sattwic action, and then we have the enlightened personality which tries to live by reason or to realise some preferred ideal of good, truth or beauty; but this reason is still subject to the appearances of Nature and these ideals are only changing phases of our personality in which we find in the end no sure rule or permanent satisfaction. We are still carried on a wheel of mutation, obeying in our circlings through the ego some Power within us and within all this, but not ourselves that Power or in union and communion with it. Still there is no freedom, no real mastery.

Yet freedom is possible. For that we have to get first away into ourselves from the action of the external world upon our senses; that is to say, we have to live inwardly and be able to hold back the natural running of the senses after their external objects. A mastery of the senses, an ability to do without all that they hanker after, is the first condition of the true soul-life; only so can we begin to feel that there is a soul within us which is other than the mutations of mind in its reception of the touches of outward things, a soul which in its depths goes back to something self-existent, immutable, tranquil, self-possessed, grandiose, serene and august, master of itself and unaffected by the eager runnings of our external nature. But this cannot be done so long as we are subject to desire. For it is desire, the principle of all our superficial life, which satisfies itself with the life of the senses and finds its whole account in the play of the passions. We must get rid then of desire and, that propensity of our natural being destroyed, the passions which are its emotional results will fall into quietude; for the joy and grief of possession and of loss, success and failure, pleasant and unpleasant touches, which entertain them, will pass out of our souls. A calm equality will then be gained. And since we have still to live and act in the world and our nature in works is to seek for the fruits of our works, we must change that nature and do works without attachment to their fruits, otherwise desire and all its results remain. But how can we change this nature of the doer of works in us? By dissociating works from ego and personality, by seeing through the reason that all this is only the play of the gunas of Nature, and by dissociating our soul from the play, by making it first of all the observer of the workings of Nature and leaving those works to the Power that is really behind them, the something in Nature which is greater than ourselves, not our personality, but the Master of the universe. But the mind will not permit all this; its nature is to run out after the senses and carry the reason and will with it. Then we must learn to still the mind. We must attain that absolute peace and stillness in which we become aware of the calm, motionless, blissful Self within us which is eternally untroubled and unaffected by the touches of things, is sufficient to itself and finds there alone its eternal satisfaction.

This Self is our self-existent being. It is not limited by our personal existence. It is the same in all existences, pervasive, equal to all things, supporting the whole universal action with its infinity, but unlimited by all that is finite, unmodified by the changings of Nature and personality. When this Self is revealed within us, when we feel its peace and stillness, we can grow into that; we can transfer the poise of our soul from its lower immergence in Nature and draw it back into the Self. We can do this by the force of the things we have attained, calm, equality, passionless impersonality. For as we grow in these things, carry them to their fullness, subject all our nature to them, we are growing into this calm, equal, passionless, impersonal, all-pervading Self. Our senses fall into that stillness and receive the touches of the world on us with a supreme tranquillity; our mind falls into stillness and becomes the calm, universal witness; our ego dissolves itself into this impersonal existence. All things we see in this self which we have become in ourself; and we see this self in all; we become one being with all beings in the spiritual basis of their existence. By doing works in this selfless tranquillity and impersonality, our works cease to be ours, cease to bind or trouble us with their reactions. Nature and her gunas weave the web of her works, but without affecting our griefless self-existent tranquillity. All is given up into that one equal and universal Brahman.

But here there are two difficulties. First, there seems to be an antinomy between this tranquil and immutable Self and the action of Nature. How then does the action at all exist or how can it continue once we have entered into the immutable Self-existence? Where in that is the will to works which would make the action of our nature possible? If we say with the Sankhya that the will is in Nature and not in the Self, still there must be a motive in Nature and the power in her to draw the soul into its workings by interest, ego and attachment, and when these things cease to reflect themselves in the soul-consciousness, her power ceases and the motive of works ceases with it. But the Gita does not accept this view, which seems indeed to necessitate the existence of many Purushas and not one universal Purusha, otherwise the separate experience of the soul and its separate liberation while millions of others are still involved, would not be intelligible. Nature is not a separate principle, but the power of the Supreme going forth in cosmic creation. But if the Supreme is only this immutable Self and the individual is only something that has gone forth from him in the Power, then the moment it returns and takes its poise in the self, everything must cease except the supreme unity and the supreme calm. Secondly, even if in some mysterious way action still continues, yet since the Self is equal to all things, it cannot matter whether works are done or, if they are done, it cannot matter what work is done. Why then this insistence on the most violent and disastrous form of action, this chariot, this battle, this warrior, this divine charioteer?

The Gita answers by presenting the Supreme as something greater even than the immutable Self, more comprehensive, one who is at once this Self and the Master of works in Nature. But he directs the works of Nature with the eternal calm, the equality, the superiority to works and personality which belong to the immutable. This, we may say, is the poise of being from which he directs works, and by growing into this we are growing into his being and into the poise of divine works. From this he goes forth as the Will and Power of his being in Nature, manifests himself in all existences, is born as Man in the world, is there in the heart of all men, reveals himself as the Avatar, the divine birth in man; and as man grows into his being, it is into the divine birth that he grows. Works must be done as a sacrifice to this Lord of our works, and we must by growing into the Self realise our oneness with him in our being and see our personality as a partial manifestation of him in Nature. One with him in being, we grow one with all beings in the universe and do divine works, not as ours, but as his workings through us for the maintenance and leading of the peoples.

This is the essential thing to be done, and once this is done, the difficulties which present themselves to Arjuna will disappear. The problem is no longer one of our personal action, for that which makes our personality becomes a thing temporal and subordinate, the question is then only one of the workings of the divine Will through us in the universe. To understand that we must know what this supreme Being is in himself and in Nature, what the workings of Nature are and what they lead to, and the intimate relation between the soul in Nature and this supreme Soul, of which bhakti with knowledge is the foundation. The elucidation of these questions is the subject of the rest of the Gita.

END OF THE FIRST SERIES

ESSAYS ON THE GITA

SECOND SERIES

PART I

THE SYNTHESIS OF WORKS, LOVE AND KNOWLEDGE

I

The Two Natures[1]

THE FIRST six chapters of the Gita have been treated as a single block of teachings, its primary basis of practice and knowledge; the remaining twelve may be similarly treated as two closely connected blocks which develop the rest of the doctrine from this primary basis. The seventh to the twelfth chapters lay down a large metaphysical statement of the nature of the Divine Being and on that foundation closely relate and synthetise knowledge and devotion, just as the first part of the Gita related and synthetised works and knowledge. The vision of the World-Purusha intervenes in the eleventh chapter, gives a dynamic turn to this stage of the synthesis and relates it vividly to works and life. Thus again all is brought powerfully back to the original question of Arjuna round which the whole exposition revolves and completes its cycle. Afterwards the Gita proceeds by the differentiation of the Purusha and Prakriti to work out its ideas of the action of the gunas, of the ascension beyond the gunas and of the culmination of desireless works with knowledge where that coalesces with Bhakti, — knowledge, works and love made one, — and it rises thence to its great finale, the supreme secret of self-surrender to the Master of Existence.

In this second part of the Gita we come to a more concise and easy manner of statement than we have yet had. In the first six chapters the definitions have not yet been made which give the key to the underlying truth; difficulties are being met and solved; the progress is a little laboured and moves through several involutions and returns; much is implied the bearing of which is not yet clear. Here we seem to get on to clearer ground and to lay hold of a more compact and pointed expression. But because of this very conciseness we have to be careful always of our steps in order to avoid error and a missing of the real sense. For we are here no longer steadily on the safe ground of psychological and spiritual experience, but have to deal with intellectual statements of spiritual and often of supracosmic truth. Metaphysical statement has always this peril and uncertainty about it that it is an attempt to define to our minds what is really infinite, an attempt which has to be made, but can never be quite satisfactory, quite final or ultimate. The highest spiritual truth can be lived, can be seen, but can only be partially stated. The deeper method and language of the Upanishads with its free resort to image and symbol, its intuitive form of speech in which the hard limiting definiteness of intellectual utterance is broken down and the implications of words are allowed to roll out into an illimitable wave of suggestion, is in these realms the only right method and language. But the Gita cannot resort to this form, because it is designed to satisfy an intellectual difficulty, answers a state of mind in which the reason, the arbiter to which we refer the conflicts of our impulses and sentiments, is at war with itself and impotent to arrive at a conclusion. The reason has to be led to a truth beyond itself, but by its own means and in its own manner. Offered a spiritually psychological solution, of the data of which it has no experience, it can only be assured of its validity if it is satisfied by an intellectual statement of the truths of being upon which the solution rests.

---

[1] Gita, VII. 1-14.

So far the justifying truths that have been offered to it are those with which it is already familiar, and they are only sufficient as a starting-point. There is first the distinction between the Self and the individual being in Nature. The distinction has been used to point out that this individual being in Nature is necessarily subject, so long as he lives shut up within the action of the ego, to the workings of the three gunas which make up by their unstable movements the whole scope and method of the reason, the mind and the life and senses in the body. And within this circle there is no solution. Therefore the solution has to be found by an ascent out of the circle, above this nature of the gunas, to the one immutable Self and silent Spirit, because then one gets beyond that action of the ego and desire which is the whole root of the difficulty. But since this by itself seems to lead straight towards inaction, as beyond Nature there is no instrumentality of action and no cause or determinant of action, — for the immutable self is inactive, impartial and equal to all things, all workings and all happenings, — the Yoga idea is brought in of the Ishwara, the Divine as master of works and sacrifice, and it is hinted but not yet expressly stated that this Divine exceeds even the immutable self and that in him lies the key to cosmic existence. Therefore by rising to him through the Self it is possible to have spiritual freedom from our works and yet to continue in the works of Nature. But it has not yet been stated who is this Supreme, incarnate here in the divine teacher and charioteer of works, or what are his relations to the Self and to the individual being in Nature. Nor is it clear how the Will to works coming from him can be other than the will in the nature of the three gunas. And if it is only that, then the soul obeying it can hardly fail to be in subjection to the gunas in its action, if not in its spirit, and if so, at once the freedom promised becomes either illusory or incomplete. Will seems to be an aspect of the executive part of being, to be power and active force of nature, Shakti, Prakriti. Is there then a higher Nature than that of the three gunas? Is there a power of pragmatic creation, will, action other than that of ego, desire, mind, sense, reason and the vital impulse?

Therefore, in this uncertainty, what has now to be done is to give more completely the knowledge on which divine works are to be founded. And this can only be the complete, the integral knowledge of the Divine who is the source of works and in whose being the worker becomes by knowledge free; for he knows the free Spirit from whom all works proceed and participates in his freedom. Moreover this knowledge must bring a light that justifies the assertion with which the first part of the Gita closes. It must ground the supremacy of bhakti over all other motives and powers of spiritual consciousness and action; it must be a knowledge of the supreme Lord of all creatures to whom alone the soul can offer itself in the perfect self-surrender which is the highest height of all love and devotion. This is what the

Teacher proposes to give in the opening verses of the seventh chapter which initiate the development that occupies all the rest of the book. “Hear,” he says, “how by practising Yoga with a mind attached to me and with me as *āśraya* (the whole basis, lodgment, point of resort of the conscious being and action) thou shalt know me without any remainder of doubt, integrally, *samagraṁ mām*. I will speak to thee without omission or remainder, *aśeṣataḥ*,” (for otherwise a ground of doubt may remain), “the essential knowledge, attended with all the comprehensive knowledge, by knowing which there shall be no other thing here left to be known.” The implication of the phrase is that the Divine Being is all, *vāsudevaḥ sarvam*, and therefore if he is known integrally in all his powers and principles, then all is known, not only the pure Self, but the world and action and Nature. There is then nothing else here left to be known, because all is that Divine Existence. It is only because our view here is not thus integral, because it rests on the dividing mind and reason and the separative idea of the ego, that our mental perception of things is an ignorance. We have to get away from this mental and egoistic view to the true unifying knowledge, and that has two aspects, the essential, *jñāna*, and the comprehensive, *vijñāna*, the direct spiritual awareness of the supreme Being and the right intimate knowledge of the principles of his existence, Prakriti, Purusha and the rest, by which all that is can be known in its divine origin and in the supreme truth of its nature. That integral knowledge, says the Gita, is a rare and difficult thing; “among thousands of men one here and there strives after perfection, and of those who strive and attain to perfection one here and there knows me in all the principles of my existence, *tattvataḥ*.”

Then, to start with and in order to found this integral knowledge, the Gita makes that deep and momentous distinction which is the practical basis of all its Yoga, the distinction between the two Natures, the phenomenal and the spiritual Nature. “The five elements (conditions of material being), mind, reason, ego, this is my eightfold divided Nature. But know my other Nature different from this, the supreme which becomes the Jiva and by which this world is upheld.” Here is the first new metaphysical idea of the Gita which helps it to start from the notions of the Sankhya philosophy and yet exceed them and give to their terms, which it keeps and extends, a Vedantic significance. An eightfold Nature constituted of the five *bhūtas*, — elements, as it is rendered, but rather elemental or essential conditions of material being to which are given the concrete names of earth, water, fire, air and ether, — the mind with its various senses and organs, the reason-will and the ego, is the Sankhya description of Prakriti. The Sankhya stops there, and because it stops there, it has to set up an unbridgeable division between the soul and Nature; it has to posit them as two quite distinct primary entities. The Gita also, if it stopped there, would have to make the same incurable antinomy between the Self and cosmic Nature which would then be only the Maya of the three gunas and all this cosmic existence would be simply the result of this Maya; it could be nothing else. But there is something else, there is a higher principle, a nature of spirit, *parā prakṛtir me*. There is a supreme nature of the Divine which is the real source of cosmic existence and its fundamental creative force and effective energy and of which the other lower and ignorant Nature is only a derivation and a dark shadow. In this highest dynamis Purusha and Prakriti are one. Prakriti there is only the will and the executive power of the Purusha, his activity of being, — not a separate entity, but himself in Power.

This supreme Prakriti is not merely a presence of the power of spiritual being immanent in cosmic activities. For then it might be only the inactive presence of the all-pervading Self, immanent in all things or containing them, compelling in a way the world action but not itself active. Nor is this highest Prakriti the *avyakta* of the Sankhyas, the primary unmanifest seed-state of the manifest active eightfold nature of things, the one productive original force of Prakriti out of which her many instrumental and executive powers evolve. Nor is it sufficient to interpret that idea of *avyakta* in the Vedantic sense and say that this supreme Nature is the power involved and inherent in unmanifest Spirit or Self out of which cosmos comes and into which it returns. It is that, but it is much more; for that is only one of its spiritual states. It is the integral conscious-power of the supreme Being, *cit-śakti*, which is behind the self and cosmos. In the immutable Self it is involved in the Spirit; it is there, but in *nivṛtti* or a holding back from action: in the mutable self and the cosmos it comes out into action, *pravṛtti*. There by its dynamic presence it evolves in the Spirit all existences and appears in them as their essential spiritual nature, the persistent truth behind their play of subjective and objective phenomena. It is the essential quality and force, *svabhāva*, the self-principle of all their becoming, the inherent principle and divine power behind their phenomenal existence. The balance of the gunas is only a quantitative and quite derivative play evolved out of this supreme Principle. All this activity of forms, all this mental, sensuous, intelligential striving of the lower nature is only a phenomenon, which could not be at all except for this spiritual force and this power of being; it comes from that and it exists in that and by that solely. If we dwell in the phenomenal nature only and see things only by the notions it impresses on us, we shall not get at the real truth of our active existence. The real truth is this spiritual power, this divine force of being, this essential quality of the spirit in things or rather of the spirit in which things are and from which they draw all their potencies and the seeds of their movements. Get at that truth, power, quality and we shall get at the real law of our becoming and the divine principle of our living, its source and sanction in the Knowledge and not only its process in the Ignorance.

This is to throw the sense of the Gita into language suited to our modern way of thinking; but if we look at its description of the Para Prakriti, we shall find that this is practically the substance of what it says. For first, this other higher Prakriti is, says Krishna, my supreme nature, *prakṛtiṁ me parām*. And this "I" here is the Purushottama, the supreme Being, the supreme Soul, the transcendent and universal Spirit. The original and eternal nature of the Spirit and its transcendent and originating Shakti is what is meant by the Para Prakriti. For speaking first of the origin of the world from the point of view of the active power of his Nature, Krishna assevers, "This is the womb of all beings," *etad-yonīni bhūtāni*. And in the next line of the couplet, again stating the same fact from the point of view of the originating Soul, he continues, "I am the birth of the whole world and so too its dissolution; there is nothing else supreme beyond Me." Here then the supreme Soul, Purushottama, and the supreme Nature, Para Prakriti, are identified: they are put as two ways of looking at one and the same reality. For when Krishna declares, I am the birth of the world and its dissolution, it is evident that it is this Para Prakriti, supreme Nature, of his being which is both these things. The Spirit is the supreme Being in his infinite consciousness and the supreme Nature is the infinity of power or will of being of the Spirit, — it is his infinite consciousness in its inherent divine energy and its supernal divine action. The birth is the movement of evolution of this conscious Energy out of the Spirit, *parā prakṛtir jīvabhūtā*, its activity in the mutable universe; the dissolution is the withdrawing of that activity by involution of the Energy into the immutable existence and self-gathered power of the Spirit. That then is what is initially meant by the supreme Nature.

The supreme Nature, *parā prakṛtiḥ*, is then the infinite timeless conscious power of the self-existent Being out of which all existences in the cosmos are manifested and come out of timelessness into Time. But in order to provide a spiritual basis for this manifold universal becoming in the cosmos the supreme Nature formulates itself as the Jiva. To put it otherwise, the eternal multiple soul of the Purushottama appears as individual spiritual existence in all the forms of the cosmos. All existences are instinct with the life of the one indivisible Spirit; all are supported in their personality, actions and forms by the eternal multiplicity of the one Purusha. We must be careful not to make the mistake of thinking that this supreme Nature is identical with the Jiva manifested in Time in the sense that there is nothing else or that it is only nature of becoming and not at all nature of being: that could not be the supreme nature of the Spirit. Even in Time it is something more; for otherwise the only truth of it in the cosmos would be nature of multiplicity and there would be no nature of unity in the world. That is not what the Gita says: it does not say that the supreme Prakriti is in its essence the

Jiva, *jīvātmikām*, but that it has become the Jiva, *jīvabhūtām*; and it is implied in that expression that behind its manifestation as the Jiva here it is originally something else and higher, it is nature of the one supreme spirit. The Jiva, as we are told later on, is the Lord, *īśvara*, but in his partial manifestation, *mamaivāṁśaḥ*; even all the multiplicity of beings in the universe or in numberless universes could not be in their becoming the integral Divine, but only a partial manifestation of the infinite One. In them Brahman the one indivisible existence resides as if divided, *avibhaktaṁ ca bhūteṣu vibhaktam iva ca sthitam*. The unity is the greater truth, the multiplicity is the lesser truth, though both are a truth and neither of them is an illusion.

It is by the unity of this spiritual nature that the world is sustained, *yayedaṁ dhāryate jagat*, even as it is that from which it is born with all its becomings, *etad-yonīni bhūtāni sarvāṇi*, and that also which withdraws the whole world and its existences into itself in the hour of dissolution, *ahaṁ kṛtsnasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayas tathā*. But in the manifestation which is thus put forth in the Spirit, upheld in its action, withdrawn in its periodical rest from action, the Jiva is the basis of the multiple existence; it is the multiple soul, if we may so call it, or, if we prefer, the soul of the multiplicity we experience here. It is one always with the Divine in its being, different from it only in the power of its being, — different not in the sense that it is not at all the same power, but in this sense that it only supports the one power in a partial multiply individualised action. Therefore all things are initially, ultimately and in the principle of their continuance too the Spirit. The fundamental nature of all is nature of the Spirit, and only in their lower differential phenomena do they seem to be something else, to be nature of body, life, mind, reason, ego and the senses. But these are phenomenal derivatives, they are not the essential truth of our nature and our existence.

The supreme nature of spiritual being gives us then both an original truth and power of existence beyond cosmos and a first basis of spiritual truth for the manifestation in the cosmos. But where is the link between this supreme nature and the lower phenomenal nature? On me, says Krishna, all this, all that is here — *sarvam idam*, the common phrase in the Upanishads for the totality of phenomena in the mobility of the universe — is strung like pearls upon a thread. But this is only an image which we cannot press very far; for the pearls are only kept in relation to each other by the thread and have no other oneness or relation with the pearl-string except their dependence on it for this mutual connection. Let us go then from the image to that which it images. It is the supreme nature of Spirit, the infinite conscious power of its being, self-conscient, all-conscient, all-wise, which maintains these phenomenal existences in relation to each other, penetrates them, abides in and supports them and weaves them into the system of its manifestation. This one supreme power manifests not only in all as the One, but in each as the Jiva, the individual spiritual presence; it manifests also as the essence of all quality of Nature. These are therefore the concealed spiritual powers behind all phenomena. This highest quality is not the working of the three gunas, which is phenomenon of quality and not its spiritual essence. It is rather the inherent, one, yet variable inner power of all these superficial variations. It is a fundamental truth of the Becoming, a truth that supports and gives a spiritual and divine significance to all its appearances. The workings of the gunas are only the superficial unstable becomings of reason, mind, sense, ego, life and matter, *sāttvikā bhāvā rājasās tāmasāś ca*; but this is rather the essential stable original intimate power of the becoming, *svabhāva*. It is that which determines the primary law of all becoming and of each Jiva; it constitutes the essence and develops the movement of the nature. It is a principle in each creature that derives from and is immediately related to a transcendent divine Becoming, that of the Ishwara, *madbhāvaḥ*. In this relation of the divine *bhāva* to the *svabhāva* and of the *svabhāva* to the superficial *bhāvāḥ*, of the divine Nature to the individual self-nature and of the self-nature in its pure and original quality to the phenomenal nature in all its mixed and confused play of qualities, we find the link between that supreme and this lower existence. The degraded powers and values of the inferior Prakriti derive from the absolute powers and values of the supreme Shakti and must go back to them to find their own source and truth and the essential law of their operation and movement. So too the soul or Jiva involved here in the shackled, poor and inferior play of the phenomenal qualities, if he would escape from it and be divine and perfect, must by resort to the pure action of his essential quality of Swabhava go back to that higher law of his own being in which he can discover the will, the power, the dynamic principle, the highest working of his divine nature.

This is clear from the immediately subsequent passage in which the Gita gives a number of instances to show how the Divine in the power of his supreme nature manifests and acts within the animate and so-called inanimate existences of the universe. We may disentangle them from the loose and free order which the exigence of the poetical form imposes and put them in their proper philosophical series. First, the divine Power and Presence works within the five elemental conditions of matter. "I am taste in the waters, sound in ether, scent in earth, energy of light in fire," and, it may be added for more completeness, touch or contact in air. That is to say, the Divine himself in his Para Prakriti is the energy at the basis of the various sensory relations of which, according to the ancient Sankhya system, the ethereal, the radiant, electric and gaseous, the liquid and the other elemental conditions of matter are the physical medium. The five elemental conditions of matter are the quantitative or material element in the lower nature and are the basis of material forms. The five Tanmatras — taste, touch, scent, and the others — are the qualitative element. These Tanmatras are the subtle energies whose action puts the sensory consciousness in relation to the gross forms of matter, — they are the basis of all phenomenal knowledge. From the material point of view matter is the reality and the sensory relations are derivative; but from the spiritual point of view the truth is the opposite. Matter and the material media are themselves derivative powers and at bottom are only concrete ways or conditions in which the workings of the quality of Nature in things manifest themselves to the sensory consciousness of the Jiva. The one original and eternal fact is the energy of Nature, the power and quality of being which so manifests itself to the soul through the senses. And what is essential in the senses, most spiritual, most subtle is itself stuff of that eternal quality and power. But energy or power of being in Nature is the Divine himself in his Prakriti; each sense in its purity is therefore that Prakriti, each sense is the Divine in his dynamic conscious force.

This we gather better from the other terms of the series. "I am the light of sun and moon, the manhood in man, the intelligence of the intelligent, the energy of the energetic, the strength of the strong, the ascetic force of those who do askesis, *tapasyā*." "I am life in all existences." In each case it is the energy of the essential quality on which each of these becomings depends for what it has become, that is given as the characteristic sign indicating the presence of the divine Power in their nature. Again, "I am pranava in all the Vedas," that is to say, the basic syllable OM, which is the foundation of all the potent creative sounds of the revealed word; OM is the one universal formulation of the energy of sound and speech, that which contains and sums up, synthetises and releases all the spiritual power and all the potentiality of Vak and Shabda and of which the other sounds, out of whose stuff words of speech are woven, are supposed to be the developed evolutions. That makes it quite clear. It is not the phenomenal developments of the senses or of life or of light, intelligence, energy, strength, manhood, ascetic force that are proper to the supreme Prakriti. It is the essential quality in its spiritual power that constitutes the Swabhava. It is the force of spirit so manifesting, it is the light of its consciousness and the power of its energy in things revealed in a pure original sign that is the self-nature. That force, light, power is the eternal seed from which all other things are the developments and derivations and variabilities and plastic circumstances. Therefore the Gita throws in as the most general statement in the series, "Know me to be the eternal seed of all existences, O son of Pritha." This eternal seed is the power of spiritual being, the conscious will in the being, the seed which, as is said elsewhere, the Divine casts into the great Brahman, into the supramental vastness, and from that all are born into phenomenal existence. It is that seed of spirit which manifests itself as the essential quality in all becomings and constitutes their swabhava.

The practical distinction between this original power of essential quality and the phenomenal derivations of the lower nature, between the thing itself in its purity and the thing in its lower appearances, is indicated very clearly at the close of the series. "I am the strength of the strong devoid of desire and liking," stripped of all attachment to the phenomenal pleasure of things. "I am in beings the desire which is not contrary to their dharma." And as for the secondary subjective becomings of Nature, *bhāvāḥ* (states of mind, affections of desire, movements of passion, the reactions of the senses, the limited and dual play of reason, the turns of the feeling and moral sense), which are sattwic, rajasic and tamasic, as for the working of the three gunas, they are, says the Gita, not themselves the pure action of the supreme spiritual nature, but are derivations from it; "they are verily from me," *matta eva*, they have no other origin, "but I am not in them, it is they that are in me." Here is indeed a strong and yet subtle distinction. "I am" says the Divine "the essential light, strength, desire, power, intelligence, but these derivations from them I am not in my essence, nor am I in them, yet are they all of them from me and they are all in my being." It is then upon the basis of these statements that we have to view the transition of things from the higher to the lower and again from the lower back to the higher nature.

The first statement offers no difficulty. The strong man in spite of the divine nature of the principle of strength in him falls into subjection to desire and to attachment, stumbles into sin, struggles towards virtue. But that is because he descends in all his derivative action into the grasp of the three gunas and does not govern that action from above, from his essential divine nature. The divine nature of his strength is not affected by these derivations, it remains the same in its essence in spite of every obscuration and every lapse. The Divine is there in that nature and supports him by its strength through the confusions of his lower existence till he is able to recover the light, illumine wholly his life with the true sun of his being and govern his will and its acts by the pure power of the divine will in his higher nature. But how can the Divine be desire, *kāma*? for this desire, this *kāma* has been declared to be our one great enemy who has to be slain. But that desire was the desire of the lower nature of the gunas which has its native point of origin in the rajasic being, *rajoguṇa-samudbhavaḥ*; for this is what we usually mean when we speak of desire. This other, the spiritual, is a will not contrary to the dharma.

Is it meant that the spiritual *kāma* is a virtuous desire, ethical in its nature, a sattwic desire, — for virtue is always sattwic in its origin and motive force? But then there would be here an obvious contradiction, — since in the very next line all sattwic affections are declared to be not the Divine, but only lower derivations. Undoubtedly sin has to be abandoned if one is to get anywhere near the Godhead; but so too has virtue to be overpassed if we are to enter into the Divine Being. The sattwic nature has to be attained, but it has then to be exceeded. Ethical action is only a means of purification by which we can rise towards the divine nature, but that nature itself is lifted beyond the dualities, — and indeed there could otherwise be no pure divine presence or divine strength in the strong man who is subjected to the rajasic passions. Dharma in the spiritual sense is not morality or ethics. Dharma, says the Gita elsewhere, is action governed by the swabhava, the essential law of one's nature. And this swabhava is at its core the pure quality of the spirit in its inherent power of conscious will and in its characteristic force of action. The desire meant here is therefore the purposeful will of the Divine in us searching for and discovering not the pleasure of the lower Prakriti, but the Ananda of its own play and self-fulfilling; it is the desire of the divine Delight of existence unrolling its own conscious force of action in accordance with the law of the swabhava.

But what again is meant by saying that the Divine is not in the becomings, the forms and affections of the lower nature, even the sattwic, though they all are in his being? In a sense he must evidently be in them, otherwise they could not exist. But what is meant is that the true and supreme spiritual nature of the Divine is not imprisoned there; they are only phenomena in his being created out of it by the action of the ego and the ignorance. The ignorance presents everything to us in an inverted vision and at least a partially falsified experience. We imagine that the soul is in the body, almost a result and derivation from the body; even we so feel it: but it is the body that is in the soul and a result and derivation from the soul. We think of the spirit as a small part of us — the Purusha who is no bigger than the thumb — in this great mass of material and mental phenomena: in reality, the latter for all its imposing appearance is a very small thing in the infinity of the being of the spirit. So it is here; in much the same sense these things are in the Divine rather than the Divine in these things. This lower nature of the three gunas which creates so false a view of things and imparts to them an inferior character is a Maya, a power of illusion, by which it is not meant that it is all non-existent or deals with unrealities, but that it bewilders our knowledge, creates false values, envelops us in ego, mentality, sense, physicality, limited intelligence and there conceals from us the supreme truth of our existence. This illusive Maya hides from us the Divine that we are, the infinite and imperishable spirit. "By these three kinds of becoming which are of the nature of the gunas, this whole world is bewildered and does not recognise Me supreme beyond them and imperishable." If we could see that that Divine is the real truth of our existence, all else also would change to our vision, assume its true character and our life and action acquire the divine values and move in the law of the divine nature.

But why then, since the Divine is there after all and the divine nature at the root even of these bewildering derivations, since we are the Jiva and the Jiva is that, is this Maya so hard to overcome, *māyā duratyayā*? Because it is still the Maya of the Divine, *daivī hyeṣā guṇamayī mama māyā*; "this is my divine Maya of the gunas." It is itself divine and a development from the nature of the Divine, but the Divine in the nature of the gods; it is *daivī*, of the godheads or, if you will, of the Godhead, but of the Godhead in its divided subjective and lower cosmic aspects, sattwic, rajasic and tamasic. It is a cosmic veil which the Godhead has spun around our understanding; Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra have woven its complex threads; the Shakti, the Supreme Nature is there at its base and is hidden in its every tissue. We have to work out this web in ourselves and turn through it and from it leaving it behind us when its use is finished, turn from the gods to the original and supreme Godhead in whom we shall discover at the same time the last sense of the gods and their works and the inmost spiritual verities of our own imperishable existence. "To Me who turn and come, they alone cross over beyond this Maya."

II

The Synthesis of Devotion and Knowledge[1]

THE GITA is not a treatise of metaphysical philosophy, in spite of the great mass of metaphysical ideas which arise incidentally in its pages; for here no metaphysical truth is brought into expression solely for its own sake. It seeks the highest truth for the highest practical utility, not for intellectual or even for spiritual satisfaction, but as the truth that saves and opens to us the passage from our present mortal imperfection to an immortal perfection. Therefore after giving us in the first fourteen verses of this chapter a leading philosophical truth of which we stand in need, it hastens in the next sixteen verses to make an immediate application of it. It turns it into a first starting-point for the unification of works, knowledge and devotion, — for the preliminary synthesis of works and knowledge by themselves has already been accomplished.

We have before us three powers, the Purushottama as the supreme truth of that into which we have to grow, the Self and the Jiva. Or, as we may put it, there is the Supreme, there is the impersonal spirit, and there is the multiple soul, timeless foundation of our spiritual personality, the true and eternal individual, *mamaivāṁśaḥ sanātanaḥ*. All these three are divine, all three are the Divine. The supreme spiritual nature of being, the Para Prakriti free from any limitation by the conditioning Ignorance, is the nature of the Purushottama. In the impersonal Self there is the same divine nature, but here it is in its state of eternal rest, equilibrium, inactivity, nivritti. Finally, for activity, for pravritti, the Para Prakriti becomes the multiple spiritual personality, the Jiva. But the intrinsic activity of this supreme

---

[1] Gita, VII. 15-28.

Nature is always a spiritual, a divine working. It is force of the supreme divine Nature, it is the conscious will of the being of the Supreme that throws itself out in various essential and spiritual power of quality in the Jiva: that essential power is the swabhava of the Jiva. All act and becoming which proceed directly from this spiritual force are a divine becoming and a pure and spiritual action. Therefore it follows that in action the effort of the human individual must be to get back to his true spiritual personality and to make all his works flow from the power of its supernal Shakti, to develop action through the soul and the inmost intrinsic being, not through the mental idea and vital desire, and to turn all his acts into a pure outflowing of the will of the Supreme, all his life into a dynamic symbol of the Divine Nature.

But there is also this lower nature of the three gunas whose character is the character of the ignorance and whose action is the action of the ignorance, mixed, confused, perverted; it is the action of the lower personality, of the ego, of the natural and not of the spiritual individual. It is in order to recede from that false personality that we have to resort to the impersonal Self and make ourselves one with it. Then, freed so from the ego personality, we can find the relation of the true individual to the Purushottama. It is one with him in being, even though necessarily partial and determinative, because individual, in action and temporal manifestation of nature. Freed too from the lower nature we can realise the higher, the divine, the spiritual. Therefore to act from the soul does not mean to act from the desire soul; for that is not the high intrinsic being, but only the lower natural and superficial appearance. To act in accordance with the intrinsic nature, the swabhava, does not mean to act out of the passions of the ego, to enact with indifference or with desire sin and virtue according to the natural impulses and the unstable play of the gunas. Yielding to passion, an active or an inert indulgence of sin is no way either to the spiritual quietism of the highest impersonality or to the spiritual activity of the divine individual who is to be a channel for the will of the supreme Person, a direct power and visible becoming of the Purushottama.

The Gita has laid it down from the beginning that the very first precondition of the divine birth, the higher existence is the slaying of rajasic desire and its children, and that means the exclusion of sin. Sin is the working of the lower nature for the crude satisfaction of its own ignorant, dull or violent rajasic and tamasic propensities in revolt against any high self-control and self-mastery of the nature by the spirit. And in order to get rid of this crude compulsion of the being by the lower Prakriti in its inferior modes we must have recourse to the highest mode of that Prakriti, the sattwic, which is seeking always for a harmonious light of knowledge and for a right rule of action. The Purusha, the soul within us which assents in Nature to the varying impulse of the gunas, has to give its sanction to that sattwic impulse and that sattwic will and temperament in our being which seeks after such a rule. The sattwic will in our nature has to govern us and not the rajasic and tamasic will. This is the meaning of all high reason in action as of all true ethical culture; it is the law of Nature in us striving to evolve from her lower and disorderly to her higher and orderly action, to act not in passion and ignorance with the result of grief and unquiet, but in knowledge and enlightened will with the result of inner happiness, poise and peace. We cannot get beyond the three gunas, if we do not first develop within ourselves the rule of the highest guna, sattwa.

"The evil-doers attain not to me," says the Purushottama, "souls bewildered, low in the human scale; for their knowledge is reft away from them by Maya and they resort to the nature of being of the Asura." This bewilderment is a befooling of the soul in Nature by the deceptive ego. The evil-doer cannot attain to the Supreme because he is for ever trying to satisfy the idol ego on the lowest scale of human nature; his real God is this ego. His mind and will, hurried away in the activities of the Maya of the three gunas, are not instruments of the spirit, but willing slaves or self-deceived tools of his desires. He sees this lower nature only and not his supreme self and highest being or the Godhead within himself and in the world: he explains all existence to his will in the terms of ego and desire and serves only ego and desire. To serve ego and desire without aspiration to a higher nature and a higher law is to have the mind and the temperament of the Asura. A first necessary step upward is to aspire to a higher nature and a higher law, to obey a better rule than the rule of desire, to perceive and worship a nobler godhead than the ego or than any magnified image of the ego, to become a right thinker and a right doer. This too is not in itself enough; for even the sattwic man is subject to the bewilderment of the gunas, because he is still governed by wish and disliking, *icchā-dveṣa*. He moves within the circle of the forms of Nature and has not the highest, not the transcendental and integral knowledge. Still by the constant upward aspiration in his ethical aim he in the end gets rid of the obscuration of sin which is the obscuration of rajasic desire and passion and acquires a purified nature capable of deliverance from the rule of the triple Maya. By virtue alone man cannot attain to the highest, but by virtue[2] he can develop a first capacity for attaining to it, *adhikāra*. For the crude rajasic or the dull tamasic ego is difficult to shake off and put below us; the sattwic ego is less difficult and at last, when it sufficiently subtilises and enlightens itself, becomes even easy to transcend, transmute or annihilate.

Man, therefore, has first of all to become ethical, *sukṛtī*, and then to rise to heights beyond any mere ethical rule of living, to the light, largeness and power of the spiritual nature, where he gets beyond the grasp of the dualities and its delusion, *dvandva-moha*. There he no longer seeks his personal good or pleasure or shuns his personal suffering or pain, for by these things he is no longer affected, nor says any longer, "I am virtuous," "I am sinful," but acts in his own high spiritual nature by the will of the Divine for the universal good. We have already seen that for this end self-knowledge, equality, impersonality are the first necessities, and that that is the way of reconciliation between knowledge and works, between spirituality and activity in the world, between the ever immobile quietism of the timeless self and the eternal play of the pragmatic energy of Nature. But the Gita now lays down another and greater necessity for the Karmayogin who has unified his Yoga of works with the Yoga of knowledge. Not knowledge and works alone are demanded of him now, but *bhakti* also, devotion to the Divine, love and adoration and the soul's desire of the Highest. This demand, not expressly made until now, had yet been prepared when the Teacher laid down as the necessary turn of his Yoga the conversion of all works into a sacrifice to the Lord of our being and fixed as its culmination the giving up of all works, not only into our impersonal Self, but through impersonality into the Being from whom all our will and power originate. What was there implied is now brought out and we begin to see more fully the Gita's purpose.

---

[2] Obviously, by the true inner *puṇya*, a sattwic clarity in thought, feeling, temperament, motive and conduct, not a merely conventional or social virtue.

We have now set before us three interdependent movements of our release out of the normal nature and our growth into the divine and spiritual being. "By the delusion of the dualities which arises from wish and disliking, all existences in the creation are led into bewilderment," says the Gita. That is the ignorance, the egoism which fails to see and lay hold on the Divine everywhere, because it sees only the dualities of Nature and is constantly occupied with its own separate personality and its seekings and shrinkings. For escape from this circle the first necessity in our works is to get clear of the sin of the vital ego, the fire of passion, the tumult of desire of the rajasic nature, and this has to be done by the steadying sattwic impulse of the ethical being. When that is done, *yeṣāṁ tvantagataṁ pāpaṁ janānāṁ puṇyakarmaṇām*, — or rather as it is being done, for after a certain point all growth in the sattwic nature brings an increasing capacity for a high quietude, equality and transcendence, — it is necessary to rise above the dualities and to become impersonal, equal, one self with the Immutable, one self with all existences. This process of growing into the spirit completes our purification. But while this is being done, while the soul is enlarging into self-knowledge, it has also to increase in devotion. For it has not only to act in a large spirit of equality, but to do also sacrifice to the Lord, to that Godhead in all beings which it does not yet know perfectly, but which it will be able so to know, integrally, *samagraṁ mām*, when it has firmly the vision of the one self everywhere and in all existences. Equality and vision of unity once perfectly gained, *te dvandva-moha-nirmuktāḥ*, a supreme bhakti, an all-embracing devotion to the Divine, becomes the whole and the sole law of the being. All other law of conduct merges into that surrender, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*. The soul then becomes firm in this bhakti and in the vow of self-consecration of all its being, knowledge, works; for it has now for its sure base, its absolute foundation of existence and action the perfect, the integral, the unifying knowledge of the all-originating Godhead, *te bhajante māṁ dṛḍha-vratāḥ*.

From the ordinary point of view any return towards bhakti or continuation of the heart's activities after knowledge and impersonality have been gained, might seem to be a relapse. For in bhakti there is always the element, the foundation even of personality, since its motive-power is the love and adoration of the individual soul, the Jiva, turned towards the supreme and universal Being. But from the standpoint of the Gita, where the aim is not inaction and immergence in the eternal Impersonal, but a union with the Purushottama through the integrality of our being, this objection cannot at all intervene. In this Yoga the soul escapes indeed its lower personality by the sense of its impersonal and immutable self-being; but it still acts and all action belongs to the multiple soul in the mutability of Nature. If we do not bring in as a corrective to an excessive quietism the idea of sacrifice to the Highest, we have to regard this element of action as something not at all ourselves, some remnant of the play of the gunas without any divine reality behind it, a last dissolving form of ego, of I-ness, a continued impetus of the lower Nature for which we are not responsible since our knowledge rejects it and aims at escape from it into pure inaction. But by combining the tranquil impersonality of the one self with the stress of the works of Nature done as a sacrifice to the Lord, we by this double key escape from the lower egoistic personality and grow into the purity of our true spiritual person. Then are we no longer the bound and ignorant ego in the lower, but the free Jiva in the supreme Nature. Then we no longer live in the knowledge of the one immutable and impersonal self and this mutable multiple Nature as two opposite entities, but rise to the very embrace of the Purushottama discovered simultaneously through both of these powers of our being. All three are the spirit, and the two which are apparent opposites prove to be only confronting faces of the third which is the highest. "There is the immutable and impersonal spiritual being (Purusha)," says Krishna later on, "and there is the mutable and personal spiritual being. But there is too another Highest (*uttama puruṣa*) called the supreme self, Paramatman, he who has entered into this whole world and upbears it, the Lord, the imperishable. I am this Purushottama who am beyond the mutable and am greater and higher even than the immutable. He who has knowledge of me as the Purushottama, adores me (has bhakti for me, *bhajati*), with all-knowledge and in every way of his natural being." And it is this bhakti of an integral knowledge and integral self-giving which the Gita now begins to develop.

For note that it is bhakti with knowledge which the Gita demands from the disciple and it regards all other forms of devotion as good in themselves but still inferior; they may do well by the way, but they are not the thing at which it aims in the soul's culmination. Among those who have put away the sin of the rajasic egoism and are moving towards the Divine, the Gita distinguishes between four kinds of *bhaktas*. There are those who turn to him as a refuge from sorrow and suffering in the world, *ārta*. There are those who seek him as the giver of good in the world, *arthārthī*. There are those who come to him in the desire for knowledge, *jijñāsu*. And lastly there are those who adore him with knowledge, *jñānī*. All are approved by the Gita, but only on the last does it lay the seal of its complete sanction. All these movements without exception are high and good, *udārāḥ sarva evaite*, but the bhakti with knowledge excels them all, *viśiṣyate*. We may say that these forms are successively the bhakti of the vital-emotional and affective nature,[3] that of the practical and dynamic nature, that of the reasoning intellectual nature, and that of the highest intuitive being which takes up all the rest of the nature into unity with the Divine. Practically, however, the others may be regarded as preparatory movements. For the Gita itself here says that it is only at the end of many existences that one can, after possession of the integral knowledge and after working that out in oneself through many lives, attain at the long last to the Transcendent. For the knowledge of the Divine as all things that are is difficult to attain and rare on earth is the great soul, *mahātmā*, who is capable of fully so seeing him and of entering into him with his whole being, in every way of his nature, by the wide power of this all-embracing knowledge, *sarvavit sarvabhāvena*.

---

[3] The later *bhakti* of ecstatic love is at its roots psychic in nature; it is vital-emotional only in its inferior forms or in some of its more outward manifestations.

It may be asked how is that devotion high and noble, *udāra*, which seeks God only for the worldly boons he can give or as a refuge in sorrow and suffering, and not the Divine for its own sake? Do not egoism, weakness, desire reign in such an adoration and does it not belong to the lower nature? Moreover, where there is not knowledge, the devotee does not approach the Divine in his integral all-embracing truth, *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*, but constructs imperfect names and images of the Godhead which are only reflections of his own need, temperament and nature, and he worships them to help or appease his natural longings. He constructs for the Godhead the name and form of Indra or Agni, of Vishnu or Shiva, of a divinised Christ or Buddha, or else some composite of natural qualities, an indulgent God of love and mercy, or a severe God of righteousness and justice, or an awe-inspiring God of wrath and terror and flaming punishments, or some amalgam of any of these, and to that he raises his altars without and in his heart and mind and falls down before it to demand from it worldly good and joy or healing of his wounds or a sectarian sanction for an erring, dogmatic, intellectual, intolerent knowledge. All this up to a certain point is true enough. Very rare is the great soul who knows that Vasudeva the omnipresent Being is all that is, *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*. Men are led away by various outer desires which take from them the working of the inner knowledge, *kāmais tais tair hṛtajñānāḥ*. Ignorant, they resort to other godheads, imperfect forms of the deity which correspond to their desire, *prapadyante 'nyadevatāḥ*. Limited, they set up this or that rule and cult, *taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya*, which satisfies the need of their nature. And in all this it is a compelling personal determination, it is this narrow need of their own nature that they follow and take for the highest truth, — incapable yet of the infinite and its largeness. The Godhead in these forms gives them their desires if their faith is whole; but these fruits and gratifications are temporary and it is a petty intelligence and unformed reason which makes the pursuit of them its principle of religion and life. And so far as there is a spiritual attainment by this way, it is only to the gods; it is only the Divine in formations of mutable nature and as the giver of her results that they realise. But those who adore the transcendent and integral Godhead embrace all this and transform it all, exalt the gods to their highest, Nature to her summits, and go beyond them to the very Godhead, realise and attain to the Transcendent. *Devān deva-yajo yānti mad-bhaktā yānti mām api.*

Still the supreme Godhead does not at all reject these devotees because of their imperfect vision. For the Divine in his supreme transcendent being, unborn, imminuable and superior to all these partial manifestations, cannot be easily known to any living creature. He is self-enveloped in this immense cloak of Maya, that Maya of his Yoga, by which he is one with the world and yet beyond it, immanent but hidden, seated in all hearts but not revealed to any and every being. Man in Nature thinks that these manifestations in Nature are all the Divine, when they are only his works and his powers and his veils. He knows all past and all present and future existences, but him none yet knoweth. If then after thus bewildering them with his workings in Nature, he were not to meet them in these at all, there would be no divine hope for man or for any soul in Maya. Therefore according to their nature, as they approach him, he accepts their bhakti and answers to it with the reply of divine love and compassion. These forms are after all a certain kind of manifestation through which the imperfect human intelligence can touch him, these desires are first means by which our souls turn towards him: nor is any devotion worthless or ineffective, whatever its limitations. It has the one grand necessity, faith. "Whatever form of me any devotee with faith desires to worship, I make that faith of his firm and undeviating." By the force of that faith in his cult and worship he gets his desire and the spiritual realisation for which he is at the moment fitted. By seeking all his good from the Divine, he shall come in the end to seek in the Divine all his good. By depending for his joys on the Divine, he shall learn to fix in the Divine all his joy. By knowing the Divine in his forms and qualities, he shall come to know him as the All and the Transcendent who is the source of all things.[4]

Thus by spiritual development devotion becomes one with knowledge. The Jiva comes to delight in the one Godhead, — in the Divine known as all being and consciousness and delight and as all things and beings and happenings, known in Nature, known in the self, known for that which exceeds self and Nature. He is ever in constant union with him, *nityayukta*; his whole life and being are an eternal Yoga with the Transcendent than whom there is nothing higher, with the Universal besides whom there is none else and nothing else. On him is concentred all his bhakti, *ekabhaktiḥ*, not on any partial godhead, rule or cult. This single devotion is his whole law of living and he has gone beyond all creeds of religious belief, rules of conduct, personal aims of life. He has no griefs to be healed, for he is in possession of the All-blissful. He has no desires to hunger after, for he possesses the highest and the All and is close to the All-Power that brings all fulfilment. He has no doubts or baffled seekings left, for all knowledge streams upon him from the Light in which he lives. He loves perfectly the Divine and is his beloved; for as he takes joy in the Divine, so too the Divine takes joy in him. This is the God-lover who has the knowledge, *jñānī bhakta*. And this knower, says the Godhead in the Gita, is my self; the others seize only motives and aspects in Nature, but he the very self-being and all-being of the Purushottama with which he is in union. His is the divine birth in the supreme Nature, integral in being, completed in will, absolute in love, perfected in knowledge. In him the Jiva's cosmic existence is justified because it has exceeded itself and so found its own whole and highest truth of being.

---

[4] There is a place also for the three lesser seekings even after the highest attainment, but transformed, not narrowly personal, — for there can still be a passion for the removal of sorrow and evil and ignorance and for the increasing evolution and integral manifestation of the supreme good, power, joy and knowledge in this phenomenal Nature.

III

The Supreme Divine[1]

ALREADY what has been said in the seventh chapter provides us with the starting-point of our new and fuller position and fixes it with sufficient precision. Substantially it comes to this that we are to move inwardly towards a greater consciousness and a supreme existence, not by a total exclusion of our cosmic nature, but by a higher, a spiritual fulfilment of all that we now essentially are. Only there is to be a change from our mortal imperfection to a divine perfection of being. The first idea on which this possibility is founded, is the conception of the individual soul in man as in its eternal essence and its original power a ray of the supreme Soul and Godhead, here a veiled manifestation of him, a being of his being, a consciousness of his consciousness, a nature of his nature, but in the obscurity of this mental and physical existence self-forgetful of its source, its reality, its true character. The second idea is that of the double nature of the Soul in manifestation, — the original nature in which it is one with its own true spiritual being, and the derived in which it is subject to the confusions of egoism and ignorance. The latter has to be cast away and the spiritual has to be inwardly recovered, fulfilled, made dynamic and active. Through an inner self-fulfilment, the opening of a new status, our birth into a new power, we return to the nature of the Spirit and re-become a portion of the Godhead from whom we have descended into this mortal figure of being.

There is here at once a departure from the general contemporary mind of Indian thought, a less negating attitude, a greater affirmation. In place of its obsessing idea of a self-annulment of Nature we get the glimpse of an ampler solution, the principle of a self-fulfilment in divine Nature. There is, even, at least a foreshadowing of the later developments of the religions of Bhakti. Our first experience of what is beyond our normal status, concealed behind the egoistic being in which we live, is still for the Gita the calm of a vast impersonal immutable self in whose equality and oneness we lose our petty egoistic personality and cast off in its tranquil purity all our narrow motives of desire and passion. But our second completer vision reveals to us a living Infinite, a divine immeasurable Being from whom all that we are proceeds and to which all that we are belongs, self and nature, world and spirit. When we are one with him in self and spirit, we do not lose ourselves, but rather recover our true selves in him poised in the supremacy of this Infinite. And this is done at one and the same time by three simultaneous movements, — an integral self-finding through works founded in his and our spiritual nature, an integral self-becoming through knowledge of the Divine Being in whom all exists and who is all, and — most sovereign and decisive movement of all — an integral self-giving through love and devotion of our whole being to this All and this Supreme, attracted to the Master of our works, to the Inhabitant of our hearts, to the continent of all our conscious existence. To him who is the source of all that we are, we give all that we are. Our persistent consecration turns into knowledge of him all our knowing and into light of his power all our action. The passion of love in our self-giving carries us up to him and opens the mystery of his deepest heart of being. Love completes the triple cord of the sacrifice, perfects the triune key of the highest secret, *uttamaṁ rahasyam*.

---

[1] Gita, VII. 29-30, VIII.

An integral knowledge in our self-giving is the first condition of its effective force. And therefore we have first of all to know this Purusha in all the powers and principles of his divine existence, *tattvataḥ*, in the whole harmony of it, in its eternal essence and living process. But to the ancient thought all the value of this knowledge, *tattvajñāna*, lay in its power for release out of our mortal birth into the immortality of a supreme existence. The Gita therefore proceeds next to show how this liberation too in the highest degree is a final outcome of its own movement of spiritual self-fulfilment. The knowledge of the Purushottama, it says in effect, is the perfect knowledge of the Brahman. Those who have resort to Me as their refuge, *mām āśritya*, their divine light, their deliverer, receiver and harbourer of their souls, those who turn to Me in their spiritual effort towards release from age and death, from the mortal being and its limitations, says Krishna, come to know that Brahman and all the integrality of the spiritual nature and the entirety of Karma. And because they know Me and know at the same time the material and the divine nature of being and the truth of the Master of sacrifice, they keep knowledge of Me also in the critical moment of their departure from physical existence and have at that moment their whole consciousness in union with Me. Therefore they attain to Me. No longer bound to the mortal existence, they reach the very highest status of the Divine quite as effectively as those who lose their separate personality in the impersonal and immutable Brahman. Thus the Gita closes this important and decisive seventh chapter.

Here we have certain expressions which give us in their brief sum the chief essential truths of the manifestation of the supreme Divine in the cosmos. All the originative and effective aspects of it are there, all that concerns the soul in its return to integral self-knowledge. First there is that Brahman, *tad brahma*; *adhyātma*, second, the principle of the self in Nature; *adhibhūta* and *adhidaiva* next, the objective phenomenon and subjective phenomenon of being; *adhiyajña* last, the secret of the cosmic principle of works and sacrifice. I, the Purushottama (*māṁ viduḥ*), says in effect Krishna, I who am above all these things, must yet be sought and known through all together and by means of their relations, — that is the only complete way for the human consciousness which is seeking its path back towards Me. But these terms in themselves are not at first quite clear or at least they are open to different interpretations, they have to be made precise in their connotation, and Arjuna the disciple at once asks for their elucidation. Krishna answers very briefly, — nowhere does the Gita linger very long upon any purely metaphysical explanation; it gives only so much and in such a way as will make their truth just seizable for the soul to proceed on to experience. By that Brahman, a phrase which in the Upanishads is more than once used for the self-existent as opposed to the phenomenal being, the Gita intends, it appears, the immutable self-existence which is the highest self-expression of the Divine and on whose unalterable eternity all the rest, all that moves and evolves, is founded, *akṣaraṁ paramam*. By *adhyātma* it means *svabhāva*, the spiritual way and law of being of the soul in the supreme Nature. Karma, it says, is the name given to the creative impulse and energy, *visargaḥ*, which looses out things from this first essential self-becoming, this Swabhava, and effects, creates, works out under its influence the cosmic becoming of existences in Prakriti. By *adhibhūta* is to be understood all the result of mutable becoming, *kṣaro bhāvaḥ*. By *adhidaiva* is intended the Purusha, the soul in Nature, the subjective being who observes and enjoys as the object of his consciousness all that is this mutable becoming of his essential existence worked out here by Karma in Nature. By *adhiyajña*, the Lord of works and sacrifice, I mean, says Krishna, myself, the Divine, the Godhead, the Purushottama here secret in the body of all these embodied existences. All that is, therefore, falls within this formula.

The Gita immediately proceeds from this brief statement to work out the idea of the final release by knowledge which it has suggested in the last verse of the preceding chapter. It will return indeed upon its thought hereafter to give such ulterior light as is needed for action and inner realisation, and we may wait till then for a fuller knowledge of all that these terms indicate. But before we proceed farther, it is necessary to bring out as much of the connection between these things as we are justified in understanding from this passage itself and from what has gone before. For here is indicated the Gita's idea of the process of the cosmos. First there is the Brahman, the highest immutable self-existent being which all existences are behind the play of cosmic Nature in time and space and causality, *deśa-kāla-nimitta*. For by that self-existence alone time and space and causality are able to exist, and without that unchanging support omnipresent, yet indivisible they could not proceed to their divisions and results and measures. But of itself the immutable

Brahman does nothing, causes nothing, determines nothing; it is impartial, equal, all-supporting, but does not select or originate. What then originates, what determines, what gives the divine impulsion of the Supreme? what is it that governs Karma and actively unrolls the cosmic becoming in Time out of the eternal being? It is Nature as Swabhava. The Supreme, the Godhead, the Purushottama is there and supports on his eternal immutability the action of his higher spiritual Shakti. He displays the divine Being, Consciousness, Will or Power, *yayedaṁ dhāryate jagat*: that is the Para Prakriti. The self-awareness of the Spirit in this supreme Nature perceives in the light of self-knowledge the dynamic idea, the authentic truth of whatever he separates in his own being and expresses it in the Swabhava, the spiritual nature of the Jiva. The inherent truth and principle of the self of each Jiva, that which works itself out in manifestation, the essential divine nature in all which remains constant behind all conversions, perversions, reversions, that is the Swabhava. All that is in the Swabhava is loosed out into cosmic Nature for her to do what she can with it under the inner eye of the Purushottama. Out of the constant *svabhāva*, out of the essential nature and self-principle of being of each becoming, she creates the varied mutations by which she strives to express it, unrolls all her changes in name and form, in time and space and those successions of condition developed one out of the other in time and space which we call causality, *nimitta*.

All this bringing out and continual change from state to state is Karma, is action of Nature, is the energy of Prakriti, the worker, the goddess of processes. It is first a loosing forth of the *svabhāva* into its creative action, *visargaḥ*. The creation is of existences in the becoming, *bhūta-karaḥ*, and of all that they subjectively or otherwise become, *bhāva-karaḥ*. All taken together, it is a constant birth of things in Time, *udbhava*, of which the creative energy of Karma is the principle. All this mutable becoming emerges by a combination of the powers and energies of Nature, *adhibhūta*, which constitutes the world and is the object of the soul's consciousness. In it all the soul is the enjoying and observing Deity in Nature; the divine powers of mind and will and sense, all the powers of its conscious being by which it reflects this working of Prakriti are its godheads, *adhidaiva*. This soul in Nature is therefore the *kṣara puruṣa*, it is the mutable soul, the eternal activity of the Godhead: the same soul in the Brahman drawn back from her is the *akṣara puruṣa*, the immutable self, the eternal silence of the Godhead. But in the form and body of the mutable being inhabits the supreme Godhead. Possessing at once the calm of the immutable existence and the enjoyment of the mutable action there dwells in man the Purushottama. He is not only remote from us in some supreme status beyond, but he is here too in the body of every being, in the heart of man and in Nature. There he receives the works of Nature as a sacrifice and awaits the conscious self-giving of the human soul: but always even in the human creature's ignorance and egoism he is the Lord of his swabhava and the Master of all his works, who presides over the law of Prakriti and Karma. From him the soul came forth into the play of Nature's mutations; to him the soul returns through immutable self-existence to the highest status of the Divine, *paraṁ dhāma*.

Man, born into the world, revolves between world and world in the action of Prakriti and Karma. Purusha in Prakriti is his formula: what the soul in him thinks, contemplates and acts, that always he becomes. All that he had been, determined his present birth; and all that he is, thinks, does in this life up to the moment of his death, determines what he will become in the worlds beyond and in lives yet to be. If birth is a becoming, death also is a becoming, not by any means a cessation. The body is abandoned, but the soul goes on its way, *tyaktvā kalevaram*. Much then depends on what he is at the critical moment of his departure. For whatever form of becoming his consciousness is fixed on at the time of death and has been full of that always in his mind and thought before death, to that form he must attain, since the Prakriti by Karma works out the soul's thoughts and energies and that is in real fact her whole business. Therefore, if the soul in the human being desires to attain to the status of the Purushottama, there are two necessities, two conditions which must be satisfied before that can be possible. He must have moulded towards that ideal his whole inner life in his earthly living; and he must be faithful to his aspiration and will in his departing. "Whoever leaves his body and departs" says Krishna "remembering me at his time of end, comes to my *bhāva*," that of the Purushottama, my status of being. He is united with the original being of the Divine and that is the ultimate becoming of the soul, *paro bhāvaḥ*, the last result of Karma in its return upon itself and towards its source. The soul which has followed the play of cosmic evolution that veils here its essential spiritual nature, its original form of becoming, *svabhāva*, and has passed through all these other ways of becoming of its consciousness which are only its phenomena, *taṁ taṁ bhāvam*, returns to that essential nature and, finding through this return its true self and spirit, comes to the original status of being which is from the point of view of the return a highest becoming, *mad-bhāvam*. In a certain sense we may say that it becomes God, since it unites itself with nature of the Divine in a last transformation of its own phenomenal nature and existence.

The Gita here lays a great stress on the thought and state of mind at the time of death, a stress which will with difficulty be understood if we do not recognise what may be called the self-creative power of the consciousness. What the thought, the inner regard, the faith, *śraddhā*, settles itself upon with a complete and definite insistence, into that our inner being tends to change. This tendency becomes a decisive force when we go to those higher spiritual and self-evolved experiences which are less dependent on external things than is our ordinary psychology, enslaved as that is to outward Nature. There we can see ourselves steadily becoming that on which we keep our minds fixed and to which we constantly aspire. Therefore there any lapse of the thought, any infidelity of the memory means always a retardation of the change or some fall in its process and a going back towards what we were before, — at least so long as we have not substantially and irrevocably fixed our new becoming. When we have done that, when we have made it normal to our experience, the memory of it remains self-existently because that now is the natural form of our consciousness. In the critical moment of passing from the mortal plane of living, the importance of our then state of consciousness becomes evident. But it is not a death-bed remembrance at variance with or insufficiently prepared by the whole tenor of our life and our past subjectivity that can have this saving power. The thought of the Gita here is not on a par with the indulgences and facilities of popular religion; it has nothing in common with the crude fancies that make the absolution and last unction of the priest, an edifying "Christian" death after an unedifying profane life or the precaution or accident of a death in sacred Benares or holy Ganges a sufficient machinery of salvation. The divine subjective becoming on which the mind has to be fixed firmly in the moment of the physical death, *yaṁ smaran bhāvaṁ tyajati ante kalevaram*, must have been one into which the soul was at each moment growing inwardly during the physical life, *sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*. "Therefore," says the divine Teacher, "at all times remember me and fight; for if thy mind and thy understanding are always fixed on and given up to Me, *mayi arpita-mano-buddhiḥ*, to Me thou shalt surely come. For it is by thinking always of him with a consciousness united with him in an undeviating Yoga of constant practice that one comes to the divine and supreme Purusha."

We arrive here at the first description of this supreme Purusha, — the Godhead who is even more and greater than the Immutable and to whom the Gita gives subsequently the name of Purushottama. He too in his timeless eternity is immutable and far beyond all this manifestation and here in Time there dawn on us only faint glimpses of his being conveyed through many varied symbols and disguises, *avyakto akṣaraḥ*. Still he is not merely a featureless or indiscernible existence, *anirdeśyam*; or he is indiscernible only because he is subtler than the last subtlety of which the mind is aware and because the form of the Divine is beyond our thought, *aṇor aṇīyāṁsam acintya-rūpam*. This supreme Soul and Self is the Seer, the Ancient of Days and in his eternal self-vision and wisdom the Master and Ruler of all existence who sets in their place in his being all things that are, *kaviṁ purāṇam anuśāsitāraṁ sarvasya dhātāram*. This supreme Soul is the immutable self-existent Brahman of whom the Veda-knowers speak, and this is that into which the doers of askesis enter when they have passed beyond the affections of the mind of mortality and for the desire of which they practise the control of the bodily passions.[2] That eternal reality is the highest step, place, foothold of being (*padam*); therefore is it the supreme goal of the soul's movement in Time, itself no movement but a status original, sempiternal and supreme, *paraṁ sthānam ādyam*.

The Gita describes the last state of the mind of the Yogin in which he passes from life through death to this supreme divine existence. A motionless mind, a soul armed with the strength of Yoga, a union with God in bhakti, — the union by love is not here superseded by the featureless unification through knowledge, it remains to the end a part of the supreme force of the Yoga, — and the life-force entirely drawn up and set between the brows in the seat of mystic vision. All the doors of the sense are closed, the mind is shut in into the heart, the life-force taken up out of its diffused movement into the head, the intelligence concentrated in the utterance of the sacred syllable OM and its conceptive thought in the remembrance of the supreme Godhead, *mām anusmaran*. That is the established Yogic way of going, a last offering up of the whole being to the Eternal, the Transcendent. But still that is only a process; the essential condition is the constant undeviating memory of the Divine in life, even in action and battle — *mām anusmara yudhya ca* — and the turning of the whole act of living into an uninterrupted Yoga, *nitya-yoga*. Whoever does that, finds Me easy to attain, says the Godhead; he is the great soul who reaches the supreme perfection.

The condition to which the soul arrives when it thus departs from life is supracosmic. The highest heavens of the cosmic plan are subject to a return to rebirth; but there is no rebirth imposed on the soul that departs to the Purushottama. Therefore whatever fruit can be had from the aspiration of knowledge to the indefinable Brahman, is acquired also by this other and comprehensive aspiration through knowledge, works and love to the self-existent Godhead who is the Master of works and the Friend of mankind and of all beings. To know him so and so to seek him does not bind to rebirth or to the chain of Karma; the soul can satisfy its desire to escape permanently from the transient and painful condition of our mortal being. And the Gita here, in order to make more precise to the mind this circling round of births and the escape from it, adopts the ancient theory of the cosmic cycles which became a fixed part of Indian cosmological notions. There is an eternal cycle of alternating periods of cosmic manifestation and non-manifestation, each period called respectively a day and a night of the creator Brahma, each of equal length in Time, the long aeon of his working which endures for a thousand ages, the long aeon of his sleep of another thousand silent ages. At the coming of the Day all manifestations are born into being out of the unmanifest, at the coming of the Night all vanish or are dissolved into it. Thus all these existences alternate helplessly in the cycle of becoming and non-becoming; they come into the becoming again and again, *bhūtvā bhūtvā*, and they go back constantly into the unmanifest. But this unmanifest is not the original divinity of the Being; there is another status of his existence, *bhāvo 'nyo*, a supracosmic unmanifest beyond this cosmic non-manifestation, which is eternally self-seated, is not an opposite of this cosmic status of manifestation but far above and unlike it, changeless, eternal, not forced to perish with the perishing of all these existences. "He is called the unmanifest immutable, him they speak of as the supreme soul and status, and those who attain to him return not; that is my supreme place of being, *paramaṁ dhāma*." For the soul attaining to it has escaped out of the cycle of cosmic manifestation and non-manifestation.

---

[2] The language here is taken bodily from the Upanishads.

Whether we entertain or we dismiss this cosmological notion, — which depends on the value we are inclined to assign to the knowledge of "the knowers of day and night," — the important thing is the turn the Gita gives to it. One might easily imagine that this eternally unmanifested Being whose status seems to have nothing to do with the manifestation or the non-manifestation, must be the ever undefined and indefinable Absolute, and the proper way to reach him is to get rid of all that we have become in the manifestation, not to carry up to it our whole inner consciousness in a combined concentration of the mind's knowledge, the heart's love, the Yogic will, the vital life-force. Especially, bhakti seems inapplicable to the Absolute who is void of every relation, *avyavahārya*. "But" insists the Gita, — although this condition is supracosmic and although it is eternally unmanifest, — still "that supreme Purusha has to be won by a bhakti which turns to him alone in whom all beings exist and by whom all this world has been extended in space." In other words, the supreme Purusha is not an entirely relationless Absolute aloof from our illusions, but he is the Seer, Creator and Ruler of the worlds, *kavim anuśāsitāram*, *dhātāram*, and it is by knowing and by loving Him as the One and the All, *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*, that we ought by a union with him of our whole conscious being in all things, all energies, all actions to seek the supreme consummation, the perfect perfection, the absolute release.

Then there comes a more curious thought which the Gita has adopted from the mystics of the early Vedanta. It gives the different times at which the Yogin has to leave his body according as he wills to seek rebirth or to avoid it. Fire and light and smoke or mist, the day and the night, the bright fortnight of the lunar month and the dark, the northern solstice and the southern, these are the opposites. By the first in each pair the knowers of the Brahman go to the Brahman; but by the second the Yogin reaches the "lunar light" and returns subsequently to human birth. These are the bright and the dark paths, called the path of the gods and the path of the fathers in the Upanishads, and the Yogin who knows them is not misled into any error. Whatever psycho-physical fact or else symbolism there may be behind this notion,[3] — it comes down from the age of the mystics who saw in every physical thing an effective symbol of the psychological and who traced everywhere an interaction and a sort of identity of the outward with the inward, light and knowledge, the fiery principle and the spiritual energy, — we need observe only the turn by which the Gita closes the passage: "Therefore at all times be in Yoga."

---

[3] Yogic experience shows in fact that there is a real psycho-physical truth, not indeed absolute in its application, behind this idea, viz., that in the inner struggle between the powers of the Light and the powers of the Darkness, the former tend to have a natural prevalence in the bright periods of the day or the year, the latter in the dark periods, and this balance may last until the fundamental victory is won.

For that is after all the essential, to make the whole being one with the Divine, so entirely and in all ways one as to be naturally and constantly fixed in union, and thus to make all living, not only thought and meditation, but action, labour, battle, a remembering of God. "Remember me and fight," means not to lose the ever-present thought of the Eternal for one single moment in the clash of the temporal which normally absorbs our minds, and that seems sufficiently difficult, almost impossible. It is entirely possible indeed only if the other conditions are satisfied. If we have become in our consciousness one self with all, one self which is always to our thought the Divine, and even our eyes and our other senses see and sense the Divine Being everywhere so that it is impossible for us at any time at all to feel or think of anything as that merely which the unenlightened sense perceives, but only as the Godhead at once concealed and manifested in that form, and if our will is one in consciousness with a supreme will and every act of will, of mind, of body is felt to come from it, to be its movement, instinct with it or identical, then what the Gita demands can be integrally done. The remembrance of the Divine Being becomes no longer an intermittent act of the mind, but the natural condition of our activities and in a way the very substance of the consciousness. The Jiva has become possessed of its right and natural, its spiritual relation to the Purushottama and all our life is a Yoga, an accomplished and yet an eternally self-accomplishing oneness.

IV

The Secret of Secrets

ALL THE truth that has developed itself at this length step by step, each bringing forward a fresh aspect of the integral knowledge and founding on it some result of spiritual state and action, has now to take a turn of immense importance. The Teacher therefore takes care first to draw attention to the decisive character of what he is about to say, so that the mind of Arjuna may be awakened and attentive. For he is going to open his mind to the knowledge and sight of the integral Divinity and lead up to the vision of the eleventh book, by which the warrior of Kurukshetra becomes conscious of the author and upholder of his being and action and mission, the Godhead in man and the world, whom nothing in man and the world limits or binds, because all proceeds from him, is a movement in his infinite being, continues and is supported by his will, is justified in his divine self-knowledge, has him always for its origin, substance and end. Arjuna is to become aware of himself as existing only in God and as acting only by the power within him, his workings only an instrumentality of the divine action, his egoistic consciousness only a veil and to his ignorance a misrepresentation of the real being within him which is an immortal spark and portion of the supreme Godhead.

This vision is to remove whatever doubt may still remain within his mind; it is to make him strong for the action from which he has shrunk, but to which he is irrevocably commanded and can no more recoil from it, — for to recoil would be the negation and denial of the divine will and sanction within him already expressed in his individual consciousness but soon to assume the appearance of the greater cosmic sanction. For now the world Being appears to him as the body of God ensouled by the eternal Time-spirit and with its majestic and dreadful voice missions him to the crash of the battle. He is called by it to the liberation of his spirit, to the fulfilment of his action in the cosmic mystery, and the two — liberation and action — are to be one movement. His intellectual doubts are clearing away as a greater light of self-knowledge and the knowledge of God and Nature is being unfolded before him. But intellectual clarity is not enough; he must see with the inner sight illumining his blind outward human vision, so that he may act with the consent of his whole being, with a perfect faith in all his members, *śraddhā*, with a perfect devotion to the Self of his self and the Master of his being and to the same Self of the world and Master of all being in the universe.

All that has gone before laid the foundations of the knowledge or prepared its first necessary materials or scaffolding, but now the full frame of the structure is to be placed before his unsealed vision. All that is to come after will have its great importance because it will analyse parts of this frame, show in what this or that in it consists; but in substance the integral knowledge of the Being who is speaking to him is to be now unveiled to his eyes so that he cannot choose but see. What has gone before showed him that he is not bound fatally to the knot of the ignorance and egoistic action in which he had hitherto remained contented till its partial solutions sufficed no longer to satisfy his mind bewildered by the conflict of opposite appearances that make up the action of the world and his heart troubled by the entanglement of his works from which he feels himself unable to escape except by renunciation of life and works. He has been shown that there are two opposed ways of working and living, one in the ignorance of the ego, one in the clear self-knowledge of a divine being. He may act with desire, with passion, an ego driven by the qualities of the lower Nature, subject to the balance of virtue and sin, joy and sorrow, preoccupied with the fruits and consequences of his works, success and defeat, good result and evil result, bound on the world machine, caught up in a great tangle of action and inaction and perverse action which perplex the heart and mind and soul of man with their changing and contrary masks and appearances. But he is not utterly tied down to the works of the ignorance; he may do if he will the works of knowledge. He may act here as the higher thinker, the knower, the Yogin, the seeker of freedom first and afterwards the liberated spirit. To perceive that great possibility and to keep his will and intelligence fixed on the knowledge and self-vision which will realise and make it effectual, is the path of escape from his sorrow and bewilderment, the way out of the human riddle.

There is a spirit within us calm, superior to works, equal, not bound in this external tangle, surveying it as its supporter, source, immanent witness, but not involved in it. Infinite, containing all, one self in all, it surveys impartially the whole action of nature and it sees that it is only the action of Nature, not its own action. It sees that the ego and its will and its intelligence are all a machinery of Nature and that all their activities are determined by the complexity of her triple modes and qualities. The eternal spirit itself is free from these things. It is free from them because it knows; it knows that Nature and ego and the personal being of all these creatures do not make up the whole of existence. For existence is not merely a glorious or a vain, a wonderful or a dismal panorama of a constant mutation of becoming. There is something eternal, immutable, imperishable, a timeless self-existence; that is not affected by the mutations of Nature. It is their impartial witness, neither affecting nor affected, neither acting nor acted upon, neither virtuous nor sinful, but always pure, complete, great and unwounded. Neither grieving nor rejoicing at all that afflicts and attracts the egoistic being, it is the friend of none, the enemy of none, but one equal self of all. Man is not now conscious of this self, because he is wrapped up in his outward-going mind, because he will not learn or has not learned to live within; he does not detach himself, draw back from his action and observe it as the work of Nature. Ego is the obstacle, the linch-pin of the wheel of delusion, the loss of the ego in the soul's self the first condition of freedom. To become spirit, no longer merely a mind and ego, is the opening word of this message of liberation.

Arjuna has been therefore called upon first to give up all desire of the fruits of his works and become simply the desireless impartial doer of whatever has to be done, — leaving the fruit to whatever power may be the master of the cosmic workings. For he very evidently is not the master; it is not for the satisfaction of his personal ego that Nature was set upon her ways, not for the fulfilment of his desires and preferences that the universal Life is living, not for the justification of his intellectual opinions, judgments and standards that the universal Mind is working, nor is it to that petty tribunal that it has to refer its cosmic aims or its terrestrial method and purposes. These claims can only be made by the ignorant souls who live in their personality and see everything from that poor and narrow standpoint. He must stand back first from his egoistic demand on the world and work only as one among the millions who contributes his share of effort and labour to a result determined not by himself, but by the universal action and purpose. But he has to do yet more, he has to give up the idea of being the doer and to see, freed from all personality, that it is the universal intelligence, will, mind, life that is at work in him and in all others. Nature is the universal worker; his works are hers, even as the fruits of her works in him are part of the grand sum of result guided by a greater Power than his own. If he can do these two things spiritually, then the tangle and bondage of his works will fall far away from him; for the whole knot of that bondage lay in his egoistic demand and participation. Passion and sin and personal joy and grief will fade away from his soul, which will now live within, pure, large, calm, equal to all persons and all things. Action will produce no subjective reaction and will leave no stain nor any mark on his spirit's purity and peace. He will have the inner joy, rest, ease and inalienable bliss of a free unaffected being. Neither within nor without will he have any more the old little personality, for he will feel consciously one self and spirit with all, even as his outer nature will have become to his consciousness an inseparable part of the universal mind, life and will. His separative egoistic personality will have been taken up and extinguished in the impersonality of spiritual being; his separative egoistic nature will be unified with the action of cosmic Nature.

But this liberation is dependent on two simultaneous, but not yet reconciled perceptions, the clear vision of spirit and the clear vision of Nature. This is not the scientific and intelligent detachment which is quite possible even to the materialistic philosopher who has some clear vision of Nature alone, but not the perception of his own soul and self-being. Nor is it the intellectual detachment of the idealistic sage who escapes from the more limiting and disturbing forms of his ego by a luminous use of the reason. This is a larger, more living, more perfect spiritual detachment which comes by a vision of the Supreme who is more than Nature and greater than mind and reason. But even this detachment is only the initial secret of freedom and of the clear vision of knowledge, it is not the whole clue to the divine mystery, — for by itself it would leave Nature unexplained and the natural active part of being isolated from the spiritual and quietistic self-existence. The divine detachment must be the foundation for a divine participation in Nature which will replace the old egoistic participation, the divine quietism must support a divine activism and kinetism. This truth which the Teacher has had in view all along and therefore insisted on the sacrifice of works, the recognition of the Supreme as the master of our works and the doctrine of the Avatar and the divine birth, has yet been at first kept subordinate to the primary necessity of a quietistic liberation. Only the truths which lead to spiritual calm, detachment, equality and oneness, in a word, to the perception and becoming of the immutable self, have been fully developed and given their largest amplitude of power and significance. The other great and necessary truth, its complement, has been left in a certain obscurity of a lesser or relative light; it has been hinted at constantly, but not as yet developed. Now in these successive chapters it is being rapidly released into expression.

Throughout Krishna, the Avatar, the Teacher, the charioteer of the human soul in the world-action, has been preparing the revelation of the secret of himself, Nature's deepest secret. He has kept one note always sounding across his preparatory strain and insistently coming in as a warning and prelude of the larger ultimate harmony of his integral Truth. That note was the idea of a supreme Godhead which dwells within man and Nature, but is greater than man and Nature, is found by impersonality of the self, but of which impersonal self is not the whole significance. We now see the meaning of that strong recurring insistence. It was this one Godhead, the same in universal self and man and Nature who through the voice of the Teacher in the chariot was preparing for his absolute claim to the whole being of the awakened seer of things and doer of works. "I who am within thee," he was saying, "I who am here in this human body, I for whom all exists, acts, strives, am at once the secret of the self-existent spirit and of the cosmic action. This 'I' is the greater I of whom the largest human personality is only a partial and fragmentary manifestation, Nature itself only an inferior working. Master of the soul, master of all the works of the cosmos, I am the one Light, the sole Power, the only Being. This Godhead within thee is the Teacher, the Sun, the lifter of the clear blaze of knowledge in which thou becomest aware of the difference between thy immutable self and thy mutable nature. But look beyond the light itself to its source; then shalt thou know the supreme Soul in which is recovered the spiritual truth of personality and Nature. See then the one self in all beings that thou mayst see me in all beings; see all beings in one spiritual self and reality, because that is the way to see all beings in me; know one Brahman in all that thou mayst see God who is the supreme Brahman. Know thyself, be thyself that thou mayst be united with me of whom this timeless self is the clear light or the transparent curtain. I the Godhead am the highest truth of self and spirit."

Arjuna has to see that the same Godhead is the higher truth too not only of self and spirit but of Nature and his own personality, the secret at once of the individual and the universe. That was the Will universal in Nature, greater than the acts of Nature which proceed from him, to whom belong her actions and man's and the fruits of them. Therefore has he to do works as a sacrifice, because that is the truth of his works and of all works. Nature is the worker and not ego, but Nature is only a power of the Being who is the sole master of all her works and energisms and of all the aeons of the cosmic sacrifice. Therefore since his works are that Being's, he has to give up all his actions to the Godhead in him and the world by whom they are done in the divine mystery of Nature. This is the double condition of the divine birth of the soul, of its release from the mortality of the ego and the body into the spiritual and eternal, — knowledge first of one's timeless immutable self and union through it with the timeless Godhead, but knowledge too of that which lives behind the riddle of cosmos, the Godhead in all existences and their workings. Thus only can we aspire through the offering of all our nature and being to a living union with the One who has become in Time and Space all that is. Here is the place of bhakti in the scheme of the Yoga of an integral self-liberation. It is an adoration and aspiration towards that which is greater than imperishable self or changing Nature. All knowledge then becomes an adoration and aspiration, but all works too become an adoration and aspiration. Works of nature and freedom of soul are unified in this adoration and become one self-uplifting to the one Godhead. The final release, a passing away from the lower nature to the source of the higher spiritual becoming, is not an extinction of the soul, — only its form of ego becomes extinct, — but a departure of our whole self of knowledge, will and love to dwell no longer in his universal, but in his supracosmic reality, a fulfilment, not an annullation.

Necessarily, to make this knowledge clear to the mind of Arjuna, the divine Teacher sets out by removing the source of two remaining difficulties, the antinomy between the impersonal self and the human personality and the antinomy between the self and Nature. While these two antinomies last, the Godhead in Nature and man remains obscure, irrational and unbelievable. Nature has been represented as the mechanical bondage of the gunas, the soul as the egoistic being subject to that bondage. But if that be all their truth, they are not and cannot be divine. Nature, ignorant and mechanical, cannot be a power of God; for divine Power must be free in its workings, spiritual in its origin, spiritual in its greatness. The soul bound and egoistic in Nature, mental, vital, physical only, cannot be a portion of the Divine and itself a divine being; for such a divine being must be itself of the very nature of the Divine, free, spiritual, self-developing, self-existent, superior to mind, life and body. Both these difficulties and the obscurities they bring in are removed by one illumining ray of truth. Mechanical Nature is only a lower truth; it is the formula of an inferior phenomenal action. There is a higher which is the spiritual and that is the nature of our spiritual personality, our true person. God is at once impersonal and personal. His impersonality is to our psychological realisation an infinite of timeless being, consciousness, bliss of existence; his personality represents itself here as a conscious power of being, a conscious centre of knowledge and will and the joy of multiple self-manifestation. We are that one impersonality in the static essence of our being; we are each of us the multitude of that essential power in our spiritual person. But the distinction is only for the purposes of self-manifestation; the divine impersonality is, when one goes behind it, at the same time infinite He, a supreme soul and spirit. It is the great "I" — *so aham*, I am He, from which all personality and nature proceed and disport themselves here diversely in the appearance of an impersonal world. Brahman is all this that is, says the Upanishad, for Brahman is one self which sees itself in four successive positions of consciousness. Vasudeva, the eternal Being, is all, says the Gita. He is the Brahman, consciously supports and originates all from his higher spiritual nature, consciously here becomes all things in a nature of intelligence, mind, life and sense and objective phenomenon of material existence. The Jiva is he in that spiritual nature of the Eternal, his eternal multiplicity, his self-vision from many centres of conscious self-power. God, Nature and Jiva are the three terms of existence, and these three are one being.

How does this Being manifest himself in cosmos? First as the immutable timeless self omnipresent and all-supporting which is in its eternity being and not becoming. Then, held in that being there is an essential power or spiritual principle of self-becoming, *svabhāva*, through which by spiritual self-vision it determines and expresses, creates by liberation all that is latent or contained in its own existence. The power or the energy of that self-becoming looses forth into universal action, Karma, all that is thus determined in the spirit. All creation is this action, is this working of the essential nature, is Karma. But it is developed here in a mutable Nature of intelligence, mind, life, sense and form-objectivity of material phenomenon actually cut off from the absolute light and limited by the Ignorance. All its workings become there a sacrifice of the soul in Nature to the supreme Soul secret within her, and the supreme Godhead dwells therefore in all as the Master of their sacrifice, whose presence and power govern it and whose self-knowledge and delight of being receive it. To know this is to have the right knowledge of the universe and the vision of God in the cosmos and to find out the door of escape from the Ignorance. For this knowledge, made effective for man by the offering up of his works and all his consciousness to the Godhead in all, enables him to return to his spiritual existence and through it to the supracosmic Reality eternal and luminous above this mutable Nature.

This truth is the secret of being which the Gita is now going to apply in its amplitude of result for our inner life and our outer works. What it is going to say is the most secret thing of all.[1] It is the knowledge of the whole Godhead, *samagraṁ mām*, which the Master of his being has promised to Arjuna, that essential knowledge attended with the complete knowledge of it in all its principles which will leave nothing yet to be known. The whole knot of the ignorance which has bewildered his human mind and has made his will recoil from his divinely appointed work, will have been cut entirely asunder. This is the wisdom of all wisdoms, the secret of all secrets, the king-knowledge, the king-secret. It is a pure and supreme light which one can verify by direct spiritual experience and see in oneself as the truth: it is the right and just knowledge, the very law of being. It is easy to practise when one gets hold of it, sees it, tries faithfully to live in it.

But faith is necessary; if faith is absent, if one trusts to the critical intelligence which goes by outward facts and jealously questions the revelatory knowledge because that does not square with the divisions and imperfections of the apparent nature and seems to exceed it and state something which carries us beyond the first practical facts of our present existence, its grief, its pain, evil, defect, undivine error and stumbling, *aśubham*, then there is no possibility of living out that greater knowledge. The soul that fails to get faith in the higher truth and law, must return into the path of ordinary mortal living subject to death and error and evil: it cannot grow into the Godhead which it denies. For this is a truth which has to be lived, — and lived in the soul's growing light, not argued out in the mind's darkness. One has to grow into it, one has to become it, — that is the only way to verify it. It is only by an exceeding of the lower self that one can become the real divine self and live the truth of our spiritual existence. All the apparent truths one can oppose to it are appearances of the lower Nature. The release from the evil and the defect of the lower Nature, *aśubham*, can only come by accepting a higher knowledge in which all this apparent evil becomes convinced of ultimate unreality, is shown to be a creation of our darkness. But to grow thus into the freedom of the divine Nature one must accept and believe in the Godhead secret within our present limited nature. For the reason why the practice of this Yoga becomes possible and easy is that in doing it we give up the whole working of all that we naturally are into the hands of that inner divine Purusha. The Godhead works out the divine birth in us progressively, simply, infallibly, by taking up our being into his and by filling it with his own knowledge and power, *jñānadīpena bhāsvatā*; he lays hands on our obscure ignorant nature and transforms it into his own light and wideness. What with entire faith and without egoism we believe in and impelled by him will to be, the God within will surely accomplish. But the egoistic mind and life we now and apparently are, must first surrender itself for transmutation into the hands of that inmost secret Divinity within us.

---

[1] Gita, IX. 1-3.

V

The Divine Truth and Way

THE GITA then proceeds to unveil the supreme and integral secret, the one thought and truth in which the seeker of perfection and liberation must learn to live and the one law of perfection of his spiritual members and of all their movements. This supreme secret is the mystery of the transcendent Godhead who is all and everywhere, yet so much greater and other than the universe and all its forms that nothing here contains him, nothing expresses him really, and no language which is borrowed from the appearances of things in space and time and their relations can suggest the truth of his unimaginable being. The consequent law of our perfection is an adoration by our whole nature and its self-surrender to its divine source and possessor. Our one ultimate way is the turning of our entire existence in the world, and not merely of this or that in it, into a single movement towards the Eternal. By the power and mystery of a divine Yoga we have come out of his inexpressible secrecies into this bounded nature of phenomenal things. By a reverse movement of the same Yoga we must transcend the limits of phenomenal nature and recover the greater consciousness by which we can live in the Divine and the Eternal.

The supreme being of the Divine is beyond manifestation: the true sempiternal image of him is not revealed in matter, nor is it seized by life, nor is it cognisable by mind, *acintyarūpa*, *avyaktamūrti*. What we see is only a self-created form, *rūpa*, not the eternal form of the Divinity, *svarūpa*. There is someone or there is something that is other than the universe, inexpressible, unimaginable, an ineffably infinite Godhead beyond anything that our largest or subtlest conceptions of infinity can shadow. All this weft of things to which we give the name of universe, all this immense sum of motion to which we can fix no limits and vainly seek in its forms and movements for any stable reality, any status, level and point of cosmic leverage, has been spun out, shaped, extended by this highest Infinite, founded upon this ineffable supracosmic Mystery. It is founded upon a self-formulation which is itself unmanifest and unthinkable. All this mass of becomings always changing and in motion, all these creatures, existences, things, breathing and living forms cannot contain him either in their sum or in their separate existence. He is not in them; it is not in them or by them that he lives, moves or has his being, — God is not the Becoming. It is they that are in him, it is they that live and move in him and draw their truth from him; they are his becomings, he is their being.[1] In the unthinkable timeless and spaceless infinity of his existence he has extended this minor phenomenon of a boundless universe in an endless space and time.

And even to say of him that all exists in him is not the whole truth of the matter, not the entirely real relation: for it is to speak of him with the idea of space, and the Divine is spaceless and timeless. Space and time, immanence and pervasion and exceeding are all of them terms and images of his consciousness. There is a Yoga of divine Power, *me yoga aiśvaraḥ*, by which the Supreme creates phenomena of himself in a spiritual, not a material, self-formulation of his own extended infinity, an extension of which the material is only an image. He sees himself as one with that, is identified with that and all it harbours. In that infinite self-seeing, which is not his whole seeing, — the pantheist's identity of God and universe is a still more limited view, — he is at once one with all that is and yet exceeds it; but he is other also than this self or extended infinity of spiritual being which contains and exceeds the universe. All exists here in his world-conscious infinite, but that again is upheld as a self-conception by the supracosmic reality of the Godhead which exceeds all our terms of world and being and consciousness.

---

[1] *matsthāni sarvabhūtāni na cāhaṁ teṣvavasthitaḥ.*

This is the mystery of his being that he is supracosmic, yet not in any exclusive sense extracosmic. For he pervades it all as its self; there is a luminous uninvolved presence of the self-being of God, *mama ātmā*, which is in constant relation with the becoming and brings all its existences into manifestation by his simple presence.[2] Therefore it is that we have these terms of Being and becoming, existence in itself, *ātman*, and existences dependent upon it, *bhūtāni*, mutable beings and immutable being. But the highest truth of these two relations and the resolution of their antinomy must be found in that which exceeds it; it is the supreme Godhead who manifests both containing self and its contained phenomena by the power of his spiritual consciousness, *yogamāyā*. And it is only through union with him in our spiritual consciousness that we can arrive at our real relations with his being.

Metaphysically stated, this is the intention of these verses of the Gita: but they rest founded not upon any intellectual speculation, but on spiritual experience; they synthetise because they arise globally from certain truths of spiritual consciousness. When we attempt to put ourselves into conscious relations with whatever supreme or universal Being there exists concealed or manifest in the world, we arrive at a very various experience and one or other variant term of this experience is turned by different intellectual conceptions into their fundamental idea of existence. We have, to start with, the crude experience first of a Divine who is something quite different from and greater than ourselves, quite different from and greater than the universe in which we live; and so it is and no more so long as we live only in our phenomenal selves and see around us only the phenomenal face of the world. For the highest truth of the Supreme is supracosmic and all that is phenomenal seems a thing other than the infinity of the self-conscious spirit, seems an image of a lesser truth if not an illusion. When we dwell in this difference only, we regard the Divine as if extracosmic. That he is only in this sense that he is not, being supracosmic, contained in the cosmos and its creations, but not in the sense that they are outside his being: for there is nothing outside the one Eternal and Real. We realise this first truth of the Godhead spiritually when we get the experience that we live and move and have our being in him alone, that however different from him we may be, we depend on him for our existence and the universe itself is only a phenomenon and movement in the Spirit.

---

[2] *bhūtabhṛn na ca bhūtastho mamātmā bhūtabhāvanaḥ.*

But again we have the farther and more transcendent experience that our self-existence is one with his self-existence. We perceive a one self of all and of that we have the consciousness and the vision: we can no longer say or think that we are entirely different from him, but that there is self and there is phenomenon of the self-existent; all is one in self, but all is variation in the phenomenon. By an exclusive intensity of union with the self we may even come to experience the phenomenon as a thing dreamlike and unreal. But again by a double intensity we may have too the double experience of a supreme self-existent oneness with him and yet of ourselves as living with him and in many relations to him in a persistent form, an actual derivation of his being. The universe, and our existence in the universe, becomes to us a constant and real form of the self-aware existence of the Divine. In that lesser truth we have our relations of difference between us and him and all these other living or inanimate powers of the Eternal and our dealings with his cosmic self in the nature of the universe. These relations are other than the supracosmic truth, they are derivative creations of a certain power of consciousness of the spirit, and because they are other and because they are creations the exclusive seekers of the supracosmic Absolute tax them with an unreality relative or complete. Yet are they from him, they are existent forms derived from his being, not figments created out of nothing. For it is ever itself and figures of itself and not things quite other than itself that the Spirit sees everywhere. Nor can we say that there is nothing at all in the supracosmic that corresponds to these relations. We cannot say that they are derivations of consciousness sprung from that source but yet with nothing in the source which at all supports or justifies them, nothing that is the eternal reality and supernal principle of these forms of his being.

Again if we press in yet another way the difference between the self and the forms of self, we may come to regard the Self as containing and immanent, we may admit the truth of omnipresent spirit, and yet the forms of spirit, the moulds of its presence may affect us not only as something other than it, not only as transient, but as unreal images. We have the experience of the Spirit, the Divine Being immutable and ever containing in his vision the mutabilities of the universe; we have too the separate, the simultaneous or the coincident experience of the Divine immanent in ourselves and in all creatures. And yet the universe may be to us only an empirical form of his and our consciousness, or only an image or a symbol of existence by which we have to construct our significant relations with him and to grow gradually aware of him. But on the other hand, we get another revealing spiritual experience in which we are forced to see as the very Divine all things, not only that Spirit which dwells immutable in the universe and in its countless creatures, but all this inward and outward becoming. All is then to us a divine Reality manifesting himself in us and in the cosmos. If this experience is exclusive, we get the pantheistic identity, the One that is all: but the pantheistic vision is only a partial seeing. This extended universe is not all that the Spirit is, there is an Eternal greater than it by which alone its existence is possible. Cosmos is not the Divine in all his utter reality, but a single self-expression, a true but minor motion of his being. All these spiritual experiences, however different or opposed at first sight, are yet reconcilable if we cease to press on one or other exclusively and if we see this simple truth that the divine Reality is something greater than the universal existence, but yet that all universal and particular things are that Divine and nothing else, — significative of him, we might say, and not entirely That in any part or sum of their appearance, but still they could not be significative of him if they were something else and not term and stuff of the divine existence. That is the Real; but they are its expressive realities.[3]

This is what is intended by the phrase, *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*; the Godhead is all that is universe and all that is in the universe and all that is more than the universe. The Gita lays stress first on his supracosmic existence. For otherwise the mind would miss its highest goal and remain turned towards the cosmic only or else attached to some partial experience of the Divine in the cosmos. It lays stress next on his universal existence in which all moves and acts. For that is the justification of the cosmic effort and that is the vast spiritual self-awareness in which the Godhead self-seen as the Time-Spirit does his universal works. Next it insists with a certain austere emphasis on the acceptance of the Godhead as the divine inhabitant in the human body. For he is the Immanent in all existences, and if the indwelling divinity is not recognised, not only will the divine meaning of individual existence be missed, the urge to our supreme spiritual possibilities deprived of its greatest force, but the relations of soul with soul in humanity will be left petty, limited and egoistic. Finally, it insists at great length on the divine manifestation in all things in the universe and affirms the derivation of all that is from the nature, power and light of the one Godhead. For that seeing too is essential to the God-knowledge; on it is founded the integral turn of the whole being and the whole nature Godwards, the acceptance by man of the works of the divine Power in the world and the possibility of remoulding his mentality and will into the type of the God-action, transcendent in initiation, cosmic in motive, transmitted through the individual, the Jiva.

The supreme Godhead, the Self immutable behind the cosmic consciousness, the individual Divinity in the human being and the Divine secretly conscious or partially manifested in cosmic Nature and all her works and creatures, are then one reality, one Godhead. But the truths that we can put forward the most confidently of one, are reversed or they alter their sense when we try to apply them to the other poises of the one Being. Thus the Divine is always the Lord, Ishwara; but we cannot therefore crudely apply the idea of his essential lordship and mastery in exactly the same way without change in all four fields. As the Divine manifest in cosmic Nature he acts in close identity with Nature. He is himself then Nature, so to speak, but with a spirit within her workings which foresees and forewills, understands and enforces, compels the action, overrules in the result. As the one silent self of all he is the non-doer, and Nature alone is the doer. He leaves all these works to be done by her according to the law of our being, *svabhāvas tu pravartate*, and yet he is still the lord, *prabhu vibhu*, because he views and upholds our action and enables Nature to work by his silent sanction. He by his immobility transmits the power of the supreme Godhead through the compulsion of his pervading motionless Presence and supports its workings by the equal regard of his witness Self in all things. As the supreme supracosmic Godhead he originates all, but is above all; he compels all to manifest, but does not lose himself in what he creates or attach himself to the works of his Nature. His is the free presiding Will of being that is antecedent to all the necessities of the natural action. In the individual he is during the ignorance the secret Godhead in us who compels all to revolve on the machine of Nature on which the ego is carried round as part of the machinery, at once a clog and a convenience. But since all the Divine is within each being, we can rise above this relation by transcending the ignorance. For we can identify ourselves with the one Self supporter of all things and become the witness and non-doer. Or else we can put our individual being into the human soul's right relation with the supreme Godhead within us and make it in its parts of nature the immediate cause and instrument, *nimitta*, and in its spiritual self and person a high participant in the supreme, free and unattached mastery of that inner Numen. This is a thing we have to see clearly in the Gita; we have to allow for this variation of the sense of the same truth according to the nodus of relation from which its application comes into force. Otherwise we shall see mere contradiction and inconsistency where none exists or be baffled like Arjuna by what seems to us a riddling utterance.

---

[3] Even if in the mind we feel them to be comparatively unreal in face of the absolutely Real. Shankara's Mayavada apart from its logical scaffolding comes when reduced to terms of spiritual experience to no more than an exaggerated expression of this relative unreality. Beyond mind the difficulty disappears, for there it never existed. The separate experiences that lie behind the differences of religious sects and schools of philosophy or Yoga, transmuted, shed their divergent mental sequences, are harmonised and, when exalted to their highest common intensity, unified in the supramental infinite.

Thus the Gita begins by affirming that the Supreme contains all things in himself, but is not in any, *matsthāni sarva-bhūtāni*, “all are situated in Me, not I in them,” and yet it proceeds immediately to say, “and yet all existences are not situated in Me, my self is the bearer of all existences and it is not situated in existences.” And yet again it insists with an apparent self-contradiction that the Divine has lodged himself, has taken up his abode in the human body, *mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam*, and that the recognition of this truth is necessary for the soul’s release by the integral way of works and love and knowledge. These statements are only in appearance inconsistent with each other. It is as the supracosmic Godhead that he is not in existences, nor even they in him; for the distinction we make between Being and becoming applies only to the manifestation in the phenomenal universe. In the supracosmic existence all is eternal Being and all, if there too there is any multiplicity, are eternal beings; nor can the spatial idea of indwelling come in, since a supracosmic absolute being is not affected by the concepts of time and space which are created here by the Lord’s Yogamaya. There a spiritual, not a spatial or temporal coexistence, a spiritual identity and coincidence must be the foundation. But on the other hand in the cosmic manifestation there is an extension of universe in space and time by the supreme unmanifest supracosmic Being, and in that extension he appears first as a self who supports all these existences; *bhūta-bhṛt*, he bears them in his all-pervading self-existence. And, even, through this omnipresent self the supreme Self too, the Paramatman, can be said to bear the universe; he is its invisible spiritual foundation and the hidden spiritual cause of the becoming of all existences. He bears the universe as the secret spirit in us bears our thoughts, works, movements. He seems to pervade and to contain mind, life and body, to support them by his presence: but this pervasion is itself an act of consciousness, not material; the body itself is only a constant act of consciousness of the spirit.

This divine Self contains all existences; all are situated in him, not materially in essence, but in that extended spiritual conception of self-being of which our too rigid notion of a material and etheric space is only a rendering in the terms of the physical mind and senses. In reality all even here is spiritual coexistence, identity and coincidence; but that is a fundamental truth which we cannot apply until we get back to the supreme consciousness. Till then such an idea would only be an intellectual concept to which nothing corresponds in our practical experience. We have to say, then, using these terms of relation in space and time, that the universe and all its beings exist in the divine Self-existent as everything else exists in the spatial primacy of ether. "It is as the great, the all-pervading aerial principle dwells in the etheric that all existences dwell in Me, that is how you have to conceive of it," says the Teacher here to Arjuna. The universal existence is all-pervading and infinite and the Self-existent too is all-pervading and infinite; but the self-existent infinity is stable, static, immutable, the universal is an all-pervading movement, *sarvatragaḥ*. The Self is one, not many; but the universal expresses itself as all existence and is, as it seems, the sum of all existences. One is Being; the other is Power of Being which moves and creates and acts in the existence of the fundamental, supporting, immutable Spirit. The Self does not dwell in all these existences or in any of them; that is to say, he is not contained by any, — just as the ether here is not contained in any form, though all forms are derived ultimately from the ether. Nor is he contained in or constituted by all existences together — any more than the ether is contained in the mobile extension of the aerial principle or is constituted by the sum of its forms or its forces. But still in the movement also is the Divine; he dwells in the many as the Lord in each being. Both these relations are true of him at one and the same time. The one is a relation of self-existence to the universal movement; the other, the immanence, is a relation of the universal existence to its own forms. The one is a truth of being in its all-containing immutability, self-existent: the other is a truth of Power of the same being manifest in the government and information of its own self-veiling and self-revealing movements.

The Supreme from above cosmic existence leans, it is here said, or presses down upon his Nature to loose from it in an eternal cyclic recurrence all that it contains in it, all that was once manifest and has become latent. All existences act in the universe in subjection to this impelling movement and to the laws of manifested being by which is expressed in cosmic harmonies the phenomenon of the divine All-existence. The Jiva follows the cycle of its becoming in the action of this divine Nature, *prakṛtiṁ māmikām*, *svāṁ prakṛtim*, the "own nature" of the Divine. It becomes in the turns of her progression this or that personality; it follows always the curve of its own law of being as a manifestation of the divine Nature, whether in her higher and direct or her lower and derived movement, whether in ignorance or in knowledge; it returns out of her action into her immobility and silence in the lapse of the cycle. Ignorant, it is subject to her cyclic whirl, not master of itself, but dominated by her, *avaśaḥ prakṛter vaśāt*; only by return to the divine consciousness can it attain to mastery and freedom. The Divine too follows the cycle, not as subject to it, but as its informing Spirit and guide, not with his whole being involved in it, but with his power of being accompanying and shaping it. He is the presiding control of his own action of Nature, *adhyakṣa*, — not a spirit born in her, but the creative spirit who causes her to produce all that appears in the manifestation. If in his power he accompanies her and causes all her workings, he is outside it too, as if One seated above her universal action in the supracosmic mastery, not attached to her by any involving and mastering desire and not therefore bound by her works, because he infinitely exceeds them and precedes them, is the same before, during and after all their procession in the cycles of Time. All their mutations make no difference to his immutable being. The silent self that pervades and supports the cosmos is not affected by its changes because, though supporting, it does not participate in them. This greatest supreme supracosmic Self also is not affected because it exceeds and eternally transcends them.

But also since this action is the action of the divine Nature, *svā prakṛtiḥ*, and the divine Nature can never be separate from the Divine, in everything she creates the Godhead must be immanent. That is a relation which is not the whole truth of his being, but neither is it a truth which we can at all afford to ignore. He is lodged in the human body. Those who ignore his presence, who despise because of its masks the divinity in the human form, are bewildered and befooled by the appearances of Nature and they cannot realise that there is the secret Godhead within, whether conscious in humanity as in the Avatar or veiled by his Maya. Those who are great-souled, who are not shut up in their idea of ego, who open themselves to the indwelling Divinity, know that the secret spirit in man which appears here bounded by the limited human nature, is the same ineffable splendour which we worship beyond as the supreme Godhead. They become aware of the highest status of him in which he is master and lord of all existences and yet see that in each existence he is still the supreme Deity and the indwelling Godhead. All the rest is a self-limitation for the manifesting of the variations of Nature in the cosmos. They see too that as it is his Nature which has become all that is in the universe, everything here is in its inner fact nothing but one Divine, all is Vasudeva, and they worship him not only as the supreme Godhead beyond, but here in the world, in his oneness and in every separate being. They see this truth and in this truth they live and act; him they adore, live, serve both as the Transcendent of things and as God in the world and as the Godhead in all that is, serve him with works of sacrifice, seek him out by knowledge, see nothing else but him everywhere and lift their whole being to him both in its self and in all its inward and outward nature. This they know to be the large and perfect way; for it is the way of the whole truth of the one supreme and universal and individual Godhead.[4]

---

[4] Gita, IX. 4-11, 13-15, 34.

VI

Works, Devotion and Knowledge

THIS THEN is the integral truth, the highest and widest knowledge. The Divine is supracosmic, the eternal Parabrahman who supports with his timeless and spaceless existence all this cosmic manifestation of his own being and nature in Space and Time. He is the supreme spirit who ensouls the forms and movements of the universe, Paramatman. He is the supernal Person of whom all self and nature, all being and becoming in this or any universe are the self-conception and the self-energising, Purushottama. He is the ineffable Lord of all existence who by his spiritual control of his own manifested Power in Nature unrolls the cycles of the world and the natural evolution of creatures in the cycles, Parameshwara. From him the Jiva, individual spirit, soul in Nature, existent by his being, conscious by the light of his consciousness, empowered to knowledge, to will and to action by his will and power, enjoying existence by his divine enjoyment of the cosmos, has come here into the cosmic rounds.

The inner soul in man is here a partial self-manifestation of the Divine, self-limited for the works of his Nature in the universe, *prakṛtir jīva-bhūtā*. In his spiritual essence the individual is one with the Divine. In the works of the divine Prakriti he is one with him, yet there is an operative difference and many deep relations with God in Nature and with God above cosmic Nature. In the works of the lower appearance of Prakriti he seems by an ignorance and egoistic separation to be quite other than the One and to think, will, act, enjoy in this separative consciousness for the egoistic pleasure and purpose of his personal existence in the universe and its surface relations with other embodied minds and lives. But in fact all his being, all his thinking, all his willing and action and enjoyment are only a reflection — egoistic and perverted so long as he is in the ignorance — of the

Divine's being, the Divine's thought, will, action and enjoyment of Nature. To get back to this truth of himself is his direct means of salvation, his largest and nearest door of escape from subjection to the Ignorance. Since he is a spirit, a soul with a nature of mind and reason, of will and dynamic action, of emotion and sensation and life's seeking for the delight of existence, it is by turning all these powers Godwards that the return to the highest truth of himself can be made entirely possible. He must know with the knowledge of the supreme Self and Brahman; he must turn his love and adoration to the supreme Person; he must subject his will and works to the supreme Lord of cosmos. Then he passes from the lower to the divine Nature: he casts from him the thought and will and works of the Ignorance and thinks, wills and works in his divine identity as soul of that Soul, power and light of that Spirit; he enjoys all the inner infinite of the Divine and no longer only these outward touches, masks and appearances. Thus divinely living, thus directing his whole self and soul and nature Godwards, he is taken up into the truest truth of the supreme Brahman.

To know Vasudeva as all and live in that knowledge is the secret. He knows him as the Self, immutable, continent of all as well as immanent in all things. He draws back from the confused and perturbed whirl of the lower nature to dwell in the still and inalienable calm and light of the self-existent spirit. There he realises a constant unity with this self of the Divine that is present in all existences and supports all cosmic movement and action and phenomenon. He looks upward from this eternal unchanging spiritual hypostasis of the mutable universe to the greater Eternal, the supracosmic, the Real. He knows him as the divine Inhabitant in all things that are, the Lord in the heart of man, the secret Ishwara, and removes the veil between his natural being and this inner spiritual Master of his being. He makes his will, thought and works one in knowledge with the Ishwara's, attuned by an ever-present realisation to the sense of the indwelling Divinity, sees and adores him in all and changes the whole human action to the highest meaning of the divine nature. He knows him as the source and the substance of all that is around him in the universe. All things that are he sees as at once in their appearance the veils and in their secret trend the means and signs of self-manifestation of that one unthinkable Reality and everywhere discovers that oneness, Brahman, Purusha, Atman, Vasudeva, the Being that has become all these creatures. Therefore too his whole inner existence comes into tune and harmony with the Infinite now self-revealed in all that lives or is within and around him and his whole outer existence turns into an exact instrumentation of the cosmic purpose. He looks up through the Self to the Parabrahman who there and here is the one and only existence. He looks up through the divine Inhabitant in all to that supernal Person who in his supreme status is beyond all habitation. He looks up through the Lord manifested in the universe to the Supreme who exceeds and rules all his manifestation. Thus he arises through a limitless unfolding of knowledge and upward vision and aspiration to that to which he has turned with an all-compelling integrality, *sarvabhāvena*.

This integral turning of the soul Godwards bases royally the Gita's synthesis of knowledge and works and devotion. To know God thus integrally is to know him as One in the self and in all manifestation and beyond all manifestation, — and all this unitedly and at once. And yet even so to know him is not enough unless it is accompanied by an intense uplifting of the heart and soul Godwards, unless it kindles a one-pointed and at the same time all-embracing love, adoration, aspiration. Indeed the knowledge which is not companioned by an aspiration and vivified by an uplifting is no true knowledge, for it can be only an intellectual seeing and a barren cognitive endeavour. The vision of God brings infallibly the adoration and passionate seeking of the Divine, — a passion for the Divine in his self-existent being, but also for the Divine in ourselves and for the Divine in all that is. To know with the intellect is simply to understand and may be an effective starting-point, — or, too, it may not be, and it will not be if there is no sincerity in the knowledge, no urge towards inner realisation in the will, no power upon the soul, no call in the spirit: for that would mean that the brain has externally understood, but inwardly the soul has seen nothing. True knowledge is to know with the inner being, and when the inner being is touched by the light, then it arises to embrace that which is seen, it yearns to possess, it struggles to shape that in itself and itself to it, it labours to become one with the glory of its vision. Knowledge in this sense is an awakening to identity and, since the inner being realises itself by consciousness and delight, by love, by possession and oneness with whatever of itself it has seen, knowledge awakened must bring an overmastering impulse towards this true and only perfect realisation. Here that which is known is not an externalised object, but the divine Purusha, self and lord of all that we are. An all-seizing delight in him and a deep and moved love and adoration of him must be the inevitable result and is the very soul of this knowledge. And this adoration is no isolated seeking of the heart, but an offering of the whole existence. Therefore it must take also the form of a sacrifice; there is a giving of all our works to the Ishwara, there is a surrender of all our active inward and outward nature to the Godhead of our adoration in its every subjective and in its every objective movement. All our subjective workings move in him and they seek him, the Lord and Self, as the source and goal of their power and endeavour. All our objective workings move out towards him in the world and make him their object, initiate a service of God in the world of which the controlling power is the Divinity within us in whom we are one self with the universe and its creatures. For both world and self, Nature and the soul in her are enlightened by the consciousness of the One, are inner and outer bodies of the transcendent Purushottama. So comes a synthesis of mind and heart and will in the one self and spirit and with it the synthesis of knowledge, love and works in this integral union, this embracing God-realisation, this divine Yoga.

But to arrive at this movement at all is difficult for the ego-bound nature. And to arrive at its victorious and harmonious integrality is not easy even when we have set our feet on the way finally and for ever. Mortal mind is bewildered by its ignorant reliance upon veils and appearances; it sees only the outward human body, human mind, human way of living and catches no liberating glimpse of the Divinity who is lodged in the creature. It ignores the divinity within itself and cannot see it in other men, and even though the Divine manifest himself in humanity as Avatar and Vibhuti, it is still blind and ignores or despises the veiled Godhead, *avajānanti māṁ mūḍhā mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam*. And if it ignores him in the living creature, still less can it see him in the objective world on which it looks out from its prison of separative ego through the barred windows of the finite mind. It does not see God in the universe; it knows nothing of the supreme Divinity who is master of these planes full of various existences and dwells within them; it is blind to the vision by which all in the world grows divine and the soul itself awakens to its own inherent divinity and becomes of the Godhead, godlike. What it does see readily, and to that it attaches itself with passion, is only the life of the ego hunting after finite things for their own sake and for the satisfaction of the earthly hunger of the intellect, body, senses. Those who have given themselves up too entirely to this outward drive of the mentality, fall into the hands of the lower nature, cling to it and make it their foundation. They become a prey to the nature of the Rakshasa in man who sacrifices everything to a violent and inordinate satisfaction of his separate vital ego and makes that the dark godhead of his will and thought and action and enjoyment. Or they are hurried onward in a fruitless cycle by the arrogant self-will, self-sufficient thought, self-regarding act, self-satisfied and yet ever unsatisfied intellectualised appetite of enjoyment of the Asuric nature. But to live persistently in this separative ego-consciousness and make that the centre of all our activities is to miss altogether the true self-awareness. The charm it throws upon the misled instruments of the spirit is an enchantment that chains life to a profitless circling. All its hope, action, knowledge are vain things when judged by the divine and eternal standard, for it shuts out the great hope, excludes the liberating action, banishes the illuminating knowledge. It is a false knowledge that sees the phenomenon but misses the truth of the phenomenon, a blind hope that chases after the transient but misses the eternal, a sterile action whose every profit is annulled by loss and amounts to a perennial labour of Sisyphus.[1]

The great-souled who open themselves to the light and largeness of the diviner nature of which man is capable, are alone on the path narrow in the beginning, inexpressibly wide in the end that leads to liberation and perfection. The growth of the god in man is man's proper business; the steadfast turning of this lower Asuric and Rakshasic into the divine nature is the carefully hidden meaning of human life. As this growth increases, the veil falls and the soul comes to see the greater significance of action and the real truth of existence. The eye opens to the Godhead in man, to the Godhead in the world; it sees inwardly and comes to know outwardly the infinite Spirit, the Imperishable from whom all existences originate and who exists in all and by him and in him all exist always. Therefore when this vision, this knowledge seizes on the soul, its whole life-aspiration becomes a surpassing love and fathomless adoration of the Divine and Infinite. The mind attaches itself singly to the eternal, the spiritual, the living, the universal, the Real; it values nothing but for its sake, it delights only in the all-blissful Purusha. All the word and all the thought become one hymning of the universal greatness, Light, Beauty, Power and Truth that has revealed itself in its glory to the human spirit and a worship of the one supreme Soul and infinite Person. All the long stress of the inner self to break outward becomes a form now of spiritual endeavour and aspiration to possess the Divine in the soul and realise the Divine in the nature. All life becomes a constant Yoga and unification of that Divine and this human spirit. This is the manner of the integral devotion; it creates a single uplifting of our whole being and nature through sacrifice by the dedicated heart to the eternal Purushottama.[2]

Those who lay a predominant stress on knowledge, arrive to the same point by an always increasing, engrossing, enforcing power of the vision of the Divine on the soul and the nature. Theirs is the sacrifice of knowledge and by an ineffable ecstasy of knowledge they come to the adoration of the Purushottama, *jñāna-yajñena yajanto mām upāsate*. This is a comprehension filled with Bhakti, because it is integral in its instruments, integral in its objective. It is not a pursuit of the Supreme merely as an abstract unity or an indeterminable Absolute. It is a heartfelt seeking and seizing of the Supreme and the Universal, a pursuit of the Infinite in his infinity and of the Infinite in all that is finite, a vision and embracing of the One in his oneness and of the One in all his several principles, his innumerable visages, forces, forms, here, there, everywhere, timelessly and in time, multiply, multitudinously, in endless aspects of his Godhead, in beings without number, all his million universal faces fronting us in the world and its creatures, *ekatvena pṛthaktvena bahudhā viśvatomukham*. This knowledge becomes easily an adoration, a large devotion, a vast self-giving, an integral self-offering because it is the knowledge of a Spirit, the contact of a Being, the embrace of a supreme and universal Soul which claims all that we are even as it lavishes on us when we approach it all the treasures of its endless delight of existence.[3]

---

[1] Gita, IX. 11-12. [2] IX. 13-14.

The way of works too turns into an adoration and a devotion of self-giving because it is an entire sacrifice of all our will and its activities to the one Purushottama. The outward Vedic rite is a powerful symbol, effective for a slighter though still a heavenward purpose; but the real sacrifice is that inner oblation in which the Divine All becomes himself the ritual action, the sacrifice and every single circumstance of the sacrifice. All the working and forms of that inner rite are the self-ordinance and self-expression of his power in us mounting by our aspiration towards the source of its energies. The Divine Inhabitant becomes himself the flame and the offering, because the flame is the Godward will and that will is God himself within us. And the offering too is form and force of the constituent Godhead in our nature and being; all that has been received from him is given up to the service and the worship of its own Reality, its own supreme Truth and Origin. The Divine Thinker becomes himself the sacred mantra; it is the Light of his being that expresses itself in the thought directed Godward and is effective in the revealing word of splendour that enshrines the thought's secret and in the rhythm that repeats for man the rhythms of the Eternal. The illumining Godhead is himself the Veda and that which is made known by the Veda. He is both the knowledge and the object of the knowledge. The Rik, the Yajur, the Sama, the word of illumination which lights up the mind with the rays of knowledge, the word of power for the right ordaining of action, the word of calm and harmonious attainment for the bringing of the divine desire of the spirit, are themselves the Brahman, the Godhead. The mantra of the divine Consciousness brings its light of revelation, the mantra of the divine Power its will of effectuation, the mantra of the divine Ananda its equal fulfilment of the spiritual delight of existence. All word and thought are an outflowering of the great OM, — OM, the Word, the Eternal. Manifest in the forms of sensible objects, manifest in that conscious play of creative self-conception of which forms and objects are the figures, manifest behind in the self-gathered superconscient power of the Infinite, OM is the sovereign source, seed, womb of thing and idea, form and name, — it is itself, integrally, the supreme Intangible, the original Unity, the timeless Mystery self-existent above all manifestation in supernal being.[4] This sacrifice is therefore at once works and adoration and knowledge.[5]

---

[3] IX. 15.

To the soul that thus knows, adores, offers up all its workings in a great self-surrender of its being to the Eternal, God is all and all is the Godhead. It knows God as the Father of this world who nourishes and cherishes and watches over his children. It knows God as the divine Mother who holds us in her bosom, lavishes upon us the sweetness of her love and fills the universe with her forms of beauty. It knows him as the first Creator from whom has originated all that originates and creates in space and time and relation. It knows him as the Master and ordainer of all universal and of every individual dispensation. The world and fate and uncertain eventuality cannot terrify, the aspect of suffering and evil cannot bewilder the man who has surrendered himself to the Eternal. God to the soul that sees is the path and God is the goal of his journey, a path in which there is no self-losing and a goal to which his wisely guided steps are surely arriving at every moment. He knows the Godhead as the master of his and all being, the upholder of his nature, the husband of the nature-soul, its lover and cherisher, the inner witness of all his thoughts and actions. God is his house and country, the refuge of his seekings and desires, the wise and close and benignant friend of all beings. All birth and status and destruction of apparent existences is to his vision and experience the One who brings forward, maintains and withdraws his temporal self-manifestation in its system of perpetual recurrences. He alone is the imperishable seed and origin of all that seem to be born and perish and their eternal resting-place in their non-manifestation. It is he that burns in the heat of the sun and the flame; it is he who is the plenty of the rain and its withholding; he is all this physical Nature and her workings. Death is his mask and immortality is his self-revelation. All that we call existent is he and all that we look upon as non-existent still is there secret in the Infinite and is part of the mysterious being of the Ineffable.[6]

---

[4] AUM, — A the spirit of the gross and external, Virat, U the spirit of the subtle and internal, Taijasa, M the spirit of the secret superconscient omnipotence, Prajna, OM the Absolute, Turiya. — *Mandukya Upanishad.*

[5] IX. 16-17.

Nothing but the highest knowledge and adoration, no other way than an entire self-giving and surrender to this Highest who is all, will bring us to the Highest. Other religion, other worship, other knowledge, other seeking has always its fruits, but these are transient and limited to the enjoyment of divine symbols and appearances. There are always open for our following according to the balance of our mentality an outer and an inmost knowledge, an outer and an inmost seeking. Outward religion is the worship of an outward deity and the pursuit of an external beatitude: its devotees purify their conduct from sin and attain to an active ethical righteousness in order to satisfy the fixed law, the Shastra, the external dispensation; they perform the ceremonial symbol of the outer communion. But their object is to secure after the mortal pleasure and pain of earthly life the bliss of heavenly worlds, a greater happiness than earth can give but still a personal and mundane enjoyment though in a larger world than the field of this limited and suffering terrestrial nature. And to that to which they aspire, they attain by faith and right endeavour; for material existence and earthly activities are not the whole scope of our personal becoming or the whole formula of the cosmos. Other worlds there are of a larger felicity, *svargalokaṁ viśālam*. Thus the Vedic ritualist of old learned the exoteric sense of the triple Veda, purified himself from sin, drank the wine of communion with the gods and sought by sacrifice and good deeds the rewards of heaven. This firm belief in a Beyond and this seeking of a diviner world secures to the soul in its passing the strength to attain to the joys of heaven on which its faith and seeking were centred: but the return to mortal existence imposes itself because the true aim of that existence has not been found and realised. Here and not elsewhere the highest Godhead has to be found, the soul's divine nature developed out of the imperfect physical human nature and through unity with God and man and universe the whole large truth of being discovered and lived and made visibly wonderful. That completes the long cycle of our becoming and admits us to a supreme result; that is the opportunity given to the soul by the human birth and, until that is accomplished, it cannot cease. The God-lover advances constantly towards this ultimate necessity of our birth in cosmos through a concentrated love and adoration by which he makes the supreme and universal Divine the whole object of his living — not either egoistic terrestrial satisfaction or the celestial worlds — and the whole object of his thought and his seeing. To see nothing but the Divine, to be at every moment in union with him, to love him in all creatures and have the delight of him in all things is the whole condition of his spiritual existence. His God-vision does not divorce him from life, nor does he miss anything of the fullness of life; for God himself becomes the spontaneous bringer to him of every good and of all his inner and outer getting and having, *yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmyaham*. The joy of heaven and the joy of earth are only a small shadow of his possessions; for as he grows into the Divine, the Divine too flows out upon him with all the light, power and joy of an infinite existence.[7]

---

[6] IX. 17-19.

Ordinary religion is a sacrifice to partial godheads other than the integral Divinity. The Gita takes its direct examples from the old Vedic religion on its exoteric side as it had then developed; it describes this outward worship as a sacrifice to other godheads, *anya-devatāḥ*, to the gods, or to the divinised Ancestors, or to elemental powers and spirits, *devān*, *pitṝn*, *bhūtāni*. Men consecrate their life and works ordinarily to partial powers or aspects of the divine Existence as they see or conceive them — mostly powers and aspects that ensoul to them things prominent in Nature and man or else reflect to them their own humanity in a divine exceeding symbol. If they do this with faith, then their faith is justified; for the Divine accepts whatever symbol, form or conception of himself is present to the mind of the worshipper, *yāṁ yāṁ tanuṁ śraddhayā arcati*, as it is said elsewhere, and meets him according to the faith that is in him. All sincere religious belief and practice is really a seeking after the one supreme and universal Godhead; for he always is the sole master of man's sacrifice and askesis and infinite enjoyer of his effort and aspiration. However small or low the form of the worship, however limited the idea of the godhead, however restricted the giving, the faith, the effort to get behind the veil of one's own ego-worship and limitation by material Nature, it yet forms a thread of connection between the soul of man and the All-soul and there is a response. Still the response, the fruit of the adoration and offering is according to the knowledge, the faith and the work and cannot exceed their limitations, and therefore from the point of view of the greater God-knowledge, which alone gives the entire truth of being and becoming, this inferior offering is not given according to the true and highest law of the sacrifice. It is not founded on a knowledge of the supreme Godhead in his integral existence and the true principles of his self-manifestation, but attaches itself to external and partial appearances, — *na mām abhijānanti tattvena*. Therefore its sacrifice too is limited in its object, largely egoistic in its motive, partial and mistaken in its action and its giving, *yajanti avidhi-pūrvakam*. An entire seeing of the Divine is the condition of an entire conscious self-surrender; the rest attains to things that are incomplete and partial, and has to fall back from them and return to enlarge itself in a greater seeking and wider God-experience. But to follow after the supreme and universal Godhead alone and utterly is to attain to all knowledge and result which other ways acquire, while yet one is not limited by any aspect, though one finds the truth of him in all aspects. This movement embraces all forms of divine being on its way to the supreme Purushottama.[8]

---

[7] IX. 20-22.

This absolute self-giving, this one-minded surrender is the devotion which the Gita makes the crown of its synthesis. All action and effort are by this devotion turned into an offering to the supreme and universal Godhead. "Whatever thou doest, whatever thou enjoyest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, whatever energy of tapasya, of the soul's will or effort thou puttest forth, make it an offering unto Me." Here the least, the slightest circumstance of life, the most insignificant gift out of oneself or what one has, the smallest action assumes a divine significance and it becomes an acceptable offering to the Godhead who makes it a means for his possession of the soul and life of the God-lover. The distinctions made by desire and ego then disappear. As there is no straining after the good result of one's action, no shunning of unhappy result, but all action and result are given up to the Supreme to whom all work and fruit in the world belong for ever, there is no farther bondage. For by an absolute self-giving all egoistic desire disappears from the heart and there is a perfect union between the Divine and the individual soul through an inner renunciation of its separate living. All will, all action, all result become that of the Godhead, work divinely through the purified and illumined nature and no longer belong to the limited personal ego. The finite nature thus surrendered becomes a free channel of the Infinite; the soul in its spiritual being, uplifted out of the ignorance and the limitation, returns to its oneness with the Eternal. The Divine Eternal is the inhabitant in all existences; he is equal in all and the equal friend, father, mother, creator, lover, supporter of all creatures. He is the enemy of none and he is the partial lover of none; none has he cast out, none has he eternally condemned, none has he favoured by any despotism of arbitrary caprice: all at last equally come to him through their circlings in the ignorance. But it is only this perfect adoration that can make this indwelling of God in man and man in God a conscious thing and an engrossing and perfect union. Love of the Highest and a total self-surrender are the straight and swift way to this divine oneness.[9]

---

[8] IX. 23-25.

The equal Divine Presence in all of us makes no other preliminary condition, if once this integral self-giving has been made in faith and in sincerity and with a fundamental completeness. All have access to this gate, all can enter into this temple: our mundane distinctions disappear in the mansion of the All-lover. There the virtuous man is not preferred, nor the sinner shut out from the Presence; together by this road the Brahmin pure of life and exact in observance of the law and the outcaste born from a womb of sin and sorrow and rejected of men can travel and find an equal and open access to the supreme liberation and the highest dwelling in the Eternal. Man and woman find their equal right before God; for the divine Spirit is no respecter of persons or of social distinctions and restrictions: all can go straight to him without intermediary or shackling condition. “If” says the divine Teacher “even a man of very evil conduct turns to me with a sole and entire love, he must be regarded as a saint, for the settled will of endeavour in him is a right and complete will. Swiftly he becomes a soul of righteousness and obtains eternal peace.” In other words a will of entire self-giving opens wide all the gates of the spirit and brings in response an entire descent and self-giving of the Godhead to the human being, and that at once reshapes and assimilates everything in us to the law of the divine existence by a rapid transformation of the lower into the spiritual nature. The will of self-giving forces away by its power the veil between God and man; it annuls every error and annihilates every obstacle. Those who aspire in their human strength by effort of knowledge or effort of virtue or effort of laborious self-discipline, grow with much anxious difficulty towards the Eternal; but when the soul gives up its ego and its works to the Divine, God himself comes to us and takes up our burden. To the ignorant he brings the light of the divine knowledge, to the feeble the power of the divine will, to the sinner the liberation of the divine purity, to the suffering the infinite spiritual joy and Ananda. Their weakness and the stumblings of their human strength make no difference. "This is my word of promise," cries the voice of the Godhead to Arjuna, "that he who loves me shall not perish." Previous effort and preparation, the purity and the holiness of the Brahmin, the enlightened strength of the king-sage great in works and knowledge have their value, because they make it easier for the imperfect human creature to arrive at this wide vision and self-surrender; but even without this preparation all who take refuge in the divine Lover of man, the Vaishya once preoccupied with the narrowness of wealth-getting and the labour of production, the Shudra hampered by a thousand hard restrictions, woman shut in and stunted in her growth by the narrow circle society has drawn around her self-expansion, those too, *pāpa-yonayaḥ*, on whom their past Karma has imposed even the very worst of births, the outcaste, the Pariah, the Chandala, find at once the gates of God opening before them. In the spiritual life all the external distinctions of which men make so much because they appeal with an oppressive force to the outward mind, cease before the equality of the divine Light and the wide omnipotence of an impartial Power.[10]

---

[9] IX. 26-29.

The earthly world preoccupied with the dualities and bound to the immediate transient relations of the hour and the moment is for man, so long as he dwells here attached to these things and while he accepts the law they impose on him for the law of his life, a world of struggle, suffering and sorrow. The way to liberation is to turn from the outward to the inward, from the appearance created by the material life which lays its burden on the mind and imprisons it in the grooves of the life and the body to the divine Reality which waits to manifest itself through the freedom of the spirit. Love of the world, the mask, must change into the love of God, the Truth. Once this secret and inner Godhead is known and is embraced, the whole being and the whole life will undergo a sovereign uplifting and a marvellous transmutation. In place of the ignorance of the lower Nature absorbed in its outward works and appearances the eye will open to the vision of God everywhere, to the unity and universality of the spirit. The world's sorrow and pain will disappear in the bliss of the All-blissful; our weakness and error and sin will be changed into the all-embracing and all-transforming strength, truth and purity of the Eternal. To make the mind one with the divine consciousness, to make the whole of our emotional nature one love of God everywhere, to make all our works one sacrifice to the Lord of the worlds and all our worship and aspiration one adoration of him and self-surrender, to direct the whole self Godwards in an entire union is the way to rise out of a mundane into a divine existence. This is the Gita's teaching of divine love and devotion, in which knowledge, works and the heart's longing become one in a supreme unification, a merging of all their divergences, an intertwining of all their threads, a high fusion, a wide identifying movement.[11]

---

[10] IX. 30-32.

---

[11] IX. 33-34.

VII

The Supreme Word of the Gita

WE HAVE now got to the inmost kernel of the Gita's Yoga, the whole living and breathing centre of its teaching. We can see now quite clearly that the ascent of the limited human soul when it withdraws from the ego and the lower nature into the immutable Self calm, silent and stable, was only a first step, an initial change. And now too we can see why the Gita from the first insisted on the Ishwara, the Godhead in the human form, who speaks always of himself, "*aham*, *mām*," as of some great secret and omnipresent Being, lord of all the worlds and master of the human soul, one who is greater even than that immutable self-existence which is still and unmoved for ever and abides for ever untouched by the subjective and objective appearances of the natural universe.

All Yoga is a seeking after the Divine, a turn towards union with the Eternal. According to the adequacy of our perception of the Divine and the Eternal will be the way of the seeking, the depth and fullness of the union and the integrality of the realisation. Man, the mental being, approaches the Infinite through his finite mind and has to open some near gate of this finite upon that Infinite. He seeks for some conception on which his mind is able to seize, selects some power of his nature which by force of an absolute self-heightening can reach out and lay its touch on the infinite Truth that in itself is beyond his mental comprehension. Some face of that infinite Truth — for, because it is infinite, it has numberless faces, words of its meaning, self-suggestions — he attempts to see, so that by attaching himself to it he can arrive through direct experience to the immeasurable reality it figures. However narrow the gate may be, he is satisfied if it offers some prospect into the wideness which attracts him, if it sets him on the way to the fathomless profundity and unreachable heights of that which calls to his spirit. And as he approaches it, so it receives him, *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante.*

Philosophic mind attempts to attain to the Eternal by an abstractive knowledge. The business of knowledge is to comprehend and for the finite intellect that means to define and determine. But the only way to determine the indeterminable is by some kind of universal negation, *neti neti.* Therefore the mind proceeds to exclude from the conception of the Eternal all that offers itself as limitable by the senses and the heart and the understanding. An entire opposition is made between the Self and the not-self, between an eternal, immutable, indefinable self-existence and all forms of existence, — between Brahman and Maya, between the ineffable Reality and all that undertakes to express, but cannot express the Ineffable, — between Karma and Nirvana, between the ever continuous but ever impermanent action and conception of the universal Energy and some absolute ineffable supreme Negation of its action and conception which is empty of all life and mentality and dynamic significance. That strong drive of knowledge towards the Eternal leads away from everything that is transient. It negates life in order to return to its source, cuts away from us all that we seem to be in order to get from it to the nameless and impersonal reality of our being. The desires of the heart, the works of the will and the conceptions of the mind are rejected; even in the end knowledge itself is negated and abolished in the Identical and Unknowable. By the way of an increasing quietude ending in an absolute passivity the Maya-created soul or the bundle of associations we call ourselves enters into annihilation of its idea of personality, makes an end of the lie of living, disappears into Nirvana.

But this difficult abstractive method of self-negation, however it may draw to it some exceptional natures, cannot satisfy universally the embodied soul in man, because it does not give an outlet to all the straining of his complex nature towards the perfect Eternal. Not only his abstracting contemplative intellect but his yearning heart, his active will, his positive mind in search of some Truth to which his existence and the existence of the world is a manifold key, have their straining towards the Eternal and Infinite and seek to find in it their divine Source and the justification of their being and their nature. From this need arise the religions of love and works, whose strength is that they satisfy and lead Godwards the most active and developed powers of our humanity, — for only by starting from these can knowledge be effective. Even Buddhism with its austere and uncompromising negation both of subjective self and objective things had still to found itself initially on a divine discipline of works and to admit as a substitute for bhakti the spiritualised emotionalism of a universal love and compassion, since so only could it become an effective way for mankind, a truly liberating religion. Even illusionist Mayavada with its ultralogical intolerance of action and the creations of mentality had to allow a provisional and practical reality to man and the universe and to God in the world in order to have a first foothold and a feasible starting-point; it had to affirm what it denied in order to give some reality to man's bondage and to his effort for liberation.

But the weakness of the kinetic and the emotional religions is that they are too much absorbed in some divine Personality and in the divine values of the finite. And, even when they have a conception of the infinite Godhead, they do not give us the full satisfaction of knowledge because they do not follow it out into its most ultimate and supernal tendencies. These religions fall short of a complete absorption in the Eternal and the perfect union by identity, — and yet to that identity in some other way, if not in the abstractive, since there all oneness has its basis, the spirit that is in man must one day arrive. On the other hand, the weakness of a contemplative quietistic spirituality is that it arrives at this result by a too absolute abstraction and in the end it turns into a nothing or a fiction the human soul whose aspiration was yet all the time the whole sense of this attempt at union; for without the soul and its aspiration liberation and union could have no meaning. The little that this way of thinking recognises of his other powers of existence, it relegates to an inferior preliminary action which never arrives at any full or satisfying realisation in the Eternal and Infinite. Yet these things too which it restricts unduly, the potent will, the strong yearning of love, the positive light and all-embracing intuition of the conscious mental being are from the Divine, represent essential powers of him and must have some justification in their Source and some dynamic way of self-fulfilment in him. No God-knowledge can be integral, perfect or universally satisfying which leaves unfulfilled their absolute claim, no wisdom utterly wise which in its intolerant asceticism of search negates or in the pride of pure knowledge belittles the spiritual reality behind these ways of the Godhead.

The greatness of the central thought of the Gita in which all its threads are gathered up and united, consists in the synthetic value of a conception which recognises the whole nature of the soul of man in the universe and validates by a large and wise unification its many-sided need of the supreme and infinite Truth, Power, Love, Being to which our humanity turns in its search for perfection and immortality and some highest joy and power and peace. There is a strong and wide endeavour towards a comprehensive spiritual view of God and man and universal existence. Not indeed that everything without any exception is seized in these eighteen chapters, no spiritual problem left for solution; but still so large a scheme is laid out that we have only to fill in, to develop, to modify, to stress, to follow out points, to work out hint and illuminate adumbration in order to find a clue to any further claim of our intelligence and need of our spirit. The Gita itself does not evolve any quite novel solution out of its own questionings. To arrive at the comprehensiveness at which it aims, it goes back behind the great philosophical systems to the original Vedanta of the Upanishads; for there we have the widest and profoundest extant synthetic vision of spirit and man and cosmos. But what is in the Upanishads undeveloped to the intelligence because wrapped up in a luminous kernel of intuitive vision and symbolic utterance, the Gita brings out in the light of a later intellectual thinking and distinctive experience.

In the frame of its synthesis it admits the seeking of the abstractive thinkers for the Indefinable, *anirdeśyam*, the ever unmanifest Immutable, *avyaktam akṣaram*. Those who devote themselves to this search, find, they also, the Purushottama, the supreme Divine Person, *mām*, the Spirit and highest Soul and Lord of things. For his utmost self-existent way of being is indeed an unthinkable, *acintyarūpam*, an unimaginable positive, an absolute quintessence of all absolutes far beyond the determination of the intelligence. The method of negative passivity, quietude, renunciation of life and works by which men feel after this intangible Absolute is admitted and ratified in the Gita's philosophy, but only with a minor permissive sanction. This negating knowledge approaches the Eternal by one side only of the truth and that side the most difficult to reach and follow for the embodied soul in Nature, *duḥkhaṁ dehavadbhir avāpyate*; it proceeds by a highly specialised, even an unnecessarily arduous way, "narrow and difficult to tread as a razor's edge." Not by denying all relations, but through all relations is the Divine Infinite naturally approachable to man and most easily, widely, intimately seizable. This seeing is not after all the largest or the truest truth that the Supreme is without any relations with the mental, vital, physical existence of man in the universe, *avyavahāryam*, nor that what is described as the empirical truth of things, the truth of relations, *vyavahāra*, is altogether the opposite of the highest spiritual truth, *paramārtha*. On the contrary there are a thousand relations by which the supreme Eternal is secretly in contact and union with our human existence and by all essential ways of our nature and of the world's nature, *sarvabhāvena*, can that contact be made sensible and that union made real to our soul, heart, will, intelligence, spirit. Therefore is this other way natural and easy for man, *sukham āptum*. God does not make himself difficult of approach to us: only one thing is needed, one demand made on us, the single indomitable will to break through the veil of our ignorance and the whole, the persistent seeking of the mind and heart and life for that which is all the time near to it, within it, its own soul of being and spiritual essence and the secret of its personality and its impersonality, its self and its nature. This is our one difficulty; the rest the Master of our existence will himself see to and accomplish, *ahaṁ tvāṁ mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*.

In the very part of its teaching in which the Gita's synthesis leans most towards the side of pure knowledge, we have seen that it constantly prepares for this fuller truth and more pregnant experience. Indeed, it is implied in the very form the Gita gives to the realisation of the self-existent Immutable. That immutable Self of all existences seems indeed to stand back from any active intervention in the workings of Nature; but it is not void of all relation whatever and remote from all connection. It is our witness and supporter; it gives a silent and impersonal sanction; it has even an impassive enjoyment. The many-sided action of Nature is still possible even when the soul is poised in that calm self-existence: for the witness soul is the immutable Purusha, and Purusha has always some relation with Prakriti. But now the reason of this double aspect of silence and of activity is revealed in its entire significance, — because the silent all-pervading Self is only one side of the truth of the divine Being. He who pervades the world as the one unchanging self that supports all its mutations, is equally the Godhead in man, the Lord in the heart of every creature, the conscient Cause and Master of all our subjective becoming and all our inward-taking and outward-going objectivised action. The Ishwara of the Yogins is one with the Brahman of the seeker of knowledge, one supreme and universal Spirit, one supreme and universal Godhead.

This Godhead is not the limited personal God of so many exoteric religions; for those are all only partial and outward formations of this other, this creative and directive, this personal side of his complete truth of existence. This is the one supreme Person, Soul, Being, Purusha of whom all godheads are aspects, all individual personality a limited development in cosmic Nature. This Godhead is not a particularised name and form of Divinity, *iṣṭa-devatā*, constructed by the intelligence or embodying the special aspiration of the worshipper. All such names and forms are only powers and faces of the one Deva who is the universal Lord of all worshippers and all religions: but this is itself that universal Deity, *deva-deva*. This Ishwara is not a reflection of the impersonal and indeterminable Brahman in illusive Maya: for from beyond all cosmos as well as within it he rules and is the Lord of the worlds and their creatures. He is

Parabrahman who is Parameshwara, supreme Lord because he is the supreme Self and Spirit, and from his highest original existence he originates and governs the universe, not self-deceived, but with an all-knowing omnipotence. Nor is the working of his divine Nature in the cosmos an illusion whether of his or our consciousness. The only illusive Maya is the ignorance of the lower Prakriti which is not a creator of non-existent things on the impalpable background of the One and Absolute, but because of its blind encumbered and limited working misrepresents to the human mind by the figure of ego and other inadequate figures of mind, life and matter the greater sense, the deeper realities of existence. There is a supreme, a divine Nature which is the true creatrix of the universe. All creatures and all objects are becomings of the one divine Being; all life is a working of the power of the one Lord; all nature is a manifestation of the one Infinite. He is the Godhead in man; the Jiva is spirit of his Spirit. He is the Godhead in the universe; this world in Space and Time is his phenomenal self-extension.

In the unrolling of this comprehensive vision of existence and super-existence the Yoga of the Gita finds its unified significance and unexampled amplitude. This supreme Godhead is the one unchanging imperishable Self in all that is; therefore to the spiritual sense of this unchanging imperishable self man has to awake and to unify with it his inner impersonal being. He is the Godhead in man who originates and directs all his workings; therefore man has to awake to the Godhead within himself, to know the divinity he houses, to rise out of all that veils and obscures it and to become united with this inmost Self of his self, this greater consciousness of his consciousness, this hidden Master of all his will and works, this Being within him who is the fount and object of all his various becoming. He is the Godhead whose divine nature, origin of all that we are, is thickly veiled by these lower natural derivations; therefore man has to get back from his lower apparent existence, imperfect and mortal, to his essential divine nature of immortality and perfection. This Godhead is one in all things that are, the self who lives in all and the self in whom all live and move; therefore man has to discover his spiritual unity with all creatures, to see all in the self and the self in all beings, even to see all things and creatures as himself, *ātmaupamyena sarvatra*, and accordingly think, feel and act in all his mind, will and living. This Godhead is the origin of all that is here or elsewhere and by his Nature he has become all these innumerable existences, *abhūt sarvāṇi bhūtāni*; therefore man has to see and adore the One in all things animate and inanimate, to worship the manifestation in sun and star and flower, in man and every living creature, in the forms and forces, qualities and powers of Nature, *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*. He has to make himself by divine vision and divine sympathy and finally by a strong inner identity one universality with the universe. A passive relationless identity excludes love and action, but this larger and richer oneness fulfils itself by works and by a pure emotion: it becomes the source and continent and substance and motive and divine purpose of all our acts and feelings. *Kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*, to what Godhead shall we give all our life and activities as an offering? This is that Godhead, this the Lord who claims our sacrifice. A passive relationless identity excludes the joy of adoration and devotion; but bhakti is the very soul and heart and summit of this richer, completer, more intimate union. This Godhead is the fulfilment of all relations, father, mother, lover, friend and refuge of the soul of every creature. He is the one supreme and universal Deva, Atman, Purusha, Brahman, Ishwara of the secret wisdom. He has manifested the world in himself in all these ways by his divine Yoga: its multitudinous existences are one in him and he is one in them in many aspects. To awaken to the revelation of him in all these ways together is man's side of the same divine Yoga.

To make it perfectly and indisputably clear that this is the supreme and entire truth of his teaching, this the integral knowledge which he had promised to reveal, the divine Avatar declares, in a brief reiteration of the upshot of all that he has been saying, that this and no other is his supreme word, *paramaṁ vacaḥ*. "Again hearken to my supreme word," *bhūya eva śṛṇu me paramaṁ vacaḥ*. This supreme word of the Gita is, we find, first the explicit and unmistakable declaration that the highest worship and highest knowledge of the Eternal are the knowledge and the adoration of him as the supreme and divine Origin of all that is in existence and the mighty Lord of the world and its peoples of whose being all things are the becomings. It is, secondly, the declaration of a unified knowledge and bhakti as the supreme Yoga; that is the destined and the natural way given to man to arrive at union with the eternal Godhead. And to make more significant this definition of the way, to give an illuminating point to this highest importance of bhakti founded upon and opening to knowledge and made the basis and motive-power for divinely appointed works, the acceptance of it by the heart and mind of the disciple is put as a condition for the farther development by which the final command to action comes at last to be given to the human instrument, Arjuna. "I will speak this supreme word to thee" says the Godhead "from my will for thy soul's good, now that thy heart is taking delight in me," *te prīyamāṇāya vakṣyāmi*. For this delight of the heart in God is the whole constituent and essence of true bhakti, *bhajanti prītipūrvakam*. As soon as the supreme word is given, Arjuna is made to utter his acceptance of it and to ask for a practical way of seeing God in all things in Nature, and from that question immediately and naturally there develops the vision of the Divine as the Spirit of the universe and there arises the tremendous command to the world-action.[1]

The idea of the Divine on which the Gita insists as the secret of the whole mystery of existence, the knowledge that leads to liberation, is one that bridges the opposition between the cosmic procession in Time and a supracosmic eternity without denying either of them or taking anything from the reality of either. It harmonises the pantheistic, the theistic and the highest transcendental terms of our spiritual conception and spiritual experience. The Divine is the unborn Eternal who has no origin; there is and can be nothing before him from which he proceeds, because he is one and timeless and absolute. "Neither the gods nor the great Rishis know any birth of me. . . . He who knows me as the unborn without origin . . . ” are the opening utterances of this supreme word. And it gives the high promise that this knowledge, not limiting, not intellectual, but pure and spiritual, — for the form and nature, if we can use such language, of this transcendental Being, his *svarūpa*, are necessarily unthinkable by the mind, *acintyarūpa*, — liberates mortal man from all confusion of ignorance and from all bondage of sin, suffering and evil, *yo vetti asammūḍhaḥ sa martyeṣu sarva-pāpaiḥ pramucyate*. The human soul that can dwell in the light of this supreme spiritual knowledge is lifted by it beyond the ideative or sensible formulations of the universe. It rises into the ineffable power of an all-exceeding, yet all-fulfilling identity, the same beyond and here. This spiritual experience of the transcendental Infinite breaks down the limitations of the pantheistic conception of existence. The infinite of a cosmic monism which makes God and the universe one, tries to imprison the Divine in his world manifestation and leaves us that as our sole possible means of knowing him; but this experience liberates us into the timeless and spaceless Eternal. “Neither the Gods nor the Titans know thy manifestation” cries Arjuna in his reply: the whole universe or even numberless universes cannot manifest him, cannot contain his ineffable light and infinite greatness. All other lesser God-knowledge has its truth only by dependence on the ever unmanifested and ineffable reality of the transcendent Godhead.

---

[1] Gita, X. 1-18.

But at the same time the divine Transcendence is not a negation, nor is it an Absolute empty of all relation to the universe. It is a supreme positive, it is an absolute of all absolutes. All cosmic relations derive from this Supreme; all cosmic existences return to it and find in it alone their true and immeasurable existence. “For I am altogether and in every way the origin of the gods and the great Rishis.” The gods are the great undying Powers and immortal Personalities who consciously inform, constitute, preside over the subjective and objective forces of the cosmos. The gods are spiritual forms of the eternal and original Deity who descend from him into the many processes of the world. Multitudinous, universal, the gods weave out of the primary principles of being and its thousand complexities the whole web of this diversified existence of the One. All their own existence, nature, power, process proceeds in every way, in every principle, in its every strand from the truth of the transcendent Ineffable. Nothing is independently created here, nothing is caused self-sufficiently by these divine agents; everything finds its origin, cause, first spiritual reason for being and will to be in the absolute and supreme Godhead, — *aham ādiḥ sarvaśaḥ*. Nothing in the universe has its real cause in the universe; all proceeds from this supernal Existence.

The great Rishis, called here as in the Veda the seven original Seers, *maharṣayaḥ sapta pūrve*, the seven Ancients of the world, are intelligence-powers of that divine Wisdom which has evolved all things out of its own self-conscious infinitude, *prajñā purāṇī*, — developed them down the range of the seven principles of its own essence. These Rishis embody the all-upholding, all-illumining, all-manifesting seven Thoughts of the Veda, *sapta dhiyaḥ*, — the Upanishad speaks of all things as being arranged in septettes, *sapta sapta*. Along with these are coupled the four eternal Manus, fathers of man, — for the active nature of the Godhead is fourfold and humanity expresses this nature in its fourfold character. These also, as their name implies, are mental beings. Creators of all this life that depends on manifest or latent mind for its action, from them are all these living creatures in the world; all are their children and offspring, *yeṣāṁ loka imāḥ prajāḥ*. And these great Rishis and these Manus are themselves perpetual mental becomings of the supreme Soul[2] and born out of his spiritual transcendence into cosmic Nature, — originators, but he the origin of all that originates in the universe. Spirit of all spirits, Soul of all souls, Mind of all mind, Life of all life, Substance of all form, this transcendent Absolute is no complete opposite of all we are, but on the contrary the originating and illuminating Absolute of all the principles and powers of our and the world's being and nature.

This transcendent Origin of our existence is not separated from us by any unbridgeable gulf and does not disown the creatures that derive from him or condemn them to be only the figments of an illusion. He is the Being, all are his becomings. He does not create out of a void, out of a Nihil or out of an unsubstantial matrix of dream. Out of himself he creates, in himself he becomes; all are in his being and all is of his being. This truth admits and exceeds the pantheistic seeing of things. Vasudeva is all, *vāsudevaḥ sarvam*; but Vasudeva is all that appears in the cosmos because he is too all that does not appear in it, all that is never manifested. His being is in no way limited by his becoming; he is in no degree bound by this world of relations. Even in becoming all he is still a Transcendence; even in assuming finite forms he is always the Infinite. Nature, Prakriti, is in her essence his spiritual power, self-power, *ātmaśakti*; this spiritual self-power develops infinite primal qualities of becoming in the inwardness of things and turns them into an external surface of form and action. For in her essential, secret and divine order the spiritual truth of each and all comes first, a thing of her deep identities; their psychological truth of quality and nature is dependent on the spiritual for all in it that is authentic, it derives from the spirit; least in necessity, last in order the objective truth of form and action derives from inner quality of nature and depends on it for all these variable presentations of existence here in the external order. Or in other words, the objective fact is only an expression of a sum of soul factors and these go back always to a spiritual cause of their appearance.

---

[2] *mad-bhāvā mānasā jātāḥ*.

This finite outward becoming is an expressive phenomenon of the divine Infinite. Nature is, secondarily, the lower Nature, a subordinate variable development of a few selective combinations out of the many possibilities of the Infinite. Evolved out of essential and psychological quality of being and becoming, *svabhāva*, these combinations of form and energy, action and movement exist for a quite limited relation and mutual experience in the cosmic oneness. And in this lower, outward and apparent order of things Nature as an expressive power of the Godhead is disfigured by the perversions of an obscure cosmic Ignorance and her divine significances lost in the materialised, separative and egoistic mechanism of our mental and vital experience. But still here also all is from the supreme Godhead, a birth, a becoming, an evolution,[3] a process of development through action of Nature out of the Transcendent. *Ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate*; "I am the birth of everything and from me all proceeds into development of action and movement." Not only is this true of all that we call good or praise and recognise as divine, all that is luminous, sattwic, ethical, peace-giving, spiritually joy-giving, "understanding and knowledge and freedom from the bewilderment of the Ignorance, forgiveness and truth and self-government and calm of inner control, non-injuring and equality, contentment and austerity and giving." It is true also of the oppositions that perplex the mortal mind and bring in ignorance and its bewilderment, "grief and pleasure, coming into being and destruction, fear and fearlessness, glory and ingloriousness" with all the rest of the interplay of light and darkness, all the myriad mixed threads that quiver so painfully and yet with a constant stimulation through the entanglement of our nervous mind and its ignorant subjectivities. All here in their separate diversities are subjective becomings of existences in the one great Becoming and they get their birth and being from Him who transcends them. The Transcendent knows and originates these things, but is not caught as in a web in that diversified knowledge and is not overcome by his creation. We must observe here the emphatic collocation of the three words from the verb *bhū*, to become, *bhavanti*, *bhāvāḥ*, *bhūtānām*. All existences are becomings of the Divine, *bhūtāni*; all subjective states and movements are his and their psychological becomings, *bhāvāḥ*. These even, our lesser subjective conditions and their apparent results no less than the highest spiritual states, are all becomings from the supreme Being,[4] *bhavanti matta eva*. The Gita recognises and stresses the distinction between Being and becoming, but does not turn it into an opposition. For that would be to abrogate the universal oneness. The Godhead is one in his transcendence, one all-supporting Self of things, one in the unity of his cosmic nature. These three are one Godhead; all derives from him, all becomes from his being, all is eternal portion or temporal expression of the Eternal. In the Transcendence, in the Absolute, if we are to follow the Gita, we must look, not for a supreme negation of all things, but for the positive key of their mystery, the reconciling secret of their existence.

---

[3] *prabhava*, *bhāva*, *pravṛtti*.

[4] Cf. the Upanishad, *ātmā eva abhūt sarvāṇi bhūtāni*, the Self has become all existences, with this contained significance in the choice of the words, the Self-existent has become all these becomings.

But there is another supreme reality of the Infinite that must also be recognised as an indispensable element of the liberating knowledge. This reality is that of the transcendent downlook as well as the close immanent presence of the divine government of the universe. The Supreme who becomes all creation, yet infinitely transcends it, is not a will-less cause aloof from his creation. He is not an involuntary originator who disowns all responsibility for these results of his universal Power or casts them upon an illusive consciousness entirely different from his own or leaves them to a mechanical Law or to a Demiurge or to a Manichean conflict of Principles. He is not an aloof and indifferent Witness who waits impassively for all to abolish itself or return to its unmoved original principle. He is the mighty lord of the worlds and peoples, *loka-maheśvara*, and governs all not only from within but from above, from his supreme transcendence. Cosmos cannot be governed by a Power that does not transcend cosmos. A divine government implies the free mastery of an omnipotent Ruler and not an automatic force or mechanical law of determinative becoming limited by the apparent nature of the cosmos. This is the theistic seeing of the universe, but it is no shrinking and gingerly theism afraid of the world's contradictions, but one which sees God as the omniscient and omnipotent, the sole original Being who manifests in himself all, whatever it may be, good and evil, pain and pleasure, light and darkness as stuff of his own existence and governs himself what in himself he has manifested. Unaffected by its oppositions, unbound by his creation, exceeding, yet intimately related to this Nature and closely one with her creatures, their

Spirit, Self, highest Soul, Lord, Lover, Friend, Refuge, he is ever leading them from within them and from above through the mortal appearances of ignorance and suffering and sin and evil, ever leading each through his nature and all through universal Nature towards a supreme light and bliss and immortality and transcendence. This is the fullness of the liberating knowledge. It is a knowledge of the Divine within us and in the world as at the same time a transcendent Infinite. An Absolute who has become all that is by his divine Nature, his effective power of Spirit, he governs all from his transcendence. He is intimately present within every creature and the cause, ruler, director of all cosmic happenings and yet is he far too great, mighty and infinite to be limited by his creation.

This character of the knowledge is emphasised in three separate verses of promise. "Whosoever knows me," says the Godhead, "as the unborn who is without origin, mighty lord of the worlds and peoples, lives unbewildered among mortals and is delivered from all sin and evil. . . . Whosoever knows in its right principles this my pervading lordship and this my Yoga (the divine Yoga, *aiśvara yoga*, by which the Transcendent is one with all existences, even while more than them all, and dwells in them and contains them as becomings of his own Nature), unites himself to me by an untrembling Yoga. . . . The wise hold me for the birth of each and all, hold each and all as developing from me its action and movement, and so holding they love and adore me . . . and I give them the Yoga of the understanding by which they come to me and I destroy for them the darkness which is born of the ignorance." These results must arise inevitably from the very nature of the knowledge and from the very nature of the Yoga which converts that knowledge into spiritual growth and spiritual experience. For all the perplexity of man's mind and action, all the stumbling, insecurity and affliction of his mind, his will, his ethical turn, his emotional, sensational and vital urgings can be traced back to the groping and bewildered cognition and volition natural to his sense-obscured mortal mind in the body, *sammoha*. But when he sees the divine Origin of all things, when he looks steadily from the cosmic appearance to its transcendent

Reality and back from that Reality to the appearance, he is then delivered from this bewilderment of the mind, will, heart and senses, he walks enlightened and free, *asammūḍhaḥ martyeṣu*. Assigning to everything its supernal and real and not any longer only its present and apparent value, he finds the hidden links and connections; he consciously directs all life and act to their high and true object and governs them by the light and power which comes to him from the Godhead within him. Thus he escapes from the wrong cognition, the wrong mental and volitional reaction, the wrong sensational reception and impulse which here originate sin and error and suffering, *sarva-pāpaiḥ pramucyate*. For living thus in the transcendent and universal he sees his own and every other individuality in their greater values and is released from the falsehood and ignorance of his separative and egoistic will and knowledge. That is always the essence of the spiritual liberation.

The wisdom of the liberated man is not then, in the view of the Gita, a consciousness of abstracted and unrelated impersonality, a do-nothing quietude. For the mind and soul of the liberated man are firmly settled in a constant sense, an integral feeling of the pervasion of the world by the actuating and directing presence of the divine Master of the universe, *etāṁ vibhūtiṁ mama yo vetti*. He is aware of his spirit's transcendence of the cosmic order, but he is aware also of his oneness with it by the divine Yoga, *yogaṁ ca mama*. And he sees each aspect of the transcendent, the cosmic and the individual existence in its right relation to the supreme Truth and puts all in their right place in the unity of the divine Yoga. He no longer sees each thing in its separateness, — the separate seeing that leaves all either unexplained or one-sided to the experiencing consciousness. Nor does he see all confusedly together, — the confused seeing that gives a wrong light and a chaotic action. Secure in the transcendence, he is not affected by the cosmic stress and the turmoil of Time and circumstance. Untroubled in the midst of all this creation and destruction of things, his spirit adheres to an unshaken and untrembling, an unvacillating Yoga of union with the eternal and spiritual in the universe. He watches through it all the divine persistence of the Master of the Yoga and acts out of a tranquil universality and oneness with all things and creatures. And this close contact with all things implies no involution of soul and mind in the separative lower nature, because his basis of spiritual experience is not the inferior phenomenal form and movement but the inner All and the supreme Transcendence. He becomes of like nature and law of being with the Divine, *sādharmyam āgataḥ*, transcendent even in universality of spirit, universal even in the individuality of mind, life and body. By this Yoga once perfected, undeviating and fixed, *avikampena yogena yujyate*, he is able to take up whatever poise of nature, assume whatever human condition, do whatever world-action without any fall from his oneness with the divine Self, without any loss of his constant communion with the Master of existence.[5]

This knowledge translated into the affective, emotional, temperamental plane becomes a calm love and intense adoration of the original and transcendental Godhead above us, the ever-present Master of all things here, God in man, God in Nature. It is at first a wisdom of the intelligence, the *buddhi*; but that is accompanied by a moved spiritualised state of the affective nature,[6] *bhāva*. This change of the heart and mind is the beginning of a total change of all the nature. A new inner birth and becoming prepares us for oneness with the supreme object of our love and adoration, *madbhāvāya*. There is an intense delight of love in the greatness and beauty and perfection of this divine Being now seen everywhere in the world and above it, *prīti*. That deeper ecstasy assumes the place of the scattered and external pleasure of the mind in existence or rather it draws all other delight into it and transforms by a marvellous alchemy the mind's and the heart's feelings and all sense movements. The whole consciousness becomes full of the Godhead and replete with his answering consciousness; the whole life flows into one sea of bliss-experience. All the speech and thought of such God-lovers becomes a mutual utterance and understanding of the

---

[5] *sarvathā vartamāno'pi sa yogī mayi vartate.*

[6] *budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ.*

Divine. In that one joy is concentrated all the contentment of the being, all the play and pleasure of the nature. There is a continual union from moment to moment in the thought and memory, there is an unbroken continuity of the experience of oneness in the spirit. And from the moment that this inner state begins, even in the stage of imperfection, the Divine confirms it by the perfect Yoga of the will and intelligence. He uplifts the blazing lamp of knowledge within us, he destroys the ignorance of the separative mind and will, he stands revealed in the human spirit. By the Yoga of the will and intelligence founded on an illumined union of works and knowledge the transition was effected from our lower troubled mind-ranges to the immutable calm of the witnessing Soul above the active nature. But now by this greater yoga of the Buddhi founded on an illumined union of love and adoration with an all-comprehending knowledge the soul rises in a vast ecstasy to the whole transcendental truth of the absolute and all-originating Godhead. The Eternal is fulfilled in the individual spirit and individual nature; the individual spirit is exalted from birth in time to the infinitudes of the Eternal.

VIII

God in Power of Becoming

A VERY important step has been reached, a decisive statement of its metaphysical and psychological synthesis has been added to the development of the Gita's gospel of spiritual liberation and divine works. The Godhead has been revealed in thought to Arjuna; he has been made visible to the mind's search and the heart's seeing as the supreme and universal Being, the supernal and universal Person, the inward-dwelling Master of our existence for whom man's knowledge, will and adoration were seeking through the mists of the Ignorance. There remains only the vision of the multiple Virat Purusha to complete the revelation on one more of its many sides.

The metaphysical synthesis is complete. Sankhya has been admitted for the separation of the soul from the lower nature, — a separation that must be effected by self-knowledge through the discriminating reason and by transcendence of our subjection to the three gunas constituent of that nature. It has been completed and its limitations exceeded by a large revelation of the unity of the supreme Soul and supreme Nature, *para puruṣa*, *parā prakṛti*. Vedanta of the philosophers has been admitted for the self-effacement of the natural separative personality built round the ego. Its method has been used to replace the little personal by the large impersonal being, to annul the separative illusion in the unity of the Brahman and to substitute for the blind seeing of the ego the truer vision of all things in one Self and one Self in all things. Its truth has been completed by the impartial revelation of the Parabrahman from whom originate both the mobile and the immobile, the mutable and the immutable, the action and the silence. Its possible limitations have been transcended by the intimate revelation of the supreme Soul and Lord who becomes here in all Nature, manifests himself in all personality and puts forth the power of his Nature in all action. Yoga has been admitted for the self-surrender of the will, mind, heart, all the psychological being to the Ishwara, the divine Lord of the nature. It has been completed by the revelation of the supernal Master of existence as the original Godhead of whom the Jiva is the partial being in Nature. Its possible limitations have been exceeded by the soul's seeing of all things as the Lord in the light of a perfect spiritual oneness.

There results an integral vision of the Divine Existent at once as the transcendent Reality, supracosmic origin of cosmos, as the impersonal Self of all things, calm continent of the cosmos, and as the immanent Divinity in all beings, personalities, objects, powers and qualities, the Immanent who is the constituent self, the effective nature and the inward and outward becoming of all existences. The Yoga of knowledge has been fulfilled sovereignly in this integral seeing and knowing of the One. The Yoga of works has been crowned by the surrender of all works to their Master, — for the natural man is now only an instrument of his will. The Yoga of love and adoration has been declared in its amplest forms. The intense consummation of knowledge and works, love conducts to a crowning union of soul and Oversoul in a highest amplitude. In that union the revelations of knowledge are made real to the heart as well as to the intelligence. In that union the difficult sacrifice of self in an instrumental action becomes the easy, free and blissful expression of a living oneness. The whole means of the spiritual liberation has been given; the whole foundation of the divine action has been constructed.

Arjuna accepts the entire knowledge that has thus been given to him by the divine Teacher. His mind is already delivered from its doubts and seekings; his heart, turned now from the outward aspect of the world, from its baffling appearance to its supreme sense and origin and its inner realities, is already released from sorrow and affliction and touched with the ineffable gladness of a divine revelation. The language which he is made to use in voicing his acceptance is such as to emphasise and insist once again on the profound integrality of this knowledge and its all-embracing finality and fullness. He accepts first the Avatar, the Godhead in man who is speaking to him as the supreme

Brahman, as the supracosmic All and Absolute of existence in which the soul can dwell when it rises out of this manifestation and this partial becoming to its source, *paraṁ brahma*, *paraṁ dhāma*. He accepts him as the supreme purity of the ever free Existence to which one arrives through the effacement of ego in the self's immutable impersonality calm and still for ever, *pavitraṁ paramam*. He accepts him next as the one Permanent, the eternal Soul, the divine Purusha, *puruṣaṁ śāśvataṁ divyam*. He acclaims in him the original Godhead, adores the Unborn who is the pervading, indwelling, self-extending master of all existence, *ādi-devam ajaṁ vibhum*. He accepts him therefore not only as that Wonderful who is beyond expression of any kind, for nothing is sufficient to manifest him, — "neither the Gods nor the Titans, O blessed Lord, know thy manifestation," *na hi te bhagavan vyaktiṁ vidur devā na dānavāḥ*, — but as the lord of all existences and the one divine efficient cause of all their becoming, God of the gods from whom all godheads have sprung, master of the universe who manifests and governs it from above by the power of his supreme and his universal Nature, *bhūta-bhāvana bhūteśa deva-deva jagat-pate*. And lastly he accepts him as that Vasudeva in and around us who is all things here by virtue of the world-pervading, all-inhabiting, all-constituting master powers of his becoming, *vibhūtayaḥ*, "the sovereign powers of thy becoming by which thou standest pervading these worlds," *yābhir vibhūtibhir lokān imāṁs tvaṁ vyāpya tiṣṭhasi*.[1]

He has accepted the truth with the adoration of his heart, the submission of his will and the understanding of his intelligence. He is already prepared to act as the divine instrument in this knowledge and with this self-surrender. But a desire for a deeper constant spiritual realisation has been awakened in his heart and will. This is a truth which is evident only to the supreme Soul in its own self-knowledge, — for, cries Arjuna, "thou alone, O Purushottama, knowest thyself by thyself," *ātmanā ātmānaṁ vettha*. This is a knowledge that comes by spiritual identity and the unaided heart, will, intelligence of the natural man cannot arrive at it by their own motion and can only get at imperfect mental reflections that reveal less than they conceal and disfigure. This is a secret wisdom which one must hear from the seers who have seen the face of this Truth, have heard its word and have become one with it in self and spirit. "All the Rishis say this of thee and the divine seer Narada, Asita, Devala, Vyasa." Or else one must receive it from within by revelation and inspiration from the inner Godhead who lifts in us the blazing lamp of knowledge. *Svayañcaiva bravīṣi me*, "and thou thyself sayest it to me." Once revealed, it has to be accepted by the assent of the mind, the consent of the will and the heart's delight and submission, the three elements of the complete mental faith, *śraddhā*. It is so that Arjuna has accepted it; "all this that thou sayest, my mind holds for the truth." But still there will remain the need of that deeper possession in the very self of our being out from its most intimate psychic centre, the soul's demand for that inexpressible permanent spiritual realisation of which the mental is only a preliminary or a shadow and without which there cannot be a complete union with the Eternal.

---

[1] Gita, X. 12-15.

Now the way to arrive at that realisation has been given to Arjuna. And so far as regards the great self-evident divine principles, these do not baffle the mind; it can open to the idea of the supreme Godhead, to the experience of the immutable Self, to the direct perception of the immanent Divinity, to the contact of the conscient universal Being. One can, once the mind is illumined with the idea, follow readily the way and, with whatever preliminary difficult effort to exceed the normal mental perceptions, come in the end to the self-experience of these essential truths that stand behind our and all existence, *ātmanā ātmānam*. One can do it with this readiness because these, once conceived, are evidently divine realities; there is nothing in our mental associations to prevent us from admitting God in these high aspects. But the difficulty is to see him in the apparent truths of existence, to detect him in this fact of Nature and in these disguising phenomena of the world's becoming; for here all is opposed to the sublimity of this unifying conception. How can we consent to see the Divine as man and animal being and inanimate object, in the noble and the low, the sweet and the terrible, the good and the evil? If, assenting to some idea of God extended in the things of the cosmos, we see him in ideal light of knowledge and greatness of power and charm of beauty and beneficence of love and ample largeness of spirit, how shall we avoid the breaking of the unity by their opposites which in actual fact cling to these high things and envelop them and obscure? And if in spite of the limitations of human mind and nature we can see God in the man of God, how shall we see him in those who oppose him and represent in act and nature all that we conceive of as undivine? If Narayana is without difficulty visible in the sage and the saint, how shall he be easily visible to us in the sinner, the criminal, the harlot and the outcaste? To all the differentiations of the world-existence the sage, looking everywhere for the supreme purity and oneness, returns the austere cry, "not this, not this," *neti neti*. Even if to many things in the world we give a willing or reluctant assent and admit the Divine in the universe, still before most must not the mind persist in that cry "not this, not this"? Here constantly the assent of the understanding, the consent of the will and the heart's faith become difficult to a human mentality anchored always on phenomenon and appearance. At least some compelling indications are needed, some links and bridges, some supports to the difficult effort at oneness.

Arjuna, though he accepts the revelation of Vasudeva as all and though his heart is full of the delight of it, — for already he finds that it is delivering him from the perplexity and stumbling differentiations of his mind which was crying for a clue, a guiding truth amid the bewildering problems of a world of oppositions, and it is to his hearing the nectar of immortality, *amṛtam*, — yet feels the need of such supports and indices. He feels that they are indispensable to overcome the difficulty of a complete and firm realisation; for how else can this knowledge be made a thing of the heart and life? He requires guiding indications, asks Krishna even for a complete and detailed enumeration of the sovereign powers of his becoming and desires that nothing shall be left out of the vision, nothing remain to baffle him. "Thou shouldst tell me" he says "of thy divine self-manifestations in thy sovereign power of becoming, *divyā ātma-vibhūtayaḥ*, all without exception, — *aśeṣeṇa*, nothing omitted, — thy Vibhutis by which thou pervadest these worlds and peoples. How shall I know thee, O Yogin, by thinking of thee everywhere at all moments and in what pre-eminent becomings should I think of thee?" This Yoga by which thou art one with all and one in all and all are becomings of thy being, all are pervading or pre-eminent or disguised powers of thy nature, tell me of it, he cries, in its detail and extent, and tell me ever more of it; it is nectar of immortality to me, and however much of it I hear, I am not satiated. Here we get an indication in the Gita of something which the Gita itself does not bring out expressly, but which occurs frequently in the Upanishads and was developed later on by Vaishnavism and Shaktism in a greater intensity of vision, man's possible joy of the Divine in the world-existence, the universal Ananda, the play of the Mother, the sweetness and beauty of God's Lila.[2]

The divine Teacher accedes to the request of the disciple, but with an initial reminder that a full reply is not possible. For God is infinite and his manifestation is infinite. The forms of his manifestation too are innumerable. Each form is a symbol of some divine power, *vibhūti*, concealed in it and to the seeing eye each finite carries in it its own revelation of the infinite. Yes, he says, I will tell thee of my divine Vibhutis, but only in some of my principal pre-eminences and as an indication and by the example of things in which thou canst most readily see the power of the Godhead, *prādhānyataḥ*, *uddeśataḥ*. For there is no end to the innumerable detail of the Godhead's self-extension in the universe, *nāsti anto vistarasya me*. This reminder begins the passage and is repeated at the end in order to give it a greater and unmistakable emphasis. And then throughout the rest of the chapter[3] we get a summary description of these principal indications, these pre-eminent signs of the divine force present in the things and persons of the universe. It seems at first as if they were given pell-mell, without any order, but still there is a certain principle in the enumeration, which, if it is once disengaged, can lead by a helpful guidance to the inner sense of the idea and its consequences. The chapter has been called the Vibhuti-Yoga, — an indispensable yoga. For while we must identify ourselves impartially with the universal divine Becoming in all its extension, its good and evil, perfection and imperfection, light and darkness, we must at the same time realise that there is an ascending evolutionary power in it, an increasing intensity of its revelation in things, a hierarchic secret something that carries us upward from the first concealing appearances through higher and higher forms towards the large ideal nature of the universal Godhead.

---

[2] X. 16-18. [3] X. 19-42.

This summary enumeration begins with a statement of the primal principle that underlies all the power of this manifestation in the universe. It is this that in every being and object God dwells concealed and discoverable; he is housed as in a crypt in the mind and heart of every thing and creature, an inner self in the core of its subjective and its objective becoming, one who is the beginning and middle and end of all that is, has been or will be. For it is this inner divine Self hidden from the mind and heart which he inhabits, this luminous Inhabitant concealed from the view of the soul in Nature which he has put forth into Nature as his representative, who is all the time evolving the mutations of our personality in Time and our sensational existence in Space, — Time and Space that are the conceptual movement and extension of the Godhead in us. All is this self-seeing Soul, this self-representing Spirit. For ever from within all beings, from within all conscient and inconscient existences, this All-conscient develops his manifested self in quality and power, develops it in the forms of objects, in the instruments of our subjectivity, in knowledge and word and thinking, in the creations of the mind and in the passion and actions of the doer, in the measures of Time, in cosmic powers and godheads and in the forces of Nature, in plant life, in animal life, in human and superhuman beings.

If we look at things with this eye of vision unblinded by differentiations of quality and quantity or by difference of values and oppositions of nature, we shall see that all things are in fact and can be nothing but powers of his manifestation, vibhutis of this universal Soul and Spirit, Yoga of this great Yogin, self-creations of this marvellous self-Creator. He is the unborn and the all-pervading Master of his own innumerable becomings in the universe, *ajo vibhuḥ*; all things are his powers and effectuations in his self-Nature, vibhutis. He is the origin of all they are, their beginning; he is their support in their ever-changing status, their middle; he is their end too, the culmination or the disintegration of each created thing in its cessation or its disappearance. He brings them out from his consciousness and is hidden in them, he withdraws them into his consciousness and they are hidden in him for a time or for ever. What is apparent to us is only a power of becoming of the One: what disappears from our sense and vision is effect of that power of becoming of the One. All classes, genera, species, individuals are such vibhutis. But since it is through power in his becoming that he is apparent to us, he is especially apparent in whatever is of a pre-eminent value or seems to act with a powerful and pre-eminent force. And therefore in each kind of being we can see him most in those in whom the power of nature of that kind reaches its highest, its leading, its most effectively self-revealing manifestation. These are in a special sense Vibhutis. Yet the highest power and manifestation is only a very partial revelation of the Infinite; even the whole universe is informed by only one degree of his greatness, illumined by one ray of his splendour, glorious with a faint hint of his delight and beauty. This is in sum the gist of the enumeration, the result we carry away from it, the heart of its meaning.

God is imperishable, beginningless, unending Time; this is his most evident Power of becoming and the essence of the whole universal movement. *Aham eva akṣayaḥ kālaḥ*. In that movement of Time and Becoming God appears to our conception or experience of him by the evidence of his works as the divine Power who ordains and sets all things in their place in the movement. In his form of Space it is he who fronts us in every direction, million-bodied, myriad-minded, manifest in each existence; we see his faces on all sides of us. *Dhātā 'haṁ viśvato-mukhaḥ*. For simultaneously in all these many million persons and things, *sarva-bhūteṣu*, there works the mystery of his self and thought and force and his divine genius of creation and his marvellous art of formation and his impeccable ordering of relations and possibilities and inevitable consequences. He appears to us too in the universe as the universal spirit of Destruction, who seems to create only to undo his creations in the end, — "I am all-snatching Death," *ahaṁ mṛtyuḥ sarva-haraḥ*. And yet his Power of becoming does not cease from its workings, for the force of rebirth and new creation ever keeps pace with the force of death and destruction, — "and I am too the birth of all that shall come into being." The divine Self in things is the sustaining Spirit of the present, the withdrawing Spirit of the past, the creative Spirit of the future.

Then among all these living beings, cosmic godheads, superhuman and human and subhuman creatures, and amid all these qualities, powers and objects, the chief, the head, the greatest in quality of each class is a special power of the becoming of the Godhead. I am, says the Godhead, Vishnu among the Adityas, Shiva among the Rudras, Indra among the gods, Prahlada among the Titans, Brihaspati the chief of the high priests of the world, Skanda the war-god, leader of the leaders of battle, Marichi among the Maruts, the lord of wealth among the Yakshas and Rakshasas, the serpent Ananta among the Nagas, Agni among the Vasus, Chitraratha among the Gandharvas, Kandarpa the love-God among the progenitors, Varuna among the peoples of the sea, Aryaman among the Fathers, Narada among the divine sages, Yama lord of the Law among those who maintain rule and law, among the powers of storm the Wind-God. At the other end of the scale I am the radiant sun among lights and splendours, the moon among the stars of night, the ocean among the flowing waters, Meru among the peaks of the world, Himalaya among the mountain-ranges, Ganges among the rivers, the divine thunderbolt among weapons. Among all plants and trees I am the Aswattha, among horses Indra's horse Uchchaihsravas, Airavata among the elephants, among the birds Garuda, Vasuki the snake-god among the serpents, Kamadhuk the cow of plenty among cattle, the alligator among fishes, the lion among the beasts of the forest. I am Margasirsha, first of the months; I am spring, the fairest of the seasons.

In living beings, the Godhead tells Arjuna, I am consciousness by which they are aware of themselves and their surroundings. I am mind among the senses, mind by which they receive the impressions of objects and react upon them. I am man's qualities of mind and character and body and action; I am glory and speech and memory and intelligence and steadfastness and forgiveness, the energy of the energetic and the strength of the mighty. I am resolution and perseverance and victory, I am the sattwic quality of the good, I am the gambling of the cunning; I am the mastery and power of all who rule and tame and vanquish and the policy of all who succeed and conquer; I am the silence of things secret, the knowledge of the knower, the logic of those who debate. I am the letter A among letters, the dual among compounds, the sacred syllable OM among words, the Gayatri among metres, the Sama-veda among the Vedas and the great Sama among the mantras. I am Time the head of all reckoning to those who reckon and measure. I am spiritual knowledge among the many philosophies, arts and sciences. I am all the powers of the human being and all the energies of the universe and its creatures.

Those in whom my powers rise to the utmost heights of human attainment are myself always, my special Vibhutis. I am among men the king of men, the leader, the mighty man, the hero. I am Rama among warriors, Krishna among the Vrishnis, Arjuna among the Pandavas. The illumined Rishi is my Vibhuti; I am Bhrigu among the great Rishis. The great seer, the inspired poet who sees and reveals the truth by the light of the idea and sound of the word, is myself luminous in the mortal; I am Ushanas among the seer-poets. The great sage, thinker, philosopher is my power among men, my own vast intelligence; I am Vyasa among the sages. But, with whatever variety of degree in manifestation, all beings are in their own way and nature powers of the Godhead; nothing moving or unmoving, animate or inanimate in the world can be without me. I am the divine seed of all existences and of that seed they are the branches and flowers; what is in the seed of self, that only they can develop in Nature. There is no numbering or limit to my divine Vibhutis; what I have spoken is nothing more than a summary development and I have given only the light of a few leading indications and a strong opening to endless verities. Whatever beautiful and glorious creature thou seest in the world, whatever being is mighty and forceful among men and above man and below him, know to be a very splendour, light and energy of Me and born of a potent portion and intense power of my existence. But what need is there of a multitude of details for this knowledge? Take it thus, that I am here in this world and everywhere, I am in all and I constitute all: there is nothing else than I, nothing without Me. I support this entire universe with a single degree of my illimitable power and an infinitesimal portion of my fathomless spirit; all these worlds are only sparks, hints, glintings of the I Am eternal and immeasurable.

IX

The Theory of the Vibhuti

THE IMPORTANCE of this chapter of the Gita is very much greater than appears at first view or to an eye of prepossession which is looking into the text only for the creed of the last transcendence and the detached turning of the human soul away from the world to a distant Absolute. The message of the Gita is the gospel of the Divinity in man who by force of an increasing union unfolds himself out of the veil of the lower Nature, reveals to the human soul his cosmic spirit, reveals his absolute transcendences, reveals himself in man and in all beings. The potential outcome here of this union, this divine Yoga, man growing towards the Godhead, the Godhead manifest in the human soul and to the inner human vision, is our liberation from limited ego and our elevation to the higher nature of a divine humanity. For dwelling in this greater spiritual nature and not in the mortal weft, the tangled complexity of the three gunas, man, one with God by knowledge, love and will and the giving up of his whole being into the Godhead, is able indeed to rise to the absolute Transcendence, but also to act upon the world, no longer in ignorance, but in the right relation of the individual to the Supreme, in the truth of the Spirit, fulfilled in immortality, for God in the world and no longer for the ego. To call Arjuna to this action, to make him aware of the being and power that he is and of the Being and Power whose will acts through him, is the purpose of the embodied Godhead. To this end the divine Krishna is his charioteer; to this end there came upon him that great discouragement and deep dissatisfaction with the lesser human motives of his work; to substitute for them the larger spiritual motive this revelation is given to him in the supreme moment of the work to which he has been appointed. The vision of the World-Purusha and the divine command to action is the culminating point to which he was being led. That is already imminent; but without the knowledge now given to him through the Vibhuti-Yoga it would not bring with it its full meaning.

The mystery of the world-existence is in part revealed by the Gita. In part, for who shall exhaust its infinite depths or what creed or philosophy say that it has enlightened in a narrow space or shut up in a brief system all the significance of the cosmic miracle? But so far as is essential for the Gita's purpose, it is revealed to us. We have the way of the origination of the world from God, the immanence of the Divine in it and its immanence in the Divine, the essential unity of all existence, the relation of the human soul obscured in Nature to the Godhead, its awakening to self-knowledge, its birth into a greater consciousness, its ascension into its own spiritual heights. But when this new self-vision and consciousness have been acquired in place of the original ignorance, what will be the liberated man's view of the world around him, his attitude towards the cosmic manifestation of which he has now the central secret? He will have first the knowledge of the unity of existence and the regarding eye of that knowledge. He will see all around him as souls and forms and powers of the one divine Being. Henceforward that vision will be the starting-point of all the inward and outward operations of his consciousness; it will be the fundamental seeing, the spiritual basis of all his actions. He will see all things and every creature living, moving and acting in the One, contained in the divine and eternal Existence. But he will also see that One as the Inhabitant in all, their Self, the essential Spirit within them without whose secret presence in their conscious nature they could not at all live, move or act and without whose will, power, sanction or sufferance not one of their movements at any moment would be in the least degree possible. Themselves too, their soul, mind, life and physical mould he will see only as a result of the power, will and force of this one Self and Spirit. All will be to him a becoming of this one universal Being. Their consciousness he will see to be derived entirely from its consciousness, their power and will to be drawn from and dependent on its power and will, their partial phenomenon of nature to be a resultant from its greater divine Nature, whether in the immediate actuality of things it strikes the mind as a manifestation or a disguise, a figure or a disfigurement of the Godhead. No untoward or bewildering appearance of things will in any smallest degree diminish or conflict with the completeness of this vision. It is the essential foundation of the greater consciousness into which he has arisen, it is the indispensable light that has opened around him and the one perfect way of seeing, the one Truth that makes all others possible.

But the world is only a partial manifestation of the Godhead, it is not itself that Divinity. The Godhead is infinitely greater than any natural manifestation can be. By his very infinity, by its absolute freedom he exists beyond all possibility of integral formulation in any scheme of worlds or extension of cosmic Nature, however wide, complex, endlessly varied this and every world may seem to us, — *nāsti anto vistarasya me*, — however to our finite view infinite. Therefore beyond cosmos the eye of the liberated spirit will see the utter Divine. Cosmos he will see as a figure drawn from the Divinity who is beyond all figure, a constant minor term in the absolute existence. Every relative and finite he will see as a figure of the divine Absolute and Infinite, and both beyond all finites and through each finite he will arrive at that alone, see always that beyond each phenomenon and natural creature and relative action and every quality and every happening; looking at each of these things and beyond it, he will find in the Divinity its spiritual significance.

These things will not be to his mind intellectual concepts or this attitude to the world simply a way of thinking or a pragmatic dogma. For if his knowledge is conceptual only, it is a philosophy, an intellectual construction, not a spiritual knowledge and vision, not a spiritual state of consciousness. The spiritual seeing of God and world is not ideative only, not even mainly or primarily ideative. It is direct experience and as real, vivid, near, constant, effective, intimate as to the mind its sensuous seeing and feeling of images, objects and persons. It is only the physical mind that thinks of God and spirit as an abstract conception which it cannot visualise or represent to itself except by words and names and symbolic images and fictions. Spirit sees spirit, the divinised consciousness sees God as directly and more directly, as intimately and more intimately than bodily consciousness sees matter. It sees, feels, thinks, senses the Divine. For to the spiritual consciousness all manifest existence appears as a world of spirit and not a world of matter, not a world of life, not a world even of mind; these other things are to its view only God-thought, God-force, God-form. That is what the Gita means by living and acting in Vasudeva, *mayi vartate*. The spiritual consciousness is aware of the Godhead with that close knowledge by identity which is so much more tremendously real than any mental perception of the thinkable or any sensuous experience of the sensible. It is so aware even of the Absolute who is behind and beyond all world-existence and who originates and surpasses it and is for ever outside its vicissitudes. And of the immutable self of this Godhead that pervades and supports the world's mutations with his unchanging eternity, this consciousness is similarly aware, by identity, by the oneness of this self with our own timeless unchanging immortal spirit. It is aware again in the same manner of the divine Person who knows himself in all these things and persons and becomes all things and persons in his consciousness and shapes their thoughts and forms and governs their actions by his immanent will. It is intimately conscious of God absolute, God as self, God as spirit, soul and nature. Even this external Nature it knows by identity and self-experience, but an identity freely admitting variation, admitting relations, admitting greater and lesser degrees of the action of the one power of existence. For Nature is God's power of various self-becoming, *ātma-vibhūti*.

But this spiritual consciousness of world-existence will not see Nature in the world as the normal mind of man sees it in the ignorance or only as it is in the effects of the ignorance. All in this Nature that is of the ignorance, all that is imperfect or painful or perverse and repellent, does not exist as an absolute opposite of the nature of the Godhead, but goes back to something behind itself, goes back to a saving power of spirit in which it can find its own true being and redemption. There is an original and originating Supreme Prakriti, in which the divine power and will to be enjoys its own absolute quality and pure revelation. There is found the highest, there the perfect energy of all the energies we see in the universe. That is what presents itself to us as the ideal nature of the Godhead, a nature of absolute knowledge, absolute power and will, absolute love and delight. And all the infinite variations of its quality and energy, *ananta-guṇa*, *agaṇana-śakti*, are there wonderfully various, admirably and spontaneously harmonised free self-formulations of this absolute wisdom and will and power and delight and love. All is there a many-sided untrammelled unity of infinites. Each energy, each quality is in the ideal divine nature pure, perfect, self-possessed, harmonious in its action; nothing there strives for its own separate limited self-fulfilment, all act in an inexpressible oneness. There all dharmas, all laws of being — dharma, law of being, is only characteristic action of divine energy and quality, *guṇa-karma*, — are one free and plastic dharma. The one divine Power of being[1] works with an immeasurable liberty and, tied to no single excluding law, not limited by any binding system, rejoices in her own play of infinity and never falters in her truth of self-expression perfect for ever.

But in the universe in which we live, there is a separating principle of selection and differentiation. There we see each energy, each quality which comes out for expression labouring as if for its own hand, trying to get as much self-expression as it can in whatever way it can, and accommodating somehow as best or as worst it may that effort with the concomitant or rival effort of other energies and qualities for their separate self-expression. The Spirit, the Divine dwells in this struggling world-nature and imposes on it a certain harmony by the inalienable law of the inner secret oneness on which the action of all these powers is based. But it is a relative harmony which seems to result from an original division, to emerge from and subsist by the shock of divisions and not from an original oneness. Or at least the oneness seems to be suppressed and latent, not to find itself, never to put off its baffling disguises. And in fact it does not find itself till the individual being in this world-nature discovers in himself the higher divine Prakriti from whom this lesser movement is a derivation. Nevertheless, the qualities and energies at work in the world, operating variously in man, animal, plant, inanimate thing, are, whatever forms they may take, always divine qualities and energies. All energies and qualities are powers of the Godhead. Each comes from the divine Prakriti there, works for its self-expression in the lower Prakriti here, increases its potency of affirmation and actualised values under these hampering conditions, and as it reaches its heights of self-power, comes near to the visible expression of the Divinity and directs itself upward to its own absolute in the supreme, the ideal, the divine Nature. For each energy is being and power of the Godhead and the expansion and self-expression of energy is always the expansion and expression of the Godhead.

---

[1] *tapas*, *cit-śakti*.

One might even say that at a certain point of intensity each force in us, force of knowledge, force of will, force of love, force of delight, can result in an explosion which breaks the shell of the lower formulation and liberates the energy from its separative action into union with the infinite freedom and power of the divine Being. A highest Godward tension liberates the mind through an absolute seeing of knowledge, liberates the heart through an absolute love and delight, liberates the whole existence through an absolute concentration of will towards a greater existence. But the percussion and the delivering shock come by the touch of the Divine on our actual nature which directs the energy away from its normal limited separative action and objects towards the Eternal, Universal and Transcendent, orientates it towards the infinite and absolute Godhead. This truth of the dynamic omnipresence of the divine Power of being is the foundation of the theory of the Vibhuti.

The infinite divine Shakti is present everywhere and secretly supports the lower formulation, *parā prakṛtir me yayā dhāryate jagat*, but it holds itself back, hidden in the heart of each natural existence, *sarvabhūtānāṁ hṛddeśe*, until the veil of Yogamaya is rent by the light of knowledge. The spiritual being of man, the

Jiva, possesses the divine Nature. He is a manifestation of God in that Nature, *parā prakṛtir jīva-bhūtā*, and he has latent in him all the divine energies and qualities, the light, the force, the power of being of the Godhead. But in this inferior Prakriti in which we live, the Jiva follows the principle of selection and finite determination, and there whatever nexus of energy, whatever quality or spiritual principle he brings into birth with him or brings forward as the seed of his self-expression, becomes an operative portion of his swabhava, his law of self-becoming, and determines his swadharma, his law of action. And if that were all, there would be no perplexity or difficulty; the life of man would be a luminous unfolding of godhead. But this lower energy of our world is a nature of ignorance, of egoism, of the three gunas. Because this is a nature of egoism, the Jiva conceives of himself as the separative ego: he works out his self-expression egoistically as a separative will to be in conflict as well as in association with the same will to be in others. He attempts to possess the world by strife and not by unity and harmony; he stresses an ego-centric discord. Because this is a nature of ignorance, a blind seeing and an imperfect or partial self-expression, he does not know himself, does not know his law of being, but follows it instinctively under the ill-understood compulsion of the world-energy, with a struggle, with much inner conflict, with a very large possibility of deviation. Because this is a nature of the three gunas, this confused and striving self-expression takes various forms of incapacity, perversion or partial self-finding. Dominated by the guna of tamas, the mode of darkness and inertia, the power of being works in a weak confusion, a prevailing incapacity, an unaspiring subjection to the blind mechanism of the forces of the Ignorance. Dominated by the guna of rajas, the mode of action, desire and possession, there is a struggle, there is an effort, there is a growth of power and capacity, but it is stumbling, painful, vehement, misled by wrong notions, methods and ideals, impelled to a misuse, corruption and perversion of right notions, methods or ideals and prone, especially, to a great, often an enormous exaggeration of the ego. Dominated by the guna of sattwa, the mode of light and poise and peace, there is a more harmonious action, a right dealing with the nature, but right only within the limits of an individual light and a capacity unable to exceed the better forms of this lower mental will and knowledge. To escape from this tangle, to rise beyond the ignorance, the ego and the gunas is the first real step towards divine perfection. By that transcendence the Jiva finds his own divine nature and his true existence.

The liberated eye of knowledge in the spiritual consciousness does not in its outlook on the world see this struggling lower Nature alone. If we perceive only the apparent outward fact of our nature and others' nature, we are looking with the eye of the ignorance and cannot know God equally in all, in the sattwic, the rajasic, the tamasic creature, in God and Titan, in saint and sinner, in the wise man and the ignorant, in the great and in the little, in man, animal, plant and inanimate existence. The liberated vision sees three things at once as the whole occult truth of the natural being. First and foremost it sees the divine Prakriti in all, secret, present, waiting for evolution; it sees her as the real power in all things, that which gives its value to all this apparent action of diverse quality and force, and it reads the significance of these latter phenomena not in their own language of ego and ignorance, but in the light of the divine Nature. Therefore it sees too, secondly, the differences of the apparent action in Deva and Rakshasa, man and beast and bird and reptile, good and wicked, ignorant and learned, but as action of divine quality and energy under these conditions, under these masks. It is not deluded by the mask, but detects behind every mask the Godhead. It observes the perversion or the imperfection, but it pierces to the truth of the spirit behind, it discovers it even in the perversion and imperfection self-blinded, struggling to find itself, groping through various forms of self-expression and experience towards complete self-knowledge, towards its own infinite and absolute. The liberated eye does not lay undue stress on the perversion and imperfection, but is able to see all with a complete love and charity in the heart, a complete understanding in the intelligence, a complete equality in the spirit. Finally, it sees the upward urge of the striving powers of the Will to be towards Godhead; it respects, welcomes, encourages all high manifestations of energy and quality, the flaming tongues of the Divinity, the mounting greatnesses of soul and mind and life in their intensities uplifted from the levels of the lower nature towards heights of luminous wisdom and knowledge, mighty power, strength, capacity, courage, heroism, benignant sweetness and ardour and grandeur of love and self-giving, pre-eminent virtue, noble action, captivating beauty and harmony, fine and godlike creation. The eye of the spirit sees and marks out the rising godhead of man in the great Vibhuti.

This is a recognition of the Godhead as Power, but power in its widest sense, power not only of might, but of knowledge, will, love, work, purity, sweetness, beauty. The Divine is being, consciousness and delight, and in the world all throws itself out and finds itself again by energy of being, energy of consciousness and energy of delight; this is a world of the works of the divine Shakti. That Shakti shapes herself here in innumerable kinds of beings and each of them has its own characteristic powers of her force. Each power is the Divine himself in that form, in the lion as in the hind, in the Titan as in the God, in the inconscient sun that flames through ether as in man who thinks upon earth. The deformation given by the gunas is the minor, not really the major aspect; the essential thing is the divine power that is finding self-expression. It is the Godhead who manifests himself in the great thinker, the hero, the leader of men, the great teacher, sage, prophet, religious founder, saint, lover of man, the great poet, the great artist, the great scientist, the ascetic self-tamer, the tamer of things and events and forces. The work itself, the high poem, the perfect form of beauty, the deep love, the noble act, the divine achievement is a movement of godhead; it is the Divine in manifestation.

This is a truth which all ancient cultures recognised and respected, but one side of the modern mind has singular repugnances to the idea, sees in it a worship of mere strength and power, an ignorant or self-degrading hero-worship or a doctrine of the Asuric superman. Certainly, there is an ignorant way of taking this truth, as there is an ignorant way of taking all truths; but it has its proper place, its indispensable function in the divine economy of Nature. The Gita puts it in that right place and perspective. It must be based on the recognition of the divine self in all men and all creatures; it must be consistent with an equal heart to the great and the small, the eminent and the obscure manifestation. God must be seen and loved in the ignorant, the humble, the weak, the vile, the outcaste. In the Vibhuti himself it is not, except as a symbol, the outward individual that is to be thus recognised and set high, but the one Godhead who displays himself in the power. But this does not abrogate the fact that there is an ascending scale in manifestation and that Nature mounts upward in her degrees of self-expression from her groping, dark or suppressed symbols to the first visible expressions of the Godhead. Each great being, each great achievement is a sign of her power of self-exceeding and a promise of the final, the supreme exceeding. Man himself is a superior degree of natural manifestation to the beast and reptile, though in both there is the one equal Brahman. But man has not reached his own highest heights of self-exceeding and meanwhile every hint of a greater power of the Will to be in him must be recognised as a promise and an indication. Respect for the divinity in man, in all men, is not diminished, but heightened and given a richer significance by lifting our eyes to the trail of the great Pioneers who lead or point him by whatever step of attainment towards supermanhood.

Arjuna himself is a Vibhuti; he is a man high in the spiritual evolution, a figure marked out in the crowd of his contemporaries, a chosen instrument of the divine Narayana, the Godhead in humanity. In one place the Teacher speaking as the supreme and equal Self of all declares that there is none dear to him, none hated, but in others he says that Arjuna is dear to him and his bhakta and therefore guided and safe in his hands, chosen for the vision and the knowledge. There is here only an apparent inconsistency. The Power as the self of the cosmos is equal to all, therefore to each being he gives according to the workings of his nature; but there is also a personal relation of the Purushottama to the human being in which he is especially near to the man who has come near to him. All these heroes and men of might who have joined in battle on the plain of Kurukshetra are vessels of the divine Will and through each he works according to his nature but behind the veil of his ego. Arjuna has reached that point when the veil can be rent and the embodied Godhead can reveal the mystery of his workings to his Vibhuti. It is even essential that there should be the revelation. He is the instrument of a great work, a work terrible in appearance but necessary for a long step forward in the march of the race, a decisive movement in its struggle towards the kingdom of the Right and the Truth, *dharmarājya*. The history of the cycles of man is a progress towards the unveiling of the Godhead in the soul and life of humanity; each high event and stage of it is a divine manifestation. Arjuna, the chief instrument of the hidden Will, the great protagonist, must become the divine man capable of doing the work consciously as the action of the Divine. So only can that action become psychically alive and receive its spiritual import and its light and power of secret significance. He is called to self-knowledge; he must see God as the Master of the universe and the origin of the world's creatures and happenings, all as the Godhead's self-expression in Nature, God in all, God in himself as man and as Vibhuti, God in the lownesses of being and on its heights, God on the topmost summits, man too upon heights as the Vibhuti and climbing to the last summits in the supreme liberation and union. Time in its creation and destruction must be seen by him as the figure of the Godhead in its steps, — steps that accomplish the cycles of the cosmos on whose spires of movement the divine spirit in the human body rises doing God's work in the world as his Vibhuti to the supreme transcendences. This knowledge has been given; the Time-figure of the Godhead is now to be revealed and from the million mouths of that figure will issue the command for the appointed action to the liberated Vibhuti.

X

The Vision of the World-Spirit
Time the Destroyer

THE VISION of the universal Purusha is one of the best known and most powerfully poetic passages in the Gita, but its place in the thought is not altogether on the surface. It is evidently intended for a poetic and revelatory symbol and we must see how it is brought in and for what purpose and discover to what it points in its significant aspects before we can capture its meaning. It is invited by Arjuna in his desire to see the living image, the visible greatness of the unseen Divine, the very embodiment of the Spirit and Power that governs the universe. He has heard the highest spiritual secret of existence, that all is from God and all is the Divine and in all things God dwells and is concealed and can be revealed in every finite appearance. The illusion which so persistently holds man's sense and mind, the idea that things at all exist in themselves or for themselves apart from God or that anything subject to Nature can be self-moved and self-guided, has passed from him, — that was the cause of his doubt and bewilderment and refusal of action. Now he knows what is the sense of the birth and passing away of existences. He knows that the imperishable greatness of the divine conscious Soul is the secret of all these appearances. All is a Yoga of this great eternal Spirit in things and all happenings are the result and expression of that Yoga; all Nature is full of the secret Godhead and in labour to reveal him in her. But he would see too the very form and body of this Godhead, if that be possible. He has heard of his attributes and understood the steps and ways of his self-revelation; but now he asks of this Master of the Yoga to discover his very imperishable Self to the eye of Yoga. Not, evidently, the formless silence of his actionless immutability, but the Supreme from whom is all energy and action, of whom forms are the masks, who reveals his force in the Vibhuti, — the Master of works, the Master of knowledge and adoration, the Lord of Nature and all her creatures. For this greatest all-comprehending vision he is made to ask because it is so, from the Spirit revealed in the universe, that he must receive the command to his part in the world-action.

What thou hast to see, replies the Avatar, the human eye cannot grasp, — for the human eye can see only the outward appearances of things or make out of them separate symbol forms, each of them significant of only a few aspects of the eternal Mystery. But there is a divine eye, an inmost seeing, by which the supreme Godhead in his Yoga can be beheld and that eye I now give to thee. Thou shalt see, he says, my hundreds and thousands of divine forms, various in kind, various in shape and hue; thou shalt see the Adityas and the Rudras and the Maruts and the Aswins; thou shalt see many wonders that none has beheld; thou shalt see today the whole world related and unified in my body and whatever else thou willest to behold. This then is the keynote, the central significance. It is the vision of the One in the many, the Many in the One, — and all are the One. It is this vision that to the eye of the divine Yoga liberates, justifies, explains all that is and was and shall be. Once seen and held, it lays the shining axe of God at the root of all doubts and perplexities and annihilates all denials and oppositions. It is the vision that reconciles and unifies. If the soul can arrive at unity with the Godhead in this vision, — Arjuna has not yet done that, therefore we find that he has fear when he sees, — all even that is terrible in the world loses its terror. We see that it too is an aspect of the Godhead and once we have found his meaning in it, not looking at it by itself alone, we can accept the whole of existence with an all-embracing joy and a mighty courage, go forward with sure steps to the appointed work and envisage beyond it the supreme consummation. The soul admitted to the divine knowledge which beholds all things in one view, not with a divided, partial and therefore bewildered seeing, can make a new discovery of the world and all else that it wills to see, *yac cānyad draṣṭum icchasi*; it can move on the basis of this all-relating and all-unifying vision from revelation to completing revelation.

The supreme Form is then made visible. It is that of the infinite Godhead whose faces are everywhere and in whom are all the wonders of existence, who multiplies unendingly all the many marvellous revelations of his being, a world-wide Divinity seeing with innumerable eyes, speaking from innumerable mouths, armed for battle with numberless divine uplifted weapons, glorious with divine ornaments of beauty, robed in heavenly raiment of deity, lovely with garlands of divine flowers, fragrant with divine perfumes. Such is the light of this body of God as if a thousand suns had risen at once in heaven. The whole world multitudinously divided and yet unified is visible in the body of the God of Gods. Arjuna sees him, God magnificent and beautiful and terrible, the Lord of souls who has manifested in the glory and greatness of his spirit this wild and monstrous and orderly and wonderful and sweet and terrible world, and overcome with marvel and joy and fear he bows down and adores with words of awe and with clasped hands the tremendous vision. "I see" he cries "all the gods in thy body, O God, and different companies of beings, Brahma the creating lord seated in the Lotus, and the Rishis and the race of the divine Serpents. I see numberless arms and bellies and eyes and faces, I see thy infinite forms on every side, but I see not thy end nor thy middle nor thy beginning, O Lord of the universe, O Form universal. I see thee crowned and with thy mace and thy discus, hard to discern because thou art a luminous mass of energy on all sides of me, an encompassing blaze, a sun-bright fire-bright Immeasurable. Thou art the supreme Immutable whom we have to know, thou art the high foundation and abode of the universe, thou art the imperishable guardian of the eternal laws, thou art the sempiternal soul of existence."

But in the greatness of this vision there is too the terrific image of the Destroyer. This Immeasurable without end or middle or beginning is he in whom all things begin and exist and end. This Godhead who embraces the worlds with his numberless arms and destroys with his million hands, whose eyes are suns and moons, has a face of blazing fire and is ever burning up the whole universe with the flame of his energy. The form of him is fierce and marvellous and alone it fills all the regions and occupies the whole space between earth and heaven. The companies of the gods enter it, afraid, adoring; the Rishis and the Siddhas crying "May there be peace and weal" praise it with many praises; the eyes of Gods and Titans and Giants are fixed on it in amazement. It has enormous burning eyes; it has mouths that gape to devour, terrible with many tusks of destruction; it has faces like the fires of Death and Time. The kings and the captains and the heroes on both sides of the world-battle are hastening into its tusked and terrible jaws and some are seen with crushed and bleeding heads caught between its teeth of power; the nations are rushing to destruction with helpless speed into its mouths of flame like many rivers hurrying in their course towards the ocean or like moths that cast themselves on a kindled fire. With those burning mouths the Form of Dread is licking all the regions around; the whole world is full of his burning energies and baked in the fierceness of his lustres. The world and its nations are shaken and in anguish with the terror of destruction and Arjuna shares in the trouble and panic around him; troubled and in pain is the soul within him and he finds no peace or gladness. He cries to the dreadful Godhead, "Declare to me who thou art that wearest this form of fierceness. Salutation to thee, O thou great Godhead, turn thy heart to grace. I would know who thou art who wast from the beginning, for I know not the will of thy workings."

This last cry of Arjuna indicates the double intention in the vision. This is the figure of the supreme and universal Being, the Ancient of Days who is for ever, *sanātanaṁ puruṣaṁ purāṇam*, this is he who for ever creates, for Brahma the Creator is one of the Godheads seen in his body, he who keeps the world always in existence, for he is the guardian of the eternal laws, but who is always too destroying in order that he may new-create, who is Time, who is Death, who is Rudra the Dancer of the calm and awful dance, who is Kali with her garland of skulls trampling naked in battle and flecked with the blood of the slaughtered

Titans, who is the cyclone and the fire and the earthquake and pain and famine and revolution and ruin and the swallowing ocean. And it is this last aspect of him which he puts forward at the moment. It is an aspect from which the mind in men willingly turns away and ostrich-like hides its head so that perchance, not seeing, it may not be seen by the Terrible. The weakness of the human heart wants only fair and comforting truths or in their absence pleasant fables; it will not have the truth in its entirety because there there is much that is not clear and pleasant and comfortable, but hard to understand and harder to bear. The raw religionist, the superficial optimistic thinker, the sentimental idealist, the man at the mercy of his sensations and emotions agree in twisting away from the sterner conclusions, the harsher and fiercer aspects of universal existence. Indian religion has been ignorantly reproached for not sharing in this general game of hiding, because on the contrary it has built and placed before it the terrible as well as the sweet and beautiful symbols of the Godhead. But it is the depth and largeness of its long thought and spiritual experience that prevent it from feeling or from giving countenance to these feeble shrinkings.

Indian spirituality knows that God is Love and Peace and calm Eternity, — the Gita which presents us with these terrible images, speaks of the Godhead who embodies himself in them as the lover and friend of all creatures. But there is too the sterner aspect of his divine government of the world which meets us from the beginning, the aspect of destruction, and to ignore it is to miss the full reality of the divine Love and Peace and Calm and Eternity and even to throw on it an aspect of partiality and illusion, because the comforting exclusive form in which it is put is not borne out by the nature of the world in which we live. This world of our battle and labour is a fierce dangerous destructive devouring world in which life exists precariously and the soul and body of man move among enormous perils, a world in which by every step forward, whether we will it or no, something is crushed and broken, in which every breath of life is a breath too of death. To put away the responsibility for all that seems to us evil or terrible on the shoulders of a semi-omnipotent Devil, or to put it aside as part of Nature, making an unbridgeable opposition between world-nature and God-Nature, as if Nature were independent of God, or to throw the responsibility on man and his sins, as if he had a preponderant voice in the making of this world or could create anything against the will of God, are clumsily comfortable devices in which the religious thought of India has never taken refuge. We have to look courageously in the face of the reality and see that it is God and none else who has made this world in his being and that so he has made it. We have to see that Nature devouring her children, Time eating up the lives of creatures, Death universal and ineluctable and the violence of the Rudra forces in man and Nature are also the supreme Godhead in one of his cosmic figures. We have to see that God the bountiful and prodigal creator, God the helpful, strong and benignant preserver is also God the devourer and destroyer. The torment of the couch of pain and evil on which we are racked is his touch as much as happiness and sweetness and pleasure. It is only when we see with the eye of the complete union and feel this truth in the depths of our being that we can entirely discover behind that mask too the calm and beautiful face of the all-blissful Godhead and in this touch that tests our imperfection the touch of the friend and builder of the spirit in man. The discords of the worlds are God's discords and it is only by accepting and proceeding through them that we can arrive at the greater concords of his supreme harmony, the summits and thrilled vastnesses of his transcendent and his cosmic Ananda.

The problem raised by the Gita and the solution it gives demand this character of the vision of the World-Spirit. It is the problem of a great struggle, ruin and massacre which has been brought about by the all-guiding Will and in which the eternal Avatar himself has descended as the charioteer of the protagonist in the battle. The seer of the vision is himself the protagonist, the representative of the battling soul of man who has to strike down tyrant and oppressive powers that stand in the path of his evolution and to establish and enjoy the kingdom of a higher right and nobler law of being. Perplexed by the terrible aspect of the catastrophe in which kindred smite at kindred, whole nations are to perish and society itself seems doomed to sink down in a pit of confusion and anarchy, he has shrunk back, refused the task of destiny and demanded of his divine Friend and Guide why he is appointed to so dreadful a work, *kiṁ karmaṇi ghore māṁ niyojayasi*. He has been shown then how individually to rise above the apparent character of whatever work he may do, to see that Nature the executive force is the doer of the work, his natural being the instrument, God the master of Nature and of works to whom he must offer them without desire or egoistic choice as a sacrifice. He has been shown too that the Divine who is above all these things and untouched by them, yet manifests himself in man and Nature and their action and that all is a movement in the cycles of this divine manifestation. But now when he is put face to face with the embodiment of this truth, he sees in it magnified by the image of the divine greatness this aspect of terror and destruction and is appalled and can hardly bear it. For why should it be thus that the All-spirit manifests himself in Nature? What is the significance of this creating and devouring flame that is mortal existence, this world-wide struggle, these constant disastrous revolutions, this labour and anguish and travail and perishing of creatures? He puts the ancient question and breathes the eternal prayer, "Declare to me who art thou that comest to us in this form of fierceness. I would know who art thou who wast from the beginning, for I know not the will of thy workings. Turn thy heart to grace."

Destruction, replies the Godhead, is the will of my workings with which I stand here on this field of Kurukshetra, the field of the working out of the Dharma, the field of human action, — as we might symbolically translate the descriptive phrase, *dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre*, — a world-wide destruction which has come in the process of the Time-Spirit. I have a foreseeing purpose which fulfils itself infallibly and no participation or abstention of any human being can prevent, alter or modify it; all is done by me already in my eternal eye of will before it can at all be done by man upon earth. I as Time have to destroy the old structures and to build up a new, mighty and splendid kingdom. Thou as a human instrument of the divine Power and Wisdom hast in this struggle which thou canst not prevent to battle for the right and slay and conquer its opponents. Thou too, the human soul in Nature, hast to enjoy in Nature the fruit given by me, the empire of right and justice. Let this be sufficient for thee, — to be one with God in thy soul, to receive his command, to do his will, to see calmly a supreme purpose fulfilled in the world. "I am Time the waster of the peoples arisen and increased whose will in my workings is here to destroy the nations. Even without thee all these warriors shall be not, who are ranked in the opposing armies. Therefore arise, get thee glory, conquer thy enemies and enjoy an opulent kingdom. By me and none other already even are they slain, do thou become the occasion only, O Savyasachin. Slay, by me who are slain, Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and other heroic fighters; be not pained and troubled. Fight, thou shalt conquer the adversary in the battle." The fruit of the great and terrible work is promised and prophesied, not as a fruit hungered for by the individual, — for to that there is to be no attachment, — but as the result of the divine will, the glory and success of the thing to be done accomplished, the glory given by the Divine to himself in his Vibhuti. Thus is the final and compelling command to action given to the protagonist of the world-battle.

It is the Timeless manifest as Time and World-Spirit from whom the command to action proceeds. For certainly the Godhead when he says, "I am Time the Destroyer of beings," does not mean either that he is the Time-Spirit alone or that the whole essence of the Time-Spirit is destruction. But it is this which is the present will of his workings, *pravṛtti*. Destruction is always a simultaneous or alternate element which keeps pace with creation and it is by destroying and renewing that the Master of Life does his long work of preservation. More, destruction is the first condition of progress. Inwardly, the man who does not destroy his lower self-formations, cannot rise to a greater existence. Outwardly also, the nation or community or race which shrinks too long from destroying and replacing its past forms of life, is itself destroyed, rots and perishes and out of its debris other nations, communities and races are formed. By destruction of the old giant occupants man made himself a place upon earth. By destruction of the Titans the gods maintain the continuity of the divine Law in the cosmos. Whoever prematurely attempts to get rid of this law of battle and destruction, strives vainly against the greater will of the World-Spirit. Whoever turns from it in the weakness of his lower members, as did Arjuna in the beginning, — therefore was his shrinking condemned as a small and false pity, an inglorious, an un-Aryan and unheavenly feebleness of heart and impotence of spirit, *klaibyam*, *kṣudraṁ hṛdaya-daurbalyam*, — is showing not true virtue, but a want of spiritual courage to face the sterner truths of Nature and of action and existence. Man can only exceed the law of battle by discovering the greater law of his immortality. There are those who seek this where it always exists and must primarily be found, in the higher reaches of the pure spirit, and to find it turn away from a world governed by the law of Death. That is an individual solution which makes no difference to mankind and the world, or rather makes only this difference that they are deprived of so much spiritual power which might have helped them forward in the painful march of their evolution.

What then is the master man, the divine worker, the opened channel of the universal Will to do when he finds the World-Spirit turned towards some immense catastrophe, figured before his eyes as Time the destroyer arisen and increased for the destruction of the nations, and himself put there in the forefront whether as a fighter with physical weapons or a leader and guide or an inspirer of men, as he cannot fail to be by the very force of his nature and the power within him, *svabhāvajena svena karmaṇā*? To abstain, to sit silent, to protest by non-intervention? But abstention will not help, will not prevent the fulfilment of the destroying Will, but rather by the lacuna it creates increase confusion. Even without thee, cries the Godhead, my will of destruction would still be accomplished, *ṛte'pi tvām*. If Arjuna were to abstain or even if the battle of Kurukshetra were not to be fought, that evasion would only prolong and make worse the inevitable confusion, disorder, ruin that are coming. For these things are no accident, but an inevitable seed that has been sown and a harvest that must be reaped. They who have sown the wind, must reap the whirlwind. Nor indeed will his own nature allow him any real abstention, *prakṛtis tvāṁ niyokṣyati*. This the Teacher tells Arjuna at the close, "That which in thy egoism thou thinkest saying, I will not fight, vain is this thy resolve: Nature shall yoke thee to thy work. Bound by thy own action which is born of the law of thy being, what from delusion thou desirest not to do, that thou shalt do even perforce." Then to give another turn, to use some kind of soul force, spiritual method and power, not physical weapons? But that is only another form of the same action; the destruction will still take place, and the turn given too will be not what the individual ego, but what the World-Spirit wills. Even, the force of destruction may feed on this new power, may get a more formidable impetus and Kali arise filling the world with a more terrible sound of her laughters. No real peace can be till the heart of man deserves peace; the law of Vishnu cannot prevail till the debt to Rudra is paid. To turn aside then and preach to a still unevolved mankind the law of love and oneness? Teachers of the law of love and oneness there must be, for by that way must come the ultimate salvation. But not till the Time-Spirit in man is ready, can the inner and ultimate prevail over the outer and immediate reality. Christ and Buddha have come and gone, but it is Rudra who still holds the world in the hollow of his hand. And meanwhile the fierce forward labour of mankind tormented and oppressed by the Powers that are profiteers of egoistic force and their servants cries for the sword of the Hero of the struggle and the word of its prophet.

The highest way appointed for him is to carry out the will of God without egoism, as the human occasion and instrument of that which he sees to be decreed, with the constant supporting memory of the Godhead in himself and man, *mām anusmaran*, and in whatever ways are appointed for him by the Lord of his Nature. *Nimittamātraṁ bhava savyasācin*. He will not cherish personal enmity, anger, hatred, egoistic desire and passion, will not hasten towards strife or lust after violence and destruction like the fierce Asura, but he will do his work, *lokasaṅgrahāya*.

Beyond the action he will look towards that to which it leads, that for which he is warring. For God the Time-Spirit does not destroy for the sake of destruction, but to make the ways clear in the cyclic process for a greater rule and a progressing manifestation, *rājyaṁ samṛddham*. He will accept in its deeper sense, which the superficial mind does not see, the greatness of the struggle, the glory of the victory, — if need be, the glory of the victory which comes masked as defeat, — and lead man too in the enjoyment of his opulent kingdom. Not appalled by the face of the Destroyer, he will see within it the eternal Spirit imperishable in all these perishing bodies and behind it the face of the Charioteer, the Leader of man, the Friend of all creatures, *suhṛdaṁ sarvabhūtānām*. This formidable World-Form once seen and acknowledged, it is to that reassuring truth that the rest of the chapter is directed; it discloses in the end a more intimate face and body of the Eternal.

XI

The Vision of the World-Spirit[1]
The Double Aspect

EVEN WHILE the effects of the terrible aspect of this vision are still upon him, the first words uttered by Arjuna after the Godhead has spoken are eloquent of a greater uplifting and reassuring reality behind this face of death and this destruction. "Rightly and in good place," he cries, "O Krishna, does the world rejoice and take pleasure in thy name, the Rakshasas are fleeing from thee in terror to all the quarters and the companies of the Siddhas bow down before thee in adoration. How should they not do thee homage, O great Spirit? For thou art the original Creator and Doer of works and greater even than creative Brahma. O thou Infinite, O thou Lord of the gods, O thou abode of the universe, thou art the Immutable and thou art what is and is not and thou art that which is the Supreme. Thou art the ancient Soul and the first and original Godhead and the supreme resting-place of this All; thou art the knower and that which is to be known and the highest status; O infinite in form, by thee was extended the universe. Thou art Yama and Vayu and Agni and Soma and Varuna and Prajapati, father of creatures, and the great-grandsire. Salutation to thee a thousand times over and again and yet again salutation, in front and behind and from every side, for thou art each and all that is. Infinite in might and immeasurable in strength of action thou pervadest all and art every one."

But this supreme universal Being has lived here before him with the human face, in the mortal body, the divine Man, the embodied Godhead, the Avatar, and till now he has not known him. He has seen the humanity only and has treated the Divine as a mere human creature. He has not pierced through the earthly mask to the Godhead of which the humanity was a vessel and a symbol, and he prays now for that Godhead's forgiveness of his unseeing carelessness and his negligent ignorance. "For whatsoever I have spoken to thee in rash vehemence, thinking of thee only as my human friend and companion, 'O Krishna, O Yadava, O comrade,' not knowing this thy greatness, in negligent error or in love, and for whatsoever disrespect was shown by me to thee in jest, on the couch and the seat and in the banquet, alone or in thy presence, I pray forgiveness from thee the immeasurable. Thou art the father of all this world of the moving and unmoving; thou art one to be worshipped and the most solemn object of veneration. None is equal to thee, how then another greater in all the three worlds, O incomparable in might? Therefore I bow down before thee and prostrate my body and I demand grace of thee the adorable Lord. As a father to his son, as a friend to his friend and comrade, as one dear with him he loves, so shouldst thou, O Godhead, bear with me. I have seen what never was seen before and I rejoice, but my mind is troubled with fear. O Godhead, show me that other form of thine. I would see thee even as before crowned and with thy mace and discus. Assume thy four-armed shape, O thousand-armed, O Form universal."

---

[1] Gita, XI. 35-55.

From the first words there comes the suggestion that the hidden truth behind these terrifying forms is a reassuring, a heartening and delightful truth. There is something that makes the heart of the world to rejoice and take pleasure in the name and nearness of the Divine. It is the profound sense of that which makes us see in the dark face of Kali the face of the Mother and to perceive even in the midst of destruction the protecting arms of the Friend of creatures, in the midst of evil the presence of a pure unalterable Benignity and in the midst of death the Master of Immortality. From the terror of the King of the divine action the Rakshasas, the fierce giant powers of darkness, flee destroyed, defeated and overpowered. But the Siddhas, but the complete and perfect who know and sing the names of the Immortal and live in the truth of his being, bow down before every form of

Him and know what every form enshrines and signifies. Nothing has real need to fear except that which is to be destroyed, the evil, the ignorance, the veilers in Night, the Rakshasa powers. All the movement and action of Rudra the Terrible is towards perfection and divine light and completeness.

For this Spirit, this Divine is only in outward form the Destroyer, Time who undoes all these finite forms: but in himself he is the Infinite, the Master of the cosmic Godheads, in whom the world and all its action are securely seated. He is the original and ever originating Creator, one greater than that figure of creative Power called Brahma which he shows to us in the form of things as one aspect of his trinity, creation chequered by a balance of preservation and destruction. The real divine creation is eternal; it is the Infinite manifested sempiternally in finite things, the Spirit who conceals and reveals himself for ever in his innumerable infinity of souls and in the wonder of their actions and in the beauty of their forms. He is the eternal Immutable; he is the dual appearance of the Is and Is-not, of the manifest and the never manifested, of things that were and seem to be no more, are and appear doomed to perish, shall be and shall pass. But what he is beyond all these is That, the Supreme, who holds all things mutable in the single eternity of a Time to which all is ever present. He possesses his immutable self in a timeless eternity of which Time and creation are an ever extending figure.

This is the Truth of him in which all is reconciled; a harmony of simultaneous and interdependent truths start from and amount to the one that is real. It is the truth of a supreme Soul of whose supreme nature the world is a derivation and an inferior figure of that Infinite; of the Ancient of Days who for ever presides over the long evolutions of Time; of the original Godhead of whom Gods and men and all living creatures are the children, the powers, the souls, spiritually justified in their being by his truth of existence; of the Knower who develops in man the knowledge of himself and world and God; of the one Object of all knowing who reveals himself to man's heart and mind and soul, so that every new opening form of our knowledge is a partial unfolding of him, up to the highest by which he is intimately, profoundly and integrally seen and discovered. This is the high supreme Stability who originates and supports and receives to himself all that are in the universe. By him in his own existence the world is extended, by his omnipotent power, by his miraculous self-conception and energy and Ananda of never-ending creation. All is an infinity of his material and spiritual forms. He is all the many gods from the least to the greatest; he is the father of creatures and all are his children and his people. He is the origin of Brahma, the father to the first father of the divine creators of these different races of living things. On this truth there is a constant insistence. Again it is repeated that he is the All, he is each and every one, *sarvaḥ*. He is the infinite Universal and he is each individual and everything that is, the one Force and Being in every one of us, the infinite Energy that throws itself out in these multitudes, the immeasurable Will and mighty Power of motion and action that forms out of itself all the courses of Time and all the happenings of the spirit in Nature.

And from that insistence the thought naturally turns to the presence of this one great Godhead in man. There the soul of the seer of the vision is impressed by three successive suggestions. First, it is borne in upon him that in the body of this son of Man who moved beside him as a transient creature upon earth and sat by his side and lay with him on the same couch and ate with him in the banquet and was the object of jest and careless word, actor in war and council and common things, in this figure of mortal man was all the time something great, concealed, of tremendous significance, a Godhead, an Avatar, a universal Power, a One Reality, a supreme Transcendence. To this occult divinity in which all the significance of man and his long race is wrapped and from which all world-existence receives its inner meaning of ineffable greatness, he had been blind. Now only he sees the universal Spirit in the individual frame, the Divine embodied in humanity, the transcendent Inhabitant of this symbol of Nature. He has seen now only this tremendous, infinite, immeasurable Reality of all these apparent things, this boundless universal Form which so exceeds every individual form and yet of whom each individual thing is a house for his dwelling. For that great Reality is equal and infinite and the same in the individual and in the universe. And at first his blindness, his treatment of this Divine as the mere outward man, his seeing of only the mental and physical relation seems to him a sin against the Mightiness that was there. For the being whom he called Krishna, Yadava, comrade, was this immeasurable Greatness, this incomparable Might, this Spirit one in all of whom all are the creations. That and not the veiling outward humanity, *avajānan mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam*, was what he should have seen with awe and with submission and veneration.

But the second suggestion is that what was figured in the human manifestation and the human relation is also a reality which accompanies and mitigates for our mind the tremendous character of the universal vision. The transcendence and cosmic aspect have to be seen, for without that seeing the limitations of humanity cannot be exceeded. In that unifying oneness all has to be included. But by itself that would set too great a gulf between the transcendent spirit and this soul bound and circumscribed in an inferior Nature. The infinite presence in its unmitigated splendour would be too overwhelming for the separate littleness of the limited, individual and natural man. A link is needed by which he can see this universal Godhead in his own individual and natural being, close to him, not only omnipotently there to govern all he is by universal and immeasurable Power, but humanly figured to support and raise him to unity by an intimate individual relation. The adoration by which the finite creature bows down before the Infinite, receives all its sweetness and draws near to a closest truth of companionship and oneness when it deepens into the more intimate adoration which lives in the sense of the fatherhood of God, the friendhood of God, the attracting love between the Divine Spirit and our human soul and nature. For the Divine inhabits the human soul and body; he draws around him and wears like a robe the human mind and figure. He assumes the human relations which the soul affects in the mortal body and they find in God their own fullest sense and greatest realisation. This is the Vaishnava bhakti of which the seed is here in the Gita's words, but which received afterwards a more deep, ecstatic and significant extension.

And from this second suggestion a third immediately arises. The form of the transcendent and universal Being is to the strength of the liberated spirit a thing mighty, encouraging and fortifying, a source of power, an equalising, sublimating, all-justifying vision; but to the normal man it is overwhelming, appalling, incommunicable. The truth that reassures, even when known, is grasped with difficulty behind the formidable and mighty aspect of all-destructive Time and an incalculable Will and a vast immeasurable inextricable working. But there is too the gracious mediating form of divine Narayana, the God who is so close to man and in man, the Charioteer of the battle and the journey, with his four arms of helpful power, a humanised symbol of Godhead, not this million-armed universality. It is this mediating aspect which man must have for his support constantly before him. For it is this figure of Narayana which symbolises the truth that reassures. It makes close, visible, living, seizable the vast spiritual joy in which for the inner spirit and life of man the universal workings behind all their stupendous circling, retrogression, progression sovereignly culminate, their marvellous and auspicious upshot. To this humanised embodied soul their end becomes here a union, a closeness, a constant companionship of man and God, man living in the world for God, God dwelling in man and turning to his own divine ends in him the enigmatic world-process. And beyond the end is a yet more wonderful oneness and inliving in the last transfigurations of the Eternal.

The Godhead in answer to Arjuna's prayer reassumes his own normal Narayana image, *svakaṁ rūpam*, the desired form of grace and love and sweetness and beauty. But first he declares the incalculable significance of the other mighty Image which he is about to veil. "This that thou now seest," he tells him, "is my supreme shape, my form of luminous energy, the universal, the original which none but thou amongst men has yet seen. I have shown it by my self-Yoga. For it is an image of my very Self and Spirit, it is the very Supreme self-figured in cosmic existence and the soul in perfect Yoga with me sees it without any trembling of the nervous parts or any bewilderment and confusion of the mind, because he descries not only what is terrible and overwhelming in its appearance, but also its high and reassuring significance. And thou also shouldst so envisage it without fear, without confusion of mind, without any sinking of the members; but since the lower nature in thee is not yet prepared to look upon it with that high strength and tranquillity, I will reassume again for thee my Narayana figure in which the human mind sees isolated and toned to its humanity the calm, helpfulness and delight of a friendly Godhead. The greater Form" — and this is repeated again after it has disappeared — "is only for the rare highest souls. The gods themselves ever desire to look upon it. It cannot be won by Veda or austerities or gifts or sacrifice; it can be seen, known, entered into only by that bhakti which regards, adores and loves Me alone in all things."

But what then is the uniqueness of this Form by which it is lifted so far beyond cognizance that all the ordinary endeavour of human knowledge and even the inmost austerity of its spiritual effort are insufficient, unaided, to reach the vision? It is this that man can know by other means this or that exclusive aspect of the one existence, its individual, cosmic or world-excluding figures, but not this greatest reconciling Oneness of all the aspects of the Divinity in which at one and the same time and in one and the same vision all is manifested, all is exceeded and all is consummated. For here transcendent, universal and individual Godhead, Spirit and Nature, Infinite and finite, space and time and timelessness, Being and Becoming, all that we can strive to think and know of the Godhead, whether of the absolute or the manifested existence, are wonderfully revealed in an ineffable oneness. This vision can be reached only by the absolute adoration, the love, the intimate unity that crowns at their summit the fullness of works and knowledge. To know, to see, to enter into it, to be one with this supreme form of the Supreme becomes then possible, and it is that end which the Gita proposes for its Yoga. There is a supreme consciousness through which it is possible to enter into the glory of the Transcendent and contain in him the immutable Self and all mutable Becoming, —

it is possible to be one with all, yet above all, to exceed world and yet embrace the whole nature at once of the cosmic and the supracosmic Godhead. This is difficult indeed for limited man imprisoned in his mind and body: but, says the Godhead, "be a doer of my works, accept me as the supreme being and object, become my bhakta, be free from attachment and without enmity to all existences; for such a man comes to me." In other words superiority to the lower nature, unity with all creatures, oneness with the cosmic Godhead and the Transcendence, oneness of will with the Divine in works, absolute love for the One and for God in all, — this is the way to that absolute spiritual self-exceeding and that unimaginable transformation.

XII

The Way and the Bhakta

IN THE eleventh chapter of the Gita the original object of the teaching has been achieved and brought up to a certain completeness. The command to divine action done for the sake of the world and in union with the Spirit who dwells in it and in all its creatures and in whom all its working takes place, has been given and accepted by the Vibhuti. The disciple has been led away from the old poise of the normal man and the standards, motives, outlook, egoistic consciousness of his ignorance, away from all that had finally failed him in the hour of his spiritual crisis. The very action which on that standing he had rejected, the terrible function, the appalling labour, he has now been brought to admit and accept on a new inner basis. A reconciling greater knowledge, a diviner consciousness, a high impersonal motive, a spiritual standard of oneness with the will of the Divine acting on the world from the fountain light and with the motive power of the spiritual nature, — this is the new inner principle of works which is to transform the old ignorant action. A knowledge which embraces oneness with the Divine and arrives through the Divine at conscious oneness with all things and beings, a will emptied of egoism and acting only by the command and as an instrumentation of the secret Master of works, a divine love whose one aspiration is towards a close intimacy with the supreme Soul of all existence, accomplished by the unity of these three perfected powers an inner all-comprehending unity with the transcendent and universal Spirit and Nature and all creatures are the foundation offered for his activities to the liberated man. For from that foundation the soul in him can suffer the instrumental nature to act in safety; he is lifted above all cause of stumbling, delivered from egoism and its limitations, rescued from all fear of sin and evil and consequence, exalted out of that bondage to the outward nature and the limited action which is the knot of the Ignorance. He can act in the power of the Light, no longer in twilight or darkness, and a divine sanction upholds every step of his conduct. The difficulty which had been raised by the antinomy between the freedom of the Spirit and the bondage of the soul in Nature, has been solved by a luminous reconciliation of Spirit with Nature. That antinomy exists for the mind in the ignorance; it ceases to exist for the spirit in its knowledge.

But there is something more to be said in order to bring out all the meaning of the great spiritual change. The twelfth chapter leads up to this remaining knowledge and the last six that follow develop it to a grand final conclusion. This thing that remains still to be said turns upon the difference between the current Vedantic view of spiritual liberation and the larger comprehensive freedom which the teaching of the Gita opens to the spirit. There is now a pointed return to that difference. The current Vedantic way led through the door of an austere and exclusive knowledge. The Yoga, the oneness which it recognised as the means and the absorbing essence of the spiritual release, was a Yoga of pure knowledge and a still oneness with a supreme Immutable, an absolute Indefinable, — the unmanifested Brahman, infinite, silent, intangible, aloof, far above all this universe of relations. In the way proposed by the Gita knowledge is indeed the indispensable foundation, but an integral knowledge. Impersonal integral works are the first indispensable means; but a deep and large love and adoration, to which a relationless Unmanifest, an aloof and immovable Brahman can return no answer, since these things ask for a relation and an intimate personal closeness, are the strongest and highest power for release and spiritual perfection and the immortal Ananda. The Godhead with whom the soul of man has to enter into this closest oneness, is indeed in his supreme status a transcendent Unthinkable too great for any manifestation, Parabrahman; but he is at the same time the living supreme Soul of all things. He is the supreme Lord, the Master of works and universal nature. He at once exceeds and inhabits as its self the soul and mind and body of the creature. He is Purushottama, Parameshwara and

Paramatman and in all these equal aspects the same single and eternal Godhead. It is an awakening to this integral reconciling knowledge that is the wide gate to the utter release of the soul and an unimaginable perfection of the nature. It is this Godhead in the unity of all his aspects to whom our works and our adoration and our knowledge have to be directed as a constant inner sacrifice. It is this supreme soul, Purushottama, transcendent of the universe, but also its containing spirit, inhabitant and possessor, even as it is mightily figured in the vision of Kurukshetra, into whom the liberated spirit has to enter once it has reached to the vision and knowledge of him in all the principles and powers of his existence, once it is able to grasp and enjoy his multitudinous oneness, *jñātuṁ draṣṭuṁ tattvena praveṣṭuṁ ca.*

The liberation of the Gita is not a self-oblivious abolition of the soul's personal being in the absorption of the One, *sāyujya mukti*; it is all kinds of union at once. There is an entire unification with the supreme Godhead in essence of being and intimacy of consciousness and identity of bliss, *sāyujya*, — for one object of this Yoga is to become Brahman, *brahmabhūta*. There is an eternal ecstatic dwelling in the highest existence of the Supreme, *sālokya*, — for it is said, "Thou shalt dwell in me," *nivasiṣyasi mayyeva*. There is an eternal love and adoration in a uniting nearness, there is an embrace of the liberated spirit by its divine Lover and the enveloping Self of its infinitudes, *sāmīpya*. There is an identity of the soul's liberated nature with the divine nature, *sādṛśya mukti*, — for the perfection of the free spirit is to become even as the Divine, *madbhāvam āgataḥ*, and to be one with him in the law of its being and the law of its works and nature, *sādharmyam āgataḥ*. The orthodox Yoga of knowledge aims at a fathomless immergence in the one infinite existence, *sāyujya*; it looks upon that alone as the entire liberation. The Yoga of adoration envisages an eternal habitation or nearness as the greater release, *sālokya*, *sāmīpya*. The Yoga of works leads to oneness in power of being and nature, *sādṛśya*. But the Gita envelops them all in its catholic integrality and fuses them all into one greatest and richest divine freedom and perfection.

Arjuna is made to raise the question of this difference. It must be remembered that the distinction between the impersonal immutable Akshara Purusha and the supreme Soul that is at once impersonality and divine Person and much more than either — that this capital distinction implied in the later chapters and in the divine "I" of which Krishna has constantly spoken, *aham*, *mām*, has as yet not been quite expressly and definitely drawn. We have been throughout anticipating it in order to understand from the beginning the full significance of the Gita's message and not have to go back again, as we would otherwise be obliged, over the same ground newly seen and prospected in the light of this greater truth. Arjuna has been enjoined first to sink his separate personality in the calm impersonality of the one eternal and immutable self, a teaching which agreed well with his previous notions and offered no difficulties. But now he is confronted with the vision of this greatest transcendent, this widest universal Godhead and commanded to seek oneness with him by knowledge and works and adoration. Therefore he asks the better to have a doubt cleared which might otherwise have arisen, "Those devotees who thus by a constant union seek after thee, *tvām*, and those who seek after the unmanifest Immutable, which of these have the greater knowledge of Yoga?" This recalls the distinction made in the beginning by such phrases as "in the self, then in me," *ātmani atho mayi*: Arjuna points the distinction, *tvām*, *akṣaram avyaktam*. Thou, he says in substance, art the supreme Source and Origin of all beings, a Presence immanent in all things, a Power pervading the universe with thy forms, a Person manifest in thy Vibhutis, manifest in creatures, manifest in Nature, seated as the Lord of works in the world and in our hearts by thy mighty world-Yoga. As such I have to know, adore, unite myself with thee in all my being, consciousness, thoughts, feelings and actions, *satata-yukta*. But what then of this Immutable who never manifests, never puts on any form, stands back and apart from all action, enters into no relation with the universe or with anything in it, is eternally silent and one and impersonal and immobile? This eternal Self is the greater Principle according to all current notions and the Godhead in the manifestation is an inferior figure:

the unmanifest and not the manifest is the eternal Spirit. How then does the union which admits the manifestation, admits the lesser thing, come yet to be the greater Yoga-knowledge?

To this question Krishna replies with an emphatic decisiveness. "Those who found their mind in Me and by constant union, possessed of a supreme faith, seek after Me, I hold to be the most perfectly in union of Yoga." The supreme faith is that which sees God in all and to its eye the manifestation and the non-manifestation are one Godhead. The perfect union is that which meets the Divine at every moment, in every action and with all the integrality of the nature. But those also who seek by a hard ascent after the indefinable unmanifest Immutable alone, arrive, says the Godhead, to Me. For they are not mistaken in their aim, but they follow a more difficult and a less complete and perfect path. At the easiest, to reach the unmanifest Absolute they have to climb through the manifest Immutable here. This manifest Immutable is my own all-pervading impersonality and silence; vast, unthinkable, immobile, constant, omnipresent, it supports the action of personality but does not share in it. It offers no hold to the mind; it can only be gained by a motionless spiritual impersonality and silence and those who follow after it alone have to restrain altogether and even draw in completely the action of the mind and senses. But still by the equality of their understanding and by their seeing of one self in all things and by their tranquil benignancy of silent will for the good of all existences they too meet me in all objects and creatures. No less than those who unite themselves with the Divine in all ways of their existence, *sarva-bhāvena*, and enter largely and fully into the unthinkable living fountainhead of universal things, *divyaṁ puruṣam acintya-rūpam*, these seekers too who climb through this more difficult exclusive oneness towards a relationless unmanifest Absolute find in the end the same Eternal. But this is a less direct and more arduous way; it is not the full and natural movement of the spiritualised human nature.

And it must not be thought that because it is more arduous, therefore it is a higher and more effective process. The easier way of the Gita leads more rapidly, naturally and normally to the same absolute liberation. For its acceptance of the divine Person does not imply any attachment to the mental and sensuous limitations of embodied Nature. On the contrary it brings a swift and effectual unchaining from the phenomenal bondage of death and birth. The Yogin of exclusive knowledge imposes on himself a painful struggle with the manifold demands of his nature; he denies them even their highest satisfaction and cuts away from him even the upward impulses of his spirit whenever they imply relations or fall short of a negating absolute. The living way of the Gita on the contrary finds out the most intense upward trend of all our being and by turning it Godwards uses knowledge, will, feeling and the instinct for perfection as so many puissant wings of a mounting liberation. The unmanifest Brahman in its indefinable unity is a thing to which embodied souls can only arrive and that hardly by a constant mortification, a suffering of all the repressed members, a stern difficulty and anguish of the nature, *duḥkham avāpyate*, *kleśo 'dhikataras teṣām*. The indefinable Oneness accepts all that climb to it, but offers no help of relation and gives no foothold to the climber. All has to be done by a severe austerity and a stern and lonely individual effort. How different is it for those who seek after the Purushottama in the way of the Gita! When they meditate on him with a Yoga which sees none else, because it sees all to be Vasudeva, he meets them at every point, in every movement, at all times, with innumerable forms and faces, holds up the lamp of knowledge within and floods with its divine and happy lustre the whole of existence. Illumined, they discern the supreme Spirit in every form and face, arrive at once through all Nature to the Lord of Nature, arrive through all beings to the Soul of all being, arrive through themselves to the Self of all that they are; incontinently they break through a hundred opening issues at once into that from which everything has its origin. The other method of a difficult relationless stillness tries to get away from all action even though that is impossible to embodied creatures. Here the actions are all given up to the supreme Master of action and he as the supreme Will meets the will of sacrifice, takes from it its burden and assumes to himself the charge of the works of the divine Nature in us. And when too in the high passion of love the devotee of the Lover and Friend of man and of all creatures casts upon him all his heart of consciousness and yearning of delight, then swiftly the Supreme comes to him as the saviour and deliverer and exalts him by a happy embrace of his mind and heart and body out of the waves of the sea of death in this mortal nature into the secure bosom of the Eternal.

This then is the swiftest, largest and greatest way. On me, says the Godhead to the soul of man, repose all thy mind and lodge all thy understanding in me: I will lift them up bathed in the supernal blaze of the divine love and will and knowledge to myself from whom these things flow. Doubt not that thou shalt dwell in me above this mortal existence. The chain of the limiting earthly nature cannot hold the immortal spirit exalted by the passion, the power and the light of the eternal love, will and knowledge. No doubt, on this way too there are difficulties; for there is the lower nature with its fierce or dull downward gravitation which resists and battles against the motion of ascent and clogs the wings of the exaltation and the upward rapture. The divine consciousness even when it has been found at first in a wonder of great moments or in calm and splendid durations, cannot at once be altogether held or called back at will; there is felt often an inability to keep the personal consciousness fixed steadily in the Divine; there are nights of long exile from the Light, there are hours or moments of revolt, doubt or failure. But still by the practice of union and by constant repetition of the experience, that highest spirit grows upon the being and takes permanent possession of the nature. Is this also found too difficult because of the power and persistence of the outward-going movement of the mind? Then the way is simple, to do all actions for the sake of the Lord of the action, so that every outward-going movement of the mind shall be associated with the inner spiritual truth of the being and called back even in the very movement to the eternal reality and connected with its source. Then the presence of the Purushottama will grow upon the natural man till he is filled with it and becomes a godhead and a spirit; all life will become a constant remembering of God and perfection too will grow and the unity of the whole existence of the human soul with the supreme Existence.

But it may be that even this constant remembering of God and lifting up of our works to him is felt to be beyond the power of the limited mind, because in its forgetfulness it turns to the act and its outward object and will not remember to look within and lay our every movement on the divine altar of the Spirit. Then the way is to control the lower self in the act and do works without desire of the fruit. All fruit has to be renounced, to be given up to the Power that directs the work, and yet the work has to be done that is imposed by It on the nature. For by this means the obstacle steadily diminishes and easily disappears; the mind is left free to remember the Lord and to fix itself in the liberty of the divine consciousness. And here the Gita gives an ascending scale of potencies and assigns the palm of excellence to this Yoga of desireless action. *Abhyāsa*, practice of a method, repetition of an effort and experience is a great and powerful thing; but better than this is knowledge, the successful and luminous turning of the thought to the Truth behind things. This thought-knowledge too is excelled by a silent complete concentration on the Truth so that the consciousness shall eventually live in it and be always one with it. But more powerful still is the giving up of the fruit of one's works, because that immediately destroys all causes of disturbance and brings and preserves automatically an inner calm and peace, and calm and peace are the foundation on which all else becomes perfect and secure in possession by the tranquil spirit. Then the consciousness can be at ease, happily fix itself in the Divine and rise undisturbed to perfection. Then too knowledge, will and devotion can lift their pinnacles from a firm soil of solid calm into the ether of Eternity.

What then will be the divine nature, what will be the greater state of consciousness and being of the bhakta who has followed this way and turned to the adoration of the Eternal? The Gita in a number of verses rings the changes on its first insistent demand, on equality, on desirelessness, on freedom of spirit. This is to be the base always, — and that was why so much stress was laid on it in the beginning. And in that equality bhakti, the love and adoration of the Purushottama must rear the spirit towards some greatest highest perfection of which this calm equality will be the wide foundation. Several formulas of this fundamental equal consciousness are given here. First, an absence of egoism, of I-ness and my-ness, *nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ*. The bhakta of the Purushottama is one who has a universal heart and mind which has broken down all the narrow walls of the ego. A universal love dwells in his heart, a universal compassion flows from it like an encompassing sea. He will have friendship and pity for all beings and hate for no living thing: for he is patient, long-suffering, enduring, a well of forgiveness. A desireless content is his, a tranquil equality to pleasure and pain, suffering and happiness, the steadfast control of self and the firm unshakable will and resolution of the Yogin and a love and devotion which gives up the whole mind and reason to the Lord, to the Master of his consciousness and knowledge. Or, simply, he will be one who is freed from the troubled agitated lower nature and from its waves of joy and fear and anxiety and resentment and desire, a spirit of calm by whom the world is not afflicted or troubled, nor is he afflicted or troubled by the world, a soul of peace with whom all are at peace.

Or he will be one who has given up all desire and action to the Master of his being, one pure and still, indifferent to whatever comes, not pained or afflicted by any result or happening, one who has flung away from him all egoistic, personal and mental initiative whether of the inner or the outer act, one who lets the divine will and divine knowledge flow through him undeflected by his own resolves, preferences and desires, and yet for that very reason is swift and skilful in all action of his nature, because this flawless unity with the supreme will, this pure instrumentation is the condition of the greatest skill in works. Again, he will be one who neither desires the pleasant and rejoices at its touch nor abhors the unpleasant and sorrows at its burden. He has abolished the distinction between fortunate and unfortunate happenings, because his devotion receives all things equally as good from the hands of his eternal Lover and Master. The God-lover dear to God is a soul of wide equality, equal to friend and enemy, equal to honour and insult, pleasure and pain, praise and blame, grief and happiness, heat and cold, to all that troubles with opposite affections the normal nature. He will have no attachment to person or thing, place or home; he will be content and well-satisfied with whatever surroundings, whatever relation men adopt to him, whatever station or fortune. He will keep a mind firm in all things, because it is constantly seated in the highest self and fixed for ever on the one divine object of his love and adoration. Equality, desirelessness and freedom from the lower egoistic nature and its claims are always the one perfect foundation demanded by the Gita for the great liberation. There is to the end an emphatic repetition of its first fundamental teaching and original desideratum, the calm soul of knowledge that sees the one self in all things, the tranquil egoless equality that results from this knowledge, the desireless action offered in that equality to the Master of works, the surrender of the whole mental nature of man into the hands of the mightier indwelling spirit. And the crown of this equality is love founded on knowledge, fulfilled in instrumental action, extended to all things and beings, a vast absorbing and all-containing love for the divine Self who is Creator and Master of the universe, *suhṛdaṁ sarva-bhūtānāṁ sarva-loka-maheśvaram*.

This is the foundation, the condition, the means by which the supreme spiritual perfection is to be won, and those who have it in any way are all dear to me, says the Godhead, *bhaktimān me priyaḥ*. But exceedingly dear, *atīva me priyāḥ*, are those souls nearest to the Godhead whose love of me is completed by the still wider and greatest perfection of which I have just shown to you the way and the process. These are the bhaktas who make the Purushottama their one supreme aim and follow out with a perfect faith and exactitude the immortalising Dharma described in this teaching. Dharma in the language of the Gita means the innate law of the being and its works and an action proceeding from and determined by the inner nature, *svabhāva-niyataṁ karma*. In the lower ignorant consciousness of mind, life and body there are many dharmas, many rules, many standards and laws because there are many varying determinations and types of the mental, vital and physical nature. The immortal Dharma is one; it is that of the highest spiritual divine consciousness and its powers, *parā prakṛtiḥ*. It is beyond the three gunas, and to reach it all these lower dharmas have to be abandoned, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*. Alone in their place the one liberating unifying consciousness and power of the Eternal has to become the infinite source of our action, its mould, determinant and exemplar. To rise out of our lower personal egoism, to enter into the impersonal and equal calm of the immutable eternal all-pervading Akshara Purusha, to aspire from that calm by a perfect self-surrender of all one's nature and existence to that which is other and higher than the Akshara, is the first necessity of this Yoga. In the strength of that aspiration one can rise to the immortal Dharma. There, made one in being, consciousness and divine bliss with the greatest Uttama Purusha, made one with his supreme dynamic nature-force, *svā prakṛtiḥ*, the liberated spirit can know infinitely, love illimitably, act unfalteringly in the authentic power of a highest immortality and a perfect freedom. The rest of the Gita is written to throw a fuller light on this immortal Dharma.

PART II

THE SUPREME SECRET

XIII

The Field and its Knower[1]

THE GITA in its last six chapters, in order to found on a clear and complete knowledge the way of the soul's rising out of the lower into the divine nature, restates in another form the enlightenment the Teacher has already imparted to Arjuna. Essentially it is the same knowledge, but details and relations are now made prominent and assigned their entire significance, thoughts and truths brought out in their full value that were alluded to only in passing or generally stated in the light of another purpose. Thus in the first six chapters the knowledge necessary for the distinction between the immutable self and the soul veiled in nature was accorded an entire prominence. The references to the supreme Self and Purusha were summary and not at all explicit; it was assumed in order to justify works in the world and it was affirmed to be the Master of being, but there was otherwise nothing to show what it was and its relations to the rest were not even hinted at, much less developed. The remaining chapters are devoted to the bringing out of this suppressed knowledge in a conspicuous light and strong preeminence. It is to the Lord, the Ishwara, it is to the distinction of the higher and the lower nature and to the vision of the all-originating and all-constituting Godhead in Nature, it is to the One in all beings that prominence has been assigned in the next six Adhyayas (7-12) in order to found a root-unity of works and love with knowledge. But now it is necessary to bring out more definitely the precise relations between the supreme Purusha, the immutable self, the Jiva and Prakriti in her action and her gunas. Arjuna is therefore made to put a question which shall evoke a clearer elucidation of these still ill-lighted matters. He asks to learn of the Purusha and the Prakriti; he inquires of the field of being and the knower of the field and of knowledge and the object of knowledge. Here is contained the sum of all the knowledge of self and the world that is still needed if the soul is to throw off its natural ignorance and staying its steps on a right use of knowledge, of life, of works and of its own relations with the Divine in these things ascend into unity of being with the eternal Spirit of existence.

---

[1] Gita, XIII.

The essence of the Gita's ideas in these matters has already, anticipating the final evolution of its thought, been elucidated in a certain measure; but, following its example, we may state them again from the point of view of its present preoccupation. Action being admitted, a divine action done with self-knowledge as the instrument of the divine Will in the cosmos being accepted as perfectly consistent with the Brahmic status and an indispensable part of the Godward movement, that action being uplifted inwardly as a sacrifice with adoration to the Highest, how does this way practically affect the great object of spiritual life, the rising from the lower into the higher nature, from mortal into immortal being? All life, all works are a transaction between the soul and Nature. What is the original character of that transaction? what does it become at its spiritual culminating point? to what perfection does it lead the soul that gets free from its lower and external motives and grows inwardly into the very highest poise of the Spirit and deepest motive-force of the works of its energy in the universe? These are the questions involved, — there are others which the Gita does not raise or answer, for they were not pressingly present to the human mind of that day, — and they are replied to in the sense of the solution drawn from a large-sighted combination of the Vedantic, Sankhya and Yoga views of existence which is the starting-point of the whole thought of the Gita.

The Soul which finds itself here embodied in Nature has a triple reality to its own self-experience. First it is a spiritual being apparently subjected by ignorance to the outward workings of Prakriti and represented in her mobility as an acting, thinking, mutable personality, a creature of Nature, an ego. Next when it gets behind all this action and motion, it finds its own higher reality to be an eternal and impersonal self and immutable spirit which has no other share in the action and movement than to support it by its presence and regard it as an undisturbed equal witness. And last, when it looks beyond these two opposite selves, it discovers a greater ineffable Reality from which both proceed, the Eternal who is Self of the self and the Master of all Nature and all action, and not only the Master, but the origin and the spiritual support and scene of these workings of his own energy in Cosmos, and not only the origin and spiritual container, but the spiritual inhabitant in all forces, in all things and in all beings, and not only the inhabitant but, by the developments of this eternal energy of his being which we call Nature, himself all energies and forces, all things and all beings. This Nature itself is of two kinds, one derived and inferior, another original and supreme. There is a lower nature of the cosmic mechanism by association with which the soul in Prakriti lives in a certain ignorance born of Maya, *traiguṇyamayī māyā*, conceives of itself as an ego of embodied mind and life, works under the power of the modes of Nature, thinks itself bound, suffering, limited by personality, chained to the obligation of birth and the wheel of action, a thing of desires, transient, mortal, a slave of its own nature. Above this inferior power of existence there is a higher divine and spiritual nature of its own true being in which this soul is for ever a conscious portion of the Eternal and Divine, blissful, free, superior to its mask of becoming, immortal, imperishable, a power of the Godhead. To rise by this higher nature to the Eternal through divine knowledge, love and works founded on a spiritual universality is the key of the complete spiritual liberation. This much has been made clear; and we have to see now more in detail what farther considerations this change of being involves and especially what is the difference between these two natures and how our action and our soul-status are affected by the liberation. For that purpose the Gita enters largely into certain details of the highest knowledge which it had hitherto kept in the background. Especially it dwells on the relation between Being and becoming, Soul and Nature, the action of the three gunas, the highest liberation, the largest fullest self-giving of the human soul to the Divine Spirit. There is in all that it says in these closing six chapters much of the greatest importance, but it is the last thought with which it closes that is of supreme interest; for in it we shall find the central idea of its teaching, its great word to the soul of man, its highest message.

First, the whole of existence must be regarded as a field of the soul's construction and action in the midst of Nature. The Gita explains the *kṣetram*, field, by saying that it is this body which is called the field of the spirit, and in this body there is someone who takes cognizance of the field, *kṣetrajña*, the knower of Nature. It is evident, however, from the definitions that succeed that it is not the physical body alone which is the field, but all too that the body supports, the working of nature, the mentality, the natural action of the objectivity and subjectivity of our being.[2] This wider body too is only the individual field; there is a larger, a universal, a world-body, a world-field of the same Knower. For in each embodied creature there is this one Knower: in each existence he uses mainly and centrally this single outward result of the power of his nature which he has formed for his habitation, *īśā vāsyaṁ sarvaṁ yat kiñca*, makes each separate sustained knot of his mobile Energy the first base and scope of his developing harmonies. In Nature he knows the world as it affects and is reflected by the consciousness in this one limited body; the world exists to us as it is seen in our single mind, — and in the end, even, this seemingly small embodied consciousness can so enlarge itself that it contains in itself the whole universe, *ātmani viśva-darśanam*. But, physically, it is a microcosm in a macrocosm, and the macrocosm too, the large world too, is a body and field inhabited by the spiritual knower.

That becomes evident when the Gita proceeds to state the character, nature, source, deformations, powers of this sensible embodiment of our being. We see then that it is the whole working of the lower Prakriti that is meant by the *kṣetra*. That totality is the field of action of the embodied spirit here within us, the field of which it takes cognizance. For a varied and detailed knowledge of all this world of Nature in its essential action as seen from the spiritual view-point we are referred to the verses of the ancient seers, the seers of the Veda and Upanishads, in which we get the inspired and intuitive account of these creations of the Spirit, and to the Brahma Sutras which will give us the rational and philosophic analysis. The Gita contents itself with a brief practical statement of the lower nature of our being in the terms of the Sankhya thinkers. First there is the indiscriminate unmanifest Energy; out of that has come the objective evolution of the five elemental states of matter; as also the subjective evolution of the senses, intelligence and ego; there are too five objects of the senses, or rather five different ways of sense cognizance of the world, powers evolved by the universal energy in order to deal with all the forms of things she has created from the five elemental states assumed by her original objective substance, — organic relations by which the ego endowed with intelligence and sense acts on the formations of the cosmos: this is the constitution of the kshetra. Then there is a general consciousness that first informs and then illumines the Energy in its works; there is a faculty of that consciousness by which the Energy holds together the relations of objects; there is too a continuity, a persistence of the subjective and objective relations of our consciousness with its objects. These are the necessary powers of the field; all these are common and universal powers at once of the mental, vital and physical Nature. Pleasure and pain, liking and disliking are the principal deformations of the kshetra. From the Vedantic point of view we may say that pleasure and pain are the vital or sensational deformations given by the lower energy to the spontaneous Ananda or delight of the spirit when brought into contact with her workings. And we may say from the same view-point that liking and disliking are the corresponding mental deformations given by her to the reactive Will of the spirit that determines its response to her contacts. These dualities are the positive and negative terms in which the ego soul of the lower nature enjoys the universe. The negative terms, pain, dislike, sorrow, repulsion and the rest, are perverse or at the best ignorantly reverse responses: the positive terms, liking, pleasure, joy, attraction, are ill-guided responses or at the best insufficient and in character inferior to those of the true spiritual experience.

---

[2] The Upanishad speaks of a fivefold body or sheath of Nature, a physical, vital, mental, ideal and divine body; this may be regarded as the totality of the field, *kṣetram*.

All these things taken together constitute the fundamental character of our first transactions with the world of Nature, but it is evidently not the whole description of our being; it is our actuality but not the limit of our possibilities. There is something beyond to be known, *jñeyam*, and it is when the knower of the field turns from the field itself to learn of himself within it and of all that is behind its appearances that real knowledge begins, *jñānam*, — the true knowledge of the field no less than of the knower. That turning inward alone delivers from ignorance. For the farther we go inward, the more we seize on greater and fuller realities of things and grasp the complete truth both of God and the soul and of the world and its movements. Therefore, says the divine Teacher, it is the knowledge at once of the field and its knower, *kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor jñānam*, a united and even unified self-knowledge and world-knowledge, which is the real illumination and the only wisdom. For both soul and nature are the Brahman, but the true truth of the world of Nature can only be discovered by the liberated sage who possesses also the truth of the spirit. One Brahman, one reality in Self and Nature is the object of all knowledge.

The Gita then tells us what is the spiritual knowledge or rather it tells us what are the conditions of knowledge, the marks, the signs of the man whose soul is turned towards the inner wisdom. These signs are the recognised and traditional characteristics of the sage, — his strong turning away of the heart from attachment to outward and worldly things, his inward and brooding spirit, his steady mind and calm equality, the settled fixity of his thought and will upon the greatest inmost truths, upon the things that are real and eternal. First, there comes a certain moral condition, a sattwic government of the natural being. There is fixed in him a total absence of worldly pride and arrogance, a candid soul, a tolerant, long-suffering and benignant heart, purity of mind and body, tranquil firmness and steadfastness, self-control and a masterful government of the lower nature and the heart's worship given to the Teacher, whether to the divine Teacher within or to the human Master in whom the divine Wisdom is embodied, — for that is the sense of the reverence given to the Guru. Then there is a nobler and freer attitude towards the outward world, an attitude of perfect detachment and equality, a firm removal of the natural being's attraction to the objects of the senses and a radical freedom from the claims of that constant clamorous ego-sense, ego-idea, ego-motive which tyrannises over the normal man. There is no longer any clinging to the attachment and absorption of family and home. There is instead of these vital and animal movements an unattached will and sense and intelligence, a keen perception of the defective nature of the ordinary life of physical man with its aimless and painful subjection to birth and death and disease and age, a constant equalness to all pleasant or unpleasant happenings, — for the soul is seated within and impervious to the shocks of external events, — and a meditative mind turned towards solitude and away from the vain noise of crowds and the assemblies of men. Finally, there is a strong turn within towards the things that really matter, a philosophic perception of the true sense and large principles of existence, a tranquil continuity of inner spiritual knowledge and light, the Yoga of an unswerving devotion, love of God, the heart's deep and constant adoration of the universal and eternal Presence.

The one object to which the mind of spiritual knowledge must be turned is the Eternal by fixity in whom the soul clouded here and swathed in the mists of Nature recovers and enjoys its native and original consciousness of immortality and transcendence. To be fixed on the transient, to be limited in the phenomenon is to accept mortality; the constant truth in things that perish is that in them which is inward and immutable. The soul when it allows itself to be tyrannised over by the appearances of Nature, misses itself and goes whirling about in the cycle of the births and deaths of its bodies. There, passionately following without end the mutations of personality and its interests, it cannot draw back to the possession of its impersonal and unborn self-existence. To be able to do that is to find oneself and get back to one's true being, that which assumes these births but does not perish with the perishing of its forms. To enjoy the eternity to which birth and life are only outward circumstances, is the soul's true immortality and transcendence. That Eternal or that Eternity is the Brahman. Brahman is That which is transcendent and That which is universal: it is the free spirit who supports in front the play of soul with nature and assures behind their imperishable oneness; it is at once the mutable and the immutable, the All that is the One. In his highest supracosmic status Brahman is a transcendent Eternity without origin or change far above the phenomenal oppositions of existence and non-existence, persistence and transience between which the outward world moves. But once seen in the substance and light of this eternity, the world also becomes other than it seems to the mind and senses; for then we see the universe no longer as a whirl of mind and life and matter or a mass of the determinations of energy and substance, but as no other than this eternal Brahman. A spirit who immeasurably fills and surrounds all this movement with himself — for indeed the movement too is himself — and who throws on all that is finite the splendour of his garment of infinity, a bodiless and million-bodied spirit whose hands of strength and feet of swiftness are on every side of us, whose heads and eyes and faces are those innumerable visages which we see wherever we turn, whose ear is everywhere listening to the silence of eternity and the music of the worlds, is the universal Being in whose embrace we live.

All relations of Soul and Nature are circumstances in the eternity of Brahman; sense and quality, their reflectors and constituents, are this supreme Soul's devices for the presentation of the workings that his own energy in things constantly liberates into movement. He is himself beyond the limitation of the senses, sees all things but not with the physical eye, hears all things but not with the physical ear, is aware of all things but not with the limiting mind — mind which represents but cannot truly know. Not determined by any qualities, he possesses and determines in his substance all qualities and enjoys this qualitative action of his own Nature. He is attached to nothing, bound by nothing, fixed to nothing that he does; calm, he supports in a large and immortal freedom all the action and movement and passion of his universal Shakti. He becomes all that is in the universe; that which is in us is he and all that we experience outside ourselves is he. The inward and the outward, the far and the near, the moving and the unmoving, all this he is at once. He is the subtlety of the subtle which is beyond our knowledge, even as he is the density of force and substance which offers itself to the grasp of our minds. He is indivisible and the One, but seems to divide himself in forms and creatures and appears as all these separate existences. All things can get back in him, can return in the Spirit to the indivisible unity of their self-existence. All is eternally born from him, upborne in his eternity, taken eternally back into his oneness. He is the light of all lights and luminous beyond all the darkness of our ignorance. He is knowledge and the object of knowledge. The spiritual supramental knowledge that floods the illumined mind and transfigures it is this spirit manifesting himself in light to the force-obscured soul which he has put forth into the action of Nature. This eternal Light is in the heart of every being; it is he who is the secret knower of the field, *kṣetrajña*, and presides as the Lord in the heart of things over this province and over all these kingdoms of his manifested becoming and action. When man sees this eternal and universal Godhead within himself, when he becomes aware of the soul in all things and discovers the spirit in Nature, when he feels all the universe as a wave mounting in this Eternity and all that is as the one existence, he puts on the light of Godhead and stands free in the midst of the worlds of Nature. A divine knowledge and a perfect turning with adoration to this Divine is the secret of the great spiritual liberation. Freedom, love and spiritual knowledge raise us from mortal nature to immortal being.

The Soul and Nature are only two aspects of the eternal Brahman, an apparent duality which founds the operations of his universal existence. The Soul is without origin and eternal, Nature too is without origin and eternal; but the modes of Nature and the lower forms she assumes to our conscious experience have an origin in the transactions of these two entities. They come from her, wear by her the outward chain of cause and effect, doing and the results of doing, force and its workings, all that is here transient and mutable. Constantly they change and the soul and Nature seem to change with them, but in themselves these two powers are eternal and always the same. Nature creates and acts, the Soul enjoys her creation and action; but in this inferior form of her action she turns this enjoyment into the obscure and petty figures of pain and pleasure. Forcibly the soul, the individual Purusha, is attracted by her qualitative workings and this attraction of her qualities draws him constantly to births of all kinds in which he enjoys the variations and vicissitudes, the good and evil of birth in Nature. But this is only the outward experience of the soul mutable in conception by identification with mutable Nature. Seated in this body is her and our Divinity, the supreme Self, Paramatman, the supreme Soul, the mighty Lord of Nature, who watches her action, sanctions her operations, upholds all she does, commands her manifold creation, enjoys with his universal delight this play of her figures of his own being. That is the self-knowledge to which we have to accustom our mentality before we can truly know ourselves as an eternal portion of the Eternal. Once that is fixed, no matter how the soul in us may comport itself outwardly in its transactions with Nature, whatever it may seem to do or however it may seem to assume this or that figure of personality and active force and embodied ego, it is in itself free, no longer bound to birth because one through impersonality of self with the inner unborn spirit of existence. That impersonality is our union with the supreme egoless I of all that is in cosmos.

This knowledge comes by an inner meditation through which the eternal self becomes apparent to us in our own self-existence. Or it comes by the Yoga of the Sankhyas, the separation of the soul from nature. Or it comes by the Yoga of works in which the personal will is dissolved through the opening up of our mind and heart and all our active forces to the Lord who assumes to himself the whole of our works in nature. The spiritual knowledge may be awakened by the urging of the spirit within us, its call to this or that Yoga, this or that way of oneness. Or it may come to us by hearing of the truth from others and the moulding of the mind into the sense of that to which it listens with faith and concentration. But however arrived at, it carries us beyond death to immortality. Knowledge shows us high above the mutable transactions of the soul with the mortality of nature our highest Self as the supreme Lord of her actions, one and equal in all objects and creatures, not born in the taking up of a body, not subject to death in the perishing of all these bodies. That is the true seeing, the seeing of that in us which is eternal and immortal. As we perceive more and more this equal spirit in all things, we pass into that equality of the spirit; as we dwell more and more in this universal being, we become ourselves universal beings; as we grow more and more aware of this eternal, we put on our own eternity and are for ever. We identify ourselves with the eternity of the self and no longer with the limitation and distress of our mental and physical ignorance. Then we see that all our works are an evolution and operation of Nature and our real self not the executive doer, but the free witness and lord and unattached enjoyer of the action. All this surface of cosmic movement is a diverse becoming of natural existences in the one eternal Being, all is extended, manifested, rolled out by the universal Energy from the seeds of her Idea deep in his existence; but the spirit even though it takes up and enjoys her workings in this body of ours, is not affected by its mortality because it is eternal beyond birth and death, is not limited by the personalities which it multiply assumes in her because it is the one supreme self of all these personalities, is not changed by the mutations of quality because it is itself undetermined by quality, does not act even in action, *kartāram api akartāram*, because it supports natural action in a perfect spiritual freedom from its effects, is the originator indeed of all activities, but in no way changed or affected by the play of its Nature. As the all-pervading ether is not affected or changed by the multiple forms it assumes, but remains always the same pure subtle original substance, even so this spirit when it has done and become all possible things, remains through it all the same pure immutable subtle infinite essence. That is the supreme status of the soul, *parā gatiḥ*, that is the divine being and nature, *madbhāva*, and whoever arrives at spiritual knowledge, rises to that supreme immortality of the Eternal.

This Brahman, this eternal and spiritual knower of the field of his own natural becoming, this Nature, his perpetual energy, which converts herself into that field, this immortality of the soul in mortal nature, — these things together make the whole reality of our existence. The spirit within, when we turn to it, illumines the entire field of Nature with its own truth in all the splendour of its rays. In the light of that sun of knowledge the eye of knowledge opens in us and we live in that truth and no longer in this ignorance. Then we perceive that our limitation to our present mental and physical nature was an error of the darkness, then we are liberated from the law of the lower Prakriti, the law of the mind and body, then we attain to the supreme nature of the spirit. That splendid and lofty change is the last, the divine and infinite becoming, the putting off of mortal nature, the putting on of an immortal existence.

XIV

Above the Gunas[1]

THE DISTINCTIONS between the Soul and Nature rapidly drawn in the verses of the thirteenth chapter by a few decisive epithets, a few brief but packed characterisations of their separate power and functioning, and especially the distinction between the embodied soul subjected to the action of Nature by its enjoyment of her gunas, qualities or modes and the Supreme Soul which dwells enjoying the gunas, but not subject because it is itself beyond them, are the basis on which the Gita rests its whole idea of the liberated being made one in the conscious law of its existence with the Divine. That liberation, that oneness, that putting on of the divine nature, *sādharmya*, it declares to be the very essence of spiritual freedom and the whole significance of immortality. This supreme importance assigned to *sādharmya* is a capital point in the teaching of the Gita.

To be immortal was never held in the ancient spiritual teaching to consist merely in a personal survival of the death of the body: all beings are immortal in that sense and it is only the forms that perish. The souls that do not arrive at liberation, live through the returning aeons; all exist involved or secret in the Brahman during the dissolution of the manifest worlds and are born again in the appearance of a new cycle. Pralaya, the end of a cycle of aeons, is the temporary disintegration of a universal form of existence and of all the individual forms which move in its rounds, but that is only a momentary pause, a silent interval followed by an outburst of new creation, reintegration and reconstruction in which they reappear and recover the impetus of their progression. Our physical death is also a pralaya,— the Gita will presently use the word in the sense of this death,

---

[1] Gita, XIV.

pralayaṁ yāti deha-bhṛt, "the soul bearing the body comes to a pralaya," to a disintegration of that form of matter with which its ignorance identified its being and which now dissolves into the natural elements. But the soul itself persists and after an interval resumes in a new body formed from those elements its round of births in the cycle, just as after the interval of pause and cessation the universal Being resumes his endless round of the cyclic aeons. This immortality in the rounds of Time is common to all embodied spirits.

To be immortal in the deeper sense is something different from this survival of death and this constant recurrence. Immortality is that supreme status in which the Spirit knows itself to be superior to death and birth, not conditioned by the nature of its manifestation, infinite, imperishable, immutably eternal, — immortal, because never being born it never dies. The divine Purushottama, who is the supreme Lord and supreme Brahman, possesses for ever this immortal eternity and is not affected by his taking up a body or by his continuous assumption of cosmic forms and powers because he exists always in this self-knowledge. His very nature is to be unchangeably conscious of his own eternity; he is self-aware without end or beginning. He is here the Inhabitant of all bodies, but as the unborn in every body, not limited in his consciousness by that manifestation, not identified with the physical nature which he assumes; for that is only a minor circumstance of his universal activised play of existence. Liberation, immortality is to live in this unchangeably conscious eternal being of the Purushottama.[2] But to arrive here at this greater spiritual immortality the embodied soul must cease to live according to the law of the lower nature; it must put on the law of the Divine's supreme way of existence which is in fact the real law of its own eternal essence. In the spiritual evolution of its becoming, no less than in its secret original being, it must grow into the likeness of the Divine.

---

[2] Mark that nowhere in the Gita is there any indication that dissolution of the individual spiritual being into the unmanifest, indefinable or absolute Brahman, *avyaktam anirdeśyam*, is the true meaning or condition of immortality or the true aim of Yoga. On the contrary it describes immortality later on as an indwelling in the Ishwara in his supreme status, *mayi nivasiṣyasi*, *paraṁ dhāma*, and here as *sādharmya*, *parāṁ siddhim*, a supreme perfection, a becoming of one law of being and nature with the Supreme, persistent still in existence and conscious of the universal movement but above it, as all the sages still exist, *munayaḥ sarve*, not bound to birth in the creation, not troubled by the dissolution of the cycles.

And this great thing, to rise from the human into the divine nature, we can only do by an effort of Godward knowledge, will and adoration. For the soul sent forth by the Supreme as his eternal portion, his immortal representative into the workings of universal Nature is yet obliged by the character of those workings, *avaśaṁ prakṛter vaśāt*, to identify itself in its external consciousness with her limiting conditions, to identify itself with a life, mind and body that are oblivious of their inner spiritual reality and of the innate Godhead. To get back to self-knowledge and to the knowledge of the real as distinct from the apparent relations of the soul with Nature, to know God and ourselves and the world with a spiritual and no longer with a physical or externalised experience, through the deepest truth of the inner soul-consciousness and not through the misleading phenomenal significances of the sense-mind and the outward understanding, is an indispensable means of this perfection. Perfection cannot come without self-knowledge and God-knowledge and a spiritual attitude towards our natural existence, and that is why the ancient wisdom laid so much stress on salvation by knowledge, — not an intellectual cognizance of things, but a growing of man the mental being into a greater spiritual consciousness. The soul's salvation cannot come without the soul's perfection, without its growing into the divine nature; the impartial Godhead will not effect it for us by an act of caprice or an arbitrary *sanad* of his favour. Divine works are effective for salvation because they lead us towards this perfection and to a knowledge of self and nature and God by a growing unity with the inner Master of our existence. Divine love is effective because by it we grow into the likeness of the sole and supreme object of our adoration and call down the answering love of the Highest to flood us with the light of his knowledge and the uplifting power and purity of his eternal spirit. Therefore, says the Gita, this is the supreme knowledge and the highest of all knowings because it leads to the highest perfection and spiritual status, *paraṁ siddhim*, and brings the soul to likeness with the Divine, *sādharmya*. It is the eternal wisdom, the great spiritual experience by which all the sages attained to that highest perfection, grew into one law of being with the Supreme and live for ever in his eternity, not born in the creation, not troubled by the anguish of the universal dissolution. This perfection, then, this *sādharmya* is the way of immortality and the indispensable condition without which the soul cannot consciously live in the Eternal.

The soul of man could not grow into the likeness of the Divine, if it were not in its secret essence imperishably one with the Divine and part and parcel of his divinity: it could not be or become immortal if it were merely a creature of mental, vital and physical Nature. All existence is a manifestation of the divine Existence and that which is within us is spirit of the eternal Spirit. We have come indeed into the lower material nature and are under its influence, but we have come there from the supreme spiritual nature: this inferior imperfect status is our apparent, but that our real being. The Eternal puts all this movement forth as his self-creation. He is at once the Father and Mother of the universe; the substance of the infinite Idea, *vijñāna*, the Mahad Brahman, is the womb into which he casts the seed of his self-conception. As the Over-Soul he casts the seed; as the Mother, the Nature-Soul, the Energy filled with his conscious power, he receives it into this infinite substance of being made pregnant with his illimitable, yet self-limiting Idea. He receives into this Vast of self-conception and develops there the divine embryo into mental and physical form of existence born from the original act of conceptive creation. All we see springs from that act of creation; but that which is born here is only finite idea and form of the unborn and infinite. The Spirit is eternal and superior to all its manifestation: Nature, eternal without beginning in the Spirit, proceeds for ever with the rhythm of the cycles by unending act of creation and unconcluding act of cessation; the Soul too which takes on this or that form in Nature, is no less eternal than she, *anādī ubhāv api*. Even while in Nature it follows the unceasing round of the cycles, it is, in the Eternal from which it proceeds into them, for ever raised above the terms of birth and death, and even in its apparent consciousness here it can become aware of that innate and constant transcendence.

What is it then that makes the difference, what is it that gets the soul into the appearance of birth and death and bondage, — for this is patent that it is only an appearance? It is a subordinate act or state of consciousness, it is a self-oblivious identification with the modes of Nature in the limited workings of this lower motivity and with this self-wrapped ego-bounded knot of action of the mind, life and body. To rise above the modes of Nature, to be *traiguṇyātīta*, is indispensable, if we are to get back into our fully conscious being away from the obsessing power of the lower action and to put on the free nature of the spirit and its eternal immortality. That condition of the *sādharmya* is what the Gita next proceeds to develop. It has already alluded to it and laid it down with a brief emphasis in a previous chapter; but it has now to indicate more precisely what are these modes, these gunas, how they bind the soul and keep it back from spiritual freedom and what is meant by rising above the modes of Nature.

The modes of Nature are all qualitative in their essence and are called for that reason its gunas or qualities. In any spiritual conception of the universe this must be so, because the connecting medium between spirit and matter must be psyche or soul power and the primary action psychological and qualitative, not physical and quantitative; for quality is the immaterial, the more spiritual element in all the action of the universal Energy, her prior dynamics. The predominance of physical Science has accustomed us to a different view of Nature, because there the first thing that strikes us is the importance of the quantitative aspect of her workings and her dependence for the creation of forms on quantitative combinations and dispositions. And yet even there the discovery that matter is rather substance or act of energy than energy a motive power of self-existent material substance or an inherent power acting in matter has led to some revival of an older reading of universal Nature. The analysis of the ancient Indian thinkers allowed for the quantitative action of Nature, *mātrā*; but that it regarded as proper to its more objective and formally executive working, while the innately ideative executive power which disposes things according to the quality of their being and energy, *guṇa*, *svabhāva*, is the primary determinant and underlies all the outer quantitative dispositions. In the basis of the physical world this is not apparent only because there the underlying ideative spirit, the Mahad Brahman, is overlaid and hidden up by the movement of matter and material energy. But even in the physical world the miraculous varying results of different combinations and quantities of elements otherwise identical with each other admits of no conceivable explanation if there is not a superior power of variative quality of which these material dispositions are only the convenient mechanical devices. Or let us say at once, there must be a secret ideative capacity of the universal energy, *vijñāna*, — even if we suppose that energy and its instrumental idea, *buddhi*, to be themselves mechanical in their nature, — which fixes the mathematics and decides the resultants of these outer dispositions: it is the omnipotent Idea in the spirit which invents and makes use of these devices. And in the vital and mental existence quality at once openly appears as the primary power and amount of energy is only a secondary factor. But in fact the mental, the vital, the physical existence are all subject to the limitations of quality, all are governed by its determinations, even though that truth seems more and more obscured as we descend the scale of existence. Only the Spirit, which by the power of its idea-being and its idea-force called *mahat* and *vijñāna* fixes these conditions, is not so determined, not subject to any limitations either of quality or quantity because its immeasurable and indeterminable infinity is superior to the modes which it develops and uses for its creation.

But, again, the whole qualitative action of Nature, so infinitely intricate in its detail and variety, is figured as cast into the mould of three general modes of quality everywhere present, intertwined, almost inextricable, *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*. These modes are described in the Gita only by their psychological action in man, or incidentally in things such as food according as they produce a psychological or vital effect on human beings. If we look for a more general definition, we shall perhaps catch a glimpse of it in the symbolic idea of Indian religion which attributes each of these qualities respectively to one member of the cosmic Trinity, sattwa to the preserver Vishnu, rajas to the creator Brahma, tamas to the destroyer Rudra. Looking behind this idea for the rationale of the triple ascription, we might define the three modes or qualities in terms of the motion of the universal Energy as Nature's three concomitant and inseparable powers of equilibrium, kinesis and inertia. But that is only their appearance in terms of the external action of Force. It is otherwise if we regard consciousness and force as twin terms of the one Existence, always coexistent in the reality of being, however in the primal outward phenomenon of material Nature light of consciousness may seem to disappear in a vast action of nescient unillumined energy, while at an opposite pole of spiritual quiescence action of force may seem to disappear in the stillness of the observing or witness consciousness. These two conditions are the two extremes of an apparently separated Purusha and Prakriti, but each at its extreme point does not abolish but at the most only conceals its eternal mate in the depths of its own characteristic way of being. Therefore, since consciousness is always there even in an apparently inconscient Force, we must find a corresponding psychological power of these three modes which informs their more outward executive action. On their psychological side the three qualities may be defined, tamas as Nature's power of nescience, rajas as her power of active seeking ignorance enlightened by desire and impulsion, sattwa as her power of possessing and harmonising knowledge.

The three qualitative modes of Nature are inextricably intertwined in all cosmic existence. Tamas, the principle of inertia, is a passive and inert nescience which suffers all shocks and contacts without any effort of mastering response and by itself would lead to a disintegration of the whole action of the energy and a radical dispersion of substance. But it is driven by the kinetic power of rajas and even in the nescience of Matter is met and embraced by an innate though unpossessed preserving principle of harmony and balance and knowledge. Material energy appears to be tamasic in its basic action, *jaḍa*, nescient, mechanic and in movement disintegrative. But it is dominated by a huge force and impulsion of mute rajasic kinesis which drives it, even in and even by its dispersion and disintegration, to build and create and again by a sattwic ideative element in its apparently inconscient force which is always imposing a harmony and preservative order on the two opposite tendencies. Rajas, the principle of creative endeavour and motion and impulsion in Prakriti, kinesis, *pravṛtti*, so seen in Matter, appears more evidently as a conscious or half-conscious passion of seeking and desire and action in the dominant character of Life, — for that passion is the nature of all vital existence. And it would lead by itself in its own nature to a persistent but always mutable and unstable life and activity and creation without any settled result. But met on one side by the disintegrating power of tamas with death and decay and inertia, its ignorant action is on the other side of its functioning settled and harmonised and sustained by the power of sattwa, subconscient in the lower forms of life, more and more conscient in the emergence of mentality, most conscious in the effort of the evolved intelligence figuring as will and reason in the fully developed mental being. Sattwa, the principle of understanding knowledge and of according assimilation, measure and equilibrium, which by itself would lead only to some lasting concord of fixed and luminous harmonies, is in the motions of this world impelled to follow the mutable strife and action of the eternal kinesis and constantly overpowered or hedged in by the forces of inertia and nescience. This is the appearance of a world governed by the interlocked and mutually limited play of the three qualitative modes of Nature.

The Gita applies this generalised analysis of the universal Energy to the psychological nature of man in relation to his bondage to Prakriti and the realisation of spiritual freedom. Sattwa, it tells us, is by the purity of its quality a cause of light and illumination and by virtue of that purity it produces no disease or morbidity or suffering in the nature. When into all the doors in the body there comes a flooding of light, as if the doors and windows of a closed house were opened to sunshine, a light of understanding, perception and knowledge,

— when the intelligence is alert and illumined, the senses quickened, the whole mentality satisfied and full of brightness and the nervous being calmed and filled with an illumined ease and clarity, *prasāda*, one should understand that there has been a great increase and uprising of the sattwic guna in the nature. For knowledge and a harmonious ease and pleasure and happiness are the characteristic results of sattwa. The pleasure that is sattwic is not only that contentment which an inner clarity of satisfied will and intelligence brings with it, but all delight and content produced by the soul's possession of itself in light or by an accord or an adequate and truthful adjustment between the regarding soul and the surrounding Nature and her offered objects of desire and perception.

Rajas, again, the Gita tells us, has for its essence attraction of liking and longing. Rajas is a child of the attachment of the soul to the desire of objects; it is born from the nature's thirst for an unpossessed satisfaction. It is therefore full of unrest and fever and lust and greed and excitement, a thing of seeking impulsions, and all this mounts in us when the middle guna increases. It is the force of desire which motives all ordinary personal initiative of action and all that movement of stir and seeking and propulsion in our nature which is the impetus towards action and works, *pravṛtti*. Rajas, then, is evidently the kinetic force in the modes of Nature. Its fruit is the lust of action, but also grief, pain, all kinds of suffering; for it has no right possession of its object — desire in fact implies non-possession — and even its pleasure of acquired possession is troubled and unstable because it has not clear knowledge and does not know how to possess nor can it find the secret of accord and right enjoyment. All the ignorant and passionate seeking of life belongs to the rajasic mode of Nature.

Tamas, finally, is born of inertia and ignorance and its fruit too is inertia and ignorance. It is the darkness of tamas which obscures knowledge and causes all confusion and delusion. Therefore it is the opposite of sattwa, for the essence of sattwa is enlightenment, *prakāśa*, and the essence of tamas is absence of light, nescience, *aprakāśa*. But tamas brings incapacity and negligence of action as well as the incapacity and negligence of error, inattention and misunderstanding or non-understanding; indolence, languor and sleep belong to this guna. Therefore it is the opposite too of rajas; for the essence of rajas is movement and impulsion and kinesis, *pravṛtti*, but the essence of tamas is inertia, *apravṛtti*. Tamas is inertia of nescience and inertia of inaction, a double negative.

These three qualities of Nature are evidently present and active in all human beings and none can be said to be quite devoid of one and another or free from any one of the three; none is cast in the mould of one guna to the exclusion of the others. All men have in them in whatever degree the rajasic impulse of desire and activity and the sattwic boon of light and happiness, some balance, some adjustment of mind to itself and its surroundings and objects, and all have their share of tamasic incapacity and ignorance or nescience. But these qualities are not constant in any man in the quantitative action of their force or in the combination of their elements; for they are variable and in a continual state of mutual impact, displacement and interaction. Now one leads, now another increases and predominates, and each subjects us to its characteristic action and consequences. Only by a general and ordinary predominance of one or other of the qualities can a man be said to be either sattwic or rajasic or tamasic in his nature; but this can only be a general and not an exclusive or absolute description. The three qualities are a triple power which by their interaction determine the character and disposition and through that and its various motions the actions of the natural man. But this triple power is at the same time a triple cord of bondage. "The three gunas born of Prakriti" says the Gita "bind in the body the imperishable dweller in the body." In a certain sense we can see at once that there must be this bondage in following the action of the gunas; for they are all limited by their finite of quality and operation and cause limitation. Tamas is on both its sides an incapacity and therefore very obviously binds to limitation. Rajasic desire as an initiator of action is a more positive power, but still we can see well enough that desire with its limiting and engrossing hold on man must always be a bondage. But how does sattwa, the power of knowledge and happiness, become a chain? It so becomes because it is a principle of mental nature, a principle of limited and limiting knowledge and of a happiness which depends upon right following or attainment of this or that object or else on particular states of the mentality, on a light of mind which can be only a more or less clear twilight. Its pleasure can only be a passing intensity or a qualified ease. Other is the infinite spiritual knowledge and the free self-existent delight of our spiritual being.

But then there is the question, how does our infinite and imperishable spirit, even involved in Nature, come thus to confine itself to the lower action of Prakriti and undergo this bondage and how is it not, like the supreme spirit of which it is a portion, free in its infinity even while enjoying the self-limitations of its active evolution? The reason, says the Gita, is our attachment to the gunas and to the result of their workings. Sattwa, it says, attaches to happiness, rajas attaches to action, tamas covers up the knowledge and attaches to negligence of error and inaction. Or again, "sattwa binds by attachment to knowledge and attachment to happiness, rajas binds the embodied spirit by attachment to works, tamas binds by negligence and indolence and sleep." In other words, the soul by attachment to the enjoyment of the gunas and their results concentrates its consciousness on the lower and outward action of life, mind and body in Nature, imprisons itself in the form of these things and becomes oblivious of its own greater consciousness behind in the spirit, unaware of the free power and scope of the liberating Purusha. Evidently, in order to be liberated and perfect, we must get back from these things, away from the gunas and above them and return to the power of that free spiritual consciousness above Nature.

But this would seem to imply a cessation of all doing, since all natural action is done by the gunas, by Nature through her modes. The soul cannot act by itself, it can only act through Nature and her modes. And yet the Gita, while it demands freedom from the modes, insists upon the necessity of action. Here comes in the importance of its insistence on the abandonment of the fruits; for it is the desire of the fruits which is the most potent cause of the soul's bondage and by abandoning it the soul can be free in action. Ignorance is the result of tamasic action, pain the consequence of rajasic works, pain of reaction, disappointment, dissatisfaction or transience, and therefore in attachment to the fruits of this kind of activity attended as they are with these undesirable accompaniments there is no profit. But of works rightly done the fruit is pure and sattwic, the inner result is knowledge and happiness. Yet attachment even to these pleasurable things must be entirely abandoned, first, because in the mind they are limited and limiting forms and, secondly, because, since sattwa is constantly entangled with and besieged by rajas and tamas which may at any moment overcome it, there is a perpetual insecurity in their tenure. But, even if one is free from any clinging to the fruit, there may be an attachment to the work itself, either for its own sake, the essential rajasic bond, or owing to a lax subjection to the drive of Nature, the tamasic, or for the sake of the attracting rightness of the thing done, which is the sattwic attaching cause powerful on the virtuous man or the man of knowledge. And here evidently the resource is in that other injunction of the Gita, to give up the action itself to the Lord of works and be only a desireless and equal-minded instrument of his will. To see that the modes of Nature are the whole agency and cause of our works and to know and turn to that which is supreme above the gunas, is the way to rise above the lower nature. Only so can we attain to the movement and status of the Divine, *mad-bhāva*, by which free from subjection to birth and death and their concomitants, decay, old age and suffering, the liberated soul shall enjoy in the end immortality and all that is eternal.

But what, asks Arjuna, are the signs of such a man, what his action and how is he said even in action to be above the three gunas? The sign, says Krishna, is that equality of which I have so constantly spoken; the sign is that inwardly he regards happiness and suffering alike, gold and mud and stone as of equal value and that to him the pleasant and the unpleasant, praise and blame, honour and insult, the faction of his friends and the faction of his enemies are equal things. He is steadfast in a wise imperturbable and immutable inner calm and quietude. He initiates no action, but leaves all works to be done by the gunas of Nature. Sattwa, rajas or tamas may rise or cease in his outer mentality and his physical movements with their results of enlightenment, of impulsion to works or of inaction and the clouding over of the mental and nervous being, but he does not rejoice when this comes or that ceases, nor on the other hand does he abhor or shrink from the operation or the cessation of these things. He has seated himself in the conscious light of another principle than the nature of the gunas and that greater consciousness remains steadfast in him, above these powers and unshaken by their motions like the sun above clouds to one who has risen into a higher atmosphere. He from that height sees that it is the gunas that are in process of action and that their storm and calm are not himself but only a movement of Prakriti; his self is immovable above and his spirit does not participate in that shifting mutability of things unstable. This is the impersonality of the Brahmic status; for that higher principle, that greater wide high-seated consciousness, *kūṭastha*, is the immutable Brahman.

But still there is evidently here a double status, there is a scission of the being between two opposites; a liberated spirit in the immutable Self or Brahman watches the action of an unliberated mutable Nature, — Akshara and Kshara. Is there no greater status, no principle of more absolute perfection, or is this division the highest consciousness possible in the body, and is the end of Yoga to drop the mutable nature and the gunas born of the embodiment in Nature and disappear into the impersonality and everlasting peace of the Brahman? Is that *laya* or dissolution of the individual Purusha the greatest liberation? There is, it would seem, something else; for the Gita says at the close, always returning to this one final note, "He also who loves and strives after Me with an undeviating love and adoration, passes beyond the three gunas and he too is prepared for becoming the Brahman." This "I" is the Purushottama who is the foundation of the silent Brahman and of immortality and imperishable spiritual existence and of the eternal dharma and of an utter bliss of happiness. There is a status then which is greater than the peace of the Akshara as it watches unmoved the strife of the gunas. There is a highest spiritual experience and foundation above the immutability of the Brahman, there is an eternal dharma greater than the rajasic impulsion to works, *pravṛtti*, there is an absolute delight which is untouched by rajasic suffering and beyond the sattwic happiness, and these things are found and possessed by dwelling in the being and power of the Purushottama. But since it is acquired by bhakti, its status must be that divine delight, Ananda, in which is experienced the union of utter love[3] and possessing oneness, the crown of bhakti. And to rise into that Ananda, into that imperishable oneness must be the completion of spiritual perfection and the fulfilment of the eternal immortalising dharma.

---

[3] *niratiśayapremāspadatvam ānandatattvam.*

XV

The Three Purushas[1]

THE DOCTRINE of the Gita from the beginning to the end converges on all its lines and through all the flexibility of its turns towards one central thought, and to that it is arriving in all its balancing and reconciliation of the disagreements of various philosophic systems and its careful synthetising of the truths of spiritual experience, lights often conflicting or at least divergent when taken separately and exclusively pursued along their outer arc and curve of radiation, but here brought together into one focus of grouping vision. This central thought is the idea of a triple consciousness, three and yet one, present in the whole scale of existence.

There is a spirit here at work in the world that is one in innumerable appearances. It is the developer of birth and action, the moving power of life, the inhabiting and associating consciousness in the myriad mutabilities of Nature; it is the constituting reality of all this stir in Time and Space; it is itself Time and Space and Circumstance. It is this multitude of souls in the worlds; it is the gods and men and creatures and things and forces and qualities and quantities and powers and presences. It is Nature, which is power of the Spirit, and objects, which are its phenomena of name and idea and form, and existences, who are portions and births and becomings of this single self-existent spiritual entity, the One, the Eternal. But what we see obviously at work before us is not this Eternal and his conscious Shakti, but a Nature which in the blind stress of her operations is ignorant of the spirit within her action. Her work is a confused, ignorant and limiting play of certain fundamental modes, qualities, principles of force in mechanical operation and the fixity or the flux of their consequences. And whatever soul comes to the surface in her action, is itself in appearance ignorant, suffering, bound to the incomplete and unsatisfying play of this inferior Nature. The inherent Power in her is yet other than what it thus seems to be; for, hidden in its truth, manifest in its appearances, it is the Kshara, the universal Soul, the spirit in the mutability of cosmic phenomenon and becoming, one with the Immutable and the Supreme. We have to arrive at the hidden truth behind its manifest appearances; we have to discover the Spirit behind these veils and to see all as the One, *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*, individual, universal, transcendent. But this is a thing impossible to achieve with any completeness of inner reality, so long as we live concentrated in the inferior Nature. For in this lesser movement Nature is an ignorance, a Maya; she shelters the Divine within its folds and conceals him from herself and her creatures. The Godhead is hidden by the Maya of his own all-creating Yoga, the Eternal figured in transience, Being absorbed and covered up by its own manifesting phenomena. In the Kshara taken alone as a thing in itself, the mutable universal apart from the undivided Immutable and the Transcendent, there is no completeness of knowledge, no completeness of our being and therefore no liberation.

---

[1] Gita, XV.

But then there is another spirit of whom we become aware and who is none of these things, but self and self only. This Spirit is eternal, always the same, never changed or affected by manifestation, the one, the stable, a self-existence undivided and not even seemingly divided by the division of things and powers in Nature, inactive in her action, immobile in her motion. It is the Self of all and yet unmoved, indifferent, intangible, as if all these things which depend upon it were not-self, not its own results and powers and consequences, but a drama of action developed before the eye of an unmoved unparticipating spectator. For the mind that stages and shares in the drama is other than the Self which indifferently contains the action. This spirit is timeless, though we see it in Time; it is unextended in space, though we see it as if pervading space. We become aware of it in proportion as we draw back from out inward, or look behind the action and motion for something that is eternal and stable, or get away from time and its creation to the uncreated, away from phenomenon to being, from the personal to impersonality, from becoming to unalterable self-existence. This is the Akshara, the immutable in the mutable, the immobile in the mobile, the imperishable in things perishable. Or rather, since there is only an appearance of pervasion, it is the immutable, immobile and imperishable in which proceeds all the mobility of mutable and perishable things.

The Kshara spirit visible to us as all natural existence and the totality of all existences moves and acts pervadingly in the immobile and eternal Akshara. This mobile Power of Self acts in that fundamental stability of Self, as the second principle of material Nature, Vayu, with its contactual force of aggregation and separation, attraction and repulsion, supporting the formative force of the fiery (radiant, gaseous and electric) and other elemental movements, ranges pervadingly in the subtly massive stability of ether. This Akshara is the self higher than the buddhi — it exceeds even that highest subjective principle of Nature in our being, the liberating intelligence, through which man returning beyond his restless mobile mental to his calm eternal spiritual self is at last free from the persistence of birth and the long chain of action, of Karma. This self in its highest status, *paraṁ dhāma*, is an unmanifest beyond even the unmanifest principle of the original cosmic Prakriti, Avyakta, and, if the soul turns to this Immutable, the hold of cosmos and Nature falls away from it and it passes beyond birth to an unchanging eternal existence. These two then are the two spirits we see in the world; one emerges in front in its action, the other remains behind it steadfast in that perpetual silence from which the action comes and in which all actions cease and disappear into timeless being, Nirvana. *Dvāv imau puruṣau loke kṣaraś cākṣara eva ca.*

The difficulty which baffles our intelligence is that these two seem to be irreconcilable opposites with no real nexus between them or any transition from the one to the other except by an intolerant movement of separation. The Kshara acts, or at least motives action, separately in the Akshara; the Akshara stands apart, self-centred, separate in its inactivity from the Kshara. At first sight it would almost seem better, more logical, more easy of comprehension, if we admitted with the Sankhyas an original and eternal duality of Purusha and Prakriti, if not even an eternal plurality of souls. Our experience of the Akshara would then be simply the withdrawal of each Purusha into himself, his turning away from Nature and therefore from all contact with other souls in the relations of existence; for each is self-sufficient and infinite and complete in his own essence. But after all the final experience is that of a unity of all beings which is not merely a community of experience, a common subjection to one force of Nature, but a oneness in the spirit, a vast identity of conscious being beyond all this endless variety of determination, behind all this apparent separativism of relative existence. The Gita takes its stand in that highest spiritual experience. It appears indeed to admit an eternal plurality of souls subject to and sustained by their eternal unity, for cosmos is for ever and manifestation goes on in unending cycles; nor does it affirm anywhere or use any expression that would indicate an absolute disappearance, *laya*, the annullation of the individual soul in the Infinite. But at the same time it affirms with a strong insistence that the Akshara is the one self of all these many souls, and it is therefore evident that these two spirits are a dual status of one eternal and universal existence. That is a very ancient doctrine; it is the whole basis of the largest vision of the Upanishads, — as when the Isha tells us that Brahman is both the mobile and the immobile, is the One and the Many, is the Self and all existences, *ātman*, *sarvabhūtāni*, is the Knowledge and the Ignorance, is the eternal unborn status and also the birth of existences, and that to dwell only on one of these things to the rejection of its eternal counterpart is a darkness of exclusive knowledge or a darkness of ignorance. It too insists like the Gita that man must know and must embrace both and learn of the Supreme in his entirety — *samagraṁ mām*, as the Gita puts it — in order to enjoy immortality and live in the Eternal. The teaching of the Gita and this side of the teaching of the Upanishads are so far at one; for they look at and admit both sides of the reality and still arrive at identity as the conclusion and the highest truth of existence.

But this greater knowledge and experience, however true and however powerful in its appeal to our highest seeing, has still to get rid of a very real and pressing difficulty, a practical as well as a logical contradiction which seems at first sight to persist up to the highest heights of spiritual experience. The Eternal is other than this mobile subjective and objective experience, there is a greater consciousness, *na idaṁ yad upāsate*:[2] and yet at the same time all this is the Eternal, all this is the perennial self-seeing of the Self, *sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ brahma*,[3] *ayam ātmā brahma*.[4] The Eternal has become all existences, *ātmā abhūt sarvāṇi bhūtāni*;[5] as the Swetaswatara puts it, "Thou art this boy and yonder girl and that old man walking supported on his staff," — even as in the Gita the Divine says that he is Krishna and Arjuna and Vyasa and Ushanas, and the lion and the aswattha tree, and consciousness and intelligence and all qualities and the self of all creatures. But how are these two the same, when they seem not only so opposite in nature, but so difficult to unify in experience? For when we live in the mobility of the becoming, we may be aware of but hardly live in the immortality of timeless self-existence. And when we fix ourselves in timeless being, Time and Space and circumstance fall away from us and begin to appear as a troubled dream in the Infinite. The most persuasive conclusion would be, at first sight, that the mobility of the spirit in Nature is an illusion, a thing real only when we live in it, but not real in essence, and that is why, when we go back into self, it falls away from our incorruptible essence. That is the familiar cutting of the knot of the riddle, *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*.

The Gita does not take refuge in this explanation which has enormous difficulties of its own, besides its failure to account for the illusion, — for it only says that it is all a mysterious and incomprehensible Maya, and then we might just as well say that it is all a mysterious and incomprehensible double reality, spirit concealing itself from spirit. The Gita speaks of Maya, but only as a bewildering partial consciousness which loses hold of the complete reality, lives in the phenomenon of mobile Nature and has no sight of the Spirit of which she is the active Power, *me prakṛtiḥ*. When we transcend this Maya, the world does not disappear, it only changes its whole heart of meaning. In the spiritual vision we find not that all this does not really exist, but rather that all is, but with a sense quite other than its present mistaken significance: all is self and soul and nature of the Godhead, all is Vasudeva. The world for the Gita is real, a creation of the Lord, a power of the Eternal, a manifestation from the Parabrahman, and even this lower nature of the triple Maya is a derivation from the supreme divine Nature. Nor can we take refuge altogether in this distinction that there is a double, an inferior active and temporal and a superior calm, still and eternal reality beyond action and that our liberation is to pass from this partiality to that greatness, from the action to the silence. For the Gita insists that we can and should, while we live, be conscious in the self and its silence and yet act with power in the world of Nature. And it gives the example of the Divine himself who is not bound by necessity of birth, but free, superior to the cosmos, and yet abides eternally in action, *varta eva ca karmaṇi*. Therefore it is by putting on a likeness of the divine nature in its completeness that the unity of this double experience becomes entirely possible. But what is the principle of that oneness?

---

[2] *Kena Upanishad*.

[3] *Chhandogya Upanishad*: Verily all this that is is the Brahman.

[4] *Mandukya Upanishad*: The Self is the Brahman.

[5] *Isha Upanishad*.

The Gita finds it in its supreme vision of the Purushottama; for that is the type, according to its doctrine, of the complete and the highest experience, it is the knowledge of the whole-knowers, *kṛtsnavidaḥ*. The Akshara is *para*, supreme in relation to the elements and action of cosmic Nature. It is the immutable Self of all, and the immutable Self of all is the Purushottama. The Akshara is he in the freedom of his self-existence unaffected by the action of his own power in Nature, not impinged on by the urge of his own becoming, undisturbed by the play of his own qualities. But this is only one aspect though a great aspect of the integral knowledge. The Purushottama is at the same time greater than the Akshara, because he is more than this immutability and he is not limited even by the highest eternal status of his being, *paraṁ* *dhāma*. Still, it is through whatever is immutable and eternal in us that we arrive at that highest status from which there is no returning to birth, and that was the liberation which was sought by the wise of old, the ancient sages. But when pursued through the Akshara alone, this attempt at liberation becomes the seeking of the Indefinable, a thing hard for our nature embodied as we are here in Matter. The Indefinable, to which the Akshara, the pure intangible self here in us rises in its separative urge, is some supreme Unmanifest, *paro avyaktaḥ*, and that highest unmanifest Akshara is still the Purushottama. Therefore, the Gita has said, those also who follow after the Indefinable, come to me, the eternal Godhead. But yet is he more even than a highest unmanifest Akshara, more than any negative Absolute, *neti neti*, because he is to be known also as the supreme Purusha who extends this whole universe in his own existence. He is a supreme mysterious All, an ineffable positive Absolute of all things here. He is the Lord in the Kshara, Purushottama not only there, but here in the heart of every creature, Ishwara. And there too even in his highest eternal status, *paro avyaktaḥ*, he is the supreme Lord, Parameshwara, no aloof and unrelated Indefinable, but the origin and father and mother and first foundation and eternal abode of self and cosmos and Master of all existences and enjoyer of askesis and sacrifice. It is by knowing him at once in the Akshara and the Kshara, it is by knowing him as the Unborn who partially manifests himself in all birth and even himself descends as the constant Avatar, it is by knowing him in his entirety, *samagraṁ mām*, that the soul is easily released from the appearances of the lower Nature and returns by a vast sudden growth and broad immeasurable ascension into the divine being and supreme Nature. For the truth of the Kshara too is a truth of the Purushottama. The Purushottama is in the heart of every creature and is manifested in his countless Vibhutis; the Purushottama is the cosmic spirit in Time and it is he that gives the command to the divine action of the liberated human spirit. He is both Akshara and Kshara, and yet he is other because he is more and greater than either of these opposites. *Uttamaḥ puruṣas tvanyaḥ paramātmetyudāhṛtaḥ*, *yo lokatrayam āviśya* *bibhartyavyaya īśvaraḥ*, "But other than these two is that highest spirit called the supreme Self, who enters the three worlds and upbears them, the imperishable Lord." This verse is the keyword of the Gita's reconciliation of these two apparently opposite aspects of our existence.

The idea of the Purushottama has been prepared, alluded to, adumbrated, assumed even from the beginning, but it is only now in the fifteenth chapter that it is expressly stated and the distinction illuminated by a name. And it is instructive to see how it is immediately approached and developed. To ascend into the divine nature, we have been told, one must first fix oneself in a perfect spiritual equality and rise above the lower nature of the three gunas. Thus transcending the lower Prakriti we fix ourselves in the impersonality, the imperturbable superiority to all action, the purity from all definition and limitation by quality which is one side of the manifested nature of the Purushottama, his manifestation as the eternity and unity of the self, the Akshara. But there is also an ineffable eternal multiplicity of the Purushottama, a highest truest truth behind the primal mystery of soul manifestation. The Infinite has an eternal power, an unbeginning and unending action of his divine Nature, and in that action the miracle of soul personality emerges from a play of apparently impersonal forces, *prakṛtir jīvabhūtā*. This is possible because personality too is a character of the Divine and finds in the Infinite its highest spiritual truth and meaning. But the Person in the Infinite is not the egoistic, separative, oblivious personality of the lower Prakriti; it is something exalted, universal and transcendent, immortal and divine. That mystery of the supreme Person is the secret of love and devotion. The spiritual person, *puruṣa*, the eternal soul in us offers itself and all it has and is to the eternal Divine, the supreme Person and Godhead of whom it is a portion, *aṁśa*. The completeness of knowledge finds itself in this self-offering, this uplifting of our personal nature by love and adoration to the ineffable Master of our personality and its acts; the sacrifice of works receives by it its consummation and perfect sanction. It is then through these things that the soul of man fulfils itself most completely in this other and dynamic secret, this other great and intimate aspect of the divine nature and possesses by that fulfilment the foundation of immortality, the supreme felicity and the eternal Dharma. And having so stated this double requisite, equality in the one self, adoration of the one Lord, at first separately as if they were two different ways of arriving at the Brahmic status, *brahmabhūyāya*, — one taking the form of quietistic *sannyāsa*, the other a form of divine love and divine action, — the Gita proceeds now to unite the personal and the impersonal in the Purushottama and to define their relations. For the object of the Gita is to get rid of exclusions and separative exaggerations and fuse these two sides of knowledge and spiritual experience into a single and perfect way to the supreme perfection.

First there comes a description of cosmic existence in the Vedantic image of the aswattha tree. This tree of cosmic existence has no beginning and no end, *nānto na cādiḥ*, in space or in time; for it is eternal and imperishable, *avyaya*. The real form of it cannot be perceived by us in this material world of man's embodiment, nor has it any apparent lasting foundation here; it is an infinite movement and its foundation is above in the supreme of the Infinite. Its principle is the ancient sempiternal urge to action, *pravṛtti*, which for ever proceeds without beginning or end from the original Soul of all existence, *ādyaṁ puruṣaṁ yataḥ pravṛttiḥ prasṛtā purāṇī*. Therefore its original source is above, beyond Time in the Eternal, but its branches stretch down below and it extends and plunges its other roots, well-fixed and clinging roots of attachment and desire with their consequences of more and more desire and an endlessly developing action, plunges them downward here into the world of men. The hymns of the Veda are compared to its leaves and the man who knows this tree of the cosmos is the Veda-knower. And here we see the sense of that rather disparaging view of the Veda or at least of the Vedavada, which we had to notice at the beginning. For the knowledge the Veda gives us is a knowledge of the gods, of the principles and powers of the cosmos, and its fruits are the fruits of a sacrifice which is offered with desire, fruits of enjoyment and lordship in the nature of the three worlds, in earth and heaven and the world between earth and heaven. The branches of this cosmic tree extend both below and above, below in the material, above in the supraphysical planes; they grow by the gunas of Nature, for the triple guna is all the subject of the Vedas, *traiguṇya-viṣayā vedāḥ*. The Vedic rhythms, *chandāṁsi*, are the leaves and the sensible objects of desire supremely gained by a right doing of sacrifice are the constant budding of the foliage. Man, therefore, so long as he enjoys the play of the gunas and is attached to desire, is held in the coils of Pravritti, in the movement of birth and action, turns about constantly between the earth and the middle planes and the heavens and is unable to get back to his supreme spiritual infinitudes. This was perceived by the sages. To achieve liberation they followed the path of Nivritti or cessation from the original urge to action, and the consummation of this way is the cessation of birth itself and a transcendent status in the highest supracosmic reach of the Eternal. But for this purpose it is necessary to cut these long-fixed roots of desire by the strong sword of detachment and then to seek for that highest goal whence, once having reached it, there is no compulsion of return to mortal life. To be free from the bewilderment of this lower Maya, without egoism, the great fault of attachment conquered, all desires stilled, the duality of joy and grief cast away, always to be fixed in wide equality, always to be firm in a pure spiritual consciousness, these are the steps of the way to that supreme Infinite. There we find the timeless being which is not illumined by sun or moon or fire, but is itself the light of the presence of the eternal Purusha. I turn away, says the Vedantic verse, to seek that original Soul alone and to reach him in the great passage. That is the highest status of the Purushottama, his supracosmic existence.

But it would seem that this can be attained very well, best even, pre-eminently, directly, by the quiescence of Sannyasa. Its appointed path would seem to be the way of the Akshara, a complete renunciation of works and life, an ascetic seclusion, an ascetic inaction. Where is the room here, or at least where is the call, the necessity, for the command to action, and what has all this to do with the maintenance of the cosmic existence, *lokasaṅgraha*, the slaughter of Kurukshetra, the ways of the Spirit in Time, the vision of the million-bodied Lord and his high-voiced bidding, "Arise, slay the foe, enjoy a wealthy kingdom"? And what then is this soul in Nature? This spirit too, this Kshara, this enjoyer of our mutable existence, is the Purushottama; it is he in his eternal multiplicity, that is the Gita's answer. "It is an eternal portion of me that becomes the Jiva in a world of Jivas." This is an epithet, a statement of immense bearing and consequence. For it means that each soul, each being in its spiritual reality is the very Divine, however partial its actual manifestation of him in Nature. And it means too, if words have any sense, that each manifesting spirit, each of the many, is an eternal individual, an eternal unborn and undying power of the one Existence. We call this manifesting spirit the Jiva, because it appears here as if a living creature in a world of living creatures, and we speak of this spirit in man as the human soul and think of it in the terms of humanity only. But in truth it is something greater than its present appearance and not bound to its humanity: it was a lesser manifestation than the human in its past, it can become something much greater than mental man in its future. And when this soul rises above all ignorant limitation, then it puts on its divine nature of which its humanity is only a temporary veil, a thing of partial and incomplete significance. The individual spirit exists and ever existed beyond in the Eternal, for it is itself everlasting, *sanātana*. It is evidently this idea of the eternal individual which leads the Gita to avoid any expression at all suggestive of a complete dissolution, *laya*, and to speak rather of the highest state of the soul as a dwelling in the Purushottama, *nivasiṣyasi mayyeva*. If when speaking of the one Self of all it seems to use the language of Adwaita, yet this enduring truth of the eternal individual, *mamāṁśaḥ sanātanaḥ*, adds something which brings in a qualification and appears almost to accept the seeing of the Visishtadwaita,— though we must not therefore leap at once to the conclusion that that alone is the Gita's philosophy or that its doctrine is identical with the later doctrine of Ramanuja. Still this much is clear that there is an eternal, a real and not only an illusive principle of multiplicity in the spiritual being of the one divine Existence.

This eternal individual is not other than or in any way really separate from the Divine Purusha. It is the Lord himself, the Ishwara who by virtue of the eternal multiplicity of his oneness — is not all existence a rendering of that truth of the Infinite? — exists for ever as the immortal soul within us and has taken up this body and goes forth from the transient framework when it is cast away to disappear into the elements of Nature. He brings in with him and cultivates for the enjoyment of the objects of mind and sense the subjective powers of Prakriti, mind and the five senses, and in his going forth too he goes taking them as the wind takes the perfumes from a vase. But the identity of the Lord and the soul in mutable Nature is hidden from us by outward appearance and lost in the crowding mobile deceptions of that Nature. And those who allow themselves to be governed by the figures of Nature, the figure of humanity or any other form, will never see it, but will ignore and despise the Divine lodged in the human body. Their ignorance cannot perceive him in his coming in and his going forth or in his staying and enjoying and assumption of quality, but sees only what is there visible to the mind and senses, not the greater truth which can only be glimpsed by the eye of knowledge. Never can they have sight of him, even if they strive to do so, until they learn to put away the limitations of the outward consciousness and build in themselves their spiritual being, create for it, as it were, a form in their nature. Man, to know himself, must be *kṛtātmā*, formed and complete in the spiritual mould, enlightened in the spiritual vision. The Yogins who have this eye of knowledge, see the Divine Being we are in their own endless reality, their own eternity of spirit. Illumined, they see the Lord in themselves and are delivered from the crude material limitation, from the form of mental personality, from the transient life formulation: they dwell immortal in the truth of the self and spirit. But they see him too not only in themselves, but in all the cosmos. In the light of the sun that illumines all this world they witness the light of the Godhead which is in us; the light in the moon and in fire is the light of the Divine. It is the Divine who has entered into this form of earth and is the spirit of its material force and sustains by his might these multitudes. The Divine is the godhead of Soma who by the *rasa*, the sap in the Earth-mother, nourishes the plants and trees that clothe her surface. The Divine and no other is the flame of life that sustains the physical body of living creatures and turns its food into sustenance of their vital force. He is lodged in the heart of every breathing thing; from him are memory and knowledge and the debates of the reason. He is that which is known by all the Vedas and by all forms of knowing; he is the knower of Veda and the maker of Vedanta. In other words, the Divine is at once the Soul of matter and the Soul of life and the Soul of mind as well as the Soul of the supramental light that is beyond mind and its limited reasoning intelligence.

Thus the Divine is manifest in a double soul of his mystery, a twofold power, *dvāv imau puruṣau*; he supports at once the spirit of mutable things that is all these existences, *kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni*, and the immutable spirit that stands above them in his imperturbable immobility of eternal silence and calm. And it is by the force of the Divine in them that the mind and heart and will of man are so powerfully drawn in different directions by these two spirits as if by opposing and incompatible attractions one insistent to annul the other. But the Divine is neither wholly the Kshara, nor wholly the Akshara. He is greater than the immutable Self and he is much greater than the Soul of mutable things. If he is capable of being both at once, it is because he is other than they, *anyaḥ*, the Purushottama above all cosmos and yet extended in the world and extended in the Veda, in self-knowledge and in cosmic experience. And whoever thus knows and sees him as the Purushottama, is no longer bewildered whether by the world-appearance or by the separate attraction of these two apparent contraries. These at first confront each other here in him as a positive of the cosmic action and as its negative in the Self who has no part in an action that belongs or seems to belong entirely to the ignorance of Nature. Or again they challenge his consciousness as a positive of pure, indeterminable, stable, eternal self-existence and as its negative of a world of elusive determinations and relations, ideas and forms, perpetual unstable becoming and the creating and uncreating tangle of action and evolution, birth and death, appearance and disappearance. He embraces and escapes them, overcomes their opposition and becomes all-knowing, *sarvavid*, a whole-knower. He sees the entire sense both of the self and of things; he restores the integral reality of the Divine;[6] he unites the Kshara and the Akshara in the Purushottama. He loves, worships, cleaves to and adores the supreme Self of his and all existence, the one Lord of his and all energies, the close and far-off Eternal in and beyond the world. And he does this too with no single side or portion of himself, exclusive spiritualised mind, blinding light of the heart intense but divorced from largeness, or sole aspiration of the will in works, but in all the perfectly illumined ways of his being and his becoming, his soul and his nature. Divine in the equality of his imperturbable self-existence, one in it with all objects and creatures, he brings that boundless equality, that deep oneness down into his mind and heart and life and body and founds on it in an indivisible integrality the trinity of divine love, divine works and divine knowledge. This is the Gita's way of salvation.

And is that not too after all the real Adwaita which makes no least scission in the one eternal Existence? This utmost undividing Monism sees the one as the one even in the multiplicities of Nature, in all aspects, as much in the reality of self and of cosmos as in that greatest reality of the supracosmic which is the source of self and the truth of the cosmos and is not bound either by any affirmation of universal becoming or by any universal or absolute negation. That at least is the Adwaita of the Gita. This is the most secret Shastra, says the Teacher to Arjuna; this is the supreme teaching and science which leads us into the heart of the highest mystery of existence. Absolutely to know it, to seize it in knowledge and feeling and force and experience is to be perfected in the transformed understanding, divinely satisfied in heart and successful in the supreme sense and objective of all will and action and works. It is the way to be immortal, to rise towards the highest divine nature and to assume the eternal Dharma.

---

[6] *samagraṁ mām.*

XVI

The Fullness of Spiritual Action

THE DEVELOPMENT of the idea of the Gita has reached a point at which one question alone remains for solution, — the question of our nature bound and defective and how it is to effect, not only in principle but in all its movements, its evolution from the lower to the higher being and from the law of its present action to the immortal Dharma. The difficulty is one which is implied in certain of the positions laid down in the Gita, but has to be brought out into greater prominence than it gets there and to be put into a clearer shape before our intelligence. The Gita proceeded on a psychological knowledge which was familiar to the mind of the time, and in the steps of its thought it was well able to abridge its transitions, to take much for granted and to leave many things unexpressed which we need to have put strongly into light and made precise to us. Its teaching sets out at the beginning to propose a new source and level for our action in the world; that was the starting-point and that motives also the conclusion. Its initial object was not precisely to propose a way of liberation, *mokṣa*, but rather to show the compatibility of works with the soul's effort towards liberation and of spiritual freedom itself when once attained with continued action in the world, *muktasya karma*. Incidentally, a synthetic Yoga or psychological method of arriving at spiritual liberation and perfection has been developed and certain metaphysical affirmations have been put forward, certain truths of our being and nature on which the validity of this Yoga reposes. But the original preoccupation remains throughout, the original difficulty and problem, how Arjuna, dislodged by a strong revulsion of thought and feeling from the established natural and rational foundations and standards of action, is to find a new and satisfying spiritual norm of works, or how he is to live in the truth of the Spirit — since he can no longer act according to the partial truths of the customary reason and nature of man — and yet to do his appointed work on the battle-field of Kurukshetra. To live inwardly calm, detached, silent in the silence of the impersonal and universal Self and yet do dynamically the works of dynamic Nature, and more largely, to be one with the Eternal within us and to do all the will of the Eternal in the world expressed through a sublimated force, a divine height of the personal nature uplifted, liberated, universalised, made one with God-nature, — this is the Gita's solution.

Let us see what this comes to in the most plain and positive terms and from the standpoint of the problem which is at the root of Arjuna's difficulty and refusal. His duty as a human being and a social being is the discharge of the high function of the Kshatriya without which the frame of society cannot be maintained, the ideals of the race cannot be vindicated, the harmonious order of right and justice cannot be upheld against the anarchic violence of oppression, wrong and injustice. And yet the appeal to duty by itself can no longer satisfy the protagonist of the struggle because in the terrible actuality of Kurukshetra it presents itself in harsh, perplexed and ambiguous terms. The discharge of his social duty has suddenly come to signify assent to an enormous result of sin and sorrow and suffering; the customary means of maintaining social order and justice is found to lead instead to a great disorder and chaos. The rule of just claim and interest, that which we call rights, will not serve him here; for the kingdom he has to win for himself and his brothers and his side in the war is indeed rightly theirs and its assertion an overthrow of Asuric tyranny and a vindication of justice, but a blood-bespattered justice and a kingdom possessed in sorrow and with the stain on it of a great sin, a monstrous harm done to society, a veritable crime against the race. Nor will the rule of Dharma, of ethical right, serve any better; for there is here a conflict of dharmas. A new and greater yet unguessed rule is needed to solve the problem, but what is that rule?

For to withdraw from his work, to take refuge in a saintly inactivity and leave the imperfect world with its unsatisfying methods and motives to take care of itself is one possible solution easy to envisage, easy to execute, but this is the very cutting of the knot that has been insistently forbidden by the Teacher. Action is demanded of man by the Master of the world who is the master of all his works and whose world is a field of action, whether done through the ego and in the ignorance or partial light of the limited human reason or initiated from a higher and more largely seeing plane of vision and motive. Again, to abandon this particular action as evil would be another kind of solution, the ready resort of the shortsighted moralising mind, but to this evasion too the Teacher refuses his assent. Arjuna's abstention would work a much greater sin and evil: it would mean, if it had any effect at all, the triumph of wrong and injustice and the rejection of his own mission as an instrument of the divine workings. A violent crisis in the destinies of the race has been brought about not by any blind motion of forces or solely by the confused clash of human ideas, interests, passions, egoisms, but by a Will which is behind these outward appearances. This truth Arjuna must be brought to see; he must learn to act impersonally, imperturbably as the instrument not of his little personal desires and weak human shrinkings, but of a vaster and more luminous Power, a greater all-wise divine and universal Will. He must act impersonally and universally in a high union of his soul with the inner and outer Godhead, *yukta*, in a calm Yoga with his own supreme Self and the informing Self of the universe.

But this truth cannot be rightly seen and this kind of action cannot be rightly undertaken, cannot become real as long as man is governed by the ego, even by the half-enlightened unillumined sattwic ego of the reason and the mental intelligence. For this is a truth of the spirit, this is an action from a spiritual basis. A spiritual, not an intellectual knowledge is the indispensable requisite for this way of works, its sole possible light, medium, incentive. First, therefore, the Teacher points out that all these ideas and feelings which trouble, perplex and baffle Arjuna, joy and sorrow, desire and sin, the mind's turn towards governing action by the outward results of action, the human shrinking from what seems terrible and formidable in the dealings of the universal Spirit with the world, are things born of the subjection of our consciousness to a natural ignorance, the way of working of a lower nature in which the soul is involved and sees itself as a separate ego returning to the action of things upon it dual reactions of pain and pleasure, virtue and vice, right and wrong, good happening and evil fortune. These reactions create a tangled web of perplexity in which the soul is lost and bewildered by its own ignorance; it has to guide itself by partial and imperfect solutions that serve ordinarily with a stumbling sufficiency in the normal life, but fail when brought to the test of a wider seeing and a profounder experience. To understand the real sense of action and existence one must retreat behind all these appearances into the truth of the spirit; one must found self-knowledge before one can have the basis of a right world-knowledge.

The first requisite is to shake the wings of the soul free from desire and passion and troubling emotion and all this perturbed and distorting atmosphere of human mind and arrive into an ether of dispassionate equality, a heaven of impersonal calm, an egoless feeling and vision of things. For only in that lucid upper air, reaches free from all storm and cloud, can self-knowledge come and the law of the world and the truth of Nature be seen steadily and with an embracing eye and in an undisturbed and all-comprehending and all-penetrating light. Behind this little personality which is a helpless instrument, a passive or vainly resistant puppet of Nature and a form figured in her creations, there is an impersonal self one in all which sees and knows all things; there is an equal, impartial, universal presence and support of creation, a witnessing consciousness that suffers Nature to work out the becoming of things in their own type, *svabhāva*, but does not involve and lose itself in the action she initiates. To draw back from the ego and the troubled personality into this calm, equal, eternal, universal, impersonal Self is the first step towards a seeing action in Yoga done in conscious union with the divine Being and the infallible Will that, however obscure now to us, manifests itself in the universe.

When we live tranquilly poised in this self of impersonal wideness, then because that is vast, calm, quiescent, impersonal, our other little false self, our ego of action disappears into its largeness and we see that it is Nature that acts and not we, that all action is the action of Nature and can be nothing else. And this thing we call Nature is a universal executive Power of eternal being in motion which takes different shapes and forms in this or that class of its creatures and in each individual of the species according to its type of natural existence and the resultant function and law of its works. According to its nature each creature must act and it cannot act by anything else. Ego and personal will and desire are nothing more than vividly conscious forms and limited natural workings of a universal Force that is itself formless and infinite and far exceeds them; reason and intelligence and mind and sense and life and body, all that we vaunt or take for our own, are Nature's instruments and creations. But the impersonal Self does not act and is not part of Nature: it observes the action from behind and above and remains lord of itself and a free and impassive knower and witness. The soul that lives in this impersonality is not affected by the actions of which our nature is an instrument; it does not reply to them or their effects by grief and joy, desire and shrinking, attraction and repulsion or any of the hundred dualities that draw and shake and afflict us. It regards all men and all things and all happenings with equal eyes, watches the modes or qualities of Nature acting on the modes or qualities, sees the whole secret of the mechanism, but is itself beyond these modes and qualities, a pure absolute essential being, impassive, free, at peace. Nature works out her action and the soul impersonal and universal supports her but is not involved, is not attached, is not entangled, is not troubled, is not bewildered. If we can live in this equal self, we too are at peace; our works continue so long as Nature's impulsion prolongs itself in our instruments, but there is a spiritual freedom and quiescence.

This duality of Self and Nature, quiescent Purusha, active Prakriti, is not, however, the whole of our being; these are not really the two last words in the matter. If it were so, either all works would be quite indifferent to the soul and this or that action or refraining from action would take place by some ungoverned turn of the mobile variations of the gunas, — Arjuna would be moved to battle by rajasic impulse in the instruments or withheld from it by tamasic inertia or sattwic indifference, — or else, if it so is that he must act and act only in this way, it would be by some mechanical determinism of Nature. Moreover, since the soul in its retreat would come to live in the impersonal quiescent Self and cease to live at all in active Nature, the final result would be quiescence, cessation, inertia, not the action imposed by the Gita. And, finally, this duality gives no real explanation why the soul is at all called to involve itself in Nature and her works; for it cannot be that the one ever uninvolved self-conscient spirit gets itself involved and loses its self-knowledge and has to return to that knowledge. This pure Self, this Atman is on the contrary always there, always the same, always the one self-conscient impersonal aloof Witness or impartial supporter of the action. It is this lacuna, this impossible vacuum that compels us to suppose two Purushas or two poses of the one Purusha, one secret in the Self that observes all from its self-existence — or perhaps observes nothing, another self-projected into Nature that lends itself to her action and identifies itself with her creations. But even this dualism of Self and Prakriti or Maya corrected by the dualism of the two Purushas is not the whole philosophic creed of the Gita. It goes beyond them to the supreme all-embracing oneness of a highest Purusha, Purushottama.

The Gita affirms that there is a supreme Mystery, a highest Reality that upholds and reconciles the truth of these two different manifestations. There is an utmost supreme Self, Lord and Brahman, one who is both the impersonal and the personal, but other and greater than either of them and other and greater than both of them together. He is Purusha, Self and soul of our being, but he is also Prakriti; for Prakriti is the power of the All-Soul, the power of the Eternal and Infinite self-moved to action and creation. The supreme Ineffable, the universal Person, he becomes by his Prakriti all these creatures. The supreme Atman and Brahman, he manifests by his Maya of self-knowledge and his Maya of ignorance the double truth of the cosmic riddle. The supreme Lord, master of his Force, his Shakti, he creates, impels and governs all this Nature and all the personality, power and works of these innumerable existences. Each soul is a partial being of this self-existent One, an eternal soul of this All-Soul, a partial manifestation of this supreme Lord and his universal Nature. All here is this Divine, this Godhead, Vasudeva; for by Nature and the soul in Nature he becomes all that is and everything proceeds from him and lives in or by him, though he himself is greater than any widest manifestation, any deepest spirit, any cosmic figure. This is the complete truth of existence and this all the secret of the universal action that we have seen disengaging itself from the later chapters of the Gita.

But how does this greater truth modify or how affect the principle of spiritual action? It modifies it to begin with in this fundamental matter that the whole meaning of the relation of Self and soul and Nature gets changed, opens out to a new vision, fills in the blanks that were left, acquires a greater amplitude, assumes a true and spiritually positive, a flawlessly integral significance. The world is no longer a purely mechanical qualitative action and determination of Nature set over against the quiescence of an impersonal self-existence which has no quality or power of self-determination, no ability or impulse to create. The chasm left by this unsatisfactory dualism is bridged and an uplifting unity revealed between knowledge and works, the soul and Nature. The quiescent impersonal Self is a truth, — it is the truth of the calm of the Godhead, the silence of the Eternal, the freedom of the Lord of all birth and becoming and action and creation, his calm infinite freedom of self-existence not bound, troubled or affected by his creation, not touched by the action and reaction of his Nature. Nature itself is now no inexplicable illusion, no separated and opposite phenomenon, but a movement of the Eternal, all her stir and activity and multiplicity founded and supported on the detached and observing tranquillity of an immutable self and spirit. The Lord of Nature remains that immutable self even while he is at the same time the one and multiple soul of the universe and becomes in a partial manifestation all these forces, powers, consciousnesses, gods, animals, things, men. Nature of the gunas is a lower self-limited action of his power; it is nature of imperfectly conscious manifestation and therefore of a certain ignorance. The truth of the self, even as the truth of the Divine, is held back from her surface force absorbed here in its outer action — much as man's deeper being is held back from the knowledge of his surface consciousness — until the soul in her turns to find out this hidden thing, gets inside itself and discovers its own real verities, its heights and its depths. That is why it has to draw back from its little personal and egoistic to its large and impersonal, immutable and universal Self in order to become capable of self-knowledge. But the Lord is there, not only in that self, but in Nature. He is in the heart of every creature and guides by his presence the turnings of this great natural mechanism. He is present in all, all lives in him, all is himself because all is a becoming of his being, a portion or a figure of his existence. But all proceeds here in a lower partial working that has come out of a secret, a higher and greater and completer nature of Divinity, the eternal infinite nature or absolute self-power of the Godhead, *devātmaśakti*. The perfect, integrally conscious soul hidden in man, an eternal portion of Deity, a spiritual being of the eternal Divine Being, can open in us and can too open us to him if we live constantly in this true truth of his action and our existence. The seeker of Godhead has to get back to the reality of his immutable and eternal impersonal self and at the same time he has to see everywhere the Divine from whom he proceeds, to see him as all, to see him in the whole of this mutable Nature and in every part and result of her and in all her workings, and there too to make himself one with God, there too to live in him, to enter there too into the divine oneness. He unites in that integrality the divine calm and freedom of his deep essential existence with a supreme power of instrumental action in his divinised self of Nature.

But how is this to be done? It can be done first by a right spirit in our will of works. The seeker has to regard all his action as a sacrifice to the Lord of works who is the eternal and universal Being and his own highest Self and the Self of all others and the supreme all-inhabiting, all-containing, all-governing

Godhead in the universe. The whole action of Nature is such a sacrifice, — offered at first indeed to the divine Powers that move her and move in her, but these powers are only limited forms and names of the One and Illimitable. Man ordinarily offers his sacrifice openly or under a disguise to his own ego; his oblation is the false action of his own self-will and ignorance. Or he offers his knowledge, action, aspiration, works of energy and effort to the gods for partial, temporal and personal aims. The man of knowledge, the liberated soul offers on the contrary all his activities to the one eternal Godhead without any attachment to their fruit or to the satisfaction of his lower personal desires. He works for God, not for himself, for the universal welfare, for the Soul of the world and not for any particular object which is of his own personal creation or for any construction of his mental will or object of his vital longings, as a divine agent, not as a principal and separate profiteer in the world-commerce. And this, it must be noted, is a thing that cannot be really done except in proportion as the mind arrives at equality, universality, wide impersonality, and a clear freedom from every disguise of the insistent ego: for without these things the claim to be thus acting is a pretension or an illusion. The whole action of the world is the business of the Lord of the universe, the concern of the self-existent Spirit of whom it is the unceasing creation, the progressive becoming, the significant manifestation and living symbol in Nature. The fruits are his, the results are those determined by him and our personal action is only a minor contribution ruled or overruled, so far as its motive is an egoistic claim, by this Self and Spirit in us who is the Self and Spirit in all and governs things for the universal end and good and not for the sake of our ego. To work impersonally, desirelessly and without attachment to the fruits of our work, for the sake of God and the world and the greater Self and the fulfilment of the universal will, — this is the first step towards liberation and perfection.

But beyond this step there lies that other greater motion, the inner surrender of all our actions to the Divinity within us. For it is infinite Nature that impels our works and a divine

Will in and above her that demands action of us; the choice and turn our ego gives to it is a contribution of our tamasic, rajasic, sattwic quality, a deformation in the lower Nature. The deformation comes by the ego thinking of itself as the doer; the character of the act takes the form of the limited personal nature and the soul is bound up with that and its narrow figures and does not allow the act to proceed freely and purely from the infinite power within it. And the ego is chained to the act and its outcome; it must suffer the personal consequence and reaction even as it claims the responsible origination and personal will of the doing. The free perfect working comes first by referring and finally by surrendering altogether the action and its origination to the divine Master of our existence; for we feel it progressively taken up by a supreme Presence within us, the soul drawn into deep intimacy and close unity with an inner Power and Godhead and the work originated directly from the greater Self, from the all-wise, infinite, universal force of an eternal being and not from the ignorance of the little personal ego. The action is chosen and shaped according to the nature, but entirely by the divine Will in the nature, and it is therefore free and perfect within, whatever its outward appearance; it comes stamped with the inward spiritual seal of the Infinite as the thing to be done, the movement and the step of the movement decreed in the ways of the omniscient Master of action, *kartavyaṁ karma*. The soul of the liberated man is free in its impersonality, even while he contributes to the action as its means and its occasion his instrumental personal self-creation and the special will and power in his nature. That will and power is now not separately, egoistically his own, but a force of the suprapersonal Divine who acts in this becoming of his own self, this one of his myriad personalities by means of the characteristic form of the natural being, the swabhava. This is the high secret and mystery, *uttamaṁ rahasyam*, of the action of the liberated man. It is the result of a growing of the human soul into a divine Light and of the union of its nature with a highest universal nature.

This change cannot come about except by knowledge. There is necessary a right knowledge of self and God and world and a living and growing into the greater consciousness to which that knowledge admits us. We know now what the knowledge is. It is sufficient to remember that it reposes on another and wider vision than the human mental, a changed vision and experience by which one is first of all liberated from the limitations of the ego sense and its contacts and feels and sees the one self in all, all in God, all beings as Vasudeva, all as vessels of the Godhead and one's self too as a significant being and soul-power of that one Godhead; it treats in a spiritual uniting consciousness all the happenings of the lives of others as if they were happenings of one's own life; it allows no wall of separation and lives in a universal sympathy with all existences, while amidst the world-movement one still does the work that has to be done for the good of all, *sarva-bhūta-hite*, according to the way appointed by the Divine and in the measures imposed by the command of the Spirit who is Master of Time. Thus living and acting in this knowledge the soul of man becomes united with the Eternal in personality and in impersonality, lives in the Eternal though acting in Time, even as the Eternal acts, and is free, perfect and blissful whatever may be the form and determination of the work done in Nature.

The liberated man has the complete and total knowledge, *kṛtsnavid*, and does all works without any of the restrictions made by the mind, *kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*, according to the force and freedom and infinite power of the divine will within him. And since he is united with the Eternal, he has too the pure spiritual and illimitable joy of his eternal existence. He turns with adoration to the Self of whom he is a portion, the Master of his works and divine Lover of his soul and nature. He is not an impassive calm spectator only; he lifts not only his knowledge and will to the Eternal, but his heart also of love and adoration and passion. For without that uplifting of the heart his whole nature is not fulfilled and united with God; the ecstasy of the spirit's calm needs to be transformed by the ecstasy of the soul's Ananda. Beyond the personal Jiva and the impersonal Brahman or Atman he reaches the supracosmic Purushottama who is immutable in impersonality and fulfils himself in personality and draws us to him through these two different attractions. The liberated seeker rises personally to that highest Numen by his soul's love and joy in God and the adoration of the will in him for the Master of its works; the peace and largeness of his impersonal universal knowledge is perfected by delight in the self-existent integral close and intimate reality of this surpassing and universal Godhead. This delight glorifies his knowledge and unites it with the eternal delight of the Spirit in its self and its manifestation; this perfects too his personality in the superperson of the divine Purusha and makes his natural being and action one with eternal beauty, eternal harmony, eternal love and Ananda.

But all this change means a total passing from the lower human to the higher divine nature. It is a lifting of our whole being or at least of the whole mental being that wills, knows and feels beyond what we are into some highest spiritual consciousness, some satisfying fullest power of existence, some deepest widest delight of the spirit. And this may well be possible by a transcendence of our present natural life, it may well be possible in some celestial state beyond the earthly existence or still beyond in a supracosmic superconscience; it may happen by transition to an absolute and infinite power and status of the Spirit. But while we are here in the body, here in life, here in action, what in this change becomes of the lower nature? For at present all our activities are determined in their trend and shape by the nature, and this Nature here is the nature of the three gunas, and in all natural being and in all natural activities there is the triple guna, tamas with its ignorance and inertia, rajas with its kinesis and action, its passion and grief and perversion, sattwa with its light and happiness, and the bondage of these things. And granted that the soul becomes superior in the self to the three gunas, how does it escape in its instrumental nature from their working and result and bondage? For even the man of knowledge, says the Gita, must act according to his nature. To feel and bear the reactions of the gunas in the outer manifestation, but to be free from them and superior in the observing conscious self behind is not sufficient; for it leaves still a dualism of freedom and subjection, a contradiction between what we are within and what we are without, between our self and our power, what we know ourselves to be and what we will and do. Where is the release here, where the full elevation and transformation to the higher spiritual nature, the immortal Dharma, the law proper to the infinite purity and power of a divine being? If this change cannot be effected while in the body, then so it must be said, that the whole nature cannot be transformed and there must remain an unreconciled duality until the mortal type of existence drops off like a discarded shell from the spirit. But in that case the gospel of works cannot well be the right or at least cannot be the ultimate gospel: a perfect quiescence or at least as perfect a quiescence as possible, a progressive Sannyasa and renunciation of works would seem still to be the true counsel of perfection, — as indeed the Mayavadin contends, who says that the Gita's way is no doubt the right way so long as we remain in action, but still all works are an illusion and quiescence the highest path. To act in this spirit is well, but only as a transition to a renunciation of all works, to cessation, to an absolute quiescence.

This is the difficulty which the Gita has still to meet in order to justify works to the seeker after the Spirit. Otherwise it must say to Arjuna, "Act temporarily in this fashion, but afterwards seek the higher way of renunciation of works." But on the contrary it has said that not the cessation of works, but renunciation of desire is the better way; it has spoken of the action of the liberated man, *muktasya karma*. It has even insisted on doing all actions, *sarvāṇi karmāṇi*, *kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*; it has said that in whatever way the perfected Yogin lives and acts, he lives and acts in God. This can only be, if the nature also in its dynamics and workings becomes divine, a power imperturbable, intangible, inviolate, pure and untroubled by the reactions of the inferior Prakriti. How and by what steps is this most difficult transformation to be effected? What is this last secret of the soul's perfection? what the principle or the process of this transmutation of our human and earthly nature?

XVII

Deva and Asura[1]

THE PRACTICAL difficulty of the change from the ignorant and shackled normal nature of man to the dynamic freedom of a divine and spiritual being will be apparent if we ask ourselves, more narrowly, how the transition can be effected from the fettered embarrassed functioning of the three qualities to the infinite action of the liberated man who is no longer subject to the gunas. The transition is indispensable; for it is clearly laid down that he must be above or else without the three gunas, *triguṇātīta*, *nistraiguṇya*. On the other hand it is no less clearly, no less emphatically laid down that in every natural existence here on earth the three gunas are there in their inextricable working and it is even said that all action of man or creature or force is merely the action of these three modes upon each other, a functioning in which one or other predominates and the rest modify its operation and results, *guṇā guṇeṣu vartante*. How then can there be another dynamic and kinetic nature or any other kind of works? To act is to be subject to the three qualities of Nature; to be beyond these conditions of her working is to be silent in the Spirit. The Ishwara, the Supreme who is master of all her works and functions and guides and determines them by his divine will, is indeed above this mechanism of quality, not touched or limited by her modes, but still it would seem that he acts always through them, always shapes by the power of the swabhava and through the psychological machinery of the gunas. These three are fundamental properties of Prakriti, necessary operations of the executive Nature-force which takes shape here in us, and the Jiva himself is only a portion of the Divine in this Prakriti. If then the liberated man still does works, still moves in the kinetic movement, it must be so that he moves and acts, in Nature and by the limitation of her qualities, subject to their reactions, not, in so far as the natural part of him persists, in the freedom of the Divine. But the Gita has said exactly the opposite, that the liberated Yogin is delivered from the guna reactions and whatever he does, however he lives, moves and acts in God, in the power of his freedom and immortality, in the law of the supreme eternal Infinite, *sarvathā vartamāno'pi sa yogī mayi vartate*. There seems here to be a contradiction, an impasse.

---

[1] Gita, XVI.

But this is only when we knot ourselves up in the rigid logical oppositions of the analytic mind, not when we look freely and subtly at the nature of spirit and at the spirit in Nature. What moves the world is not really the modes of Prakriti, — these are only the lower aspect, the mechanism of our normal nature. The real motive power is a divine spiritual Will which uses at present these inferior conditions, but is itself not limited, not dominated, not mechanised, as is the human will, by the gunas. No doubt, since these modes are so universal in their action, they must proceed from something inherent in the power of the Spirit; there must be powers in the divine Will-force from which these aspects of Prakriti have their origin. For everything in the lower normal nature is derived from the higher spiritual power of being of the Purushottama, *mattaḥ pravartate*; it does not come into being *de novo* and without a spiritual cause. Something in the essential power of the spirit there must be from which the sattwic light and satisfaction, the rajasic kinesis, the tamasic inertia of our nature are derivations and of which they are the imperfect or degraded forms. But once we get back to these sources in their purity above this imperfection and degradation of them in which we live, we shall find that these motions put on a quite different aspect as soon as we begin to live in the spirit. Being and action and the modes of being and action become altogether different things, far above their present limited appearance.

For what is behind this troubled kinesis of the cosmos with all its clash and struggle? What is it that when it touches the mind, when it puts on mental values, creates the reactions of desire, striving, straining, error of will, sorrow, sin, pain? It is a will of the spirit in movement, it is a large divine will in action which is not touched by these things; it is a power[2] of the free and infinite conscious Godhead which has no desire because it exercises a universal possession and a spontaneous Ananda of its movements. Wearied by no striving and straining, it enjoys a free mastery of its means and its objects; misled by no error of the will, it holds a knowledge of self and things which is the source of its mastery and its Ananda; overcome by no sorrow, sin or pain, it has the joy and purity of its being and the joy and purity of its power. The soul that lives in God acts by this spiritual will and not by the normal will of the unliberated mind: its kinesis takes place by this spiritual force and not by the rajasic mode of Nature, precisely because it no longer lives in the lower movement to which that deformation belongs, but has got back in the divine nature to the pure and perfect sense of the kinesis.

And again what is behind the inertia of Nature, behind this Tamas which, when complete, makes her action like the blind driving of a machine, a mechanical impetus unobservant of anything except the groove in which it is set to spin and not conscious even of the law of that motion, — this Tamas that turns cessation of the accustomed action into death and disintegration and becomes in the mind a power for inaction and ignorance? This tamas is an obscurity which mistranslates, we may say, into inaction of power and inaction of knowledge the Spirit's eternal principle of calm and repose — the repose which the Divine never loses even while he acts, the eternal repose which supports his integral action of knowledge and the force of his creative will both there in its own infinities and here in an apparent limitation of its working and self-awareness. The peace of the Godhead is not a disintegration of energy or a vacant inertia; it would keep all that Infinity has known and done gathered up and concentratedly conscious in an omnipotent silence even if the Power everywhere ceased for a time actively to know and create. The Eternal does not need to sleep or rest; he does not get tired and flag; he has no need of a pause to refresh and recreate his exhausted energies; for his energy is inexhaustibly the same, indefatigable and infinite. The Godhead is calm and at rest in the midst of his action; and on the other hand his very cessation of action would retain in it the full power and all the potentialities of his kinesis. The liberated soul enters into this calm and participates in the eternal repose of the spirit. This is known to everyone who has had any taste at all of the joy of liberation, that it contains an eternal power of calm. And that profound tranquillity can remain in the very heart of action, can persevere in the most violent motion of forces. There may be an impetuous flood of thought, doing, will, movement, an overflowing rush of love, the emotion of the self-existent spiritual ecstasy at its strongest intensity, and that may extend itself to a fiery and forceful spiritual enjoyment of things and beings in the world and in the ways of Nature, and yet this tranquillity and repose would be behind the surge and in it, always conscious of its depths, always the same. The calm of the liberated man is not an indolence, incapacity, insensibility, inertia; it is full of immortal power, capable of all action, attuned to deepest delight, open to profoundest love and compassion and to every manner of intensest Ananda.

---

[2] *tapas*, *cit-śakti*.

And so too beyond the inferior light and happiness of that purest quality of Nature, Sattwa, the power that makes for assimilation and equivalence, right knowledge and right dealing, fine harmony, firm balance, right law of action, right possession and brings so full a satisfaction to the mind, beyond this highest thing in the normal nature, admirable in itself so far as it goes and while it can be maintained, but precarious, secured by limitation, dependent on rule and condition, there is at its high and distant source a greater light and bliss free in the free spirit. That is not limited nor dependent on limitation or rule or condition but self-existent and unalterable, not the result of this or that harmony amid the discords of our nature but the fount of harmony and able to create whatever harmony it will. That is a luminous spiritual and in its native action a direct supramental force of knowledge, *jyotiḥ*, not our modified and derivative mental light, *prakāśa*. That is the light and bliss of widest self-existence, spontaneous self-knowledge, intimate universal identity, deepest self-interchange, not of acquisition, assimilation, adjustment and laboured equivalence. That light is full of a luminous spiritual will and there is no gulf or disparateness between its knowledge and its action. That delight is not our paler mental happiness, *sukham*, but a profound concentrated intense self-existent bliss extended to all that our being does, envisages, creates, a fixed divine rapture, Ananda. The liberated soul participates more and more profoundly in this light and bliss and grows the more perfectly into it, the more integrally it unites itself with the Divine. And while among the gunas of the lower Nature there is a necessary disequilibrium, a shifting inconstancy of measures and a perpetual struggle for domination, the greater light and bliss, calm, will of kinesis of the Spirit do not exclude each other, are not at war, are not even merely in equilibrium, but each an aspect of the two others and in their fullness all are inseparable and one. Our mind when it approaches the Divine may seem to enter into one to the exclusion of another, may appear for instance to achieve calm to the exclusion of kinesis of action, but that is because we approach him first through the selecting spirit in the mind. Afterwards when we are able to rise above even the spiritual mind, we can see that each divine power contains all the rest and can get rid of this initial error.[3]

We see then that action is possible without the subjection of the soul to the normal degraded functioning of the modes of Nature. That functioning depends on the mental, vital and physical limitation into which we are cast; it is a deformation, an incapacity, a wrong or depressed value imposed on us by the mind and life in matter. When we grow into the spirit, this dharma or inferior law of Nature is replaced by the immortal dharma of the spirit; there is the experience of a free immortal action, a divine illimitable knowledge, a transcendent power, an unfathomable repose. But still there remains the question of the transition; for there must be a transition, a proceeding by steps, since nothing in God's workings in this world is done by an abrupt action without procedure or basis. We have the thing we seek in us, but we have in practice to evolve it out of the inferior forms of our nature.[4] Therefore in the action of the modes itself there must be some means, some leverage, some *point d'appui*, by which we can effect this transformation. The Gita finds it in the full development of the sattwic guna till that in its potent expansion reaches a point at which it can go beyond itself and disappear into its source. The reason is evident, because sattwa is a power of light and happiness, a force that makes for calm and knowledge, and at its highest point it can arrive at a certain reflection, almost a mental identity with the spiritual light and bliss from which it derives. The other two gunas cannot get this transformation, rajas into the divine kinetic will or tamas into the divine repose and calm, without the intervention of the sattwic power in Nature. The principle of inertia will always remain an inert inaction of power or an incapacity of knowledge until its ignorance disappears in illumination and its torpid incapacity is lost in the light and force of the omnipotent divine will of repose. Then only can we have the supreme calm. Therefore tamas must be dominated by sattwa. The principle of rajas for the same reason must remain always a restless, troubled, feverish or unhappy working because it has not right knowledge; its native movement is a wrong and perverse action, perverse through ignorance. Our will must purify itself by knowledge; it must get more and more to a right and luminously informed action before it can be converted into the divine kinetic will. That again means the necessity of the intervention of sattwa. The sattwic quality is a first mediator between the higher and the lower nature. It must indeed at a certain point transform or escape from itself and break up and dissolve into its source; its conditioned derivative seeking light and carefully constructed action must change into the free direct dynamics and spontaneous light of the spirit. But meanwhile a high increase of sattwic power delivers us largely from the tamasic and the rajasic disqualification; and its own disqualification, once we are not pulled too much downward by rajas and tamas, can be surmounted with a greater ease. To develop sattwa till it becomes full of spiritual light and calm and happiness is the first condition of this preparatory discipline of the nature.

---

[3] The account given here of the supreme spiritual and supramental forms of highest Nature action corresponding to the gunas is not derived from the Gita, but introduced from spiritual experience. The Gita does not describe in any detail the action of the highest Nature, *rahasyam uttamam*; it leaves that for the seeker to discover by his own spiritual experience. It only points out the nature of the high sattwic temperament and action through which this supreme mystery has to be reached and insists at the same time on the overpassing of Sattwa and transcendence of the three gunas.

---

[4] This is from the point of view of our nature ascending upwards by self-conquest, effort and discipline. There must also intervene more and more a descent of the divine Light, Presence and Power into the being to transform it; otherwise the change at the point of culmination and beyond it cannot take place. That is why there comes in as the last movement the necessity of an absolute self-surrender.

That, we shall find, is the whole intention of the remaining chapters of the Gita. But first it prefaces the consideration of this enlightening movement by a distinction between two kinds of being, the Deva and the Asura; for the Deva is capable of a high self-transforming sattwic action, the Asura incapable. We must see what is the object of this preface and the precise bearing of this distinction. The general nature of all human beings is the same, it is a mixture of the three gunas; it would seem then that in all there must be the capacity to develop and strengthen the sattwic element and turn it upward towards the heights of the divine transformation. That our ordinary turn is actually towards making our reason and will the servants of our rajasic or tamasic egoism, the ministers of our restless and ill-balanced kinetic desire or our self-indulgent indolence and static inertia, can only be, one would imagine, a temporary characteristic of our undeveloped spiritual being, a rawness of its imperfect evolution and must disappear when our consciousness rises in the spiritual scale. But we actually see that men, at least men above a certain level, fall very largely into two classes, those who have a dominant force of sattwic nature turned towards knowledge, self-control, beneficence, perfection and those who have a dominant force of rajasic nature turned towards egoistic greatness, satisfaction of desire, the indulgence of their own strong will and personality which they seek to impose on the world, not for the service of man or God, but for their own pride, glory and pleasure. These are the human representatives of the Devas and Danavas or Asuras, the Gods and the Titans. This distinction is a very ancient one in Indian religious symbolism. The fundamental idea of the Rig Veda is a struggle between the Gods and their dark opponents, between the Masters of Light, sons of Infinity, and the children of Division and Night, a battle in which man takes part and which is reflected in all his inner life and action. This was also a fundamental principle of the religion of Zoroaster. The same idea is prominent in later literature. The Ramayana is in its ethical intention the parable of an enormous conflict between the Deva in human form and the incarnate Rakshasa, between the representative of a high culture and Dharma and a huge unbridled force and gigantic civilisation of the exaggerated Ego. The Mahabharata, of which the Gita is a section, takes for its subject a lifelong clash between human Devas and Asuras, the men of power, sons of the Gods, who are governed by the light of a high ethical Dharma and others who are embodied Titans, the men of power who are out for the service of their intellectual, vital and physical ego. The ancient mind, more open than ours to the truth of things behind the physical veil, saw behind the life of man great cosmic Powers or beings representative of certain turns or grades of the universal Shakti, divine, titanic, gigantic, demoniac, and men who strongly represented in themselves these types of nature were themselves considered as Devas, Asuras, Rakshasas, Pisachas. The Gita for its own purposes takes up this distinction and develops the difference between these two kinds of beings, *dvau bhūtasargau*. It has spoken previously of the nature which is Asuric and Rakshasic and obstructs God-knowledge, salvation and perfection; it now contrasts it with the Daivic nature which is turned to these things.

Arjuna, says the Teacher, is of the Deva nature. He need not grieve with the thought that by acceptance of battle and slaughter he will be yielding to the impulses of the Asura. The action on which all turns, the battle which Arjuna has to fight with the incarnate Godhead as his charioteer at the bidding of the Master of the world in the form of the Time-Spirit, is a struggle to establish the kingdom of the Dharma, the empire of Truth, Right and Justice. He himself is born in the Deva kind; he has developed in himself the sattwic being, until he has now come to a point at which he is capable of a high transformation and liberation from the *traiguṇya* and therefore even from the sattwic nature. The distinction between the Deva and the Asura is not comprehensive of all humanity, not rigidly applicable to all its individuals, neither is it sharp and definite in all stages of the moral or spiritual history of the race or in all phases of the individual evolution. The tamasic man who makes so large a part of the whole, falls into neither category as it is here described, though he may have both elements in him in a low degree and for the most part serves tepidly the lower qualities. The normal man is ordinarily a mixture; but one or the other tendency is more pronounced, tends to make him predominantly rajaso-tamasic or sattwo-rajasic and can be said to be preparing him for either culmination, for the divine clarity or the titanic turbulence. For here what is in question is a certain culmination in the evolution of the qualitative nature, as will be evident from the descriptions given in the text. On one side there can be a sublimation of the sattwic quality, the culmination or manifestation of the unborn Deva, on the other a sublimation of the rajasic turn of the soul in nature, the entire birth of the Asura. The one leads towards that movement of liberation on which the Gita is about to lay stress; it makes possible a high self-exceeding of the sattwa quality and a transformation into the likeness of the divine being, *vimokṣāya*. The other leads away from that universal potentiality and precipitates towards an exaggeration of our bondage to the ego. This is the point of the distinction.

The Deva nature is distinguished by an acme of the sattwic habits and qualities; self-control, sacrifice, the religious habit, cleanness and purity, candour and straightforwardness, truth, calm and self-denial, compassion to all beings, modesty, gentleness, forgivingness, patience, steadfastness, a deep sweet and serious freedom from all restlessness, levity and inconstancy are its native attributes. The Asuric qualities, wrath, greed, cunning, treachery, wilful doing of injury to others, pride and arrogance and excessive self-esteem have no place in its composition. But its gentleness and self-denial and self-control are free too from all weakness: it has energy and soul force, strong resolution, the fearlessness of the soul that lives in the right and according to the truth as well as its harmlessness, *tejaḥ*, *abhayam*, *dhṛtiḥ*, *ahiṁsā*, *satyam*. The whole being, the whole temperament is integrally pure; there is a seeking for knowledge and a calm and fixed abiding in knowledge. This is the wealth, the plenitude of the man born into the Deva nature.

The Asuric nature has too its wealth, its plenitude of force, but it is of a very different, a powerful and evil kind. Asuric men have no true knowledge of the way of action or the way of abstention, the fulfilling or the holding in of the nature. Truth is not in them, nor clean doing, nor faithful observance. They see naturally in the world nothing but a huge play of the satisfaction of self; theirs is a world with Desire for its cause and seed and governing force and law, a world of Chance, a world devoid of just relation and linked Karma, a world without God, not true, not founded in Truth. Whatever better intellectual or higher religious dogma they may possess, this alone is the true creed of their mind and will in action; they follow always the cult of Desire and Ego. On that way of seeing life they lean in reality and by its falsehood they ruin their souls and their reason. The Asuric man becomes the centre or instrument of a fierce, Titanic, violent action, a power of destruction in the world, a fount of injury and evil. Arrogant, full of self-esteem and the drunkenness of their pride, these misguided souls delude themselves, persist in false and obstinate aims and pursue the fixed impure resolution of their longings. They imagine that desire and enjoyment are all the aim of life and in their inordinate and insatiable pursuit of it they are the prey of a devouring, a measurelessly unceasing care and thought and endeavour and anxiety till the moment of their death. Bound by a hundred bonds, devoured by wrath and lust, unweariedly occupied in amassing unjust gains which may serve their enjoyment and the satisfaction of their craving, always they think, "Today I have gained this object of desire, tomorrow I shall have that other; today I have so much wealth, more I will get tomorrow. I have killed this my enemy, the rest too I will kill. I am a lord and king of men, I am perfect, accomplished, strong, happy, fortunate, a privileged enjoyer of the world; I am wealthy, I am of high birth; who is there like unto me? I will sacrifice, I will give, I will enjoy." Thus occupied by many egoistic ideas, deluded, doing works, but doing them wrongly, acting mightily, but for themselves, for desire, for enjoyment, not for God in themselves and God in man, they fall into the unclean hell of their own evil. They sacrifice and give, but from a self-regarding ostentation, from vanity and with a stiff and foolish pride. In the egoism of their strength and power, in the violence of their wrath and arrogance they hate, despise and belittle the God hidden in themselves and the God in man. And because they have this proud hatred and contempt of good and of God, because they are cruel and evil, the Divine casts them down continually into more and more Asuric births. Not seeking him, they find him not, and at last, losing the way to him altogether, sink down into the lowest status of soul-nature, *adhamāṁ gatim*.

This graphic description, even giving its entire value to the distinction it implies, must not be pressed to carry more in it than it means. When it is said that there are two creations of beings in this material world, Deva and Asura,[5] it is not meant that human souls are so created by God from the beginning each with its own inevitable career in Nature, nor is it meant that there is a rigid spiritual predestination and those rejected from the beginning by the Divine are blinded by him so that they may be thrust down to eternal perdition and the impurity of Hell. All souls are eternal portions of the Divine, the Asura as well as the Deva, all can come to salvation: even the greatest sinner can turn to the Divine. But the evolution of the soul in Nature is an adventure of which Swabhava and the Karma governed by the swabhava are ever the chief powers; and if an excess in the manifestation of the swabhava, the self-becoming of the soul, a disorder in its play turns the law of being to the perverse side, if the rajasic qualities are given the upper hand, cultured to the diminution of sattwa, then the trend of Karma and its results necessarily culminate not in the sattwic height which is capable of the movement of liberation, but in the highest exaggeration of the perversities of the lower nature. The man, if he does not stop short and abandon his way of error, has eventually the Asura full-born in him, and once he has taken that enormous turn away from the Light and Truth, he can no more reverse the fatal speed of his course because of the very immensity of the misused divine power in him until he has plumbed the depths to which it falls, found bottom and seen where the way has led him, the power exhausted and misspent, himself down in the lowest state of the soul nature, which is Hell. Only when he understands and turns to the Light, does that other truth of the Gita come in, that even the greatest sinner, the most impure and violent evil-doer is saved the moment he turns to adore and follow after the Godhead within him. Then, simply by that turn, he gets very soon into the sattwic way which leads to perfection and freedom.

---

[5] The distinction between the two creations has its full truth in supraphysical planes where the law of spiritual evolution does not govern the movement. There are worlds of the Devas, worlds of the Asuras, and there are in these worlds behind us constant types of beings which support the complex divine play of creation indispensable to the march of the universe and cast their influence also on the earth and on the life and nature of man in this physical plane of existence.

The Asuric Prakriti is the rajasic at its height; it leads to the slavery of the soul in Nature, to desire, wrath and greed, the three powers of the rajasic ego, and these are the threefold doors of Hell, the Hell into which the natural being falls when it indulges the impurity and evil and error of its lower or perverted instincts. These three are again the doors of a great darkness, they fold back into tamas, the characteristic power of the original Ignorance; for the unbridled force of the rajasic nature, when exhausted, falls back into the weakness, collapse, darkness, incapacity of the worst tamasic soul-status. To escape from this downfall one must get rid of these three evil forces and turn to the light of the sattwic quality, live by the right, in the true relations, according to the Truth and the Law; then one follows one's own higher good and arrives at the highest soul-status. To follow the law of desire is not the true rule of our nature; there is a higher and juster standard of its works. But where is it embodied or how is it to be found? In the first place, the human race has always been seeking for this just and high Law and whatever it has discovered is embodied in its Shastra, its rule of science and knowledge, rule of ethics, rule of religion, rule of best social living, rule of one's right relations with man and God and Nature. Shastra does not mean a mass of customs, some good, some bad, unintelligently followed by the customary routine mind of the tamasic man. Shastra is the knowledge and teaching laid down by intuition, experience and wisdom, the science and art and ethic of life, the best standards available to the race. The half-awakened man who leaves the observance of its rule to follow the guidance of his instincts and desires, can get pleasure but not happiness; for the inner happiness can only come by right living. He cannot move to perfection, cannot acquire the highest spiritual status. The law of instinct and desire seems to come first in the animal world, but the manhood of man grows by the pursuit of truth and religion and knowledge and a right life. The Shastra, the recognised Right that he has set up to govern his lower members by his reason and intelligent will, must therefore first be observed and made the authority for conduct and works and for what should or should not be done, till the instinctive desire nature is schooled and abated and put down by the habit of self-control and man is ready first for a freer intelligent self-guidance and then for the highest supreme law and supreme liberty of the spiritual nature.

For the Shastra in its ordinary aspect is not that spiritual law, although at its loftiest point, when it becomes a science and art of spiritual living, Adhyatma-shastra, — the Gita itself describes its own teaching as the highest and most secret Shastra, — it formulates a rule of the self-transcendence of the sattwic nature and develops the discipline which leads to spiritual transmutation. Yet all Shastra is built on a number of preparatory conditions, dharmas; it is a means, not an end. The supreme end is the freedom of the spirit when abandoning all dharmas the soul turns to God for its sole law of action, acts straight from the divine will and lives in the freedom of the divine nature, not in the Law, but in the Spirit. This is the development of the teaching which is prepared by the next question of Arjuna.

XVIII

The Gunas, Faith and Works[1]

THE GITA has made a distinction between action according to the licence of personal desire and action done according to the Shastra. We must understand by the latter the recognised science and art of life which is the outcome of mankind's collective living, its culture, religion, science, its progressive discovery of the best rule of life, — but mankind still walking in the ignorance and proceeding in a half light towards knowledge. The action of personal desire belongs to the unregenerated state of our nature and is dictated by ignorance or false knowledge and an unregulated or ill-regulated kinetic or rajasic egoism. The action controlled by Shastra is an outcome of intellectual, ethical, aesthetic, social and religious culture; it embodies an attempt at a certain right living, harmony and right order and is evidently an effort, more or less advanced according to circumstances, of the sattwic element in man to overtop, regulate and control or guide, where it must be admitted, his rajasic and tamasic egoism. It is the means to a step in advance, and therefore mankind must first proceed through it and make this Shastra its law of action rather than obey the impulsion of its personal desires. This is a general rule which humanity has always recognised wherever it has arrived at any kind of established and developed society; it has an idea of an order, a law, a standard of its perfection, something other than the guidance of its desires or the crude direction of its raw impulses. This greater rule the individual finds usually outside himself in some more or less fixed outcome of the experience and wisdom of the race, which he accepts, to which his mind and the leading parts of his being give their assent or sanction and which he tries to make his own by living it in his mind, will and action.

---

[1] Gita, XVII.

And this assent of the being, its conscious acceptance and will to believe and realise, may be called by the name which the Gita gives to it, his faith, *śraddhā*. The religion, the philosophy, the ethical law, the social idea, the cultural idea in which I put my faith, gives me a law for my nature and its works, an idea of relative right or an idea of relative or absolute perfection and in proportion as I have a sincerity and completeness of faith in it and an intensity of will to live according to that faith, I can become what it proposes to me, I can shape myself into an image of that right or an exemplar of that perfection.

But we see also that there is a freer tendency in man other than the leading of his desires and other than his will to accept the Law, the fixed idea, the safe governing rule of the Shastra. The individual frequently enough, the community at any moment of its life is seen to turn away from the Shastra, becomes impatient of it, loses that form of its will and faith and goes in search of another law which it is now more disposed to accept as the right rule of living and regard as a more vital or higher truth of existence. This may happen when the established Shastra ceases to be a living thing and degenerates or stiffens into a mass of customs and conventions. Or it may come because it is found that the Shastra is imperfect or no longer useful for the progress demanded; a new truth, a more perfect law of living has become imperative. If that does not exist, it has to be discovered by the effort of the race or by some great and illumined individual mind who embodies the desire and seeking of the race. The Vedic law becomes a convention and a Buddha appears with his new rule of the eightfold path and the goal of Nirvana; and it may be remarked that he propounds it not as a personal invention, but as the true rule of Aryan living constantly rediscovered by the Buddha, the enlightened mind, the awakened spirit. But this practically means that there is an ideal, an eternal Dharma which religion, philosophy, ethics and all other powers in man that strive after truth and perfection are constantly endeavouring to embody in new statements of the science and art of the inner and outer life, a new Shastra. The Mosaic law of religious, ethical and social righteousness is convicted of narrowness and imperfection and is now besides a convention; the law of Christ comes to replace it and claims at once to abrogate and to fulfil, to abrogate the imperfect form and fulfil in a deeper and broader light and power the spirit of the thing which it aimed at, the divine rule of living. And the human search does not stop there, but leaves these formulations too, goes back to some past truth it had rejected or breaks forward to some new truth and power, but is always in search of the same thing, the law of its perfection, its rule of right living, its complete, highest and essential self and nature.

This movement begins with the individual, who is no longer satisfied with the law because he finds that it no longer corresponds to his idea and largest or intensest experience of himself and existence and therefore he can no longer bring to it the will to believe and practise. It does not correspond to his inner way of being, it is not to him *sat*, the thing that truly is, the right, the highest or best or real good; it is not the truth and law of his or of all being. The Shastra is something impersonal to the individual, and that gives it its authority over the narrow personal law of his members; but at the same time it is personal to the collectivity and is the outcome of its experience, its culture or its nature. It is not in all its form and spirit the ideal rule of fulfilment of the Self or the eternal law of the Master of our nature, although it may contain in itself in small or larger measure indications, preparations, illuminating glimpses of that far greater thing. And the individual may have gone beyond the collectivity and be ready for a greater truth, a wider walk, a deeper intention of the Life-Spirit. The leading in him that departs from the Shastra may not indeed be always a higher movement; it may take the form of a revolt of the egoistic or rajasic nature seeking freedom from the yoke of something which it feels to be cramping to its liberty of self-fulfilment and self-finding. But even then it is often justified by some narrowness or imperfection of the Shastra or by the degradation of the current rule of living into a merely restricting or lifeless convention. And so far it is legitimate, it appeals to a truth, it has a good and just reason for existence: for though it misses the right path, yet the free action of the rajasic ego, because it has more in it of liberty and life, is better than the dead and hidebound tamasic following of a convention. The rajasic is always stronger, always more forcefully inspired and has more possibilities in it than the tamasic nature. But also this leading may be sattwic at its heart; it may be a turn to a larger and greater ideal which will carry us nearer to a more complete and ample truth of our self and universal existence than has yet been seen and nearer therefore to that highest law which is one with the divine freedom. And in effect this movement is usually an attempt to lay hold on some forgotten truth or to move on to a yet undiscovered or unlived truth of our being. It is not a mere licentious movement of the unregulated nature; it has its spiritual justification and is a necessity of our spiritual progress. And even if the Shastra is still a living thing and the best rule for the human average, the exceptional man, spiritual, inwardly developed, is not bound by that standard. He is called upon to go beyond the fixed line of the Shastra. For this is a rule for the guidance, control and relative perfection of the normal imperfect man and he has to go on to a more absolute perfection: this is a system of fixed dharmas and he has to learn to live in the liberty of the Spirit.

But what then shall be the secure base of an action which departs both from the guidance of desire and from the normal law? For the rule of desire has an authority of its own, no longer safe or satisfactory to us as it is to the animal or as it might have been to a primitive humanity, but still, so far as it goes, founded on a very living part of our nature and fortified by its strong indications; and the law, the Shastra has behind it all the authority of long established rule, old successful sanctions and a secure past experience. But this new movement is of the nature of a powerful adventure into the unknown or partly known, a daring development and a new conquest, and what then is the clue to be followed, the guiding light on which it can depend or its strong basis in our being? The answer is that the clue and support is to be found in man's *śraddhā*, his faith, his will to believe, to live what he sees or thinks to be the truth of himself and of existence. In other words this movement is man's appeal to himself or to something potent and compelling in himself or in universal existence for the discovery of his truth, his law of living, his way to fullness and perfection. And everything depends on the nature of his faith, the thing in himself or in the universal soul — of which he is a portion or manifestation — to which he directs it and on how near he gets by it to his real self and the Self or true being of the universe. If he is tamasic, obscure, clouded, if he has an ignorant faith, an inept will, he will reach nothing true and will fall away to his lower nature. If he is lured by false rajasic lights, he can be carried away by self-will into bypaths that may lead to morass or precipice. In either case his only chance of salvation lies in a return of sattwa upon him to impose a new enlightened order and rule upon his members which will liberate him from the violent error of his self-will or the dull error of his clouded ignorance. If on the other hand he has the sattwic nature and a sattwic faith and direction for his steps, he will arrive in sight of a higher yet unachieved ideal rule which may lead him even in rare instances beyond the sattwic light some way at least towards a highest divine illumination and divine way of being and living. For if the sattwic light is so strong in him as to bring him to its own culminating point, then he will be able advancing from that point to make out his gate of entrance into some first ray of that which is divine, transcendent and absolute. In all effort at self-finding these possibilities are there; they are the conditions of this spiritual adventure.

Now we have to see how the Gita deals with this question on its own line of spiritual teaching and self-discipline. For Arjuna puts immediately a suggestive query from which the problem or one aspect of it arises. When men, he says, sacrifice to God or the gods with faith, *śraddhā*, but abandon the rule of the Shastra, what is that concentrated will of devotion in them, *niṣṭhā*, which gives them this faith and moves them to this kind of action? Is it sattwa, rajas or tamas? to which strand of our nature does it belong? The answer of the Gita first states the principle that the faith in us is of a triple kind like all things in Nature and varies according to the dominating quality of our nature. The faith of each man takes the shape, hue, quality given to it by his stuff of being, his constituting temperament, his innate power of existence, *sattvānurūpā sarvasya śraddhā*. And then there comes a remarkable line in which the Gita tells us that this Purusha, this soul in man, is, as it were, made of *śraddhā*, a faith, a will to be, a belief in itself and existence, and whatever is that will, faith or constituting belief in him, he is that and that is he. *Śraddhāmayo 'yaṁ puruṣo yo yac-chraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*. If we look into this pregnant saying a little closely, we shall find that this single line contains implied in its few forceful words almost the whole theory of the modern gospel of pragmatism. For if a man or the soul in a man consists of the faith which is in him, taken in this deeper sense, then it follows that the truth which he sees and wills to live is for him the truth of his being, the truth of himself that he has created or is creating and there can be for him no other real truth. This truth is a thing of his inner and outer action, a thing of his becoming, of the soul's dynamics, not of that in him which never changes. He is what he is today by some past will of his nature sustained and continued by a present will to know, to believe and to be in his intelligence and vital force, and whatever new turn is taken by this will and faith active in his very substance, that he will tend to become in the future. We create our own truth of existence in our own action of mind and life, which is another way of saying that we create our own selves, are our own makers.

But very obviously this is only one aspect of the truth, and all one-aspected statements are suspect to the thinker. Truth is not merely whatever our own personality is or creates; that is only the truth of our becoming, one point or line of emphasis in a movement of widest volume. Beyond our personality there is, first, a universal being as well as a universal becoming of which ours is a little movement; and beyond that too there is the eternal Being out of which all becoming derives and to which it owes its potentialities, elements, original and final motives. We may say indeed that all becoming is only an act of universal consciousness, is Maya, is a creation of the will to become, and the only other reality, if there is any, is a pure eternal existence beyond consciousness, featureless, unexpressed and inexpressible. That is practically the standpoint taken by the Mayavadin's Adwaita and the sense of the distinction he makes between pragmatic truth which to his mind is illusory or at least only temporarily and partly real — while modern pragmatism takes it to be the true truth or at least the only recognisable reality because the only reality that we can act and know, — between that pragmatic illusion and on the other side of creative Maya the lonely Absolute featureless and inexpressible. But for the Gita absolute Brahman is also supreme Purusha, and Purusha is always conscious Soul, though its highest consciousness, its superconsciousness, if we will, — as, one may add, its lowest which we call the Inconscient, — is something very different from our mind consciousness to which alone we are accustomed to give the name. There is in that highest superconscience a highest truth and dharma of immortality, a greatest divine way of being, a way of the eternal and infinite. That eternal way of existence and divine manner of being exists already in the eternity of the Purushottama, but we are now attempting to create it here too in our becoming by Yoga; our endeavour is to become the Divine, to be as He, *madbhāva*. That also depends on *śraddhā*. It is by an act of our conscious substance and a belief in its truth, an inmost will to live it or be it that we come by it; but this does not mean that it does not already exist beyond us. Though it may not exist for our outward mind until we see and create ourselves anew into it, it is still there in the Eternal and we may say even that it is already there in our own secret self; for in us also, in our depths the Purushottama always is. Our growing into that, our creation of it is his and its manifestation in us. All creation indeed since it proceeds from the conscious substance of the Eternal, is a manifestation of him and proceeds by a faith, acceptance, will to be in the originating consciousness, Chit-Shakti.

We are concerned at present, however, not with the metaphysical issue, but with the relation of this will or faith in our being to our possibility of growth into the perfection of the divine nature. This power, this *śraddhā* is in any case our basis. When we live, when we are and do according to our desires, that is a persistent act of *śraddhā* belonging mostly to our vital and physical, our tamasic and rajasic nature. And when we try to be, to live and to do according to the Shastra, we proceed by a persistent act of *śraddhā* which belongs, supposing it to be not a routine faith, to a sattwic tendency that is constantly labouring to impose itself on our rajasic and tamasic parts. When we leave both these things and try to be, to live and to do according to some ideal or novel conception of truth of our own finding or our own individual acceptance, that too is a persistent act of *śraddhā* which may be dominated by any one of these three qualities that constantly govern our every thought, will, feeling and act. And again when we try to be, to live and to do according to the divine nature, then too we must proceed by a persistent act of *śraddhā*, which must be according to the Gita the faith of the sattwic nature when it culminates and is preparing to exceed its own clear-cut limits. But all and any of these things implies some kinesis or displacement of nature, all suppose an inner or outer or ordinarily both an inner and an outer action. And what then will be the character of this action? The Gita states three main elements of the work we have to do, *kartavyaṁ karma*, and these three are sacrifice, giving and askesis. For when questioned by Arjuna on the difference between the outer and inner renunciation, *sannyāsa* and *tyāga*, Krishna insists that these three things ought not to be renounced at all but ought altogether to be done, for they are the work before us, *kartavyaṁ karma*, and they purify the wise. In other words these acts constitute the means of our perfection. But at the same time they may be done unwisely or less wisely by the unwise. All dynamic action may be reduced in its essential parts to these three elements. For all dynamic action, all kinesis of the nature involves a voluntary or an involuntary tapasya or askesis, an energism and concentration of our forces or capacities or of some capacity which helps us to achieve, to acquire or to become something, *tapas*. All action involves a giving of what we are or have, an expenditure which is the price of that achievement, acquisition or becoming, *dāna*. All action involves too a sacrifice to elemental or to universal powers or to the supreme Master of our works. The question is whether we do these things inconsciently, passively, or at best with an unintelligent ignorant half-conscient will, or with an unwisely or perversely conscient energism, or with a wisely conscient will rooted in knowledge, in other words, whether our sacrifice, giving and askesis are tamasic, rajasic or sattwic in nature.

For everything here, including physical things, partakes of this triple character. Our food, for example, the Gita tells us, is either sattwic, rajasic or tamasic according to its character and effect on the body. The sattwic temperament in the mental and physical body turns naturally to the things that increase the life, increase the inner and outer strength, nourish at once the mental, vital and physical force and increase the pleasure and satisfaction and happy condition of mind and life and body, all that is succulent and soft and firm and satisfying. The rajasic temperament prefers naturally food that is violently sour, pungent, hot, acrid, rough and strong and burning, the aliments that increase ill-health and the distempers of the mind and body. The tamasic temperament takes a perverse pleasure in cold, impure, stale, rotten or tasteless food or even accepts like the animals the remnants half-eaten by others. All-pervading is the principle of the three gunas. The gunas apply at the other end in the same way to the things of the mind and spirit, to sacrifice, giving and askesis, and the Gita distinguishes under each of these three heads between the three kinds in the customary terms of these things as they were formulated by the symbolism of the old Indian culture. But, remembering the very wide sense which the Gita itself gives to the idea of sacrifice, we may well enlarge the surface meaning of these hints and open them to a freer significance. And it will be convenient to take them in the reverse order, from tamas to sattwa, since we are considering how we go upward out of our lower nature through a certain sattwic culmination and self-exceeding to a divine nature and action beyond the three gunas.

The tamasic sacrifice is work which is done without faith, without, that is to say, any full conscious idea and acceptance and will towards the thing Nature yet compels us to execute. It is done mechanically, because the act of living demands it, because it comes in our way, because others do it, to avoid some other greater difficulty which may arise from not doing it, or from any other tamasic motive. And it is apt to be done, if we have in the full this kind of temperament, carelessly, perfunctorily, in the wrong way. It will not be performed by the *vidhi* or right rule of the Shastra, will not be led in its steps according to the right method laid down by the art and science of life and the true science of the thing to be done. There will be no giving of food in the sacrifice, — and that act in the Indian ritual is symbolic of the element of helpful giving inherent in every action that is real sacrifice, the indispensable giving to others, the fruitful help to others, to the world, without which our action becomes a wholly self-regarding thing and a violation of the true universal law of solidarity and interchange. The work will be done without the dakshina, the much-needed giving or self-giving to the leaders of the sacrificial action, whether to the outward guide and helper of our work or to the veiled or manifest godhead within us. It will be done without the mantra, without the dedicating thought which is the sacred body of our will and knowledge lifted upwards to the godheads we serve by our sacrifice. The tamasic man does not offer his sacrifice to the gods, but to inferior elemental powers or to those grosser spirits behind the veil who feed upon his works and dominate his life with their darkness.

The rajasic man offers his sacrifice to lower godheads or to perverse powers, the Yakshas, the keepers of wealth, or to the Asuric and the Rakshasic forces. His sacrifice may be performed outwardly according to the Shastra, but its motive is ostentation, pride or a strong lust after the fruit of his action, a vehement demand for the reward of his works. All work therefore that proceeds from violent or egoistic personal desire or from an arrogant will intent to impose itself on the world for personal objects is of the rajasic nature, even if it mask itself with the insignia of the light, even if it be done outwardly as a sacrifice. Although it is ostensibly given to God or to the gods, it remains essentially an Asuric action. It is the inner state, motive and direction which give their value to our works, and not merely the apparent outer direction, the divine names we may call to sanction them or even the sincere intellectual belief which seems to justify us in the performance. Wherever there is a dominating egoism in our acts, there our work becomes a rajasic sacrifice. The true sattwic sacrifice on the other hand is distinguished by three signs that are the quiet seal of its character. First, it is dictated by the effective truth, executed according to the *vidhi*, the right principle, the exact method and rule, the just rhythm and law of our works, their true functioning, their dharma; that means that the reason and enlightened will are the guides and determinants of their steps and their purpose. Secondly, it is executed with a mind concentrated and fixed on the idea of the thing to be done as a true sacrifice imposed on us by the divine law that governs our life and therefore performed out of a high inner obligation or imperative truth and without desire for the personal fruit, — the more impersonal the motive of the action and the temperament of the force put out in it, the more sattwic is its nature. And finally it is offered to the gods without any reservation; it is acceptable to the divine powers by whom — for they are his masks and personalities — the Master of existence governs the universe.

This sattwic sacrifice comes then very near to the ideal and leads directly towards the kind of action demanded by the Gita; but it is not the last and highest ideal, it is not yet the action of the perfected man who lives in the divine nature. For it is carried out as a fixed dharma, and it is offered as a sacrifice or service to the gods, to some partial power or aspect of the Divine manifested in ourselves or in the universe. Work done with a disinterested religious faith or selflessly for humanity or impersonally from devotion to the Right or the Truth is of this nature, and action of that kind is necessary for our perfection; for it purifies our thought and will and our natural substance. The culmination of the sattwic action at which we have to arrive is of a still larger and freer kind; it is the high last sacrifice offered by us to the supreme Divine in his integral being and with a seeking for the Purushottama or with the vision of Vasudeva in all that is, the action done impersonally, universally, for the good of the world, for the fulfilment of the divine will in the universe. That culmination leads to its own transcending, to the immortal Dharma. For then comes a freedom in which there is no personal action at all, no sattwic rule of dharma, no limitation of Shastra; the inferior reason and will are themselves overpassed and it is not they but a higher wisdom that dictates and guides the work and commands its objective. There is no question of personal fruit; for the will that works is not our own but a supreme Will of which the soul is the instrument. There is no self-regarding and no selflessness; for the Jiva, the eternal portion of the Divine, is united with the highest Self of his existence and he and all are one in that Self and Spirit. There is no personal action, for all actions are given up to the Master of our works and it is he that does the action through the divinised Prakriti. There is no sacrifice, — unless we can say that the Master of sacrifice is offering the works of his energy in the Jiva to himself in his own cosmic form. This is the supreme self-surpassing state arrived at by the action that is sacrifice, this the perfection of the soul that has come to its full consciousness in the divine nature.

Tamasic tapasya is that which is pursued under a clouded and deluded idea hard and obstinate in its delusion, maintained by an ignorant faith in some cherished falsehood, performed with effort and suffering imposed on oneself in pursuit of some narrow and vulgar egoistic object empty of relation to any true or great aim or else with a concentration of the energy in a will to do hurt to others. That which makes this kind of energism tamasic is not any principle of inertia, for inertia is foreign to tapasya, but a darkness in the mind and nature, a vulgar narrowness and ugliness in the doing or a brutish instinct or desire in the aim or in the motive feeling. Rajasic energisms of askesis are those which are undertaken to get honour and worship from men, for the sake of personal distinction and outward glory and greatness or from some other of the many motives of egoistic will and pride. This kind of askesis is devoted to fleeting particular objects which add nothing to the heavenward growth and perfection of the soul; it is a thing without fixed and helpful principle, an energy bound up with changeful and passing occasion and itself of that nature. Or even if there is ostensibly a more inward and noble object and the faith and will are of a higher kind, yet if any kind of arrogance or pride or any great strength of violent self-will or desire enters into the askesis or if it drives some violent, lawless or terrible action contrary to the Shastra, opposed to the right rule of life and works and afflicting to oneself and to others, or if it is of the nature of self-torture and hurts the mental, vital and physical elements or violates the God within us who is seated in the inner subtle body, then too it is an unwise, an Asuric, a rajasic or rajaso-tamasic tapasya.

Sattwic tapasya is that which is done with a highest enlightened faith, as a duty deeply accepted or for some ethical or spiritual or other higher reason and with no desire for any external or narrowly personal fruit in the action. It is of the character of self-discipline and asks for self-control and a harmonising of one's nature. The Gita describes three kinds of sattwic askesis. First comes the physical, the askesis of the outward act; under this head are especially mentioned worship and reverence of those deserving reverence, cleanness of the person, the action and the life, candid dealing, sexual purity and avoidance of killing and injury to others. Next is askesis of speech, and that consists in the study of Scripture, kind, true and beneficent speech and a careful avoidance of words that may cause fear, sorrow and trouble to others. Finally there is the askesis of mental and moral perfection, and that means the purifying of the whole temperament, gentleness and a clear and calm gladness of mind, self-control and silence. Here comes in all that quiets or disciplines the rajasic and egoistic nature and all that replaces it by the happy and tranquil principle of good and virtue. This is the askesis of the sattwic dharma so highly prized in the system of the ancient Indian culture. Its greater culmination will be a high purity of the reason and will, an equal soul, a deep peace and calm, a wide sympathy and preparation of oneness, a reflection of the inner soul's divine gladness in the mind, life and body. There at that lofty point the ethical is already passing away into the spiritual type and character. And this culmination too can be made to transcend itself, can be raised into a higher and freer light, can pass away into the settled godlike energy of the supreme nature. And what will remain then will be the spirit's immaculate Tapas, a highest will and luminous force in all the members acting in a wide and solid calm and a deep and pure spiritual delight, Ananda. There will then be no farther need of askesis, no tapasya, because all is naturally and easily divine, all is that Tapas. There will be no separate labour of the lower energism, because the energy of Prakriti will have found its true source and base in the transcendent will of the Purushottama. Then, because of this high initiation, the acts of this energy on the lower planes also will proceed naturally and spontaneously from an innate perfect will and by an inherent perfect guidance. There will be no limitation by any of the present dharmas; for there will be a free action far above the rajasic and tamasic nature, but also far beyond the too careful and narrow limits of the sattwic rule of action.

As with tapasya, all giving also is of an ignorant tamasic, an ostentatious rajasic or a disinterested and enlightened sattwic character. The tamasic gift is offered ignorantly with no consideration of the right conditions of time, place and object; it is a foolish, inconsiderate and in reality a self-regarding movement, an ungenerous and ignoble generosity, the gift offered without sympathy or true liberality, without regard for the feelings of the recipient and despised by him even in the acceptance. The rajasic kind of giving is that which is done with regret, unwillingness or violence to oneself or with a personal and egoistic object or in the hope of a return of some kind from whatever quarter or a corresponding or greater benefit to oneself from the receiver. The sattwic way of giving is to bestow with right reason and goodwill and sympathy in the right conditions of time and place and on the right recipient who is worthy or to whom the gift can be really helpful. Its act is performed for the sake of the giving and the beneficence, without any view to a benefit already done or yet to be done to oneself by the receiver of the benefit and without any personal object in the action.

The culmination of the sattwic way of *dāna* will bring into the action an increasing element of that wide self-giving to others and to the world and to God, *ātma-dāna*, *ātma-samarpaṇa*, which is the high consecration of the sacrifice of works enjoined by the Gita. And the transcendence in the divine nature will be a greatest completeness of self-offering founded on the largest meaning of existence. All this manifold universe comes into birth and is constantly maintained by God's giving of himself and his powers and the lavish outflow of his self and spirit into all these existences; universal being, says the Veda, is the sacrifice of the Purusha. All the action of the perfected soul will be even such a constant divine giving of itself and its powers, an outflowing of the knowledge, light, strength, love, joy, helpful shakti which it possesses in the Divine and by his influence and effluence on all around it according to their capacity of reception or on all this world and its creatures. That will be the complete result of the complete self-giving of the soul to the Master of our existence.

The Gita closes this chapter with what seems at first sight a recondite utterance. The formula OM, Tat, Sat, is, it says, the triple definition of the Brahman, by whom the Brahmanas, the Vedas and sacrifices were created of old and in it resides all their significance. Tat, That, indicates the Absolute. Sat indicates the supreme and universal existence in its principle. OM is the symbol of the triple Brahman, the outward-looking, the inward or subtle and the superconscient causal Purusha. Each letter A, U, M indicates one of these three in ascending order and the syllable as a whole brings out the fourth state, Turiya, which rises to the Absolute. OM is the initiating syllable pronounced at the outset as a benedictory prelude and sanction to all act of sacrifice, all act of giving and all act of askesis; it is a reminder that our work should be made an expression of the triple Divine in our inner being and turned towards him in the idea and motive. The seekers of liberation indeed do these actions without desire of fruit and only with the idea, feeling, Ananda of the absolute Divine behind their nature. It is that which they seek by this purity and impersonality in their works, this high desirelessness, this vast emptiness of ego and plenitude of Spirit. Sat means good and it means existence. Both these things, the principle of good and the principle of reality, must be there behind all the three kinds of action. All good works are Sat, for they prepare the soul for the higher reality of our being; all firm abiding in sacrifice, giving and askesis and all works done with that central view, as sacrifice, as giving, as askesis, are Sat, for they build the basis for the highest truth of our spirit. And because *śraddhā* is the central principle of our existence, any of these things done without *śraddhā* is a falsity and has no true meaning or true substance on earth or beyond, no reality, no power to endure or create in life here or after the mortal life in greater regions of our conscious spirit. The soul's faith, not a mere intellectual belief, but its concordant will to know, to see, to believe and to do and be according to its vision and knowledge, is that which determines by its power the measure of our possibilities of becoming, and it is this faith and will turned in all our inner and outer self, nature and action towards all that is highest, most divine, most real and eternal that will enable us to reach the supreme perfection.

XIX

The Gunas, Mind and Works[1]

THE GITA has not yet completed its analysis of action in the light of this fundamental idea of the three gunas and the transcendence of them by a self-exceeding culmination of the highest sattwic discipline. Faith, *śraddhā*, the will to believe and to be, know, live and enact the Truth that we have seen is the principal factor, the indispensable force behind a self-developing action, most of all behind the growth of the soul by works into its full spiritual stature. But there are also the mental powers, the instruments and the conditions which help to constitute the momentum, direction and character of the activity and are therefore of importance for a full understanding of this psychological discipline. The Gita enters into a summary psychological analysis of these things before it proceeds to its great finale, the culmination of all it teaches, the highest secret which is that of a spiritual exceeding of all dharmas, a divine transcendence. And we have to follow it in its brief descriptions, summarily, expanding just enough to seize fully the main idea; for these are secondary things, but yet each of great consequence in its own place and for its own purpose. It is their action cast in the type of the gunas that we have to bring out from the brief descriptions in the text; the nature of the culmination of any or each of them beyond the gunas will automatically follow from the character of the general transcendence.

This part of the subject is introduced by a last question of Arjuna regarding the principle of Sannyasa and the principle of Tyaga and their difference. The frequent harping, the reiterated emphasis of the Gita on this crucial distinction has been amply justified by the subsequent history of the later Indian mind, its constant confusion of these two very different things and its strong bent towards belittling any activity of the kind taught by the Gita as at best only a preliminary to the supreme inaction of Sannyasa. As a matter of fact, when people talk of Tyaga, of renunciation, it is always the physical renunciation of the world which they understand by the word or at least on which they lay emphasis, while the Gita takes absolutely the opposite view that the real Tyaga has action and living in the world as its basis and not a flight to the monastery, the cave or the hill-top. The real Tyaga is action with a renunciation of desire and that too is the real Sannyasa.

---

[1] Gita, XVIII. 1-39.

The liberating activity of the sattwic self-discipline must no doubt be pervaded by a spirit of renunciation, — that is an essential element: but what renunciation and in what manner of the spirit? Not the renunciation of work in the world, not any outward asceticism or any ostentation of a visible giving up of enjoyment, but a renunciation, a leaving, *tyāga*, of vital desire and ego, a total laying aside, *sannyāsa*, of the separate personal life of the desire soul and ego-governed mind and rajasic vital nature. That is the true condition for entering into the heights of Yoga whether through the impersonal self and Brahmic oneness or through universal Vasudeva or inwardly into the supreme Purushottama. More conventionally taken, Sannyasa in the standing terminology of the sages means the physical depositing or laying aside of desirable actions: Tyaga — this is the Gita's distinction — is the name given by the wise to a mental and spiritual renunciation, an entire abandonment of all attached clinging to the fruit of our works, to the action itself or to its personal initiation or rajasic impulse. In that sense Tyaga, not Sannyasa, is the better way. It is not the desirable actions that must be laid aside, but the desire which gives them that character has to be put away from us. The fruit of the action may come in the dispensation of the Master of works, but there is to be no egoistic demand for that as a reward and condition of doing works. Or the fruit may not at all come and still the work has to be performed as the thing to be done, *kartavyaṁ karma*, the thing which the Master within demands of us. The success, the failure are in his hands and he will regulate them according to his omniscient will and inscrutable purpose. Action, all action has indeed to be given up in the end, not physically by abstention, by immobility, by inertia, but spiritually to the Master of our being by whose power alone can any action be accomplished. There has to be a renunciation of the false idea of ourselves as the doer; for in reality it is the universal Shakti that works through our personality and our ego. The spiritual transference of all our works to the Master and his Shakti is the real Sannyasa in the teaching of the Gita.

The question still arises, what works are to be done? Those even who stand for a final physical renunciation are not at one in this difficult matter. Some would have it that all works must be excised from our life, as if that were possible. But it is not possible so long as we are in the body and alive; nor can salvation consist in reducing our active selves by trance to the lifeless immobility of the clod and the pebble. The silence of Samadhi does not abrogate the difficulty, for as soon as the breath comes again into the body, we are once more in action and have toppled down from the heights of this salvation by spiritual slumber. But the true salvation, the release by an inner renunciation of the ego and union with the Purushottama remains steady in whatever state, persists in this world or out of it or in whatever world or out of all world, is self-existent, *sarvathā vartamāno'pi*, and does not depend upon inaction or action. What then are the actions to be done? The thoroughgoing ascetic answer, not noted by the Gita — it was perhaps not altogether current at the time — might be that solely begging, eating and meditation are to be permitted among voluntary activities and otherwise only the necessary actions of the body. But the more liberal and comprehensive solution was evidently to continue the three most sattwic activities, sacrifice, giving and askesis. And these certainly are to be done, says the Gita, for they purify the wise. But more generally, and understanding these three things in their widest sense, it is the rightly regulated action, *niyataṁ karma*, that has to be done, action regulated by the Shastra, the science and art of right knowledge, right works, right living, or regulated by the essential nature, *svabhāva-niyataṁ karma*, or, finally and best of all, regulated by the will of the Divine within and above us. The last is the true and only action of the liberated man, *muktasya karma*. To renounce these works is not a right movement — the Gita lays that down plainly and trenchantly in the end, *niyatasya tu sannyāsaḥ karmaṇo nopapadyate*. To renounce them from an ignorant confidence in the sufficiency of that withdrawal for the true liberation is a tamasic renunciation. The gunas follow us, we see, into the renunciation of works as well as into works. A renunciation with attachment to inaction, *saṅgo akarmaṇi*, would be equally a tamasic withdrawal. And to give them up because they bring sorrow or are a trouble to the flesh and a weariness to the mind or in the feeling that all is vanity and vexation of spirit, is a rajasic renunciation and does not bring the high spiritual fruit; that too is not the true Tyaga. It is a result of intellectual pessimism or vital weariness, it has its roots in ego. No freedom can come from a renunciation governed by this self-regarding principle.

The sattwic principle of renunciation is to withdraw not from action, but from the personal demand, the ego factor behind it. It is to do works not dictated by desire but by the law of right living or by the essential nature, its knowledge, its ideal, its faith in itself and the Truth it sees, its *śraddhā*. Or else, on a higher spiritual plane, they are dictated by the will of the Master and done with the mind in Yoga, without any personal attachment either to the action or to the fruit of the action. There must be a complete renunciation of all desire and of all self-regarding egoistic choice and impulse and finally of that much subtler egoism of the will which either says, "The work is mine, I am the doer", or even "The work is God's, but I am the doer." There must be no attachment to pleasant, desirable, lucrative or successful work and no doing of it because it has that nature; but that kind of work too has to be done, — done totally, selflessly, with the assent of the spirit, — when it is the action demanded from above and from within us, *kartavyaṁ* *karma*. There must be no aversion to unpleasant, undesirable or ungratifying action or work that brings or is likely to bring with it suffering, danger, harsh conditions, inauspicious consequences; for that too has to be accepted, totally, selflessly, with a deep understanding of its need and meaning, when it is the work that should be done, *kartavyaṁ karma*. The wise man puts away the shrinkings and hesitations of the desire-soul and the doubts of the ordinary human intelligence, that measure by little personal, conventional or otherwise limited standards. He follows in the light of the full sattwic mind and with the power of an inner renunciation lifting the soul to impersonality, towards God, towards the universal and eternal the highest ideal law of his nature or the will of the Master of works in his secret spirit. He will not do action for the sake of any personal result or for any reward in this life or with any attachment to success, profit or consequence: neither will his works be undertaken for the sake of a fruit in the invisible hereafter or ask for a reward in other births or in worlds beyond us, the prizes for which the half-baked religious mind hungers. The three kinds of result, pleasant, unpleasant and mixed, in this or other worlds, in this or another life are for the slaves of desire and ego; these things do not cling to the free spirit. The liberated worker who has given up his works by the inner sannyasa to a greater Power is free from Karma. Action he will do, for some kind of action, less or more, small or great, is inevitable, natural, right for the embodied soul, — action is part of the divine law of living, it is the high dynamics of the spirit. The essence of renunciation, the true Tyaga, the true Sannyasa is not any rule of thumb of inaction but a disinterested soul, a selfless mind, the transition from ego to the free impersonal and spiritual nature. The spirit of this inner renunciation is the first mental condition of the highest culminating sattwic discipline.

The Gita then speaks of the five causes or indispensable requisites for the accomplishment of works as laid down by the Sankhya. These five are, first, the frame of body, life and mind which are the basis or standing-ground of the soul in Nature, *adhiṣṭhāna*, next, the doer, *kartā*, third, the various instrumentation of Nature, *karaṇa*, fourth, the many kinds of effort which make up the force of action, *ceṣṭāḥ*, and last, Fate, *daivam*, that is to say, the influence of the Power or powers other than the human factors, other than the visible mechanism of Nature, that stand behind these and modify the work and dispose its fruits in the steps of act and consequence. These five elements make up among them all the efficient causes, *kāraṇa*, that determine the shaping and outcome of whatever work man undertakes with mind and speech and body.

The doer is ordinarily supposed to be our surface personal ego, but that is the false idea of the understanding that has not arrived at knowledge. The ego is the ostensible doer, but the ego and its will are creations and instruments of Nature with which the ignorant understanding wrongly identifies our self and they are not the only determinants even of human action, much less of its turn and consequence. When we are liberated from ego, our real self behind comes forward, impersonal and universal, and it sees in its self-vision of unity with the universal Spirit universal Nature as the doer of the work and the Divine Will behind as the master of universal Nature. Only so long as we have not this knowledge, are we bound by the character of the ego and its will as the doer and do good and evil and have the satisfaction of our tamasic, rajasic or sattwic nature. But once we live in this greater knowledge, the character and consequences of the work can make no difference to the freedom of the spirit. The work may be outwardly a terrible action like this great battle and slaughter of Kurukshetra; but although the liberated man takes his part in the struggle and though he slay all these peoples, he slays no man and he is not bound by his work, because the work is that of the Master of the Worlds and it is he who has already slain in his hidden omnipotent will all these armies. This work of destruction was needed that humanity might move forward to another creation and a new purpose, might get rid as in a fire of its past karma of unrighteousness and oppression and injustice and move towards a kingdom of the Dharma. The liberated man does all his appointed work as the living instrument one in spirit with the universal Spirit. And knowing that all this must be and looking beyond the outward appearance he acts not for self but for God and man and the human and cosmic order,[2] not in fact himself acting, but conscious of the presence and power of the divine Force in his deeds and their issue. He knows that the supreme Shakti is doing in his mental, vital and physical body, *adhiṣṭhāna*, as the sole doer the thing appointed by a Fate which is in truth not Fate, not a mechanical dispensation, but the wise and all-seeing Will that is at work behind human Karma. This "terrible work" on which the whole teaching of the Gita turns, is an extreme example of action inauspicious in appearance, *akuśalam*, though a great good lies beyond the appearance. Impersonally has it to be done by the divinely appointed man for the holding together of the world purpose, *loka-saṅgrahārtham*, without personal aim or desire, because it is the appointed service.

It is clear then that the work is not the sole thing that matters; the knowledge in which we do works makes an immense spiritual difference. There are three things, says the Gita, which go to constitute the mental impulsion to works, and they are the knowledge in our will, the object of knowledge and the knower; and into the knowledge there comes always the working of the three gunas. It is this element of the gunas that makes all the difference to our view of the thing known and to the spirit in which the knower does his work. The tamasic ignorant knowledge is a small and narrow, a lazy or dully obstinate way of looking at things which has no eye for the real nature of the world or of the thing done or its field or the act or its conditions. The tamasic mind does not look for real cause and effect, but absorbs itself in one movement or one routine with an obstinate attachment to it, can see nothing but the little section of personal activity before its eyes and does not know in fact what it is doing but blindly lets natural impulsion work out through its deed results of which it has no conception, foresight or comprehending intelligence. The rajasic knowledge is that which sees the multiplicity of things only in their separateness and variety of operation in all these existences and is unable to discover a true principle of unity or rightly coordinate its will and action, but follows the bent of ego and desire, the activity of its many-branching egoistic will and various and mixed motive in response to the solicitation of internal and environing impulsions and forces. This knowing is a jumble of sections of knowledge, often inconsistent knowledge, put forcefully together by the mind in order to make some kind of pathway through the confusion of our half-knowledge and half-ignorance. Or else it is a restless kinetic multiple action with no firm governing higher ideal and self-possessed law of true light and power within it. The sattwic knowledge on the contrary sees existence as one indivisible whole in all these divisions, one imperishable being in all becomings; it masters the principle of its action and the relation of the particular action to the total purpose of existence; it puts in the right place each step of the complete process. At the highest top of knowledge this seeing becomes the knowledge of the one spirit in the world, one in all these many existences, of the one Master of all works, of the forces of cosmos as expressions of the Godhead and of the work itself as the operation of his supreme will and wisdom in man and his life and essential nature. The personal will has come to be entirely conscious, illumined, spiritually awake, and it lives and works in the One, obeys more and more perfectly his supreme mandate and grows more and more a faultless instrument of his light and power in the human person. The supreme liberated action arrives through this culmination of the sattwic knowledge.

---

[2] The cosmic order comes into question, because the triumph of the Asura in humanity means to that extent the triumph of the Asura in the balance of the world-forces.

There are again three things, the doer, the instrument and the work done, that hold the action together and make it possible. And here again it is the difference of the gunas that determines the character of each of these elements. The sattwic mind that seeks always for a right harmony and right knowledge is the governing instrument of the sattwic man and moves all the rest of the machine. An egoistic will of desire supported by the desire-soul is the dominant instrument of the rajasic worker. An ignorant instinct or the unenlightened impulsion of the physical mind and the crude vital nature is the chief instrumental force of the tamasic doer of action. The instrument of the liberated man is a greater spiritual light and power, far higher than the highest sattwic intelligence, and it works in him by an enveloping descent from a supraphysical centre and uses as a clear channel of its force a purified and receptive mind, life and body.

Tamasic action is that done with a confused, deluded and ignorant mind, in mechanical obedience to the instincts, impulsions and unseeing ideas, without regarding the strength or capacity or the waste and loss of blind misapplied effort or the antecedent and consequence and right conditions of the impulse, effort or labour. Rajasic action is that which a man undertakes under the dominion of desire, with his eyes fixed on the work and its hoped-for fruit and nothing else, or with an egoistic sense of his own personality in the action, and it is done with inordinate effort, with a passionate labour, with a great heaving and straining of the personal will to get at the object of its desire. Sattwic action is that which a man does calmly in the clear light of reason and knowledge and with an impersonal sense of right or duty or the demand of an ideal, as the thing that ought to be done whatever may be the result to himself in this world or another, a work performed without attachment, without liking or disliking for its spur or its drag, for the sole satisfaction of his reason and sense of right, of the lucid intelligence and the enlightened will and the pure disinterested mind and the high contented spirit. At the line of culmination of sattwa it will be transformed and become a highest impersonal action dictated by the spirit within us and no longer by the intelligence, an action moved by the highest law of the nature, free from the lower ego and its light or heavy baggage and from limitation even by best opinion, noblest desire, purest personal will or loftiest mental ideal. There will be none of these impedimenta; in their place there will stand a clear spiritual self-knowledge and illumination and an imperative intimate sense of an infallible power that acts and of the work to be done for the world and for the world's Master.

The tamasic doer of action is one who does not put himself really into the work, but acts with a mechanical mind, or obeys the most vulgar thought of the herd, follows the common routine or is wedded to a blind error and prejudice. He is obstinate in stupidity, stubborn in error and takes a foolish pride in his ignorant doing; a narrow and evasive cunning replaces true intelligence; he has a stupid and insolent contempt for those with whom he has to deal, especially for wiser men and his betters. A dull laziness, slowness, procrastination, looseness, want of vigour or of sincerity mark his action. The tamasic man is ordinarily slow to act, dilatory in his steps, easily depressed, ready soon to give up his task if it taxes his strength, his diligence or his patience. The rajasic doer of action on the contrary is one eagerly attached to the work, bent on its rapid completion, passionately desirous of fruit and reward and consequence, greedy of heart, impure of mind, often violent and cruel and brutal in the means he uses; he cares little whom he injures or how much he injures others so long as he gets what he wants, satisfies his passions and will, vindicates the claims of his ego. He is full of an incontinent joy in success and bitterly grieved and stricken by failure. The sattwic doer is free from all this attachment, this egoism, this violent strength or passionate weakness; his is a mind and will unelated by success, undepressed by failure, full of a fixed impersonal resolution, a calm rectitude of zeal or a high and pure and selfless enthusiasm in the work that has to be done. At and beyond the culmination of sattwa this resolution, zeal, enthusiasm become the spontaneous working of the spiritual Tapas and at last a highest soul-force, the direct God-Power, the mighty and steadfast movement of a divine energy in the human instrument, the self-assured steps of the Seer-will, the gnostic intelligence and with it the wide delight of the free spirit in the works of the liberated nature.

The reason armed with the intelligent will works in man in whatever manner or measure he may possess these human gifts and it is accordingly right or perverted, clouded or luminous, narrow and small or large and wide like the mind of its possessor. It is the understanding power of his nature, *buddhi*, that chooses the work for him or, more often, approves and sets its sanction on one or other among the many suggestions of his complex instincts, impulsions, ideas and desires. It is that which determines for him what is right or wrong, to be done or not to be done, Dharma or Adharma. And the persistence of the will[3] is that continuous force of mental Nature which sustains the work and gives it consistence and persistence. Here again there is the incidence of the gunas. The tamasic reason is a false, ignorant and darkened instrument which chains us to see all things in a dull and wrong light, a cloud of misconceptions, a stupid ignoring of the values of things and people. This reason calls light darkness and darkness light, takes what is not the true law and upholds it as the law, persists in the thing which ought not to be done and holds it up to us as the one right thing to be done. Its ignorance is invincible and its persistence of will is a persistence in the satisfaction and dull pride of its ignorance. That is on its side of blind action; but it is pursued also by a heavy stress of inertia and impotence, a persistence in dullness and sleep, an aversion to mental change and progress, a dwelling on the fears and pains and depressions of mind which deter us in our path or keep us to base, weak and cowardly ways. Timidity, shirking, evasion, indolence, the justification by the mind of its fears and false doubts and cautions and refusals of duty and its lapses and turnings from the call of our higher nature, a safe following of the line of least resistance so that there may be the least trouble and effort and peril in the winning of the fruit of our labour, — rather no fruit or poor result, it says, than a great and noble toil or a perilous and exacting endeavour and adventure, — these are characteristics of the tamasic will and intelligence.

The rajasic understanding, when it does not knowingly choose error and evil for the sake of the error and evil, can make distinctions between right and wrong, between what should or should not be done, but not rightly, rather with a pulling awry of their true measures and a constant distortion of values. And this is because its reason and will are a reason of the ego and a will of desire, and these powers misrepresent and distort the truth and the right to serve their own egoistic purpose. It is only when we are free from ego and desire and look steadily with a calm, pure, disinterested mind concerned only with the truth and its sequences that we can hope to see things rightly and in their just values. But the rajasic will fixes its persistent attention on the satisfaction of its own attached clingings and desires in its pursuit of interest and pleasure and of what it thinks or chooses to think right and justice, Dharma. Always it is apt to put on these things the construction which will most flatter and justify its desires and to uphold as right or legitimate the means which will best help it to get the coveted fruits of its work and endeavour. That is the cause of three fourths of the falsehood and misconduct of the human reason and will. Rajas with its vehement hold on the vital ego is the great sinner and positive misleader.

---

[3] *dhṛti.*

The sattwic understanding sees in its right place, right form, right measure the movement of the world, the law of action and the law of abstention from action, the thing that is to be done and the thing that is not to be done, what is safe for the soul and what is dangerous, what is to be feared and shunned and what is to be embraced by the will, what binds the spirit of man and what sets it free. These are the things that it follows or avoids by the persistence of its conscious will according to the degree of its light and the stage of evolution it has reached in its upward ascent to the highest self and Spirit. The culmination of this sattwic intelligence is found by a high persistence of the aspiring buddhi when it is settled on what is beyond the ordinary reason and mental will, pointed to the summits, turned to a steady control of the senses and the life and a union by Yoga with man's highest Self, the universal Divine, the transcendent Spirit. It is there that arriving through the sattwic guna one can pass beyond the gunas, can climb beyond the limitations of the mind and its will and intelligence and sattwa itself disappear into that which is above the gunas and beyond this instrumental nature. There the soul is enshrined in light and enthroned in firm union with the Self and Spirit and Godhead. Arrived upon that summit we can leave the Highest to guide Nature in our members in the free spontaneity of a divine action: for there there is no wrong or confused working, no element of error or impotence to obscure or distort the luminous perfection and power of the Spirit. All these lower conditions, laws, dharmas cease to have any hold on us; the Infinite acts in the liberated man and there is no law but the immortal truth and right of the free spirit, no Karma, no kind of bondage.

Harmony and order are the characteristic qualities of the sattwic mind and temperament, quiet happiness, a clear and calm content and an inner ease and peace. Happiness is indeed the one thing which is openly or indirectly the universal pursuit of our human nature, — happiness or its suggestion or some counterfeit of it, some pleasure, some enjoyment, some satisfaction of the mind, the will, the passions or the body. Pain is an experience our nature has to accept when it must, involuntarily as a necessity, an unavoidable incident of universal Nature, or voluntarily as a means to what we seek after, but not a thing desired for its own sake, — except when it is so sought in perversity or with an ardour of enthusiasm in suffering for some touch of fierce pleasure it brings or the intense strength it engenders. But there are various kinds of happiness or pleasure according to the guna which dominates in our nature. Thus the tamasic mind can remain well-pleased in its indolence and inertia, its stupor and sleep, its blindness and its error. Nature has armed it with the privilege of a smug satisfaction in its stupidity and ignorance, its dim lights of the cave, its inert contentment, its petty or base joys and its vulgar pleasures. Delusion is the beginning of this satisfaction and delusion is its consequence; but still there is given a dull, a by no means admirable but a sufficient pleasure in his delusions to the dweller in the cave. There is a tamasic happiness founded in inertia and ignorance.

The mind of the rajasic man drinks of a more fiery and intoxicating cup; the keen, mobile, active pleasure of the senses and the body and the sense-entangled or fierily kinetic will and intelligence are to him all the joy of life and the very significance of living. This joy is nectar to the lips at the first touch, but there is a secret poison in the bottom of the cup and after it the bitterness of disappointment, satiety, fatigue, revolt, disgust, sin, suffering, loss, transience. And it must be so because these pleasures in their external figure are not the things which the spirit in us truly demands from life; there is something behind and beyond the transience of the form, something that is lasting, satisfying, self-sufficient. What the sattwic nature seeks, therefore, is the satisfaction of the higher mind and the spirit and when it once gets this large object of its quest, there comes in a clear, pure happiness of the soul, a state of fullness, an abiding ease and peace. This happiness does not depend on outward things, but on ourselves alone and on the flowering of what is best and most inward within us. But it is not at first our normal possession; it has to be conquered by self-discipline, a labour of the soul, a high and arduous endeavour. At first this means much loss of habitual pleasure, much suffering and struggle, a poison born of the churning of our nature, a painful conflict of forces, much revolt and opposition to the change due to the ill-will of the members or the insistence of vital movements, but in the end the nectar of immortality rises in the place of this bitterness and as we climb to the higher spiritual nature we come to the end of sorrow, the euthanasia of grief and pain. That is the surpassing happiness which descends upon us at the point or line of culmination of the sattwic discipline.

The self-exceeding of the sattwic nature comes when we get beyond the great but still inferior sattwic pleasure, beyond the pleasures of mental knowledge and virtue and peace to the eternal calm of the self and the spiritual ecstasy of the divine oneness. That spiritual joy is no longer the sattwic happiness, *sukham*, but the absolute Ananda. Ananda is the secret delight from which all things are born, by which all is sustained in existence and to which all can rise in the spiritual culmination. Only then can it be possessed when the liberated man, free from ego and its desires, lives at last one with his highest self, one with all beings and one with God in an absolute bliss of the spirit.

XX

Swabhava and Swadharma[1]

IT IS then by a liberating development of the soul out of this lower nature of the triple gunas into the supreme divine nature beyond the three gunas that we can best arrive at spiritual perfection and freedom. And this again can best be brought about by an anterior development of the predominance of the highest sattwic quality to a point at which sattwa also is overpassed, mounts beyond its own limitations and breaks up into a supreme freedom, absolute light, serene power of the conscious spirit in which there is no determination by conflicting gunas. A highest sattwic faith and aim new-shaping what we are according to the highest mental conception of our inner possibilities that we can form in the free intelligence, is changed by this transition into a vision of our own real being, a spiritual self-knowledge. A loftiest ideality or standard of dharma, a pursuit of the right law of our natural existence, is transformed into a free assured self-existent perfection in which all dependence on standards is transcended and the spontaneous law of the immortal self and spirit displaces the lower rule of the instruments and members. The sattwic mind and will change into that spiritual knowledge and dynamic power of identical existence in which the whole nature puts off its disguise and becomes a free self-expression of the godhead within it. The sattwic doer becomes the Jiva in contact with his source, united with the Purushottama; he is no longer the personal doer of the act, but a spiritual channel of the works of the transcendent and universal Spirit. His natural being transformed and illumined remains to be the instrument of a universal and impersonal action, the bow of the divine Archer. What was sattwic action becomes the free activity of the perfected nature in which there is no longer any personal limitation, any tethering to this or that quality, any bondage of sin and virtue, self and others or any but a supreme spiritual self-determination. That is the culmination of works uplifted to the sole Divine Worker by a God-seeking and spiritual knowledge.

---

[1] Gita, XVIII. 40-48.

But there is still an incidental question of great importance in the old Indian system of culture and, even apart from that antique view, of considerable general importance, on which we have had some passing pronouncements already by the Gita and which now falls into its proper place. All action on the normal level is determined by the gunas; the action which is to be done, *kartavyaṁ karma*, takes the triple form of giving, askesis and sacrifice, and any or all of these three may assume the character of any of the gunas. Therefore we have to proceed by the raising of these things to the highest sattwic height of which they are capable and go yet farther beyond to a largeness in which all works become a free self-giving, an energy of the divine Tapas, a perpetual sacrament of the spiritual existence. But this is a general law and all these considerations have been the enunciation of quite general principles and refer indiscriminately to all actions and to all men alike. All can eventually arrive by spiritual evolution to this strong discipline, this large perfection, this highest spiritual state. But while the general rule of mind and action is the same for all men, we see too that there is a constant law of variation and each individual acts not only according to the common laws of the human spirit, mind, will, life, but according to his own nature; each man fulfils different functions or follows a different bent according to the rule of his own circumstances, capacities, turn, character, powers. What place is to be assigned to this variation, this individual rule of nature in the spiritual discipline?

The Gita has laid some stress on this point and even assigned to it a great preliminary importance. At the very start it has spoken of the nature, rule and function of the Kshatriya as Arjuna's own law of action, *svadharma*;[2] it has proceeded to lay it down with a striking emphasis that one's own nature, rule, function should be observed and followed, — even if defective, it is better than the well-performed rule of another's nature. Death in one's own law of nature is better for a man than victory in an alien movement. To follow the law of another's nature is dangerous to the soul,[3] contradictory, as we may say, to the natural way of his evolution, a thing mechanically imposed and therefore imported, artificial and sterilising to one's growth towards the true stature of the spirit. What comes out of the being is the right and healthful thing, the authentic movement, not what is imposed on it from outside or laid on it by life's compulsions or the mind's error. This swadharma is of four general kinds formulated outwardly in the action of the four orders of the old Indian social culture, *cāturvarṇya*. That system corresponds, says the Gita, to a divine law, it "was created by me according to the divisions of the gunas and works," — created from the beginning by the Master of existence. In other words, there are four distinct orders of the active nature, or four fundamental types of the soul in nature, *svabhāva*, and the work and proper function of each human being corresponds to his type of nature. This is now finally explained in preciser detail. The works of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras, says the Gita, are divided according to the qualities (*guṇas*) born of their own inner nature, spiritual temperament, essential character (*svabhāva*). Calm, self-control, askesis, purity, long-suffering, candour, knowledge, acceptance of spiritual truth are the work of the Brahmin, born of his swabhava. Heroism, high spirit, resolution, ability, not fleeing in the battle, giving, lordship (*īśvara-bhāva*, the temperament of the ruler and leader) are the natural work of the Kshatriya. Agriculture, cattle-keeping, trade inclusive of the labour of the craftsman and the artisan are the natural work of the Vaishya. All work of the character of service falls within the natural function of the Shudra. A man, it goes on to say, who devotes himself to his own natural work in life acquires spiritual perfection, not indeed by the mere act itself, but if he does it with right knowledge and the right motive, if he can make it a worship of the Spirit of this creation and dedicate it sincerely to the Master of the universe from whom is all impulse to action. All labour, all action and function, whatever it be, can be consecrated by this dedication of works, can convert the life into a self-offering to the Godhead within and without us and is itself converted into a means of spiritual perfection. But a work not naturally one's own, even though it may be well performed, even though it may look better from the outside when judged by an external and mechanical standard or may lead to more success in life, is still inferior as a means of subjective growth precisely because it has an external motive and a mechanical impulsion. One's own natural work is better, even if it looks from some other point of view defective. One does not incur sin or stain when one acts in the true spirit of the work and in agreement with the law of one's own nature. All action in the three gunas is imperfect, all human work is subject to fault, defect or limitation; but that should not make us abandon our own proper work and natural function. Action should be rightly regulated action, *niyataṁ karma*, but intrinsically one's own, evolved from within, in harmony with the truth of one's being, regulated by the Swabhava, *svabhāva-niyataṁ karma*.

---

[2] II. 31. *svadharmam api cāvekṣya.*

---

[3] III. 35.

What precisely is the intention of the Gita? Let us take it first in its more outward meaning and consider the tinge given to the principle it enounces by the ideas of the race and the time — the hue of the cultural environment, the ancient significance. These verses and the earlier pronouncements of the Gita on the same subject have been seized upon in current controversies on the caste question and interpreted by some as a sanction of the present system, used by others as a denial of the hereditary basis of caste. In point of fact the verses in the Gita have no bearing on the existing caste system, because that is a very different thing from the ancient social ideal of *caturvarṇa*, the four clear-cut orders of the Aryan community, and in no way corresponds with the description of the Gita. Agriculture, cattle-keeping and trade of every kind are said here to be the work of the Vaishya; but in the later system the majority of those concerned in trade and in cattle-keeping, artisans, small craftsmen and others are actually classed as Shudras, — where they are not put altogether outside the pale, — and, with some exceptions, the merchant class is alone and that too not everywhere ranked as Vaishya. Agriculture, government and service are the professions of all classes from the Brahmin down to the Shudra. And if the economical divisions of function have been confounded beyond any possibility of rectification, the law of the guna or quality is still less a part of the later system. There all is rigid custom, *ācāra*, with no reference to the need of the individual nature. If again we take the religious side of the contention advanced by the advocates of the caste system, we can certainly fasten no such absurd idea on the words of the Gita as that it is a law of a man's nature that he shall follow without regard to his personal bent and capacities the profession of his parents or his immediate or distant ancestors, the son of a milkman be a milkman, the son of a doctor a doctor, the descendants of shoemakers remain shoemakers to the end of measurable time, still less that by doing so, by this unintelligent and mechanical repetition of the law of another's nature without regard to his own individual call and qualities a man automatically farthers his own perfection and arrives at spiritual freedom. The Gita's words refer to the ancient system of *caturvarṇa*, as it existed or was supposed to exist in its ideal purity, — there is some controversy whether it was ever anything more than an ideal or general norm more or less loosely followed in practice, — and it should be considered in that connection alone. Here too there is considerable difficulty as to the exact outward significance.

The ancient system of the four orders had a triple aspect; it took a social and economic, a cultural and a spiritual appearance. On the economic side it recognised four functions of the social man in the community, the religious and intellectual, the political, the economic and the servile functions. There are thus four kinds of work, the work of religious ministration, letters, learning and knowledge, the work of government, politics, administration and war, the work of production, wealth-making and exchange, the work of hired labour and service. An endeavour was made to found and stabilise the whole arrangement of society on the partition of these four functions among four clearly marked classes. This system was not peculiar to India, but was with certain differences the dominating feature of a stage of social evolution in other ancient or mediaeval societies. The four functions are still inherent in the life of all normal communities, but the clear divisions no longer exist anywhere. The old system everywhere broke down and gave place to a more fluid order or, as in India, to a confused and complex social rigidity and economic immobility degenerating towards a chaos of castes. Along with this economic division there existed the association of a cultural idea which gave to each class its religious custom, its law of honour, ethical rule, suitable education and training, type of character, family ideal and discipline. The facts of life did not always correspond to the idea, — there is always a certain gulf found between the mental ideal and the vital and physical practice, — but there was a constant and strenuous endeavour to keep up as much as possible a real correspondence. The importance of this attempt and of the cultural ideal and atmosphere it created in the past training of the social man, can hardly be put too high; but at the present day it has little more than a historical, a past and evolutionary significance. Finally, wherever this system existed, it was given more or less a religious sanction (more in the East, very little in Europe) and in India a profounder spiritual use and significance. This spiritual significance is the real kernel of the teaching of the Gita.

The Gita found this system in existence and its ideal in possession of the Indian mind and it recognised and accepted both the ideal and system and its religious sanction. "The fourfold order was created by me," says Krishna, "according to the divisions of quality and active function." On the mere strength of this phrase it cannot altogether be concluded that the Gita regarded this system as an eternal and universal social order. Other ancient authorities did not so regard it; rather they distinctly state that it did not exist in the beginning and will collapse in a later age of the cycle. Still we may understand from the phrase that the fourfold function of social man was considered as normally inherent in the psychological and economic needs of every community and therefore a dispensation of the Spirit that expresses itself in the human corporate and individual existence. The Gita's line is in fact an intellectual rendering of the well-known symbol in the Vedic Purusha-Sukta. But what then should be the natural basis and form of practice of these functions? The practical basis in ancient times came to be the hereditary principle. A man's social function and position were no doubt determined originally, as they are still in freer, less closely ordered communities by environment, occasion, birth and capacity; but as there set in a more fixed stratification, his rank came practically to be regulated by birth mainly or alone and in the later system of caste birth came to be the sole rule of status. The son of a Brahmin is always a Brahmin in status, though he may have nothing of the typical Brahmin qualities or character, no intellectual training or spiritual experience or religious worth or knowledge, no connection whatever with the right function of his class, no Brahminhood in his work and no Brahminhood in his nature.

This was an inevitable evolution, because the external signs are the only ones which are easily and conveniently determinable and birth was the most handy and manageable in an increasingly mechanised, complex and conventional social order. For a time the possible disparity between the hereditary fiction and the individual's real inborn character and capacity was made up or minimised by education and training: but eventually this effort ceased to be sustained and the hereditary convention held absolute rule. The ancient lawgivers, while recognising the hereditary practice, insisted that quality, character and capacity were the one sound and real basis and that without them the hereditary social status became an unspiritual falsehood because it had lost its true significance. The Gita too, as always, founds its thought on the inner significance. It speaks indeed in one verse of the work born with a man, *sahajaṁ karma*; but this does not in itself imply a hereditary basis. According to the Indian theory of rebirth, which the Gita recognises, a man's inborn nature and course of life are essentially determined by his own past lives, are the self-development already effected by his past actions and mental and spiritual evolution and cannot depend solely on the material factor of his ancestry, parentage, physical birth, which can only be of subordinate moment, one effective sign perhaps, but not the dominant principle. The word *sahaja* means that which is born with us, whatever is natural, inborn, innate; its equivalent in all other passages is *svabhāvaja*. The work or function of a man is determined by his qualities, *karma* is determined by *guṇa*; it is the work born of his Swabhava, *svabhāvajaṁ karma*, and regulated by his Swabhava, *svabhāvaniyataṁ karma*. This emphasis on an inner quality and spirit which finds expression in work, function and action is the whole sense of the Gita's idea of Karma.

And from this emphasis on the inner truth and not on the outer form arises the spiritual significance and power which the Gita assigns to the following of the Swadharma. That is the really important bearing of the passage. Too much has been made of its connection with the outer social order, as if the object of the Gita were to support that for its own sake or to justify it by a religio-philosophical theory. In fact it lays very little stress on the external rule and a very great stress on the internal law which the Varna system attempted to put into regulated outward practice. And it is on the individual and spiritual value of this law and not on its communal and economic or other social and cultural importance that the eye of the thought is fixed in this passage. The Gita accepted the Vedic theory of sacrifice, but gave it a profound turn, an inner, subjective and universal meaning, a spiritual sense and direction which alters all its values. Here too and in the same way it accepts the theory of the four orders of men, but gives to it a profound turn, an inner, subjective and universal meaning, a spiritual sense and direction. And immediately the idea behind the theory changes its values and becomes an enduring and living truth not bound up with the transience of a particular social form and order. What the Gita is concerned with is not the validity of the Aryan social order now abolished or in a state of deliquescence, — if that were all, its principle of the Swabhava and Swadharma would have no permanent truth or value, — but the relation of a man's outward life to his inward being, the evolution of his action from his soul and inner law of nature.

And we see in fact that the Gita itself indicates very clearly its intention when it describes the work of the Brahmin and the Kshatriya not in terms of external function, not defined as learning, priest-work and letters or government, war and politics, but entirely in terms of internal character. The language reads a little curiously to our ear. Calm, self-control, askesis, purity, long-suffering, candour, knowledge, acceptance and practice of spiritual truth would not ordinarily be described as a man's function, work or life occupation. Yet this is precisely what the Gita means and says, — that these things, their development, their expression in conduct, their power to cast into form the law of the sattwic nature are the real work of the Brahmin: learning, religious ministration and the other outer functions are only its most suitable field, a favourable means of this inner development, its appropriate self-expression, its way of fixing itself into firmness of type and externalised solidity of character. War, government, politics, leadership and rule are a similar field and means for the Kshatriya; but his real work is the development, the expression in conduct, the power to cast into form and dynamic rhythm of movement the law of the active battling royal or warrior spirit. The work of the Vaishya and Shudra is expressed in terms of external function, and this opposite turn may have some significance. For the temperament moved to production and wealth-getting or limited in the circle of labour and service, the mercantile and the servile mind, are usually turned outward, more occupied with the external values of their work than its power for character, and this disposition is not so favourable to a sattwic or spiritual action of the nature. That too is the reason why a commercial and industrial age or a society preoccupied with the idea of work and labour creates around it an atmosphere more favourable to the material than the spiritual life, more adapted to vital efficiency than to the subtler perfection of the high-reaching mind and spirit. Nevertheless, this kind of nature too and its functions have their inner significance, their spiritual value and can be made a means and power for perfection. As has been said elsewhere, not alone the Brahmin with his ideal of spirituality, ethical purity and knowledge and the Kshatriya with his ideal of nobility, chivalry and high character, but the wealth-seeking Vaishya, the toil-imprisoned Shudra, woman with her narrow, circumscribed and subject life, the very outcaste born from a womb of sin, *pāpayonayaḥ*, can by this road rise at once towards the highest inner greatness and spiritual freedom, towards perfection, towards the liberation and fulfilment of the divine element in the human being.

Three propositions suggest themselves even at the first view and may be taken as implicit in all that the Gita says in this passage. First, all action must be determined from within because each man has in him something his own, some characteristic principle and inborn power of his nature. That is the efficient power of his spirit, that creates the dynamic form of his soul in nature and to express and perfect it by action, to make it effective in capacity and conduct and life is his work, his true Karma: that points him to the right way of his inner and outer living and is the right starting-point for his farther development. Next, there are broadly four types of nature each with its characteristic function and ideal rule of work and character and the type indicates the man's proper field and should trace for him his just circle of function in his outer social existence. Finally, whatever work a man does, if done according to the law of his being, the truth of his nature, can be turned Godwards and made an effective means of spiritual liberation and perfection. The first and last of these propositions are suggestions of an evident truth and justice. The ordinary way of man's individual and social living seems indeed to be a contradiction of these principles; for certainly we bear a terrible weight of external necessity, rule and law and our need for self-expression, for the development of our true person, our real soul, our inmost characteristic law of nature in life is at every turn interfered with, thwarted, forced from its course, given a very poor chance and scope by environmental influences. Life, State, society, family, all surrounding powers seem to be in a league to lay their yoke on our spirit, compel us into their moulds, impose on us their mechanical interest and rough immediate convenience. We become parts of a machine; we are not, are hardly allowed to be men in the true sense, *manuṣya*, *puruṣa*, souls, minds, free children of the spirit empowered to develop the highest characteristic perfection of our being and make it our means of service to the race. It would seem that we are not what we make ourselves, but what we are made. Yet the more we advance in knowledge, the more the truth of the Gita's rule is bound to appear. The child's education ought to be an outbringing of all that is best, most powerful, most intimate and living in his nature; the mould into which the man's action and development ought to run is that of his innate quality and power. He must acquire new things, but he will acquire them best, most vitally on the basis of his own developed type and inborn force. And so too the functions of a man ought to be determined by his natural turn, gift and capacities. The individual who develops freely in this manner will be a living soul and mind and will have a much greater power for the service of the race. And we are able now to see more clearly that this rule is true not only of the individual but of the community and the nation, the group soul, the collective man. The second proposition of the four types and their functions is more open to dispute. It may be said that it is too simple and positive, that it takes no sufficient account of the complexity of life and the plasticity of human nature, and, whatever the theory or its intrinsic merits, the outward social application must lead precisely to that tyranny of a mechanical rule which is the flat contradiction of all law of Swadharma. But it has a profounder meaning under the surface which gives it a less disputable value. And even if we reject it, the third proposition will yet stand in its general significance. Whatever a man's work and function in life, he can, if it is determined from within or if he is allowed to make it a self-expression of his nature, turn it into a means of growth and of a greater inner perfection. And whatever it be, if he performs his natural function in the right spirit, if he enlightens it by the ideal mind, if he turns its action to the uses of the Godhead within, serves with it the Spirit manifested in the universe or makes it a conscious instrumentation for the purposes of the Divine in humanity, he can transmute it into a means towards the highest spiritual perfection and freedom.

But the Gita's teaching here has a still profounder significance if we take it not as a detached quotation self-contained in meaning, as is too often done, but as we should do, in connection with all that it has been saying throughout the work and especially in the last twelve chapters. The Gita's philosophy of life and works is that all proceeds from the Divine Existence, the transcendent and universal Spirit. All is a veiled manifestation of the Godhead, Vasudeva, *yataḥ pravṛttir bhūtānāṁ yena sarvam idaṁ tatam*, and to unveil the Immortal within and in the world, to dwell in unity with the Soul of the universe, to rise in consciousness, knowledge, will, love, spiritual delight to oneness with the supreme Godhead, to live in the highest spiritual nature with the individual and natural being delivered from shortcoming and ignorance and made a conscious instrument for the works of the divine Shakti is the perfection of which humanity is capable and the condition of immortality and freedom. But how is this possible when in fact we are enveloped in natural ignorance, the soul shut up in the prison of ego, overcome, beset, hammered and moulded by the environment, mastered by the mechanism of Nature, cut off from our hold on the reality of our own secret spiritual force? The answer is that all this natural action, however now enveloped in a veiled and contrary working, still contains the principle of its own evolving freedom and perfection. A Godhead is seated in the heart of every man and is the Lord of this mysterious action of Nature. And though this Spirit of the universe, this One who is all, seems to be turning us on the wheel of the world as if mounted on a machine by the force of Maya, shaping us in our ignorance as the potter shapes a pot, as the weaver a fabric, by some skilful mechanical principle, yet is this spirit our own greatest self and it is according to the real idea, the truth of ourselves, that which is growing in us and finding always new and more adequate forms in birth after birth, in our animal and human and divine life, in that which we were, that which we are, that which we shall be, — it is in accordance with this inner soul-truth that, as our opened eyes will discover, we are progressively shaped by this spirit within us in its all-wise omnipotence. This machinery of ego, this tangled complexity of the three gunas, mind, body, life, emotion, desire, struggle, thought, aspiration, endeavour, this locked interaction of pain and pleasure, sin and virtue, striving and success and failure, soul and environment, myself and others, is only the outward imperfect form taken by a higher spiritual Force in me which pursues through its vicissitudes the progressive self-expression of the divine reality and greatness I am secretly in spirit and shall overtly become in nature. This action contains in itself the principle of its own success, the principle of the Swabhava and Swadharma.

The Jiva is in self-expression a portion of the Purushottama. He represents in Nature the power of the supreme Spirit, he is in his personality that Power; he brings out in an individual existence the potentialities of the Soul of the universe. This Jiva itself is spirit and not the natural ego; the spirit and not the form of ego is our reality and inner soul principle. The true force of what we are and can be is there in that higher spiritual Power and this mechanical Maya of the three gunas is not the inmost and fundamental truth of its movements; it is only a present executive energy, an apparatus of lower convenience, a scheme of outward exercise and practice. The spiritual Nature which has become this multiple personality in the universe, *parā prakṛtir jīva-bhūtā*, is the basic stuff of our existence: all the rest is lower derivation and outer formation from a highest hidden activity of the spirit. And in Nature each of us has a principle and will of our own becoming; each soul is a force of self-consciousness that formulates an idea of the Divine in it and guides by that its action and evolution, its progressive self-finding, its constant varying self-expression, its apparently uncertain but secretly inevitable growth to fullness. That is our Swabhava, our own real nature; that is our truth of being which is finding now only a constant partial expression in our various becoming in the world. The law of action determined by this Swabhava is our right law of self-shaping, function, working, our Swadharma.

This principle obtains throughout cosmos; there is everywhere the one Power at work, one common universal Nature, but in each grade, form, energy, genus, species, individual creature she follows out a major Idea and minor ideas and principles of constant and complex variation that found both the permanent dharma of each and its temporary dharmas. These fix for it the law of its being in becoming, the curve of its birth and persistence and change, the force of its self-preservation and self-increasing, the lines of its stable and evolving self-expression and self-finding, the rules of its relations to all the rest of the expression of the Self in the universe. To follow the law of its being, Swadharma, to develop the idea in its being, Swabhava, is its ground of safety, its right walk and procedure. That does not in the end chain down the soul to any present formulation, but rather by this way of development it enriches itself most surely with new experiences assimilated to its own law and principle and can most powerfully grow and break at its hour beyond present moulds to a higher self-expression. To be unable to maintain its own law and principle, to fail to adapt itself to its environment in such a way as to adapt the environment to itself and make it useful to its own nature is to lose its self, forfeit its right of self, deviate from its way of self, is perdition, *vinaṣṭi*, is falsehood, death, anguish of decay and dissolution and necessity of painful self-recovery often after eclipse and disappearance, is the vain circuit of the wrong road retarding our real progress. This law obtains in one form or another in all Nature; it underlies all that action of law of universality and law of variation revealed to us by science. The same law obtains in the life of the human being, his many lives in many human bodies. Here it has an outward play and an inward spiritual truth, and the outward play can only put on its full and real meaning when we have found the inward spiritual truth and enlightened all our action with the values of the spirit. This great and desirable transformation can be effected with rapidity and power in proportion to our progress in self-knowledge.

And first we have to see that the Swabhava means one thing in the highest spiritual nature and takes quite another form and significance in the lower nature of the three gunas. There too it acts, but is not in full possession of itself, is seeking as it were for its own true law in a half light or a darkness and goes on its way through many lower forms, many false forms, endless imperfections, perversions, self-losings, self-findings, seekings after norm and rule before it arrives at self-discovery and perfection. Our nature here is a mixed weft of knowledge and ignorance, of truth and falsehood, of success and failure, of right and wrong, of finding and losing, of sin and virtue. It is always the Swabhava that is looking for self-expression and self-finding through all these things, *svabhāvas tu pravartate*, a truth which should teach us universal charity and equality of vision, since we are all subject to the same perplexity and struggle. These motions belong, not to the soul, but to the nature. The Purushottama is not limited by this ignorance; he governs it from above and guides the soul through its changes. The pure immutable self is not touched by these movements; it witnesses and supports by its intangible eternity this mutable Nature in her vicissitudes. The real soul of the individual, the central being in us, is greater than these things, but accepts them in its outward evolution in Nature. And when we have got at this real soul, at the changeless universal self sustaining us and at the Purushottama, the Lord within us who presides over and guides the whole action of Nature, we have found all the spiritual meaning of the law of our life. For we become aware of the Master of existence expressing himself for ever in his infinite quality, *anantaguṇa*, in all beings. We become aware of a fourfold presence of the Divinity, a Soul of self-knowledge and world-knowledge, a Soul of strength and power that seeks for and finds and uses its powers, a Soul of mutuality and creation and relation and interchange between creature and creature, a Soul of works that labours in the universe and serves all in each and turns the labour of each to the service of all others. We become aware too of the individual Power of the Divine in us, that which directly uses these fourfold powers, assigns our strain of self-expression, determines our divine work and office and raises us through it all to his universality in manifoldness till we can find by it our spiritual oneness with him and with all that he is in the cosmos.

The external idea of the four orders of men in life is concerned only with the more outward working of this truth of the divine action; it is limited to one side of its operation in the functioning of the three gunas. It is true that in this birth men fall very largely into one of four types, the man of knowledge, the man of power, the productive vital man, the man of rude labour and service. These are not fundamental divisions, but stages of self-development in our manhood. The human being starts with a sufficient load of ignorance and inertia; his first state is one of rude toil enforced on his animal indolence by the needs of the body, by the impulsion of life, by necessity of Nature and, beyond a certain point of need, by some form of direct or indirect compulsion which society lays upon him, and those who are still governed by this tamas are the Shudras, the serfs of society who give it their toil and can contribute nothing or very little else in comparison with more developed men to its manifold play of life. By kinetic action man develops the rajasic guna in him and we get a second type of man who is driven by a constant instinct for useful creation, production, having, acquisition, holding and enjoying, the middle economic and vital man, the Vaishya. At a higher elevation of the rajasic or kinetic quality of our one common nature we get the active man with a more dominant will, with bolder ambitions, with the instinct to act, battle, and enforce his will, at the strongest to lead, command, rule, carry masses of men in his orbit, the fighter, leader, ruler, prince, king, Kshatriya. And where the sattwic mind predominates, we get the Brahmin, the man with a turn for knowledge, who brings thought, reflection, the seeking for truth and an intelligent or at the highest a spiritual rule into life and illumines by it his conception and mode of existence.

There is always in human nature something of all these four personalities developed or undeveloped, wide or narrow, suppressed or rising to the surface, but in most men one or the other tends to predominate and seems to take up sometimes the whole space of action in the nature. And in any society we should have all four types, — even, for an example, if we create a purely productive and commercial society such as modern times have attempted, or for that matter a Shudra society of labour, of the proletariate such as attracts the most modern mind and is now being attempted in one part of Europe and advocated in others. There would still be the thinkers moved to find the law and truth and guiding rule of the whole matter, the captains and leaders of industry who would make all this productive activity an excuse for the satisfaction of their need of adventure and battle and leadership and dominance, the many typical purely productive and wealth-getting men, the average workers satisfied with a modicum of labour and the reward of their labour. But these are quite outward things, and if that were all, this economy of human type would have no spiritual significance. Or it would mean at most, as has been sometimes held in India, that we have to go through these stages of development in our births; for we must perforce proceed progressively through the tamasic, the rajaso-tamasic, the rajasic or rajaso-sattwic to the sattwic nature, ascend and fix ourselves in an inner Brahminhood, *brāhmaṇya*, and then seek salvation from that basis. But in that case there would be no logical room for the Gita's assertion that even the Shudra or Chandala can by turning his life Godwards climb straight to spiritual liberty and perfection.

The fundamental truth is not this outward thing, but a force of our inner being in movement, the truth of the fourfold active power of the spiritual nature. Each Jiva possesses in his spiritual nature these four sides, is a soul of knowledge, a soul of strength and of power, a soul of mutuality and interchange, a soul of works and service, but one side or other predominates in the action and expressive spirit and tinges the dealings of the soul with its embodied nature; it leads and gives its stamp to the other powers and uses them for the principal strain of action, tendency, experience. The Swabhava then follows, not crudely and rigidly as put in the social demarcation, but subtly and flexibly the law of this strain and develops in developing it the other three powers. Thus the pursuit of the impulse of works and service rightly done develops knowledge, increases power, trains closeness or balance of mutuality and skill and order of relation.

Each front of the fourfold godhead moves through the enlargement of its own dominant principle of nature and enrichment by the other three towards a total perfection. This development undergoes the law of the three gunas. There is possible a tamasic and rajasic way of following even the dharma of the soul of knowledge, a brute tamasic and a high sattwic way of following the dharma of power, a forceful rajasic or a beautiful and noble sattwic way of following the dharma of works and service. To arrive at the sattwic way of the inner individual Swadharma and of the works to which it moves us on the ways of life is a preliminary condition of perfection. And it may be noted that the inner Swadharma is not bound to any outward social or other form of action, occupation or function. The soul of works or that element in us that is satisfied to serve, can, for example, make the life of the pursuit of knowledge, the life of struggle and power or the life of mutuality, production and interchange a means of satisfying its divine impulse to labour and to service.

And in the end to arrive at the divinest figure and most dynamic soul-power of this fourfold activity is a wide doorway to a swiftest and largest reality of the most high spiritual perfection. This we can do if we turn the action of the Swadharma into a worship of the inner Godhead, the universal Spirit, the transcendent Purushottama and, eventually, surrender the whole action into his hands, *mayi sannyasya karmāṇi*. Then as we get beyond the limitation of the three gunas, so also do we get beyond the division of the fourfold law and beyond the limitation of all distinctive dharmas, *sarvadharmān parityajya*. The Spirit takes up the individual into the universal Swabhava, perfects and unifies the fourfold soul of nature in us and does its self-determined works according to the divine will and the accomplished power of the godhead in the creature.

The Gita's injunction is to worship the Divine by our own work, *sva-karmaṇā*; our offering must be the works determined by our own law of being and nature. For from the Divine all movement of creation and impulse to act originates and by him all this universe is extended and for the holding together of the worlds he presides over and shapes all action through the

Swabhava. To worship him with our inner and outer activities, to make our whole life a sacrifice of works to the Highest is to prepare ourselves to become one with him in all our will and substance and nature. Our work should be according to the truth within us, it should not be an accommodation with outward and artificial standards: it must be a living and sincere expression of the soul and its inborn powers. For to follow out the living inmost truth of this soul in our present nature will help us eventually to arrive at the immortal truth of the same soul in the now superconscious supreme nature. There we can live in oneness with God and our true self and all beings and, perfected, become a faultless instrument of divine action in the freedom of the immortal Dharma.

XXI

Towards the Supreme Secret[1]

THE TEACHER has completed all else that he needed to say, he has worked out all the central principles and the supporting suggestions and implications of his message and elucidated the principal doubts and questions that might rise around it, and now all that rests for him to do is to put into decisive phrase and penetrating formula the one last word, the heart itself of the message, the very core of his gospel. And we find that this decisive, last and crowning word is not merely the essence of what has been already said on the matter, not merely a concentrated description of the needed self-discipline, the Sadhana, and of that greater spiritual consciousness which is to be the result of all its effort and askesis; it sweeps out, as it were, yet farther, breaks down every limit and rule, canon and formula and opens into a wide and illimitable spiritual truth with an infinite potentiality of significance. And that is a sign of the profundity, the wide reach, the greatness of spirit of the Gita's teaching. An ordinary religious teaching or philosophical doctrine is well enough satisfied to seize on certain great and vital aspects of truth and turn them into utilisable dogma and instruction, method and practice for the guidance of man in his inner life and the law and form of his action; it does not go farther, it does not open doors out of the circle of its own system, does not lead us out into some widest freedom and unimprisoned largeness. This limitation is useful and indeed for a time indispensable. Man bounded by his mind and will has need of a law and rule, a fixed system, a definite practice selective of his thought and action; he asks for the single unmistakable hewn path hedged, fixed and secure to the tread, for the limited horizons, for the enclosed resting-places. It is only the strong and few who can move through freedom to freedom. And yet in the end the free soul ought to have an issue out of the forms and systems in which the mind finds its account and takes its limited pleasure. To exceed our ladder of ascent, not to stop short even on the topmost stair but move untrammelled and at large in the wideness of the spirit is a release important for our perfection; the spirit's absolute liberty is our perfect status. And this is how the Gita leads us: it lays down a firm and sure but very large way of ascent, a great Dharma, and then it takes us out beyond all that is laid down, beyond all dharmas, into infinitely open spaces, divulges to us the hope, lets us into the secret of an absolute perfection founded in an absolute spiritual liberty, and that secret, *guhyatamam*, is the substance of what it calls its supreme word, that the hidden thing, the inmost knowledge.

---

[1] Gita, XVIII. 49-56.

And first the Gita restates the body of its message. It summarises the whole outline and essence in the short space of fifteen verses, lines of a brief and concentrated expression and significance that miss nothing of the kernel of the matter, couched in phrases of the most lucid precision and clearness. And they must therefore be scanned with care, must be read deeply in the light of all that has gone before, because here it is evidently intended to extract what the Gita itself considers to be the central sense of its own teaching. The statement sets out from the original starting-point of the thought in the book, the enigma of human action, the apparently insuperable difficulty of living in the highest self and spirit while yet we continue to do the works of the world. The easiest way is to give up the problem as insoluble, life and action as an illusion or an inferior movement of existence to be abandoned as soon as we can rise out of the snare of the world into the truth of spiritual being. That is the ascetic solution, if it can be called a solution; at any rate it is a decisive and effective way out of the enigma, a way to which ancient Indian thought of the highest and most meditative kind, as soon as it commenced to turn at a sharp incline from its first large and free synthesis, had moved with an always increasing preponderance. The Gita like the Tantra and on certain sides the later religions attempts to preserve the ancient balance: it maintains the substance and foundation of the original synthesis, but the form has been changed and renovated in the light of a developing spiritual experience. This teaching does not evade the difficult problem of reconciling the full active life of man with the inner life in the highest self and spirit; it advances what it holds to be the real solution. It does not at all deny the efficacy of the ascetic renunciation of life for its own purpose, but it sees that that cuts instead of loosening the knot of the riddle and therefore it accounts it an inferior method and holds its own for the better way. The two paths both lead us out of the lower ignorant normal nature of man to the pure spiritual consciousness and so far both must be held to be valid and even one in essence: but where one stops short and turns back, the other advances with a firm subtlety and high courage, opens a gate on unexplored vistas, completes man in God and unites and reconciles in the spirit soul and Nature.

And therefore in the first five of these verses the Gita so phrases its statement that it shall be applicable to both the way of the inner and the way of the outer renunciation and yet in such a manner that one has only to assign to some of their common expressions a deeper and more inward meaning in order to get the sense and thought of the method favoured by the Gita. The difficulty of human action is that the soul and nature of man seem fatally subjected to many kinds of bondage, the prison of the ignorance, the meshes of the ego, the chain of the passions, the hammering insistence of the life of the moment, an obscure and limited circle without an issue. The soul shut up in this circle of action has no freedom, no leisure or light of self-knowledge to make the discovery of its self and the true value of life and meaning of existence. It has indeed such hints of its being as it can get from its active personality and dynamic nature, but the standards of perfection it can erect there are much too temporal, restricted and relative to be a satisfactory key to its own riddle. How, while absorbed and continually forced outward by the engrossing call of its active nature, is it to get back to its real self and spiritual existence? The ascetic renunciation and the way of the Gita are both agreed that it must first of all renounce this absorption, must cast from it the external solicitation of outward things and separate silent self from active nature; it must identify itself with the immobile Spirit and live in the silence. It must arrive at an inner inactivity, *naiṣkarmya*. It is therefore this saving inner passivity that the Gita puts here as the first object of its Yoga, the first necessary perfection in it or Siddhi. "An understanding without attachment in all things, a soul self-conquered and empty of desire, man attains by renunciation a supreme perfection of *naiṣkarmya*."

This ideal of renunciation, of a self-conquered stillness, spiritual passivity and freedom from desire is common to all the ancient wisdom. The Gita gives us its psychological foundation with an unsurpassed completeness and clearness. It rests on the common experience of all seekers of self-knowledge that there are two different natures and as it were two selves in us. There is the lower self of the obscure mental, vital and physical nature subject to ignorance and inertia in the very stuff of its consciousness and especially in its basis of material substance, kinetic and vital indeed by the power of life but without inherent self-possession and self-knowledge in its action, attaining in the mind to some knowledge and harmony, but only with difficult effort and by a constant struggle with its own disabilities. And there is the higher nature and self of our spiritual being, self-possessed and self-luminous but in our ordinary mentality inaccessible to our experience. At times we get glimpses of this greater thing within us, but we are not consciously within it, we do not live in its light and calm and illimitable splendour. The first of these two very different things is the Gita's nature of the three gunas. Its seeing of itself is centred in the ego idea, its principle of action is desire born of ego, and the knot of ego is attachment to the objects of the mind and sense and the life's desire. The inevitable constant result of all these things is bondage, settled subjection to a lower control, absence of self-mastery, absence of self-knowledge. The other greater power and presence is discovered to be nature and being of the pure spirit unconditioned by ego, that which is called in Indian philosophy self and impersonal Brahman. Its principle is an infinite and an impersonal existence one and the same in all: and, since this impersonal existence is without ego, without conditioning quality, without desire, need or stimulus, it is immobile and immutable; eternally the same, it regards and supports but does not share or initiate the action of the universe. The soul when it throws itself out into active Nature is the Gita's Kshara, its mobile or mutable Purusha; the same soul gathered back into pure silent self and essential spirit is the Gita's Akshara, immobile or immutable Purusha.

Then evidently the straight and simplest way to get out of the close bondage of the active nature and back to spiritual freedom is to cast away entirely all that belongs to the dynamics of the ignorance and to convert the soul into a pure spiritual existence. That is what is called becoming Brahman, *brahma-bhūya*. It is to put off the lower mental, vital, physical existence and to put on the pure spiritual being. This can best be done by the intelligence and will, *buddhi*, our present topmost principle. It has to turn away from the things of the lower existence and first and foremost from its effective knot of desire, from our attachment to the objects pursued by the mind and the senses. One must become an understanding unattached in all things, *asakta-buddhiḥ sarvatra*. Then all desire passes away from the soul in its silence; it is free from all longings, *vigata-spṛhaḥ*. That brings with it or it makes possible the subjection of our lower and the possession of our higher self, a possession dependent on complete self-mastery, secured by a radical victory and conquest over our mobile nature, *jitātmā*. And all this amounts to an absolute inner renunciation of the desire of things, *sannyāsa*. Renunciation is the way to this perfection and the man who has thus inwardly renounced all is described by the Gita as the true Sannyasin. But because the word usually signifies as well an outward renunciation or sometimes even that alone, the Teacher uses another word, *tyāga*, to distinguish the inward from the outward withdrawal and says that Tyaga is better than Sannyasa. The ascetic way goes much farther in its recoil from the dynamic Nature. It is enamoured of renunciation for its own sake and insists on an outward giving up of life and action, a complete quietism of soul and nature. That, the Gita replies, is not possible entirely so long as we live in the body. As far as it is possible, it may be done, but such a rigorous diminution of works is not indispensable: it is not even really or at least ordinarily advisable. The one thing needed is a complete inner quietism and that is all the Gita's sense of *naiṣkarmya*.

If we ask why this reservation, why this indulgence to the dynamic principle when our object is to become the pure self and the pure self is described as inactive, *akartā*, the answer is that that inactivity and divorce of self from Nature are not the whole truth of our spiritual release. Self and Nature are in the end one thing; a total and perfect spirituality makes us one with all the Divine in self and in nature. In fact this becoming Brahman, this assumption into the self of eternal silence, *brahma-bhūya*, is not all our objective, but only the necessary immense base for a still greater and more marvellous divine becoming, *mad-bhāva*. And to get to that greatest spiritual perfection we have indeed to be immobile in the self, silent in all our members, but also to act in the power, Shakti, Prakriti, the true and high force of the Spirit. And if we ask how a simultaneity of what seem to be two opposites is possible, the answer is that that is the very nature of a complete spiritual being; always it has this double poise of the Infinite. The impersonal self is silent; we too must be inwardly silent, impersonal, withdrawn into the spirit. The impersonal self looks on all action as done not by it but by Prakriti; it regards with a pure equality all the working of her qualities, modes and forces: the soul impersonalised in the self must similarly regard all our actions as done not by itself but by the qualities of Prakriti; it must be equal in all things, *sarvatra*. And at the same time in order that we may not stop here, in order that we may eventually go forward and find a spiritual rule and direction in our works and not only a law of inner immobility and silence, we are asked to impose on the intelligence and will the attitude of sacrifice, all our action inwardly changed and turned into an offering to the Lord of Nature, to the Being of whom she is the self-power, *svā prakṛtiḥ*, the supreme Spirit. Even we have eventually to renounce all into his hands, to abandon all personal initiation of action, *sarvārambhāḥ*, to keep our natural selves only as an instrument of his works and his purpose. These things have been already explained fully and the Gita does not here insist, but uses simply without farther qualification the common terms, *sannyāsa* and *naiṣkarmya*.

A completest inner quietism once admitted as our necessary means towards living in the pure impersonal self, the question how practically it brings about that result is the next issue that arises. "How, having attained this perfection, one thus attains to the Brahman, hear from me, O son of Kunti, — that which is the supreme concentrated direction of the knowledge." The knowledge meant here is the Yoga of the Sankhyas, — the Yoga of pure knowledge accepted by the Gita, *jñāna-yogena sāṅkhyānām*, so far as it is one with its own Yoga which includes also the way of works of the Yogins, *karma-yogena yoginām*. But all mention of works is kept back for the moment. For by Brahman here is meant at first the silent, the impersonal, the immutable. The Brahman indeed is both for the Upanishads and the Gita all that is and lives and moves; it is not solely an impersonal Infinite or an unthinkable and incommunicable Absolute, *acintyam avyavahāryam*. All this is Brahman, says the Upanishad; all this is Vasudeva, says the Gita, — the supreme Brahman is all that moves or is stable and his hands and feet and eyes and heads and faces are on every side of us. But still there are two aspects of this All, — his immutable eternal self that supports existence and his self of active power that moves abroad in the world movement. It is only when we lose our limited ego personality in the impersonality of the self that we arrive at the calm and free oneness by which we can possess a true unity with the universal power of the Divine in his world movement. Impersonality is a denial of limitation and division, and the cult of impersonality is a natural condition of true being, an indispensable preliminary of true knowledge and therefore a first requisite of true action. It is very clear that we cannot become one self with all or one with the universal Spirit and his vast self-knowledge, his complex will and his widespread world-purpose by insisting on our limited personality of ego; for that divides us from others and it makes us bound and self-centred in our view and in our will to action.

Imprisoned in personality we can only get at a limited union by sympathy or by some relative accommodation of ourselves to the view-point and feeling and will of others. To be one with all and with the Divine and his will in the cosmos we must become at first impersonal and free from our ego and its claims and from the ego's way of seeing ourselves and the world and others. And we cannot do this if there is not something in our being other than the personality, other than the ego, an impersonal self one with all existences. To lose ego and be this impersonal self, to become this impersonal Brahman in our consciousness is therefore the first movement of this Yoga.

How then is this to be done? First, says the Gita, through a union of our purified intelligence with the pure spiritual substance in us by the yoga of the buddhi, *buddhyā viśuddhayā yuktaḥ*. This spiritual turning of the buddhi from the outward and downward to the inward and upward look is the essence of the Yoga of knowledge. The purified understanding has to control the whole being, *ātmānaṁ niyamya*; it must draw us away from attachment to the outward-going desires of the lower nature by a firm and a steady will, *dhṛtyā*, which in its concentration faces entirely towards the impersonality of the pure spirit. The senses must abandon their objects, the mind must cast away the liking and disliking which these objects excite in it, — for the impersonal self has no desires and repulsions; these are vital reactions of our personality to the touches of things and the corresponding response of the mind and senses to the touches is their support and their basis. An entire control has to be acquired over the mind, speech and body, over even the vital and physical reactions, hunger and cold and heat and physical pleasure and pain; the whole of our being must become indifferent, unaffected by these things, equal to all outward touches and to their inward reactions and responses. This is the most direct and powerful method, the straight and sharp way of Yoga. There has to be a complete cessation of desire and attachment, *vairāgya*; a strong resort to impersonal solitude, a constant union with the inmost self by meditation is demanded of the seeker. And yet the object of this austere discipline is not to be self-centred in some supreme egoistic seclusion and tranquillity of the sage and thinker averse to the trouble of participation in the world-action; the object is to get rid of all ego. One must put away utterly first the rajasic kind of egoism, egoistic strength and violence, arrogance, desire, wrath, the sense and instinct of possession, the urge of the passions, the strong lusts of life. But afterwards must be discarded egoism of all kinds, even of the most sattwic type; for the aim is to make soul and mind and life free in the end from all imprisoning I-ness and my-ness, *nirmama*. The extinction of ego and its demands of all sorts is the method put before us. For the pure impersonal self which, unshaken, supports the universe has no egoism and makes no demand on thing or person; it is calm and luminously impassive and silently regards all things and persons with an equal and impartial eye of self-knowledge and world-knowledge. Then clearly it is by living inwardly in a similar or identical impersonality that the soul within, released from the siege of things, can best become capable of oneness with this immutable Brahman which regards and knows but is not affected by the forms and mutations of the universe.

This first pursuit of impersonality as enjoined by the Gita brings with it evidently a certain completest inner quietism and is identical in its inmost parts and principles of practice with the method of Sannyasa. And yet there is a point at which its tendency of withdrawal from the claims of dynamic Nature and the external world is checked and a limit imposed to prevent the inner quietism from deepening into refusal of action and a physical withdrawal. The renunciation of their objects by the senses, *viṣayāṁs tyaktvā*, is to be of the nature of Tyaga; it must be a giving up of all sensuous attachment, *rasa*, not a refusal of the intrinsic necessary activity of the senses. One must move among surrounding things and act on the objects of the sense-field with a pure, true and intense, a simple and absolute operation of the senses for their utility to the spirit in divine action, *kevalair indriyaiś caran*, and not at all for the fulfilment of desire. There is to be *vairāgya*, not in the common significance of disgust of life or distaste for the world action, but renunciation of *rāga*, as also of its opposite, *dveṣa*. There must be a withdrawal from all mental and vital liking as from all mental and vital disliking whatsoever. And this is asked not for extinction, but in order that there may be a perfect enabling equality in which the spirit can give an unhampered and unlimited assent to the integral and comprehensive divine vision of things and to the integral divine action in Nature. A continual resort to meditation, *dhyāna-yoga-paro nityam*, is the firm means by which the soul of man can realise its self of Power and its self of silence. And yet there must be no abandonment of the active life for a life of pure meditation; action must always be done as a sacrifice to the supreme Spirit. This movement of recoil in the path of Sannyasa prepares an absorbed disappearance of the individual in the Eternal, and renunciation of action and life in the world is an indispensable step in the process. But in the Gita's path of Tyaga it is a preparation rather for the turning of our whole life and existence and of all action into an integral oneness with the serene and immeasurable being, consciousness and will of the Divine, and it preludes and makes possible a vast and total passing upward of the soul out of the lower ego to the inexpressible perfection of the supreme spiritual nature, *parā prakṛti*.

This decisive departure of the Gita's thought is indicated in the next two verses, of which the first runs with a significant sequence, "When one has become the Brahman, when one neither grieves nor desires, when one is equal to all beings, then one gets the supreme love and devotion to Me." But in the narrow path of knowledge bhakti, devotion to the personal Godhead, can be only an inferior and preliminary movement; the end, the climax is the disappearance of personality in a featureless oneness with the impersonal Brahman in which there can be no place for bhakti: for there is none to be adored and none to adore; all else is lost in the silent immobile identity of the Jiva with the Atman. Here there is given to us something yet higher than the Impersonal, — here there is the supreme Self who is the supreme Ishwara, here there is the supreme Soul and its supreme nature, here there is the Purushottama who is beyond the personal and impersonal and reconciles them on his eternal heights. The ego personality still disappears in the silence of the Impersonal, but at the same time there remains even with this silence at the back the action of a supreme Self, one greater than the Impersonal. There is no longer the lower blind and limping action of the ego and the three gunas, but instead the vast self-determining movement of an infinite spiritual Force, a free immeasurable Shakti. All Nature becomes the power of the one Divine and all action his action through the individual as channel and instrument. In place of the ego there comes forward conscious and manifest the true spiritual individual in the freedom of his real nature, in the power of his supernal status, in the majesty and splendour of his eternal kinship to the Divine, an imperishable portion of the supreme Godhead, an indestructible power of the supreme Prakriti, *mamaivāṁśaḥ sanātanaḥ*, *parā prakṛtir jīva-bhūtā*. The soul of man then feels itself to be one in a supreme spiritual impersonality with the Purushottama and in its universalised personality a manifest power of the Godhead. Its knowledge is a light of his knowledge; its will is a force of his will; its unity with all in the universe is a play of his eternal oneness. It is in this double realisation, it is in this union of two sides of an ineffable Truth of existence by either and both of which man can approach and enter into his own infinite being, that the liberated man has to live and act and feel and determine or rather have determined for him by a greatest power of his supreme self his relations with all and the inner and outer workings of his spirit. And in that unifying realisation adoration, love and devotion are not only still possible, but are a large, an inevitable and a crowning portion of the highest experience. The One who eternally becomes the Many, the Many who in their apparent division are still eternally one, the Highest who displays in us this secret and mystery of existence, not dispersed by his multiplicity, not limited by his oneness, — this is the integral knowledge, this is the reconciling experience which makes one capable of liberated action, *muktasya karma*.

This knowledge comes, says the Gita, by a highest bhakti. It is attained when the mind exceeds itself by a supramental and high spiritual seeing of things and when the heart too rises in unison beyond our more ignorant mental forms of love and devotion to a love that is calm and deep and luminous with widest knowledge, to a supreme delight in God and an illimitable adoration, the unperturbed ecstasy, the spiritual Ananda. When the soul has lost its separative personality, when it has become the Brahman, it is then that it can live in the true Person and can attain to the supreme revealing bhakti for the Purushottama and can come to know him utterly by the power of its profound bhakti, its heart's knowledge, *bhaktyā mām abhijānāti*. That is the integral knowledge, when the heart's fathomless vision completes the mind's absolute experience, — *samagraṁ māṁ jñātvā*. "He comes to know Me," says the Gita, "who and how much I am and in all the reality and principles of my being, *yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ*." This integral knowledge is the knowledge of the Divine present in the individual; it is the entire experience of the Lord secret in the heart of man, revealed now as the supreme Self of his existence, the Sun of all his illumined consciousness, the Master and Power of all his works, the divine Fountain of all his soul's love and delight, the Lover and Beloved of his worship and adoration. It is the knowledge too of the Divine extended in the universe, of the Eternal from whom all proceeds and in whom all lives and has its being, of the Self and Spirit of the cosmos, of Vasudeva who has become all this that is, of the Lord of cosmic existence who reigns over the works of Nature. It is the knowledge of the divine Purusha luminous in his transcendent eternity, the form of whose being escapes from the thought of the mind but not from its silence; it is the entire living experience of him as absolute Self, supreme Brahman, supreme Soul, supreme Godhead: for that seemingly incommunicable Absolute is at the same time and even in that highest status the originating Spirit of the cosmic action and Lord of all these existences. The soul of the liberated man thus enters by a reconciling knowledge, penetrates by a perfect simultaneous delight of the transcendent Divine, of the Divine in the individual and of the Divine in the universe into the Purushottama, *māṁ viśate tadanantaram*. He becomes one with him in his self-knowledge and self-experience, one with him in his being and consciousness and will and world-knowledge and world-impulse, one with him in the universe and in his unity with all creatures in the universe and one with him beyond world and individual in the transcendence of the eternal Infinite, *śāśvataṁ padam avyayam*. This is the culmination of the supreme bhakti that is at the core of the supreme knowledge.

And it then becomes evident how action continual and unceasing and of all kinds without diminution or abandonment of any part of the activities of life can be not only quite consistent with a supreme spiritual experience, but as forceful a means of reaching this highest spiritual condition as bhakti or knowledge. Nothing can be more positive than the Gita's statement in this matter. "And by doing also all actions always lodged in Me he attains by my grace the eternal and imperishable status." This liberating action is of the character of works done in a profound union of the will and all the dynamic parts of our nature with the Divine in ourself and the cosmos. It is done first as a sacrifice with the idea still of our self as the doer. It is done next without that idea and with a perception of the Prakriti as the sole doer. It is done last with the knowledge of that Prakriti as the supreme power of the Divine and a renunciation, a surrender of all our actions to him with the individual as a channel only and an instrument. Our works then proceed straight from the Self and Divine within us, are a part of the indivisible universal action, are initiated and performed not by us but by a vast transcendent Shakti. All that we do is done for the sake of the Lord seated in the heart of all, for the Godhead in the individual and for the fulfilment of his will in us, for the sake of the Divine in the world, for the good of all beings, for the fulfilment of the world action and the world purpose, or in one word for the sake of the Purushottama and done really by him through his universal Shakti. These divine works, whatever their form or outward character, cannot bind, but are rather a potent means for rising out of this lower Prakriti of the three gunas to the perfection of the supreme, divine and spiritual nature. Disengaged from these mixed and limited dharmas we escape into the immortal Dharma which comes upon us when we make ourselves one in all our consciousness and action with the Purushottama. That oneness here brings with it the power to rise there into the immortality beyond Time. There we shall exist in his eternal transcendence.

Thus these eight verses carefully read in the light of the knowledge already given by the Teacher are a brief, but still a comprehensive indication of the whole essential idea, the entire central method, all the kernel of the complete Yoga of the Gita.

XXII

The Supreme Secret[1]

THE ESSENCE of the teaching and the Yoga has thus been given to the disciple on the field of his work and battle and the divine Teacher now proceeds to apply it to his action, but in a way that makes it applicable to all action. Attached to a crucial example, spoken to the protagonist of Kurukshetra, the words bear a much wider significance and are a universal rule for all who are ready to ascend above the ordinary mentality and to live and act in the highest spiritual consciousness. To break out of ego and personal mind and see everything in the wideness of the self and spirit, to know God and adore him in his integral truth and in all his aspects, to surrender all oneself to the transcendent Soul of nature and existence, to possess and be possessed by the divine consciousness, to be one with the One in universality of love and delight and will and knowledge, one in him with all beings, to do works as an adoration and a sacrifice on the divine foundation of a world in which all is God and in the divine status of a liberated spirit, is the sense of the Gita's Yoga. It is a transition from the apparent to the supreme spiritual and real truth of our being, and one enters into it by putting off the many limitations of the separative consciousness and the mind's attachment to the passion and unrest and ignorance, the lesser light and knowledge, the sin and virtue, the dual law and standard of the lower nature. Therefore, says the Teacher, "devoting all thyself to me, giving up in thy conscious mind all thy actions into Me, resorting to Yoga of the will and intelligence be always one in heart and consciousness with Me. If thou art that at all times, then by my grace thou shalt pass safe through all difficult and perilous passages; but if from egoism thou hear not, thou shalt fall into perdition. Vain is this thy resolve, that in thy egoism thou thinkest, saying ‘I will not fight’; thy nature shall appoint thee to thy work. What from delusion thou desirest not to do, that helplessly thou shalt do bound by thy own work born of thy swabhava. The Lord is stationed in the heart of all existences, O Arjuna, and turns them all round and round mounted on a machine by his Maya. In him take refuge in every way of thy being and by his grace thou shalt come to the supreme peace and the eternal status.”

---

[1] Gita, XVIII. 57-66, 73.

These are lines that carry in them the innermost heart of this Yoga and lead to its crowning experience and we must understand them in their innermost spirit and the whole vastness of that high summit of experience. The words express the most complete, intimate and living relation possible between God and man; they are instinct with the concentrated force of religious feeling that springs from the human being’s absolute adoration, his upward surrender of his whole existence, his unreserved and perfect self-giving to the transcendent and universal Divinity from whom he comes and in whom he lives. This stress of feeling is in entire consonance with the high and enduring place that the Gita assigns to bhakti, to the love of God, to the adoration of the Highest, as the inmost spirit and motive of the supreme action and the crown and core of the supreme knowledge. The phrases used and the spiritual emotion with which they vibrate seem to give the most intense prominence possible and an utmost importance to the personal truth and presence of the Godhead. It is no abstract Absolute of the philosopher, no indifferent impersonal Presence or ineffable Silence intolerant of all relations to whom this complete surrender of all our works can be made and this closeness and intimacy of oneness with him in all the parts of our conscious existence imposed as the condition and law of our perfection or of whom this divine intervention and protection and deliverance are the promise. It is a Master of our works, a Friend and Lover of our soul, an intimate Spirit of our life, an indwelling and overdwelling Lord of all our personal and impersonal self and nature who alone can utter to us this near and moving message. And yet this is not the common relation established by the religions between man living in his sattwic or other ego-mind and some personal form and aspect of the Deity, *iṣṭa-deva*, constructed by that mind or offered to it to satisfy its limited ideal, aspiration or desire. That is the ordinary sense and actual character of the normal mental being's religious devotion; but here there is something wider that passes beyond the mind and its limits and its dharmas. It is something deeper than the mind that offers and something greater than the Ishta-deva that receives the surrender.

That which surrenders here is the Jiva, the essential soul, the original central and spiritual being of man, the individual Purusha. It is the Jiva delivered from the limiting and ignorant ego-sense who knows himself not as a separate personality but as an eternal portion and power and soul-becoming of the Divine, *aṁśa sanātana*, the Jiva released and uplifted by the passing away of ignorance and established in the light and freedom of his own true and supreme nature which is one with that of the Eternal. It is this central spiritual being in us who thus enters into a perfect and closely real relation of delight and union with the origin and continent and governing Self and Power of our existence. And he who receives our surrender is no limited Deity but the Purushottama, the one eternal Godhead, the one supreme Soul of all that is and of all Nature, the original transcendent Spirit of existence. An immutable impersonal self-existence is his first obvious spiritual self-presentation to the experience of our liberated knowledge, the first sign of his presence, the first touch and impression of his substance. A universal and transcendent infinite Person or Purusha is the mysterious hidden secret of his very being, unthinkable in form of mind, *acintya-rūpa*, but very near and present to the powers of our consciousness, emotion, will and knowledge when they are lifted out of themselves, out of their blind and petty forms into a luminous spiritual, an immeasurable supramental Ananda and power and gnosis. It is He, ineffable Absolute but also Friend and Lord and Enlightener and Lover, who is the object of this most complete devotion and approach and this most intimate inner becoming and surrender. This union, this relation is a thing lifted beyond the forms and laws of the limiting mind, too high for all these inferior dharmas;

it is a truth of our self and spirit. And yet or rather therefore, because it is the truth of our self and spirit, the truth of its oneness with that Spirit from which all comes and by it and as its derivations and suggestions all exists and travails, it is not a negation but a fulfilment of all that mind and life point to and bear in them as their secret and unaccomplished significance. Thus it is not by a nirvana, an exclusion and negating extinction of all that we are here, but by a nirvana, an exclusion and negating extinction of ignorance and ego and a consequent ineffable fulfilment of our knowledge and will and heart's aspiration, an uplifted and limitless living of them in the Divine, in the Eternal, *nivasiṣyasi mayyeva*, a transfigurement and transference of all our consciousness to a greater inner status that there comes this supreme perfection and release in the spirit.

The crux of the spiritual problem, the character of this transition of which it is so difficult for the normal mind of man to get a true apprehension, turns altogether upon the capital distinction between the ignorant life of the ego in the lower nature and the large and luminous existence of the liberated Jiva in his own true spiritual nature. The renunciation of the first must be complete, the transition to the second absolute. This is the distinction on which the Gita dwells here with all possible emphasis. On the one side is this poor, trepidant, braggart egoistic condition of consciousness, *ahaṅkṛta bhāva*, the crippling narrowness of this little helpless separative personality according to whose view-point we ordinarily think and act, feel and respond to the touches of existence. On the other are the vast spiritual reaches of immortal fullness, bliss and knowledge into which we are admitted through union with the divine Being, of whom we are then a manifestation and expression in the eternal light and no longer a disguise in the darkness of the ego-nature. It is the completeness of this union which is indicated by the Gita's *satataṁ mac-cittaḥ*. The life of the ego is founded on a construction of the apparent mental, vital and physical truth of existence, on a nexus of pragmatic relations between the individual soul and Nature, on an intellectual, emotional and sensational interpretation of things used by the little limited I in us to maintain and satisfy the ideas and desires of its bounded separate personality amid the vast action of the universe. All our dharmas, all the ordinary standards by which we determine our view of things and our knowledge and our action, proceed upon this narrow and limiting basis, and to follow them even in the widest wheelings round our ego centre does not carry us out of this petty circle. It is a circle in which the soul is a contented or struggling prisoner, for ever subject to the mixed compulsions of Nature.

For Purusha veils himself in this round, veils his divine and immortal being in ignorance and is subject to the law of an insistent limiting Prakriti. That law is the compelling rule of the three gunas. It is a triple stair that stumbles upward towards the divine light but cannot reach it. At its base is the law or dharma of inertia: the tamasic man inertly obeys in a customary mechanical action the suggestions and impulses, the round of will of his material and his half-intellectualised vital and sensational nature. In the middle intervenes the kinetic law or dharma; the rajasic man, vital, dynamic, active, attempts to impose himself on his world and environment, but only increases the wounding weight and tyrant yoke of his turbulent passions, desires and egoisms, the burden of his restless self-will, the yoke of his rajasic nature. At the top presses down upon life the harmonic regulative law or dharma; the sattwic man attempts to erect and follow his limited personal standards of reasoning knowledge, enlightened utility or mechanised virtue, his religions and philosophies and ethical formulas, mental systems and constructions, fixed channels of idea and conduct which do not agree with the totality of the meaning of life and are constantly being broken in the movement of the wider universal purpose. The dharma of the sattwic man is the highest in the circle of the gunas; but that too is a limited view and a dwarfed standard. Its imperfect indications lead to a petty and relative perfection; temporarily satisfying to the enlightened personal ego, it is not founded either on the whole truth of the self or on the whole truth of Nature.

And in fact the actual life of man is not at any time one of these things alone, neither a mechanical routine execution of the first crude law of Nature, nor the struggle of a kinetic soul of action, nor a victorious emergence of conscious light and reason and good and knowledge. There is a mixture of all these dharmas out of which our will and intelligence make a more or less arbitrary construction to be realised as best it can, but never in fact realised except by compromise with other compelling things in the universal Prakriti. The sattwic ideals of our enlightened will and reason are either themselves compromises, at best progressive compromises, subject to a constant imperfection and flux of change, or if absolute in their character, they can be followed only as a counsel of perfection ignored for the most part in practice or successful only as a partial influence. And if sometimes we imagine we have completely realised them, it is because we ignore in ourselves the subconscious or half-conscious mixture of other powers and motives that are usually as much or more than our ideals the real force in our action. That self-ignorance constitutes the whole vanity of human reason and self-righteousness; it is the dark secret lining behind the spotless white outsides of human sainthood and alone makes possible the specious egoisms of knowledge and virtue. The best human knowledge is a half knowledge and the highest human virtue a thing of mixed quality and, even when most sincerely absolute in standard, sufficiently relative in practice. As a general law of living the absolute sattwic ideals cannot prevail in conduct; indispensable as a power for the betterment and raising of personal aspiration and conduct, their insistence modifies life but cannot wholly change it, and their perfect fulfilment images itself only in a dream of the future or a world of heavenly nature free from the mixed strain of our terrestrial existence. It cannot be otherwise because neither the nature of this world nor the nature of man is or can be one single piece made of the pure stuff of sattwa.

The first door of escape we see out of this limitation of our possibilities, out of this confused mixture of dharmas is in a certain high trend towards impersonality, a movement inwards towards something large and universal and calm and free and right and pure hidden now by the limiting mind of ego. The difficulty is that while we can feel a positive release into this impersonality in moments of the quiet and silence of our being, an impersonal activity is by no means so easy to realise. The pursuit of an impersonal truth or an impersonal will in our conduct is vitiated so long as we live at all in our normal mind by that which is natural and inevitable to that mind, the law of our personality, the subtle urge of our vital nature, the colour of ego. The pursuit of impersonal truth is turned by these influences into an unsuspected cloak for a system of intellectual preferences supported by our mind's limiting insistence; the pursuit of a disinterested impersonal action is converted into a greater authority and apparent high sanction for our personal will's interested selections and blind arbitrary persistences. On the other hand an absolute impersonality would seem to impose an equally absolute quietism, and this would mean that all action is bound to the machinery of the ego and the three gunas and to recede from life and its works the only way out of the circle. This impersonal silence however is not the last word of wisdom in the matter, because it is not the only way and crown or not all the way and the last crown of self-realisation open to our endeavour. There is a mightier fuller more positive spiritual experience in which the circle of our egoistic personality and the round of the mind's limitations vanish in the unwalled infinity of a greatest self and spirit and yet life and its works not only remain still acceptable and possible but reach up and out to their widest spiritual completeness and assume a grand ascending significance.

There have been different gradations in this movement to bridge the gulf between an absolute impersonality and the dynamic possibilities of our nature. The thought and practice of the Mahayana approached this difficult reconciliation through the experience of a deep desirelessness and a large dissolving freedom from mental and vital attachment and sanskaras and on the positive side a universal altruism, a fathomless compassion for the world and its creatures which became as it were the flood and outpouring of the high Nirvanic state on life and action.

That reconciliation was equally the sense of yet another spiritual experience, more conscious of a world significance, more profound, kindling, richly comprehensive on the side of action, a step nearer to the thought of the Gita: this experience we find or can at least read behind the utterances of the Taoist thinkers. There there seems to be an impersonal ineffable Eternal who is spirit and at the same time the one life of the universe: it supports and flows impartially in all things, *samaṁ brahma*; it is a One that is nothing, Asat, because other than all that we perceive and yet the totality of all these existences. The fluid personality that forms like foam on this Infinite, the mobile ego with its attachments and repulsions, its likings and dislikings, its fixed mental distinctions, is an effective image that veils and deforms to us the one reality, Tao, the supreme All and Nothing. That can be touched only by losing personality and its little structural forms in the unseizable universal and eternal Presence and, this once achieved, we live in that a real life and have another greater consciousness which makes us penetrate all things, ourselves penetrable to all eternal influences. Here, as in the Gita, the highest way would seem to be a complete openness and self-surrender to the Eternal. "Your body is not your own," says the Taoist thinker, "it is the delegated image of God: your life is not your own, it is the delegated harmony of God: your individuality is not your own, it is the delegated adaptability of God." And here too a vast perfection and liberated action are the dynamic result of the soul's surrender. The works of ego personality are a separative running counter to the bias of universal nature. This false movement must be replaced by a wise and still passivity in the hands of the universal and eternal Power, a passivity that makes us adaptable to the infinite action, in harmony with its truth, plastic to the shaping breath of the Spirit. The man who has this harmony may be motionless within and absorbed in silence, but his Self will appear free from disguises, the divine Influence will be at work in him and while he abides in tranquillity and an inward inaction, *naiṣkarmya*, yet he will act with an irresistible power and myriads of things and beings will move and gather under his influence. The impersonal force of the Self takes up his works, movements no longer deformed by ego, and sovereignly acts through him for the keeping together and control of the world and its peoples, *loka-saṅgrahārthāya*.

There is little difference between these experiences and the first impersonal activity inculcated by the Gita. The Gita also demands of us renunciation of desire, attachment and ego, transcendence of the lower nature and the breaking up of our personality and its little formations. The Gita also demands of us to live in the Self and Spirit, to see the Self and Spirit in all and all in the Self and Spirit and all as the Self and Spirit. It demands of us like the Taoist thinker to renounce our natural personality and its works into the Self, the Spirit, the Eternal, the Brahman, *ātmani sannyasya*, *brahmaṇi*. And there is this coincidence because that is always man's highest and freest possible experience of a quietistic inner largeness and silence reconciled with an outer dynamic active living, the two coexistent or fused together in the impersonal infinite reality and illimitable action of the one immortal Power and sole eternal Existence. But the Gita adds a phrase of immense import that alters everything, *ātmani atho mayi*. The demand is to see all things in the self and then in "Me" the Ishwara, to renounce all action into the Self, Spirit, Brahman and thence into the supreme Person, the Purushottama. There is here a still greater and profounder complex of spiritual experience, a larger transmutation of the significance of human life, a more mystic and heart-felt sweep of the return of the stream to the ocean, the restoration of personal works and the cosmic action to the Eternal Worker. The stress on pure impersonality has this difficulty and incompleteness for us that it reduces the inner person, the spiritual individual, that persistent miracle of our inmost being, to a temporary, illusive and mutable formation in the Infinite. The Infinite alone exists and except in a passing play has no true regard on the soul of the living creature. There can be no real and permanent relation between the soul in man and the Eternal, if that soul is even as the always renewable body no more than a transient phenomenon in the Infinite.

It is true that the ego and its limited personality are even such a temporary and mutable formation of Nature and therefore it must be broken and we must feel ourselves one with all and infinite. But the ego is not the real person; when it has been dissolved there still remains the spiritual individual, there is still the eternal Jiva. The ego limitation disappears and the soul lives in a profound unity with the One and feels its universal unity with all things. And yet it is still our own soul that enjoys this expanse and oneness. The universal action, even when it is felt as the action of one and the same energy in all, even when it is experienced as the initiation and movement of the Ishwara, still takes different forms in different souls of men, *aṁśaḥ sanātanaḥ*, and a different turn in their nature. The light of spiritual knowledge, the manifold universal Shakti, the eternal delight of being stream into us and around us, concentrate in the soul and flow out on the surrounding world from each as from a centre of living spiritual consciousness whose circumference is lost in the infinite. More, the spiritual individual remains as a little universe of divine existence at once independent and inseparable from the whole infinite universe of the divine self-manifestation of which we see a petty portion around us. A portion of the Transcendent, creative, he creates his own world around him even while he retains this cosmic consciousness in which are all others. If it be objected that this is an illusion which must disappear when he retreats into the transcendent Absolute, there is after all no very certain certainty in that matter. For it is still the soul in man that is the enjoyer of this release, as it was the living spiritual centre of the divine action and manifestation; there is something more than the mere self-breaking of an illusory shell of individuality in the Infinite. This mystery of our existence signifies that what we are is not only a temporary name and form of the One, but as we may say, a soul and spirit of the Divine Oneness. Our spiritual individuality of which the ego is only a misleading shadow and projection in the ignorance has or is a truth that persists beyond the ignorance; there is something of us that dwells for ever in the supreme nature of the Purushottama, *nivasiṣyasi mayi*. This is the profound comprehensiveness of the teaching of the Gita that while it recognises the truth of the universalised impersonality into which we enter by the extinction of ego, *brahma-nirvāṇa*,

— for indeed without it there can be no liberation or at least no absolute release, — it recognises too the persistent spiritual truth of our personality as a factor of the highest experience. Not this natural but that divine and central being in us is the eternal Jiva. It is the Ishwara, Vasudeva who is all things, that takes up our mind and life and body for the enjoyment of the lower Prakriti; it is the supreme Prakriti, the original spiritual nature of the supreme Purusha that holds together the universe and appears in it as the Jiva. This Jiva then is a portion of the Purushottama's original divine spiritual being, a living power of the living Eternal. He is not merely a temporary form of lower Nature, but an eternal portion of the Highest in his supreme Prakriti, an eternal conscious ray of the divine existence and as everlasting as that supernal Prakriti. One side of the highest perfection and status of our liberated consciousness must then be to assume the true place of the Jiva in a supreme spiritual Nature, there to dwell in the glory of the supreme Purusha and there to have the joy of the eternal spiritual oneness.

This mystery of our being implies necessarily a similar supreme mystery of the being of the Purushottama, *rahasyam uttamam*. It is not an exclusive impersonality of the Absolute that is the highest secret. This highest secret is the miracle of a supreme Person and apparent vast Impersonal that are one, an immutable transcendent Self of all things and a Spirit that manifests itself here at the very foundation of cosmos as an infinite and multiple personality acting everywhere, — a Self and Spirit revealed to our last, closest, profoundest experience as an illimitable Being who accepts us and takes us to him, not into a blank of featureless existence, but most positively, deeply, wonderfully into all Himself and in all the ways of his and our conscious existence. This highest experience and this largest way of seeing open a profound, moving and endless significance to our parts of nature, our knowledge, will, heart's love and adoration, which is lost or diminished if we put an exclusive stress on the impersonal, because that stress suppresses or minimises or does not allow of the intensest fulfilment of movements and powers that are a portion of our deepest nature, intensities and luminosities that are attached to the closest essential fibres of our self-experience. It is not the austerity of knowledge alone that can help us; there is room and infinite room for the heart's love and aspiration illumined and uplifted by knowledge, a more mystically clear, a greater calmly passionate knowledge. It is by the perpetual unified closeness of our heart-consciousness, mind-consciousness, all consciousness, *satataṁ maccittaḥ*, that we get the widest, the deepest, the most integral experience of our oneness with the Eternal. A nearest oneness in all the being, profoundly individual in a divine passion even in the midst of universality, even at the top of transcendence is here enjoined on the human soul as its way to reach the Highest and its way to possess the perfection and the divine consciousness to which it is called by its nature as a spirit. The intelligence and will have to turn the whole existence in all its parts to the Ishwara, to the divine Self and Master of that whole existence, *buddhi-yogam upāśritya*. The heart has to cast all other emotion into the delight of oneness with him and the love of Him in all creatures. The sense spiritualised has to see and hear and feel him everywhere. The life has to be utterly his life in the Jiva. All the actions have to proceed from his sole power and sole initiation in the will, knowledge, organs of action, senses, vital parts, body. This way is deeply impersonal because the separateness of ego is abolished for the soul universalised and restored to transcendence. And yet it is intimately personal because it soars to a transcendent passion and power of indwelling and oneness. A featureless extinction may be a rigorous demand of the mind's logic of self-annulment; it is not the last word of the supreme mystery, *rahasyam uttamam*.

The refusal of Arjuna to persevere in his divinely appointed work proceeded from the ego sense in him, *ahaṅkāra*. Behind it was a mixture and confusion and tangled error of ideas and impulsions of the sattwic, rajasic, tamasic ego, the vital nature's fear of sin and its personal consequences, the heart's recoil from individual grief and suffering, the clouded reason's covering of egoistic impulses by self-deceptive specious pleas of right and virtue, our nature's ignorant shrinking from the ways of God because they seem other than the ways of man and impose things terrible and unpleasant on his nervous and emotional parts and his intelligence. The spiritual consequences will be infinitely worse now than before, now that a higher truth and a greater way and spirit of action have been revealed to him, if yet persisting in his egoism he perseveres in a vain and impossible refusal. For it is a vain resolution, a futile recoil, since it springs only from a temporary failure of strength, a strong but passing deviation from the principle of energy of his inmost character, and is not the true will and way of his nature. If now he casts down his arms, he will yet be compelled by that nature to resume them when he sees the battle and slaughter go on without him, his abstention a defeat of all for which he has lived, the cause for whose service he was born weakened and bewildered by the absence or inactivity of its protagonist, vanquished and afflicted by the cynical and unscrupulous strength of the champions of a self-regarding unrighteousness and injustice. And in this return there will be no spiritual virtue. It was a confusion of the ideas and feelings of the ego mind that impelled his refusal; it will be his nature working through a restoration of the characteristic ideas and feelings of the ego mind that will compel him to annul his refusal. But whatever the direction, this continued subjection to the ego will mean a worse, a more fatal spiritual refusal, a perdition, *vinaṣṭi*; for it will be a definite falling away from a greater truth of his being than that which he has followed in the ignorance of the lower nature. He has been admitted to a higher consciousness, a new self-realisation, he has been shown the possibility of a divine instead of an egoistic action; the gates have been opened before him of a divine and spiritual in place of a merely intellectual, emotional, sensuous and vital life. He is called to be no longer a great blind instrument, but a conscious soul and an enlightened power and vessel of the Godhead.

For there is this possibility within us: there is open to us even at our human highest this consummation and transcendence. The ordinary mind and life of man is a half-enlightened and mostly an ignorant development and a partial uncompleted manifestation of something concealed within him. There is a godhead there concealed from himself, subliminal to his consciousness, immobilised behind the obscure veil of a working that is not wholly his own and the secret of which he has not yet mastered. He finds himself in the world thinking and willing and feeling and acting and he takes himself instinctively or intellectually conceives of himself or at least conducts his life as a separate self-existent being who has the freedom of his thought and will and feeling and action. He bears the burden of his sin and error and suffering and takes the responsibility and merit of his knowledge and virtue; he claims the right to satisfy his sattwic, rajasic or tamasic ego and arrogates the power to shape his own destiny and to turn the world to his own uses. It is this idea of himself through which Nature works in him, and she deals with him according to his own conception, but fulfils all the time the will of the greater Spirit within her. The error of this self-view of man is like most of his errors the distortion of a truth, a distortion that creates a whole system of erroneous and yet effective values. What is true of his spirit he attributes to his ego-personality and gives it a false application, a false form and a mass of ignorant consequences. The ignorance lies in this fundamental deficiency of his surface consciousness that he identifies himself only with the outward mechanical part of him which is a convenience of Nature and with so much only of the soul as reflects and is reflected in these workings. He misses the greater inner spirit within which gives to all his mind and life and creation and action an unfulfilled promise and a hidden significance. A universal Nature here obeys the power of the Spirit who is the master of the universe, shapes each creature and determines its action according to the law of its own nature, Swabhava, shapes man too and determines his action according to the general law of nature of his kind, the law of a mental being emmeshed and ignorant in the life and the body, shapes too each man and determines his individual action according to the law of his own distinct type and the variations of his own original swabhava. It is this universal Nature that forms and directs the mechanical workings of the body and the instinctive operations of our vital and nervous parts; and there our subjection to her is very obvious. And she has formed and directs the action too, hardly less mechanical as things now are, of our sense-mind and will and intelligence. Only, while in the animal the mind workings are a wholly mechanical obedience to Prakriti, man has this distinction that he embodies a conscious development in which the soul more actively participates, and that gives to his outward mentality the sense, useful to him, indispensable, but very largely a misleading sense, of a certain freedom and increasing mastery of his instrumental nature. And it is especially misleading because it blinds him to the hard fact of his bondage and his false idea of freedom prevents him from finding a true liberty and lordship. For the freedom and mastery of man over his nature are hardly even real and cannot be complete until he becomes aware of the Divinity within him and is in possession of his own real self and spirit other than the ego, *ātmavān*. It is that which Nature is labouring to express in mind and life and body; it is that which imposes on her this or that law of being and working, Swabhava; it is that which shapes the outward destiny and the evolution of the soul within us. It is therefore only when he is in possession of his real self and spirit that his nature can become a conscious instrument and enlightened power of the godhead.

For then, when we enter into that inmost self of our existence, we come to know that in us and in all is the one Spirit and Godhead whom all Nature serves and manifests and we ourselves are soul of this Soul, spirit of this Spirit, our body his delegated image, our life a movement of the rhythm of his life, our mind a sheath of his consciousness, our senses his instruments, our emotions and sensations the seekings of his delight of being, our actions a means of his purpose, our freedom only a shadow, suggestion or glimpse while we are ignorant, but when we know him and ourselves a prolongation and effective channel of his immortal freedom. Our masteries are a reflection of his power at work, our best knowledge a partial light of his knowledge, the highest most potent will of our spirit a projection and delegation of the will of this Spirit in all things who is the Master and Soul of the universe. It is the Lord seated in the heart of every creature who has been turning us in all our inner and outer action during the ignorance as if mounted on a machine on the wheel of this Maya of the lower Nature. And whether obscure in the Ignorance or luminous in the Knowledge, it is for him in us and him in the world that we have our existence. To live consciously and integrally in this knowledge and this truth is to escape from ego and break out of Maya. All other highest dharmas are only a preparation for this Dharma, and all Yoga is only a means by which we can come first to some kind of union and finally, if we have the full light, to an integral union with the Master and supreme Soul and Self of our existence. The greatest Yoga is to take refuge from all the perplexities and difficulties of our nature with this indwelling Lord of all Nature, to turn to him with our whole being, with the life and body and sense and mind and heart and understanding, with our whole dedicated knowledge and will and action, *sarva-bhāvena*, in every way of our conscious self and our instrumental nature. And when we can at all times and entirely do this, then the divine Light and Love and Power takes hold of us, fills both self and instruments and leads us safe through all the doubts and difficulties and perplexities and perils that beset our soul and our life, leads us to a supreme peace and the spiritual freedom of our immortal and eternal status, *parāṁ śāntim*, *sthānaṁ śāśvatam*.

For after giving out all the laws, the dharmas, and the deepest essence of its Yoga, after saying that beyond all the first secrets revealed to the mind of man by the transforming light of spiritual knowledge, *guhyāt*, this is a still deeper more secret truth, *guhyataram*, the Gita suddenly declares that there is yet a supreme word that it has to speak, *paramaṁ vacaḥ*, and a most secret truth of all, *sarva-guhyatamam*. This secret of secrets the Teacher will tell to Arjuna as his highest good because he is the chosen and beloved soul, *iṣṭa*. For evidently, as had already been declared by the Upanishad, it is only the rare soul chosen by the Spirit for the revelation of his very body, *tanuṁ svām*, who can be admitted to this mystery, because he alone is near enough in heart and mind and life to the Godhead to respond truly to it in all his being and to make it a living practice. The last, the closing supreme word of the Gita expressing the highest mystery is spoken in two brief, direct and simple slokas and these are left without farther comment or enlargement to sink into the mind and reveal their own fullness of meaning in the soul's experience. For it is alone this inner incessantly extending experience that can make evident the infinite deal of meaning with which are for ever pregnant these words in themselves apparently so slight and simple. And we feel, as they are being uttered, that it was this for which the soul of the disciple was being prepared all the time and the rest was only an enlightening and enabling discipline and doctrine. Thus runs this secret of secrets, the highest most direct message of the Ishwara. "Become my-minded, my lover and adorer, a sacrificer to me, bow thyself to me, to me thou shalt come, this is my pledge and promise to thee, for dear art thou to me. Abandon all dharmas and take refuge in me alone. I will deliver thee from all sin and evil, do not grieve."

The Gita throughout has been insisting on a great and well-built discipline of Yoga, a large and clearly traced philosophical system, on the Swabhava and the Swadharma, on the sattwic law of life as leading out of itself by a self-exceeding exaltation to a free spiritual dharma of immortal existence utterly wide in its spaces and high-lifted beyond the limitation of even this highest guna, on many rules and means and injunctions and conditions of perfection, and now suddenly it seems to break out of its own structure and says to the human soul, "Abandon all dharmas, give thyself to the Divine alone, to the supreme Godhead above and around and within thee: that is all that thou needest, that is the truest and greatest way, that is the real deliverance." The Master of the worlds in the form of the divine Charioteer and Teacher of Kurukshetra has revealed to man the magnificent realities of God and Self and Spirit and the nature of the complex world and the relation of man's mind and life and heart and senses to the Spirit and the victorious means by which through his own spiritual self-discipline and effort he can rise out of mortality into immortality and out of his limited mental into his infinite spiritual existence. And now speaking as the Spirit and Godhead in man and in all things he says to him, "All this personal effort and self-discipline will not in the end be needed, all following and limitation of rule and dharma can at last be thrown away as hampering encumbrances if thou canst make a complete surrender to Me, depend alone on the Spirit and Godhead within thee and all things and trust to his sole guidance. Turn all thy mind to me and fill it with the thought of me and my presence. Turn all thy heart to me, make thy every action, whatever it be, a sacrifice and offering to me. That done, leave me to do my will with thy life and soul and action; do not be grieved or perplexed by my dealings with thy mind and heart and life and works or troubled because they do not seem to follow the laws and dharmas man imposes on himself to guide his limited will and intelligence. My ways are the ways of a perfect wisdom and power and love that knows all things and combines all its movements in view of a perfect eventual result; for it is refining and weaving together the many threads of an integral perfection. I am here with thee in thy chariot of battle revealed as the Master of Existence within and without thee and I repeat the absolute assurance, the infallible promise that I will lead thee to myself through and beyond all sorrow and evil. Whatever difficulties and perplexities arise, be sure of this that I am leading thee to a complete divine life in the universal and an immortal existence in the transcendent Spirit."

The secret thing, *guhyam*, that all deep spiritual knowledge reveals to us, mirrored in various teachings and justified in the soul's experience, is for the Gita the secret of the spiritual self hidden within us of which mind and external Nature are only manifestations or figures. It is the secret of the constant relations between soul and Nature, Purusha and Prakriti, the secret of an indwelling Godhead who is the lord of all existence and veiled from us in its forms and movements. These are the truths taught in many ways by Vedanta and Sankhya and Yoga and synthetised in the earlier chapters of the Gita. And amidst all their apparent distinctions they are one truth and all the different ways of Yoga are various means of spiritual self-discipline by which our unquiet mind and blinded life are stilled and turned towards this many-aspected One and the secret truth of self and God made so real to us and intimate that we can either consciously live and dwell in it or lose our separate selves in the Eternal and no longer be compelled at all by the mental Ignorance.

The more secret thing, *guhyataram*, developed by the Gita is the profound reconciling truth of the divine Purushottama, at once self and Purusha, supreme Brahman and a sole, intimate, mysterious, ineffable Godhead. That gives to the thought a larger and more deeply understanding foundation for an ultimate knowledge and to the spiritual experience a greater and more fully comprehending and comprehensive Yoga. This deeper mystery is founded on the secret of the supreme spiritual Prakriti and of the Jiva, an eternal portion of the Divine in that eternal and this manifested Nature and of one spirit and essence with him in his immutable self-existence. This profounder knowledge escapes from the elementary distinction of spiritual experience between the Beyond and what is here. For the Transcendent beyond the worlds is at the same time Vasudeva who is all things in all worlds; he is the Lord standing in the heart of every creature and the self of all existences and the origin and supernal meaning of everything that he has put forth in his Prakriti. He is manifested in his Vibhutis and he is the Spirit in Time who compels the action of the world and the Sun of all knowledge and the Lover and Beloved of the soul and the Master of all works and sacrifice. The result of an inmost opening to this deeper, truer, more secret mystery is the Gita's Yoga of integral knowledge, integral works and integral bhakti. It is the simultaneous experience of spiritual universality and a free and perfected spiritual individuality, of an entire union with God and an entire dwelling in him as at once the frame of the soul's immortality and the support and power of our liberated action in the world and the body.

And now there comes the supreme word and most secret thing of all, *guhyatamam*, that the Spirit and Godhead is an Infinite free from all dharmas and though he conducts the world according to fixed laws and leads man through his dharmas of ignorance and knowledge, sin and virtue, right and wrong, liking and disliking and indifference, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow and the rejection of these opposites, through his physical and vital, intellectual, emotional, ethical and spiritual forms and rules and standards, yet the Spirit and Godhead transcends all these things, and if we too can cast away all dependence on dharmas, surrender ourselves to this free and eternal Spirit and, taking care only to keep ourselves absolutely and exclusively open to him, trust to the light and power and delight of the Divine in us and, unafraid and ungrieving, accept only his guidance, then that is the truest, the greatest release and that brings the absolute and inevitable perfection of our self and nature. This is the way offered to the chosen of the Spirit, — to those only in whom he takes the greatest delight because they are nearest to him and most capable of oneness and of being even as he, freely consenting and concordant with Nature in her highest power and movement, universal in soul consciousness, transcendent in the spirit.

For a time comes in spiritual development when we become aware that all our effort and action are only our mental and vital reactions to the silent and secret insistence of a greater Presence in and around us. It is borne in upon us that all our Yoga, our aspiration and our endeavour are imperfect or narrow forms, because disfigured or at least limited by the mind's associations, demands, prejudgments, predilections, mistranslations or half translations of a vaster truth. Our ideas and experiences and efforts are mental images only of greatest things which would be done more perfectly, directly, freely, largely, more in harmony with the universal and eternal will by that Power itself in us if we could only put ourselves passively as instruments in the hands of a supreme and absolute strength and wisdom. That Power is not separate from us; it is our own self one with the self of all others and at the same time a transcendent Being and an immanent Person. Our existence, our action taken up into this greatest Existence would be no longer, as it seems to us now, individually our own in a mental separation. It would be the vast movement of an Infinity and an intimate ineffable Presence; it would be the constant spontaneity of formation and expression in us of this deep universal self and this transcendent Spirit. The Gita indicates that in order that that may wholly be, the surrender must be without reservations; our Yoga, our life, our state of inner being must be determined freely by this living Infinite, not predetermined by our mind's insistence on this or that dharma or any dharma. The divine Master of the Yoga, *yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*, will then himself take up our Yoga and raise us to our utmost possible perfection, not the perfection of any external or mental standard or limiting rule, but vast and comprehensive, to the mind incalculable. It will be a perfection developed by an all-seeing Wisdom according to the whole truth, first indeed of our human swabhava, but afterwards of a greater thing into which it will open, a spirit and power illimitable, immortal, free and all-transmuting, the light and splendour of a divine and infinite nature.

All must be given as material of that transmutation. An omniscient consciousness will take up our knowledge and our ignorance, our truth and our error, cast away their forms of insufficiency, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*, and transform all into its infinite light. An almighty Power will take up our virtue and sin, our right and wrong, our strength and our weakness, cast away their tangled figures, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*, and transform all into its transcendent purity and universal good and infallible force. An ineffable Ananda will take up our petty joy and sorrow, our struggling pleasure and pain, cast away their discordances and imperfect rhythms, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*, and transform all into its transcendent and universal unimaginable delight. All that all the Yogas can do will be done and more; but it will be done in a greater seeing way, with a greater wisdom and truth than any human teacher, saint or sage can give us. The inner spiritual state to which this supreme Yoga will take us, will be above all that is here and yet comprehensive of all things in this and other worlds, but with a spiritual transformation of all, without limitation, without bondage, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*. The infinite existence, consciousness and delight of the Godhead in its calm silence and bright boundless activity will be there, will be its essential, fundamental, universal stuff, mould and character. And in that mould of infinity the Divine made manifest will overtly dwell, no longer concealed by his Yogamaya, and whenever and as he wills build in us whatever shapes of the Infinite, translucent forms of knowledge, thought, love, spiritual joy, power and action according to his self-fulfilling will and immortal pleasure. And there will be no binding effect on the free soul and the unaffected nature, no unescapable crystallising into this or that inferior formula. For all the action will be executed by the power of the Spirit in a divine freedom, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*. An unfallen abiding in the transcendent Spirit, *paraṁ dhāma*, will be the foundation and the assurance of this spiritual state. An intimate understanding oneness with universal being and all creatures, released from the evil and suffering of the separative mind but wisely regardful of true distinctions, will be the conditioning power. A constant delight, oneness and harmony of the eternal individual here with the Divine and all that he is will be the effect of this integral liberation. The baffling problems of our human existence of which Arjuna's difficulty stands as an acute example, are created by our separative personality in the Ignorance. This Yoga because it puts the soul of man into its right relation with God and world-existence and makes our action God's, the knowledge and will shaping and moving it his and our life the harmony of a divine self-expression, is the way to their total disappearance.

The whole Yoga is revealed, the great word of the teaching is given, and Arjuna the chosen human soul is once more turned, no longer in his egoistic mind but in this greatest self-knowledge, to the divine action. The Vibhuti is ready for the divine life in the human, his conscious spirit for the works of the liberated soul, *muktasya karma*. Destroyed is the illusion of the mind; the soul's memory of its self and its truth concealed so long by the misleading shows and forms of our life has returned to it and become its normal consciousness: all doubt and perplexity gone, it can turn to the execution of the command and do faithfully whatever work for God and the world may be appointed and apportioned to it by the Master of our being, the Spirit and Godhead self-fulfilled in Time and universe.

XXIII

The Core of the Gita's Meaning

WHAT THEN is the message of the Gita and what its working value, its spiritual utility to the human mind of the present day after the long ages that have elapsed since it was written and the great subsequent transformations of thought and experience? The human mind moves always forward, alters its viewpoint and enlarges its thought substance, and the effect of these changes is to render past systems of thinking obsolete or, when they are preserved, to extend, to modify and subtly or visibly to alter their value. The vitality of an ancient doctrine consists in the extent to which it naturally lends itself to such a treatment; for that means that whatever may have been the limitations or the obsolescences of the form of its thought, the truth of substance, the truth of living vision and experience on which its system was built is still sound and retains a permanent validity and significance. The Gita is a book that has worn extraordinarily well and it is almost as fresh and still in its real substance quite as new, because always renewable in experience, as when it first appeared in or was written into the frame of the Mahabharata. It is still received in India as one of the great bodies of doctrine that most authoritatively govern religious thinking and its teaching acknowledged as of the highest value if not wholly accepted by almost all shades of religious belief and opinion. Its influence is not merely philosophic or academic but immediate and living, an influence both for thought and action, and its ideas are actually at work as a powerful shaping factor in the revival and renewal of a nation and a culture. It has even been said recently by a great voice that all we need of spiritual truth for the spiritual life is to be found in the Gita. It would be to encourage the superstition of the book to take too literally that utterance. The truth of the spirit is infinite and cannot be circumscribed in that manner. Still it may be said that most of the main clues are there and that after all the later developments of spiritual experience and discovery we can still return to it for a large inspiration and guidance. Outside India too it is universally acknowledged as one of the world's great scriptures, although in Europe its thought is better understood than its secret of spiritual practice. What is it then that gives this vitality to the thought and the truth of the Gita?

The central interest of the Gita's philosophy and Yoga is its attempt, the idea with which it sets out, continues and closes, to reconcile and even effect a kind of unity between the inner spiritual truth in its most absolute and integral realisation and the outer actualities of man's life and action. A compromise between the two is common enough, but that can never be a final and satisfactory solution. An ethical rendering of spirituality is also common and has its value as a law of conduct; but that is a mental solution which does not amount to a complete practical reconciliation of the whole truth of spirit with the whole truth of life and it raises as many problems as it solves. One of these is indeed the starting-point of the Gita; it sets out with an ethical problem raised by a conflict in which we have on one side the dharma of the man of action, a prince and warrior and leader of men, the protagonist of a great crisis, of a struggle on the physical plane, the plane of actual life, between the powers of right and justice and the powers of wrong and injustice, the demand of the destiny of the race upon him that he shall resist and give battle and establish even though through a terrible physical struggle and a giant slaughter a new era and reign of truth and right and justice, and on the other side the ethical sense which condemns the means and the action as a sin, recoils from the price of individual suffering and social strife, unsettling and disturbance and regards abstention from violence and battle as the only way and the one right moral attitude. A spiritualised ethics insists on Ahinsa, on non-injuring and non-killing as the highest law of spiritual conduct. The battle, if it is to be fought out at all, must be fought on the spiritual plane and by some kind of non-resistance or refusal of participation or only by soul resistance, and if this does not succeed on the external plane, if the force of injustice conquers, the individual will still have preserved his virtue and vindicated by his example the highest ideal. On the other hand a more insistent extreme of the inner spiritual direction, passing beyond this struggle between social duty and an absolutist ethical ideal, is apt to take the ascetic turn and to point away from life and all its aims and standards of action towards another and celestial or supracosmic state in which alone beyond the perplexed vanity and illusion of man's birth and life and death there can be a pure spiritual existence. The Gita rejects none of these things in their place, — for it insists on the performance of the social duty, the following of the dharma for the man who has to take his share in the common action, accepts Ahinsa as part of the highest spiritual-ethical ideal and recognises the ascetic renunciation as a way of spiritual salvation. And yet it goes boldly beyond all these conflicting positions; greatly daring, it justifies all life to the spirit as a significant manifestation of the one Divine Being and asserts the compatibility of a complete human action and a complete spiritual life lived in union with the Infinite, consonant with the highest Self, expressive of the perfect Godhead.

All the problems of human life arise from the complexity of our existence, the obscurity of its essential principle and the secrecy of the inmost power that makes out its determinations and governs its purpose and its processes. If our existence were of one piece, solely material-vital or solely mental or solely spiritual, or even if the others were entirely or mainly involved in one of these or were quite latent in our subconscient or our superconscient parts, there would be nothing to perplex us; the material and vital law would be imperative or the mental would be clear to its own pure and unobstructed principle or the spiritual self-existent and self-sufficient to spirit. The animals are aware of no problems; a mental god in a world of pure mentality would admit none or would solve them all by the purity of a mental rule or the satisfaction of a rational harmony; a pure spirit would be above them and self-content in the infinite. But the existence of man is a triple web, a thing mysteriously physical-vital, mental and spiritual at once, and he knows not what are the true relations of these things, which the real reality of his life and his nature, whither the attraction of his destiny and where the sphere of his perfection.

Matter and life are his actual basis, the thing from which he starts and on which he stands and whose requirement and law he has to satisfy if he would exist at all on earth and in the body. The material and vital law is a rule of survival, of struggle, of desire and possession, of self-assertion and the satisfaction of the body, the life and the ego. All the intellectual reasoning in the world, all the ethical idealism and spiritual absolutism of which the higher faculties of man are capable cannot abolish the reality and claim of our vital and material base or prevent the race from following under the imperative compulsion of Nature its aims and the satisfaction of its necessities or from making its important problems a great and legitimate part of human destiny and human interest and endeavour. And the intelligence of man even, failing to find any sustenance in spiritual or ideal solutions that solve everything else but the pressing problems of our actual human life, often turns away from them to an exclusive acceptance of the vital and material existence and the reasoned or instinctive pursuit of its utmost possible efficiency, well-being and organised satisfaction. A gospel of the will to live or the will to power or of a rationalised vital and material perfection becomes the recognised dharma of the human race and all else is considered either a pretentious falsity or a quite subsidiary thing, a side issue of a minor and dependent consequence.

Matter and life however in spite of their insistence and great importance are not all that man is, nor can he wholly accept mind as nothing but a servant of the life and body admitted to certain pure enjoyments of its own as a sort of reward for its service or regard it as no more than an extension and flower of the vital urge, an ideal luxury contingent upon the satisfaction of the material life. The mind much more intimately than the body and the life is the man, and the mind as it develops insists more and more on making the body and the life an instrument — an indispensable instrument and yet a considerable obstacle, otherwise there would be no problem — for its own characteristic satisfactions and self-realisation. The mind of man is not only a vital and physical, but an intellectual, aesthetic, ethical, psychic, emotional and dynamic intelligence, and in the sphere of each of its tendencies its highest and strongest nature is to strain towards some absolute of them which the frame of life will not allow it to capture wholly and embody and make here entirely real. The mental absolute of our aspiration remains as a partly grasped shining or fiery ideal which the mind can make inwardly very present to itself, inwardly imperative on its effort, and can even effectuate partly, but not compel all the facts of life into its image. There is thus an absolute, a high imperative of intellectual truth and reason sought for by our intellectual being; there is an absolute, an imperative of right and conduct aimed at by the ethical conscience; there is an absolute, an imperative of love, sympathy, compassion, oneness yearned after by our emotional and psychic nature; there is an absolute, an imperative of delight and beauty quivered to by the aesthetic soul; there is an absolute, an imperative of inner self-mastery and control of life laboured after by the dynamic will; all these are there together and impinge upon the absolute, the imperative of possession and pleasure and safe embodied existence insisted on by the vital and physical mind. And the human intelligence, since it is not able to realise entirely any of these things, much less all of them together, erects in each sphere many standards and dharmas, standards of truth and reason, of right and conduct, of delight and beauty, of love, sympathy and oneness, of self-mastery and control, of self-preservation and possession and vital efficiency and pleasure, and tries to impose them on life. The absolute shining ideals stand far above and beyond our capacity and rare individuals approximate to them as best they can: the mass follow or profess to follow some less magnificent norm, some established possible and relative standard. Human life as a whole undergoes the attraction and yet rejects the ideal. Life resists in the strength of some obscure infinite of its own and wears down or breaks down any established mental and moral order. And this must be either because the two are quite different and disparate though meeting and interacting principles or because mind has not the clue to the whole reality of life. The clue must be sought in something greater, an unknown something above the mentality and morality of the human creature.

The mind itself has the vague sense of some surpassing factor of this kind and in the pursuit of its absolutes frequently strikes against it. It glimpses a state, a power, a presence that is near and within and inmost to it and yet immeasurably greater and singularly distant and above it; it has a vision of something more essential, more absolute than its own absolutes, intimate, infinite, one, and it is that which we call God, Self or Spirit. This then the mind attempts to know, enter, touch and seize wholly, to approach it or become it, to arrive at some kind of unity or lose itself in a complete identity with that mystery, *āścaryam*. The difficulty is that this spirit in its purity seems something yet farther than the mental absolutes from the actualities of life, something not translatable by mind into its own terms, much less into those of life and action. Therefore we have the intransigent absolutists of the spirit who reject the mental and condemn the material being and yearn after a pure spiritual existence happily purchased by the dissolution of all that we are in life and mind, a Nirvana. The rest of spiritual effort is for these fanatics of the Absolute a mental preparation or a compromise, a spiritualising of life and mind as much as possible. And because the difficulty most constantly insistent on man's mentality in practice is that presented by the claims of his vital being, by life and conduct and action, the direction taken by this preparatory endeavour consists mainly in a spiritualising of the ethical supported by the psychical mind — or rather it brings in the spiritual power and purity to aid these in enforcing their absolute claim and to impart a greater authority than life allows to the ethical ideal of right and truth of conduct or the psychic ideal of love and sympathy and oneness. These things are helped to some highest expression, given their broadest luminous basis by an assent of the reason and will to the underlying truth of the absolute oneness of the spirit and therefore the essential oneness of all living creatures. This kind of spirituality linked on in some way to the demands of the normal mind of man, persuaded to the acceptance of useful social duty and current law of social conduct, popularised by cult and ceremony and image is the outward substance of the world's greater religions. These religions have their individual victories, call in some ray of a higher light, impose some shadow of a larger spiritual or semi-spiritual rule, but cannot effect a complete victory, end flatly in a compromise and in the act of compromise are defeated by life. Its problems remain and even recur in their fiercest forms — even such as this grim problem of Kurukshetra. The idealising intellect and ethical mind hope always to eliminate them, to discover some happy device born of their own aspiration and made effective by their own imperative insistence, which will annihilate this nether untoward aspect of life; but it endures and is not eliminated. The spiritualised intelligence on the other hand offers indeed by the voice of religion the promise of some victorious millennium hereafter, but meanwhile half convinced of terrestrial impotence, persuaded that the soul is a stranger and intruder upon earth, declares that after all not here in the life of the body or in the collective life of mortal man but in some immortal Beyond lies the heaven or the Nirvana where alone is to be found the true spiritual existence.

It is here that the Gita intervenes with a restatement of the truth of the Spirit, of the Self, of God and of the world and Nature. It extends and remoulds the truth evolved by a later thought from the ancient Upanishads and ventures with assured steps on an endeavour to apply its solving power to the problem of life and action. The solution offered by the Gita does not disentangle all the problem as it offers itself to modern mankind; as stated here to a more ancient mentality, it does not meet the insistent pressure of the present mind of man for a collective advance, does not respond to its cry for a collective life that will at last embody a greater rational and ethical and if possible even a dynamic spiritual ideal. Its call is to the individual who has become capable of a complete spiritual existence; but for the rest of the race it prescribes only a gradual advance, to be wisely effected by following out faithfully with more and more of intelligence and moral purpose and with a final turn to spirituality the law of their nature. Its message touches the other smaller solutions but, even when it accepts them partly, it is to point them beyond themselves to a higher and more integral secret into which as yet only the few individuals have shown themselves fit to enter.

The Gita's message to the mind that follows after the vital and material life is that all life is indeed a manifestation of the universal Power in the individual, a derivation from the Self, a ray from the Divine, but actually it figures the Self and the Divine veiled in a disguising Maya, and to pursue the lower life for its own sake is to persist in a stumbling path and to enthrone our nature's obscure ignorance and not at all to find the true truth and complete law of existence. A gospel of the will to live, the will to power, of the satisfaction of desire, of the glorification of mere force and strength, of the worship of the ego and its vehement acquisitive self-will and tireless self-regarding intellect is the gospel of the Asura and it can lead only to some gigantic ruin and perdition. The vital and material man must accept for his government a religious and social and ideal dharma by which, while satisfying desire and interest under right restrictions, he can train and subdue his lower personality and scrupulously attune it to a higher law both of the personal and the communal life.

The Gita's message to the mind occupied with the pursuit of intellectual, ethical and social standards, the mind that insists on salvation by the observance of established dharmas, the moral law, social duty and function or the solutions of the liberated intelligence, is that this is indeed a very necessary stage, the dharma has indeed to be observed and, rightly observed, can raise the stature of the spirit and prepare and serve the spiritual life, but still it is not the complete and last truth of existence. The soul of man has to go beyond to some more absolute dharma of man's spiritual and immortal nature. And this can only be done if we repress and get rid of the ignorant formulations of the lower mental elements and the falsehood of egoistic personality, impersonalise the action of the intelligence and will, live in the identity of the one self in all, break out of all ego-moulds into the impersonal spirit. The mind moves under the limiting compulsion of the triple lower nature, it erects its standards in obedience to the tamasic, rajasic or at highest the sattwic qualities; but the destiny of the soul is a divine perfection and liberation and that can only be based in the freedom of our highest self, can only be found by passing through its vast impersonality and universality beyond mind into the integral light of the immeasurable Godhead and supreme Infinite who is beyond all dharmas.

The Gita's message to those, absolutist seekers of the Infinite, who carry impersonality to an exclusive extreme, entertain an intolerant passion for the extinction of life and action and would have as the one ultimate aim and ideal an endeavour to cease from all individual being in the pure silence of the ineffable Spirit, is that this is indeed one path of journey and entry into the Infinite, but the most difficult, the ideal of inaction a dangerous thing to hold up by precept or example before the world, this way, though great, yet not the best way for man and this knowledge, though true, yet not the integral knowledge. The Supreme, the all-conscious Self, the Godhead, the Infinite is not solely a spiritual existence remote and ineffable; he is here in the universe at once hidden and expressed through man and the gods and through all beings and in all that is. And it is by finding him not only in some immutable silence but in the world and its beings and in all self and in all Nature, it is by raising to an integral as well as to a highest union with him all the activities of the intelligence, the heart, the will, the life that man can solve at once his inner riddle of self and God and the outer problem of his active human existence. Made Godlike, God-becoming, he can enjoy the infinite breadth of a supreme spiritual consciousness that is reached through works no less than through love and knowledge. Immortal and free, he can continue his human action from that highest level and transmute it into a supreme and all-embracing divine activity, — that indeed is the ultimate crown and significance here of all works and living and sacrifice and the world's endeavour.

This highest message is first for those who have the strength to follow after it, the master men, the great spirits, the God-knowers, God-doers, God-lovers who can live in God and for God and do their work joyfully for him in the world, a divine work uplifted above the restless darkness of the human mind and the false limitations of the ego. At the same time, and here we get the gleam of a larger promise which we may even extend to the hope of a collective turn towards perfection, — for if there is hope for man, why should there not be hope for mankind? — the Gita declares that all can if they will, even to the lowest and sinfullest among men, enter into the path of this Yoga. And if there is a true self-surrender and an absolute unegoistic faith in the indwelling Divinity, success is certain in this path. The decisive turn is needed; there must be an abiding belief in the Spirit, a sincere and insistent will to live in the Divine, to be in self one with him and in Nature — where too we are an eternal portion of his being — one with his greater spiritual Nature, God-possessed in all our members and Godlike.

The Gita in the development of its idea raises many issues, such as the determinism of Nature, the significance of the universal manifestation and the ultimate status of the liberated soul, questions that have been the subject of unending and inconclusive debate. It is not necessary in this series of essays of which the object is a scrutiny and positive affirmation of the substance of the Gita and a disengaging of its contribution to the abiding spiritual thought of humanity and its kernel of living practice, to enter far into these discussions or to consider where we may differ from its standpoint or conclusions, make any reserves in our assent or even, strong in later experience, go beyond its metaphysical teaching or its Yoga. It will be sufficient to close with a formulation of the living message it still brings for man the eternal seeker and discoverer to guide him through the present circuits and the possible steeper ascent of his life up to the luminous heights of his spirit.

XXIV

The Message of the Gita

"THE SECRET of action," so we might summarise the message of the Gita, the word of its divine Teacher, "is one with the secret of all life and existence. Existence is not merely a machinery of Nature, a wheel of law in which the soul is entangled for a moment or for ages; it is a constant manifestation of the Spirit. Life is not for the sake of life alone, but for God, and the living soul of man is an eternal portion of the Godhead. Action is for self-finding, for self-fulfilment, for self-realisation and not only for its own external and apparent fruits of the moment or the future. There is an inner law and meaning of all things dependent on the supreme as well as the manifested nature of the self; the true truth of works lies there and can be represented only incidentally, imperfectly and disguised by ignorance in the outer appearances of the mind and its action. The supreme, the faultless largest law of action is therefore to find out the truth of your own highest and inmost existence and live in it and not to follow any outer standard and dharma. All life and action must be till then an imperfection, a difficulty, a struggle and a problem. It is only by discovering your true self and living according to its true truth, its real reality that the problem can be finally solved, the difficulty and struggle overpassed and your doings perfected in the security of the discovered self and spirit turn into a divinely authentic action. Know then your self; know your true self to be God and one with the self of all others; know your soul to be a portion of God. Live in what you know; live in the self, live in your supreme spiritual nature, be united with God and Godlike. Offer, first, all your actions as a sacrifice to the Highest and the One in you and to the Highest and the One in the world; deliver last all you are and do into his hands for the supreme and universal spirit to do through you his own will and works in the world. This is the solution that I present to you and in the end you will find that there is no other."

Here it is necessary to state the Gita's view of the fundamental opposition on which like all Indian teaching it takes its position. This finding of the true self, this knowledge of the Godhead within us and all is not an easy thing; nor is it an easy thing either to turn this knowledge, even though seen by the mind, into the stuff of our consciousness and the whole condition of our action. All action is determined by the effective state of our being, and the effective state of our being is determined by the state of our constant self-seeing will and active consciousness and by its basis of kinetic movement. It is what we see and believe with our whole active nature ourselves to be and our relations with the world to mean, it is our faith, our *śraddhā*, that makes us what we are. But the consciousness of man is of a double kind and corresponds to a double truth of existence; for there is a truth of the inner reality and a truth of the outer appearance. According as he lives in one or the other, he will be a mind dwelling in human ignorance or a soul founded in divine knowledge.

In its outer appearance the truth of existence is solely what we call Nature or Prakriti, a Force that operates as the whole law and mechanism of being, creates the world which is the object of our mind and senses and creates too the mind and senses as a means of relation between the creature and the objective world in which he lives. In this outer appearance man in his soul, his mind, his life, his body seems to be a creature of Nature differentiated from others by a separation of his body, life and mind and especially by his ego-sense — that subtle mechanism constructed for him that he may confirm and centralise his consciousness of all this strong separateness and difference. All in him, his soul of mind and its action as well as the functioning of his life and body, is very evidently determined by the law of his nature, cannot get outside of it, cannot operate otherwise. He attributes indeed a certain freedom to his personal will, the will of his ego; but that in reality amounts to nothing, since his ego is only a sense which makes him identify himself with the creation that Nature has made of him, with the varying mind and life and body she has constructed. His ego is itself a product of her workings, and as is the nature of his ego, so will be the nature of its will and according to that he must act and he can no other.

This then is man's ordinary consciousness of himself, this his faith in his own being, that he is a creature of Nature, a separate ego establishing whatever relations with others and with the world, making whatever development of himself, satisfying whatever will, desire, idea of his mind may be permissible in her circle and consonant with her intention or law in his existence.

There is, however, something in man's consciousness which does not fall in with the rigidity of this formula; he has a faith, which grows greater as his soul develops, in another and an inner reality of existence. In this inner reality the truth of existence is no longer Nature but Soul and Spirit, Purusha rather than Prakriti. Nature herself is only a power of Spirit, Prakriti the force of the Purusha. A Spirit, a Self, a Being one in all is the master of this world which is only his partial manifestation. That Spirit is the upholder of Nature and her action and the giver of the sanction by which alone her law becomes imperative and her force and its ways operative. That Spirit within her is the Knower who illuminates her and makes her conscient in us; his is the immanent and superconscient Will that inspires and motives her workings. The soul in man, a portion of this Divinity, shares his nature. Our nature is our soul's manifestation, operates by its sanction and embodies its secret self-knowledge and self-consciousness and its will of being in her motions and forms and changes.

The real soul and self of us is hidden from our intelligence by its ignorance of inner things, by a false identification, by an absorption in our outward mechanism of mind, life and body. But if the active soul of man can once draw back from this identification with its natural instruments, if it can see and live in the entire faith of its inner reality, then all is changed to it, life and existence take on another appearance, action a different meaning and character. Our being then becomes no longer this little egoistic creation of Nature, but the largeness of a divine, immortal and spiritual Power. Our consciousness becomes no longer that of this limited and struggling mental and vital creature, but an infinite, divine and spiritual consciousness.

And our will and action too are no longer that of this bounded personality and its ego, but a divine and spiritual will and action, the will and power of the Universal, the Supreme, the All-Self and Spirit acting freely through the human figure.

"This is the great change and transfiguration," runs the message of the Godhead in man, the Avatar, the divine Teacher, "to which I call the elect, and the elect are all who can turn their will away from the ignorance of the natural instruments to the soul's deepest experience, its knowledge of the inner self and spirit, its contact with the Godhead, its power to enter into the Divine. The elect are all who can accept this faith and this greater law. It is difficult indeed to accept for the human intellect attached always to its own cloud-forms and half lights of ignorance and to the yet obscurer habits of man's mental, nervous and physical parts; but once received it is a great and sure and saving way, because it is identical with the true truth of man's being and it is the authentic movement of his inmost and supreme nature.

"But the change is a very great one, an enormous transformation, and it cannot be done without an entire turning and conversion of your whole being and nature. There will be needed a complete consecration of your self and your nature and your life to the Highest and to nothing else but the Highest; for all must be held only for the sake of the Highest, nothing accepted except as it is in God and a form of God and for the sake of the Divine. There will be needed an admission of new truth, an entire turn and giving of your mind to a new knowledge of self and others and world and God and soul and Nature, a knowledge of oneness, a knowledge of universal Divinity, which will be at first an acceptance by the understanding but must become in the end a vision, a consciousness, a permanent state of the soul and the frame of its movements.

"There will be needed a will that shall make this new knowledge, vision, consciousness a motive of action and the sole motive. And it must be the motive not of an action grudging, limited, confined to a few necessary operations of Nature or to the few things that seem helpful to a formal perfection, apposite to a religious turn or to an individual salvation, but rather all action of human life taken up by the equal spirit and done for the sake of God and the good of all creatures. There will be needed an uplifting of the heart in a single aspiration to the Highest, a single love of the Divine Being, a single God-adoration. And there must be a widening too of the calmed and enlightened heart to embrace God in all beings. There will be needed a change of the habitual and normal nature of man as he is now to a supreme and divine spiritual nature. There will be needed in a word a Yoga which shall be at once a Yoga of integral knowledge, a Yoga of the integral will and its works, a Yoga of integral love, adoration and devotion and a Yoga of an integral spiritual perfection of the whole being and of all its parts and states and powers and motions.

"What then is this knowledge that will have to be admitted by the understanding, supported by the soul's faith and made real and living to the mind, heart and life? It is the knowledge of the supreme Soul and Spirit in its oneness and its wholeness. It is the knowledge of One who is for ever, beyond Time and Space and name and form and world, high beyond his own personal and impersonal levels and yet from whom all this proceeds, One whom all manifests in manifold Nature and her multitude of figures. It is the knowledge of him as an impersonal eternal immutable Spirit, the calm and limitless thing we call Self, infinite, equal and always the same, unaffected and unmodified and unchanged amid all this constant changing and all this multitude of individual personalities and soul powers and Nature powers and the forms and forces and eventualities of this transitory and apparent existence. It is the knowledge of him at the same time as the Spirit and Power who seems ever mutable in Nature, the Inhabitant who shapes himself to every form and modifies himself to every grade and degree and activity of his power, the Spirit who, becoming all that is even while he is for ever infinitely more than all that is, dwells in man and animal and thing, subject and object, soul and mind and life and matter, every existence and every force and every creature.

"It is not by insisting on this or that side only of the truth that you can practise this Yoga. The Divine whom you have to seek, the Self whom you have to discover, the supreme Soul of whom your soul is an eternal portion, is simultaneously all these things; you have to know them simultaneously in a supreme oneness, enter into all of them at once and in all states and all things see Him alone. If he were solely the Spirit mutable in Nature, there would be only an eternal and universal becoming. If you limit your faith and knowledge to that one aspect, you will never go beyond your personality and its constant changeful figures; on such a foundation you would be bound altogether in the revolutions of Nature. But you are not merely a succession of soul moments in Time. There is an impersonal self in you which supports the stream of your personality and is one with God's vast and impersonal spirit. And incalculable beyond this impersonality and personality, dominating these two constant poles of what you are here, you are eternal and transcendent in the Eternal Transcendence.

"If, again, there were only the truth of an eternal impersonal self that neither acts nor creates, then the world and your soul would be illusions without any real basis. If you limit your faith and knowledge to this one lonely aspect, the renunciation of life and action is your only resource. But God in the world and you in the world are realities; the world and you are true and actual powers and manifestations of the Supreme. Therefore accept life and action and do not reject them. One with God in your impersonal self and essence, an eternal portion of the Godhead turned to him by the love and adoration of your spiritual personality for its own Infinite, make of your natural being what it is intended to be, an instrument of works, a channel, a power of the Divine. That it always is in its truth, but now unconsciously and imperfectly, through the lower nature, doomed to a disfigurement of the Godhead by your ego. Make it consciously and perfectly and without any distortion by ego a power of the Divine in his supreme spiritual nature and a vehicle of his will and his works. In this way you will live in the integral truth of your own being and you will possess the integral God-union, the whole and flawless Yoga.

"The Supreme is the Purushottama, eternal beyond all manifestation, infinite beyond all limitation by Time or Space or Causality or any of his numberless qualities and features. But this does not mean that in his supreme eternity he is unconnected with all that happens here, cut off from world and Nature, aloof from all these beings. He is the supreme ineffable Brahman, he is impersonal self, he is all personal existences. Spirit here and life and matter, soul and Nature and the works of Nature are aspects and movements of his infinite and eternal existence. He is the supreme transcendent Spirit and all comes into manifestation from him and are his forms and his self-powers. As the one self he is here all-pervasive and equal and impersonal in man and animal and thing and object and every force of Nature. He is the supreme Soul and all souls are tireless flames of this one Soul. All living beings are in their spiritual personality deathless portions of the one Person or Purusha. He is the eternal Master of all manifested existence, Lord of the worlds and their creatures. He is the omnipotent originator of all actions, not bound by his works, and to him go all action and effort and sacrifice. He is in all and all are in him; he has become all and yet too he is above all and not limited by his creations. He is the transcendent Divine; he descends as the Avatar; he is manifest by his power in the Vibhuti; he is the Godhead secret in every human being. All the gods whom men worship are only personalities and forms and names and mental bodies of the one Divine Existence.

"The Supreme has manifested the world from his spiritual essence and in his own infinite existence and manifested himself too variously in the world. All things are his powers and figures and to the powers and figures of him there is no end, because he himself is infinite. As a pervading and containing impersonal self-existence he informs and sustains equally and without any partiality, preference or attachment to any person or thing or happening or feature all this infinite manifestation in Time and the universe. This pure and equal Self does not act, but supports impartially all the action of things. And yet it is the Supreme, but as the cosmic Spirit and the Time Spirit, who wills and conducts and determines the action of the world through his multitudinous power-to-be, that power of the Spirit which we call Nature. He creates, sustains and destroys his creations. He is seated too in the heart of every living creature and from there as a secret

Power in the individual, no less than from his universal presence in the Cosmos, he originates by force of Nature, manifests some line of his mystery in quality of nature and in executive energy of nature, shapes each thing and being separately according to its kind and initiates and upholds all action. It is this transcendent first origination from the Supreme and this constant universal and individual manifestation of Him in things and beings which makes the complex character of the cosmos.

"There are always these three eternal states of the Divine Being. There is always and for ever this one eternal immutable self-existence which is the basis and support of existent things. There is always and for ever this Spirit mutable in Nature manifested by her as all these existences. There is always and for ever this transcendent Divine who can be both of these others at once, can be a pure and silent Spirit and at the same time the active soul and life of the cycles of the universe, because he is something other and more than these two whether taken separately or together. In us is the Jiva, a spirit of this Spirit, a conscious power of the Supreme. He is one who carries in his deepest self the whole of the immanent Divine and in Nature lives in the universal Divine, — no temporary creation but an eternal soul acting and moving in the eternal Self, in the eternal Infinite.

"This conscient soul in us can adopt either of these three states of the Spirit. Man can live here in the mutability of Nature and in that alone. Ignorant of his real self, ignorant of the Godhead within him, he knows only Nature: he sees her as a mechanical executive and creative Force and sees himself and others as her creations, — egos, separated existences in her universe. It is thus, superficially, that he now lives and, while it is so and until he exceeds this outer consciousness and knows what is within him, all his thought and science can only be a shadow of light thrown upon screens and surfaces. This ignorance is possible, is even imposed, because the Godhead within is hidden by the veil of his own power. His greater reality is lost to our view by the completeness with which he has identified himself in a partial appearance with his creations and images and absorbed the created mind in the deceptive workings of his own Nature. And it is possible also because the real, the eternal, the spiritual Nature which is the secret of things in themselves is not manifest in their outward phenomena. The Nature which we see when we look outwards, the Nature which acts in our mind and body and senses is a lower Force, a derivation, a Magician who creates figures of the Spirit but hides the Spirit in its figures, conceals the truth and makes men look upon masks, a Force which is only capable of a sum of secondary and depressed values, not of the full power and glory and ecstasy and sweetness of the manifestation of the Divine. This Nature in us is a Maya of the ego, a tangle of the dualities, a web of ignorance and the three gunas. And so long as the soul of man lives in the surface fact of mind and life and body and not in his self and spirit, he cannot see God and himself and the world as they really are, cannot overcome this Maya, but must do what he can with its terms and figures.

"It is possible by drawing back from the lower turn of his nature in which man now lives, to awake from this light that is darkness and live in the luminous truth of the eternal and immutable self-existence. Man then is no longer bound up in his narrow prison of personality, no longer sees himself as this little I that thinks and acts and feels and struggles and labours for a little. He is merged in the vast and free impersonality of the pure spirit; he becomes the Brahman; he knows himself as one with the one self in all things. He is no longer aware of ego, no longer troubled by the dualities, no longer feels anguish of grief or disturbance of joy, is no longer shaken by desire, is no longer troubled by sin or limited by virtue. Or if the shadows of these things remain, he sees and knows them only as Nature working in her own qualities and does not feel them to be the truth of himself in which he lives. Nature alone acts and works out her mechanical figures: but the pure spirit is silent, inactive and free. Calm, untouched by her workings, it regards them with a perfect equality and knows itself to be other than these things. This spiritual state brings with it a still peace and freedom but not the dynamic divinity, not the integral perfection; it is a great step, but it is not the integral God-knowledge and self-knowledge.

"A perfect perfection comes only by living in the supreme and the whole Divine. Then the soul of man is united with the Godhead of which it is a portion; then it is one with all beings in the self and spirit, one with them both in God and in Nature; then it is not only free but complete, plunged in the supreme felicity, ready for its ultimate perfection. He still sees the self as an eternal and changeless Spirit silently supporting all things; but he sees also Nature no longer as a mere mechanical force that works out things according to the mechanism of the gunas, but as a power of the Spirit and the force of God in manifestation. He sees that the lower Nature is not the inmost truth of the spirit's action; he becomes aware of a highest spiritual nature of the Divine in which is contained the source and the yet to be realised greater truth of all that is imperfectly figured now in mind, life and body. Arisen from the lower mental to this supreme spiritual nature, he is delivered there from all ego. He knows himself as a spiritual being, in his essence one with all existences and in his active nature a power of the one Godhead and an eternal soul of the transcendent Infinite. He sees all in God and God in all; he sees all things as Vasudeva. He is delivered from the dualities of joy and grief, from the pleasant and the unpleasant, from desire and disappointment, from sin and virtue. All henceforth is to his conscious sight and sense the will and working of the Divine. He lives and acts as a soul and portion of the universal consciousness and power; he is filled with the transcendent divine delight, a spiritual Ananda. His action becomes the divine action and his status the highest spiritual status.

⁂

"This is the solution, this the salvation, this the perfection that I offer to all those who can listen to a divine voice within them and are capable of this faith and knowledge. But to climb to this pre-eminent condition the first necessity, the original radical step is to turn away from all that belongs to your lower Nature and fix yourself by concentration of the will and intelligence on that which is higher than either will or intelligence, higher than mind and heart and sense and body. And first of all you must turn to your own eternal and immutable self, impersonal and the same in all creatures. So long as you live in ego and mental personality, you will always spin endlessly in the same rounds and there can be no real issue. Turn your will inward beyond the heart and its desires and the sense and its attractions; lift it upward beyond the mind and its associations and attachments and its bounded wish and thought and impulse. Arrive at something within you that is eternal, ever unchanged, calm, unperturbed, equal, impartial to all things and persons and happenings, not affected by any action, not altered by the figures of Nature. Be that, be the eternal self, be the Brahman. If you can become that by a permanent spiritual experience, you will have an assured basis on which you can stand delivered from the limitations of your mind-created personality, secure against any fall from peace and knowledge, free from ego.

"Thus to impersonalise your being is not possible so long as you nurse and cherish and cling to your ego or anything that belongs to it. Desire and the passions that arise from desire are the principal sign and knot of ego. It is desire that makes you go on saying I and mine and subjects you through a persistent egoism to satisfaction and dissatisfaction, liking and disliking, hope and despair, joy and grief, to your petty loves and hatreds, to wrath and passion, to your attachment to success and things pleasant and to the sorrow and suffering of failure and of things unpleasant. Desire brings always confusion of mind and limitation of the will, an egoistic and distorted view of things, a failure and clouding of knowledge. Desire and its preferences and violences are the first strong root of sin and error. There can be while you cherish desire no assured stainless tranquillity, no settled light, no calm pure knowledge. There can be no right being — for desire is a perversion of the spirit — and no firm foundation for right thought, action and feeling. Desire, if permitted to remain under whatever colour, is a perpetual menace even to the wisest and can at any moment subtly or violently cast down the mind from even its firmest and most surely acquired foundation. Desire is the chief enemy of spiritual perfection.

"Slay then desire; put away attachment to the possession and enjoyment of the outwardness of things. Separate yourself from all that comes to you as outward touches and solicitations, as objects of the mind and senses. Learn to bear and reject all the rush of the passions and to remain securely seated in your inner self even while they rage in your members, until at last they cease to affect any part of your nature. Bear and put away similarly the forceful attacks and even the slightest insinuating touches of joy and sorrow. Cast away liking and disliking, destroy preference and hatred, root out shrinking and repugnance. Let there be a calm indifference to these things and to all the objects of desire in all your nature. Look on them with the silent and tranquil regard of an impersonal spirit.

"The result will be an absolute equality and the power of unshakable calm that the universal spirit maintains in front of its creations, facing ever the manifold action of Nature. Look with equal eyes; receive with an equal heart and mind all that comes to you, success and failure, honour and dishonour, the esteem and love of men and their scorn and persecution and hatred, every happening that would be to others a cause of joy and every happening that would be to others a cause of sorrow. Look with equal eyes on all persons, on the good and the wicked, on the wise and the foolish, on the Brahmin and the outcaste, on man at his highest and every pettiest creature. Meet equally all men whatever their relations to you, friend and ally, neutral and indifferent, opponent and enemy, lover and hater. These things touch the ego and you are called to be free from ego. These are personal relations and you have to observe all with the deep regard of the impersonal spirit. These are temporal and personal differences which you have to see but not be influenced by them; for you must fix not on these differences but on that which is the same in all, on the one self which all are, on the Divine in every creature and on the one working of Nature which is the equal will of God in men and things and energies and happenings and in all endeavour and result and whatever outcome of the world's labour.

"Action will still be done in you because Nature is always at work; but you must learn and feel that your self is not the doer of the action. Observe simply, observe unmoved the working of Nature and the play of her qualities and the magic of the gunas. Observe unmoved this action in yourself; look on all that is being done around you and see that it is the same working in others. Observe that the result of your works and theirs is constantly other than you or they desired or intended, not theirs, not yours, but omnipotently fixed by a greater Power that wills and acts here in universal Nature. Observe too that even the will in your works is not yours but Nature's. It is the will of the ego sense in you and is determined by the predominant quality in your composition which she has developed in the past or else brings forward at the moment. It depends on the play of your natural personality and that formation of Nature is not your true person. Draw back from this external formation to your inner silent self; you will see that you the Purusha are inactive, but Nature continues to do always her works according to her gunas. Fix yourself in this inner inactivity and stillness: no longer regard yourself as the doer. Remain seated in yourself above the play, free from the perturbed action of the gunas. Live secure in the purity of an impersonal spirit, live untroubled by the mortal waves that persist in your members.

"If you can do this, then you will find yourself uplifted into a great release, a wide freedom and a deep peace. Then you will be aware of God and immortal, possessed of your dateless self-existence, independent of mind and life and body, sure of your spiritual being, untouched by the reactions of Nature, unstained by passion and sin and pain and sorrow. Then you will depend for your joy and desire on no mortal or outward or worldly thing, but will possess inalienably the self-sufficient delight of a calm and eternal spirit. Then you will have ceased to be a mental creature and will have become spirit illimitable, the Brahman. And into this eternity of the silent self, rejecting from your mind all seed of thought and all root of desire, rejecting the figure of birth in the body, you can pass at your end by concentration in the pure Eternal and a mighty transference of your consciousness to the Infinite, the Absolute.

* * *

“This however is not all the truth of the Yoga and this end and way of departure, though a great end and a great way, is not the thing I propose to you. For I am the eternal Worker within you and I ask of you works. I demand of you not a passive consent to a mechanical movement of Nature from which in your self you are wholly separated, indifferent and aloof, but action complete and divine, done as the willing and understanding instrument of the Divine, done for God in you and others and for the good of the world. This action I propose to you, first no doubt as a means of perfection in the supreme spiritual Nature, but as a part too of that perfection. Action is a part of the integral knowledge of God, of his greater mysterious truth and of an entire living in the Divine; action can and should be continued even after perfection and freedom are won. I ask of you the action of the Jivanmukta, the works of the Siddha. Something has to be added to the Yoga already described, — for that was only a first Yoga of knowledge. There is also a Yoga of action in the illumination of God-experience; works can be made one spirit with knowledge. For works done in a total self-vision and God-vision, a vision of God in the world and of the world in God are themselves a movement of knowledge, a movement of light, an indispensable means and an intimate part of spiritual perfection.

“Therefore now to the experience of a high impersonality add too this knowledge that the Supreme whom one meets as the pure silent Self can be met also as a vast dynamic Spirit who originates all works and is Lord of the worlds and the Master of man’s action and endeavour and sacrifice. This apparently self-acting mechanism of Nature conceals an immanent divine Will that compels and guides it and shapes its purposes. But you cannot feel or know that Will while you are shut up in your narrow cell of personality, blinded and chained to your viewpoint of the ego and its desires. For you can wholly respond to it only when you are impersonalised by knowledge and widened to see all things in the self and in God and the self and God in all things. All becomes here by the power of the Spirit; all do their works by the immanence of God in things and his presence in the heart of every creature. The Creator of the worlds is not limited by his creations; the Lord of works is not bound by his works; the divine Will is not attached to its labour and the results of its labour: for it is omnipotent, all-possessing and all-blissful. But still the Lord looks down on his creations from his transcendence; he descends as the Avatar; he is here in you; he rules from within all things in the steps of their nature. And you too must do works in him, after the way and in the steps of the divine nature, untouched by limitation, attachment or bondage. Act for the best good of all, act for the maintenance of the march of the world, for the support or the leading of its peoples. The action asked of you is the action of the liberated Yogin; it is the spontaneous output of a free and God-held energy, it is an equal-minded movement, it is a selfless and desireless labour.

"The first step on this free, this equal, this divine way of action is to put from you attachment to fruit and recompense and to labour only for the sake of the work itself that has to be done. For you must deeply feel that the fruits belong not to you but to the Master of the world. Consecrate your labour and leave its returns to the Spirit who manifests and fulfils himself in the universal movement. The outcome of your action is determined by his will alone and whatever it be, good or evil fortune, success or failure, it is turned by him to the accomplishment of his world purpose. An entirely desireless and disinterested working of the personal will and the whole instrumental nature is the first rule of Karmayoga. Demand no fruit, accept whatever result is given to you; accept it with equality and a calm gladness: successful or foiled, prosperous or afflicted, continue unafraid, untroubled and unwavering on the steep path of the divine action.

"This is no more than the first step on the path. For you must be not only unattached to results, but unattached also to your labour. Cease to regard your works as your own; as you have abandoned the fruits of your work, so you must surrender the work also to the Lord of action and sacrifice. Recognise that your nature determines your action; your nature rules the immediate motion of your Swabhava and decides the expressive turn and development of your spirit in the paths of the executive force of Prakriti. Bring in no longer any self-will to confuse the steps of your mind in following the Godward way. Accept the action proper to your nature. Make of all you do from the greatest and most unusual effort to the smallest daily act, make of each act of your mind, each act of your heart, each act of your body, of every inner and outer turn, of every thought and will and feeling, of every step and pause and movement, a sacrifice to the Master of all sacrifice and Tapasya.

"Next know that you are an eternal portion of the Eternal and the powers of your nature are nothing without him, nothing if not his partial self-expression. It is the Divine Infinite that is being progressively fulfilled in your nature. It is the supreme power-to-be, it is the Shakti of the Lord that shapes and takes shape in your swabhava. Give up then all sense that you are the doer; see the Eternal alone as the doer of the action. Let your natural being be an occasion, an instrument, a channel of power, a means of manifestation. Offer up your will to him and make it one with his eternal will: surrender all your actions in the silence of your self and spirit to the transcendent Master of your nature. This cannot be really done or done perfectly so long as there is any ego sense in you or any mental claim or vital clamour. Action done in the least degree for the sake of the ego or tinged with the desire and will of the ego is not a perfect sacrifice. Nor can this great thing be well and truly done so long as there is inequality anywhere or any stamp of ignorant shrinking and preference. But when there is a perfect equality to all works, results, things and persons, a surrender to the Highest and not to desire or ego, then the divine Will determines without stumbling or deflection and the divine Power executes freely without any nether interference or perverting reaction all works in the purity and safety of your transmuted nature. To allow your every act to be shaped through you by the divine Will in its immaculate sovereignty is the highest degree of the perfection that comes by doing works in Yoga. That done, your nature will follow its cosmic walk in a complete and constant union with the Supreme, express the highest Self, obey the Ishwara.

"This way of divine works is a far better release and a more perfect way and solution than the physical renunciation of life and works. A physical abstention is not entirely possible and is not in the measure of its possibility indispensable to the spirit's freedom; it is besides a dangerous example, for it exerts a misleading influence on ordinary men. The best, the greatest set the standard which the rest of humanity strive to follow. Then since action is the nature of the embodied spirit, since works are the will of the eternal Worker, the great spirits, the master minds should set this example. World-workers should they be, doing all works of the world without reservation, God-workers free, glad and desireless, liberated souls and natures.

⁂

"The mind of knowledge and the will of action are not all; there is within you a heart whose demand is for delight. Here too in the heart's power and illumination, in its demand for delight, for the soul's satisfaction your nature must be turned, transformed and lifted to one conscious ecstasy with the Divine. The knowledge of the impersonal self brings its own Ananda; there is a joy of impersonality, a singleness of joy of the pure spirit. But an integral knowledge brings a greater triple delight. It opens the gates of the Transcendent's bliss; it releases into the limitless delight of a universal impersonality; it discovers the rapture of all this multitudinous manifestation: for there is a joy of the Eternal in Nature. This Ananda in the Jiva, a portion here of the Divine, takes the form of an ecstasy founded in the Godhead who is his source, in his supreme self, in the Master of his existence. An entire God-love and adoration extends to a love of the world and all its forms and powers and creatures; in all the Divine is seen, is found, is adored, is served or is felt in oneness. Add to knowledge and works this crown of the eternal triune delight; admit this love, learn this worship; make it one spirit with works and knowledge. That is the apex of the perfect perfection.

"This Yoga of love will give you a highest potential force for spiritual largeness and unity and freedom. But it must be a love which is one with God-knowledge. There is a devotion which seeks God in suffering for consolation and succour and deliverance; there is a devotion which seeks him for his gifts, for divine aid and protection and as a fountain of the satisfaction of desire; there is a devotion that, still ignorant, turns to him for light and knowledge. And so long as one is limited to these forms, there may persist even in their highest and noblest Godward turn a working of the three gunas. But when the God-lover is also the God-knower, the lover becomes one self with the Beloved; for he is the chosen of the Most High and the elect of the Spirit. Develop in yourself this God-engrossed love; the heart spiritualised and lifted beyond the limitations of its lower nature will reveal to you most intimately the secrets of God's immeasurable being, bring into you the whole touch and influx and glory of his divine Power and open to you the mysteries of an eternal rapture. It is perfect love that is the key to a perfect knowledge.

"This integral God-love demands too an integral work for the sake of the Divine in yourself and in all creatures. The ordinary man does works in obedience to some desire sinful or virtuous, some vital impulse low or high, some mental choice common or exalted or from some mixed mind and life motive. But the work done by you must be free and desireless; work done without desire creates no reaction and imposes no bondage. Done in a perfect equality and an unmoved calm and peace, but without any divine passion, it is at first the fine yoke of a spiritual obligation, *kartavyaṁ karma*, then the uplifting of a divine sacrifice; at its highest it can be the expression of a calm and glad acquiescence in active oneness. The oneness in love will do much more: it will replace the first impassive calm by a strong and deep rapture, not the petty ardour of egoistic desire but the ocean of an infinite Ananda. It will bring the moving sense and the pure and divine passion of the presence of the Beloved into your works; there will be an insistent joy of labour for God in yourself and for God in all beings. Love is the crown of works and the crown of knowledge.

"This love that is knowledge, this love that can be the deep heart of your action, will be your most effective force for an utter consecration and complete perfection. An integral union of the individual's being with the Divine Being is the condition of a perfect spiritual life. Turn then altogether towards the Divine; make one with him by knowledge, love and works all your nature. Turn utterly towards him and give up ungrudgingly into his hands your mind and your heart and your will, all your consciousness and even your very senses and body. Let your consciousness be sovereignly moulded by him into a flawless mould of his divine consciousness. Let your heart become a lucid or flaming heart of the Divine. Let your will be an impeccable action of his will. Let your very sense and body be the rapturous sensation and body of the Divine. Adore and sacrifice to him with all you are; remember him in every thought and feeling, every impulsion and act. Persevere until all these things are wholly his and he has taken up even in most common and outward things as in the inmost sacred chamber of your spirit his constant transmuting presence.

⁂

"This triune way is the means by which you can rise entirely out of your lower into your supreme spiritual nature. That is the hidden superconscient nature in which the Jiva, a portion of the high Infinite and Divine and intimately one in law of being with him, dwells in his Truth and not any longer in an externalised Maya. This perfection, this unity can be enjoyed in its own native status, aloof in a supreme supracosmic existence: but here also you may and should realise it, here in the human body and physical world. It is not enough for this end to be calm, inactive and free from the gunas in the inner self and to watch and allow indifferently their mechanical action in the outer members. For the active nature as well as the self has to be given to the Divine and to become divine. All that you are must grow into one law of being with the Purushottama, *sādharmya*; all must be changed into my conscious spiritual becoming, *mad-bhāva*. A completest surrender must be there. Take refuge with Me in all the many ways and along all the living lines of your nature; for that alone will bring about this great change and perfection.

"This high consummation of the Yoga will at once solve or rather it will wholly remove and destroy at its roots the problem of action. Human action is a thing full of difficulties and perplexities, tangled and confused like a forest with a few more or less obscure paths cut into it rather than through it; but all this difficulty and entanglement arises from the single fact that man lives imprisoned in the ignorance of his mental, vital and physical nature. He is compelled by its qualities and yet afflicted with responsibility in his will because something in him feels that he is a soul who ought to be what now he is not at all or very little, master and ruler of his nature. All his laws of living, all his dharmas must be under these conditions imperfect, temporary and provisional and at best only partly right or true. His imperfections can cease only when he knows himself, knows the real nature of the world in which he lives and, most of all, knows the Eternal from whom he comes and in whom and by whom he exists. When he has once achieved a true consciousness and knowledge, there is no longer any problem; for then he acts freely out of himself and lives spontaneously in accordance with the truth of his spirit and his highest nature. At its fullest, at the highest height of this knowledge it is not he who acts but the Divine, the One eternal and infinite who acts in him and through him in his liberated wisdom and power and perfection.

"Man in his natural being is a sattwic, rajasic and tamasic creature of Nature. According as one or other of her qualities predominates in him, he makes and follows this or that law of his life and action. His tamasic, material, sensational mind subject to inertia and fear and ignorance either obeys partly the compulsion of its environment and partly the spasmodic impulses of its desires or finds a protection in the routine following of a dull customary intelligence. The rajasic mind of desire struggles with the world in which it lives and tries to possess always new things, to command, battle, conquer, create, destroy, accumulate. Always it goes forward tossed between success and failure, joy and sorrow, exultation or despair. But in all, whatever law it may seem to admit, it follows really only the law of the lower self and ego, the restless, untired, self-devouring and all-devouring mind of the Asuric and Rakshasic nature. The sattwic intelligence surmounts partly this state, sees that a better law than that of desire and ego must be followed and erects and imposes on itself a social, an ethical, a religious rule, a Dharma, a Shastra. This is as high as the ordinary mind of man can go, to erect an ideal or practical rule for the guidance of the mind and will and as faithfully as possible observe it in life and conduct. This sattwic mind must be developed to its highest point where it succeeds in putting away the mixture of ego motive altogether and observes the Dharma for its own sake as an impersonal social, ethical or religious ideal, the thing disinterestedly to be done solely because it is right, *kartavyaṁ karma*.

"The real truth of all this action of Prakriti is, however, less outwardly mental and more inwardly subjective. It is this that man is an embodied soul involved in material and mental nature, and he follows in it a progressive law of his development determined by an inner law of his being; his cast of spirit makes out his cast of mind and life, his swabhava. Each man has a swadharma, a law of his inner being which he must observe, find out and follow. The action determined by his inner nature, that is his real Dharma. To follow it is the true law of his development; to deviate from it is to bring in confusion, retardation and error. That social, ethical, religious or other law and ideal is best for him always which helps him to observe and follow out his Swadharma.

"All this action however is even at its best subject to the ignorance of the mind and the play of the gunas. It is only when the soul of man finds itself that he can overpass and erase from his consciousness the ignorance and the confusion of the gunas. It is true that even when you have found yourself and live in your self, your nature will still continue on its old lines and act for a time according to its inferior modes. But now you can follow that action with a perfect self-knowledge and can make of it a sacrifice to the Master of your existence. Follow then the law of your Swadharma, do the action that is demanded by your Swabhava whatever it may be. Reject all motive of egoism, all initiation by self-will, all rule of desire, until you can make the complete surrender of all the ways of your being to the Supreme.

"And when you are once able to do that sincerely, that will be the moment to renounce the initiation of your acts without exception into the hands of the supreme Godhead within you. Then you will be released from all laws of conduct, liberated from all dharmas. The Divine Power and Presence within you will free you from sin and evil and lift you far above human standards of virtue. For you will live and act in the absolute and spontaneous right and purity of the spiritual being and the immaculate force of the divine nature. The Divine and not you will enact his own will and works through you, not for your lower personal pleasure and desire, but for the world-purpose and for your divine good and the manifest or secret good of all. Inundated with light, you will see the form of the Godhead in the world and in the works of Time, know his purpose and hear his command. Your nature will receive as an instrument his will only whatever it may be and do it without question, because there will come with each initiation of your acts from above and within you an imperative knowledge and an illumined assent to the divine wisdom and its significance. The battle will be his, his the victory, his the empire.

"This will be your perfection in the world and the body, and beyond these worlds of temporal birth the supreme eternal superconsciousness will be yours and you will dwell for ever in the highest status of the Supreme Spirit. The cycles of incarnation and the fear of mortality will not distress you; for here in life you will have accomplished the expression of the Godhead, and your soul, even though it has descended into mind and body, will already be living in the vast eternity of the Spirit.

"This then is the supreme movement, this complete surrender of your whole self and nature, this abandonment of all dharmas to the Divine who is your highest Self, this absolute aspiration of all your members to the supreme spiritual nature. If you can once achieve it, whether at the outset or much later on the way, then whatever you are or were in your outward nature, your way is sure and your perfection inevitable. A supreme Presence within you will take up your Yoga and carry it swiftly along the lines of your swabhava to its consummate completion. And afterwards whatever your way of life and mode of action, you will be consciously living, acting and moving in him and the Divine Power will act through you in your every inner and outer motion. This is the supreme way because it is the highest secret and mystery and yet an inner movement progressively realisable by all. This is the deepest and most intimate truth of your real, your spiritual existence."

THE END

Note on the Text

ESSAYS ON THE GITA was first published in the monthly review *Arya* in two series. The first series, covering the first six chapters of the Gita, ran from August 1916 to July 1918. The second series, covering the last twelve chapters, ran from August 1918 to July 1920.

The first series, slightly revised and with some new chapter titles, was brought out as a book in 1922 by V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu and Sons, Madras. New editions of the first series were published by Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, in 1926, 1937, 1944 and 1949. The same publisher issued an extensively revised edition of the second series in 1928, and new editions of this series in 1942, 1945 and 1949.

The 1922 edition of the first series may be considered an incomplete first edition of *Essays on the Gita*. The first and second series pairs of 1926 and 1928, 1937 and 1942, 1944 and 1945, and 1949 (both series) may be considered the second, third, fourth and fifth editions of the book.

Since 1949 the two series of *Essays on the Gita* have appeared in one volume. An American edition was published by The Sri Aurobindo Library, New York, in 1950. The sixth and seventh Indian editions were published by the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education in 1959 and 1966. In 1970 *Essays on the Gita* formed volume 13 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. This, the eighth Indian edition, was reprinted many times.

The text of the present, ninth, edition has been carefully checked against Sri Aurobindo's extant manuscripts and all editions published before 1950.

The Renaissance in India
and
Other Essays on Indian Culture

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 20
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1997
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

The Renaissance in India

with

A Defence of Indian Culture

Publisher's Note

Most of the essays that make up this volume have appeared until now under the title *The Foundations of Indian Culture*. That title was not Sri Aurobindo's. It was first used when those essays were published as a book in New York in 1953.

The present volume consists of three series of essays and one single essay, published in the monthly review *Arya* as follows:

The Renaissance in India, August – November 1918.
Indian Culture and External Influence, March 1919.
"Is India Civilised?", December 1918 – February 1919.
A Defence of Indian Culture, February 1919 – January 1921.

Sri Aurobindo revised the four essays making up *The Renaissance in India* and published them as a booklet in 1920. He later revised *"Is India Civilised?"* and the first eight and a half chapters of *A Defence of Indian Culture*. These revised chapters were not published during his lifetime. In 1947 some of the later chapters of *A Defence of Indian Culture*, lightly revised, were published in two booklets. The four essays on Indian art appeared as *The Significance of Indian Art* and the four essays on Indian polity as *The Spirit and Form of Indian Polity*. The rest of the series was only sporadically revised. When its publication was proposed to him in 1949, Sri Aurobindo replied:

> The Defence of Indian Culture is an unfinished book and also I had intended to alter much of it and to omit all but brief references to William Archer's criticisms. That was why its publication has been so long delayed. Even if it is reprinted as it is considerable alterations will have to be made and there must be some completion and an end to the book which does not at present exist.

The desired alterations were never made.

The text of the present edition has been checked against the *Arya* and the revised versions.

A number of photographic reproductions of Indian architecture, sculpture and painting have been included to illustrate references in the text.

CONTENTS

The Renaissance in India 3

Indian Culture and External Influence 43

"Is India Civilised?" 55

A Defence of Indian Culture

- A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture 97
- Indian Spirituality and Life 178
- Indian Art 255
- Indian Literature 314
- Indian Polity 384

List of Illustrations

1. Cave Cathedral, Ajanta
2. Kalahastishwara Temple, Andhra Pradesh
3. Sinhachalam Temple, Andhra Pradesh
4. Kandarya Mahadeo Temple, Khajuraho
5. Humayun's Tomb, New Delhi
6. Taj Mahal, Agra
7. Itimad-ud-Daulah's Tomb, Agra
8. Panch Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri
9. Dhyani Buddha, Ajanta
10. Maheshwara Murti, Elephanta Caves
11. Durga Mahishasuramardini, Mamallapuram
12. Nagaraja and Queen, Ajanta
13. Buddha, Mathura Museum
14. Princely Doorkeeper, Mamallapuram
15. Vrikshaka, Gwalior Museum
16. Buddha, Sarnath
17. Nataraja, Kuram, Tamil Nadu
18. Sundaramurti Swami, Colombo Museum
19. Avalokiteshwara, Nepal
20. Nataraja, Tanjore
21. Bodhisattwa Padmapani, Ajanta
22. Apsaras, Sigiriya, Sri Lanka
23. Painting in Bagh Caves, Madhya Pradesh
24. Krishna and Radha, Rajput School
25. The Adoration Group, Ajanta

The illustrations of Indian architecture, sculpture and painting in this volume are reproduced by courtesy of the Archeological Survey of India; Department of Archeology, Govt. of Tamil Nadu; Archeological Museum, Mathura; Colombo Museum and Mrs. Elizabeth Beck.

The Renaissance in India

The Renaissance in India

THERE has been recently some talk of a Renaissance in India. A number of illuminating essays with that general title and subject have been given to us by a poet and subtle critic and thinker, Mr. James H. Cousins, and others have touched suggestively various sides of the growing movement towards a new life and a new thought that may well seem to justify the description. This Renaissance, this new birth in India, if it is a fact, must become a thing of immense importance both to herself and the world, to herself because of all that is meant for her in the recovery or the change of her time-old spirit and national ideals, to the world because of the possibilities involved in the rearising of a force that is in many respects unlike any other and its genius very different from the mentality and spirit that have hitherto governed the modern idea in mankind, although not so far away perhaps from that which is preparing to govern the future. It is rather the first point of view that I shall put forward at present: for the question what India means to make of her own life must precede the wider question what her new life may mean to the human race. And it is besides likely to become before long an issue of a pressing importance.

There is a first question, whether at all there is really a Renaissance in India. That depends a good deal on what we mean by the word; it depends also on the future, for the thing itself is only in its infancy and it is too early to say to what it may lead. The word carries the mind back to the turning-point of European culture to which it was first applied; that was not so much a reawakening as an overturn and reversal, a seizure of Christianised, Teutonised, feudalised Europe by the old Graeco-Latin spirit and form with all the complex and momentous results which came from it. That is certainly not a type of renaissance that is at all possible in India. There is a closer resemblance to the recent Celtic movement in Ireland, the attempt of a reawakened national spirit to find a new impulse of self-expression which shall give the spiritual force for a great reshaping and rebuilding: in Ireland this was discovered by a return to the Celtic spirit and culture after a long period of eclipsing English influences, and in India something of the same kind of movement is appearing and has especially taken a pronounced turn since the political outburst of 1905. But even here the analogy does not give the whole truth.

We have to see moreover that the whole is at present a great formless chaos of conflicting influences with a few luminous points of formation here and there where a new self-consciousness has come to the surface. But it cannot be said that these forms have yet a sufficient hold on the general mind of the people. They represent an advance movement; they are the voices of the vanguard, the torchlights of the pioneers. On the whole what we see is a giant Shakti who awakening into a new world, a new and alien environment, finds herself shackled in all her limbs by a multitude of gross or minute bonds, bonds self-woven by her past, bonds recently imposed from outside, and is struggling to be free from them, to arise and proclaim herself, to cast abroad her spirit and set her seal on the world. We hear on every side a sound of the slow fraying of bonds, here and there a sharp tearing and snapping; but freedom of movement has not yet been attained. The eyes are not yet clear, the bud of the soul has only partly opened. The Titaness has not yet arisen.

Mr. Cousins puts the question in his book whether the word renaissance at all applies since India has always been awake and stood in no need of reawakening. There is a certain truth behind that and to one coming in with a fresh mind from outside and struck by the living continuity of past and present India, it may be especially apparent; but that is not quite how we can see it who are her children and are still suffering from the bitter effects of the great decline which came to a head in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Undoubtedly there was a period, a brief but very disastrous period of the dwindling of that great fire of life, even a moment of incipient disintegration, marked politically by the anarchy which gave European adventure its chance, inwardly by an increasing torpor of the creative spirit in religion and art, — science and philosophy and intellectual knowledge had long been dead or petrified into a mere scholastic Punditism, — all pointing to a nadir of setting energy, the evening-time from which according to the Indian idea of the cycles a new age has to start. It was that moment and the pressure of a superimposed European culture which followed it that made the reawakening necessary.

We have practically to take three facts into consideration, the great past of Indian culture and life with the moment of inadaptive torpor into which it had lapsed, the first period of the Western contact in which it seemed for a moment likely to perish by slow decomposition, and the ascending movement which first broke into some clarity of expression only a decade or two ago. Mr. Cousins has his eye fixed on Indian spirituality which has always maintained itself even in the decline of the national vitality; it was certainly that which saved India always at every critical moment of her destiny, and it has been the starting-point too of her renascence. Any other nation under the same pressure would have long ago perished soul and body. But certainly the outward members were becoming gangrened; the powers of renovation seemed for a moment to be beaten by the powers of stagnation, and stagnation is death. Now that the salvation, the reawakening has come, India will certainly keep her essential spirit, will keep her characteristic soul, but there is likely to be a great change of the body. The shaping for itself of a new body, of new philosophical, artistic, literary, cultural, political, social forms by the same soul rejuvenescent will, I should think, be the type of the Indian renascence, — forms not contradictory of the truths of life which the old expressed, but rather expressive of those truths restated, cured of defect, completed.

What was this ancient spirit and characteristic soul of India? European writers, struck by the general metaphysical bent of the Indian mind, by its strong religious instincts and religious idealism, by its other-worldliness, are inclined to write as if this were all the Indian spirit. An abstract, metaphysical, religious mind overpowered by the sense of the infinite, not apt for life, dreamy, unpractical, turning away from life and action as Maya, this, they said, is India; and for a time Indians in this as in other matters submissively echoed their new Western teachers and masters. They learned to speak with pride of their metaphysics, of their literature, of their religion, but in all else they were content to be learners and imitators. Since then Europe has discovered that there was too an Indian art of remarkable power and beauty; but the rest of what India meant it has hardly at all seen. But meanwhile the Indian mind began to emancipate itself and to look upon its past with a clear and self-discerning eye, and it very soon discovered that it had been misled into an entirely false self-view. All such one-sided appreciations indeed almost invariably turn out to be false. Was it not the general misconception about Germany at one time, because she was great in philosophy and music, but had blundered in life and been unable to make the most of its materials, that this was a nation of unpractical dreamers, idealists, erudites and sentimentalists, patient, docile and industrious certainly, but politically inapt, — "admirable, ridiculous Germany"? Europe has had a terrible awakening from that error. When the renascence of India is complete, she will have an awakening, not of the same brutal kind, certainly, but startling enough, as to the real nature and capacity of the Indian spirit.

Spirituality is indeed the master-key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinite is native to it. India saw from the beginning, — and, even in her ages of reason and her age of increasing ignorance, she never lost hold of the insight, — that life cannot be rightly seen in the sole light, cannot be perfectly lived in the sole power of its externalities. She was alive to the greatness of material laws and forces; she had a keen eye for the importance of the physical sciences; she knew how to organise the arts of ordinary life. But she saw that the physical does not get its full sense until it stands in right relation to the supra-physical; she saw that the complexity of the universe could not be explained in the present terms of man or seen by his superficial sight, that there were other powers behind, other powers within man himself of which he is normally unaware, that he is conscious only of a small part of himself, that the invisible always surrounds the visible, the suprasensible the sensible, even as infinity always surrounds the finite. She saw too that man has the power of exceeding himself, of becoming himself more entirely and profoundly than he is, — truths which have only recently begun to be seen in Europe and seem even now too great for its common intelligence. She saw the myriad gods beyond man, God beyond the gods, and beyond God his own ineffable eternity; she saw that there were ranges of life beyond our life, ranges of mind beyond our present mind and above these she saw the splendours of the spirit. Then with that calm audacity of her intuition which knew no fear or littleness and shrank from no act whether of spiritual or intellectual, ethical or vital courage, she declared that there was none of these things which man could not attain if he trained his will and knowledge; he could conquer these ranges of mind, become the spirit, become a god, become one with God, become the ineffable Brahman. And with the logical practicality and sense of science and organised method which distinguished her mentality, she set forth immediately to find out the way. Hence from long ages of this insight and practice there was ingrained in her her spirituality, her powerful psychic tendency, her great yearning to grapple with the infinite and possess it, her ineradicable religious sense, her idealism, her Yoga, the constant turn of her art and her philosophy.

But this was not and could not be her whole mentality, her entire spirit; spirituality itself does not flourish on earth in the void, even as our mountaintops do not rise like those of an enchantment of dream out of the clouds without a base. When we look at the past of India, what strikes us next is her stupendous vitality, her inexhaustible power of life and joy of life, her almost unimaginably prolific creativeness. For three thousand years at least, — it is indeed much longer, — she has been creating abundantly and incessantly, lavishly, with an inexhaustible many-sidedness, republics and kingdoms and empires, philosophies and cosmogonies and sciences and creeds and arts and poems and all kinds of monuments, palaces and temples and public works, communities and societies and religious orders, laws and codes and rituals, physical sciences, psychic sciences, systems of Yoga, systems of politics and administration, arts spiritual, arts worldly, trades, industries, fine crafts, — the list is endless and in each item there is almost a plethora of activity. She creates and creates and is not satisfied and is not tired; she will not have an end of it, seems hardly to need a space for rest, a time for inertia and lying fallow. She expands too outside her borders; her ships cross the ocean and the fine superfluity of her wealth brims over to Judaea and Egypt and Rome; her colonies spread her arts and epics and creeds in the Archipelago; her traces are found in the sands of Mesopotamia; her religions conquer China and Japan and spread westward as far as Palestine and Alexandria, and the figures of the Upanishads and the sayings of the Buddhists are reechoed on the lips of Christ. Everywhere, as on her soil, so in her works there is the teeming of a superabundant energy of life. European critics complain that in her ancient architecture, sculpture and art there is no reticence, no holding back of riches, no blank spaces, that she labours to fill every rift with ore, occupy every inch with plenty. Well, but defect or no, that is the necessity of her superabundance of life, of the teeming of the infinite within her. She lavishes her riches because she must, as the Infinite fills every inch of space with the stirring of life and energy because it is the Infinite.

But this supreme spirituality and this prolific abundance of the energy and joy of life and creation do not make all that the spirit of India has been in its past. It is not a confused splendour of tropical vegetation under heavens of a pure sapphire infinity. It is only to eyes unaccustomed to such wealth that there seems to be a confusion in this crowding of space with rich forms of life, a luxurious disorder of excess or a wanton lack of measure, clear balance and design. For the third power of the ancient Indian spirit was a strong intellectuality, at once austere and rich, robust and minute, powerful and delicate, massive in principle and curious in detail. Its chief impulse was that of order and arrangement, but an order founded upon a seeking for the inner law and truth of things and having in view always the possibility of conscientious practice. India has been preeminently the land of the Dharma and the Shastra. She searched for the inner truth and law of each human or cosmic activity, its dharma; that found, she laboured to cast into elaborate form and detailed law of arrangement its application in fact and rule of life. Her first period was luminous with the discovery of the Spirit; her second completed the discovery of the Dharma; her third elaborated into detail the first simpler formulation of the Shastra; but none was exclusive, the three elements are always present.

In this third period the curious elaboration of all life into a science and an art assumes extraordinary proportions. The mere mass of the intellectual production during the period from Asoka well into the Mahomedan epoch is something truly prodigious, as can be seen at once if one studies the account which recent scholarship gives of it, and we must remember that that scholarship as yet only deals with a fraction of what is still lying extant and what is extant is only a small percentage of what was once written and known. There is no historical parallel for such an intellectual labour and activity before the invention of printing and the facilities of modern science; yet all that mass of research and production and curiosity of detail was accomplished without these facilities and with no better record than the memory and for an aid the perishable palm-leaf. Nor was all this colossal literature confined to philosophy and theology, religion and Yoga, logic and rhetoric and grammar and linguistics, poetry and drama, medicine and astronomy and the sciences; it embraced all life, politics and society, all the arts from painting to dancing, all the sixty-four accomplishments, everything then known that could be useful to life or interesting to the mind, even, for instance, to such practical side minutiae as the breeding and training of horses and elephants, each of which had its Shastra and its art, its apparatus of technical terms, its copious literature. In each subject from the largest and most momentous to the smallest and most trivial there was expended the same all-embracing, opulent, minute and thorough intellectuality. On one side there is an insatiable curiosity, the desire of life to know itself in every detail, on the other a spirit of organisation and scrupulous order, the desire of the mind to tread through life with a harmonised knowledge and in the right rhythm and measure. Thus an ingrained and dominant spirituality, an inexhaustible vital creativeness and gust of life and, mediating between them, a powerful, penetrating and scrupulous intelligence combined of the rational, ethical and aesthetic mind each at a high intensity of action, created the harmony of the ancient Indian culture.

Indeed without this opulent vitality and opulent intellectuality India could never have done so much as she did with her spiritual tendencies. It is a great error to suppose that spirituality flourishes best in an impoverished soil with the life half-killed and the intellect discouraged and intimidated. The spirituality that so flourishes is something morbid, hectic and exposed to perilous reactions. It is when the race has lived most richly and thought most profoundly that spirituality finds its heights and its depths and its constant and many-sided fruition. In modern Europe it is after a long explosion of vital force and a stupendous activity of the intellect that spirituality has begun really to emerge and with some promise of being not, as it once was, the sorrowful physician of the malady of life, but the beginning of a large and profound clarity. The European eye is struck in Indian spiritual thought by the Buddhistic and illusionist denial of life. But it must be remembered that this is only one side of its philosophic tendency which assumed exaggerated proportions only in the period of decline. In itself too that was simply one result, in one direction, of a tendency of the Indian mind which is common to all its activities, the impulse to follow each motive, each specialisation of motive even, spiritual, intellectual, ethical, vital, to its extreme point and to sound its utmost possibility. Part of its innate direction was to seek in each not only for its fullness of detail, but for its infinite, its absolute, its profoundest depth or its highest pinnacle. It knew that without a “fine excess” we cannot break down the limits which the dull temper of the normal mind opposes to knowledge and thought and experience; and it had in seeking this point a boundless courage and yet a sure tread. Thus it carried each tangent of philosophic thought, each line of spiritual experience to its farthest point, and chose to look from that farthest point at all existence, so as to see what truth or power such a view could give it. It tried to know the whole of divine nature and to see too as high as it could beyond nature and into whatever there might be of supradivine. When it formulated a spiritual atheism, it followed that to its acme of possible vision. When, too, it indulged in materialistic atheism, — though it did that only with a side glance, as the freak of an insatiable intellectual curiosity, — yet it formulated it straight out, boldly and nakedly, without the least concession to idealism or ethicism.

Everywhere we find this tendency. The ideals of the Indian mind have included the height of self-assertion of the human spirit and its thirst of independence and mastery and possession and the height also of its self-abnegation, dependence and submission and self-giving. In life the ideal of opulent living and the ideal of poverty were carried to the extreme of regal splendour and the extreme of satisfied nudity. Its intuitions were sufficiently clear and courageous not to be blinded by its own most cherished ideas and fixed habits of life. If it was obliged to stereotype caste as the symbol of its social order, it never quite forgot, as the caste-spirit is apt to forget, that the human soul and the human mind are beyond caste. For it had seen in the lowest human being the Godhead, Narayana. It emphasised distinctions only to turn upon them and deny all distinctions. If all its political needs and circumstances compelled it at last to exaggerate the monarchical principle and declare the divinity of the king and to abolish its earlier republican city states and independent federations as too favourable to the centrifugal tendency, if therefore it could not develop democracy, yet it had the democratic idea, applied it in the village, in council and municipality, within the caste, was the first to assert a divinity in the people and could cry to the monarch at the height of his power, "O king, what art thou but the head servant of the demos?" Its idea of the golden age was a free spiritual anarchism. Its spiritual extremism could not prevent it from fathoming through a long era the life of the senses and its enjoyments, and there too it sought the utmost richness of sensuous detail and the depths and intensities of sensuous experience. Yet it is notable that this pursuit of the most opposite extremes never resulted in disorder; and its most hedonistic period offers nothing that at all resembles the unbridled corruption which a similar tendency has more than once produced in Europe. For the Indian mind is not only spiritual and ethical, but intellectual and artistic, and both the rule of the intellect and the rhythm of beauty are hostile to the spirit of chaos. In every extreme the Indian spirit seeks for a law in that extreme and a rule, measure and structure in its application. Besides, this sounding of extremes is balanced by a still more ingrained characteristic, the synthetical tendency, so that having pushed each motive to its farthest possibility the Indian mind returns always towards some fusion of the knowledge it has gained and to a resulting harmony and balance in action and institution. Balance and rhythm which the Greeks arrived at by self-limitation, India arrived at by its sense of intellectual, ethical and aesthetic order and the synthetic impulse of its mind and life.

I have dwelt on these facts because they are apt to be ignored by those who look only at certain sides of the Indian mind and spirit which are most prominent in the last epochs. By insisting only upon these we get an inaccurate or incomplete idea of the past of India and of the integral meaning of its civilisation and the spirit that animated it. The present is only a last deposit of the past at a time of ebb; it has no doubt also to be the starting-point of the future, but in this present all that was in India's past is still dormant, it is not destroyed; it is waiting there to assume new forms. The decline was the ebb-movement of a creative spirit which can only be understood by seeing it in the full tide of its greatness; the renascence is the return of the tide and it is the same spirit that is likely to animate it, although the forms it takes may be quite new. To judge therefore the possibilities of the renascence, the powers that it may reveal and the scope that it may take, we must dismiss the idea that the tendency of metaphysical abstraction is the one note of the Indian spirit which dominates or inspires all its cadences. Its real key-note is the tendency of spiritual realisation, not cast at all into any white monotone, but many-faceted, many-coloured, as supple in its adaptability as it is intense in its highest pitches. The note of spirituality is dominant, initial, constant, always recurrent; it is the support of all the rest. The first age of India's greatness was a spiritual age when she sought passionately for the truth of existence through the intuitive mind and through an inner experience and interpretation both of the psychic and the physical existence. The stamp put on her by that beginning she has never lost, but rather always enriched it with fresh spiritual experience and discovery at each step of the national life. Even in her hour of decline it was the one thing she could never lose.

But this spiritual tendency does not shoot upward only to the abstract, the hidden and the intangible; it casts its rays downward and outward to embrace the multiplicities of thought and the richness of life. Therefore the second long epoch of India's greatness was an age of the intellect, the ethical sense, the dynamic will in action enlightened to formulate and govern life in the lustre of spiritual truth. After the age of the Spirit, the age of the Dharma; after the Veda and Upanishads, the heroic centuries of action and social formation, typal construction and thought and philosophy, when the outward forms of Indian life and culture were fixed in their large lines and even their later developments were being determined in the seed. The great classical age of Sanskrit culture was the flowering of this intellectuality into curiosity of detail in the refinements of scholarship, science, art, literature, politics, sociology, mundane life. We see at this time too the sounding not only of aesthetic, but of emotional and sensuous, even of vital and sensual experience. But the old spirituality reigned behind all this mental and all this vital activity, and its later period, the post-classical, saw a lifting up of the whole lower life and an impressing upon it of the values of the spirit. This was the sense of the Puranic and Tantric systems and the religions of Bhakti. Later Vaishnavism, the last fine flower of the Indian spirit, was in its essence the taking up of the aesthetic, emotional and sensuous being into the service of the spiritual. It completed the curve of the cycle.

The evening of decline which followed the completion of the curve was prepared by three movements of retrogression. First there is, comparatively, a sinking of that superabundant vital energy and a fading of the joy of life and the joy of creation. Even in the decline this energy is still something splendid and extraordinary and only for a very brief period sinks nearest to a complete torpor; but still a comparison with its past greatness will show that the decadence was marked and progressive. Secondly, there is a rapid cessation of the old free intellectual activity, a slumber of the scientific and the critical mind as well as the creative intuition; what remains becomes more and more a repetition of ill-understood fragments of past knowledge. There is a petrification of the mind and life in the relics of the forms which a great intellectual past had created. Old authority and rule become rigidly despotic and, as always then happens, lose their real sense and spirit. Finally, spirituality remains but burns no longer with the large and clear flame of knowledge of former times, but in intense jets and in a dispersed action which replaces the old magnificent synthesis and in which certain spiritual truths are emphasised to the neglect of others. This diminution amounts to a certain failure of the great endeavour which is the whole meaning of Indian culture, a falling short in the progress towards the perfect spiritualisation of the mind and the life. The beginnings were superlative, the developments very great, but at a certain point where progress, adaptation, a new flowering should have come in, the old civilisation stopped short, partly drew back, partly lost its way. The essential no doubt remained and still remains in the heart of the race and not only in its habits and memories, but in its action it was covered up in a great smoke of confusion. The causes internal and external we need not now discuss; but the fact is there. It was the cause of the momentary helplessness of the Indian mind in the face of new and unprecedented conditions.

It was at this moment that the European wave swept over India. The first effect of this entry of a new and quite opposite civilisation was the destruction of much that had no longer the power to live, the deliquescence of much else, a tendency to the devitalisation of the rest. A new activity came in, but this was at first crudely and confusedly imitative of the foreign culture. It was a crucial moment and an ordeal of perilous severity; a less vigorous energy of life might well have foundered and perished under the double weight of the deadening of its old innate motives and a servile imitation of alien ideas and habits. History shows us how disastrous this situation can be to nations and civilisations. But fortunately the energy of life was there, sleeping only for a moment, not dead, and, given that energy, the evil carried within itself its own cure. For whatever temporary rotting and destruction this crude impact of European life and culture has caused, it gave three needed impulses. It revived the dormant intellectual and critical impulse; it rehabilitated life and awakened the desire of new creation; it put the reviving Indian spirit face to face with novel conditions and ideals and the urgent necessity of understanding, assimilating and conquering them. The national mind turned a new eye on its past culture, reawoke to its sense and import, but also at the same time saw it in relation to modern knowledge and ideas. Out of this awakening vision and impulse the Indian renaissance is arising, and that must determine its future tendency. The recovery of the old spiritual knowledge and experience in all its splendour, depth and fullness is its first, most essential work; the flowing of this spirituality into new forms of philosophy, literature, art, science and critical knowledge is the second; an original dealing with modern problems in the light of the Indian spirit and the endeavour to formulate a greater synthesis of a spiritualised society is the third and most difficult. Its success on these three lines will be the measure of its help to the future of humanity.

The Spirit is a higher infinite of verities; life is a lower infinite of possibilities which seek to grow and find their own truth and fulfilment in the light of these verities. Our intellect, our will, our ethical and our aesthetic being are the reflectors and the mediators. The method of the West is to exaggerate life and to call down as much — or as little — as may be of the higher powers to stimulate and embellish life.[1] But the method of India is on the contrary to discover the spirit within and the higher hidden intensities of the superior powers and to dominate life in one way or another so as to make it responsive to and expressive of the spirit and in that way increase the power of life. Its tendency with the intellect, will, ethical, aesthetic and emotional being is to sound indeed their normal mental possibilities, but also to upraise them towards the greater light and power of their own highest intuitions. The work of the renaissance in India must be to make this spirit, this higher view of life, this sense of deeper potentiality once more a creative, perhaps a dominant power in the world. But to that truth of itself it is as yet only vaguely awake; the mass of Indian action is still at the moment proceeding under the impress of the European motive and method and, because there is a spirit within us to which they are foreign, the action is poor in will, feeble in form and ineffective in results, for it does not come from the roots of our being. Only in a few directions is there some clear light of self-knowledge. It is when a greater light prevails and becomes general that we shall be able to speak, not only in prospect but in fact, of the renaissance of India.

---

[1] Mr. Cousins' distinction between invocation and evocation.

The Renaissance in India – 2

THE PROCESS which has led up to the renaissance now inevitable, may be analysed, both historically and logically, into three steps by which a transition is being managed, a complex breaking, reshaping and new building, with the final result yet distant in prospect, — though here and there the first bases may have been already laid, — a new age of an old culture transformed, not an affiliation of a new-born civilisation to one that is old and dead, but a true rebirth, a renascence. The first step was the reception of the European contact, a radical reconsideration of many of the prominent elements and some revolutionary denial of the very principles of the old culture. The second was a reaction of the Indian spirit upon the European influence, sometimes with a total denial of what it offered and a stressing both of the essential and the strict letter of the national past, which yet masked a movement of assimilation. The third, only now beginning or recently begun, is rather a process of new creation in which the spiritual power of the Indian mind remains supreme, recovers its truths, accepts whatever it finds sound or true, useful or inevitable of the modern idea and form, but so transmutes and Indianises it, so absorbs and so transforms it entirely into itself that its foreign character disappears and it becomes another harmonious element in the characteristic working of the ancient goddess, the Shakti of India mastering and taking possession of the modern influence, no longer possessed or overcome by it.

Nothing in the many processes of Nature, whether she deals with men or with things, comes by chance or accident or is really at the mercy of external causes. What things are inwardly, determines the course of even their most considerable changes; and timeless India being what she is, the complexity of this transition was predestined and unavoidable. It was impossible that she should take a rapid wholesale imprint of Western motives and their forms and leave the ruling motives of her own past to accommodate themselves to the foreign change as best they could afterwards. A swift transformation scene like that which brought into being a new modernised Japan, would have been out of the question for her, even if the external circumstances had been equally favourable. For Japan lives centrally in her temperament and in her aesthetic sense, and therefore she has always been rapidly assimilative; her strong temperamental persistence has been enough to preserve her national stamp and her artistic vision a sufficient power to keep her soul alive. But India lives centrally in the spirit, with less buoyancy and vivacity and therefore with a less ready adaptiveness of creation, but a greater, intenser, more brooding depth; her processes are apt to be deliberate, uncertain and long because she has to take things into that depth and from its profoundest inwardness to modify or remould the more outward parts of her life. And until that has been done, the absorption completed, the powers of the remoulding determined, she cannot yet move forward with an easier step on the new way she is taking. From the complexity of the movement arises all the difficulty of the problems she has to face and the rather chaotic confusion of the opinions, standpoints and tendencies that have got entangled in the process, which prevents any easy, clear and decided development, so that we seem to be advancing under a confused pressure of circumstance or in a series of shifting waves of impulsion, this ebbing for that to arise, rather than with any clear idea of our future direction. But here too lies the assurance that once the inner direction has found its way and its implications have come to the surface, the result will be no mere Asiatic modification of Western modernism, but some great, new and original thing of the first importance to the future of human civilisation.

This was not the idea of the earliest generation of intellectuals, few in number but powerful by their talent and originative vigour, that arose as the first result of Western education in India. Theirs was the impatient hope of a transformation such as took place afterwards with so striking a velocity in Japan;

they saw in welcome prospect a new India modernised wholesale and radically in mind, spirit and life. Intensely patriotic in motive, they were yet denationalised in their mental attitude. They admitted practically, if not in set opinion, the occidental view of our past culture as only a half-civilisation and their governing ideals were borrowed from the West or at least centrally inspired by the purely Western spirit and type of their education. From mediaeval India they drew away in revolt and inclined to discredit and destroy whatever it had created; if they took anything from it, it was as poetic symbols to which they gave a superficial and modern significance. To ancient India they looked back on the contrary with a sentiment of pride, at least in certain directions, and were willing to take from it whatever material they could subdue to their new standpoint, but they could not quite grasp anything of it in its original sense and spirit and strove to rid it of all that would not square with their Westernised intellectuality. They sought for a bare, simplified and rationalised religion, created a literature which imported very eagerly the forms, ideas and whole spirit of their English models, — the value of the other arts was almost entirely ignored, — put their political faith and hope in a wholesale assimilation or rather an exact imitation of the middle-class pseudo-democracy of nineteenth-century England, would have revolutionised Indian society by introducing into it all the social ideas and main features of the European form. Whatever value for the future there may be in the things they grasped at with this eager conviction, their method was, as we now recognise, a false method, — an anglicised India is a thing we can no longer view as either possible or desirable, — and it could only, if pursued to the end, have made us painful copyists, clumsy followers always stumbling in the wake of European evolution and always fifty years behind it. This movement of thought did not and could not endure; something of it still continues, but its engrossing power has passed away beyond any chance of vigorous revival.

Nevertheless, this earliest period of crude reception left behind it results that were of value and indeed indispensable to a powerful renaissance. We may single out three of them as of the first order of importance. It reawakened a free activity of the intellect which, though at first confined within very narrow bounds and derivative in its ideas, is now spreading to all subjects of human and national interest and is applying itself with an increasing curiosity and a growing originality to every field it seizes. This is bringing back to the Indian mind its old unresting thirst for all kinds of knowledge and must restore to it before long the width of its range and the depth and flexible power of its action; and it has opened to it the full scope of the critical faculty of the human mind, its passion for exhaustive observation and emancipated judgment which, in older times exercised only by a few and within limits, has now become an essential equipment of the intellect. These things the imitative period did not itself carry very far, but it cast the germ which we now see beginning to fructify more richly. Secondly, it threw definitely the ferment of modern ideas into the old culture and fixed them before our view in such a way that we are obliged to reckon and deal with them in far other sort than would have been possible if we had simply proceeded from our old fixed traditions without some such momentary violent break in our customary view of things. Finally, it made us turn our look upon all that our past contains with new eyes which have not only enabled us to recover something of their ancient sense and spirit, long embedded and lost in the unintelligent practice of received forms, but to bring out of them a new light which gives to the old truths fresh aspects and therefore novel potentialities of creation and evolution. That in this first period we misunderstood our ancient culture, does not matter; the enforcement of a reconsideration, which even orthodox thought has been obliged to accept, is the fact of capital importance.

The second period of reaction of the Indian mind upon the new elements, its movement towards a recovery of the national poise, has helped us to direct these powers and tendencies into sounder and much more fruitful lines of action. For the anglicising impulse was very soon met by the old national spirit and began to be heavily suffused by its influence. It is now a very small and always dwindling number of our present-day intellectuals who still remain obstinately Westernised in their outlook; and even these have given up the attitude of blatant and uncompromising depreciation of the past which was at one time a common pose. A larger number have proceeded by a constantly increasing suffusion of their modernism with much of ancient motive and sentiment, a better insight into the meaning of Indian things and their characteristics, a free acceptance more of their spirit than of their forms and an attempt at new interpretation. At first the central idea still remained very plainly of the modern type and betrayed everywhere the Western inspiration, but it drew to itself willingly the ancient ideas and it coloured itself more and more with their essential spirit; and latterly this suffusing element has overflooded, has tended more and more to take up and subdue the original motives until the thought and spirit, turn and tinge are now characteristically Indian. The works of Bankim Chandra Chatterji and Tagore, the two minds of the most distinctive and original genius in our recent literature, illustrate the stages of this transition.

Side by side with this movement and more characteristic and powerful there has been flowing an opposite current. This first started on its way by an integral reaction, a vindication and reacceptance of everything Indian as it stood and because it was Indian. We have still waves of this impulse and many of its influences continuing among us; for its work is not yet completed. But in reality the reaction marks the beginning of a more subtle assimilation and fusing; for in vindicating ancient things it has been obliged to do so in a way that will at once meet and satisfy the old mentality and the new, the traditional and the critical mind. This in itself involves no mere return, but consciously or unconsciously hastens a restatement. And the riper form of the return has taken as its principle a synthetical restatement; it has sought to arrive at the spirit of the ancient culture and, while respecting its forms and often preserving them to revivify, has yet not hesitated also to remould, to reject the outworn and to admit whatever new motive seemed assimilable to the old spirituality or apt to widen the channel of its larger evolution. Of this freer dealing with past and present, this preservation by reconstruction Vivekananda was in his life-time the leading exemplar and the most powerful exponent.

But this too could not be the end; of itself it leads towards a principle of new creation. Otherwise the upshot of the double current of thought and tendency might be an incongruous assimilation, something in the mental sphere like the strangely assorted half-European, half-Indian dress which we now put upon our bodies. India has to get back entirely to the native power of her spirit at its very deepest and to turn all the needed strengths and aims of her present and future life into materials for that spirit to work upon and integrate and harmonise. Of such vital and original creation we may cite the new Indian art as a striking example. The beginning of this process of original creation in every sphere of her national activity will be the sign of the integral self-finding of her renaissance.

The Renaissance in India – 3

TO ATTEMPT to penetrate through the indeterminate confusion of present tendencies and first efforts in order to foresee the exact forms the new creation will take, would be an effort of very doubtful utility. One might as well try to forecast a harmony from the sounds made by the tuning of the instrument. In one direction or another we may just detect certain decisive indications, but even these are only first indications and we may be quite sure that much lies behind them that will go far beyond anything that they yet suggest. This is true whether in religion and spirituality or thought and science, poetry and art or society and politics. Everywhere there is, at most, only a beginning of beginnings.

One thing seems at any rate certain, that the spiritual motive will be in the future of India, as in her past, the real originative and dominating strain. By spirituality we do not mean a remote metaphysical mind or the tendency to dream rather than to act. That was not the great India of old in her splendid days of vigour, — whatever certain European critics or interpreters of her culture may say, — and it will not be the India of the future. Metaphysical thinking will always no doubt be a strong element in her mentality, and it is to be hoped that she will never lose her great, her sovereign powers in that direction; but Indian metaphysics are as far removed from the brilliant or the profound idea-spinning of the French or the German mind as from the broad intellectual generalising on the basis of the facts of physical science which for some time did duty for philosophy in modern Europe. It has always been in its essential parts an intellectual approach to spiritual realisation. Though in later times it led too much away from life, yet that was not its original character whether in its early Vedantic intuitional forms or in those later developments of it, such as the Gita, which belong to the period of its most vigorous intellectual originality and creation. Buddhism itself, the philosophy which first really threw doubt on the value of life, did so only in its intellectual tendency; in its dynamic parts, by its ethical system and spiritual method, it gave a new set of values, a severe vigour, yet a gentler idealism to human living and was therefore powerfully creative both in the arts which interpret life and in society and politics. To realise intimately truth of spirit and to quicken and to remould life by it is the native tendency of the Indian mind, and to that it must always return in all its periods of health, greatness and vigour.

All great movements of life in India have begun with a new spiritual thought and usually a new religious activity. What more striking and significant fact can there be than this that even the new European influence, which was an influence intellectual, rationalistic, so often antireligious and which drew so much of its idealism from the increasingly cosmopolitan, mundane and secularist thought of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, precipitated in India from the very first an attempt at religious reformation and led actually to the creation of new religions? The instinct of the Indian mind was that, if a reconstruction of ideas and of society was to be attempted, it must start from a spiritual basis and take from the first a religious motive and form. The Brahmo Samaj had in its inception a large cosmopolitan idea, it was even almost eclectic in the choice of the materials for the synthesis it attempted; it combined a Vedantic first inspiration, outward forms akin to those of English Unitarianism and something of its temper, a modicum of Christian influence, a strong dose of religious rationalism and intellectualism. It is noteworthy, however, that it started from an endeavour to restate the Vedanta, and it is curiously significant of the way in which even what might be well called a protestant movement follows the curve of the national tradition and temper, that the three stages of its growth, marked by the three churches or congregations into which it split, correspond to the three eternal motives of the Indian religious mind, Jnana, Bhakti and Karma, the contemplative and philosophical, the emotional and fervently devotional and the actively and practically dynamic spiritual mentality. The Arya Samaj in the Punjab founded itself on a fresh interpretation of the truth of the Veda and an attempt to apply old Vedic principles of life to modern conditions. The movement associated with the great names of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda has been a very wide synthesis of past religious motives and spiritual experience topped by a reaffirmation of the old asceticism and monasticism, but with new living strands in it and combined with a strong humanitarianism and zeal of missionary expansion. There has been too the movement of orthodox Hindu revivalism, more vigorous two or three decades ago than it is now. The rest of India has either felt vibrations of some of these great regional movements or been touched with smaller ones of their own making. In Bengal a strong Neo-Vaishnavic tendency is the most recent development of its religious mind and shows that the preparatory creative activity has not yet finished its workings. Throughout India the old religious sects and disciplines are becoming strongly revitalised, vocal, active, moved to a fresh self-affirmation. Islam has recently shared in the general stirring and attempts to return vitally to the original Islamic ideals or to strike out fresh developments have preceded or accompanied the awakening to life of the long torpid Mussulman mass in India.

Perhaps none of these forms, nor all the sum of them may be definitive, they may constitute only the preparatory self-finding of the Indian spiritual mind recovering its past and turning towards its future. India is the meeting-place of the religions and among these Hinduism alone is by itself a vast and complex thing, not so much a religion as a great diversified and yet subtly unified mass of spiritual thought, realisation and aspiration. What will finally come out of all this stir and ferment, lies yet in the future. There has been an introduction of fresh fruitful impulses to activity: there has been much revival of the vitality of old forms, a new study, rehabilitation, resort to old disciplines and old authorities and scriptures, — we may note that Vedanta, Veda, Purana, Yoga, and recently the same thing is being initiated with regard to the Tantra, have each in their turn been brought back into understanding, if not always yet to a perfect understanding, to practice, to some efficacy on thought and on life; there has been an evolution of enlarging truth and novel forms out of ancient ideas and renewed experience. Whatever the last upshot may be, this spiritual and religious ferment and activity stand out as the most prominent feature of the new India; and it may be observed that while in other fields the tendency has been, until quite recently, more critical than constructive, here every impulse has been throughout powerfully creative. Especially, we see everywhere the tendency towards the return of the spirit upon life; the reassertion of a spiritual living as a foundation for a new life of the nation has been a recognisable impulse. Even asceticism and monasticism are rapidly becoming, no longer merely contemplative, self-centred or aloof, but missionary, educative, humanitarian. And recently in the utterances of the leaders of thought the insistence on life has been growing marked, self-conscious and positive. This is at present the most significant immediate sign of the future. Probably, here lies the key of the Indian renaissance, in a return from forms to the depths of a released spirituality which will show itself again in a pervading return of spirituality upon life.

But what are likely to be the great constructive ideas and the great decisive instruments which this spirituality will take to deal with and govern life, is as yet obscure, because the thought of this new India is still inchoate and indeterminative. Religions, creeds and forms are only a characteristic outward sign of the spiritual impulsion and religion itself is the intensive action by which it tries to find its inward force. Its expansive movement comes in the thought which it throws out on life, the ideals which open up new horizons and which the intellect accepts and life labours to assimilate. Philosophy in India has been the intellectual canaliser of spiritual knowledge and experience, but the philosophical intellect has not as yet decidedly begun the work of new creation; it has been rather busy with the restatement of its past gains than with any new statement which would visibly and rapidly enlarge the boundaries of its thought and aspiration. The contact of European philosophy has not been fruitful of any creative reaction; first because the past philosophies of Europe have very little that could be of any utility in this direction, nothing of the first importance in fact which India has not already stated in forms better suited to her own spiritual temper and genius, and though the thought of Nietzsche, of Bergson and of James has recently touched more vitally just a few minds here and there, their drift is much too externally pragmatic and vitalistic to be genuinely assimilable by the Indian spirit. But, principally, a real Indian philosophy can only be evolved out of spiritual experience and as the fruit of the spiritual seeking which all the religious movements of the past century have helped to generalise. It cannot spring, as in Europe, out of the critical intellect solely or as the fruit of scientific thought and knowledge. Nor has there been very much preparing force of original critical thought in nineteenth century India. The more original intellects have either turned towards pure literature or else been busy assimilating and at most Indianising modern ideas. And though a stronger thought tendency is now beginning, all is yet uncertain flux or brilliantly vague foreshadowing.

In poetry, literature, art, science there have, on the contrary, been definite beginnings. Bengal in these, as in many other directions, has been recently the chief testing crucible or the first workshop of the Shakti of India; it is there she has chosen to cast in the greatest vivacity of new influences and develop her initial forms and inspirations. In the rest of India there is often much activity of production and one hears here and there of a solitary poet or prose-writer of genius or notable talent; but Bengal has already a considerable literature of importance, with a distinct spirit and form, well-based and always developing; she has now a great body of art original, inspired, full of delicate beauty and vision; she has not only two renowned scientists, one of the two world-famous for a central and far-reaching discovery, but a young school of research which promises to count for something in the world's science. It is here therefore that we can observe the trend of the Indian mind and the direction in which it is turning. Especially the art of the Bengal painters is very significant, more so even than the prose of Bankim or the poetry of Tagore. Bengali poetry has had to feel its way and does not seem yet quite definitively to have found it, but Bengal art has found its way at once at the first step, by a sort of immediate intuition.

Partly this is because the new literature began in the period of foreign influence and of an indecisive groping, while art in India was quite silent, — except for the preposterous Ravi Varma interlude which was doomed to sterility by its absurdly barren incompetence, — began in a moment of self-recovery and could profit by a clearer possibility of light. But besides, plastic art is in itself by its very limitation, by the narrower and intense range of its forms and motives, often more decisively indicative than the more fluid and variable turns of literary thought and expression. Now the whole power of the Bengal artists springs from their deliberate choice of the spirit and hidden meaning in things rather than their form and surface meaning as the object to be expressed. It is intuitive and its forms are the very rhythm of its intuition, they have little to do with the metric formalities devised by the observing intellect; it leans over the finite to discover its suggestions of the infinite and inexpressible; it turns to outward life and nature to found upon it lines and colours, rhythms and embodiments which will be significant of the other life and other nature than the physical which all that is merely outward conceals. This is the eternal motive of Indian art, but applied in a new way less largely ideaed, mythological and symbolical, but with a more delicately suggestive attempt at a near, subtle, direct embodiment. This art is a true new creation, and we may expect that the artistic mind of the rest of India will follow through the gate thus opened, but we may expect it too to take on there other characteristics and find other ways of expression; for the peculiar turn and tone given by the Calcutta painters is intimate to the temperament of Bengal. But India is great by the unity of her national coupled with the rich diversity of her regional mind. That we may expect to see reflected in the resurgence of her artistic creativeness.

Poetry and literature in Bengal have gone through two distinct stages and seem to be preparing for a third of which one cannot quite foresee the character. It began with a European and mostly an English influence, a taking in of fresh poetical and prose forms, literary ideas, artistic canons. It was a period of copious and buoyant creation which produced a number of poets and poetesses, one or two of great genius, others of a fine poetic capacity, much work of beauty and distinction, a real opening of the floodgates of Saraswati. Its work was not at all crudely imitative; the foreign influences are everywhere visible, but they are assimilated, not merely obeyed or aped. The quality of the Bengali temperament and its native aesthetic turn took hold of them and poured them into a mould of speech suitable to its own spirit. But still the substance was not quite native to the soul and therefore one feels a certain void in it. The form and expression have the peculiar grace and the delicate plastic beauty which Bengali poetical expression achieved from its beginning, but the thing expressed does not in the end amount to very much. As is inevitable when one does not think or create freely but is principally assimilating thought and form, it is thin and falls short of the greatness which we would expect from the natural power of the poet.

That period is long over, it has lived its time and its work has taken its place in the past of the literature. Two of its creators, one, the sovereign initiator of its prose expression, supreme by combination of original mentality with a flawless artistic gift, the other born into its last glow of productive brilliance, but outliving it to develop another strain and a profounder voice of poetry, released the real soul of Bengal into expression. The work of Bankim Chandra is now of the past, because it has entered already into the new mind of Bengal which it did more than any other literary influence to form; the work of Rabindranath still largely holds the present, but it has opened ways for the future which promise to go beyond it. Both show an increasing return to the Indian spirit in fresh forms; both are voices of the dawn, seek more than they find, suggest and are calling for more than they actually evoke. At present we see a fresh preparation, on one side evolving and promising to broaden out from the influence of Tagore, on the other in revolt against it and insisting on a more distinctively national type of inspiration and creation; but what will come out of it, is not yet clear. On the whole it appears that the movement is turning in the same direction as that of the new art, though with the more flexible utterance and varied motive natural to the spoken thought and expressive word. No utterance of the highest genius, such as would give the decisive turn, has yet made itself heard. But some faint promise of a great imaginative and intuitive literature of a new Indian type is already discernible in these uncertain voices.

In the things of the mind we have then within however limited an area certain beginnings, preparatory or even initially definitive. But in the outward life of the nation we are still in a stage of much uncertainty and confusion. Very largely this is due to the political conditions which have ceased in spirit to be those of the past, but are not yet in fact those of the future. The fever and the strain born from the alternation of waves of aspiration with the reflux of non-fulfilment are not favourable to the strong formulation of a new birth in the national life. All that is as yet clear is that the first period of a superficial assimilation and aping of European political ideas and methods is over. Another political spirit has awakened in the people under the shock of the movement of the last decade which, vehemently national in its motive, proclaimed a religion of Indian patriotism, applied the notions of the ancient religion and philosophy to politics, expressed the cult of the country as mother and Shakti and attempted to base the idea of democracy firmly on the spiritual thought and impulses native to the Indian mind. Crude often and uncertain in its self-expression, organising its effort for revolt against past and present conditions but not immediately successful in carrying forward its methods of constructive development, it still effectively aroused the people and gave a definite turn to its political thought and life, the outcome of which can only appear when the nation has found completely the will and gained sufficiently the power to determine its own evolution.

Indian society is in a still more chaotic stage; for the old forms are crumbling away under the pressure of the environment, their spirit and reality are more and more passing out of them, but the façade persists by the force of inertia of thought and will and the remaining attachment of a long association, while the new is still powerless to be born. There is much of slow and often hardly perceptible destruction, a dull preservation effective only by immobility, no possibility yet of sound reconstruction. We have had a loud proclaiming, — only where supported by religion, as in the reforming Samajes, any strong effectuation, — of a movement of social change, appealing sometimes crudely to Western exemplars and ideals, sometimes to the genius or the pattern of ancient times; but it has quite failed to carry the people, because it could not get at their spirit and itself lacked, with the exceptions noted, in robust sincerity. We have had too a revival of orthodox conservatism, more academic and sentimental than profound in its impulse or in touch with the great facts and forces of life. We have now in emergence an increasing sense of the necessity of a renovation of social ideas and expressive forms by the spirit of the nation awaking to the deeper yet unexpressed implications of its own culture, but as yet no sufficient will or means of execution. It is probable that only with the beginning of a freer national life will the powers of the renaissance take effective hold of the social mind and action of the awakened people.

The Renaissance in India – 4

THE RENAISSANCE thus determining itself, but not yet finally determined, if it is to be what the name implies, a rebirth of the soul of India into a new body of energy, a new form of its innate and ancient spirit, *prajñā purāṇī*, must insist much more finally and integrally than it has as yet done on its spiritual turn, on the greater and greater action of the spiritual motive in every sphere of our living. But here we are still liable to be met by the remnants of a misunderstanding or a refusal to understand, — it is something of both, — which was perhaps to a little extent justified by certain ascetic or religionist exaggerations, a distrust which is accentuated by a recoil from the excessive other-worldliness that has marked certain developments of the Indian mind and life, but yet is not justified, because it misses the true point at issue. Thus we are sometimes asked what on earth we mean by spirituality in art and poetry or in political and social life, — a confession of ignorance strange enough in any Indian mouth at this stage of our national history, — or how art and poetry will be any the better when they have got into them what I have recently seen described as the "twang of spirituality", and how the practical problems either of society or of politics are going at all to profit by this element. We have here really an echo of the European idea, now of sufficiently long standing, that religion and spirituality on the one side and intellectual activity and practical life on the other are two entirely different things and have each to be pursued on its own entirely separate lines and in obedience to its own entirely separate principles. Again we may be met also by the suspicion that in holding up this ideal rule before India we are pointing her to the metaphysical and away from the dynamic and pragmatic or inculcating some obscurantist reactionary principle of mystical or irrational religiosity and diverting her from the paths of reason and modernity which she must follow if she is to be an efficient and a well-organised nation able to survive in the shocks of the modern world. We must therefore try to make clear what it is we mean by a renaissance governed by the principle of spirituality.

But first let us say what we do not mean by this ideal. Clearly it does not signify that we shall regard earthly life as a temporal vanity, try to become all of us as soon as possible monastic ascetics, frame our social life into a preparation for the monastery or cavern or mountain-top or make of it a static life without any great progressive ideals but only some aim which has nothing to do with earth or the collective advance of the human race. That may have been for some time a tendency of the Indian mind, but it was never the whole tendency. Nor does spirituality mean the moulding of the whole type of the national being to suit the limited dogmas, forms, tenets of a particular religion, as was often enough attempted by the old societies, an idea which still persists in many minds by the power of old mental habit and association; clearly such an attempt would be impossible, even if it were desirable, in a country full of the most diverse religious opinions and harbouring too three such distinct general forms as Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, to say nothing of the numerous special forms to which each of these has given birth. Spirituality is much wider than any particular religion, and in the larger ideas of it that are now coming on us even the greatest religion becomes no more than a broad sect or branch of the one universal religion, by which we shall understand in the future man's seeking for the eternal, the divine, the greater self, the source of unity and his attempt to arrive at some equation, some increasing approximation of the values of human life with the eternal and the divine values.

Nor do we mean the exclusion of anything whatsoever from our scope, of any of the great aims of human life, any of the great problems of our modern world, any form of human activity, any general or inherent impulse or characteristic means of the desire of the soul of man for development, expansion, increasing vigour and joy, light, power, perfection. Spirit without mind, spirit without body is not the type of man, therefore a human spirituality must not belittle the mind, life or body or hold them of small account: it will rather hold them of high account, of immense importance, precisely because they are the conditions and instruments of the life of the spirit in man. The ancient Indian culture attached quite as much value to the soundness, growth and strength of the mind, life and body as the old Hellenic or the modern scientific thought, although for a different end and a greater motive. Therefore to everything that serves and belongs to the healthy fullness of these things, it gave free play, to the activity of the reason, to science and philosophy, to the satisfaction of the aesthetic being and to all the many arts great or small, to the health and strength of the body, to the physical and economical well-being, ease, opulence of the race, — there was never a national ideal of poverty in India as some would have us believe, nor was bareness or squalor the essential setting of her spirituality, — and to its general military, political and social strength and efficiency. Their aim was high, but firm and wide too was the base they sought to establish and great the care bestowed on these first instruments. Necessarily the new India will seek the same end in new ways under the vivid impulse of fresh and large ideas and by an instrumentality suited to more complex conditions; but the scope of her effort and action and the suppleness and variety of her mind will not be less, but greater than of old. Spirituality is not necessarily exclusive; it can be and in its fullness must be all-inclusive.

But still there is a great difference between the spiritual and the purely material and mental view of existence. The spiritual view holds that the mind, life, body are man's means and not his aims and even that they are not his last and highest means; it sees them as his outer instrumental self and not his whole being. It sees the infinite behind all things finite and it adjudges the value of the finite by higher infinite values of which they are the imperfect translation and towards which, to a truer expression of them, they are always trying to arrive. It sees a greater reality than the apparent not only behind man and the world, but within man and the world, and this soul, self, divine thing in man it holds to be that in him which is of the highest importance, that which everything else in him must try in whatever way to bring out and express, and this soul, self, divine presence in the world it holds to be that which man has ever to try to see and recognise through all appearances, to unite his thought and life with it and in it to find his unity with his fellows. This alters necessarily our whole normal view of things; even in preserving all the aims of human life, it will give them a different sense and direction.

We aim at the health and vigour of the body; but with what object? For its own sake, will be the ordinary reply, because it is worth having; or else that we may have long life and a sound basis for our intellectual, vital, emotional satisfactions. Yes, for its own sake, in a way, but in this sense that the physical too is an expression of the spirit and its perfection is worth having, is part of the dharma of the complete human living; but still more as a basis for all that higher activity which ends in the discovery and expression of the divine self in man. *Śarīraṁ khalu dharma-sādhanam*, runs the old Sanskrit saying, the body too is our means for fulfilling the dharma, the Godward law of our being. The mental, the emotional, the aesthetic parts of us have to be developed, is the ordinary view, so that they may have a greater satisfaction, or because that is man's finer nature, because so he feels himself more alive and fulfilled. This, but not this only; rather because these things too are the expressions of the spirit, things which are seeking in him for their divine values and by their growth, subtlety, flexibility, power, intensity he is able to come nearer to the divine Reality in the world, to lay hold on it variously, to tune eventually his whole life into unity and conformity with it. Morality is in the ordinary view a well-regulated individual and social conduct which keeps society going and leads towards a better, a more rational, temperate, sympathetic, self-restrained dealing with our fellows. But ethics in the spiritual point of view is much more, it is a means of developing in our action and still more essentially in the character of our being the diviner self in us, a step of our growing into the nature of the Godhead.

So with all our aims and activities; spirituality takes them all and gives them a greater, diviner, more intimate sense. Philosophy is in the Western way of dealing with it a dispassionate enquiry by the light of the reason into the first truths of existence, which we shall get at either by observing the facts science places at our disposal or by a careful dialectical scrutiny of the concepts of the reason or a mixture of the two methods. But from the spiritual view-point truth of existence is to be found by intuition and inner experience and not only by the reason and by scientific observation; the work of philosophy is to arrange the data given by the various means of knowledge, excluding none, and put them into their synthetic relation to the one Truth, the one supreme and universal reality. Eventually, its real value is to prepare a basis for spiritual realisation and the growing of the human being into his divine self and divine nature. Science itself becomes only a knowledge of the world which throws an added light on the spirit of the universe and his way in things. Nor will it confine itself to a physical knowledge and its practical fruits or to the knowledge of life and man and mind based upon the idea of matter or material energy as our starting-point; a spiritualised culture will make room for new fields of research, for new and old psychical sciences and results which start from spirit as the first truth and from the power of mind and of what is greater than mind to act upon life and matter. The primitive aim of art and poetry is to create images of man and Nature which shall satisfy the sense of beauty and embody artistically the ideas of the intelligence about life and the responses of the imagination to it; but in a spiritual culture they become too in their aim a revelation of greater things concealed in man and Nature and of the deepest spiritual and universal beauty. Politics, society, economy are in the first form of human life simply an arrangement by which men collectively can live, produce, satisfy their desires, enjoy, progress in bodily, vital and mental efficiency; but the spiritual aim makes them much more than this, first, a framework of life within which man can seek for and grow into his real self and divinity, secondly, an increasing embodiment of the divine law of being in life, thirdly, a collective advance towards the light, power, peace, unity, harmony of the diviner nature of humanity which the race is trying to evolve. This and nothing more but nothing less, this in all its potentialities, is what we mean by a spiritual culture and the application of spirituality to life.

Those who distrust this ideal or who cannot understand it, are still under the sway of the European conception of life which for a time threatened to swamp entirely the Indian spirit. But let us remember that Europe itself is labouring to outgrow the limitations of its own conceptions and precisely by a rapid infusion of the ideas of the East, — naturally, essential ideas and not the mere forms, — which have been first infiltrating and are now more freely streaming into Western thought, poetry, art, ideas of life, not to overturn its culture, but to transform, enlighten and aggrandise its best values and to add new elements which have too long been ignored or forgotten. It will be singular if while Europe is thus intelligently enlarging herself in the new light she has been able to seize and admitting the truths of the spirit and the aim at a divine change in man and his life, we in India are to take up the cast-off clothes of European thought and life and to straggle along in the old rut of her wheels, always taking up today what she had cast off yesterday. We should not allow our cultural independence to be paralysed by the accident that at the moment Europe came in upon us, we were in a state of ebb and weakness, such as comes some day upon all civilisations. That no more proves that our spirituality, our culture, our leading ideas were entirely mistaken and the best we can do is vigorously to Europeanise, rationalise, materialise ourselves in the practical parts of life, — keeping perhaps some spirituality, religion, Indianism as a graceful decoration in the background, — than the great catastrophe of the war proves that Europe's science, her democracy, her progress were all wrong and she should return to the Middle Ages or imitate the culture of China or Turkey or Tibet. Such generalisations are the facile falsehoods of a hasty and unreflecting ignorance.

We have both made mistakes, faltered in the true application of our ideals, been misled into unhealthy exaggerations. Europe has understood the lesson, she is striving to correct herself;

but she does not for this reason forswear science, democracy, progress, but purposes to complete and perfect them, to use them better, to give them a sounder direction. She is admitting the light of the East, but on the basis of her own way of thinking and living, opening herself to truth of the spirit, but not abandoning her own truth of life and science and social ideals. We should be as faithful, as free in our dealings with the Indian spirit and modern influences; correct what went wrong with us; apply our spirituality on broader and freer lines, be if possible not less but more spiritual than were our forefathers; admit Western science, reason, progressiveness, the essential modern ideas, but on the basis of our own way of life and assimilated to our spiritual aim and ideal; open ourselves to the throb of life, the pragmatic activity, the great modern endeavour, but not therefore abandon our fundamental view of God and man and Nature. There is no real quarrel between them; for rather these two things need each other to fill themselves in, to discover all their own implications, to awaken to their own richest and completest significances.

India can best develop herself and serve humanity by being herself and following the law of her own nature. This does not mean, as some narrowly and blindly suppose, the rejection of everything new that comes to us in the stream of Time or happens to have been first developed or powerfully expressed by the West. Such an attitude would be intellectually absurd, physically impossible, and above all unspiritual; true spirituality rejects no new light, no added means or materials of our human self-development. It means simply to keep our centre, our essential way of being, our inborn nature and assimilate to it all we receive, and evolve out of it all we do and create. Religion has been a central preoccupation of the Indian mind; some have told us that too much religion ruined India, precisely because we made the whole of life religion or religion the whole of life, we have failed in life and gone under. I will not answer, adopting the language used by the poet in a slightly different connection, that our fall does not matter and that the dust in which India lies is sacred. The fall, the failure does matter, and to lie in the dust is no sound position for man or nation. But the reason assigned is not the true one. If the majority of Indians had indeed made the whole of their lives religion in the true sense of the word, we should not be where we are now; it was because their public life became most irreligious, egoistic, self-seeking, materialistic that they fell. It is possible, that on one side we deviated too much into an excessive religiosity, that is to say, an excessive externalism of ceremony, rule, routine, mechanical worship, on the other into a too world-shunning asceticism which drew away the best minds who were thus lost to society instead of standing like the ancient Rishis as its spiritual support and its illuminating life-givers. But the root of the matter was the dwindling of the spiritual impulse in its generality and broadness, the decline of intellectual activity and freedom, the waning of great ideals, the loss of the gust of life.

Perhaps there was too much of religion in one sense; the word is English, smacks too much of things external such as creeds, rites, an external piety; there is no one Indian equivalent. But if we give rather to religion the sense of the following of the spiritual impulse in its fullness and define spirituality as the attempt to know and live in the highest self, the divine, the all-embracing unity and to raise life in all its parts to the divinest possible values, then it is evident that there was not too much of religion, but rather too little of it — and in what there was, a too one-sided and therefore an insufficiently ample tendency. The right remedy is, not to belittle still farther the agelong ideal of India, but to return to its old amplitude and give it a still wider scope, to make in very truth all the life of the nation a religion in this high spiritual sense. This is the direction in which the philosophy, poetry, art of the West is, still more or less obscurely, but with an increasing light, beginning to turn, and even some faint glints of the truth are beginning now to fall across political and sociological ideals. India has the key to the knowledge and conscious application of the ideal; what was dark to her before in its application, she can now, with a new light, illumine; what was wrong and wry in her old methods she can now rectify; the fences which she created to protect the outer growth of the spiritual ideal and which afterwards became barriers to its expansion and farther application, she can now break down and give her spirit a freer field and an ampler flight: she can, if she will, give a new and decisive turn to the problems over which all mankind is labouring and stumbling, for the clue to their solutions is there in her ancient knowledge. Whether she will rise or not to the height of her opportunity in the renaissance which is coming upon her, is the question of her destiny.

Indian Culture
and
External Influence

Indian Culture and External Influence

IN CONSIDERING Indian civilisation and its renascence, I suggested that a powerful new creation in all fields was our great need, the meaning of the renascence and the one way of preserving the civilisation. Confronted with the huge rush of modern life and thought, invaded by another dominant civilisation almost her opposite or inspired at least with a very different spirit to her own, India can only survive by confronting this raw, new, aggressive, powerful world with fresh diviner creations of her own spirit, cast in the mould of her own spiritual ideals. She must meet it by solving its greater problems, — which she cannot avoid, even if such avoidance could be thought desirable, — in her own way, through solutions arising out of her own being and from her own deepest and largest knowledge. In that connection I spoke of the acceptance and assimilation from the West of whatever in its knowledge, ideas, powers was assimilable, compatible with her spirit, reconcilable with her ideals, valuable for a new statement of life. This question of external influence and new creation from within is of very considerable importance; it calls for more than a passing mention. Especially it is necessary to form some more precise idea of what we mean by acceptance and of the actual effect of assimilation; for this is a problem of pressing incidence in which we have to get our ideas clear and fix firmly and seeingly on our line of solution.

But it is possible to hold that while new creation — and not a motionless sticking to old forms — is our one way of life and salvation, no acceptance of anything Western is called for, we can find in ourselves all that we need; no considerable acceptance is possible without creating a breach which will bring pouring in the rest of the occidental deluge. That, if I have not misread it, is the sense of a comment on these articles in a

Bengali literary periodical[1] which holds up the ideal of a new creation to arise from within entirely on national lines and in the national spirit. The writer takes his stand on a position which is common ground, that humanity is one, but different peoples are variant soul-forms of the common humanity. When we find the oneness, the principle of variation is not destroyed but finds rather its justification; it is not by abolishing ourselves, our own special temperament and power, that we can get at the living oneness, but by following it out and raising it to its highest possibilities of freedom and action. That is a truth which I have myself insisted on repeatedly, with regard to the modern idea and attempt at some kind of political unification of humanity, as a very important part of the psychological sense of social development, and again in this question of a particular people's life and culture in all its parts and manifestations. I have insisted that uniformity is not a real but a dead unity: uniformity kills life while real unity, if well founded, becomes vigorous and fruitful by a rich energy of variation. But the writer adds that the idea of taking over what is best in occidental civilisation, is a false notion without a living meaning; to leave the bad and take the good sounds very well, but this bad and this good are not separable in that way: they are the inextricably mingled growth of one being, not separate blocks of a child's toy house set side by side and easily detachable, — and what is meant then by cutting out and taking one element and leaving the rest? If we take over a Western ideal, we take it over from a living form which strikes us; we imitate that form, are subjugated by its spirit and natural tendencies, and the good and bad intertwined in the living growth come in upon us together and take united possession. In fact, we have been for a long time so imitating the West, trying to become like it or partly like it and have fortunately failed, for that would have meant creating a bastard or twy-natured culture; but twy-natured, as Tennyson makes his Lucretius say, is no-natured and a bastard culture is no sound, truth-living culture. An entire return upon ourselves is our only way of salvation.

---

[1] *Narayan*, edited by Mr. C. R. Das.

There is much to be said here, it seems to me, both in the way of confirmation and of modification. But let us be clear about the meaning of our terms. That the attempt in the last century which still in some directions continues, — to imitate European civilisation and to make ourselves a sort of brown Englishmen, to throw our ancient culture into the dust-bin and put on the livery or uniform of the West was a mistaken and illegitimate endeavour, I heartily agree. At the same time a certain amount of imitation, a great amount even, was, one might almost say, a biological necessity, at any rate a psychological necessity of the situation. Not only when a lesser meets a greater culture, but when a culture which has fallen into a state of comparative inactivity, sleep, contraction, is faced with, still more when it receives the direct shock of a waking, active, tremendously creative civilisation, finds thrown upon it novel and successful powers and functionings, sees an immense succession and development of new ideas and formations, it is impelled by the very instinct of life to take over these ideas and forms, to annex, to enrich itself, even to imitate and reproduce, and in one way or in another take large account and advantage of these new forces and opportunities. That is a phenomenon which has happened repeatedly in history, in a greater or a lesser degree, in part or in totality. But if there is only a mechanical imitation, if there is a subordination and servitude, the inactive or weaker culture perishes, it is swallowed up by the invading leviathan. And even short of that, in proportion as there is a leaning towards these undesirable things, it languishes, is unsuccessful in its attempt at annexation, loses besides the power of its own spirit. To recover its own centre, find its own base and do whatever it has to do in its own strength and genius is certainly the one way of salvation. But even then a certain amount of acceptance, of forms too, — some imitation, if all taking over of forms must be called imitation, — is inevitable. We have, for instance, taken over in literature the form of the novel, the short story, the critical essay among a number of other adoptions, in science not only the discoveries and inventions, but the method and instrumentation of inductive research, in politics the press, the platform, the forms and habits of agitation, the public association. I do not suppose that anyone seriously thinks of renouncing or exiling these modern additions to our life, — though they are not all of them by any means unmixed blessings, — on the ground that they are foreign importations. But the question is what we do with them and whether we can bring them to be instruments and by some characteristic modification moulds of our own spirit. If so, there has been an acceptance and an assimilation; if not there has been merely a helpless imitation.

But the taking over of forms is not the heart of the question. When I speak of acceptance and assimilation, I am thinking of certain influences, ideas, energies brought forward with a great living force by Europe, which can awaken and enrich our own cultural activities and cultural being if we succeed in dealing with them with a victorious power and originality, if we can bring them into our characteristic way of being and transform them by its shaping action. That was in fact what our own ancestors did, never losing their originality, never effacing their uniqueness, because always vigorously creating from within, with whatever knowledge or artistic suggestion from outside they thought worthy of acceptance or capable of an Indian treatment. But I would certainly repel the formula of taking the good and leaving the bad as a crudity, one of those facile formulas which catch the superficial mind but are unsound in conception. Obviously, if we "take over" anything, the good and the bad in it will come in together pell-mell. If we take over for instance that terrible, monstrous and compelling thing, that giant Asuric creation, European industrialism, — unfortunately we are being forced by circumstances to do it, — whether we take it in its form or its principle, we may under more favourable conditions develop by it our wealth and economic resources, but assuredly we shall get too its social discords and moral plagues and cruel problems, and I do not see how we shall avoid becoming the slaves of the economic aim in life and losing the spiritual principle of our culture.

But, besides, these terms good and bad in this connection mean nothing definite, give us no help. If I must use them, where they can have only a relative significance, in a matter not of ethics, but of an interchange between life and life, I must first give them this general significance that whatever helps me to find myself more intimately, nobly, with a greater and sounder possibility of self-expressive creation, is good; whatever carries me out of my orientation, whatever weakens and belittles my power, richness, breadth and height of self-being, is bad for me. If the distinction is so understood, it will be evident, I think, to any serious and critical mind which tries to fathom things, that the real point is not the taking over of this or that formal detail, which has only a sign value, for example, widow remarriage, but a dealing with great effective ideas, such as are the ideas, in the external field of life, of social and political liberty, equality, democracy. If I accept any of these ideas it is not because they are modern or European, which is in itself no recommendation, but because they are human, because they present fruitful view-points to the spirit, because they are things of the greatest importance in the future development of the life of man. What I mean by acceptance of the effective idea of democracy, — the thing itself, never fully worked out, was present as an element in ancient Indian as in ancient European polity and society, — is that I find its inclusion in our future way of living, in some shape, to be a necessity of our growth. What I mean by assimilation, is that we must not take it crudely in the European forms, but must go back to whatever corresponds to it, illumines its sense, justifies its highest purport in our own spiritual conception of life and existence, and in that light work out its extent, degree, form, relation to other ideas, application. To everything I would apply the same principle, to each in its own kind, after its proper dharma, in its right measure of importance, its spiritual, intellectual, ethical, aesthetic, dynamic utility.

I take it as a self-evident law of individual being applicable to group-individuality, that it is neither desirable nor possible to exclude everything that comes in to us from outside. I take it as an equally self-evident law that a living organism, which grows not by accretion, but by self-development and assimilation, must recast the things it takes in to suit the law and form and characteristic action of its biological or psychological body, reject what would be deleterious or poisonous to it, — and what is that but the non-assimilable? — take only what can be turned into useful stuff of self-expression. It is, to use an apt Sanskritic phrase employed in the Bengali tongue, *ātmasātkaraṇa*, an assimilative appropriation, a making the thing settle into oneself and turn into characteristic form of our self-being. The impossibility of entire rejection arises from the very fact of our being a term of diversity in a unity, not really separate from all other existence, but in relation with all that surrounds us, because in life this relation expresses itself very largely by a process of interchange. The undesirability of total rejection, even if it were entirely possible, arises from the fact that interchange with the environment is necessary to a healthy persistence and growth; the living organism which rejects all such interchange, would speedily languish and die of lethargy and inanition.

Mentally, vitally and physically I do not grow by a pure self-development from within in a virgin isolation; I am not a separate self-existent being proceeding from a past to a new becoming in a world of its own where no one is but itself, nothing works but its own inner powers and musings. There is in every individualised existence a double action, a self-development from within which is its greatest intimate power of being and by which it is itself, and a reception of impacts from outside which it has to accommodate to its own individuality and make into material of self-growth and self-power. The two operations are not mutually exclusive, nor is the second harmful to the first except when the inner genius is too weak to deal victoriously with its environmental world; on the contrary the reception of impacts stimulates in a vigorous and healthy being its force for self-development and is an aid to a greater and more pronouncedly characteristic self-determination. As we rise in the scale we find that the power of original development from within, of conscious self-determination increases more and more, while in those who live most powerfully in themselves it reaches striking, sometimes almost divine proportions. But at the same time we see that the allied power of seizing upon the impacts and suggestions of the outside world grows in proportion; those who live most powerfully in themselves, can also most largely use the world and all its material for the Self, — and, it must be added, most successfully help the world and enrich it out of their own being. The man who most finds and lives from the inner self, can most embrace the universal and become one with it; the Swarat, independent, self-possessed and self-ruler, can most be the Samrat, possessor and shaper of the world in which he lives, can most too grow one with all in the Atman. That is the truth this developing existence teaches us, and it is one of the greatest secrets of the old Indian spiritual knowledge.

Therefore to live in one's self, determining one's self-expression from one's own centre of being in accordance with one's own law of being, swadharma, is the first necessity. Not to be able to do that means disintegration of the life; not to do it sufficiently means languor, weakness, inefficiency, the danger of being oppressed by the environing forces and overborne; not to be able to do it wisely, intuitively, with a strong use of one's inner material and inner powers, means confusion, disorder and finally decline and loss of vitality. But also not to be able to use the material that the life around offers us, not to lay hold on it with an intuitive selection and a strong mastering assimilation is a serious deficiency and a danger to the existence. To a healthy individuality the external impact or entering energy, idea, influence may act as an irritant awakening the inner being to a sense of discord, incompatibility or peril, and then there is a struggle, an impulse and process of rejection; but even in this struggle, in this process of rejection there is some resultant of change and growth, some increment of the power and material of life; the energies of the being are stimulated and helped by the attack. It may act as a stimulus, awakening a new action of the self-consciousness and a sense of fresh possibility, — by comparison, by suggestion, by knocking at locked doors and arousing slumbering energies. It may come in as a possible material which has then to be reshaped to a form of the inner energy, harmonised with the inner being, reinterpreted in the light of its own characteristic self-consciousness. In a great change of environment or a close meeting with a mass of invading influences all these processes work together and there is possibly much temporary perplexity and difficulty, many doubtful and perilous movements, but also the opportunity of a great self-developing transformation or an immense and vigorous renascence.

The group-soul differs from the individual only in being more self-sufficient by reason of its being an assemblage of many individual selves and capable within of many group variations. There is a constant inner interchange which may for a long time suffice to maintain the vitality, growth, power of developing activity, even when there is a restricted interchange with the rest of humanity. Greek civilisation, — after growing under the influence of Egyptian, Phoenician and other oriental influences, — separated itself sharply from the non-Hellenic "barbarian" cultures and was able for some centuries to live within itself by a rich variation and internal interchange. There was the same phenomenon in ancient India of a culture living intensely from within in a profound differentiation from all surrounding cultures, its vitality rendered possible by an even greater richness of internal interchange and variation. Chinese civilisation offers a third instance. But at no time did Indian culture exclude altogether external influences; on the contrary a very great power of selective assimilation, subordination and transformation of external elements was a characteristic of its processes; it protected itself from any considerable or overwhelming invasion, but laid hands on and included whatever struck or impressed it and in the act of inclusion subjected it to a characteristic change which harmonised the new element with the spirit of its own culture. But nowadays any such strong separative aloofness as distinguished the ancient civilisations, is no longer possible; the races of mankind have come too close to each other, are being thrown together in a certain unavoidable life unity. We are confronted with the more difficult problem of living in the full stress of this greater interaction and imposing on its impacts the law of our being.

Any attempt to remain exactly what we were before the European invasion or to ignore in future the claims of a modern environment and necessity is foredoomed to an obvious failure. However much we may deplore some of the characteristics of that intervening period in which we were dominated by the Western standpoint or move away from the standpoint back to our own characteristic way of seeing existence, we cannot get rid of a certain element of inevitable change it has produced upon us, any more than a man can go back in life to what he was some years ago and recover entire and unaffected a past mentality. Time and its influences have not only passed over him, but carried him forward in their stream. We cannot go backward to a past form of our being, but we can go forward to a large repossession of ourselves in which we shall make a better, more living, more real, more self-possessed use of the intervening experience. We can still think in the essential sense of the great spirit and ideals of our past, but the form of our thinking, our speaking, our development of them has changed by the very fact of new thought and experience; we see them not only in the old, but in new lights, we support them by the added strength of new view-points, even the old words we use acquire for us a modified, more extended and richer significance. Again, we cannot be "ourselves alone" in any narrow formal sense, because we must necessarily take account of the modern world around us and get full knowledge of it, otherwise we cannot live. But all such taking account of things, all added knowledge modifies our subjective being. My mind, with all that depends on it, is modified by what it observes and works upon, modified when it takes in from it fresh materials of thought, modified when it is wakened by its stimulus to new activities, modified even when it denies and rejects; for even an old thought or truth which I affirm against an opposing idea, becomes a new thought to me in the effort of affirmation and rejection, clothes itself with new aspects and issues. My life is modified in the same way by the life influences it has to encounter and confront. Finally, we cannot avoid dealing with the great governing ideas and problems of the modern world. The modern world is still mainly European, a world dominated by the European mind and Western civilisation. We claim to set right this undue preponderance, to reassert the Asiatic and, for ourselves, the Indian mind and to preserve and develop the great values of Asiatic and of Indian civilisation. But the Asiatic or the Indian mind can only assert itself successfully by meeting these problems and by giving them a solution which will justify its own ideals and spirit.

The principle I have affirmed results both from the necessity of our nature and the necessity of things, of life, — fidelity to our own spirit, nature, ideals, the creation of our own characteristic forms in the new age and the new environment, but also a strong and masterful dealing with external influences which need not be and in the nature of the situation cannot be a total rejection; therefore there must be an element of successful assimilation. There remains the very difficult question of the application of the principle, — the degree, the way, the guiding perceptions. To think that out we must look at each province of culture and, keeping always firm hold on a perception of what the Indian spirit is and the Indian ideal is, see how they can work upon the present situation and possibilities in each of these provinces and lead to a new victorious creation. In such thinking it will not do to be too dogmatic. Each capable Indian mind must think it out or, better, work it out in its own light and power, — as the Bengal artists are working it out in their own sphere, — and contribute some illumination or effectuation. The spirit of the Indian renascence will take care of the rest, that power of the universal Time-Spirit which has begun to move in our midst for the creation of a new and greater India.

“Is India Civilised?”

“Is India Civilised?”

A BOOK under this rather startling title was published some years ago by Sir John Woodroffe, the well-known scholar and writer on Tantric philosophy, in answer to an extravagant *jeu d’esprit* by Mr. William Archer. That well-known dramatic critic leaving his safe natural sphere for fields in which his chief claim to speak was a sublime and confident ignorance, assailed the whole life and culture of India and even lumped together all her greatest achievements, philosophy, religion, poetry, painting, sculpture, Upanishads, Mahabharata, Ramayana in one wholesale condemnation as a repulsive mass of unspeakable barbarism. It was argued by many at the time that to reply to a critic of this kind was to break a butterfly, or it might be in this instance a bumble-bee upon the wheel. But Sir John Woodroffe insisted that even an attack of this ignorant kind ought not to be neglected; he took it as a particularly useful type in the general kind, first, because it raised the question from the rationalistic and not from the Christian and missionary standpoint and, again, because it betrayed the grosser underlying motives of all such attacks. But his book was important, not so much as an answer to a particular critic, but because it raised with great point and power the whole question of the survival of Indian civilisation and the inevitability of a war of cultures.

The question whether there has been or is a civilisation in India is not any longer debatable; for everyone whose opinion counts recognises the presence of a distinct and a great civilisation unique in its character. Sir John Woodroffe’s purpose was to disclose the conflict of European and Asiatic culture and, in greater prominence, the distinct meaning and value of Indian civilisation, the peril it now runs and the calamity its destruction would be to the world. The author held its preservation to be of an immense importance to mankind and he believed it to be in great danger. In the stupendous rush of change which is coming on the human world as a result of the present tornado of upheaval, ancient India’s culture, attacked by European modernism, overpowered in the material field, betrayed by the indifference of her children, may perish for ever along with the soul of the nation that holds it in its keeping. The book was an urgent invitation to us to appreciate better this sacred trust and the near peril which besets it and to stand firm and faithful in the hour of the ordeal. It will be useful to state briefly its gist as an introduction to this all-important issue.

A true happiness in this world is the right terrestrial aim of man, and true happiness lies in the finding and maintenance of a natural harmony of spirit, mind and body. A culture is to be valued to the extent to which it has discovered the right key of this harmony and organised its expressive motives and movements. And a civilisation must be judged by the manner in which all its principles, ideas, forms, ways of living work to bring that harmony out, manage its rhythmic play and secure its continuance or the development of its motives. A civilisation in pursuit of this aim may be predominantly material like modern European culture, predominantly mental and intellectual like the old Graeco-Roman or predominantly spiritual like the still persistent culture of India. India’s central conception is that of the Eternal, the Spirit here incased in matter, involved and immanent in it and evolving on the material plane by rebirth of the individual up the scale of being till in mental man it enters the world of ideas and realm of conscious morality, *dharma*. This achievement, this victory over unconscious matter develops its lines, enlarges its scope, elevates its levels until the increasing manifestation of the sattwic or spiritual portion of the vehicle of mind enables the individual mental being in man to identify himself with the pure spiritual consciousness beyond Mind. India’s social system is built upon this conception; her philosophy formulates it; her religion is an aspiration to the spiritual consciousness and its fruits; her art and literature have the same upward look; her whole dharma or law of being is founded upon it. Progress she admits, but this spiritual progress, not the externally self-unfolding process of an always more and more prosperous and efficient material civilisation. It is her founding of life upon this exalted conception and her urge towards the spiritual and the eternal that constitute the distinct value of her civilisation. And it is her fidelity, with whatever human shortcomings, to this highest ideal that has made her people a nation apart in the human world.

But there are other cultures led by a different conception and even an opposite motive. And by the law of struggle which is the first law of existence in the material universe, varying cultures are bound to come into conflict. A deep-seated urge in Nature compels them to attempt to extend themselves and to destroy, assimilate and replace all disparates or opposites. Conflict is not indeed the last and ideal stage; for that comes when various cultures develop freely, without hatred, misunderstanding or aggression and even with an underlying sense of unity, their separate special motives. But so long as the principle of struggle prevails, one must face the lesser law; it is fatal to disarm in the midmost of the battle. The culture which gives up its living separateness, the civilisation which neglects an active self-defence will be swallowed up and the nation which lived by it will lose its soul and perish. Each nation is a Shakti or power of the evolving spirit in humanity and lives by the principle which it embodies. India is the Bharata Shakti, the living energy of a great spiritual conception, and fidelity to it is the very principle of her existence. For by its virtue alone she has been one of the immortal nations; this alone has been the secret of her amazing persistence and perpetual force of survival and revival.

The principle of struggle has assumed the large historical aspect of an agelong clash and pressure of conflict between Asia and Europe. This clash, this mutual pressure has had its material side, but has borne also its cultural and spiritual aspect. Both materially and spiritually Europe has thrown herself repeatedly upon Asia, Asia too upon Europe, to conquer, assimilate and dominate. There has been a constant alternation, a flowing backward and forward of these two seas of power. All Asia has always had the spiritual tendency in more or less intensity, with more or less clearness; but in this essential matter India is the quintessence of the Asiatic way of being. Europe too in mediaeval times had a culture in which by the dominance of the Christian idea — but Christianity was of Asiatic origin — the spiritual motive took the lead; then there was an essential similarity as well as a certain difference. Still the differentiation of cultural temperament has on the whole been constant. Since some centuries Europe has become material, predatory, aggressive, and has lost the harmony of the inner and outer man which is the true meaning of civilisation and the efficient condition of a true progress. Material comfort, material progress, material efficiency have become the gods of her worship. The modern European civilisation which has invaded Asia and which all violent attacks on Indian ideals represent, is the effective form of this materialistic culture. India, true to her spiritual motive, has never shared in the physical attacks of Asia upon Europe; her method has always been an infiltration of the world with her ideas, such as we today see again in progress. But she has now been physically occupied by Europe and this physical conquest must necessarily be associated with an attempt at cultural conquest; that invasion too has also made some progress. On the other hand English rule has enabled India still to retain her identity and social type; it has awakened her to herself and has meanwhile, until she became conscious of her strength, guarded her against the flood which would otherwise have submerged and broken her civilisation.[1] It is for her now to recover herself, defend her cultural existence against the alien penetration, preserve her distinct spirit, essential principle and characteristic forms for her own salvation and the total welfare of the human race.

But many questions may arise, — and principally whether such a spirit of defence and attack is the right spirit, whether union, harmony, interchange are not our proper temperament for the coming human advance. Is not a unified world-culture the large way of the future? Can either an exaggeratedly spiritual or an excessively temporal civilisation be the sound condition of human progress or human perfection? A happy or just reconciliation would seem to be a better key to a harmony of Spirit, Mind and Body. And there is the question too whether the forms of Indian culture must be preserved intact as well as the spirit. To these queries the reply of the author is to be found in his law of graduality of the spiritual advance of humanity, its need of advancing through three successive stages.

---

[1] This contention cannot be accepted in an unqualified sense. English rule has by its general principle of social and religious non-interference prevented any direct and violent touch, any deliberate and purposeful social pressure; but it has undermined and deprived of living strength all the preexisting centres and instruments of Indian social life and by a sort of unperceived rodent process left it only a rotting shell without expansive power or any better defensive force than the force of inertia.

The first stage is the period of conflict and competition which has been ever dominant in the past and still overshadows the present of mankind. For even when the crudest forms of material conflict are mitigated, the conflict itself still survives and the cultural struggle comes into greater prominence. The second step brings the stage of concert. The third and last is marked by the spirit of sacrifice in which, because all is known as the one Self, each gives himself for the good of others. The second stage has hardly at all commenced for most; the third belongs to the indeterminate future. Individuals have reached the highest stage; the perfected Sannyasin, the liberated man, the soul that has become one with the Spirit, knows all being as himself and for him all self-defence and attack are needless. For strife does not belong to the law of his seeing; sacrifice and self-giving are the whole principle of his action. But no people has reached that level, and to follow a law or principle involuntarily or ignorantly or contrary to the truth of one's consciousness is a falsehood and a self-destruction. To allow oneself to be killed, like the lamb attacked by the wolf, brings no growth, farthers no development, assures no spiritual merit. Concert or unity may come in good time, but it must be an underlying unity with a free differentiation, not a swallowing up of one by another or an incongruous and inharmonious mixture. Nor can it come before the world is ready for these greater things. To lay down one's arms in a state of war is to invite destruction and it can serve no compensating spiritual purpose.

Spiritual and temporal have indeed to be perfectly harmonised, for the spirit works through mind and body. But the purely intellectual or heavily material culture of the kind that Europe now favours, bears in its heart the seed of death; for the living aim of culture is the realisation on earth of the kingdom of heaven. India, though its urge is towards the Eternal, since that is always the highest, the entirely real, still contains in her own culture and her own philosophy a supreme reconciliation of the eternal and the temporal and she need not seek it from outside. On the same principle the form of the interdependence of mind, body and spirit in a harmonious culture is important as well as the pure spirit; for the form is the rhythm of the spirit. It follows that to break up the form is to injure the spirit's self-expression or at least to put it into grave peril. Change of forms there may and will be, but the novel formation must be a new self-expression or self-creation developed from within; it must be characteristic of the spirit and not servilely borrowed from the embodiments of an alien nature.

Where then does India actually stand in this critical hour of her necessity and how far can she be said to be still firmly seated on her eternal foundations? Already she has been largely affected by European culture and the peril is far from over; on the contrary it will be greater, more insistent, more imperatively violent in the immediate future. Asia is rearising; but that very fact will intensify and is already intensifying the attempt, natural and legitimate according to the law of competition, of European civilisation to assimilate Asia. For if she is culturally transformed and conquered, then when she again counts in the material order of the world, it will not be with any menace of the invasion of Europe by the Asiatic ideal. It is a cultural quarrel complicated with a political question. Asia must become culturally a province of Europe and form politically one part of a Europeanised if not a European concert; otherwise Europe may become culturally a province of Asia, Asiaticised by the dominant influence of wealthy, enormous, powerful Asiatic peoples in the new world-system. The motive of Mr. Archer's attack is frankly a political motive. This is the burden of all his song that the reconstruction of the world must take place in the forms and follow the canons of a rationalistic and materialistic European civilisation. On his reasoning, India if she adheres to her own civilisation, if she cherishes its spiritual motive, if she clings to its spiritual principle of formation, will stand out as a living denial, a hideous "blot" upon this fair, luminous, rationalistic world. Either she must Europeanise, rationalise, materialise her whole being and deserve liberty by the change or else she must be kept in subjection and administered by her cultural superiors: her people of three hundred million religious savages must be held down firmly, taught and civilised by her noble and enlightened Christian-atheistic European warders and tutors. A grotesque statement in form, but in substance it has in it the root of the matter. As against the attack — not universal, for understanding and appreciation of Indian culture are now more common than before, — India is indeed awaking and defending herself, but not sufficiently and not with the whole-heartedness, the clear sight and the firm resolution which can alone save her from the peril. Today it is close; let her choose, — for the choice is imperatively before her, to live or to perish.

The warning cannot be neglected; recent utterances of European publicists and statesmen, recent books and writings against India and the joyful and enthusiastic welcome they have received from the public of occidental countries, point to the reality of the danger. It arises indeed as a necessity from the present political situation and cultural trend of humanity at this moment of enormous decisive change. It is not necessary to follow the writer in all the viewpoints expressed in his book. I cannot myself accept in full his eulogy of the mediaeval civilisation of Europe. Its interest, the beauty of its artistic motives, its deep and sincere spiritual urgings are marred for me by its large strain of ignorance and obscurantism, its cruel intolerance, its revolting early-Teutonic hardness, brutality, ferocity and coarseness. He seems to me to hit a little too hard at the later European culture. This predominantly economic type of civilisation has been ugly enough in its strain of utilitarian materialism, which we shall err grossly if we imitate; still it has been uplifted by some nobler ideals that have done much for the race. But even these are crude and imperfect in their form and need to be spiritualised in their meaning before they can be wholly admitted by the mind of India. I think too that the author has a little underrated the force of the Indian revival. I do not mean its outward realised strength, for that is very deficient, but the inevitability of its drive, its spiritual and potential force. And he has made a little too much of the servile type of Indian who is capable of mouthing the portentously obsequious imagination that "European institutions are the standard by which the aspirations of India are set." That, except for the rapidly dwindling class to which this spokesman belongs, has its truth now only in a single field, the political, — a very important exception, I admit, and one which opens the door to a peril of stupendous proportions. But even there a deep change of spirit is foreshadowed although it has not yet taken definite form and has now to meet a fresh invasion of furious Europeanism inspired by the militant crudeness of proletarian Russia. Again he does not attach a sufficient importance to the increasing infiltration of India's spiritual thought into Europe and America, which is her characteristic retort to the European invasion. It is from this point of view that the whole question takes on a different aspect.

Sir John Woodroffe invites us to a vigorous self-defence. But defence by itself in the modern struggle can only end in defeat, and, if battle there must be, the only sound strategy is a vigorous aggression based on a strong, living and mobile defence; for by that aggressive force alone can the defence itself be effective. Why are a certain class of Indians still hypnotised in all fields by European culture and why are we all still hypnotised by it in the field of politics? Because they constantly saw all the power, creation, activity on the side of Europe, all the immobility or weakness of a static inefficient defence on the side of India. But wherever the Indian spirit has been able to react, to attack with energy and to create with éclat, the European glamour has begun immediately to lose its hypnotic power. No one now feels the weight of the religious assault from Europe which was very powerful at the outset, because the creative activities of the Hindu revival have made Indian religion a living and evolving, a secure, triumphant and self-assertive power. But the seal was put to this work by two events, the Theosophical movement and the appearance of Swami Vivekananda at Chicago. For these two things showed the spiritual ideas for which India stands no longer on their defence but aggressive and invading the materialised mentality of the Occident. All India had been vulgarised and anglicised in its aesthetic notions by English education and influence, until the brilliant and sudden dawn of the Bengal school of art cast its rays so far as to be seen in Tokio, London and Paris. That significant cultural event has already effected an aesthetic revolution in the country, not yet by any means complete, but irresistible and sure of the future. The same phenomenon extends to other fields. Even in the province of politics that was the internal sense of the policy of the so-called extremist party in the Swadeshi movement; for it was a movement which attempted to override the previous apparent impossibility of political creation by the Indian spirit upon other than imitative European lines. If it failed for the time being, not by any falsity in its inspiration, but by the strength of a hostile pressure and the weakness still left by a past decadence, if its incipient creations were broken or left languishing and deprived of their original significance, yet it will remain as a finger-post on the roads. The attempt is bound to be renewed as soon as a wider gate is opened under more favourable conditions. Till that attempt comes and succeeds, a serious danger besets the soul of India; for a political Europeanisation would be followed by a social turn of the same kind and bring a cultural and spiritual death in its train. Aggression must be successful and creative if the defence is to be effective.

This great question must be given its larger world-wide import if we are to see it in its true lines. The principle of struggle, conflict and competition still governs and for some time will still govern international relations; for even if war is abolished in the near future by some as yet improbable good fortune of the race, conflict will take other forms. At the same time a certain growing mutual closeness of the life of humanity is the most prominent phenomenon of the day. The War has brought it into violent relief; but the after-war is bringing out all its implications as well as the mass of its difficulties. This is as yet no real concert, still less the beginning of a true unity, but only a compelling physical oneness forced on us by scientific inventions and modern circumstances. But this physical oneness must necessarily bring its mental, cultural and psychological results. At first it will probably accentuate rather than diminish conflict in many directions, enhance political and economic struggles of many kinds and hasten too a cultural struggle. There it may bring about in the end a swallowing unification and a destruction of all other civilisations by one aggressive European type: whether that type will be bourgeois economical or labour materialistic or a rationalistic intellectualism cannot easily be foreseen, but at present in one form or another this is the actuality that is most in the front. On the other hand it may lead to a free concert with some underlying oneness. But the ideal of the entire separateness of the peoples each developing its sharply separatist culture with an alien exclusion law for other leading ideas and cultural forms, although it has been for some time abroad and was growing in vigour, is not likely to prevail. For that to happen the whole aim of unification preparing in Nature must fall to pieces, an improbable but not quite impossible catastrophe. Europe dominates the world and it is natural to forecast a Westernised world with such petty differences as might be permissible in a European unity given up to the rigorous scientific pursuit of the development and organisation of material life. Across this possibility falls the shadow of India.

Sir John Woodroffe quotes the dictum of Professor Lowes Dickinson that the opposition is not so much between Asia and Europe as between India and the rest of the world. There is a truth behind that dictum; but the cultural opposition of Europe and Asia remains an unabolished factor. Spirituality is not the monopoly of India; however it may hide submerged in intellectualism or hid in other concealing veils, it is a necessary part of human nature. But the difference is between spirituality made the leading motive and the determining power of both the inner and the outer life and spirituality suppressed, allowed only under disguises or brought in as a minor power, its reign denied or put off in favour of the intellect or of a dominant materialistic vitalism. The former way was the type of the ancient wisdom at one time universal in all civilised countries — literally, from China to Peru. But all other nations have fallen away from it and diminished its large pervasiveness or fallen away from it altogether as in Europe. Or they are now, as in Asia, in danger of abandoning it for the invading economic, commercial, industrial, intellectually utilitarian modern type. India alone, with whatever fall or decline of light and vigour, has remained faithful to the heart of the spiritual motive. India alone is still obstinately recalcitrant; for Turkey and China and Japan, say her critics, have outgrown that foolishness, by which it is meant that they have grown rationalistic and materialistic. India alone as a nation, whatever individuals or a small class may have done, has till now refused to give up her worshipped Godhead or bow her knee to the strong reigning idols of rationalism, commercialism and economism, the successful iron gods of the West. Affected she has been, but not yet overcome. Her surface mind rather than her deeper intelligence has been obliged to admit many Western ideas, liberty, equality, democracy and others, and to reconcile them with her Vedantic Truth; but she has not been altogether at ease with them in the Western form and she seeks about already in her thought to give to them an Indian which cannot fail to be a spiritualised turn. The first passion to imitate English ideas and culture has passed; but another more dangerous has recently taken its place, the passion to imitate continental European culture at large and in particular the crude and vehement turn of revolutionary Russia. On the other hand one sees a growing revival of this ancient Hindu religion and the immense sweep of a spiritual awakening and its significant movements. And out of this ambiguous situation there can be only one out of two issues. Either India will be rationalised and industrialised out of all recognition and she will be no longer India or else she will be the leader in a new world-phase, aid by her example and cultural infiltration the new tendencies of the West and spiritualise the human race. That is the one radical and poignant question at issue. Will the spiritual motive which India represents prevail on Europe and create there new forms congenial to the West, or will European rationalism and commercialism put an end for ever to the Indian type of culture?

Not, then, whether India is civilised is the query that should be put, but whether the motive which has shaped her civilisation or the old-European intellectual or the new-European materialistic motive is to lead human culture. Is the harmony of the spirit, mind and body to found itself on the gross law of our physical nature, rationalised only or touched at the most by an ineffective spiritual glimmer, or is the dominant power of spirit to take the lead and force the lesser powers of the intellect, mind and body to a more exalted effort after a highest harmony, a victorious ever-developing equipoise? India must defend herself by reshaping her cultural forms to express more powerfully, intimately and perfectly her ancient ideal. Her aggression must lead the waves of the light thus liberated in triumphant self-expanding rounds all over the world which it once possessed or at least enlightened in far-off ages. An appearance of conflict must be admitted for a time, for as long as the attack of an opposite culture continues. But since it will be in effect an assistance to all the best that is emerging from the advanced thought of the Occident, it will culminate in the beginning of concert on a higher plane and a preparation of oneness.

“Is India Civilised?” – 2

THIS QUESTION of Indian civilisation, once it has raised this greater issue, shifts from its narrow meaning and disappears into a much larger problem. Does the future of humanity lie in a culture founded solely upon reason and science? Is the progress of human life the effort of a mind, a continuous collective mind constituted by an ever changing sum of transient individuals, that has emerged from the darkness of the inconscient material universe and is stumbling about in it in search of some clear light and some sure support amid its difficulties and problems? And does civilisation consist in man’s endeavour to find that light and support in a rationalised knowledge and a rationalised way of life? An ordered knowledge of the powers, forces, possibilities of physical Nature and of the psychology of man as a mental and physical being is then the only true science. An ordered use of that knowledge for a progressive social efficiency and well-being, which will make his brief existence more efficient, more tolerable, more comfortable, happier, better appointed, more luxuriously enriched with the pleasures of the mind, life and body, is the only true art of life. All our philosophy, all our religion, — supposing religion has not been outgrown and rejected, — all our science, thought, art, social structure, law and institution must found itself upon this idea of existence and must serve this one aim and endeavour. This is the formula which European civilisation has accepted and is still labouring to bring into some kind of realisation. It is the formula of an intelligently mechanised civilisation supporting a rational and utilitarian culture.

Or is not the truth of our being rather that of a Soul embodied in Nature which is seeking to know itself, to find itself, to enlarge its consciousness, to arrive at a greater way of existence, to progress in the spirit and grow into the full light of self-knowledge and some divine inner perfection? Are not religion, philosophy, science, thought, art, society, all life even means only of this growth, instruments of the spirit to be used for its service and with this spiritual aim as their dominant or at least their ultimate preoccupation? That is the idea of life and being, — the knowledge of it, as she claims, — for which India stood till yesterday and still strives to stand with all that is most persistent and powerful in her nature. It is the formula of a spiritualised civilisation striving through the perfection but also through an exceeding of mind, life and body towards a high soul-culture.

Whether the future hope of the race lies in a rational and an intelligently mechanised or in a spiritual, intuitive and religious civilisation and culture, — that, then, is the important issue. When the rationalist critic denies that India is or ever has been civilised, when he declares the Upanishads, the Vedanta, Buddhism, Hinduism, ancient Indian art and poetry a mass of barbarism, the vain production of a persistently barbaric mind, what he means is simply that civilisation is synonymous and identical with the cult and practice of the materialistic reason and that anything which falls below or goes above that standard does not deserve the name. A too metaphysical philosophy, a too religious religion, — if not indeed all philosophy and all religion, — any too idealistic and all mystic thought and art and every kind of occult knowledge, all that refines and probes beyond the limited purview of the reason dealing with the physical universe and seems therefore to it bizarre, over-subtle, excessive, unintelligible, all that responds to the sense of the Infinite, all that is obsessed with the idea of the eternal, and a society which is too much governed by ideas born of these things and not solely by intellectual clarity and the pursuit of a material development and efficiency, are not the products of civilisation, but the offspring of a crudely subtle barbarism. But this thesis obviously proves too much; most of the great past of humanity would fall under its condemnation. Even ancient Greek culture would not escape it; much of the thought and art of modern European civilisation itself would in that case have to be damned as at least semi-barbarous. Evidently, we cannot without falling into exaggeration and absurdity narrow the sense of the word and impoverish the significance of the past strivings of the race. Indian civilisation in the past has been and must be recognised as the fruit of a great culture, quite as much as the Graeco-Roman, the Christian, the Islamic or the later Renaissance civilisation of Europe.

But the essential question remains open; the dispute is only narrowed to its central issue. A more moderate and perspicacious rationalistic critic would admit the past value of India's achievements. He would not condemn Buddhism and Vedanta and all Indian art and philosophy and social ideas as barbarous, but he would still contend that not there lies any future good for the human race. The true line of advance lies through European modernism, the mighty works of Science and the great modern adventure of humanity, its effort well founded not upon speculation and imagination but on ascertained and tangible scientific truth, its laboriously increased riches of sure and firmly tested scientific organisation. An Indian mind faithful to its ideals would contend on the contrary that while reason and science and all other auxiliaries have their place in the human effort, the real truth goes beyond them. The secret of our ultimate perfection is to be discovered deeper within us and things and Nature; it is to be sought centrally in spiritual self-knowledge and self-perfection and in the founding of life on that self-knowledge.

When the issue is so stated, we can at once see that the gulf between East and West, India and Europe is much less profound and unbridgeable now than it was thirty or forty years ago. The basic difference still remains; the life of the West is still chiefly governed by the rationalistic idea and a materialistic preoccupation. But at the summits of thought and steadily penetrating more and more downward through art and poetry and music and general literature an immense change is in progress. A reaching towards deeper things, an increasing return of seekings which had been banished, an urge towards higher experience yet unrealised, an admission of ideas long foreign to the Western mentality can be seen everywhere. Aiding this process and aided by it there has been a certain infiltration of Indian and Eastern thought and influence; even here and there we find some growing recognition of the high value or the superior greatness of the ancient spiritual ideal. This infiltration began at a very early stage of the near contact between the farther Orient and Europe of which the English occupation of India was the most direct occasion. But at first it was a slight and superficial touch, at most an intellectual influence on a few superior minds. An academic interest or an attracted turn of scholars and thinkers towards Vedanta, Sankhya, Buddhism, admiration for the subtlety and largeness of Indian philosophic idealism, the stamp left by the Upanishads and the Gita on great intellects like Schopenhauer and Emerson and on a few lesser thinkers, this was the first narrow inlet of the floods. The impression did not go very far at the best and the little effect it might have produced was counteracted and even effaced for a time by the great flood of scientific materialism which submerged the whole life-view of later nineteenth-century Europe.

But now other movements have arisen and laid hold on thought and life with a triumphant success. Philosophy and thought have taken a sharp curve away from rationalistic materialism and its confident absolutisms. On the one hand, as a first consequence of the seeking for a larger thought and vision of the universe, Indian Monism has taken a subtle but powerful hold on many minds, though often in strange disguises. On the other hand new philosophies have been born, not indeed directly spiritual, vitalistic rather and pragmatic, but yet by their greater subjectivity already nearer to Indian ways of thinking. The old limits of scientific interest have begun to break down; various forms of psychical research and novel departures in psychology and even an interest in psychism and occultism, have come into increasing vogue and fasten more and more their hold in spite of the anathemas of orthodox religion and orthodox science. Theosophy with its comprehensive combinations of old and new beliefs and its appeal to ancient spiritual and psychic systems, has everywhere exercised an influence far beyond the circle of its professed adherents. Opposed for a long time with obloquy and ridicule, it has done much to spread the belief in Karma, reincarnation, other planes of existence, the evolution of the embodied soul through intellect and psyche to spirit, ideas which once accepted must change the whole attitude towards life. Even Science itself is constantly arriving at conclusions which only repeat upon the physical plane and in its language truths which ancient India had already affirmed from the standpoint of spiritual knowledge in the tongue of the Veda and Vedanta. Every one of these advances leads directly or in its intrinsic meaning towards a nearer approach between the mind of East and West and to that extent to a likelihood of a better understanding of Indian thought and ideals.

In some directions the change of attitude has gone remarkably far and seems to be constantly increasing. A Christian missionary quoted by Sir John Woodroffe is "amazed to find the extent to which Hindu Pantheism has begun to permeate the religious conceptions of Germany, of America, even of England" and he considers its cumulative effect an imminent "danger" to the next generation. Another writer cited by him goes so far as to attribute all the highest philosophical thought of Europe to the previous thinking of the Brahmins and affirms even that all modern solutions of intellectual problems will be found anticipated in the East. A distinguished French psychologist recently told an Indian visitor that India had already laid down all the large lines and main truths, the broad schema, of a genuine psychology and all that Europe can now do is to fill them in with exact details and scientific verifications. These utterances are the extreme indications of a growing change of which the drift is unmistakable.

Nor is it only in philosophy and the higher thinking that this turn is visible. European art has moved in certain directions far away from its old moorings; it is developing a new eye and opening in its own manner to motives which until now were held in honour only in the East. Eastern art and decoration have begun to be widely appreciated and have exercised a strong if subtle influence. Poetry has for some time commenced to speak uncertainly a new language, — note that the world-wide fame of Tagore would have been unthinkable thirty years ago, — and one often finds the verse even of ordinary writers teeming with thoughts and expressions which could formerly have found few parallels outside Indian, Buddhistic and Sufi poems. And there are some first preliminary signs of a similar phenomenon in general literature. More and more the seekers of new truth are finding their spiritual home in India or owe to her much of their inspiration or at least acknowledge her light and undergo her influence. If this turn continues to accentuate its drive, and there is little chance of a reversion, the spiritual and intellectual gulf between East and West if not filled up, will at least be bridged and the defence of Indian culture and ideals will stand in a stronger position.

But then, it may be said, if there is this certainty of an approximative understanding, what is the need of an aggressive defence of Indian culture or of any defence at all? Indeed, what is the need for the continuance of any distinctive Indian civilisation in the future? East and West will meet from two opposite sides and merge in each other and found in the life of a unified humanity a common world-culture. All previous or existing forms, systems, variations will fuse in this new amalgam and find their fulfilment. But the problem is not so easy, not so harmoniously simple. For, even if we could assume that in a united world-culture there would be no spiritual need and no vital utility for strong distinctive variations, we are still very far from any such oneness. The subjective and spiritual turn of the more advanced modern thought is still confined to a minority and has only very superficially coloured the general intelligence of Europe. Moreover, it is a movement of the thought only; the great life-motives of European civilisation stand as yet where they were. There is a greater pressure of certain idealistic elements in the proposed reshaping of human relations, but they have not shaken off or even loosened the yoke of the immediate materialistic past. It is precisely at this critical moment and in these conditions that the whole human world, India included, is about to be forced into the stress and travail of a swift transformation. The danger is that the pressure of dominant European ideas and motives, the temptations of the political needs of the hour, the velocity of rapid inevitable change will leave no time for the growth of sound thought and spiritual reflection and may strain to bursting-point the old Indian cultural and social system, and shatter this ancient civilisation before India has had time to readjust her mental stand and outlook or to reject, remould or replace the forms that can no longer meet her environmental national necessities, create new characteristic powers and figures and find a firm basis for a swift evolution in the sense of her own spirit and ideals. In that event a rationalised and Westernised India, a brown ape of Europe, might emerge from the chaos, keeping some elements only of her ancient thought to modify, but no longer to shape and govern her total existence. Like other countries she would have passed into the mould of occidental modernism; ancient India would have perished.

Certain minds would see in this contingency no disaster, but rather a most desirable turn and a happy event. It would mean, in their view, that India had given up her spiritual separation and undergone the much needed intellectual and moral change that would at last entitle her to enter into the comity of modern peoples. And since in the new world-comity there would enter an increasing spiritual and subjective element and much perhaps of India's own religious and philosophical thought would be appropriated by its culture, the disappearance of her antique spirit and personal self-expression need be no absolute loss. Ancient India would have passed like ancient Greece, leaving its contribution to a new and more largely progressive life of the race. But the absorption of the Graeco-Roman culture by the later European world, even though many of its elements still survive in a larger and more complex civilisation, was yet attended with serious diminutions. There was a deplorable loss of its high and clear intellectual order, a still more calamitous perdition of the ancient cult of beauty, and even now after so many centuries there has been no true recovery of the lost spirit. A much greater diminution of the world's riches would result from the disappearance of a distinctive Indian civilisation, because the difference between its standpoint and that of European modernism is deeper, its spirit unique and the rich mass and diversity of its thousand lines of inner experience a heritage that still India alone can preserve in its intricate truth and dynamic order.

The tendency of the normal Western mind is to live from below upward and from out inward. A strong foundation is taken in the vital and material nature and higher powers are invoked and admitted only to modify and partially uplift the natural terrestrial life. The inner existence is formed and governed by the external powers. India’s constant aim has been on the contrary to find a basis of living in the higher spiritual truth and to live from the inner spirit outwards, to exceed the present way of mind, life and body, to command and dictate to external Nature. As the old Vedic seers put it, “Their divine foundation was above even while they stood below; let its rays be settled deep within us,” *nīcīnāḥ sthur upari budhna eṣām*, *asme antar nihitāḥ ketavaḥ syuḥ*. Now that difference is no unimportant subtlety, but of a great and penetrating practical consequence. And we can see how Europe would deal with any spiritual influence by her treatment of Christianity and its inner rule which she never really accepted as the law of her life. It was admitted but only as an ideal and emotional influence and used only to chasten and give some spiritual colouring to the vital vigour of the Teuton and the intellectual clarity and sensuous refinement of the Latins. Any new spiritual development she might accept would be taken in the same way and used to a like limited and superficial purpose, if an insistent living culture were not there in the world to challenge this lesser ideal and insist on the true life of the spirit.

It may well be that both tendencies, the mental and the vital and physical stress of Europe and the spiritual and psychic impulse of India, are needed for the completeness of the human movement. But if the spiritual ideal points the final way to a triumphant harmony of manifested life, then it is all-important for India not to lose hold of the truth, not to give up the highest she knows and barter it away for a perhaps more readily practicable but still lower ideal alien to her true and constant nature. It is important too for humanity that a great collective effort to realise this highest ideal — however imperfect it may have been, into whatever confusion and degeneration it may temporarily have fallen, — should not cease, but continue. Always it can recover its force and enlarge its expression; for the spirit is not bound to temporal forms but ever-new, immortal and infinite. A new creation of the old Indian *svadharma*, not a transmutation to some law of the Western nature, is our best way to serve and increase the sum of human progress.

There arises the necessity of a defence and a strong, even an aggressive defence; for only an aggressive defence can be effective in the conditions of the modern struggle. But here we find ourselves brought up against an opposite turn of mind and its stark obstructive temper. For there are plenty of Indians now who are for a stubbornly static defence, and whatever aggressiveness they put into it consists in a rather vulgar and unthinking cultural Chauvinism which holds that whatever we have is good for us because it is Indian or even that whatever is in India is best, because it is the creation of the Rishis. As if all the later clumsy and chaotic developments were laid down by those much misused, much misapplied and often very much forged founders of our culture. But the question is whether a static defence is of any effective value. I hold that it is of no value, because it is inconsistent with the truth of things and doomed to failure. It amounts to an attempt to sit stubbornly still while the Shakti of the world is rapidly moving on her way, and not only the Shakti of the world but the Shakti in India also. It is a determination to live only on our past cultural capital, to eke it out, small as it has grown in our wasteful and incompetent hands, to the last anna: but to live on our capital without using it for fresh gains is to end in bankruptcy and pauperism. The past has to be used and spent as mobile and current capital for some larger profit, acquisition and development of the future: but to gain we must release, we must part with something in order to grow and live more richly, — that is the universal law of existence. Otherwise the life within us will stagnate and perish in its immobile torpor. Thus to shrink from enlargement and change is too a false confession of impotence. It is to hold that India's creative capacity in religion and in philosophy came to an end with Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa and Chaitanya and in social construction with Raghunandan and Vidyaranya. It is to rest in art and poetry either in a blank and uncreative void or in a vain and lifeless repetition of beautiful but spent forms and motives. It is to cling to social forms that are crumbling and will continue to crumble in spite of our efforts and risk to be crushed in their collapse.

The objection to any large change — for a large and bold change is needed and no peddling will serve our purpose — can be given a plausible turn only if we rest it on the contention that the forms of a culture are the right rhythm of its spirit and in breaking the rhythm we may expel the spirit and dissipate the harmony for ever. Yes, but though the Spirit is eternal in its essence and in the fundamental principles of its harmony immutable, the actual rhythm of its self-expression in form is ever mutable. Immutable in its being and in the powers of its being but richly mutable in life, that is the very nature of the spirit's manifested existence. And we have to see too whether the actual rhythm of the moment is still a harmony or whether it has not become in the hands of an inferior and ignorant orchestra a discord and no longer expresses rightly or sufficiently the ancient spirit. To recognise defect in the form is not to deny the inherent spirit; it is rather the condition for moving onward to a greater future amplitude, a more perfect realisation, a happier outflow of the Truth we harbour. Whether we shall actually find a greater expression than the past gave us, depends on our own selves, on our capacity of response to the eternal Power and Wisdom and the illumination of the Shakti within us and on our skill in works, the skill that comes by unity with the eternal spirit we are in the measure of our light labouring to express; *yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*.

This from the standpoint of Indian culture, and that must be always for us the first consideration and the intrinsic standpoint. But there is also the standpoint of the pressure of the Time Spirit upon us. For this too is the action of the universal Shakti and cannot be ignored, held at arm's length or forbidden entrance. Here too the policy of new creation imposes itself as the true and only effective way. Even if to stand still and stiff within our well-defended gates were desirable, it is no longer possible. We can no longer take our single station apart in humanity, isolated like a solitary island in the desert ocean, neither going forth nor allowing to enter in, — if indeed we ever did it. For good or for ill the world is with us; the flood of modern ideas and forces are pouring in and will take no denial. There are two ways of meeting them, either to offer a forlorn and hopeless resistance or to seize and subjugate them. If we offer only an inert or stubborn passive resistance, they will still come in on us, break down our defences where they are weakest, sap them where they are stiffer, and where they can do neither, steal in unknown or ill-apprehended by underground mine and tunnel. Entering unassimilated they will act as disruptive forces, and it will be only partly by outward attack, but much more by an inward explosion that this ancient Indian civilisation will be shattered to pieces. Ominous sparks are already beginning to run about which nobody knows how to extinguish, and if we could extinguish them, we should be no better off, for we should yet have to deal with the source from which they are starting. Even the most rigid defenders of the present in the name of the past show in their every word how strongly they have been affected by new ways of thinking. Many if not most are calling passionately, calling inevitably for innovations in certain fields, changes European in spirit and method which, once admitted without some radical assimilation and Indianisation, will end by breaking up the whole social structure they think they are defending. That arises from confusion of thought and an incapacity of power. Because we are unable to think and create in certain fields, we are obliged to borrow without assimilation or with only an illusory pretence of assimilation. Because we cannot see the whole sense of what we are doing from a high inner and commanding point of vision, we are busy bringing together disparates without any saving reconciliation. A slow combustion and swift explosion are likely to be the end of our efforts.

Aggressive defence implies a new creation from this inner and commanding vision and while it demands a bringing of what we have to a more expressive force of form, it must allow also an effective assimilation of whatever is useful to our new life and can be made harmonious with our spirit. Battle, shock and struggle themselves are no vain destruction; they are a violent cover for Time’s great interchanges. Even the most successful victor receives much from the vanquished and if sometimes he appropriates it, as often it takes him prisoner. The Western attack is not confined to a breaking down of the forms of Eastern culture; there is at the same time a large, subtle and silent appropriation of much that is valuable in the East for the enrichment of occidental culture. Therefore to bring forward the glories of our past and scatter on Europe and America as much of its treasures as they will receive, will not save us. That liberality will enrich and strengthen our cultural assailants, but for us it will only serve to give a self-confidence which will be useless and even misleading if it is not made a force of will for a greater creation. What we have to do is to front the attack with new and more powerful formations which will not only throw it back, but even, where that is possible and helpful to the race, carry the war into the assailant’s country. At the same time we must take by a strong creative assimilation whatever answers to our own needs and responds to the Indian spirit. In certain directions, as yet all too few, we have begun both these movements. In others we have simply created an unintelligent mixture or else have taken and are still taking over rash, crude and undigested borrowings. Imitation, a rough and haphazard borrowing of the assailant’s engines and methods may be temporarily useful, but by itself it is only another way of submitting to conquest. A stark appropriation is not sufficient; successful assimilation to the Indian spirit is the needed movement. The problem is one of immense difficulty and stupendous in its proportions and we have not yet approached it with wisdom and insight. All the more pressing is the need to awaken to the situation and meet it with original thinking and a conscious action wise and powerful in insight and sure in process. A mastering and helpful assimilation of new stuff into an eternal body has always been in the past a peculiar power of the genius of India.

"Is India Civilised?" – 3

BUT THERE is yet another point of view from which the challenge put in front of us ceases to be an issue crudely and provokingly phrased in a conflict of cultures. Instead it presents itself as a problem with a deep significance; it becomes a thought-provoking suggestion that affects not only ours but all civilisations still in existence.

We can reply on the cultural issue from the view-point of the past and the valuation of different cultures as acquired contributions to the growth of the human race, that Indian civilisation has been the form and expression of a culture as great as any of the historic civilisations of mankind, great in religion, great in philosophy, great in science, great in thought of many kinds, great in literature, art and poetry, great in the organisation of society and politics, great in craft and trade and commerce. There have been dark spots, positive imperfections, heavy shortcomings; what civilisation has been perfect, which has not had its deep stains and cruel abysses? There have been considerable lacunae, many blind alleys, much uncultured or ill-cultured ground: what civilisation has been without its unfilled parts, its negative aspects? But our ancient civilisation can survive the severest comparisons of either ancient or mediaeval times. More high-reaching, subtle, many-sided, curious and profound than the Greek, more noble and humane than the Roman, more large and spiritual than the old Egyptian, more vast and original than any other Asiatic civilisation, more intellectual than the European prior to the eighteenth century, possessing all that these had and more, it was the most powerful, self-possessed, stimulating and wide in influence of all past human cultures.

And if we look from the view-point of the present and the fruitful workings of the progressive Time-Spirit, we can say that even here in spite of our downfall all is not on the debit side. Many of the forms of our civilisation have become inapt and effete and others stand in need of radical change and renovation. But that can be said equally well of European culture; for all its recently acquired progressiveness and habit of more rapid self-adaptation, large parts of it are already rotten and out of date. In spite of all drawbacks and in spite of downfall the spirit of Indian culture, its central ideas, its best ideals have still their message for humanity and not for India alone. And we in India hold that they are capable of developing out of themselves by contact with new need and idea as good and better solutions of the problems before us than those which are offered to us secondhand from Western sources. But besides the comparisons of the past and the needs of the present there is too a view-point of the ideal future. There are the farther goals towards which humanity is moving, — and the present is only a crude aspiration towards them and the immediate future we now see in hope and strive to bring about in form, only its crude preparatory stage. There is an unrealised standard of the ideas which to the mind of the moment are figments of Utopia, but may become to a more developed humanity the commonplaces of their daily environment, the familiar things of the present which they have to overpass. How stands Indian civilisation with regard to this yet unrealised future of the race? Are its master ideas and dominant powers guiding lights or helping forces towards it or do they end in themselves with no vistas on the evolutionary potentialities of the earth's coming ages?

The very idea of progress is an illusion to some minds; for they imagine that the race moves constantly in a circle. Or even their view is that greatness more often than not is to be found in the past and that the line of our movement is a curve of deterioration, a downward lapse. But that is an illusion created when we look too much upon the highlights of the past and forget its shadows or concentrate too much on the dark spaces of the present and ignore its powers of light and its aspects of happier promise. It is created too by a mistaken deduction from the phenomenon of an uneven progress. For Nature effects her evolution through a rhythm of advance and relapse, day and night, waking and sleep; there is a temporary pushing of certain results at the expense of others not less desirable for perfection and to a superficial eye there may seem to be a relapse even in our advance. Progress admittedly does not march on securely in a straight line like a man sure of his familiar way or an army covering an unimpeded terrain or well-mapped unoccupied spaces. Human progress is very much an adventure through the unknown, an unknown full of surprises and baffling obstacles; it stumbles often, it misses its way at many points, it cedes here in order to gain there, it retraces its steps frequently in order to get more widely forward. The present does not always compare favourably with the past; even when it is more advanced in the mass, it may still be inferior in certain directions important to our inner or our outer welfare. But earth does move forward after all, *eppur si muove*. Even in failure there is a preparation for success: our nights carry in them the secret of a greater dawn. This is a frequent experience in our individual progress, but the human collectivity also moves in much the same manner. The question is whither are we marching or what are the true routes and harbours of our voyage.

Western civilisation is proud of its successful modernism. But there is much that it has lost in the eagerness of its gains and much which men of old strove towards that it has not even attempted to accomplish. There is much too that it has wilfully flung aside in impatience or scorn to its own great loss, to the injury of its life, to the imperfection of its culture. An ancient Greek of the time of Pericles or the philosophers suddenly transported in time to this century would be astonished by the immense gains of the intellect and the expansion of the mind, the modern many-sidedness of the reason and inexhaustible habit of inquiry, the power of endless generalisation and precise detail. He would admire without reserve the miraculous growth of science and its giant discoveries, the abundant power, richness and minuteness of its instrumentation, the wonder-working force of its inventive genius. He would be overcome and stupefied rather than surprised and charmed by the enormous stir and pulsation of modern life. But at the same time he would draw back repelled from its unashamed mass of ugliness and vulgarity, its unchastened external utilitarianism, its vitalistic riot and the morbid exaggeration and unsoundness of many of its growths. He would see in it much ill-disguised evidence of the uneliminated survival of the triumphant barbarian. If he recognised its intellectuality and the scrupulous application of thought and scientific reason to the machinery of life, he would miss in it his own later attempt at the clear and noble application of the ideal reason to the inner life of the mind and the soul. He would find that in this civilisation beauty had become an exotic and the shining ideal mind in some fields a debased and exploited slave and in others a neglected stranger. As for the great spiritual seekers of the past, they would experience in all this huge activity of the intellect and the life the sense of an aching void. A feeling of its illusion and unreality because that which is greatest in man and raises him beyond himself had been neglected, would oppress them at every step. The discovery of the laws of physical Nature would not compensate in their eyes for the comparative decline — for a long time it was the almost absolute cessation — of a greater seeking and finding, the discovery of the freedom of the spirit.

But an unbiassed view will prefer to regard this age of civilisation as an evolutionary stage, an imperfect but important turn of the human advance. It is then possible to see that great gains have been made which are of the utmost value to an ultimate perfection, even if they have been made at a great price. There is not only a greater generalisation of knowledge and more thorough use of intellectual power and activity in multiple fields. There is not only the advance of Science and its application to the conquest of our environment, an immense apparatus of means, vast utilisations, endless minute conveniences, an irresistible machinery, a tireless exploitation of forces. There is too a certain development of powerful if not high-pitched ideals and there is an attempt, however external and therefore imperfect, to bring them to bear upon the working of human society as a whole. Much has been diminished or lost, but it can be recovered, eventually, if not with ease. Once restored to its true movement, the inner life of man will find that it has gained in materials, in power of plasticity, in a new kind of depth and wideness. And we shall have acquired a salutary habit of many-sided thoroughness and a sincere endeavour to shape the outer collective life into an adequate image of our highest ideals. Temporary diminutions will not count before the greater inner expansion that is likely to succeed this age of external turmoil and outward-looking endeavour.

If on the other hand an ancient Indian of the time of the Upanishads, the Buddhist period or the later classical age were to be set down in modern India and note that larger part of its life which belongs to the age of decline, he would experience a much more depressing sensation, the sense of a national, a cultural debacle, a fall from the highest summits to discouragingly low levels. He might well ask himself what this degenerate posterity had done with the mighty civilisation of the past. He would wonder how with so much to inspire, to elevate, to spur them to yet greater accomplishment and self-exceeding, they could have lapsed into this impotent and inert confusion and, instead of developing the high motives of Indian culture to yet deeper and wider issues, allowed them to overload themselves with ugly accretions, to rust, to rot, almost to perish. He would see his race clinging to forms and shells and rags of the past and missing nine-tenths of its nobler values. He would compare the spiritual light and energy of the heroic ages of the Upanishads and the philosophies with the later inertia or small and broken fragmentarily derivative activity of our philosophic thought. After the intellectual curiosity, the scientific development, the creative literary and artistic greatness, the noble fecundity of the classical age he would be amazed by the extent of a later degeneracy, its mental poverty, immobility, static repetition, the comparative feebleness of the creative intuition, the long sterility of art, the cessation of science. He would deplore a prone descent to ignorance, a failing of the old powerful will and tapasya, almost a volitional impotence. In place of the simpler and more spiritually rational order of old times he would find a bewildering chaotic disorganised organisation of things without centre and without any large harmonising idea. He would find not a true social order but a half arrested, half hastening putrescence. In place of the great adaptable civilisation which assimilated with power and was able to return tenfold for what it received, he would meet a helplessness that bore passively or only with a few ineffectual galvanic reactions the forces of the outside world and the stress of adverse circumstance. At one time he would see that there had been even a loss of faith and self-confidence so considerable as to tempt the intellectuals of the nation to scrap the ancient spirit and ideals for an alien and imported culture. He would note indeed the beginning of a change, but might perhaps doubt how deep it had gone or whether it was powerful enough to save, forceful enough to upheave the whole nation from its cherished torpor and weakness, enlightened enough to guide a new and robust creative activity towards the building of new significant forms for the ancient spirit.

Here too a better understanding points to hope rather than to the flat despondency suggested by a too hasty surface glance. This last age of Indian history is an example of the constant local succession of night even to the most long and brilliant day in the evolution of the race. But it was a night filled at first with many and brilliant constellations and even at its thickest and worst it was the darkness of Kalidasa's *viceya-tārakā prabhāta-kalpeva śarvarī*, "night preparing for dawn, with a few just decipherable stars." Even in the decline all was not loss; there were needed developments, there were spiritual and other gains of the greatest importance for the future. If the high spiritualised mind and stupendous force of spiritual will, *tapasyā*, that characterised ancient India were less in evidence, there were new gains of spiritual emotion and sensitiveness to spiritual impulse on the lower planes of consciousness, that had been lacking before. Architecture, literature, painting, sculpture lost the grandeur, power, nobility of old, but evoked other powers and motives full of delicacy, vividness and grace. There was a descent from the heights to the lower levels, but a descent that gathered riches on its way and was needed for the fullness of spiritual discovery and experience. And in the worst period of decline and failure the spirit was not dead in India, but only torpid, concealed and shackled; now emerging in answer to a pressure of constant awakening shocks for a strong self-liberation it finds that its sleep was a preparation of new potentialities behind the veil of that slumber. The decline of our past culture may even be regarded as a needed waning and dying of old forms to make way not only for a new, but, if we will that it should be so, a greater and more perfect creation.

For after all it is the will in the being that gives to circumstances their value, and often an unexpected value; the hue of apparent actuality is a misleading indicator. If the will in a race or civilisation is towards death, if it clings to the lassitude of decay and the laissez-faire of the moribund or even in strength insists blindly upon the propensities that lead to destruction or if it cherishes only the powers of dead Time and puts away from it the powers of the future, if it prefers life that was to life that will be, nothing, not even abundant strength and resources and intelligence, not even many calls to live and constantly offered opportunities will save it from an inevitable disintegration or collapse. But if there comes to it a strong faith in itself and a robust will to live, if it is open to the things that shall come, willing to seize on the future and what it offers and strong to compel it where it seems adverse, it can draw from adversity and defeat a force of invincible victory and rise from apparent helplessness and decay in a mighty flame of renovation to the light of a more splendid life. This is what Indian civilisation is now rearising to do as it has always done in the eternal strength of its spirit.

The greatness of the ideals of the past is a promise of greater ideals for the future. A continual expansion of what stood behind past endeavour and capacity is the one abiding justification of a living culture. But it follows that civilisation and barbarism are words of a quite relative significance. For from the view of the evolutionary future European and Indian civilisation at their best have only been half achievements, infant dawns pointing to the mature sunlight that is to come. Neither

Europe nor India nor any race, country or continent of mankind has ever been fully civilised from this point of view; none has grasped the whole secret of a true and perfect human living, none has applied with an entire insight or a perfectly vigilant sincerity even the little they were able to achieve. If we define civilisation as a harmony of spirit, mind and body, where has that harmony been entire or altogether real? Where have there not been glaring deficiencies and painful discords? Where has the whole secret of the harmony been altogether grasped in all its parts or the complete music of life evolved into the triumphant ease of a satisfying, durable and steadily mounting concord? Not only are there everywhere positive, ugly, even "hideous" blots on the life of man, but much that we now accept with equanimity, much in which we take pride, may well be regarded by a future humanity as barbarism or at least as semi-barbarous and immature. The achievements that we regard as ideal, will be condemned as a self-satisfied imperfection blind to its own errors; the ideas that we vaunt as enlightenment will appear as a demi-light or a darkness. Not only will many forms of our life that claim to be ancient or even eternal, as if that could be said of any form of things, fail and disappear; the subjective shapes given to our best principles and ideals will perhaps claim from the future at best an understanding indulgence. There is little that will not have to undergo expansion and mutation, change perhaps beyond recognition or accept to be modified in a new synthesis. In the end the coming ages may look on Europe and Asia of today much as we look on savage tribes or primitive peoples. And this view from the future, if we can get it, is undoubtedly the most illuminating and dynamic standpoint from which we can judge our present; but it does not invalidate our comparative appreciation of past and extant cultures.

For this past and present are creating the greater steps of that future and much of it will survive even in that which supplants it. There is behind our imperfect cultural figures a permanent spirit to which we must cling and which will remain permanent even hereafter; there are certain fundamental motives or essential idea-forces which cannot be thrown aside, because they are part of the vital principle of our being and of the aim of Nature in us, our *svadharma*. But these motives, these idea-forces are, whether for nation or for humanity as a whole, few and simple in their essence and capable of an application always varying and progressive. The rest belongs to the less internal layers of our being and must undergo the changing pressure and satisfy the forward-moving demands of the Time-Spirit. There is this permanent spirit in things and there is this persistent swadharma or law of our nature; but there is too a less binding system of laws of successive formulation, — rhythms of the spirit, forms, turns, habits of the nature, and these endure the mutations of the ages, *yugadharma*. The race must obey this double principle of persistence and mutation or bear the penalty of a decay and deterioration that may attaint even its living centre.

Certainly we must repel with vigour every disintegrating or injurious attack; but it is much more important to form our own true and independent view of our own past achievement, present position and future possibilities, — what we were, what we are and what we may be. In our past we must distinguish all that was great, essential, elevating, vitalising, illuminating, victorious, effective. And in that again we must distinguish what was close to the permanent, essential spirit and the persistent law of our cultural being and separate from it what was temporary and transiently formulative. For all that was great in the past cannot be preserved as it was or repeated for ever; there are new needs, there are other vistas before us. But we have to distinguish too what was deficient, ill-grasped, imperfectly formulated or only suited to the limiting needs of the age or unfavourable circumstances. For it is quite idle to pretend that all in the past, even at its greatest, was entirely admirable and in its kind the highest consummate achievement of the human mind and spirit. Afterwards we have to make a comparison of this past with our present and to understand the causes of our decline and seek the remedy of our shortcomings and ailments. Our sense of the greatness of our past must not be made a fatally hypnotising lure to inertia; it should be rather an inspiration to renewed and greater achievement. But in our criticism of the present we must not be one-sided or condemn with a foolish impartiality all that we are or have done. Neither flattering or glossing over our downfall nor fouling our nest to win the applause of the stranger, we have to note our actual weakness and its roots, but to fix too our eyes with a still firmer attention on our elements of strength, our abiding potentialities, our dynamic impulses of self-renewal.

A second comparison has to be made between the West and India. In the past of Europe and the past of India we can observe with an unbiassed mind the successes of the West, the gifts it brought to humanity, but also its large gaps, striking deficiencies, terrible and even "hideous" vices and failures. On the other balance we have to cast ancient and mediaeval India's achievements and failures. Here we shall find that there is little for which we need lower our heads before Europe and much in which we rise well and sometimes immeasurably above her. But we have to scrutinise next the present of the West in its strong success, vitality, conquering insolence. What has been great in it we shall allow, but take deep note too of its defects, stumblings and dangers. And with this dangerous greatness we must compare the present of India, her downfall and its causes, her velleities of revival, her elements that still make for superiority now and in the future. Let us see and take account of all that we must inevitably receive from the West and consider how we can assimilate it to our own spirit and ideals. But let us see too what founts of native power there are in ourselves from which we can draw deeper, more vital and fresher streams of the power of life than from anything the West can offer. For that will help us more than occidental forms and motives, because it will be more natural to us, more stimulating to our idiosyncrasy of nature, more packed with creative suggestions, more easily taken up and completely followed in power of practice.

But far more helpful than any of these necessary comparisons will be the forward look from our past and present towards our own and not any foreign ideal of the future. For it is our evolutionary push towards the future that will give to our past and present their true value and significance. India's nature, her mission, the work that she has to do, her part in the earth's destiny, the peculiar power for which she stands is written there in her past history and is the secret purpose behind her present sufferings and ordeals. A reshaping of the forms of our spirit will have to take place; but it is the spirit itself behind past forms that we have to disengage and preserve and to give to it new and powerful thought-significances, culture-values, a new instrumentation, greater figures. And so long as we recognise these essential things and are faithful to their spirit, it will not hurt us to make even the most drastic mental or physical adaptations and the most extreme cultural and social changes. But these changes themselves must be cast in the spirit and mould of India and not in any other, not in the spirit of America or Europe, not in the mould of Japan or Russia. We must recognise the great gulf between what we are and what we may and ought to strive to be. But this we must do not in any spirit of discouragement or denial of ourselves and the truth of our spirit, but in order to measure the advance we have to make. For we have to find its true lines and to find in ourselves the aspiration and inspiration, the fire and the force to conceive them and to execute.

An original truth-seeking thought is needed if we are to take this stand and make this movement, a strong and courageous intuition, an unfailing spiritual and intellectual rectitude. The courage to defend our culture against ignorant occidental criticism and to maintain it against the gigantic modern pressure comes first, but with it there must be the courage to admit not from any European standpoint but from our own outlook the errors of our culture. Apart from all phenomena of decline or deterioration, we should recognise without any sophistical denial those things in our creeds of life and social institutions which are in themselves mistaken and some of them indefensible, things weakening to our national life, degrading to our civilisation, dishonouring to our culture. A flagrant example can be found in the treatment of our outcastes. There are those who would excuse it as an unavoidable error in the circumstances of the past; there are others who contend that it was the best possible solution then available. There are still others who would justify it and, with whatever modifications, prolong it as necessary to our social synthesis. The contention is highly disputable. The excuse was there, but it is no justification for continuance. A solution which condemns by segregation one sixth of the nation to permanent ignominy, continued filth, uncleanliness of the inner and outer life and a brutal animal existence instead of lifting them out of it is no solution but rather an acceptance of weakness and a constant wound to the social body and to its collective spiritual, intellectual, moral and material welfare. A social synthesis which can only live by making a permanent rule of the degradation of our fellowmen and countrymen stands condemned and foredoomed to decay and disturbance. The evil effects may be kept under for a long time and work only by the subtler unobserved action of the law of Karma; but once the light of Truth is let in on these dark spots, to perpetuate them is to maintain a seed of disruption and ruin our chances of eventual survival.

Again, we have to look on our cultural ideas and our social forms and see where they have lost their ancient spirit or real significance. Many of them are now a fiction and no longer in accordance with the ideas they assume or with the facts of life. Others even if good in themselves or else beneficent in their own time are no longer sufficient for our growth. All these must either be transformed or discarded and truer ideas and better formulations must be found in their place. The new turn we must give them will not always be a return upon their old significance. The new dynamic truths we have to discover need not be parked within the limited truth of a past ideal. On our past and present ideals we have to turn the searchlight of the spirit and see whether they have not to be surpassed or enlarged or brought into consonance with new wider ideals. All we do or create must be consistent with the abiding spirit of India, but framed to fit into a greater harmonised rhythm and plastic to the call of a more luminous future. If faith in ourselves and fidelity to the spirit of our culture are the first requisites of a continued and vigorous life, a recognition of greater possibilities is a condition not less indispensable. There cannot be a healthy and victorious survival if we make of the past a fetish instead of an inspiring impulse.

The spirit and ideals of our civilisation need no defence, for in their best parts and in their essence they were of eternal value. India's internal and individual seeking of them was earnest, powerful, effective. But the application in the collective life of society was subjected to serious reserves. Never sufficiently bold and thoroughgoing, it became more and more limited and halting when the life-force declined in her peoples. This defect, this gulf between ideal and collective practice, has pursued all human living and was not peculiar to India; but the dissonance became especially marked with the lapse of time and it put at last on our society a growing stamp of weakness and failure. There was a large effort in the beginning at some kind of synthesis between the inner ideal and the outer life; but a static regulation of society was its latter end. An underlying principle of spiritual idealism, an elusive unity and fixed helpful forms of mutuality remained always there, but also an increasing element of strict bondage and minute division and fissiparous complexity in the social mass. The great Vedantic ideals of freedom, unity and the godhead in man were left to the inner spiritual effort of individuals. The power of expansion and assimilation diminished and when powerful and aggressive forces broke in from outside, Islam, Europe, the later Hindu society was content with an imprisoned and static self-preservation, a mere permission to live. The form of living became more and more narrow and it endured a continually restricted assertion of its ancient spirit. Duration, survival was achieved, but not in the end a really secure and vital duration, not a great, robust and victorious survival.

And now survival itself has become impossible without expansion. If we are to live at all, we must resume India's great interrupted endeavour; we must take up boldly and execute thoroughly in the individual and in the society, in the spiritual and in the mundane life, in philosophy and religion, in art and literature, in thought, in political and economic and social formulation the full and unlimited sense of her highest spirit and knowledge. And if we do that, we shall find that the best of what comes to us draped in occidental forms, is already implied in our own ancient wisdom and has there a greater spirit behind it, a profounder truth and self-knowledge and the capacity of a will to nobler and more ideal formations. Only we need to work out thoroughly in life what we have always known in the spirit. There and nowhere else lies the secret of the needed harmony between the essential meaning of our past culture and the environmental requirements of our future.

That view opens out a prospect beyond the battle of cultures which is the immediate dangerous aspect of the meeting of East and West. The Spirit in man has one aim before it in all mankind; but different continents or peoples approach it from different sides, with different formulations and in a differing spirit. Not recognising the underlying unity of the ultimate divine motive, they give battle to each other and claim that theirs alone is the way for mankind. The one real and perfect civilisation is the one in which they happen to be born, all the rest must perish or go under. But the real and perfect civilisation yet waits to be discovered; for the life of mankind is still nine tenths of barbarism to one tenth of culture. The European mind gives the first place to the principle of growth by struggle; it is by struggle that it arrives at some kind of concert. But this concert is itself hardly more than an organisation for growth by competition, aggression and farther battle. It is a peace that is constantly breaking, even within itself, into a fresh strife of principles, ideas, interests, races, classes. It is an organisation precarious at its base and in its centre because it is founded on half-truths that deteriorate into whole falsehoods; but it is still or has been till now vigorous in constant achievement and able to grow powerfully and to devour and assimilate. Indian culture proceeded on the principle of a concert that strove to find its base in a unity and reached out again towards some greater oneness. Its aim was a lasting organisation that would minimise or even eliminate the principle of struggle. But it ended by achieving peace and stable arrangement through exclusion, fragmentation and immobility of status; it drew a magic circle of safety and shut itself up in it for good.

In the end it lost its force of aggression, weakened its power of assimilation and decayed within its barriers. A static and limited concert, not always enlarging itself, not plastic becomes in our human state of imperfection a prison or a sleeping-chamber. Concert cannot be anything but imperfect and provisional in its form and can only preserve its vitality and fulfil its ultimate aim if it constantly adapts, expands, progresses. Its lesser unities must widen towards a broader and more comprehensive and above all a more real and spiritual oneness. In the larger statement of our culture and civilisation that we have now to achieve, a greater outward expression of spiritual and psychological oneness, but with a diversity which the mechanical method of Europe does not tolerate, will surely be one leading motive. A concert, a unity with the rest of mankind, in which we shall maintain our spiritual and our outer independence will be another line of our endeavour. But what now appears as a struggle may well be the first necessary step, before we can formulate that unity of mankind which the West sees only in idea, but cannot achieve because it does not possess its spirit. Therefore Europe labours to establish unity by accommodation of conflicting interests and the force of mechanical institutions; but so attempted, it will either not be founded at all or will be founded on sand. Meanwhile she wishes to blot out every other culture, as if hers were the only truth or all the truth of life and there were no such thing as truth of the spirit. India, the ancient possessor of the truth of the spirit, must resist that arrogant claim and aggression and affirm her own deeper truths in spite of heavy odds and against all comers. For in its preservation lies the only hope that mankind instead of marching to a new cataclysm and primitive beginning with a constant repetition of the old blind cycles will at last emerge into the light and accomplish the drive forward which will bring the terrestrial evolution to its next step of ascent in the progressive manifestation of the Spirit.

A Defence of Indian Culture

I

A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture

WHEN we try to appreciate a culture, and when that culture is the one in which we have grown up or from which we draw our governing ideals and are likely from overpartiality to minimise its deficiencies or from overfamiliarity to miss aspects or values of it which would strike an unaccustomed eye, it is always useful as well as interesting to know how others see it. It will not move us to change our view-point for theirs; but we can get fresh light from a study of this kind and help our self-introspection. But there are different ways of seeing a foreign civilisation and culture. There is the eye of sympathy and intuition and a close appreciative self-identification: that gives us work like Sister Nivedita's *Web of Indian Life* or Mr. Fielding's book on Burma or Sir John Woodroffe's studies of Tantra. These are attempts to push aside all concealing veils and reveal the soul of a people. It may well be that they do not give us all the hard outward fact, but we are enlightened of something deeper which has its greater reality; we get not the thing as it is in the deficiencies of life, but its ideal meaning. The soul, the essential spirit is one thing, the forms taken in this difficult human actuality are another and are often imperfect or perverted; neither can be neglected if we would have a total vision. Then there is the eye of the discerning and dispassionate critic who tries to see the thing as it is in its intention and actuality, apportion the light and shade, get the balance of merit and defect, success and failure, mark off that which evokes appreciative sympathy from that which calls for critical censure. We may not always agree; the standpoint is different and by its externality, by failure of intuition and self-identification it may miss things that are essential or may not get the whole meaning of that which it praises or condemns: still we profit, we can add to our sense of shade and tone or correct our own previous judgment. Finally there is the eye of the hostile critic, convinced of the inferiority of the culture in question, who gives plainly and honestly without deliberate overcharging what he conceives to be sound reason for his judgment. That too has its use for us; hostile criticism of this kind is good for the soul and the intellect, provided we do not allow ourselves to be afflicted, beaten down or shaken from the upholding centre of our living faith and action. Most things in our human world are imperfect and it is sometimes well to get a strong view of our imperfections. Or, if nothing else, we can at least learn to appreciate opposite standpoints and get at the source of the opposition; wisdom, insight and sympathy grow by such comparisons.

But hostile criticism to be of any sound value must be criticism, not slander and false witness, not vitriol-throwing: it must state the facts without distortion, preserve consistent standards of judgment, observe a certain effort at justice, sanity, measure. Mr. William Archer's well-known book on India, which on account of its very demerits I have taken as the type of the characteristic Western or anti-Indian regard on our culture, was certainly not of this character. It is not only that here we have a wholesale and unsparing condemnation, a picture all shade and no light: that is a recommendation, for Mr. Archer's professed object was to challenge the enthusiastic canonisation of Indian culture by its admirers in the character of a devil's advocate whose business is to find out and state in its strongest terms everything that can be said against the claim. And for us too it is useful to have before us an attack which covers the whole field so that we may see in one comprehensive view the entire enemy case against our culture. But there are three vitiating elements in his statement. First, it had an ulterior, a political object; it started with the underlying idea that India must be proved altogether barbarous in order to destroy or damage her case for self-government. That sort of extraneous motive at once puts his whole pleading out of court; for it means a constant deliberate distortion in order to serve a material interest, foreign altogether to the disinterested intellectual objects of cultural comparison and criticism.

In fact this book is not criticism; it is literary or rather journalistic pugilism. There too it is of a peculiar kind; it is a furious sparring at a lay figure of India which is knocked down at pleasure through a long and exuberant dance of misstatement and exaggeration in the hope of convincing an ignorant audience that the performer has prostrated a living adversary. Sanity, justice, measure are things altogether at a discount: a show-off of the appearance of staggering and irresistible blows is the object held in view, and for that anything comes in handy, — the facts are altogether misstated or clumsily caricatured, the most extraordinary and unfounded suggestions advanced with an air of obviousness, the most illogical inconsistencies permitted if an apparent point can be scored. All this is not the occasional freak of a well-informed critic suffering from a fit of mental biliousness and impelled to work it off by an extravagant intellectual exercise, an irresponsible fantasia or a hostile war-dance around a subject with which he is not in sympathy. That is a kind of extravagance, which is sometimes permissible and may be interesting and amusing. It is a sweet and pleasant thing, cries the Roman poet, to play the fool in place and right season, *dulce est desipere in loco*. But Mr. Archer's constant departures into irrational extravagance are not by any means *in loco*. We discover very soon, — in addition to his illegitimate motive and his deliberate unfairness this is a third and worst cardinal defect, — that for the most part he knew absolutely nothing about the things on which he was passing his confident damnatory judgments. What he has done is to collect together in his mind all the unfavourable comments he had read about India, eke them out with casual impressions of his own and advance this unwholesome and unsubstantial compound as his original production, although his one genuine and native contribution is the cheery cocksureness of his secondhand opinions. The book is a journalistic fake, not an honest critical production.

The writer was evidently no authority on metaphysics, which he despises as a misuse of the human mind; yet he lays down the law at length about the values of Indian philosophy. He was a rationalist to whom religion is an error, a psychological disease, a sin against reason; yet he adjudges here between the comparative claims of religions, assigning a *proxime accessit* to Christianity, mainly, it seems, because Christians do not seriously believe in their own religion, — let not the reader laugh, the book advances quite seriously this amazing reason, — and bestowing the wooden spoon on Hinduism. He admits his incompetence to speak about music, yet that has not prevented him from relegating Indian music to a position of hopeless inferiority. His judgment on art and architecture is of the narrowest kind; but he is generously liberal of his decisive depreciations. In drama and literature one would expect from him better things; but the astonishing superficiality of his standards and his arguments here leaves one wondering how in the world he got his reputation as a dramatic and literary critic: one concludes that either he must have used a very different method in dealing with European literature or else it is very easy to get a reputation of this kind in England. An ill-informed misrepresentation of facts, a light-hearted temerity of judgment on things he has not cared to study constitute this critic's title to write on Indian culture and dismiss it authoritatively as a mass of barbarism.

It is not then for a well-informed outside view or even an instructive adverse criticism of Indian civilisation that I have turned to Mr. William Archer. In the end it is only those who possess a culture who can judge the intrinsic value of its productions, because they alone can enter entirely into its spirit. To the foreign critic we can only go for help in forming a comparative judgment, — which too is indispensable. But if for any reason we had to depend on a foreign judgment for the definitive view of these things, it is evident that in each field it is to men who can speak with some authority that we must turn. It matters very little to me what Mr. Archer or Dr. Gough or Sir John Woodroffe's unnamed English professor may say about Indian philosophy; it is enough for me to know what Emerson or Schopenhauer or Nietzsche, three entirely different minds of the greatest power in this field, or what thinkers like Cousin and Schlegel have to say about it or to mark the increasing influence of some of its conceptions, the great parallel lines of thought in earlier European thinking and the confirmations of ancient Indian metaphysics and psychology which are the results of the most modern research and inquiry. For religion I shall not go to Mr. Harold Begbie or any European atheist or rationalist for a judgment on our spirituality, but see rather what are the impressions of open-minded men of religious feeling and experience who can alone be judges, a spiritual and religious thinker such as Tolstoy, for instance. Or I may study even, allowing for an inevitable bias, what the more cultured Christian missionary has to say about a religion which he can no longer dismiss as a barbarous superstition. In art I shall not turn to the opinion of the average European who knows nothing of the spirit, meaning or technique of Indian architecture, painting and sculpture. For the first I shall consult some recognised authority like Fergusson; for the others if critics like Mr. Havell are to be dismissed as partisans, I can at least learn something from Okakura or Mr. Laurence Binyon. In literature I shall be at a loss, for I cannot remember that any Western writer of genius or high reputation as a critic has had any first-hand knowledge of Sanskrit literature or of the Prakritic tongues, and a judgment founded on translations can only deal with the substance, — and even that in most translations of Indian work is only the dead substance with the whole breath of life gone out of it. Still even here Goethe's well-known epigram on the Shakuntala will be enough by itself to show me that all Indian writing is not of a barbarous inferiority to European creation. And perhaps we may find a scholar here and there with some literary taste and judgment, not a too common combination, who will be of help to us. This sort of excursion will certainly not give us an entirely reliable scheme of values, but at any rate we shall be safer than in a resort to the great lowland clan of Goughs, Archers and Begbies.

If I still find it necessary or useful to notice these lucubrations, it is for quite another purpose. Even for that purpose all that Mr. Archer writes is not of utility; much of it is so irrational, inconsequent or unscrupulous in suggestion that one can only note and pass on. When for instance he assures his readers that Indian philosophers think that sitting cross-legged and contemplating one's own navel is the best way of ascertaining the truths of the universe and that their real object is an indolent immobility and to live upon the alms of the faithful, his object in thus describing one of the postures of abstracted meditation is to stamp the meditation itself in the eyes of ignorant English readers with the character of a bovine absurdity and a selfish laziness; that is an instance of his unscrupulousness which helps us to observe the kinks of his own rationalistic mind, but is useful for nothing else. When he denies that there is any real morality in Hinduism or affirms that it has never claimed moral teaching as one of its functions, statements which are the exact contrary of the facts, when he goes so far as to say that Hinduism is the character of the people and it indicates a melancholy proclivity towards *whatever* is monstrous and unwholesome, one can only conclude that truth-speaking is not one of the ethical virtues which Mr. William Archer thought it necessary to practise or at least that it need be no part of a rationalist's criticism of religion.

But no, after all Mr. Archer does throw a grudging tribute on the altar of truth; for he admits in the same breath that Hinduism talks much of righteousness and allows that there are in the Hindu writings many admirable ethical doctrines. But that only proves that Hindu philosophy is illogical, — the morality is there indeed, but it ought not to be; its presence does not suit Mr. Archer's thesis. Admire the logic, the rational consistency of this champion of rationalism! Mark that at the same time one of his objections to the Ramayana, admitted to be one of the Bibles of the Hindu people, is that its ideal characters, Rama and Sita, the effective patterns of the highest Indian manhood and womanhood, are much too virtuous for his taste. Rama is too saintly for human nature. I do not know in fact that Rama is more saintly than Christ or St. Francis, yet I had always thought they were within the pale of human nature; but perhaps this critic will reply that, if not beyond that pale, their excessive virtues are at least like the daily practice of the Hindu cult, — shall we say for example, scrupulous physical purity and personal cleanliness and the daily turning of the mind to God in worship and meditation, — "sufficient to place them beyond the pale of civilisation." For he tells us that Sita, the type of conjugal fidelity and chastity, is so excessive in her virtue "as to verge on immorality." Meaningless smart extravagance has reached its highest point when it can thus verge on the idiotic. I am as sorry to use the epithet as Mr. Archer to harp on Indian "barbarism", but there is really no help for it; "it expresses the essence of the situation." If all were of this character, — there is too much of it and it is deplorable, — a contemptuous silence would be the only possible reply. But fortunately Apollo does not always stretch his bow thus to the breaking-point; all Mr. Archer's shafts are not of this wildgoose flight. There is much in his writing that expresses crudely, but still with sufficient accuracy the feeling of recoil of the average occidental mind at its first view of the unique characteristics of Indian culture and that is a thing worth noting and sounding; it is necessary to understand it and find out its value.

This is the utility I wish to seize on; for it is an utility and even more. It is through the average mind that we get best at the bedrock of the psychological differences which divide from each other great blocks of our common humanity. The cultured mind tends to diminish the force of these prejudices or at least even in difference and opposition to develop points of similarity or of contact. In the average mentality we have a better chance of getting them in their crude strength and can appreciate their full force and bearing. Mr. Archer helps us here admirably. Not that we have not to clear away much rubbish to get at what we want. I should have preferred to deal with a manual of misunderstanding which had the same thoroughness of scope, but expressed itself with a more straightforward simplicity and less of vicious smartness and of superfluous ill-will; but none such is available. Let us take Mr. Archer then and dissect some of his prejudices to get at their inner psychology. We shall perhaps find that through all this unpleasant crudity we can arrive at the essence of a historic misunderstanding of continents. An exact understanding of it may even help us towards an approach to some kind of reconciliation.

II

A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture – 2

IT IS best to start with a precise idea of the species of critic from whom we are going to draw our estimate of oppositions. What we have before us are the ideas of an average and typical occidental mind on Indian culture, a man of sufficient education and wide reading, but no genius or exceptional capacity, rather an ordinary successful talent, no flexibility or broad sympathy of mind, but pronounced and rigid opinions which are backed up and given an appearance of weight by the habit of using to good effect a varied though not always sound information. This is in fact the mind and standpoint of an average Englishman of some ability formed in the habit of journalism. That is precisely the kind of thing we want in order to seize the nature of the antagonism which led Mr. Rudyard Kipling, — himself a super-journalist and "magnified non-natural" average man, the average lifted up, without ceasing to be itself, by the glare of a kind of crude and barbaric genius, — to affirm the eternal incompatibility of the East and the West. Let us see what strikes such a mentality as unique and abhorrent in the Indian mind and its culture: if we can put aside all sensitiveness of personal feeling and look dispassionately at this phenomenon, we shall find it an interesting and illuminative study.

A certain objection may be advanced against taking a rationalistic critic with a political bias, a mind belonging at best to the today which is already becoming yesterday, in this widely representative capacity. The misunderstanding of continents has been the result of a long-enduring and historic difference, and this book gives us only one phase of it which is of a very modern character. But it is in modern times, in an age of scientific and rationalistic enlightenment, that the difference has become most pronounced, the misunderstanding most aggressive and the sense of cultural incompatibility most conscious and self-revealing. An ancient Greek, full of disinterested intellectual curiosity and a flexible aesthetic appreciation, was in spite of his feeling of racial and cultural superiority to the barbarian much nearer to the Indian mind than a typical modern European. Not only could a Pythagoras or a philosopher of the Neo-platonist school, an Alexander or a Menander understand with a more ready sympathy the root ideas of Asiatic culture, but an average man of ability, a Megasthenes for instance, could be trusted to see and understand, though not inwardly and perfectly, yet in a sufficient measure. The mediaeval European, for all his militant Christianity and his prejudice against the infidel and paynim, yet resembled his opponent in many characteristic ways of seeing and feeling to an extent which is no longer possible to an average European mind, unless it has been imbued with the new ideas which are once more lessening the gulf between the continents. It was the rationalising of the occidental mind, the rationalising even of its religious ideas and sentiments, which made the gulf so wide as to appear unbridgeable. Our critic represents this increased hostility in an extreme form, a shape given to it by the unthinking free-thinker, the man who has not thought out originally these difficult problems, but imbibed his views from his cultural environment and the intellectual atmosphere of the period. He will exaggerate enormously the points of opposition, but by his very exaggeration he will make them more strikingly clear and intelligible. He will make up for his want of correct information and intelligent study by a certain sureness of instinct in his attack upon things alien to his own mental outlook.

It is this sureness of instinct which has led him to direct the real gravamen of his attack against Indian philosophy and religion. The culture of a people may be roughly described as the expression of a consciousness of life which formulates itself in three aspects. There is a side of thought, of ideal, of upward will and the soul's aspiration; there is a side of creative self-expression and appreciative aesthesis, intelligence and imagination; and there is a side of practical and outward formulation.

A people's philosophy and higher thinking give us its mind's purest, largest and most general formulation of its consciousness of life and its dynamic view of existence. Its religion formulates the most intense form of its upward will and the soul's aspirations towards the fulfilment of its highest ideal and impulse. Its art, poetry, literature provide for us the creative expression and impression of its intuition, imagination, vital turn and creative intelligence. Its society and politics provide in their forms an outward frame in which the more external life works out what it can of its inspiring ideal and of its special character and nature under the difficulties of the environment. We can see how much it has taken of the crude material of living, what it has done with it, how it has shaped as much of it as possible into some reflection of its guiding consciousness and deeper spirit. None of them express the whole secret spirit behind, but they derive from it their main ideas and their cultural character. Together they make up its soul, mind and body. In Indian civilisation philosophy and religion, philosophy made dynamic by religion, religion enlightened by philosophy have led, the rest follow as best they can. This is indeed its first distinctive character, which it shares with the more developed Asiatic peoples, but has carried to an extraordinary degree of thoroughgoing pervasiveness. When it is spoken of as a Brahminical civilisation, that is the real significance of the phrase. The phrase cannot truly imply any domination of sacerdotalism, though in some lower aspects of the culture the sacerdotal mind has been only too prominent; for the priest as such has had no hand in shaping the great lines of the culture. But it is true that its main motives have been shaped by philosophic thinkers and religious minds, not by any means all of them of Brahmin birth. The fact that a class has been developed whose business was to preserve the spiritual traditions, knowledge and sacred law of the race, — for this and not a mere priest trade was the proper occupation of the Brahmin, — and that this class could for thousands of years maintain in the greatest part, but not monopolise, the keeping of the national mind and conscience, and the direction of social principles, forms and manners, is only a characteristic indication. The fact behind is that Indian culture has been from the beginning and has remained a spiritual, an inward-looking religio-philosophical culture. Everything else in it has derived from that one central and original peculiarity or has been in some way dependent on it or subordinate to it; even external life has been subjected to the inward look of the spirit.

Our critic has felt the importance of this central point and directed upon it his most unsparing attack; in other quarters he may make concessions, allow attenuations, here he will make none. All here must be bad and harmful, or if not deleterious, then ineffective, by the very nature of the central ideas and motives, for any real good. This is a significant attitude. Of course there is the polemical motive. That which is claimed for the Indian mind and its civilisation is a high spirituality, high on all the summits of thought and religion, permeating art and literature and religious practice and social ideas and affecting even the ordinary man's attitude to life. If the claim is conceded, as it is conceded by all sympathetic and disinterested inquirers even when they do not accept the Indian view of life, then Indian culture stands, its civilisation has a right to live. More, it has a right even to throw a challenge to rationalistic modernism and say, "Attain first my level of spirituality before you claim to destroy and supersede me or call on me to modernise myself entirely in your sense. No matter if I have myself latterly fallen from my own heights or if my present forms cannot meet all the requirements of the future mind of humanity; I can reascend, the power is there in me. I may even be able to develop a spiritual modernism which will help you in your effort to exceed yourself and arrive at a larger harmony than any you have reached in the past or can dream of in the present." The hostile critic feels that he must deny this claim at its roots. He tries to prove Indian philosophy to be unspiritual and Indian religion to be an irrational animistic cult of monstrosity. In this effort which is an attempt to stand Truth on her head and force her to see facts upside down, he lands himself in a paradoxical absurdity and inconsistency which destroy his case by sheer overstatement. Still there arise even from this farrago two quite genuine issues. First, we can ask whether the spiritual and religio-philosophical view of life and the government of civilisation by its ideas and motives or the rationalistic and external view of life and the satisfaction of the vital being governed by the intellectual and practical reason give the best lead to mankind. And granting the value and power of a spiritual conception of life, we can ask whether the expression given to it by Indian culture is the best possible and the most helpful to the growth of humanity towards its highest level. These are the real questions at issue between this Asiatic or ancient mind and the European or modern intelligence.

The typical occidental mind, which prolongs still the mentality of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has been almost entirely fashioned by the second view; it has grown into the mould of the vitalistic rational idea. Its attitude to life has never been governed by a philosophic conception of existence except during a brief period of Graeco-Roman culture and then only in a small class of thinking and highly cultivated minds; always it is dominated by environmental necessity and the practical reason. It has left behind it too the ages in which spiritual and religious conceptions which invaded it from the East, strove to impose themselves on the vitalistic and rational tendency; it has largely rejected them or thrust them into a corner. Its religion is the religion of life, a religion of earth and of terrestrial humanity, an ideal of intellectual growth, vital efficiency, physical health and enjoyment, a rational social order. This mind confronted by Indian culture is at once repelled, first by its unfamiliarity and strangeness, then by a sense of irrational abnormality and a total difference and often a diametrical opposition of standpoints and finally by an abundance and plethora of unintelligible forms. These forms appear to its eye to teem with the supranatural and therefore, as it thinks, with the false. Even the unnatural is there, a persistent departure from the common norm, from right method and sound device, a frame of things in which everything, to use Mr. Chesterton's expression, is of the wrong shape. The old orthodox Christian point of view might regard this culture as a thing of hell, an abnormal creation of demons; the modern orthodox rationalistic standpoint looks at it as a nightmare not only irrational, but antirational, a monstrosity, an out-of-date anomaly, at best a coloured fantasia of the oriental past. That is no doubt an extreme attitude, — it is Mr. Archer's, — but incomprehension and distaste are the rule. One continually finds traces of these feelings even in minds which try to understand and sympathise; but to the average occidental content with his first raw natural impressions all is a repellent confusion. Indian philosophy is an incomprehensible, subtly unsubstantial cloud-weaving; Indian religion meets his eye as a mixture of absurd asceticism and an absurder gross, immoral and superstitious polytheism. He sees in Indian art a riot of crudely distorted or conventional forms and an impossible seeking after suggestions of the infinite — whereas all true art should be a beautiful and rational reproduction or fine imaginative representation of the natural and finite. He condemns in Indian society an anachronistic and semi-barbaric survival of old-world and mediaeval ideas and institutions. This view, which has recently undergone some modification and is less loud and confident in expression, but still subsists, is the whole foundation of Mr. Archer's philippic.

This is evident from the nature of all the objections he brings against Indian civilisation. When you strip them of their journalistic rhetoric, you find that they amount simply to this natural antagonism of the rationalised vital and practical man against a culture which subordinates reason to a supra-rational spirituality and life and action to a feeling after something which is greater than life and action. Philosophy and religion are the soul of Indian culture, inseparable from each other and interpenetrative. The whole objective of Indian philosophy, its entire *raison d'être*, is the knowledge of the spirit, the experience of it and the right way to a spiritual existence; its single aim coincides with the highest significance of religion. Indian religion draws all its characteristic value from the spiritual philosophy which illumines its supreme aspiration and colours even most of what is drawn from an inferior range of religious experience. But what are Mr. Archer's objections, first to Indian philosophy? Well, his first objection simply comes to this that it is too philosophical. His second accusation is that even as that worthless thing, metaphysical philosophy, it is too metaphysical. His third charge, the most positive and plausible, is that it enervates and kills the personality and the will-power by false notions of pessimism, asceticism, karma and reincarnation. If we take his criticism under each of these heads, we shall see that it is really not a dispassionate intellectual criticism, but the exaggerated expression of a mental dislike and a fundamental difference of temperament and standpoint.

Mr. Archer cannot deny, — the denial would go beyond even his unequalled capacity for affirming absurdities, — that the Indian mind has displayed an unparalleled activity and fruitfulness in philosophical thinking. He cannot deny that a familiarity with metaphysical conceptions and the capacity of discussing with some subtlety a metaphysical problem is much more wide-spread in India than in any other country. Even an ordinary Indian intellect can understand and deal with questions of this kind where an occidental mind of corresponding culture and attainments would be as hopelessly out of its depth as is Mr. Archer in these pages. But he denies that this familiarity and this subtlety are any proof of great mental capacity — "necessarily", he adds, I suppose in order to escape the charge of having suggested that Plato, Spinoza or Berkeley did not show a great mental capacity. Perhaps it is not "necessarily" such a proof; but it does show in one great order of questions, in one large and especially difficult range of the mind's powers and interests a remarkable and unique general development. The European journalist's capacity for discussing with some show of acumen questions of economy and politics or, for that matter, art, literature and drama, is not "necessarily" proof of a great mental capacity; but it does show a great development of the European mind in general, a wide-spread information and normal capacity in these fields of its action. The crudity of his opinions and his treatment of his subjects may sometimes seem a little "barbaric" to an outsider; but the thing itself is a proof that there is a culture, a civilisation, a great intellectual and civic achievement and a sufficient wide-spread interest in the achievement. Mr. Archer has to avoid a similar conclusion in another subtler and more difficult range about India. He does it by denying that philosophy is of any value; this activity of the Indian mind is for him only an unequalled diligence in knowing the unknowable and thinking about the unthinkable. And why so? Well, because philosophy deals with a region where there is no possible "test of values" and in such a region thought itself, since it is simply unverifiable speculation, can be of little or no value.

There we come to a really interesting and characteristic opposition of standpoints, more, a difference in the very grain of the mind. As stated, it is the sceptical argument of the atheist and agnostic, but after all that is only the extreme logical statement of an attitude common to the average European turn of thinking which is inherently a positivist attitude. Philosophy has been pursued in Europe with great and noble intellectual results by the highest minds, but very much as a pursuit apart from life, a thing high and splendid, but ineffective. It is remarkable that while in India and China philosophy has seized hold on life, has had an enormous practical effect on the civilisation and got into the very bones of current thought and action, it has never at all succeeded in achieving this importance in Europe. In the days of the Stoics and Epicureans it got a grip, but only among the highly cultured; at the present day, too, we have some renewed tendency of the kind. Nietzsche has had his influence, certain French thinkers also in France, the philosophies of James and Bergson have attracted some amount of public interest; but it is a mere nothing compared with the effective power of Asiatic philosophy. The average European draws his guiding views not from the philosophic, but from the positive and practical reason. He does not absolutely disdain philosophy like Mr. Archer, but he considers it, if not a "man-made illusion", yet a rather nebulous, remote and ineffective kind of occupation. He honours the philosophers, but he puts their works on the highest shelf of the library of civilisation, not to be taken down or consulted except by a few minds of an exceptional turn. He admires, but he distrusts them. Plato's idea of philosophers as the right rulers and best directors of society seems to him the most fantastic and unpractical of notions; the philosopher, precisely because he moves among ideas, must be without any hold on real life. The Indian mind holds on the contrary that the Rishi, the thinker, the seer of spiritual truth is the best guide not only of the religious and moral, but the practical life. The seer, the Rishi is the natural director of society; to the Rishis he attributes the ideals and guiding intuitions of his civilisation. Even today he is very ready to give the name to anyone who can give a spiritual truth which helps his life or a formative idea and inspiration which influences religion, ethics, society, even politics.

This is because the Indian believes that the ultimate truths are truths of the spirit and that truths of the spirit are the most fundamental and most effective truths of our existence, powerfully creative of the inner, salutarily reformative of the outer life. To the European the ultimate truths are more often truths of the ideative intellect, the pure reason; but, whether intellectual or spiritual, they belong to a sphere beyond the ordinary action of the mind, life and body where alone there are any daily verifying "tests of values". These tests can only be given by living experience of outward fact and the positive and practical reason. The rest are speculations and their proper place is in the world of ideas, not in the world of life. That brings us to a difference of standpoint which is the essence of Mr. Archer's second objection. He believes that all philosophy is speculation and guessing; the only verifiable truth, we must suppose, is that of the normal fact, the outward world and our responses to it, truth of physical science and a psychology founded on physical science. He reproaches Indian philosophy for having taken its speculations seriously, for presenting speculation in the guise of dogma, for the "unspiritual" habit which mistakes groping for seeing and guessing for knowing, — in place, I presume, of the very spiritual habit which holds the physically sensible for the only knowable and takes the knowledge of the body for the knowledge of the soul and spirit. He waxes bitterly sarcastic over the idea that philosophic meditation and Yoga are the best way to ascertain the truth of Nature and the constitution of the universe. Mr. Archer's descriptions of Indian philosophy are a grossly ignorant misrepresentation of its idea and spirit, but in their essence they represent the view inevitably taken by the normal positivist mind of the Occident.

In fact, Indian philosophy abhors mere guessing and speculation. That word is constantly applied by European critics to the thoughts and conclusions of the Upanishads, of the philosophies, of Buddhism; but Indian philosophers would reject it altogether as at all a valid description of their method. If our philosophy admits an ultimate unthinkable and unknowable, it does not concern itself with any positive description or analysis of that supreme Mystery, — the absurdity the rationalist ascribes to it; it concerns itself with whatever is thinkable and knowable to us at the highest term as well as on the lower ranges of our experience. If it has been able to make its conclusions articles of religious faith, — dogmas, as they are here called, — it is because it has been able to base them on an experience verifiable by any man who will take the necessary means and apply the only possible tests. The Indian mind does not admit that the only possible test of values or of reality is the outward scientific, the test of a scrutiny of physical Nature or the everyday normal facts of our surface psychology, which is only a small movement upon vast hidden subconscious and superconscious heights, depths and ranges. What are the tests of these more ordinary or objective values? Evidently, experience, experimental analysis and synthesis, reason, intuition, — for I believe the value of intuition is admitted nowadays by modern philosophy and science. The tests of this other subtler order of truths are the same, experience, experimental analysis and synthesis, reason, intuition. Only, since these things are truths of the soul and spirit, it must necessarily be a psychological and spiritual experience, a psychological and psychophysical experimentation, analysis and synthesis, a larger intuition which looks into higher realms, realities, possibilities of being, a reason which admits something beyond itself, looks upward to the supra-rational, tries to give as far as may be an account of it to the human intelligence. Yoga, which Mr. Archer invites us so pressingly to abandon, is itself nothing but a well-tested means of opening up these greater realms of experience.

Mr. Archer and minds of his type cannot be expected to know these things; they are beyond the little narrow range of facts and ideas which is to them the whole arc of knowledge. But even if he knew, it would make no difference to him; he would reject the very thought with scornful impatience, without any degrading of his immense rationalistic superiority by any sort of examination into the possibility of an unfamiliar truth. In this attitude he would have the average positivist mind on his side. To that mind such notions seem in their very nature absurd and incomprehensible, — much worse than Greek and Hebrew, languages which have very respectable and credit-worthy professors; but these are hieroglyphs which can only be upheld as decipherable signs by Indians and Theosophists and mystical thinkers, a disreputable clan. It can understand dogma and speculation about spiritual truth, a priest, a Bible, whether disbelieving them or giving them a conventional acceptance; but profoundest verifiable spiritual truth, firmly ascertainable spiritual values! The idea is foreign to this mentality and sounds to it like jargon. It can understand, even when it dismisses, an authoritative religion, an "I believe because it is rationally impossible"; but a deepest mystery of religion, a highest truth of philosophical thinking, a farthest ultimate discovery of psychological experience, a systematic and ordered experimentation of self-search and self-analysis, a constructive inner possibility of self-perfection, all arriving at the same result, assenting to each other's conclusions, reconciling spirit and reason and the whole psychological nature and its deepest needs, — this great ancient and persistent research and triumph of Indian culture baffles and offends the average positivist mind of the West. It is bewildered by the possession of a knowledge which the West never more than fumbled after and ended by missing. Irritated, perplexed, contemptuous, it refuses to recognise the superiority of such a harmony to its own lesser self-divided culture. For it is accustomed only to a religious seeking and experience which is at war with science and philosophy or oscillates between irrational belief and a troubled or else a self-confident scepticism. In Europe philosophy has been sometimes the handmaid — not the sister — of religion; but more often it has turned its back on religious belief in hostility or in a disdainful separation. The war between religion and science has been almost the leading phenomenon of European culture. Even philosophy and science have been unable to agree; they too have quarrelled and separated. These powers still coexist in Europe, but they are not a happy family; civil war is their natural atmosphere.

No wonder that the positivist mind to which this seems the natural order of things, should turn from a way of thinking and knowing in which there is a harmony, a consensus, a union between philosophy and religion and a systematised well-tested psychological experience. It is easily moved to escape from the challenge of this alien form of knowledge by readily dismissing Indian psychology as a jungle of self-hypnotic hallucinations, Indian religion as a rank growth of antirational superstitions, Indian philosophy as a remote cloud-land of unsubstantial speculation. It is unfortunate for the peace of mind which this self-satisfied attitude brings with it and for the effect of Mr. Archer's facile and devastating method of criticism that the West too has recently got itself pushed into paths of thinking and discovery which seem dangerously likely to justify all this mass of unpleasant barbarism and to bring Europe herself nearer to so monstrous a way of thinking. It is becoming more and more clear that Indian philosophy has anticipated in its own way most of what has been or is being thought out in metaphysical speculation. One finds even scientific thought repeating very ancient Indian generalisations from the other end of the scale of research. Indian psychology which Mr. Archer dismisses along with Indian cosmology and physiology as baseless classification and ingenious guessing, — it is anything but that, for it is based rigorously on experience, — is justified more and more by all the latest psychological discoveries. The fundamental ideas of Indian religion look perilously near to a conquest by which they will become the prominent thought and sentiment of a new and universal religious mentality and spiritual seeking. Who can say that the psycho-physiology of Indian Yoga may not be justified if certain lines of "groping and guessing" in the West are pushed a little farther? And even perhaps the Indian cosmological idea that there are other planes of being than this easily sensible kingdom of Matter, may be rehabilitated in a not very distant future? But the positivist mind may yet be of good courage: for its hold is still strong and it has still the claim of intellectual orthodoxy and the prestige of the right of possession; many streams must swell and meet together before it is washed under and a tide of uniting thought sweeps humanity towards the hidden shores of the Spirit.

III

A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture – 3

THIS CRITICISM so far is not very formidable; its edge, if it has any apart from the edge of trenchant misrepresentation, turns against the assailant. To have put a high value on philosophy, sought by it the highest secrets of our being, turned an effective philosophic thought on life and called in the thinkers, the men of profoundest spiritual experience, highest ideas, largest available knowledge, to govern and shape society, to have subjected creed and dogma to the test of the philosophic mind and founded religious belief upon spiritual intuition, philosophical thought and psychological experience, are signs, not of barbarism or of a mean and ignorant culture, but marks of the highest possible type of civilisation. There is nothing here that would warrant us in abasing ourselves before the idols of the positivist reason or putting the spirit and aim of Indian culture at all lower than the spirit and aim of Western civilisation whether in its high ancient period of rational enlightenment and the speculative idea or in its modern period of broad and minute scientific thought and strong applied knowledge. Different it is, inferior it is not, but has rather a distinct element of superiority in the unique height of its motive and the spiritual nobility of its endeavour.

It is useful to lay stress on this greatness of spirit and aim, not only because it is of immense importance and the first test of the value of a culture, but because the assailants take advantage of two extraneous circumstances to create a prejudice and confuse the real issues. They have the immense advantage of attacking India when she is prostrate and in the dust and, materially, Indian civilisation seems to have ended in a great defeat and downfall. Strong in this temporary advantage they can afford to show a superb and generous courage in kicking the surrounding dust and mire with their hooves upon the sick and wounded lioness caught in the nets of the hunters and try to persuade the world that she had never any strength and virtue in her. It is an easy task in this age of the noble culture of Reason and Mammon and Science doing the works of Moloch, when the brazen idol of the great goddess Success is worshipped as she was never before worshipped by cultured human beings. But they have too the yet greater advantage of representing her to the world in a period of the eclipse of her civilisation when after at least two thousand years of the most brilliant and many-sided cultural activity she had for a time lost everything except the memory of her past and her long depressed and obscured but always living and now strongly reviving religious spirit.

I have touched elsewhere on the significance of this failure and this temporary eclipse. I may have to deal with it again at closer quarters, since it has been raised as an objection to the value of Indian culture and Indian spirituality. At present it will be enough to say that culture cannot be judged by material success; still less can spirituality be brought to that touchstone. Philosophic, aesthetic, poetic, intellectual Greece failed and fell while drilled and militarist Rome triumphed and conquered, but no one dreams of crediting for that reason the victorious imperial nation with a greater civilisation and a higher culture. The religious culture of Judaea is not disproved or lessened by the destruction of the Jewish State, any more than it is proved and given greater value by the commercial capacity shown by the Jewish race in their dispersion. But I admit, as ancient Indian thought admitted, that material and economic capacity and prosperity are a necessary, though not the highest or most essential part of the total effort of human civilisation. In that respect India throughout her long period of cultural activity can claim equality with any ancient or mediaeval country. No people before modern times reached a higher splendour of wealth, commercial prosperity, material appointment, social organisation. That is the record of history, of ancient documents, of contemporary witnesses; to deny it is to give evidence of a singular prepossession and obfuscation of the view, an imaginative, or is it unimaginative, misreading of present actuality into past actuality. The splendour of Asiatic and not least of Indian prosperity, the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind, the "barbaric doors rough with gold", *barbaricae postes squalentes auro*, were once stigmatised by the less opulent West as a sign of barbarism. Circumstances are now strangely reversed; the opulent barbarism and a much less artistic ostentation of wealth are to be found in London, New York and Paris, and it is the nakedness of India and the squalor of her poverty which are flung in her face as evidence of the worthlessness of her culture.

India's ancient and mediaeval political, administrative, military and economic organisation was no mean achievement; the records stand and can be left to contradict the ignorance of the uninstructed and the rhetoric of the journalistic critic or the interested politician. There was no doubt an element of failure and defect, almost unavoidable in the totality of a problem on so large a scale and in the then conditions. But to exaggerate that into a count against her civilisation would be a singular severity of criticism which few civilisations watched to their end could survive. Failure in the end, yes, because of the decline of her culture, but not as a result of its most valuable elements. A later eclipse of the more essential elements of her civilisation is not a disproof of their original value. Indian civilisation must be judged mainly by the culture and greatness of its millenniums, not by the ignorance and weakness of a few centuries. A culture must be judged, first by its essential spirit, then by its best accomplishment and, lastly, by its power of survival, renovation and adaptation to new phases of the permanent needs of the race. In the poverty, confusion and disorganisation of a period of temporary decline, the eye of the hostile witness refuses to see or to recognise the saving soul of good which still keeps this civilisation alive and promises a strong and vivid return to the greatness of its permanent ideal. Its obstinate elastic force of rebound, its old measureless adaptability are again at work; it is no longer even solely on the defence, but boldly aggressive. Not survival alone, but victory and conquest are the promise of its future.

But our critic does not merely deny the lofty aim and greatness of spirit of Indian civilisation, which stand too high to be vulnerable to an assault of this ignorant and prejudiced character. He questions its leading ideas, denies its practical life-value, disparages its fruits, efficacy, character. Has this disparagement any critical value or is it only a temperamental expression of the misunderstanding natural to a widely different view of life and to a diametrically opposite estimate of our nature's highest significances and realities? If we consider the character of the attack and its terms, we shall see that it amounts to no more than a condemnation passed by the positivist mind attached to the normal values of life upon the quite different standards of a culture which looks beyond the ordinary life of man, points to something greater behind it and makes it a passage to something eternal, permanent and infinite. India, we are told, has no spirituality, — a portentous discovery; on the contrary she has succeeded, it would seem, in killing the germs of all sane and virile spirituality. Mr. Archer evidently puts his own sense, a novel and interesting and very occidental sense, on the word. Spirituality has meant hitherto a recognition of something greater than mind and life, the aspiration to a consciousness pure, great, divine beyond our normal mental and vital nature, a surge and rising of the soul in man out of the littleness and bondage of our lower parts towards a greater thing secret within him. That at least is the idea, the experience, which is the very core of Indian thinking. But the rationalist does not believe in the spirit in this sense; life, human will-force and reason are his highest godheads. Spirituality then, — it would have been simpler and more logical to reject the word when the thing on which it rests is denied, — has to be given another sense, some high passion and effort of the emotions, will and reason, directed towards the finite, not towards the infinite, towards things temporary, not towards the eternal, towards perishable life, not towards any greater reality which overpasses and supports the superficial phenomena of life. The thought and suffering which seam and furrow the ideal head of Homer, there, we are told, is the sane and virile spirituality. The calm and compassion of Buddha victorious over ignorance and suffering, the meditation of the thinker tranced in communion with the Eternal, lifted above the seekings of thought into identity with a supreme light, the rapture of the saint made one by love in the pure heart with the transcendent and universal Love, the will of the Karmayogin raised above egoistic desire and passion into the impersonality of the divine and universal will, these things on which India has set the highest value and which have been the supreme endeavour of her greatest spirits, are not sane, not virile. This, one may be allowed to say, is a very occidental and up to date idea of spirituality. Homer, Shakespeare, Raphael, Spinoza, Kant, Charlemagne, Abraham Lincoln, Lenin, Mussolini, these, shall we suggest, are to figure henceforth not only as great poets and artists or heroes of thought and action, but as our typical heroes and exemplars of spirituality. Not Buddha, not Christ, Chaitanya, St. Francis, Ramakrishna; these are either semi-barbaric Orientals or touched by the feminine insanity of an oriental religion. The impression made on an Indian mind resembles the reaction that a cultured intellectual might feel if he were told that good cooking, good dressing, good engineering, good schoolmastering are the true beauty and their pursuit the right, sane, virile aesthetic cult and literature, architecture, sculpture and painting are only a useless scribbling on paper, an insane hacking of stone and an effeminate daubing of canvas; Vauban, Pestalozzi, Dr. Parr, Vatel and Beau Brummell are then the true heroes of artistic creation and not Da Vinci, Angelo, Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare or Rodin. Whether Mr. Archer's epithets and his accusations against Indian spirituality stand in the comparison, let the judicious determine. But meanwhile we see the opposition of the standpoints and begin to understand the inwardness of the difference between the West and India.

This forms the gravamen of the charge against the effective value of Indian philosophy, that it turns away from life, nature, vital will and the effort of man upon earth. It denies all value to life; it leads not towards the study of nature, but away from it. It expels all volitional individuality; it preaches the unreality of the world, detachment from terrestrial interests, the unimportance of the life of the moment compared with the endless chain of past and future existences. It is an enervating metaphysic tangled up with false notions of pessimism, asceticism, karma and reincarnation, all of them ideas fatal to that supreme spiritual thing, volitional individuality. This is a grotesquely exaggerated and false notion of Indian culture and philosophy, got up by presenting one side only of the Indian mind in colours of a sombre emphasis, after a manner which I suppose Mr. Archer has learned from the modern masters of realism. But in substance and spirit it is a fairly correct statement of the notions which the European mind has formed in the past about the character of Indian thought and culture, sometimes in ignorance, sometimes in defiance of the evidence. For a time even it managed to impress some strong shadow of this error on the mind of educated India. It is best to begin by setting right the tones of the picture; that done, we can better judge the opposition of mentality which is at the bottom of the criticism.

To say that Indian philosophy has led away from the study of nature is to state a gross unfact and to ignore the magnificent history of Indian civilisation. If by nature is meant physical Nature, the plain truth is that no nation before the modern epoch carried scientific research so far and with such signal success as India of ancient times. That is a truth which lies on the face of history for all to read; it has been brought forward with great force and much wealth of detail by Indian scholars and scientists of high eminence, but it was already known and acknowledged by European savants who had taken the trouble to make a comparative study in the subject. Not only was India in the first rank in mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, surgery, all the branches of physical knowledge which were practised in ancient times, but she was, along with the Greeks, the teacher of the Arabs from whom Europe recovered the lost habit of scientific enquiry and got the basis from which modern science started. In many directions India had the priority of discovery, — to take only two striking examples among a multitude, the decimal notation in mathematics or the perception that the earth is a moving body in astronomy, — *calā pṛthvī sthirā bhāti*, the earth moves and only appears to be still, said the Indian astronomer many centuries before Galileo. This great development would hardly have been possible in a nation whose thinkers and men of learning were led by its metaphysical tendencies to turn away from the study of nature. A remarkable feature of the Indian mind was a close attention to the things of life, a disposition to observe minutely its salient facts, to systematise and to found in each department of it a science, Shastra, well-founded scheme and rule. That is at least a good beginning of the scientific tendency and not the sign of a culture capable only of unsubstantial metaphysics.

It is perfectly true that Indian science came abruptly to a halt somewhere about the thirteenth century and a period of darkness and inactivity prevented it from proceeding forward or sharing at once in the vast modern development of scientific knowledge. But this was not due to any increase or intolerance of the metaphysical tendency calling the national mind away from physical nature. It was part of a general cessation of new intellectual activity, for philosophy too ceased to develop almost at the same time. The last great original attempts at spiritual philosophy are dated only a century or two later than the names of the last great original scientists. It is true also that Indian metaphysics did not attempt, as modern philosophy has attempted without success, to read the truth of existence principally by the light of the truths of physical Nature. This ancient wisdom founded itself rather upon an inner experimental psychology and a profound psychic science, India's special strength, — but study of mind too and of our inner forces is surely study of nature, — in which her success was greater than in physical knowledge. This she could not but do, since it was the spiritual truth of existence for which she was seeking; nor is any really great and enduring philosophy possible except on this basis. It is true also that the harmony she established in her culture between philosophical truth and truth of psychology and religion was not extended in the same degree to the truth of physical Nature; physical Science had not then arrived at the great universal generalisations which would have made and are now making that synthesis entirely possible. Nevertheless from the beginning, from as early as the thought of the Vedas, the Indian mind had recognised that the same general laws and powers hold in the spiritual, the psychological and the physical existence. It discovered too the omnipresence of life, affirmed the evolution of the soul in Nature from the vegetable and the animal to the human form, asserted on the basis of philosophic intuition and spiritual and psychological experience many of the truths which modern Science is reaffirming from its own side of the approach to knowledge. These things too were not the results of a barren and empty metaphysics, not the inventions of bovine navel-gazing dreamers.

Equally is it a misrepresentation to say that Indian culture denies all value to life, detaches from terrestrial interests and insists on the unimportance of the life of the moment. To read these European comments one would imagine that in all Indian thought there was nothing but the nihilistic school of Buddhism and the monistic illusionism of Shankara and that all Indian art, literature and social thinking were nothing but the statement of their recoil from the falsehood and vanity of things. It does not follow that because these things are what the average European has heard about India or what most interests or strikes the European scholar in her thought, therefore they are, however great may have been their influence, the whole of Indian thinking. The ancient civilisation of India founded itself very expressly upon four human interests; first, desire and enjoyment, next, material, economic and other aims and needs of the mind and body, thirdly, ethical conduct and the right law of individual and social life, and, lastly spiritual liberation; *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma*, *mokṣa*. The business of culture and social organisation was to lead, to satisfy, to support these things in man and to build some harmony of their forms and motives. Except in very rare cases the satisfaction of the three mundane objects must run before the other; fullness of life must precede the surpassing of life. The debt to the family, the community and the gods could not be scamped; earth must have her due and the relative its play, even if beyond it there was the glory of heaven or the peace of the

Absolute. There was no preaching of a general rush to the cave and the hermitage.

The symmetric character of ancient Indian life and the vivid variety of its literature were inconsistent with any exclusive other-worldly direction. The great mass of Sanskrit literature is a literature of human life; certain philosophic and religious writings are devoted to the withdrawal from it, but even these are not as a rule contemptuous of its value. If the Indian mind gave the highest importance to a spiritual release, — and whatever the positivist mood may say, a spiritual liberation of some kind is the highest possibility of the human spirit, — it was not interested in that alone. It looked equally at ethics, law, politics, society, the sciences, the arts and crafts, everything that appertains to human life. It thought on these things deeply and scrutinisingly and it wrote of them with power and knowledge. What a fine monument of political and administrative genius is the *Śukra-Nīti*, to take one example only, and what a mirror of the practical organisation of a great civilised people! Indian art was not always solely hieratic, — it seemed so only because it is in the temples and cave cathedrals that its greatest work survived; as the old literature testifies, as we see from the Rajput and Mogul paintings, it was devoted as much to the court and the city and to cultural ideas and the life of the people as to the temple and monastery and their motives. Indian education of women as well as of men was more rich and comprehensive and many-sided than any system of education before modern times. The documents which prove these things are now available to anyone who cares to study. It is time that this parrot talk about the unpractical, metaphysical, quietistic, anti-vital character of Indian civilisation should cease and give place to a true and understanding estimate.

But it is perfectly true that Indian culture has always set the highest value on that in man which rises beyond the terrestrial preoccupation; it has held up the goal of a supreme and arduous self-exceeding as the summit of human endeavour. The spiritual life was to its view a nobler thing than the life of external power and enjoyment, the thinker greater than the man of action, the spiritual man greater than the thinker. The soul that lives in God is more perfect than the soul that lives only in outward mind or only for the claims and joys of thinking and living matter. It is here that the difference comes in between the typical Western and the typical Indian mentality. The West has acquired the religious mind rather than possessed it by nature and it has always worn its acquisition with a certain looseness. India has constantly believed in worlds behind of which the material world is only the antechamber. Always she has seen a self within us greater than the mental and vital self, greater than the ego. Always she has bowed her intellect and heart before a near and present Eternal in which the temporal being exists and to which in man it increasingly turns for transcendence. The sentiment of the Bengali poet, the wonderful singer and rapt devotee of the Divine Mother, —

> How rich an estate man lies fallow here!
> If this were tilled, a golden crop would spring, —

expresses the real Indian feeling about human life. But it is most attracted by the greater spiritual possibilities man alone of terrestrial beings possesses. The ancient Aryan culture recognised all human possibilities, but put this highest of all and graded life according to a transitional scale in its system of the four classes and the four orders. Buddhism first gave an exaggerated and enormous extension to the ascetic ideal and the monastic impulse, erased the transition and upset the balance. Its victorious system left only two orders, the householder and the ascetic, the monk and the layman, an effect which subsists to the present day. It is this upsetting of the Dharma for which we find it fiercely attacked in the Vishnu Purana under the veil of an apologue, for it weakened in the end the life of society by its tense exaggeration and its hard system of opposites. But Buddhism too had another side, a side turned towards action and creation and gave a new light, a new meaning and a new moral and ideal power to life. Afterwards there came the lofty illusionism of Shankara at the close of the two greatest known millenniums of Indian culture. Life thenceforward was too much depreciated as an unreality or a relative phenomenon, in the end not worth living, not worth our assent to it and persistence in its motives. But this dogma was not universally accepted, nor admitted without a struggle; Shankara was even denounced by his adversaries as a masked Buddhist. The later Indian mind has been powerfully impressed by his idea of Maya; but popular thought and sentiment was never wholly shaped by it. The religions of devotion which see in life a play or Lila of God and not a half sombre, half glaring illusion defacing the white silence of eternity had a closer growing influence. If they did not counteract, they humanised the austere ascetic ideal. It is only recently that educated India accepted the ideas of English and German scholars, imagined for a time Shankara's Mayavada to be the one highest thing, if not the whole of our philosophy, and put it in a place of exclusive prominence. But against that tendency too there is now a powerful reaction, not towards replacing the spirit without life by life without the spirit, but towards a spiritual possession of mind, life and matter. Still it is true that the ascetic ideal which in the ancient vigour of our culture was the fine spire of life mounting into the eternal existence, became latterly its top-heavy dome and tended under the weight of its bare and imposing sublimity to crush the rest of the edifice.

But here also we should get the right view, away from all exaggeration and false stress. Mr. Archer drags in Karma and Reincarnation into his list of anti-vital Indian notions. But it is preposterous, it is a stupid misunderstanding to speak of reincarnation as a doctrine which preaches the unimportance of the life of the moment compared with the endless chain of past and future existences. The doctrine of reincarnation and Karma tells us that the soul has a past which shaped its present birth and existence; it has a future which our present action is shaping; our past has taken and our future will take the form of recurring terrestrial births and Karma, our own action, is the power which by its continuity and development as a subjective and objective force determines the whole nature and eventuality of these repeated existences. There is nothing here to depreciate the importance of the present life. On the contrary the doctrine gives it immense vistas and enormously enhances the value of effort and action. The nature of the present act is of an incalculable importance because it determines not only our immediate but our subsequent future. There will be found too insistently pervading Indian literature and deeply settled in the mind of the people the idea of a whole-hearted concentrated present action and energy, tapasya, as a miraculous all-powerful force for the acquisition of our desires, whether the material or the spiritual desires of the human will. No doubt, our present life loses the exclusive importance which we give to it when we regard it only as an ephemeral moment in Time never to be repeated, our one sole opportunity, without any after-existence beyond it. But a narrow exaggerated insistence on the present shuts up the human soul in the prison of the moment: it may give a feverish intensity to action, but it is inimical to calm and joy and greatness of the spirit. No doubt, too, the idea that our present sufferings are the results of our own past action, imparts a calm, a resignation, an acquiescence to the Indian mind which the restless Western intelligence finds it difficult to understand or tolerate. This may degenerate in a time of great national weakness, depression and misfortune, into a quietistic fatalism that may extinguish the fire of reparative endeavour. But that is not its inevitable turn, nor is it the turn given to it in the records of the more vigorous past of our culture. The note there is of action, of tapasya. There is too another turn given to this belief which increased with time, the Buddhistic dogma of the succession of rebirths as a chain of Karma from which the soul must escape into the eternal silence. This notion has strongly affected Hinduism; but whatever is depressing in it, belongs not properly to the doctrine of rebirth but to other elements stigmatised as an ascetic pessimism by the vitalistic thought of Europe.

Pessimism is not peculiar to the Indian mind: it has been an element in the thought of all developed civilisations. It is the sign of a culture already old, the fruit of a mind which has lived much, experienced much, sounded life and found it full of suffering, sounded joy and achievement and found that all is vanity and vexation of spirit and there is nothing new under the sun or, if there is, its novelty is but of a day. Pessimism has been as rampant in Europe as in India and it is certainly a singular thing to find the materialist of all people bringing against Indian spirituality this accusation of lowering the values of existence. For what can be more depressing than the materialistic view of the quite physical and ephemeral nature of human life? There is nothing in the most ascetic notes of the Indian mind like the black gloom of certain kinds of European pessimism, a city of dreadful night without joy here or hope beyond, and nothing like the sad and shrinking attitude before death and the dissolution of the body which pervades Western literature. The note of ascetic pessimism often found in Christianity is a distinctly Western note; for it is absent in Christ's teachings. This mediaeval religion with its cross, its salvation by suffering, its devil-ridden and flesh-ridden world and the flames of eternal hell waiting for man beyond the grave has a character of pain and terror alien to the Indian mind, to which indeed religious terror is a stranger. The suffering of the world is there, but it fades into a bliss of spiritual peace or ecstasy beyond the sorrow line. Buddha's teaching laid heavy stress on the sorrow and impermanence of things, but the Buddhist Nirvana won by the heroic spirit of moral self-conquest and calm wisdom is a state of ineffable calm and joy, open not only to a few like the Christian heavens, but to all, and very different from the blank cessation which is the mechanical release of our pain and struggle, the sorry Nirvana of the Western pessimist, the materialist's brute flat end of all things. Even illusionism preached, not a gospel of sorrow, but the final unreality of joy and grief and the whole world-existence. It admits the practical validity of life and allows its values to those who dwell in the Ignorance. And like all Indian asceticism it places before man the possibility of a great effort, a luminous concentration of knowledge, a mighty urge of the will by which he can rise to an absolute peace or an absolute bliss. A not ignoble pessimism there has been about man's normal life as it is, a profound sense of its imperfection, a disgust of its futile obscurity, smallness and ignorance; but an unconquerable optimism as regards his spiritual possibility was the other side of this mood. If it did not believe in the ideal of an immense material progress of the race or a perfection of the normal man with earth as its field, it believed in a sure spiritual progress for every individual and an ultimate perfection lifted above subjection to the shocks of life. And this pessimism with regard to life is not the sole note of the Indian religious mind; its most popular forms accept life as a game of God and see beyond our present conditions for every human being the eternal nearness to the Divine. A luminous ascent into godhead was always held to be a consummation well within man's grasp. That can hardly be called a depressing or pessimistic theory of existence.

There can be no great and complete culture without some element of asceticism in it; for asceticism means the self-denial and self-conquest by which man represses his lower impulses and rises to greater heights of his nature. Indian asceticism is not a mournful gospel of sorrow or a painful mortification of the flesh in morbid penance, but a noble effort towards a higher joy and an absolute possession of the spirit. A great joy of self-conquest, a still joy of inner peace and the forceful joy of a supreme self-exceeding are at the heart of its experience. It is only a mind besotted with the flesh or too enamoured of external life and its restless effort and inconstant satisfactions that can deny the nobility or idealistic loftiness of the ascetic endeavour. But there are the exaggerations and deflections that all ideals undergo. Those which are the most difficult to humanity, suffer from them most, and asceticism may become a fanatic self-torture, a crude repression of the nature, a tired flight from existence or an indolent avoidance of the trouble of life and a weak recoil from the effort demanded of our manhood. Practised not by the comparatively few who are called to it, but preached in its extreme form to all and adopted by unfit thousands, its values may be debased, counterfeits may abound and the vital force of the community lose its elasticity and its forward spring. It would be idle to pretend that such defects and untoward results have been absent in India. I do not accept the ascetic ideal as the final solution of the problem of human existence; but even its exaggerations have a nobler spirit behind them than the vitalistic exaggerations which are the opposite defect of Western culture.

After all asceticism and illusionism are minor issues. The point to be pressed is that Indian spirituality in its greatest eras and in its inmost significance has not been a tired quietism or a conventional monasticism, but a high effort of the human spirit to rise beyond the life of desire and vital satisfaction and arrive at an acme of spiritual calm, greatness, strength, illumination, divine realisation, settled peace and bliss. The question between the culture of India and the vehement secular activism of the modern mind is whether such an endeavour is or is not essential to man's highest perfection. And if it is, then the other question arises whether it is to be only an exceptional force confined to a few rare spirits or can be made the main inspiring motive-power of a great and complete human civilisation.

IV

A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture – 4

A RIGHT judgment of the life-value of Indian philosophy is intimately bound up with a right appreciation of the life-value of Indian religion; religion and philosophy are too intimately one in this culture to be divided from each other. Indian philosophy is not a purely rational gymnastic of speculative logic in the air, an ultra-subtle process of thought-spinning and word-spinning like the greater part of philosophy in Europe; it is the organised intellectual theory of the intuitive ordering perception of all that is the soul, the thought, the dynamic truth, the heart of feeling and power of Indian religion. Indian religion is Indian spiritual philosophy put into action and experience. Whatever in the religious thought and practice of that vast, rich, thousand-sided, infinitely pliable, yet very firmly structured system we call Hinduism, does not in intention come under this description, — whatever its practice, — is either social framework or projection of ritual buttresses or survival of old supports and additions. Or else it is an excrescence and growth of corruption, a degradation of its truth and meaning in the vulgar mind, part of the debased mixtures that overtake all religious thinking and practice. Or, in some instances, it is dead habit contracted in periods of fossilisation or ill-assimilated extraneous matter gathered into this giant body. The inner principle of Hinduism, the most tolerant and receptive of religious systems, is not sharply exclusive like the religious spirit of Christianity or Islam; as far as that could be without loss of its own powerful idiosyncrasy and law of being, it has been synthetic, acquisitive, inclusive. Always it has taken in from every side and trusted to the power of assimilation that burns in its spiritual heart and in the white heat of its flaming centre to turn even the most unpromising material into forms for its spirit.

But before we turn to see what it is that so fiercely irritates and exasperates our hostile Western critic in Indian religious philosophy, it is as well to consider what he has to say about other sides of this ancient, dateless and still vigorously living, growing, all-assimilating Hinduism. For he has a great deal to say and it is unsparing and without measure. There is not the intemperate drunkenness of denunciation and vomit of false witness, hatred, uncharitableness and all things degrading and unspiritual and unclean that are the mark of a certain type of "Christian literature" on the subject, — for example, the superlative specimen of this noxious compound which Sir John Woodroffe has cited from the pages of Mr. Harold Begbie, "virile" perhaps if violence is virile, but certainly not sane. But still it is a mass of unsparing condemnation, exaggerated where it has any foundation at all and serenely illogical in its blithe joy of deliberate misrepresentation. Still, even from this crude mass it is possible to disengage the salient and typical antipathies that recommend it to the uncritical and even to many critical minds, and it is these alone that it is useful to discover.

The total irrationality of Hinduism is the main theme of the attack. Mr. Archer does casually admit a philosophical, and one might therefore suppose a rational element in the religion of India, but he disparages and dismisses as false and positively harmful the governing ideas of this religious philosophy as he understands or imagines he understands them. He explains the pervading irrational character of Hindu religion by the allegation that the Indian people have always gravitated towards the form rather than the substance and towards the letter rather than the spirit. One would have supposed that this kind of gravitation is a fairly universal feature of the human mind, not only in religion, but in society, politics, art, literature, even in science. In every conceivable human activity a cult of the form and forgetfulness of the spirit, a turn towards convention, externalism, unthinking dogma has been the common drift of the human mind from China to Peru and it does not skip Europe on its way. And Europe where men have constantly fought, killed, burned, tortured, imprisoned, persecuted in every way imaginable by human stupidity and cruelty for the sake of dogmas, words, rites and forms of church government, Europe where these things have done duty for spirituality and religion, has hardly a record which would entitle it to cast this reproach in the face of the East. But, we are told, this gravitation afflicts the Indian religion more than any other creed. Higher Hinduism can be scarcely said to exist except in certain small reforming sects and current Hinduism, the popular religion, is the cult of a monstrous folk-lore oppressive and paralysing to the imagination, — although here again one would think that if anything an excess rather than a paralysis of the creative imagination might be charged against the Indian mind. Animism and magic are the prevailing characteristics. The Indian people has displayed a genius for obfuscating reason and formalising, materialising and degrading religion. If India has possessed great thinkers, she has not extracted from their thoughts a rational and ennobling religion: the devotion of the Spanish or the Russian peasant is rational and enlightened by comparison. Irrationalism, anti-rationalism, — that in this laboured and overcharged accusation is the constant cry; it is the keynote of the Archer tune.

The phenomenon that has astonished and disgusted the mind of the critic is the obstinate survival in India of the old religious spirit and large antique religious types unsubmerged by the flood of modernism and its devastating utilitarian free thought. India, he tells us, still clings to what not only the Western world, but China and Japan have outgrown for ages. The religion is a superstition full of performances of piety repulsive to the free enlightened secular mind of the modern man. Its daily practices put it far outside the pale of civilisation. Perhaps, if it had confined its practice decorously to church attendance on Sundays and to marriage and funeral services and grace before meat, it might have been admitted as human and tolerable! As it is, it is the great anachronism of the modern world; it has not been cleansed for thirty centuries; it is paganism, it is a wholly unfiltered paganism; its tendency towards pollution rather than purification marks out its place as incomparably the lowest in the scale of world religions. An ingenious remedy is proposed. Christianity destroyed Paganism in Europe; therefore, since any immediate or very rapid triumph of sceptical free-thought would be too happily abrupt a transition to be quite feasible, we unenlightened, polluted, impure Hindus are advised to take up for a time with Christianity, poor irrational thing that it is, dark and deformed though it looks in the ample light of the positivist reason, because Christianity and especially Protestant Christianity will be at least a good preparatory step towards the noble freedom and stainless purities of atheism and agnosticism. But if even this little cannot be hoped for in spite of numerous famine conversions, at any rate Hinduism must somehow or other get itself filtered, and until that hygienic operation has been executed, India must be denied fellowship on equal terms with the civilised nations.

Incidentally, to support this charge of irrationalism and its companion charge of Paganism, we find a third and more damaging count brought against us and our religious culture, an alleged want of all moral worth and ethical substance. There is now an increasing perception, even in Europe, that reason is not the last word of human mind, not quite the one and only sovereign way to truth and certainly not the sole arbiter of religious and spiritual truth. The accusation of paganism too does not settle the question, since plenty of cultivated minds are well able to see that there were many great, true and beautiful things in the ancient religions that were lumped together by Christian ignorance under that inappropriate nickname. Nor has the world been entirely a gainer by losing these high ancient forms and motives. But whatever the actual practice of men, — and in this respect the normal human being is a singular mixture of the sincere but quite ineffective, the just respectable, would-be ethical man and the self-deceiving or semi-hypocritical Pharisee, — one can always appeal with force to a moralistic prejudice. All religions raise high the flag of morality and, whether religious or secular-minded, all but the antinomian, the rebel and the cynic, profess to follow or at least to admit that standard in their lives. This accusation is therefore about the most prejudicial charge that can be brought against any religion. The self-constituted prosecuting judge whose diatribe we are examining brings it without scruple and without measure. He has discovered that Hinduism is not an ennobling or even a morally helpful religion; if it has talked much of righteousness, it has never claimed moral teaching as one of its functions. A religion that can talk much of righteousness without performing the function of moral teaching, sounds rather like a square which can make no claim to be a quadrilateral; but let that pass. If the Hindu is comparatively free from the grosser Western vices, — as yet only, and only until he enters "the pale of civilisation" by adopting Christianity or otherwise, — it is not because there is any ethical strain in his character; it is because these vices do not come his way. His social system founded on the barbarous idea of the Dharma, of the divine and the human, the universal and the individual, the ethical and the social law, and supported on it at every point, has stupidly neglected to supply him with the opportunities of departing from it so liberally provided by Western civilisation! And yet the whole character of Hinduism, which is the character of the people, indicates, we are calmly told, a melancholy proclivity towards whatever is monstrous and unwholesome! On that highest note of unmeasured denunciation we may leave Mr. Archer's monstrous and unwholesome dance of disparagement and turn to disengage the temperamental sources of his dislike and anger.

Two things especially distinguish the normal European mind, — for we must leave aside some great souls and some great thinkers or some moments or epochs of abnormal religiosity and look at the dominant strain. Its two significant characters are the cult of the inquiring, defining, effective, practical reason and the cult of life. The great high tides of European civilisation, Greek culture, the Roman world before Constantine, the Renascence, the modern age with its two colossal idols, Industrialism and physical Science, have come to the West on the strong ascending urge of this double force. Whenever the tide of these powers has ebbed, the European mind has entered into much confusion, darkness and weakness. Christianity failed to spiritualise

Europe, whatever it may have done towards humanising it in certain ethical directions, because it ran counter to these two master instincts; it denied the supremacy of the reason and put its anathema on a satisfied or strenuous fullness of life. But in Asia there has been neither this predominance of reason and the life-cult nor any incompatibility of these two powers with the religious spirit. The great ages of Asia, the strong culminations of her civilisation and culture, — in India the high Vedic beginning, the grand spiritual stir of the Upanishads, the wide flood of Buddhism, Vedanta, Sankhya, the Puranic and Tantric religions, the flowering of Vaishnavism and Shaivism in the southern kingdoms — have come in on a surge of spiritual light and a massive or intense climbing of the religious or the religio-philosophic mind to its own heights, its noblest realities, its largest riches of vision and experience. It was in such periods that intellect, thought, poetry, the arts, the material life flowered into splendour. The ebbing of spirituality brought in always, on the contrary, the weakness of these other powers, periods of fossilisation or at least depression of the power of life, tracts of decline, even beginnings of decay. This is a clue to which we have to hold if we would understand the great lines of divergence between the East and the West.

Towards the spirit if not all the way to it man must rise or he misses his upward curve of strength; but there are different ways of approach to its secret forces. Europe, it would seem, must go through the life and the reason and find spiritual truth by their means as a crown and a revelation; she cannot at once take the kingdom of heaven by violence, as the saying of Christ would have men do. The attempt confuses and obscures her reason, is combated by her life instincts and leads to revolt, negation, a return to her own law of nature. But Asia or at any rate India lives naturally by a spiritual influx from above; that alone brings with it a spiritual evocation of her higher powers of mind and life. The two continents are two sides of the integral orb of humanity and until they meet and fuse, each must move to whatever progress or culmination the spirit in humanity seeks, by the law of its being, its own proper Dharma. A one-sided world would have been the poorer for its uniformity and the monotone of a single culture; there is a need of divergent lines of advance until we can raise our heads into that infinity of the spirit in which there is a light broad enough to draw together and reconcile all highest ways of thinking, feeling and living. That is a truth which the violent Indian assailant of a materialistic Europe or the contemptuous enemy or cold disparager of Asiatic or Indian culture agree to ignore. There is here no real question between barbarism and civilisation, for all masses of men are barbarians labouring to civilise themselves. There is only one of the dynamic differences necessary for the completeness of the growing orb of human culture.

Meanwhile the divergence unfortunately gives rise to a constant warring opposition of outlooks in religion and in most other matters, and the opposition brings with it more or less of an incapacity for mutual understanding and even a positive enmity or dislike. The emphasis of the Western mind is on life, the outer life above all, the things that are grasped, visible, tangible. The inner life is taken only as an intelligent reflection of the outer world, with the reason for a firm putter of things into shape, an intelligent critic, builder, refiner of the external materials offered by Nature. The present use of living, to be wholly in this life and for this life, is all the preoccupation of Europe. The present life of the individual and the continuous physical existence and developing mind and knowledge of humanity make up her one absorbing interest. Even from religion the West is apt to demand that it shall subordinate its aim or its effect to this utility of the immediate visible world. The Greek and the Roman looked on religious cult as a sanction for the life of the "polis" or a force for the just firmness and stability of the State. The Middle Ages when the Christian idea was at its height were an interregnum; it was a period during which the Western mind was trying to assimilate in its emotion and intelligence an oriental ideal. But it never succeeded in firmly living it and had eventually to throw it aside or keep it only for a verbal homage. The present moment is in the same way for Asia an interregnum dominated by an attempt to assimilate in its intellect and life in spite of a rebellious soul and temperament the Western outlook and its earth-bound ideal. And it may be safely predicted that Asia too will not succeed in living out this alien law firmly or for a long time. But in Europe even the Christian idea, marked in its purity by the emphasis of its introspective tendency and an uncompromising other-worldliness, had to compromise with the demands of the occidental temperament and in doing that it lost its own inner kingdom. The genuine temperament of the West triumphed and in an increasing degree rationalised, secularised and almost annihilated the religious spirit. Religion became more and more a pale and ever thinning shadow pushed aside into a small corner of the life and a still smaller corner of the nature and awaiting sentence of death or exile, while outside the doors of the vanquished Church marched on their victorious way the triumphant secular pomps of the outward life and the positive reason and materialistic Science.

The tendency to secularism is a necessary consequence of the cult of life and reason divorced from their inmost inlook. Ancient Europe did not separate religion and life; but that was because it had no need for the separation. Its religion, once it got rid of the oriental element of the mysteries, was a secular institution which did not look beyond a certain supraphysical sanction and convenient aid to the government of this life. And even then the tendency was to philosophise and reason away the relics of the original religious spirit, to exile the little shadow that remained of the brooding wings of a suprarational mystery and to get into the clear sunlight of the logical and practical reason. But modern Europe went farther and to the very end of this way. The more effectually to shake off the obsession of the Christian idea, which like all oriental religious thought claims to make religion commensurate with life and, against whatever obstacles may be opposed to it by the unregenerate vital nature of the animal man, spiritualise the whole being and its action, modern Europe separated religion from life, from philosophy, from art and science, from politics, from the greater part of social action and social existence. And it secularised and rationalised too the ethical demand so that it might stand in itself on its own basis and have no need of any aid from religious sanction or mystic insistence. At the end of this turn is an antinomian tendency, constantly recurring in the life-history of Europe and now again in evidence. This force seeks to annul ethics also, not by rising above it into the absolute purity of the spirit, as mystic experience claims to do, but by breaking out of its barriers below into an exultant freedom of the vital play. In this evolution religion was left aside, an impoverished system of belief and ceremony to which one might or might not subscribe with very little difference to the march of the human mind and life. Its penetrating and colouring power had been reduced to a faint minimum; a superficial pigmentation of dogma, sentiment and emotion was all that survived this drastic process.

Even the poor little corner that was still conceded to it, intellectualism insisted on flooding as much as possible with the light of reason. The trend has been to reduce, not only the infrarational, but equally the suprarational refuges of the religious spirit. The old pagan polytheistic symbolism had clothed with its beautiful figures the ancient idea of a divine presence and supraphysical life and Power in all Nature and in every particle of life and matter and in all animal existence and in all the mental action of man; but this idea, which to the secularist reason is only an intellectualised animism, had already been ruthlessly swept aside. The Divinity had abandoned the earth and lived far aloof and remote in other worlds, in a celestial heaven of saints and immortal spirits. But why should there be any other worlds? I admit, cried the progressing intellect, only this material world to which our reason and senses bear witness. A vague bleak abstraction of spiritual existence without any living habitation, without any means of dynamic nearness was left to satisfy the wintry remnants of the old spiritual sense or the old fantastic illusion. A blank and tepid Theism remained or a rationalised Christianity without either the name of Christ or his presence. Or why should that even be allowed by the critical light of the intelligence? A Reason or Power, called God for want of a better name, represented by the moral and physical Law in the material universe, is quite sufficient for any rational mind,

— and so we get to Deism, to a vacant intellectual formula. Or why should there be any God at all? The reason and the senses by themselves give no witness to God; at best they can make of Him only a plausible hypothesis. But there is no need of an unsubstantial hypothesis, since Nature is enough and the sole thing of which we have knowledge. Thus by an inevitable process we reach the atheistic or agnostic cult of secularism, the acme of denial, the zenith of the positive intelligence. And there reason and life may henceforward take their foundation and reign well satisfied over a conquered world, — if only that inconvenient veiled ambiguous infinite Something behind will leave them alone for the future!

A temperament, an outlook of this kind must necessarily be impatient of any such thing as an earnest straining after the suprarational and the infinite. It may tolerate some moderate play of these fine hallucinations as an innocent indulgence of the speculative mind or the artistic imagination, provided it is not too serious and does not intrude upon life. But asceticism and other-worldliness are abhorrent to its temperament and fatal to its outlook. Life is a thing to be possessed and enjoyed rationally or forcefully according to our power, but this earthly life, the one thing we know, our only province. At most a moderate intellectual and ethical asceticism is permissible, the simple life, plain living, high thinking; but an ecstatic spiritual asceticism is an offence to the reason, almost a crime. Pessimism of the vitalistic kind may be allowed its mood or its hour; for it admits that life is an evil that has to be lived and does not cut at its roots. But the obvious right standpoint is to take life as it is and make the most of it, either practically for the best ordering of its mixed good and evil or ideally with some hope of a relative perfection. If spirituality is to have any meaning, it can only signify the aim or the high labour of a lofty intelligence, rational will, limited beauty and moral good which will try to make the best of this life that is, but not vainly look beyond to some unhuman, unattainable, infinite or absolute satisfaction. If religion is to survive, let its function be to serve this kind of spiritual aim, to govern conduct, to give beauty and purity to our living, but let it minister only to this sane and virile spirituality; let it keep within the bounds of the practical reason and an earthly intelligence. This description no doubt isolates the main strands and ignores departures to one side or the other; and in all human nature there must be departures, often of an extreme kind. But it would not, I think, be an unfair or exaggerated description of the persistent ground and characteristic turn of the Western temperament and its outlook and the normal poise of its intelligence. This is its self-fulfilled static poise before it proceeds to that deflection or that self-exceeding to which man is inevitably moved when he reaches the acme of his normal nature. For he harbours a power in Nature that must either grow or else stagnate and cease and disintegrate, and until he has found all himself, there is for him no static abiding and no permanent home for his spirit.

Now when this Western mind is confronted with the still surviving force of Indian religion, thought, culture, it finds that all its standards are denied, exceeded or belittled; all that it honours is given a second place, all that it has rejected is still held in honour. Here is a philosophy which founds itself on the immediate reality of the Infinite, the pressing claim of the Absolute. And this is not as a thing to speculate about, but as a real presence and a constant Power which demands the soul of man and calls it. Here is a mentality which sees the Divine in Nature and man and animal and inanimate thing, God at the beginning, God in the middle, God at the end, God everywhere. And all this is not a permissible poetical play of the imagination that need not be taken too seriously by life, but is put forward as a thing to be lived, realised, put at the back even of outward action, turned into stuff of thought, feeling and conduct! And whole disciplines are systematised for this purpose, disciplines which men still practise! And whole lives are given up to this pursuit of the supreme Person, the universal Godhead, the One, the Absolute, the Infinite! And to pursue this immaterial aim men are still content to abandon the outward life and society and home and family and their most cherished pursuits and all that has to a rational mind a substantial and ascertainable value! Here is a country which is still heavily coloured with the ochre tint of the garb of the Sannyasin, where the Beyond is still preached as a truth and men have a living belief in other worlds and reincarnation and a whole army of antique ideas whose truth is quite unverifiable by the instruments of physical Science. Here the experiences of Yoga are held to be as true or more true than the experiments of the laboratory. Is this not a thinking of things evidently unthinkable since the rational Western mind has ceased to think about them? Is it not an attempt to know things evidently unknowable since the modern mind has abandoned all attempt to know them? There is amongst these irrational half-savages an endeavour even to make this unreal thing the highest flight of life, its very goal, and a governing force, a shaping power in art and culture and conduct. But art and culture and conduct are things which, this rational mind tells us, Indian spirituality and religion ought logically not to touch at all; for they belong to the realm of the finite and can only be founded on the intellectual reason and the practical environment and the truths and suggestions of physical Nature. There in its native form is the apparent gulf between the two mentalities and it looks unbridgeable. Or rather the Indian mind can understand well enough, even when it does not share, the positivist turn of the occidental intelligence; but it is itself to the latter a thing, if not damnable, at least abnormal and unintelligible.

The effects of the Indian religio-philosophical standpoint on life are to the occidental critic still more intolerable. If his reason was already offended by this suprarational and to him antirational urge, it is the strongest instincts of his temperament that are now violently shocked by their own direct contrasts and opposites. Life, the thing on which he puts an entire and unquestioning value, is questioned here. It is belittled and discouraged by the extremest consequences of one side of the Indian outlook or inlook and is nowhere accepted as it is for its own sake. Asceticism ranges rampant, is at the head of things, casts its shadow on the vital instincts and calls man to exceed the life of the body and even the life of the mental will and intelligence. The Western mind lays an enormous stress upon force of personality, upon the individual will, upon the apparent man and the desires and demands of his nature. But here is an opposing stress on a high growth towards impersonality, on the widening of the individual into the universal will, on an increasing or breaking beyond the apparent man and his limits. The flowering of the mental and vital ego or at most its subservience to the larger ego of the community is the West's cultural ideal. But here the ego is regarded as the chief obstacle to the soul's perfection and its place is proposed to be taken not by the concrete communal ego, but by something inward, abstract, transcendental, something supramental, supraphysical, absolutely real. The Western temperament is rajasic, kinetic, pragmatic, active; thought for it turns always to action and has little value except for the sake of action or else for a fine satisfaction of the mind's play and vigour. But here the type proposed for admiration is the self-possessed sattwic man for whom calm thought, spiritual knowledge and the inner life are the things of the greatest importance and action is chiefly of consequence not for its own sake, not for its rewards and fruits, but for its effects on the growth of the inner nature. Here too is a disconcerting quietism which looks forward to the cessation or Nirvana of all thought and action in a perpetual light and peace. It is not surprising that a critic with an unreleased occidental mind should look upon these contrasts with much dissatisfaction, a recoil of antipathy, an almost ferocious repugnance.

But at any rate these things, however remote they may seem to his understanding, contain something that is lofty and noble. He can disparage them as false, antirational and depressing, but not denounce them as evil and ignoble. Or he can do this only on the strength of such misrepresentations as some of those we have noted in Mr. Archer's more irresponsible strictures. These things may be signs of an antique or an antiquated mind, but are certainly not the fruits of a barbaric culture. But when he surveys the forms of the religion which they enlighten and animate, it does look to him as if he was in the presence of a pure barbarism, a savage ignorant muddle. For here is an abundance of everything of which he has so long been steadily emptying religion in his own culture, well content to call that emptiness reformation, enlightenment and the rational truth of things. He sees a gigantic polytheism, a superabundance of what seems to his intelligence rank superstition, a limitless readiness of belief in things that are to him without significance or incredible. The Hindu is popularly credited with thirty crores and more of gods, as many inhabitants for all the many heavens as there are men in this single earthly peninsula India; and he has no objection to adding, if need be, to this mighty multitude. Here are temples, images, a priesthood, a mass of unintelligible rites and ceremonies, the daily repetition of Sanskrit mantras and prayers, some of them of a prehistoric creation, a belief in all kinds of supraphysical beings and forces, saints, gurus, holy days, vows, offerings, sacrifice, a constant reference of life to powers and influences of which there can be no physical evidence instead of a rational scientific dependence on the material laws which alone govern the existence of mortal creatures. It is to him an unintelligible chaos; it is animism; it is a monstrous folk-lore. The meaning which Indian thought puts upon these things, their spiritual sense, escapes him altogether or it leaves him incredulous or else strikes his mind as a vain and mad symbolism subtle, useless, futile. And not only is the cult and belief of this people antiquated and mediaeval in kind, but it is not kept in its proper place. Instead of putting religion into an unobtrusive and ineffective corner, the Indian mind has the pretension, the preposterous pretension which rational man has outgrown for ever, of filling with it the whole of life.

It would be difficult to convince the too positive average European intelligence which has "outgrown" the religious mentality or is only struggling back towards it after a not yet liquidated bankruptcy of rationalistic materialism, that there is any profound truth or meaning in these Indian religious forms. It has been well said that they are rhythms of the spirit; but one who misses the spirit must necessarily miss too the connection of the spirit and the rhythm. The gods of this worship are, as every Indian knows, potent names, divine forms, dynamic personalities, living aspects of the one Infinite. Each Godhead is a form or derivation or dependent power of the supreme Trinity, each Goddess a form of the universal Energy, Conscious-Force or Shakti. But to the logical European mind monotheism, polytheism, pantheism are irreconcilable warring dogmas; oneness, many-ness, all-ness are not and cannot be different but concordant aspects of the eternal Infinite. A belief in one Divine Being superior to cosmos who is all cosmos and who lives in many forms of godhead, is a hotch-potch, mush, confusion of ideas; for synthesis, intuitive vision, inner experience are not the forte of this strongly external, analytic and logical mind. The image to the Hindu is a physical symbol and support of the supraphysical; it is a basis for the meeting between the embodied mind and sense of man and the supraphysical power, force or presence which he worships and with which he wishes to communicate. But the average European has small faith in disembodied entities and, if they are at all, he would put them away into a category apart, another unconnected world, a separate existence. A nexus between the physical and supraphysical is to his view a meaningless subtlety admissible only in imaginative poetry and romance.

The rites, ceremonies, system of cult and worship of Hinduism can only be understood if we remember its fundamental character. It is in the first place a non-dogmatic inclusive religion and would have taken even Islam and Christianity into itself, if they had tolerated the process. All that it has met on its way it has taken into itself, content if it could put its forms into some valid relation with the truth of the supraphysical worlds and the truth of the Infinite. Again it has always known in its heart that religion, if it is to be a reality for the mass of men and not only for a few saints and thinkers, must address its appeal to the whole of our being, not only to the suprarational and the rational parts, but to all the others. The imagination, the emotions, the aesthetic sense, even the very instincts of the half subconscient parts must be taken into the influence. Religion must lead man towards the suprarational, the spiritual truth and it must take the aid of the illumined reason on the way, but it cannot afford to neglect to call Godwards the rest of our complex nature. And it must take too each man where he stands and spiritualise him through what he can feel and not at once force on him something which he cannot yet grasp as a true and living power. That is the sense and aim of all those parts of Hinduism which are specially stigmatised as irrational or antirational by the positivist intelligence. But the European mind has failed to understand this plain necessity or has despised it. It insists on "purifying" religion, by the reason and not by the spirit, on "reforming" it, by the reason and not by the spirit. And we have seen what were the results of this kind of purification and reformation in Europe. The infallible outcome of that ignorant doctoring has been first to impoverish and then slowly to kill religion; the patient has fallen a victim to the treatment, while he might well have survived the disease!

The accusation of a want of ethical content is almost monstrously false, — it is the direct opposite of the truth; but we must look for its explanation in some kind of characteristic misunderstanding; for it is not new. Hindu thought and literature might almost be accused of a tyrannously pervading ethical obsession; everywhere the ethical note recurs. The idea of the Dharma is, next to the idea of the Infinite, its major chord; Dharma, next to spirit, is its foundation of life. There is no ethical idea which it has not stressed, put in its most ideal and imperative form, enforced by teaching, injunction, parable, artistic creation, formative examples. Truth, honour, loyalty, fidelity, courage, chastity, love, long-suffering, self-sacrifice, harmlessness, forgiveness, compassion, benevolence, beneficence are its common themes, are in its view the very stuff of a right human life, the essence of man's dharma. Buddhism with its high and noble ethics, Jainism with its austere ideal of self-conquest, Hinduism with its magnificent examples of all sides of the Dharma are not inferior in ethical teaching and practice to any religion or system, but rather take the highest rank and have had the strongest effective force. For the practice of these virtues in older times there is abundant internal and foreign evidence. A considerable stamp of them still remains in spite of much degeneracy even though there has been some depression of the manlier qualities which only flourish in their fullest power on the soil of freedom. The legend to the contrary began in the minds of English scholars with a Christian bias who were misled by the stress which Indian philosophy lays on knowledge rather than works as the means of salvation. For they did not note or could not grasp the meaning of the rule well-known to all Indian spiritual seekers that a pure sattwic mind and life are presupposed as the first step towards the divine knowledge — the doers of evil find me not, says the Gita. And they were unable to realise that knowledge of the truth means for Indian thought, not intellectual assent or recognition, but a new consciousness and a life according to the truth of the Spirit. Morality is for the Western mind mostly a thing of outward conduct; but conduct for the Indian mind is only one means of expression and sign of a soul-state. Hinduism only incidentally strings together a number of commandments for observance, a table of moral laws; more deeply it enjoins a spiritual or ethical purity of the mind with action as one outward index. It says strongly enough, almost too strongly, "Thou shouldst not kill," but insists more firmly on the injunction, "Thou shalt not hate, thou shalt not yield to greed, anger or malice," for these are the roots of killing. And Hinduism admits relative standards, a wisdom too hard for the European intelligence. Non-injuring is the very highest of its laws, *ahiṁsā paramo dharmaḥ*; still it does not lay it down as a physical rule for the warrior, but insistently demands from him mercy, chivalry, respect for the non-belligerent, the weak, the unarmed, the vanquished, the prisoner, the wounded, the fugitive, and so escapes the unpracticality of a too absolutist rule for all life. A misunderstanding of this inwardness and this wise relativity is perhaps responsible for much misrepresentation. The Western ethicist likes to have a high standard as a counsel of perfection and is not too much concerned if it is honoured more by the breach than by the observance; Indian ethics puts up an equally high and often higher standard; but less concerned with high professions than with truth of life, it admits stages of progress and in the lower stages is satisfied if it can moralise as much as possible those who are not yet capable of the highest ethical concepts and practice.

All these criticisms of Hinduism are therefore either false in fact or invalid in their very nature. It remains to be considered whether the farther yet more common charge is justified in full or in part, — the damaging accusation that Indian culture depresses the vital force, paralyses the will, gives no great or vigorous power, no high incentive, no fortifying and ennobling motive to human life.

V

A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture – 5

THE QUESTION before us is whether Indian culture has a sufficient power for the fortifying and ennobling of our normal human existence. Apart from its transcendental aims, has it any pragmatic, non-ascetic, dynamic value, any power for expansion of life and for the right control of life? This is a question of central importance. For if it has nothing of this kind to give us, then whatever its other cultural greatness, it cannot live. It becomes an abnormal cis-Himalayan hot-house splendour which could subsist in its peninsular seclusion, but must perish in the keen and arduous air of the modern struggle of life. No anti-vital culture can survive. A too intellectual or too ethereal civilisation void of strong vital stimulus and motive must languish for want of sap and blood. A culture to be permanently and completely serviceable to man must give him something more than some kind of rare transcendental uprush towards an exceeding of all earthly life-values. It must do more even than adorn with a great curiosity of knowledge, science and philosophic enquiry or a rich light and blaze of art, poetry and architecture the long stability and orderly well-being of an old, ripe and humane society. All this Indian culture did in the past to a noble purpose. But it must satisfy too the tests of a progressive Life-power. There must be some inspiration for the terrestrial endeavour of man, an object, a stimulus, a force for development and a will to live. Whether or not our end is silence and Nirvana, a spiritual cessation or a material death, this is certain that the world itself is a mighty labour of a vast Life-Spirit and man the present doubtful crown on earth and the struggling but still unsuccessful present hero and protagonist of its endeavour or its drama. A great human culture must see this truth in some fullness; it must impart some conscious and ideal power of self-effectuation to this upward effort. It is not enough to found a stable base for life, not enough to adorn it, not enough to shoot up sublimely to summits beyond it; the greatness and growth of the race on earth must be our equal care. To miss this great intermediate reality is a capital imperfection and in itself a seal of failure.

Our critics will have it that the whole body of Indian culture bears the stamp of just such a failure. The Western impression has been that Hinduism is an entirely metaphysical and other-worldly system dreaming of things beyond, oblivious of the now and here: a depressing sense of the unreality of life or an intoxication of the Infinite turns it away from any nobility, vitality and greatness of human aspiration and the earth's labour. Its philosophy may be sublime, its religious spirit fervent, its ancient social system strong, symmetrical and stable, its literature and its art good in their own way, but the salt of life is absent, the breath of will-power, the force of a living endeavour. This new journalistic Apollo, our Archer who is out to cleave with his arrows the python coils of Indian barbarism, abounds in outcries in this sense. But, if that is so, evidently India can have done nothing great, contributed no invigorating power to human life, produced no men of mighty will, no potent personalities, no strong significant human lives, no vital human figures in art and poetry, no significant architecture and sculpture. And that is what our devil's advocate tells us in graphic phrases. He tells us that there is in this religion and philosophy a general undervaluing of life and endeavour. Life is conceived as a shoreless expanse in which generations rise and fall as helplessly and purposelessly as waves in mid-ocean; the individual is everywhere dwarfed and depreciated; one solitary great character, Gautama Buddha, who "perhaps never existed," is India's sole contribution to the world's pantheon, or for the rest a pale featureless Asoka. The characters of drama and poetry are lifeless exaggerations or puppets of supernatural powers; the art is empty of reality; the whole history of the civilisation makes a drab, effete, melancholy picture. There is no power of life in this religion and this philosophy, there is no breath of life in this history, there is no colour of life in this art and poetry; that is the blank result of Indian culture. Whoever has seen at first hand and felt the literature, followed the history, studied the civilisation of India, can see that this is a bitter misrepresentation, a violent caricature, an absurd falsehood. But it is an extreme and unscrupulous way of putting an impression often given to the European mind and, as before, we must see why different eyes see the same object in such different colours. It is the same primary misunderstanding that is at the root. India has lived and lived richly, splendidly, greatly, but with a different will in life from Europe. The idea and plan of her life have been peculiar to her temperament, original and unique. Her values are not easy to seize for an outsider and her highest things are easily open to hostile misrepresentation by the ignorant, precisely because they are too high for the normal untrained mind and apt to shoot beyond its limits.

There are three powers that we must grasp in order to judge the life-value of a culture. There is, first, the power of its original conception of life; there is, next, the power of the forms, types and rhythms it has given to life; there is, last, the inspiration, the vigour, the force of vital execution of its motives manifested in the actual lives of men and of the community that flourished under its influence. The European conception of life is a thing with which we in India are now very familiar, because our present thought and effort are obscured with its shadow when they are not filled with its presence. For we have been trying hard to assimilate something of it, even to shape ourselves and especially our political, economic and outward conduct into some imitation of its forms and rhythms. The European idea is the conception of a Force that manifests itself in the material universe and a Life in it of which man is almost the only discoverable meaning. This anthropocentric view of things has not been altered by the recent stress of Science on the vast blank inanities of an inconscient mechanical Nature. And in man, thus unique in the inert drift of Nature, the whole effort of Life is to arrive at some light and harmony of the understanding and ordering reason, some efficient rational power, adorning beauty, strong utility, vital enjoyment, economic welfare. The free power of the individual ego, the organised will of the corporate ego, these are the great needed forces. The development of individual personality and an organised efficient national life are the two things that matter in the European ideal. These two powers have grown, striven, run riot at times, and the restless and often violent vividness of the historic stir and the literary and artistic vivacity of Europe are due to their powerful colours. The enjoyment of life and force, the gallop of egoistic passion and vital satisfaction are a loud and insistent strain, a constant high-voiced motive. Against them is another opposite effort, the endeavour to govern life by reason, science, ethics, art; a restraining and harmonising utility is here the foremost motive. At different times different powers have taken the lead. Christian religiosity too has come in and added new tones, modified some tendencies, deepened others. Each age and period has increased the wealth of contributory lines and forces and helped the complexity and largeness of the total conception. At present the sense of the corporate life dominates and it is served by the idea of a great intellectual and material progress, an ameliorated political and social state governed by science. There is an ideal of intelligent utility, liberty and equality or else an ideal of stringent organisation and efficiency and a perfectly mobilised, carefully marshalled uniting of forces in a ceaseless pull towards the general welfare. This endeavour of Europe has become terribly outward and mechanical in its appearance; but some renewed power of a more humanistic idea is trying to beat its way in again and man may perhaps before long refuse to be tied on the wheel of his own triumphant machinery and conquered by his apparatus. At any rate we need not lay too much emphasis on what may be a passing phase. The broad permanent European conception of life remains and it is in its own limits a great and invigorating conception, — imperfect, narrow at the top, shut in under a heavy lid, poor in its horizons, too much of the soil, but still with a sense in it that is strenuous and noble.

The Indian conception of life starts from a deeper centre and moves on less external lines to a very different objective. The peculiarity of the Indian eye of thought is that it looks through the form, looks even through the force, and searches for the spirit in things everywhere. The peculiarity of the Indian will in life is that it feels itself to be unfulfilled, not in touch with perfection, not permanently justified in any intermediate satisfaction if it has not found and does not live in the truth of the spirit. The Indian idea of the world, of Nature and of existence is not physical, but psychological and spiritual. Spirit, soul, consciousness are not only greater than inert matter and inconscient force, but they precede and originate these lesser things. All force is power or means of a secret spirit; the Force that sustains the world is a conscious Will and Nature is its machinery of executive power. Matter is the body or field of a consciousness hidden within it, the material universe a form and movement of the Spirit. Man himself is not a life and mind born of Matter and eternally subject to physical Nature, but a spirit that uses life and body. It is an understanding faith in this conception of existence, it is the attempt to live it out, it is the science and practice of this high endeavour, and it is the aspiration to break out in the end from this mind bound to life and matter into a greater spiritual consciousness that is the innermost sense of Indian culture. It is this that constitutes the much-talked-of Indian spirituality. It is evidently very remote from the dominant European idea; it is different even from the form given by Europe to the Christian conception of life. But it does not mean at all that Indian culture concedes no reality to life, follows no material or vital aims and satisfactions or cares to do nothing for our actual human existence. It cannot truly be contended that a conception of this kind can give no powerful and inspiring motive to the human effort of man. Certainly, in this view, matter, mind, life, reason, form are only powers of the spirit and valuable not for their own sake, but because of the Spirit within them. *Ātmārtham*, they exist for the sake of the Self, says the Upanishad, and this is certainly the Indian attitude to these things. But that does not depreciate them or deprive them of their value; on the contrary it increases a hundredfold their significance. Form and body immensely increase in importance if they are felt to be instinct with the life of the Spirit and are conceived as a support for the rhythm of its workings. And human life was in ancient Indian thought no vile and unworthy existence; it is the greatest thing known to us, it is desired, the Purana boldly says, even by the gods in heaven. The deepening and raising of the richest or the most potent energies of our minds, our hearts, our life-power, our bodies are all means by which the spirit can proceed to self-discovery and the return to its own infinite freedom and power. For when mind and heart and reason heighten to their greatest lights and powers, they bring embodied life to the point where it can open to a still greater light and power beyond them; the individual mind widens into a vast universal consciousness and lifts towards a high spiritual transcendence. These are at least no sterilising and depressing ideas; they exalt the life of man and make something like godhead its logical outcome.

The dignity given to human existence by the Vedantic thought and by the thought of the classical ages of Indian culture exceeded anything conceived by the Western idea of humanity. Man in the West has always been only an ephemeral creature of Nature or a soul manufactured at birth by an arbitrary breath of the whimsical Creator and set under impossible conditions to get salvation, but far more likely to be thrown away into the burning refuse-heap of Hell as a hopeless failure. At best he is exalted by a reasoning mind and will and an effort to be better than God or Nature made him. Far more ennobling, inspiring, filled with the motive-force of a great idea is the conception placed before us by Indian culture. Man in the Indian idea is a spirit veiled in the works of energy, moving to self-discovery, capable of Godhead. He is a soul that is growing through Nature to conscious self-hood; he is a divinity and an eternal existence; he is an ever-flowing wave of the God-ocean, an inextinguishable spark of the supreme Fire. Even, he is in his uttermost reality identical with the ineffable Transcendence from which he came and greater than the godheads whom he worships. The natural half-animal creature that for a while he seems to be is not at all his whole being and is not in any way his real being. His inmost reality is the divine Self or at least one dynamic eternal portion of it, and to find that and exceed his outward, apparent, natural self is the greatness of which he alone of terrestrial beings is capable. He has the spiritual capacity to pass to a supreme and extraordinary pitch of manhood and that is the first aim which is proposed to him by Indian culture. Living no more in the first crude type of an undeveloped humanity to which most men still belong, *na yathā prākṛto janaḥ*, he can even become a free perfected semi-divine man, *mukta*, *siddha*. But he can do more; released into the cosmic consciousness, his spirit can become one with God, one self with the Spirit of the universe or rise into a Light and Vastness that transcends the universe; his nature can become one dynamic power with universal Nature or one Light with a transcendental Gnosis. To be shut up for ever in his ego is not his ultimate perfection; he can become a universal soul, one with the supreme Unity, one with others, one with all beings. This is the high sense and power concealed in his humanity that he can aspire to this perfection and transcendence. And he can arrive at it through any or all of his natural powers if they will accept release, through his mind and reason and thought and their illuminations, through his heart and its unlimited power of love and sympathy, through his will and its dynamic drive towards mastery and right action, through his ethical nature and its hunger for the universal Good, through his aesthetic sense and its seekings after delight and beauty or through his inner soul and its power of absolute spiritual calm, wideness, joy and peace.

This is the sense of that spiritual liberation and perfection of which Indian thought and inner discipline have been full since the earliest Vedic times. However high and arduous this aim may be, it has always seemed to it possible and even in a way near and normal, once spiritual realisation has discovered its path. The positivist Western mind finds it difficult to give this conception the rank of a living and intelligible idea. The status of the *siddha*, *bhāgavata*, *mukta* appears to it a baseless chimera. It seems to its Christian associations a blasphemy against the solitary greatness of God, before whom man is only a grovelling worm, to its fierce attachment to the normal ego a negation of personality and a repellent menace, to its earthbound rationalism a dream, a self-hypnotic hallucination or a deluding mania. And yet in ancient Europe the Stoics, Platonists, Pythagoreans had made some approach to this aspiration, and even afterwards, a few rare souls have envisaged or pursued it through occult ways. And now it is again beginning to percolate into the Western imagination, but less as a dynamic life-motive than in poetry and in certain aspects of general thought or through movements like Theosophy that draw from ancient and oriental sources. Science and philosophy and religion still regard it with scorn as an illusion, with indifference as a dream or with condemnation as a heathen arrogance. It is the distinction of Indian culture to have seized on this great dynamic hope, to have kept it a living and practicable thing and to have searched out all the possible paths to this spiritual way of perfect existence. Indian thought has made this great thing the common highest aim and universal spiritual destiny of the soul that is in every human creature.

The value of the Indian conception for life must depend on the relations and gradations by which it connects this difficult and distant perfection with our normal living and present everyday nature. Put over against the latter without any connection or any gradations that lead up to it and make it possible, it would either be a high unattainable ideal or the detached remote passion of a few exceptional spirits. Or even it would discourage the springs of our natural life by the too great contrast between this spiritual being and our own poor imperfect nature. Something of the kind has happened in later times; the current Western impression about the exaggerated asceticism and otherworldliness of Indian religion and philosophy is founded on the growing gulf created by a later thought between man's spiritual possibilities and his terrestrial status. But we must not be misled by extreme tendencies or the overemphasis put upon them in a period of decline. If we would get at the real meaning of the Indian idea of life, we must go back to its best times. And we must not look at this or that school of philosophy or at some side of it as the whole of Indian thought; the totality of the ancient philosophical thinking, religion, literature, art, society must be our ground of enquiry. The Indian conception in its early soundness made no such mistake as to imagine that this great thing can or even ought to be done by some violent, intolerant, immediate leap from one pole of existence to its opposite. Even the most extreme philosophies do not go so far. The workings of the Spirit in the universe were a reality to one side of the Indian mind, to another only a half reality, a self-descriptive Lila or illusory Maya. To the one the world was an action of the Infinite Energy, Shakti, to the other a figment of some secondary paradoxical consciousness in the Eternal, Maya: but life as an intermediate reality was never denied by any school of Indian thinking. Indian thought recognised that the normal life of man has to be passed through with a conscientious endeavour to fulfil its purpose: its powers must be developed with knowledge; its forms must be perused, interpreted and fathomed; its values must be worked out, possessed and lived; its enjoyments must be fully taken on their own level. Only afterwards can we go on to self-existence or a supra-existence. The spiritual perfection which opens before man is the crown of a long, patient, millennial outflowering of the spirit in life and nature. This belief in a gradual spiritual progress and evolution here is indeed the secret of the almost universal Indian acceptance of the truth of reincarnation. It is only by millions of lives in inferior forms that the secret soul in the universe, conscious even in the inconscient, *cetano acetaneṣu*, has arrived at humanity: it is only by hundreds or thousands, perhaps even millions of human lives that man can grow into his divine self-existence. Every life is a step which he can take backward or forward; his action in life, his will in life, his thought and knowledge by which he governs and directs his life, determine what he is yet to be from the earliest stages to the last transcendence. *Yathā karma yathā śrutam.*

This belief in a gradual soul evolution with a final perfection or divine transcendence and human life as its first direct means and often repeated opportunity, is the pivot of the Indian conception of existence. This gives to our life the figure of an ascent in spirals or circles; and the long period of the ascent has to be filled in with human knowledge and human action and human experience. There is room within it for all terrestrial aims, activities and aspirations; there is place in the ascent for all types of human character and nature. For the spirit in the world assumes hundreds of forms and follows many tendencies and gives many shapes to his play or *līlā*. All are part of the total mass of our necessary experience; each has its justification, each has its natural or true law and reason of being, each has its utility in the play and the process. The claim of sense satisfaction was not ignored, it was given its just importance. The soul's need of labour and heroic action was not stifled, it was urged to its fullest action and freest scope. The hundred forms of the pursuit of knowledge were given an absolute freedom of movement; the play of the emotions was allowed, refined, trained till they were fit for the divine levels; the demand of the aesthetic faculties was encouraged in its highest rarest forms and in life's commonest details. Indian culture did not deface nor impoverish the richness of the grand game of human life; it never depressed or mutilated the activities of our nature. On the contrary, subject to a certain principle of harmony and government, it allowed them their full, often their extreme value. Man was allowed to fathom on his way all experience, to give to his character and action a large rein and heroic proportions, and to fill in life opulently with colour and beauty and enjoyment. This life side of the Indian idea is stamped in strong relief over the epic and the classical literature. It is amazing indeed that anyone with an eye or a brain could have read the Ramayana, Mahabharata, the dramas, the literary epics, the romances, and the great abundance of gnomic and lyric poetry in Sanskrit and in the later tongues (to say nothing of the massive remains of other cultural work and social and political system and speculation), and yet failed to perceive this breadth, wealth and greatness. One must have read without eyes to see or without a mind to understand; most indeed of the adverse critics have not read or studied at all, but only flung about their preconceived notions with a violent or a high-browed ignorant assurance.

But while it is the generous office of culture to enrich, enlarge and encourage human life, it must also give the vital forces a guiding law, subject them to some moral and rational government and lead them beyond their first natural formulations, until it can find for life the clue to a spiritual freedom, perfection and greatness. The preeminent value of the ancient Indian civilisation lay in the power with which it did this work, the profound wisdom and high and subtle skill with which it based society and ordered the individual life, and encouraged and guided the propensities of human nature and finally turned them all towards the realisation of its master idea. The mind it was training, while not called away from its immediate aims, was never allowed to lose sight of the use of life as a discipline for spiritual perfection and a passage to the Infinite.

The Indian mind whether in the government of life or in the discipline of spirituality kept always in sight two main truths of our existence. First, our being in its growth has stages through which it must pass: if there are sometimes leaps forward, yet most of its growth is a developing progression; the swiftest race has its stadia. Then again, life is complex and the nature of man is complex; in each life man has to figure a certain sum of its complexity and put that into some kind of order. But the initial movement of life is that form of it which develops the powers of the natural ego in man; self-interest and hedonistic desire are the original human motives, — *kāma*, *artha*. Indian culture gave a large recognition to this primary turn of our nature. These powers have to be accepted and put in order; for the natural ego-life must be lived and the forces it evolves in the human being must be brought to fullness. But this element must be kept from making any too unbridled claim or heading furiously towards its satisfaction; only so can it get its full results without disaster and only so can it be inspired eventually to go beyond itself and turn in the end to a greater spiritual Good and Bliss. An internal or external anarchy cannot be the rule; a life governed in any absolute or excessive degree by self-will, passion, sense-attraction, self-interest and desire cannot be the natural whole of a human or a humane existence. The tempting imagination that it can and that this is the true law is a lure with which the Western mind has played in characteristic leanings or outbursts; but this turn unjustly called Paganism, — for the Greek or Pagan intelligence had a noble thought for law and harmony and self-rule, — is alien to the Indian spirit. India has felt the call of the senses not less than Greece, Rome or modern Europe; she perceived very well the possibility of a materialistic life and its attraction worked on certain minds and gave birth to the philosophy of the Charvakas: but this could not take full hold or establish even for a time any dominant empire. Even if we can see in it, when lived on a grand scale, a certain perverse greatness, still a colossal egoism indulgent of the sole life of the mind and the senses was regarded by her as the nature of the Asura and Rakshasa. It is the Titanic, gigantic or demoniac type of spirit, permitted in its own plane, but not the proper law for a human life. Another power claims man and overtops desire and self-interest and self-will, the power of the Dharma.

The Dharma, at once religious law of action and deepest law of our nature, is not, as in the Western idea, a creed, cult or ideal inspiring an ethical and social rule; it is the right law of functioning of our life in all its parts. The tendency of man to seek after a just and perfect law of his living finds its truth and its justification in the Dharma. Every thing indeed has its dharma, its law of life imposed on it by its nature; but for man the dharma is the conscious imposition of a rule of ideal living on all his members. Dharma is fixed in its essence, but still it develops in our consciousness and evolves and has its stages; there are gradations of spiritual and ethical ascension in the search for the highest law of our nature. All men cannot follow in all things one common and invariable rule. Life is too complex to admit of the arbitrary ideal simplicity which the moralising theorist loves. Natures differ; the position, the work we have to do has its own claims and standards; the aim and bent, the call of life, the call of the spirit within is not the same for everyone: the degree and turn of development and the capacity, *adhikāra*, are not equal. Man lives in society and by society, and every society has its own general dharma, and the individual life must be fitted into this wider law of movement. But there too the individual's part in society and his nature and the needs of his capacity and temperament vary and have many kinds and degrees: the social law must make some room for this variety and would lose by being rigidly one for all. The man of knowledge, the man of power, the productive and acquisitive man, the priest, scholar, poet, artist, ruler, fighter, trader, tiller of the soil, craftsman, labourer, servant cannot usefully have the same training, cannot be shaped in the same pattern, cannot all follow the same way of living. All ought not to be put under the same tables of the law; for that would be a senseless geometric rigidity that would spoil the plastic truth of life. Each has his type of nature and there must be a rule for the perfection of that type; each has his own proper function and there must be a canon and ideal for the function. There must be in all things some wise and understanding standard of practice and idea of perfection and living rule, — that is the one thing needful for the Dharma. A lawless impulsion of desire and interest and propensity cannot be allowed to lead human conduct; even in the frankest following of desire and interest and propensity there must be a governing and restraining and directing line, a guidance. There must be an ethic or a science, a restraint as well as a scope arising from the truth of the thing sought, a standard of perfection, an order. Differing with the type of the man and the type of the function these special dharmas would yet rise towards the greater law and truth that contains and overtops the others and is universally effective. This then was the Dharma, special for the special person, stage of development, pursuit of life or individual field of action, but universal too in the broad lines which all ought to pursue.

The universal embracing dharma in the Indian idea is a law of ideal perfection for the developing mind and soul of man; it compels him to grow in the power and force of certain high or large universal qualities which in their harmony build a highest type of manhood. In Indian thought and life this was the ideal of the best, the law of the good or noble man, the discipline laid down for the self-perfecting individual, *ārya*, *śreṣṭha*, *sajjana*, *sādhu*. This ideal was not a purely moral or ethical conception, although that element might predominate; it was also intellectual, religious, social, aesthetic, the flowering of the whole ideal man, the perfection of the total human nature. The most varied qualities met in the Indian conception of the best, *śreṣṭha*, the good and noble man, *ārya*. In the heart benevolence, beneficence, love, compassion, altruism, long-suffering, liberality, kindliness, patience; in the character courage, heroism, energy, loyalty, continence, truth, honour, justice, faith, obedience and reverence where these were due, but power too to govern and direct, a fine modesty and yet a strong independence and noble pride; in the mind wisdom and intelligence and love of learning, knowledge of all the best thought, an openness to poetry, art and beauty, an educated capacity and skill in works; in the inner being a strong religious sense, piety, love of God, seeking after the Highest, the spiritual turn; in social relations and conduct a strict observance of all the social dharmas, as father, son, husband, brother, kinsman, friend, ruler or subject, master or servant, priest or warrior or worker, king or sage, member of clan or caste: this was the total ideal of the Arya, the man of high upbringing and noble nature. The ideal is clearly portrayed in the written records of ancient India during two millenniums and it is the very life-breath of Hindu ethics. It was the creation of an at once ideal and rational mind, spirit-wise and worldly-wise, deeply religious, nobly ethical, firmly yet flexibly intellectual, scientific and aesthetic, patient and tolerant of life's difficulties and human weakness, but arduous in self-discipline. This was the mind that was at the base of the Indian civilisation and gave its characteristic stamp to all the culture.

But even this was only the foundation and preparation for another highest thing which by its presence exalts human life beyond itself into something spiritual and divine. Indian culture raised the crude animal life of desire, self-interest and satisfied propensity beyond its first intention to a noble self-exceeding and shapeliness by infusing into it the order and high aims of the Dharma. But its profounder characteristic aim — and in this it was unique — was to raise this nobler life too of the self-perfecting human being beyond its own intention to a mightiest self-exceeding and freedom; it laboured to infuse into it the great aim of spiritual liberation and perfection, *mukti*, *mokṣa*.

The Law and its observance are neither the beginning nor the end of man; there is beyond the field of the Law a larger realm of consciousness in which, climbing, he emerges into a great spiritual freedom. Not a noble but ever death-bound manhood is the highest height of man's perfection: immortality, freedom, divinity are within his grasp. Ancient Indian culture held this highest aim constantly before the inner eye of the soul and insistently inspired with its prospect and light the whole conception of existence. The entire life of the individual was ennobled by this aim; the whole ordering of society was cast into a scale of graduated ascension towards this supreme summit.

A well-governed system of the individual and communal existence must be always in the first instance an ordering of the three first powers recognised by Indian thought. The claim of the natural functionings must be recognised in it to the full; the pursuit of personal and communal interest and the satisfaction of human desires as of human needs must be amply admitted and there must be an understanding combination of knowledge and labour towards these ends. But all must be controlled, uplifted and widened to greater aims by the ideal of the Dharma. And if, as India believes, there is a higher spiritual consciousness towards which man can rise, that ascent must be kept throughout in view as the supreme goal of life. The system of Indian culture at once indulged and controlled man's nature; it fitted him for his social role; it stamped on his mind the generous ideal of an accomplished humanity refined, harmonised in all its capacities, ennobled in all its members; but it placed before him too the theory and practice of a highest change, familiarised him with the conception of a spiritual existence and sowed in him a hunger for the divine and the infinite. The symbols of his religion were filled with suggestions which led towards it; at every step he was reminded of lives behind and in front and of worlds beyond the material existence; he was brought close to the nearness, even to the call and pressure of the Spirit who is greater than the life it informs, of the final goal, of a high possible immortality, freedom, God-consciousness, divine Nature. Man was not allowed to forget that he had in him a highest self beyond his little personal ego and that always he and all things live, move and have their being in God, in the Eternal, in the Spirit. There were ways and disciplines provided in number by which he could realise this liberating truth or could at least turn and follow at a distance this highest aim according to his capacity and nature, *adhikāra*. Around him he saw and revered the powerful practicants and the mighty masters of these disciplines. These men were in early times the teachers of his youth, the summits of his society, the inspirers and fountain-heads of his civilisation, the great lights of his culture. Spiritual freedom, spiritual perfection were not figured as a far-off intangible ideal, but presented as the highest human aim towards which all must grow in the end, and were made near and possible to his endeavour from a first practicable basis of life and the Dharma. The spiritual idea governed, enlightened and gathered towards itself all the other life-motives of a great civilised people.

VI

A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture – 6

THESE are the principal lines upon which the structure of Indian civilisation was founded and they constitute the power of its conception of life. I do not think it can be said that there is here any inferiority to other human cultures or to any established conception of life that has ever held sway over the mind of man in historic times. There is nothing here that can be said to discourage life and its flowering or to deprive it of impetus and elevation and a great motive. On the contrary there is a full and frank recognition and examination of the whole of human existence in all its variety and range and power, there is a clear and wise and noble idea for its right government and there is an ideal tendency pointing it upward and a magnificent call to a highest possible perfection and greatness. These are the serious uses of culture, these are the things that raise the life of man above a crude, primitive barbarism. If a civilisation is to be judged by the power of its ideas, their power for these great uses, Indian civilisation was inferior to none. Certainly, it was not perfect or final or complete; for that can be alleged of no past or present cultural idea or system. Man is in his inmost self an infinite being, in his mind and life too he is continually growing, with whatever stumblings and long relapses, and he cannot be permanently bound in any one system of ideas or frame of living. The structures in which he lives are incomplete and provisional; even those which seem the most comprehensive lose their force to stand and are convicted by time of insufficiency and must be replaced or change. But this at least can be said of the Indian idea that it seized with a remarkable depth and comprehensiveness on the main truths and needs of the whole human being, on his mind and life and body, his artistic and ethical and intellectual parts of nature, his soul and spirit, and gave them a subtle and liberal, a profoundly large and high and wise, a sympathetic and yet nobly arduous direction. More cannot be said for any past or any existing culture.

But there must be in any culture aiming at completeness, not only great and noble governing and inspiring ideas, but a harmony of forms and rhythms, a mould into which the ideas and the life can run and settle. Here we must be prepared for a lesser perfection, a greater incompleteness. And the reason is that just as the spirit is vaster than its ideas, the ideas too are larger than their forms, moulds and rhythms. Form has a certain fixity which limits; no form can exhaust or fully express the potentialities of the idea or force that gave it birth. Neither can any idea, however great, or any limited play of force or form bind the infinite spirit: that is the secret of earth's need of mutation and progress. The idea is only a partial expression of the spirit. Even within its own limits, on its own lines it ought always to become more supple, to fill itself out with other views, to rise and broaden to new applications, and often it has to lose itself in uplifting transformations of its own meaning into vaster significances or fuse itself into new and richer syntheses. In the history of all great cultures therefore we find a passage through three periods, for this passage is a necessary consequence of this truth of things. There is a first period of large and loose formation; there is a second period in which we see a fixing of forms, moulds and rhythms; and there is a closing or a critical period of superannuation, decay and disintegration. This last stage is the supreme crisis in the life of a civilisation; if it cannot transform itself, it enters into a slow lingering decline or else collapses in a death agony brought about by the rapid impact of stronger and more immediately living though not necessarily greater or truer powers or formations. But if it is able to shake itself free of limiting forms, to renovate its ideas and to give a new scope to its spirit, if it is willing to understand, master and assimilate novel growths and necessities, then there is a rebirth, a fresh lease of life and expansion, a true renascence.

Indian civilisation passed in its own large and leisurely manner through all these stages. Its first period was that of a great spiritual outflowering in which the forms were supple, flexible and freely responsive to its essential spirit. That fluid movement passed away into an age of strong intellectuality in which all was fixed into distinct, sufficiently complex, but largely treated and still supple forms and rhythms. There came as a consequence a period of richly crystallised fixity shaken by crises which were partly met by a change of ideas and a modification of forms. But the hard binding of set forms triumphed at last and there was a decline of the inspiring spirit, a stagnation of living force, a progressive decay of the outward structure. This decay was accompanied and at once arrested for a moment and hastened in the end by the impact of other cultures. Today we are in the midst of a violent and decisive crisis brought about by the inflooding of the West and of all for which it stands. An upheaval resulted that began with the threat of a total death and irretrievable destruction of the culture; but its course is now uplifted on the contrary by the strong hope of a great revival, transmutation and renascence. Each of these three stages has its special significance for the student of culture. If we would understand the essential spirit of Indian civilisation, we must go back to its first formative period, the early epoch of the Veda and the Upanishads, its heroic creative seed-time. If we would study the fixed forms of its spirit and discern the thing it eventually realised as the basic rhythm of its life, we must look with an observing eye at the later middle period of the Shastras and the classic writings, the age of philosophy and science, legislation and political and social theory and many-sided critical thought, religious fixation, art, sculpture, painting, architecture. If we would discover the limitations, the points at which it stopped short and failed to develop its whole or its true spirit, we must observe closely the unhappy disclosures of its period of decline. If, finally, we would discover the directions it is likely to follow in its transformation, we must try to fathom what lies beneath the still confused movements of its crisis of renascence. None of these can indeed be cut clean apart from each other; for what developed in one period is already forecast and begun in the preceding age: but still on a certain large and imprecise scale we can make these distinctions and they are necessary for a discerning analytic view. But at present we are only concerned with the developed forms and the principal rhythms which persisted through its greater eras.

The problem which Indian culture had to solve was that of a firm outward basis on which to found the practical development of its spirit and its idea in life. How are we to take the natural life of man and, while allowing it sufficient scope and variety and freedom, yet to subject it to a law, canon, dharma, a law of function, a law of type, a law of each actual unideal human tendency and a law too of highest ideal intention? And how again are we to point that dharma towards its own exceeding by the fulfilment and cessation of its disciplinary purpose in the secure freedom of the spiritual life? Indian culture from an early stage seized upon a double idea for its own guidance which it threw into a basic system of the individual life in the social frame. This was the double system of the four Varnas and the four Asramas, — four graded classes of society and four successive stages of a developing human life.

The ancient Chaturvarnya must not be judged by its later disintegrated degeneration and gross meaningless parody, the caste system. But neither was it precisely the system of the classes which we find in other civilisations, priesthood, nobility, merchant class and serfs or labourers. It may have had outwardly the same starting-point, but it was given a very different revealing significance. The ancient Indian idea was that man falls by his nature into four types. There are, first and highest, the man of learning and thought and knowledge; next, the man of power and action, ruler, warrior, leader, administrator; third in the scale, the economic man, producer and wealth-getter, the merchant, artisan, cultivator: these were the twice-born, who received the initiation, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya. Last came the more undeveloped human type, not yet fit for these steps of the scale, unintellectual, without force, incapable of creation or intelligent production, the man fit only for unskilled labour and menial service, the Shudra. The economic order of society was cast in the form and gradation of these four types. The Brahmin class was called upon to give the community its priests, thinkers, men of letters, legists, scholars, religious leaders and guides. The Kshatriya class gave it its kings, warriors, governors and administrators. The Vaishya order supplied it with its producers, agriculturists, craftsmen, artisans, merchants and traders. The Shudra class ministered to its need of menials and servants. As far as this went, there was nothing peculiar in the system except its extraordinary durability and, perhaps, the supreme position given to religion, thought and learning, not only at the top of the scale, — for that can be paralleled from one or two other civilisations, — but as the dominant power. The Indian idea in its purity fixed the status of a man in this order not by his birth, but by his capacities and his inner nature, and, if this rule had been strictly observed, that would have been a very clear mark of distinctness, a superiority of a unique kind. But even the best society is always something of a machine and gravitates towards the material sign and standard, and to found truly the social order upon this finer psychological basis would have been in those times a difficult and vain endeavour. In practice we find that birth became the basis of the Varna. It is elsewhere that we must look for the strong distinguishing mark which has made of this social structure a thing apart and sole in its type.

At no time indeed was the adherence to the economic rule quite absolute. The early ages show a considerable flexibility which was not quite lost in the process of complex crystallisation into a fixed form. And even in the greater rigidity of the latter-day caste system there has been in practice a confusion of economic functions. The vitality of a vigorous community cannot obey at every point the indications of a pattern and tradition cut by the mechanising mind. Moreover there was always a difference between the ideal theory of the system and its rougher unideal practice. For the material side of an idea or system has always its weaknesses even in its best times, and the final defect of all systems of this kind is that they stiffen into a fixed hierarchy which cannot maintain permanently its purity or the utility it was meant to serve. It becomes a soulless form and prolongs itself in a state of corruption, degeneracy or oppressive formalism when the uses that justified it are no longer in existence. Even when its ways can no longer be made consistent with the developing needs of the growth of humanity, the formal system persists and corrupts the truth of life and blocks progress. Indian society did not escape this general law; it was overtaken by these deficiencies, lost the true sense of the thing which it set out to embody and degenerated into a chaos of castes, developing evils which we are now much embarrassed to eliminate. But it was a well-devised and necessary scheme in its time; it gave the community the firm and nobly built stability it needed for the security of its cultural development, — a stability hardly paralleled in any other culture. And, as interpreted by the Indian genius, it became a greater thing than a mere outward economic, political and social mechanism intended to serve the needs and convenience of the collective life.

For the real greatness of the Indian system of the four varnas did not lie in its well-ordered division of economic function; its true originality and permanent value was in the ethical and spiritual content which the thinkers and builders of the society poured into these forms. This inner content started with the idea that the intellectual, ethical and spiritual growth of the individual is the central need of the race. Society itself is only the necessary framework for this growth; it is a system of relations which provides it with its needed medium, field and conditions and with a nexus of helpful influences. A secure place had to be found in the community for the individual man from which he could at once serve these relations, helping to maintain the society and pay it his debt of duty and assistance, and proceed to his own self-development with the best possible aid from the communal life. Birth was accepted in practice as the first gross and natural indicator; for heredity to the Indian mind has always ranked as a factor of the highest importance: it was even taken in later thought as a sign of the nature and as an index to the surroundings which the individual had prepared for himself by his past soul-development in former existences. But birth is not and cannot be the sole test of Varna. The intellectual capacity of the man, the turn of his temperament, his ethical nature, his spiritual stature, these are the important factors. There was erected therefore a rule of family living, a system of individual observance and self-training, a force of upbringing and education which would bring out and formulate these essential things. The individual man was carefully trained in the capacities, habits and attainments, and habituated to the sense of honour and duty necessary for the discharge of his allotted function in life. He was scrupulously equipped with the science of the thing he had to do, the best way to succeed in it as an interest, *artha*, and to attain to the highest rule, canon and recognised perfection of its activities, economic, political, sacerdotal, literary, scholastic or whatever else they might be. Even the most despised pursuits had their education, their law and canon, their ambition of success, their sense of honour in the discharge and scruple of well-doing, their dignity of a fixed standard of perfection, and it was because they had these things that even the lowest and least attractive could be in a certain degree a means of self-finding and ordered self-satisfaction. In addition to this special function and training there were the general accomplishments, sciences, arts, graces of life, those which satisfy the intellectual, aesthetic and hedonistic powers of human nature. These in ancient India were many and various, were taught with minuteness, thoroughness and subtlety and were available to all men of culture.

But while there was provision for all these things and it was made with a vivid liberality of the life-spirit and a noble sense of order, the spirit of Indian culture did not, like other ancient cultures, stop here. It said to the individual: “This is only the substructure; it is of a pressing importance indeed, but still not the last and greatest thing. When you have paid your debt to society, filled well and admirably your place in its life, helped its maintenance and continuity and taken from it your legitimate and desired satisfactions, there still remains the greatest thing of all. There is still your own self, the inner you, the soul which is a spiritual portion of the Infinite, one in its essence with the Eternal. This self, this soul in you you have to find, you are here for that, and it is from the place I have provided for you in life and by this training that you can begin to find it. For to each Varna I have supplied its highest ideal of manhood, the highest ideal way of which your nature is capable. By directing your life and nature in its own law of being towards that perfection, you can not only grow towards the ideal and enter into harmony with universal nature but come also into nearness and contact with a greater nature of divinity and move towards transcendence. That is the real object before you. From the life-basis I give you you can rise to the liberating knowledge which brings a spiritual release, *mokṣa*. Then you can grow out of all these limitations in which you are being trained; you can grow through the fulfilled Dharma and beyond it into the eternity of your self, into the fullness, freedom, greatness and bliss of the immortal spirit; for that is what each man is behind the veils of his nature. When you have done that you are free. Then you have gone beyond all the dharmas; you are then a universal soul, one with all existence, and you can either act in that divine liberty for the good of all living things or else turn to enjoy in solitude the bliss of eternity and transcendence." The whole system of society, founded on the four varnas, was made a harmonious means for the elevation and progress of the soul, mind and life from the natural pursuit of interest and desire first to the perfection of the law of our being, Dharma, and at the end to a highest spiritual freedom. For man's true end in life must be always this realisation of his own immortal self, this entry in its secret of an infinite and eternal existence.

The Indian system did not entirely leave this difficult growth to the individual's unaided inner initiative. It supplied him with a framework; it gave him a scale and gradation for his life which could be made into a kind of ladder rising in that sense. This high convenience was the object of the four Asramas. Life was divided into four natural periods and each of them marked out a stage in the working out of this cultural idea of living. There was the period of the student, the period of the householder, the period of the recluse or forest-dweller, the period of the free supersocial man, *parivrājaka*. The student life was framed to lay the groundwork of what the man had to know, do and be. It gave a thorough training in the necessary arts, sciences, branches of knowledge, but it was still more insistent on the discipline of the ethical nature and in earlier days contained as an indispensable factor a grounding in the Vedic formula of spiritual knowledge. In these earlier days this training was given in suitable surroundings far away from the life of cities and the teacher was one who had himself passed through the round of this circle of living and, very usually, even, one who had arrived at some remarkable realisation of spiritual knowledge. But subsequently education became more intellectual and mundane; it was imparted in cities and universities and aimed less at an inner preparation of character and knowledge and more at instruction and the training of the intelligence. But in the beginning the Aryan man was really prepared in some degree for the four great objects of his life, *artha*, *kāma*, *dharma*, *mokṣa*. Entering into the householder stage to live out his knowledge, he was able to serve there the three first human objects; he satisfied his natural being and its interests and desire to take the joy of life, he paid his debt to the society and its demands and by the way he discharged his life functions he prepared himself for the last greatest purpose of his existence. In the third stage he retired to the forest and worked out in a certain seclusion the truth of his spirit. He lived in a broad freedom from the stricter social bonds; but if he so willed, gathering the young around him or receiving the inquirer and seeker, he could leave his knowledge to the new rising generation as an educator or a spiritual teacher. In the last stage of life he was free to throw off every remaining tie and to wander over the world in an extreme spiritual detachment from all the forms of social life, satisfying only the barest necessities, communing with the universal spirit, making his soul ready for eternity. This circle was not obligatory on all. The great majority never went beyond the two first stages; many passed away in the *vānaprastha* or forest stage. Only the rare few made the last extreme venture and took the life of the wandering recluse. But this profoundly conceived cycle gave a scheme which kept the full course of the human spirit in its view; it could be taken advantage of by all according to their actual growth and in its fullness by those who were sufficiently developed in their present birth to complete the circle.

On this first firm and noble basis Indian civilisation grew to its maturity and became a thing rich, splendid and unique. While it filled the view with the last mountain prospect of a supreme spiritual elevation, it did not neglect the life of the levels. It lived between the busy life of the city and village, the freedom and seclusion of the forest and the last overarching illimitable ether. Moving firmly between life and death it saw beyond both and cut out a hundred high-roads to immortality. It developed the external nature and drew it into the inner self; it enriched life to raise it into the spirit. Thus founded, thus trained, the ancient Indian race grew to astonishing heights of culture and civilisation; it lived with a noble, well-based, ample and vigorous order and freedom; it developed a great literature, sciences, arts, crafts, industries; it rose to the highest possible ideals and no mean practice of knowledge and culture, of arduous greatness and heroism, of kindness, philanthropy and human sympathy and oneness; it laid the inspired basis of wonderful spiritual philosophies; it examined the secrets of external nature and discovered and lived the boundless and miraculous truths of the inner being; it fathomed self and understood and possessed the world. As the civilisation grew in richness and complexity, it lost indeed the first grand simplicity of its early order. The intellect towered and widened, but intuition waned or retreated into the hearts of the saints and adepts and mystics. A greater stress came to be laid on scientific system, accuracy and order, not only in all the things of the life and mind, but even in the things of the spirit; the free flood of intuitive knowledge was forced to run in hewn channels. Society became more artificial and complex, less free and noble; more of a bond on the individual, it was less a field for the growth of his spiritual faculties. The old fine integral harmony gave place to an exaggerated stress on one or other of its elemental factors. *Artha* and *kāma*, interest and desire were in some directions developed at the expense of the *dharma*. The lines of the dharma were filled and stamped in with so rigid a distinctness as to stand in the way of the freedom of the spirit.

Spiritual liberation was pursued in hostility to life and not as its full-orbed result and high crowning. But still some strong basis of the old knowledge remained to inspire, to harmonise, to keep alive the soul of India. Even when deterioration came and a slow collapse, even when the life of the community degenerated into an uneasily petrified ignorance and confusion, the old spiritual aim and tradition remained to sweeten and humanise and save in its worst days the Indian peoples. For we see that it continually swept back on the race in new waves and high outbursts of life-giving energy or leaped up in intense kindlings of the spiritualised mind or heart, even as it now rises once more in all its strength to give the impulse of a great renascence.

VII

Indian Spirituality and Life

I HAVE described the framework of the Indian idea from the outlook of an intellectual criticism, because that is the standpoint of the critics who affect to disparage its value. I have shown that Indian culture must be adjudged even from this alien outlook to have been the creation of a wide and noble spirit. Inspired in the heart of its being by a lofty principle, illumined with a striking and uplifting idea of individual manhood and its powers and its possible perfection, aligned to a spacious plan of social architecture, it was enriched not only by a strong philosophic, intellectual and artistic creativeness but by a great and vivifying and fruitful life-power. But this by itself does not give an adequate account of its spirit or its greatness. One might describe Greek or Roman civilisation from this outlook and miss little that was of importance; but Indian civilisation was not only a great cultural system, but an immense religious effort of the human spirit.

The whole root of difference between Indian and European culture springs from the spiritual aim of Indian civilisation. It is the turn which this aim imposes on all the rich and luxuriant variety of its forms and rhythms that gives to it its unique character. For even what it has in common with other cultures gets from that turn a stamp of striking originality and solitary greatness. A spiritual aspiration was the governing force of this culture, its core of thought, its ruling passion. Not only did it make spirituality the highest aim of life, but it even tried, as far as that could be done in the past conditions of the human race, to turn the whole of life towards spirituality. But since religion is in the human mind the first native, if imperfect form of the spiritual impulse, the predominance of the spiritual idea, its endeavour to take hold of life, necessitated a casting of thought and action into the religious mould and a persistent filling of every circumstance of life with the religious sense; it demanded a pervadingly religio-philosophic culture. The highest spirituality indeed moves in a free and wide air far above that lower stage of seeking which is governed by religious form and dogma; it does not easily bear their limitations and, even when it admits, it transcends them; it lives in an experience which to the formal religious mind is unintelligible. But man does not arrive immediately at that highest inner elevation and, if it were demanded from him at once, he would never arrive there. At first he needs lower supports and stages of ascent; he asks for some scaffolding of dogma, worship, image, sign, form, symbol, some indulgence and permission of mixed half-natural motive on which he can stand while he builds up in him the temple of the spirit. Only when the temple is completed, can the supports be removed, the scaffolding disappear. The religious culture which now goes by the name of Hinduism not only fulfilled this purpose, but, unlike certain credal religions, it knew its purpose. It gave itself no name, because it set itself no sectarian limits; it claimed no universal adhesion, asserted no sole infallible dogma, set up no single narrow path or gate of salvation; it was less a creed or cult than a continuously enlarging tradition of the Godward endeavour of the human spirit. An immense many-sided many-staged provision for a spiritual self-building and self-finding, it had some right to speak of itself by the only name it knew, the eternal religion, *sanātana dharma*. It is only if we have a just and right appreciation of this sense and spirit of Indian religion that we can come to an understanding of the true sense and spirit of Indian culture.

Now just here is the first baffling difficulty over which the European mind stumbles; for it finds itself unable to make out what Hindu religion is. Where, it asks, is its soul? where is its mind and fixed thought? where is the form of its body? How can there be a religion which has no rigid dogmas demanding belief on pain of eternal damnation, no theological postulates, even no fixed theology, no credo distinguishing it from antagonistic or rival religions? How can there be a religion which has no papal head, no governing ecclesiastic body, no church, chapel or congregational system, no binding religious form of any kind obligatory on all its adherents, no one administration and discipline? For the Hindu priests are mere ceremonial officiants without any ecclesiastical authority or disciplinary powers and the Pundits are mere interpreters of the Shastra, not the lawgivers of the religion or its rulers. How again can Hinduism be called a religion when it admits all beliefs, allowing even a kind of high-reaching atheism and agnosticism and permits all possible spiritual experiences, all kinds of religious adventures? The only thing fixed, rigid, positive, clear is the social law, and even that varies in different castes, regions, communities. The caste rules and not the Church; but even the caste cannot punish a man for his beliefs, ban heterodoxy or prevent his following a new revolutionary doctrine or a new spiritual leader. If it excommunicates Christian or Muslim, it is not for religious belief or practice, but because they break with the social rule and order. It has been asserted in consequence that there is no such thing as a Hindu religion, but only a Hindu social system with a bundle of the most disparate religious beliefs and institutions. The precious dictum that Hinduism is a mass of folk-lore with an ineffective coat of metaphysical daubing is perhaps the final judgment of the superficial occidental mind on this matter.

This misunderstanding springs from the total difference of outlook on religion that divides the Indian mind and the normal Western intelligence. The difference is so great that it could only be bridged by a supple philosophical training or a wide spiritual culture; but the established forms of religion and the rigid methods of philosophical thought practised in the West make no provision and even allow no opportunity for either. To the Indian mind the least important part of religion is its dogma; the religious spirit matters, not the theological credo. On the contrary to the Western mind a fixed intellectual belief is the most important part of a cult; it is its core of meaning, it is the thing that distinguishes it from others. For it is its formulated beliefs that make it either a true or a false religion, according as it agrees or does not agree with the credo of its critic. This notion, however foolish and shallow, is a necessary consequence of the Western idea which falsely supposes that intellectual truth is the highest verity and, even, that there is no other. The Indian religious thinker knows that all the highest eternal verities are truths of the spirit. The supreme truths are neither the rigid conclusions of logical reasoning nor the affirmations of credal statement, but fruits of the soul's inner experience. Intellectual truth is only one of the doors to the outer precincts of the temple. And since intellectual truth turned towards the Infinite must be in its very nature many-sided and not narrowly one, the most varying intellectual beliefs can be equally true because they mirror different facets of the Infinite. However separated by intellectual distance, they still form so many side-entrances which admit the mind to some faint ray from a supreme Light. There are no true and false religions, but rather all religions are true in their own way and degree. Each is one of the thousand paths to the One Eternal.

Indian religion placed four necessities before human life. First, it imposed upon the mind a belief in a highest consciousness or state of existence universal and transcendent of the universe, from which all comes, in which all lives and moves without knowing it and of which all must one day grow aware, returning towards that which is perfect, eternal and infinite. Next, it laid upon the individual life the need of self-preparation by development and experience till man is ready for an effort to grow consciously into the truth of this greater existence. Thirdly, it provided it with a well-founded, well-explored, many-branching and always enlarging way of knowledge and of spiritual or religious discipline. Lastly, for those not yet ready for these higher steps it provided an organisation of the individual and collective life, a framework of personal and social discipline and conduct, of mental and moral and vital development by which they could move each in his own limits and according to his own nature in such a way as to become eventually ready for the greater existence. The first three of these elements are the most essential to any religion, but Hinduism has always attached to the last also a great importance; it has left out no part of life as a thing secular and foreign to the religious and spiritual life. Still the

Indian religious tradition is not merely the form of a religio-social system, as the ignorant critic vainly imagines. However greatly that may count at the moment of a social departure, however stubbornly the conservative religious mind may oppose all pronounced or drastic change, still the core of Hinduism is a spiritual, not a social discipline. Actually we find religions like Sikhism counted in the Vedic family although they broke down the old social tradition and invented a novel form, while the Jains and Buddhists were traditionally considered to be outside the religious fold although they observed Hindu social custom and intermarried with Hindus, because their spiritual system and teaching figured in its origin as a denial of the truth of Veda and a departure from the continuity of the Vedic line. In all these four elements that constitute Hinduism there are major and minor differences between Hindus of various sects, schools, communities and races; but nevertheless there is also a general unity of spirit, of fundamental type and form and of spiritual temperament which creates in this vast fluidity an immense force of cohesion and a strong principle of oneness.

The fundamental idea of all Indian religion is one common to the highest human thinking everywhere. The supreme truth of all that is is a Being or an existence beyond the mental and physical appearances we contact here. Beyond mind, life and body there is a Spirit and Self containing all that is finite and infinite, surpassing all that is relative, a supreme Absolute, originating and supporting all that is transient, a one Eternal. A one transcendent, universal, original and sempiternal Divinity or divine Essence, Consciousness, Force and Bliss is the fount and continent and inhabitant of things. Soul, nature, life are only a manifestation or partial phenomenon of this self-aware Eternity and this conscious Eternal. But this Truth of being was not seized by the Indian mind only as a philosophical speculation, a theological dogma, an abstraction contemplated by the intelligence. It was not an idea to be indulged by the thinker in his study, but otherwise void of practical bearing on life. It was not a mystic sublimation which could be ignored in the dealings of man with the world and Nature. It was a living spiritual

Truth, an Entity, a Power, a Presence that could be sought by all according to their degree of capacity and seized in a thousand ways through life and beyond life. This Truth was to be lived and even to be made the governing idea of thought and life and action. This recognition and pursuit of something or someone Supreme is behind all forms the one universal credo of Indian religion, and if it has taken a hundred shapes, it was precisely because it was so much alive. The Infinite alone justifies the existence of the finite and the finite by itself has no entirely separate value or independent existence. Life, if it is not an illusion, is a divine Play, a manifestation of the glory of the Infinite. Or it is a means by which the soul growing in Nature through countless forms and many lives can approach, touch, feel and unite itself through love and knowledge and faith and adoration and a Godward will in works with this transcendent Being and this infinite Existence. This Self or this self-existent Being is the one supreme reality, and all things else are either only appearances or only true by dependence upon it. It follows that self-realisation and God-realisation are the great business of the living and thinking human being. All life and thought are in the end a means of progress towards self-realisation and God-realisation.

Indian religion never considered intellectual or theological conceptions about the supreme Truth to be the one thing of central importance. To pursue that Truth under whatever conception or whatever form, to attain to it by inner experience, to live in it in consciousness, this it held to be the sole thing needful. One school or sect might consider the real self of man to be indivisibly one with the universal Self or the supreme Spirit. Another might regard man as one with the Divine in essence but different from him in Nature. A third might hold God, Nature and the individual soul in man to be three eternally different powers of being. But for all the truth of Self held with equal force; for even to the Indian dualist God is the supreme self and reality in whom and by whom Nature and man live, move and have their being and, if you eliminate God from his view of things, Nature and man would lose for him all their meaning and importance. The Spirit, universal Nature (whether called Maya, Prakriti or Shakti) and the soul in living beings, Jiva, are the three truths which are universally admitted by all the many religious sects and conflicting religious philosophies of India. Universal also is the admission that the discovery of the inner spiritual self in man, the divine soul in him, and some kind of living and uniting contact or absolute unity of the soul in man with God or supreme Self or eternal Brahman is the condition of spiritual perfection. It is open to us to conceive and have experience of the Divine as an impersonal Absolute and Infinite or to approach and know and feel Him as a transcendent and universal sempiternal Person: but whatever be our way of reaching him, the one important truth of spiritual experience is that he is in the heart and centre of all existence and all existence is in him and to find him is the great self-finding. Differences of credal belief are to the Indian mind nothing more than various ways of seeing the one Self and Godhead in all. Self-realisation is the one thing needful; to open to the inner Spirit, to live in the Infinite, to seek after and discover the Eternal, to be in union with God, that is the common idea and aim of religion, that is the sense of spiritual salvation, that is the living Truth that fulfils and releases. This dynamic following after the highest spiritual truth and the highest spiritual aim are the uniting bond of Indian religion and, behind all its thousand forms, its one common essence.

If there were nothing else to be said in favour of the spiritual genius of the Indian people or the claim of Indian civilisation to stand in the front rank as a spiritual culture, it would be sufficiently substantiated by this single fact that not only was this greatest and widest spiritual truth seen in India with the boldest largeness, felt and expressed with a unique intensity, and approached from all possible sides, but it was made consciously the grand uplifting idea of life, the core of all thinking, the foundation of all religion, the secret sense and declared ultimate aim of human existence. The truth announced is not peculiar to Indian thinking; it has been seen and followed by the highest minds and souls everywhere. But elsewhere it has been the living guide only of a few thinkers, or of some rare mystics or exceptionally gifted spiritual natures. The mass of men have had no understanding, no distant perception, not even a reflected glimpse of this something Beyond; they have lived only in the lower sectarian side of religion, in inferior ideas of the Deity or in the outward mundane aspects of life. But Indian culture did succeed by the strenuousness of its vision, the universality of its approach, the intensity of its seeking in doing what has been done by no other culture. It succeeded in stamping religion with the essential ideal of a real spirituality; it brought some living reflection of the very highest spiritual truth and some breath of its influence into every part of the religious field. Nothing can be more untrue than to pretend that the general religious mind of India has not at all grasped the higher spiritual or metaphysical truths of Indian religion. It is a sheer falsehood or a wilful misunderstanding to say that it has lived always in the externals only of rite and creed and shibboleth. On the contrary, the main metaphysical truths of Indian religious philosophy in their broad idea-aspects or in an intensely poetic and dynamic representation have been stamped on the general mind of the people. The ideas of Maya, Lila, divine Immanence are as familiar to the man in the street and the worshipper in the temple as to the philosopher in his seclusion, the monk in his monastery and the saint in his hermitage. The spiritual reality which they reflect, the profound experience to which they point, has permeated the religion, the literature, the art, even the popular religious songs of a whole people.

It is true that these things are realised by the mass of men more readily through the fervour of devotion than by a strenuous effort of thinking; but that is as it must and should be since the heart of man is nearer to the Truth than his intelligence. It is true, too, that the tendency to put too much stress on externals has always been there and worked to overcloud the deeper spiritual motive; but that is not peculiar to India, it is a common failing of human nature, not less but rather more evident in Europe than in Asia. It has needed a constant stream of saints and religious thinkers and the teaching of illuminated Sannyasins to keep the reality vivid and resist the deadening weight of form and ceremony and ritual. But the fact remains that these messengers of the spirit have never been wanting. And the still more significant fact remains that there has never been wanting either a happy readiness in the common mind to listen to the message. The ordinary materialised souls, the external minds are the majority in India as everywhere. How easy it is for the superior European critic to forget this common fact of our humanity and treat this turn as a peculiar sin of the Indian mentality! But at least the people of India, even the "ignorant masses" have this distinction that they are by centuries of training nearer to the inner realities, are divided from them by a less thick veil of the universal ignorance and are more easily led back to a vital glimpse of God and Spirit, self and eternity than the mass of men or even the cultured elite anywhere else. Where else could the lofty, austere and difficult teaching of a Buddha have seized so rapidly on the popular mind? Where else could the songs of a Tukaram, a Ramprasad, a Kabir, the Sikh gurus and the chants of the Tamil saints with their fervid devotion but also their profound spiritual thinking have found so speedy an echo and formed a popular religious literature? This strong permeation or close nearness of the spiritual turn, this readiness of the mind of a whole nation to turn to the highest realities is the sign and fruit of an age-long, a real and a still living and supremely spiritual culture.

The endless variety of Indian philosophy and religion seems to the European mind interminable, bewildering, wearisome, useless; it is unable to see the forest because of the richness and luxuriance of its vegetation; it misses the common spiritual life in the multitude of its forms. But this infinite variety is itself, as Vivekananda pertinently pointed out, a sign of a superior religious culture. The Indian mind has always realised that the Supreme is the Infinite; it has perceived, right from its Vedic beginnings, that to the soul in Nature the Infinite must always present itself in an endless variety of aspects. The mentality of the West has long cherished the aggressive and quite illogical idea of a single religion for all mankind, a religion universal by the very force of its narrowness, one set of dogmas, one cult, one system of ceremonies, one array of prohibitions and injunctions, one ecclesiastical ordinance. That narrow absurdity prances about as the one true religion which all must accept on peril of persecution by men here and spiritual rejection or fierce eternal punishment by God in other worlds. This grotesque creation of human unreason, the parent of so much intolerance, cruelty, obscurantism and aggressive fanaticism, has never been able to take firm hold of the free and supple mind of India. Men everywhere have common human failings, and intolerance and narrowness especially in the matter of observances there has been and is in India. There has been much violence of theological disputation, there have been querulous bickerings of sects with their pretensions to spiritual superiority and greater knowledge, and sometimes, at one time especially in southern India in a period of acute religious differences, there have been brief local outbreaks of active mutual tyranny and persecution even unto death. But these things have never taken the proportions which they assumed in Europe. Intolerance has been confined for the most part to the minor forms of polemical attack or to social obstruction or ostracism; very seldom have they transgressed across the line to the major forms of barbaric persecution which draw a long, red and hideous stain across the religious history of Europe. There has played ever in India the saving perception of a higher and purer spiritual intelligence, which has had its effect on the mass mentality. Indian religion has always felt that since the minds, the temperaments, the intellectual affinities of men are unlimited in their variety, a perfect liberty of thought and of worship must be allowed to the individual in his approach to the Infinite.

India recognised authority of spiritual experience and knowledge, but she recognised still more the need of variety of spiritual experience and knowledge. Even in the days of decline when the claim of authority became in too many directions rigorous and excessive, she still kept the saving perception that there could not be one but must be many authorities. An alert readiness to acknowledge new light capable of enlarging the old tradition has always been characteristic of the religious mind in India. Indian civilisation did not develop to a last logical conclusion its earlier political and social liberties, — that greatness of freedom or boldness of experiment belongs to the West; but liberty of religious practice and a complete freedom of thought in religion as in every other matter have always counted among its constant traditions. The atheist and the agnostic were free from persecution in India. Buddhism and Jainism might be disparaged as unorthodox religions, but they were allowed to live freely side by side with the orthodox creeds and philosophies; in her eager thirst for truth she gave them their full chance, tested all their values, and as much of their truth as was assimilable was taken into the stock of the common and always enlarging continuity of her spiritual experience. That ageless continuity was carefully conserved, but it admitted light from all quarters. In latter times the saints who reached some fusion of the Hindu and the Islamic teaching were freely and immediately recognised as leaders of Hindu religion, — even, in some cases, when they started with a Mussulman birth and from the Mussulman standpoint. The Yogin who developed a new path of Yoga, the religious teacher who founded a new order, the thinker who built up a novel statement of the many-sided truth of spiritual existence, found no serious obstacle to their practice or their propaganda. At most they had to meet the opposition of the priest and pundit instinctively adverse to any change; but this had only to be lived down for the new element to be received into the free and pliant body of the national religion and its ever plastic order.

The necessity of a firm spiritual order as well as an untrammelled spiritual freedom was always perceived; but it was provided for in various ways and not in any one formal, external or artificial manner. It was founded in the first place on the recognition of an ever enlarging number of authorised scriptures. Of these scriptures some like the Gita possessed a common and widespread authority, others were peculiar to sects or schools: some like the Vedas were supposed to have an absolute, others a relative binding force. But the very largest freedom of interpretation was allowed, and this prevented any of these authoritative books from being turned into an instrument of ecclesiastical tyranny or a denial of freedom to the human mind and spirit. Another instrument of order was the power of family and communal tradition, *kuladharma*, persistent but not immutable. A third was the religious authority of the Brahmins; as priests they officiated as the custodians of observance, as scholars, acting in a much more important and respected role than the officiating priesthood could claim, — for to the priesthood no great consideration was given in India, — they stood as the exponents of religious tradition and were a strong conservative power. Finally, and most characteristically, most powerfully, order was secured by the succession of Gurus or spiritual teachers, *paramparā*, who preserved the continuity of each spiritual system and handed it down from generation to generation but were empowered also, unlike the priest and the Pundit, to enrich freely its significance and develop its practice. A living and moving, not a rigid continuity, was the characteristic turn of the inner religious mind of India. The evolution of the Vaishnava religion from very early times, its succession of saints and teachers, the striking developments given to it successively by Ramanuja, Madhwa, Chaitanya, Vallabhacharya and its recent stirrings of survival after a period of languor and of some fossilisation form one notable example of this firm combination of agelong continuity and fixed tradition with latitude of powerful and vivid change. A more striking instance was the founding of the Sikh religion, its long line of Gurus and the novel direction and form given to it by Guru Govind Singh in the democratic institution of the Khalsa. The Buddhist Sangha and its councils, the creation of a sort of divided pontifical authority by Shankaracharya, an authority transmitted from generation to generation for more than a thousand years and even now not altogether effete, the Sikh Khalsa, the adoption of the congregational form called Samaj by the modern reforming sects indicate an attempt towards a compact and stringent order. But it is noteworthy that even in these attempts the freedom and plasticity and living sincerity of the religious mind of India always prevented it from initiating anything like the overblown ecclesiastical orders and despotic hierarchies which in the West have striven to impose the tyranny of their obscurantist yoke on the spiritual liberty of the human race.

The instinct for order and freedom at once in any field of human activity is always a sign of a high natural capacity in that field, and a people which could devise such a union of unlimited religious liberty with an always orderly religious evolution, must be credited with a high religious capacity, even as they cannot be denied its inevitable fruit, a great, ancient and still living spiritual culture. It is this absolute freedom of thought and experience and this provision of a framework sufficiently flexible and various to ensure liberty and yet sufficiently sure and firm to be the means of a stable and powerful evolution that have given to Indian civilisation this wonderful and seemingly eternal religion with its marvellous wealth of many-sided philosophies, of great scriptures, of profound religious works, of religions that approach the Eternal from every side of his infinite Truth, of Yoga-systems of psycho-spiritual discipline and self-finding, of suggestive forms, symbols and ceremonies which are strong to train the mind at all stages of development towards the Godward endeavour. Its firm structure capable of supporting without peril a large tolerance and assimilative spirit, its vivacity, intensity, profundity and multitudinousness of experience, its freedom from the unnatural European divorce between mundane knowledge and science on the one side and religion on the other, its reconciliation of the claims of the intellect with the claims of the spirit, its long endurance and infinite capacity of revival make it stand out today as the most remarkable, rich and living of all religious systems. The nineteenth century has thrown on it its tremendous shock of negation and scepticism but has not been able to destroy its assured roots of spiritual knowledge. A little disturbed for a brief moment, surprised and temporarily shaken by this attack in a period of greatest depression of the nation’s vital force, India revived almost at once and responded by a fresh outburst of spiritual activity, seeking, assimilation, formative effort. A great new life is visibly preparing in her, a mighty transformation and farther dynamic evolution and potent march forward into the inexhaustible infinities of spiritual experience.

The many-sided plasticity of Indian cult and spiritual experience is the native sign of its truth, its living reality, the unfettered sincerity of its search and finding; but this plasticity is a constant stumbling block to the European mind. The religious thinking of Europe is accustomed to rigid impoverishing definitions, to strict exclusions, to a constant preoccupation with the outward idea, the organisation, the form. A precise creed framed by the logical or theological intellect, a strict and definite moral code to fix the conduct, a bundle of observances and ceremonies, a firm ecclesiastical or congregational organisation, that is Western religion. Once the spirit is safely imprisoned and chained up in these things, some emotional fervours and even a certain amount of mystic seeking can be tolerated — within rational limits; but, after all, it is perhaps safest to do without these dangerous spices. Trained in these conceptions, the European critic comes to India and is struck by the immense mass and intricacy of a polytheistic cult crowned at its summit by a belief in the one Infinite. This belief he erroneously supposes to be identical with the barren and abstract intellectual pantheism of the West. He applies with an obstinate prejudgment the ideas and definitions of his own thinking, and this illegitimate importation has fixed many false values on Indian spiritual conceptions, — unhappily, even in the mind of "educated" India. But where our religion eludes his fixed standards, misunderstanding, denunciation and supercilious condemnation come at once to his rescue. The Indian mind on the contrary is averse to intolerant mental exclusions; for a great force of intuition and inner experience had given it from the beginning that towards which the mind of the West is only now reaching with much fumbling and difficulty, — the cosmic consciousness, the cosmic vision. Even when it sees the One without a second, it still admits his duality of Spirit and Nature; it leaves room for his many trinities and million aspects. Even when it concentrates on a single limiting aspect of the Divinity and seems to see nothing but that, it still keeps instinctively at the back of its consciousness the sense of the All and the idea of the One. Even when it distributes its worship among many objects, it looks at the same time through the objects of its worship and sees beyond the multitude of godheads the unity of the Supreme. This synthetic turn is not peculiar to the mystics or to a small literate class or to philosophic thinkers nourished on the high sublimities of the Veda and Vedanta. It permeates the popular mind nourished on the thoughts, images, traditions and cultural symbols of the Purana and Tantra; for these things are only concrete representations or living figures of the synthetic monism, the many-sided unitarianism, the large cosmic universalism of the Vedic scriptures.

Indian religion founded itself on the conception of a timeless, nameless and formless Supreme, but it did not feel called upon, like the narrower and more ignorant monotheisms of the younger races, to deny or abolish all intermediary forms and names and powers and personalities of the Eternal and Infinite. A colourless monism or a pale vague transcendental Theism was not its beginning, its middle and its end. The one Godhead is worshipped as the All, for all in the universe is he or made out of his being or his nature. But Indian religion is not therefore pantheism; for beyond this universality it recognises the supracosmic Eternal. Indian polytheism is not the popular polytheism of ancient Europe; for here the worshipper of many gods still knows that all his divinities are forms, names, personalities and powers of the One; his gods proceed from the one Purusha, his goddesses are energies of the one divine Force. Those ways of Indian cult which most resemble a popular form of Theism, are still something more; for they do not exclude, but admit the many aspects of God. Indian image-worship is not the idolatry of a barbaric or undeveloped mind; for even the most ignorant know that the image is a symbol and support and can throw it away when its use is over. The later religious forms which most felt the impress of the Islamic idea, like Nanak's worship of the timeless One, Akala, and the reforming creeds of today, born under the influence of the West, yet draw away from the limitations of Western or Semitic monotheism. Irresistibly they turn from these infantile conceptions towards the fathomless truth of Vedanta. The divine Personality of God and his human relations with man are strongly stressed by Vaishnavism and Shaivism as the most dynamic Truth; but that is not the whole of these religions, and this divine Personality is not the limited magnified-human personal God of the West. Indian religion cannot be described by any of the definitions known to the occidental intelligence. In its totality it has been a free and tolerant synthesis of all spiritual worship and experience. Observing the one Truth from all its many sides, it shut out none. It gave itself no specific name and bound itself by no limiting distinction. Allowing separative designations for its constituting cults and divisions, it remained itself nameless, formless, universal, infinite, like the Brahman of its agelong seeking. Although strikingly distinguished from other creeds by its traditional scriptures, cults and symbols, it is not in its essential character a credal religion at all but a vast and many-sided, an always unifying and always progressive and self-enlarging system of spiritual culture.[1]

It is necessary to emphasise this synthetic character and embracing unity of the Indian religious mind, because otherwise we miss the whole meaning of Indian life and the whole sense of Indian culture. It is only by recognising this broad and plastic character that we can understand its total effect on the life of the community and the life of the individual. And if we are asked, "But after all what is Hinduism, what does it teach, what does it practise, what are its common factors?" we can answer that Indian religion is founded upon three basic ideas or rather three fundamentals of a highest and widest spiritual experience. First comes the idea of the One Existence of the Veda to whom sages give different names, the One without a second of the Upanishads who is all that is and beyond all that is, the Permanent of the Buddhists, the Absolute of the Illusionists, the supreme God or Purusha of the Theists who holds in his power the soul and Nature, — in a word the Eternal, the Infinite. This is the first common foundation; but it can be and is expressed in an endless variety of formulas by the human intelligence. To discover and closely approach and enter into whatever kind or degree of unity with this Permanent, this Infinite, this Eternal, is the highest height and last effort of its spiritual experience. That is the first universal *credo* of the religious mind of India.

---

[1] The only religion that India has apparently rejected in the end, is Buddhism; but in fact this appearance is a historical error. Buddhism lost its separative force, because its spiritual substance, as opposed to its credal parts, was absorbed by the religious mind of Hindu India. Even so, it survived in the North and was exterminated not by Shankaracharya or another, but by the invading force of Islam.

Admit in whatever formula this foundation, follow this great spiritual aim by one of the thousand paths recognised in India or even any new path which branches off from them and you are at the core of the religion. For its second basic idea is the manifold way of man's approach to the Eternal and Infinite. The Infinite is full of many infinities and each of these infinities is itself the very Eternal. And here in the limitations of the cosmos God manifests himself and fulfils himself in the world in many ways, but each is the way of the Eternal. For in each finite we can discover and through all things as his forms and symbols we can approach the Infinite; all cosmic powers are manifestations, all forces are forces of the One. The gods behind the workings of Nature are to be seen and adored as powers, names and personalities of the one Godhead. An infinite Conscious-Force, executive Energy, Will or Law, Maya, Prakriti, Shakti or Karma, is behind all happenings, whether to us they seem good or bad, acceptable or inacceptable, fortunate or adverse. The Infinite creates and is Brahma; it preserves and is Vishnu; it destroys or takes to itself and is Rudra or Shiva. The supreme Energy beneficent in upholding and protection is or else formulates itself as the Mother of the worlds, Luxmi or Durga. Or beneficent even in the mask of destruction, it is Chandi or it is Kali, the dark Mother. The One Godhead manifests himself in the form of his qualities in various names and godheads. The God of divine love of the Vaishnava, the God of divine power of the Shakta appear as two different godheads; but in truth they are the one infinite Deity in different figures.[2] One may approach the Supreme through any of these names and forms, with knowledge or in ignorance; for through them and beyond them we can proceed at last to the supreme experience.

---

[2] This explanation of Indian polytheism is not a modern invention created to meet Western reproaches; it is to be found explicitly stated in the Gita; it is, still earlier, the sense of the Upanishads; it was clearly stated in so many words in the first ancient days by the "primitive" poets (in truth the profound mystics) of the Veda.

One thing however has to be noted that while many modernised Indian religionists tend, by way of an intellectual compromise with modern materialistic rationalism, to explain away these things as symbols, the ancient Indian religious mentality saw them not only as symbols but as world-realities, — even if to the Illusionist realities only of the world of Maya. For between the highest unimaginable Existence and our material way of being the spiritual and psychic knowledge of India did not fix a gulf as between two unrelated opposites. It was aware of other psychological planes of consciousness and experience and the truths of these supraphysical planes were no less real to it than the outward truths of the material universe. Man approaches God at first according to his psychological nature and his capacity for deeper experience, *svabhāva*, *adhikāra*. The level of Truth, the plane of consciousness he can reach is determined by his inner evolutionary stage. Thence comes the variety of religious cult, but its data are not imaginary structures, inventions of priests or poets, but truths of a supraphysical existence intermediate between the consciousness of the physical world and the ineffable superconscience of the Absolute.

The third idea of strongest consequence at the base of Indian religion is the most dynamic for the inner spiritual life. It is that while the Supreme or the Divine can be approached through a universal consciousness and by piercing through all inner and outer Nature, That or He can be met by each individual soul in itself, in its own spiritual part, because there is something in it that is intimately one or at least intimately related with the one divine Existence. The essence of Indian religion is to aim at so growing and so living that we can grow out of the Ignorance which veils this self-knowledge from our mind and life and become aware of the Divinity within us. These three things put together are the whole of Hindu religion, its essential sense and, if any credo is needed, its credo.

VIII

Indian Spirituality and Life – 2

THE TASK of religion and spirituality is to mediate between God and man, between the Eternal and Infinite and this transient, yet persistent finite, between a luminous Truth-consciousness not expressed or not yet expressed here and the Mind's ignorance. But nothing is more difficult than to bring home the greatness and uplifting power of the spiritual consciousness to the natural man forming the vast majority of the race; for his mind and senses are turned outward towards the external calls of life and its objects and never inwards to the Truth which lies behind them. This external vision and attraction are the essence of the universal blinding force which is designated in Indian philosophy the Ignorance. Ancient Indian spirituality recognised that man lives in the Ignorance and has to be led through its imperfect indications to a highest inmost knowledge. Our life moves between two worlds, the depths upon depths of our inward being and the surface field of our outward nature. The majority of men put the whole emphasis of life on the outward and live very strongly in their surface consciousness and very little in the inward existence. Even the choice spirits raised from the grossness of the common vital and physical mould by the stress of thought and culture do not usually get farther than a strong dwelling on the things of the mind. The highest flight they reach — and it is this that the West persistently mistakes for spirituality — is a preference for living in the mind and emotions more than in the gross outward life or else an attempt to subject this rebellious life-stuff to the law of intellectual truth or ethical reason and will or aesthetic beauty or of all three together. But spiritual knowledge perceives that there is a greater thing in us; our inmost self, our real being is not the intellect, not the aesthetic, ethical or thinking mind, but the divinity within, the Spirit, and these other things are only the instruments of the

Spirit. A mere intellectual, ethical and aesthetic culture does not go back to the inmost truth of the spirit; it is still an Ignorance, an incomplete, outward and superficial knowledge. To have made the discovery of our deepest being and hidden spiritual nature is the first necessity and to have erected the living of an inmost spiritual life into the aim of existence is the characteristic sign of a spiritual culture.

This endeavour takes in certain religions the form of a spiritual exclusiveness which revolts from the outward existence rather than seeks to transform it. The main tendency of the Christian discipline was not only to despise the physical and vital way of living, but to disparage and imprison the intellectual and distrust and discourage the aesthetic thirsts of our nature. It emphasised against them a limited spiritual emotionalism and its intense experiences as the one thing needful; the development of the ethical sense was the sole mental necessity, its translation into act the sole indispensable condition or result of the spiritual life. Indian spirituality reposed on too wide and many-sided a culture to admit as its base this narrow movement; but on its more solitary summits, at least in its later period, it tended to a spiritual exclusiveness loftier in vision, but even more imperative and excessive. A spirituality of this intolerant high-pointed kind, to whatever elevation it may rise, however it may help to purify life or lead to a certain kind of individual salvation, cannot be a complete thing. For its exclusiveness imposes on it a certain impotence to deal effectively with the problems of human existence; it cannot lead it to its integral perfection or combine its highest heights with its broadest broadness. A wider spiritual culture must recognise that the Spirit is not only the highest and inmost thing, but all is manifestation and creation of the Spirit. It must have a wider outlook, a more embracing range of applicability and, even, a more aspiring and ambitious aim of its endeavour. Its aim must be not only to raise to inaccessible heights the few elect, but to draw all men and all life and the whole human being upward, to spiritualise life and in the end to divinise human nature. Not only must it be able to lay hold on his deepest individual being but to inspire too his communal existence. It must turn by a spiritual change all the members of his ignorance into members of the knowledge; it must transmute all the instruments of the human into instruments of a divine living. The total movement of Indian spirituality is towards this aim; in spite of all the difficulties, imperfections and fluctuations of its evolution, it had this character. But like other cultures it was not at all times and in all its parts and movements consciously aware of its own total significance. This large sense sometimes emerged into something like a conscious synthetic clarity, but was more often kept in the depths and on the surface dispersed in a multitude of subordinate and special stand-points. Still, it is only by an intelligence of the total drift that its manifold sides and rich variations of effort and teaching and discipline can receive their full reconciling unity and be understood in the light of its own most intrinsic purpose.

Now the spirit of Indian religion and spiritual culture has been persistently and immovably the same throughout the long time of its vigour, but its form has undergone remarkable changes. Yet if we look into them from the right centre it will be apparent that these changes are the results of a logical and inevitable evolution inherent in the very process of man's growth towards the heights. In its earliest form, its first Vedic system, it took its outward foundation on the mind of the physical man whose natural faith is in things physical, in the sensible and visible objects, presences, representations and the external pursuits and aims of this material world. The means, symbols, rites, figures, by which it sought to mediate between the spirit and the normal human mentality were drawn from these most external physical things. Man's first and primitive idea of the Divine can only come through his vision of external Nature and the sense of a superior Power or Powers concealed behind her phenomena, veiled in the heaven and earth, father and mother of our being, in the sun and moon and stars, its lights and regulators, in dawn and day and night and rain and wind and storm, the oceans and the rivers and the forests, all the circumstances and forces of her scene of action, all that vast and mysterious surrounding life of which we are a part and in which the natural heart and mind of the human creature feel instinctively through whatever bright or dark or confused figures that there is here some divine Multitude or else mighty Infinite, one, manifold and mysterious, which takes these forms and manifests itself in these motions. The Vedic religion took this natural sense and feeling of the physical man; it used the conceptions to which they gave birth, and it sought to lead him through them to the psychic and spiritual truths of his own being and the being of the cosmos. It recognised that he was right when he saw behind the manifestations of Nature great living powers and godheads, even though he knew not their inner truth, and right too in offering to them worship and propitiation and atonement. For that inevitably must be the initial way in which his active physical, vital and mental nature is allowed to approach the Godhead. He approaches it through its visible outward manifestations as something greater than his own natural self, something single or multiple that guides, sustains and directs his life, and he calls to it for help and support in the desires and difficulties and distresses and struggles of his human existence.[1] The Vedic religion accepted also the form in which early man everywhere expressed his sense of the relation between himself and the godheads of Nature; it adopted as its central symbol the act and ritual of a physical sacrifice. However crude the notions attached to it, this idea of the necessity of sacrifice did express obscurely a first law of being. For it was founded on that secret of constant interchange between the individual and the universal powers of the cosmos which covertly supports all the process of life and develops the action of Nature.

But even in its external or exoteric side the Vedic religion did not limit itself to this acceptance and regulation of the first religious notions of the natural physical mind of man. The Vedic Rishis gave a psychic function to the godheads worshipped by the people; they spoke to them of a higher Truth, Right, Law of which the gods were the guardians, of the necessity of a truer knowledge and a larger inner living according to this Truth and Right and of a home of Immortality to which the soul of man could ascend by the power of Truth and of right doing. The people no doubt took these ideas in their most external sense; but they were trained by them to develop their ethical nature, to turn towards some initial development of their psychic being, to conceive the idea of a knowledge and truth other than that of the physical life and to admit even a first conception of some greater spiritual Reality which was the ultimate object of human worship or aspiration. This religious and moral force was the highest reach of the external cult and the most that could be understood or followed by the mass of the people.

---

[1] The Gita recognises four kinds or degrees of worshippers and God-seekers. There are first the *arthārthī* and *ārta*, those who seek him for the fulfilment of desire and those who turn for divine help in the sorrow and suffering of existence; there is next the *jijñāsu*, the seeker of knowledge, the questioner who is moved to seek the Divine in his truth and in that to meet him; last and highest, there is the *jñānī* who has already contact with the truth and is able to live in unity with the Spirit.

The deeper truth of these things was reserved for the initiates, for those who were ready to understand and practise the inner sense, the esoteric meaning hidden in the Vedic scripture. For the Veda is full of words which, as the Rishis themselves express it, are secret words that give their inner meaning only to the seer, *kavaye nivacanā niṇyā vacāṁsi*. This is a feature of the ancient sacred hymns which grew obscure to later ages; it became a dead tradition and has been entirely ignored by modern scholarship in its laborious attempt to read the hieroglyph of the Vedic symbols. Yet its recognition is essential to a right understanding of almost all the ancient religions; for mostly they started on their upward curve through an esoteric element of which the key was not given to all. In all or most there was a surface cult for the common physical man who was held yet unfit for the psychic and spiritual life and an inner secret of the Mysteries carefully disguised by symbols whose sense was opened only to the initiates. This was the origin of the later distinction between the Shudra, the undeveloped physical-minded man, and the twice-born, those who were capable of entering into the second birth by initiation and to whom alone the Vedic education could be given without danger. This too actuated the later prohibition of any reading or teaching of the Veda by the Shudra. It was this inner meaning, it was the higher psychic and spiritual truths concealed by the outer sense, that gave to these hymns the name by which they are still known, the Veda, the Book of Knowledge. Only by penetrating into the esoteric sense of this worship can we understand the full flowering of the Vedic religion in the Upanishads and in the long later evolution of Indian spiritual seeking and experience. For it is all there in its luminous seed, preshadowed or even prefigured in the verses of the early seers. The persistent notion which through every change ascribed the foundation of all our culture to the Rishis, whatever its fabulous forms and mythical ascriptions, contains a real truth and veils a sound historic tradition. It reflects the fact of a true initiation and an unbroken continuity between this great primitive past and the riper but hardly greater spiritual development of our historic culture.

This inner Vedic religion started with an extension of the psychic significance of the godheads in the Cosmos. Its primary notion was that of a hierarchy of worlds, an ascending stair of planes of being in the universe. It saw a mounting scale of the worlds corresponding to a similar mounting scale of planes or degrees or levels of consciousness in the nature of man. A Truth, Right and Law sustains and governs all these levels of Nature; one in essence, it takes in them different but cognate forms. There is for instance the series of the outer physical light, another higher and inner light which is the vehicle of the mental, vital and psychic consciousness and a highest inmost light of spiritual illumination. Surya, the Sun-God, was the lord of the physical Sun; but he is at the same time to the Vedic seer-poet the giver of the rays of knowledge which illumine the mind and he is too the soul and energy and body of the spiritual illumination. And in all these powers he is a luminous form of the one and infinite Godhead. All the Vedic godheads have this outer and this inner and inmost function, their known and their secret Names. All are in their external character powers of physical Nature; all have in their inner meaning a psychic function and psychological ascriptions; all too are various powers of some one highest Reality, *ekaṁ sat*, the one infinite Existence. This hardly knowable Supreme is called often in the Veda "That Truth" or "That One", *tat satyam*, *tad ekam*. This complex character of the Vedic godheads assumes forms which have been wholly misunderstood by those who ascribe to them only their outward physical significance. Each of these gods is in himself a complete and separate cosmic personality of the one Existence and in their combination of powers they form the complete universal power, the cosmic whole, *vaiśvadevyam*. Each again, apart from his special function, is one godhead with the others; each holds in himself the universal divinity, each god is all the other gods. This is the aspect of the Vedic teaching and worship to which a European scholar, mistaking entirely its significance because he read it in the dim and poor light of European religious experience, has given the sounding misnomer, henotheism. Beyond, in the triple Infinite, these godheads put on their highest nature and are names of the one nameless Ineffable.

But the greatest power of the Vedic teaching, that which made it the source of all later Indian philosophies, religions, systems of Yoga, lay in its application to the inner life of man. Man lives in the physical cosmos subject to death and the "much falsehood" of the mortal existence. To rise beyond this death, to become one of the immortals, he has to turn from the falsehood to the Truth; he has to turn to the Light and to battle with and to conquer the powers of the Darkness. This he does by communion with the divine Powers and their aid; the way to call down this aid was the secret of the Vedic mystics. The symbols of the outer sacrifice are given for this purpose in the manner of the Mysteries all over the world an inner meaning; they represent a calling of the gods into the human being, a connecting sacrifice, an intimate interchange, a mutual aid, a communion. There is a building of the powers of the godheads within man and a formation in him of the universality of the divine nature. For the gods are the guardians and increasers of the Truth, the powers of the Immortal, the sons of the infinite Mother; the way to immortality is the upward way of the gods, the way of the Truth, a journey, an ascent by which there is a growth into the law of the Truth, *ṛtasya panthāḥ*. Man arrives at immortality by breaking beyond the limitations not only of his physical self, but of his mental and his ordinary psychic nature into the highest plane and supreme ether of the Truth: for there is the foundation of immortality and the native seat of the triple Infinite. On these ideas the Vedic sages built up a profound psychological and psychic discipline which led beyond itself to a highest spirituality and contained the nucleus of later Indian Yoga. Already we find in their seed, though not in their full expansion, the most characteristic ideas of Indian spirituality. There is the one Existence, *ekaṁ sat*, supracosmic beyond the individual and the universe. There is the one God who presents to us the many forms, names, powers, personalities of his Godhead. There is the distinction between the Knowledge and the Ignorance,[2] the greater truth of an immortal life opposed to the much falsehood or mixed truth and falsehood of mortal existence. There is the discipline of an inward growth of man from the physical through the psychic to the spiritual existence. There is the conquest of death, the secret of immortality, the perception of a realisable divinity of the human spirit. In an age to which in the insolence of our external knowledge we are accustomed to look back as the childhood of humanity or at best a period of vigorous barbarism, this was the inspired and intuitive psychic and spiritual teaching by which the ancient human fathers, *pūrve pitaraḥ manuṣyāḥ*, founded a great and profound civilisation in India.

This high beginning was secured in its results by a larger sublime efflorescence. The Upanishads have always been recognised in India as the crown and end of Veda; that is indicated in their general name, Vedanta. And they are in fact a large crowning outcome of the Vedic discipline and experience. The time in which the Vedantic truth was wholly seen and the Upanishads took shape, was, as we can discern from such records as the Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka, an epoch of immense and strenuous seeking, an intense and ardent seed-time of the

---

[2] *Cittim acittiṁ cinavad vi vidvān.* "Let the knower distinguish the Knowledge and the Ignorance."

Spirit. In the stress of that seeking the truths held by the initiates but kept back from ordinary men broke their barriers, swept through the higher mind of the nation and fertilised the soil of Indian culture for a constant and ever increasing growth of spiritual consciousness and spiritual experience. This turn was not as yet universal; it was chiefly men of the higher classes, Kshatriyas and Brahmins trained in the Vedic system of education, no longer content with an external truth and the works of the outer sacrifice, who began everywhere to seek for the highest word of revealing experience from the sages who possessed the knowledge of the One. But we find too among those who attained to the knowledge and became great teachers men of inferior or doubtful birth like Janashruti, the wealthy Shudra, or Satyakama Jabali, son of a servant-girl who knew not who was his father. The work that was done in this period became the firm bedrock of Indian spirituality in later ages and from it gush still the life-giving waters of a perennial and never failing inspiration. This period, this activity, this grand achievement created the whole difference between the evolution of Indian civilisation and the quite different curve of other cultures.

For a time had come when the original Vedic symbols must lose their significance and pass into an obscurity that became impenetrable, as did the inner teaching of the Mysteries in other countries. The old poise of culture between two extremes with a bridge of religious cult and symbolism to unite them, the crude or half-trained naturalness of the outer physical man on one side of the line, and on the other an inner and secret psychic and spiritual life for the initiates could no longer suffice as the basis of our spiritual progress. The human race in its cycle of civilisation needed a large-lined advance; it called for a more and more generalised intellectual, ethical and aesthetic evolution to help it to grow into the light. This turn had to come in India as in other lands. But the danger was that the greater spiritual truth already gained might be lost in the lesser confident half-light of the acute but unillumined intellect or stifled within the narrow limits of the self-sufficient logical reason. That was what actually happened in the West, Greece leading the way. The old knowledge was prolonged in a less inspired, less dynamic and more intellectual form by the Pythagoreans, by the Stoics, by Plato and the Neo-Platonists; but still in spite of them and in spite of the only half-illumined spiritual wave which swept over Europe from Asia in an ill-understood Christianity, the whole real trend of Western civilisation has been intellectual, rational, secular and even materialistic, and it keeps this character to the present day. Its general aim has been a strong or a fine culture of the vital and physical man by the power of an intellectualised ethics, aesthesis and reason, not the leading up of our lower members into the supreme light and power of the spirit. The ancient spiritual knowledge and the spiritual tendency it had created were saved in India from this collapse by the immense effort of the age of the Upanishads. The Vedantic seers renewed the Vedic truth by extricating it from its cryptic symbols and casting it into a highest and most direct and powerful language of intuition and inner experience. It was not the language of the intellect, but still it wore a form which the intellect could take hold of, translate into its own more abstract terms and convert into a starting-point for an ever widening and deepening philosophic speculation and the reason's long search after a Truth original, supreme and ultimate. There was in India as in the West a great upbuilding of a high, wide and complex intellectual, aesthetic, ethical and social culture. But left in Europe to its own resources, combated rather than helped by obscure religious emotion and dogma, here it was guided, uplifted and more and more penetrated and suffused by a great saving power of spirituality and a vast stimulating and tolerant light of wisdom from a highest ether of knowledge.

The second or post-Vedic age of Indian civilisation was distinguished by the rise of the great philosophies, by a copious, vivid, many-thoughted, many-sided epic literature, by the beginnings of art and science, by the evolution of a vigorous and complex society, by the formation of large kingdoms and empires, by manifold formative activities of all kinds and great systems of living and thinking. Here as elsewhere, in Greece, Rome, Persia, China, this was the age of a high outburst of the intelligence working upon life and the things of the mind to discover their reason and their right way and bring out a broad and noble fullness of human existence. But in India this effort never lost sight of the spiritual motive, never missed the touch of the religious sense. It was a birth time and youth of the seeking intellect and, as in Greece, philosophy was the main instrument by which it laboured to solve the problems of life and the world. Science too developed, but it came second only as an auxiliary power. It was through profound and subtle philosophies that the intellect of India attempted to analyse by the reason and logical faculty what had formerly been approached with a much more living force through intuition and the soul's experience. But the philosophic mind started from the data these mightier powers had discovered and was faithful to its parent Light; it went back always in one form or another to the profound truths of the Upanishads which kept their place as the highest authority in these matters. There was a constant admission that spiritual experience is a greater thing and its light a truer if more incalculable guide than the clarities of the reasoning intelligence.

The same governing force kept its hold on all the other activities of the Indian mind and Indian life. The epic literature is full almost to excess of a strong and free intellectual and ethical thinking; there is an incessant criticism of life by the intelligence and the ethical reason, an arresting curiosity and desire to fix the norm of truth in all possible fields. But in the background and coming constantly to the front there is too a constant religious sense and an implicit or avowed assent to the spiritual truths which remained the unshakable basis of the culture. These truths suffused with their higher light secular thought and action or stood above to remind them that they were only steps towards a goal. Art in India, contrary to a common idea, dwelt much upon life; but still its highest achievement was always in the field of the interpretation of the religio-philosophical mind and its whole tone was coloured by a suggestion of the spiritual and the infinite. Indian society developed with an unsurpassed organising ability, stable effectiveness, practical insight its communal coordination of the mundane life of interest and desire, *kāma*, *artha*; it governed always its action by a reference at every point to the moral and religious law, the Dharma: but it never lost sight of spiritual liberation as our highest point and the ultimate aim of the effort of Life. In later times when there was a still stronger secular tendency of intellectual culture, there came in an immense development of the mundane intelligence, an opulent political and social evolution, an emphatic stressing of aesthetic, sensuous and hedonistic experience. But this effort too always strove to keep itself within the ancient frame and not to lose the special stamp of the Indian cultural idea. The enlarged secular turn was compensated by a deepening of the intensities of psycho-religious experience. New religious or mystic forms and disciplines attempted to seize not only the soul and the intellect, but the emotions, the senses, the vital and the aesthetic nature of man and turn them into stuff of the spiritual life. And every excess of emphasis on the splendour and richness and power and pleasures of life had its recoil and was balanced by a corresponding potent stress on spiritual asceticism as the higher way. The two trends, on one side an extreme of the richness of life experience, on the other an extreme and pure rigorous intensity of the spiritual life, accompanied each other; their interaction, whatever loss there might be of the earlier deep harmony and large synthesis, yet by their double pull preserved something still of the balance of Indian culture.

Indian religion followed this line of evolution and kept its inner continuity with its Vedic and Vedantic origins; but it changed entirely its mental contents and colour and its outward basis. It did not effectuate this change through any protestant revolt or revolution or with any idea of an iconoclastic reformation. A continuous development of its organic life took place, a natural transformation brought out latent motives or else gave to already established motive-ideas a more predominant place or effective form. At one time indeed it seemed as if a discontinuity and a sharp new beginning were needed and would take place. Buddhism seemed to reject all spiritual continuity with the Vedic religion. But this was after all less in reality than in appearance. The Buddhist ideal of Nirvana was no more than a sharply negative and exclusive statement of the highest Vedantic spiritual experience. The ethical system of the eightfold path taken as the way to release was an austere sublimation of the Vedic notion of the Right, Truth and Law followed as the way to immortality, *ṛtasya panthāḥ*. The strongest note of Mahayana Buddhism, its stress on universal compassion and fellow-feeling, was an ethical application of the spiritual unity which is the essential idea of Vedanta.[3] The most characteristic tenets of the new discipline, Nirvana and Karma, could have been supported from the utterances of the Brahmanas and Upanishads. Buddhism could easily have claimed for itself a Vedic origin and the claim would have been no less valid than the Vedic ascription of the Sankhya philosophy and discipline with which it had some points of intimate alliance. But what hurt Buddhism and determined in the end its rejection, was not its denial of a Vedic origin or authority, but the exclusive trenchancy of its intellectual, ethical and spiritual positions. A result of an intense stress of the union of logical reason with the spiritualised mind — for it was by an intense spiritual search supported on a clear and hard rational thinking that it was born as a separate religion, — its trenchant affirmations and still more exclusive negations could not be made sufficiently compatible with the native flexibility, many-sided susceptibility and rich synthetic turn of the Indian religious consciousness; it was a high creed but not plastic enough to hold the heart of the people. Indian religion absorbed all that it could of Buddhism, but rejected its exclusive positions and preserved the full line of its own continuity, casting back to the ancient Vedanta.

This lasting line of change moved forward not by any destruction of principle, but by a gradual fading out of the prominent Vedic forms and the substitution of others. There was a transformation of symbol and ritual and ceremony or a substitution of new kindred figures, an emergence of things that are only hints in the original system, a development of novel idea-forms from the seed of the original thinking. And especially there was a farther widening and fathoming of psychic and spiritual experience. The Vedic gods rapidly lost their deep original significance. At first they kept their hold by their outer cosmic sense but were overshadowed by the great Trinity, Brahma-Vishnu-Shiva, and afterwards faded altogether. A new pantheon appeared which in its outward symbolic aspects expressed a deeper truth and larger range of religious experience, an intenser feeling, a vaster idea. The Vedic sacrifice persisted only in broken and lessening fragments. The house of Fire was replaced by the temple; the karmic ritual of sacrifice was transformed into the devotional temple ritual; the vague and shifting mental images of the Vedic gods figured in the mantras yielded to more precise conceptual forms of the two great deities, Vishnu and Shiva, and of their Shaktis and their offshoots. These new concepts stabilised in physical images which were made the basis both for internal adoration and for the external worship which replaced sacrifice. The psychic and spiritual mystic endeavour which was the inner sense of the Vedic hymns, disappeared into the less intensely luminous but more wide and rich and complex psycho-spiritual inner life of Puranic and Tantric religion and Yoga.

---

[3] Buddha himself does not seem to have preached his tenets as a novel revolutionary creed, but as the old Aryan way, the true form of the eternal religion.

The Purano-Tantric stage of the religion was once decried by European critics and Indian reformers as a base and ignorant degradation of an earlier and purer religion. It was rather an effort, successful in a great measure, to open the general mind of the people to a higher and deeper range of inner truth and experience and feeling. Much of the adverse criticism once heard proceeded from a total ignorance of the sense and intention of this worship. Much of this criticism has been uselessly concentrated on side-paths and aberrations which could hardly be avoided in this immensely audacious experimental widening of the basis of the culture. For there was a catholic attempt to draw towards the spiritual truth minds of all qualities and people of all classes. Much was lost of the profound psychic knowledge of the Vedic seers, but much also of new knowledge was developed, untrodden ways were opened and a hundred gates discovered into the Infinite. If we try to see the essential sense and aim of this development and the intrinsic value of its forms and means and symbols, we shall find that this evolution followed upon the early Vedic form very much for the same reason as Catholic Christianity replaced the mysteries and sacrifices of the early Pagan religions. For in both cases the outward basis of the early religion spoke to the outward physical mind of the people and took that as the starting-point of its appeal. But the new evolution tried to awaken a more inner mind even in the common man, to lay hold on his inner vital and emotional nature, to support all by an awakening of the soul and to lead him through these things towards a highest spiritual truth. It attempted in fact to bring the mass into the temple of the spirit rather than leave them in the outer precincts. The outward physical sense was satisfied through its aesthetic turn by a picturesque temple worship, by numerous ceremonies, by the use of physical images; but these were given a psycho-emotional sense and direction that was open to the heart and imagination of the ordinary man and not reserved for the deeper sight of the elect or the strenuous tapasya of the initiates. The secret initiation remained but was now a condition for the passage from the surface psycho-emotional and religious to a profounder psychic-spiritual truth and experience.

Nothing essential was touched in its core by this new orientation; but the instruments, atmosphere, field of religious experience underwent a considerable change. The Vedic godheads were to the mass of their worshippers divine powers who presided over the workings of the outward life of the physical cosmos; the Puranic Trinity had even for the multitude a predominant psycho-religious and spiritual significance. Its more external significances, for instance the functions of cosmic creation, preservation and destruction, were only a dependent fringe of these profundities that alone touched the heart of its mystery. The central spiritual truth remained in both systems the same, the truth of the One in many aspects. The Trinity is a triple form of the one supreme Godhead and Brahman; the Shaktis are energies of the one Energy of the highest divine Being. But this greatest religious truth was no longer reserved for the initiated few; it was now more and more brought powerfully, widely and intensely home to the general mind and feeling of the people. Even the so-called henotheism of the Vedic idea was prolonged and heightened in the larger and simpler worship of Vishnu or Shiva as the one universal and highest Godhead of whom all others are living forms and powers. The idea of the Divinity in man was popularised to an extraordinary extent, not only the occasional manifestation of the Divine in humanity which founded the worship of the Avataras, but the Presence discoverable in the heart of every creature. The systems of Yoga developed themselves on the same common basis. All led or hoped to lead through many kinds of psycho-physical, inner vital, inner mental and psycho-spiritual methods to the common aim of all Indian spirituality, a greater consciousness and a more or less complete union with the One and Divine or else an immergence of the individual soul in the Absolute. The Purano-Tantric system was a wide, assured and many-sided endeavour, unparalleled in its power, insight, amplitude, to provide the race with a basis of generalised psycho-religious experience from which man could rise through knowledge, works or love or through any other fundamental power of his nature to some established supreme experience and highest absolute status.

This great effort and achievement which covered all the time between the Vedic age and the decline of Buddhism, was still not the last possibility of religious evolution open to Indian culture. The Vedic training of the physically-minded man made the development possible. But in its turn this raising of the basis of religion to the inner mind and life and psychic nature, this training and bringing out of the psychic man ought to make possible a still larger development and support a greater spiritual movement as the leading power of life. The first stage makes possible the preparation of the natural external man for spirituality; the second takes up his outward life into a deeper mental and psychical living and brings him more directly into contact with the spirit and divinity within him; the third should render him capable of taking up his whole mental, psychical, physical living into a first beginning at least of a generalised spiritual life. This endeavour has manifested itself in the evolution of Indian spirituality and is the significance of the latest philosophies, the great spiritual movements of the saints and bhaktas and an increasing resort to the various paths of Yoga. But unhappily it synchronised with a decline of Indian culture and an increasing collapse of its general power and knowledge, and in these surroundings it could not bear its natural fruit; but at the same time it has done much to prepare such a possibility in the future. If Indian culture is to survive and keep its spiritual basis and innate character, it is in this direction, and not in a mere revival or prolongation of the Puranic system, that its evolution must turn, rising so towards the fulfilment of that which the Vedic seers saw as the aim of man and his life thousands of years ago and the Vedantic sages cast into the clear and immortal forms of their luminous revelation.

Even the psychic-emotional part of man's nature is not the inmost door to religious feeling, nor is his inner mind the highest witness to spiritual experience. There is behind the first the inmost soul of man, in that deepest secret heart, *hṛdaye guhāyām*, in which the ancient seers saw the very tabernacle of the indwelling Godhead and there is above the second a luminous highest mind directly open to a truth of the Spirit to which man's normal nature has as yet only an occasional and momentary access. Religious evolution, spiritual experience can find their true native road only when they open to these hidden powers and make them their support for a lasting change, a divinisation of human life and nature. An effort of this kind was the very force behind the most luminous and vivid of the later movements of India's vast religious cycle. It is the secret of the most powerful forms of Vaishnavism and Tantra and Yoga. The labour of ascent from our half-animal human nature into the fresh purity of the spiritual consciousness needed to be followed and supplemented by a descent of the light and force of the spirit into man's members and the attempt to transform human into divine nature.

But it could not find its complete way or its fruit because it synchronised with a decline of the life force in India and a lowering of power and knowledge in her general civilisation and culture. Nevertheless here lies the destined force of her survival and renewal, this is the dynamic meaning of her future. A widest and highest spiritualising of life on earth is the last vision of all that vast and unexampled seeking and experiment in a thousand ways of the soul's outermost and innermost experience which is the unique character of her past; this in the end is the mission for which she was born and the meaning of her existence.

IX

Indian Spirituality and Life – 3

IT IS essential, if we are to get a right view of Indian civilisation or of any civilisation, to keep to the central, living, governing things and not to be led away by the confusion of accidents and details. This is a precaution which the critics of our culture steadily refuse to take. A civilisation, a culture must be looked at first in its initiating, supporting, durable central motives, in its heart of abiding principle; otherwise we shall be likely to find ourselves, like these critics, in a maze without a clue and we shall stumble about among false and partial conclusions and miss entirely the true truth of the matter. The importance of avoiding this error is evident when we are seeking for the essential significance of Indian religious culture. But the same method must be held to when we proceed to observe its dynamic formulation and the effect of its spiritual ideal on life.

Indian culture recognises the spirit as the truth of our being and our life as a growth and evolution of the spirit. It sees the Eternal, the Infinite, the Supreme, the All; it sees this as the secret highest Self of all, this is what it calls God, the Permanent, the Real, and it sees man as a soul and power of this being of God in Nature. The progressive growth of the finite consciousness of man towards this Self, towards God, towards the universal, the eternal, the infinite, in a word his growth into spiritual consciousness, by the development of his ordinary ignorant natural being into an illumined divine nature, this is for Indian thinking the significance of life and the aim of human existence. To this deeper and more spiritual idea of Nature and of existence a great deal of what is strongest and most potential of fruitful consequences in recent European thinking already turns with a growing impetus. This turn may be a relapse to "barbarism" or it may be the high natural outcome of her own increasing and ripened culture; that is a question for Europe to decide. But always to India this ideal inspiration or rather this spiritual vision of Self, God, Spirit, this nearness to a cosmic consciousness, a cosmic sense and feeling, a cosmic idea, will, love, delight into which we can release the limited, ignorant, suffering ego, this drive towards the transcendental, eternal and infinite, and the moulding of man into a conscious soul and power of that greater Existence have been the engrossing motive of her philosophy, the sustaining force of her religion, the fundamental idea of her civilisation and culture.

I have suggested that the formal turn, the rhythmic lines of effort of this culture must be regarded as having passed through two complete external stages; while a third has taken its initial steps and is the destiny of her future. The early Vedic was the first stage: then religion took its outward formal stand on the natural approach of the physical mind of man to the Godhead in the universe, but the initiates guarded the sacrificial fire of a greater spiritual truth behind the form. The Purano-Tantric was the second stage: then religion took its outward formal stand on the first deeper approaches of man's inner mind and life to the Divine in the universe, but a greater initiation opened the way to a far more intimate truth and pushed towards an inner living of the spiritual life in all its profundity and in all the infinite possibilities of an uttermost sublime experience. There has been long in preparation a third stage which belongs to the future. Its inspiring idea has been often cast out in limited or large, veiled and quiet or bold and striking spiritual movements and potent new disciplines and religions, but it has not yet been successful in finding its way or imposing new lines on human life. The circumstances were adverse, the hour not yet come. This greatest movement of the Indian spiritual mind has a double impulse. Its will is to call the community of men and all men each according to his power to live in the greatest light of all and found their whole life on some fully revealed power and grand uplifting truth of the Spirit. But it has had too at times a highest vision which sees the possibility not only of an ascent towards the Eternal but of a descent of the Divine Consciousness and a change of human into divine nature. A perception of the divinity hidden in man has been its crowning force. This is a turn that cannot be rightly understood in the ideas or language of the European religious reformer or his imitators. It is not what the purist of the reason or the purist of the spirit imagines it to be and by that too hasty imagination falls short in his endeavour. Its index vision is pointed to a truth that exceeds the human mind and, if at all realised in his members, would turn human life into a divine superlife. And not until this third largest sweep of the spiritual evolution has come into its own, can Indian civilisation be said to have discharged its mission, to have spoken its last word and be *functus officio*, crowned and complete in its office of mediation between the life of man and the spirit.

The past dealings of Indian religion with life must be judged according to the stages of its progress; each age of its movement must be considered on its own basis. But throughout it consistently held to two perceptions that showed great practical wisdom and a fine spiritual tact. First, it saw that the approach to the spirit cannot be sudden, simple and immediate for all individuals or for the community of men; it must come ordinarily or at least at first through a gradual culture, training, progress. There must be an enlarging of the natural life accompanied by an uplifting of all its motives; a growing hold upon it of the higher rational, psychic and ethical powers must prepare and lead it towards a higher spiritual law. But the Indian religious mind saw too at the same time that if its greater aim was to be fruitful and the character of its culture imperative, there must be throughout and at every moment some kind of insistence on the spiritual motive. And for the mass of men this means always some kind of religious influence. That pervasive insistence was necessary in order that from the beginning some power of the universal inner truth, some ray from the real reality of our existence might cast its light or at least its sensible if subtle influence on the natural life of man. Human life must be induced to flower, naturally in a way, but at the same time with a wise nurturing and cultivation into its own profounder spiritual significance. Indian culture has worked by two coordinated, mutually stimulating and always interblended operations of which these perceptions are the principle. First, it has laboured to lead upward and enlarge the life of the individual in the community through a natural series of life-stages till it was ready for the spiritual levels. But also it has striven to keep that highest aim before the mind at every stage and throw its influence on each circumstance and action both of man's inner and his outer existence.

In the plan of its first aim it came nearer to the highest ancient culture of mankind in other regions, but in a type and with a motive all its own. The frame of its system was constituted by a triple quartette. Its first circle was the synthesis and gradation of the fourfold object of life, vital desire and hedonistic enjoyment, personal and communal interest, moral right and law, and spiritual liberation. Its second circle was the fourfold order of society, carefully graded and equipped with its fixed economic functions and its deeper cultural, ethical and spiritual significances. Its third, the most original and indeed unique of its englobing life-patterns, was the fourfold scale of the successive stages of life, student, householder, forest recluse and free supersocial man. This frame, these lines of a large and noble life-training subsisted in their purity, their grand natural balance of austerity and accommodation, their fine effectiveness during the later Vedic and heroic age of the civilisation: afterwards they crumbled slowly or lost their completeness and order. But the tradition, the idea with some large effect of its force and some figure of its lines endured throughout the whole period of cultural vigour. However deflected it might have been from its true form and spirit, however mutilated and complicated for the worse, there was always left some presence of its inspiration and power. Only in the decline do we get the slow collapse, the degraded and confused mass of conventions which still labours to represent the ancient and noble Aryan system, but in spite of relics of glamour and beauty, in spite of survivals of spiritual suggestion and in spite of a residue of the old high training, is little better than a detritus or a mass of confused relics. Still even in this degradation enough of the original virtue has remained to ensure a remarkable remnant of the ancient beauty, attractiveness and power of survival.

But the turn given to the other and more direct spiritual operation of this culture is of a still greater importance. For it is that which, always surviving, has coloured permanently the Indian mind and life. It has remained the same behind every change of forms and throughout all the ages of the civilisation it has renewed its effectiveness and held its field. This second side of the cultural effort took the form of an endeavour to cast the whole of life into a religious mould; it multiplied means and devices which by their insistent suggestion and opportunity and their mass of effect would help to stamp a Godward tendency on the entire existence. Indian culture was founded on a religious conception of life and both the individual and the community drank in at every moment its influence. It was stamped on them by the training and turn of the education; the entire life atmosphere, all the social surroundings were suffused with it; it breathed its power through the whole original form and hieratic character of the culture. Always was felt the near idea of the spiritual existence and its supremacy as the ideal, highest over all others; everywhere there was the pervading pressure of the notion of the universe as a manifestation of divine Powers and a movement full of the presence of the Divine. Man himself was not a mere reasoning animal, but a soul in constant relation with God and with the divine cosmic Powers. The soul's continued existence was a cyclic or upward progress from birth to birth; human life was the summit of an evolution which terminated in the conscious Spirit, every stage of that life a step in a pilgrimage. Every single action of man had its importance of fruit whether in future lives or in the worlds beyond the material existence.

But Indian religion was not content with the general pressure of these conceptions, the training, the atmosphere, the stamp on the culture. Its persistent effort was to impress the mind at every moment and in each particular with the religious influence. And to do this more effectively by a living and practical adaptation, not asking from anyone what was too much for him or too little, it took as a guiding idea its perception of the varying natural capacity of man, *adhikāra*. It provided in its system means by which each man high or low, wise or ignorant, exceptional or average might feel in the way suitable to his nature and evolutionary stage the call, the pressure, the influence. Avoiding the error of the religions that impose a single dogmatic and inflexible rule on every man regardless of the possibilities of his nature, it tried rather to draw him gently upward and help him to grow steadily in religious and spiritual experience. Every part of human nature, every characteristic turn of its action was given a place in the system; each was suitably surrounded with the spiritual idea and a religious influence, each provided with steps by which it might rise towards its own spiritual possibility and significance. The highest spiritual meaning of life was set on the summits of each evolving power of the human nature. The intelligence was called to a supreme knowledge, the dynamic active and creative powers pointed to openness and unity with an infinite and universal Will, the heart and sense put in contact with a divine love and joy and beauty. But this highest meaning was also put everywhere indicatively or in symbols behind the whole system of living, even in its details, so that its impression might fall in whatever degree on the life, increase in pervasion and in the end take up the entire control. This was the aim and, if we consider the imperfections of our nature and the difficulty of the endeavour, we can say that it achieved an unusual measure of success. It has been said with some truth that for the Indian the whole of life is a religion. True of the ideal of Indian life, it is true to a certain degree and in a certain sense in its fact and practice. No step could be taken in the Indian's inner or outer life without his being reminded of a spiritual existence. Everywhere he felt the closeness or at least saw the sign of something beyond his natural life, beyond the moment in time, beyond his individual ego, something other than the needs and interests of his vital and physical nature. That insistence gave its tone and turn to his thought and action and feeling; it produced that subtler sensitiveness to the spiritual appeal, that greater readiness to turn to the spiritual effort which are even now distinguishing marks of the Indian temperament. It is that readiness, that sensitiveness which justifies us when we speak of the characteristic spirituality of the Indian people.

The ancient idea of the *adhikāra* has to be taken into careful account if we would understand the peculiar character of Indian religion. In most other religious systems we find a high-pitched spiritual call and a difficult and rigid ethical standard far beyond the possibilities of man's half-evolved, defective and imperfect nature. This standard, this call are announced as if imperative on all; but it is evident that only a few can give an adequate response. There is presented to our view for all our picture of life the sharp division of two extremes; the saint and the worldling, the religious and the irreligious, the good and the bad, the pious and the impious, souls accepted and souls rejected, the sheep and the goats, the saved and the damned, the believer and the infidel, are the two categories set constantly before us. All between is a confusion, a tug of war, an uncertain balance. This crude and summary classification is the foundation of the Christian system of an eternal heaven and hell; at best, the Catholic religion humanely interposes a precarious chance hung between that happy and this dread alternative, the chance of a painful purgatory for more than nine tenths of the human race. Indian religion set up on its summits a still more high-pitched spiritual call, a standard of conduct still more perfect and absolute; but it did not go about its work with this summary and unreflecting ignorance. All beings are to the Indian mind portions of the Divine, evolving souls, and sure of an eventual salvation and release into the spirit. All must feel, as the good in them grows or, more truly, the godhead in them finds itself and becomes conscious, the ultimate touch and call of their highest self and through that call the attraction to the Eternal and Divine. But actually in life there are infinite differences between man and man; some are more inwardly evolved, others are less mature, many if not most are infant souls incapable of great steps and difficult efforts. Each needs to be dealt with according to his nature and his soul stature. But a general distinction can be drawn between three principal types varying in their openness to the spiritual appeal or to the religious influence or impulse. This distinction amounts to a gradation of three stages in the growing human consciousness. One crude, ill-formed, still outward, still vitally and physically minded can be led only by devices suited to its ignorance. Another, more developed and capable of a much stronger and deeper psycho-spiritual experience, offers a riper make of manhood gifted with a more conscious intelligence, a larger vital or aesthetic opening, a stronger ethical power of the nature. A third, the ripest and most developed of all, is ready for the spiritual heights, fit to receive or to climb towards the loftiest ultimate truth of God and of its own being and to tread the summits of divine experience.[1]

It was to meet the need of the first type or level that Indian religion created that mass of suggestive ceremony and effective ritual and strict outward rule and injunction and all that pageant of attracting and compelling symbol with which the cult is so richly equipped or profusely decorated. These are for the most part forming and indicative things which work upon the mind consciently and subconsciently and prepare it for an entry into the significance of the greater permanent things that lie behind them. And for this type too, for its vital mind and will, is intended all in the religion that calls on man to turn to a divine Power or powers for the just satisfaction of his desires and his interests, just because subject to the right and the law, the Dharma. In the Vedic times the outward ritual sacrifice and at a later period all the religious forms and notions that clustered visibly around the rites and imagery of temple worship, constant festival and ceremony and daily act of outward devotion were intended to serve this type or this soul-stage. Many of these things may seem to the developed mind to belong to an ignorant or half awakened religionism; but they have their concealed truth and their psychic value and are indispensable in this stage for the development and difficult awakening of the soul shrouded in the ignorance of material Nature.

---

[1] The Tantric distinction is between the animal man, the hero man and the divine man, *paśu*, *vīra*, *deva*. Or we may grade the difference according to the three gunas, — first, the tamasic or rajaso-tamasic man ignorant, inert or moved only in a little light by small motive forces, the rajasic or sattwo-rajasic man struggling with an awakened mind and will towards self-development or self-affirmation, and the sattwic man open in mind and heart and will to the Light, standing at the top of the scale and ready to transcend it.

The middle stage, the second type starts from these things, but gets behind them; it is capable of understanding more clearly and consciently the psychic truths, the conceptions of the intelligence, the aesthetic indications, the ethical values and all the other mediating directions which Indian religion took care to place behind its symbols. These intermediate truths vivify the outward forms of the system and those who can grasp them can go through these mental indices towards things that are beyond the mind and approach the profounder truths of the spirit. For at this stage there is already something awake that can go inward to a more deeply psycho-religious experience. Already the mind, heart and will have some strength to grapple with the difficulties of the relations between the spirit and life, some urge to satisfy more luminously or more inwardly the rational, aesthetic and ethical nature and lead them upward towards their own highest heights; one can begin to train mind and soul towards a spiritual consciousness and the opening of a spiritual existence. This ascending type of humanity claims for its use all that large and opulent middle region of philosophic, psycho-spiritual, ethical, aesthetic and emotional religious seeking which is the larger and more significant portion of the wealth of Indian culture. At this stage intervene the philosophical systems, the subtle illumining debates and inquiries of the thinkers; here are the nobler or more passionate reaches of devotion, here are held up the higher, ampler or austerer ideals of the Dharma; here break in the psychical suggestions and first definite urgings of the eternal and infinite which draw men by their appeal and promise towards the practice of Yoga.

But these things, great as they were, were not final or supreme: they were openings, steps of ascension towards the luminous grandeurs of spiritual truth and its practice was kept ready and its means of attainment provided for the third and greatest type of human being, the third loftiest stage of the spiritual evolution. The complete light of spiritual knowledge when it emerges from veil and compromise and goes beyond all symbols and middle significances, the absolute and universal divine love, the beauty of the All-beautiful, the noblest dharma of unity with all beings, universal compassion and benevolence calm and sweet in the perfect purity of the spirit, the upsurge of the psychical being into the spiritual unity or the spiritual ecstasy, these divinest things were the heritage of the human being ready for divinity and their way and call were the supreme significances of Indian religion and Yoga. He reached by them the fruits of his perfect spiritual evolution, an identity with the Self and Spirit, a dwelling in or with God, the divine law of his being, a spiritual universality, communion, transcendence.

But distinctions are lines that can always be overpassed in the infinite complexity of man's nature and there was no sharp and unbridgeable division, only a gradation, since the actuality or potentiality of the three powers coexist in all men. Both the middle and the highest significances were near and present and pervaded the whole system, and the approaches to the highest status were not absolutely denied to any man, in spite of certain prohibitions: but these prohibitions broke down in practice or left a way of escape to the man who felt the call; the call itself was a sign of election. He had only to find the way and the guide. But even in the direct approach the principle of *adhikāra*, differing capacity and varying nature, *svabhāva*, was recognised in subtle ways, which it would be beyond my present purpose to enumerate. One may note as an example the significant Indian idea of the *iṣṭa-devatā*, the special name, form, idea of the Divinity which each man may choose for worship and communion and follow after according to the attraction in his nature and his capacity of spiritual intelligence. And each of the forms has its outer initial associations and suggestions for the worshipper, its appeal to the intelligence, psychical, aesthetic, emotional power in the nature and its highest spiritual significance which leads through some one truth of the Godhead into the essence of spirituality. One may note too that in the practice of Yoga the disciple has to be led through his nature and according to his capacity and the spiritual teacher and guide is expected to perceive and take account of the necessary gradations and the individual need and power in his giving of help and guidance.

Many things may be objected to in the actual working of this large and flexible system and I shall take some note of them when I have to deal with the weak points or the pejorative side of the culture against which the hostile critic directs with a misleading exaggeration his missiles. But the principle of it and the main lines of the application embody a remarkable wisdom, knowledge and careful observation of human nature and an assured insight into the things of the spirit which none can question who has considered deeply and flexibly these difficult matters or had any close experience of the obstacles and potentialities of our nature in its approach to the concealed spiritual reality.

This carefully graded and complex system of religious development and spiritual evolution was linked on by a process of pervading intimate connection to that general culture of the life of the human being and his powers which must be the first care of every civilisation worth the name. The most delicate and difficult part of this task of human development is concerned with the thinking being of man, his mind of reason and knowledge. No ancient culture of which we have knowledge, not even the Greek, attached more importance to it or spent more effort on its cultivation. The business of the ancient Rishi was not only to know God, but to know the world and life and to reduce it by knowledge to a thing well understood and mastered with which the reason and will of man could deal on assured lines and on a safe basis of wise method and order. The ripe result of this effort was the Shastra. When we speak of the Shastra nowadays, we mean too often only the religio-social system of injunctions of the middle age made sacrosanct by their mythical attribution to Manu, Parashara and other Vedic sages. But in older India Shastra meant any systematised teaching and science; each department of life, each line of activity, each subject of knowledge had its science or Shastra. The attempt was to reduce each to a theoretical and practical order founded on detailed observation, just generalisation, full experience, intuitive, logical and experimental analysis and synthesis, in order to enable man to know always with a just fruitfulness for life and to act with the security of right knowledge. The smallest and the greatest things were examined with equal care and attention and each provided with its art and science. The name was given even to the highest spiritual knowledge whenever it was stated not in a mass of intuitive experience and revelatory knowledge as in the Upanishads, but for intellectual comprehension in system and order, — and in that sense the Gita is able to call its profound spiritual teaching the most secret science, *guhyatamaṁ śāstram*. This high scientific and philosophical spirit was carried by the ancient Indian culture into all its activities. No Indian religion is complete without its outward form of preparatory practice, its supporting philosophy and its Yoga or system of inward practice or art of spiritual living: most even of what seems irrational in it to a first glance, has its philosophical turn and significance. It is this complete understanding and philosophical character which has given religion in India its durable security and immense vitality and enabled it to resist the acid dissolvent power of modern sceptical inquiry; whatever is ill-founded in experience and reason, that power can dissolve, but not the heart and mind of these great teachings. But what we have more especially to observe is that while Indian culture made a distinction between the lower and the higher learning, the knowledge of things and the knowledge of self, it did not put a gulf between them like some religions, but considered the knowledge of the world and things as a preparatory and a leading up to the knowledge of Self and God. All Shastra was put under the sanction of the names of the Rishis, who were in the beginning the teachers not only of spiritual truth and philosophy, — and we may note that all Indian philosophy, even the logic of Nyaya and the atomic theory of the Vaisheshikas, has for its highest crowning note and eventual object spiritual knowledge and liberation, — but of the arts, the social, political and military, the physical and psychic sciences, and every instructor was in his degree respected as a *guru* or *ācārya*, a guide or preceptor of the human spirit. All knowledge was woven into one and led up by degrees to the one highest knowledge.

The whole right practice of life founded on this knowledge was in the view of Indian culture a Dharma, a living according to a just understanding and right view of self-culture, of the knowledge of things and life and of action in that knowledge. Thus each man and class and kind and species and each activity of soul, mind, life, body has its dharma. But the largest or at least most vitally important part of the Dharma was held to be the culture and ordering of the ethical nature of man. The ethical aspect of life, contrary to the amazingly ignorant observation of a certain type of critics, attracted a quite enormous amount of attention, occupied the greater part of Indian thought and writing not devoted to the things of pure knowledge and of the spirit and was so far pushed that there is no ethical formation or ideal which does not reach in it its highest conception and a certain divine absolutism of ideal practice. Indian thought took for granted, — though there are some remarkable speculations to the contrary, — the ethical nature of man and the ethical law of the world. It considered that man was justified in satisfying his desires, since that is necessary for the satisfaction and expansion of life, but not in obeying the dictates of desire as the law of his being; for in all things there is a greater law, each has not only its side of interest and desire, but its dharma or rule of right practice, satisfaction, expansion, regulation. The Dharma, then, fixed by the wise in the Shastra is the right thing to observe, the true rule of action. First in the web of Dharma comes the social law; for man's life is only initially for his vital, personal, individual self, but much more imperatively for the community, though most imperatively of all for the greatest Self one in himself and in all beings, for God, for the Spirit. Therefore first the individual must subordinate himself to the communal self, though by no means bound altogether to efface himself in it as the extremists of the communal idea imagine. He must live according to the law of his nature harmonised with the law of his social type and class, for the nation and in a higher reach of his being — this was greatly stressed by the Buddhists — for humanity. Thus living and acting he could learn to transcend the social scale of the Dharma, practise without injuring the basis of life the ideal scale and finally grow into the liberty of the spirit, when rule and duty were not binding because he would then move and act in a highest free and immortal dharma of the divine nature. All these aspects of the Dharma were closely linked up together in a progressive unity. Thus, for an example, each of the four orders had its own social function and ethics, but also an ideal rule for the growth of the pure ethical being, and every man by observing his dharma and turning his action Godwards could grow out of it into the spiritual freedom. But behind all dharma and ethics was put, not only as a safeguard but as a light, a religious sanction, a reminder of the continuity of life and of man's long pilgrimage through many births, a reminder of the Gods and planes beyond and of the Divine, and above it all the vision of a last stage of perfect comprehension and unity and of divine transcendence.

The system of Indian ethics liberalised by the catholicity of the ancient mind did not ban or violently discourage the aesthetic or even the hedonistic being of man in spite of a growing ascetic tendency and a certain high austerity of the summits. The aesthetic satisfactions of all kinds and all grades were an important part of the culture. Poetry, the drama, song, dance, music, the greater and lesser arts were placed under the sanction of the Rishis and were made instruments of the spirit's culture. A just theory held them to be initially the means of a pure aesthetic satisfaction and each was founded on its own basic rule and law, but on that basis and with a perfect fidelity to it still raised up to minister to the intellectual, ethical and religious development of the being. It is notable that the two vast Indian epics have been considered as much as Dharma-shastras as great historico-mythic epic narratives, *itihāsas*. They are, that is to say, noble, vivid and puissant pictures of life, but they utter and breathe throughout their course the law and ideal of a great and high ethical and religious spirit in life and aim in their highest intention at the idea of the Divine and the way of the mounting soul in the action of the world. Indian painting, sculpture and architecture did not refuse service to the aesthetic satisfaction and interpretation of the social, civic and individual life of the human being; these things, as all evidences show, played a great part in their motives of creation, but still their highest work was reserved for the greatest spiritual side of the culture, and throughout we see them seized and suffused with the brooding stress of the Indian mind on the soul, the Godhead, the spiritual, the Infinite. And we have to note too that the aesthetic and hedonistic being was made not only an aid to religion and spirituality and liberally used for that purpose, but even one of the main gates of man's approach to the Spirit. The Vaishnava religion especially is a religion of love and beauty and of the satisfaction of the whole delight-soul of man in God and even the desires and images of the sensuous life were turned by its vision into figures of a divine soul-experience. Few religions have gone so far as this immense catholicity or carried the whole nature so high in its large, puissant and many-sided approach to the spiritual and the infinite.

Finally, there is the most outwardly vital life of man, his ordinary dynamic, political, economical and social being. This too Indian culture took strenuously in hand and subjected its whole body to the pressure of its own ideals and conceptions. Its method was to build up great shastras of social living, duty and enjoyment, military and political rule and conduct and economical well-being. These were directed on one side to success, expansion, opulence and the right art and relation of these activities, but on those motives, demanded by the very nature of the vital man and his action, was imposed the law of the Dharma, a stringent social and ethical ideal and rule — thus the whole life of the king as the head of power and responsibility was regulated by it in its every hour and function, — and the constant reminder of religious duty. In latter times a Machiavellian principle of statecraft, that which has been always and is still pursued by governments and diplomats, encroached on this nobler system, but in the best age of Indian thought this depravation was condemned as a temporarily effective, but lesser, ignoble and inferior way of policy. The great rule of the culture was that the higher a man's position and power, the larger the scope of his function and influence of his acts and example, the greater should be the call on him of the Dharma. The whole law and custom of society was placed under the sanction of the Rishis and the gods, protected from the violence of the great and powerful, given a socio-religious character and the king himself charged to live and rule as the guardian and servant of the Dharma with only an executive power over the community which was valid so long as he observed with fidelity the Law. And as this vital aspect of life is the one which most easily draws us outward and away from the inner self and the diviner aim of living, it was the most strenuously linked up at every point with the religious idea in the way the vital man can best understand, in the Vedic times by the constant reminder of the sacrifice behind every social and civic act, at a later period by religious rites, ceremonies, worship, the calling in of the gods, the insistence on the subsequent results or a supraterrestrial aim of works. So great was this preoccupation, that while in the spiritual and intellectual and other spheres a considerable or a complete liberty was allowed to speculation, action, creation, here the tendency was to impose a rigorous law and authority, a tendency which in the end became greatly exaggerated and prevented the expansion of the society into new forms more suitable for the need of the spirit of the age, the Yugadharma. A door of liberty was opened to the community by the provision of an automatic permission to change custom and to the individual in the adoption of the religious life with its own higher discipline or freedom outside the ordinary social weft of binding rule and injunction. A rigid observation and discipline of the social law, a larger nobler discipline and freer self-culture of the ideal side of the Dharma, a wide freedom of the religious and spiritual life became the three powers of the system. The steps of the expanding human spirit mounted through these powers to its perfection.

Thus the whole general character of the application of Indian ideals to life became throughout of this one texture, the constant, subtly graded, subtly harmonised preparation of the soul of man for its spiritual being. First, the regulated satisfaction of the primary natural being of man subjected to the law of the Dharma and the ethical idea and besieged at every moment by the suggestions of religion, a religion at first appealing to his more outward undeveloped mind, but in each of its outward symbols and circumstances opening to a profounder significance, armed with the indication of a profoundest spiritual and ideal meaning as its justification. Then, the higher steps of the developed reason and psychical, ethical and aesthetic powers closely interwoven and raised by a similar opening beyond themselves to their own heights of spiritual direction and potentiality. Finally, each of these growing powers in man was made on its own line of approach a gateway into his divine and spiritual being. Thus we may observe that there was created a Yoga of knowledge for the self-exceeding of the thinking intellectual man, a Yoga of works for the self-exceeding of the active, dynamic and ethical man, a Yoga of love and bhakti for the self-exceeding of the emotional, aesthetic, hedonistic man, by which each arrived to perfection through a self-ward, spiritual, God-ward direction of his own special power, as too a Yoga of self-exceeding through the power of the psychical being and even through the power of the life in the body, — Yogas which could be practised in separation or with some kind of synthesis. But all these ways of self-exceeding led to a highest self-becoming. To become one with universal being and all existences, one with the self and spirit, united with God completed the human evolution, built the final step of man's self-culture.

X

Indian Spirituality and Life – 4

I HAVE dwelt at some length, though still very inadequately, on the principles of Indian religion, the sense of its evolution and the intention of its system, because these things are being constantly ignored and battle delivered by its defenders and assailants on details, particular consequences and side issues. Those too have their importance because they are part of the practical execution, the working out of the culture in life; but they cannot be rightly valued unless we seize hold of the intention which was behind the execution. And the first thing we see is that the principle, the essential intention of Indian culture was extraordinarily high, ambitious and noble, the highest indeed that the human spirit can conceive. For what can be a greater idea of life than that which makes it a development of the spirit in man to its most vast, secret and high possibilities, — a culture that conceives of life as a movement of the Eternal in time, of the universal in the individual, of the infinite in the finite, of the Divine in man, or holds that man can become not only conscious of the eternal and the infinite, but live in its power and universalise, spiritualise and divinise himself by self-knowledge? What greater aim can be for the life of man than to grow by an inner and outer experience till he can live in God, realise his spirit, become divine in knowledge, in will and in the joy of his highest existence? And that is the whole sense of the striving of Indian culture.

It is easy to say that these ideas are fantastic, chimerical and impracticable, that there is no spirit and no eternal and nothing divine, and man would do much better not to dabble in religion and philosophy, but rather make the best he can of the ephemeral littleness of his life and body. That is a negation natural enough to the vital and physical mind, but it rests on the assumption that man can only be what he is at the moment, and there is nothing greater in him which it is his business to evolve; such a negation has no enduring value. The whole aim of a great culture is to lift man up to something which at first he is not, to lead him to knowledge though he starts from an unfathomable ignorance, to teach him to live by his reason, though actually he lives much more by his unreason, by the law of good and unity, though he is now full of evil and discord, by a law of beauty and harmony though his actual life is a repulsive muddle of ugliness and jarring barbarisms, by some high law of his spirit, though at present he is egoistic, material, unspiritual, engrossed by the needs and desires of his physical being. If a civilisation has not any of these aims, it can hardly at all be said to have a culture and certainly in no sense a great and noble culture. But the last of these aims, as conceived by ancient India, is the highest of all because it includes and surpasses all the others. To have made this attempt is to have ennobled the life of the race; to have failed in it is better than if it had never at all been attempted; to have achieved even a partial success is a great contribution to the future possibilities of the human being.

The system of Indian culture is another thing. A system is in its very nature at once an effectuation and a limitation of the spirit; and yet we must have a science and art of life, a system of living. All that is needed is that the lines laid down should be large and noble, capable of evolution so that the spirit may more and more express itself in life, flexible even in its firmness so that it may absorb and harmonise new material and enlarge its variety and richness without losing its unity. The system of Indian culture was all these things in its principle and up to a certain point and a certain period in its practice. That a decline came upon it in the end and a kind of arrest of growth, not absolute, but still very serious and dangerous to its life and future, is perfectly true, and we shall have to ask whether that was due to the inherent character of the culture, to a deformation or to a temporary exhaustion of the force of living, and, if the last, how that exhaustion came. At present, I will only note in passing one point which has its importance. Our critic is never tired of harping on India's misfortunes and he attributes them all to the incurable badness of our civilisation, the total absence of a true and sound culture. Now misfortune is not a proof of absence of culture, nor good fortune the sign of salvation. Greece was unfortunate; she was as much torn by internal dissensions and civil wars as India, she was finally unable to arrive at unity or preserve independence; yet Europe owes half its civilisation to those squabbling inconsequent petty peoples of Greece. Italy was unfortunate enough in all conscience, yet few nations have contributed more to European culture than incompetent and unfortunate Italy. The misfortunes of India have been considerably exaggerated, at least in their incidence, but take them at their worst, admit that no nation has suffered more. If all that is due to the badness of our civilisation, to what is due then the remarkable fact of the obstinate survival of India, her culture and her civilisation under this load of misfortunes, or the power which enables her still to assert herself and her spirit at this moment, to the great wrath of her critics, against the tremendous shock of the flood from Europe which has almost submerged other peoples? If her misfortunes are due to her cultural deficiencies, must not by a parity of reasoning this extraordinary vitality be due to some great force in her, some enduring virtue of truth in her spirit? A mere lie and insanity cannot live; its persistence is a disease which must before long lead to death; it cannot be the source of an unslayable life. There must be some heart of soundness, some saving truth which has kept this people alive and still enables it to raise its head and affirm its will to be and its faith in its mission.

But, finally, we have to see not only the spirit and principle of the culture, not only the ideal idea and scope of intention in its system, but its actual working and effect in the values of life. Here we must admit great limitations, great imperfections. There is no culture, no civilisation ancient or modern which in its system has been entirely satisfactory to the need of perfection in man; there is none in which the working has not been marred by considerable limitations and imperfections. And the greater the aim of the culture, the larger the body of the civilisation, the more are these flaws likely to overbear the eye. In the first place every culture suffers by the limitations or defects of its qualities and, an almost infallible consequence, by the exaggerations too of its qualities. It tends to concentrate on certain leading ideas and to lose sight of others or unduly depress them; this want of balance gives rise to one-sided tendencies which are not properly checked, not kept in their due place, and bring about unhealthy exaggerations. But so long as the vigour of the civilisation lasts, life accommodates itself, makes the most of compensating forces and in spite of all stumblings, evils, disasters some great thing is done; but in a time of decline the defect or the excess of a particular quality gets the upper hand, becomes a disease, makes a general ravage and, if not arrested, may lead to decay and death. Again, the ideal may be great, may have even, as Indian culture had in its best times, a certain kind of provisional completeness, a first attempt at comprehensive harmony, but there is always a great gulf between the ideal and the actual practice of life. To bridge that gulf or at least to make it as narrow as possible is the most difficult part of human endeavour. Finally, the evolution of our race, surprising enough if we look across the ages, is still, when all is said, a slow and embarrassed progress. Each age, each civilisation carries the heavy burden of our deficiencies, each succeeding age throws off something of the load, but loses some virtue of the past, creates other gaps and embarrasses itself with new aberrations. We have to strike a balance, to see things in the whole, to observe whither we are tending and use a large secular vision; otherwise it would be difficult to keep an unfailing faith in the destinies of the race. For, after all, what we have accomplished so far in the main at the best of times is to bring in a modicum of reason and culture and spirituality to leaven a great mass of barbarism. Mankind is still no more than semi-civilised and it was never anything else in the recorded history of its present cycle.

And therefore every civilisation presents a mixed and anomalous appearance and can be turned by a hostile or unsympathetic observation which notes and exaggerates its defects, ignores its true spirit and its qualities, masses the shades, leaves out the lights, into a mass of barbarism, a picture of almost unrelieved gloom and failure, to the legitimate surprise and indignation of those to whom its motives appear to have a great and just value. For each has achieved something of special value for humanity in the midst of its general work of culture, brought out in a high degree some potentiality of our nature and given a first large standing-ground for its future perfection. Greece developed to a high degree the intellectual reason and the sense of form and harmonious beauty, Rome founded firmly strength and power and patriotism and law and order, modern Europe has raised to enormous proportions practical reason, science and efficiency and economic capacity, India developed the spiritual mind working on the other powers of man and exceeding them, the intuitive reason, the philosophical harmony of the Dharma informed by the religious spirit, the sense of the eternal and the infinite. The future has to go on to a greater and more perfect comprehensive development of these things and to evolve fresh powers, but we shall not do this rightly by damning the past or damning other cultures than our own in a spirit of arrogant intolerance. We need not only a spirit of calm criticism, but an eye of sympathetic intuition to extract the good from the past and present effort of humanity and make the most of it for our future progress.

This being so, if our critic insists that the past culture of India was of the nature of a semi-barbarism, I shall not object, so long as I have the liberty of passing the same criticism, equally valid or invalid, on the type of European culture which he wishes to foist on us in its place. Mr. Archer feels the openings which European civilisation gives to this kind of retort and he pleads plaintively that it ought not to be made; he takes refuge in the old tag that a *tu quoque* is no argument. Certainly the retort would be irrelevant if this were only a question of the dispassionate criticism of Indian culture without arrogant comparisons and offensive pretensions. But it becomes a perfectly valid and effective argument when the critic turns into a partisan and tries to trample underfoot all the claims of the Indian spirit and its civilisation in the name of the superiority of Europe. When he insists on our renouncing our own natural being and culture in order to follow and imitate the West as docile pupils on the ground of India's failure to achieve cultural perfection or the ideal of a sound civilisation, we have a right to point out that Europe has to its credit at least as ugly a failure, and for the same fundamental reasons. We have a right to ask whether science, practical reason and efficiency and an unbridled economic production which makes man a slave of his life and body, a wheel, spring or cog in a huge mechanism or a cell of an economic organism and translates into human terms the ideal of the ant-hill and the bee-hive, is really the whole truth of our being and a sound or complete ideal of civilisation. The ideal of this culture, though it has its obstacles and difficulties, is at any rate not an unduly exalted aim and ought to be more easy of accomplishment than the arduous spiritual ideal of ancient India. But how much of the European mind and life is really governed by reason and what does this practical reason and efficiency come to in the end? To what perfection has it brought the human mind and soul and life? The aggressive ugliness of modern European life, its paucity of philosophic reason and aesthetic beauty and religious aspiration, its constant unrest, its harsh and oppressive mechanical burden, its lack of inner freedom, its recent huge catastrophe, the fierce struggle of classes are things of which we have a right to take note. To harp in the style of the Archerian lyre on these aspects alone and to ignore the brighter side of modern ideals would certainly be an injustice. There was a time indeed many years ago, when, while admiring the past cultural achievement of Europe, the present industrial form of it seemed to me an intellectualised Titanic barbarism with Germany as its too admired type and successful protagonist. A wider view of the ways of the Spirit in the world corrects the one-sidedness of this notion, but still it contains a truth which Europe recognised in the hour of her agony, though now she seems to be forgetting too easily her momentary illumination. Mr. Archer argues that at least the West is trying to struggle out of its barbarism while India has been content to stagnate in her deficiencies. That may be a truth of the immediate past; but what then? The question still remains whether Europe is taking the only, the complete or the best way open to human endeavour and whether it is not the right thing for India, not to imitate Europe, though she well may learn from Western experience, but to get out of her stagnation by developing what is best and most essential in her own spirit and culture.

The right, the natural path for India lies so obviously in this direction that in order to destroy it Mr. Archer in his chosen role as devil's advocate has to juggle with the truth at every step and labour hard and vainly to reestablish the spell of hypnotic suggestion, now broken for good, which led most of us for a long space to condemn wholesale ourselves and our past and imagine that the Indian's whole duty in life was to turn an imitative ape in leading-strings and dance to the mechanic barrel-organ tunes of the British civiliser. The claim of Indian culture to survival can be met first and most radically by challenging the value of its fundamental ideas and the high things which are most native to its ideal, its temperament, its way of looking at the world. To deny the truth or the value of spirituality, of the sense of the eternal and infinite, the inner spiritual experience, the philosophic mind and spirit, the religious aim and feeling, the intuitive reason, the idea of universality and spiritual unity is one resource, and this is the real attitude of our critic which emerges constantly in his vehement philippic. But he cannot carry it through consistently, because it brings him into conflict with ideas and perceptions which are ineradicable in the human mind and which even in Europe are now after a temporary obscuration beginning to come back into favour. Therefore he hedges and tries rather to prove that we find in India, even in her magnificent past, even at her best, no spirituality, no real philosophy, no true or high religious feeling, no light of intuitive reason, nothing at all of the great things to which she has directed her most strenuous aspiration. This assertion is sufficiently absurd, self-contradictory and opposed to the express testimony of those who are eminently fitted and entitled to express an authoritative opinion on these matters. He therefore establishes a third line of attack combined of two inconsistent and opposite assertions, first, that the higher Hinduism which is made up of these greater things has had no effect on India and, secondly, that it has had on the contrary a most all-pervading, a most disastrous and paralysing, a soul-killing, life-killing effect. He attempts to make his indictment effective by massing together all these inconsistent lines of attack and leading them all to the one conclusion, that the culture of India is both in theory and practice wrong, worthless, deleterious to the true aim of human living.

The last position taken is the only one which we need now consider, since the value of the essential ideas of Indian culture cannot be destroyed and to deny them is futile. The things they stand for are there, in whatever form, vaguely or distinctly seeking for themselves in the highest and deepest movements of human being and its nature. The peculiarity of Indian culture lies only in this distinction that what is vague or confused or imperfectly brought out in most other cultures, it has laboured rather to make distinct, to sound all its possibilities, to fix its aspects and lines and hold it up as a true, precise, large and practicable ideal for the race. The formulation may not be entirely complete; it may have to be still more enlarged, bettered, put otherwise, things missed brought out, the lines and forms modified, errors of stress and direction corrected; but a firm, a large foundation has been laid down not only in theory, but in solid practice. If there has been an actual complete failure in life, — and that is the one point left, — it must be due to one of two causes; either there has been some essential bungling in the application of the ideal to the facts of life as it is, or else there has been a refusal to recognise the facts of life at all. Perhaps, then, there has been, to put it otherwise, an insistence on what we may be at some hardly attainable height of our being without having first made the most of what we are. The infinite can only be reached after we have grown in the finite, the eternal grasped only by man growing in time, the spiritual perfected only by man accomplished first in body, life and mind. If that necessity has been ignored, then one may fairly contend that there has been a gross, impracticable and inexcusable error in the governing idea of Indian culture. But as a matter of fact there has been no such error. We have seen what were the aim and idea and method of Indian culture and it will be perfectly clear that the value of life and its training were amply recognised in its system and given their proper place. Even the most extreme philosophies and religions, Buddhism and Illusionism, which held life to be an impermanence or ignorance that must be transcended and cast away, yet did not lose sight of the truth that man must develop himself under the conditions of this present ignorance or impermanence before he can attain to knowledge and to that Permanent which is the denial of temporal being. Buddhism was not solely a cloudy sublimation of Nirvana, nothingness, extinction and the tyrannous futility of Karma; it gave us a great and powerful discipline for the life of man on earth. The enormous positive effects it had on society and ethics and the creative impulse it imparted to art and thought and in a less degree to literature, are a sufficient proof of the strong vitality of its method. If this positive turn was present in the most extreme philosophy of denial, it was still more largely present in the totality of Indian culture.

There has been indeed from early times in the Indian mind a certain strain, a tendency towards a lofty and austere exaggeration in the direction taken by Buddhism and Mayavada. This excess was inevitable, the human mind being what it is; it had even its necessity and value. Our mind does not arrive at the totality of truth easily and by one embracing effort; an arduous search is the condition of its finding. The mind opposes different sides of the truth to each other, follows each to its extreme possibility, treats it even for a time as the sole truth, makes imperfect compromises, arrives by various adjustments and gropings nearer to the true relations. The Indian mind followed this method; it covered, as far as it could, the whole field, tried every position, looked at the truth from every angle, attempted many extremes and many syntheses. But the European critic very ordinarily labours under the idea that this exaggeration in the direction of negating life was actually the whole of Indian thought and sentiment or the one undisputed governing idea of the culture. Nothing could be more false and inaccurate. The early Vedic religion did not deny, but laid a full emphasis on life. The Upanishads did not deny life, but held that the world is a manifestation of the Eternal, of Brahman, all here is Brahman, all is in the Spirit and the Spirit is in all, the self-existent Spirit has become all these things and creatures; life too is Brahman, the life-force is the very basis of our existence, the life-spirit Vayu is the manifest and evident Eternal, *pratyakṣaṁ brahma*. But it affirmed that the present way of existence of man is not the highest or the whole; his outward mind and life are not all his being; to be fulfilled and perfect he has to grow out of his physical and mental ignorance into spiritual self-knowledge.

Buddhism arrived at a later stage and seized on one side of these ancient teachings to make a sharp spiritual and intellectual opposition between the impermanence of life and the permanence of the Eternal which brought to a head and made a gospel of the ascetic exaggeration. But the synthetic Hindu mind struggled against this negation and finally threw out Buddhism, though not without contracting an increased bias in this direction. That bias came to its height in the philosophy of Shankara, his theory of Maya, which put its powerful imprint on the Indian mind and, coinciding with a progressive decline in the full vitality of the race, did tend for a time to fix a pessimistic and negative view of terrestrial life and distort the larger Indian ideal. But his theory is not at all a necessary deduction from the great Vedantic authorities, the Upanishads, Brahmasutras and Gita, and was always combated by other Vedantic philosophies and religions which drew from them and from spiritual experience very different conclusions. At the present time, in spite of a temporary exaltation of Shankara's philosophy, the most vital movements of Indian thought and religion are moving again towards the synthesis of spirituality and life which was an essential part of the ancient Indian ideal. Therefore Mr. Archer's contention that whatever India has achieved in life and creation and action has been done in spite of the governing ideas of her culture, since logically she ought to have abandoned life and creation and action, is as unsound as it is unnatural and grotesque. To develop to the full the intellectual, the dynamic and volitional, the ethical, the aesthetic, the social and economic being of man was an important element of Indian civilisation, — if for nothing else, at least as an indispensable preliminary to spiritual perfection and freedom. India's best achievements in thought, art, literature, society were the logical outcome of her religio-philosophical culture.

But still it may be argued that whatever may have been the theory, the exaggeration was there and in practice it discouraged life and action. That, when its other falsities have been eliminated, is what Mr. Archer's criticism comes to in the end; the emphasis on the Self, the eternal, the universal, the impersonal, the infinite discouraged, he thinks, life, will, personality, human action and led to a false and life-killing asceticism. India achieved nothing of importance, produced no great personalities, was impotent in will and endeavour, her literature and art are a barbaric and monstrous nullity not equal even to the third-rate work of Europe, her life story a long and dismal record of incompetence and failure. An inconsistency more or less is nothing to this critic and in the same breath he affirms that this very India, described by him elsewhere as always effete, sterile or a mother of monstrous abortions, is one of the most interesting countries in the world, that her art casts a potent and attractive spell and has numberless beauties, that her very barbarisms are magnificent and that, most wonderful of all, in presence of some of her personalities in the abodes of her ancient fine-spun aristocratic culture a European is apt to feel like a semi-barbarian intruder! But let us leave aside these signs of grace which are only an occasional glimmering of light across the darkness and gloom of Mr. Archer's mood. We must see how far there is any foundation for the substance of this criticism. What was the real value of Indian life, will, personality, achievement, creation, those things that she regards as her glories, but her critic tells her she should shudder at as her disgrace? That is the one remaining vital question.

XI

Indian Spirituality and Life – 5

THE MOST general charge against Indian culture in its practical effects can be dismissed without any serious difficulty. The critic with whom I have to deal has, in fact, spoiled his case by the spirit of frantic exaggeration in which he writes. To say that there has been no great or vivid activity of life in India, that she has had no great personalities with the mythical exception of Buddha and the other pale exception of Asoka, that she has never shown any will-power and never done any great thing, is so contrary to all the facts of history that only a devil's advocate in search of a case could advance it at all or put it with that crude vehemence. India has lived and lived greatly, whatever judgment one may pass on her ideas and institutions. What is meant after all by life and when is it that we most fully and greatly live? Life is surely nothing but the creation and active self-expression of man's spirit, powers, capacities, his will to be and think and create and love and do and achieve. When that is wanting or, since it cannot be absolutely wanting, depressed, held under, discouraged or inert, whether by internal or external causes, then we may say that there is a lack of life. Life in its largest sense is the great web of our internal and external action, the play of Shakti, the play of Karma; it is religion and philosophy and thought and science and poetry and art, drama and song and dance and play, politics and society, industry, commerce and trade, adventure and travel, war and peace, conflict and unity, victory and defeat and aspirations and vicissitudes, the thoughts, emotions, words, deeds, joys and sorrows which make up the existence of man. In a narrower sense life is sometimes spoken of as the more obvious and external vital action, a thing which can be depressed by a top-heavy intellectuality or ascetic spirituality, sicklied over with the pale cast of thought or the paler cast of world-weariness or made flat, stale and uninteresting by a formalised, conventional or too strait-laced system of society. Again, life may be very active and full of colour for a small and privileged part of the community, but the life of the mass dull, void and miserable. Or, finally, there may be all the ordinary materials and circumstances of mere living, but if life is not uplifted by great hopes, aspirations and ideals, then we may well say that the community does not really live; it is defective in the characteristic greatness of the human spirit.

The ancient and mediaeval life of India was not wanting in any of the things that make up the vivid interesting activity of human existence. On the contrary, it was extraordinarily full of colour and interest. Mr. Archer's criticism on this point, a criticism packed full of ignorance and built up by a purely fictitious construction of what things logically ought to have been on the theory of a dominating asceticism and belief in the illusionary character of the world, is not and cannot be borne out by anyone who has come close to the facts. It is true that while many European writers who have studied the history of the land and the people, have expressed strongly their appreciation of the vividness and interesting fullness, colour and beauty of life in India before the present period, — that unhappily exists no longer except in the pages of history and literature and the broken or crumbling fragments of the past, — those who see only from a distance or fix their eyes only on one aspect, speak of it often as a land of metaphysics, philosophies, dreams and brooding imaginations, and certain artists and writers are apt to write in a strain as if it were a country of the Arabian Nights, a mere glitter of strange hues and fancies and marvels. But on the contrary India has been as much a home of serious and solid realities, of a firm grappling with the problems of thought and life, of measured and wise organisation and great action as any other considerable centre of civilisation. The widely different view these perceptions express simply show the many-sided brilliance and fullness of her life. The colour and magnificence have been its aesthetic side; she has had great dreams and high and splendid imaginations, for that too is wanted for the completeness of our living; but also deep philosophical and religious thinking, a wide and searching criticism of life, a great political and social order, a strong ethical tone and a persistent vigour of individual and communal living. That is a combination which means life in all its fullness, though deficient, it may be, except in extraordinary cases, in the more violent egoistic perversities and exaggerations which some minds seem to take for a proof of the highest vigour of existence.

In what field indeed has not India attempted, achieved, created, and in all on a large scale and yet with much attention to completeness of detail? Of her spiritual and philosophic achievement there can be no real question. They stand there as the Himalayas stand upon the earth in the phrase of Kalidasa, *pṛthivyā iva mānadaṇḍaḥ*, "as if earth's measuring rod," mediating still between earth and heaven, measuring the finite, casting their plummet far into the infinite, plunging their extremities into the upper and lower seas of the superconscient and the subliminal, the spiritual and the natural being. But if her philosophies, her religious disciplines, her long list of great spiritual personalities, thinkers, founders, saints are her greatest glory, as was natural to her temperament and governing idea, they are by no means her sole glories, nor are the others dwarfed by their eminence. It is now proved that in science she went farther than any country before the modern era, and even Europe owes the beginning of her physical science to India as much as to Greece, although not directly but through the medium of the Arabs. And, even if she had only gone as far, that would have been sufficient proof of a strong intellectual life in an ancient culture. Especially in mathematics, astronomy and chemistry, the chief elements of ancient science, she discovered and formulated much and well and anticipated by force of reasoning or experiment some of the scientific ideas and discoveries which Europe first arrived at much later, but was able to base more firmly by her new and completer method. She was well-equipped in surgery and her system of medicine survives to this day and has still its value, though it declined intermediately in knowledge and is only now recovering its vitality.

In literature, in the life of the mind, she lived and built greatly. Not only has she the Vedas, Upanishads and Gita, not to speak of less supreme but still powerful or beautiful work in that field, unequalled monuments of religious and philosophic poetry, a kind in which Europe has never been able to do anything much of any great value, but that vast national structure, the Mahabharata, gathering into its cycle the poetic literature and expressing so completely the life of a long formative age, that it is said of it in a popular saying which has the justice if also the exaggeration of a too apt epigram, "What is not in this Bharata, is not in Bharatavarsha (India)," and the Ramayana, the greatest and most remarkable poem of its kind, that most sublime and beautiful epic of ethical idealism and a heroic semi-divine human life, and the marvellous richness, fullness and colour of the poetry and romance of highly cultured thought, sensuous enjoyment, imagination, action and adventure which makes up the romantic literature of her classical epoch. Nor did this long continuous vigour of creation cease with the loss of vitality by the Sanskrit tongue, but was paralleled and carried on in a mass of great or of beautiful work in her other languages, in Pali first and Prakrit, much unfortunately lost,[1] and Tamil, afterwards in Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and other tongues. The long tradition of her architecture, sculpture and painting speaks for itself, even in what survives after all the ruin of stormy centuries: whatever judgment may be formed of it by the narrower school of Western aesthetics, — and at least its fineness of execution and workmanship cannot be denied, nor the power with which it renders the Indian mind, — it testifies at least to a continuous creative activity. And creation is proof of life and great creation of greatness of life.

But these things are, it may be said, the things of the mind, and the intellect, imagination and aesthetic mind of India may have been creatively active, but yet her outward life depressed, dull, poor, gloomy with the hues of asceticism, void of willpower and personality, ineffective, null. That would be a hard proposition to swallow; for literature, art and science do not flourish in a void of life. But here too what are the facts? India has not only had the long roll of her great saints, sages, thinkers, religious founders, poets, creators, scientists, scholars, legists; she has had her great rulers, administrators, soldiers, conquerors, heroes, men with the strong active will, the mind that plans and the seeing force that builds. She has warred and ruled, traded and colonised and spread her civilisation, built polities and organised communities and societies, done all that makes the outward activity of great peoples. A nation tends to throw out its most vivid types in that line of action which is most congenial to its temperament and expressive of its leading idea, and it is the great saints and religious personalities that stand at the head in India and present the most striking and continuous roll-call of greatness, just as Rome lived most in her warriors and statesmen and rulers. The Rishi in ancient India was the outstanding figure with the hero just behind, while in later times the most striking feature is the long uninterrupted chain from Buddha and Mahavira to Ramanuja, Chaitanya, Nanak, Ramdas and Tukaram and beyond them to Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and Dayananda. But there have been also the remarkable achievements of statesmen and rulers, from the first dawn of ascertainable history which comes in with the striking figures of Chandragupta, Chanakya, Asoka, the Gupta emperors and goes down through the multitude of famous Hindu and Mahomedan figures of the middle age to quite modern times. In ancient India there was the life of republics, oligarchies, democracies, small kingdoms of which no detail of history now survives, afterwards the long effort at empire-building, the colonisation of Ceylon and the Archipelago, the vivid struggles that attended the rise and decline of the Pathan and Mogul dynasties, the Hindu struggle for survival in the south, the wonderful record of Rajput heroism and the great upheaval of national life in Maharashtra penetrating to the lowest strata of society, the remarkable episode of the Sikh Khalsa. An adequate picture of that outward life still remains to be given; once given it would be the end of many fictions. All this mass of action was not accomplished by men without mind and will and vital force, by pale shadows of humanity in whom the vigorous manhood had been crushed out under the burden of a gloomy and all-effacing asceticism, nor does it look like the sign of a metaphysically minded people of dreamers averse to life and action. It was not men of straw or lifeless and will-less dummies or thin-blooded dreamers who thus acted, planned, conquered, built great systems of administration, founded kingdoms and empires, figured as great patrons of poetry and art and architecture or, later, resisted heroically imperial power and fought for the freedom of clan or people. Nor was it a nation devoid of life which maintained its existence and culture and still lived on and broke out constantly into new revivals under the ever increasing stress of continuously adverse circumstances. The modern Indian revival, religious, cultural, political, called now sometimes a renaissance, which so troubles and grieves the minds of her critics, is only a repetition under altered circumstances, in an adapted form, in a greater though as yet less vivid mass of movement, of a phenomenon which has constantly repeated itself throughout a millennium of Indian history.

---

[1] E.g. the once famous work in Paisachi of which the *Kathāsaritsāgara* is an inferior version.

And it must be remembered that by virtue of its culture and its system the whole nation shared in the common life. In all countries in the past the mass has indeed lived with a less active and vivid force than the few, — sometimes with the mere elements of life, not with even any beginning of finished richness, — nor has modern civilisation yet got rid of this disparity, though it has opened the advantages or at least the initial opportunities of a first-hand life and thought and knowledge to a greater number. But in ancient India, though the higher classes led and had the lion's share of the force and wealth of life, the people too lived and until much later times intensely though on a lesser scale and with a more diffused and less concentrated force. Their religious life was more intense than that of any other country; they drank in with remarkable facility the thoughts of the philosophers and the influence of the saints; they heard and followed Buddha and the many who came after him; they were taught by the Sannyasins and sang the songs of the Bhaktas and

Bauls and thus possessed some of the most delicate and beautiful poetical literature ever produced; they contributed many of the greatest names in our religion, and from the outcastes themselves came saints revered by the whole community. In ancient Hindu times they had their share of political life and power; they were the people, the *viśaḥ* of the Veda, of whom the kings were the leaders and from them as well as from the sacred or princely families were born the Rishis; they held their villages as little self-administered republics; in the time of the great kingdoms and empires they sat in the municipalities and urban councils and the bulk of the typical royal Council described in the books of political science was composed of commoners, Vaishyas, and not of Brahmin Pundits and Kshatriya nobles; for a long time they could impose their will on their kings, without the need of a long struggle, by a single demonstration of their displeasure. So long as Hindu kingdoms existed, something of all this survived, and even the entrance into India of central Asian forms of absolutist despotism, never an indigenous Indian growth, left some remnant of the old edifice still in being. The people had their share too in art and poetry, their means by which the essence of Indian culture was disseminated through the mass, a system of elementary education in addition to the great universities of ancient times, a type of popular dramatic representation which was in some parts of the country alive even yesterday; they gave India her artists and architects and many of the famous poets in the popular tongues; they preserved by the force of their long past culture an innate aesthetic sense and faculty of which the work of Indian craftsmen remained a constant and striking evidence until it was destroyed or degraded by the vulgarisation and loss of aesthetic sense and beauty which has been one of the results of modern civilisation. Nor was the life of India ascetic, gloomy or sad, as the too logical mind of the critic would have it be. The outward form is more quiet than in other countries, there is a certain gravity and reserve before strangers which deceives the foreign observer, and in recent times asceticism and poverty and an increase of puritanic tendency had their effect, but the life portrayed in the literature of the country is glad and vivid, and even now despite certain varieties of temperament and many forces making for depression laughter, humour, an unobtrusive elasticity and equanimity in the vicissitudes of life are very marked features of the Indian character.

The whole theory of a want of life and will and activity in the Indian people as a result of their culture is then a myth. The circumstances which have given some colour to it in later times will be noted in their proper place; but they are a feature of the decline and even then must be taken with considerable qualification, and the much longer history of its past greatness tells quite another story. That history has not been recorded in the European fashion; for the art of history and biography, though not entirely neglected, was never brought to perfection in India, never sufficiently practised, nor does any sustained record of the doings of kings and great men and peoples before the Mussulman dynasties survive except in the one solitary instance of Cashmere. This is certainly a defect and leaves a very serious gap. India has lived much, but has not sat down to record the history of her life. Her soul and mind have left their great monuments, but so much as we know — and after all it is not little — of the rest, the more outward things, remains or has emerged recently in spite of her neglect; such exact records as she had, she has allowed to rust forgotten or disappear. Perhaps what Mr. Archer really means when he tells us that we have had no personalities in our history, is that they do not come home to his mind because their doings and sayings are not minutely recorded in the Western manner; their personality, will-power and creative force emerge only in their work or in indicative tradition and anecdote or in incomplete records. And very curiously, very fancifully this defect has been set down to an ascetic want of interest in life; it is supposed that India was so much absorbed in the eternal that she deliberately despised and neglected time, so profoundly concentrated on the pursuit of ascetic brooding and quietistic peace that she looked down on and took no interest in the memory of action. That is another myth. The same phenomenon of a lack of sustained and deliberate record appears in other ancient cultures, but nobody suggests that Egypt, Assyria or Persia have to be reconstructed for us by the archaeologists for an analogous reason. The genius of Greece developed the art of history, though only in the later period of her activity, and Europe has cherished and preserved the art; India and other ancient civilisations did not arrive at it or neglected its full development. It is a defect, but there is no reason why we should go out of our way in this one case to attribute it to a deliberate motive or to any lack of interest in life. And in spite of the defect the greatness and activity of the past life of India reveals itself and comes out in bolder relief the more the inquiry into her past unearths the vast amount of material still available.

But our critic will still have it that India lived as it were in spite of herself and that in all this teeming action there is ample evidence of the dwarfing of individual will and the absence of any great individual personality. He arrives at that result by methods which savour of the skill of the journalist or pamphleteer rather than the disinterested mind of the critic. He tells us for instance that India has contributed only one or at most two great names to the world's Pantheon. By that, of course, he means Europe's Pantheon, or the world's Pantheon as constructed by the mind of Europe, crammed with the figures of Western history and achievement which are near and familiar to it and admitting only a very few of the more gigantic names from the distant East, those which it finds it most difficult to ignore. One remembers the list made by a great French poet in the field of literature in which a sounding string of French names equals or outnumbers the whole contribution of the rest of Europe! If an Indian were to set about the same task in the same spirit, he would no doubt similarly pour out an interminable list of Indian names with some great men of Europe and America, Arabia, Persia, China, Japan forming a brief tail to this large peninsular body. These exercises of the partial mentality have no value. And it is difficult to find out what measure of values Mr. Archer is using when he relegates other great Indian names, allowing for three or four only, to the second plan and even there belittles them in comparison with corresponding European immortals. In what is Shivaji with his vivid and interesting life and character, who not only founded a kingdom but organised a nation, inferior to Cromwell, or Shankara whose great spirit in the few years of its mortal life swept triumphant through India and reconstituted the whole religious life of her peoples, inferior as a personality to Luther? Why are Chanakya and Chandragupta who laid down the form of empire-building in India and whose great administrative system survived with changes often for the worse down to modern times, lesser men than the rulers and statesmen of European history? India may not present any recorded moment of her life so crowded as the few years of Athens to which Mr. Archer makes appeal; she may have no parallel to the swarm of interesting but often disturbing, questionable or even dark and revolting figures which illuminate and stain the story of the Italian cities during the Renaissance, although she has had too her crowded moments thronged by figures of a different kind. But she has had many rulers, statesmen and encouragers of art as great in their own way as Pericles or Lorenzo di Medici; the personalities of her famed poets emerge more dimly through the mist of time, but with indications which point to a lofty spirit or a humanity as great as that of Aeschylus or Euripides or a life-story as human and interesting as that of the famous Italian poets. And if, comparing this one country with all Europe as Mr. Archer insists, — mainly on the ground that Indians themselves make the comparison when they speak of the size of the country, its many races and the difficulty so long experienced in organising Indian unity, — it may be that in the field of political and military action Europe has a long lead, but what of the unparalleled profusion of great spiritual personalities in which India is preeminent? Again Mr. Archer speaks with arrogant depreciation of the significant figures born of the creative Indian mind which people its literature and its drama. Here too it is difficult to follow him or to accept his measure of values. To an oriental mind at least Rama and Ravana are as vivid and great and real characters as the personalities of Homer and Shakespeare, Sita and Draupadi certainly not less living than Helen or Cleopatra, Damayanti and Shakuntala and other feminine types not less sweet, gracious and alive than Alcestis or Desdemona. I am not here affirming any superiority, but the bottomless inequality and inferiority which this critic affirms exists, not in truth, but only in his imagination or his way of seeing.

That perhaps is the one thing of significance, the one thing which is really worth noting, the difference of mentality which is at the bottom of these comparisons. There is not any inferiority of life or force or active and reactive will but, as far as the sameness of human nature allows, a difference of type, character, personality, let us say, an emphasis in different and almost opposite directions. Will-power and personality have not been wanting in India, but the direction preferably given to them and the type most admired are of a different kind. The average European mind is prone to value or at least to be more interested in the egoistic or self-asserting will which insists upon itself with a strong or a bold, an aggressive, sometimes a fierce insistence; the Indian mind not only prizes more from the ethical standpoint, — that is found everywhere, — but is more vividly interested in the calm, self-controlling or even the self-effacing personality; for the effacement of egoism seems to it to be not an effacement, but an enhancement of value and power of the true person and its greatness. Mr. Archer finds Asoka pale and featureless; to an Indian mind he is supremely vivid and attractive. Why is Asoka to be called pale in comparison with Charlemagne or, let us say, with Constantine? Is it because he only mentions his sanguinary conquest of Kalinga in order to speak of his remorse and the turning of his spirit, a sentiment which Charlemagne massacring the Saxons in order to make good Christians of them could not in the least have understood, nor any more perhaps the Pope who anointed him? Constantine gave the victory to the Christian religion, but there is nothing Christian in his personality; Asoka not only enthroned Buddhism, but strove though not with a perfect success to follow the path laid down by Buddha. And the Indian mind would account him not only a nobler will, but a greater and more attracting personality than Constantine or Charlemagne. It is interested in Chanakya, but much more interested in Chaitanya.

And in literature also just as in actual life it has the same turn. This European mind finds Rama and Sita uninteresting and unreal, because they are too virtuous, too ideal, too white in colour; but to the Indian mind even apart from all religious sentiment they are figures of an absorbing reality which appeal to the inmost fibres of our being. A European scholar criticising the Mahabharata finds the strong and violent Bhima the only real character in that great poem; the Indian mind on the contrary finds greater character and a more moving interest in the calm and collected heroism of Arjuna, in the fine ethical temperament of Yudhisthira, in the divine charioteer of Kurukshetra who works not for his own hand but for the founding of the kingdom of right and justice. Those vehement or self-asserting characters or those driven by the storm of their passions which make the chief interest of European epic and drama, would either be relegated by it to the second plan or else, if set in large proportions, so brought in in order to bring into relief the greatness of the higher type of personality, as Ravana contrasts with and sets off Rama. The admiration of the one kind of mentality in the aesthetics of life goes to the coloured, that of the other to the luminous personality. Or, to put it in the form of the distinction made by the Indian mind itself, the interest of the one centres more in the rajasic, that of the other in the sattwic will and character.

Whether this difference imposes an inferiority on the aesthetics of Indian life and creation, each must judge for himself, but surely the Indian is the more evolved and spiritual conception. The Indian mind believes that the will and personality are not diminished but heightened by moving from the rajasic or more coloured egoistic to the sattwic and more luminous level of our being. Are not after all calm, self-mastery, a high balance signs of a greater and more real force of character than mere self-assertion of strength of will or the furious driving of the passions? Their possession does not mean that one must act with an inferior or less puissant, but only with a more right, collected and balanced will. And it is a mistake to think that asceticism itself rightly understood and practised implies an effacement of will; it brings much rather its greater concentration. That is the Indian view and experience and the meaning of the old legends in the epics — to which Mr. Archer, misunderstanding the idea behind them, violently objects, — attributing so enormous a force, even when it was misused, to the power gained by ascetic self-mastery, Tapasya. The Indian mind believed and still believes that soul power is a greater thing, works from a mightier centre of will and has greater results than a more outwardly and materially active will-force. But it will be said that India has valued most the impersonal and that must obviously discourage personality. But this too, — except for the negative ideal of losing oneself in the trance or the silence of the Eternal, which is not the true essence of the matter, — involves a misconception. However paradoxical it may sound, one finds actually that the acceptance of the eternal and impersonal behind one's being and action and the attempt at unity with it is precisely the thing that carries the person to his largest greatness and power. For this impersonality is not a nullity, but an oceanic totality of the being. The perfect man, the Siddha or the Buddha, becomes universal, embraces all being in sympathy and oneness, finds himself in others as in himself and by so doing draws into himself at the same time something of the infinite power of a universal energy. That is the positive ideal of Indian culture. And when this hostile critic finds himself forced to do homage to the superiority of certain personalities who have sprung from this "fine-spun aristocratic" culture, he is really paying a tribute to some results of this preference of the sattwic to the rajasic, the universal to the limited and egoistic man. Not to be as the common man, that is to say, as the crude natural or half-baked human being, was indeed the sense of this ancient endeavour and in that sense it may be called an aristocratic culture. But it was not a vulgar outward but a spiritual nobility which was the aim of its self-discipline. Indian life, personality, art, literature must be judged in this light and appreciated or depreciated after being seen in the real sense and with the right understanding of Indian culture.

XII

Indian Art

A GOOD deal of hostile or unsympathetic Western criticism of Indian civilisation has been directed in the past against its aesthetic side and taken the form of a disdainful or violent depreciation of its fine arts, architecture, sculpture and painting. Mr. Archer would not find much support in his wholesale and undiscriminating depreciation of a great literature, but here too there has been, if not positive attack, much failure of understanding; but in the attack on Indian art, his is the last and shrillest of many hostile voices. This aesthetic side of a people's culture is of the highest importance and demands almost as much scrutiny and carefulness of appreciation as the philosophy, religion and central formative ideas which have been the foundation of Indian life and of which much of the art and literature is a conscious expression in significant aesthetic forms. Fortunately, a considerable amount of work has been already done in the clearing away of misconceptions about Indian sculpture and painting and, if that were all, I might be content to refer to the works of Mr. Havell and Dr. Coomaraswamy or to the sufficiently understanding though less deeply informed and penetrating criticisms of others who cannot be charged with a prepossession in favour of oriental work. But a more general and searching consideration of first principles is called for in any complete view of the essential motives of Indian culture. I am appealing mainly to that new mind of India which long misled by an alien education, view and influence is returning to a sound and true idea of its past and future; but in this field the return is far from being as pervading, complete or luminous as it should be. I shall confine myself therefore first to a consideration of the sources of misunderstanding and pass from that to the true cultural significance of Indian aesthetic creation.

Mr. Archer pursuing his policy of Thorough devotes a whole chapter to the subject. This chapter is one long torrent of sweeping denunciation. But it would be a waste of time to take his attack as serious criticism and answer all in detail. His reply to defenders and eulogists is amazing in its shallowness and triviality, made up mostly of small, feeble and sometimes irrelevant points, big glaring epithets and forcibly senseless phrases, based for the rest on a misunderstanding or a sheer inability to conceive the meaning of spiritual experiences and metaphysical ideas, which betrays an entire absence of the religious sense and the philosophic mind. Mr. Archer is of course a rationalist and contemner of philosophy and entitled to his deficiencies; but why then try to judge things into the sense of which one is unable to enter and exhibit the spectacle of a blind man discoursing on colours? I will cite one or two instances which will show the quality of his criticism and amply justify a refusal to attach any positive value to the actual points he labours to make, except for the light they throw on the psychology of the objectors.

I will give first an instance amazing in its ineptitude. The Indian ideal figure of the masculine body insists on two features among many, a characteristic width at the shoulders and slenderness in the middle. Well, an objection to broadness of girth and largeness of belly — allowed only where they are appropriate as in sculptures of Ganesha or the Yakshas — is not peculiar to the Indian aesthetic sense; an emphasis, even a pronounced emphasis on their opposites is surely intelligible enough as an aesthetic tradition, however some may prefer a more realistic and prosperous presentation of the human figure. But Indian poets and authorities on art have given in this connection the simile of the lion, and lo and behold Mr. Archer solemnly discoursing on this image as a plain proof that the Indian people were only just out of the semi-savage state! It is only too clear that they drew the ideal of heroic manhood from their native jungle, from theriolatry, that is to say, from a worship of wild beasts! I presume, on the same principle and with the same stupefying ingenuity he would find in Kamban's image of the sea for the colour and depth of Sita's eyes clear evidence of a still more primitive savagery and barbaric worship of inanimate

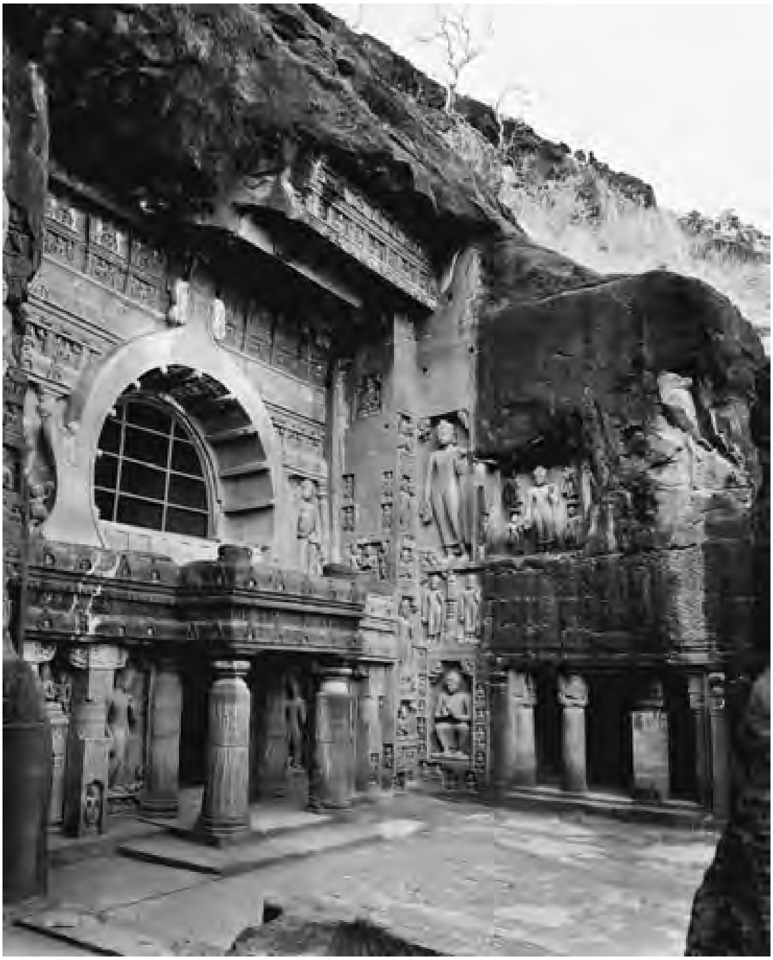

1. Cave Cathedral, Ajanta

The secular buildings of ancient India, her palaces and places of assembly and civic edifices have not outlived the ravage of time; what remains to us is mostly something of the great mountain and cave temples, something too of the temples of her ancient cities of the plains....(p. 272)

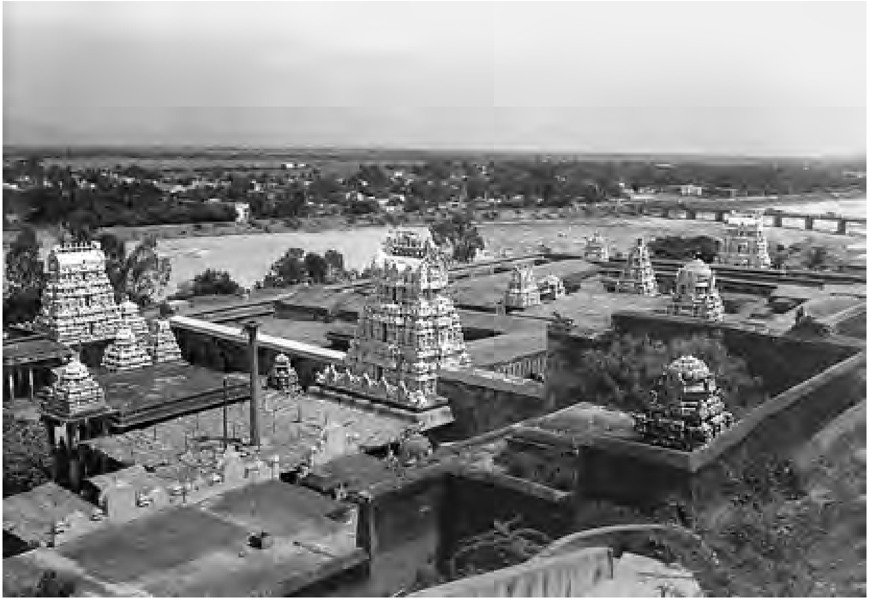

2. Kalahastishwara Temple, Andhra Pradesh

The straight way here is not to detach the temple from its surroundings, but to see it in unity with the sky and low-lying landscape or with the sky and hills around and feel the thing common to both, the construction and its environment, the reality in Nature, the reality expressed in the work of art. (p. 277)

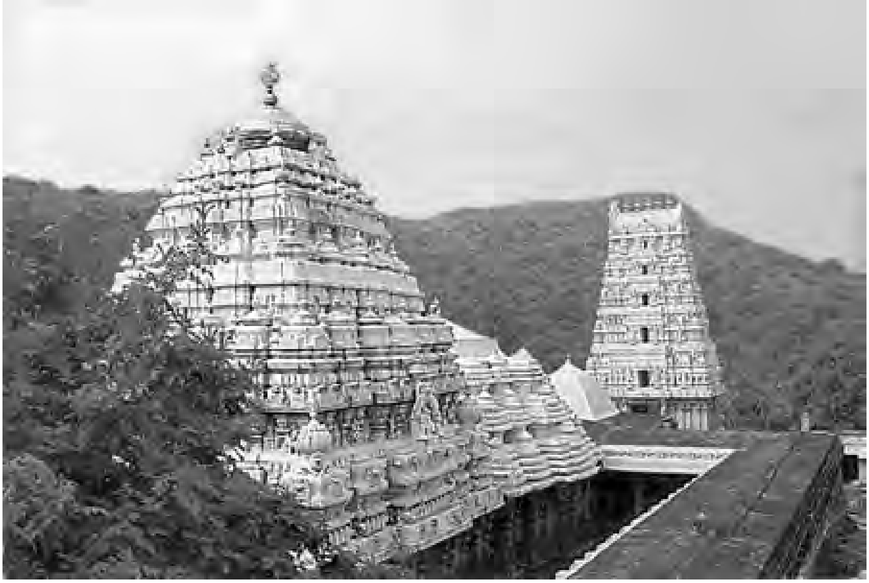

3. Sinhachalam Temple, Andhra Pradesh

One of these buildings climbs up bold, massive in projection, up-piled in the greatness of a forceful but sure ascent, preserving its range and line to the last, the other soars from the strength of its base, in the grace and emotion of a curving mass to a rounded summit and crowning symbol. (p. 277)

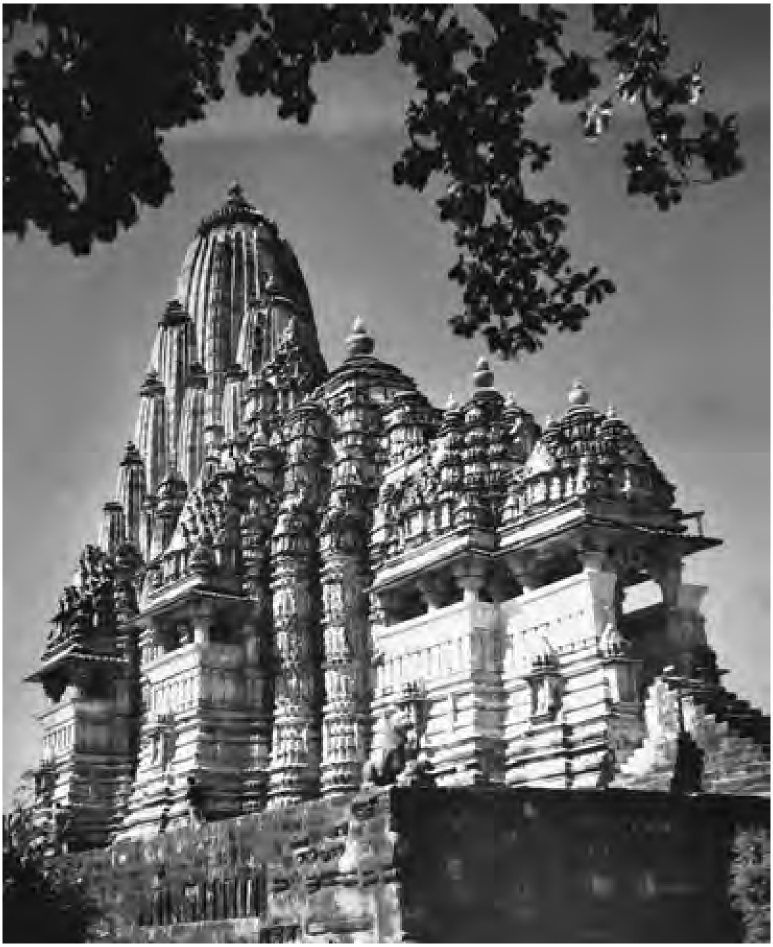

4. Kandarya Mahadeo Temple, Khajuraho

The great temples of the north have often ... a singular grace in their power, a luminous lightness relieving their mass and strength, a rich delicacy of beauty in their ornate fullness. (p. 280)

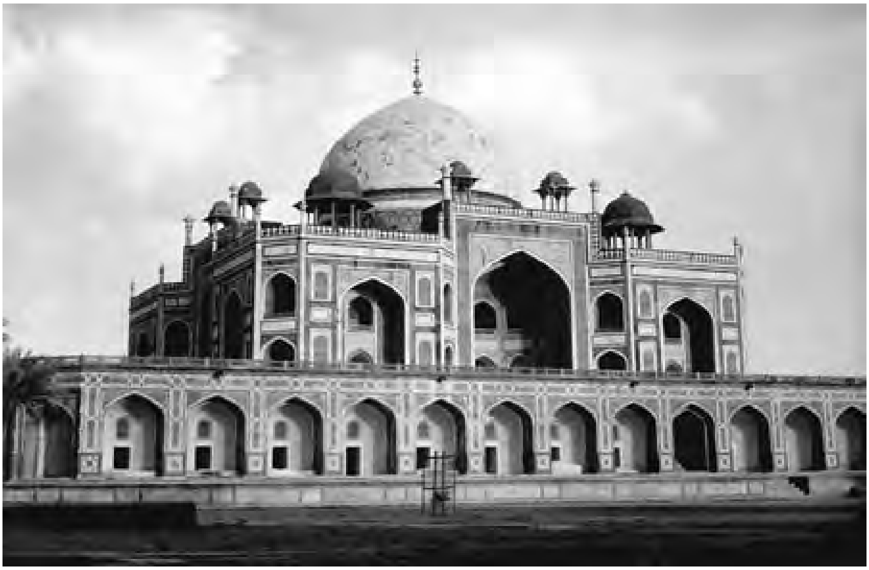

5. Humayun's Tomb, New Delhi

It seems to me that here the Indian mind has taken in much from the Arab and Persian imagination and in certain mosques and tombs I seem to find an impress of the robust and bold Afghan and Mogul temperament; but it remains clear enough that it is still on the whole a typically Indian creation with the peculiar Indian gift. (p. 282)

6. Taj Mahal, Agra

The Taj is not merely a sensuous reminiscence of an imperial amour or a fairy enchantment hewn from the moon's lucent quarries, but the eternal dream of a love that survives death. (p. 284)

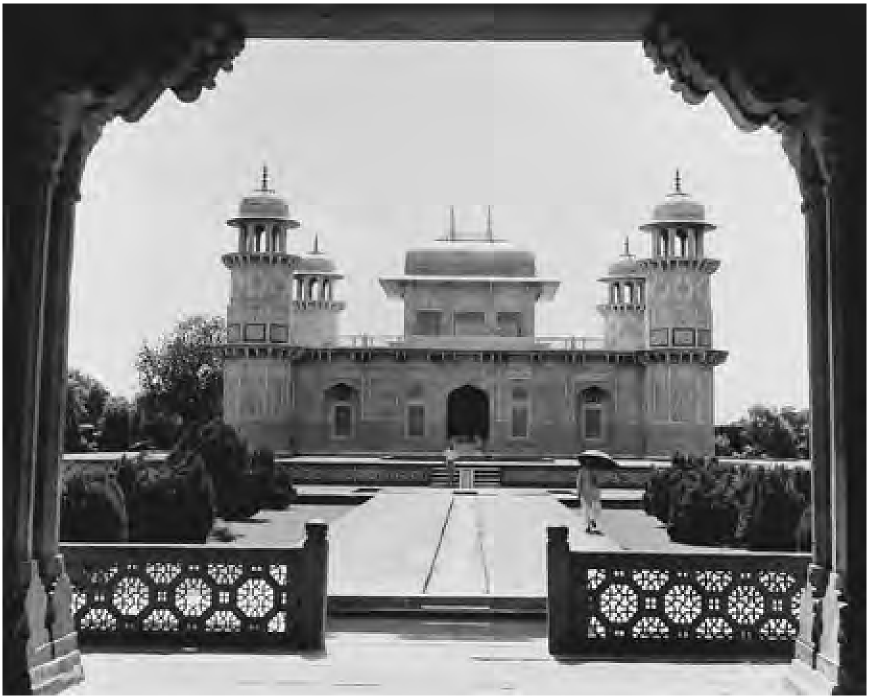

7. Itimad-ud-Daulah's Tomb, Agra

Not rational but magical beauty satisfying and enchanting to some deeper quite suprarational aesthetic soul in us is the inexpressible charm of these creations. (p. 283)

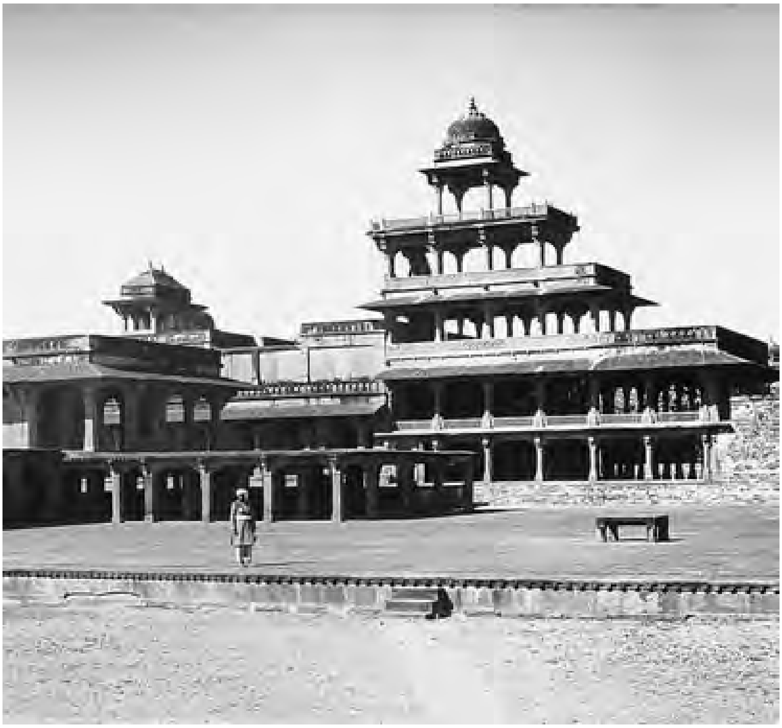

8. Panch Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri

The buildings of Fatehpur-Sikri are not monuments of an effeminate luxurious decadence, — an absurd description for the mind of the time of Akbar, — but give form to a nobility, power and beauty which lay hold upon but do not wallow on the earth. (p. 284) nature, or in Valmiki's description of his heroine's "eyes like wine", *madirekṣaṇā*, evidence of a chronic inebriety and the semi-drunken inspiration of the Indian poetic mind. This is one example of Mr. Archer's most telling points. It is by no means an isolated though it is an extreme specimen, and the absurdity of that particular argument only brings out the triviality of this manner of criticism. It is on a par with the common objection to the slim hands and feet loved of the Bengal painters which one hears sometimes advanced as a solid condemnation of their work. And that can be pardoned in the average man who under the high dispensation of modern culture is not expected to have any intelligent conception about art, — the instinctive appreciation has been already safely killed and buried. But what are we to say of a professed critic who ignores the deeper motives and fastens on details in order to give them this kind of significance?

But there are more grave and important objections in this criticism; for Mr. Archer turns also to deal with philosophy in art. The whole basis of Indian artistic creation, perfectly conscious and recognised in the canons, is directly spiritual and intuitive. Mr. Havell rightly lays stress on this essential distinction and speaks in passing of the infinite superiority of the method of direct perception over intellect, an assertion naturally offensive to the rationalistic mind, though it is now increasingly affirmed by leading Western thinkers. Mr. Archer at once starts out to hack at it with a very blunt tomahawk. How does he deal with this crucial matter? In a way which misses the whole real point and has nothing whatever to do with the philosophy of art. He fastens on Mr. Havell's coupling of the master intuition of Buddha with the great intuition of Newton and objects to the parallel because the two discoveries deal with two different orders of knowledge, one scientific and physical, the other mental or psychic, spiritual or philosophic in nature. He trots out from its stable the old objection that Newton's intuition was only the last step in a long intellectual process, while according to this positive psychologist and philosophic critic the intuitions of Buddha and other Indian sages had no basis in any intellectual process of any kind or any verifiable experience. It is on the contrary the simple fact, well-known to all who know anything of the subject, that the conclusions of Buddha and other Indian philosophers (I am not now speaking of the inspired thought of the Upanishads which was pure spiritual experience enlightened by intuition and gnosis,) were preceded by a very acute scrutiny of relevant psychological phenomena and a process of reasoning which, though certainly not rationalistic, was as rational as any other method of thinking. He clinches his refutation by the sage remark that these intuitions which he chooses to call fantasies contradict one another and therefore, it seems, have no sort of value except their vain metaphysical subtlety. Are we to conclude that the patient study of phenomena, the scrupulous and rigidly verifiable intellectual reasonings and conclusions of Western scientists have led to no conflicting or contradictory results? One could never imagine at this rate that the science of heredity is torn by conflicting "fantasies" or that Newton's "fantasies" about space and gravitational effect on space are at this day in danger of being upset by Einstein's "fantasies" in the same field. It is a minor matter that Mr. Archer happens to be wrong in his idea of Buddha's intuition when he says that he would have rejected a certain Vedantic intuition, since Buddha neither accepted nor rejected, but simply refused at all to speculate on the supreme cause. His intuition was confined to the cause of sorrow and the impermanence of things and the release by extinction of ego, desire and Sanskara, and so far as he chose to go, his intuition of this extinction, Nirvana, and the Vedantic intuition of the supreme unity were the seeing of one truth of spiritual experience, seen no doubt from different angles of vision and couched in different intellectual forms, but with a common intuitive substance. The rest was foreign to Buddha's rigidly practical purpose. All this leads us far afield from our subject, but our critic has a remarkably confused mind and to follow him is to be condemned to divagate.

Thus far Mr. Archer on intuition. This is the character of his excursions on first principles in art. Is it really necessary to point out that a power of mind or spirit may be the same and yet act differently in different fields? or that a certain kind of intuition may be prepared by a long intellectual training, but that does not make it a last step in an intellectual process, any more than the precedence of sense activity makes intellectual reasoning a last step of sense-perception? The reason overtops sense and admits us to other and subtler ranges of truth; the intuition similarly overtops reason and admits us to a more direct and luminous power of truth. But very obviously in the use of the intuition the poet and artist cannot proceed precisely in the same way as the scientist or philosopher. Leonardo da Vinci's remarkable intuitions in science and his creative intuitions in art started from the same power, but the surrounding or subordinate mental operations were of a different character and colour. And in art itself there are different kinds of intuition. Shakespeare's seeing of life differs in its character and aims from Balzac's or Ibsen's, but the essential part of the process, that which makes it intuitive, is the same. The Buddhistic, the Vedantic seeing of things may be equally powerful starting-points for artistic creation, may lead one to the calm of a Buddha or the other to the rapture dance or majestic stillness of Shiva, and it is quite indifferent to the purposes of art to which of them the metaphysician may be inclined to give a logical preference. These are elementary notions and it is not surprising that one who ignores them should misunderstand the strong and subtle artistic creations of India.

The weakness of Mr. Archer's attack, its empty noise and violence and exiguity of substance must not blind us to the very real importance of the mental outlook from which his dislike of Indian art proceeds. For the outlook and the dislike it generates are rooted in something deeper than themselves, a whole cultural training, natural or acquired temperament and fundamental attitude towards existence, and it measures, if the immeasurable can be measured, the width of the gulf which till recently separated the oriental and the Western mind and most of all the European and the Indian way of seeing things. An inability to understand the motives and methods of Indian art and a contempt of or repulsion from it was almost universal till yesterday in the mind of Europe. There was little difference in this regard between the average man bound by his customary first notions and the competent critic trained to appreciate different forms of culture. The gulf was too wide for any bridge of culture then built to span. To the European mind Indian art was a thing barbarous, immature, monstrous, an arrested growth from humanity's primitive savagery and incompetent childhood. If there has been now some change, it is due to the remarkably sudden widening of the horizon and view of European culture, a partial shifting even of the standpoint from which it was accustomed to see and judge all that it saw. In matters of art the Western mind was long bound up as in a prison in the Greek and Renascence tradition modified by a later mentality with only two side rooms of escape, the romantic and the realistic motives, but these were only wings of the same building; for the base was the same and a common essential canon united their variations. The conventional superstition of the imitation of Nature as the first law or the limiting rule of art governed even the freest work and gave its tone to the artistic and critical intelligence. The canons of Western artistic creation were held to be the sole valid criteria and everything else was regarded as primitive and half-developed or else strange and fantastic and interesting only by its curiosity. But a remarkable change has begun to set in, even though the old ideas still largely rule. The prison, if not broken, has at least had a wide breach made in it; a more flexible vision and a more profound imagination have begun to superimpose themselves on the old ingrained attitude. As a result, and as a contributing influence towards this change, oriental or at any rate Chinese and Japanese art has begun to command something like adequate recognition.

But the change has not yet gone far enough for a thorough appreciation of the deepest and most characteristic spirit and inspiration of Indian work. An eye or an effort like Mr. Havell's is still rare. For the most part even the most sympathetic criticism stops short at a technical appreciation and imaginative sympathy which tries to understand from outside and penetrates into so much only of the artistic suggestion as can be at once seized by the new wider view of a more accomplished and flexible critical mentality. But there is little sign of the understanding of the very well-spring and spiritual fountain of Indian artistic creation. There is therefore still a utility in fathoming the depths and causes of the divergence. That is especially necessary for the Indian mind itself, for by the appreciation excited by an opposing view it will be better able to understand itself and especially to seize what is essential in Indian art and must be clung to in the future and what is an incident or a phase of growth and can be shed in the advance to a new creation. This is properly a task for those who have themselves at once the creative insight, the technical competence and the seeing critical eye. But everyone who has at all the Indian spirit and feeling, can at least give some account of the main, the central things which constitute for him the appeal of Indian painting, sculpture and architecture. This is all that I shall attempt, for it will be in itself the best defence and justification of Indian culture on its side of aesthetic significance.

The criticism of art is a vain and dead thing when it ignores the spirit, aim, essential motive from which a type of artistic creation starts and judges by the external details only in the light of a quite different spirit, aim and motive. Once we understand the essential things, enter into the characteristic way and spirit, are able to interpret the form and execution from that inner centre, we can then see how it looks in the light of other standpoints, in the light of the comparative mind. A comparative criticism has its use, but the essential understanding must precede it if it is to have any real value. But while this is comparatively easy in the wider and more flexible turn of literature, it is, I think, more difficult in the other arts, when the difference of spirit is deep, because there the absence of the mediating word, the necessity of proceeding direct from spirit to line and form brings about a special intensity and exclusive concentration of aim and stress of execution. The intensity of the thing that moves the work is brought out with a more distinct power, but by its very stress and directness allows of few accommodations and combined variations of appeal. The thing meant and the thing done strike deep home into the soul or the imaginative mind, but touch it over a smaller surface and with a lesser multitude of points of contact. But whatever the reason, it is less easy for a different kind of mind to appreciate.

The Indian mind in its natural poise finds it almost or quite as difficult really, that is to say, spiritually to understand the arts of Europe, as the ordinary European mind to enter into the spirit of Indian painting and sculpture. I have seen a comparison made between a feminine Indian figure and a Greek Aphrodite which illustrates the difficulty in an extreme form. The critic tells me that the Indian figure is full of a strong spiritual sense — here of the very breath and being of devotion, an ineffable devotion, and that is true, it is a suggestion or even a revelation which breaks through or overflows the form rather than depends on the external work, — but the Greek creation can only awaken a sublimated carnal or sensuous delight. Now having entered somewhat into the heart of meaning of Greek sculpture, I can see that this is a wrong account of the matter. The critic has got into the real spirit of the Indian, but not into the real spirit of the Greek work; his criticism from that moment, as a comparative appreciation, loses all value. The Greek figure stresses no doubt the body, but appeals through it to an imaginative seeing inspiration which aims at expressing a certain divine power of beauty and gives us therefore something which is much more than a merely sensuous aesthetic pleasure. If the artist has done this with perfection, the work has accomplished its aim and ranks as a masterpiece. The Indian sculptor stresses something behind, something more remote to the surface imagination, but nearer to the soul, and subordinates to it the physical form. If he has only partially succeeded or done it with power but with something faulty in the execution, his work is less great, even though it may have a greater spirit in the intention: but when he wholly succeeds, then his work too is a masterpiece, and we may prefer it with a good conscience, if the spiritual, the higher intuitive vision is what we most demand from art. This however need not interfere with an appreciation of both kinds in their own order.

But in viewing much of other European work of the very greatest repute, I am myself aware of a failure of spiritual sympathy. I look for instance on some of the most famed pieces of Tintoretto, — not the portraits, for those give the soul, if only the active or character soul in the man, but say, the Adam and Eve, the St. George slaying the dragon, the Christ appearing to Venetian Senators, and I am aware of standing baffled and stopped by an irresponsive blankness somewhere in my being. I can see the magnificence and power of colouring and design, I can see the force of externalised imagination or the spirited dramatic rendering of action, but I strive in vain to get out any significance below the surface or equivalent to the greatness of the form, except perhaps an incidental minor suggestion here and there and that is not sufficient for me. When I try to analyse my failure, I find at first certain conceptions which conflict with my expectation or my own way of seeing. This muscular Adam, the sensuous beauty of this Eve do not bring home to me the mother or the father of the race, this dragon seems to me only a surly portentous beast in great danger of being killed, not a creative embodiment of monstrous evil, this Christ with his massive body and benevolent philosophic visage almost offends me, is not at any rate the Christ whom I know. But these are after all incidental things; what is really the matter is that I come to this art with a previous demand for a kind of vision, imagination, emotion, significance which it cannot give me. And not being so self-confident as to think that what commands the admiration of the greatest critics and artists is not admirable, I can see this and pause on the verge of applying Mr. Archer's criticism of certain Indian work and saying that the mere execution is beautiful or marvellous but there is no imagination, nothing beyond what is on the surface. I can understand that what is wanting is really the kind of imagination I personally demand; but though my acquired cultured mind explains this to me and may intellectually catch at the something more, my natural being will not be satisfied, I am oppressed, not uplifted by this triumph of life and the flesh and of the power and stir of life, — not that I object to these things in themselves or to the greatest emphasis on the sensuous or even the sensual, elements not at all absent from Indian creation, if I can get something at least of the deeper thing I want behind it, — and I find myself turning away from the work of one of the greatest Italian masters to satisfy myself with some "barbaric" Indian painting or statue, some calm unfathomable Buddha, bronze Shiva or eighteen-armed Durga slaying the Asuras. But the cause of my failure is there, that I am seeking for something which was not meant in the spirit of this art and which I ought not to expect from its characteristic creation. And if I had steeped myself in this Renascence mind as in the original Hellenic spirit, I could have added something to my inner experience and acquired a more catholic and universal aesthesis.

I lay stress on this psychological misunderstanding or want of understanding, because it explains the attitude of the natural European mind to the great works of Indian art and puts on it its right value. This mind catches only what is kin to European effort and regards that too as inferior, naturally and quite rightly since the same thing is more sincerely and perfectly done from a more native fountain of power in Western work. That explains the amazing preference of better informed critics than Mr. Archer for the bastard Gandharan sculpture to great and sincere work original and true in its unity, — Gandharan sculpture which is an unsatisfying, almost an impotent junction of two incompatible motives, incompatible at least if one is not fused into the other as here certainly it is not fused, — or its praise otherwise incomprehensible of certain second-rate or third-rate creations and its turning away from others noble and profound but strange to its conceptions. Or else it seizes with appreciation — but is it really a total and a deeply understanding appreciation? — on work like the Indo-Saracenic which though in no way akin to Western types has yet the power at certain points to get within the outskirts of its circle of aesthetic conceptions. It is even so much struck by the Taj as to try to believe that it is the work of an Italian sculptor, some astonishing genius, no doubt, who Indianised himself miraculously in this one hour of solitary achievement, for India is a land of miracles, — and probably died of the effort, for he has left us no other work to admire. Again it admires, at least in Mr. Archer, Javanese work because of its humanity and even concludes from that that it is not Indian. Its essential unity with Indian work behind the variation of manner is invisible to this mind because the spirit and inner meaning of Indian work is a blank to its vision and it sees only a form, a notation of the meaning, which, therefore, it does not understand and dislikes. One might just as well say that the Gita written in the Devanagari is a barbaric, monstrous or meaningless thing, but put into some cursive character at once becomes not Indian, because human and intelligible!

But, ordinarily, place this mind before anything ancient, Hindu, Buddhistic or Vedantic in art and it looks at it with a blank or an angry incomprehension. It looks for the sense and does not find any, because either it has not in itself the experience and finds it difficult to have the imagination, much more the realisation of what this art does really mean and express, or because it insists on looking for what it is accustomed to see at home and, not finding that, is convinced that there is nothing to see or nothing of any value. Or else if there is something which it could have understood, it does not understand because it is expressed in the Indian form and the Indian way. It looks at the method and form and finds it unfamiliar, contrary to its own canons, is revolted, contemptuous, repelled, speaks of the thing as monstrous, barbarous, ugly or null, passes on in a high dislike or disdain. Or if it is overborne by some sense of unanalysable beauty of greatness or power it still speaks of a splendid barbarism. Do you want an illuminating instance of this blankness of comprehension? Mr. Archer sees the Dhyani Buddha with its supreme, its unfathomable, its infinite spiritual calm which every cultured oriental mind can at once feel and respond to in the depths of his being, and he denies that there is anything, — only drooped eyelids, an immobile pose and an insipid, by which I suppose he means a calm passionless face.[1] He turns for comfort to the Hellenic nobility of expression of the Gandharan Buddha, or to the living Rabindranath Tagore more spiritual than any Buddha from Peshawar to Kamakura, an inept misuse of comparison against which I imagine the great poet himself would be the first to protest. There we have the total incomprehension, the blind window, the blocked door in the mind, and there too the reason why the natural Western mentality comes to Indian art with a demand for something other than what its characteristic spirit and motive intend to give, and, demanding that, is not prepared to enter into another kind of spiritual experience and another range of creative sight, imaginative power and mode of self-expression.

This once understood, we can turn to the difference in the spirit and method of artistic creation which has given rise to the mutual incomprehension; for that will bring us to the positive side of the matter. All great artistic work proceeds from an act of intuition, not really an intellectual idea or a splendid imagination, — these are only mental translations, — but a direct intuition of some truth of life or being, some significant form of that truth, some development of it in the mind of man. And so far there is no difference between great European and great Indian work. Where then begins the immense divergence? It is there in everything else, in the object and field of the intuitive vision, in the method of working out the sight or suggestion, in the part taken in the rendering by the external form and technique, in the whole way of the rendering to the human mind, even in the centre of our being to which the work appeals. The European artist gets his intuition by a suggestion from an appearance in life and Nature or, if it starts from something in his own soul, relates it at once to an external support. He brings down that intuition into his normal mind and sets the intellectual idea and the imagination in the intelligence to clothe it with a mental stuff which will render its form to the moved reason, emotion, aesthesis. Then he missions his eye and hand to execute it in terms which start from a colourable "imitation" of life and Nature — and in ordinary hands too often end there — to get at an interpretation that really changes it into the image of something not outward in our own being or in universal being which was the real thing seen. And to that in looking at the work we have to get back through colour and line and disposition or whatever else may be part of the external means, to their mental suggestions and through them to the soul of the whole matter. The appeal is not direct to the eye of the deepest self and spirit within, but to the outward soul by a strong awakening of the sensuous, the vital, the emotional, the intellectual and imaginative being, and of the spiritual we get as much or as little as can suit itself to and express itself through the outward man. Life, action, passion, emotion, idea, Nature seen for their own sake and for an aesthetic delight in them, these are the object and field of this creative intuition. The something more which the Indian mind knows to be behind these things looks out, if at all, from behind many veils. The direct and unveiled presence of the Infinite and its godheads is not evoked or thought necessary to the greater greatness and the highest perfection.

---

[1] In a note Mr. Archer mentions and very rightly discounts an absurd apology for these Buddhas, viz., that the greatness and spirituality are not at all in the work, but in the devotion of the artist! If the artist cannot put into his work what was in him — and here it is not devotion that is expressed, — his work is a futile abortion. But if he has expressed what he has felt, the capacity to feel it must also be there in the mind that looks at his work.

The theory of ancient Indian art at its greatest — and the greatest gives its character to the rest and throws on it something of its stamp and influence — is of another kind. Its highest business is to disclose something of the Self, the Infinite, the Divine to the regard of the soul, the Self through its expressions, the Infinite through its living finite symbols, the Divine through his powers. Or the Godheads are to be revealed, luminously interpreted or in some way suggested to the soul's understanding or to its devotion or at the very least to a spiritually or religiously aesthetic emotion. When this hieratic art comes down from these altitudes to the intermediate worlds behind ours, to the lesser godheads or genii, it still carries into them some power or some hint from above. And when it comes quite down to the material world and the life of man and the things of external Nature, it does not altogether get rid of the greater vision, the hieratic stamp, the spiritual seeing, and in most good work — except in moments of relaxation and a humorous or vivid play with the obvious — there is always something more in which the seeing presentation of life floats as in an immaterial atmosphere. Life is seen in the self or in some suggestion of the infinite or of something beyond or there is at least a touch and influence of these which helps to shape the presentation. It is not that all Indian work realises this ideal; there is plenty no doubt that falls short, is lowered, ineffective or even debased, but it is the best and the most characteristic influence and execution which gives its tone to an art and by which we must judge. Indian art in fact is identical in its spiritual aim and principle with the rest of Indian culture.

A seeing in the self accordingly becomes the characteristic method of the Indian artist and it is directly enjoined on him by the canon. He has to see first in his spiritual being the truth of the thing he must express and to create its form in his intuitive mind; he is not bound to look out first on outward life and Nature for his model, his authority, his rule, his teacher or his fountain of suggestions. Why should he when it is something quite inward he has to bring out into expression? It is not an idea in the intellect, a mental imagination, an outward emotion on which he has to depend for his stimulants, but an idea, image, emotion of the spirit, and the mental equivalents are subordinate things for help in the transmission and give only a part of the colouring and the shape. A material form, colour, line and design are his physical means of the expression, but in using them he is not bound to an imitation of Nature, but has to make the form and all else significant of his vision, and if that can only be done or can best be done by some modification, some pose, some touch or symbolic variation which is not found in physical Nature, he is at perfect liberty to use it, since truth to his vision, the unity of the thing he is seeing and expressing is his only business. The line, colour and the rest are not his first, but his last preoccupation, because they have to carry on them a world of things which have already taken spiritual form in his mind. He has not for instance to re-create for us the human face and body of the Buddha or some one passion or incident of his life, but to reveal the calm of Nirvana through a figure of the Buddha, and every detail and accessory must be turned into a means or an aid of his purpose. And even when it is some human passion or incident he has to portray, it is not usually that alone, but also or more something else in the soul to which it points or from which it starts or some power behind the action that has to enter into the spirit of his design and is often really the main thing. And through the eye that looks on his work he has to appeal not merely to an excitement of the outward soul, but to the inner self, *antarātman*. One may well say that beyond the ordinary cultivation of the aesthetic instinct necessary to all artistic appreciation there is a spiritual insight or culture needed if we are to enter into the whole meaning of Indian artistic creation, otherwise we get only at the surface external things or at the most at things only just below the surface. It is an intuitive and spiritual art and must be seen with the intuitive and spiritual eye.

This is the distinctive character of Indian art and to ignore it is to fall into total incomprehension or into much misunderstanding. Indian architecture, painting, sculpture are not only intimately one in inspiration with the central things in Indian philosophy, religion, Yoga, culture, but a specially intense expression of their significance. There is much in the literature which can be well enough appreciated without any very deep entry into these things, but it is comparatively a very small part of what is left of the other arts, Hindu or Buddhistic, of which this can be said. They have been very largely a hieratic aesthetic script of India's spiritual, contemplative and religious experience.

XIII

Indian Art – 2

ARCHITECTURE, sculpture and painting, because they are the three great arts which appeal to the spirit through the eye, are those too in which the sensible and the invisible meet with the strongest emphasis on themselves and yet the greatest necessity of each other. The form with its insistent masses, proportions, lines, colours, can here only justify them by their service for the something intangible it has to express; the spirit needs all the possible help of the material body to interpret itself to itself through the eye, yet asks of it that it shall be as transparent a veil as possible of its own greater significance. The art of the East and the art of the West — each in its characteristic or mean, for there are always exceptions, — deal with the problem of these two interlocking powers in a quite different way. The Western mind is arrested and attracted by the form, lingers on it and cannot get away from its charm, loves it for its own beauty, rests on the emotional, intellectual, aesthetic suggestions that arise directly from its most visible language, confines the soul in the body; it might almost be said that for this mind form creates the spirit, the spirit depends for its existence and for everything it has to say on the form. The Indian attitude to the matter is at the opposite pole to this view. For the Indian mind form does not exist except as a creation of the spirit and draws all its meaning and value from the spirit. Every line, arrangement of mass, colour, shape, posture, every physical suggestion, however many, crowded, opulent they may be, is first and last a suggestion, a hint, very often a symbol which is in its main function a support for a spiritual emotion, idea, image that again goes beyond itself to the less definable, but more powerfully sensible reality of the spirit which has excited these movements in the aesthetic mind and passed through them into significant shapes.

This characteristic attitude of the Indian reflective and creative mind necessitates in our view of its creations an effort to get beyond at once to the inner spirit of the reality it expresses and see from it and not from outside. And in fact to start from the physical details and their synthesis appears to me quite the wrong way to look at an Indian work of art. The orthodox style of Western criticism seems to be to dwell scrutinisingly on the technique, on form, on the obvious story of the form, and then pass to some appreciation of beautiful or impressive emotion and idea. It is only in some deeper and more sensitive minds that we get beyond that depth into profounder things. A criticism of that kind applied to Indian art leaves it barren or poor of significance. Here the only right way is to get at once through a total intuitive or revelatory impression or by some meditative dwelling on the whole, *dhyāna* in the technical Indian term, to the spiritual meaning and atmosphere, make ourselves one with that as completely as possible, and then only the helpful meaning and value of all the rest comes out with a complete and revealing force. For here it is the spirit that carries the form, while in most Western art it is the form that carries whatever there may be of spirit. The striking phrase of Epictetus recurs to the mind in which he describes man as a little soul carrying a corpse, *psucharion ei bastazon nekron*. The more ordinary Western outlook is upon animate matter carrying in its life a modicum of soul. But the seeing of the Indian mind and of Indian art is that of a great, a limitless self and spirit, *mahān ātmā*, which carries to us in the sea of its presence a living shape of itself, small in comparison to its own infinity, but yet sufficient by the power that informs this symbol to support some aspect of that infinite's self-expression. It is therefore essential that we should look here not solely with the physical eye informed by the reason and the aesthetic imagination, but make the physical seeing a passage to the opening of the inner spiritual eye and a moved communion in the soul. A great oriental work of art does not easily reveal its secret to one who comes to it solely in a mood of aesthetic curiosity or with a considering critical objective mind, still less as the cultivated and interested tourist passing among strange and foreign things; but it has to be seen in loneliness, in the solitude of one's self, in moments when one is capable of long and deep meditation and as little weighted as possible with the conventions of material life. That is why the Japanese with their fine sense in these things, — a sense which modern Europe with her assault of crowded art galleries and over-pictured walls seems to have quite lost, though perhaps I am wrong, and those are the right conditions for display of European art, — have put their temples and their Buddhas as often as possible away on mountains and in distant or secluded scenes of Nature and avoid living with great paintings in the crude hours of daily life, but keep them by preference in such a way that their undisputed suggestion can sink into the mind in its finer moments or apart where they can go and look at them in a treasured secrecy when the soul is at leisure from life. That is an indication of the utmost value pointing to the nature of the appeal made by Eastern art and the right way and mood for looking at its creations.

Indian architecture especially demands this kind of inner study and this spiritual self-identification with its deepest meaning and will not otherwise reveal itself to us. The secular buildings of ancient India, her palaces and places of assembly and civic edifices have not outlived the ravage of time; what remains to us is mostly something of the great mountain and cave temples, something too of the temples of her ancient cities of the plains, and for the rest we have the fanes and shrines of her later times, whether situated in temple cities and places of pilgrimage like Srirangam and Rameshwaram or in her great once regal towns like Madura, when the temple was the centre of life. It is then the most hieratic side of a hieratic art that remains to us. These sacred buildings are the signs, the architectural self-expression of an ancient spiritual and religious culture. Ignore the spiritual suggestion, the religious significance, the meaning of the symbols and indications, look only with the rational and secular aesthetic mind, and it is vain to expect that we shall get to any true and discerning appreciation of this art. And it has to be remembered too that the religious spirit here is something

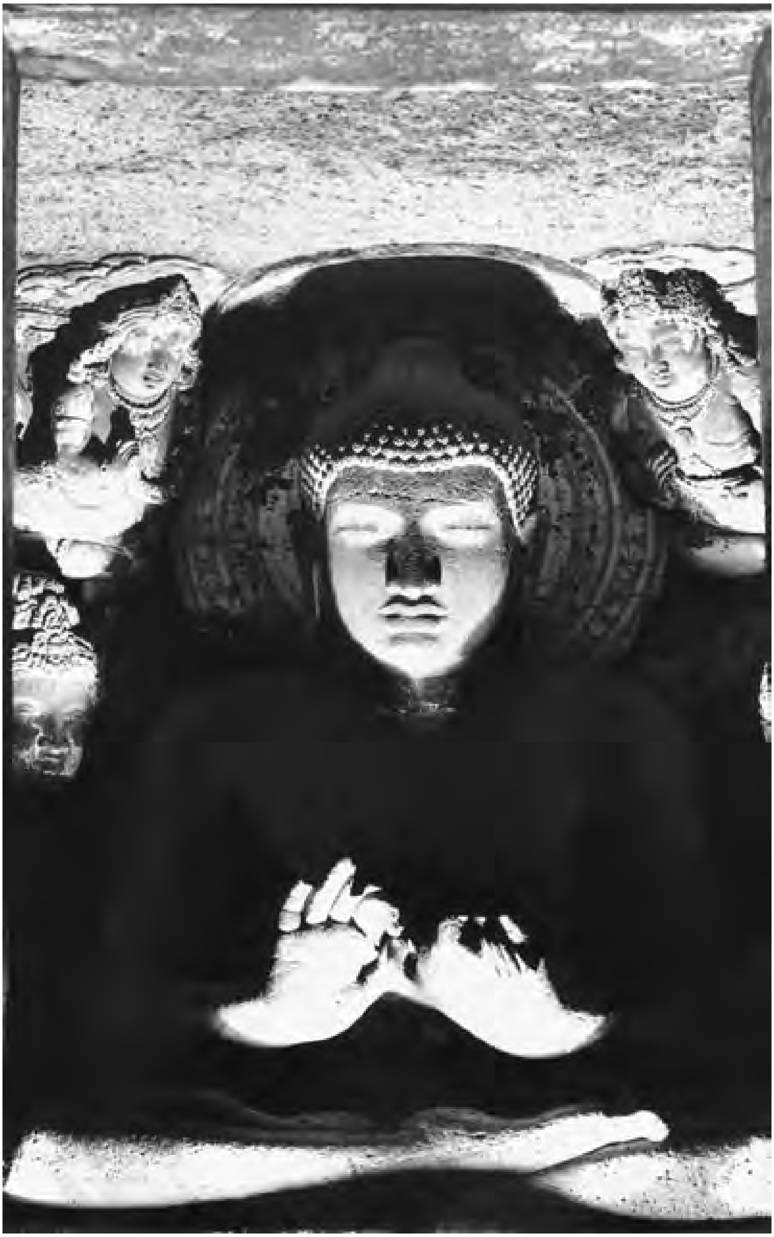

9. Dhyani Buddha, Ajanta

The figure of the Buddha achieves the expression of the infinite in a finite image,... the illimitable calm of Nirvana in a human form and visage. (p. 291)

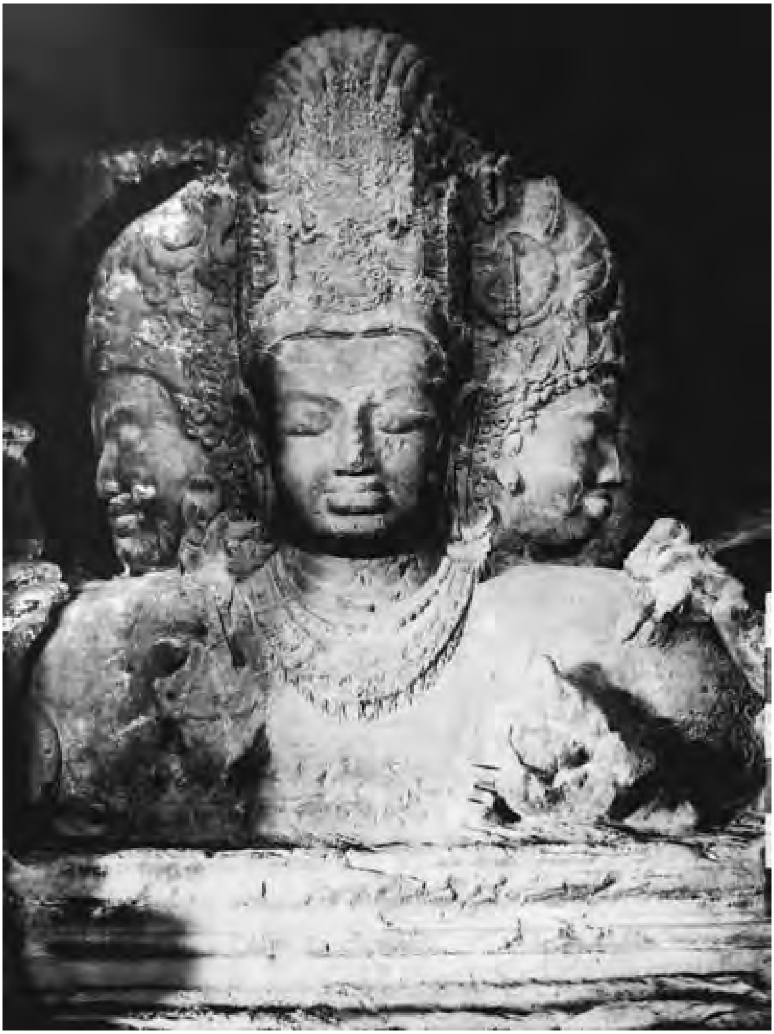

10. Maheshwara Murti, Elephanta Caves

The inspiration, the way of seeing is frankly not naturalistic, not, that is to say, the vivid, convincing and accurate, the graceful, beautiful or strong, or even the idealised or imaginative imitation of surface or terrestrial nature. (p. 293)

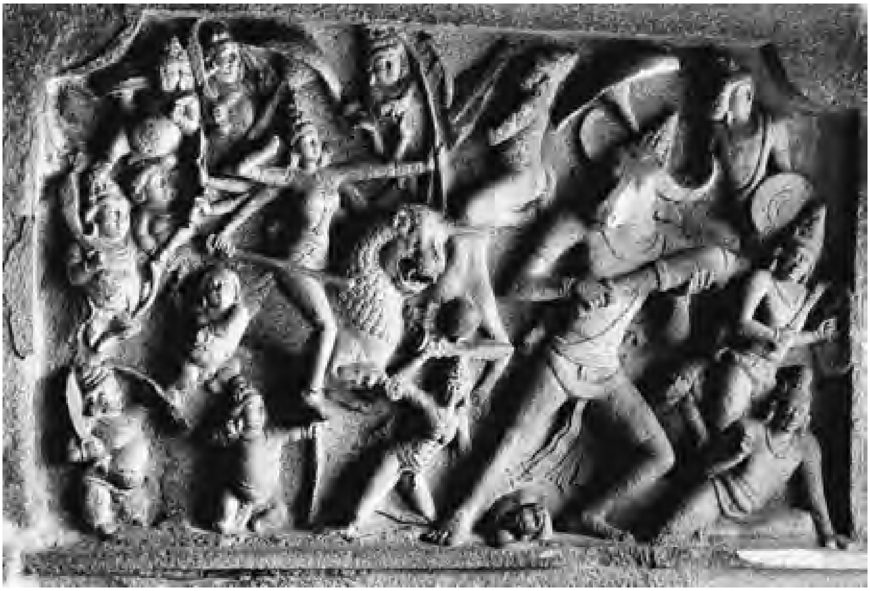

11. Durga Mahishasuramardini, Mamallapuram

The gods of Indian sculpture are cosmic beings, embodiments of some great spiritual power, spiritual idea and action, inmost psychic significance, the human form a vehicle of this soul meaning, its outward means of self-expression; everything in the figure, every opportunity it gives, the face, the hands, the posture of the limbs, the poise and turn of the body, every accessory, has to be made instinct with the inner meaning, help it to emerge, carry out the rhythm of the total suggestion.... (p. 290)

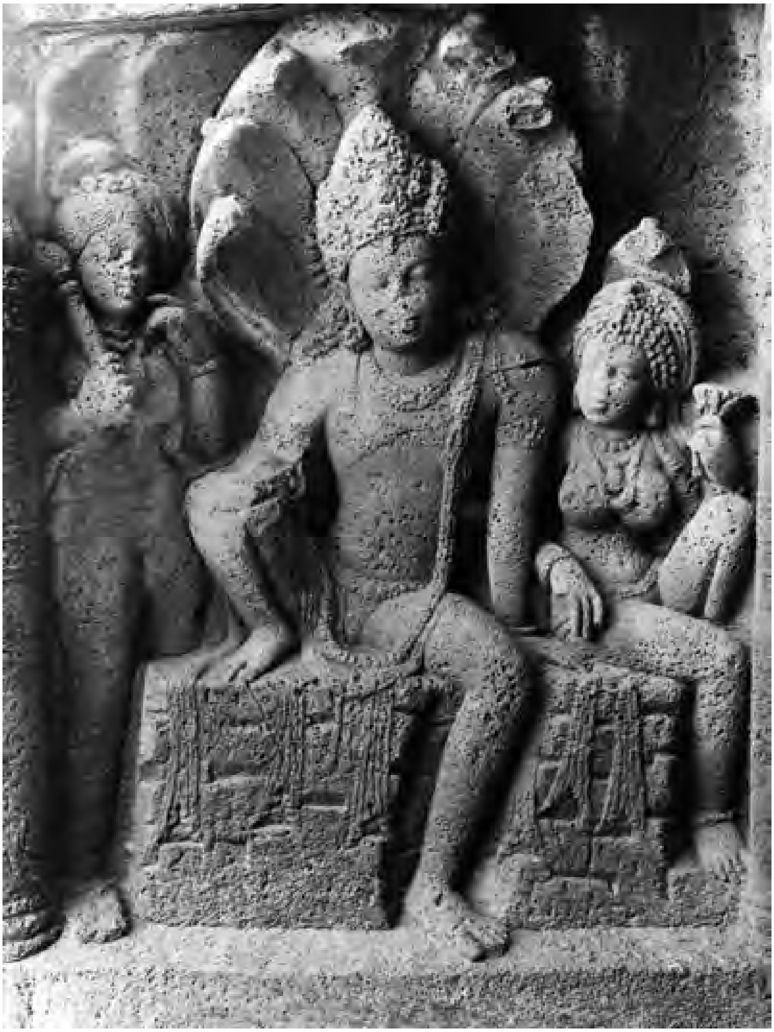

12. Nagaraja and Queen, Ajanta

The sculptor must express always in static form; the idea of the spirit is cut out for him in mass and line, significant in the stability of its insistence...;

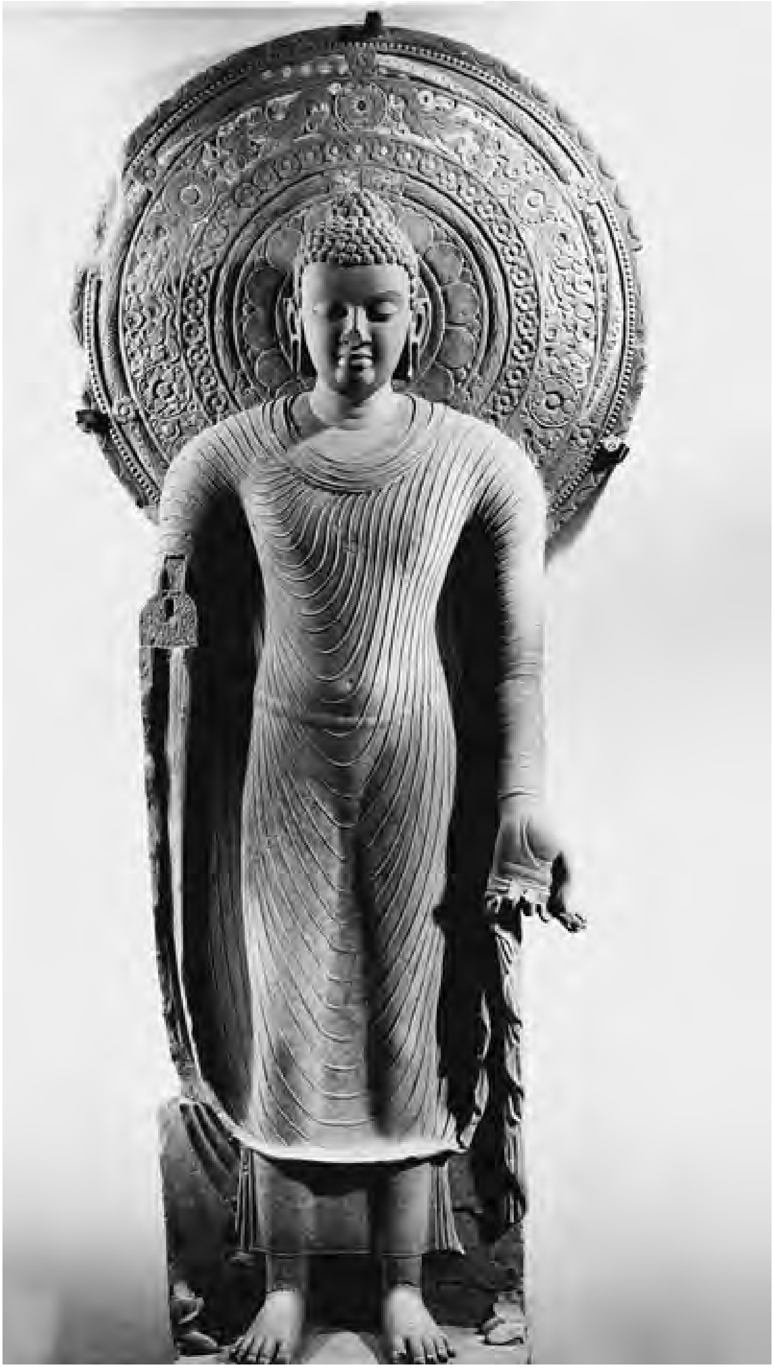

13. Buddha, Mathura Museum

for him eternity seizes hold of time in its shapes and arrests it in the monumental spirit of stone or bronze. (p. 302)

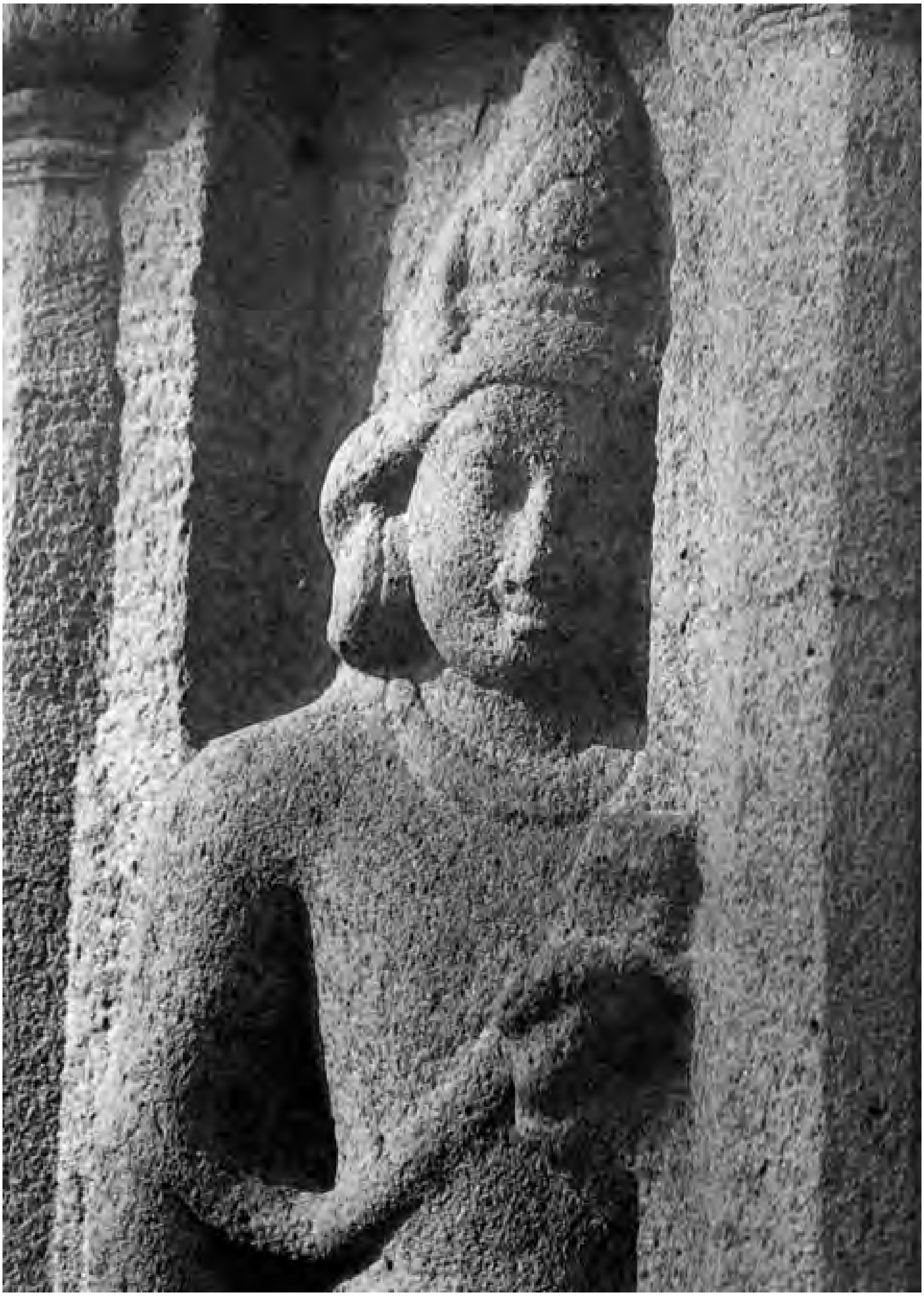

14. Princely Doorkeeper, Mamallapuram

The material in which we work makes its own peculiar demand on the creative spirit, lays down its own natural conditions, ...

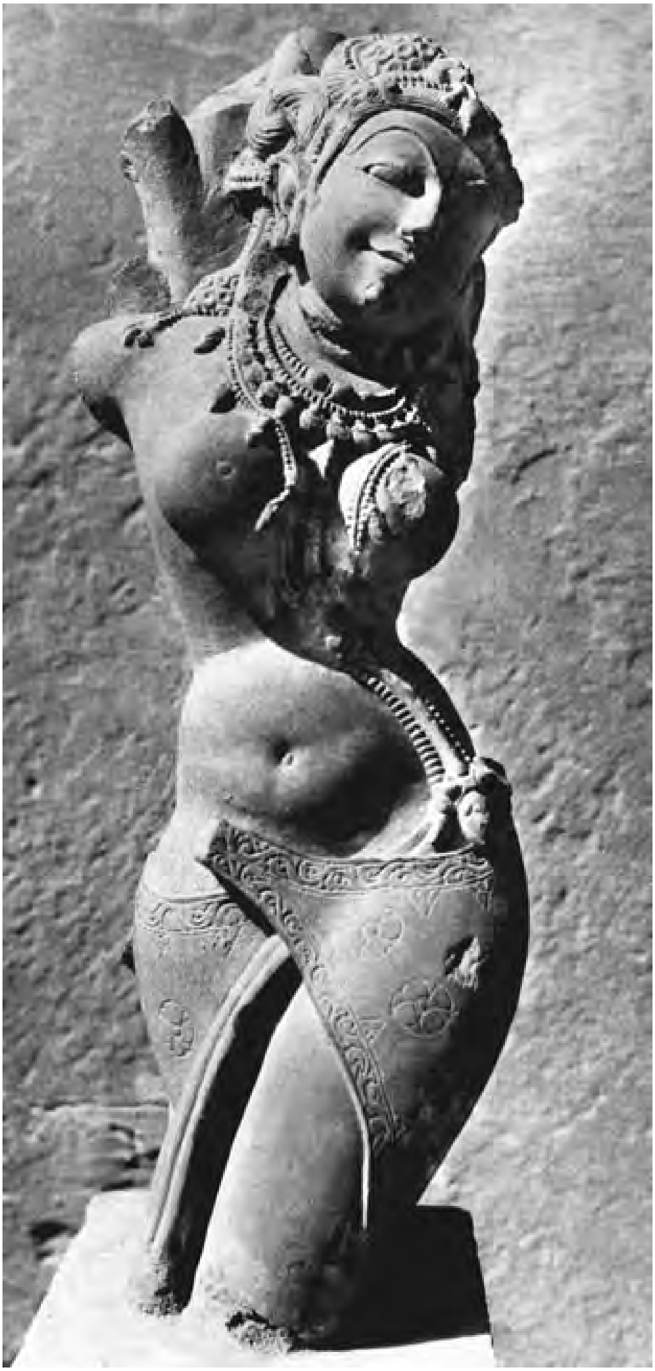

15. Vrikshaka, Gwalior Museum

and the art of making in stone or bronze calls for a cast of mind which the ancients had and the moderns have not or have had only in rare individuals.... (p. 287)

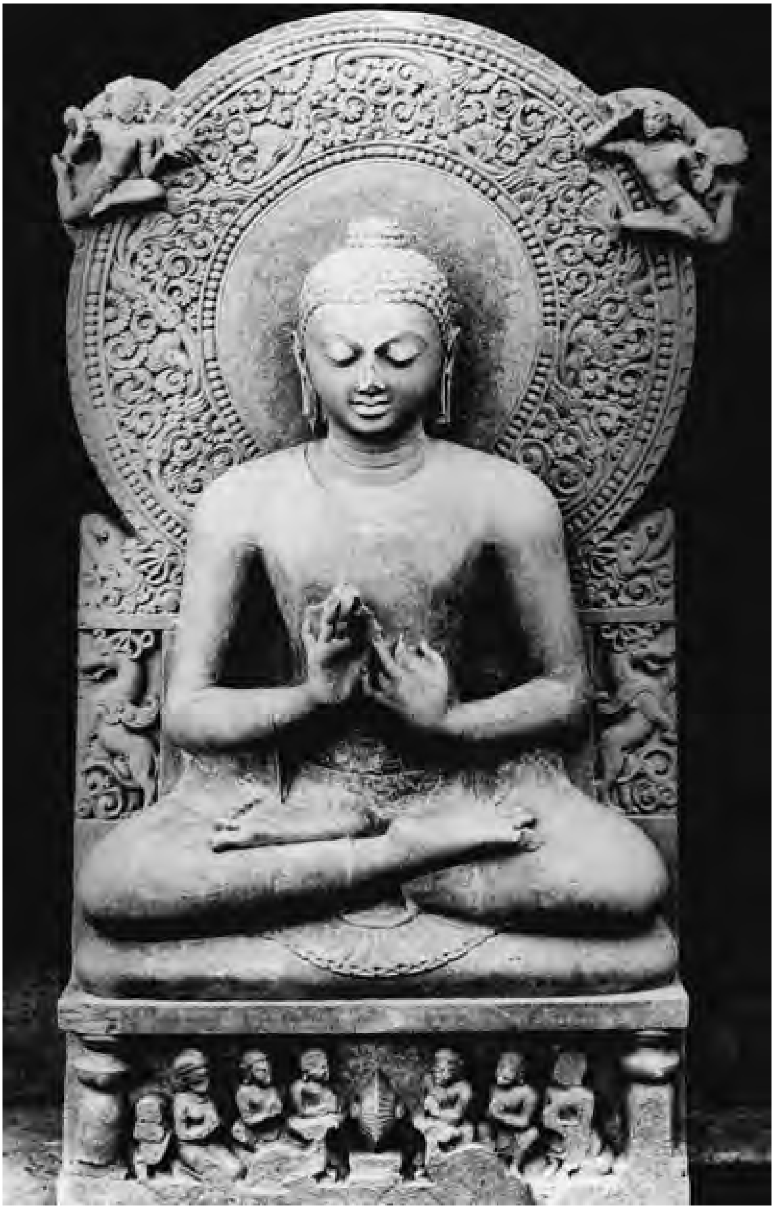

16. Buddha, Sarnath

An assured history of two millenniums of accomplished sculptural creation is a rare and significant fact in the life of a people. (p. 288) quite different from the sense of European religions; and even mediaeval Christianity, especially as now looked at by the modern European mind which has gone through the two great crises of the Renascence and recent secularism, will not in spite of its oriental origin and affinities be of much real help. To bring in into the artistic look on an Indian temple occidental memories or a comparison with Greek Parthenon or Italian church or Duomo or Campanile or even the great Gothic cathedrals of mediaeval France, though these have in them something much nearer to the Indian mentality, is to intrude a fatally foreign and disturbing element or standard in the mind. But this consciously or else subconsciously is what almost every European mind does to a greater or less degree, — and it is here a pernicious immixture, for it subjects the work of a vision that saw the immeasurable to the tests of an eye that dwells only on measure.

Indian sacred architecture of whatever date, style or dedication goes back to something timelessly ancient and now outside India almost wholly lost, something which belongs to the past, and yet it goes forward too, though this the rationalistic mind will not easily admit, to something which will return upon us and is already beginning to return, something which belongs to the future. An Indian temple, to whatever godhead it may be built, is in its inmost reality an altar raised to the divine Self, a house of the Cosmic Spirit, an appeal and aspiration to the Infinite. As that and in the light of that seeing and conception it must in the first place be understood, and everything else must be seen in that setting and that light, and then only can there be any real understanding. No artistic eye however alert and sensible and no aesthetic mind however full and sensitive can arrive at that understanding, if it is attached to a Hellenised conception of rational beauty or shuts itself up in a materialised or intellectual interpretation and fails to open itself to the great things here meant by a kindred close response to some touch of the cosmic consciousness, some revelation of the greater spiritual self, some suggestion of the Infinite. These things, the spiritual self, the cosmic spirit, the Infinite, are not rational, but suprarational, eternal presences, but to the intellect only words, and visible, sensible, near only to an intuition and revelation in our inmost selves. An art which starts from them as a first conception can only give us what it has to give, their touch, their nearness, their self-disclosure, through some responding intuition and revelation in us, in our own soul, our own self. It is this which one must come to it to find and not demand from it the satisfaction of some quite other seeking or some very different turn of imagination and more limited superficial significance.

This is the first truth of Indian architecture and its significance which demands emphasis and it leads at once to the answer to certain very common misapprehensions and objections. All art reposes on some unity and all its details, whether few and sparing or lavish and crowded and full, must go back to that unity and help its significance; otherwise it is not art. Now we find our Western critic telling us with an assurance which would be stupefying if one did not see how naturally it arose, that in Indian architecture there is no unity, which is as much as to say that there is here no great art at all, but only a skill in the execution of crowded and unrelated details. We are told even by otherwise sympathetic judges that there is an overloading of ornament and detail which, however beautiful or splendid in itself, stands in the way of unity, an attempt to load every rift with ore, an absence of calm, no unfilled spaces, no relief to the eye. Mr. Archer as usual carries up the adverse criticism to its extreme clamorous top notes; his heavily shotted phrases are all a continuous insistence on this one theme. The great temples of the South of India are, he allows, marvels of massive construction. He seems by the way to have a rooted objection to massiveness in architecture or great massed effects in sculpture, regardless of their appropriateness or need, although he admits them in literature. Still this much there is and with it a sort of titanic impressiveness, but of unity, clarity, nobility there is no trace. This observation seems to my judgment sufficiently contradictory, since I do not understand how there can be a marvel of construction, whether light or massive, without any unity, — but here is not even, it seems, a trace of it — or a mighty impressiveness without any greatness or nobility whatever, even allowing this to be a Titanic and not an Olympian nobleness. He tells us that everything is ponderous, everything here overwrought and the most prominent features swarming, writhing with contorted semi-human figures are as senseless as anything in architecture. How, one might ask, does he know that they are senseless, when he practically admits that he has made no attempt to find what is their sense, but has simply assumed from the self-satisfied sufficiency of his own admitted ignorance and failure to understand that there cannot be any meaning? And the whole thing he characterises as a monstrosity built by Rakshasas, ogres, demons, a gigantesque barbarism. The northern buildings find a little less disfavour in his eyes, but the difference in the end is small or none. There is the same ponderousness, absence of lightness and grace, an even greater profusion of incised ornament; these too are barbaric creations. Alone the Mahomedan architecture, called Indo-Saracenic, is exempted from this otherwise universal condemnation.

It is a little surprising after all, however natural the first blindness here, that even assailants of this extreme kind, since they must certainly know that there can be no art, no effective construction without unity, should not have paused even once to ask themselves whether after all there must not be here some principle of oneness which they had missed because they came with alien conceptions and looked at things from the wrong end, and before pronouncing this magisterial judgment should not have had patience to wait in a more detached and receptive way upon the thing under their eye and seen whether then some secret of unity did not emerge. But it is the more sympathetic and less violent critic who deserves a direct answer. Now it may readily be admitted that the failure to see at once the unity of this architecture is perfectly natural to a European eye, because unity in the sense demanded by the Western conception, the Greek unity gained by much suppression and a sparing use of detail and circumstance or even the Gothic unity got by casting everything into the mould of a single spiritual aspiration, is not there. And the greater unity that really is there can never be arrived at at all, if the eye begins and ends by dwelling on form and detail and ornament, because it will then be obsessed by these things and find it difficult to go beyond to the unity which all this in its totality serves not so much to express in itself, but to fill it with that which comes out of it and relieve its oneness by multitude. An original oneness, not a combined or synthetic or an effected unity, is that from which this art begins and to which its work when finished returns or rather lives in it as in its self and natural atmosphere. Indian sacred architecture constantly represents the greatest oneness of the self, the cosmic, the infinite in the immensity of its world-design, the multitude of its features of self-expression, *lakṣaṇa*, (yet the oneness is greater than and independent of their totality and in itself indefinable), and all its starting-point of unity in conception, its mass of design and immensity of material, its crowding abundance of significant ornament and detail and its return towards oneness are only intelligible as necessary circumstances of this poem, this epic or this lyric — for there are smaller structures which are such lyrics — of the Infinite. The Western mentality, except in those who are coming or returning, since Europe had once something of this cult in her own way, to this vision, may find it difficult to appreciate the truth and meaning of such an art, which tries to figure existence as a whole and not in its pieces; but I would invite those Indian minds who are troubled by these criticisms or partly or temporarily overpowered by the Western way of seeing things, to look at our architecture in the light of this conception and see whether all but minor objections do not vanish as soon as the real meaning makes itself felt and gives body to the first indefinable impression and emotion which we experience before the greater constructions of the Indian builders.

To appreciate this spiritual-aesthetic truth of Indian architecture, it will be best to look first at some work where there is not the complication of surroundings now often out of harmony with the building, outside even those temple towns which still retain their dependence on the sacred motive, and rather in some place where there is room for a free background of Nature. I have before me two prints which can well serve the purpose, a temple at Kalahasti, a temple at Sinhachalam, two buildings entirely different in treatment and yet one in the ground and the universal motive. The straight way here is not to detach the temple from its surroundings, but to see it in unity with the sky and low-lying landscape or with the sky and hills around and feel the thing common to both, the construction and its environment, the reality in Nature, the reality expressed in the work of art. The oneness to which this Nature aspires in her inconscient self-creation and in which she lives, the oneness to which the soul of man uplifts itself in his conscious spiritual upbuilding, his labour of aspiration here expressed in stone, and in which so upbuilt he and his work live, are the same and the soul-motive is one. Thus seen this work of man seems to be something which has started out and detached itself against the power of the natural world, something of the one common aspiration in both to the same infinite spirit of itself, — the inconscient uplook and against it the strong single relief of the self-conscient effort and success of finding. One of these buildings climbs up bold, massive in projection, up-piled in the greatness of a forceful but sure ascent, preserving its range and line to the last, the other soars from the strength of its base, in the grace and emotion of a curving mass to a rounded summit and crowning symbol. There is in both a constant, subtle yet pronounced lessening from the base towards the top, but at each stage a repetition of the same form, the same multiplicity of insistence, the same crowded fullness and indented relief, but one maintains its multiple endeavour and indication to the last, the other ends in a single sign. To find the significance we have first to feel the oneness of the infinity in which this nature and this art live, then see this thronged expression as the sign of the infinite multiplicity which fills this oneness, see in the regular lessening ascent of the edifice the subtler and subtler return from the base on earth to the original unity and seize on the symbolic indication of its close at the top. Not absence of unity, but a tremendous unity is revealed. Reinterpret intimately what this representation means in the terms of our own spiritual self-existence and cosmic being, and we have what these great builders saw in themselves and reared in stone. All objections, once we have got at this identity in spiritual experience, fall away and show themselves to be what they really are, the utterance and cavil of an impotent misunderstanding, an insufficient apprehension or a complete failure to see. To appreciate the detail of Indian architecture is easy when the whole is thus seen and known; otherwise, it is impossible.

This method of interpretation applies, however different the construction and the nature of the rendering, to all Dravidian architecture, not only to the mighty temples of far-spread fame, but to unknown roadside shrines in small towns, which are only a slighter execution of the same theme, a satisfied suggestion here, but the greater buildings a grandiose fulfilled aspiration. The architectural language of the north is of a different kind, there is another basic style; but here too the same spiritual, meditative, intuitive method has to be used and we get at the same result, an aesthetic interpretation or suggestion of the one spiritual experience, one in all its complexity and diversity, which founds the unity of the infinite variations of Indian spirituality and religious feeling and the realised union of the human self with the Divine. This is the unity too of all the creations of this hieratic art. The different styles and motives arrive at or express that unity in different ways. The objection that an excess of thronging detail and ornament hides, impairs or breaks up the unity, is advanced only because the eye has made the mistake of dwelling on the detail first without relation to this original spiritual oneness, which has first to be fixed in an intimate spiritual seeing and union and then all else seen in that vision and experience. When we look on the multiplicity of the world, it is only a crowded plurality that we can find and to arrive at unity we have to reduce, to suppress what we have seen or sparingly select a few indications or to be satisfied with the unity of this or that separate idea, experience or imagination; but when we have realised the self, the infinite unity and look back on the multiplicity of the world, then we find that oneness able to bear all the infinity of variation and circumstance we can crowd into it and its unity remains unabridged by even the most endless self-multiplication of its informing creation. We find the same thing in looking at this architecture. The wealth of ornament, detail, circumstance in Indian temples represents the infinite variety and repetition of the worlds, — not our world only, but all the planes, — suggests the infinite multiplicity in the infinite oneness. It is a matter of our own experience and fullness of vision how much we leave out or bring in, whether we express so much or so little or attempt as in the Dravidian style to give the impression of a teeming inexhaustible plenitude. The largeness of this unity is base and continent enough for any superstructure or content of multitude.

To condemn this abundance as barbarous is to apply a foreign standard. Where after all are we bound to draw the line? To the pure classical taste Shakespeare's art once appeared great but barbarous for a similar reason, — one remembers the Gallic description of him as a drunken barbarian of genius, — his artistic unity non-existent or spoilt by crowding tropical vegetation of incident and character, his teeming imaginations violent, exaggerated, sometimes bizarre, monstrous, without symmetry, proportion and all the other lucid unities, lightnesses, graces loved by the classic mind. That mind might say of his work in language like Mr. Archer's that here there is indeed a Titanic genius, a mass of power, but of unity, clarity, classic nobility no trace, but rather an entire absence of lucid grace and lightness and restraint, a profusion of wild ornament and an imaginative riot without law or measure, strained figures, distorted positions and gestures, no dignity, no fine, just, rationally natural and beautiful classic movement and pose. But even the strictest Latin mind has now got over its objections to the "splendid barbarism" of Shakespeare and can understand that here is a fuller, less sparing and exiguous vision of life, a greater intuitive unity than the formal unities of the classic aesthesis. But the Indian vision of the world and existence was vaster and fuller than Shakespeare's, because it embraced not merely life, but all being, not merely humanity, but all the worlds and all Nature and cosmos. The European mind not having arrived except in individuals at any close, direct, insistent realisation of the unity of the infinite self or the cosmic consciousness peopled with its infinite multiplicity, is not driven to express these things, cannot understand or put up with them when they are expressed in this oriental art, speech and style and object to it as the Latin mind once objected to Shakespeare. Perhaps the day is not distant when it will see and understand and perhaps even itself try to express the same things in another language.

The objection that the crowding detail allows no calm, gives no relief or space to the eye, falls under the same heading, springs from the same root, is urged from a different experience and has no validity for the Indian experience. For this unity on which all is upborne, carries in itself the infinite space and calm of the spiritual realisation, and there is no need for other unfilled spaces or tracts of calm of a lesser more superficial kind. The eye is here only a way of access to the soul, it is to that that there is the appeal, and if the soul living in this realisation or dwelling under the influence of this aesthetic impression needs any relief, it is not from the incidence of life and form, but from the immense incidence of that vastness of infinity and tranquil silence, and that can only be given by its opposite, by an abundance of form and detail and life. As for the objection in regard to Dravidian architecture to its massiveness and its Titanic construction, the precise spiritual effect intended could not be given otherwise; for the infinite, the cosmic seen as a whole in its vast manifestation is Titanic, is mighty in material and power. It is other and quite different things also, but none of these are absent from Indian construction. The great temples of the north have often in spite of Mr. Archer's dictum, a singular grace in their power, a luminous lightness relieving their mass and strength, a rich delicacy of beauty in their ornate fullness. It is not indeed the Greek lightness, clarity or naked nobleness, nor is it exclusive, but comes in in a fine blending of opposites which is in the very spirit of the Indian religious, philosophical and aesthetic mind. Nor are these things absent from many Dravidian buildings, though in certain styles they are boldly sacrificed or only put into minor incidents, — one instance of the kind Mr. Archer rejoices in as an oasis in the desert of this to him unintelligible mass of might and greatness, — but in either case suppressed so that the fullness of solemn and grandiose effect may have a complete, an undiminished expression.

I need not deal with adverse strictures of a more insignificant kind, — such as the dislike of the Indian form of the arch and dome, because they are not the radiating arch and dome of other styles. That is only an intolerant refusal to admit the beauty of unaccustomed forms. It is legitimate to prefer one's own things, those to which our mind and nature have been trained, but to condemn other art and effort because it also prefers its own way of arriving at beauty, greatness, self-expression, is a narrowness which with the growth of a more catholic culture ought to disappear. But there is one comment on Dravidian temple architecture which is worth noting because it is made by others than Mr. Archer and his kind. Even a sympathetic mind like Professor Geddes is impressed by some sense of a monstrous effect of terror and gloom in these mighty buildings. Such expressions are astonishing to an Indian mind because terror and gloom are conspicuously absent from the feelings aroused in it by its religion, art or literature. In the religion they are rarely awakened and only in order to be immediately healed and, even when they come, are always sustained by the sense of a supporting and helping presence, an eternal greatness and calm or love or Delight behind; the very goddess of destruction is at the same time the compassionate and loving Mother; the austere Maheshwara, Rudra, is also Shiva, the auspicious, Ashutosha, the refuge of men. The Indian thinking and religious mind looks with calm, without shrinking or repulsion, with an understanding born of its agelong effort at identity and oneness, at all that meets it in the stupendous spectacle of the cosmos. And even its asceticism, its turning from the world, which begins not in terror and gloom, but in a sense of vanity and fatigue, or of something higher, truer, happier than life, soon passes beyond any element of pessimistic sadness into the rapture of the eternal peace and bliss. Indian secular poetry and drama is throughout rich, vital and joyous and there is more tragedy, terror, sorrow and gloom packed into any few pages of European work than we can find in the whole mass of Indian literature. It does not seem to me that Indian art is at all different in this respect from the religion and literature. The Western mind is here thrusting in its own habitual reactions upon things in the indigenous conception in which they have no proper place. Mark the curious misreading of the dance of Shiva as a dance of Death or Destruction, whereas, as anybody ought to be able to see who looks upon the Nataraja, it expresses on the contrary the rapture of the cosmic dance with the profundities behind of the unmoved eternal and infinite bliss. So too the figure of Kali which is so terrible to European eyes is, as we know, the Mother of the universe accepting this fierce aspect of destruction in order to slay the Asuras, the powers of evil in man and the world. There are other strands in this feeling in the Western mind which seem to spring from a dislike of anything uplifted far beyond the human measure and others again in which we see a subtle survival of the Greek limitation, the fear, gloom and aversion with which the sunny terrestrial Hellenic mind commonly met the idea of the beyond, the limitless, the unknown; but that reaction has no place in Indian mentality. And as for the strangeness or formidable aspect of certain unhuman figures or the conception of demons or Rakshasas, it must be remembered that the Indian aesthetic mind deals not only with the earth but with psychic planes in which these things exist and ranges freely among them without being overpowered because it carries everywhere the stamp of a large confidence in the strength and the omnipresence of the Self or the Divine.

I have dwelt on Hindu and especially on Dravidian architecture because the latter is the most fiercely attacked as the most uncompromisingly foreign to European taste. But a word too may be said about Indo-Moslem architecture. I am not concerned to defend any claim for the purely indigenous origin of its features. It seems to me that here the Indian mind has taken in much from the Arab and Persian imagination and in certain mosques and tombs I seem to find an impress of the robust and bold Afghan and Mogul temperament; but it remains clear enough that it is still on the whole a typically Indian creation with the peculiar Indian gift. The richness of decorative skill and imagination has been turned to the uses of another style, but it is the same skill which we find in the northern Hindu temples, and in the ground we see, however toned down, something sometimes of the old epic mass and power, but more often that lyric grace which we see developing before the Mahomedan advent in the indigenous sculpture, — as in the schools of the North-East and of Java, — and sometimes a blending of the two motives. The modification, the toning down sets the average European mind at ease and secures its suffrage. But what is it that it so much admires? Mr. Archer tells us at first that it is its rational beauty, refinement and grace, normal, fair, refreshing after the monstrous riot of Hindu Yogic hallucination and nightmare. That description which might have been written of Greek art, seems to me grotesquely inapplicable. Immediately afterwards he harps on quite another and an incompatible phrase, and calls it a fairy-land of exquisite architecture. A rational fairy-land is a wonder which may perhaps be hereafter discovered by some strange intertwining of the nineteenth and twentieth century minds, but I do not think it has yet existed on earth or in the heavens. Not rational but magical beauty satisfying and enchanting to some deeper quite suprarational aesthetic soul in us is the inexpressible charm of these creations. But still where does the magic touch our critic? He tells us in a rapt journalistic style. It is the exquisite marble traceries, the beautiful domes and minarets, the stately halls of sepulture, the marvellous loggias and arcades, the magnificent plinths and platforms, the majestic gateways, et cetera. And is this then all? Only the charm of an outward material luxury and magnificence? Yes; Mr. Archer again tells us that we must be content here with a visual sensuous beauty without any moral suggestion. And that helps him to bring in the sentence of destructive condemnation without which he could not feel happy in dealing with Indian things: this Moslem architecture suggests not only unbridled luxury, but effeminacy and decadence! But in that case, whatever its beauty, it belongs entirely to a secondary plane of artistic creation and cannot rank with the great spiritual aspirations in stone of the Hindu builders.

I do not demand "moral suggestions" from architecture, but is it true that there is nothing but a sensuous outward grace and beauty and luxury in these Indo-Moslem buildings? It is not at all true of the characteristic greater work. The Taj is not merely a sensuous reminiscence of an imperial amour or a fairy enchantment hewn from the moon's lucent quarries, but the eternal dream of a love that survives death. The great mosques embody often a religious aspiration lifted to a noble austerity which supports and is not lessened by the subordinated ornament and grace. The tombs reach beyond death to the beauty and joy of Paradise. The buildings of Fatehpur-Sikri are not monuments of an effeminate luxurious decadence, — an absurd description for the mind of the time of Akbar, — but give form to a nobility, power and beauty which lay hold upon but do not wallow on the earth. There is not here indeed the vast spiritual content of the earlier Indian mind, but it is still an Indian mind which in these delicate creations absorbs the West Asian influence, and lays stress on the sensuous as before in the poetry of Kalidasa, but uplifts it to a certain immaterial charm, rises often from the earth without quite leaving it into the magical beauty of the middle world and in the religious mood touches with a devout hand the skirts of the Divine. The all-pervading spiritual obsession is not there, but other elements of life not ignored by Indian culture and gaining on it since the classical times are here brought out under a new influence and are still penetrated with some radiant glow of a superior lustre.

XIV

Indian Art – 3

THE SCULPTURE and painting of ancient India have recently been rehabilitated with a surprising suddenness in the eyes of a more cultivated European criticism in the course of that rapid opening of the Western mind to the value of oriental thought and creation which is one of the most significant signs of a change that is yet only in its beginning. There have even been here and there minds of a fine perception and profound originality who have seen in a return to the ancient and persistent freedom of oriental art, its refusal to be shackled or debased by an imitative realism, its fidelity to the true theory of art as an inspired interpretation of the deeper soul values of existence lifted beyond servitude to the outsides of Nature, the right way to the regeneration and liberation of the aesthetic and creative mind of Europe. And actually, although much of Western art runs still along the old grooves, much too of its most original recent creation has elements or a guiding direction which brings it nearer to the Eastern mentality and understanding. It might then be possible for us to leave it at that and wait for time to deepen this new vision and vindicate more fully the truth and greatness of the art of India.

But we are concerned not only with the critical estimation of our art by Europe, but much more nearly with the evil effect of the earlier depreciation on the Indian mind which has been for a long time side-tracked off its true road by a foreign, an anglicised education and, as a result, vulgarised and falsified by the loss of its own true centre, because this hampers and retards a sound and living revival of artistic taste and culture and stands in the way of a new age of creation. It was only a few years ago that the mind of educated India — "educated" without an atom of real culture — accepted contentedly the vulgar English estimate of our sculpture and painting as undeveloped inferior art or even a mass of monstrous and abortive miscreation, and though that has passed and there is a great change, there is still very common a heavy weight of secondhand occidental notions, a bluntness or absolute lacking of aesthetic taste,[1] a failure to appreciate, and one still comes sometimes across a strain of blatantly anglicised criticism which depreciates all that is in the Indian manner and praises only what is consistent with Western canons. And the old style of European criticism continues to have some weight with us, because the lack of aesthetic or indeed of any real cultural training in our present system of education makes us ignorant and undiscriminating receptacles, so that we are ready to take the considered opinions of competent critics like Okakura or Mr. Laurence Binyon and the rash scribblings of journalists of the type of Mr. Archer, who write without authority because in these things they have neither taste nor knowledge, as of equal importance and the latter even attract a greater attention. It is still necessary therefore to reiterate things which, however obvious to a trained or sensitive aesthetic intelligence, are not yet familiar to the average mind still untutored or habituated to a system of false weights and values. The work of recovering a true and inward understanding of ourselves — our past and our present self and from that our future — is only in its commencement for the majority of our people.

To appreciate our own artistic past at its right value we have to free ourselves from all subjection to a foreign outlook and see our sculpture and painting, as I have already suggested about our architecture, in the light of its own profound intention and greatness of spirit. When we so look at it, we shall be able to see that the sculpture of ancient and mediaeval India claims its place on the very highest levels of artistic achievement. I do not know where we shall find a sculptural art of a more profound intention, a greater spirit, a more consistent skill of achievement. Inferior work there is, work that fails or succeeds only partially, but take it in its whole, in the long persistence of its excellence, in the number of its masterpieces, in the power with which it renders the soul and the mind of a people, and we shall be tempted to go further and claim for it a first place. The art of sculpture has indeed flourished supremely only in ancient countries where it was conceived against its natural background and support, a great architecture. Egypt, Greece, India take the premier rank in this kind of creation. Mediaeval and modern Europe produced nothing of the same mastery, abundance and amplitude, while on the contrary in painting later Europe has done much and richly and with a prolonged and constantly renewed inspiration. The difference arises from the different kind of mentality required by the two arts. The material in which we work makes its own peculiar demand on the creative spirit, lays down its own natural conditions, as Ruskin has pointed out in a different connection, and the art of making in stone or bronze calls for a cast of mind which the ancients had and the moderns have not or have had only in rare individuals, an artistic mind not too rapidly mobile and self-indulgent, not too much mastered by its own personality and emotion and the touches that excite and pass, but founded rather on some great basis of assured thought and vision, stable in temperament, fixed in its imagination on things that are firm and enduring. One cannot trifle with ease in these sterner materials, one cannot even for long or with safety indulge in them in mere grace and external beauty or the more superficial, mobile and lightly attractive motives. The aesthetic self-indulgence which the soul of colour permits and even invites, the attraction of the mobile play of life to which line of brush, pen or pencil gives latitude, are here forbidden or, if to some extent achieved, only within a line of restraint to cross which is perilous and soon fatal. Here grand or profound motives are called for, a more or less penetrating spiritual vision or some sense of things eternal to base the creation. The sculptural art is static, self-contained, necessarily firm, noble or severe and demands an aesthetic spirit capable of these qualities. A certain mobility of life and mastering grace of line can come in upon this basis, but if it entirely replaces the original dharma of the material, that means that the spirit of the statuette has come into the statue and we may be sure of an approaching decadence. Hellenic sculpture following this line passed from the greatness of Phidias through the soft self-indulgence of Praxiteles to its decline. A later Europe has failed for the most part in sculpture, in spite of some great work by individuals, an Angelo or a Rodin, because it played externally with stone and bronze, took them as a medium for the representation of life and could not find a sufficient basis of profound vision or spiritual motive. In Egypt and in India, on the contrary, sculpture preserved its power of successful creation through several great ages. The earliest recently discovered work in India dates back to the fifth century B.C. and is already fully evolved with an evident history of consummate previous creation behind it, and the latest work of some high value comes down to within a few centuries from our own time. An assured history of two millenniums of accomplished sculptural creation is a rare and significant fact in the life of a people.

---

[1] For example, one still reads with a sense of despairing stupefaction “criticism” that speaks of Ravi Varma and Abanindranath Tagore as artistic creators of different styles, but an equal power and genius!

This greatness and continuity of Indian sculpture is due to the close connection between the religious and philosophical and the aesthetic mind of the people. Its survival into times not far from us was possible because of the survival of the cast of the antique mind in that philosophy and religion, a mind familiar with eternal things, capable of cosmic vision, having its roots of thought and seeing in the profundities of the soul, in the most intimate, pregnant and abiding experiences of the human spirit. The spirit of this greatness is indeed at the opposite pole to the perfection within limits, the lucid nobility or the vital fineness and physical grace of Hellenic creation in stone. And since the favourite trick of Mr. Archer and his kind is to throw the Hellenic ideal constantly in our face, as if sculpture must be either governed by the Greek standard or worthless, it is as well to take note of the meaning of the difference. The earlier and more archaic Greek style had indeed something in it which looks like a reminiscent touch of a first creative origin from Egypt and the Orient, but there is already there the governing conception which determined the Greek aesthesis and has dominated the

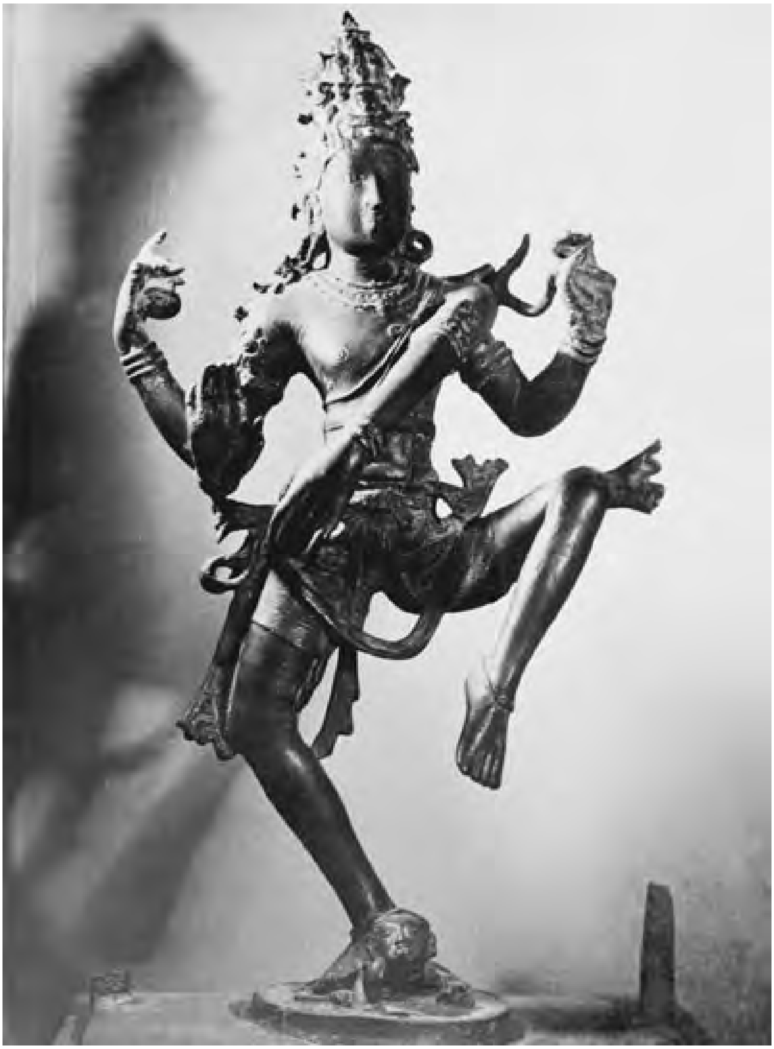

17. Nataraja, Kuram, Tamil Nadu

Or what of the marvellous genius and skill in the treatment of the cosmic movement and delight of the dance of Shiva...? (p. 292)

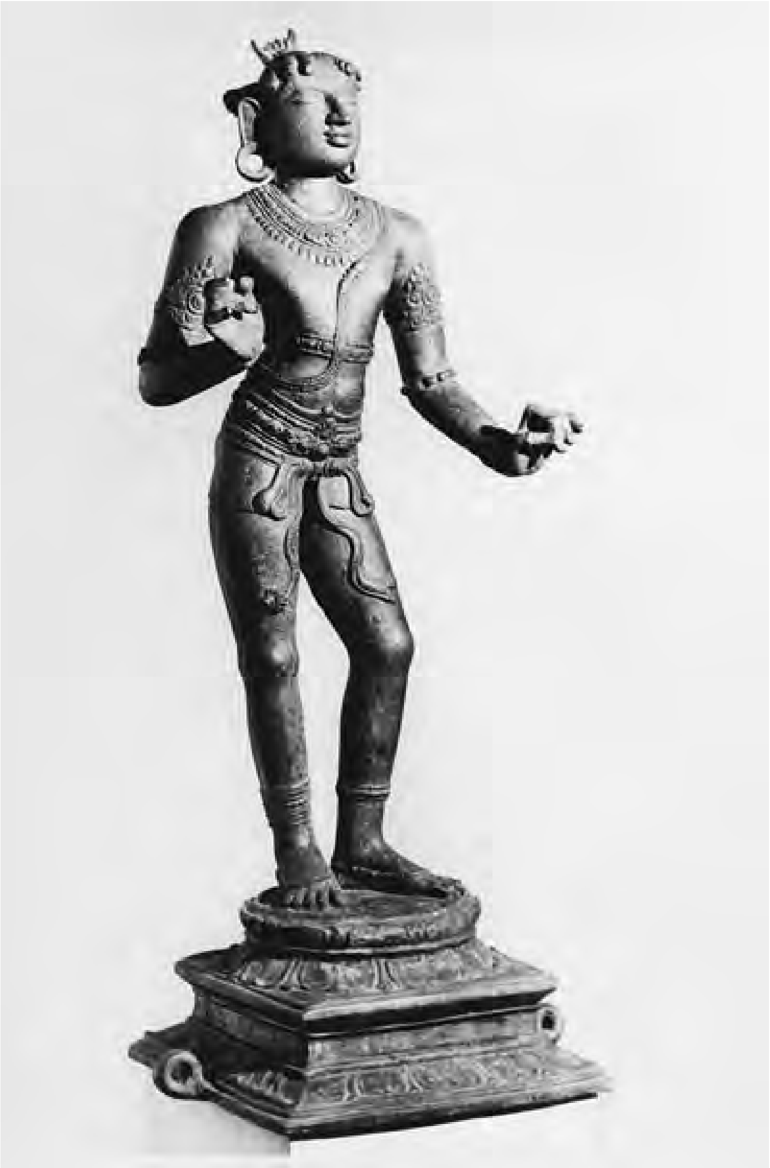

18. Sundaramurti Swami, Colombo Museum

The dignity and beauty of the human figure in the best Indian statues cannot be excelled, but what was sought and what was achieved was not an outward naturalistic, but a spiritual and a psychic beauty.... (p. 296)

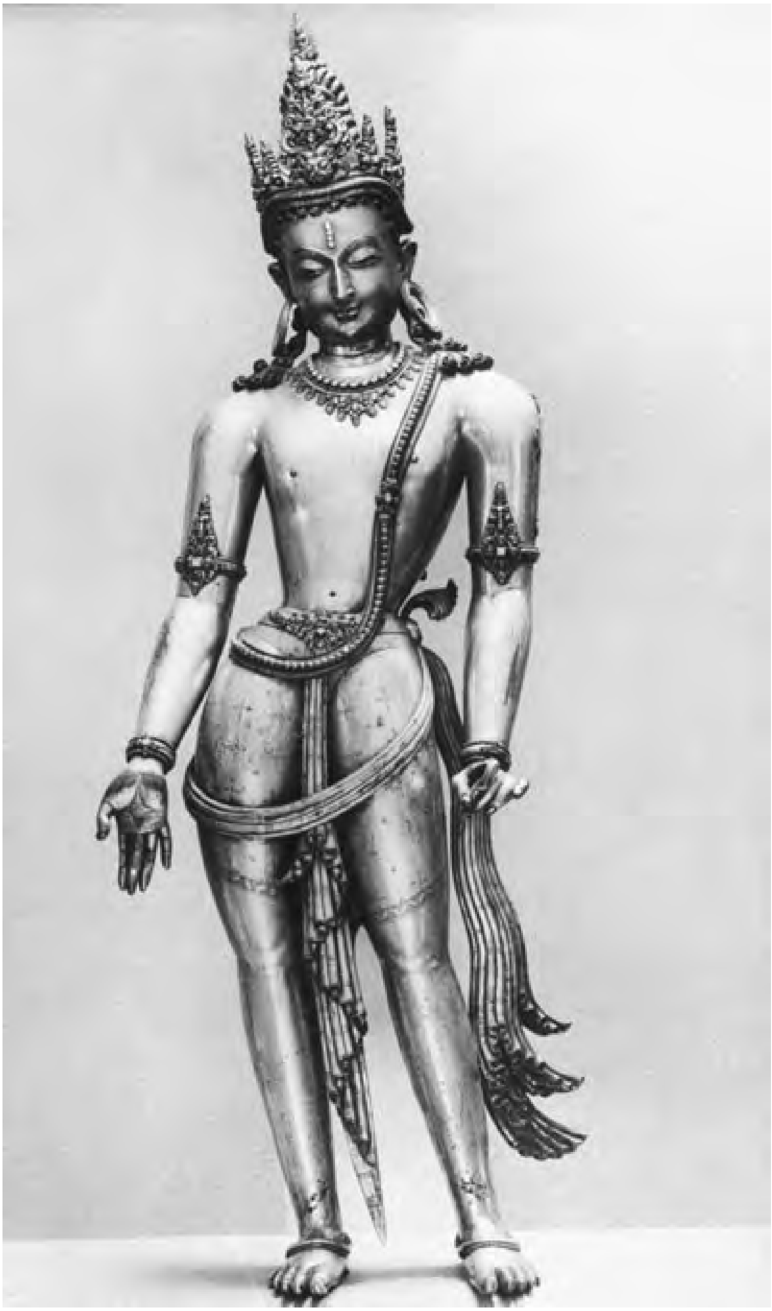

19. Avalokiteshwara, Nepal

... gracious imaginations of Bengal, Nepal and Java...(p. 297)

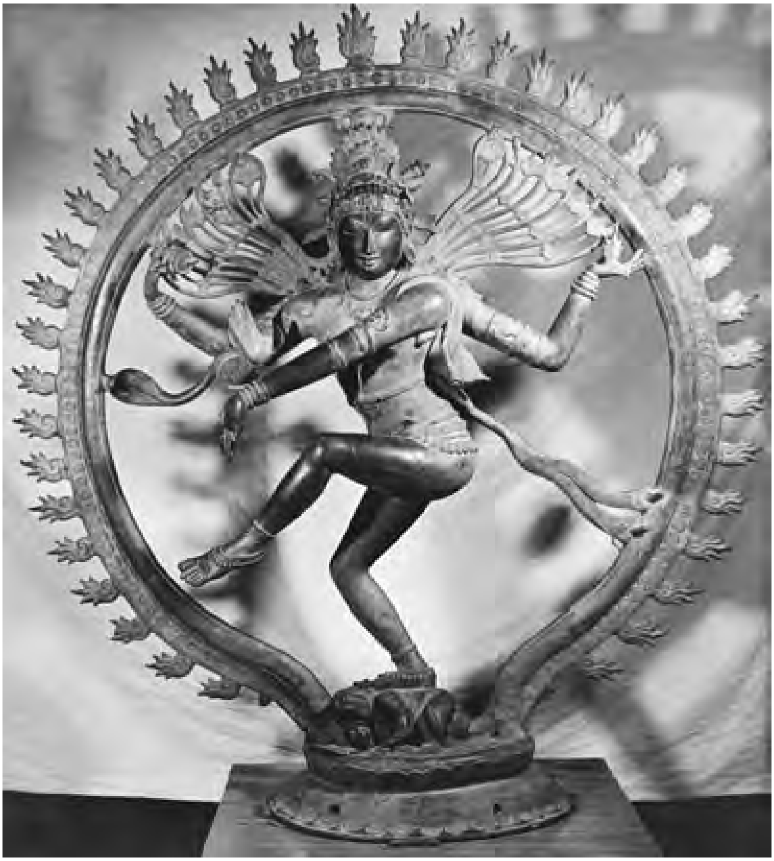

20. Nataraja, Tanjore

The Buddhistic, the Vedantic seeing of things may be equally powerful starting-points for artistic creation, may lead one to the calm of a Buddha or the other to the rapture dance or majestic stillness of Shiva.... (p. 259)

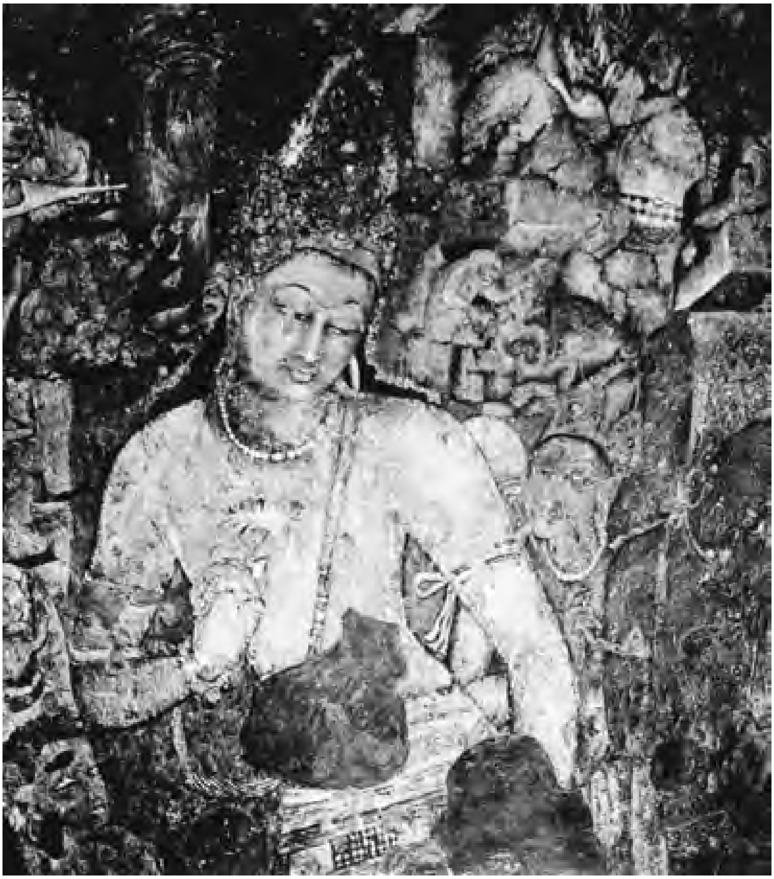

21. Bodhisattwa Padmapani, Ajanta

... the unique character of Indian painting, the peculiar appeal of the art of Ajanta springs from the remarkably inward, spiritual and psychic turn which was given to the artistic conception and method by the pervading genius of Indian culture. (p. 303)

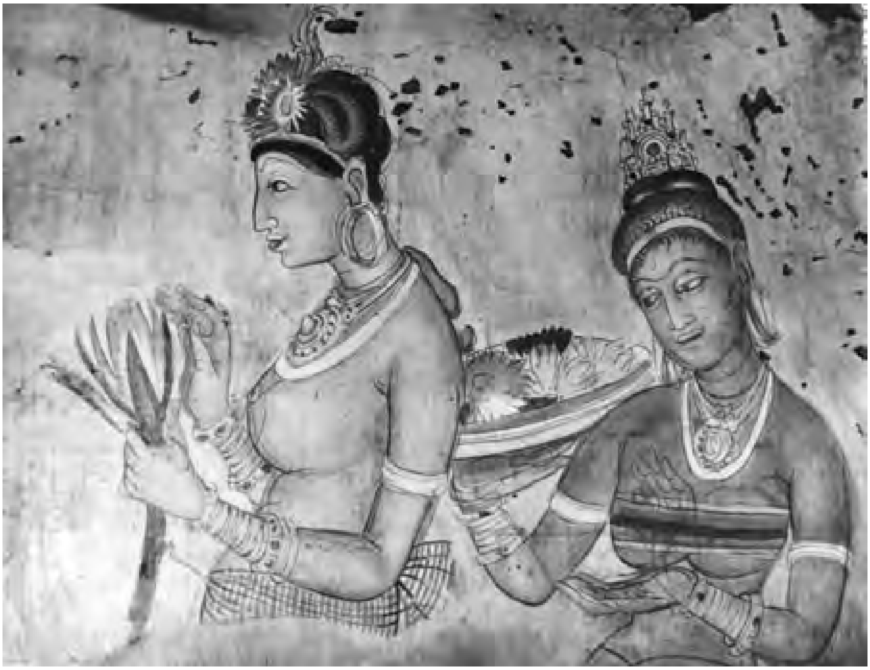

22. Apsaras, Sigiriya, Sri Lanka

The rest of all that vivid contemporaneous creation which must at one time have covered the whole country in the temples and viharas and the houses of the cultured and the courts and pleasure-houses of nobles and kings, has perished, and we have only, more or less similar to the work at Ajanta, some crumbling fragments of rich and profuse decoration in the caves of Bagh and a few paintings of female figures in two rock-cut chambers at Sigiriya. (p. 299)

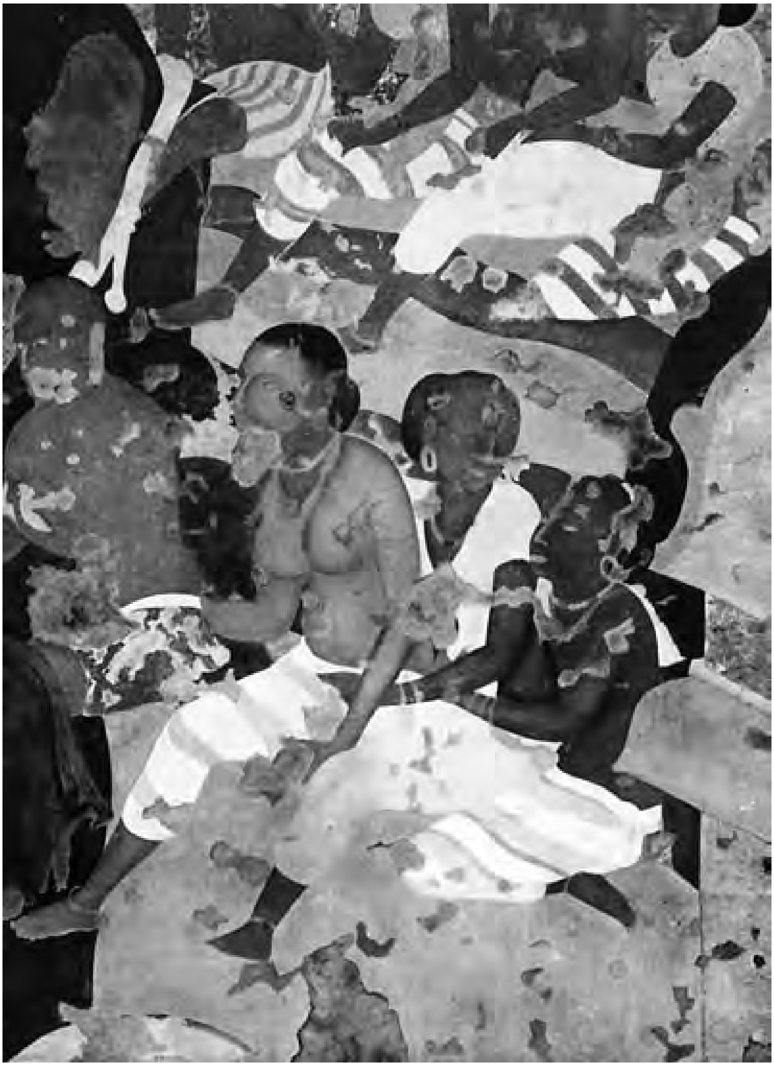

23. Painting in Bagh Caves, Madhya Pradesh

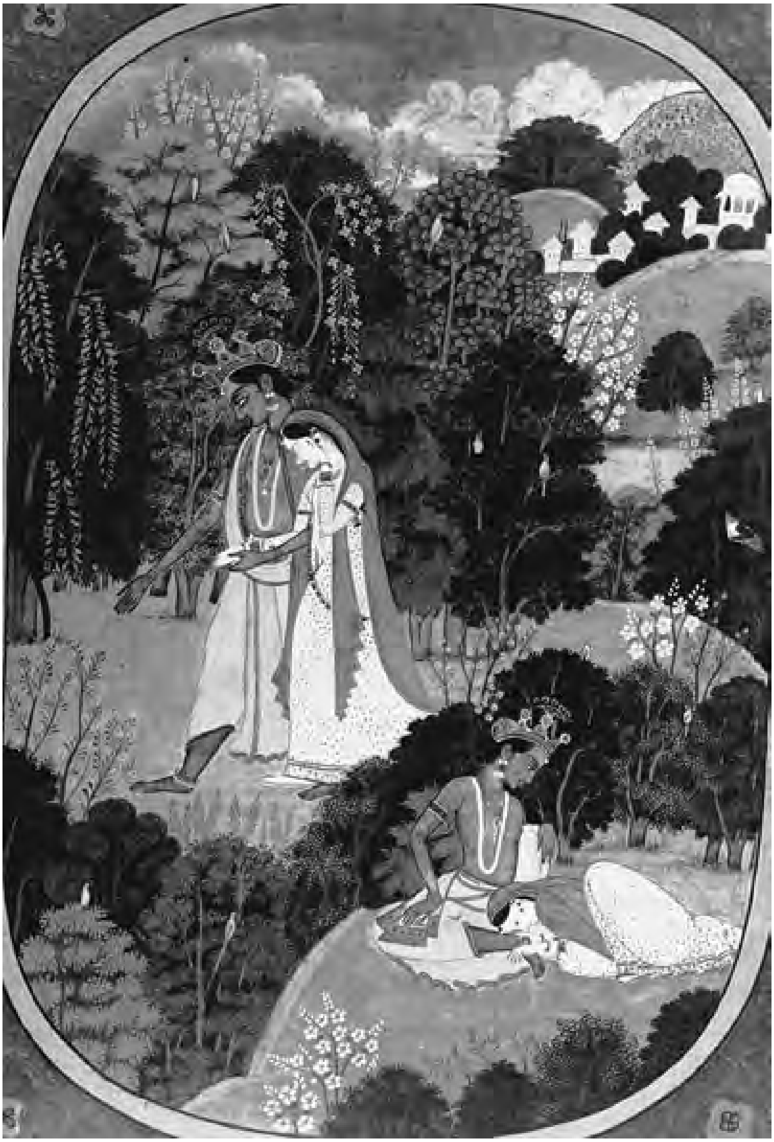

24. Krishna and Radha, Rajput School

Painting is naturally the most sensuous of the arts, and the highest greatness open to the painter is to spiritualise this sensuous appeal by making the most vivid outward beauty a revelation of subtle spiritual emotion.... (p. 302) later mind of Europe, the will to combine some kind of expression of an inner truth with an idealising imitation of external Nature. The brilliance, beauty and nobility of the work which was accomplished, was a very great and perfect thing, but it is idle to maintain that that is the sole possible method or the one permanent and natural law of artistic creation. Its highest greatness subsisted only so long — and it was not for very long — as a certain satisfying balance was struck and constantly maintained between a fine, but not very subtle, opulent or profound spiritual suggestion and an outward physical harmony of nobility and grace. A later work achieved a brief miracle of vital suggestion and sensuous physical grace with a certain power of expressing the spirit of beauty in the mould of the senses; but this once done, there was no more to see or create. For the curious turn which impels at the present day the modern mind to return to spiritual vision through a fiction of exaggerated realism which is really a pressure upon the form of things to yield the secret of the spirit in life and matter, was not open to the classic temperament and intelligence. And it is surely time for us to see, as is now by many admitted, that an acknowledgment of the greatness of Greek art in its own province ought not to prevent the plain perception of the rather strait and narrow bounds of that province. What Greek sculpture expressed was fine, gracious and noble, but what it did not express and could not by the limitations of its canon hope to attempt, was considerable, was immense in possibility, was that spiritual depth and extension which the human mind needs for its larger and deeper self-experience. And just this is the greatness of Indian sculpture that it expresses in stone and bronze what the Greek aesthetic mind could not conceive or express and embodies it with a profound understanding of its right conditions and a native perfection.

The more ancient sculptural art of India embodies in visible form what the Upanishads threw out into inspired thought and the Mahabharata and Ramayana portrayed by the word in life. This sculpture like the architecture springs from spiritual realisation, and what it creates and expresses at its greatest is the spirit in form, the soul in body, this or that living soul power in the divine or the human, the universal and cosmic individualised in suggestion but not lost in individuality, the impersonal supporting a not too insistent play of personality, the abiding moments of the eternal, the presence, the idea, the power, the calm or potent delight of the spirit in its actions and creations. And over all the art something of this intention broods and persists and is suggested even where it does not dominate the mind of the sculptor. And therefore as in the architecture so in the sculpture, we have to bring a different mind to this work, a different capacity of vision and response, we have to go deeper into ourselves to see than in the more outwardly imaginative art of Europe. The Olympian gods of Phidias are magnified and uplifted human beings saved from a too human limitation by a certain divine calm of impersonality or universalised quality, divine type, guna; in other work we see heroes, athletes, feminine incarnations of beauty, calm and restrained embodiments of idea, action or emotion in the idealised beauty of the human figure. The gods of Indian sculpture are cosmic beings, embodiments of some great spiritual power, spiritual idea and action, inmost psychic significance, the human form a vehicle of this soul meaning, its outward means of self-expression; everything in the figure, every opportunity it gives, the face, the hands, the posture of the limbs, the poise and turn of the body, every accessory, has to be made instinct with the inner meaning, help it to emerge, carry out the rhythm of the total suggestion, and on the other hand everything is suppressed which would defeat this end, especially all that would mean an insistence on the merely vital or physical, outward or obvious suggestions of the human figure. Not the ideal physical or emotional beauty, but the utmost spiritual beauty or significance of which the human form is capable, is the aim of this kind of creation. The divine self in us is its theme, the body made a form of the soul is its idea and its secret. And therefore in front of this art it is not enough to look at it and respond with the aesthetic eye and the imagination, but we must look also into the form for what it carries and even through and behind it to pursue the profound suggestion it gives into its own infinite. The religious or hieratic side of Indian sculpture is intimately connected with the spiritual experiences of Indian meditation and adoration, — those deep things of our self-discovery which our critic calls contemptuously Yogic hallucinations, — soul realisation is its method of creation and soul realisation must be the way of our response and understanding. And even with the figures of human beings or groups it is still a like inner aim and vision which governs the labour of the sculptor. The statue of a king or a saint is not meant merely to give the idea of a king or saint or to portray some dramatic action or to be a character portrait in stone, but to embody rather a soul state or experience or deeper soul quality, as for instance, not the outward emotion, but the inner soul-side of rapt ecstasy of adoration and God-vision in the saint or the devotee before the presence of the worshipped deity. This is the character of the task the Indian sculptor set before his effort and it is according to his success in that and not by the absence of something else, some quality or some intention foreign to his mind and contrary to his design, that we have to judge of his achievement and his labour.

Once we admit this standard, it is impossible to speak too highly of the profound intelligence of its conditions which was developed in Indian sculpture, of the skill with which its task was treated or of the consummate grandeur and beauty of its masterpieces. Take the great Buddhas — not the Gandharan, but the divine figures or groups in cave cathedral or temple, the best of the later southern bronzes of which there is a remarkable collection of plates in Mr. Gangoly's book on that subject, the Kalasanhara image, the Natarajas. No greater or finer work, whether in conception or execution, has been done by the human hand and its greatness is increased by obeying a spiritualised aesthetic vision. The figure of the Buddha achieves the expression of the infinite in a finite image, and that is surely no mean or barbaric achievement, to embody the illimitable calm of Nirvana in a human form and visage. The Kalasanhara Shiva is supreme not only by the majesty, power, calmly forceful control, dignity and kingship of existence which the whole spirit and pose of the figure visibly incarnates, — that is only half or less than half its achievement, — but much more by the concentrated divine passion of the spiritual overcoming of time and existence which the artist has succeeded in putting into eye and brow and mouth and every feature and has subtly supported by the contained suggestion, not emotional, but spiritual, of every part of the body of the godhead and the rhythm of his meaning which he has poured through the whole unity of this creation. Or what of the marvellous genius and skill in the treatment of the cosmic movement and delight of the dance of Shiva, the success with which the posture of every limb is made to bring out the rhythm of the significance, the rapturous intensity and abandon of the movement itself and yet the just restraint in the intensity of motion, the subtle variation of each element of the single theme in the seizing idea of these master sculptors? Image after image in the great temples or saved from the wreck of time shows the same grand traditional art and the genius which worked in that tradition and its many styles, the profound and firmly grasped spiritual idea, the consistent expression of it in every curve, line and mass, in hand and limb, in suggestive pose, in expressive rhythm, — it is an art which, understood in its own spirit, need fear no comparison with any other, ancient or modern, Hellenic or Egyptian, of the near or the far East or of the West in any of its creative ages. This sculpture passed through many changes, a more ancient art of extraordinary grandeur and epic power uplifted by the same spirit as reigned in the Vedic and Vedantic seers and in the epic poets, a later Puranic turn towards grace and beauty and rapture and an outburst of lyric ecstasy and movement, and last a rapid and vacant decadence; but throughout all the second period too the depth and greatness of sculptural motive supports and vivifies the work and in the very turn towards decadence something of it often remains to redeem from complete debasement, emptiness or insignificance.

Let us see then what is the value of the objections made to the spirit and style of Indian sculpture. This is the burden of the objurgations of the devil's advocate that his self-bound European mind finds the whole thing barbaric, meaningless, uncouth, strange, bizarre, the work of a distorted imagination labouring mid a nightmare of unlovely unrealities. Now there is in the total of what survives to us work that is less inspired or even work that is bad, exaggerated, forced or clumsy, the production of mechanic artificers mingled with the creation of great nameless artists, and an eye that does not understand the sense, the first conditions of the work, the mind of the race or its type of aesthesis, may well fail to distinguish between good and inferior execution, decadent work and the work of the great hands and the great eras. But applied as a general description the criticism is itself grotesque and distorted and it means only that here are conceptions and a figuring imagination strange to the Western intelligence. The line and run and turn demanded by the Indian aesthetic sense are not the same as those demanded by the European. It would take too long to examine the detail of the difference which we find not only in sculpture, but in the other plastic arts and in music and even to a certain extent in literature, but on the whole we may say that the Indian mind moves on the spur of a spiritual sensitiveness and psychic curiosity, while the aesthetic curiosity of the European temperament is intellectual, vital, emotional and imaginative in that sense, and almost the whole strangeness of the Indian use of line and mass, ornament and proportion and rhythm arises from this difference. The two minds live almost in different worlds, are either not looking at the same things or, even where they meet in the object, see it from a different level or surrounded by a different atmosphere, and we know what power the point of view or the medium of vision has to transform the object. And undoubtedly there is very ample ground for Mr. Archer's complaint of the want of naturalism in most Indian sculpture. The inspiration, the way of seeing is frankly not naturalistic, not, that is to say, the vivid, convincing and accurate, the graceful, beautiful or strong, or even the idealised or imaginative imitation of surface or terrestrial nature. The Indian sculptor is concerned with embodying spiritual experiences and impressions, not with recording or glorifying what is received by the physical senses. He may start with suggestions from earthly and physical things, but he produces his work only after he has closed his eyes to the insistence of the physical circumstances, seen them in the psychic memory and transformed them within himself so as to bring out something other than their physical reality or their vital and intellectual significance. His eye sees the psychic line and turn of things and he replaces by them the material contours. It is not surprising that such a method should produce results which are strange to the average Western mind and eye when these are not liberated by a broad and sympathetic culture. And what is strange to us, is naturally repugnant to our habitual mind and uncouth to our habitual sense, bizarre to our imaginative tradition and aesthetic training. We want what is familiar to the eye and obvious to the imagination and will not readily admit that there may be here another and perhaps greater beauty than that in the circle of which we are accustomed to live and take pleasure.

It seems to be especially the application of this psychic vision to the human form which offends these critics of Indian sculpture. There is the familiar objection to such features as the multiplication of the arms in the figures of gods and goddesses, the four, six, eight or ten arms of Shiva, the eighteen arms of Durga, because they are a monstrosity, a thing not in nature. Now certainly a play of imagination of this kind would be out of place in the representation of a man or woman, because it would have no artistic or other meaning, but I cannot see why this freedom should be denied in the representation of cosmic beings like the Indian godheads. The whole question is, first, whether it is an appropriate means of conveying a significance not otherwise to be represented with an equal power and force and, secondly, whether it is capable of artistic representation, a rhythm of artistic truth and unity which need not be that of physical nature. If not, then it is an ugliness and violence, but if these conditions are satisfied, the means are justified and I do not see that we have any right, faced with the perfection of the work, to raise a discordant clamour. Mr. Archer himself is struck with the perfection of skill and mastery with which these to him superfluous limbs are disposed in the figures of the dancing Shiva, and indeed it would need an eye of impossible blindness not to see that much, but what is still more important is the artistic significance which this skill is used to serve, and, if that is understood, we can at once see that the spiritual emotion and suggestions of the cosmic dance are brought out by this device in a way which would not be as possible with a two-armed figure. The same truth holds as to the Durga with her eighteen arms slaying the Asuras or the Shivas of the great Pallava creations where the lyrical beauty of the Natarajas is absent, but there is instead a great epical rhythm and grandeur. Art justifies its own means and here it does it with a supreme perfection. And as for the "contorted" postures of some figures, the same law holds. There is often a departure in this respect from the anatomical norm of the physical body or else — and that is a rather different thing — an emphasis more or less pronounced on an unusual pose of limbs or body, and the question then is whether it is done without sense or purpose, a mere clumsiness or an ugly exaggeration, or whether it rather serves some significance and establishes in the place of the normal physical metric of Nature another purposeful and successful artistic rhythm. Art after all is not forbidden to deal with the unusual or to alter and overpass Nature, and it might almost be said that it has been doing little else since it began to serve the human imagination from its first grand epic exaggerations to the violences of modern romanticism and realism, from the high ages of Valmiki and Homer to the day of Hugo and Ibsen. The means matter, but less than the significance and the thing done and the power and beauty with which it expresses the dreams and truths of the human spirit.

The whole question of the Indian artistic treatment of the human figure has to be understood in the light of its aesthetic purpose. It works with a certain intention and ideal, a general norm and standard which permits of a good many variations and from which too there are appropriate departures. The epithets with which Mr. Archer tries to damn its features are absurd, captious, exaggerated, the forced phrases of a journalist trying to depreciate a perfectly sensible, beautiful and aesthetic norm with which he does not sympathise. There are other things here than a repetition of hawk faces, wasp waists, thin legs and the rest of the ill-tempered caricature. He doubts Mr. Havell's suggestion that these old Indian artists knew the anatomy of the body well enough, as Indian science knew it, but chose to depart from it for their own purpose. It does not seem to me to matter much, since art is not anatomy, nor an artistic masterpiece necessarily a reproduction of physical fact or a lesson in natural science. I see no reason to regret the absence of telling studies in muscles, torsos, etc., for I cannot regard these things as having in themselves any essential artistic value. The one important point is that the Indian artist had a perfect idea of proportion and rhythm and used them in certain styles with nobility and power, in others like the Javan, the Gauda or the southern bronzes with that or with a perfect grace added and often an intense and a lyrical sweetness. The dignity and beauty of the human figure in the best Indian statues cannot be excelled, but what was sought and what was achieved was not an outward naturalistic, but a spiritual and a psychic beauty, and to achieve it the sculptor suppressed, and was entirely right in suppressing, the obtrusive material detail and aimed instead at purity of outline and fineness of feature. And into that outline, into that purity and fineness he was able to work whatever he chose, mass of force or delicacy of grace, a static dignity or a mighty strength or a restrained violence of movement or whatever served or helped his meaning. A divine and subtle body was his ideal; and to a taste and imagination too blunt or realistic to conceive the truth and beauty of his idea, the ideal itself may well be a stumbling-block, a thing of offence. But the triumphs of art are not to be limited by the narrow prejudices of the natural realistic man; that triumphs and endures which appeals to the best, *sādhu-sammatam*, that is deepest and greatest which satisfies the profoundest souls and the most sensitive psychic imaginations.

Each manner of art has its own ideals, traditions, agreed conventions; for the ideas and forms of the creative spirit are many, though there is one ultimate basis. The perspective, the psychic vision of the Chinese and Japanese painters are not the same as those of European artists; but who can ignore the beauty and the wonder of their work? I dare say Mr. Archer would set a Constable or a Turner above the whole mass of Far Eastern work, as I myself, if I had to make a choice, would take a Chinese or Japanese landscape or other magic transmutation of Nature in preference to all others; but these are matters of individual, national or continental temperament and preference. The essence of the question lies in the rendering of the truth and beauty seized by the spirit. Indian sculpture, Indian art in general follows its own ideal and traditions and these are unique in their character and quality. It is the expression great as a whole through many centuries and ages of creation, supreme at its best, whether in rare early pre-Asokan, in Asokan or later work of the first heroic age or in the magnificent statues of the cave-cathedrals and Pallava and other southern temples or the noble, accomplished or gracious imaginations of Bengal, Nepal and Java through the after centuries or in the singular skill and delicacy of the bronze work of the southern religions, a self-expression of the spirit and ideals of a great nation and a great culture which stands apart in the cast of its mind and qualities among the earth's peoples, famed for its spiritual achievement, its deep philosophies and its religious spirit, its artistic taste, the richness of its poetic imagination, and not inferior once in its dealings with life and its social endeavour and political institutions. This sculpture is a singularly powerful, a seizing and profound interpretation in stone and bronze of the inner soul of that people. The nation, the culture failed for a time in life after a long greatness, as others failed before it and others will yet fail that now flourish; the creations of its mind have been arrested, this art like others has ceased or fallen into decay, but the thing from which it rose, the spiritual fire within still burns and in the renascence that is coming it may be that this great art too will revive, not saddled with the grave limitations of modern Western work in the kind, but vivified by the nobility of a new impulse and power of the ancient spiritual motive. Let it recover, not limited by old forms, but undeterred by the cavillings of an alien mind, the sense of the grandeur and beauty and the inner significance of its past achievement; for in the continuity of its spiritual endeavour lies its best hope for the future.

XV

Indian Art – 4

THE ART of painting in ancient and later India, owing to the comparative scantiness of its surviving creations, does not create quite so great an impression as her architecture and sculpture and it has even been supposed that this art flourished only at intervals, finally ceased for a period of several centuries and was revived later on by the Moguls and by Hindu artists who underwent the Mogul influence. This however is a hasty view that does not outlast a more careful research and consideration of the available evidence. It appears, on the contrary, that Indian culture was able to arrive at a well developed and an understanding aesthetic use of colour and line from very early times and, allowing for the successive fluctuations, periods of decline and fresh outbursts of originality and vigour, which the collective human mind undergoes in all countries, used this form of self-expression very persistently through the long centuries of its growth and greatness. And especially it is apparent now that there was a persistent tradition, a fundamental spirit and turn of the aesthetic sense native to the mind of India which links even the latest Rajput art to the earliest surviving work still preserved at its highest summit of achievement in the rock-cut retreats of Ajanta.

The materials of the art of painting are unfortunately more perishable than those of any other of the greater means of creative aesthetic self-expression and of the ancient masterpieces only a little survives, but that little still indicates the immensity of the amount of work of which it is the fading remnant. It is said that of the twenty-nine caves at Ajanta almost all once bore signs of decoration by frescoes; only so long ago as forty years sixteen still contained something of the original paintings, but now six alone still bear their witness to the greatness of this ancient art, though rapidly perishing and deprived of something of the original warmth and beauty and glory of colour. The rest of all that vivid contemporaneous creation which must at one time have covered the whole country in the temples and viharas and the houses of the cultured and the courts and pleasure-houses of nobles and kings, has perished, and we have only, more or less similar to the work at Ajanta, some crumbling fragments of rich and profuse decoration in the caves of Bagh and a few paintings of female figures in two rock-cut chambers at Sigiriya.[1] These remnants represent the work of some six or seven centuries, but they leave gaps, and nothing now remains of any paintings earlier than the first century of the Christian era, except some frescoes, spoilt by unskilful restoration, from the first century before it, while after the seventh there is a blank which might at first sight argue a total decline of the art, a cessation and disappearance. But there are fortunately evidences which carry back the tradition of the art at one end many centuries earlier and other remains more recently discovered and of another kind outside India and in the Himalayan countries carry it forward at the other end as late as the twelfth century and help us to link it on to the later schools of Rajput painting. The history of the self-expression of the Indian mind in painting covers a period of as much as two millenniums of more or less intense artistic creation and stands on a par in this respect with the architecture and sculpture.

The paintings that remain to us from ancient times are the work of Buddhist painters, but the art itself in India was of pre-Buddhistic origin. The Tibetan historian ascribes a remote antiquity to all the crafts, prior to the Buddha, and this is a conclusion increasingly pointed to by a constant accumulation of evidence. Already in the third century before the Christian era we find the theory of the art well founded from previous times, the six essential elements, *ṣaḍaṅga*, recognised and enumerated, like the more or less corresponding six Chinese canons which are first mentioned nearly a thousand years later, and in a very ancient work on the art pointing back to pre-Buddhistic times a number of careful and very well-defined rules and traditions are laid down which were developed into an elaborate science of technique and traditional rule in the later Shilpasutras. The frequent references in the ancient literature also are of a character which would have been impossible without a widespread practice and appreciation of the art by both men and women of the cultured classes, and these allusions and incidents evidencing a moved delight in the painted form and beauty of colour and the appeal both to the decorative sense and to the aesthetic emotion occur not only in the later poetry of Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti and other classical dramatists, but in the early popular drama of Bhasa and earlier still in the epics and in the sacred books of the Buddhists. The absence of any actual creations of this earlier art makes it indeed impossible to say with absolute certainty what was its fundamental character and intimate source of inspiration or whether it was religious and hieratic or secular in its origin. The theory has been advanced rather too positively that it was in the courts of kings that the art began and with a purely secular motive and inspiration, and it is true that while the surviving work of Buddhist artists is mainly religious in subject or at least links on common scenes of life to Buddhist ceremony and legend, the references in the epic and dramatic literature are usually to painting of a more purely aesthetic character, personal, domestic or civic, portrait painting, the representation of scenes and incidents in the lives of kings and other great personalities or mural decoration of palaces and private or public buildings. On the other hand, there are similar elements in Buddhist painting, as, for example, the portraits of the queens of King Kashyapa at Sigiriya, the historic representation of a Persian embassy or the landing of Vijaya in Ceylon. And we may fairly assume that all along Indian painting both Buddhist and Hindu covered much the same kind of ground as the later Rajput work in a more ample fashion and with a more antique greatness of spirit and was in its ensemble an interpretation of the whole religion, culture and life of the Indian people. The one important and significant thing that emerges is the constant oneness and continuity of all Indian art in its essential spirit and tradition. Thus the earlier work at Ajanta has been found to be akin to the earlier sculptural work of the Buddhists, while the later paintings have a similar close kinship to the sculptural reliefs at Java. And we find that the spirit and tradition which reigns through all changes of style and manner at Ajanta, is present too at Bagh and Sigiriya, in the Khotan frescoes, in the illuminations of Buddhist manuscripts of a much later time and in spite of the change of form and manner is still spiritually the same in the Rajput paintings. This unity and continuity enable us to distinguish and arrive at a clear understanding of what is the essential aim, inner turn and motive, spiritual method which differentiate Indian painting first from occidental work and then from the nearer and more kindred art of other countries of Asia.

---

[1] Since then more paintings of high quality have been found in some southern temples, akin in their spirit and style to the work at Ajanta.

The spirit and motive of Indian painting are in their centre of conception and shaping force of sight identical with the inspiring vision of Indian sculpture. All Indian art is a throwing out of a certain profound self-vision formed by a going within to find out the secret significance of form and appearance, a discovery of the subject in one's deeper self, the giving of soul-form to that vision and a remoulding of the material and natural shape to express the psychic truth of it with the greatest possible purity and power of outline and the greatest possible concentrated rhythmic unity of significance in all the parts of an indivisible artistic whole. Take whatever masterpiece of Indian painting and we shall find these conditions aimed at and brought out into a triumphant beauty of suggestion and execution. The only difference from the other arts comes from the turn natural and inevitable to its own kind of aesthesis, from the moved and indulgent dwelling on what one might call the mobilities of the soul rather than on its static eternities, on the casting out of self into the grace and movement of psychic and vital life (subject always to the reserve and restraint necessary to all art) rather than on the holding back of life in the stabilities of the self and its eternal qualities and principles, guna and tattwa. This distinction is of the very essence of the difference between the work given to the sculptor and the painter, a difference imposed on them by the natural scope, turn, possibility of their instrument and medium. The sculptor must express always in static form; the idea of the spirit is cut out for him in mass and line, significant in the stability of its insistence, and he can lighten the weight of this insistence but not get rid of it or away from it; for him eternity seizes hold of time in its shapes and arrests it in the monumental spirit of stone or bronze. The painter on the contrary lavishes his soul in colour and there is a liquidity in the form, a fluent grace of subtlety in the line he uses which imposes on him a more mobile and emotional way of self-expression. The more he gives us of the colour and changing form and emotion of the life of the soul, the more his work glows with beauty, masters the inner aesthetic sense and opens it to the thing his art better gives us than any other, the delight of the motion of the self out into a spiritually sensuous joy of beautiful shapes and the coloured radiances of existence. Painting is naturally the most sensuous of the arts, and the highest greatness open to the painter is to spiritualise this sensuous appeal by making the most vivid outward beauty a revelation of subtle spiritual emotion so that the soul and the sense are at harmony in the deepest and finest richness of both and united in their satisfied consonant expression of the inner significances of things and life. There is less of the austerity of Tapasya in his way of working, a less severely restrained expression of eternal things and of the fundamental truths behind the forms of things, but there is in compensation a moved wealth of psychic or warmth of vital suggestion, a lavish delight of the beauty of the play of the eternal in the moments of time and there the artist arrests it for us and makes moments of the life of the soul reflected in form of man or creature or incident or scene or Nature full of a permanent and opulent significance to our spiritual vision. The art of the painter justifies visually to the spirit the search of the sense for delight by making it its own search for the pure intensities of meaning of the universal beauty it has revealed or hidden in creation; the indulgence of the eye's desire in perfection of form and colour becomes an enlightenment of the inner being through the power of a certain spiritually aesthetic Ananda.

The Indian artist lived in the light of an inspiration which imposed this greater aim on his art and his method sprang from its fountains and served it to the exclusion of any more earthly sensuous or outwardly imaginative aesthetic impulse. The six limbs of his art, the *ṣaḍaṅga*, are common to all work in line and colour: they are the necessary elements and in their elements the great arts are the same everywhere; the distinction of forms, *rūpabheda*, proportion, arrangement of line and mass, design, harmony, perspective, *pramāṇa*, the emotion or aesthetic feeling expressed by the form, *bhāva*, the seeking for beauty and charm for the satisfaction of the aesthetic spirit, *lāvaṇya*, truth of the form and its suggestion, *sādṛśya*, the turn, combination, harmony of colours, *varṇikābhaṅga*, are the first constituents to which every successful work of art reduces itself in analysis. But it is the turn given to each of the constituents which makes all the difference in the aim and effect of the technique and the source and character of the inner vision guiding the creative hand in their combination which makes all the difference in the spiritual value of the achievement, and the unique character of Indian painting, the peculiar appeal of the art of Ajanta springs from the remarkably inward, spiritual and psychic turn which was given to the artistic conception and method by the pervading genius of Indian culture. Indian painting no more than Indian architecture and sculpture could escape from its absorbing motive, its transmuting atmosphere, the direct or subtle obsession of the mind that has been subtly and strangely changed, the eye that has been trained to see, not as others with only the external eye but by a constant communing of the mental parts and the inner vision with the self beyond mind and the spirit to which forms are only a transparent veil or a slight index of its own greater splendour. The outward beauty and power, the grandeur of drawing, the richness of colour, the aesthetic grace of this painting is too obvious and insistent to be denied, the psychical appeal usually carries something in it to which there is a response in every cultivated and sensitive human mind and the departures from the outward physical norm are less vehement and intense, less disdainful of the more external beauty and grace, — as is only right in the nature of this art, — than in the sculpture: therefore we find it more easily appreciated up to a certain point by the Western critical mind, and even when not well appreciated, it is exposed to milder objections. There is not the same blank incomprehension or violence of misunderstanding and repulsion. And yet we find at the same time that there is something which seems to escape the appreciation or is only imperfectly understood, and this something is precisely that profounder spiritual intention of which the things the eye and aesthetic sense immediately seize are only the intermediaries. This explains the remark often made about Indian work of the less visibly potent and quieter kind that it lacks inspiration or imagination or is a conventional art: the spirit is missed where it does not strongly impose itself, and is not fully caught even where the power which is put into the expression is too great and direct to allow of denial. Indian painting like Indian architecture and sculpture appeals through the physical and psychical to another spiritual vision from which the artist worked and it is only when this is no less awakened in us than the aesthetic sense that it can be appreciated in all the depth of its significance.

The orthodox Western artist works by a severely conscientious reproduction of the forms of outward Nature; the external world is his model, and he has to keep it before his eye and repress any tendency towards a substantial departure from it or any motion to yield his first allegiance to a subtler spirit. His imagination submits itself to physical Nature even when he brings in conceptions which are more properly of another kingdom, the stress of the physical world is always with him, and the Seer of the subtle, the creator of mental forms, the inner Artist, the wide-eyed voyager in the vaster psychical realms, is obliged to subdue his inspirations to the law of the Seer of the outward, the spirit that has embodied itself in the creations of the terrestrial life, the material universe. An idealised imaginative realism is as far as he can ordinarily go in the method of his work when he would fill the outward with the subtler inner seeing. And when, dissatisfied with this confining law, he would break quite out of the circle, he is exposed to a temptation to stray into intellectual or imaginative extravagances which violate the universal rule of the right distinction of forms, *rūpabheda*, and belong to the vision of some intermediate world of sheer fantasia. His art has discovered the rule of proportion, arrangement and perspective which preserves the illusion of physical Nature and he relates his whole design to her design in a spirit of conscientious obedience and faithful dependence. His imagination is a servant or interpreter of her imaginations, he finds in the observation of her universal law of beauty his secret of unity and harmony and his subjectivity tries to discover itself in hers by a close dwelling on the objective shapes she has given to her creative spirit. The farthest he has got in the direction of a more intimately subjective spirit is an impressionism which still waits upon her models but seeks to get at some first inward or original effect of them on the inner sense, and through that he arrives at some more strongly psychical rendering, but he does not work altogether from within outward in the freer manner of the oriental artist. His emotion and artistic feeling move in this form and are limited by this artistic convention and are not a pure spiritual or psychic emotion but usually an imaginative exaltation derived from the suggestions of life and outward things with a psychic element or an evocation of spiritual feeling initiated and dominated by the touch of the outward. The charm that he gives is a sublimation of the beauty that appeals to the outward senses by the power of the idea and the imagination working on the outward sense appeal and other beauty is only brought in by association into that frame. The truth of correspondence he depends upon is a likeness to the creations of physical Nature and their intellectual, emotional and aesthetic significances, and his work of line and wave of colour are meant to embody the flow of this vision. The method of this art is always a transcript from the visible world with such necessary transmutation as the aesthetic mind imposes on its materials. At the lowest to illustrate, at the highest to interpret life and Nature to the mind by identifying it with deeper things through some derivative touch of the spirit that has entered into and subdued itself to their shapes, *praviśya yaḥ pratirūpo babhūva*, is the governing principle.[2]

The Indian artist sets out from the other end of the scale of values of experience which connect life and the spirit. The whole creative force comes here from a spiritual and psychic vision, the emphasis of the physical is secondary and always deliberately lightened so as to give an overwhelmingly spiritual and psychic impression and everything is suppressed which does not serve this purpose or would distract the mind from the purity of this intention. This painting expresses the soul through life, but life is only a means of the spiritual self-expression, and its outward representation is not the first object or the direct motive. There is a real and a very vivid and vital representation, but it is more of an inner psychical than of the outward physical life. A critic of high repute speaking of the Indian influence in a famous Japanese painting fixes on the grand strongly outlined figures and the feeling for life and character recalling the Ajanta frescoes as the signs of its Indian character: but we have to mark carefully the nature of this feeling for life and the origin and intention of this strong outlining of the figures. The feeling for life and character here is a very different thing from the splendid and abundant vitality and the power and force of character which we find in an Italian painting, a fresco from Michael Angelo's hand or a portrait by Titian or Tintoretto. The first primitive object of the art of painting is to illustrate life and Nature and at the lowest this becomes a more or less vigorous and original or conventionally faithful reproduction, but it rises in great hands to a revelation of the glory and beauty of the sensuous appeal of life or of the dramatic power and moving interest of character and emotion and action. That is a common form of aesthetic work in Europe; but in Indian art it is never the governing motive. The sensuous appeal is there, but it is refined into only one and not the chief element of the richness of a soul of psychic grace and beauty which is for the Indian artist the true beauty, *lāvaṇya*: the dramatic motive is subordinated and made only a purely secondary element, only so much is given of character and action as will help to bring out the deeper spiritual or psychic feeling, *bhāva*, and all insistence or too prominent force of these more outwardly dynamic things is shunned, because that would externalise too much the spiritual emotion and take away from its intense purity by the interference of the grosser intensity which emotion puts on in the stress of the active outward nature. The life depicted is the life of the soul and not, except as a form and a helping suggestion, the life of the vital being and the body. For the second more elevated aim of art is the interpretation or intuitive revelation of existence through the forms of life and Nature and it is this that is the starting-point of the Indian motive. But the interpretation may proceed on the basis of the forms already given us by physical Nature and try to evoke by the form an idea, a truth of the spirit which starts from it as a suggestion and returns upon it for support, and the effort is then to correlate the form as it is to the physical eye with the truth which it evokes without overpassing the limits imposed by the appearance. This is the common method of occidental art always zealous for the immediate fidelity to Nature which is its idea of true correspondence, *sādṛśya*, but it is rejected by the Indian artist. He begins from within, sees in his soul the thing he wishes to express or interpret and tries to discover the right line, colour and design of his intuition which, when it appears on the physical ground, is not a just and reminding reproduction of the line, colour and design of physical nature, but much rather what seems to us a psychical transmutation of the natural figure. In reality the shapes he paints are the forms of things as he has seen them in the psychical plane of experience: these are the soul-figures of which physical things are a gross representation and their purity and subtlety reveals at once what the physical masks by the thickness of its casings. The lines and colours sought here are the psychic lines and the psychic hues proper to the vision which the artist has gone into himself to discover.

---

[2] All this is no longer true of European art in much of its more prominent recent developments.

This is the whole governing principle of the art which gives its stamp to every detail of an Indian painting and transforms the artist's use of the six limbs of the canon. The distinction of forms is faithfully observed, but not in the sense of an exact naturalistic fidelity to the physical appearance with the object of a faithful reproduction of the outward shapes of the world in which we live. To recall with fidelity something our eyes have seen or could have seen on the spot, a scene, an interior, a living and breathing person, and give the aesthetic sense and emotion of it to the mind is not the motive. There is here an extraordinary vividness, naturalness, reality, but it is a more than physical reality, a reality which the soul at once recognises as of its own sphere, a vivid naturalness of psychic truth, the convincing spirit of the form to which the soul, not the outward naturalness of the form to which the physical eye bears witness. The truth, the exact likeness is there, the correspondence, *sādṛśya*, but it is the truth of the essence of the form, it is the likeness of the soul to itself, the reproduction of the subtle embodiment which is the basis of the physical embodiment, the purer and finer subtle body of an object which is the very expression of its own essential nature, *svabhāva*. The means by which this effect is produced is characteristic of the inward vision of the Indian mind. It is done by a bold and firm insistence on the pure and strong outline and a total suppression of everything that would interfere with its boldness, strength and purity or would blur over and dilute the intense significance of the line. In the treatment of the human figure all corporeal filling in of the outline by insistence on the flesh, the muscle, the anatomical detail is minimised or disregarded: the strong subtle lines and pure shapes which make the humanity of the human form are alone brought into relief; the whole essential human being is there, the divinity that has taken this garb of the spirit to the eye, but not the superfluous physicality which he carries with him as his burden. It is the ideal psychical figure and body of man and woman that is before us in its charm and beauty. The filling in of the line is done in another way; it is effected by a disposition of pure masses, a design and coloured wave-flow of the body, *bhaṅga*, a simplicity of content that enables the artist to flood the whole with the significance of the one spiritual emotion, feeling, suggestion which he intends

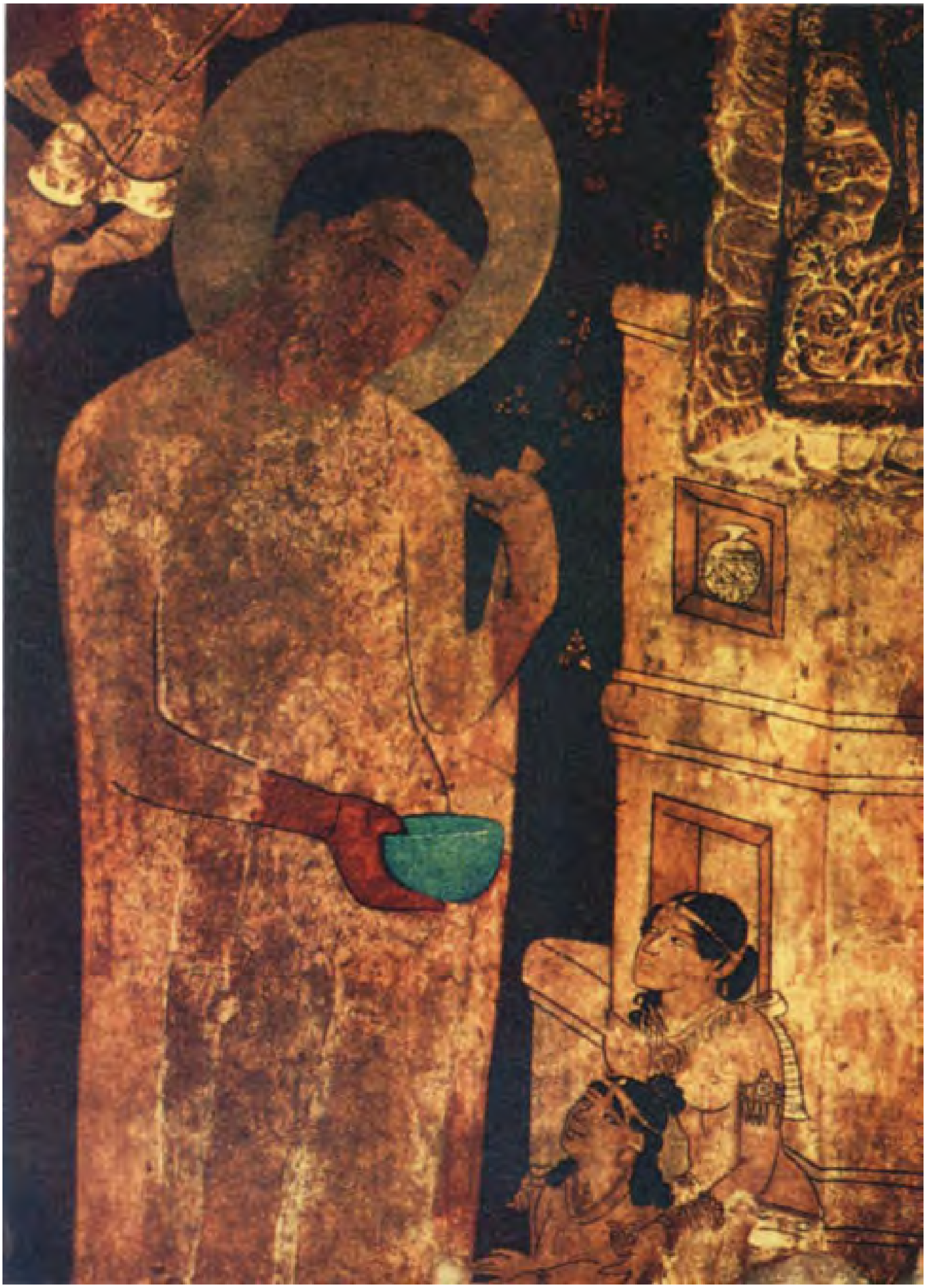

25. The Adoration Group, Ajanta

The simplicity in the greatness and power, the fullness of expression gained by reserve and suppression and concentration which we find here is the perfect method of the classical art of India. (p.310)

to convey, his intuition of the moment of the soul, its living self-experience. All is disposed so as to express that and that alone. The almost miraculously subtle and meaningful use of the hands to express the psychic suggestion is a common and well-marked feature of Indian paintings and the way in which the suggestion of the face and the eyes is subtly repeated or supplemented by this expression of the hands is always one of the first things that strikes the regard, but as we continue to look, we see that every turn of the body, the pose of each limb, the relation and design of all the masses are filled with the same psychical feeling. The more important accessories help it by a kindred suggestion or bring it out by a support or variation or extension or relief of the motive. The same law of significant line and suppression of distracting detail is applied to animal forms, buildings, trees, objects. There is in all the art an inspired harmony of conception, method and expression. Colour too is used as a means for the spiritual and psychic intention, and we can see this well enough if we study the suggestive significance of the hues in a Buddhist miniature. This power of line and subtlety of psychic suggestion in the filling in of the expressive outlines is the source of that remarkable union of greatness and moving grace which is the stamp of the whole work of Ajanta and continues in Rajput painting, though there the grandeur of the earlier work is lost in the grace and replaced by a delicately intense but still bold and decisive power of vivid and suggestive line. It is this common spirit and tradition which is the mark of all the truly indigenous work of India.

These things have to be carefully understood and held in mind when we look at an Indian painting and the real spirit of it first grasped before we condemn or praise. To dwell on that in it which is common to all art is well enough, but it is what is peculiar to India that is its real essence. And there again to appreciate the technique and the fervour of religious feeling is not sufficient; the spiritual intention served by the technique, the psychic significance of line and colour, the greater thing of which the religious emotion is the result has to be felt if we would identify ourself with the whole purpose of the artist. If we look long, for an example, at the adoration group of the mother and child before the Buddha, one of the most profound, tender and noble of the Ajanta masterpieces, we shall find that the impression of intense religious feeling of adoration there is only the most outward general touch in the ensemble of the emotion. That which it deepens to is the turning of the soul of humanity in love to the benignant and calm Ineffable which has made itself sensible and human to us in the universal compassion of the Buddha, and the motive of the soul moment the painting interprets is the dedication of the awakening mind of the child, the coming younger humanity, to that in which already the soul of the mother has learned to find and fix its spiritual joy. The eyes, brows, lips, face, poise of the head of the woman are filled with this spiritual emotion which is a continued memory and possession of the psychical release, the steady settled calm of the heart's experience filled with an ineffable tenderness, the familiar depths which are yet moved with the wonder and always farther appeal of something that is infinite, the body and other limbs are grave masses of this emotion and in their poise a basic embodiment of it, while the hands prolong it in the dedicative putting forward of her child to meet the Eternal. This contact of the human and eternal is repeated in the smaller figure with a subtly and strongly indicated variation, the glad and childlike smile of awakening which promises but not yet possesses the depths that are to come, the hands disposed to receive and keep, the body in its looser curves and waves harmonising with that significance. The two have forgotten themselves and seem almost to forget or confound each other in that which they adore and contemplate, and yet the dedicating hands unite mother and child in the common act and feeling by their simultaneous gesture of maternal possession and spiritual giving. The two figures have at each point the same rhythm, but with a significant difference. The simplicity in the greatness and power, the fullness of expression gained by reserve and suppression and concentration which we find here is the perfect method of the classical art of India. And by this perfection Buddhist art became not merely an illustration of the religion and an expression of its thought and its religious feeling, history and legend, but a revealing interpretation of the spiritual sense of Buddhism and its profounder meaning to the soul of India.

To understand that — we must always seek first and foremost this kind of deeper intention — is to understand the reason of the differences between the occidental and the Indian treatment of the life motives. Thus a portrait by a great European painter will express with sovereign power the soul through character, through the active qualities, the ruling powers and passions, the master feeling and temperament, the active mental and vital man: the Indian artist tones down the outward-going dynamic indices and gives only so much of them as will serve to bring out or to modulate something that is more of the grain of the subtle soul, something more static and impersonal of which our personality is at once the mask and the index. A moment of the spirit expressing with purity the permanence of a very subtle soul quality is the highest type of the Indian portrait. And more generally the feeling for character which has been noted as a feature of the Ajanta work is of a similar kind. An Indian painting expressing, let us say, a religious feeling centred on some significant incident will show the expression in each figure varied in such a way as to bring out the universal spiritual essence of the emotion modified by the essential soul type, different waves of the one sea, all complexity of dramatic insistence is avoided, and so much stress only is laid on character in the individual feeling as to give the variation without diminishing the unity of the fundamental emotion. The vividness of life in these paintings must not obscure for us the more profound purpose for which it is the setting, and this has especially to be kept in mind in our view of the later art which has not the greatness of the classic work and runs to a less grave and highly sustained kind, to lyric emotion, minute vividness of life movement, the more naive feelings of the people. One sometimes finds inspiration, decisive power of thought and feeling, originality of creative imagination denied to this later art; but its real difference from that of Ajanta is only that the intermediate psychic transmission between the life movement and the inmost motive has been given with less power and distinctness: the psychic thought and feeling are there more thrown outward in movement, less contained in the soul, but still the soul motive is not only present but makes the true atmosphere and if we miss it, we miss the real sense of the picture. This is more evident where the inspiration is religious, but it is not absent from the secular subject. Here too spiritual intention or psychic suggestion are the things of the first importance. In Ajanta work they are all-important and to ignore them at all is to open the way to serious errors of interpretation. Thus a highly competent and very sympathetic critic speaking of the painting of the Great Renunciation says truly that this great work excels in its expression of sorrow and feeling of profound pity, but then, looking for what a Western imagination would naturally put into such a subject, he goes on to speak of the weight of a tragic decision, the bitterness of renouncing a life of bliss blended with a yearning sense of hope in the happiness of the future, and that is singularly to misunderstand the spirit in which the Indian mind turns from the transient to the eternal, to mistake the Indian art motive and to put a vital into the place of a spiritual emotion. It is not at all his own personal sorrow but the sorrow of all others, not an emotional self-pity but a poignant pity for the world, not the regret for a life of domestic bliss but the afflicting sense of the unreality of human happiness that is concentrated in the eyes and lips of the Buddha, and the yearning there is not, certainly, for earthly happiness in the future but for the spiritual way out, the anguished seeking which found its release, already foreseen by the spirit behind and hence the immense calm and restraint that support the sorrow, in the true bliss of Nirvana. There is illustrated the whole difference between two kinds of imagination, the mental, vital and physical stress of the art of Europe and the subtle, less forcefully tangible spiritual stress of the art of India.

It is the indigenous art of which this is the constant spirit and tradition, and it has been doubted whether the Mogul paintings deserve that name, have anything to do with that tradition and are not rather an exotic importation from Persia. Almost all oriental art is akin in this respect that the psychic enters into and for the most part lays its subtler law on the physical vision and the psychic line and significance give the characteristic turn, are the secret of the decorative skill, direct the higher art in its principal motive. But there is a difference between the Persian psychicality which is redolent of the magic of the middle worlds and the Indian which is only a means of transmission of the spiritual vision. And obviously the Indo-Persian style is of the former kind and not indigenous to India. But the Mogul school is not an exotic; there is rather a blending of two mentalities: on the one side there is a leaning to some kind of externalism which is not the same thing as Western naturalism, a secular spirit and certain prominent elements that are more strongly illustrative than interpretative, but the central thing is still the domination of a transforming touch which shows that there as in the architecture the Indian mind has taken hold of another invading mentality and made it a help to a more outward-going self-expression that comes in as a new side strain in the spiritual continuity of achievement which began in prehistoric times and ended only with the general decline of Indian culture. Painting, the last of the arts in that decline to touch the bottom, has also been the first to rise again and lift the dawn fires of an era of new creation.

It is not necessary to dilate on the decorative arts and crafts of India, for their excellence has always been beyond dispute. The generalised sense of beauty which they imply is one of the greatest proofs that there can be of the value and soundness of a national culture. Indian culture in this respect need not fear any comparison: if it is less predominantly artistic than that of Japan, it is because it has put first the spiritual need and made all other things subservient to and a means for the spiritual growth of the people. Its civilisation, standing in the first rank in the three great arts as in all things of the mind, has proved that the spiritual urge is not, as has been vainly supposed, sterilising to the other activities, but a most powerful force for the many-sided development of the human whole.

XVI

Indian Literature

THE ARTS which appeal to the soul through the eye are able to arrive at a peculiarly concentrated expression of the spirit, the aesthesis and the creative mind of a people, but it is in its literature that we must seek for its most flexible and many-sided self-expression, for it is the word used in all its power of clear figure or its threads of suggestion that carries to us most subtly and variably the shades and turns and teeming significances of the inner self in its manifestation. The greatness of a literature lies first in the greatness and worth of its substance, the value of its thought and the beauty of its forms, but also in the degree to which, satisfying the highest conditions of the art of speech, it avails to bring out and raise the soul and life or the living and the ideal mind of a people, an age, a culture, through the genius of some of its greatest or most sensitive representative spirits. And if we ask what in both these respects is the achievement of the Indian mind as it has come down to us in the Sanskrit and other literatures, we might surely say that here at least there is little room for any just depreciation and denial even by a mind the most disposed to quarrel with the effect on life and the character of the culture. The ancient and classical creations of the Sanskrit tongue both in quality and in body and abundance of excellence, in their potent originality and force and beauty, in their substance and art and structure, in grandeur and justice and charm of speech and in the height and width of the reach of their spirit stand very evidently in the front rank among the world's great literatures. The language itself, as has been universally recognised by those competent to form a judgment, is one of the most magnificent, the most perfect and wonderfully sufficient literary instruments developed by the human mind, at once majestic and sweet and flexible, strong and clearly-formed and full and vibrant and subtle, and its quality and character would be of itself a sufficient evidence of the character and quality of the race whose mind it expressed and the culture of which it was the reflecting medium. The great and noble use made of it by poet and thinker did not fall below the splendour of its capacities. Nor is it in the Sanskrit tongue alone that the Indian mind has done high and beautiful and perfect things, though it couched in that language the larger part of its most prominent and formative and grandest creations. It would be necessary for a complete estimate to take into account as well the Buddhistic literature in Pali and the poetic literatures, here opulent, there more scanty in production, of about a dozen Sanskritic and Dravidian tongues. The whole has almost a continental effect and does not fall so far short in the quantity of its really lasting things and equals in its things of best excellence the work of ancient and mediaeval and modern Europe. The people and the civilisation that count among their great works and their great names the Veda and the Upanishads, the mighty structures of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti and Bhartrihari and Jayadeva and the other rich creations of classical Indian drama and poetry and romance, the Dhammapada and the Jatakas, the Panchatantra, Tulsidas, Vidyapati and Chandidas and Ramprasad, Ramdas and Tukaram, Tiruvalluvar and Kamban and the songs of Nanak and Kabir and Mirabai and the southern Shaiva saints and the Alwars, — to name only the best-known writers and most characteristic productions, though there is a very large body of other work in the different tongues of both the first and the second excellence, — must surely be counted among the greatest civilisations and the world's most developed and creative peoples. A mental activity so great and of so fine a quality commencing more than three thousand years ago and still not exhausted is unique and the best and most undeniable witness to something extraordinarily sound and vital in the culture.

A criticism that ignores or belittles the significance of this unsurpassed record and this splendour of the self-expressing spirit and the creative intelligence, stands convicted at once of a blind malignity or an invincible prejudice and does not merit refutation. It would be a sheer waste of time and energy to review the objections raised by our devil's advocate: for nothing vital to the greatness of a literature is really in dispute and there is only to the credit of the attack a general distortion and denunciation and a laborious and exaggerated cavilling at details and idiosyncracies which at most show a difference between the idealising mind and abundant imagination of India and the more realistically observant mind and less rich and exuberant imagination of Europe. The fit parallel to this motive and style of criticism would be if an Indian critic who had read European literature only in bad or ineffective Indian translations, were to pass it under a hostile and disparaging review, dismiss the Iliad as a crude and empty semi-savage and primitive epos, Dante's great work as the nightmare of a cruel and superstitious religious fantasy, Shakespeare as a drunken barbarian of considerable genius with an epileptic imagination, the whole drama of Greece and Spain and England as a mass of bad ethics and violent horrors, French poetry as a succession of bald or tawdry rhetorical exercises and French fiction as a tainted and immoral thing, a long sacrifice on the altar of the goddess Lubricity, admit here and there a minor merit, but make no attempt at all to understand the central spirit or aesthetic quality or principle of structure and conclude on the strength of his own absurd method that the ideals of both Pagan and Christian Europe were altogether false and bad and its imagination afflicted with a "habitual and ancestral" earthiness, morbidity, poverty and disorder. No criticism would be worth making on such a mass of absurdities, and in this equally ridiculous philippic only a stray observation or two less inconsequent and opaque than the others perhaps demands a passing notice. But although these futilities do not at all represent the genuine view of the general European mind on the subject of Indian poetry and literature, still one finds a frequent inability to appreciate the spirit or the form or the aesthetic value of Indian writing and especially its perfection and power as an expression of the cultural mind of the people. One meets such criticisms even from sympathetic critics as an admission of the vigour, colour and splendour of Indian poetry followed by a conclusion that for all that it does not satisfy, and this means that the intellectual and temperamental misunderstanding extends to some degree even to this field of creation where different minds meet more readily than in painting and sculpture, that there is a rift between the two mentalities and what is delightful and packed with meaning and power to the one has no substance, but only a form, of aesthetic or intellectual pleasure for the other. This difficulty is partly due to an inability to enter into the living spirit and feel the vital touch of the language, but partly to a spiritual difference in similarity which is even more baffling than a complete dissimilarity and otherness. Chinese poetry for example is altogether of its own kind and it is more possible for a Western mentality, when it does not altogether pass it by as an alien world, to develop an undisturbed appreciation because the receptivity of the mind is not checked or hampered by any disturbing memories or comparisons. Indian poetry on the contrary, like the poetry of Europe, is the creation of an Aryan or Aryanised national mind, starts apparently from similar motives, moves on the same plane, uses cognate forms, and yet has something quite different in its spirit which creates a pronounced and separating divergence in its aesthetic tones, type of imagination, turn of self-expression, ideative mind, method, form, structure. The mind accustomed to the European idea and technique expects the same kind of satisfaction here and does not meet it, feels a baffling difference to whose secret it is a stranger, and the subtly pursuing comparison and vain expectation stand in the way of a full receptivity and intimate understanding. At bottom it is an insufficient comprehension of the quite different spirit behind, the different heart of this culture that produces the mingled attraction and dissatisfaction. The subject is too large to be dealt with adequately in small limits: I shall only attempt to bring out certain points by a consideration of some of the most representative master works of creative intuition and imagination taken as a record of the soul and mind of the Indian people.

The early mind of India in the magnificent youth of the nation, when a fathomless spiritual insight was at work, a subtle intuitive vision and a deep, clear and greatly outlined intellectual and ethical thinking and heroic action and creation which founded and traced the plan and made the permanent structure of her unique culture and civilisation, is represented by four of the supreme productions of her genius, the Veda, the Upanishads and the two vast epics, and each of them is of a kind, a form and an intention not easily paralleled in any other literature. The two first are the visible foundation of her spiritual and religious being, the others a large creative interpretation of her greatest period of life, of the ideas that informed and the ideals that governed it and the figures in which she saw man and Nature and God and the powers of the universe. The Veda gave us the first types and figures of these things as seen and formed by an imaged spiritual intuition and psychological and religious experience; the Upanishads constantly breaking through and beyond form and symbol and image without entirely abandoning them, since always they come in as accompaniment or undertone, reveal in a unique kind of poetry the ultimate and unsurpassable truths of self and God and man and the world and its principles and powers in their most essential, their profoundest and most intimate and their most ample realities, — highest mysteries and clarities vividly seen in an irresistible, an unwalled perception that has got through the intuitive and psychological to the sheer spiritual vision. And after that we have powerful and beautiful developments of the intellect and the life and of ideal, ethical, aesthetic, psychic, emotional and sensuous and physical knowledge and idea and vision and experience of which the epics are the early record and the rest of the literature the continuation; but the foundation remains the same throughout, and whatever new and often larger types and significant figures replace the old or intervene to add and modify and alter the whole ensemble, are in their essential build and character transmutations and extensions of the original vision and first spiritual experience and never an unconnected departure. There is a persistence, a continuity of the Indian mind in its literary creation in spite of great changes as consistent as that which we find in painting and sculpture.

The Veda is the creation of an early intuitive and symbolical mentality to which the later mind of man, strongly intellectualised and governed on the one side by reasoning idea and abstract conception, on the other hand by the facts of life and matter accepted as they present themselves to the senses and positive intelligence without seeking in them for any divine or mystic significance, indulging the imagination as a play of the aesthetic fancy rather than as an opener of the doors of truth and only trusting to its suggestions when they are confirmed by the logical reason or by physical experience, aware only of carefully intellectualised intuitions and recalcitrant for the most part to any others, has grown a total stranger. It is not surprising therefore that the Veda should have become unintelligible to our minds except in its most outward shell of language, and that even very imperfectly known owing to the obstacle of an antique and ill-understood diction, and that the most inadequate interpretations should be made which reduce this great creation of the young and splendid mind of humanity to a botched and defaced scrawl, an incoherent hotch-potch of the absurdities of a primitive imagination perplexing what would be otherwise the quite plain, flat and common record of a naturalistic religion which mirrored only and could only minister to the crude and materialistic desires of a barbaric life mind. The Veda became to the later scholastic and ritualistic idea of Indian priests and pundits nothing better than a book of mythology and sacrificial ceremonies; European scholars seeking in it for what was alone to them of any rational interest, the history, myths and popular religious notions of a primitive people, have done yet worse wrong to the Veda and by insisting on a wholly external rendering still farther stripped it of its spiritual interest and its poetic greatness and beauty.

But this was not what it was to the Vedic Rishis themselves or to the great seers and thinkers who came after them and developed out of their pregnant and luminous intuitions their own wonderful structures of thought and speech built upon an unexampled spiritual revelation and experience. The Veda was to these early seers the Word discovering the Truth and clothing in image and symbol the mystic significances of life. It was a divine discovery and unveiling of the potencies of the word, of its mysterious revealing and creative capacity, not the word of the logical and reasoning or the aesthetic intelligence, but the intuitive and inspired rhythmic utterance, the mantra. Image and myth were freely used, not as an imaginative indulgence, but as living parables and symbols of things that were very real to their speakers and could not otherwise find their own intimate and native shape in utterance, and the imagination itself was a priest of greater realities than those that meet and hold the eye and mind limited by the external suggestions of life and the physical existence. This was their idea of the sacred poet, a mind visited by some highest light and its forms of idea and word, a seer and hearer of the Truth, *kavayaḥ satyaśrutaḥ*. The poets of the Vedic verse certainly did not regard their function as it is represented by modern scholars, they did not look on themselves as a sort of superior medicine-men and makers of hymn and incantation to a robust and barbarous tribe, but as seers and thinkers, *ṛṣi*, *dhīra*. These singers believed that they were in possession of a high, mystic and hidden truth, claimed to be the bearers of a speech acceptable to a divine knowledge, and expressly so speak of their utterances, as secret words which declare their whole significance only to the seer, *kavaye nivacanā niṇyā vacāṁsi*. And to those who came after them the Veda was a book of knowledge, and even of the supreme knowledge, a revelation, a great utterance of eternal and impersonal truth as it had been seen and heard in the inner experience of inspired and semi-divine thinkers. The smallest circumstances of the sacrifice around which the hymns were written were intended to carry a symbolic and psychological power of significance, as was well known to the writers of the ancient Brahmanas. The sacred verses, each by itself held to be full of a divine meaning, were taken by the thinkers of the Upanishads as the profound and pregnant seed-words of the truth they sought and the highest authority they could give for their own sublime utterances was a supporting citation from their predecessors with the formula, *tad eṣā ṛcābhyuktā*, "This is that word which was spoken by the Rig Veda." Western scholars choose to imagine that the successors of the Vedic Rishis were in error, that, except for some later hymns, they put a false and non-existent meaning into the old verses and that they themselves, divided from the Rishis not only by ages of time but by many gulfs and separating seas of an intellectualised mentality, know infinitely better. But mere common sense ought to tell us that those who were so much nearer in both ways to the original poets had a better chance of holding at least the essential truth of the matter and suggests at least the strong probability that the Veda was really what it professes to be, the seeking for a mystic knowledge, the first form of the constant attempt of the Indian mind, to which it has always been faithful, to look beyond the appearances of the physical world and through its own inner experiences to the godheads, powers, self-existence of the One of whom the sages speak variously — the famous phrase in which the Veda utters its own central secret, *ekaṁ sad viprā bahudhā vadanti*.

The real character of the Veda can best be understood by taking it anywhere and rendering it straightforwardly according to its own phrases and images. A famous German scholar rating from his high pedestal of superior intelligence the silly persons who find sublimity in the Veda, tells us that it is full of childish, silly, even monstrous conceptions, that it is tedious, low, commonplace, that it represents human nature on a low level of selfishness and worldliness and that only here and there are a few rare sentiments that come from the depths of the soul. It may be made so if we put our own mental conceptions into the words of the Rishis, but if we read them as they are without any such false translation into what we think early barbarians ought to have said and thought, we shall find instead a sacred poetry sublime and powerful in its words and images, though with another kind of language and imagination than we now prefer and appreciate, deep and subtle in its psychological experience and stirred by a moved soul of vision and utterance. Hear rather the word itself of the Veda.

> States upon states are born, covering over covering[1] awakens to knowledge: in the lap of the mother he wholly sees. They have called to him, getting a wide knowledge, they guard sleeplessly the strength, they have entered into the strong city. The peoples born on earth increase the luminous (force) of the son of the White Mother; he has gold on his neck, he is large of speech, he is as if by (the power of) this honey wine a seeker of plenty. He is like pleasant and desirable milk, he is a thing uncompanioned and is with the two who are companions and is as a heat that is the belly of plenty and is invincible and an overcomer of many. Play, O Ray, and manifest thyself.[2]

Or again in the succeeding hymn, —

> Those (flames) of thee, the forceful (godhead), that move not and are increased and puissant, uncling the hostility and crookedness of one who has another law. O Fire, we choose thee for our priest and the means of effectuation of our strength and in the sacrifices bringing the food of thy pleasure we call thee by the word. . . . O god of perfect works, may we be for the felicity, for the truth, revelling with the rays, revelling with the heroes.

And finally let us take the bulk of the third hymn that follows couched in the ordinary symbols of the sacrifice, —

> As the Manu we set thee in thy place, as the Manu we kindle thee: O Fire, O Angiras, as the Manu sacrifice to the gods for him who desires the godheads. O Fire, well pleased thou art kindled in the human being and the ladles go to thee continually. . . . Thee all the gods with one pleasure (in thee) made their messenger and serving thee, O seer, (men) in the sacrifices adore the god. Let the mortal adore the divine Fire with sacrifice

---

[1] Or, "the coverer of the coverer".
[2] Literally, "become towards us".

> to the godheads. Kindled, flame forth, O Bright One. Sit
> in the seat of Truth, sit in the seat of peace.[3]

That, whatever interpretation we choose to put on its images, is a mystic and symbolic poetry and that is the real Veda.

The character of Vedic poetry apparent from these typical verses need not surprise or baffle us when we see what will be evident from a comparative study of Asiatic literature, that though distinguished by its theory and treatment of the Word, its peculiar system of images and the complexity of its thought and symbolised experience, it is in fact the beginning of a form of symbolic or figurative imagery for the poetic expression of spiritual experience which reappears constantly in later Indian writing, the figures of the Tantras and Puranas, the figures of the Vaishnava poets, — one might add even a certain element in the modern poetry of Tagore, — and has its kindred movements in certain Chinese poets and in the images of the Sufis. The poet has to express a spiritual and psychical knowledge and experience and he cannot do it altogether or mainly in the more abstract language of the philosophical thinker, for he has to bring out, not the naked idea of it, but as vividly as possible its very life and most intimate touches. He has to reveal in one way or another a whole world within him and the quite inner and spiritual significances of the world around him and also, it may well be, godheads, powers, visions and experiences of planes of consciousness other than the one with which our normal minds are familiar. He uses or starts with the images taken from his own normal and outward life and that of humanity and from visible Nature, and though they do not of themselves actually express, yet obliges them to express by implication or to figure the spiritual and psychic idea and experience. He takes them selecting freely his notation of images according to his insight or imagination and transmutes them into instruments of another significance and at the same time pours a direct spiritual meaning into the Nature and life to which they belong, applies outward figures to inner things and brings out their latent and inner spiritual or psychic significance into life's outward figures and circumstances. Or an outward figure nearest to the inward experience, its material counterpart, is taken throughout and used with such realism and consistency that while it indicates to those who possess it the spiritual experience, it means only the external thing to others, — just as the Vaishnava poetry of Bengal makes to the devout mind a physical and emotional image or suggestion of the love of the human soul for God, but to the profane is nothing but a sensuous and passionate love poetry hung conventionally round the traditional human-divine personalities of Krishna and Radha. The two methods may meet together, the fixed system of outward images be used as the body of the poetry, while freedom is often taken to pass their first limits, to treat them only as initial suggestions and transmute subtly or even cast them aside or subdue into a secondary strain or carry them out of themselves so that the translucent veil they offer to our minds lifts from or passes into the open revelation. The last is the method of the Veda and it varies according to the passion and stress of the sight in the poet or the exaltation of his utterance.

---

[3] I have translated these passages with as close a literalness as the English language will admit. Let the reader compare the original and judge whether this is not the sense of the verses.

The poets of the Veda had another mentality than ours, their use of their images is of a peculiar kind and an antique cast of vision gives a strange outline to their substance. The physical and the psychical worlds were to their eyes a manifestation and a twofold and diverse and yet connected and similar figure of cosmic godheads, the inner and outer life of man a divine commerce with the gods, and behind was the one spirit or being of which the gods were names and personalities and powers. These godheads were at once masters of physical Nature and its principles and forms their godheads and their bodies and inward divine powers with their corresponding states and energies born in our psychic being because they are the soul powers of the cosmos, the guardians of truth and immortality, the children of the Infinite, and each of them too is in his origin and his last reality the supreme Spirit putting in front one of his aspects. The life of man was to these seers a thing of mixed truth and falsehood, a movement from mortality to immortality, from mixed light and darkness to the splendour of a divine Truth whose home is above in the Infinite but which can be built up here in man's soul and life, a battle between the children of light and the sons of Night, a getting of treasure, of the wealth, the booty given by the gods to the human warrior, and a journey and a sacrifice; and of these things they spoke in a fixed system of images taken from Nature and from the surrounding life of the war-like, pastoral and agricultural Aryan peoples and centred round the cult of Fire and the worship of the powers of living Nature and the institution of sacrifice. The details of outward existence and of the sacrifice were in their life and practice symbols, and in their poetry not dead symbols or artificial metaphors, but living and powerful suggestions and counterparts of inner things. And they used too for their expression a fixed and yet variable body of other images and a glowing web of myth and parable, images that became parables, parables that became myths and myths that remained always images, and yet all these things were to them, in a way that can only be understood by those who have entered into a certain order of psychic experience, actual realities. The physical melted its shades into the lustres of the psychic, the psychic deepened into the light of the spiritual and there was no sharp dividing line in the transition, but a natural blending and intershading of their suggestions and colours. It is evident that a poetry of this kind, written by men with this kind of vision or imagination, cannot either be interpreted or judged by the standards of a reason and taste observant only of the canons of the physical existence. The invocation "Play, O Ray, and become towards us" is at once a suggestion of the leaping up and radiant play of the potent sacrificial flame on the physical altar and of a similar psychical phenomenon, the manifestation of the saving flame of a divine power and light within us. The Western critic sneers at the bold and reckless and to him monstrous image in which Indra son of earth and heaven is said to create his own father and mother; but if we remember that Indra is the supreme spirit in one of its eternal and constant aspects, creator of earth and heaven, born as a cosmic godhead between the mental and physical worlds and recreating their powers in man, we shall see that the image is not only a powerful but in fact a true and revealing figure, and in the Vedic technique it does not matter that it outrages the physical imagination since it expresses a greater actuality as no other figure could have done with the same awakening aptness and vivid poetical force. The Bull and Cow of the Veda, the shining herds of the Sun lying hidden in the cave are strange enough creatures to the physical mind, but they do not belong to the earth and in their own plane they are at once images and actual things and full of life and significance. It is in this way that throughout we must interpret and receive the Vedic poetry according to its own spirit and vision and the psychically natural, even if to us strange and supranatural, truth of its ideas and figures.

The Veda thus understood stands out, apart from its interest as the world's first yet extant Scripture, its earliest interpretation of man and the Divine and the universe, as a remarkable, a sublime and powerful poetic creation. It is in its form and speech no barbaric production. The Vedic poets are masters of a consummate technique, their rhythms are carved like chariots of the gods and borne on divine and ample wings of sound, and are at once concentrated and wide-waved, great in movement and subtle in modulation, their speech lyric by intensity and epic by elevation, an utterance of great power, pure and bold and grand in outline, a speech direct and brief in impact, full to overflowing in sense and suggestion so that each verse exists at once as a strong and sufficient thing in itself and takes its place as a large step between what came before and what comes after. A sacred and hieratic tradition faithfully followed gave them both their form and substance, but this substance consisted of the deepest psychic and spiritual experiences of which the human soul is capable and the forms seldom or never degenerate into a convention, because what they are intended to convey was lived in himself by each poet and made new to his own mind in expression by the subtleties or sublimities of his individual vision. The utterances of the greatest seers, Vishwamitra, Vamadeva, Dirghatamas and many others, touch the most extraordinary heights and amplitudes of a sublime and mystic poetry and there are poems like the Hymn of Creation that move in a powerful clarity on the summits of thought on which the Upanishads lived constantly with a more sustained breathing. The mind of ancient India did not err when it traced back all its philosophy, religion and essential things of its culture to these seer-poets, for all the future spirituality of her people is contained there in seed or in first expression.

It is one great importance of a right understanding of the Vedic hymns as a form of sacred literature that it helps us to see the original shaping not only of the master ideas that governed the mind of India, but of its characteristic types of spiritual experience, its turn of imagination, its creative temperament and the kind of significant forms in which it persistently interpreted its sight of self and things and life and the universe. It is in a great part of the literature the same turn of inspiration and self-expression that we see in the architecture, painting and sculpture. Its first character is a constant sense of the infinite, the cosmic, and of things as seen in or affected by the cosmic vision, set in or against the amplitude of the one and infinite; its second peculiarity is a tendency to see and render its spiritual experience in a great richness of images taken from the inner psychic plane or in physical images transmuted by the stress of a psychic significance and impression and line and idea colour; and its third tendency is to image the terrestrial life often magnified, as in the Mahabharata and Ramayana, or else subtilised in the transparencies of a larger atmosphere, attended by a greater than the terrestrial meaning or at any rate presented against the background of the spiritual and psychic worlds and not alone in its own separate figure. The spiritual, the infinite is near and real and the gods are real and the worlds beyond not so much beyond as immanent in our own existence. That which to the Western mind is myth and imagination is here an actuality and a strand of the life of our inner being, what is there beautiful poetic idea and philosophic speculation is here a thing constantly realised and present to the experience. It is this turn of the Indian mind, its spiritual sincerity and psychic positivism, that makes the Veda and Upanishads and the later religious and religio-philosophic poetry so powerful in inspiration and intimate and living in expression and image, and it has its less absorbing but still very sensible effect on the working of the poetic idea and imagination even in the more secular literature.

XVII

Indian Literature – 2

THE UPANISHADS are the supreme work of the Indian mind, and that it should be so, that the highest self-expression of its genius, its sublimest poetry, its greatest creation of the thought and word should be not a literary or poetical masterpiece of the ordinary kind, but a large flood of spiritual revelation of this direct and profound character, is a significant fact, evidence of a unique mentality and unusual turn of spirit. The Upanishads are at once profound religious scriptures, — for they are a record of the deepest spiritual experiences, — documents of revelatory and intuitive philosophy of an inexhaustible light, power and largeness and, whether written in verse or cadenced prose, spiritual poems of an absolute, an unfailing inspiration inevitable in phrase, wonderful in rhythm and expression. It is the expression of a mind in which philosophy and religion and poetry are made one, because this religion does not end with a cult nor is limited to a religio-ethical aspiration, but rises to an infinite discovery of God, of Self, of our highest and whole reality of spirit and being and speaks out of an ecstasy of luminous knowledge and an ecstasy of moved and fulfilled experience, this philosophy is not an abstract intellectual speculation about Truth or a structure of the logical intelligence, but Truth seen, felt, lived, held by the inmost mind and soul in the joy of utterance of an assured discovery and possession, and this poetry is the work of the aesthetic mind lifted up beyond its ordinary field to express the wonder and beauty of the rarest spiritual self-vision and the profoundest illumined truth of self and God and universe. Here the intuitive mind and intimate psychological experience of the Vedic seers passes into a supreme culmination in which the Spirit, as is said in a phrase of the Katha Upanishad, discloses its own very body, reveals the very word of its self-expression and discovers to the mind the vibration of rhythms which repeating themselves within in the spiritual hearing seem to build up the soul and set it satisfied and complete on the heights of self-knowledge.

This character of the Upanishads needs to be insisted upon with a strong emphasis, because it is ignored by foreign translators who seek to bring out the intellectual sense without feeling the life of thought vision and the ecstasy of spiritual experience which made the ancient verses appear then and still make them to those who can enter into the element in which these utterances move, a revelation not to the intellect alone, but to the soul and the whole being, make of them in the old expressive word not intellectual thought and phrase, but Sruti, spiritual audience, an inspired Scripture. The philosophical substance of the Upanishads demands at this day no farther stress of appreciation of its value; for even if the amplest acknowledgement by the greatest minds were wanting, the whole history of philosophy would be there to offer its evidence. The Upanishads have been the acknowledged source of numerous profound philosophies and religions that flowed from it in India like her great rivers from their Himalayan cradle fertilising the mind and life of the people and kept its soul alive through the long procession of the centuries, constantly returned to for light, never failing to give fresh illumination, a fountain of inexhaustible life-giving waters. Buddhism with all its developments was only a restatement, although from a new standpoint and with fresh terms of intellectual definition and reasoning, of one side of its experience and it carried it thus changed in form but hardly in substance over all Asia and westward towards Europe. The ideas of the Upanishads can be rediscovered in much of the thought of Pythagoras and Plato and form the profoundest part of Neo-platonism and Gnosticism with all their considerable consequences to the philosophical thinking of the West, and Sufism only repeats them in another religious language. The larger part of German metaphysics is little more in substance than an intellectual development of great realities more spiritually seen in this ancient teaching, and modern thought is rapidly absorbing them with a closer, more living and intense receptiveness which promises a revolution both in philosophical and in religious thinking; here they are filtering in through many indirect influences, there slowly pouring through direct and open channels. There is hardly a main philosophical idea which cannot find an authority or a seed or indication in these antique writings — the speculations, according to a certain view, of thinkers who had no better past or background to their thought than a crude, barbaric, naturalistic and animistic ignorance. And even the larger generalisations of Science are constantly found to apply to the truth of physical Nature formulas already discovered by the Indian sages in their original, their largest meaning in the deeper truth of the spirit.

And yet these works are not philosophical speculations of the intellectual kind, a metaphysical analysis which labours to define notions, to select ideas and discriminate those that are true, to logicise truth or else to support the mind in its intellectual preferences by dialectical reasoning and is content to put forward an exclusive solution of existence in the light of this or that idea of the reason and see all things from that viewpoint, in that focus and determining perspective. The Upanishads could not have had so undying a vitality, exercised so unfailing an influence, produced such results or seen now their affirmations independently justified in other spheres of inquiry and by quite opposite methods, if they had been of that character. It is because these seers saw Truth rather than merely thought it, clothed it indeed with a strong body of intuitive idea and disclosing image, but a body of ideal transparency through which we look into the illimitable, because they fathomed things in the light of self-existence and saw them with the eye of the Infinite, that their words remain always alive and immortal, of an inexhaustible significance, an inevitable authenticity, a satisfying finality that is at the same time an infinite commencement of truth, to which all our lines of investigation when they go through to their end arrive again and to which humanity constantly returns in its minds and its ages of greatest vision. The Upanishads are Vedanta, a book of knowledge in a higher degree even than the Vedas, but knowledge in the profounder Indian sense of the word, Jnana. Not a mere thinking and considering by the intelligence, the pursuit and grasping of a mental form of truth by the intellectual mind, but a seeing of it with the soul and a total living in it with the power of the inner being, a spiritual seizing by a kind of identification with the object of knowledge is Jnana. And because it is only by an integral knowing of the self that this kind of direct knowledge can be made complete, it was the self that the Vedantic sages sought to know, to live in and to be one with it by identity. And through this endeavour they came easily to see that the self in us is one with the universal self of all things and that this self again is the same as God and Brahman, a transcendent Being or Existence, and they beheld, felt, lived in the inmost truth of all things in the universe and the inmost truth of man's inner and outer existence by the light of this one and unifying vision. The Upanishads are epic hymns of self-knowledge and world-knowledge and God-knowledge. The great formulations of philosophic truth with which they abound are not abstract intellectual generalisations, things that may shine and enlighten the mind, but do not live and move the soul to ascension, but are ardours as well as lights of an intuitive and revelatory illumination, reachings as well as seeings of the one Existence, the transcendent Godhead, the divine and universal Self and discoveries of his relation with things and creatures in this great cosmic manifestation. Chants of inspired knowledge, they breathe like all hymns a tone of religious aspiration and ecstasy, not of the narrowly intense kind proper to a lesser religious feeling, but raised beyond cult and special forms of devotion to the universal Ananda of the Divine which comes to us by approach to and oneness with the self-existent and universal spirit. And though mainly concerned with an inner vision and not directly with outward human action, all the highest ethics of Buddhism and later Hinduism are still emergences of the very life and significance of the truths to which they give expressive form and force, — and there is something greater than any ethical precept and mental rule of virtue, the supreme ideal of a spiritual action founded on oneness with God and all living beings. Therefore even when the life of the forms of the

Vedic cult had passed away, the Upanishads still remained alive and creative and could generate the great devotional religions and motive the persistent Indian idea of the Dharma.

The Upanishads are the creation of a revelatory and intuitive mind and its illumined experience, and all their substance, structure, phrase, imagery, movement are determined by and stamped with this original character. These supreme and all-embracing truths, these visions of oneness and self and a universal divine being are cast into brief and monumental phrases which bring them at once before the soul's eye and make them real and imperative to its aspiration and experience or are couched in poetic sentences full of revealing power and suggestive thought-colour that discover a whole infinite through a finite image. The One is there revealed, but also disclosed the many aspects, and each is given its whole significance by the amplitude of the expression and finds as if in a spontaneous self-discovery its place and its connection by the illumining justness of each word and all the phrase. The largest metaphysical truths and the subtlest subtleties of psychological experience are taken up into the inspired movement and made at once precise to the seeing mind and loaded with unending suggestion to the discovering spirit. There are separate phrases, single couplets, brief passages which contain each in itself the substance of a vast philosophy and yet each is only thrown out as a side, an aspect, a portion of the infinite self-knowledge. All here is a packed and pregnant and yet perfectly lucid and luminous brevity and an immeasurable completeness. A thought of this kind cannot follow the tardy, careful and diffuse development of the logical intelligence. The passage, the sentence, the couplet, the line, even the half line follows the one that precedes with a certain interval full of an unexpressed thought, an echoing silence between them, a thought which is carried in the total suggestion and implied in the step itself, but which the mind is left to work out for its own profit, and these intervals of pregnant silence are large, the steps of this thought are like the paces of a Titan striding from rock to distant rock across infinite waters. There is a perfect totality, a comprehensive connection of harmonious parts in the structure of each Upanishad; but it is done in the way of a mind that sees masses of truth at a time and stops to bring only the needed word out of a filled silence. The rhythm in verse or cadenced prose corresponds to the sculpture of the thought and the phrase. The metrical forms of the Upanishads are made up of four half lines each clearly cut, the lines mostly complete in themselves and integral in sense, the half lines presenting two thoughts or distinct parts of a thought that are wedded to and complete each other, and the sound movement follows a corresponding principle, each step brief and marked off by the distinctness of its pause, full of echoing cadences that remain long vibrating in the inner hearing: each is as if a wave of the infinite that carries in it the whole voice and rumour of the ocean. It is a kind of poetry — word of vision, rhythm of the spirit, — that has not been written before or after.

The imagery of the Upanishads is in large part developed from the type of imagery of the Veda and though very ordinarily it prefers an unveiled clarity of directly illuminative image, not unoften also it uses the same symbols in a way that is closely akin to the spirit and to the less technical part of the method of the older symbolism. It is to a great extent this element no longer seizable by our way of thinking that has baffled certain Western scholars and made them cry out that these scriptures are a mixture of the sublimest philosophical speculations with the first awkward stammerings of the child mind of humanity. The Upanishads are not a revolutionary departure from the Vedic mind and its temperament and fundamental ideas, but a continuation and development and to a certain extent an enlarging transformation in the sense of bringing out into open expression all that was held covered in the symbolic Vedic speech as a mystery and a secret. It begins by taking up the imagery and the ritual symbols of the Veda and the Brahmanas and turning them in such a way as to bring out an inner and a mystic sense which will serve as a sort of psychical starting-point for its own more highly evolved and more purely spiritual philosophy. There are a number of passages especially in the prose Upanishads which are entirely of this kind and deal, in a manner recondite, obscure and even unintelligible to the modern understanding, with the psychic sense of ideas then current in the Vedic religious mind, the distinction between the three kinds of Veda, the three worlds and other similar subjects; but, leading as they do in the thought of the Upanishads to deepest spiritual truths, these passages cannot be dismissed as childish aberrations of the intelligence void of sense or of any discoverable bearing on the higher thought in which they culminate. On the contrary we find that they have a deep enough significance once we can get inside their symbolic meaning. That appears in a psycho-physical passing upward into a psycho-spiritual knowledge for which we would now use more intellectual, less concrete and imaged terms, but which is still valid for those who practise Yoga and rediscover the secrets of our psycho-physical and psycho-spiritual being. Typical passages of this kind of peculiar expression of psychic truths are Ajatashatru's explanation of sleep and dream or the passages of the Prasna Upanishad on the vital principle and its motions, or those in which the Vedic idea of the struggle between the Gods and the demons is taken up and given its spiritual significance and the Vedic godheads more openly than in Rik and Saman characterised and invoked in their inner function and spiritual power.

I may cite as an example of this development of Vedic idea and image a passage of the Taittiriya in which Indra plainly appears as the power and godhead of the divine mind:

> He who is the Bull of the Vedas of the universal form, he who was born in the sacred rhythms from the Immortal, — may Indra satisfy me through the intelligence. O God, may I become a vessel of the Immortal. May my body be full of vision and my tongue of sweetness, may I hear the much and vast with my ears. For thou art the sheath of Brahman covered over and hidden by the intelligence.

And a kindred passage may also be cited from the Isha in which Surya the Sun-God is invoked as the godhead of knowledge whose supreme form of effulgence is the oneness of the Spirit and his rays dispersed here on the mental level are the shining diffusion of the thought mind and conceal his own infinite supramental truth, the body and self of this Sun, the truth of the spirit and the Eternal:

> The face of the Truth is covered with a golden lid: O fostering Sun, that uncover for the law of the truth, for sight. O fosterer, O sole Rishi, O controlling Yama, O Surya, O son of the Father of creatures, marshal and mass thy rays: the Lustre that is thy most blessed form of all, that I see, He who is this, this Purusha, He am I.

The kinship in difference of these passages with the imagery and style of the Veda is evident and the last indeed paraphrases or translates into a later and more open style a Vedic verse of the Atris:

> Hidden by your truth is the Truth that is constant for ever where they unyoke the horses of the Sun. There the ten thousands stand together, That is the One: I have seen the supreme Godhead of the embodied gods.

This Vedic and Vedantic imagery is foreign to our present mentality which does not believe in the living truth of the symbol, because the revealing imagination intimidated by the intellect has no longer the courage to accept, identify itself with and boldly embody a psychic and spiritual vision; but it is certainly very far from being a childish or a primitive and barbarous mysticism; this vivid, living, luminously poetic intuitive language is rather the natural expression of a highly evolved spiritual culture.

The intuitive thought of the Upanishads starts from this concrete imagery and these symbols, first to the Vedic Rishis secret seer words wholly expressive to the mind of the seer but veils of their deepest sense to the ordinary intelligence, link them to a less covertly expressive language and pass beyond them to another magnificently open and sublime imagery and diction which at once reveals the spiritual truth in all its splendour. The prose Upanishads show us this process of the early mind of India at its work using the symbol and then passing beyond it to the overt expression of the spiritual significance. A passage of the Prasna Upanishad on the power and significance of the mystic syllable AUM illustrates the earlier stage of the process:

> This syllable OM, O Satyakama, it is the supreme and it is the lower Brahman. Therefore the man of knowledge passeth by this house of the Brahman to the one or the other. And if one meditate on the single letter, he getteth by it knowledge and soon he attaineth on the earth. And him the Riks lead to the world of men and there perfected in Tapas and Brahmacharya and faith he experienceth the greatness of the spirit. Now if by the double letter he is accomplished in the mind, then is he led up by the Yajus to the middle world, to the moon-world of Soma. He in the world of Soma experienceth the majesty of the spirit and returneth again. And he who by the triple letter again, even this syllable OM, shall meditate on the highest Purusha, is perfected in the light that is the Sun. As a snake putteth off its skin, even so is he released from sin and evil and is led by the Samans to the world of Brahman. He from this dense of living souls seeth the higher than the highest Purusha who lieth in this mansion. The three letters are afflicted by death, but now they are used undivided and united to each other, then are the inner and the outer and the middle action of the spirit made whole in their perfect using and the spirit knows and is not shaken. This world by the Riks, the middle world by the Yajus and by the Samans that which the seers make known to us. The man of knowledge passeth to Him by OM, his house, even to the supreme spirit that is calm and ageless and fearless and immortal.

The symbols here are still obscure to our intelligence, but indications are given which show beyond doubt that they are representations of a psychical experience leading to different states of spiritual realisation and we can see that these are three, outward, mental and supramental, and as the result of the last a supreme perfection, a complete and integral action of the whole being in the tranquil eternity of the immortal Spirit. And later in the Mandukya Upanishad the other symbols are cast aside and we are admitted to the unveiled significance. Then there emerges a knowledge to which modern thought is returning through its own very different intellectual, rational and scientific method, the knowledge that behind the operations of our outward physical consciousness are working the operations of another, subliminal, — another and yet the same, — of which our waking mind is a surface action, and above — perhaps, we still say — is a spiritual superconscience in which can be found, it may well be, the highest state and the whole secret of our being. We shall see, when we look closely at the passage of the Prasna Upanishad, that this knowledge is already there, and I think we can very rationally conclude that these and similar utterances of the ancient sages, however perplexing their form to the rational mind, cannot be dismissed as a childish mysticism, but are the imaged expression, natural to the mentality of the time, of what the reason itself by its own processes is now showing us to be true and a very profound truth and real reality of knowledge.

The metrical Upanishads continue this highly charged symbolism but carry it more lightly and in the bulk of their verses pass beyond this kind of image to the overt expression. The Self, the Spirit, the Godhead in man and creatures and Nature and all this world and in other worlds and beyond all cosmos, the Immortal, the One, the Infinite is hymned without veils in the splendour of his eternal transcendence and his manifold self-revelation. A few passages from the teachings of Yama, lord of the Law and of Death, to Nachiketas, will be enough to illustrate something of their character.

> OM is this syllable. This syllable is the Brahman, this syllable is the Supreme. He who knoweth the imperishable OM, whatso he willeth, it is his. This support is the best, this support is the highest; and when a man knoweth it, he is greatened in the world of Brahman. The omniscient is not born, nor dies, nor has he come into being from

anywhere, nor is he anyone. He is unborn, he is constant and eternal, he is the Ancient of Days who is not slain in the slaying of the body. . . .

He is seated and journeys far, and lying still he goes to every side. Who other than I should know this ecstatic Godhead? The wise man cometh to know the great Lord and Self established and bodiless in these bodies that pass and has grief no longer. This Self is not to be won by teaching nor by brain-power nor by much learning: he whom the Spirit chooses, by him alone it can be won, and to him this Spirit discloses its own very body. One who has not ceased from ill-doing, one who is not concentrated and calm, one whose mind is not tranquil, shall not get him by the brain's wisdom. He of whom warriors and sages are the food and death is the spice of his banquet, who knoweth where is He? . . .

The Self-born has cloven his doors outward, therefore man sees outward and not in the inner self: only a wise man here and there turns his eyes inward, desiring immortality, and looks on the Self face to face. The child minds follow after surface desires and fall into the net of death which is spread wide for us; but the wise know of immortality and ask not from things inconstant that which is constant. One knoweth by this Self form and taste and odour and touch and its pleasures and what then is here left over? The wise man cometh to know the great Lord and Self by whom one seeth all that is in the soul that wakes and all that is in the soul that dreams and hath grief no longer. He who knoweth the Self, the eater of sweetness close to the living being, the lord of what was and what will be, shrinks thereafter from nothing that is. He knoweth him who is that which was born of old from Tapas and who was born of old from the waters and hath entered in and standeth in the secret cavern of being with all these creatures. He knoweth her who is born by the life force, the infinite Mother with all the gods in her, her who hath entered in and standeth in the

> secret cavern of being with all these creatures. This is the Fire that hath the knowledge and it is hidden in the two tinders as the embryo is borne in pregnant women; this is the Fire that must be adored by men watching sleeplessly and bringing to him the offering. He is that from which the Sun rises and that in which it sets: and in him all the gods are founded and none can pass beyond him. What is here, even that is in other worlds, and what is there, even according to that is all that is here. He goes from death to death who sees here only difference. A Purusha no bigger than a thumb stands in man's central self and is the lord of what was and what shall be, and knowing him thenceforth one shrinks from nothing that is. A Purusha no bigger than a man's thumb and he is like a light without smoke; he is the Lord of what was and what shall be; it is he that is today and it is he that shall be tomorrow.

The Upanishads abound with passages which are at once poetry and spiritual philosophy, of an absolute clarity and beauty, but no translation empty of the suggestions and the grave and subtle and luminous sense echoes of the original words and rhythms can give any idea of their power and perfection. There are others in which the subtlest psychological and philosophical truths are expressed with an entire sufficiency without falling short of a perfect beauty of poetical expression and always so as to live to the mind and soul and not merely be presented to the understanding intelligence. There is in some of the prose Upanishads another element of vivid narrative and tradition which restores for us though only in brief glimpses the picture of that extraordinary stir and movement of spiritual enquiry and passion for the highest knowledge which made the Upanishads possible. The scenes of the old world live before us in a few pages, the sages sitting in their groves ready to test and teach the comer, princes and learned Brahmins and great landed nobles going about in search of knowledge, the king's son in his chariot and the illegitimate son of the servant-girl, seeking any man who might carry in himself the thought of light and the word of revelation, the typical figures and personalities, Janaka and the subtle mind of Ajatashatru, Raikwa of the cart, Yajnavalkya militant for truth, calm and ironic, taking to himself with both hands without attachment worldly possessions and spiritual riches and casting at last all his wealth behind to wander forth as a houseless ascetic, Krishna son of Devaki who heard a single word of the Rishi Ghora and knew at once the Eternal, the ashramas, the courts of kings who were also spiritual discoverers and thinkers, the great sacrificial assemblies where the sages met and compared their knowledge. And we see how the soul of India was born and how arose this great birth-song in which it soared from its earth into the supreme empyrean of the spirit. The Vedas and the Upanishads are not only the sufficient fountain-head of Indian philosophy and religion, but of all Indian art, poetry and literature. It was the soul, the temperament, the ideal mind formed and expressed in them which later carved out the great philosophies, built the structure of the Dharma, recorded its heroic youth in the Mahabharata and Ramayana, intellectualised indefatigably in the classical times of the ripeness of its manhood, threw out so many original intuitions in science, created so rich a glow of aesthetic and vital and sensuous experience, renewed its spiritual and psychic experience in Tantra and Purana, flung itself into grandeur and beauty of line and colour, hewed and cast its thought and vision in stone and bronze, poured itself into new channels of self-expression in the later tongues and now after eclipse reemerges always the same in difference and ready for a new life and a new creation.

XVIII

Indian Literature – 3

THE VEDA is thus the spiritual and psychological seed of Indian culture and the Upanishads the expression of the truth of highest spiritual knowledge and experience that has always been the supreme idea of that culture and the ultimate objective to which it directed the life of the individual and the aspiration of the soul of the people: and these two great bodies of sacred writing, its first great efforts of poetic and creative self-expression, coming into being at a time preceding the later strong and ample and afterwards rich and curious intellectual development, are conceived and couched in the language of a purely psychic and spiritual mentality. An evolution so begun had to proceed by a sort of enriching descent from the spirit to matter and to pass on first to an intellectual endeavour to see life and the world and the self in all their relations as they present themselves to the reasoning and the practical intelligence. The earlier movement of this intellectual effort was naturally accompanied by a practical development and organisation of life consciously expressive of the mind and spirit of the people, the erection of a strong and successful structure of society shaped so as to fulfil the mundane objects of human existence under the control of a careful religious, ethical and social order and discipline, but also so as to provide for the evolution of the soul of man through these things to a spiritual freedom and perfection. It is this stage of which we get a remarkably ample and effective representation in the immediately succeeding period of Indian literary creation.

This movement of the Indian mind is represented in its more critical effort on one side by a strenuous philosophical thinking crystallised into the great philosophic systems, on the other by an equally insistent endeavour to formulate in a clear body and with a strict cogency an ethical, social and political ideal and practice in a consistent and organised system of individual and communal life and that endeavour resulted in the authoritative social treatises or Shastras of which the greatest and the most authoritative is the famous Laws of Manu. The work of the philosophers was to systematise and justify to the reasoning intelligence the truths of the self and man and the world already discovered by intuition, revelation and spiritual experience and embodied in the Veda and the Upanishads, and at the same time to indicate and systematise methods of discipline founded upon this knowledge by which man might effectuate the highest aim of his existence. The characteristic form in which this was done shows the action of the intuitive passing into that of the intellectual mentality and preserves the stamp and form expressive of its transitional character. The terse and pregnant phrase of the sacred literature abounding in intuitive substance is replaced by a still more compact and crowded brief expression, no longer intuitive and poetic, but severely intellectual, — the expression of a principle, a whole development of philosophic thought or a logical step burdened with considerable consequences in a few words, sometimes one or two, a shortest decisive formula often almost enigmatic in its concentrated fullness. These Sutras or aphorisms became the basis of ratiocinative commentaries developing by metaphysical and logical method and with a considerable variety of interpretation all that was contained at first in the series of aphoristic formulas. Their concern is solely with original and ultimate truth and the method of spiritual liberation, *mokṣa*.

The work of the social thinkers and legislators was on the contrary concerned with normal action and practice. It attempted to take up the ordinary life of man and of the community and the life of human desire and aim and interest and ordered rule and custom and to interpret and formulate it in the same complete and decisive manner and at the same time to throw the whole into an ordered relation to the ruling ideas of the national culture and frame and perpetuate a social system intelligently fashioned so as to provide a basis, a structure, a gradation by which there could be a secure evolution of the life from the vital and mental to the spiritual motive. The leading idea was the government of human interest and desire by the social and ethical law, the Dharma, so that it might be made, — all vital, economic, aesthetic, hedonistic, intellectual and other needs being satisfied duly and according to the right law of the nature, — a preparation for the spiritual existence. Here too we have as an initial form the aphoristic method of the Vedic *gṛhya-sūtras*, afterwards the diffuser, fuller method of the Dharma Shastras, — the first satisfied with brief indications of simple and essential socio-religious principle and practice, the later work attempting to cover the whole life of the individual, the class and the people. The very character of the effort and its thoroughness and the constant unity of idea that reigns through the whole of it are a remarkable evidence of a very developed intellectual, aesthetic and ethical consciousness and a high turn and capacity for a noble and ordered civilisation and culture. The intelligence at work, the understanding and formative power manifested is not inferior to that of any ancient or modern people, and there is a gravity, a unified clarity and nobility of conception which balances at least in any true idea of culture the greater suppleness, more well-informed experience and science and eager flexibility of experimental hardihood which are the gains that distinguish our later humanity. At any rate it was no barbaric mind that was thus intently careful for a fine and well unified order of society, a high and clear thought to govern it and at the end of life a great spiritual perfection and release.

The pure literature of the period is represented by the two great epics, the Mahabharata, which gathered into its vast structure the greater part of the poetic activity of the Indian mind during several centuries, and the Ramayana. These two poems are epical in their motive and spirit, but they are not like any other two epics in the world, but are entirely of their own kind and subtly different from others in their principle. It is not only that although they contain an early heroic story and a transmutation of many primitive elements, their form belongs to a period of highly developed intellectual, ethical and social culture, is enriched with a body of mature thought and uplifted by a ripe nobility and refined gravity of ethical tone and therefore these poems are quite different from primitive edda and saga and greater in breadth of view and substance and height of motive — I do not speak now of aesthetic quality and poetic perfection — than the Homeric poems, while at the same time there is still an early breath, a direct and straightforward vigour, a freshness and greatness and pulse of life, a simplicity of strength and beauty that makes of them quite another kind than the elaborately constructed literary epics of Virgil or Milton, Firdausi or Kalidasa. This peculiar blending of the natural breath of an early, heroic, swift and vigorous force of life with a strong development and activity of the ethical, the intellectual, even the philosophic mind is indeed a remarkable feature; these poems are the voice of the youth of a people, but a youth not only fresh and fine and buoyant, but also great and accomplished, wise and noble. This however is only a temperamental distinction: there is another that is more far-reaching, a difference in the whole conception, function and structure.

One of the elements of the old Vedic education was a knowledge of significant tradition, Itihasa, and it is this word that was used by the ancient critics to distinguish the Mahabharata and the Ramayana from the later literary epics. The Itihasa was an ancient historical or legendary tradition turned to creative use as a significant mythus or tale expressive of some spiritual or religious or ethical or ideal meaning and thus formative of the mind of the people. The Mahabharata and Ramayana are Itihasas of this kind on a large scale and with a massive purpose. The poets who wrote and those who added to these great bodies of poetic writing did not intend merely to tell an ancient tale in a beautiful or noble manner or even to fashion a poem pregnant with much richness of interest and meaning, though they did both these things with a high success; they wrote with a sense of their function as architects and sculptors of life, creative exponents, fashioners of significant forms of the national thought and religion and ethics and culture. A profound stress of thought on life, a large and vital view of religion and society, a certain strain of philosophic idea runs through these poems and the whole ancient culture of India is embodied in them with a great force of intellectual conception and living presentation. The Mahabharata has been spoken of as a fifth Veda, it has been said of both these poems that they are not only great poems but Dharmashastras, the body of a large religious and ethical and social and political teaching, and their effect and hold on the mind and life of the people have been so great that they have been described as the bible of the Indian people. That is not quite an accurate analogy, for the bible of the Indian people contains also the Veda and Upanishads, the Purana and Tantras and the Dharmashastras, not to speak of a large bulk of the religious poetry in the regional languages. The work of these epics was to popularise high philosophic and ethical idea and cultural practice; it was to throw out prominently and with a seizing relief and effect in a frame of great poetry and on a background of poetic story and around significant personalities that became to the people abiding national memories and representative figures all that was best in the soul and thought or true to the life or real to the creative imagination and ideal mind or characteristic and illuminative of the social, ethical, political and religious culture of India. All these things were brought together and disposed with artistic power and a telling effect in a poetic body given to traditions half legendary, half historic but cherished henceforth as deepest and most living truth and as a part of their religion by the people. Thus framed the Mahabharata and Ramayana, whether in the original Sanskrit or rewritten in the regional tongues, brought to the masses by Kathakas, — rhapsodists, reciters and exegetes, — became and remained one of the chief instruments of popular education and culture, moulded the thought, character, aesthetic and religious mind of the people and gave even to the illiterate some sufficient tincture of philosophy, ethics, social and political ideas, aesthetic emotion, poetry, fiction and romance. That which was for the cultured classes contained in Veda and Upanishad, shut into profound philosophical aphorism and treatise or inculcated in dharma-shastra and artha-shastra, was put here into creative and living figures, associated with familiar story and legend, fused into a vivid representation of life and thus made a near and living power that all could readily assimilate through the poetic word appealing at once to the soul and the imagination and the intelligence.

The Mahabharata especially is not only the story of the Bharatas, the epic of an early event which had become a national tradition but on a vast scale the epic of the soul and religious and ethical mind and social and political ideals and culture and life of India. It is said popularly of it and with a certain measure of truth that whatever is in India is in the Mahabharata. The Mahabharata is the creation and expression not of a single individual mind, but of the mind of a nation; it is the poem of itself written by a whole people. It would be vain to apply to it the canons of a poetical art applicable to an epic poem with a smaller and more restricted purpose, but still a great and quite conscious art has been expended both on its detail and its total structure. The whole poem has been built like a vast national temple unrolling slowly its immense and complex idea from chamber to chamber, crowded with significant groups and sculptures and inscriptions, the grouped figures carved in divine or semi-divine proportions, a humanity aggrandised and half uplifted to superhumanity and yet always true to the human motive and idea and feeling, the strain of the real constantly raised by the tones of the ideal, the life of this world amply portrayed but subjected to the conscious influence and presence of the powers of the worlds behind it, and the whole unified by the long embodied procession of a consistent idea worked out in the wide steps of the poetic story. As is needed in an epic narrative, the conduct of the story is the main interest of the poem and it is carried through with an at once large and minute movement, wide and bold in the mass, striking and effective in detail, always simple, strong and epic in its style and pace. At the same time though supremely interesting in substance and vivid in the manner of the telling as a poetic story, it is something more, — a significant tale, Itihasa, representative throughout of the central ideas and ideals of Indian life and culture. The leading motive is the Indian idea of the Dharma. Here the Vedic notion of the struggle between the godheads of truth and light and unity and the powers of darkness and division and falsehood is brought out from the spiritual and religious and internal into the outer intellectual, ethical and vital plane. It takes there in the figure of the story a double form of a personal and a political struggle, the personal a conflict between typical and representative personalities embodying the greater ethical ideals of the Indian Dharma and others who are embodiments of Asuric egoism and self-will and misuse of the Dharma, the political a battle in which the personal struggle culminates, an international clash ending in the establishment of a new rule of righteousness and justice, a kingdom or rather an empire of the Dharma uniting warring races and substituting for the ambitious arrogance of kings and aristocratic clans the supremacy, the calm and peace of a just and humane empire. It is the old struggle of Deva and Asura, God and Titan, but represented in the terms of human life.

The way in which this double form is worked out and the presentation of the movement of individual lives and of the national life first as their background and then as coming into the front in a movement of kingdoms and armies and nations show a high architectonic faculty akin in the sphere of poetry to that which laboured in Indian architecture, and the whole has been conducted with a large poetic art and vision. There is the same power to embrace great spaces in a total view and the same tendency to fill them with an abundance of minute, effective, vivid and significant detail. There is brought too into the frame of the narrative a very considerable element of other tales, legends, episodes, most of them of a significant character suitable to the method of Itihasa, and an extraordinary amount of philosophical, religious, ethical, social and political thinking sometimes direct, sometimes cast into the form of the legend and episode. The ideas of the Upanishads and of the great philosophies are brought in continually and sometimes given new developments, as in the Gita; religious myth and tale and idea and teaching are made part of the tissue; the ethical ideals of the race are expressed or are transmuted into the shape of tale and episode as well as embodied in the figures of the story, political and social ideals and institutions are similarly developed or illustrated with a high vividness and clearness and space is found too for aesthetic and other suggestions connected with the life of the people. All these things are interwoven into the epic narrative with a remarkable skill and closeness. The irregularities inevitable in so combined and difficult a plan and in a work to which many poets of an unequal power have contributed fall into their place in the general massive complexity of the scheme and assist rather than break the total impression. The whole is a poetic expression unique in its power and fullness of the entire soul and thought and life of a people.

The Ramayana is a work of the same essential kind as the Mahabharata; it differs only by a greater simplicity of plan, a more delicate ideal temperament and a finer glow of poetic warmth and colour. The main bulk of the poem in spite of much accretion is evidently by a single hand and has a less complex and more obvious unity of structure. There is less of the philosophic, more of the purely poetic mind, more of the artist, less of the builder. The whole story is from beginning to end of one piece and there is no deviation from the stream of the narrative. At the same time there is a like vastness of vision, an even more wide-winged flight of epic sublimity in the conception and sustained richness of minute execution in the detail. The structural power, strong workmanship and method of disposition of the Mahabharata remind one of the art of the Indian builders, the grandeur and boldness of outline and wealth of colour and minute decorative execution of the Ramayana suggest rather a transcript into literature of the spirit and style of Indian painting. The epic poet has taken here also as his subject an Itihasa, an ancient tale or legend associated with an old Indian dynasty and filled it in with detail from myth and folklore, but has exalted all into a scale of grandiose epic figure that it may bear more worthily the high intention and significance. The subject is the same as in the Mahabharata, the strife of the divine with the titanic forces in the life of the earth, but in more purely ideal forms, in frankly supernatural dimensions and an imaginative heightening of both the good and the evil in human character. On one side is portrayed an ideal manhood, a divine beauty of virtue and ethical order, a civilization founded on the Dharma and realising an exaltation of the moral ideal which is presented with a singularly strong appeal of aesthetic grace and harmony and sweetness; on the other are wild and anarchic and almost amorphous forces of superhuman egoism and self-will and exultant violence, and the two ideas and powers of mental nature living and embodied are brought into conflict and led to a decisive issue of the victory of the divine man over the Rakshasa. All shade and complexity are omitted which would diminish the single purity of the idea, the representative force in the outline of the figures, the significance of the temperamental colour and only so much admitted as is sufficient to humanise the appeal and the significance. The poet makes us conscious of the immense forces that are behind our life and sets his action in a magnificent epic scenery, the great imperial city, the mountains and the ocean, the forest and wilderness, described with such a largeness as to make us feel as if the whole world were the scene of his poem and its subject the whole divine and titanic possibility of man imaged in a few great or monstrous figures. The ethical and the aesthetic mind of India have here fused themselves into a harmonious unity and reached an unexampled pure wideness and beauty of self-expression. The Ramayana embodied for the Indian imagination its highest and tenderest human ideals of character, made strength and courage and gentleness and purity and fidelity and self-sacrifice familiar to it in the suavest and most harmonious forms coloured so as to attract the emotion and the aesthetic sense, stripped morals of all repellent austerity on one side or on the other of mere commonness and lent a certain high divineness to the ordinary things of life, conjugal and filial and maternal and fraternal feeling, the duty of the prince and leader and the loyalty of follower and subject, the greatness of the great and the truth and worth of the simple, toning things ethical to the beauty of a more psychical meaning by the glow of its ideal hues. The work of Valmiki has been an agent of almost incalculable power in the moulding of the cultural mind of India: it has presented to it to be loved and imitated in figures like Rama and Sita, made so divinely and with such a revelation of reality as to become objects of enduring cult and worship, or like Hanuman, Lakshmana, Bharata the living human image of its ethical ideals; it has fashioned much of what is best and sweetest in the national character, and it has evoked and fixed in it those finer and exquisite yet firm soul tones and that more delicate humanity of temperament which are a more valuable thing than the formal outsides of virtue and conduct.

The poetical manner of these epics is not inferior to the greatness of their substance. The style and the verse in which they are written have always a noble epic quality, a lucid classical simplicity and directness rich in expression but stripped of superfluous ornament, a swift, vigorous, flexible and fluid verse constantly sure of the epic cadence. There is a difference in the temperament of the language. The characteristic diction of the Mahabharata is almost austerely masculine, trusting to force of sense and inspired accuracy of turn, almost ascetic in its simplicity and directness and a frequent fine and happy bareness; it is the speech of a strong and rapid poetical intelligence and a great and straightforward vital force, brief and telling in phrase but by virtue of a single-minded sincerity and, except in some knotted passages or episodes, without any rhetorical labour of compactness, a style like the light and strong body of a runner nude and pure and healthily lustrous and clear without superfluity of flesh or exaggeration of muscle, agile and swift and untired in the race. There is inevitably much in this vast poem that is in an inferior manner, but little or nothing that falls below a certain sustained level in which there is always something of this virtue. The diction of the Ramayana is shaped in a more attractive mould, a marvel of sweetness and strength, lucidity and warmth and grace; its phrase has not only poetic truth and epic force and diction but a constant intimate vibration of the feeling of the idea, emotion or object: there is an element of fine ideal delicacy in its sustained strength and breath of power. In both poems it is a high poetic soul and inspired intelligence that is at work; the directly intuitive mind of the Veda and Upanishads has retired behind the veil of the intellectual and outwardly psychical imagination.

This is the character of the epics and the qualities which have made them immortal, cherished among India's greatest literary and cultural treasures, and given them their enduring power over the national mind. Apart from minor defects and inequalities such as we find in all works set at this pitch and involving a considerable length of labour, the objections made by Western criticism are simply expressions of a difference of mentality and aesthetic taste. The vastness of the plan and the leisurely minuteness of detail are baffling and tiring to a Western mind accustomed to smaller limits, a more easily fatigued eye and imagination and a hastier pace of life, but they are congenial to the spaciousness of vision and intent curiosity of circumstance, characteristic of the Indian mind, that spring as I have pointed out in relation to architecture from the habit of the cosmic consciousness and its sight and imagination and activity of experience. Another difference is that the terrestrial life is not seen realistically just as it is to the physical mind but constantly in relation to the much that is behind it, the human action is surrounded and influenced by great powers and forces, Daivic, Asuric and Rakshasic, and the greater human figures are a kind of incarnation of these more cosmic personalities and powers. The objection that the individual thereby loses his individual interest and becomes a puppet of impersonal forces is not true either in reality or actually in the imaginative figures of this literature, for there we see that the personages gain by it in greatness and force of action and are only ennobled by an impersonality that raises and heightens the play of their personality. The mingling of terrestrial nature and supernature, not as a mere imagination but with an entire sincerity and naturalness, is due to the same conception of a greater reality in life, and it is as significant figures of this greater reality that we must regard much to which the realistic critic objects with an absurdly misplaced violence, such as the powers gained by Tapasya, the use of divine weapons, the frequent indications of psychic action and influence. The complaint of exaggeration is equally invalid where the whole action is that of men raised beyond the usual human level, since we can only ask for proportions consonant with the truth of the stature of life conceived in the imagination of the poet and cannot insist on an unimaginative fidelity to the ordinary measures which would here be false because wholly out of place. The complaint of lifelessness and want of personality in the epic characters is equally unfounded: Rama and Sita, Arjuna and Yudhisthira, Bhishma and Duryodhana and Karna are intensely real and human and alive to the Indian mind. Only the main insistence, here as in Indian art, is not on the outward saliences of character, for these are only used secondarily as aids to the presentation, but on the soul life and the inner soul quality presented with as absolute a vividness and strength and purity of outline as possible. The idealism of characters like Rama and Sita is no pale and vapid unreality; they are vivid with the truth of the ideal life, of the greatness that man may be and does become when he gives his soul a chance and it is no sound objection that there is only a small allowance of the broken littleness of our ordinary nature.

These epics are therefore not a mere mass of untransmuted legend and folklore, as is ignorantly objected, but a highly artistic representation of intimate significances of life, the living presentment of a strong and noble thinking, a developed ethical and aesthetic mind and a high social and political ideal, the ensouled image of a great culture. As rich in freshness of life but immeasurably more profound and evolved in thought and substance than the Greek, as advanced in maturity of culture but more vigorous and vital and young in strength than the Latin epic poetry, the Indian epic poems were fashioned to serve a greater and completer national and cultural function and that they should have been received and absorbed by both the high and the low, the cultured and the masses and remained through twenty centuries an intimate and formative part of the life of the whole nation is of itself the strongest possible evidence of the greatness and fineness of this ancient Indian culture.

XIX

Indian Literature – 4

THE CLASSICAL age of the ancient literature, the best known and appraised of all, covers a period of some ten centuries and possibly more, and it is marked off from the earlier writings by a considerable difference, not so much in substance, as in the moulding and the colour of its thought, temperament and language. The divine childhood, the heroic youth, the bright and strong early manhood of the people and its culture are over and there is instead a long and opulent maturity and as its sequence an equally opulent and richly coloured decline. The decline is not to death, for it is followed by a certain rejuvenescence, a fresh start and repeated beginning, of which the medium is no longer Sanskrit but the derived languages, the daughters of the dialects raised into literary instruments and developing as the grand and ancient tongue loses its last forces and inspiring life. The difference in spirit and mould between the epics and the speech of Bhartrihari and Kalidasa is already enormous and may possibly be explained by the early centuries of Buddhism when Sanskrit ceased to be the sole literary tongue understood and spoken by all educated men and Pali came up as its successful rival and the means of expression for at least a great part of the current of the national thought and life. The language and movement of the epics have all the vigour, freedom, spontaneous force and appeal of a speech that leaps straight from the founts of life; the speech of Kalidasa is an accomplished art, an intellectual and aesthetic creation consummate, deliberate, finely ornate, carved like a statue, coloured like a painting, not yet artificial, though there is a masterly artifice and device, but still a careful work of art laboured by the intelligence. It is carefully natural, not with the spontaneous ease of a first, but the accomplished air of ease of a habitual second nature. The elements of artifice and device increase and predominate in the later writers, their language is a laborious and deliberate though a powerful and beautiful construction and appeals only to an erudite audience, a learned elite. The religious writings, Purana and Tantra, moving from a deeper, still intensely living source, aiming by their simplicity at a wider appeal, prolong for a time the tradition of the epics, but the simplicity and directness is willed rather than the earlier natural ease. In the end Sanskrit becomes the language of the Pundits and except for certain philosophical, religious and learned purposes no longer a first-hand expression of the life and mind of the people.

The alteration in the literary speech corresponds however, apart from all inducing circumstances, to a great change in the centre of mentality of the culture. It is still and always spiritual, philosophical, religious, ethical, but the inner austerer things seem to draw back a little and to stand in the background, acknowledged indeed and overshadowing the rest, but nevertheless a little detaching themselves from them and allowing them to act for their own enlargement and profit. The exterior powers that stand out in front are the curious intellect, the vital urge, the aesthetic, urbanely active and hedonistic sense life. It is the great period of logical philosophy, of science, of art and the developed crafts, law, politics, trade, colonisation, the great kingdoms and empires with their ordered and elaborate administrations, the minute rule of the Shastras in all departments of thought and life, an enjoyment of all that is brilliant, sensuous, agreeable, a discussion of all that could be thought and known, a fixing and systemising of all that could be brought into the compass of intelligence and practice, — the most splendid, sumptuous and imposing millennium of Indian culture.

The intellectuality that predominates is not in any way restless, sceptical or negative, but it is enormously inquiring and active, accepting the great lines of spiritual, religious, philosophical and social truth that had been discovered and laid down by the past, but eager too to develop, to complete, to know minutely and thoroughly and fix in perfectly established system and detail, to work out all possible branches and ramifications, to fill the intelligence, the sense and the life. The grand basic principles and lines of Indian religion, philosophy, society have already been found and built and the steps of the culture move now in the magnitude and satisfying security of a great tradition; but there is still ample room for creation and discovery within these fields and a much wider province, great beginnings, strong developments of science and art and literature, the freedom of the purely intellectual and aesthetic activities, much scope too for the hedonisms of the vital and the refinements of the emotional being, a cultivation of the art and rhythmic practice of life. There is a highly intellectualised vital stress and a many-sided interest in living, an indulgence of an at once intellectual and vital and sensuous satisfaction extending even to a frankness of physical and sensual experience, but in the manner of the oriental mind with a certain decorousness and order, an element of aesthetic restraint and the observance of rule and measure even in indulgence that saves always from the unbridled licence to which less disciplined races are liable. The characteristic, the central action is the play of the intellectual mind and everywhere that predominates. In the earlier age the many strands of the Indian mind and life principle are unified and inseparable, a single wide movement set to a strong and abundant but simple music; here they seem to stand side by side related and harmonised, curious and complex, multiply one. The spontaneous unity of the intuitive mind is replaced by the artificial unity of the analysing and synthetising intelligence. Art and religion still continue the predominance of the spiritual and intuitive motive, but it is less to the front in literature. A division has been settled between religious and secular writing that did not exist to any appreciable extent in the previous ages. The great poets and writers are secular creators and their works have no chance of forming part of the intimate religious and ethical mind of the people as did the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The stream of religious poetry flows separately in Purana and Tantra.

The great representative poet of this age is Kalidasa. He establishes a type which was preparing before and endured after him with more or less of additional decoration, but substantially unchanged through the centuries. His poems are the perfect and harmoniously designed model of a kind and substance that others cast always into similar forms but with a genius inferior in power or less rhythmically balanced, faultless and whole. The art of poetic speech in Kalidasa's period reaches an extraordinary perfection. Poetry itself had become a high craft, conscious of its means, meticulously conscientious in the use of its instruments, as alert and exact in its technique as architecture, painting and sculpture, vigilant to equate beauty and power of the form with nobility and richness of the conception, aim and spirit and the scrupulous completeness of its execution with fullness of aesthetic vision or of the emotional or sensuous appeal. There was established here as in the other arts and indeed during all this era in all human activities a Shastra, a well recognised and carefully practised science and art of poetics, critical and formulative of all that makes perfection of method and prescriptive of things to be avoided, curious of essentials and possibilities but under a regime of standards and limits conceived with the aim of excluding all fault of excess or of defect and therefore in practice as unfavourable to any creative lawlessness, even though the poet's native right of fantasy and freedom is theoretically admitted, as to any least tendency towards bad or careless, hasty or irregular workmanship. The poet is expected to be thoroughly conscious of his art, as minutely acquainted with its conditions and its fixed and certain standard and method as the painter and sculptor and to govern by his critical sense and knowledge the flight of his genius. This careful art of poetry became in the end too much of a rigid tradition, too appreciative of rhetorical device and artifice and even permitted and admired the most extraordinary contortions of the learned intelligence, as in the Alexandrian decline of Greek poetry, but the earlier work is usually free from these shortcomings or they are only occasional and rare.

The classical Sanskrit is perhaps the most remarkably finished and capable instrument of thought yet fashioned, at any rate by either the Aryan or the Semitic mind, lucid with the utmost possible clarity, precise to the farthest limit of precision, always compact and at its best sparing in its formation of phrase, but yet with all this never poor or bare: there is no sacrifice of depth to lucidity, but rather a pregnant opulence of meaning, a capacity of high richness and beauty, a natural grandeur of sound and diction inherited from the ancient days. The abuse of the faculty of compound structure proved fatal later on to the prose, but in the earlier prose and poetry where it is limited, there is an air of continent abundance strengthened by restraint and all the more capable of making the most of its resources. The great and subtle and musical rhythms of the classical poetry with their imaginative, attractive and beautiful names, manifold in capacity, careful in structure, are of themselves a mould that insists on perfection and hardly admits the possibility of a mean or slovenly workmanship or a defective movement. The unit of this poetical art is the *śloka*, the sufficient verse of four quarters or *pādas*, and each *śloka* is expected to be a work of perfect art in itself, a harmonious, vivid and convincing expression of an object, scene, detail, thought, sentiment, state of mind or emotion that can stand by itself as an independent figure; the succession of *ślokas* must be a constant development by addition of completeness to completeness and the whole poem or canto of a long poem an artistic and satisfying structure in this manner, the succession of cantos a progression of definite movements building a total harmony. It is this carefully artistic and highly cultured type of poetic creation that reached its acme of perfection in the poetry of Kalidasa.

This preeminence proceeds from two qualities possessed in a degree only to be paralleled in the work of the greatest world-poets and not always combined in them in so equable a harmony and with so adequate a combination of execution and substance. Kalidasa ranks among the supreme poetic artists with Milton and Virgil and he has a more subtle and delicate spirit and touch in his art than the English, a greater breath of native power informing and vivifying his execution than the Latin poet. There is no more perfect and harmonious style in literature, no more inspired and careful master of the absolutely harmonious and sufficient phrase combining the minimum of word expenditure with the fullest sense of an accomplished ease and a divine elegance and not excluding a fine excess that is not excessive, an utmost possible refined opulence of aesthetic value. More perfectly than any other he realises the artistic combination of a harmonious economy of expression, not a word, syllable, sound in superfluity, and a total sense of wise and lavish opulence that was the aim of the earlier classical poets. None so divinely skilful as he in imparting without any overdoing the richest colour, charm, appeal and value, greatness or nobility or power or suavity and always some kind and the right kind and the fullest degree of beauty to each line and each phrase. The felicity of selection is equalled by the felicity of combination. One of the most splendidly sensuous of poets in the higher sense of that epithet because he has a vivid vision and feeling of his object, his sensuousness is neither lax nor overpowering, but always satisfying and just, because it is united with a plenary force of the intelligence, a gravity and strength sometimes apparent, sometimes disguised in beauty but appreciable within the broidered and coloured robe, a royal restraint in the heart of the regal indulgence. And Kalidasa's sovereign mastery of rhythm is as great as his sovereign mastery of phrase. Here we meet in each metrical kind with the most perfect discoveries of verbal harmony in the Sanskrit language (pure lyrical melody comes only afterwards at the end in one or two poets like Jayadeva), harmonies founded on a constant subtle complexity of the fine assonances of sound and an unobtrusive use of significant cadence that never breaks the fluent unity of tone of the music. And the other quality of Kalidasa's poetry is the unfailing adequacy of the substance. Careful always to get the full aesthetic value of the word and sound clothing his thought and substance, he is equally careful that the thought and the substance itself should be of a high, strong or rich intellectual, descriptive or emotional value. His conception is large in its view though it has not the cosmic breadth of the earlier poets and it is sustained at every step in its execution. The hand of the artist never fails in the management of its material, — exception being made of a fault of composition marring one, the least considerable of his works, — and his imagination is always as equal to its task as his touch is great and subtle.

The work to which these supreme poetic qualities were brought was very much the same at bottom, though differing in its form and method, as that achieved by the earlier epics; it was to interpret in poetic speech and represent in significant images and figures the mind, the life, the culture of India in his age. Kalidasa's seven extant poems, each in its own way and within its limits and on its level a masterpiece, are a brilliant and delicately ornate roll of pictures and inscriptions with that as their single real subject. His was a richly stored mind, the mind at once of a scholar and observer possessed of all the learning of his time, versed in the politics, law, social idea, system and detail, religion, mythology, philosophy, art of his time, intimate with the life of courts and familiar with the life of the people, widely and very minutely observant of the life of Nature, of bird and beast, season and tree and flower, all the lore of the mind and all the lore of the eye; and this mind was at the same time always that of a great poet and artist. There is not in his work the touch of pedantry or excessive learning that mars the art of some other Sanskrit poets, he knows how to subdue all his matter to the spirit of his art and to make the scholar and observer no more than a gatherer of materials for the poet, but the richness of documentation is there ready and available and constantly brought in as part of incident and description and surrounding idea and forms or intervenes in the brilliant series of images that pass before us in the long succession of magnificent couplets and stanzas. India, her great mountains and forests and plains and their peoples, her men and women and the circumstances of their life, her animals, her cities and villages, her hermitages, rivers, gardens and tilled lands are the background of narrative and drama and love poem. He has seen it all and filled his mind with it and never fails to bring it before us vivid with all the wealth of description of which he is capable. Her ethical and domestic ideals, the life of the ascetic in the forest or engaged in meditation and austerity upon the mountains and the life of the householder, her familiar customs and social standards and observances, her religious notions, cult, symbols give the rest of the surroundings and the atmosphere. The high actions of gods and kings, the nobler or the more delicate human sentiments, the charm and beauty of women, the sensuous passion of lovers, the procession of the seasons and the scenes of Nature, these are his favourite subjects.

He is a true son of his age in his dwelling on the artistic, hedonistic, sensuous sides of experience and preeminently a poet of love and beauty and the joy of life. He represents it also in his intellectual passion for higher things, his intense appreciation of knowledge, culture, the religious idea, the ethical ideal, the greatness of ascetic self-mastery, and these too he makes a part of the beauty and interest of life and sees as admirable elements of its complete and splendid picture. All his work is of this tissue. His great literary epic, the "House of Raghu", treats the story of a line of ancient kings as representative of the highest religious and ethical culture and ideals of the race and brings out its significances environed with a splendid decoration of almost pictorially depicted sentiment and action, noble or beautiful thought and speech and vivid incident and scene and surrounding. Another unfinished epic, a great fragment but by the virtue of his method of work complete in itself so far as the tale proceeds, is in subject a legend of the gods, the ancient subject of a strife of Gods and Titans, the solution prepared here by a union of the supreme God and the Goddess, but in treatment it is a description of Nature and the human life of India raised to a divine magnitude on the sacred mountain and in the homes of the high deities. His three dramas move around the passion of love, but with the same insistence on the detail and picture of life. One poem unrolls the hued series of the seasons of the Indian year. Another leads the messenger cloud across northern India viewing as it passes the panorama of her scenes and closes on a vivid and delicately sensuous and emotional portrayal of the passion of love. In these varied settings we get a singularly complete impression of the mind, the tradition, the sentiment, the rich, beautiful and ordered life of the India of the times, not in its very deepest things, for these have to be sought elsewhere, but in what was for the time most characteristic, the intellectual, vital and artistic turn of that period of her culture.

The rest of the poetry of the times is of one fundamental type with Kalidasa's; for it has with individual variations the same thought mind, temperament, general materials, poetic method, and much of it has a high genius or an unusual quality and distinction though not the same perfection, beauty and felicity. The literary epics of Bharavi and Magha reveal the beginning of the decline marked by the progressive encroachment of a rhetorical and laborious standard of form, method and manner that heavily burdens and is bound eventually to stifle the poetic spirit, an increasing artificiality of tradition and convention and gross faults of taste that bear evidence of the approaching transmission of the language out of the hands of the literary creator into the control of the Pundit and pedant. Magha's poem is more constructed by rule of rhetoric than created and he displays as merits the very worst puerilities of melodious jingle, intricate acrostic and laborious double meaning. Bharavi is less attainted by the decadence, but not immune, and he suffers himself to be betrayed by its influence to much that is neither suitable to his temperament and genius nor in itself beautiful or true. Nevertheless Bharavi has high qualities of grave poetic thinking and epic sublimity of description and Magha poetic gifts that would have secured for him a more considerable place in literature if the poet had not been crossed with a pedant. In this mixture of genius with defect of taste and manner the later classical poets resemble the Elizabethans with the difference that in one case the incoherence is the result of a crude and still unripe, in the other of an overripe and decadent culture. At the same time they bring out very prominently the character of this age of Sanskrit literature, its qualities but also its limitations that escape the eye in Kalidasa and are hidden in the splendour of his genius.

This poetry is preeminently a ripe and deliberate poetic representation and criticism of thought and life and the things that traditionally interested an aristocratic and cultured class in a very advanced and intellectual period of civilisation. The intellect predominates everywhere and, even when it seems to stand aside and leave room for pure objective presentation, it puts on that too the stamp of its image. In the earlier epics the thought, religion, ethics, life movements are all strongly lived; the poetic intelligence is at work but always absorbed in its work, self-forgetful and identified with its object, and it is this that is the secret of their great creative force and living poetic sincerity and power. The later poets are interested in the same things but with an intensely reflective experience and critical intelligence that always observes more than it lives with its objects. In the literary epics there is no real movement of life, but only a close brilliant description of life. The poet makes to pass before us a series of pictured incidents, scenes, details, figures, attitudes richly coloured, exact, vivid, convincing to the eye and attractive, but in spite of the charm and interest we speedily perceive that these are only animated pictures. Things are indeed seen vividly but with the more outer eye of the imagination, observed by the intellect, reproduced by the sensuous imagination of the poet, but they have not been deeply lived in the spirit. Kalidasa alone is immune from this deficiency of the method because there is in him a great thinking, imaginative, sensuous poetic soul that has lived and creates what he pictures and does not merely fabricate brilliant scenes and figures. The rest only occasionally rise above the deficiency and do then great and not only brilliant or effective work. Their ordinary work is so well done as to deserve great and unstinted praise for what it possesses, but not the highest praise. It is in the end more decorative than creative. There ensues from the character of this poetic method a spiritual consequence, that we see here very vividly the current thought, ethics, aesthetic culture, active and sense life of contemporary India, but not the deeper soul of these things so much as their outer character and body. There is much ethical and religious thought of a sufficiently high ideal kind, and it is quite sincere but only intellectually sincere, and therefore there is no impression of the deeper religious feeling or the living ethical power that we get in the Mahabharata and Ramayana and in most of the art and literature of India. The ascetic life is depicted, but only in its ideas and outward figure:

the sensuous life is depicted in the same scrupulous manner — it is intensely observed and appreciated and well reproduced to the eye and the intelligence, but not intensely felt and created in the soul of the poet. The intellect has become too detached and too critically observant to live things with the natural force of the life or with the intuitive identity. This is the quality and also the malady of an overdeveloped intellectualism and it has always been the forerunner of a decadence.

The predominantly intellectual turn appears in the abundance of another kind of writing, the gnomic verse, *subhāṣita*. This is the use of the independent completeness of the *śloka* to be the body in its single sufficiency of the concentrated essence and expression of a thought, an aperçu or significant incident of life, a sentiment so expressed as to convey its essential idea to the intelligence. There is a great plenty of this kind of work admirably done; for it was congenial to the keen intellect and the wide, mature and well-stored experience of the age: but in the work of Bhartrihari it assumes the proportions of genius, because he writes not only with the thought but with emotion, with what might be called a moved intellectuality of the feeling and an intimate experience that gives great potency and sometimes poignancy to his utterance. There are three centuries or *śatakas* of his sentences, the first expressing high ethical thought or worldly wisdom or brief criticisms of aspects of life, the second concerned with erotic passion, much less effective because it is the fruit of curiosity and the environment rather than the poet's own temperament and genius, and the third proclaiming an ascetic weariness and recoil from the world. Bhartrihari's triple work is significant of the three leading motives of the mind of the age, its reflective interest in life and turn for high and strong and minute thinking, its preoccupation with the enjoyment of the senses, and its ascetic spiritual turn — the end of the one and the ransom of the other. It is significant too by the character of this spirituality; it is no longer the great natural flight of the spirit to the fullness of its own high domain, but rather a turning away of the intellect and the senses wearied of themselves and life, unable to find there the satisfaction they sought, to find peace in a spiritual passivity in which the tired thought and sense could find their absolute rest and cessation.

The drama however is the most attractive though not therefore the greatest product of the poetical mind of the age. There its excessive intellectuality was compelled by the necessities of dramatic poetry to be more closely and creatively identified with the very mould and movement of life. The Sanskrit drama type is a beautiful form and it has been used in most of the plays that have come down to us with an accomplished art and a true creative faculty. At the same time it is true that it does not rise to the greatnesses of the Greek or the Shakespearian drama. This is not due to the elimination of tragedy, — for there can be dramatic creation of the greatest kind without a solution in death, sorrow, overwhelming calamity or the tragic return of Karma, a note that is yet not altogether absent from the Indian mind, — for it is there in the Mahabharata and was added later on to the earlier triumphant and victorious close of the Ramayana; but a closing air of peace and calm was more congenial to the sattwic turn of the Indian temperament and imagination. It is due to the absence of any bold dramatic treatment of the great issues and problems of life. These dramas are mostly romantic plays reproducing the images and settled paces of the most cultured life of the time cast into the frame of old myth and legend, but a few are more realistic and represent the type of the citizen householder or other scenes of the times or a historical subject. The magnificent courts of kings or the beauty of the surroundings of Nature are their more common scene. But whatever their subject or kind, they are only brilliant transcripts or imaginative transmutations of life, and something more is needed for the very greatest or most moving dramatic creation. But their type still admits of a high or a strong or delicate poetry and a representation, if not any very profound interpretation of human action and motive and they do not fall short in this kind. A great charm of poetic beauty and subtle feeling and atmosphere, — reaching its most accomplished type in the Shakuntala of Kalidasa, the most perfect and captivating romantic drama in all literature, — or an interesting turn of sentiment and action, a skilful unobtrusive development according to the recognised principle and carefully observed formula of the art, in temperate measure without violent noise of incident or emphatic stress on situation or crowded figures, the movement subdued to a key of suavity and calm, a delicate psychology, not a strongly marked characterisation such as is commonly demanded in the dramatic art of Europe, but a subtle indication by slight touches in the dialogue and action, these are the usual characteristics. It is an art that was produced by and appealed to a highly cultured class, refined, and intellectual and subtle, loving best a tranquil aesthetic charm, suavity and beauty, and it has the limitations of the kind but also its qualities. There is a constant grace and fineness of work in the best period, a plainer and more direct but still fine vigour in Bhasa and the writers who prolong him, a breath of largeness and power in the dramas of Bhavabhuti, a high and consummate beauty in the perfection of Kalidasa.

This drama, this poetry, the prose romances crowded with descriptive detail, monographs like Bana's biography of Harsha or Jonaraja's history of Cashmere, the collections of religious or romantic or realistic tales, the Jatakas, the Kathasaritsagara with its opulence and inexhaustible abundance of narrative in verse, the Panchatantra and the more concise Hitopadesha which develop the form of the animal fable to make a piquant setting for a mass of acute worldly wisdom and policy and statecraft, and a great body of other less known work are only the surviving remnants of what, as many indications show, must have been an immense literary activity, but they are sufficiently abundant and representative to create a crowded and splendid impression, a many-toned picture of a high culture, a rich intellectuality, a great and ordered society with an opulent religious, aesthetic, ethical, economic, political and vital activity, a many-sided development, a plentiful life-movement. As completely as the earlier epics they belie the legend of an India lost in metaphysics and religious dreamings and incapable of the great things of life. The other element which has given rise to this conception, an intense strain of philosophic thinking and religious experience, follows in fact at this time an almost separate movement and develops gradually behind the pomp and motion of this outward action the thought, the influences, the temperament and tendencies that were to govern another millennium of the life of the Indian people.

XX

Indian Literature – 5

THE DOMINANT note in the Indian mind, the temperament that has been at the foundation of all its culture and originated and supported the greater part of its creative action in philosophy, religion, art and life has been, I have insisted, spiritual, intuitive and psychic: but this fundamental tendency has not excluded but rather powerfully supported a strong and rich intellectual, practical and vital activity. In the secular classical literature this activity comes very much to the front, is the prominent characteristic and puts the original spirit a little in the background. That does not mean that the spirit is changed or lost or that there is nothing psychic or intuitive in the secular poetry of the time. On the contrary all the type of the mind reflected there is of the familiar Indian character constant through every change, religio-philosophic, religio-ethical, religio-social, with all the past spiritual experience behind it and supporting it though not prominently in the front; the imagination is of the same kind that we have found in the art of the time; the frames of significant image, symbol and myth are those which have come down from the past subjected to the modifications and new developments that get their full body in the Puranas, and they have a strong psychic suggestion. The difference is that they take in the hands of these poets more of the form of a tradition well understood and worked upon by the intellect than of an original spiritual creation, and it is the intelligence that is prominent, accepting and observing established ideas and things in this frame and type and making its critical or reproductive observation and assent vivid with the strong lines and rich colours of artistic presentation and embellishing image. The original force, the intuitive vision work most strongly now in the outward, in the sensuous, the objective, the vital aspects of existence, and it is these that in this age are being more fully taken up, brought out and made in the religious field a support for an extension of spiritual experience.

The sense of this evolution of the culture appears more clearly outside the range of pure literature in the philosophic writings of the time and in the religious poetry of the Puranas and Tantras. It was these two strains which mixing together and soon becoming a single whole proved to be the most living and enduring movement of the classical age, had the most abiding result in the mind of the people, were the creating force and made the most conspicuous part of the later popular literatures. It is a remarkable proof of the native disposition, capacity and profound spiritual intelligence and feeling of the national mind that the philosophic thinking of this period should have left behind it this immense influence; for it was of the highest and severest intellectual character. The tendency that had begun in earlier times and created Buddhism, Jainism and the great schools of philosophy, the labour of the metaphysical intellect to formulate to the reason the truths discovered by the intuitive spiritual experience, to subject them to the close test of a logical and severely dialectical ratiocination and to elicit from them all that the thought could discover, reaches its greatest power of elaborate and careful reasoning, minute criticism and analysis and forceful logical construction and systematisation in the abundant philosophical writing of the period between the sixth and thirteenth centuries marked especially by the work of the great southern thinkers, Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa. It did not cease even then, but survived its greatest days and continued even up to our own times throwing up sometimes great creative thinking and often new and subtle philosophical ideas in the midst of an incessant stream of commentary and criticism on established lines. Here there was no decline but a continued vigour of the metaphysical turn in the mind of the race. The work it did was to complete the diffusion of the philosophic intelligence with the result that even an average Indian mentality, once awakened, responds with a surprising quickness to the most subtle and profound ideas. It is notable that no Hindu religion old or new has been able to come into existence without developing as its support a clear philosophic content and suggestion.

The philosophical writings in prose make no pretension to rank as literature; it is in these that the critical side is prominent, and they have no well-built creative shape, but there are other productions in which a more structural presentation of the complete thought is attempted and here the literary form adopted is ordinarily the philosophical poem. The preference for this form is a direct continuation of the tradition of the Upanishads and the Gita. These works cannot be given a very high place as poetry: they are too overweighted with thought and the preoccupation of an intellectual as distinguished from an intuitive adequacy in the phrase to have the breath of life and impetus of inspiration that are the indispensable attributes of the creative poetic mind. It is the critical and affirmative intelligence that is most active and not the vision seeing and interpretative. The epic greatness of the soul that sees and chants the self-vision and God-vision and supreme world-vision, the blaze of light that makes the power of the Upanishads, is absent, and absent too the direct thought springing straight from the soul's life and experience, the perfect, strong and suggestive phrase and the living beauty of the rhythmic pace that make the poetic greatness of the Gita. At the same time some of these poems are, if certainly not great poetry, yet admirable literature combining a supreme philosophical genius with a remarkable literary talent, not indeed creations, but noble and skilful constructions, embodying the highest possible thought, using well all the weighty, compact and sparing phrase of the classical Sanskrit speech, achieving the harmony and noble elegance of its rhythms. These merits are seen at their best in poems like the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* attributed to Shankara, and there we hear even, in spite of its too abstract turn, an intellectual echo of the voice of the Upanishads and the manner of the Gita. These poems, if inferior to the grandeur and beauty of earlier Indian work, are at least equal in poetic style and superior in height of thought to the same kind anywhere else and deservedly survive to fulfil the aim intended by their writers. And one must not omit to mention a few snatches of philosophic song here and there that are a quintessence at once of philosophic thought and poetic beauty, or the abundant literature of hymns, many of them consummate in their power and fervour and their charm of rhythm and expression which prepare us for the similar but larger work in the later regional literature.

The philosophical creations of India differ in this respect from the bulk of the metaphysical thinking of Europe that even when they most adopt the intellectual form and method, yet their real substance is not intellectual, but is rather the result of a subtle and very profound intelligence working on the stuff of sight and spiritual experience. This is the result of the constant unity India has preserved between philosophy, religion and Yoga. The philosophy is the intuitive or intellectual presentation of the truth that was sought for first through the religious mind and its experiences and it is never satisfied by discovering truth to the idea and justifying it to the logical intelligence, although that is admirably done, but has its eye always turned to realisation in the soul's life, the object of Yoga. The thinking of this age, even in giving so much prominence to the intellectual side, does not depart from this constant need of the Indian temperament. It works out from spiritual experience through the exact and laborious inspection and introspection of the intellect and works backward and in again from the intellectual perceptions to new gains of spiritual experience. There is indeed a tendency of fragmentation and exclusiveness; the great integral truth of the Upanishads has already been broken into divergent schools of thought and these are now farther subdividing into still less comprehensive systems; but still in each of these lessened provinces there is a gain of minute or intensive searching and on the whole, if a loss of breadth on the heights, in recompense some extension of assimilable spiritual knowledge. And this rhythm of exchange between the spirit and the intelligence, the spirit illumining, the intelligence searching and arriving and helping the lower life to absorb the intuitions of the spirit, did its part in giving Indian spirituality a wonderful intensity, security and persistence not exampled in any other people. It is indeed largely the work of these philosophers who were at the same time Yogins that saved the soul of India alive through the gathering night of her decadence.

This however could not have been done without the aid of a great body of more easily seizable ideas, forms, images, appealing to the imagination, emotions, ethical and aesthetic sense of the people, that had to be partly an expression of the higher spiritual truth and partly a bridge of transition between the normal religious and the spiritual mentality. The need was met by the Tantras and Puranas. The Puranas are the religious poetry peculiar to this period: for although the form probably existed in ancient times, it is only now that it was entirely developed and became the characteristic and the principal literary expression of the religious spirit, and it is to this period that we must attribute, not indeed all the substance, but the main bulk and the existing shape of the Puranic writings. The Puranas have been much discredited and depreciated in recent times, since the coming in of modern ideas coloured by Western rationalism and the turning of the intelligence under new impulses back towards the earlier fundamental ideas of the ancient culture. Much however of this depreciation is due to an entire misunderstanding of the purpose, method and sense of the mediaeval religious writings. It is only in an understanding of the turn of the Indian religious imagination and of the place of these writings in the evolution of the culture that we can seize their sense.

In fact the better comprehension that is now returning to us of our own self and past shows that the Puranic religions are only a new form and extension of the truth of the ancient spirituality and philosophy and socio-religious culture. In their avowed intention they are popular summaries of the cosmogony, symbolic myth and image, tradition, cult, social rule of the Indian people continued, as the name Purana signifies, from ancient times. There is no essential change, but only a change of forms. The psychic symbols or true images of truth belonging to the Vedic age disappear or are relegated to a subordinate plan with a changed and diminished sense: others take their place more visibly large in aim, cosmic, comprehensive, not starting with conceptions drawn from the physical universe, but supplied entirely from the psychic universe within us. The Vedic gods and goddesses conceal from the profane by their physical aspect their psychic and spiritual significance. The Puranic trinity and the forms of its female energies have on the contrary no meaning to the physical mind or imagination, but are philosophic and psychic conceptions and embodiments of the unity and multiplicity of the all-manifesting Godhead. The Puranic cults have been characterised as a degradation of the Vedic religion, but they might conceivably be described, not in the essence, for that remains always the same, but in the outward movement, as an extension and advance. Image worship and temple cult and profuse ceremony, to whatever superstition or externalism their misuse may lead, are not necessarily a degradation. The Vedic religion had no need of images, for the physical signs of its godheads were the forms of physical Nature and the outward universe was their visible house. The Puranic religion worshipped the psychical forms of the Godhead within us and had to express it outwardly in symbolic figures and house it in temples that were an architectural sign of cosmic significances. And the very inwardness it intended necessitated a profusion of outward symbol to embody the complexity of these inward things to the physical imagination and vision. The religious aesthesis has changed, but the meaning of the religion has been altered only in temperament and fashion, not in essence. The real difference is this that the early religion was made by men of the highest mystic and spiritual experience living among a mass still impressed mostly by the life of the physical universe: the Upanishads casting off the physical veil created a free transcendent and cosmic vision and experience and this was expressed by a later age to the mass in images containing a large philosophical and intellectual meaning of which the Trinity and the Shaktis of Vishnu and Shiva are the central figures: the Puranas carried forward this appeal to the intellect and imagination and made it living to the psychic experience, the emotions, the aesthetic feeling and the senses. A constant attempt to make the spiritual truths discovered by the Yogin and the Rishi integrally expressive, appealing, effective to the whole nature of man and to provide outward means by which the ordinary mind, the mind of a whole people might be drawn to a first approach to them is the sense of the religio-philosophic evolution of Indian culture.

It is to be observed that the Puranas and Tantras contain in themselves the highest spiritual and philosophical truths, not broken up and expressed in opposition to each other as in the debates of the thinkers, but synthetised by a fusion, relation or grouping in the way most congenial to the catholicity of the Indian mind and spirit. This is done sometimes expressly, but most often in a form which might carry something of it to the popular imagination and feeling by legend, tale, symbol, apologue, miracle and parable. An immense and complex body of psycho-spiritual experience is embodied in the Tantras, supported by visual images and systematised in forms of Yogic practice. This element is also found in the Puranas, but more loosely and cast out in a less strenuous sequence. This method is after all simply a prolongation, in another form and with a temperamental change, of the method of the Vedas. The Puranas construct a system of physical images and observances each with its psychical significance. Thus the sacredness of the confluence of the three rivers, Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati, is a figure of an inner confluence and points to a crucial experience in a psycho-physical process of Yoga and it has too other significances, as is common in the economy of this kind of symbolism. The so-called fantastic geography of the Puranas, as we are expressly told in the Puranas themselves, is a rich poetic figure, a symbolic geography of the inner psychical universe. The cosmogony expressed sometimes in terms proper to the physical universe has, as in the Veda, a spiritual and psychological meaning and basis. It is easy to see how in the increasing ignorance of later times the more technical parts of the Puranic symbology inevitably lent themselves to much superstition and to crude physical ideas about spiritual and psychic things. But that danger attends all attempts to bring them to the comprehension of the mass of men and this disadvantage should not blind us to the enormous effect produced in training the mass mind to respond to a psycho-religious and psycho-spiritual appeal that prepares a capacity for higher things. That effect endures even though the Puranic system may have to be superseded by a finer appeal and the awakening to more directly subtle significances, and if such a supersession becomes possible, it will itself be due very largely to the work done by the Puranas.

The Puranas are essentially a true religious poetry, an art of aesthetic presentation of religious truth. All the bulk of the eighteen Puranas does not indeed take a high rank in this kind: there is much waste substance and not a little of dull and dreary matter, but on the whole the poetic method employed is justified by the richness and power of the creation. The earliest work is the best — with one exception at the end in a new style which stands by itself and is unique. The Vishnu Purana for instance in spite of one or two desert spaces is a remarkable literary creation of a very considerable quality maintaining much of the direct force and height of the old epic style. There is in it a varied movement, much vigorous and some sublime epic writing, an occasional lyrical element of a lucid sweetness and beauty, a number of narratives of the finest verve and skilful simplicity of poetic workmanship. The Bhagavat coming at the end and departing to a great extent from the more popular style and manner, for it is strongly affected by the learned and more ornately literary form of speech, is a still more remarkable production full of subtlety, rich and deep thought and beauty. It is here that we get the culmination of the movement which had the most important effects on the future, the evolution of the emotional and ecstatic religions of Bhakti. The tendency that underlay this development was contained in the earlier forms of the religious mind of India and was slowly gaining ground, but it had hitherto been overshadowed and kept from its perfect formation by the dominant tendency towards the austerities of knowledge and action and the seeking of the spiritual ecstasy only on the highest planes of being. The turn of the classical age outward to the exterior life and the satisfaction of the senses brought in a new inward turn of which the later ecstatic forms of the Vaishnava religion were the most complete manifestation. Confined to the secular and outward this fathoming of vital and sensuous experience might have led only to a relaxation of nerve and vigour, an ethical degeneracy or licence; but the Indian mind is always compelled by its master impulse to reduce all its experience of life to the corresponding spiritual term and factor and the result was a transfiguring of even these most external things into a basis for new spiritual experience. The emotional, the sensuous, even the sensual motions of the being, before they could draw the soul farther outward, were taken and transmuted into a psychical form and, so changed, they became the elements of a mystic capture of the Divine through the heart and the senses and a religion of the joy of God's love, delight and beauty. In the Tantra the new elements are taken up and assigned their place in a complete psycho-spiritual and psycho-physical science of Yoga. Its popular form in the Vaishnava religion centres round the mystic apologue of the pastoral life of the child Krishna. In the Vishnu Purana the tale of Krishna is a heroic saga of the divine Avatar: in later Puranas we see the aesthetic and erotic symbol developing and in the Bhagavat it is given its full power and prepared to manifest its entire spiritual and philosophic as well as its psychic sense and to remould into its own lines by a shifting of the centre of synthesis from knowledge to spiritual love and delight the earlier significance of Vedanta. The perfect outcome of this evolution is to be found in the philosophy and religion of divine love promulgated by Chaitanya.

It is the later developments of Vedantic philosophy, the Puranic ideas and images and the poetic and aesthetic spirituality of the religions of devotion that inspired from their birth the regional literatures. The literature of the Sanskrit tongue does not come to any abrupt end. Poetry of the classical type continues to be written especially in the South down to a comparatively late period and Sanskrit remains still the language of philosophy and of all kinds of scholarship: all prose work, all the work of the critical mind is written in the ancient tongue. But the genius rapidly fades out from it, it becomes stiff, heavy and artificial and only a scholastic talent remains to keep it in continuance. In every province the local tongues arise here earlier, there a little later to the dignity of literature and become the vehicle of poetic creation and the instrument of popular culture. Sanskrit, although not devoid of popular elements, is essentially and in the best sense an aristocratic speech developing and holding to the necessity of a noble aspiration and the great manner a high spiritual, intellectual, ethical and aesthetic culture, then possible in this manner only to the higher classes, and handing it down by various channels of impression and transfusion and especially by religion, art and social and ethical rule to the mass of the people. Pali in the hands of the Buddhists becomes a direct means of this transmission. The poetry of the regional tongues on the contrary creates, in every sense of the word, a popular literature. The Sanskrit writers were men of the three highest castes, mostly Brahmins and Kshatriyas, and later they were learned men writing for a highly cultured elite; the Buddhist writers too were for the most part philosophers, monks, kings, preachers writing sometimes for themselves, sometimes in a more popular form for the mass of the people; but the poetry of the regional tongues sprang straight from the heart of the people and its writers came from all classes from the Brahmin to the lowest Shudra and the outcaste. It is only in Urdu and to a less degree in the Southern tongues, as in Tamil whose great period is contemporaneous with the classical Sanskrit, its later production continuing during the survival of independent or semi-independent courts and kingdoms in the South, that there is a strong influence of the learned or classical temperament and habit; but even here there is a very considerable popular element as in the songs of the Shaiva saints and Vaishnava Alwars. The field here is too large to be easily known in its totality or to permit of a rapid survey, but something must be said of the character and value of this later literature that we may see how vital and persistently creative Indian culture remained even in a period which compared with its greater times might be regarded as a period of restriction and decadence.

As the Sanskrit literature begins with the Vedas and Upanishads, these later literatures begin with the inspired poetry of saints and devotees: for in India it is always a spiritual movement that is the source or at least imparts the impulse of formation to new ideas and possibilities and initiates the changes of the national life. It is this kind that predominated almost throughout the creative activity of most of these tongues before modern times, because it was always poetry of this type that was nearest to the heart and mind of the people; and even where the work is of a more secular spirit, the religious turn enters into it and provides the framework, a part of the tone or the apparent motive. In abundance, in poetic excellence, in the union of spontaneous beauty of motive and lyrical skill this poetry has no parallel in its own field in any other literature. A sincerity of devotional feeling is not enough to produce work of this high turn of beauty, as is shown by the sterility of Christian Europe in this kind; it needs a rich and profound spiritual culture. Another part of the literature is devoted to the bringing of something of the essence of the old culture into the popular tongues through new poetic versions of the story of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana or in romantic narrative founded on the ancient legends; and here again we have work of the very greatest genius as well as much of a lesser but still high order. A third type presents vividly the religious beliefs and feelings of the people, the life of court and city and village and hamlet, of landholder and trader and artisan and peasant. The bulk of the work done in the regional tongues falls under one or other of these heads, but there are variations such as the religio-ethical and political poems of Ramdas in Maharashtra or the gnomic poetry, the greatest in plan, conception and force of execution ever written in this kind, of the Tamil saint, Tiruvalluvar. There is too in one or two of these languages a later erotic poetry not without considerable lyrical beauty of an entirely mundane inspiration. The same culture reigns amid many variations of form in all this work of the regional peoples, but each creates on the lines of its own peculiar character and temperament and this gives a different stamp, the source of a rich variety in the unity, to each of these beautiful and vigorous literatures.

Thus under the stress of temperamental variation the poetry of the Vaishnavas puts on very different artistic forms in different provinces. There is first the use of the psychical symbol created by the Puranas, and this assumes its most complete and artistic shape in Bengal and becomes there a long continued tradition. The desire of the soul for God is there thrown into symbolic figure in the lyrical love cycle of Radha and Krishna, the Nature soul in man seeking for the Divine Soul through love, seized and mastered by his beauty, attracted by his magical flute, abandoning human cares and duties for this one overpowering passion and in the cadence of its phases passing through first desire to the bliss of union, the pangs of separation, the eternal longing and reunion, the *līlā* of the love of the human spirit for God. There is a settled frame and sequence, a subtly simple lyrical rhythm, a traditional diction of appealing directness and often of intense beauty. This accomplished lyrical form springs at once to perfect birth from the genius of the first two poets who used the Bengali tongue, Vidyapati, a consummate artist of word and line, and the inspired singer Chandidas in whose name stand some of the sweetest and most poignant and exquisite love-lyrics in any tongue. The symbol here is sustained in its most external figure of human passion and so consistently that it is now supposed by many to mean nothing else, but this is quite negatived by the use of the same figures by the devout poets of the religion of Chaitanya. All the spiritual experience that lay behind the symbol was embodied in that inspired prophet and incarnation of the ecstasy of divine love and its spiritual philosophy put into clear form in his teaching. His followers continued the poetic tradition of the earlier singers and though they fall below them in genius, yet left behind a great mass of this kind of poetry always beautiful in form and often deep and moving in substance. Another type is created in the perfect lyrics of the Rajput queen Mirabai, in which the images of the Krishna symbol are more directly turned into a song of the love and pursuit of the divine Lover by the soul of the singer. In the Bengal poetry the expression preferred is the symbolic figure impersonal to the poet: here a personal note gives the peculiar intensity to the emotion. This is given a still more direct turn by a southern poetess in the image of herself as the bride of Krishna. The peculiar power of this kind of Vaishnava religion and poetry is in the turning of all the human emotions Godward, the passion of love being preferred as the intensest and most absorbing of them all, and though the idea recurs wherever there has been a strong development of devotional religion, it has nowhere been used with so much power and sincerity as in the work of the Indian poets.

Other Vaishnava poetry does not use the Krishna symbol, but is rather addressed in language of a more direct devotion to Vishnu or centres sometimes around the Rama Avatar. The songs of Tukaram are the best known of this kind. The Vaishnava poetry of Bengal avoids except very rarely any element of intellectualising thought and relies purely on emotional description, a sensuous figure of passion and intensity of feeling: Maratha poetry on the contrary has from the beginning a strong intellectual strain. The first Marathi poet is at once a devotee, a Yogin and a thinker; the poetry of the saint Ramdas, associated with the birth and awakening of a nation, is almost entirely a stream of religious ethical thinking raised to the lyrical pitch; and it is the penetrating truth and fervour of a thought arising from the heart of devotion that makes the charm and power of Tukaram's songs. A long strain of devotee poets keeps sounding the note that he struck and their work fills the greater space of Marathi poetry. The same type takes a lighter and more high-pitched turn in the poetry of Kabir. In Bengal again at the end of the Mahomedan period there is the same blending of fervent devotion with many depths and turns of religious thought in the songs of Ramprasad to the divine Mother, combined here with a vivid play of imagination turning all familiar things into apt and pregnant images and an intense spontaneity of feeling. In the South a profounder philosophic utterance is often fused into the devotional note, especially in the Shaiva poets, and, as in the early Sanskrit poetry, vivified by a great power of living phrase and image, and farther north the high Vedantic spirituality renews itself in the Hindi poetry of Surdas and inspires Nanak and the Sikh gurus. The spiritual culture prepared and perfected by two millenniums of the ancient civilisation has flooded the mind of all these peoples and given birth to great new literatures and its voice is heard continually through all their course.

The narrative poetry of this age is less striking and original except for a certain number of great or famous works. Most of these tongues have felt the cultural necessity of transferring into the popular speech the whole central story of the Mahabharata or certain of its episodes and, still more universally, the story of the Ramayana. In Bengal there is the Mahabharata of Kashiram, the gist of the old epic simply retold in a lucid classical style, and the Ramayana of Krittibas, more near to the vigour of the soil, neither of them attaining to the epic manner but still written with a simple poetic skill and a swift narrative force. Only two however of these later poets arrived at a vividly living recreation of the ancient story and succeeded in producing a supreme masterpiece, Kamban, the Tamil poet who makes of his subject a great original epic, and Tulsidas whose famed Hindi Ramayana combines with a singular mastery lyric intensity, romantic richness and the sublimity of the epic imagination and is at once a story of the divine Avatar and a long chant of religious devotion. An English historian of the literature has even claimed for Tulsidas's poem superiority to the epic of Valmiki: that is an exaggeration and, whatever the merits, there cannot be a greater than the greatest, but that such claims can be made for Tulsidas and Kamban is evidence at least of the power of the poets and a proof that the creative genius of the Indian mind has not declined even in the narrowing of the range of its culture and knowledge. All this poetry indeed shows a gain in intensity that compensates to some extent for the loss of the ancient height and amplitude.

While this kind of narrative writing goes back to the epics, another seems to derive its first shaping and motive from the classical poems of Kalidasa, Bharavi and Magha. A certain number take for their subject, like that earlier poetry, episodes of the Mahabharata or other ancient or Puranic legends, but the classical and epic manner has disappeared, the inspiration resembles more that of the Puranas and there is the tone and the looser and easier development of the popular romance. This kind is commoner in western India and excellence in it is the title to fame of Premananda, the most considerable of the Gujerati poets. In Bengal we find another type of half-romantic half-realistic narrative which develops a poetic picture of the religious mind and life and scenes of contemporary times and has a strong resemblance in its motive to the more outward element in the aim of Rajput painting. The life of Chaitanya written in a simple and naive romance verse, appealing by its directness and sincerity but inadequate in poetic form, is a unique contemporary presentation of the birth and foundation of a religious movement. Two other poems that have become classics, celebrate the greatness of Durga or Chandi, the goddess who is the Energy of Shiva, — the "Chandi" of Mukundaram, a pure romance of great poetic beauty which presents in its frame of popular legend a very living picture of the life of the people, and the "Annadamangal" of Bharatchandra repeating in its first part the Puranic tales of the gods as they might be imagined by the Bengali villager in the type of his own human life, telling in the second a romantic love story and in the third a historical incident of the time of Jehangir, all these disparate elements forming the development of the one central motive and presented without any imaginative elevation but with an unsurpassable vividness of description and power of vital and convincing phrase. All this poetry, the epic and the romance, the didactic poem, of which Ramdas and the famous Kural of Tiruvalluvar are the chief representatives, and the philosophic and devotional lyrics are not the creation or meant for the appreciation of a cultivated class, but with few exceptions the expression of a popular culture. The Ramayana of Tulsidas, the songs of Ramprasad and of the Bauls, the wandering Vaishnava devotees, the poetry of Ramdas and Tukaram, the sentences of Tiruvalluvar and the poetess Avvai and the inspired lyrics of the southern saints and Alwars were known to all classes and their thought or their emotion entered deeply into the life of the people.

I have dwelt at this length on the literature because it is, not indeed the complete, but still the most varied and ample record of the culture of a people. Three millenniums at least of a creation of this kind and greatness are surely the evidence of a real and very remarkable culture. The last period shows no doubt a gradual decline, but one may note the splendour even of the decline and especially the continued vitality of religious, literary and artistic creation. At the moment when it seemed to be drawing to a close it has revived at the first chance and begins again another cycle, at first precisely in the three things that lasted the longest, spiritual and religious activity, literature and painting, but already the renewal promises to extend itself to all the many activities of life and culture in which India was once a great and leading people.

XXI

Indian Polity

I HAVE spoken hitherto of the greatness of Indian civilisation in the things most important to human culture, those activities that raise man to his noblest potentialities as a mental, a spiritual, religious, intellectual, ethical, aesthetic being, and in all these matters the cavillings of the critics break down before the height and largeness and profundity revealed when we look at the whole and all its parts in the light of a true understanding of the spirit and intention and a close discerning regard on the actual achievement of the culture. There is revealed not only a great civilisation, but one of the half dozen greatest of which we have a still existing record. But there are many who would admit the greatness of the achievement of India in the things of the mind and the spirit, but would still point out that she has failed in life, her culture has not resulted in a strong, successful or progressive organisation of life such as Europe shows to us, and that in the end at least the highest part of her mind turned away from life to asceticism and an inactive and world-shunning pursuit by the individual of his personal spiritual salvation. Or at most she has come only to a certain point and then there has been an arrest and decadence.

This charge weighs with an especial heaviness in the balance today because the modern man, even the modern cultured man, is or tends to be to a degree quite unprecedented *politikon zōon*, a political, economic and social being valuing above all things the efficiency of the outward existence and the things of the mind and spirit mainly, when not exclusively, for their aid to humanity's vital and mechanical progress: he has not that regard of the ancients which looked up towards the highest heights and regarded an achievement in the things of the mind and the spirit with an unquestioning admiration or a deep veneration for its own sake as the greatest possible contribution to human culture and progress. And although this modern tendency is exaggerated and ugly and degrading in its exaggeration, inimical to humanity's spiritual evolution, it has this much of truth behind it that while the first value of a culture is its power to raise and enlarge the internal man, the mind, the soul, the spirit, its soundness is not complete unless it has shaped also his external existence and made of it a rhythm of advance towards high and great ideals. This is the true sense of progress and there must be as part of it a sound political, economic and social life, a power and efficiency enabling a people to survive, to grow and to move securely towards a collective perfection, and a vital elasticity and responsiveness that will give room for a constant advance in the outward expression of the mind and the spirit. If a culture does not serve these ends, then there is evidently a defect somewhere either in its essential conceptions or its wholeness or in its application that will seriously detract from its claims to a complete and integral value.

The ideals that governed the spirit and body of Indian society were of the highest kind, its social order secured an inexpugnable basic stability, the strong life force that worked in it was creative of an extraordinary energy, richness and interest, and the life organised remarkable in its opulence, variety in unity, beauty, productiveness, movement. All the records of Indian history, art and literature bear evidence to a cultural life of this character and even in decline and dissolution there survives some stamp of it to remind however faintly and distantly of the past greatness. To what then does the charge brought against Indian culture as an agent of the life power amount and what is its justification? In its exaggerated form it is founded upon the characteristics of the decline and dissolution, the features of the decadence read backward into the time of greatness, and it amounts to this that India has always shown an incompetence for any free or sound political organisation and has been constantly a divided and for the most part of her long history a subject nation, that her economic system whatever its bygone merits, if it had any, remained an inelastic and static order that led in modern conditions to poverty and failure and her society an unprogressive hierarchy, caste-ridden, full of semi-barbaric abuses, only fit to be thrown on the scrap-heap among the broken rubbish of the past and replaced by the freedom, soundness and perfection or at least the progressive perfectibility of the European social order. It is necessary to reestablish the real facts and their meaning and afterwards it will be time to pass judgment on the political, the economic and the social aspects of Indian culture.

The legend of Indian political incompetence has arisen from a false view of the historical development and an insufficient knowledge of the ancient past of the country. It has long been currently supposed that she passed at once from the freer type of the primitive Aryan or Vedic social and political organisation to a system socially marked by the despotism of the Brahmin theocracy and politically by an absolute monarchy of the oriental, by which is meant the Western Asiatic, type and has remained fixed in these two things for ever after. That summary reading of Indian history has been destroyed by a more careful and enlightened scholarship and the facts are of a quite different nature. It is true that India never evolved either the scrambling and burdensome industrialism or the parliamentary organisation of freedom and self-styled democracy characteristic of the bourgeois or Vaishya period of the cycle of European progress. But the time is passing when the uncritical praise of these things as the ideal state and the last word of social and political progress was fashionable, their defects are now visible and the greatness of an oriental civilisation need not be judged by the standard of these Western developments. Indian scholars have attempted to read the modern ideas and types of democracy and even a parliamentary system into the past of India, but this seems to me an ill-judged endeavour. There was a strong democratic element, if we must use the Western terms, in Indian polity and even institutions that present a certain analogy to the parliamentary form, but in reality these features were of India's own kind and not at all the same thing as modern parliaments and modern democracy. And so considered they are a much more remarkable evidence of the political capacity of the Indian people in their living adaptation to the ensemble of the social mind and body of the nation than when we judge them by the very different standard of Western society and the peculiar needs of its cultural cycle.

The Indian system began with a variation of the type generally associated with the early history of the Aryan peoples; but certain features have a more general character and belong to a still earlier stage in the social development of the human race. It was a clan or tribal system, Kula, founded upon the equality of all the freemen of the clan or race; this was not at first firmly founded upon the territorial basis, the migratory tendency was still in evidence or recurred under pressure and the land was known by the name of the people who occupied it, the Kuru country or simply the Kurus, the Malava country or the Malavas. After the fixed settlement within determined boundaries the system of the clan or tribe continued, but found a basic unit or constituent atom in the settled village community. The meeting of the people, *viśaḥ*, assembling for communal deliberation, for sacrifice and worship or as the host for war, remained for a long time the power-sign of the mass body and the agent of the active common life with the king as the head and representative, but long depending even after his position became hereditary on the assent of the people for his formal election or confirmation. The religious institution of the sacrifice developed in time a class of priests and inspired singers, men trained in the ritual or in possession of the mystic knowledge which lay behind the symbols of the sacrifice, the seed of the great Brahminic institution. These were not at first hereditary, but exercised other professions and belonged in their ordinary life to the general body of the people. This free and simple natural constitution of the society seems to have been general at first throughout Aryan India.

The later development out of this primitive form followed up to a certain point the ordinary line of evolution as we see it in other communities, but at the same time threw up certain very striking peculiarities that owing to the unique mentality of the race fixed themselves, became prominent characteristics and gave a different stamp to the political, economic and social factors of Indian civilisation. The hereditary principle emerged at an early stage and increased constantly its power and hold on the society until it became everywhere the basis of the whole organisation of its activities. A hereditary kingship was established, a powerful princely and warrior class appeared, the rest of the people were marked off as the caste of traders, artisans and agriculturalists and a subject or menial caste was added, perhaps sometimes as the result of conquest but more probably or more commonly from economic necessity, of servants and labourers. The predominance from early times of the religious and spiritual tendency in the mind of the Indian people brought about at the top of the social system the growth of the Brahmin order, priests, scholars, legists, repositories of the sacred lore of the Vedas, a development paralleled elsewhere but here given an unequalled permanence and definiteness and supreme importance. In other countries with a less complex mentality this predominance might have resulted in a theocracy: but the Brahmins in spite of their ever-increasing and finally predominant authority did not and could not usurp in India the political power. As sacrosanct priests and legists and spiritual preceptors of the monarch and the people they exercised a very considerable influence, but the real or active political power remained with the king, the Kshatriya aristocracy and the commons.

A peculiar figure for some time was the Rishi, the man of a higher spiritual experience and knowledge, born in any of the classes, but exercising an authority by his spiritual personality over all, revered and consulted by the king of whom he was sometimes the religious preceptor and in the then fluid state of social evolution able alone to exercise an important role in evolving new basic ideas and effecting direct and immediate changes of the socio-religious ideas and customs of the people. It was a marked feature of the Indian mind that it sought to attach a spiritual meaning and a religious sanction to all, even to the most external social and political circumstances of its life, imposing on all classes and functions an ideal, not except incidentally of rights and powers, but of duties, a rule of their action and an ideal way and temperament, character, spirit in the action, a dharma with a spiritual significance. It was the work of the Rishi to put this stamp enduringly on the national mind, to prolong and perpetuate it, to discover and interpret the ideal law and its practical meaning, to cast the life of the people into the well-shaped ideals and significant forms of a civilisation founded on the spiritual and religious sense. And in later ages we find the Brahminic schools of legists attributing their codes, though in themselves only formulations of existing rule and custom, to the ancient Rishis. Whatever the developments of the Indian socio-political body in later days, this original character still exercised its influence, even when all tended at last to become traditionalised and conventionalised instead of moving forward constantly in the steps of a free and living practice.

The political evolution of this early system varied in different parts of India. The ordinary development, as in most other countries, was in the direction of an increasing emphasis on the control of the king as the centre, head and unifying factor of a more and more complex system of rule and administration and this prevailed eventually and became the universal type. But for a long time it was combated and held in check by a contrary tendency that resulted in the appearance and the strong and enduring vitality of city or regional or confederated republics. The king became either a hereditary or elected executive head of the republic or an archon administering for a brief and fixed period or else he altogether disappeared from the polity of the state. This turn must have come about in many cases by a natural evolution of the power of the assemblies, but in others it seems to have been secured by some kind of revolution and there appear to have been vicissitudes, alternations between periods of monarchical and periods of republican government. Among a certain number of the Indian peoples the republican form finally asserted its hold and proved itself capable of a strong and settled organisation and a long duration lasting over many centuries. In some cases they were governed by a democratic assembly, in more by an oligarchical senate. It is unfortunate that we know little of the details of the constitution and nothing of the inner history of these Indian republics, but the evidence is clear of the high reputation they enjoyed throughout India for the excellence of their civil and the formidable efficiency of their military organisation. There is an interesting dictum of Buddha that so long as the republican institutions were maintained in their purity and vigour, a small state of this kind would remain invincible even by the arms of the powerful and ambitious Magadhan monarchy, and this opinion is amply confirmed by the political writers who consider the alliance of the republics the most solid and valuable political and military support a king could have and advise their reduction not so much by the force of arms, as that would have a very precarious chance of success, but by Machiavellian means, — similar to those actually employed in Greece by Philip of Macedon, — aimed at undermining their internal unity and the efficiency of their constitution.

These republican states were already long established and in vigorous functioning in the sixth century before Christ, contemporary therefore with the brilliant but ephemeral and troubled Greek city commonwealths, but this form of political liberty in India long outlasted the period of Greek republican freedom. The ancient Indian mind, not less fertile in political invention, must be considered superior to that of the mercurial and restless Mediterranean people in the capacity for a firm organisation and settled constitutional order. Some of these states appear to have enjoyed a longer and a more settled history of vigorous freedom than republican Rome, for they persisted even against the mighty empire of Chandragupta and Asoka and were still in existence in the early centuries of the Christian era. But none of them developed the aggressive spirit and the conquering and widely organising capacity of the Roman republic; they were content to preserve their own free inner life and their independence. India especially after the invasion of Alexander felt the need of a movement of unification and the republics were factors of division: strong for themselves, they could do nothing for the organisation of the peninsula, too vast indeed for any system of confederation of small states to be possible — and indeed in the ancient world that endeavour nowhere succeeded, always it broke down in the effort of expansion beyond certain narrow limits and could not endure against the movement towards a more centralised government. In India as elsewhere it was the monarchical state that grew and finally held the field replacing all other forms of political organisation. The republican organisation disappeared from her history and is known to us only by the evidence of coins, scattered references and the testimony of Greek observers and of the contemporary political writers and theorists who supported and helped to confirm and develop the monarchical state throughout India.

But Indian monarchy previous to the Mahomedan invasion was not, in spite of a certain sanctity and great authority conceded to the regal position and the personality of the king as the representative of the divine Power and the guardian of the Dharma, in any way a personal despotism or an absolutist autocracy: it had no resemblance to the ancient Persian monarchy or the monarchies of western and central Asia or the Roman imperial government or later European autocracies: it was of an altogether different type from the system of the Pathan or the Mogul emperors. The Indian king exercised supreme administrative and judicial power, was in possession of all the military forces of the kingdom and with his Council alone responsible for peace and war and he had too a general supervision and control over the good order and welfare of the life of the community, but his power was not personal and it was besides hedged in by safeguards against abuse and encroachment and limited by the liberties and powers of other public authorities and interests who were, so to speak, lesser copartners with him in the exercise of sovereignty and administrative legislation and control. He was in fact a limited or constitutional monarch, although the machinery by which the constitution was maintained and the limitation effected differed from the kind familiar in European history; and even the continuance of his rule was far more dependent than that of mediaeval European kings on the continued will and assent of the people.

A greater sovereign than the king was the Dharma, the religious, ethical, social, political, juridic and customary law organically governing the life of the people. This impersonal authority was considered sacred and eternal in its spirit and the totality of its body, always characteristically the same, the changes organically and spontaneously brought about in its actual form by the evolution of the society being constantly incorporated in it, regional, family and other customs forming a sort of attendant and subordinate body capable of change only from within, — and with the Dharma no secular authority had any right of autocratic interference. The Brahmins themselves were recorders and exponents of the Dharma, not its creators nor authorised to make at will any changes, although it is evident that by an authoritative expression of opinion they could and did favour or oppose this or that tendency to change of principle or detail. The king was only the guardian, executor and servant of the Dharma, charged to see to its observance and to prevent offences, serious irregularities and breaches. He himself was bound the first to obey it and observe the rigorous rule it laid on his personal life and action and on the province, powers and duties of his regal authority and office.

This subjection of the sovereign power to the Dharma was not an ideal theory inoperative in practice; for the rule of the socio-religious law actively conditioned the whole life of the people and was therefore a living reality, and it had in the political field very large practical consequences. It meant first that the king had not the power of direct legislation and was limited to the issue of administrative decrees that had to be in consonance with the religious, social, political, economic constitution of the community, — and even here there were other powers than that of the king who shared with him the right of promulgating and seeing to the execution of administrative decrees independently issued, — neither could he disregard in the general tenor and character and the effective result of his administration the express or tacit will of the people.

The religious liberties of the commons were assured and could not normally be infringed by any secular authority; each religious community, each new or long-standing religion could shape its own way of life and institutions and had its own authorities or governing bodies exercising in their proper field an entire independence. There was no exclusive State religion and the monarch was not the religious head of the people. Asoka in this respect seems to have attempted an extension of the royal control or influence and similar velleities were occasionally shown on a minor scale by other powerful sovereigns. But Asoka's so-called edicts of this kind had a recommendatory rather than an imperative character, and the sovereign who wished to bring about a change in religious belief or institutions had always, in accordance with the Indian principle of communal freedom and the obligation of a respect for and a previous consultation of the wishes of those concerned, to secure the assent of the recognised authorities or to refer the matter to a consultative assembly for deliberation, as was done in the famous Buddhist councils, or to arrange a discussion between the exponents of the different religions and abide by the issue. The monarch might personally favour a particular sect or creed and his active preference might evidently have a considerable propagandist influence, but at the same time he was bound to respect and support in his public office all the recognised religions of the people with a certain measure of impartiality, a rule that explains the support extended by Buddhist and Brahmin emperors to both the rival religions. At times there were, mainly in the south, instances of petty or violent State persecutions, but these outbreaks were a violation of the Dharma due to momentary passion at a time of acute religious ferment and were always local and of a brief duration. Normally there was no place in the Indian political system for religious oppression and intolerance and a settled State policy of that kind was unthinkable.

The social life of the people was similarly free from autocratic interference. Instances of royal legislation in this province are rare and here too, when it occurred, there had to be a consultation of the will of those concerned, as in the rearrangement or the reconstitution of the caste system by the Sena kings in Bengal after its disorganisation during a long period of Buddhist predominance. Change in the society was brought about not artificially from above but automatically from within and principally by the freedom allowed to families or particular communities to develop or alter automatically their own rule of life, *ācāra*.

In the sphere of administration the power of the king was similarly hedged in by the standing constitution of the Dharma. His right of taxation was limited in the most important sources of revenue to a fixed percentage as a maximum and in other directions often by the right of the bodies representing the various elements of the community to a voice in the matter and always by the general rule that his right to govern was subject to the satisfaction and good-will of the people. This as we shall see, was not merely a pious wish or opinion of the Brahmin custodians of the Dharma. The king was in person the supreme court and the highest control in the execution of the civil and criminal law, but here too his role was that of the executor: he was bound to administer the law faithfully as it stood through his judges or with the aid of the Brahmin legists learned in these matters. He had the complete and unfettered control in his Council only of foreign policy, military administration and war and peace and of a great number of directive activities. He was free to make efficient arrangements for all that part of the administration that served to secure and promote the welfare of the community, good order, public morals, and all such matters as could best be supervised or regulated by the sovereign authority. He had a right of patronage and punishment consistent with the law and was expected to exercise it with a strict regard to an effect of general beneficence and promotion of the public welfare.

There could therefore be ordinarily little or no room in the ancient Indian system for autocratic freak or monarchical violence and oppression, much less for the savage cruelty and tyranny of so common an occurrence in the history of some other countries. Nevertheless such happenings were possible by the sovereign's disregard of the Dharma or by a misuse of his power of administrative decree; instances occurred of the kind, — though the worst recorded is that of a tyrant belonging to a foreign dynasty; in other cases any prolonged outbreak of autocratic caprice, violence or injustice seems to have led before long to an effective protest or revolt on the part of the people. The legists provided for the possibility of oppression. In spite of the sanctity and prestige attaching to the sovereign it was laid down that obedience ceased to be binding if the king ceased to be faithful executor of the Dharma. Incompetence and violation of the obligation to rule to the satisfaction of the people were in theory and effect sufficient causes for his removal. Manu even lays it down that an unjust and oppressive king should be killed by his own subjects like a mad dog, and this justification by the highest authority of the right or even the duty of insurrection and regicide in extreme cases is sufficient to show that absolutism or the unconditional divine right of kings was no part of the intention of the Indian political system. As a matter of fact the right was actually exercised as we find both from history and literature. Another more peaceful and more commonly exercised remedy was a threat of secession or exodus which in most cases was sufficient to bring the delinquent ruler to reason. It is interesting to find the threat of secession employed against an unpopular monarch in the south as late as the seventeenth century, as well as a declaration by a popular assembly denouncing any assistance given to the king as an act of treason. A more common remedy was deposition by the council of ministers or by the public assemblies. The kingship thus constituted proved to be in effect moderate, efficient and beneficent, served well the purposes assigned to it and secured an abiding hold on the affections of the people. The monarchical institution was however only one, an approved and very important, but not, as we see from the existence of the ancient republics, an indispensable element of the Indian socio-political system, and we shall understand nothing of the real principle of the system and its working if we stop short with a view of the regal façade and fail to see what lay behind it. It is there that we shall find the clue to the essential character of the whole construction.

XXII

Indian Polity – 2

THE TRUE nature of the Indian polity can only be realised if we look at it not as a separate thing, a machinery independent of the rest of the mind and life of the people, but as a part of and in its relation to the organic totality of the social existence.

A people, a great human collectivity, is in fact an organic living being with a collective or rather — for the word collective is too mechanical to be true to the inner reality — a common or communal soul, mind and body. The life of the society like the physical life of the individual human being passes through a cycle of birth, growth, youth, ripeness and decline, and if this last stage goes far enough without any arrest of its course towards decadence, it may perish, — even so all the older peoples and nations except India and China perished, — as a man dies of old age. But the collective being has too the capacity of renewing itself, of a recovery and a new cycle. For in each people there is a soul idea or life idea at work, less mortal than its body, and if this idea is itself sufficiently powerful, large and force-giving and the people sufficiently strong, vital and plastic in mind and temperament to combine stability with a constant enlargement or new application of the power of the soul idea or life idea in its being, it may pass through many such cycles before it comes to a final exhaustion. Moreover, the idea is itself only the principle of soul manifestation of the communal being and each communal soul again a manifestation and vehicle of the greater eternal spirit that expresses itself in Time and on earth is seeking, as it were, its own fullness in humanity through the vicissitudes of the human cycles. A people then which learns to live consciously not solely in its physical and outward life, not even only in that and the power of the life idea or soul idea that governs the changes of its development and is the key to its psychology and temperament, but in the soul and spirit behind, may not at all exhaust itself, may not end by disappearance or a dissolution or a fusion into others or have to give place to a new race and people, but having itself fused into its life many original smaller societies and attained to its maximum natural growth pass without death through many renascences. And even if at any time it appears to be on the point of absolute exhaustion and dissolution, it may recover by the force of the spirit and begin another and perhaps a more glorious cycle. The history of India has been that of the life of such a people.

The master idea that has governed the life, culture, social ideals of the Indian people has been the seeking of man for his true spiritual self and the use of life — subject to a necessary evolution first of his lower physical, vital and mental nature — as a frame and means for that discovery and for man's ascent from the ignorant natural into the spiritual existence. This dominant idea India has never quite forgotten even under the stress and material exigencies and the externalities of political and social construction. But the difficulty of making the social life an expression of man's true self and some highest realisation of the spirit within him is immensely greater than that which attends a spiritual self-expression through the things of the mind, religion, thought, art, literature, and while in these India reached extraordinary heights and largenesses, she could not in the outward life go beyond certain very partial realisations and very imperfect tentatives, — a general spiritualising symbolism, an infiltration of the greater aspiration, a certain cast given to the communal life, the creation of institutions favourable to the spiritual idea. Politics, society, economics are the natural field of the two first and grosser parts of human aim and conduct recognised in the Indian system, interest and hedonistic desire: Dharma, the higher law, has nowhere been brought more than partially into this outer side of life, and in politics to a very minimum extent; for the effort at governing political action by ethics is usually little more than a pretence. The coordination or true union of the collective outward life with Moksha, the liberated spiritual existence, has hardly even been conceived or attempted, much less anywhere succeeded in the past history of the yet hardly adult human race. Accordingly, we find that the governance by the Dharma of India's social, economic and even (though here the attempt broke down earlier than in other spheres) her political rule of life, system, turn of existence, with the adumbration of a spiritual significance behind, — the full attainment of the spiritual life being left as a supreme aim to the effort of the individual — was as far as her ancient system could advance. This much endeavour, however, she did make with persistence and patience and it gave a peculiar type to her social polity. It is perhaps for a future India, taking up and enlarging with a more complete aim, a more comprehensive experience, a more certain knowledge that shall reconcile life and the spirit, her ancient mission, to found the status and action of the collective being of man on the realisation of the deeper spiritual truth, the yet unrealised spiritual potentialities of our existence and so ensoul the life of her people as to make it the Lila of the greater Self in humanity, a conscious communal soul and body of Virat, the universal spirit.

Another point must be noted which creates a difference between the ancient polity of India and that of the European peoples and makes the standards of the West as inapplicable here as in the things of the mind and the inner culture. Human society has in its growth to pass through three stages of evolution before it can arrive at the completeness of its possibilities. The first is a condition in which the forms and activities of the communal existence are those of the spontaneous play of the powers and principles of its life. All its growth, all its formations, customs, institutions are then a natural organic development, — the motive and constructive power coming mostly from the subconscient principle of the life within it, — expressing, but without deliberate intention, the communal psychology, temperament, vital and physical need, and persisting or altering partly under the pressure of an internal impulse, partly under that of the environment acting on the communal mind and temper. In this stage the people is not yet intelligently self-conscious in the way of the reason, is not yet a thinking collective being, and it does not try to govern its whole communal existence by the reasoning will, but lives according to its vital intuitions or their first mental renderings. The early framework of Indian society and polity grew up in such a period as in most ancient and mediaeval communities, but also in the later age of a growing social self-consciousness they were not rejected but only farther shaped, developed, systematised so as to be always, not a construction of politicians, legislators and social and political thinkers, but a strongly stable vital order natural to the mind, instincts and life intuitions of the Indian people.

A second stage of the society is that in which the communal mind becomes more and more intellectually self-conscious, first in its more cultured minds, then more generally, first broadly, then more and more minutely and in all the parts of its life. It learns to review and deal with its own life, communal ideas, needs, institutions in the light of the developed intelligence and finally by the power of the critical and constructive reason. This is a stage which is full of great possibilities but attended too by serious characteristic dangers. Its first advantages are those which go always with the increase of a clear and understanding and finally an exact and scientific knowledge and the culminating stage is the strict and armoured efficiency which the critical and constructive, the scientific reason used to the fullest degree offers as its reward and consequence. Another and greater outcome of this stage of social evolution is the emergence of high and luminous ideals which promise to raise man beyond the limits of the vital being, beyond his first social, economic and political needs and desires and out of their customary moulds and inspire an impulse of bold experiment with the communal life which opens a field of possibility for the realisation of a more and more ideal society. This application of the scientific mind to life with the strict, well-finished, armoured efficiency which is its normal highest result, this pursuit of great consciously proposed social and political ideals and the progress which is the index of the ground covered in the endeavour, have been, with whatever limits and drawbacks, the distinguishing advantages of the political and social effort of Europe.

On the other hand the tendency of the reason when it pretends to deal with the materials of life as its absolute governor, is to look too far away from the reality of the society as a living growth and to treat it as a mechanism which can be manipulated at will and constructed like so much dead wood or iron according to the arbitrary dictates of the intelligence. The sophisticating, labouring, constructing, efficient, mechanising reason loses hold of the simple principles of a people's vitality; it cuts it away from the secret roots of its life. The result is an exaggerated dependence on system and institution, on legislation and administration and the deadly tendency to develop, in place of a living people, a mechanical State. An instrument of the communal life tries to take the place of the life itself and there is created a powerful but mechanical and artificial organisation; but, as the price of this exterior gain, there is lost the truth of life of an organically self-developing communal soul in the body of a free and living people. It is this error of the scientific reason stifling the work of the vital and the spiritual intuition under the dead weight of its mechanical method which is the weakness of Europe and has deceived her aspiration and prevented her from arriving at the true realisation of her own higher ideals.

It is only by reaching a third stage of the evolution of the collective social as of the individual human being that the ideals first seized and cherished by the thought of man can discover their own real source and character and their true means and conditions of effectuation or the perfect society be anything more than a vision on a shining cloud constantly run after in a circle and constantly deceiving the hope and escaping the embrace. That will be when man in the collectivity begins to live more deeply and to govern his collective life neither primarily by the needs, instincts, intuitions welling up out of the vital self, nor secondarily by the constructions of the reasoning mind, but first, foremost and always by the power of unity, sympathy, spontaneous liberty, supple and living order of his discovered greater self and spirit in which the individual and the communal existence have their law of freedom, perfection and oneness. That is a rule that has not yet anywhere found its right conditions for even beginning its effort, for it can only come when man's attempt to reach and abide by the law of the spiritual existence is no longer an exceptional aim for individuals or else degraded in its more general aspiration to the form of a popular religion, but is recognised and followed out as the imperative need of his being and its true and right attainment the necessity of the next step in the evolution of the race.

The small early Indian communities developed like others through the first stage of a vigorous and spontaneous vitality, finding naturally and freely its own norm and line, casting up form of life and social and political institution out of the vital intuition and temperament of the communal being. As they fused with each other into an increasing cultural and social unity and formed larger and larger political bodies, they developed a common spirit and a common basis and general structure allowing of a great freedom of variation in minor line and figure. There was no need of a rigid uniformity; the common spirit and life impulse were enough to impose on this plasticity a law of general oneness. And even when there grew up the great kingdoms and empires, still the characteristic institutions of the smaller kingdoms, republics, peoples were as much as possible incorporated rather than destroyed or thrown aside in the new cast of the socio-political structure. Whatever could not survive in the natural evolution of the people or was no longer needed, fell away of itself and passed into desuetude: whatever could last by modifying itself to new circumstance and environment, was allowed to survive: whatever was in intimate consonance with the psychical and the vital law of being and temperament of the Indian people became universalised and took its place in the enduring figure of the society and polity.

This spontaneous principle of life was respected by the age of growing intellectual culture. The Indian thinkers on society, economics and politics, Dharma Shastra and Artha Shastra, made it their business not to construct ideals and systems of society and government in the abstract intelligence, but to understand and regulate by the practical reason the institutions and ways of communal living already developed by the communal mind and life and to develop, fix and harmonise without destroying the original elements, and whatever new element or idea was needed was added or introduced as a superstructure or a modifying but not a revolutionary and destructive principle. It was in this way that the transition from the earlier stages to the fully developed monarchical polity was managed; it proceeded by an incorporation of the existing institutions under the supreme control of the king or the emperor. The character and status of many of them was modified by the superimposition of the monarchical or imperial system, but, as far as possible, they did not pass out of existence. As a result we do not find in India the element of intellectually idealistic political progress or revolutionary experiment which has been so marked a feature of ancient and of modern Europe. A profound respect for the creations of the past as the natural expression of the Indian mind and life, the sound manifestation of its Dharma or right law of being, was the strongest element in the mental attitude and this preservative instinct was not disturbed but rather yet more firmly settled and fixed by the great millennium of high intellectual culture. A slow evolution of custom and institution conservative of the principle of settled order, of social and political precedent, of established framework and structure was the one way of progress possible or admissible. On the other hand, Indian polity never arrived at that unwholesome substitution of the mechanical for the natural order of the life of the people which has been the disease of European civilisation now culminating in the monstrous artificial organisation of the bureaucratic and industrial State. The advantages of the idealising intellect were absent, but so also were the disadvantages of the mechanising rational intelligence.

The Indian mind has always been profoundly intuitive in habit even when it was the most occupied with the development of the reasoning intelligence, and its political and social thought has therefore been always an attempt to combine the intuitions of life and the intuitions of the spirit with the light of the reason acting as an intermediary and an ordering and regulating factor. It has tried to base itself strongly on the established and persistent actualities of life and to depend for its idealism not on the intellect but on the illuminations, inspirations, higher experiences of the spirit, and it has used the reason as a critical power testing and assuring the steps and aiding but not replacing the life and the spirit — always the true and sound constructors. The spiritual mind of India regarded life as a manifestation of the self: the community was the body of the creator Brahma, the people was a life body of Brahman in the *samaṣṭi*, the collectivity, it was the collective Narayana, as the individual was Brahman in the *vyaṣṭi*, the separate Jiva, the individual Narayana; the king was the living representative of the Divine and the other orders of the community the natural powers of the collective self, *prakṛtayaḥ*. The agreed conventions, institutes, customs, constitution of the body social and politic in all its parts had therefore not only a binding authority but a certain sacrosanct character.

The right order of human life as of the universe is preserved according to the ancient Indian idea by each individual being following faithfully his swadharma, the true law and norm of his nature and the nature of his kind and by the group being, the organic collective life, doing likewise. The family, clan, caste, class, social, religious, industrial or other community, nation, people are all organic group beings that evolve their own dharma and to follow it is the condition of their preservation, healthy continuity, sound action. There is also the dharma of the position, the function, the particular relation with others, as there is too the dharma imposed by the condition, environment, age, *yugadharma*, the universal religious or ethical dharma, and all these acting on the natural dharma, the action according to the Swabhava, create the body of the Law. The ancient theory supposed that in an entirely right and sound condition of man, individual and collective, — a condition typified by the legendary Golden Age, Satya Yuga, Age of Truth, — there is no need of any political government or State or artificial construction of society, because all then live freely according to the truth of their enlightened self and God-inhabited being and therefore spontaneously according to the inner divine Dharma. The self-determining individual and self-determining community living according to the right and free law of his and its being is therefore the ideal. But in the actual condition of humanity, its ignorant and devious nature subject to perversions and violations of the true individual and the true social dharma, there has to be superimposed on the natural life of society a State, a sovereign power, a king or governing body, whose business is not to interfere unduly with the life of the society, which must be allowed to function for the most part according to its natural law and custom and spontaneous development, but to superintend and assist its right process and see that the Dharma is observed and in vigour and, negatively, to punish and repress and, as far as may be, prevent offences against the Dharma. A more advanced stage of corruption of the Dharma is marked by the necessity of the appearance of the legislator and the formal government of the whole of life by external or written law and code and rule; but to determine it — apart from external administrative detail — was not the function of the political sovereign, who was only its administrator, but of the socio-religious creator, the Rishi, or the Brahminic recorder and interpreter. And the Law itself written or unwritten was always not a thing to be new created or fabricated by a political and legislative authority, but a thing already existent and only to be interpreted and stated as it was or as it grew naturally out of pre-existing law and principle in the communal life and consciousness. The last and worst state of the society growing out of this increasing artificiality and convention must be a period of anarchy and conflict and dissolution of the dharma, — Kali Yuga, — which must precede through a red-grey evening of cataclysm and struggle a recovery and a new self-expression of the spirit in the human being.

The main function of the political sovereign, the king and council and the other ruling members of the body politic, was therefore to serve and assist the maintenance of the sound law of life of the society: the sovereign was the guardian and administrator of the Dharma. The function of society itself included the right satisfaction of the vital, economic and other needs of the human being and of his hedonistic claim to pleasure and enjoyment, but according to their right law and measure of satisfaction and subject and subordinated to the ethical and social and religious dharma. All the members and groups of the socio-political body had their Dharma determined for them by their nature, their position, their relation to the whole body and must be assured and maintained in the free and right exercise of it, must be left to their own natural and self-determined functioning within their own bounds, but at the same time restrained from any transgression, encroachment or deviation from their right working and true limits. That was the office of the supreme political authority, the sovereign in his Council aided by the public assemblies. It was not the business of the state authority to interfere with or encroach upon the free functioning of the caste, religious community, guild, village, township or the organic custom of the region or province or to abrogate their rights, for these were inherent because necessary to the sound exercise of the social Dharma. All that it was called upon to do was to coordinate, to exercise a general and supreme control, to defend the life of the community against external attack or internal disruption, to repress crime and disorder, to assist, promote and regulate in its larger lines the economic and industrial welfare, to see to the provision of facilities, and to use for these purposes the powers that passed beyond the scope of the others.

Thus in effect the Indian polity was the system of a very complex communal freedom and self-determination, each group unit of the community having its own natural existence and administering its own proper life and business, set off from the rest by a natural demarcation of its field and limits, but connected with the whole by well-understood relations, each a copartner with the others in the powers and duties of the communal existence, executing its own laws and rules, administering within its own proper limits, joining with the others in the discussion and the regulation of matters of a mutual or common interest and represented in some way and to the degree of its importance in the general assemblies of the kingdom or empire. The State, sovereign or supreme political authority was an instrument of coordination and of a general control and efficiency and exercised a supreme but not an absolute authority; for in all its rights and powers it was limited by the Law and by the will of the people and in all its internal functions only a copartner with the other members of the socio-political body.

This was the theory and principle and the actual constitution of the Indian polity, a complex of communal freedom and self-determination with a supreme coordinating authority, a sovereign person and body, armed with efficient powers, position and prestige, but limited to its proper rights and functions, at once controlling and controlled by the rest, admitting them as its active copartners in all branches, sharing the regulation and administration of the communal existence, and all alike, the sovereign, the people and all its constituent communities, bound to the maintenance and restrained by the yoke of the Dharma. Moreover the economic and political aspects of the communal life were only a part of the Dharma and a part not at all separate but inextricably united with all the rest, the religious, the ethical, the higher cultural aim of the social existence. The ethical law coloured the political and economic and was imposed on every action of the king and his ministers, the council and assemblies, the individual, the constituent groups of the society; ethical and cultural considerations counted in the use of the vote and the qualifications for minister, official and councillor; a high character and training was expected from all who held authority in the affairs of the Aryan people. The religious spirit and the reminders of religion were the head and the background of the whole life of king and people. The life of the society was regarded not so much as an aim in itself in spite of the necessary specialisation of parts of its system, but in all its parts and the whole as a great framework and training ground for the education of the human mind and soul and its development through the natural to the spiritual existence.

XXIII

Indian Polity – 3

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL evolution of Indian civilisation, as far as one can judge from the available records, passed through four historical stages, first the simple Aryan community, then a long period of transition in which the national life was proceeding through a considerable variety of experimental formations in political structure and synthesis, thirdly, the definite formation of the monarchical state coordinating all the complex elements of the communal life of the people into regional and imperial unities, and last the era of decline in which there was an internal arrest and stagnation and an imposition of new cultures and systems from western Asia and Europe. The distinguishing character of the first three periods is a remarkable solidity and stability in all the formations and a sound and vital and powerful evolution of the life of the people rendered slow and leisurely by this fundamental conservative stability of the system but all the more sure in its building and living and complete in its structure. And even in the decline this solidity opposes a strong resistance to the process of demolition. The structure breaks up at the top under foreign pressure, but preserves for a long time its basis, keeps, wherever it can maintain itself against invasion, much of its characteristic system and is even towards the end capable of attempts at revival of its form and its spirit. And now too though the whole political system has disappeared and its last surviving elements have been ground out of existence, the peculiar social mind and temperament which created it remains even in the present social stagnation, weakness, perversion and disintegration and may yet in spite of immediate tendencies and appearances, once it is free to work again at its own will and after its own manner, proceed not along the Western line of evolution, but to a new creation out of its own spirit which may perhaps lead at the call of the demand now vaguely beginning to appear in the advanced thought of the race towards the inception of the third stage of communal living and a spiritual basis of human society. In any case the long stability of its constructions and the greatness of the life they sheltered is certainly no sign of incapacity, but rather of a remarkable political instinct and capacity in the cultural mind of India.

The one principle permanent at the base of construction throughout all the building and extension and rebuilding of the Indian polity was the principle of an organically self-determining communal life, — self-determining not only in the mass and by means of the machinery of the vote and a representative body erected on the surface, representative only of the political mind of a part of the nation, which is all that the modern system has been able to manage, but in every pulse of its life and in each separate member of its existence. A free synthetic communal order was its character, and the condition of liberty it aimed at was not so much an individual as a communal freedom. In the beginning the problem was simple enough as only two kinds of communal unit had to be considered, the village and the clan, tribe or small regional people. The free organic life of the first was founded on the system of the self-governing village community and it was done with such sufficiency and solidity that it lasted down almost to our own days resisting all the wear and tear of time and the inroad of other systems and was only recently steam-rollered out of existence by the ruthless and lifeless machinery of the British bureaucratic system. The whole people living in its villages mostly on agriculture formed in the total a single religious, social, military and political body governing itself in its assembly, *samiti*, under the leadership of the king, as yet without any clear separation of functions or class division of labour.

It was the inadequacy of this system for all but the simplest form of agricultural and pastoral life and all but the small people living within a very limited area that compelled the problem of the evolution of a more complex communal system and a modified and more intricate application of the fundamental Indian principle. The agricultural and pastoral life common at first to all the members of the Aryan community, *kṛṣṭayaḥ*, remained always the large basis, but it developed an increasingly rich superstructure of commerce and industry and numerous arts and crafts and a smaller superstructure of specialised military and political and religious and learned occupations and functions. The village community remained throughout the stable unit, the firm grain or indestructible atom of the social body, but there grew up a group life of tens and hundreds of villages, each under its head and needing its administrative organisation, and these, as the clan grew into a large people by conquest or coalition with others, became constituents of a kingdom or a confederated republican nation, and these again the circles, *maṇḍala*, of larger kingdoms and finally of one or more great empires. The test of the Indian genius for socio-political construction lay in the successful application of its principle of a communal self-determined freedom and order to suit this growing development and new order of circumstances.

The Indian mind evolved, to meet this necessity, the stable socio-religious system of the four orders. Outwardly this might seem to be only a more rigid form of the familiar social system developed naturally in most human peoples at one time or another, a priesthood, a military and political aristocracy, a class of artisans and free agriculturalists and traders and a proletariate of serfs or labourers. The resemblance however is only in the externals and the spirit of the system of Chaturvarna was different in India. In the later Vedic and the epic times the fourfold order was at once and inextricably the religious, social, political and economic framework of the society and within that framework each order had its natural portion and in none of the fundamental activities was the share or position of any of them exclusive. This characteristic is vital to an understanding of the ancient system, but has been obscured by false notions formed from a misunderstanding or an exaggeration of later phenomena and of conditions mostly belonging to the decline. The Brahmins, for example, had not a monopoly either of sacred learning or of the highest spiritual knowledge and opportunities. At first we see a kind of competition between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas for the spiritual lead and the latter for a long time held their own against the pretensions of the learned and sacerdotal order. The Brahmins, however, as legists, teachers, priests, men who could give their whole time and energy to philosophy, scholarship, the study of the sacred writings, prevailed in the end and secured a settled and imposing predominance. The priestly and learned class became the religious authorities, the custodians of the sacred books and the tradition, the interpreters of the law and Shastra, the recognised teachers in all the departments of knowledge, the ordinary religious preceptors or gurus of the other classes and supplied the bulk, though never the totality of the philosophers, thinkers, literary men, scholars. The study of the Vedas and Upanishads passed mainly into their hands, although always open to the three higher orders; it was denied in theory to the Shudras. As a matter of fact, however, a series of religious movements kept up even in the later days the essential element of the old freedom, brought the highest spiritual knowledge and opportunity to all doors and, as in the beginning we find the Vedic and Vedantic Rishis born from all classes, we find too up to the end the yogins, saints, spiritual thinkers, innovators and restorers, religious poets and singers, the fountain-heads of a living spirituality and knowledge as distinguished from traditional authority and lore, derived from all the strata of the community down to the lowest Shudras and even the despised and oppressed outcastes.

The four orders grew into a fixed social hierarchy, but, leaving aside the status of the outcastes, each had attached to it a spiritual life and utility, a certain social dignity, an education, a principle of social and ethical honour and a place and duty and right in the communal body. The system served again as an automatic means of securing a fixed division of labour and a settled economic status, the hereditary principle at first prevailing, although here even the theory was more rigid than the practice, but none was denied the right or opportunity of amassing wealth and making some figure in society, administration and politics by means of influence or status in his own order. For, finally, the social hierarchy was not at the same time a political hierarchy:

all the four orders had their part in the common political rights of the citizen and in the assemblies and administrative bodies their place and their share of influence. It may be noted too that in law and theory at least women in ancient India, contrary to the sentiment of other ancient peoples, were not denied civic rights, although in practice this equality was rendered nugatory for all but a few by their social subordination to the male and their domestic preoccupation; instances have yet survived in the existing records of women figuring, not only as queens and administrators and even in the battlefield, a common enough incident in Indian history, but as elected representatives on civic bodies.

The whole Indian system was founded upon a close participation of all the orders in the common life, each predominating in its own field, the Brahmin in religion, learning and letters, the Kshatriya in war, king-craft and interstate political action, the Vaishya in wealth-getting and productive economical function, but none, not even the Shudra, excluded from his share in the civic life and an effective place and voice in politics, administration, justice. As a consequence the old Indian polity at no time developed, or at least it did not maintain for long, those exclusive forms of class rule that have so long and powerfully marked the political history of other countries. A priestly theocracy, like that of Tibet, or the rule of a landed and military aristocracy that prevailed for centuries in France and England and other European countries or a mercantile oligarchy, as in Carthage and Venice, were forms of government foreign to the Indian spirit. A certain political predominance of the great Kshatriya families at a time of general war and strife and mobile expansion, when the clans and tribes were developing into nations and kingdoms and were still striving with each other for hegemony and overlordship, seems to be indicated in the traditions preserved in the Mahabharata and recurred in a cruder form in the return to the clan nation in mediaeval Rajputana: but in ancient India this was a passing phase and the predominance did not exclude the political and civic influence of men of the other orders or interfere with or exercise any oppressive control over the free life of the various communal units. The democratic republics of the intermediate times were in all probability polities which endeavoured to preserve in its fullness the old principle of the active participation of the whole body of the people in the assemblies and not democracies of the Greek type; the oligarchical republics were clan governments or were ruled by more limited senates drawn from the dignified elements of the society and this afterwards developed into councils or assemblies representing all the four orders as in the later royal councils and urban bodies. In any case the system finally evolved was a mixed polity in which none of the orders had an undue predominance. Accordingly we do not find in India either that struggle between the patrician and plebeian elements of the community, the oligarchic and the democratic idea, ending in the establishment of an absolute monarchical rule, which characterises the troubled history of Greece and Rome or that cycle of successive forms evolving by a strife of classes, — first a ruling aristocracy, then replacing it by encroachment or revolution the dominance of the moneyed and professional classes, the regime of the bourgeois industrialising the society and governing and exploiting it in the name of the commons or masses and, finally, the present turn towards a rule of the proletariate of Labour, — which we see in later Europe. The Indian mind and temperament less exclusively intellectual and vital, more intuitively synthetic and flexible than that of the occidental peoples arrived, not certainly at any ideal system of society and politics, but at least at a wise and stable synthesis — not a dangerously unstable equilibrium, not a compromise or balance — of all the natural powers and orders, an organic and vital coordination respectful of the free functioning of all the organs of the communal body and therefore ensured, although not against the decadence that overtakes all human systems, at any rate against any organic disturbance or disorder.

The summit of the political structure was occupied by three governing bodies, the King in his ministerial council, the metropolitan assembly and the general assembly of the kingdom. The members of the Council and the ministers were drawn from all orders. The Council included a fixed number of Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra representatives. The Vaishyas had indeed numerically a great preponderance, but this was a just proportion as it corresponded to their numerical preponderance in the body of the people: for in the early Aryan society the Vaishya order comprised not only the merchants and small traders but the craftsmen and artisans and the agriculturists and formed therefore the bulk of the commons, *viśaḥ*, and the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Shudras, however considerable the position and influence of the two higher orders, were later social growths and were comparatively very inferior in number. It was only after the confusion created by the Buddhist upheaval and the Brahminic reconstitution of the society in the age of cultural decadence that the mass of the cultivators and artisans and small traders sank in the greater part of India to the condition of Shudras with a small Brahmin mass at the top and in between a slight sprinkling of Kshatriyas and of Vaishyas. The Council, representing thus the whole community, was the supreme executive and administrative body and its assent and participation necessary to all the action and decrees of the sovereign in all more important matters of government, finance, policy, throughout the whole range of the communal interests. It was the King, the ministers and the council who aided by a system of boards of administration superintended and controlled all the various departments of the State action. The power of the king undoubtedly tended to grow with time and he was often tempted to act according to his own independent will and initiative; but still, as long as the system was in its vigour, he could not with impunity defy or ignore the opinion and will of the ministers and council. Even, it seems, so powerful and strong-willed a sovereign as the great emperor Asoka was eventually defeated in his conflict with his council and was forced practically to abdicate his power. The ministers in council could and did often proceed to the deposition of a recalcitrant or an incompetent monarch and replace him by another of his family or by a new dynasty and it was in this way that there came about several of the historic changes, as for example the dynastic revolution from the Mauryas to the

Sungas and again the initiation of the Kanwa line of emperors. As a matter of constitutional theory and ordinary practice all the action of the king was in reality that of the king in his council with the aid of his ministers and all his personal action was only valid as depending on their assent and in so far as it was a just and faithful discharge of the functions assigned to him by the Dharma. And as the Council was, as it were, a quintessential power body or action centre taking up into itself in a manageable compass, concentrating and representing in its constitution the four orders, the main elements of the social organism, the king too could only be the active head of this power and not, as in an autocratic regime, himself the State or the owner of the country and the irresponsible personal ruler of a nation of obedient subjects. The obedience owed by the people was due to the Law, the Dharma, and to the edicts of the King in council only as an administrative means for the service and maintenance of the Dharma.

At the same time a small body like the Council subject to the immediate and constant influence of the sovereign and his ministers might, if it had been the sole governing body, have degenerated into an instrument of autocratic rule. But there were two other powerful bodies in the State which represented on a larger scale the social organism, were a nearer and closer expression of its mind, life and will independent of the immediate regal influence and exercising large and constant powers of administration and administrative legislation and capable at all times of acting as a check on the royal power, since in case of their displeasure they could either get rid of an unpopular or oppressive king or render his administration impossible until he made submission to the will of the people. These were the great metropolitan and general assemblies sitting separately for the exercise each of its separate powers and together for matters concerning the whole people.[1] The Paura or metropolitan civic assembly sat constantly in the capital town of the kingdom or empire — and under the imperial system there seem also to have been similar lesser bodies in the chief towns of the provinces, survivals of the assemblies that governed them when they were themselves capitals of independent kingdoms — and was constituted of representatives of the city guilds and the various caste bodies belonging to all the orders of the society or at least to the three lower orders. The guilds and caste bodies were themselves organic self-governing constituents of the community both in the country and the city and the supreme assembly of the citizens was not an artificial but an organic representation of the collective totality of the whole organism as it existed within the limits of the metropolis. It governed all the life of the city, acting directly or through subordinate lesser assemblies and administrative boards or committees of five, ten or more members, and, both by regulations and decrees which the guilds were bound to obey and by direct administration, controlled and supervised the commercial, industrial, financial and municipal affairs of the civic community. But in addition it was a power that had to be consulted and could take action in the wider affairs of the kingdom, sometimes separately and sometimes in cooperation with the general assembly, and its constant presence and functioning at the capital made it a force that had always to be reckoned with by the king and his ministers and their council. In a case of conflict with the royal ministers or governors even the distant civic parliaments in the provinces could make their displeasure felt if offended in matters of their position or privileges or discontented with the king's administrators and could compel the withdrawal of the offending officer.

---

[1] The facts about these bodies — I have selected only those that are significant for my purpose — are taken from the luminous and scrupulously documented contribution of Mr. Jayaswal to the subject.

The general assembly was similarly an organic representation of the mind and will of the whole country outside the metropolis; for it was composed of the deputies, elective heads or chief men of the townships and villages. A certain plutocratic element seems to have entered into its composition, as it was principally recruited from the wealthier men of the represented communities, and it was therefore something of the nature of an assembly of the commons not of an entirely democratic type,

— although unlike all but the most recent modern parliaments it included Shudras as well as Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, — but still a sufficiently faithful expression of the life and mind of the people. It was not however a supreme parliament: for it had ordinarily no fundamental legislative powers, any more than had the king and council or the metropolitan assembly, but only of decree and regulation. Its business was to serve as a direct instrument of the will of the people in the coordination of the various activities of the life of the nation, to see to the right direction of these and to the securing of the general order and welfare of the commerce, industry, agriculture, social and political life of the nation, to pass decrees and regulations to that purpose and secure privileges and facilities from the king and his council, to give or withhold the assent of the people to the actions of the sovereign and, if need be, to oppose him actively and prevent misgovernment or end it by the means open to the people's representatives. The joint session of the metropolitan and general assemblies was consulted in matters of succession, could depose the sovereign, alter the succession at his death, transfer the throne outside the reigning family, act sometimes as a supreme court of law in cases having a political tincture, cases of treason or of miscarriage of justice. The royal resolutions on any matter of State policy were promulgated to these assemblies and their assent had to be taken in all matters involving special taxation, war, sacrifice, large schemes of irrigation etc., and all questions of vital interest to the country. The two bodies seem to have sat constantly, for matters came up daily from them to the sovereign: their acts were registered by the king and had automatically the effect of law. It is clear indeed from a total review of their rights and activities that they were partners in the sovereignty and its powers were inherent in them and even those could be exercised by them on extraordinary occasions which were not normally within their purview. It is significant that Asoka in his attempt to alter the Dharma of the community, proceeded not merely by his royal decree but by discussion with the Assembly. The ancient description seems therefore to have been thoroughly justified which characterised the two bodies as executors of the kingdom's activities and at need the instruments of opposition to the king's government.

It is not clear when these great institutions went out of existence, whether before the Mahomedan invasion or as a result of the foreign conquest. Any collapse of the system at the top leaving a gulf between the royal government, which would grow more autocratic by its isolation and in sole control of the larger national affairs, and the other constituents of the socio-political body each carrying on its own internal affairs, as was to the end the case with the village communities, but not in any living relation with the higher State matters, would obviously be, in an organisation of complex communal freedom where coordination of the life was imperatively needed, a great cause of weakness. In any case the invasion from Central Asia, bringing in a tradition of personal and autocratic rule unfamiliar with these restraints would immediately destroy such bodies, or their remnants or survivals wherever they still existed, and this happened throughout the whole of Northern India. The Indian political system was still maintained for many centuries in the south, but the public assemblies which went on existing there do not seem to have been of the same constitution as the ancient political bodies, but were rather some of the other communal organisations and assemblies of which these were a coordination and supreme instrument of control. These inferior assemblies included bodies originally of a political character, once the supreme governing institutions of the clan nation, *kula*, and the republic, *gaṇa*. Under the new dispensation they remained in existence, but lost their supreme powers and could only administer with a subordinate and restricted authority the affairs of their constituent communities. The *kula* or clan family persisted, even after it had lost its political character, as a socio-religious institution, especially among the Kshatriyas, and preserved the tradition of its social and religious law, *kula-dharma*, and in some cases its communal assembly, *kula-saṅgha*. The public assemblies that we find even in quite recent times filling the role of the old general assembly in Southern India, more than one coexisting and acting separately or in unison, appear to have been variations on this type of body. In Rajputana also the clan family, *kula*, recovered its political character and action, but in another form and without the ancient institutions and finer cultural temper, although they preserved in a high degree the Kshatriya dharma of courage, chivalry, magnanimity and honour.

A stronger permanent element in the Indian communal system, one that grew up in the frame of the four orders — in the end even replacing it — and acquired an extraordinary vitality, persistence and predominant importance was the historic and still tenacious though decadent institution of caste, *jāti*. Originally this rose from subdivisions of the four orders that grew up in each order under the stress of various forces. The subdivision of the Brahmin castes was mainly due to religious, socio-religious and ceremonial causes, but there were also regional and local divisions: the Kshatriyas remained for the most part one united order, though divided into *kulas*. On the other hand the Vaishya and Shudra orders split up into innumerable castes under the necessity of a subdivision of economic functions on the basis of the hereditary principle. Apart from the increasingly rigid application of the hereditary principle, this settled subdivision of function could well enough have been secured, as in other countries, by a guild system and in the towns we do find a vigorous and efficient guild system in existence. But the guild system afterwards fell into desuetude and the more general institution of caste became the one basis of economic function everywhere. The caste in town and village was a separate communal unit, at once religious, social and economic, and decided its religious, social and other questions, carried on its caste affairs and exercised jurisdiction over its members in a perfect freedom from all outside interference: only on fundamental questions of the Dharma the Brahmins were referred to for an authoritative interpretation or decision as custodians of the Shastra. As with the *kula*, each caste had its caste law and rule of living and conduct, *jāti-dharma*, and its caste communal assembly, *jāti-saṅgha*. As the Indian polity in all its institutions was founded on a communal and not on an individualistic basis, the caste also counted in the political and administrative functioning of the kingdom. The guilds equally were self-functioning mercantile and industrial communal units, assembled for the discussion and administration of their affairs and had besides their united assemblies which seem at one time to have been the governing urban bodies. These guild governments, if they may so be called, — for they were more than municipalities, — disappeared afterwards into the more general urban body which represented an organic unity of both the guilds and the caste assemblies of all the orders. The castes as such were not directly represented in the general assembly of the kingdom, but they had their place in the administration of local affairs.

The village community and the township were the most tangibly stable basis of the whole system; but these, it must be noted, were not solely territorial units or a convenient mechanism for electoral, administrative or other useful social and political purposes, but always true communal unities with an organic life of their own that functioned in its own power and not merely as a subordinate part of the machinery of the State. The village community has been described as a little village republic, and the description is hardly an exaggeration: for each village was within its own limits autonomous and self-sufficient, governed by its own elected Panchayats and elected or hereditary officers, satisfying its own needs, providing for its own education, police, tribunals, all its economic necessities and functions, managing itself its own life as an independent and self-governing unit. The villages carried on also their affairs with each other by combinations of various kinds and there were too groups of villages under elected or hereditary heads and forming therefore, though in a less closely organised fashion, a natural body. But the townships in India were also in a hardly less striking way autonomous and self-governing bodies, ruled by their own assembly and committees with an elective system and the use of the vote, managing their own affairs in their own right and sending like the villages their representative men to the general assembly of the kingdom. The administration of these urban governments included all works contributing to the material or other welfare of the citizens, police, judicial cases, public works and the charge of sacred and public places, registration, the collection of municipal taxes and all matters relating to trade, industry and commerce. If the village community can be described as a little village republic, the constitution of the township can equally be described as a larger urban republic. It is significant that the Naigama and Paura assemblies, — the guild governments and the metropolitan bodies, — had the privilege of striking coins of their own, a power otherwise exercised only by the monarchical heads of States and the republics.

Another kind of community must be noted, those which had no political existence, but were yet each in its own kind a self-governing body; for they illustrate the strong tendency of Indian life to throw itself in all its manifestations into a closely communal form of existence. One example is the joint family, prevalent everywhere in India and only now breaking down under the pressure of modern conditions, of which the two fundamental principles were first a communal holding of the property by the agnates and their families and, as far as possible, an undivided communal life under the management of the head of the family and, secondly, the claim of each male to an equal portion in the share of his father, a portion due to him in case of separation and division of the estate. This communal unity with the persistent separate right of the individual is an example of the synthetic turn of the Indian mind and life, its recognition of fundamental tendencies and its attempt to harmonise them even if they seemed in their norm of practice to be contradictory to each other. It is the same synthetic turn as that which in all parts of the Indian socio-political system tended to fuse together in different ways the theocratic, the monarchic and aristocratic, the plutocratic and the democratic tendencies in a whole which bore the characteristics of none of them nor was yet an accommodation of them or amalgamation whether by a system of checks and balances or by an intellectually constructed synthesis, but rather a natural outward form of the inborn tendencies and character of the complex social mind and temperament.

At the other end, forming the ascetic and purely spiritual extreme of the Indian life-mind, we find the religious community and, again, this too takes a communal shape. The original Vedic society had no place for any Church or religious community or ecclesiastical order, for in its system the body of the people formed a single socio-religious whole with no separation into religious and secular, layman and cleric, and in spite of later developments the Hindu religion has held, in the whole or at least as the basis, to this principle. On the other hand an increasing ascetic tendency that came in time to distinguish the religious from the mundane life and tended to create the separate religious community, was confirmed by the rise of the creeds and disciplines of the Buddhists and the Jains. The Buddhist monastic order was the first development of the complete figure of the organised religious community. Here we find that Buddha simply applied the known principles of the Indian society and polity to the ascetic life. The order he created was intended to be a *dharma-saṅgha*, and each monastery a religious commune living the life of a united communal body which existed as the expression and was based in all the rules, features, structure of its life on the maintenance of the Dharma as it was understood by the Buddhists. This was, as we can at once see, precisely the principle and theory of the whole Hindu society, but given here the higher intensity possible to the spiritual life and a purely religious body. It managed its affairs too like the Indian social and political communal unities. An assembly of the order discussed debatable questions of the Dharma and its application and proceeded by vote as in the meeting-halls of the republics, but it was subject still to a limiting control intended to avoid the possible evils of a too purely democratic method. The monastic system once thus firmly established was taken over from Buddhism by the orthodox religion, but without its elaborate organisation. These religious communities tended, wherever they could prevail against the older Brahminic system, as in the order created by Shankaracharya, to become a sort of ecclesiastical head to the lay body of the community, but they arrogated to themselves no political position and the struggle between Church and State is absent from the political history of India.

It is clear therefore that the whole life of ancient India retained even in the time of the great kingdoms and empires its first principle and essential working and its social polity remained fundamentally a complex system of self-determined and self-governing communal bodies. The evolution of an organised State authority supervening on this system was necessitated in India as elsewhere partly by the demand of the practical reason for a more stringent and scientifically efficient coordination than was possible except in small areas to the looser natural coordination of life, and more imperatively by the need of a systematised military aggression and defence and international action concentrated in the hands of a single central authority. An extension of the free republican State might have sufficed to meet the former demand, for it had the potentiality and the necessary institutions, but the method of the monarchical State with its more constricted and easily tangible centrality presented a more ready and manageable device and a more facile and apparently efficient machinery. And for the external task, involving almost from the commencement the supremely difficult age-long problem of the political unification of India, then a continent rather than a country, the republican system, more suited to strength in defence than for aggression, proved in spite of its efficient military organisation to be inadequate. It was, therefore, in India as elsewhere, the strong form of the monarchical State that prevailed finally and swallowed up the others. At the same time the fidelity of the Indian mind to its fundamental intuitions and ideals preserved the basis of communal self-government natural to the temperament of the people, prevented the monarchical State from developing into an autocracy or exceeding its proper functions and stood successfully in the way of its mechanising the life of the society. It is only in the long decline that we find the free institutions that stood between the royal government and the self-determining communal life of the people either tending to disappear or else to lose much of their ancient power and vigour and the evils of personal government, of a bureaucracy of scribes and officials and of a too preponderant centralised authority commencing to manifest in some sensible measure.

As long as the ancient traditions of the Indian polity remained and in proportion as they continued to be vital and effective, these evils remained either sporadic and occasional or could not assume any serious proportions. It was the combination of foreign invasion and conquest with the slow decline and final decadence of the ancient Indian culture that brought about the collapse of considerable parts of the old structure and the degradation and disintegration, with no sufficient means for revival or new creation, of the socio-political life of the people.

At the height of its evolution and in the great days of Indian civilisation we find an admirable political system efficient in the highest degree and very perfectly combining communal self-government with stability and order. The State carried on its work administrative, judicial, financial and protective without destroying or encroaching on the rights and free activities of the people and its constituent bodies in the same departments. The royal courts in capital and country were the supreme judicial authority coordinating the administration of justice throughout the kingdom, but they did not unduly interfere with the judicial powers entrusted to their own courts by the village and urban communes and, even, the regal system associated with itself the guild, caste and family courts, working as an ample means of arbitration and only insisted on its own exclusive control of the more serious criminal offences. A similar respect was shown to the administrative and financial powers of the village and urban communes. The king's governors and officials in town and country existed side by side with the civic governors and officials and the communal heads and officers appointed by the people and its assemblies. The State did not interfere with the religious liberty or the established economic and social life of the nation; it confined itself to the maintenance of social order and the provision of a needed supervision, support, coordination and facilities for the rich and powerful functioning of all the national activities. It understood too always and magnificently fulfilled its opportunities as a source of splendid and munificent stimulation to the architecture, art, culture, scholarship, literature already created by the communal mind of India. In the person of the monarch it was the dignified and powerful head and in the system of his administration the supreme instrument — neither an arbitrary autocracy or bureaucracy, nor a machine oppressing or replacing life — of a great and stable civilisation and a free and living people.

XXIV

Indian Polity – 4

A RIGHT knowledge of the facts and a right understanding of the character and principle of the Indian socio-political system disposes at once of the contention of occidental critics that the Indian mind, even if remarkable in metaphysics, religion, art and literature was inapt for the organisation of life, inferior in the works of the practical intelligence and, especially, that it was sterile in political experiment and its record empty of sound political construction, thinking and action. On the contrary, Indian civilisation evolved an admirable political system, built solidly and with an enduring soundness, combined with a remarkable skill the monarchical, democratic and other principles and tendencies to which the mind of man has leaned in its efforts of civic construction and escaped at the same time the excess of the mechanising turn which is the defect of the modern European State. I shall consider afterwards the objections that can be made to it from the evolutionary standpoint of the West and its idea of progress.

But there is another side of politics on which it may be said that the Indian political mind has registered nothing but failure. The organisation it developed may have been admirable for stability and effective administration and the securing of communal order and liberties and the well-being of the people under ancient conditions, but even if its many peoples were each of them separately self-governed, well governed and prosperous and the country at large assured in the steady functioning of a highly developed civilisation and culture, yet that organisation failed to serve for the national and political unification of India and failed in the end to secure it against foreign invasion, the disruption of its institutions and an agelong servitude. The political system of a society has to be judged, no doubt first and foremost by the stability, prosperity, internal freedom and order it ensures to the people, but also it must be judged by the security it erects against other States, its unity and power of defence and aggression against external rivals and enemies. It is not perhaps altogether to the credit of humanity that it should be so and a nation or people that is inferior in this kind of political strength, as were the ancient Greeks and mediaeval Italians, may be spiritually and culturally far superior to its conquerors and may well have contributed more to a true human progress than successful military States, aggressive communities, predatory empires. But the life of man is still predominatingly vital and moved therefore by the tendencies of expansion, possession, aggression, mutual struggle for absorption and dominant survival which are the first law of life, and a collective mind and consciousness that gives a constant proof of incapacity for aggression and defence and does not organise the centralised and efficient unity necessary to its own safety, is clearly one that in the political field falls far short of the first order. India has never been nationally and politically one. India was for close on a thousand years swept by barbaric invasions and for almost another thousand years in servitude to successive foreign masters. It is clear therefore that judgment of political incapacity must be passed against the Indian people.

Here again the first necessity is to get rid of exaggerations, to form a clear idea of the actual facts and their significance and understand the tendencies and principles involved in the problem that admittedly throughout the long history of India escaped a right solution. And first if the greatness of a people and a civilisation is to be reckoned by its military aggressiveness, its scale of foreign conquest, its success in warfare against other nations and the triumph of its organised acquisitive and predatory instincts, its irresistible push towards annexation and exploitation, it must be confessed that India ranks perhaps the lowest in the list of the world's great peoples. At no time does India seem to have been moved towards an aggressive military and political expansion beyond her own borders; no epic of world dominion, no great tale of far-borne invasion or expanding colonial empire has ever been written in the tale of Indian achievement. The sole great endeavour of expansion, of conquest, of invasion she attempted was the expansion of her culture, the invasion and conquest of the Eastern world by the Buddhistic idea and the penetration of her spirituality, art and thought-forces. And this was an invasion of peace and not of war, for to spread a spiritual civilisation by force and physical conquest, the vaunt or the excuse of modern imperialism, would have been uncongenial to the ancient cast of her mind and temperament and the idea underlying her Dharma. A series of colonising expeditions carried indeed Indian blood and Indian culture to the islands of the archipelago, but the ships that set out from both the eastern and western coast were not fleets of invaders missioned to annex those outlying countries to an Indian empire but of exiles or adventurers carrying with them to yet uncultured peoples Indian religion, architecture, art, poetry, thought, life, manners. The idea of empire and even of world-empire was not absent from the Indian mind, but its world was the Indian world and the object the founding of the imperial unity of its peoples.

This idea, the sense of this necessity, a constant urge towards its realisation is evident throughout the whole course of Indian history from earlier Vedic times through the heroic period represented by the traditions of the Ramayana and Mahabharata and the effort of the imperial Mauryas and Guptas up to the Mogul unification and the last ambition of the Peshwas, until there came the final failure and the levelling of all the conflicting forces under a foreign yoke, a uniform subjection in place of the free unity of a free people. The question then is whether the tardiness, the difficulty, the fluctuating movements of the process and the collapse of the long effort were due to a fundamental incapacity in the civilisation or in the political consciousness and ability of the people or to other forces. A great deal has been said and written about the inability of Indians to unite, the want of a common patriotism — now only being created, it is said, by the influence of Western culture — and the divisions imposed by religion and caste. Admitting even in their full degree the force of these strictures, — all of them are not altogether true or rightly stated or vitally applicable to the matter, — they are only symptoms and we have still to seek for the deeper causes.

The reply made for the defence is usually that India is practically a continent almost as large as Europe containing a great number of peoples and the difficulties of the problem have been as great or at least almost as considerable. And if then it is no proof of the insufficiency of Western civilisation or of the political incapacity of the European peoples that the idea of European unity should still remain an ineffective phantasm on the ideal plane and to this day impossible to realise in practice, it is not just to apply a different system of values to the much more clear ideal of unity or at least of unification, the persistent attempt at its realisation and the frequent near approach to success that marked the history of the Indian peoples. There is some force in the contention, but it is not in the form entirely apposite, for the analogy is far from perfect and the conditions were not quite of the same order. The peoples of Europe are nations very sharply divided from each other in their collective personality, and their spiritual unity in the Christian religion or even their cultural unity in a common European civilisation, never so real and complete as the ancient spiritual and cultural unity of India, was also not the very centre of their life, not its basis or firm ground of existence, not its supporting earth but only its general air or circumambient atmosphere. Their base of existence lay in the political and economic life which was strongly separate in each country, and it was the very strength of the political consciousness in the Western mind that kept Europe a mass of divided and constantly warring nations. It is only the increasing community of political movements and the now total economic interdependence of the whole of Europe that has at last created not any unity, but a nascent and still ineffective League of Nations struggling vainly to apply the mentality born of an agelong separatism to the common interests of the European peoples. But in India at a very early time the spiritual and cultural unity was made complete and became the very stuff of the life of all this great surge of humanity between the Himalayas and the two seas. The peoples of ancient India were never so much distinct nations sharply divided from each other by a separate political and economic life as sub-peoples of a great spiritual and cultural nation itself firmly separated, physically, from other countries by the seas and the mountains and from other nations by its strong sense of difference, its peculiar common religion and culture. The creation of a political unity, however vast the area and however many the practical difficulties, ought therefore to have been effected more easily than could possibly be the unity of Europe. The cause of the failure must be sought deeper down and we shall find that it lay in a dissidence between the manner in which the problem was or ought to have been envisaged and the actual turn given to the endeavour and in the latter a contradiction of the peculiar mentality of the people.

The whole basis of the Indian mind is its spiritual and inward turn, its propensity to seek the things of the spirit and the inner being first and foremost and to look at all else as secondary, dependent, to be handled and determined in the light of the higher knowledge and as an expression, a preliminary, field or aid or at least a pendent to the deeper spiritual aim, — a tendency therefore to create whatever it had to create first on the inner plane and afterwards in its other aspects. This mentality and this consequent tendency to create from within outwards being given, it was inevitable that the unity India first created for herself should be the spiritual and cultural oneness. It could not be, to begin with, a political unification effected by an external rule centralised, imposed or constructed, as was done in Rome or ancient Persia, by a conquering kingdom or the genius of a military and organising people. It cannot, I think, justly be said that this was a mistake or a proof of the unpractical turn of the Indian mind and that the single political body should have been created first and afterwards the spiritual unity could have securely grown up in the vast body of an Indian national empire. The problem that presented itself at the beginning was that of a huge area containing more than a hundred kingdoms, clans, peoples, tribes, races, in this respect another Greece, but a Greece on an enormous scale, almost as large as modern Europe. As in Greece a cultural Hellenic unity was necessary to create a fundamental feeling of oneness, here too and much more imperatively a conscious spiritual and cultural unity of all these peoples was the first, the indispensable condition without which no enduring unity could be possible. The instinct of the Indian mind and of its great Rishis and founders of its culture was sound in this matter. And even if we suppose that an outward imperial unity like that of the Roman world could have been founded among the peoples of early India by military and political means, we must not forget that the Roman unity did not endure, that even the unity of ancient Italy founded by the Roman conquest and organisation did not endure, and it is not likely that a similar attempt in the vast reaches of India without the previous spiritual and cultural basis would have been of an enduring character. It cannot be said either, even if the emphasis on spiritual and cultural unity be pronounced to have been too engrossing or excessive and the insistence on political and external unity too feeble, that the effect of this precedence has been merely disastrous and without any advantage. It is due to this original peculiarity, to this indelible spiritual stamp, to this underlying oneness amidst all diversities that if India is not yet a single organised political nation, she still survives and is still India.

After all the spiritual and cultural is the only enduring unity and it is by a persistent mind and spirit much more than by an enduring physical body and outward organisation that the soul of a people survives. This is a truth the positive Western mind may be unwilling to understand or concede, and yet its proofs are written across the whole story of the ages. The ancient nations, contemporaries of India, and many younger born than she are dead and only their monuments left behind them. Greece and Egypt exist only on the map and in name, for it is not the soul of Hellas or the deeper nation-soul that built Memphis which we now find at Athens or at Cairo. Rome imposed a political and a purely outward cultural unity on the Mediterranean peoples, but their living spiritual and cultural oneness she could not create, and therefore the east broke away from the west, Africa kept no impress of the Roman interlude, and even the western nations still called Latin could offer no living resistance to barbarian invaders and had to be reborn by the infusion of a foreign vitality to become modern Italy, Spain and France. But India still lives and keeps the continuity of her inner mind and soul and spirit with the India of the ages. Invasion and foreign rule, the Greek, the Parthian and the Hun, the robust vigour of Islam, the levelling steam-roller heaviness of the British occupation and the British system, the enormous pressure of the Occident have not been able to drive or crush the ancient soul out of the body her Vedic Rishis made for her. At every step, under every calamity and attack and domination, she has been able to resist and survive either with an active or a passive resistance. And this she was able to do in her great days by her spiritual solidarity and power of assimilation and reaction, expelling all that would not be absorbed, absorbing all that could not be expelled, and even after the beginning of the decline she was still able to survive by the same force, abated but not slayable, retreating and maintaining for a time her ancient political system in the south, throwing up under the pressure of Islam Rajput and Sikh and Mahratta to defend her ancient self and its idea, persisting passively where she could not resist actively, condemning to decay each empire that could not answer her riddle or make terms with her, awaiting always the day of her revival. And even now it is a similar phenomenon that we see in process before our eyes. And what shall we say then of the surpassing vitality of the civilisation that could accomplish this miracle and of the wisdom of those who built its foundation not on things external but on the spirit and the inner mind and made a spiritual and cultural oneness the root and stock of her existence and not solely its fragile flower, the eternal basis and not the perishable superstructure?

But spiritual unity is a large and flexible thing and does not insist like the political and external on centralisation and uniformity; rather it lives diffused in the system and permits readily a great diversity and freedom of life. Here we touch on the secret of the difficulty in the problem of unifying ancient India. It could not be done by the ordinary means of a centralised uniform imperial State crushing out all that made for free divergence, local autonomies, established communal liberties, and each time that an attempt was made in this direction, it has failed after however long a term of apparent success, and we might even say that the guardians of India's destiny wisely compelled it to fail that her inner spirit might not perish and her soul barter for an engine of temporary security the deep sources of its life. The ancient mind of India had the intuition of its need; its idea of empire was a uniting rule that respected every existing regional and communal liberty, that unnecessarily crushed out no living autonomy, that effected a synthesis of her life and not a mechanical oneness. Afterwards the conditions under which such a solution might securely have evolved and found its true means and form and basis, disappeared and there was instead an attempt to establish a single administrative empire. That endeavour, dictated by the pressure of an immediate and external necessity, failed to achieve a complete success in spite of its greatness and splendour. It could not do so because it followed a trend that was not eventually compatible with the true turn of the Indian spirit. It has been seen that the underlying principle of the Indian politico-social system was a synthesis of communal autonomies, the autonomy of the village, of the town and capital city, of the caste, guild, family, *kula*, religious community, regional unit. The state or kingdom or confederated republic was a means of holding together and synthetising in a free and living organic system these autonomies. The imperial problem was to synthetise again these states, peoples, nations, effecting their unity but respecting their autonomy, into a larger free and living organism. A system had to be found that would maintain peace and oneness among its members, secure safety against external attack and totalise the free play and evolution, in its unity and diversity, in the uncoerced and active life of all its constituent communal and regional units, of the soul and body of Indian civilisation and culture, the functioning on a grand and total scale of the Dharma.

This was the sense in which the earlier mind of India understood the problem. The administrative empire of later times accepted it only partially, but its trend was, very slowly and almost subconsciously, what the centralising tendency must always be, if not actively to destroy, still to wear down and weaken the vigour of the subordinated autonomies. The consequence was that whenever the central authority was weak, the persistent principle of regional autonomy essential to the life of India reasserted itself to the detriment of the artificial unity established and not, as it should have done, for the harmonious intensification and freer but still united functioning of the total life. The imperial monarchy tended also to wear down the vigour of the free assemblies, and the result was that the communal units instead of being elements of a united strength became isolated and dividing factors. The village community preserved something of its vigour, but had no living connection with the supreme authority and, losing the larger national sense, was willing to accept any indigenous or foreign rule that respected its own self-sufficient narrow life. The religious communities came to be imbued with the same spirit. The castes, multiplying themselves without any true necessity or true relation to the spiritual or the economic need of the country, became mere sacrosanct conventional divisions, a power for isolation and not, as they originally were, factors of a harmonious functioning of the total life-synthesis. It is not true that the caste divisions were in ancient India an obstacle to the united life of the people or that they were even in later times an active power for political strife and disunion, — except indeed at the end, in the final decline, and especially during the later history of the Mahratta confederation; but they did become a passive force of social division and of a stagnant compartmentalism obstructive to the reconstitution of a free and actively united life.

The evils that attended the system did not all manifest themselves with any power before the Mahomedan invasions, but they must have been already there in their beginning and they increased rapidly under the conditions created by the Pathan and the Mogul empires. These later imperial systems however brilliant and powerful, suffered still more than their predecessors from the evils of centralisation owing to their autocratic character and were constantly breaking down from the same tendency of the regional life of India to assert itself against an artificial unitarian regime, while, because they had no true, living and free relation with the life of the people, they proved unable to create the common patriotism which would have effectively secured them against the foreign invader. And in the end there has come a mechanical Western rule that has crushed out all the still existing communal or regional autonomies and substituted the dead unity of a machine. But again in the reaction against it we see the same ancient tendencies reviving, the tendency towards a reconstitution of the regional life of the Indian peoples, the demand for a provincial autonomy founded on true subdivisions of race and language, a harking back of the Indian mind to the ideal of the lost village community as a living unit necessary to the natural life of the national body and, not yet reborn but dimly beginning to dawn on the more advanced minds, a truer idea of the communal basis proper to Indian life and the renovation and reconstruction of Indian society and politics on a spiritual foundation.

The failure to achieve Indian unity of which the invasions and the final subjection to the foreigner were the consequence, arose therefore at once from the magnitude and from the peculiarity of the task, because the easy method of a centralised empire could not truly succeed in India, while yet it seemed the only device possible and was attempted again and again with a partial success that seemed for the time and a long time to justify it, but always with an eventual failure. I have suggested that the early mind of India better understood the essential character of the problem. The Vedic Rishis and their successors made it their chief work to found a spiritual basis of Indian life and to effect the spiritual and cultural unity of the many races and peoples of the peninsula. But they were not blind to the necessity of a political unification. Observing the constant tendency of the clan life of the Aryan peoples to consolidate under confederacies and hegemonies of varying proportions, *vairājya*, *sāmrājya*, they saw that to follow this line to its full conclusion was the right way and evolved therefore the ideal of the Chakravarti, a uniting imperial rule, uniting without destroying the autonomy of India's many kingdoms and peoples, from sea to sea. This ideal they supported, like everything else in Indian life, with a spiritual and religious sanction, set up as its outward symbol the Aswamedha and Rajasuya sacrifices, and made it the dharma of a powerful King, his royal and religious duty, to attempt the fulfilment of the ideal. He was not allowed by the Dharma to destroy the liberties of the peoples who came under his sway nor to dethrone or annihilate their royal houses or replace their archons by his officials and governors. His function was to establish a suzerain power possessed of sufficient military strength to preserve internal peace and to combine at need the full forces of the country. And to this elementary function came to be added the ideal of the fulfilment and maintenance under a strong uniting hand of the Indian dharma, the right functioning of the spiritual, religious, ethical and social culture of India.

The full flowering of the ideal is seen in the great epics. The Mahabharata is the record of a legendary or, it may be, a historic attempt to establish such an empire, a *dharmarājya* or kingdom of the Dharma. There the ideal is pictured as so imperative and widely acknowledged that even the turbulent Shishupala is represented as motiving his submission and attendance at the Rajasuya sacrifice on the ground that Yudhisthira was carrying out an action demanded by the Dharma. And in the Ramayana we have an idealised picture of such a Dharmarajya, a settled universal empire. Here too it is not an autocratic despotism but a universal monarchy supported by a free assembly of the city and provinces and of all the classes that is held up as the ideal, an enlargement of the monarchical state synthetising the communal autonomies of the Indian system and maintaining the law and constitution of the Dharma. The ideal of conquest held up is not a destructive and predatory invasion annihilating the organic freedom and the political and social institutions and exploiting the economic resources of the conquered peoples, but a sacrificial progression bringing with it a trial of military strength of which the result was easily accepted because defeat entailed neither humiliation nor servitude and suffering but merely a strengthening adhesion to a suzerain power concerned only with establishing the visible unity of the nation and the Dharma. The ideal of the ancient Rishis is clear and their purpose: it is evident that they saw the military and political utility and necessity of a unification of the divided and warring peoples of the land, but they saw also that it ought not to be secured at the expense of the free life of the regional peoples or of the communal liberties and not therefore by a centralised monarchy or a rigidly unitarian imperial State. A hegemony or confederacy under an imperial head would be the nearest Western analogy to the conception they sought to impose on the minds of the people.

There is no historical evidence that this ideal was ever successfully carried into execution, although the epic tradition speaks of several such empires preceding the Dharmarajya of Yudhisthira. At the time of Buddha and later when Chandragupta and Chanakya were building the first historic Indian empire, the country was still covered with free kingdoms and republics and there was no united empire to meet the great raid of Alexander. It is evident that if any hegemony had previously existed, it had failed to discover a means or system of enduring permanence. This might however have evolved if time had been given, but a serious change had meanwhile taken place which made it urgently necessary to find an immediate solution. The historic weakness of the Indian peninsula has always been until modern times its vulnerability through the north-western passes. This weakness did not exist so long as ancient India extended northward far beyond the Indus and the powerful kingdoms of Gandhara and Vahlika presented a firm bulwark against foreign invasion. But they had now gone down before the organised Persian empire and from this time forward the trans-Indus countries, ceasing to be part of India, ceased also to be its protection and became instead the secure base for every successive invader. The inroad of Alexander brought home the magnitude of the danger to the political mind of India and from this time we see poets, writers, political thinkers constantly upholding the imperial ideal or thinking out the means of its realisation. The immediate practical result was the rise of the empire founded with remarkable swiftness by the statesmanship of Chanakya and constantly maintained or restored through eight or nine centuries, in spite of periods of weakness and incipient disintegration, successively by the Maurya, Sunga, Kanwa, Andhra and Gupta dynasties. The history of this empire, its remarkable organisation, administration, public works, opulence, magnificent culture and the vigour, the brilliance, the splendid fruitfulness of the life of the peninsula under its shelter emerges only from scattered insufficient records, but even so it ranks among the greatest constructed and maintained by the genius of the earth's great peoples. India has no reason, from this point of view, to be anything but proud of her ancient achievement in empire-building or to submit to the hasty verdict that denies to her antique civilisation a strong practical genius or high political virtue.

At the same time this empire suffered by the inevitable haste, violence and artificiality of its first construction to meet a pressing need, because that prevented it from being the deliberate, natural and steady evolution in the old solid Indian manner of the truth of her deepest ideal. The attempt to establish a centralised imperial monarchy brought with it not a free synthesis but a breaking down of regional autonomies. Although according to the Indian principle their institutes and customs were respected and at first even their political institutions not wholly annulled, at any rate in many cases, but brought within the imperial system, these could not really flourish under the shadow of the imperial centralisation. The free peoples of the ancient Indian world began to disappear, their broken materials serving afterwards to create the now existing Indian races. And I think it can be concluded on the whole that although for a long time the great popular assemblies continued to remain in vigour, their function in the end tended to become more mechanical and their vitality to decline and suffer. The urban republics too tended to become more and more mere municipalities of the organised kingdom or empire. The habits of mind created by the imperial centralisation and the weakening or disappearance of the more dignified free popular institutions of the past created a sort of spiritual gap, on one side of which were the administered content with any government that gave them security and did not interfere too much with their religion, life and customs and on the other the imperial administration beneficent and splendid, no doubt, but no longer that living head of a free and living people contemplated by the earlier and the true political mind of India. These results became prominent and were final only with the decline, but they were there in seed and rendered almost inevitable by the adoption of a mechanical method of unification. The advantages gained were those of a stronger and more coherent military action and a more regularised and uniform administration, but these could not compensate in the end for the impairment of the free organic diversified life which was the true expression of the mind and temperament of the people.

A worse result was a certain fall from the high ideal of the Dharma. In the struggle of kingdom with kingdom for supremacy a habit of Machiavellian statecraft replaced the nobler ethical ideals of the past, aggressive ambition was left without any sufficient spiritual or moral check and there was a coarsening of the national mind in the ethics of politics and government already evidenced in the draconic penal legislation of the Maurya times and in Asoka's sanguinary conquest of Orissa. The deterioration, held in abeyance by a religious spirit and high intelligence, did not come to a head till more than a thousand years afterwards and we only see it in its full force in the worst period of the decline when unrestrained mutual aggression, the unbridled egoism of princes and leaders, a total lack of political principle and capacity for effective union, the want of a common patriotism and the traditional indifference of the common people to a change of rulers gave the whole of the vast peninsula into the grasp of a handful of merchants from across the seas. But however tardy the worst results in their coming and however redeemed and held in check at first by the political greatness of the empire and a splendid intellectual and artistic culture and by frequent spiritual revivals, India had already lost by the time of the later Guptas the chance of a natural and perfect flowering of her true mind and inmost spirit in the political life of her peoples.

Meanwhile the empire served well enough, although not perfectly, the end for which it was created, the saving of Indian soil and Indian civilisation from that immense flood of barbarian unrest which threatened all the ancient stabilised cultures and finally proved too strong for the highly developed Graeco-Roman civilisation and the vast and powerful Roman empire. That unrest throwing great masses of Teutons, Slavs, Huns and Scythians to west and east and south battered at the gates of India for many centuries, effected certain inroads, but, when it sank, left the great edifice of Indian civilisation standing and still firm, great and secure. The irruptions took place whenever the empire grew weak and this seems to have happened whenever the country was left for some time secure. The empire was weakened by the suspension of the need which created it, for then the regional spirit reawoke in separatist movements disintegrating its unity or breaking down its large extension over all the North. A fresh peril brought about the renewal of its strength under a new dynasty, but the phenomenon continued to repeat itself until, the peril ceasing for a considerable time, the empire called into existence to meet it passed away not to revive. It left behind it a certain number of great kingdoms in the east, south and centre and a more confused mass of peoples in the northwest, the weak point at which the Mussulmans broke in and in a brief period rebuilt in the north, but in another, a Central Asiatic type, the ancient empire.

These earlier foreign invasions and their effects have to be seen in their true proportions, which are often disturbed by the exaggerated theories of oriental scholars. The invasion of Alexander was an eastward impulsion of Hellenism that had a work to do in western and central Asia, but no future in India. Immediately ejected by Chandragupta, it left no traces. The entrance of the Graeco-Bactrians which took place during the weakness of the later Mauryas and was annulled by the reviving strength of the empire, was that of a Hellenised people already profoundly influenced by Indian culture. The later Parthian, Hun and Scythian invasions were of a more serious character and for a time seemed dangerous to the integrity of India. In the end however they affected powerfully only the Punjab, although they threw their waves farther south along the western coast and dynasties of a foreign extraction may have been established for a time far down towards the south. To what degree the racial character of these parts was affected, is far from certain. Oriental scholars and ethnologists have imagined that the Punjab was Scythianised, that the Rajputs are of the same stock and that even farther south the race was changed by the intrusion. These speculations are founded upon scanty or no evidence and are contradicted by other theories, and it is highly doubtful whether the barbarian invaders could have come in such numbers as to produce so considerable a consequence. It is farther rendered improbable by the fact that in one or two or three generations the invaders were entirely Indianised, assumed completely the Indian religion, manners, customs, culture and melted into the mass of the Indian peoples. No such phenomenon took place as in the countries of the Roman empire, of barbarian tribes imposing on a superior civilisation their laws, political system, barbaric customs, alien rule. This is the common significant fact of these irruptions and it must have been due to one or all of three factors. The invaders may have been armies rather than peoples: the occupation was not a continuous external rule which had time to stiffen in its foreign character, for each was followed by a revival of the strength of the Indian empire and its return upon the conquered provinces: and finally the powerfully vital and absorbing character of Indian culture was too strong to allow of any mental resistance to assimilation in the intruders. At any rate if these irruptions were of a very considerable character, Indian civilisation must be considered to have proved itself much more sound, more vital and more solid than the younger Graeco-Roman which went down before the Teuton and the Arab or survived only underneath and in a debased form heavily barbarised, broken and unrecognisable. And the Indian empire too must be pronounced to have proved after all more efficacious than was the Roman with all its vaunt of solidity and greatness, for it succeeded, even if pierced in the west, in preserving the security of the great mass of the peninsula.

It is a later downfall, the Mussulman conquest failing in the hands of the Arabs but successfully reattempted after a long interval, and all that followed it which serves to justify the doubt thrown on the capacity of the Indian peoples. But first let us put aside certain misconceptions which cloud the real issue. This conquest took place at a time when the vitality of ancient Indian life and culture after two thousand years of activity and creation was already exhausted for a time or very near exhaustion and needed a breathing space to rejuvenate itself by transference from the Sanskrit to the popular tongues and the newly forming regional peoples. The conquest was effected rapidly enough in the north, although not entirely complete there for several centuries, but the south long preserved its freedom as of old against the earlier indigenous empire and there was not so long a distance of time between the extinction of the kingdom of Vijayanagara and the rise of the Mahrattas. The Rajputs maintained their independence until the time of Akbar and his successors and it was in the end partly with the aid of Rajput princes acting as their generals and ministers that the Moguls completed their sway over the east and the south. And this was again possible because — a fact too often forgotten — the Mussulman domination ceased very rapidly to be a foreign rule. The vast mass of the Mussulmans in the country were and are Indians by race, only a very small admixture of Pathan, Turkish and Mogul blood took place, and even the foreign kings and nobles became almost immediately wholly Indian in mind, life and interest. If the race had really like certain European countries remained for many centuries passive, acquiescent and impotent under an alien sway, that would indeed have been a proof of a great inherent weakness; but the British is the first really continuous foreign rule that has dominated India. The ancient civilisation underwent indeed an eclipse and decline under the weight of a Central Asiatic religion and culture with which it failed to coalesce, but it survived its pressure, put its impact on it in many directions and remained to our own day alive even in decadence and capable of recovery, thus giving a proof of strength and soundness rare in the history of human cultures.

And in the political field it never ceased to throw up great rulers, statesmen, soldiers, administrators. Its political genius was not in the decadence sufficient, not coherent enough or swift in vision and action, to withstand the Pathan, Mogul and European, but it was strong to survive and await every opportunity of revival, made a bid for empire under Rana Sanga, created the great kingdom of Vijayanagara, held its own for centuries against Islam in the hills of Rajputana, and in its worst days still built and maintained against the whole power of the ablest of the Moguls the kingdom of Shivaji, formed the Mahratta confederacy and the Sikh Khalsa, undermined the great Mogul structure and again made a last attempt at empire. On the brink of the final and almost fatal collapse in the midst of unspeakable darkness, disunion and confusion it could still produce Ranjit Singh and Nana Fadnavis and Madhoji Scindia and oppose the inevitable march of England's destiny. These facts do not diminish the weight of the charge that can be made of an incapacity to see and solve the central problem and answer the one persistent question of Fate, but considered as the phenomena of a decadence they make a sufficiently remarkable record not easily paralleled under similar circumstances and certainly put a different complexion on the total question than the crude statement that India has been always subject and politically incapable.

The real problem introduced by the Mussulman conquest was not that of subjection to a foreign rule and the ability to recover freedom, but the struggle between two civilisations, one ancient and indigenous, the other mediaeval and brought in from outside. That which rendered the problem insoluble was the attachment of each to a powerful religion, the one militant and aggressive, the other spiritually tolerant indeed and flexible, but obstinately faithful in its discipline to its own principle and standing on the defence behind a barrier of social forms. There were two conceivable solutions, the rise of a greater spiritual principle and formation which could reconcile the two or a political patriotism surmounting the religious struggle and uniting the two communities. The first was impossible in that age. Akbar attempted it on the Mussulman side, but his religion was an intellectual and political rather than a spiritual creation and had never any chance of assent from the strongly religious mind of the two communities. Nanak attempted it from the Hindu side, but his religion, universal in principle, became a sect in practice. Akbar attempted also to create a common political patriotism, but this endeavour too was foredoomed to failure. An autocratic empire built on the Central Asian principle could not create the desired spirit by calling in the administrative ability of the two communities in the person of great men and princes and nobles to a common service in the creation of a united imperial India: the living assent of the people was needed and that remained passive for want of awakening political ideals and institutions. The Mogul empire was a great and magnificent construction and an immense amount of political genius and talent was employed in its creation and maintenance. It was as splendid, powerful and beneficent and, it may be added, in spite of Aurangzeb's fanatical zeal, infinitely more liberal and tolerant in religion than any mediaeval or contemporary European kingdom or empire and India under its rule stood high in military and political strength, economic opulence and the brilliance of its art and culture. But it failed like the empires before it, more disastrously even, and in the same way, crumbling not by external attack but by internal disintegration. A military and administrative centralised empire could not effect India's living political unity. And although a new life seemed about to rise in the regional peoples, the chance was cut short by the intrusion of the European nations and their seizure of the opportunity created by the failure of the Peshwas and the desperate confusion of the succeeding anarchy and decadence.

Two remarkable creations embodied in the period of disintegration the last effort of the Indian political mind to form the foundations of a new life under the old conditions, but neither proved to be of a kind that could solve the problem. The Mahratta revival inspired by Ramdas's conception of the Maharashtra Dharma and cast into shape by Shivaji was an attempt to restore what could still be understood or remembered of the ancient form and spirit, but it failed, as all attempts to revive the past must fail, in spite of the spiritual impetus and the democratic forces that assisted its inception. The Peshwas for all their genius lacked the vision of the founder and could only establish a military and political confederacy. And their endeavour to found an empire could not succeed because it was inspired by a regional patriotism that failed to enlarge itself beyond its own limits and awaken to the living ideal of a united India. The Sikh Khalsa on the other hand was an astonishingly original and novel creation and its face was turned not to the past but the future. Apart and singular in its theocratic head and democratic soul and structure, its profound spiritual beginning, its first attempt to combine the deepest elements of Islam and Vedanta, it was a premature drive towards an entrance into the third or spiritual stage of human society, but it could not create between the spirit and the external life the transmitting medium of a rich creative thought and culture. And thus hampered and deficient it began and ended within narrow local limits, achieved intensity but no power of expansion. The conditions were not then in existence that could have made possible a successful endeavour.

Afterwards came the night and a temporary end of all political initiative and creation. The lifeless attempt of the last generation to imitate and reproduce with a servile fidelity the ideals and forms of the West has been no true indication of the political mind and genius of the Indian people. But again amid all the mist of confusion there is still the possibility of a new twilight, not of an evening but a morning Yuga-sandhya. India of the ages is not dead nor has she spoken her last creative word; she lives and has still something to do for herself and the human peoples. And that which must seek now to awake is not an anglicised oriental people, docile pupil of the West and doomed to repeat the cycle of the Occident's success and failure, but still the ancient immemorable Shakti recovering her deepest self, lifting her head higher towards the supreme source of light and strength and turning to discover the complete meaning and a vaster form of her Dharma.

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

The thirty-two essays that make up this volume were first published in the monthly journal *Arya* between August 1918 and January 1921. Each essay was written immediately before its publication.

The Renaissance in India. Four essays appeared in the *Arya* between August and November 1918 under the title *The Renaissance in India*. In September 1920 they were published under the same title by the Prabartak Publishing House, Chandernagore, after being revised lightly by Sri Aurobindo. The publisher's note to this edition stated: "The subject matter of the book was written in a way of appreciation of Mr. James H. Cousins' book of the same name." Cousins' *Renaissance in India*, a series of articles on contemporary Indian art and other subjects, was published by Ganesh & Co., Madras, with a preface dated June 1918. New editions of Sri Aurobindo's *Renaissance in India* were published in 1927, 1937, 1946, 1951 and 1966. The 1966 edition has been frequently reprinted. In 1971 and 1972 *The Renaissance in India* was published along with *The Foundations of Indian Culture* (see below) as volume 14 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (de luxe and popular editions).

Indian Culture and External Influence. This essay, published in March 1919, was written in answer to a comment in the Bengali journal *Narayan* on Sri Aurobindo's series, *The Renaissance in India*. In 1953 the essay was included in *The Foundations of Indian Culture* as an appendix.

"Is India Civilised?". Three essays appeared in the *Arya* under this title between December 1918 and February 1919. They were written in response to a book by Sir John Woodroffe entitled *Is India Civilized? Essays on Indian Culture* (Madras: Ganesh & Co., foreword dated 4 October 1918). Woodroffe's book was itself a response to a book by

William Archer, *India and the Future* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1917).

A Defence of Indian Culture. In the issue of the *Arya* in which he concluded *"Is India Civilised?"*, Sri Aurobindo began another series dealing in more detail with William Archer's criticisms of Indian culture, taken to represent a typical Western attitude at that time. Six essays were published under the title "A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture" between February and July 1919. In the August 1919 issue of the *Arya* the title "A Defence of Indian Culture" appeared for the first time with this note: "As these articles have extended beyond their original intention, a more suitable title is substituted for the original heading." The next eighteen articles appeared under the new title. The twenty-four instalments of the series were numbered I-XXIV (actually XXIII due to an error). The series was discontinued with the termination of the *Arya* in January 1921.

Revision of *"Is India Civilised?"* and *A Defence of Indian Culture.* Sometime in the 1920s or 1930s Sri Aurobindo revised the three instalments of *"Is India Civilised?"* and the first eight and a half instalments of *A Defence of Indian Culture* (including the six entitled "A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture"). When the eight essays on art and polity referred to in the next paragraph were republished in 1947, Sri Aurobindo revised them slightly. He also made a few changes to the essays on literature. The rest of *A Defence of Indian Culture* was not revised.

Separate booklets. In February 1947 the four instalments on Indian art from *A Defence of Indian Culture* were published by Sri Aurobindo Circle, Bombay, under the title *The Significance of Indian Art*. New editions of this booklet were published in 1953 and 1964. In 1947, sometime after February, the four instalments on Indian polity were published by the Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, under the title *The Spirit and Form of Indian Polity*. A new edition of this booklet was brought out in 1966. The publisher's note to *The Significance of Indian Art*, seen and approved by Sri Aurobindo, is reproduced below in full:

> These chapters have been abstracted from Sri Aurobindo's work left unfinished in the Arya,—*A Defence of Indian*

> *Culture* (1918-1921). This was undertaken as a reply to a considerable work by Mr. William Archer criticising and attacking Indian civilisation and culture in all its domains: at that time this critic's views were typical of a very general attitude of the European mind towards the Indian civilisation and its special character, forms and creations and to combat the self-depreciation awakened in the Indian mind by this hostile impact and to explain to it the meaning of its own civilisation and past achievements was the main object of Sri Aurobindo. Since then, there has been a radical change and Mr. Archer's strictures and the answer to them might have been omitted and only the positive part of the work retained in this publication but there is a historical interest in the comparison or contrast drawn and otherwise also it may still have its value. The four chapters have therefore been reprinted in their entirety.

In 1949, a year before Sri Aurobindo's passing, he was asked about the possibility of bringing out the whole of *A Defence of Indian Culture*. At this time, in a statement reproduced in the Publisher's Note to the present volume, he indicated that he did not feel that the book as it then stood was ready for publication.

The Foundations of Indian Culture. In 1953 the three essays of *"Is India Civilised?"*, the twenty-four chapters making up *A Defence of Indian Culture* and, as an appendix, *Indian Culture and External Influence* (but not *The Renaissance in India*) were published by The Sri Aurobindo Library, New York, as *The Foundations of Indian Culture*. This title was provided by the editors of the volume. The editors divided the last eighteen chapters of *A Defence* into four sections for which they provided headings: "Religion and Spirituality", "Indian Art", "Indian Literature", "Indian Polity". The same material identically arranged was published under the same title by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, in 1959. A new edition of this book was brought out in 1968. *The Foundations of Indian Culture* and *The Renaissance in India* were published together in 1971 and 1972 as the de luxe and popular editions of volume 14 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. The SABCL edition of *The Foundations*, without *The Renaissance*, was reprinted in reduced facsimile in 1975 and five more times between 1980 and 1995.

The present edition. This volume contains, under another title and in a different order, the same writings as volume 14 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. The book is now published as *The Renaissance in India with A Defence of Indian Culture*, using the titles Sri Aurobindo himself gave to the two principal sets of essays. *The Renaissance in India* formed the starting-point and was the only series brought out as a book during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. Its title has been given priority over that of the longer but unfinished series, *A Defence of Indian Culture*. *"Is India Civilised?"* and *Indian Culture and External Influence* have been put in their appropriate places. With the exception of the last-named piece, the essays appear in the order in which they were published in the *Arya*. The present editors have kept the original sequential numbering of the twenty-four essays of *A Defence of Indian Culture*. In addition they have retained the *Arya* heading "A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture" for the first six chapters. They have also used the headings given in 1953 to the four editorial divisions of the remainder of the work, with one change, the replacement of "Religion and Spirituality" by "Indian Spirituality and Life".

The editors have carefully checked the text of each of the essays against the *Arya* text and, where appropriate, the revised versions.

The Synthesis of Yoga

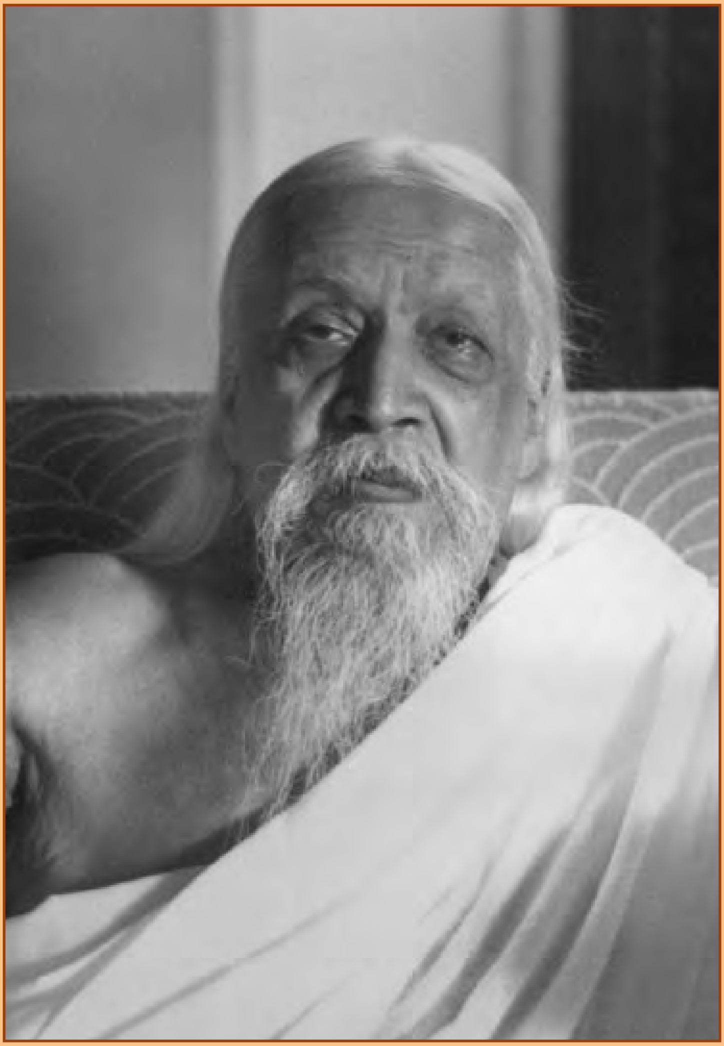

Sri Aurobindo

www.holybooks.com

VOLUMES 23 and 24
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1999
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

The Synthesis of Yoga

Publisher's Note

The Synthesis of Yoga first appeared serially in the monthly review *Arya* between August 1914 and January 1921. Each instalment was written immediately before its publication. The work was left incomplete when the *Arya* was discontinued. Sri Aurobindo never attempted to complete the *Synthesis*; he did, however, lightly revise the Introduction, thoroughly revise all of Part I, "The Yoga of Divine Works", and significantly revise several chapters of Part II, "The Yoga of Integral Knowledge". More than thirty years elapsed between the first appearance of the *Synthesis* in the *Arya* and the final stages of its incomplete revision. As a result, there are some differences of terminology between the revised and unrevised portions of the book.

In 1948 the chapters making up "The Yoga of Divine Works" were published as a book by the Sri Aurobindo Library, Madras. No other part of *The Synthesis of Yoga* appeared in book-form during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. In 1955 an edition comprising the Introduction and four Parts was brought out by the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre. The present edition, which has been checked against all manuscripts and printed texts, includes for the first time the author's revisions to the Introduction and Chapters XV–XVII of Part II, and an incomplete continuation of Part IV entitled "The Supramental Time Consciousness".

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
THE CONDITIONS OF THE SYNTHESIS

Chapter I
Life and Yoga 5

Chapter II
The Three Steps of Nature 9

Chapter III
The Threefold Life 20

Chapter IV
The Systems of Yoga 31

Chapter V
The Synthesis of the Systems 41

PART I
THE YOGA OF DIVINE WORKS

Chapter I
The Four Aids 53

Chapter II
Self-Consecration 69

Chapter III
Self-Surrender in Works — The Way of the Gita 89

Chapter IV
The Sacrifice, the Triune Path and the Lord of the Sacrifice 106

Chapter V
The Ascent of the Sacrifice – 1
The Works of Knowledge — The Psychic Being 134

Chapter VI
The Ascent of the Sacrifice – 2
The Works of Love — The Works of Life 158

Chapter VII
Standards of Conduct and Spiritual Freedom 188

Chapter VIII
The Supreme Will 208

Chapter IX
Equality and the Annihilation of Ego 221

Chapter X
The Three Modes of Nature 232

Chapter XI
The Master of the Work 243

Chapter XII
The Divine Work 264

Appendix to Part I
Chapter XIII
The Supermind and the Yoga of Works 279

PART II
THE YOGA OF INTEGRAL KNOWLEDGE

Chapter I
The Object of Knowledge 287

Chapter II
The Status of Knowledge 300

Chapter III
The Purified Understanding 308

Chapter IV
Concentration 317

Chapter V
Renunciation 326

CONTENTS

Chapter VI
The Synthesis of the Disciplines of Knowledge 335

Chapter VII
The Release from Subjection to the Body 343

Chapter VIII
The Release from the Heart and the Mind 350

Chapter IX
The Release from the Ego 356

Chapter X
The Realisation of the Cosmic Self 368

Chapter XI
The Modes of the Self 374

Chapter XII
The Realisation of Sachchidananda 383

Chapter XIII
The Difficulties of the Mental Being 391

Chapter XIV
The Passive and the Active Brahman 400

Chapter XV
The Cosmic Consciousness 409

Chapter XVI
Oneness 419

Chapter XVII
The Soul and Nature 426

Chapter XVIII
The Soul and Its Liberation 436

Chapter XIX
The Planes of Our Existence 446

Chapter XX
The Lower Triple Purusha 457

Chapter XXI
The Ladder of Self-Transcendence 465

Chapter XXII
Vijnana or Gnosis 475

Chapter XXIII
The Conditions of Attainment to the Gnosis 488

Chapter XXIV
Gnosis and Ananda 498

Chapter XXV
The Higher and the Lower Knowledge 511

Chapter XXVI
Samadhi 519

Chapter XXVII
Hathayoga 528

Chapter XXVIII
Rajayoga 536

PART III
THE YOGA OF DIVINE LOVE

Chapter I
Love and the Triple Path 545

Chapter II
The Motives of Devotion 552

Chapter III
The Godward Emotions 561

Chapter IV
The Way of Devotion 571

Chapter V
The Divine Personality 577

Chapter VI
The Delight of the Divine 587

Chapter VII
The Ananda Brahman 593

Chapter VIII
The Mystery of Love 599

PART IV
THE YOGA OF SELF-PERFECTION

Chapter I
The Principle of the Integral Yoga 609

Chapter II
The Integral Perfection 616

Chapter III
The Psychology of Self-Perfection 623

Chapter IV
The Perfection of the Mental Being 632

Chapter V
The Instruments of the Spirit 643

Chapter VI
Purification — The Lower Mentality 654

Chapter VII
Purification — Intelligence and Will 663

Chapter VIII
The Liberation of the Spirit 674

Chapter IX
The Liberation of the Nature 682

Chapter X
The Elements of Perfection 691

Chapter XI
The Perfection of Equality 698

Chapter XII
The Way of Equality 709

Chapter XIII
The Action of Equality 721

CONTENTS

Chapter XIV
The Power of the Instruments 729

Chapter XV
Soul-Force and the Fourfold Personality 740

Chapter XVI
The Divine Shakti 752

Chapter XVII
The Action of the Divine Shakti 762

Chapter XVIII
Faith and Shakti 771

Chapter XIX
The Nature of the Supermind 783

Chapter XX
The Intuitive Mind 799

Chapter XXI
The Gradations of the Supermind 811

Chapter XXII
The Supramental Thought and Knowledge 825

Chapter XXIII
The Supramental Instruments — Thought-Process 841

Chapter XXIV
The Supramental Sense 862

Chapter XXV
Towards the Supramental Time Vision 885

Appendix to Part IV
Chapter XXVI
The Supramental Time Consciousness 907

The Synthesis of Yoga

“All life is Yoga.”

Sri Aurobindo in 1950

Introduction

The Conditions of the Synthesis

Chapter I

Life and Yoga

THERE are two necessities of Nature's workings which seem always to intervene in the greater forms of human activity, whether these belong to our ordinary fields of movement or seek those exceptional spheres and fulfilments which appear to us high and divine. Every such form tends towards a harmonised complexity and totality which again breaks apart into various channels of special effort and tendency, only to unite once more in a larger and more puissant synthesis. Secondly, development into forms is an imperative rule of effective manifestation; yet all truth and practice too strictly formulated becomes old and loses much, if not all, of its virtue; it must be constantly renovated by fresh streams of the spirit revivifying the dead or dying vehicle and changing it, if it is to acquire a new life. To be perpetually reborn is the condition of a material immortality. We are in an age, full of the throes of travail, when all forms of thought and activity that have in themselves any strong power of utility or any secret virtue of persistence are being subjected to a supreme test and given their opportunity of rebirth. The world today presents the aspect of a huge cauldron of Medea in which all things are being cast, shredded into pieces, experimented on, combined and recombined either to perish and provide the scattered material of new forms or to emerge rejuvenated and changed for a fresh term of existence. Indian Yoga, in its essence a special action or formulation of certain great powers of Nature, itself specialised, divided and variously formulated, is potentially one of these dynamic elements of the future life of humanity. The child of immemorial ages, preserved by its vitality and truth into our modern times, it is now emerging from the secret schools and ascetic retreats in which it had taken refuge and is seeking its place in the future sum of living human powers and utilities. But it has first to rediscover itself, bring to the surface the profoundest reason of its being in that general truth and that unceasing aim of Nature which it represents, and find by virtue of this new self-knowledge and self-appreciation its own recovered and larger synthesis. Reorganising itself, it will enter more easily and powerfully into the reorganised life of the race which its processes claim to lead within into the most secret penetralia and upward to the highest altitudes of existence and personality.

In the right view both of life and of Yoga all life is either consciously or subconsciously a Yoga. For we mean by this term a methodised effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the secret potentialities latent in the being and — highest condition of victory in that effort — a union of the human individual with the universal and transcendent Existence we see partially expressed in man and in the Cosmos. But all life, when we look behind its appearances, is a vast Yoga of Nature who attempts in the conscious and the subconscious to realise her perfection in an ever-increasing expression of her yet unrealised potentialities and to unite herself with her own divine reality. In man, her thinker, she for the first time upon this Earth devises self-conscious means and willed arrangements of activity by which this great purpose may be more swiftly and puissantly attained. Yoga, as Swami Vivekananda has said, may be regarded as a means of compressing one's evolution into a single life or a few years or even a few months of bodily existence. A given system of Yoga, then, can be no more than a selection or a compression, into narrower but more energetic forms of intensity, of the general methods which are already being used loosely, largely, in a leisurely movement, with a profuser apparent waste of material and energy but with a more complete combination by the great Mother in her vast upward labour. It is this view of Yoga that can alone form the basis for a sound and rational synthesis of Yogic methods. For then Yoga ceases to appear something mystic and abnormal which has no relation to the ordinary processes of the World-Energy or the purpose she keeps in view in her two great movements of subjective and objective self-fulfilment; it reveals itself rather as an intense and exceptional use of powers that she has already manifested or is progressively organising in her less exalted but more general operations.

Yogic methods have something of the same relation to the customary psychological workings of man as has the scientific handling of the force of electricity or of steam to their normal operations in Nature. And they, too, like the operations of Science, are formed upon a knowledge developed and confirmed by regular experiment, practical analysis and constant result. All Rajayoga, for instance, depends on this perception and experience that our inner elements, combinations, functions, forces, can be separated or dissolved, can be new-combined and set to novel and formerly impossible workings or can be transformed and resolved into a new general synthesis by fixed internal processes. Hathayoga similarly depends on this perception and experience that the vital forces and functions to which our life is normally subjected and whose ordinary operations seem set and indispensable, can be mastered and the operations changed or suspended with results that would otherwise be impossible and that seem miraculous to those who have not seized the rationale of their process. And if in some other of its forms this character of Yoga is less apparent, because they are more intuitive and less mechanical, nearer, like the Yoga of Devotion, to a supernal ecstasy or, like the Yoga of Knowledge, to a supernal infinity of consciousness and being, yet they too start from the use of some principal faculty in us by ways and for ends not contemplated in its everyday spontaneous workings. All methods grouped under the common name of Yoga are special psychological processes founded on a fixed truth of Nature and developing, out of normal functions, powers and results which were always latent but which her ordinary movements do not easily or do not often manifest.

But as in physical knowledge the multiplication of scientific processes has its disadvantages, as that tends, for instance, to develop a victorious artificiality which overwhelms our natural human life under a load of machinery and to purchase certain forms of freedom and mastery at the price of an increased servitude, so the preoccupation with Yogic processes and their exceptional results may have its disadvantages and losses. The

Yogin tends to draw away from the common existence and lose his hold upon it; he tends to purchase wealth of spirit by an impoverishment of his human activities, the inner freedom by an outer death. If he gains God, he loses life, or if he turns his efforts outward to conquer life, he is in danger of losing God. Therefore we see in India that a sharp incompatibility has been created between life in the world and spiritual growth and perfection, and although the tradition and ideal of a victorious harmony between the inner attraction and the outer demand remains, it is little or else very imperfectly exemplified. In fact, when a man turns his vision and energy inward and enters on the path of Yoga, he is popularly supposed to be lost inevitably to the great stream of our collective existence and the secular effort of humanity. So strongly has the idea prevailed, so much has it been emphasised by prevalent philosophies and religions that to escape from life is now commonly considered as not only the necessary condition, but the general object of Yoga. No synthesis of Yoga can be satisfying which does not, in its aim, reunite God and Nature in a liberated and perfected human life or, in its method, not only permit but favour the harmony of our inner and outer activities and experiences in the divine consummation of both. For man is precisely that term and symbol of a higher Existence descended into the material world in which it is possible for the lower to transfigure itself and put on the nature of the higher and the higher to reveal itself in the forms of the lower. To avoid the life which is given him for the realisation of that possibility, can never be either the indispensable condition or the whole and ultimate object of his supreme endeavour or of his most powerful means of self-fulfilment. It can only be a temporary necessity under certain conditions or a specialised extreme effort imposed on the individual so as to prepare a greater general possibility for the race. The true and full object and utility of Yoga can only be accomplished when the conscious Yoga in man becomes, like the subconscious Yoga in Nature, outwardly conterminous with life itself and we can once more, looking out both on the path and the achievement, say in a more perfect and luminous sense: “All life is Yoga.”

Chapter II

The Three Steps of Nature

WE RECOGNISE then, in the past developments of Yoga, a specialising and separative tendency which, like all things in Nature, had its justifying and even imperative utility and we seek a synthesis of the specialised aims and methods which have, in consequence, come into being. But in order that we may be wisely guided in our effort, we must know, first, the general principle and purpose underlying this separative impulse and, next, the particular utilities upon which the method of each school of Yoga is founded. For the general principle we must interrogate the universal workings of Nature herself, recognising in her no merely specious and illusive activity of a distorting Maya, but the cosmic energy and working of God Himself in His universal being formulating and inspired by a vast, an infinite and yet a minutely selective Wisdom, *prajñā prasṛtā purāṇī* of the Upanishad, Wisdom that went forth from the Eternal since the beginning. For the particular utilities we must cast a penetrative eye on the different methods of Yoga and distinguish among the mass of their details the governing idea which they serve and the radical force which gives birth and energy to their processes of effectuation. Afterwards we may more easily find the one common principle and the one common power from which all derive their being and tendency, towards which all subconsciously move and in which, therefore, it is possible for all consciously to unite.

The progressive self-manifestation of Nature in man, termed in modern language his evolution, must necessarily depend upon three successive elements. There is that which is already evolved; there is that which, still imperfect, still partly fluid, is persistently in the stage of conscious evolution; and there is that which is to be evolved and may perhaps be already displayed, if not constantly, then occasionally or with some regularity of recurrence, in primary formations or in others more developed and, it may well be, even in some, however rare, that are near to the highest possible realisation of our present humanity. For the march of Nature is not drilled to a regular and mechanical forward stepping. She reaches constantly beyond herself even at the cost of subsequent deplorable retreats. She has rushes; she has splendid and mighty outbursts; she has immense realisations. She storms sometimes passionately forward hoping to take the kingdom of heaven by violence. And these self-exceedings are the revelation of that in her which is most divine or else most diabolical, but in either case the most puissant to bring her rapidly forward towards her goal.

That which Nature has evolved for us and has firmly founded is the bodily life. She has effected a certain combination and harmony of the two inferior but most fundamentally necessary elements of our action and progress upon earth, — Matter, which, however the too ethereally spiritual may despise it, is our foundation and the first condition of all our energies and realisations, and the Life-Energy which is our means of existence in a material body and the basis there even of our mental and spiritual activities. She has successfully achieved a certain stability of her constant material movement which is at once sufficiently steady and durable and sufficiently pliable and mutable to provide a fit dwelling-place and instrument for the progressively manifesting god in humanity. This is what is meant by the fable in the Aitareya Upanishad which tells us that the gods rejected the animal forms successively offered to them by the Divine Self and only when man was produced, cried out, "This indeed is perfectly made," and consented to enter in. She has effected also a working compromise between the inertia of matter and the active Life that lives in and feeds on it, by which not only is vital existence sustained, but the fullest developments of mentality are rendered possible. This equilibrium constitutes the basic status of Nature in man and is termed in the language of Yoga his gross body composed of the material or food sheath and the nervous system or vital vehicle.[1]

If, then, this inferior equilibrium is the basis and first means of the higher movements which the universal Power contemplates and if it constitutes the vehicle in which the Divine here seeks to reveal Itself, if the Indian saying is true that the body is the instrument provided for the fulfilment of the right law of our nature, then any final recoil from the physical life must be a turning away from the completeness of the divine Wisdom and a renunciation of its aim in earthly manifestation. Such a refusal may be, owing to some secret law of their development, the right attitude for certain individuals, but never the aim intended for mankind. It can be, therefore, no integral Yoga which ignores the body or makes its annulment or its rejection indispensable to a perfect spirituality. Rather, the perfecting of the body also should be the last triumph of the Spirit and to make the bodily life also divine must be God's final seal upon His work in the universe. The obstacle which the physical presents to the spiritual is no argument for the rejection of the physical; for in the unseen providence of things our greatest difficulties are our best opportunities. A supreme difficulty is Nature's indication to us of a supreme conquest to be won and an ultimate problem to be solved; it is not a warning of an inextricable snare to be shunned or of an enemy too strong for us from whom we must flee.

Equally, the vital and nervous energies in us are there for a great utility; they too demand the divine realisation of their possibilities in our ultimate fulfilment. The great part assigned to this element in the universal scheme is powerfully emphasised by the catholic wisdom of the Upanishads. "As the spokes of a wheel in its nave, so in the Life-Energy is all established, the triple knowledge and the Sacrifice and the power of the strong and the purity of the wise. Under the control of the Life-Energy is all this that is established in the triple heaven."[2] It is therefore no integral Yoga that kills these vital energies, forces them into a nerveless quiescence or roots them out as the source of noxious activities. Their purification, not their destruction, — their transformation, control and utilisation is the aim in view with which they have been created and developed in us.

---

[1] *annakoṣa* and *prāṇakoṣa*.

[2] Prasna Upanishad II. 6 and 13.

If the bodily life is what Nature has firmly evolved for us as her base and first instrument, it is our mental life that she is evolving as her immediate next aim and superior instrument. This in her ordinary exaltations is the lofty preoccupying thought in her; this, except in her periods of exhaustion and recoil into a reposeful and recuperating obscurity, is her constant pursuit wherever she can get free from the trammels of her first vital and physical realisations. For here in man we have a distinction which is of the utmost importance. He has in him not a single mentality, but a double and a triple, the mind material and nervous, the pure intellectual mind which liberates itself from the illusions of the body and the senses, and a divine mind above intellect which in its turn liberates itself from the imperfect modes of the logically discriminative and imaginative reason. Mind in man is first emmeshed in the life of the body, where in the plant it is entirely involved and in animals always imprisoned. It accepts this life as not only the first but the whole condition of its activities and serves its needs as if they were the entire aim of existence. But the bodily life in man is a base, not the aim, his first condition and not his last determinant. In the just idea of the ancients man is essentially the thinker, the Manu, the mental being who leads the life and the body,[3] not the animal who is led by them. The true human existence, therefore, only begins when the intellectual mentality emerges out of the material and we begin more and more to live in the mind independent of the nervous and physical obsession and in the measure of that liberty are able to accept rightly and rightly to use the life of the body. For freedom and not a skilful subjection is the true means of mastery. A free, not a compulsory acceptance of the conditions, the enlarged and sublimated conditions of our physical being, is the high human ideal. But beyond this intellectual mentality is the divine.

The mental life thus evolving in man is not, indeed, a common possession. In actual appearance it would seem as if it were only developed to the fullest in individuals and as if there were great numbers and even the majority in whom it is either a small and ill-organised part of their normal nature or not evolved at all or latent and not easily made active. Certainly, the mental life is not a finished evolution of Nature; it is not yet firmly founded in the human animal. The sign is that the fine and full equilibrium of vitality and matter, the sane, robust, long-lived human body is ordinarily found only in races or classes of men who reject the effort of thought, its disturbances, its tensions, or think only with the material mind. Civilised man has yet to establish an equilibrium between the fully active mind and the body; he does not normally possess it. Indeed, the increasing effort towards a more intense mental life seems to create, frequently, an increasing disequilibrium of the human elements, so that it is possible for eminent scientists to describe genius as a form of insanity, a result of degeneration, a pathological morbidity of Nature. The phenomena which are used to justify this exaggeration, when taken not separately, but in connection with all other relevant data, point to a different truth. Genius is one attempt of the universal Energy to so quicken and intensify our intellectual powers that they shall be prepared for those more puissant, direct and rapid faculties which constitute the play of the supra-intellectual or divine mind. It is not, then, a freak, an inexplicable phenomenon, but a perfectly natural next step in the right line of her evolution. She has harmonised the bodily life with the material mind, she is harmonising it with the play of the intellectual mentality; for that, although it tends to a depression of the full animal and vital vigour, need not produce active disturbances. And she is shooting yet beyond in the attempt to reach a still higher level. Nor are the disturbances created by her process as great as is often represented. Some of them are the crude beginnings of new manifestations; others are an easily corrected movement of disintegration, often fruitful of fresh activities and always a small price to pay for the far-reaching results that she has in view.

---

[3] *manomayaḥ prāṇaśarīranetā*. Mundaka Upanishad II. 2. 8.

We may perhaps, if we consider all the circumstances, come to this conclusion that mental life, far from being a recent appearance in man, is the swift repetition in him of a previous achievement from which the Energy in the race had undergone one of her deplorable recoils. The savage is perhaps not so much the first forefather of civilised man as the degenerate descendant of a previous civilisation. For if the actuality of intellectual achievement is unevenly distributed, the capacity is spread everywhere. It has been seen that in individual cases even the racial type considered by us the lowest, the negro fresh from the perennial barbarism of Central Africa, is capable, without admixture of blood, without waiting for future generations, of the intellectual culture, if not yet of the intellectual accomplishment of the dominant European. Even in the mass men seem to need, in favourable circumstances, only a few generations to cover ground that ought apparently to be measured in the terms of millenniums. Either, then, man by his privilege as a mental being is exempt from the full burden of the tardy laws of evolution or else he already represents and with helpful conditions and in the right stimulating atmosphere can always display a high level of material capacity for the activities of the intellectual life. It is not mental incapacity, but the long rejection or seclusion from opportunity and withdrawal of the awakening impulse that creates the savage. Barbarism is an intermediate sleep, not an original darkness.

Moreover the whole trend of modern thought and modern endeavour reveals itself to the observant eye as a large conscious effort of Nature in man to effect a general level of intellectual equipment, capacity and farther possibility by universalising the opportunities which modern civilisation affords for the mental life. Even the preoccupation of the European intellect, the protagonist of this tendency, with material Nature and the externalities of existence is a necessary part of the effort. It seeks to prepare a sufficient basis in man's physical being and vital energies and in his material environment for his full mental possibilities. By the spread of education, by the advance of the backward races, by the elevation of depressed classes, by the multiplication of labour-saving appliances, by the movement towards ideal social and economic conditions, by the labour of Science towards an improved health, longevity and sound physique in civilised humanity, the sense and drift of this vast movement translates itself in easily intelligible signs. The right or at least the ultimate means may not always be employed, but their aim is the right preliminary aim, — a sound individual and social body and the satisfaction of the legitimate needs and demands of the material mind, sufficient ease, leisure, equal opportunity, so that the whole of mankind and no longer only the favoured race, class or individual may be free to develop the emotional and intellectual being to its full capacity. At present the material and economic aim may predominate, but always, behind, there works or there waits in reserve the higher and major impulse.

And when the preliminary conditions are satisfied, when the great endeavour has found its base, what will be the nature of that farther possibility which the activities of the intellectual life must serve? If Mind is indeed Nature's highest term, then the entire development of the rational and imaginative intellect and the harmonious satisfaction of the emotions and sensibilities must be to themselves sufficient. But if, on the contrary, man is more than a reasoning and emotional animal, if beyond that which is being evolved, there is something that has to be evolved, then it may well be that the fullness of the mental life, the suppleness, flexibility and wide capacity of the intellect, the ordered richness of emotion and sensibility may be only a passage towards the development of a higher life and of more powerful faculties which are yet to manifest and to take possession of the lower instrument, just as mind itself has so taken possession of the body that the physical being no longer lives only for its own satisfaction but provides the foundation and the materials for a superior activity.

The assertion of a higher than the mental life is the whole foundation of Indian philosophy and its acquisition and organisation is the veritable object served by the methods of Yoga. Mind is not the last term of evolution, not an ultimate aim, but, like body, an instrument. It is even so termed in the language of

Yoga, the inner instrument.[4] And Indian tradition asserts that this which is to be manifested is not a new term in human experience, but has been developed before and has even governed humanity in certain periods of its development. In any case, in order to be known it must at one time have been partly developed. And if since then Nature has sunk back from her achievement, the reason must always be found in some unrealised harmony, some insufficiency of the intellectual and material basis to which she has now returned, some over-specialisation of the higher to the detriment of the lower existence.

But what then constitutes this higher or highest existence to which our evolution is tending? In order to answer the question we have to deal with a class of supreme experiences, a class of unusual conceptions which it is difficult to represent accurately in any other language than the ancient Sanskrit tongue in which alone they have been to some extent systematised. The only approximate terms in the English language have other associations and their use may lead to many and even serious inaccuracies. The terminology of Yoga recognises besides the status of our physical and vital being, termed the gross body and doubly composed of the food sheath and the vital vehicle, besides the status of our mental being, termed the subtle body and singly composed of the mind sheath or mental vehicle,[5] a third, supreme and divine status of supra-mental being, termed the causal body and composed of a fourth and a fifth vehicle[6] which are described as those of knowledge and bliss. But this knowledge is not a systematised result of mental questionings and reasonings, not a temporary arrangement of conclusions and opinions in the terms of the highest probability, but rather a pure self-existent and self-luminous Truth. And this bliss is not a supreme pleasure of the heart and sensations with the experience of pain and sorrow as its background, but a delight also self-existent and independent of objects and particular experiences, a self-delight which is the very nature, the very stuff, as it were, of a transcendent and infinite existence.

---

[4] *antaḥkaraṇa.* [5] *manaḥ-koṣa.* [6] *vijñānakoṣa* and *ānandakoṣa.*

Do such psychological conceptions correspond to anything real and possible? All Yoga asserts them as its ultimate experience and supreme aim. They form the governing principles of our highest possible state of consciousness, our widest possible range of existence. There is, we say, a harmony of supreme faculties, corresponding roughly to the psychological faculties of revelation, inspiration and intuition, yet acting not in the intuitive reason or the divine mind, but on a still higher plane, which see Truth directly face to face, or rather live in the truth of things both universal and transcendent and are its formulation and luminous activity. And these faculties are the light of a conscious existence superseding the egoistic and itself both cosmic and transcendent, the nature of which is Bliss. These are obviously divine and, as man is at present apparently constituted, superhuman states of consciousness and activity. A trinity of transcendent existence, self-awareness and self-delight[7] is, indeed, the metaphysical description of the supreme Atman, the self-formulation, to our awakened knowledge, of the Unknowable whether conceived as a pure Impersonality or as a cosmic Personality manifesting the universe. But in Yoga they are regarded also in their psychological aspects as states of subjective existence to which our waking consciousness is now alien, but which dwell in us in a superconscious plane and to which, therefore, we may always ascend.

For, as is indicated by the name, causal body (*kāraṇa*), as opposed to the two others which are instruments (*karaṇa*), this crowning manifestation is also the source and effective power of all that in the actual evolution has preceded it. Our mental activities are, indeed, a derivation, selection and, so long as they are divided from the truth that is secretly their source, a deformation of the divine knowledge. Our sensations and emotions have the same relation to the Bliss, our vital forces and actions to the aspect of Will or Force assumed by the divine consciousness, our physical being to the pure essence of that Bliss and Consciousness. The evolution which we observe and of which we are the terrestrial summit may be considered, in a sense, as an inverse manifestation, by which these supreme Powers in their unity and their diversity use, develop and perfect the imperfect substance and activities of Matter, of Life and of Mind so that they, the inferior modes, may express in mutable relativity an increasing harmony of the divine and eternal states from which they are born. If this be the truth of the universe, then the goal of evolution is also its cause, it is that which is immanent in its elements and out of them is liberated. But the liberation is surely imperfect if it is only an escape and there is no return upon the containing substance and activities to exalt and transform them. The immanence itself would have no credible reason for being if it did not end in such a transfiguration. But if human mind can become capable of the glories of the divine Light, human emotion and sensibility can be transformed into the mould and assume the measure and movement of the supreme Bliss, human action not only represent but feel itself to be the motion of a divine and non-egoistic Force and the physical substance of our being sufficiently partake of the purity of the supernal essence, sufficiently unify plasticity and durable constancy to support and prolong these highest experiences and agencies, then all the long labour of Nature will end in a crowning justification and her evolutions reveal their profound significance.

---

[7] *saccidānanda.*

So dazzling is even a glimpse of this supreme existence and so absorbing its attraction that, once seen, we feel readily justified in neglecting all else for its pursuit. Even, by an opposite exaggeration to that which sees all things in Mind and the mental life as an exclusive ideal, Mind comes to be regarded as an unworthy deformation and a supreme obstacle, the source of an illusory universe, a negation of the Truth and itself to be denied and all its works and results annulled if we desire the final liberation. But this is a half-truth which errs by regarding only the actual limitations of Mind and ignores its divine intention. The ultimate knowledge is that which perceives and accepts God in the universe as well as beyond the universe; the integral Yoga is that which, having found the Transcendent, can return upon the universe and possess it, retaining the power freely to descend as well as ascend the great stair of existence. For if the eternal Wisdom exists at all, the faculty of Mind also must have some high use and destiny. That use must depend on its place in the ascent and in the return and that destiny must be a fulfilment and transfiguration, not a rooting out or an annulling.

We perceive, then, these three steps in Nature, a bodily life which is the basis of our existence here in the material world, a mental life into which we emerge and by which we raise the bodily to higher uses and enlarge it into a greater completeness, and a divine existence which is at once the goal of the other two and returns upon them to liberate them into their highest possibilities. Regarding none of them as either beyond our reach or below our nature and the destruction of none of them as essential to the ultimate attainment, we accept this liberation and fulfilment as part at least and a large and important part of the aim of Yoga.

Chapter III

The Threefold Life

NATURE, then, is an evolution or progressive self-manifestation of an eternal and secret existence, with three successive forms as her three steps of ascent. And we have consequently as the condition of all our activities these three mutually interdependent possibilities, the bodily life, the mental existence and the veiled spiritual being which is in the involution the cause of the others and in the evolution their result. Preserving and perfecting the physical, fulfilling the mental, it is Nature's aim and it should be ours to unveil in the perfected body and mind the transcendent activities of the Spirit. As the mental life does not abrogate but works for the elevation and better utilisation of the bodily existence, so too the spiritual should not abrogate but transfigure our intellectual, emotional, aesthetic and vital activities.

For man, the head of terrestrial Nature, the sole earthly frame in which her full evolution is possible, is a triple birth. He has been given a living frame in which the body is the vessel and life the dynamic means of a divine manifestation. His activity is centred in a progressive mind which aims at perfecting itself as well as the house in which it dwells and the means of life that it uses, and is capable of awaking by a progressive self-realisation to its own true nature as a form of the Spirit. He culminates in what he always really was, the illumined and beatific spirit which is intended at last to irradiate life and mind with its now concealed splendours.

Since this is the plan of the divine Energy in humanity, the whole method and aim of our existence must work by the interaction of these three elements in the being. As a result of their separate formulation in Nature, man has open to him a choice between three kinds of life, the ordinary material existence, a life of mental activity and progress and the unchanging spiritual beatitude. But he can, as he progresses, combine these three forms, resolve their discords into a harmonious rhythm and so create in himself the whole godhead, the perfect Man.

In ordinary Nature they have each their own characteristic and governing impulse.

The characteristic energy of bodily Life is not so much in progress as in persistence, not so much in individual self-enlargement as in self-repetition. There is, indeed, in physical Nature a progression from type to type, from the vegetable to the animal, from the animal to man; for even in inanimate Matter Mind is at work. But once a type is marked off physically, the chief immediate preoccupation of the terrestrial Mother seems to be to keep it in being by a constant reproduction. For Life always seeks immortality; but since individual form is impermanent and only the idea of a form is permanent in the consciousness that creates the universe, — for there it does not perish, — such constant reproduction is the only possible material immortality. Self-preservation, self-repetition, self-multiplication are necessarily, then, the predominant instincts of all material existence. Material life seems ever to move in a fixed cycle.

The characteristic energy of pure Mind is change, and the more our mentality acquires elevation and organisation, the more this law of Mind assumes the aspect of a continual enlargement, improvement and better arrangement of its gains and so of a continual passage from a smaller and simpler to a larger and more complex perfection. For Mind, unlike bodily life, is infinite in its field, elastic in its expansion, easily variable in its formations. Change, then, self-enlargement and self-improvement are its proper instincts. Mind too moves in cycles, but these are ever-enlarging spirals. Its faith is perfectibility, its watchword is progress.

The characteristic law of Spirit is self-existent perfection and immutable infinity. It possesses always and in its own right the immortality which is the aim of Life and the perfection which is the goal of Mind. The attainment of the eternal and the realisation of that which is the same in all things and beyond all things, equally blissful in universe and outside it, untouched by the imperfections and limitations of the forms and activities in which it dwells, are the glory of the spiritual life.

In each of these forms Nature acts both individually and collectively; for the Eternal affirms Himself equally in the single form and in the group-existence, whether family, clan and nation or groupings dependent on less physical principles or the supreme group of all, our collective humanity. Man also may seek his own individual good from any or all of these spheres of activity, or identify himself in them with the collectivity and live for it, or, rising to a truer perception of this complex universe, harmonise the individual realisation with the collective aim. For as it is the right relation of the soul with the Supreme, while it is in the universe, neither to assert egoistically its separate being nor to blot itself out in the Indefinable, but to realise its unity with the Divine and the world and unite them in the individual, so the right relation of the individual with the collectivity is neither to pursue egoistically his own material or mental progress or spiritual salvation without regard to his fellows, nor for the sake of the community to suppress or maim his proper development, but to sum up in himself all its best and completest possibilities and pour them out by thought, action and all other means on his surroundings so that the whole race may approach nearer to the attainment of its supreme personalities.

It follows that the object of the material life must be to fulfil, above all things, the vital aim of Nature. The whole aim of the material man is to live, to pass from birth to death with as much comfort or enjoyment as may be on the way, but anyhow to live. He can subordinate this aim, but only to physical Nature's other instincts, the reproduction of the individual and the conservation of the type in the family, class or community. Self, domesticity, the accustomed order of the society and of the nation are the constituents of the material existence. Its immense importance in the economy of Nature is self-evident, and commensurate is the importance of the human type which represents it. He assures her of the safety of the framework she has made and of the orderly continuance and conservation of her past gains.

But by that very utility such men and the life they lead are condemned to be limited, irrationally conservative and earthbound. The customary routine, the customary institutions, the inherited or habitual forms of thought, — these things are the life-breath of their nostrils. They admit and jealously defend the changes compelled by the progressive mind in the past, but combat with equal zeal the changes that are being made by it in the present. For to the material man the living progressive thinker is an ideologue, dreamer or madman. The old Semites who stoned the living prophets and adored their memories when dead, were the very incarnation of this instinctive and unintelligent principle in Nature. In the ancient Indian distinction between the once born and the twice born, it is to this material man that the former description can be applied. He does Nature's inferior works; he assures the basis for her higher activities; but not to him easily are opened the glories of her second birth.

Yet he admits so much of spirituality as has been enforced on his customary ideas by the great religious outbursts of the past and he makes in his scheme of society a place, venerable though not often effective, for the priest or the learned theologian who can be trusted to provide him with a safe and ordinary spiritual pabulum. But to the man who would assert for himself the liberty of spiritual experience and the spiritual life, he assigns, if he admits him at all, not the vestment of the priest but the robe of the Sannyasin. Outside society let him exercise his dangerous freedom. So he may even serve as a human lightning-rod receiving the electricity of the Spirit and turning it away from the social edifice.

Nevertheless it is possible to make the material man and his life moderately progressive by imprinting on the material mind the custom of progress, the habit of conscious change, the fixed idea of progression as a law of life. The creation by this means of progressive societies in Europe is one of the greatest triumphs of Mind over Matter. But the physical nature has its revenge; for the progress made tends to be of the grosser and more outward kind and its attempts at a higher or a more rapid movement bring about great wearinesses, swift exhaustions, startling recoils.

It is possible also to give the material man and his life a moderate spirituality by accustoming him to regard in a religious spirit all the institutions of life and its customary activities. The creation of such spiritualised communities in the East has been one of the greatest triumphs of Spirit over Matter. Yet here, too, there is a defect; for this often tends only to the creation of a religious temperament, the most outward form of spirituality. Its higher manifestations, even the most splendid and puissant, either merely increase the number of souls drawn out of social life and so impoverish it or disturb the society for a while by a momentary elevation. The truth is that neither the mental effort nor the spiritual impulse can suffice, divorced from each other, to overcome the immense resistance of material Nature. She demands their alliance in a complete effort before she will suffer a complete change in humanity. But, usually, these two great agents are unwilling to make to each other the necessary concessions.

The mental life concentrates on the aesthetic, the ethical and the intellectual activities. Essential mentality is idealistic and a seeker after perfection. The subtle self, the brilliant Atman,[1] is ever a dreamer. A dream of perfect beauty, perfect conduct, perfect Truth, whether seeking new forms of the Eternal or revitalising the old, is the very soul of pure mentality. But it knows not how to deal with the resistance of Matter. There it is hampered and inefficient, works by bungling experiments and has either to withdraw from the struggle or submit to the grey actuality. Or else, by studying the material life and accepting the conditions of the contest, it may succeed, but only in imposing temporarily some artificial system which infinite Nature either rends and casts aside or disfigures out of recognition or by withdrawing her assent leaves as the corpse of a dead ideal. Few and far between have been those realisations of the dreamer in Man which the world has gladly accepted, looks back to with a fond memory and seeks, in its elements, to cherish.

---

[1] Who dwells in Dream, the inly conscious, the enjoyer of abstractions, the Brilliant. Mandukya Upanishad 4.

When the gulf between actual life and the temperament of the thinker is too great, we see as the result a sort of withdrawing of the Mind from life in order to act with a greater freedom in its own sphere. The poet living among his brilliant visions, the artist absorbed in his art, the philosopher thinking out the problems of the intellect in his solitary chamber, the scientist, the scholar caring only for their studies and their experiments, were often in former days, are even now not unoften the Sannyasins of the intellect. To the work they have done for humanity, all its past bears record.

But such seclusion is justified only by some special activity. Mind finds fully its force and action only when it casts itself upon life and accepts equally its possibilities and its resistances as the means of a greater self-perfection. In the struggle with the difficulties of the material world the ethical development of the individual is firmly shaped and the great schools of conduct are formed; by contact with the facts of life Art attains to vitality, Thought assures its abstractions, the generalisations of the philosopher base themselves on a stable foundation of science and experience.

This mixing with life may, however, be pursued for the sake of the individual mind and with an entire indifference to the forms of the material existence or the uplifting of the race. This indifference is seen at its highest in the Epicurean discipline and is not entirely absent from the Stoic; and even altruism does the works of compassion more often for its own sake than for the sake of the world it helps. But this too is a limited fulfilment. The progressive mind is seen at its noblest when it strives to elevate the whole race to its own level whether by sowing broadcast the image of its own thought and fulfilment or by changing the material life of the race into fresh forms, religious, intellectual, social or political, intended to represent more nearly that ideal of truth, beauty, justice, righteousness with which the man's own soul is illumined. Failure in such a field matters little; for the mere attempt is dynamic and creative. The struggle of Mind to elevate life is the promise and condition of the conquest of life by that which is higher even than Mind.

That highest thing, the spiritual existence, is concerned with what is eternal but not therefore entirely aloof from the transient. For the spiritual man the mind's dream of perfect beauty is realised in an eternal love, beauty and delight that has no dependence and is equal behind all objective appearances; its dream of perfect Truth in the supreme, self-existent, self-apparent and eternal Verity which never varies, but explains and is the secret of all variations and the goal of all progress; its dream of perfect action in the omnipotent and self-guiding Law that is inherent for ever in all things and translates itself here in the rhythm of the worlds. What is fugitive vision or constant effort of creation in the brilliant Self is an eternally existing Reality in the Self that knows[2] and is the Lord.

But if it is often difficult for the mental life to accommodate itself to the dully resistant material activity, how much more difficult must it seem for the spiritual existence to live on in a world that appears full not of the Truth but of every lie and illusion, not of Love and Beauty but of an encompassing discord and ugliness, not of the Law of Truth but of victorious selfishness and sin? Therefore the spiritual life tends easily in the saint and Sannyasin to withdraw from the material existence and reject it either wholly and physically or in the spirit. It sees this world as the kingdom of evil or of ignorance and the eternal and divine either in a far-off heaven or beyond where there is no world and no life. It separates itself inwardly, if not also physically, from the world's impurities; it asserts the spiritual reality in a spotless isolation. This withdrawal renders an invaluable service to the material life itself by forcing it to regard and even to bow down to something that is the direct negation of its own petty ideals, sordid cares and egoistic self-content.

But the work in the world of so supreme a power as spiritual force cannot be thus limited. The spiritual life also can return upon the material and use it as a means of its own greater fullness. Refusing to be blinded by the dualities, the appearances, it can seek in all appearances whatsoever the vision of the same Lord, the same eternal Truth, Beauty, Love, Delight. The Vedantic formula of the Self in all things, all things in the Self and all things as becomings of the Self is the key to this richer and all-embracing Yoga.

---

[2] The Unified, in whom conscious thought is concentrated, who is all delight and enjoyer of delight, the Wise. . . . He is the Lord of all, the Omniscient, the inner Guide. Mandukya Upanishad 5, 6.

But the spiritual life, like the mental, may thus make use of this outward existence for the benefit of the individual with a perfect indifference to any collective uplifting of the merely symbolic world which it uses. Since the Eternal is for ever the same in all things and all things the same to the Eternal, since the exact mode of action and the result are of no importance compared with the working out in oneself of the one great realisation, this spiritual indifference accepts no matter what environment, no matter what action, dispassionately, prepared to retire as soon as its own supreme end is realised. It is so that many have understood the ideal of the Gita. Or else the inner love and bliss may pour itself out on the world in good deeds, in service, in compassion, the inner Truth in the giving of knowledge, without therefore attempting the transformation of a world which must by its inalienable nature remain a battlefield of the dualities, of sin and virtue, of truth and error, of joy and suffering.

But if Progress also is one of the chief terms of world-existence and a progressive manifestation of the Divine the true sense of Nature, this limitation also is invalid. It is possible for the spiritual life in the world, and it is its real mission, to change the material life into its own image, the image of the Divine. Therefore, besides the great solitaries who have sought and attained their self-liberation, we have the great spiritual teachers who have also liberated others and, supreme of all, the great dynamic souls who, feeling themselves stronger in the might of the Spirit than all the forces of the material life banded together, have thrown themselves upon the world, grappled with it in a loving wrestle and striven to compel its consent to its own transfiguration. Ordinarily, the effort is concentrated on a mental and moral change in humanity, but it may extend itself also to the alteration of the forms of our life and its institutions so that they too may be a better mould for the inpourings of the Spirit. These attempts have been the supreme landmarks in the progressive development of human ideals and the divine preparation of the race. Every one of them, whatever its outward results, has left Earth more capable of Heaven and quickened in its tardy movements the evolutionary Yoga of Nature.

In India, for the last thousand years and more, the spiritual life and the material have existed side by side to the exclusion of the progressive mind. Spirituality has made terms for itself with Matter by renouncing the attempt at general progress. It has obtained from society the right of free spiritual development for all who assume some distinctive symbol, such as the garb of the Sannyasin, the recognition of that life as man's goal and those who live it as worthy of an absolute reverence, and the casting of society itself into such a religious mould that its most customary acts should be accompanied by a formal reminder of the spiritual symbolism of life and its ultimate destination. On the other hand, there was conceded to society the right of inertia and immobile self-conservation. The concession destroyed much of the value of the terms. The religious mould being fixed, the formal reminder tended to become a routine and to lose its living sense. The constant attempts to change the mould by new sects and religions ended only in a new routine or a modification of the old; for the saving element of the free and active mind had been exiled. The material life, handed over to the Ignorance, the purposeless and endless duality, became a leaden and dolorous yoke from which flight was the only escape.

The schools of Indian Yoga lent themselves to the compromise. Individual perfection or liberation was made the aim, seclusion of some kind from the ordinary activities the condition, the renunciation of life the culmination. The teacher gave his knowledge only to a small circle of disciples. Or if a wider movement was attempted, it was still the release of the individual soul that remained the aim. The pact with an immobile society was, for the most part, observed.

The utility of the compromise in the then actual state of the world cannot be doubted. It secured in India a society which lent itself to the preservation and the worship of spirituality, a country apart in which as in a fortress the highest spiritual ideal could maintain itself in its most absolute purity unoverpowered by the siege of the forces around it. But it was a compromise, not an absolute victory. The material life lost the divine impulse to growth, the spiritual preserved by isolation its height and purity, but sacrificed its full power and serviceableness to the world. Therefore, in the divine Providence the country of the Yogins and the Sannyasins has been forced into a strict and imperative contact with the very element it had rejected, the element of the progressive Mind, so that it might recover what was now wanting to it.

We have to recognise once more that the individual exists not in himself alone but in the collectivity and that individual perfection and liberation are not the whole sense of God's intention in the world. The free use of our liberty includes also the liberation of others and of mankind; the perfect utility of our perfection is, having realised in ourselves the divine symbol, to reproduce, multiply and ultimately universalise it in others.

Therefore from a concrete view of human life in its threefold potentialities we come to the same conclusion that we had drawn from an observation of Nature in her general workings and the three steps of her evolution. And we begin to perceive a complete aim for our synthesis of Yoga.

Spirit is the crown of universal existence; Matter is its basis; Mind is the link between the two. Spirit is that which is eternal; Mind and Matter are its workings. Spirit is that which is concealed and has to be revealed; mind and body are the means by which it seeks to reveal itself. Spirit is the image of the Lord of the Yoga; mind and body are the means He has provided for reproducing that image in phenomenal existence. All Nature is an attempt at a progressive revelation of the concealed Truth, a more and more successful reproduction of the divine image.

But what Nature aims at for the mass in a slow evolution, Yoga effects for the individual by a rapid revolution. It works by a quickening of all her energies, a sublimation of all her faculties. While she develops the spiritual life with difficulty and has constantly to fall back from it for the sake of her lower realisations, the sublimated force, the concentrated method of Yoga can attain directly and carry with it the perfection of the mind and even, if she will, the perfection of the body. Nature seeks the Divine in her own symbols: Yoga goes beyond Nature to the Lord of Nature, beyond universe to the Transcendent and can return with the transcendent light and power, with the fiat of the Omnipotent.

But their aim is one in the end. The generalisation of Yoga in humanity must be the last victory of Nature over her own delays and concealments. Even as now by the progressive mind in Science she seeks to make all mankind fit for the full development of the mental life, so by Yoga must she inevitably seek to make all mankind fit for the higher evolution, the second birth, the spiritual existence. And as the mental life uses and perfects the material, so will the spiritual use and perfect the material and the mental existence as the instruments of a divine self-expression. The ages when that is accomplished, are the legendary Satya or Krita[3] Yugas, the ages of the Truth manifested in the symbol, of the great work done when Nature in mankind, illumined, satisfied and blissful, rests in the culmination of her endeavour.

It is for man to know her meaning, no longer misunderstanding, vilifying or misusing the universal Mother, and to aspire always by her mightiest means to her highest ideal.

---

[3] Satya means Truth; Krita, effected or completed.

Chapter IV

The Systems of Yoga

THESE relations between the different psychological divisions of the human being and these various utilities and objects of effort founded on them, such as we have seen them in our brief survey of the natural evolution, we shall find repeated in the fundamental principles and methods of the different schools of Yoga. And if we seek to combine and harmonise their central practices and their predominant aims, we shall find that the basis provided by Nature is still our natural basis and the condition of their synthesis.

In one respect Yoga exceeds the normal operation of cosmic Nature and climbs beyond her. For the aim of the Universal Mother is to embrace the Divine in her own play and creations and there to realise It. But in the highest flights of Yoga she reaches beyond herself and realises the Divine in Itself exceeding the universe and even standing apart from the cosmic play. Therefore by some it is supposed that this is not only the highest but also the one true or exclusively preferable object of Yoga.

Yet it is always through something which she has formed in her evolution that Nature thus overpasses her evolution. It is the individual heart that by sublimating its highest and purest emotions attains to the transcendent Bliss or the ineffable Nirvana, the individual mind that by converting its ordinary functionings into a knowledge beyond mentality knows its oneness with the Ineffable and merges its separate existence in that transcendent unity. And always it is the individual, the Self conditioned in its experience by Nature and working through her formations, that attains to the Self unconditioned, free and transcendent.

In practice three conceptions are necessary before there can be any possibility of Yoga; there must be, as it were, three consenting parties to the effort, — God, Nature and the human soul or, in more abstract language, the Transcendental, the Universal and the Individual. If the individual and Nature are left to themselves, the one is bound to the other and unable to exceed appreciably her lingering march. Something transcendent is needed, free from her and greater, which will act upon us and her, attracting us upward to Itself and securing from her by good grace or by force her consent to the individual ascension.

It is this truth which makes necessary to every philosophy of Yoga the conception of the Ishwara, Lord, supreme Soul or supreme Self, towards whom the effort is directed and who gives the illuminating touch and the strength to attain. Equally true is the complementary idea so often enforced by the Yoga of devotion that as the Transcendent is necessary to the individual and sought after by him, so also the individual is necessary in a sense to the Transcendent and sought after by It. If the Bhakta seeks and yearns after Bhagavan, Bhagavan also seeks and yearns after the Bhakta.[1] There can be no Yoga of knowledge without a human seeker of the knowledge, the supreme subject of knowledge and the divine use by the individual of the universal faculties of knowledge; no Yoga of devotion without the human God-lover, the supreme object of love and delight and the divine use by the individual of the universal faculties of spiritual, emotional and aesthetic enjoyment; no Yoga of works without the human worker, the supreme Will, Master of all works and sacrifices, and the divine use by the individual of the universal faculties of power and action. However Monistic may be our intellectual conception of the highest truth of things, in practice we are compelled to accept this omnipresent Trinity.

For the contact of the human and individual consciousness with the divine is the very essence of Yoga. Yoga is the union of that which has become separated in the play of the universe with its own true self, origin and universality. The contact may take place at any point of the complex and intricately organised consciousness which we call our personality. It may be effected in the physical through the body; in the vital through the action of those functionings which determine the state and the experiences of our nervous being; through the mentality, whether by means of the emotional heart, the active will or the understanding mind, or more largely by a general conversion of the mental consciousness in all its activities. It may equally be accomplished through a direct awakening to the universal or transcendent Truth and Bliss by the conversion of the central ego in the mind. And according to the point of contact that we choose will be the type of the Yoga that we practise.

---

[1] Bhakta, the devotee or lover of God; Bhagavan, God, the Lord of Love and Delight. The third term of the trinity is Bhagavat, the divine revelation of Love.

For if, leaving aside the complexities of their particular processes, we fix our regard on the central principle of the chief schools of Yoga still prevalent in India, we find that they arrange themselves in an ascending order which starts from the lowest rung of the ladder, the body, and ascends to the direct contact between the individual soul and the transcendent and universal Self. Hathayoga selects the body and the vital functionings as its instruments of perfection and realisation; its concern is with the gross body. Rajayoga selects the mental being in its different parts as its lever-power; it concentrates on the subtle body. The triple Path of Works, of Love and of Knowledge uses some part of the mental being, will, heart or intellect as a starting-point and seeks by its conversion to arrive at the liberating Truth, Beatitude and Infinity which are the nature of the spiritual life. Its method is a direct commerce between the human Purusha in the individual body and the divine Purusha who dwells in every body and yet transcends all form and name.

Hathayoga aims at the conquest of the life and the body whose combination in the food sheath and the vital vehicle constitutes, as we have seen, the gross body and whose equilibrium is the foundation of all Nature's workings in the human being. The equilibrium established by Nature is sufficient for the normal egoistic life; it is insufficient for the purpose of the Hathayogin. For it is calculated on the amount of vital or dynamic force necessary to drive the physical engine during the normal span of human life and to perform more or less adequately the various workings demanded of it by the individual life inhabiting this frame and the world-environment by which it is conditioned.

Hathayoga therefore seeks to rectify Nature and establish another equilibrium by which the physical frame will be able to sustain the inrush of an increasing vital or dynamic force of Prana indefinite, almost infinite in its quantity or intensity. In Nature the equilibrium is based upon the individualisation of a limited quantity and force of the Prana; more than that the individual is by personal and hereditary habit unable to bear, use or control. In Hathayoga, the equilibrium opens a door to the universalisation of the individual vitality by admitting into the body, containing, using and controlling a much less fixed and limited action of the universal energy.

The chief processes of Hathayoga are *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma*. By its numerous *āsanas* or fixed postures it first cures the body of that restlessness which is a sign of its inability to contain without working them off in action and movement the vital forces poured into it from the universal Life-Ocean, gives to it an extraordinary health, force and suppleness and seeks to liberate it from the habits by which it is subjected to ordinary physical Nature and kept within the narrow bounds of her normal operations. In the ancient tradition of Hathayoga it has always been supposed that this conquest could be pushed so far even as to conquer to a great extent the force of gravitation. By various subsidiary but elaborate processes the Hathayogin next contrives to keep the body free from all impurities and the nervous system unclogged for those exercises of respiration which are his most important instruments. These are called *prāṇāyāma*, the control of the breath or vital power; for breathing is the chief physical functioning of the vital forces. Pranayama, for the Hathayogin, serves a double purpose. First, it completes the perfection of the body. The vitality is liberated from many of the ordinary necessities of physical Nature; robust health, prolonged youth, often an extraordinary longevity are attained. On the other hand, Pranayama awakens the coiled-up serpent of the Pranic dynamism in the vital sheath and opens to the Yogin fields of consciousness, ranges of experience, abnormal faculties denied to the ordinary human life while it puissantly intensifies such normal powers and faculties as he already possesses.

These advantages can be farther secured and emphasised by other subsidiary processes open to the Hathayogin.

The results of Hathayoga are thus striking to the eye and impose easily on the vulgar or physical mind. And yet at the end we may ask what we have gained at the end of all this stupendous labour. The object of physical Nature, the preservation of the mere physical life, its highest perfection, even in a certain sense the capacity of a greater enjoyment of physical living have been carried out on an abnormal scale. But the weakness of Hathayoga is that its laborious and difficult processes make so great a demand on the time and energy and impose so complete a severance from the ordinary life of men that the utilisation of its results for the life of the world becomes either impracticable or is extraordinarily restricted. If in return for this loss we gain another life in another world within, the mental, the dynamic, these results could have been acquired through other systems, through Rajayoga, through Tantra, by much less laborious methods and held on much less exacting terms. On the other hand the physical results, increased vitality, prolonged youth, health, longevity are of small avail if they must be held by us as misers of ourselves, apart from the common life, for their own sake, not utilised, not thrown into the common sum of the world's activities. Hathayoga attains large results, but at an exorbitant price and to very little purpose.

Rajayoga takes a higher flight. It aims at the liberation and perfection not of the bodily, but of the mental being, the control of the emotional and sensational life, the mastery of the whole apparatus of thought and consciousness. It fixes its eyes on the *citta*, that stuff of mental consciousness in which all these activities arise, and it seeks, even as Hathayoga with its physical material, first to purify and to tranquillise. The normal state of man is a condition of trouble and disorder, a kingdom either at war with itself or badly governed; for the lord, the Purusha, is subjected to his ministers, the faculties, subjected even to his subjects, the instruments of sensation, emotion, action, enjoyment. Swarajya, self-rule, must be substituted for this subjection. First, therefore, the powers of order must be helped to overcome the powers of disorder. The preliminary movement of Rajayoga is a careful self-discipline by which good habits of mind are substituted for the lawless movements that indulge the lower nervous being. By the practice of truth, by renunciation of all forms of egoistic seeking, by abstention from injury to others, by purity, by constant meditation and inclination to the divine Purusha who is the true lord of the mental kingdom, a pure, glad, clear state of mind and heart is established.

This is the first step only. Afterwards, the ordinary activities of the mind and sense must be entirely quieted in order that the soul may be free to ascend to higher states of consciousness and acquire the foundation for a perfect freedom and self-mastery. But Rajayoga does not forget that the disabilities of the ordinary mind proceed largely from its subjection to the reactions of the nervous system and the body. It adopts therefore from the Hathayogic system its devices of *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma*, but reduces their multiple and elaborate forms in each case to one simplest and most directly effective process sufficient for its own immediate object. Thus it gets rid of the Hathayogic complexity and cumbrousness while it utilises the swift and powerful efficacy of its methods for the control of the body and the vital functions and for the awakening of that internal dynamism, full of a latent supernormal faculty, typified in Yogic terminology by the *kuṇḍalinī*, the coiled and sleeping serpent of Energy within. This done, the system proceeds to the perfect quieting of the restless mind and its elevation to a higher plane through concentration of mental force by the successive stages which lead to the utmost inner concentration or ingathered state of the consciousness which is called Samadhi.

By Samadhi, in which the mind acquires the capacity of withdrawing from its limited waking activities into freer and higher states of consciousness, Rajayoga serves a double purpose. It compasses a pure mental action liberated from the confusions of the outer consciousness and passes thence to the higher supra-mental planes on which the individual soul enters into its true spiritual existence. But also it acquires the capacity of that free and concentrated energising of consciousness on its object which our philosophy asserts as the primary cosmic energy and the method of divine action upon the world. By this capacity the Yogin, already possessed of the highest supracosmic knowledge and experience in the state of trance, is able in the waking state to acquire directly whatever knowledge and exercise whatever mastery may be useful or necessary to his activities in the objective world. For the ancient system of Rajayoga aimed not only at Swarajya, self-rule or subjective empire, the entire control by the subjective consciousness of all the states and activities proper to its own domain, but included Samrajya as well, outward empire, the control by the subjective consciousness of its outer activities and environment.

We perceive that as Hathayoga, dealing with the life and body, aims at the supernormal perfection of the physical life and its capacities and goes beyond it into the domain of the mental life, so Rajayoga, operating with the mind, aims at a supernormal perfection and enlargement of the capacities of the mental life and goes beyond it into the domain of the spiritual existence. But the weakness of the system lies in its excessive reliance on abnormal states of trance. This limitation leads first to a certain aloofness from the physical life which is our foundation and the sphere into which we have to bring our mental and spiritual gains. Especially is the spiritual life, in this system, too much associated with the state of Samadhi. Our object is to make the spiritual life and its experiences fully active and fully utilisable in the waking state and even in the normal use of the functions. But in Rajayoga it tends to withdraw into a subliminal plane at the back of our normal experiences instead of descending and possessing our whole existence.

The triple Path of devotion, knowledge and works attempts the province which Rajayoga leaves unoccupied. It differs from Rajayoga in that it does not occupy itself with the elaborate training of the whole mental system as the condition of perfection, but seizes on certain central principles, the intellect, the heart, the will, and seeks to convert their normal operations by turning them away from their ordinary and external preoccupations and activities and concentrating them on the Divine. It differs also in this, — and here from the point of view of an integral Yoga there seems to be a defect, — that it is indifferent to mental and bodily perfection and aims only at purity as a condition of the divine realisation. A second defect is that as actually practised it chooses one of the three parallel paths exclusively and almost in antagonism to the others instead of effecting a synthetic harmony of the intellect, the heart and the will in an integral divine realisation.

The Path of Knowledge aims at the realisation of the unique and supreme Self. It proceeds by the method of intellectual reflection, *vicāra*, to right discrimination, *viveka*. It observes and distinguishes the different elements of our apparent or phenomenal being and rejecting identification with each of them arrives at their exclusion and separation in one common term as constituents of Prakriti, of phenomenal Nature, creations of Maya, the phenomenal consciousness. So it is able to arrive at its right identification with the pure and unique Self which is not mutable or perishable, not determinable by any phenomenon or combination of phenomena. From this point the path, as ordinarily followed, leads to the rejection of the phenomenal worlds from the consciousness as an illusion and the final immergence without return of the individual soul in the Supreme.

But this exclusive consummation is not the sole or inevitable result of the Path of Knowledge. For, followed more largely and with a less individual aim, the method of Knowledge may lead to an active conquest of the cosmic existence for the Divine no less than to a transcendence. The point of this departure is the realisation of the supreme Self not only in one's own being but in all beings and, finally, the realisation of even the phenomenal aspects of the world as a play of the divine consciousness and not something entirely alien to its true nature. And on the basis of this realisation a yet further enlargement is possible, the conversion of all forms of knowledge, however mundane, into activities of the divine consciousness utilisable for the perception of the one and unique Object of knowledge both in itself and through the play of its forms and symbols. Such a method might well lead to the elevation of the whole range of human intellect and perception to the divine level, to its spiritualisation and to the justification of the cosmic travail of knowledge in humanity.

The Path of Devotion aims at the enjoyment of the supreme Love and Bliss and utilises normally the conception of the supreme Lord in His personality as the divine Lover and enjoyer of the universe. The world is then realised as a play of the Lord, with our human life as its final stage, pursued through the different phases of self-concealment and self-revelation. The principle of Bhakti Yoga is to utilise all the normal relations of human life into which emotion enters and apply them no longer to transient worldly relations, but to the joy of the All-Loving, the All-Beautiful and the All-Blissful. Worship and meditation are used only for the preparation and increase of intensity of the divine relationship. And this Yoga is catholic in its use of all emotional relations, so that even enmity and opposition to God, considered as an intense, impatient and perverse form of Love, is conceived as a possible means of realisation and salvation. This path, too, as ordinarily practised, leads away from world-existence to an absorption, of another kind than the Monist's, in the Transcendent and Supra-cosmic.

But, here too, the exclusive result is not inevitable. The Yoga itself provides a first corrective by not confining the play of divine love to the relation between the supreme Soul and the individual, but extending it to a common feeling and mutual worship between the devotees themselves united in the same realisation of the supreme Love and Bliss. It provides a yet more general corrective in the realisation of the divine object of Love in all beings not only human but animal, easily extended to all forms whatsoever. We can see how this larger application of the Yoga of Devotion may be so used as to lead to the elevation of the whole range of human emotion, sensation and aesthetic perception to the divine level, its spiritualisation and the justification of the cosmic labour towards love and joy in our humanity.

The Path of Works aims at the dedication of every human activity to the supreme Will. It begins by the renunciation of all egoistic aim for our works, all pursuit of action for an interested aim or for the sake of a worldly result. By this renunciation it so purifies the mind and the will that we become easily conscious of the great universal Energy as the true doer of all our actions and the Lord of that Energy as their ruler and director with the individual as only a mask, an excuse, an instrument or, more positively, a conscious centre of action and phenomenal relation. The choice and direction of the act is more and more consciously left to this supreme Will and this universal Energy. To That our works as well as the results of our works are finally abandoned. The object is the release of the soul from its bondage to appearances and to the reaction of phenomenal activities. Karmayoga is used, like the other paths, to lead to liberation from phenomenal existence and a departure into the Supreme. But here too the exclusive result is not inevitable. The end of the path may be, equally, a perception of the Divine in all energies, in all happenings, in all activities, and a free and unegoistic participation of the soul in the cosmic action. So followed it will lead to the elevation of all human will and activity to the divine level, its spiritualisation and the justification of the cosmic labour towards freedom, power and perfection in the human being.

We can see also that in the integral view of things these three paths are one. Divine Love should normally lead to the perfect knowledge of the Beloved by perfect intimacy, thus becoming a path of Knowledge, and to divine service, thus becoming a path of Works. So also should perfect Knowledge lead to perfect Love and Joy and a full acceptance of the works of That which is known; dedicated Works to the entire love of the Master of the Sacrifice and the deepest knowledge of His ways and His being. It is in this triple path that we come most readily to the absolute knowledge, love and service of the One in all beings and in the entire cosmic manifestation.

Chapter V

The Synthesis of the Systems

BY THE very nature of the principal Yogic schools, each covering in its operations a part of the complex human integer and attempting to bring out its highest possibilities, it will appear that a synthesis of all of them largely conceived and applied might well result in an integral Yoga. But they are so disparate in their tendencies, so highly specialised and elaborated in their forms, so long confirmed in the mutual opposition of their ideas and methods that we do not easily find how we can arrive at their right union.

An undiscriminating combination in block would not be a synthesis, but a confusion. Nor would a successive practice of each of them in turn be easy in the short span of our human life and with our limited energies, to say nothing of the waste of labour implied in so cumbrous a process. Sometimes, indeed, Hathayoga and Rajayoga are thus successively practised. And in a recent unique example, in the life of Ramakrishna Paramhansa, we see a colossal spiritual capacity first driving straight to the divine realisation, taking, as it were, the kingdom of heaven by violence, and then seizing upon one Yogic method after another and extracting the substance out of it with an incredible rapidity, always to return to the heart of the whole matter, the realisation and possession of God by the power of love, by the extension of inborn spirituality into various experience and by the spontaneous play of an intuitive knowledge. Such an example cannot be generalised. Its object also was special and temporal, to exemplify in the great and decisive experience of a master-soul the truth, now most necessary to humanity, towards which a world long divided into jarring sects and schools is with difficulty labouring, that all sects are forms and fragments of a single integral truth and all disciplines labour in their different ways towards one supreme experience. To know, be and possess the Divine is the one thing needful and it includes or leads up to all the rest; towards this sole good we have to drive and this attained, all the rest that the divine Will chooses for us, all necessary form and manifestation, will be added.

The synthesis we propose cannot, then, be arrived at either by combination in mass or by successive practice. It must therefore be effected by neglecting the forms and outsides of the Yogic disciplines and seizing rather on some central principle common to all which will include and utilise in the right place and proportion their particular principles, and on some central dynamic force which is the common secret of their divergent methods and capable therefore of organising a natural selection and combination of their varied energies and different utilities. This was the aim which we set before ourselves at first when we entered upon our comparative examination of the methods of Nature and the methods of Yoga and we now return to it with the possibility of hazarding some definite solution.

We observe, first, that there still exists in India a remarkable Yogic system which is in its nature synthetical and starts from a great central principle of Nature, a great dynamic force of Nature; but it is a Yoga apart, not a synthesis of other schools. This system is the way of the Tantra. Owing to certain of its developments Tantra has fallen into discredit with those who are not Tantrics; and especially owing to the developments of its left-hand path, the Vama Marga, which not content with exceeding the duality of virtue and sin and instead of replacing them by spontaneous rightness of action seemed, sometimes, to make a method of self-indulgence, a method of unrestrained social immorality. Nevertheless, in its origin, Tantra was a great and puissant system founded upon ideas which were at least partially true. Even its twofold division into the right-hand and left-hand paths, Dakshina Marga and Vama Marga, started from a certain profound perception. In the ancient symbolic sense of the words Dakshina and Vama, it was the distinction between the way of Knowledge and the way of Ananda, — Nature in man liberating itself by right discrimination in power and practice of its own energies, elements and potentialities and Nature in man liberating itself by joyous acceptance in power and practice of its own energies, elements and potentialities. But in both paths there was in the end an obscuration of principles, a deformation of symbols and a fall.

If, however, we leave aside, here also, the actual methods and practices and seek for the central principle, we find, first, that Tantra expressly differentiates itself from the Vedic methods of Yoga. In a sense, all the schools we have hitherto examined are Vedantic in their principle; their force is in knowledge, their method is knowledge, though it is not always discernment by the intellect, but may be, instead, the knowledge of the heart expressed in love and faith or a knowledge in the will working out through action. In all of them the lord of the Yoga is the Purusha, the Conscious Soul that knows, observes, attracts, governs. But in Tantra it is rather Prakriti, the Nature-Soul, the Energy, the Will-in-Power executive in the universe. It was by learning and applying the intimate secrets of this Will-in-Power, its method, its Tantra, that the Tantric Yogin pursued the aims of his discipline, — mastery, perfection, liberation, beatitude. Instead of drawing back from manifested Nature and its difficulties, he confronted them, seized and conquered. But in the end, as is the general tendency of Prakriti, Tantric Yoga largely lost its principle in its machinery and became a thing of formulae and occult mechanism still powerful when rightly used but fallen from the clarity of their original intention.

We have in this central Tantric conception one side of the truth, the worship of the Energy, the Shakti, as the sole effective force for all attainment. We get the other extreme in the Vedantic conception of the Shakti as a power of Illusion and in the search after the silent inactive Purusha as the means of liberation from the deceptions created by the active Energy. But in the integral conception the Conscious Soul is the Lord, the Nature-Soul is his executive Energy. Purusha is of the nature of Sat, the being of conscious self-existence pure and infinite; Shakti or Prakriti is of the nature of Chit, — it is power of the Purusha's self-conscious existence, pure and infinite. The relation of the two exists between the poles of rest and action. When the Energy is absorbed in the bliss of conscious self-existence, there is rest; when the Purusha pours itself out in the action of its Energy, there is action, creation and the enjoyment or Ananda of becoming. But if Ananda is the creator and begetter of all becoming, its method is Tapas or force of the Purusha's consciousness dwelling upon its own infinite potentiality in existence and producing from it truths of conception or real Ideas, *vijñāna*, which, proceeding from an omniscient and omnipotent Self-existence, have the surety of their own fulfilment and contain in themselves the nature and law of their own becoming in the terms of mind, life and matter. The eventual omnipotence of Tapas and the infallible fulfilment of the Idea are the very foundation of all Yoga. In man we render these terms by Will and Faith, — a will that is eventually self-effective because it is of the substance of Knowledge and a faith that is the reflex in the lower consciousness of a Truth or real Idea yet unrealised in the manifestation. It is this self-certainty of the Idea which is meant by the Gita when it says, *yo yac-chraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*, "whatever is a man's faith or the sure Idea in him, that he becomes."

We see, then, what from the psychological point of view, — and Yoga is nothing but practical psychology, — is the conception of Nature from which we have to start. It is the self-fulfilment of the Purusha through his Energy. But the movement of Nature is twofold, higher and lower, or, as we may choose to term it, divine and undivine. The distinction exists indeed for practical purposes only; for there is nothing that is not divine, and in a larger view it is as meaningless, verbally, as the distinction between natural and supernatural, for all things that are are natural. All things are in Nature and all things are in God. But, for practical purposes, there is a real distinction. The lower Nature, that which we know and are and must remain so long as the faith in us is not changed, acts through limitation and division, is of the nature of Ignorance and culminates in the life of the ego; but the higher Nature, that to which we aspire, acts by unification and transcendence of limitation, is of the nature of Knowledge and culminates in the life divine. The passage from the lower to the higher is the aim of Yoga; and this passage may effect itself by the rejection of the lower and escape into the higher, — the ordinary view-point, — or by the transformation of the lower and its elevation to the higher Nature. It is this, rather, that must be the aim of an integral Yoga.

But in either case it is always through something in the lower that we must rise into the higher existence, and the schools of Yoga each select their own point of departure or their own gate of escape. They specialise certain activities of the lower Prakriti and turn them towards the Divine. But the normal action of Nature in us is an integral movement in which the full complexity of all our elements is affected by and affects all our environments. The whole of life is the Yoga of Nature. The Yoga that we seek must also be an integral action of Nature, and the whole difference between the Yogin and the natural man will be this, that the Yogin seeks to substitute in himself for the integral action of the lower Nature working in and by ego and division the integral action of the higher Nature working in and by God and unity. If indeed our aim be only an escape from the world to God, synthesis is unnecessary and a waste of time; for then our sole practical aim must be to find out one path out of the thousand that lead to God, one shortest possible of short cuts, and not to linger exploring different paths that end in the same goal. But if our aim be a transformation of our integral being into the terms of God-existence, it is then that a synthesis becomes necessary.

The method we have to pursue, then, is to put our whole conscious being into relation and contact with the Divine and to call Him in to transform our entire being into His. Thus in a sense God Himself, the real Person in us, becomes the sadhaka of the sadhana[1] as well as the Master of the Yoga by whom the lower personality is used as the centre of a divine transfiguration and the instrument of its own perfection. In effect, the pressure of the Tapas, the force of consciousness in us dwelling in the Idea of the divine Nature upon that which we are in our entirety, produces its own realisation. The divine and all-knowing and all-effecting descends upon the limited and obscure, progressively illumines and energises the whole lower nature and substitutes its own action for all the terms of the inferior human light and mortal activity.

---

[1] *Sādhana*, the practice by which perfection, *siddhi*, is attained; *sādhaka*, the Yogin who seeks by that practice the *siddhi*.

In psychological fact this method translates itself into the progressive surrender of the ego with its whole field and all its apparatus to the Beyond-ego with its vast and incalculable but always inevitable workings. Certainly, this is no short cut or easy sadhana. It requires a colossal faith, an absolute courage and above all an unflinching patience. For it implies three stages of which only the last can be wholly blissful or rapid, — the attempt of the ego to enter into contact with the Divine, the wide, full and therefore laborious preparation of the whole lower Nature by the divine working to receive and become the higher Nature, and the eventual transformation. In fact, however, the divine Strength, often unobserved and behind the veil, substitutes itself for our weakness and supports us through all our failings of faith, courage and patience. It "makes the blind to see and the lame to stride over the hills." The intellect becomes aware of a Law that beneficently insists and a succour that upholds; the heart speaks of a Master of all things and Friend of man or a universal Mother who upholds through all stumblings. Therefore this path is at once the most difficult imaginable and yet, in comparison with the magnitude of its effort and object, the most easy and sure of all.

There are three outstanding features of this action of the higher when it works integrally on the lower nature. In the first place it does not act according to a fixed system and succession as in the specialised methods of Yoga, but with a sort of free, scattered and yet gradually intensive and purposeful working determined by the temperament of the individual in whom it operates, the helpful materials which his nature offers and the obstacles which it presents to purification and perfection. In a sense, therefore, each man in this path has his own method of Yoga. Yet are there certain broad lines of working common to all which enable us to construct not indeed a routine system, but yet some kind of Shastra or scientific method of the synthetic Yoga.

Secondly, the process, being integral, accepts our nature such as it stands organised by our past evolution and without rejecting anything essential compels all to undergo a divine change. Everything in us is seized by the hands of a mighty Artificer and transformed into a clear image of that which it now seeks confusedly to present. In that ever-progressive experience we begin to perceive how this lower manifestation is constituted and that everything in it, however seemingly deformed or petty or vile, is the more or less distorted or imperfect figure of some element or action in the harmony of the divine Nature. We begin to understand what the Vedic Rishis meant when they spoke of the human forefathers fashioning the gods as a smith forges the crude material in his smithy.

Thirdly, the divine Power in us uses all life as the means of this integral Yoga. Every experience and outer contact with our world-environment, however trifling or however disastrous, is used for the work, and every inner experience, even to the most repellent suffering or the most humiliating fall, becomes a step on the path to perfection. And we recognise in ourselves with opened eyes the method of God in the world, His purpose of light in the obscure, of might in the weak and fallen, of delight in what is grievous and miserable. We see the divine method to be the same in the lower and in the higher working; only in the one it is pursued tardily and obscurely through the subconscious in Nature, in the other it becomes swift and self-conscious and the instrument confesses the hand of the Master. All life is a Yoga of Nature seeking to manifest God within itself. Yoga marks the stage at which this effort becomes capable of self-awareness and therefore of right completion in the individual. It is a gathering up and concentration of the movements dispersed and loosely combined in the lower evolution.

An integral method and an integral result. First, an integral realisation of Divine Being; not only a realisation of the One in its indistinguishable unity, but also in its multitude of aspects which are also necessary to the complete knowledge of it by the relative consciousness; not only realisation of unity in the Self, but of unity in the infinite diversity of activities, worlds and creatures.

Therefore, also, an integral liberation. Not only the freedom born of unbroken contact and identification of the individual being in all its parts with the Divine, *sāyujya-mukti*, by which it can become free[2] even in its separation, even in the duality; not only the *sālokya-mukti* by which the whole conscious existence dwells in the same status of being as the Divine, in the state of Sachchidananda; but also the acquisition of the divine nature by the transformation of this lower being into the human image of the Divine, *sādharmya-mukti*, and the complete and final release of all, the liberation of the consciousness from the transitory mould of the ego and its unification with the One Being, universal both in the world and the individual and transcendentally one both in the world and beyond all universe.

By this integral realisation and liberation, the perfect harmony of the results of Knowledge, Love and Works. For there is attained the complete release from ego and identification in being with the One in all and beyond all. But since the attaining consciousness is not limited by its attainment, we win also the unity in Beatitude and the harmonised diversity in Love, so that all relations of the play remain possible to us even while we retain on the heights of our being the eternal oneness with the Beloved. And by a similar wideness, being capable of a freedom in spirit that embraces life and does not depend upon withdrawal from life, we are able to become without egoism, bondage or reaction the channel in our mind and body for a divine action poured out freely upon the world.

The divine existence is of the nature not only of freedom, but of purity, beatitude and perfection. An integral purity which shall enable on the one hand the perfect reflection of the divine Being in ourselves and on the other the perfect outpouring of its Truth and Law in us in the terms of life and through the right functioning of the complex instrument we are in our outer parts, is the condition of an integral liberty. Its result is an integral beatitude, in which there becomes possible at once the Ananda of all that is in the world seen as symbols of the Divine and the Ananda of that which is not-world. And it prepares the integral perfection of our humanity as a type of the Divine in the conditions of the human manifestation, a perfection founded on a certain free universality of being, of love and joy, of play of knowledge and of play of will in power and will in unegoistic action. This integrality also can be attained by the integral Yoga.

---

[2] As the Jivanmukta, who is entirely free even without dissolution of the bodily life in a final Samadhi.

Perfection includes perfection of mind and body, so that the highest results of Rajayoga and Hathayoga should be contained in the widest formula of the synthesis finally to be effected by mankind. At any rate a full development of the general mental and physical faculties and experiences attainable by humanity through Yoga must be included in the scope of the integral method. Nor would these have any *raison d'être* unless employed for an integral mental and physical life. Such a mental and physical life would be in its nature a translation of the spiritual existence into its right mental and physical values. Thus we would arrive at a synthesis of the three degrees of Nature and of the three modes of human existence which she has evolved or is evolving. We would include in the scope of our liberated being and perfected modes of activity the material life, our base, and the mental life, our intermediate instrument.

Nor would the integrality to which we aspire be real or even possible, if it were confined to the individual. Since our divine perfection embraces the realisation of ourselves in being, in life and in love through others as well as through ourselves, the extension of our liberty and of its results in others would be the inevitable outcome as well as the broadest utility of our liberation and perfection. And the constant and inherent attempt of such an extension would be towards its increasing and ultimately complete generalisation in mankind.

The divinising of the normal material life of man and of his great secular attempt of mental and moral self-culture in the individual and the race by this integralisation of a widely perfect spiritual existence would thus be the crown alike of our individual and of our common effort. Such a consummation being no other than the kingdom of heaven within reproduced in the kingdom of heaven without, would be also the true fulfilment of the great dream cherished in different terms by the world's religions.

The widest synthesis of perfection possible to thought is the sole effort entirely worthy of those whose dedicated vision perceives that God dwells concealed in humanity.

Part I

The Yoga of Divine Works

Chapter I

The Four Aids

YOGA-SIDDHI, the perfection that comes from the practice of Yoga, can be best attained by the combined working of four great instruments. There is, first, the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation — *śāstra*. Next comes a patient and persistent action on the lines laid down by this knowledge, the force of our personal effort — *utsāha*. There intervenes, third, uplifting our knowledge and effort into the domain of spiritual experience, the direct suggestion, example and influence of the Teacher — *guru*. Last comes the instrumentality of Time — *kāla*; for in all things there is a cycle of their action and a period of the divine movement.

⁂

The supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every thinking and living being. The lotus of the eternal knowledge and the eternal perfection is a bud closed and folded up within us. It opens swiftly or gradually, petal by petal, through successive realisations, once the mind of man begins to turn towards the Eternal, once his heart, no longer compressed and confined by attachment to finite appearances, becomes enamoured, in whatever degree, of the Infinite. All life, all thought, all energising of the faculties, all experiences passive or active, become thenceforward so many shocks which disintegrate the teguments of the soul and remove the obstacles to the inevitable efflorescence. He who chooses the Infinite has been chosen by the Infinite. He has received the divine touch without which there is no awakening, no opening of the spirit; but once it is received, attainment is sure, whether conquered swiftly in the course of one human life or pursued patiently through many stadia of the cycle of existence in the manifested universe.

Nothing can be taught to the mind which is not already concealed as potential knowledge in the unfolding soul of the creature. So also all perfection of which the outer man is capable, is only a realising of the eternal perfection of the Spirit within him. We know the Divine and become the Divine, because we are That already in our secret nature. All teaching is a revealing, all becoming is an unfolding. Self-attainment is the secret; self-knowledge and an increasing consciousness are the means and the process.

The usual agency of this revealing is the Word, the thing heard (*śruta*). The Word may come to us from within; it may come to us from without. But in either case, it is only an agency for setting the hidden knowledge to work. The word within may be the utterance of the inmost soul in us which is always open to the Divine; or it may be the word of the secret and universal Teacher who is seated in the hearts of all. There are rare cases in which none other is needed, for all the rest of the Yoga is an unfolding under that constant touch and guidance; the lotus of the knowledge discloses itself from within by the power of irradiating effulgence which proceeds from the Dweller in the lotus of the heart. Great indeed, but few are those to whom self-knowledge from within is thus sufficient and who do not need to pass under the dominant influence of a written book or a living teacher.

Ordinarily, the Word from without, representative of the Divine, is needed as an aid in the work of self-unfolding; and it may be either a word from the past or the more powerful word of the living Guru. In some cases this representative word is only taken as a sort of excuse for the inner power to awaken and manifest; it is, as it were, a concession of the omnipotent and omniscient Divine to the generality of a law that governs Nature. Thus it is said in the Upanishads of Krishna, son of Devaki, that he received a word of the Rishi Ghora and had the knowledge. So Ramakrishna, having attained by his own internal effort the central illumination, accepted several teachers in the different paths of Yoga, but always showed in the manner and swiftness of his realisation that this acceptance was a concession to the general rule by which effective knowledge must be received as by a disciple from a Guru.

But usually the representative influence occupies a much larger place in the life of the sadhaka. If the Yoga is guided by a received written Shastra, — some Word from the past which embodies the experience of former Yogins, — it may be practised either by personal effort alone or with the aid of a Guru. The spiritual knowledge is then gained through meditation on the truths that are taught and it is made living and conscious by their realisation in the personal experience; the Yoga proceeds by the results of prescribed methods taught in a Scripture or a tradition and reinforced and illumined by the instructions of the Master. This is a narrower practice, but safe and effective within its limits, because it follows a well-beaten track to a long familiar goal.

For the sadhaka of the integral Yoga it is necessary to remember that no written Shastra, however great its authority or however large its spirit, can be more than a partial expression of the eternal Knowledge. He will use, but never bind himself even by the greatest Scripture. Where the Scripture is profound, wide, catholic, it may exercise upon him an influence for the highest good and of incalculable importance. It may be associated in his experience with his awakening to crowning verities and his realisation of the highest experiences. His Yoga may be governed for a long time by one Scripture or by several successively, — if it is in the line of the great Hindu tradition, by the Gita, for example, the Upanishads, the Veda. Or it may be a good part of his development to include in its material a richly varied experience of the truths of many Scriptures and make the future opulent with all that is best in the past. But in the end he must take his station, or better still, if he can, always and from the beginning he must live in his own soul beyond the limitations of the word that he uses. The Gita itself thus declares that the Yogin in his progress must pass beyond the written Truth, — *śabdabrahmātivartate* — beyond all that he has heard and all that he has yet to hear, — *śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*. For he is not the sadhaka of a book or of many books; he is a sadhaka of the Infinite.

Another kind of Shastra is not Scripture, but a statement of the science and methods, the effective principles and way of working of the path of Yoga which the sadhaka elects to follow. Each path has its Shastra, either written or traditional, passing from mouth to mouth through a long line of Teachers. In India a great authority, a high reverence even is ordinarily attached to the written or traditional teaching. All the lines of the Yoga are supposed to be fixed and the Teacher who has received the Shastra by tradition and realised it in practice guides the disciple along the immemorial tracks. One often even hears the objection urged against a new practice, a new Yogic teaching, the adoption of a new formula, "It is not according to the Shastra." But neither in fact nor in the actual practice of the Yogins is there really any such entire rigidity of an iron door shut against new truth, fresh revelation, widened experience. The written or traditional teaching expresses the knowledge and experiences of many centuries systematised, organised, made attainable to the beginner. Its importance and utility are therefore immense. But a great freedom of variation and development is always practicable. Even so highly scientific a system as Rajayoga can be practised on other lines than the organised method of Patanjali. Each of the three paths of the *trimārga*[1] breaks into many bypaths which meet again at the goal. The general knowledge on which the Yoga depends is fixed, but the order, the succession, the devices, the forms must be allowed to vary; for the needs and particular impulsions of the individual nature have to be satisfied even while the general truths remain firm and constant.

An integral and synthetic Yoga needs especially not to be bound by any written or traditional Shastra; for while it embraces the knowledge received from the past, it seeks to organise it anew for the present and the future. An absolute liberty of experience and of the restatement of knowledge in new terms and new combinations is the condition of its self-formation.

---

[1] The triple path of Knowledge, Devotion and Works.

Seeking to embrace all life in itself, it is in the position not of a pilgrim following the highroad to his destination, but, to that extent at least, of a path-finder hewing his way through a virgin forest. For Yoga has long diverged from life and the ancient systems which sought to embrace it, such as those of our Vedic forefathers, are far away from us, expressed in terms which are no longer accessible, thrown into forms which are no longer applicable. Since then mankind has moved forward on the current of eternal Time and the same problem has to be approached from a new starting-point.

By this Yoga we not only seek the Infinite, but we call upon the Infinite to unfold himself in human life. Therefore the Shastra of our Yoga must provide for an infinite liberty in the receptive human soul. A free adaptability in the manner and the type of the individual's acceptance of the Universal and Transcendent into himself is the right condition for the full spiritual life in man. Vivekananda, pointing out that the unity of all religions must necessarily express itself by an increasing richness of variety in its forms, said once that the perfect state of that essential unity would come when each man had his own religion, when not bound by sect or traditional form he followed the free self-adaptation of his nature in its relations with the Supreme. So also one may say that the perfection of the integral Yoga will come when each man is able to follow his own path of Yoga, pursuing the development of his own nature in its upsurging towards that which transcends the nature. For freedom is the final law and the last consummation.

Meanwhile certain general lines have to be formed which may help to guide the thought and practice of the sadhaka. But these must take as much as possible the form of general truths, general statements of principle, the most powerful broad directions of effort and development rather than a fixed system which has to be followed as a routine. All Shastra is the outcome of past experience and a help to future experience. It is an aid and a partial guide. It puts up signposts, gives the names of the main roads and the already explored directions, so that the traveller may know whither and by what paths he is proceeding.

The rest depends on personal effort and experience and upon the power of the Guide.

⁂

The development of the experience in its rapidity, its amplitude, the intensity and power of its results, depends primarily, in the beginning of the path and long after, on the aspiration and personal effort of the sadhaka. The process of Yoga is a turning of the human soul from the egoistic state of consciousness absorbed in the outward appearances and attractions of things to a higher state in which the Transcendent and Universal can pour itself into the individual mould and transform it. The first determining element of the siddhi is, therefore, the intensity of the turning, the force which directs the soul inward. The power of aspiration of the heart, the force of the will, the concentration of the mind, the perseverance and determination of the applied energy are the measure of that intensity. The ideal sadhaka should be able to say in the Biblical phrase, "My zeal for the Lord has eaten me up." It is this zeal for the Lord, — *utsāha*, the zeal of the whole nature for its divine results, *vyākulatā*, the heart's eagerness for the attainment of the Divine, — that devours the ego and breaks up the limitations of its petty and narrow mould for the full and wide reception of that which it seeks, that which, being universal, exceeds and, being transcendent, surpasses even the largest and highest individual self and nature.

But this is only one side of the force that works for perfection. The process of the integral Yoga has three stages, not indeed sharply distinguished or separate, but in a certain measure successive. There must be, first, the effort towards at least an initial and enabling self-transcendence and contact with the Divine; next, the reception of that which transcends, that with which we have gained communion, into ourselves for the transformation of our whole conscious being; last, the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world. So long as the contact with the Divine is not in some considerable degree established, so long as there is not some measure of sustained identity, *sāyujya*, the element of personal effort must normally predominate. But in proportion as this contact establishes itself, the sadhaka must become conscious that a force other than his own, a force transcending his egoistic endeavour and capacity, is at work in him and to this Power he learns progressively to submit himself and delivers up to it the charge of his Yoga. In the end his own will and force become one with the higher Power; he merges them in the divine Will and its transcendent and universal Force. He finds it thenceforward presiding over the necessary transformation of his mental, vital and physical being with an impartial wisdom and provident effectivity of which the eager and interested ego is not capable. It is when this identification and this self-merging are complete that the divine centre in the world is ready. Purified, liberated, plastic, illumined, it can begin to serve as a means for the direct action of a supreme Power in the larger Yoga of humanity or superhumanity, of the earth's spiritual progression or its transformation.

Always indeed it is the higher Power that acts. Our sense of personal effort and aspiration comes from the attempt of the egoistic mind to identify itself in a wrong and imperfect way with the workings of the divine Force. It persists in applying to experience on a supernormal plane the ordinary terms of mentality which it applies to its normal experiences in the world. In the world we act with the sense of egoism; we claim the universal forces that work in us as our own; we claim as the effect of our personal will, wisdom, force, virtue the selective, formative, progressive action of the Transcendent in this frame of mind, life and body. Enlightenment brings to us the knowledge that the ego is only an instrument; we begin to perceive and feel that these things are our own in the sense that they belong to our supreme and integral Self, one with the Transcendent, not to the instrumental ego. Our limitations and distortions are our contribution to the working; the true power in it is the Divine's. When the human ego realises that its will is a tool, its wisdom ignorance and childishness, its power an infant's groping, its virtue a pretentious impurity, and learns to trust itself to that which transcends it, that is its salvation. The apparent freedom and self-assertion of our personal being to which we are so profoundly attached, conceal a most pitiable subjection to a thousand suggestions, impulsions, forces which we have made extraneous to our little person. Our ego, boasting of freedom, is at every moment the slave, toy and puppet of countless beings, powers, forces, influences in universal Nature. The self-abnegation of the ego in the Divine is its self-fulfilment; its surrender to that which transcends it is its liberation from bonds and limits and its perfect freedom.

But still, in the practical development, each of the three stages has its necessity and utility and must be given its time or its place. It will not do, it cannot be safe or effective to begin with the last and highest alone. It would not be the right course, either, to leap prematurely from one to another. For even if from the beginning we recognise in mind and heart the Supreme, there are elements of the nature which long prevent the recognition from becoming realisation. But without realisation our mental belief cannot become a dynamic reality; it is still only a figure of knowledge, not a living truth, an idea, not yet a power. And even if realisation has begun, it may be dangerous to imagine or to assume too soon that we are altogether in the hands of the Supreme or are acting as his instrument. That assumption may introduce a calamitous falsity; it may produce a helpless inertia or, magnifying the movements of the ego with the Divine Name, it may disastrously distort and ruin the whole course of the Yoga. There is a period, more or less prolonged, of internal effort and struggle in which the individual will has to reject the darkness and distortions of the lower nature and to put itself resolutely or vehemently on the side of the divine Light. The mental energies, the heart's emotions, the vital desires, the very physical being have to be compelled into the right attitude or trained to admit and answer to the right influences. It is only then, only when this has been truly done, that the surrender of the lower to the higher can be effected, because the sacrifice has become acceptable.

The personal will of the sadhaka has first to seize on the egoistic energies and turn them towards the light and the right;

once turned, he has still to train them to recognise that always, always to accept, always to follow that. Progressing, he learns, still using the personal will, personal effort, personal energies, to employ them as representatives of the higher Power and in conscious obedience to the higher Influence. Progressing yet farther, his will, effort, energy become no longer personal and separate, but activities of that higher Power and Influence at work in the individual. But there is still a sort of gulf or distance which necessitates an obscure process of transit, not always accurate, sometimes even very distorting, between the divine Origin and the emerging human current. At the end of the process, with the progressive disappearance of egoism and impurity and ignorance, this last separation is removed; all in the individual becomes the divine working.

⁂

As the supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every man, so its supreme Guide and Teacher is the inner Guide, the World-Teacher, *jagad-guru*, secret within us. It is he who destroys our darkness by the resplendent light of his knowledge; that light becomes within us the increasing glory of his own self-revelation. He discloses progressively in us his own nature of freedom, bliss, love, power, immortal being. He sets above us his divine example as our ideal and transforms the lower existence into a reflection of that which it contemplates. By the inpouring of his own influence and presence into us he enables the individual being to attain to identity with the universal and transcendent.

What is his method and his system? He has no method and every method. His system is a natural organisation of the highest processes and movements of which the nature is capable. Applying themselves even to the pettiest details and to the actions the most insignificant in their appearance with as much care and thoroughness as to the greatest, they in the end lift all into the Light and transform all. For in his Yoga there is nothing too small to be used and nothing too great to be attempted. As the servant and disciple of the Master has no business with pride or egoism because all is done for him from above, so also he has no right to despond because of his personal deficiencies or the stumblings of his nature. For the Force that works in him is impersonal — or superpersonal — and infinite.

The full recognition of this inner Guide, Master of the Yoga, lord, light, enjoyer and goal of all sacrifice and effort, is of the utmost importance in the path of integral perfection. It is immaterial whether he is first seen as an impersonal Wisdom, Love and Power behind all things, as an Absolute manifesting in the relative and attracting it, as one's highest Self and the highest Self of all, as a Divine Person within us and in the world, in one of his — or her — numerous forms and names or as the ideal which the mind conceives. In the end we perceive that he is all and more than all these things together. The mind's door of entry to the conception of him must necessarily vary according to the past evolution and the present nature.

This inner Guide is often veiled at first by the very intensity of our personal effort and by the ego's preoccupation with itself and its aims. As we gain in clarity and the turmoil of egoistic effort gives place to a calmer self-knowledge, we recognise the source of the growing light within us. We recognise it retrospectively as we realise how all our obscure and conflicting movements have been determined towards an end that we only now begin to perceive, how even before our entrance into the path of the Yoga the evolution of our life has been designedly led towards its turning-point. For now we begin to understand the sense of our struggles and efforts, successes and failures. At last we are able to seize the meaning of our ordeals and sufferings and can appreciate the help that was given us by all that hurt and resisted and the utility of our very falls and stumblings. We recognise this divine leading afterwards, not retrospectively but immediately, in the moulding of our thoughts by a transcendent Seer, of our will and actions by an all-embracing Power, of our emotional life by an all-attracting and all-assimilating Bliss and Love. We recognise it too in a more personal relation that from the first touched or at the last seizes us; we feel the eternal presence of a supreme Master, Friend, Lover, Teacher. We recognise it in the essence of our being as that develops into likeness and oneness with a greater and wider existence; for we perceive that this miraculous development is not the result of our own efforts: an eternal Perfection is moulding us into its own image. One who is the Lord or Ishwara of the Yogic philosophies, the Guide in the conscious being (*caitya guru* or *antaryāmin*), the Absolute of the thinker, the Unknowable of the Agnostic, the universal Force of the materialist, the supreme Soul and the supreme Shakti, the One who is differently named and imaged by the religions, is the Master of our Yoga.

To see, know, become and fulfil this One in our inner selves and in all our outer nature, was always the secret goal and becomes now the conscious purpose of our embodied existence. To be conscious of him in all parts of our being and equally in all that the dividing mind sees as outside our being, is the consummation of the individual consciousness. To be possessed by him and possess him in ourselves and in all things is the term of all empire and mastery. To enjoy him in all experience of passivity and activity, of peace and of power, of unity and of difference is the happiness which the Jiva, the individual soul manifested in the world, is obscurely seeking. This is the entire definition of the aim of integral Yoga; it is the rendering in personal experience of the truth which universal Nature has hidden in herself and which she travails to discover. It is the conversion of the human soul into the divine soul and of natural life into divine living.

* * *

The surest way towards this integral fulfilment is to find the Master of the secret who dwells within us, open ourselves constantly to the divine Power which is also the divine Wisdom and Love and trust to it to effect the conversion. But it is difficult for the egoistic consciousness to do this at all at the beginning. And, if done at all, it is still difficult to do it perfectly and in every strand of our nature. It is difficult at first because our egoistic habits of thought, of sensation, of feeling block up the avenues by which we can arrive at the perception that is needed. It is difficult afterwards because the faith, the surrender, the courage requisite in this path are not easy to the ego-clouded soul. The divine working is not the working which the egoistic mind desires or approves; for it uses error in order to arrive at truth, suffering in order to arrive at bliss, imperfection in order to arrive at perfection. The ego cannot see where it is being led; it revolts against the leading, loses confidence, loses courage. These failings would not matter; for the divine Guide within is not offended by our revolt, not discouraged by our want of faith or repelled by our weakness; he has the entire love of the mother and the entire patience of the teacher. But by withdrawing our assent from the guidance we lose the consciousness, though not all the actuality — not, in any case, the eventuality — of its benefit. And we withdraw our assent because we fail to distinguish our higher Self from the lower through which he is preparing his self-revelation. As in the world, so in ourselves, we cannot see God because of his workings and, especially, because he works in us through our nature and not by a succession of arbitrary miracles. Man demands miracles that he may have faith; he wishes to be dazzled in order that he may see. And this impatience, this ignorance may turn into a great danger and disaster if, in our revolt against the divine leading, we call in another distorting Force more satisfying to our impulses and desires and ask it to guide us and give it the Divine Name.

But while it is difficult for man to believe in something unseen within himself, it is easy for him to believe in something which he can image as extraneous to himself. The spiritual progress of most human beings demands an extraneous support, an object of faith outside us. It needs an external image of God; or it needs a human representative, — Incarnation, Prophet or Guru; or it demands both and receives them. For according to the need of the human soul the Divine manifests himself as deity, as human divine or in simple humanity — using that thick disguise, which so successfully conceals the Godhead, for a means of transmission of his guidance.

The Hindu discipline of spirituality provides for this need of the soul by the conceptions of the Ishta Devata, the Avatar and the Guru. By the Ishta Devata, the chosen deity, is meant, — not some inferior Power, but a name and form of the transcendent and universal Godhead. Almost all religions either have as their base or make use of some such name and form of the Divine. Its necessity for the human soul is evident. God is the All and more than the All. But that which is more than the All, how shall man conceive? And even the All is at first too hard for him; for he himself in his active consciousness is a limited and selective formation and can open himself only to that which is in harmony with his limited nature. There are things in the All which are too hard for his comprehension or seem too terrible to his sensitive emotions and cowering sensations. Or, simply, he cannot conceive as the Divine, cannot approach or cannot recognise something that is too much out of the circle of his ignorant or partial conceptions. It is necessary for him to conceive God in his own image or in some form that is beyond himself but consonant with his highest tendencies and seizable by his feelings or his intelligence. Otherwise it would be difficult for him to come into contact and communion with the Divine.

Even then his nature calls for a human intermediary so that he may feel the Divine in something entirely close to his own humanity and sensible in a human influence and example. This call is satisfied by the Divine manifest in a human appearance, the Incarnation, the Avatar — Krishna, Christ, Buddha. Or if this is too hard for him to conceive, the Divine represents himself through a less marvellous intermediary, — Prophet or Teacher. For many who cannot conceive or are unwilling to accept the Divine Man, are ready to open themselves to the supreme man, terming him not incarnation but world-teacher or divine representative.

This also is not enough; a living influence, a living example, a present instruction is needed. For it is only the few who can make the past Teacher and his teaching, the past Incarnation and his example and influence a living force in their lives. For this need also the Hindu discipline provides in the relation of the Guru and the disciple. The Guru may sometimes be the Incarnation or World-Teacher; but it is sufficient that he should represent to the disciple the divine wisdom, convey to him something of the divine ideal or make him feel the realised relation of the human soul with the Eternal.

The sadhaka of the integral Yoga will make use of all these aids according to his nature; but it is necessary that he should shun their limitations and cast from himself that exclusive tendency of egoistic mind which cries, "My God, my Incarnation, my Prophet, my Guru," and opposes it to all other realisation in a sectarian or a fanatical spirit. All sectarianism, all fanaticism must be shunned; for it is inconsistent with the integrity of the divine realisation.

On the contrary, the sadhaka of the integral Yoga will not be satisfied until he has included all other names and forms of Deity in his own conception, seen his own Ishta Devata in all others, unified all Avatars in the unity of Him who descends in the Avatar, welded the truth in all teachings into the harmony of the Eternal Wisdom.

Nor should he forget the aim of these external aids which is to awaken his soul to the Divine within him. Nothing has been finally accomplished if that has not been accomplished. It is not sufficient to worship Krishna, Christ or Buddha without, if there is not the revealing and the formation of the Buddha, the Christ or Krishna in ourselves. And all other aids equally have no other purpose; each is a bridge between man's unconverted state and the revelation of the Divine within him.

⁂

The Teacher of the integral Yoga will follow as far as he may the method of the Teacher within us. He will lead the disciple through the nature of the disciple. Teaching, example, influence, — these are the three instruments of the Guru. But the wise Teacher will not seek to impose himself or his opinions on the passive acceptance of the receptive mind; he will throw in only what is productive and sure as a seed which will grow under the divine fostering within. He will seek to awaken much more than to instruct; he will aim at the growth of the faculties and the experiences by a natural process and free expansion. He will give a method as an aid, as a utilisable device, not as an imperative formula or a fixed routine. And he will be on his guard against any turning of the means into a limitation, against the mechanising of process. His whole business is to awaken the divine light and set working the divine force of which he himself is only a means and an aid, a body or a channel.

The example is more powerful than the instruction; but it is not the example of the outward acts nor that of the personal character which is of most importance. These have their place and their utility; but what will most stimulate aspiration in others is the central fact of the divine realisation within him governing his whole life and inner state and all his activities. This is the universal and essential element; the rest belongs to individual person and circumstance. It is this dynamic realisation that the sadhaka must feel and reproduce in himself according to his own nature; he need not strive after an imitation from outside which may well be sterilising rather than productive of right and natural fruits.

Influence is more important than example. Influence is not the outward authority of the Teacher over his disciple, but the power of his contact, of his presence, of the nearness of his soul to the soul of another, infusing into it, even though in silence, that which he himself is and possesses. This is the supreme sign of the Master. For the greatest Master is much less a Teacher than a Presence pouring the divine consciousness and its constituting light and power and purity and bliss into all who are receptive around him.

And it shall also be a sign of the teacher of the integral Yoga that he does not arrogate to himself Guruhood in a humanly vain and self-exalting spirit. His work, if he has one, is a trust from above, he himself a channel, a vessel or a representative. He is a man helping his brothers, a child leading children, a Light kindling other lights, an awakened Soul awakening souls, at highest a Power or Presence of the Divine calling to him other powers of the Divine.

* * *

The sadhaka who has all these aids is sure of his goal. Even a fall will be for him only a means of rising and death a passage towards fulfilment. For once on this path, birth and death become only processes in the development of his being and the stages of his journey.

Time is the remaining aid needed for the effectivity of the process. Time presents itself to human effort as an enemy or a friend, as a resistance, a medium or an instrument. But always it is really the instrument of the soul.

Time is a field of circumstances and forces meeting and working out a resultant progression whose course it measures. To the ego it is a tyrant or a resistance, to the Divine an instrument. Therefore, while our effort is personal, Time appears as a resistance, for it presents to us all the obstruction of the forces that conflict with our own. When the divine working and the personal are combined in our consciousness, it appears as a medium and a condition. When the two become one, it appears as a servant and instrument.

The ideal attitude of the sadhaka towards Time is to have an endless patience as if he had all eternity for his fulfilment and yet to develop the energy that shall realise now and with an ever-increasing mastery and pressure of rapidity till it reaches the miraculous instantaneousness of the supreme divine Transformation.

Chapter II

Self-Consecration

ALL YOGA is in its nature a new birth; it is a birth out of the ordinary, the mentalised material life of man into a higher spiritual consciousness and a greater and diviner being. No Yoga can be successfully undertaken and followed unless there is a strong awakening to the necessity of that larger spiritual existence. The soul that is called to this deep and vast inward change, may arrive in different ways to the initial departure. It may come to it by its own natural development which has been leading it unconsciously towards the awakening; it may reach it through the influence of a religion or the attraction of a philosophy; it may approach it by a slow illumination or leap to it by a sudden touch or shock; it may be pushed or led to it by the pressure of outward circumstances or by an inward necessity, by a single word that breaks the seals of the mind or by long reflection, by the distant example of one who has trod the path or by contact and daily influence. According to the nature and the circumstances the call will come.

But in whatever way it comes, there must be a decision of the mind and the will and, as its result, a complete and effective self-consecration. The acceptance of a new spiritual idea-force and upward orientation in the being, an illumination, a turning or conversion seized on by the will and the heart's aspiration, — this is the momentous act which contains as in a seed all the results that the Yoga has to give. The mere idea or intellectual seeking of something higher beyond, however strongly grasped by the mind's interest, is ineffective unless it is seized on by the heart as the one thing desirable and by the will as the one thing to be done. For truth of the Spirit has not to be merely thought but to be lived, and to live it demands a unified single-mindedness of the being; so great a change as is contemplated by the Yoga is not to be effected by a divided will or by a small portion of the energy or by a hesitating mind. He who seeks the Divine must consecrate himself to God and to God only.

If the change comes suddenly and decisively by an overpowering influence, there is no further essential or lasting difficulty. The choice follows upon the thought, or is simultaneous with it, and the self-consecration follows upon the choice. The feet are already set upon the path, even if they seem at first to wander uncertainly and even though the path itself may be only obscurely seen and the knowledge of the goal may be imperfect. The secret Teacher, the inner Guide is already at work, though he may not yet manifest himself or may not yet appear in the person of his human representative. Whatever difficulties and hesitations may ensue, they cannot eventually prevail against the power of the experience that has turned the current of the life. The call, once decisive, stands; the thing that has been born cannot eventually be stifled. Even if the force of circumstances prevents a regular pursuit or a full practical self-consecration from the first, still the mind has taken its bent and persists and returns with an ever-increasing effect upon its leading preoccupation. There is an ineluctable persistence of the inner being, and against it circumstances are in the end powerless, and no weakness in the nature can for long be an obstacle.

But this is not always the manner of the commencement. The sadhaka is often led gradually and there is a long space between the first turning of the mind and the full assent of the nature to the thing towards which it turns. There may at first be only a vivid intellectual interest, a forcible attraction towards the idea and some imperfect form of practice. Or perhaps there is an effort not favoured by the whole nature, a decision or a turn imposed by an intellectual influence or dictated by personal affection and admiration for someone who is himself consecrated and devoted to the Highest. In such cases, a long period of preparation may be necessary before there comes the irrevocable consecration; and in some instances it may not come. There may be some advance, there may be a strong effort, even much purification and many experiences other than those that are central or supreme; but the life will either be spent in preparation or, a certain stage having been reached, the mind pushed by an insufficient driving-force may rest content at the limit of the effort possible to it. Or there may even be a recoil to the lower life, — what is called in the ordinary parlance of Yoga a fall from the path. This lapse happens because there is a defect at the very centre. The intellect has been interested, the heart attracted, the will has strung itself to the effort, but the whole nature has not been taken captive by the Divine. It has only acquiesced in the interest, the attraction or the endeavour. There has been an experiment, perhaps even an eager experiment, but not a total self-giving to an imperative need of the soul or to an unforsakable ideal. Even such imperfect Yoga has not been wasted; for no upward effort is made in vain. Even if it fails in the present or arrives only at some preparatory stage or preliminary realisation, it has yet determined the soul's future.

But if we desire to make the most of the opportunity that this life gives us, if we wish to respond adequately to the call we have received and to attain to the goal we have glimpsed, not merely advance a little towards it, it is essential that there should be an entire self-giving. The secret of success in Yoga is to regard it not as one of the aims to be pursued in life, but as the one and only aim, not as an important part of life, but as the whole of life.

⁂

And since Yoga is in its essence a turning away from the ordinary material and animal life led by most men or from the more mental but still limited way of living followed by the few to a greater spiritual life, to the way divine, every part of our energies that is given to the lower existence in the spirit of that existence is a contradiction of our aim and our self-dedication. On the other hand, every energy or activity that we can convert from its allegiance to the lower and dedicate to the service of the higher is so much gained on our road, so much taken from the powers that oppose our progress. It is the difficulty of this wholesale conversion that is the source of all the stumblings in the path of Yoga. For our entire nature and its environment, all our personal and all our universal self, are full of habits and of influences that are opposed to our spiritual rebirth and work against the whole-heartedness of our endeavour. In a certain sense we are nothing but a complex mass of mental, nervous and physical habits held together by a few ruling ideas, desires and associations, — an amalgam of many small self-repeating forces with a few major vibrations. What we propose in our Yoga is nothing less than to break up the whole formation of our past and present which makes up the ordinary material and mental man and to create a new centre of vision and a new universe of activities in ourselves which shall constitute a divine humanity or a superhuman nature.

The first necessity is to dissolve that central faith and vision in the mind which concentrate it on its development and satisfaction and interests in the old externalised order of things. It is imperative to exchange this surface orientation for the deeper faith and vision which see only the Divine and seek only after the Divine. The next need is to compel all our lower being to pay homage to this new faith and greater vision. All our nature must make an integral surrender; it must offer itself in every part and every movement to that which seems to the unregenerated sense-mind so much less real than the material world and its objects. Our whole being — soul, mind, sense, heart, will, life, body — must consecrate all its energies so entirely and in such a way that it shall become a fit vehicle for the Divine. This is no easy task; for everything in the world follows the fixed habit which is to it a law and resists a radical change. And no change can be more radical than the revolution attempted in the integral Yoga. Everything in us has constantly to be called back to the central faith and will and vision. Every thought and impulse has to be reminded in the language of the Upanishad that "That is the divine Brahman and not this which men here adore." Every vital fibre has to be persuaded to accept an entire renunciation of all that hitherto represented to it its own existence. Mind has to cease to be mind and become brilliant with something beyond it. Life has to change into a thing vast and calm and intense and powerful that can no longer recognise its old blind eager narrow self of petty impulse and desire. Even the body has to submit to a mutation and be no longer the clamorous animal or the impeding clod it now is, but become instead a conscious servant and radiant instrument and living form of the spirit.

The difficulty of the task has led naturally to the pursuit of easy and trenchant solutions; it has generated and fixed deeply the tendency of religions and of schools of Yoga to separate the life of the world from the inner life. The powers of this world and their actual activities, it is felt, either do not belong to God at all or are for some obscure and puzzling cause, Maya or another, a dark contradiction of the divine Truth. And on their own opposite side the powers of the Truth and their ideal activities are seen to belong to quite another plane of consciousness than that, obscure, ignorant and perverse in its impulses and forces, on which the life of the earth is founded. There appears at once the antinomy of a bright and pure kingdom of God and a dark and impure kingdom of the devil; we feel the opposition of our crawling earthly birth and life to an exalted spiritual God-consciousness; we become readily convinced of the incompatibility of life's subjection to Maya with the soul's concentration in pure Brahman existence. The easiest way is to turn away from all that belongs to the one and to retreat by a naked and precipitous ascent into the other. Thus arises the attraction and, it would seem, the necessity of the principle of exclusive concentration which plays so prominent a part in the specialised schools of Yoga; for by that concentration we can arrive through an uncompromising renunciation of the world at an entire self-consecration to the One on whom we concentrate. It is no longer incumbent on us to compel all the lower activities to the difficult recognition of a new and higher spiritualised life and train them to be its agents or executive powers. It is enough to kill or quiet them and keep at most the few energies necessary, on one side, for the maintenance of the body and, on the other, for communion with the Divine.

The very aim and conception of an integral Yoga debar us from adopting this simple and strenuous high-pitched process.

The hope of an integral transformation forbids us to take a short cut or to make ourselves light for the race by throwing away our impedimenta. For we have set out to conquer all ourselves and the world for God; we are determined to give him our becoming as well as our being and not merely to bring the pure and naked spirit as a bare offering to a remote and secret Divinity in a distant heaven or abolish all we are in a holocaust to an immobile Absolute. The Divine that we adore is not only a remote extra-cosmic Reality, but a half-veiled Manifestation present and near to us here in the universe. Life is the field of a divine manifestation not yet complete: here, in life, on earth, in the body, — *ihaiva*, as the Upanishads insist, — we have to unveil the Godhead; here we must make its transcendent greatness, light and sweetness real to our consciousness, here possess and, as far as may be, express it. Life then we must accept in our Yoga in order utterly to transmute it; we are forbidden to shrink from the difficulties that this acceptance may add to our struggle. Our compensation is that even if the path is more rugged, the effort more complex and bafflingly arduous, yet after a certain point we gain an immense advantage. For once our minds are reasonably fixed in the central vision and our wills are on the whole converted to the single pursuit, Life becomes our helper. Intent, vigilant, integrally conscious, we can take every detail of its forms and every incident of its movements as food for the sacrificial Fire within us. Victorious in the struggle, we can compel Earth herself to be an aid towards our perfection and can enrich our realisation with the booty torn from the Powers that oppose us.

⁂

There is another direction in which the ordinary practice of Yoga arrives at a helpful but narrowing simplification which is denied to the sadhaka of the integral aim. The practice of Yoga brings us face to face with the extraordinary complexity of our own being, the stimulating but also embarrassing multiplicity of our personality, the rich endless confusion of Nature. To the ordinary man who lives upon his own waking surface, ignorant of the self's depths and vastnesses behind the veil, his psychological existence is fairly simple. A small but clamorous company of desires, some imperative intellectual and aesthetic cravings, some tastes, a few ruling or prominent ideas amid a great current of unconnected or ill-connected and mostly trivial thoughts, a number of more or less imperative vital needs, alternations of physical health and disease, a scattered and inconsequent succession of joys and griefs, frequent minor disturbances and vicissitudes and rarer strong searchings and upheavals of mind or body, and through it all Nature, partly with the aid of his thought and will, partly without or in spite of it, arranging these things in some rough practical fashion, some tolerable disorderly order, — this is the material of his existence. The average human being even now is in his inward existence as crude and undeveloped as was the bygone primitive man in his outward life. But as soon as we go deep within ourselves, — and Yoga means a plunge into all the multiple profundities of the soul, — we find ourselves subjectively, as man in his growth has found himself objectively, surrounded by a whole complex world which we have to know and to conquer.

The most disconcerting discovery is to find that every part of us — intellect, will, sense-mind, nervous or desire self, the heart, the body — has each, as it were, its own complex individuality and natural formation independent of the rest; it neither agrees with itself nor with the others nor with the representative ego which is the shadow cast by some central and centralising self on our superficial ignorance. We find that we are composed not of one but many personalities and each has its own demands and differing nature. Our being is a roughly constituted chaos into which we have to introduce the principle of a divine order. Moreover, we find that inwardly too, no less than outwardly, we are not alone in the world; the sharp separateness of our ego was no more than a strong imposition and delusion; we do not exist in ourselves, we do not really live apart in an inner privacy or solitude. Our mind is a receiving, developing and modifying machine into which there is being constantly passed from moment to moment a ceaseless foreign flux, a streaming mass of disparate materials from above, from below, from outside. Much more than half our thoughts and feelings are not our own in the sense that they take form out of ourselves; of hardly anything can it be said that it is truly original to our nature. A large part comes to us from others or from the environment, whether as raw material or as manufactured imports; but still more largely they come from universal Nature here or from other worlds and planes and their beings and powers and influences; for we are overtopped and environed by other planes of consciousness, mind planes, life planes, subtle matter planes, from which our life and action here are fed, or fed on, pressed, dominated, made use of for the manifestation of their forms and forces. The difficulty of our separate salvation is immensely increased by this complexity and manifold openness and subjection to the in-streaming energies of the universe. Of all this we have to take account, to deal with it, to know what is the secret stuff of our nature and its constituent and resultant motions and to create in it all a divine centre and a true harmony and luminous order.

In the ordinary paths of Yoga the method used for dealing with these conflicting materials is direct and simple. One or another of the principal psychological forces in us is selected as our single means for attaining to the Divine; the rest is quieted into inertia or left to starve in its smallness. The Bhakta, seizing on the emotional forces of the being, the intense activities of the heart, abides concentrated in the love of God, gathered up as into a single one-pointed tongue of fire; he is indifferent to the activities of thought, throws behind him the importunities of the reason, cares nothing for the mind's thirst for knowledge. All the knowledge he needs is his faith and the inspirations that well up from a heart in communion with the Divine. He has no use for any will to works that is not turned to the direct worship of the Beloved or the service of the temple. The man of Knowledge, self-confined by a deliberate choice to the force and activities of discriminative thought, finds release in the mind's hushed inward-drawn endeavour. He concentrates on the idea of the self, succeeds by a subtle inner discernment in distinguishing its silent presence amid the veiling activities of Nature, and through the perceptive idea arrives at the concrete spiritual experience. He is indifferent to the play of the emotions, deaf to the hunger-call of passion, closed to the activities of Life, — the more blessed he, the sooner they fall away from him and leave him free, still and mute, the eternal non-doer. The body is his stumbling-block, the vital functions are his enemies; if their demands can be reduced to a minimum, that is his great good fortune. The endless difficulties that arise from the environing world are dismissed by erecting firmly against them a defence of outer physical and inner spiritual solitude; safe behind a wall of inner silence, he remains impassive and untouched by the world and by others. To be alone with oneself or alone with the Divine, to walk apart with God and his devotees, to entrench oneself in the single self-ward endeavour of the mind or Godward passion of the heart is the trend of these Yogas. The problem is solved by the excision of all but the one central difficulty which pursues the one chosen motive-force; into the midst of the dividing calls of our nature the principle of an exclusive concentration comes sovereignly to our rescue.

But for the sadhaka of the integral Yoga this inner or this outer solitude can only be incidents or periods in his spiritual progress. Accepting life, he has to bear not only his own burden, but a great part of the world's burden too along with it, as a continuation of his own sufficiently heavy load. Therefore his Yoga has much more of the nature of a battle than others; but this is not only an individual battle, it is a collective war waged over a considerable country. He has not only to conquer in himself the forces of egoistic falsehood and disorder, but to conquer them as representatives of the same adverse and inexhaustible forces in the world. Their representative character gives them a much more obstinate capacity of resistance, an almost endless right to recurrence. Often he finds that even after he has won persistently his own personal battle, he has still to win it over and over again in a seemingly interminable war, because his inner existence has already been so much enlarged that not only it contains his own being with its well-defined needs and experiences, but is in solidarity with the being of others, because in himself he contains the universe.

Nor is the seeker of the integral fulfilment permitted to solve too arbitrarily even the conflict of his own inner members. He has to harmonise deliberate knowledge with unquestioning faith; he must conciliate the gentle soul of love with the formidable need of power; the passivity of the soul that lives content in transcendent calm has to be fused with the activity of the divine helper and the divine warrior. To him as to all seekers of the spirit there are offered for solution the oppositions of the reason, the clinging hold of the senses, the perturbations of the heart, the ambush of the desires, the clog of the physical body; but he has to deal in another fashion with their mutual and internal conflicts and their hindrance to his aim, for he must arrive at an infinitely more difficult perfection in the handling of all this rebel matter. Accepting them as instruments for the divine realisation and manifestation, he has to convert their jangling discords, to enlighten their thick darknesses, to transfigure them separately and all together, harmonising them in themselves and with each other, — integrally, omitting no grain or strand or vibration, leaving no iota of imperfection anywhere. An exclusive concentration, or even a succession of concentrations of that kind, can be in his complex work only a temporary convenience; it has to be abandoned as soon as its utility is over. An all-inclusive concentration is the difficult achievement towards which he must labour.

⁂

Concentration is indeed the first condition of any Yoga, but it is an all-receiving concentration that is the very nature of the integral Yoga. A separate strong fixing of the thought, of the emotions or of the will on a single idea, object, state, inner movement or principle is no doubt a frequent need here also; but this is only a subsidiary helpful process. A wide massive opening, a harmonised concentration of the whole being in all its parts and through all its powers upon the One who is the All is the larger action of this Yoga without which it cannot achieve its purpose. For it is the consciousness that rests in the One and that acts in the All to which we aspire; it is this that we seek to impose on every element of our being and on every movement of our nature. This wide and concentrated totality is the essential character of the Sadhana and its character must determine its practice.

But even though the concentration of all the being on the Divine is the character of the Yoga, yet is our being too complex a thing to be taken up easily and at once, as if we were taking up the world in a pair of hands, and set in its entirety to a single task. Man in his effort at self-transcendence has usually to seize on some one spring or some powerful leverage in the complicated machine that his nature is; this spring or lever he touches in preference to others and uses it to set the machine in motion towards the end that he has in view. In his choice it is always Nature itself that should be his guide. But here it must be Nature at her highest and widest in him, not at her lowest or in some limiting movement. In her lower vital activities it is desire that Nature takes as her most powerful leverage; but the distinct character of man is that he is a mental being, not a merely vital creature. As he can use his thinking mind and will to restrain and correct his life impulses, so too he can bring in the action of a still higher luminous mentality aided by the deeper soul in him, the psychic being, and supersede by these greater and purer motive-powers the domination of the vital and sensational force that we call desire. He can entirely master or persuade it and offer it up for transformation to its divine Master. This higher mentality and this deeper soul, the psychic element in man, are the two grappling hooks by which the Divine can lay hold upon his nature.

The higher mind in man is something other, loftier, purer, vaster, more powerful than the reason or logical intelligence. The animal is a vital and sensational being; man, it is said, is distinguished from the animal by the possession of reason. But that is a very summary, a very imperfect and misleading account of the matter. For reason is only a particular and limited utilitarian and instrumental activity that proceeds from something much greater than itself, from a power that dwells in an ether more luminous, wider, illimitable. The true and ultimate, as distinguished from the immediate or intermediate importance of our observing, reasoning, inquiring, judging intelligence is that it prepares the human being for the right reception and right action of a Light from above which must progressively replace in him the obscure light from below that guides the animal. The latter also has a rudimentary reason, a kind of thought, a soul, a will and keen emotions; even though less developed, its psychology is yet the same in kind as man's. But all these capacities in the animal are automatically moved and strictly limited, almost even constituted by the lower nervous being. All animal perceptions, sensibilities, activities are ruled by nervous and vital instincts, cravings, needs, satisfactions, of which the nexus is the life-impulse and vital desire. Man too is bound, but less bound, to this automatism of the vital nature. Man can bring an enlightened will, an enlightened thought and enlightened emotions to the difficult work of his self-development; he can more and more subject to these more conscious and reflecting guides the inferior function of desire. In proportion as he can thus master and enlighten his lower self, he is man and no longer an animal. When he can begin to replace desire altogether by a still greater enlightened thought and sight and will in touch with the Infinite, consciously subject to a diviner will than his own, linked to a more universal and transcendent knowledge, he has commenced the ascent towards the superman; he is on his upward march towards the Divine.

It is, then, in the highest mind of thought and light and will or it is in the inner heart of deepest feeling and emotion that we must first centre our consciousness, — in either of them or, if we are capable, in both together, — and use that as our leverage to lift the nature wholly towards the Divine. The concentration of an enlightened thought, will and heart turned in unison towards one vast goal of our knowledge, one luminous and infinite source of our action, one imperishable object of our emotion is the starting-point of the Yoga. And the object of our seeking must be the very fount of the Light which is growing in us, the very origin of the Force which we are calling to move our members. Our one objective must be the Divine himself to whom, knowingly or unknowingly, something always aspires in our secret nature. There must be a large, many-sided yet single concentration of the thought on the idea, the perception, the vision, the awakening touch, the soul's realisation of the one Divine. There must be a flaming concentration of the heart on the seeking of the All and Eternal and, when once we have found him, a deep plunging and immersion in the possession and ecstasy of the All-Beautiful. There must be a strong and immovable concentration of the will on the attainment and fulfilment of all that the Divine is and a free and plastic opening of it to all that he intends to manifest in us. This is the triple way of the Yoga.

⁂

But on that which as yet we know not how shall we concentrate? And yet we cannot know the Divine unless we have achieved this concentration of our being upon him. A concentration which culminates in a living realisation and the constant sense of the presence of the One in ourselves and in all of which we are aware, is what we mean in Yoga by knowledge and the effort after knowledge. It is not enough to devote ourselves by the reading of Scriptures or by the stress of philosophic reasoning to an intellectual understanding of the Divine; for at the end of our long mental labour we might know all that has been said of the Eternal, possess all that can be thought about the Infinite and yet we might not know him at all. This intellectual preparation can indeed be the first stage in a powerful Yoga, but it is not indispensable: it is not a step which all need or can be called upon to take. Yoga would be impossible, except for a very few, if the intellectual figure of knowledge arrived at by the speculative or meditative Reason were its indispensable condition or a binding preliminary. All that the Light from above asks of us that it may begin its work is a call from the soul and a sufficient point of support in the mind. This support can be reached through an insistent idea of the Divine in the thought, a corresponding will in the dynamic parts, an aspiration, a faith, a need in the heart. Any one of these may lead or predominate, if all cannot move in unison or in an equal rhythm. The idea may be and must in the beginning be inadequate; the aspiration may be narrow and imperfect, the faith poorly illumined or even, as not surely founded on the rock of knowledge, fluctuating, uncertain, easily diminished; often even it may be extinguished and need to be lit again with difficulty like a torch in a windy pass. But if once there is a resolute self-consecration from deep within, if there is an awakening to the soul's call, these inadequate things can be a sufficient instrument for the divine purpose. Therefore the wise have always been unwilling to limit man's avenues towards God; they would not shut against his entry even the narrowest portal, the lowest and darkest postern, the humblest wicket-gate. Any name, any form, any symbol, any offering has been held to be sufficient if there is the consecration along with it; for the Divine knows himself in the heart of the seeker and accepts the sacrifice.

But still the greater and wider the moving idea-force behind the consecration, the better for the seeker; his attainment is likely to be fuller and more ample. If we are to attempt an integral Yoga, it will be as well to start with an idea of the Divine that is itself integral. There should be an aspiration in the heart wide enough for a realisation without any narrow limits. Not only should we avoid a sectarian religious outlook, but also all one-sided philosophical conceptions which try to shut up the Ineffable in a restricting mental formula. The dynamic conception or impelling sense with which our Yoga can best set out would be naturally the idea, the sense of a conscious all-embracing but all-exceeding Infinite. Our uplook must be to a free, all-powerful, perfect and blissful One and Oneness in which all beings move and live and through which all can meet and become one. This Eternal will be at once personal and impersonal in his self-revelation and touch upon the soul. He is personal because he is the conscious Divine, the infinite Person who casts some broken reflection of himself in the myriad divine and undivine personalities of the universe. He is impersonal because he appears to us as an infinite Existence, Consciousness and Ananda and because he is the fount, base and constituent of all existences and all energies, the very material of our being and mind and life and body, our spirit and our matter. The thought, concentrating on him, must not merely understand in an intellectual form that he exists, or conceive of him as an abstraction, a logical necessity; it must become a seeing thought able to meet him here as the Inhabitant in all, realise him in ourselves, watch and take hold on the movement of his forces. He is the one Existence: he is the original and universal Delight that constitutes all things and exceeds them: he is the one infinite Consciousness that composes all consciousnesses and informs all their movements: he is the one illimitable Being who sustains all action and experience: his will guides the evolution of things towards their yet unrealised but inevitable aim and plenitude. To him the heart can consecrate itself, approach him as the supreme Beloved, beat and move in him as in a universal sweetness of Love and a living sea of Delight. For his is the secret Joy that supports the soul in all its experiences and maintains even the errant ego in its ordeals and struggles till all sorrow and suffering shall cease. His is the Love and the Bliss of the infinite divine Lover who is drawing all things by their own path towards his happy oneness. On him the Will can unalterably fix as the invisible Power that guides and fulfils it and as the source of its strength. In the impersonality this actuating Power is a self-illumined Force that contains all results and calmly works until it accomplishes, in the personality an all-wise and omnipotent Master of the Yoga whom nothing can prevent from leading it to its goal. This is the faith with which the seeker has to begin his seeking and endeavour; for in all his effort here, but most of all in his effort towards the Unseen, mental man must perforce proceed by faith. When the realisation comes, the faith divinely fulfilled and completed will be transformed into an eternal flame of knowledge.

⁂

Into all our endeavour upward the lower element of desire will at first naturally enter. For what the enlightened will sees as the thing to be done and pursues as the crown to be conquered, what the heart embraces as the one thing delightful, that in us which feels itself limited and opposed and, because it is limited, craves and struggles, will seek with the troubled passion of an egoistic desire. This craving life-force or desire-soul in us has to be accepted at first, but only in order that it may be transformed. Even from the very beginning it has to be taught to renounce all other desires and concentrate itself on the passion for the Divine. This capital point gained, it has to be taught to desire, not for its own separate sake, but for God in the world and for the Divine in ourselves; it has to fix itself upon no personal spiritual gain, though of all possible spiritual gains we are sure, but on the great work to be done in us and others, on the high coming manifestation which is to be the glorious fulfilment of the Divine in the world, on the Truth that has to be sought and lived and enthroned for ever. But last, most difficult for it, more difficult than to seek with the right object, it has to be taught to seek in the right manner; for it must learn to desire, not in its own egoistic way, but in the way of the Divine. It must insist no longer, as the strong separative will always insists, on its own manner of fulfilment, its own dream of possession, its own idea of the right and the desirable; it must yearn to fulfil a larger and greater Will and consent to wait upon a less interested and ignorant guidance. Thus trained, Desire, that great unquiet harasser and troubler of man and cause of every kind of stumbling, will become fit to be transformed into its divine counterpart. For desire and passion too have their divine forms; there is a pure ecstasy of the soul's seeking beyond all craving and grief, there is a Will of Ananda that sits glorified in the possession of the supreme beatitudes.

When once the object of concentration has possessed and is possessed by the three master instruments, the thought, the heart and the will, — a consummation fully possible only when the desire-soul in us has submitted to the Divine Law, — the perfection of mind and life and body can be effectively fulfilled in our transmuted nature. This will be done, not for the personal satisfaction of the ego, but that the whole may constitute a fit temple for the Divine Presence, a faultless instrument for the divine work. For that work can be truly performed only when the instrument, consecrated and perfected, has grown fit for a selfless action, — and that will be when personal desire and egoism are abolished, but not the liberated individual. Even when the little ego has been abolished, the true spiritual Person can still remain and God's will and work and delight in him and the spiritual use of his perfection and fulfilment. Our works will then be divine and done divinely; our mind and life and will, devoted to the Divine, will be used to help fulfil in others and in the world that which has been first realised in ourselves, — all that we can manifest of the embodied Unity, Love, Freedom, Strength, Power, Splendour, immortal Joy which is the goal of the Spirit's terrestrial adventure.

The Yoga must start with an effort or at least a settled turn towards this total concentration. A constant and unfailing will of consecration of all ourselves to the Supreme is demanded of us, an offering of our whole being and our many-chambered nature to the Eternal who is the All. The effective fullness of our concentration on the one thing needful to the exclusion of all else will be the measure of our self-consecration to the One who is alone desirable. But this exclusiveness will in the end exclude nothing except the falsehood of our way of seeing the world and our will's ignorance. For our concentration on the Eternal will be consummated by the mind when we see constantly the Divine in itself and the Divine in ourselves, but also the Divine in all things and beings and happenings. It will be consummated by the heart when all emotion is summed up in the love of the Divine, — of the Divine in itself and for itself, but love too of the Divine in all its beings and powers and personalities and forms in the Universe. It will be consummated by the will when we feel and receive always the divine impulsion and accept that alone as our sole motive force; but this will mean that, having slain to the last rebellious straggler the wandering impulses of the egoistic nature, we have universalised ourselves and can accept with a constant happy acceptance the one divine working in all things. This is the first fundamental siddhi of the integral Yoga.

It is nothing less that is meant in the end when we speak of the absolute consecration of the individual to the Divine. But this total fullness of consecration can only come by a constant progression when the long and difficult process of transforming desire out of existence is completed in an ungrudging measure. Perfect self-consecration implies perfect self-surrender.

⁂

For here, there are two movements with a transitional stage between them, two periods of this Yoga, — one of the process of surrender, the other of its crown and consequence. In the first the individual prepares himself for the reception of the Divine into his members. For all this first period he has to work by means of the instruments of the lower Nature, but aided more and more from above. But in the later transitional stage of this movement our personal and necessarily ignorant effort more and more dwindles and a higher Nature acts; the eternal Shakti descends into this limited form of mortality and progressively possesses and transmutes it. In the second period the greater movement wholly replaces the lesser, formerly indispensable first action; but this can be done only when our self-surrender is complete. The ego person in us cannot transform itself by its own force or will or knowledge or by any virtue of its own into the nature of the Divine; all it can do is to fit itself for the transformation and make more and more its surrender to that which it seeks to become. As long as the ego is at work in us, our personal action is and must always be in its nature a part of the lower grades of existence; it is obscure or half-enlightened, limited in its field, very partially effective in its power. If a spiritual transformation, not a mere illumining modification of our nature, is to be done at all, we must call in the Divine Shakti to effect that miraculous work in the individual; for she alone has the needed force, decisive, all-wise and illimitable. But the entire substitution of the divine for the human personal action is not at once entirely possible. All interference from below that would falsify the truth of the superior action must first be inhibited or rendered impotent, and it must be done by our own free choice. A continual and always repeated refusal of the impulsions and falsehoods of the lower nature is asked from us and an insistent support to the Truth as it grows in our parts; for the progressive settling into our nature and final perfection of the incoming informing Light, Purity and Power needs for its development and sustenance our free acceptance of it and our stubborn rejection of all that is contrary to it, inferior or incompatible.

In the first movement of self-preparation, the period of personal effort, the method we have to use is this concentration of the whole being on the Divine that it seeks and, as its corollary, this constant rejection, throwing out, *katharsis*, of all that is not the true Truth of the Divine. An entire consecration of all that we are, think, feel and do will be the result of this persistence. This consecration in its turn must culminate in an integral self-giving to the Highest; for its crown and sign of completion is the whole nature's all-comprehending absolute surrender. In the second stage of the Yoga, transitional between the human and the divine working, there will supervene an increasing purified and vigilant passivity, a more and more luminous divine response to the Divine Force, but not to any other; and there will be as a result the growing inrush of a great and conscious miraculous working from above. In the last period there is no effort at all, no set method, no fixed sadhana; the place of endeavour and tapasya will be taken by a natural, simple, powerful and happy disclosing of the flower of the Divine out of the bud of a purified and perfected terrestrial nature. These are the natural successions of the action of the Yoga.

These movements are indeed not always or absolutely arranged in a strict succession to each other. The second stage begins in part before the first is completed; the first continues in part until the second is perfected; the last divine working can manifest from time to time as a promise before it is finally settled and normal to the nature. Always too there is something higher and greater than the individual which leads him even in his personal labour and endeavour. Often he may become, and remain for a time, wholly conscious, even in parts of his being permanently conscious, of this greater leading behind the veil, and that may happen long before his whole nature has been purified in all its parts from the lower indirect control. Even, he may be thus conscious from the beginning; his mind and heart, if not his other members, may respond to that seizing and penetrating guidance with a certain initial completeness from the very first steps of the Yoga. But it is the constant and complete and uniform action of the great direct control that more and more distinguishes the transitional stage as it proceeds and draws to its close. This predominance of a greater diviner leading, not personal to ourselves, indicates the nature's increasing ripeness for a total spiritual transformation. It is the unmistakable sign that the self-consecration has not only been accepted in principle but is fulfilled in act and power. The Supreme has laid his luminous hand upon a chosen human vessel of his miraculous Light and Power and Ananda.

Chapter III

Self-Surrender in Works — The Way of the Gita

LIFE, NOT a remote silent or high-uplifted ecstatic Beyond-Life alone, is the field of our Yoga. The transformation of our superficial, narrow and fragmentary human way of thinking, seeing, feeling and being into a deep and wide spiritual consciousness and an integrated inner and outer existence and of our ordinary human living into the divine way of life must be its central purpose. The means towards this supreme end is a self-giving of all our nature to the Divine. Everything must be given to the Divine within us, to the universal All and to the transcendent Supreme. An absolute concentration of our will, our heart and our thought on that one and manifold Divine, an unreserved self-consecration of our whole being to the Divine alone — this is the decisive movement, the turning of the ego to That which is infinitely greater than itself, its self-giving and indispensable surrender.

The life of the human creature, as it is ordinarily lived, is composed of a half-fixed, half-fluid mass of very imperfectly ruled thoughts, perceptions, sensations, emotions, desires, enjoyments, acts, mostly customary and self-repeating, in part only dynamic and self-developing, but all centred around a superficial ego. The sum of movement of these activities eventuates in an internal growth which is partly visible and operative in this life, partly a seed of progress in lives hereafter. This growth of the conscious being, an expansion, an increasing self-expression, a more and more harmonised development of his constituent members is the whole meaning and all the pith of human existence. It is for this meaningful development of consciousness by thought, will, emotion, desire, action and experience, leading in the end to a supreme divine self-discovery, that Man, the mental being, has entered into the material body. All the rest is either auxiliary and subordinate or accidental and otiose; that only matters which sustains and helps the evolution of his nature and the growth or rather the progressive unfolding and discovery of his self and spirit.

The aim set before our Yoga is nothing less than to hasten this supreme object of our existence here. Its process leaves behind the ordinary tardy method of slow and confused growth through the evolution of Nature. For the natural evolution is at its best an uncertain growth under cover, partly by the pressure of the environment, partly by a groping education and an ill-lighted purposeful effort, an only partially illumined and half-automatic use of opportunities with many blunders and lapses and relapses; a great portion of it is made up of apparent accidents and circumstances and vicissitudes, — though veiling a secret divine intervention and guidance. In Yoga we replace this confused crooked crab-motion by a rapid, conscious and self-directed evolution which is planned to carry us, as far as can be, in a straight line towards the goal set before us. In a certain sense it may be an error to speak of a goal anywhere in a progression which may well be infinite. Still we can conceive of an immediate goal, an ulterior objective beyond our present achievement towards which the soul in man can aspire. There lies before him the possibility of a new birth; there can be an ascent into a higher and wider plane of being and its descent to transform his members. An enlarged and illumined consciousness is possible that shall make of him a liberated spirit and a perfected force — and, if spread beyond the individual, it might even constitute a divine humanity or else a new, a supramental and therefore a superhuman race. It is this new birth that we make our aim: a growth into a divine consciousness is the whole meaning of our Yoga, an integral conversion to divinity not only of the soul but of all the parts of our nature.

* * *

Our purpose in Yoga is to exile the limited outward-looking ego and to enthrone God in its place as the ruling Inhabitant of the nature. And this means, first, to disinherit desire and no longer accept the enjoyment of desire as the ruling human motive. The spiritual life will draw its sustenance not from desire but from a pure and selfless spiritual delight of essential existence. And not only the vital nature in us whose stamp is desire, but the mental being too must undergo a new birth and a transfiguring change. Our divided, egoistic, limited and ignorant thought and intelligence must disappear; in its place there must stream in the catholic and faultless play of a shadowless divine illumination which shall culminate in the end in a natural self-existent Truth-consciousness free from groping half-truth and stumbling error. Our confused and embarrassed ego-centred small-motived will and action must cease and make room for the total working of a swiftly powerful, lucidly automatic, divinely moved and guided unfallen Force. There must be implanted and activised in all our doings a supreme, impersonal, unfaltering and unstumbling will in spontaneous and untroubled unison with the will of the Divine. The unsatisfying surface play of our feeble egoistic emotions must be ousted and there must be revealed instead a secret deep and vast psychic heart within that waits behind them for its hour; all our feelings, impelled by this inner heart in which dwells the Divine, will be transmuted into calm and intense movements of a twin passion of divine Love and manifold Ananda. This is the definition of a divine humanity or a supramental race. This, not an exaggerated or even a sublimated energy of human intellect and action, is the type of the superman whom we are called to evolve by our Yoga.

In the ordinary human existence an outgoing action is obviously three-fourths or even more of our life. It is only the exceptions, the saint and the seer, the rare thinker, poet and artist who can live more within themselves; these indeed, at least in the most intimate parts of their nature, shape themselves more in inner thought and feeling than in the surface act. But it is not either of these sides separated from the other, but rather a harmony of the inner and the outer life made one in fullness and transfigured into a play of something that is beyond them which will create the form of a perfect living. A Yoga of works, a union with the Divine in our will and acts — and not only in knowledge and feeling — is then an indispensable, an inexpressibly important element of an integral Yoga. The conversion of our thought and feeling without a corresponding conversion of the spirit and body of our works would be a maimed achievement.

But if this total conversion is to be done, there must be a consecration of our actions and outer movements as much as of our mind and heart to the Divine. There must be accepted and progressively accomplished a surrender of our capacities of working into the hands of a greater Power behind us and our sense of being the doer and worker must disappear. All must be given for a more direct use into the hands of the divine Will which is hidden by these frontal appearances; for by that permitting Will alone is our action possible. A hidden Power is the true Lord and overruling Observer of our acts and only he knows through all the ignorance and perversion and deformation brought in by the ego their entire sense and ultimate purpose. There must be effected a complete transformation of our limited and distorted egoistic life and works into the large and direct outpouring of a greater divine Life, Will and Energy that now secretly supports us. This greater Will and Energy must be made conscious in us and master; no longer must it remain, as now, only a superconscious, upholding and permitting Force. There must be achieved an undistorted transmission through us of the all-wise purpose and process of a now hidden omniscient Power and omnipotent Knowledge which will turn into its pure, unobstructed, happily consenting and participating channel all our transmuted nature. This total consecration and surrender and this resultant entire transformation and free transmission make up the whole fundamental means and the ultimate aim of an integral Karmayoga.

Even for those whose first natural movement is a consecration, a surrender and a resultant entire transformation of the thinking mind and its knowledge, or a total consecration, surrender and transformation of the heart and its emotions, the consecration of works is a needed element in that change. Otherwise, although they may find God in other-life, they will not be able to fulfil the Divine in life; life for them will be a meaningless undivine inconsequence. Not for them the true victory that shall be the key to the riddle of our terrestrial existence; their love will not be the absolute love triumphant over self, their knowledge will not be the total consciousness and the all-embracing knowledge. It is possible, indeed, to begin with knowledge or Godward emotion solely or with both together and to leave works for the final movement of the Yoga. But there is then this disadvantage that we may tend to live too exclusively within, subtilised in subjective experience, shut off in our isolated inner parts; there we may get incrusted in our spiritual seclusion and find it difficult later on to pour ourselves triumphantly outwards and apply to life our gains in the higher Nature. When we turn to add this external kingdom also to our inner conquests, we shall find ourselves too much accustomed to an activity purely subjective and ineffective on the material plane. There will be an immense difficulty in transforming the outer life and the body. Or we shall find that our action does not correspond with the inner light: it still follows the old accustomed mistaken paths, still obeys the old normal imperfect influences; the Truth within us continues to be separated by a painful gulf from the ignorant mechanism of our external nature. This is a frequent experience because in such a process the Light and Power come to be self-contained and unwilling to express themselves in life or to use the physical means prescribed for the Earth and her processes. It is as if we were living in another, a larger and subtler world and had no divine hold, perhaps little hold of any kind, upon the material and terrestrial existence.

But still each must follow his nature, and there are always difficulties that have to be accepted for some time if we are to pursue our natural path of Yoga. Yoga is after all primarily a change of the inner consciousness and nature, and if the balance of our parts is such that this must be done first with an initial exclusiveness and the rest left for later handling, we must accept the apparent imperfection of the process. Yet would the ideal working of an integral Yoga be a movement, even from the beginning, integral in its process and whole and many-sided in its progress. In any case our present preoccupation is with a Yoga, integral in its aim and complete movement, but starting from works and proceeding by works although at each step more and more moved by a vivifying divine love and more and more illumined by a helping divine knowledge.

* * *

The greatest gospel of spiritual works ever yet given to the race, the most perfect system of Karmayoga known to man in the past, is to be found in the Bhagavad Gita. In that famous episode of the Mahabharata the great basic lines of Karmayoga are laid down for all time with an incomparable mastery and the infallible eye of an assured experience. It is true that the path alone, as the ancients saw it, is worked out fully: the perfect fulfilment, the highest secret[1] is hinted rather than developed; it is kept back as an unexpressed part of a supreme mystery. There are obvious reasons for this reticence; for the fulfilment is in any case a matter for experience and no teaching can express it. It cannot be described in a way that can really be understood by a mind that has not the effulgent transmuting experience. And for the soul that has passed the shining portals and stands in the blaze of the inner light, all mental and verbal description is as poor as it is superfluous, inadequate and an impertinence. All divine consummations have perforce to be figured by us in the inapt and deceptive terms of a language which was made to fit the normal experience of mental man; so expressed, they can be rightly understood only by those who already know, and, knowing, are able to give these poor external terms a changed, inner and transfigured sense. As the Vedic Rishis insisted in the beginning, the words of the supreme wisdom are expressive only to those who are already of the wise. The Gita at its cryptic close may seem by its silence to stop short of that solution for which we are seeking; it pauses at the borders of the highest spiritual mind and does not cross them into the splendours of the supramental

---

[1] *rahasyam uttamam.*

Light. And yet its secret of dynamic, and not only static, identity with the inner Presence, its highest mystery of absolute surrender to the Divine Guide, Lord and Inhabitant of our nature, is the central secret. This surrender is the indispensable means of the supramental change and, again, it is through the supramental change that the dynamic identity becomes possible.

What then are the lines of Karmayoga laid down by the Gita? Its key principle, its spiritual method, can be summed up as the union of two largest and highest states or powers of consciousness, equality and oneness. The kernel of its method is an unreserved acceptance of the Divine in our life as in our inner self and spirit. An inner renunciation of personal desire leads to equality, accomplishes our total surrender to the Divine, supports a delivery from dividing ego which brings us oneness. But this must be a oneness in dynamic force and not only in static peace or inactive beatitude. The Gita promises us freedom for the spirit even in the midst of works and the full energies of Nature, if we accept subjection of our whole being to that which is higher than the separating and limiting ego. It proposes an integral dynamic activity founded on a still passivity; a largest possible action irrevocably based on an immobile calm is its secret, — free expression out of a supreme inward silence.

All things here are the one and indivisible eternal transcendent and cosmic Brahman that is in its seeming divided in things and creatures; in seeming only, for in truth it is always one and equal in all things and creatures and the division is only a phenomenon of the surface. As long as we live in the ignorant seeming, we are the ego and are subject to the modes of Nature. Enslaved to appearances, bound to the dualities, tossed between good and evil, sin and virtue, grief and joy, pain and pleasure, good fortune and ill fortune, success and failure, we follow helplessly the iron or gilt and iron round of the wheel of Maya. At best we have only the poor relative freedom which by us is ignorantly called free-will. But that is at bottom illusory, since it is the modes of Nature that express themselves through our personal will; it is force of Nature, grasping us, ungrasped by us that determines what we shall will and how we shall will it. Nature, not an independent ego, chooses what object we shall seek, whether by reasoned will or unreflecting impulse, at any moment of our existence. If, on the contrary, we live in the unifying reality of the Brahman, then we go beyond the ego and overstep Nature. For then we get back to our true self and become the spirit; in the spirit we are above the impulsion of Nature, superior to her modes and forces. Attaining to a perfect equality in the soul, mind and heart, we realise our true self of oneness, one with all beings, one too with That which expresses itself in them and in all that we see and experience. This equality and this oneness are the indispensable twin foundation we must lay down for a divine being, a divine consciousness, a divine action. Not one with all, we are not spiritual, not divine. Not equal-souled to all things, happenings and creatures, we cannot see spiritually, cannot know divinely, cannot feel divinely towards others. The Supreme Power, the one Eternal and Infinite is equal to all things and to all beings; and because it is equal, it can act with an absolute wisdom according to the truth of its works and its force and according to the truth of each thing and of every creature.

This is also the only true freedom possible to man, — a freedom which he cannot have unless he outgrows his mental separativeness and becomes the conscious soul in Nature. The only free will in the world is the one divine Will of which Nature is the executrix; for she is the master and creator of all other wills. Human free-will can be real in a sense, but, like all things that belong to the modes of Nature, it is only relatively real. The mind rides on a swirl of natural forces, balances on a poise between several possibilities, inclines to one side or another, settles and has the sense of choosing: but it does not see, it is not even dimly aware of the Force behind that has determined its choice. It cannot see it, because that Force is something total and to our eyes indeterminate. At most mind can only distinguish with an approach to clarity and precision some out of the complex variety of particular determinations by which this Force works out her incalculable purposes. Partial itself, the mind rides on a part of the machine, unaware of nine-tenths of its motor agencies in Time and environment, unaware of its past preparation and future drift; but because it rides, it thinks that it is directing the machine. In a sense it counts: for that clear inclination of the mind which we call our will, that firm settling of the inclination which presents itself to us as a deliberate choice, is one of Nature's most powerful determinants; but it is never independent and sole. Behind this petty instrumental action of the human will there is something vast and powerful and eternal that oversees the trend of the inclination and presses on the turn of the will. There is a total Truth in Nature greater than our individual choice. And in this total Truth, or even beyond and behind it, there is something that determines all results; its presence and secret knowledge keep up steadily in the process of Nature a dynamic, almost automatic perception of the right relations, the varying or persistent necessities, the inevitable steps of the movement. There is a secret divine Will, eternal and infinite, omniscient and omnipotent, that expresses itself in the universality and in each particular of all these apparently temporal and finite inconscient or half-conscient things. This is the Power or Presence meant by the Gita when it speaks of the Lord within the heart of all existences who turns all creatures as if mounted on a machine by the illusion of Nature.

This divine Will is not an alien Power or Presence; it is intimate to us and we ourselves are part of it: for it is our own highest Self that possesses and supports it. Only, it is not our conscious mental will; it rejects often enough what our conscious will accepts and accepts what our conscious will rejects. For while this secret One knows all and every whole and each detail, our surface mind knows only a little part of things. Our will is conscious in the mind, and what it knows, it knows by the thought only; the divine Will is superconscious to us because it is in its essence supra-mental, and it knows all because it is all. Our highest Self which possesses and supports this universal Power is not our ego-self, not our personal nature; it is something transcendent and universal of which these smaller things are only foam and flowing surface. If we surrender our conscious will and allow it to be made one with the will of the Eternal, then, and then only, shall we attain to a true freedom; living in the divine liberty, we shall no longer cling to this shackled so-called free-will, a puppet freedom ignorant, illusory, relative, bound to the error of its own inadequate vital motives and mental figures.

* * *

A distinction has to be firmly seized in our consciousness, the capital distinction between mechanical Nature and the free Lord of Nature, between the Ishwara or single luminous divine Will and the many executive modes and forces of the universe.

Nature, — not as she is in her divine Truth, the conscious Power of the Eternal, but as she appears to us in the Ignorance, — is executive Force, mechanical in her steps, not consciously intelligent to our experience of her, although all her works are instinct with an absolute intelligence. Not in herself master, she is full of a self-aware Power[2] which has an infinite mastery and, because of this Power driving her, she rules all and exactly fulfils the work intended in her by the Ishwara. Not enjoying but enjoyed, she bears in herself the burden of all enjoyments. Nature as Prakriti is an inertly active Force, — for she works out a movement imposed upon her; but within her is One that knows, — some Entity sits there that is aware of all her motion and process. Prakriti works containing the knowledge, the mastery, the delight of the Purusha, the Being associated with her or seated within her; but she can participate in them only by subjection and reflection of that which fills her. Purusha knows and is still and inactive; he contains the action of Prakriti within his consciousness and knowledge and enjoys it. He gives the sanction to Prakriti's works and she works out what is sanctioned by him for his pleasure. Purusha himself does not execute; he maintains Prakriti in her action and allows her to express in energy and process and formed result what he perceives in his knowledge. This is the distinction made by the Sankhyas; and although it is not all the true truth, not in any way the highest truth either of Purusha or of Prakriti, still it is a valid and indispensable practical knowledge in the lower hemisphere of existence.

---

[2] This Power is the conscious divine Shakti of the Ishwara, the transcendent and universal Mother.

The individual soul or the conscious being in a form may identify itself with this experiencing Purusha or with this active Prakriti. If it identifies itself with Prakriti, it is not master, enjoyer and knower, but reflects the modes and workings of Prakriti. It enters by its identification into that subjection and mechanical working which is characteristic of her. And even, by an entire immersion in Prakriti, this soul becomes inconscient or subconscient, asleep in her forms as in the earth and the metal or almost asleep as in plant life. There, in that inconscience, it is subject to the domination of tamas, the principle, the power, the qualitative mode of obscurity and inertia: sattwa and rajas are there, but they are concealed in the thick coating of tamas. Emerging into its own proper nature of consciousness but not yet truly conscious, because there is still too great a domination of tamas in the nature, the embodied being becomes more and more subject to rajas, the principle, the power, the qualitative mode of action and passion impelled by desire and instinct. There is then formed and developed the animal nature, narrow in consciousness, rudimentary in intelligence, rajaso-tamasic in vital habit and impulse. Emerging yet farther from the great Inconscience towards a spiritual status the embodied being liberates sattwa, the mode of light, and acquires a relative freedom and mastery and knowledge and with it a qualified and conditioned sense of inner satisfaction and happiness. Man, the mental being in a physical body, should be but is not, except in a few among this multitude of ensouled bodies, of this nature. Ordinarily he has too much in him of the obscure earth-inertia and a troubled ignorant animal life-force to be a soul of light and bliss or even a mind of harmonious will and knowledge. There is here in man an incomplete and still hampered and baffled ascension towards the true character of the Purusha, free, master, knower and enjoyer. For these are in human and earthly experience relative modes, none giving its single and absolute fruit; all are intermixed with each other and there is not the pure action of any one of them anywhere. It is their confused and inconstant interaction that determines the experiences of the egoistic human consciousness swinging in Nature's uncertain balance.

The sign of the immersion of the embodied soul in Prakriti is the limitation of consciousness to the ego. The vivid stamp of this limited consciousness can be seen in a constant inequality of the mind and heart and a confused conflict and disharmony in their varied reactions to the touches of experience. The human reactions sway perpetually between the dualities created by the soul's subjection to Nature and by its often intense but narrow struggle for mastery and enjoyment, a struggle for the most part ineffective. The soul circles in an unending round of Nature's alluring and distressing opposites, success and failure, good fortune and ill fortune, good and evil, sin and virtue, joy and grief, pain and pleasure. It is only when, awaking from its immersion in Prakriti, it perceives its oneness with the One and its oneness with all existences that it can become free from these things and found its right relation to this executive world-Nature. Then it becomes indifferent to her inferior modes, equal-minded to her dualities, capable of mastery and freedom; it is seated above her as the high-throned knower and witness filled with the calm intense unalloyed delight of his own eternal existence. The embodied spirit continues to express its powers in action, but it is no longer involved in ignorance, no longer bound by its works; its actions have no longer a consequence within it, but only a consequence outside in Prakriti. The whole movement of Nature becomes to its experience a rising and falling of waves on the surface that make no difference to its own unfathomable peace, its wide delight, its vast universal equality or its boundless God-existence.[3]

* * *

---

[3] It is not indispensable for the Karmayoga to accept implicitly all the philosophy of the Gita. We may regard it, if we like, as a statement of psychological experience useful as a practical basis for the Yoga; here it is perfectly valid and in entire consonance with a high and wide experience. For this reason I have thought it well to state it here, as far as possible in the language of modern thought, omitting all that belongs to metaphysics rather than to psychology.

These are the conditions of our effort and they point to an ideal which can be expressed in these or in equivalent formulae.

To live in God and not in the ego; to move, vastly founded, not in the little egoistic consciousness, but in the consciousness of the All-Soul and the Transcendent.

To be perfectly equal in all happenings and to all beings, and to see and feel them as one with oneself and one with the Divine; to feel all in oneself and all in God; to feel God in all, oneself in all.

To act in God and not in the ego. And here, first, not to choose action by reference to personal needs and standards, but in obedience to the dictates of the living highest Truth above us. Next, as soon as we are sufficiently founded in the spiritual consciousness, not to act any longer by our separate will or movement, but more and more to allow action to happen and develop under the impulsion and guidance of a divine Will that surpasses us. And last, the supreme result, to be exalted into an identity in knowledge, force, consciousness, act, joy of existence with the Divine Shakti; to feel a dynamic movement not dominated by mortal desire and vital instinct and impulse and illusive mental free-will, but luminously conceived and evolved in an immortal self-delight and an infinite self-knowledge. For this is the action that comes by a conscious subjection and merging of the natural man into the divine Self and eternal Spirit; it is the Spirit that for ever transcends and guides this world-Nature.

⁂

But by what practical steps of self-discipline can we arrive at this consummation?

The elimination of all egoistic activity and of its foundation, the egoistic consciousness, is clearly the key to the consummation we desire. And since in the path of works action is the knot we have first to loosen, we must endeavour to loosen it where it is centrally tied, in desire and in ego; for otherwise we shall cut only stray strands and not the heart of our bondage. These are the two knots of our subjection to this ignorant and divided Nature, desire and ego-sense. And of these two desire has its native home in the emotions and sensations and instincts and from there affects thought and volition; ego-sense lives indeed in these movements, but it casts its deep roots also in the thinking mind and its will and it is there that it becomes fully self-conscious. These are the twin obscure powers of the obsessing world-wide Ignorance that we have to enlighten and eliminate.

In the field of action desire takes many forms, but the most powerful of all is the vital self's craving or seeking after the fruit of our works. The fruit we covet may be a reward of internal pleasure; it may be the accomplishment of some preferred idea or some cherished will or the satisfaction of the egoistic emotions, or else the pride of success of our highest hopes and ambitions. Or it may be an external reward, a recompense entirely material, — wealth, position, honour, victory, good fortune or any other fulfilment of vital or physical desire. But all alike are lures by which egoism holds us. Always these satisfactions delude us with the sense of mastery and the idea of freedom, while really we are harnessed and guided or ridden and whipped by some gross or subtle, some noble or ignoble, figure of the blind Desire that drives the world. Therefore the first rule of action laid down by the Gita is to do the work that should be done without any desire for the fruit, *niṣkāma karma*.

A simple rule in appearance, and yet how difficult to carry out with anything like an absolute sincerity and liberating entireness! In the greater part of our action we use the principle very little if at all, and then even mostly as a sort of counterpoise to the normal principle of desire and to mitigate the extreme action of that tyrant impulse. At best, we are satisfied if we arrive at a modified and disciplined egoism not too shocking to our moral sense, not too brutally offensive to others. And to our partial self-discipline we give various names and forms; we habituate ourselves by practice to the sense of duty, to a firm fidelity to principle, a stoical fortitude or a religious resignation, a quiet or an ecstatic submission to God's will. But it is not these things that the Gita intends, useful though they are in their place; it aims at something absolute, unmitigated, uncompromising, a turn, an attitude that will change the whole poise of the soul. Not the mind's control of vital impulse is its rule, but the strong immobility of an immortal spirit.

The test it lays down is an absolute equality of the mind and the heart to all results, to all reactions, to all happenings. If good fortune and ill fortune, if respect and insult, if reputation and obloquy, if victory and defeat, if pleasant event and sorrowful event leave us not only unshaken but untouched, free in the emotions, free in the nervous reactions, free in the mental view, not responding with the least disturbance or vibration in any spot of the nature, then we have the absolute liberation to which the Gita points us, but not otherwise. The tiniest reaction is a proof that the discipline is imperfect and that some part of us accepts ignorance and bondage as its law and clings still to the old nature. Our self-conquest is only partially accomplished; it is still imperfect or unreal in some stretch or part or smallest spot of the ground of our nature. And that little pebble of imperfection may throw down the whole achievement of the Yoga!

There are certain semblances of an equal spirit which must not be mistaken for the profound and vast spiritual equality which the Gita teaches. There is an equality of disappointed resignation, an equality of pride, an equality of hardness and indifference: all these are egoistic in their nature. Inevitably they come in the course of the sadhana, but they must be rejected or transformed into the true quietude. There is too, on a higher level, the equality of the stoic, the equality of a devout resignation or a sage detachment, the equality of a soul aloof from the world and indifferent to its doings. These too are insufficient; first approaches they can be, but they are at most early soul-phases only or imperfect mental preparations for our entry into the true and absolute self-existent wide evenness of the spirit.

For it is certain that so great a result cannot be arrived at immediately and without any previous stages. At first we have to learn to bear the shocks of the world with the central part of our being untouched and silent, even when the surface mind, heart, life are strongly shaken; unmoved there on the bedrock of our life, we must separate the soul watching behind or immune deep within from these outer workings of our nature. Afterwards, extending this calm and steadfastness of the detached soul to its instruments, it will become slowly possible to radiate peace from the luminous centre to the darker peripheries. In this process we may take the passing help of many minor phases; a certain stoicism, a certain calm philosophy, a certain religious exaltation may help us towards some nearness to our aim, or we may call in even less strong and exalted but still useful powers of our mental nature. In the end we must either discard or transform them and arrive instead at an entire equality, a perfect self-existent peace within and even, if we can, a total unassailable, self-poised and spontaneous delight in all our members.

But how then shall we continue to act at all? For ordinarily the human being acts because he has a desire or feels a mental, vital or physical want or need; he is driven by the necessities of the body, by the lust of riches, honours or fame, or by a craving for the personal satisfactions of the mind or the heart or a craving for power or pleasure. Or he is seized and pushed about by a moral need or, at least, the need or the desire of making his ideas or his ideals or his will or his party or his country or his gods prevail in the world. If none of these desires nor any other must be the spring of our action, it would seem as if all incentive or motive power had been removed and action itself must necessarily cease. The Gita replies with its third great secret of the divine life. All action must be done in a more and more Godward and finally a God-possessed consciousness; our works must be a sacrifice to the Divine and in the end a surrender of all our being, mind, will, heart, sense, life and body to the One must make God-love and God-service our only motive. This transformation of the motive force and very character of works is indeed its master idea; it is the foundation of its unique synthesis of works, love and knowledge. In the end not desire, but the consciously felt will of the Eternal remains as the sole driver of our action and the sole originator of its initiative.

Equality, renunciation of all desire for the fruit of our works, action done as a sacrifice to the supreme Lord of our nature and of all nature, — these are the three first Godward approaches in the Gita's way of Karmayoga.

Chapter IV

The Sacrifice, the Triune Path and the Lord of the Sacrifice

THE LAW of sacrifice is the common divine action that was thrown out into the world in its beginning as a symbol of the solidarity of the universe. It is by the attraction of this law that a divinising principle, a saving power descends to limit and correct and gradually to eliminate the errors of an egoistic and self-divided creation. This descent, this sacrifice of the Purusha, the Divine Soul submitting itself to Force and Matter so that it may inform and illuminate them, is the seed of redemption of this world of Inconscience and Ignorance. “For with sacrifice as their companion,” says the Gita, “the All-Father created these peoples.” The acceptance of the law of sacrifice is a practical recognition by the ego that it is neither alone in the world nor chief in the world. It is its admission that, even in this much fragmented existence, there is beyond itself and behind that which is not its own egoistic person, something greater and completer, a diviner All which demands from it subordination and service. Indeed, sacrifice is imposed and, where need be, compelled by the universal World-Force; it takes it even from those who do not consciously recognise the law, — inevitably, because this is the intrinsic nature of things. Our ignorance or our false egoistic view of life can make no difference to this eternal bedrock truth of Nature. For this is the truth in Nature, that this ego which thinks itself a separate independent being and claims to live for itself, is not and cannot be independent nor separate, nor can it live to itself even if it would, but rather all are linked together by a secret Oneness. Each existence is continually giving out perforce from its stock; out of its mental receipts from Nature or its vital and physical assets and acquisitions and belongings a stream goes to all that is around it. And always again it receives something from its environment gratis or in return for its voluntary or involuntary tribute. For it is only by this giving and receiving that it can effect its own growth while at the same time it helps the sum of things. At length, though at first slowly and partially, we learn to make the conscious sacrifice; even, in the end, we take joy to give ourselves and what we envisage as belonging to us in a spirit of love and devotion to That which appears for the moment other than ourselves and is certainly other than our limited personalities. The sacrifice and the divine return for our sacrifice then become a gladly accepted means towards our last perfection; for it is recognised now as the road to the fulfilment in us of the eternal purpose.

But, most often, the sacrifice is done unconsciously, egoistically and without knowledge or acceptance of the true meaning of the great world-rite. It is so that the vast majority of earth-creatures do it; and, when it is so done, the individual derives only a mechanical minimum of natural inevitable profit, achieves by it only a slow painful progress limited and tortured by the smallness and suffering of the ego. Only when the heart, the will and the mind of knowledge associate themselves with the law and gladly follow it, can there come the deep joy and the happy fruitfulness of divine sacrifice. The mind's knowledge of the law and the heart's gladness in it culminate in the perception that it is to our own Self and Spirit and the one Self and Spirit of all that we give. And this is true even when our self-offering is still to our fellow-creatures or to lesser Powers and Principles and not yet to the Supreme. "Not for the sake of the wife," says Yajnavalkya in the Upanishad, "but for the sake of the Self is the wife dear to us." This in the lower sense of the individual self is the hard fact behind the coloured and passionate professions of egoistic love; but in a higher sense it is the inner significance of that love too which is not egoistic but divine. All true love and all sacrifice are in their essence Nature's contradiction of the primary egoism and its separative error; it is her attempt to turn from a necessary first fragmentation towards a recovered oneness. All unity between creatures is in its essence a self-finding, a fusion with that from which we have separated, a discovery of one's self in others.

But it is only a divine love and unity that can possess in the light what the human forms of these things seek for in the darkness. For the true unity is not merely an association and agglomeration like that of physical cells joined by a life of common interests; it is not even an emotional understanding, sympathy, solidarity or close drawing together. Only then are we really unified with those separated from us by the divisions of Nature, when we annul the division and find ourselves in that which seemed to us not ourselves. Association is a vital and physical unity; its sacrifice is that of mutual aid and concessions. Nearness, sympathy, solidarity create a mental, moral and emotional unity; theirs is a sacrifice of mutual support and mutual gratifications. But the true unity is spiritual; its sacrifice is a mutual self-giving, an interfusion of our inner substance. The law of sacrifice travels in Nature towards its culmination in this complete and unreserved self-giving; it awakens the consciousness of one common self in the giver and the object of the sacrifice. This culmination of sacrifice is the height even of human love and devotion when it tries to become divine; for there too the highest peak of love points into a heaven of complete mutual self-giving, its summit is the rapturous fusing of two souls into one.

This profounder idea of the world-wide law is at the heart of the teaching about works given in the Gita; a spiritual union with the Highest by sacrifice, an unreserved self-giving to the Eternal is the core of its doctrine. The vulgar conception of sacrifice is an act of painful self-immolation, austere self-mortification, difficult self-effacement; this kind of sacrifice may go even as far as self-mutilation and self-torture. These things may be temporarily necessary in man's hard endeavour to exceed his natural self; if the egoism in his nature is violent and obstinate, it has to be met sometimes by an answering strong internal repression and counterbalancing violence. But the Gita discourages any excess of violence done to oneself; for the self within is really the Godhead evolving, it is Krishna, it is the Divine; it has not to be troubled and tortured as the Titans of the world trouble and torture it, but to be increased, fostered, cherished, luminously opened to a divine light and strength and joy and wideness. It is not one's self, but the band of the spirit's inner enemies that we have to discourage, expel, slay upon the altar of the growth of the spirit; these can be ruthlessly excised, whose names are desire, wrath, inequality, greed, attachment to outward pleasures and pains, the cohort of usurping demons that are the cause of the soul's errors and sufferings. These should be regarded not as part of oneself but as intruders and perverters of our self's real and diviner nature; these have to be sacrificed in the harsher sense of the word, whatever pain in going they may throw by reflection on the consciousness of the seeker.

But the true essence of sacrifice is not self-immolation, it is self-giving; its object not self-effacement, but self-fulfilment; its method not self-mortification, but a greater life, not self-mutilation, but a transformation of our natural human parts into divine members, not self-torture, but a passage from a lesser satisfaction to a greater Ananda. There is only one thing painful in the beginning to a raw or turbid part of the surface nature; it is the indispensable discipline demanded, the denial necessary for the merging of the incomplete ego. But for that there can be a speedy and enormous compensation in the discovery of a real greater or ultimate completeness in others, in all things, in the cosmic oneness, in the freedom of the transcendent Self and Spirit, in the rapture of the touch of the Divine. Our sacrifice is not a giving without any return or any fruitful acceptance from the other side; it is an interchange between the embodied soul and conscious Nature in us and the eternal Spirit. For even though no return is demanded, yet there is the knowledge deep within us that a marvellous return is inevitable. The soul knows that it does not give itself to God in vain; claiming nothing, it yet receives the infinite riches of the divine Power and Presence.

Last, there is to be considered the recipient of the sacrifice and the manner of the sacrifice. The sacrifice may be offered to others or it may be offered to divine Powers; it may be offered to the cosmic All or it may be offered to the transcendent Supreme. The worship given may take any shape from the dedication of a leaf or flower, a cup of water, a handful of rice, a loaf of bread, to consecration of all that we possess and the submission of all that we are. Whoever the recipient, whatever the gift, it is the Supreme, the Eternal in things, who receives and accepts it, even if it be rejected or ignored by the immediate recipient. For the Supreme who transcends the universe, is yet here too, however veiled, in us and in the world and in its happenings; he is there as the omniscient Witness and Receiver of all our works and their secret Master. All our actions, all our efforts, even our sins and stumblings and sufferings and struggles are obscurely or consciously, known to us and seen or else unknown and in a disguise, governed in their last result by the One. All is turned towards him in his numberless forms and offered through them to the single Omnipresence. In whatever form and with whatever spirit we approach him, in that form and with that spirit he receives the sacrifice.

And the fruit also of the sacrifice of works varies according to the work, according to the intention in the work and according to the spirit that is behind the intention. But all other sacrifices are partial, egoistic, mixed, temporal, incomplete, — even those offered to the highest Powers and Principles keep this character: the result too is partial, limited, temporal, mixed in its reactions, effective only for a minor or intermediate purpose. The one entirely acceptable sacrifice is a last and highest and uttermost self-giving, — it is that surrender made face to face, with devotion and knowledge, freely and without any reserve to One who is at once our immanent Self, the environing constituent All, the Supreme Reality beyond this or any manifestation and, secretly, all these together, concealed everywhere, the immanent Transcendence. For to the soul that wholly gives itself to him, God also gives himself altogether. Only the one who offers his whole nature, finds the Self. Only the one who can give everything, enjoys the Divine All everywhere. Only a supreme self-abandonment attains to the Supreme. Only the sublimation by sacrifice of all that we are, can enable us to embody the Highest and live here in the immanent consciousness of the transcendent Spirit.

⁂

This, in short, is the demand made on us, that we should turn our whole life into a conscious sacrifice. Every moment and every movement of our being is to be resolved into a continuous and a devoted self-giving to the Eternal. All our actions, not less the smallest and most ordinary and trifling than the greatest and most uncommon and noble, must be performed as consecrated acts. Our individualised nature must live in the single consciousness of an inner and outer movement dedicated to Something that is beyond us and greater than our ego. No matter what the gift or to whom it is presented by us, there must be a consciousness in the act that we are presenting it to the one divine Being in all beings. Our commonest or most grossly material actions must assume this sublimated character; when we eat, we should be conscious that we are giving our food to that Presence in us; it must be a sacred offering in a temple and the sense of a mere physical need or self-gratification must pass away from us. In any great labour, in any high discipline, in any difficult or noble enterprise, whether undertaken for ourselves, for others or for the race, it will no longer be possible to stop short at the idea of the race, of ourselves or of others. The thing we are doing must be consciously offered as a sacrifice of works, not to these, but either through them or directly to the One Godhead; the Divine Inhabitant who was hidden by these figures must be no longer hidden but ever present to our soul, our mind, our sense. The workings and results of our acts must be put in the hands of that One in the feeling that that Presence is the Infinite and Most High by whom alone our labour and our aspiration are possible. For in his being all takes place; for him all labour and aspiration are taken from us by Nature and offered on his altar. Even in those things in which Nature is herself very plainly the worker and we only the witnesses of her working and its containers and supporters, there should be the same constant memory and insistent consciousness of a work and of its divine Master. Our very inspiration and respiration, our very heart-beats can and must be made conscious in us as the living rhythm of the universal sacrifice.

It is clear that a conception of this kind and its effective practice must carry in them three results that are of a central importance for our spiritual ideal. It is evident, to begin with, that, even if such a discipline is begun without devotion, it leads straight and inevitably towards the highest devotion possible; for it must deepen naturally into the completest adoration imaginable, the most profound God-love. There is bound up with it a growing sense of the Divine in all things, a deepening communion with the Divine in all our thought, will and action and at every moment of our lives, a more and more moved consecration to the Divine of the totality of our being. Now these implications of the Yoga of works are also of the very essence of an integral and absolute Bhakti. The seeker who puts them into living practice makes in himself continually a constant, active and effective representation of the very spirit of self-devotion, and it is inevitable that out of it there should emerge the most engrossing worship of the Highest to whom is given this service. An absorbing love for the Divine Presence to whom he feels an always more intimate closeness, grows upon the consecrated worker. And with it is born or in it is contained a universal love too for all these beings, living forms and creatures that are habitations of the Divine — not the brief restless grasping emotions of division, but the settled selfless love that is the deeper vibration of oneness. In all the seeker begins to meet the one Object of his adoration and service. The way of works turns by this road of sacrifice to meet the path of Devotion; it can be itself a devotion as complete, as absorbing, as integral as any the desire of the heart can ask for or the passion of the mind can imagine.

Next, the practice of this Yoga demands a constant inward remembrance of the one central liberating knowledge, and a constant active externalising of it in works comes in too to intensify the remembrance. In all is the one Self, the one Divine is all; all are in the Divine, all are the Divine and there is nothing else in the universe, — this thought or this faith is the whole background until it becomes the whole substance of the consciousness of the worker. A memory, a self-dynamising meditation of this kind, must and does in its end turn into a profound and uninterrupted vision and a vivid and all-embracing consciousness of that which we so powerfully remember or on which we so constantly meditate. For it compels a constant reference at each moment to the Origin of all being and will and action and there is at once an embracing and exceeding of all particular forms and appearances in That which is their cause and upholder. This way cannot go to its end without a seeing vivid and vital, as concrete in its way as physical sight, of the works of the universal Spirit everywhere. On its summits it rises into a constant living and thinking and willing and acting in the presence of the Supramental, the Transcendent. Whatever we see and hear, whatever we touch and sense, all of which we are conscious, has to be known and felt by us as That which we worship and serve; all has to be turned into an image of the Divinity, perceived as a dwelling-place of his Godhead, enveloped with the eternal Omnipresence. In its close, if not long before it, this way of works turns by communion with the Divine Presence, Will and Force into a way of Knowledge more complete and integral than any the mere creature intelligence can construct or the search of the intellect can discover.

Lastly, the practice of this Yoga of sacrifice compels us to renounce all the inner supports of egoism, casting them out of our mind and will and actions, and to eliminate its seed, its presence, its influence out of our nature. All must be done for the Divine; all must be directed towards the Divine. Nothing must be attempted for ourselves as a separate existence; nothing done for others, whether neighbours, friends, family, country or mankind or other creatures merely because they are connected with our personal life and thought and sentiment or because the ego takes a preferential interest in their welfare. In this way of doing and seeing all works and all life become only a daily dynamic worship and service of the Divine in the unbounded temple of his own vast cosmic existence. Life becomes more and more the sacrifice of the eternal in the individual constantly self-offered to the eternal Transcendence. It is offered in the wide sacrificial ground of the field of the eternal cosmic Spirit; and the Force too that offers it is the eternal Force, the omnipresent

Mother. Therefore is this way a way of union and communion by acts and by the spirit and knowledge in the act as complete and integral as any our Godward will can hope for or our soul's strength execute.

It has all the power of a way of works integral and absolute, but because of its law of sacrifice and self-giving to the Divine Self and Master, it is accompanied on its one side by the whole power of the path of Love and on the other by the whole power of the path of Knowledge. At its end all these three divine Powers work together, fused, united, completed, perfected by each other.

⁂

The Divine, the Eternal is the Lord of our sacrifice of works and union with him in all our being and consciousness and in its expressive instruments is the one object of the sacrifice; the steps of the sacrifice of works must therefore be measured, first, by the growth in our nature of something that brings us nearer to divine Nature, but secondly also by an experience of the Divine, his presence, his manifestation to us, an increasing closeness and union with that Presence. But the Divine is in his essence infinite and his manifestation too is multitudinously infinite. If that is so, it is not likely that our true integral perfection in being and in nature can come by one kind of realisation alone; it must combine many different strands of divine experience. It cannot be reached by the exclusive pursuit of a single line of identity till that is raised to its absolute; it must harmonise many aspects of the Infinite. An integral consciousness with a multiform dynamic experience is essential for the complete transformation of our nature.

There is one fundamental perception indispensable towards any integral knowledge or many-sided experience of this Infinite. It is to realise the Divine in its essential self and truth unaltered by forms and phenomena. Otherwise we are likely to remain caught in the net of appearances or wander confusedly in a chaotic multitude of cosmic or particular aspects, and if we avoid this confusion, it will be at the price of getting chained to some mental formula or shut up in a limited personal experience. The one secure and all-reconciling truth which is the very foundation of the universe is this that life is the manifestation of an uncreated Self and Spirit, and the key to life's hidden secret is the true relation of this Spirit with its own created existences. There is behind all this life the look of an eternal Being upon its multitudinous becomings; there is around and everywhere in it the envelopment and penetration of a manifestation in time by an unmanifested timeless Eternal. But this knowledge is valueless for Yoga if it is only an intellectual and metaphysical notion void of life and barren of consequence; a mental realisation alone cannot be sufficient for the seeker. For what Yoga searches after is not truth of thought alone or truth of mind alone, but the dynamic truth of a living and revealing spiritual experience. There must awake in us a constant indwelling and enveloping nearness, a vivid perception, a close feeling and communion, a concrete sense and contact of a true and infinite Presence always and everywhere. That Presence must remain with us as the living, pervading Reality in which we and all things exist and move and act, and we must feel it always and everywhere, concrete, visible, inhabiting all things; it must be patent to us as their true Self, tangible as their imperishable Essence, met by us closely as their inmost Spirit. To see, to feel, to sense, to contact in every way and not merely to conceive this Self and Spirit here in all existences and to feel with the same vividness all existences in this Self and Spirit, is the fundamental experience which must englobe all other knowledge.

This infinite and eternal Self of things is an omnipresent Reality, one existence everywhere; it is a single unifying presence and not different in different creatures; it can be met, seen or felt in its completeness in each soul or each form in the universe. For its infinity is spiritual and essential and not merely a boundlessness in Space or an endlessness in Time; the Infinite can be felt in an infinitesimal atom or in a second of time as convincingly as in the stretch of the aeons or the stupendous enormity of the intersolar spaces. The knowledge or experience of it can begin anywhere and express itself through anything; for the Divine is in all, and all is the Divine.

This fundamental experience will yet begin differently for different natures and take long to develop all the Truth that it conceals in its thousand aspects. I see perhaps or feel in myself or as myself first the eternal Presence and afterwards only can extend the vision or sense of this greater self of mine to all creatures. I then see the world in me or as one with me. I perceive the universe as a scene in my being, the play of its processes as a movement of forms and souls and forces in my cosmic spirit; I meet myself and none else everywhere. Not, be it well noted, with the error of the Asura, the Titan, who lives in his own inordinately magnified shadow, mistakes ego for the self and spirit and tries to impose his fragmentary personality as the one dominant existence upon all his surroundings. For, having the knowledge, I have already seized this reality that my true self is the non-ego, so always my greater Self is felt by me either as an impersonal vastness or an essential Person containing yet beyond all personalities or as both these together; but in any case, whether Impersonal or illimitable Personal or both together, it is an ego-exceeding Infinite. If I have sought it out and found it first in the form of it I call myself rather than in others, it is only because there it is easiest for me, owing to the subjectivity of my consciousness, to find it, to know it at once and to realise it. But if the narrow instrumental ego does not begin to merge in this Self as soon as it is seen, if the smaller external mind-constructed I refuses to disappear into that greater permanent uncreated spiritual I, then my realisation is either not genuine or radically imperfect. There is somewhere in me an egoistic obstacle; some part of my nature has opposed a self-regarding and self-preserving denial to the all-swallowing truth of the Spirit.

On the other hand — and to some this is an easier way — I may see the Divinity first in the world outside me, not in myself but in others. I meet it there from the beginning as an indwelling and all-containing Infinite that is not bound up with all these forms, creatures and forces which it bears on its surface. Or else I see and feel it as a pure solitary Self and Spirit which contains all these powers and existences, and I lose my sense of ego in the silent Omnipresence around me. Afterwards it is this that begins to pervade and possess my instrumental being and out of it seem to proceed all my impulsions to action, all my light of thought and speech, all the formations of my consciousness and all its relations and impacts with other soul-forms of this one world-wide Existence. I am already no longer this little personal self, but That with something of itself put forward which sustains a selected form of its workings in the universe.

There is another basic realisation, the most extreme of all, that yet comes sometimes as the first decisive opening or an early turn of the Yoga. It is the awakening to an ineffable high transcendent Unknowable above myself and above this world in which I seem to move, a timeless and spaceless condition or entity which is at once, in some way compelling and convincing to an essential consciousness in me, the one thing that is to it overwhelmingly real. This experience is usually accompanied by an equally compelling sense either of the dreamlike or shadowy illusoriness of all things here or else of their temporary, derivative and only half-real character. For a time at least all around me may seem to be a moving of cinematographic shadow forms or surface figures and my own action may appear as a fluid formulation from some Source ungrasped as yet and perhaps unseizable above or outside me. To remain in this consciousness, to carry out this initiation or follow out this first suggestion of the character of things would be to proceed towards the goal of dissolution of self and world in the Unknowable, — Moksha, Nirvana. But this is not the only line of issue; it is possible, on the contrary, for me to wait till through the silence of this timeless unfilled liberation I begin to enter into relations with that yet ungrasped Source of myself and my actions; then the void begins to fill, there emerges out of it or there rushes into it all the manifold Truth of the Divine, all the aspects and manifestations and many levels of a dynamic Infinite. At first this experience imposes on the mind and then on all our being an absolute, a fathomless, almost an abysmal peace and silence. Overpowered and subjugated, stilled, liberated from itself, the mind accepts the Silence itself as the Supreme. But afterwards the seeker discovers that all is there for him contained or new-made in that silence or through it descends upon him from a greater concealed transcendent Existence. For this Transcendent, this Absolute is not a mere peace of signless emptiness; it has its own infinite contents and riches of which ours are debased and diminished values. If there were not that Source of all things, there could be no universe; all powers, all works and activities would be an illusion, all creation and manifestation would be impossible.

These are the three fundamental realisations, so fundamental that to the Yogin of the way of Knowledge they seem ultimate, sufficient in themselves, destined to overtop and replace all others. And yet for the integral seeker, whether accorded to him at an early stage suddenly and easily by a miraculous grace or achieved with difficulty after a long progress and endeavour, they are neither the sole truth nor the full and only clues to the integral truth of the Eternal, but rather the unfilled beginning, the vast foundation of a greater divine Knowledge. Other realisations there are that are imperatively needed and must be explored to the full limit of their possibilities; and if some of them appear to a first sight to cover only Divine Aspects that are instrumental to the activity of existence but not inherent in its essence, yet, when followed to their end through that activity to its everlasting Source, it is found that they lead to a disclosure of the Divine without which our knowledge of the Truth behind things would be left bare and incomplete. These seeming Instrumentals are the key to a secret without which the Fundamentals themselves would not unveil all their mystery. All the revelatory aspects of the Divine must be caught in the wide net of the integral Yoga.

⁂

If a departure from the world and its activities, a supreme release and quietude were the sole aim of the seeker, the three great fundamental realisations would be sufficient for the fulfilment of his spiritual life: concentrated in them alone he could suffer all other divine or mundane knowledge to fall away from him and himself unencumbered, depart into the eternal Silence. But he has to take account of the world and its activities, learn what divine truth there may be behind them and reconcile that apparent opposition between the Divine Truth and the manifest creation which is the starting-point of most spiritual experience. Here, on each line of approach that he can take, he is confronted with a constant Duality, a separation between two terms of existence that seem to be opposites and their opposition to be the very root of the riddle of the universe. Later, he may and does discover that these are the two poles of One Being, connected by two simultaneous currents of energy negative and positive in relation to each other, their interaction the very condition for the manifestation of what is within the Being, their reunion the appointed means for the reconciliation of life's discords and for the discovery of the integral truth of which he is the seeker.

For on one side he is aware of this Self everywhere, this everlasting Spirit-Substance — Brahman, the Eternal — the same self-existence here in time behind each appearance he sees or senses and timeless beyond the universe. He has this strong overpowering experience of a Self that is neither our limited ego nor our mind, life or body, world-wide but not outwardly phenomenal, yet to some spirit-sense in him more concrete than any form or phenomenon, universal yet not dependent for its being on anything in the universe or on the whole totality of the universe; if all this were to disappear, its extinction would make no difference to this Eternal of his constant intimate experience. He is sure of an inexpressible Self-Existence which is the essence of himself and all things; he is intimately aware of an essential Consciousness of which thinking mind and life-sense and body-sense are only partial and diminished figures, a Consciousness with an illimitable Force in it of which all energies are the outcome, but which is yet not explained or accounted for by the sum or power or nature of all these energies together; he feels, he lives in an inalienable self-existent Bliss which is not this lesser transient joy or happiness or pleasure. A changeless imperishable infinity, a timeless eternity, a self-awareness which is not this receptive and reactive or tentacular mental consciousness, but is behind and above it and present too below it, even in what we call Inconscience, a oneness in which there is no possibility of any other existence, are the fourfold character of this settled experience. Yet this eternal Self-Existence is seen by him also as a conscious Time-Spirit bearing the stream of happenings, a self-extended spiritual Space containing all things and beings, a Spirit-Substance which is the very form and material of all that seems non-spiritual, temporary and finite. For all that is transitory, temporal, spatial, bounded, is yet felt by him to be in its substance and energy and power no other than the One, the Eternal, the Infinite.

And yet there is not only in him or before him this eternal self-aware Existence, this spiritual Consciousness, this infinity of self-illumined Force, this timeless and endless Beatitude. There is too, constant also to his experience, this universe in measurable Space and Time, some kind perhaps of boundless finite, and in it all is transient, limited, fragmentary, plural, ignorant, exposed to disharmony and suffering, seeking vaguely for some unrealised yet inherent harmony of oneness, unconscious or half-conscious or, even when most conscious, still tied to the original Ignorance and Inconscience. He is not always in a trance of peace or bliss and, even if he were, it would be no solution, for he knows that this would still be going on outside him and yet within some larger self of him as if for ever. At times these two states of his spirit seem to exist for him alternately according to his state of consciousness; at others they are there as two parts of his being, disparate and to be reconciled, two halves, an upper and a lower or an inner and an outer half of his existence. He finds soon that this separation in his consciousness has an immense liberative power; for by it he is no longer bound to the Ignorance, the Inconscience; it no longer appears to him the very nature of himself and things but an illusion which can be overcome or at least a temporary wrong self-experience, Maya. It is tempting to regard it as only a contradiction of the Divine, an incomprehensible mystery-play, masque or travesty of the Infinite — and so it irresistibly seems to his experience at times, on one side the luminous verity of Brahman, on the other a dark illusion of Maya. But something in him will not allow him to cut existence thus permanently in two and, looking more closely, he discovers that in this half-light or darkness too is the Eternal — it is the Brahman who is here with this face of Maya.

This is the beginning of a growing spiritual experience which reveals to him more and more that what seemed to him dark incomprehensible Maya was all the time no other than the Consciousness-Puissance of the Eternal, timeless and illimitable beyond the universe, but spread out here under a mask of bright and dark opposites for the miracle of the slow manifestation of the Divine in Mind and Life and Matter. All the Timeless presses towards the play in Time; all in Time turns upon and around the timeless Spirit. If the separate experience was liberative, this unitive experience is dynamic and effective. For he now not only feels himself to be in his soul-substance part of the Eternal, in his essential self and spirit entirely one with the Eternal, but in his active nature an instrumentation of its omniscient and omnipotent Consciousness-Puissance. However bounded and relative its present play in him, he can open to a greater and greater consciousness and power of it and to that expansion there seems to be no assignable limit. A level spiritual and supramental of that Consciousness-Puissance seems even to reveal itself above him and lean to enter into contact, where there are not these trammels and limits, and its powers too are pressing upon the play in Time with the promise of a greater descent and a less disguised or no longer disguised manifestation of the Eternal. The once conflicting but now biune duality of Brahman-Maya stands revealed to him as the first great dynamic aspect of the Self of all selves, the Master of existence, the Lord of the world-sacrifice and of his sacrifice.

On another line of approach another Duality presents itself to the experience of the seeker. On one side he becomes aware of a witness recipient observing experiencing Consciousness which does not appear to act but for which all these activities inside and outside us seem to be undertaken and continue. On the other side he is aware at the same time of an executive Force or an energy of Process which is seen to constitute, drive and guide all conceivable activities and to create a myriad forms visible to us and invisible and use them as stable supports for its incessant flux of action and creation. Entering exclusively into the witness consciousness he becomes silent, untouched, immobile; he sees that he has till now passively reflected and appropriated to himself the movements of Nature and it is by this reflection that they acquired from the witness soul within him what seemed a spiritual value and significance. But now he has withdrawn that ascription or mirroring identification; he is conscious only of his silent self and aloof from all that is in motion around it; all activities are outside him and at once they cease to be intimately real; they appear now mechanical, detachable, endable. Entering exclusively into the kinetic movement, he has an opposite self-awareness; he seems to his own perception a mass of activities, a formation and result of forces; if there is an active consciousness, even some kind of kinetic being in the midst of it all, yet there is no longer a free soul in it anywhere. These two different and opposite states of being alternate in him or else stand simultaneously over against each other; one silent in the inner being observes but is unmoved and does not participate; the other active in some outer or surface self pursues its habitual movements. He has entered into an intense separative perception of the great duality, Soul-Nature, Purusha-Prakriti.

But as the consciousness deepens, he becomes aware that this is only a first frontal appearance. For he finds that it is by the silent support, permission or sanction of this witness soul in him that this executive nature can work intimately or persistently upon his being; if the soul withdraws its sanction, the movements of Nature in their action upon and within him become a wholly mechanical repetition, vehement at first as if seeking still to enforce their hold, but afterwards less and less dynamic and real. More actively using this power of sanction or refusal, he perceives that he can, slowly and uncertainly at first, more decisively afterwards, change the movements of Nature. Eventually in this witness soul or behind it is revealed to him the presence of a Knower and master Will in Nature, and all her activities more and more appear as an expression of what is known and either actively willed or passively permitted by this Lord of her existence. Prakriti herself now seems to be mechanical only in the carefully regulated appearance of her workings, but in fact a conscious Force with a soul within her, a self-aware significance in her turns, a revelation of a secret Will and Knowledge in her steps and figures. This Duality, in aspect separate, is inseparable. Wherever there is Prakriti, there is Purusha; wherever there is Purusha, there is Prakriti. Even in his inactivity he holds in himself all her force and energies ready for projection; even in the drive of her action she carries with her all his observing and mandatory consciousness as the whole support and sense of her creative purpose. Once more the seeker discovers in his experience the two poles of existence of One Being and the two lines or currents of their energy negative and positive in relation to each other which effect by their simultaneity the manifestation of all that is within it. Here too he finds that the separative aspect is liberative; for it releases him from the bondage of identification with the inadequate workings of Nature in the Ignorance. The unitive aspect is dynamic and effective; for it enables him to arrive at mastery and perfection; while rejecting what is less divine or seemingly undivine in her, he can rebuild her forms and movements in himself according to a nobler pattern and the law and rhythm of a greater existence. At a certain spiritual and supramental level the Duality becomes still more perfectly Two-in-one, the Master Soul with the Conscious Force within it, and its potentiality disowns all barriers and breaks through every limit. Thus this once separate, now biune Duality of Purusha-Prakriti is revealed to him in all its truth as the second great instrumental and effective aspect of the Soul of all souls, the Master of existence, the Lord of the Sacrifice.

On yet another line of approach the seeker meets another corresponding but in aspect distinct Duality in which the biune character is more immediately apparent, — the dynamic Duality of Ishwara-Shakti. On one side he is aware of an infinite and self-existent Godhead in being who contains all things in an ineffable potentiality of existence, a Self of all selves, a Soul of all souls, a spiritual Substance of all substances, an impersonal inexpressible Existence, but at the same time an illimitable Person who is here self-represented in numberless personality, a Master of Knowledge, a Master of Forces, a Lord of love and bliss and beauty, a single Origin of the worlds, a self-manifester and self-creator, a Cosmic Spirit, a universal Mind, a universal Life, the conscious and living Reality supporting the appearance which we sense as unconscious inanimate Matter. On the other side he becomes aware of the same Godhead in effectuating consciousness and power put forth as a self-aware Force that contains and carries all within her and is charged to manifest it in universal Time and Space. It is evident to him that here there is one supreme and infinite Being represented to us in two different sides of itself, obverse and reverse in relation to each other. All is either prepared or pre-existent in the Godhead in Being and issues from it and is upheld by its Will and Presence; all is brought out, carried in movement by the Godhead in power; all becomes and acts and develops by her and in her its individual or its cosmic purpose. It is again a Duality necessary for the manifestation, creating and enabling that double current of energy which seems always necessary for the world-workings, two poles of the same Being, but here closer to each other and always very evidently carrying each the powers of the other in its essence and its dynamic nature. At the same time by the fact that the two great elements of the divine Mystery, the Personal and the Impersonal, are here fused together, the seeker of the integral Truth feels in the duality of Ishwara-Shakti his closeness to a more intimate and ultimate secret of the divine Transcendence and the Manifestation than that offered to him by any other experience.

For the Ishwari Shakti, divine Conscious-Force and World-Mother, becomes a mediatrix between the eternal One and the manifested Many. On one side, by the play of the energies which she brings from the One, she manifests the multiple Divine in the universe, involving and evolving its endless appearances out of her revealing substance; on the other by the reascending current of the same energies she leads back all towards That from which they have issued so that the soul in its evolutionary manifestation may more and more return towards the Divinity there or here put on its divine character. There is not in her, although she devises a cosmic mechanism, the character of an inconscient mechanical Executrix which we find in the first physiognomy of Prakriti, the Nature-Force; neither is there that sense of an Unreality, creatrix of illusions or semi-illusions, which is attached to our first view of Maya. It is at once clear to the experiencing soul that here is a conscious Power of one substance and nature with the Supreme from whom she came. If she seems to have plunged us into the Ignorance and Inconscience in pursuance of a plan we cannot yet interpret, if her forces present themselves as all these ambiguous forces of the universe, yet it becomes visible before long that she is working for the development of the Divine Consciousness in us and that she stands above drawing us to her own higher entity, revealing to us more and more the very essence of the Divine Knowledge, Will and Ananda. Even in the movements of the Ignorance the soul of the seeker becomes aware of her conscious guidance supporting his steps and leading them slowly or swiftly, straight or by many detours out of the darkness into the light of a greater consciousness, out of mortality into immortality, out of evil and suffering towards a highest good and felicity of which as yet his human mind can form only a faint image. Thus her power is at once liberative and dynamic, creative, effective, — creative not only of things as they are, but of things that are to be; for, eliminating the twisted and tangled movements of his lower consciousness made of the stuff of the Ignorance, it rebuilds and new-makes his soul and nature into the substance and forces of a higher divine Nature.

In this Duality too there is possible a separative experience. At one pole of it the seeker may be conscious only of the Master of Existence putting forth on him His energies of knowledge, power and bliss to liberate and divinise; the Shakti may appear to him only an impersonal Force expressive of these things or an attribute of the Ishwara. At the other pole he may encounter the World-Mother, creatrix of the universe, putting forth the Gods and the worlds and all things and existences out of her spirit-substance. Or even if he sees both aspects, it may be with an unequal separating vision, subordinating one to the other, regarding the Shakti only as a means for approaching the Ishwara. There results a one-sided tendency or a lack of balance, a power of effectuation not perfectly supported or a light of revelation not perfectly dynamic. It is when a complete union of the two sides of the Duality is effected and rules his consciousness that he begins to open to a fuller power that will draw him altogether out of the confused clash of Ideas and Forces here into a higher Truth and enable the descent of that Truth to illumine and deliver and act sovereignly upon this world of Ignorance. He has begun to lay his hand on the integral secret which in its fullness can be grasped only when he overpasses the double term that reigns here of Knowledge inextricably intertwined with an original Ignorance and crosses the border where spiritual mind disappears into supramental Gnosis. It is through this third and most dynamic dual aspect of the One that the seeker begins with the most integral completeness to enter into the deepest secret of the being of the Lord of the Sacrifice.

For it is behind the mystery of the presence of personality in an apparently impersonal universe — as in that of consciousness manifesting out of the Inconscient, life out of the inanimate, soul out of brute Matter — that is hidden the solution of the riddle of existence. Here again is another dynamic Duality more pervading than appears at first view and deeply necessary to the play of the slowly self-revealing Power. It is possible for the seeker in his spiritual experience, standing at one pole of the Duality, to follow Mind in seeing a fundamental Impersonality everywhere. The evolving soul in the material world begins from a vast impersonal Inconscience in which our inner sight yet perceives the presence of a veiled infinite Spirit; it proceeds with the emergence of a precarious consciousness and personality that even at their fullest have the look of an episode, but an episode that repeats itself in a constant series; it arises through experience of life out of mind into an infinite, impersonal and absolute Superconscience in which personality, mind-consciousness, life-consciousness seem all to disappear by a liberating annihilation, Nirvana. At a lower pitch he still experiences this fundamental impersonality as an immense liberating force everywhere. It releases his knowledge from the narrowness of personal mind, his will from the clutch of personal desire, his heart from the bondage of petty mutable emotions, his life from its petty personal groove, his soul from ego, and it allows them to embrace calm, equality, wideness, universality, infinity. A Yoga of works would seem to require Personality as its mainstay, almost its source, but here too the impersonal is found to be the most direct liberating force; it is through a wide egoless impersonality that one can become a free worker and a divine creator. It is not surprising that the overwhelming power of this experience from the impersonal pole of the Duality should have moved the sages to declare this to be the one way and an impersonal Superconscience to be the sole truth of the Eternal.

But still to the seeker standing at the opposite pole of the Duality another line of experience appears which justifies an intuition deeply-seated behind the heart and in our very life-force, that personality, like consciousness, life, soul, is not a brief-lived stranger in an impersonal Eternity, but contains the very meaning of existence. This fine flower of the cosmic Energy carries in it a forecast of the aim and a hint of the very motive of the universal labour. As an occult vision opens in him, he becomes aware of worlds behind in which consciousness and personality hold an enormous place and assume a premier value; even here in the material world to this occult vision the inconscience of Matter fills with a secret pervading consciousness, its inanimation harbours a vibrant life, its mechanism is the device of an indwelling Intelligence, God and soul are everywhere. Above all stands an infinite conscious Being who is variously self-expressed in all these worlds; impersonality is only a first means of that expression. It is a field of principles and forces, an equal basis of manifestation; but these forces express themselves through beings, have conscious spirits at their head and are the emanation of a One Conscious Being who is their source. A multiple innumerable personality expressing that One is the very sense and central aim of the manifestation and if now personality seems to be narrow, fragmentary, restrictive, it is only because it has not opened to its source or flowered into its own divine truth and fullness packing itself with the universal and the infinite. Thus the world-creation is no more an illusion, a fortuitous mechanism, a play that need not have happened, a flux without consequence; it is an intimate dynamism of the conscious and living Eternal.

This extreme opposition of view from the two poles of one Existence creates no fundamental difficulty for the seeker of the integral Yoga; for his whole experience has shown him the necessity of these double terms and their currents of Energy, negative and positive in relation to each other, for the manifestation of what is within the one Existence. For himself Personality and Impersonality have been the two wings of his spiritual ascension and he has the prevision that he will reach a height where their helpful interaction will pass into a fusion of their powers and disclose the integral Reality and release into action the original force of the Divine. Not only in the fundamental Aspects but in all the working of his sadhana he has felt their double truth and mutually complementary working. An impersonal Presence has dominated from above or penetrated and occupied his nature; a Light descending has suffused his mind, life-power, the very cells of his body, illumined them with knowledge, revealed him to himself down to his most disguised and unsuspected movements, exposing, purifying, destroying or brilliantly changing all that belonged to the Ignorance. A Force has poured into him in currents or like a sea, worked in his being and all its members, dissolved, new-made, reshaped, transfigured everywhere. A Bliss has invaded him and shown that it can make suffering and sorrow impossible and turn pain itself into divine pleasure. A Love without limits has joined him to all creatures or revealed to him a world of inseparable intimacy and unspeakable sweetness and beauty and begun to impose its law of perfection and its ecstasy even amidst the disharmony of terrestrial life. A spiritual

Truth and Right have convicted the good and evil of this world of imperfection or of falsehood and unveiled a supreme good and its clue of subtle harmony and its sublimation of action and feeling and knowledge. But behind all these and in them he has felt a Divinity who is all these things, a Bringer of Light, a Guide and All-Knower, a Master of Force, a Giver of Bliss, Friend, Helper, Father, Mother, Playmate in the world-game, an absolute Master of his being, his soul's Beloved and Lover. All relations known to human personality are there in the soul's contact with the Divine; but they rise towards superhuman levels and compel him towards a divine nature.

It is an integral knowledge that is being sought, an integral force, a total amplitude of union with the All and Infinite behind existence. For the seeker of the integral Yoga no single experience, no one Divine Aspect, — however overwhelming to the human mind, sufficient for its capacity, easily accepted as the sole or the ultimate reality, — can figure as the exclusive truth of the Eternal. For him the experience of the Divine Oneness carried to its extreme is more deeply embraced and amply fathomed by following out to the full the experience of the Divine Multiplicity. All that is true behind polytheism as well as behind monotheism falls within the scope of his seeking; but he passes beyond their superficial sense to human mind to grasp their mystic truth in the Divine. He sees what is aimed at by the jarring sects and philosophies and accepts each facet of the Reality in its own place, but rejects their narrownesses and errors and proceeds farther till he discovers the One Truth that binds them together. The reproach of anthropomorphism and anthropolatry cannot deter him, — for he sees them to be prejudices of the ignorant and arrogant reasoning intelligence, the abstracting mind turning on itself in its own cramped circle. If human relations as practised now by man are full of smallness and perversity and ignorance, yet are they disfigured shadows of something in the Divine and by turning them to the Divine he finds that of which they are a shadow and brings it down for manifestation in life. It is through the human exceeding itself and opening itself to a supreme plenitude that the Divine must manifest itself here, since that comes inevitably in the course and process of the spiritual evolution, and therefore he will not despise or blind himself to the Godhead because it is lodged in a human body, *mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam*. Beyond the limited human conception of God, he will pass to the one divine Eternal, but also he will meet him in the faces of the Gods, his cosmic personalities supporting the World-Play, detect him behind the mask of the Vibhutis, embodied World-Forces or human Leaders, reverence and obey him in the Guru, worship him in the Avatar. This will be to him his exceeding good fortune if he can meet one who has realised or is becoming That which he seeks for and can by opening to it in this vessel of its manifestation himself realise it. For that is the most palpable sign of the growing fulfilment, the promise of the great mystery of the progressive Descent into Matter which is the secret sense of the material creation and the justification of terrestrial existence.

Thus reveals himself to the seeker in the progress of the sacrifice the Lord of the sacrifice. At any point this revelation can begin; in any aspect the Master of the Work can take up the work in him and more and more press upon him and it for the unfolding of his presence. In time all the Aspects disclose themselves, separate, combine, fuse, are unified together. At the end there shines through it all the supreme integral Reality, unknowable to Mind which is part of the Ignorance, but knowable because self-aware in the light of a spiritual consciousness and a supramental knowledge.

⁂

This revelation of a highest Truth or a highest Being, Consciousness, Power, Bliss and Love, impersonal and personal at once and so taking up both sides of our own being, — since in us also is the ambiguous meeting of a Person and a mass of impersonal principles and forces, — is at once the first aim and the condition of the ultimate achievement of the sacrifice. The achievement itself takes the shape of a union of our own existence with That which is thus made manifest to our vision and experience, and the union has a threefold character. There is a union in spiritual essence, by identity; there is a union by the indwelling of our soul in this highest Being and Consciousness; there is a dynamic union of likeness or oneness of nature between That and our instrumental being here. The first is the liberation from the Ignorance and identification with the Real and Eternal, *mokṣa*, *sāyujya*, which is the characteristic aim of the Yoga of Knowledge. The second, the dwelling of the soul with or in the Divine, *sāmīpya*, *sālokya*, is the intense hope of all Yoga of love and beatitude. The third, identity in nature, likeness to the Divine, to be perfect as That is perfect, is the high intention of all Yoga of power and perfection or of divine works and service. The combined completeness of the three together, founded here on a multiple Unity of the self-manifesting Divine, is the complete result of the integral Yoga, the goal of its triple Path and the fruit of its triple sacrifice.

A union by identity may be ours, a liberation and change of our substance of being into that supreme Spirit-substance, of our consciousness into that divine Consciousness, of our soul-state into that ecstasy of spiritual beatitude or that calm eternal bliss of existence. A luminous indwelling in the Divine can be attained by us secure against any fall or exile into this lower consciousness of the darkness and the Ignorance, the soul ranging freely and firmly in its own natural world of light and joy and freedom and oneness. And since this is not merely to be attained in some other existence beyond but pursued and discovered here also, it can only be by a descent, by a bringing down of the Divine Truth, by the establishment here of the soul's native world of light, joy, freedom, oneness. A union of our instrumental being no less than of our soul and spirit must change our imperfect nature into the very likeness and image of Divine Nature; it must put off the blind, marred, mutilated, discordant movements of the Ignorance and put on the inherence of that light, peace, bliss, harmony, universality, mastery, purity, perfection; it must convert itself into a receptacle of divine knowledge, an instrument of divine Will-Power and Force of Being, a channel of divine Love, Joy and Beauty. This is the transformation to be effected, an integral transformation of all that we now are or seem to be, by the joining — Yoga — of the finite being in Time with the Eternal and Infinite.

All this difficult result can become possible only if there is an immense conversion, a total reversal of our consciousness, a supernormal entire transfiguration of the nature. There must be an ascension of the whole being, an ascension of spirit chained here and trammelled by its instruments and its environment to sheer Spirit free above, an ascension of soul towards some blissful Super-soul, an ascension of mind towards some luminous Supermind, an ascension of life towards some vast Super-life, an ascension of our very physicality to join its origin in some pure and plastic spirit-substance. And this cannot be a single swift upsoaring but, like the ascent of the sacrifice described in the Veda, a climbing from peak to peak in which from each summit one looks up to the much more that has still to be done. At the same time there must be a descent too to affirm below what we have gained above: on each height we conquer we have to turn to bring down its power and its illumination into the lower mortal movement; the discovery of the Light for ever radiant on high must correspond with the release of the same Light secret below in every part down to the deepest caves of subconscient Nature. And this pilgrimage of ascension and this descent for the labour of transformation must be inevitably a battle, a long war with ourselves and with opposing forces around us which, while it lasts, may well seem interminable. For all our old obscure and ignorant nature will contend repeatedly and obstinately with the transforming Influence, supported in its lagging unwillingness or its stark resistance by most of the established forces of environing universal Nature; the powers and principalities and the ruling beings of the Ignorance will not easily give up their empire.

At first there may have to be a prolonged, often tedious and painful period of preparation and purification of all our being till it is ready and fit for an opening to a greater Truth and Light or to the Divine Influence and Presence. Even when centrally fitted, prepared, open already, it will still be long before all our movements of mind, life and body, all the multiple and conflicting members and elements of our personality consent or, consenting, are able to bear the difficult and exacting process of the transformation. And hardest of all, even if all in us is willing, is the struggle we shall have to carry through against the universal forces attached to the present unstable creation when we seek to make the final supramental conversion and reversal of consciousness by which the Divine Truth must be established in us in its plenitude and not merely what they would more readily permit, an illumined Ignorance.

It is for this that a surrender and submission to That which is beyond us enabling the full and free working of its Power is indispensable. As that self-giving progresses, the work of the sacrifice becomes easier and more powerful and the prevention of the opposing Forces loses much of its strength, impulsion and substance. Two inner changes help most to convert what now seems difficult or impracticable into a thing possible and even sure. There takes place a coming to the front of some secret inmost soul within which was veiled by the restless activity of the mind, by the turbulence of our vital impulses and by the obscurity of the physical consciousness, the three powers which in their confused combination we now call our self. There will come about as a result a less impeded growth of a Divine Presence at the centre with its liberating Light and effective Force and an irradiation of it into all the conscious and subconscious ranges of our nature. These are the two signs, one marking our completed conversion and consecration to the great Quest, the other the final acceptance by the Divine of our sacrifice.

Chapter V

The Ascent of the Sacrifice – 1

The Works of Knowledge — The Psychic Being

THIS THEN is in its foundations the integral knowledge of the Supreme and Infinite to whom we offer our sacrifice, and this the nature of the sacrifice itself in its triple character, — a sacrifice of works, a sacrifice of love and adoration, a sacrifice of knowledge. For even when we speak of the sacrifice of works by itself, we do not mean the offering only of our outward acts, but of all that is active and dynamic in us; our internal movements no less than our external doings are to be consecrated on the one altar. The inner heart of all work that is made into a sacrifice is a labour of self-discipline and self-perfection by which we can hope to become conscious and luminous with a Light from above poured into all our movements of mind, heart, will, sense, life and body. An increasing light of divine consciousness will make us close in soul and one by identity in our inmost being and spiritual substance with the Master of the world-sacrifice, — the supreme object of existence proposed by the ancient Vedanta; but also it will tend to make us one in our becoming by resemblance to the Divine in our nature, the mystic sense of the symbol of sacrifice in the sealed speech of the seers of the Veda.

But if this is to be the character of the rapid evolution from a mental to a spiritual being contemplated by the integral Yoga, a question arises full of many perplexities but of great dynamic importance. How are we to deal with life and works as they now are, with the activities proper to our still unchanged human nature? An ascension towards a greater consciousness, an occupation of our mind, life and body by its powers has been accepted as the outstanding object of the Yoga: but still life here, not some other-life elsewhere, is proposed as the immediate field of the action of the Spirit, — a transformation, not an annihilation of our instrumental being and nature. What then becomes of the present activities of our being, activities of the mind turned towards knowledge and the expression of knowledge, activities of our emotional and sensational parts, activities of outward conduct, creation, production, the will turned towards mastery over men, things, life, the world, the forces of Nature? Are they to be abandoned and to be replaced by some other way of living in which a spiritualised consciousness can find its true expression and figure? Are they to be maintained as they are in their outward appearance, but transformed by an inner spirit in the act or enlarged in scope and liberated into new forms by a reversal of consciousness such as was seen on earth when man took up the vital activities of the animal to mentalise and extend and transfigure them by the infusion of reason, thinking will, refined emotion, an organised intelligence? Or is there to be an abandonment in part, a preservation only of such of them as can bear a spiritual change and, for the rest, the creation of a new life expressive, in its form no less than in its inspiration and motive-force, of the unity, wideness, peace, joy and harmony of the liberated spirit? It is this problem most of all that has exercised the minds of those who have tried to trace the paths that lead from the human to the Divine in the long journey of the Yoga.

Every kind of solution has been offered from the entire abandonment of works and life, so far as that is physically possible, to the acceptance of life as it is but with a new spirit animating and uplifting its movements, in appearance the same as they were but changed in the spirit behind them and therefore in their inner significance. The extreme solution insisted on by the world-shunning ascetic or the inward-turned ecstatical and self-oblivious mystic is evidently foreign to the purpose of an integral Yoga, — for if we are to realise the Divine in the world, it cannot be done by leaving aside the world-action and action itself altogether. At a less high pitch it was laid down by the religious mind in ancient times that one should keep only such actions as are in their nature part of the seeking, service or cult of the Divine and such others as are attached to these or, in addition, those that are indispensable to the ordinary setting of life but done in a religious spirit and according to the injunctions of traditional religion and Scripture. But this is too formalist a rule for the fulfilment of the free spirit in works, and it is besides professedly no more than a provisional solution for tiding over the transition from life in the world to a life in the Beyond which still remains the sole ultimate purpose. An integral Yoga must lean rather to the catholic injunction of the Gita that even the liberated soul, living in the Truth, should still do all the works of life so that the plan of the universal evolution under a secret divine leading may not languish or suffer. But if all works are to be done with the same forms and on the same lines as they are now done in the Ignorance, our gain is only inward and our life is in danger of becoming the dubious and ambiguous formula of an inner Light doing the works of an outer Twilight, the perfect Spirit expressing itself in a mould of imperfection foreign to its own divine nature. If no better can be done for a time, — and during a long period of transition something like this does inevitably happen, — then so it must remain till things are ready and the spirit within is powerful enough to impose its own forms on the life of the body and the world outside; but this can be accepted only as a transitional stage and not as our soul's ideal or the ultimate goal of the passage.

For the same reason the ethical solution is insufficient; for an ethical rule merely puts a bit in the mouth of the wild horses of Nature and exercises over them a difficult and partial control, but it has no power to transform Nature so that she may move in a secure freedom fulfilling the intuitions that proceed from a divine self-knowledge. At best its method is to lay down limits, to coerce the devil, to put the wall of a relative and very doubtful safety around us. This or some similar device of self-protection may be necessary for a time whether in ordinary life or in Yoga; but in Yoga it can only be the mark of a transition. A fundamental transformation and a pure wideness of spiritual life are the aim before us and, if we are to reach it, we must find a deeper solution, a surer supra-ethical dynamic principle. To be spiritual within, ethical in the outside life, this is the ordinary religious solution, but it is a compromise; the spiritualisation of both the inward being and the outward life and not a compromise between life and the spirit is the goal of which we are the seekers. Nor can the human confusion of values which obliterates the distinction between spiritual and moral and even claims that the moral is the only true spiritual element in our nature be of any use to us; for ethics is a mental control, and the limited erring mind is not and cannot be the free and ever-luminous spirit. It is equally impossible to accept the gospel that makes life the one aim, takes its elements fundamentally as they are and only calls in a half-spiritual or pseudo-spiritual light to flush and embellish it. Inadequate too is the very frequent attempt at a misalliance between the vital and the spiritual, a mystic experience within with an aestheticised intellectual and sensuous Paganism or exalted hedonism outside leaning upon it and satisfying itself in the glow of a spiritual sanction; for this too is a precarious and never successful compromise and it is as far from the divine Truth and its integrality as the puritanic opposite. These are all stumbling solutions of the fallible human mind groping for a transaction between the high spiritual summits and the lower pitch of the ordinary mind-motives and life-motives. Whatever partial truth may be hidden behind them, that truth can only be accepted when it has been raised to the spiritual level, tested in the supreme Truth-consciousness and extricated from the soil and error of the Ignorance.

In sum, it may be safely affirmed that no solution offered can be anything but provisional until a supramental Truth-consciousness is reached by which the appearances of things are put in their place and their essence revealed and that in them which derives straight from the spiritual essence. In the meanwhile our only safety is to find a guiding law of spiritual experience — or else to liberate a light within that can lead us on the way until that greater direct Truth-consciousness is reached above us or born within us. For all else in us that is only outward, all that is not a spiritual sense or seeing, the constructions, representations or conclusions of the intellect, the suggestions or instigations of the life-force, the positive necessities of physical things are sometimes half-lights, sometimes false lights that can at best only serve for a while or serve a little and for the rest either detain or confuse us. The guiding law of spiritual experience can only come by an opening of human consciousness to the Divine Consciousness; there must be the power to receive in us the working and command and dynamic presence of the Divine Shakti and surrender ourselves to her control; it is that surrender and that control which bring the guidance. But the surrender is not sure, there is no absolute certitude of the guidance so long as we are besieged by mind formations and life impulses and instigations of ego which may easily betray us into the hands of a false experience. This danger can only be countered by the opening of a now nine-tenths concealed inmost soul or psychic being that is already there but not commonly active within us. That is the inner light we must liberate; for the light of this inmost soul is our one sure illumination so long as we walk still amidst the siege of the Ignorance and the Truth-consciousness has not taken up the entire control of our Godward endeavour. The working of the Divine Force in us under the conditions of the transition and the light of the psychic being turning us always towards a conscious and seeing obedience to that higher impulsion and away from the demands and instigations of the Forces of the Ignorance, these between them create an ever progressive inner law of our action which continues till the spiritual and supramental can be established in our nature. In the transition there may well be a period in which we take up all life and action and offer them to the Divine for purification, change and deliverance of the truth within them, another period in which we draw back and build a spiritual wall around us admitting through its gates only such activities as consent to undergo the law of the spiritual transformation, a third in which a free and all-embracing action, but with new forms fit for the utter truth of the Spirit, can again be made possible. These things, however, will be decided by no mental rule but in the light of the soul within us and by the ordaining force and progressive guidance of the Divine Power that secretly or overtly first impels, then begins clearly to control and order and finally takes up the whole burden of the Yoga.

In accordance with the triple character of the sacrifice we may divide works too into a triple order, the works of Knowledge, the works of Love, the works of the Will-in-Life, and see how this more plastic spiritual rule applies to each province and effects the transition from the lower to the higher nature.

⁂

It is natural from the point of view of the Yoga to divide into two categories the activities of the human mind in its pursuit of knowledge. There is the supreme supra-intellectual knowledge which concentrates itself on the discovery of the One and Infinite in its transcendence or tries to penetrate by intuition, contemplation, direct inner contact into the ultimate truths behind the appearances of Nature; there is the lower science which diffuses itself in an outward knowledge of phenomena, the disguises of the One and Infinite as it appears to us in or through the more exterior forms of the world-manifestation around us. These two, an upper and a lower hemisphere, in the form of them constructed or conceived by men within the mind's ignorant limits, have even there separated themselves, as they developed, with some sharpness.... Philosophy, sometimes spiritual or at least intuitive, sometimes abstract and intellectual, sometimes intellectualising spiritual experience or supporting with a logical apparatus the discoveries of the spirit, has claimed always to take the fixation of ultimate Truth as its province. But even when it did not separate itself on rarefied metaphysical heights from the knowledge that belongs to the practical world and the pursuit of ephemeral objects, intellectual Philosophy by its habit of abstraction has seldom been a power for life. It has been sometimes powerful for high speculation, pursuing mental Truth for its own sake without any ulterior utility or object, sometimes for a subtle gymnastic of the mind in a mistily bright cloud-land of words and ideas, but it has walked or acrobatised far from the more tangible realities of existence. Ancient

Philosophy in Europe was more dynamic, but only for the few; in India in its more spiritualised forms, it strongly influenced but without transforming the life of the race.... Religion did not attempt, like Philosophy, to live alone on the heights; its aim was rather to take hold of man's parts of life even more than his parts of mind and draw them Godwards; it professed to build a bridge between spiritual Truth and the vital and material human existence; it strove to subordinate and reconcile the lower to the higher, make life serviceable to God, Earth obedient to Heaven. It has to be admitted that too often this necessary effort had the opposite result of making Heaven a sanction for Earth's desires; for, continually, the religious idea has been turned into an excuse for the worship and service of the human ego. Religion, leaving constantly its little shining core of spiritual experience, has lost itself in the obscure mass of its ever extending ambiguous compromises with life: in attempting to satisfy the thinking mind, it more often succeeded in oppressing or fettering it with a mass of theological dogmas; while seeking to net the human heart, it fell itself into pits of pietistic emotionalism and sensationalism; in the act of annexing the vital nature of man to dominate it, it grew itself vitiated and fell a prey to all the fanaticism, homicidal fury, savage or harsh turn for oppression, pullulating falsehood, obstinate attachment to ignorance to which that vital nature is prone; its desire to draw the physical in man towards God betrayed it into chaining itself to ecclesiastic mechanism, hollow ceremony and lifeless ritual. The corruption of the best produced the worst by that strange chemistry of the power of life which generates evil out of good even as it can also generate good out of evil. At the same time in a vain effort at self-defence against this downward gravitation, Religion was driven to cut existence into two by a division of knowledge, works, art, life itself into two opposite categories, the spiritual and the worldly, religious and mundane, sacred and profane; but this defensive distinction itself became conventional and artificial and aggravated rather than healed the disease.... On their side Science and Art and the knowledge of Life, although at first they served or lived in the shadow of Religion, ended by emancipating themselves, became estranged or hostile, or have even recoiled with indifference, contempt or scepticism from what seem to them the cold, barren and distant or unsubstantial and illusory heights of unreality to which metaphysical Philosophy and Religion aspire. For a time the divorce has been as complete as the one-sided intolerance of the human mind could make it and threatened even to end in a complete extinction of all attempt at a higher or a more spiritual knowledge. Yet even in the earthward life a higher knowledge is indeed the one thing that is throughout needful, and without it the lower sciences and pursuits, however fruitful, however rich, free, miraculous in the abundance of their results, become easily a sacrifice offered without due order and to false gods; corrupting, hardening in the end the heart of man, limiting his mind's horizons, they confine in a stony material imprisonment or lead to a final baffling incertitude and disillusionment. A sterile agnosticism awaits us above the brilliant phosphorescence of a half-knowledge that is still the Ignorance.

A Yoga turned towards an all-embracing realisation of the Supreme will not despise the works or even the dreams, if dreams they are, of the Cosmic Spirit or shrink from the splendid toil and many-sided victory which he has assigned to himself in the human creature. But its first condition for this liberality is that our works in the world too must be part of the sacrifice offered to the Highest and to none else, to the Divine Shakti and to no other Power, in the right spirit and with the right knowledge, by the free soul and not by the hypnotised bondslave of material Nature. If a division of works has to be made, it is between those that are nearest to the heart of the sacred flame and those that are least touched or illumined by it because they are more at a distance, or between the fuel that burns strongly and brightly and the logs that if too thickly heaped on the altar may impede the ardour of the fire by their rather damp, heavy and diffused abundance. But, otherwise, apart from this division, all activities of knowledge that seek after or express Truth are in themselves rightful materials for a complete offering; none ought necessarily to be excluded from the wide framework of the divine life. The mental and physical sciences which examine into the laws and forms and processes of things, those which concern the life of men and animals, the social, political, linguistic and historical and those which seek to know and control the labours and activities by which man subdues and utilises his world and environment, and the noble and beautiful Arts which are at once work and knowledge, — for every well-made and significant poem, picture, statue or building is an act of creative knowledge, a living discovery of the consciousness, a figure of Truth, a dynamic form of mental and vital self-expression or world-expression, — all that seeks, all that finds, all that voices or figures is a realisation of something of the play of the Infinite and to that extent can be made a means of God-realisation or of divine formation. But the Yogin has to see that it is no longer done as part of an ignorant mental life; it can be accepted by him only if by the feeling, the remembrance, the dedication within it, it is turned into a movement of the spiritual consciousness and becomes a part of its vast grasp of comprehensive illuminating knowledge.

For all must be done as a sacrifice, all activities must have the One Divine for their object and the heart of their meaning. The Yogin's aim in the sciences that make for knowledge should be to discover and understand the workings of the Divine Consciousness-Puissance in man and creatures and things and forces, her creative significances, her execution of the mysteries, the symbols in which she arranges the manifestation. The Yogin's aim in the practical sciences, whether mental and physical or occult and psychic, should be to enter into the ways of the Divine and his processes, to know the materials and means for the work given to us so that we may use that knowledge for a conscious and faultless expression of the spirit's mastery, joy and self-fulfilment. The Yogin's aim in the Arts should not be a mere aesthetic, mental or vital gratification, but, seeing the Divine everywhere, worshipping it with a revelation of the meaning of its own works, to express that One Divine in ideal forms, the One Divine in principles and forces, the One Divine in gods and men and creatures and objects. The theory that sees an intimate connection between religious aspiration and the truest and greatest Art is in essence right; but we must substitute for the mixed and doubtful religious motive a spiritual aspiration, vision, interpreting experience. For the wider and more comprehensive the seeing, the more it contains in itself the sense of the hidden Divine in humanity and in all things and rises beyond a superficial religiosity into the spiritual life, the more luminous, flexible, deep and powerful will the Art be that springs from that high motive. The Yogin's distinction from other men is this that he lives in a higher and vaster spiritual consciousness; all his work of knowledge or creation must then spring from there: it must not be made in the mind, — for it is a greater truth and vision than mental man's that he has to express or rather that presses to express itself through him and mould his works, not for his personal satisfaction, but for a divine purpose.

At the same time the Yogin who knows the Supreme is not subject to any need or compulsion in these activities; for to him they are neither a duty nor a necessary occupation for the mind nor a high amusement, nor imposed even by the loftiest human purpose. He is not attached, bound and limited by any nor has he any personal motive of fame, greatness or personal satisfaction in these works; he can leave or pursue them as the Divine in him wills, but he need not otherwise abandon them in his pursuit of the higher integral knowledge. He will do these things just as the supreme Power acts and creates, for a certain spiritual joy in creation and expression or to help in the holding together and right ordering or leading of this world of God's workings. The Gita teaches that the man of knowledge shall by his way of life give to those who have not yet the spiritual consciousness, the love and habit of *all* works and not only of actions recognised as pious, religious or ascetic in their character; he should not draw men away from the world-action by his example. For the world must proceed in its great upward aspiring; men and nations must not be led to fall away from even an ignorant activity into a worse ignorance of inaction or to sink down into that miserable disintegration and tendency of dissolution which comes upon communities and peoples when there predominates the tamasic principle, the principle whether of obscure confusion and error or of weariness and inertia. "For I too," says the Lord in the Gita, "have no need to do works, since there is nothing I have not or must yet gain for myself; yet I do works in the world: for if I did not do works, all laws would fall into confusion, the worlds would sink towards chaos and I would be the destroyer of these peoples." The spiritual life does not need, for its purity, to destroy interest in all things except the Inexpressible or to cut at the roots of the Sciences, the Arts and Life. It may well be one of the effects of an integral spiritual knowledge and activity to lift them out of their limitations, substitute for our mind's ignorant, limited, tepid or trepidant pleasure in them a free, intense and uplifting urge of delight and supply a new source of creative spiritual power and illumination by which they can be carried more swiftly and profoundly towards their absolute light in knowledge and their yet undreamed possibilities and most dynamic energy of content and form and practice. The one thing needful must be pursued first and always; but all things else come with it as its outcome and have not so much to be added to us as recovered and reshaped in its self-light and as portions of its self-expressive force.

⁂

This then is the true relation between divine and human knowledge; it is not a separation into disparate fields, sacred and profane, that is the heart of the difference, but the character of the consciousness behind the working. All is human knowledge that proceeds from the ordinary mental consciousness interested in the outside or upper layers of things, in process, in phenomena for their own sake or for the sake of some surface utility or mental or vital satisfaction of Desire or of the Intelligence. But the same activity of knowledge can become part of the Yoga if it proceeds from the spiritual or spiritualising consciousness which seeks and finds in all that it surveys or penetrates the presence of the timeless Eternal and the ways of manifestation of the Eternal in Time. It is evident that the need of a concentration indispensable for the transition out of the Ignorance may make it necessary for the seeker to gather together his energies and focus them only on that which will help the transition and to leave aside or subordinate for the time all that is not directly turned towards the one object. He may find that this or that pursuit of human knowledge with which he was accustomed to deal by the surface power of the mind still brings him by reason of this tendency or habit out of the depths to the surface or down from the heights which he has climbed or is nearing to lower levels. These activities then may have to be intermitted or put aside until, secure in a higher consciousness, he is able to turn its powers on all the mental fields; then, subjected to that light or taken up into it, they are turned, by the transformation of his consciousness, into a province of the spiritual and divine. All that cannot be so transformed or refuses to be part of a divine consciousness he will abandon without hesitation, but not from any preconceived prejudgment of its unfitness or its incapacity to be an element of the new inner life. There can be no fixed mental test or principle for these things; he will therefore follow no unalterable rule, but accept or repel an activity of the mind according to his feeling, insight or experience until the greater Power and Light are there to turn their unerring scrutiny on all that is below and choose or reject their material out of what the human evolution has prepared for the divine labour.

How precisely or by what stages this progression and change will take place must depend on the form, need and powers of the individual nature. In the spiritual domain the essence is always one, but there is yet an infinite variety and, at any rate in the integral Yoga, the rigidity of a strict and precise mental rule is seldom applicable; for, even when they walk in the same direction, no two natures proceed on exactly the same lines, in the same series of steps or with quite identical stages of their progress. It may yet be said that a logical succession of the states of progress would be very much in this order. First, there is a large turning in which all the natural mental activities proper to the individual nature are taken up or referred to a higher standpoint and dedicated by the soul in us, the psychic being, the priest of the sacrifice, to the divine service; next, there is an attempt at an ascent of the being and a bringing down of the Light and Power proper to some new height of consciousness gained by its upward effort into the whole action of the knowledge. Here there may be a strong concentration on the inward central change of the consciousness and an abandonment of a large part of the outward-going mental life or else its relegation to a small and subordinate place. At different stages it or parts of it may be taken up again from time to time to see how far the new inner psychic and spiritual consciousness can be brought into its movements; but that compulsion of the temperament or the nature which in human beings necessitates one kind of activity or another and makes it seem almost an indispensable portion of the existence, will diminish and eventually no attachment will be left, no lower compulsion or driving force felt anywhere. Only the Divine will matter, the Divine alone will be the one need of the whole being; if there is any compulsion to activity it will be not that of implanted desire or of force of Nature, but the luminous driving of some greater Consciousness-Force which is becoming more and more the sole motive power of the whole existence. On the other hand, it is possible at any period of the inner spiritual progress that one may experience an extension rather than a restriction of the activities; there may be an opening of new capacities of mental creation and new provinces of knowledge by the miraculous touch of the Yoga-Shakti. Aesthetic feeling, the power of artistic creation in one field or many fields together, talent or genius of literary expression, a faculty of metaphysical thinking, any power of eye or ear or hand or mind-power may awaken where none was apparent before. The Divine within may throw these latent riches out from the depths in which they were hidden or a Force from above may pour down its energies to equip the instrumental nature for the activity or the creation of which it is meant to be a channel or a builder. But, whatever may be the method or the course of development chosen by the hidden Master of the Yoga, the common culmination of this stage is the growing consciousness of him alone as the mover, decider, shaper of all the movements of the mind and all the activities of knowledge.

There are two signs of the transformation of the seeker's mind of knowledge and works of knowledge from the process of the Ignorance to the process of a liberated consciousness working partly, then wholly in the light of the Spirit. There is first a central change of the consciousness and a growing direct experience, vision, feeling of the Supreme and the cosmic existence, the Divine in itself and the Divine in all things; the mind will be taken up into a growing preoccupation with this first and foremost and will feel itself heightening, widening into a more and more illumined means of expression of the one fundamental knowledge. But also the central Consciousness in its turn will take up more and more the outer mental activities of knowledge and turn them into a parcel of itself or an annexed province; it will infuse into them its more authentic movement and make a more and more spiritualised and illumined mind its instrument in these surface fields, its new conquests, as well as in its own deeper spiritual empire. And this will be the second sign, the sign of a certain completion and perfection, that the Divine himself has become the Knower and all the inner movements, including the activities of what was once a purely human mental action, have become his field of knowledge. There will be less and less individual choice, opinion, preference, less and less of intellectualisation, mental weaving, cerebral galley-slave labour; a Light within will see all that has to be seen, know all that has to be known, develop, create, organise. It will be the Inner Knower who will do in the liberated and universalised mind of the individual the works of an all-comprehending knowledge.

These two changes are the signs of a first effectuation in which the activities of the mental nature are lifted up, spiritualised, widened, universalised, liberated, led to a consciousness of their true purpose as an instrumentation of the Divine creating and developing its manifestation in the temporal universe. But this cannot be the whole scope of the transformation; for it is not in these limits that the integral seeker can cease from his ascension or confine the widening of his nature. For, if it were so, knowledge would still remain a working of the mind, liberated, universalised, spiritualised, but still, as all mind must be, comparatively restricted, relative, imperfect in the very essence of its dynamism; it would reflect luminously great constructions of Truth, but not move in the domain where Truth is authentic, direct, sovereign and native. There is an ascension still to be made from this height, by which the spiritualised mind will exceed itself and transmute into a supramental power of knowledge. Already in the process of spiritualisation it will have begun to pass out of the brilliant poverty of the human intellect; it will mount successively into the pure broad reaches of a higher mind, and next into the gleaming belts of a still greater free Intelligence illumined with a Light from above. At this point it will begin to feel more freely, admit with a less mixed response the radiant beginnings of an Intuition, not illumined, but luminous in itself, true in itself, no longer entirely mental and therefore subjected to the abundant intrusion of error. Here too is not an end, for it must rise beyond into the very domain of that untruncated Intuition, the first direct light from the self-awareness of essential Being and, beyond it, attain that from which this light comes. For there is an Overmind behind Mind, a Power more original and dynamic which supports Mind, sees it as a diminished radiation from itself, uses it as a transmitting belt of passage downward or an instrument for the creations of the Ignorance. The last step of the ascension would be the surpassing of Overmind itself or its return into its own still greater origin, its conversion into the supramental light of the Divine Gnosis. For there in the supramental Light is the seat of a divine Truth-consciousness that has native in it, as no other consciousness below it can have, the power to organise the works of a Truth which is no longer tarnished by the shadow of the cosmic Inconscience and Ignorance. There to reach and thence to bring down a supramental dynamism that can transform the Ignorance is the distant but imperative supreme goal of the integral Yoga.

As the light of each of these higher powers is turned upon the human activities of knowledge, any distinction of sacred and profane, human and divine, begins more and more to fade until it is finally abolished as otiose; for whatever is touched and thoroughly penetrated by the Divine Gnosis is transfigured and becomes a movement of its own Light and Power, free from the turbidity and limitations of the lower intelligence. It is not a separation of some activities, but a transformation of them all by the change of the informing consciousness that is the way of liberation, an ascent of the sacrifice of knowledge to a greater and ever greater light and force. All the works of mind and intellect must be first heightened and widened, then illumined, lifted into the domain of a higher Intelligence, afterwards translated into workings of a greater non-mental Intuition, these again transformed into the dynamic outpourings of the Overmind radiance, and those transfigured into the full light and sovereignty of the supramental Gnosis. It is this that the evolution of consciousness in the world carries prefigured but latent in its seed and in the straining tense intention of its process; nor can that process, that evolution cease till it has evolved the instruments of a perfect in place of its now imperfect manifestation of the Spirit.

⁂

If knowledge is the widest power of the consciousness and its function is to free and illumine, yet love is the deepest and most intense and its privilege is to be the key to the most profound and secret recesses of the Divine Mystery. Man, because he is a mental being, is prone to give the highest importance to the thinking mind and its reason and will and to its way of approach and effectuation of Truth and, even, he is inclined to hold that there is no other. The heart with its emotions and incalculable movements is to the eye of his intellect an obscure, uncertain and often a perilous and misleading power which needs to be kept in control by the reason and the mental will and intelligence. And yet there is in the heart or behind it a profounder mystic light which, if not what we call intuition, — for that, though not of the mind, yet descends through the mind, — has yet a direct touch upon Truth and is nearer to the Divine than the human intellect in its pride of knowledge. According to the ancient teaching the seat of the immanent Divine, the hidden Purusha, is in the mystic heart, — the secret heart-cave, *hṛdaye guhāyām*, as the Upanishads put it, — and, according to the experience of many Yogins, it is from its depths that there comes the voice or the breath of the inner oracle.

This ambiguity, these opposing appearances of depth and blindness are created by the double character of the human emotive being. For there is in front in man a heart of vital emotion similar to the animal's, if more variously developed; its emotions are governed by egoistic passion, blind instinctive affections and all the play of the life-impulses with their imperfections, perversions, often sordid degradations, — a heart besieged and given over to the lusts, desires, wraths, intense or fierce demands or little greeds and mean pettinesses of an obscure and fallen life-force and debased by its slavery to any and every impulse. This mixture of the emotive heart and the sensational hungering vital creates in man a false soul of desire; it is this that is the crude and dangerous element which the reason rightly distrusts and feels a need to control, even though the actual control or rather coercion it succeeds in establishing over our raw and insistent vital nature remains always very uncertain and deceptive. But the true soul of man is not there; it is in the true invisible heart hidden in some luminous cave of the nature: there under some infiltration of the divine Light is our soul, a silent inmost being of which few are even aware; for if all have a soul, few are conscious of their true soul or feel its direct impulse. There dwells the little spark of the Divine which supports the obscure mass of our nature and around it grows the psychic being, the formed soul or the real Man within us. It is as this psychic being in him grows and the movements of the heart reflect its divinations and impulsions that man becomes more and more aware of his soul, ceases to be a superior animal and, awakening to glimpses of the godhead within him, admits more and more its intimations of a deeper life and consciousness and an impulse towards things divine. It is one of the decisive moments of the integral Yoga when this psychic being, liberated, brought out from the veil to the front, can pour the full flood of its divinations, seeings and impulsions on the mind, life and body of man and begins to prepare the upbuilding of divinity in the earthly nature.

As in the works of knowledge, so in dealing with the workings of the heart, we are obliged to make a preliminary distinction between two categories of movements, those that are either moved by the true soul or aid towards its liberation and rule in the nature and those that are turned to the satisfaction of the unpurified vital nature. But the distinctions ordinarily laid down in this sense are of little use for the deeper spiritual purpose of Yoga. Thus a division can be made between religious emotions and mundane feelings and it can be laid down as a rule of spiritual life that the religious emotions alone should be cultivated and all worldly feelings and passions must be rejected and fall away from our existence. This in practice would mean the religious life of the saint or devotee, alone within with the Divine or linked only to others in a common God-love or at the most pouring out the fountains of a sacred, religious or pietistic love on the world outside. But religious emotion itself is too constantly invaded by the turmoil and obscurity of the vital movements and it is often either crude or narrow or fanatical or mixed with movements that are not signs of the spirit's perfection. It is evident besides that even at the best an intense figure of sainthood clamped in rigid hieratic lines is quite other than the wide ideal of an integral Yoga. A larger psychic and emotional relation with God and the world, more deep and plastic in its essence, more wide and embracing in its movements, more capable of taking up in its sweep the whole of life, is imperative.

A wider formula has been provided by the secular mind of man of which the basis is the ethical sense; for it distinguishes between the emotions sanctioned by the ethical sense and those that are egoistic and selfishly common and mundane. It is the works of altruism, philanthropy, compassion, benevolence, humanitarianism, service, labour for the well-being of man and all creatures that are to be our ideal; to shuffle off the coil of egoism and grow into a soul of self-abnegation that lives only or mainly for others or for humanity as a whole is the way of man's inner evolution according to this doctrine. Or if this is too secular and mental to satisfy the whole of our being, since there is a deeper religious and spiritual note there that is left out of account by the humanitarian formula, a religio-ethical foundation can be provided for it — and such was indeed its original basis. To the inner worship of the Divine or the Supreme by the devotion of the heart or to the pursuit of the Ineffable by the seeking of a highest knowledge can be added a worship through altruistic works or a preparation through acts of love, of benevolence, of service to mankind or to those around us. It is indeed by the religio-ethical sense that the law of universal goodwill or universal compassion or of love and service to the neighbour, the Vedantic, the Buddhistic, the Christian ideal, was created; only by a sort of secular refrigeration extinguishing the fervour of the religious element in it could the humanitarian ideal disengage itself and become the highest plane of a secular system of mental and moral ethics. For in the religious system this law of works is a means that ceases when its object is accomplished or a side issue; it is a part of the cult by which one adores and seeks the Divinity or it is a penultimate step of the excision of self in the passage to Nirvana. In the secular ideal it is promoted into an object in itself; it becomes a sign of the moral perfection of the human being, or else it is a condition for a happier state of man upon earth, a better society, a more united life of the race. But none of these things satisfy the demand of the soul that is placed before us by the integral Yoga.

Altruism, philanthropy, humanitarianism, service are flowers of the mental consciousness and are at best the mind's cold and pale imitation of the spiritual flame of universal Divine Love. Not truly liberative from ego-sense, they widen it at most and give it a higher and larger satisfaction; impotent in practice to change man's vital life and nature, they only modify and palliate its action and daub over its unchanged egoistic essence. Or if they are intensely followed with an entire sincerity of the will, it is by an exaggerated amplification of one side of our nature; in that exaggeration there can be no clue for the full and perfect divine evolution of the many sides of our individualised being towards the universal and transcendent Eternal. Nor can the religio-ethical ideal be a sufficient guide, — for this is a compromise or compact of mutual concessions for mutual support between a religious urge which seeks to get a closer hold on earth by taking into itself the higher turns of ordinary human nature and an ethical urge which hopes to elevate itself out of its own mental hardness and dryness by some touch of a religious fervour. In making this compact religion lowers itself to the mental level and inherits the inherent imperfections of mind and its inability to convert and transform life. The mind is the sphere of the dualities and, just as it is impossible for it to achieve any absolute Truth but only truths relative or mixed with error, so it is impossible for it to achieve any absolute good; for moral good exists as a counterpart and corrective to evil and has evil always for its shadow, complement, almost its reason for existence. But the spiritual consciousness belongs to a higher than the mental plane and there the dualities cease; for there falsehood confronted with the truth by which it profited through a usurping falsification of it and evil faced by the good of which it was a perversion or a lurid substitute, are obliged to perish for want of sustenance and to cease. The integral Yoga, refusing to rely upon the fragile stuff of mental and moral ideals, puts its whole emphasis in this field on three central dynamic processes, — the development of the true soul or psychic being to take the place of the false soul of desire, the sublimation of human into divine love, the elevation of consciousness from its mental to its spiritual and supramental plane by whose power alone both the soul and the life-force can be utterly delivered from the veils and prevarications of the Ignorance.

It is the very nature of the soul or the psychic being to turn towards the divine Truth as the sunflower to the sun; it accepts and clings to all that is divine or progressing towards divinity, and draws back from all that is a perversion or a denial of it, from all that is false and undivine. Yet the soul is at first but a spark and then a little flame of godhead burning in the midst of a great darkness; for the most part it is veiled in its inner sanctum and to reveal itself it has to call on the mind, the life-force and the physical consciousness and persuade them, as best they can, to express it; ordinarily, it succeeds at most in suffusing their outwardness with its inner light and modifying with its purifying fineness their dark obscurities or their coarser mixture. Even when there is a formed psychic being able to express itself with some directness in life, it is still in all but a few a smaller portion of the being — "no bigger in the mass of the body than the thumb of a man" was the image used by the ancient seers — and it is not always able to prevail against the obscurity or ignorant smallness of the physical consciousness, the mistaken surenesses of the mind or the arrogance and vehemence of the vital nature. This soul is obliged to accept the human mental, emotive, sensational life as it is, its relations, its activities, its cherished forms and figures; it has to labour to disengage and increase the divine element in all this relative truth mixed with a continual falsifying error, this love turned to the uses of the animal body or the satisfaction of the vital ego, this life of an average manhood shot with rare and pale glimpses of godhead and the darker luridities of the demon and the brute. Unerring in the essence of its will, it is obliged often under the pressure of its instruments to submit to mistakes of action, wrong placement of feeling, wrong choice of person, errors in the exact form of its will, in the circumstances of its expression of the infallible inner ideal. Yet is there a divination within it which makes it a surer guide than the reason or than even the highest desire, and through apparent errors and stumblings its voice can still lead better than the precise intellect and the considering mental judgment. This voice of the soul is not what we call conscience — for that is only a mental and often conventional erring substitute; it is a deeper and more seldom heard call; yet to follow it when heard is wisest: even, it is better to wander at the call of one's soul than to go apparently straight with the reason and the outward moral mentor. But it is only when the life turns towards the Divine that the soul can truly come forward and impose its power on the outer members; for, itself a spark of the Divine, to grow in flame towards the Divine is its true life and its very reason of existence.

At a certain stage in the Yoga when the mind is sufficiently quieted and no longer supports itself at every step on the sufficiency of its mental certitudes, when the vital has been steadied and subdued and is no longer constantly insistent on its own rash will, demand and desire, when the physical has been sufficiently altered not to bury altogether the inner flame under the mass of its outwardness, obscurity or inertia, an inmost being, long hidden within and felt only in its rare influences, is able to come forward and illumine the rest and take up the lead of the Sadhana. Its character is a one-pointed orientation towards the Divine or the Highest, one-pointed and yet plastic in action and movement; it does not create a rigidity of direction like the one-pointed intellect or a bigotry of the regnant idea or impulse like the one-pointed vital force; it is at every moment and with a supple sureness that it points the way to the Truth, automatically distinguishes the right step from the false, extricates the divine or Godward movement from the clinging mixture of the undivine. Its action is like a searchlight showing up all that has to be changed in the nature; it has in it a flame of will insistent on perfection, on an alchemic transmutation of all the inner and outer existence. It sees the divine essence everywhere but rejects the mere mask and the disguising figure. It insists on Truth, on will and strength and mastery, on Joy and Love and Beauty, but on a Truth of abiding Knowledge that surpasses the mere practical momentary truth of the Ignorance, on an inward joy and not on mere vital pleasure, — for it prefers rather a purifying suffering and sorrow to degrading satisfactions, — on love winged upward and not tied to the stake of egoistic craving or with its feet sunk in the mire, on beauty restored to its priesthood of interpretation of the Eternal, on strength and will and mastery as instruments not of the ego but of the Spirit. Its will is for the divinisation of life, the expression through it of a higher Truth, its dedication to the Divine and the Eternal.

But the most intimate character of the psychic is its pressure towards the Divine through a sacred love, joy and oneness. It is a divine Love that it seeks most, it is the love of the Divine that is its spur, its goal, its star of Truth shining over the luminous cave of the nascent or the still obscure cradle of the new-born godhead within us. In the first long stage of its growth and immature existence it has leaned on earthly love, affection, tenderness, goodwill, compassion, benevolence, on all beauty and gentleness and fineness and light and strength and courage, on all that can help to refine and purify the grossness and commonness of human nature; but it knows how mixed are these human movements at their best and at their worst how fallen and stamped with the mark of ego and self-deceptive sentimental falsehood and the lower self profiting by the imitation of a soul-movement. At once, emerging, it is ready and eager to break all the old ties and imperfect emotional activities and replace them by a greater spiritual Truth of love and oneness. It may still admit the human forms and movements, but on condition that they are turned towards the One alone. It accepts only the ties that are helpful, the heart's and mind's reverence for the Guru, the union of the God-seekers, a spiritual compassion for this ignorant human and animal world and its peoples, the joy and happiness and satisfaction of beauty that comes from the perception of the Divine everywhere. It plunges the nature inward towards its meeting with the immanent Divine in the heart's secret centre and, while that call is there, no reproach of egoism, no mere outward summons of altruism or duty or philanthropy or service will deceive or divert it from its sacred longing and its obedience to the attraction of the Divinity within it. It lifts the being towards a transcendent Ecstasy and is ready to shed all the downward pull of the world from its wings in its uprising to reach the One Highest; but it calls down also this transcendent Love and Beatitude to deliver and transform this world of hatred and strife and division and darkness and jarring Ignorance. It opens to a universal Divine Love, a vast compassion, an intense and immense will for the good of all, for the embrace of the World-Mother enveloping or gathering to her her children, the divine Passion that has plunged into the night for the redemption of the world from the universal Inconscience. It is not attracted or misled by mental imitations or any vital misuse of these great deep-seated Truths of existence; it exposes them with its detecting search-ray and calls down the entire truth of divine Love to heal these malformations, to deliver mental, vital, physical love from their insufficiencies or their perversions and reveal to them their true abounding share of the intimacy and the oneness, the ascending ecstasy and the descending rapture.

All true Truth of love and of the works of love the psychic being accepts in their place: but its flame mounts always upward and it is eager to push the ascent from lesser to higher degrees of Truth, since it knows that only by the ascent to a highest Truth and the descent of that highest Truth can Love be delivered from the cross and placed upon the throne; for the cross is the sign of the Divine Descent barred and marred by the transversal line of a cosmic deformation which turns it into a stake of suffering and misfortune. Only by the ascent to the original Truth can the deformation be healed and all the works of love, as too all the works of knowledge and of life, be restored to a divine significance and become part of an integral spiritual existence.

Chapter VI

The Ascent of the Sacrifice – 2

The Works of Love — The Works of Life

IT IS therefore through the sacrifice of love, works and knowledge with the psychic being as the leader and priest of the sacrifice that life itself can be transformed into its own true spiritual figure. If the sacrifice of knowledge rightly done is easily the largest and purest offering we can bring to the Highest, the sacrifice of love is not less demanded of us for our spiritual perfection; it is even more intense and rich in its singleness and can be made not less vast and pure. This pure wideness is brought into the intensity of the sacrifice of love when into all our activities there is poured the spirit and power of a divine infinite joy and the whole atmosphere of our life is suffused with an engrossing adoration of the One who is the All and the Highest. For then does the sacrifice of love attain its utter perfection when, offered to the divine All, it becomes integral, catholic and boundless, and when, uplifted to the Supreme, it ceases to be the weak, superficial and transient movement men call love and becomes a pure and grand and deep uniting Ananda.

Although it is a divine love for the supreme and universal Divine that must be the rule of our spiritual existence, this does not exclude altogether all forms of individual love or the ties that draw soul to soul in manifested existence. A psychic change is demanded, a divestiture of the masks of the Ignorance, a purification of the egoistic mental, vital and physical movements that prolong the old inferior consciousness; each movement of love, spiritualised, must depend no longer on mental preference, vital passion or physical craving, but on the recognition of soul by soul, — love restored to its fundamental spiritual and psychic essence with the mind, the vital, the physical as manifesting instruments and elements of that greater oneness.

In this change the individual love also is converted by a natural heightening into a divine love for the Divine Inhabitant immanent in a mind and soul and body occupied by the One in all creatures.

All love, indeed, that is adoration has a spiritual force behind it, and even when it is offered ignorantly and to a limited object, something of that splendour appears through the poverty of the rite and the smallness of its issues. For love that is worship is at once an aspiration and a preparation: it can bring even within its small limits in the Ignorance a glimpse of a still more or less blind and partial but surprising realisation; for there are moments when it is not we but the One who loves and is loved in us, and even a human passion can be uplifted and glorified by a slight glimpse of this infinite Love and Lover. It is for this reason that the worship of the god, the worship of the idol, the human magnet or ideal are not to be despised; for these are steps through which the human race moves towards that blissful passion and ecstasy of the Infinite which, even in limiting it, they yet represent for our imperfect vision when we have still to use the inferior steps Nature has hewn for our feet and admit the stages of our progress. Certain idolatries are indispensable for the development of our emotional being, nor will the man who knows be hasty at any time to shatter the image unless he can replace it in the heart of the worshipper by the Reality it figures. Moreover, they have this power because there is always something in them that is greater than their forms and, even when we reach the supreme worship, that abides and becomes a prolongation of it or a part of its catholic wholeness. Our knowledge is still imperfect in us, love incomplete if even when we know That which surpasses all forms and manifestations, we cannot still accept the Divine in creature and object, in man, in the kind, in the animal, in the tree, in the flower, in the work of our hands, in the Nature-Force which is then no longer to us the blind action of a material machinery but a face and power of the universal Shakti: for in these things too is the presence of the Eternal.

An ultimate inexpressible adoration offered by us to the

Transcendent, to the Highest,[1] to the Ineffable, is yet no complete worship if it is not offered to him wherever he manifests or wherever even he hides his godhead — in man[2] and object and every creature. An Ignorance is there no doubt which imprisons the heart, distorts its feelings, obscures the significance of its offering; all partial worship, all religion which erects a mental or a physical idol is tempted to veil and protect the truth in it by a certain cloak of ignorance and easily loses the truth in its image. But the pride of exclusive knowledge is also a limitation and a barrier. For there is, concealed behind individual love, obscured by its ignorant human figure, a mystery which the mind cannot seize, the mystery of the body of the Divine, the secret of a mystic form of the Infinite which we can approach only through the ecstasy of the heart and the passion of the pure and sublimated sense, and its attraction which is the call of the divine Flute-player, the mastering compulsion of the All-Beautiful, can only be seized and seize us through an occult love and yearning which in the end makes one the Form and the Formless, and identifies Spirit and Matter. It is that which the spirit in Love is seeking here in the darkness of the Ignorance and it is that which it finds when individual human love is changed into the love of the Immanent Divine incarnate in the material universe.

As with individual, so with universal Love; all that widening of the self through sympathy, goodwill, universal benevolence and beneficence, love of mankind, love of creatures, the attraction of all the myriad forms and presences that surround us, by which mentally and emotionally man escapes from the first limits of his ego, has to be taken up into a unifying divine love for the universal Divine. Adoration fulfilled in love, love in Ananda, — the surpassing love, the self-wrapped ecstasy of transcendent delight in the Transcendent which awaits us at the end of the path of Devotion, — has for its wider result a universal love for all beings, the Ananda of all that is; we perceive behind every veil the Divine, spiritually embrace in all forms the All-Beautiful. A universal delight in his endless manifestation flows through us, taking in its surge every form and movement, but not bound or stationary in any and always reaching out to a greater and more perfect expression. This universal love is liberative and dynamic for transformation; for the discord of forms and appearances ceases to affect the heart that has felt the one Truth behind them all and understood their perfect significance. The impartial equality of soul of the selfless worker and knower is transformed by the magic touch of divine Love into an all-embracing ecstasy and million-bodied beatitude. All things become bodies and all movements the playings of the divine Beloved in his infinite house of pleasure. Even pain is changed and in their reaction and even in their essence things painful alter; the forms of pain fall away, there are created in their place the forms of Ananda.

---

[1] *paraṁ bhāvam.* [2] *mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam.*

This is in its essence the nature of the change of consciousness which turns existence itself into a glorified field of a Divine Love and Ananda. In its essence it begins for the seeker when he passes from the ordinary to the spiritual level and looks with a new heart of luminous vision and feeling on the world and self and others. It reaches its height when the spiritual becomes also the supramental level and then also it is possible not only to feel it in essence but realise it dynamically as a Power for the transformation of the whole inner life and the whole outer existence.

* * *

It is not altogether difficult for the mind to envisage, even though it may be difficult for the human will with its many earth-ties to accept, this transformation of the spirit and nature of love from the character of a mixed and limited human emotion to a supreme and all-embracing divine passion. It is when we come to the works of love that a certain perplexity is likely to intervene. It is possible, as in a certain high exaggeration of the path of knowledge, to cut here also the knot of the problem, escape the difficulty of uniting the spirit of love with the crudities of the world-action by avoiding it; it is open to us, withdrawing from outward life and action altogether, to live alone with our adoration of the Divine in the heart's silence. It is possible too to admit only those acts that are either in themselves an expression of love for the Divine, prayer, praise, symbolic acts of worship or subordinate activities that may be attached to these things and partake of their spirit, and to leave aside all else; the soul turns away to satisfy its inner longing in the absorbed or the God-centred life of the saint and devotee. It is possible, again, to open the doors of life more largely and to spend one's love of the Divine in acts of service to those around us and to the race; one can do the works of philanthropy, benevolence and beneficence, charity and succour to man and beast and every creature, transfigure them by a kind of spiritual passion, at least bring into their merely ethical appearance the greater power of a spiritual motive. This is indeed the solution most commonly favoured by the religious mind of today and we see it confidently advanced on all sides as the proper field of action of the God-seeker or of the man whose life is founded on divine love and knowledge. But the integral Yoga pushed towards a complete union of the Divine with the earth-life cannot stop short in this narrow province or limit this union within the lesser dimensions of an ethical rule of philanthropy and beneficence. All action must be made in it part of the God-life, our acts of knowledge, our acts of power and production and creation, our acts of joy and beauty and the soul's pleasure, our acts of will and endeavour and struggle and not our acts only of love and beneficent service. Its way to do these things will be not outward and mental, but inward and spiritual, and to that end it will bring into all activities, whatever they are, the spirit of divine love, the spirit of adoration and worship, the spirit of happiness in the Divine and in the beauty of the Divine so as to make all life a sacrifice of the works of the soul's love to the Divine, its cult of the Master of its existence.

It is possible so to turn life into an act of adoration to the Supreme by the spirit in one's works; for, says the Gita, "He who gives to me with a heart of adoration a leaf, a flower, a fruit or a cup of water, I take and enjoy that offering of his devotion"; and it is not only any dedicated external gift that can be so offered with love and devotion, but all our thoughts, all our feelings and sensations, all our outward activities and their forms and objects can be such gifts to the Eternal. It is true that the special act or form of action has its importance, even a great importance, but it is the spirit in the act that is the essential factor; the spirit of which it is the symbol or materialised expression gives it its whole value and justifying significance. Or it may be said that a complete act of divine love and worship has in it three parts that are the expressions of a single whole, — a practical worship of the Divine in the act, a symbol of worship in the form of the act expressing some vision and seeking or some relation with the Divine, an inner adoration and longing for oneness or feeling of oneness in the heart and soul and spirit. It is so that life can be changed into worship, — by putting behind it the spirit of a transcendent and universal love, the seeking of oneness, the sense of oneness; by making each act a symbol, an expression of Godward emotion or a relation with the Divine; by turning all we do into an act of worship, an act of the soul's communion, the mind's understanding, the life's obedience, the heart's surrender.

In any cult the symbol, the significant rite or expressive figure is not only a moving and enriching aesthetic element, but a physical means by which the human being begins to make outwardly definite the emotion and aspiration of his heart, to confirm it and to dynamise it. For if without a spiritual aspiration worship is meaningless and vain, yet the aspiration also without the act and the form is a disembodied and, for life, an incompletely effective power. It is unhappily the fate of all forms in human life to become crystallised, purely formal and therefore effete, and although form and cult preserve always their power for the man who can still enter into their meaning, the majority come to use the ceremony as a mechanical rite and the symbol as a lifeless sign, and because that kills the soul of religion, cult and form have in the end to be changed or thrown aside altogether. There are those even to whom all cult and form are for this reason suspect and offensive; but few can dispense with the support of outward symbols and, even, a certain divine element in human nature demands them always for the completeness of its spiritual satisfaction. Always the symbol is legitimate in so far as it is true, sincere, beautiful and delightful, and even one may say that a spiritual consciousness without any aesthetic or emotional content is not entirely or at any rate not integrally spiritual. In the spiritual life the basis of the act is a spiritual consciousness perennial and renovating, moved to express itself always in new forms or able to renew the truth of a form always by the flow of the spirit, and to so express itself and make every action a living symbol of some truth of the soul is the very nature of its creative vision and impulse. It is so that the spiritual seeker must deal with life and transmute its form and glorify it in its essence.

A supreme divine Love is a creative Power and, even though it can exist in itself silent and unchangeable, yet rejoices in external form and expression and is not condemned to be a speechless and bodiless godhead. It has even been said that creation itself was an act of love or at least the building up of a field in which Divine Love could devise its symbols and fulfil itself in act of mutuality and self-giving, and, if not the initial nature of creation, this may well be its ultimate object and motive. It does not so appear now because, even if a Divine Love is there in the world upholding all this evolution of creatures, yet the stuff of life and its action is made up of an egoistic formation, a division, a struggle of life and consciousness to exist and survive in an apparently indifferent, inclement or even hostile world of inanimate and inconscient Matter. In the confusion and obscurity of this struggle all are thrown against each other with a will in each to assert its own existence first and foremost and only secondarily to assert itself in others and very partially for others; for even man's altruism remains essentially egoistic and must be so till the soul finds the secret of the divine Oneness. It is to discover that at its supreme source, to bring it from within and to radiate it out up to the extreme confines of life that is turned the effort of the Yoga. All action, all creation must be turned into a form, a symbol of the cult, the adoration, the sacrifice; it must carry something that makes it bear in it the stamp of a dedication, a reception and translation of the Divine Consciousness, a service of the Beloved, a self-giving, a surrender. This has to be done wherever possible in the outward body and form of the act; it must be done always in its inward emotion and an intensity that shows it to be an outflow from the soul towards the Eternal.

In itself the adoration in the act is a great and complete and powerful sacrifice that tends by its self-multiplication to reach the discovery of the One and make the radiation of the Divine possible. For devotion by its embodiment in acts not only makes its own way broad and full and dynamic, but brings at once into the harder way of works in the world the divinely passionate element of joy and love which is often absent in its beginning when it is only the austere spiritual Will that follows in a struggling uplifting tension the steep ascent, and the heart is still asleep or bound to silence. If the spirit of divine love can enter, the hardness of the way diminishes, the tension is lightened, there is a sweetness and joy even in the core of difficulty and struggle. The indispensable surrender of all our will and works and activities to the Supreme is indeed only perfect and perfectly effective when it is a surrender of love. All life turned into this cult, all actions done in the love of the Divine and in the love of the world and its creatures seen and felt as the Divine manifested in many disguises become by that very fact part of an integral Yoga.

It is the inner offering of the heart's adoration, the soul of it in the symbol, the spirit of it in the act, that is the very life of the sacrifice. If this offering is to be complete and universal, then a turning of all our emotions to the Divine is imperative. This is the intensest way of purification for the human heart, more powerful than any ethical or aesthetic catharsis could ever be by its half-power and superficial pressure. A psychic fire within must be lit into which all is thrown with the Divine Name upon it. In that fire all the emotions are compelled to cast off their grosser elements and those that are undivine perversions are burned away and the others discard their insufficiencies, till a spirit of largest love and a stainless divine delight arises out of the flame and smoke and frankincense. It is the divine love which so emerges that, extended in inward feeling to the Divine in man and all creatures in an active universal equality, will be more potent for the perfectibility of life and a more real instrument than the ineffective mental ideal of brotherhood can ever be. It is this poured out into acts that could alone create a harmony in the world and a true unity between all its creatures; all else strives in vain towards that end so long as Divine Love has not disclosed itself as the heart of the delivered manifestation in terrestrial Nature.

It is here that the emergence of the secret psychic being in us as the leader of the sacrifice is of the utmost importance; for this inmost being alone can bring with it the full power of the spirit in the act, the soul in the symbol. It alone can assure, even while the spiritual consciousness is incomplete, the perennial freshness and sincerity and beauty of the symbol and prevent it from becoming a dead form or a corrupted and corrupting magic; it alone can preserve for the act its power with its significance. All the other members of our being, mind, life-force, physical or body consciousness, are too much under the control of the Ignorance to be a sure instrumentation and much less can they be a guide or the source of an unerring impulse. Always the greater part of the motive and action of these powers clings to the old law, the deceiving tablets, the cherished inferior movements of Nature and they meet with reluctance, alarm or revolt or obstructing inertia the voices and the forces that call and impel us to exceed and transform ourselves into a greater being and a wider Nature. In their major part the response is either a resistance or a qualified or temporising acquiescence; for even if they follow the call, they yet tend — when not consciously, then by automatic habit — to bring into the spiritual action their own natural disabilities and errors. At every moment they are moved to take egoistic advantage of the psychic and spiritual influences and can be detected using the power, joy or light these bring into us for a lower life-motive. Afterwards too, even when the seeker has opened to the Divine Love transcendental, universal or immanent, yet if he tries to pour it into life, he meets the power of obscuration and perversion of these lower Nature-forces. Always they draw away towards pitfalls, pour into that higher intensity their diminishing elements, seek to capture the descending Power for themselves and their interests and degrade it into an aggrandised mental, vital or physical instrumentation for desire and ego. Instead of a Divine Love creator of a new heaven and a new earth of Truth and Light, they would hold it here prisoner as a tremendous sanction and glorifying force of sublimation to gild the mud of the old earth and colour with its rose and sapphire the old turbid unreal skies of sentimentalising vital imagination and mental idealised chimera. If that falsification is permitted, the higher Light and Power and Bliss withdraw, there is a fall back to a lower status; or else the realisation remains tied to an insecure half-way and mixture or is covered and even submerged by an inferior exaltation that is not the true Ananda. It is for this reason that Divine Love which is at the heart of all creation and the most powerful of all redeeming and creative forces has yet been the least frontally present in earthly life, the least successfully redemptive, the least creative. Human nature has been unable to bear it in its purity for the very reason that it is the most powerful, pure, rare and intense of all the divine energies; what little could be seized has been corrupted at once into a vital pietistic ardour, a defenceless religious or ethical sentimentalism, a sensuous or even sensual erotic mysticism of the roseate coloured mind or passionately turbid life-impulse and with these simulations compensated its inability to house the Mystic Flame that could rebuild the world with its tongues of sacrifice. It is only the inmost psychic being unveiled and emerging in its full power that can lead the pilgrim sacrifice unscathed through these ambushes and pitfalls; at each moment it catches, exposes, repels the mind's and the life's falsehoods, seizes hold on the truth of the Divine Love and Ananda and separates it from the excitement of the mind's ardours and the blind enthusiasms of the misleading life-force. But all things that are true at their core in mind and life and the physical being it extricates and takes with it in the journey till they stand on the heights, new in spirit and sublime in figure.

And yet even the leading of the inmost psychic being is not found sufficient until it has succeeded in raising itself out of this mass of inferior Nature to the highest spiritual levels and the divine spark and flame descended here have rejoined themselves to their original fiery Ether. For there is there no longer a spiritual consciousness still imperfect and half lost to itself in the thick sheaths of human mind, life and body, but the full spiritual consciousness in its purity, freedom and intense wideness. There, as it is the eternal Knower that becomes the Knower in us and mover and user of all knowledge, so it is the eternal All-Blissful who is the Adored attracting to himself the eternal divine portion of his being and joy that has gone out into the play of the universe, the infinite Lover pouring himself out in the multiplicity of his own manifested selves in a happy Oneness. All Beauty in the world is there the beauty of the Beloved, and all forms of beauty have to stand under the light of that eternal Beauty and submit themselves to the sublimating and transfiguring power of the unveiled Divine Perfection. All Bliss and Joy are there of the All-Blissful, and all inferior forms of enjoyment, happiness or pleasure are subjected to the shock of the intensity of its floods or currents and either they are broken to pieces as inadequate things under its convicting stress or compelled to transmute themselves into the forms of the Divine Ananda. Thus for the individual consciousness a Force is manifested which can deal sovereignly in it with the diminutions and degradations of the values of the Ignorance. At last it begins to be possible to bring down into life the immense reality and intense concreteness of the love and joy that are of the Eternal. Or at any rate it will be possible for our spiritual consciousness to raise itself out of mind into the supramental Light and Force and Vastness; there in the light and potency of the supramental Gnosis are the splendour and joy of a power of divine self-expression and self-organisation which could rescue and re-create even the world of the Ignorance into a figure of the Truth of the Spirit.

There in the supramental Gnosis is the fulfilment, the culminating height, the all-embracing extent of the inner adoration, the profound and integral union, the flaming wings of Love upbearing the power and joy of a supreme Knowledge. For supramental Love brings an active ecstasy that surpasses the void passive peace and stillness which is the heaven of the liberated Mind and does not betray the deeper greater calm which is the beginning of the supramental silence. The unity of a love which is able to include in itself all differences without being diminished or abrogated by their present limitations and apparent dissonances is raised to its full potentiality on the supramental level. For there an intense oneness with all creatures founded on a profound oneness of the soul with the Divine can harmonise with a play of relations that only makes the oneness more perfect and absolute. The power of Love supramentalised can take hold of all living relations without hesitation or danger and turn them Godwards delivered from their crude, mixed and petty human settings and sublimated into the happy material of a divine life. For it is the very nature of the supramental experience that it can perpetuate the play of difference without forfeiting or in the least diminishing either the divine union or the infinite oneness. For a supramentalised consciousness it would be utterly possible to embrace all contacts with men and the world in a purified flame-force and with a transfigured significance, because the soul would then perceive always as the object of all emotion and all seeking for love or beauty the One Eternal and could spiritually use a wide and liberated life-urge to meet and join with that One Divine in all things and all creatures.

⁂

Into the third and last category of the works of sacrifice can be gathered all that is directly proper to the Yoga of works; for here is its direct field of effectuation and major province. It covers the entire range of life's more visible activities; under it fall the multiform energies of the Will-to-Life throwing itself outward to make the most of material existence. It is here that an ascetic or other-worldly spirituality feels an insurmountable denial of the Truth which it seeks after and is compelled to turn away from terrestrial existence, rejecting it as for ever the dark playground of an incurable Ignorance. Yet it is precisely these activities that are claimed for a spiritual conquest and divine transformation by the integral Yoga. Abandoned altogether by the more ascetic disciplines, accepted by others only as a field of temporary ordeal or a momentary, superficial and ambiguous play of the concealed spirit, this existence is fully embraced and welcomed by the integral seeker as a field of fulfilment, a field for divine works, a field of the total self-discovery of the concealed and indwelling spirit. A discovery of the Divinity in oneself is his first object, but a total discovery too of the Divinity in the world behind the apparent denial offered by its scheme and figures and, last, a total discovery of the dynamism of some transcendent Eternal; for by its descent this world and self will be empowered to break their disguising envelopes and become divine in revealing form and manifesting process as they now are secretly in their hidden essence.

This object of the integral Yoga must be accepted wholly by those who follow it, but the acceptance must not be in ignorance of the immense stumbling-blocks that lie in the way of the achievement; on the contrary we must be fully aware of the compelling cause of the refusal of so many other disciplines to regard even its possibility, much less its imperative character, as the true meaning of terrestrial existence. For here in the works of life in the earth-nature is the very heart of the difficulty that has driven Philosophy to its heights of aloofness and turned away even the eager eye of Religion from the malady of birth in a mortal body to a distant Paradise or a silent peace of Nirvana. A way of pure Knowledge is comparatively straightforward and easy to the tread of the seeker in spite of our mental limitations and the pitfalls of the Ignorance; a way of pure Love, although it has its stumbling-blocks and its sufferings and trials, can in comparison be as easy as the winging of a bird through the free azure. For Knowledge and Love are pure in their essence and become mixed and embarrassed, corrupted and degraded only when they enter into the ambiguous movement of the life-forces and are seized by them for the outward life's crude movements and obstinately inferior motives. Alone of the three powers Life or at least a certain predominant Will-in-Life has the appearance of something impure, accursed or fallen in its very essence. At its contact, wrapped in its dull sheaths or caught in its iridescent quagmires, the divinities themselves become common and muddy and hardly escape from being dragged downwards into its perversions and disastrously assimilated to the demon and the Asura. A principle of dark and dull inertia is at its base; all are tied down by the body and its needs and desires to a trivial mind, petty desires and emotions, an insignificant repetition of small worthless functionings, needs, cares, occupations, pains, pleasures that lead to nothing beyond themselves and bear the stamp of an ignorance that knows not its own why and whither. This physical mind of inertia believes in no divinity other than its own small earth-gods; it aspires perhaps to a greater comfort, order, pleasure, but asks for no uplifting and no spiritual deliverance. At the centre we meet a stronger Will of life with a greater gusto, but it is a blinded Daemon, a perverted spirit and exults in the very elements that make of life a striving turmoil and an unhappy imbroglio. It is a soul of human or Titanic desire clinging to the garish colour, disordered poetry, violent tragedy or stirring melodrama of this mixed flux of good and evil, joy and sorrow, light and darkness, heady rapture and bitter torture. It loves these things and would have more and more of them or, even when it suffers and cries out against them, can accept or joy in nothing else; it hates and revolts against higher things and in its fury would trample, tear or crucify any diviner Power that has the presumption to offer to make life pure, luminous and happy and snatch from its lips the fiery brew of that exciting mixture. Another Will-in-Life there is that is ready to follow the ameliorating ideal Mind and is allured by its offer to extract some harmony, beauty, light, nobler order out of life, but this is a smaller part of the vital nature and can be easily overpowered by its more violent or darker duller yoke-comrades; nor does it readily lend itself to a call higher than that of the Mind unless that call defeats itself, as Religion usually does, by lowering its demand to conditions more intelligible to our obscure vital nature. All these forces the spiritual seeker grows aware of in himself and finds all around him and has to struggle and combat incessantly to be rid of their grip and dislodge the long-entrenched mastery they have exercised over his own being as over the environing human existence. The difficulty is great; for their hold is so strong, so apparently invincible that it justifies the disdainful dictum which compares human nature to a dog's tail, — for, straighten it never so much by force of ethics, religion, reason or any other redemptive effort, it returns in the end always to the crooked curl of Nature. And so great is the vim, the clutch of that more agitated Life-Will, so immense the peril of its passions and errors, so subtly insistent or persistently invasive, so obstinate up to the very gates of Heaven the fury of its attack or the tedious obstruction of its obstacles that even the saint and the Yogin cannot be sure of their liberated purity or their trained self-mastery against its intrigue or its violence. All labour to straighten out this native crookedness strikes the struggling will as a futility; a flight, a withdrawal to happy Heaven or peaceful dissolution easily finds credit as the only wisdom and to find a way not to be born again gets established as the only remedy for the dull bondage or the poor shoddy delirium or the blinded and precarious happiness and achievement of earthly existence.

A remedy yet there should be and is, a way of redress and a chance of transformation for this troubled vital nature; but for that the cause of deviation must be found and remedied at the heart of Life itself and in its very principle, since Life too is a power of the Divine and not a creation of some malignant Chance or dark Titanic impulse, however obscure or perverted may be its actual appearance. In Life itself there is the seed of its own salvation, it is from the Life-Energy that we must get our leverage; for though there is a saving light in Knowledge, a redeeming and transforming force in Love, these cannot be effective here unless they secure the consent of Life and can use the instrumentation of some delivered energy at its centre for a sublimation of the erring human into a divine Life-Force. It is not possible to cut the difficulty by a splitting up of the works of sacrifice; we cannot escape it by deciding that we shall do only the works of Love and Knowledge and leave aside the works of will and power, possession and acquisition, production and fruitful expense of capacity, battle and victory and mastery, striking away from us the larger part of life because it seems to be made of the very stuff of desire and ego and therefore doomed to be a field of disharmony and mere conflict and disorder. For the division cannot really be made; or, if attempted, it must fail in its essential purpose, since it would isolate us from the total energies of the World-Power and sterilise an important part of integral Nature, just the one force in it that is a necessary instrument in any world-creative purpose. The Life-Force is an indispensable intermediary, the effectuating element in Nature here; mind needs its alliance if the works of mind are not to remain shining inner formations without a body; the spirit needs it to give an outer force and form to its manifested possibilities and arrive at a complete self-expression incarnated in Matter. If Life refuses the aid of its intermediary energy to the spirit's other workings or is itself refused, they are likely to be reduced for all the effect they can have here to a static seclusion or a golden impotence; or if anything is done, it will be a partial irradiation of our action more subjective than objective, modifying existence perhaps, but without force to change it. Yet if Life brings its forces to the spirit but unregenerate, a worse result may follow since it is likely to reduce the spiritual action of Love or Knowledge to diminished and corrupted motions or make them accomplices of its own inferior or perverse workings. Life is indispensable to the completeness of the creative spiritual realisation, but life released, transformed, uplifted, not the ordinary mentalised human-animal life, nor the demoniac or Titanic, nor even the divine and the undivine mixed together. Whatever may be done by other world-shunning or heaven-seeking disciplines, this is the difficult but unavoidable task of the integral Yoga; it cannot afford to leave unsolved the problem of the outward works of Life, it must find in them their native Divinity and ally it firmly and for ever to the divinities of Love and Knowledge.

It is no solution either to postpone dealing with the works of Life till Love and Knowledge have been evolved to a point at which they can sovereignly and with safety lay hold on the Life-Force to regenerate it; for we have seen that they have to rise to immense heights before they can be secure from the vital perversion which hampers or hamstrings their power to deliver. If once our consciousness could reach the heights of a supramental Nature, then indeed these disabilities would disappear. But here there is the dilemma that it is impossible to reach the supramental heights with the burden of an unregenerated Life-Force on our shoulders and equally impossible to regenerate radically the Will-in-Life without bringing down the infallible light and unconquerable power that belong to the spiritual and supramental levels. The Supramental Consciousness is not only a Knowledge, a Bliss, an intimate Love and Oneness, it is also a Will, a principle of Power and Force, and it cannot descend till the element of Will, of Power, of Force in this manifested Nature is sufficiently developed and sublimated to receive and bear it. But Will, Power, Force are the native substance of the Life-Energy, and herein lies the justification for the refusal of Life to acknowledge the supremacy of Knowledge and Love alone, — for its push towards the satisfaction of something far more unreflecting, headstrong and dangerous that can yet venture too in its own bold and ardent way towards the Divine and Absolute. Love and Wisdom are not the only aspects of the Divine, there is also its aspect of Power. As the mind gropes for Knowledge, as the heart feels out for Love, so the life-force, however fumblingly or trepidantly, stumbles in search of Power and the control given by Power. It is a mistake of the ethical or religious mind to condemn Power as in itself a thing not to be accepted or sought after because naturally corrupting and evil; in spite of its apparent justification by a majority of instances, this is at its core a blind and irrational prejudice. However corrupted and misused, as Love and Knowledge too are corrupted and misused, Power is divine and put here for a divine use. Shakti, Will, Power is the driver of the worlds and, whether it be Knowledge-Force or Love-Force or Life-Force or Action-Force or Body-Force, is always spiritual in its origin and divine in its native character. It is the use of it made in the Ignorance by brute, man or Titan that has to be cast aside and replaced by its greater natural — even if to us supernormal — action led by the Light of an inner consciousness which is in tune with the Infinite and the Eternal. The integral Yoga cannot reject the works of Life and be satisfied with an inward experience only; it has to go inward in order to change the outward, making the Life-Force a part and a working of a Yoga-Energy which is in touch with the Divine and divine in its guidance.

All the difficulty in dealing spiritually with the works of Life arises because the Will-in-Life for its purposes in the Ignorance has created a false soul of desire and substituted it for that spark of the Divine which is the true psyche. All or most of the works of life are at present or seem to be actuated and vitiated by this soul of desire; even those that are ethical or religious, even those that wear the guise of altruism, philanthropy, self-sacrifice, self-denial, are shot through and through with the threads of its making. This soul of desire is a separative soul of ego and all its instincts are for a separative self-affirmation; it pushes always, openly or under more or less shining masks, for its own growth, for possession, for enjoyment, for conquest and empire. If the curse of disquiet and disharmony and perversion is to be lifted from Life, the true soul, the psychic being, must be given its leading place and there must be a dissolution of the false soul of desire and ego. But this does not mean that life itself must be coerced and denied its native line of fulfilment; for behind this outer life soul of desire there is in us an inner and true vital being which has not to be dissolved but brought out into prominence and released to its true working as a power of the Divine Nature. The prominence of this true vital being under the lead of the true inmost soul within us is the condition for the divine fulfilment of the objects of the Life-Force. Those objects will even remain the same in essence, but transformed in their inner motive and outer character. The Divine Life-Power too will be a will for growth, a force of self-affirmation, but affirmation of the Divine within us, not of the little temporary personality on the surface, — growth into the true divine Individual, the central being, the secret imperishable Person who can emerge only by the subordination and disappearance of the ego. This is life's true object: growth, but a growth of the spirit in Nature, affirming and developing itself in mind, life and body; possession, but a possession by the Divine of the Divine in all things, and not of things for their own sake by the desire of the ego; enjoyment, but an enjoyment of the divine Ananda in the universe; battle and conquest and empire in the shape of a victorious conflict with the Powers of Darkness, an entire spiritual self-rule and mastery over inward and outward Nature, a conquest by Knowledge, Love and Divine Will over the domains of the Ignorance.

These are the conditions and these must be the aims of the divine effectuation of the works of Life and their progressive transformation which is the third element of the triple sacrifice. It is not a rationalisation but a supramentalisation, not a moralising but a spiritualising of life that is the object of the Yoga. It is not a handling of externals or superficial psychological motives that is its main purpose, but a refounding of life and its action on their hidden divine element; for only such a refounding of life can bring about its direct government by the secret Divine Power above us and its transfiguration into a manifest expression of the Divinity, not as now a disguise and a disfiguring mask of the eternal Actor. It is a spiritual essential change of consciousness, not the surface manipulation which is the method of Mind and Reason, that can alone make Life other than it now is and rescue it out of its present distressed and ambiguous figure.

⁂

It is then by a transformation of life in its very principle, not by an external manipulation of its phenomena, that the integral Yoga proposes to change it from a troubled and ignorant into a luminous and harmonious movement of Nature. There are three conditions which are indispensable for the achievement of this central inner revolution and new formation; none of them is altogether sufficient in itself, but by their united threefold power the uplifting can be done, the conversion made and completely made. For, first, life as it is is a movement of desire and it has built in us as its centre a desire-soul which refers to itself all the motions of life and puts in them its own troubled hue and pain of an ignorant, half-lit, baffled endeavour: for a divine living, desire must be abolished and replaced by a purer and firmer motive-power, the tormented soul of desire dissolved and in its stead there must emerge the calm, strength, happiness of a true vital being now concealed within us. Next, life as it is is driven or led partly by the impulse of the life-force, partly by a mind which is mostly a servant and abettor of the ignorant life-impulse, but in part also its uneasy and not too luminous or competent guide and mentor; for a divine life the mind and the life-impulse must cease to be anything but instruments and the inmost psychic being must take their place as the leader on the path and the indicator of a divine guidance. Last, life as it is is turned towards the satisfaction of the separative ego; ego must disappear and be replaced by the true spiritual person, the central being, and life itself must be turned towards the fulfilment of the Divine in terrestrial existence; it must feel a Divine Force awaking within it and become an obedient instrumentation of its purpose.

There is nothing that is not ancient and familiar in the first of these three transforming inner movements; for it has always been one of the principal objects of spiritual discipline. It has been best formulated in the already expressed doctrine of the Gita by which a complete renouncement of desire for the fruits as the motive of action, a complete annulment of desire itself, the complete achievement of a perfect equality are put forward as the normal status of a spiritual being. A perfect spiritual equality is the one true and infallible sign of the cessation of desire, — to be equal-souled to all things, unmoved by joy and sorrow, the pleasant and the unpleasant, success or failure, to look with an equal eye on high and low, friend and enemy, the virtuous and the sinner, to see in all beings the manifold manifestation of the One and in all things the multitudinous play or the slow masked evolution of the embodied Spirit. It is not a mental quiet, aloofness, indifference, not an inert vital quiescence, not a passivity of the physical consciousness consenting to no movement or to any movement that is the condition aimed at, though these things are sometimes mistaken for this spiritual condition, but a wide comprehensive unmoved universality such as that of the Witness Spirit behind Nature. For all here seems to be a mobile half-ordered half-confused organisation of forces, but behind them one can feel a supporting peace, silence, wideness, not inert but calm, not impotent but potentially omnipotent with a concentrated, stable, immobile energy in it capable of bearing all the motions of the universe. This Presence behind is equal-souled to all things: the energy it holds in it can be unloosed for any action, but no action will be chosen by any desire in the Witness Spirit; a Truth acts which is beyond and greater than the action itself or its apparent forms and impulses, beyond and greater than mind or life-force or body, although it may take for the immediate purpose a mental, a vital or a physical appearance. It is when there is this death of desire and this calm equal wideness in the consciousness everywhere, that the true vital being within us comes out from the veil and reveals its own calm, intense and potent presence. For such is the true nature of the vital being, *prāṇamaya puruṣa*; it is a projection of the Divine Purusha into life, — tranquil, strong, luminous, many-energied, obedient to the Divine Will, egoless, yet or rather therefore capable of all action, achievement, highest or largest enterprise. The true Life-Force too reveals itself as no longer this troubled harassed divided striving surface energy, but a great and radiant Divine Power, full of peace and strength and bliss, a wide-wayed Angel of Life with its wings of Might enfolding the universe.

And yet this transformation into a large strength and equality is insufficient; for if it opens to us the instrumentation of a Divine Life, it does not provide its government and initiative. It is here that the presence of the released psychic being intervenes; it does not give the supreme government and direction, — for that is not its function, — but it supplies during the transition from ignorance to a divine Knowledge a progressive guidance for the inner and outer life and action; it indicates at each moment the method, the way, the steps that will lead to that fulfilled spiritual condition in which a supreme dynamic initiative will be always there directing the activities of a divinised Life-Force.

The light it sheds illuminates the other parts of the nature which, for want of any better guidance than their own confused and groping powers, have been wandering in the rounds of the Ignorance; it gives to mind the intrinsic feeling of the thoughts and perceptions, to life the infallible sense of the movements that are misled or misleading and those that are well-inspired; something like a quiet oracle from within discloses the causes of our stumblings, warns in time against their repetition, extracts from experience and intuition the law, not rigid but plastic, of a just direction for our acts, a right stepping, an accurate impulse. A will is created that becomes more in consonance with evolving Truth rather than with the circling and dilatory mazes of a seeking Error. A determined orientation towards the greater Light to be, a soul-instinct, a psychic tact and insight into the true substance, motion and intention of things, coming always nearer and nearer to a spiritual vision, to a knowledge by inner contact, inner sight and even identity, begin to replace the superficial keenness of mental judgment and the eager graspings of the life-force. The works of Life right themselves, escape from confusion, substitute for the artificial or legal order imposed by the intellect and for the arbitrary rule of desire the guidance of the soul's inner insight, enter into the profound paths of the Spirit. Above all, the psychic being imposes on life the law of the sacrifice of all its works as an offering to the Divine and the Eternal. Life becomes a call to that which is beyond Life; its every smallest act enlarges with the sense of the Infinite.

As an inner equality increases and with it the sense of the true vital being waiting for the greater direction it has to serve, as the psychic call too increases in all the members of our nature, That to which the call is addressed begins to reveal itself, descends to take possession of the life and its energies and fills them with the height, intimacy, vastness of its presence and its purpose. In many, if not most, it manifests something of itself even before the equality and the open psychic urge or guidance are there. A call of the veiled psychic element oppressed by the mass of the outer ignorance and crying for deliverance, a stress of eager meditation and seeking for knowledge, a longing of the heart, a passionate will ignorant yet but sincere may break the lid that shuts off that Higher from this Lower Nature and open the floodgates. A little of the Divine Person may reveal itself or some Light, Power, Bliss, Love out of the Infinite. This may be a momentary revelation, a flash or a brief-lived gleam that soon withdraws and waits for the preparation of the nature; but also it may repeat itself, grow, endure. A long and large and comprehensive working will then have begun, sometimes luminous or intense, sometimes slow and obscure. A Divine Power comes in front at times and leads and compels or instructs and enlightens; at others it withdraws into the background and seems to leave the being to its own resources. All that is ignorant, obscure, perverted or simply imperfect and inferior in the being is raised up, perhaps brought to its acme, dealt with, corrected, exhausted, shown its own disastrous results, compelled to call for its own cessation or transformation or expelled as worthless or incorrigible from the nature. This cannot be a smooth and even process; alternations there are of day and night, illumination and darkness, calm and construction or battle and upheaval, the presence of the growing Divine Consciousness and its absence, heights of hope and abysses of despair, the clasp of the Beloved and the anguish of its absence, the overwhelming invasion, the compelling deceit, the fierce opposition, the disabling mockery of hostile Powers or the help and comfort and communion of the Gods and the Divine Messengers. A great and long revolution and churning of the ocean of Life with strong emergences of its nectar and its poison is enforced till all is ready and the increasing Descent finds a being, a nature prepared and conditioned for its complete rule and its all-encompassing presence. But if the equality and the psychic light and will are already there, then this process, though it cannot be dispensed with, can still be much lightened and facilitated: it will be rid of its worst dangers; an inner calm, happiness, confidence will support the steps through all the difficulties and trials of the transformation and the growing Force profiting by the full assent of the nature will rapidly diminish and eliminate the power of the opposing forces. A sure guidance and protection will be present throughout, sometimes standing in front, sometimes working behind the veil, and the power of the end will be already there even in the beginning and in the long middle stages of the great endeavour. For at all times the seeker will be aware of the Divine Guide and Protector or the working of the supreme Mother-Force; he will know that all is done for the best, the progress assured, the victory inevitable. In either case the process is the same and unavoidable, a taking up of the whole nature, of the whole life, of the internal and of the external, to reveal and handle and transform its forces and their movements under the pressure of a diviner Life from above, until all here has been possessed by greater spiritual powers and made an instrumentation of a spiritual action and a divine purpose.

In this process and at an early stage of it it becomes evident that what we know of ourselves, our present conscious existence, is only a representative formation, a superficial activity, a changing external result of a vast mass of concealed existence. Our visible life and the actions of that life are no more than a series of significant expressions, but that which it tries to express is not on the surface; our existence is something much larger than this apparent frontal being which we suppose ourselves to be and which we offer to the world around us. This frontal and external being is a confused amalgam of mind-formations, life-movements, physical functionings of which even an exhaustive analysis into its component parts and machinery fails to reveal the whole secret. It is only when we go behind, below, above into the hidden stretches of our being that we can know it; the most thorough and acute surface scrutiny and manipulation cannot give us the true understanding or the completely effective control of our life, its purposes, its activities; that inability indeed is the cause of the failure of reason, morality and every other surface action to control and deliver and perfect the life of the human race. For below even our most obscure physical consciousness is a subconscious being in which as in a covering and supporting soil are all manner of hidden seeds that sprout up, unaccountably to us, on our surface and into which we are constantly throwing fresh seeds that prolong our past and will influence our future, — a subconscious being, obscure, small in its motions, capriciously and almost fantastically subrational, but of an immense potency for the earth-life. Again behind our mind, our life, our conscious physical there is a larger subliminal consciousness, — there are inner mental, inner vital, inner more subtle physical reaches supported by an inmost psychic existence which is the animating soul of all the rest; and in these hidden reaches too lie a mass of numerous pre-existent personalities which supply the material, the motive-forces, the impulsions of our developing surface existence. For in each one of us here there may be one central person, but also a multitude of subordinate personalities created by the past history of its manifestation or by expressions of it on these inner planes which support its present play in this external material cosmos. And while on our surface we are cut off from all around us except through an exterior mind and sense contact which delivers but little of us to our world or of our world to us, in these inner reaches the barrier between us and the rest of existence is thin and easily broken; there we can feel at once — not merely infer from their results, but feel directly — the action of the secret world-forces, mind-forces, life-forces, subtle physical forces that constitute universal and individual existence; we shall even be able, if we will but train ourselves to it, to lay our hands on these world-forces that throw themselves on us or surround us and more and more to control or at least strongly modify their action on us and others, their formations, their very movements. Yet again, above our human mind are still greater reaches superconscient to it and from there secretly descend influences, powers, touches which are the original determinants of things here and, if they were called down in their fullness, could altogether alter the whole make and economy of life in the material universe. It is all this latent experience and knowledge that the Divine Force working upon us by our opening to it in the integral Yoga, progressively reveals to us, uses and works out the consequences as means and steps towards a transformation of our whole being and nature. Our life is thenceforth no longer a little rolling wave on the surface, but interpenetrant if not coincident with the cosmic life. Our spirit, our self rises not only into an inner identity with some wide cosmic Self but into some contact with that which is beyond, though aware of and dominant over the action of the universe.

It is thus by an integralisation of our divided being that the Divine Shakti in the Yoga will proceed to its object; for liberation, perfection, mastery are dependent on this integralisation, since the little wave on the surface cannot control its own movement, much less have any true control over the vast life around it. The Shakti, the power of the Infinite and the Eternal descends within us, works, breaks up our present psychological formations, shatters every wall, widens, liberates, presents us with always newer and greater powers of vision, ideation, perception and newer and greater life-motives, enlarges and new-models increasingly the soul and its instruments, confronts us with every imperfection in order to convict and destroy it, opens to a greater perfection, does in a brief period the work of many lives or ages so that new births and new vistas open constantly within us. Expansive in her action, she frees the consciousness from confinement in the body; it can go out in trance or sleep or even waking and enter into worlds or other regions of this world and act there or carry back its experience. It spreads out, feeling the body only as a small part of itself, and begins to contain what before contained it; it achieves the cosmic consciousness and extends itself to be commensurate with the universe. It begins to know inwardly and directly and not merely by external observation and contact the forces at play in the world, feels their movement, distinguishes their functioning and can operate immediately upon them as the scientist operates upon physical forces, accept their action and results in our mind, life, body or reject them or modify, change, reshape, create immense new powers and movements in place of the old small functionings of the nature. We begin to perceive the working of the forces of universal Mind and to know how our thoughts are created by that working, separate from within the truth and falsehood of our perceptions, enlarge their field, extend and illumine their significance, become master of our own minds and active to shape the movements of Mind in the world around us. We begin to perceive the flow and surge of the universal life-forces, detect the origin and law of our feelings, emotions, sensations, passions, are free to accept, reject, new-create, open to wider, rise to higher planes of Life-Power. We begin to perceive too the key to the enigma of Matter, follow the interplay of Mind and Life and Consciousness upon it, discover more and more its instrumental and resultant function and detect ultimately the last secret of Matter as a form not merely of Energy but of involved and arrested or unstably fixed and restricted consciousness and begin to see too the possibility of its liberation and plasticity of response to higher Powers, its possibilities for the conscious and no longer the more than half-inconscient incarnation and self-expression of the Spirit. All this and more becomes more and more possible as the working of the Divine Shakti increases in us and, against much resistance or labour to respond of our obscure consciousness, through much struggle and movement of progress and regression and renewed progress necessitated by the work of intensive transformation of a half-inconscient into a conscious substance, moves to a greater purity, truth, height, range. All depends on the psychic awakening in us, the completeness of our response to her and our growing surrender.

But all this can only constitute a greater inner life with a greater possibility of the outer action and is a transitional achievement; the full transformation can come only by the ascent of the sacrifice to its farthest heights and its action upon life with the power and light and beatitude of the divine supramental Gnosis. For then alone all the forces that are divided and express themselves imperfectly in life and its works are raised to their original unity, harmony, single truth, authentic absoluteness and entire significance. There Knowledge and Will are one, Love and Force a single movement; the opposites that afflict us here are resolved into their reconciled unity: good develops its absolute and evil divesting itself of its error returns to the good that was behind it; sin and virtue vanish in a divine purity and an infallible truth-movement; the dubious evanescence of pleasure disappears in a Bliss that is the play of an eternal and happy spiritual certitude, and pain in perishing discovers the touch of an Ananda which was betrayed by some dark perversion and incapacity of the will of the Inconscient to receive it. These things, to the Mind an imagination or a mystery, become evident and capable of experience as the consciousness rises out of limited embodied Matter-mind to the freedom and fullness of the higher and higher ranges of the super-intelligence; but they can become entirely true and normal only when the supramental becomes the law of the nature.

It is therefore on the accomplishment of this ascent and on the possibility of a full dynamism from these highest levels descending into earth-consciousness that is dependent the justification of Life, its salvation, its transformation into a Divine Life in a transfigured terrestrial Nature.

⁂

The nature of the integral Yoga so conceived, so conditioned, progressing by these spiritual means, turning upon this integral transformation of the nature, determines of itself its answer to the question of the ordinary activities of life and their place in the Yoga.

There is not and cannot be here any ascetic or contemplative or mystic abandonment of works and life altogether, any gospel of an absorbed meditation and inactivity, any cutting away or condemnation of the Life-Force and its activities, any rejection of the manifestation in the earth-nature. It may be necessary for the seeker at any period to withdraw into himself, to remain plunged in his inner being, to shut out from him the noise and turmoil of the life of the Ignorance until a certain inner change has been accomplished or something achieved without which a further effective action on life has become difficult or impossible. But this can only be a period or an episode, a temporary necessity or a preparatory spiritual manoeuvre; it cannot be the rule of his Yoga or its principle.

A splitting up of the activities of human existence on a religious or an ethical basis or both together, a restriction to the works of worship only or to the works of philanthropy and beneficence only would be contrary to the spirit of the integral

Yoga. Any merely mental rule or merely mental acceptance or repudiation is alien to the purpose and method of its discipline. All must be taken to a spiritual height and placed upon a spiritual basis; the presence of an inner spiritual change and an outer transformation must be enforced upon the whole of life and not merely on a part of life; all must be accepted that is helpful towards this change or admits it, all must be rejected that is incapable or inapt or refuses to submit itself to the transforming movement. There must be no attachment to any form of things or of life, any object, any activity; all must be renounced if need be, all must be admitted that the Divine chooses as its material for the divine life. But what accepts or rejects must be neither mind nor open or camouflaged vital will of desire nor ethical sense, but the insistence of the psychic being, the command of the Divine Guide of the Yoga, the vision of the higher Self or Spirit, the illumined guidance of the Master. The way of the spirit is not a mental way; a mental rule or mental consciousness cannot be its determinant or its leader.

Equally, a combination or a compromise between two orders of consciousness, the spiritual and the mental or the spiritual and the vital or a mere sublimation from within of Life outwardly unchanged cannot be the law or the aim of the Yoga. All life must be taken up but all life must be transformed; all must become a part, a form, an adequate expression of a spiritual being in the supramental nature. This is the height and crowning movement of a spiritual evolution in the material world, and as the change from the vital animal to mental man made life another thing altogether in basic consciousness, scope, significance, so this change from the materialised mental being to the spiritual and supramental being using but not dominated by matter must take up life and make it another thing altogether than the flawed, imperfect limited human, quite other in its basic consciousness, scope, significance. All forms of life activity that cannot bear the change must disappear, all that can bear it will survive and enter into the kingdom of the spirit. A divine Force is at work and will choose at each moment what has to be done or has not to be done, what has to be momentarily or permanently taken up, momentarily or permanently abandoned. For provided we do not substitute for that our desire or our ego, and to that end the soul must be always awake, always on guard, alive to the divine guidance, resistant to the undivine misleading from within or without us, that Force is sufficient and alone competent and she will lead us to the fulfilment along ways and by means too large, too inward, too complex for the mind to follow, much less to dictate. It is an arduous and difficult and dangerous way, but there is none other.

Two rules alone there are that will diminish the difficulty and obviate the danger. One must reject all that comes from the ego, from vital desire, from the mere mind and its presumptuous reasoning incompetence, all that ministers to these agents of the Ignorance. One must learn to hear and follow the voice of the inmost soul, the direction of the Guru, the command of the Master, the working of the Divine Mother. Whoever clings to the desires and weaknesses of the flesh, the cravings and passions of the vital in its turbulent ignorance, the dictates of his personal mind unsilenced and unillumined by a greater knowledge, cannot find the true inner law and is heaping obstacles in the way of the divine fulfilment. Whoever is able to detect and renounce those obscuring agencies and to discern and follow the true Guide within and without will discover the spiritual law and reach the goal of the Yoga.

A radical and total change of consciousness is not only the whole meaning but, in an increasing force and by progressive stages, the whole method of the integral Yoga.

Chapter VII

Standards of Conduct and Spiritual Freedom

THE KNOWLEDGE on which the doer of works in Yoga has to found all his action and development has for the keystone of its structure a more and more concrete perception of unity, the living sense of an all-pervading oneness; he moves in the increasing consciousness of all existence as an indivisible whole: all work too is part of this divine indivisible whole. His personal action and its results can no longer be or seem a separate movement mainly or entirely determined by the egoistic "free" will of an individual, himself separate in the mass. Our works are part of an indivisible cosmic action; they are put or, more accurately, put themselves into their place in the whole out of which they arise and their outcome is determined by forces that overpass us. That world action in its vast totality and in every petty detail is the indivisible movement of the One who manifests himself progressively in the cosmos. Man too becomes progressively conscious of the truth of himself and the truth of things in proportion as he awakens to this One within him and outside him and to the occult, miraculous and significant process of its forces in the motion of Nature. This action, this movement, is not confined even in ourselves and those around us to the little fragmentary portion of the cosmic activities of which we in our superficial consciousness are aware; it is supported by an immense underlying environing existence subliminal to our minds or subconscious, and it is attracted by an immense transcending existence which is superconscious to our nature. Our action arises, as we ourselves have emerged, out of a universality of which we are not aware; we give it a shape by our personal temperament, personal mind and will of thought or force of impulse or desire; but the true truth of things, the true law of action exceeds these personal and human formations. Every standpoint, every man-made rule of action which ignores the indivisible totality of the cosmic movement, whatever its utility in external practice, is to the eye of spiritual Truth an imperfect view and a law of the Ignorance.

Even when we have arrived at some glimpse of this idea or succeeded in fixing it in our consciousness as a knowledge of the mind and a consequent attitude of the soul, it is difficult for us in our outward parts and active nature to square accounts between this universal standpoint and the claims of our personal opinion, our personal will, our personal emotion and desire. We are forced still to go on dealing with this indivisible movement as if it were a mass of impersonal material out of which we, the ego, the person, have to carve something according to our own will and mental fantasy by a personal struggle and effort. This is man's normal attitude towards his environment, actually false because our ego and its will are creations and puppets of the cosmic forces and it is only when we withdraw from ego into the consciousness of the divine Knowledge-Will of the Eternal who acts in them that we can be by a sort of deputation from above their master. And yet is this personal position the right attitude for man so long as he cherishes his individuality and has not yet fully developed it; for without this view-point and motive-force he cannot grow in his ego, cannot sufficiently develop and differentiate himself out of the subconscious or half-conscious universal mass-existence.

But the hold of this ego-consciousness upon our whole habit of existence is difficult to shake off when we have no longer need of the separative, the individualistic and aggressive stage of development, when we would proceed forward from this necessity of littleness in the child-soul to unity and universality, to the cosmic consciousness and beyond, to our transcendent spirit-stature. It is indispensable to recognise clearly, not only in our mode of thought but in our way of feeling, sensing, doing, that this movement, this universal action is not a helpless impersonal wave of being which lends itself to the will of any ego according to that ego's strength and insistence. It is the movement of a cosmic Being who is the Knower of his field, the steps of a Divinity who is the Master of his own progressive force of action. As the movement is one and indivisible, so he who is present in the movement is one, sole and indivisible. Not only all result is determined by him, but all initiation, action and process are dependent on the motion of his cosmic force and only belong secondarily and in their form to the creature.

But what then must be the spiritual position of the personal worker? What is his true relation in dynamic Nature to this one cosmic Being and this one total movement? He is a centre only — a centre of differentiation of the one personal consciousness, a centre of determination of the one total movement; his personality reflects in a wave of persistent individuality the one universal Person, the Transcendent, the Eternal. In the Ignorance it is always a broken and distorted reflection because the crest of the wave which is our conscious waking self throws back only an imperfect and falsified similitude of the divine Spirit. All our opinions, standards, formations, principles are only attempts to represent in this broken, reflecting and distorting mirror something of the universal and progressive total action and its many-sided movement towards some ultimate self-revelation of the Divine. Our mind represents it as best it can with a narrow approximation that becomes less and less inadequate in proportion as its thought grows in wideness and light and power; but it is always an approximation and not even a true partial figure. The Divine Will acts through the aeons to reveal progressively not only in the unity of the cosmos, not only in the collectivity of living and thinking creatures, but in the soul of each individual something of its divine Mystery and the hidden truth of the Infinite. Therefore there is in the cosmos, in the collectivity, in the individual, a rooted instinct or belief in its own perfectibility, a constant drive towards an ever increasing and more adequate and more harmonious self-development nearer to the secret truth of things. This effort is represented to the constructing mind of man by standards of knowledge, feeling, character, aesthesis and action, — rules, ideals, norms and laws that he essays to turn into universal dharmas.

* * *

If we are to be free in the spirit, if we are to be subject only to the supreme Truth, we must discard the idea that our mental or moral laws are binding on the Infinite or that there can be anything sacrosanct, absolute or eternal even in the highest of our existing standards of conduct. To form higher and higher temporary standards as long as they are needed is to serve the Divine in his world march; to erect rigidly an absolute standard is to attempt the erection of a barrier against the eternal waters in their onflow. Once the nature-bound soul realises this truth, it is delivered from the duality of good and evil. For good is all that helps the individual and the world towards their divine fullness, and evil is all that retards or breaks up that increasing perfection. But since the perfection is progressive, evolutive in Time, good and evil are also shifting quantities and change from time to time their meaning and value. This thing which is evil now and in its present shape must be abandoned was once helpful and necessary to the general and individual progress. That other thing which we now regard as evil may well become in another form and arrangement an element in some future perfection. And on the spiritual level we transcend even this distinction; for we discover the purpose and divine utility of all these things that we call good and evil. Then have we to reject the falsehood in them and all that is distorted, ignorant and obscure in that which is called good no less than in that which is called evil. For we have then to accept only the true and the divine, but to make no other distinction in the eternal processes.

To those who can act only on a rigid standard, to those who can feel only the human and not the divine values, this truth may seem to be a dangerous concession which is likely to destroy the very foundation of morality, confuse all conduct and establish only chaos. Certainly, if the choice must be between an eternal and unchanging ethics and no ethics at all, it would have that result for man in his ignorance. But even on the human level, if we have light enough and flexibility enough to recognise that a standard of conduct may be temporary and yet necessary for its time and to observe it faithfully until it can be replaced by a better, then we suffer no such loss, but lose only the fanaticism of an imperfect and intolerant virtue. In its place we gain openness and a power of continual moral progression, charity, the capacity to enter into an understanding sympathy with all this world of struggling and stumbling creatures and by that charity a better right and a greater strength to help it upon its way. In the end where the human closes and the divine commences, where the mental disappears into the supramental consciousness and the finite precipitates itself into the infinite, all evil disappears into a transcendent divine Good which becomes universal on every plane of consciousness that it touches.

This, then, stands fixed for us that all standards by which we may seek to govern our conduct are only our temporary, imperfect and evolutive attempts to represent to ourselves our stumbling mental progress in the universal self-realisation towards which Nature moves. But the divine manifestation cannot be bound by our little rules and fragile sanctities; for the consciousness behind it is too vast for these things. Once we have grasped this fact, disconcerting enough to the absolutism of our reason, we shall better be able to put in their right place in regard to each other the successive standards that govern the different stages in the growth of the individual and the collective march of mankind. At the most general of them we may cast a passing glance. For we have to see how they stand in relation to that other standardless spiritual and supramental mode of working for which Yoga seeks and to which it moves by the surrender of the individual to the divine Will and, more effectively, through his ascent by this surrender to the greater consciousness in which a certain identity with the dynamic Eternal becomes possible.

⁂

There are four main standards of human conduct that make an ascending scale. The first is personal need, preference and desire;

the second is the law and good of the collectivity; the third is an ideal ethic; the last is the highest divine law of the nature.

Man starts on the long career of his evolution with only the first two of these four to enlighten and lead him; for they constitute the law of his animal and vital existence and it is as the vital and physical animal man that he begins his progress. The true business of man upon earth is to express in the type of humanity a growing image of the Divine; whether knowingly or unknowingly, it is to this end that Nature is working in him under the thick veil of her inner and outer processes. But the material or animal man is ignorant of the inner aim of life; he knows only its needs and its desires and he has necessarily no other guide to what is required of him than his own perception of need and his own stirrings and pointings of desire. To satisfy his physical and vital demands and necessities before all things else and, in the next rank, whatever emotional or mental cravings or imaginations or dynamic notions rise in him must be the first natural rule of his conduct. The sole balancing or overpowering law that can modify or contradict this pressing natural claim is the demand put on him by the ideas, needs and desires of his family, community or tribe, the herd, the pack of which he is a member.

If man could live to himself, — and this he could only do if the development of the individual were the sole object of the Divine in the world, — this second law would not at all need to come into operation. But all existence proceeds by the mutual action and reaction of the whole and the parts, the need for each other of the constituents and the thing constituted, the interdependence of the group and the individuals of the group. In the language of Indian philosophy the Divine manifests himself always in the double form of the separative and the collective being, *vyaṣṭi*, *samaṣṭi*. Man, pressing after the growth of his separate individuality and its fullness and freedom, is unable to satisfy even his own personal needs and desires except in conjunction with other men; he is a whole in himself and yet incomplete without others. This obligation englobes his personal law of conduct in a group-law which arises from the formation of a lasting group-entity with a collective mind and life of its own to which his own embodied mind and life are subordinated as a transitory unit. And yet is there something in him immortal and free, not bound to this group-body which outlasts his own embodied existence but cannot outlast or claim to chain by its law his eternal spirit.

In itself this seemingly larger and overriding law is no more than an extension of the vital and animal principle that governs the individual elementary man; it is the law of the pack or herd. The individual identifies partially his life with the life of a certain number of other individuals with whom he is associated by birth, choice or circumstance. And since the existence of the group is necessary for his own existence and satisfaction, in time, if not from the first, its preservation, the fulfilment of its needs and the satisfaction of its collective notions, desires, habits of living, without which it would not hold together, must come to take a primary place. The satisfaction of personal idea and feeling, need and desire, propensity and habit has to be constantly subordinated, by the necessity of the situation and not from any moral or altruistic motive, to the satisfaction of the ideas and feelings, needs and desires, propensities and habits, not of this or that other individual or number of individuals, but of the society as a whole. This social need is the obscure matrix of morality and of man's ethical impulse.

It is not actually known that in any primitive times man lived to himself or with only his mate as do some of the animals. All record of him shows him to us as a social animal, not an isolated body and spirit. The law of the pack has always overridden his individual law of self-development; he seems always to have been born, to have lived, to have been formed as a unit in a mass. But logically and naturally from the psychological viewpoint the law of personal need and desire is primary, the social law comes in as a secondary and usurping power. Man has in him two distinct master impulses, the individualistic and the communal, a personal life and a social life, a personal motive of conduct and a social motive of conduct. The possibility of their opposition and the attempt to find their equation lie at the very roots of human civilisation and persist in other figures when he has passed beyond the vital animal into a highly individualised mental and spiritual progress.

The existence of a social law external to the individual is at different times a considerable advantage and a heavy disadvantage to the development of the divine in man. It is an advantage at first when man is crude and incapable of self-control and self-finding, because it erects a power other than that of his personal egoism through which that egoism may be induced or compelled to moderate its savage demands, to discipline its irrational and often violent movements and even to lose itself sometimes in a larger and less personal egoism. It is a disadvantage to the adult spirit ready to transcend the human formula because it is an external standard which seeks to impose itself on him from outside, and the condition of his perfection is that he shall grow from within and in an increasing freedom, not by the suppression but by the transcendence of his perfected individuality, not any longer by a law imposed on him that trains and disciplines his members but by the soul from within breaking through all previous forms to possess with its light and transmute his members.

⁂

In the conflict of the claims of society with the claims of the individual two ideal and absolute solutions confront one another. There is the demand of the group that the individual should subordinate himself more or less completely or even lose his independent existence in the community, — the smaller must be immolated or self-offered to the larger unit. He must accept the need of the society as his own need, the desire of the society as his own desire; he must live not for himself but for the tribe, clan, commune or nation of which he is a member. The ideal and absolute solution from the individual's standpoint would be a society that existed not for itself, for its all-overriding collective purpose, but for the good of the individual and his fulfilment, for the greater and more perfect life of all its members. Representing as far as possible his best self and helping him to realise it, it would respect the freedom of each of its members and maintain itself not by law and force but by the free and spontaneous consent of its constituent persons. An ideal society of either kind does not exist anywhere and would be most difficult to create, more difficult still to keep in precarious existence so long as individual man clings to his egoism as the primary motive of existence. A general but not complete domination of the society over the individual is the easier way and it is the system that Nature from the first instinctively adopts and keeps in equilibrium by rigorous law, compelling custom and a careful indoctrination of the still subservient and ill-developed intelligence of the human creature.

In primitive societies the individual life is submitted to rigid and immobile communal custom and rule; this is the ancient and would-be eternal law of the human pack that tries always to masquerade as the everlasting decree of the Imperishable, *eṣa dharmaḥ sanātanaḥ*. And the ideal is not dead in the human mind; the most recent trend of human progress is to establish an enlarged and sumptuous edition of this ancient turn of collective living towards the enslavement of the human spirit. There is here a serious danger to the integral development of a greater truth upon earth and a greater life. For the desires and free seekings of the individual, however egoistic, however false or perverted they may be in their immediate form, contain in their obscure shell the seed of a development necessary to the whole; his searchings and stumblings have behind them a force that has to be kept and transmuted into the image of the divine ideal. That force needs to be enlightened and trained but must not be suppressed or harnessed exclusively to society's heavy cart-wheels. Individualism is as necessary to the final perfection as the power behind the group-spirit; the stifling of the individual may well be the stifling of the god in man. And in the present balance of humanity there is seldom any real danger of exaggerated individualism breaking up the social integer. There is continually a danger that the exaggerated pressure of the social mass by its heavy unenlightened mechanical weight may suppress or unduly discourage the free development of the individual spirit. For man in the individual can be more easily enlightened, conscious, open to clear influences; man in the mass is still obscure, half-conscious, ruled by universal forces that escape its mastery and its knowledge.

Against this danger of suppression and immobilisation Nature in the individual reacts. It may react by an isolated resistance ranging from the instinctive and brutal revolt of the criminal to the complete negation of the solitary and ascetic. It may react by the assertion of an individualistic trend in the social idea, may impose it on the mass consciousness and establish a compromise between the individual and the social demand. But a compromise is not a solution; it only salves over the difficulty and in the end increases the complexity of the problem and multiplies its issues. A new principle has to be called in other and higher than the two conflicting instincts and powerful at once to override and to reconcile them. Above the natural individual law which sets up as our one standard of conduct the satisfaction of our individual needs, preferences and desires and the natural communal law which sets up as a superior standard the satisfaction of the needs, preferences and desires of the community as a whole, there had to arise the notion of an ideal moral law which is not the satisfaction of need and desire, but controls and even coerces or annuls them in the interests of an ideal order that is not animal, not vital and physical, but mental, a creation of the mind's seeking for light and knowledge and right rule and right movement and true order. The moment this notion becomes powerful in man, he begins to escape from the engrossing vital and material into the mental life; he climbs from the first to the second degree of the threefold ascent of Nature. His needs and desires themselves are touched with a more elevated light of purpose and the mental need, the aesthetic, intellectual and emotional desire begin to predominate over the demand of the physical and vital nature.

⁂

The natural law of conduct proceeds from a conflict to an equilibrium of forces, impulsions and desires; the higher ethical law proceeds by the development of the mental and moral nature towards a fixed internal standard or else a self-formed ideal of absolute qualities, — justice, righteousness, love, right reason, right power, beauty, light. It is therefore essentially an individual standard; it is not a creation of the mass mind. The thinker is the individual; it is he who calls out and throws into forms that which would otherwise remain subconscious in the amorphous human whole. The moral striver is also the individual; self-discipline, not under the yoke of an outer law, but in obedience to an internal light, is essentially an individual effort. But by positing his personal standard as the translation of an absolute moral ideal the thinker imposes it, not on himself alone, but on all the individuals whom his thought can reach and penetrate. And as the mass of individuals come more and more to accept it in idea if only in an imperfect practice or no practice, society also is compelled to obey the new orientation. It absorbs the ideative influence and tries, not with any striking success, to mould its institutions into new forms touched by these higher ideals. But always its instinct is to translate them into binding law, into pattern forms, into mechanic custom, into an external social compulsion upon its living units.

For, long after the individual has become partially free, a moral organism capable of conscious growth, aware of an inward life, eager for spiritual progress, society continues to be external in its methods, a material and economic organism, mechanical, more intent upon status and self-preservation than on growth and self-perfection. The greatest present triumph of the thinking and progressive individual over the instinctive and static society has been the power he has acquired by his thought-will to compel it to think also, to open itself to the idea of social justice and righteousness, communal sympathy and mutual compassion, to feel after the rule of reason rather than blind custom as the test of its institutions and to look on the mental and moral assent of its individuals as at least one essential element in the validity of its laws. Ideally at least, to consider light rather than force as its sanction, moral development and not vengeance or restraint as the object even of its penal action, is becoming just possible to the communal mind. The greatest future triumph of the thinker will come when he can persuade the individual integer and the collective whole to rest their life-relation and its union and stability upon a free and harmonious consent and self-adaptation, and shape and govern the external by the internal truth rather than to constrain the inner spirit by the tyranny of the external form and structure.

But even this success that he has gained is rather a thing in potentiality than in actual accomplishment. There is always a disharmony and a discord between the moral law in the individual and the law of his needs and desires, between the moral law proposed to society and the physical and vital needs, desires, customs, prejudices, interests and passions of the caste, the clan, the religious community, the society, the nation. The moralist erects in vain his absolute ethical standard and calls upon all to be faithful to it without regard to consequences. To him the needs and desires of the individual are invalid if they are in conflict with the moral law, and the social law has no claims upon him if it is opposed to his sense of right and denied by his conscience. This is his absolute solution for the individual that he shall cherish no desires and claims that are not consistent with love, truth and justice. He demands from the community or nation that it shall hold all things cheap, even its safety and its most pressing interests, in comparison with truth, justice, humanity and the highest good of the peoples.

No individual rises to these heights except in intense moments, no society yet created satisfies this ideal. And in the present state of morality and of human development none perhaps can or ought to satisfy it. Nature will not allow it, Nature knows that it should not be. The first reason is that our moral ideals are themselves for the most part ill-evolved, ignorant and arbitrary, mental constructions rather than transcriptions of the eternal truths of the spirit. Authoritative and dogmatic, they assert certain absolute standards in theory, but in practice every existing system of ethics proves either in application unworkable or is in fact a constant coming short of the absolute standard to which the ideal pretends. If our ethical system is a compromise or a makeshift, it gives at once a principle of justification to the further sterilising compromises which society and the individual hasten to make with it. And if it insists on absolute love, justice, right with an uncompromising insistence, it soars above the head of human possibility and is professed with lip homage but ignored in practice. Even it is found that it ignores other elements in humanity which equally insist on survival but refuse to come within the moral formula. For just as the individual law of desire contains within it invaluable elements of the infinite whole which have to be protected against the tyranny of the absorbing social idea, the innate impulses too both of individual and of collective man contain in them invaluable elements which escape the limits of any ethical formula yet discovered and are yet necessary to the fullness and harmony of an eventual divine perfection.

Moreover, absolute love, absolute justice, absolute right reason in their present application by a bewildered and imperfect humanity come easily to be conflicting principles. Justice often demands what love abhors. Right reason dispassionately considering the facts of nature and human relations in search of a satisfying norm or rule is unable to admit without modification either any reign of absolute justice or any reign of absolute love. And in fact man's absolute justice easily turns out to be in practice a sovereign injustice; for his mind, one-sided and rigid in its constructions, puts forward a one-sided partial and rigorous scheme or figure and claims for it totality and absoluteness and an application that ignores the subtler truth of things and the plasticity of life. All our standards turned into action either waver on a flux of compromises or err by this partiality and unelastic structure. Humanity sways from one orientation to another; the race moves upon a zigzag path led by conflicting claims and, on the whole, works out instinctively what Nature intends, but with much waste and suffering, rather than either what it desires or what it holds to be right or what the highest light from above demands from the embodied spirit.

* * *

The fact is that when we have reached the cult of absolute ethical qualities and erected the categorical imperative of an ideal law, we have not come to the end of our search or touched the truth that delivers. There is, no doubt, something here that helps us to rise beyond limitation by the physical and vital man in us, an insistence that overpasses the individual and collective needs and desires of a humanity still bound to the living mud of Matter in which it took its roots, an aspiration that helps to develop the mental and moral being in us: this new sublimating element has been therefore an acquisition of great importance; its workings have marked a considerable step forward in the difficult evolution of terrestrial Nature. And behind the inadequacy of these ethical conceptions something too is concealed that does attach to a supreme Truth; there is here the glimmer of a light and power that are part of a yet unreached divine Nature. But the mental idea of these things is not that light and the moral formulation of them is not that power. These are only representative constructions of the mind that cannot embody the divine spirit which they vainly endeavour to imprison in their categorical formulas. Beyond the mental and moral being in us is a greater divine being that is spiritual and supramental; for it is only through a large spiritual plane where the mind's formulas dissolve in a white flame of direct inner experience that we can reach beyond mind and pass from its constructions to the vastness and freedom of the supramental realities. There alone can we touch the harmony of the divine powers that are poorly mispresented to our mind or framed into a false figure by the conflicting or wavering elements of the moral law. There alone the unification of the transformed vital and physical and the illumined mental man becomes possible in that supramental Spirit which is at once the secret source and goal of our mind and life and body. There alone is there any possibility of an absolute justice, love and right — far other than that which we imagine — at one with each other in the light of a supreme divine knowledge. There alone can there be a reconciliation of the conflict between our members.

In other words there is, above society's external law and man's moral law and beyond them, though feebly and ignorantly aimed at by something within them, a larger truth of a vast unbound consciousness, a law divine towards which both these blind and gross formulations are progressive faltering steps that try to escape from the natural law of the animal to a more exalted light or universal rule. That divine standard, since the godhead in us is our spirit moving towards its own concealed perfection, must be a supreme spiritual law and truth of our nature. Again, as we are embodied beings in the world with a common existence and nature and yet individual souls capable of direct touch with the Transcendent, this supreme truth of ourselves must have a double character. It must be a law and truth that discovers the perfect movement, harmony, rhythm of a great spiritualised collective life and determines perfectly our relations with each being and all beings in Nature's varied oneness. It must be at the same time a law and truth that discovers to us at each moment the rhythm and exact steps of the direct expression of the Divine in the soul, mind, life, body of the individual creature.[1] And we find in experience that this supreme light and force of action in its highest expression is at once an imperative law and an absolute freedom. It is an imperative law because it governs by immutable Truth our every inner and outer movement. And yet at each moment and in each movement the absolute freedom of the Supreme handles the perfect plasticity of our conscious and liberated nature.

The ethical idealist tries to discover this supreme law in his own moral data, in the inferior powers and factors that belong to the mental and ethical formula. And to sustain and organise them he selects a fundamental principle of conduct essentially unsound and constructed by the intellect — utility, hedonism, reason, intuitive conscience or any other generalised standard. All such efforts are foredoomed to failure. Our inner nature is the progressive expression of the eternal Spirit and too complex a power to be tied down by a single dominant mental or moral principle. Only the supramental consciousness can reveal to its differing and conflicting forces their spiritual truth and harmonise their divergences.

---

[1] Therefore the Gita defines "dharma", an expression which means more than either religion or morality, as action controlled by our essential manner of self-being.

The later religions endeavour to fix the type of a supreme truth of conduct, erect a system and declare God's law through the mouth of Avatar or prophet. These systems, more powerful and dynamic than the dry ethical idea, are yet for the most part no more than idealistic glorifications of the moral principle sanctified by religious emotion and the label of a superhuman origin. Some, like the extreme Christian ethic, are rejected by Nature because they insist unworkably on an impracticable absolute rule. Others prove in the end to be evolutionary compromises and become obsolete in the march of Time. The true divine law, unlike these mental counterfeits, cannot be a system of rigid ethical determinations that press into their cast-iron moulds all our life-movements. The Law divine is truth of life and truth of the spirit and must take up with a free living plasticity and inspire with the direct touch of its eternal light each step of our action and all the complexity of our life issues. It must act not as a rule and formula but as an enveloping and penetrating conscious presence that determines all our thoughts, activities, feelings, impulsions of will by its infallible power and knowledge.

The older religions erected their rule of the wise, their dicta of Manu or Confucius, a complex Shastra in which they attempted to combine the social rule and moral law with the declaration of certain eternal principles of our highest nature in some kind of uniting amalgam. All three were treated on the same ground as equally the expression of everlasting verities, *sanātana dharma*. But two of these elements are evolutionary and valid for a time, mental constructions, human readings of the will of the Eternal; the third, attached and subdued to certain social and moral formulas, had to share the fortunes of its forms. Either the Shastra grows obsolete and has to be progressively changed or finally cast away or else it stands as a rigid barrier to the self-development of the individual and the race. The Shastra erects a collective and external standard; it ignores the inner nature of the individual, the indeterminable elements of a secret spiritual force within him. But the nature of the individual will not be ignored; its demand is inexorable. The unrestrained indulgence of his outer impulses leads to anarchy and dissolution, but the suppression and coercion of his soul's freedom by a fixed and mechanical rule spells stagnation or an inner death. Not this coercion or determination from outside, but the free discovery of his highest spirit and the truth of an eternal movement is the supreme thing that he has to discover.

The higher ethical law is discovered by the individual in his mind and will and psychic sense and then extended to the race. The supreme law also must be discovered by the individual in his spirit. Then only, through a spiritual influence and not by the mental idea, can it be extended to others. A moral law can be imposed as a rule or an ideal on numbers of men who have not attained that level of consciousness or that fineness of mind and will and psychic sense in which it can become a reality to them and a living force. As an ideal it can be revered without any need of practice. As a rule it can be observed in its outsides even if the inner sense is missed altogether. The supramental and spiritual life cannot be mechanised in this way, it cannot be turned into a mental ideal or an external rule. It has its own great lines, but these must be made real, must be the workings of an active Power felt in the individual's consciousness and the transcriptions of an eternal Truth powerful to transform mind, life and body. And because it is thus real, effective, imperative, the generalisation of the supramental consciousness and the spiritual life is the sole force that can lead to individual and collective perfection in earth's highest creatures. Only by our coming into constant touch with the divine Consciousness and its absolute Truth can some form of the conscious Divine, the dynamic Absolute, take up our earth-existence and transform its strife, stumbling, sufferings and falsities into an image of the supreme Light, Power and Ananda.

The culmination of the soul's constant touch with the Supreme is that self-giving which we call surrender to the divine Will and immergence of the separated ego in the One who is all. A vast universality of soul and an intense unity with all is the base and fixed condition of the supramental consciousness and spiritual life. In that universality and unity alone can we find the supreme law of the divine manifestation in the life of the embodied spirit; in that alone can we discover the supreme motion and right play of our individual nature. In that alone can all these lower discords resolve themselves into a victorious harmony of the true relations between manifested beings who are portions of the one Godhead and children of one universal Mother.

⁂

All conduct and action are part of the movement of a Power, a Force infinite and divine in its origin and secret sense and will even though the forms of it we see seem inconscient or ignorant, material, vital, mental, finite, which is working to bring out progressively something of the Divine and Infinite in the obscurity of the individual and collective nature. This power is leading towards the Light, but still through the Ignorance. It leads man first through his needs and desires; it guides him next through enlarged needs and desires modified and enlightened by a mental and moral ideal. It is preparing to lead him to a spiritual realisation that overrides these things and yet fulfils and reconciles them in all that is divinely true in their spirit and purpose. It transforms the needs and desires into a divine Will and Ananda. It transforms the mental and moral aspiration into the powers of Truth and Perfection that are beyond them. It substitutes for the divided straining of the individual nature, for the passion and strife of the separate ego, the calm, profound, harmonious and happy law of the universalised person within us, the central being, the spirit that is a portion of the supreme Spirit. This true Person in us, because it is universal, does not seek its separate gratification but only asks in its outward expression in Nature its growth to its real stature, the expression of its inner divine self, that transcendent spiritual power and presence within it which is one with all and in sympathy with each thing and creature and with all the collective personalities and powers of the divine existence, and yet it transcends them and is not bound by the egoism of any creature or collectivity or limited by the ignorant controls of their lower nature. This is the high realisation in front of all our seeking and striving, and it gives the sure promise of a perfect reconciliation and transmutation of all the elements of our nature. A pure, total and flawless action is possible only when that is effected and we have reached the height of this secret Godhead within us.

The perfect supramental action will not follow any single principle or limited rule. It is not likely to satisfy the standard either of the individual egoist or of any organised group-mind. It will conform to the demand neither of the positive practical man of the world nor of the formal moralist nor of the patriot nor of the sentimental philanthropist nor of the idealising philosopher. It will proceed by a spontaneous outflowing from the summits in the totality of an illumined and uplifted being, will and knowledge and not by the selected, calculated and standardised action which is all that the intellectual reason or ethical will can achieve. Its sole aim will be the expression of the divine in us and the keeping together of the world and its progress towards the Manifestation that is to be. This even will not be so much an aim and purpose as a spontaneous law of the being and an intuitive determination of the action by the Light of the divine Truth and its automatic influence. It will proceed like the action of Nature from a total will and knowledge behind her, but a will and knowledge enlightened in a conscious supreme Nature and no longer obscure in this ignorant Prakriti. It will be an action not bound by the dualities but full and large in the spirit's impartial joy of existence. The happy and inspired movement of a divine Power and Wisdom guiding and impelling us will replace the perplexities and stumblings of the suffering and ignorant ego.

If by some miracle of divine intervention all mankind at once could be raised to this level, we should have something on earth like the Golden Age of the traditions, Satya Yuga, the Age of Truth or true existence. For the sign of the Satya Yuga is that the Law is spontaneous and conscious in each creature and does its own works in a perfect harmony and freedom. Unity and universality, not separative division, would be the foundation of the consciousness of the race; love would be absolute; equality would be consistent with hierarchy and perfect in difference; absolute justice would be secured by the spontaneous action of the being in harmony with the truth of things and the truth of himself and others and therefore sure of true and right result; right reason, no longer mental but supramental, would be satisfied not by the observation of artificial standards but by the free automatic perception of right relations and their inevitable execution in the act. The quarrel between the individual and society or disastrous struggle between one community and another could not exist: the cosmic consciousness imbedded in embodied beings would assure a harmonious diversity in oneness.

In the actual state of humanity, it is the individual who must climb to this height as a pioneer and precursor. His isolation will necessarily give a determination and a form to his outward activities that must be quite other than those of a consciously divine collective action. The inner state, the root of his acts, will be the same; but the acts themselves may well be very different from what they would be on an earth liberated from ignorance. Nevertheless his consciousness and the divine mechanism of his conduct, if such a word can be used of so free a thing, would be such as has been described, free from that subjection to vital impurity and desire and wrong impulse which we call sin, unbound by that rule of prescribed moral formulas which we call virtue, spontaneously sure and pure and perfect in a greater consciousness than the mind's, governed in all its steps by the light and truth of the Spirit. But if a collectivity or group could be formed of those who had reached the supramental perfection, there indeed some divine creation could take shape; a new earth could descend that would be a new heaven, a world of supramental light could be created here amidst the receding darkness of this terrestrial ignorance.

Chapter VIII

The Supreme Will

IN THE light of this progressive manifestation of the Spirit, first apparently bound in the Ignorance, then free in the power and wisdom of the Infinite, we can better understand the great and crowning injunction of the Gita to the Karmayogin, "Abandoning all dharmas, all principles and laws and rules of conduct, take refuge in me alone." All standards and rules are temporary constructions founded upon the needs of the ego in its transition from Matter to Spirit. These makeshifts have a relative imperativeness so long as we rest satisfied in the stages of transition, content with the physical and vital life, attached to the mental movement, or even fixed in the ranges of the mental plane that are touched by the spiritual lustres. But beyond is the unwalled wideness of a supramental infinite consciousness and there all temporary structures cease. It is not possible to enter utterly into the spiritual truth of the Eternal and Infinite if we have not the faith and courage to trust ourselves into the hands of the Lord of all things and the Friend of all creatures and leave utterly behind us our mental limits and measures. At one moment we must plunge without hesitation, reserve, fear or scruple into the ocean of the free, the infinite, the Absolute. After the Law, Liberty; after the personal, after the general, after the universal standards there is something greater, the impersonal plasticity, the divine freedom, the transcendent force and the supernal impulse. After the strait path of the ascent the wide plateaus on the summit.

There are three stages of the ascent, — at the bottom the bodily life enslaved to the pressure of necessity and desire, in the middle the mental, higher emotional and psychic rule that feels after greater interests, aspirations, experiences, at the summits first a deeper psychic and spiritual state and then a supramental eternal consciousness in which all our aspirations and seekings discover their own intimate significance. In the bodily life first desire and need and then the practical good of the individual and the society are the governing consideration, the dominant force. In the mental life ideas and ideals rule, ideas that are half-lights wearing the garb of Truth, ideals formed by the mind as a result of a growing but still imperfect intuition and experience. Whenever the mental life prevails and the bodily diminishes its brute insistence, man the mental being feels pushed by the urge of mental Nature to mould in the sense of the idea or the ideal the life of the individual, and in the end even the vaguer more complex life of the society is forced to undergo this subtle process. In the spiritual life, or when a higher power than Mind has manifested and taken possession of the nature, these limited motive-forces recede, dwindle, tend to disappear. The spiritual or supramental Self, the Divine Being, the supreme and immanent Reality, must be alone the Lord within us and shape freely our final development according to the highest, widest, most integral expression possible of the law of our nature. In the end that nature acts in the perfect Truth and its spontaneous freedom; for it obeys only the luminous power of the Eternal. The individual has nothing further to gain, no desire to fulfil; he has become a portion of the impersonality or the universal personality of the Eternal. No other object than the manifestation and play of the Divine Spirit in life and the maintenance and conduct of the world in its march towards the divine goal can move him to action. Mental ideas, opinions, constructions are his no more; for his mind has fallen into silence, it is only a channel for the Light and Truth of the divine knowledge. Ideals are too narrow for the vastness of his spirit; it is the ocean of the Infinite that flows through him and moves him for ever.

⁂

Whoever sincerely enters the path of works, must leave behind him the stage in which need and desire are the first law of our acts. For whatever desires still trouble his being, he must, if he accepts the high aim of Yoga, put them away from him into the hands of the Lord within us. The supreme Power will deal with them for the good of the sadhaka and for the good of all. In effect, we find that once this surrender is done, — always provided the rejection is sincere, — egoistic indulgence of desire may for some time recur under the continued impulse of past nature but only in order to exhaust its acquired momentum and to teach the embodied being in his most unteachable part, his nervous, vital, emotional nature, by the reactions of desire, by its grief and unrest bitterly contrasted with calm periods of the higher peace or marvellous movements of divine Ananda, that egoistic desire is not a law for the soul that seeks liberation or aspires to its own original god-nature. Afterwards the element of desire in those impulsions will be thrown away or persistently eliminated by a constant denying and transforming pressure. Only the pure force of action in them (*pravṛtti*) justified by an equal delight in all work and result that is inspired or imposed from above will be preserved in the happy harmony of a final perfection. To act, to enjoy is the normal law and right of the nervous being; but to choose by personal desire its action and enjoyment is only its ignorant will, not its right. Alone the supreme and universal Will must choose; action must change into a dynamic movement of that Will; enjoyment must be replaced by the play of a pure spiritual Ananda. All personal will is either a temporary delegation from on high or a usurpation by the ignorant Asura.

The social law, that second term of our progress, is a means to which the ego is subjected in order that it may learn discipline by subordination to a wider collective ego. This law may be quite empty of any moral content and may express only the needs or the practical good of the society as each society conceives it. Or it may express those needs and that good, but modified and coloured and supplemented by a higher moral or ideal law. It is binding on the developing but not yet perfectly developed individual in the shape of social duty, family obligation, communal or national demand, so long as it is not in conflict with his growing sense of the higher Right. But the sadhaka of the Karmayoga will abandon this also to the Lord of works. After he has made this surrender, his social impulses and judgments will, like his desires, only be used for their exhaustion or, it may be, so far as they are still necessary for a time to enable him to identify his lower mental nature with mankind in general or with any grouping of mankind in its works and hopes and aspirations. But after that brief time is over, they will be withdrawn and a divine government will alone abide. He will be identified with the Divine and with others only through the divine consciousness and not through the mental nature.

For, even after he is free, the sadhaka will be in the world and to be in the world is to remain in works. But to remain in works without desire is to act for the good of the world in general or for the kind or the race or for some new creation to be evolved on the earth or some work imposed by the Divine Will within him. And this must be done either in the framework provided by the environment or the grouping in which he is born or placed or else in one which is chosen or created for him by a divine direction. Therefore in our perfection there must be nothing left in the mental being which conflicts with or prevents our sympathy and free self-identification with the kind, the group or whatever collective expression of the Divine he is meant to lead, help or serve. But in the end it must become a free self-identification through identity with the Divine and not a mental bond or moral tie of union or a vital association dominated by any kind of personal, social, national, communal or credal egoism. If any social law is obeyed, it will not be from physical necessity or from the sense of personal or general interest or for expediency or because of the pressure of the environment or from any sense of duty, but solely for the sake of the Lord of works and because it is felt or known to be the Divine Will that the social law or rule or relation as it stands can still be kept as a figure of the inner life and the minds of men must not be disturbed by its infringement. If, on the other hand, the social law, rule or relation is disregarded, that too will not be for the indulgence of desire, personal will or personal opinion, but because a greater rule is felt that expresses the law of the Spirit or because it is known that there must be in the march of the divine All-Will a movement towards the changing, exceeding or abolition of existing laws and forms for the sake of a freer larger life necessary to the world's progress.

There is still left the moral law or the ideal and these, even to many who think themselves free, appear for ever sacred and intangible. But the sadhaka, his gaze turned always to the heights, will abandon them to Him whom all ideals seek imperfectly and fragmentarily to express; all moral qualities are only a poor and rigid travesty of his spontaneous and illimitable perfection. The bondage to sin and evil passes away with the passing of nervous desire; for it belongs to the quality of vital passion, impulsion or drive of propensity in us (*rajoguṇa*) and is extinguished with the transformation of that mode of Nature. But neither must the aspirant remain subject to the gilded or golden chain of a conventional or a habitual or a mentally ordered or even a high or clear sattwic virtue. That will be replaced by something profounder and more essential than the minor inadequate thing that men call virtue. The original sense of the word was manhood and this is a much larger and deeper thing than the moral mind and its structures. The culmination of Karmayoga is a yet higher and deeper state that may perhaps be called "soulhood", — for the soul is greater than the man; a free soulhood spontaneously welling out in works of a supreme Truth and Love will replace human virtue. But this supreme Truth cannot be forced to inhabit the petty edifices of the practical reason or even confined in the more dignified constructions of the larger ideative reason that imposes its representations as if they were pure truth on the limited human intelligence. This supreme Love will not necessarily be consistent, much less will it be synonymous, with the partial and feeble, ignorant and emotion-ridden movements of human attraction, sympathy and pity. The petty law cannot bind the vaster movement; the mind's partial attainment cannot dictate its terms to the soul's supreme fulfilment.

At first, the higher Love and Truth will fulfil its movement in the sadhaka according to the essential law or way of his own nature. For that is the special aspect of the divine Nature, the particular power of the supreme Shakti, out of which his soul has emerged into the Play, not limited indeed by the forms of this law or way, for the soul is infinite. But still its stuff of nature bears that stamp, evolves fluently along those lines or turns around the spiral curves of that dominating influence. He will manifest the divine Truth-movement according to the temperament of the sage or the lion-like fighter or the lover and enjoyer or the worker and servant or in any combination of essential attributes (gunas) that may constitute the form given to his being by its own inner urge. It is this self-nature playing freely in his acts which men will see in him and not a conduct cut, chalked out, artificially regulated, by any lesser rule or by any law from outside.

But there is a yet higher attainment, there is an infinity (*ānantya*) in which even this last limitation is exceeded, because the nature is utterly fulfilled and its boundaries vanish. There the soul lives without any boundaries; for it uses all forms and moulds according to the divine Will in it, but it is not restrained, it is not tied down, it is not imprisoned in any power or form that it uses. This is the summit of the path of works and this the utter liberty of the soul in its actions. In reality, it has there no actions; for all its activities are a rhythm of the Supreme and sovereignly proceed from That alone like a spontaneous music out of the Infinite.

⁂

The total surrender, then, of all our actions to a supreme and universal Will, an unconditioned and standardless surrender of all works to the government of something eternal within us which will replace the ordinary working of the ego-nature, is the way and end of Karmayoga. But what is this divine supreme Will and how can it be recognised by our deluded instruments and our blind prisoned intelligence?

Ordinarily, we conceive of ourselves as a separate "I" in the universe that governs a separate body and mental and moral nature, chooses in full liberty its own self-determined actions and is independent and therefore sole master of its works and responsible. It is not easy for the ordinary mind, the mind that has not thought nor looked deeply into its own constitution and constituents, it is difficult even for minds that have thought but have no spiritual vision and experience, to imagine how there can be anything else in us truer, deeper and more powerful than this apparent "I" and its empire. But the very first step towards self-knowledge as towards the true knowledge of phenomena is to get behind the apparent truth of things and find the real but masked, essential and dynamic truth which their appearances cover.

This ego or "I" is not a lasting truth, much less our essential part; it is only a formation of Nature, a mental form of thought-centralisation in the perceiving and discriminating mind, a vital form of the centralisation of feeling and sensation in our parts of life, a form of physical conscious reception centralising substance and function of substance in our bodies. All that we internally are is not ego, but consciousness, soul or spirit. All that we externally and superficially are and do is not ego but Nature. An executive cosmic force shapes us and dictates through our temperament and environment and mentality so shaped, through our individualised formulation of the cosmic energies, our actions and their results. Truly, we do not think, will or act but thought occurs in us, will occurs in us, impulse and act occur in us; our ego-sense gathers around itself, refers to itself all this flow of natural activities. It is cosmic Force, it is Nature that forms the thought, imposes the will, imparts the impulse. Our body, mind and ego are a wave of that sea of force in action and do not govern it, but by it are governed and directed. The sadhaka in his progress towards truth and self-knowledge must come to a point where the soul opens its eyes of vision and recognises this truth of ego and this truth of works. He gives up the idea of a mental, vital, physical "I" that acts or governs action; he recognises that Prakriti, Force of cosmic nature following her fixed modes, is the one and only worker in him and in all things and creatures.

But what has fixed the modes of Nature? Or who has originated and governs the movements of Force? There is a Consciousness — or a Conscient — behind that is the lord, witness, knower, enjoyer, upholder and source of sanction for her works;

this consciousness is Soul or Purusha. Prakriti shapes the action in us; Purusha in her or behind her witnesses, assents, bears and upholds it. Prakriti forms the thought in our minds; Purusha in her or behind her knows the thought and the truth in it. Prakriti determines the result of the action; Purusha in her or behind her enjoys or suffers the consequence. Prakriti forms mind and body, labours over them, develops them; Purusha upholds the formation and evolution and sanctions each step of her works. Prakriti applies the Will-force which works in things and men; Purusha sets that Will-force to work by his vision of that which should be done. This Purusha is not the surface ego, but a silent Self, a source of Power, an originator and receiver of Knowledge behind the ego. Our mental "I" is only a false reflection of this Self, this Power, this Knowledge. This Purusha or supporting Consciousness is therefore the cause, recipient and support of all Nature's works, but he is not himself the doer. Prakriti, Nature-Force, in front and Shakti, Conscious-Force, Soul-Force behind her, — for these two are the inner and outer faces of the universal Mother, — account for all that is done in the universe. The universal Mother, Prakriti-Shakti, is the one and only worker.

Purusha-Prakriti, Consciousness-Force, Soul supporting Nature, — for the two even in their separation are one and inseparable, — are at once a universal and a transcendent Power. But there is something in the individual too which is not the mental ego, something that is one in essence with this greater reality: it is a pure reflection or portion of the one Purusha; it is the Soul Person or the embodied being, the individual self, Jivatman; it is the Self that seems to limit its power and knowledge so as to support an individual play of transcendent and universal Nature. In deepest reality the infinitely One is also infinitely multiple; we are not only a reflection or portion of That but we are That; our spiritual individuality — unlike our ego — does not preclude our universality and transcendence. But at present the soul or self in us intent on individualisation in Nature allows itself to be confused with the idea of the ego; it has to get rid of this ignorance, it has to know itself as a reflection or portion or being of the supreme and universal Self and solely a centre of its consciousness in the world-action. But this Jiva Purusha too is not the doer of works any more than the ego or the supporting consciousness of the Witness and Knower. Again and always it is the transcendent and universal Shakti who is the sole doer. But behind her is the one Supreme who manifests through her as the dual power, Purusha-Prakriti, Ishwara-Shakti.[1] The Supreme becomes dynamic as the Shakti and is by her the sole originator and Master of works in the universe.

* * *

If this is the truth of works, the first thing the sadhaka has to do is to recoil from the egoistic forms of activity and get rid of the sense of an "I" that acts. He has to see and feel that everything happens in him by the plastic conscious or subconscious or sometimes superconscious automatism of his mental and bodily instruments moved by the forces of spiritual, mental, vital and physical Nature. There is a personality on his surface that chooses and wills, submits and struggles, tries to make good in Nature or prevail over Nature, but this personality is itself a construction of Nature and so dominated, driven, determined by her that it cannot be free. It is a formation or expression of the Self in her, — it is a self of Nature rather than a self of Self, his natural and processive, not his spiritual and permanent being, a temporary constructed personality, not the true immortal Person. It is that Person that he must become. He must succeed in being inwardly quiescent, detach himself as the observer from the outer active personality and learn the play of the cosmic forces in him by standing back from all blinding absorption in its turns and movements. Thus calm, detached, a student of himself and a witness of his nature, he realises that he is the individual soul who observes the works of Nature, accepts tranquilly her results and sanctions or withholds his sanction from the impulse to her acts. At present this soul or Purusha is little more than an acquiescent spectator, influencing perhaps the action and development of the being by the pressure of its veiled consciousness, but for the most part delegating its powers or a fragment of them to the outer personality, — in fact to Nature, for this outer self is not lord but subject to her, *anīśa*; but, once unveiled, it can make its sanction or refusal effective, become the master of the action, dictate sovereignly a change of Nature. Even if for a long time, as the result of fixed association and past storage of energy, the habitual movement takes place independent of the Purusha's assent and even if the sanctioned movement is persistently refused by Nature for want of past habit, still he will discover that in the end his assent or refusal prevails, — slowly with much resistance or quickly with a rapid accommodation of her means and tendencies she modifies herself and her workings in the direction indicated by his inner sight or volition. Thus he learns in place of mental control or egoistic will an inner spiritual control which makes him master of the Nature-forces that work in him and not their unconscious instrument or mechanic slave. Above and around him is the Shakti, the universal Mother and from her he can get all his inmost soul needs and wills if only he has a true knowledge of her ways and a true surrender to the divine Will in her. Finally, he becomes aware of that highest dynamic Self within him and within Nature which is the source of all his seeing and knowing, the source of the sanction, the source of the acceptance, the source of the rejection. This is the Lord, the Supreme, the One-in-all, Ishwara-Shakti, of whom his soul is a portion, a being of that Being and a power of that Power. The rest of our progress depends on our knowledge of the ways in which the Lord of works manifests his Will in the world and in us and executes them through the transcendent and universal Shakti.

---

[1] Ishwara-Shakti is not quite the same as Purusha-Prakriti; for Purusha and Prakriti are separate powers, but Ishwara and Shakti contain each other. Ishwara is Purusha who contains Prakriti and rules by the power of the Shakti within him. Shakti is Prakriti ensouled by Purusha and acts by the will of the Ishwara which is her own will and whose presence in her movement she carries always with her. The Purusha-Prakriti realisation is of the first utility to the seeker on the Way of Works; for it is the separation of the conscient being and the Energy and the subjection of the being to the mechanism of the Energy that are the efficient cause of our ignorance and imperfection; by this realisation the being can liberate himself from the mechanical action of the nature and become free and arrive at a first spiritual control over the nature. Ishwara-Shakti stands behind the relation of Purusha-Prakriti and its ignorant action and turns it to an evolutionary purpose. The Ishwara-Shakti realisation can bring participation in a higher dynamism and a divine working and a total unity and harmony of the being in a spiritual nature.

The Lord sees in his omniscience the thing that has to be done. This seeing is his Will, it is a form of creative Power, and that which he sees the all-conscious Mother, one with him, takes into her dynamic self and embodies, and executive Nature-Force carries it out as the mechanism of their omnipotent omniscience. But this vision of what is to be and therefore of what is to be done arises out of the very being, pours directly out of the consciousness and delight of existence of the Lord, spontaneously, like light from the Sun. It is not our mortal attempt to see, our difficult arrival at truth of action and motive or just demand of Nature. When the individual soul is entirely at one in its being and knowledge with the Lord and directly in touch with the original Shakti, the transcendent Mother, the supreme Will can then arise in us too in the high divine manner as a thing that must be and is achieved by the spontaneous action of Nature. There is then no desire, no responsibility, no reaction; all takes place in the peace, calm, light, power of the supporting and enveloping and inhabiting Divine.

But even before that highest approach to identity is achieved, something of the supreme Will can manifest in us as an imperative impulsion, a God-driven action; we then act by a spontaneous self-determining Force but a fuller knowledge of meaning and aim arises only afterwards. Or the impulse to action may come as an inspiration or intuition, but rather in the heart and body than in the mind; here an effective sight enters in but the complete and exact knowledge is still deferred and comes, if at all, later. But the divine Will may descend too as a luminous single command or a total perception or a continuous current of perception of what is to be done into the will or into the thought or as a direction from above spontaneously fulfilled by the lower members. When the Yoga is imperfect, only some actions can be done in this way, or else a general action may so proceed but only during periods of exaltation and illumination. When the

Yoga is perfect, all action becomes of this character. We may indeed distinguish three stages of a growing progress by which, first, the personal will is occasionally or frequently enlightened or moved by a supreme Will or conscious Force beyond it, then constantly replaced and, last, identified and merged in that divine Power-action. The first is the stage when we are still governed by the intellect, heart and senses; these have to seek or wait for the divine inspiration and guidance and do not always find or receive it. The second is the stage when human intelligence is more and more replaced by a high illumined or intuitive spiritualised mind, the external human heart by the inner psychic heart, the senses by a purified and selfless vital force. The third is the stage when we rise even above spiritualised mind to the supramental levels.

In all three stages the fundamental character of the liberated action is the same, a spontaneous working of Prakriti no longer through or for the ego but at the will and for the enjoyment of the supreme Purusha. At a higher level this becomes the Truth of the absolute and universal Supreme expressed through the individual soul and worked out consciously through the nature, — no longer through a half-perception and a diminished or distorted effectuation by the stumbling, ignorant and all-deforming energy of lower nature in us but by the all-wise transcendent and universal Mother.

The Lord has veiled himself and his absolute wisdom and eternal consciousness in ignorant Nature-Force and suffers her to drive the individual being, with its complicity, as the ego; this lower action of Nature continues to prevail, often even in spite of man's half-lit imperfect efforts at a nobler motive and a purer self-knowledge. Our human effort at perfection fails, or progresses very incompletely, owing to the force of Nature's past actions in us, her past formations, her long-rooted associations; it turns towards a true and high-climbing success only when a greater Knowledge and Power than our own breaks through the lid of our ignorance and guides or takes up our personal will. For our human will is a misled and wandering ray that has parted from the supreme Puissance. The period of slow emergence out of this lower working into a higher light and purer force is the valley of the shadow of death for the striver after perfection; it is a dreadful passage full of trials, sufferings, sorrows, obscurations, stumblings, errors, pitfalls. To abridge and alleviate this ordeal or to penetrate it with the divine delight faith is necessary, an increasing surrender of the mind to the knowledge that imposes itself from within and, above all, a true aspiration and a right and unfaltering and sincere practice. "Practise unfalteringly," says the Gita, "with a heart free from despondency," the Yoga; for even though in the earlier stage of the path we drink deep of the bitter poison of internal discord and suffering, the last taste of this cup is the sweetness of the nectar of immortality and the honey-wine of an eternal Ananda.

Chapter IX

Equality and the Annihilation of Ego

AN ENTIRE self-consecration, a complete equality, an unsparing effacement of the ego, a transforming deliverance of the nature from its ignorant modes of action are the steps by which the surrender of all the being and nature to the Divine Will can be prepared and achieved, — a self-giving true, total and without reserve. The first necessity is an entire spirit of self-consecration in our works; it must become first the constant will, then the ingrained need in all the being, finally its automatic but living and conscious habit, the self-existent turn to do all action as a sacrifice to the Supreme and to the veiled Power present in us and in all beings and in all the workings of the universe. Life is the altar of this sacrifice, works are our offering; a transcendent and universal Power and Presence as yet rather felt or glimpsed than known or seen by us is the Deity to whom they are offered. This sacrifice, this self-consecration has two sides to it; there is the work itself and there is the spirit in which it is done, the spirit of worship to the Master of Works in all that we see, think and experience.

The work itself is at first determined by the best light we can command in our ignorance. It is that which we conceive as the thing that should be done. And whether it be shaped by our sense of duty, by our feeling for our fellow-creatures, by our idea of what is for the good of others or the good of the world or by the direction of one whom we accept as a human Master, wiser than ourselves and for us the representative of that Lord of all works in whom we believe but whom we do not yet know, the principle is the same. The essential of the sacrifice of works must be there and the essential is the surrender of all desire for the fruit of our works, the renunciation of all attachment to the result for which yet we labour. For so long as we work with attachment to the result, the sacrifice is offered not to the Divine, but to our ego.

We may think otherwise, but we are deceiving ourselves; we are making our idea of the Divine, our sense of duty, our feeling for our fellow-creatures, our idea of what is good for the world or others, even our obedience to the Master a mask for our egoistic satisfactions and preferences and a specious shield against the demand made on us to root all desire out of our nature.

At this stage of the Yoga and even throughout the Yoga this form of desire, this figure of the ego is the enemy against whom we have to be always on our guard with an unsleeping vigilance. We need not be discouraged when we find him lurking within us and assuming all sorts of disguises, but we should be vigilant to detect him in all his masks and inexorable in expelling his influence. The illumining Word of this movement is the decisive line of the Gita, "To action thou hast a right but never under any circumstances to its fruit." The fruit belongs solely to the Lord of all works; our only business with it is to prepare success by a true and careful action and to offer it, if it comes, to the divine Master. Afterwards even as we have renounced attachment to the fruit, we must renounce attachment to the work also; at any moment we must be prepared to change one work, one course or one field of action for another or abandon all works if that is the clear command of the Master. Otherwise we do the act not for his sake but for our satisfaction and pleasure in the work, from the kinetic nature's need of action or for the fulfilment of our propensities; but these are all stations and refuges of the ego. However necessary for our ordinary motion of life, they have to be abandoned in the growth of the spiritual consciousness and replaced by divine counterparts: an Ananda, an impersonal and God-directed delight will cast out or supplant the unillumined vital satisfaction and pleasure, a joyful driving of the Divine Energy the kinetic need; the fulfilment of the propensities will no longer be an object or a necessity, there will be instead the fulfilment of the Divine Will through the natural dynamic truth in action of a free soul and a luminous nature. In the end, as the attachment to the fruit of the work and to the work itself has been excised from the heart, so also the last clinging attachment to the idea and sense of ourselves as the doer has to be relinquished; the Divine Shakti must be known and felt above and within us as the true and sole worker.

* * *

The renunciation of attachment to the work and its fruit is the beginning of a wide movement towards an absolute equality in the mind and soul which must become all-enveloping if we are to be perfect in the spirit. For the worship of the Master of works demands a clear recognition and glad acknowledgment of him in ourselves, in all things and in all happenings. Equality is the sign of this adoration; it is the soul's ground on which true sacrifice and worship can be done. The Lord is there equally in all beings, we have to make no essential distinctions between ourselves and others, the wise and the ignorant, friend and enemy, man and animal, the saint and the sinner. We must hate none, despise none, be repelled by none; for in all we have to see the One disguised or manifested at his pleasure. He is a little revealed in one or more revealed in another or concealed and wholly distorted in others according to his will and his knowledge of what is best for that which he intends to become in form in them and to do in works in their nature. All is ourself, one self that has taken many shapes. Hatred and disliking and scorn and repulsion, clinging and attachment and preference are natural, necessary, inevitable at a certain stage: they attend upon or they help to make and maintain Nature's choice in us. But to the Karmayogin they are a survival, a stumbling-block, a process of the Ignorance and, as he progresses, they fall away from his nature. The child-soul needs them for its growth; but they drop from an adult in the divine culture. In the God-nature to which we have to rise there can be an adamantine, even a destructive severity but not hatred, a divine irony but not scorn, a calm, clear-seeing and forceful rejection but not repulsion and dislike. Even what we have to destroy, we must not abhor or fail to recognise as a disguised and temporary movement of the Eternal.

And since all things are the one Self in its manifestation, we shall have equality of soul towards the ugly and the beautiful, the maimed and the perfect, the noble and the vulgar, the pleasant and the unpleasant, the good and the evil. Here also there will be no hatred, scorn and repulsion, but instead the equal eye that sees all things in their real character and their appointed place. For we shall know that all things express or disguise, develop or distort, as best they can or with whatever defect they must, under the circumstances intended for them, in the way possible to the immediate status or function or evolution of their nature, some truth or fact, some energy or potential of the Divine necessary by its presence in the progressive manifestation both to the whole of the present sum of things and for the perfection of the ultimate result. That truth is what we must seek and discover behind the transitory expression; undeterred by appearances, by the deficiencies or the disfigurements of the expression, we can then worship the Divine for ever unsullied, pure, beautiful and perfect behind his masks. All indeed has to be changed, not ugliness accepted but divine beauty, not imperfection taken as our resting-place but perfection striven after, the supreme good made the universal aim and not evil. But what we do has to be done with a spiritual understanding and knowledge, and it is a divine good, beauty, perfection, pleasure that has to be followed after, not the human standards of these things. If we have not equality, it is a sign that we are still pursued by the Ignorance, we shall truly understand nothing and it is more than likely that we shall destroy the old imperfection only to create another: for we are substituting the appreciations of our human mind and desire-soul for the divine values.

Equality does not mean a fresh ignorance or blindness; it does not call for and need not initiate a greyness of vision and a blotting out of all hues. Difference is there, variation of expression is there and this variation we shall appreciate, — far more justly than we could when the eye was clouded by a partial and erring love and hate, admiration and scorn, sympathy and antipathy, attraction and repulsion. But behind the variation we shall always see the Complete and Immutable who dwells within it and we shall feel, know or at least, if it is hidden from us, trust in the wise purpose and divine necessity of the particular manifestation, whether it appear to our human standards harmonious and perfect or crude and unfinished or even false and evil.

And so too we shall have the same equality of mind and soul towards all happenings, painful or pleasurable, defeat and success, honour and disgrace, good repute and ill-repute, good fortune and evil fortune. For in all happenings we shall see the will of the Master of all works and results and a step in the evolving expression of the Divine. He manifests himself, to those who have the inner eye that sees, in forces and their play and results as well as in things and in creatures. All things move towards a divine event; each experience, suffering and want no less than joy and satisfaction, is a necessary link in the carrying out of a universal movement which it is our business to understand and second. To revolt, to condemn, to cry out is the impulse of our unchastened and ignorant instincts. Revolt like everything else has its uses in the play and is even necessary, helpful, decreed for the divine development in its own time and stage; but the movement of an ignorant rebellion belongs to the stage of the soul's childhood or to its raw adolescence. The ripened soul does not condemn but seeks to understand and master, does not cry out but accepts or toils to improve and perfect, does not revolt inwardly but labours to obey and fulfil and transfigure. Therefore we shall receive all things with an equal soul from the hands of the Master. Failure we shall admit as a passage as calmly as success until the hour of the divine victory arrives. Our souls and minds and bodies will remain unshaken by acutest sorrow and suffering and pain if in the divine dispensation they come to us, unoverpowered by intensest joy and pleasure. Thus supremely balanced we shall continue steadily on our way meeting all things with an equal calm until we are ready for a more exalted status and can enter into the supreme and universal Ananda.

⁂

This equality cannot come except by a protracted ordeal and patient self-discipline; so long as desire is strong, equality cannot come at all except in periods of quiescence and the fatigue of desire, and it is then more likely to be an inert indifference or desire's recoil from itself than the true calm and the positive spiritual oneness. Moreover, this discipline or this growth into equality of spirit has its necessary epochs and stages. Ordinarily we have to begin with a period of endurance; for we must learn to confront, to suffer and to assimilate all contacts. Each fibre in us must be taught not to wince away from that which pains and repels and not to run eagerly towards that which pleases and attracts, but rather to accept, to face, to bear and to conquer. All touches we must be strong to bear, not only those that are proper and personal to us but those born of our sympathy or our conflict with the worlds around, above or below us and with their peoples. We shall endure tranquilly the action and impact on us of men and things and forces, the pressure of the Gods and the assaults of Titans; we shall face and engulf in the unstirred seas of our spirit all that can possibly come to us down the ways of the soul's infinite experience. This is the stoical period of the preparation of equality, its most elementary and yet its heroic age. But this steadfast endurance of the flesh and heart and mind must be reinforced by a sustained sense of spiritual submission to a divine Will: this living clay must yield not only with a stern or courageous acquiescence, but with knowledge or with resignation, even in suffering, to the touch of the divine Hand that is preparing its perfection. A sage, a devout or even a tender stoicism of the God-lover is possible, and these are better than the merely pagan self-reliant endurance which may lend itself to a too great hardening of the vessel of God: for this kind prepares the strength that is capable of wisdom and of love; its tranquillity is a deeply moved calm that passes easily into bliss. The gain of this period of resignation and endurance is the soul's strength equal to all shocks and contacts.

There is next a period of high-seated impartiality and indifference in which the soul becomes free from exultation and depression and escapes from the snare of the eagerness of joy as from the dark net of the pangs of grief and suffering. All things and persons and forces, all thoughts and feelings and sensations and actions, one's own no less than those of others, are regarded from above by a spirit that remains intact and immutable and is not disturbed by these things. This is the philosophic period of the preparation of equality, a wide and august movement. But indifference must not settle into an inert turning away from action and experience; it must not be an aversion born of weariness, disgust and distaste, a recoil of disappointed or satiated desire, the sullenness of a baffled and dissatisfied egoism forced back from its passionate aims. These recoils come inevitably in the unripe soul and may in some way help the progress by a discouragement of the eager desire-driven vital nature, but they are not the perfection towards which we labour. The indifference or the impartiality that we must seek after is a calm superiority of the high-seated soul above the contacts of things;[1] it regards and accepts or rejects them but is not moved in the rejection and is not subjected by the acceptance. It begins to feel itself near, kin to, one with a silent Self and Spirit self-existent and separate from the workings of Nature which it supports and makes possible, part of or merged in the motionless calm Reality that transcends the motion and action of the universe. The gain of this period of high transcendence is the soul's peace unrocked and unshaken by the pleasant ripplings or by the tempestuous waves and billows of the world's movement.

If we can pass through these two stages of the inner change without being arrested or fixed in either, we are admitted to a greater divine equality which is capable of a spiritual ardour and tranquil passion of delight, a rapturous, all-understanding and all-possessing equality of the perfected soul, an intense and even wideness and fullness of its being embracing all things. This is the supreme period and the passage to it is through the joy of a total self-giving to the Divine and to the universal Mother. For strength is then crowned by a happy mastery, peace deepens into bliss, the possession of the divine calm is uplifted and made the ground for the possession of the divine movement. But if this greater perfection is to arrive, the soul's impartial high-seatedness looking down from above on the flux of forms and personalities and movements and forces must be modified and change into a new sense of strong and calm submission and a powerful and intense surrender. This submission will be no longer a resigned acquiescence but a glad acceptance: for there will be no sense of suffering or of the bearing of a burden or cross; love and delight and the joy of self-giving will be its brilliant texture. And this surrender will be not only to a divine Will which we perceive and accept and obey, but to a divine Wisdom in the Will which we recognise and a divine Love in it which we feel and rapturously suffer, the wisdom and love of a supreme Spirit and Self of ourselves and all with which we can achieve a happy and perfect unity. A lonely power, peace and stillness is the last word of the philosophic equality of the sage; but the soul in its integral experience liberates itself from this self-created status and enters into the sea of a supreme and all-embracing ecstasy of the beginningless and endless beatitude of the Eternal. Then we are at last capable of receiving all contacts with a blissful equality, because we feel in them the touch of the imperishable Love and Delight, the happiness absolute that hides ever in the heart of things. The gain of this culmination in a universal and equal rapture is the soul's delight and the opening gates of the Bliss that is infinite, the Joy that surpasses all understanding.

---

[1] *udāsīna*.

⁂

Before this labour for the annihilation of desire and the conquest of the soul's equality can come to its absolute perfection and fruition, that turn of the spiritual movement must have been completed which leads to the abolition of the sense of ego. But for the worker the renunciation of the egoism of action is the most important element in this change. For even when by giving up the fruits and the desire of the fruits to the Master of the Sacrifice we have parted with the egoism of rajasic desire, we may still have kept the egoism of the worker. Still we are subject to the sense that we are ourselves the doer of the act, ourselves its source and ourselves the giver of the sanction. It is still the "I" that chooses and determines, it is still the "I" that undertakes the responsibility and feels the demerit or the merit.

An entire removal of this separative ego-sense is an essential aim of our Yoga. If any ego is to remain in us for a while, it is only a form of it which knows itself to be a form and is ready to disappear as soon as a true centre of consciousness is manifested or built in us. That true centre is a luminous formulation of the one Consciousness and a pure channel and instrument of the one Existence. A support for the individual manifestation and action of the universal Force, it gradually reveals behind it the true Person in us, the central eternal being, an everlasting being of the Supreme, a power and portion of the transcendent Shakti.[2]

Here too, in this movement by which the soul divests itself gradually of the obscure robe of the ego, there is a progress by marked stages. For not only the fruit of works belongs to the Lord alone, but our works also must be his; he is the true lord of our actions no less than of our results. This we must not see with the thinking mind only, it must become entirely true to our entire consciousness and will. The sadhaka has not only to think and know but to see and feel concretely and intensely even in the moment of the working and in its initiation and whole process that his works are not his at all, but are coming through him from the Supreme Existence. He must be always aware of a Force, a Presence, a Will that acts through his individual nature. But there is in taking this turn the danger that he may confuse his own disguised or sublimated ego or an inferior power with the Lord and substitute its demands for the supreme dictates. He may fall into a common ambush of this lower nature and distort his supposed surrender to a higher Power into an excuse for a magnified and uncontrolled indulgence of his own self-will and even of his desires and passions. A great sincerity is asked for and has to be imposed not only on the conscious mind but still more on the subliminal part of us which is full of hidden movements. For there is there, especially in our subliminal vital nature, an incorrigible charlatan and actor. The sadhaka must first have advanced far in the elimination of desire and in the firm equality of his soul towards all workings and all happenings before he can utterly lay down the burden of his works on the Divine. At every moment he must proceed with a vigilant eye upon the deceits of the ego and the ambushes of the misleading Powers of Darkness who ever represent themselves as the one Source of Light and Truth and take on them a simulacrum of divine forms in order to capture the soul of the seeker.

---

[2] *aṁśaḥ sanātanaḥ, parā prakṛtir jīvabhūtā.*

Immediately he must take the further step of relegating himself to the position of the Witness. Aloof from the Prakriti, impersonal and dispassionate, he must watch the executive Nature-Force at work within him and understand its action; he must learn by this separation to recognise the play of her universal forces, distinguish her interweaving of light and night, the divine and the undivine, and detect her formidable Powers and Beings that use the ignorant human creature. Nature works in us, says the Gita, through the triple quality of Prakriti, the quality of light and good, the quality of passion and desire and the quality of obscurity and inertia. The seeker must learn to distinguish, as an impartial and discerning witness of all that proceeds within this kingdom of his nature, the separate and the combined action of these qualities; he must pursue the workings of the cosmic forces in him through all the labyrinth of their subtle unseen processes and disguises and know every intricacy of the maze. As he proceeds in this knowledge, he will be able to become the giver of the sanction and no longer remain an ignorant tool of Nature. At first he must induce the Nature-Force in its action on his instruments to subdue the working of its two lower qualities and bring them into subjection to the quality of light and good and, afterwards, he must persuade that again to offer itself so that all three may be transformed by a higher Power into their divine equivalents, supreme repose and calm, divine illumination and bliss, the eternal divine dynamis, Tapas. The first part of this discipline and change can be firmly done in principle by the will of the mental being in us; but its full execution and the subsequent transformation can be done only when the deeper psychic soul increases its hold on the nature and replaces the mental being as its ruler. When this happens, he will be ready to make, not only with an aspiration and intention and an initial and progressive self-abandonment but with the most intense actuality of dynamic self-giving, the complete renunciation of his works to the Supreme Will. By degrees his mind of an imperfect human intelligence will be replaced by a spiritual and illumined mind and that can in the end enter into the supramental Truth-Light; he will then no longer act from his nature of the Ignorance with its three modes of confused and imperfect activity, but from a diviner nature of spiritual calm, light, power and bliss. He will act not from an amalgam of an ignorant mind and will with the drive of a still more ignorant heart of emotion and the desire of the life-being and the urge and instinct of the flesh, but first from a spiritualised self and nature and, last, from a supramental Truth-consciousness and its divine force of supernature.

Thus are made possible the final steps when the veil of Nature is withdrawn and the seeker is face to face with the Master of all existence and his activities are merged in the action of a supreme Energy which is pure, true, perfect and blissful for ever. Thus can he utterly renounce to the supramental Shakti his works as well as the fruits of his works and act only as the conscious instrument of the eternal Worker. No longer giving the sanction, he will rather receive in his instruments and follow in her hands a divine mandate. No longer doing works, he will accept their execution through him by her unsleeping Force. No longer willing the fulfilment of his own mental constructions and the satisfaction of his own emotional desires, he will obey and participate in an omnipotent Will that is also an omniscient Knowledge and a mysterious, magical and unfathomable Love and a vast bottomless sea of the eternal Bliss of Existence.

Chapter X

The Three Modes of Nature

TO TRANSCEND the natural action of the lower Prakriti is indispensable to the soul, if it is to be free in its self and free in its works. Harmonious subjection to this actual universal Nature, a condition of good and perfect work for the natural instruments, is not an ideal for the soul, which should rather be subject to God and his Shakti, but master of its own nature. As agent or as channel of the Supreme Will it must determine by its vision and sanction or refusal the use that shall be made of the storage of energy, the conditions of environment, the rhythm of combined movement which are provided by Prakriti for the labour of the natural instruments, mind, life and body. But this inferior Nature can only be mastered if she is surmounted and used from above. And this can only be done by a transcendence of her forces, qualities and modes of action; otherwise we are subject to her conditions and helplessly dominated by her, not free in the spirit.

The idea of the three essential modes of Nature is a creation of the ancient Indian thinkers and its truth is not at once obvious, because it was the result of long psychological experiment and profound internal experience. Therefore without a long inner experience, without intimate self-observation and intuitive perception of the Nature-forces it is difficult to grasp accurately or firmly utilise. Still certain broad indications may help the seeker on the Way of Works to understand, analyse and control by his assent or refusal the combinations of his own nature. These modes are termed in the Indian books qualities, *guṇas*, and are given the names *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*. Sattwa is the force of equilibrium and translates in quality as good and harmony and happiness and light; rajas is the force of kinesis and translates in quality as struggle and effort, passion and action; tamas is the force of inconscience and inertia and translates in quality as obscurity and incapacity and inaction. Ordinarily used for psychological self-analysis, these distinctions are valid also in physical Nature. Each thing and every existence in the lower Prakriti contains them and its process and dynamic form are the result of the interaction of these qualitative powers.

Every form of things, whether animate or inanimate, is a constantly maintained poise of natural forces in motion and is subject to an unending stream of helpful, disturbing or disintegrating contacts from other combinations of forces that surround it. Our own nature of mind, life and body is nothing else than such a formative combination and poise. In the reception of the environing contacts and the reaction to them the three modes determine the temper of the recipient and the character of the response. Inert and inapt, he may suffer them without any responsive reaction, any motion of self-defence or any capacity of assimilation and adjustment; this is the mode of tamas, the way of inertia. The stigmata of tamas are blindness and unconsciousness and incapacity and unintelligence, sloth and indolence and inactivity and mechanical routine and the mind's torpor and the life's sleep and the soul's slumber. Its effect, if uncorrected by other elements, can be nothing but disintegration of the form or the poise of the nature without any new creation or new equilibrium or force of kinetic progress. At the heart of this inert impotence is the principle of ignorance and an inability or slothful unwillingness to comprehend, seize and manage the stimulating or assailing contact, the suggestion of environing forces and their urge towards fresh experience.

On the other hand, the recipient of Nature's contacts, touched and stimulated, solicited or assailed by her forces, may react to the pressure or against it. She allows, encourages, impels him to strive, to resist, to attempt, to dominate or engross his environment, to assert his will, to fight and create and conquer. This is the mode of rajas, the way of passion and action and the thirst of desire. Struggle and change and new creation, victory and defeat and joy and suffering and hope and disappointment are its children and build the many-coloured house of life in which it takes its pleasure. But its knowledge is an imperfect or a false knowledge and brings with it ignorant effort, error, a constant misadjustment, pain of attachment, disappointed desire, grief of loss and failure. The gift of rajas is kinetic force, energy, activity, the power that creates and acts and can overcome; but it moves in the wrong lights or the half-lights of the Ignorance and it is perverted by the touch of the Asura, Rakshasa and Pishacha. The arrogant ignorance of the human mind and its self-satisfied perversions and presumptuous errors, the pride and vanity and ambition, the cruelty and tyranny and beast wrath and violence, the selfishness and baseness and hypocrisy and treachery and vile meanness, the lust and greed and rapacity, the jealousy, envy and bottomless ingratitude that disfigure the earth-nature are the natural children of this indispensable but strong and dangerous turn of Nature.

But the embodied being is not limited to these two modes of Prakriti; there is a better and more enlightened way in which he can deal with surrounding impacts and the stream of the world-forces. There is possible a reception and reaction with clear comprehension, poise and balance. This way of natural being has the power that, because it understands, sympathises; it fathoms and controls and develops Nature's urge and her ways: it has an intelligence that penetrates her processes and her significances and can assimilate and utilise; there is a lucid response that is not overpowered but adjusts, corrects, adapts, harmonises, elicits the best in all things. This is the mode of sattwa, the turn of Nature that is full of light and poise, directed to good, to knowledge, to delight and beauty, to happiness, right understanding, right equilibrium, right order: its temperament is the opulence of a bright clearness of knowledge and a lucent warmth of sympathy and closeness. A fineness and enlightenment, a governed energy, an accomplished harmony and poise of the whole being is the consummate achievement of the sattwic nature.

No existence is cast entirely in the single mould of any of these three modes of the cosmic Force; all three are present in everyone and everywhere. There is a constant combining and separation of their shifting relations and interpenetrating influences, often a conflict, a wrestling of forces, a struggle to dominate each other. All have in great or in small extent or degree, even if sometimes in a hardly appreciable minimum, their sattwic states and clear tracts or inchoate tendencies of light, clarity and happiness, fine adaptation and sympathy with the environment, intelligence, poise, right mind, right will and feeling, right impulse, virtue, order. All have their rajasic moods and impulses and turbid parts of desire and passion and struggle, perversion and falsehood and error, unbalanced joy and sorrow, aggressive push to work and eager creation and strong or bold or fiery or fierce reactions to the pressure of the environment and to life's assaults and offers. All have their tamasic states and constant obscure parts, their moments or points of unconsciousness, their long habit or their temporary velleities of weak resignation or dull acceptance, their constitutional feeblenesses or movements of fatigue, negligence and indolence and their lapses into ignorance and incapacity, depression and fear and cowardly recoil or submission to the environment and to the pressure of men and events and forces. Each one of us is sattwic in some directions of his energy of Nature or in some parts of his mind or character, in others rajasic, tamasic in others. According as one or other of the modes usually dominates his general temperament and type of mind and turn of action, it is said of him that he is the sattwic, the rajasic or the tamasic man; but few are always of one kind and none is entire in his kind. The wise are not always or wholly wise, the intelligent are intelligent only in patches; the saint suppresses in himself many unsaintly movements and the evil are not entirely evil: the dullest has his unexpressed or unused and undeveloped capacities, the most timorous his moments or his way of courage, the helpless and the weakling a latent part of strength in his nature. The dominant gunas are not the essential soul-type of the embodied being but only the index of the formation he has made for this life or during his present existence and at a given moment of his evolution in Time.

* * *

When the sadhaka has once stood back from the action of Prakriti within him or upon him and, not interfering, not amending or inhibiting, not choosing or deciding, allowed its play and analysed and watched the process, he soon discovers that her modes are self-dependent and work as a machine once put in action works by its own structure and propelling forces. The force and the propulsion come from Prakriti and not from the creature. Then he realises how mistaken was his impression that his mind was the doer of his works; his mind was only a small part of him and a creation and engine of Nature. Nature was acting all the while in her own modes moving the three general qualities about as a girl might play with her puppets. His ego was all along a tool and plaything; his character and intelligence, his moral qualities and mental powers, his creations and works and exploits, his anger and forbearance, his cruelty and mercy, his love and his hatred, his sin and his virtue, his light and his darkness, his passion of joy and his anguish of sorrow were the play of Nature to which the soul, attracted, won and subjected, lent its passive concurrence. And yet the determinism of Nature or Force is not all; the soul has a word to say in the matter, — but the secret soul, the Purusha, not the mind or the ego, since these are not independent entities, they are parts of Nature. For the soul's sanction is needed for the play and by an inner silent will as the lord and giver of the sanction it can determine the principle of the play and intervene in its combinations, although the execution in thought and will and act and impulse must still be Nature's part and privilege. The Purusha can dictate a harmony for Nature to execute, not by interfering in her functions but by a conscious regard on her which she transmutes at once or after much difficulty into translating idea and dynamic impetus and significant figure.

An escape from the action of the two inferior gunas is very evidently indispensable if we are to transmute our present nature into a power and form of the divine consciousness and an instrument of its forces. Tamas obscures and prevents the light of the divine knowledge from penetrating into the dark and dull corners of our nature. Tamas incapacitates and takes away the power to respond to divine impulse and the energy to change and the will to progress and make ourselves plastic to a greater Shakti. Rajas perverts knowledge, makes our reason the accomplice of falsehood and the abettor of every wrong movement, disturbs and twists our life-force and its impulses, oversets the balance and health of the body. Rajas captures all high-born ideas and high-seated movements and turns them to a false and egoistic use; even divine Truth and divine influences, when they descend into the earthly plane, cannot escape this misuse and seizure. Tamas unenlightened and rajas unconverted, no divine change or divine life is possible.

An exclusive resort to sattwa would seem to be the way of escape: but there is this difficulty that no one of the qualities can prevail by itself against its two companions and rivals. If, envisaging the quality of desire and passion as the cause of disturbance, suffering, sin and sorrow, we strain and labour to quell and subdue it, rajas sinks but tamas rises. For, the principle of activity dulled, inertia takes its place. A quiet peace, happiness, knowledge, love, right sentiment can be founded by the principle of light, but, if rajas is absent or completely suppressed, the quiet in the soul tends to become a tranquillity of inaction, not the firm ground of a dynamic change. Ineffectively right-thinking, right-doing, good, mild and even, the nature may become in its dynamic parts sattwa-tamasic, neutral, pale-tinted, uncreative or emptied of power. Mental and moral obscurity may be absent, but so are the intense springs of action, and this is a hampering limitation and another kind of incompetence. For tamas is a double principle; it contradicts rajas by inertia, it contradicts sattwa by narrowness, obscurity and ignorance and, if either is depressed, it pours in to occupy its place.

If we call in rajas again to correct this error and bid it ally itself to sattwa and by their united agency endeavour to get rid of the dark principle, we find that we have elevated our action, but that there is again subjection to rajasic eagerness, passion, disappointment, suffering, anger. These movements may be more exalted in their scope and spirit and action than before, but they are not the peace, the freedom, the power, the self-mastery at which we long to arrive. Wherever desire and ego harbour, passion and disturbance harbour with them and share their life. And if we seek a compromise between the three modes, sattwa leading, the others subordinate, still we have only arrived at a more temperate action of the play of Nature. A new poise has been reached, but a spiritual freedom and mastery are not in sight or else are still only a far-off prospect.

A radically different movement has to draw us back from the gunas and lift us above them. The error that accepts the action of the modes of Nature must cease; for as long as it is accepted, the soul is involved in their operations and subjected to their law. Sattwa must be transcended as well as rajas and tamas; the golden chain must be broken no less than the leaden fetters and the bond-ornaments of a mixed alloy. The Gita prescribes to this end a new method of self-discipline. It is to stand back in oneself from the action of the modes and observe this unsteady flux as the Witness seated above the surge of the forces of Nature. He is one who watches but is impartial and indifferent, aloof from them on their own level and in his native posture high above them. As they rise and fall in their waves, the Witness looks, observes, but neither accepts nor for the moment interferes with their course. First there must be the freedom of the impersonal Witness; afterwards there can be the control of the Master, the Ishwara.

⁂

The initial advantage of this process of detachment is that one begins to understand one's own nature and all Nature. The detached Witness is able to see entirely without the least blinding by egoism the play of her modes of the Ignorance and to pursue it into all its ramifications, coverings and subtleties — for it is full of camouflage and disguise and snare and treachery and ruse. Instructed by long experience, conscious of all act and condition as their interaction, made wise of their processes, he cannot any longer be overcome by their assaults, surprised in their nets or deceived by their disguises. At the same time he perceives the ego to be nothing better than a device and the sustaining knot of their interaction and, perceiving it, he is delivered from the illusion of the lower egoistic Nature. He escapes from the sattwic egoism of the altruist and the saint and the thinker; he shakes off from its control on his life-impulses the rajasic egoism of the self-seeker and ceases to be the laborious caterer of self-interest and the pampered prisoner or toiling galley-slave of passion and desire; he slays with the light of knowledge the tamasic egoism of the ignorant or passive being, dull, unintelligent, attached to the common round of human life. Thus convinced and conscious of the essential vice of the ego-sense in all our personal action, he seeks no longer to find a means of self-correction and self-liberation in the rajasic or sattwic ego but looks above, beyond the instruments and the working of Nature, to the Master of works alone and his supreme Shakti, the supreme Prakriti. There alone all the being is pure and free and the rule of a divine Truth possible.

In this progression the first step is a certain detached superiority to the three modes of Nature. The soul is inwardly separated and free from the lower Prakriti, not involved in its coils, indifferent and glad above it. Nature continues to act in the triple round of her ancient habits, — desire, grief and joy attack the heart, the instruments fall into inaction and obscurity and weariness, light and peace come back into the heart and mind and body; but the soul stands unchanged and untouched by these changes. Observing and unmoved by the grief and desire of the lower members, smiling at their joys and their strainings, regarding and unoverpowered by the failing and the darknesses of the thought and the wildness or the weaknesses of the heart and nerves, uncompelled and unattached to the mind's illuminations and its relief and sense of ease or of power in the return of light and gladness, it throws itself into none of these things, but waits unmoved for the intimations of a higher Will and the intuitions of a greater luminous knowledge. Thus doing always, it becomes eventually free even in its nature parts from the strife of the three modes and their insufficient values and imprisoning limits. For now this lower Prakriti feels progressively a compulsion from a higher Shakti. The old habits to which it clung receive no further sanction and begin steadily to lose their frequency and force of recurrence. At last it understands that it is called to a higher action and a better state and, however slowly, however reluctantly, with whatever initial or prolonged ill-will and stumbling ignorance, it submits, turns and prepares itself for the change.

The static freedom of the soul, no longer witness only and knower, is crowned by a dynamic transformation of the nature. The constant mixture, the uneven operation of the three modes acting upon each other in our three instruments ceases from its normal confused, troubled and improper action and movement. Another action becomes possible, commences, grows, culminates, a working more truly right, more luminous, natural and normal to the deepest divine interplay of Purusha and Prakriti although supernatural and supernormal to our present imperfect nature. The body conditioning the physical mind insists no longer on its tamasic inertia that repeats always the same ignorant movement: it becomes a passive field and instrument of a greater force and light, it responds to every demand of the spirit's force, holds and supports every variety and intensity of new divine experience. Our kinetic and dynamic vital parts, our nervous and emotional and sensational and volitional being, expand in power and admit a tireless action and a blissful enjoyment of experience, but learn at the same time to stand on a foundation of wide self-possessed and self-poised calm, sublime in force, divine in rest, neither exulting and excited nor tortured by sorrow and pain, neither harried by desire and importunate impulses nor dulled by incapacity and indolence. The intelligence, the thinking, understanding and reflective mind, renounces its sattwic limitations and opens to an essential light and peace. An infinite knowledge offers to us its splendid ranges, a knowledge not made up of mental constructions, not bound by opinion and idea or dependent on a stumbling uncertain logic and the petty support of the senses, but self-sure, authentic, all-penetrating, all-comprehending; a boundless bliss and peace, not dependent on deliverance from the hampered strenuousness of creative energy and dynamic action, not constituted by a few limited felicities but self-existent and all-including, pour into ever-enlarging fields and through ever-widening and always more numerous channels to possess the nature. A higher force, bliss and knowledge from a source beyond mind and life and body seize on them to remould in a diviner image.

Here the disharmonies of the triple mode of our inferior existence are overpassed and there begins a greater triple mode of a divine Nature. There is no obscurity of tamas or inertia. Tamas is replaced by a divine peace and tranquil eternal repose out of which is released from a supreme matrix of calm concentration the play of action and knowledge. There is no rajasic kinesis, no desire, no joyful and sorrowful striving of action, creation and possession, no fruitful chaos of troubled impulse. Rajas is replaced by a self-possessed power and illimitable act of force, that even in its most violent intensities does not shake the immovable poise of the soul or stain the vast and profound heavens and luminous abysses of its peace. There is no constructing light of mind casting about to seize and imprison the Truth, no insecure or inactive ease. Sattwa is replaced by an illumination and a spiritual bliss identical with the depth and infinite existence of the soul and instinct with a direct and authentic knowledge that springs straight from the veiled glories of the secret Omniscience.

This is the greater consciousness into which our inferior consciousness has to be transformed, this nature of the Ignorance with its unquiet unbalanced activity of the three modes changed into this greater luminous supernature. At first we become free from the three gunas, detached, untroubled, *nistraiguṇya*; but this is the recovery of the native state of the soul, the self, the spirit free and watching in its motionless calm the motion of Prakriti in her force of the Ignorance. If on this basis the nature, the motion of Prakriti, is also to become free, it must be by a quiescence of action in a luminous peace and silence in which all necessary movements are done without any conscious reaction or participation or initiation of action by the mind or by the life-being, without any ripple of thought or eddy of the vital parts: it must be done under the impulsion, by the initiation, by the working of an impersonal cosmic or a transcendent Force. A cosmic Mind, Life, Substance must act, or a pure transcendent Self-Power and Bliss other than our own personal being or its building of Nature. This is a state of freedom which can come in the Yoga of works through renunciation of ego and desire and personal initiation and the surrender of the being to the cosmic Self or to the universal Shakti; it can come in the Yoga of knowledge by the cessation of thought, the silence of the mind, the opening of the whole being to the cosmic Consciousness, to the cosmic Self, the cosmic Dynamis or to the supreme Reality; it can come in the Yoga of devotion by the surrender of the heart and the whole nature into the hands of the All-Blissful as the adored Master of our existence. But the culminating change intervenes by a more positive and dynamic transcendence: there is a transference or transmutation into a superior spiritual status, *triguṇātīta*, in which we participate in a greater spiritual dynamisation; for the three lower unequal modes pass into an equal triune mode of eternal calm, light and force, the repose, kinesis, illumination of the divine Nature.

This supreme harmony cannot come except by the cessation of egoistic will and choice and act and the quiescence of our limited intelligence. The individual ego must cease to strive, the mind fall silent, the desire-will learn not to initiate. Our personality must join its source and all thought and initiation come from above. The secret Master of our activities will be slowly unveiled to us and from the security of the supreme Will and Knowledge give the sanction to the Divine Shakti who will do all works in us with a purified and exalted nature for her instrument; the individual centre of personality will be only the upholder of her works here, their recipient and channel, the reflector of her power and luminous participator in her light, joy and force. Acting it will not act and no reaction of the lower Prakriti will touch it. The transcendence of the three modes of Nature is the first condition, their transformation the decisive step of this change by which the Way of Works climbs out of the pit of narrowness of our darkened human nature into the unwalled wideness of the Truth and Light above us.

Chapter XI

The Master of the Work

THE MASTER and Mover of our works is the One, the Universal and Supreme, the Eternal and Infinite. He is the transcendent unknown or unknowable Absolute, the unexpressed and unmanifested Ineffable above us; but he is also the Self of all beings, the Master of all worlds, transcending all worlds, the Light and the Guide, the All-Beautiful and All-Blissful, the Beloved and the Lover. He is the Cosmic Spirit and all-creating Energy around us; he is the Immanent within us. All that is is he, and he is the More than all that is, and we ourselves, though we know it not, are being of his being, force of his force, conscious with a consciousness derived from his; even our mortal existence is made out of his substance and there is an immortal within us that is a spark of the Light and Bliss that are for ever. No matter whether by knowledge, works, love or any other means, to become aware of this truth of our being, to realise it, to make it effective here or elsewhere is the object of all Yoga.

* * *

But the passage is long and the labour arduous before we can look on him with eyes that see true, and still longer and more arduous must be our endeavour if we would rebuild ourselves in his true image. The Master of the work does not reveal himself at once to the seeker. Always it is his Power that acts behind the veil, but it is manifest only when we renounce the egoism of the worker, and its direct movement increases in proportion as that renunciation becomes more and more complete. Only when our surrender to his Divine Shakti is absolute, shall we have the right to live in his absolute presence. And only then can we see our work throw itself naturally, completely and simply into the mould of the Divine Will.

There must, therefore, be stages and gradations in our approach to this perfection, as there are in the progress towards all other perfection on any plane of Nature. The vision of the full glory may come to us before, suddenly or slowly, once or often, but until the foundation is complete, it is a summary and concentrated, not a durable and all-enveloping experience, not a lasting presence. The amplitudes, the infinite contents of the Divine Revelation come afterwards and unroll gradually their power and their significance. Or, even, the steady vision can be there on the summits of our nature, but the perfect response of the lower members comes only by degrees. In all Yoga the first requisites are faith and patience. The ardours of the heart and the violences of the eager will that seek to take the kingdom of heaven by storm can have miserable reactions if they disdain to support their vehemence on these humbler and quieter auxiliaries. And in the long and difficult integral Yoga there must be an integral faith and an unshakable patience.

It is difficult to acquire or to practise this faith and steadfastness on the rough and narrow path of Yoga because of the impatience of both heart and mind and the eager but soon faltering will of our rajasic nature. The vital nature of man hungers always for the fruit of its labour and, if the fruit appears to be denied or long delayed, he loses faith in the ideal and in the guidance. For his mind judges always by the appearance of things, since that is the first ingrained habit of the intellectual reason in which he so inordinately trusts. Nothing is easier for us than to accuse God in our hearts when we suffer long or stumble in the darkness or to abjure the ideal that we have set before us. For we say, "I have trusted to the Highest and I am betrayed into suffering and sin and error." Or else, "I have staked my whole life on an idea which the stern facts of experience contradict and discourage. It would have been better to be as other men are who accept their limitations and walk on the firm ground of normal experience." In such moments — and they are sometimes frequent and long — all the higher experience is forgotten and the heart concentrates itself in its own bitterness. It is in these dark passages that it is possible to fall for good or to turn back from the divine labour.

If one has walked long and steadily in the path, the faith of the heart will remain under the fiercest adverse pressure; even if it is concealed or apparently overborne, it will take the first opportunity to re-emerge. For something higher than either heart or intellect upholds it in spite of the worst stumblings and through the most prolonged failure. But even to the experienced sadhaka such falterings or overcloudings bring a retardation of his progress and they are exceedingly dangerous to the novice. It is therefore necessary from the beginning to understand and accept the arduous difficulty of the path and to feel the need of a faith which to the intellect may seem blind, but yet is wiser than our reasoning intelligence. For this faith is a support from above; it is the brilliant shadow thrown by a secret light that exceeds the intellect and its data; it is the heart of a hidden knowledge that is not at the mercy of immediate appearances. Our faith, persevering, will be justified in its works and will be lifted and transfigured at last into the self-revelation of a divine knowledge. Always we must adhere to the injunction of the Gita, "Yoga must be continually applied with a heart free from despondent sinking." Always we must repeat to the doubting intellect the promise of the Master, "I will surely deliver thee from all sin and evil; do not grieve." At the end, the flickerings of faith will cease; for we shall see his face and feel always the Divine Presence.

⁂

The Master of our works respects our nature even when he is transforming it; he works always through the nature and not by any arbitrary caprice. This imperfect nature of ours contains the materials of our perfection, but inchoate, distorted, misplaced, thrown together in disorder or a poor imperfect order. All this material has to be patiently perfected, purified, reorganised, new-moulded and transformed, not hacked and hewn and slain or mutilated, not obliterated by simple coercion and denial. This world and we who live in it are his creation and manifestation, and he deals with it and us in a way our narrow and ignorant mind cannot understand unless it falls silent and opens to a divine knowledge. In our errors is the substance of a truth which labours to reveal its meaning to our groping intelligence. The human intellect cuts out the error and the truth with it and replaces it by another half-truth half-error; but the Divine Wisdom suffers our mistakes to continue until we are able to arrive at the truth hidden and protected under every false cover. Our sins are the misdirected steps of a seeking Power that aims, not at sin, but at perfection, at something that we might call a divine virtue. Often they are the veils of a quality that has to be transformed and delivered out of this ugly disguise: otherwise, in the perfect providence of things, they would not have been suffered to exist or to continue. The Master of our works is neither a blunderer nor an indifferent witness nor a dallier with the luxury of unneeded evils. He is wiser than our reason and wiser than our virtue.

Our nature is not only mistaken in will and ignorant in knowledge but weak in power; but the Divine Force is there and will lead us if we trust in it and it will use our deficiencies and our powers for the divine purpose. If we fail in our immediate aim, it is because he has intended the failure; often our failure or ill-result is the right road to a truer issue than an immediate and complete success would have put in our reach. If we suffer, it is because something in us has to be prepared for a rarer possibility of delight. If we stumble, it is to learn in the end the secret of a more perfect walking. Let us not be in too furious a haste to acquire even peace, purity and perfection. Peace must be ours, but not the peace of an empty or devastated nature or of slain or mutilated capacities incapable of unrest because we have made them incapable of intensity and fire and force. Purity must be our aim, but not the purity of a void or of a bleak and rigid coldness. Perfection is demanded of us, but not the perfection that can exist only by confining its scope within narrow limits or putting an arbitrary full stop to the ever self-extending scroll of the Infinite. Our object is to change into the divine nature, but the divine nature is not a mental or moral but a spiritual condition, difficult to achieve, difficult even to conceive by our intelligence. The Master of our work and our Yoga knows the thing to be done, and we must allow him to do it in us by his own means and in his own manner.

The movement of the Ignorance is egoistic at its core and nothing is more difficult for us than to get rid of egoism while yet we admit personality and adhere to action in the half-light and half-force of our unfinished nature. It is easier to starve the ego by renouncing the impulse to act or to kill it by cutting away from us all movement of personality. It is easier to exalt it into self-forgetfulness immersed in a trance of peace or an ecstasy of divine Love. But our more difficult problem is to liberate the true Person and attain to a divine manhood which shall be the pure vessel of a divine force and the perfect instrument of a divine action. Step after step has to be firmly taken; difficulty after difficulty has to be entirely experienced and entirely mastered. Only the Divine Wisdom and Power can do this for us and it will do all if we yield to it in an entire faith and follow and assent to its workings with a constant courage and patience.

The first step on this long path is to consecrate all our works as a sacrifice to the Divine in us and in the world; this is an attitude of the mind and heart, not too difficult to initiate, but very difficult to make absolutely sincere and all-pervasive. The second step is to renounce attachment to the fruit of our works; for the only true, inevitable and utterly desirable fruit of sacrifice — the one thing needful — is the Divine Presence and the Divine Consciousness and Power in us, and if that is gained, all else will be added. This is a transformation of the egoistic will in our vital being, our desire-soul and desire-nature, and it is far more difficult than the other. The third step is to get rid of the central egoism and even the ego-sense of the worker. That is the most difficult transformation of all and it cannot be perfectly done if the first two steps have not been taken; but these first steps too cannot be completed unless the third comes in to crown the movement and, by the extinction of egoism, eradicates the very origin of desire. Only when the small ego-sense is rooted out from the nature can the seeker know his true person that stands above as a portion and power of the Divine and renounce all motive-force other than the will of the Divine Shakti.

⁂

There are gradations in this last integralising movement; for it cannot be done at once or without long approaches that bring it progressively nearer and make it at last possible. The first attitude to be taken is to cease to regard ourselves as the worker and firmly to realise that we are only one instrument of the cosmic Force. At first it is not the one Force but many cosmic forces that seem to move us; but these may be turned into feeders of the ego and this vision liberates the mind but not the rest of the nature. Even when we become aware of all as the working of one cosmic Force and of the Divine behind it, that too need not liberate. If the egoism of the worker disappears, the egoism of the instrument may replace it or else prolong it in a disguise. The life of the world has been full of instances of egoism of this kind and it can be more engrossing and enormous than any other; there is the same danger in Yoga. A man becomes a leader of men or eminent in a large or lesser circle and feels himself full of a power that he knows to be beyond his own ego-force; he may be aware of a Fate acting through him or a Will mysterious and unfathomable or a Light within of great brilliance. There are extraordinary results of his thoughts, his actions or his creative genius. He effects some tremendous destruction that clears the path for humanity or some great construction that becomes its momentary resting-place. He is a scourge or he is a bringer of light and healing, a creator of beauty or a messenger of knowledge. Or, if his work and its effects are on a lesser scale and have a limited field, still they are attended by the strong sense that he is an instrument and chosen for his mission or his labour. Men who have this destiny and these powers come easily to believe and declare themselves to be mere instruments in the hand of God or of Fate: but even in the declaration we can see that there can intrude or take refuge an intenser and more exaggerated egoism than ordinary men have the courage to assert or the strength to house within them. And often if men of this kind speak of God, it is to erect an image of him which is really nothing but a huge shadow of themselves or their own nature, a sustaining Deific Essence of their own type of will and thought and quality and force. This magnified image of their ego is the Master whom they serve. This happens only too often in Yoga to strong but crude vital natures or minds too easily exalted when they allow ambition, pride or the desire of greatness to enter into their spiritual seeking and vitiate its purity of motive; a magnified ego stands between them and their true being and grasps for its own personal purpose the strength from a greater unseen Power, divine or undivine, acting through them of which they become vaguely or intensely aware. An intellectual perception or vital sense of a Force greater than ours and of ourselves as moved by it is not sufficient to liberate from the ego.

This perception, this sense of a greater Power in us or above and moving us, is not a hallucination or a megalomania. Those who thus feel and see have a larger sight than ordinary men and have advanced a step beyond the limited physical intelligence, but theirs is not the plenary vision or the direct experience. For, because they are not clear in mind and aware in the soul, because their awakening is more in the vital parts than into the spiritual substance of Self, they cannot be the conscious instruments of the Divine or come face to face with the Master, but are used through their fallible and imperfect nature. The most they see of the Divinity is a Fate or a cosmic Force or else they give his name to a limited Godhead or, worse, to a Titanic or demoniac Power that veils him. Even certain religious founders have erected the image of the God of a sect or a national God or a Power of terror and punishment or a Numen of sattwic love and mercy and virtue and seem not to have seen the One and Eternal. The Divine accepts the image they make of him and does his work in them through that medium, but, since the one Force is felt and acts in their imperfect nature but more intensely than in others, the motive principle of egoism too can be more intense in them than in others. An exalted rajasic or sattwic ego still holds them and stands between them and the integral Truth. Even this is something, a beginning, although far from the true and perfect experience. A much worse thing may befall those who break something of the human bonds but have not purity and have not the knowledge, for they may become instruments, but not of the Divine; too often, using his name, they serve unconsciously his Masks and black Contraries, the Powers of Darkness.

Our nature must house the cosmic Force but not in its lower aspect or in its rajasic or sattwic movement; it must serve the universal Will, but in the light of a greater liberating knowledge. There must be no egoism of any kind in the attitude of the instrument, even when we are fully conscious of the greatness of the Force within us. Every man is knowingly or unknowingly the instrument of a universal Power and, apart from the inner Presence, there is no such essential difference between one action and another, one kind of instrumentation and another as would warrant the folly of an egoistic pride. The difference between knowledge and ignorance is a grace of the Spirit; the breath of divine Power blows where it lists and fills today one and tomorrow another with the word or the puissance. If the potter shapes one pot more perfectly than another, the merit lies not in the vessel but the maker. The attitude of our mind must not be "This is my strength" or "Behold God's power in me", but rather "A Divine Power works in this mind and body and it is the same that works in all men and in the animal, in the plant and in the metal, in conscious and living things and in things apparently inconscient and inanimate." This large view of the One working in all and of the whole world as the equal instrument of a divine action and gradual self-expression, if it becomes our entire experience, will help to eliminate all rajasic egoism out of us and even the sattwic ego-sense will begin to pass away from our nature.

The elimination of this form of ego leads straight towards the true instrumental action which is the essence of a perfect Karmayoga. For while we cherish the instrumental ego, we may pretend to ourselves that we are conscious instruments of the Divine, but in reality we are trying to make of the Divine Shakti an instrument of our own desires or our egoistic purpose. And even if the ego is subjected but not eliminated, we may indeed be engines of the Divine Work, but we shall be imperfect tools and deflect or impair the working by our mental errors, our vital distortions or the obstinate incapacities of our physical nature. If this ego disappears, then we can truly become, not only pure instruments consciously consenting to every turn of the divine Hand that moves us, but aware of our true nature, conscious portions of the one Eternal and Infinite put out in herself for her works by the supreme Shakti.

⁂

There is another greater step to be taken after the surrender of our instrumental ego to the Divine Shakti. It is not enough to know her as the one Cosmic Force that moves us and all creatures on the planes of mind, life and matter; for this is the lower Nature and, although the Divine Knowledge, Light, Power are there concealed and at work in this Ignorance and can break partly its veil and manifest something of their true character or descend from above and uplift these inferior workings, yet, even if we realise the One in a spiritualised mind, a spiritualised life-movement, a spiritualised body-consciousness, an imperfection remains in the dynamic parts. There is a stumbling response to the Supreme Power, a veil over the face of the Divine, a constant mixture of the Ignorance. It is only when we open to the Divine Shakti in the truth of her Force which transcends this lower Prakriti that we can be perfect instruments of her power and knowledge.

Not only liberation but perfection must be the aim of the Karmayoga. The Divine works through our nature and according to our nature; if our nature is imperfect, the work also will be imperfect, mixed, inadequate. Even it may be marred by gross errors, falsehoods, moral weaknesses, diverting influences. The work of the Divine will be done in us even then, but according to our weakness, not according to the strength and purity of its source. If ours were not an integral Yoga, if we sought only the liberation of the self within us or the motionless existence of Purusha separated from Prakriti, this dynamic imperfection might not matter. Calm, untroubled, not depressed, not elated, refusing to accept the perfection or imperfection, fault or merit, sin or virtue as ours, perceiving that it is the modes of Nature working in the field of her modes that make this mixture, we could withdraw into the silence of the spirit and, pure, untouched, witness only the workings of Prakriti. But in an integral realisation this can only be a step on the way, not our last resting-place. For we aim at the divine realisation not only in the immobility of the Spirit, but also in the movement of Nature. And this cannot be altogether until we can feel the presence and power of the Divine in every step, motion, figure of our activities, in every turn of our will, in every thought, feeling and impulse. No doubt, we can feel that in essence even in the nature of the Ignorance, but it is the divine Power and Presence in a disguise, a diminution, an inferior figure. Ours is a greater demand, that our nature shall be a power of the Divine in the Truth of the Divine, in the Light, in the force of the eternal self-conscient Will, in the wideness of the sempiternal Knowledge.

After the removal of the veil of ego, the removal of the veil of Nature and her inferior modes that govern our mind, life and body. As soon as the limits of the ego begin to fade, we see how that veil is constituted and detect the action of cosmic Nature in us, and in or behind cosmic Nature we sense the presence of the cosmic Self and the dynamis of the world-pervading Ishwara. The Master of the instrument stands behind all this working, and even within the working there is his touch and the drive of a great guiding or disposing Influence. It is no longer ego or ego-force that we serve; we obey the World-Master and his evolutionary impulse. At each step we can say in the language of the Sanskrit verse, “Even as I am appointed by Thee seated in my heart, so, O Lord, I act.” But still this action may be of two very different kinds, one only illumined, the other transformed and uplifted into a greater supernature. For we may keep on in the way of action upheld and followed by our nature when by her and her illusion of egoism we were “turned as if mounted on a machine,” but now with a perfect understanding of the mechanism and its utilisation for his world purposes by the Master of works whom we feel behind it. This is indeed as far as even many great Yogis have reached on the levels of spiritualised mind; but it need not be so always, for there is a greater supramental possibility. It is possible to rise beyond spiritualised mind and to act spontaneously in the living presence of the original divine Truth-Force of the Supreme Mother. Our motion one with her motion and merged in it, our will one with her will, our energy absolved in her energy, we shall feel her working through us as the Divine manifest in a supreme Wisdom-Power, and we shall be aware of the transformed mind, life and body only as the channels of a supreme Light and Force beyond them, infallible in its steps because transcendent and total in its knowledge. Of this Light and Force we shall not only be the recipients, channels, instruments, but become a part of it in a supreme uplifted abiding experience.

Already, before we reach this last perfection, we can have the union with the Divine in works in its extreme wideness, if not yet on its most luminous heights; for we perceive no longer merely Nature or the modes of Nature, but become conscious, in our physical movements, in our nervous and vital reactions, in our mental workings, of a Force greater than body, mind and life which takes hold of our limited instruments and drives all their motion. There is no longer the sense of ourselves moving, thinking or feeling but of that moving, feeling and thinking in us. This force that we feel is the universal Force of the Divine, which, veiled or unveiled, acting directly or permitting the use of its powers by beings in the cosmos, is the one Energy that alone exists and alone makes universal or individual action possible. For this force is the Divine itself in the body of its power; all is that, power of act, power of thought and knowledge, power of mastery and enjoyment, power of love. Conscious always and in everything, in ourselves and in others, of the Master of Works possessing, inhabiting, enjoying through this Force that is himself, becoming through it all existences and all happenings, we shall have arrived at the divine union through works and achieved by that fulfilment in works all that others have gained through absolute devotion or through pure knowledge. But there is still another step that calls us, an ascent out of this cosmic identity into the identity of the Divine Transcendence.

The Master of our works and our being is not merely a Godhead here within us, nor is he merely a cosmic Spirit or some kind of universal Power. The world and the Divine are not one and the same thing, as a certain kind of pantheistic thinking would like to believe. The world is an emanation; it depends upon something that manifests in it but is not limited by it: the Divine is not here alone; there is a Beyond, an eternal Transcendence. The individual being also in its spiritual part is not a formation in the cosmic existence — our ego, our mind, our life, our body are that; but the immutable spirit, the imperishable soul in us has come out of the Transcendence.

⁂

A Transcendent who is beyond all world and all Nature and yet possesses the world and its nature, who has descended with something of himself into it and is shaping it into that which as yet it is not, is the Source of our being, the Source of our works and their Master. But the seat of the Transcendent Consciousness is above in an absoluteness of divine Existence — and there too is the absolute Power, Truth, Bliss of the Eternal — of which our mentality can form no conception and of which even our greatest spiritual experience is only a diminished reflection in the spiritualised mind and heart, a faint shadow, a thin derivate. Yet proceeding from it there is a sort of golden corona of Light, Power, Bliss and Truth — a divine Truth-Consciousness as the ancient mystics called it, a Supermind, a Gnosis, with which this world of a lesser consciousness proceeding by Ignorance is in secret relation and which alone maintains it and prevents it from falling into a disintegrated chaos. The powers we are now satisfied to call gnosis, intuition or illumination are only fainter lights of which that is the full and flaming source, and between the highest human intelligence and it there lie many levels of ascending consciousness, highest mental or overmental, which we would have to conquer before we arrived there or could bring down its greatness and glory here. Yet, however difficult, that ascent, that victory is the destiny of the human spirit and that luminous descent or bringing down of the divine Truth is the inevitable term of the troubled evolution of the earth-nature; that intended consummation is its *raison d'être*, our culminating state and the explanation of our terrestrial existence. For though the transcendental Divine is already here as the Purushottama in the secret heart of our mystery, he is veiled by many coats and disguises of his magic world-wide Yoga-Maya; it is only by the ascent and victory of the Soul here in the body that the disguises can fall away and the dynamis of the supreme Truth replace this tangled weft of half-truth that becomes creative error, this emergent Knowledge that is converted by its plunge into the inconscience of Matter and its slow partial return towards itself into an effective Ignorance.

For here in the world, though the Gnosis is there secretly behind existence, what acts is not the Gnosis but a magic of Knowledge-Ignorance, an incalculable yet apparently mechanical Overmind Maya. The Divine appears to us here in one view as an equal, inactive and impersonal Witness Spirit, an immobile consenting Purusha not bound by quality or Space or Time, whose support or sanction is given impartially to the play of all action and energies which the transcendent Will has once permitted and authorised to fulfil themselves in the cosmos. This Witness Spirit, this immobile Self in things, seems to will nothing and determine nothing; yet we become aware that his very passivity, his silent presence compels all things to travel even in their ignorance towards a divine goal and attracts through division towards a yet unrealised oneness. Yet no supreme infallible Divine Will seems to be there, only a widely deployed Cosmic Energy or a mechanical executive Process, Prakriti. This is one side of the cosmic Self; the other presents itself as a universal Divine, one in being, multiple in personality and power, who conveys to us, when we enter into the consciousness of his universal forces, a sense of infinite quality and will and act and world-wide knowledge and a one yet innumerable delight; for through him we become one with all existences not only in their essence but in their play of action, see ourself in all and all in ourself, perceive all knowledge and thought and feeling as motions of the one Mind and Heart, all energy and action as kinetics of the one Will in power, all Matter and form as particles of the one Body, all personalities as projections of the one Person, all egos as deformations of the one and sole real "I" in existence. In him we no longer stand separate, but lose our active ego in the universal movement, even as by the Witness who is without qualities and for ever unattached and unentangled, we lose our static ego in the universal peace.

And yet there remains a contradiction between these two terms, the aloof divine Silence and the all-embracing divine Action, which we may heal in ourselves in a certain manner, in a certain high degree which seems to us complete, yet is not complete because it cannot altogether transform and conquer. A universal Peace, Light, Power, Bliss is ours, but its effective expression is not that of the Truth-Consciousness, the divine Gnosis, but still, though wonderfully freed, uplifted and illumined, supports only the present self-expression of the Cosmic Spirit and does not transform, as would a transcendental Descent, the ambiguous symbols and veiled mysteries of a world of Ignorance. Ourselves are free, but the earth-consciousness remains in bondage; only a further transcendental ascent and descent can entirely heal the contradiction and transform and deliver.

For there is yet a third intensely close and personal aspect of the Master of Works which is a key to his sublimest hidden mystery and ecstasy; for he detaches from the secret of the hidden Transcendence and the ambiguous display of the cosmic Movement an individual Power of the Divine that can mediate between the two and bridge our passage from the one to the other. In this aspect the transcendent and universal person of the Divine conforms itself to our individualised personality and accepts a personal relation with us, at once identified with us as our supreme Self and yet close and different as our Master, Friend, Lover, Teacher, our Father and our Mother, our Playmate in the great world-game who has disguised himself throughout as friend and enemy, helper and opponent and, in all relations and in all workings that affect us, has led our steps towards our perfection and our release. It is through this more personal manifestation that we are admitted to some possibility of the complete transcendental experience; for in him we meet the One not merely in a liberated calm and peace, not merely with a passive or active submission in our works or through the mystery of union with a universal Knowledge and Power filling and guiding us, but with an ecstasy of divine Love and divine Delight that shoots up beyond silent Witness and active World-Power to some positive divination of a greater beatific secret. For it is not so much knowledge leading to some ineffable Absolute, not so much works lifting us beyond world-process to the originating supreme Knower and Master, but rather this thing most intimate to us, yet at present most obscure, which keeps for us wrapped in its passionate veil the deep and rapturous secret of the transcendent Godhead and some absolute positiveness of its perfect Being, its all-concentrating Bliss, its mystic Ananda.

But the individual relation with the Divine does not always or from the beginning bring into force a widest enlargement or a highest self-exceeding. At first this Godhead close to our being or immanent within us can be felt fully only in the scope of our personal nature and experience, a Leader and Master, a Guide and Teacher, a Friend and Lover, or else a spirit, power or presence, constituting and uplifting our upward and enlarging movement by the force of his intimate reality inhabiting the heart or presiding over our nature from above even our highest intelligence. It is our personal evolution that is his preoccupation, a personal relation with him that is our joy and fulfilment, the building of our nature into his divine image that is our self-finding and perfection. The outside world seems to exist only as a field for this growth and a provider of materials or of helping and opposing forces for its successive stages. Our works done in that world are his works, but even when they serve some temporary universal end, their main purpose for us is to make outwardly dynamic or give inward power to our relations with this immanent Divine. Many seekers ask for no more or see the continuation and fulfilment of this spiritual flowering only in heavens beyond; the union is consummated and made perpetual in an eternal dwelling-place of his perfection, joy and beauty. But this is not enough for the integral seeker; however intense and beautiful, a personal isolated achievement cannot be his sole aim or his entire experience. A time must come when the personal opens out into the universal; our very individuality, spiritual, mental, vital, physical even, becomes universalised: it is seen as a power of his universal force and cosmic spirit, or else it contains the universe in that ineffable wideness which comes to the individual consciousness when it breaks its bonds and flows upward towards the Transcendent and on every side into the Infinite.

⁂

In a Yoga lived entirely on the spiritualised mental plane it is possible and even usual for these three fundamental aspects of the Divine — the Individual or Immanent, the Cosmic and the Transcendent — to stand out as separate realisations. Each by itself then appears sufficient to satisfy the yearning of the seeker. Alone with the personal Divine in the inner heart's illumined secret chamber, he can build his being into the Beloved's image and ascend out of fallen Nature to dwell with him in some heaven of the Spirit. Absolved in the cosmic wideness, released from ego, his personality reduced to a point of working of the universal Force, himself calm, liberated, deathless in universality, motionless in the Witness Self even while outspread without limit in unending Space and Time, he can enjoy in the world the freedom of the Timeless. One-pointed towards some ineffable Transcendence, casting away his personality, shedding from him the labour and trouble of the universal Dynamis, he can escape into an inexpressible Nirvana, annul all things in an intolerant exaltation of flight into the Incommunicable.

But none of these achievements is enough for one who seeks the wide completeness of an integral Yoga. An individual salvation is not enough for him; for he finds himself opening to a cosmic consciousness which far exceeds by its breadth and vastness the narrower intensity of a limited individual fulfilment, and its call is imperative; driven by that immense compulsion, he must break through all separative boundaries, spread himself in world-Nature, contain the universe. Above too, there is urgent upon him a dynamic realisation pressing from the Supreme upon this world of beings, and only some encompassing and exceeding of the cosmic consciousness can release into manifestation here that yet unlavished splendour. But the cosmic consciousness too is not sufficient; for it is not all the Divine Reality, not integral. There is a divine secret behind personality that he must discover; there, waiting in it to be delivered here into Time, stands the mystery of the embodiment of the Transcendence. In the cosmic consciousness there remains at the end a hiatus, an unequal equation of a highest Knowledge that can liberate but not effectuate with a Power seeming to use a limited Knowledge or masking itself with a surface Ignorance that can create but creates imperfection or a perfection transient, limited and in fetters. On one side there is a free undynamic Witness and on the other side a bound Executrix of action who has not been given all the means of action. The reconciliation of these companions and opposites seems to be reserved, postponed, held back in an Unmanifest still beyond us. But, again, a mere escape into some absolute Transcendence leaves personality unfulfilled and the universal action inconclusive and cannot satisfy the integral seeker. He feels that the Truth that is for ever is a Power that creates as well as a stable Existence; it is not a Power solely of illusory or ignorant manifestation. The eternal Truth can manifest its truths in Time; it can create in Knowledge and not only in Inconscience and Ignorance. A divine Descent no less than an ascent to the Divine is possible; there is a prospect of the bringing down of a future perfection and a present deliverance. As his knowledge widens, it becomes for him more and more evident that it was this for which the Master of Works cast down the soul within him here as a spark of his fire into the darkness, that it might grow there into a centre of the Light that is for ever.

The Transcendent, the Universal, the Individual are three powers overarching, underlying and penetrating the whole manifestation; this is the first of the Trinities. In the unfolding of consciousness also, these are the three fundamental terms and none of them can be neglected if we would have the experience of the whole Truth of existence. Out of the individual we wake into a vaster freer cosmic consciousness; but out of the universal too with its complex of forms and powers we must emerge by a still greater self-exceeding into a consciousness without limits that is founded on the Absolute. And yet in this ascension we do not really abolish but take up and transfigure what we seem to leave; for there is a height where the three live eternally in each other, on that height they are blissfully joined in a nodus of their harmonised oneness. But that summit is above the highest and largest spiritualised mentality, even if some reflection of it can be experienced there; mind, to attain to it, to live there, must exceed itself and be transformed into a supramental gnostic light, power and substance. In this lower diminished consciousness a harmony can indeed be attempted, but it must always remain imperfect; a coordination is possible, not a simultaneous fused fulfilment. An ascent out of the mind is, for any greater realisation, imperative. Or else, there must be, with the ascent or consequent to it, a dynamic descent of the self-existent Truth that exists always uplifted in its own light above Mind, eternal, prior to the manifestation of Life and Matter.

For Mind is Maya, *sat-asat*: there is a field of embrace of the true and the false, the existent and the non-existent, and it is in that ambiguous field that Mind seems to reign; but even in its own reign it is in truth a diminished consciousness, it is not part of the original and supremely originating power of the Eternal. Even if Mind is able to reflect some image of essential Truth in its substance, yet the dynamic force and action of Truth appears in it always broken and divided. All Mind can do is to piece together the fragments or deduce a unity; truth of Mind is only a half-truth or a portion of a puzzle. Mental knowledge is always relative, partial and inconclusive, and its outgoing action and creation come out still more confused in its steps or precise only in narrow limits and by imperfect piecings together. Even in this diminished consciousness the Divine manifests as a Spirit in Mind, just as he moves as a Spirit in Life or dwells still more obscurely as a Spirit in Matter; but not here is his full dynamic revelation, not here the perfect identities of the Eternal. Only when we cross the border into a larger luminous consciousness and self-aware substance where divine Truth is a native and not a stranger, will there be revealed to us the Master of our existence in the imperishable integral truth of his being and his powers and his workings. Only there, too, will his works in us assume the flawless movement of his unfailing supramental purpose.

*
* *

But that is the end of a long and difficult journey, and the Master of works does not wait till then to meet the seeker on the path of Yoga and put his secret or half-shown Hand upon him and upon his life and actions. Already he was there in the world as the Originator and Receiver of works behind the dense veils of the Inconscient, disguised in force of Life, visible to the Mind through symbol godheads and figures. It may well be in these disguises that he first meets the soul destined to the way of the integral Yoga. Or even, wearing still vaguer masks, he may be conceived by us as an Ideal or mentalised as an abstract Power of Love, Good, Beauty or Knowledge; or, as we turn our feet towards the Way, he may come to us veiled as the call of Humanity or a Will in things that drives towards the deliverance of the world from the grasp of Darkness and Falsehood and Death and Suffering — the great quaternary of the Ignorance. Then, after we have entered the path, he envelops us with his wide and mighty liberating Impersonality or moves near to us with the face and form of a personal Godhead. In and around us we feel a Power that upholds and protects and cherishes; we hear a Voice that guides; a conscious Will greater than ourselves rules us; an imperative Force moves our thought and actions and our very body; an ever-widening Consciousness assimilates ours, a living Light of Knowledge lights all within, or a Beatitude invades us; a Mightiness presses from above, concrete, massive and overpowering, and penetrates and pours itself into the very stuff of our nature; a Peace sits there, a Light, a Bliss, a Strength, a Greatness. Or there are relations, personal, intimate as life itself, sweet as love, encompassing like the sky, deep like deep waters. A Friend walks at our side; a Lover is with us in our heart's secrecy; a Master of the Work and the Ordeal points our way; a Creator of things uses us as his instrument; we are in the arms of the eternal Mother. All these more seizable aspects in which the Ineffable meets us are truths and not mere helpful symbols or useful imaginations; but as we progress, their first imperfect formulations in our experience yield to a larger vision of the one Truth that is behind them. At each step their mere mental masks are shed and they acquire a larger, a profounder, a more intimate significance. At last on the supramental borders all these Godheads combine their forces and, without at all ceasing to be, coalesce together. On this path the Divine Aspects are not revealed in order to be cast away; they are not temporary spiritual conveniences or compromises with an illusory Consciousness or dream-figures mysteriously cast upon us by the incommunicable superconscience of the Absolute; on the contrary, their power increases and their absoluteness reveals itself as they draw near to the Truth from which they issue.

For that now superconscient Transcendence is a Power as well as an Existence. The supramental Transcendence is not a vacant Wonder, but an Inexpressible which contains for ever all essential things that have issued from it; it holds them there in their supreme everlasting reality and their own characteristic absolutes. The diminution, division, degradation that create here the sense of an unsatisfactory puzzle, a mystery of Maya, themselves diminish and fall from us in our ascension, and the Divine Powers assume their real forms and appear more and more as the terms of a Truth in process of realisation here. A soul of the Divine is here slowly awaking out of its involution and concealment in the material Inconscience. The Master of our works is not a Master of illusions, but a supreme Reality who is working out his self-expressive realities delivered slowly from the cocoons of the Ignorance in which for the purposes of an evolutionary manifestation they were allowed for a while to slumber. For the supramental Transcendence is not a thing absolutely apart and unconnected with our present existence. It is a greater Light out of which all this has come for the adventure of the Soul lapsing into the Inconscience and emerging out of it, and, while that adventure proceeds, it waits superconscient above our minds till it can become conscious in us. Hereafter it will unveil itself and by the unveiling reveal to us all the significance of our own being and our works; for it will disclose the Divine whose fuller manifestation in the world will release and accomplish that covert significance.

In that disclosure the Transcendent Divine will be more and more made known to us as the Supreme Existence and the Perfect Source of all that we are; but equally we shall see him as a Master of works and creation prepared to pour out more and more of himself into the field of his manifestation. The cosmic consciousness and its action will appear no longer as a huge regulated Chance, but as a field of the manifestation; there the Divine is seen as a presiding and pervading Cosmic Spirit who receives all out of the Transcendence and develops what descends into forms that are now an opaque disguise or a baffling half-disguise, but destined to be a transparent revelation. The individual consciousness will recover its true sense and action; for it is the form of a Soul sent out from the Supreme and, in spite of all appearances, a nucleus or nebula in which the Divine Mother-Force is at work for the victorious embodiment of the timeless and formless Divine in Time and Matter. This will reveal itself slowly to our vision and experience as the will of the Master of works and as their own ultimate significance, which alone gives to world-creation and to our own action in the world a light and a meaning. To recognise that and to strive towards its effectuation is the whole burden of the Way of Divine Works in the integral Yoga.

Chapter XII

The Divine Work

ONE QUESTION remains for the seeker upon the way of works, when his quest is or seems to have come to its natural end, — whether any work or what work is left for the soul after liberation and to what purpose? Equality has been seated in the nature or governs the whole nature; there has been achieved a radical deliverance from the ego-idea, from the pervading ego-sense, from all feelings and impulsions of the ego and its self-will and desires. The entire self-consecration has been made not only in thought and heart but in all the complexities of the being. A complete purity or transcendence of the three gunas has been harmoniously established. The soul has seen the Master of its works and lives in his presence or is consciously contained in his being or is unified with him or feels him in the heart or above and obeys his dictates. It has known its true being and cast away the veil of the Ignorance. What work then remains for the worker in man and with what motive, to what end, in what spirit will it be done?

⁂

There is one answer with which we are very familiar in India; no work at all remains, for the rest is quiescence. When the soul can live in the eternal presence of the Supreme or when it is unified with the Absolute, the object of our existence in the world, if it can be said to have an object, at once ceases. Man, released from the curse of self-division and the curse of Ignorance, is released too from that other affliction, the curse of works. All action would then be a derogation from the supreme state and a return into the Ignorance. This attitude towards life is supported by an idea founded on the error of the vital nature to which action is dictated only by one or all of three inferior motives, necessity, restless instinct and impulse or desire. The instinct or impulse quiescent, desire extinguished, what place is there for works? Some mechanical necessity might remain but no other, and even that would cease for ever with the fall of the body. But after all, even so, while life remains, action is unavoidable. Mere thinking or, in the absence of thought, mere living is itself an act and a cause of many effects. All existence in the world is work, force, potency, and has a dynamic effect in the whole by its mere presence, even the inertia of the clod, even the silence of the immobile Buddha on the verge of Nirvana. There is the question only of the manner of the action, the instruments that are used or that act of themselves, and the spirit and knowledge of the worker. For in reality, no man works, but Nature works through him for the self-expression of a Power within that proceeds from the Infinite. To know that and live in the presence and in the being of the Master of Nature, free from desire and the illusion of personal impulsion, is the one thing needful. That and not the bodily cessation of action is the true release; for the bondage of works at once ceases. A man might sit still and motionless for ever and yet be as much bound to the Ignorance as the animal or the insect. But if he can make this greater consciousness dynamic within him, then all the work of all the worlds could pass through him and yet he would remain at rest, absolute in calm and peace, free from all bondage. Action in the world is given us first as a means for our self-development and self-fulfilment; but even if we reached a last possible divine self-completeness, it would still remain as a means for the fulfilment of the divine intention in the world and of the larger universal self of which each being is a portion — a portion that has come down with it from the Transcendence.

In a certain sense, when his Yoga has reached a certain culmination, works cease for a man; for he has no further personal necessity of works, no sense of works being done by him; but there is no need to flee from action or to take refuge in a blissful inertia. For now he acts as the Divine Existence acts without any binding necessity and without any compelling ignorance. Even in doing works *he* does not work at all; he undertakes no personal initiative. It is the Divine Shakti that works in him through his nature; his action develops through the spontaneity of a supreme Force by which his instruments are possessed, of which he is a part, with whose will his will is identical and his power is her power. The spirit within him contains, supports and watches this action; it presides over it in knowledge but is not glued or clamped to the work by attachment or need, is not bound by desire of its fruit, is not enslaved to any movement or impulse.

It is a common error to suppose that action is impossible or at least meaningless without desire. If desire ceases, we are told, action also must cease. But this, like other too simply comprehensive generalisations, is more attractive to the cutting and defining mind than true. The major part of the work done in the universe is accomplished without any interference of desire; it proceeds by the calm necessity and spontaneous law of Nature. Even man constantly does work of various kinds by a spontaneous impulse, intuition, instinct or acts in obedience to a natural necessity and law of forces without either mental planning or the urge of a conscious vital volition or emotional desire. Often enough his act is contrary to his intention or his desire; it proceeds out of him in subjection to a need or compulsion, in submission to an impulse, in obedience to a force in him that pushes for self-expression or in conscious pursuance of a higher principle. Desire is an additional lure to which Nature has given a great part in the life of animated beings in order to produce a certain kind of rajasic action necessary for her intermediate ends; but it is not her sole or even her chief engine. It has its great use while it endures: it helps us to rise out of inertia, it contradicts many tamasic forces which would otherwise inhibit action. But the seeker who has advanced far on the way of works has passed beyond this intermediate stage in which desire is a helpful engine. Its push is no longer indispensable for his action, but is rather a terrible hindrance and source of stumbling, inefficiency and failure. Others are obliged to obey a personal choice or motive, but he has to learn to act with an impersonal or a universal mind or as a part or an instrument of an infinite Person. A calm indifference, a joyful impartiality or a blissful response to a divine Force, whatever its dictate, is the condition of his doing any effective work or undertaking any worth-while action. Not desire, not attachment must drive him, but a Will that stirs in a divine peace, a Knowledge that moves from the transcendent Light, a glad Impulse that is a force from the supreme Ananda.

⁂

In an advanced stage of the Yoga it is indifferent to the seeker, in the sense of any personal preference, what action he shall do or not do; even whether he shall act or not, is not decided by his personal choice or pleasure. Always he is moved to do whatever is in consonance with the Truth or whatever the Divine demands through his nature. A false conclusion is sometimes drawn from this that the spiritual man, accepting the position in which Fate or God or his past Karma has placed him, content to work in the field and cadre of the family, clan, caste, nation, occupation which are his by birth and circumstance, will not and even perhaps ought not to make any movement to exceed them or to pursue any great mundane end. Since he has really no work to do, since he has only to use works, no matter what works, as long as he is in the body in order to arrive at liberation or, having arrived, only to obey the supreme Will and do whatever it dictates, the actual field given him is sufficient for the purpose. Once free, he has only to continue working in the sphere assigned to him by Fate and circumstances till the great hour arrives when he can at last disappear into the Infinite. To insist on any particular end or to work for some great mundane object is to fall into the illusion of works; it is to entertain the error that terrestrial life has an intelligible intention and contains objects worthy of pursuit. The great theory of Illusion, which is a practical denial of the Divine in the world, even when in idea it acknowledges the Presence, is once more before us. But the Divine is here in the world, — not only in status but in dynamis, not only as a spiritual self and presence but as power, force, energy, — and therefore a divine work in the world is possible.

There is no narrow principle, no field of cabined action that can be imposed on the Karmayogin as his rule or his province. This much is true that every kind of works, whether small to man's imagination or great, petty in scope or wide, can be equally used in the progress towards liberation or for self-discipline. This much is also true that after liberation a man may dwell in any sphere of life and in any kind of action and fulfil there his existence in the Divine. According as he is moved by the Spirit, he may remain in the sphere assigned to him by birth and circumstances or break that framework and go forth to an untrammelled action which shall be the fitting body of his greatened consciousness and higher knowledge. To the outward eyes of men the inner liberation may make no apparent difference in his outward acts; or, on the contrary, the freedom and infinity within may translate itself into an outward dynamic working so large and new that all regards are drawn by this novel force. If such be the intention of the Supreme within him, the liberated soul may be content with a subtle and limited action within the old human surroundings which will in no way seek to change their outward appearance. But it may too be called to a work which will not only alter the forms and sphere of its own external life but, leaving nothing around it unchanged or unaffected, create a new world or a new order.

⁂

A prevalent idea would persuade us that the sole aim of liberation is to secure for the individual soul freedom from physical rebirth in the unstable life of the universe. If this freedom is once assured, there is no further work for it in life here or elsewhere or only that which the continued existence of the body demands or the unfulfilled effects of past lives necessitate. This little, rapidly exhausted or consumed by the fire of Yoga, will cease with the departure of the released soul from the body. The aim of escape from rebirth, now long fixed in the Indian mentality as the highest object of the soul, has replaced the enjoyment of a heaven beyond fixed in the mentality of the devout by many religions as their divine lure. Indian religion also upheld that earlier and lower call when the gross external interpretation of the Vedic hymns was the dominant creed, and the dualists in later India also have kept that as part of their supreme spiritual motive. Undoubtedly a release from the limitations of the mind and body into an eternal peace, rest, silence of the Spirit, makes a higher appeal than the offer of a heaven of mental joys or eternised physical pleasures, but this too after all is a lure; its insistence on the mind's world-weariness, the life-being's shrinking from the adventure of birth, strikes a chord of weakness and cannot be the supreme motive. The desire of personal salvation, however high its form, is an outcome of ego; it rests on the idea of our own individuality and its desire for its personal good or welfare, its longing for a release from suffering or its cry for the extinction of the trouble of becoming and makes that the supreme aim of our existence. To rise beyond the desire of personal salvation is necessary for the complete rejection of this basis of ego. If we seek the Divine, it should be for the sake of the Divine and for nothing else, because that is the supreme call of our being, the deepest truth of the spirit. The pursuit of liberation, of the soul's freedom, of the realisation of our true and highest self, of union with the Divine, is justified only because it is the highest law of our nature, because it is the attraction of that which is lower in us to that which is highest, because it is the Divine Will in us. That is its sufficient justification and its one truest reason; all other motives are excrescences, minor or incidental truths or useful lures which the soul must abandon, the moment their utility has passed and the state of oneness with the Supreme and with all beings has become our normal consciousness and the bliss of that state our spiritual atmosphere.

Often, we see this desire of personal salvation overcome by another attraction which also belongs to the higher turn of our nature and which indicates the essential character of the action the liberated soul must pursue. It is that which is implied in the great legend of the Amitabha Buddha who turned away when his spirit was on the threshold of Nirvana and took the vow never to cross it while a single being remained in the sorrow and the Ignorance. It is that which underlies the sublime verse of the Bhagavata Purana, "I desire not the supreme state with all its eight siddhis nor the cessation of rebirth; may I assume the sorrow of all creatures who suffer and enter into them so that they may be made free from grief." It is that which inspires a remarkable passage in a letter of Swami Vivekananda. "I have lost all wish for my salvation," wrote the great Vedantin, "may I be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum-total of all souls, — and above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species is the special object of my worship. He who is the high and low, the saint and the sinner, the god and the worm, Him worship, the visible, the knowable, the real, the omnipresent; break all other idols. In whom there is neither past life nor future birth, nor death nor going nor coming, in whom we always have been and always will be one, Him worship; break all other idols."

The last two sentences contain indeed the whole gist of the matter. The true salvation or the true freedom from the chain of rebirth is not the rejection of terrestrial life or the individual's escape by a spiritual self-annihilation, even as the true renunciation is not the mere physical abandonment of family and society; it is the inner identification with the Divine in whom there is no limitation of past life and future birth but instead the eternal existence of the unborn Soul. He who is free inwardly, even doing actions, does nothing at all, says the Gita; for it is Nature that works in him under the control of the Lord of Nature. Equally, even if he assumes a hundred times the body, he is free from any chain of birth or mechanical wheel of existence since he lives in the unborn and undying spirit and not in the life of the body. Therefore attachment to the escape from rebirth is one of the idols which, whoever keeps, the sadhaka of the integral Yoga must break and cast away from him. For his Yoga is not limited to the realisation of the Transcendent beyond all world by the individual soul; it embraces also the realisation of the Universal, "the sum-total of all souls", and cannot therefore be confined to the movement of a personal salvation and escape.

Even in his transcendence of cosmic limitations he is still one with all in God; a divine work remains for him in the universe.

⁂

That work cannot be fixed by any mind-made rule or human standard; for his consciousness has moved away from human law and limits and passed into the divine liberty, away from government by the external and transient into the self-rule of the inner and eternal, away from the binding forms of the finite into the free self-determination of the Infinite. "Howsoever he lives and acts," says the Gita, "he lives and acts in Me." The rules which the intellect of men lays down cannot apply to the liberated soul, — by the external criteria and tests which their mental associations and prejudgments prescribe, such a one cannot be judged; he is outside the narrow jurisdiction of these fallible tribunals. It is immaterial whether he wears the garb of the ascetic or lives the full life of the householder; whether he spends his days in what men call holy works or in the many-sided activities of the world; whether he devotes himself to the direct leading of men to the Light like Buddha, Christ or Shankara or governs kingdoms like Janaka or stands before men like Sri Krishna as a politician or a leader of armies; what he eats or drinks; what are his habits or his pursuits; whether he fails or succeeds; whether his work be one of construction or of destruction; whether he supports or restores an old order or labours to replace it by a new; whether his associates are those whom men delight to honour or those whom their sense of superior righteousness outcastes and reprobates; whether his life and deeds are approved by his contemporaries or he is condemned as a misleader of men and a fomenter of religious, moral or social heresies. He is not governed by the judgments of men or the laws laid down by the ignorant; he obeys an inner voice and is moved by an unseen Power. His real life is within and this is its description that he lives, moves and acts in God, in the Divine, in the Infinite.

But if his action is governed by no external rule, one rule it will observe that is not external; it will be dictated by no personal desire or aim, but will be a part of a conscious and eventually a well-ordered because self-ordered divine working in the world. The Gita declares that the action of the liberated man must be directed not by desire, but towards the keeping together of the world, its government, guidance, impulsion, maintenance in the path appointed to it. This injunction has been interpreted in the sense that the world being an illusion in which most men must be kept, since they are unfit for liberation, he must so act outwardly as to cherish in them an attachment to their customary works laid down for them by the social law. If so, it would be a poor and petty rule and every noble heart would reject it to follow rather the divine vow of Amitabha Buddha, the sublime prayer of the Bhagavata, the passionate aspiration of Vivekananda. But if we accept rather the view that the world is a divinely guided movement of Nature emerging in man towards God and that this is the work in which the Lord of the Gita declares that he is ever occupied although he himself has nothing ungained that he has yet to win, then a deep and true sense will appear for this great injunction. To participate in that divine work, to live for God in the world will be the rule of the Karmayogin; to live for God in the world and therefore so to act that the Divine may more and more manifest himself and the world go forward by whatever way of its obscure pilgrimage and move nearer to the divine ideal.

How he shall do this, in what particular way, can be decided by no general rule. It must develop or define itself from within; the decision lies between God and our self, the Supreme Self and the individual self that is the instrument of the work; even before liberation, it is from the inner self, as soon as we become conscious of it, that there rises the sanction, the spiritually determined choice. It is altogether from within that must come the knowledge of the work that has to be done. There is no particular work, no law or form or outwardly fixed or invariable way of works which can be said to be that of the liberated being. The phrase used in the Gita to express this work that has to be done has indeed been interpreted in the sense that we must do our duty without regard to the fruit. But this is a conception born of European culture which is ethical rather than spiritual and external rather than inwardly profound in its concepts. No such general thing as duty exists; we have only duties, often in conflict with each other, and these are determined by our environment, our social relations, our external status in life. They are of great value in training the immature moral nature and setting up a standard which discourages the action of selfish desire. It has already been said that so long as the seeker has no inner light, he must govern himself by the best light he has, and duty, a principle, a cause are among the standards he may temporarily erect and observe. But for all that, duties are external things, not stuff of the soul and cannot be the ultimate standard of action in this path. It is the duty of the soldier to fight when called upon, even to fire upon his own kith and kin; but such a standard or any akin to it cannot be imposed on the liberated man. On the other hand, to love or have compassion, to obey the highest truth of our being, to follow the command of the Divine are not duties; these things are a law of the nature as it rises towards the Divine, an outflowing of action from a soul-state, a high reality of the spirit. The action of the liberated doer of works must be even such an outflowing from the soul; it must come to him or out of him as a natural result of his spiritual union with the Divine and not be formed by an edifying construction of the mental thought and will, the practical reason or the social sense. In the ordinary life a personal, social or traditional constructed rule, standard or ideal is the guide; once the spiritual journey has begun, this must be replaced by an inner and outer rule or way of living necessary for our self-discipline, liberation and perfection, a way of living proper to the path we follow or enjoined by the spiritual guide and master, the Guru, or else dictated by a Guide within us. But in the last state of the soul's infinity and freedom all outward standards are replaced or laid aside and there is left only a spontaneous and integral obedience to the Divine with whom we are in union and an action spontaneously fulfilling the integral spiritual truth of our being and nature.

⁂

It is this deeper sense in which we must accept the dictum of the Gita that action determined and governed by the nature must be our law of works. It is not, certainly, the superficial temperament or the character or habitual impulses that are meant, but in the literal sense of the Sanskrit word our "own being", our essential nature, the divine stuff of our souls. Whatever springs from this root or flows from these sources is profound, essential, right; the rest — opinions, impulses, habits, desires — may be merely surface formations or casual vagaries of the being or impositions from outside. They shift and change, but this remains constant. It is not the executive forms taken by Nature in us that are ourselves or the abidingly constant and expressive shape of ourselves; it is the spiritual being in us — and this includes the soul-becoming of it — that persists through time in the universe.

We cannot, however, easily distinguish this true inner law of our being; it is kept screened from us so long as the heart and intellect remain unpurified from egoism: till then we follow superficial and impermanent ideas, impulses, desires, suggestions and impositions of all kinds from our environment or work out formations of our temporary mental, vital, physical personality — that passing experimental and structural self which has been made for us by an interaction between our being and the pressure of a lower cosmic Nature. In proportion as we are purified, the true being within declares itself more clearly; our will is less entangled in suggestions from outside or shut up in our own superficial mental constructions. Egoism renounced, the nature purified, action will come from the soul's dictates, from the depths or the heights of the spirit, or it will be openly governed by the Lord who was all the time seated secretly within our hearts. The supreme and final word of the Gita for the Yogin is that he should leave all conventional formulas of belief and action, all fixed and external rules of conduct, all constructions of the outward or surface Nature, *dharmas*, and take refuge in the Divine alone. Free from desire and attachment, one with all beings, living in the infinite Truth and Purity and acting out of the profoundest deeps of his inner consciousness, governed by his immortal, divine and highest Self, all his works will be directed by the Power within through that essential spirit and nature in us which, knowing, warring, working, loving, serving, is always divine, towards the fulfilment of God in the world, an expression of the Eternal in Time.

A divine action arising spontaneously, freely, infallibly from the light and force of our spiritual self in union with the Divine is the last state of this integral Yoga of Works. The truest reason why we must seek liberation is not to be delivered, individually, from the sorrow of the world, though that deliverance too will be given to us, but that we may be one with the Divine, the Supreme, the Eternal. The truest reason why we must seek perfection, a supreme status, purity, knowledge, strength, love, capacity, is not that personally we may enjoy the divine Nature or be even as the gods, though that enjoyment too will be ours, but because this liberation and perfection are the divine Will in us, the highest truth of our self in Nature, the always intended goal of a progressive manifestation in the universe. The divine Nature, free and perfect and blissful, must be manifested in the individual in order that it may manifest in the world. Even in the Ignorance the individual lives really in the universal and for the universal Purpose, for in the very act of pursuing the purposes and desires of his ego, he is forced by Nature to contribute by his egoistic action to her work and purpose in the worlds; but it is without conscious intention, imperfectly done, and his contribution is to her half-evolved and half-conscient, her imperfect and crude movement. To escape from ego and be united with the Divine is at once the liberation and the consummation of his individuality; so liberated, purified, perfected, the individual — the divine soul — lives consciously and entirely, as was from the first intended, in and for the cosmic and transcendent Divine and for his Will in the universe.

In the Way of Knowledge we may arrive at a point where we can leap out of personality and universe, escape from all thought and will and works and all way of Nature and, absorbed and taken up into Eternity, plunge into the Transcendence; that, though not obligatory on the God-knower, may be the soul's decision, the turn pursued by the self within us. In the Way of

Devotion we may reach through an intensity of adoration and joy union with the supreme All-Beloved and remain eternally in the ecstasy of his presence, absorbed in him alone, intimately in one world of bliss with him; that then may be our being's impulsion, its spiritual choice. But in the Way of Works another prospect opens; for travelling on that path, we can enter into liberation and perfection by becoming of one law and power of nature with the Eternal; we are identified with him in our will and dynamic self as much as in our spiritual status; a divine way of works is the natural outcome of this union, a divine living in a spiritual freedom the body of its self-expression. In the Integral Yoga these three lines of approach give up their exclusions, meet and coalesce or spring out of each other; liberated from the mind's veil over the self, we live in the Transcendence, enter by the adoration of the heart into the oneness of a supreme love and bliss, and all our forces of being uplifted into the one Force, our will and works surrendered into the one Will and Power, assume the dynamic perfection of the divine Nature.

Appendix
to Part I

The following chapter was left unfinished. It was not included in the edition of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Part I, that was published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime.

Chapter XIII

The Supermind and the Yoga of Works

AN INTEGRAL Yoga includes as a vital and indispensable element in its total and ultimate aim the conversion of the whole being into a higher spiritual consciousness and a larger divine existence. Our parts of will and action, our parts of knowledge, our thinking being, our emotional being, our being of life, all our self and nature must seek the Divine, enter into the Infinite, unite with the Eternal. But man's present nature is limited, divided, unequal, — it is easiest for him to concentrate in the strongest part of his being and follow a definite line of progress proper to his nature: only rare individuals have the strength to take a large immediate plunge straight into the sea of the Divine Infinity. Some therefore must choose as a starting-point a concentration in thought or contemplation or the mind's one-pointedness to find the eternal reality of the Self in them; others can more easily withdraw into the heart to meet there the Divine, the Eternal: yet others are predominantly dynamic and active; for these it is best to centre themselves in the will and enlarge their being through works. United with the Self and source of all by their surrender of their will into its infinity, guided in their works by the secret Divinity within or surrendered to the Lord of the cosmic action as the master and mover of all their energies of thought, feeling, act, becoming by this enlargement of being selfless and universal, they can reach by works some first fullness of a spiritual status. But the path, whatever its point of starting, must debouch into a vaster dominion; it must proceed in the end through a totality of integrated knowledge, emotion, will of dynamic action, perfection of the being and the entire nature. In the supramental consciousness, on the level of the supramental existence this integration becomes consummate;

there knowledge, will, emotion, the perfection of the self and the dynamic nature rise each to its absolute of itself and all to their perfect harmony and fusion with each other, to a divine integrality, a divine perfection. For the supermind is a Truth-Consciousness in which the Divine Reality, fully manifested, no longer works with the instrumentation of the Ignorance; a truth of status of being which is absolute becomes dynamic in a truth of energy and activity of the being which is self-existent and perfect. Every movement there is a movement of the self-aware truth of Divine Being and every part is in entire harmony with the whole. Even the most limited and finite action is in the Truth-Consciousness a movement of the Eternal and Infinite and partakes of the inherent absoluteness and perfection of the Eternal and Infinite. An ascent into the supramental Truth not only raises our spiritual and essential consciousness to that height but brings about a descent of this Light and Truth into all our being and all our parts of nature. All then becomes part of the Divine Truth, an element and means of the supreme union and oneness; this ascent and descent must be therefore an ultimate aim of this Yoga.

A union with the Divine Reality of our being and all being is the one essential object of the Yoga. It is necessary to keep this in mind; we must remember that our Yoga is not undertaken for the sake of the acquisition of supermind itself but for the sake of the Divine; we seek the supermind not for its own joy and greatness but to make the union absolute and complete, to feel it, possess it, dynamise it in every possible way of our being, in its highest intensities and largest widenesses and in every range and turn and nook and recess of our nature. It is a mistake to think, as many are apt to think, that the object of a supramental Yoga is to arrive at a mighty magnificence of supermanhood, a divine power and greatness, the self-fulfilment of a magnified individual personality. This is a false and disastrous conception, — disastrous because it is likely to raise the pride, vanity and ambition of the rajasic vital mind in us and that, if not overpassed and overcome, must lead to spiritual downfall, false because it is an egoistic conception and the first condition of the supramental change is to get rid of ego. It is most dangerous for the active and dynamic nature of the man of will and works which can easily be led away by the pursuit of power. Power comes inevitably by the supramental change, it is a necessary condition for a perfect action: but it is the Divine Shakti that comes and takes up the nature and the life, the power of the One acting through the spiritual individual; it is not an aggrandisement of the personal force, not the last crowning fulfilment of the separative mental and vital ego. Self-fulfilment is a result of the Yoga, but its aim is not the greatness of the individual. The sole aim is a spiritual perfection, a finding of the true self and a union with the Divine by putting on the divine consciousness and nature.[1] All the rest is constituent detail and attendant circumstance. Ego-centric impulses, ambition, desire of power and greatness, motives of self-assertion are foreign to this greater consciousness and would be an insuperable bar against any possibility of even a distant approach towards the supramental change. One must lose one's little lower self to find the greater self. Union with the Divine must be the master motive; even the discovery of the truth of one's own being and of all being, life in that truth and its greater consciousness, perfection of the nature are only the natural results of that movement. Indispensable conditions of its entire consummation, they are part of the central aim only because they are a necessary development and a major consequence.

It must also be kept in mind that the supramental change is difficult, distant, an ultimate stage; it must be regarded as the end of a far-off vista; it cannot be and must not be turned into a first aim, a constantly envisaged goal or an immediate objective. For it can only come into the view of possibility after much arduous self-conquest and self-exceeding, at the end of many long and trying stages of a difficult self-evolution of the nature. One must first acquire an inner Yogic consciousness and replace by it our ordinary view of things, natural movements, motives of life; one must revolutionise the whole present build of our being. Next, we have to go still deeper, discover our veiled psychic entity and in its light and under its government psychicise our inner and outer parts, turn mind-nature, life-nature, body-nature and all our mental, vital, physical action and states and movements into a conscious instrumentation of the soul. Afterwards or concurrently we have to spiritualise the being in its entirety by a descent of a divine Light, Force, Purity, Knowledge, freedom and wideness. It is necessary to break down the limits of the personal mind, life and physicality, dissolve the ego, enter into the cosmic consciousness, realise the self, acquire a spiritualised and universalised mind and heart, life-force, physical consciousness. Then only the passage into supramental consciousness begins to become possible, and even then there is a difficult ascent to make each stage of which is a separate arduous achievement. Yoga is a rapid and concentrated conscious evolution of the being, but however rapid, even though it may effect in a single life what in an unassisted Nature might take centuries and millenniums or many hundreds of lives, still all evolution must move by stages; even the greatest rapidity and concentration of the movement cannot swallow up all the stages or reverse natural process and bring the end near to the beginning. A hasty and ignorant mind, a too eager force easily forget this necessity; they rush forward to make the supermind an immediate aim and expect to pull it down with a pitchfork from its highest heights in the Infinite. This is not only an absurd expectation but full of danger. For the vital desire may very well bring in an action of dark or vehement vital powers which hold out before it a promise of immediate fulfilment of its impossible longing; the consequence is likely to be a plunge into many kinds of self-deception, a yielding to the falsehoods and temptations of the forces of darkness, a hunt for supernormal powers, a turning away from the Divine to the Asuric nature, a fatal self-inflation into an unnatural unhuman and undivine bigness of magnified ego. If the being is small, the nature weak and incapable, there is not this large-scale disaster; but a loss of balance, a mental unhinging and fall into unreason or a vital unhinging and consequent moral aberration or a deviation into some kind of morbid abnormality of the nature may be the untoward consequence. This is not a Yoga in which abnormality of any kind, even if it be an exalted abnormality, can be admitted as a way to self-fulfilment or spiritual realisation. Even when one enters into supernormal and suprarational experience, there should be no disturbance of the poise which must be kept firm from the summit of the consciousness to its base; the experiencing consciousness must preserve a calm balance, an unfailing clarity and order in its observation, a sort of sublimated commonsense, an unfailing power of self-criticism, right discrimination, coordination and firm vision of things; a sane grasp on facts and a high spiritualised positivism must always be there. It is not by becoming irrational or infrarational that one can go beyond ordinary nature into supernature; it should be done by passing through reason to a greater light of superreason. This superreason descends into reason and takes it up into higher levels even while breaking its limitations; reason is not lost but changes and becomes its own true unlimited self, a coordinating power of the supernature.

---

[1] *sādharmya mukti.*

Another error that has to be guarded against is also one to which our mentality is easily prone; it is to take some higher intermediate consciousness or even any kind of supernormal consciousness for the supermind. To reach supermind it is not enough to go above the ordinary movements of the human mind; it is not enough to receive a greater light, a greater power, a greater joy or to develop capacities of knowledge, sight, effective will that surpass the normal range of the human being. All light is not the light of the spirit, still less is all light the light of the supermind; the mind, the vital, the physical itself have lights of their own, as yet hidden, which can be very inspiring, exalting, informative, powerfully executive. A breaking out into the cosmic consciousness may also bring in an immense enlargement of the consciousness and power. An opening into the inner mind, inner vital, inner physical, any range of the subliminal consciousness, can liberate an activity of abnormal or supernormal powers of knowledge, action or experience which the uninstructed mind can easily mistake for spiritual revelations, inspirations, intuitions. An opening upward into the greater ranges of the higher mental being can bring down much light and force creating an intense activity of the intuitivised mind and life-power or an ascent into these ranges can bring a true but still incomplete light easily exposed to mixture, a light which is spiritual in its source though it does not always remain spiritual in its active character when it comes down into the lower nature. But none of these things is the supramental light, the supramental power; that can only be seen and grasped when we have reached the summits of mental being, entered into overmind and stand on the borders of an upper, a greater hemisphere of spiritual existence. There the ignorance, the inconscience, the original blank Nescience slowly awaking towards a half-knowledge, which are the basis of material Nature and which surround, penetrate and powerfully limit all our powers of mind and life, cease altogether; for an unmixed and unmodified Truth-consciousness is there the substance of all the being, its pure spiritual texture. To imagine that we have reached such a condition when we are still moving in the dynamics of the Ignorance, though it may be an enlightened or illumined Ignorance, is to lay ourselves open either to a disastrous misleading or to an arrest of the evolution of the being. For if it is some inferior state that we thus mistake for the supermind, it lays us open to all the dangers we have seen to attend a presumptuous egoistic haste in our demand for achievement. If it is one of the higher states that we presume to be the highest, we may, though we achieve much, yet fall short of the greater, more perfect goal of our being; for we shall remain content with an approximation and the supreme transformation will escape us. Even the achievement of a complete inner liberation and a high spiritual consciousness is not that supreme transformation; for we may have that achievement, a status perfect in itself, in essence, and still our dynamic parts may in their instrumentation belong to an enlightened spiritualised mind and may be in consequence, like all mind, defective even in its greater power and knowledge, still subject to a partial or local obscuration or a limitation by the original circumscribing nescience.

* * *

Part II

The Yoga of Integral Knowledge

Chapter I

The Object of Knowledge

ALL SPIRITUAL seeking moves towards an object of Knowledge to which men ordinarily do not turn the eye of the mind, to someone or something Eternal, Infinite, Absolute that is not the temporal things or forces of which we are sensible, although he or it may be in them or behind them or their source or creator. It aims at a state of knowledge by which we can touch, enter or know by identity this Eternal, Infinite and Absolute, a consciousness other than our ordinary consciousness of ideas and forms and things, a Knowledge that is not what we call knowledge but something self-existent, everlasting, infinite. And although it may or even necessarily must, since man is a mental creature, start from our ordinary instruments of knowledge, yet it must as necessarily go beyond them and use supra-sensuous and supramental means and faculties, for it is in search of something that is itself supra-sensuous and supramental and beyond the grasp of the mind and senses, even if through mind and sense there can come a first glimpse of it or a reflected image.

The traditional systems, whatever their other differences, all proceed on the belief or the perception that the Eternal and Absolute can only be or at least can only inhabit a pure transcendent state of non-cosmic existence or else a non-existence. All cosmic existence or all that we call existence is a state of ignorance. Even the highest individual perfection, even the most blissful cosmic condition is no better than a supreme ignorance. All that is individual, all that is cosmic has to be austerely renounced by the seeker of the absolute Truth. The supreme quiescent Self or else the absolute Nihil is the sole Truth, the only object of spiritual knowledge. The state of knowledge, the consciousness other than this temporal that we must attain is Nirvana, an extinction of ego, a cessation of all mental, vital and physical activities, of all activities whatsoever, a supreme illumined quiescence, the pure bliss of an impersonal tranquillity self-absorbed and ineffable. The means are meditation, a concentration excluding all things else, a total loss of the mind in its object. Action is permissible only in the first stages of the search in order to purify the seeker and make him morally and temperamentally a fit vessel for the knowledge. Even this action must either be confined to the performance of the rites of worship and the prescribed duties of life rigorously ordained by the Hindu Shastra or, as in the Buddhistic discipline, must be guided along the eightfold path to the supreme practice of the works of compassion which lead towards the practical annihilation of self in the good of others. In the end, in any severe and pure Jnanayoga, all works must be abandoned for an entire quiescence. Action may prepare salvation; it cannot give it. Any continued adherence to action is incompatible with the highest progress and may be an insuperable obstacle to the attainment of the spiritual goal. The supreme state of quiescence is the very opposite of action and cannot be attained by those who persist in works. And even devotion, love, worship are disciplines for the unripe soul, are at best the best methods of the Ignorance. For they are offered to something other, higher and greater than ourselves; but in the supreme knowledge there can be no such thing, since there is either only one self or no self at all and therefore either no one to do the worship and offer the love and devotion or no one to receive it. Even thought-activity must disappear in the sole consciousness of identity or of nothingness and by its own quiescence bring about the quiescence of the whole nature. The absolute Identical alone must remain or else the eternal Nihil.

This pure Jnanayoga comes by the intellect, although it ends in the transcendence of the intellect and its workings. The thinker in us separates himself from all the rest of what we phenomenally are, rejects the heart, draws back from the life and the senses, separates from the body that he may arrive at his own exclusive fulfilment in that which is beyond even himself and his function. There is a truth that underlies, as there is

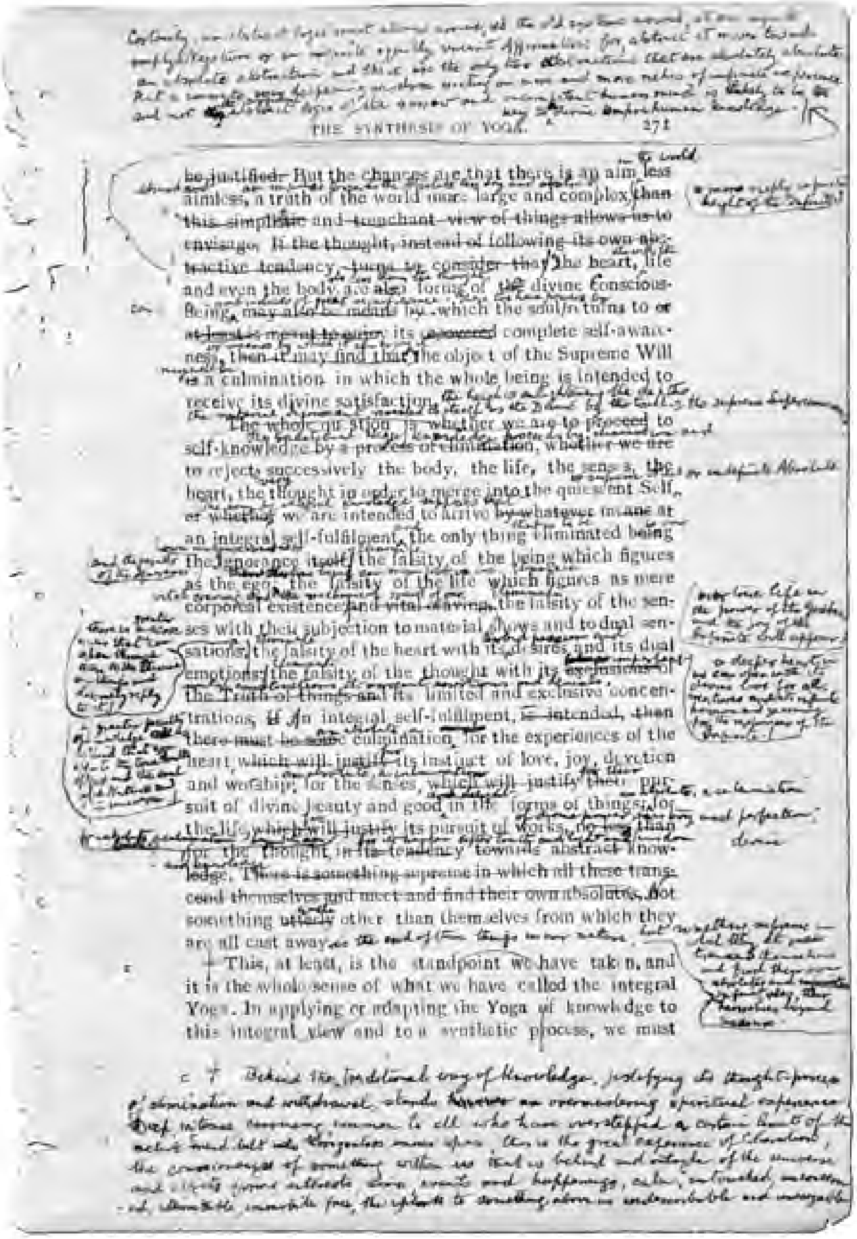

A page of the "The Yoga Integral Knowledge"
as revised by Sri Aurobindo during the 1930s

an experience that seems to justify this attitude. There is an Essence that is in its nature a quiescence, a supreme of Silence in the Being that is beyond its own developments and mutations, immutable and therefore superior to all activities of which it is at most a Witness. And in the hierarchy of our psychological functions the Thought is in a way nearest to this Self, nearest at least to its aspect of the all-conscious knower who regards all activities but can stand back from them all. The heart, will and other powers in us are fundamentally active, turn naturally towards action, find through it their fulfilment, — although they also may automatically arrive at a certain quiescence by fullness of satisfaction in their activities or else by a reverse process of exhaustion through perpetual disappointment and dissatisfaction. The thought too is an active power, but is more capable of arriving at quiescence by its own conscious choice and will. The thought is more easily content with the illumined intellectual perception of this silent Witness Self that is higher than all our activities and, that immobile Spirit once seen, is ready, deeming its mission of truth-finding accomplished, to fall at rest and become itself immobile. For in its most characteristic movement it is itself apt to be a disinterested witness, judge, observer of things more than an eager participant and passionate labourer in the work and can arrive very readily at a spiritual or philosophic calm and detached aloofness. And since men are mental beings, thought, if not truly their best and highest, is at least their most constant, normal and effective means for enlightening their ignorance. Armed with its functions of gathering and reflection, meditation, fixed contemplation, the absorbed dwelling of the mind on its object, *śravaṇa*, *manana*, *nididhyāsana*, it stands at our tops as an indispensable aid to our realisation of that which we pursue, and it is not surprising that it should claim to be the leader of the journey and the only available guide or at least the direct and innermost door of the temple.

In reality, thought is only a scout and pioneer; it can guide but not command or effectuate. The leader of the journey, the captain of the march, the first and most ancient priest of our sacrifice is the Will. This Will is not the wish of the heart or the demand or preference of the mind to which we often give the name. It is that inmost, dominant and often veiled conscious force of our being and of all being, Tapas, Shakti, Sraddha, that sovereignly determines our orientation and of which the intellect and the heart are more or less blind and automatic servants and instruments. The Self that is quiescent, at rest, vacant of things and happenings is a support and background to existence, a silent channel or a hypostasis of something Supreme: it is not itself the one entirely real existence, not itself the Supreme. The Eternal, the Supreme is the Lord and the all-originating Spirit. Superior to all activities and not bound by any of them, it is the source, sanction, material, efficient power, master of all activities. All activities proceed from this supreme Self and are determined by it; all are its operations, processes of its own conscious force and not of something alien to Self, some power other than the Spirit. In these activities is expressed the conscious Will or Shakti of the Spirit moved to manifest its being in infinite ways, a Will or Power not ignorant but at one with its own self-knowledge and its knowledge of all that it is put out to express. And of this Power a secret spiritual will and soul-faith in us, the dominant hidden force of our nature, is the individual instrument, more nearly in communication with the Supreme, a surer guide and enlightener, could we once get at it and hold it, because profounder and more intimately near to the Identical and Absolute than the surface activities of our thought powers. To know that will in ourselves and in the universe and follow it to its divine finalities, whatever these may be, must surely be the highest way and truest culmination for knowledge as for works, for the seeker in life and for the seeker in Yoga.

The thought, since it is not the highest or strongest part of Nature, not even the sole or deepest index to Truth, ought not to follow its own exclusive satisfaction or take that for the sign of its attainment to the supreme Knowledge. It is here as the guide, up to a certain point, of the heart, the life and the other members, but it cannot be a substitute for them; it has to see not only what is its own ultimate satisfaction but whether there is not an ultimate satisfaction intended also for these other members. An exclusive path of abstract thought would be justified, only if the object of the Supreme Will in the universe has been nothing more than a descent into the activity of the ignorance operated by the mind as blinding instrument and jailor through false idea and sensation and an ascent into the quiescence of knowledge equally operated by the mind through correct thought as enlightening instrument and saviour. But the chances are that there is an aim in the world less absurd and aimless, an impulse towards the Absolute less dry and abstract, a truth of the world more large and complex, a more richly infinite height of the Infinite. Certainly, an abstract logic must always arrive, as the old systems arrived, at an infinite empty Negation or an infinite equally vacant Affirmation; for, abstract it moves towards an absolute abstraction and these are the only two abstractions that are absolutely absolute. But a concrete ever deepening wisdom waiting on more and more riches of infinite experience and not the confident abstract logic of the narrow and incompetent human mind is likely to be the key to a divine suprahuman knowledge. The heart, the will, the life and even the body, no less than the thought, are forms of a divine Conscious-Being and indices of great significance. These too have powers by which the soul can return to its complete self-awareness or means by which it can enjoy it. The object of the Supreme Will may well be a culmination in which the whole being is intended to receive its divine satisfaction, the heights enlightening the depths, the material Inconscient revealed to itself as the Divine by the touch of the supreme Superconscience.

The traditional Way of Knowledge proceeds by elimination and rejects successively the body, the life, the senses, the heart, the very thought in order to merge into the quiescent Self or supreme Nihil or indefinite Absolute. The way of integral knowledge supposes that we are intended to arrive at an integral self-fulfilment and the only thing that is to be eliminated is our own unconsciousness, the Ignorance and the results of the Ignorance. Eliminate the falsity of the being which figures as the ego; then our true being can manifest in us. Eliminate the falsity of the life which figures as mere vital craving and the mechanical round of our corporeal existence; our true life in the power of the Godhead and the joy of the Infinite will appear. Eliminate the falsity of the senses with their subjection to material shows and to dual sensations; there is a greater sense in us that can open through these to the Divine in things and divinely reply to it. Eliminate the falsity of the heart with its turbid passions and desires and its dual emotions; a deeper heart in us can open with its divine love for all creatures and its infinite passion and yearning for the responses of the Infinite. Eliminate the falsity of the thought with its imperfect mental constructions, its arrogant assertions and denials, its limited and exclusive concentrations; a greater faculty of knowledge is behind that can open to the true Truth of God and the soul and Nature and the universe. An integral self-fulfilment, — an absolute, a culmination for the experiences of the heart, for its instinct of love, joy, devotion and worship; an absolute, a culmination for the senses, for their pursuit of divine beauty and good and delight in the forms of things; an absolute, a culmination for the life, for its pursuit of works, of divine power, mastery and perfection; an absolute, a culmination beyond its own limits for the thought, for its hunger after truth and light and divine wisdom and knowledge. Not something quite other than themselves from which they are all cast away is the end of these things in our nature, but something supreme in which they at once transcend themselves and find their own absolutes and infinitudes, their harmonies beyond measure.

Behind the traditional way of Knowledge, justifying its thought-process of elimination and withdrawal, stands an overmastering spiritual experience. Deep, intense, convincing, common to all who have overstepped a certain limit of the active mind-belt into horizonless inner space, this is the great experience of liberation, the consciousness of something within us that is behind and outside of the universe and all its forms, interests, aims, events and happenings, calm, untouched, unconcerned, illimitable, immobile, free, the uplook to something above us indescribable and unseizable into which by abolition of our personality we can enter, the presence of an omnipresent eternal witness Purusha, the sense of an Infinity or a Timelessness that looks down on us from an august negation of all our existence and is alone the one thing Real. This experience is the highest sublimation of spiritualised mind looking resolutely beyond its own existence. No one who has not passed through this liberation can be entirely free from the mind and its meshes, but one is not compelled to linger in this experience for ever. Great as it is, it is only the Mind's overwhelming experience of what is beyond itself and all it can conceive. It is a supreme negative experience, but beyond it is all the tremendous light of an infinite Consciousness, an illimitable Knowledge, an affirmative absolute Presence.

The object of spiritual knowledge is the Supreme, the Divine, the Infinite and Absolute. This Supreme has its relations to our individual being and its relations to the universe and it transcends both the soul and the universe. Neither the universe nor the individual are what they seem to be, for the report of them which our mind and our senses give us is, so long as they are unenlightened by a faculty of higher supramental and suprasensuous knowledge, a false report, an imperfect construction, an attenuated and erroneous figure. And yet that which the universe and the individual seem to be is still a figure of what they really are, a figure that points beyond itself to the reality behind it. Truth proceeds by a correction of the values our mind and senses give us, and first by the action of a higher intelligence that enlightens and sets right as far as may be the conclusions of the ignorant sense-mind and limited physical intelligence; that is the method of all human knowledge and science. But beyond it there is a knowledge, a Truth-consciousness, that exceeds our intellect and brings us into the true light of which it is a refracted ray. There the abstract terms of the pure reason and the constructions of the mind disappear or are converted into concrete soul-vision and the tremendous actuality of spiritual experience. This knowledge can turn away to the absolute Eternal and lose vision of the soul and the universe; but it can too see this existence from that Eternal. When that is done, we find that the ignorance of the mind and the senses and all the apparent futilities of human life were not a useless excursion of the conscious being, an otiose blunder. Here they were planned as a rough ground for the self-expression of the Soul that comes from the Infinite, a material foundation for its self-unfolding and self-possessing in the terms of the universe. It is true that in themselves they and all that is here have no significance and to build separate significances for them is to live in an illusion, Maya; but they have a supreme significance in the Supreme, an absolute Power in the Absolute and it is that that assigns to them and refers to that Truth their present relative values. This is the all-uniting experience that is the foundation of the deepest integral and most intimate self-knowledge and world-knowledge.

In relation to the individual the Supreme is our own true and highest self, that which ultimately we are in our essence, that of which we are in our manifested nature. A spiritual knowledge, moved to arrive at the true Self in us, must reject, as the traditional way of knowledge rejects, all misleading appearances. It must discover that the body is not our self, our foundation of existence; it is a sensible form of the Infinite. The experience of Matter as the world's sole foundation and the physical brain and nerves and cells and molecules as the one truth of all things in us, the ponderous inadequate basis of materialism, is a delusion, a half-view taken for the whole, the dark bottom or shadow of things misconceived as the luminous substance, the effective figure of zero for the Integer. The materialist idea mistakes a creation for the creative Power, a means of expression for That which is expressed and expresses. Matter and our physical brain and nerves and body are the field and foundation for one action of a vital force that serves to connect the Self with the form of its works and maintains them by its direct dynamis. The material movements are an exterior notation by which the soul represents its perceptions of certain truths of the Infinite and makes them effective in the terms of Substance. These things are a language, a notation, a hieroglyphic, a system of symbols, not themselves the deepest truest sense of the things they intimate.

Neither is the Life ourself, the vitality, the energy which plays in the brain, nerves and body; it is a power and not the whole power of the Infinite. The experience of a life-force instrumentalising Matter as the foundation, source and true sum of all things, the vibrating unsteady basis of vitalism, is a delusion, a half-view taken for the whole, a tide on a near shore misconceived as all the ocean and its waters. The vitalist idea takes something powerful but outward for the essence. Life-force is the dynamisation of a consciousness which exceeds it. That consciousness is felt and acts but does not become valid to us in intelligence until we arrive at the higher term of Mind, our present summit. Mind is here apparently a creation of Life, but it is really the ulterior — not the ultimate — sense of Life itself and what is behind it and a more conscious formulation of its secret; Mind is an expression not of Life, but of that of which Life itself is a less luminous expression.

And yet Mind also, our mentality, our thinking, understanding part, is not our Self, is not That, not the end or the beginning; it is a half-light thrown from the Infinite. The experience of mind as the creator of forms and things and of these forms and things existing in the Mind only, the thin subtle basis of idealism, is also a delusion, a half-view taken for the whole, a pale refracted light idealised as the burning body of the Sun and its splendour. This idealist vision also does not arrive at the essence of being, does not even touch it but only an inferior mode of Nature. Mind is the dubious outer penumbra of a conscious existence which is not limited by mentality but exceeds it. The method of the traditional way of knowledge, eliminating all these things, arrives at the conception and realisation of a pure conscious existence, self-aware, self-blissful, unconditioned by mind and life and body and to its ultimate positive experience that is Atman, the Self, the original and essential nature of our existence. Here at last there is something centrally true, but in its haste to arrive at it this knowledge assumes that there is nothing between the thinking mind and the Highest, *buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ*, and, shutting its eyes in Samadhi, tries to rush through all that actually intervenes without even seeing these great and luminous kingdoms of the Spirit. Perhaps it arrives at its object, but only to fall asleep in the Infinite. Or, if it remains awake, it is in the highest experience of the Supreme into which the self-annulling Mind can enter, but not in the supreme of the Supreme, Paratpara. The Mind can only be aware of the Self in a mentalised spiritual thinness, only of the mind-reflected Sachchidananda. The highest truth, the integral self-knowledge is not to be gained by this self-blinded leap into the Absolute but by a patient transit beyond the mind into the Truth-consciousness where the Infinite can be known, felt, seen, experienced in all the fullness of its unending riches. And there we discover this Self that we are to be not only a static tenuous vacant Atman but a great dynamic Spirit individual, universal and transcendent. That Self and Spirit cannot be expressed by the mind's abstract generalisations; all the inspired descriptions of the seers and mystics cannot exhaust its contents and its splendours.

In relation to the universe the Supreme is Brahman, the one Reality which is not only the spiritual material and conscious substance of all the ideas and forces and forms of the universe, but their origin, support and possessor, the cosmic and supracosmic Spirit. All the last terms to which we can reduce the universe, Force and Matter, Name and Form, Purusha and Prakriti, are still not entirely that which the universe really is, either in itself or its nature. As all that we are is the play and form, the mental, psychic, vital and physical expression of a supreme Self unconditioned by mind and life and body, the universe too is the play and form and cosmic soul-expression and nature-expression of a supreme Existence which is unconditioned by force and matter, unconditioned by idea and name and form, unconditioned by the fundamental distinction of Purusha and Prakriti. Our supreme Self and the supreme Existence which has become the universe are one Spirit, one self and one existence. The individual is in nature one expression of the universal Being, in spirit an emanation of the Transcendence. For if he finds his self, he finds too that his own true self is not this natural personality, this created individuality, but is a universal being in its relations with others and with Nature and in its upward term a portion or the living front of a supreme transcendental Spirit.

This supreme Existence is not conditioned by the individual or by the universe. A spiritual knowledge can therefore surpass or even eliminate these two powers of the Spirit and arrive at the conception of something utterly Transcendent, something that is unnameable and mentally unknowable, a sheer Absolute. The traditional way of knowledge eliminates individual and universe. The Absolute it seeks after is featureless, indefinable, relationless, not this, not that, *neti neti*. And yet we can say of it that it is One, that it is Infinite, that it is ineffable Bliss, Consciousness, Existence. Although unknowable to the mind, yet through our individual being and through the names and forms of the universe we can approach the realisation of the supreme Self that is Brahman, and by the realisation of the self we come to a certain realisation also of this utter Absolute of which our true self is the essential form in our consciousness (*svarūpa*). These are the devices the human mind is compelled to use if it is to form to itself any conception at all of a transcendent and unconditioned Absolute. The system of negation is indispensable to it in order to get rid of its own definitions and limited experience; it is obliged to escape through a vague Indefinite into the Infinite. For it lives in a closed prison of constructions and representations that are necessary for its action but are not the self-existent truth either of Matter or Life or Mind or Spirit. But if we can once cross beyond the Mind's frontier twilight into the vast plane of supramental Knowledge, these devices cease to be indispensable. Supermind has quite another, a positive and direct and living experience of the supreme Infinite. The Absolute is beyond personality and beyond impersonality, and yet it is both the Impersonal and the supreme Person and all persons. The Absolute is beyond the distinction of unity and multiplicity, and yet it is the One and the innumerable Many in all the universes. It is beyond all limitation by quality and yet it is not limited by a qualitiless void but is too all infinite qualities. It is the individual soul and all souls and none of them; it is the formless Brahman and the universe. It is the cosmic and the supracosmic Spirit, the supreme Lord, the supreme Self, the supreme Purusha and supreme Shakti, the Ever Unborn who is endlessly born, the Infinite who is innumerably finite, the multitudinous

One, the complex Simple, the many-sided Single, the Word of the Silence Ineffable, the impersonal omnipresent Person, the Mystery translucent in highest consciousness to its own spirit, but to a lesser consciousness veiled in its own exceeding light and impenetrable for ever. These things are to the dimensional mind irreconcilable opposites, but to the constant vision and experience of the supramental Truth-consciousness they are so simply and inevitably the intrinsic nature of each other that even to think of them as contraries is an unimaginable violence. The walls constructed by the measuring and separating Intellect have disappeared and the Truth in its simplicity and beauty appears and reduces all to terms of its harmony and unity and light. Dimensions and distinctions remain but as figures for use, not a separative prison for the self-forgetting Spirit.

The consciousness of the transcendent Absolute with its consequence in individual and universe is the last, the eternal knowledge. Our minds may deal with it on various lines, may build upon it conflicting philosophies, may limit, modify, overstress, understress sides of the knowledge, deduce from it truth or error; but our intellectual variations and imperfect statements make no difference to the ultimate fact that if we push thought and experience to their end, this is the knowledge in which they terminate. The object of a Yoga of spiritual knowledge can be nothing else than this eternal Reality, this Self, this Brahman, this Transcendent that dwells over all and in all and is manifest yet concealed in the individual, manifest yet disguised in the universe.

The culmination of the path of knowledge need not necessarily entail extinction of our world-existence. For the Supreme to whom we assimilate ourselves, the Absolute and Transcendent into whom we enter has always the complete and ultimate consciousness for which we are seeking and yet he supports by it his play in the world. Neither are we compelled to believe that our world-existence ends because by attaining to knowledge its object or consummation is fulfilled and therefore there is nothing more for us here afterwards. For what we gain at first with its release and immeasurable silence and quietude is only the eternal self-realisation by the individual in the essence of his conscious being; there will still remain on that foundation, unannulled by the silence, one with the release and freedom, the infinitely proceeding self-fulfilment of Brahman, its dynamic divine manifestation in the individual and by his presence, example and action in others and in the universe at large, — the work which the Great Ones remain to do. Our dynamic self-fulfilment cannot be worked out so long as we remain in the egoistic consciousness, in the mind's candle-lit darkness, in the bondage. Our present limited consciousness can only be a field of preparation, it can consummate nothing; for all that it manifests is marred through and through by an ego-ridden ignorance and error. The true and divine self-fulfilment of Brahman in the manifestation is only possible on the foundation of the Brahman-consciousness and therefore through the acceptance of life by the liberated soul, the Jivanmukta.

This is the integral knowledge; for we know that everywhere and in all conditions all to the eye that sees is One, to a divine experience all is one block of the Divine. It is only the mind which for the temporary convenience of its own thought and aspiration seeks to cut an artificial line of rigid division, a fiction of perpetual incompatibility between one aspect and another of the eternal oneness. The liberated knower lives and acts in the world not less than the bound soul and ignorant mind but more, doing all actions, *sarvakṛt*, only with a true knowledge and a greater conscient power. And by so doing he does not forfeit the supreme unity nor fall from the supreme consciousness and the highest knowledge. For the Supreme, however hidden now to us, is here in the world no less than he could be in the most utter and ineffable self-extinction, the most intolerant Nirvana.

Chapter II

The Status of Knowledge

THE SELF, the Divine, the Supreme Reality, the All, the Transcendent, — the One in all these aspects is then the object of Yogic knowledge. Ordinary objects, the external appearances of life and matter, the psychology of our thoughts and actions, the perception of the forces of the apparent world can be part of this knowledge, but only in so far as it is part of the manifestation of the One. It becomes at once evident that the knowledge for which Yoga strives must be different from what men ordinarily understand by the word. For we mean ordinarily by knowledge an intellectual appreciation of the facts of life, mind and matter and the laws that govern them. This is a knowledge founded upon our sense-perception and upon reasoning from our sense-perceptions and it is undertaken partly for the pure satisfaction of the intellect, partly for practical efficiency and the added power which knowledge gives in managing our lives and the lives of others, in utilising for human ends the overt or secret forces of Nature and in helping or hurting, in saving and ennobling or in oppressing and destroying our fellow-men. Yoga, indeed, is commensurate with all life and can include all these subjects and objects. There is even a Yoga[1] which can be used for self-indulgence as well as for self-conquest, for hurting others as well as for their salvation. But "all life" includes not only, not even mainly life as humanity now leads it. It envisages rather and regards as its one true object a higher truly conscious existence which our half-conscious humanity does not yet possess and can only arrive at by a self-exceeding spiritual ascension. It is this greater consciousness and higher existence which is the peculiar and appropriate object of Yogic discipline.

---

[1] Yoga develops power, it develops it even when we do not desire or consciously aim at it; and power is always a double-edged weapon which can be used to hurt or destroy as well as to help and save. Be it also noted that all destruction is not evil.

This greater consciousness, this higher existence are not an enlightened or illumined mentality supported by a greater dynamic energy or supporting a purer moral life and character. Their superiority to the ordinary human consciousness is not in degree but in kind and essence. There is a change not merely of the surface or instrumental manner of our being but of its very foundation and dynamic principle. Yogic knowledge seeks to enter into a secret consciousness beyond mind which is only occultly here, concealed at the basis of all existence. For it is that consciousness alone that truly knows and only by its possession can we possess God and rightly know the world and its real nature and secret forces. All this world visible or sensible to us and all too in it that is not visible is merely the phenomenal expression of something beyond the mind and the senses. The knowledge which the senses and intellectual reasoning from the data of the senses can bring us, is not true knowledge; it is a science of appearances. And even appearances cannot be properly known unless we know first the Reality of which they are images. This Reality is their self and there is one self of all; when that is seized, all other things can then be known in their truth and no longer as now only in their appearance.

It is evident that however much we may analyse the physical and sensible, we cannot by that means arrive at the knowledge of the Self or of ourselves or of that which we call God. The telescope, the microscope, the scalpel, the retort and alembic cannot go beyond the physical, although they may arrive at subtler and subtler truths about the physical. If then we confine ourselves to what the senses and their physical aids reveal to us and refuse from the beginning to admit any other reality or any other means of knowledge, we are obliged to conclude that nothing is real except the physical and that there is no Self in us or in the universe, no God within and without, no ourselves even except this aggregate of brain, nerves and body. But this we are only obliged to conclude because we have assumed it firmly from the beginning and therefore cannot but circle round to our original assumption.

If, then, there is a Self, a Reality not obvious to the senses, it must be by other means than those of physical Science that it is to be sought and known. The intellect is not that means. Undoubtedly there are a number of suprasensuous truths at which the intellect is able to arrive in its own manner and which it is able to perceive and state as intellectual conceptions. The very idea of Force for instance on which Science so much insists, is a conception, a truth at which the intellect alone can arrive by going beyond its data; for we do not sense this universal force but only its results, and the force itself we infer as a necessary cause of these results. So also the intellect by following a certain line of rigorous analysis can arrive at the intellectual conception and the intellectual conviction of the Self and this conviction can be very real, very luminous, very potent as the beginning of other and greater things. Still, in itself intellectual analysis can only lead to an arrangement of clear conceptions, perhaps to a right arrangement of true conceptions; but this is not the knowledge aimed at by Yoga. For it is not in itself an effective knowledge. A man may be perfect in it and yet be precisely what he was before except in the mere fact of the greater intellectual illumination. The change of our being at which Yoga aims, may not at all take place.

It is true that intellectual deliberation and right discrimination are an important part of the Yoga of knowledge; but their object is rather to remove a difficulty than to arrive at the final and positive result of this path. Our ordinary intellectual notions are a stumbling-block in the way of knowledge; for they are governed by the error of the senses and they found themselves on the notion that matter and body are the reality, that life and force are the reality, that passion and emotion, thought and sense are the reality; and with these things we identify ourselves, and because we identify ourselves with these things we cannot get back to the real self. Therefore, it is necessary for the seeker of knowledge to remove this stumbling-block and to get right notions about himself and the world; for how shall we pursue by knowledge the real self if we have no notion of what it is and are on the contrary burdened with ideas quite opposite to the truth?

Therefore right thought is a necessary preliminary, and once the habit of right thought is established, free from sense-error and desire and old association and intellectual prejudgment, the understanding becomes purified and offers no serious obstacle to the farther process of knowledge. Still, right thought only becomes effective when in the purified understanding it is followed by other operations, by vision, by experience, by realisation.

What are these operations? They are not mere psychological self-analysis and self-observation. Such analysis, such observation are, like the process of right thought, of immense value and practically indispensable. They may even, if rightly pursued, lead to a right thought of considerable power and effectivity. Like intellectual discrimination by the process of meditative thought they will have an effect of purification; they will lead to self-knowledge of a certain kind and to the setting right of the disorders of the soul and the heart and even of the disorders of the understanding. Self-knowledge of all kinds is on the straight path to the knowledge of the real Self. The Upanishad tells us that the Self-existent has so set the doors of the soul that they turn outwards and most men look outward into the appearances of things; only the rare soul that is ripe for a calm thought and steady wisdom turns its eye inward, sees the Self and attains to immortality. To this turning of the eye inward psychological self-observation and analysis is a great and effective introduction. We can look into the inward of ourselves more easily than we can look into the inward of things external to us because there, in things outside us, we are in the first place embarrassed by the form and secondly we have no natural previous experience of that in them which is other than their physical substance. A purified or tranquillised mind may reflect or a powerful concentration may discover God in the world, the Self in Nature even before it is realised in ourselves, but this is rare and difficult.[2] And it is only in ourselves that we can observe and know the process of the Self in its becoming and follow the process by which it draws back into self-being. Therefore the ancient counsel, know thyself, will always stand as the first word that directs us towards *the* knowledge. Still, psychological self-knowledge is only the experience of the modes of the Self, it is not the realisation of the Self in its pure being.

---

[2] In one respect, however, it is easier, because in external things we are not so much hampered by the sense of the limited ego as in ourselves; one obstacle to the realisation of God is therefore removed.

The status of knowledge, then, which Yoga envisages is not merely an intellectual conception or clear discrimination of the truth, nor is it an enlightened psychological experience of the modes of our being. It is a "realisation", in the full sense of the word; it is the making real to ourselves and in ourselves of the Self, the transcendent and universal Divine, and it is the subsequent impossibility of viewing the modes of being except in the light of that Self and in their true aspect as its flux of becoming under the psychical and physical conditions of our world-existence. This realisation consists of three successive movements, internal vision, complete internal experience and identity.

This internal vision, *dṛṣṭi*, the power so highly valued by the ancient sages, the power which made a man a Rishi or Kavi and no longer a mere thinker, is a sort of light in the soul by which things unseen become as evident and real to it — to the soul and not merely to the intellect — as do things seen to the physical eye. In the physical world there are always two forms of knowledge, the direct and the indirect, *pratyakṣa*, of that which is present to the eyes, and *parokṣa*, of that which is remote from and beyond our vision. When the object is beyond our vision, we are necessarily obliged to arrive at an idea of it by inference, imagination, analogy, by hearing the descriptions of others who have seen it or by studying pictorial or other representations of it if these are available. By putting together all these aids we can indeed arrive at a more or less adequate idea or suggestive image of the object, but we do not realise the thing itself; it is not yet to us the grasped reality, but only our conceptual representation of a reality. But once we have seen it with the eyes, — for no other sense is adequate, — we possess, we realise; it is there secure in our satisfied being, part of ourselves in knowledge.

Precisely the same rule holds good of psychical things and of the Self. We may hear clear and luminous teachings about the Self from philosophers or teachers or from ancient writings; we may by thought, inference, imagination, analogy or by any other available means attempt to form a mental figure or conception of it; we may hold firmly that conception in our mind and fix it by an entire and exclusive concentration;[3] but we have not yet realised it, we have not seen God. It is only when after long and persistent concentration or by other means the veil of the mind is rent or swept aside, only when a flood of light breaks over the awakened mentality, *jyotirmaya brahman*, and conception gives place to a knowledge-vision in which the Self is as present, real, concrete as a physical object to the physical eye, that we possess in knowledge; for we have seen. After that revelation, whatever fadings of the light, whatever periods of darkness may afflict the soul, it can never irretrievably lose what it has once held. The experience is inevitably renewed and must become more frequent till it is constant; when and how soon depends on the devotion and persistence with which we insist on the path and besiege by our will or our love the hidden Deity.

This inner vision is one form of psychological experience; but the inner experience is not confined to that seeing; vision only opens, it does not embrace. Just as the eye, though it is alone adequate to bring the first sense of realisation, has to call in the aid of experience by the touch and other organs of sense before there is an embracing knowledge, so the vision of the self ought to be completed by an experience of it in all our members. Our whole being ought to demand God and not only our illumined eye of knowledge. For since each principle in us is only a manifestation of the Self, each can get back to its reality and have the experience of it. We can have a mental experience of the Self and seize as concrete realities all those apparently abstract things that to the mind constitute existence — consciousness, force, delight and their manifold forms and workings: thus the mind is satisfied of God. We can have an emotional experience of the Self through Love and through emotional delight, love and delight of the Self in us, of the Self in the universal and of the Self in all with whom we have relations: thus the heart is satisfied of God. We can have an aesthetic experience of the Self in beauty, a delight-perception and taste of the absolute reality all-beautiful in everything whether created by ourselves or Nature in its appeal to the aesthetic mind and the senses; thus the sense is satisfied of God. We can have even the vital, nervous experience and practically the physical sense of the Self in all life and formation and in all workings of powers, forces, energies that operate through us or others or in the world: thus the life and the body are satisfied of God.

---

[3] This is the idea of the triple operation of Jnanayoga, *śravaṇa*, *manana*, *nididhyāsana*, hearing, thinking or mentalising and fixing in concentration.

All this knowledge and experience are primary means of arriving at and of possessing identity. It is our self that we see and experience and therefore vision and experience are incomplete unless they culminate in identity, unless we are able to live in all our being the supreme Vedantic knowledge, He am I. We must not only see God and embrace Him, but become that Reality. We must become one with the Self in its transcendence of all form and manifestation by the resolution, the sublimation, the escape from itself of ego and all its belongings into That from which they proceed, as well as become the Self in all its manifested existences and becomings, one with it in the infinite existence, consciousness, peace, delight by which it reveals itself in us and one with it in the action, formation, play of self-conception with which it garbs itself in the world.

It is difficult for the modern mind to understand how we can do more than conceive intellectually of the Self or of God; but it may borrow some shadow of this vision, experience and becoming from that inner awakening to Nature which a great English poet has made a reality to the European imagination. If we read the poems in which Wordsworth expressed his realisation of Nature, we may acquire some distant idea of what realisation is. For, first, we see that he had the vision of something in the world which is the very Self of all things that it contains, a conscious force and presence other than its forms, yet cause of its forms and manifested in them. We perceive that he had not only the vision of this and the joy and peace and universality which its presence brings, but the very sense of it, mental, aesthetic, vital, physical; not only this sense and vision of it in its own being but in the nearest flower and simplest man and the immobile rock; and, finally, that he even occasionally attained to that unity, that becoming the object of his meditation, one phase of which is powerfully and profoundly expressed in the poem "A slumber did my spirit seal," where he describes himself as become one in his being with earth, "rolled round in its diurnal course with rocks and stones and trees." Exalt this realisation to a profounder Self than physical Nature and we have the elements of the Yogic knowledge. But all this experience is only the vestibule to that suprasensuous, supramental realisation of the Transcendent who is beyond all His aspects, and the final summit of knowledge can only be attained by entering into the superconscient and there merging all other experience into a supernal unity with the Ineffable. That is the culmination of all divine knowing; that also is the source of all divine delight and divine living.

That status of knowledge is then the aim of this path and indeed of all paths when pursued to their end, to which intellectual discrimination and conception and all concentration and psychological self-knowledge and all seeking by the heart through love and by the senses through beauty and by the will through power and works and by the soul through peace and joy are only keys, avenues, first approaches and beginnings of the ascent which we have to use and to follow till the wide and infinite levels are attained and the divine doors swing open into the infinite Light.

Chapter III

The Purified Understanding

THE DESCRIPTION of the status of knowledge to which we aspire, determines the means of knowledge which we shall use. That status of knowledge may be summed up as a supramental realisation which is prepared by mental representations through various mental principles in us and once attained again reflects itself more perfectly in all the members of the being. It is a re-seeing and therefore a remoulding of our whole existence in the light of the Divine and One and Eternal free from subjection to the appearances of things and the externalities of our superficial being.

Such a passage from the human to the divine, from the divided and discordant to the One, from the phenomenon to the eternal Truth, such an entire rebirth or new birth of the soul must necessarily involve two stages, one of preparation in which the soul and its instruments must become fit and another of actual illumination and realisation in the prepared soul through its fit instruments. There is indeed no rigid line of demarcation in sequence of Time between these two stages; rather they are necessary to each other and continue simultaneously. For in proportion as the soul becomes fit it increases in illumination and rises to higher and higher, completer and completer realisations, and in proportion as these illuminations and these realisations increase, becomes fit and its instruments more adequate to their task: there are soul-seasons of unillumined preparation and soul-seasons of illumined growth and culminating soul-moments more or less prolonged of illumined possession, moments that are transient like the flash of the lightning, yet change the whole spiritual future, moments also that extend over many human hours, days, weeks in a constant light or blaze of the Sun of Truth. And through all these the soul once turned Godwards grows towards the permanence and perfection of its new birth and real existence.

The first necessity of preparation is the purifying of all the members of our being; especially, for the path of knowledge, the purification of the understanding, the key that shall open the door of Truth; and a purified understanding is hardly possible without the purification of the other members. An unpurified heart, an unpurified sense, an unpurified life confuse the understanding, disturb its data, distort its conclusions, darken its seeing, misapply its knowledge; an unpurified physical system clogs or chokes up its action. There must be an integral purity. Here also there is an interdependence; for the purification of each member of our being profits by the clarifying of every other, the progressive tranquillisation of the emotional heart helping for instance the purification of the understanding while equally a purified understanding imposes calm and light on the turbid and darkened workings of the yet impure emotions. It may even be said that while each member of our being has its own proper principles of purification, yet it is the purified understanding that in man is the most potent cleanser of his turbid and disordered being and most sovereignly imposes their right working on his other members. Knowledge, says the Gita, is the sovereign purity; light is the source of all clearness and harmony even as the darkness of ignorance is the cause of all our stumblings. Love, for example, is the purifier of the heart and by reducing all our emotions into terms of divine love the heart is perfected and fulfilled; yet love itself needs to be clarified by divine knowledge. The heart's love of God may be blind, narrow and ignorant and lead to fanaticism and obscurantism; it may, even when otherwise pure, limit our perfection by refusing to see Him except in a limited personality and by recoiling from the true and infinite vision. The heart's love of man may equally lead to distortions and exaggerations in feeling, action and knowledge which have to be corrected and prevented by the purification of the understanding.

We must, however, consider deeply and clearly what we mean by the understanding and by its purification. We use the word as the nearest equivalent we can get in the English tongue to the Sanskrit philosophical term *buddhi*; therefore we exclude from it the action of the sense mind which merely consists of the recording of perceptions of all kinds without distinction whether they be right or wrong, true or mere illusory phenomena, penetrating or superficial. We exclude that mass of confused conception which is merely a rendering of these perceptions and is equally void of the higher principle of judgment and discrimination. Nor can we include that constant leaping current of habitual thought which does duty for understanding in the mind of the average unthinking man, but is only a constant repetition of habitual associations, desires, prejudices, prejudgments, received or inherited preferences, even though it may constantly enrich itself by a fresh stock of concepts streaming in from the environment and admitted without the challenge of the sovereign discriminating reason. Undoubtedly this is a sort of understanding which has been very useful in the development of man from the animal; but it is only one remove above the animal mind; it is a half-animal reason subservient to habit, to desire and the senses and is of no avail in the search whether for scientific or philosophical or spiritual knowledge. We have to go beyond it; its purification can only be effected either by dismissing or silencing it altogether or by transmuting it into the true understanding.

By the understanding we mean that which at once perceives, judges and discriminates, the true reason of the human being not subservient to the senses, to desire or to the blind force of habit, but working in its own right for mastery, for knowledge. Certainly, the reason of man as he is at present does not even at its best act entirely in this free and sovereign fashion; but so far as it fails, it fails because it is still mixed with the lower half-animal action, because it is impure and constantly hampered and pulled down from its characteristic action. In its purity it should not be involved in these lower movements, but stand back from the object, and observe disinterestedly, put it in its right place in the whole by force of comparison, contrast, analogy, reason from its rightly observed data by deduction, induction, inference and holding all its gains in memory and supplementing them by a chastened and rightly-guided imagination view all in the light of a trained and disciplined judgment. Such is the pure intellectual understanding of which disinterested observation, judgment and reasoning are the law and characterising action.

But the term *buddhi* is also used in another and profounder sense. The intellectual understanding is only the lower *buddhi*; there is another and a higher *buddhi* which is not intelligence but vision, is not understanding but rather an over-standing[1] in knowledge, and does not seek knowledge and attain it in subjection to the data it observes but possesses already the truth and brings it out in the terms of a revelatory and intuitional thought. The nearest the human mind usually gets to this truth-conscious knowledge is that imperfect action of illumined finding which occurs when there is a great stress of thought and the intellect electrified by constant discharges from behind the veil and yielding to a higher enthusiasm admits a considerable instreaming from the intuitive and inspired faculty of knowledge. For there is an intuitive mind in man which serves as a recipient and channel for these instreamings from a supramental faculty. But the action of intuition and inspiration in us is imperfect in kind as well as intermittent in action; ordinarily, it comes in response to a claim from the labouring and struggling heart or intellect and, even before its givings enter the conscious mind, they are already affected by the thought or aspiration which went up to meet them, are no longer pure but altered to the needs of the heart or intellect; and after they enter the conscious mind, they are immediately seized upon by the intellectual understanding and dissipated or broken up so as to fit in with our imperfect intellectual knowledge, or by the heart and remoulded to suit our blind or half-blind emotional longings and preferences, or even by the lower cravings and distorted to the vehement uses of our hungers and passions.

If this higher *buddhi* could act pure of the interference of these lower members, it would give pure forms of the truth; observation would be dominated or replaced by a vision which could see without subservient dependence on the testimony of the sense-mind and senses; imagination would give place to the self-assured inspiration of the truth, reasoning to the spontaneous discernment of relations and conclusion from reasoning to an intuition containing in itself those relations and not building laboriously upon them, judgment to a thought-vision in whose light the truth would stand revealed without the mask which it now wears and which our intellectual judgment has to penetrate; while memory too would take upon itself that larger sense given to it in Greek thought and be no longer a paltry selection from the store gained by the individual in his present life, but rather the all-recording knowledge which secretly holds and constantly gives from itself everything that we now seem painfully to acquire but really in this sense remember, a knowledge which includes the future[2] no less than the past. Certainly, we are intended to grow in our receptivity to this higher faculty of truth-conscious knowledge, but its full and unveiled use is as yet the privilege of the gods and beyond our present human stature.

---

[1] The Divine Being is described as the *adhyakṣa*, he who seated over all in the supreme ether over-sees things, views and controls them from above.

We see then what we mean precisely by the understanding and by that higher faculty which we may call for the sake of convenience the ideal faculty and which stands to the developed intellect much in the same relation as that intellect stands to the half-animal reason of the undeveloped man. It becomes evident also what is the nature of the purification which is necessary before the understanding can fulfil rightly its part in the attainment of right knowledge. All impurity is a confusion of working, a departure from the *dharma*, the just and inherently right action of things which in that right action are pure and helpful to our perfection and this departure is usually the result of an ignorant confusion[3] of dharmas in which the function lends itself to the demand of other tendencies than those which are properly its own.

---

[2] In this sense the power of prophecy has been aptly called a memory of the future.

[3] *saṅkara*.

The first cause of impurity in the understanding is the intermiscence of desire in the thinking functions, and desire itself is an impurity of the Will involved in the vital and emotional parts of our being. When the vital and emotional desires interfere with the pure will-to-know, the thought-function becomes subservient to them, pursues ends other than those proper to itself and its perceptions are clogged and deranged. The understanding must lift itself beyond the siege of desire and emotion and, in order that it may have perfect immunity, it must get the vital parts and the emotions themselves purified. The will to enjoy is proper to the vital being but not the choice or the reaching after the enjoyment which must be determined and acquired by higher functions; therefore the vital being must be trained to accept whatever gain or enjoyment comes to it in the right functioning of the life in obedience to the working of the divine Will and to rid itself of craving and attachment. Similarly the heart must be freed from subjection to the cravings of the life-principle and the senses and thus rid itself of the false emotions of fear, wrath, hatred, lust, etc. which constitute the chief impurity of the heart. The will to love is proper to the heart, but here also the choice and reaching after love have to be foregone or tranquillised and the heart taught to love with depth and intensity indeed, but with a calm depth and a settled and equal, not a troubled and disordered intensity. The tranquillisation and mastery[4] of these members is a first condition for the immunity of the understanding from error, ignorance and perversion. This purification spells an entire equality of the nervous being and the heart; equality, therefore, even as it was the first word of the path of works, so also is the first word of the path of knowledge.

The second cause of impurity in the understanding is the illusion of the senses and the intermiscence of the sense-mind in the thinking functions. No knowledge can be true knowledge which subjects itself to the senses or uses them otherwise than as first indices whose data have constantly to be corrected and overpassed. The beginning of Science is the examination of the truths of the world-force that underlie its apparent workings such as our senses represent them to be; the beginning of philosophy is the examination of the principles of things which the senses mistranslate to us; the beginning of spiritual knowledge is the refusal to accept the limitations of the sense-life or to take the visible and sensible as anything more than phenomenon of the Reality.

---

[4] *śama* and *dama*.

Equally must the sense-mind be stilled and taught to leave the function of thought to the mind that judges and understands. When the understanding in us stands back from the action of the sense-mind and repels its intermiscence, the latter detaches itself from the understanding and can be watched in its separate action. It then reveals itself as a constantly swirling and eddying undercurrent of habitual concepts, associations, perceptions, desires without any real sequence, order or principle of light. It is a constant repetition in a circle unintelligent and unfruitful. Ordinarily the human understanding accepts this undercurrent and tries to reduce it to a partial order and sequence; but by so doing it becomes itself subject to it and partakes of that disorder, restlessness, unintelligent subjection to habit and blind purposeless repetition which makes the ordinary human reason a misleading, limited and even frivolous and futile instrument. There is nothing to be done with this fickle, restless, violent and disturbing factor but to get rid of it whether by detaching it and then reducing it to stillness or by giving a concentration and singleness to the thought by which it will of itself reject this alien and confusing element.

A third cause of impurity has its source in the understanding itself and consists in an improper action of the will to know. That will is proper to the understanding, but here again choice and unequal reaching after knowledge clog and distort. They lead to a partiality and attachment which makes the intellect cling to certain ideas and opinions with a more or less obstinate will to ignore the truth in other ideas and opinions, cling to certain fragments of a truth and shy against the admission of other parts which are yet necessary to its fullness, cling to certain predilections of knowledge and repel all knowledge that does not agree with the personal temperament of thought which has been acquired by the past of the thinker. The remedy lies in a perfect equality of the mind, in the cultivation of an entire intellectual rectitude and in the perfection of mental disinterestedness. The purified understanding as it will not lend itself to any desire or craving, so will not lend itself either to any predilection or distaste for any particular idea or truth, and will refuse to be attached even to those ideas of which it is the most certain or to lay on them such an undue stress as is likely to disturb the balance of truth and depreciate the values of other elements of a complete and perfect knowledge.

An understanding thus purified would be a perfectly flexible, entire and faultless instrument of intellectual thought and being free from the inferior sources of obstruction and distortion would be capable of as true and complete a perception of the truths of the Self and the universe as the intellect can attain. But for real knowledge something more is necessary, since real knowledge is by our very definition of it supra-intellectual. In order that the understanding may not interfere with our attainment to real knowledge, we have to reach to that something more and cultivate a power exceedingly difficult for the active intellectual thinker and distasteful to his proclivities, the power of intellectual passivity. The object served is double and therefore two different kinds of passivity have to be acquired.

In the first place we have seen that intellectual thought is in itself inadequate and is not the highest thinking; the highest is that which comes through the intuitive mind and from the supramental faculty. So long as we are dominated by the intellectual habit and by the lower workings, the intuitive mind can only send its messages to us subconsciously and subject to a distortion more or less entire before it reaches the conscious mind; or if it works consciously, then only with an inadequate rarity and a great imperfection in its functioning. In order to strengthen the higher knowledge-faculty in us we have to effect the same separation between the intuitive and intellectual elements of our thought as we have already effected between the understanding and the sense-mind; and this is no easy task, for not only do our intuitions come to us incrusted in the intellectual action, but there are a great number of mental workings which masquerade and ape the appearances of the higher faculty. The remedy is to train first the intellect to recognise the true intuition, to distinguish it from the false and then to accustom it, when it arrives at an intellectual perception or conclusion, to attach no final value to it, but rather look upward, refer all to the divine principle and wait in as complete a silence as it can command for the light from above. In this way it is possible to transmute a great part of our intellectual thinking into the luminous truth-conscious vision, — the ideal would be a complete transition, — or at least to increase greatly the frequency, purity and conscious force of the ideal knowledge working behind the intellect. The latter must learn to be subject and passive to the ideal faculty.

But for the knowledge of the Self it is necessary to have the power of a complete intellectual passivity, the power of dismissing all thought, the power of the mind to think not at all which the Gita in one passage enjoins. This is a hard saying for the occidental mind to which thought is the highest thing and which will be apt to mistake the power of the mind not to think, its complete silence for the incapacity of thought. But this power of silence is a capacity and not an incapacity, a power and not a weakness. It is a profound and pregnant stillness. Only when the mind is thus entirely still, like clear, motionless and level water, in a perfect purity and peace of the whole being and the soul transcends thought, can the Self which exceeds and originates all activities and becomings, the Silence from which all words are born, the Absolute of which all relativities are partial reflections manifest itself in the pure essence of our being. In a complete silence only is the Silence heard; in a pure peace only is its Being revealed. Therefore to us the name of That is the Silence and the Peace.

Chapter IV

Concentration

ALONG with purity and as a help to bring it about, concentration. Purity and concentration are indeed two aspects, feminine and masculine, passive and active, of the same status of being; purity is the condition in which concentration becomes entire, rightly effective, omnipotent; by concentration purity does its works and without it would only lead to a state of peaceful quiescence and eternal repose. Their opposites are also closely connected; for we have seen that impurity is a confusion of dharmas, a lax, mixed and mutually entangled action of the different parts of the being; and this confusion proceeds from an absence of right concentration of its knowledge on its energies in the embodied Soul. The fault of our nature is first an inert subjection to the impacts of things[1] as they come in upon the mind pell-mell without order or control and then a haphazard imperfect concentration managed fitfully, irregularly with a more or less chance emphasis on this or on that object according as they happen to interest, not the higher soul or the judging and discerning intellect, but the restless, leaping, fickle, easily tired, easily distracted lower mind which is the chief enemy of our progress. In such a condition purity, the right working of the functions, the clear, unstained and luminous order of the being is an impossibility; the various workings, given over to the chances of the environment and external influences, must necessarily run into each other and clog, divert, distract, pervert. Equally, without purity the complete, equal, flexible concentration of the being in right thought, right will, right feeling or secure status of spiritual experience is not possible. Therefore the two must proceed together, each helping the victory of the other, until we arrive at that eternal calm from which may proceed some partial image in the human being of the eternal, omnipotent and omniscient activity.

---

[1] *bāhyasparśa.*

But in the path of knowledge as it is practised in India concentration is used in a special and more limited sense. It means that removal of the thought from all distracting activities of the mind and that concentration of it on the idea of the One by which the soul rises out of the phenomenal into the one Reality. It is by the thought that we dissipate ourselves in the phenomenal; it is by the gathering back of the thought into itself that we must draw ourselves back into the real. Concentration has three powers by which this aim can be effected. By concentration on anything whatsoever we are able to know that thing, to make it deliver up its concealed secrets; we must use this power to know not things, but the one Thing-in-itself. By concentration again the whole will can be gathered up for the acquisition of that which is still ungrasped, still beyond us; this power, if it is sufficiently trained, sufficiently single-minded, sufficiently sincere, sure of itself, faithful to itself alone, absolute in faith, we can use for the acquisition of any object whatsoever; but we ought to use it not for the acquisition of the many objects which the world offers to us, but to grasp spiritually that one object worthy of pursuit which is also the one subject worthy of knowledge. By concentration of our whole being on one status of itself, we can become whatever we choose; we can become, for instance, even if we were before a mass of weaknesses and fears, a mass instead of strength and courage, or we can become all a great purity, holiness and peace or a single universal soul of Love; but we ought, it is said, to use this power to become not even these things, high as they may be in comparison with what we now are, but rather to become that which is above all things and free from all action and attributes, the pure and absolute Being. All else, all other concentration can only be valuable for preparation, for previous steps, for a gradual training of the dissolute and self-dissipating thought, will and being towards their grand and unique object.

This use of concentration implies like every other a previous purification; it implies also in the end a renunciation, a cessation and lastly an ascent into the absolute and transcendent state of Samadhi from which if it culminates, if it endures, there is, except perhaps for one soul out of many thousands, no return. For by that we go to the "supreme state of the Eternal whence souls revert not" into the cyclic action of Nature;[2] and it is into this Samadhi that the Yogin who aims at release from the world seeks to pass away at the time of leaving his body. We see this succession in the discipline of the Rajayoga. For first the Rajayogin must arrive at a certain moral and spiritual purity; he must get rid of the lower or downward activities of his mind, but afterwards he must stop all its activities and concentrate himself in the one idea that leads from activity to the quiescence of status. The Rajayogic concentration has several stages, that in which the object is seized, that in which it is held, that in which the mind is lost in the status which the object represents or to which the concentration leads, and only the last is termed Samadhi in the Rajayoga although the word is capable, as in the Gita, of a much wider sense. But in the Rajayogic Samadhi there are different grades of status, — that in which the mind, though lost to outward objects, still muses, thinks, perceives in the world of thought, that in which the mind is still capable of primary thought-formations and that in which, all out-darting of the mind even within itself having ceased, the soul rises beyond thought into the silence of the Incommunicable and Ineffable. In all Yoga there are indeed many preparatory objects of thought-concentration, forms, verbal formulas of thought, significant names, all of which are supports[3] to the mind in this movement, all of which have to be used and transcended; the highest support according to the Upanishads is the mystic syllable AUM, whose three letters represent the Brahman or Supreme Self in its three degrees of status, the Waking Soul, the Dream Soul and the Sleep Soul, and the whole potent sound rises towards that which is beyond status as beyond activity.[4]

---

[2] *yato naiva nivartante tad dhāma paramaṁ mama.*

[3] *avalambana.*

[4] Mandukya Upanishad.

For of all Yoga of knowledge the final goal is the Transcendent.

We have, however, conceived as the aim of an integral Yoga something more complex and less exclusive — less exclusively positive of the highest condition of the soul, less exclusively negative of its divine radiations. We must aim indeed at the Highest, the Source of all, the Transcendent but not to the exclusion of that which it transcends, rather as the source of an established experience and supreme state of the soul which shall transform all other states and remould our consciousness of the world into the form of its secret Truth. We do not seek to excise from our being all consciousness of the universe, but to realise God, Truth and Self in the universe as well as transcendent of it. We shall seek therefore not only the Ineffable, but also His manifestation as infinite being, consciousness and bliss embracing the universe and at play in it. For that triune infinity is His supreme manifestation and that we shall aspire to know, to share in and to become; and since we seek to realise this Trinity not only in itself but in its cosmic play, we shall aspire also to knowledge of and participation in the universal divine Truth, Knowledge, Will, Love which are His secondary manifestation, His divine becoming. With this too we shall aspire to identify ourselves, towards this too we shall strive to rise and, when the period of effort is passed, allow it by our renunciation of all egoism to draw us up into itself in our being and to descend into us and embrace us in all our becoming. This not only as a means of approach and passage to His supreme transcendence, but as the condition, even when we possess and are possessed by the Transcendent, of a divine life in the manifestation of the cosmos.

In order that we may do this, the terms concentration and Samadhi must assume for us a richer and profound meaning. All our concentration is merely an image of the divine Tapas by which the Self dwells gathered in itself, by which it manifests within itself, by which it maintains and possesses its manifestation, by which it draws back from all manifestation into its supreme oneness. Being dwelling in consciousness upon itself for bliss, this is the divine Tapas; and a Knowledge-Will dwelling in force of consciousness on itself and its manifestations is the essence of the divine concentration, the Yoga of the Lord of Yoga. Given the self-differentiation of the Divine in which we dwell, concentration is the means by which the individual soul identifies itself with and enters into any form, state or psychological self-manifestation (*bhāva*) of the Self. To use this means for unification with the Divine is the condition for the attainment of divine knowledge and the principle of all Yoga of knowledge.

This concentration proceeds by the Idea, using thought, form and name as keys which yield up to the concentrating mind the Truth that lies concealed behind all thought, form and name; for it is through the Idea that the mental being rises beyond all expression to that which is expressed, to that of which the Idea itself is only the instrument. By concentration upon the Idea the mental existence which at present we are breaks open the barrier of our mentality and arrives at the state of consciousness, the state of being, the state of power of conscious-being and bliss of conscious-being to which the Idea corresponds and of which it is the symbol, movement and rhythm. Concentration by the Idea is, then, only a means, a key to open to us the superconscient planes of our existence; a certain self-gathered state of our whole existence lifted into that superconscient truth, unity and infinity of self-aware, self-blissful existence is the aim and culmination; and that is the meaning we shall give to the term Samadhi. Not merely a state withdrawn from all consciousness of the outward, withdrawn even from all consciousness of the inward into that which exists beyond both whether as seed of both or transcendent even of their seed-state; but a settled existence in the One and Infinite, united and identified with it, and this status to remain whether we abide in the waking condition in which we are conscious of the forms of things or we withdraw into the inward activity which dwells in the play of the principles of things, the play of their names and typal forms or we soar to the condition of static inwardness where we arrive at the principles themselves and at the principle of all principles, the seed of name and form.[5]

---

[5] The Waking, Dream and Sleep states of the soul.

For the soul that has arrived at the essential Samadhi and is settled in it (*samādhistha*) in the sense the Gita attaches to the word, has that which is fundamental to all experience and cannot fall from it by any experience however distracting to one who has not yet ascended the summit. It can embrace all in the scope of its being without being bound by any or deluded or limited.

When we arrive at this state, all our being and consciousness being concentrated, the necessity of concentration in the Idea ceases. For there in that supramental state the whole position of things is reversed. The mind is a thing that dwells in diffusion, in succession; it can only concentrate on one thing at a time and when not concentrated runs from one thing to another very much at random. Therefore it has to concentrate on a single idea, a single subject of meditation, a single object of contemplation, a single object of will in order to possess or master it, and this it must do to at least the temporary exclusion of all others. But that which is beyond the mind and into which we seek to rise is superior to the running process of the thought, superior to the division of ideas. The Divine is centred in itself and when it throws out ideas and activities does not divide itself or imprison itself in them, but holds them and their movement in its infinity; undivided, its whole self is behind each Idea and each movement and at the same time behind all of them together. Held by it, each spontaneously works itself out, not through a separate act of will, but by the general force of consciousness behind it; if to us there seems to be a concentration of divine Will and Knowledge in each, it is a multiple and equal and not an exclusive concentration, and the reality of it is rather a free and spontaneous working in a self-gathered unity and infinity. The soul which has risen to the divine Samadhi participates in the measure of its attainment in this reversed condition of things, — the true condition, for that which is the reverse of our mentality is the truth. It is for this reason that, as is said in the ancient books, the man who has arrived at Self-possession attains spontaneously without the need of concentration in thought and effort the knowledge or the result which the Idea or the Will in him moves out to embrace.

To arrive then at this settled divine status must be the object of our concentration. The first step in concentration must be always to accustom the discursive mind to a settled unwavering pursuit of a single course of connected thought on a single subject and this it must do undistracted by all lures and alien calls on its attention. Such concentration is common enough in our ordinary life, but it becomes more difficult when we have to do it inwardly without any outward object or action on which to keep the mind; yet this inward concentration is what the seeker of knowledge must effect.[6] Nor must it be merely the consecutive thought of the intellectual thinker, whose only object is to conceive and intellectually link together his conceptions. It is not, except perhaps at first, a process of reasoning that is wanted so much as a dwelling so far as possible on the fruitful essence of the idea which by the insistence of the soul's will upon it must yield up all the facets of its truth. Thus if it be the divine Love that is the subject of concentration, it is on the essence of the idea of God as Love that the mind should concentrate in such a way that the various manifestation of the divine Love should arise luminously, not only to the thought, but in the heart and being and vision of the sadhaka. The thought may come first and the experience afterwards, but equally the experience may come first and the knowledge arise out of the experience. Afterwards the thing attained has to be dwelt on and more and more held till it becomes a constant experience and finally the dharma or law of the being.

This is the process of concentrated meditation; but a more strenuous method is the fixing of the whole mind in concentration on the essence of the idea only, so as to reach not the thought-knowledge or the psychological experience of the subject, but the very essence of the thing behind the idea. In this process thought ceases and passes into the absorbed or ecstatic contemplation of the object or by a merging into it in an inner Samadhi. If this be the process followed, then subsequently the state into which we rise must still be called down to take possession of the lower being, to shed its light, power and bliss on our ordinary consciousness. For otherwise we may possess it, as many do, in the elevated condition or in the inward Samadhi, but we shall lose our hold of it when we awake or descend into the contacts of the world; and this truncated possession is not the aim of an integral Yoga.

---

[6] In the elementary stages of internal debate and judgment, *vitarka* and *vicāra*, for the correction of false ideas and arrival at the intellectual truth.

A third process is neither at first to concentrate in a strenuous meditation on the one subject nor in a strenuous contemplation of the one object of thought-vision, but first to still the mind altogether. This may be done by various ways; one is to stand back from the mental action altogether not participating in but simply watching it until, tired of its unsanctioned leaping and running, it falls into an increasing and finally an absolute quiet. Another is to reject the thought-suggestions, to cast them away from the mind whenever they come and firmly hold to the peace of the being which really and always exists behind the trouble and riot of the mind. When this secret peace is unveiled, a great calm settles on the being and there comes usually with it the perception and experience of the all-pervading silent Brahman, everything else at first seeming to be mere form and eidolon. On the basis of this calm everything else may be built up in the knowledge and experience no longer of the external phenomena of things but of the deeper truth of the divine manifestation.

Ordinarily, once this state is obtained, strenuous concentration will be found no longer necessary. A free concentration of will[7] using thought merely for suggestion and the giving of light to the lower members will take its place. This Will will then insist on the physical being, the vital existence, the heart and the mind remoulding themselves in the forms of the Divine which reveal themselves out of the silent Brahman. By swifter or slower degrees according to the previous preparation and purification of the members, they will be obliged with more or less struggle to obey the law of the will and its thought-suggestion, so that eventually the knowledge of the Divine takes possession of our consciousness on all its planes and the image of the Divine is formed in our human existence even as it was done by the old Vedic Sadhakas. For the integral Yoga this is the most direct and powerful discipline.

---

[7] This subject will be dealt with more in detail when we come to the Yoga of self-perfection.

Chapter V

Renunciation

IF DISCIPLINE of all the members of our being by purification and concentration may be described as the right arm of the body of Yoga, renunciation is its left arm. By discipline or positive practice we confirm in ourselves the truth of things, truth of being, truth of knowledge, truth of love, truth of works and replace with these the falsehoods that have overgrown and perverted our nature; by renunciation we seize upon the falsehoods, pluck up their roots and cast them out of our way so that they shall no longer hamper by their persistence, their resistance or their recurrence the happy and harmonious growth of our divine living. Renunciation is an indispensable instrument of our perfection.

How far shall this renunciation go? what shall be its nature? and in what way shall it be applied? There is an established tradition long favoured by great religious teachings and by men of profound spiritual experience that renunciation must not only be complete as a discipline but definite and final as an end and that it shall fall nothing short of the renunciation of life itself and of our mundane existence. Many causes have contributed to the growth of this pure, lofty and august tradition. There is first the profounder cause of the radical opposition between the sullied and imperfect nature of life in the world as it now is in the present stage of our human evolution and the nature of spiritual living; and this opposition has led to the entire rejection of world-existence as a lie, an insanity of the soul, a troubled and unhappy dream or at best a flawed, specious and almost worthless good or to its characterisation as a kingdom of the world, the flesh and the devil, and therefore for the divinely led and divinely attracted soul only a place of ordeal and preparation or at best a play of the All-existence, a game of cross-purposes which He tires of and abandons. A second cause is the soul's hunger for personal salvation, for escape into some farther or farthest height of unalloyed bliss and peace untroubled by the labour and the struggle; or else it is its unwillingness to return from the ecstasy of the divine embrace into the lower field of work and service. But there are other slighter causes incidental to spiritual experience, — strong feeling and practical proof of the great difficulty, which we willingly exaggerate into an impossibility, of combining the life of works and action with spiritual peace and the life of realisation; or else the joy which the mind comes to take in the mere act and state of renunciation, — as it comes indeed to take joy in anything that it has attained or to which it has inured itself, — and the sense of peace and deliverance which is gained by indifference to the world and to the objects of man's desire. Lowest causes of all are the weakness that shrinks from the struggle, the disgust and disappointment of the soul baffled by the great cosmic labour, the selfishness that cares not what becomes of those left behind us so long as we personally can be free from the monstrous ever-circling wheel of death and rebirth, the indifference to the cry that rises up from a labouring humanity.

For the sadhaka of an integral Yoga none of these reasons are valid. With weakness and selfishness, however spiritual in their guise or trend, he can have no dealings; a divine strength and courage and a divine compassion and helpfulness are the very stuff of that which he would be, they are that very nature of the Divine which he would take upon himself as a robe of spiritual light and beauty. The revolvings of the great wheel bring to him no sense of terror or giddiness; he rises above it in his soul and knows from above their divine law and their divine purpose. The difficulty of harmonising the divine life with human living, of being in God and yet living in man is the very difficulty that he is set here to solve and not to shun. He has learned that the joy, the peace and the deliverance are an imperfect crown and no real possession if they do not form a state secure in itself, inalienable to the soul, not dependent on aloofness and inaction but firm in the storm and the race and the battle, unsullied whether by the joy of the world or by its suffering. The ecstasy of the divine embrace will not abandon him because he obeys the impulse of divine love for God in humanity; or if it seems to draw back from him for a while, he knows by experience that it is to try and test him still farther so that some imperfection in his own way of meeting it may fall away from him. Personal salvation he does not seek except as a necessity for the human fulfilment and because he who is himself in bonds cannot easily free others, — though to God nothing is impossible; for a heaven of personal joys he has no hankerings even as a hell of personal sufferings has for him no terrors. If there is an opposition between the spiritual life and that of the world, it is that gulf which he is here to bridge, that opposition which he is here to change into a harmony. If the world is ruled by the flesh and the devil, all the more reason that the children of Immortality should be here to conquer it for God and the Spirit. If life is an insanity, then there are so many million souls to whom there must be brought the light of divine reason; if a dream, yet is it real within itself to so many dreamers who must be brought either to dream nobler dreams or to awaken; or if a lie, then the truth has to be given to the deluded. Nor, if it be said that only by the luminous example of escape from the world can we help the world, shall we accept that dogma, since the contrary example of great Avataras is there to show that not only by rejecting the life of the world as it is can we help, but also and more by accepting and uplifting it. And if it is a play of the All-Existence, then we may well consent to play out our part in it with grace and courage, well take delight in the game along with our divine Playmate.

But, most of all, the view we have taken of the world forbids the renunciation of world-existence so long as we can be anything to God and man in their working-out of its purposes. We regard the world not as an invention of the devil or a self-delusion of the soul, but as a manifestation of the Divine, although as yet a partial because a progressive and evolutionary manifestation. Therefore for us renunciation of life cannot be the goal of life nor rejection of the world the object for which the world was created. We seek to realise our unity with God, but for us that realisation involves a complete and absolute recognition of our unity with man and we cannot cut the two asunder. To use Christian language, the Son of God is also the Son of Man and both elements are necessary to the complete Christhood; or to use an Indian form of thought, the divine Narayana of whom the universe is only one ray is revealed and fulfilled in man; the complete man is Nara-Narayana and in that completeness he symbolises the supreme mystery of existence.

Therefore renunciation must be for us merely an instrument and not an object; nor can it be the only or the chief instrument since our object is the fulfilment of the Divine in the human being, a positive aim which cannot be reached by negative means. The negative means can only be for the removal of that which stands in the way of the positive fulfilment. It must be a renunciation, a complete renunciation of all that is other than and opposed to the divine self-fulfilment and a progressive renunciation of all that is a lesser or only a partial achievement. We shall have no attachment to our life in the world; if that attachment exists, we must renounce it and renounce utterly; but neither shall we have any attachment to the escape from the world, to salvation, to the great self-annihilation; if that attachment exists, that also we must renounce and renounce it utterly.

Again our renunciation must obviously be an inward renunciation; especially and above all, a renunciation of attachment and the craving of desire in the senses and the heart, of self-will in the thought and action and of egoism in the centre of the consciousness. For these things are the three knots by which we are bound to our lower nature and if we can renounce these utterly, there is nothing else that can bind us. Therefore attachment and desire must be utterly cast out; there is nothing in the world to which we must be attached, not wealth nor poverty, nor joy nor suffering, nor life nor death, nor greatness nor littleness, nor vice nor virtue, nor friend, nor wife, nor children, nor country, nor our work and mission, nor heaven nor earth, nor all that is within them or beyond them. And this does not mean that there is nothing at all that we shall love, nothing in which we shall take delight; for attachment is egoism in love and not love itself, desire is limitation and insecurity in a hunger for pleasure and satisfaction and not the seeking after the divine delight in things. A universal love we must have, calm and yet eternally intense beyond the brief vehemence of the most violent passion; a delight in things rooted in a delight in God that does not adhere to their forms but to that which they conceal in themselves and that embraces the universe without being caught in its meshes.[1]

Self-will in thought and action has, we have already seen, to be quite renounced if we would be perfect in the way of divine works; it has equally to be renounced if we are to be perfect in divine knowledge. This self-will means an egoism in the mind which attaches itself to its preferences, its habits, its past or present formations of thought and view and will because it regards them as itself or its own, weaves around them the delicate threads of “I-ness” and “my-ness” and lives in them like a spider in its web. It hates to be disturbed, as a spider hates attack on its web, and feels foreign and unhappy if transplanted to fresh view-points and formations as a spider feels foreign in another web than its own. This attachment must be entirely excised from the mind. Not only must we give up the ordinary attitude to the world and life to which the unawakened mind clings as its natural element; but we must not remain bound in any mental construction of our own or in any intellectual thought-system or arrangement of religious dogmas or logical conclusions; we must not only cut asunder the snare of the mind and the senses, but flee also beyond the snare of the thinker, the snare of the theologian and the church-builder, the meshes of the Word and the bondage of the Idea. All these are within us waiting to wall in the spirit with forms; but we must always go beyond, always renounce the lesser for the greater, the finite for the Infinite; we must be prepared to proceed from illumination to illumination, from experience to experience, from soul-state to soul-state so as to reach the utmost transcendence of the Divine and its utmost universality. Nor must we attach ourselves even to the truths we hold most securely, for they are but forms and expressions of the Ineffable who refuses to limit himself to any form or expression; always we must keep ourselves open to the higher Word from above that does not confine itself to its own sense and the light of the Thought that carries in it its own opposites.

---

[1] *Nirlipta*. The divine Ananda in things is *niṣkāma* and *nirlipta*, free from desire and therefore not attached.

But the centre of all resistance is egoism and this we must pursue into every covert and disguise and drag it out and slay it; for its disguises are endless and it will cling to every shred of possible self-concealment. Altruism and indifference are often its most effective disguises; so draped, it will riot boldly in the very face of the divine spies who are missioned to hunt it out. Here the formula of the supreme knowledge comes to our help; we have nothing to do in our essential standpoint with these distinctions, for there is no I nor thou, but only one divine Self equal in all embodiments, equal in the individual and the group, and to realise that, to express that, to serve that, to fulfil that is all that matters. Self-satisfaction and altruism, enjoyment and indifference are not the essential thing. If the realisation, fulfilment, service of the one Self demands from us an action that seems to others self-service or self-assertion in the egoistic sense or seems egoistic enjoyment and self-indulgence, that action we must do; we must be governed by the guide within rather than by the opinions of men. The influence of the environment works often with great subtlety; we prefer and put on almost unconsciously the garb which will look best in the eye that regards us from outside and we allow a veil to drop over the eye within; we are impelled to drape ourselves in the vow of poverty, or in the garb of service, or in outward proofs of indifference and renunciation and a spotless sainthood because that is what tradition and opinion demand of us and so we can make best an impression on our environment. But all this is vanity and delusion. We may be called upon to assume these things, for that may be the uniform of our service; but equally it may not. The eye of man outside matters nothing; the eye within is all.

We see in the teaching of the Gita how subtle a thing is the freedom from egoism which is demanded. Arjuna is driven to fight by the egoism of strength, the egoism of the Kshatriya; he is turned from the battle by the contrary egoism of weakness, the shrinking, the spirit of disgust, the false pity that overcomes the mind, the nervous being and the senses, — not that divine compassion which strengthens the arm and clarifies the knowledge. But this weakness comes garbed as renunciation, as virtue: “Better the life of the beggar than to taste these blood-stained enjoyments; I desire not the rule of all the earth, no, nor the kingdom of the gods.” How foolish of the Teacher, we might say, not to confirm this mood, to lose this sublime chance of adding one more great soul to the army of Sannyasins, one more shining example before the world of a holy renunciation. But the Guide sees otherwise, the Guide who is not to be deceived by words; “This is weakness and delusion and egoism that speak in thee. Behold the Self, open thy eyes to the knowledge, purify thy soul of egoism.” And afterwards? “Fight, conquer, enjoy a wealthy kingdom.” Or to take another example from ancient Indian tradition. It was egoism, it would seem, that drove Rama, the Avatara, to raise an army and destroy a nation in order to recover his wife from the King of Lanka. But would it have been a lesser egoism to drape himself in indifference and misusing the formal terms of the knowledge to say, “I have no wife, no enemy, no desire; these are illusions of the senses; let me cultivate the Brahman-knowledge and let Ravana do what he will with the daughter of Janaka”?

The criterion is within, as the Gita insists. It is to have the soul free from craving and attachment, but free from the attachment to inaction as well as from the egoistic impulse to action, free from attachment to the forms of virtue as well as from the attraction to sin. It is to be rid of “I-ness” and “my-ness” so as to live in the one Self and act in the one Self; to reject the egoism of refusing to work through the individual centre of the universal Being as well as the egoism of serving the individual mind and life and body to the exclusion of others. To live in the Self is not to dwell for oneself alone in the Infinite immersed and oblivious of all things in that ocean of impersonal self-delight; but it is to live as the Self and in the Self equal in this embodiment and all embodiments and beyond all embodiments. This is the integral knowledge.

It will be seen that the scope we give to the idea of renunciation is different from the meaning currently attached to it. Currently its meaning is self-denial, inhibition of pleasure, rejection of the objects of pleasure. Self-denial is a necessary discipline for the soul of man, because his heart is ignorantly attached; inhibition of pleasure is necessary because his sense is caught and clogged in the mud-honey of sensuous satisfactions; rejection of the objects of pleasure is imposed because the mind fixes on the object and will not leave it to go beyond it and within itself. If the mind of man were not thus ignorant, attached, bound even in its restless inconstancy, deluded by the forms of things, renunciation would not have been needed; the soul could have travelled on the path of delight, from the lesser to the greater, from joy to diviner joy. At present that is not practicable. It must give up from within everything to which it is attached in order that it may gain that which they are in their reality. The external renunciation is not the essential, but even that is necessary for a time, indispensable in many things and sometimes useful in all; we may even say that a complete external renunciation is a stage through which the soul must pass at some period of its progress, — though always it should be without those self-willed violences and fierce self-torturings which are an offence to the Divine seated within us. But in the end this renunciation or self-denial is always an instrument and the period for its use passes. The rejection of the object ceases to be necessary when the object can no longer ensnare us because what the soul enjoys is no longer the object as an object but the Divine which it expresses; the inhibition of pleasure is no longer needed when the soul no longer seeks pleasure but possesses the delight of the Divine in all things equally without the need of a personal or physical possession of the thing itself; self-denial loses its field when the soul no longer claims anything, but obeys consciously the will of the one Self in all beings. It is then that we are freed from the Law and released into the liberty of the Spirit.

We must be prepared to leave behind on the path not only that which we stigmatise as evil, but that which seems to us to be good, yet is not the one good. There are things which were beneficial, helpful, which seemed perhaps at one time the one thing desirable, and yet once their work is done, once they are attained, they become obstacles and even hostile forces when we are called to advance beyond them. There are desirable states of the soul which it is dangerous to rest in after they have been mastered, because then we do not march on to the wider kingdoms of God beyond. Even divine realisations must not be clung to, if they are not the divine realisation in its utter essentiality and completeness. We must rest at nothing less than the All, nothing short of the utter transcendence. And if we can thus be free in the spirit, we shall find out all the wonder of God's workings; we shall find that in inwardly renouncing everything we have lost nothing. "By all this abandoned thou shalt come to enjoy the All." For everything is kept for us and restored to us but with a wonderful change and transfiguration into the All-Good and the All-Beautiful, the All-Light and the All-Delight of Him who is for ever pure and infinite and the mystery and the miracle that ceases not through the ages.

Chapter VI

The Synthesis of the Disciplines of Knowledge

IN THE last chapter we have spoken of renunciation in its most general scope, even as we spoke of concentration in all its possibilities; what has been said, applies therefore equally to the path of Works and the path of Devotion as to the path of Knowledge; for on all three concentration and renunciation are needed, though the way and spirit in which they are applied may vary. But we must now turn more particularly to the actual steps of the Path of Knowledge on which the double force of concentration and renunciation must aid us to advance. Practically, this path is a reascent up the great ladder of being down which the soul has descended into the material existence.

The central aim of Knowledge is the recovery of the Self, of our true self-existence, and this aim presupposes the admission that our present mode of being is not our true self-existence. No doubt, we have rejected the trenchant solutions which cut the knot of the riddle of the universe; we recognise it neither as a fiction of material appearance created by Force, nor as an unreality set up by the Mind, nor as a bundle of sensations, ideas and results of idea and sensation with a great Void or a great blissful Zero behind it to strive towards as our true truth of eternal non-existence. We accept the Self as a reality and the universe as a reality of the Self, a reality of its consciousness and not of mere material force and formation, but none the less or rather all the more for that reason a reality. Still, though the universe is a fact and not a fiction, a fact of the divine and universal and not a fiction of the individual self, our state of existence here is a state of ignorance, not the true truth of our being. We conceive of ourselves falsely, we see ourselves as we are not; we live in a false relation with our environment, because we know neither the universe nor ourselves for what they really are but with an imperfect view founded on a temporary fiction which the Soul and Nature have established between themselves for the convenience of the evolving ego. And this falsity is the root of a general perversion, confusion and suffering which besiege at every step both our internal life and our relations with our environment. Our personal life and our communal life, our commerce with ourselves and our commerce with our fellows are founded on a falsity and are therefore false in their recognised principles and methods, although through all this error a growing truth continually seeks to express itself. Hence the supreme importance to man of Knowledge, not what is called the practical knowledge of life, but of the profoundest knowledge of the Self and Nature[1] on which alone a true practice of life can be founded.

The error proceeds from a false identification. Nature has created within her material unity separate-seeming bodies which the Soul manifested in material Nature enfolds, inhabits, possesses, uses; the Soul forgetting itself experiences only this single knot in Matter and says "I am this body." It thinks of itself as the body, suffers with the body, enjoys with the body, is born with the body, is dissolved with the body; or so at least it views its self-existence. Again, Nature has created within her unity of universal life separate-seeming currents of life which form themselves into a whorl of vitality around and in each body, and the Soul manifested in vital Nature seizes on and is seized by that current, is imprisoned momentarily in that little whirling vortex of life. The Soul, still forgetting itself, says "I am this life"; it thinks of itself as the life, craves with its cravings or desires, wallows in its pleasures, bleeds with its wounds, rushes or stumbles with its movements. If it is still mainly governed by the body-sense, it identifies its own existence with that of the whorl and thinks "When this whorl is dissipated by the dissolution of the body round which it has formed itself, then *I* shall be no more." If it has been able to sense the current of life which has formed the vortex, it thinks of itself as that current and says "I am this stream of life; I have entered upon the possession of this body, I shall leave it and enter upon the possession of other bodies: I am an immortal life revolving in a cycle of constant rebirth."

---

[1] *ātmajñāna* and *tattvajñāna*.

But again Nature has created within her mental unity, formed in the universal Mind separate-seeming dynamos as it were of mentality, constant centres for the generation, distribution and reabsorption of mental force and mental activities, stations as it were in a system of mental telegraphy where messages are conceived, written, sent, received, deciphered, and these messages and these activities are of many kinds, sensational, emotional, perceptual, conceptual, intuitional, all of which the Soul manifested in mental Nature accepts, uses for its outlook on the world and seems to itself to project and to receive their shocks, to suffer or to master their consequences. Nature instals the base of these dynamos in the material bodies she has formed, makes these bodies the ground for her stations and connects the mental with the material by a nerve-system full of the movement of vital currents through which the mind becomes conscious of the material world and, so far as it chooses, of the vital world of Nature. Otherwise the mind would be conscious of the mental world first and chiefly and would only indirectly glimpse the material. As it is, its attention is fixed on the body and the material world in which it has been installed and it is aware of the rest of existence only dimly, indirectly or subconsciously in that vast remainder of itself with regard to which superficially it has become irresponsive and oblivious.

The Soul identifies itself with this mental dynamo or station and says "I am this mind." And since the mind is absorbed in the bodily life, it thinks "I am a mind in a living body" or, still more commonly, "I am a body which lives and thinks." It identifies itself with the thoughts, emotions, sensations of the embodied mind and imagines that because when the body is dissolved all this will dissolve, itself also will cease to exist. Or if it becomes conscious of the current of persistence of mental personality, it thinks of itself as a mental soul occupying the body whether once or repeatedly and returning from earthly living to mental worlds beyond; the persistence of this mental being mentally enjoying or suffering sometimes in the body, sometimes on the mental or vital plane of Nature it calls its immortal existence. Or else, because the mind is a principle of light and knowledge, however imperfect, and can have some notion of what is beyond it, it sees the possibility of a dissolution of the mental being into that which is beyond, some Void or some eternal Existence, and it says, "There I, the mental soul, cease to be." Such dissolution it dreads or desires, denies or affirms according to its measure of attachment to or repulsion from this present play of embodied mind and vitality.

Now, all this is a mixture of truth and falsehood. Mind, Life, Matter exist and mental, vital, physical individualisation exists as facts in Nature, but the identification of the soul with these things is a false identification. Mind, Life and Matter are ourselves only in this sense that they are principles of being which the true self has evolved by the meeting and interaction of Soul and Nature in order to express a form of its one existence as the Cosmos. Individual mind, life and body are a play of these principles which is set up in the commerce of Soul and Nature as a means for the expression of that multiplicity of itself of which the one Existence is eternally capable and which it holds eternally involved in its unity. Individual mind, life and body are forms of ourselves in so far as we are centres of the multiplicity of the One; universal Mind, Life and Body are also forms of our self, because we are that One in our being. But the self is more than universal or individual mind, life and body and when we limit ourselves by identification with these things, we found our knowledge on a falsehood, we falsify our determining view and our practical experience not only of our self-being but of our cosmic existence and of our individual activities.

The Self is an eternal utter Being and pure existence of which all these things are becomings. From this knowledge we have to proceed; this knowledge we have to realise and make it the foundation of the inner and the outer life of the individual. The Yoga of Knowledge, starting from this primary truth, has conceived a negative and positive method of discipline by which we shall get rid of these false identifications and recoil back from them into true self-knowledge. The negative method is to say always "I am not the body" so as to contradict and root out the false idea "I am the body", to concentrate on this knowledge and by renunciation of the attachment of the soul to the physical get rid of the body-sense. We say again "I am not the life" and by concentration on this knowledge and renunciation of attachment to the vital movements and desires, get rid of the life-sense. We say, finally, "I am not the mind, the motion, the sense, the thought" and by concentration on this knowledge and renunciation of the mental activities, get rid of the mind-sense. When we thus constantly create a gulf between ourselves and the things with which we identified ourselves, their veils progressively fall away from us and the Self begins to be visible to our experience. Of that then we say "I am That, the pure, the eternal, the self-blissful" and by concentrating our thought and being upon it we become That and are able finally to renounce the individual existence and the Cosmos. Another positive method belonging rather to the Rajayoga is to concentrate on the thought of the Brahman and shut out from us all other ideas, so that this dynamo of mind shall cease to work upon our external or varied internal existence; by mental cessation the vital and physical play also shall fall to rest in an eternal samadhi, some inexpressible deepest trance of the being in which we shall pass into the absolute Existence.

This discipline is evidently a self-centred and exclusive inner movement which gets rid of the world by denying it in thought and shutting the eyes of the soul to it in vision. But the universe is there as a truth in God even though the individual soul may have shut its eyes to it and the Self is there in the universe really and not falsely, supporting all that we have rejected, truly immanent in all things, really embracing the individual in the universal as well as embracing the universe in that which exceeds and transcends it. What shall we do with this eternal Self in this persistent universe which we see encompassing us every time we come out of the trance of inner meditation? The ascetic Path of Knowledge has its solution and its discipline for the soul that looks out on the universe. It is to regard the immanent and all-encompassing and all-constituting Self in the image of the ether in which all forms are, which is in all forms, of which all forms are made. In that ether cosmic Life and Mind move as the Breath of things, an atmospheric sea in the ethereal, and constitute from it all these forms; but what they constitute are merely name and form and not realities; the form of the pot we see is a form of earth only and goes back into the earth, earth a form resolvable into the cosmic Life, the cosmic Life a movement that falls to rest in that silent immutable Ether. Concentrating on this knowledge, rejecting all phenomenon and appearance, we come to see the whole as an illusion of name and form in the ether that is Brahman; it becomes unreal to us; and the universe becoming unreal the immanence becomes unreal and there is only the Self upon which our mind has falsely imposed the name and form of the universe. Thus are we justified in the withdrawal of the individual self into the Absolute.

Still, the Self goes on with its imperishable aspect of immanence, its immutable aspect of divine envelopment, its endless trick of becoming each thing and all things; our detection of the cheat and our withdrawal do not seem to affect one tittle either the Self or the universe. Must we not then know also what it is that thus persists superior to our acceptance and rejection and too great, too eternal to be affected by it? Here too there must be some invincible reality at work and the integrality of Knowledge demands that we shall see and realise it; otherwise it may prove that our own knowledge and not the Lord in the universe was the cheat and the illusion. Therefore we must concentrate again and see and realise also this which persists so sovereignly and must know the Self as no other than the Supreme Soul which is the Lord of Nature, the upholder of cosmic existence by whose sanction it proceeds, whose will compels its multitudinous actions and determines its perpetual cycles. And we must yet concentrate once again and see and realise and must know the Self as the one Existence who is both the Soul of all and the Nature of all, at once Purusha and Prakriti and so able both to express himself in all these forms of things and to be all these formations. Otherwise we have excluded what the Self does not exclude and made a wilful choice in our knowledge.

The old ascetic Path of Knowledge admitted the unity of things and the concentration on all these aspects of the one Existence, but it made a distinction and a hierarchy. The Self that becomes all these forms of things is the Virat or universal Soul; the Self that creates all these forms is Hiranyagarbha, the luminous or creatively perceptive Soul; the Self that contains all these things involved in it is Prajna, the conscious Cause or originally determining Soul; beyond all these is the Absolute who permits all this unreality, but has no dealings with it. Into That we must withdraw and have no farther dealings with the universe, since Knowledge means the final Knowledge, and therefore these lesser realisations must fall away from us or be lost in That. But evidently from our point of view these are practical distinctions made by the mind which have a value for certain purposes, but no ultimate value. Our view of the world insists on unity; the universal Self is not different from the perceptive and creative, nor the perceptive from the causal, nor the causal from the Absolute, but it is one "Self-being which has become all becomings", and which is not any other than the Lord who manifests Himself as all these individual existences nor the Lord any other than the sole-existing Brahman who verily is all this that we can see, sense, live or mentalise. That Self, Lord, Brahman we would know that we may realise our unity with it and with all that it manifests and in that unity we would live. For we demand of knowledge that it shall unite; the knowledge that divides must always be a partial knowing good for certain practical purposes; the knowledge that unites is *the* knowledge.

Therefore our integral Yoga will take up these various disciplines and concentrations, but harmonise and if possible fuse them by a synthesis which removes their mutual exclusions. Not realising the Lord and the All only to reject them for silent Self or unknowable Absolute as would an exclusively transcendental, nor living for the Lord alone or in the All alone as would an exclusively theistic or an exclusively pantheistic Yoga, the seeker of integral knowledge will limit himself neither in his thought nor in his practice nor in his realisation by any religious creed or philosophical dogma. He will seek the Truth of existence in its completeness. The ancient disciplines he will not reject, for they rest upon eternal truths, but he will give them an orientation in conformity with his aim.

We must recognise that our primary aim in knowledge must be to realise our own supreme Self more than that Self in others or as the Lord of Nature or as the All; for that is the pressing need of the individual, to arrive at the highest truth of his own being, to set right its disorders, confusions, false identifications, to arrive at its right concentration and purity and to know and mount to its source. But we do this not in order to disappear into its source, but so that our whole existence and all the members of this inner kingdom may find their right basis, may live in our highest self, live for our highest self only and obey no other law than that which proceeds from our highest self and is given to our purified being without any falsification in the transmitting mentality. And if we do this rightly we shall discover that in finding this supreme Self we have found the one Self in all, the one Lord of our nature and of all Nature, the All of ourselves who is the All of the universe. For this that we see in ourselves we must necessarily see everywhere, since that is the truth of His unity. By discovering and using rightly the Truth of our being the barrier between our individuality and the universe will necessarily be forced open and cast away and the Truth that we realise in our own being cannot fail to realise itself to us in the universality which will then be our self. Realising in ourselves the "I am He" of the Vedanta, we cannot but realise in looking upon all around us the identical knowledge on its other side, "Thou art That." We have only to see how practically the discipline must be conducted in order that we may arrive successfully at this great unification.

Chapter VII

The Release from Subjection to the Body

OUR FIRST step in this path of knowledge, having once determined in our intellect that what seems is not the Truth, that the self is not the body or life or mind, since these are only its forms, must be to set right our mind in its practical relation with the life and the body so that it may arrive at its own right relation with the Self. This it is easiest to do by a device with which we are already familiar, since it played a great part in our view of the Yoga of Works; it is to create a separation between the Prakriti and the Purusha. The Purusha, the soul that knows and commands has got himself involved in the workings of his executive conscious force, so that he mistakes this physical working of it which we call the body for himself; he forgets his own nature as the soul that knows and commands; he believes his mind and soul to be subject to the law and working of the body; he forgets that he is so much else besides that is greater than the physical form; he forgets that the mind is really greater than Matter and ought not to submit to its obscurations, reactions, habit of inertia, habit of incapacity; he forgets that he is more even than the mind, a Power which can raise the mental being above itself; that he is the Master, the Transcendent and it is not fit the Master should be enslaved to his own workings, the Transcendent imprisoned in a form which exists only as a trifle in its own being. All this forgetfulness has to be cured by the Purusha remembering his own true nature and first by his remembering that the body is only a working and only one working of Prakriti.

We say then to the mind "This is a working of Prakriti, this is neither thyself nor myself; stand back from it." We shall find, if we try, that the mind has this power of detachment and can stand back from the body not only in idea, but in act and as it were physically or rather vitally. This detachment of the mind must be strengthened by a certain attitude of indifference to the things of the body; we must not care essentially about its sleep or its waking, its movement or its rest, its pain or its pleasure, its health or ill-health, its vigour or its fatigue, its comfort or its discomfort, or what it eats or drinks. This does not mean that we shall not keep the body in right order so far as we can; we have not to fall into violent asceticisms or a positive neglect of the physical frame. But we have not either to be affected in mind by hunger or thirst or discomfort or ill-health or attach the importance which the physical and vital man attaches to the things of the body, or indeed any but a quite subordinate and purely instrumental importance. Nor must this instrumental importance be allowed to assume the proportions of a necessity; we must not for instance imagine that the purity of the mind depends on the things we eat or drink, although during a certain stage restrictions in eating and drinking are useful to our inner progress; nor on the other hand must we continue to think that the dependence of the mind or even of the life on food and drink is anything more than a habit, a customary relation which Nature has set up between these principles. As a matter of fact the food we take can be reduced by contrary habit and new relation to a minimum without the mental or vital vigour being in any way reduced; even on the contrary with a judicious development they can be trained to a greater potentiality of vigour by learning to rely on the secret fountains of mental and vital energy with which they are connected more than upon the minor aid of physical aliments. This aspect of self-discipline is however more important in the Yoga of self-perfection than here; for our present purpose the important point is the renunciation by the mind of attachment to or dependence on the things of the body.

Thus disciplined the mind will gradually learn to take up towards the body the true attitude of the Purusha. First of all, it will know the mental Purusha as the upholder of the body and not in any way the body itself; for it is quite other than the physical existence which it upholds by the mind through the agency of the vital force. This will come to be so much the normal attitude of the whole being to the physical frame that the latter will feel to us as if something external and detachable like the dress we wear or an instrument we happen to be carrying in our hand. We may even come to feel that the body is in a certain sense non-existent except as a sort of partial expression of our vital force and of our mentality. These experiences are signs that the mind is coming to a right poise regarding the body, that it is exchanging the false view-point of the mentality obsessed and captured by physical sensation for the view-point of the true truth of things.

Secondly, with regard to the movements and experiences of the body the mind will come to know the Purusha seated within it as, first, the witness or observer of the movements and, secondly, the knower or perceiver of the experiences. It will cease to consider in thought or feel in sensation these movements and experiences as its own but rather consider and feel them as not its own, as operations of Nature governed by the qualities of Nature and their interaction upon each other. This detachment can be made so normal and carried so far that there will be a kind of division between the mind and the body and the former will observe and experience the hunger, thirst, pain, fatigue, depression, etc. of the physical being as if they were experiences of some other person with whom it has so close a *rapport* as to be aware of all that is going on within him. This division is a great means, a great step towards mastery; for the mind comes to observe these things first without being overpowered and finally without being at all affected by them, dispassionately, with clear understanding but with perfect detachment. This is the initial liberation of the mental being from servitude to the body; for by right knowledge put steadily into practice liberation comes inevitably.

Finally, the mind will come to know the Purusha in the mind as the master of Nature whose sanction is necessary to her movements. It will find that as the giver of the sanction he can withdraw the original fiat from the previous habits of

Nature and that eventually the habit will cease or change in the direction indicated by the will of the Purusha; not at once, for the old sanction persists as an obstinate consequence of the past Karma of Nature until that is exhausted, and a good deal also depends on the force of the habit and the idea of fundamental necessity which the mind had previously attached to it; but if it is not one of the fundamental habits Nature has established for the relation of the mind, life and body and if the old sanction is not renewed by the mind or the habit willingly indulged, then eventually the change will come. Even the habit of hunger and thirst can be minimised, inhibited, put away; the habit of disease can be similarly minimised and gradually eliminated and in the meantime the power of the mind to set right the disorders of the body whether by conscious manipulation of vital force or by simple mental fiat will immensely increase. By a similar process the habit by which the bodily nature associates certain forms and degrees of activity with strain, fatigue, incapacity can be rectified and the power, freedom, swiftness, effectiveness of the work whether physical or mental which can be done with this bodily instrument marvellously increased, doubled, tripled, decupled.

This side of the method belongs properly to the Yoga of self-perfection; but it is as well to speak briefly of these things here both because we thereby lay a basis for what we shall have to say of self-perfection, which is a part of the integral Yoga, and because we have to correct the false notions popularised by materialistic Science. According to this Science the normal mental and physical states and the relations between mind and body actually established by our past evolution are the right, natural and healthy conditions and anything other, anything opposite to them is either morbid and wrong or a hallucination, self-deception and insanity. Needless to say, this conservative principle is entirely ignored by Science itself when it so diligently and successfully improves on the normal operations of physical Nature for the greater mastery of Nature by man. Suffice it to say here once for all that a change of mental and physical state and of relations between the mind and body which increases the purity and freedom of the being, brings a clear joy and peace and multiplies the power of the mind over itself and over the physical functions, brings about in a word man's greater mastery of his own nature, is obviously not morbid and cannot be considered a hallucination or self-deception since its effects are patent and positive. In fact, it is simply a willed advance of Nature in her evolution of the individual, an evolution which she will carry out in any case but in which she chooses to utilise the human will as her chief agent, because her essential aim is to lead the Purusha to conscious mastery over herself.

This being said, we must add that in the movement of the path of knowledge perfection of the mind and body are no consideration at all or only secondary considerations. The one thing necessary is to rise out of Nature to the Self by either the most swift or the most thorough and effective method possible; and the method we are describing, though not the swiftest, is the most thorough-going in its effectivity. And here there arises the question of physical action or inaction. It is ordinarily considered that the Yogin should draw away from action as much as possible and especially that too much action is a hindrance because it draws off the energies outward. To a certain extent this is true; and we must note farther that when the mental Purusha takes up the attitude of mere witness and observer, a tendency to silence, solitude, physical calm and bodily inaction grows upon the being. So long as this is not associated with inertia, incapacity or unwillingness to act, in a word, with the growth of the tamasic quality, all this is to the good. The power to do nothing, which is quite different from indolence, incapacity or aversion to action and attachment to inaction, is a great power and a great mastery; the power to rest absolutely from action is as necessary for the Jnanayogin as the power to cease absolutely from thought, as the power to remain indefinitely in sheer solitude and silence and as the power of immovable calm. Whoever is not willing to embrace these states is not yet fit for the path that leads towards the highest knowledge; whoever is unable to draw towards them, is as yet unfit for its acquisition.

At the same time it must be added that the power is enough;

the abstention from all physical action is not indispensable, the aversion to action mental or corporeal is not desirable. The seeker of the integral state of knowledge must be free from attachment to action and equally free from attachment to inaction. Especially must any tendency to mere inertia of mind or vitality or body be surmounted, and if that habit is found growing on the nature, the will of the Purusha must be used to dismiss it. Eventually, a state arrives when the life and the body perform as mere instruments the will of the Purusha in the mind without any strain or attachment, without their putting themselves into the action with that inferior, eager and often feverish energy which is the nature of their ordinary working; they come to work as forces of Nature work without the fret and toil and reaction characteristic of life in the body when it is not yet master of the physical. When we attain to this perfection, then action and inaction become immaterial, since neither interferes with the freedom of the soul or draws it away from its urge towards the Self or its poise in the Self. But this state of perfection arrives later in the Yoga and till then the law of moderation laid down by the Gita is the best for us; too much mental or physical action then is not good since excess draws away too much energy and reacts unfavourably upon the spiritual condition; too little also is not good since defect leads to a habit of inaction and even to an incapacity which has afterwards to be surmounted with difficulty. Still, periods of absolute calm, solitude and cessation from works are highly desirable and should be secured as often as possible for that recession of the soul into itself which is indispensable to knowledge.

While dealing thus with the body we have necessarily to deal also with the Prana or life-energy. For practical purposes we have to make a distinction between the life-energy as it acts in the body, the physical Prana, and the life-energy as it acts in support of the mental activities, the psychical Prana. For we lead always a double life, mental and physical, and the same life-energy acts differently and assumes a different aspect according as it lends itself to one or the other. In the body it produces those reactions of hunger, thirst, fatigue, health, disease, physical vigour, etc. which are the vital experiences of the physical frame. For the gross body of man is not like the stone or the earth; it is a combination of two sheaths, the vital and the "food" sheath and its life is a constant interaction of these two. Still the life-energy and the physical frame are two different things and in the withdrawal of the mind from the absorbing sense of the body we become increasingly sensible of the Prana and its action in the corporeal instrument and can observe and more and more control its operations. Practically, in drawing back from the body we draw back from the physical life-energy also, even while we distinguish the two and feel the latter nearer to us than the mere physical instrument. The entire conquest of the body comes in fact by the conquest of the physical life-energy.

Along with the attachment to the body and its works the attachment to life in the body is overcome. For when we feel the physical being to be not ourselves, but only a dress or an instrument, the repulsion to the death of the body which is so strong and vehement an instinct of the vital man must necessarily weaken and can be thrown away. Thrown away it must be and entirely. The fear of death and the aversion to bodily cessation are the stigma left by his animal origin on the human being. That brand must be utterly effaced.

Chapter VIII

The Release from the Heart and the Mind

BUT THE ascending soul has to separate itself not only from the life in the body but from the action of the life-energy in the mind; it has to make the mind say as the representative of the Purusha "I am not the Life; the Life is not the self of the Purusha, it is only a working and only one working of Prakriti." The characteristics of Life are action and movement, a reaching out to absorb and assimilate what is external to the individual and a principle of satisfaction or dissatisfaction in what it seizes upon or what comes to it, which is associated with the all-pervading phenomenon of attraction and repulsion. These three things are everywhere in Nature because Life is everywhere in Nature. But in us mental beings they are all given a mental value according to the mind which perceives and accepts them. They take the form of action, of desire and of liking and disliking, pleasure and pain. The Prana is everywhere in us supporting not only the action of our body, but of our sense-mind, our emotional mind, our thought-mind; and bringing its own law or dharma into all these, it confuses, it limits, it throws into discord their right action and creates that impurity of misplacement and that tangled confusion which is the whole evil of our psychological existence. In that confusion one law seems to reign, the law of desire. As the universal Divine Being, all-embracing and all-possessing, acts, moves, enjoys purely for the satisfaction of divine Delight, so the individual life acts, moves, enjoys and suffers predominantly for the satisfaction of desire. Therefore the psychic life-energy presents itself to our experience as a sort of desire-mind, which we have to conquer if we mean to get back to our true self.

Desire is at once the motive of our actions, our lever of accomplishment and the bane of our existence. If our sense-mind, emotional mind, thought-mind could act free from the intrusions and importations of the life-energy, if that energy could be made to obey their right action instead of imposing its own yoke on our existence, all human problems would move harmoniously to their right solution. The proper function of the life-energy is to do what it is bidden by the divine principle in us, to reach to and enjoy what is given to it by that indwelling Divine and not to desire at all. The proper function of the sense-mind is to lie open passively, luminously to the contacts of Life and transmit their sensations and the *rasa* or right taste and principle of delight in them to the higher function; but interfered with by the attractions and repulsions, the acceptances and refusals, the satisfactions and dissatisfactions, the capacities and incapacities of the life-energy in the body it is, to begin with, limited in its scope and, secondly, forced in these limits to associate itself with all these discords of the life in Matter. It becomes an instrument for pleasure and pain instead of for delight of existence.

Similarly the emotional mind compelled to take note of all these discords and subject itself to their emotional reactions becomes a hurtling field of joy and grief, love and hatred, wrath, fear, struggle, aspiration, disgust, likes, dislikes, indifferences, content, discontent, hopes, disappointments, gratitude, revenge and all the stupendous play of passion which is the drama of life in the world. This chaos we call our soul. But the real soul, the real psychic entity which for the most part we see little of and only a small minority in mankind has developed, is an instrument of pure love, joy and the luminous reaching out to fusion and unity with God and our fellow-creatures. This psychic entity is covered up by the play of the mentalised Prana or desire-mind which we mistake for the soul; the emotional mind is unable to mirror the real soul in us, the Divine in our hearts, and is obliged instead to mirror the desire-mind.

So too the proper function of the thought-mind is to observe, understand, judge with a dispassionate delight in knowledge and open itself to messages and illuminations playing upon all that it observes and upon all that is yet hidden from it but must progressively be revealed, messages and illuminations that secretly flash down to us from the divine Oracle concealed in light above our mentality whether they seem to descend through the intuitive mind or arise from the seeing heart. But this it cannot do rightly because it is pinned to the limitations of the life-energy in the senses, to the discords of sensation and emotion, and to its own limitations of intellectual preference, inertia, straining, self-will which are the form taken in it by the interference of this desire-mind, this psychic Prana. As is said in the Upanishads, our whole mind-consciousness is shot through with the threads and currents of this Prana, this Life-energy that strives and limits, grasps and misses, desires and suffers, and only by its purification can we know and possess our real and eternal self.

It is true that the root of all this evil is the ego-sense and that the seat of the conscious ego-sense is the mind itself; but in reality the conscious mind only reflects an ego already created in the subconscious mind in things, the dumb soul in the stone and the plant which is present in all body and life and only finally delivered into voicefulness and wakefulness but not originally created by the conscious mind. And in this upward procession it is the life-energy which has become the obstinate knot of the ego, it is the desire-mind which refuses to relax the knot even when the intellect and the heart have discovered the cause of their ills and would be glad enough to remove it; for the Prana in them is the Animal who revolts and who obscures and deceives their knowledge and coerces their will by his refusal.

Therefore the mental Purusha has to separate himself from association and self-identification with this desire-mind. He has to say "I am not this thing that struggles and suffers, grieves and rejoices, loves and hates, hopes and is baffled, is angry and afraid and cheerful and depressed, a thing of vital moods and emotional passions. All these are merely workings and habits of Prakriti in the sensational and emotional mind." The mind then draws back from its emotions and becomes with these, as with the bodily movements and experiences, the observer or witness. There is again an inner cleavage. There is this emotional mind in which these moods and passions continue to occur according to the habit of the modes of Nature and there is the observing mind which sees them, studies and understands but is detached from them. It observes them as if in a sort of action and play on a mental stage of personages other than itself, at first with interest and a habit of relapse into identification, then with entire calm and detachment, and, finally, attaining not only to calm but to the pure delight of its own silent existence, with a smile at their unreality as at the imaginary joys and sorrows of a child who is playing and loses himself in the play. Secondly, it becomes aware of itself as master of the sanction who by his withdrawal of sanction can make this play to cease. When the sanction is withdrawn, another significant phenomenon takes place; the emotional mind becomes normally calm and pure and free from these reactions, and even when they come, they no longer rise from within but seem to fall on it as impressions from outside to which its fibres are still able to respond; but this habit of response dies away and the emotional mind is in time entirely liberated from the passions which it has renounced. Hope and fear, joy and grief, liking and disliking, attraction and repulsion, content and discontent, gladness and depression, horror and wrath and fear and disgust and shame and the passions of love and hatred fall away from the liberated psychic being.

What takes their place? It may be, if we will, an entire calm, silence and indifference. But although this is a stage through which the soul has usually to pass, it is not the final aim we have placed before us. Therefore the Purusha becomes also the master who wills and whose will it is to replace wrong by right enjoyment of the psychic existence. What he wills, Nature executes. What was fabric-stuff of desire and passion, is turned into reality of pure, equal and calmly intense love and joy and oneness. The real soul emerges and takes the place left vacant by the desire-mind. The cleansed and emptied cup is filled with the wine of divine love and delight and no longer with the sweet and bitter poison of passion. The passions, even the passion for good, misrepresent the divine nature. The passion of pity with its impure elements of physical repulsion and emotional inability to bear the suffering of others has to be rejected and replaced by the higher divine compassion which sees, understands, accepts the burden of others and is strong to help and heal, not with self-will and revolt against the suffering in the world and with ignorant accusation of the law of things and their source, but with light and knowledge and as an instrument of the Divine in its emergence. So too the love that desires and grasps and is troubled with joy and shaken with grief must be rejected for the equal, all-embracing love that is free from these things and has no dependence upon circumstances and is not modified by response or absence of response. So we shall deal with all the movements of the soul; but of these things we shall speak farther when we consider the Yoga of self-perfection.

As with action and inaction, so it is with this dual possibility of indifference and calm on the one side and active joy and love on the other. Equality, not indifference is the basis. Equal endurance, impartial indifference, calm submission to the causes of joy and grief without any reaction of either grief or joy are the preparation and negative basis of equality; but equality is not fulfilled till it takes its positive form of love and delight. The sense-mind must find the equal *rasa* of the All-Beautiful, the heart the equal love and Ananda for all, the psychic Prana the enjoyment of this *rasa*, love and Ananda. This, however, is the positive perfection that comes by liberation; our first object on the path of knowledge is rather the liberation that comes by detachment from the desire-mind and by the renunciation of its passions.

The desire-mind must also be rejected from the instrument of thought and this is best done by the detachment of the Purusha from thought and opinion itself. Of this we have already had occasion to speak when we considered in what consists the integral purification of the being. For all this movement of knowledge which we are describing is a method of purification and liberation whereby entire and final self-knowledge becomes possible, a progressive self-knowledge being itself the instrument of the purification and liberation. The method with the thought-mind will be the same as with all the rest of the being. The Purusha, having used the thought-mind for release from identification with the life and body and with the mind of desire and sensations and emotions, will turn round upon the thought-mind itself and will say "This too I am not; I am not the thought or the thinker; all these ideas, opinions, speculations, strivings of the intellect, its predilections, preferences, dogmas, doubts, self-corrections are not myself; all this is only a working of Prakriti which takes place in the thought-mind." Thus a division is created between the mind that thinks and wills and the mind that observes and the Purusha becomes the witness only; he sees, he understands the process and laws of his thought, but detaches himself from it. Then as the master of the sanction he withdraws his past sanction from the tangle of the mental undercurrent and the reasoning intellect and causes both to cease from their importunities. He becomes liberated from subjection to the thinking mind and capable of the utter silence.

For perfection there is necessary also the resumption by the Purusha of his position as the lord of his Nature and the will to replace the mere mental undercurrent and intellect by the truth-conscious thought that lightens from above. But the silence is necessary; in the silence and not in the thought we shall find the Self, we shall become aware of it, not merely conceive it, and we shall withdraw out of the mental Purusha into that which is the source of the mind. But for this withdrawal a final liberation is needed, the release from the ego-sense in the mind.

Chapter IX

The Release from the Ego

THE FORMATION of a mental and vital ego tied to the body-sense was the first great labour of the cosmic Life in its progressive evolution; for this was the means it found for creating out of matter a conscious individual. The dissolution of this limiting ego is the one condition, the necessary means for this very same Life to arrive at its divine fruition: for only so can the conscious individual find either his transcendent self or his true Person. This double movement is usually represented as a fall and a redemption or a creation and a destruction, — the kindling of a light and its extinction or the formation first of a smaller temporary and unreal self and a release from it into our true self's eternal largeness. For human thought falls apart towards two opposite extremes: one, mundane and pragmatic, regards the fulfilment and satisfaction of the mental, vital and physical ego-sense individual or collective as the object of life and looks no farther, while the other, spiritual, philosophic or religious, regards the conquest of the ego in the interests of the soul, spirit or whatever be the ultimate entity, as the one thing supremely worth doing. Even in the camp of the ego there are two divergent attitudes which divide the mundane or materialist theory of the universe. One tendency of this thought regards the mental ego as a creation of our mentality which will be dissolved with the dissolution of mind by the death of the body; the one abiding truth is eternal Nature working in the race — this or another — and her purpose should be followed, not ours, — the fulfilment of the race, the collective ego, and not that of the individual should be the rule of life. Another trend of thought, more vitalistic in its tendencies, fixes on the conscious ego as the supreme achievement of Nature, no matter how transitory, ennobles it into a human representative of the Will-to-be and holds up its greatness and satisfaction as the highest aim of our existence. In the more numerous systems that take their stand on some kind of religious thought or spiritual discipline there is a corresponding divergence. The Buddhist denies the existence of a real self or ego, admits no universal or transcendent Being. The Adwaitin declares the apparently individual soul to be none other than the supreme Self and Brahman, its individuality an illusion; the putting off of individual existence is the only true release. Other systems assert, in flat contradiction of this view, the eternal persistence of the human soul; a basis of multiple consciousness in the One or else a dependent but still separate entity, it is constant, real, imperishable.

Amidst these various and conflicting opinions the seeker of the Truth has to decide for himself which shall be for him the Knowledge. But if our aim is a spiritual release or a spiritual fulfilment, then the exceeding of this little mould of ego is imperative. In human egoism and its satisfaction there can be no divine culmination and deliverance. A certain purification from egoism is the condition even of ethical progress and elevation, for social good and perfection; much more is it indispensable for inner peace, purity and joy. But a much more radical deliverance, not only from egoism but from ego-idea and ego-sense, is needed if our aim is to raise human into divine nature. Experience shows that, in proportion as we deliver ourselves from the limiting mental and vital ego, we command a wider life, a larger existence, a higher consciousness, a happier soul-state, even a greater knowledge, power and scope. Even the aim which the most mundane philosophy pursues, the fulfilment, perfection, satisfaction of the individual, is best assured not by satisfying the narrow ego but by finding freedom in a higher and larger self. There is no happiness in smallness of the being, says the Scripture, it is with the large being that happiness comes. The ego is by its nature a smallness of being; it brings contraction of the consciousness and with the contraction limitation of knowledge, disabling ignorance, — confinement and a diminution of power and by that diminution incapacity and weakness, — scission of oneness and by that scission disharmony and failure of sympathy and love and understanding, — inhibition or fragmentation of delight of being and by that fragmentation pain and sorrow. To recover what is lost we must break out of the walls of ego. The ego must either disappear in impersonality or fuse into a larger I: it must fuse into the wider cosmic "I" which comprehends all these smaller selves or the transcendent of which even the cosmic self is a diminished image.

But this cosmic self is spiritual in essence and in experience; it must not be confused with the collective existence, with any group soul or the life and body of a human society or even of all mankind. The subordination of the ego to the progress and happiness of the human race is now a governing idea in the world's thought and ethics; but this is a mental and moral and not a spiritual ideal. For that progress is a series of constant mental, vital and physical vicissitudes, it has no firm spiritual content, and offers no sure standing-ground to the soul of man. The consciousness of collective humanity is only a larger comprehensive edition or a sum of individual egos. Made of the same substance, in the same mould of nature, it has not in it any greater light, any more eternal sense of itself, any purer source of peace, joy and deliverance. It is rather even more tortured, troubled and obscured, certainly more vague, confused and unprogressive. The individual is in this respect greater than the mass and cannot be called on to subordinate his more luminous possibilities to this darker entity. If light, peace, deliverance, a better state of existence are to come, they must descend into the soul from something wider than the individual, but also from something higher than the collective ego. Altruism, philanthropy, the service of mankind are in themselves mental or moral ideals, not laws of the spiritual life. If into the spiritual aim there enters the impulse to deny the personal self or to serve humanity or the world at large, it comes not from the ego nor from the collective sense of the race, but from something more occult and profound transcendent of both these things; for it is founded on a sense of the Divine in all and it works not for the sake of the ego or the race but for the sake of the Divine and its purpose in the person or group or collective. It is this transcendent Source which we must seek and serve, this vaster being and consciousness to which the race and the individual are minor terms of its existence.

There is indeed a truth behind the pragmatic impulse which an exclusive one-sided spirituality is apt to ignore or deny or belittle. It is this that since the individual and the universal are terms of that higher and vaster Being, their fulfilment must have some real place in the supreme Existence. There must be behind them some high purpose in the supreme Wisdom and Knowledge, some eternal strain in the supreme Delight: they cannot have been, they were not created in vain. But the perfection and satisfaction of humanity like the perfection and satisfaction of the individual, can only be securely compassed and founded upon a more eternal yet unseized truth and right of things. Minor terms of some greater Existence, they can fulfil themselves only when that of which they are the terms is known and possessed. The greatest service to humanity, the surest foundation for its true progress, happiness and perfection is to prepare or find the way by which the individual and the collective man can transcend the ego and live in its true self, no longer bound to ignorance, incapacity, disharmony and sorrow. It is by the pursuit of the eternal and not by living bound in the slow collective evolution of Nature that we can best assure even that evolutionary, collective, altruistic aim our modern thought and idealism have set before us. But it is in itself a secondary aim; to find, know and possess the Divine existence, consciousness and nature and to live in it for the Divine is our true aim and the one perfection to which we must aspire.

It is then in the way of the spiritual philosophies and religions, not in that of any earth-bound materialistic doctrine, that the seeker of the highest knowledge has to walk, even if with enriched aims and a more comprehensive spiritual purpose. But how far has he to proceed in the elimination of the ego? In the ancient way of knowledge we arrive at the elimination of the ego-sense which attaches itself to the body, to the life, to the mind and says of all or any of them, “This is I”. Not only do we, as in the way of works, get rid of the “I” of the worker and see the Lord alone as the true source of all works and sanction of works and His executive Nature-power or else His supreme Shakti as the sole agent and worker, — but we get rid also of the ego-sense which mistakes the instruments or the expressions of our being for our true self and spirit. But even if all this has been done, something remains still; there remains a substratum of all these, a general sense of the separate I. This substratum ego is something vague, indefinable, elusive; it does not or need not attach itself to anything in particular as the self; it does not identify itself with anything collective; it is a sort of fundamental form or power of the mind which compels the mental being to feel himself as a perhaps indefinable but still a limited being which is not mind, life or body, but under which their activities proceed in Nature. The others were a qualified ego-idea and ego-sense supporting themselves on the play of the Prakriti; but this is the pure fundamental ego-power supporting itself on the consciousness of the mental Purusha. And because it seems to be above or behind the play and not in it, because it does not say "I am the mind, life or body," but "I am a being on whom the action of mind, life and body depends," many think themselves released and mistake this elusive Ego for the One, the Divine, the true Purusha or at the very least for the true Person within them, — mistaking the indefinable for the Infinite. But so long as this fundamental ego-sense remains, there is no absolute release. The egoistic life, even if diminished in force and intensity, can still continue well enough with this support. If there is the error in identification, the ego life may under that pretext get rather an exaggerated intensity and force. Even if there is no such error, the ego life may be wider, purer, more flexible and release may be now much easier to attain and nearer to accomplishment, but still there is as yet no definitive release. It is imperative to go farther, to get rid of this indefinable but fundamental ego-sense also and get back to the Purusha on whom it is supporting itself, of whom it is a shadow; the shadow has to disappear and by its disappearance reveal the spirit's unclouded substance.

That substance is the self of the man called in European thought the Monad, in Indian philosophy, Jiva or Jivatman, the living entity, the self of the living creature. This Jiva is not the mental ego-sense constructed by the workings of Nature for her temporary purpose. It is not a thing bound, as the mental being, the vital, the physical are bound, by her habits, laws or processes. The Jiva is a spirit and self, superior to Nature. It is true that it consents to her acts, reflects her moods and upholds the triple medium of mind, life and body through which she casts them upon the soul's consciousness; but it is itself a living reflection or a soul-form or a self-creation of the Spirit universal and transcendent. The One Spirit who has mirrored some of His modes of being in the world and in the soul, is multiple in the Jiva. That Spirit is the very Self of our self, the One and the Highest, the Supreme we have to realise, the infinite existence into which we have to enter. And so far the teachers walk in company, all agreeing that this is the supreme object of knowledge, of works and of devotion, all agreeing that if it is to be attained, the Jiva must release himself from the ego-sense which belongs to the lower Nature or Maya. But here they part company and each goes his own way. The Monist fixes his feet on the path of an exclusive Knowledge and sets for us as sole ideal an entire return, loss, immersion or extinction of the Jiva in the Supreme. The Dualist or the partial Monist turns to the path of Devotion and directs us to shed indeed the lower ego and material life, but to see as the highest destiny of the spirit of man, not the self-annihilation of the Buddhist, not the self-immersion of the Adwaitin, not a swallowing up of the many by the One, but an eternal existence absorbed in the thought, love and enjoyment of the Supreme, the One, the All-Lover.

For the disciple of an integral Yoga there can be no hesitation; as a seeker of knowledge it is the integral knowledge and not anything either half-way and attractive or high-pinnacled and exclusive he must seek. He must soar to the utmost height, but also circle and spread to the most all-embracing wideness, not binding himself to any rigid structure of metaphysical thought, but free to admit and combine all the soul's highest and greatest and fullest and most numerous experiences. If the highest height of spiritual experience, the sheer summit of all realisation is the absolute union of the soul with the Transcendent who exceeds the individual and the universe, the widest scope of that union is the discovery of that very Transcendent as the source, support, continent, informing and constituent spirit and substance of both these manifesting powers of the divine Essence and the divine Nature. Whatever the path, this must be for him the goal. The Yoga of Action also is not fulfilled, is not absolute, is not victoriously complete until the seeker has felt and lives in his essential and integral oneness with the Supreme. One he must be with the Divine both in his highest and inmost and in his widest being and consciousness, in his work, his will, his power of action, his mind, body, life. Otherwise he is only released from the illusion of individual works, but not released from the illusion of separate being and instrumentality. As the servant and instrument of the Divine he works, but the crown of his labour and its perfect base or motive is oneness with that which he serves and fulfils. The Yoga of devotion too is complete only when the lover and the Beloved are unified and difference is abolished in the ecstasy of a divine oneness; and yet in the mystery of this unification there is the sole existence of the Beloved but no extinction or absorption of the lover. It is the highest unity which is the express direction of the path of knowledge, the call to absolute oneness is its impulse, the experience of it its magnet, but it is this very highest unity which takes as its field of manifestation in him the largest possible cosmic wideness. Obeying the necessity to withdraw successively from the practical egoism of our triple nature and its fundamental ego-sense, we come to the realisation of the spirit, the self, lord of this individual human manifestation, but our knowledge is not integral if we do not make this self in the individual one with the cosmic spirit and find their greater reality above in an inexpressible but not unknowable Transcendence. The Jiva, possessed of himself, must give himself up into the being of the Divine. The self of the man must be made one with the Self of all; the self of the finite individual must pour itself into the boundless finite and that cosmic spirit too must be exceeded in the transcendent Infinite.

This cannot be done without an uncompromising abolition of the ego-sense at its very basis and source. In the path of Knowledge one attempts this abolition, negatively by a denial of the reality of the ego, positively by a constant fixing of the thought upon the idea of the One and the Infinite in itself or the One and Infinite everywhere. This, if persistently done, changes in the end the mental outlook on oneself and the whole world and there is a kind of mental realisation; but afterwards by degrees or perhaps rapidly and imperatively and almost at the beginning the mental realisation deepens into spiritual experience — a realisation in the very substance of our being. More and more frequent conditions come of something indefinable and illimitable, a peace, a silence, a joy, a bliss beyond expression, a sense of absolute impersonal Power, a pure existence, a pure consciousness, an all-pervading Presence. The ego persists in itself or in its habitual movements, but the place of the one becomes more and more loosened, the others are broken, crushed, more and more rejected, becoming weak in their intensity, limp or mechanical in their action. In the end there is a constant giving up of the whole consciousness into the being of the Supreme. In the beginning when the restless confusion and obscuring impurity of our outward nature is active, when the mental, vital, physical ego-sense are still powerful, this new mental outlook, these experiences may be found difficult in the extreme: but once that triple egoism is discouraged or moribund and the instruments of the Spirit are set right and purified, in an entirely pure, silent, clarified, widened consciousness the purity, infinity, stillness of the One reflects itself like the sky in a limpid lake. A meeting or a taking in of the reflected Consciousness by that which reflects it becomes more and more pressing and possible; the bridging or abolition of the atmospheric gulf between that immutable ethereal impersonal vastness and this once mobile whirl or narrow stream of personal existence is no longer an arduous improbability and may be even a frequent experience, if not yet an entirely permanent state. For even before complete purification, if the strings of the egoistic heart and mind are already sufficiently frayed and loosened, the Jiva can by a sudden snapping of the main cords escape, ascending like a bird freed into the spaces or widening like a liberated flood into the One and Infinite. There is first a sudden sense of a cosmic consciousness, a casting of oneself into the universal; from that universality one can aspire more easily to the Transcendent. There is a pushing back and rending or a rushing down of the walls that imprisoned our conscious being; there is a loss of all sense of individuality and personality, of all placement in Space or Time or action and law of Nature; there is no longer an ego, a person definite and definable, but only consciousness, only existence, only peace or bliss; one becomes immortality, becomes eternity, becomes infinity. All that is left of the personal soul is a hymn of peace and freedom and bliss vibrating somewhere in the Eternal.

When there is an insufficient purity in the mental being, the release appears at first to be partial and temporary; the Jiva seems to descend again into the egoistic life and the higher consciousness to be withdrawn from him. In reality, what happens is that a cloud or veil intervenes between the lower nature and the higher consciousness and the Prakriti resumes for a time its old habit of working under the pressure but not always with a knowledge or present memory of that high experience. What works in it then is a ghost of the old ego supporting a mechanical repetition of the old habits upon the remnants of confusion and impurity still left in the system. The cloud intervenes and disappears, the rhythm of ascent and descent renews itself until the impurity has been worked out. This period of alternations may easily be long in the integral Yoga; for there an entire perfection of the system is required; it must be capable at all times and in all conditions and all circumstances, whether of action or inaction, of admitting and then living in the consciousness of the supreme Truth. Nor is it enough for the sadhaka to have the utter realisation only in the trance of Samadhi or in a motionless quietude, but he must in trance or in waking, in passive reflection or energy of action be able to remain in the constant Samadhi of the firmly founded Brahmic consciousness.[1] But if or when our conscious being has become sufficiently pure and clear, then there is a firm station in the higher consciousness. The impersonalised Jiva, one with the universal or possessed by the Transcendent, lives high-seated above[2] and looks down undisturbed at whatever remnants of the old working of Nature may revisit the system. He cannot be moved by the workings of the three modes of Prakriti in his lower being, nor can he be shaken from his station by the attacks even of grief and suffering. And finally, there being no veil between, the higher peace overpowers the lower disturbance and mobility. There is a settled silence in which the soul can take sovereign possession of itself above and below and altogether.

---

[1] Gita.

Such possession is not indeed the aim of the traditional Yoga of knowledge whose object is rather to get away from the above and the below and the all into the indefinable Absolute. But whatever the aim, the path of knowledge must lead to one first result, an absolute quietude; for unless the old action of Nature in us be entirely quieted, it is difficult if not impossible to found either any true soul-status or any divine activity. Our nature acts on a basis of confusion and restless compulsion to action, the Divine acts freely out of a fathomless calm. Into that abyss of tranquillity we must plunge and become that, if we are to annul the hold of this lower nature upon the soul. Therefore the universalised Jiva first ascends into the Silence; it becomes vast, tranquil, actionless. What action takes place, whether of body and these organs or any working whatever, the Jiva sees but does not take part in, authorise or in any way associate itself with it. There is action, but no personal actor, no bondage, no responsibility. If personal action is needed, then the Jiva has to keep or recover what has been called the form of the ego, a sort of mental image of an "I" that is the knower, devotee, servant or instrument, but an image only and not a reality. If even that is not there, still action can continue by the mere continued force of Prakriti, without any personal actor, without indeed there being any sense of an actor at all; for the Self into which the Jiva has cast its being is the actionless, the fathomlessly still. The path of works leads to the realisation of the Lord, but here even the Lord is not known; there is only the silent Self and Prakriti doing her works, even, as it seems at first, not with truly living entities but with names and forms existing in the Self but which the Self does not admit as real. The soul may go even beyond this realisation; it may either rise to the Brahman on the other side of all idea of Self as a Void of everything that is here, a Void of unnameable peace and extinction of all, even of the Sat, even of that Existent which is the impersonal basis of individual or universal personality; or else it may unite with it as an ineffable "That" of which nothing can be said; for the universe and all that is does not even exist in That, but appears to the mind as a dream more unsubstantial than any dream ever seen or imagined, so that even the word dream seems too positive a thing to express its entire unreality. These experiences are the foundation of that lofty Illusionism which takes such firm hold of the human mind in its highest overleapings of itself.

---

[2] *Udāsīna*, the word for the spiritual "indifference", that is to say the unattached freedom of the soul touched by the supreme knowledge.

These ideas of dream and illusion are simply results in our still existent mentality of the new poise of the Jiva and its denial of the claim made upon it by its old mental associations and view of life and existence. In reality, the Prakriti does not act for itself or by its own motion, but with the Self as lord; for out of that Silence wells all this action, that apparent Void looses out as if into movement all these infinite riches of experience. To this realisation the sadhaka of the integral Yoga must arrive by the process that we shall hereafter describe. What then, when he so resumes his hold upon the universe and views no longer himself in the world but the cosmos in himself, will be the position of the Jiva or what will fill in his new consciousness the part of the ego-sense? There will be no ego-sense even if there is a sort of individualisation for the purposes of the play of universal consciousness in an individual mind and frame; and for this reason that all will be unforgettably the One and every Person or Purusha will be to him the One in many forms or rather in many aspects and poises, Brahman acting upon Brahman, one

Nara-Narayana[3] everywhere. In that larger play of the Divine the joy of the relations of divine love also is possible without the lapse into the ego-sense, — just as the supreme state of human love likewise is described as the unity of one soul in two bodies. The ego-sense is not indispensable to the world-play in which it is so active and so falsifies the truth of things; the truth is always the One at work on itself, at play with itself, infinite in unity, infinite in multiplicity. When the individualised consciousness rises to and lives in that truth of the cosmic play, then even in full action, even in possession of the lower being the Jiva remains still one with the Lord, and there is no bondage and no delusion. He is in possession of Self and released from the ego.

---

[3] The Divine, Narayana, making itself one with humanity even as the human, Nara becomes one with the Divine.

Chapter X

The Realisation of the Cosmic Self

OUR FIRST imperative aim when we draw back from mind, life, body and all else that is not our eternal being, is to get rid of the false idea of self by which we identify ourselves with the lower existence and can realise only our apparent being as perishable or mutable creatures in a perishable or ever mutable world. We have to know ourselves as the self, the spirit, the eternal; we have to exist consciously in our true being. Therefore this must be our primary, if not our first one and all-absorbing idea and effort in the path of knowledge. But when we have realised the eternal self that we are, when we have become that inalienably, we have still a secondary aim, to establish the true relation between this eternal self that we are and the mutable existence and mutable world which till now we had falsely taken for our real being and our sole possible status.

In order that there should be any real relation, it must be a relation between two realities. Formerly we had thought the eternal self to be a remote concept far from our mundane existence if not an illusion and an unreality, because in the nature of things we could not conceive of ourselves as anything except this mind, life, body, changing and moving in the succession of Time. When we have once got rid of our confinement to this lower status, we are apt to seize on the other side of the same erroneous relation between self and world; we tend to regard this eternity which we increasingly are or in which we live as the sole reality and begin to look down from it upon the world and man as a remote illusion and unreality, because that is a status quite opposite to our new foundation in which we no longer place our roots of consciousness, from which we have been lifted up and transfigured and with which we seem to have no longer any binding link. Especially is this likely to happen if we have made the finding of the eternal Self not only our primary, but our one and absorbing objective in the withdrawal from the lower triplicity; for then we are likely to shoot at once from pure mind to pure spirit without treading the stairs between this middle and that summit and we tend to fix on our consciousness the profound sense of a gulf which we cannot bridge and can no longer cross over again except by a painful fall.

But the self and the world are in an eternal close relation and there is a connection between them, not a gulf that has to be overleaped. Spirit and material existence are highest and lowest rung of an orderly and progressive series. Therefore between the two there must be a real relation and principle of connection by which the eternal Brahman is able to be at once pure Spirit and Self and yet hold in himself the universe of himself; and it must be possible for the soul that is one with or in union with the Eternal to adopt the same poise of divine relation in place of our present ignorant immersion in the world. This principle of connection is the eternal unity between the Self and all existences; of that eternal unity the liberated soul must be capable, just as the ever free and unbound Divine is capable of it, and that we should realise equally with the pure self-existence at which we have first to aim. For integral self-possession we must be one not only with the Self, with God, but with all existences. We must take back in the right relation and in the poise of an eternal Truth the world of our manifested existence peopled by our fellow-beings from which we had drawn back because we were bound to them in a wrong relation and in the poise of a falsehood created in Time by the principle of divided consciousness with all its oppositions, discords and dualities. We have to take back all things and beings into our new consciousness but as one with all, not divided from them by an egoistic individuality.

In other words, besides the consciousness of the transcendent Self pure, self-existent, timeless, spaceless we have to accept and become the cosmic consciousness, we have to identify our being with the Infinite who makes himself the base and continent of the worlds and dwells in all existences. This is the realisation which the ancient Vedantins spoke of as seeing all existences in the self and the self in all existences; and in addition they speak of the crowning realisation of the man in whom the original miracle of existence has been repeated, self-being has become all these existences that belong to the worlds of the becoming.[1] In these three terms is expressed, fundamentally, the whole of that real relation between the self and the world which we have to substitute for the false relation created by the limiting ego. This is the new vision and sense of infinite being which we have to acquire, this the foundation of that unity with all which we have to establish.

For our real self is not the individual mental being, that is only a figure, an appearance; our real self is cosmic, infinite, it is one with all existence and the inhabitant of all existences. The self behind our mind, life and body is the same as the self behind the mind, life and body of all our fellow-beings, and if we come to possess it, we shall naturally, when we turn to look out again upon them, tend to become one with them in the common basis of our consciousness. It is true that the mind opposes any such identification and if we allow it to persist in its old habits and activities, it will rather strive to bring again its veil of dissonances over our new realisation and possession of self than to shape and subject itself to this true and eternal vision of things. But in the first place, if we have proceeded rightly on the path of our Yoga, we shall have attained to Self through a purified mind and heart, and a purified mind is one that is necessarily passive and open to the knowledge. Secondly, even the mind in spite of its tendency to limit and divide can be taught to think in the rhythm of the unifying Truth instead of the broken terms of the limiting appearance. We must therefore accustom it by meditation and concentration to cease to think of things and beings as separately existent in themselves and rather to think always of the One everywhere and of all things as the One. Although we have spoken hitherto of the withdrawing motion of the Jiva as the first necessity of knowledge and as if it were to be pursued alone and by itself, yet in fact it is better for the sadhaka of the integral Yoga to unite the two movements. By one he will find the self within, by the other he will find that self in all that seems to us at present to be outside us. It is possible indeed to begin with the latter movement, to realise all things in this visible and sensible existence as God or Brahman or Virat Purusha and then to go beyond to all that is behind the Virat. But this has its inconveniences and it is better, if that be found possible, to combine the two movements.

---

[1] Isha Upanishad.

This realisation of all things as God or Brahman has, as we have seen, three aspects of which we can conveniently make three successive stages of experience. First, there is the Self in whom all beings exist. The Spirit, the Divine has manifested itself as infinite self-extended being, self-existent, pure, not subject to Time and Space, but supporting Time and Space as figures of its consciousness. It is more than all things and contains them all within that self-extended being and consciousness, not bound by anything that it creates, holds or becomes, but free and infinite and all-blissful. It holds them, in the old image, as the infinite ether contains in itself all objects. This image of the ethereal (Akasha) Brahman may indeed be of great practical help to the sadhaka who finds a difficulty in meditating on what seems to him at first an abstract and unseizable idea. In the image of the ether, not physical but an encompassing ether of vast being, consciousness and bliss, he may seek to see with the mind and to feel in his mental being this supreme existence and to identify it in oneness with the self within him. By such meditation the mind may be brought to a favourable state of predisposition in which, by the rending or withdrawing of the veil, the supramental vision may flood the mentality and change entirely all our seeing. And upon that change of seeing, as it becomes more and more potent and insistent and occupies all our consciousness, there will supervene eventually a change of becoming so that what we see we become. We shall be in our self-consciousness not so much cosmic as ultra-cosmic, infinite. Mind and life and body will then be only movements in that infinity which we have become, and we shall see that what exists is not world at all but simply this infinity of spirit in which move the mighty cosmic harmonies of its own images of self-conscious becoming.

But what then of all these forms and existences that make up the harmony? Shall they be to us only images, empty name and form without any informing reality, poor worthless things in themselves and however grandiose, puissant or beautiful they once seemed to our mental vision, now to be rejected and held of no value? Not so; although that would be the first natural result of a very intense absorption in the infinity of the all-containing Self to the exclusion of the infinities that it contains. But these things are not empty, not mere unreal name and form imagined by a cosmic Mind; they are, as we have said, in their reality self-conscious becomings of the Self, that is to say, the Self dwells within all of them even as within us, conscious of them, governing their motion, blissful in his habitation as in his embrace of all that he becomes. As the ether both contains and is as it were contained in the jar, so this Self both contains and inhabits all existences, not in a physical but in a spiritual sense, and is their reality. This indwelling State of the Self we have to realise; we have to see and ourselves to become in our consciousness the Self in all existences. We have, putting aside all vain resistance of the intellect and the mental associations, to know that the Divine inhabits all these becomings and is their true Self and conscious Spirit, and not to know it only intellectually but to know by a self-experience that shall compel into its own diviner mould all the habits of the mental consciousness.

This Self that we are has finally to become to our self-consciousness entirely one with all existences in spite of its exceeding them. We have to see it not only as that which contains and inhabits all, but that which is all, not only as indwelling spirit, but also as the name and form, the movement and the master of the movement, the mind and life and body. It is by this final realisation that we shall resume entirely in the right poise and the vision of the Truth all that we drew back from in the first movement of recoil and withdrawal. The individual mind, life and body which we recoiled from as not our true being, we shall recover as a true becoming of the Self, but no longer in a purely individual narrowness. We shall take up the mind not as a separate mentality imprisoned in a petty motion, but as a large movement of the universal mind, the life not as an egoistic activity of vitality and sensation and desire, but as a free movement of the universal life, the body not as a physical prison of the soul but as a subordinate instrument and detachable robe, realising that also as a movement of universal Matter, a cell of the cosmic Body. We shall come to feel all the consciousness of the physical world as one with our physical consciousness, feel all the energies of the cosmic life around as our own energies, feel all the heart-beats of the great cosmic impulse and seeking in our heart-beats set to the rhythm of the divine Ananda, feel all the action of the universal mind flowing into our mentality and our thought-action flowing out upon it as a wave into that wide sea. This unity embracing all mind, life and matter in the light of a supramental Truth and the pulse of a spiritual Bliss will be to us our internal fulfilment of the Divine in a complete cosmic consciousness.

But since we must embrace all this in the double term of the Being and the Becoming, the knowledge that we shall possess must be complete and integral. It must not stop with the realisation of the pure Self and Spirit, but include also all those modes of the Spirit by which it supports, develops and throws itself out into its cosmic manifestation. Self-knowledge and world-knowledge must be made one in the all-ensphering knowledge of the Brahman.

Chapter XI

The Modes of the Self

SINCE the Self which we come to realise by the path of knowledge is not only the reality which lies behind and supports the states and movements of our psychological being, but also that transcendent and universal Existence which has manifested itself in all the movements of the universal, the knowledge of the Self includes also the knowledge of the principles of Being, its fundamental modes and its relations with the principles of the phenomenal universe. This was what was meant by the Upanishad when it spoke of the Brahman as that which being known all is known.[1] It has to be realised first as the pure principle of Existence, afterwards, says the Upanishad, its essential modes become clear to the soul which realises it. We may indeed, before realisation, try to analyse by the metaphysical reason and even understand intellectually what Being is and what the world is, but such metaphysical understanding is not the Knowledge. Moreover, we may have the realisation in knowledge and vision, but this is incomplete without realisation in the entire soul-experience and the unity of all our being with that which we realise.[2] It is the science of Yoga to know and the art of Yoga to be unified with the Highest so that we may live in the Self and act from that supreme poise, becoming one not only in the conscious essence but in the conscious law of our being with the transcendent Divine whom all things and creatures, whether ignorantly or with partial knowledge and experience, seek to express through the lower law of their members. To know the highest Truth and to be in harmony with it is the condition of right being, to express it in all that we are, experience and do is the condition of right living.

---

[1] *yasmin vijñāte sarvaṁ vijñātam.*

[2] This is the distinction made in the Gita between Sankhya and Yoga; both are necessary to an integral knowledge.

But rightly to know and express the Highest is not easy for man the mental being because the highest Truth and therefore the highest modes of existence are supramental. They repose on the essential unity of what seem to the intellect and mind and are to our mental experience of the world opposite poles of existence and idea and therefore irreconcilable opposites and contradictions, but to the supramental experience are complementary aspects of the same Truth. We have seen this already in the necessity of realising the Self as at once one and many; for we have to realise each thing and being as That; we have to realise the unity of all as That, both in the unity of sum and in the oneness of essence; and we have to realise That as the Transcendent who is beyond all this unity and this multiplicity which we see everywhere as the two opposite, yet companion poles of all existence. For every individual being is the Self, the Divine in spite of the outward limitations of the mental and physical form through which it presents itself at the actual moment, in the actual field of space, in the actual succession of circumstances that make up the web of inner state and outward action and event through which we know the individual. So, equally, every collectivity small or great is each the Self, the Divine similarly expressing itself in the conditions of this manifestation. We cannot really know any individual or any collectivity if we know it only as it appears inwardly to itself or outwardly to us, but only if we know it as the Divine, the One, our own Self employing its various essential modes and its occasional circumstances of self-manifestation. Until we have transformed the habits of our mentality so that it shall live entirely in this knowledge reconciling all differences in the One, we do not live in the real Truth, because we do not live in the real Unity. The accomplished sense of Unity is not that in which all are regarded as parts of one whole, waves of one sea, but that in which each as well as the All is regarded wholly as the Divine, wholly as our Self in a supreme identity.

And yet, so complex is the Maya of the Infinite, there is a sense in which the view of all as parts of the whole, waves of the sea or even as in a sense separate entities becomes a necessary part of the integral Truth and the integral Knowledge. For if the Self is always one in all, yet we see that for the purposes at least of the cyclic manifestation it expresses itself in perpetual soul-forms which preside over the movements of our personality through the worlds and the aeons. This persistent soul-existence is the real Individuality which stands behind the constant mutations of the thing we call our personality. It is not a limited ego but a thing in itself infinite; it is in truth the Infinite itself consenting from one plane of its being to reflect itself in a perpetual soul-experience. This is the truth which underlies the Sankhya theory of many Purushas, many essential, infinite, free and impersonal souls reflecting the movements of a single cosmic energy. It stands also, in a different way, behind the very different philosophy of qualified Monism which arose as a protest against the metaphysical excesses of Buddhistic Nihilism and illusionist Adwaita. The old semi-Buddhistic, semi-Sankhya theory which saw only the Quiescent and nothing else in the world except a constant combination of the five elements and the three modes of inconscient Energy lighting up their false activity by the consciousness of the Quiescent in which it is reflected, is not the whole truth of the Brahman. We are not a mere mass of changing mind-stuff, life-stuff, body-stuff taking different forms of mind and life and body from birth to birth, so that at no time is there any real self or conscious reason of existence behind all the flux or none except that Quiescent who cares for none of these things. There is a real and stable power of our being behind the constant mutation of our mental, vital and physical personality, and this we have to know and preserve in order that the Infinite may manifest Himself through it according to His will in whatever range and for whatever purpose of His eternal cosmic activity.

And if we regard existence from the standpoint of the possible eternal and infinite relations of this One from whom all things proceed, these Many of whom the One is the essence and the origin and this Energy, Power, or Nature through which the relations of the One and the Many are maintained, we shall see a certain justification even for the dualist philosophies and religions which seem to deny most energetically the unity of beings and to make an unbridgeable differentiation between the Lord and His creatures. If in their grosser forms these religions aim only at the ignorant joys of the lower heavens, yet there is a far higher and profounder sense in which we may appreciate the cry of the devotee poet when in a homely and vigorous metaphor he claimed the right of the soul to enjoy for ever the ecstasy of its embrace of the Supreme. "I do not want to become sugar," he wrote, "I want to eat sugar." However strongly we may found ourselves on the essential identity of the one Self in all, we need not regard that cry as the mere aspiration of a certain kind of spiritual sensuousness or the rejection by an attached and ignorant soul of the pure and high austerity of the supreme Truth. On the contrary, it aims in its positive part at a deep and mysterious truth of Being which no human language can utter, of which human reason can give no adequate account, to which the heart has the key and which no pride of the soul of knowledge insisting on its own pure austerity can abolish. But that belongs properly to the summit of the path of Devotion and there we shall have again to return to it.

The sadhaka of an integral Yoga will take an integral view of his goal and seek its integral realisation. The Divine has many essential modes of His eternal self-manifestation, possesses and finds Himself on many planes and through many poles of His being; to each mode its purpose, to each plane or pole its fulfilment both in the apex and the supreme scope of the eternal Unity. It is necessarily through the individual Self that we must arrive at the One, for that is the basis of all our experience. By Knowledge we arrive at identity with the One; for there is, in spite of the Dualist, an essential identity by which we can plunge into our Source and free ourselves from all bondage to individuality and even from all bondage to universality. Nor is the experience of that identity a gain for knowledge only or for the pure state of abstract being. The height of all our action also, we have seen, is the immersion of ourselves in the Lord through unity with the divine Will or Conscious-Power by the way of works; the height of love is the rapturous immersion of ourselves in unity of ecstatic delight with the object of our love and adoration. But again for divine works in the world the individual Self converts itself into a centre of consciousness through which the divine Will, one with the divine Love and Light, pours itself out in the multiplicity of the universe. We arrive in the same way at our unity with all our fellow-beings through the identity of this self with the Supreme and with the self in all others. At the same time in the action of Nature we preserve by it as soul-form of the One a differentiation which enables us to preserve relations of difference in Oneness with other beings and with the Supreme Himself. The relations will necessarily be very different in essence and spirit from those which we had when we lived entirely in the Ignorance and Oneness was a mere name or a struggling aspiration of imperfect love, sympathy or yearning. Unity will be the law, difference will be simply for the various enjoyment of that unity. Neither descending again into that plane of division which clings to the separation of the ego-sense nor attached to an exclusive seeking for pure identity which cannot have to do with any play of difference, we shall embrace and reconcile the two poles of being where they meet in the infinity of the Highest.

The Self, even the individual self, is different from our personality as it is different from our mental ego-sense. Our personality is never the same; it is a constant mutation and various combination. It is not a basic consciousness, but a development of forms of consciousness, — not a power of being, but a various play of partial powers of being, — not the enjoyer of the self-delight of our existence, but a seeking after various notes and tones of experience which shall more or less render that delight in the mutability of relations. This also is Purusha and Brahman, but it is the mutable Purusha, the phenomenon of the Eternal, not its stable reality. The Gita makes a distinction between three Purushas who constitute the whole state and action of the divine Being, the Mutable, the Immutable and the Highest which is beyond and embraces the other two. That Highest is the Lord in whom we have to live, the supreme Self in us and in all. The Immutable is the silent, actionless, equal, unchanging self which we reach when we draw back from activity to passivity, from the play of consciousness and force and the seeking of delight to the pure and constant basis of consciousness and force and delight through which the Highest, free, secure and unattached, possesses and enjoys the play. The Mutable is the substance and immediate motive of that changing flux of personality through which the relations of our cosmic life are made possible. The mental being fixed in the Mutable moves in its flux and has not possession of an eternal peace and power and self-delight; the soul fixed in the Immutable holds all these in itself but cannot act in the world; but the soul that can live in the Highest enjoys the eternal peace and power and delight and wideness of being, is not bound in its self-knowledge and self-power by character and personality or by forms of its force and habits of its consciousness and yet uses them all with a large freedom and power for the self-expression of the Divine in the world. Here again the change is not any alteration of the essential modes of the Self, but consists in our emergence into the freedom of the Highest and the right use of the divine law of our being.

Connected with this triple mode of the Self is that distinction which Indian philosophy has drawn between the Qualitied and the Qualitiless Brahman and European thought has made between the Personal and the Impersonal God. The Upanishad indicates clearly enough the relative nature of this opposition, when it speaks of the Supreme as the "Qualitied who is without qualities".[3] We have again two essential modes, two fundamental aspects, two poles of eternal being, both of them exceeded in the transcendent divine Reality. They correspond practically to the Silent and the Active Brahman. For the whole action of the universe may be regarded from a certain point of view as the expression and shaping out in various ways of the numberless and infinite qualities of the Brahman. His being assumes by conscious Will all kinds of properties, shapings of the stuff of conscious being, habits as it were of cosmic character and power of dynamic self-consciousness, *guṇas*, into which all the cosmic action can be resolved. But by none of these nor by all of them nor by their utmost infinite potentiality is He bound; He is above all His qualities and on a certain plane of being rests free from them. The Nirguna or Unqualitied is not incapable of qualities, rather it is this very Nirguna or No-Quality who manifests Himself as Saguna, as Ananta-guna, infinite quality, since He contains all in His absolute capacity of boundlessly varied self-revelation. He is free from them in the sense of exceeding them; and indeed if He were not free from them they could not be infinite; God would be subject to His qualities, bound by His nature, Prakriti would be supreme and Purusha its creation and plaything. The Eternal is bound neither by quality nor absence of quality, neither by Personality nor by Impersonality; He is Himself, beyond all our positive and all our negative definitions.

---

[3] *nirguṇo guṇī.*

But if we cannot define the Eternal, we can unify ourselves with it. It has been said that we can become the Impersonal, but not the personal God, but this is only true in the sense that no one can become individually the Lord of all the universes; we *can* free ourselves into the existence of the active Brahman as well as that of the Silence; we can live in both, go back to our being in both, but each in its proper way, by becoming one with the Nirguna in our essence and one with the Saguna in the liberty of our active being, in our nature.[4] The Supreme pours Himself out of an eternal peace, poise and silence into an eternal activity, free and infinite, freely fixing for itself its self-determinations, using infinite quality to shape out of it varied combination of quality. We have to go back to that peace, poise and silence and act out of it with the divine freedom from the bondage of qualities but still using qualities even the most opposite largely and flexibly for the divine work in the world. Only, while the Lord acts out of the centre of all things, we have to act by transmission of His will and power and self-knowledge through the individual centre, the soul-form of Him which we are. The Lord is subject to nothing; the individual soul-form is subject to its own highest

---

[4] *sādharmya-mukti.*

Self and the greater and more absolute is that subjection, the greater becomes its sense of absolute force and freedom.

The distinction between the Personal and the Impersonal is substantially the same as the Indian distinction, but the associations of the English words carry within them a certain limitation which is foreign to Indian thought. The personal God of the European religions is a Person in the human sense of the word, limited by His qualities though otherwise possessed of omnipotence and omniscience; it answers to the Indian special conceptions of Shiva or Vishnu or Brahma or of the Divine Mother of all, Durga or Kali. Each religion really erects a different personal Deity according to its own heart and thought to adore and serve. The fierce and inexorable God of Calvin is a different being from the sweet and loving God of St. Francis, as the gracious Vishnu is different from the terrible though always loving and beneficent Kali who has pity even in her slaying and saves by her destructions. Shiva, the God of ascetic renunciation who destroys all things seems to be a different being from Vishnu and Brahma, who act by grace, love, preservation of the creature or for life and creation. It is obvious that such conceptions can be only in a very partial and relative sense true descriptions of the infinite and omnipresent Creator and Ruler of the universe. Nor does Indian religious thought affirm them as adequate descriptions. The Personal God is not limited by His qualities, He is Ananta-guna, capable of infinite qualities and beyond them and lord of them to use them as He will, and He manifests Himself in various names and forms of His infinite godhead to satisfy the desire and need of the individual soul according to its own nature and personality. It is for this reason that the normal European mind finds it so difficult to understand Indian religion as distinct from Vedantic or Sankhya philosophy, because it cannot easily conceive of a personal God with infinite qualities, a personal God who is not a Person, but the sole real Person and the source of all personality. Yet that is the only valid and complete truth of the divine Personality.

The place of the divine Personality in our synthesis will best be considered when we come to speak of the Yoga of devotion;

it is enough here to indicate that it has its place and keeps it in the integral Yoga even when liberation has been attained. There are practically three grades of the approach to the personal Deity; the first in which He is conceived with a particular form or particular qualities as the name and form of the Godhead which our nature and personality prefers;[5] a second in which He is the one real Person, the All-Personality, the Ananta-guna; a third in which we get back to the ultimate source of all idea and fact of personality in that which the Upanishad indicates by the single word *He* without fixing any attributes. It is there that our realisations of the personal and the impersonal Divine meet and become one in the utter Godhead. For the impersonal Divine is not ultimately an abstraction or a mere principle or a mere state or power and degree of being any more than we ourselves are really such abstractions. The intellect first approaches it through such conceptions, but realisation ends by exceeding them. Through the realisation of higher and higher principles of being and states of conscious existence we arrive not at the annullation of all in a sort of positive zero or even an inexpressible state of existence, but at the transcendent Existence itself which is also the Existent who transcends all definition by personality and yet is always that which is the essence of personality.

When in That we live and have our being, we can possess it in both its modes, the Impersonal in a supreme state of being and consciousness, in an infinite impersonality of self-possessing power and bliss, the Personal by the divine nature acting through the individual soul-form and by the relation between that and its transcendent and universal Self. We may keep even our relation with the personal Deity in His forms and names; if, for instance, our work is predominantly a work of Love it is as the Lord of Love that we can seek to serve and express Him, but we shall have at the same time an integral realisation of Him in all His names and forms and qualities and not mistake the front of Him which is prominent in our attitude to the world for all the infinite Godhead.

---

[5] *iṣṭa-devatā.*

Chapter XII

The Realisation of Sachchidananda

THE MODES of the Self which we have dealt with in our last Chapter may seem at first to be of a highly metaphysical character, to be intellectual conceptions more fit for philosophical analysis than for practical realisation. But this is a false distinction made by the division of our faculties. It is at least a fundamental principle of the ancient wisdom, the wisdom of the East on which we are founding ourselves, that philosophy ought not to be merely a lofty intellectual pastime or a play of dialectical subtlety or even a pursuit of metaphysical truth for its own sake, but a discovery by all right means of the basic truths of all-existence which ought then to become the guiding principles of our own existence. Sankhya, the abstract and analytical realisation of truth, is one side of Knowledge. Yoga, the concrete and synthetic realisation of it in our experience, inner state, outer life is the other. Both are means by which man can escape out of falsehood and ignorance and live in and by the truth. And since it is always the highest he can know or be capable of that must be the aim of the thinking man, it is the highest truth which the soul must seek out by thought and by life accomplish.

Here lies the whole importance of the part of the Yoga of Knowledge which we are now considering, the knowledge[1] of those essential principles of Being, those essential modes of self-existence on which the absolute Divine has based its self-manifestation. If the truth of our being is an infinite unity in which alone there is perfect wideness, light, knowledge, power, bliss, and if all our subjection to darkness, ignorance, weakness, sorrow, limitation comes of our viewing existence as a clash of infinitely multiple separate existences, then obviously it is the most practical and concrete and utilitarian as well as the most lofty and philosophical wisdom to find a means by which we can get away from the error and learn to live in the truth. So also, if that One is in its nature a freedom from bondage to this play of qualities which constitute our psychology and if from subjection to that play are born the struggle and discord in which we live, floundering eternally between the two poles of good and evil, virtue and sin, satisfaction and failure, joy and grief, pleasure and pain, then to get beyond the qualities and take our foundation in the settled peace of that which is always beyond them is the only practical wisdom. If attachment to mutable personality is the cause of our self-ignorance, of our discord and quarrel with ourself and with life and with others, and if there is an impersonal One in which no such discord and ignorance and vain and noisy effort exist because it is in eternal identity and harmony with itself, then to arrive in our souls at that impersonality and untroubled oneness of being is the one line and object of human effort to which our reason can consent to give the name of practicality.

---

[1] *tattvajñāna*.

There is such a unity, impersonality, freedom from the play of qualities which lifts us above the strife and surge of Nature in her eternal seeking through mind and body for the true key and secret of all her relations. And it is the ancient highest experience of mankind that only by arriving there, only by making oneself impersonal, one, still, self-gathered, superior to the mental and vital existence in that which is eternally superior to it, can a settled, because self-existent peace and internal freedom be acquired. Therefore this is the first, in a sense the characteristic and essential object of the Yoga of Knowledge. But, as we have insisted, this, if first, is not all; if the essential, it is not the complete object. Knowledge is not complete if it merely shows us how to get away from relations to that which is beyond relations, from personality to impersonality, from multiplicity to featureless unity. It must give us also that key, that secret of the whole play of relations, the whole variation of multiplicity, the whole clash and interaction of personalities for which cosmic existence is seeking. And knowledge is still incomplete if it gives us only an idea and cannot verify it in experience; we seek the key, the secret in order that we may govern the phenomenon by the reality it represents, heal its discords by the hidden principle of concord and unification behind them and arrive from the converging and diverging effort of the world to the harmony of its fulfilment. Not merely peace, but fulfilment is what the heart of the world is seeking and what a perfect and effective self-knowledge must give to it; peace can only be the eternal support, the infinite condition, the natural atmosphere of self-fulfilment.

Moreover, the knowledge that finds the true secret of multiplicity, personality, quality, play of relations, must show us some real oneness in essence of being and intimate unity in power of being between the impersonal and the source of personality, the qualitiless and that which expresses itself in qualities, the unity of existence and its many-featured multiplicity. The knowledge that leaves a yawning gulf between the two, can be no ultimate knowledge, however logical it may seem to the analytical intellect or however satisfactory to a self-dividing experience. True knowledge must arrive at a oneness which embraces even though it exceeds the totality of things, not at a oneness which is incapable of it and rejects it. For there can be no such original unbridgeable chasm of duality either in the All-existence itself or between any transcendent Oneness and the All-existent. And as in knowledge, so in experience and self-fulfilment. The experience which finds at the summit of things such an original unbridgeable chasm between two contrary principles and can at most succeed in overleaping it so that it has to live in one or the other, but cannot embrace and unify, is not the ultimate experience. Whether we seek to know by thought or by the vision of knowledge which surpasses thought or by that perfect self-experience in our own being which is the crown and fulfilment of realisation by knowledge, we must be able to think out, see, experience and live the all-satisfying unity. This is what we find in the conception, vision and experience of the One whose oneness does not cease or disappear from view by self-expression in the Many, who is free from bondage to qualities but is yet infinite quality, who contains and combines all relations, yet is ever absolute, who is no one person and yet all persons because He is all being and the one conscious Being. For the individual centre we call ourselves, to enter by its consciousness into this Divine and reproduce its nature in itself is the high and marvellous, yet perfectly rational and most supremely pragmatic and utilitarian goal before us. It is the fulfilment of our self-existence and at the same time the fulfilment of our cosmic existence, of the individual in himself and of the individual in his relation to the cosmic Many. Between these two terms there is no irreconcilable opposition: rather, our own self and the self of the cosmos having been discovered to be one, there must be between them an intimate unity.

In fact all these opposite terms are merely general conditions for the manifestation of conscious being in that Transcendent who is always one not only behind, but within all conditions however apparently opposite. And the original unifying spirit-stuff of them all and the one substantial mode of them all is that which has been described for the convenience of our thought as the trinity of Sachchidananda. Existence, Consciousness, Bliss, these are everywhere the three inseparable divine terms. None of them is really separate, though our mind and our mental experience can make not only the distinction, but the separation. Mind can say and think "I was, but unconscious" — for no being can say "I am, but unconscious" — and it can think and feel "I am, but miserable and without any pleasure in existence." In reality this is impossible. The existence we really are, the eternal "I am", of which it can never be true to say "It was", is nowhere and at no time unconscious. What we call unconsciousness is simply other-consciousness; it is the going in of this surface wave of our mental awareness of outer objects into our subliminal self-awareness and into our awareness too of other planes of existence. We are really no more unconscious when we are asleep or stunned or drugged or "dead" or in any other state, than when we are plunged in inner thought oblivious of our physical selves and our surroundings. For anyone who has advanced even a little way in Yoga, this is a most elementary proposition and one which offers no difficulty whatever to the thought because it is proved at every point by experience. It is more difficult to realise that existence and undelight of existence cannot go together. What we call misery, grief, pain, absence of delight is again merely a surface wave of the delight of existence which takes on to our mental experience these apparently opposite tints because of a certain trick of false reception in our divided being — which is not our existence at all but only a fragmentary formulation or discoloured spray of conscious-force tossed up by the infinite sea of our self-existence. In order to realise this we have to get away from our absorption in these surface habits, these petty tricks of our mental being, — and when we do get behind and away from them it is surprising how superficial they are, what ridiculously weak and little-penetrating pin-pricks they prove to be, — and we have to realise true existence, and true consciousness, and true experience of existence and consciousness, Sat, Chit and Ananda.

Chit, the divine Consciousness, is not our mental self-awareness; that we shall find to be only a form, a lower and limited mode or movement. As we progress and awaken to the soul in us and things, we shall realise that there is a consciousness also in the plant, in the metal, in the atom, in electricity, in everything that belongs to physical nature; we shall find even that it is not really in all respects a lower or more limited mode than the mental, on the contrary it is in many "inanimate" forms more intense, rapid, poignant, though less evolved towards the surface. But this also, this consciousness of vital and physical Nature is, compared with Chit, a lower and therefore a limited form, mode and movement. These lower modes of consciousness are the conscious-stuff of inferior planes in one indivisible existence. In ourselves also there is in our subconscious being an action which is precisely that of the "inanimate" physical Nature whence has been constituted the basis of our physical being, another which is that of plant-life, and another which is that of the lower animal creation around us. All these are so much dominated and conditioned by the thinking and reasoning conscious-being in us that we have no real awareness of these lower planes; we are unable to perceive in their own terms what these parts of us are doing, and receive it very imperfectly in the terms and values of the thinking and reasoning mind. Still we know well enough that there is an animal in us as well as that which is characteristically human, — something which is a creature of conscious instinct and impulse, not reflective or rational, as well as that which turns back in thought and will on its experience, meets it from above with the light and force of a higher plane and to some degree controls, uses and modifies it. But the animal in man is only the head of our subhuman being; below it there is much that is also sub-animal and merely vital, much that acts by an instinct and impulse of which the constituting consciousness is withdrawn behind the surface. Below this sub-animal being, there is at a further depth the subvital. When we advance in that ultra-normal self-knowledge and experience which Yoga brings with it, we become aware that the body too has a consciousness of its own; it has habits, impulses, instincts, an inert yet effective will which differs from that of the rest of our being and can resist it and condition its effectiveness. Much of the struggle in our being is due to this composite existence and the interaction of these varied and heterogeneous planes on each other. For man here is the result of an evolution and contains in himself the whole of that evolution up from the merely physical and subvital conscious being to the mental creature which at the top he is.

But this evolution is really a manifestation and just as we have in us these subnormal selves and subhuman planes, so are there in us above our mental being supernormal and superhuman planes. There Chit as the universal conscious-stuff of existence takes other poises, moves out in other modes, on other principles and by other faculties of action. There is above the mind, as the old Vedic sages discovered, a Truth-plane, a plane of self-luminous, self-effective Idea, which can be turned in light and force upon our mind, reason, sentiments, impulses, sensations and use and control them in the sense of the real Truth of things just as we turn our mental reason and will upon our sense-experience and animal nature to use and control them in the sense of our rational and moral perceptions. There

there is no seeking, but rather natural possession; no conflict or separation between will and reason, instinct and impulse, desire and experience, idea and reality, but all are in harmony, concomitant, mutually effective, unified in their origin, in their development and in their effectuation. But beyond this plane and attainable through it are others in which the very Chit itself becomes revealed, Chit the elemental origin and primal completeness of all this varied consciousness which is here used for various formation and experience. There will and knowledge and sensation and all the rest of our faculties, powers, modes of experience are not merely harmonious, concomitant, unified, but are one being of consciousness and power of consciousness. It is this Chit which modifies itself so as to become on the Truth-plane the supermind, on the mental plane the mental reason, will, emotion, sensation, on the lower planes the vital or physical instincts, impulses, habits of an obscure force not in superficially conscious possession of itself. All is Chit because all is Sat; all is various movement of the original Consciousness because all is various movement of the original Being.

When we find, see or know Chit, we find also that its essence is Ananda or delight of self-existence. To possess self is to possess self-bliss; not to possess self is to be in more or less obscure search of the delight of existence. Chit eternally possesses its self-bliss; and since Chit is the universal conscious-stuff of being, conscious universal being is also in possession of conscious self-bliss, master of the universal delight of existence. The Divine whether it manifests itself in All-Quality or in No-Quality, in Personality or Impersonality, in the One absorbing the Many or in the One manifesting its essential multiplicity, is always in possession of self-bliss and all-bliss because it is always Sachchidananda. For us also to know and possess our true Self in the essential and the universal is to discover the essential and the universal delight of existence, self-bliss and all-bliss. For the universal is only the pouring out of the essential existence, consciousness and delight; and wherever and in whatever form that manifests as existence, there the essential consciousness must be and therefore there must be an essential delight.

The individual soul does not possess this true nature of itself or realise this true nature of its experience, because it separates itself both from the essential and the universal and identifies itself with the separate accidents, with the unessential form and mode and with the separate aspect and vehicle. Thus it takes its mind, body, life-stream for its essential self. It tries to assert these for their own sake against the universal, against that of which the universal is the manifestation. It is right in trying to assert and fulfil itself in the universal for the sake of something greater and beyond, but wrong in attempting to do so against the universal and in obedience to a fragmentary aspect of the universal. This fragmentary aspect or rather collection of fragmentary experiences it combines around an artificial centre of mental experience, the mental ego, and calls that itself and it serves this ego and lives for its sake instead of living for the sake of that something greater and beyond of which all aspects, even the widest and most general are partial manifestations. This is the living in the false and not the true self; this is living for the sake of and in obedience to the ego and not for the sake of and in obedience to the Divine. The question how this fall has come about and for what purpose it has been done, belongs to the domain of Sankhya rather than of Yoga. We have to seize on the practical fact that to such self-division is due the self-limitation by which we have become unable to possess the true nature of being and experience and are therefore in our mind, life and body subject to ignorance, incapacity and suffering. Non-possession of unity is the root cause; to recover unity is the sovereign means, unity with the universal and with that which the universal is here to express. We have to realise the true self of ourselves and of all; and to realise the true self is to realise Sachchidananda.

Chapter XIII

The Difficulties of the Mental Being

WE HAVE come to this stage in our development of the path of Knowledge that we began by affirming the realisation of our pure self, pure existence above the terms of mind, life and body, as the first object of this Yoga, but we now affirm that this is not sufficient and that we must also realise the Self or Brahman in its essential modes and primarily in its triune reality as Sachchidananda. Not only pure existence, but pure consciousness and pure bliss of its being and consciousness are the reality of the Self and the essence of Brahman.

Further, there are two kinds of realisation of Self or Sachchidananda. One is that of the silent passive quietistic, self-absorbed, self-sufficient existence, consciousness and delight, one, impersonal, without play of qualities, turned away from the infinite phenomenon of the universe or viewing it with indifference and without participation. The other is that of the same existence, consciousness, delight sovereign, free, lord of things, acting out of an inalienable calm, pouring itself out in infinite action and quality out of an eternal self-concentration, the one supreme Person holding in himself all this play of personality in a vast equal impersonality, possessing the infinite phenomenon of the universe without attachment but without any inseparable aloofness, with a divine mastery and an innumerable radiation of his eternal luminous self-delight — as a manifestation which he holds, but by which he is not held, which he governs freely and by which therefore he is not bound. This is not the personal God of the religious or the qualified Brahman of the philosophers, but that in which personal and impersonal, quality and non-quality are reconciled. It is the Transcendent possessing them both in His being and employing them both as modes for His manifestation. This then is the object of realisation for the sadhaka of the integral Yoga.

We see at once that from this point of view the realisation of the pure quiescent self which we gain by withdrawing from mind, life and body, is for us only the acquisition of the necessary basis for this greater realisation. Therefore that process is not sufficient for our Yoga; something else is needed more embracingly positive. As we drew back from all that constitutes our apparent self and the phenomenon of the universe in which it dwells to the self-existent, self-conscious Brahman, so we must now repossess our mind, life and body with the all-embracing self-existence, self-consciousness and self-delight of the Brahman. We must not only have the possession of a pure self-existence independent of the world-play, but possess all existence as our own; not only know ourselves as an infinite unegoistic consciousness beyond all change in Time and Space, but become one with all the outpouring of consciousness and its creative force in Time and Space; not only be capable of a fathomless peace and quiescence, but also of a free and an infinite delight in universal things. For that and not only pure calm is Sachchidananda, is the Brahman.

If it were easily possible to elevate ourselves to the supramental plane and, dwelling securely there, realise world and being, consciousness and action, outgoing and incoming of conscious experience by the power and in the manner of the divine supramental faculties, this realisation would offer no essential difficulties. But man is a mental and not yet a supramental being. It is by the mind therefore that he has to aim at knowledge and realise his being, with whatever help he can get from the supramental planes. This character of our actually realised being and therefore of our Yoga imposes on us certain limitations and primary difficulties which can only be overcome by divine help or an arduous practice, and in reality only by the combination of both these aids. These difficulties in the way of the integral knowledge, the integral realisation, the integral becoming we have to state succinctly before we can proceed farther.

Realised mental being and realised spiritual being are really two different planes in the arrangement of our existence, the one superior and divine, the other inferior and human. To the former belong infinite being, infinite consciousness and will, infinite bliss and the infinite comprehensive and self-effective knowledge of supermind, four divine principles; to the latter belong mental being, vital being, physical being, three human principles. In their apparent nature the two are opposed; each is the reverse of the other. The divine is infinite and immortal being; the human is life limited in time and scope and form, life that is death attempting to become life that is immortality. The divine is infinite consciousness transcending and embracing all that it manifests within it; the human is consciousness rescued from a sleep of inconscience, subjected to the means it uses, limited by body and ego and attempting to find its relation to other consciousnesses, bodies, egos positively by various means of uniting contact and sympathy, negatively by various means of hostile contact and antipathy. The divine is inalienable self-bliss and inviolable all-bliss; the human is sensation of mind and body seeking for delight, but finding only pleasure, indifference and pain. The divine is supramental knowledge comprehending all and supramental will effecting all; the human is ignorance reaching out to knowledge by the comprehension of things in parts and parcels which it has to join clumsily together, and it is incapacity attempting to acquire force and will through a gradual extension of power corresponding to its gradual extension of knowledge; and this extension it can only bring about by a partial and parcelled exercise of will corresponding to the partial and parcelled method of its knowledge. The divine founds itself upon unity and is master of the transcendences and totalities of things; the human founds itself on separated multiplicity and is the subject even when the master of their division and fragmentations and their difficult solderings and unifyings. Between the two there are for the human being a veil and a lid which prevent the human not only from attaining but even from knowing the divine.

When, therefore, the mental being seeks to know the divine, to realise it, to become it, it has first to lift this lid, to put by this veil. But when it succeeds in that difficult endeavour, it sees the divine as something superior to it, distant, high, conceptually, vitally, even physically above it, to which it looks up from its own humble station and to which it has, if at all that be possible, to rise, or if it be not possible, to call that down to itself, to be subject to it and to adore. It sees the divine as a superior plane of being, and then it regards it as a supreme state of existence, a heaven or a Sat or a Nirvana according to the nature of its own conception or realisation. Or it sees it as a supreme Being other than itself or at least other than its own present self, and then it calls it God under one name or another, and views it as personal or impersonal, qualitied or without qualities, silent and indifferent Power or active Lord and Helper, again according to its own conception or realisation, its vision or understanding of some side or some aspect of that Being. Or it sees it as a supreme Reality of which its own imperfect being is a reflection or from which it has become detached, and then it calls it Self or Brahman and qualifies it variously, always according to its own conception or realisation, — Existence, Non-Existence, Tao, Nihil, Force, Unknowable.

If then we seek mentally to realise Sachchidananda, there is likely to be this first difficulty that we shall see it as something above, beyond, around even in a sense, but with a gulf between that being and our being, an unbridged or even an unbridgeable chasm. There is this infinite existence; but it is quite other than the mental being who becomes aware of it, and we cannot either raise ourselves to it and become it or bring it down to ourselves so that our own experience of our being and world-being shall be that of its blissful infinity. There is this great, boundless, unconditioned consciousness and force; but our consciousness and force stands apart from it, even if within it, limited, petty, discouraged, disgusted with itself and the world, but unable to participate in that higher thing which it has seen. There is this immeasurable and unstained bliss; but our own being remains the sport of a lower Nature of pleasure and pain and dull neutral sensation incapable of its divine delight. There is this perfect Knowledge and Will; but our own remains always the mental deformed knowledge and limping will incapable of sharing in or even being in tune with that nature of Godhead. Or else so long as we live purely in an ecstatic contemplation of that vision, we are delivered from ourselves; but the moment we again turn our consciousness upon our own being, we fall away from it and it disappears or becomes remote and intangible. The Divinity leaves us; the Vision vanishes; we are back again in the pettiness of our mortal existence.

Somehow this chasm has to be bridged. And here there are two possibilities for the mental being. One possibility is for it to rise by a great, prolonged, concentrated, all-forgetting effort out of itself into the Supreme. But in this effort the mind has to leave its own consciousness, to disappear into another and temporarily or permanently lose itself, if not quite abolish. It has to go into the trance of Samadhi. For this reason the Raja and other systems of Yoga give a supreme importance to the state of Samadhi or Yogic trance in which the mind withdraws not only from its ordinary interests and preoccupations, but first from all consciousness of outward act and sense and being and then from all consciousness of inward mental activities. In this its inward-gathered state the mental being may have different kinds of realisation of the Supreme in itself or in various aspects or on various levels, but the ideal is to get rid of mind altogether and, going beyond mental realisation, to enter into the absolute trance in which all sign of mind or lower existence ceases. But this is a state of consciousness to which few can attain and from which not all can return.

It is obvious, since mind-consciousness is the sole waking state possessed by mental being, that it cannot ordinarily quite enter into another without leaving behind completely both all our waking existence and all our inward mind. This is the necessity of the Yogic trance. But one cannot continually remain in this trance; or, even if one could persist in it for an indefinitely long period, it is always likely to be broken in upon by any strong or persistent call on the bodily life. And when one returns to the mental consciousness, one is back again in the lower being. Therefore it has been said that complete liberation from the human birth, complete ascension from the life of the mental being is impossible until the body and the bodily life are finally cast off. The ideal upheld before the Yogin who follows this method is to renounce all desire and every least velleity of the human life, of the mental existence, to detach himself utterly from the world and, entering more and more frequently and more and more deeply into the most concentrated state of Samadhi, finally to leave the body while in that utter in-gathering of the being so that it may depart into the supreme Existence. It is also by reason of this apparent incompatibility of mind and Spirit that so many religions and systems are led to condemn the world and look forward only to a heaven beyond or else a void Nirvana or supreme featureless self-existence in the Supreme.

But what under these circumstances is the human mind which seeks the divine to do with its waking moments? For if these are subject to all the disabilities of mortal mentality, if they are open to the attacks of grief, fear, anger, passion, hunger, greed, desire, it is irrational to suppose that by the mere concentration of the mental being in the Yogic trance at the moment of putting off the body, the soul can pass away without return into the supreme existence. For the man's normal consciousness is still subject to what the Buddhists call the chain or the stream of Karma; it is still creating energies which must continue and have their effect in a continued life of the mental being which is creating them. Or, to take another point of view, consciousness being the determining fact and not the bodily existence which is only a result, the man still belongs normally to the status of human, or at least mental activity and this cannot be abrogated by the fact of passing out of the physical body; to get rid of mortal body is not to get rid of mortal mind. Nor is it sufficient to have a dominant disgust of the world or an anti-vital indifference or aversion to the material existence; for this too belongs to the lower mental status and activity. The highest teaching is that even the desire for liberation with all its mental concomitants must be surpassed before the soul can be entirely free. Therefore not only must the mind be able to rise in abnormal states out of itself into a higher consciousness, but its waking mentality also must be entirely spiritualised.

This brings into the field the second possibility open to the mental being; for if its first possibility is to rise out of itself into a divine supramental plane of being, the other is to call down the divine into itself so that its mentality shall be changed into an image of the divine, shall be divinised or spiritualised. This may be done and primarily must be done by the mind's power of reflecting that which it knows, relates to its own consciousness, contemplates. For the mind is really a reflector and a medium and none of its activities originate in themselves, none exist *per se*. Ordinarily, the mind reflects the status of mortal nature and the activities of the Force which works under the conditions of the material universe. But if it becomes clear, passive, pure by the renunciation of these activities and of the characteristic ideas and outlook of mental nature, then as in a clear mirror or like the sky in clear water which is without ripple and unruffled by winds, the divine is reflected. The mind still does not entirely possess the divine or become divine, but is possessed by it or by a luminous reflection of it so long as it remains in this pure passivity. If it becomes active, it falls back into the disturbance of the mortal nature and reflects that and no longer the divine. For this reason an absolute quietism and a cessation first of all outer action and then of all inner movement is the ideal ordinarily proposed; here too, for the follower of the path of knowledge, there must be a sort of waking Samadhi. Whatever action is unavoidable, must be a purely superficial working of the organs of perception and motor action in which the quiescent mind takes eventually no part and from which it seeks no result or profit.

But this is insufficient for the integral Yoga. There must be a positive transformation and not merely a negative quiescence of the waking mentality. The transformation is possible because, although the divine planes are above the mental consciousness and to enter actually into them we have ordinarily to lose the mental in Samadhi, yet there are in the mental being divine planes superior to our normal mentality which reproduce the conditions of the divine plane proper, although modified by the conditions, dominant here, of mentality. All that belongs to the experience of the divine plane can there be seized, but in the mental way and in a mental form. To these planes of divine mentality it is possible for the developed human being to arise in the waking state; or it is possible for him to derive from them a stream of influences and experiences which shall eventually open to them and transform into their nature his whole waking existence. These higher mental states are the immediate sources, the large actual instruments, the inner stations[1] of his perfection.

But in arriving to these planes or deriving from them the limitations of our mentality pursue us. In the first place the mind is an inveterate divider of the indivisible and its whole nature is to dwell on one thing at a time to the exclusion of others or to stress it to the subordination of others. Thus in approaching Sachchidananda it will dwell on its aspect of the pure existence, Sat, and consciousness and bliss are compelled then to lose themselves or remain quiescent in the experience of pure, infinite being which leads to the realisation of the quietistic Monist. Or it will dwell on the aspect of consciousness, Chit, and existence and bliss become then dependent on the experience of an infinite transcendent Power and Conscious-Force, which leads to the realisation of the Tantric worshipper of Energy. Or it will dwell on the aspect of delight, Ananda, and existence and consciousness then seem to disappear into a bliss without basis of self-possessing awareness or constituent being, which leads to the realisation of the Buddhistic seeker of Nirvana. Or it will dwell on some aspect of Sachchidananda which comes to the mind from the supramental Knowledge, Will or Love, and then the infinite impersonal aspect of Sachchidananda is almost or quite lost in the experience of the Deity which leads to the realisations of the various religions and to the possession of some supernal world or divine status of the human soul in relation to God. And for those whose object is to depart anywhither from cosmic existence, this is enough, since they are able by the mind's immergence into or seizure upon any one of these principles or aspects to effect through status in the divine planes of their mentality or the possession by them of their waking state this desired transit.

---

[1] Called in the Veda variously seats, houses, placings or statuses, footings, earths, dwelling-places, *sadas*, *gṛha* or *kṣaya*, *dhāma*, *padam*, *bhūmi*, *kṣiti*.

But the sadhaka of the integral Yoga has to harmonise all so that they may become a plenary and equal unity of the full realisation of Sachchidananda. Here the last difficulty of mind meets him, its inability to hold at once the unity and the multiplicity. It is not altogether difficult to arrive at and dwell in a pure infinite or even, at the same time, a perfect global experience of the Existence which is Consciousness which is Delight. The mind may even extend its experience of this Unity to the multiplicity so as to perceive it immanent in the universe and in each object, force, movement in the universe or at the same time to be aware of this Existence-Consciousness-Bliss containing the universe and enveloping all its objects and originating all its movements. It is difficult indeed for it to unite and harmonise rightly all these experiences; but still it can possess Sachchidananda at once in himself and immanent in all and the continent of all. But with this to unite the final experience of all this as Sachchidananda and possess objects, movements, forces, forms as no other than He, is the great difficulty for mind. Separately any of these things may be done; the mind may go from one to the other, rejecting one as it arrives at another and calling this the lower or that the higher existence. But to unify without losing, to integralise without rejecting is its supreme difficulty.

Chapter XIV

The Passive and the Active Brahman

THE DIFFICULTY which the mental being experiences in arriving at an integral realisation of true being and world-being may be met by following one or other of two different lines of his self-development. He may evolve himself from plane to plane of his own being and embrace on each successively his oneness with the world and with Sachchidananda realised as the Purusha and Prakriti, Conscious-Soul and Nature-Soul of that plane, taking into himself the action of the lower grades of being as he ascends. He may, that is to say, work out by a sort of inclusive process of self-enlargement and transformation the evolution of the material into the divine or spiritual man. This seems to have been the method of the most ancient sages of which we get some glimpse in the Rig Veda and some of the Upanishads.[1] He may, on the other hand, aim straight at the realisation of pure self-existence on the highest plane of mental being and from that secure basis realise spiritually under the conditions of his mentality the process by which the self-existent becomes all existences, but without that descent into the self-divided egoistic consciousness which is a circumstance of evolution in the Ignorance. Thus identified with Sachchidananda in the universal self-existence as the spiritualised mental being, he may then ascend beyond to the supramental plane of the pure spiritual existence. It is the latter method the stages of which we may now attempt to trace for the seeker by the path of knowledge.

When the sadhaka has followed the discipline of withdrawal from the various identifications of the self with the ego, the mind, the life, the body, he has arrived at realisation by knowledge of a pure, still, self-aware existence, one, undivided, peaceful, inactive, undisturbed by the action of the world. The only relation that this Self seems to have with the world is that of a disinterested Witness not at all involved in or affected or even touched by any of its activities. If this state of consciousness is pushed farther one becomes aware of a self even more remote from world-existence; all that is in the world is in a sense in that Self and yet at the same time extraneous to its consciousness, non-existent in its existence, existing only in a sort of unreal mind, — a dream therefore, an illusion. This aloof and transcendent Real Existence may be realised as an utter Self of one's own being; or the very idea of a self and of one's own being may be swallowed up in it, so that it is only for the mind an unknowable That, unknowable to the mental consciousness and without any possible kind of actual connection or commerce with world-existence. It can even be realised by the mental being as a Nihil, Non-Existence or Void, but a Void of all that is in the world, a Non-existence of all that is in the world and yet the only Reality. To proceed farther towards that Transcendence by concentration of one's own being upon it is to lose mental existence and world-existence altogether and cast oneself into the Unknowable.

---

[1] Notably, the Taittiriya Upanishad.

The integral Yoga of knowledge demands instead a divine return upon world-existence and its first step must be to realise the Self as the All, *sarvaṁ brahma*. First, concentrating on the Self-existent, we have to realise all of which the mind and senses are aware as a figure of things existing in this pure Self that we now are to our own consciousness. This vision of the pure self translates itself to the mind-sense and the mind-perception as an infinite Reality in which all exists merely as name and form, not precisely unreal, not a hallucination or a dream, but still only a creation of the consciousness, perceptual and subtly sensible rather than substantial. In this poise of the consciousness all seems to be, if not a dream, yet very much like a representation or puppet-show taking place in the calm, motionless, peaceful, indifferent Self. Our own phenomenal existence is part of this conceptual movement, a mechanical form of mind and body among other forms, ourselves a name of being among other names, automatically mobile in this Self with its all-encompassing, still self-awareness. The active consciousness of the world is not present in this state to our realisation, because thought has been stilled in us and therefore our own consciousness is perfectly still and inactive, — whatever we do, seems to be purely mechanical, not attended with any conscious origination by our active will and knowledge. Or if thought occurs, that also happens mechanically like the rest, like the movement of our body, moved by the unseen springs of Nature as in the plant and element and not by any active will of our self-existence. For this Self is the immobile and does not originate or take part in the action which it allows. This Self is the All in the sense only of being the infinite One who is immutably and contains all names and forms.

The basis of this status of consciousness is the mind's exclusive realisation of pure self-existence in which consciousness is at rest, inactive, widely concentrated in pure self-awareness of being, not active and originative of any kind of becoming. Its aspect of knowledge is at rest in the awareness of undifferentiated identity; its aspect of force and will is at rest in the awareness of unmodifiable immutability. And yet it is aware of names and forms, it is aware of movement; but this movement does not seem to proceed from the Self, but to go on by some inherent power of its own and only to be reflected in the Self. In other words, the mental being has put away from himself by exclusive concentration the dynamic aspect of consciousness, has taken refuge in the static and built a wall of non-communication between the two; between the passive and the active Brahman a gulf has been created and they stand on either side of it, the one visible to the other but with no contact, no touch of sympathy, no sense of unity between them. Therefore to the passive Self all conscious being seems to be passive in its nature, all activity seems to be non-conscious in itself and mechanical (*jaḍa*) in its movement. The realisation of this status is the basis of the ancient Sankhya philosophy which taught that the Purusha or Conscious-Soul is a passive, inactive, immutable entity, Prakriti or the Nature-Soul including even the mind and the understanding active, mutable, mechanical, but reflected in the Purusha which identifies itself with what is reflected in it and lends to it its own light of consciousness. When the Purusha learns not to identify himself, then Prakriti begins to fall away from its impulse of movement and returns towards equilibrium and rest. The Vedantic view of the same status led to the philosophy of the inactive Self or Brahman as the one reality and of all the rest as name and form imposed on it by a false activity of mental illusion which has to be removed by right knowledge of the immutable Self and refusal of the imposition.[2] The two views really differ only in their language and their viewpoint; substantially, they are the same intellectual generalisation from the same spiritual experience.

If we rest here, there are only two possible attitudes towards the world. Either we must remain as mere inactive witnesses of the world-play or act in it mechanically without any participation of the conscious self and by mere play of the organs of sense and motor-action.[3] In the former choice what we do is to approach as completely as possible to the inactivity of the passive and silent Brahman. We have stilled our mind and silenced the activity of the thought and the disturbances of the heart, we have arrived at an entire inner peace and indifference; we attempt now to still the mechanical action of the life and body, to reduce it to the most meagre minimum possible so that it may eventually cease entirely and for ever. This, the final aim of the ascetic Yoga which refuses life, is evidently not our aim. By the alternative choice we can have an activity perfect enough in outward appearance along with an entire inner passivity, peace, mental silence, indifference and cessation of the emotions, absence of choice in the will.

To the ordinary mind this does not seem possible. As, emotionally, it cannot conceive of activity without desire and emotional preference, so intellectually it cannot conceive of activity without thought-conception, conscious motive and energising of the will. But, as a matter of fact, we see that a large part of our own action as well as the whole activity of inanimate and merely animate life is done by a mechanical impulse and movement in which these elements are not, openly at least, at work. It may be said that this is only possible of the purely physical and vital activity and not of those movements which ordinarily depend upon the functioning of the conceptual and volitional mind, such as speech, writing and all the intelligent action of human life. But this again is not true, as we find when we are able to go behind the habitual and normal process of our mental nature. It has been found by recent psychological experiment that all these operations can be effected without any conscious origination in the thought and will of the apparent actor; his organs of sense and action, including the speech, become passive instruments for a thought and will other than his.

---

[2] *adhyāropa.* [3] *kevalair indriyair*. Gita.

Certainly, behind all intelligent action there must be an intelligent will, but it need not be the intelligence or the will of the conscious mind in the actor. In the psychological phenomena of which I have spoken, it is obviously in some of them the will and intelligence of other human beings that uses the organs, in others it is doubtful whether it is an influence or actuation by other beings or the emergence of a subconscious, subliminal mind or a mixed combination of both these agencies. But in this Yogic status of action by the mere organs, *kevalair indriyair*, it is the universal intelligence and will of Nature itself working from centres superconscious and subconscious as it acts in the mechanically purposeful energies of plant-life or of the inanimate material form, but here with a living instrument who is the conscious witness of the action and instrumentation. It is a remarkable fact that the speech, writing and intelligent actions of such a state may convey a perfect force of thought, luminous, faultless, logical, inspired, perfectly adapting means to ends, far beyond what the man himself could have done in his old normal poise of mind and will and capacity, yet all the time he himself perceives but does not conceive the thought that comes to him, observes in its works but does not appropriate or use the will that acts through him, witnesses but does not claim as his own the powers which play upon the world through him as through a passive channel. But this phenomenon is not really abnormal or contrary to the general law of things. For do we not see a perfect working of the secret universal Will and Intelligence in the apparently brute (*jaḍa*) action of material Nature? And it is precisely this universal Will and Intelligence which thus acts through the calm, indifferent and inwardly silent Yogin who offers no obstacle of limited and ignorant personal will and intelligence to its operations. He dwells in the silent Self; he allows the active Brahman to work through his natural instruments, accepting impartially, without participation, the formations of its universal force and knowledge.

This status of an inner passivity and an outer action independent of each other is a state of entire spiritual freedom. The Yogin, as the Gita says, even in acting does no actions, for it is not he, but universal Nature directed by the Lord of Nature which is at work. He is not bound by his works, nor do they leave any after effects or consequences in his mind, nor cling to or leave any mark on his soul;[4] they vanish and are dissolved[5] by their very execution and leave the immutable self unaffected and the soul unmodified. Therefore this would seem to be the poise the uplifted soul ought to take, if it has still to preserve any relations with human action in the world-existence, an unalterable silence, tranquillity, passivity within, an action without regulated by the universal Will and Wisdom which works, as the Gita says, without being involved in, bound by or ignorantly attached to its works. And certainly this poise of a perfect activity founded upon a perfect inner passivity is that which the Yogin has to possess, as we have seen in the Yoga of Works. But here in this status of self-knowledge at which we have arrived, there is an evident absence of integrality; for there is still a gulf, an unrealised unity or a cleft of consciousness between the passive and the active Brahman. We have still to possess consciously the active Brahman without losing the possession of the silent Self. We have to preserve the inner silence, tranquillity, passivity as a foundation; but in place of an aloof indifference to the works of the active Brahman we have to arrive at an equal and impartial delight in them; in place of a refusal to participate lest our freedom and peace be lost we have to arrive at a conscious possession of the active Brahman whose joy of existence does not abrogate His peace, nor His lordship of all workings impair His calm freedom in the midst of His works.

---

[4] *na karma lipyate nare*. Isha Upanishad.

[5] *pravilīyante karmāṇi*. Gita.

The difficulty is created by the exclusive concentration of the mental being on its plane of pure existence in which consciousness is at rest in passivity and delight of existence at rest in peace of existence. It has to embrace also its plane of conscious force of existence in which consciousness is active as power and will and delight is active as joy of existence. Here the difficulty is that mind is likely to precipitate itself into the consciousness of Force instead of possessing it. The extreme mental state of precipitation into Nature is that of the ordinary man who takes his bodily and vital activity and the mind-movements dependent on them for his whole real existence and regards all passivity of the soul as a departure from existence and an approach towards nullity. He lives in the superficies of the active Brahman and while to the silent soul exclusively concentrated in the passive self all activities are mere name and form, to him they are the only reality and it is the Self that is merely a name. In one the passive Brahman stands aloof from the active and does not share in its consciousness; in the other the active Brahman stands aloof from the passive and does not share in its consciousness nor wholly possess its own. Each is to the other in these exclusivenesses an inertia of status or an inertia of mechanically active non-possession of self if not altogether an unreality. But the sadhaka who has once seen firmly the essence of things and tasted thoroughly the peace of the silent Self, is not likely to be content with any state which involves loss of self-knowledge or a sacrifice of the peace of the soul. He will not precipitate himself back into the mere individual movement of mind and life and body with all its ignorance and straining and disturbance. Whatever new status he may acquire, will only satisfy him if it is founded upon and includes that which he has already found to be indispensable to real self-knowledge, self-delight and self-possession.

Still there is the likelihood of a partial, superficial and temporary relapse into the old mental movement when he attempts again to ally himself to the activity of the world. To prevent this relapse or to cure it when it arrives, he has to hold fast to the truth of Sachchidananda and extend his realisation of the infinite One into the movement of the infinite multiplicity. He has to concentrate on and realise the one Brahman in all things as conscious force of being as well as pure awareness of conscious being. The Self as the All, not only in the unique essence of things, but in the manifold form of things, not only as containing all in a transcendent consciousness, but as becoming all by a constituting consciousness, this is the next step towards his true possession of existence. In proportion as this realisation is accomplished, the status of consciousness as well as the mental view proper to it will change. Instead of an immutable Self containing name and form, containing without sharing in them the mutations of Nature, there will be the consciousness of the Self immutable in essence, unalterable in its fundamental poise but constituting and becoming in its experience all these existences which the mind distinguishes as name and form. All formations of mind and body will be not merely figures reflected in the Purusha, but real forms of which Brahman, Self, conscious Being is the substance and, as it were, the material of their formation. The name attaching to the form will be not a mere conception of the mind answering to no real existence bearing the name, but there will be behind it a true power of conscious being, a true self-experience of the Brahman answering to something that it contained potential but unmanifest in its silence. And yet in all its mutations it will be realised as one, free and above them. The realisation of a sole Reality suffering the imposition of names and forms will give place to that of eternal Being throwing itself out into infinite becoming. All existences will be to the consciousness of the Yogin soul-forms and not merely idea-forms of the Self, of himself, one with him, contained in his universal existence. All the soul-life, mental, vital, bodily existence of all that exists will be to him one indivisible movement and activity of the Being who is the same forever. The Self will be realised as the all in its double aspect of immutable status and mutable activity and it is this that will be seen as the comprehensive truth of our existence.

Chapter XV

The Cosmic Consciousness

TO REALISE and unite oneself with the active Brahman is to exchange, perfectly or imperfectly according as the union is partial or complete, the individual for the cosmic consciousness. The ordinary existence of man is not only an individual but an egoistic consciousness; it is, that is to say, the individual soul or Jivatman identifying himself with the nodus of his mental, vital, physical experiences in the movement of universal Nature, that is to say, with his mind-created ego, and, less intimately, with the mind, life, body which receive the experiences. Less intimately, because of these he can say "my mind, life, body," he can regard them as himself, yet partly as not himself and something rather which he possesses and uses, but of the ego he says, "It is I." By detaching himself from all identification with mind, life and body, he can get back from his ego to the consciousness of the true Individual, the Jivatman, who is the real possessor of mind, life and body. Looking back from this Individual to that of which it is the representative and conscious figure, he can get back to the transcendent consciousness of pure Self, absolute Existence or absolute Non-being, three poises of the same eternal Reality. But between the movement of universal Nature and this transcendent Existence, possessor of the one and cosmic self of the other, is the cosmic consciousness, the universal Purusha of whom all Nature is the Prakriti or active conscious Force. We can arrive at that, become that whether by breaking the walls of the ego laterally, as it were, and identifying oneself with all existences in the One, or else from above by realising the pure Self or absolute Existence in its outgoing, immanent, all-embracing, all-constituting self-knowledge and self-creative power.

The immanent, silent Self in all is the foundation of this cosmic consciousness for the experience of the mental being. It is the Witness pure and omnipresent who as the silent Conscious Soul of the cosmos regards all the activity of the universe; it is Sachchidananda for whose delight universal Nature displays the eternal procession of her works. We are aware of an unwounded Delight, a pure and perfect Presence, an infinite and self-contained Power present in ourselves and all things, not divided by their divisions, not affected by the stress and struggle of the cosmic manifestation; it is within it all, but it is superior to it all. Because of that all this exists, but that does not exist because of all this; it is too great to be limited by the movement in Time and Space which it inhabits and supports. This foundation enables us to possess in the security of the divine existence the whole universe within our own being. We are no longer limited and shut in by what we inhabit, but like the Divine contain in ourselves all that for the purpose of the movement of Nature we consent to inhabit. We are not mind or life or body, but the informing and sustaining Soul, silent, peaceful, eternal, which possesses them; and since we find this Soul everywhere sustaining and informing and possessing all lives and minds and bodies, we cease to regard it as a separate and individual being in our own. In it all this moves and acts; within all this it is stable and immutable. Having this, we possess our eternal self-existence at rest in its eternal consciousness and bliss.

Next we have to realise this silent Self as the Lord of all the action of universal Nature; we have to see that it is this same Self-existent who is displayed in the creative force of His eternal consciousness. All this action is only His power and knowledge and self-delight going abroad in His infinite being to do the works of His eternal wisdom and will. We shall realise the Divine, the eternal Self of all, first, as the source of all action and inaction, of all knowledge and ignorance, of all delight and suffering, of all good and evil, perfection and imperfection, of all force and form, of all the outgoing of Nature from the eternal divine Principle and of all the return of Nature towards the Divine. We shall realise it next as itself going abroad in its Power and Knowledge, — for the Power and Knowledge are itself, — not only the source of their works, but the creator and doer of their works, one in all existences; for the many souls of the universal manifestation are only faces of the one Divine, the many minds, lives, bodies are only His masks and disguises. We perceive each being to be the universal Narayana presenting to us many faces; we lose ourselves in that universality and perceive our own mind, life and body as only one presentation of the Self, while all whom we formerly conceived of as others, are now to our consciousness our self in other minds, lives and bodies. All force and idea and event and figure of things in the universe are only manifest degrees of this Self, values of the Divine in His eternal self-figuration. Thus viewing things and beings we may see them first as if they were parts and parcels of His divided being;[1] but the realisation and the knowledge are not complete unless we go beyond this idea of quality and space and division by which there comes the experience of less and more, large and small, part and whole, and see the whole Infinite everywhere; we must see the universe and each thing in the universe as in its existence and secret consciousness and power and delight the indivisible Divine in its entirety, however much the figure it makes to our minds may appear only as a partial manifestation. When we possess thus the Divine as at once the silent and surpassing Witness and the active Lord and all-constituting Being without making any division between these aspects, we possess the whole cosmic Divine, embrace all of the universal Self and Reality, are awake to the cosmic consciousness.

What will be the relation of our individual existence to this cosmic consciousness to which we have attained? For since we have still a mind and body and human life, our individual existence persists even though our separate individual consciousness has been transcended. It is quite possible to realise the cosmic consciousness without becoming that; we can see it, that is to say, with the soul, feel it and dwell in it; we can even be united with it without becoming wholly one with it; in a word, we may preserve the individual consciousness of the Jivatman within the cosmic consciousness of the universal Self. We may preserve a yet greater distinctness between the two and enjoy the relations between them; we may remain, in a way, entirely the individual self while participating in the bliss and infinity of the universal Self. Or we may possess them both as a greater and lesser self, one we feel pouring itself out in the universal play of the divine consciousness and force, the other in the action of the same universal Being through our individual soul-centre or soul-form for the purposes of an individual play of mind, life and body. But the summit of this cosmic realisation by knowledge is always the power to dissolve the personality in universal being, to merge the individual in the cosmic consciousness, to liberate even the soul-form into the unity and universality of the Spirit. This is the *laya*, dissolution, or *mokṣa*, liberation, at which the Yoga of Knowledge aims. This may extend itself, as in the traditional Yoga, to the dissolution of mind, life and body itself into the silent Self or absolute Existence; but the essence of the liberation is the merging of the individual in the Infinite. When the Yogin no longer feels himself to be a consciousness situated in the body or limited by the mind, but has lost the sense of division in the boundlessness of an infinite consciousness, that which he set out to do is accomplished. Afterwards the retaining or non-retaining of the human life is a circumstance of no essential importance, for it is always the formless One who acts through its many forms of the mind and life and body and each soul is only one of the stations from which it chooses to watch and receive and actuate its own play.

---

[1] The Gita speaks of the Jiva as a portion of the Lord.

That into which we merge ourselves in the cosmic consciousness is Sachchidananda. It is one eternal Existence that we then are, one eternal Consciousness which sees its own works in us and others, one eternal Will or Force of that Consciousness which displays itself in infinite workings, one eternal Delight which has the joy of itself and all its workings. It is itself stable, immutable, timeless, spaceless, supreme and it is still itself in the infinity of its workings, not changed by their variations, not broken up by their multiplicity, not increased or diminished by their ebbings and flowings in the seas of Time and Space, not confused by their apparent contrarieties or limited by their divinely-willed limitations. Sachchidananda is the unity of the many-sidedness of manifested things, Sachchidananda is the eternal harmony of all their variations and oppositions, Sachchidananda is the infinite perfection which justifies their limitations and is the goal of their imperfections.

So much for the essential relation; but we have to see also the practical results of this internal transformation. It is evident that by dwelling in this cosmic consciousness our whole experience and valuation of everything in the universe will be radically changed. As individual egos we dwell in the Ignorance and judge everything by a broken, partial and personal standard of knowledge; we experience everything according to the capacity of a limited consciousness and force and are therefore unable to give a divine response or set the true value upon any part of cosmic experience. We experience limitation, weakness, incapacity, grief, pain, struggle and its contradictory emotions and we accept these things and their opposites as opposites in an eternal duality and cannot reconcile them in the eternity of an absolute good and happiness. We live by fragments of experience and judge by our fragmentary values each thing and the whole. When we try to arrive at absolute values we only promote some partial view of things to do duty for a totality in the divine workings; we then make believe that our fractions are integers and try to thrust our one-sided view-points into the catholicity of the all-vision of the Divine.

But by entering into the cosmic consciousness we begin to participate in that all-vision and see everything in the values of the Infinite and the One. Limitation itself, ignorance itself change their meaning for us. Ignorance changes into a particularising action of divine knowledge; strength and weakness and incapacity change into a free putting forth and holding back various measures of divine Force; joy and grief, pleasure and pain change into a mastering and a suffering of divine delight; struggle, losing its discords, becomes a balancing of forces and values in the divine harmony. We do not then suffer by the limitations of our mind, life and body; for we no longer live in these, even when we record and accept them, but in the infinity of the Spirit, and these we view in their right value and place and purpose in the manifestation, as degrees of the supreme being, conscious-force and delight of Sachchidananda veiling and manifesting Himself in the cosmos. We cease also to judge other men and things by their outward appearances and are delivered from hostile and contradictory ideas and emotions; for it is the soul that we see, the Divine that we seek and find in every thing and creature, and the rest has only a secondary value to us in a scheme of relations which exist now for us only as self-expressions of the Divine and not as having any absolute value in themselves. So too no event can disturb us, since the distinction of happy and unhappy, beneficent and maleficent happenings loses its force, and all is seen in its divine value and its divine purpose. Thus we arrive at a perfect liberation and an infinite equality. It is this consummation of which the Upanishad speaks when it says "He in whom the self has become all existences, how shall he have delusion, whence shall he have grief who knows entirely[2] and sees in all things oneness."

But this can be only when there is perfection in the cosmic consciousness, and that is difficult for the mental being. The mentality when it arrives at the idea or the realisation of the Spirit, the Divine, tends to break existence into two opposite halves, the lower and the higher existence. It sees on one side the Infinite, the Formless, the One, the Peace and Bliss, the Calm and Silence, the Absolute, the Vast and Pure; on the other it sees the finite, the world of forms, the jarring multiplicity, the strife and suffering and imperfect, unreal good, the tormented activity and futile success, the relative, the limited and vain and vile. To those who make this division and this opposition, complete liberation is only attainable in the peace of the One, in the featurelessness of the Infinite, in the non-becoming of the Absolute which is to them the only real being; to be free all values must be destroyed, all limitations not only transcended but abolished.

---

[2] *Vijānataḥ*. Vijnana is the knowledge of the One and the Many, by which the Many are seen in the terms of the One, in the infinite unifying Truth, Right, Vast of the divine existence.

They have the liberation of the divine rest, but not the liberty of the divine action; they enjoy the peace of the Transcendent, but not the cosmic bliss of the Transcendent. Their liberty depends upon abstention from the cosmic movement, it cannot dominate and possess cosmic existence itself. But it is also possible for them to realise and participate in the immanent as well as the transcendent peace. Still the division is not cured. The liberty they enjoy is that of the silent unacting Witness, not the liberty of the divine Master-consciousness which possesses all things, delights in all, casts itself into all forms of existence without fear of fall or loss or bondage or stain. All the rights of the Spirit are not yet possessed; there is still a denial, a limitation, a holding back from the entire oneness of all existence. The workings of Mind, Life, Body are viewed from the calm and peace of the spiritual planes of the mental being and are filled with that calm and peace; they are not possessed by and subjected to the law of the all-mastering Spirit.

All this is when the mental being takes its station in its own spiritual planes, in the mental planes of Sat, Chit, Ananda, and casts down their light and delight upon the lower existence. But there is possible the attempt at a kind of cosmic consciousness by dwelling on the lower planes themselves after breaking their limitations laterally, as we have said, and then calling down into them the light and largeness of the higher existence. Not only Spirit is one, but Mind, Life, Matter are one. There is one cosmic Mind, one cosmic Life, one cosmic Body. All the attempt of man to arrive at universal sympathy, universal love and the understanding and knowledge of the inner soul of other existences is an attempt to beat thin, breach and eventually break down by the power of the enlarging mind and heart the walls of the ego and arrive nearer to a cosmic oneness. And if we can by the mind and heart get at the touch of the Spirit, receive the powerful inrush of the Divine into this lower humanity and change our nature into a reflection of the divine nature by love, by universal joy, by oneness of mind with all Nature and all beings, we can break down the walls. Even our bodies are not really separate entities and therefore our very physical consciousness is capable of oneness with the physical consciousness of others and of the cosmos. The Yogin is able to feel his body one with all bodies, to be aware of and even to participate in their affections; he can feel constantly the unity of all Matter and be aware of his physical being as only a movement in its movement.[3] Still more is it possible for him to feel constantly and normally the whole sea of the infinite life as his true vital existence and his own life as only a wave of that boundless surge. And more easily yet is it possible for him to unite himself in mind and heart with all existences, be aware of their desires, struggles, joys, sorrows, thoughts, impulses, in a sense as if they were his own, at least as occurring in his larger self hardly less intimately or quite as intimately as the movements of his own heart and mind. This too is a realisation of cosmic consciousness.

It may even seem as if it were the greatest oneness, since it accepts all that we can be sensible of in the mind-created world as our own. Sometimes one sees it spoken of as the highest achievement. Certainly, it is a great realisation and the path to a greater. It is that which the Gita speaks of as the accepting of all existences as if oneself whether in grief or in joy; it is the way of sympathetic oneness and infinite compassion which helps the Buddhist to arrive at his Nirvana. Still there are gradations and degrees. In the first stage the soul is still subject to the reactions of the duality, still subject therefore to the lower Prakriti; it is depressed or hurt by the cosmic suffering, elated by the cosmic joy. We suffer the joys of others, suffer their griefs; and this oneness can be carried even into the body, as in the story of the Indian saint who, seeing a bullock tortured in the field by its cruel owner, cried out with the creature's pain and the weal of the lash was found reproduced on his own flesh. But there must be a oneness with Sachchidananda in his freedom as well as with the subjection of the lower being to the reactions of Prakriti. This is achieved when the soul is free and superior to the cosmic reactions which are then felt only in the life, mind and body and as an inferior movement; the soul understands, accepts the experience, sympathises, but is not overpowered or affected, so that at last even the mind and body learn also to accept without being overpowered or even affected except on their surface. And the consummation of this movement is when the two spheres of existence are no longer divided and the mind, life and body obeying utterly the higher law grow into the spirit's freedom; free from the lower or ignorant response to the cosmic touches, their struggle and their subjection to the duality ceases. This does not mean insensibility to the subjection and struggles and sufferings of others, but it does mean a spiritual supremacy and freedom which enables one to understand perfectly, put the right values on things and heal from above instead of struggling from below. It does not inhibit the divine compassion and helpfulness, but it does inhibit the human and animal sorrow and suffering.

---

[3] *jagatyāṁ jagat*. Isha Upanishad.

The link between the spiritual and the lower planes of the being is that which is called in the old Vedantic phraseology the *vijñāna* and which we may describe in our modern turn of language as the Truth-plane or the ideal mind or supermind. There the One and the Many meet and our being is freely open to the revealing light of the divine Truth and the inspiration of the divine Will and Knowledge. If we can break down the veil of the intellectual, emotional, sensational mind which our ordinary existence has built between us and the Divine, we can then take up through the Truth-mind all our mental, vital and physical experience and offer it up to the spiritual — this was the secret or mystic sense of the old Vedic "sacrifice" — to be converted into the terms of the infinite truth of Sachchidananda, and we can receive the powers and illuminations of the infinite Existence in forms of a divine knowledge, will and delight to be imposed on our mentality, vitality, physical existence till the lower members are transformed into the perfect vessel of the higher nature. This was the double Vedic movement of the descent and birth of the gods in the human creature and the ascent of the human powers that struggle towards the divine knowledge, power and delight and climb into the godheads, the result of which was the possession of the One, the infinite, the beatific existence, the union with God, the Immortality. By possession of this ideal plane we break down entirely the opposition of the lower and the higher existence, the false gulf created by the Ignorance between the finite and the Infinite, God and Nature, the One and the Many, open the gates of the Divine, fulfil the individual in the complete harmony of the cosmic consciousness and realise in the cosmic being the epiphany of the transcendent Sachchidananda. And these results, which obtained on the supramental plane itself or beyond, would be the highest perfection of the human being, we can attain to partially, in a very modified way, in a sort of mental figure by awakening into activity on the corresponding plane of the mental nature. We can get a luminous shadow of that perfect harmony and light. But this belongs to another part of our subject; it is the knowledge on which we must found our Yoga of self-perfection.

Chapter XVI

Oneness

WHEN, then, by the withdrawal of the centre of consciousness from identification with the mind, life and body, one has discovered one's true self, discovered the oneness of that self with the pure, silent, immutable Brahman, discovered in the immutable, in the Akshara Brahman, that by which the individual being escapes from his own personality into the impersonal, the first movement of the Path of Knowledge has been completed. It is the sole that is absolutely necessary for the traditional aim of the Yoga of Knowledge, for immergence, for escape from cosmic existence, for release into the absolute and ineffable Parabrahman who is beyond all cosmic being. The seeker of this ultimate release may take other realisations on his way, may realise the Lord of the universe, the Purusha who manifests Himself in all creatures, may arrive at the cosmic consciousness, may know and feel his unity with all beings; but these are only stages or circumstances of his journey, results of the unfolding of his soul as it approaches nearer the ineffable goal. To pass beyond them all is his supreme object. When on the other hand, having attained to the freedom and the silence and the peace, we resume possession by the cosmic consciousness of the active as well as the silent Brahman and can securely live in the divine freedom as well as rest in it, we have completed the second movement of the Path by which the integrality of self-knowledge becomes the station of the liberated soul.

The soul thus possesses itself in the unity of Sachchidananda upon all the manifest planes of its own being. This is the characteristic of the integral knowledge that it unifies all in Sachchidananda because not only is Being one in itself, but it is one everywhere, in all its poises and in every aspect, in its utmost appearance of multiplicity as in its utmost appearance of oneness. The traditional knowledge while it admits this truth in theory, yet reasons practically as if the oneness were not equal everywhere or could not be equally realised in all. It finds it in the unmanifest Absolute, but not so much in the manifestation, finds it purer in the Impersonal than in the Personal, complete in the Nirguna, not so complete in the Saguna, satisfyingly present in the silent and inactive Brahman, not so satisfyingly present in the active. Therefore it places all these other terms of the Absolute below their opposites in the scale of ascent and urges their final rejection as if it were indispensable to the utter realisation. The integral knowledge makes no such division; it arrives at a different kind of absoluteness in its vision of the unity. It finds the same oneness in the Unmanifest and the Manifest, in the Impersonal and the Personal, in Nirguna and Saguna, in the infinite depths of the universal silence and the infinite largeness of the universal action. It finds the same absolute oneness in the Purusha and the Prakriti; in the divine Presence and the works of the divine Power and Knowledge; in the eternal manifestness of the one Purusha and the constant manifestation of the many Purushas; in the inalienable unity of Sachchidananda keeping constantly real to itself its own manifold oneness and in the apparent divisions of mind, life and body in which oneness is constantly, if secretly real and constantly seeks to be realised. All unity is to it an intense, pure and infinite realisation, all difference an abundant, rich and boundless realisation of the same divine and eternal Being.

The complete realisation of unity is therefore the essence of the integral knowledge and of the integral Yoga. To know Sachchidananda one in Himself and one in all His manifestation is the basis of knowledge; to make that vision of oneness real to the consciousness in its status and in its action and to become that by merging the sense of separate individuality in the sense of unity with the Being and with all beings is its effectuation in Yoga of knowledge; to live, think, feel, will and act in that sense of unity is its effectuation in the individual being and the individual life. This realisation of oneness and this practice of oneness in difference is the whole of the Yoga.

Sachchidananda is one in Himself in whatever status or whatever plane of existence. We have therefore to make that the basis of all effectuation whether of consciousness or force or being, whether of knowledge or will or delight. We have, as we have seen, to live in the consciousness of the Absolute transcendent and of the Absolute manifested in all relations, impersonal and manifest as all personalities, beyond all qualities and rich in infinite quality, a silence out of which the eternal Word creates, a divine calm and peace possessing itself in infinite joy and activity. We have to find Him knowing all, sanctioning all, governing all, containing, upholding and informing all as the Purusha and at the same time executing all knowledge, will and formation as Prakriti. We have to see Him as one Existence, Being gathered in itself and Being displayed in all existences; as one Consciousness concentrated in the unity of its existence, extended in universal nature and many-centred in innumerable beings; one Force static in its repose of self-gathered consciousness and dynamic in its activity of extended consciousness; one Delight blissfully aware of its featureless infinity and blissfully aware of all feature and force and forms as itself; one creative knowledge and governing Will, supramental, originative and determinative of all minds, lives and bodies; one Mind containing all mental beings and constituting all their mental activities; one Life active in all living beings and generative of their vital activities; one substance constituting all forms and objects as the visible and sensible mould in which mind and life manifest and act just as one pure existence is that ether in which all Conscious-Force and Delight exist unified and find themselves variously. For these are the seven principles of the manifest being of Sachchidananda.

The integral Yoga of knowledge has to recognise the double nature of this manifestation, — for there is the higher nature of Sachchidananda in which He is found and the lower nature of mind, life and body in which He is veiled, — and to reconcile and unite the two in the oneness of the illumined realisation. We have not to leave them separate so that we live a sort of double life, spiritual within or above, mental and material in our active and earthly living; we have to re-view and remould the lower living in the light, force and joy of the higher reality. We have to realise Matter as a sense-created mould of Spirit, a vehicle for all manifestation of the light, force and joy of Sachchidananda in the highest conditions of terrestrial being and activity. We have to see Life as a channel for the infinite Force divine and break the barrier of a sense-created and mind-created farness and division from it so that that divine Power may take possession of and direct and change all our life-activities until our vitality transfigured ceases in the end to be the limited life-force which now supports mind and body and becomes a figure of the all-blissful conscious-force of Sachchidananda. We have similarly to change our sensational and emotional mentality into a play of the divine Love and universal Delight; and we have to surcharge the intellect which seeks to know and will in us with the light of the divine Knowledge-Will until it is transformed into a figure of that higher and sublime activity.

This transformation cannot be complete or really executed without the awakening of the truth-mind which corresponds in the mental being to the Supermind and is capable of receiving mentally its illuminations. By the opposition of Spirit and Mind without the free opening of this intermediate power the two natures, higher and lower, stand divided, and though there may be communication and influence or the catching up of the lower into the higher in a sort of luminous or ecstatic trance, there cannot be a full and perfect transfiguration of the lower nature. We may feel imperfectly by the emotional mind, we may have a sense by the sense-mind or a conception and perception by the intelligent mind of the Spirit present in Matter and all its forms, the divine Delight present in all emotion and sensation, the divine Force behind all life-activities; but the lower will still keep its own nature and limit and divide in its action and modify in its character the influence from above. Even when that influence assumes its highest, widest, intensest power, it will be irregular and disorderly in activity and perfectly realised only in calm and stillness; we shall be subject to reactions and periods of obscuration when it is withdrawn from us; we shall be apt to forget it in the stress of ordinary life and its outward touches and the siege of its dualities and to be fully possessed of it only when alone with ourselves and God or else only in moments or periods of a heightened exaltation and ecstasy. For our mentality, a restricted instrument moving in a limited field and seizing things by fragments and parcels, is necessarily shifting, restless and mutable; it can find steadiness only by limiting its field of action and fixity only by cessation and repose.

Our direct truth-perceptions on the other hand come from that Supermind, — a Will that knows and a Knowledge that effects, — which creates universal order out of infinity. Its awakening into action brings down, says the Veda, the unrestricted downpour of the rain of heaven, — the full flowing of the seven rivers from a superior sea of light and power and joy. It reveals Sachchidananda. It reveals the Truth behind the scattered and ill-combined suggestions of our mentality and makes each to fall into its place in the unity of the Truth behind; thus it can transform the half-light of our minds into a certain totality of light. It reveals the Will behind all the devious and imperfectly regulated strivings of our mental will and emotional wishes and vital effort and makes each to fall into its place in the unity of the luminous Will behind; thus it can transform the half-obscure struggle of our life and mind into a certain totality of ordered force. It reveals the delight for which each of our sensations and emotions is groping and from which they fall back in movements of partially grasped satisfaction or of dissatisfaction, pain, grief or indifference, and makes each take its place in the unity of the universal delight behind; thus it can transform the conflict of our dualised emotions and sensations into a certain totality of serene, yet profound and powerful love and delight. Moreover, revealing the universal action, it shows the truth of being out of which each of its movements arises and to which each progresses, the force of effectuation which each carries with it and the delight of being for which and from which each is born, and it relates all to the universal being, consciousness, force and delight of Sachchidananda. Thus it harmonises for us all the oppositions, divisions, contrarieties of existence and shows us in them the One and the Infinite. Uplifted into this supramental light, pain and pleasure and indifference begin to be converted into joy of the one self-existent Delight; strength and weakness, success and failure turn into powers of the one self-effective Force and Will; truth and error, knowledge and ignorance change into light of the one infinite self-awareness and universal knowledge; increase of being and diminution of being, limitation and the overcoming of limitation are transfigured into waves of the one self-realising conscious existence. All our life as well as all our essential being is transformed into the possession of Sachchidananda.

By way of this integral knowledge we arrive at the unity of the aims set before themselves by the three paths of knowledge, works and devotion. Knowledge aims at the realisation of true self-existence; works are directed to the realisation of the divine Conscious-Will which secretly governs all works; devotion yearns for the realisation of the Bliss which enjoys as the Lover all beings and all existences, — Sat, Chit-Tapas and Ananda. Each therefore aims at possessing Sachchidananda through one or other aspect of his triune divine nature. By Knowledge we arrive always at our true, eternal, immutable being, the self-existent which every "I" in the universe obscurely represents, and we abrogate difference in the great realisation, So Aham, I am He, while we arrive also at our identity with all other beings.

But at the same time the integral knowledge gives us the awareness of that infinite existence as the conscious-force which creates and governs the worlds and manifests itself in their works; it reveals the Self-existent in his universal conscious-will as the Lord, the Ishwara. It enables us to unite our will with His, to realise His will in the energies of all existences and to perceive the fulfilment of these energies of others as part of our own universal self-fulfilment. Thus it removes the reality of strife and division and opposition and leaves only their appearances. By that knowledge therefore we arrive at the possibility of a divine action, a working which is personal to our nature, but impersonal to our being, since it proceeds from That which is beyond our ego and acts only by its universal sanction. We proceed in our works with equality, without bondage to works and their results, in unison with the Highest, in unison with the universal, free from separate responsibility for our acts and therefore unaffected by their reactions. This which we have seen to be the fulfilment of the path of Works becomes thus an annexe and result of the path of Knowledge.

The integral knowledge again reveals to us the Self-existent as the All-blissful who, as Sachchidananda manifesting the world, manifesting all beings, accepts their adoration, even as He accepts their works of aspiration and their seekings of knowledge, leans down to them and drawing them to Himself takes all into the joy of His divine being. Knowing Him as our divine Self, we become one with Him, as the lover and beloved become one, in the ecstasy of that embrace. Knowing Him too in all beings, perceiving the glory and beauty and joy of the Beloved everywhere, we transform our souls into a passion of universal delight and a wideness and joy of universal love. All this which, as we shall find, is the summit of the path of Devotion, becomes also an annexe and result of the path of Knowledge.

Thus by the integral knowledge we unify all things in the One. We take up all the chords of the universal music, strains sweet or discordant, luminous in their suggestion or obscure, powerful or faint, heard or suppressed, and find them all changed and reconciled in the indivisible harmony of Sachchidananda. The Knowledge brings also the Power and the Joy. “How shall he be deluded, whence shall he have sorrow who sees everywhere the Oneness?”

Chapter XVII

The Soul and Nature

THIS IS the result of the integral knowledge taken in its mass; its work is to gather up the different strands of our being into the universal oneness. If we are to possess perfectly the world in our new divinised consciousness as the Divine himself possesses it, we have to know also each thing in its absoluteness, first by itself, secondly in its union with all that completes it; for so has the Divine imaged out and seen its being in the world. To see things as parts, as incomplete elements is a lower analytic knowledge. The Absolute is everywhere; it has to be seen and found everywhere. Every finite is an infinite and has to be known and sensed in its intrinsic infiniteness as well as in its surface finite appearance. But so to know the world, so to perceive and experience it, it is not enough to have an intellectual idea or imagination that so it is; a certain divine vision, divine sense, divine ecstasy is needed, an experience of union of ourselves with the objects of our consciousness. In that experience not only the Beyond but all here, not only the totality, the All in its mass, but each thing in the All becomes to us our self, God, the Absolute and Infinite, Sachchidananda. This is the secret of complete delight in God's world, complete satisfaction of the mind and heart and will, complete liberation of the consciousness. It is the supreme experience at which art and poetry and all the various efforts of subjective and objective knowledge and all desire and effort to possess and enjoy objects are trying more or less obscurely to arrive; their attempt to seize the forms and properties and qualities of things is only a first movement which cannot give the deepest satisfaction unless by seizing them perfectly and absolutely they get the sense of the infinite reality of which these are the outer symbols. To the rational mind and the ordinary sense-experience this may well seem only a poetic fancy or a mystic hallucination; but the absolute satisfaction and sense of illumination which it gives and alone can give is really a proof of its greater validity; we get by that a ray from the higher consciousness and the diviner sense into which our subjective being is intended eventually, if we will only allow it, to be transfigured.

We have seen that this applies to the highest principles of the Divine Being. Ordinarily, the discriminating mind tells us that only what is beyond all manifestation is absolute, only the formless Spirit is infinite, only the timeless, spaceless, immutable, immobile Self in its repose is absolutely real; and if we follow and are governed in our endeavour by this conception, that is the subjective experience at which we shall arrive, all else seeming to us false or only relatively true. But if we start from the larger conception, a completer truth and a wider experience open to us. We perceive that the immutability of the timeless, spaceless existence is an absolute and an infinite, but that also the conscious-force and the active delight of the divine Being in its all-blissful possession of the outpouring of its powers, qualities, self-creations is an absolute and an infinite, — and indeed the same absolute and infinite, so much the same that we can enjoy simultaneously, equally the divine timeless calm and peace and the divine time-possessing joy of activity, freely, infinitely, without bondage or the lapse into unrest and suffering. So too we can have the same experience of all the principles of this activity which in the Immutable are self-contained and in a sense drawn in and concealed, in the cosmic are expressed and realise their infinite quality and capacity.

The first of these principles in importance is the duality — which resolves itself into a unity — of Purusha and Prakriti of which we have had occasion to speak in the Yoga of Works, but which is of equal importance for the Yoga of Knowledge. This division was made most clearly by the old Indian philosophies; but it bases itself upon the eternal fact of practical duality in unity upon which the world-manifestation is founded. It is given different names according to our view of the universe. The Vedantins spoke of the Self and Maya, meaning according to their predilections by the Self the Immutable and by Maya the power the Self has of imposing on itself the cosmic illusion, or by the Self the Divine Being and by Maya the nature of conscious-being and the conscious-force by which the Divine embodies himself in soul-forms and forms of things. Others spoke of Ishwara and Shakti, the Lord and His force, His cosmic power. The analytic philosophy of the Sankhyas affirmed their eternal duality without any possibility of oneness, accepting only relations of union and separation by which the cosmic action of Prakriti begins, proceeds or ceases for the Purusha; for the Purusha is an inactive conscious existence, — it is the Soul the same in itself and immutable forever, — Prakriti the active force of Nature which by its motion creates and maintains and by its sinking into rest dissolves the phenomenon of the cosmos. Leaving aside these philosophical distinctions, we come to the original psychological experience from which all really take their start, that there are two elements in the existence of living beings, of human beings at least if not of all cosmos, — a dual being, Nature and the soul.

This duality is self-evident. Without any philosophy at all, by the mere force of experience it is what we can all perceive, although we may not take the trouble to define. Even the most thoroughgoing materialism which denies the soul or resolves it into a more or less illusory result of natural phenomena acting upon some ill-explained phenomenon of the physical brain which we call consciousness or the mind, but which is really no more than a sort of complexity of nervous spasms, cannot get rid of the practical fact of this duality. It does not matter at all how it came about; the fact is not only there, it determines our whole existence, it is the one fact which is really important to us as human beings with a will and an intelligence and a subjective existence which makes all our happiness and our suffering. The whole problem of life resolves itself into this one question, — "What are we to do with this soul and nature set face to face with each other, — we who have as one side of our existence this Nature, this personal and cosmic activity, which tries to impress itself upon the soul, to possess, control, determine it, and as the other side this soul which feels that in some mysterious way it has a freedom, a control over itself, a responsibility for what it is and does, and tries therefore to turn upon Nature, its own and the world's, and to control, possess, enjoy, or even, it may be, reject and escape from her?" In order to answer that question we have to know, — to know what the soul can do, to know what it can do with itself, to know too what it can do with Nature and the world. The whole of human philosophy, religion, science is really nothing but an attempt to get at the right data upon which it will be possible to answer the question and solve, as satisfactorily as our knowledge will allow, the problem of our existence.

The hope of a complete escape from our present strife with and subjection to our lower and troubled nature and existence arises when we perceive what religion and philosophy affirm, but modern thought has tried to deny, that there are two poises of our soul-existence, a lower, troubled and subjected, a higher, supreme, untroubled and sovereign, one vibrant in Mind, the other tranquil in Spirit. The hope not only of an escape, but of a completely satisfying and victorious solution comes when we perceive what some religions and philosophies affirm, but others seem to deny, that there is also in the dual unity of soul and nature a lower, an ordinary human status and a higher, a divine; for it is in the divine alone that the conditions of the duality stand reversed; there the soul becomes that which now it only struggles and aspires to be, master of its nature, free and by union with the Divine possessor also of the world-nature. According to our idea of these possibilities will be the solution we shall attempt to realise.

Involved in mind, possessed by the ordinary phenomenon of mental thought, sensation, emotion, reception of the vital and physical impacts of the world and mechanical reaction to them, the soul is subject to Nature. Even its will and intelligence are determined by its mental nature, determined even more largely by the mental nature of its environment which acts upon, subtly as well as overtly, and overcomes the individual mentality. Thus its attempt to regulate, to control, to determine its own experience and action is pursued by an element of illusion, since when it thinks it is acting, it is really Nature that is acting and determining all it thinks, wills and does. If there were not this constant knowledge in it that it is, that it exists in itself, is not the body or life but something other which at least receives and accepts the cosmic experience if it does not determine it, it would be compelled in the end to suppose that Nature is all and the soul an illusion. This is the conclusion modern Materialism affirms and to that nihilistic Buddhism arrived; the Sankhyas, perceiving the dilemma, solved it by saying that the soul in fact only mirrors Nature's determinations and itself determines nothing, is not the lord, but can by refusing to mirror them fall back into eternal immobility and peace. There are too the other solutions which arrive at the same practical conclusion, but from the other end, the spiritual; for they affirm either that Nature is an illusion or that both the soul and Nature are impermanent and they point us to a state beyond in which their duality has no existence; either they cease by the extinction of both in something permanent and ineffable or their discordances end by the exclusion of the active principle altogether. Though they do not satisfy humanity's larger hope and deep-seated impulse and aspiration, these are valid solutions so far as they go; for they arrive at an Absolute in itself or at the separate absolute of the soul, even if they reject the many rapturous infinities of the Absolute which the true possession of Nature by the soul in its divine existence offers to the eternal seeker in man.

Uplifted into the Spirit the soul is no longer subject to Nature; it is above this mental activity. It may be above it in detachment and aloofness, *udāsīna*, seated above and indifferent, or attracted by and lost in the absorbing peace or bliss of its undifferentiated, its concentrated spiritual experience of itself; we must then transcend by a complete renunciation of Nature and cosmic existence, not conquer by a divine and sovereign possession. But the Spirit, the Divine is not only above Nature; it is master of Nature and cosmos; the soul rising into its spiritual poise must at least be capable of the same mastery by its unity with the Divine. It must be capable of controlling its own nature not only in calm or by forcing it to repose, but with a sovereign control of its play and activity.

To arrive by an intense spirituality at the absolute of the soul is our possibility on one side of our dual existence; to enjoy the absolute of Nature and of everything in Nature is our possibility on the other side of this eternal duality. To unify these highest aspirations in a divine possession of God and ourselves and the world, should be our happy completeness. In the lower poise this is not possible because the soul acts through the mind and the mind can only act individually and fragmentarily in a contented obedience or a struggling subjection to that universal Nature through which the divine knowledge and the divine Will are worked out in the cosmos. But the Spirit is in possession of knowledge and will, of which it is the source and cause and not a subject; therefore in proportion as the soul assumes its divine or spiritual being, it assumes also control of the movements of its nature. It becomes, in the ancient language, Swarat, free and a self-ruler over the kingdom of its own life and being. But also it increases in control over its environment, its world.

This it can only do entirely by universalising itself; for it is the divine and universal will that it must express in its action upon the world. It must first extend its consciousness and see the universe in itself instead of being like the mind limited by the physical, vital, sensational, emotional, intellectual outlook of the little divided personality. It must accept the world-truths, the world-energies, the world-tendencies, the world-purposes as its own instead of clinging to its own intellectual ideas, desires and endeavours, preferences, objects, intentions, impulses; these, so far as they remain, must be harmonised with the universal. It must then submit its knowledge and will at their very source to the divine Knowledge and the divine Will and so arrive through submission at immergence, losing its personal light in the divine Light and its personal initiative in the divine initiative. To be first in tune with the Infinite, in harmony with the Divine, and then to be unified with the Infinite, taken into the Divine is its condition of perfect strength and mastery, and this is precisely the very nature of the spiritual life and the spiritual existence.

The distinction made in the Gita between the Purusha and the Prakriti gives us the clue to the various attitudes which the soul can adopt towards Nature in its movement towards perfect freedom and rule. The Purusha is, says the Gita, witness, upholder, source of the sanction, knower, lord, enjoyer; Prakriti executes, it is the active principle and must have an operation corresponding to the attitude of the Purusha. The soul may assume, if it wishes, the poise of the pure witness, *sākṣī*; it may look on at the action of Nature as a thing from which it stands apart; it watches, but does not itself participate. We have seen the importance of this quietistic capacity; it is the basis of the movement of withdrawal by which we can say of everything, — body, life, mental action, thought, sensation, emotion, — "This is Prakriti working in the life, mind and body, it is not myself, it is not even mine," and thus come to the soul's separation from these things and to their quiescence. This may, therefore, be an attitude of renunciation or at least of non-participation, tamasic, with a resigned and inert endurance of the natural action so long as it lasts, rajasic, with a disgust, aversion and recoil from it, sattwic, with a luminous intelligence of the soul's separateness and the peace and joy of aloofness and repose; but also it may be attended by an equal and impersonal delight as of a spectator at a show, joyous but unattached and ready to rise up at any moment and as joyfully depart. The attitude of the Witness at its highest is the absolute of unattachment and freedom from affection by the phenomena of the cosmic existence.

As the pure Witness, the soul refuses the function of upholder or sustainer of Nature. The upholder, *bhartā*, is another, God or Force or Maya, but not the soul, which only admits the reflection of the natural action upon its watching consciousness, but not any responsibility for maintaining or continuing it. It does not say "All this is in me and maintained by me, an activity of my being," but at the most "This is imposed on me, but really external to myself." Unless there is a clear and real duality in existence, this cannot be the whole truth of the matter; the soul is the upholder also, it supports in its being the energy which unrolls the spectacle of the cosmos and which conducts its energies. When the Purusha accepts this upholding, it may do it still passively and without attachment, feeling that it contributes the energy, but not that it controls and determines it. The control is another, God or Force or the very nature of Maya; the soul only upholds indifferently so long as it must, so long perhaps as the force of its past sanction and interest in the energy continues and refuses to be exhausted. But if the attitude of the upholder is fully accepted, an important step forward has been taken towards identification with the active Brahman and his joy of cosmic being. For the Purusha has become the active giver of the sanction.

In the attitude of the Witness there is also a kind of sanction, but it is passive, inert and has no kind of absoluteness about it; but if he consents entirely to uphold, the sanction has become active, even though the soul may do no more than consent to reflect, support and thereby maintain in action all the energies of Prakriti. It may refuse to determine, to select, believing that it is God or Force itself or some Knowledge-Will that selects and determines, and the soul only a witness and upholder and thereby giver of the sanction, *anumantā*, but not the possessor and the director of the knowledge and the will, *jñātā īśvaraḥ*. Then there is a general sanction in the form of an active upholding of whatever is determined by God or universal Will, but there is not an active determination. But if the soul habitually selects and rejects in what is offered to it, it determines; the relatively passive has become an entirely active sanction and is on the way to be an active control.

This it becomes when the soul accepts its complete function as the knower, lord and enjoyer of Nature. As the knower the soul possesses the knowledge of the force that acts and determines, it sees the values of being which are realising themselves in cosmos, it is in the secret of Fate. For the force that acts is itself determined by the knowledge which is its origin and the source and standardiser of its valuations and effectuations of values. Therefore in proportion as the soul becomes again the knower, it gets the capacity of becoming also the controller of the action whether by spiritual force alone or by that force figuring itself in mental and physical activities. There may be in our soul life a perfect spiritual knowledge and understanding not only of all our internal activities but of all the unrolling of things, events, human, animal, natural activities around us, the world-vision of the Rishi. This may not be attended by an active putting forth of power upon the world, though that is seldom entirely absent; for the Rishi is not uninterested in the world or in his fellow-creatures, but one with them by sympathy or by accepting all creatures as his own self in many minds and bodies. The old forest-dwelling anchorites even are described continually as busily engaged in doing good to all creatures. This can only be done in the spiritual realisation, not by an effort, for effort is a diminution of freedom, but by a spiritual influence or by a spiritual mastery over the minds of men and the workings of Nature, which reflects the divine effective immanence and the divine effective mastery.

Nor can it do this without becoming the active enjoyer, *bhoktā*. In the lower being the enjoyment is of a twofold kind, positive and negative, which in the electricity of sensation translates itself into joy and suffering; but in the higher it is an actively equal enjoyment of the divine delight in self-manifestation. That enjoyment again may be limited to a silent spiritual delight or an integral divine joy possessing all things around us and all activities of all parts of our being.

There is no loss of freedom, no descent into an ignorant attachment. The man free in his soul is aware that the Divine is the lord of the action of Nature, that Maya is His Knowledge-Will determining and effecting all, that Force is the Will side of this double divine Power in which knowledge is always present and effectual. He is aware of himself also, even individually, as a centre of the divine existence, — a portion of the Lord, the Gita expresses it, — controlling so far the action of Nature which he views, upholds, sanctions, enjoys, knows and by the determinative power of knowledge controls. And when he universalises himself, his knowledge still reflects only the divine knowledge, his will effectuates only the divine will, he enjoys only the divine delight and not an ignorant personal satisfaction. Thus the Purusha preserves its freedom in its possession, renunciation of limited personality even in its representative enjoyment and delight of cosmic being. It has taken up fully in the higher poise the true relations of the soul and Nature.

Purusha and Prakriti in their union and duality arise from the being of Sachchidananda. Self-conscious existence is the essential nature of the Being; that is Sat or Purusha. The Power of self-aware existence, whether drawn into itself or acting in the works of its consciousness and force, its knowledge and its will, Chit and Tapas, Chit and its Shakti, — that is Prakriti. Delight of being, Ananda, is the eternal truth of the union of this conscious being and its conscious force whether absorbed in itself or else deployed in the inseparable duality of its two aspects. It unrolls the worlds as Prakriti and views them as Purusha; acts in them and upholds the action; executes works and gives the sanction without which the force of Nature cannot act; executes and controls the knowledge and the will and knows and controls the determinations of the knowledge-force and will-force; ministers to the enjoyment and enjoys; — all is the Soul possessor, observer, knower, lord of Nature and Nature expressing the being, executing the will, satisfying the self-knowledge, ministering to the delight of being of the soul. There we have, founded on the very nature of being, the supreme and the universal relation of Prakriti with Purusha. The relation in its imperfect, perverted or reverse terms is the world as we see it; but the perfect relation brings the absolute joy of the soul in itself and, based upon that, the absolute joy of the soul in Nature which is the divine fulfilment of world-existence.

Chapter XVIII

The Soul and Its Liberation

WE HAVE now to pause and consider to what this acceptance of the relations of Purusha and Prakriti commits us; for it means that the Yoga which we are pursuing has for end none of the ordinary aims of humanity. It neither accepts our earthly existence as it is, nor can be satisfied with some kind of moral perfection or religious ecstasy, with a heaven beyond or with some dissolution of our being by which we get satisfactorily done with the trouble of existence. Our aim becomes quite other; it is to live in the Divine, the Infinite, in God and not in any mere egoism and temporality, but at the same time not apart from Nature, from our fellow-beings, from earth and the mundane existence, any more than the Divine lives aloof from us and the world. He exists also in relation to the world and Nature and all these beings, but with an absolute and inalienable power, freedom and self-knowledge. Our liberation and perfection is to transcend ignorance, bondage and weakness and live in Him in relation to the world and Nature with the divine power, freedom and self-knowledge. For the highest relation of the Soul to existence is the Purusha's possession of Prakriti, when he is no longer ignorant and subject to his nature, but knows, transcends, enjoys and controls his manifested being and determines largely and freely what shall be his self-expression.

A oneness finding itself out in the variations of its own duality is the whole play of the soul with Nature in its cosmic birth and becoming. One Sachchidananda everywhere, self-existent, illimitable, a unity indestructible by the utmost infinity of its own variations, is the original truth of being for which our knowledge seeks and to that our subjective existence eventually arrives. From that all other truths arise, upon that they are based, by that they are at every moment made possible and in that they in the end can know themselves and each other, are reconciled, harmonised and justified. All relations in the world, even to its greatest and most shocking apparent discords, are relations of something eternal to itself in its own universal existence; they are not anywhere or at any time collisions of disconnected beings who meet fortuitously or by some mechanical necessity of cosmic existence. Therefore to get back to this eternal fact of oneness is our essential act of self-knowledge; to live in it must be the effective principle of our inner possession of our being and of our right and ideal relations with the world. That is why we have had to insist first and foremost on oneness as the aim and in a way the whole aim of our Yoga of knowledge.

But this unity works itself out everywhere and on every plane by an executive or practical truth of duality. The Eternal is the one infinite conscious Existence, Purusha, and not something inconscient and mechanical; it exists eternally in its delight of the force of its own conscious being founded in an equilibrium of unity; but it exists also in the no less eternal delight of its force of conscious being at play with various creative self-experience in the universe. Just as we ourselves are or can become aware of being always something timeless, nameless, perpetual which we call our self and which constitutes the unity of all that we are, and yet simultaneously we have the various experience of what we do, think, will, create, become, such too is the self-awareness of this Purusha in the world. Only we, being at present limited and ego-bound mental individuals, have usually this experience in the ignorance and do not live in the self, but only look back at it or draw back to it from time to time, while the Eternal has it in His infinite self-knowledge, is eternally this self and looks from the fullness of self-being at all this self-experience. He does not like us, bound prisoners of the mind, conceive of His being as either a sort of indefinite result and sum or else a high contradiction of self-experience. The old philosophical quarrel between Being and Becoming is not possible to the eternal self-knowledge.

An active force of conscious-being which realises itself in its powers of self-experience, its powers of knowledge, will, self-delight, self-formulation with all their marvellous variations, inversions, conservations and conversions of energy, even perversions, is what we call Prakriti or Nature, in ourselves as in the cosmos. But behind this force of variation is the eternal equilibrium of the same force in an equal unity which supports impartially, governs even as it has originated the variations and directs them to whatever aim of its self-delight the Being, the Purusha, has conceived in its consciousness and determined by its will or power of consciousness. That is the divine Nature into unity with which we have to get back by our Yoga of self-knowledge. We have to become the Purusha, Sachchidananda, delighting in a divine individual possession of its Prakriti and no longer mental beings subject to our egoistic nature. For that is the real man, the supreme and integral self of the individual, and the ego is only a lower and partial manifestation of ourselves through which a certain limited and preparatory experience becomes possible and is for a time indulged. But this indulgence of the lower being is not our whole possibility; it is not the sole or crowning experience for which we exist as human beings even in this material world.

This individual being of ours is that by which ignorance is possible to self-conscious mind, but it is also that by which liberation into the spiritual being is possible and the enjoyment of divine immortality. It is not the Eternal in His transcendence or in His cosmic being who arrives at this immortality; it is the individual who rises into self-knowledge, in him it is possessed and by him it is made effective. All life, spiritual, mental or material, is the play of the soul with the possibilities of its nature; for without this play there can be no self-expression and no relative self-experience. Even, then, in our realisation of all as our larger self and in our oneness with God and other beings, this play can and must persist, unless we desire to cease from all self-expression and all but a tranced and absorbed self-experience. But then it is in the individual being that this trance or this liberated play is realised; the trance is this mental being's immersion in the sole experience of unity, the liberated play is the taking up of his mind into the spiritual being for the free realisation and delight of oneness. For the nature of the divine existence is to possess always its unity, but to possess it also in an infinite experience, from many standpoints, on many planes, through many conscious powers or selves of itself, individualities — in our limited intellectual language — of the one conscious being. Each one of us is one of these individualities. To stand away from God in limited ego, limited mind is to stand away from ourselves, to be unpossessed of our true individuality, to be the apparent and not the real individual; it is our power of ignorance. To be taken up into the divine Being and be aware of our spiritual, infinite and universal consciousness as that in which we now live, is to possess our supreme and integral self, our true individuality; it is our power of self-knowledge.

By knowing the eternal unity of these three powers of the eternal manifestation, God, Nature and the individual self, and their intimate necessity to each other, we come to understand existence itself and all that in the appearances of the world now puzzles our ignorance. Our self-knowledge abolishes none of these things, it abolishes only our ignorance and those circumstances proper to the ignorance which made us bound and subject to the egoistic determinations of our nature. When we get back to our true being, the ego falls away from us; its place is taken by our supreme and integral self, the true individuality. As this supreme self it makes itself one with all beings and sees all world and Nature in its own infinity. What we mean by this is simply that our sense of separate existence disappears into a consciousness of illimitable, undivided, infinite being in which we no longer feel bound to the name and form and the particular mental and physical determinations of our present birth and becoming and are no longer separate from anything or anyone in the universe. This was what the ancient thinkers called the Non-birth or the destruction of birth or Nirvana. At the same time we continue to live and act through our individual birth and becoming, but with a different knowledge and quite another kind of experience; the world also continues, but we see it in our own being and not as something external to it and other than ourselves. To be able to live permanently in this new consciousness of our real, our integral being is to attain liberation and enjoy immortality.

Here there comes in the complication of the idea that immortality is only possible after death in other worlds, upon higher planes of existence or that liberation must destroy all possibility of mental or bodily living and annihilate the individual existence for ever in an impersonal infinity. These ideas derive their strength from a certain justification in experience and a sort of necessity or upward attraction felt by the soul when it shakes off the compelling ties of mind and matter. It is felt that these ties are inseparable from all earthly living or from all mental existence. Death is the king of the material world, for life seems to exist here only by submission to death, by a constant dying; immortality has to be conquered here with difficulty and seems to be in its nature a rejection of all death and therefore of all birth into the material world. The field of immortality must be in some immaterial plane, in some heavens where either the body does not exist or else is different and only a form of the soul or a secondary circumstance. On the other hand, it is felt by those who would go beyond immortality even, that all planes and heavens are circumstances of the finite existence and the infinite self is void of all these things. They are dominated by a necessity to disappear into the impersonal and infinite and an inability to equate in any way the bliss of impersonal being with the soul's delight in its becoming. Philosophies have been invented which justify to the intellect this need of immersion and disappearance; but what is really important and decisive is the call of the Beyond, the need of the soul, its delight — in this case — in a sort of impersonal existence or non-existence. For what decides is the determining delight of the Purusha, the relation which it wills to establish with its Prakriti, the experience at which it arrives as the result of the line it has followed in the development of its individual self-experience among all the various possibilities of its nature. Our intellectual justifications are only the account of that experience which we give to the reason and the devices by which we help the mind to assent to the direction in which the soul is moving.

The cause of our world-existence is not, as our present experience induces us to believe, the ego; for the ego is only a result and a circumstance of our mode of world-existence. It is a relation which the many-souled Purusha has set up between individualised minds and bodies, a relation of self-defence and mutual exclusion and aggression in order to have among all the dependences of things in the world upon each other a possibility of independent mental and physical experience. But there can be no absolute independence upon these planes; impersonality which rejects all mental and physical becoming is therefore the only possible culmination of this exclusive movement: so only can an absolutely independent self-experience be achieved. The soul then seems to exist absolutely, independently in itself; it is free in the sense of the Indian word, *svādhīna*, dependent only on itself, not dependent upon God and other beings. Therefore in this experience God, personal self and other beings are all denied, cast away as distinctions of the ignorance. It is the ego recognising its own insufficiency and abolishing both itself and its contraries that its own essential instinct of independent self-experience may be accomplished; for it finds that its effort to achieve it by relations with God and others is afflicted throughout with a sentence of illusion, vanity and nullity. It ceases to admit them because by admitting them it becomes dependent on them; it ceases to admit its own persistence, because the persistence of ego means the admission of that which it tries to exclude as not-self, of the cosmos and other beings. The self-annihilation of the Buddhist is in its nature absolute exclusion of all that the mental being perceives; the self-immersion of the Adwaitin in his absolute being is the self-same aim differently conceived: both are a supreme self-assertion of the soul of its exclusive independence of Prakriti.

The experience which we first arrive at by the sort of short-cut to liberation which we have described as the movement of withdrawal, assists this tendency. For it is a breaking of the ego and a rejection of the habits of the mentality we now possess; for that is subject to matter and the physical senses and conceives of things only as forms, objects, external phenomena and as names which we attach to those forms. We are not aware directly of the subjective life of other beings except by analogy from our own and by inference or derivative perception based upon their external signs of speech, action, etc., which our minds translate into the terms of our own subjectivity. When we break out from ego and physical mind into the infinity of the spirit, we still see the world and others as the mind has accustomed us to see them, as names and forms; only in our new experience of the direct and superior reality of spirit, they lose that direct objective reality and that indirect subjective reality of their own which they had to the mind. They seem to be quite the opposite of the truer reality we now experience; our mentality, stilled and indifferent, no longer strives to know and make real to itself those intermediate terms which exist in them as in us and the knowledge of which has for its utility to bridge over the gulf between the spiritual self and the objective phenomena of the world. We are satisfied with the blissful infinite impersonality of a pure spiritual existence; nothing else and nobody else any longer matters to us. What the physical senses show to us and what the mind perceives and conceives about them and so imperfectly and transiently delights in, seems now unreal and worthless; we are not and do not care to be in possession of the intermediate truths of being through which these things are enjoyed by the One and possess for Him that value of His being and delight which makes, as we might say, cosmic existence a thing beautiful to Him and worth manifesting. We can no longer share in God's delight in the world; on the contrary it looks to us as if the Eternal had degraded itself by admitting into the purity of its being the gross nature of Matter or had falsified the truth of its being by imagining vain names and unreal forms. Or else if we perceive at all that delight, it is with a far-off detachment which prevents us from participating in it with any sense of intimate possession, or it is with an attraction to the superior delight of an absorbed and exclusive self-experience which does not allow us to stay any longer in these lower terms than we are compelled to stay by the continuance of our physical life and body.

But if either in the course of our Yoga or as the result of a free return of our realised Self upon the world and a free repossession of its Prakriti by the Purusha in us, we become conscious not only of the bodies and outward self-expression of others, but intimately of their inner being, their minds, their souls and that in them of which their own surface minds are not aware, then we see the real Being in them also and we see them as selves of our Self and not as mere names and forms. They become to us realities of the Eternal. Our minds are no longer subject to the delusion of trivial unworthiness or the illusion of unreality. The material life loses indeed for us its old absorbing value, but finds the greater value which it has for the divine Purusha; regarded no longer as the sole term of our becoming, but as merely having a subordinate value in relation to the higher terms of mind and spirit, it increases by that diminution instead of losing in value. We see that our material being, life, nature are only one poise of the Purusha in relation to its Prakriti and that their true purpose and importance can only be appreciated when they are seen not as a thing in itself, but as dependent on higher poises by which they are supported; from those superior relations they derive their meaning and, therefore, by conscious union with them they can fulfil all their valid tendencies and aims. Life then becomes justified to us and no longer stultified by the possession of liberated self-knowledge.

This larger integral knowledge and freedom liberates in the end and fulfils our whole existence. When we possess it, we see why our existence moves between these three terms of God, ourselves and the world; we no longer see them or any of them in opposition to each other, inconsistent, incompatible, nor do we on the other hand regard them as terms of our ignorance which all disappear at last into a pure impersonal unity. We perceive their necessity as terms rather of our self-fulfilment which preserve their value after liberation or rather find then only their real value. We have no longer the experience of our existence as exclusive of the other existences which make up by our relations with them our experience of the world; in this new consciousness they are all contained in ourselves and we in them. They and we are no longer so many mutually exclusive egos each seeking its own independent fulfilment or self-transcendence and ultimately aiming at nothing else; they are all the Eternal and the self in each secretly embraces all in itself and seeks in various ways to make that higher truth of its unity apparent and effective in its terrestrial being. Not mutual exclusiveness, but mutual inclusiveness is the divine truth of our individuality, love the higher law and not an independent self-fulfilment.

The Purusha who is our real being is always independent and master of Prakriti and at this independence we are rightly seeking to arrive; that is the utility of the egoistic movement and its self-transcendence, but its right fulfilment is not in making absolute the ego's principle of independent existence, but in arriving at this other highest poise of the Purusha with regard to its Prakriti. There there is transcendence of Nature, but also possession of Nature, perfect fulfilment of our individuality, but also perfect fulfilment of our relations with the world and with others. Therefore an individual salvation in heavens beyond careless of the earth is not our highest objective; the liberation and self-fulfilment of others is as much our own concern, — we might almost say, our divine self-interest, — as our own liberation. Otherwise our unity with others would have no effective meaning. To conquer the lures of egoistic existence in this world is our first victory over ourselves; to conquer the lure of individual happiness in heavens beyond is our second victory; to conquer the highest lure of escape from life and a self-absorbed bliss in the impersonal infinity is the last and greatest victory. Then are we rid of all individual exclusiveness and possessed of our entire spiritual freedom.

The state of the liberated soul is that of the Purusha who is for ever free. Its consciousness is a transcendence and an all-comprehending unity. Its self-knowledge does not get rid of all the terms of self-knowledge, but unifies and harmonises all things in God and in the divine nature. The intense religious ecstasy which knows only God and ourselves and shuts out all else, is only to it an intimate experience which prepares it for sharing in the embrace of the divine Love and Delight around all creatures. A heavenly bliss which unites God and ourselves and the blest, but enables us to look with a remote indifference on the unblest and their sufferings is not possible to the perfect soul; for these also are its selves; free individually from suffering and ignorance, it must naturally turn to draw them also towards its freedom. On the other hand any absorption in the relations between self and others and the world to the exclusion of God and the Beyond is still more impossible, and therefore it cannot be limited by the earth or even by the highest and most altruistic relations of man with man. Its activity or its culmination is not to efface and utterly deny itself for the sake of others, but to fulfil itself in God-possession, freedom and divine bliss that in and by its fulfilment others too may be fulfilled. For it is in God alone, by the possession of the Divine only that all the discords of life can be resolved, and therefore the raising of men towards the Divine is in the end the one effective way of helping mankind. All the other activities and realisations of our self-experience have their use and power, but in the end these crowded side-tracks or these lonely paths must circle round to converge into the wideness of the integral way by which the liberated soul transcends all, embraces all and becomes the promise and the power of the fulfilment of all in their manifested being of the Divine.

Chapter XIX

The Planes of Our Existence

IF THE Purusha in us has thus to become by union with its highest self, the Divine Purusha, the knower, lord, free enjoyer of its Prakriti, it cannot be done, evidently, by dwelling on the present plane of our being; for that is the material plane in which the reign of Prakriti is complete; there the divine Purusha is entirely hidden in the blinding surge of her activities, in the gross pomp of her workings, and the individual soul emerging from her involution of spirit in matter, subject in all its activities to its entangling in the material and vital instruments is unable to experience the divine freedom. What it calls its freedom and mastery, is only the subtle subjection of mind to Prakriti which is lighter indeed, nearer to the possibility of liberty and rule than the gross subjection of vital and material things like the animal, plant and metal, but is still not real freedom and mastery. Therefore we have had to speak of different planes of our consciousness and of the spiritual planes of the mental being; for if these did not exist, the liberation of the embodied being would have been impossible here on earth. He would have had to wait and at most to prepare himself for seeking it in other worlds and in a different kind of physical or spiritual embodiment less obstinately sealed in its shell of material experience.

In the ordinary Yoga of knowledge it is only necessary to recognise two planes of our consciousness, the spiritual and the materialised mental; the pure reason standing between these two views them both, cuts through the illusions of the phenomenal world, exceeds the materialised mental plane, sees the reality of the spiritual; and then the will of the individual Purusha unifying itself with this poise of knowledge rejects the lower and draws back to the supreme plane, dwells there, loses mind and body, sheds life from it and merges itself in the supreme Purusha, is delivered from individual existence. It knows that this is not the whole truth of our existence, which is much more complex; it knows there are many planes, but it disregards them or pays little attention to them because they are not essential to this liberation. They indeed rather hamper it, because to live on them brings new attractive psychical experiences, psychical enjoyments, psychical powers, a new world of phenomenal knowledge the pursuit of which creates stumbling-blocks in the way of its one object, immergence in Brahman, and brings a succession of innumerable way-side snares on the road which leads to God. But since we accept world-existence, and for us all world-existence is Brahman and full of the presence of God, these things can have no terrors for us; whatever dangers of distraction there may be, we have to face and overcome them. If the world and our own existence are so complex, we must know and embrace their complexities in order that our self-knowledge and our knowledge of the dealings of Purusha with its Prakriti may be complete. If there are many planes, we have to possess them all for the Divine, even as we seek to possess spiritually and transform our ordinary poise of mind, life and body.

The ancient knowledge in all countries was full of the search after the hidden truths of our being and it created that large field of practice and inquiry which goes in Europe by the name of occultism, — we do not use any corresponding word in the East, because these things do not seem to us so remote, mysterious and abnormal as to the occidental mentality; they are nearer to us and the veil between our normal material life and this larger life is much thinner. In India,[1] Egypt, Chaldea, China, Greece, the Celtic countries they have formed part of various Yogic systems and disciplines which had once a great hold everywhere, but to the modern mind have seemed mere superstition and mysticism, although the facts and experiences on which they are founded are quite as real in their own field and as much governed by intelligible laws of their own as the facts and experiences of the material world. It is not our intention here to plunge into this vast and difficult field of psychical knowledge.[2] But it becomes necessary now to deal with certain broad facts and principles which form its framework, for without them our Yoga of knowledge cannot be complete. We find that in the various systems the facts dealt with are always the same, but there are considerable differences of theoretic and practical arrangement, as is natural and inevitable in dealing with a subject so large and difficult. Certain things are here omitted, there made all-important, here understressed, there over-emphasised; certain fields of experience which are in one system held to be merely subordinate provinces, are in others treated as separate kingdoms. But I shall follow here consistently the Vedic and Vedantic arrangement of which we find the great lines in the Upanishads, first because it seems to me at once the simplest and most philosophical and more especially because it was from the beginning envisaged from the point of view of the utility of these various planes to the supreme object of our liberation. It takes as its basis the three principles of our ordinary being, mind, life and matter, the triune spiritual principle of Sachchidananda and the link principle of *vijñāna*, supermind, the free or spiritual intelligence, and thus arranges all the large possible poises of our being in a tier of seven planes, — sometimes regarded as five only, because, only the lower five are wholly accessible to us, — through which the developing being can rise to its perfection.

---

[1] For example, the Tantric in India.

But first we must understand what we mean by planes of consciousness, planes of existence. We mean a general settled poise or world of relations between Purusha and Prakriti, between the Soul and Nature. For anything that we can call world is and can be nothing else than the working out of a general relation which a universal existence has created or established between itself, or let us say its eternal fact or potentiality and the powers of its becoming. That existence in its relations with and its experience of the becoming is what we call soul or Purusha, individual soul in the individual, universal soul in the cosmos; the principle and the powers of the becoming are what we call Nature or Prakriti. But since Being, conscious force and delight of being are always the three constituent terms of existence, the nature of a world is really determined by the way in which Prakriti is set to deal with these three primary things and the forms which it is allowed to give to them. For existence itself is and must always be the stuff of its own becoming; it must be shaped into the substance with which Force has to deal. Force again must be the power which works out that substance and works with it to whatever ends; Force is that which we ordinarily call Nature. Again the end, the object with which the worlds are created must be worked out by the consciousness inherent in all existence and all force and all their workings, and the object must be the possession of itself and of its delight of existence in the world. To that all the circumstances and aims of any world-existence must reduce themselves; it is existence developing its terms of being, its power of being, its conscious delight of being; if these are involved, their evolution; if they are veiled, their self-revelation.

---

[2] We hope to deal with it hereafter; but our first concern in the *Arya* must be with spiritual and philosophical truths; it is only when these have been grasped that the approach to the psychical becomes safe and clear.

Here the soul lives in a material universe; of that alone it is immediately conscious; the realisation of its potentialities in that is the problem with which it is concerned. But matter means the involution of the conscious delight of existence in self-oblivious force and in a self-dividing, infinitesimally disaggregated form of substance. Therefore the whole principle and effort of a material world must be the evolution of what is involved and the development of what is undeveloped. Here everything is shut up from the first in the violently working inconscient sleep of material force; therefore the whole aim of any material becoming must be the waking of consciousness out of the inconscient; the whole consummation of a material becoming must be the removal of the veil of matter and the luminous revelation of the entirely self-conscient Being to its own imprisoned soul in the becoming. Since Man is such an imprisoned soul, this luminous liberation and coming to self-knowledge must be his highest object and the condition of his perfection.

But the limitations of a material universe seem to be hostile to the proper accomplishment of this object which is yet so inevitably the highest aim of a mental being born into a physical body. First existence has formed itself here, fundamentally, as Matter; it has been objectivised, made sensible and concrete to its own self-experiencing conscious-force in the form of self-dividing material substance, and by the aggregation of this matter there has been built up for man a physical body separate, divided from others and subject to the fixed habits of process or, as we call them, the laws of inconscient material Nature. His force of being too is nature or Force working in matter, which has waked slowly out of inconscience to life and is always limited by form, always dependent on the body, always separated by it from the rest of Life and from other living beings, always hampered in its development, persistence, self-perfectioning by the laws of the Inconscience and the limitations of bodily living. Equally, his consciousness is a mentality emerging in a body and in a sharply individualised life; it is therefore limited in its workings and capacities and dependent on bodily organs of no great competence and on a very restricted vital force; it is separated from the rest of cosmic mind and shut out from the thoughts of other mental beings whose inner workings are a sealed book to man's physical mind except in so far as he can read them by the analogy of his own mentality and by their insufficient bodily signs and self-expressions. His consciousness is always falling back towards the inconscience in which a large part of it is always involved, his life towards death, his physical being towards disaggregation. His delight of being depends on the relations of this imperfect consciousness with its environment based upon physical sensations and the sense-mind, in other words on a limited mind trying to lay hold on a world external and foreign to it by means of a limited body, limited vital force, limited organs. Therefore its power for possession is limited, its force for delight is limited, and every touch of the world which exceeds its force, which that force cannot bear, cannot seize on, cannot assimilate and possess must turn to something else than delight, to pain, discomfort or grief. Or else it must be met by non-reception, insensibility, or, if received, put away by indifference. Moreover such delight of being as it possesses, is not possessed naturally and eternally like the self-delight of Sachchidananda, but by experience and acquisition in Time, and can therefore only be maintained and prolonged by repetition of experience and is in its nature precarious and transient.

All this means that the natural relations of Purusha to Prakriti in the material universe are the complete absorption of conscious being in the force of its workings, therefore the complete self-oblivion and self-ignorance of the Purusha, the complete domination of Prakriti and subjection of the soul to Nature. The soul does not know itself, it only knows, if anything, the workings of Prakriti. The emergence of the individual self-conscious soul in Man does not of itself abrogate these primary relations of ignorance and subjection. For this soul is living on a material plane of existence, a poise of Prakriti in which matter is still the chief determinant of its relations to Nature, and its consciousness being limited by Matter cannot be an entirely self-possessing consciousness. Even the universal soul, if limited by the material formula, could not be in entire possession of itself; much less can the individual soul to which the rest of existence becomes by bodily, vital and mental limitation and separation something external to it on which it is yet dependent for its life and its delight and its knowledge. These limitations of his power, knowledge, life, delight of existence are the whole cause of man's dissatisfaction with himself and the universe. And if the material universe were all and the material plane the only plane of his being, then man the individual Purusha could never arrive at perfection and self-fulfilment or indeed to any other life than that of the animals. There must be either worlds in which he is liberated from these incomplete and unsatisfactory relations of Purusha with Prakriti, or planes of his own being by ascending to which he can transcend them, or at the very least planes, worlds and higher beings from which he can receive or be helped to knowledge, powers, joys, a growth of his being otherwise impossible. All these things, the ancient knowledge asserts, exist, — other worlds, higher planes, the possibility of communication, of ascension, of growth by contact with and influence from that which is above him in the present scale of his realised being.

As there is a poise of the relations of Purusha with Prakriti in which Matter is the first determinant, a world of material existence, so there is another just above it in which Matter is not supreme, but rather Life-force takes its place as the first determinant. In this world forms do not determine the conditions of the life, but it is life which determines the form, and therefore forms are there much more free, fluid, largely and to our conceptions strangely variable than in the material world. This life-force is not inconscient material force, not even, except in its lowest movements, an elemental subconscient energy, but a conscious force of being which makes for formation, but much more essentially for enjoyment, possession, satisfaction of its own dynamic impulse. Desire and the satisfaction of impulse are therefore the first law of this world of sheer vital existence, this poise of relations between the soul and its nature in which the life-power plays with so much greater a freedom and capacity than in our physical living; it may be called the desire-world, for that is its principal characteristic. Moreover, it is not fixed in one hardly variable formula as physical life seems to be, but is capable of many variations of its poise, admits many sub-planes ranging from those which touch material existence and, as it were, melt into that, to those which touch at the height of the life-power the planes of pure mental and psychic existence and melt into them. For in Nature in the infinite scale of being there are no wide gulfs, no abrupt chasms to be overleaped, but a melting of one thing into another, a subtle continuity; out of that her power of distinctive experience creates the orderings, the definite ranges, the distinct gradations by which the soul variously knows and possesses its possibilities of world-existence. Again, enjoyment of one kind or another being the whole object of desire, that must be the trend of the desire-world; but since wherever the soul is not free, — and it cannot be free when subject to desire, — there must be the negative as well as the positive of all its experience, this world contains not only the possibility of large or intense or continuous enjoyments almost inconceivable to the limited physical mind, but also the possibility of equally enormous sufferings. It is here therefore that there are situated the lowest heavens and all the hells with the tradition and imagination of which the human mind has lured and terrified itself since the earliest ages. All human imaginations indeed correspond to some reality or real possibility, though they may in themselves be a quite inaccurate representation or couched in too physical images and therefore inapt to express the truth of supraphysical realities.

Nature being a complex unity and not a collection of unrelated phenomena, there can be no unbridgeable gulf between the material existence and this vital or desire world. On the contrary, they may be said in a sense to exist in each other and are at least interdependent to a certain extent. In fact, the material world is really a sort of projection from the vital, a thing which it has thrown out and separated from itself in order to embody and fulfil some of its desires under conditions other than its own, which are yet the logical result of its own most material longings. Life on earth may be said to be the result of the pressure of this life-world on the material, inconscient existence of the physical universe. Our own manifest vital being is also only a surface result of a larger and profounder vital being which has its proper seat on the life-plane and through which we are connected with the life-world. Moreover, the life-world is constantly acting upon us and behind everything in material existence there stand appropriate powers of the life-world; even the most crude and elemental have behind them elemental life-powers, elemental beings by which or by whom they are supported. The influences of the life-world are always pouring out on the material existence and producing there their powers and results which return again upon the life-world to modify it. From that the life-part of us, the desire-part is being always touched and influenced; there too are beneficent and malefic powers of good desire and evil desire which concern themselves with us even when we are ignorant of and unconcerned with them. Nor are these powers merely tendencies, inconscient forces, nor, except on the verges of Matter, subconscient, but conscious powers, beings, living influences. As we awaken to the higher planes of our existence, we become aware of them as friends or enemies, powers which seek to possess or which we can master, overcome, pass beyond and leave behind. It is this possible relation of the human being with the powers of the life-world which occupied to so large an extent European occultism, especially in the Middle Ages, as well as certain forms of Eastern magic and spiritualism. The "superstitions" of the past — much superstition there was, that is to say, much ignorant and distorted belief, false explanations and obscure and clumsy dealing with the laws of the beyond, — had yet behind them truths which a future Science, delivered from its sole preoccupation with the material world, may rediscover. For the supra-material is as much a reality as the existence of mental beings in the material universe.

But why then are we not normally aware of so much that is behind us and always pressing upon us? For the same reason that we are not aware of the inner life of our neighbour, although it exists as much as our own and is constantly exercising an occult influence upon us, — for a great part of our thoughts and feelings come into us from outside, from our fellow-men, both from individuals and from the collective mind of humanity; and for the same reason that we are not aware of the greater part of our own being which is subconscient or subliminal to our waking mind and is always influencing and in an occult manner determining our surface existence. It is because we use, normally, only our corporeal senses and live almost wholly in the body and the physical vitality and the physical mind, and it is not directly through these that the life-world enters into relations with us. That is done through other sheaths of our being, — so they are termed in the Upanishads, — other bodies, as they are called in a later terminology, the mental sheath or subtle body in which our true mental being lives and the life sheath or vital body which is more closely connected with the physical or food-sheath and forms with it the gross body of our complex existence. These possess powers, senses, capacities which are always secretly acting in us, are connected with and impinge upon our physical organs and the plexuses of our physical life and mentality. By self-development we can become aware of them, possess our life in them, get through them into conscious relation with the life-world and other worlds and use them also for a more subtle experience and more intimate knowledge of the truths, facts and happenings of even the material world itself. We can by this self-development live more or less fully on planes of our existence other than the material which is now all in all to us.

What has been said of the life-world applies with the necessary differences to still higher planes of the cosmic existence. For beyond that is a mental plane, a world of mental existence in which neither life, nor matter, but mind is the first determinant. Mind there is not determined by material conditions or by the life-force, but itself determines and uses them for its own satisfaction. There mind, that is to say, the psychical and the intellectual being, is free in a certain sense, free at least to satisfy and fulfil itself in a way hardly conceivable to our body-bound and life-bound mentality; for the Purusha there is the pure mental being and his relations with Prakriti are determined by that purer mentality, Nature there is mental rather than vital and physical. Both the life-world and indirectly the material are a projection from that, the result of certain tendencies of the mental Being which have sought a field, conditions, an arrangement of harmonies proper to themselves; and the phenomena of mind in this world may be said to be a result of the pressure of that plane first on the life-world and then on life in the material existence. By its modification in the life-world it creates in us the desire-mind; in its own right it awakes in us the purer powers of our psychical and intellectual existence. But our surface mentality is only a secondary result of a larger subliminal mentality whose proper seat is the mental plane. This world of mental existence also is constantly acting upon us and our world, has its powers and its beings, is related to us through our mental body. There we find the psychical and mental heavens to which the Purusha can ascend when it drops this physical body and can there sojourn till the impulse to terrestrial existence again draws it downward. Here too are many planes, the lowest converging upon and melting into the worlds below, the highest at the heights of the mind-power into the worlds of a more spiritual existence.

These highest worlds are therefore supramental; they belong to the principle of supermind, the free, spiritual or divine intelligence[3] or gnosis and to the triple spiritual principle of Sachchidananda. From them the lower worlds derive by a sort of fall of the Purusha into certain specific or narrow conditions of the play of the soul with its nature. But these also are divided from us by no unbridgeable gulf; they affect us through what are called the knowledge-sheath and the bliss-sheath, through the causal or spiritual body, and less directly through the mental body, nor are their secret powers absent from the workings of the vital and material existence. Our conscious spiritual being and our intuitive mind awaken in us as a result of the pressure of these highest worlds on the mental being in life and body. But this causal body is, as we may say, little developed in the majority of men and to live in it or to ascend to the supramental planes, as distinguished from corresponding sub-planes in the mental being, or still more to dwell consciously upon them is the most difficult thing of all for the human being. It can be done in the trance of Samadhi, but otherwise only by a new evolution of the capacities of the individual Purusha of which few are even willing to conceive. Yet is that the condition of the perfect self-consciousness by which alone the Purusha can possess the full conscious control of Prakriti; for there not even the mind determines, but the Spirit freely uses the lower differentiating principles as minor terms of its existence governed by the higher and reaching by them their own perfect capacity. That alone would be the perfect evolution of the involved and development of the undeveloped for which the Purusha has sought in the material universe, as if in a wager with itself, the conditions of the greatest difficulty.

---

[3] Called the *vijñāna* or *buddhi*, a word which may lead to some misunderstanding as it is also applied to the mental intelligence which is only a lower derivation from the divine gnosis.

Chapter XX

The Lower Triple Purusha

SUCH is the constituent principle of the various worlds of cosmic existence and the various planes of our being; they are as if a ladder plunging down into Matter and perhaps below it, rising up into the heights of the Spirit, even perhaps to the point at which existence escapes out of cosmic being into ranges of a supra-cosmic Absolute, — so at least it is averred in the world-system of the Buddhists. But to our ordinary materialised consciousness all this does not exist because it is hidden from us by our preoccupation with our existence in a little corner of the material universe and with the petty experiences of the little hour of time which is represented by our life in a single body upon this earth. To that consciousness the world is a mass of material things and forces thrown into some kind of shape and harmonised into a system of regulated movements by a number of fixed self-existent laws which we have to obey, by which we are governed and circumscribed and of which we have to get the best knowledge we can so as to make the most of this one brief existence which begins with birth, ends with death and has no second recurrence. Our own being is a sort of accident or at least a very small and minor circumstance in the universal life of Matter or the eternal continuity of the workings of material Force. Somehow or other a soul or mind has come to exist in a body and it stumbles about among things and forces which it does not very well understand, at first preoccupied with the difficulty of managing to live in a dangerous and largely hostile world and then with the effort to understand its laws and use them so as to make life as tolerable or as happy as possible so long as it lasts. If we were really nothing more than such a minor movement of individualised mind in Matter, existence would have nothing more to offer us; its best part would be at most this struggle of an ephemeral intellect and will with eternal

Matter and with the difficulties of Life supplemented and eased by a play of imagination and by the consoling fictions presented to us by religion and art and all the wonders dreamed of by the brooding mind and restless fancy of man.

But because he is a soul and not merely a living body, man can never for long remain satisfied that this first view of his existence, the sole view justified by the external and objective facts of life, is the real truth or the whole knowledge: his subjective being is full of hints and inklings of realities beyond, it is open to the sense of infinity and immortality, it is easily convinced of other worlds, higher possibilities of being, larger fields of experience for the soul. Science gives us the objective truth of existence and the superficial knowledge of our physical and vital being; but we feel that there are truths beyond which possibly through the cultivation of our subjective being and the enlargement of its powers may come to lie more and more open to us. When the knowledge of this world is ours, we are irresistibly impelled to seek for the knowledge of other states of existence beyond, and that is the reason why an age of strong materialism and scepticism is always followed by an age of occultism, of mystical creeds, of new religions and profounder seekings after the Infinite and the Divine. The knowledge of our superficial mentality and the laws of our bodily life is not enough; it brings us always to all that mysterious and hidden depth of subjective existence below and behind of which our surface consciousness is only a fringe or an outer court. We come to see that what is present to our physical senses is only the material shell of cosmic existence and what is obvious in our superficial mentality is only the margin of immense continents which lie behind unexplored. To explore them must be the work of another knowledge than that of physical science or of a superficial psychology.

Religion is the first attempt of man to get beyond himself and beyond the obvious and material facts of his existence. Its first essential work is to confirm and make real to him his subjective sense of an Infinite on which his material and mental being depends and the aspiration of his soul to come into its presence and live in contact with it. Its function is to assure him too of that possibility of which he has always dreamed, but of which his ordinary life gives him no assurance, the possibility of transcending himself and growing out of bodily life and mortality into the joy of immortal life and spiritual existence. It also confirms in him the sense that there are worlds or planes of existence other than that in which his lot is now cast, worlds in which this mortality and this subjection to evil and suffering are not the natural state, but rather bliss of immortality is the eternal condition. Incidentally, it gives him a rule of mortal life by which he shall prepare himself for immortality. He is a soul and not a body and his earthly life is a means by which he determines the future conditions of his spiritual being. So much is common to all religions; beyond this we get from them no assured certainty. Their voices vary; some tell us that one life on earth is all we have in which to determine our future existence, deny the past immortality of the soul and assert only its future immortality, threaten it even with the incredible dogma of a future of eternal suffering for those who miss the right path, while others more large and rational affirm successive existences by which the soul grows into the knowledge of the Infinite with a complete assurance for all of ultimate arrival and perfection. Some present the Infinite to us as a Being other than ourselves with whom we can have personal relations, others as an impersonal existence into which our separate being has to merge; some therefore give us as our goal worlds beyond in which we dwell in the presence of the Divine, others a cessation of world-existence by immergence in the Infinite. Most invite us to bear or to abandon earthly life as a trial or a temporary affliction or a vanity and fix our hopes beyond; in some we find a vague hint of a future triumph of the Spirit, the Divine in the body, upon this earth, in the collective life of man, and so justify not only the separate hope and aspiration of the individual but the united and sympathetic hope and aspiration of the race. Religion in fact is not knowledge, but a faith and aspiration; it is justified indeed both by an imprecise intuitive knowledge of large spiritual truths and by the subjective experience of souls that have risen beyond the ordinary life, but in itself it only gives us the hope and faith by which we may be induced to aspire to the intimate possession of the hidden tracts and larger realities of the Spirit. That we turn always the few distinct truths and the symbols or the particular discipline of a religion into hard and fast dogmas, is a sign that as yet we are only infants in the spiritual knowledge and are yet far from the science of the Infinite.

Yet behind every great religion, behind, that is to say, its exoteric side of faith, hope, symbols, scattered truths and limiting dogmas, there is an esoteric side of inner spiritual training and illumination by which the hidden truths may be known, worked out, possessed. Behind every exoteric religion there is an esoteric Yoga, an intuitive knowledge to which its faith is the first step, inexpressible realities of which its symbols are the figured expression, a deeper sense for its scattered truths, mysteries of the higher planes of existence of which even its dogmas and superstitions are crude hints and indications. What Science does for our knowledge of the material world, replacing first appearances and uses by the hidden truths and as yet occult powers of its great natural forces and in our own minds beliefs and opinions by verified experience and a profounder understanding, Yoga does for the higher planes and worlds and possibilities of our being which are aimed at by the religions. Therefore all this mass of graded experience existing behind closed doors to which the consciousness of man may find, if it wills, the key, falls within the province of a comprehensive Yoga of knowledge, which need not be confined to the seeking after the Absolute alone or the knowledge of the Divine in itself or of the Divine only in its isolated relations with the individual human soul. It is true that the consciousness of the Absolute is the highest reach of the Yoga of knowledge and that the possession of the Divine is its first, greatest and most ardent object and that to neglect it for an inferior knowledge is to afflict our Yoga with inferiority or even frivolity and to miss or fall away from its characteristic object; but, the Divine in itself being known, the Yoga of knowledge may well embrace also the knowledge of the Divine in its relations with ourselves and the world on the different planes of our existence. To rise to the pure Self being steadfastly held to as the summit of our subjective self-uplifting, we may from that height possess our lower selves even to the physical and the workings of Nature which belong to them.

We may seek this knowledge on two sides separately, the side of Purusha, the side of Prakriti; and we may combine the two for the perfect possession of the various relations of Purusha and Prakriti in the light of the Divine. There is, says the Upanishad, a fivefold soul in man and the world, the microcosm and the macrocosm. The physical soul, self or being, — Purusha, Atman, — is that of which we are all at first conscious, a self which seems to have hardly any existence apart from the body and no action vital or even mental independent of it. This physical soul is present everywhere in material Nature; it pervades the body, actuates obscurely its movements and is the whole basis of its experiences; it informs all things even that are not mentally conscious. But in man this physical being has become vitalised and mentalised; it has received something of the law and capacities of the vital and mental being and nature. But its possession of them is derivative, superimposed, as it were, on its original nature and exercised under subjection to the law and action of the physical existence and its instruments. It is this dominance of our mental and vital parts by the body and the physical nature which seems at first sight to justify the theory of the materialists that mind and life are only circumstances and results of physical force and all their operations explicable by the activities of that force in the animal body. In fact entire subjection of the mind and the life to the body is the characteristic of an undeveloped humanity, as it is in an even greater degree of the infra-human animal. According to the theory of reincarnation those who do not get beyond this stage in the earthly life, cannot rise after death to the mental or higher vital worlds, but have to return from the confines of a series of physical planes to increase their development in the next earthly existence. For the undeveloped physical soul is entirely dominated by material nature and its impressions and has to work them out to a better advantage before it can rise in the scale of being.

A more developed humanity allows us to make a better and freer use of all the capacities and experiences that we derive from the vital and mental planes of being, to lean more for support upon these hidden planes, be less absorbed by the physical and to govern and modify the original nature of the physical being by greater vital forces and powers from the desire-world and greater and subtler mental forces and powers from the psychical and intellectual planes. By this development we are able to rise to higher altitudes of the intermediary existence between death and rebirth and to make a better and more rapid use of rebirth itself for a yet higher mental and spiritual development. But even so, in the physical being which still determines the greater part of our waking self, we act without definite consciousness of the worlds or planes which are the sources of our action. We are aware indeed of the life-plane and mind-plane of the physical being, but not of the life-plane and mind-plane proper or of the superior and larger vital and mental being which we are behind the veil of our ordinary consciousness. It is only at a high stage of development that we become aware of them and even then, ordinarily, only at the back of the action of our mentalised physical nature; we do not actually live on those planes, for if we did we could very soon arrive at the conscious control of the body by the life-power and of both by the sovereign mind; we should then be able to determine our physical and mental life to a very large extent by our will and knowledge as masters of our being and with a direct action of the mind on the life and body. By Yoga this power of transcending the physical self and taking possession of the higher selves may to a greater or less degree be acquired through a heightened and widened self-consciousness and self-mastery.

This may be done, on the side of Purusha, by drawing back from the physical self and its preoccupation with physical nature and through concentration of thought and will raising oneself into the vital and then into the mental self. By doing so we can become the vital being and draw up the physical self into that new consciousness so that we are only aware of the body, its nature and its actions as secondary circumstances of the Life-soul which we now are, used by it for its relations with the material world. A certain remoteness from physical being and then a superiority to it; a vivid sense of the body being a mere instrument or shell and easily detachable; an extraordinary effectivity of our desires on our physical being and life-environment; a great sense of power and ease in manipulating and directing the vital energy of which we now become vividly conscious, for its action is felt by us concretely, subtly physical in relation to the body, sensible in a sort of subtle density as an energy used by the mind; an awareness of the life-plane in us above the physical and knowledge and contact with the beings of the desire-world; a coming into action of new powers, — what are usually called occult powers or siddhis; a close sense of and sympathy with the Life-soul in the world and a knowledge or sensation of the emotions, desires, vital impulses of others; these are some of the signs of this new consciousness gained by Yoga.

But all this belongs to the inferior grades of spiritual experience and indeed is hardly more spiritual than the physical existence. We have in the same way to go yet higher and raise ourselves into the mental self. By doing so we can become the mental self and draw up the physical and vital being into it, so that life and body and their operations become to us minor circumstances of our being used by the Mind-soul which we now are for the execution of its lower purposes that belong to the material existence. Here too we acquire at first a certain remoteness from the life and the body and our real life seems to be on quite another plane than material man's, in contact with a subtler existence, a greater light of knowledge than the terrestrial, a far rarer and yet more sovereign energy; we are in touch in fact with the mental plane, aware of the mental worlds, can be in communication with its beings and powers. From that plane we behold the desire-world and the material existence as if below us, things that we can cast away from us if we will and in fact easily reject when we relinquish the body, so as to dwell in the mental or psychical heavens. But we can also, instead of being thus remote and detached, become rather superior to the life and body and the vital and material planes and act upon them with mastery from our new height of being. Another sort of dynamis than physical or vital energy, something that we may call pure mind-power and soul-force, which the developed human being uses indeed but derivatively and imperfectly, but which we can now use freely and with knowledge, becomes the ordinary process of our action, while desire-force and physical action fall into a secondary place and are only used with this new energy behind them and as its occasional channels. We are in touch and sympathy also with the Mind in cosmos, conscious of it, aware of the intentions, directions, thought-forces, struggle of subtle powers behind all happenings, which the ordinary man is ignorant of or can only obscurely infer from the physical happening, but which we can now see and feel directly before there is any physical sign or even vital intimation of their working. We acquire too the knowledge and sense of the mind-action of other beings whether on the physical plane or on those above it; and the higher capacities of the mental being, — occult powers or siddhis, but of a much rarer or subtler kind than those proper to the vital plane, — naturally awake in our consciousness.

All these however are circumstances of the lower triple world of our being, the *trailokya* of the ancient sages. Living on these we are, whatever the enlargement of our powers and our consciousness, still living within the limits of the cosmic gods and subject, though with a much subtler, easier and modified subjection, to the reign of Prakriti over Purusha. To achieve real freedom and mastery we have to ascend to a yet higher level of the many-plateaued mountain of our being.

Chapter XXI

The Ladder of Self-Transcendence

THE TRANSCENDENCE of this lower triple being and this lower triple world, to which ordinarily our consciousness and its powers and results are limited, — a transcendence described by the Vedic seers as an exceeding or breaking beyond the two firmaments of heaven and earth, — opens out a hierarchy of infinitudes to which the normal existence of man even in its highest and widest flights is still a stranger. Into that altitude, even to the lowest step of its hierarchy, it is difficult for him to rise. A separation, acute in practice though unreal in essence, divides the total being of man, the microcosm, as it divides also the world-being, the macrocosm. Both have a higher and a lower hemisphere, the *parārdha* and *aparārdha* of the ancient wisdom. The higher hemisphere is the perfect and eternal reign of the Spirit; for there it manifests without cessation or diminution its infinities, deploys the unconcealed glories of its illimitable existence, its illimitable consciousness and knowledge, its illimitable force and power, its illimitable beatitude. The lower hemisphere belongs equally to the Spirit; but here it is veiled, closely, thickly, by its inferior self-expression of limiting mind, confined life and dividing body. The Self in the lower hemisphere is shrouded in name and form; its consciousness is broken up by the division between the internal and external, the individual and universal; its vision and sense are turned outward; its force, limited by division of its consciousness, works in fetters; its knowledge, will, power, delight, divided by this division, limited by this limitation, are open to the experience of their contrary or perverse forms, to ignorance, weakness and suffering. We can indeed become aware of the true Self or Spirit in ourselves by turning our sense and vision inward; we can discover too the same Self or Spirit in the external world and its phenomena by plunging them there also inward through the veil of names and forms to that which dwells in these or else stands behind them. Our normal consciousness through this inward look may become by reflection aware of the infinite being, consciousness and delight of the Self and share in its passive or static infinity of these things. But we can only to a very limited extent share in its active or dynamic manifestation of knowledge, power and joy. Even this static identity by reflection cannot, ordinarily, be effected without a long and difficult effort and as the result of many lives of progressive self-development; for very firmly is our normal consciousness bound to the law of its lower hemisphere of being. To understand the possibility of transcending it at all, we must restate in a practical formula the relations of the worlds which constitute the two hemispheres.

All is determined by the Spirit, for all from subtlest existence to grossest matter is manifestation of the Spirit. But the Spirit, Self or Being determines the world it lives in and the experiences of its consciousness, force and delight in that world by some poise — among many possible — of the relations of Purusha and Prakriti, Soul and Nature, — some basic poise in one or other of its own cosmic principles. Poised in the principle of Matter, it becomes the physical self of a physical universe in the reign of a physical Nature. Spirit is then absorbed in its experience of Matter; it is dominated by the ignorance and inertia of the tamasic Power proper to physical existence. In the individual it becomes a materialised soul, *annamaya puruṣa*, whose life and mind have developed out of the ignorance and inertia of the material principle and are subject to their fundamental limitations. For life in Matter works in dependence on the body; mind in Matter works in dependence on the body and on the vital or nervous being; spirit itself in Matter is limited and divided in its self-relation and its powers by the limitations and divisions of this matter-governed and life-driven mind. This materialised soul lives bound to the physical body and its narrow superficial external consciousness, and it takes normally the experiences of its physical organs, its senses, its matter-bound life and mind, with at most some limited spiritual glimpses, as the whole truth of existence.

Man is a spirit, but a spirit that lives as a mental being in physical Nature; he is to his own self-consciousness a mind in a physical body. But at first he is this mental being materialised and he takes the materialised soul, *annamaya puruṣa*, for his real self. He is obliged to accept, as the Upanishad expresses it, Matter for the Brahman because his vision here sees Matter as that from which all is born, by which all lives and to which all return in their passing. His natural highest concept of Spirit is an Infinite, preferably an inconscient Infinite, inhabiting or pervading the material universe (which alone it really knows), and manifesting by the power of its presence all these forms around him. His natural highest conception of himself is a vaguely conceived soul or spirit, a soul manifested only by the physical life's experiences, bound up with physical phenomena and forced on its dissolution to return by an automatic necessity to the vast indeterminateness of the Infinite. But because he has the power of self-development, he can rise beyond these natural conceptions of the materialised soul; he can supplement them with a certain derivative experience drawn from supraphysical planes and worlds. He can concentrate in mind and develop the mental part of his being, usually at the expense of the fullness of his vital and physical life and in the end the mind predominates and can open to the Beyond. He can concentrate this self-liberating mind on the Spirit. Here too usually in the process he turns away more and more from his full mental and physical life; he limits or discourages their possibilities as much as his material foundation in nature will allow him. In the end his spiritual life predominates, destroys his earthward tendency and breaks its ties and limitations. Spiritualised, he places his real existence beyond in other worlds, in the heavens of the vital or mental plane; he begins to regard life on earth as a painful or troublesome incident or passage in which he can never arrive at any full enjoyment of his inner ideal self, his spiritual essence. Moreover, his highest conception of the Self or Spirit is apt to be more or less quietistic; for, as we have seen, it is its static infinity alone that he can entirely experience, the still freedom of Purusha unlimited by Prakriti, the Soul standing back from Nature. There may come indeed some divine dynamic manifestation in him, but it cannot rise entirely above the heavy limitations of physical Nature. The peace of the silent and passive Self is more easily attainable and he can more easily and fully hold it; too difficult for him is the bliss of an infinite activity, the dynamis of an immeasurable Power.

But the Spirit can be poised in the principle of Life, not in Matter. The Spirit so founded becomes the vital self of a vital world, the Life-soul of a Life-energy in the reign of a consciously dynamic Nature. Absorbed in the experiences of the power and play of a conscious Life, it is dominated by the desire, activity and passion of the rajasic principle proper to vital existence. In the individual this spirit becomes a vital soul, *prāṇamaya puruṣa*, in whose nature the life-energies tyrannise over the mental and physical principles. The physical element in a vital world readily shapes its activities and formations in response to desire and its imaginations, it serves and obeys the passion and power of life and their formations and does not thwart or limit them as it does here on earth where life is a precarious incident in inanimate Matter. The mental element too is moulded and limited by the life-power, obeys it and helps only to enrich and fulfil the urge of its desires and the energy of its impulses. This vital soul lives in a vital body composed of a substance much subtler than physical matter; it is a substance surcharged with conscious energy, capable of much more powerful perceptions, capacities, sense-activities than any that the gross atomic elements of earth-matter can offer. Man too has in himself behind his physical being, subliminal to it, unseen and unknown, but very close to it and forming with it the most naturally active part of his existence, this vital soul, this vital nature and this vital body; a whole vital plane connected with the life-world or desire-world is hidden in us, a secret consciousness in which life and desire find their untrammelled play and their easy self-expression and from there throw their influences and formations on our outer life.

In proportion as the power of this vital plane manifests itself in man and takes hold of his physical being, this son of earth becomes a vehicle of the life energy, forceful in his desires, vehement in his passions and emotions, intensely dynamic in his action, more and more the rajasic man. It is possible now for him to awaken in his consciousness to the vital plane and to become the vital soul, *prāṇamaya puruṣa*, put on the vital nature and live in the secret vital as well as the visible physical body. If he achieves this change with some fullness or one-pointedness — usually it is under great and salutary limitations or attended by saving complexities — and without rising beyond these things, without climbing to a supra-vital height from which they can be used, purified, uplifted, he becomes the lower type of Asura or Titan, a Rakshasa in nature, a soul of sheer power and life-energy, magnified or racked by a force of unlimited desire and passion, hunted and driven by an active capacity and colossal rajasic ego, but in possession of far greater and more various powers than those of the physical man in the ordinary more inert earth-nature. Even if he develops mind greatly on the vital plane and uses its dynamic energy for self-control as well as for self-satisfaction, it will still be with an Asuric energism (*tapasyā*) although of a higher type and directed to a more governed satisfaction of the rajasic ego.

But for the vital plane also it is possible, even as on the physical, to rise to a certain spiritual greatness in its own kind. It is open to the vital man to lift himself beyond the conceptions and energies natural to the desire-soul and the desire-plane. He can develop a higher mentality and, within the conditions of the vital being, concentrate upon some realisation of the Spirit or Self behind or beyond its forms and powers. In this spiritual realisation there would be a less strong necessity of quietism; for there would be a greater possibility of an active effectuation of the bliss and power of the Eternal, mightier and more self-satisfied powers, a richer flowering of the dynamic Infinite. Nevertheless that effectuality could never come anywhere near to a true and integral perfection; for the conditions of the desire-world are like those of the physical improper to the development of the complete spiritual life. The vital being too must develop spirit to the detriment of his fullness, activity and force of life in the lower hemisphere of our existence and turn in the end away from the vital formula, away from life either to the Silence or to an ineffable Power beyond him. If he does not withdraw from life, he must remain enchained by life, limited in his self-fulfilment by the downward pull of the desire-world and its dominant rajasic principle. On the vital plane also, in its own right alone, a perfect perfection is impossible; the soul that attains only so far would have to return to the physical life for a greater experience, a higher self-development, a more direct ascent to the Spirit.

Above matter and life stands the principle of mind, nearer to the secret Origin of things. The Spirit poised in mind becomes the mental self of a mental world and dwells there in the reign of its own pure and luminous mental Nature. There it acts in the intrinsic freedom of the cosmic Intelligence supported by the combined workings of a psycho-mental and a higher emotional mind-force, subtilised and enlightened by the clarity and happiness of the sattwic principle proper to the mental existence. In the individual the spirit so poised becomes a mental soul, *manomaya puruṣa*, in whose nature the clarity and luminous power of the mind acts in its own right independent of any limitation or oppression by the vital or corporeal instruments; it rather rules and determines entirely the forms of its body and the powers of its life. For mind in its own plane is not limited by life and obstructed by matter as it is here in the earth-process. This mental soul lives in a mental or subtle body which enjoys capacities of knowledge, perception, sympathy and interpenetration with other beings hardly imaginable by us and a free, delicate and extensive mentalised sense-faculty not limited by the grosser conditions of the life nature or the physical nature.

Man too has in himself, subliminal, unknown and unseen, concealed behind his waking consciousness and visible organism this mental soul, mental nature, mental body and a mental plane, not materialised, in which the principle of Mind is at home and not as here at strife with a world which is alien to it, obstructive to its freedom and corruptive of its purity and clearness. All the higher faculties of man, his intellectual and psycho-mental being and powers, his higher emotional life awaken and increase in proportion as this mental plane in him presses upon him. For the more it manifests, the more it influences the physical parts, the more it enriches and elevates the corresponding mental plane of the embodied nature. At a certain pitch of its increasing sovereignty it can make man truly man and not merely a reasoning animal; for it gives then its characteristic force to that mental being within us which our humanity is in the inwardly governing but still too hampered essence of its psychological structure.

It is possible for man to awaken to this higher mental consciousness, to become this mental being,[1] put on this mental nature and live not only in the vital and physical sheaths, but in this mental body. If there were a sufficient completeness in this transformation he would become capable of a life and a being at least half divine. For he would enjoy powers and a vision and perceptions beyond the scope of this ordinary life and body; he would govern all by the clarities of pure knowledge; he would be united to other beings by a sympathy of love and happiness; his emotions would be lifted to the perfection of the psycho-mental plane, his sensations rescued from grossness, his intellect subtle, pure and flexible, delivered from the deviations of the impure pranic energy and the obstructions of matter. And he would develop too the reflection of a wisdom and bliss higher than any mental joy and knowledge; for he could receive more fully and without our incompetent mind's deforming and falsifying mixture the inspirations and intuitions that are the arrows of the supramental Light and form his perfected mental existence in the mould and power of that vaster splendour. He could then realise too the self or Spirit in a much larger and more luminous and more intimate intensity than is now possible and with a greater play of its active power and bliss in the satisfied harmony of his existence.

---

[1] I include here in mind, not only the highest range of mind ordinarily known to man, but yet higher ranges to which he has either no current faculty of admission or else only a partial and mixed reception of some faint portion of their powers, — the illumined mind, the intuition and finally the creative Overmind or Maya which stands far above and is the source of our present existence. If mind is to be understood only as Reason or human intelligence, then the free mental being and its state would be something much more limited and very inferior to the description given here.

And to our ordinary notions this may well seem to be a consummate perfection, something to which man might aspire in his highest flights of idealism. No doubt, it would be a sufficient perfection for the pure mental being in its own character; but it would still fall far below the greater possibilities of the spiritual nature. For here too our spiritual realisation would be subject to the limitations of the mind which is in the nature of a reflected, diluted and diffused or a narrowly intensive light, not the vast and comprehensive self-existent luminosity and joy of the Spirit. That vaster light, that profounder bliss are beyond the mental reaches. Mind indeed can never be a perfect instrument of the Spirit; a supreme self-expression is not possible in its movements because to separate, divide, limit is its very character. Even if mind could be free from all positive falsehood and error, even if it could be all intuitive and infallibly intuitive, it could still present and organise only half-truths or separate truths and these too not in their own body but in luminous representative figures put together to make an accumulated total or a massed structure. Therefore the self-perfecting mental being here must either depart into pure spirit by the shedding of its lower existence or return upon the physical life to develop in it a capacity not yet found in our mental and psychic nature. This is what the Upanishad expresses when it says that the heavens attained by the mind Purusha are those to which man is lifted by the rays of the sun, the diffused, separated, though intense beams of the supramental truth-consciousness, and from these it has to return to the earthly existence. But the illuminates who renouncing earth-life go beyond through the gateways of the sun, do not return hither. The mental being exceeding his sphere does not return because by that transition he enters a high range of existence peculiar to the superior hemisphere. He cannot bring down its greater spiritual nature into this lower triplicity; for here the mental being is the highest expression of the Self. Here the triple mental, vital and physical body provides almost the whole range of our capacity and cannot suffice for that greater consciousness; the vessel has not been built to contain a greater godhead or to house the splendours of this supramental force and knowledge.

This limitation is true only so long as man remains closed within the boundaries of the mental Maya. If he rises into the knowledge-self beyond the highest mental stature, if he becomes the knowledge-soul, the Spirit poised in gnosis, *vijñānamaya puruṣa*, and puts on the nature of its infinite truth and power, if he lives in the knowledge-sheath, the causal body as well as in these subtle mental, interlinking vital and grosser physical sheaths or bodies, then, but then only he will be able to draw down entirely into his terrestrial existence the fullness of the infinite spiritual consciousness; only then will he avail to raise his total being and even his whole manifested, embodied expressive nature into the spiritual kingdom. But this is difficult in the extreme; for the causal body opens itself readily to the consciousness and capacities of the spiritual planes and belongs in its nature to the higher hemisphere of existence, but it is either not developed at all in man or only as yet crudely developed and organised and veiled behind many intervening portals of the subliminal in us. It draws its stuff from the plane of the truth-knowledge and the plane of the infinite bliss and these pertain altogether to a still inaccessible higher hemisphere. Shedding upon this lower existence their truth and light and joy they are the source of all that we call spirituality and all that we call perfection. But this infiltration comes from behind thick coverings through which they arrive so tempered and weakened that they are entirely obscured in the materiality of our physical perceptions, grossly distorted and perverted in our vital impulses, perverted too though a little less grossly in our ideative seekings, minimised even in the comparative purity and intensity of the highest intuitive ranges of our mental nature. The supramental principle is secretly lodged in all existence. It is there even in the grossest materiality, it preserves and governs the lower worlds by its hidden power and law; but that power veils itself and that law works unseen through the shackled limitations and limping deformations of the lesser rule of our physical, vital, mental Nature. Yet its governing presence in the lowest forms assures us, because of the unity of all existence, that there is a possibility of their awakening, a possibility even of their perfect manifestation here in spite of every veil, in spite of all the mass of our apparent disabilities, in spite of the incapacity or unwillingness of our mind and life and body. And what is possible, must one day be, for that is the law of the omnipotent Spirit.

The character of these higher states of the soul and their greater worlds of spiritual Nature is necessarily difficult to seize. Even the Upanishads and the Veda only shadow them out by figures, hints and symbols. Yet it is necessary to attempt some account of their principles and practical effect so far as they can be grasped by the mind that stands on the border of the two hemispheres. The passage beyond that border would be the culmination, the completeness of the Yoga of self-transcendence by self-knowledge. The soul that aspires to perfection, draws back and upward, says the Upanishad, from the physical into the vital and from the vital into the mental Purusha, from the mental into the knowledge-soul and from that self of knowledge into the bliss Purusha. This self of bliss is the conscious foundation of perfect Sachchidananda and to pass into it completes the soul's ascension. The mind therefore must try to give to itself some account of this decisive transformation of the embodied consciousness, this radiant transfiguration and self-exceeding of our ever aspiring nature. The description mind can arrive at, can never be adequate to the thing itself, but it may point at least to some indicative shadow of it or perhaps some half-luminous image.

Chapter XXII

Vijnana or Gnosis

IN OUR perfect self-transcendence we pass out and up from the ignorance or half-enlightenment of our mental consciousbeing into a greater wisdom-self and truth-power above it, there to dwell in the unwalled light of a divine knowledge. The mental man that we are is changed into the gnostic soul, the truth-conscious godhead, the *vijñānamaya* Purusha. Seated on that level of the hill of our ascension we are in a quite different plane from this material, this vital, this mental poise of the universal spirit, and with this change changes too all our view and experience of our soul-life and of the world around us. We are born into a new soul-status and put on a new nature; for according to the status of the soul is the status of the Prakriti. At each transition of the world-ascent, from matter to life, from life to mind, from mind bound to free intelligence, as the latent, half-manifested or already manifest soul rises to a higher and higher level of being, the nature also is elevated into a superior working, a wider consciousness, a vaster force and an intenser or larger range and joy of existence. But the transition from the mind-self to the knowledge-self is the great and the decisive transition in the Yoga. It is the shaking off of the last hold on us of the cosmic ignorance and our firm foundation in the Truth of things, in a consciousness infinite and eternal and inviolable by obscurity, falsehood, suffering or error.

This is the first summit which enters into the divine perfection, *sādharmya*, *sādṛśya*; for all the rest only look up to it or catch some rays of its significance. The highest heights of mind or of overmind come still within the belt of a mitigated ignorance; they can refract a divine Light but not pass it on in undiminished power to our lower members. For so long as we are within the triple stratum of mind, life and body, our active nature continues to work in the force of the ignorance even when the soul in Mind possesses something of the knowledge. And even if the soul were to reflect or to represent all the largeness of the knowledge in its mental consciousness, it would be unable to mobilise it rightly in force of action. The truth in its action might greatly increase, but it would still be pursued by a limitation, still condemned to a divisibility which would prevent it from working integrally in the power of the infinite. The power of a divinely illumined mind may be immense compared with ordinary powers, but it will still be subject to incapacity and there can be no perfect correspondence between the force of the effective will and the light of the idea which inspires it. The infinite Presence may be there in status, but the dynamis of the operations of nature still belongs to the lower Prakriti, must follow its triple modes of working and cannot give any adequate form to the greatness within it. This is the tragedy of ineffectivity, of the hiatus between ideal and effective will, of our constant incapacity to work out in living form and action the truth we feel in our inner consciousness that pursues all the aspiration of mind and life towards the divinity behind them. But the *vijñāna* or gnosis is not only truth but truth power, it is the very working of the infinite and divine nature; it is the divine knowledge one with the divine will in the force and delight of a spontaneous and luminous and inevitable self-fulfilment. By the gnosis, then, we change our human into a divine nature.

What then is this gnosis and how can we describe it? Two opposite errors have to be avoided, two misconceptions that disfigure opposite sides of the truth of gnosis. One error of intellect-bounded thinkers takes *vijñāna* as synonymous with the other Indian term *buddhi* and *buddhi* as synonymous with the reason, the discerning intellect, the logical intelligence. The systems that accept this significance, pass at once from a plane of pure intellect to a plane of pure spirit. No intermediate power is recognised, no diviner action of knowledge than the pure reason is admitted; the limited human means for fixing truth is taken for the highest possible dynamics of consciousness, its topmost force and original movement. An opposite error, a misconception of the mystics identifies *vijñāna* with the consciousness of the Infinite free from all ideation or else ideation packed into one essence of thought, lost to other dynamic action in the single and invariable idea of the One. This is the *caitanyaghana* of the Upanishad and is one movement or rather one thread of the many-aspected movement of the gnosis. The gnosis, the Vijnana, is not only this concentrated consciousness of the infinite Essence; it is also and at the same time an infinite knowledge of the myriad play of the Infinite. It contains all ideation (not mental but supramental), but it is not limited by ideation, for it far exceeds all ideative movement. Nor is the gnostic ideation in its character an intellectual thinking; it is not what we call the reason, not a concentrated intelligence. For the reason is mental in its methods, mental in its acquisitions, mental in its basis, but the ideative method of the gnosis is self-luminous, supramental, its yield of thought-light spontaneous, not proceeding by acquisition, its thought-basis a rendering of conscious identities, not a translation of the impressions born of indirect contacts. There is a relation and even a sort of broken identity between the two forms of thought; for one proceeds covertly from the other, mind is born from that which is beyond mind. But they act on different planes and reverse each other's process.

Even the purest reason, the most luminous rational intellectuality is not the gnosis. Reason or intellect is only the lower *buddhi*; it is dependent for its action on the percepts of the sense-mind and on the concepts of the mental intelligence. It is not like the gnosis, self-luminous, authentic, making the subject one with the object. There is, indeed, a higher form of the *buddhi* that can be called the intuitive mind or intuitive reason, and this by its intuitions, its inspirations, its swift revelatory vision, its luminous insight and discrimination can do the work of the reason with a higher power, a swifter action, a greater and spontaneous certitude. It acts in a self-light of the truth which does not depend upon the torch-flares of the sense-mind and its limited uncertain percepts; it proceeds not by intelligent but by visional concepts: it is a kind of truth-vision, truth-hearing, truth-memory, direct truth-discernment. This true and authentic intuition must be distinguished from a power of the ordinary mental reason which is too easily confused with it, the power of involved reasoning that reaches its conclusion by a bound and does not need the ordinary steps of the logical mind. The logical reason proceeds pace after pace and tries the sureness of each step like a man who is walking over unsafe ground and has to test by the hesitating touch of his foot each span of soil that he perceives with his eye. But this other supralogical process of the reason is a motion of rapid insight or swift discernment; it proceeds by a stride or leap, like a man who springs from one sure spot to another point of sure footing, — or at least held by him to be sure. He sees the space he covers in one compact and flashing view, but he does not distinguish or measure either by eye or touch its successions, features and circumstances. This movement has something of the sense of power of the intuition, something of its velocity, some appearance of its light and certainty, and we always are apt to take it for the intuition. But our assumption is an error and, if we trust to it, may lead us into grievous blunders.

It is even thought by the intellectualists that the intuition itself is nothing more than this rapid process in which the whole action of the logical mind is swiftly done or perhaps half-consciously or subconsciously done, not deliberately worked out in its reasoned method. In its nature, however, this proceeding is quite different from the intuition and it is not necessarily a truth-movement. The power of its leap may end in a stumble, its swiftness may betray, its certainty is too often a confident error. The validity of its conclusions must always depend on a subsequent verification or support from the evidence of the sense-perceptions or a rational linking of intelligent conceptions must intervene to explain to it its own certitudes. This lower light may indeed receive very readily a mixture of actual intuition into it and then a pseudo-intuitive or half-intuitive mind is created, very misleading by its frequent luminous successes palliating a whirl of intensely self-assured false certitudes. The true intuition on the contrary carries in itself its own guarantee of truth; it is sure and infallible within its limits. And so long as it is pure intuition and does not admit into itself any mixture of sense-error or intellectual ideation, it is never contradicted by experience: the intuition may be verified by the reason or the sense-perception afterwards, but its truth does not depend on that verification, it is assured by an automatic self-evidence. If the reason depending on its inferences contradicts the greater light, it will be found in the end on ampler knowledge that the intuitional conclusion was correct and that the more plausible rational and inferential conclusion was an error. For the true intuition proceeds from the self-existent truth of things and is secured by that self-existent truth and not by any indirect, derivatory or dependent method of arriving at knowledge.

But even the intuitive reason is not the gnosis; it is only an edge of light of the supermind finding its way by flashes of illumination into the mentality like lightnings in dim and cloudy places. Its inspirations, revelations, intuitions, self-luminous discernings are messages from a higher knowledge-plane that make their way opportunely into our lower level of consciousness. The very character of the intuitive mind sets a gulf of great difference between its action and the action of the self-contained gnosis. In the first place it acts by separate and limited illuminations and its truth is restricted to the often narrow reach or the one brief spot of knowledge lit up by that one lightning-flash with which its intervention begins and terminates. We see the action of the instinct in animals, — an automatic intuition in that vital or sense-mind which is the highest and surest instrument that the animal has to rely on, since it does not possess the human light of the reason, only a cruder and yet ill-formed intelligence. And we can observe at once that the marvellous truth of this instinct which seems so much surer than the reason, is limited in the bird, beast or insect to some particular and restricted utility it is admitted to serve. When the vital mind of the animal tries to act beyond that restricted limit, it blunders in a much blinder way than the reason of man and has to learn with difficulty by a succession of sense-experiences. The higher mental intuition of the human being is an inner visional, not a sense intuition; for it illumines the intelligence and not the sense-mind, it is self-conscious and luminous, not a half-subconscious blind light: it is freely self-acting, not mechanically automatic. But still, even when it is not marred by the imitative pseudo-intuition, it is restricted in man like the instinct in the animal, restricted to a particular purpose of will or knowledge as is the instinct to a particular life utility or Nature purpose. And when the intelligence, as is its almost invariable habit, tries to make use of it, to apply it, to add to it, it builds round the intuitive nucleus in its own characteristic fashion a mass of mixed truth and error. More often than not, by foisting an element of sense-error and conceptual error into the very substance of the intuition or by coating it up in mental additions and deviations, it not merely deflects but deforms its truth and converts it into a falsehood. At the best therefore the intuition gives us only a limited, though an intense light; at the worst, through our misuse of it or false imitations of it, it may lead us into perplexities and confusions which the less ambitious intellectual reason avoids by remaining satisfied with its own safe and plodding method, — safe for the inferior purposes of the reason, though never a satisfying guide to the inner truth of things.

It is possible to cultivate and extend the use of the intuitive mind in proportion as we rely less predominantly upon the reasoning intelligence. We may train our mentality not to seize, as it does now, upon every separate flash of intuitive illumination for its own inferior purposes, not to precipitate our thought at once into a crystallising intellectual action around it; we can train it to think in a stream of successive and connected intuitions, to pour light upon light in a brilliant and triumphant series. We shall succeed in this difficult change in proportion as we purify the interfering intelligence, — if we can reduce in it the element of material thought enslaved to the external appearances of things, the element of vital thought enslaved to the wishes, desires, impulses of the lower nature, the element of intellectual thought enslaved to our preferred, already settled or congenial ideas, conceptions, opinions, fixed operations of intelligence, if, having reduced to a minimum those elements, we can replace them by an intuitive vision and sense of things, an intuitive insight into appearances, an intuitive will, an intuitive ideation. This is hard enough for our consciousness naturally bound by the triple tie of mentality, vitality, corporeality to its own imperfection and ignorance, the upper, middle and lower cord in the Vedic parable of the soul's bondage, cords of the mixed truth and falsehood of appearances by which Shunahshepa was bound to the post of sacrifice.

But even if this difficult thing were perfectly accomplished, still the intuition would not be the gnosis; it would only be its thin prolongation into mind or its sharp edge of first entrance. The difference, not easy to define except by symbols, may be expressed if we take the Vedic image in which the Sun represents the gnosis and the sky, mid-air and earth the mentality, vitality, physicality of man and of the universe. Living on the earth, climbing into the mid-air or even winging in the sky, the mental being, the *manomaya* Purusha, would still live in the rays of the sun and not in its bodily light. And in those rays he would see things not as they are, but as reflected in his organ of vision, deformed by its faults or limited in their truth by its restrictions. But the *vijñānamaya* Purusha lives in the Sun itself, in the very body and blaze of the true light;[1] he knows this light to be his own self-luminous being and he sees besides all that dwells in the rays of the sun, sees the whole truth of the lower triplicity and each thing that is in it. He sees it not by reflection in a mental organ of vision, but with the Sun of gnosis itself as his eye, — for the Sun, says the Veda, is the eye of the gods. The mental being, even in the intuitive mind, can perceive the truth only by a brilliant reflection or limited communication and subject to the restrictions and the inferior capacity of the mental vision; but the supramental being sees it by the gnosis itself, from the very centre and outwelling fount of the truth, in its very form and by its own spontaneous and self-illumining process. For the Vijnana is a direct and divine as opposed to an indirect and human knowledge.

The nature of the gnosis can only be indicated to the intellect by contrasting it with the nature of the intellect, and even then the phrases we must use cannot illuminate unless aided by some amount of actual experience. For what language forged by the reason can express the suprarational? Fundamentally, this is the difference between these two powers that the mental reason proceeds with labour from ignorance to truth, but the gnosis has in itself the direct contact, the immediate vision, the easy and constant possession of the truth and has no need of seeking or any kind of procedure. The reason starts with appearances and labours, never or seldom losing at least a partial dependence on appearances, to arrive at the truth behind them; it shows the truth in the light of the appearances. The gnosis starts from the truth and shows the appearances in the light of the truth; it is itself the body of the truth and its spirit. The reason proceeds by inference, it concludes; but the gnosis proceeds by identity or vision, — it is, sees and knows. As directly as the physical vision sees and grasps the appearance of objects, so and far more directly the gnosis sees and grasps the truth of things. But where the physical sense gets into relation with objects by a veiled contact, the gnosis gets into identity with things by an unveiled oneness. Thus it is able to know all things as a man knows his own existence, simply, convincingly, directly. To the reason only what the senses give is direct knowledge, *pratyakṣa*, the rest of truth is arrived at indirectly; to the gnosis all its truth is direct knowledge, *pratyakṣa*. Therefore the truth gained by the intellect is an acquisition over which there hangs always a certain shadow of doubt, an incompleteness, a surrounding penumbra of night and ignorance or half-knowledge, a possibility of alteration or annullation by farther knowledge. The truth of the gnosis is free from doubt, self-evident, self-existent, irrefragable, absolute.

---

[1] So the Sun is called in the Veda, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*.

The reason has as its first instrument observation general, analytical and synthetic; it aids itself by comparison, contrast and analogy, — proceeds from experience to indirect knowledge by logical processes of deduction, induction, all kinds of inference, — rests upon memory, reaches out beyond itself by imagination, secures itself by judgment: all is a process of groping and seeking. The gnosis does not seek, it possesses. Or if it has to enlighten, it does not even then seek; it reveals, it illumines. In a consciousness transmuted from intelligence to gnosis, imagination would be replaced by truth-inspiration, mental judgment would give place to a self-luminous discerning. The slow and stumbling logical process from reasoning to conclusion would be pushed out by a swift intuitive proceeding; the conclusion or fact would be seen at once in its own right, by its own self-sufficient witness, and all the evidence by which we arrive at it would be seen too at once, along with it, in the same comprehensive figure, not as its evidence, but as its intimate conditions, connections and relations, its constituent parts or its wings of circumstance. Mental and sense observation would be changed into an inner vision using the instruments as channels, but not dependent on them as the mind in us is blind and deaf without the physical senses, and this vision would see not merely the thing, but all its truth, its forces, powers, the eternities within it. Our uncertain memory would fall away and there would come in its place a luminous possession of knowledge, the divine memory that is not a store of acquisition, but holds all things always contained in the consciousness, a memory at once of past, present and future.

For while the reason proceeds from moment to moment of time and loses and acquires and again loses and again acquires, the gnosis dominates time in a one view and perpetual power and links past, present and future in their indivisible connections, in a single continuous map of knowledge, side by side. The gnosis starts from the totality which it immediately possesses; it sees parts, groups and details only in relation to the totality and in one vision with it: the mental reason cannot really see the totality at all and does not know fully any whole except by starting from an analysis and synthesis of its parts, masses and details; otherwise its whole-view is always a vague apprehension or an imperfect comprehension or a confused summary of indistinct features. The reason deals with constituents and processes and properties; it tries in vain to form by them an idea of the thing in itself, its reality, its essence. But the gnosis sees the thing in itself first, penetrates to its original and eternal nature, adjoins its processes and properties only as a self-expression of its nature. The reason dwells in the diversity and is its prisoner: it deals with things separately and treats each as a separate existence, as it deals with sections of Time and divisions of Space; it sees unity only in a sum or by elimination of diversity or as a general conception and a vacant figure. But the gnosis dwells in the unity and knows by it all the nature of the diversities; it starts from the unity and sees diversities only of a unity, not diversities constituting the one, but a unity constituting its own multitudes. The gnostic knowledge, the gnostic sense does not recognise any real division; it does not treat things separately as if they were independent of their true and original oneness. The reason deals with the finite and is helpless before the infinite: it can conceive of it as an indefinite extension in which the finite acts, but the infinite in itself it can with difficulty conceive and cannot at all grasp or penetrate. But the gnosis is, sees and lives in the infinite; it starts always from the infinite and knows finite things only in their relation to the infinite and in the sense of the infinite.

If we would describe the gnosis as it is in its own awareness, not thus imperfectly as it is to us in contrast with our own reason and intelligence, it is hardly possible to speak of it except in figures and symbols. And first we must remember that the gnostic level, Mahat, Vijnana, is not the supreme plane of our consciousness, but a middle or link plane. Interposed between the triune glory of the utter Spirit, the infinite existence, consciousness and bliss of the Eternal and our lower triple being and nature, it is as if it stood there as the mediating, formulated, organising and creative wisdom, power and joy of the Eternal. In the gnosis Sachchidananda gathers up the light of his unseizable existence and pours it out on the soul in the shape and power of a divine knowledge, a divine will and a divine bliss of existence. It is as if infinite light were gathered up into the compact orb of the sun and lavished on all that depends upon the sun in radiances that continue for ever. But the gnosis is not only light, it is force; it is creative knowledge, it is the self-effective truth of the divine Idea. This idea is not creative imagination, not something that constructs in a void, but light and power of eternal substance, truth-light full of truth-force; and it brings out what is latent in being, it does not create a fiction that never was in being. The ideation of the gnosis is radiating light-stuff of the consciousness of the eternal Existence; each ray is a truth. The will in the gnosis is a conscious force of eternal knowledge; it throws the consciousness and substance of being into infallible forms of truth-power, forms that embody the idea and make it faultlessly effective, and it works out each truth-power and each truth-form spontaneously and rightly according to its nature. Because it carries this creative force of the divine Idea, the Sun, the lord and symbol of the gnosis, is described in the Veda as the Light which is the father of all things, Surya Savitri, the Wisdom-Luminous who is the bringer-out into manifest existence. This creation is inspired by the divine delight, the eternal Ananda; it is full of the joy of its own truth and power, it creates in bliss, creates out of bliss, creates that which is blissful. Therefore the world of the gnosis, the supramental world is the true and the happy creation, *ṛtam*, *bhadram*, since all in it shares in the perfect joy that made it. A divine radiance of undeviating knowledge, a divine power of unfaltering will and a divine ease of unstumbling bliss are the nature or Prakriti of the soul in supermind, in *vijñāna*.

The stuff of the gnostic or supramental plane is made of the perfect absolutes of all that is here imperfect and relative and its movement of the reconciled interlockings and happy fusions of all that here are opposites. For behind the appearance of these opposites are their truths and the truths of the Eternal are not in conflict with each other; our mind's and life's opposites transformed in the supermind into their own true spirit link together and are seen as tones and colourings of an eternal Reality and everlasting Ananda. Supermind or Gnosis is the supreme Truth, the supreme Thought, the supreme Word, the supreme Sight, the supreme Will-Idea; it is the inner and outer extension of the Infinite who is beyond Space, the unfettered Time of the Eternal who is timeless, the supernal harmony of all absolutes of the Absolute.

To the envisaging mind there are three powers of the Vijnana. Its supreme power knows and receives into it from above all the infinite existence, consciousness and bliss of the Ishwara;

it is in its highest height the absolute knowledge and force of eternal Sachchidananda. Its second power concentrates the Infinite into a dense luminous consciousness, *caitanyaghana* or *cidghana*, the seed-state of the divine consciousness in which are contained living and concrete all the immutable principles of the divine being and all the inviolable truths of the divine conscious-idea and nature. Its third power brings or looses out these things by the effective ideation, vision, authentic identities of the divine knowledge, movement of the divine will-force, vibration of the divine delight intensities into a universal harmony, an illimitable diversity, a manifold rhythm of their powers, forms and interplay of living consequences. The mental Purusha rising into the *vijñānamaya* must ascend into these three powers. It must turn by conversion of its movements into the movements of the gnosis its mental perception, ideation, will, pleasure into radiances of the divine knowledge, pulsations of the divine will-force, waves and floods of the divine delight-seas. It must convert its conscious stuff of mental nature into the *cidghana* or dense self-luminous consciousness. It must transform its conscious substance into a gnostic self or Truth-self of infinite Sachchidananda. These three movements are described in the Isha Upanishad, the first as *vyūha*, the marshalling of the rays of the Sun of gnosis in the order of the Truth-consciousness, the second as *samūha*, the gathering together of the rays into the body of the Sun of gnosis, the third as the vision of that Sun's fairest form of all in which the soul most intimately possesses its oneness with the infinite Purusha.[2] The Supreme above, in him, around, everywhere and the soul dwelling in the Supreme and one with it, — the infinite power and truth of the Divine concentrated in his own concentrated luminous soul nature, —

---

[2] *Sūrya raśmīn vyūha samūha tejo yat te kalyāṇatamaṁ rūpaṁ tat te paśyāmi yo 'sāv asau puruṣaḥ so 'ham asmi.* The Veda describes the *vijñāna* plane as *ṛtaṁ satyaṁ bṛhat*, the Right, Truth, Vast, the same triple idea differently expressed. *Ṛtam* is the action of the divine knowledge, will and joy in the lines of the truth, the play of the truth-consciousness. *Satyam* is the truth of being which so acts, the dynamic essence of the truth-consciousness. *Bṛhat* is the infinity of Sachchidananda out of which the other two proceed and in which they are founded.

a radiant activity of the divine knowledge, will and joy perfect in the natural action of the Prakriti, — this is the fundamental experience of the mental being transformed and fulfilled and sublimated in the perfection of the gnosis.

Chapter XXIII

The Conditions of Attainment to the Gnosis

KNOWLEDGE is the first principle of the Vijnana, but knowledge is not its only power. The Truth-consciousness, like every other plane, founds itself upon that particular principle which is naturally the key of all its motions; but it is not limited by it, it contains all the other powers of existence. Only the character and working of these other powers is modified and moulded into conformity with its own original and dominant law; intelligence, life, body, will, consciousness, bliss are all luminous, awake, instinct with divine knowledge. This is indeed the process of Purusha-Prakriti everywhere; it is the key-movement of all the hierarchy and graded harmonies of manifested existence.

In the mental being mind-sense or intelligence is the original and dominant principle. The mental being in the mind-world where he is native is in his central and determining nature intelligence; he is a centre of intelligence, a massed movement of intelligence, a receptive and radiating action of intelligence. He has the intelligent sense of his own existence, the intelligent sense of other existence than his own, the intelligent sense of his own nature and activities and the activities of others, the intelligent sense of the nature of things and persons and their relations with himself and each other. That makes up his experience of existence. He has no other knowledge of existence, no knowledge of life and matter except as they make themselves sensible to him and capable of being seized by his mental intelligence; what he does not sense and conceive, is to him practically non-existent, or at least alien to his world and his nature.

Man is in his principle a mental being, but not one living in a mind world, but in a dominantly physical existence; his is a mind cased in Matter and conditioned by Matter. Therefore he has to start with the action of the physical senses which are all channels of material contact; he does not start with the mind-sense. But even so he does not and cannot make free use of anything conveyed by these physical organs until and unless they are taken hold of by the mind-sense and turned into stuff and value of his intelligent being. What is in the lower subhuman submental world a pranic, a nervous, a dynamic action and reaction that proceeds very well without any need of translation into mind-terms or government by mind, has in him to be raised and offered to some kind of intelligence. In order to be characteristically human it has to become first a sense of force, sense of desire, sense of will, sense of intelligent will-action or mentally conscious sense of force-action. His lower delight of being translates itself into a sense of mental or mentalised vital or physical pleasure and its perversion pain, or into a mental or mentalised feeling-sensation of liking and disliking, or into an intelligence of delight and failure of delight, — all phenomena of the intelligent mind-sense. So too that which is above him and that which is around him and in which he lives, — God, the universal being, the cosmic Forces, — are non-existent and unreal to him until his mind awakes to them and gets, not yet their true truth, but some idea, observation, inference, imagination of things supersensuous, some mental sense of the Infinite, some intelligent interpreting consciousness of the forces of the superself above and around him.

All changes when we pass from mind to gnosis; for there a direct inherent knowledge is the central principle. The gnostic (*vijñānamaya*) being is in its character a truth-consciousness, a centre and circumference of the truth-vision of things, a massed movement or subtle body of gnosis. Its action is a self-fulfilling and radiating action of the truth-power of things according to the inner law of their deepest truest self and nature. This truth of things at which we must arrive before we can enter into the gnosis, — for in that all exists and from that all originates on the gnostic plane, — is, first of all, a truth of unity, of oneness, but of unity originating diversity, unity in multiplicity and still unity always, an indefeasible oneness. State of gnosis, the condition of *vijñānamaya* being, is impossible without an ample and close self-identification of ourselves with all existence and with all existences, a universal pervasiveness, a universal comprehension or containing, a certain all-in-allness. The gnostic Purusha has normally the consciousness of itself as infinite, normally too the consciousness of containing the world in itself and exceeding it; it is not like the divided mental being normally bound to a consciousness that feels itself contained in the world and a part of it. It follows that a deliverance from the limiting and imprisoning ego is the first elementary step towards the being of the gnosis; for so long as we live in the ego, it is idle to hope for this higher reality, this vast self-consciousness, this true self-knowledge. The least reversion to ego-thought, ego-action, ego-will brings back the consciousness tumbling out of such gnostic Truth as it has attained into the falsehoods of the divided mind-nature. A secure universality of being is the very basis of this luminous higher consciousness. Abandoning all rigid separateness (but getting instead a certain transcendent overlook or independence) we have to feel ourselves one with all things and beings, to identify ourselves with them, to become aware of them as ourselves, to feel their being as our own, to admit their consciousness as part of ours, to contact their energy as intimate to our energy, to learn how to be one self with all. That oneness is not indeed all that is needed, but it is a first condition and without it there is no gnosis.

This universality is impossible to achieve in its completeness so long as we continue to feel ourselves, as we now feel, a consciousness lodged in an individual mind, life and body. There has to be a certain elevation of the Purusha out of the physical and even out of the mental into the *vijñānamaya* body. No longer can the brain nor its corresponding mental "lotus" remain the centre of our thinking, no longer the heart nor its corresponding "lotus" the originating centre of our emotional and sensational being. The conscious centre of our being, our thought, our will and action, even the original force of our sensations and emotions rise out of the body and mind and take a free station above them. No longer have we the sensation of living in the body, but are above it as its lord, possessor or Ishwara and at the same time encompass it with a wider consciousness than that of the imprisoned physical sense. Now we come to realise with a very living force of reality, normal and continuous, what the sages meant when they spoke of the soul carrying the body or when they said that the soul is not in the body, but the body in the soul. It is from above the body and not from the brain that we shall ideate and will; the brain-action will become only a response and movement of the physical machinery to the shock of the thought-force and will-force from above. All will be originated from above; from above, all that corresponds in gnosis to our present mental activity takes place.[1]

But this centre and this action are free, not bound, not dependent on the physical machine, not clamped to a narrow ego-sense. It is not involved in body; it is not shut up in a separated individuality feeling out for clumsy contacts with the world outside or groping inward for its own deeper spirit. For in this great transformation we begin to have a consciousness not shut up in a generating box, but diffused freely and extending self-existently everywhere; there is or may be a centre, but it is a convenience for individual action, not rigid, not constitutive or separative. The very nature of our conscious activities is henceforth universal; one with those of the universal being, it proceeds from universality to a supple and variable individualisation. It has become the awareness of an infinite being who acts always universally though with emphasis on an individual formation of its energies. But this emphasis is differential rather than separative, and this formation is no longer what we now understand by individuality; there is no longer a petty limited constructed person shut up in the formula of his own mechanism. This state of consciousness is so abnormal to our present mode of being that to the rational man who does not possess it it may seem impossible or even a state of alienation; but once possessed it vindicates itself even to the mental intelligence by its greater calm, freedom, light, power, effectivity of will, verifiable truth of ideation and feeling. For this condition begins already on the higher levels of liberated mind, and can therefore be partly sensed and understood by mind-intelligence, but it rises to perfect self-possession only when it leaves behind the mental levels, only in the supramental gnosis.

---

[1] Many, if not all, of these conditions of the gnostic change can and indeed have to be attained long before we reach the gnosis, — but imperfectly at first as if by a reflection, — in higher mind itself, and more completely in what we may call an overmind consciousness between mentality and gnosis.

In this state of consciousness the infinite becomes to us the primal, the actual reality, the one thing immediately and sensibly true. It becomes impossible for us to think of or realise the finite apart from our fundamental sense of the infinite, in which alone the finite can live, can form itself, can have any reality or duration. So long as this finite mind and body are to our consciousness the first fact of our existence and the foundation of all our thinking, feeling and willing and so long as things finite are the normal reality from which we can rise occasionally, or even frequently, to an idea and sense of the infinite, we are still very far away from the gnosis. In the plane of the gnosis the infinite is at once our normal consciousness of being, its first fact, our sensible substance. It is very concretely to us there the foundation from which everything finite forms itself and its boundless incalculable forces are the origination of all our thought, will and delight. But this infinite is not only an infinite of pervasion or of extension in which everything forms and happens. Behind that immeasurable extension the gnostic consciousness is always aware of a spaceless inner infinite. It is through this double infinite that we shall arrive at the essential being of Sachchidananda, the highest self of our own being and the totality of our cosmic existence. There is opened to us an illimitable existence which we feel as if it were an infinity above us to which we attempt to rise and an infinity around us into which we strive to dissolve our separate existence. Afterwards we widen into it and rise into it; we break out of the ego into its largeness and are that for ever. If this liberation is achieved, its power can take, if so we will, increasing possession of our lower being also until even our lowest and perversest activities are refashioned into the truth of the Vijnana.

This is the basis, this sense of the infinite and possession by the infinite, and only when it is achieved, can we progress towards some normality of the supramental ideation, perception, sense, identity, awareness. For even this sense of the infinite is only a first foundation and much more has to be done before the consciousness can become dynamically gnostic. The supramental knowledge is the play of a supreme light; there are many other lights, other levels of knowledge higher than human mind which can open in us and receive or reflect something of that effulgence even before we rise into the gnosis. But to command or wholly possess it we must first enter into and become the being of the supreme light, our consciousness must be transformed into that consciousness, its principle and power of self-awareness and all-awareness by identity must be the very stuff of our existence. For our means and ways of knowledge and action must necessarily be according to the nature of our consciousness and it is the consciousness that must radically change if we are to command and not only be occasionally visited by that higher power of knowledge. But it is not confined to a higher thought or the action of a sort of divine reason. It takes up all our present means of knowledge immensely extended, active and effective where they are now debarred, blind, infructuous, and turns them into a high and intense perceptive activity of the Vijnana. Thus it takes up our sense action and illumines it even in its ordinary field so that we get a true sense of things. But also it enables the mind-sense to have a direct perception of the inner as well as the outer phenomenon, to feel and receive or perceive, for instance, the thoughts, feelings, sensations, the nervous reactions of the object on which it is turned.[2] It uses the subtle senses as well as the physical and saves them from their errors. It gives us the knowledge, the experience of planes of existence other than the material to which our ordinary mentality is ignorantly attached and it enlarges the world for us. It transforms similarly the sensations and gives them their full intensity as well as their full holding-power; for in our normal mentality the full intensity is impossible because the power to hold and sustain vibrations beyond a certain point is denied to it, mind and body would both break under the shock or the prolonged strain. It takes up too the element of knowledge in our feelings and emotions, — for our feelings too contain a power of knowledge and a power of effectuation which we do not recognise and do not properly develop, — and delivers them at the same time from their limitations and from their errors and perversions. For in all things the gnosis is the Truth, the Right, the highest Law, *devānām adabdhāni vratāni*.

---

[2] This power, says Patanjali, comes by "*saṁyama*" on an object. That is for the mentality, in the gnosis there is no need of *saṁyama*. For this kind of perception is the natural action of the Vijnana.

Knowledge and Force or Will — for all conscious force is will — are the twin sides of the action of consciousness. In our mentality they are divided. The idea comes first, the will comes stumbling after it or rebels against it or is used as its imperfect tool with imperfect results; or else the will starts up first with a blind or half-seeing idea in it and works out something in confusion of which we get the right understanding afterwards. There is no oneness, no full understanding between these powers in us; or else there is no perfect correspondence of initiation with effectuation. Nor is the individual will in harmony with the universal; it tries to reach beyond it or falls short of it or deviates from and strives against it. It knows not the times and seasons of the Truth, nor its degrees and measures. The Vijnana takes up the will and puts it first into harmony and then into oneness with the truth of the supramental knowledge. In this knowledge the idea in the individual is one with the idea in the universal, because both are brought back to the truth of the supreme Knowledge and the transcendent Will. The gnosis takes up not only our intelligent will, but our wishes, desires, even what we call the lower desires, the instincts, the impulses, the reachings out of sense and sensation and it transforms them. They cease to be wishes and desires, because they cease first to be personal and then cease to be that struggling after the ungrasped which we mean by craving and desire. No longer blind or half-blind reachings out of the instinctive or intelligent mentality, they are transformed into a various action of the Truth-will; and that will acts with an inherent knowledge of the right measures of its decreed action and therefore with an effectivity unknown to our mental willing. Therefore too in the action of the *vijñānamaya* will there is no place for sin; for all sin is an error of the will, a desire and act of the Ignorance.

When desire ceases entirely, grief and all inner suffering also cease. The Vijnana takes up not only our parts of knowledge and will, but our parts of affection and delight and changes them into action of the divine Ananda. For if knowledge and force are the twin sides or powers of the action of consciousness, delight, Ananda — which is something higher than what we call pleasure — is the very stuff of consciousness and the natural result of the interaction of knowledge and will, force and self-awareness. Both pleasure and pain, both joy and grief are deformations caused by the disturbance of harmony between our consciousness and the force it applies, between our knowledge and will, a breaking up of their oneness by a descent to a lower plane in which they are limited, divided in themselves, restrained from their full and proper action, at odds with other-force, other-consciousness, other-knowledge, other-will. The Vijnana sets this to rights by the power of its truth and a wholesale restoration to oneness and harmony, to the Right and the highest Law. It takes up all our emotions and turns them into various forms of love and delight, even our hatreds, repulsions, causes of suffering. It finds out or reveals the meaning they missed and by missing it became the perversions they are; it restores our whole nature to the eternal Good. It deals similarly with our perceptions and sensations and reveals all the delight that they seek, but in its truth, not in any perversion and wrong seeking and wrong reception; it teaches even our lower impulses to lay hold on the Divine and Infinite in the appearances after which they run. All this is done not in the values of the lower being, but by a lifting up of the mental, vital, material into the inalienable purity, the natural intensity, the continual ecstasy, one yet manifold, of the divine Ananda.

Thus the being of Vijnana is in all its activities a play of perfected knowledge-power, will-power, delight-power, raised to a higher than the mental, vital and bodily level. All-pervasive, universalised, freed from egoistic personality and individuality, it is the play of a higher Self, a higher consciousness and therefore a higher force and higher delight of being. All that acts in the Vijnana in the purity, in the right, in the truth of the superior or divine Prakriti. Its powers may often seem to be what are called in ordinary Yogic parlance siddhis, by the Europeans occult powers, shunned and dreaded by devotees and by many Yogins as snares, stumbling-blocks, diversions from the true seeking after the Divine. But they have that character and are dangerous here because they are sought in the lower being, abnormally, by the ego for an egoistic satisfaction. In the Vijnana they are neither occult nor siddhis, but the open, unforced and normal play of its nature. The Vijnana is the Truth-power and Truth-action of the divine Being in its divine identities, and, when this acts through the individual lifted to the gnostic plane, it fulfils itself unperverted, without fault or egoistic reaction, without diversion from the possession of the Divine. There the individual is no longer the ego, but the free Jiva domiciled in the higher divine nature of which he is a portion, *parā prakṛtir jīvabhūtā*, the nature of the supreme and universal Self seen indeed in the play of multiple individuality but without the veil of ignorance, with self-knowledge, in its multiple oneness, in the truth of its divine Shakti.

In the Vijnana the right relation and action of Purusha and Prakriti are found, because there they become unified and the Divine is no longer veiled in Maya. All is his action. The Jiva no longer says "I think, I act, I desire, I feel"; he does not even say like the sadhaka striving after unity but before he has reached it, "As appointed by Thee seated in my heart, I act." For the heart, the centre of the mental consciousness is no longer the centre of origination but only a blissful channel. He is rather aware of the Divine seated above, lord of all, *adhiṣṭhita*, as well as acting within him. And seated himself in that higher being, *parārdhe*, *paramasyāṁ parāvati*, he can say truly and boldly, "God himself by his Prakriti knows, acts, loves, takes delight through my individuality and its figures and fulfils there in its higher and divine measures the multiple *līlā* which the Infinite for ever plays in the universality which is himself for ever."

Chapter XXIV

Gnosis and Ananda

THE ASCENT to the gnosis, the possession of something of the gnostic consciousness must elevate the soul of man and sublimate his life in the world into a glory of light and power and bliss and infinity that can seem in comparison with the lame action and limited realisations of our present mental and physical existence the very status and dynamis of a perfection final and absolute. And it is a true perfection, such as nothing before it has yet been in the ascension of the spirit. For even the highest spiritual realisation on the plane of mentality has in it something top-heavy, one-sided and exclusive; even the widest mental spirituality is not wide enough and it is marred too by its imperfect power of self-expression in life. And yet in comparison with what is beyond it, this too, this first gnostic splendour is only a bright passage to a more perfect perfection. It is the secure and shining step from which we can happily mount still upwards into the absolute infinities which are the origin and the goal of the incarnating spirit. In this farther ascension the gnosis does not disappear, but reaches rather its own supreme Light out of which it has descended to mediate between mind and the supreme Infinite.

The Upanishad tells us that after the knowledge-self above the mental is possessed and all the lower selves have been drawn up into it, there is another and last step of all still left to us — though one might ask, is it eternally the last or only the last practically conceivable or at all necessary for us now? — to take up our gnostic existence into the Bliss-Self and there complete the spiritual self-discovery of the divine Infinite. Ananda, a supreme Bliss eternal, far other and higher in its character than the highest human joy or pleasure, is the essential and original nature of the spirit. In Ananda our spirit will find its true self, in Ananda its essential consciousness, in Ananda the absolute power of its existence. The embodied soul's entry into this highest absolute, unlimited, unconditional bliss of the spirit is the infinite liberation and the infinite perfection. It is true that something of this bliss can be enjoyed by reflection, by a qualified descent even on the lower planes where the Purusha plays with his modified and qualified Nature. There can be the experience of a spiritual and boundless Ananda on the plane of matter, on the plane of life, on the plane of mind as well as on the gnostic truth-plane of knowledge and above it. And the Yogin who enters into these lesser realisations, may find them so complete and compelling that he will imagine there is nothing greater, nothing beyond it. For each of the divine principles contains in itself the whole potentiality of all the other six notes of our being; each plane of Nature can have its own perfection of these notes under its own conditions. But the integral perfection can come only by a mounting ascent of the lowest into the highest and an incessant descent of the highest into the lowest till all becomes one at once solid block and plastic sea-stuff of the Truth infinite and eternal.

The very physical consciousness in man, the *annamaya puruṣa*, can without this supreme ascent and integral descent yet reflect and enter into the self of Sachchidananda. It can do it either by a reflection of the Soul in physical Nature, its bliss, power and infinity secret but still present here, or by losing its separate sense of substance and existence in the Self within or without it. The result is a glorified sleep of the physical mind in which the physical being forgets itself in a kind of conscious Nirvana or else moves about like a thing inert in the hands of Nature, *jaḍavat*, like a leaf in the wind, or otherwise a state of pure happy and free irresponsibility of action, *bālavat*, a divine childhood. But this comes without the higher glories of knowledge and delight which belong to the same status upon a more exalted level. It is an inert realisation of Sachchidananda in which there is neither any mastery of the Prakriti by the Purusha nor any sublimation of Nature into her own supreme power, the infinite glories of the Para Shakti. Yet these two, this mastery and this sublimation, are the two gates of perfection, the splendid doors into the supreme Eternal.

The life soul and life consciousness in man, *prāṇamaya puruṣa*, can in the same way directly reflect and enter into the self of Sachchidananda by a large and splendid and blissful reflection of the Soul in universal Life or by losing its separate sense of life and existence in the vast Self within or without it. The result is either a profound state of sheer self-oblivion or else an action driven irresponsibly by the life nature, an exalted enthusiasm of self-abandonment to the great world-energy in its vitalistic dance. The outer being lives in a God-possessed frenzy careless of itself and the world, *unmattavat*, or with an entire disregard whether of the conventions and proprieties of fitting human action or of the harmony and rhythms of a greater Truth. It acts as the unbound vital being, *piśācavat*, the divine maniac or else the divine demoniac. Here too there is no mastery or supreme sublimation of nature. There is only a joyful static possession by the Self within us and an unregulated dynamic possession by the physical and the vital Nature without us.

The mind soul and mind consciousness in man, *manomaya puruṣa*, can in the same direct way reflect and enter into Sachchidananda by a reflection of the Soul as it mirrors itself in the nature of pure universal mind luminous, unwalled, happy, plastic, illimitable, or by absorption in the vast free unconditioned uncentred Self within it and without it. The result is either the immobile cessation of all mind and action or a desire-free unbound action watched by the unparticipating inner Witness. The mental being becomes the eremite soul alone in the world and careless of all human ties or the saint soul that lives in a rapturous God-nearness or felicitous identity and in joyful relations of pure love and ecstasy towards all creatures. The mental being may even realise the Self in all three planes together. Then he is all these things alternately, successively or at once. Or he may transform the lower forms into manifestations of the higher state; he may draw upward the childlikeness or the inert irresponsibility of the free physical mind or the free vital mind's divine madness and carelessness of all rules, proprieties, harmonies and colour or disguise with them the ecstasy of the saint or the solitary liberty of the wandering eremite. Here again there is no mastery, no sublimation of the Nature by the soul in the world, but a double possession, by the freedom and delight of the mental-spiritual infinite within and without by the happy, natural and unregulated play of the mind-Nature. But since the mental being is capable of receiving the gnosis in a way in which the life soul and physical soul cannot receive it, since he can accept it with knowledge though only the limited knowledge of a mental response, he may to a certain extent govern by its light his outer action or, if not that, at least bathe and purify in it his will and his thinkings. But Mind can arrive only at a compromise between the infinite within and the finite nature without; it cannot pour the infinity of the inner being's knowledge and power and bliss with any sense of fullness into its external action which remains always inadequate. Still it is content and free because it is the Lord within who takes up the responsibility of the action adequate or inadequate, assumes its guidance and fixes its consequence.

But the gnostic soul, the *vijñānamaya puruṣa*, is the first to participate not only in the freedom, but in the power and sovereignty of the Eternal. For it receives the fullness, it has the sense of plenitude of the Godhead in its action; it shares the free, splendid and royal march of the Infinite, is a vessel of the original knowledge, the immaculate power, the inviolable bliss, transmutes all life into the eternal Light and the eternal Fire and the eternal Wine of the nectar. It possesses the infinite of the Self and it possesses the infinite of Nature. It does not so much lose as find its nature self in the self of the Infinite. On the other planes to which the mental being has easier access, man finds God in himself and himself in God; he becomes divine in essence rather than in person or nature. In the gnosis, even the mentalised gnosis, the Divine Eternal possesses, changes and stamps the human symbol, envelops and partly finds himself in the person and nature. The mental being at most receives or reflects that which is true, divine and eternal; the gnostic soul reaches a true identity, possesses the spirit and power of the truth-Nature. In the gnosis the dualism of Purusha and Prakriti, Soul and Nature, two separate powers complementary to each other, the great truth of the Sankhyas founded on the practical truth of our present natural existence, disappears in their biune entity, the dynamic mystery of the occult Supreme. The Truth-being is the Hara-Gauri[1] of the Indian iconological symbol; it is the double Power masculine-feminine born from and supported by the supreme Shakti of the Supreme.

Therefore the truth-soul does not arrive at self-oblivion in the Infinite; it comes to an eternal self-possession in the Infinite. Its action is not irregular; it is a perfect control in an infinite freedom. In the lower planes the soul is naturally subject to Nature and the regulating principle is found in the lower nature; all regulation there depends on the acceptance of a strict subjection to the law of the finite. If the soul on these planes withdraws from that law into the liberty of the infinite, it loses its natural centre and becomes centreless in a cosmic infinitude; it forfeits the living harmonic principle by which its external being was till then regulated and it finds no other. The personal nature or what is left of it merely continues mechanically for a while its past movements, or it dances in the gusts and falls of the universal energy that acts on the individual system rather than in that system, or it strays in the wild steps of an irresponsible ecstasy, or it remains inert and abandoned by the breath of the Spirit that was within it. If on the other hand the soul moves in its impulse of freedom towards the discovery of another and divine centre of control through which the Infinite can consciously govern its own action in the individual, it is moving towards the gnosis where that centre pre-exists, the centre of an eternal harmony and order. It is when he ascends above mind and life to the gnosis that the Purusha becomes the master of his own nature because subject only to supreme Nature. For there force or will is the exact counterpart, the perfect dynamis of the divine knowledge. And that knowledge is not merely the eye of the Witness, it is the immanent and compelling gaze of the Ishwara. Its luminous governing power, a power not to be hedged in or denied, imposes its self-expressive force on all the action and makes true and radiant and authentic and inevitable every movement and impulse.

---

[1] The biune body of the Lord and his Spouse, Ishwara and Shakti, the right half male, the left half female.

The gnosis does not reject the realisations of the lower planes; for it is not an annihilation or extinction, not a Nirvana but a sublime fulfilment of our manifested Nature. It possesses the first realisations under its own conditions after it has transformed them and made them elements of a divine order. The gnostic soul is the child, but the king-child;[2] here is the royal and eternal childhood whose toys are the worlds and all universal Nature is the miraculous garden of the play that tires never. The gnosis takes up the condition of divine inertia; but this is no longer the inertia of the subject soul driven by Nature like a fallen leaf in the breath of the Lord. It is the happy passivity bearing an unimaginable intensity of action and Ananda of the Nature-Soul at once driven by the bliss of the mastering Purusha and aware of herself as the supreme Shakti above and around him and mastering and carrying him blissfully on her bosom for ever. This biune being of Purusha-Prakriti is as if a flaming Sun and body of divine Light self-carried in its orbit by its own inner consciousness and power at one with the universal, at one with a supreme Transcendence. Its madness is a wise madness of Ananda, the incalculable ecstasy of a supreme consciousness and power vibrating with an infinite sense of freedom and intensity in its divine life-movements. Its action is supra-rational and therefore to the rational mind which has not the key it seems a colossal madness. And yet this that seems madness is a wisdom in action that only baffles the mind by the liberty and richness of its contents and the infinite complexity in fundamental simplicity of its motions, it is the very method of the Lord of the worlds, a thing no intellectual interpretation can fathom, — a dance this also, a whirl of mighty energies, but the Master of the dance holds the hands of His energies and keeps them to the rhythmic order, the self-traced harmonic circles of his Rasa-lila. The gnostic soul is not bound any more than the divine demoniac by the petty conventions and proprieties of the normal human life or the narrow rules through which it makes some shift to accommodate itself with the perplexing dualities of the lower nature and tries to guide its steps among the seeming contradictions of the world, to avoid its numberless stumbling-blocks and to foot with gingerly care around its dangers and pitfalls. The gnostic supramental life is abnormal to us because it is free to all the hardihoods and audacious delights of a soul dealing fearlessly and even violently with Nature, but yet is it the very normality of the infinite and all governed by the law of the Truth in its exact unerring process. It obeys the law of a self-possessed Knowledge, Love, Delight in an innumerable Oneness. It seems abnormal only because its rhythm is not measurable by the faltering beats of the mind, but yet it steps in a wonderful and transcendent measure.

---

[2] So Heraclitus, “The kingdom is of the child.”

And what then is the necessity of a still higher step and what difference is there between the soul in gnosis and the soul in the Bliss? There is no essential difference, but yet a difference, because there is a transfer to another consciousness and a certain reversal in position, — for at each step of the ascent from Matter to the highest Existence there is a reversal of consciousness. The soul no longer looks up to something beyond it, but is in it and from it looks down on all that it was before. On all planes indeed the Ananda can be discovered, because everywhere it exists and is the same. Even there is a repetition of the Ananda plane in each lower world of consciousness. But in the lower planes not only is it reached by a sort of dissolution into it of the pure mind or the life-sense or the physical awareness, but it is, as it were, itself diluted by the dissolved form of mind, life or matter, held in the dilution and turned into a poor thinness wonderful to the lower consciousness but not comparable to its true intensities. The gnosis has on the contrary a dense light of essential consciousness[3] in which the intense fullness of the Ananda can be. And when the form of gnosis is dissolved into the Ananda, it is not annulled altogether, but undergoes a natural change by which the soul is carried up into its last and absolute freedom; for it casts itself into the absolute existence of the spirit and is enlarged into its own entirely self-existent bliss infinitudes. The gnosis has the infinite and absolute as the conscious source, accompaniment, condition, standard, field and atmosphere of all its activities, it possesses it as its base, fount, constituent material, indwelling and inspiring Presence; but in its action it seems to stand out from it as its operation, as the rhythmical working of its activities, as a divine Maya[4] or Wisdom-Formation of the Eternal. Gnosis is the divine Knowledge-Will of the divine Consciousness-Force; it is harmonic consciousness and action of Prakriti-Purusha full of the delight of the divine existence. In the Ananda the knowledge goes back from these willed harmonies into pure self-consciousness, the will dissolves into pure transcendent force and both are taken up into the pure delight of the Infinite. The basis of the gnostic existence is the self-stuff and self-form of the Ananda.

---

[3] *cidghana.*

This in the ascension takes place because there is here completed the transition to the absolute unity of which the gnosis is the decisive step, but not the final resting-place. In the gnosis the soul is aware of its infinity and lives in it, yet it lives also in a working centre for the individual play of the Infinite. It realises its identity with all existences, but it keeps a distinction without difference by which it can have also the contact with them in a certain diverseness. This is that distinction for the joy of contact which in the mind becomes not only difference, but in its self-experience division from our other selves, in its spiritual being a sense of loss of self one with us in others and a reaching after the felicity it has forfeited, in life a compromise between egoistic self-absorption and a blind seeking out for the lost oneness. In its infinite consciousness, the gnostic soul creates a sort of voluntary limitation for its own wisdom-purposes; it has even its particular luminous aura of being in which it moves, although beyond that it enters into all things and identifies itself with all being and all existences. In the Ananda all is reversed, the centre disappears. In the bliss nature there is no centre, nor any voluntary or imposed circumference, but all is, all are one equal being, one identical spirit. The bliss soul finds and feels itself everywhere; it has no mansion, is *aniketa*, or has the all for its mansion, or, if it likes, it has all things for its many mansions open to each other for ever. All other selves are entirely its own selves, in action as well as in essence. The joy of contact in diverse oneness becomes altogether the joy of absolute identity in innumerable oneness. Existence is no longer formulated in the terms of the Knowledge, because the known and knowledge and the knower are wholly one self here and, since all possesses all in an intimate identity beyond the closest closeness, there is no need of what we call knowledge. All the consciousness is of the bliss of the Infinite, all power is power of the bliss of the Infinite, all forms and activities are forms and activities of the bliss of the Infinite. In this absolute truth of its being the eternal soul of Ananda lives, here deformed by contrary phenomena, there brought back and transfigured into their reality.

---

[4] Not in the sense of illusion, but in the original Vedic significance of the word Maya. All in the gnostic existence is real, spiritually concrete, eternally verifiable.

The soul lives: it is not abolished, it is not lost in a featureless Indefinite. For on every plane of our existence the same principle holds; the soul may fall asleep in a trance of self-absorption, dwell in an ineffable intensity of God-possession, live in the highest glory of its own plane, — the Anandaloka, Brahmaloka, Vaikuntha, Goloka of various Indian systems, — even turn upon the lower worlds to fill them with its own light and power and beatitude. In the eternal worlds and more and more in all worlds above Mind these states exist in each other. For they are not separate; they are coexistent, even coincident powers of the consciousness of the Absolute. The Divine on the Ananda plane is not incapable of a world-play or self-debarred from any expression of its glories. On the contrary, as the Upanishad insists, the Ananda is the true creative principle. For all takes birth from this divine Bliss;[5] all is pre-existent in it as an absolute truth of existence which the Vijnana brings out and subjects to voluntary limitation by the Idea and the law of the Idea. In the Ananda all law ceases and there is an absolute freedom without binding term or limit. It is superior to all principles and in one and the same motion the enjoyer of all principles; it is free from all gunas and the enjoyer of its own infinite gunas; it is above all forms and the builder and enjoyer of all its self-forms and figures. This unimaginable completeness is what the spirit is, the spirit transcendent and universal, and to be one in bliss with the transcendent and universal spirit is for the soul too to be that and nothing less. Necessarily, since there is on this plane the absolute and the play of absolutes, it is ineffable by any of the conceptions of our mind or by signs of the phenomenal or ideal realities of which mind-conceptions are the figures in our intelligence. These realities are themselves indeed only relative symbols of those ineffable absolutes. The symbol, the expressive reality, may give an idea, a perception, sense, vision, contact even of the thing itself to us, but at last we get beyond it to the thing it symbolises, transcend idea, vision, contact, pierce through the ideal and pass to the real realities, the identical, the supreme, the timeless and eternal, the infinitely infinite.

---

[5] Therefore the world of the Ananda is called the Janaloka, in the double sense of birth and delight.

Our first absorbing impulse when we become inwardly aware of something entirely beyond what we now are and know and are powerfully attracted to it, is to get away from the present actuality and dwell in that higher reality altogether. The extreme form of this attraction when we are drawn to the supreme Existence and the infinite Ananda is the condemnation of the lower and the finite as an illusion and an aspiration to Nirvana in the beyond, — the passion for dissolution, immersion, extinction in the Spirit. But the real dissolution, the true *nirvāṇa* is the release of all that is bindingly characteristic of the lower into the larger being of the Higher, the conscious possession of the living symbol by the living Real. We discover in the end that not only is that higher Reality the cause of all the rest, not only it embraces and exists in all the rest, but as more and more we possess it, all this rest is transformed in our soul-experience into a superior value and becomes the means of a richer expression of the Real, a more many-sided communion with the Infinite, a larger ascent to the Supreme. Finally, we get close to the absolute and its supreme values which are the absolutes of all things. We lose the passion for release, *mumukṣutva*, which till then actuated us, because we are now intimately near to that which is ever free, that which is neither attracted into attachment by what binds us now nor afraid of what to us seems to be bondage. It is only by the loss of the bound soul's exclusive passion for its freedom that there can come an absolute liberation of our nature. The Divine attracts the soul of man to him by various lures; all of them are born of its own relative and imperfect conceptions of bliss; all are its ways of seeking for the Ananda, but, if clung to till the end, miss the inexpressible truth of those surpassing felicities. First in order comes the lure of an earthly reward, a prize of material, intellectual, ethical or other joy in the terrestrial mind and body. A second remoter greater version of the same fruitful error is the hope of a heavenly bliss, far exceeding these earthly rewards; the conception of heaven rises in altitude and purity till it reaches the pure idea of the eternal presence of God or an unending union with the Eternal. And last we get the subtlest of all lures, an escape from these worldly or heavenly joys and from all pains and sorrows, effort and trouble and from all phenomenal things, a Nirvana, a self-dissolution in the Absolute, an Ananda of cessation and ineffable peace. In the end all these toys of the mind have to be transcended. The fear of birth and the desire of escape from birth must entirely fall away from us. For, to repeat the ancient language, the soul that has realised oneness has no sorrow or shrinking; the spirit that has entered into the bliss of the Spirit has nought to fear from anyone or anything whatsoever. Fear, desire and sorrow are diseases of the mind; born of its sense of division and limitation, they cease with the falsehood that begot them. The Ananda is free from these maladies; it is not the monopoly of the ascetic, it is not born from the disgust of existence.

The bliss soul is not bound to birth or to non-birth; it is not driven by desire of the Knowledge or harassed by fear of the Ignorance. The supreme bliss Soul has already the Knowledge and transcends all need of knowledge. Not limited in consciousness by the form and the act, it can play with the manifestation without being imbued with the Ignorance. Already it is taking its part above in the mystery of an eternal manifestation and here, when the time comes, it will descend into birth without being the slave of Ignorance chained to the revolutions of the wheel of Nature. For it knows that the purpose and law of the birth-series is for the soul in the body to rise from plane to plane and substitute always the rule of the higher for the rule of the lower play even down to the material field. The bliss-soul neither disdains to help that ascent from above nor fears to descend down the stairs of God into the material birth and there contribute the power of its own bliss nature to the upward pull of the divine forces. The time for that marvellous hour of the evolving Time-Spirit is not yet come. Man, generally, cannot yet ascend to the bliss nature; he has first to secure himself on the higher mental altitudes, to ascend from them to the gnosis. Still less can he bring down all the Bliss-Power into this terrestrial Nature; he must first cease to be mental man and become superhuman. All he can do now is to receive something of its power into his soul in greater or less degree, by a diminishing transmission through an inferior consciousness; but even that gives him the sense of an ecstasy and an unsurpassable beatitude.

And what will be the bliss nature when it manifests in a new supramental race? The fully evolved soul will be one with all beings in the status and dynamic effects of experience of a bliss-consciousness intense and illimitable. And since love is the effective power and soul-symbol of bliss-oneness he will approach and enter into this oneness by the gate of universal love, a sublimation of human love at first, a divine love afterwards, at its summits a thing of beauty, sweetness and splendour now to us inconceivable. He will be one in bliss-consciousness with all the world-play and its powers and happenings and there will be banished for ever the sorrow and fear, the hunger and pain of our poor and darkened mental and vital and physical existence. He will get that power of the bliss-freedom in which all the conflicting principles of our being shall be unified in their absolute values. All evil shall perforce change itself into good; the universal beauty of the All-beautiful will take possession of its fallen kingdoms; every darkness will be converted into a pregnant glory of light and the discords which the mind creates between Truth and Good and Beauty, Power and Love and Knowledge will disappear on the eternal summit, in the infinite extensions where they are always one.

The Purusha in mind, life and body is divided from Nature and in conflict with her. He labours to control and coerce what he can embody of her by his masculine force and is yet subject to her afflicting dualities and in fact her plaything from top to bottom, beginning to end. In the gnosis he is biune with her, finds as master of his own nature their reconciliation and harmony by their essential oneness even while he accepts an infinite blissful subjection, the condition of his mastery and his liberties, to the Supreme in his sovereign divine Nature. In the tops of the gnosis and in the Ananda he is one with the Prakriti and no longer solely biune with her. There is no longer the baffling play of Nature with the soul in the Ignorance; all is the conscious play of the soul with itself and all its selves and the Supreme and the divine Shakti in its own and the infinite bliss nature. This is the supreme mystery, the highest secret, simple to its own experience, however difficult and complex to our mental conceptions and the effort of our limited intelligence to understand what is beyond it. In the free infinity of the self-delight of Sachchidananda there is a play of the divine Child, a *rāsa līlā* of the infinite Lover and its mystic soul-symbols repeat themselves in characters of beauty and movements and harmonies of delight in a timeless forever.

Chapter XXV

The Higher and the Lower Knowledge

WE HAVE now completed our view of the path of Knowledge and seen to what it leads. First, the end of Yoga of Knowledge is God-possession, it is to possess God and be possessed by him through consciousness, through identification, through reflection of the divine Reality. But not merely in some abstraction away from our present existence, but here also; therefore to possess the Divine in himself, the Divine in the world, the Divine within, the Divine in all things and all beings. It is to possess oneness with God and through that to possess also oneness with the universal, with the cosmos and all existences; therefore to possess the infinite diversity also in the oneness, but on the basis of oneness and not on the basis of division. It is to possess God in his personality and his impersonality; in his purity free from qualities and in his infinite qualities; in time and beyond time; in his action and in his silence; in the finite and in the infinite. It is to possess him not only in pure self, but in all self; not only in self, but in Nature; not only in spirit, but in supermind, mind, life and body; to possess him with the spirit, with the mind, with the vital and the physical consciousness; and it is again for all these to be possessed by him, so that our whole being is one with him, full of him, governed and driven by him. It is, since God is oneness, for our physical consciousness to be one with the soul and the nature of the material universe; for our life, to be one with all life; for our mind, to be one with the universal mind; for our spirit, to be identified with the universal spirit. It is to merge in him in the absolute and find him in all relations.

Secondly, it is to put on the divine being and the divine nature. And since God is Sachchidananda, it is to raise our being into the divine being, our consciousness into the divine consciousness, our energy into the divine energy, our delight of existence into the divine delight of being. And it is not only to lift ourselves into this higher consciousness, but to widen into it in all our being, because it is to be found on all the planes of our existence and in all our members, so that our mental, vital, physical existence shall become full of the divine nature. Our intelligent mentality is to become a play of the divine knowledge-will, our mental soul-life a play of the divine love and delight, our vitality a play of the divine life, our physical being a mould of the divine substance. This God-action in us is to be realised by an opening of ourselves to the divine gnosis and divine Ananda and, in its fullness, by an ascent into and a permanent dwelling in the gnosis and the Ananda. For though we live physically on the material plane and in normal outward-going life the mind and soul are preoccupied with material existence, this externality of our being is not a binding limitation. We can raise our internal consciousness from plane to plane of the relations of Purusha with Prakriti, and even become, instead of the mental being dominated by the physical soul and nature, the gnostic being or the bliss-self and assume the gnostic or the bliss nature. And by this raising of the inner life we can transform our whole outward-going existence; instead of a life dominated by matter we shall then have a life dominated by spirit with all its circumstances moulded and determined by the purity of being, the consciousness infinite even in the finite, the divine energy, the divine joy and bliss of the spirit.

This is the goal; we have seen also what are the essentials of the method. But here we have first to consider briefly one side of the question of method which we have hitherto left untouched. In the system of an integral Yoga the principle must be that all life is a part of the Yoga; but the knowledge which we have been describing seems to be not the knowledge of what is ordinarily understood as life, but of something behind life. There are two kinds of knowledge, that which seeks to understand the apparent phenomenon of existence externally, by an approach from outside, through the intellect, — this is the lower knowledge, the knowledge of the apparent world; secondly, the knowledge which seeks to know the truth of existence from within, in its source and reality, by spiritual realisation. Ordinarily, a sharp distinction is drawn between the two, and it is supposed that when we get to the higher knowledge, the God-knowledge, then the rest, the world-knowledge, becomes of no concern to us: but in reality they are two sides of one seeking. All knowledge is ultimately the knowledge of God, through himself, through Nature, through her works. Mankind has first to seek this knowledge through the external life; for until its mentality is sufficiently developed, spiritual knowledge is not really possible, and in proportion as it is developed, the possibilities of spiritual knowledge become richer and fuller.

Science, art, philosophy, ethics, psychology, the knowledge of man and his past, action itself are means by which we arrive at the knowledge of the workings of God through Nature and through life. At first it is the workings of life and forms of Nature which occupy us, but as we go deeper and deeper and get a completer view and experience, each of these lines brings us face to face with God. Science at its limits, even physical Science, is compelled to perceive in the end the infinite, the universal, the spirit, the divine intelligence and will in the material universe. Still more easily must this be the end with the psychic sciences which deal with the operations of higher and subtler planes and powers of our being and come into contact with the beings and the phenomena of the worlds behind which are unseen, not sensible by our physical organs, but ascertainable by the subtle mind and senses. Art leads to the same end; the aesthetic human being intensely preoccupied with Nature through aesthetic emotion must in the end arrive at spiritual emotion and perceive not only the infinite life, but the infinite presence within her; preoccupied with beauty in the life of man he must in the end come to see the divine, the universal, the spiritual in humanity. Philosophy dealing with the principles of things must come to perceive the Principle of all these principles and investigate its nature, attributes and essential workings. So ethics must eventually perceive that the law of good which it seeks is the law of God and depends on the being and nature of the Master of the law. Psychology leads from the study of mind and the soul in living beings to the perception of the one soul and one mind in all things and beings. The history and study of man like the history and study of Nature lead towards the perception of the eternal and universal Power and Being whose thought and will work out through the cosmic and human evolution. Action itself forces us into contact with the divine Power which works through, uses, overrules our actions. The intellect begins to perceive and understand, the emotions to feel and desire and revere, the will to turn itself to the service of the Divine without whom Nature and man cannot exist or move and by conscious knowledge of whom alone we can arrive at our highest possibilities.

It is here that Yoga steps in. It begins by using knowledge, emotion and action for the possession of the Divine. For Yoga is the conscious and perfect seeking of union with the Divine towards which all the rest was an ignorant and imperfect moving and seeking. At first, then, Yoga separates itself from the action and method of the lower knowledge. For while this lower knowledge approaches God indirectly from outside and never enters his secret dwelling-place, Yoga calls us within and approaches him directly; while that seeks him through the intellect and becomes conscious of him from behind a veil, Yoga seeks him through realisation, lifts the veil and gets the full vision; where that only feels the presence and the influence, Yoga enters into the presence and fills itself with the influence; where that is only aware of the workings and through them gets some glimpse of the Reality, Yoga identifies our inner being with the Reality and sees from that the workings. Therefore the methods of Yoga are different from the methods of the lower knowledge.

The method of Yoga in knowledge must always be a turning of the eye inward and, so far as it looks upon outer things, a penetrating of the surface appearances to get at the one eternal reality within them. The lower knowledge is preoccupied with the appearances and workings; it is the first necessity of the higher to get away from them to the Reality of which they are the appearances and the Being and Power of conscious existence of which they are the workings. It does this by three movements each necessary to each other, by each of which the others become complete, — purification, concentration, identification. The object of purification is to make the whole mental being a clear mirror in which the divine reality can be reflected, a clear vessel and an unobstructing channel into which the divine presence and through which the divine influence can be poured, a subtilised stuff which the divine nature can take possession of, new-shape and use to divine issues. For the mental being at present reflects only the confusions created by the mental and physical view of the world, is a channel only for the disorders of the ignorant lower nature and full of obstructions and impurities which prevent the higher from acting; therefore the whole shape of our being is deformed and imperfect, indocile to the highest influences and turned in its action to ignorant and inferior utilities. It reflects even the world falsely; it is incapable of reflecting the Divine.

Concentration is necessary, first, to turn the whole will and mind from the discursive divagation natural to them, following a dispersed movement of the thoughts, running after many-branching desires, led away in the track of the senses and the outward mental response to phenomena: we have to fix the will and the thought on the eternal and real behind all, and this demands an immense effort, a one-pointed concentration. Secondly, it is necessary in order to break down the veil which is erected by our ordinary mentality between ourselves and the truth; for outer knowledge can be picked up by the way, by ordinary attention and reception, but the inner, hidden and higher truth can only be seized by an absolute concentration of the mind on its object, an absolute concentration of the will to attain it and, once attained, to hold it habitually and securely unite oneself with it. For identification is the condition of complete knowledge and possession; it is the intense result of a habitual purified reflecting of the reality and an entire concentration on it; and it is necessary in order to break down entirely that division and separation of ourselves from the divine being and the eternal reality which is the normal condition of our unregenerated ignorant mentality.

None of these things can be done by the methods of the lower knowledge. It is true that here also they have a preparing action, but up to a certain point and to a certain degree of intensity only, and it is where their action ceases that the action of Yoga takes up our growth into the Divine and finds the means to complete it. All pursuit of knowledge, if not vitiated by a too earthward tendency, tends to refine, to subtilise, to purify the being. In proportion as we become more mental, we attain to a subtler action of our whole nature which becomes more apt to reflect and receive higher thoughts, a purer will, a less physical truth, more inward influences. The power of ethical knowledge and the ethical habit of thought and will to purify is obvious. Philosophy not only purifies the reason and predisposes it to the contact of the universal and the infinite, but tends to stabilise the nature and create the tranquillity of the sage; and tranquillity is a sign of increasing self-mastery and purity. The preoccupation with universal beauty even in its aesthetic forms has an intense power for refining and subtilising the nature, and at its highest it is a great force for purification. Even the scientific habit of mind and the disinterested preoccupation with cosmic law and truth not only refine the reasoning and observing faculty, but have, when not counteracted by other tendencies, a steadying, elevating and purifying influence on the mind and moral nature which has not been sufficiently noticed.

The concentration of the mind and the training of the will towards the reception of the truth and living in the truth is also an evident result, a perpetual necessity of these pursuits; and at the end or in their highest intensities they may and do lead first to an intellectual, then to a reflective perception of the divine Reality which may culminate in a sort of preliminary identification with it. But all this cannot go beyond a certain point. The systematic purification of the whole being for an integral reflection and taking in of the divine reality can only be done by the special methods of Yoga. Its absolute concentration has to take the place of the dispersed concentrations of the lower knowledge; the vague and ineffective identification which is all the lower knowledge can bring, has to be replaced by the complete, intimate, imperative and living union which Yoga brings.

Nevertheless, Yoga does not either in its path or in its attainment exclude and throw away the forms of the lower knowledge, except when it takes the shape of an extreme asceticism or a mysticism altogether intolerant of this other divine mystery of the world-existence. It separates itself from them by the intensity, largeness and height of its objective and the specialisation of its methods to suit its aim; but it not only starts from them, but for a certain part of the way carries them with it and uses them as auxiliaries. Thus it is evident how largely ethical thought and practice, — not so much external as internal conduct, — enter into the preparatory method of Yoga, into its aim at purity. Again the whole method of Yoga is psychological; it might almost be termed the consummate practice of a perfect psychological knowledge. The data of philosophy are the supports from which it begins in the realisation of God through the principles of his being; only it carries the intelligent understanding which is all philosophy gives, into an intensity which carries it beyond thought into vision and beyond understanding into realisation and possession; what philosophy leaves abstract and remote, it brings into a living nearness and spiritual concreteness. The aesthetic and emotional mind and aesthetic forms are used by Yoga as a support for concentration even in the Yoga of knowledge and are, sublimated, the whole means of the Yoga of love and delight, as life and action, sublimated, are the whole means of the Yoga of works. Contemplation of God in Nature, contemplation and service of God in man and in the life of man and of the world in its past, present and future, are equally elements of which the Yoga of knowledge can make use to complete the realisation of God in all things. Only, all is directed to the one aim, directed towards God, filled with the idea of the divine, infinite, universal existence so that the outward-going, sensuous, pragmatical preoccupation of the lower knowledge with phenomena and forms is replaced by the one divine preoccupation. After attainment the same character remains. The Yogin continues to know and see God in the finite and be a channel of God-consciousness and God-action in the world; therefore the knowledge of the world and the enlarging and uplifting of all that appertains to life comes within his scope. Only, in all he sees God, sees the supreme reality, and his motive of work is to help mankind towards the knowledge of God and the possession of the supreme reality. He sees God through the data of science, God through the conclusions of philosophy, God through the forms of Beauty and the forms of Good, God in all the activities of life, God in the past of the world and its effects, in the present and its tendencies, in the future and its great progression. Into any or all of these he can bring his illumined vision and his liberated power of the spirit. The lower knowledge has been the step from which he has risen to the higher; the higher illumines for him the lower and makes it part of itself, even if only its lower fringe and most external radiation.

Chapter XXVI

Samadhi

INTIMATELY connected with the aim of the Yoga of Knowledge which must always be the growth, the ascent or the withdrawal into a higher or a divine consciousness not now normal to us, is the importance attached to the phenomenon of Yogic trance, to Samadhi. It is supposed that there are states of being which can only be gained in trance; that especially is to be desired in which all action of awareness is abolished and there is no consciousness at all except the pure supramental immersion in immobile, timeless and infinite being. By passing away in this trance the soul departs into the silence of the highest Nirvana without possibility of return into any illusory or inferior state of existence. Samadhi is not so all-important in the Yoga of devotion, but it still has its place there as the swoon of being into which the ecstasy of divine love casts the soul. To enter into it is the supreme step of the ladder of Yogic practice in Rajayoga and Hathayoga. What then is the nature of Samadhi or the utility of its trance in an integral Yoga? It is evident that where our objective includes the possession of the Divine in life, a state of cessation of life cannot be the last consummating step or the highest desirable condition: Yogic trance cannot be an aim, as in so many Yogic systems, but only a means, and a means not of escape from the waking existence, but to enlarge and raise the whole seeing, living and active consciousness.

The importance of Samadhi rests upon the truth which modern knowledge is rediscovering, but which has never been lost in Indian psychology, that only a small part whether of world-being or of our own being comes into our ken or into our action. The rest is hidden behind in subliminal reaches of being which descend into the profoundest depths of the subconscient and rise to highest peaks of superconscience, or which surround the little field of our waking self with a wide circumconscient existence of which our mind and sense catch only a few indications. The old Indian psychology expressed this fact by dividing consciousness into three provinces, waking state, dream-state, sleep-state, *jāgrat*, *svapna*, *suṣupti*; and it supposed in the human being a waking self, a dream-self, a sleep-self, with the supreme or absolute self of being, the fourth or Turiya, beyond, of which all these are derivations for the enjoyment of relative experience in the world.

If we examine the phraseology of the old books, we shall find that the waking state is the consciousness of the material universe which we normally possess in this embodied existence dominated by the physical mind. The dream-state is a consciousness corresponding to the subtler life-plane and mind-plane behind, which to us, even when we get intimations of them, have not the same concrete reality as the things of the physical existence. The sleep-state is a consciousness corresponding to the supramental plane proper to the gnosis, which is beyond our experience because our causal body or envelope of gnosis is not developed in us, its faculties not active, and therefore we are in relation to that plane in a condition of dreamless sleep. The Turiya beyond is the consciousness of our pure self-existence or our absolute being with which we have no direct relations at all, whatever mental reflections we may receive in our dream or our waking or even, irrecoverably, in our sleep consciousness. This fourfold scale corresponds to the degrees of the ladder of being by which we climb back towards the absolute Divine. Normally therefore we cannot get back from the physical mind to the higher planes or degrees of consciousness without receding from the waking state, without going in and away from it and losing touch with the material world. Hence to those who desire to have the experience of these higher degrees, trance becomes a desirable thing, a means of escape from the limitations of the physical mind and nature.

Samadhi or Yogic trance retires to increasing depths according as it draws farther and farther away from the normal or waking state and enters into degrees of consciousness less and less communicable to the waking mind, less and less ready to receive a summons from the waking world. Beyond a certain point the trance becomes complete and it is then almost or quite impossible to awaken or call back the soul that has receded into them; it can only come back by its own will or at most by a violent shock of physical appeal dangerous to the system owing to the abrupt upheaval of return. There are said to be supreme states of trance in which the soul persisting for too long a time cannot return; for it loses its hold on the cord which binds it to the consciousness of life, and the body is left, maintained indeed in its set position, not dead by dissolution, but incapable of recovering the ensouled life which had inhabited it. Finally, the Yogin acquires at a certain stage of development the power of abandoning his body definitively without the ordinary phenomena of death, by an act of will,[1] or by a process of withdrawing the pranic life-force through the gate of the upward life-current (*udāna*), opening for it a way through the mystic *brahmarandhra* in the head. By departure from life in the state of Samadhi he attains directly to that higher status of being to which he aspires.

In the dream-state itself there are an infinite series of depths; from the lighter recall is easy and the world of the physical senses is at the doors, though for the moment shut out; in the deeper it becomes remote and less able to break in upon the inner absorption, the mind has entered into secure depths of trance. There is a complete difference between Samadhi and normal sleep, between the dream-state of Yoga and the physical state of dream. The latter belongs to the physical mind; in the former the mind proper and subtle is at work liberated from the immixture of the physical mentality. The dreams of the physical mind are an incoherent jumble made up partly of responses to vague touches from the physical world round which the lower mind-faculties disconnected from the will and reason, the *buddhi*, weave a web of wandering phantasy, partly of disordered associations from the brain-memory, partly of reflections from the soul travelling on the mental plane, reflections which are, ordinarily, received without intelligence or coordination, wildly distorted in the reception and mixed up confusedly with the other dream elements, with brain-memories and fantastic responses to any sensory touch from the physical world. In the Yogic dream-state, on the other hand, the mind is in clear possession of itself, though not of the physical world, works coherently and is able to use either its ordinary will and intelligence with a concentrated power or else the higher will and intelligence of the more exalted planes of mind. It withdraws from experience of the outer world, it puts its seals upon the physical senses and their doors of communication with material things; but everything that is proper to itself, thought, reasoning, reflection, vision, it can continue to execute with an increased purity and power of sovereign concentration free from the distractions and unsteadiness of the waking mind. It can use too its will and produce upon itself or upon its environment mental, moral and even physical effects which may continue and have their after consequences on the waking state subsequent to the cessation of the trance.

---

[1] *icchā-mṛtyu.*

To arrive at full possession of the powers of the dream-state, it is necessary first to exclude the attack of the sights, sounds etc. of the outer world upon the physical organs. It is quite possible indeed to be aware in the dream-trance of the outer physical world through the subtle senses which belong to the subtle body; one may be aware of them just so far as one chooses and on a much wider scale than in the waking condition: for the subtle senses have a far more powerful range than the gross physical organs, a range which may be made practically unlimited. But this awareness of the physical world through the subtle senses is something quite different from our normal awareness of it through the physical organs; the latter is incompatible with the settled state of trance, for the pressure of the physical senses breaks the Samadhi and calls back the mind to live in their normal field where alone they have power. But the subtle senses have power both upon their own planes and upon the physical world, though this is to them more remote than their own world of being. In Yoga various devices are used to seal up the doors of the physical sense, some of them physical devices; but the one all-sufficient means is a force of concentration by which the mind is drawn inward to depths where the call of physical things can no longer easily attain to it. A second necessity is to get rid of the intervention of physical sleep. The ordinary habit of the mind when it goes in away from contact with physical things is to fall into the torpor of sleep or its dreams, and therefore when called in for the purposes of Samadhi, it gives or tends to give, at the first chance, by sheer force of habit, not the response demanded, but its usual response of physical slumber. This habit of the mind has to be got rid of; the mind has to learn to be awake in the dream-state, in possession of itself, not with the outgoing, but with an ingathered wakefulness in which, though immersed in itself, it exercises all its powers.

The experiences of the dream-state are infinitely various. For not only has it sovereign possession of the usual mental powers, reasoning, discrimination, will, imagination, and can use them in whatever way, on whatever subject, for whatever purpose it pleases, but it is able to establish connection with all the worlds to which it has natural access or to which it chooses to acquire access, from the physical to the higher mental worlds. This it does by various means open to the subtlety, flexibility and comprehensive movement of this internalised mind liberated from the narrow limitations of the physical outward-going senses. It is able first to take cognizance of all things whether in the material world or upon other planes by aid of perceptible images, not only images of things visible, but of sounds, touch, smell, taste, movement, action, of all that makes itself sensible to the mind and its organs. For the mind in Samadhi has access to the inner space called sometimes the *cidākāśa*, to depths of more and more subtle ether which are heavily curtained from the physical sense by the grosser ether of the material universe, and all things sensible, whether in the material world or any other, create reconstituting vibrations, sensible echoes, reproductions, recurrent images of themselves which that subtler ether receives and retains.

It is this which explains many of the phenomena of clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc.; for these phenomena are only the exceptional admission of the waking mentality into a limited sensitiveness to what might be called the image memory of the subtle ether, by which not only the signs of all things past and present, but even those of things future can be seized; for things future are already accomplished to knowledge and vision on higher planes of mind and their images can be reflected upon mind in the present. But these things which are exceptional to the waking mentality, difficult and to be perceived only by the possession of a special power or else after assiduous training, are natural to the dream-state of trance consciousness in which the subliminal mind is free. And that mind can also take cognizance of things on various planes not only by these sensible images, but by a species of thought perception or of thought reception and impression analogous to that phenomenon of consciousness which in modern psychical science has been given the name of telepathy. But the powers of the dream-state do not end here. It can by a sort of projection of ourselves, in a subtle form of the mental body, actually enter into other planes and worlds or into distant places and scenes of this world, move among them with a sort of bodily presence and bring back the direct experience of their scenes and truths and occurrences. It may even project actually the mental or vital body for the same purpose and travel in it, leaving the physical body in a profoundest trance without sign of life until its return.

The greatest value of the dream-state of Samadhi lies, however, not in these more outward things, but in its power to open up easily higher ranges and powers of thought, emotion, will by which the soul grows in height, range and self-mastery. Especially, withdrawing from the distraction of sensible things, it can, in a perfect power of concentrated self-seclusion, prepare itself by a free reasoning, thought, discrimination, or more intimately, more finally, by an ever deeper vision and identification, for access to the Divine, the supreme Self, the transcendent Truth, both in its principles and powers and manifestations and in its highest original Being. Or it can by an absorbed inner joy and emotion, as in a sealed and secluded chamber of the soul, prepare itself for the delight of union with the divine Beloved, the Master of all bliss, rapture and Ananda.

For the integral Yoga this method of Samadhi may seem to have the disadvantage that when it ceases, the thread is broken and the soul returns into the distraction and imperfection of the outward life, with only such an elevating effect upon that outer life as the general memory of these deeper experiences may produce. But this gulf, this break is not inevitable. In the first place, it is only in the untrained psychic being that the experiences of the trance are a blank to the waking mind; as it becomes the master of its Samadhi, it is able to pass without any gulf of oblivion from the inner to the outer waking. Secondly, when this has been once done, what is attained in the inner state, becomes easier to acquire by the waking consciousness and to turn into the normal experience, powers, mental status of the waking life. The subtle mind which is normally eclipsed by the insistence of the physical being, becomes powerful even in the waking state, until even there the enlarging man is able to live in his several subtle bodies as well as in his physical body, to be aware of them and in them, to use their senses, faculties, powers, to dwell in possession of supraphysical truth, consciousness and experience.

The sleep-state ascends to a higher power of being, beyond thought into pure consciousness, beyond emotion into pure bliss, beyond will into pure mastery; it is the gate of union with the supreme state of Sachchidananda out of which all the activities of the world are born. But here we must take care to avoid the pitfalls of symbolic language. The use of the words dream and sleep for these higher states is nothing but an image drawn from the experience of the normal physical mind with regard to planes in which it is not at home. It is not the truth that the Self in the third status called perfect sleep, *suṣupti*, is in a state of slumber. The sleep self is on the contrary described as Prajna, the Master of Wisdom and Knowledge, Self of the Gnosis, and as Ishwara, the Lord of being. To the physical mind a sleep, it is to our wider and subtler consciousness a greater waking. To the normal mind all that exceeds its normal experience but still comes into its scope, seems a dream; but at the point where it borders on things quite beyond its scope, it can no longer see truth even as in a dream, but passes into the blank incomprehension and non-reception of slumber. This border-line varies with the power of the individual consciousness, with the degree and height of its enlightenment and awakening. The line may be pushed up higher and higher until it may pass even beyond the mind. Normally indeed the human mind cannot be awake, even with the inner waking of trance, on the supramental levels; but this disability can be overcome. Awake on these levels the soul becomes master of the ranges of gnostic thought, gnostic will, gnostic delight, and if it can do this in Samadhi, it may carry its memory of experience and its power of experience over into the waking state. Even on the yet higher level open to us, that of the Ananda, the awakened soul may become similarly possessed of the Bliss-Self both in its concentration and in its cosmic comprehension. But still there may be ranges above from which it can bring back no memory except that which says, "somehow, indescribably, I was in bliss," the bliss of an unconditioned existence beyond all potentiality of expression by thought or description by image or feature. Even the sense of being may disappear in an experience in which the word existence loses its sense and the Buddhistic symbol of Nirvana seems alone and sovereignly justified. However high the power of awakening goes, there seems to be a beyond in which the image of sleep, of *suṣupti*, will still find its application.

Such is the principle of the Yogic trance, Samadhi, — into its complex phenomena we need not now enter. It is sufficient to note its double utility in the integral Yoga. It is true that up to a point difficult to define or delimit almost all that Samadhi can give, can be acquired without recourse to Samadhi. But still there are certain heights of spiritual and psychic experience of which the direct as opposed to a reflecting experience can only be acquired deeply and in its fullness by means of the Yogic trance. And even for that which can be otherwise acquired, it offers a ready means, a facility which becomes more helpful, if not indispensable, the higher and more difficult of access become the planes on which the heightened spiritual experience is sought. Once attained there, it has to be brought as much as possible into the waking consciousness. For in a Yoga which embraces all life completely and without reserve, the full use of Samadhi comes only when its gains can be made the normal possession and experience for an integral waking of the embodied soul in the human being.

Chapter XXVII

Hathayoga

THERE are almost as many ways of arriving at Samadhi as there are different paths of Yoga. Indeed so great is the importance attached to it, not only as a supreme means of arriving at the highest consciousness, but as the very condition and status of that highest consciousness itself, in which alone it can be completely possessed and enjoyed while we are in the body, that certain disciplines of Yoga look as if they were only ways of arriving at Samadhi. All Yoga is in its nature an attempt and an arriving at unity with the Supreme, — unity with the being of the Supreme, unity with the consciousness of the Supreme, unity with the bliss of the Supreme, — or, if we repudiate the idea of absolute unity, at least at some kind of union, even if it be only for the soul to live in one status and periphery of being with the Divine, *sālokya*, or in a sort of indivisible proximity, *sāmīpya*. This can only be gained by rising to a higher level and intensity of consciousness than our ordinary mentality possesses. Samadhi, as we have seen, offers itself as the natural status of such a higher level and greater intensity. It assumes naturally a great importance in the Yoga of knowledge, because there it is the very principle of its method and its object to raise the mental consciousness into a clarity and concentrated power by which it can become entirely aware of, lost in, identified with true being. But there are two great disciplines in which it becomes of an even greater importance. To these two systems, to Rajayoga and Hathayoga, we may as well now turn; for in spite of the wide difference of their methods from that of the path of knowledge, they have this same principle as their final justification. At the same time, it will not be necessary for us to do more than regard the spirit of their gradations in passing; for in a synthetic and integral Yoga they take a secondary importance; their aims have indeed to be included, but their methods can either altogether be dispensed with or used only for a preliminary or else a casual assistance.

Hathayoga is a powerful, but difficult and onerous system whose whole principle of action is founded on an intimate connection between the body and the soul. The body is the key, the body the secret both of bondage and of release, of animal weakness and of divine power, of the obscuration of the mind and soul and of their illumination, of subjection to pain and limitation and of self-mastery, of death and of immortality. The body is not to the Hathayogin a mere mass of living matter, but a mystic bridge between the spiritual and the physical being; one has even seen an ingenious exegete of the Hathayogic discipline explain the Vedantic symbol OM as a figure of this mystic human body. Although, however, he speaks always of the physical body and makes that the basis of his practices, he does not view it with the eye of the anatomist or physiologist, but describes and explains it in language which always looks back to the subtle body behind the physical system. In fact the whole aim of the Hathayogin may be summarised from our point of view, though he would not himself put it in that language, as an attempt by fixed scientific processes to give to the soul in the physical body the power, the light, the purity, the freedom, the ascending scales of spiritual experience which would naturally be open to it, if it dwelt here in the subtle and the developed causal vehicle.

To speak of the processes of Hathayoga as scientific may seem strange to those who associate the idea of science only with the superficial phenomena of the physical universe apart from all that is behind them; but they are equally based on definite experience of laws and their workings and give, when rightly practised, their well-tested results. In fact, Hathayoga is, in its own way, a system of knowledge; but while the proper Yoga of knowledge is a philosophy of being put into spiritual practice, a psychological system, this is a science of being, a psycho-physical system. Both produce physical, psychic and spiritual results; but because they stand at different poles of the same truth, to one the psycho-physical results are of small importance, the pure psychic and spiritual alone matter, and even the pure psychic are only accessories of the spiritual which absorb all the attention; in the other the physical is of immense importance, the psychical a considerable fruit, the spiritual the highest and consummating result, but it seems for a long time a thing postponed and remote, so great and absorbing is the attention which the body demands. It must not be forgotten, however, that both do arrive at the same end. Hathayoga, also, is a path, though by a long, difficult and meticulous movement, *duḥkham āptum*, to the Supreme.

All Yoga proceeds in its method by three principles of practice; first, purification, that is to say, the removal of all aberrations, disorders, obstructions brought about by the mixed and irregular action of the energy of being in our physical, moral and mental system; secondly, concentration, that is to say, the bringing to its full intensity and the mastered and self-directed employment of that energy of being in us for a definite end; thirdly, liberation, that is to say, the release of our being from the narrow and painful knots of the individualised energy in a false and limited play, which at present are the law of our nature. The enjoyment of our liberated being which brings us into unity or union with the Supreme, is the consummation; it is that for which Yoga is done. Three indispensable steps and the high, open and infinite levels to which they mount; and in all its practice Hathayoga keeps these in view.

The two main members of its physical discipline, to which the others are mere accessories, are *āsana*, the habituating of the body to certain attitudes of immobility, and *prāṇāyāma*, the regulated direction and arrestation by exercises of breathing of the vital currents of energy in the body. The physical being is the instrument; but the physical being is made up of two elements, the physical and the vital, the body which is the apparent instrument and the basis, and the life energy, *prāṇa*, which is the power and the real instrument. Both of these instruments are now our masters. We are subject to the body, we are subject to the life energy; it is only in a very limited degree that we can, though souls, though mental beings, at all pose as their masters. We are bound by a poor and limited physical nature, we are bound consequently by a poor and limited life-power which is all that the body can bear or to which it can give scope. Moreover, the action of each and both in us is subject not only to the narrowest limitations, but to a constant impurity, which renews itself every time it is rectified, and to all sorts of disorders, some of which are normal, a violent order, part of our ordinary physical life, others abnormal, its maladies and disturbances. With all this Hathayoga has to deal; all this it has to overcome; and it does it mainly by these two methods, complex and cumbrous in action, but simple in principle and effective.

The Hathayogic system of Asana has at its basis two profound ideas which bring with them many effective implications. The first is that of control by physical immobility, the second is that of power by immobility. The power of physical immobility is as important in Hathayoga as the power of mental immobility in the Yoga of knowledge, and for parallel reasons. To the mind unaccustomed to the deeper truths of our being and nature they would both seem to be a seeking after the listless passivity of inertia. The direct contrary is the truth; for Yogic passivity, whether of mind or body, is a condition of the greatest increase, possession and continence of energy. The normal activity of our minds is for the most part a disordered restlessness, full of waste and rapidly tentative expenditure of energy in which only a little is selected for the workings of the self-mastering will, — waste, be it understood, from this point of view, not that of universal Nature in which what is to us waste, serves the purposes of her economy. The activity of our bodies is a similar restlessness.

It is the sign of a constant inability of the body to hold even the limited life energy that enters into or is generated in it, and consequently of a general dissipation of this Pranic force with a quite subordinate element of ordered and well-economised activity. Moreover in the consequent interchange and balancing between the movement and interaction of the vital energies normally at work in the body and their interchange with those which act upon it from outside, whether the energies of others or of the general Pranic force variously active in the environment, there is a constant precarious balancing and adjustment which may at any moment go wrong. Every obstruction, every defect, every excess, every lesion creates impurities and disorders. Nature manages it all well enough for her own purposes, when left to herself; but the moment the blundering mind and will of the human being interfere with her habits and her vital instincts and intuitions, especially when they create false or artificial habits, a still more precarious order and frequent derangement become the rule of the being. Yet this interference is inevitable, since man lives not for the purposes of the vital Nature in him alone, but for higher purposes which she had not contemplated in her first balance and to which she has with difficulty to adjust her operations. Therefore the first necessity of a greater status or action is to get rid of this disordered restlessness, to still the activity and to regulate it. The Hathayogin has to bring about an abnormal poise of status and action of the body and the life energy, abnormal not in the direction of greater disorder, but of superiority and self-mastery.

The first object of the immobility of the Asana is to get rid of the restlessness imposed on the body and to force it to hold the Pranic energy instead of dissipating and squandering it. The experience in the practice of Asana is not that of a cessation and diminution of energy by inertia, but of a great increase, inpouring, circulation of force. The body, accustomed to work off superfluous energy by movement, is at first ill able to bear this increase and this retained inner action and betrays it by violent tremblings; afterwards it habituates itself and, when the Asana is conquered, then it finds as much ease in the posture, however originally difficult or unusual to it, as in its easiest attitudes sedentary or recumbent. It becomes increasingly capable of holding whatever amount of increased vital energy is brought to bear upon it without needing to spill it out in movement, and this increase is so enormous as to seem illimitable, so that the body of the perfected Hathayogin is capable of feats of endurance, force, unfatigued expenditure of energy of which the normal physical powers of man at their highest would be incapable. For it is not only able to hold and retain this energy, but to bear its possession of the physical system and its more complete movement through it. The life energy, thus occupying and operating in a powerful, unified movement on the tranquil and passive body, freed from the restless balancing between the continent power and the contained, becomes a much greater and more effective force. In fact, it seems then rather to contain and possess and use the body than to be contained, possessed and used by it, — just as the restless active mind seems to seize on and use irregularly and imperfectly whatever spiritual force comes into it, but the tranquillised mind is held, possessed and used by the spiritual force.

The body, thus liberated from itself, purified from many of its disorders and irregularities, becomes, partly by Asana, completely by combined Asana and Pranayama, a perfected instrument. It is freed from its ready liability to fatigue; it acquires an immense power of health; its tendencies of decay, age and death are arrested. The Hathayogin even at an age advanced beyond the ordinary span maintains the unimpaired vigour, health and youth of the life in the body; even the appearance of physical youth is sustained for a longer time. He has a much greater power of longevity, and from his point of view, the body being the instrument, it is a matter of no small importance to preserve it long and to keep it for all that time free from impairing deficiencies. It is to be observed, also, that there are an enormous variety of Asanas in Hathayoga, running in their fullness beyond the number of eighty, some of them of the most complicated and difficult character. This variety serves partly to increase the results already noted, as well as to give a greater freedom and flexibility to the use of the body, but it serves also to alter the relation of the physical energy in the body to the earth energy with which it is related. The lightening of the heavy hold of the latter, of which the overcoming of fatigue is the first sign and the phenomenon of *utthāpana* or partial levitation the last, is one result. The gross body begins to acquire something of the nature of the subtle body and to possess something of its relations with the life-energy; that becomes a greater force more powerfully felt and yet capable of a lighter and freer and more resolvable physical action, powers which culminate in the Hathayogic *siddhis* or extraordinary powers of *garimā*, *mahimā*, *aṇimā* and *laghimā*.

Moreover, the life ceases to be entirely dependent on the action of the physical organs and functionings, such as the heart-beats and the breathing. These can in the end be suspended without cessation of or lesion to the life.

All this, however, the result in its perfection of Asana and Pranayama, is only a basic physical power and freedom. The higher use of Hathayoga depends more intimately on Pranayama. Asana deals more directly with the more material part of the physical totality, though here too it needs the aid of the other; Pranayama, starting from the physical immobility and self-holding which is secured by Asana, deals more directly with the subtler vital parts, the nervous system. This is done by various regulations of the breathing, starting from equality of respiration and inspiration and extending to the most diverse rhythmic regulations of both with an interval of inholding of the breath. In the end the keeping in of the breath, which has first to be done with some effort, and even its cessation become as easy and seem as natural as the constant taking in and throwing out which is its normal action. But the first objects of the Pranayama are to purify the nervous system, to circulate the life-energy through all the nerves without obstruction, disorder or irregularity, and to acquire a complete control of its functionings, so that the mind and will of the soul inhabiting the body may be no longer subject to the body or life or their combined limitations. The power of these exercises of breathing to bring about a purified and unobstructed state of the nervous system is a known and well-established fact of our physiology. It helps also to clear the physical system, but is not entirely effective at first on all its canals and openings; therefore the Hathayogin uses supplementary physical methods for clearing them out regularly of all their accumulations. The combination of these with Asana, — particular Asanas have even an effect in destroying particular diseases, — and with Pranayama maintains perfectly the health of the body. But the principal gain is that by this purification the vital energy can be directed anywhere, to any part of the body and in any way or with any rhythm of its movement.

The mere function of breathing into and out of the lungs is only the most sensible, outward and seizable movement of the Prana, the Breath of Life in our physical system. The Prana has according to Yogic science a fivefold movement pervading all the nervous system and the whole material body and determining all its functionings. The Hathayogin seizes on the outward movement of respiration as a sort of key which opens to him the control of all these five powers of the Prana. He becomes sensibly aware of their inner operations, mentally conscious of his whole physical life and action. He is able to direct the Prana through all the *nāḍīs* or nerve-channels of his system. He becomes aware of its action in the six *cakras* or ganglionic centres of the nervous system, and is able to open it up in each beyond its present limited, habitual and mechanical workings. He gets, in short, a perfect control of the life in the body in its most subtle nervous as well as in its grossest physical aspects, even over that in it which is at present involuntary and out of the reach of our observing consciousness and will. Thus a complete mastery of the body and the life and a free and effective use of them established upon a purification of their workings is founded as a basis for the higher aims of Hathayoga.

All this, however, is still a mere basis, the outward and inward physical conditions of the two instruments used by Hathayoga. There still remains the more important matter of the psychical and spiritual effects to which they can be turned. This depends on the connection between the body and the mind and spirit and between the gross and the subtle body on which the system of Hathayoga takes its stand. Here it comes into line with Rajayoga, and a point is reached at which a transition from the one to the other can be made.

Chapter XXVIII

Rajayoga

AS THE body and the Prana are the key of all the closed doors of the Yoga for the Hathayogin, so is the mind the key in Rajayoga. But since in both the dependence of the mind on the body and the Prana is admitted, in the Hathayoga totally, in the established system of Rajayoga partially, therefore in both systems the practice of Asana and Pranayama is included; but in the one they occupy the whole field, in the other each is limited only to one simple process and in their unison they are intended to serve only a limited and intermediate office. We can easily see how largely man, even though in his being an embodied soul, is in his earthly nature the physical and vital being and how, at first sight at least, his mental activities seem to depend almost entirely on his body and his nervous system. Modern Science and psychology have even held, for a time, this dependence to be in fact an identity; they have tried to establish that there is no such separate entity as mind or soul and that all mental operations are in reality physical functionings. Even otherwise, apart from this untenable hypothesis, the dependence is so exaggerated that it has been supposed to be an altogether binding condition, and any such thing as the control of the vital and bodily functionings by the mind or its power to detach itself from them has long been treated as an error, a morbid state of the mind or a hallucination. Therefore the dependence has remained absolute, and Science neither finds nor seeks for the real key of the dependence and therefore can discover for us no secret of release and mastery.

The psycho-physical science of Yoga does not make this mistake. It seeks for the key, finds it and is able to effect the release; for it takes account of the psychical or mental body behind of which the physical is a sort of reproduction in gross form, and is able to discover thereby secrets of the physical body which do not appear to a purely physical enquiry. This mental or psychical body, which the soul keeps even after death, has also a subtle pranic force in it corresponding to its own subtle nature and substance, — for wherever there is life of any kind, there must be the pranic energy and a substance in which it can work, — and this force is directed through a system of numerous channels, called *nāḍī*, — the subtle nervous organisation of the psychic body, — which are gathered up into six (or really seven) centres called technically lotuses or circles, *cakra*, and which rise in an ascending scale to the summit where there is the thousand-petalled lotus from which all the mental and vital energy flows. Each of these lotuses is the centre and the storing-house of its own particular system of psychological powers, energies and operations, — each system corresponding to a plane of our psychological existence, — and these flow out and return in the stream of the pranic energies as they course through the *nāḍīs*.

This arrangement of the psychic body is reproduced in the physical with the spinal column as a rod and the ganglionic centres as the chakras which rise up from the bottom of the column, where the lowest is attached, to the brain and find their summit in the *brahmarandhra* at the top of the skull. These chakras or lotuses, however, are in physical man closed or only partly open, with the consequence that only such powers and only so much of them are active in him as are sufficient for his ordinary physical life, and so much mind and soul only is at play as will accord with its need. This is the real reason, looked at from the mechanical point of view, why the embodied soul seems so dependent on the bodily and nervous life, — though the dependence is neither so complete nor so real as it seems. The whole energy of the soul is not at play in the physical body and life, the secret powers of mind are not awake in it, the bodily and nervous energies predominate. But all the while the supreme energy is there, asleep; it is said to be coiled up and slumbering like a snake, — therefore it is called the *kuṇḍalinī śakti*, — in the lowest of the chakras, in the *mūlādhāra*. When by Pranayama the division between the upper and lower prana currents in the body is dissolved, this Kundalini is struck and awakened, it uncoils itself and begins to rise upward like a fiery serpent breaking open each lotus as it ascends until the Shakti meets the Purusha in the *brahmarandhra* in a deep samadhi of union.

Put less symbolically, in more philosophical though perhaps less profound language, this means that the real energy of our being is lying asleep and inconscient in the depths of our vital system, and is awakened by the practice of Pranayama. In its expansion it opens up all the centres of our psychological being in which reside the powers and the consciousness of what would now be called perhaps our subliminal self; therefore as each centre of power and consciousness is opened up, we get access to successive psychological planes and are able to put ourselves in communication with the worlds or cosmic states of being which correspond to them; all the psychic powers abnormal to physical man, but natural to the soul develop in us. Finally, at the summit of the ascension, this arising and expanding energy meets with the superconscient self which sits concealed behind and above our physical and mental existence; this meeting leads to a profound samadhi of union in which our waking consciousness loses itself in the superconscient. Thus by the thorough and unremitting practice of Pranayama the Hathayogin attains in his own way the psychic and spiritual results which are pursued through more directly psychical and spiritual methods in other Yogas. The one mental aid which he conjoins with it, is the use of the mantra, sacred syllable, name or mystic formula which is of so much importance in the Indian systems of Yoga and common to them all. This secret of the power of the mantra, the six chakras and the Kundalini Shakti is one of the central truths of all that complex psycho-physical science and practice of which the Tantric philosophy claims to give us a rationale and the most complete compendium of methods. All religions and disciplines in India which use largely the psycho-physical method, depend more or less upon it for their practices.

Rajayoga also uses the Pranayama and for the same principal psychic purposes as the Hathayoga, but being in its whole principle a psychical system, it employs it only as one stage in the series of its practices and to a very limited extent, for three or four large utilities. It does not start with Asana and Pranayama, but insists first on a moral purification of the mentality. This preliminary is of supreme importance; without it the course of the rest of the Rajayoga is likely to be troubled, marred and full of unexpected mental, moral and physical perils.[1] This moral purification is divided in the established system under two heads, five *yamas* and five *niyamas*. The first are rules of moral self-control in conduct such as truth-speaking, abstinence from injury or killing, from theft etc.; but in reality these must be regarded as merely certain main indications of the general need of moral self-control and purity. *Yama* is, more largely, any self-discipline by which the rajasic egoism and its passions and desires in the human being are conquered and quieted into perfect cessation. The object is to create a moral calm, a void of the passions, and so prepare for the death of egoism in the rajasic human being. The *niyamas* are equally a discipline of the mind by regular practices of which the highest is meditation on the divine Being, and their object is to create a sattwic calm, purity and preparation for concentration upon which the secure pursuance of the rest of the Yoga can be founded.

It is here, when this foundation has been secured, that the practice of Asana and Pranayama come in and can then bear their perfect fruits. By itself the control of the mind and moral being only puts our normal consciousness into the right preliminary condition; it cannot bring about that evolution or manifestation of the higher psychic being which is necessary for the greater aims of Yoga. In order to bring about this manifestation the present nodus of the vital and physical body with the mental being has to be loosened and the way made clear for the ascent through the greater psychic being to the union with the superconscient Purusha. This can be done by Pranayama.

---

[1] In modern India people attracted to Yoga, but picking up its processes from books or from persons only slightly acquainted with the matter, often plunge straight into Pranayama of Rajayoga, frequently with disastrous results. Only the very strong in spirit can afford to make mistakes in this path.

Asana is used by the Rajayoga only in its easiest and most natural position, that naturally taken by the body when seated and gathered together, but with the back and head strictly erect and in a straight line, so that there may be no deflection of the spinal cord. The object of the latter rule is obviously connected with the theory of the six chakras and the circulation of the vital energy between the *mūlādhāra* and the *brahmarandhra*. The Rajayogic Pranayama purifies and clears the nervous system; it enables us to circulate the vital energy equally through the body and direct it also where we will according to need, and thus maintain a perfect health and soundness of the body and the vital being; it gives us control of all the five habitual operations of the vital energy in the system and at the same time breaks down the habitual divisions by which only the ordinary mechanical processes of the vitality are possible to the normal life. It opens entirely the six centres of the psycho-physical system and brings into the waking consciousness the power of the awakened Shakti and the light of the unveiled Purusha on each of the ascending planes. Coupled with the use of the mantra it brings the divine energy into the body and prepares for and facilitates that concentration in Samadhi which is the crown of the Rajayogic method.

Rajayogic concentration is divided into four stages; it commences with the drawing both of the mind and senses from outward things, proceeds to the holding of the one object of concentration to the exclusion of all other ideas and mental activities, then to the prolonged absorption of the mind in this object, finally, to the complete ingoing of the consciousness by which it is lost to all outward mental activity in the oneness of Samadhi. The real object of this mental discipline is to draw away the mind from the outward and the mental world into union with the divine Being. Therefore in the first three stages use has to be made of some mental means or support by which the mind, accustomed to run about from object to object, shall fix on one alone, and that one must be something which represents the idea of the Divine. It is usually a name or a form or a mantra by which the thought can be fixed in the sole knowledge or adoration of the Lord. By this concentration on the idea the mind enters from the idea into its reality, into which it sinks silent, absorbed, unified. This is the traditional method. There are, however, others which are equally of a Rajayogic character, since they use the mental and psychical being as key. Some of them are directed rather to the quiescence of the mind than to its immediate absorption, as the discipline by which the mind is simply watched and allowed to exhaust its habit of vagrant thought in a purposeless running from which it feels all sanction, purpose and interest withdrawn, and that, more strenuous and rapidly effective, by which all outward-going thought is excluded and the mind forced to sink into itself where in its absolute quietude it can only reflect the pure Being or pass away into its superconscient existence. The method differs, the object and the result are the same.

Here, it might be supposed, the whole action and aim of Rajayoga must end. For its action is the stilling of the waves of consciousness, its manifold activities, *cittavṛtti*, first, through a habitual replacing of the turbid rajasic activities by the quiet and luminous sattwic, then, by the stilling of all activities; and its object is to enter into silent communion of soul and unity with the Divine. As a matter of fact we find that the system of Rajayoga includes other objects, — such as the practice and use of occult powers, — some of which seem to be unconnected with and even inconsistent with its main purpose. These powers or siddhis are indeed frequently condemned as dangers and distractions which draw away the Yogin from his sole legitimate aim of divine union. On the way, therefore, it would naturally seem as if they ought to be avoided; and once the goal is reached, it would seem that they are then frivolous and superfluous. But Rajayoga is a psychic science and it includes the attainment of all the higher states of consciousness and their powers by which the mental being rises towards the superconscient as well as its ultimate and supreme possibility of union with the Highest. Moreover, the Yogin, while in the body, is not always mentally inactive and sunk in Samadhi, and an account of the powers and states which are possible to him on the higher planes of his being is necessary to the completeness of the science.

These powers and experiences belong, first, to the vital and mental planes above this physical in which we live, and are natural to the soul in the subtle body; as the dependence on the physical body decreases, these abnormal activities become possible and even manifest themselves without being sought for. They can be acquired and fixed by processes which the science gives, and their use then becomes subject to the will; or they can be allowed to develop of themselves and used only when they come, or when the Divine within moves us to use them; or else, even though thus naturally developing and acting, they may be rejected in a single-minded devotion to the one supreme goal of the Yoga. Secondly, there are fuller, greater powers belonging to the supramental planes which are the very powers of the Divine in his spiritual and supramentally ideative being. These cannot be acquired at all securely or integrally by personal effort, but can only come from above, or else can become natural to the man if and when he ascends beyond mind and lives in the spiritual being, power, consciousness and ideation. They then become, not abnormal and laboriously acquired siddhis, but simply the very nature and method of his action, if he still continues to be active in the world-existence.

On the whole, for an integral Yoga the special methods of Rajayoga and Hathayoga may be useful at times in certain stages of the progress, but are not indispensable. It is true that their principal aims must be included in the integrality of the Yoga; but they can be brought about by other means. For the methods of the integral Yoga must be mainly spiritual, and dependence on physical methods or fixed psychic or psycho-physical processes on a large scale would be the substitution of a lower for a higher action. We shall have occasion to touch upon this question later when we come to the final principle of synthesis in method to which our examination of the different Yogas is intended to lead.

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry, c. 1915-1918

Part III

The Yoga of Divine Love

Chapter I

Love and the Triple Path

WILL, KNOWLEDGE and love are the three divine powers in human nature and the life of man, and they point to the three paths by which the human soul rises to the divine. The integrality of them, the union of man with God in all the three, must therefore, as we have seen, be the foundation of an integral Yoga.

Action is the first power of life. Nature begins with force and its works which, once conscious in man, become will and its achievements; therefore it is that by turning his action Godwards the life of man best and most surely begins to become divine. It is the door of first access, the starting-point of the initiation. When the will in him is made one with the divine will and the whole action of the being proceeds from the Divine and is directed towards the Divine, the union in works is perfectly accomplished. But works fulfil themselves in knowledge; all the totality of works, says the Gita, finds its rounded culmination in knowledge, *sarvaṁ karmākhilaṁ jñāne parisamāpyate*. By union in will and works we become one in the omnipresent conscious being from whom all our will and works have their rise and draw their power and in whom they fulfil the round of their energies. And the crown of this union is love; for love is the delight of conscious union with the Being in whom we live, act and move, by whom we exist, for whom alone we learn in the end to act and to be. That is the trinity of our powers, the union of all three in God to which we arrive when we start from works as our way of access and our line of contact.

Knowledge is the foundation of a constant living in the Divine. For consciousness is the foundation of all living and being, and knowledge is the action of the consciousness, the light by which it knows itself and its realities, the power by which, starting from action, we are able to hold the inner results of thought and act in a firm growth of our conscious being until it accomplishes itself, by union, in the infinity of the divine being. The Divine meets us in many aspects and to each of them knowledge is the key, so that by knowledge we enter into and possess the infinite and divine in every way of his being, *sarvabhāvena*,[1] and receive him into us and are possessed by him in every way of ours.

Without knowledge we live blindly in him with the blindness of the power of Nature intent on its works, but forgetful of its source and possessor, undivinely therefore, deprived of the real, the full delight of our being. By knowledge arriving at conscious oneness with that which we know, — for by identity alone can complete and real knowledge exist, — the division is healed and the cause of all our limitation and discord and weakness and discontent is abolished. But knowledge is not complete without works; for the Will in being also is God and not the being or its self-aware silent existence alone, and if works find their culmination in knowledge, knowledge also finds its fulfilment in works. And, here too, love is the crown of knowledge; for love is the delight of union, and unity must be conscious of joy of union to find all the riches of its own delight. Perfect knowledge indeed leads to perfect love, integral knowledge to a rounded and multitudinous richness of love. "He who knows me" says the Gita "as the supreme Purusha," — not only as the immutable oneness, but in the many-souled movement of the divine and as that, superior to both, in which both are divinely held, — "he, because he has the integral knowledge, seeks me by love in every way of his being." This is the trinity of our powers, the union of all three in God to which we arrive when we start from knowledge.

Love is the crown of all being and its way of fulfilment, that by which it rises to all intensity and all fullness and the ecstasy of utter self-finding. For if the Being is in its very nature consciousness and by consciousness we become one with it, therefore by perfect knowledge of it fulfilled in identity, yet is delight the nature of consciousness and of the acme of delight love is the key and the secret. And if will is the power of conscious being by which it fulfils itself and by union in will we become one with the Being in its characteristic infinite power, yet all the works of that power start from delight, live in the delight, have delight for their aim and end; love of the Being in itself and in all of itself that its power of consciousness manifests, is the way to the perfect wideness of the Ananda. Love is the power and passion of the divine self-delight and without love we may get the rapt peace of its infinity, the absorbed silence of the Ananda, but not its absolute depth of richness and fullness. Love leads us from the suffering of division into the bliss of perfect union, but without losing that joy of the act of union which is the soul's greatest discovery and for which the life of the cosmos is a long preparation. Therefore to approach God by love is to prepare oneself for the greatest possible spiritual fulfilment.

---

[1] Gita.

Love fulfilled does not exclude knowledge, but itself brings knowledge; and the completer the knowledge, the richer the possibility of love. "By Bhakti" says the Lord in the Gita "shall a man know Me in all my extent and greatness and as I am in the principles of my being, and when he has known Me in the principles of my being, then he enters into Me." Love without knowledge is a passionate and intense, but blind, crude, often dangerous thing, a great power, but also a stumbling-block; love, limited in knowledge, condemns itself in its fervour and often by its very fervour to narrowness; but love leading to perfect knowledge brings the infinite and absolute union. Such love is not inconsistent with, but rather throws itself with joy into divine works; for it loves God and is one with him in all his being, and therefore in all beings, and to work for the world is then to feel and fulfil multitudinously one's love for God. This is the trinity of our powers, the union of all three in God to which we arrive when we start on our journey by the path of devotion with Love for the Angel of the Way to find in the ecstasy of the divine delight of the All-Lover's being the fulfilment of ours, its secure home and blissful abiding-place and the centre of its universal radiation.

Since then in the union of these three powers lies our base of perfection, the seeker of an integral self-fulfilment in the Divine must avoid or throw away, if he has them at all, the misunderstanding and mutual depreciation which we often find existent between the followers of the three paths. Those who have the cult of knowledge seem often, if not to despise, yet to look downward from their dizzy eminence on the path of the devotee as if it were a thing inferior, ignorant, good only for souls that are not yet ready for the heights of the Truth. It is true that devotion without knowledge is often a thing raw, crude, blind and dangerous, as the errors, crimes, follies of the religious have too often shown. But this is because devotion in them has not found its own path, its own real principle, has not therefore really entered on the path, but is fumbling and feeling after it, is on one of the bypaths that lead to it; and knowledge too at this stage is as imperfect as devotion, dogmatic, schismatic, intolerant, bound up in the narrowness of some single and exclusive principle, even that being usually very imperfectly seized. When the devotee has grasped the power that shall raise him, has really laid hold on love, that in the end purifies and enlarges him as effectively as knowledge can; they are equal powers, though their methods of arriving at the same goal are different. The pride of the philosopher looking down on the passion of the devotee arises, as does all pride, from a certain deficiency of his nature; for the intellect too exclusively developed misses what the heart has to offer. The intellect is not in every way superior to the heart; if it opens more readily doors at which the heart is apt to fumble in vain, it is, itself, apt to miss truths which to the heart are very near and easy to hold. And if when the way of thought deepens into spiritual experience, it arrives readily at the etherial heights, pinnacles, skiey widenesses, it cannot without the aid of the heart fathom the intense and rich abysses and oceanic depths of the divine being and the divine Ananda.

The way of Bhakti is supposed often to be necessarily inferior because it proceeds by worship which belongs to that stage of spiritual experience where there is a difference, an insufficient unity between the human soul and the Divine, because its very principle is love and love means always two, the lover and the beloved, a dualism therefore, while oneness is the highest spiritual experience, and because it seeks after the personal God while the Impersonal is the highest and the eternal truth, if not even the sole Reality. But worship is only the first step on the path of devotion. Where external worship changes into the inner adoration, real Bhakti begins; that deepens into the intensity of divine love; that love leads to the joy of closeness in our relations with the Divine; the joy of closeness passes into the bliss of union. Love too as well as knowledge brings us to a highest oneness and it gives to that oneness its greatest possible depth and intensity. It is true that love returns gladly upon a difference in oneness, by which the oneness itself becomes richer and sweeter. But here we may say that the heart is wiser than the thought, at least than that thought which fixes upon opposite ideas of the Divine and concentrates on one to the exclusion of the other which seems its contrary, but is really its complement and a means of its greatest fulfilment. This is the weakness of the mind that it limits itself by its thoughts, its positive and negative ideas, the aspects of the Divine Reality that it sees, and tends too much to pit one against the other.

Thought in the mind, *vicāra*, the philosophic trend by which mental knowledge approaches the Divine, is apt to lend a greater importance to the abstract over the concrete, to that which is high and remote over that which is intimate and near. It finds a greater truth in the delight of the One in itself, a lesser truth or even a falsehood in the delight of the One in the Many and of the Many in the One, a greater truth in the impersonal and the Nirguna, a lesser truth or a falsehood in the personal and the Saguna. But the Divine is beyond our oppositions of ideas, beyond the logical contradictions we make between his aspects. He is not, we have seen, bound and restricted by exclusive unity; his oneness realises itself in infinite variation and to the joy of that love has the completest key, without therefore missing the joy of the unity. The highest knowledge and highest spiritual experience by knowledge find his oneness as perfect in his various relations with the Many as in his self-absorbed delight. If to thought the Impersonal seems the wider and higher truth, the Personal a narrower experience, the spirit finds both of them to be aspects of a Reality which figures itself in both, and if there is a knowledge of that Reality to which thought arrives by insistence on the infinite Impersonality, there is also a knowledge of it to which love arrives by insistence on the infinite Personality. The spiritual experience of each leads, if followed to the end, to the same ultimate Truth. By Bhakti as by knowledge, as the Gita tells us, we arrive at unity with the Purushottama, the Supreme who contains in himself the impersonal and numberless personalities, the qualitiless and infinite qualities, pure being, consciousness and delight and the endless play of their relations.

The devotee on the other hand tends to look down on the sawdust dryness of mere knowledge. And it is true that philosophy by itself without the rapture of spiritual experience is something as dry as it is clear and cannot give all the satisfaction we seek, that its spiritual experience even, when it has not left its supports of thought and shot up beyond the mind, lives too much in an abstract delight and that what it reaches, is not indeed the void it seems to the passion of the heart, but still has the limitations of the peaks. On the other hand, love itself is not complete without knowledge. The Gita distinguishes between three initial kinds of Bhakti, that which seeks refuge in the Divine from the sorrows of the world, *ārta*, that which, desiring, approaches the Divine as the giver of its good, *arthārthī*, and that which attracted by what it already loves, but does not yet know, yearns to know this divine Unknown, *jijñāsu*; but it gives the palm to the Bhakti that knows. Evidently the intensity of passion which says, "I do not understand, I love," and, loving, cares not to understand, is not love's last self-expression, but its first, nor is it its highest intensity. Rather as knowledge of the Divine grows, delight in the Divine and love of it must increase. Nor can mere rapture be secure without the foundation of knowledge; to live in what we love, gives that security, and to live in it means to be one with it in consciousness, and oneness of consciousness is the perfect condition of knowledge. Knowledge of the Divine gives to love of the Divine its firmest security, opens to it its own widest joy of experience, raises it to its highest pinnacles of outlook.

If the mutual misunderstandings of these two powers are an ignorance, no less so is the tendency of both to look down on the way of works as inferior to their own loftier pitch of spiritual achievement. There is an intensity of love, as there is an intensity of knowledge, to which works seem something outward and distracting. But works are only thus outward and distracting when we have not found oneness of will and consciousness with the Supreme. When once that is found, works become the very power of knowledge and the very outpouring of love. If knowledge is the very state of oneness and love its bliss, divine works are the living power of its light and sweetness. There is a movement of love, as in the aspiration of human love, to separate the lover and the loved in the enjoyment of their exclusive oneness away from the world and from all others, shut up in the nuptial chambers of the heart. That is perhaps an inevitable movement of this path. But still the widest love fulfilled in knowledge sees the world not as something other and hostile to this joy, but as the being of the Beloved and all creatures as his being, and in that vision divine works find their joy and their justification.

This is the knowledge in which an integral Yoga must live. We have to start Godward from the powers of the mind, the intellect, the will, the heart, and in the mind all is limited. Limitations, exclusiveness there can hardly fail to be at the beginning and for a long time on the way. But an integral Yoga will wear these more loosely than more exclusive ways of seeking, and it will sooner emerge from the mental necessity. It may commence with the way of love, as with the way of knowledge or of works; but where they meet, is the beginning of its joy of fulfilment. Love it cannot miss, even if it does not start from it; for love is the crown of works and the flowering of knowledge.

Chapter II

The Motives of Devotion

ALL RELIGION begins with the conception of some Power or existence greater and higher than our limited and mortal selves, a thought and act of worship done to that Power, and an obedience offered to its will, its laws or its demands. But Religion, in its beginnings, sets an immeasurable gulf between the Power thus conceived, worshipped and obeyed and the worshipper. Yoga in its culmination abolishes the gulf; for Yoga is union. We arrive at union with it through knowledge; for as our first obscure conceptions of it clarify, enlarge, deepen, we come to recognise it as our own highest self, the origin and sustainer of our being and that towards which it tends. We arrive at union with it through works; for from simply obeying we come to identify our will with its Will, since only in proportion as it is identified with this Power that is its source and ideal, can our will become perfect and divine. We arrive at union with it also by worship; for the thought and act of a distant worship develops into the necessity of close adoration and this into the intimacy of love, and the consummation of love is union with the Beloved. It is from this development of worship that the Yoga of devotion starts and it is by this union with the Beloved that it finds its highest point and consummation.

All our instincts and the movements of our being begin by supporting themselves on the ordinary motives of our lower human nature, — mixed and egoistic motives at first, but afterwards they purify and elevate themselves, they become an intense and special need of our higher nature quite apart from the results our actions bring with them; finally they exalt themselves into a sort of categorical imperative of our being, and it is through our obedience to this that we arrive at that supreme something self-existent in us which was all the time drawing us towards it, first by the lures of our egoistic nature, then by something much higher, larger, more universal, until we are able to feel its own direct attraction which is the strongest and most imperative of all. In the transformation of ordinary religious worship into the Yoga of pure Bhakti we see this development from the motived and interested worship of popular religion into a principle of motiveless and self-existent love. This last is in fact the touchstone of the real Bhakti and shows whether we are really in the central way or are only upon one of the bypaths leading to it. We have to throw away the props of our weakness, the motives of the ego, the lures of our lower nature before we can deserve the divine union.

Faced with the sense of a Power or perhaps a number of Powers greater and higher than himself by whom his life in Nature is overshadowed, influenced, governed, man naturally applies to it or to them the first primitive feelings of the natural being among the difficulties, desires and dangers of that life, — fear and interest. The enormous part played by these motives in the evolution of the religious instinct, is undeniable, and in fact, man being what he is, it could hardly have been less; and even when religion has advanced fairly far on its road, we see these motives still surviving, active, playing a sufficiently large part, justified and appealed to by Religion herself in support of her claims on man. The fear of God, it is said, — or, it may be added for the sake of historical truth, the fear of the Gods, — is the beginning of religion, a half-truth upon which scientific research, trying to trace the evolution of religion, ordinarily in a critical and often a hostile rather than in a sympathetic spirit, has laid undue emphasis. But not the fear of God only, for man does not act, even most primitively, from fear alone, but from twin motives, fear and desire, fear of things unpleasant and maleficent and desire of things pleasant and beneficent, — therefore from fear and interest. Life to him is primarily and engrossingly, — until he learns to live more in his soul and only secondarily in the action and reaction of outward things, — a series of actions and results, things to be desired, pursued and gained by action and things to be dreaded and shunned, yet which may come upon him as a result of action. And it is not only by his own action but by that also of others and of Nature around him that these things come to him. As soon, then, as he comes to sense a Power behind all this which can influence or determine action and result, he conceives of it as a dispenser of boons and sufferings, able and under certain conditions willing to help him or hurt, save and destroy.

In the most primitive parts of his being he conceives of it as a thing of natural egoistic impulses like himself, beneficent when pleased, maleficent when offended; worship is then a means of propitiation by gifts and a supplication by prayer. He gets God on his side by praying to him and flattering him. With a more advanced mentality, he conceives of the action of life as reposing on a certain principle of divine justice, which he reads always according to his own ideas and character, as a sort of enlarged copy of his human justice; he conceives the idea of moral good and evil and looks upon suffering and calamity and all things unpleasant as a punishment for his sins and upon happiness and good fortune and all things pleasant as a reward of his virtue. God appears to him as a king, judge, legislator, executor of justice. But still regarding him as a sort of magnified Man, he imagines that as his own justice can be deflected by prayers and propitiation, so the divine justice can also be deflected by the same means. Justice is to him reward and punishment, and the justice of punishment can be modified by mercy to the suppliant, while rewards can be supplemented by special favours and kindness such as Power when pleased can always bestow on its adherents and worshippers. Moreover God like ourselves is capable of wrath and revenge, and wrath and revenge can be turned by gifts and supplication and atonement; he is capable too of partiality, and his partiality can be attracted by gifts, by prayer and by praise. Therefore instead of relying solely on the observation of the moral law, worship as prayer and propitiation is still continued.

Along with these motives there arises another development of personal feeling, first of the awe which one naturally feels for something vast, powerful and incalculable beyond our nature by a certain inscrutability in the springs and extent of its action, and of the veneration and adoration which one feels for that which is higher in its nature or its perfection than ourselves. For, even while preserving largely the idea of a God endowed with the qualities of human nature, there still grows up along with it, mixed up with it or superadded, the conception of an omniscience, an omnipotence and a mysterious perfection quite other than our nature. A confused mixture of all these motives, variously developed, often modified, subtilised or glossed over, is what constitutes nine tenths of popular religion; the other tenth is a suffusion of the rest by the percolation into it of nobler, more beautiful and profounder ideas of the Divine which minds of a greater spirituality have been able to bring into the more primitive religious concepts of mankind. The result is usually crude enough and a ready target for the shafts of scepticism and unbelief, — powers of the human mind which have their utility even for faith and religion, since they compel a religion to purify gradually what is crude or false in its conceptions. But what we have to see is how far in purifying and elevating the religious instinct of worship any of these earlier motives need to survive and enter into the Yoga of devotion which itself starts from worship. That depends on how far they correspond to any truth of the divine Being and its relations with the human soul; for we seek by Bhakti union with the Divine and true relation with it, with its truth and not with any mirage of our lower nature and of its egoistic impulses and ignorant conceptions.

The ground on which sceptical unbelief assails Religion, namely, that there is in fact no conscient Power or Being in the universe greater and higher than ourselves or in any way influencing or controlling our existence, is one which Yoga cannot accept, as that would contradict all spiritual experience and make Yoga itself impossible. Yoga is not a matter of theory or dogma, like philosophy or popular religion, but a matter of experience. Its experience is that of a conscient universal and supracosmic Being with whom it brings us into union, and this conscious experience of union with the Invisible, always renewable and verifiable, is as valid as our conscious experience of a physical world and of visible bodies with whose invisible minds we daily communicate. Yoga proceeds by conscious union, the conscious being is its instrument, and a conscious union with the Inconscient cannot be. It is true that it goes beyond the human consciousness and in Samadhi becomes superconscient, but this is not an annullation of our conscious being, it is only its self-exceeding, the going beyond its present level and normal limits.

So far, then, all Yogic experience is agreed. But Religion and the Yoga of Bhakti go farther; they attribute to this Being a Personality and human relations with the human being. In both the human being approaches the Divine by means of his humanity, with human emotions, as he would approach a fellow-being, but with more intense and exalted feelings; and not only so, but the Divine also responds in a manner answering to these emotions. In that possibility of response lies the whole question; for if the Divine is impersonal, featureless and relationless, no such response is possible and all human approach to it becomes an absurdity; we must rather dehumanise, depersonalise, annul ourselves in so far as we are human beings or any kind of beings; on no other conditions and by no other means can we approach it. Love, fear, prayer, praise, worship of an Impersonality which has no relation with us or with anything in the universe and no feature that our minds can lay hold of, are obviously an irrational foolishness. On such terms religion and devotion become out of the question. The Adwaitin in order to find a religious basis for his bare and sterile philosophy, has to admit the practical existence of God and the gods and to delude his mind with the language of Maya. Buddhism only became a popular religion when Buddha had taken the place of the supreme Deity as an object of worship.

Even if the Supreme be capable of relations with us but only of impersonal relations, religion is robbed of its human vitality and the Path of Devotion ceases to be effective or even possible. We may indeed apply our human emotions to it, but in a vague and imprecise fashion, with no hope of a human response: the only way in which it can respond to us, is by stilling our emotions and throwing upon us its own impersonal calm and immutable equality; and this is what in fact happens when we approach the pure impersonality of the Godhead. We can obey it as a Law, lift our souls to it in aspiration towards its tranquil being, grow into it by shedding from us our emotional nature; the human being in us is not satisfied, but it is quieted, balanced, stilled. But the Yoga of devotion, agreeing in this with Religion, insists on a closer and warmer worship than this impersonal aspiration. It aims at a divine fulfilment of the humanity in us as well as of the impersonal part of our being; it aims at a divine satisfaction of the emotional being of man. It demands of the Supreme acceptance of our love and a response in kind; as we delight in Him and seek Him, so it believes that He too delights in us and seeks us. Nor can this demand be condemned as irrational, for if the supreme and universal Being did not take any delight in us, it is not easy to see how we could have come into being or could remain in being, and if He does not at all draw us towards him, — a divine seeking of us, — there would seem to be no reason in Nature why we should turn from the round of our normal existence to seek Him.

Therefore that there may be at all any possibility of a Yoga of devotion, we must assume first that the supreme Existence is not an abstraction or a state of existence, but a conscious Being; secondly, that he meets us in the universe and is in some way immanent in it as well as its source, — otherwise, we should have to go out of cosmic life to meet him; thirdly, that he is capable of personal relations with us and must therefore be not incapable of personality; finally, that when we approach him by our human emotions, we receive a response in kind. This does not mean that the nature of the Divine is precisely the same as our human nature though upon a larger scale, or that it is that nature pure of certain perversions and God a magnified or else an ideal Man. God is not and cannot be an ego limited by his qualities as we are in our normal consciousness. But on the other hand our human consciousness must certainly originate and have been derived from the Divine; though the forms which it takes in us may and must be other than the divine because we are limited by ego, not universal, not superior to our nature, not greater than our qualities and their workings, as he is, still our human emotions and impulses must have behind them a Truth in him of which they are the limited and very often, therefore, the perverse or even the degraded forms. By approaching him through our emotional being we approach that Truth, it comes down to us to meet our emotions and lift them towards it; through it our emotional being is united with him.

Secondly, this supreme Being is also the universal Being and our relations with the universe are all means by which we are prepared for entering into relation with him. All the emotions with which we confront the action of the universal existence upon us, are really directed towards him, in ignorance at first, but it is by directing them in growing knowledge towards him that we enter into more intimate relations with him, and all that is false and ignorant in them will fall away as we draw nearer towards unity. To all of them he answers, taking us in the stage of progress in which we are; for if we met no kind of response or help to our imperfect approach, the more perfect relations could never be established. Even as men approach him, so he accepts them and responds too by the divine Love to their bhakti, *tathaiva bhajate*. Whatever form of being, whatever qualities they lend to him, through that form and those qualities he helps them to develop, encourages or governs their advance and in their straight way or their crooked draws them towards him. What they see of him is a truth, but a truth represented to them in the terms of their own being and consciousness, partially, distortedly, not in the terms of its own higher reality, not in the aspect which it assumes when we become aware of the complete Divinity. This is the justification of the cruder and more primitive elements of religion and also their sentence of transience and passing. They are justified because there is a truth of the Divine behind them and only so could that truth of the Divine be approached in that stage of the developing human consciousness and be helped forward; they are condemned, because to persist always in these crude conceptions and relations with the Divine is to miss that closer union towards which these crude beginnings are the first steps, however faltering.

All life, we have said, is a Yoga of Nature; here in this material world life is her reaching out from her first inconscience towards a return to union with the conscient Divine from whom she proceeded. In religion the mind of man, her accomplished instrument, becomes aware of her goal in him, responds to her aspiration. Even popular religion is a sort of ignorant Yoga of devotion. But it does not become what we specifically call Yoga until the motive becomes in a certain degree clairvoyant, until it sees that union is its object and that love is the principle of union, and until therefore it tries to realise love and lose its separative character in love. When that has been accomplished, then the Yoga has taken its decisive step and is sure of its fruition. Thus the motives of devotion have first to direct themselves engrossingly and predominantly towards the Divine, then to transform themselves so that they are rid of their more earthy elements and finally to take their stand in pure and perfect love. All those that cannot coexist with the perfect union of love, must eventually fall away, while only those that can form themselves into expressions of divine love and into means of enjoying divine love, can remain. For love is the one emotion in us which can be entirely motiveless and self-existent; love need have no other motive than love. For all our emotions arise either from the seeking after delight and the possession of it, or from the baffling of the search, or from the failure of the delight we have possessed or had thought to grasp; but love is that by which we can enter directly into possession of the self-existent delight of the divine Being. Divine love is indeed itself that possession and, as it were, the body of the Ananda.

These are the truths which condition our approach to this Yoga and our journey on this path. There are subsidiary questions which arise and trouble the intellect of man, but, though we may have yet to deal with them they are not essential. Yoga of Bhakti is a matter of the heart and not of the intellect. For even for the knowledge which comes on this way, we set out from the heart and not from the intelligence. The truth of the motives of the heart's devotion and their final arrival and in some sort their disappearance into the supreme and unique self-existent motive of love, is therefore all that initially and essentially concerns us. Such difficult questions there are as whether the Divine has an original supraphysical form or power of form from which all forms proceed or is eternally formless; all we need at present say is that the Divine does at least accept the various forms which the devotee gives to him and through them meets him in love, while the mixing of our spirits with his spirit is essential to the fruition of Bhakti. So too, certain religions and religious philosophies seek to bind down devotion by a conception of an eternal difference between the human soul and the Divine, without which they say love and devotion cannot exist, while that philosophy which considers that One alone exists, consigns love and devotion to a movement in the ignorance, necessary perhaps or at the least useful as a preparatory movement while yet the ignorance lasts, but impossible when all difference is abolished and therefore to be transcended and discarded. We may hold, however, the truth of the one existence in this sense that all in Nature is the Divine even though God be more than all in Nature, and love becomes then a movement by which the Divine in Nature and man takes possession of and enjoys the delight of the universal and the supreme Divine. In any case, love has necessarily a twofold fulfilment by its very nature, that by which the lover and the beloved enjoy their union in difference and all too that enhances the joy of various union, and that by which they throw themselves into each other and become one Self. That truth is quite sufficient to start with, for it is the very nature of love, and since love is the essential motive of this Yoga, as is the whole nature of love, so will be too the crown and fulfilment of the movement of the Yoga.

Chapter III

The Godward Emotions

THE PRINCIPLE of Yoga is to turn Godward all or any of the powers of the human consciousness so that through that activity of the being there may be contact, relation, union. In the Yoga of Bhakti it is the emotional nature that is made the instrument. Its main principle is to adopt some human relation between man and the Divine Being by which through the ever intenser flowing of the heart's emotions towards him the human soul may at last be wedded to and grow one with him in a passion of divine Love. It is not ultimately the pure peace of oneness or the power and desireless will of oneness, but the ecstatic joy of union which the devotee seeks by his Yoga. Every feeling that can make the heart ready for this ecstasy the Yoga admits; everything that detracts from it must increasingly drop away as the strong union of love becomes closer and more perfect.

All the feelings with which religion approaches the worship, service and love of God, the Yoga admits, if not as its final accompaniments, yet as preparatory movements of the emotional nature. But there is one feeling with which the Yoga, at least as practised in India, has very little dealing. In certain religions, in most perhaps, the idea of the fear of God plays a very large part, sometimes the largest, and the Godfearing man is the typical worshipper of these religions. The sentiment of fear is indeed perfectly consistent with devotion of a certain kind and up to a certain point; at its highest it rises into a worship of the divine Power, the divine Justice, divine Law, divine Righteousness, and ethical obedience, an awed reverence for the almighty Creator and Judge. Its motive is therefore ethico-religious and it belongs not so strictly to the devotee, but to the man of works moved by a devotion to the divine ordainer and judge of his works. It regards God as the King and does not approach too near the glory of his throne unless justified by righteousness or led there by a mediator who will turn away the divine wrath for sin. Even when it draws nearest, it keeps an awed distance between itself and the high object of its worship. It cannot embrace the Divine with all the fearless confidence of the child in his mother or of the lover in his beloved or with that intimate sense of oneness which perfect love brings with it.

The origin of this divine fear was crude enough in some of the primitive popular religions. It was the perception of powers in the world greater than man, obscure in their nature and workings, which seemed always ready to strike him down in his prosperity and to smite him for any actions which displeased them. Fear of the gods arose from man's ignorance of God and his ignorance of the laws that govern the world. It attributed to the higher powers caprice and human passion; it made them in the image of the great ones of the earth, capable of whim, tyranny, personal enmity, jealous of any greatness in man which might raise him above the littleness of terrestrial nature and bring him too near to the divine nature. With such notions no real devotion could arise, except that doubtful kind which the weaker may feel for the stronger whose protection he can buy by worship and gifts and propitiation and obedience to such laws as he may have laid upon those beneath him and may enforce by rewards and punishments, or else the submissive and prostrate reverence and adoration which one may feel for a greatness, glory, wisdom, sovereign power which is above the world and is the source or at any rate the regulator of all its laws and happenings.

A nearer approach to the beginnings of the way of devotion becomes possible when this element of divine Power disengages itself from these crudities and fixes on the idea of a divine ruler, creator of the world and master of the Law who governs the earth and heavens and is the guide and helper and saviour of his creatures. This larger and higher idea of the divine Being long kept many elements and still keeps some elements of the old crudity. The Jews who brought it forward most prominently and from whom it overspread a great part of the world, could believe in a God of righteousness who was exclusive, arbitrary, wrathful, jealous, often cruel and even wantonly sanguinary. Even now it is possible for some to believe in a Creator who has made heaven and hell, an eternal hell, the two poles of his creation, and has even according to some religions predestined the souls he has created not only to sin and punishment, but to an eternal damnation. But even apart from these extravagances of a childish religious belief, the idea of the almighty Judge, Legislator, King, is a crude and imperfect idea of the Divine, when taken by itself, because it takes an inferior and an external truth for the main truth and it tends to prevent a higher approach to a more intimate reality. It exaggerates the importance of the sense of sin and thereby prolongs and increases the soul's fear and self-distrust and weakness. It attaches the pursuit of virtue and the shunning of sin to the idea of rewards and punishment, though given in an after life, and makes them dependent on the lower motives of fear and interest instead of the higher spirit which should govern the ethical being. It makes hell and heaven and not the Divine himself the object of the human soul in its religious living. These crudities have served their turn in the slow education of the human mind, but they are of no utility to the Yogin who knows that whatever truth they may represent belongs rather to the external relations of the developing human soul with the external law of the universe than any intimate truth of the inner relations of the human soul with the Divine; but it is these which are the proper field of Yoga.

Still out of this conception there arise certain developments which bring us nearer to the threshold of the Yoga of devotion. First, there can emerge the idea of the Divine as the source and law and aim of our ethical being and from this there can come the knowledge of him as the highest Self to which our active nature aspires, the Will to which we have to assimilate our will, the eternal Right and Purity and Truth and Wisdom into harmony with which our nature has to grow and towards whose being our being is attracted. By this way we arrive at the Yoga of works, and this Yoga has a place for personal devotion to the Divine, for the divine Will appears as the Master of our works to whose voice we must listen, whose divine impulsion we must obey and whose work it is the sole business of our active life and will to do. Secondly, there emerges the idea of the divine Spirit, the father of all who extends his wings of benignant protection and love over all his creatures, and from that grows between the soul and the Divine the relation of father and child, a relation of love, and as a result the relation of brotherhood with our fellow-beings. These relations of the Divine into the calm pure light of whose nature we have to grow and the Master whom we approach through works and service, the Father who responds to the love of the soul that approaches him as the child, are admitted elements of the Yoga of devotion.

The moment we come well into these developments and their deeper spiritual meaning, the motive of the fear of God becomes otiose, superfluous and even impossible. It is of importance chiefly in the ethical field when the soul has not yet grown sufficiently to follow good for its own sake and needs an authority above it whose wrath or whose stern passionless judgment it can fear and found upon that fear its fidelity to virtue. When we grow into spirituality, this motive can no longer remain except by the lingering on of some confusion in the mind, some persistence of the old mentality. Moreover, the ethical aim in Yoga is different from that of the external idea of virtue. Ordinarily, ethics is regarded as a sort of machinery of right action, the act is everything and how to do the right act is the whole question and the whole trouble. But to the Yogin action is chiefly important not for its own sake, but rather as a means for the growth of the soul Godward. Therefore what Indian spiritual writings lay stress upon is not so much the quality of the action to be done as the quality of the soul from which the action flows, upon its truth, fearlessness, purity, love, compassion, benevolence, absence of the will to hurt, and upon the actions as their outflowings. The old western idea that human nature is intrinsically bad and virtue is a thing to be followed out in despite of our fallen nature to which it is contrary, is foreign to the Indian mentality trained from ancient times in the ideas of the Yogins. Our nature contains, as well as its passionate rajasic and its downward-tending tamasic quality, a purer sattwic element and it is the encouragement of this, its highest part, which is the business of ethics. By it we increase the divine nature, *daivī prakṛti*, which is present in us and get rid of the Titanic and demoniac elements. Not therefore the Hebraic righteousness of the Godfearing man, but the purity, love, beneficence, truth, fearlessness, harmlessness of the saint and the God-lover are the goal of the ethical growth according to this notion. And, speaking more largely, to grow into the divine nature is the consummation of the ethical being. This can be done best by realising God as the higher Self, the guiding and uplifting Will or the Master whom we love and serve. Not fear of him, but love of him and aspiration to the freedom and eternal purity of his being must be the motive.

Certainly, fear enters into the relations of the master and the servant and even of the father and the child, but only when they are on the human level, when control and subjection and punishment figure predominantly in them and love is obliged to efface itself more or less behind the mask of authority. The Divine even as the Master does not punish anybody, does not threaten, does not force obedience. It is the human soul that has freely to come to the Divine and offer itself to his overpowering force that he may seize and uplift it towards his own divine levels, and give it that joy of mastery of the finite nature by the Infinite and of service to the Highest by which there comes freedom from the ego and the lower nature. Love is the key of this relation, and this service, *dāsyam*, is in Indian Yoga the happy service of the divine Friend or the passionate service to the divine Beloved. The Master of the worlds who in the Gita demands of his servant, the bhakta, to be nothing more in life than his instrument, makes this claim as the friend, the guide, the higher Self, and describes himself as the Lord of all the worlds who is the friend of all creatures, *sarvalokamaheśvaraṁ suhṛdaṁ sarvabhūtānām*; the two relations in fact must go together and neither can be perfect without the other. So too it is not the fatherhood of God as the Creator who demands obedience because he is the maker of our being, but the fatherhood of love which leads us towards the closer soul-union of Yoga. Love is the real key in both, and perfect love is inconsistent with the admission of the motive of fear. Closeness of the human soul to the Divine is the object, and fear sets always a barrier and a distance; even awe and reverence for the divine Power are a sign of distance and division and they disappear in the intimacy of the union of love. Moreover, fear belongs to the lower nature, to the lower self, and in approaching the higher Self must be put aside before we can enter into its presence.

This relation of the divine fatherhood and the closer relation with the Divine as the Mother-Soul of the universe have their springs in another early religious motive. One type of the Bhakta, says the Gita, is the devotee who comes to the Divine as the giver of his wants, the giver of his good, the satisfier of the needs of his inner and his outer being. "I bring to my bhakta" says the Lord "his getting and his having of good, *yogakṣemaṁ vahāmyaham*." The life of man is a life of wants and needs and therefore of desires, not only in his physical and vital, but in his mental and spiritual being. When he becomes conscious of a greater Power governing the world, he approaches it through prayer for the fulfilment of his needs, for help in his rough journey, for protection and aid in his struggle. Whatever crudities there may be in the ordinary religious approach to God by prayer, and there are many, especially that attitude which imagines the Divine as if capable of being propitiated, bribed, flattered into acquiescence or indulgence by praise, entreaty and gifts and has often little regard to the spirit in which he is approached, still this way of turning to the Divine is an essential movement of our religious being and reposes on a universal truth.

The efficacy of prayer is often doubted and prayer itself supposed to be a thing irrational and necessarily superfluous and ineffective. It is true that the universal will executes always its aim and cannot be deflected by egoistic propitiation and entreaty, it is true of the Transcendent who expresses himself in the universal order that being omniscient his larger knowledge must foresee the thing to be done and it does not need direction or stimulation by human thought and that the individual's desires are not and cannot be in any world-order the true determining factor. But neither is that order or the execution of the universal will altogether effected by mechanical Law, but by powers and forces of which for human life at least human will, aspiration and faith are not among the least important. Prayer is only a particular form given to that will, aspiration and faith. Its forms are very often crude and not only childlike, which is in itself no defect, but childish; but still it has a real power and significance. Its power and sense is to put the will, aspiration and faith of man into touch with the divine Will as that of a conscious Being with whom we can enter into conscious and living relations. For our will and aspiration can act either by our own strength and endeavour, which can no doubt be made a thing great and effective whether for lower or higher purposes, — and there are plenty of disciplines which put it forward as the one force to be used, — or it can act in dependence upon and with subordination to the divine or the universal Will. And this latter way again may either look upon that Will as responsive indeed to our aspiration, but almost mechanically, by a sort of law of energy, or at any rate quite impersonally, or else it may look upon it as responding consciously to the divine aspiration and faith of the human soul and consciously bringing to it the help, the guidance, the protection and fruition demanded, *yogakṣemaṁ vahāmyaham*.

Prayer helps to prepare this relation for us at first on the lower plane even while it is there consistent with much that is mere egoism and self-delusion; but afterwards we can draw towards the spiritual truth which is behind it. It is not then the giving of the thing asked for that matters, but the relation itself, the contact of man's life with God, the conscious interchange. In spiritual matters and in the seeking of spiritual gains, this conscious relation is a great power; it is a much greater power than our own entirely self-reliant struggle and effort and it brings a fuller spiritual growth and experience. Necessarily in the end prayer either ceases in the greater thing for which it prepared us, — in fact the form we call prayer is not itself essential so long as the faith, the will, the aspiration are there, — or remains only for the joy of the relation. Also its objects, the *artha* or interest it seeks to realise, become higher and higher until we reach the highest motiveless devotion, which is that of divine love pure and simple without any other demand or longing.

The relations which arise out of this attitude towards the Divine, are that of the divine Father and the Mother with the child and that of the divine Friend. To the Divine as these things the human soul comes for help, for protection, for guidance, for fruition, — or if knowledge be the aim, to the Guide, Teacher, Giver of light, for the Divine is the Sun of knowledge, — or it comes in pain and suffering for relief and solace and deliverance, it may be deliverance either from the suffering itself or from the world-existence which is the habitat of the suffering or from all its inner and real causes.[1] In these things we find there is a certain gradation. For the relation of fatherhood is always less close, intense, passionate, intimate, and therefore it is less resorted to in the Yoga which seeks for the closest union. That of the divine Friend is a thing sweeter and more intimate, admits of an equality and intimacy even in inequality and the beginning of mutual self-giving; at its closest when all idea of other giving and taking disappears, when this relation becomes motiveless except for the one sole all-sufficing motive of love, it turns into the free and happy relation of the playmate in the Lila of existence. But closer and more intimate still is the relation of the Mother and the child, and that therefore plays a very large part wherever the religious impulse is most richly fervent and springs most warmly from the heart of man. The soul goes to the Mother-Soul in all its desires and troubles and the divine Mother wishes that it should be so, so that she may pour out her heart of love. It turns to her too because of the self-existent nature of this love and because that points us to the home towards which we turn from our wanderings in the world and to the bosom in which we find our rest.

---

[1] These are three of the four classes of devotee which are recognised by the Gita, *ārta*, *arthārthī*, *jijñāsu*, the distressed, the seeker of personal objects and the seeker of God-knowledge.

But the highest and the greatest relation is that which starts from none of the ordinary religious motives, but is rather of the very essence of Yoga, springs from the very nature of love itself; it is the passion of the Lover and the Beloved. Wherever there is the desire of the soul for its utter union with God, this form of the divine yearning makes its way even into religions which seem to do without it and give it no place in their ordinary system. Here the one thing asked for is love, the one thing feared is the loss of love, the one sorrow is the sorrow of separation of love; for all other things either do not exist for the lover or come in only as incidents or as results and not as objects or conditions of love. All love is indeed in its nature self-existent because it springs from a secret oneness in being and a sense of that oneness or desire of oneness in the heart between souls that are yet able to conceive of themselves as different from each other and divided. Therefore all these other relations too can arrive at their self-existent motiveless joy of being for the sake of love alone. But still they start from and to the end they to some extent find a satisfaction of their play in other motives. But here the beginning is love and the end is love and the whole aim is love. There is indeed the desire of possession, but even this is overcome in the fullness of the self-existent love and the final demand of the Bhakta is simply that his bhakti may never cease nor diminish. He does not ask for heaven or for liberation from birth or for any other object, but only that his love may be eternal and absolute.

Love is a passion and it seeks for two things, eternity and intensity, and in the relation of the Lover and Beloved the seeking for eternity and for intensity is instinctive and self-born. Love is a seeking for mutual possession, and it is here that the demand for mutual possession becomes absolute. Passing beyond desire of possession which means a difference, it is a seeking for oneness, and it is here that the idea of oneness, of two souls merging into each other and becoming one finds the acme of its longing and the utterness of its satisfaction. Love, too, is a yearning for beauty, and it is here that the yearning is eternally satisfied in the vision and the touch and the joy of the All-beautiful. Love is a child and a seeker of Delight, and it is here that it finds the highest possible ecstasy both of the heart-consciousness and of every fibre of the being. Moreover, this relation is that which as between human being and human being demands the most and, even while reaching the greatest intensities, is still the least satisfied, because only in the Divine can it find its real and its utter satisfaction. Therefore it is here most that the turning of human emotion Godwards finds its full meaning and discovers all the truth of which love is the human symbol, all its essential instincts divinised, raised, satisfied in the bliss from which our life was born and towards which by oneness it returns in the Ananda of the divine existence where love is absolute, eternal and unalloyed.

Chapter IV

The Way of Devotion

BHAKTI in itself is as wide as the heart-yearning of the soul for the Divine and as simple and straightforward as love and desire going straight towards their object. It cannot therefore be fixed down to any systematic method, cannot found itself on a psychological science like the Rajayoga, or a psycho-physical like the Hathayoga, or start from a definite intellectual process like the ordinary method of the Jnanayoga. It may employ various means or supports, and man, having in him a tendency towards order, process and system, may try to methodise his resort to these auxiliaries: but to give an account of their variations one would have to review almost all man's numberless religions upon their side of inner approach to the Deity. Really, however, the more intimate yoga of Bhakti resolves itself simply into these four movements, the desire of the Soul when it turns towards God and the straining of its emotion towards him, the pain of love and the divine return of love, the delight of love possessed and the play of that delight, and the eternal enjoyment of the divine Lover which is the heart of celestial bliss. These are things that are at once too simple and too profound for methodising or for analysis. One can at best only say, here are these four successive elements, steps, if we may so call them, of the siddhi, and here are, largely, some of the means which it uses, and here again are some of the aspects and experiences of the sadhana of devotion. We need only trace broadly the general line they follow before we turn to consider how the way of devotion enters into a synthetic and integral Yoga, what place it takes there and how its principle affects the other principles of divine living.

All Yoga is a turning of the human mind and the human soul, not yet divine in realisation, but feeling the divine impulse and attraction in it, towards that by which it finds its greater being. Emotionally, the first form which this turning takes must be that of adoration. In ordinary religion this adoration wears the form of external worship and that again develops a most external form of ceremonial worship. This element is ordinarily necessary because the mass of men live in their physical minds, cannot realise anything except by the force of a physical symbol and cannot feel that they are living anything except by the force of a physical action. We might apply here the Tantric gradation of *sādhana*, which makes the way of the *paśu*, the herd, the animal or physical being, the lowest stage of its discipline, and say that the purely or predominantly ceremonial adoration is the first step of this lowest part of the way. It is evident that even real religion, — and Yoga is something more than religion, — only begins when this quite outward worship corresponds to something really felt within the mind, some genuine submission, awe or spiritual aspiration, to which it becomes an aid, an outward expression and also a sort of periodical or constant reminder helping to draw back the mind to it from the preoccupations of ordinary life. But so long as it is only an idea of the Godhead to which one renders reverence or homage, we have not yet got to the beginning of Yoga. The aim of Yoga being union, its beginning must always be a seeking after the Divine, a longing after some kind of touch, closeness or possession. When this comes on us, the adoration becomes always primarily an inner worship; we begin to make ourselves a temple of the Divine, our thoughts and feelings a constant prayer of aspiration and seeking, our whole life an external service and worship. It is as this change, this new soul-tendency grows, that the religion of the devotee becomes a Yoga, a growing contact and union. It does not follow that the outward worship will necessarily be dispensed with, but it will increasingly become only a physical expression or outflowing of the inner devotion and adoration, the wave of the soul throwing itself out in speech and symbolic act.

Adoration, before it turns into an element of the deeper Yoga of devotion, a petal of the flower of love, its homage and self-uplifting to its sun, must bring with it, if it is profound, an increasing consecration of the being to the Divine who is adored.

And one element of this consecration must be a self-purifying so as to become fit for the divine contact, or for the entrance of the Divine into the temple of our inner being, or for his self-revelation in the shrine of the heart. This purifying may be ethical in its character, but it will not be merely the moralist's seeking for the right and blameless action or even, when once we reach the stage of Yoga, an obedience to the law of God as revealed in formal religion; but it will be a throwing away, *katharsis*, of all that conflicts whether with the idea of the Divine in himself or of the Divine in ourselves. In the former case it becomes in habit of feeling and outer act an imitation of the Divine, in the latter a growing into his likeness in our nature. What inner adoration is to ceremonial worship, this growing into the divine likeness is to the outward ethical life. It culminates in a sort of liberation by likeness to the Divine,[1] a liberation from our lower nature and a change into the divine nature.

Consecration becomes in its fullness a devoting of all our being to the Divine; therefore also of all our thoughts and our works. Here the Yoga takes into itself the essential elements of the Yoga of works and the Yoga of knowledge, but in its own manner and with its own peculiar spirit. It is a sacrifice of life and works to the Divine, but a sacrifice of love more than a tuning of the will to the divine Will. The bhakta offers up his life and all that he is and all that he has and all that he does to the Divine. This surrender may take the ascetic form, as when he leaves the ordinary life of men and devotes his days solely to prayer and praise and worship or to ecstatic meditation, gives up his personal possessions and becomes the monk or the mendicant whose one and only possession is the Divine, gives up all actions in life except those only which help or belong to the communion with the Divine and communion with other devotees, or at most keeps the doing from the secure fortress of the ascetic life of those services to men which seem peculiarly the outflowing of the divine nature of love, compassion and good. But there is the wider self-consecration, proper to any integral Yoga, which, accepting the fullness of life and the world in its entirety as the play of the Divine, offers up the whole being into his possession; it is a holding of all one is and has as belonging to him only and not to ourselves and a doing of all works as an offering to him. By this comes the complete active consecration of both the inner and the outer life, the unmutilated self-giving.

---

[1] *sādṛśya-mukti.*

There is also the consecration of the thoughts to the Divine. In its inception this is the attempt to fix the mind on the object of adoration, — for naturally the restless human mind is occupied with other objects and, even when it is directed upwards, constantly drawn away by the world, — so that in the end it habitually thinks of him and all else is only secondary and thought of only in relation to him. This is done often with the aid of a physical image or, more intimately and characteristically, of a mantra or a divine name through which the divine being is realised. There are supposed by those who systematise to be three stages of the seeking through the devotion of the mind, first, the constant hearing of the divine name, qualities and all that has been attached to them, secondly, the constant thinking on them or on the divine being or personality, thirdly, the settling and fixing of the mind on the object; and by this comes the full realisation. And by these, too, there comes when the accompanying feeling or the concentration is very intense, the Samadhi, the ecstatic trance in which the consciousness passes away from outer objects. But all this is really incidental; the one thing essential is the intense devotion of the thought in the mind to the object of adoration. Although it seems akin to the contemplation of the way of knowledge, it differs from that in its spirit. It is in its real nature not a still, but an ecstatic contemplation; it seeks not to pass into the being of the Divine, but to bring the Divine into ourselves and to lose ourselves in the deep ecstasy of his presence or of his possession; and its bliss is not the peace of unity, but the ecstasy of union. Here, too, there may be the separative self-consecration which ends in the giving up of all other thought of life for the possession of this ecstasy, eternal afterwards in planes beyond, or the comprehensive consecration in which all the thoughts are full of the Divine and even in the occupations of life every thought remembers him. As in the other Yogas, so in this, one comes to see the Divine everywhere and in all and to pour out the realisation of the Divine in all one's inner activities and outward actions. But all is supported here by the primary force of the emotional union: for it is by love that the entire self-consecration and the entire possession is accomplished, and thought and action become shapes and figures of the divine love which possesses the spirit and its members.

This is the ordinary movement by which what may be at first a vague adoration of some idea of the Divine takes on the hue and character and then, once entered into the path of Yoga, the inner reality and intense experience of divine love. But there is the more intimate Yoga which from the first consists in this love and attains only by the intensity of its longing without other process or method. All the rest comes, but it comes out of this, as leaf and flower out of the seed; other things are not the means of developing and fulfilling love, but the radiations of love already growing in the soul. This is the way that the soul follows when, while occupied perhaps with the normal human life, it has heard the flute of the Godhead behind the near screen of secret woodlands and no longer possesses itself, can have no satisfaction or rest till it has pursued and seized and possessed the divine fluteplayer. This is in essence the power of love itself in the heart and soul turning from earthly objects to the spiritual source of all beauty and delight. There live in this seeking all the sentiment and passion, all the moods and experiences of love concentrated on a supreme object of desire and intensified a hundredfold beyond the highest acme of intensity possible to a human love. There is the disturbance of the whole life, the illumination by an unseized vision, the unsatisfied yearning for a single object of the heart's desire, the intense impatience of all that distracts from the one preoccupation, the intense pain of the obstacles that stand in the way of possession, the perfect vision of all beauty and delight in a single form. And there are all the many moods of love, the joy of musing and absorption, the delight of the meeting and fulfilment and embrace, the pain of separation, the wrath of love, the tears of longing, the increased delight of reunion. The heart is the scene of this supreme idyll of the inner consciousness, but a heart which undergoes increasingly an intense spiritual change and becomes the radiantly unfolding lotus of the spirit. And as the intensity of its seeking is beyond the highest power of the normal human emotions, so also the delight and the final ecstasy are beyond the reach of the imagination and beyond expression by speech. For this is the delight of the Godhead that passes human understanding.

Indian bhakti has given to this divine love powerful forms, poetic symbols which are not in reality so much symbols as intimate expressions of truth which can find no other expression. It uses human relations and sees a divine person, not as mere figures, but because there are divine relations of supreme Delight and Beauty with the human soul of which human relations are the imperfect but still the real type, and because that Delight and Beauty are not abstractions or qualities of a quite impalpable metaphysical entity, but the very body and form of the supreme Being. It is a living Soul to which the soul of the bhakta yearns; for the source of all life is not an idea or a conception or a state of existence, but a real Being. Therefore in the possession of the divine Beloved all the life of the soul is satisfied and all the relations by which it finds and in which it expresses itself, are wholly fulfilled; therefore, too, by any and all of them can the Beloved be sought, though those which admit the greatest intensity, are always those by which he can be most intensely pursued and possessed with the profoundest ecstasy. He is sought within in the heart and therefore apart from all by an inward-gathered concentration of the being in the soul itself; but he is also seen and loved everywhere where he manifests his being. All the beauty and joy of existence is seen as his joy and beauty; he is embraced by the spirit in all beings; the ecstasy of love enjoyed pours itself out in a universal love; all existence becomes a radiation of its delight and even in its very appearances is transformed into something other than its outward appearance. The world itself is experienced as a play of the divine Delight, a Lila, and that in which the world loses itself is the heaven of beatitude of the eternal union.

Chapter V

The Divine Personality

ONE QUESTION rises immediately in a synthetic Yoga which must not only comprise but unify knowledge and devotion, the difficult and troubling question of the divine Personality. All the trend of modern thought has been towards the belittling of personality; it has seen behind the complex facts of existence only a great impersonal force, an obscure becoming, and that too works itself out through impersonal forces and impersonal laws, while personality presents itself only as a subsequent, subordinate, partial, transient phenomenon upon the face of this impersonal movement. Granting even to this Force a consciousness, that seems to be impersonal, indeterminate, void in essence of all but abstract qualities or energies; for everything else is only a result, a minor phenomenon. Ancient Indian thought starting from quite the other end of the scale arrived on most of its lines at the same generalisation. It conceived of an impersonal existence as the original and eternal truth; personality is only an illusion or at best a phenomenon of the mind.

On the other hand, the way of devotion is impossible if the personality of the Divine cannot be taken as a reality, a real reality and not a hypostasis of the illusion. There can be no love without a lover and beloved. If our personality is an illusion and the Personality to whom our adoration rises only a primary aspect of the illusion, and if we believe that, then love and adoration must at once be killed, or can only survive in the illogical passion of the heart denying by its strong beats of life the clear and dry truths of the reason. To love and adore a shadow of our minds or a bright cosmic phenomenon which vanishes from the eye of Truth, may be possible, but the way of salvation cannot be built upon a foundation of wilful self-deception. The bhakta indeed does not allow these doubts of the intellect to come in his way; he has the divinations of his heart, and these are to him sufficient. But the sadhaka of the integral Yoga has to know the eternal and ultimate Truth and not to persist to the end in the delight of a Shadow. If the impersonal is the sole enduring truth, then a firm synthesis is impossible. He can at most take the divine personality as a symbol, a powerful and effective fiction, but he will have in the end to overpass it and to abandon devotion for the sole pursuit of the ultimate knowledge. He will have to empty being of all its symbols, values, contents in order to arrive at the featureless Reality.

We have said, however, that personality and impersonality, as our minds understand them, are only aspects of the Divine and both are contained in his being; they are one thing which we see from two opposite sides and into which we enter by two gates. We have to see this more clearly in order to rid ourselves of any doubts with which the intellect may seek to afflict us as we follow the impulse of devotion and the intuition of love or to pursue us into the joy of the divine union. They fall away indeed from that joy, but if we are too heavily weighted with the philosophical mind, they may follow us almost up to its threshold. It is well therefore to discharge ourselves of them as early as may be by perceiving the limits of the intellect, the rational philosophic mind, in its peculiar way of approaching the truth and the limits even of the spiritual experience which sets out from the approach through the intellect, to see that it need not be the whole integrality of the highest and widest spiritual experience. Spiritual intuition is always a more luminous guide than the discriminating reason, and spiritual intuition addresses itself to us not only through the reason, but through the rest of our being as well, through the heart and the life also. The integral knowledge will then be that which takes account of all and unifies their diverse truths. The intellect itself will be more deeply satisfied if it does not confine itself to its own data, but accepts truth of the heart and the life also and gives to them their absolute spiritual value.

The nature of the philosophical intellect is to move among ideas and to give them a sort of abstract reality of their own apart from all their concrete representations which affect our life and personal consciousness. Its bent is to reduce these representations to their barest and most general terms and to subtilise even these if possible into some final abstraction. The pure intellectual direction travels away from life. In judging things it tries to get back from their effects on our personality and to arrive at whatever general and impersonal truth may be behind them; it is inclined to treat that kind of truth as the only real truth of being or at least as the one superior and permanent power of reality. Therefore it is bound by its own nature to end in its extremes at an absolute impersonality and an absolute abstraction. This is where the ancient philosophies ended. They reduced everything to three abstractions, existence, consciousness and bliss of being, and they tended to get rid of the two of these three which seemed dependent on the first and most abstract, and to throw all back into a pure featureless existence from which everything else had been discharged, all representations, all values, except the one infinite and timeless fact of being. But the intellect had still one farther possible step to take and it took it in Buddhistic philosophy. It found that even this final fact of existence was only a representation; it abstracted that also and got to an infinite zero which might be either a void or an eternal inexpressible.

The heart and life, as we know, have an exactly opposite law. They cannot live with abstractions; they can find their satisfaction only in things that are concrete or can be made seizable; whether physically, mentally or spiritually, their object is not something which they seek to discriminate and arrive at by intellectual abstraction; a living becoming of it or a conscious possession and joy of their object is what they seek. Nor is it the satisfaction of an abstract mind or impersonal existence to which they respond, but the joy and the activity of a being, a conscious Person in us, whether finite or infinite, to whom the delights and powers of his existence are a reality. Therefore when the heart and life turn towards the Highest and the Infinite, they arrive not at an abstract existence or non-existence, a Sat or else a Nirvana, but at an existent, a Sat Purusha, not merely at a consciousness, but at a conscious Being, a Chaitanya Purusha, not merely at a purely impersonal delight of the Is, but at an infinite I Am of bliss, an Anandamaya Purusha; nor can they immerge and lose his consciousness and bliss in featureless existence, but must insist on all three in one, for delight of existence is their highest power and without consciousness delight cannot be possessed. That is the sense of the supreme figure of the intensest Indian religion of love, Sri Krishna, the All-blissful and All-beautiful.

The intelligence can also follow this trend, but it ceases then to be the pure intellect; it calls in its power of imagination to its aid, it becomes the image-maker, the creator of symbols and values, a spiritual artist and poet. Therefore the severest intellectual philosophy admits the Saguna, the divine Person, only as the supreme cosmic symbol; go beyond it to reality and you will arrive, it says, at last to the Nirguna, the pure Impersonal. The rival philosophy asserts the superiority of the Saguna; that which is impersonal is, it will perhaps say, only the material, the stuff of his spiritual nature out of which he manifests the powers of his being, consciousness and bliss, all that expresses him; the impersonal is the apparent negative out of which he looses the temporal variations of his eternal positive of personality. There are evidently here two instincts, or, if we hesitate to apply that word to the intellect, two innate powers of our being which are dealing each in its own manner with the same Reality.

Both the ideas of the intellect, its discriminations, and the aspirations of the heart and life, their approximations, have behind them realities at which they are the means of arriving. Both are justified by spiritual experience; both arrive at the divine absolute of that which they are seeking. But still each tends, if too exclusively indulged, to be hampered by the limitations of its innate quality and its characteristic means. We see that in our earthly living, where the heart and life followed exclusively failed to lead to any luminous issue, while an exclusive intellectuality becomes either remote, abstract and impotent or a sterile critic or dry mechanist. Their sufficient harmony and just reconciliation is one of the great problems of our psychology and our action.

The reconciling power lies beyond in the intuition. But there is an intuition which serves the intellect and an intuition which serves the heart and the life, and if we follow either of these exclusively, we shall not get much farther than before; we shall only make more intimately real to us, but still separately, the things at which the other and less seeing powers are aiming. But the fact that it can lend itself impartially to all parts of our being, — for even the body has its intuitions, — shows that the intuition is not exclusive, but an integral truth-finder. We have to question the intuition of our whole being, not only separately in each part of it, nor in a sum of their findings, but beyond all these lower instruments, beyond even their first spiritual correspondents, by rising into the native home of the intuition which is the native home of the infinite and illimitable Truth, *ṛtasya sve dame*, where all existence discovers its unity. That is what the ancient Veda meant when it cried, "There is a firm truth hidden by truth (the eternal truth concealed by this other of which we have here these lower intuitions); there the ten hundred rays of light stand together; that is One." *Ṛtena ṛtam apihitaṁ dhruvaṁ . . . daśa śatā saha tasthus, tad ekam.*

The spiritual intuition lays hold always upon the reality; it is the luminous harbinger of spiritual realisation or else its illuminative light; it sees that which the other powers of our being are labouring to explore; it gets at the firm truth of the abstract representations of the intellect and the phenomenal representations of the heart and life, a truth which is itself neither remotely abstract nor outwardly concrete, but something else for which these are only two sides of its psychological manifestation to us. What the intuition of our integral being perceives, when its members no longer dispute among themselves but are illumined from above, is that the whole of our being aims at the one reality. The impersonal is a truth, the personal too is a truth; they are the same truth seen from two sides of our psychological activity; neither by itself gives the total account of the Reality, and yet by either we can approach it.

Looked at from one side, it would seem as if an impersonal Thought were at work and created the fiction of the thinker for the convenience of its action, an impersonal Power at work creating the fiction of the doer, an impersonal existence in operation which uses the fiction of a personal being who has a conscious personality and a personal delight. Looked at from the other side, it is the thinker who expresses himself in thoughts which without him could not exist and our general notion of thought symbolises simply the power of the nature of the thinker; the Ishwara expresses himself by will and power and force; the Existent extends himself in all the forms integral and partial, direct, inverse and perverse of his existence, consciousness and bliss, and our abstract general notion of these things is only an intellectual representation of the triple power of his nature of being. All impersonality seems in its turn to become a fiction and existence in its every movement and its every particle nothing but the life, the consciousness, the power, the delight of the one and yet innumerable Personality, the infinite Godhead, the self-aware and self-unfolding Purusha. Both views are true, except that the idea of fiction, which is borrowed from our own intellectual processes, has to be exiled and each must be given its proper validity. The integral seeker has to see in this light that he can reach one and the same Reality on both lines, either successively or simultaneously, as if on two connected wheels travelling on parallel lines, but parallel lines which in defiance of intellectual logic but in obedience to their own inner truth of unity do meet in infinity.

We have to look at the divine Personality from this standpoint. When we speak of personality, we mean by it at first something limited, external and separative, and our idea of a personal God assumes the same imperfect character. Our personality is to us at first a separate creature, a limited mind, body, character which we conceive of as the person we are, a fixed quantity; for although in reality it is always changing, yet there is a sufficient element of stability to give a kind of practical justification to this notion of fixedness. We conceive of God as such a person, only without body, a separate person different from all others with a mind and character limited by certain qualities. At first in our primitive conceptions his deity is a thing of much inconstancy, freak and caprice, an enlarged edition of our human character; but afterwards we conceive of the divine nature of personality as a quite fixed quantity and we attribute to it those qualities alone which we regard as divine and ideal, while all the others are eliminated. This limitation compels us to account for all the rest by attributing them to a Devil, or by lending to man an original creative capacity for all that we consider evil, or else, when we perceive that this will not quite do, by erecting a power which we call Nature and attributing to that all the lower quality and mass of action for which we do not wish to make the Divine responsible. At a higher pitch the attribution of mind and character to God becomes less anthropomorphic and we regard him as an infinite Spirit, but still a separate person, a spirit with certain fixed divine qualities as his attributes. So are conceived the ideas of the divine Personality, the personal God which vary so much in various religions.

All this may seem at first sight to be an original anthropomorphism terminating in an intellectual notion of the Deity which is very much at variance with the actualities of the world as we see it. It is not surprising that the philosophical and sceptical mind should have found little difficulty in destroying it all intellectually, whether in the direction of the denial of a personal God and the assertion of an impersonal Force or Becoming or in that of an impersonal Being or an ineffable denial of existence with all the rest as only symbols of Maya or phenomenal truths of the Time-consciousness. But these are only the personifications of monotheism. Polytheistic religions, less exalted perhaps, but wider and more sensitive in their response to cosmic life, have felt that all in the cosmos has a divine origin; therefore they conceived of the existence of many divine personalities with a vague sense of an indefinable Divine behind, whose relations with the personal gods were not very clearly conceived. And in their more exoteric forms these gods were crudely anthropomorphic; but where the inner sense of spiritual things became clearer, the various godheads assumed the appearance of personalities of the one Divine, — that is the declared point of view of the ancient Veda. This Divine might be a supreme

Being who manifests himself in various divine personalities or an impersonal existence which meets the human mind in these forms; or both views might be held simultaneously without any intellectual attempt to reconcile them, since both were felt to be true to spiritual experience.

If we subject these notions of the divine Personality to the discrimination of the intellect, we shall be inclined to reduce them, according to our bent, to fictions of the imagination or to psychological symbols, in any case, the response of our sensitive personality to something which is not this at all, but is purely impersonal. We may say that That is in reality the very opposite of our humanity and our personality and therefore in order to enter into relations with it we are impelled to set up these human fictions and these personal symbols so as to make it nearer to us. But we have to judge by spiritual experience, and in a total spiritual experience we shall find that these things are not fictions and symbols, but truths of divine being in their essence, however imperfect may have been our representations of them. Even our first idea of our own personality is not an absolute error, but only an incomplete and superficial view beset by many mental errors. Greater self-knowledge shows us that we are not fundamentally the particular formulation of form, powers, properties, qualities with a conscious I identifying itself with them, which we at first appear to be. That is only a temporary fact, though still a fact, of our partial being on the surface of our active consciousness. We find within an infinite being with the potentiality of all qualities, of infinite quality, *ananta-guṇa*, which can be combined in any number of possible ways, and each combination is a revelation of our being. For all this personality is the self-manifestation of a Person, that is to say of a being who is conscious of his manifestation.

But we see too that this being does not seem to be composed even of infinite quality, but has a status of his complex reality in which he seems to stand back from it and to become an indefinable conscious existence, *anirdeśyam*. Even consciousness seems to be drawn back and leave merely a timeless pure existence. And again even this pure self of our being seems at a certain pitch to deny its own reality, or to be a projection from a selfless[1] baseless unknowable, which we may conceive of either as a nameless somewhat, or as a Nihil. It is when we would fix upon this exclusively and forget all that it has withdrawn into itself that we speak of pure impersonality or the void Nihil as the highest truth. But a more integral vision shows us that it is the Person and the personality and all that it had manifested which has thus cast itself upward into its own unexpressed absolute. And if we carry up our heart as well as our reasoning mind to the Highest, we shall find that we can reach it through the absolute Person as well as through an absolute impersonality. But all this self-knowledge is only the type within ourselves of the corresponding truth of the Divine in his universality. There too we meet him in various forms of divine personality; in formulations of quality which variously express him to us in his nature; in infinite quality, the Ananta-guna; in the divine Person who expresses himself through infinite quality; in absolute impersonality, an absolute existence or an absolute non-existence, which is yet all the time the unexpressed Absolute of this divine Person, this conscious Being who manifests himself through us and through the universe.

Even on the cosmic plane we are constantly approaching the Divine on either of these sides. We may think, feel and say that God is Truth, Justice, Righteousness, Power, Love, Delight, Beauty; we may see him as a universal force or as a universal consciousness. But this is only the abstract way of experience. As we ourselves are not merely a number of qualities or powers or a psychological quantity, but a being, a person who so expresses his nature, so is the Divine a Person, a conscious Being who thus expresses his nature to us. And we can adore him through different forms of this nature, a God of righteousness, a God of love and mercy, a God of peace and purity; but it is evident that there are other things in the divine nature which we have put outside the form of personality in which we are thus worshipping him. The courage of an unflinching spiritual vision and experience can meet him also in more severe or in terrible forms. None of these are all the Divinity; yet these forms of his personality are real truths of himself in which he meets us and seems to deal with us, as if the rest had been put away behind him. He is each separately and all altogether. He is Vishnu, Krishna, Kali; he reveals himself to us in humanity as the Christ personality or the Buddha personality. When we look beyond our first exclusively concentrated vision, we see behind Vishnu all the personality of Shiva and behind Shiva all the personality of Vishnu. He is the Ananta-guna, infinite quality and the infinite divine Personality which manifests itself through it. Again he seems to withdraw into a pure spiritual impersonality or beyond all idea even of impersonal Self and to justify a spiritualised atheism or agnosticism; he becomes to the mind of man an indefinable, *anirdeśyam*. But out of this unknowable the conscious Being, the divine Person, who has manifested himself here, still speaks, "This too is I; even here beyond the view of mind, I am He, the Purushottama."

---

[1] *anātmyam anilayanam*. Taittiriya Upanishad.

For beyond the divisions and contradictions of the intellect there is another light and there the vision of a truth reveals itself which we may thus try to express to ourselves intellectually. There all is one truth of all these truths; for there each is present and justified in all the rest. In that light our spiritual experience becomes united and integralised; no least hair's breadth of real division is left, no shade of superiority and inferiority remains between the seeking of the Impersonal and the adoration of the divine Personality, between the way of knowledge and the way of devotion.

Chapter VI

The Delight of the Divine

THIS THEN is the way of devotion and this its justification to the highest and the widest, the most integral knowledge, and we can now perceive what form and place it will take in an integral Yoga. Yoga is in essence the union of the soul with the immortal being and consciousness and delight of the Divine, effected through the human nature with a result of development into the divine nature of being, whatever that may be, so far as we can conceive it in mind and realise it in spiritual activity. Whatever we see of this Divine and fix our concentrated effort upon it, that we can become or grow into some kind of unity with it or at the lowest into tune and harmony with it. The old Upanishad put it trenchantly in its highest terms, "Whoever envisages it as the Existence becomes that existence and whoever envisages it as the Non-existence, becomes that non-existence;" so too it is with all else that we see of the Divine, — that, we may say, is at once the essential and the pragmatic truth of the Godhead. It is something beyond us which is indeed already within us, but which we as yet are not or are only initially in our human existence; but whatever of it we see, we can create or reveal in our conscious nature and being and can grow into it, and so to create or reveal in ourselves individually the Godhead and grow into its universality and transcendence is our spiritual destiny. Or if this seem too high for the weakness of our nature, then at least to approach, reflect and be in secure communion with it is a near and possible consummation.

The aim of this synthetic or integral Yoga which we are considering, is union with the being, consciousness and delight of the Divine through every part of our human nature separately or simultaneously, but all in the long end harmonised and unified, so that the whole may be transformed into a divine nature of being. Nothing less than this can satisfy the integral seer, because what he sees must be that which he strives to possess spiritually and, so far as may be, become. Not with the knower in him alone, nor with the will alone, nor with the heart alone, but with all these equally and also with the whole mental and vital being in him he aspires to the Godhead and labours to convert their nature into its divine equivalents. And since God meets us in many ways of his being and in all tempts us to him even while he seems to elude us, — and to see divine possibility and overcome its play of obstacles constitutes the whole mystery and greatness of human existence, — therefore in each of these ways at its highest or in the union of all, if we can find the key of their oneness, we shall aspire to track out and find and possess him. Since he withdraws into impersonality, we follow after his impersonal being and delight, but since he meets us also in our personality and through personal relations of the Divine with the human, that too we shall not deny ourselves; we shall admit both the play of the love and the delight and its ineffable union.

By knowledge we seek unity with the Divine in his conscious being: by works we seek also unity with the Divine in his conscious being, not statically, but dynamically, through conscious union with the divine Will; but by love we seek unity with him in all the delight of his being. For that reason the way of love, however narrow it may seem in some of its first movements, is in the end more imperatively all-embracing than any other motive of Yoga. The way of knowledge tends easily towards the impersonal and the absolute, may very soon become exclusive. It is true that it need not do so; since the conscious being of the Divine is universal and individual as well as transcendent and absolute, here too there may be and should be a tendency to integral realisation of unity and we can arrive by it at a spiritual oneness with God in man and God in the universe not less complete than any transcendent union. But still this is not quite imperative. For we may plead that there is a higher and a lower knowledge, a higher self-awareness and a lower self-awareness, and that here the apex of knowledge is to be pursued to the exclusion of the mass of knowledge, the way of exclusion preferred to the integral way. Or we may discover a theory of illusion to justify our rejection of all connection with our fellow-men and with the cosmic action. The way of works leads us to the Transcendent whose power of being manifests itself as a will in the world one in us and all, by identity with which we come, owing to the conditions of that identity, into union with him as the one self in all and as the universal self and Lord in the cosmos. And this might seem to impose a certain comprehensiveness in our realisation of the unity. But still this too is not quite imperative. For this motive also may lean towards an entire impersonality and, even if it leads to a continued participation in the activities of the universal Godhead, may be entirely detached and passive in its principle. It is only when delight intervenes that the motive of integral union becomes quite imperative.

This delight which is so entirely imperative, is the delight in the Divine for his own sake and for nothing else, for no cause or gain whatever beyond itself. It does not seek God for anything that he can give us or for any particular quality in him, but simply and purely because he is our self and our whole being and our all. It embraces the delight of the transcendence, not for the sake of transcendence, but because he is the transcendent; the delight of the universal, not for the sake of universality, but because he is the universal; the delight of the individual not for the sake of individual satisfaction, but because he is the individual. It goes behind all distinctions and appearances and makes no calculations of more or less in his being, but embraces him wherever he is and therefore everywhere, embraces him utterly in the seeming less as in the seeming more, in the apparent limitation as in the revelation of the illimitable; it has the intuition and the experience of his oneness and completeness everywhere. To seek after him for the sake of his absolute being alone is really to drive at our own individual gain, the gain of absolute peace. To possess him absolutely indeed is necessarily the aim of this delight in his being, but this comes when we possess him utterly and are utterly possessed by him and need be limited to no particular status or condition. To seek after him in some heaven of bliss is to seek him not for himself, but for the bliss of heaven; when we have all the true delight of his being, then heaven is within ourselves, and wherever he is and we are, there we have the joy of his kingdom. So too to seek him only in ourselves and for ourselves, is to limit both ourselves and our joy in him. The integral delight embraces him not only within our own individual being, but equally in all men and in all beings. And because in him we are one with all, it seeks him not only for ourselves, but for all our fellows. A perfect and complete delight in the Divine, perfect because pure and self-existent, complete because all-embracing as well as all-absorbing, is the meaning of the way of Bhakti for the seeker of the integral Yoga.

Once it is active in us, all other ways of Yoga convert themselves, as it were, to its law and find by it their own richest significance. This integral devotion of our being to God does not turn away from knowledge; the bhakta of this path is the God-lover who is also the God-knower, because by knowledge of his being comes the whole delight of his being; but it is in delight that knowledge fulfils itself, the knowledge of the transcendent in the delight of the Transcendent, the knowledge of the universal in the delight of the universal Godhead, the knowledge of the individual manifestation in the delight of God in the individual, the knowledge of the impersonal in the pure delight of his impersonal being, the knowledge of the personal in the full delight of his personality, the knowledge of his qualities and their play in the delight of the manifestation, the knowledge of the quality-less in the delight of his colourless existence and non-manifestation.

So too this God-lover will be the divine worker, not for the sake of works or for a self-regarding pleasure in action, but because in this way God expends the power of his being and in his powers and their signs we find him, because the divine Will in works is the outflowing of the Godhead in the delight of its power, of divine Being in the delight of divine Force. He will feel perfect joy in the works and acts of the Beloved, because in them too he finds the Beloved; he will himself do all works because through those works too the Lord of his being expresses his divine joy in him: when he works, he feels that he is expressing in act and power his oneness with that which he loves and adores;

he feels the rapture of the will which he obeys and with which all the force of his being is blissfully identified. So too, again, this God-lover will seek after perfection, because perfection is the nature of the Divine and the more he grows into perfection, the more he feels the Beloved manifest in his natural being. Or he will simply grow in perfection like the blossoming of a flower because the Divine is in him and the joy of the Divine, and as that joy expands in him, soul and mind and life too expand naturally into their godhead. At the same time, because he feels the Divine in all, perfect within every limiting appearance, he will not have the sorrow of his imperfection.

Nor will the seeking of the Divine through life and the meeting of him in all the activities of his being and of the universal being be absent from the scope of his worship. All Nature and all life will be to him at once a revelation and a fine trysting-place. Intellectual and aesthetic and dynamic activities, science and philosophy and life, thought and art and action will assume for him a diviner sanction and a greater meaning. He will seek them because of his clear sight of the Divine through them and because of the delight of the Divine in them. He will not be indeed attached to their appearances, for attachment is an obstacle to the Ananda; but because he possesses that pure, powerful and perfect Ananda which obtains everything but is dependent on nothing, and because he finds in them the ways and acts and signs, the becomings and the symbols and images of the Beloved, he draws from them a rapture which the normal mind that pursues them for themselves cannot attain or even dream. All this and more becomes part of the integral way and its consummation.

The general power of Delight is love and the special mould which the joy of love takes is the vision of beauty. The God-lover is the universal lover and he embraces the All-blissful and All-beautiful. When universal love has seized on his heart, it is the decisive sign that the Divine has taken possession of him; and when he has the vision of the All-beautiful everywhere and can feel at all times the bliss of his embrace, that is the decisive sign that he has taken possession of the Divine. Union is the consummation of love, but it is this mutual possession that gives it at once the acme and the largest reach of its intensity. It is the foundation of oneness in ecstasy.

Chapter VII

The Ananda Brahman

THE WAY of devotion in the integral synthetic Yoga will take the form of a seeking after the Divine through love and delight and a seizing with joy on all the ways of his being. It will find its acme in a perfect union of love and a perfect enjoyment of all the ways of the soul's intimacy with God. It may start from knowledge or it may start from works, but it will then turn knowledge into a joy of luminous union with the being of the Beloved and turn works into a joy of the active union of our being with the will and the power of being of the Beloved. Or it may start directly from love and delight; it will then take both these other things into itself and will develop them as part of the complete joy of oneness.

The beginning of the heart's attraction to the Divine may be impersonal, the touch of an impersonal joy in something universal or transcendent that has revealed itself directly or indirectly to our emotional or our aesthetic being or to our capacity of spiritual felicity. That which we thus grow aware of is the Ananda Brahman, the bliss existence. There is an adoration of an impersonal Delight and Beauty, of a pure and an infinite perfection to which we can give no name or form, a moved attraction of the soul to some ideal and infinite Presence, Power, existence in the world or beyond it, which in some way becomes psychologically or spiritually sensible to us and then more and more intimate and real. That is the call, the touch of the bliss existence upon us. Then to have always the joy and nearness of its presence, to know what it is, so as to satisfy the intellect and the intuitional mind of its constant reality, to put our passive and, so far as we can manage it, our active, our inner immortal and even our outer mortal being into perfect harmony with it, grow into a necessity of our living. And to open ourselves to it is what we feel to be the one true happiness, to live into it the sole real perfection.

A transcendent Bliss, unimaginable and inexpressible by the mind and speech, is the nature of the Ineffable. That broods immanent and secret in the whole universe and in everything in the universe. Its presence is described as a secret ether of the bliss of being, of which the Scripture says that, if this were not, none could for a moment breathe or live. And this spiritual bliss is here also in our hearts. It is hidden in from the toil of the surface mind which catches only at weak and flawed translations of it into various mental, vital and physical forms of the joy of existence. But if the mind has once grown sufficiently subtle and pure in its receptions and not limited by the grosser nature of our outward responses to existence, we can take a reflection of it which will wear perhaps wholly or predominantly the hue of whatever is strongest in our nature. It may present itself first as a yearning for some universal Beauty which we feel in Nature and man and in all that is around us; or we may have the intuition of some transcendent Beauty of which all apparent beauty here is only a symbol. That is how it may come to those in whom the aesthetic being is developed and insistent and the instincts which, when they find form of expression, make the poet and artist, are predominant. Or it may be the sense of a divine spirit of love or else a helpful and compassionate infinite Presence in the universe or behind or beyond it which responds to us when we turn the need of our spirit towards it. So it may first show itself when the emotional being is intensely developed. It may come near to us in other ways, but always as a Power or Presence of delight, beauty, love or peace which touches the mind, but is beyond the forms these things take ordinarily in the mind.

For all joy, beauty, love, peace, delight are outflowings from the Ananda Brahman, — all delight of the spirit, the intellect, the imagination, aesthetic sense, ethical aspiration and satisfaction, action, life, the body. And through all ways of our being the Divine can touch us and make use of them to awaken and liberate the spirit. But to reach the Ananda Brahman in itself the mental reception of it must be subtilised, spiritualised, universalised, discharged of everything that is turbid and limiting. For when we draw quite near or enter into it, it is by an awakened spiritual sense of a transcendent and a universal Delight which exists within and yet behind and beyond the contradictions of the world and to which we can unite ourselves through a growing universal and spiritual or a transcendental ecstasy.

Ordinarily, the mind is satisfied with reflecting this Infinity we perceive or with feeling the sense of it within and without us, as an experience which, however frequent, yet remains exceptional. It seems in itself so satisfying and wonderful when it comes and our ordinary mind and the active life which we have to lead may seem to us so incompatible with it, that we may think it excessive to expect anything more. But the very spirit of Yoga is this, to make the exceptional normal, and to turn that which is above us and greater than our normal selves into our own constant consciousness. Therefore we should not hesitate to open ourselves more steadily to whatever experience of the Infinite we have, to purify and intensify it, to make it our object of constant thought and contemplation, till it becomes the originating power that acts in us, the Godhead we adore and embrace, our whole being is put into tune with it and it is made the very self of our being.

Our experience of it has to be purified of any mental alloy in it, otherwise it departs, we cannot hold it. And part of this purification is that it shall cease to be dependent on any cause or exciting condition of mind; it must become its own cause and self-existent, source of all other delight, which will exist only by it, and not attached to any cosmic or other image or symbol through which we first came into contact with it. Our experience of it has to be constantly intensified and made more concentrated; otherwise we shall only reflect it in the mirror of the imperfect mind and not reach that point of uplifting and transfiguration by which we are carried beyond the mind into the ineffable bliss. Object of our constant thought and contemplation, it will turn all that is into itself, reveal itself as the universal Ananda Brahman and make all existence its outpouring. If we wait upon it for the inspiration of all our inner and our outer acts, it will become the joy of the Divine pouring itself through us in light and love and power on life and all that lives. Sought by the adoration and love of the soul, it reveals itself as the Godhead, we see in it the face of God and know the bliss of our Lover. Tuning our whole being to it, we grow into a happy perfection of likeness to it, a human rendering of the divine nature. And when it becomes in every way the self of our self, we are fulfilled in being and we bear the plenitude.

Brahman always reveals himself to us in three ways, within ourselves, above our plane, around us in the universe. Within us, there are two centres of the Purusha, the inner Soul through which he touches us to our awakening; there is the Purusha in the lotus of the heart which opens upward all our powers and the Purusha in the thousand-petalled lotus whence descend through the thought and will, opening the third eye in us, the lightnings of vision and the fire of the divine energy. The bliss existence may come to us through either one of these centres. When the lotus of the heart breaks open, we feel a divine joy, love and peace expanding in us like a flower of light which irradiates the whole being. They can then unite themselves with their secret source, the Divine in our hearts, and adore him as in a temple; they can flow upwards to take possession of the thought and the will and break out upward towards the Transcendent; they stream out in thought and feeling and act towards all that is around us. But so long as our normal being offers any obstacle or is not wholly moulded into a response to this divine influence or an instrument of this divine possession, the experience will be intermittent and we may fall back constantly into our old mortal heart; but by repetition, *abhyāsa*, or by the force of our desire and adoration of the Divine, it will be progressively remoulded until this abnormal experience becomes our natural consciousness.

When the other upper lotus opens, the whole mind becomes full of a divine light, joy and power, behind which is the Divine, the Lord of our being on his throne with our soul beside him or drawn inward into his rays; all the thought and will become then a luminosity, power and ecstasy; in communication with the Transcendent, this can pour down towards our mortal members and flow by them outwards on the world. In this dawn too there are, as the Vedic mystics knew, our alternations of its day and night, our exiles from the light; but as we grow in the power to hold this new existence, we become able to look long on the sun from which this irradiation proceeds and in our inner being we can grow one body with it. Sometimes the rapidity of this change depends on the strength of our longing for the Divine thus revealed, and on the intensity of our force of seeking; but at others it proceeds rather by a passive surrender to the rhythms of his all-wise working which acts always by its own at first inscrutable method. But the latter becomes the foundation when our love and trust are complete and our whole being lies in the clasp of a Power that is perfect love and wisdom.

The Divine reveals himself in the world around us when we look upon that with a spiritual desire of delight that seeks him in all things. There is often a sudden opening by which the veil of forms is itself turned into a revelation. A universal spiritual Presence, a universal peace, a universal infinite Delight has manifested, immanent, embracing, all-penetrating. This Presence by our love of it, our delight in it, our constant thought of it returns and grows upon us; it becomes the thing that we see and all else is only its habitation, form and symbol. Even all that is most outward, the body, the form, the sound, whatever our senses seize, are seen as this Presence; they cease to be physical and are changed into a substance of spirit. This transformation means a transformation of our own inner consciousness; we are taken by the surrounding Presence into itself and we become part of it. Our own mind, life, body become to us only its habitation and temple, a form of its working and an instrument of its self-expression. All is only soul and body of this delight.

This is the Divine seen around us and on our own physical plane. But he may reveal himself above. We see or feel him as a high-uplifted Presence, a great infinite of Ananda above us, — or in it, our Father in heaven, — and do not feel or see him in ourselves or around us. So long as we keep this vision, the mortality in us is quelled by that Immortality; it feels the light, power and joy and responds to it according to its capacity; or it feels the descent of the spirit and it is then for a time transformed or else uplifted into some lustre of reflection of the light and power; it becomes a vessel of the Ananda. But at other times it lapses into the old mortality and exists or works dully or pettily in the ruck of its earthly habits. The complete redemption comes by the descent of the divine Power into the human mind and body and the remoulding of their inner life into the divine image, — what the Vedic seers called the birth of the Son by the sacrifice. It is in fact by a continual sacrifice or offering, a sacrifice of adoration and aspiration, of works, of thought and knowledge, of the mounting flame of the Godward will that we build ourselves into the being of this Infinite.

When we possess firmly this consciousness of the Ananda Brahman in all of these three manifestations, above, within, around, we have the full oneness of it and embrace all existences in its delight, peace, joy and love; then all the worlds become the body of this self. But we have not the richest knowledge of this Ananda if it is only an impersonal presence, largeness or immanence that we feel, if our adoration has not been intimate enough for this Being to reveal to us out of its wide-extended joy the face and body and make us feel the hands of the Friend and Lover. Its impersonality is the blissful greatness of the Brahman, but from that can look out upon us the sweetness and intimate control of the divine Personality. For Ananda is the presence of the Self and Master of our being and the stream of its outflowing can be the pure joy of his Lila.

Chapter VIII

The Mystery of Love

THE ADORATION of the impersonal Divine would not be strictly a Yoga of devotion according to the current interpretation; for in the current forms of Yoga it is supposed that the Impersonal can only be sought for a complete unity in which God and our own person disappear and there is none to adore or to be adored; only the delight of the experience of oneness and infinity remains. But in truth the miracles of spiritual consciousness are not to be subjected to so rigid a logic. When we first come to feel the presence of the infinite, as it is the finite personality in us which is touched by it, that may well answer to the touch and call with a sort of adoration. Secondly, we may regard the Infinite not so much as a spiritual status of oneness and bliss, or that only as its mould and medium of being, but rather as the presence of the ineffable Godhead to our consciousness, and then too love and adoration find their place. And even when our personality seems to disappear into unity with it, it may still be — and really is — the individual divine who is melting to the universal or the supreme by a union in which love and lover and loved are forgotten in a fusing experience of ecstasy, but are still there latent in the oneness and subconsciently persisting in it. All union of the self by love must necessarily be of this nature. We may even say, in a sense, that it is to have this joy of union as the ultimate crown of all the varied experiences of spiritual relation between the individual soul and God that the One became many in the universe.

Still, the more varied and most intimate experience of divine love cannot come by the pursuit of the impersonal Infinite alone; for that the Godhead we adore must become near and personal to us. It is possible for the Impersonal to reveal within itself all the riches of personality when we get into its heart, and one who sought only to enter into or to embrace the infinite Presence alone, may discover in it things he had not dreamed of; the being of the Divine has surprises for us which confound the ideas of the limiting intellect. But ordinarily the way of devotion begins from the other end; it starts from and it rises and widens to its issue by adoration of the divine Personality. The Divine is a Being and not an abstract existence or a status of pure timeless infinity; the original and universal existence is He, but that existence is inseparable from consciousness and bliss of being, and an existence conscious of its own being and its own bliss is what we may well call a divine infinite Person, — Purusha. Moreover all consciousness implies power, Shakti; where there is infinite consciousness of being, there is infinite power of being, and by that power all exists in the universe. All beings exist by this Being; all things are the faces of God; all thought and action and feeling and love proceed from him and return to him, all their results have him for source and support and secret goal. It is to this Godhead, this Being that the Bhakti of an integral Yoga will be poured out and uplifted. Transcendent, it will seek him in the ecstasy of an absolute union; universal, it will seek him in infinite quality and every aspect and in all beings with a universal delight and love; individual, it will enter into all human relations with him that love creates between person and person.

It may not be possible to seize from the beginning on all the complete integrality of that which the heart is seeking; in fact, it is only possible if the intelligence, the temperament, the emotional mind have already been developed into largeness and fineness by the trend of our previous living. That is what the experience of the normal life is meant to lead to by its widening culture of the intellect, the aesthetic and emotional mind and of our parts too of will and active experience. It widens and refines the normal being so that it may open easily to all the truth of That which was preparing it for the temple of its self-manifestation. Ordinarily, man is limited in all these parts of his being and he can grasp at first only so much of the divine truth as has some large correspondence to his own nature and its past development and associations. Therefore God meets us first in different limited affirmations of his divine qualities and nature; he presents himself to the seeker as an absolute of the things he can understand and to which his will and heart can respond; he discloses some name and aspect of his Godhead. This is what is called in Yoga the *iṣṭa-devatā*, the name and form elected by our nature for its worship. In order that the human being may embrace this Godhead with every part of himself, it is represented with a form that answers to its aspects and qualities and which becomes the living body of God to the adorer. These are those forms of Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Kali, Durga, Christ, Buddha, which the mind of man seizes on for adoration. Even the monotheist who worships a formless Godhead, yet gives to him some form of quality, some mental form or form of Nature by which he envisages and approaches him. But to be able to see a living form, a mental body, as it were, of the Divine gives to the approach a greater closeness and sweetness.

The way of the integral Yoga of bhakti will be to universalise this conception of the Deity, to personalise him intimately by a multiple and an all-embracing relation, to make him constantly present to all the being and to devote, give up, surrender the whole being to him, so that he shall dwell near to us and in us and we with him and in him. *Manana* and *darśana*, a constant thinking of him in all things and seeing of him always and everywhere is essential to this way of devotion. When we look on the things of physical Nature, in them we have to see the divine object of our love; when we look upon men and beings, we have to see him in them and in our relation with them to see that we are entering into relations with forms of him; when breaking beyond the limitation of the material world we know or have relations with the beings of other planes, still the same thought and vision has to be made real to our minds. The normal habit of our minds which are open only to the material and apparent form and the ordinary mutilated relation and ignore the secret Godhead within, has to yield by an unceasing habit of all-embracing love and delight to this deeper and ampler comprehension and this greater relation. In all godheads we have to see this one God whom we worship with our heart and all our being; they are forms of his divinity. So enlarging our spiritual embrace we reach a point at which all is he and the delight of this consciousness becomes to us our normal uninterrupted way of looking at the world. That brings us the outward or objective universality of our union with him.

Inwardly, the image of the Beloved has to become visible to the eye within, dwelling in us as in his mansion, informing our hearts with the sweetness of his presence, presiding over all our activities of mind and life as the friend, master and lover from the summit of our being, uniting us from above with himself in the universe. A constant inner communion is the joy to be made close and permanent and unfailing. This communion is not to be confined to an exceptional nearness and adoration when we retire quite into ourselves away from our normal preoccupations, nor is it to be sought by a putting away of our human activities. All our thoughts, impulses, feelings, actions have to be referred to him for his sanction or disallowance, or if we cannot yet reach this point, to be offered to him in our sacrifice of aspiration, so that he may more and more descend into us and be present in them all and pervade them with all his will and power, his light and knowledge, his love and delight. In the end all our thoughts, feelings, impulses, actions will begin to proceed from him and change into some divine seed and form of themselves; in our whole inner living we shall have grown conscious of ourselves as a part of his being till between the existence of the Divine whom we adore and our own lives there is no longer any division. So too in all happenings we have to come to see the dealings with us of the divine Lover and take such pleasure in them that even grief and suffering and physical pain become his gifts and turn to delight and disappear finally into delight, slain by the sense of the divine contact, because the touch of his hands is the alchemist of a miraculous transformation. Some reject life because it is tainted with grief and pain, but to the God-lover grief and pain become means of meeting with him, imprints of his pressure and finally cease as soon as our union with his nature becomes too complete for these masks of the universal delight at all to conceal it. They change into the Ananda.

All the relations by which this union comes about, become on this path intensely and blissfully personal. That which in the end contains, takes up or unifies them all, is the relation of lover and beloved, because that is the most intense and blissful of all and carries up all the rest into its heights and yet exceeds them. He is the teacher and guide and leads us to knowledge; at every step of the developing inner light and vision, we feel his touch like that of the artist moulding our clay of mind, his voice revealing the truth and its word, the thought he gives us to which we respond, the flashing of his spears of lightning which chase the darkness of our ignorance. Especially, in proportion as the partial lights of the mind become transformed into lights of gnosis, in whatever slighter or greater degree that may happen, we feel it as a transformation of our mentality into his and more and more he becomes the thinker and seer in us. We cease to think and see for ourselves, but think only what he wills to think for us and see only what he sees for us. And then the teacher is fulfilled in the lover; he lays hands on all our mental being to embrace and possess, to enjoy and use it.

He is the Master; but in this way of approach all distance and separation, all awe and fear and mere obedience disappear, because we become too close and united with him for these things to endure and it is the lover of our being who takes it up and occupies and uses and does with it whatever he wills. Obedience is the sign of the servant, but that is the lowest stage of this relation, *dāsya*. Afterwards we do not obey, but move to his will as the string replies to the finger of the musician. To be the instrument is this higher stage of self-surrender and submission. But this is the living and loving instrument and it ends in the whole nature of our being becoming the slave of God, rejoicing in his possession and its own blissful subjection to the divine grasp and mastery. With a passionate delight it does all he wills it to do without questioning and bears all he would have it bear, because what it bears is the burden of the beloved being.

He is the friend, the adviser, helper, saviour in trouble and distress, the defender from enemies, the hero who fights our battles for us or under whose shield we fight, the charioteer, the pilot of our ways. And here we come at once to a closer intimacy; he is the comrade and eternal companion, the playmate of the game of living. But still there is so far a certain division, however pleasant, and friendship is too much limited by the appearance of beneficence. The lover can wound, abandon, be wroth with us, seem to betray, yet our love endures and even grows by these oppositions; they increase the joy of reunion and the joy of possession; through them the lover remains the friend, and all that he does we find in the end has been done by the lover and helper of our being for our soul's perfection as well as for his joy in us. These contradictions lead to a greater intimacy. He is the father and mother too of our being, its source and protector and its indulgent cherisher and giver of our desires. He is the child born to our desire whom we cherish and rear. All these things the lover takes up; his love in its intimacy and oneness keeps in it the paternal and maternal care and lends itself to our demands upon it. All is unified in that deepest many-sided relation.

From the beginning even it is possible to have this closest relation of the lover and beloved, but it will not be as exclusive for the integral Yogin as for certain purely ecstatic ways of Bhakti. It will from the beginning take into itself something of the hues of the other relations, since he follows too knowledge and works and has need of the Divine as teacher, friend and master. The growing of the love of God must carry with it in him an expansion of the knowledge of God and of the action of the divine Will in his nature and living. The divine Lover reveals himself; he takes possession of the life. But still the essential relation will be that of love from which all things flow, love passionate, complete, seeking a hundred ways of fulfilment, every means of mutual possession, a million facets of the joy of union. All the distinctions of the mind, all its barriers and "cannot be"s, all the cold analyses of the reason are mocked at by this love or they are only used as the tests and fields and gates of union. Love comes to us in many ways; it may come as an awakening to the beauty of the Lover, by the sight of an ideal face and image of him, by his mysterious hints to us of himself behind the thousand faces of things in the world, by a slow or sudden need of the heart, by a vague thirst in the soul, by the sense of someone near us drawing us or pursuing us with love or of someone blissful and beautiful whom we must discover.

We may seek after him passionately and pursue the unseen beloved; but also the lover whom we think not of, may pursue us, may come upon us in the midst of the world and seize on us for his own whether at first we will or no. Even, he may come to us at first as an enemy, with the wrath of love, and our earliest relations with him may be those of battle and struggle. Where first there is love and attraction, the relations between the Divine and the soul may still for long be chequered with misunderstanding and offence, jealousy and wrath, strife and the quarrels of love, hope and despair and the pain of absence and separation. We throw up all the passions of the heart against him, till they are purified into a sole ecstasy of bliss and oneness. But that too is no monotony; it is not possible for the tongue of human speech to tell all the utter unity and all the eternal variety of the ananda of divine love. Our higher and our lower members are both flooded with it, the mind and life no less than the soul: even the physical body takes its share of the joy, feels the touch, is filled in all its limbs, veins, nerves with the flowing of the wine of the ecstasy, *amṛta*. Love and Ananda are the last word of being, the secret of secrets, the mystery of mysteries.

Thus universalised, personalised, raised to its intensities, made all-occupying, all-embracing, all-fulfilling, the way of love and delight gives the supreme liberation. Its highest crest is a supracosmic union. But for love complete union is *mukti*; liberation has to it no other sense; and it includes all kinds of *mukti* together, nor are they in the end, as some would have it, merely successive to each other and therefore mutually exclusive. We have the absolute union of the divine with the human spirit, *sāyujya*; in that reveals itself a content of all that depends here upon difference, — but there the difference is only a form of oneness, — ananda too of nearness and contact and mutual presence, *sāmīpya*, *sālokya*, ananda of mutual reflection, the thing that we call likeness, *sādṛśya*, and other wonderful things too for which language has as yet no name. There is nothing which is beyond the reach of the God-lover or denied to him; for he is the favourite of the divine Lover and the self of the Beloved.

Part IV

The Yoga of Self-Perfection

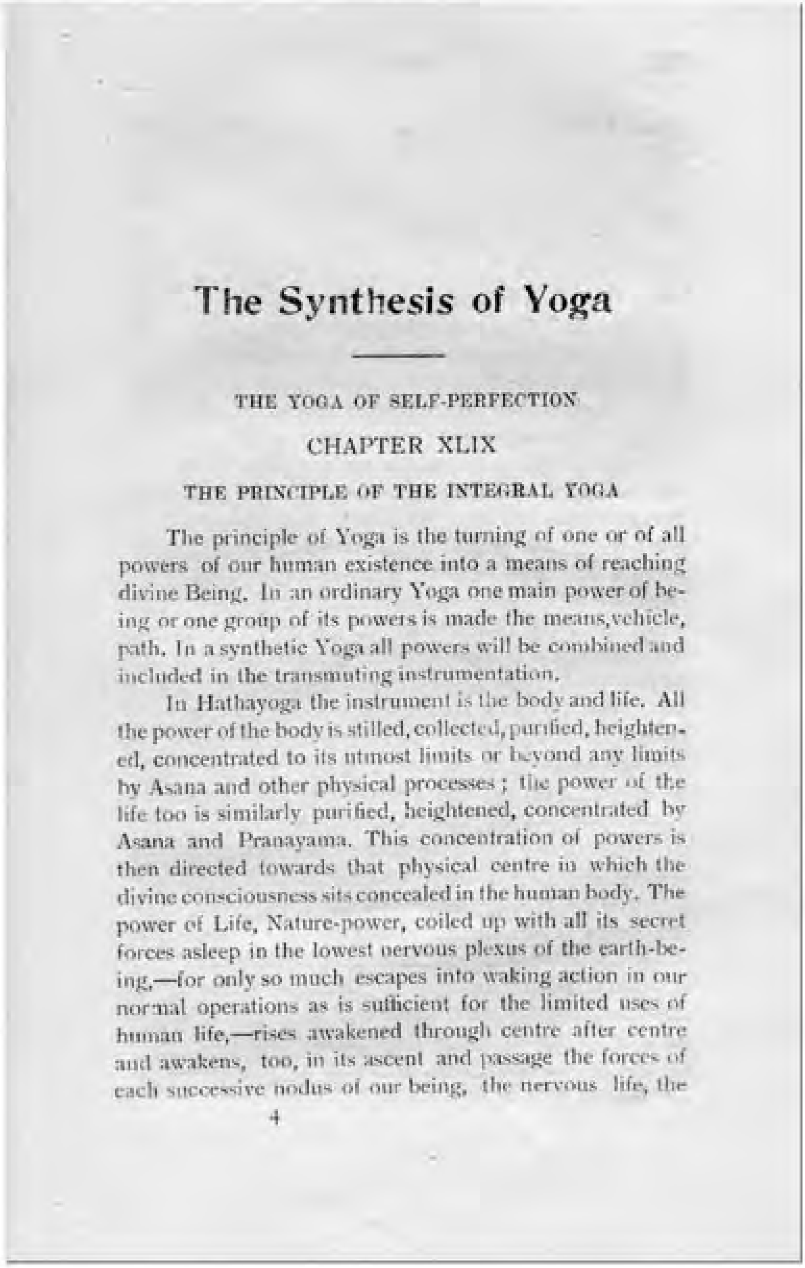

The Synthesis of Yoga

THE YOGA OF SELF-PERFECTION

CHAPTER XLIX

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE INTEGRAL YOGA

The principle of Yoga is the turning of one or of all powers of our human existence into a means of reaching divine Being. In an ordinary Yoga one main power of being or one group of its powers is made the means,vehicle, path. In a synthetic Yoga all powers will be combined and included in the transmuting instrumentation.

In Hathayoga the instrument is the body and life. All the power of the body is stilled, collected, purified, heightened, concentrated to its utmost limits or beyond any limits by Asana and other physical processes ; the power of the life too is similarly purified, heightened, concentrated by Asana and Pranayama. This concentration of powers is then directed towards that physical centre in which the divine consciousness sits concealed in the human body. The power of Life, Nature-power, coiled up with all its secret forces asleep in the lowest nervous plexus of the earth-being,—for only so much escapes into waking action in our normal operations as is sufficient for the limited uses of human life,—rises awakened through centre after centre and awakens, too, in its ascent and passage the forces of each successive nodus of our being, the nervous life, the

4

The first page of "The Yoga of Self-Perfection"
as it appeared in the *Arya* of 15 December 1918

Chapter I

The Principle of the Integral Yoga

THE PRINCIPLE of Yoga is the turning of one or of all powers of our human existence into a means of reaching divine Being. In an ordinary Yoga one main power of being or one group of its powers is made the means, vehicle, path. In a synthetic Yoga all powers will be combined and included in the transmuting instrumentation.

In Hathayoga the instrument is the body and life. All the power of the body is stilled, collected, purified, heightened, concentrated to its utmost limits or beyond any limits by Asana and other physical processes; the power of the life too is similarly purified, heightened, concentrated by Asana and Pranayama. This concentration of powers is then directed towards that physical centre in which the divine consciousness sits concealed in the human body. The power of Life, Nature-power, coiled up with all its secret forces asleep in the lowest nervous plexus of the earth-being, — for only so much escapes into waking action in our normal operations as is sufficient for the limited uses of human life, — rises awakened through centre after centre and awakens, too, in its ascent and passage the forces of each successive nodus of our being, the nervous life, the heart of emotion and ordinary mentality, the speech, sight, will, the higher knowledge, till through and above the brain it meets with and it becomes one with the divine consciousness.

In Rajayoga the chosen instrument is the mind. Our ordinary mentality is first disciplined, purified and directed towards the divine Being, then by a summary process of Asana and Pranayama the physical force of our being is stilled and concentrated, the life-force released into a rhythmic movement capable of cessation and concentrated into a higher power of its upward action, the mind, supported and strengthened by this greater action and concentration of the body and life upon which it rests, is itself purified of all its unrest and emotion and its habitual thought-waves, liberated from distraction and dispersion, given its highest force of concentration, gathered up into a trance of absorption. Two objects, the one temporal, the other eternal, are gained by this discipline. Mind-power develops in another concentrated action abnormal capacities of knowledge, effective will, deep light of reception, powerful light of thought-radiation which are altogether beyond the narrow range of our normal mentality; it arrives at the Yogic or occult powers around which there has been woven so much quite dispensable and yet perhaps salutary mystery. But the one final end and the one all-important gain is that the mind, stilled and cast into a concentrated trance, can lose itself in the divine consciousness and the soul be made free to unite with the divine Being.

The triple way takes for its chosen instruments the three main powers of the mental soul-life of the human being. Knowledge selects the reason and the mental vision and it makes them by purification, concentration and a certain discipline of a God-directed seeking its means for the greatest knowledge and the greatest vision of all, God-knowledge and God-vision. Its aim is to see, know and be the Divine. Works, action selects for its instrument the will of the doer of works; it makes life an offering of sacrifice to the Godhead and by purification, concentration and a certain discipline of subjection to the divine Will a means for contact and increasing unity of the soul of man with the divine Master of the universe. Devotion selects the emotional and aesthetic powers of the soul and by turning them all Godward in a perfect purity, intensity, infinite passion of seeking makes them a means of God-possession in one or many relations of unity with the Divine Being. All aim in their own way at a union or unity of the human soul with the supreme Spirit.

Each Yoga in its process has the character of the instrument it uses; thus the Hathayogic process is psycho-physical, the Rajayogic mental and psychic, the way of knowledge is spiritual and cognitive, the way of devotion spiritual, emotional and aesthetic, the way of works spiritual and dynamic by action. Each is guided in the ways of its own characteristic power. But all power is in the end one, all power is really soul-power. In the ordinary process of life, body and mind this truth is quite obscured by the dispersed, dividing and distributive action of Nature which is the normal condition of all our functionings, although even there it is in the end evident; for all material energy contains hidden the vital, mental, psychic, spiritual energy and in the end it must release these forms of the one Shakti, the vital energy conceals and liberates into action all the other forms, the mental supporting itself on the life and body and their powers and functionings contains undeveloped or only partially developed the psychic and the spiritual power of the being. But when by Yoga any of these powers is taken up from the dispersed and distributive action, raised to its highest degree, concentrated, it becomes manifest soul-power and reveals the essential unity. Therefore the Hathayogic process has too its pure psychic and spiritual result, the Rajayogic arrives by psychic means at a spiritual consummation. The triple way may appear to be altogether mental and spiritual in its way of seeking and its objectives, but it can be attended by results more characteristic of the other paths, which offer themselves in a spontaneous and involuntary flowering, and for the same reason, because soul-power is all-power and where it reaches its height in one direction its other possibilities also begin to show themselves in fact or in incipient potentiality. This unity at once suggests the possibility of a synthetic Yoga.

Tantric discipline is in its nature a synthesis. It has seized on the large universal truth that there are two poles of being whose essential unity is the secret of existence, Brahman and Shakti, Spirit and Nature, and that Nature is power of the spirit or rather is spirit as power. To raise nature in man into manifest power of spirit is its method and it is the whole nature that it gathers up for the spiritual conversion. It includes in its system of instrumentation the forceful Hathayogic process and especially the opening up of the nervous centres and the passage through them of the awakened Shakti on her way to her union with the Brahman, the subtler stress of the Rajayogic purification, meditation and concentration, the leverage of will-force, the motive power of devotion, the key of knowledge. But it does not stop short with an effective assembling of the different powers of these specific Yogas. In two directions it enlarges by its synthetic turn the province of the Yogic method. First, it lays its hand firmly on many of the main springs of human quality, desire, action and it subjects them to an intensive discipline with the soul's mastery of its motives as a first aim and their elevation to a diviner spiritual level as its final utility. Again, it includes in its objects of Yoga not only liberation,[1] which is the one all-mastering preoccupation of the specific systems, but a cosmic enjoyment[2] of the power of the Spirit, which the others may take incidentally on the way, in part, casually, but avoid making a motive or object. It is a bolder and larger system.

In the method of synthesis which we have been following, another clue of principle has been pursued which is derived from another view of the possibilities of Yoga. This starts from the method of Vedanta to arrive at the aim of the Tantra. In the Tantric method Shakti is all-important, becomes the key to the finding of spirit; in this synthesis spirit, soul is all-important, becomes the secret of the taking up of Shakti. The Tantric method starts from the bottom and grades the ladder of ascent upwards to the summit; therefore its initial stress is upon the action of the awakened Shakti in the nervous system of the body and its centres; the opening of the six lotuses is the opening up of the ranges of the power of Spirit. Our synthesis takes man as a spirit in mind much more than a spirit in body and assumes in him the capacity to begin on that level, to spiritualise his being by the power of the soul in mind opening itself directly to a higher spiritual force and being and to perfect by that higher force so possessed and brought into action the whole of his nature. For that reason our initial stress has fallen upon the utilisation of the powers of soul in mind and the turning of the triple key of knowledge, works and love in the locks of the spirit; the Hathayogic methods can be dispensed with, — though there is no objection to their partial use, — the Rajayogic will only enter in as an informal element. To arrive by the shortest way at the largest development of spiritual power and being and divinise by it a liberated nature in the whole range of human living is our inspiring motive.

---

[1] Mukti. [2] Bhukti.

The principle in view is a self-surrender, a giving up of the human being into the being, consciousness, power, delight of the Divine, a union or communion at all the points of meeting in the soul of man, the mental being, by which the Divine himself, directly and without veil master and possessor of the instrument, shall by the light of his presence and guidance perfect the human being in all the forces of the Nature for a divine living. Here we arrive at a farther enlargement of the objects of the Yoga. The common initial purpose of all Yoga is the liberation of the soul of man from its present natural ignorance and limitation, its release into spiritual being, its union with the highest self and Divinity. But ordinarily this is made not only the initial but the whole and final object: enjoyment of spiritual being there is, but either in a dissolution of the human and individual into the silence of self-being or on a higher plane in another existence. The Tantric system makes liberation the final, but not the only aim; it takes on its way a full perfection and enjoyment of the spiritual power, light and joy in the human existence, and even it has a glimpse of a supreme experience in which liberation and cosmic action and enjoyment are unified in a final overcoming of all oppositions and dissonances. It is this wider view of our spiritual potentialities from which we begin, but we add another stress which brings in a completer significance. We regard the spirit in man not as solely an individual being travelling to a transcendent unity with the Divine, but as a universal being capable of oneness with the Divine in all souls and all Nature and we give this extended view its entire practical consequence. The human soul's individual liberation and enjoyment of union with the Divine in spiritual being, consciousness and delight must always be the first object of the Yoga; its free enjoyment of the cosmic unity of the Divine becomes a second object; but out of that a third appears, the effectuation of the meaning of the divine unity with all beings by a sympathy and participation in the spiritual purpose of the Divine in humanity. The individual Yoga then turns from its separateness and becomes a part of the collective Yoga of the divine Nature in the human race. The liberated individual being, united with the Divine in self and spirit, becomes in his natural being a self-perfecting instrument for the perfect outflowering of the Divine in humanity.

This outflowering has its two terms; first, comes the growth out of the separative human ego into the unity of the spirit, then the possession of the divine nature in its proper and its higher forms and no longer in the inferior forms of the mental being which are a mutilated translation and not the authentic text of the original script of divine Nature in the cosmic individual. In other words, a perfection has to be aimed at which amounts to the elevation of the mental into the full spiritual and supramental nature. Therefore this integral Yoga of knowledge, love and works has to be extended into a Yoga of spiritual and gnostic self-perfection. As gnostic knowledge, will and ananda are a direct instrumentation of spirit and can only be won by growing into the spirit, into divine being, this growth has to be the first aim of our Yoga. The mental being has to enlarge itself into the oneness of the Divine before the Divine will perfect in the soul of the individual its gnostic outflowering. That is the reason why the triple way of knowledge, works and love becomes the key-note of the whole Yoga, for that is the direct means for the soul in mind to rise to its highest intensities where it passes upward into the divine oneness. That too is the reason why the Yoga must be integral. For if immergence in the Infinite or some close union with the Divine were all our aim, an integral Yoga would be superfluous, except for such greater satisfaction of the being of man as we may get by a self-lifting of the whole of it towards its Source. But it would not be needed for the essential aim, since by any single power of the soul-nature we can meet with the Divine; each at its height rises up into the infinite and absolute, each therefore offers a sufficient way of arrival, for all the hundred separate paths meet in the Eternal. But the gnostic being is a complete enjoyment and possession of the whole divine and spiritual nature; and it is a complete lifting of the whole nature of man into its power of a divine and spiritual existence. Integrality becomes then an essential condition of this Yoga.

At the same time we have seen that each of the three ways at its height, if it is pursued with a certain largeness, can take into itself the powers of the others and lead to their fulfilment. It is therefore sufficient to start by one of them and find the point at which it meets the other at first parallel lines of advance and melts into them by its own widenings. At the same time a more difficult, complex, wholly powerful process would be to start, as it were, on three lines together, on a triple wheel of soul-power. But the consideration of this possibility must be postponed till we have seen what are the conditions and means of the Yoga of self-perfection. For we shall see that this also need not be postponed entirely, but a certain preparation of it is part of and a certain initiation into it proceeds by the growth of the divine works, love and knowledge.

Chapter II

The Integral Perfection

A DIVINE perfection of the human being is our aim. We must know then first what are the essential elements that constitute man's total perfection; secondly, what we mean by a divine as distinguished from a human perfection of our being. That man as a being is capable of self-development and of some approach at least to an ideal standard of perfection which his mind is able to conceive, fix before it and pursue, is common ground to all thinking humanity, though it may be only the minority who concern themselves with this possibility as providing the one most important aim of life. But by some the ideal is conceived as a mundane change, by others as a religious conversion.

The mundane perfection is sometimes conceived of as something outward, social, a thing of action, a more rational dealing with our fellow-men and our environment, a better and more efficient citizenship and discharge of duties, a better, richer, kindlier and happier way of living, with a more just and more harmonious associated enjoyment of the opportunities of existence. By others again a more inner and subjective ideal is cherished, a clarifying and raising of the intelligence, will and reason, a heightening and ordering of power and capacity in the nature, a nobler ethical, a richer aesthetic, a finer emotional, a much healthier and better-governed vital and physical being. Sometimes one element is stressed, almost to the exclusion of the rest; sometimes, in wider and more well-balanced minds, the whole harmony is envisaged as a total perfection. A change of education and social institutions is the outward means adopted or an inner self-training and development is preferred as the true instrumentation. Or the two aims may be clearly united, the perfection of the inner individual, the perfection of the outer living.

But the mundane aim takes for its field the present life and its opportunities; the religious aim on the contrary fixes before it the self-preparation for another existence after death, its commonest ideal is some kind of pure sainthood, its means a conversion of the imperfect or sinful human being by divine grace or through obedience to a law laid down by a scripture or else given by a religious founder. The aim of religion may include a social change, but it is then a change brought about by the acceptance of a common religious ideal and way of consecrated living, a brotherhood of the saints, a theocracy or kingdom of God reflecting on earth the kingdom of heaven.

The object of our synthetic Yoga must, in this respect too as in its other parts, be more integral and comprehensive, embrace all these elements or these tendencies of a larger impulse of self-perfection and harmonise them or rather unify, and in order to do that successfully it must seize on a truth which is wider than the ordinary religious and higher than the mundane principle. All life is a secret Yoga, an obscure growth of Nature towards the discovery and fulfilment of the divine principle hidden in her which becomes progressively less obscure, more self-conscient and luminous, more self-possessed in the human being by the opening of all his instruments of knowledge, will, action, life to the Spirit within him and in the world. Mind, life, body, all the forms of our nature are the means of this growth, but they find their last perfection only by opening out to something beyond them, first, because they are not the whole of what man is, secondly, because that other something which he is, is the key of his completeness and brings a light which discovers to him the whole high and large reality of his being.

Mind is fulfilled by a greater knowledge of which it is only a half-light, life discovers its meaning in a greater power and will of which it is the outward and as yet obscure functioning, body finds its last use as an instrument of a power of being of which it is a physical support and material starting-point. They have all themselves first to be developed and find out their ordinary possibilities; all our normal life is a trying of these possibilities and an opportunity for this preparatory and tentative self-training. But life cannot find its perfect self-fulfilment till it opens to that greater reality of being of which by this development of a richer power and a more sensitive use and capacity it becomes a well-prepared field of working.

Intellectual, volitional, ethical, emotional, aesthetic and physical training and improvement are all so much to the good, but they are only in the end a constant movement in a circle without any last delivering and illumining aim, unless they arrive at a point when they can open themselves to the power and presence of the Spirit and admit its direct workings. This direct working effects a conversion of the whole being which is the indispensable condition of our real perfection. To grow into the truth and power of the Spirit and by the direct action of that power to be made a fit channel of its self-expression, — a living of man in the Divine and a divine living of the Spirit in humanity, — will therefore be the principle and the whole object of an integral Yoga of self-perfection.

In the process of this change there must be by the very necessity of the effort two stages of its working. First, there will be the personal endeavour of the human being, as soon as he becomes aware by his soul, mind, heart of this divine possibility and turns towards it as the true object of life, to prepare himself for it and to get rid of all in him that belongs to a lower working, of all that stands in the way of his opening to the spiritual truth and its power, so as to possess by this liberation his spiritual being and turn all his natural movements into free means of its self-expression. It is by this turn that the self-conscious Yoga aware of its aim begins: there is a new awakening and an upward change of the life motive. So long as there is only an intellectual, ethical and other self-training for the now normal purposes of life which does not travel beyond the ordinary circle of working of mind, life and body, we are still only in the obscure and yet unillumined preparatory Yoga of Nature; we are still in pursuit of only an ordinary human perfection. A spiritual desire of the Divine and of the divine perfection, of a unity with him in all our being and a spiritual perfection in all our nature, is the effective sign of this change, the precursory power of a great integral conversion of our being and living.

By personal effort a precursory change, a preliminary conversion can be effected; it amounts to a greater or less spiritualising of our mental motives, our character and temperament, and a mastery, stilling or changed action of the vital and physical life. This converted subjectivity can be made the base of some communion or unity of the soul in mind with the Divine and some partial reflection of the divine nature in the mentality of the human being. That is as far as man can go by his unaided or indirectly aided effort, because that is an effort of mind and mind cannot climb beyond itself permanently: at most it arises to a spiritualised and idealised mentality. If it shoots up beyond that border, it loses hold of itself, loses hold of life, and arrives either at a trance of absorption or a passivity. A greater perfection can only be arrived at by a higher power entering in and taking up the whole action of the being. The second stage of this Yoga will therefore be a persistent giving up of all the action of the nature into the hands of this greater Power, a substitution of its influence, possession and working for the personal effort, until the Divine to whom we aspire becomes the direct master of the Yoga and effects the entire spiritual and ideal conversion of the being.

This double character of our Yoga raises it beyond the mundane ideal of perfection, while at the same time it goes too beyond the loftier, intenser, but much narrower religious formula. The mundane ideal regards man always as a mental, vital and physical being and it aims at a human perfection well within these limits, a perfection of mind, life and body, an expansion and refinement of the intellect and knowledge, of the will and power, of ethical character, aim and conduct, of aesthetic sensibility and creativeness, of emotional balanced poise and enjoyment, of vital and physical soundness, regulated action and just efficiency. It is a wide and full aim, but yet not sufficiently full and wide, because it ignores that other greater element of our being which the mind vaguely conceives as the spiritual element and leaves it either undeveloped or insufficiently satisfied as merely some high occasional or added derivatory experience, the result of the action of mind in its exceptional aspects or dependent upon mind for its presence and persistence. It can become a high aim when it seeks to develop the loftier and the larger reaches of our mentality, but yet not sufficiently high, because it does not aspire beyond mind to that of which our purest reason, our brightest mental intuition, our deepest mental sense and feeling, strongest mental will and power or ideal aim and purpose are only pale radiations. Its aim besides is limited to a terrestrial perfection of the normal human life.

A Yoga of integral perfection regards man as a divine spiritual being involved in mind, life and body; it aims therefore at a liberation and a perfection of his divine nature. It seeks to make an inner living in the perfectly developed spiritual being his constant intrinsic living and the spiritualised action of mind, life and body only its outward human expression. In order that this spiritual being may not be something vague and indefinable or else but imperfectly realised and dependent on the mental support and the mental limitations, it seeks to go beyond mind to the supramental knowledge, will, sense, feeling, intuition, dynamic initiation of vital and physical action, all that makes the native working of the spiritual being. It accepts human life, but takes account of the large supraterrestrial action behind the earthly material living, and it joins itself to the divine Being from whom the supreme origination of all these partial and lower states proceeds so that the whole of life may become aware of its divine source and feel in each action of knowledge, of will, of feeling, sense and body the divine originating impulse. It rejects nothing that is essential in the mundane aim, but enlarges it, finds and lives in its greater and its truer meaning now hidden from it, transfigures it from a limited, earthly and mortal thing to a figure of infinite, divine and immortal values.

The integral Yoga meets the religious ideal at several points, but goes beyond it in the sense of a greater wideness. The religious ideal looks, not only beyond this earth, but away from it to a heaven or even beyond all heavens to some kind of Nirvana. Its ideal of perfection is limited to whatever kind of inner or outer mutation will eventually serve the turning away of the soul from the human life to the beyond. Its ordinary idea of perfection is a religio-ethical change, a drastic purification of the active and the emotional being, often with an ascetic abrogation and rejection of the vital impulses as its completest reaching of excellence, and in any case a supraterrestrial motive and reward or result of a life of piety and right conduct. In so far as it admits a change of knowledge, will, aesthesis, it is in the sense of the turning of them to another object than the aims of human life and eventually brings a rejection of all earthly objects of aesthesis, will and knowledge. The method, whether it lays stress on personal effort or upon divine influence, on works and knowledge or upon grace, is not like the mundane a development, but rather a conversion; but in the end the aim is not a conversion of our mental and physical nature, but the putting on of a pure spiritual nature and being, and since that is not possible here on earth, it looks for its consummation by a transference to another world or a shuffling off of all cosmic existence.

But the integral Yoga founds itself on a conception of the spiritual being as an omnipresent existence, the fullness of which comes not essentially by a transference to other worlds or a cosmic self-extinction, but by a growth out of what we now are phenomenally into the consciousness of the omnipresent reality which we always are in the essence of our being. It substitutes for the form of religious piety its completer spiritual seeking of a divine union. It proceeds by a personal effort to a conversion through a divine influence and possession; but this divine grace, if we may so call it, is not simply a mysterious flow or touch coming from above, but the all-pervading act of a divine presence which we come to know within as the power of the highest Self and Master of our being entering into the soul and so possessing it that we not only feel it close to us and pressing upon our mortal nature, but live in its law, know that law, possess it as the whole power of our spiritualised nature. The conversion its action will effect is an integral conversion of our ethical being into the Truth and Right of the divine nature, of our intellectual into the illumination of divine knowledge, our emotional into the divine love and unity, our dynamic and volitional into a working of the divine power, our aesthetic into a plenary reception and a creative enjoyment of divine beauty, not excluding even in the end a divine conversion of the vital and physical being. It regards all the previous life as an involuntary and unconscious or half-conscious preparatory growing towards this change and Yoga as the voluntary and conscious effort and realisation of the change, by which all the aim of human existence in all its parts is fulfilled, even while it is transfigured. Admitting the supracosmic truth and life in worlds beyond, it admits too the terrestrial as a continued term of the one existence and a change of individual and communal life on earth as a strain of its divine meaning.

To open oneself to the supracosmic Divine is an essential condition of this integral perfection; to unite oneself with the universal Divine is another essential condition. Here the Yoga of self-perfection coincides with the Yogas of knowledge, works and devotion; for it is impossible to change the human nature into the divine or to make it an instrument of the divine knowledge, will and joy of existence, unless there is a union with the supreme Being, Consciousness and Bliss and a unity with its universal Self in all things and beings. A wholly separative possession of the divine nature by the human individual, as distinct from a self-withdrawn absorption in it, is not possible. But this unity will not be an inmost spiritual oneness qualified, so long as the human life lasts, by a separative existence in mind, life and body; the full perfection is a possession, through this spiritual unity, of unity too with the universal Mind, the universal Life, the universal Form which are the other constant terms of cosmic being. Moreover, since human life is still accepted as a self-expression of the realised Divine in man, there must be an action of the entire divine nature in our life; and this brings in the need of the supramental conversion which substitutes the native action of spiritual being for the imperfect action of the superficial nature and spiritualises and transfigures its mental, vital and physical parts by the spiritual ideality. These three elements, a union with the supreme Divine, unity with the universal Self, and a supramental life action from this transcendent origin and through this universality, but still with the individual as the soul-channel and natural instrument, constitute the essence of the integral divine perfection of the human being.

Chapter III

The Psychology of Self-Perfection

ESSENTIALLY, then, this divine self-perfection is a conversion of the human into a likeness of and a fundamental oneness with the divine nature, a rapid shaping of the image of God in man and filling in of its ideal outlines. It is what is ordinarily termed *sādṛśya-mukti*, a liberation into the divine resemblance out of the bondage of the human seeming, or, to use the expression of the Gita, *sādharmya-gati*, a coming to be one in law of being with the supreme, universal and indwelling Divine. To perceive and have a right view of our way to such a transformation we must form some sufficient working idea of the complex thing that this human nature at present is in the confused interminglings of its various principles, so that we may see the precise nature of the conversion each part of it must undergo and the most effective means for the conversion. How to disengage from this knot of thinking mortal matter the Immortal it contains, from this mentalised vital animal man the happy fullness of his submerged hints of Godhead, is the real problem of a human being and living. Life develops many first hints of the divinity without completely disengaging them; Yoga is the unravelling of the knot of Life's difficulty.

First of all we have to know the central secret of the psychological complexity which creates the problem and all its difficulties. But an ordinary psychology which only takes mind and its phenomena at their surface values, will be of no help to us; it will not give us the least guidance in this line of self-exploration and self-conversion. Still less can we find the clue in a scientific psychology with a materialistic basis which assumes that the body and the biological and physiological factors of our nature are not only the starting-point but the whole real foundation and regards human mind as only a subtle development from the life and the body. That may be the actual truth of the animal side of human nature and of the human mind in so far as it is limited and conditioned by the physical part of our being. But the whole difference between man and the animal is that the animal mind, as we know it, cannot get for one moment away from its origins, cannot break out from the covering, the close chrysalis which the bodily life has spun round the soul, and become something greater than its present self, a more free, magnificent and noble being; but in man mind reveals itself as a greater energy escaping from the restrictions of the vital and physical formula of being. But even this is not all that man is or can be: he has in him the power to evolve and release a still greater ideal energy which in its turn escapes out of the restrictions of the mental formula of his nature and discloses the supramental form, the ideal power of a spiritual being. In Yoga we have to travel beyond the physical nature and the superficial man and to discover the workings of the whole nature of the real man. In other words we must arrive at and use a psycho-physical knowledge with a spiritual foundation.

Man is in his real nature, — however obscure now this truth may be to our present understanding and self-consciousness, we must for the purposes of Yoga have faith in it, and we shall then find that our faith is justified by an increasing experience and a greater self-knowledge, — a spirit using the mind, life and body for an individual and a communal experience and self-manifestation in the universe. This spirit is an infinite existence limiting itself in apparent being for individual experience. It is an infinite consciousness which defines itself in finite forms of consciousness for joy of various knowledge and various power of being. It is an infinite delight of being expanding and contracting itself and its powers, concealing and discovering, formulating many terms of its joy of existence, even to an apparent obscuration and denial of its own nature. In itself it is eternal Sachchidananda, but this complexity, this knotting up and unravelling of the infinite in the finite is the aspect we see it assume in universal and in individual nature. To discover the eternal Sachchidananda, this essential self of our being within us, and live in it is the stable basis, to make its true nature evident and creative of a divine way of living in our instruments, supermind, mind, life and body, the active principle of a spiritual perfection.

Supermind, mind, life and body are the four instruments which the spirit uses for its manifestation in the workings of Nature. Supermind is spiritual consciousness acting as a self-luminous knowledge, will, sense, aesthesis, energy, self-creative and unveiling power of its own delight and being. Mind is the action of the same powers, but limited and only very indirectly and partially illumined. Supermind lives in unity though it plays with diversity; mind lives in a separative action of diversity, though it may open to unity. Mind is not only capable of ignorance, but, because it acts always partially and by limitation, it works characteristically as a power of ignorance: it may even and it does forget itself in a complete inconscience, or nescience, awaken from it to the ignorance of a partial knowledge and move from the ignorance towards a complete knowledge, — that is its natural action in the human being, — but it can never have by itself a complete knowledge. Supermind is incapable of real ignorance; even if it puts full knowledge behind it in the limitation of a particular working, yet all its working refers back to what it has put behind it and all is instinct with self-illumination; even if it involves itself in material nescience, it yet does there accurately the works of a perfect will and knowledge. Supermind lends itself to the action of the inferior instruments; it is always there indeed at the core as a secret support of their operations. In matter it is an automatic action and effectuation of the hidden idea in things; in life its most seizable form is instinct, an instinctive, subconscious or partly subconscious knowledge and operation; in mind it reveals itself as intuition, a swift, direct and self-effective illumination of intelligence, will, sense and aesthesis. But these are merely irradiations of the supermind which accommodate themselves to the limited functioning of the obscurer instruments: its own characteristic nature is a gnosis superconscient to mind, life and body. Supermind or gnosis is the characteristic, illumined, significant action of spirit in its own native reality.

Life is an energy of spirit subordinated to action of mind and body, which fulfils itself through mentality and physicality and acts as a link between them. It has its own characteristic operation but nowhere works independently of mind and body. All energy of the spirit in action works in the two terms of existence and consciousness, for the self-formation of existence and the play and self-realisation of consciousness, for the delight of existence and the delight of consciousness. In this inferior formulation of being in which we at present live, the spirit's energy of life works between the two terms of mind and matter, supporting and effecting the formulations of substance of matter and working as a material energy, supporting the formulations of consciousness of mind and the workings of mental energy, supporting the interaction of mind and body and working as a sensory and nervous energy. What we call vitality is for the purposes of our normal human existence power of conscious being emerging in matter, liberating from it and in it mind and the higher powers and supporting their limited action in the physical life, — just as what we call mentality is power of conscious being awaking in body to light of its own consciousness and to consciousness of all the rest of being immediately around it and working at first in the limited action set for it by life and body, but at certain points and at a certain height escaping from it to a partial action beyond this circle. But this is not the whole power whether of life or mentality; they have planes of conscious existence of their own kind, other than this material level, where they are freer in their characteristic action. Matter or body itself is a limiting form of substance of spirit in which life and mind and spirit are involved, self-hidden, self-forgetful by absorption in their own externalising action, but bound to emerge from it by a self-compelling evolution. But matter too is capable of refining to subtler forms of substance in which it becomes more apparently a formal density of life, of mind, of spirit. Man himself has, besides this gross material body, an encasing vital sheath, a mental body, a body of bliss and gnosis. But all matter, all body contains within it the secret powers of these higher principles; matter is a formation of life that has no real existence apart from the informing universal spirit which gives it its energy and substance.

This is the nature of spirit and its instruments. But to understand its operations and to get at a knowledge which will give to us a power of leverage in uplifting them out of the established groove in which our life goes spinning, we have to perceive that the Spirit has based all its workings upon two twin aspects of its being, Soul and Nature, Purusha and Prakriti. We have to treat them as different and diverse in power, — for in practice of consciousness this difference is valid, — although they are only two sides of the same reality, pole and pole of the one conscious being. Purusha or soul is spirit cognizant of the workings of its nature, supporting them by its being, enjoying or rejecting enjoyment of them in its delight of being. Nature is power of the spirit, and she is too working and process of its power formulating name and form of being, developing action of consciousness and knowledge, throwing itself up in will and impulsion, force and energy, fulfilling itself in enjoyment. Nature is Prakriti, Maya, Shakti. If we look at her on her most external side where she seems the opposite of Purusha, she is Prakriti, an inert and mechanical self-driven operation, inconscient or conscient only by the light of Purusha, elevated by various degrees, vital, mental, supramental, of his soul-illumination of her workings. If we look at her on her other internal side where she moves nearer to unity with Purusha, she is Maya, will of being and becoming or of cessation from being and becoming with all their results, apparent to the consciousness, of involution and evolution, existing and non-existing, self-concealment of spirit and self-discovery of spirit. Both are sides of one and the same thing, Shakti, power of being of the spirit which operates, whether superconsciously or consciously or subconsciously in a seeming inconscience, — in fact all these motions coexist at the same time and in the same soul, — as the spirit's power of knowledge, power of will, power of process and action, *jñāna-śakti*, *icchā-śakti*, *kriyā-śakti*. By this power the spirit creates all things in itself, hides and discovers all itself in the form and behind the veil of its manifestation.

Purusha is able by this power of its nature to take whatever poise it may will and to follow the law and form of being proper to any self-formulation. It is eternal soul and spirit in its own power of self-existence superior to and governing its manifestations; it is universal soul and spirit developed in power of becoming of its existence, infinite in the finite; it is individual soul and spirit absorbed in development of some particular course of its becoming, in appearance mutably finite in the infinite. All these things it can be at once, eternal spirit universalised in cosmos, individualised in its beings; it can too found the consciousness rejecting, governing or responding to the action of Nature in any one of them, put the others behind it or away from it, know itself as pure eternity, self-supporting universality or exclusive individuality. Whatever the formulation of its nature, soul can seem to become that and view itself as that only in the frontal active part of its consciousness; but it is never only what it seems to be; it is too the so much else that it can be; secretly, it is the all of itself that is yet hidden. It is not irrevocably limited by any particular self-formulation in Time, but can break through and beyond it, break it up or develop it, select, reject, new-create, reveal out of itself a greater self-formulation. What it believes itself to be by the whole active will of its consciousness in its instruments, that it is or tends to become, *yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*: what it believes it can be and has full faith in becoming, that it changes to in nature, evolves or discovers.

This power of the soul over its nature is of the utmost importance in the Yoga of self-perfection; if it did not exist, we could never get by conscious endeavour and aspiration out of the fixed groove of our present imperfect human being; if any greater perfection were intended, we should have to wait for Nature to effect it in her own slow or swift process of evolution. In the lower forms of being the soul accepts this complete subjection to Nature, but as it rises higher in the scale, it awakes to a sense of something in itself which can command Nature; but it is only when it arrives at self-knowledge that this free will and control becomes a complete reality. The change effects itself through process of nature, not therefore by any capricious magic, but an ordered development and intelligible process. When complete mastery is gained, then the process by its self-effective rapidity may seem a miracle to the intelligence, but it still proceeds by law of the truth of Spirit, — when the Divine within us by close union of our will and being with him takes up the Yoga and acts as the omnipotent master of the nature. For the Divine is our highest Self and the self of all Nature, the eternal and universal Purusha.

Purusha may establish himself in any plane of being, take any principle of being as the immediate head of his power and live in the working of its proper mode of conscious action. The soul may dwell in the principle of infinite unity of self-existence and be aware of all consciousness, energy, delight, knowledge, will, activity as conscious form of this essential truth, Sat or Satya. It may dwell in the principle of infinite conscious energy, Tapas, and be aware of it unrolling out of self-existence the works of knowledge, will and dynamic soul-action for the enjoyment of an infinite delight of the being. It may dwell in the principle of infinite self-existent delight and be aware of the divine Ananda creating out of its self-existence by its energy whatever harmony of being. In these three poises the consciousness of unity dominates; the soul lives in its awareness of eternity, universality, unity, and whatever diversity there is, is not separative, but only a multitudinous aspect of oneness. It may dwell too in the principle of supermind, in a luminous self-determining knowledge, will and action which develops some coordination of perfect delight of conscious being. In the higher gnosis unity is the basis, but it takes its joy in diversity; in lower fact of supermind diversity is the basis, but it refers back always to a conscious unity and it takes joy in unity. These ranges of consciousness are beyond our present level; they are superconscious to our normal mentality. That belongs to a lower hemisphere of being.

This lower being begins where a veil falls between soul and nature, between spirit in supermind and spirit in mind, life and body. Where this veil has not fallen, these instrumental powers are not what they are in us, but an enlightened part of the unified action of supermind and spirit. Mind gets to an independent idea of its own action when it forgets to refer back to the light from which it derives and becomes absorbed in the possibilities of its own separative process and enjoyment. The soul when it dwells in the principle of mind, not yet subject to but user of life and body, knows itself as a mental being working out its mental life and forces and images, bodies of the subtle mental substance, according to its individual knowledge, will and dynamis modified by its relation to other similar beings and powers in the universal mind. When it dwells in the principle of life, it knows itself as a being of the universal life working out action and consciousness by its desires under similar modifying conditions proper to a universal life-soul whose action is through many individual life-beings. When it dwells in the principle of matter, it knows itself as a consciousness of matter acting under a similar law of the energy of material being. In proportion as it leans towards the side of knowledge, it is aware of itself more or less clearly as a soul of mind, a soul of life, a soul of body viewing and acting in or acted upon by its nature; but where it leans towards the side of ignorance, it knows itself as an ego identified with nature of mind, of life or of body, a creation of Nature. But the native tendency of material being leads towards an absorption of the soul's energy in the act of formation and material movement and a consequent self-oblivion of the conscious being. The material universe begins from an apparent inconscience.

The universal Purusha dwells in all these planes in a certain simultaneity and builds upon each of these principles a world or series of worlds with its beings who live in the nature of that principle. Man, the microcosm, has all these planes in his own being, ranged from his subconscient to his superconscient existence. By a developing power of Yoga he can become aware of these concealed worlds hidden from his physical, materialised mind and senses which know only the material world, and then he becomes aware that his material existence is not a thing apart and self-existent, as the material universe in which he lives is also not a thing apart and self-existent, but is in constant relation to the higher planes and acted on by their powers and beings. He can open up and increase the action of these higher planes in himself and enjoy some sort of participation in the life of the other worlds, — which, for the rest, are or can be his dwelling-place, that is to say, the station of his awareness, *dhāma*, after death or between death and rebirth in a material body. But his most important capacity is that of developing the powers of the higher principles in himself, a greater power of life, a purer light of mind, the illumination of supermind, the infinite being, consciousness and delight of spirit. By an ascending movement he can develop his human imperfection towards that greater perfection.

But whatever his aim, however exalted his aspiration, he has to begin from the law of his present imperfection, to take full account of it and see how it can be converted to the law of a possible perfection. This present law of his being starts from the inconscience of the material universe, an involution of the soul in form and subjection to material nature; and, though in this matter life and mind have developed their own energies, yet they are limited and bound up in the action of the lower material, which is to the ignorance of his practical surface consciousness his original principle. Mind in him, though he is an embodied mental being, has to bear the control of the body and the physical life and can only by some more or less considerable effort of energy and concentration consciously control life and body. It is only by increasing that control that he can move towards perfection, — and it is only by developing soul-power that he can reach it. Nature-power in him has to become more and more completely a conscious act of soul, a conscious expression of all the will and knowledge of spirit. Prakriti has to reveal itself as shakti of the Purusha.

Chapter IV

The Perfection of the Mental Being

THE FUNDAMENTAL idea of a Yoga of self-perfection must be, under these conditions, a reversal of the present relations of the soul of man to his mental, vital and physical nature. Man is at present a partly self-conscious soul subject to and limited by mind, life and body, who has to become an entirely self-conscious soul master of his mind, life and body. Not limited by their claims and demands, a perfect self-conscious soul would be superior to and a free possessor of its instruments. This effort of man to be master of his own being has been the sense of a large part of his past spiritual, intellectual and moral strivings.

In order to be possessor of his being with any complete reality of freedom and mastery, man must find out his highest self, the real man or highest Purusha in him, which is free and master in its own inalienable power. He must cease to be the mental, vital, physical ego; for that is always the creation, instrument and subject of mental, vital, physical Nature. This ego is not his real self, but an instrumentation of Nature by which it has developed a sense of limited and separate individual being in mind, life and body. By this instrumentation he acts as if he were a separate existence in the material universe. Nature has evolved certain habitual limiting conditions under which that action takes place; self-identification of the soul with the ego is the means by which she induces the soul to consent to this action and accept these habitual limiting conditions. While the identification lasts, there is a self-imprisonment in this habitual round and narrow action, and, until it is transcended, there can be no free use by the soul of its individual living, much less a real self-exceeding. For this reason an essential movement of the Yoga is to draw back from the outward ego sense by which we are identified with the action of mind, life and body and live inwardly in the soul. The liberation from an externalised ego sense is the first step towards the soul's freedom and mastery.

When we thus draw back into the soul, we find ourselves to be not the mind, but a mental being who stands behind the action of the embodied mind, not a mental and vital personality, — personality is a composition of Nature, — but a mental Person, *manomaya puruṣa*. We become aware of a being within who takes his stand upon mind for self-knowledge and world-knowledge and thinks of himself as an individual for self-experience and world-experience, for an inward action and an outward-going action, but is yet different from mind, life and body. This sense of difference from the vital actions and the physical being is very marked; for although the Purusha feels his mind to be involved in life and body, yet he is aware that even if the physical life and body were to cease or be dissolved, he would still go on existing in his mental being. But the sense of difference from the mind is more difficult and less firmly distinct. But still it is there; it is characterised by any or all of three intuitions in which this mental Purusha lives and becomes by them aware of his own greater existence.

First, he has the intuition of himself as someone observing the action of the mind; it is something which is going on in him and yet before him as an object of his regarding knowledge. This self-awareness is the intuitive sense of the witness Purusha, *sākṣī*. Witness Purusha is a pure consciousness who watches Nature and sees it as an action reflected upon the consciousness and enlightened by that consciousness, but in itself other than it. To mental Purusha Nature is only an action, a complex action of discriminating and combining thought, of will, of sense, of emotion, of temperament and character, of ego feeling, which works upon a foundation of vital impulses, needs and cravings in the conditions imposed by the physical body. But it is not limited by them, since it can not only give them new directions and much variation, refining and extension, but is able to act in thought and imagination and a mental world of much more subtle and flexible creations. But also there is an intuition in the mental Purusha of something larger and greater than this present action in which he lives, a range of experience of which it is only a frontal scheme or a narrow superficial selection. By this intuition he stands upon the threshold of a subliminal self with a more extended possibility than this superficial mentality opens to his self-knowledge. A last and greatest intuition is an inner awareness of something which he more essentially is, something as high above mind as mind is above the physical life and body. This inner awareness is his intuition of his supramental and spiritual being.

The mental Purusha can at any time involve himself again in the superficial action from which he has drawn back, live for a while entirely identified with the mechanism of mind, life and body and absorbedly repeat its recurrent normal action. But once that separative movement has been made and lived in for some time, he can never be to himself quite what he was before. The involution in the outward action becomes now only a recurrent self-oblivion from which there is a tendency in him to draw back again to himself and to pure self-experience. It may be noted too that the Purusha by drawing back from the normal action of this outward consciousness which has created for him his present natural form of self-experience, is able to take two other poises. He can have an intuition of himself as a soul in body, which puts forth life as its activity and mind as the light of that activity. This soul in body is the physical conscious being, *annamaya puruṣa*, which uses life and mind characteristically for physical experience, — all else being regarded as a consequence of physical experience, — does not look beyond the life of the body and, so far as it feels anything beyond its physical individuality, is aware only of the physical universe and at most its oneness with the soul of physical Nature. But he can have too an intuition of himself as a soul of life, self-identified with a great movement of becoming in Time, which puts forth body as a form or basic sense-image and mind as a conscious activity of life-experience. This soul in life is the vital conscious being, *prāṇamaya puruṣa*, which is capable of looking beyond the duration and limits of the physical body, of feeling an eternity of life behind and in front, an identity with a universal Life-being, but does not look beyond a constant vital becoming in Time. These three Purushas are soul-forms of the Spirit by which it identifies its conscious existence with and founds its action upon any of these three planes or principles of its universal being.

But man is characteristically a mental being. Moreover, mentality is his highest present status in which he is nearest to his real self, most easily and largely aware of spirit. His way to perfection is not to involve himself in the outward or superficial existence, nor is it to place himself in the soul of life or the soul of body, but to insist on the three mental intuitions by which he can lift himself eventually above the physical, vital and mental levels. This insistence may take two quite different forms, each with its own object and way of proceeding. It is quite possible for him to accentuate it in a direction away from existence in Nature, a detachment, a withdrawal from mind, life and body. He may try to live more and more as the witness Purusha, regarding the action of Nature, without interest in it, without sanction to it, detached, rejecting the whole action, withdrawing into pure conscious existence. This is the Sankhya liberation. He may go inward into that larger existence of which he has the intuition and away from the superficial mentality into a dream-state or sleep-state which admits him into wider or higher ranges of consciousness. By passing away into these ranges he may put away from him the terrestrial being. There is even, it was supposed in ancient times, a transition to supramental worlds from which a return to earthly consciousness was either not possible or not obligatory. But the definite and sure finality of this kind of liberation depends on the elevation of the mental being into that spiritual self of which he becomes aware when he looks away and upward from all mentality. That is given as the key to entire cessation from terrestrial existence whether by immergence in pure being or a participation in supracosmic being.

But if our aim is to be not only free by self-detachment from Nature, but perfected in mastery, this type of insistence can no longer suffice. We have to regard our mental, vital and physical action of Nature, find out the knots of its bondage and the loosing-points of liberation, discover the keys of its imperfection and lay our finger on the key of perfection. When the regarding soul, the witness Purusha stands back from his action of nature and observes it, he sees that it proceeds of its own impulsion by the power of its mechanism, by force of continuity of movement, continuity of mentality, continuity of life impulse, continuity of an involuntary physical mechanism. At first the whole thing seems to be the recurrent action of an automatic machinery, although the sum of that action mounts constantly into a creation, development, evolution. He was as if seized in this wheel, attached to it by the ego sense, whirled round and onward in the circling of the machinery. A complete mechanical determinism or a stream of determinations of Nature to which he lent the light of his consciousness, is the natural aspect of his mental, vital and physical personality once it is regarded from this stable detached standpoint and no longer by a soul caught up in the movement and imagining itself to be a part of the action.

But on a farther view we find that this determinism is not so complete as it seemed; action of Nature continues and is what it is because of the sanction of the Purusha. The regarding Purusha sees that he supports and in some way fills and pervades the action with his conscious being. He discovers that without him it could not continue and that where he persistently withdraws this sanction, the habitual action becomes gradually enfeebled, flags and ceases. His whole active mentality can be thus brought to a complete stillness. There is yet a passive mentality which mechanically continues, but this too can be stilled by his withdrawal into himself out of the action. Even then the life action in its most mechanical parts continues; but that too can be stilled into cessation. It would appear then that he is not only the upholding (*bhartṛ*) Purusha, but in some way the master of his nature, Ishwara. It was the consciousness of this sanctioning control, this necessity of his consent, which made him in the ego-sense conceive of himself as a soul or mental being with a free will determining all his own becomings. Yet the free-will seems to be imperfect, almost illusory, since the actual will itself is a machinery of Nature and each separate willing determined by the stream of past action and the sum of conditions it created,

— although, because the result of the stream, the sum, is at each moment a new development, a new determination, it may seem to be a self-born willing, virginally creative at each moment. What he contributed all the while was a consent behind, a sanction to what Nature was doing. He does not seem able to rule her entirely, but only choose between certain well-defined possibilities: there is in her a power of resistance born of her past impetus and a still greater power of resistance born of the sum of fixed conditions she has created, which she presents to him as a set of permanent laws to be obeyed. He cannot radically alter her way of proceeding, cannot freely effect his will from within her present movement, nor, while standing in the mentality, get outside or above her in such a way as to exercise a really free control. There is a duality of dependence, her dependence on his consent, his dependence on her law and way and limits of action, determination denied by a sense of free-will, free-will nullified by the actuality of natural determination. He is sure that she is his power, but yet he seems to be subject to her. He is the sanctioning (*anumantṛ*) Purusha, but does not seem to be the absolute lord, Ishwara.

Nevertheless, there is somewhere an absolute control, a real Ishwara. He is aware of it and knows that if he can find it, he will enter into control, become not only the passive sanctioning witness and upholding soul of her will, but the free powerful user and determiner of her movements. But this control seems to belong to another poise than the mentality. Sometimes he finds himself using it, but as a channel or instrument; it comes to him from above. It is clear then that it is supramental, a power of the Spirit greater than mental being which he already knows himself to be at the summit and in the secret core of his conscious being. To enter into identity with that Spirit must then be his way to control and lordship. He can do it passively by a sort of reflection and receiving in his mental consciousness, but then he is only a mould, channel or instrument, not a possessor or participant in the power. He can arrive at identity by an absorption of his mentality in inner spiritual being, but then the conscious action ceases in a trance of identity. To be active master of the nature he must evidently rise to some higher supramental poise where there is possible not only a passive, but an active identity with the controlling spirit. To find the way of rising to this greater poise and be self-ruler, Swarat, is a condition of his perfection.

The difficulty of the ascent is due to a natural ignorance. He is the Purusha, witness of mental and physical Nature, *sākṣī*, but not a complete knower of self and Nature, *jñātṛ*. Knowledge in the mentality is enlightened by his consciousness; he is the mental knower; but he finds that this is not a real knowledge, but only a partial seeking and partial finding, a derivative uncertain reflection and narrow utilisation for action from a greater light beyond which is the real knowledge. This light is the self-awareness and all-awareness of Spirit. The essential self-awareness he can arrive at even on the mental plane of being, by reflection in the soul of mind or by its absorption in spirit, as indeed it can be arrived at by another kind of reflection or absorption in soul of life and soul of body. But for participation in an effective all-awareness with this essential self-awareness as the soul of its action he must rise to supermind. To be lord of his being, he must be knower of self and Nature, *jñātā īśvaraḥ*. Partially this may be done on a higher level of mind where it responds directly to supermind, but really and completely this perfection belongs not to the mental being, but to the ideal or knowledge Soul, *vijñānamaya puruṣa*. To draw up the mental into the greater knowledge being and that into the Bliss-Self of the spirit, *ānandamaya puruṣa*, is the uttermost way of this perfection.

But no perfection, much less this perfection can be attained without a very radical dealing with the present nature and the abrogation of much that seems to be the fixed law of its complex nexus of mental, vital and physical being. The law of this nexus has been created for a definite and limited end, the temporary maintenance, preservation, possession, aggrandisement, enjoyment, experience, need, action of the mental ego in the living body. Other resultant uses are served, but this is the immediate and fundamentally determining object and utility. To arrive at a higher utility and freer instrumentation this nexus must be partly broken up, exceeded, transformed into a larger harmony of action. The Purusha sees that the law created is that of a partly stable, partly unstable selective determination of habitual, yet developing experiences out of a first confused consciousness of self and not-self, subjective being and external universe. This determination is managed by mind, life and body acting upon each other, in harmony and correspondence, but also in discord and divergence, mutual interference and limitation. There is a similar mixed harmony and discord between various activities of the mind in itself, as also between activities of the life in itself and of the physical being. The whole is a sort of disorderly order, an order evolved and contrived out of a constantly surrounding and invading confusion.

This is the first difficulty the Purusha has to deal with, a mixed and confused action of Nature, — an action without clear self-knowledge, distinct motive, firm instrumentation, only an attempt at these things and a general relative success of effectuality, — a surprising effect of adaptation in some directions, but also much distress of inadequacy. That mixed and confused action has to be mended; purification is an essential means towards self-perfection. All these impurities and inadequacies result in various kinds of limitation and bondage: but there are two or three primary knots of the bondage, — ego is the principal knot, — from which the others derive. These bonds must be got rid of; purification is not complete till it brings about liberation. Besides, after a certain purification and liberation has been effected, there is still the conversion of the purified instruments to the law of a higher object and utility, a large, real and perfect order of action. By the conversion man can arrive at a certain perfection of fullness of being, calm, power and knowledge, even a greater vital action and more perfect physical existence. One result of this perfection is a large and perfected delight of being, Ananda. Thus purification, liberation, perfection, delight of being are four constituent elements of the Yoga, — *śuddhi*, *mukti*, *siddhi*, *bhukti*.

But this perfection cannot be attained or cannot be secure and entire in its largeness if the Purusha lays stress on individuality. To abandon identification with the physical, vital and mental ego, is not enough; he must arrive in soul also at a true, universalised, not separative individuality. In the lower nature man is an ego making a clean cut in conception between himself and all other existence; the ego is to him self, but all the rest not self, external to his being. His whole action starts from and is founded upon this self-conception and world-conception. But the conception is in fact an error. However sharply he individualises himself in mental idea and mental or other action, he is inseparable from the universal being, his body from universal force and matter, his life from the universal life, his mind from universal mind, his soul and spirit from universal soul and spirit. The universal acts on him, invades him, overcomes him, shapes itself in him at every moment; he in his reaction acts on the universal, invades, tries to impose himself on it, shape it, overcome its attack, rule and use its instrumentation.

This conflict is a rendering of the underlying unity, which assumes the aspect of struggle by a necessity of the original separation; the two pieces into which mind has cut the oneness, rush upon each other to restore the oneness and each tries to seize on and take into itself the separated portion. Universe seems to be always trying to swallow up man, the infinite to resume this finite which stands on its self-defence and even replies by aggression. But in real fact the universal being through this apparent struggle is working out its purpose in man, though the key and truth of the purpose and working is lost to his superficial conscious mind, only held obscurely in an underlying subconscient and only known luminously in an overruling superconscient unity. Man also is impelled towards unity by a constant impulse of extension of his ego, which identifies itself as best it can with other egos and with such portions of the universe as he can physically, vitally, mentally get into his use and possession. As man aims at knowledge and mastery of his own being, so also he aims at knowledge and mastery of the environmental world of nature, its objects, its instrumentation, its beings. First he tries to effect this aim by egoistic possession, but, as he develops, the element of sympathy born of the secret oneness grows in him and he arrives at the idea of a widening cooperation and oneness with other beings, a harmony with universal Nature and universal being.

The witness Purusha in the mind observes that the inadequacy of his effort, all the inadequacy in fact of man's life and nature arises from the separation and the consequent struggle, want of knowledge, want of harmony, want of oneness. It is essential for him to grow out of separative individuality, to universalise himself, to make himself one with the universe. This unification can be done only through the soul by making our soul of mind one with the universal Mind, our soul of life one with the universal Life-soul, our soul of body one with the universal soul of physical Nature. When this can be done, in proportion to the power, intensity, depth, completeness, permanence with which it can be done, great effects are produced upon the natural action. Especially there grows an immediate and profound sympathy and immixture of mind with mind, life with life, a lessening of the body's insistence on separateness, a power of direct mental and other intercommunication and effective mutual action which helps out now the inadequate indirect communication and action that was till now the greater part of the conscious means used by embodied mind. But still the Purusha sees that in mental, vital, physical nature, taken by itself, there is always a defect, inadequacy, confused action, due to the mechanically unequal interplay of the three modes or gunas of Nature. To transcend it he has in the universality too to rise to the supramental and spiritual, to be one with the supramental soul of cosmos, the universal spirit. He arrives at the larger light and order of a higher principle in himself and the universe which is the characteristic action of the divine Sachchidananda. Even, he is able to impose the influence of that light and order, not only on his own natural being, but, within the radius and to the extent of the Spirit's action in him, on the world he lives in, on that which is around him. He is *svarāṭ*, self-knower, self-ruler, but he begins to be also through this spiritual oneness and transcendence *samrāṭ*, a knower and master of his environing world of being.

In this self-development the soul finds that it has accomplished on this line the object of the whole integral Yoga, union with the Supreme in its self and in its universalised individuality. So long as he remains in the world-existence, this perfection must radiate out from him, — for that is the necessity of his oneness with the universe and its beings, — in an influence and action which help all around who are capable of it to rise to or advance towards the same perfection, and for the rest in an influence and action which help, as only the self-ruler and master man can help, in leading the human race forward spiritually towards this consummation and towards some image of a greater divine truth in their personal and communal existence. He becomes a light and power of the Truth to which he has climbed and a means for others' ascension.

Chapter V

The Instruments of the Spirit

IF THERE is to be an active perfection of our being, the first necessity is a purification of the working of the instruments which it now uses for a music of discords. The being itself, the spirit, the divine Reality in man stands in no need of purification; it is for ever pure, not affected by the faults of its instrumentation or the stumblings of mind and heart and body in their work, as the sun, says the Upanishad, is not touched or stained by the faults of the eye of vision. Mind, heart, the soul of vital desire, the life in the body are the seats of impurity; it is they that must be set right if the working of the spirit is to be a perfect working and not marked by its present greater or less concession to the devious pleasure of the lower nature. What is ordinarily called purity of the being, is either a negative whiteness, a freedom from sin gained by a constant inhibition of whatever action, feeling, idea or will we think to be wrong, or else, the highest negative or passive purity, the entire God-content, inaction, the complete stilling of the vibrant mind and the soul of desire, which in quietistic disciplines leads to a supreme peace; for then the spirit appears in all the eternal purity of its immaculate essence. That gained, there would be nothing farther to be enjoyed or done. But here we have the more difficult problem of a total, unabated, even an increased and more powerful action founded on perfect bliss of the being, the purity of the soul's instrumental as well as the spirit's essential nature. Mind, heart, life, body are to do the works of the Divine, all the works which they do now and yet more, but to do them divinely, as now they do not do them. This is the first appearance of the problem before him on which the seeker of perfection has to lay hold, that it is not a negative, prohibitory, passive or quietistic, but a positive, affirmative, active purity which is his object. A divine quietism discovers the immaculate eternity of the Spirit, a divine kinetism adds to it the right pure undeviating action of the soul, mind and body.

Moreover, it is a total purification of all the complex instrumentality in all the parts of each instrument that is demanded of us by the integral perfection. It is not, ultimately, the narrower moral purification of the ethical nature. Ethics deals only with the desire-soul and the active outward dynamical part of our being; its field is confined to character and action. It prohibits and inhibits certain actions, certain desires, impulses, propensities, — it inculcates certain qualities in the act, such as truthfulness, love, charity, compassion, chastity. When it has got this done and assured a base of virtue, the possession of a purified will and blameless habit of action, its work is finished. But the Siddha of the integral perfection has to dwell in a larger plane of the Spirit's eternal purity beyond good and evil. By this phrase it is not meant, as the rash hastily concluding intellect would be prone to imagine, that he will do good and evil indifferently and declare that to the spirit there is no difference between them, which would be in the plane of individual action an obvious untruth and might serve to cover a reckless self-indulgence of the imperfect human nature. Neither is it meant that since good and evil are in this world inextricably entangled together, like pain and pleasure, — a proposition which, however true at the moment and plausible as a generalisation, need not be true of the human being's greater spiritual evolution, — the liberated man will live in the spirit and stand back from the mechanical continued workings of a necessarily imperfect nature. This, however possible as a stage towards a final cessation of all activity, is evidently not a counsel of active perfection. But it is meant that the Siddha of the active integral perfection will live dynamically in the working of the transcendent power of the divine Spirit as a universal will through the supermind individualised in him for action. His works will therefore be the works of an eternal Knowledge, an eternal Truth, an eternal Might, an eternal Love, an eternal Ananda; but the truth, knowledge, force, love, delight will be the whole essential spirit of whatever work he will do and will not depend on its form; they will determine his action from the spirit within and the action will not determine the spirit or subject it to a fixed standard or rigid mould of working. He will have no dominant mere habit of character, but only a spiritual being and will with at the most a free and flexible temperamental mould for the action. His life will be a direct stream from the eternal fountains, not a form cut to some temporary human pattern. His perfection will not be a sattwic purity, but a thing uplifted beyond the gunas of Nature, a perfection of spiritual knowledge, spiritual power, spiritual delight, unity and harmony of unity; the outward perfection of his works will be freely shaped as the self-expression of this inner spiritual transcendence and universality. For this change he must make conscient in him that power of spirit and supermind which is now superconscient to our mentality. But that cannot work in him so long as his present mental, vital, physical being is not liberated from its actual inferior working. This purification is the first necessity.

In other words, purification must not be understood in any limited sense of a selection of certain outward kinetic movements, their regulation, the inhibition of other action or a liberation of certain forms of character or particular mental and moral capacities. These things are secondary signs of our derivative being, not essential powers and first forces. We have to take a wider psychological view of the primary forces of our nature. We have to distinguish the formed parts of our being, find out their basic defect of impurity or wrong action and correct that, sure that the rest will then come right naturally. We have not to doctor symptoms of impurity, or that only secondarily, as a minor help, — but to strike at its roots after a deeper diagnosis. We then find that there are two forms of impurity which are at the root of the whole confusion. One is a defect born of the nature of our past evolution, which has been a nature of separative ignorance; this defect is a radically wrong and ignorant form given to the proper action of each part of our instrumental being. The other impurity is born of the successive process of an evolution, where life emerges in and depends on body, mind emerges in and depends on life in the body, supermind emerges in and lends itself to instead of governing mind, soul itself is apparent only as a circumstance of the bodily life of the mental being and veils up the spirit in the lower imperfections. This second defect of our nature is caused by this dependence of the higher on the lower parts; it is an immixture of functions by which the impure working of the lower instrument gets into the characteristic action of the higher function and gives to it an added imperfection of embarrassment, wrong direction and confusion.

Thus the proper function of the life, the vital force, is enjoyment and possession, both of them perfectly legitimate, because the Spirit created the world for Ananda, enjoyment and possession of the many by the One, of the One by the many and of the many too by the many; but, — this is an instance of the first kind of defect, — the separative ignorance gives to it the wrong form of desire and craving which vitiates the whole enjoyment and possession and imposes on it its opposites, want and suffering. Again, because mind is entangled in life from which it evolves, this desire and craving get into the action of the mental will and knowledge; that makes the will a will of craving, a force of desire instead of a rational will and a discerning force of intelligent effectuation, and it distorts the judgment and reason so that we judge and reason according to our desires and prepossessions and not with the disinterested impartiality of a pure judgment and the rectitude of a reason which seeks only to distinguish truth and understand rightly the objects of its workings. That is an example of immixture. These two kinds of defect, wrong form of action and illegitimate mixture of action, are not limited to these signal instances, but belong to each instrument and to each combination of their functionings. They pervade the whole economy of our nature. They are fundamental defects of our lower instrumental nature, and if we can set them right, we shall get our instrumental being into a state of purity, enjoy the clarity of a pure will, a pure heart of emotion, a pure enjoyment of our vitality, a pure body. That will be a preliminary, a human perfection, but it can be made the basis and open out in its effort of self-attainment into the greater, the divine perfection.

Mind, life and body are the three powers of our lower nature. But they cannot be taken quite separately because the life acts as a link and gives its character to body and to a great extent to our mentality. Our body is a living body; the life-force mingles in and determines all its functionings. Our mind too is largely a mind of life, a mind of physical sensation; only in its higher functions is it normally capable of something more than the workings of a physical mentality subjected to life. We may put it in this ascending order. We have first a body supported by the physical life-force, the physical prana which courses through the whole nervous system and gives its stamp to our corporeal action, so that all is of the character of the action of a living and not an inert mechanical body. Prana and physicality together make the gross body, *sthūla śarīra*. This is only the outer instrument, the nervous force of life acting in the form of body with its gross physical organs. Then there is the inner instrument, *antaḥkaraṇa*, the conscious mentality. This inner instrument is divided by the old system into four powers; *citta* or basic mental consciousness; *manas*, the sense mind; *buddhi*, the intelligence; *ahaṅkāra*, the ego-idea. The classification may serve as a starting-point, though for a greater practicality we have to make certain farther distinctions. This mentality is pervaded by the life-force, which becomes here an instrument for psychic consciousness of life and psychic action on life. Every fibre of the sense mind and basic consciousness is shot through with the action of this psychic prana, it is a nervous or vital and physical mentality. Even the buddhi and ego are overpowered by it, although they have the capacity of raising the mind beyond subjection to this vital, nervous and physical psychology. This combination creates in us the sensational desire-soul which is the chief obstacle to a higher human as well as to the still greater divine perfection. Finally, above our present conscious mentality is a secret supermind which is the proper means and native seat of that perfection.

Chitta, the basic consciousness, is largely subconscient; it has, open and hidden, two kinds of action, one passive or receptive, the other active or reactive and formative. As a passive power it receives all impacts, even those of which the mind is unaware or to which it is inattentive, and it stores them in an immense reserve of passive subconscient memory on which the mind as an active memory can draw. But ordinarily the mind draws only what it had observed and understood at the time, — more easily what it had observed well and understood carefully, less easily what it had observed carelessly or ill understood; at the same time there is a power in consciousness to send up to the active mind for use what that mind had not at all observed or attended to or even consciously experienced. This power only acts observably in abnormal conditions, when some part of the subconscious chitta comes as it were to the surface or when the subliminal being in us appears on the threshold and for a time plays some part in the outer chamber of mentality where the direct intercourse and commerce with the external world takes place and our inner dealings with ourselves develop on the surface. This action of memory is so fundamental to the entire mental action that it is sometimes said, memory is the man. Even in the submental action of the body and life, which is full of this subconscient chitta, though not under the control of the conscious mind, there is a vital and physical memory. The vital and physical habits are largely formed by this submental memory. For this reason they can be changed to an indefinite extent by a more powerful action of conscious mind and will, when that can be developed and can find means to communicate to the subconscient chitta the will of the spirit for a new law of vital and physical action. Even, the whole constitution of our life and body may be described as a bundle of habits formed by the past evolution in Nature and held together by the persistent memory of this secret consciousness. For chitta, the primary stuff of consciousness, is like prana and body universal in Nature, but is subconscient and mechanical in nature of Matter.

But in fact all action of the mind or inner instrument arises out of this chitta or basic consciousness, partly conscient, partly subconscient or subliminal to our active mentality. When it is struck by the world's impacts from outside or urged by the reflective powers of the subjective inner being, it throws up certain habitual activities, the mould of which has been determined by our evolution. One of these forms of activity is the emotional mind, — the heart, as we may call it for the sake of a convenient brevity. Our emotions are the waves of reaction and response which rise up from the basic consciousness, *citta-vṛtti*. Their action too is largely regulated by habit and an emotive memory. They are not imperative, not laws of Necessity; there is no really binding law of our emotional being to which we must submit without remedy; we are not obliged to give responses of grief to certain impacts upon the mind, responses of anger to others, to yet others responses of hatred or dislike, to others responses of liking or love. All these things are only habits of our affective mentality; they can be changed by the conscious will of the spirit; they can be inhibited; we may even rise entirely above all subjection to grief, anger, hatred, the duality of liking and disliking. We are subject to these things only so long as we persist in subjection to the mechanical action of the chitta in the emotive mentality, a thing difficult to get rid of because of the power of past habit and especially the importunate insistence of the vital part of mentality, the nervous life-mind or psychic prana. This nature of the emotive mind as a reaction of chitta with a certain close dependence upon the nervous life sensations and the responses of the psychic prana is so characteristic that in some languages it is called chitta and prana, the heart, the life soul; it is indeed the most directly agitating and powerfully insistent action of the desire-soul which the immixture of vital desire and responsive consciousness has created in us. And yet the true emotive soul, the real psyche in us, is not a desire-soul, but a soul of pure love and delight; but that, like the rest of our true being, can only emerge when the deformation created by the life of desire is removed from the surface and is no longer the characteristic action of our being. To get that done is a necessary part of our purification, liberation, perfection.

The nervous action of the psychic prana is most obvious in our purely sensational mentality. This nervous mentality pursues indeed all the action of the inner instrument and seems often to form the greater part of things other than sensation. The emotions are especially assailed and have the pranic stamp; fear is more even of a nervous sensation than an emotion, anger is largely or often a sensational response translated into terms of emotion. Other feelings are more of the heart, more inward, but they ally themselves to the nervous and physical longings or outward-going impulses of the psychic prana. Love is an emotion of the heart and may be a pure feeling, — all mentality, since we are embodied minds, must produce, even thought produces, some kind of life effect and some response in the stuff of body, but they need not for that reason be of a physical nature, — but the heart's love allies itself readily with a vital desire in the body. This physical element may be purified of that subjection to physical desire which is called lust, it may become love using the body for a physical as well as a mental and spiritual nearness; but love may, too, separate itself from all, even the most innocent physical element, or from all but a shadow of it, and be a pure movement to union of soul with soul, psyche with psyche. Still the proper action of the sensational mind is not emotion, but conscious nervous response and nervous feeling and affection, impulse of the use of physical sense and body for some action, conscious vital craving and desire. There is a side of receptive response, a side of dynamic reaction. These things get their proper normal use when the higher mind is not mechanically subject to them, but controls and regulates their action. But a still higher state is when they undergo a certain transformation by the conscious will of the spirit which gives its right and no longer its wrong or desire form of characteristic action to the psychic prana.

Manas, the sense mind, depends in our ordinary consciousness on the physical organs of receptive sense for knowledge and on the organs of the body for action directed towards the objects of sense. The superficial and outward action of the senses is physical and nervous in its character, and they may easily be thought to be merely results of nerve-action; they are sometimes called in the old books *prāṇas*, nervous or life activities. But still the essential thing in them is not the nervous excitation, but the consciousness, the action of the chitta, which makes use of the organ and of the nervous impact of which it is the channel. Manas, sense-mind, is the activity, emerging from the basic consciousness, which makes up the whole essentiality of what we call sense. Sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch are really properties of the mind, not of the body; but the physical mind which we ordinarily use, limits itself to a translation into sense of so much of the outer impacts as it receives through the nervous system and the physical organs. But the inner Manas has also a subtle sight, hearing, power of contact of its own which is not dependent on the physical organs. And it has, moreover, a power not only of direct communication of mind with object — leading even at a high pitch of action to a sense of the contents of an object within or beyond the physical range, — but direct communication also of mind with mind. Mind is able too to alter, modify, inhibit the incidence, values, intensities of sense impacts. These powers of the mind we do not ordinarily use or develop; they remain subliminal and emerge sometimes in an irregular and fitful action, more readily in some minds than in others, or come to the surface in abnormal states of the being. They are the basis of clairvoyance, clairaudience, transference of thought and impulse, telepathy, most of the more ordinary kinds of occult powers, — so called, though these are better described less mystically as powers of the now subliminal action of the Manas. The phenomena of hypnotism and many others depend upon the action of this subliminal sense-mind; not that it alone constitutes all the elements of the phenomena, but it is the first supporting means of intercourse, communication and response, though much of the actual operation belongs to an inner Buddhi. Mind physical, mind supraphysical, — we have and can use this double sense mentality.

Buddhi is a construction of conscious being which quite exceeds its beginnings in the basic chitta; it is the intelligence with its power of knowledge and will. Buddhi takes up and deals with all the rest of the action of the mind and life and body. It is in its nature thought-power and will-power of the Spirit turned into the lower form of a mental activity. We may distinguish three successive gradations of the action of this intelligence. There is first an inferior perceptive understanding which simply takes up, records, understands and responds to the communications of the sense-mind, memory, heart and sensational mentality. It creates by their means an elementary thinking mind which does not go beyond their data, but subjects itself to their mould and rings out their repetitions, runs round and round in the habitual circle of thought and will suggested by them or follows, with an obedient subservience of the reason to the suggestions of life, any fresh determinations which may be offered to its perception and conception. Beyond this elementary understanding, which we all use to an enormous extent, there is a power of arranging or selecting reason and will-force of the intelligence which has for its action and aim an attempt to arrive at a plausible, sufficient, settled ordering of knowledge and will for the use of an intellectual conception of life.

In spite of its more purely intellectual character this secondary or intermediate reason is really pragmatic in its intention. It creates a certain kind of intellectual structure, frame, rule into which it tries to cast the inner and outer life so as to use it with a certain mastery and government for the purposes of some kind of rational will. It is this reason which gives to our normal intellectual being our set aesthetic and ethical standards, our structures of opinion and our established norms of idea and purpose. It is highly developed and takes the primacy in all men of an at all developed understanding. But beyond it there is a reason, a highest action of the buddhi which concerns itself disinterestedly with a pursuit of pure truth and right knowledge; it seeks to discover the real Truth behind life and things and our apparent selves and to subject its will to the law of Truth. Few, if any of us, can use this highest reason with any purity, but the attempt to do it is the topmost capacity of the inner instrument, the *antaḥkaraṇa*.

Buddhi is really an intermediary between a much higher Truth-mind not now in our active possession, which is the direct instrument of Spirit, and the physical life of the human mind evolved in body. Its powers of intelligence and will are drawn from this greater direct Truth-mind or supermind. Buddhi centres its mental action round the ego-idea, the idea that I am this mind, life and body or am a mental being determined by their action. It serves this ego-idea whether limited by what we call egoism or extended by sympathy with the life around us. An ego-sense is created which reposes on the separative action of the body, of the individualised life, of the mind-responses, and the ego-idea in the buddhi centralises the whole action of this ego's thought, character, personality. The lower understanding and the intermediary reason are instruments of its desire of experience and self-enlargement. But when the highest reason and will develop, we can turn towards that which these outward things mean to the higher spiritual consciousness. The "I" can then be seen as a mental reflection of the Self, the Spirit, the Divine, the one existence transcendent, universal, individual in its multiplicity; the consciousness in which these things meet, become aspects of one being and assume their right relations, can then be unveiled out of all these physical and mental coverings. When the transition to supermind takes place, the powers of the Buddhi do not perish, but have all to be converted to their supramental values. But the consideration of the supermind and the conversion of the buddhi belongs to the question of the higher siddhi or divine perfection. At present we have to consider the purification of the normal being of man, preparatory to any such conversion, which leads to the liberation from the bonds of our lower nature.

Chapter VI

Purification — The Lower Mentality

WE HAVE to deal with the complex action of all these instruments and set about their purification. And the simplest way will be to fasten on the two kinds of radical defect in each, distinguish clearly in what they consist and set them right. But there is also the question where we are to begin. For the entanglement is great, the complete purification of one instrument depends on the complete purification too of all the others, and that is a great source of difficulty, disappointment and perplexity, — as when we think we have got the intelligence purified, only to find that it is still subject to attack and overclouding because the emotions of the heart and the will and sensational mind are still affected by the many impurities of the lower nature and they get back into the enlightened buddhi and prevent it from reflecting the pure truth for which we are seeking. But we have on the other hand this advantage that one important instrument sufficiently purified can be used as a means for the purification of the others, one step firmly taken makes easier all the others and gets rid of a host of difficulties. Which instrument then by its purification and perfection will bring about most easily and effectively or can aid with a most powerful rapidity the perfection of the rest?

Since we are the spirit enveloped in mind, a soul evolved here as a mental being in a living physical body, it must naturally be in the mind, the *antaḥkaraṇa*, that we must look for this desideratum. And in the mind it is evidently by the buddhi, the intelligence and the will of the intelligence that the human being is intended to do whatever work is not done for him by the physical or nervous nature as in the plant and the animal. Pending the evolution of any higher supramental power the intelligent will must be our main force for effectuation and to purify it becomes a very primary necessity. Once our intelligence and will are well purified of all that limits them and gives them a wrong action or wrong direction, they can easily be perfected, can be made to respond to the suggestions of Truth, understand themselves and the rest of the being, see clearly and with a fine and scrupulous accuracy what they are doing and follow out the right way to do it without any hesitating or eager error or stumbling deviation. Eventually their response can be opened up to the perfect discernings, intuitions, inspirations, revelations of the supermind and proceed by a more and more luminous and even infallible action. But this purification cannot be effected without a preliminary clearing of its natural obstacles in the other lower parts of the *antaḥkaraṇa*, and the chief natural obstacle running through the whole action of the *antaḥkaraṇa*, through the sense, the mental sensation, emotion, dynamic impulse, intelligence, will, is the intermiscence and the compelling claim of the psychic prana. This then must be dealt with, its dominating intermiscence ruled out, its claim denied, itself quieted and prepared for purification.

Each instrument has, it has been said, a proper and legitimate action and also a deformation or wrong principle of its proper action. The proper action of the psychic prana is pure possession and enjoyment, *bhoga*. To enjoy thought, will, action, dynamic impulse, result of action, emotion, sense, sensation, to enjoy too by their means objects, persons, life, the world, is the activity for which this prana gives us a psycho-physical basis. A really perfect enjoyment of existence can only come when what we enjoy is not the world in itself or for itself, but God in the world, when it is not things, but the Ananda of the spirit in things that forms the real, essential object of our enjoying and things only as form and symbol of the spirit, waves of the ocean of Ananda. But this Ananda can only come at all when we can get at and reflect in our members the hidden spiritual being, and its fullness can only be had when we climb to the supramental ranges. Meanwhile there is a just and permissible, a quite legitimate human enjoyment of these things, which is, to speak in the language of Indian psychology, predominantly sattwic in its nature. It is an enlightened enjoyment principally by the perceptive, aesthetic and emotive mind, secondarily only by the sensational, nervous and physical being, but all subject to the clear government of the buddhi, to a right reason, a right will, a right reception of the life impacts, a right order, a right feeling of the truth, law, ideal sense, beauty, use of things. The mind gets the pure taste of enjoyment of them, *rasa*, and rejects whatever is perturbed, troubled and perverse. Into this acceptance of the clear and limpid *rasa*, the psychic prana has to bring in the full sense of life and the occupying enjoyment by the whole being, *bhoga*, without which the acceptance and possession by the mind, *rasa-grahaṇa*, would not be concrete enough, would be too tenuous to satisfy altogether the embodied soul. This contribution is its proper function.

The deformation which enters in and prevents the purity, is a form of vital craving; the grand deformation which the psychic prana contributes to our being, is desire. The root of desire is the vital craving to seize upon that which we feel we have not, it is the limited life's instinct for possession and satisfaction. It creates the sense of want, — first the simpler vital craving of hunger, thirst, lust, then these psychical hungers, thirsts, lusts of the mind which are a much greater and more instant and pervading affliction of our being, the hunger which is infinite because it is the hunger of an infinite being, the thirst which is only temporarily lulled by satisfaction, but is in its nature insatiable. The psychic prana invades the sensational mind and brings into it the unquiet thirst of sensations, invades the dynamic mind with the lust of control, having, domination, success, fulfilment of every impulse, fills the emotional mind with the desire for the satisfaction of liking and disliking, for the wreaking of love and hate, brings the shrinkings and panics of fear and the strainings and disappointments of hope, imposes the tortures of grief and the brief fevers and excitements of joy, makes the intelligence and intelligent will the accomplices of all these things and turns them in their own kind into deformed and lame instruments, the will into a will of craving and the intelligence into a partial, a stumbling and an eager pursuer of limited, impatient, militant prejudgment and opinion. Desire is the root of all sorrow, disappointment, affliction, for though it has a feverish joy of pursuit and satisfaction, yet because it is always a straining of the being, it carries into its pursuit and its getting a labour, hunger, struggle, a rapid subjection to fatigue, a sense of limitation, dissatisfaction and early disappointment with all its gains, a ceaseless morbid stimulation, trouble, disquiet, *aśānti*. To get rid of desire is the one firm indispensable purification of the psychical prana, — for so we can replace the soul of desire with its pervading immiscence in all our instruments by a mental soul of calm delight and its clear and limpid possession of ourselves and world and Nature which is the crystal basis of the mental life and its perfection.

The psychical prana interferes in all the higher operations to deform them, but its defect is itself due to its being interfered with and deformed by the nature of the physical workings in the body which Life has evolved in its emergence from matter. It is that which has created the separation of the individual life in the body from the life of the universe and stamped on it the character of want, limitation, hunger, thirst, craving for what it has not, a long groping after enjoyment and a hampered and baffled need of possession. Easily regulated and limited in the purely physical order of things, it extends itself in the psychical prana immensely and becomes, as the mind grows, a thing with difficulty limited, insatiable, irregular, a busy creator of disorder and disease. Moreover, the psychical prana leans on the physical life, limits itself by the nervous force of the physical being, limits thereby the operations of the mind and becomes the link of its dependence on the body and its subjection to fatigue, incapacity, disease, disorder, insanity, the pettiness, the precariousness and even the possible dissolution of the workings of the physical mentality. Our mind instead of being a thing powerful in its own strength, a clear instrument of conscious spirit, free and able to control, use and perfect the life and body, appears in the result a mixed construction; it is a predominantly physical mentality limited by its physical organs and subject to the demands and to the obstructions of the life in the body. This can only be got rid of by a sort of practical, inward psychological operation of analysis by which we become aware of the mentality as a separate power, isolate it for a free working, distinguish too the psychical and the physical prana and make them no longer a link for dependence, but a transmitting channel for the Idea and Will in the buddhi, obedient to its suggestions and commands; the prana then becomes a passive means of effectuation for the mind's direct control of the physical life. This control, however abnormal to our habitual poise of action, is not only possible, — it appears to some extent in the phenomena of hypnosis, though these are unhealthily abnormal, because there it is a foreign will which suggests and commands, — but must become the normal action when the higher Self within takes up the direct command of the whole being. This control can be exercised perfectly, however, only from the supramental level, for it is there that the true effective Idea and Will reside and the mental thought-mind, even spiritualised, is only a limited, though it may be made a very powerful deputy.

Desire, it is thought, is the real motive power of human living and to cast it out would be to stop the springs of life; satisfaction of desire is man's only enjoyment and to eliminate it would be to extinguish the impulse of life by a quietistic asceticism. But the real motive power of the life of the soul is Will; desire is only a deformation of will in the dominant bodily life and physical mind. The essential turn of the soul to possession and enjoyment of the world consists in a will to delight, and the enjoyment of the satisfaction of craving is only a vital and physical degradation of the will to delight. It is essential that we should distinguish between pure will and desire, between the inner will to delight and the outer lust and craving of the mind and body. If we are unable to make this distinction practically in the experience of our being, we can only make a choice between a life-killing asceticism and the gross will to live or else try to effect an awkward, uncertain and precarious compromise between them. This is in fact what the mass of men do; a small minority trample down the life instinct and strain after an ascetic perfection; most obey the gross will to live with such modifications and restraints as society imposes or the normal social man has been trained to impose on his own mind and actions;

others set up a balance between ethical austerity and temperate indulgence of the desiring mental and vital self and see in this balance the golden mean of a sane mind and healthy human living. But none of these ways gives the perfection which we are seeking, the divine government of the will in life. To tread down altogether the prana, the vital being, is to kill the force of life by which the large action of the embodied soul in the human being must be supported; to indulge the gross will to live is to remain satisfied with imperfection; to compromise between them is to stop half way and possess neither earth nor heaven. But if we can get at the pure will undeformed by desire, — which we shall find to be a much more free, tranquil, steady and effective force than the leaping, smoke-stifled, soon fatigued and baffled flame of desire, — and at the calm inner will of delight not afflicted or limited by any trouble of craving, we can then transform the prana from a tyrant, enemy, assailant of the mind into an obedient instrument. We may call these greater things, too, by the name of desire, if we choose, but then we must suppose that there is a divine desire other than the vital craving, a God-desire of which this other and lower phenomenon is an obscure shadow and into which it has to be transfigured. It is better to keep distinct names for things which are entirely different in their character and inner action.

To rid the prana of desire and incidentally to reverse the ordinary poise of our nature and turn the vital being from a troublesomely dominant power into the obedient instrument of a free and unattached mind, is then the first step in purification. As this deformation of the psychical prana is corrected, the purification of the rest of the intermediary parts of the *antaḥkaraṇa* is facilitated, and when that correction is completed, their purification too can be easily made absolute. These intermediary parts are the emotional mind, the receptive sensational mind and the active sensational mind or mind of dynamic impulse. They all hang together in a strongly knotted interaction. The deformation of the emotional mind hinges upon the duality of liking and disliking, *rāga-dveṣa*, emotional attraction and repulsion. All the complexity of our emotions and their tyranny over the soul arise from the habitual responses of the soul of desire in the emotions and sensations to these attractions and repulsions. Love and hatred, hope and fear, grief and joy all have their founts in this one source. We like, love, welcome, hope for, joy in whatever our nature, the first habit of our being, or else a formed (often perverse) habit, the second nature of our being, presents to the mind as pleasant, *priyam*; we hate, dislike, fear, have repulsion from or grief of whatever it presents to us as unpleasant, *apriyam*. This habit of the emotional nature gets into the way of the intelligent will and makes it often a helpless slave of the emotional being or at least prevents it from exercising a free judgment and government of the nature. This deformation has to be corrected. By getting rid of desire in the psychic prana and its intermiscence in the emotional mind, we facilitate the correction. For then attachment which is the strong bond of the heart, falls away from the heart-strings; the involuntary habit of *rāga-dveṣa* remains, but, not being made obstinate by attachment, it can be dealt with more easily by the will and the intelligence. The restless heart can be conquered and get rid of the habit of attraction and repulsion.

But then if this is done, it may be thought, as with regard to desire, that this will be the death of the emotional being. It will certainly be so, if the deformation is eliminated but not replaced by the right action of the emotional mind; the mind will then pass into a neutral condition of blank indifference or into a luminous state of peaceful impartiality with no stir or wave of emotion. The former state is in no way desirable; the latter may be the perfection of a quietistic discipline, but in the integral perfection which does not reject love or shun various movement of delight, it can be no more than a stage which has to be overpassed, a preliminary passivity admitted as a first basis for a right activity. Attraction and repulsion, liking and disliking are a necessary mechanism for the normal man, they form a first principle of natural instinctive selection among the thousand flattering and formidable, helpful and dangerous impacts of the world around him. The buddhi starts with this material to work on and tries to correct the natural and instinctive by a wiser reasoned and willed selection; for obviously the pleasant is not always the right thing, the object to be preferred and selected, nor the unpleasant the wrong thing, the object to be shunned and rejected; the pleasant and the good, *preyas* and *śreyas*, have to be distinguished, and right reason has to choose and not the caprice of emotion. But this it can do much better when the emotional suggestion is withdrawn and the heart rests in a luminous passivity. Then too the right activity of the heart can be brought to the surface; for we find then that behind this emotion-ridden soul of desire there was waiting all the while a soul of love and lucid joy and delight, a pure psyche, which was clouded over by the deformations of anger, fear, hatred, repulsion and could not embrace the world with an impartial love and joy. But the purified heart is rid of anger, rid of fear, rid of hatred, rid of every shrinking and repulsion: it has a universal love, it can receive with an untroubled sweetness and clarity the various delight which God gives it in the world. But it is not the lax slave of love and delight; it does not desire, does not attempt to impose itself as the master of the actions. The selective process necessary to action is left principally to the buddhi and, when the buddhi has been overpassed, to the spirit in the supramental will, knowledge and Ananda.

The receptive sensational mind is the nervous mental basis of the affections; it receives mentally the impacts of things and gives to them the responses of mental pleasure and pain which are the starting-point of the duality of emotional liking and disliking. All the heart's emotions have a corresponding nervous-mental accompaniment, and we often find that when the heart is freed of any will to the dualities, there still survives a root of disturbance of nervous mind, or a memory in physical mind which falls more and more away to a quite physical character, the more it is repelled by the will in the buddhi. It becomes finally a mere suggestion from outside to which the nervous chords of the mind still occasionally respond until a complete purity liberates them into the same luminous universality of delight which the pure heart already possesses. The active dynamic mind of impulse is the lower organ or channel of responsive action; its deformation is a subjection to the suggestions of the impure emotional and sensational mentality and the desire of the prana, to impulses to action dictated by grief, fear, hatred, desire, lust, craving, and the rest of the unquiet brood. Its right form of action is a pure dynamic force of strength, courage, temperamental power, not acting for itself or in obedience to the lower members, but as an impartial channel for the dictates of the pure intelligence and will or the supramental Purusha. When we have got rid of these deformations and cleared the mentality for these truer forms of action, the lower mentality is purified and ready for perfection. But that perfection depends on the possession of a purified and enlightened buddhi; for the buddhi is the chief power in the mental being and the chief mental instrument of the Purusha.

Chapter VII

Purification — Intelligence and Will

TO PURIFY the buddhi we must first understand its rather complex composition. And first we have to make clear the distinction, ignored in ordinary speech, between the *manas*, mind, and *buddhi*, the discerning intelligence and the enlightened will. Manas is the sense mind. Man's initial mentality is not at all a thing of reason and will; it is an animal, physical or sense mentality which constitutes its whole experience from the impressions made on it by the external world and by its own embodied consciousness which responds to the outward stimulus of this kind of experience. The buddhi only comes in as a secondary power which has in the evolution taken the first place, but is still dependent on the inferior instrument it uses; it depends for its workings on the sense mind and does what it can on its own higher range by a difficult, elaborate and rather stumbling extension of knowledge and action from the physical or sense basis. A half-enlightened physical or sense mentality is the ordinary type of the mind of man.

In fact the manas is a development from the external chitta; it is a first organising of the crude stuff of the consciousness excited and aroused by external contacts, *bāhya-sparśa*. What we are physically is a soul asleep in matter which has evolved to the partial wakefulness of a living body pervaded by a crude stuff of external consciousness more or less alive and attentive to the outward impacts of the external world in which we are developing our conscious being. In the animal this stuff of externalised consciousness organises itself into a well-regulated mental sense or organ of perceiving and acting mind. Sense is in fact the mental contact of the embodied consciousness with its surroundings. This contact is always essentially a mental phenomenon; but in fact it depends chiefly upon the development of certain physical organs of contact with objects and with their properties to whose images it is able by habit to give their mental values. What we call the physical senses have a double element, the physical-nervous impression of the object and the mental-nervous value we give to it, and the two together make up our seeing, hearing, smell, taste, touch with all those varieties of sensation of which they, and the touch chiefly, are the starting-point or first transmitting agency. But the manas is able to receive sense impressions and draw results from them by a direct transmission not dependent on the physical organ. This is more distinct in the lower creation. Man, though he has really a greater capacity for this direct sense, the sixth sense in the mind, has let it fall into abeyance by an exclusive reliance on the physical senses supplemented by the activity of the buddhi.

The manas is therefore in the first place an organiser of sense experience; in addition it organises the natural reactions of the will in the embodied consciousness and uses the body as an instrument, uses, as it is ordinarily put, the organs of action. This natural action too has a double element, a physico-nervous impulse and behind it a mental-nervous power-value of instinctive will-impulse. That makes up the nexus of first perceptions and actions which is common to all developing animal life. But in addition there is in the manas or sense-mind a first resulting thought-element which accompanies the operations of animal life. Just as the living body has a certain pervading and possessing action of consciousness, *citta*, which forms into this sense-mind, so the sense-mind has in it a certain pervading and possessing power which mentally uses the sense data, turns them into perceptions and first ideas, associates experience with other experiences, and in some way or other thinks and feels and wills on the sense basis.

This sensational thought-mind which is based upon sense, memory, association, first ideas and resultant generalisations or secondary ideas, is common to all developed animal life and mentality. Man indeed has given it an immense development and range and complexity impossible to the animal, but still, if he stopped there, he would only be a more highly effective animal. He gets beyond the animal range and height because he has been able to disengage and separate to a greater or less extent his thought action from the sense mentality, to draw back from the latter and observe its data and to act on it from above by a separated and partially freed intelligence. The intelligence and will of the animal are involved in the sense-mind and therefore altogether governed by it and carried on its stream of sensations, sense-perceptions, impulses; it is instinctive. Man is able to use a reason and will, a self-observing, thinking and all-observing, an intelligently willing mind which is no longer involved in the sense-mind, but acts from above and behind it in its own right, with a certain separateness and freedom. He is reflective, has a certain relative freedom of intelligent will. He has liberated in himself and has formed into a separate power the buddhi.

But what is this buddhi? From the point of view of Yogic knowledge we may say that it is that instrument of the soul, of the inner conscious being in nature, of the Purusha, by which it comes into some kind of conscious and ordered possession both of itself and its surroundings. Behind all the action of the chitta and manas there is this soul, this Purusha; but in the lower forms of life it is mostly subconscient, asleep or half-awake, absorbed in the mechanical action of Nature; but it becomes more and more awake and comes more and more forward as it rises in the scale of life. By the activity of the buddhi it begins the process of an entire awakening. In the lower actions of the mind the soul suffers Nature rather than possesses her; for it is there entirely a slave to the mechanism which has brought it into conscious embodied experience. But in the buddhi we get to something, still a natural instrumentation, by which yet Nature seems to be helping and arming the Purusha to understand, possess and master her.

Neither understanding, possession nor mastery is complete, either because the buddhi in us is itself still incomplete, only yet half developed and half formed, or because it is in its nature only an intermediary instrument and before we can get complete knowledge and mastery, we must rise to something greater than the buddhi. Still it is a movement by which we come to the knowledge that there is a power within us greater than the animal life, a truth greater than the first truths or appearances perceived by the sense-mind, and can try to get at that truth and to labour towards a greater and more successful power of action and control, a more effective government both of our own nature and the nature of things around us, a higher knowledge, a higher power, a higher and larger enjoyment, a more exalted range of being. What then is the final object of this trend? Evidently, it must be for the Purusha to get to the highest and fullest truth of itself and of things, greatest truth of soul or self and greatest truth of Nature, and to an action and a status of being which shall be the result of or identical with that Truth, the power of this greatest knowledge and the enjoyment of that greatest being and consciousness to which it opens. This must be the final result of the evolution of the conscious being in Nature.

To arrive then at the whole truth of our self and Spirit and the knowledge, greatness, bliss of our free and complete being must be the object of the purification, liberation and perfection of the buddhi. But it is a common idea that this means not the full possession of Nature by the Purusha, but a rejection of Nature. We are to get at self by the removal of the action of Prakriti. As the buddhi, coming to the knowledge that the sense-mind only gives us appearances in which the soul is subject to Nature, discovers more real truths behind them, the soul must arrive at this knowledge that the buddhi too, when turned upon Nature, can give us only appearances and enlarge the subjection, and must discover behind them the pure truth of the Self. The Self is something quite other than Nature and the buddhi must purify itself of attachment to and preoccupation with natural things; so only can it discern and separate from them the pure Self and Spirit: the knowledge of the pure Self and Spirit is the only real knowledge, Ananda of the pure Self and Spirit is the only spiritual enjoyment, the consciousness and being of the pure Self and Spirit are the only real consciousness and being. Action and will must cease because all action is of the Nature; the will to be pure Self and Spirit means the cessation of all will to action.

But while the possession of the being, consciousness, delight, power of the Self is the condition of perfection, — for it is only by knowing and possessing and living in the truth of itself that the soul can become free and perfect, — we hold that Nature is an eternal action and manifestation of the Spirit; Nature is not a devil's trap, a set of misleading appearances created by desire, sense, life and mental will and intelligence, but these phenomena are hints and indications and behind all of them is a truth of Spirit which exceeds and uses them. We hold that there must be an inherent spiritual gnosis and will by which the secret Spirit in all knows its own truth, wills, manifests and governs its own being in Nature; to arrive at that, at communion with it or participation in it, must be part of our perfection. The object of the purification of the buddhi will then be to arrive at the possession of our own truth of self-being, but also at the possession of the highest truth of our being in Nature. For that purpose we must first purify the buddhi of all that makes it subject to the sense-mind and, that once done, purify it from its own limitations and convert its inferior mental intelligence and will into the greater action of a spiritual will and knowledge.

The movement of the buddhi to exceed the limits of the sense-mind is an effort already half accomplished in the human evolution; it is part of the common operation of Nature in man. The original action of the thought-mind, the intelligence and will in man, is a subject action. It accepts the evidence of the senses, the commands of the life-cravings, instincts, desires, emotions, the impulses of the dynamic sense-mind and only tries to give them a more orderly direction and effective success. But the man whose reason and will are led and dominated by the lower mind, is an inferior type of human nature, and the part of our conscious being which consents to this domination is the lowest part of our manhood. The higher action of the buddhi is to exceed and control the lower mind, not indeed to get rid of it, but to raise all the action of which it is the first suggestion into the nobler plane of will and intelligence. The impressions of the sense-mind are used by a thought which exceeds them and which arrives at truths they do not give, ideative truths of thought, truths of philosophy and science; a thinking, discovering, philosophic mind overcomes, rectifies and dominates the first mind of sense impressions. The impulsive reactive sensational mentality, the life-cravings and the mind of emotional desire are taken up by the intelligent will and are overcome, are rectified and dominated by a greater ethical mind which discovers and sets over them a law of right impulse, right desire, right emotion and right action. The receptive, crudely enjoying sensational mentality, the emotional mind and life mind are taken up by the intelligence and are overcome, rectified and dominated by a deeper, happier aesthetic mind which discovers and sets above them a law of true delight and beauty. All these new formations are used by a general Power of the intellectual, thinking and willing man in a soul of governing intellect, imagination, judgment, memory, volition, discerning reason and ideal feeling which uses them for knowledge, self-development, experience, discovery, creation, effectuation, aspires, strives, inwardly attains, endeavours to make a higher thing of the life of the soul in Nature. The primitive desire-soul no longer governs the being. It is still a desire-soul, but it is repressed and governed by a higher power, something which has manifested in itself the godheads of Truth, Will, Good, Beauty and tries to subject life to them. The crude desire-soul and mind is trying to convert itself into an ideal soul and mind, and the proportion in which some effect and harmony of this greater conscious being has been found and enthroned, is the measure of our increasing humanity.

But this is still a very incomplete movement. We find that it progresses towards a greater completeness in proportion as we arrive at two kinds of perfection; first, a greater and greater detachment from the control of the lower suggestions; secondly, an increasing discovery of a self-existent Being, Light, Power and Ananda which surpasses and transforms the normal humanity. The ethical mind becomes perfect in proportion as it detaches itself from desire, sense suggestion, impulse, customary dictated action and discovers a self of Right, Love, Strength and Purity in which it can live accomplished and make it the foundation of all its actions. The aesthetic mind is perfected in proportion as it detaches itself from all its cruder pleasures and from outward conventional canons of the aesthetic reason and discovers a self-existent self and spirit of pure and infinite Beauty and Delight which gives its own light and joy to the material of the aesthesis. The mind of knowledge is perfected when it gets away from impression and dogma and opinion and discovers a light of self-knowledge and intuition which illumines all the workings of the sense and reason, all self-experience and world-experience. The will is perfected when it gets away from and behind its impulses and its customary ruts of effectuation and discovers an inner power of the Spirit which is the source of an intuitive and luminous action and an original harmonious creation. The movement of perfection is away from all domination by the lower nature and towards a pure and powerful reflection of the being, power, knowledge and delight of the Spirit and Self in the buddhi.

The Yoga of self-perfection is to make this double movement as absolute as possible. All immiscence of desire in the buddhi is an impurity. The intelligence coloured by desire is an impure intelligence and it distorts Truth; the will coloured by desire is an impure will and it puts a stamp of distortion, pain and imperfection upon the soul's activity. All immiscence of the emotions of the soul of desire is an impurity and similarly distorts both the knowledge and the action. All subjection of the buddhi to the sensations and impulses is an impurity. The thought and will have to stand back detached from desire, troubling emotion, distracting or mastering impulse and to act in their own right until they can discover a greater guide, a Will, Tapas or divine Shakti which will take the place of desire and mental will and impulse, an Ananda or pure delight of the spirit and an illumined spiritual knowledge which will express themselves in the action of that Shakti. This complete detachment, impossible without an entire self-government, equality, calm, *śama*, *samatā*, *śānti*, is the surest step towards the purification of the buddhi. A calm, equal and detached mind can alone reflect the peace or base the action of the liberated spirit.

The buddhi itself is burdened with a mixed and impure action. When we reduce it to its own proper forms, we find that it has three stages or elevations of its functioning. First, its lowest basis is a habitual, customary action which is a link between the higher reason and the sense-mind, a kind of current understanding. This understanding is in itself dependent on the witness of the senses and the rule of action which the reason deduces from the sense-mind's perception of and attitude to life. It is not capable of itself forming pure thought and will, but it takes the workings of the higher reason and turns them into coin of opinion and customary standard of thought or canon of action. When we perform a sort of practical analysis of the thinking mind, cut away this element and hold back the higher reason free, observing and silent, we find that this current understanding begins to run about in a futile circle, repeating all its formed opinions and responses to the impressions of things, but incapable of any strong adaptation and initiation. As it feels more and more the refusal of sanction from the higher reason, it begins to fail, to lose confidence in itself and its forms and habits, to distrust the intellectual action and to fall into weakness and silence. The stilling of this current, running, circling, repeating thought-mind is the principal part of that silencing of the thought which is one of the most effective disciplines of Yoga.

But the higher reason itself has a first stage of dynamic, pragmatic intellectuality in which creation, action and will are the real motive and thought and knowledge are employed to form basic constructions and suggestions which are used principally for effectuation. To this pragmatic reason truth is only a formation of the intellect effective for the action of the inner and the outer life. When we cut it away from the still higher reason which seeks impersonally to reflect Truth rather than to create personally effective truth, we find then that this pragmatic reason can originate, progress, enlarge the experience by dynamic knowledge, but it has to depend on the current understanding as a pedestal and base and put its whole weight on life and becoming. It is in itself therefore a mind of the Will to life and action, much more a mind of Will than a mind of knowledge: it does not live in any assured and constant and eternal Truth, but in progressing and changing aspects of Truth which serve the shifting forms of our life and becoming or, at the highest, help life to grow and progress. By itself this pragmatic mind can give us no firm foundation and no fixed goal; it lives in the truth of the hour, not in any truth of eternity. But when purified of dependence on the customary understanding, it is a great creator and in association with the highest mental reason it becomes a strong channel and bold servant for the effectuation of Truth in life. The value of its work will depend on the value and the power of the highest truth-seeking reason. But by itself it is a sport of Time and a bondslave of Life. The seeker of the Silence has to cast it away from him; the seeker of the integral Divinity has to pass beyond it, to replace and transform this thinking mind intent on Life by a greater effectuating spiritual Will, the Truth-Will of the spirit.

The third and noblest stage of the intellectual will and reason is an intelligence which seeks for some universal reality or for a still higher self-existent Truth for its own sake and tries to live in that Truth. This is primarily a mind of knowledge and only secondarily a mind of Will. In its excess of tendency it often becomes incapable of Will except the one will to know; for action it is dependent on the aid of the pragmatic mind and therefore man tends in action to fall away from the purity of the Truth his highest knowledge holds into a mixed, inferior, inconstant and impure effectuation. The disparity, even when it is not an opposition, between knowledge and will is one of the principal defects of the human buddhi. But there are other inherent limitations of all human thinking. This highest Buddhi does not work in man in its own purity; it is assailed by the defects of the lower mentality, continually clouded by it, distorted, veiled, and prevented or lamed in its own proper action. Purified as much as may be from that habit of mental degradation, the human buddhi is still a power that searches for the Truth, but is never in full or direct possession of it; it can only reflect truth of the spirit and try to make it its own by giving it a limited mental value and a distinct mental body. Nor does it reflect integrally, but seizes either an uncertain totality or else a sum of limited particulars. First it seizes on this or that partial reflection and by subjection to the habit of customary mind turns it into a fixed imprisoning opinion; all new truth it judges from the standpoint it has thus formed and therefore puts on it the colour of a limiting prejudgment. Release it as much as possible from this habit of limiting opinion, still it is subject to another affliction, the demand of the pragmatic mind for immediate effectuation, which gives it no time to proceed to larger truth, but fixes it by the power of effective realisation in whatever it has already judged, known and lived. Freed from all these chains, the buddhi can become a pure and flexible reflector of Truth, adding light to light, proceeding from realisation to realisation. It is then limited only by its own inherent limitations.

These limitations are mainly of two kinds. First, its realisations are only mental realisations; to get to the Truth itself we have to go beyond the mental buddhi. Again, the nature of the mind prevents it from making an effective unification of the truths it seizes. It can only put them side by side and see oppositions or effect some kind of partial, executive and practical combination. But it finds finally that the aspects of the Truth are infinite and that none of its intellectual forms are quite valid, because the spirit is infinite and in the spirit all is true, but nothing in the mind can give the whole truth of the spirit. Either then the buddhi becomes a pure mirror of many reflections, reflecting all truth that falls on it, but ineffective and when turned to action either incapable of decision or chaotic, or it has to make a selection and act as if that partiality were the whole truth, though it knows otherwise. It acts in a helpless limitation of Ignorance, though it may hold a Truth far greater than its action. On the other hand, it may turn away from life and thought and seek to exceed itself and pass into the Truth beyond it. This it may do by seizing on some aspect, some principle, some symbol or suggestion of reality and pushing that to its absolute, all-absorbing, all-excluding term of realisation or by seizing on and realising some idea of indeterminate Being or Non-Being from which all thought and life fall away into cessation. The buddhi casts itself into a luminous sleep and the soul passes away into some ineffable height of spiritual being.

Therefore in dealing with the buddhi, we must either take one of these choices or else try the rarer adventure of lifting the soul from the mental being into the spiritual gnosis to see what we can find in the very core of that supernal light and power. This gnosis contains the sun of the divine Knowledge-Will burning in the heavens of the supreme conscious Being, to which the mental intelligence and will are only a focus of diffused and deflected rays and reflections. That possesses the divine unity and yet or rather therefore can govern the multiplicity and diversity: whatever selection, self-limitation, combination it makes is not imposed on it by Ignorance, but is self-developed by a power of self-possessing divine Knowledge. When the gnosis is gained, it can then be turned on the whole nature to divinise the human being. It is impossible to rise into it at once; if that could be done, it would mean a sudden and violent overshooting, a breaking or slipping through the gates of the Sun, *sūryasya dvārā*, without near possibility of return. We have to form as a link or bridge an intuitive or illuminated mind, which is not the direct gnosis, but in which a first derivative body of the gnosis can form. This illumined mind will first be a mixed power which we shall have to purify of all its mental dependence and mental forms so as to convert all willing and thinking into thought-sight and truth-seeing will by an illumined discrimination, intuition, inspiration, revelation. That will be the final purification of the intelligence and the preparation for the siddhi of the gnosis.

Chapter VIII

The Liberation of the Spirit

THE PURIFICATION of the mental being and the psychic prana — we will leave aside for the time the question of the physical purification, that of the body and physical prana, though that too is necessary to an integral perfection, — prepares the ground for a spiritual liberation. *Śuddhi* is the condition for *mukti*. All purification is a release, a delivery; for it is a throwing away of limiting, binding, obscuring imperfections and confusions: purification from desire brings the freedom of the psychic prana, purification from wrong emotions and troubling reactions the freedom of the heart, purification from the obscuring limited thought of the sense mind the freedom of the intelligence, purification from mere intellectuality the freedom of the gnosis. But all this is an instrumental liberation. The freedom of the soul, *mukti*, is of a larger and more essential character; it is an opening out of mortal limitation into the illimitable immortality of the Spirit.

For certain ways of thinking liberation is a throwing off of all nature, a silent state of pure being, a nirvana or extinction, a dissolution of the natural existence into some indefinable Absolute, *mokṣa*. But an absorbed and immersed bliss, a wideness of actionless peace, a release of self-extinction or a self-drowning in the Absolute is not our aim. We shall give to the idea of liberation, *mukti*, only the connotation of that inner change which is common to all experience of this kind, essential to perfection and indispensable to spiritual freedom. We shall find that it then implies always two things, a rejection and an assumption, a negative and a positive side; the negative movement of freedom is a liberation from the principal bonds, the master-knots of the lower soul-nature, the positive side an opening or growth into the higher spiritual existence. But what are these master-knots — other and deeper twistings than the instrumental knots of the mind, heart, psychic life-force? We find them pointed out for us and insisted on with great force and a constant emphatic repetition in the Gita; they are four, desire, ego, the dualities and the three gunas of Nature; for to be desireless, ego-less, equal of mind and soul and spirit and *nistraiguṇya*, is in the idea of the Gita to be free, *mukta*. We may accept this description; for everything essential is covered by its amplitude. On the other hand, the positive sense of freedom is to be universal in soul, transcendently one in spirit with God, possessed of the highest divine nature, — as we may say, like to God, or one with him in the law of our being. This is the whole and full sense of liberation and this is the integral freedom of the spirit.

We have already had to speak of purification from the psychic desire of which the craving of the prana is the evolutionary or, as we may put it, the practical basis. But this is in the mental and psychic nature; spiritual desirelessness has a wider and more essential meaning: for desire has a double knot, a lower knot in the prana, which is a craving in the instruments, and a very subtle knot in the soul itself with the buddhi as its first support or *pratiṣṭhā*, which is the inmost origin of this mesh of our bondage. When we look from below, desire presents itself to us as a craving of the life force which subtilises in the emotions into a craving of the heart and is farther subtilised in the intelligence into a craving, preference, passion of the aesthetic, ethical, dynamic or rational turn of the buddhi. This desire is essential to the ordinary man; he cannot live or act as an individual without knotting up all his action into the service of some kind of lower or higher craving, preference or passion. But when we are able to look at desire from above, we see that what supports this instrumental desire is a will of the spirit. There is a will, *tapas*, *śakti*, by which the secret spirit imposes on its outer members all their action and draws from it an active delight of its being, an ananda, in which they very obscurely and imperfectly, if at all consciously, partake. This tapas is the will of the transcendent spirit who creates the universal movement, of the universal spirit who supports and informs it, of the free individual spirit who is the soul centre of its multiplicities. It is one will, free in all these at once, comprehensive, harmonious, unified; we find it, when we live and act in the spirit, to be an effortless and desireless, a spontaneous and illumined, a self-fulfilling and self-possessing, a satisfied and blissful will of the spiritual delight of being.

But the moment the individual soul leans away from the universal and transcendent truth of its being, leans towards ego, tries to make this will a thing of its own, a separate personal energy, that will changes its character: it becomes an effort, a straining, a heat of force which may have its fiery joys of effectuation and of possession, but has also its afflicting recoils and pain of labour. It is this that turns in each instrument into an intellectual, emotional, dynamic, sensational or vital will of desire, wish, craving. Even when the instruments *per se* are purified of their own apparent initiative and particular kind of desire, this imperfect tapas may still remain, and so long as it conceals the source or deforms the type of the inner action, the soul has not the bliss of liberty, or can only have it by refraining from all action; even, if allowed to persist, it will rekindle the pranic or other desires or at least throw a reminiscent shadow of them on the being. This spiritual seed or beginning of desire too must be expelled, renounced, cast away: the sadhaka must either choose an active peace and complete inner silence or lose individual initiation, *saṅkalpārambha*, in a unity with the universal will, the tapas of the divine Shakti. The passive way is to be inwardly immobile, without effort, wish, expectation or any turn to action, *niśceṣṭa*, *anīha*, *nirapekṣa*, *nivṛtta*; the active way is to be thus immobile and impersonal in the mind, but to allow the supreme Will in its spiritual purity to act through the purified instruments. Then, if the soul abides on the level of the spiritualised mentality, it becomes an instrument only, but is itself without initiative or action, *niṣkriya*, *sarvārambha-parityāgī*. But if it rises to the gnosis, it is at once an instrument and a participant in the bliss of the divine action and the bliss of the divine Ananda; it unifies in itself the *prakṛti* and the *puruṣa*.

The ego turn, the separative turn of the being, is the fulcrum of the whole embarrassed labour of the ignorance and the bondage. So long as one is not free from the ego sense, there can be no real freedom. The seat of the ego is said to be in the buddhi; it is an ignorance of the discriminating mind and reason which discriminate wrongly and take the individuation of mind, life and body for a truth of separative existence and are turned away from the greater reconciling truth of the oneness of all existence. At any rate in man it is the ego idea which chiefly supports the falsehood of a separative existence; to get rid of this idea, to dwell on the opposite idea of unity, of the one self, the one spirit, the one being of nature is therefore an effective remedy; but it is not by itself absolutely effective. For the ego, though it supports itself by this ego idea, *aham-buddhi*, finds its most powerful means for a certain obstinacy or passion of persistence in the normal action of the sense-mind, the prana and the body. To cast out of us the ego idea is not entirely possible or not entirely effective until these instruments have undergone purification; for, their action being persistently egoistic and separative, the buddhi is carried away by them, — as a boat by winds on the sea, says the Gita, — the knowledge in the intelligence is being constantly obscured or lost temporarily and has to be restored again, a very labour of Sisyphus. But if the lower instruments have been purified of egoistic desire, wish, will, egoistic passion, egoistic emotion and the buddhi itself of egoistic idea and preference, then the knowledge of the spiritual truth of oneness can find a firm foundation. Till then, the ego takes all sorts of subtle forms and we imagine ourselves to be free from it, when we are really acting as its instruments and all we have attained is a certain intellectual poise which is not the true spiritual liberation. Moreover, to throw away the active sense of ego is not enough; that may merely bring an inactive state of the mentality, a certain passive inert quietude of separate being may take the place of the kinetic egoism, which is also not the true liberation. The ego sense must be replaced by a oneness with the transcendental Divine and with universal being.

This necessity arises from the fact that the buddhi is only a *pratiṣṭhā* or chief support of the ego-sense in its manifold play, *ahaṅkāra*; but in its source it is a degradation or deformation of a truth of our spiritual being. The truth of being is that there is a transcendent existence, supreme self or spirit, a timeless soul of existence, an eternal, a Divine, or even we may speak of it in relation to current mental ideas of the Godhead as a supra-Divine, which is here immanent, all-embracing, all-initiating and all-governing, a great universal Spirit; and the individual is a conscious power of being of the Eternal, capable eternally of relations with him, but one with him too in the very core of reality of its own eternal existence. This is a truth which the intelligence can apprehend, can, when once purified, reflect, transmit, hold in a derivative fashion, but it can only be entirely realised, lived and made effective in the spirit. When we live in the spirit, then we not only know, but are this truth of our being. The individual then enjoys in the spirit, in the bliss of the spirit, his oneness with the universal existence, his oneness with the timeless Divine and his oneness with all other beings and that is the essential sense of a spiritual liberation from the ego. But the moment the soul leans towards the mental limitation, there is a certain sense of spiritual separativeness which has its joys, but may at any moment lapse into the entire ego-sense, ignorance, oblivion of oneness. To get rid of this separativeness an attempt is made to absorb oneself in the idea and realisation of the Divine, and this takes in certain forms of spiritual askesis the turn of a strain towards the abolition of all individual being and a casting away, in the trance of immersion, of all individual or universal relations with the Divine, in others it becomes an absorbed dwelling in him and not in this world or a continual absorbed or intent living in his presence, *sāyujya*, *sālokya*, *sāmīpya mukti*. The way proposed for the integral Yoga is a lifting up and surrender of the whole being to him, by which not only do we become one with him in our spiritual existence, but dwell too in him and he in us, so that the whole nature is full of his presence and changed into the divine nature; we become one spirit and consciousness and life and substance with the Divine and at the same time we live and move in and have a various joy of that oneness. This integral liberation from the ego into the divine spirit and nature can only be relatively complete on our present level, but it begins to become absolute as we open to and mount into the gnosis. This is the liberated perfection.

The liberation from ego, the liberation from desire together found the central spiritual freedom. The sense, the idea, the experience that I am a separately self-existent being in the universe, and the forming of consciousness and force of being into the mould of that experience are the root of all suffering, ignorance and evil. And it is so because that falsifies both in practice and in cognition the whole real truth of things; it limits the being, limits the consciousness, limits the power of our being, limits the bliss of being; this limitation again produces a wrong way of existence, wrong way of consciousness, wrong way of using the power of our being and consciousness, and wrong, perverse and contrary forms of the delight of existence. The soul limited in being and self-isolated in its environment feels itself no longer in unity and harmony with its Self, with God, with the universe, with all around it; but rather it finds itself at odds with the universe, in conflict and disaccord with other beings who are its other selves, but whom it treats as not-self; and so long as this disaccord and disagreement last, it cannot possess its world and it cannot enjoy the universal life, but is full of unease, fear, afflictions of all kinds, in a painful struggle to preserve and increase itself and possess its surroundings, — for to possess its world is the nature of infinite spirit and the necessary urge in all being. The satisfactions it gets from this labour and effort are of a stinted, perverse and unsatisfying kind: for the one real satisfaction it has is that of growth, of an increasing return towards itself, of some realisation of accord and harmony, of successful self-creation and self-realisation, but the little of these things that it can achieve on the basis of ego-consciousness is always limited, insecure, imperfect, transitory. It is at war too with its own self, — first because, since it is no longer in possession of the central harmonising truth of its own being, it cannot properly control its natural members or accord their tendencies, powers and demands; it has not the secret of harmony, because it has not the secret of its own unity and self-possession; and, secondly, not being in possession of its highest self, it has to struggle towards that, is not allowed to be at peace till it is in possession of its own true highest being. All this means that it is not at one with God; for to be at one with God is to be at one with oneself, at one with the universe and at one with all beings. This oneness is the secret of a right and a divine existence. But the ego cannot have it, because it is in its very nature separative and because even with regard to ourselves, to our own psychological existence it is a false centre of unity; for it tries to find the unity of our being in an identification with a shifting mental, vital, physical personality, not with the eternal self of our total existence. Only in the spiritual self can we possess the true unity; for there the individual enlarges to his own total being and finds himself one with universal existence and with the transcending Divinity.

All the trouble and suffering of the soul proceeds from this wrong egoistic and separative way of existence. The soul not in possession of its free self-existence, *anātmavān*, because it is limited in its consciousness, is limited in knowledge; and this limited knowledge takes the form of a falsifying knowledge. The struggle to return to a true knowing is imposed upon it, but the ego in the separative mind is satisfied with shows and fragments of knowledge which it pieces together into some false or some imperfect total or governing notion, and this knowledge fails it and has to be abandoned for a fresh pursuit of the one thing to be known. That one thing is the Divine, the Self, the Spirit in whom universal and individual being find at last their right foundation and their right harmonies. Again, because it is limited in force, the ego-prisoned soul is full of many incapacities; wrong knowledge is accompanied by wrong will, wrong tendencies and impulses of the being, and the acute sense of this wrongness is the root of the human consciousness of sin. This deficiency of its nature it tries to set right by standards of conduct which will help it to remove the egoistic consciousness and satisfactions of sin by the egoistic consciousness and self-satisfaction of virtue, the rajasic by the sattwic egoism. But the original sin has to be cured, the separation of its being and will from the divine Being and the divine Will; when it returns to unity with the divine Will and Being, it rises beyond sin and virtue to the infinite self-existent purity and the security of its own divine nature.

Its incapacities it tries to set right by organising its imperfect knowledge and disciplining its half-enlightened will and force and directing them by some systematic effort of the reason; but the result must always be a limited, uncertain, mutable and stumbling way and standard of capacity in action. Only when it returns again to the large unity of the free spirit, *bhūmā*, can the action of its nature move perfectly as the instrument of the infinite Spirit and in the steps of the Right and Truth and Power which belong to the free soul acting from the supreme centre of its existence. Again, because it is limited in the delight of being, it is unable to lay hold on the secure, self-existent perfect bliss of the spirit or the delight, the Ananda of the universe which keeps the world in motion, but is only able to move in a mixed and shifting succession of pleasures and pains, joys and sorrows, or must take refuge in some conscient inconscience or neutral indifference. The ego mind cannot do otherwise, and the soul which has externalised itself in ego, is subjected to this unsatisfactory, secondary, imperfect, often perverse, troubled or annulled enjoyment of existence; yet all the time the spiritual and universal Ananda is within, in the self, in the spirit, in its secret unity with God and existence. To cast away the chain of ego and go back to free self, immortal spiritual being is the soul's return to its own eternal divinity.

The will to the imperfect separative being, that wrong Tapas which makes the soul in Nature attempt to individualise itself, to individualise its being, consciousness, force of being, delight of existence in a separative sense, to have these things as its own, in its own right, and not in the right of God and of the universal oneness, is that which brings about this wrong turn and creates the ego. To turn from this original desire is therefore essential, to get back to the will without desire whose whole enjoyment of being and whole will in being is that of a free universal and unifying Ananda. These two things are one, liberation from the will that is of the nature of desire and liberation from the ego, and the oneness which is brought about by the happy loss of the will of desire and the ego, is the essence of Mukti.

Chapter IX

The Liberation of the Nature

THE TWO sides of our being, conscious experiencing soul and executive Nature continuously and variously offering to the soul her experiences, determine in their meeting all the affections of our inner status and its responses. Nature contributes the character of the happenings and the forms of the instruments of experience, the soul meets it by an assent to the natural determinations of the response to these happenings or by a will to other determination which it imposes upon the nature. The acceptance of the instrumental ego consciousness and the will to desire are the initial consent of the self to the lapse into the lower ranges of experience in which it forgets its divine nature of being; the rejection of these things, the return to free self and the will of the divine delight in being is the liberation of the spirit. But on the other side stand the contributions of Nature herself to the mixed tangle, which she imposes on the soul's experience of her doings and makings when once that first initial consent has been given and made the law of the whole outward transaction. Nature's essential contributions are two, the gunas and the dualities. This inferior action of Nature in which we live has certain essential qualitative modes which constitute the whole basis of its inferiority. The constant effect of these modes on the soul in its natural powers of mind, life and body is a discordant and divided experience, a strife of opposites, *dvandva*, a motion in all its experience and an oscillation between or a mixture of constant pairs of contraries, of combining positives and negatives, dualities. A complete liberation from the ego and the will of desire must bring with it a superiority to the qualitative modes of the inferior Nature, *traiguṇyātītya*, a release from this mixed and discordant experience, a cessation or solution of the dual action of Nature. But on this side too there are two kinds of freedom. A liberation from Nature in a quiescent bliss of the spirit is the first form of release. A farther liberation of the Nature into a divine quality and spiritual power of world-experience fills the supreme calm with the supreme kinetic bliss of knowledge, power, joy and mastery. A divine unity of supreme spirit and its supreme nature is the integral liberation.

Nature, because she is a power of spirit, is essentially qualitative in her action. One may almost say that Nature is only the power in being and the development in action of the infinite qualities of the spirit, *anantaguṇa*. All else belongs to her outward and more mechanical aspects; but this play of quality is the essential thing, of which the rest is the result and mechanical combination. Once we have set right the working of the essential power and quality, all the rest becomes subject to the control of the experiencing Purusha. But in the inferior nature of things the play of infinite quality is subject to a limited measure, a divided and conflicting working, a system of opposites and discords between which some practical mobile system of concords has to be found and to be kept in action; this play of concorded discords, conflicting qualities, disparate powers and ways of experience compelled to some just manageable, partial, mostly precarious agreement, an unstable mutable equilibrium, is managed by a fundamental working in three qualitative modes which conflict and combine together in all her creations. These three modes have been given in the Sankhya system, which is generally adopted for this purpose by all the schools of philosophic thought and of Yoga in India, the three names, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.[1] Tamas is the principle and power of inertia; rajas is the principle of kinesis, passion, endeavour, struggle, initiation (*ārambha*); sattwa the principle of assimilation, equilibrium and harmony. The metaphysical bearing of this classification does not concern us; but in its psychological and spiritual bearing it is of immense practical importance, because these three principles enter into all things, combine to give them their turn of active nature, result, effectuation, and their unequal working in the soul-experience is the constituent force of our active personality, our temperament, type of nature and cast of psychological response to experience. All character of action and experience in us is determined by the predominance and by the proportional interaction of these three qualities or modes of Nature. The soul in its personality is obliged, as it were, to run into their moulds; mostly, too, it is controlled by them rather than has any free control of them. The soul can only be free by rising above and rejecting the tormented strife of their unequal action and their insufficient concords and combinations and precarious harmonies, whether in the sense of a complete quiescence from the half-regulated chaos of their action or in the sense of a superiority to this lower turn of nature and a higher control or transformation of their working. There must be either an emptiness of the gunas or a superiority to the gunas.

---

[1] This subject has been treated in the Yoga of Works. It is restated here from the point of view of the general type of nature and the complete liberation of the being.

The gunas affect every part of our natural being. They have indeed their strongest relative hold in the three different members of it, mind, life and body. Tamas, the principle of inertia, is strongest in material nature and in our physical being. The action of this principle is of two kinds, inertia of force and inertia of knowledge. Whatever is predominantly governed by Tamas, tends in its force to a sluggish inaction and immobility or else to a mechanical action which it does not possess, but is possessed by obscure forces which drive it in a mechanical round of energy; equally in its consciousness it turns to an inconscience or enveloped subconscience or to a reluctant, sluggish or in some way mechanical conscious action which does not possess the idea of its own energy, but is guided by an idea which seems external to it or at least concealed from its active awareness. Thus the principle of our body is in its nature inert, subconscient, incapable of anything but a mechanical and habitual self-guidance and action: though it has like everything else a principle of kinesis and a principle of equilibrium of its state and action, an inherent principle of response and a secret consciousness, the greatest portion of its rajasic motions are contributed by the life-power and all the overt consciousness by the mental being. The principle of rajas has its strongest hold on the vital nature. It is the Life within us that is the strongest kinetic motor power, but the life-power in earthly beings is possessed by the force of desire, therefore rajas turns always to action and desire; desire is the strongest human and animal initiator of most kinesis and action, predominant to such an extent that many consider it the father of all action and even the originator of our being. Moreover, rajas finding itself in a world of matter which starts from the principle of inconscience and a mechanical driven inertia, has to work against an immense contrary force; therefore its whole action takes on the nature of an effort, a struggle, a besieged and an impeded conflict for possession which is distressed in its every step by a limiting incapacity, disappointment and suffering: even its gains are precarious and limited and marred by the reaction of the effort and an aftertaste of insufficiency and transience. The principle of sattwa has its strongest hold in the mind; not so much in the lower parts of the mind which are dominated by the rajasic life-power, but mostly in the intelligence and the will of the reason. Intelligence, reason, rational will are moved by the nature of their predominant principle towards a constant effort of assimilation, assimilation by knowledge, assimilation by a power of understanding will, a constant effort towards equilibrium, some stability, rule, harmony of the conflicting elements of natural happening and experience. This satisfaction it gets in various ways and in various degrees of acquisition. The attainment of assimilation, equilibrium and harmony brings with it always a relative but more or less intense and satisfying sense of ease, happiness, mastery, security, which is other than the troubled and vehement pleasures insecurely bestowed by the satisfaction of rajasic desire and passion. Light and happiness are the characteristics of the sattwic guna. The whole nature of the embodied living mental being is determined by these three gunas.

But these are only predominant powers in each part of our complex system. The three qualities mingle, combine and strive in every fibre and in every member of our intricate psychology. The mental character is made by them, the character of our reason, the character of our will, the character of our moral, aesthetic, emotional, dynamic, sensational being. Tamas brings in all the ignorance, inertia, weakness, incapacity which afflicts our nature, a clouded reason, nescience, unintelligence, a clinging to habitual notions and mechanical ideas, the refusal to think and know, the small mind, the closed avenues, the trotting round of mental habit, the dark and the twilit places. Tamas brings in the impotent will, want of faith and self-confidence and initiative, the disinclination to act, the shrinking from endeavour and aspiration, the poor and little spirit, and in our moral and dynamic being the inertia, the cowardice, baseness, sloth, lax subjection to small and ignoble motives, the weak yielding to our lower nature. Tamas brings into our emotional nature insensibility, indifference, want of sympathy and openness, the shut soul, the callous heart, the soon spent affection and languor of the feelings, into our aesthetic and sensational nature the dull aesthesis, the limited range of response, the insensibility to beauty, all that makes in man the coarse, heavy and vulgar spirit. Rajas contributes our normal active nature with all its good and evil; when unchastened by a sufficient element of sattwa, it turns to egoism, self-will and violence, the perverse, obstinate or exaggerating action of the reason, prejudice, attachment to opinion, clinging to error, the subservience of the intelligence to our desires and preferences and not to the truth, the fanatic or the sectarian mind, self-will, pride, arrogance, selfishness, ambition, lust, greed, cruelty, hatred, jealousy, the egoisms of love, all the vices and passions, the exaggerations of the aesthesis, the morbidities and perversions of the sensational and vital being. Tamas in its own right produces the coarse, dull and ignorant type of human nature, rajas the vivid, restless, kinetic man, driven by the breath of action, passion and desire. Sattwa produces a higher type. The gifts of sattwa are the mind of reason and balance, clarity of the disinterested truth-seeking open intelligence, a will subordinated to the reason or guided by the ethical spirit, self-control, equality, calm, love, sympathy, refinement, measure, fineness of the aesthetic and emotional mind, in the sensational being delicacy, just acceptivity, moderation and poise, a vitality subdued and governed by the mastering intelligence. The accomplished types of the sattwic man are the philosopher, saint and sage, of the rajasic man the statesman, warrior, forceful man of action. But in all men there is in greater or less proportions a mingling of the gunas, a multiple personality and in most a good deal of shifting and alternation from the predominance of one to the prevalence of another guna; even in the governing form of their nature most human beings are of a mixed type. All the colour and variety of life is made of the intricate pattern of the weaving of the gunas.

But richness of life, even a sattwic harmony of mind and nature does not constitute spiritual perfection. There is a relative possible perfection, but it is a perfection of incompleteness, some partial height, force, beauty, some measure of nobility and greatness, some imposed and precariously sustained balance. There is a relative mastery, but it is a mastery of the body by life or of the life by mind, not a free possession of the instruments by the liberated and self-possessing spirit. The gunas have to be transcended if we would arrive at spiritual perfection. Tamas evidently has to be overcome, inertia and ignorance and incapacity cannot be elements of a true perfection; but it can only be overcome in Nature by the force of rajas aided by an increasing force of sattwa. Rajas has to be overcome, egoism, personal desire and self-seeking passion are not elements of the true perfection; but it can only be overcome by force of sattwa enlightening the being and force of tamas limiting the action. Sattwa itself does not give the highest or the integral perfection; sattwa is always a quality of the limited nature; sattwic knowledge is the light of a limited mentality; sattwic will is the government of a limited intelligent force. Moreover, sattwa cannot act by itself in Nature, but has to rely for all action on the aid of rajas, so that even sattwic action is always liable to the imperfections of rajas; egoism, perplexity, inconsistency, a one-sided turn, a limited and exaggerated will, exaggerating itself in the intensity of its limitations, pursue the mind and action even of the saint, philosopher and sage. There is a sattwic as well as a rajasic or tamasic egoism, at the highest an egoism of knowledge or virtue; but the mind's egoism of whatever type is incompatible with liberation. All the three gunas have to be transcended. Sattwa may bring us near to the Light, but its limited clarity falls away from us when we enter into the luminous body of the divine Nature.

This transcendence is usually sought by a withdrawal from the action of the lower nature. That withdrawal brings with it a stressing of the tendency to inaction. Sattwa when it wishes to intensify itself, seeks to get rid of rajas and calls in the aid of the tamasic principle of inaction; that is the reason why a certain type of highly sattwic men live intensely in the inward being, but hardly at all in the outward life of action, or else are there incompetent and ineffective. The seeker of liberation goes farther in this direction, strives by imposing an enlightened tamas on his natural being, a tamas which by this saving enlightenment is more of a quiescence than an incapacity, to give the sattwic guna freedom to lose itself in the light of the spirit. A quietude and stillness is imposed on the body, on the active life-soul of desire and ego, on the external mind, while the sattwic nature by stress of meditation, by an exclusive concentration of adoration, by a will turned inward to the Supreme, strives to merge itself in the spirit. But if this is sufficient for a quietistic release, it is not sufficient for the freedom of an integral perfection. This liberation depends upon inaction and is not entirely self-existent and absolute; the moment the soul turns to action, it finds that the activity of the nature is still the old imperfect motion. There is a liberation of the soul from the nature which is gained by inaction, but not a liberation of the soul in nature perfect and self-existent whether in action or in inaction. The question then arises whether such a liberation and perfection are possible and what may be the condition of this perfect freedom.

The ordinary idea is that it is not possible because all action is of the lower gunas, necessarily defective, *sadoṣam*, caused by the motion, inequality, want of balance, unstable strife of the gunas; but when these unequal gunas fall into perfect equilibrium, all action of Nature ceases and the soul rests in its quietude. The divine Being, we may say, may either exist in his silence or act in Nature through her instrumentation, but in that case must put on the appearance of her strife and imperfection. That may be true of the ordinary deputed action of the Divine in the human spirit with its present relations of soul to nature in an embodied imperfect mental being, but it is not true of the divine nature of perfection. The strife of the gunas is only a representation in the imperfection of the lower nature; what the three gunas stand for are three essential powers of the Divine which are not merely existent in a perfect equilibrium of quietude, but unified in a perfect consensus of divine action. Tamas in the spiritual being becomes a divine calm, which is not an inertia and incapacity of action, but a perfect power, *śakti*, holding in itself all its capacity and capable of controlling and subjecting to the law of calm even the most stupendous and enormous activity: rajas becomes a self-effecting initiating sheer Will of the spirit, which is not desire, endeavour, striving passion, but the same perfect power of being, *śakti*, capable of an infinite, imperturbable and blissful action. Sattwa becomes not the modified mental light, *prakāśa*, but the self-existent light of the divine being, *jyotiḥ*, which is the soul of the perfect power of being and illumines in their unity the divine quietude and the divine will of action. The ordinary liberation gets the still divine light in the divine quietude, but the integral perfection will aim at this greater triune unity.

When this liberation of the nature comes, there is a liberation also of all the spiritual sense of the dualities of Nature. In the lower nature the dualities are the inevitable effect of the play of the gunas on the soul affected by the formations of the sattwic, rajasic and tamasic ego. The knot of this duality is an ignorance which is unable to seize on the spiritual truth of things and concentrates on the imperfect appearances, but meets them not with a mastery of their inner truth, but with a strife and a shifting balance of attraction and repulsion, capacity and incapacity, liking and disliking, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, acceptance and repugnance; all life is represented to us as a tangle of these things, of the pleasant and the unpleasant, the beautiful and the unbeautiful, truth and falsehood, fortune and misfortune, success and failure, good and evil, the inextricable double web of Nature. Attachment to its likings and repugnances keeps the soul bound in this web of good and evil, joys and sorrows. The seeker of liberation gets rid of attachment, throws away from his soul the dualities, but as the dualities appear to be the whole act, stuff and frame of life, this release would seem to be most easily compassed by a withdrawal from life, whether a physical withdrawal, so far as that is possible while in the body, or an inner retirement, a refusal of sanction, a liberating distaste, *vairāgya*, for the whole action of Nature. There is a separation of the soul from Nature. Then the soul watches seated above and unmoved, *udāsīna*, the strife of the gunas in the natural being and regards as an impassive witness the pleasure and pain of the mind and body. Or it is able to impose its indifference even on the outer mind and watches with the impartial calm or the impartial joy of the detached spectator the universal action in which it has no longer an active inner participation. The end of this movement is the rejection of birth and a departure into the silent self, *mokṣa*.

But this rejection is not the last possible word of liberation. The integral liberation comes when this passion for release, *mumukṣutva*, founded on distaste or *vairāgya*, is itself transcended; the soul is then liberated both from attachment to the lower action of nature and from all repugnance to the cosmic action of the Divine. This liberation gets its completeness when the spiritual gnosis can act with a supramental knowledge and reception of the action of Nature and a supramental luminous will in initiation. The gnosis discovers the spiritual sense in Nature, God in things, the soul of good in all things that have the contrary appearance; that soul is delivered in them and out of them, the perversions of the imperfect or contrary forms fall away or are transformed into their higher divine truth, — even as the gunas go back to their divine principles, — and the spirit lives in a universal, infinite and absolute Truth, Good, Beauty, Bliss which is the supramental or ideal divine Nature. The liberation of the Nature becomes one with the liberation of the spirit, and there is founded in the integral freedom the integral perfection.

Chapter X

The Elements of Perfection

WHEN the self is purified of the wrong and confused action of the instrumental Nature and liberated into its self-existent being, consciousness, power and bliss and the Nature itself liberated from the tangle of this lower action of the struggling gunas and the dualities into the high truth of the divine calm and the divine action, then spiritual perfection becomes possible. Purification and freedom are the indispensable antecedents of perfection. A spiritual self-perfection can only mean a growing into oneness with the nature of divine being, and therefore according to our conception of divine being will be the aim, effort and method of our seeking after this perfection. To the Mayavadin the highest or rather the only real truth of being is the impassive, impersonal, self-aware Absolute and therefore to grow into an impassive calm, impersonality and pure self-awareness of spirit is his idea of perfection and a rejection of cosmic and individual being and a settling into silent self-knowledge is his way. To the Buddhist for whom the highest truth is a negation of being, a recognition of the impermanence and sorrow of being and the disastrous nullity of desire and a dissolution of egoism, of the upholding associations of the Idea and the successions of Karma are the perfect way. Other ideas of the Highest are less negative; each according to its own idea leads towards some likeness to the Divine, *sādṛśya*, and each finds its own way, such as the love and worship of the Bhakta and the growing into the likeness of the Divine by love. But for the integral Yoga perfection will mean a divine spirit and a divine nature which will admit of a divine relation and action in the world; it will mean also in its entirety a divinising of the whole nature, a rejection of all its wrong knots of being and action, but no rejection of any part of our being or of any field of our action. The approach to perfection must be therefore a large and complex movement and its results and workings will have an infinite and varied scope. We must fix in order to find a clue and method on certain essential and fundamental elements and requisites of perfection, *siddhi*; for if these are secured, all the rest will be found to be only their natural development or particular working. We may cast these elements into six divisions, interdependent on each other to a great extent but still in a certain way naturally successive in their order of attainment. The movement will start from a basic equality of the soul and mount to an ideal action of the Divine through our perfected being in the largeness of the Brahmic unity.

The first necessity is some fundamental poise of the soul both in its essential and its natural being regarding and meeting the things, impacts and workings of Nature. This poise we shall arrive at by growing into a perfect equality, *samatā*. The self, spirit or Brahman is one in all and therefore one to all; it is, as is said in the Gita which has developed fully this idea of equality and indicated its experience on at least one side of equality, the equal Brahman, *samaṁ brahma*; the Gita even goes so far in one passage as to identify equality and yoga, *samatvaṁ yoga ucyate*. That is to say, equality is the sign of unity with the Brahman, of becoming Brahman, of growing into an undisturbed spiritual poise of being in the Infinite. Its importance can hardly be exaggerated; for it is the sign of our having passed beyond the egoistic determinations of our nature, of our having conquered our enslaved response to the dualities, of our having transcended the shifting turmoil of the gunas, of our having entered into the calm and peace of liberation. Equality is a term of consciousness which brings into the whole of our being and nature the eternal tranquillity of the Infinite. Moreover, it is the condition of a securely and perfectly divine action; the security and largeness of the cosmic action of the Infinite is based upon and never breaks down or forfeits its eternal tranquillity. That too must be the character of the perfect spiritual action; to be equal and one to all things in spirit, understanding, mind, heart and natural consciousness, — even in the most physical consciousness, — and to make all their workings, whatever their outward adaptation to the thing to be done, always and imminuably full of the divine equality and calm must be its inmost principle. That may be said to be the passive or basic, the fundamental and receptive side of equality, but there is also an active and possessive side, an equal bliss which can only come when the peace of equality is founded and which is the beatific flower of its fullness.

The next necessity of perfection is to raise all the active parts of the human nature to that highest condition and working pitch of their power and capacity, *śakti*, at which they become capable of being divinised into true instruments of the free, perfect, spiritual and divine action. For practical purposes we may take the understanding, the heart, the prana and the body as the four members of our nature which have thus to be prepared, and we have to find the constituent terms of their perfection. Also there is the dynamical force in us (*vīrya*) of the temperament, character and soul nature, *svabhāva*, which makes the power of our members effective in action and gives them their type and direction; this has to be freed from its limitations, enlarged, rounded so that the whole manhood in us may become the basis of a divine manhood, when the Purusha, the real Man in us, the divine Soul, shall act fully in this human instrument and shine fully through this human vessel. To divinise the perfected nature we have to call in the divine Power or Shakti to replace our limited human energy so that this may be shaped into the image of and filled with the force of a greater infinite energy, *daivī prakṛti*, *bhāgavatī śakti*. This perfection will grow in the measure in which we can surrender ourselves, first, to the guidance and then to the direct action of that Power and of the Master of our being and our works to whom it belongs, and for this purpose faith is the essential, faith is the great motor-power of our being in our aspirations to perfection, — here, a faith in God and the Shakti which shall begin in the heart and understanding, but shall take possession of all our nature, all its consciousness, all its dynamic motive-force. These four things are the essentials of this second element of perfection, the full powers of the members of the instrumental nature, the perfected dynamis of the soul nature, the assumption of them into the action of the divine

Power, and a perfect faith in all our members to call and support that assumption, *śakti*, *vīrya*, *daivī prakṛti*, *śraddhā*.

But so long as this development takes place only on the highest level of our normal nature, we may have a reflected and limited image of perfection translated into the lower terms of the soul in mind, life and body, but not the possession of the divine perfection in the highest terms possible to us of the divine Idea and its Power. That is to be found beyond these lower principles in the supramental gnosis; therefore the next step of perfection will be the evolution of the mental into the gnostic being. This evolution is effected by a breaking beyond the mental limitation, a stride upward into the next higher plane or region of our being hidden from us at present by the shining lid of the mental reflections and a conversion of all that we are into the terms of this greater consciousness. In the gnosis itself, *vijñāna*, there are several gradations which open at their highest into the full and infinite Ananda. The gnosis once effectively called into action will progressively take up all the terms of intelligence, will, sense-mind, heart, the vital and sensational being and translate them by a luminous and harmonising conversion into a unity of the truth, power and delight of a divine existence. It will lift into that light and force and convert into their own highest sense our whole intellectual, volitional, dynamic, ethical, aesthetic, sensational, vital and physical being. It has the power also of overcoming physical limitations and developing a more perfect and divinely instrumental body. Its light opens up the fields of the superconscient and darts its rays and pours its luminous flood into the subconscient and enlightens its obscure hints and withheld secrets. It admits us to a greater light of the Infinite than is reflected in the paler luminosity even of the highest mentality. While it perfects the individual soul and nature in the sense of a diviner existence and makes a full harmony of the diversities of our being, it founds all its action upon the Unity from which it proceeds and takes up everything into that Unity. Personality and impersonality, the two eternal aspects of existence, are made one by its action in the spiritual being and Nature body of the Purushottama.

The gnostic perfection, spiritual in its nature, is to be accomplished here in the body and takes life in the physical world as one of its fields, even though the gnosis opens to us possession of planes and worlds beyond the material universe. The physical body is therefore a basis of action, *pratiṣṭhā*, which cannot be despised, neglected or excluded from the spiritual evolution: a perfection of the body as the outer instrument of a complete divine living on earth will be necessarily a part of the gnostic conversion. The change will be effected by bringing in the law of the gnostic Purusha, *vijñānamaya puruṣa*, and of that into which it opens, the Anandamaya, into the physical consciousness and its members. Pushed to its highest conclusion this movement brings in a spiritualising and illumination of the whole physical consciousness and a divinising of the law of the body. For behind the gross physical sheath of this materially visible and sensible frame there is subliminally supporting it and discoverable by a finer subtle consciousness a subtle body of the mental being and a spiritual or causal body of the gnostic and bliss soul in which all the perfection of a spiritual embodiment is to be found, a yet unmanifested divine law of the body. Most of the physical siddhis acquired by certain Yogins are brought about by some opening up of the law of the subtle or a calling down of something of the law of the spiritual body. The ordinary method is the opening up of the *cakras* by the physical processes of Hathayoga (of which something is also included in the Rajayoga) or by the methods of the Tantric discipline. But while these may be optionally used at certain stages by the integral Yoga, they are not indispensable; for here the reliance is on the power of the higher being to change the lower existence, a working is chosen mainly from above downward and not the opposite way, and therefore the development of the superior power of the gnosis will be awaited as the instrumentative change in this part of the Yoga.

There will remain, because it will then only be entirely possible, the perfect action and enjoyment of being on the gnostic basis. The Purusha enters into cosmic manifestation for the variations of his infinite existence, for knowledge, action and enjoyment; the gnosis brings the fullness of spiritual knowledge and it will found on that the divine action and cast the enjoyment of world and being into the law of the truth, the freedom and the perfection of the spirit. But neither action nor enjoyment will be the lower action of the gunas and consequent egoistic enjoyment mostly of the satisfaction of rajasic desire which is our present way of living. Whatever desire will remain, if that name be given, will be the divine desire, the will to delight of the Purusha enjoying in his freedom and perfection the action of the perfected Prakriti and all her members. The Prakriti will take up the whole nature into the law of her higher divine truth and act in that law offering up the universal enjoyment of her action and being to the Anandamaya Ishwara, the Lord of existence and works and Spirit of bliss, who presides over and governs her workings. The individual soul will be the channel of this action and offering, and it will enjoy at once its oneness with the Ishwara and its oneness with the Prakriti and will enjoy all relations with Infinite and finite, with God and the universe and beings in the universe in the highest terms of the union of the universal Purusha and Prakriti.

All the gnostic evolution opens up into the divine principle of Ananda, which is the foundation of the fullness of spiritual being, consciousness and bliss of Sachchidananda or eternal Brahman. Possessed at first by reflection in the mental experience, it will be possessed afterwards with a greater fullness and directness in the massed and luminous consciousness, *cidghana*, which comes by the gnosis. The Siddha or perfected soul will live in union with the Purushottama in this Brahmic consciousness, he will be conscious in the Brahman that is the All, *sarvaṁ brahma*, in the Brahman infinite in being and infinite in quality, *anantaṁ brahma*, in Brahman as self-existent consciousness and universal knowledge, *jñānaṁ brahma*, in Brahman as the self-existent bliss and its universal delight of being, *ānandaṁ brahma*. He will experience all the universe as the manifestation of the One, all quality and action as the play of his universal and infinite energy, all knowledge and conscious experience as the outflowing of that consciousness, and all in the terms of that one Ananda. His physical being will be one with all material Nature, his vital being with the life of the universe, his mind with the cosmic mind, his spiritual knowledge and will with the divine knowledge and will both in itself and as it pours itself through these channels, his spirit with the one spirit in all beings. All the variety of cosmic existence will be changed to him in that unity and revealed in the secret of its spiritual significance. For in this spiritual bliss and being he will be one with That which is the origin and continent and inhabitant and spirit and constituting power of all existence. This will be the highest reach of self-perfection.

Chapter XI

The Perfection of Equality

THE VERY first necessity for spiritual perfection is a perfect equality. Perfection in the sense in which we use it in Yoga, means a growth out of a lower undivine into a higher divine nature. In terms of knowledge it is a putting on the being of the higher self and a casting away of the darker broken lower self or a transforming of our imperfect state into the rounded luminous fullness of our real and spiritual personality. In terms of devotion and adoration it is a growing into a likeness of the nature or the law of the being of the Divine, to be united with whom we aspire, — for if there is not this likeness, this oneness of the law of the being, unity between that transcending and universal and this individual spirit is not possible. The supreme divine nature is founded on equality. This affirmation is true of it whether we look on the Supreme Being as a pure silent Self and Spirit or as the divine Master of cosmic existence. The pure Self is equal, unmoved, the witness in an impartial peace of all the happenings and relations of cosmic existence. While it is not averse to them, — aversion is not equality, nor, if that were the attitude of the Self to cosmic existence, could the universe come at all into being or proceed upon its cycles, — a detachment, the calm of an equal regard, a superiority to the reactions which trouble and are the disabling weakness of the soul involved in outward nature, are the very substance of the silent Infinite's purity and the condition of its impartial assent and support to the many-sided movement of the universe. But in that power too of the Supreme which governs and develops these motions, the same equality is a basic condition.

The Master of things cannot be affected or troubled by the reactions of things; if he were, he would be subject to them, not master, not free to develop them according to his sovereign will and wisdom and according to the inner truth and necessity of what is behind their relations, but obliged rather to act according to the claim of temporary accident and phenomenon. The truth of all things is in the calm of their depths, not in the shifting inconstant wave form on the surface. The supreme conscious Being in his divine knowledge and will and love governs their evolution — to our ignorance so often a cruel confusion and distraction — from these depths and is not troubled by the clamour of the surface. The divine nature does not share in our gropings and our passions; when we speak of the divine wrath or favour or of God suffering in man, we are using a human language which mistranslates the inner significance of the movement we characterise. We see something of the real truth of them when we rise out of the phenomenal mind into the heights of the spiritual being. For then we perceive that whether in the silence of self or in its action in the cosmos, the Divine is always Sachchidananda, an infinite existence, an infinite consciousness and self-founded power of conscious being, an infinite bliss in all his existence. We ourselves begin to dwell in an equal light, strength, joy — the psychological rendering of the divine knowledge, will and delight in self and things which are the active universal outpourings from those infinite sources. In the strength of that light, power and joy a secret self and spirit within us accepts and transforms always into food of its perfect experience the dual letters of the mind's transcript of life, and if there were not the hidden greater existence even now within us, we could not bear the pressure of the universal force or subsist in this great and dangerous world. A perfect equality of our spirit and nature is a means by which we can move back from the troubled and ignorant outer consciousness into this inner kingdom of heaven and possess the spirit's eternal kingdoms, *rājyaṁ samṛddham*, of greatness, joy and peace. That self-elevation to the divine nature is the complete fruit and the whole occasion of the discipline of equality demanded from us by the self-perfecting aim in Yoga.

A perfect equality and peace of the soul is indispensable to change the whole substance of our being into substance of the self out of its present stuff of troubled mentality. It is equally indispensable if we aspire to replace our present confused and ignorant action by the self-possessed and luminous works of a free spirit governing its nature and in tune with universal being. A divine action or even a perfect human action is impossible if we have not equality of spirit and an equality in the motive-forces of our nature. The Divine is equal to all, an impartial sustainer of his universe, who views all with equal eyes, assents to the law of developing being which he has brought out of the depths of his existence, tolerates what has to be tolerated, depresses what has to be depressed, raises what has to be raised, creates, sustains and destroys with a perfect and equal understanding of all causes and results and working out of the spiritual and pragmatic meaning of all phenomena. God does not create in obedience to any troubled passion of desire or maintain and preserve through an attachment of partial preference or destroy in a fury of wrath, disgust or aversion. The Divine deals with great and small, just and unjust, ignorant and wise as the Self of all who, deeply intimate and one with the being, leads all according to their nature and need with a perfect understanding, power and justness of proportion. But through it all he moves things according to his large aim in the cycles and draws the soul upward in the evolution through its apparent progress and retrogression towards the higher and ever higher development which is the sense of the cosmic urge. The self-perfecting individual who seeks to be one in will with the Divine and make his nature an instrument of the divine purpose, must enlarge himself out of the egoistic and partial views and motives of the human ignorance and mould himself into an image of this supreme equality.

This equal poise in action is especially necessary for the sadhaka of the integral Yoga. First, he must acquire that equal assent and understanding which will respond to the law of the divine action without trying to impose on it a partial will and the violent claim of a personal aspiration. A wise impersonality, a quiescent equality, a universality which sees all things as the manifestations of the Divine, the one Existence, is not angry, troubled, impatient with the way of things or on the other hand excited, over-eager and precipitate, but sees that the law must be obeyed and the pace of time respected, observes and understands with sympathy the actuality of things and beings, but looks also behind the present appearance to their inner significances and forward to the unrolling of their divine possibilities, is the first thing demanded of those who would do works as the perfect instruments of the Divine. But this impersonal acquiescence is only the basis. Man is the instrument of an evolution which wears at first the mask of a struggle, but grows more and more into its truer and deeper sense of a constant wise adjustment and must take on in a rising scale the deepest truth and significance — now only underlying the adjustment and struggle — of a universal harmony. The perfected human soul must always be an instrument for the hastening of the ways of this evolution. For that a divine power acting with the royalty of the divine will in it must be in whatever degree present in the nature. But to be accomplished and permanent, steadfast in action, truly divine, it has to proceed on the basis of a spiritual equality, a calm, impersonal and equal self-identification with all beings, an understanding of all energies. The Divine acts with a mighty power in the myriad workings of the universe, but with the supporting light and force of an imperturbable oneness, freedom and peace. That must be the type of the perfected soul's divine works. And equality is the condition of the being which makes possible this changed spirit in the action.

But even a human perfection cannot dispense with equality as one of its chief elements and even its essential atmosphere. The aim of a human perfection must include, if it is to deserve the name, two things, self-mastery and a mastery of the surroundings; it must seek for them in the greatest degree of these powers which is at all attainable by our human nature. Man's urge of self-perfection is to be, in the ancient language, *svarāṭ* and *samrāṭ*, self-ruler and king. But to be self-ruler is not possible for him if he is subject to the attack of the lower nature, to the turbulence of grief and joy, to the violent touches of pleasure and pain, to the tumult of his emotions and passions, to the bondage of his personal likings and dislikings, to the strong chains of desire and attachment, to the narrowness of a personal and emotionally preferential judgment and opinion, to all the hundred touches of his egoism and its pursuing stamp on his thought, feeling and action. All these things are the slavery to the lower self which the greater "I" in man must put under his feet if he is to be king of his own nature. To surmount them is the condition of self-rule; but of that surmounting again equality is the condition and the essence of the movement. To be quite free from all these things, — if possible, or at least to be master of and superior to them, — is equality. Farther, one who is not self-ruler, cannot be master of his surroundings. The knowledge, the will, the harmony which is necessary for this outward mastery, can come only as a crown of the inward conquest. It belongs to the self-possessing soul and mind which follows with a disinterested equality the Truth, the Right, the universal Largeness to which alone this mastery is possible, — following always the great ideal they present to our imperfection while it understands and makes a full allowance too for all that seems to conflict with them and stand in the way of their manifestation. This rule is true even on the levels of our actual human mentality, where we can only get a limited perfection. But the ideal of Yoga takes up this aim of Swarajya and Samrajya and puts it on the larger spiritual basis. There it gets its full power, opens to the diviner degrees of the spirit; for it is by oneness with the Infinite, by a spiritual power acting upon finite things, that some highest integral perfection of our being and nature finds its own native foundation.

A perfect equality not only of the self, but in the nature is a condition of the Yoga of self-perfection. The first obvious step to it will be the conquest of our emotional and vital being, for here are the sources of greatest trouble, the most rampant forces of inequality and subjection, the most insistent claim of our imperfection. The equality of these parts of our nature comes by purification and freedom. We might say that equality is the very sign of liberation. To be free from the domination of the urge of vital desire and the stormy mastery of the soul by the passions is to have a calm and equal heart and a life-principle governed by the large and even view of a universal spirit. Desire is the impurity of the Prana, the life-principle, and its chain of bondage. A free Prana means a content and satisfied life-soul which fronts the contact of outward things without desire and receives them with an equal response; delivered, uplifted above the servile duality of liking and disliking, indifferent to the urgings of pleasure and pain, not excited by the pleasant, not troubled and overpowered by the unpleasant, not clinging with attachment to the touches it prefers or violently repelling those for which it has an aversion, it will be opened to a greater system of values of experience. All that comes to it from the world with menace or with solicitation, it will refer to the higher principles, to a reason and heart in touch with or changed by the light and calm joy of the spirit. Thus quieted, mastered by the spirit and no longer trying to impose its own mastery on the deeper and finer soul in us, this life-soul will be itself spiritualised and work as a clear and noble instrument of the diviner dealings of the spirit with things. There is no question here of an ascetic killing of the life-impulse and its native utilities and functions; not its killing is demanded, but its transformation. The function of the Prana is enjoyment, but the real enjoyment of existence is an inward spiritual Ananda, not partial and troubled like that of our vital, emotional or mental pleasure, degraded as they are now by the predominance of the physical mind, but universal, profound, a massed concentration of spiritual bliss possessed in a calm ecstasy of self and all existence. Possession is its function, by possession comes the soul's enjoyment of things, but this is the real possession, a thing large and inward, not dependent on the outward seizing which makes us subject to what we seize. All outward possession and enjoyment will be only an occasion of a satisfied and equal play of the spiritual Ananda with the forms and phenomena of its own world-being. The egoistic possession, the making things our own in the sense of the ego's claim on God and beings and the world, *parigraha*, must be renounced in order that this greater thing, this large, universal and perfect life, may come. *Tyaktena bhuñjīthāḥ*, by renouncing the egoistic sense of desire and possession, the soul enjoys divinely its self and the universe.

A free heart is similarly a heart delivered from the gusts and storms of the affections and the passions; the assailing touch of grief, wrath, hatred, fear, inequality of love, trouble of joy, pain of sorrow fall away from the equal heart, and leave it a thing large, calm, equal, luminous, divine. These things are not incumbent on the essential nature of our being, but the creations of the present make of our outward active mental and vital nature and its transactions with its surroundings. The ego-sense which induces us to act as separate beings who make their isolated claim and experience the test of the values of the universe, is responsible for these aberrations. When we live in unity with the Divine in ourselves and the spirit of the universe, these imperfections fall away from us and disappear in the calm and equal strength and delight of the inner spiritual existence. Always that is within us and transforms the outward touches before they reach it by a passage through a subliminal psychic soul in us which is the hidden instrument of its delight of being. By equality of the heart we get away from the troubled desire-soul on the surface, open the gates of this profounder being, bring out its responses and impose their true divine values on all that solicits our emotional being. A free, happy, equal and all-embracing heart of spiritual feeling is the outcome of this perfection.

In this perfection too there is no question of a severe ascetic insensibility, an aloof spiritual indifference or a strained rugged austerity of self-suppression. This is not a killing of the emotional nature but a transformation. All that presents itself here in our outward nature in perverse or imperfect forms has a significance and utility which come out when we get back to the greater truth of divine being. Love will be not destroyed, but perfected, enlarged to its widest capacity, deepened to its spiritual rapture, the love of God, the love of man, the love of all things as ourselves and as beings and powers of the Divine; a large, universal love, not at all incapable of various relation, will replace the clamant, egoistic, self-regarding love of little joys and griefs and insistent demands afflicted with all the chequered pattern of angers and jealousies and satisfactions, rushings to unity and movements of fatigue, divorce and separation on which we now place so high a value. Grief will cease to exist, but a universal, an equal love and sympathy will take its place, not a suffering sympathy, but a power which, itself delivered, is strong to sustain, to help, to liberate. To the free spirit wrath and hatred are impossible, but not the strong Rudra energy of the Divine which can battle without hatred and destroy without wrath because all the time aware of the things it destroys as parts of itself, its own manifestations and unaltered therefore in its sympathy and understanding of those in whom are embodied these manifestations. All our emotional nature will undergo this high liberating transformation; but in order that it may do so, a perfect equality is the effective condition.

The same equality must be brought into the rest of our being. Our whole dynamic being is acting under the influence of unequal impulses, the manifestations of the lower ignorant nature. These urgings we obey or partially control or place on them the changing and modifying influence of our reason, our refining aesthetic sense and mind and regulating ethical notions. A tangled strain of right and wrong, of useful and harmful, harmonious or disordered activity is the mixed result of our endeavour, a shifting standard of human reason and unreason, virtue and vice, honour and dishonour, the noble and the ignoble, things approved and things disapproved of men, much trouble of self-approbation and disapprobation or of self-righteousness and disgust, remorse, shame and moral depression. These things are no doubt very necessary at present for our spiritual evolution. But the seeker of a greater perfection will draw back from all these dualities, regard them with an equal eye and arrive through equality at an impartial and universal action of the dynamic Tapas, spiritual force, in which his own force and will are turned into pure and just instruments of a greater calm secret of divine working. The ordinary mental standards will be exceeded on the basis of this dynamic equality. The eye of his will must look beyond to a purity of divine being, a motive of divine will-power guided by divine knowledge of which his perfected nature will be the engine, *yantra*. That must remain impossible in entirety as long as the dynamic ego with its subservience to the emotional and vital impulses and the preferences of the personal judgment interferes in his action. A perfect equality of the will is the power which dissolves these knots of the lower impulsion to works. This equality will not respond to the lower impulses, but watch for a greater seeing impulsion from the Light above the mind, and will not judge and govern with the intellectual judgment, but wait for enlightenment and direction from a superior plane of vision. As it mounts upward to the supramental being and widens inward to the spiritual largeness, the dynamic nature will be transformed, spiritualised like the emotional and pranic, and grow into a power of the divine nature. There will be plenty of stumblings and errors and imperfections of adjustment of the instruments to their new working, but the increasingly equal soul will not be troubled overmuch or grieve at these things, since, delivered to the guidance of the Light and Power within self and above mind, it will proceed on its way with a firm assurance and await with growing calm the vicissitudes and completion of the process of transformation. The promise of the Divine Being in the Gita will be the anchor of its resolution, "Abandon all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone; I will deliver thee from all sin and evil; do not grieve."

The equality of the thinking mind will be a part and a very important part of the perfection of the instruments in the nature. Our present attractive self-justifying attachment to our intellectual preferences, our judgments, opinions, imaginations, limiting associations of the memory which makes the basis of our mentality, to the current repetitions of our habitual mind, to the insistences of our pragmatic mind, to the limitations even of our intellectual truth-mind, must go the way of other attachments and yield to the impartiality of an equal vision. The equal thought-mind will look on knowledge and ignorance and on truth and error, those dualities created by our limited nature of consciousness and the partiality of our intellect and its little stock of reasonings and intuitions, accept them both without being bound to either twine of the skein and await a luminous transcendence. In ignorance it will see a knowledge which is imprisoned and seeks or waits for delivery, in error a truth at work which has lost itself or got thrown by the groping mind into misleading forms. On the other side it will not hold itself bound and limited by its knowledge or forbidden by it to proceed to fresh illumination, nor lay too fierce a grasp on truth, even when using it to the full, or tyrannously chain it to its present formulations. This perfect equality of the thinking mind is indispensable because the objective of this progress is the greater light which belongs to a higher plane of spiritual cognizance. This equality is the most delicate and difficult of all, the least practised by the human mind; its perfection is impossible so long as the supramental light does not fall fully on the upward looking mentality. But an increasing will to equality in the intelligence is needed, before that light can work freely upon the mental substance. This too is not an abnegation of the seekings and cosmic purposes of the intelligence, not an indifference or impartial scepticism, nor yet a stilling of all thought in the silence of the Ineffable. A stilling of the mental thought may be part of the discipline, when the object is to free the mind from its own partial workings, in order that it may become an equal channel of a higher light and knowledge; but there must also be a transformation of the mental substance; otherwise the higher light cannot assume full possession and a compelling shape for the ordered works of the divine consciousness in the human being. The silence of the Ineffable is a truth of divine being, but the Word which proceeds from that silence is also a truth, and it is this Word which has to be given a body in the conscious form of the nature.

But, finally, all this equalisation of the nature is a preparation for the highest spiritual equality to take possession of the whole being and make a pervading atmosphere in which the light, power and joy of the Divine can manifest itself in man amid an increasing fullness. That equality is the eternal equality of Sachchidananda. It is an equality of the infinite being which is self-existent, an equality of the eternal spirit, but it will mould into its own mould the mind, heart, will, life, physical being. It is an equality of the infinite spiritual consciousness which will contain and base the blissful flowing and satisfied waves of a divine knowledge. It is an equality of the divine Tapas which will initiate a luminous action of the divine will in all the nature. It is an equality of the divine Ananda which will found the play of a divine universal delight, universal love and an illimitable aesthesis of universal beauty. The ideal equal peace and calm of the Infinite will be the wide ether of our perfected being, but the ideal, equal and perfect action of the Infinite through the nature working on the relations of the universe will be the untroubled outpouring of its power in our being. This is the meaning of equality in the terms of the integral Yoga.

Chapter XII

The Way of Equality

IT WILL appear from the description of the complete and perfect equality that this equality has two sides. It must therefore be arrived at by two successive movements. One will liberate us from the action of the lower nature and admit us to the calm peace of the divine being; the other will liberate us into the full being and power of the higher nature and admit us to the equal poise and universality of a divine and infinite knowledge, will of action, Ananda. The first may be described as a passive or negative equality, an equality of reception which fronts impassively the impacts and phenomena of existence and negates the dualities of the appearances and reactions which they impose on us. The second is an active, a positive equality which accepts the phenomena of existence, but only as the manifestation of the one divine being and with an equal response to them which comes from the divine nature in us and transforms them into its hidden values. The first lives in the peace of the one Brahman and puts away from it the nature of the active Ignorance. The second lives in that peace, but also in the Ananda of the Divine and imposes on the life of the soul in nature the signs of the divine knowledge, power and bliss of being. It is this double orientation united by the common principle which will determine the movement of equality in the integral Yoga.

The effort towards a passive or purely receptive equality may start from three different principles or attitudes which all lead to the same result and ultimate consequence, — endurance, indifference and submission. The principle of endurance relies on the strength of the spirit within us to bear all the contacts, impacts, suggestions of this phenomenal Nature that besieges us on every side without being overborne by them and compelled to bear their emotional, sensational, dynamic, intellectual reactions. The outer mind in the lower nature has not this strength. Its strength is that of a limited force of consciousness which has to do the best it can with all that comes in upon it or besieges it from the greater whirl of consciousness and energy which environs it on this plane of existence. That it can maintain itself at all and affirm its individual being in the universe, is due indeed to the strength of the spirit within it, but it cannot bring forward the whole of that strength or the infinity of that force to meet the attacks of life; if it could, it would be at once the equal and master of its world. In fact, it has to manage as it can. It meets certain impacts and is able to assimilate, equate or master them partially or completely, for a time or wholly, and then it has in that degree the emotional and sensational reactions of joy, pleasure, satisfaction, liking, love, etc., or the intellectual and mental reactions of acceptance, approval, understanding, knowledge, preference, and on these its will seizes with attraction, desire, the attempt to prolong, to repeat, to create, to possess, to make them the pleasurable habit of its life. Other impacts it meets, but finds them too strong for it or too dissimilar and discordant or too weak to give it satisfaction; these are things which it cannot bear or cannot equate with itself or cannot assimilate, and it is obliged to give to them reactions of grief, pain, discomfort, dissatisfaction, disliking, disapproval, rejection, inability to understand or know, refusal of admission. Against them it seeks to protect itself, to escape from them, to avoid or minimise their recurrence; it has with regard to them movements of fear, anger, shrinking, horror, aversion, disgust, shame, would gladly be delivered from them, but it cannot get away from them, for it is bound to and even invites their causes and therefore the results; for these impacts are part of life, tangled up with the things we desire, and the inability to deal with them is part of the imperfection of our nature. Other impacts again the normal mind succeeds in holding at bay or neutralising and to these it has a natural reaction of indifference, insensibility or tolerance which is neither positive acceptance and enjoyment nor rejection or suffering. To things, persons, happenings, ideas, workings, whatever presents itself to the mind, there are always these three kinds of reaction. At the same time, in spite of their generality, there is nothing absolute about them; they form a scheme for a habitual scale which is not precisely the same for all or even for the same mind at different times or in different conditions. The same impact may arouse in it at one time and another the pleasurable or positive, the adverse or negative or the indifferent or neutral reactions.

The soul which seeks mastery may begin by turning upon these reactions the encountering and opposing force of a strong and equal endurance. Instead of seeking to protect itself from or to shun and escape the unpleasant impacts it may confront them and teach itself to suffer and to bear them with perseverance, with fortitude, an increasing equanimity or an austere or calm acceptance. This attitude, this discipline brings out three results, three powers of the soul in relation to things. First, it is found that what was before unbearable, becomes easy to endure; the scale of the power that meets the impact rises in degree; it needs a greater and greater force of it or of its protracted incidence to cause trouble, pain, grief, aversion or any other of the notes in the gamut of the unpleasant reactions. Secondly, it is found that the conscious nature divides itself into two parts, one of the normal mental and emotional nature in which the customary reactions continue to take place, another of the higher will and reason which observes and is not troubled or affected by the passion of this lower nature, does not accept it as its own, does not approve, sanction or participate. Then the lower nature begins to lose the force and power of its reactions, to submit to the suggestions of calm and strength from the higher reason and will, and gradually that calm and strength take possession of the mental and emotional, even of the sensational, vital and physical being. This brings the third power and result, the power by this endurance and mastery, this separation and rejection of the lower nature, to get rid of the normal reactions and even, if we will, to remould all our modes of experience by the strength of the spirit. This method is applied not only to the unpleasant, but also to the pleasant reactions; the soul refuses to give itself up to or be carried away by them; it endures with calm the impacts which bring joy and pleasure; refuses to be excited by them and replaces the joy and eager seeking of the mind after pleasant things by the calm of the spirit. It can be applied too to the thought-mind in a calm reception of knowledge and of limitation of knowledge which refuses to be carried away by the fascination of this attractive or repelled by dislike for that unaccustomed or unpalatable thought-suggestion and waits on the Truth with a detached observation which allows it to grow on the strong, disinterested, mastering will and reason. Thus the soul becomes gradually equal to all things, master of itself, adequate to meet the world with a strong front in the mind and an undisturbed serenity of the spirit.

The second way is an attitude of impartial indifference. Its method is to reject at once the attraction or the repulsion of things, to cultivate for them a luminous impassivity, an inhibiting rejection, a habit of dissociation and desuetude. This attitude reposes less on the will, though will is always necessary, than on the knowledge. It is an attitude which regards these passions of the mind as things born of the illusion of the outward mentality or inferior movements unworthy of the calm truth of the single and equal spirit or a vital and emotional disturbance to be rejected by the tranquil observing will and dispassionate intelligence of the sage. It puts away desire from the mind, discards the ego which attributes these dual values to things, and replaces desire by an impartial and indifferent peace and ego by the pure self which is not troubled, excited or unhinged by the impacts of the world. And not only is the emotional mind quieted, but the intellectual being also rejects the thoughts of the ignorance and rises beyond the interests of an inferior knowledge to the one truth that is eternal and without change. This way too develops three results or powers by which it ascends to peace.

First, it is found that the mind is voluntarily bound by the petty joys and troubles of life and that in reality these can have no inner hold on it, if the soul simply chooses to cast off its habit of helpless determination by external and transient things. Secondly, it is found that here too a division can be made, a psychological partition between the lower or outward mind still subservient to the old habitual touches and the higher reason and will which stand back to live in the indifferent calm of the spirit. There grows on us, in other words, an inner separate calm which watches the commotion of the lower members without taking part in it or giving it any sanction. At first the higher reason and will may be often clouded, invaded, the mind carried away by the incitation of the lower members, but eventually this calm becomes inexpugnable, permanent, not to be shaken by the most violent touches, *na duḥkhena guruṇāpi vicālyate*. This inner soul of calm regards the trouble of the outer mind with a detached superiority or a passing uninvolved indulgence such as might be given to the trivial joys and griefs of a child, it does not regard them as its own or as reposing on any permanent reality. And, finally, the outer mind too accepts by degrees this calm and indifferent serenity; it ceases to be attracted by the things that attracted it or troubled by the griefs and pains to which it had the habit of attaching an unreal importance. Thus the third power comes, an all-pervading power of wide tranquillity and peace, a bliss of release from the siege of our imposed fantastic self-torturing nature, the deep undisturbed exceeding happiness of the touch of the eternal and infinite replacing by its permanence the strife and turmoil of impermanent things, *brahmasaṁsparśam atyantaṁ sukham aśnute*. The soul is fixed in the delight of the self, *ātmaratiḥ*, in the single and infinite Ananda of the spirit and hunts no more after outward touches and their griefs and pleasures. It observes the world only as the spectator of a play or action in which it is no longer compelled to participate.

The third way is that of submission, which may be the Christian resignation founded on submission to the will of God, or an unegoistic acceptance of things and happenings as a manifestation of the universal Will in time, or a complete surrender of the person to the Divine, to the supreme Purusha. As the first was a way of the will and the second a way of knowledge, of the understanding reason, so this is a way of the temperament and heart and very intimately connected with the principle of Bhakti. If it is pushed to the end, it arrives at the same result of a perfect equality. For the knot of the ego is loosened and the personal claim begins to disappear, we find that we are no longer bound to joy in things pleasant or sorrow over the unpleasant; we bear them without either eager acceptance or troubled rejection, refer them to the Master of our being, concern ourselves less and less with their personal result to us and hold only one thing of importance, to approach God, or to be in touch and tune with the universal and infinite Existence, or to be united with the Divine, his channel, instrument, servant, lover, rejoicing in him and in our relation with him and having no other object or cause of joy or sorrow. Here too there may be for some time a division between the lower mind of habitual emotions and the higher psychical mind of love and self-giving, but eventually the former yields, changes, transforms itself, is swallowed up in the love, joy, delight of the Divine and has no other interests or attractions. Then all within is the equal peace and bliss of that union, the one silent bliss that passes understanding, the peace that abides untouched by the solicitation of lower things in the depths of our spiritual existence.

These three ways coincide in spite of their separate starting-points, first, by their inhibition of the normal reactions of the mind to the touches of outward things, *bāhya-sparśān*, secondly, by their separation of the self or spirit from the outward action of Nature. But it is evident that our perfection will be greater and more embracingly complete, if we can have a more active equality which will enable us not only to draw back from or confront the world in a detached and separated calm, but to return upon it and possess it in the power of the calm and equal Spirit. This is possible because the world, Nature, action are not in fact a quite separate thing, but a manifestation of the Self, the All-Soul, the Divine. The reactions of the normal mind are a degradation of the divine values which would but for this degradation make this truth evident to us, — a falsification, an ignorance which alters their workings, an ignorance which starts from the involution of the Self in a blind material nescience. Once we return to the full consciousness of Self, of God, we can then put a true divine value on things and receive and act on them with the calm, joy, knowledge, seeing will of the Spirit. When we begin to do that, then the soul begins to have an equal joy in the universe, an equal will dealing with all energies, an equal knowledge which takes possession of the spiritual truth behind all the phenomena of this divine manifestation. It possesses the world as the Divine possesses it, in a fullness of the infinite light, power and Ananda.

All this existence can therefore be approached by a Yoga of positive and active in place of the negative and passive equality. This requires, first, a new knowledge which is the knowledge of unity, — to see all things as oneself and to see all things in God and God in all things. There is then a will of equal acceptance of all phenomena, all events, all happenings, all persons and forces as masks of the Self, movements of the one energy, results of the one power in action, ruled by the one divine wisdom; and on the foundation of this will of greater knowledge there grows a strength to meet everything with an untroubled soul and mind. There must be an identification of myself with the self of the universe, a vision and a feeling of oneness with all creatures, a perception of all forces and energies and results as the movement of this energy of my self and therefore intimately my own; not, obviously, of my ego-self which must be silenced, eliminated, cast away, — otherwise this perfection cannot come, — but of a greater impersonal or universal self with which I am now one. For my personality is now only one centre of action of that universal self, but a centre intimately in relation and unison with all other personalities and also with all those other things which are to us only impersonal objects and forces: but in fact they also are powers of the one impersonal Person (Purusha), God, Self and Spirit. My individuality is his and is no longer a thing incompatible with or separated from universal being; it is itself universalised, a knower of the universal Ananda and one with and a lover of all that it knows, acts on and enjoys. For to the equal knowledge of the universe and equal will of acceptance of the universe will be added an equal delight in all the cosmic manifestation of the Divine.

Here too we may describe three results or powers of the method. First, we develop this power of equal acceptance in the spirit and in the higher reason and will which respond to the spiritual knowledge. But also we find that though the nature can be induced to take this general attitude, there is yet a struggle between that higher reason and will and the lower mental being which clings to the old egoistic way of seeing the world and reacting to its impacts. Then we find that these two, though at first confused, mingled together, alternating, acting on each other, striving for possession, can be divided, the higher spiritual disengaged from the lower mental nature. But in this stage, while the mind is still subject to reactions of grief, trouble, an inferior joy and pleasure, there is an increased difficulty which does not act to the same extent in a more sharply individualised Yoga. For not only does the mind feel its own troubles and difficulties, but it shares in the joys and griefs of others, vibrates to them in a poignant sympathy, feels their impacts with a subtle sensitiveness, makes them its own; not only so, but the difficulties of others are added to our own and the forces which oppose the perfection act with a greater persistence, because they feel this movement to be an attack upon and an attempt to conquer their universal kingdom and not merely the escape of an isolated soul from their empire. But finally, we find too that there comes a power to surmount these difficulties; the higher reason and will impose themselves on the lower mind, which sensibly changes into the vast types of the spiritual nature; it takes even a delight in feeling, meeting and surmounting all troubles, obstacles and difficulties until they are eliminated by its own transformation. Then the whole being lives in a final power, the universal calm and joy, the seeing delight and will of the Spirit in itself and its manifestation.

To see how this positive method works, we may note very briefly its principle in the three great powers of knowledge, will and feeling. All emotion, feeling, sensation is a way of the soul meeting and putting effective values on the manifestations of the Self in nature. But what the self feels is a universal delight, Ananda. The soul in the lower mind on the contrary gives it, as we have seen, three varying values of pain, pleasure and neutral indifference, which tone by gradations of less and more into each other, and this gradation depends on the power of the individualised consciousness to meet, sense, assimilate, equate, master all that comes in on it from all of the greater self which it has by separative individualisation put outside of it and made as if not-self to its experience. But all the time, because of the greater Self within us, there is a secret soul which takes delight in all these things and draws strength from and grows by all that touches it, profits as much by adverse as by favourable experience. This can make itself felt by the outer desire soul, and that in fact is why we have a delight in existing and can even take a certain kind of pleasure in struggle, suffering and the harsher colours of existence. But to get the universal Ananda all our instruments must learn to take not any partial or perverse, but the essential joy of all things. In all things there is a principle of Ananda, which the understanding can seize on and the aesthesis feel as the taste of delight in them, their *rasa*; but ordinarily they put upon them instead arbitrary, unequal and contrary values: they have to be led to perceive things in the light of the spirit and to transform these provisional values into the real, the equal and essential, the spiritual *rasa*. The life-principle is there to give this seizing of the principle of delight, *rasa-grahaṇa*, the form of a strong possessing enjoyment, *bhoga*, which makes the whole life-being vibrate with it and accept and rejoice in it; but ordinarily it is not, owing to desire, equal to its task, but turns it into the three lower forms, — pain and pleasure, *sukha-bhoga duḥkha-bhoga*, and that rejection of both which we call insensibility or indifference. The prana or vital being has to be liberated from desire and its inequalities and to accept and turn into pure enjoyment the *rasa* which the understanding and aesthesis perceive. Then there is no farther obstacle in the instruments to the third step by which all is changed into the full and pure ecstasy of the spiritual Ananda.

In the matter of knowledge, there are again three reactions of the mind to things, ignorance, error and true knowledge. The positive equality will accept all three of them to start with as movements of a self-manifestation which evolves out of ignorance through the partial or distorted knowledge which is the cause of error to true knowledge. It will deal with the ignorance of the mind, as what it is psychologically, a clouded, veiled or wrapped-up state of the substance of consciousness in which the knowledge of the all-knowing Self is hidden as if in a dark sheath; it will dwell on it by the mind and by the aid of related truths already known, by the intelligence or by an intuitive concentration deliver the knowledge out of the veil of the ignorance. It will not attach itself only to the known or try to force all into its little frame, but will dwell on the known and the unknown with an equal mind open to all possibility. So too it will deal with error; it will accept the tangled skein of truth and error, but attach itself to no opinion, rather seeking for the element of truth behind all opinions, the knowledge concealed within the error, — for all error is a disfiguration of some misunderstood fragments of truth and draws its vitality from that and not from its misapprehension; it will accept, but not limit itself even by ascertained truths, but will always be ready for new knowledge and seek for a more and more integral, a more and more extended, reconciling, unifying wisdom. This can only come in its fullness by rising to the ideal supermind, and therefore the equal seeker of truth will not be attached to the intellect and its workings or think that all ends there, but be prepared to rise beyond, accepting each stage of ascent and the contributions of each power of his being, but only to lift them into a higher truth. He must accept everything, but cling to nothing, be repelled by nothing however imperfect or however subversive of fixed notions, but also allow nothing to lay hold on him to the detriment of the free working of the Truth-Spirit. This equality of the intelligence is an essential condition for rising to the higher supramental and spiritual knowledge.

The will in us, because it is the most generally forceful power of our being, — there is a will of knowledge, a will of life, a will of emotion, a will acting in every part of our nature, — takes many forms and returns various reactions to things, such as incapacity, limitation of power, mastery, or right will, wrong or perverted will, neutral volition, — in the ethical mind virtue, sin and non-ethical volition, — and others of the kind.

These too the positive equality accepts as a tangle of provisional values from which it must start, but which it must transform into universal mastery, into the will of the Truth and universal Right, into the freedom of the divine Will in action. The equal will need not feel remorse, sorrow or discouragement over its stumblings; if these reactions occur in the habitual mentality, it will only see how far they indicate an imperfection and the thing to be corrected, — for they are not always just indicators, — and so get beyond them to a calm and equal guidance. It will see that these stumblings themselves are necessary to experience and in the end steps towards the goal. Behind and within all that occurs in ourselves and in the world, it will look for the divine meaning and the divine guidance; it will look beyond imposed limitations to the voluntary self-limitation of the universal Power by which it regulates its steps and gradations, — imposed on our ignorance, self-imposed in the divine knowledge, — and go beyond to unity with the illimitable power of the Divine. All energies and actions it will see as forces proceeding from the one Existence and their perversions as imperfections, inevitable in the developing movement, of powers that were needed for that movement; it will therefore have charity for all imperfections, even while pressing steadily towards a universal perfection. This equality will open the nature to the guidance of the divine and universal Will and make it ready for that supramental action in which the power of the soul in us is luminously full of and one with the power of the supreme Spirit.

The integral Yoga will make use of both the passive and the active methods according to the need of the nature and the guidance of the inner spirit, the Antaryamin. It will not limit itself by the passive way, for that would lead only to some individual quietistic salvation or negation of an active and universal spiritual being which would be inconsistent with the totality of its aim. It will use the method of endurance, but not stop short with a detached strength and serenity, but move rather to a positive strength and mastery, in which endurance will no longer be needed, since the self will then be in a calm and powerful spontaneous possession of the universal energy and capable of determining easily and happily all its reactions in the oneness and the Ananda. It will use the method of impartial indifference, but not end in an aloof indifference to all things, but rather move towards a high-seated impartial acceptance of life strong to transform all experience into the greater values of the equal spirit. It will use too temporarily resignation and submission, but by the full surrender of its personal being to the Divine it will attain to the all-possessing Ananda in which there is no need of resignation, to the perfect harmony with the universal which is not merely an acquiescence, but an embracing oneness, to the perfect instrumentality and subjection of the natural self to the Divine by which the Divine also is possessed by the individual spirit. It will use fully the positive method, but will go beyond any individual acceptance of things which would have the effect of turning existence into a field only of the perfected individual knowledge, power and Ananda. That it will have, but also it will have the oneness by which it can live in the existence of others for their sake and not only for its own and for their assistance and as one of their means, an associated and helping force in the movement towards the same perfection. It will live for the Divine, not shunning world-existence, not attached to the earth or the heavens, not attached either to a supracosmic liberation, but equally one with the Divine in all his planes and able to live in him equally in the Self and in the manifestation.

Chapter XIII

The Action of Equality

THE DISTINCTIONS that have already been made, will have shown in sufficiency what is meant by the status of equality. It is not mere quiescence and indifference, not a withdrawal from experience, but a superiority to the present reactions of the mind and life. It is the spiritual way of replying to life or rather of embracing it and compelling it to become a perfect form of action of the self and spirit. It is the first secret of the soul's mastery of existence. When we have it in perfection, we are admitted to the very ground of the divine spiritual nature. The mental being in the body tries to compel and conquer life, but is at every turn compelled by it, because it submits to the desire reactions of the vital self. To be equal, not to be overborne by any stress of desire, is the first condition of real mastery, self-empire is its basis. But a mere mental equality, however great it may be, is hampered by the tendency of quiescence. It has to preserve itself from desire by self-limitation in the will and action. It is only the spirit which is capable of sublime undisturbed rapidities of will as well as an illimitable patience, equally just in a slow and deliberate or a swift and violent, equally secure in a safely lined and limited or a vast and enormous action. It can accept the smallest work in the narrowest circle of cosmos, but it can work too upon the whirl of chaos with an understanding and creative force; and these things it can do because by its detached and yet intimate acceptance it carries into both an infinite calm, knowledge, will and power. It has that detachment because it is above all the happenings, forms, ideas and movements it embraces in its scope; and it has that intimate acceptance because it is yet one with all things. If we have not this free unity, *ekatvam anupaśyataḥ*, we have not the full equality of the spirit.

The first business of the sadhaka is to see whether he has the perfect equality, how far he has gone in this direction or else where is the flaw, and to exercise steadily his will on his nature or invite the will of the Purusha to get rid of the defect and its causes. There are four things that he must have; first, equality in the most concrete practical sense of the word, *samatā*, freedom from mental, vital, physical preferences, an even acceptance of all God's workings within and around him; secondly, a firm peace and absence of all disturbance and trouble, *śānti*; thirdly, a positive inner spiritual happiness and spiritual ease of the natural being which nothing can lessen, *sukham*; fourthly, a clear joy and laughter of the soul embracing life and existence. To be equal is to be infinite and universal, not to limit oneself, not to bind oneself down to this or that form of the mind and life and its partial preferences and desires. But since man in his present normal nature lives by his mental and vital formations, not in the freedom of his spirit, attachment to them and the desires and preferences they involve is also his normal condition. To accept them is at first inevitable, to get beyond them exceedingly difficult and not, perhaps, altogether possible so long as we are compelled to use the mind as the chief instrument of our action. The first necessity therefore is to take at least the sting out of them, to deprive them, even when they persist, of their greater insistence, their present egoism, their more violent claim on our nature.

The test that we have done this is the presence of an undisturbed calm in the mind and spirit. The sadhaka must be on the watch as the witnessing and willing Purusha behind or, better, as soon as he can manage it, above the mind, and repel even the least indices or incidence of trouble, anxiety, grief, revolt, disturbance in his mind. If these things come, he must at once detect their source, the defect which they indicate, the fault of egoistic claim, vital desire, emotion or idea from which they start and this he must discourage by his will, his spiritualised intelligence, his soul unity with the Master of his being. On no account must he admit any excuse for them, however natural, righteous in seeming or plausible, or any inner or outer justification. If it is the prana which is troubled and clamorous, he must separate himself from the troubled prana, keep seated his higher nature in the buddhi and by the buddhi school and reject the claim of the desire-soul in him; and so too if it is the heart of emotion that makes the clamour and the disturbance. If on the other hand it is the will and intelligence itself that is at fault, then the trouble is more difficult to command, because then his chief aid and instrument becomes an accomplice of the revolt against the divine Will and the old sins of the lower members take advantage of this sanction to raise their diminished heads. Therefore there must be a constant insistence on one main idea, the self-surrender to the Master of our being, God within us and in the world, the supreme Self, the universal Spirit. The buddhi dwelling always in this master idea must discourage all its own lesser insistences and preferences and teach the whole being that the ego whether it puts forth its claim through the reason, the personal will, the heart or the desire-soul in the prana, has no just claim of any kind and all grief, revolt, impatience, trouble is a violence against the Master of the being.

This complete self-surrender must be the chief mainstay of the sadhaka because it is the only way, apart from complete quiescence and indifference to all action, — and that has to be avoided, — by which the absolute calm and peace can come. The persistence of trouble, *aśānti*, the length of time taken for this purification and perfection, itself must not be allowed to become a reason for discouragement and impatience. It comes because there is still something in the nature which responds to it, and the recurrence of trouble serves to bring out the presence of the defect, put the sadhaka upon his guard and bring about a more enlightened and consistent action of the will to get rid of it. When the trouble is too strong to be kept out, it must be allowed to pass and its return discouraged by a greater vigilance and insistence of the spiritualised buddhi. Thus persisting, it will be found that these things lose their force more and more, become more and more external and brief in their recurrence, until finally calm becomes the law of the being. This rule persists so long as the mental buddhi is the chief instrument; but when the supramental light takes possession of mind and heart, then there can be no trouble, grief or disturbance; for that brings with it a spiritual nature of illumined strength in which these things can have no place. There the only vibrations and emotions are those which belong to the *ānandamaya* nature of divine unity.

The calm established in the whole being must remain the same whatever happens, in health and disease, in pleasure and in pain, even in the strongest physical pain, in good fortune and misfortune, our own or that of those we love, in success and failure, honour and insult, praise and blame, justice done to us or injustice, everything that ordinarily affects the mind. If we see unity everywhere, if we recognise that all comes by the divine will, see God in all, in our enemies or rather our opponents in the game of life as well as our friends, in the powers that oppose and resist us as well as the powers that favour and assist, in all energies and forces and happenings, and if besides we can feel that all is undivided from our self, all the world one with us within our universal being, then this attitude becomes much easier to the heart and mind. But even before we can attain or are firmly seated in that universal vision, we have by all the means in our power to insist on this receptive and active equality and calm. Even something of it, *alpam api asya dharmasya*, is a great step towards perfection; a first firmness in it is the beginning of liberated perfection; its completeness is the perfect assurance of a rapid progress in all the other members of perfection. For without it we can have no solid basis; and by the pronounced lack of it we shall be constantly falling back to the lower status of desire, ego, duality, ignorance.

This calm once attained, vital and mental preference has lost its disturbing force; it only remains as a formal habit of the mind. Vital acceptance or rejection, the greater readiness to welcome this rather than that happening, the mental acceptance or rejection, the preference of this more congenial to that other less congenial idea or truth, the dwelling upon the will to this rather than to that other result, become a formal mechanism still necessary as an index of the direction in which the Shakti is meant to turn or for the present is made to incline by the Master of our being. But it loses its disturbing aspect of strong egoistic will, intolerant desire, obstinate liking. These appearances may remain for a while in a diminished form, but as the calm of equality increases, deepens, becomes more essential and compact, *ghana*, they disappear, cease to colour the mental and vital substance or occur only as touches on the most external physical mind, are unable to penetrate within, and at last even that recurrence, that appearance at the outer gates of mind ceases. Then there can come the living reality of the perception that all in us is done and directed by the Master of our being, *yathā prayukto 'smi, tathā karomi*, which was before only a strong idea and faith with occasional and derivative glimpses of the divine action behind the becomings of our personal nature. Now every movement is seen to be the form given by the Shakti, the divine power in us, to the indications of the Purusha, still no doubt personalised, still belittled in the inferior mental form, but not primarily egoistic, an imperfect form, not a positive deformation. We have then to get beyond this stage even. For the perfect action and experience is not to be determined by any kind of mental or vital preference, but by the revealing and inspiring spiritual will which is the Shakti in her direct and real initiation. When I say that as I am appointed, I work, I still bring in a limiting personal element and mental reaction. But it is the Master who will do his own work through myself as his instrument, and there must be no mental or other preference in me to limit, to interfere, to be a source of imperfect working. The mind must become a silent luminous channel for the revelations of the supramental Truth and of the Will involved in its seeing. Then shall the action be the action of that highest Being and Truth and not a qualified translation or mistranslation in the mind. Whatever limitation, selection, relation is imposed, will be self-imposed by the Divine on himself in the individual at the moment for his own purpose, not binding, not final, not an ignorant determination of the mind. The thought and will become then an action from a luminous Infinite, a formulation not excluding other formulations, but rather putting them into their just place in relation to itself, englobing or transforming them even and proceeding to larger formations of the divine knowledge and action.

The first calm that comes is of the nature of peace, the absence of all unquiet, grief and disturbance. As the equality becomes more intense, it takes on a fuller substance of positive happiness and spiritual ease. This is the joy of the spirit in itself, dependent on nothing external for its absolute existence, *nirāśraya*, as the Gita describes it, *antaḥ-sukho antarārāmaḥ*, an exceeding inner happiness, *brahmasaṁsparśam atyantaṁ sukham aśnute*. Nothing can disturb it, and it extends itself to the soul's view of outward things, imposes on them too the law of this quiet spiritual joy. For the base of it is still calm, it is an even and tranquil neutral joy, *ahaituka*. And as the supramental light grows, a greater Ananda comes, the base of the abundant ecstasy of the spirit in all it is, becomes, sees, experiences and of the laughter of the Shakti doing luminously the work of the Divine and taking his Ananda in all the worlds.

The perfected action of equality transforms all the values of things on the basis of the divine *ānandamaya* power. The outward action may remain what it was or may change, that must be as the Spirit directs and according to the need of the work to be done for the world, — but the whole inner action is of another kind. The Shakti in its different powers of knowledge, action, enjoyment, creation, formulation, will direct itself to the different aims of existence, but in another spirit; they will be the aims, the fruits, the lines of working laid down by the Divine from his light above, not anything claimed by the ego for its own separate sake. The mind, the heart, the vital being, the body itself will be satisfied with whatever comes to them from the dispensation of the Master of the being and in that find a subtlest and yet fullest spiritualised satisfaction and delight; but the divine knowledge and will above will work forward towards its farther ends. Here both success and failure lose their present meanings. There can be no failure; for whatever happens is the intention of the Master of the worlds, not final, but a step on his way, and if it appears as an opposition, a defeat, a denial, even for the moment a total denial of the aim set before the instrumental being, it is so only in appearance and afterwards it will appear in its right place in the economy of his action, — a fuller supramental vision may even see at once or beforehand its necessity and its true relation to the eventual result to which it seems so contrary and even perhaps its definite prohibition. Or, if — while the light is deficient — there has been a misinterpretation whether with regard to the aim or the course of the action and the steps of the result, the failure comes as a rectification and is calmly accepted without bringing discouragement or a fluctuation of the will. In the end it is found that there is no such thing as failure and the soul takes an equal passive or active delight in all happenings as the steps and formulations of the divine Will. The same evolution takes place with regard to good fortune and ill fortune, the pleasant and the unpleasant in every form, *maṅgala amaṅgala*, *priya apriya*.

And as with happenings, so with persons, equality brings an entire change of the view and the attitude. The first result of the equal mind and spirit is to bring about an increasing charity and inner toleration of all persons, ideas, views, actions, because it is seen that God is in all beings and each acts according to his nature, his *svabhāva*, and its present formulations. When there is the positive equal Ananda, this deepens to a sympathetic understanding and in the end an equal universal love. None of these things need prevent various relations or different formulations of the inner attitude according to the need of life as determined by the spiritual will, or firm furtherings of this idea, view, action against that other for the same need and purpose by the same determination, or a strong outward or inward resistance, opposition and action against the forces that are impelled to stand in the way of the decreed movement. And there may be even the rush of the Rudra energy forcefully working upon or shattering the human or other obstacle, because that is necessary both for him and for the world purpose. But the essence of the equal inmost attitude is not altered or diminished by these more superficial formulations. The spirit, the fundamental soul remain the same, even while the Shakti of knowledge, will, action, love does its work and assumes the various forms needed for its work. And in the end all becomes a form of a luminous spiritual unity with all persons, energies, things in the being of God and in the luminous, spiritual, one and universal force, in which one's own action becomes an inseparable part of the action of all, is not divided from it, but feels perfectly every relation as a relation with God in all in the complex terms of his universal oneness. That is a plenitude which can hardly be described in the language of the dividing mental reason for it uses all its oppositions, yet escapes from them, nor can it be put in the terms of our limited mental psychology. It belongs to another domain of consciousness, another plane of our being.

Chapter XIV

The Power of the Instruments

THE SECOND member of the Yoga of self-perfection is the heightened, enlarged and rectified power of the instruments of our normal Nature. The cultivation of this second perfection need not wait for the security of the equal mind and spirit, but it is only in that security that it can become complete and act in the safety of the divine leading. The object of this cultivation is to make the nature a fit instrument for divine works. All work is done by power, by Shakti, and since the integral Yoga does not contemplate abandonment of works, but rather a doing of all works from the divine consciousness and with the supreme guidance, the characteristic powers of the instruments, mind, life and body, must not only be purified of defects, but raised to a capacity for this greater action. In the end they must undergo a spiritual and supramental transfiguration.

There are four members of this second part of the sadhana or discipline of self-perfection and the first of them is right shakti, the right condition of the powers of the intelligence, heart, vital mind and body. It will only be possible at present to suggest a preliminary perfection of the last of these four, for the full siddhi will have to be dealt with after I have spoken of the supermind and its influence on the rest of the being. The body is not only the necessary outer instrument of the physical part of action, but for the purposes of this life a base or pedestal also for all inner action. All working of mind or spirit has its vibration in the physical consciousness, records itself there in a kind of subordinate corporeal notation and communicates itself to the material world partly at least through the physical machine. But the body of man has natural limitations in this capacity which it imposes on the play of the higher parts of his being. And, secondly, it has a subconscient consciousness of its own in which it keeps with an obstinate fidelity the past habits and past nature of the mental and vital being and which automatically opposes and obstructs any very great upward change or at least prevents it from becoming a radical transformation of the whole nature. It is evident that if we are to have a free divine or spiritual and supramental action conducted by the force and fulfilling the character of a diviner energy, some fairly complete transformation must be effected in this outward character of the bodily nature. The physical being of man has always been felt by the seekers of perfection to be a great impediment and it has been the habit to turn from it with contempt, denial or aversion and a desire to suppress altogether or as far as may be the body and the physical life. But this cannot be the right method for the integral Yoga. The body is given us as one instrument necessary to the totality of our works and it is to be used, not neglected, hurt, suppressed or abolished. If it is imperfect, recalcitrant, obstinate, so are also the other members, the vital being, heart and mind and reason. It has like them to be changed and perfected and to undergo a transformation. As we must get ourselves a new life, new heart, new mind, so we have in a certain sense to build for ourselves a new body.

The first thing the will has to do with the body is to impose on it progressively a new habit of all its being, consciousness, force and outward and inward action. It must be taught an entire passivity in the hands first of the higher instruments, but eventually in the hands of the spirit and its controlling and informing Shakti. It must be accustomed not to impose its own limits on the nobler members, but to shape its action and its response to their demands, to develop, one might say, a higher notation, a higher scale of responses. At present the notation of the body and the physical consciousness has a very large determining power on the music made by this human harp of God; the notes we get from the spirit, from the psychic soul, from the greater life behind our physical life cannot come in freely, cannot develop their high, powerful and proper strain. This condition must be reversed; the body and the physical consciousness must develop the habit of admitting and shaping themselves to these higher strains and not they, but the nobler parts of the nature must determine the music of our life and being.

The control of the body and life by the mind and its thought and will is the first step towards this change. All Yoga implies the carrying of that control to a very high pitch. But afterwards the mind must itself give place to the spirit, to the spiritual force, the supermind and the supramental force. And finally the body must develop a perfect power to hold whatever force is brought into it by the spirit and to contain its action without spilling and wasting it or itself getting cracked. It must be capable of being filled and powerfully used by whatever intensity of spiritual or higher mind or life force without any part of the mechanical instrument being agitated, upset, broken or damaged by the inrush or pressure, — as the brain, vital health or moral nature are often injured in those who unwisely attempt Yogic practice without preparation or by undue means or rashly invite a power they are intellectually, vitally, morally unfit to bear, — and, thus filled, it must have the capacity to work normally, automatically, rightly according to the will of that spiritual or other now unusual agent without distorting, diminishing or mistranslating its intention and stress. This faculty of holding, *dhāraṇa-śakti*, in the physical consciousness, energy and machinery is the most important siddhi or perfection of the body.

The result of these changes will be to make the body a perfect instrument of the spirit. The spiritual force will be able to do what it wills and as it wills in and through the body. It will be able to conduct an unlimited action of the mind or at a higher stage of the supermind without the body betraying the action by fatigue, incapacity, inaptitude or falsification. It will be able too to pour a full tide of the life-force into the body and conduct a large action and joy of the perfected vital being without that quarrel and disparity which is the relation of the normal life-instincts and life-impulses to the insufficient physical instrument they are obliged to use. And it will also be able to conduct a full action of the spiritualised psychic being not falsified, degraded or in any way marred by the lower instincts of the body and to use physical action and expression as a free notation of the higher psychical life. And in the body itself there will be a presence of a greatness of sustaining force, an abounding strength, energy and puissance of outgoing and managing force, a lightness, swiftness and adaptability of the nervous and physical being, a holding and responsive power in the whole physical machine and its driving springs[1] of which it is now even at its strongest and best incapable.

This energy will not be in its essence an outward, physical or muscular strength, but will be of the nature, first, of an unbounded life-power or pranic force, secondly, sustaining and using this pranic energy, a superior or supreme will-power acting in the body. The play of the pranic shakti in the body or form is the condition of all action, even of the most apparently inanimate physical action. It is the universal Prana, as the ancients knew, which in various forms sustains or drives material energy in all physical things from the electron and atom and gas up through the metal, plant, animal, physical man. To get this pranic shakti to act more freely and forcibly in the body is knowingly or unknowingly the attempt of all who strive for a greater perfection of or in the body. The ordinary man tries to command it mechanically by physical exercises and other corporeal means, the Hathayogin more greatly and flexibly, but still mechanically by Asana and Pranayama; but for our purpose it can be commanded by more subtle, essential and pliable means; first, by a will in the mind widely opening itself to and potently calling in the universal pranic shakti on which we draw and fixing its stronger presence and more powerful working in the body; secondly, by the will in the mind opening itself rather to the spirit and its power and calling in a higher pranic energy from above, a supramental pranic force; thirdly, the last step, by the highest supramental will of the spirit entering and taking up directly the task of the perfection of the body. In fact, it is always really a will within which drives and makes effective the pranic instrument even when it uses what seem to be purely physical means; but at first it is dependent on the inferior action. When we go higher, the relation is gradually reversed; it is then able to act in its own power or handle the rest only as a subordinate instrumentation.

---

[1] *mahattva*, *bala*, *laghutā*, *dhāraṇa-sāmarthya*.

Most men are not conscious of this pranic force in the body or cannot distinguish it from the more physical form of energy which it informs and uses for its vehicle. But as the consciousness becomes more subtle by practice of Yoga, we can come to be aware of the sea of pranic shakti around us, feel it with the mental consciousness, concretely with a mental sense, see its courses and movements, and direct and act upon it immediately by the will. But until we thus become aware of it, we have to possess a working or at least an experimental faith in its presence and in the power of the will to develop a greater command and use of this prana force. There is necessary a faith, *śraddhā*, in the power of the mind to lay its will on the state and action of the body, such as those have who heal disease by faith, will or mental action; but we must seek this control not only for this or any other limited use, but generally as a legitimate power of the inner and greater over the outer and lesser instrument. This faith is combated by our past habits of mind, by our actual normal experience of its comparative helplessness in our present imperfect system and by an opposing belief in the body and physical consciousness. For they too have a limiting *śraddhā* of their own which opposes the idea in the mind when it seeks to impose on the system the law of a higher yet unattained perfection. But as we persist and find this power giving evidence of itself to our experience, the faith in the mind will be able to found itself more firmly and grow in vigour and the opposing faith in the body will change, admit what it first denied and not only accept in its habits the new yoke but itself call for this higher action. Finally we shall realise the truth that this being we are is or can become whatever it has the faith and will to be, — for faith is only a will aiming at greater truth, — and cease to set limits to our possibility or deny the potential omnipotence of the Self in us, the divine Power working through the human instrument. That however, at least as a practical force, comes in at a later stage of high perfection.

The Prana is not only a force for the action of physical and vital energy, but supports also the mental and spiritual action. Therefore the full and free working of the pranic shakti is required not only for the lower but still necessary use, but also for the free and full operation of mind and supermind and spirit in the instrumentality of our complex human nature. That is the main sense of the use of exercises of Pranayama for control of the vital force and its motions which is so important and indispensable a part of certain systems of Yoga. The same mastery must be got by the seeker of the integral Yoga; but he may arrive at it by other means and in any case he must not be dependent on any physical or breathing exercise for its possession and maintenance, for that will at once bring in a limitation and subjection to Prakriti. Her instrumentation has to be used flexibly by the Purusha, but not to be a fixed control on the Purusha. The necessity of the pranic force, however, remains and will be evident to our self-study and experience. It is in the Vedic image the steed and conveyance of the embodied mind and will, *vāhana*. If it is full of strength and swiftness and a plenitude of all its powers, then the mind can go on the courses of its action with a plenary and unhampered movement. But if it is lame or soon tired or sluggish or weak, then an incapacity is laid on the effectuation of the will and activity of the mind. The same rule holds good of the supermind when it first comes into action. There are indeed states and activities in which the mind takes up the pranic shakti into itself and this dependence is not felt at all; but even then the force is there, though involved in the pure mental energy. The supermind, when it gets into full strength, can do pretty well what it likes with the pranic shakti, and we find that in the end this life power is transformed into the type of a supramentalised prana which is simply one motor power of that greater consciousness. But this belongs to a later stage of the siddhi of the Yoga.

Then again there is the psychic prana, pranic mind or desire soul; this too calls for its own perfection. Here too the first necessity is a fullness of the vital capacity in the mind, its power to do its full work, to take possession of all the impulsions and energies given to our inner psychic life for fulfilment in this existence, to hold them and to be a means for carrying them out with strength, freedom, perfection. Many of the things we need for our perfection, courage, will-power effective in life, all the elements of what we now call force of character and force of personality, depend very largely for their completest strength and spring of energetic action on the fullness of the psychic prana. But along with this fullness there must be an established gladness, clearness and purity in the psychic life-being. This dynamis must not be a troubled, perfervid, stormy, fitfully or crudely passionate strength; energy there must be, rapture of its action it must have, but a clear and glad and pure energy, a seated and firmly supported pure rapture. And as a third condition of its perfection it must be poised in a complete equality. The desire-soul must get rid of the clamour, insistence or inequality of its desires in order that its desires may be satisfied with justice and balance and in the right way and eventually must rid them of the character of desire altogether and change them into impulsions of the divine Ananda. To that end it must make no demands nor seek to impose itself on heart, mind or spirit, but accept with a strong passive and active equality whatever impulsion and command come into it from the spirit through the channel of a still mind and a pure heart. And it must accept too whatever result of the impulse, whatever enjoyment more or less, full or nil, is given to it by the Master of our being. At the same time, possession and enjoyment are its law, function, use, swadharma. It is not intended to be a slain or mortified thing, dull in its receptive power, dreary, suppressed, maimed, inert or null. It must have a full power of possession, a glad power of enjoyment, an exultant power of pure and divine passion and rapture. The enjoyment it will have will be in the essence a spiritual bliss, but one which takes up into itself and transforms the mental, emotional, dynamic, vital and physical joy; it must have therefore an integral capacity for these things and must not by incapacity or fatigue or inability to bear great intensities fail the spirit, mind, heart, will and body. Fullness, clear purity and gladness, equality, capacity for possession and enjoyment are the fourfold perfection of the psychic prana.[2]

---

[2] *pūrṇatā, prasannatā, samatā, bhoga-sāmarthya.*

The next instrument which needs perfection is the *citta*, and within the complete meaning of this expression we may include the emotional and the pure psychical being. This heart and psychic being of man shot through with the threads of the life instincts is a thing of mixed inconstant colours of emotion and soul vibrations, bad and good, happy and unhappy, satisfied and unsatisfied, troubled and calm, intense and dull. Thus agitated and invaded it is unacquainted with any real peace, incapable of a steady perfection of all its powers. By purification, by equality, by the light of knowledge, by a harmonising of the will it can be brought to a tranquil intensity and perfection. The first two elements of this perfection are on one side a high and large sweetness, openness, gentleness, calm, clarity, on the other side a strong and ardent force and intensity. In the divine no less than in ordinary human character and action there are always two strands, sweetness and strength, mildness and force, *saumya* and *raudra*, the force that bears and harmonises, the force that imposes itself and compels, Vishnu and Ishana, Shiva and Rudra. The two are equally necessary to a perfect world-action. The perversions of the Rudra power in the heart are stormy passion, wrath and fierceness and harshness, hardness, brutality, cruelty, egoistic ambition and love of violence and domination. These and other human perversions have to be got rid of by the flowering of a calm, clear and sweet psychical being.

But on the other hand incapacity of force is also an imperfection. Laxity and weakness, self-indulgence, a certain flabbiness and limpness or inert passivity of the psychical being are the last result of an emotional and psychic life in which energy and power of assertion have been quelled, discouraged or killed. Nor is it a total perfection to have only the strength that endures or to cultivate only a heart of love, charity, tolerance, mildness, meekness and forbearance. The other side of perfection is a self-contained and calm and unegoistic Rudra-power armed with psychic force, the energy of the strong heart which is capable of supporting without shrinking an insistent, an outwardly austere or even, where need is, a violent action. An unlimited light of energy, force, puissance harmonised with sweetness of heart and clarity, capable of being one with it in action, the lightning of Indra starting from the orb of the nectarous moon-rays of Soma is the double perfection. And these two things *saumyatva*, *tejas*, must base their presence and action on a firm equality of the temperament and of the psychical soul delivered from all crudity and all excess or defect of the heart's light or the heart's power.

Another necessary element is a faith in the heart, a belief in and will to the universal good, an openness to the universal Ananda. The pure psychic being is of the essence of Ananda, it comes from the delight-soul in the universe; but the superficial heart of emotion is overborne by the conflicting appearances of the world and suffers many reactions of grief, fear, depression, passion, short-lived and partial joy. An equal heart is needed for perfection, but not only a passive equality; there must be the sense of a divine power making for good behind all experiences, a faith and will which can turn the poisons of the world to nectar, see the happier spiritual intention behind adversity, the mystery of love behind suffering, the flower of divine strength and joy in the seed of pain. This faith, *kalyāṇa-śraddhā*, is needed in order that the heart and the whole overt psychic being may respond to the secret divine Ananda and change itself into this true original essence. This faith and will must be accompanied by and open into an illimitable widest and intensest capacity for love. For the main business of the heart, its true function is love. It is our destined instrument of complete union and oneness; for to see oneness in the world by the understanding is not enough unless we also feel it with the heart and in the psychic being, and this means a delight in the One and in all existences in the world in him, a love of God and all beings. The heart's faith and will in good are founded on a perception of the one Divine immanent in all things and leading the world. The universal love has to be founded on the heart's sight and psychical and emotional sense of the one Divine, the one Self in all existence. All four elements will then form a unity and even the Rudra power to do battle for the right and the good proceed on the basis of a power of universal love. This is the highest and the most characteristic perfection of the heart, *prema-sāmarthya*.

The last perfection is that of the intelligence and thinking mind, *buddhi*. The first need is the clarity and the purity of the intelligence. It must be freed from the claims of the vital being which seeks to impose the desire of the mind in place of the truth, from the claims of the troubled emotional being which strives to colour, distort, limit and falsify the truth with the hue and shape of the emotions. It must be free too from its own defect, inertia of the thought-power, obstructive narrowness and unwillingness to open to knowledge, intellectual unscrupulousness in thinking, prepossession and preference, self-will in the reason and false determination of the will to knowledge. Its sole will must be to make itself an unsullied mirror of the truth, its essence and its forms and measures and relations, a clear mirror, a just measure, a fine and subtle instrument of harmony, an integral intelligence. This clear and pure intelligence can then become a serene thing of light, a pure and strong radiance emanating from the sun of Truth. But, again, it must become not merely a thing of concentrated dry or white light, but capable of all variety of understanding, supple, rich, flexible, brilliant with all the flame and various with all the colours of the manifestation of the Truth, open to all its forms. And so equipped it will get rid of limitations, not be shut up in this or that faculty or form or working of knowledge, but an instrument ready and capable for whatever work is demanded from it by the Purusha. Purity, clear radiance, rich and flexible variety, integral capacity are the fourfold perfection of the thinking intelligence, *viśuddhi*, *prakāśa*, *vicitra-bodha*, *sarva-jñāna-sāmarthya*.

The normal instruments thus perfected will act each in its own kind without undue interference from each other and serve the unobstructed will of the Purusha in a harmonised totality of our natural being. This perfection must rise constantly in its capacity for action, the energy and force of its working and a certain greatness of the scope of the total nature. They will then be ready for the transformation into their own supramental action in which they will find a more absolute, unified and luminous spiritual truth of the whole perfected nature. The means of this perfection of the instruments we shall have to consider later on; but at present it will be enough to say that the principal conditions are will, self-watching and self-knowledge and a constant practice, *abhyāsa*, of self-modification and transformation. The Purusha has that capacity; for the spirit within can always change and perfect the working of its nature. But the mental being must open the way by a clear and a watchful introspection, an opening of itself to a searching and subtle self-knowledge which will give it the understanding and to an increasing extent the mastery of its natural instruments, a vigilant and insistent will of self-modification and self-transformation — for to that will the Prakriti must with whatever difficulty and whatever initial or prolonged resistance eventually respond, — and an unfailing practice which will constantly reject all defect and perversion and replace it by right state and a right and enhanced working. Askesis, tapasya, patience and faithfulness and rectitude of knowledge and will are the things required until a greater Power than our mental selves directly intervenes to effect a more easy and rapid transformation.

Chapter XV

Soul-Force and the Fourfold Personality

THE PERFECTING of the normal mind, heart, prana and body gives us only the perfection of the psycho-physical machine we have to use and creates certain right instrumental conditions for a divine life and works lived and done with a purer, greater, clearer power and knowledge. The next question is that of the Force which is poured into the instruments, *karaṇa*, and the One who works it for his universal ends. The force at work in us must be the manifest divine Shakti, the supreme or the universal Force unveiled in the liberated individual being, *parā prakṛtir jīvabhūtā*, who will be the doer of all the action and the power of this divine life, *kartā*. The One behind this force will be the Ishwara, the Master of all being, with whom all our existence will be in our perfection a Yoga at once of oneness in being and of union in various relations of the soul and its nature with the Godhead who is seated within us and in whom too we live, move and have our being. It is this Shakti with the Ishwara in her or behind her whose divine presence and way we have to call into all our being and life. For without this divine presence and this greater working there can be no siddhi of the power of the nature.

All the action of man in life is a nexus of the presence of the soul and the workings of Nature, Purusha and Prakriti. The presence and influence of the Purusha represents itself in nature as a certain power of our being which we may call for our immediate purpose soul-force; and it is always this soul-force which supports all the workings of the powers of the reason, the mind, life and body and determines the cast of our conscious being and the type of our nature. The normal ordinarily developed man possesses it in a subdued, a modified, a mechanised, submerged form as temperament and character; but that is only its most outward mould in which Purusha, the conscious soul or being, seems to be limited, conditioned and given some shape by the mechanical Prakriti. The soul flows into whatever moulds of intellectual, ethical, aesthetic, dynamic, vital and physical mind and type the developing nature takes and can act only in the way this formed Prakriti lays on it and move in its narrow groove or relatively wider circle. The man is then sattwic, rajasic or tamasic or a mixture of these qualities and his temperament is only a sort of subtler soul-colour which has been given to the major prominent operation of these fixed modes of his nature. Men of a stronger force get more of the soul-power to the surface and develop what we call a strong or great personality, they have in them something of the Vibhuti as described by the Gita, *vibhūtimat sattvaṁ śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā*, a higher power of being often touched with or sometimes full of some divine afflatus or more than ordinary manifestation of the Godhead which is indeed present in all, even in the weakest or most clouded living being, but here some special force of it begins to come out from behind the veil of the average humanity, and there is something beautiful, attractive, splendid or powerful in these exceptional persons which shines out in their personality, character, life and work. These men too work in the type of their nature-force according to its gunas, but there is something evident in them and yet not easily analysable which is in reality a direct power of the Self and spirit using to strong purpose the mould and direction of the nature. The nature itself thereby rises to or towards a higher grade of its being. Much in the working of the Force may seem egoistic or even perverse, but it is still the touch of the Godhead behind, whatever Daivic, Asuric or even Rakshasic form it may take, which drives the Prakriti and uses it for its own greater purpose. A still more developed power of the being will bring out the real character of this spiritual presence and it will then be seen as something impersonal and self-existent and self-empowered, a sheer soul-force which is other than the mind-force, life-force, force of intelligence, but drives them and, even while following to a certain extent their mould of working, guna, type of nature, yet puts its stamp of an initial transcendence, impersonality, pure fire of spirit, a something beyond the gunas of our normal nature. When the spirit in us is free, then what was behind this soul-force comes out in all its light, beauty and greatness, the Spirit, the Godhead who makes the nature and soul of man his foundation and living representative in cosmic being and mind, action and life.

The Godhead, the spirit manifested in Nature appears in a sea of infinite quality, Ananta-guna. But the executive or mechanical Prakriti is of the threefold guna, sattwa, rajas, tamas, and the Ananta-guna, the spiritual play of infinite quality, modifies itself in this mechanical nature into the type of these three gunas. And in the soul-force in man this Godhead in Nature represents itself as a fourfold effective Power, *catur-vyūha*, a Power for knowledge, a Power for strength, a Power for mutuality and active and productive relation and interchange, a Power for works and labour and service, and its presence casts all human life into a nexus and inner and outer operation of these four things. The ancient thought of India conscious of this fourfold type of active human personality and nature built out of it the four types of the Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, each with its spiritual turn, ethical ideal, suitable upbringing, fixed function in society and place in the evolutionary scale of the spirit. As always tends to be the case when we too much externalise and mechanise the more subtle truths of our nature, this became a hard and fast system inconsistent with the freedom and variability and complexity of the finer developing spirit in man. Nevertheless the truth behind it exists and is one of some considerable importance in the perfection of our power of nature; but we have to take it in its inner aspects, first, personality, character, temperament, soul-type, then the soul-force which lies behind them and wears these forms, and lastly the play of the free spiritual Shakti in which they find their culmination and unity beyond all modes. For the crude external idea that a man is born as a Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shudra and that alone, is not a psychological truth of our being. The psychological fact is that there are these four active powers and tendencies of the Spirit and its executive Shakti within us and the predominance of one or the other in the more well-formed part of our personality gives us our main tendencies, dominant qualities and capacities, effective turn in action and life. But they are more or less present in all men, here manifest, there latent, here developed, there subdued and depressed or subordinate, and in the perfect man will be raised up to a fullness and harmony which in the spiritual freedom will burst out into the free play of the infinite quality of the spirit in the inner and outer life and in the self-enjoying creative play of the Purusha with his and the world's Nature-Power.

The most outward psychological form of these things is the mould or trend of the nature towards certain dominant tendencies, capacities, characteristics, form of active power, quality of the mind and inner life, cultural personality or type. The turn is often towards the predominance of the intellectual element and the capacities which make for the seeking and finding of knowledge and an intellectual creation or formativeness and a preoccupation with ideas and the study of ideas or of life and the information and development of the reflective intelligence. According to the grade of the development there is produced successively the make and character of the man of active, open, inquiring intelligence, then the intellectual and, last, the thinker, sage, great mind of knowledge. The soul-powers which make their appearance by a considerable development of this temperament, personality, soul-type, are a mind of light more and more open to all ideas and knowledge and incomings of Truth; a hunger and passion for knowledge, for its growth in ourselves, for its communication to others, for its reign in the world, the reign of reason and right and truth and justice and, on a higher level of the harmony of our greater being, the reign of the spirit and its universal unity and light and love; a power of this light in the mind and will which makes all the life subject to reason and its right and truth or to the spirit and spiritual right and truth and subdues the lower members to their greater law; a poise in the temperament turned from the first to patience, steady musing and calm, to reflection, to meditation, which dominates and quiets the turmoil of the will and passions and makes for high thinking and pure living, founds the self-governed sattwic mind, grows into a more and more mild, lofty, impersonalised and universalised personality. This is the ideal character and soul-power of the Brahmana, the priest of knowledge. If it is not there in all its sides, we have the imperfections or perversions of the type, a mere intellectuality or curiosity for ideas without ethical or other elevation, a narrow concentration on some kind of intellectual activity without the greater needed openness of mind, soul and spirit, or the arrogance and exclusiveness of the intellectual shut up in his intellectuality, or an ineffective idealism without any hold on life, or any other of the characteristic incompletenesses and limitations of the intellectual, religious, scientific or philosophic mind. These are stoppings short on the way or temporary exclusive concentrations, but a fullness of the divine soul and power of truth and knowledge in man is the perfection of this Dharma or Swabhava, the accomplished Brahminhood of the complete Brahmana.

On the other hand the turn of the nature may be to the predominance of the will-force and the capacities which make for strength, energy, courage, leadership, protection, rule, victory in every kind of battle, a creative and formative action, the will-power which lays its hold on the material of life and on the wills of other men and compels the environment into the shapes which the Shakti within us seeks to impose on life or acts powerfully according to the work to be done to maintain what is in being or to destroy it and make clear the paths of the world or to bring out into definite shape what is to be. This may be there in lesser or greater power or form and according to its grade and force we have successively the mere fighter or man of action, the man of self-imposing active will and personality and the ruler, conqueror, leader of a cause, creator, founder in whatever field of the active formation of life. The various imperfections of the soul and mind produce many imperfections and perversities of this type, — the man of mere brute force of will, the worshipper of power without any other ideal or higher purpose, the selfish, dominant personality, the aggressive violent rajasic man, the grandiose egoist, the Titan, Asura, Rakshasa. But the soul-powers to which this type of nature opens on its higher grades are as necessary as those of the Brahmana to the perfection of our human nature. The high fearlessness which no danger or difficulty can daunt and which feels its power equal to meet and face and bear whatever assault of man or fortune or adverse gods, the dynamic audacity and daring which shrinks from no adventure or enterprise as beyond the powers of a human soul free from disabling weakness and fear, the love of honour which would scale the heights of the highest nobility of man and stoop to nothing little, base, vulgar or weak, but maintains untainted the ideal of high courage, chivalry, truth, straightforwardness, sacrifice of the lower to the higher self, helpfulness to men, unflinching resistance to injustice and oppression, self-control and mastery, noble leading, warriorhood and captainship of the journey and the battle, the high self-confidence of power, capacity, character and courage indispensable to the man of action, — these are the things that build the make of the Kshatriya. To carry these things to their highest degree and give them a certain divine fullness, purity and grandeur is the perfection of those who have this Swabhava and follow this Dharma.

A third turn is one that brings out into relief the practical arranging intelligence and the instinct of life to produce, exchange, possess, enjoy, contrive, put things in order and balance, spend itself and get and give and take, work out to the best advantage the active relations of existence. In its outward action it is this power that appears as the skilful devising intelligence, the legal, professional, commercial, industrial, economical, practical and scientific, mechanical, technical and utilitarian mind. This nature is accompanied at the normal level of its fullness by a general temperament which is at once grasping and generous, prone to amass and treasure, to enjoy, show and use, bent upon efficient exploitation of the world or its surroundings, but well capable too of practical philanthropy, humanity, ordered benevolence, orderly and ethical by rule but without any high distinction of the finer ethical spirit, a mind of the middle levels, not straining towards the heights, not great to break and create noble moulds of life, but marked by capacity, adaptation and measure. The powers, limitations and perversions of this type are familiar to us on a large scale, because this is the very spirit which has made our modern commercial and industrial civilisation. But if we look at the greater inner capacities and soul-values, we shall find that here also there are things that enter into the completeness of human perfection. The Power that thus outwardly expresses itself on our present lower levels is one that can throw itself out in the great utilities of life and at its freest and widest makes, not for oneness and identity which is the highest reach of knowledge or the mastery and spiritual kingship which is the highest reach of strength, but still for something which is also essential to the wholeness of existence, equal mutuality and the exchange of soul with soul and life with life. Its powers are, first, a skill, *kauśala*, which fashions and obeys law, recognises the uses and limits of relations, adapts itself to settled and developing movements, produces and perfects the outer technique of creation and action and life, assures possession and proceeds from possession to growth, is watchful over order and careful in progress and makes the most of the material of existence and its means and ends; then a power of self-spending skilful in lavishness and skilful in economy, which recognises the great law of interchange and amasses in order to throw out in a large return, increasing the currents of interchange and the fruitfulness of existence; a power of giving and ample creative liberality, mutual helpfulness and utility to others which becomes the source in an open soul of just beneficence, humanitarianism, altruism of a practical kind; finally, a power of enjoyment, a productive, possessive, active opulence luxurious of the prolific Ananda of existence. A largeness of mutuality, a generous fullness of the relations of life, a lavish self-spending and return and ample interchange between existence and existence, a full enjoyment and use of the rhythm and balance of fruitful and productive life are the perfection of those who have this Swabhava and follow this Dharma.

The other turn is towards work and service. This was in the old order the dharma or soul-type of the Shudra and the Shudra in that order was considered as not one of the twice-born, but an inferior type. A more recent consideration of the values of existence lays stress on the dignity of labour and sees in its toil the bed-rock of the relations between man and man. There is a truth in both attitudes. For this force in the material world is at once in its necessity the foundation of material existence or rather that on which it moves, the feet of the creator Brahma in the old parable, and in its primal state not uplifted by knowledge, mutuality or strength a thing which reposes on instinct, desire and inertia. The well-developed Shudra soul-type has the instinct of toil and the capacity of labour and service; but toil as opposed to easy or natural action is a thing imposed on the natural man which he bears because without it he cannot assure his existence or get his desires and he has to force himself or be forced by others or circumstances to spend himself in work. The natural Shudra works not from a sense of the dignity of labour or from the enthusiasm of service, — though that comes by the cultivation of his dharma, — not as the man of knowledge for the joy or gain of knowledge, not from a sense of honour, nor as the born craftsman or artist for love of his work or ardour for the beauty of its technique, nor from an ordered sense of mutuality or large utility, but for the maintenance of his existence and gratification of his primal wants, and when these are satisfied, he indulges, if left to himself, his natural indolence, the indolence which is normal to the tamasic quality in all of us, but comes out most clearly in the uncompelled primitive man, the savage. The unregenerated Shudra is born therefore for service rather than for free labour and his temperament is prone to an inert ignorance, a gross unthinking self-indulgence of the instincts, a servility, an unreflective obedience and mechanical discharge of duty varied by indolence, evasion, spasmodic revolt, an instinctive and uninformed life. The ancients held that all men are born in their lower nature as Shudras and only regenerated by ethical and spiritual culture, but in their highest inner self are Brahmanas capable of the full spirit and godhead, a theory which is not far perhaps from the psychological truth of our nature.

And yet when the soul develops, it is in this Swabhava and

Dharma of work and service that there are found some of the most necessary and beautiful elements of our greatest perfection and the key to much of the secret of the highest spiritual evolution. For the soul powers that belong to the full development of this force in us are of the greatest importance, — the power of service to others, the will to make our life a thing of work and use to God and man, to obey and follow and accept whatever great influence and needful discipline, the love which consecrates service, a love which asks for no return, but spends itself for the satisfaction of that which we love, the power to bring down this love and service into the physical field and the desire to give our body and life as well as our soul and mind and will and capacity to God and man, and, as a result, the power of complete self-surrender, *ātma-samarpaṇa*, which transferred to the spiritual life becomes one of the greatest most revealing keys to freedom and perfection. In these things lies the perfection of this Dharma and the nobility of this Swabhava. Man could not be perfect and complete if he had not this element of nature in him to raise to its divine power.

None of these four types of personality can be complete even in its own field if it does not bring into it something of the other qualities. The man of knowledge cannot serve Truth with freedom and perfection, if he has not intellectual and moral courage, will, audacity, the strength to open and conquer new kingdoms, otherwise he becomes a slave of the limited intellect or a servant or at most a ritual priest of only an established knowledge,[1] — cannot use his knowledge to the best advantage unless he has the adaptive skill to work out its truths for the practice of life, otherwise he lives only in the idea, — cannot make the entire consecration of his knowledge unless he has the spirit of service to humanity, to the Godhead in man and the Master of his being. The man of power must illumine and uplift and govern his force and strength by knowledge, light of reason or religion or the spirit, otherwise he becomes the mere forceful

---

[1] That perhaps is why it was the Kshatriya bringing his courage, audacity, spirit of conquest into the fields of intuitive knowledge and spiritual experience who first discovered the great truths of Vedanta.

Asura, — must have the skill which will help him best to use and administer and regulate his strength and make it creative and fruitful and adapted to his relations with others, otherwise it becomes a mere drive of force across the field of life, a storm that passes and devastates more than it constructs, — must be capable too of obedience and make the use of his strength a service to God and the world, otherwise he becomes a selfish dominator, tyrant, brutal compeller of men's souls and bodies. The man of productive mind and work must have an open inquiring mind and ideas and knowledge, otherwise he moves in the routine of his functions without expansive growth, must have courage and enterprise, must bring a spirit of service into his getting and production, in order that he may not only get but give, not only amass and enjoy his own life, but consciously help the fruitfulness and fullness of the surrounding life by which he profits. The man of labour and service becomes a helpless drudge and slave of society if he does not bring knowledge and honour and aspiration and skill into his work, since only so can he rise by an opening mind and will and understanding usefulness to the higher dharmas. But the greater perfection of man comes when he enlarges himself to include all these powers, even though one of them may lead the others, and opens his nature more and more into the rounded fullness and universal capacity of the fourfold spirit. Man is not cut out into an exclusive type of one of these dharmas, but all these powers are in him at work at first in an ill-formed confusion, but he gives shape to one or another in birth after birth, progresses from one to the other even in the same life and goes on towards the total development of his inner existence. Our life itself is at once an inquiry after truth and knowledge, a struggle and battle of our will with ourselves and surrounding forces, a constant production, adaptation, application of skill to the material of life and a sacrifice and service.

These things are the ordinary aspects of the soul while it is working out its force in nature, but when we get nearer to our inner selves, then we get too a glimpse and experience of something which was involved in these forms and can disengage itself and stand behind and drive them, as if a general Presence or Power brought to bear on the particular working of this living and thinking machine. This is the force of the soul itself presiding over and filling the powers of its nature. The difference is that the first way is personal in its stamp, limited and determined in its action and mould, dependent on the instrumentation, but here there emerges something impersonal in the personal form, independent and self-sufficient even in the use of the instrumentation, indeterminable though determining both itself and things, something which acts with a much greater power upon the world and uses particular power only as one means of communication and impact on man and circumstance. The Yoga of self-perfection brings out this soul-force and gives it its largest scope, takes up all the fourfold powers and throws them into the free circle of an integral and harmonious spiritual dynamis. The godhead, the soul-power of knowledge rises to the highest degree of which the individual nature can be the supporting basis. A free mind of light develops which is open to every kind of revelation, inspiration, intuition, idea, discrimination, thinking synthesis; an enlightened life of the mind grasps at all knowledge with a delight of finding and reception and holding, a spiritual enthusiasm, passion, or ecstasy; a power of light full of spiritual force, illumination and purity of working manifests its empire, *brahma-tejas*, *brahma-varcas*; a bottomless steadiness and illimitable calm upholds all the illumination, movement, action as on some rock of ages, equal, unperturbed, unmoved, *acyuta*.

The godhead, the soul-power of will and strength rises to a like largeness and altitude. An absolute calm fearlessness of the free spirit, an infinite dynamic courage which no peril, limitation of possibility, wall of opposing force can deter from pursuing the work or aspiration imposed by the spirit, a high nobility of soul and will untouched by any littleness or baseness and moving with a certain greatness of step to spiritual victory or the success of the God-given work through whatever temporary defeat or obstacle, a spirit never depressed or cast down from faith and confidence in the power that works in the being, are the signs of this perfection. There comes too to fulfilment a large godhead, a soul-power of mutuality, a free self-spending and spending of gift and possession in the work to be done, lavished for the production, the creation, the achievement, the possession, gain, utilisable return, a skill that observes the law and adapts the relation and keeps the measure, a great taking into oneself from all beings and a free giving out of oneself to all, a divine commerce, a large enjoyment of the mutual delight of life. And finally there comes to perfection the godhead, the soul-power of service, the universal love that lavishes itself without demand of return, the embrace that takes to itself the body of God in man and works for help and service, the abnegation that is ready to bear the yoke of the Master and make the life a free servitude to Him and under his direction to the claim and need of his creatures, the self-surrender of the whole being to the Master of our being and his work in the world. These things unite, assist and enter into each other, become one. The full consummation comes in the greatest souls most capable of perfection, but some large manifestation of this fourfold soul-power must be sought and can be attained by all who practise the integral Yoga.

These are the signs, but behind is the soul which thus expresses itself in a consummation of nature. And this soul is an outcoming of the free self of the liberated man. That self is of no character, being infinite, but bears and upholds the play of all character, supports a kind of infinite, one, yet multiple personality, *nirguṇo guṇī*, is in its manifestation capable of infinite quality, *anantaguṇa*. The force that it uses is the supreme and universal, the divine and infinite Shakti pouring herself into the individual being and freely determining action for the divine purpose.

Chapter XVI

The Divine Shakti

THE RELATION between the Purusha and Prakriti which emerges as one advances in the Yoga of self-perfection is the next thing that we have to understand carefully in this part of the Yoga. In the spiritual truth of our being the power which we call Nature is the power of being, consciousness and will and therefore the power of self-expression and self-creation of the self, soul or Purusha. But to our ordinary mind in the ignorance and to its experience of things the force of Prakriti has a different appearance. When we look at it in its universal action outside ourselves, we see it first as a mechanical energy in the cosmos which acts upon matter or in its own created forms of matter. In matter it evolves powers and processes of life and in living matter powers and processes of mind. Throughout its operations it acts by fixed laws and in each kind of created thing displays varying properties of energy and laws of process which give its character to the genus or species and again in the individual develops without infringing the law of the kind minor characteristics and variations of a considerable consequence. It is this mechanical appearance of Prakriti which has preoccupied the modern scientific mind and made for it its whole view of Nature, and so much so that science still hopes and labours with a very small amount of success to explain all phenomena of life by laws of matter and all phenomena of mind by laws of living matter. Here soul or spirit has no place and nature cannot be regarded as power of spirit. Since the whole of our existence is mechanical, physical and bounded by the biological phenomenon of a brief living consciousness and man is a creature and instrument of material energy, the spiritual self-evolution of Yoga can be only a delusion, hallucination, abnormal state of mind or self-hypnosis. In any case it cannot be what it represents itself to be, a discovery of the eternal truth of our being and a passing above the limited truth of the mental, vital and physical to the full truth of our spiritual nature.

But when we look, not at external mechanical Nature to the exclusion of our personality, but at the inner subjective experience of man the mental being, our nature takes to us a quite different appearance. We may believe intellectually in a purely mechanical view even of our subjective existence, but we cannot act upon it or make it quite real to our self-experience. For we are conscious of an I which does not seem identical with our nature, but capable of a standing back from it, of a detached observation and criticism and creative use of it, and of a will which we naturally think of as a free will; and even if this be a delusion, we are still obliged in practice to act as if we were responsible mental beings capable of a free choice of our actions, able to use or misuse and to turn to higher or lower ends our nature. And even we seem to be struggling both with our environmental and with our own present nature and striving to get mastery over a world which imposes itself on and masters us and at the same time to become something more than we now are. But the difficulty is that we are only in command, if at all, over a small part of ourselves, the rest is subconscient or subliminal and beyond our control, our will acts only in a small selection of our activities; the most is a process of mechanism and habit and we must strive constantly with ourselves and surrounding circumstances to make the least advance or self-amelioration. There seems to be a dual being in us; Soul and Nature, Purusha and Prakriti, seem to be half in agreement, half at odds, Nature laying its mechanical control on the soul, the soul attempting to change and master nature. And the question is what is the fundamental character of this duality and what the issue.

The Sankhya explanation is that our present existence is governed by a dual principle. Prakriti is inert without the contact of Purusha, acts only by a junction with it and then too by the fixed mechanism of her instruments and qualities; Purusha, passive and free apart from Prakriti, becomes by contact with her and sanction to her works subject to this mechanism, lives in her limitation of ego-sense and must get free by withdrawing the sanction and returning to its own proper principle. Another explanation that tallies with a certain part of our experience is that there is a dual being in us, the animal and material, or more widely the lower nature-bound, and the soul or spiritual being entangled by mind in the material existence or in world-nature, and freedom comes by escape from the entanglement, the soul returning to its native planes or the self or spirit to its pure existence. The perfection of the soul then is to be found not at all in, but beyond Nature.

But in a higher than our present mental consciousness we find that this duality is only a phenomenal appearance. The highest and real truth of existence is the one Spirit, the supreme Soul, Purushottama, and it is the power of being of this Spirit which manifests itself in all that we experience as universe. This universal Nature is not a lifeless, inert or unconscious mechanism, but informed in all its movements by the universal Spirit. The mechanism of its process is only an outward appearance and the reality is the Spirit creating or manifesting its own being by its own power of being in all that is in Nature. Soul and Nature in us too are only a dual appearance of the one existence. The universal energy acts in us, but the soul limits itself by the ego-sense, lives in a partial and separate experience of her workings, uses only a modicum and a fixed action of her energy for its self-expression. It seems rather to be mastered and used by this energy than to use it, because it identifies itself with the ego-sense which is part of the natural instrumentation and lives in the ego experience. The ego is in fact driven by the mechanism of Nature of which it is a part and the ego-will is not and cannot be a free will. To arrive at freedom, mastery and perfection we have to get back to the real self and soul within and arrive too thereby at our true relations with our own and with universal nature.

In our active being this translates itself into a replacement of our egoistic, our personal, our separatively individual will and energy by a universal and a divine will and energy which determines our action in harmony with the universal action and reveals itself as the direct will and the all-guiding power of the Purushottama. We replace the inferior action of the limited, ignorant and imperfect personal will and energy in us by the action of the divine Shakti. To open ourselves to the universal energy is always possible to us, because that is all around us and always flowing into us, it is that which supports and supplies all our inner and outer action and in fact we have no power of our own in any separately individual sense, but only a personal formulation of the one Shakti. And on the other hand this universal Shakti is within ourselves, concentrated in us, for the whole power of it is present in each individual as in the universe, and there are means and processes by which we can awaken its greater and potentially infinite force and liberate it to its larger workings.

We can become aware of the existence and presence of the universal Shakti in the various forms of her power. At present we are conscious only of the power as formulated in our physical mind, nervous being and corporeal case sustaining our various activities. But if we can once get beyond this first formation by some liberation of the hidden, recondite, subliminal parts of our existence by Yoga, we become aware of a greater life force, a pranic Shakti, which supports and fills the body and supplies all the physical and vital activities, — for the physical energy is only a modified form of this force, — and supplies and sustains too from below all our mental action. This force we feel in ourselves also, but we can feel it too around us and above, one with the same energy in us, and can draw it in and down to aggrandise our normal action or call upon and get it to pour into us. It is an illimitable ocean of Shakti and will pour as much of itself as we can hold into our being. This pranic force we can use for any of the activities of life, body or mind with a far greater and effective power than any that we command in our present operations, limited as they are by the physical formula. The use of this pranic power liberates us from that limitation to the extent of our ability to use it in place of the body-bound energy. It can be used so to direct the prana as to manage more powerfully or to rectify any bodily state or action, as to heal illness or to get rid of fatigue, and to liberate an enormous amount of mental exertion and play of will or knowledge. The exercises of Pranayama are the familiar mechanical means of freeing and getting control of the pranic energy. They heighten too and set free the psychic, mental and spiritual energies which ordinarily depend for their opportunity of action on the pranic force. But the same thing can be done by mental will and practice or by an increasing opening of ourselves to a higher spiritual power of the Shakti. The pranic Shakti can be directed not only upon ourselves, but effectively towards others or on things or happenings for whatever purposes the will dictates. Its effectivity is immense, in itself illimitable, and limited only by defect of the power, purity and universality of the spiritual or other will which is brought to bear upon it; but still, however great and powerful, it is a lower formulation, a link between the mind and body, an instrumental force. There is a consciousness in it, a presence of the spirit, of which we are aware, but it is encased, involved in and preoccupied with the urge to action. It is not to this action of the Shakti that we can leave the whole burden of our activities; we have either to use its lendings by our own enlightened personal will or else call in a higher guidance; for of itself it will act with greater force, but still according to our imperfect nature and mainly by the drive and direction of the life-power in us and not according to the law of the highest spiritual existence.

The ordinary power by which we govern the pranic energy is that of the embodied mind. But when we get clear above the physical mind, we can get too above the pranic force to the consciousness of a pure mental energy which is a higher formulation of the Shakti. There we are aware of a universal mind consciousness closely associated with this energy in, around and above us, — above, that is to say, the level of our ordinary mind status, — giving all the substance and shaping all the forms of our will and knowledge and of the psychic element in our impulses and emotions. This mind force can be made to act upon the pranic energy and can impose upon it the influence, colour, shape, character, direction of our ideas, our knowledge, our more enlightened volition and thus more effectively bring our life and vital being into harmony with our higher powers of being, ideals and spiritual aspirations. In our ordinary state these two, the mental and the pranic being and energies, are very much mixed up and run into each other, and we are not able clearly to distinguish them or get a full hold of the one on the other and so control effectively the lower by the higher and more understanding principle. But when we take our station above the physical mind, we are able then to separate clearly the two forms of energy, the two levels of our being, disentangle their action and act with a clearer and more potent self-knowledge and an enlightened and a purer will-power. Nevertheless the control is not complete, spontaneous, sovereign so long as we work with the mind as our chief guiding and controlling force. The mental energy we find to be itself derivative, a lower and limiting power of the conscious spirit which acts only by isolated and combined seeings, imperfect and incomplete half-lights which we take for full and adequate light, and with a disparity between the idea and knowledge and the effective will-power. And we are aware soon of a far higher power of the Spirit and its Shakti concealed or above, superconscient to mind or partially acting through the mind, of which all this is an inferior derivation.

The Purusha and Prakriti are on the mental level as in the rest of our being closely joined and much involved in each other and we are not able to distinguish clearly soul and nature. But in the purer substance of mind we can more easily discern the dual strain. The mental Purusha is naturally able in its own native principle of mind to detach itself, as we have seen, from the workings of its Prakriti and there is then a division of our being between a consciousness that observes and can reserve its will-power and an energy full of the substance of consciousness that takes the forms of knowledge, will and feeling. This detachment gives at its highest a certain freedom from the compulsion of the soul by its mental nature. For ordinarily we are driven and carried along in the stream of our own and the universal active energy partly floundering in its waves, partly maintaining and seeming to guide or at least propel ourselves by a collected thought and an effort of the mental will muscle; but now there is a part of ourselves, nearest to the pure essence of self, which is free from the stream, can quietly observe and to a certain extent decide its immediate movement and course and to a greater extent its ultimate direction. The Purusha can at last act upon the Prakriti from half apart, from behind or from above her as a presiding person or presence, *adhyakṣa*, by the power of sanction and control inherent in the spirit.

What we shall do with this relative freedom depends on our aspiration, our idea of the relation we must have with our highest self, with God and Nature. It is possible for the Purusha to use it on the mental plane itself for a constant self-observation, self-development, self-modification, to sanction, reject, alter, bring out new formulations of the nature and establish a calm and disinterested action, a high and pure sattwic balance and rhythm of its energy, a personality perfected in the sattwic principle. This may amount only to a highly mentalised perfection of our present intelligence and the ethical and the psychic being or else, aware of the greater self in us, it may impersonalise, universalise, spiritualise its self-conscious existence and the action of its nature and arrive either at a large quietude or a large perfection of the spiritualised mental energy of its being. It is possible again for the Purusha to stand back entirely and by a refusal of sanction allow the whole normal action of the mind to exhaust itself, run down, spend its remaining impetus of habitual action and fall into silence. Or else this silence may be imposed on the mental energy by rejection of its action and a constant command to quietude. The soul may through the confirmation of this quietude and mental silence pass into some ineffable tranquillity of the spirit and vast cessation of the activities of Nature. But it is also possible to make this silence of the mind and ability to suspend the habits of the lower nature a first step towards the discovery of a superior formulation, a higher grade of the status and energy of our being and pass by an ascent and transformation into the supramental power of the spirit. And this may even, though with more difficulty, be done without resorting to the complete state of quietude of the normal mind by a persistent and progressive transformation of all the mental into their greater corresponding supramental powers and activities. For everything in the mind derives from and is a limited, inferior, groping, partial or perverse translation into mentality of something in the supermind. But neither of these movements can be successfully executed by the sole individual unaided power of the mental Purusha in us, but needs the help, intervention and guidance of the divine Self, the Ishwara, the Purushottama. For the supermind is the divine mind and it is on the supramental plane that the individual arrives at his right, integral, luminous and perfect relation with the supreme and universal Purusha and the supreme and universal Para Prakriti.

As the mind progresses in purity, capacity of stillness or freedom from absorption in its own limited action, it becomes aware of and is able to reflect, bring into itself or enter into the conscious presence of the Self, the supreme and universal Spirit, and it becomes aware too of grades and powers of the spirit higher than its own highest ranges. It becomes aware of an infinite of the consciousness of being, an infinite ocean of all the power and energy of illimitable consciousness, an infinite ocean of Ananda, of the self-moved delight of existence. It may be aware of one or other only of these things, for the mind can separate and feel exclusively as distinct original principles what in a higher experience are inseparable powers of the One, or it may feel them in a trinity or fusion which reveals or arrives at their oneness. It may become aware of it on the side of Purusha or on the side of Prakriti. On the side of Purusha it reveals itself as Self or Spirit, as Being or as the one sole existent Being, the divine Purushottama, and the individual Jiva soul can enter into entire oneness with it in its timeless self or in its universality, or enjoy nearness, immanence, difference without any gulf of separation and enjoy too inseparably and at one and the same time oneness of being and delight-giving difference of relation in active experiencing nature. On the side of Prakriti the power and Ananda of the Spirit come into the front to manifest this Infinite in the beings and personalities and ideas and forms and forces of the universe and there is then present to us the divine

Mahashakti, original Power, supreme Nature, holding in herself infinite existence and creating the wonders of the cosmos. The mind grows conscious of this illimitable ocean of Shakti or else of her presence high above the mind and pouring something of herself into us to constitute all that we are and think and will and do and feel and experience, or it is conscious of her all around us and our personality a wave of the ocean of power of spirit, or of her presence in us and of her action there based on our present form of natural existence but originated from above and raising us towards the higher spiritual status. The mind too can rise towards and touch her infinity or merge itself in it in trance of samadhi or can lose itself in her universality, and then our individuality disappears, our centre of action is then no longer in us, but either outside our bodied selves or nowhere; our mental activities are then no longer our own, but come into this frame of mind, life and body from the universal, work themselves out and pass leaving no impression on us, and this frame of ourselves too is only an insignificant circumstance in her cosmic vastness. But the perfection sought in the integral Yoga is not only to be one with her in her highest spiritual power and one with her in her universal action, but to realise and possess the fullness of this Shakti in our individual being and nature. For the supreme Spirit is one as Purusha or as Prakriti, conscious being or power of conscious being, and as the Jiva in essence of self and spirit is one with the supreme Purusha, so on the side of Nature, in power of self and spirit it is one with Shakti, *parā prakṛtir jīvabhūtā*. To realise this double oneness is the condition of the integral self-perfection. The Jiva is then the meeting-place of the play of oneness of the supreme Soul and Nature.

To reach this perfection we have to become aware of the divine Shakti, draw her to us and call her in to fill the whole system and take up the charge of all our activities. There will then be no separate personal will or individual energy trying to conduct our actions, no sense of a little personal self as the doer, nor will it be the lower energy of the three gunas, the mental, vital and physical nature. The divine Shakti will fill us and preside over and take up all our inner activities, our outer life, our Yoga. She will take up the mental energy, her own lower formation, and raise it to its highest and purest and fullest powers of intelligence and will and psychic action. She will change the mechanical energies of the mind, life and body which now govern us into delight-filled manifestations of her own living and conscious power and presence. She will manifest in us and relate to each other all the various spiritual experiences of which the mind is capable. And as the crown of this process she will bring down the supramental light into the mental levels, change the stuff of mind into the stuff of supermind, transform all the lower energies into energies of her supramental nature and raise us into our being of gnosis. The Shakti will reveal herself as the power of the Purushottama, and it is the Ishwara who will manifest himself in his force of supermind and spirit and be the master of our being, action, life and Yoga.

Chapter XVII

The Action of the Divine Shakti

THIS IS the nature of the divine Shakti that it is the timeless power of the Divine which manifests itself in time as a universal force creating, constituting, maintaining and directing all the movements and workings of the universe. This universal Power is apparent to us first on the lower levels of existence as a mental, vital and material cosmic energy of which all our mental, vital and physical activities are the operations. It is necessary for our sadhana that we should thoroughly realise this truth in order to escape from the pressure of the limiting ego view and universalise ourselves even on these lower levels where ordinarily the ego reigns in full force. To see that we are not the originators of action but that it is rather this Power that acts in ourselves and in all others, not I and others the doers, but the one Prakriti, which is the rule of the Karmayoga, is also the right rule here. The ego sense serves to limit, separate and sharply differentiate, to make the most of the individual form and it is there because it is indispensable to the evolution of the lower life. But when we would rise above to a higher divine life we must loosen the force of the ego and eventually get rid of it — as for the lower life the development of ego, so for the higher life this reverse movement of elimination of the ego is indispensable. To see our actions as not our own but those of the divine Shakti working in the form of the lower Prakriti on the inferior levels of the conscious being, helps powerfully towards this change. And if we can do this, then the separation of our mental, vital and physical consciousness from that of other beings thins and lessens; the limitations of its workings remain indeed, but they are broadened and taken up into a large sense and vision of the universal working; the specialising and individualising differentiations of Nature abide for their own proper purpose, but are no longer a prison. The individual feels his mind, life and physical existence to be one with that of others amid all differences and one with the total power of the spirit in Nature.

This however is a stage and not the whole perfection. The existence, however comparatively large and free, is still subject to the inferior nature. The sattwic, rajasic and tamasic ego is diminished but not eliminated; or if it seems to disappear, it has only sunk in our parts of action into the universal operation of the gunas, remains involved in them and is still working in a covert, subconscient fashion and may force itself to the front at any time. The sadhaka has therefore first to keep the idea and get the realisation of a one self or spirit in all behind all these workings. He must be aware behind Prakriti of the one supreme and universal Purusha. He must see and feel not only that all is the self-shaping of the one Force, Prakriti or Nature, but that all her actions are those of the Divine in all, the one Godhead in all, however veiled, altered and as it were perverted — for perversion comes by a conversion into lower forms — by transmission through the ego and the gunas. This will farther diminish the open or covert insistence of the ego and, if thoroughly realised, it will make it difficult or impossible for it to assert itself in such a way as to disturb or hamper the farther progress. The ego-sense will become, so far as it interferes at all, a foreign intrusive element and only a fringe of the mist of the old ignorance hanging on to the outskirts of the consciousness and its action. And, secondly, the universal Shakti must be realised, must be seen and felt and borne in the potent purity of its higher action, its supramental and spiritual workings. This greater vision of the Shakti will enable us to escape from the control of the gunas, to convert them into their divine equivalents and dwell in a consciousness in which the Purusha and Prakriti are one and not separated or hidden in or behind each other. There the Shakti will be in its every movement evident to us and naturally, spontaneously, irresistibly felt as nothing else but the active presence of the Divine, the shape of power of the supreme Self and Spirit.

The Shakti in this higher status reveals itself as the presence or potentiality of the infinite existence, consciousness, will, delight, and when it is so seen and felt, the being turns towards it in whatever way, with its adoration or its will of aspiration or some kind of attraction of the lesser to the greater, to know it, to be full of and possessed by it, to be one with it in the sense and action of the whole nature. But at first while we still live in the mind, there is a gulf of division or else a double action. The mental, vital and physical energy in us and the universe is felt to be a derivation from the supreme Shakti, but at the same time an inferior, separated and in some sense another working. The real spiritual force may send down its messages or the light and power of its presence above us to the lower levels or may descend occasionally and even for a time possess, but it is then mixed with the inferior workings and partially transforms and spiritualises them, but is itself diminished and altered in the process. There is an intermittent higher action or a dual working of the nature. Or we find that the Shakti for a time raises the being to a higher spiritual plane and then lowers it back into the inferior levels. These alternations must be regarded as the natural vicissitudes of a process of transformation from the normal to the spiritual being. The transformation, the perfection cannot for the integral Yoga be complete until the link between the mental and the spiritual action is formed and a higher knowledge applied to all the activities of our existence. That link is the supramental or gnostic energy in which the incalculable infinite power of the supreme being, consciousness, delight formulates itself as an ordering divine will and wisdom, a light and power in the being which shapes all the thought, will, feeling, action and replaces the corresponding individual movements.

This supramental Shakti may form itself as a spiritualised intuitive light and power in the mind itself, and that is a great but still a mentally limited spiritual action. Or it may transform altogether the mind and raise the whole being to the supramental level. In any case this is the first necessity of this part of the Yoga, to lose the ego of the doer, the ego idea and the sense of one's own power of action and initiation of action and control of the result of action and merge it in the sense and vision of the universal Shakti originating, shaping, turning to its ends the action of ourselves and others and of all the persons and forces of the world. And this realisation can become absolute and complete in all the parts of our being only if we can have that sense and vision of it in all its forms, on all the levels of our being and the world being, as the material, vital, mental and supramental energy of the Divine, but all these, all the powers of all the planes must be seen and known as self-formulations of the one spiritual Shakti, infinite in being, consciousness and Ananda. It is not the invariable rule that this power should first manifest itself on the lower levels in the lower forms of energy and then reveal its higher spiritual nature. And if it does so come, first in its mental, vital or physical universalism, we must be careful not to rest content there. It may come instead at once in its higher reality, in the might of the spiritual splendour. The difficulty then will be to bear and hold the Power until it has laid powerful hands on and transformed the energies of the lower levels of the being. The difficulty will be less in proportion as we have been able to attain to a large quiet and equality, *samatā*, and either to realise, feel and live in the one tranquil immutable self in all or else to make a genuine and complete surrender of ourselves to the divine Master of the Yoga.

It is necessary here to keep always in mind the three powers of the Divine which are present and have to be taken account of in all living existences. In our ordinary consciousness we see these three as ourselves, the Jiva in the form of the ego, God — whatever conception we may have of God, and Nature. In the spiritual experience we see God as the supreme Self or Spirit, or as the Being from whom we come and in whom we live and move. We see Nature as his Power or God as Power, Spirit in Power acting in ourselves and the world. The Jiva is then himself this Self, Spirit, Divine, *so 'ham*, because he is one with him in essence of his being and consciousness, but as the individual he is only a portion of the Divine, a self of the Spirit, and in his natural being a form of the Shakti, a power of God in movement and action, *parā prakṛtir jīvabhūtā*. At first, when we become conscious of God or of the Shakti, the difficulties of our relation with them arise from the ego consciousness which we bring into the spiritual relation. The ego in us makes claims on the Divine other than the spiritual claim, and these claims are in a sense legitimate, but so long as and in proportion as they take the egoistic form, they are open to much grossness and great perversions, burdened with an element of falsehood, undesirable reaction and consequent evil, and the relation can only be wholly right, happy and perfect when these claims become part of the spiritual claim and lose their egoistic character. And in fact the claim of our being upon the Divine is fulfilled absolutely only then when it ceases at all to be a claim and is instead a fulfilment of the Divine through the individual, when we are satisfied with that alone, when we are content with the delight of oneness in being, content to leave the supreme Self and Master of existence to do whatever is the will of his absolute wisdom and knowledge through our more and more perfected Nature. This is the sense of the self-surrender of the individual self to the Divine, *ātma-samarpaṇa*. It does not exclude a will for the delight of oneness, for participation in the divine consciousness, wisdom, knowledge, light, power, perfection, for the satisfaction of the divine fulfilment in us, but the will, the aspiration is ours because it is his will in us. At first, while there is still insistence on our own personality, it only reflects that, but becomes more and more indistinguishable from it, less personal and eventually it loses all shade of separateness, because the will in us has grown identical with the divine Tapas, the action of the divine Shakti.

And equally when we first become aware of the infinite Shakti above us or around or in us, the impulse of the egoistic sense in us is to lay hold on it and use this increased might for our egoistic purpose. This is a most dangerous thing, for it brings with it a sense and some increased reality of a great, sometimes a titanic power, and the rajasic ego, delighting in this sense of new enormous strength, may instead of waiting for it to be purified and transformed throw itself out in a violent and impure action and even turn us for a time or partially into the selfish and arrogant Asura using the strength given him for his own and not for the divine purpose: but on that way lies, in the end, if it is persisted in, spiritual perdition and material ruin. And even to regard oneself as the instrument of the Divine is not a perfect remedy; for when a strong ego meddles in the matter, it falsifies the spiritual relation and under cover of making itself an instrument of the Divine is really bent on making instead God its instrument. The one remedy is to still the egoistic claim of whatever kind, to lessen persistently the personal effort and individual straining which even the sattwic ego cannot avoid and instead of laying hold on the Shakti and using it for its purpose rather to let the Shakti lay hold on us and use us for the divine purpose. This cannot be done perfectly at once — nor can it be done safely if it is only the lower form of the universal energy of which we are aware, for then, as has already been said, there must be some other control, either of the mental Purusha or from above, — but still it is the aim which we must have before us and which can be wholly carried out when we become insistently aware of the highest spiritual presence and form of the divine Shakti. This surrender too of the whole action of the individual self to the Shakti is in fact a form of real self-surrender to the Divine.

It has been seen that a most effective way of purification is for the mental Purusha to draw back, to stand as the passive witness and observe and know himself and the workings of Nature in the lower, the normal being; but this must be combined, for perfection, with a will to raise the purified nature into the higher spiritual being. When that is done, the Purusha is no longer only a witness, but also the master of his prakriti, *īśvara*. At first it may not be apparent how this ideal of active self-mastery can be reconciled with the apparently opposite ideal of self-surrender and of becoming the assenting instrument of the divine Shakti. But in fact on the spiritual plane there is no difficulty. The Jiva cannot really become master except in proportion as he arrives at oneness with the Divine who is his supreme Self. And in that oneness and in his unity with the universe he is one too in the universal self with the will that directs all the operations of Nature. But more directly, less transcendentally, in his individual action too, he is a portion of the Divine and participates in the mastery over his nature of that to which he has surrendered himself. Even as instrument, he is not a mechanical but a conscious instrument. On the Purusha side of him he is one with the Divine and participates in the divine mastery of the Ishwara. On the nature side of him he is in his universality one with the power of the Divine, while in his individual natural being he is an instrument of the universal divine Shakti, because the individualised power is there to fulfil the purpose of the universal Power. The Jiva, as has been seen, is the meeting-place of the play of the dual aspect of the Divine, Prakriti and Purusha, and in the higher spiritual consciousness he becomes simultaneously one with both these aspects, and there he takes up and combines all the divine relations created by their interaction. This it is that makes possible the dual attitude.

There is however a possibility of arriving at this result without the passage through the passivity of the mental Purusha, by a more persistently and predominantly kinetic Yoga. Or there may be a combination of both the methods, alternations between them and an ultimate fusion. And here the problem of spiritual action assumes a more simple form. In this kinetic movement there are three stages. In the first the Jiva is aware of the supreme Shakti, receives the power into himself and uses it under her direction, with a certain sense of being the subordinate doer, a sense of minor responsibility in the action, — even at first, it may be, a responsibility for the result; but that disappears, for the result is seen to be determined by the higher Power, and only the action is felt to be partly his own. The sadhaka then feels that it is he who is thinking, willing, doing, but feels too the divine Shakti or Prakriti behind driving and shaping all his thought, will, feeling and action: the individual energy belongs in a way to him, but is still only a form and an instrument of the universal divine Energy. The Master of the Power may be hidden from him for a time by the action of the Shakti, or he may be aware of the Ishwara sometimes or continually manifest to him. In the latter case there are three things present to his consciousness, himself as the servant of the Ishwara, the Shakti behind as a great Power supplying the energy, shaping the action, formulating the results, the Ishwara above determining by his will the whole action.

In the second stage the individual doer disappears, but there is not necessarily any quietistic passivity; there may be a full kinetic action, only all is done by the Shakti. It is her power of knowledge which takes shape as thought in the mind; the sadhaka has no sense of himself thinking, but of the Shakti thinking in him. The will and the feelings and action are also in the same way nothing but a formation, operation, activity of the Shakti in her immediate presence and full possession of all the system. The sadhaka does not think, will, act, feel, but thought, will, feeling, action happen in his system. The individual on the side of action has disappeared into oneness with universal Prakriti, has become an individualised form and action of the divine Shakti. He is still aware of his personal existence, but it is as the Purusha supporting and observing the whole action, conscious of it in his self-knowledge and enabling by his participation the divine Shakti to do in him the works and the will of the Ishwara. The Master of the power is then sometimes hidden by the action of the power, sometimes appears governing it and compelling its workings. Here too there are three things present to the consciousness, the Shakti carrying on all the knowledge, thought, will, feeling, action for the Ishwara in an instrumental human form, the Ishwara, the Master of existence governing and compelling all her action, and ourself as the soul, the Purusha of her individual action enjoying all the relations with him which are created by her workings. There is another form of this realisation in which the Jiva disappears into and becomes one with the Shakti and there is then only the play of the Shakti with the Ishwara, Mahadeva and Kali, Krishna and Radha, the Deva and the Devi. This is the intensest possible form of the Jiva's realisation of himself as a manifestation of Nature, a power of the being of the Divine, *parā prakṛtir jīva-bhūtā*.

A third stage comes by the increasing manifestation of the Divine, the Ishwara in all our being and action. This is when we are constantly and uninterruptedly aware of him. He is felt in us as the possessor of our being and above us as the ruler of all its workings and they become to us nothing but a manifestation of him in the existence of the Jiva. All our consciousness is his consciousness, all our knowledge is his knowledge, all our thought is his thought, all our will is his will, all our feeling is his Ananda and form of his delight in being, all our action is his action. The distinction between the Shakti and the Ishwara begins to disappear; there is only the conscious activity in us of the Divine with the great self of the Divine behind and around and possessing it; all the world and Nature is seen to be only that, but here it has become fully conscious, the Maya of the ego removed, and the Jiva is there only as an eternal portion of his being, *aṁśa sanātana*, put forth to support a divine individualisation and living now fulfilled in the complete presence and power of the Divine, the complete joy of the Spirit manifested in the being. This is the highest realisation of the perfection and delight of the active oneness; for beyond it there could be only the consciousness of the Avatara, the Ishwara himself assuming a human name and form for action in the Lila.

Chapter XVIII

Faith and Shakti

THE THREE parts of the perfection of our instrumental nature of which we have till now been reviewing the general features, the perfection of the intelligence, heart, vital consciousness and body, the perfection of the fundamental soul powers, the perfection of the surrender of our instruments and action to the divine Shakti, depend at every moment of their progression on a fourth power that is covertly and overtly the pivot of all endeavour and action, faith, *śraddhā*. The perfect faith is an assent of the whole being to the truth seen by it or offered to its acceptance, and its central working is a faith of the soul in its own will to be and attain and become and its idea of self and things and its knowledge, of which the belief of the intellect, the heart's consent and the desire of the life mind to possess and realise are the outward figures. This soul faith, in some form of itself, is indispensable to the action of the being and without it man cannot move a single pace in life, much less take any step forward to a yet unrealised perfection. It is so central and essential a thing that the Gita can justly say of it that whatever is a man's *śraddhā*, that he is, *yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*, and, it may be added, whatever he has the faith to see as possible in himself and strive for, that he can create and become. There is one kind of faith demanded as indispensable by the integral Yoga and that may be described as faith in God and the Shakti, faith in the presence and power of the Divine in us and the world, a faith that all in the world is the working of one divine Shakti, that all the steps of the Yoga, its strivings and sufferings and failures as well as its successes and satisfactions and victories are utilities and necessities of her workings and that by a firm and strong dependence on and a total self-surrender to the Divine and to his Shakti in us we can attain to oneness and freedom and victory and perfection.

The enemy of faith is doubt, and yet doubt too is a utility and necessity, because man in his ignorance and in his progressive labour towards knowledge needs to be visited by doubt, otherwise he would remain obstinate in an ignorant belief and limited knowledge and unable to escape from his errors. This utility and necessity of doubt does not altogether disappear when we enter on the path of Yoga. The integral Yoga aims at a knowledge not merely of some fundamental principle, but a knowing, a gnosis which will apply itself to and cover all life and the world action, and in this search for knowledge we enter on the way and are accompanied for many miles upon it by the mind's unregenerated activities before these are purified and transformed by a greater light: we carry with us a number of intellectual beliefs and ideas which are by no means all of them correct and perfect and a host of new ideas and suggestions meet us afterwards demanding our credence which it would be fatal to seize on and always cling to in the shape in which they come without regard to their possible error, limitation or imperfection. And indeed at one stage in the Yoga it becomes necessary to refuse to accept as definite and final any kind of intellectual idea or opinion whatever in its intellectual form and to hold it in a questioning suspension until it is given its right place and luminous shape of truth in a spiritual experience enlightened by supramental knowledge. And much more must this be the case with the desires or impulsions of the life mind, which have often to be provisionally accepted as immediate indices of a temporarily necessary action before we have the full guidance, but not always clung to with the soul's complete assent, for eventually all these desires and impulsions have to be rejected or else transformed into and replaced by impulsions of the divine will taking up the life movements. The heart's faith, emotional beliefs, assents are also needed upon the way, but cannot be always sure guides until they too are taken up, purified, transformed and are eventually replaced by the luminous assents of a divine Ananda which is at one with the divine will and knowledge. In nothing in the lower nature from the reason to the vital will can the seeker of the Yoga put a complete and permanent faith, but only at last in the spiritual truth, power, Ananda which become in the spiritual reason his sole guides and luminaries and masters of action.

And yet faith is necessary throughout and at every step because it is a needed assent of the soul and without this assent there can be no progress. Our faith must first be abiding in the essential truth and principles of the Yoga, and even if this is clouded in the intellect, despondent in the heart, outwearied and exhausted by constant denial and failure in the desire of the vital mind, there must be something in the innermost soul which clings and returns to it, otherwise we may fall on the path or abandon it from weakness and inability to bear temporary defeat, disappointment, difficulty and peril. In the Yoga as in life it is the man who persists unwearied to the last in the face of every defeat and disillusionment and of all confronting, hostile and contradicting events and powers who conquers in the end and finds his faith justified because to the soul and Shakti in man nothing is impossible. And even a blind and ignorant faith is a better possession than the sceptical doubt which turns its back on our spiritual possibilities or the constant carping of the narrow pettily critical uncreative intellect, *asūyā*, which pursues our endeavour with a paralysing incertitude. The seeker of the integral Yoga must however conquer both these imperfections. The thing to which he has given his assent and set his mind and heart and will to achieve, the divine perfection of the whole human being, is apparently an impossibility to the normal intelligence, since it is opposed to the actual facts of life and will for long be contradicted by immediate experience, as happens with all far-off and difficult ends, and it is denied too by many who have spiritual experience but believe that our present nature is the sole possible nature of man in the body and that it is only by throwing off the earthly life or even all individual existence that we can arrive at either a heavenly perfection or the release of extinction. In the pursuit of such an aim there will for long be plenty of ground for the objections, the carpings, *asūyā*, of that ignorant but persistent criticising reason which founds itself plausibly on the appearances of the moment, the stock of ascertained fact and experience, refuses to go beyond and questions the validity of all indices and illuminations that point forward; and if he yields to these narrow suggestions, he will either not arrive or be seriously hampered and long delayed in his journey. On the other hand ignorance and blindness in the faith are obstacles to a large success, invite much disappointment and disillusionment, fasten on false finalities and prevent advance to greater formulations of truth and perfection. The Shakti in her workings will strike ruthlessly at all forms of ignorance and blindness and all even that trusts wrongly and superstitiously in her, and we must be prepared to abandon a too persistent attachment to forms of faith and cling to the saving reality alone. A great and wide spiritual and intelligent faith, intelligent with the intelligence of that larger reason which assents to high possibilities, is the character of the *śraddhā* needed for the integral Yoga.

This *śraddhā* — the English word faith is inadequate to express it — is in reality an influence from the supreme Spirit and its light a message from our supramental being which is calling the lower nature to rise out of its petty present to a great self-becoming and self-exceeding. And that which receives the influence and answers to the call is not so much the intellect, the heart or the life mind, but the inner soul which better knows the truth of its own destiny and mission. The circumstances that provoke our first entry into the path are not the real index of the thing that is at work in us. There the intellect, the heart, or the desires of the life mind may take a prominent place, or even more fortuitous accidents and outward incentives; but if these are all, then there can be no surety of our fidelity to the call and our enduring perseverance in the Yoga. The intellect may abandon the idea that attracted it, the heart weary or fail us, the desire of the life mind turn to other objectives. But outward circumstances are only a cover for the real workings of the spirit, and if it is the spirit that has been touched, the inward soul that has received the call, the *śraddhā* will remain firm and resist all attempts to defeat or slay it. It is not that the doubts of the intellect may not assail, the heart waver, the disappointed desire of the life mind sink down exhausted on the wayside. That is almost inevitable at times, perhaps often, especially with us, sons of an age of intellectuality and scepticism and a materialistic denial of spiritual truth which has not yet lifted its painted clouds from the face of the sun of a greater reality and is still opposed to the light of spiritual intuition and inmost experience. There will very possibly be many of those trying obscurations of which even the Vedic Rishis so often complained, “long exiles from the light”, and these may be so thick, the night on the soul may be so black that faith may seem utterly to have left us. But through it all the spirit within will be keeping its unseen hold and the soul will return with a new strength to its assurance which was only eclipsed and not extinguished, because extinguished it cannot be when once the inner self has known and made its resolution.[1] The Divine holds our hand through all and if he seems to let us fall, it is only to raise us higher. This saving return we shall experience so often that the denials of doubt will become eventually impossible and, when once the foundation of equality is firmly established and still more when the sun of the gnosis has risen, doubt itself will pass away because its cause and utility have ended.

Moreover not only a faith in the fundamental principle, ideas, way of the Yoga is needed, but a day to day working faith in the power in us to achieve, in the steps we have taken on the way, in the spiritual experiences that come to us, in the intuitions, the guiding movements of will and impulsion, the moved intensities of the heart and aspirations and fulfilments of the life that are the aids, the circumstances and the stages of the enlarging of the nature and the stimuli or the steps of the soul’s evolution. At the same time it has always to be remembered that we are moving from imperfection and ignorance towards light and perfection, and the faith in us must be free from attachment to the forms of our endeavour and the successive stages of our realisation. There is not only much that will be strongly raised in us in order to be cast out and rejected, a battle between the powers of ignorance and the lower nature and the higher powers that have to replace them, but experiences, states of thought and feeling, forms of realisation that are helpful and have to be accepted on the way and may seem to us for the time to be spiritual finalities, are found afterwards to be steps of transition, have to be exceeded and the working faith that supported them withdrawn in favour of other and greater things or of more full and comprehensive realisations and experiences, which replace them or into which they are taken up in a completing transformation. There can be for the seeker of the integral Yoga no clinging to resting-places on the road or to half-way houses; he cannot be satisfied till he has laid down all the great enduring bases of his perfection and broken out into its large and free infinities, and even there he has to be constantly filling himself with more experiences of the Infinite. His progress is an ascent from level to level and each new height brings in other vistas and revelations of the much that has still to be done, *bhūri kartvam*, till the divine Shakti has at last taken up all his endeavour and he has only to assent and participate gladly by a consenting oneness in her luminous workings. That which will support him through these changes, struggles, transformations which might otherwise dishearten and baffle, — for the intellect and life and emotion always grasp too much at things, fasten on premature certitudes and are apt to be afflicted and unwilling when forced to abandon that on which they rested, — is a firm faith in the Shakti that is at work and reliance on the guidance of the Master of the Yoga whose wisdom is not in haste and whose steps through all the perplexities of the mind are assured and just and sound, because they are founded on a perfectly comprehending transaction with the necessities of our nature.

---

[1] *saṅkalpa*, *vyavasāya*.

The progress of the Yoga is a procession from the mental ignorance through imperfect formations to a perfect foundation and increasing of knowledge and in its more satisfyingly positive parts a movement from light to greater light, and it cannot cease till we have the greatest light of the supramental knowledge. The motions of the mind in its progress must necessarily be mixed with a greater or lesser proportion of error, and we should not allow our faith to be disconcerted by the discovery of its errors or imagine that because the beliefs of the intellect which aided us were too hasty and positive, therefore the fundamental faith in the soul was invalid. The human intellect is too much afraid of error precisely because it is too much attached to a premature sense of certitude and a too hasty eagerness for positive finality in what it seems to seize of knowledge. As our self-experience increases, we shall find that our errors even were necessary movements, brought with them and left their element or suggestion of truth and helped towards discovery or supported a necessary effort and that the certitudes we have now to abandon had yet their temporary validity in the progress of our knowledge. The intellect cannot be a sufficient guide in the search for spiritual truth and realisation and yet it has to be utilised in the integral movement of our nature. And while, therefore, we have to reject paralysing doubt or mere intellectual scepticism, the seeking intelligence has to be trained to admit a certain large questioning, an intellectual rectitude not satisfied with half-truths, mixtures of error or approximations and, most positive and helpful, a perfect readiness always to move forward from truths already held and accepted to the greater corrective, completing or transcending truths which at first it was unable or, it may be, disinclined to envisage. A working faith of the intellect is indispensable, not a superstitious, dogmatic or limiting credence attached to every temporary support or formula, but a large assent to the successive suggestions and steps of the Shakti, a faith fixed on realities, moving from the lesser to the completer realities and ready to throw down all scaffolding and keep only the large and growing structure.

A constant *śraddhā*, faith, assent of the heart and the life too are indispensable. But while we are in the lower nature the heart's assent is coloured by mental emotion and the life movements are accompanied by their trail of perturbing or straining desires, and mental emotion and desire tend to trouble, alter more or less grossly or subtly or distort the truth, and they always bring some limitation and imperfection into its realisation by the heart and life. The heart too when it is troubled in its attachments and its certitudes, perplexed by throw-backs and failures and convictions of error or involved in the wrestlings which attend a call to move forward from its assured positions, has its draggings, wearinesses, sorrowings, revolts, reluctances which hamper the progress. It must learn a larger and surer faith giving in the place of the mental reactions a calm or a moved spiritual acceptance to the ways and the steps of the Shakti which is in its nature the assent of a deepening Ananda to all necessary movements and a readiness to leave old moorings and move always forward towards the delight of a greater perfection. The life mind must give its assent to the successive motives, impulsions, activities of the life imposed on it by the guiding power as aids or fields of the development of the nature and to the successions also of the inner Yoga, but it must not be attached or call a halt anywhere, but must always be prepared to abandon old urgency and accept with the same completeness of assent new higher movements and activities, and it must learn to replace desire by a wide and bright Ananda in all experience and action. The faith of the heart and the life mind, like that of the intelligence, must be capable of a constant correction, enlarging and transformation.

This faith is essentially the secret *śraddhā* of the soul, and it is brought more and more to the surface and there satisfied, sustained and increased by an increasing assurance and certainty of spiritual experience. Here too the faith in us must be unattached, a faith that waits upon Truth and is prepared to change and enlarge its understanding of spiritual experiences, to correct mistaken or half-true ideas about them and receive more enlightening interpretations, to replace insufficient by more sufficient intuitions, and to merge experiences that seemed at the time to be final and satisfying in more satisfying combinations with new experience and greater largenesses and transcendences. And especially in the psychical and other middle domains there is a very large room for the possibility of misleading and often captivating error, and here even a certain amount of positive scepticism has its use and at all events a great caution and scrupulous intellectual rectitude, but not the scepticism of the ordinary mind which amounts to a disabling denial. In the integral Yoga psychical experience, especially of the kind associated with what is often called occultism and savours of the miraculous, should be altogether subordinated to spiritual truth and wait upon that for its own interpretation, illumination and sanction. But even in the purely spiritual domain, there are experiences which are partial and, however attractive, only receive their full validity, significance or right application when we can advance to a fuller experience. And there are others which are in themselves quite valid and full and absolute, but if we confine ourselves to them, will prevent other sides of the spiritual truth from manifestation and mutilate the integrality of the Yoga. Thus the profound and absorbing quietude of impersonal peace which comes by the stilling of the mind is a thing in itself complete and absolute, but if we rest in that alone, it will exclude the companion absolute, not less great and needed and true, of the bliss of the divine action. Here too our faith must be an assent that receives all spiritual experience, but with a wide openness and readiness for always more light and truth, an absence of limiting attachment and no such clinging to forms as would interfere with the forward movement of the Shakti towards the integrality of the spiritual being, consciousness, knowledge, power, action and the wholeness of the one and the multiple Ananda.

The faith demanded of us both in its general principle and its constant particular application amounts to a large and ever increasing and a constantly purer, fuller and stronger assent of the whole being and all its parts to the presence and guidance of God and the Shakti. The faith in the Shakti, as long as we are not aware of and filled with her presence, must necessarily be preceded or at least accompanied by a firm and virile faith in our own spiritual will and energy and our power to move successfully towards unity and freedom and perfection. Man is given faith in himself, his ideas and his powers that he may work and create and rise to greater things and in the end bring his strength as a worthy offering to the altar of the Spirit. This spirit, says the Scripture, is not to be won by the weak, *nāyam ātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ*. All paralysing self-distrust has to be discouraged, all doubt of our strength to accomplish, for that is a false assent to impotence, an imagination of weakness and a denial of the omnipotence of the spirit. A present incapacity, however heavy may seem its pressure, is only a trial of faith and a temporary difficulty and to yield to the sense of inability is for the seeker of the integral Yoga a non-sense, for his object is a development of a perfection that is there already, latent in the being, because man carries the seed of the divine life in himself, in his own spirit, the possibility of success is involved and implied in the effort and victory is assured because behind is the call and guidance of an omnipotent power. At the same time this faith in oneself must be purified from all touch of rajasic egoism and spiritual pride. The sadhaka should keep as much as possible in his mind the idea that his strength is not his own in the egoistic sense but that of the divine universal Shakti and whatever is egoistic in his use of it must be a cause of limitation and in the end an obstacle. The power of the divine universal Shakti which is behind our aspiration is illimitable, and when it is rightly called upon it cannot fail to pour itself into us and to remove whatever incapacity and obstacle, now or later; for the times and durations of our struggle while they depend at first, instrumentally and in part, on the strength of our faith and our endeavour, are yet eventually in the hands of the wisely determining secret Spirit, alone the Master of the Yoga, the Ishwara.

The faith in the divine Shakti must be always at the back of our strength and when she becomes manifest, it must be or grow implicit and complete. There is nothing that is impossible to her who is the conscious Power and universal Goddess all-creative from eternity and armed with the Spirit's omnipotence. All knowledge, all strengths, all triumph and victory, all skill and works are in her hands and they are full of the treasures of the Spirit and of all perfections and siddhis. She is Maheshwari, goddess of the supreme knowledge, and brings to us her vision for all kinds and widenesses of truth, her rectitude of the spiritual will, the calm and passion of her supramental largeness, her felicity of illumination: she is Mahakali, goddess of the supreme strength, and with her are all mights and spiritual force and severest austerity of tapas and swiftness to the battle and the victory and the laughter, the *aṭṭahāsya*, that makes light of defeat and death and the powers of the ignorance: she is Mahalakshmi, the goddess of the supreme love and delight, and her gifts are the spirit's grace and the charm and beauty of the Ananda and protection and every divine and human blessing: she is Mahasaraswati, the goddess of divine skill and of the works of the Spirit, and hers is the Yoga that is skill in works, *yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*, and the utilities of divine knowledge and the self-application of the spirit to life and the happiness of its harmonies. And in all her powers and forms she carries with her the supreme sense of the masteries of the eternal Ishwari, a rapid and divine capacity for all kinds of action that may be demanded from the instrument, oneness, a participating sympathy, a free identity, with all energies in all beings and therefore a spontaneous and fruitful harmony with all the divine will in the universe. The intimate feeling of her presence and her powers and the satisfied assent of all our being to her workings in and around it is the last perfection of faith in the Shakti.

And behind her is the Ishwara and faith in him is the most central thing in the *śraddhā* of the integral Yoga. This faith we must have and develop to perfection that all things are the workings under the universal conditions of a supreme self-knowledge and wisdom, that nothing done in us or around us is in vain or without its appointed place and just significance, that all things are possible when the Ishwara as our supreme Self and Spirit takes up the action and that all that has been done before and all that he will do hereafter was and will be part of his infallible and foreseeing guidance and intended towards the fruition of our Yoga and our perfection and our life work. This faith will be more and more justified as the higher knowledge opens, we shall begin to see the great and small significances that escaped our limited mentality and faith will pass into knowledge. Then we shall see beyond the possibility of doubt that all happens within the working of the one Will and that that will was also wisdom because it develops always the true workings in life of the self and nature. The highest state of the assent, the *śraddhā* of the being will be when we feel the presence of the Ishwara and feel all our existence and consciousness and thought and will and action in his hand and consent in all things and with every part of our self and nature to the direct and immanent and occupying will of the Spirit. And that highest perfection of the *śraddhā* will also be the opportunity and perfect foundation of a divine strength: it will base, when complete, the development and manifestation and the works of the luminous supramental Shakti.

Chapter XIX

The Nature of the Supermind

THE OBJECT of Yoga is to raise the human being from the consciousness of the ordinary mind subject to the control of vital and material Nature and limited wholly by birth and death and Time and the needs and desires of the mind, life and body to the consciousness of the spirit free in its self and using the circumstances of mind, life and body as admitted or self-chosen and self-figuring determinations of the spirit, using them in a free self-knowledge, a free will and power of being, a free delight of being. This is the essential difference between the ordinary mortal mind in which we live and the spiritual consciousness of our divine and immortal being which is the highest result of Yoga. It is a radical conversion as great as and greater than the change which we suppose evolutionary Nature to have made in its transition from the vital animal to the fully mentalised human consciousness. The animal has the conscious vital mind, but whatever beginnings there are in it of anything higher are only a primary glimpse, a crude hint of the intelligence which in man becomes the splendour of the mental understanding, will, emotion, aesthesis and reason. Man elevated in the heights and deepened by the intensities of the mind becomes aware of something great and divine in himself towards which all this tends, something he is in possibility but which he has not yet become, and he turns the powers of his mind, his power of knowledge, his power of will, his power of emotion and aesthesis to seek out this, to seize and comprehend all that it may be, to become it and to exist wholly in its greater consciousness, delight, being and power of highest becoming. But what he gets of this higher state in his normal mind is only an intimation, a primary glimpse, a crude hint of the splendour, the light, the glory and divinity of the spirit within him. A complete conversion of all the parts of his being into moulds and instruments of the spiritual consciousness is demanded of him before he can make quite real, constant, present to himself this greater thing that he can be and entirely live in what is now to him at the best a luminous aspiration. He must seek to develop and grow altogether into a greater divine consciousness by an integral Yoga.

The Yoga of perfection necessary to this change has, so far as we have been considering it, consisted in a preparatory purification of the mental, vital and physical nature, a liberation from the knots of the lower Prakriti, a consequent replacement of the egoistic state always subject to the ignorant and troubled action of the desire soul by a large and luminous static equality which quiets the reason, the emotional mind, the life mind and the physical nature and brings into us the peace and freedom of the spirit, and a dynamical substitution of the action of the supreme and universal divine Shakti under the control of the Ishwara for that of the lower Prakriti, — an action whose complete operation must be preceded by the perfection of the natural instruments. And all these things together, though not as yet the whole Yoga, constitute already a much greater than the present normal consciousness, spiritual in its basis and moved by a greater light, power and bliss, and it might be easy to rest satisfied with so much accomplished and think that all has been done that was needed for the divine conversion.

A momentous question however arises as light grows, the question through what medium is the divine Shakti to act in the human being? Is it to be always through the mind only and on the mind plane or in some greater supramental formulation which is more proper to a divine action and which will take up and replace the mental functions? If the mind is to be always the instrument, then although we shall be conscious of a diviner Power initiating and conducting all our inner and outer human action, yet it will have to formulate its knowledge, will, Ananda and all things else in the mental figure, and that means to translate them into an inferior kind of functioning other than the supreme workings native to the divine consciousness and its Shakti. The mind spiritualised, purified, liberated, perfected within its own limits may come as near as possible to a faithful mental translation, but we shall find that this is after all a relative fidelity and an imperfect perfection. The mind by its very nature cannot render with an entirely right rightness or act in the unified completeness of the divine knowledge, will and Ananda because it is an instrument for dealing with the divisions of the finite on the basis of division, a secondary instrument therefore and a sort of delegate for the lower movement in which we live. The mind can reflect the Infinite, it can dissolve itself into it, it can live in it by a large passivity, it can take its suggestions and act them out in its own way, a way always fragmentary, derivative and subject to a greater or less deformation, but it cannot be itself the direct and perfect instrument of the infinite Spirit acting in its own knowledge. The divine Will and Wisdom organising the action of the infinite consciousness and determining all things according to the truth of the spirit and the law of its manifestation is not mental but supramental and even in its formulation nearest to mind as much above the mental consciousness in its light and power as the mental consciousness of man above the vital mind of the lower creation. The question is how far the perfected human being can raise himself above mind, enter into some kind of fusing union with the supramental and build up in himself a level of supermind, a developed gnosis by the form and power of which the divine Shakti can directly act, not through a mental translation, but organically in her supramental nature.

It is here necessary in a matter so remote from the ordinary lines of our thought and experience to state first what is the universal gnosis or divine supermind, how it is represented in the actual movement of the universe and what are its relations to the present psychology of the human being. It will then be evident that though the supermind is suprarational to our intelligence and its workings occult to our apprehension, it is nothing irrationally mystic, but rather its existence and emergence is a logical necessity of the nature of existence, always provided we grant that not matter or mind alone but spirit is the fundamental reality and everywhere a universal presence. All things are a manifestation of the infinite spirit out of its own being, out of its own consciousness and by the self-realising, self-determining, self-fulfilling power of that consciousness. The Infinite, we may say, organises by the power of its self-knowledge the law of its own manifestation of being in the universe, not only the material universe present to our senses, but whatever lies behind it on whatever planes of existence. All is organised by it not under any inconscient compulsion, not according to a mental fantasy or caprice, but in its own infinite spiritual freedom according to the self-truth of its being, its infinite potentialities and its will of self-creation out of those potentialities, and the law of this self-truth is the necessity that compels created things to act and evolve each according to its own nature. The Intelligence — to give it an inadequate name — the Logos that thus organises its own manifestation is evidently something infinitely greater, more extended in knowledge, compelling in self-power, large both in the delight of its self-existence and the delight of its active being and works than the mental intelligence which is to us the highest realised degree and expression of consciousness. It is to this intelligence infinite in itself but freely organising and self-determiningly organic in its self-creation and its works that we may give for our present purpose the name of the divine supermind or gnosis.

The fundamental nature of this supermind is that all its knowledge is originally a knowledge by identity and oneness and even when it makes numberless apparent divisions and discriminating modifications in itself, still all the knowledge that operates in its workings, even in these divisions, is founded upon and sustained and lit and guided by this perfect knowledge by identity and oneness. The Spirit is one everywhere and it knows all things as itself and in itself, so sees them always and therefore knows them intimately, completely, in their reality as well as their appearance, in their truth, their law, the entire spirit and sense and figure of their nature and their workings. When it sees anything as an object of knowledge, it yet sees it as itself and in itself, and not as a thing other than or divided from it about which therefore it would at first be ignorant of the nature, constitution and workings and have to learn about them, as the mind is at first ignorant of its object and has to learn about it because the mind is separated from its object and regards and senses and meets it as something other than itself and external to its own being. The mental awareness we have of our own subjective existence and its movements, though it may point to, is not the same thing as this identity and self-knowledge, because what it sees are mental figures of our being and not the inmost or the whole and it is only a partial, derivative and superficial action of our self that appears to us while the largest and most secretly determining parts of our own existence are occult to our mentality. The supramental Spirit has, unlike the mental being, the real because the inmost and total knowledge of itself and of all its universe and of all things that are its creations and self-figurings in the universe.

This is the second character of the supreme Supermind that its knowledge is a real because a total knowledge. It has in the first place a transcendental vision and sees the universe not only in the universal terms, but in its right relation to the supreme and eternal reality from which it proceeds and of which it is an expression. It knows the spirit and truth and whole sense of the universal expression because it knows all the essentiality and all the infinite reality and all the consequent constant potentiality of that which in part it expresses. It knows rightly the relative because it knows the Absolute and all its absolutes to which the relatives refer back and of which they are the partial or modified or suppressed figures. It is in the second place universal and sees all that is individual in the terms of the universal as well as in its own individual terms and holds all these individual figures in their right and complete relation to the universe. It is in the third place, separately with regard to individual things, total in its view because it knows each in its inmost essence of which all else is the resultant, in its totality which is its complete figure and in its parts and their connections and dependences, — as well as in its connections with and its dependences upon other things and its nexus with the total implications and the explicits of the universe.

The mind on the contrary is limited and incapable in all these directions. Mind cannot arrive at identity with the Absolute even when by a stretch of the intellect it conceives the idea, but can only disappear into it in a swoon or extinction: it can only have a kind of sense or an intimation of certain absolutes which it puts by the mental idea into a relative figure. It cannot grasp the universal, but only arrives at some idea of it through an extension of the individual or a combination of apparently separate things and so sees it either as a vague infinite or indeterminate or a half-determined largeness or else only in an external scheme or constructed figure. The indivisible being and action of the universal, which is its real truth, escapes the apprehension of the mind, because the mind thinks it out analytically by taking its own divisions for units and synthetically by combinations of these units, but cannot seize on and think entirely in the terms, though it may get at the idea and certain secondary results, of the essential oneness. It cannot, either, know truly and thoroughly even the individual and apparently separate thing, because it proceeds in the same way, by an analysis of parts and constituents and properties and a combination by which it erects a scheme of it which is only its external figure. It can get an intimation of the essential inmost truth of its object, but cannot live constantly and luminously in that essential knowledge and work out on the rest from within outward so that the outward circumstances appear in their intimate reality and meaning as inevitable result and expression and form and action of the spiritual something which is the reality of the object. And all this which is impossible for the mind to do, but possible only to strive towards and figure, is inherent and natural to the supramental knowledge.

The third characteristic of the supermind arising from this difference, which brings us to the practical distinction between the two kinds of knowledge, is that it is directly truth-conscious, a divine power of immediate, inherent and spontaneous knowledge, an Idea holding luminously all realities and not depending on indications and logical or other steps from the known to the unknown like the mind which is a power of the Ignorance. The supermind contains all its knowledge in itself, is in its highest divine wisdom in eternal possession of all truth and even in its lower, limited or individualised forms has only to bring the latent truth out of itself, — the perception which the old thinkers tried to express when they said that all knowing was in its real origin and nature only a memory of inwardly existing knowledge. The supermind is eternally and on all levels truth-conscious and exists secretly even in mental and material being, surveys and knows the things, even obscurest, of the mental ignorance and understands and is behind and governs its processes, because everything in the mind derives from the supermind — and must do so because everything derives from the spirit. All that is mental is but a partial, a modified, a suppressed or half-suppressed figure of the supramental truth, a deformation or a derived and imperfect figure of its greater knowledge. The mind begins with ignorance and proceeds towards knowledge. As an actual fact, in the material universe, it appears out of an initial and universal inconscience which is really an involution of the all-conscient spirit in its own absorbed self-oblivious force of action; and it appears therefore as part of an evolutionary process, first a vital feeling towards overt sensation, then an emergence of a vital mind capable of sensation and, evolving out of it, a mind of emotion and desire, a conscious will, a growing intelligence. And each stage is an emergence of a greater suppressed power of the secret supermind and spirit.

The mind of man, capable of reflection and a coordinated investigation and understanding of itself and its basis and surroundings, arrives at truth but against a background of original ignorance, a truth distressed by a constant surrounding mist of incertitude and error. Its certitudes are relative and for the most part precarious certainties or else are the assured fragmentary certitudes only of an imperfect, incomplete and not an essential experience. It makes discovery after discovery, gets idea after idea, adds experience to experience and experiment to experiment, — but losing and rejecting and forgetting and having to recover much as it proceeds, — and it tries to establish a relation between all that it knows by setting up logical and other sequences, a series of principles and their dependences, generalisations and their application, and makes out of its devices a structure in which mentally it can live, move and act and enjoy and labour. This mental knowledge is always limited in extent: not only so, but in addition the mind even sets up other willed barriers, admitting by the mental device of opinion certain parts and sides of truth and excluding all the rest, because if it gave free admission and play to all ideas, if it suffered truth's infinities, it would lose itself in an unreconciled variety, an undetermined immensity and would be unable to act and proceed to practical consequences and an effective creation. And even when it is widest and most complete, mental knowing is still an indirect knowledge, a knowledge not of the thing in itself but of its figures, a system of representations, a scheme of indices, — except indeed when in certain movements it goes beyond itself, beyond the mental idea to spiritual identity, but it finds it extremely difficult to go here beyond a few isolated and intense spiritual realisations or to draw or work out or organise the right practical consequences of these rare identities of knowledge. A greater power than the reason is needed for the spiritual comprehension and effectuation of this deepest knowledge.

This is what the supermind, intimate with the Infinite, alone can do. The supermind sees directly the spirit and essence, the face and body, the result and action, the principles and dependences of the truth as one indivisible whole and therefore can work out the circumstantial results in the power of the essential knowledge, the variations of the spirit in the light of its identities, its apparent divisions in the truth of its oneness. The supermind is a knower and creator of its own truth, the mind of man only a knower and creator in the half light and half darkness of a mingled truth and error, and creator too of a thing which it derives altered, translated, lessened from something greater than and beyond it. Man lives in a mental consciousness between a vast subconscient which is to his seeing a dark inconscience and a vaster superconscient which he is apt to take for another but a luminous inconscience, because his idea of consciousness is confined to his own middle term of mental sensation and intelligence. It is in that luminous superconscience that there lie the ranges of the supermind and the spirit.

The supermind is again, because it acts and creates as well as knows, not only a direct truth-consciousness, but an illumined, direct and spontaneous truth-will. There is not and cannot be in the will of the self-knowing spirit any contradiction, division or difference between its will and its knowledge. The spiritual will is the Tapas or enlightened force of the conscious being of the spirit effecting infallibly what is there within it, and it is this infallible operation of things acting according to their own nature, of energy producing result and event according to the force within it, of action bearing the fruit and event involved in its own character and intention which we call variously in its different aspects law of Nature, Karma, Necessity and Fate. These things are to mind the workings of a power outside or above it in which it is involved and intervenes only with a contributory personal effort which partly arrives and succeeds, partly fails and stumbles and which even in succeeding is largely overruled for issues different from or at any rate greater and more far-reaching than its own intention. The will of man works in the ignorance by a partial light or more often flickerings of light which mislead as much as they illuminate. His mind is an ignorance striving to erect standards of knowledge, his will an ignorance striving to erect standards of right, and his whole mentality as a result very much a house divided against itself, idea in conflict with idea, the will often in conflict with the ideal of right or the intellectual knowledge. The will itself takes different shapes, the will of the intelligence, the wishes of the emotional mind, the desires and the passion of the vital being, the impulsions and blind or half-blind compulsions of the nervous and the subconscient nature, and all these make by no means a harmony, but at best a precarious concord among discords. The will of the mind and life is a stumbling about in search of right force, right Tapas which can wholly be attained in its true and complete light and direction only by oneness with the spiritual and supramental being.

The supramental nature on the contrary is just, harmonious and one, will and knowledge there only light of the spirit and power of the spirit, the power effecting the light, the light illumining the power. In the highest supramentality they are intimately fused together and do not even wait upon each other but are one movement, will illumining itself, knowledge fulfilling itself, both together a single jet of the being. The mind knows only the present and lives in an isolated movement of it though it tries to remember and retain the past and forecast and compel the future. The supermind has the vision of the three times, *trikāladṛṣṭi*; it sees them as an indivisible movement and sees too each containing the others. It is aware of all tendencies, energies and forces as the diverse play of unity and knows their relation to each other in the single movement of the one spirit. The supramental will and action are therefore a will and action of the spontaneous self-fulfilling truth of the spirit, the right and at the highest the infallible movement of a direct and total knowledge.

The supreme and universal Supermind is the active Light and Tapas of the supreme and universal Self as the Lord and Creator, that which we come to know in Yoga as the divine Wisdom and Power, the eternal knowledge and will of the Ishwara. On the highest planes of Being where all is known and all manifests as existences of the one existence, consciousnesses of the one consciousness, delight's self-creations of the one Ananda, many truths and powers of the one Truth, there is the intact and integral display of its spiritual and supramental knowledge. And in the corresponding planes of our own being the Jiva shares in the spiritual and supramental nature and lives in its light and power and bliss. As we descend nearer to what we are in this world, the presence and action of this self-knowledge narrows but retains always the essence and character when not the fullness of the supramental nature and its way of knowing and willing and acting, because it still lives in the essence and body of the spirit. The mind, when we trace the descent of the self towards matter, we see as a derivation which travels away from the fullness of self, the fullness of its light and being and which lives in a division and diversion, not in the body of the sun, but first in its nearer and then in its far-off rays. There is a highest intuitive mind which receives more nearly the supramental truth, but even this is a formation which conceals the direct and greater real knowledge. There is an intellectual mind which is a luminous half-opaque lid which intercepts and reflects in a radiantly distorting and suppressively modifying atmosphere the truth known to the supermind. There is a still lower mind built on the foundation of the senses between which and the sun of knowledge there is a thick cloud, an emotional and a sensational mist and vapour with here and there lightnings and illuminations. There is a vital mind which is shut away even from the light of intellectual truth, and lower still in submental life and matter the spirit involves itself entirely as if in a sleep and a night, a sleep plunged in a dim and yet poignant nervous dream, the night of a mechanical somnambulist energy. It is a re-evolution of the spirit out of this lowest state in which we find ourselves at a height above the lower creation having taken it up all in us and reaching so far in our ascent only the light of the well-developed mental reason. The full powers of self-knowledge and the illumined will of the spirit are still beyond us above the mind and reason in supramental Nature.

If the spirit is everywhere, even in matter — in fact matter itself is only an obscure form of the spirit — and if the supermind is the universal power of the spirit's omnipresent self-knowledge organising all the manifestation of the being, then in matter and everywhere there must be present a supramental action and, however concealed it may be by another, lower and obscurer kind of operation, yet when we look close we shall find that it is really the supermind which organises matter, life, mind and reason. And this actually is the knowledge towards which we are now moving. There is even a quite visible intimate action of the consciousness, persistent in life, matter and mind, which is clearly a supramental action subdued to the character and need of the lower medium and to which we now give the name of intuition from its most evident characteristics of direct vision and self-acting knowledge, really a vision born of some secret identity with the object of the knowledge. What we call the intuition is however only a partial indication of the presence of the supermind, and if we take this presence and power in its widest character, we shall see that it is a concealed supramental force with a self-conscient knowledge in it which informs the whole action of material energy. It is that which determines what we call law of nature, maintains the action of each thing according to its own nature and harmonises and evolves the whole, which would otherwise be a fortuitous creation apt at any moment to collapse into chaos. All the law of nature is a thing precise in its necessities of process, but is yet in the cause of that necessity and of its constancy of rule, measure, combination, adaptation, result a thing inexplicable, meeting us at every step with a mystery and a miracle, and this must be either because it is irrational and accidental even in its regularities or because it is suprarational, because the truth of it belongs to a principle greater than that of our intelligence. That principle is the supramental; that is to say, the hidden secret of Nature is the organisation of something out of the infinite potentialities of the self-existent truth of the spirit the nature of which is wholly evident only to an original knowledge born of and proceeding by a fundamental identity, the spirit's constant self-perception. All the action of life too is of this character and all the action of mind and reason, — reason which is the first to perceive everywhere the action of a greater reason and law of being and try to render it by its own conceptional structures, though it does not always perceive that it is something other than a mental Intelligence which is at work, other than an intellectual Logos. All these processes are actually spiritual and supramental in their secret government, but mental, vital and physical in their overt process.

The outward matter, life, mind do not possess this occult action of the supermind, even while possessed and compelled by the necessity it imposes on their workings. There is what we are sometimes moved to call an intelligence and will operating in the material force and the atom (although the words ring false because it is not actually the same thing as our own will and intelligence), — let us say, a covert intuition of self-existence at work, — but the atom and force are not aware of it and are only the obscure body of matter and of power created by its first effort of self-manifestation. The presence of such an intuition becomes more evident to us in all the action of life because that is nearer to our own scale. And as life develops overt sense and mind, as in the animal creation, we can speak more confidently of a vital intuition which is behind its operations and which emerges in the animal mind in the clear form of instinct, — instinct, an automatic knowledge implanted in the animal, sure, direct, self-existent, self-guided, which implies somewhere in its being an accurate knowing of purpose, relation and the thing or object. It acts in the life force and mind, but yet the surface life and mind do not possess it and cannot give an account of what it does or control or extend the power at its will and pleasure. Here we observe two things, first, that the overt intuition acts only for a limited necessity and purpose, and that in the rest of the operations of the nature there is a double action, one uncertain and ignorant of the surface consciousness and the other subliminal implying a secret subconscient direction. The surface consciousness is full of a groping and seeking which increases rather than diminishes as life rises in its scale and widens in the scope of its conscious powers; but the secret self within assures in spite of the groping of the vital mind the action of the nature and the result needed for the necessity, the purpose and the destiny of the being. This continues on a higher and higher scale up to the human reason and intelligence.

The being of man also is full of physical, vital, emotional, psychical and dynamic instincts and intuitions, but he does not rely on them as the animal does, — though they are capable in him of a far larger scope and greater action than in the animal and lower creation by reason of his greater actual evolutionary development and his yet greater potentiality of development of the being. He has suppressed them, discontinued their full and overt action by atrophy, — not that these capacities are destroyed but rather held back or cast back into the subliminal consciousness, — and consequently this lower part of his being is much less sure of itself, much less confident of the directions of his nature, much more groping, errant and fallible in its larger scope than that of the animal in his lesser limits. This happens because man's real dharma and law of being is to seek for a greater self-aware existence, a self-manifestation no longer obscure and governed by an ununderstood necessity, but illumined, conscious of that which is expressing itself and able to give it a fuller and more perfect expression. And finally his culmination must be to identify himself with his greatest and real self and act or rather let it act (his natural existence being an instrumental form of the expression of the spirit) in its spontaneous perfect will and knowledge. His first instrument for this transition is the reason and the will of the rational intelligence and he is moved to depend upon that to the extent of its development for his knowledge and guidance and give it the control of the rest of his being. And if the reason were the highest thing and the greatest all-sufficient means of the self and spirit, he could by it know perfectly and guide perfectly all the movements of his nature. This he cannot do entirely because his self is a larger thing than his reason and if he limits himself by the rational will and intelligence, he imposes an arbitrary restriction both in extent and in kind on his self-development, self-expression, knowledge, action, Ananda. The other parts of his being demand too a complete expression in the largeness and perfection of the self and cannot have it if their expression is changed in kind and carved, cut down and arbitrarily shaped and mechanised in action by the inflexible machinery of the rational intelligence. The godhead of the reason, the intellectual Logos, is only a partial representative and substitute for the greater supramental Logos, and its function is to impose a preliminary partial knowledge and order upon the life of the creature, but the real, final and integral order can only be founded by the spiritual supermind in its emergence.

The supermind in the lower nature is present most strongly as intuition and it is therefore by a development of an intuitive mind that we can make the first step towards the self-existent spontaneous and direct supramental knowledge. All the physical, vital, emotional, psychic, dynamic nature of man is a surface seizing of suggestions which rise out of a subliminal intuitive self-being of these parts, and an attempt usually groping and often circuitous to work them out in the action of a superficial embodiment and power of the nature which is not overtly enlightened by the inner power and knowledge. An increasingly intuitive mind has the best chance of discovering what they are seeking for and leading them to the desired perfection of their self-expression. The reason itself is only a special kind of application, made by a surface regulating intelligence, of suggestions which actually come from a concealed, but sometimes partially overt and active power of the intuitive spirit. In all its action there is at the covered or half-covered point of origination something which is not the creation of the reason, but given to it either directly by the intuition or indirectly through some other part of the mind for it to shape into intellectual form and process. The rational judgment in its decisions and the mechanical process of the logical intelligence, whether in its more summary or in its more developed operations, conceals while it develops the true origin and native substance of our will and thinking. The greatest minds are those in which this veil wears thin and there is the largest part of intuitive thinking, which often no doubt but not always brings with it a great accompanying display of intellectual action. The intuitive intelligence is however never quite pure and complete in the present mind of man, because it works in the medium of mind and is at once seized on and coated over with a mixed stuff of mentality. It is as yet not brought out, not developed and perfected so as to be sufficient for all the operations now performed by the other mental instruments, not trained to take them up and change them into or replace them by its own fullest, most direct, assured and sufficient workings. This can indeed only be done if we make the intuitive mind a transitional means for bringing out the secret supermind itself of which it is a mental figure and forming in our frontal consciousness a body and instrument of supermind which will make it possible for the self and spirit to display itself in its own largeness and splendour.

It must be remembered that there is always a difference between the supreme Supermind of the omniscient and omnipotent Ishwara and that which can be attained by the Jiva. The human being is climbing out of the ignorance and when he ascends into the supramental nature, he will find in it grades of its ascension, and he must first form the lower grades and limited steps before he rises to higher summits. He will enjoy there the full essential light, power, Ananda of the infinite self by oneness with the Spirit, but in the dynamical expression it must determine and individualise itself according to the nature of the self-expression which the transcendent and universal Spirit seeks in the Jiva. It is God-realisation and God-expression which is the object of our Yoga and more especially of its dynamic side, it is a divine self-expression in us of the Ishwara, but under the conditions of humanity and through the divinised human nature.

Chapter XX

The Intuitive Mind

THE ORIGINAL nature of supermind is the self-conscience and all-conscience of the Infinite, of the universal Spirit and Self in things, organising on the foundation and according to the character of a direct self-knowledge its own wisdom and effective omnipotence for the unfolding and the regulated action of the universe and of all things in the universe. It is, we might say, the gnosis of the Spirit master of its own cosmos, *ātmā jñātā īśvaraḥ*. As it knows itself, so too it knows all things — for all are only becomings of itself — directly, totally and from within outward, spontaneously in detail and arrangement, each thing in the truth of itself and its nature and in its relation to all other things. And it knows similarly all action of its energy in antecedent or cause and occasion of manifestation and effect or consequence, all things in infinite and in limited potentiality and in selection of actuality and in their succession of past, present and future. The organising supermind of a divine being in the universe would be a delegation of this omnipotence and omniscience for the purpose and within the scope of his own action and nature and of all that comes into its province. The supermind in an individual would be a similar delegation on whatever scale and within whatever province. But while in the god this would be a direct and an immediate delegation of a power illimitable in itself and limited only in action, but otherwise unaltered in operation, natural to the being and full and free always, in man any emergence of the supermind must be a gradual and at first an imperfect creation and to his customary mind the activity of an exceptional and supernormal will and knowledge.

In the first place it will not be for him a native power always enjoyed without interruption, but a secret potentiality which has to be discovered and one for which there are no organs in his present physical or mental system: he has either to evolve a new organ for it or else to adopt or transform existing ones and make them utilisable for the purpose. He has not merely to uncover the hidden sun of the supermind in the subliminal cavern of his secret being or remove the cloud of his mental ignorance from its face in the spiritual skies so that it shall at once shine out in all its glory. His task is much more complex and difficult because he is an evolutionary being and by the evolution of Nature of which he is a part he has been constituted with an inferior kind of knowledge, and this inferior, this mental power of knowledge forms by its persistent customary action an obstacle to a new formation greater than its own nature. A limited mental intelligence enlightening a limited mind of sense and the capacity not always well used of a considerable extension of it by the use of the reason are the powers by which he is at present distinguished from all other terrestrial creatures. This sense mind, this intelligence, this reason, however inadequate, are the instruments in which he has learned to put his trust and he has erected by their means certain foundations which he is not over willing to disturb and has traced limits outside of which he feels all to be confusion, uncertainty and a perilous adventure. Moreover the transition to the higher principle means not only a difficult conversion of his whole mind and reason and intelligence, but in a certain sense a reversal of all their methods. The soul climbing above a certain critical line of change sees all its former operations as an inferior and ignorant action and has to effect another kind of working which sets out from a different starting-point and has quite another kind of initiation of the energy of the being. If an animal mind were called upon to leave consciently the safe ground of sense impulse, sense understanding and instinct for the perilous adventure of a reasoning intelligence, it might well turn back alarmed and unwilling from the effort. The human mind would here be called upon to make a still greater change and, although self-conscious and adventurous in the circle of its possibility, might well hold this to be beyond the circle and reject the adventure. In fact the change is only possible if there is first a spiritual development on our present level of consciousness and it can only be undertaken securely when the mind has become aware of the greater self within, enamoured of the Infinite and confident of the presence and guidance of the Divine and his Shakti.

The problem of this conversion resolves itself at first into a passage through a mediary status and by the help of the one power already at work in the human mind which we can recognise as something supramental in its nature or at least in its origin, the faculty of intuition, a power of which we can feel the presence and the workings and are impressed, when it acts, by its superior efficiency, light, direct inspiration and force, but cannot understand or analyse it as we understand or analyse the workings of our reason. The reason understands itself, but not what is beyond it, — of that it can only make a general figure or representation; the supermind alone can discern the method of its own workings. The power of intuition acts in us at present for the most part in a covert manner secret and involved in or mostly veiled by the action of the reason and the normal intelligence; so far as it emerges into a clear separate action, it is still occasional, partial, fragmentary and of an intermittent character. It casts a sudden light, it makes a luminous suggestion or it throws out a solitary brilliant clue or scatters a small number of isolated or related intuitions, lustrous discriminations, inspirations or revelations, and it leaves the reason, will, mental sense or intelligence to do what each can or pleases with this seed of succour that has come to them from the depths or the heights of our being. The mental powers immediately proceed to lay hold on these things and to manipulate and utilise them for our mental or vital purposes, to adapt them to the forms of the inferior knowledge, to coat them up in or infiltrate them with the mental stuff and suggestion, often altering their truth in the process and always limiting their potential force of enlightenment by these accretions and by this subdual to the exigencies of the inferior agent, and almost always they make at once too little and too much of them, too little by not allowing them time to settle and extend their full power for illumination, too much by insisting on them or rather on the form into which the mentality casts them to the exclusion of the larger truth that the more consistent use of the intuitive faculty might have given. Thus the intuition intervening in the ordinary mental operations acts in lightning flashes that make lustrous a space of truth, but is not a steady sunlight illumining securely the whole reach and kingdom of our thought and will and feeling and action.

It appears at once that there are two necessary lines of progress which we must follow, and the first is to extend the action of the intuition and make it more constant, more persistent and regular and all-embracing until it is so intimate and normal to our being that it can take up all the action now done by the ordinary mind and assume its place in the whole system. This cannot wholly be done so long as the ordinary mind continues to assert its power of independent action and intervention or its habit of seizing on the light of the intuition and manipulating it for its own purposes. The higher mentality cannot be complete or secure so long as the inferior intelligence is able to deform it or even to bring in any of its own intermixture. And either then we must silence altogether the intellect and the intellectual will and the other inferior activities and leave room only for the intuitive action or we must lay hold on and transform the lower action by the constant pressure of the intuition. Or else there must be an alternation and combination of the two methods if that be the most natural way or at all possible. The actual process and experience of Yoga manifests the possibility of several methods or movements none of which by itself produces the entire result in practice, however it may seem at first sight that logically each should or might be adequate. And when we learn to insist on no particular method as exclusively the right one and leave the whole movement to a greater guidance, we find that the divine Lord of the Yoga commissions his Shakti to use one or the other at different times and all in combination according to the need and turn of the being and the nature.

At first it might seem the straight and right way to silence the mind altogether, to silence the intellect, the mental and personal will, the desire mind and the mind of emotion and sensation, and to allow in that perfect silence the Self, the Spirit, the Divine to disclose himself and leave him to illuminate the being by the supramental light and power and Ananda. And this is indeed a great and powerful discipline. It is the calm and still mind much more readily and with a much greater purity than the mind in agitation and action that opens to the Infinite, reflects the Spirit, becomes full of the Self and awaits like a consecrated and purified temple the unveiling of the Lord of all our being and nature. It is true also that the freedom of this silence gives a possibility of a larger play of the intuitive being and admits with less obstruction and turmoil of mental groping and seizing the great intuitions, inspirations, revelations which emerge from within or descend from above. It is therefore an immense gain if we can acquire the capacity of always being able at will to command an absolute tranquillity and silence of the mind free from any necessity of mental thought or movement and disturbance and, based in that silence, allow thought and will and feeling to happen in us only when the Shakti wills it and when it is needful for the divine purpose. It becomes easier then to change the manner and character of the thought and will and feeling. Nevertheless it is not the fact that by this method the supramental light will immediately replace the lower mind and reflective reason. When the inner action proceeds after the silence, even if it be then a more predominatingly intuitive thought and movement, the old powers will yet interfere, if not from within, then by a hundred suggestions from without, and an inferior mentality will mix in, will question or obstruct or will try to lay hold on the greater movement and to lower or darken or distort or minimise it in the process. Therefore the necessity of a process of elimination or transformation of the inferior mentality remains always imperative, — or perhaps both at once, an elimination of all that is native to the lower being, its disfiguring accidents, its depreciations of value, its distortions of substance and all else that the greater truth cannot harbour, and a transformation of the essential things our mind derives from the supermind and spirit but represents in the manner of the mental ignorance.

A second movement is one which comes naturally to those who commence the Yoga with the initiative that is proper to the way of Bhakti. It is natural to them to reject the intellect and its action and to listen for the voice, wait for the impulsion or the command, the *ādeśa*, obey only the idea and will and power of the Lord within them, the divine Self and Purusha in the heart of the creature, *īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṁ hṛddeśe*. This is a movement which must tend more and more to intuitivise the whole nature, for the ideas, the will, the impulsions, the feelings which come from the secret Purusha in the heart are of the direct intuitive character. This method is consonant with a certain truth of our nature. The secret Self within us is an intuitive self and this intuitive self is seated in every centre of our being, the physical, the nervous, the emotional, the volitional, the conceptual or cognitive and the higher more directly spiritual centres. And in each part of our being it exercises a secret intuitive initiation of our activities which is received and represented imperfectly by our outer mind and converted into the movements of the ignorance in the external action of these parts of our nature. The heart or emotional centre of the thinking desire mind is the strongest in the ordinary man, gathers up or at least affects the presentation of things to the consciousness and is the capital of the system. It is from there that the Lord seated in the heart of all creatures turns them mounted on the machine of Nature by the Maya of the mental ignorance. It is possible then by referring back all the initiation of our action to this secret intuitive Self and Spirit, the ever-present Godhead within us, and replacing by its influences the initiations of our personal and mental nature to get back from the inferior external thought and action to another, internal and intuitive, of a highly spiritualised character. Nevertheless the result of this movement cannot be complete, because the heart is not the highest centre of our being, is not supramental nor directly moved from the supramental sources. An intuitive thought and action directed from it may be very luminous and intense but is likely to be limited, even narrow in its intensity, mixed with a lower emotional action and at the best excited and troubled, rendered unbalanced or exaggerated by a miraculous or abnormal character in its action or at least in many of its accompaniments which is injurious to the harmonised perfection of the being. The aim of our effort at perfection must be to make the spiritual and supramental action no longer a miracle, even if a frequent or constant miracle, or only a luminous intervention of a greater than our natural power, but normal to the being and the very nature and law of all its process.

The highest organised centre of our embodied being and of its action in the body is the supreme mental centre figured by the yogic symbol of the thousand-petalled lotus, *sahasradala*, and it is at its top and summit that there is the direct communication with the supramental levels. It is then possible to adopt a different and a more direct method, not to refer all our thought and action to the Lord secret in the heart-lotus but to the veiled truth of the Divinity above the mind and to receive all by a sort of descent from above, a descent of which we become not only spiritually but physically conscious. The siddhi or full accomplishment of this movement can only come when we are able to lift the centre of thought and conscious action above the physical brain and feel it going on in the subtle body. If we can feel ourselves thinking no longer with the brain but from above and outside the head in the subtle body, that is a sure physical sign of a release from the limitations of the physical mind, and though this will not be complete at once nor of itself bring the supramental action, for the subtle body is mental and not supramental, still it is a subtle and pure mentality and makes an easier communication with the supramental centres. The lower movements must still come, but it is then found easier to arrive at a swift and subtle discrimination telling us at once the difference, distinguishing the intuitional thought from the lower intellectual mixture, separating it from its mental coatings, rejecting the mere rapidities of the mind which imitate the form of the intuition without being of its true substance. It will be easier to discern rapidly the higher planes of the true supramental being and call down their power to effect the desired transformation and to refer all the lower action to the superior power and light that it may reject and eliminate, purify and transform and select among them its right material for the Truth that has to be organised within us. This opening up of a higher level and of higher and higher planes of it and the consequent re-formation of our whole consciousness and its action into their mould and into the substance of their power and luminous capacity is found in practice to be the greater part of the natural method used by the divine Shakti.

A fourth method is one which suggests itself naturally to the developed intelligence and suits the thinking man. This is to develop our intellect instead of eliminating it, but with the will not to cherish its limitations, but to heighten its capacity, light, intensity, degree and force of activity until it borders on the thing that transcends it and can easily be taken up and transformed into that higher conscious action. This movement also is founded on the truth of our nature and enters into the course and movement of the complete Yoga of self-perfection. That course, as I have described it, included a heightening and greatening of the action of our natural instruments and powers till they constitute in their purity and essential completeness a preparatory perfection of the present normal movement of the Shakti that acts in us. The reason and intelligent will, the buddhi, is the greatest of these powers and instruments, the natural leader of the rest in the developed human being, the most capable of aiding the development of the others. The ordinary activities of our nature are all of them of use for the greater perfection we seek, are meant to be turned into material for them, and the greater their development, the richer the preparation for the supramental action.

The intellectual being too has to be taken up by the Shakti in the Yoga and raised to its fullest and its most heightened powers. The subsequent transformation of the intellect is possible because all the action of the intellect derives secretly from the supermind, each thought and will contains some truth of it however limited and altered by the inferior action of the intelligence. The transformation can be brought about by the removal of the limitation and the elimination of the distorting or perverting element. This however cannot be done by the heightening and greatening of the intellectual activity alone; for that must always be limited by the original inherent defects of the mental intelligence. An intervention of the supramental energy is needed that can light up and get rid of its deficiencies of thought and will and feeling. This intervention too cannot be completely effective unless the supramental plane is manifested and acts above the mind no longer from behind a lid or veil, however thin the veil may have grown, but more constantly in an open and luminous action till there is seen the full sun of Truth with no cloud to moderate its splendour. It is not necessary, either, to develop the intellect fully in its separateness before calling down this intervention or opening up by it the supramental levels. The intervention may come in earlier and at once develop the intellectual action and turn it, as it develops, into the higher intuitive form and substance.

The widest natural action of the Shakti combines all these methods. It creates, sometimes at first, sometimes at some later, perhaps latest stage, the freedom of the spiritual silence. It opens the secret intuitive being within the mind itself and accustoms us to refer all our thought and our feeling and will and action to the initiation of the Divine, the Splendour and Power who is now concealed in the heart of its recesses. It raises, when we are ready, the centre of its operations to the mental summit and opens up the supramental levels and proceeds doubly by an action from above downward filling and transforming the lower nature and an action from below upwards raising all the energies to that which is above them till the transcendence is completed and the change of the whole system integrally effected. It takes and develops the intelligence and will and other natural powers, but brings in constantly the intuitive mind and afterwards the true supramental energy to change and enlarge their action. These things it does in no fixed and mechanically invariable order, such as the rigidity of the logical intellect might demand, but freely and flexibly according to the needs of its work and the demand of the nature.

The first result will not be the creation of the true supermind, but the organisation of a predominantly or even a completely intuitive mentality sufficiently developed to take the place of the ordinary mentality and of the logical reasoning intellect of the developed human being. The most prominent change will be the transmutation of the thought heightened and filled by that substance of concentrated light, concentrated power, concentrated joy of the light and the power and that direct accuracy which are the marks of a true intuitive thinking. It is not only primary suggestions or rapid conclusions that this mind will give, but it will conduct too with the same light, power, joy of sureness and direct spontaneous seeing of the truth the connecting and developing operations now conducted by the intellectual reason. The will also will be changed into this intuitive character, proceed directly with light and power to the thing to be done, *kartavyaṁ karma*, and dispose with a rapid sight of possibilities and actualities the combinations necessary to its action and its purpose. The feelings also will be intuitive, seizing upon right relations, acting with a new light and power and a glad sureness, retaining only right and spontaneous desires and emotions, so long as these things endure, and, when they pass away, replacing them by a luminous and spontaneous love and an Ananda that knows and seizes at once on the right *rasa* of its objects. All the other mental movements will be similarly enlightened and even too the pranic and sense movements and the consciousness of the body. And usually there will be some development also of the psychic faculties, powers and perceptions of the inner mind and its senses not dependent on the outer sense and the reason. The intuitive mentality will be not only a stronger and a more luminous thing, but usually capable of a much more extensive operation than the ordinary mind of the same man before this development of the Yoga.

This intuitive mentality, if it could be made perfect in its nature, unmixed with any inferior element and yet unconscious of its own limitations and of the greatness of the thing beyond it, might form another definite status and halting place like the instinctive mind of the animal or the reasoning mind of man. But the intuitive mentality cannot be made abidingly perfect and self-sufficient except by the opening power of the supermind above it and that at once reveals its limitations and makes of it a secondary action transitional between the intellectual mind and the true supramental nature. The intuitive mentality is still mind and not gnosis. It is indeed a light from the supermind, but modified and diminished by the stuff of mind in which it works, and stuff of mind means always a basis of ignorance. The intuitive mind is not yet the wide sunlight of truth, but a constant play of flashes of it keeping lighted up a basic state of ignorance or of half-knowledge and indirect knowledge. As long as it is imperfect, it is invaded by a mixture of ignorant mentality which crosses its truth with a strain of error. After it has acquired a larger native action more free from this intermixture, even then so long as the stuff of mind in which it works is capable of the old intellectual or lower mental habit, it is subject to accretion of error, to clouding, to many kinds of relapse. Moreover the individual mind does not live alone and to itself but in the general mind and all that it has rejected is discharged into the general mind atmosphere around it and tends to return upon and invade it with the old suggestions and many promptings of the old mental character. The intuitive mind, growing or grown, has therefore to be constantly on guard against invasion and accretion, on the watch to reject and eliminate immixtures, busy intuitivising more and still more the whole stuff of mind, and this can only end by itself being enlightened, transformed, lifted up into the full light of the supramental being.

Moreover, this new mentality is in each man a development of the present power of his being and, however new and remarkable its developments, its organisation is within a certain range of capacity. Adventuring beyond that border — it may indeed limit itself to the work in hand and its present range of realised capacity, but the nature of a mind opened to the infinite is to progress and change and enlarge — it there becomes liable to a return, however modified by the new intuitive habit, of the old intellectual seeking in the ignorance, — unless and until it is constantly overtopped and led by the manifested action of a fuller supramental luminous energy. This is indeed its nature that it is a link and transition between present mind and the supermind and, so long as the transition is not complete, there is sometimes a gravitation downward, sometimes a tendency upward, an oscillation, an invasion and attraction from below, an invasion and attraction from above, and at best an uncertain and limited status between the two poles. As the higher intelligence of man is situated between his animal and customary human mind below and his evolving spiritual mind above, so this first spiritual mind is situated between the intellectualised human mentality and the greater supramental knowledge.

The nature of mind is that it lives between half-lights and darkness, amid probabilities and possibilities, amid partly grasped aspects, amid incertitudes and half certitudes: it is an ignorance grasping at knowledge, striving to enlarge itself and pressing against the concealed body of true gnosis. The supermind lives in the light of spiritual certitudes: it is to man knowledge opening the actual body of its own native effulgence. The intuitive mind appears at first a lightening up of the mind's half-lights, its probabilities and possibilities, its aspects, its uncertain certitudes, its representations, and a revealing of the truth concealed or half concealed and half manifested by these things, and in its higher action it is a first bringing of the supramental truth by a nearer directness of seeing, a luminous indication or memory of the spirit's knowledge, an intuition or looking in through the gates of the being's secret universal self-vision and knowledge. It is a first imperfect organisation of that greater light and power, imperfect because done in the mind, not based on its own native substance of consciousness, a constant communication, but not a quite immediate and constant presence. The perfect perfection lies beyond on the supramental levels and must be based on a more decisive and complete transformation of the mentality and of our whole nature.

Chapter XXI

The Gradations of the Supermind

THE INTUITIVE mind is an immediate translation of truth into mental terms half transformed by a radiant supramental substance, a translation of some infinite self-knowledge that acts above mind in the superconscient spirit. That spirit becomes conscient to us as a greater self at once above and in and around us of which our present self, our mental, vital and physical personality and nature, is an imperfect portion or a partial derivation or an inferior and inadequate symbol, and as the intuitive mind grows in us, as our whole being grows more moulded to an intuitive substance, we feel a sort of half transformation of our members into the nature of this greater self and spirit. All our thought, will, impulse, feeling, even in the end our more outward vital and physical sensations become more and more direct transmissions from the spirit and are of another and a more and more pure, untroubled, powerful and luminous nature. This is one side of the change: the other is that whatever belongs still to the lower being, whatever still seems to us to come from outside or as a survival of the action of our old inferior personality, feels the pressure of the change and increasingly tends to modify and transform itself to the new substance and nature. The higher comes down and largely takes the place of the lower, but also the lower changes, transforms itself into material of the action and becomes part of the substance of the higher being.

The greater spirit above the mind appears at first as a presence, a light, a power, a source, an infinite, but all that is knowable to us in it is at first an infinite identity of being, consciousness, power of consciousness, Ananda. The rest comes from it, but takes no determinate shape of thought, will or feeling above us, but only in the intuitive mind and on its level. Or we feel and are manifoldly aware of a great and infinite Purusha who is the eternally living truth of that being and presence, a great and infinite knowledge which is the potency of that light and consciousness, a great and infinite will which is the potency of that power of consciousness, a great and infinite love which is the potency of that Ananda. But all these potencies are only known to us in any definite manner, apart from the strong reality and effect of their essential presence, in so far as they are translated to our intuitive mental being and on its level and within its limits. As however we progress or as we grow into a more luminous and dynamic union with that spirit or Purusha, a greater action of knowledge and will and spiritual feeling manifests and seems to organise itself above the mind and this we recognise as the true supermind and the real native play of the infinite knowledge, will and Ananda. The intuitive mentality then becomes a secondary and inferior movement waiting upon this higher power, responding and assenting to all its illuminations and dictates, transmitting them to the lower members, and, when they do not arrive or are not in immediate evidence, often attempting to supply its place, imitate its action and do as best it can the works of the supramental nature. It takes in fact the same place and relation with regard to it as was taken with regard to itself by the ordinary intelligence at an earlier stage of the Yoga.

This double action on the two planes of our being at first strengthens the intuitive mentality as a secondary operation and assists it to expel or transform more completely the survivals or invasions or accretions of the ignorance. And more and more it intensifies the intuitive mentality itself in its light of knowledge and eventually transforms it into the image of the supermind itself, but at first, ordinarily, in the more limited action of the gnosis when it takes the form of what we might call a luminous supramental or divine reason. It is as this divine reason that the supermind itself at the beginning may manifest its action and then, when it has changed the mind into its own image, it descends and takes the place of the ordinary intelligence and reason. Meanwhile a higher supramental power of a much greater character has been revealing itself above which takes the supreme lead of the divine action in the being. The divine reason is of a more limited character because, although not of the mental stamp and although an operation of the direct truth and knowledge, it is a delegated power for a range of purposes greater in light, but still to a certain extent analogous to those of the ordinary human will and reason; it is in the yet greater supermind that there comes the direct, altogether revealed and immediate action of the Ishwara in the human being. These distinctions between the intuitive mind, the divine reason and the greater supermind, and others within these gradations themselves, have to be made because eventually they become of great importance. At first the mind takes all that comes from beyond it without distinction as the sufficient spiritual illumination and accepts even initial states and first enlightenments as a finality, but afterwards it finds that to rest here would be to rest in a partial realisation and that one has to go on heightening and enlarging till at least there is reached a certain completeness of divine breadth and stature.

It is difficult for the intellect to grasp at all what is meant by these supramental distinctions: the mental terms in which they can be rendered are lacking or inadequate and they can only be understood after a certain sight or certain approximations in experience. A number of indications are all that at present it can be useful to give. And first it will be enough to take certain clues from the thinking mind; for it is there that some of the nearest keys to the supramental action are discoverable. The thought of the intuitive mind proceeds wholly by four powers that shape the form of the truth, an intuition that suggests its idea, an intuition that discriminates, an inspiration that brings in its word and something of its greater substance and a revelation that shapes to the sight its very face and body of reality. These things are not the same as certain movements of the ordinary mental intelligence that look analogous and are easily mistaken for the true intuition in our first inexperience. The suggestive intuition is not the same thing as the intellectual insight of a quick intelligence or the intuitive discrimination as the rapid judgment of the reasoning intellect; the intuitive inspiration is not the same as the inspired action of the imaginative intelligence, nor the intuitive revelation as the strong light of a purely mental close seizing and experience.

It would perhaps be accurate to say that these latter activities are mental representations of the higher movements, attempts of the ordinary mind to do the same things or the best possible imitations the intellect can offer of the functionings of the higher nature. The true intuitions differ from these effective but insufficient counterfeits in their substance of light, their operation, their method of knowledge. The intellectual rapidities are dependent on awakenings of the basic mental ignorance to mental figures and representations of truth that may be quite valid in their own field and for their own purpose but are not necessarily and by their very nature reliable. They are dependent for their emergence on the suggestions given by mental and sense data or on the accumulation of past mental knowledge. They search for the truth as a thing outside, an object to be found and looked at and stored as an acquisition and, when found, scrutinise its surfaces, suggestions or aspects. This scrutiny can never give a quite complete and adequate truth idea. However positive they may seem at the time, they may at any moment have to be passed over, rejected and found inconsistent with fresh knowledge.

The intuitive knowledge on the contrary, however limited it may be in its field or application, is within that scope sure with an immediate, a durable and especially a self-existent certitude. It may take for starting-point or rather for a thing to light up and disclose in its true sense the data of mind and sense or else fire a train of past thought and knowledge to new meanings and issues, but it is dependent on nothing but itself and may leap out of its own field of lustres, independent of previous suggestion or data, and this kind of action becomes progressively more common and adds itself to the other to initiate new depths and ranges of knowledge. In either case there is always an element of self-existent truth and a sense of absoluteness of origination suggestive of its proceeding from the spirit's knowledge by identity. It is the disclosing of a knowledge that is secret but already existent in the being: it is not an acquisition, but something that was always there and revealable. It sees the truth from within and illumines with that inner vision the outsides and it harmonises, too, readily — provided we keep intuitively awake — with whatever fresh truth has yet to arrive. These characteristics become more pronounced and intense in the higher, the proper supramental ranges: in the intuitive mind they may not be always recognisable in their purity and completeness, because of the mixture of mental stuff and its accretion, but in the divine reason and greater supramental action they become free and absolute.

The suggestive intuition acting on the mental level suggests a direct and illumining inner idea of the truth, an idea that is its true image and index, not as yet the entirely present and whole sight, but rather of the nature of a bright memory of some truth, a recognition of a secret of the self's knowledge. It is a representation, but a living representation, not an ideative symbol, a reflection, but a reflection that is lit up with something of the truth's real substance. The intuitive discrimination is a secondary action setting this idea of the truth in its right place and its relation to other ideas. And so long as there is the habit of mental interference and accretion it works also to separate the mental from the higher seeing, to discrete the inferior mental stuff that embarrasses with its alloy the pure truth substance, and labours to unravel the mingled skein of ignorance and knowledge, falsehood and error. As the intuition is of the nature of a memory, a luminous remembering of the self-existent truth, so the inspiration is of the nature of truth hearing: it is an immediate reception of the very voice of the truth, it readily brings the word that perfectly embodies it and it carries something more than the light of its idea; there is seized some stream of its inner reality and vivid arriving movement of its substance. The revelation is of the nature of direct sight, *pratyakṣa-dṛṣṭi*, and makes evident to a present vision the thing in itself of which the idea is the representation. It brings out the very spirit and being and reality of the truth and makes it part of the consciousness and the experience.

In the actual process of the development of the supramental nature, supposing it to follow a regular gradation, it may be seen that the two lower powers come out first, though not necessarily void of all action of the two higher powers, and as they increase and become a normal action, they make a sort of lower intuitive gnosis. The combination of the two together is necessary for its completeness. If the intuitive discrimination works by itself, it creates a sort of critical illumination that acts on the ideas and perceptions of the intellect and turns them on themselves in such a way that the mind can separate their truth from their error. It creates in the end in place of the intellectual judgment a luminous intuitive judgment, a sort of critical gnosis: but it is likely to be deficient in fresh illuminative knowledge or to create only so much extension of truth as is the natural consequence of the separation of error. On the other hand, if the suggestive intuition works by itself without this discrimination, there is indeed a constant accession of new truths and new lights, but they are easily surrounded and embarrassed by the mental accretions and their connections and relation or harmonious development out of each other are clouded and broken by the interference. A normalised power of active intuitive perception is created, but not any complete and coherent mind of intuitive gnosis. The two together supply the deficiencies of each other's single action and build up a mind of intuitive perception and discrimination which can do the work and more than the work of the stumbling mental intelligence and do it with the greater light, surety and power of a more direct and unfaltering ideation.

The two higher powers in the same way make a higher intuitive gnosis. Acting as separate powers in the mentality they too are not in themselves sufficient without the companion activities. The revelation may indeed present the reality, the identities of the thing in itself and add something of great power to the experience of the conscious being, but it may lack the embodying word, the out-bringing idea, the connected pursuit of its relations and consequences and may remain a possession in the self but not a thing communicated to and through the members. There may be the presence of the truth but not its full manifestation. The inspiration may give the word of the truth and the stir of its dynamis and movement, but this is not a complete thing and sure in its effect without the full revelation of all that it bears in itself and luminously indicates and the ordering of it in its relations. The inspired intuitive mind is a mind of lightnings lighting up many things that were dark, but the light needs to be canalised and fixed into a stream of steady lustres that will be a constant power for lucidly ordered knowledge. The higher gnosis by itself in its two sole powers would be a mind of spiritual splendours living too much in its own separate domain, producing perhaps invisibly its effect on the outside world, but lacking the link of a more close and ordinary communication with its more normal movements that is provided by the lower ideative action. It is the united or else the fused and unified action of the four powers that makes the complete and fully armed and equipped intuitive gnosis.

A regular development would at first, allowing for some simultaneous manifestation of the four powers, yet create on a sufficiently extensive scale the lower suggestive and critical intuitive mind and then develop above it the inspired and the revelatory intuitive mentality. Next it would take up the two lower powers into the power and field of the inspiration and make all act as one harmony doing simultaneously the united — or, at a higher intensity, indistinguishably as one light the unified — action of the three. And last it would execute a similar movement of taking up into and fusion with the revelatory power of the intuitive gnosis. As a matter of fact in the human mind the clear process of the development is likely always to be more or less disturbed, confused and rendered irregular in its course, subjected to relapses, incomplete advances, returns upon things unaccomplished or imperfectly accomplished owing to the constant mixture and intervention of the existing movements of the mental half-knowledge and the obstruction of the stuff of the mental ignorance. In the end however a time can come when the process, so far as it is possible in the mind itself, is complete and a clear formation of a modified supramental light is possible composed of all these powers, the highest leading or absorbing into its own body the others. It is at this point, when the intuitive mind has been fully formed in the mental being and is strong enough to dominate if not yet wholly to occupy the various mental activities, that a farther step becomes possible, the lifting of the centre and level of action above the mind and the predominance of the supramental reason.

The first character of this change is a complete reversal, a turning over, one might almost say, upside down of the whole activity. At present we live in the mind and mostly in the physical mind, but still not entirely involved like the animal in the physical, vital and sensational workings. On the contrary we have attained to a certain mental elevation from which we can look down on the action of the life, sense and body, turn the higher mental light on them, reflect, judge, use our will to modify the action of the inferior nature. On the other hand we look up too from that elevation more or less consciously to something above and receive from it either directly or through our subconscient or subliminal being some secret superconscient impulsion of our thought and will and other activities. The process of this communication is veiled and obscure and men are not ordinarily aware of it except in certain highly developed natures: but when we advance in self-knowledge, we find that all our thought and will originate from above though formed in the mind and there first overtly active. If we release the knots of the physical mind which binds us to the brain instrument and identifies us with the bodily consciousness and can move in the pure mentality, this becomes constantly clear to the perception.

The development of the intuitive mentality makes this communication direct, no longer subconscient and obscure; but we are still in the mind and the mind still looks upward and receives the supramental communication and passes it on to the other members. In doing so it no longer wholly creates its own form for the thought and will that come down to it, but still it modifies and qualifies and limits them and imposes something of its own method. It is still the receiver and the transmitter of the thought and will, — though not formative of them now except by a subtle influence, because it provides them or at least surrounds them with a mental stuff or a mental setting and framework and atmosphere. When however the supramental reason develops, the Purusha rises above the mental elevation and now looks down on the whole action of mind, life, sense, body from quite another light and atmosphere, sees and knows it with quite a different vision and, because he is no longer involved in the mind, with a free and true knowledge. Man is at present only partly liberated from the animal involution, — for his mind is partially lifted above, partially immerged and controlled by the life, sense and body, — and he is not at all liberated from the mental forms and limits. But after he rises to the supramental elevation, he is delivered from the nether control and governor of his whole nature — essentially and initially only at first and in his highest consciousness, for the rest remains still to be transformed, — but when or in proportion as that is done, he becomes a free being and master of his mind, sense, life and body.

The second character of the change is that the formation of the thought and will can take place now wholly on the supramental level and therefore there is initiated an entirely luminous and effective will and knowledge. The light and the power are not indeed complete at the beginning because the supramental reason is only an elementary formulation of the supermind and because the mind and other members have yet to be changed into the mould of the supramental nature. The mind, it is true, no longer acts as the apparent originator, formulator or judge of the thought and will or anything else, but it still acts as the transmitting channel and therefore in that degree as a recipient and to a certain extent an obstructor and qualifier in transmission of the power and light that comes from above. There is a disparateness between the supramental consciousness in which the Purusha now stands, thinks and wills and the mental, vital and physical consciousness through which he has to effectuate its light and knowledge. He lives and sees with an ideal consciousness, but he has yet in his lower self to make it entirely practical and effective. Otherwise he can only act with a greater or less spiritual effectiveness through an internal communication with others on the spiritual level and on the higher mental level that is most easily affected by it, but the effect is diminished and is retarded by the inferiority or lack of the integral play of the being. This can only be remedied by the supermind taking hold of and supramentalising the mental, the vital and the physical consciousness, — transforming them, that is to say, into moulds of the supramental nature. This is much more easily done if there has been that Yogic preparation of the instruments of the lower nature of which I have already spoken; otherwise there is much difficulty in getting rid of the discord or disparateness between the ideal supramentality and the mental transmitting instruments, the mind channel, the heart, the sense, the nervous and the physical being. The supramental reason can do the first and a fairly ample, though not the entire work of this transformation.

The supramental reason is of the nature of a spiritual, direct, self-luminous, self-acting will and intelligence, not mental, *mānasa buddhi*, but supramental, *vijñāna buddhi*. It acts by the same four powers as the intuitive mind, but these powers are here active in an initial fullness of body not modified by the mental stuff of the intelligence, not concerned mainly with an illumining of the mind, but at work in their own proper manner and for their own native purpose. And of these four the discrimination here is hardly recognisable as a separate power, but is constantly inherent in the three others and is their own determination of the scope and relations of their knowledge. There are three elevations in this reason, one in which the action of what we may call a supramental intuition gives the form and the predominant character, one in which a rapid supramental inspiration and one in which a large supramental revelation leads and imparts the general character, and each of these raises us to a more concentrated substance and a higher light, sufficiency and scope of the truth will and the truth knowledge.

The work of the supramental reason covers and goes beyond all that is done by the mental reason, but it starts from the other end and has a corresponding operation. The essential truths of self and the spirit and the principle of things are not to the spiritual reason abstract ideas or subtle unsubstantial experiences to which it arrives by a sort of overleaping of limits, but a constant reality and the natural background of all its ideation and experience. It does not like the mind arrive at, but discloses directly both the general and total and the particular truths of being and consciousness, of spiritual and other sensation and Ananda and of force and action, — reality and phenomenon and symbol, actuality and possibility and eventuality, that which is determined and that which determines, and all with a self-luminous evidence. It formulates and arranges the relations of thought and thought, of force and force, of action and action and of all these with each other and throws them into a convincing and luminous harmony. It includes the data of sense, but gives to them another meaning in the light of what is behind them, and treats them only as outermost indications: the inner truth is known to a greater sense which it already possesses. And it is not dependent on them alone even in their own field of objects or limited by their range. It has a spiritual sense and sensation of its own and it takes and relates to that the data too of a sixth sense, the inner mind sense. And it takes also the illuminations and the living symbols and images familiar to the psychic experience and relates these too to the truths of the self and spirit.

The spiritual reason takes also the emotions and psychic sensations, relates them to their spiritual equivalents and imparts to them the values of the higher consciousness and Ananda from which they derive and are its modifications in an inferior nature and it corrects their deformations. It takes similarly the movements of the vital being and consciousness and relates them to the movements and imparts to them the significances of the spiritual life of the self and its power of Tapas. It takes the physical consciousness, delivers it from its darkness and tamas of inertia and makes it a responsive recipient and a sensitive instrument of the supramental light and power and Ananda. It deals with life and action and knowledge like the mental will and reason, but not starting from matter, life and sense and their data and relating to them through the idea the truth of higher things, but it starts on the contrary from truth of self and spirit and relates to that through a direct spiritual experience assuming all other experience as its forms and instruments the things of mind and soul and life and sense and matter. It commands a far vaster range than the ordinary embodied mind shut up in the prison of the physical senses and vaster too than the pure mentality, even when that is free in its own ranges and operates with the aid of the psychical mind and inner senses. And it has that power which the mental will and reason do not possess, because they are not truly self-determined and originally determinative of things, the power of transforming the whole being in all its parts into a harmonious instrument and manifestation of the spirit.

At the same time the spiritual reason acts mainly by the representative idea and will in the spirit, though it has a greater and more essential truth as its constant source and supporter and reference. It is, then, a power of light of the Ishwara, but not the very self-power of his immediate presence in the being; it is his *sūrya-śakti*, not his whole *ātma-śakti* or *parā svā prakṛti*, that works in the spiritual reason. The immediate self-power begins its direct operation in the greater supermind, and that takes up all that has hitherto been realised in body, life and mind and in the intuitive being and by the spiritual reason and shapes all that has been created, all that has been gathered, turned into stuff of experience and made part of the consciousness, personality and nature by the mental being, into a highest harmony with the high infinite and universal life of the spirit. The mind can have the touch of the infinite and the universal and can reflect and even lose itself in them, but the supermind alone can enable the individual to be completely one in action with the universal and transcendent spirit.

Here the one thing that is always and constantly present, that which one has grown to and in which one lives always, is infinite being and all that is is seen, felt, known, existed in as only substance of the one being; it is infinite consciousness and all that is conscious and acts and moves is seen, felt, received, known, lived in as self-experience and energy of the one being; it is infinite Ananda and all that feels and is felt is seen and felt and known, received and lived in as forms of the one Ananda. Everything else is only manifestation and circumstance of this one truth of our existence. This is no longer merely the seeing or knowing, but the very condition of the self in all and all in the self, God in all and all in God and all seen as God, and that condition is now not a thing offered to the reflecting spiritualised mind but held and lived by an integral, always present, always active realisation in the supramental nature. There is thought here and will and sensation and everything that belongs to our nature, but it is transfigured and elevated into a higher consciousness. All thought is here seen and experienced as a luminous body of substance, a luminous movement of force, a luminous wave of Ananda of the being; it is not an idea in the void air of mind, but experienced in the reality and as the light of a reality of the infinite being. The will and impulsions are similarly experienced as a real power and substance of the Sat, the Chit, the Ananda of the Ishwara. All the spiritualised sensation and emotion are experienced as pure moulds of the consciousness and Ananda. The physical being itself is experienced as a conscious form and the vital being as an outpouring of the power and possession of the life of the spirit.

The action of the supermind in the development is to manifest and organise this highest consciousness so as to exist and act no longer only in the infinite above with some limited or veiled or lower and deformed manifestations in the individual being and nature, but largely and totally in the individual as a conscious and self-knowing spiritual being and a living and acting power of the infinite and universal spirit. The character of this action, so far as it can be expressed, may be spoken of more fitly afterwards when we come to speak of the Brahmic consciousness and vision. In the succeeding chapters we shall only deal with so much of it as concerns the thought, will and psychic and other experience in the individual nature. At present all that is necessary to note is that here too there is in the field of the thought and the will a triple action. The spiritual reason is lifted and broadened into a greater representative action that formulates to us mainly the actualities of the existence of the self in and around us. There is then a higher interpretative action of the supramental knowledge, a greater scale less insistent on actualities, that opens out yet greater potentialities in time and space and beyond. And lastly there is a highest knowledge by identity that is a gate of entrance to the essential self-awareness and the omniscience and omnipotence of the Ishwara.

It must not however be supposed that these superimposed stages are shut off in experience from each other. I have placed them in what might be a regular order of ascending development for the better possibility of understanding in an intellectual statement. But the infinite even in the normal mind breaks through its own veils and across its own dividing lines of descent and ascension and gives often intimations of itself in one manner or another. And while we are still in the intuitive mentality, the things above open and come to us in irregular visitations, then form as we grow a more frequent and regularised action above it. These anticipations are still more large and frequent the moment we enter on the supramental level. The universal and infinite consciousness can always seize on and surround the mind and it is when it does so with a certain continuity, frequency or persistence that the mind can most easily transform itself into the intuitive mentality and that again into the supramental movement. Only as we rise we grow more intimately and integrally into the infinite consciousness and it becomes more fully our own self and nature. And also, on the other, the lower side of existence which it might seem would then be not only beneath but quite alien to us, even when we live in the supramental being and even when the whole nature has been formed into its mould, that need not cut us off from the knowledge and feeling of others who live in the ordinary nature. The lower or more limited may have a difficulty in understanding and feeling the higher, but the higher and less limited can always, if it will, understand and identify itself with the lower nature. The supreme Ishwara too is not aloof from us; he knows, lives in, identifies himself with all and yet is not subjugated by the reactions or limited in his knowledge, power and Ananda by the limitations of the mind and life and physical being in the universe.

Chapter XXII

The Supramental Thought and Knowledge

THE TRANSITION from mind to supermind is not only the substitution of a greater instrument of thought and knowledge, but a change and conversion of the whole consciousness. There is evolved not only a supramental thought, but a supramental will, sense, feeling, a supramental substitute for all the activities that are now accomplished by the mind. All these higher activities are first manifested in the mind itself as descents, irruptions, messages or revelations of a superior power. Mostly they are mixed up with the more ordinary action of the mind and not easily distinguishable from them in our first inexperience except by their superior light and force and joy, the more so as the mind greatened or excited by their frequent coming quickens its own action and imitates the external characteristics of the supramental activity: its own operation is made more swift, luminous, strong and positive and it arrives even at a kind of imitative and often false intuition that strives to be but is not really the luminous, direct and self-existent truth. The next step is the formation of a luminous mind of intuitive experience, thought, will, feeling, sense from which the intermixture of the lesser mind and the imitative intuition are progressively eliminated: this is a process of purification, *śuddhi*, necessary to the new formation and perfection, *siddhi*. At the same time there is the disclosure above the mind of the source of the intuitive action and a more and more organised functioning of a true supramental consciousness acting not in the mind but on its own higher plane. This draws up into itself in the end the intuitive mentality it has created as its representative and assumes the charge of the whole activity of the consciousness. The process is progressive and for a long time chequered by admixture and the necessity of a return upon the lower movements in order to correct and transform them. The higher and the lower power act sometimes alternately, — the consciousness descending back from the heights it had attained to its former level but always with some change, — but sometimes together and with a sort of mutual reference. The mind eventually becomes wholly intuitivised and exists only as a passive channel for the supramental action; but this condition too is not ideal and presents, besides, still a certain obstacle, because the higher action has still to pass through a retarding and diminishing conscious substance, — that of the physical consciousness. The final stage of the change will come when the supermind occupies and supramentalises the whole being and turns even the vital and physical sheaths into moulds of itself, responsive, subtle and instinct with its powers. Man then becomes wholly the superman. This is at least the natural and integral process.

It would be to go altogether outside present limits to attempt anything like an adequate presentation of the whole character of the supermind; and it would not be possible to give a complete presentation, since the supermind carries in it the unity, but also the largeness and multiplicities of the infinite. All that need now be done is to present some salient characters from the point of view of the actual process of the conversion in the Yoga, the relation to the action of mind and the principle of some of the phenomena of the change. This is the fundamental relation that all the action of the mind is a derivation from the secret supermind, although we do not know this until we come to know our higher self, and draws from that source all it has of truth and value. All our thoughts, willings, feelings, sense representations have in them or at their roots an element of truth, which originates and sustains their existence, however in the actuality they may be perverted or false, and behind them a greater ungrasped truth, which if they could grasp it, would make them soon unified, harmonious and at least relatively complete. Actually, however, such truth as they have is diminished in scope, degraded into a lower movement, divided and falsified by fragmentation, afflicted with incompleteness, marred by perversion. Mental knowledge is not an integral but always a partial knowledge. It adds constantly detail to detail, but has a difficulty in relating them aright; its wholes too are not real but incomplete wholes which it tends to substitute for the more real and integral knowledge. And even if it arrived at a kind of integral knowledge, it would still be by a sort of putting together, a mental and intellectual arrangement, an artificial unity and not an essential and real oneness. If that were all, the mind might conceivably arrive at some kind of half reflection half translation of an integral knowledge, but the radical malady would still be that it would not be the real thing, but only at best an intellectual representation. That the mental truth must always be, an intellectual, emotional and sensational representation, not the direct truth, not truth itself in its body and essence.

The supermind can do all that the mind does, present and combine details and what might be called aspects or subordinate wholes, but it does it in a different way and on another basis. It does not like the mind bring in the element of deviation, false extension and imposed error, but even when it gives a partial knowledge, gives it in a firm and exact light, and always there is behind implied or opened to the consciousness the essential truth on which the details and subordinate wholes or aspects depend. The supermind has also a power of representation, but its representations are not of the intellectual kind, they are filled with the body and substance of light of the truth in its essence, they are its vehicles and not substituted figures. There is such an infinite power of representation of the supermind and that is the divine power of which the mental action is a sort of fallen representative. This representative supermind has a lower action in what I have called the supramental reason, nearest to the mental and into which the mental can most easily be taken up, and a higher action in the integral supermind that sees all things in the unity and infinity of the divine consciousness and self-existence. But on whatever level, it is a different thing from the corresponding mental action, direct, luminous, secure. The whole inferiority of the mind comes from its being the action of the soul after it has fallen into the nescience and the ignorance and is trying to get back to self-knowledge but doing it still on the basis of the nescience and the ignorance. The mind is the ignorance attempting to know or it is the ignorance receiving a derivative knowledge: it is the action of Avidya. The supermind is always the disclosure of an inherent and self-existent knowledge; it is the action of Vidya.

A second difference that we experience is a greater and a spontaneous harmony and unity. All consciousness is one, but in action it takes on many movements and each of these fundamental movements has many forms and processes. The forms and processes of the mind consciousness are marked by a disturbing and perplexing division and separateness of the mental energies and movements in which the original unity of the conscious mind does not at all or only distractedly appears. Constantly we find in our mentality a conflict or else a confusion and want of combination between different thoughts or a patched up combination and the same phenomenon applies to the various movements of our will and desire and to our emotions and feelings. Again our thought and our will and our feeling are not in a state of natural harmony and unison with each other, but act in their separate power even when they have to act together and are frequently in conflict or to some degree at variance. There is too an unequal development of one at the expense of another. The mind is a thing of discords in which some kind of practical arrangement rather than a satisfying concord is established for the purposes of life. The reason tries to arrive at a better arrangement, aims at a better control, a rational or an ideal harmony, and in this attempt it is a delegate or substitute of the supermind and is trying to do what only the supermind can do in its own right: but actually it is not able wholly to control the rest of the being and there is usually a considerable difference between the rational or ideal harmony we create in our thoughts and the movement of the life. Even at the best the arrangement made by the reason has always in it something of artificiality and imposition, for in the end there are only two spontaneous harmonic movements, that of the life, inconscient or largely subconscient, the harmony that we find in the animal creation and in lower Nature, and that of the spirit. The human condition is a stage of transition, effort and imperfection between the one and the other, between the natural and the ideal or spiritual life and it is full of uncertain seeking and disorder. It is not that the mental being cannot find or rather construct some kind of relative harmony of its own, but that it cannot render it stable because it is under the urge of the spirit. Man is obliged by a Power within him to be the labourer of a more or less conscious self-evolution that shall lead him to self-mastery and self-knowledge.

The supermind in its action is on the contrary a thing of unity and harmony and inherent order. At first when the pressure from above falls on the mentality, this is not realised and even a contrary phenomenon may for a time appear. That is due to several causes. First, there may be a disturbance, even a derangement created by impact of the greater hardly measurable power on an inferior consciousness which is not capable of responding to it organically or even perhaps of bearing the pressure. The very fact of the simultaneous and yet uncoordinated activity of two quite different forces, especially if the mind insists on its own way, if it tries obstinately or violently to profit by the supermind instead of giving itself up to it and its purpose, if it is not sufficiently passive and obedient to the higher guidance, may lead to a great excitation of power but also an increased disorder. It is for this reason that a previous preparation and long purification, the more complete the better, and a tranquillising and ordinarily a passivity of the mind calmly and strongly open to the spirit are necessities of the Yoga.

Again the mind, accustomed to act in limits, may try to supramentalise itself on the line of any one of its energies. It may develop a considerable power of intuitive half-supramentalised thought and knowledge, but the will may remain untransformed and out of harmony with this partial half-supramental development of the thinking mind, and the rest of the being too, emotional and nervous, may continue to be equally or more unregenerate. Or there may be a very great development of intuitive or strongly inspired will, but no corresponding uplifting of the thought mind or the emotional and psychic being, or only at most so much as is specially needed in order not wholly to obstruct the will action. The emotional or psychic mind may try to intuitivise and supramentalise itself and to a great extent succeed, and yet the thinking mind remain ordinary, poor in stuff and obscure in its light. There may be a development of intuitivity in the ethical or aesthetic being, but the rest may remain very much as it was. This is the reason of the frequent disorder or one-sidedness which we mark in the man of genius, poet, artist, thinker, saint or mystic. A partially intuitivised mentality may present an appearance of much less harmony and order outside its special activity than the largely developed intellectual mind. An integral development is needed, a wholesale conversion of the mind; otherwise the action is that of the mind using the supramental influx for its own profit and in its own mould, and that is allowed for the immediate purpose of the Divine in the being and may even be considered as a stage sufficient for the individual in this one life: but it is a state of imperfection and not the complete and successful evolution of the being. If however there is an integral development of the intuitive mind, it will be found that a great harmony has begun to lay its own foundations. This harmony will be other than that created by the intellectual mind and indeed may not be easily perceptible or, if it is felt, yet not intelligible to the logical man, because not arrived at or analysable by his mental process. It will be a harmony of the spontaneous expression of the spirit.

As soon as we arise above mind to the supermind, this initial harmony will be replaced by a greater and a more integral unity. The thoughts of the supramental reason meet together and understand each other and fall into a natural arrangement even when they have started from quite opposite quarters. The movements of will that are in conflict in the mind, come in the supermind to their right place and relation to each other. The supramental feelings also discover their own affinities and fall into a natural agreement and harmony. At a higher stage this harmony intensifies towards unity. The knowledge, will, feeling and all else become a single movement. This unity reaches its greatest completeness in the highest supermind. The harmony, the unity are inevitable because the base in the supermind is knowledge and characteristically self-knowledge, the knowledge of the self in all its aspects. The supramental will is the dynamic expression of this self-knowledge, the supramental feeling the expression of the luminous joy of the self and all else in supermind a part of this one movement. At its highest range it becomes something greater than what we call knowledge; there it is the essential and integral self-awareness of the Divine in us, his being, consciousness, Tapas, Ananda, and all is the harmonious, unified, luminous movement of that one existence.

This supramental knowledge is not primarily or essentially a thought knowledge. The intellect does not consider that it knows a thing until it has reduced its awareness of it to the terms of thought, not, that is to say, until it has put it into a system of representative mental concepts, and this kind of knowledge gets its most decisive completeness when it can be put into clear, precise and defining speech. It is true that the mind gets its knowledge primarily by various kinds of impression beginning from the vital and the sense impressions and rising to the intuitive, but these are taken by the developed intelligence only as data and seem to it uncertain and vague in themselves until they have been forced to yield up all their content to the thought and have taken their place in some intellectual relation or in an ordered thought sequence. It is true again that there is a thought and a speech which are rather suggestive than definitive and have in their own way a greater potency and richness of content, and this kind already verges on the intuitive: but still there is a demand in the intellect to bring out in clear sequence and relation the exact intellectual content of these suggestions and until that is done it does not feel satisfied that its knowledge is complete. The thought labouring in the logical intellect is that which normally seems best to organise the mental action and gives to the mind a sense of sure definiteness, security and completeness in its knowledge and its use of knowledge. Nothing of this is at all true of the supramental knowledge.

The supermind knows most completely and securely not by thought but by identity, by a pure awareness of the self-truth of things in the self and by the self, *ātmani ātmānam ātmanā*. I get the supramental knowledge best by becoming one with the truth, one with the object of knowledge; the supramental satisfaction and integral light is most there when there is no further division between the knower, knowledge and the known, *jñātā*, *jñānam*, *jñeyam*. I see the thing known not as an object outside myself, but as myself or a part of my universal self contained in my most direct consciousness. This leads to the highest and completest knowledge; thought and speech being representations and not this direct possession in the consciousness are to the supermind a lesser form and, if not filled with the spiritual awareness, thought becomes in fact a diminution of knowledge. For it would be, supposing it to be a supramental thought, only a partial manifestation of a greater knowledge existing in the self but not at the time present to the immediately active consciousness. In the highest ranges of the infinite there need be no thought at all because all would be experienced spiritually, in continuity, in eternal possession and with an absolute directness and completeness. Thought is only one means of partially manifesting and presenting what is hidden in this greater self-existent knowledge. This supreme kind of knowing will not indeed be possible to us in its full extent and degree until we can rise through many grades of the supermind to that infinite. But still as the supramental power emerges and enlarges its action, something of this highest way of knowledge appears and grows and even the members of the mental being, as they are intuitivised and supramentalised, develop more and more a corresponding action upon their own level. There is an increasing power of a luminous vital, psychic, emotional, dynamic and other identification with all the things and beings that are the objects of our consciousness and these transcendings of the separative consciousness bring with them many forms and means of a direct knowledge.

The supramental knowledge or experience by identity carries in it as a result or as a secondary part of itself a supramental vision that needs the support of no image, can concretise what is to the mind abstract and has the character of sight though its object may be the invisible truth of that which has form or the truth of the formless. This vision can come before there is any identity, as a sort of previous emanation of light from it, or may act detached from it as a separate power. The truth or the thing known is then not altogether or not yet one with myself, but an object of my knowledge: but still it is an object subjectively seen in the self or at least, even if it is still farther separated and objectivised to the knower, by the self, not through any intermediate process, but by a direct inner seizing or a penetrating and enveloping luminous contact of the spiritual consciousness with its object. It is this luminous seizing and contact that is the spiritual vision, *dṛṣṭi*, — "*paśyati*", says the Upanishad continually of the spiritual knowledge, "he sees"; and of the Self conceiving the idea of creation, where we should expect "he thought", it says instead "he saw". It is to the spirit what the eyes are to the physical mind and one has the sense of having passed through a subtly analogous process. As the physical sight can present to us the actual body of things of which the thought had only possessed an indication or mental description and they become to us at once real and evident, *pratyakṣa*, so the spiritual sight surpasses the indications or representations of thought and can make the self and truth of all things present to us and directly evident, *pratyakṣa*.

The sense can only give us the superficial image of things and it needs the aid of thought to fill and inform the image; but the spiritual sight is capable of presenting to us the thing in itself and all truth about it. The seer does not need the aid of thought in its process as a means of knowledge, but only as a means of representation and expression, — thought is to him a lesser power and used for a secondary purpose. If a further extension of knowledge is required, he can come at it by new seeing without the slower thought processes that are the staff of support of the mental search and its feeling out for truth, — even as we scrutinise with the eye to find what escaped our first observation. This experience and knowledge by spiritual vision is the second in directness and greatness of the supramental powers. It is something much more near, profound and comprehensive than mental vision, because it derives direct from the knowledge by identity, and it has this virtue that we can proceed at once from the vision to the identity, as from the identity to the vision. Thus when the spiritual vision has seen God, Self or Brahman, the soul can next enter into and become one with the Self, God or Brahman.

This can only be done integrally on or above the supramental level, but at the same time the spiritual vision can take on mental forms of itself that can help towards this identification each in its own way. A mental intuitive vision or a spiritualised mental sight, a psychic vision, an emotional vision of the heart, a vision in the sense mind are parts of the Yogic experience. If these seeings are purely mental, then they may but need not be true, for the mind is capable of both truth and error, both of a true and of a false representation. But as the mind becomes intuitivised and supramentalised, these powers are purified and corrected by the more luminous action of the supermind and become themselves forms of a supramental and a true seeing. The supramental vision, it may be noted, brings with it a supplementary and completing experience that might be called a spiritual hearing and touch of the truth, — of its essence and through that of its significance, — that is to say, there is a seizing of its movement, vibration, rhythm and a seizing of its close presence and contact and substance. All these powers prepare us to become one with that which has thus grown near to us through knowledge.

The supramental thought is a form of the knowledge by identity and a development, in the idea, of the truth presented to the supramental vision. The identity and the vision give the truth in its essence, its body and its parts in a single view: the thought translates this direct consciousness and immediate power of the truth into idea-knowledge and will. It adds or need add otherwise nothing new, but reproduces, articulates, moves round the body of the knowledge. Where, however, the identity and the vision are still incomplete, the supramental thought has a larger office and reveals, interprets or recalls as it were to the soul's memory what they are not yet ready to give. And where these greater states and powers are still veiled, the thought comes in front and prepares and to a certain extent effects a partial rending or helps actively in the removal of the veil. Therefore in the development out of the mental ignorance into the supramental knowledge this illumined thought comes to us often though not always first, to open the way to the vision or else to give first supports to the growing consciousness of identity and its greater knowledge. This thought is also an effective means of communication and expression and helps to an impression or fixation of the truth whether on one's own lower mind and being or on that of others. The supramental thought differs from the intellectual not only because it is the direct truth idea and not a representation of truth to the ignorance, — it is the truth consciousness of the spirit always presenting to itself its own right forms, the *satyam* and *ṛtam* of the Veda, — but because of its strong reality, body of light and substance.

The intellectual thought refines and sublimates to a rarefied abstractness; the supramental thought as it rises in its height increases to a greater spiritual concreteness. The thought of the intellect presents itself to us as an abstraction from something seized by the mind sense and is as if supported in a void and subtle air of mind by an intangible force of the intelligence. It has to resort to a use of the mind's power of image if it wishes to make itself more concretely felt and seen by the soul sense and soul vision. The supramental thought on the contrary presents always the idea as a luminous substance of being, luminous stuff of consciousness taking significative thought form and it therefore creates no such sense of a gulf between the idea and the real as we are liable to feel in the mind, but is itself a reality, it is real-idea and the body of a reality. It has as a result, associated with it when it acts according to its own nature, a phenomenon of spiritual light other than the intellectual clarity, a great realising force and a luminous ecstasy. It is an intensely sensible vibration of being, consciousness and Ananda.

The supramental thought, as has already been indicated, has three elevations of its intensity, one of direct thought vision, another of interpretative vision pointing to and preparing the greater revelatory idea-sight, a third of representative vision recalling as it were to the spirit's knowledge the truth that is called out more directly by the higher powers. In the mind these things take the form of the three ordinary powers of the intuitive mentality, — the suggestive and discriminating intuition, the inspiration and the thought that is of the nature of revelation. Above they correspond to three elevations of the supramental being and consciousness and, as we ascend, the lower first calls down into itself and is then taken up into the higher, so that on each level all the three elevations are reproduced, but always there predominates in the thought essence the character that belongs to that level's proper form of consciousness and spiritual substance. It is necessary to bear this in mind; for otherwise the mentality, looking up to the ranges of the supermind as they reveal themselves, may think it has got the vision of the highest heights when it is only the highest range of the lower ascent that is being presented to its experience. At each height, *sānoḥ sānum āruhat*, the powers of the supermind increase in intensity, range and completeness.

There is also a speech, a supramental word, in which the higher knowledge, vision or thought can clothe itself within us for expression. At first this may come down as a word, a message or an inspiration that descends to us from above or it may even seem a voice of the Self or of the Ishwara, *vāṇī*, *ādeśa*. Afterwards it loses that separate character and becomes the normal form of the thought when it expresses itself in the form of an inward speech. The thought may express itself without the aid of any suggestive or developing word and only — but still quite completely, explicitly and with its full contents — in a luminous substance of supramental perception. It may aid itself when it is not so explicit by a suggestive inward speech that attends it to bring out its whole significance. Or the thought may come not as silent perception but as speech self-born out of the truth and complete in its own right and carrying in itself its own vision and knowledge. Then it is the word revelatory, inspired or intuitive or of a yet greater kind capable of bearing the infinite intention or suggestion of the higher supermind and spirit. It may frame itself in the language now employed to express the ideas and perceptions and impulses of the intellect and the sense mind, but it uses it in a different way and with an intense bringing out of the intuitive or revelatory significances of which speech is capable. The supramental word manifests inwardly with a light, a power, a rhythm of thought and a rhythm of inner sound that make it the natural and living body of the supramental thought and vision and it pours into the language, even though the same as that of mental speech, another than the limited intellectual, emotional or sensational significance. It is formed and heard in the intuitive mind or supermind and need not at first except in certain highly gifted souls come out easily into speech and writing, but that too can be freely done when the physical consciousness and its organs have been made ready, and this is a part of the needed fullness and power of the integral perfection.

The range of knowledge covered by the supramental thought, experience and vision will be commensurate with all that is open to the human consciousness, not only on the earthly but on all planes. It will however act increasingly in an inverse sense to that of the mental thinking and experience. The centre of mental thinking is the ego, the person of the individual thinker. The supramental man on the contrary will think more with the universal mind or even may rise above it, and his individuality will rather be a vessel of radiation and communication to which the universal thought and knowledge of the Spirit will converge than a centre. The mental man thinks and acts in a radius determined by the smallness or largeness of his mentality and of its experience. The range of the supramental man will be all the earth and all that lies behind it on other planes of existence. And finally the mental man thinks and sees on the level of the present life, though it may be with an upward aspiration, and his view is obstructed on every side. His main basis of knowledge and action is the present with a glimpse into the past and ill-grasped influence from its pressure and a blind look towards the future. He bases himself on the actualities of the earthly existence, first on the facts of the outward world, —

to which he is ordinarily in the habit of relating nine tenths if not the whole of his inner thinking and experience, — then on the changing actualities of the more superficial part of his inner being. As he increases in mind, he goes more freely beyond these to potentialities which arise out of them and pass beyond them; his mind deals with a larger field of possibilities: but these for the most part get to him a full reality only in proportion as they are related to the actual and can be made actual here, now or hereafter. The essence of things he tends to see, if at all, only as a result of his actualities, in a relation to and dependence on them, and therefore he sees them constantly in a false light or in a limited measure. In all these respects the supramental man must proceed from the opposite principle of truth vision.

The supramental being sees things from above in large spaces and at the highest from the spaces of the infinite. His view is not limited to the standpoint of the present but can see in the continuities of time or from above time in the indivisibilities of the Spirit. He sees truth in its proper order first in the essence, secondly in the potentialities that derive from it and only last in the actualities. The essential truths are to his sight self-existent, self-seen, not dependent for their proof on this or that actuality; the potential truths are truths of the power of being in itself and in things, truths of the infinity of force and real apart from their past or present realisation in this or that actuality or the habitual surface forms that we take for the whole of Nature; the actualities are only a selection from the potential truths he sees, dependent on them, limited and mutable. The tyranny of the present, of the actual, of the immediate range of facts, of the immediate urge and demand of action has no power over his thought and his will and he is therefore able to have a larger will-power founded on a larger knowledge. He sees things not as one on the levels surrounded by the jungle of present facts and phenomena but from above, not from outside and judged by their surfaces, but from within and viewed from the truth of their centre; therefore he is nearer the divine omniscience. He wills and acts from a dominating height and with a longer movement in time and a larger range of potencies, therefore he is nearer to the divine omnipotence. His being is not shut into the succession of the moments, but has the full power of the past and ranges seeingly through the future: not shut in the limiting ego and personal mind, but lives in the freedom of the universal, in God and in all beings and all things; not in the dull density of the physical mind, but in the light of the self and the infinity of the spirit. He sees soul and mind only as a power and a movement and matter only as a resultant form of the spirit. All his thought will be of a kind that proceeds from knowledge. He perceives and enacts the things of the phenomenal life in the light of the reality of the spiritual being and the power of the dynamic spiritual essence.

At first, at the beginning of the conversion into this greater status, the thought will continue to move for a shorter or a longer time to a greater or a less extent on the lines of the mind but with a greater light and increasing flights and spaces and movements of freedom and transcendence. Afterwards the freedom and transcendence will begin to predominate; the inversion of the thought view and the conversion of the thought method will take place in different movements of the thought mind one after the other, subject to whatever difficulties and relapses, until it has gained on the whole and effected a complete transformation. Ordinarily the supramental knowledge will be organised first and with the most ease in the processes of pure thought and knowledge, *jñāna*, because here the human mind has already the upward tendency and is the most free. Next and with less ease it will be organised in the processes of applied thought and knowledge because there the mind of man is at once most active and most bound and wedded to its inferior methods. The last and most difficult conquest, because this is now to his mind a field of conjecture or a blank, will be the knowledge of the three times, *trikāladṛṣṭi*. In all these there will be the same character of a spirit seeing and willing directly above and around and not only in the body it possesses and there will be the same action of the supramental knowledge by identity, the supramental vision, the supramental thought and supramental word, separately or in a united movement.

This then will be the general character of the supramental thought and knowledge and these its main powers and action. It remains to consider its particular instrumentation, the change that the supermind will make in the different elements of the present human mentality and the special activities that give to the thought its constituents, motives and data.

Chapter XXIII

The Supramental Instruments — Thought-Process

THE SUPERMIND, the divine gnosis, is not something entirely alien to our present consciousness: it is a superior instrumentation of the spirit and all the operations of our normal consciousness are limited and inferior derivations from the supramental, because these are tentatives and constructions, that the true and perfect, the spontaneous and harmonious nature and action of the spirit. Accordingly when we rise from mind to supermind, the new power of consciousness does not reject, but uplifts, enlarges and transfigures the operations of our soul and mind and life. It exalts and gives to them an ever greater reality of their power and performance. It does not limit itself either to the transformation of the superficial powers and action of the mind and psychic parts and the life, but it manifests and transforms also those rarer powers and that larger force and knowledge proper to our subliminal self that appear now to us as things occult, curiously psychic, abnormal. These things become in the supramental nature not at all abnormal but perfectly natural and normal, not separately psychic but spiritual, not occult and strange, but a direct, simple, inherent and spontaneous action. The spirit is not limited like the waking material consciousness, and the supermind when it takes possession of the waking consciousness, dematerialises it, delivers it from its limits, converts the material and the psychic into the nature of the spiritual being.

The mental activity that can be most readily organised is, as has been already indicated, that of pure ideative knowledge. This is transformed on the higher level to the true *jñāna*, supramental thought, supramental vision, the supramental knowledge by identity. The essential action of this supramental knowledge has been described in the preceding chapter. It is necessary however to see also how this knowledge works in outward application and how it deals with the data of existence. It differs from the action of the mind first in this respect that it works naturally with those operations that are to the mind the highest and the most difficult, acting in them or on them from above downward and not with the hampered straining upward of the mind or with its restriction to its own and the inferior levels. The higher operations are not dependent on the lower assistance, but rather the lower operations depend on the higher not only for their guidance but for their existence. The lower mental operations are therefore not only changed in character by the transformation, but are made entirely subordinate. And the higher mental operations too change their character, because, supramentalised, they begin to derive their light directly from the highest, the self-knowledge or infinite knowledge.

The normal thought-action of the mind may for this purpose be viewed as constituted of a triple motion. First and lowest and most necessary to the mental being in the body is the habitual thought mind that founds its ideas upon the data given by the senses and by the surface experiences of the nervous and emotional being and on the customary notions formed by the education and the outward life and environment. This habitual mind has two movements, one a kind of constant undercurrent of mechanically recurrent thought always repeating itself in the same round of physical, vital, emotional, practical and summarily intellectual notion and experience, the other more actively working upon all new experience that the mind is obliged to admit and reducing it to formulas of habitual thinking. The mentality of the average man is limited by this habitual mind and moves very imperfectly outside its circle.

A second grade of the thinking activity is the pragmatic idea mind that lifts itself above life and acts creatively as a mediator between the idea and the life-power, between truth of life and truth of the idea not yet manifested in life. It draws material from life and builds out of it and upon it creative ideas that become dynamic for farther life development: on the other side it receives new thought and mental experience from the mental plane or more fundamentally from the idea power of the Infinite and immediately turns it into mental idea force and a power for actual being and living. The whole turn of this pragmatic idea mind is towards action and experience, inward as well as outward, the inward casting itself outward for the sake of a completer satisfaction of reality, the outward taken into the inward and returning upon it assimilated and changed for fresh formations. The thought is only or mainly interesting to the soul on this mental level as a means for a large range of action and experience.

A third gradation of thinking opens in us the pure ideative mind which lives disinterestedly in truth of the idea apart from any necessary dependence on its value for action and experience. It views the data of the senses and the superficial inner experience, but only to find the idea, the truth to which they bear witness and to reduce them into terms of knowledge. It observes the creative action of mind in life in the same way and for the same purpose. Its preoccupation is with knowledge, its whole object is to have the delight of ideation, the search for truth, the effort to know itself and the world and all that may lie behind its own action and the world action. This ideative mind is the highest reach of the intellect acting for itself, characteristically, in its own power and for its own purpose.

It is difficult for the human mind to combine rightly and harmonise these three movements of the intelligence. The ordinary man lives mainly in the habitual, has a comparatively feeble action of the creative and pragmatic and experiences a great difficulty in using at all or entering into the movement of the pure ideative mentality. The creative pragmatic mind is commonly too much occupied with its own motion to move freely and disinterestedly in the atmosphere of pure ideative order and on the other hand has often an insufficient grasp on the actualities imposed by the habitual mentality and the obstacles it imposes as also on other movements of pragmatic thought and action than that which it is itself interested in building. The pure ideative mentality tends to construct abstract and arbitrary systems of truth, intellectual sections and ideative edifices, and either misses the pragmatic movement necessary to life and lives only or mainly in ideas, or cannot act with sufficient power and directness in the life field and is in danger of being divorced from or weak in the world of the practical and habitual mentality. An accommodation of some kind is made, but the tyranny of the predominant tendency interferes with the wholeness and unity of the thinking being. Mind fails to be assured master even of its own totality, because the secret of that totality lies beyond it in the free unity of the self, free and therefore capable of an infinite multiplicity and diversity, and in the supramental power that can alone bring out in a natural perfection the organic multiple movement of the self's unity.

The supermind in its completeness reverses the whole order of the mind's thinking. It lives not in the phenomenal, but in the essential, in the self, and sees all as being of the self and its power and form and movement, and all the thought and the process of the thought in the supermind must also be of that character. All its fundamental ideation is a rendering of the spiritual knowledge that acts by identity with all being and of the supramental vision. It moves therefore primarily among the eternal, the essential and the universal truths of self and being and consciousness and infinite power and delight of being (not excluding all that seems to our present consciousness non-being), and all its particular thinking originates from and depends upon the power of these eternal verities; but in the second place it is at home too with infinite aspects and applications, sequences and harmonies of the truths of being of the Eternal. It lives therefore at its heights in all that which the action of the pure ideative mind is an effort to reach and discover, and even on its lower ranges these things are to its luminous receptivity present, near or easily grasped and available.

But while the highest truths or the pure ideas are to the ideative mind abstractions, because mind lives partly in the phenomenal and partly in intellectual constructions and has to use the method of abstraction to arrive at the higher realities, the supermind lives in the spirit and therefore in the very substance of what these ideas and truths represent or rather fundamentally are and truly realises them, not only thinks but in the act of thinking feels and identifies itself with their substance, and to it they are among the most substantial things that can be. Truths of consciousness and of essential being are to the supermind the very stuff of reality, more intimately and, as one might almost say, densely real than outward movement and form of being, although these too are to it movement and form of the reality and not, as they are to a certain action of the spiritualised mind, an illusion. The idea too is to it real-idea, stuff of the reality of conscious being, full of power for the substantial rendering of the truth and therefore for creation.

And again, while the pure ideative mind tends to build up arbitrary systems which are mental and partial constructions of the truth, the supermind is not bound by any representation or system, though it is perfectly able to represent and to arrange and construct in the living substance of the truth for the pragmatic purposes of the Infinite. The mind when it gets free from its exclusivenesses, systematising, attachment to its own constructions, is at a loss in the infiniteness of the infinite, feels it as a chaos, even if a luminous chaos, is unable any longer to formulate and therefore to think and act decisively because all, even the most diverse or contradictory things, point at some truth in this infinity and yet nothing it can think is entirely true and all its formulations break down under the test of new suggestions from the infinite. It begins to look on the world as a phantasmagory and thought as a chaos of scintillations out of the luminous indefinite. The mind assailed by the vastness and freedom of the supramental loses itself and finds no firm footing in the vastness. The supermind on the contrary can in its freedom construct harmonies of its thought and expression of being on the firm ground of reality while still holding its infinite liberty and rejoicing in its self of infinite vastness. All that it thinks, as all that it is and does and lives, belongs to the truth, the right, the vast, *satyam*, *ṛtam*, *bṛhat*.

The result of this wholeness is that there is no division or incompatibility between the free essential ideation of the supermind corresponding to the mind's pure ideation, free, disinterested, illimitable, and its creative, pragmatic ideation purposeful and determinative. The infinity of being results naturally in a freedom of the harmonies of becoming. The supermind perceives always action as a manifestation and expression of the Self and creation as a revelation of the Infinite. All its creative and pragmatic thought is an instrument of the self's becoming, a power of illumination for that purpose, an intermediary between the eternal identity and infinite novelty and variety of illimitable Being and its self-expression in the worlds and life. It is this that the supermind constantly sees and embodies and while its ideative vision and thought interpret to it the illimitable unity and variety of the Infinite, which it is by a perpetual identity and in which it lives in all its power of being and becoming, there is constantly too a special creative thought, associated with an action of the infinite will, Tapas, power of being, which determines what it shall present, manifest or create out of the infinite in the course of Time, what it shall make — here and now or in any range of Time or world — of the perpetual becoming of the self in the universe.

The supermind is not limited by this pragmatic movement and does not take the partial motion or the entire stream of what it so becomes and creates in its thought and life for the whole truth of its self or of the Infinite. It does not live only in what it is and thinks and does selectively in the present or on one plane only of being; it does not feed its existence only on the present or the continual succession of moments to whose beats we give that name. It does not see itself only as a movement of Time or of the consciousness in time or as a creature of the perpetual becoming. It is aware of a timeless being beyond manifestation and of which all is a manifestation, it is aware of what is eternal even in Time, it is aware of many planes of existence; it is aware of past truth of manifestation and of much truth of being yet to be manifested in the future, but already existing in the self-view of the Eternal. It does not mistake the pragmatic reality which is the truth of action and mutation for the sole truth, but sees it as a constant realisation of that which is eternally real. It knows that creation whether on the plane of matter or of life or of mind or of supermind is and can be only a self-determined presentation of eternal truth, a revelation of the Eternal, and it is intimately aware of the pre-existence of the truth of all things in the Eternal. This seeing conditions all its pragmatic thought and its resultant action. The maker in it is a selective power of the seer and thinker, the self-builder a power of the self-seer, the self-expressing soul a power of the infinite spirit. It creates freely, and all the more surely and decisively for that freedom, out of the infinite self and spirit.

It is therefore not prisoned in its special becoming or shut up in its round or its course of action. It is open, in a way and a degree to which the mind cannot attain, to the truth of other harmonies of creative becoming even while in its own it puts forth a decisive will and thought and action. When it is engaged in action that is of the nature of a struggle, the replacing of past or other thought and form and becoming by that which it is appointed to manifest, it knows the truth of what it displaces and fulfils even in displacing as well as the truth of what it substitutes. It is not bound by its manifesting, selecting, pragmatic conscious action, but it has at the same time all the joy of a specially creative thought and selective precision of action, the Ananda of the truth of the forms and movements equally of its own and of others' becoming. All its thought and will of life and action and creation, rich, manifold, focussing the truth of many planes, is liberated and illumined with the illimitable truth of the Eternal.

This creative or pragmatic movement of the supramental thought and consciousness brings with it an action which corresponds to that of the habitual or mechanical mentality but is yet of a very different character. The thing that is created is the self-determination of a harmony and all harmony proceeds upon seen or given lines and carries with it a constant pulsation and rhythmic recurrence. The supramental thought, organising the harmony of manifested existence of the supramental being, founds it on eternal principles, casts it upon the right lines of the truth that is to be manifested, keeps sounding as characteristic notes the recurrence of the constant elements in the experience and the action which are necessary to constitute the harmony. There is an order of the thought, a cycle of the will, a stability in the motion. At the same time its freedom prevents it from being shut up by the recurrence into a groove of habitual action turning always mechanically round a limited stock of thinking. It does not like the habitual mind refer and assimilate all new thought and experience to a fixed customary mould of thinking, taking that for its basis. Its basis, that to which all is referred, is above, *upari budhne*, in the largeness of the self, in the supreme foundation of the supramental truth, *budhne ṛtasya*. Its order of thought, its cycle of will, its stable movement of action does not crystallise into a mechanism or convention, but is always alive with the spirit, does not live by exclusiveness or hostility to other coexistent or possible order and cycle, but absorbs sustenance from all that it contacts and assimilates it to its own principle. The spiritual assimilation is practicable because all is referred to the largeness of the self and its free vision above. The order of the supramental thought and will is constantly receiving new light and power from above and has no difficulty in accepting it into its movement; it is, as is proper to an order of the Infinite, even in its stability of motion indescribably supple and plastic, capable of perceiving and rendering the relation of all things to each other in the One, capable of expressing always more and more of the Infinite, at its fullest of expressing in its own way all that is actually expressible of the Infinite.

Thus there is no discord, disparity or difficulty of adjustment in the complex motion of the supramental *jñāna*, but a simplicity in the complexity, an assured ease in a many-sided abundance that comes from the spontaneous sureness and totality of the self-knowledge of the spirit. Obstacle, inner struggle, disparity, difficulty, discord of parts and movements continues in the transformation of mind to supermind only so long as the action, influence or pressure of the mind insisting on its own methods of construction continues or its process of building knowledge or thought and will of action on the foundation of a primal ignorance resists the opposite process of supermind organising all as a luminous manifestation out of the self and its inherent and eternal self-knowledge. It is thus that the supermind acting as a representative, interpretative, revealingly imperative power of the spirit's knowledge by identity, turning the light of the infinite consciousness freely and illimitably into substance and form of real-idea, creating out of power of conscious being and power of real-idea, stabilising a movement which obeys its own law but is still a supple and plastic movement of the infinite, uses its thought and knowledge and a will identical in substance and light with the knowledge to organise in each supramental being his own right manifestation of the one self and spirit.

The action of the supramental *jñāna* so constituted evidently surpasses the action of the mental reason and we have to see what replaces the reason in the supramental transformation. The thinking mind of man finds its most clear and characteristic satisfaction and its most precise and effective principle of organisation in the reasoning and logical intelligence. It is true that man is not and cannot be wholly governed either in his thought or his action by the reason alone. His mentality is inextricably subjected to a joint, mixed and intricate action of the reasoning intelligence with two other powers, an intuition, actually only half luminous in the human mentality, operating behind the more visible action of the reason or veiled and altered in the action of the normal intelligence, and the life-mind of sensation, instinct, impulse, which is in its own nature a sort of obscure involved intuition and which supplies the intelligence from below with its first materials and data. And each of these other powers is in its own kind an intimate action of the spirit operating in mind and life and has a more direct and spontaneous character and immediate power for perception and action than the reasoning intelligence. But yet neither of these powers is capable of organising for man his mental existence.

His life-mind — its instincts, its impulses, — is not and cannot be self-sufficient and predominant as it is in the lower creation. It has been seized upon by the intelligence and profoundly altered by it even where the development of the intelligence is imperfect and itself most insistent in its prominence. It has lost most of its intuitive character, is indeed now infinitely richer as a supplier of materials and data, but no longer quite itself or at ease in its action because half rationalised, dependent at least on some infused element however vague of reasoning or intelligent activity and incapable of acting to good purpose without the aid of the intelligence. Its roots and place of perfection are in the subconscient from which it emerges and man's business is to increase in the sense of a more and more conscient knowledge and action. Man reverting to a governance of his being by the life mind would become either irrational and erratic or dull and imbecile and would lose the essential character of manhood.

The intuition on the other hand has its roots and its place of perfection in the supramental which is now to us the superconscient, and in mind it has no pure and no organised action, but is immediately mixed with the action of the reasoning intelligence, is not quite itself, but limited, fragmentary, diluted and impure, and depends for the ordered use and organisation of its suggestions on the aid of the logical reason. The human mind is never quite sure of its intuitions until they have been viewed and confirmed by the judgment of the rational intelligence: it is there that it feels most well founded and secure. Man surmounting reason to organise his thought and life by the intuitive mind would be already surpassing his characteristic humanity and on the way to the development of supermanhood. This can only be done above: for to attempt it below is only to achieve another kind of imperfection: there the mental reason is a necessary factor.

The reasoning intelligence is an intermediate agent between the life mind and the yet undeveloped supramental intuition. Its business is that of an intermediary, on the one side to enlighten the life mind, to make it conscient and govern and regulate as much as may be its action until Nature is ready to evolve the supramental energy which will take hold of life and illumine and perfect all its movements by converting its obscurely intuitive motions of desire, emotion, sensation and action into a spiritually and luminously spontaneous life manifestation of the self and spirit. On the other higher side its mission is to take the rays of light which come from above and translate them into terms of intelligent mentality and to accept, examine, develop, intellectually utilise the intuitions that escape the barrier and descend into mind from the superconscience. It does this until man, becoming more and more intelligently conscient of himself and his environment and his being, becomes also aware that he cannot really know these things by his reason, but can only make a mental representation of them to his intelligence.

The reason, however, tends in the intellectual man to ignore the limitations of its power and function and attempts to be not an instrument and agent but a substitute for the self and spirit. Made confident by success and predominance, by the comparative greatness of its own light, it regards itself as a thing primary and absolute, assures itself of its own entire truth and sufficiency and endeavours to become the absolute ruler of mind and life. This it cannot do successfully, because it depends on the lower life intuition and on the covert supermind and its intuitive messages for its own real substance and existence. It can only appear to itself to succeed because it reduces all its experience to rational formulas and blinds itself to half the real nature of the thought and action that is behind it and to the infinite deal that breaks out of its formulas. The excess of the reason only makes life artificial and rationally mechanical, deprives it of its spontaneity and vitality and prevents the freedom and expansion of the spirit. The limited and limiting mental reason must make itself plastic and flexible, open itself to its source, receive the light from above, exceed itself and pass by an euthanasia of transformation into the body of the supramental reason. Meanwhile it is given power and leading for an organisation of thought and action on the characteristically human scale intermediate between the subconscient power of the spirit organising the life of the animal and the superconscient power of the spirit which becoming conscient can organise the existence and life of a spiritual supermanhood.

The characteristic power of the reason in its fullness is a logical movement assuring itself first of all available materials and data by observation and arrangement, then acting upon them for a resultant knowledge gained, assured and enlarged by a first use of the reflective powers, and lastly assuring itself of the correctness of its results by a more careful and formal action, more vigilant, deliberate, severely logical which tests, rejects or confirms them according to certain secure standards and processes developed by reflection and experience. The first business of the logical reason is therefore a right, careful and complete observation of its available material and data. The first and easiest field of data open to our knowledge is the world of Nature, of the physical objects made external to it by the separative action of mind, things not ourself and therefore only indirectly knowable by an interpreting of our sense perceptions, by observation, accumulated experience, inference and reflective thinking. Another field is our own internal being and its movements which one knows naturally by an internally acting mental sense, by intuitive perception and constant experience and by reflective thought on the evidences of our nature. The reason with regard even to these inner movements acts best and knows them most correctly by detaching itself and regarding them quite impersonally and objectively, a movement which in the Yoga of knowledge ends in viewing our own active being too as not self, a mechanism of Nature like the rest of the world-existence. The knowledge of other thinking and conscious beings stands between these two fields, but is gained, too, indirectly by observation, by experience, by various means of communication and, acting on these, by reflection and inference largely founded on analogy from our knowledge of our own nature. Another field of data which the reason has to observe is its own action and the action of the whole human intelligence, for without that study it cannot be assured of the correctness of its knowledge or of right method and process. Finally, there are other fields of knowledge for which the data are not so easily available and which need the development of abnormal faculties, — the discovery of things and ranges of existence behind the appearances of the physical world and the discovery of the secret self or principle of being of man and of Nature. The first the logical reason can attempt to deal with, accepting subject to its scrutiny whatever data become available, in the same way as it deals with the physical world, but ordinarily it is little disposed to deal with them, finding it more easy to question and deny, and its action here is seldom assured or effective. The second it usually attempts to discover by a constructive metaphysical logic founded on its analytic and synthetic observation of the phenomena of life, mind and matter.

The operation of the logical reason is the same in all these fields of its data. At first the intelligence amasses a store of observations, associations, percepts, recepts, concepts, makes a more or less obvious arrangement and classification of relations and of things according to their likenesses and differences, and works upon them by an accumulating store and a constant addition of ideas, memories, imaginations, judgments; these make up primarily the nature of activity of our knowledge. There is a kind of natural enlargement of this intelligent activity of the mind progressing by its own momentum, an evolution aided more and more by a deliberate culture, the increase of faculties gained by the culture becoming in its turn a part of the nature as they settle into a more spontaneous action, — the result a progression not of the character and essential power of the intelligence, but of its degree of power, flexibility, variety of capacity, fineness. There is a correction of errors, an accumulating of assured ideas and judgments, a reception or formation of fresh knowledge. At the same time a necessity arises for a more precise and assured action of the intelligence which will get rid of the superficiality of this ordinary method of the intelligence, test every step, scrutinise severely every conclusion and reduce the mind's action to a well-founded system and order.

This movement develops the complete logical mind and raises to its acme the acuteness and power of the intelligence. The rougher and more superficial observation is replaced or supplemented by a scrutinising analysis of all the process, properties, constituents, energies making up or related to the object and a synthetic construction of it as a whole which is added to or in great part substituted for the mind's natural conception of it. The object is more precisely distinguished from all others and at the same time there is a completer discovery of its relations with others. There is a fixing of sameness or likeness and kinship and also of divergences and differences resulting on one side in the perception of the fundamental unity of being and Nature and the similarity and continuity of their processes, on the other in a clear precision and classification of different energies and kinds of beings and objects. The amassing and ordering of the materials and data of knowledge are carried to perfection as far as is possible to the logical intelligence.

Memory is the indispensable aid of the mind to preserve its past observations, the memory of the individual but also of the race, whether in the artificial form of accumulated records or the general race memory preserving its gains with a sort of constant repetition and renewal and, an element not sufficiently appreciated, a latent memory that can under the pressure of various kinds of stimulation repeat under new conditions past movements of knowledge for judgment by the increased information and intelligence. The developed logical mind puts into order the action and resources of the human memory and trains it to make the utmost use of its materials. The human judgment naturally works on these materials in two ways, by a more or less rapid and summary combination of observation, inference, creative or critical conclusion, insight, immediate idea — this is largely an attempt of the mind to work in a spontaneous manner with the directness that can only be securely achieved by the higher faculty of the intuition, for in the mind it produces much false confidence and unreliable certitude, — and a slower but in the end intellectually surer seeking, considering and testing judgment that develops into the careful logical action.

The memory and judgment are both aided by the imagination which, as a function of knowledge, suggests possibilities not actually presented or justified by the other powers and opens the doors to fresh vistas. The developed logical intelligence uses the imagination for suggesting new discovery and hypothesis, but is careful to test its suggestions fully by observation and a sceptical or scrupulous judgment. It insists too on testing, as far as may be, all the action of the judgment itself, rejects hasty inference in favour of an ordered system of deduction and induction and makes sure of all its steps and of the justice, continuity, compatibility, cohesion of its conclusions. A too formalised logical mind discourages, but a free use of the whole action of the logical intelligence may rather heighten a certain action of immediate insight, the mind's nearest approach to the higher intuition, but it does not place on it an unqualified reliance. The endeavour of the logical reason is always by a detached, disinterested and carefully founded method to get rid of error, of prejudgment, of the mind's false confidence and arrive at reliable certitudes.

And if this elaborated method of the mind were really sufficient for truth, there would be no need of any higher step in the evolution of knowledge. In fact, it increases the mind's hold on itself and on the world around it and serves great and undeniable utilities: but it can never be sure whether its data supply it with the frame of a real knowledge or only a frame useful and necessary for the human mind and will in its own present form of action. It is more and more perceived that the knowledge of phenomena increases, but the knowledge of reality escapes this laborious process. A time must come, is already coming when the mind perceives the necessity of calling to its aid and developing fully the intuition and all the great range of powers that lie concealed behind our vague use of the word and uncertain perception of its significance. In the end it must discover that these powers can not only aid and complete but even replace its own proper action. That will be the beginning of the discovery of the supramental energy of the spirit.

The supermind, as we have seen, lifts up the action of the mental consciousness towards and into the intuition, creates an intermediate intuitive mentality insufficient in itself but greater in power than the logical intelligence, and then lifts up and transforms that too into the true supramental action. The first well-organised action of the supermind in the ascending order is the supramental reason, not a higher logical intellect, but a directly luminous organisation of intimately subjective and intimately objective knowledge, the higher *buddhi*, the logical or rather the logos Vijnana. The supramental reason does all the work of the reasoning intelligence and does much more, but with a greater power and in a different fashion. It is then itself taken up into a higher range of the power of knowledge and in that too nothing is lost, but all farther heightened, enlarged in scope, transformed in power of action.

The ordinary language of the intellect is not sufficient to describe this action, for the same words have to be used, indicating a certain correspondence, but actually to connote inadequately a different thing. Thus the supermind uses a certain sense action, employing but not limited by the physical organs, a thing which is in its nature a form consciousness and a contact consciousness, but the mental idea and experience of sense can give no conception of the essential and characteristic action of this supramentalised sense consciousness. Thought too in the supramental action is a different thing from the thought of the mental intelligence. The supramental thinking is felt at its basis as a conscious contact or union or identity of the substance of being of the knower with the substance of being of the thing known and its figure of thought as the power of awareness of the self revealing through the meeting or the oneness, because carrying in itself, a certain knowledge form of the object's content, action, significance. Therefore observation, memory, judgment too mean each a different thing in the supermind from what it is in the process of the mental intelligence.

The supramental reason observes all that the intelligence observes — and much more; it makes, that is to say, the thing to be known the field of a perceptual action, in a certain way objective, that causes to emerge its nature, character, quality, action. But this is not that artificial objectivity by which the reason in its observation tries to extrude the element of personal or subjective error. The supermind sees everything in the self and its observation must therefore be subjectively objective and much nearer to, though not the same as the observation of our own internal movements regarded as an object of knowledge. It is not in the separatively personal self or by its power that it sees and therefore it has not to be on guard against the element of personal error: that interferes only while a mental substratum or environing atmosphere yet remains and can still throw in its influence or while the supermind is still acting by descent into the mind to change it. And the supramental method with error is to eliminate it, not by any other device, but by an increasing spontaneity of the supramental discrimination and a constant heightening of its own energy. The consciousness of supermind is a cosmic consciousness and it is in this self of universal consciousness, in which the individual knower lives and with which he is more or less closely united, that it holds before him the object of knowledge.

The knower is in his observation a witness and this relation would seem to imply an otherness and difference, but the point is that it is not an entirely separative difference and does not bring an excluding idea of the thing observed as completely not self, as in the mental seeing of an external object. There is always a basic feeling of oneness with the thing known, for without this oneness there can be no supramental knowledge. The knower carrying the object in his universalised self of consciousness as a thing held before his station of witness vision includes it in his own wider being. The supramental observation is of things with which we are one in the being and consciousness and are capable of knowing them even as we know ourselves by the force of that oneness: the act of observation is a movement towards bringing out the latent knowledge.

There is, then, first a fundamental unity of consciousness that is greater or less in its power, more or less completely and immediately revelatory of its contents of knowledge according to our progress and elevation and intensity of living, feeling and seeing in the supramental ranges. There is set up between the knower and the object of knowledge, as a result of this fundamental unity, a stream or bridge of conscious connection — one is obliged to use images, however inadequate — and as a consequence a contact or active union enabling one to see, feel, sense supramentally what is to be known in the object or about it. Sometimes this stream or bridge of connection is not sensibly felt at the moment, only the results of the contact are noted, but it is always really there and an after memory can always make us aware that it was really all the time present: as we grow in supramentality, it becomes an abiding factor. The necessity of this stream or this bridge of connection ceases when the fundamental oneness becomes a complete active oneness. This process is the basis of what Patanjali calls *saṁyama*, a concentration, directing or dwelling of the consciousness, by which, he says, one can become aware of all that is in the object. But the necessity of concentration becomes slight or nil when the active oneness grows; the luminous consciousness of the object and its contents becomes more spontaneous, normal, facile.

There are three possible movements of this kind of supramental observation. First, the knower may project himself in consciousness on the object, feel his cognition in contact or enveloping or penetrating it and there, as it were in the object itself, become aware of what he has to know. Or he may by the contact become aware of that which is in it or belongs to it, as for example the thought or feeling of another, coming from it and entering into himself where he stands in his station of the witness. Or he may simply know in himself by a sort of supramental cognition in his own witness station without any such projection or entrance. The starting-point and apparent basis of the observation may be the presence of the object to the physical or other senses, but to the supermind this is not indispensable. It may be instead an inner image or simply the idea of the object. The simple will to know may bring to the supramental consciousness the needed knowledge — or, it may be, the will to be known or communicate itself of the object of knowledge.

The elaborate process of analytical observation and synthetical construction adopted by the logical intelligence is not the method of the supermind and yet there is a corresponding action. The supermind distinguishes by a direct seeing and without any mental process of taking to pieces the particularities of the thing, form, energy, action, quality, mind, soul that it has in view, and it sees too with an equal directness and without any process of construction the significant totality of which these particularities are the incidents. It sees also the essentiality, the Swabhava, of the thing in itself of which the totality and the particularities are the manifestation. And again it sees, whether apart from or through the essentiality or swabhava, the one self, the one existence, consciousness, power, force of which it is the basic expression.

It may be observing at the time only the particularities, but the whole is implied, and *vice versa*, — as for an example, the total state of mind out of which a thought or a feeling arises, — and the cognition may start from one or the other and proceed at once by immediate suggestion to the implied knowledge. The essentiality is similarly implied in the whole and in each or all of the particulars and there may be the same rapid or immediate alternative or alternate process. The logic of the supermind is different from that of the mind: it sees always the self as what is, the essentiality of the thing as a fundamental expression of the being and power of the self, and the whole and particulars as a consequent manifestation of this power and its active expression. In the fullness of the supramental consciousness and cognition this is the constant order. All perception of unity, similarity, difference, kind, uniqueness arrived at by the supramental reason is consonant with and depends on this order.

This observing action of supermind applies to all things. Its view of physical objects is not and cannot be only a surface or outward view, even when concentrated on the externals. It sees the form, action, properties, but it is aware at the same time of the qualities or energies, *guṇa*, *śakti*, of which the form is a translation, and it sees them not as an inference or deduction from the form or action, but feels and sees them directly in the being of the object and quite as vividly, — one might say, with a subtle concreteness and fine substantiality, — as the form or sensible action. It is aware too of the consciousness that manifests itself in quality, energy, form. It can feel, know, observe, see forces, tendencies, impulsions, things abstract to us quite as directly and vividly as the things we now call visible and sensible. It observes in just the same way persons and beings. It can take as its starting-point or first indication the speech, action, outward signs, but it is not limited by or dependent on them. It can know and feel and observe the very self and consciousness of another, can either proceed to that directly through the sign or can in its more powerful action begin with it and at once, instead of seeking to know the inner being through the evidence of the outer expression, understand rather all the outer expression in the light of the inner being. Even so, completely, the supramental being knows his own inner being and nature. The supermind can too act with equal power and observe with direct experience what is hidden behind the physical order; it can move in other planes than the material universe. It knows the self and reality of things by identity, by experience of oneness or contact of oneness and a vision, a seeing and realising ideation and knowledge dependent on or derived from these things, and its thought presentation of the truths of the spirit is an expression of this kind of sight and experience.

The supramental memory is different from the mental, not a storing up of past knowledge and experience, but an abiding presence of knowledge that can be brought forward or, more characteristically, offers itself, when it is needed: it is not dependent on attention or on conscious reception, for the things of the past not known actually or not observed can be called up from latency by an action which is yet essentially a remembrance. Especially on a certain level all knowledge presents itself as a remembering, because all is latent or inherent in the self of supermind. The future like the past presents itself to knowledge in the supermind as a memory of the preknown. The imagination transformed in the supermind acts on one side as a power of true image and symbol, always an image or index of some value or significance or other truth of being, on the other as an inspiration or interpretative seeing of possibilities and potentialities not less true than actual or realised things. These are put in their place either by an attendant intuitive or interpretative judgment or by one inherent in the vision of the image, symbol or potentiality, or by a supereminent revelation of that which is behind the image or symbol or which determines the potential and the actual and their relations and, it may be, overrides and overpasses them, imposing ultimate truths and supreme certitudes.

The supramental judgment acts inseparably from the supramental observation or memory, inherent in it as a direct seeing or cognition of values, significances, antecedents, consequences, relations, etc.; or it supervenes on the observation as a luminous disclosing idea or suggestion; or it may go before, independent of any observation, and then the object called up and observed confirms visibly the truth of the idea. But in each case it is sufficient in itself for its own purpose, is its own evidence and does not really depend for its truth on any aid or confirmation. There is a logic of the supramental reason, but its function is not to test or scrutinise, to support and prove or to detect and eliminate error. Its function is simply to link knowledge with knowledge, to discover and utilise harmonies and arrangement and relations, to organise the movement of the supramental knowledge. This it does not by any formal rule or construction of inferences but by a direct, living and immediate seeing and placing of connection and relation. All thought in the supermind is in the nature of intuition, inspiration or revelation and all deficiency of knowledge is to be supplied by a farther action of these powers; error is prevented by the action of a spontaneous and luminous discrimination; the movement is always from knowledge to knowledge. It is not rational in our sense but suprarational, — it does sovereignly what is sought to be done stumblingly and imperfectly by the mental reason.

The ranges of knowledge above the supramental reason, taking it up and exceeding it, cannot well be described, nor is it necessary here to make the endeavour. It is sufficient to say that the process here is more sufficient, intense and large in light, imperative, instantaneous, the scope of the active knowledge larger, the way nearer to the knowledge by identity, the thought more packed with the luminous substance of self-awareness and all-vision and more evidently independent of any other inferior support or assistance.

These characteristics, it must be remembered, do not fully apply even to the strongest action of the intuitive mentality, but are there seen only in their first glimpses. Nor can they be entirely or unmixedly evident so long as supramentality is only forming with an undercurrent, a mixture or an environment of mental action. It is only when mentality is overpassed and drops away into a passive silence that there can be the full disclosure and the sovereign and integral action of the supramental gnosis.

Chapter XXIV

The Supramental Sense

ALL THE instruments, all the activities of the mind have their corresponding powers in the action of the supramental energy and are there exalted and transfigured, but have there a reverse order of priority and necessary importance. As there is a supramental thought and essential consciousness, so too there is a supramental sense. Sense is fundamentally not the action of certain physical organs, but the contact of consciousness with its objects, *saṁjñāna*.

When the consciousness of the being is withdrawn wholly into itself, it is aware only of itself, of its own being, its own consciousness, its own delight of existence, its own concentrated force of being, and of these things not in their forms but in their essence. When it comes out of this self-immersion, it becomes aware of or it releases or develops out of its self-immersion its activities and forms of being, of consciousness, of delight and force. Then too, on the supramental plane, its primary awareness still remains of a kind native to and entirely characteristic of the self-awareness of the spirit, the self-knowledge of the one and infinite; it is a knowledge that knows all its objects, forms and activities comprehensively by being aware of them in its own infinite self, intimately by being aware in them as their self, absolutely by being aware of them as one in self with its own being. All its other ways of knowledge are projected from this knowledge by identity, are parts or movements of it, or at the lowest depend on it for their truth and light, are touched and supported by it even in their own separate way of action and refer back to it overtly or implicitly as their authority and origin.

The activity which is nearest to this essential knowledge by identity is the large embracing consciousness, especially characteristic of the supramental energy, which takes into itself all truth and idea and object of knowledge and sees them at once in their essence, totality and parts or aspects, — *vijñāna*. Its movement is a total seeing and seizing; it is a comprehension and possession in the self of knowledge; and it holds the object of consciousness as a part of the self or one with it, the unity being spontaneously and directly realised in the act of knowledge. Another supramental activity puts the knowledge by identity more into the background and stresses more the objectivity of the thing known. Its characteristic movement, descending into the mind, becomes the source of the peculiar nature of our mental knowledge, intelligence, *prajñāna*. In the mind the action of intelligence involves, at the outset, separation and otherness between the knower, knowledge and the known; but in the supermind its movement still takes place in the infinite identity or at least in the cosmic oneness. Only, the self of knowledge indulges the delight of putting the object of consciousness away from the more immediate nearness of the original and eternal unity, but always in itself, and of knowing it again in another way so as to establish with it a variety of relations of interaction which are so many minor chords in the harmony of the play of the consciousness. The movement of this supramental intelligence, *prajñāna*, becomes a subordinate, a tertiary action of the supramental for the fullness of which thought and word are needed. The primary action, because it is of the nature of knowledge by identity or of a comprehensive seizing in the consciousness, is complete in itself and has no need of these means of formulation. The supramental intelligence is of the nature of a truth seeing, truth hearing and truth remembering and, though capable of being sufficient to itself in a certain way, still feels itself more richly fulfilled by the thought and word that give it a body of expression.

Finally, a fourth action of the supramental consciousness completes the various possibilities of the supramental knowledge. This still farther accentuates the objectivity of the thing known, puts it away from the station of experiencing consciousness and again brings it to nearness by a uniting contact effected either in a direct nearness, touch, union or less closely across the bridge or through the connecting stream of consciousness of which there has already been mention. It is a contacting of existence, presences, things, forms, forces, activities, but a contacting of them in the stuff of the supramental being and energy, not in the divisions of matter and through the physical instruments, that creates the supramental sense, *saṁjñāna*.

It is a little difficult to make the nature of the supramental sense understood to a mentality not yet familiar with it by enlarged experience, because our idea of sense action is governed by the limiting experience of the physical mind and we suppose that the fundamental thing in it is the impression made by an external object on the physical organ of sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste, and that the business of the mind, the present central organ of our consciousness, is only to receive the physical impression and its nervous translation and so become intelligently conscious of the object. In order to understand the supramental change we have to realise first that the mind is the only real sense even in the physical process: its dependence on the physical impressions is the result of the conditions of the material evolution, but not a thing fundamental and indispensable. Mind is capable of a sight that is independent of the physical eye, a hearing that is independent of the physical ear, and so with the action of all the other senses. It is capable too of an awareness, operating by what appears to us as mental impressions, of things not conveyed or even suggested by the agency of the physical organs, — an opening to relations, happenings, forms even and the action of forces to which the physical organs could not have borne evidence. Then, becoming aware of these rarer powers, we speak of the mind as a sixth sense; but in fact it is the only true sense organ and the rest are no more than its outer conveniences and secondary instruments, although by its dependence on them they have become its limitations and its too imperative and exclusive conveyors. Again we have to realise — and this is more difficult to admit for our normal ideas in the matter — that the mind itself is only the characteristic instrument of sense, but the thing itself, sense in its purity, *saṁjñāna*, exists behind and beyond the mind it uses and is a movement of the self, a direct and original activity of the infinite power of its consciousness.

The pure action of sense is a spiritual action and pure sense is itself a power of the spirit.

The spiritual sense is capable of knowing in its own characteristic way, which is other than that of supramental thought or of the intelligence or spiritual comprehension, *vijñāna*, or knowledge by identity, all things whatsoever, things material and what is to us immaterial, all forms and that which is formless. For all is spiritual substance of being, substance of consciousness and force, substance of delight; and the spiritual sense, pure *saṁjñāna*, is the conscious being's contactual, substantial awareness of its own extended substance of self and in it of all that is of the infinite or universal substance. It is possible for us not only to know by conscious identity, by a spiritual comprehension of self, of principles and aspects, force, play and action, by a direct spiritual, supramental and intuitive thought knowledge, by the heart's spiritually and supramentally illumined feeling, love, delight, but also to have in a very literal significance the sense — sense-knowledge or sensation — of the spirit, the self, the Divine, the Infinite. The state described by the Upanishad in which one sees, hears, feels, touches, senses in every way the Brahman and the Brahman only, for all things have become to the consciousness only that and have no other, separate or independent existence, is not a mere figure of speech, but the exact description of the fundamental action of the pure sense, the spiritual object of the pure *saṁjñāna*. And in this original action, — to our experience a transfigured, glorified, infinitely blissful action of the sense, a direct feeling out inward, around, everywhere of the self to embrace and touch and be sensible of all that is in its universal being, — we can become aware in a most moving and delightful way of the Infinite and of all that is in it, cognizant, by intimate contact of our being with all being, of whatever is in the universe.

The action of the supramental sense is founded on this true truth of sense; it is an organisation of this pure, spiritual, infinite, absolute *saṁjñāna*. The supermind acting through sense feels all as God and in God, all as the manifest touch, sight, hearing, taste, perfume, all as the felt, seen, directly experienced substance and power and energy and movement, play, penetration, vibration, form, nearness, pressure, substantial interchange of the Infinite. Nothing exists independently to its sense, but all is felt as one being and movement and each thing as indivisible from the rest and as having in it all the Infinite, all the Divine. This supramental sense has the direct feeling and experience, not only of forms, but of forces and of the energy and the quality in things and of a divine substance and presence which is within them and round them and into which they open and expand themselves in their secret subtle self and elements, extending themselves in oneness into the illimitable. Nothing to the supramental sense is really finite: it is founded on a feeling of all in each and of each in all: its sense definition, although more precise and complete than the mental, creates no walls of limitation; it is an oceanic and ethereal sense in which all particular sense knowledge and sensation is a wave or movement or spray or drop that is yet a concentration of the whole ocean and inseparable from the ocean. Its action is a result of the extension and vibration of being and consciousness in a supra-ethereal ether of light, ether of power, ether of bliss, the Ananda Akasha of the Upanishads, which is the matrix and continent of the universal expression of the Self, — here in body and mind experienced only in limited extensions and vibrations, — and the medium of its true experience. This sense even at its lowest power is luminous with a revealing light that carries in it the secret of the thing it experiences and can therefore be a starting-point and basis of all the rest of the supramental knowledge, — the supramental thought, spiritual intelligence and comprehension, conscious identity, — and on its highest plane or at its fullest intensity of action it opens into or contains and at once liberates these things. It is strong with a luminous power that carries in it the force of self-realisation and an intense or infinite effectiveness, and this sense-experience can therefore be the starting-point of impulsion for a creative or fulfilling action of the spiritual and supramental will and knowledge. It is rapturous with a powerful and luminous delight that makes of it, makes of all sense and sensation a key to or a vessel of the divine and infinite Ananda.

The supramental sense can act in its own power and is independent of the body and the physical life and outer mind and it is above too the inner mind and its experiences. It can be aware of all things in whatever world, on whatever plane, in whatever formation of universal consciousness. It can be aware of the things of the material universe even in the trance of samadhi, aware of them as they are or appear to the physical sense, even as it is of other states of experience, of the pure vital, the mental, the psychical, the supramental presentation of things. It can in the waking state of the physical consciousness present to us the things concealed from the limited receptivity or beyond the range of the physical organs, distant forms, scenes and happenings, things that have passed out of physical existence or that are not yet in physical existence, scenes, forms, happenings, symbols of the vital, psychical, mental, supramental, spiritual worlds and all these in their real or significant truth as well as their appearance. It can use all the other states of sense consciousness and their appropriate senses and organs adding to them what they have not, setting right their errors and supplying their deficiencies: for it is the source of the others and they are only inferior derivations from this higher sense, this true and illimitable *saṁjñāna*.

⁂

The lifting of the level of consciousness from the mind to the supermind and the consequent transformation of the being from the state of the mental to that of the supramental Purusha must bring with it to be complete a transformation of all the parts of the nature and all its activities. The whole mind is not merely made into a passive channel of the supramental activities, a channel of their downflow into the life and body and of their outflow or communication with the outward world, the material existence, — that is only the first stage of the process, — but is itself supramentalised along with all its instruments. There is accordingly a change, a profound transformation in the physical sense, a supramentalising of the physical sight, hearing, touch, etc., that creates or reveals to us a quite different view, not merely of life and its meaning, but even of the material world and all its forms and aspects. The supermind uses the physical organs and confirms their way of action, but it develops behind them the inner and deeper senses which see what are hidden from the physical organs and farther transforms the new sight, hearing, etc. thus created by casting it into its own mould and way of sensing. The change is one that takes nothing from the physical truth of the object, but adds to it its supraphysical truth and takes away by the removal of the physical limitation the element of falsehood in the material way of experience.

The supramentalising of the physical sense brings with it a result similar in this field to that which we experience in the transmutation of the thought and consciousness. As soon as the sight, for example, becomes altered under the influence of the supramental seeing, the eye gets a new and transfigured vision of things and of the world around us. Its sight acquires an extraordinary totality and an immediate and embracing precision in which the whole and every detail stand out at once in the complete harmony and vividness of the significance meant by Nature in the object and its realisation of the idea in form, executed in a triumph of substantial being. It is as if the eye of the poet and artist had replaced the vague or trivial unseeing normal vision, but singularly spiritualised and glorified, — as if indeed it were the sight of the supreme divine Poet and Artist in which we were participating and there were given to us the full seeing of his truth and intention in his design of the universe and of each thing in the universe. There is an unlimited intensity which makes all that is seen a revelation of the glory of quality and idea and form and colour. The physical eye seems then to carry in itself a spirit and a consciousness which sees not only the physical aspect of the object but the soul of quality in it, the vibration of energy, the light and force and spiritual substance of which it is made. Thus there comes through the physical sense to the total sense consciousness within and behind the vision a revelation of the soul of the thing seen and of the universal spirit that is expressing itself in this objective form of its own conscious being.

There is at the same time a subtle change which makes the sight see in a sort of fourth dimension, the character of which is a certain internality, the seeing not only of the superficies and the outward form but of that which informs it and subtly extends around it. The material object becomes to this sight something different from what we now see, not a separate object on the background or in the environment of the rest of Nature, but an indivisible part and even in a subtle way an expression of the unity of all that we see. And this unity that we see becomes not only to the subtler consciousness but to the mere sense, to the illumined physical sight itself, that of the identity of the Eternal, the unity of the Brahman. For to the supramentalised seeing the material world and space and material objects cease to be material in the sense in which we now on the strength of the sole evidence of our limited physical organs and of the physical consciousness that looks through them receive as our gross perception and understand as our conception of matter. It and they appear and are seen as spirit itself in a form of itself and a conscious extension. The whole is a unity — the oneness unaffected by any multitudinousness of objects and details — held in and by the consciousness in a spiritual space and all substance there is conscious substance. This change and this totality of the way of seeing comes from the exceeding of the limitations of our present physical sense, because the power of the subtle or psychical eye has been infused into the physical and there has again been infused into this psycho-physical power of vision the spiritual sight, the pure sense, the supramental *saṁjñāna*.

All the other senses undergo a similar transformation. All that the ear listens to, reveals the totality of its sound body and sound significance and all the tones of its vibration and reveals also to the single and complete hearing the quality, the rhythmic energy, the soul of the sound and its expression of the one universal spirit. There is the same internality, the going of the sense into the depths of the sound and the finding there of that which informs it and extends it into unity with the harmony of all sound and no less with the harmony of all silence, so that the ear is always listening to the infinite in its heard expression and the voice of its silence. All sounds become to the supramentalised ear the voice of the Divine, himself born into sound, and a rhythm of the concord of the universal symphony. And there is too the same completeness, vividness, intensity, the revelation of the self of the thing heard and the spiritual satisfaction of the self in hearing. The supramentalised touch also contacts or receives the touch of the Divine in all things and knows all things as the Divine through the conscious self in the contact: and there is too the same totality, intensity, revelation of all that is in and behind the touch to the experiencing consciousness. There comes a similar transformation of the other senses.

There is at the same time an opening of new powers in all the senses, an extension of range, a stretching out of the physical consciousness to an undreamed capacity. The supramental transformation extends too the physical consciousness far beyond the limits of the body and enables it to receive with a perfect concreteness the physical contact of things at a distance. And the physical organs become capable of serving as channels for the psychic and other senses so that we can see with the physical waking eye what is ordinarily revealed only in the abnormal states and to the psychical vision, hearing or other sense knowledge. It is the spirit or the inner soul that sees and senses, but the body and its powers are themselves spiritualised and share directly in the experience. The entire material sensation is supramentalised and it becomes aware, directly and with a physical participation and, finally, a unity with the subtler instrumentation, of forces and movements and the physical, vital, emotional, mental vibrations of things and beings and feels them all not only spiritually or mentally but physically in the self and as movements of the one self in these many bodies. The wall that the limitations of the body and its senses have built around us is abolished even in the body and the senses and there is in its place the free communication of the eternal oneness. All sense and sensation becomes full of the divine light, the divine power and intensity of experience, a divine joy, the delight of the Brahman. And even that which is now to us discordant and jars on the senses takes its place in the universal concord of the universal movement, reveals its *rasa*, meaning, design and, by delight in its intention in the divine consciousness and its manifestation of its law and dharma, its harmony with the total self, its place in the manifestation of the divine being, becomes beautiful and happy to the soul experience. All sensation becomes Ananda.

The embodied mind in us is ordinarily aware only through the physical organs and only of their objects and of subjective experiences which seem to start from the physical experience and to take them alone, however remotely, for their foundation and mould of construction. All the rest, all that is not consistent with or part of or verified by the physical data, seems to it rather imagination than reality and it is only in abnormal states that it opens to other kinds of conscious experience. But in fact there are immense ranges behind of which we could be aware if we opened the doors of our inner being. These ranges are there already in action and known to a subliminal self in us, and much even of our surface consciousness is directly projected from them and without our knowing it influences our subjective experience of things. There is a range of independent vital or pranic experiences behind, subliminal to and other than the surface action of the vitalised physical consciousness. And when this opens itself or acts in any way, there are made manifest to the waking mind the phenomena of a vital consciousness, a vital intuition, a vital sense not dependent on the body and its instruments, although it may use them as a secondary medium and a recorder. It is possible to open completely this range and, when we do so, we find that its operation is that of the conscious life force individualised in us contacting the universal life force and its operations in things, happenings and persons. The mind becomes aware of the life consciousness in all things, responds to it through our life consciousness with an immediate directness not limited by the ordinary communication through the body and its organs, records its intuitions, becomes capable of experiencing existence as a translation of the universal Life or Prana. The field of which the vital consciousness and the vital sense are primarily aware is not that of forms but, directly, that of forces: its world is a world of the play of energies, and form and event are sensed only secondarily as a result and embodiment of the energies. The mind working through the physical senses can only construct a view and knowledge of this nature as an idea in the intelligence, but it cannot go beyond the physical translation of the energies, and it has therefore no real or direct experience of the true nature of life, no actual realisation of the life force and the life spirit. It is by opening this other level or depth of experience within and by admission to the vital consciousness and vital sense that the mind can get the true and direct experience. Still, even then, so long as it is on the mental level, the experience is limited by the vital terms and their mental renderings and there is an obscurity even in this greatened sense and knowledge. The supramental transformation supravitalises the vital, reveals it as a dynamics of the spirit, makes a complete opening and a true revelation of all the spiritual reality behind and within the life force and the life spirit and of all its spiritual as well as its mental and purely vital truth and significance.

The supermind in its descent into the physical being awakens, if not already wakened by previous yogic sadhana, the consciousness — veiled or obscure in most of us — which supports and forms there the vital sheath, the *prāṇa koṣa*. When this is awakened, we no longer live in the physical body alone, but also in a vital body which penetrates and envelops the physical and is sensitive to impacts of another kind, to the play of the vital forces around us and coming in on us from the universe or from particular persons or group lives or from things or else from the vital planes and worlds which are behind the material universe. These impacts we feel even now in their result and in certain touches and affectations, but not at all or very little in their source and their coming. An awakened consciousness in the pranic body immediately feels them, is aware of a pervading vital force other than the physical energy, and can draw upon it to increase the vital strength and support the physical energies, can deal directly with the phenomena and causes of health and disease by means of this vital influx or by directing pranic currents, can be aware of the vital and the vital-emotional atmosphere of others and deal with its interchanges, along with a host of other phenomena which are unfelt by or obscure to our outward consciousness but here become conscient and sensible. It is acutely aware of the life soul and life body in ourself and others. The supermind takes up this vital consciousness and vital sense, puts it on its right foundation and transforms it by revealing the life-force here as the very power of the spirit dynamised for a near and direct operation on and through subtle and gross matter and for formation and action in the material universe.

The first result is that the limitations of our individual life being break down and we live no longer with a personal life force, or not with that ordinarily, but in and by the universal life energy. It is all the universal Prana that comes consciently streaming into and through us, keeps up there a dynamic constant eddy, an unseparated centre of its power, a vibrant station of storage and communication, constantly fills it with its forces and pours them out in activity upon the world around us. This life energy, again, is felt by us not merely as a vital ocean and its streams, but as the vital way and form and body and outpouring of a conscious universal Shakti, and that conscient Shakti reveals itself as the Chit Shakti of the Divine, the Energy of the transcendent and universal Self and Purusha of which — or rather of whom — our universalised individuality becomes an instrument and channel. As a result we feel ourselves one in life with all others and one with the life of all Nature and of all things in the universe. There is a free and conscious communication of the vital energy working in us with the same energy working in others. We are aware of their life as of our own or, at the least, of the touch and pressure and communicated movements of our life being on them and theirs upon us. The vital sense in us becomes powerful, intense, capable of bearing all the small or large, minute or immense vibrations of this life world on all its planes physical and supraphysical, vital and supravital, thrills with all its movement and Ananda and is aware of and open to all forces. The supermind takes possession of all this great range of experience, and makes it all luminous, harmonious, experienced not obscurely and fragmentarily and subject to the limitations and errors of its handling by the mental ignorance, but revealed, it and each movement of it, in its truth and totality of power and delight, and directs the great and now hardly limitable powers and capacities of the life dynamis on all its ranges according to the simple and yet complex, the sheer and spontaneous and yet unfalteringly intricate will of the Divine in our life. It makes the vital sense a perfect means of the knowledge of the life forces around us, as the physical of the forms and sensations of the physical universe, and a perfect channel too of the reactions of the active life force through us working as an instrument of self-manifestation.

⁂

The phenomena of this vital consciousness and sense, this direct sensation and perception of and response to the play of subtler forces than the physical, are often included without distinction under the head of psychical phenomena. In a certain sense it is an awakening of the psyche, the inner soul now hidden, clogged wholly or partially covered up by the superficial activity of the physical mind and senses that brings to the surface the submerged or subliminal inner vital consciousness and also an inner or subliminal mental consciousness and sense capable of perceiving and experiencing directly, not only the life forces and their play and results and phenomena, but the mental and psychical worlds and all they contain and the mental activities, vibrations, phenomena, forms, images of this world also and of establishing a direct communication between mind and mind without the aid of the physical organs and the limitations they impose on our consciousness. There are however two different kinds of action of these inner ranges of the consciousness. The first is a more outer and confused activity of the awakening subliminal mind and life which is clogged with and subject to the grosser desires and illusions of the mind and vital being and vitiated in spite of its wider range of experience and powers and capacities by an enormous mass of error and deformations of the will and knowledge, full of false suggestions and images, false and distorted intuitions and inspirations and impulses, the latter often even depraved and perverse, and vitiated too by the interference of the physical mind and its obscurities. This is an inferior activity to which clairvoyants, psychists, spiritists, occultists, seekers of powers and siddhis are very liable and to which all the warnings against the dangers and errors of this kind of seeking are more especially applicable. The seeker of spiritual perfection has to pass as quickly as possible, if he cannot altogether avoid, this zone of danger, and the safe rule here is to be attached to none of these things, but to make spiritual progress one's sole real objective and to put no sure confidence in other things until the mind and life soul are purified and the light of the spirit and supermind or at least of the spiritually illumined mind and soul are shed on these inner ranges of experience. For when the mind is tranquillised and purified and the pure psyche liberated from the insistence of the desire soul, these experiences are free from any serious danger, — except indeed that of limitation and a certain element of error which cannot be entirely eliminated so long as the soul experiences and acts on the mental level. For there is then a pure action of the true psychical consciousness and its powers, a reception of psychical experience pure in itself of the worse deformations, although subject to the limitations of the representing mind, and capable of a high spiritualisation and light. The complete power and truth, however, can only come by the opening of the supermind and the supramentalising of the mental and psychical experience.

The range of the psychic consciousness and its experiences is almost illimitable and the variety and complexity of its phenomena almost infinite. Only some of the broad lines and main features can be noted here. The first and most prominent is the activity of the psychic senses of which the sight is the most developed ordinarily and the first to manifest itself with any largeness when the veil of the absorption in the surface consciousness which prevents the inner vision is broken. But all the physical senses have their corresponding powers in the psychical being, there is a psychical hearing, touch, smell, taste: indeed the physical senses are themselves in reality only a projection of the inner sense into a limited and externalised operation in and through and upon the phenomena of gross matter. The psychical sight receives characteristically the images that are formed in the subtle matter of the mental or psychical ether, *cittākāśa*. These may be transcriptions there or impresses of physical things, persons, scenes, happenings, whatever is, was or will be or may be in the physical universe. These images are very variously seen and under all kinds of conditions; in samadhi or in the waking state, and in the latter with the bodily eyes closed or open, projected on or into a physical object or medium or seen as if materialised in the physical atmosphere or only in a psychical ether revealing itself through this grosser physical atmosphere; seen through the physical eyes themselves as a secondary instrument and as if under the conditions of the physical vision or by the psychical vision alone and independently of the relations of our ordinary sight to space. The real agent is always the psychical sight and the power indicates that the consciousness is more or less awake, intermittently or normally and more or less perfectly, in the psychical body. It is possible to see in this way the transcriptions or impressions of things at any distance beyond the range of the physical vision or the images of the past or the future.

Besides these transcriptions or impresses the psychical vision receives thought images and other forms created by constant activity of consciousness in ourselves or in other human beings, and these may be according to the character of the activity images of truth or falsehood or else mixed things, partly true, partly false, and may be too either mere shells and representations or images inspired with a temporary life and consciousness and, it may be, carrying in them in one way or another some kind of beneficent or maleficent action or some willed or unwilled effectiveness on our minds or vital being or through them even on the body. These transcriptions, impresses, thought images, life images, projections of the consciousness may also be representations or creations not of the physical world, but of vital, psychic or mental worlds beyond us, seen in our own minds or projected from other than human beings. And as there is this psychical vision of which some of the more external and ordinary manifestations are well enough known by the name of clairvoyance, so there is a psychical hearing and psychical touch, taste, smell — clairaudience, clairsentience are the more external manifestations, — with precisely the same range each in its own kind, the same fields and manner and conditions and varieties of their phenomena.

These and other phenomena create an indirect, a representative range of psychical experience; but the psychical sense has also the power of putting us in a more direct communication with earthly or supraterrestrial beings through their psychical selves or their psychical bodies or even with things, for things also have a psychical reality and souls or presences supporting them which can communicate with our psychical consciousness. The most notable of these more powerful but rarer phenomena are those which attend the power of exteriorisation of our consciousness for various kinds of action otherwise and elsewhere than in the physical body, communication in the psychical body or some emanation or reproduction of it, oftenest, though by no means necessarily, during sleep or trance and the setting up of relations or communication by various means with the denizens of another plane of existence.

For there is a continuous scale of the planes of consciousness, beginning with the psychical and other belts attached to and dependent on the earth plane and proceeding through the true independent vital and psychical worlds to the worlds of the gods and the highest supramental and spiritual planes of existence. And these are in fact always acting upon our subliminal selves unknown to our waking mind and with considerable effect on our life and nature. The physical mind is only a little part of us and there is a much more considerable range of our being in which the presence, influence and powers of the other planes are active upon us and help to shape our external being and its activities. The awakening of the psychical consciousness enables us to become aware of these powers, presences and influences in and around us; and while in the impure or yet ignorant and imperfect mind this unveiled contact has its dangers, it enables us too, if rightly used and directed, to be no longer their subject but their master and to come into conscious and self-controlled possession of the inner secrets of our nature. The psychical consciousness reveals this interaction between the inner and the outer planes, this world and others, partly by an awareness, which may be very constant, vast and vivid, of their impacts, suggestions, communications to our inner thought and conscious being and a capacity of reaction upon them there, partly also through many kinds of symbolic, transcriptive or representative images presented to the different psychical senses. But also there is the possibility of a more direct, concretely sensible, almost material, sometimes actively material communication — a complete though temporary physical materialisation seems to be possible — with the powers, forces and beings of other worlds and planes. There may even be a complete breaking of the limits of the physical consciousness and the material existence.

The awakening of the psychical consciousness liberates in us the direct use of the mind as a sixth sense, and this power may be made constant and normal. The physical consciousness can only communicate with the minds of others or know the happenings of the world around us through external means and signs and indications, and it has beyond this limited action only a vague and haphazard use of the mind's more direct capacities, a poor range of occasional presentiments, intuitions and messages. Our minds are indeed constantly acting and acted upon by the minds of others through hidden currents of which we are not aware, but we have no knowledge or control of these agencies. The psychical consciousness, as it develops, makes us aware of the great mass of thoughts, feelings, suggestions, will impacts, influences of all kinds that we are receiving from others or sending to others or imbibing from and throwing into the general mind atmosphere around us. As it evolves in power, precision and clearness, we are able to trace these to their source or feel immediately their origin and transit to us and direct consciously and with an intelligent will our own messages. It becomes possible to be aware, more or less accurately and discerningly, of the activities of minds whether near to us physically or at a distance, to understand, feel or identify ourselves with their temperament, character, thoughts, feelings, reactions, whether by a psychic sense or a direct mental perception or by a very sensible and often intensely concrete reception of them into our mind or on its recording surface. At the same time we can consciously make at least the inner selves and, if they are sufficiently sensitive, the surface minds of others aware of our own inner mental or psychic self and plastic to its thoughts, suggestions, influences or even cast it or its active image in influence into their subjective, even into their vital and physical being to work there as a helping or moulding or dominating power and presence.

All these powers of the psychic consciousness need have and often have no more than a mental utility and significance, but it can also be used with a spiritual sense and light and intention in it and for a spiritual purpose. This can be done by a spiritual meaning and use in our psychical interchange with others, and it is largely by a psycho-spiritual interchange of this kind that a master in Yoga helps his disciple. The knowledge of our inner subliminal and psychic nature, of the powers and presences and influences there and the capacity of communication with other planes and their powers and beings can also be used for a higher than any mental or mundane object, for the possession and mastering of our whole nature and the overpassing of the intermediate planes on the way to the supreme spiritual heights of being. But the most direct spiritual use of the psychic consciousness is to make it an instrument of contact, communication and union with the Divine. A world of psycho-spiritual symbols is readily opened up, illuminating and potent and living forms and instruments, which can be made a revelation of spiritual significances, a support for our spiritual growth and the evolution of spiritual capacity and experience, a means towards spiritual power, knowledge or Ananda. The mantra is one of these psycho-spiritual means, at once a symbol, an instrument and a sound body for the divine manifestation, and of the same kind are the images of the Godhead and of its personalities or powers used in meditation or for adoration in Yoga. The great forms or bodies of the Divine are revealed through which he manifests his living presence to us and we can more easily by their means intimately know, adore and give ourselves to him and enter into the different lokas, worlds of his habitation and presence, where we can live in the light of his being. His word, command, Adesha, presence, touch, guidance can come to us through our spiritualised psychic consciousness and, as a subtly concrete means of transmission from the spirit, it can give us a close communication and nearness to him through all our psychic senses. These and many more are the spiritual uses of the psychic consciousness and sense and, although capable of limitation and deformation, — for all secondary instruments can be also by our mental capacity of exclusive self-limitation means of a partial but at the same time hindrances to a more integral realisation, — they are of the greatest utility on the road to the spiritual perfection and afterwards, liberated from the limitation of our minds, transformed and supramentalised, an element of rich detail in the spiritual Ananda.

As the physical and vital, the psychical consciousness and sense also are capable of a supramental transformation and receive by it their own integral fullness and significance. The supermind lays hold on the psychical being, descends into it, changes it into the mould of its own nature and uplifts it to be a part of the supramental action and state, the supra-psychic being of the Vijnana Purusha. The first result of this change is to base the phenomena of the psychical consciousness on their true foundation by bringing into it the permanent sense, the complete realisation, the secure possession of the oneness of our mind and soul with the minds and souls of others and the mind and soul of universal Nature. For always the effect of the supramental growth is to universalise the individual consciousness. As it makes us live, even in our individual vital movement and its relations with all around us, with the universal life, so it makes us think and feel and sense, although through an individual centre or instrument, with the universal mind and psychical being. This has two results of great importance.

First, the phenomena of the psychical sense and mind lose the fragmentariness and incoherence or else difficult regulation and often quite artificial order which pursues them even more than it pursues our more normal mental activities of the surface, and they become the harmonious play of the universal inner mind and soul in us, assume their true law and right forms and relations and reveal their just significances. Even on the mental plane one can get by the spiritualising of the mind at some realisation of soul oneness, but it is never really complete, at least in its application, and does not acquire this real and entire law, form, relation, complete and unfailing truth and accuracy of its significances. And, secondly, the activity of the psychical consciousness loses all character of abnormality, of an exceptional, irregular and even a perilously supernormal action, often bringing a loss of hold upon life and a disturbance or an injury to other parts of the being. It not only acquires its own right order within itself but its right relation with the physical life on one side and with the spiritual truth of being on the other and the whole becomes a harmonious manifestation of the embodied spirit. It is always the originating supermind that contains within itself the true values, significances and relations of the other parts of our being and its unfolding is the condition of the integral possession of our self and nature.

The complete transformation comes on us by a certain change, not merely of the poise or level of our regarding conscious self or even of its law and character, but also of the whole substance of our conscious being. Till that is done, the supramental consciousness manifests above the mental and psychical atmosphere of being — in which the physical has already become a subordinate and to a large extent a dependent method of our self's expression, — and it sends down its power, light, and influence into it to illumine it and transfigure. But only when the substance of the lower consciousness has been changed, filled potently, wonderfully transformed, swallowed up as it were into the greater energy and sense of being, *mahān*, *bṛhat*, of which it is a derivation and projection, do we have the perfected, entire and constant supramental consciousness. The substance, the conscious ether of being in which the mental or psychic consciousness and sense live and see and feel and experience is something subtler, freer, more plastic than that of the physical mind and sense. As long as we are dominated by the latter, psychical phenomena may seem to us less real, hallucinatory even, but the more we acclimatise ourselves to the psychical and to the ether of being which it inhabits, the more we begin to see the greater truth and to sense the more spiritually concrete substance of all to which its larger and freer mode of experience bears witness. Even, the physical may come to seem to itself unreal and hallucinatory — but this is an exaggeration and new misleading exclusiveness due to a shifting of the centre and a change of action of the mind and sense — or else may seem at any rate less powerfully real. When, however, the psychical and physical experiences are well combined in their true balance, we live at once in two complementary worlds of our being each with its own reality, but the psychical revealing all that is behind the physical, the soul view and experience taking precedence and enlightening and explaining the physical view and experience. The supramental transformation again changes the whole substance of our consciousness; it brings in an ether of greater being, consciousness, sense, life, which convicts the psychical also of insufficiency and makes it appear by itself an incomplete reality and only a partial truth of all that we are and become and witness.

All the experiences of the psychical are accepted and held up indeed in the supramental consciousness and its energy, but they are filled with the light of a greater truth, the substance of a greater spirit. The psychical consciousness is first supported and enlightened, then filled and occupied with the supramental light and power and the revealing intensity of its vibrations. Whatever exaggeration, whatever error born of isolated incidence, insufficiently illumined impression, personal suggestion, misleading influence and intention or other cause of limitation or deformation interferes in the truth of the mental and psychical experience and knowledge, is revealed and cured or vanishes, failing to stand in the light of the self-truth — *satyam*, *ṛtam* — of things, persons, happenings, indications, representations proper to this greater largeness. All the psychical communications, transcriptions, impresses, symbols, images receive their true value, take their right place, are put into their proper relations. The psychical intelligence and sensation are lit up with the supramental sense and knowledge, their phenomena, intermediate between the spiritual and material worlds, begin to reveal automatically their own truth and meaning and also the limitations of their truth and significance. The images presented to the inner sight, hearing, sensation of all kinds are occupied by or held in a larger and more luminous mass of vibrations, a greater substance of light and intensity which brings into them the same change as in the things of the physical sense, a greater totality, precision, revealing force of sense knowledge carried in the image. And finally all is lifted up and taken into the supermind and made a part of the infinitely luminous consciousness, knowledge and experience of the supramental being, the Vijnana Purusha.

The state of the being after this supramental transformation will be in all its parts of consciousness and knowledge that of an infinite and cosmic consciousness acting through the universalised individual Purusha. The fundamental power will be an awareness of identity, a knowledge by identity, — an identity of being, of consciousness, of force of being and consciousness, of delight of being, an identity with the Infinite, the Divine, and with all that is in the Infinite, all that is the expression and manifestation of the Divine. This awareness and knowledge will use as its means and instruments a spiritual vision of all that the knowledge by identity can found, a supramental real idea and thought of the nature of direct thought vision, thought hearing, thought memory that reveals, interprets or represents to the awareness the truth of all things, and an inner truth speech that expresses it, and finally a supramental sense that provides a relation of contact in substance of being with all things and persons and powers and forces in all the planes of existence.

The supramental will not depend on the instrumentation, for example, of the sense, as the physical mind is dependent on the evidence of our senses, although it will be capable of making them a starting-point for the higher forms of knowledge, as it will also be capable of proceeding directly through these higher forms and making the sense only a means of formation and objective expression. The supramental being will transform at the same time and take up into itself the present thinking of the mind transfigured into an immensely larger knowledge by identity, knowledge by total comprehension, knowledge by intimate perception of detail and relation, all direct, immediate, spontaneous, all the expression of the self's already existent eternal knowledge. It will take up, transform, supramentalise the physical sense, the sixth sense capacities of the mind and the psychic consciousness and senses and use them as the means of an extreme inner objectivisation of experience. Nothing will be really external to it, for it will experience all in the unity of the cosmic consciousness which will be its own, the unity of being of the infinite which will be its own being. It will experience matter, not only gross matter but the subtle and the most subtle, as substance and form of the spirit, experience life and all kinds of energy as the dynamics of the spirit, supramentalised mind as a means or channel of knowledge of the spirit, supermind as the infinite self of knowledge and power of knowledge and Ananda of knowledge of the spirit.

Chapter XXV

Towards the Supramental Time Vision

ALL BEING, consciousness, knowledge moves, secretly for our present surface awareness, openly when we rise beyond it to the spiritual and supramental ranges, between two states and powers of existence, that of the timeless Infinite and that of the Infinite deploying in itself and organising all things in time. These two states are opposed to and incompatible with each other only for our mental logic with its constant embarrassed stumbling around a false conception of contradictions and a confronting of eternal opposites. In reality, as we find when we see things with a knowledge founded on the supramental identity and vision and think with the great, profound and flexible logic proper to that knowledge, the two are only coexistent and concurrent status and movement of the same truth of the Infinite. The timeless Infinite holds in itself, in its eternal truth of being, beyond this manifestation, all that it manifests in Time. Its time consciousness too is itself infinite and maintains in itself at once in a vision of totalities and of particularities, of mobile succession or moment sight and of total stabilising vision or abiding whole sight what appears to us as the past of things, their present and their future.

The consciousness of the timeless Infinite can be brought home to us in various ways, but is most ordinarily imposed on our mentality by a reflection of it and a powerful impression or else made present to us as something above the mind, something of which it is aware, towards which it lifts, but into which it cannot enter because itself lives only in the time sense and in the succession of the moments. If our present mind untransformed by the supramental influence tries to enter into the timeless, it must either disappear and be lost in the trance of Samadhi or else, remaining awake, it feels itself diffused in an Infinite where there is perhaps a sense of supra-physical space, a vastness, a boundless extension of consciousness, but no time self, time movement or time order. And if then the mental being is still mechanically aware of things in time, it is yet unable to deal with them in its own manner, unable to establish a truth relation between the timeless and things in time and unable to act and will out of its indefinite Infinite. The action that then remains possible to the mental Purusha is the mechanical action of the instruments of the Prakriti continuing by force of old impulsion and habit or continued initiation of past energy, *prārabdha*, or else an action chaotic, unregulated, uncoordinated, a confused precipitate from an energy which has no longer a conscious centre.

The supramental consciousness on the other hand is founded upon the supreme consciousness of the timeless Infinite, but has too the secret of the deployment of the infinite Energy in time. It can either take its station in the time consciousness and keep the timeless infinite as its background of supreme and original being from which it receives all its organising knowledge, will and action, or it can, centred in its essential being, live in the timeless but live too in a manifestation in time which it feels and sees as infinite and as the same Infinite, and can bring out, sustain and develop in the one what it holds supernally in the other. Its time consciousness therefore will be different from that of the mental being, not swept helplessly on the stream of the moments and clutching at each moment as a stay and a swiftly disappearing standpoint, but founded first on its eternal identity beyond the changes of time, secondly on a simultaneous eternity of Time in which past, present and future exist together for ever in the self-knowledge and self-power of the Eternal, thirdly, in a total view of the three times as one movement singly and indivisibly seen even in their succession of stages, periods, cycles, last — and that only in the instrumental consciousness — in the step by step evolution of the moments. It will therefore have the knowledge of the three times, *trikāladṛṣṭi*, — held of old to be a supreme sign of the seer and the Rishi, — not as an abnormal power, but as its normal way of time knowledge.

This unified and infinite time consciousness and this vision and knowledge are the possession of the supramental being in its own supreme region of light and are complete only on the highest levels of the supramental nature. But in the ascent of the human consciousness through the uplifting and transmuting evolutionary — that is to say, self-unveiling, self-developing, progressively self-perfecting — process of Yoga, we have to take account of three successive conditions all of which have to be overpassed before we are able to move on the highest levels. The first condition of our consciousness, that in which we now move, is this mind of ignorance that has arisen out of the inconscience and nescience of material Nature, — ignorant but capable of seeking for knowledge and finding it at least in a series of mental representations which may be made clues to the true truth and, more and more refined and illuminated and rendered transparent by the influence, the infiltration and the descent of the light from above, prepare the intelligence for opening to the capacity of true knowledge. All truth is to this mind a thing it originally had not and has had to acquire or has still to acquire, a thing external to it and to be gathered by experience or by following certain ascertained methods and rules of enquiry, calculation, application of discovered law, interpretation of signs and indices. Its very knowledge implies an antecedent nescience; it is the instrument of Avidya.

The second condition of consciousness is potential only to the human being and gained by an inner enlightening and transformation of the mind of ignorance; it is that in which the mind seeks for its source of knowledge rather within than without and becomes to its own feeling and self-experience, by whatever means, a mind, not of original ignorance, but of self-forgetful knowledge. This mind is conscious that the knowledge of all things is hidden within it or at least somewhere in the being, but as if veiled and forgotten, and the knowledge comes to it not as a thing acquired from outside, but always secretly there and now remembered and known at once to be true, — each thing in its own place, degree, manner and measure. This is its attitude to knowledge even when the occasion of knowing is some external experience, sign or indication, because that is to it only the occasion and its reliance for the truth of the knowledge is not on the external indication or evidence but on the inner confirming witness. The true mind is the universal within us and the individual is only a projection on the surface, and therefore this second state of consciousness we have either when the individual mind goes more and more inward and is always consciously or subconsciously near and sensitive to the touches of the universal mentality in which all is contained, received, capable of being made manifest, or, still more powerfully, when we live in the consciousness of universal mind with the personal mentality only as a projection, a marking board or a communicating switch on the surface.

The third state of consciousness is that of the mind of knowledge in which all things and all truths are perceived and experienced as already present and known and immediately available by merely turning the inner light upon it, as when one turns the eye upon things in a room already known and familiar, — though not always present to the vision because that is not attentive, — and notes them as objects of a pre-existent knowledge. The difference from the second self-forgetful state of consciousness is that there is here no effort or seeking needed but simply a turning or opening of the inner light on whatever field of knowledge, and therefore it is not a recalling of things forgotten and self-hidden from the mind, but a luminous presentation of things already present, ready and available. This last condition is only possible by a partial supramentalising of the intuitive mentality and its full openness to any and every communication from the supramental ranges. This mind of knowledge is in its essentiality a power of potential omnipotence, but in its actual working on the level of mind it is limited in its range and province. The character of limitation applies to the supermind itself when it descends into the mental level and works in the lesser substance of mentality, though in its own manner and body of power and light, and it persists even in the action of the supramental reason. It is only the higher supramental Shakti acting on its own ranges whose will and knowledge work always in a boundless light or with a free capacity of illimitable extension of knowledge subject only to such limitations as are self-imposed for its own purposes and at its own will by the spirit.

The human mind developing into supermind has to pass through all these stages and in its ascent and expansion it may experience many changes and various dispositions of the powers and possibilities of its time consciousness and time knowledge. At first man in the mind of ignorance can neither live in the infinite time consciousness nor command any direct and real power of the triple time knowledge. The mind of ignorance lives, not in the indivisible continuity of time, but successively in each moment. It has a vague sense of the continuity of self and of an essential continuity of experience, a sense of which the source is the deeper self within us, but as it does not live in that self, also it does not live in a true time continuity, but only uses this vague but still insistent awareness as a background, support and assurance in what would otherwise be to it a constant baseless flux of its being. In its practical action its only support other than its station in the present is the line left behind by the past and preserved in memory, the mass of impressions deposited by previous experience and, for the future, an assurance of the regularity of experience and a power of uncertain forecast founded partly upon repeated experience and well-founded inference and partly on imaginative construction and conjecture. The mind of ignorance relies on a certain foundation or element of relative or moral certainties, but for the rest a dealing with probabilities and possibilities is its chief resource.

This is because the mind in the Ignorance lives in the moment and moves from hour to hour like a traveller who sees only what is near and visible around his immediate standpoint and remembers imperfectly what he has passed through before, but all in front beyond his immediate view is the unseen and unknown of which he has yet to have experience. Therefore man in his self-ignorance moving in time exists, as the Buddhists saw, only in the succession of thoughts and sensations and of the external forms present to his thought and sense. His present momentary self is alone real to him, his past self is dead or vanishing or only preserved in memory, result and impression, his future self is entirely non-existent or only in process of creation or preparation of birth. And the world around him is subject to the same rule of perception. Only its actual form and sum of happenings and phenomena is present and quite real to him, its past is no longer in existence or abides only in memory and record and in so much of it as has left its dead monuments or still survives into the present, the future is not yet at all in existence.

It must be noted however that if our knowledge of the present were not limited by our dependence on the physical mind and sense, this result would not be altogether inevitable. If we could be aware of all the present, all the action of physical, vital, mental energies at work in the moment, it is conceivable that we would be able to see their past too involved in them and their latent future or at least to proceed from present to past and future knowledge. And under certain conditions this might create a sense of real and ever present time continuity, a living in the behind and the front as well as the immediate, and a step farther might carry us into an ever present sense of our existence in infinite time and in our timeless self, and its manifestation in eternal time might then become real to us and also we might feel the timeless Self behind the worlds and the reality of his eternal world manifestation. In any case the possibility of another kind of time consciousness than we have at present and of a triple time knowledge rests upon the possibility of developing another consciousness than that proper to the physical mind and sense and breaking our imprisonment in the moment and in the mind of ignorance with its limitation to sensation, memory, inference and conjecture.

Actually man is not content solely with living in the present, though it is that he does with the most pressing vividness and insistence: he is moved to look before and after, to know as much as he can of the past and try to penetrate as far as he can, however obscurely, into the future. And he has certain aids towards this endeavour of which some depend on his surface mind, while others open to intimations from another subliminal or superconscient self which has a greater, subtler and more certain knowledge. His first aid is that of the reason proceeding forward from cause to effect and backward from effect to cause, discovering the law of energies and their assured mechanic process, assuming the perpetual sameness of the movements of Nature, fixing her time measures and thus calculating on the basis of a science of general lines and assured results the past and the future. A certain measure of limited but sufficiently striking success has been gained by this method in the province of physical Nature and it might seem that the same process might eventually be applied to the movements of mind and life and that at any rate this alone is man's one reliable means in any field of looking with precision back and forwards. But as a matter of fact the happenings of vital and still more of mental nature escape to a very great degree the means of inference and calculation from assured law that apply in the field of physical knowledge: it can apply there only to a limited range of regularised happenings and phenomena and for the rest leaves us where we were amid a mixed mass of relative certainties, uncertain probabilities and incalculable possibilities.

This is because mind and life bring in a great subtlety and intricacy of movement, each realised movement carries in it a complex of forces, and even if we could disengage all these, all, that is to say, that are simply actualised and on or near the surface, we should still be baffled by all the rest that is obscure or latent, — concealed and yet potent contributory causes, hidden motion and motive force, undeployed possibilities, uncalculated and incalculable chances of variation. It ceases to be practicable here for our limited intelligence to calculate accurately and with certitude as in the physical field from precise cause to precise effect, that is to say, from a given apparent set of existing conditions to an inevitable resultant of subsequent or a necessary precedence of antecedent conditions. It is for this reason that the predictions and previsions of the human intelligence are constantly baffled and contradicted by the event, even when largest in their view of the data and most careful in their survey of possible consequence. Life and mind are a constant flux of possibles intervening between spirit and matter and at each step bring in, if not an infinite, at least an indefinite of possibles, and this would be enough to make all logical calculation uncertain and relative. But in addition there reigns behind them a supreme factor incalculable by human mind, the will of the soul and secret spirit, the first indefinitely variable, fluid and elusive, the second infinite and inscrutably imperative, bound, if at all, only by itself and the Will in the Infinite. It is therefore only by going back from the surface physical mind to the psychic and spiritual consciousness that a vision and knowledge of the triple time, a transcendence of our limitation to the standpoint and view range of the moment, can be wholly possible.

Meanwhile there are certain doors opening from the inner on to the outer consciousness which make an occasional but insufficient power of direct retro-vision of the past, circumvision of the present, prevision of the future even in the physical mind at least potentially feasible. First, there are certain movements of the mind sense and the vital consciousness that are of this character — of which one kind, that which has most struck our perceptions, has been called presentiment. These movements are instinctive perceptions, obscure intuitions of the sense mind and the vital being, and like all that is instinctive in man have been suppressed, rendered rare or discredited as unreliable by the engrossing activity of the mental intelligence. If allowed a free scope, these could develop and supply data not available to the ordinary reason and the senses. But still they would not be of themselves perfectly useful or reliable indices unless their obscurity were enlightened by an interpretation and guidance which the ordinary intelligence cannot give, but a higher intuition could provide. Intuition, then, is the second and more important possible means available to us, and actually intuition can and does sometimes give us in this difficult field an occasional light and guidance. But acting in our present mentality it is subject to the disadvantage that it is uncertain in operation, imperfect in its functioning, obscured by false imitative movements of the imagination and fallible mental judgment and continually seized on and alloyed and distorted by the normal action of mind with its constant liability to error. The formation of an organised intuitive mentality purified from these deficiencies would be needed to enlarge and assure this possibility of the functioning of a higher luminous intelligence.

Man, confronted by this incapacity of the intelligence and yet avid of the knowledge of the future, has fallen back on other and external means, omens, sortileges, dreams, astrology and many other alleged data for a past and future knowledge that have been in less sceptical times formulated as veridical sciences. Challenged and discredited by the sceptical reason these still persist in attracting our minds and hold their own, supported by desire and credulity and superstition, but also by the frequent though imperfect evidence we get of a certain measure of truth in their pretensions. A higher psychical knowledge shows us that in fact the world is full of many systems of correspondences and indices and that these things, however much misused by the human intelligence, can in their place and under right conditions give us real data of a supraphysical knowledge. It is evident, however, that it is only an intuitive knowledge that can discover and formulate them, — as it was in fact the psychical and intuitive mind that originally formulated these ways of veridical knowledge, — and it will be found in practice that only an intuitive knowledge, not the mere use either of a traditional or a haphazard interpretation or of mechanical rule and formula, can ensure a right employment of these indices. Otherwise, handled by the surface intelligence, they are liable to be converted into a thick jungle of error.

The true and direct knowledge or vision of past, present and future begins with the opening of the psychical consciousness and the psychical faculties. The psychical consciousness is that of what is now often called the subliminal self, the subtle or dream self of Indian psychology, and its range of potential knowledge, almost infinite as has been pointed out in the last chapter, includes a very large power and many forms of insight into both the possibilities and the definite actualities of past, present and future. Its first faculty, that which most readily attracts attention, is its power of seeing by the psychical sense images of all things in time and space. As exercised by clairvoyants, mediums and others this is often, and indeed usually, a specialised faculty limited though often precise and accurate in action, and implies no development of the inner soul or the spiritual being or the higher intelligence. It is a door opened by chance or by an innate gift or by some kind of pressure between the waking and the subliminal mind and admitting only to the surface or the outskirts of the latter. All things in a certain power and action of the secret universal mind are represented by images — not only visual but, if one may use the phrase, auditory and other images, — and a certain development of the subtle or psychical senses makes it possible, — if there is no interference of the constructing mind and its imaginations, if, that is to say, artificial or falsifying mental images do not intervene, if the psychical sense is free, sincere and passive, — to receive these representations or transcriptions with a perfect accuracy and not so much predict as see in its correct images the present beyond the range of the physical sense, the past and the future. The accuracy of this kind of seeing depends on its being confined to a statement of the thing seen and the attempt to infer, interpret or otherwise go beyond the visual knowledge may lead to much error unless there is at the same time a strong psychical intuition fine, subtle and pure or a high development of the luminous intuitive intelligence.

A completer opening of the psychical consciousness leads us far beyond this faculty of vision by images and admits us not indeed to a new time consciousness, but to many ways of the triple time knowledge. The subliminal or psychic self can bring back or project itself into past states of consciousness and experience and anticipate or even, though this is less common, strongly project itself into future states of consciousness and experience. It does this by a temporary entering into or identification of its being or its power of experiencing knowledge with either permanences or representations of the past and the future that are maintained in an eternal time consciousness behind our mentality or thrown up by the eternity of supermind into an indivisible continuity of time vision. Or it may receive the impress of these things and construct a transcriptive experience of them in the subtle ether of psychical being. Or it may call up the past from the subconscious memory where it is always latent and give it in itself a living form and a kind of renewed memorative existence, and equally it may call up from the depths of latency, where it is already shaped in the being, and similarly form to itself and experience the future. It may by a kind of psychical thought vision or soul intuition — not the same thing as the subtler and less concrete thought vision of the luminous intuitive intelligence — foresee or foreknow the future or flash this soul intuition into the past that has gone behind the veil and recover it for present knowledge. It can develop a symbolic seeing which conveys the past and the future through a vision of the powers and significances that belong to supraphysical planes but are powerful for creation in the material universe. It can feel the intention of the Divine, the mind of the gods, all things and their signs and indices that descend upon the soul and determine the complex movement of forces. It can feel too the movement of forces that represent or respond to the pressure — as it can perceive the presence and the action — of the beings of the mental, vital and other worlds who concern themselves with our lives. It can gather on all hands all kinds of indications of happenings in past, present and future time. It can receive before its sight the etheric writing, *ākāśa lipi*, that keeps the record of all things past, transcribes all that is in process in the present, writes out the future.

All these and a multitude of other powers are concealed in our subliminal being and with the waking of the psychical consciousness can be brought to the surface. The knowledge of our past lives, — whether of past soul states or personalities or scenes, occurrences, relations with others, — of the past lives of others, of the past of the world, of the future, of present things that are beyond the range of our physical senses or the reach of any means of knowledge open to the surface intelligence, the intuition and impressions not only of physical things, but of the working of a past and present and future mind and life and soul in ourselves and others, the knowledge not only of this world but of other worlds or planes of consciousness and their manifestations in time and of their intervention and workings and effects on the earth and its embodied souls and their destinies, lies open to our psychical being, because it is close to the intimations of the universal, not engrossed only or mainly with the immediate and not shut up into the narrow circle of the purely personal and physical experience.

At the same time these powers are subject to this disadvantage that they are not by any means free from liability to confusion and error, and especially the lower ranges and more outer workings of the psychical consciousness are subject to dangerous influences, strong illusions, misleading, perverting and distorting suggestions and images. A purified mind and heart and a strong and fine psychical intuition may do much to protect from perversion and error, but even the most highly developed psychical consciousness cannot be absolutely safe unless the psychical is illumined and uplifted by a higher force than itself and touched and strengthened by the luminous intuitive mind and that again raised towards the supramental energy of the spirit. The psychical consciousness does not derive its time knowledge from a direct living in the indivisible continuity of the spirit and it has not to guide it a perfect intuitive discrimination or the absolute light of the higher truth consciousness. It receives its time perceptions, like the mind, only in part and detail, is open to all kinds of suggestions, and as its consequent range of truth is wider, more manifold too are its sources of error. And it is not only that which was but that which might have been or tried and failed to be that comes to it out of the past, not only that which is but that which may be or wishes to be that crowds on it from the present and not only things to be but suggestions, intuitions, visions and images of many kinds of possibility that visit it from the future. And always too there is the possibility of mental constructions and mental images interfering with the true truth of things in the presentations of the psychical experience.

The coming of the intimations of the subliminal self to the surface and the activity of the psychical consciousness tend to turn the mind of ignorance, with which we begin, increasingly though not perfectly into a mind of self-forgetful knowledge constantly illuminated with intimations and upsurgings from the inner being, *antarātman*, rays from the still concealed awareness of its whole self and infinite contents and from the awareness — representing itself here as a sort of memory, a recalling or a bringing out — of an inherent and permanent but hidden knowledge of past, present and future that is always carried within itself by the eternal spirit. But embodied as we are and founded on the physical consciousness, the mind of ignorance still persists as a conditioning environment, an intervening power and limiting habitual force obstructing and mixing with the new formation or, even in moments of large illumination, at once a boundary wall and a strong substratum, and it imposes its incapacities and errors. And to remedy this persistence the first necessity would seem to be the development of the power of a luminous intuitive intelligence seeing the truth of time and its happenings as well as all other truth by intuitive thought and sense and vision and detecting and extruding by its native light of discernment the intrusions of misprision and error.

All intuitive knowledge comes more or less directly from the light of the self-aware spirit entering into the mind, the spirit concealed behind mind and conscious of all in itself and in all its selves, omniscient and capable of illumining the ignorant or the self-forgetful mind whether by rare or constant flashes or by a steady instreaming light, out of its omniscience. This all includes all that was, is or will be in time and this omniscience is not limited, impeded or baffled by our mental division of the three times and the idea and experience of a dead and no longer existent and ill-remembered or forgotten past and a not yet existent and therefore unknowable future which is so imperative for the mind in the ignorance. Accordingly the growth of the intuitive mind can bring with it the capacity of a time knowledge which comes to it not from outside indices, but from within the universal soul of things, its eternal memory of the past, its unlimited holding of things present and its prevision or, as it has been paradoxically but suggestively called, its memory of the future. But this capacity works at first sporadically and uncertainly and not in an organised manner. As the force of intuitive knowledge grows, it becomes more possible to command the use of the capacity and to regularise to a certain degree its functioning and various movements. An acquired power can be established of commanding the materials and the main or the detailed knowledge of things in the triple time, but this usually forms itself as a special or abnormal power and the normal action of the mentality or a large part of it remains still that of the mind of ignorance. This is obviously an imperfection and limitation and it is only when the power takes its place as a normal and natural action of the wholly intuitivised mind that there can be said to be a perfection of the capacity of the triple time knowledge so far as that is possible in the mental being.

It is by the progressive extrusion of the ordinary action of the intelligence, the acquiring of a complete and total reliance on the intuitive self and a consequent intuitivising of all the parts of the mental being that the mind of ignorance can be, more successfully, if not as yet wholly, replaced by the mind of self-contained knowledge. But, — and especially for this kind of knowledge, — what is needed is the cessation of mental constructions built on the foundation of the mind of ignorance. The difference between the ordinary mind and the intuitive is that the former, seeking in the darkness or at most by its own unsteady torchlight, first, sees things only as they are presented in that light and, secondly, where it does not know, constructs by imagination, by uncertain inference, by others of its aids and makeshifts things which it readily takes for truth, shadow projections, cloud edifices, unreal prolongations, deceptive anticipations, possibilities and probabilities which do duty for certitudes. The intuitive mind constructs nothing in this artificial fashion, but makes itself a receiver of the light and allows the truth to manifest in it and organise its own constructions. But so long as there is a mixed action and the mental constructions and imaginations are allowed to operate, this passivity of the intuitive mind to the higher light, the truth light, cannot be complete or securely dominate and there cannot therefore be a firm organisation of the triple time knowledge. It is because of this obstruction and mixture that that power of time vision, of back-sight and around-sight and foresight, which sometimes marks the illuminated mind, is not only an abnormal power among others rather than part of the very texture of the mental action, but also occasional, very partial and marred often by an undetected intermixture or a self-substituting intervention of error.

The mental constructions that interfere are mainly of two kinds, and the first and most powerfully distorting are those which proceed from the stresses of the will claiming to see and determine, interfering with knowledge and not allowing the intuition to be passive to the truth light and its impartial and pure channel. The personal will, whether taking the shape of the emotions and the heart's wishes or of vital desires or of strong dynamic volitions or the wilful preferences of the intelligence, is an evident source of distortion when these try, as they usually do try with success, to impose themselves on the knowledge and make us take what we desire or will for the thing that was, is or must be. For either they prevent the true knowledge from acting or if it at all presents itself, they seize upon it, twist it out of shape and make the resultant deformation a justifying basis for a mass of will-created falsehood. The personal will must either be put aside or else its suggestions must be kept in their place until a supreme reference has been made to the higher impersonal light and then must be sanctioned or rejected according to the truth that comes from deeper within than the mind or from higher above. But even if the personal will is held in abeyance and the mind passive for reception, it may be assailed and imposed on by suggestions from all sorts of forces and possibilities that strive in the world for realisation and come representing the things cast up by them on the stream of their will-to-be as the truth of past, present or future. And if the mind lends itself to these impostor suggestions, accepts their self-valuations, does not either put them aside or refer them to the truth light, the same result of prevention or distortion of the truth is inevitable. There is a possibility of the will element being entirely excluded and the mind being made a silent and passive register of a higher luminous knowledge, and in that case a much more accurate reception of time intuitions becomes possible. The integrality of the being demands however a will action and not only an inactive knowing, and therefore the larger and more perfect remedy is to replace progressively the personal by a universalised will which insists on nothing that is not securely felt by it to be an intuition, inspiration or revelation of what must be from that higher light in which will is one with knowledge.

The second kind of mental construction belongs to the very nature of our mind and intelligence and its dealing with things in time. All is seen here by mind as a sum of realised actualities with their antecedents and natural consequences, an indeterminate of possibilities and, conceivably, although of this it is not certain, a determining something behind, a will, fate or Power, which rejects some and sanctions or compels others out of many possibles. Its constructions therefore are made partly of inferences from the actual, both past and present, partly of a volitional or an imaginative and conjectural selection and combining of possibilities and partly of a decisive reasoning or preferential judgment or insistent creative will-intelligence that tries to fix among the mass of actuals and possibles the definitive truth it is labouring to discover or determine. All this which is indispensable to our thought and action in mind, has to be excluded or transformed before the intuitive knowledge can have a chance of organising itself on a sound basis. A transformation is possible because the intuitive mind has to do the same work and cover the same field, but with a different handling of the materials and another light upon their significance. An exclusion is possible because all is really contained in the truth consciousness above and a silencing of the mind of ignorance and a pregnant receptivity is not beyond our compass in which the intuitions descending from the truth consciousness can be received with a subtle or strong exactitude and all the materials of the knowledge seen in their right place and true proportion. As a matter of practice it will be found that both methods are used alternatively or together to effect the transition from the one kind of mentality to the other.

The intuitive mind dealing with the triple time movement has to see rightly in thought sense and vision three things, actualities, possibles and imperatives. There is first a primary intuitive action developed which sees principally the stream of successive actualities in time, even as the ordinary mind, but with an immediate directness of truth and spontaneous accuracy of which the ordinary mind is not capable. It sees them first by a perception, a thought action, a thought sense, a thought vision, which at once detects the forces at work on persons and things, the thoughts, intentions, impulsions, energies, influences in and around them, those already formulated in them and those in process of formation, those too that are coming or about to come into or upon them from the environment or from secret sources invisible to the normal mind, distinguishes by a rapid intuitive analysis free from seeking or labour or by a synthetic total view the complex of these forces, discerns the effective from the ineffective or partly effective and sees too the result that is to emerge. This is the integral process of the intuitive vision of actualities, but there are others that are less complete in their character. For there may be developed a power of seeing the result without any previous or simultaneous perception of the forces at work or the latter may be seen only afterwards and the result alone leap at once and first into the knowledge. On the other hand there may be a partial or complete perception of the complex of forces, but an incertitude of the definitive result or only a slowly arriving or relative certitude. These are stages in the development of the capacity for a total and unified vision of actualities.

This kind of intuitive knowledge is not an entirely perfect instrument of time knowledge. It moves normally in the stream of the present and sees rightly from moment to moment only the present, the immediate past and the immediate future. It may, it is true, project itself backward and reconstruct correctly by the same power and process a past action or project itself forward and reconstruct correctly something in the more distant future. But this is for the normal power of the thought vision a more rare and difficult effort and usually it needs for a freer use of this self-projection the aid and support of the psychical seeing.

Moreover it can see only what will arrive in the undisturbed process of the actualities and its vision no longer applies if some unforeseen rush of forces or intervening power comes down from regions of a larger potentiality altering the complex of conditions, and this is a thing that constantly happens in the action of forces in the time movement. It may help itself by the reception of inspirations that illumine to it these potentialities and of imperative revelations that indicate what is decisive in them and its sequences and by these two powers correct the limitations of the intuitive mind of actuality. But the capacity of this first intuitive action to deal with these greater sources of vision is never quite perfect, as must always be the case with an inferior power in its treatment of the materials given to it from a greater consciousness. A considerable limitation of vision by its stress on the stream of immediate actualities must be always its character.

It is possible however to develop a mind of luminous inspiration which will be more at home among the greater potentialities of the time movement, see more easily distant things and at the same time take up into itself, into its more brilliant, wide and powerful light, the intuitive knowledge of actualities. This inspired mind will see things in the light of the world's larger potentialities and note the stream of actuality as a selection and result from the mass of forceful possibles. It will be liable, however, if it is not attended with a sufficient revelatory knowledge of imperatives, to a hesitation or suspension of determining view as between various potential lines of the movement or even to a movement away from the line of eventual actuality and following another not yet applicable sequence. The aid of imperative revelations from above will help to diminish this limitation, but here again there will be the difficulty of an inferior power dealing with the materials given to it from the treasury of a higher light and force. But it is possible to develop too a mind of luminous revelation which taking into itself the two inferior movements sees what is determined behind the play of potentialities and actualities and observes these latter as its means of deploying its imperative decisions. An intuitive mind thus constituted and aided by an active psychic consciousness may be in command of a very remarkable power of time knowledge.

At the same time it will be found that it is still a limited instrument. In the first place it will represent a superior knowledge working in the stuff of mind, cast into mental forms and still subject to mental conditions and limitations. It will always lean chiefly on the succession of present moments as a foundation for its steps and successions of knowledge, however far it may range backward or forward, — it will move in the stream of Time even in its higher revelatory action and not see the movement from above or in the stabilities of eternal time with their large ranges of vision, and therefore it will always be bound to a secondary and limited action and to a certain dilution, qualification and relativity in its activities. Moreover, its knowing will be not a possession in itself but a reception of knowledge. It will at most create in place of the mind of ignorance a mind of self-forgetful knowledge constantly reminded and illumined from a latent self-awareness and all-awareness. The range, the extent, the normal lines of action of the knowledge will vary according to the development, but it can never be free from very strong limitations. And this limitation will give a tendency to the still environing or subconsciously subsisting mind of ignorance to reassert itself, to rush in or up, acting where the intuitive knowledge refuses or is unable to act and bringing in with it again its confusion and mixture and error. The only security will be a refusal to attempt to know or at least a suspension of the effort of knowledge until or unless the higher light descends and extends its action. This self-restraint is difficult to mind and, too contentedly exercised, may limit the growth of the seeker. If on the other hand the mind of ignorance is allowed again to emerge and seek in its own stumbling imperfect force, there may be a constant oscillation between the two states or a mixed action of the two powers in place of a definite though relative perfection.

The issue out of this dilemma is to a greater perfection towards which the formation of the intuitive, inspired and revelatory mind is only a preparatory stage, and that comes by a constant instreaming and descent of more and more of the supramental light and energy into the whole mental being and a constant raising of the intuition and its powers towards their source in the open glories of the supramental nature. There is then a double action of the intuitive mind aware of, open to and referring its knowledge constantly to the light above it for support and confirmation and of that light itself creating a highest mind of knowledge, — really the supramental action itself in a more and more transformed stuff of mind and a less and less insistent subjection to mental conditions. There is thus formed a lesser supramental action, a mind of knowledge tending always to change into the true supermind of knowledge. The mind of ignorance is more and more definitely excluded, its place taken by the mind of self-forgetful knowledge illumined by the intuition, and the intuition itself more perfectly organised becomes capable of answering to a larger and larger call upon it. The increasing mind of knowledge acts as an intermediary power and, as it forms itself, it works upon the other, transforms or replaces it and compels the farther change which effects the transition from mind to supermind. It is here that a change begins to take place in the time consciousness and time knowledge which finds its base and complete reality and significance only on the supramental levels. It is therefore in relation to the truth of supermind that its workings can be more effectively elucidated: for the mind of knowledge is only a projection and a last step in the ascent towards the supramental nature.

Appendix
to Part IV

Sri Aurobindo began another chapter of “The Yoga of Self-Perfection” before deciding to discontinue the publication of the *Arya*. He wrote two versions of the opening of this chapter, which are reproduced here from his typescript.

Chapter XXVI

The Supramental Time Consciousness

[Version A]

The supermind in its supreme status is the truth-consciousness of the Infinite, the inherent light and power of self-knowledge and all-knowledge of the Supreme who is the self of all, the living eternal truth of all that is and of whom all objects and beings, all the universe and motion of things and happenings in time is a partial continually proceeding manifestation. The Supreme organises through the power of self-realisation and self-manifestation that resides in this self-knowledge and all-knowledge all truth of his being that he has the will and delight to put forth in his universal existence, — to create, as we say from our standpoint. But this creation is not a making or bringing into being of that which was non-existent, neither is it a construction of illusory phenomena in a self of dream, but a revelation in condition of being, substance of consciousness, movement of force, name, form, idea, significance, of the truths of being of the Eternal. All that manifests itself in time, is the coming into play, effective disclosure, result, form, power, evolution, movement of some truth of being, a truth of Sat, of the eternal existence of the Supreme and Eternal.

The power that brings it into play is the infinite consciousness of the Supreme aware of itself and all that is itself, not a limited mental consciousness like ours but supramental and illimitable, not bound by this or that condition, but determining out of an infinite truth of self-existence its own conditions, nor by this or that relation or step and sequence, but capable of all possible relations and steps and sequences. It is a power or force inherent in that consciousness which spontaneously, sovereignly and imperatively compels into manifestation the truth it sees and dwells on and evolves its play, combinations, sequences, not a limited mental will and power like ours, but a conscious force supramental and illimitable, Tapas, Chit-shakti, not bound to this or that movement and result of energy, but ordering out of the infinite truth of self-existence the movement and result of all possible energies. And it is finally an Ananda of the being that deploys itself, that ranges at will among the infinities of consciousness and of its power of manifestation, not a limited mental joy or pleasure like our chequered delight of being and action and feeling, but supramental and illimitable, not subject to a given set of reactions, but embracing and taking a free and sovereign and compelling delight of all that is possible in the truth of the infinite consciousness and existence.

[Version B]

It is necessary in order to understand the phenomena of the supramental time consciousness to realise very firmly certain truths which are strange to our ordinary mentality or presented to it only as constructions of the metaphysical intellect, intelligible but unsubstantial abstractions as all mere philosophical statements must be, but to the supermind are realised experience and the normal and natural truth of the consciousness in which it lives, moves, acts and manifests its being. It is only in their light that we can grasp the truth and reality and the manifestation of things in time, otherwise only an illusion or else a flux of transient, inexplicable and incalculable actualities, and the law, source and order of their manifestation, otherwise only a process of inscrutable Law or else a play of chance and probabilities and possibilities. The truths that reveal the inner meaning and way of the universe are of a spiritual and supramental order. It is difficult however to express them at all in a language adapted to the mental intellect and one can at most try to indicate.

The first of the truths that thus becomes real to the consciousness is the truth of infinite being, a thing abstract to our present sense and intelligence to which only phenomena are concrete and real, but to the supramental being always and absolutely and intimately present and real. This indeed is that which to its knowledge, sense, vision, idea, feeling is most concretely real and the phenomena which are now so close and all-important to us, are to it less concrete, not self-existent at all but dependent on the support of the infinite consciousness and its force of presentation: there is thus a complete reversal of the order in the conception of realities. It is not that the phenomena in their turn become abstract, unreal, unsubstantial creations of consciousness, — that is only the result of a certain exclusive realisation, when there is an identification with the essence of absolute being to the exclusion of its power, — but that they are felt as existing here only in a certain movement of the infinite, real only because they are made, as it were, out of the substance of infinite being. That which determines them, the truth of their essence and nature, *svarūpa*, *svabhāva*, that which gives them the power to be, is not originally here, but above in the supreme being and consciousness of the infinite. All their true truth, all their real reality is there in that supreme consciousness and here only hidden in the inmost heart of their existence, *guhāyām*, but not fully expressed in their overt outward phenomena. Therefore to know them only through the externals or through superficial inner movements which is all that our mind now does, is to miss their true truth and reality and to know them only with a partial and mistaken knowledge subject to the limitations, errors, incapacities of the mental ignorance. All that determines their manifestation in our time and space is also beyond and here only in the hidden secrecy within them, and therefore the mind following their line of manifestation misses that which determines them and can only see a part of the actually present outward executive play of forces that help to give them their immediate character and direction. It is only the consciousness that reigns above, that of the supreme Ishwara, and is present in their secret heart, *hṛddeśe tiṣṭhati*, that knows and determines all their true truth and their manifestation in eternal time.

This supreme of infinite being is supreme in the sense of being above the manifestation in time, its eternal origin, support, control, itself beyond time and space. It is this of which the supermind, itself a luminous power of this supreme of infinite being, is always and fundamentally conscious.

Note on the Text

Note on the Text

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA first appeared in seventy-seven monthly instalments in the philosophical review *Arya*, beginning with its first issue, August 1914, and continuing until its last, January 1921. The *Arya* text of the *Synthesis* consisted of five introductory chapters numbered I–V and seventy-two other chapters numbered I–II and IV–LXXIII (the number III was inadvertently omitted). Each of the instalments was written immediately before its publication.

In the *Arya* the division of the main series of chapters into four parts, corresponding to the yogas of Works, Knowledge, Devotion and Self-Perfection, was not marked explicitly until the fifth year, when the heading "The Yoga of Self-Perfection" began to be added above the chapter numbers.

The Synthesis of Yoga was left incomplete when the *Arya* ceased publication in January 1921. Before abandoning the work, Sri Aurobindo wrote part of a chapter entitled "The Supramental Time Consciousness", which was meant to follow the last published chapter of "The Yoga of Self-Perfection". He never completed this chapter and never published the portion that he had written.

A letter that Sri Aurobindo wrote in 1936 gives some idea of his purpose in writing *The Synthesis of Yoga* and his overall plan for the work:

> *The Synthesis of Yoga* was not meant to give a method for all to follow. Each side of the Yoga was dealt with separately with all its possibilities, and an indication [was given] as to how they meet so that one starting from knowledge could realise Karma and Bhakti also and so with each path. It was intended when the Self-Perfection was finished, to suggest a way in which all could be combined, but this was never written.

One can gauge how much of *The Synthesis of Yoga* remained to be written by comparing the actually completed chapters of "The Yoga of Self-Perfection" with the outline of this part found in chapter X of Part IV. The "elements and requisites of perfection, *siddhi*" which are set forth discursively in that chapter are listed more explicitly in *Sapta Chatusthaya*, a text of 1913 published along with *Record of Yoga* in volume 10 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. The system of seven (*sapta*) sets of four elements (*catuṣṭaya*) evidently underlies the structure of Part IV of *The Synthesis of Yoga*. The last and most general *catuṣṭaya*, the *siddhi catuṣṭaya*, is taken up first, in chapters I to IX. Chapters XI to XVIII correspond to the *śānti* and *samatā catuṣṭayas*, the first two of the seven. Chapters XIX to XXV, and the incomplete chapter "The Supramental Time Consciousness", correspond to the first two elements of the third or *vijñāna catuṣṭaya*. By breaking off at this point, Sri Aurobindo left untreated the rest of the third and all of the fourth *catuṣṭayas*. He had covered the fifth and sixth *catuṣṭayas* to some degree in the rest of the *Synthesis*, but undoubtedly intended to deal with them in more depth before concluding.

When Sri Aurobindo turned his attention to *The Synthesis of Yoga* during the 1930s after a gap of more than a decade, he made no effort to complete "The Yoga of Self-Perfection". Instead he applied himself to the revision of already existing chapters.

THE REVISION OF *The Synthesis of Yoga*

Sri Aurobindo revised the text of *The Synthesis of Yoga* during three distinct periods, referred to below as Period 1, Period 2, and Period 3.

Period 1. At various times after the printed text of the *Arya* began to appear, perhaps up to the end of the 1920s, Sri Aurobindo made corrections to certain chapters of *The Synthesis of Yoga* while reading over his own copies of the journal. Most of these chapters received only sporadic and minor revision; two chapters of Part II, however, were substantially altered.

Period 2. During 1932, and possibly somewhat before and after, Sri Aurobindo undertook a full-scale revision of *The Synthesis of Yoga* with a view to publishing it as a book. At this time he revised all the chapters of what became Part I, "The Yoga of Divine Works", and nine chapters of what became Part II, "The Yoga of Integral Knowledge"

(the addition of part-titles was part of the revision). He began this work by marking up pages torn from the *Arya* and then continued on copies handwritten or typed by disciples.
Period 3. During the early 1940s, Sri Aurobindo did further work on the later chapters of Part I, using typed copies of the pages from the *Arya* revised during Period 2. At the same time he began to write two new chapters, which he apparently intended to add to this part, but which he abandoned before completion.

During the later part of the 1940s, Sri Aurobindo lightly revised the entire first part of the *Synthesis* while preparing it for publication.

What follows is a brief part-by-part description of the revision.

Introduction: The Conditions of the Synthesis

Sri Aurobindo made sporadic minor changes to these five chapters during Period 1 and possibly also Period 2 of the revision. His alterations and additions, marked in issues of the *Arya* and a set of pages torn from the journal, were not discovered until the 1970s, and appear as part of the text for the first time in the present edition.

Part I: The Yoga of Divine Works

The twelve chapters of this part correspond to eleven *Arya* chapters: I–II and IV–XII. (There was no chapter numbered III in the *Arya*; the present chapters V and VI correspond to *Arya* chapter VI.) Sri Aurobindo revised each of these chapters during Period 2. The work done ranges from the light retouching of some pages to the rewriting or new-writing of long passages. During Period 3 he continued the work of revision begun in Period 2, concentrating on the last six chapters, and prepared the entire part for publication.

Chapter I. Moderately revised during Period 2.
Chapters II–IV. Heavily revised during Period 2. Sri Aurobindo added the entire second half of chapter IV at this time. He also made stylistic changes and added new material to all three chapters, but did not fundamentally alter their structure.
Chapters V and VI. Completely rewritten during Period 2 on the basis of *Arya* chapter VI, little of which remains in the final text.

Chapters VII–XII. Extensively revised during Periods 2 and 3. The typed sheets containing the later stages of the Period 2 revision of chapters VII and VIII were misplaced before the start of Period 3, obliging Sri Aurobindo to work on transcripts of the *Arya* pages containing only the earlier stages of the revision. The unused versions from Period 2 have since been found, and are reproduced in the reference volume (volume 35).
Appendix: Chapter XIII. During Period 3, Sri Aurobindo wrote this draft of a chapter meant to follow the last complete chapter of Part I, but did not prepare it for publication in the 1948 edition of the *Synthesis*. Found among his papers after his passing, it was published for the first time in the 1955 edition of the book.

Around the same time that Sri Aurobindo worked on the chapter published as "Appendix: Chapter XIII", he produced several drafts of a chapter entitled "The Yogic Consciousness and Works", which he also intended to place at the end of Part I. None of these drafts are sufficiently well worked out to be published as part of the text of *The Synthesis of Yoga*. The most important of them are reproduced in the reference volume (volume 35).

Part II: The Yoga of Integral Knowledge

These twenty-eight chapters correspond to *Arya* chapters XIII–XL. Sri Aurobindo revised eleven of these chapters during Periods 1 and 2, but did not prepare any of them for publication. The Period 2 revision was incorporated into the text of the 1955 edition; the Period 1 revision was not discovered until the 1970s and appears in print for the first time in the present edition.

Chapter I. Extensively revised during Period 2.
Chapter II. First four paragraphs revised significantly during Period 2.
Chapters III–VIII. Never revised.
Chapter IX. Extensively revised during Period 2.
Chapters X–XIV. Never revised.
Chapter XV. Moderately revised during Period 1.
Chapter XVI. One page lightly revised during Period 1.
Chapter XVII. Some of the later paragraphs revised significantly during

Period 1; the first paragraph separately revised during Period 2. The present text includes both sets of revision, which do not overlap.
Chapters XVIII–XX. Never revised.
Chapters XXI–XXIV. Extensively revised during Period 2.
Chapter XXV. Never revised.
Chapter XXVI. Lightly revised during Period 2.
Chapters XXVII and XXVIII. Never revised.

Part III: The Yoga of Divine Love

No chapter in this part was ever revised by Sri Aurobindo. The texts of these eight chapters are identical to those of *Arya* chapters XLI–XLVIII. They were renumbered I–VIII and the part-title was added by the editors of the 1955 edition.

Part IV: The Yoga of Self-Perfection

No chapter in this part was ever revised by Sri Aurobindo. The texts of these twenty-five chapters are identical to those of *Arya* chapters XLIX–LXXIII. They were renumbered I–XXV by the editors of the 1955 edition. The Appendix consists of two incomplete versions of a chapter Sri Aurobindo began to write in 1920 or 1921, just before he discontinued the *Arya*.

PUBLISHING HISTORY

The revised versions of chapters VII–XII of Part I of *The Synthesis of Yoga* were published in the quarterly review *Advent* between August 1946 and April 1948. The entire first part was published by the Sri Aurobindo Library, Madras, in October 1948. In 1950, and again in 1953, the same text was brought out by the Sri Aurobindo Library, New York. In each of these editions, the title of the book was given as *The Synthesis of Yoga*. A half-title specified that the contents consisted only of Part I ("Book One" in the American edition) of the complete work. Separate publication of the other parts had been planned, but this plan was never carried out.

In 1955, the *Arya* text of the Introduction, the 1948 text of Part I, a text of Part II incorporating Sri Aurobindo's revisions from Period 2, and the *Arya* texts of the chapters comprising Part III and Part IV, were published by the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre as *On Yoga I: The Synthesis of Yoga*. (*On Yoga II*, published in 1958, consisted of a selection of Sri Aurobindo's letters on yoga.) The incomplete chapter "The Supermind and the Yoga of Works" appeared in this edition for the first time as chapter XIII of Part I. The SAIUC edition was reprinted, with corrections, in 1957. The same publisher (under the new name Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education) issued a new edition of the same text in 1965.

In 1970 *The Synthesis of Yoga* was published as volumes 20 and 21 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. This edition was reprinted many times.

The present edition has been thoroughly checked against all related manuscripts and printed texts. Many typographical and other errors have been corrected. The edition includes for the first time Sri Aurobindo's scattered revisions in the Introduction and substantial revision of chapters XV–XVII of Part II. It is the first edition of the book to include the text of "The Supramental Time Consciousness", the incomplete chapter Sri Aurobindo wrote for Part IV before setting aside "The Yoga of Self-Perfection".

The Human Cycle
The Ideal of Human Unity
War and Self-Determination

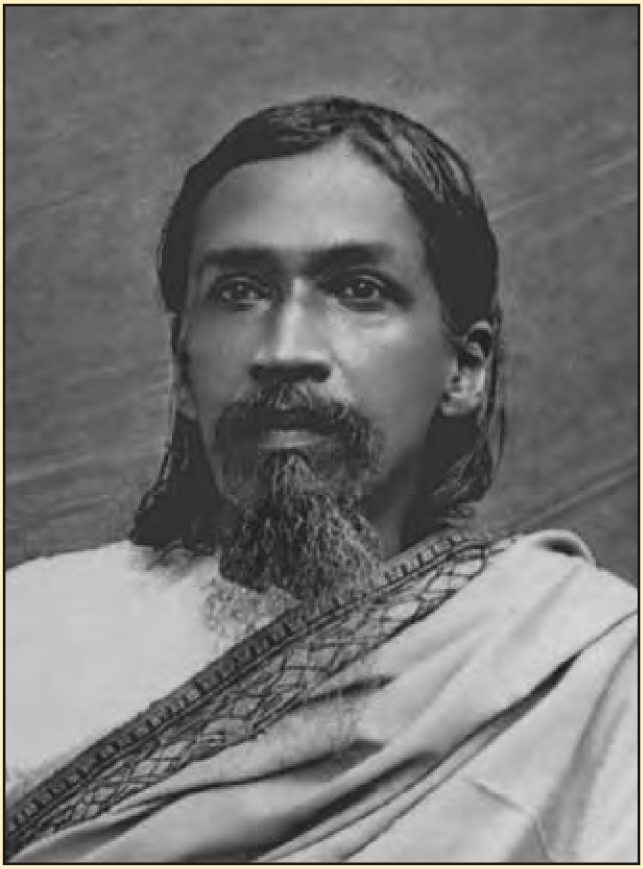

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 25
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1997
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

The Human Cycle

The Ideal of Human Unity

War and Self-Determination

Publisher's Note

The Human Cycle was first published in monthly instalments in the review *Arya* between August 1916 and July 1918 under the title *The Psychology of Social Development*. Each chapter was written immediately before its publication. The text was revised during the late 1930s and again, more lightly, in 1949. That year it was published as a book under the title *The Human Cycle*. The Publisher's Note to the first edition, which was dictated by Sri Aurobindo, is reproduced in the present edition.

The Ideal of Human Unity was written and published in monthly instalments in the *Arya* between September 1915 and July 1918. In 1919 it was brought out as a book. Sri Aurobindo wrote a Preface to that edition which is reproduced in the present volume. He revised the book during the late 1930s, before the outbreak of World War II. References to political developments of the period between the world wars were introduced at this time, often in footnotes. In 1949 Sri Aurobindo undertook a final revision of *The Ideal of Human Unity*. He commented on the changed international situation in footnotes and made alterations here and there throughout the book, but brought it up to date mainly by the addition of a Postscript Chapter. In 1950 the revised text was published in an Indian and an American edition.

Five of the essays making up *War and Self-Determination* were published in the *Arya* between 1916 and 1920. In 1920 three of them — "The Passing of War?", "The Unseen Power" and "Self-Determination" — along with a Foreword and a newly written essay, "The League of Nations", were published as a book. In later editions the other two *Arya* essays, "1919" and "After the War", were added by the editors.

CONTENTS

THE HUMAN CYCLE

Chapter I
The Cycle of Society 5

Chapter II
The Age of Individualism and Reason 15

Chapter III
The Coming of the Subjective Age 26

Chapter IV
The Discovery of the Nation-Soul 35

Chapter V
True and False Subjectivism 44

Chapter VI
The Objective and Subjective Views of Life 55

Chapter VII
The Ideal Law of Social Development 63

Chapter VIII
Civilisation and Barbarism 73

Chapter IX
Civilisation and Culture 82

Chapter X
Aesthetic and Ethical Culture 92

Chapter XI
The Reason as Governor of Life 102

Chapter XII
The Office and Limitations of the Reason 114

CONTENTS

Chapter XIII
Reason and Religion 124

Chapter XIV
The Suprarational Beauty 136

Chapter XV
The Suprarational Good 146

Chapter XVI
The Suprarational Ultimate of Life 155

Chapter XVII
Religion as the Law of Life 173

Chapter XVIII
The Infrarational Age of the Cycle 182

Chapter XIX
The Curve of the Rational Age 192

Chapter XX
The End of the Curve of Reason 208

Chapter XXI
The Spiritual Aim and Life 222

Chapter XXII
The Necessity of the Spiritual Transformation 232

Chapter XXIII
Conditions for the Coming of a Spiritual Age 246

Chapter XXIV
The Advent and Progress of the Spiritual Age 261

CONTENTS

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY
PART I

Chapter I
The Turn towards Unity: Its Necessity and Dangers 279

Chapter II
The Imperfection of Past Aggregates 285

Chapter III
The Group and the Individual 290

Chapter IV
The Inadequacy of the State Idea 296

Chapter V
Nation and Empire: Real and Political Unities 304

Chapter VI
Ancient and Modern Methods of Empire 312

Chapter VII
The Creation of the Heterogeneous Nation 323

Chapter VIII
The Problem of a Federated Heterogeneous Empire 330

Chapter IX
The Possibility of a World-Empire 337

Chapter X
The United States of Europe 344

Chapter XI
The Small Free Unit and the Larger Concentrated Unity 355

Chapter XII
The Ancient Cycle of Prenational Empire-Building — The Modern Cycle of Nation-Building 364

Chapter XIII
The Formation of the Nation-Unit
— The Three Stages 374

Chapter XIV
The Possibility of a First Step towards International Unity — Its Enormous Difficulties 384

Chapter XV
Some Lines of Fulfilment 395

Chapter XVI
The Problem of Uniformity and Liberty 405

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY
PART II

Chapter XVII
Nature's Law in Our Progress
— Unity in Diversity, Law and Liberty 417

Chapter XVIII
The Ideal Solution — A Free Grouping of Mankind 427

Chapter XIX
The Drive towards Centralisation and Uniformity
— Administration and Control of Foreign Affairs 437

Chapter XX
The Drive towards Economic Centralisation 445

Chapter XXI
The Drive towards Legislative and Social Centralisation and Uniformity 451

Chapter XXII
World-Union or World-State 462

Chapter XXIII
Forms of Government 465

CONTENTS

Chapter XXIV
The Need of Military Unification 475

Chapter XXV
War and the Need of Economic Unity 485

Chapter XXVI
The Need of Administrative Unity 494

Chapter XXVII
The Peril of the World-State 505

Chapter XXVIII
Diversity in Oneness 513

Chapter XXIX
The Idea of a League of Nations 523

Chapter XXX
The Principle of Free Confederation 533

Chapter XXXI
The Conditions of a Free World-Union 540

Chapter XXXII
Internationalism 548

Chapter XXXIII
Internationalism and Human Unity 554

Chapter XXXIV
The Religion of Humanity 564

Chapter XXXV
Summary and Conclusion 571

A Postscript Chapter 579

CONTENTS

WAR AND SELF-DETERMINATION

The Passing of War? 606
The Unseen Power 612
Self-Determination 623
A League of Nations 634
1919 664
After the War 668

APPENDIXES

Appendix I 685
Appendix II 686

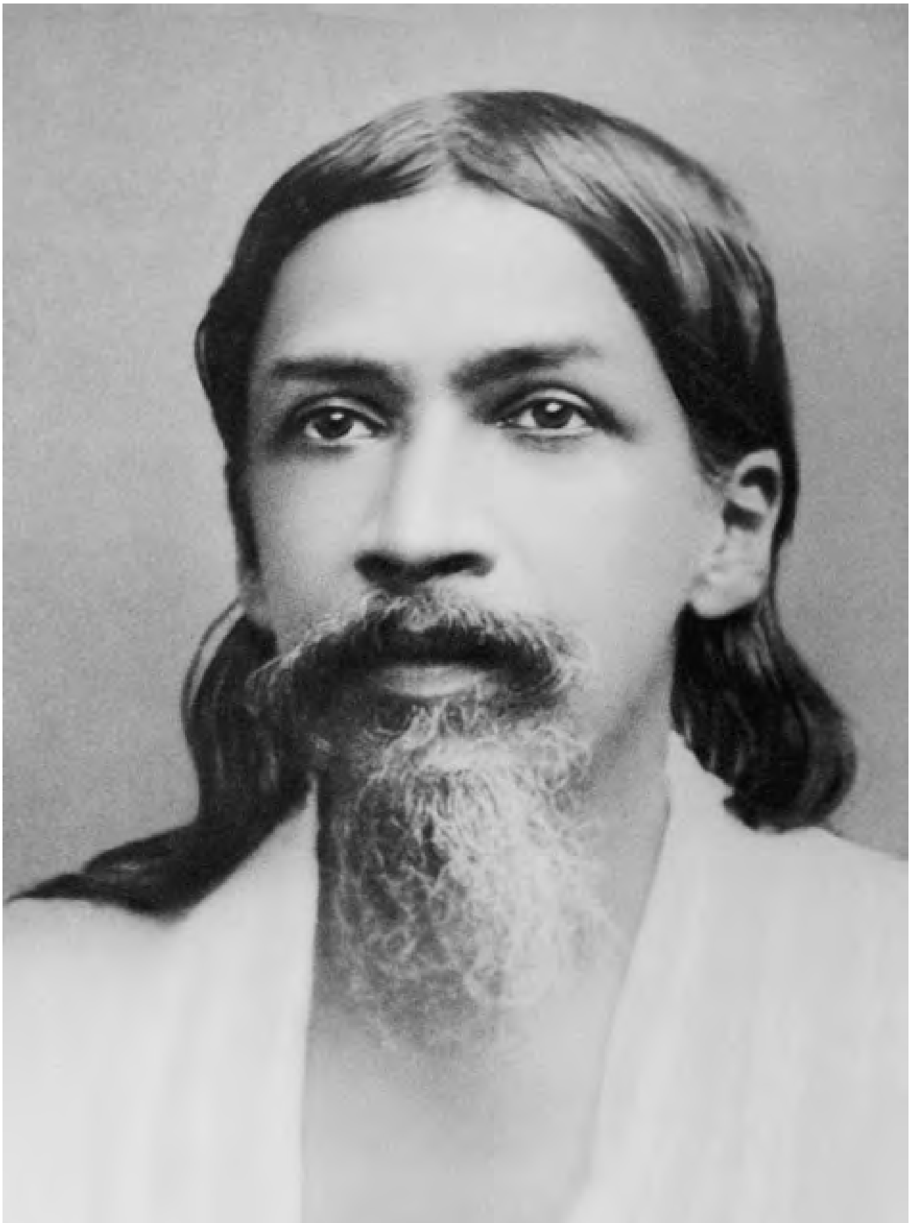

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry

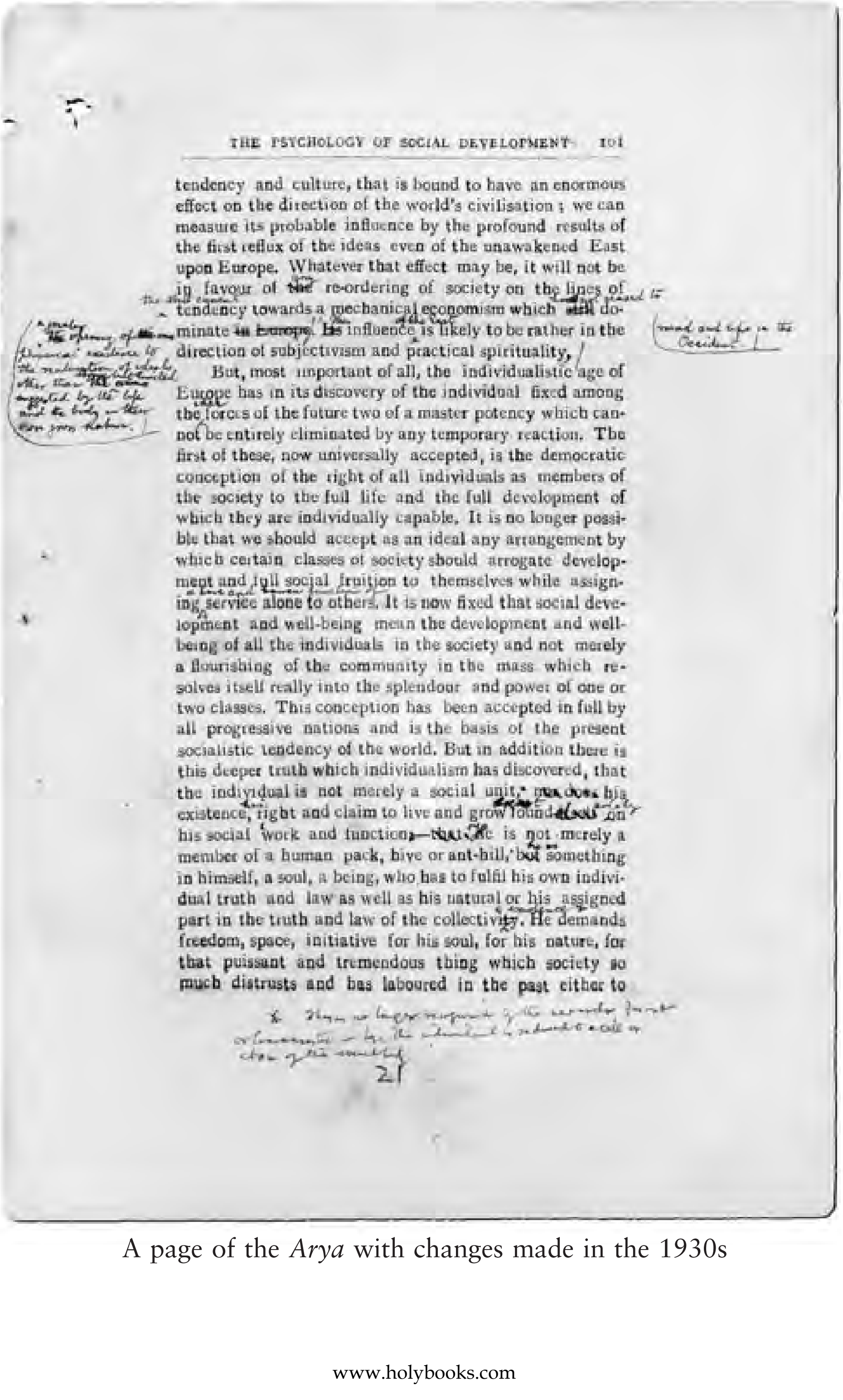

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT 101

tendency and culture, that is bound to have an enormous effect on the direction of the world's civilisation; we can measure its probable influence by the profound results of the first reflux of the ideas even of the unawakened East upon Europe. Whatever that effect may be, it will not be in favour of ~~the~~ re-ordering of society on the lines of the still dominant tendency towards a mechanical economism which ~~still~~ dominate ~~in Europe~~. ~~Its~~ influence of the East is likely to be rather in the direction of subjectivism and practical spirituality,

mind and life in the Occident

a secular [illegible] the efficiency of the [illegible] physical existence to the realisation of ideals other than [illegible] suggested by the life and the body in their own gross Nature.

But, most important of all, the individualistic age of Europe has in its discovery of the individual fixed among the forces of the future two of a master potency which cannot be entirely eliminated by any temporary reaction. The first of these, now universally accepted, is the democratic conception of the right of all individuals as members of the society to the full life and the full development of which they are individually capable. It is no longer possible that we should accept as an ideal any arrangement by which certain classes of society should arrogate development and full social fruition to themselves while assigning service alone to others. It is now fixed that social development and well-being mean the development and well-being of all the individuals in the society and not merely a flourishing of the community in the mass which resolves itself really into the splendour and power of one or two classes. This conception has been accepted in full by all progressive nations and is the basis of the present socialistic tendency of the world. But in addition there is this deeper truth which individualism has discovered, that the individual is not merely a social unit,* ~~nor does~~ his existence, right and claim to live and grow found~~ed~~ ~~solely~~ on his social work and function,—~~that~~ He is not merely a member of a human pack, hive or ant-hill, ~~but~~ something in himself, a soul, a being, who has to fulfil his own individual truth and law as well as his natural or his assigned part in the truth and law of the collectivity. He demands freedom, space, initiative for his soul, for his nature, for that puissant and tremendous thing which society so much distrusts and has laboured in the past either to

& [illegible] no longer [illegible] of the [illegible] or [illegible] by the individual [illegible] a cell or class of the community

21

A page of the *Arya* with changes made in the 1930s

The Human Cycle

Publisher's Note to the First Edition

The chapters constituting this book were written under the title "The Psychology of Social Development" from month to month in the philosophical monthly, "Arya", from August 15, 1916 to July 15, 1918 and used recent and contemporary events as well as illustrations from the history of the past in explanation of the theory of social evolution put forward in these pages. The reader has therefore to go back in his mind to the events of that period in order to follow the line of thought and the atmosphere in which it developed. At one time there suggested itself the necessity of bringing this part up to date, especially by some reference to later developments in Nazi Germany and the development of a totalitarian Communist regime in Russia. But afterwards it was felt that there was sufficient prevision and allusion to these events and more elaborate description or criticism of them was not essential; there was already without them an adequate working out and elucidation of this theory of the social cycle.

November, 1949

Chapter I

The Cycle of Society

MODERN Science, obsessed with the greatness of its physical discoveries and the idea of the sole existence of Matter, has long attempted to base upon physical data even its study of Soul and Mind and of those workings of Nature in man and animal in which a knowledge of psychology is as important as any of the physical sciences. Its very psychology founded itself upon physiology and the scrutiny of the brain and nervous system. It is not surprising therefore that in history and sociology attention should have been concentrated on the external data, laws, institutions, rites, customs, economic factors and developments, while the deeper psychological elements so important in the activities of a mental, emotional, ideative being like man have been very much neglected. This kind of science would explain history and social development as much as possible by economic necessity or motive, — by economy understood in its widest sense. There are even historians who deny or put aside as of a very subsidiary importance the working of the idea and the influence of the thinker in the development of human institutions. The French Revolution, it is thought, would have happened just as it did and when it did, by economic necessity, even if Rousseau and Voltaire had never written and the eighteenth-century philosophic movement in the world of thought had never worked out its bold and radical speculations.

Recently, however, the all-sufficiency of Matter to explain Mind and Soul has begun to be doubted and a movement of emancipation from the obsession of physical science has set in, although as yet it has not gone beyond a few awkward and rudimentary stumblings. Still there is the beginning of a perception that behind the economic motives and causes of social and historical development there are profound psychological, even perhaps soul factors; and in pre-war Germany, the metropolis of rationalism and materialism but the home also, for a century and a half, of new thought and original tendencies good and bad, beneficent and disastrous, a first psychological theory of history was conceived and presented by an original intelligence. The earliest attempts in a new field are seldom entirely successful, and the German historian, originator of this theory, seized on a luminous idea, but was not able to carry it very far or probe very deep. He was still haunted by a sense of the greater importance of the economic factor, and like most European science his theory related, classified and organised phenomena much more successfully than it explained them. Nevertheless, its basic idea formulated a suggestive and illuminating truth, and it is worth while following up some of the suggestions it opens out in the light especially of Eastern thought and experience.

The theorist, Lamprecht, basing himself on European and particularly on German history, supposed that human society progresses through certain distinct psychological stages which he terms respectively symbolic, typal and conventional, individualist and subjective. This development forms, then, a sort of psychological cycle through which a nation or a civilisation is bound to proceed. Obviously, such classifications are likely to err by rigidity and to substitute a mental straight line for the coils and zigzags of Nature. The psychology of man and his societies is too complex, too synthetical of many-sided and intermixed tendencies to satisfy any such rigorous and formal analysis. Nor does this theory of a psychological cycle tell us what is the inner meaning of its successive phases or the necessity of their succession or the term and end towards which they are driving. But still to understand natural laws whether of Mind or Matter it is necessary to analyse their working into its discoverable elements, main constituents, dominant forces, though these may not actually be found anywhere in isolation. I will leave aside the Western thinker's own dealings with his idea. The suggestive names he has offered us, if we examine their intrinsic sense and value, may yet throw some light on the thickly veiled secret of our historic evolution, and this is the line on which it would be most useful to investigate.

Undoubtedly, wherever we can seize human society in what to us seems its primitive beginnings or early stages, — no matter whether the race is comparatively cultured or savage or economically advanced or backward, — we do find a strongly symbolic mentality that governs or at least pervades its thought, customs and institutions. Symbolic, but of what? We find that this social stage is always religious and actively imaginative in its religion; for symbolism and a widespread imaginative or intuitive religious feeling have a natural kinship and especially in earlier or primitive formations they have gone always together. When man begins to be predominantly intellectual, sceptical, ratiocinative he is already preparing for an individualist society and the age of symbols and the age of conventions have passed or are losing their virtue. The symbol then is of something which man feels to be present behind himself and his life and his activities, — the Divine, the Gods, the vast and deep unnameable, a hidden, living and mysterious nature of things. All his religious and social institutions, all the moments and phases of his life are to him symbols in which he seeks to express what he knows or guesses of the mystic influences that are behind his life and shape and govern or at the least intervene in its movements.

If we look at the beginnings of Indian society, the far-off Vedic age which we no longer understand, for we have lost that mentality, we see that everything is symbolic. The religious institution of sacrifice governs the whole society and all its hours and moments, and the ritual of the sacrifice is at every turn and in every detail, as even a cursory study of the Brahmanas and Upanishads ought to show us, mystically symbolic. The theory that there was nothing in the sacrifice except a propitiation of Nature-gods for the gaining of worldly prosperity and of Paradise, is a misunderstanding by a later humanity which had already become profoundly affected by an intellectual and practical bent of mind, practical even in its religion and even in its own mysticism and symbolism, and therefore could no longer enter into the ancient spirit. Not only the actual religious worship but also the social institutions of the time were penetrated through and through with the symbolic spirit. Take the hymn of the Rig Veda which is supposed to be a marriage hymn for the union of a human couple and was certainly used as such in the later Vedic ages. Yet the whole sense of the hymn turns about the successive marriages of Suryā, daughter of the Sun, with different gods and the human marriage is quite a subordinate matter overshadowed and governed entirely by the divine and mystic figure and is spoken of in the terms of that figure. Mark, however, that the divine marriage here is not, as it would be in later ancient poetry, a decorative image or poetical ornamentation used to set off and embellish the human union; on the contrary, the human is an inferior figure and image of the divine. The distinction marks off the entire contrast between that more ancient mentality and our modern regard upon things. This symbolism influenced for a long time Indian ideas of marriage and is even now conventionally remembered though no longer understood or effective.

We may note also in passing that the Indian ideal of the relation between man and woman has always been governed by the symbolism of the relation between the Purusha and Prakriti (in the Veda Nri and Gna), the male and female divine Principles in the universe. Even, there is to some degree a practical correlation between the position of the female sex and this idea. In the earlier Vedic times when the female principle stood on a sort of equality with the male in the symbolic cult, though with a certain predominance for the latter, woman was as much the mate as the adjunct of man; in later times when the Prakriti has become subject in idea to the Purusha, the woman also depends entirely on the man, exists only for him and has hardly even a separate spiritual existence. In the Tantrik Shakta religion which puts the female principle highest, there is an attempt which could not get itself translated into social practice, — even as this Tantrik cult could never entirely shake off the subjugation of the Vedantic idea, — to elevate woman and make her an object of profound respect and even of worship.

Or let us take, for this example will serve us best, the Vedic institution of the fourfold order, *caturvarṇa*, miscalled the system of the four castes, — for caste is a conventional, *varṇa* a symbolic and typal institution. We are told that the institution of the four orders of society was the result of an economic evolution complicated by political causes. Very possibly;[1] but the important point is that it was not so regarded and could not be so regarded by the men of that age. For while we are satisfied when we have found the practical and material causes of a social phenomenon and do not care to look farther, they cared little or only subordinately for its material factors and looked always first and foremost for its symbolic, religious or psychological significance. This appears in the Purushasukta of the Veda, where the four orders are described as having sprung from the body of the creative Deity, from his head, arms, thighs and feet. To us this is merely a poetical image and its sense is that the Brahmins were the men of knowledge, the Kshatriyas the men of power, the Vaishyas the producers and support of society, the Shudras its servants. As if that were all, as if the men of those days would have so profound a reverence for mere poetical figures like this of the body of Brahma or that other of the marriages of Suryā, would have built upon them elaborate systems of ritual and sacred ceremony, enduring institutions, great demarcations of social type and ethical discipline. We read always our own mentality into that of these ancient forefathers and it is therefore that we can find in them nothing but imaginative barbarians. To us poetry is a revel of intellect and fancy, imagination a plaything and caterer for our amusement, our entertainer, the nautch-girl of the mind. But to the men of old the poet was a seer, a revealer of hidden truths, imagination no dancing courtesan but a priestess in God's house commissioned not to spin fictions but to image difficult and hidden truths; even the metaphor or simile in the Vedic style is used with a serious purpose and expected to convey a reality, not to suggest a pleasing artifice of thought. The image was to these seers a revelative symbol of the unrevealed and it was used because it could hint luminously to the mind what the precise intellectual word, apt only for logical or practical thought or to express the physical and the superficial, could not at all hope to manifest. To them this symbol of the Creator's body was more than an image, it expressed a divine reality. Human society was for them an attempt to express in life the cosmic Purusha who has expressed himself otherwise in the material and the supraphysical universe. Man and the cosmos are both of them symbols and expressions of the same hidden Reality.

---

[1] It is at least doubtful. The Brahmin class at first seem to have exercised all sorts of economic functions and not to have confined themselves to those of the priesthood.

From this symbolic attitude came the tendency to make everything in society a sacrament, religious and sacrosanct, but as yet with a large and vigorous freedom in all its forms, — a freedom which we do not find in the rigidity of "savage" communities because these have already passed out of the symbolic into the conventional stage though on a curve of degeneration instead of a curve of growth. The spiritual idea governs all; the symbolic religious forms which support it are fixed in principle; the social forms are lax, free and capable of infinite development. One thing, however, begins to progress towards a firm fixity and this is the psychological type. Thus we have first the symbolic idea of the four orders, expressing — to employ an abstractly figurative language which the Vedic thinkers would not have used nor perhaps understood, but which helps best our modern understanding — the Divine as knowledge in man, the Divine as power, the Divine as production, enjoyment and mutuality, the Divine as service, obedience and work. These divisions answer to four cosmic principles, the Wisdom that conceives the order and principle of things, the Power that sanctions, upholds and enforces it, the Harmony that creates the arrangement of its parts, the Work that carries out what the rest direct. Next, out of this idea there developed a firm but not yet rigid social order based primarily upon temperament and psychic type[2] with a corresponding ethical discipline and secondarily upon the social and economic function.[3] But the function was determined by its suitability to the type and its helpfulness to the discipline; it was not the primary or sole factor. The first, the symbolic stage of this evolution is predominantly religious and spiritual; the other elements, psychological, ethical, economic, physical are there but subordinated to the spiritual and religious idea. The second stage, which we may call the typal, is predominantly psychological and ethical; all else, even the spiritual and religious, is subordinate to the psychological idea and to the ethical ideal which expresses it. Religion becomes then a mystic sanction for the ethical motive and discipline, Dharma; that becomes its chief social utility, and for the rest it takes a more and more other-worldly turn. The idea of the direct expression of the divine Being or cosmic Principle in man ceases to dominate or to be the leader and in the forefront; it recedes, stands in the background and finally disappears from the practice and in the end even from the theory of life.

---

[2] *guṇa.*

[3] *karma.*

This typal stage creates the great social ideals which remain impressed upon the human mind even when the stage itself is passed. The principal active contribution it leaves behind when it is dead is the idea of social honour; the honour of the Brahmin which resides in purity, in piety, in a high reverence for the things of the mind and spirit and a disinterested possession and exclusive pursuit of learning and knowledge; the honour of the Kshatriya which lives in courage, chivalry, strength, a certain proud self-restraint and self-mastery, nobility of character and the obligations of that nobility; the honour of the Vaishya which maintains itself by rectitude of dealing, mercantile fidelity, sound production, order, liberality and philanthropy; the honour of the Shudra which gives itself in obedience, subordination, faithful service, a disinterested attachment. But these more and more cease to have a living root in the clear psychological idea or to spring naturally out of the inner life of the man; they become a convention, though the most noble of conventions. In the end they remain more as a tradition in the thought and on the lips than a reality of the life.

For the typal passes naturally into the conventional stage. The conventional stage of human society is born when the external supports, the outward expressions of the spirit or the ideal become more important than the ideal, the body or even the clothes more important than the person. Thus in the evolution of caste, the outward supports of the ethical fourfold order, — birth, economic function, religious ritual and sacrament, family custom, — each began to exaggerate enormously its proportions and its importance in the scheme. At first, birth does not seem to have been of the first importance in the social order, for faculty and capacity prevailed; but afterwards, as the type fixed itself, its maintenance by education and tradition became necessary and education and tradition naturally fixed themselves in a hereditary groove. Thus the son of a Brahmin came always to be looked upon conventionally as a Brahmin; birth and profession were together the double bond of the hereditary convention at the time when it was most firm and faithful to its own character. This rigidity once established, the maintenance of the ethical type passed from the first place to a secondary or even a quite tertiary importance. Once the very basis of the system, it came now to be a not indispensable crown or pendent tassel, insisted upon indeed by the thinker and the ideal code-maker but not by the actual rule of society or its practice. Once ceasing to be indispensable, it came inevitably to be dispensed with except as an ornamental fiction. Finally, even the economic basis began to disintegrate; birth, family custom and remnants, deformations, new accretions of meaningless or fanciful religious sign and ritual, the very scarecrow and caricature of the old profound symbolism, became the riveting links of the system of caste in the iron age of the old society. In the full economic period of caste the priest and the Pundit masquerade under the name of the Brahmin, the aristocrat and feudal baron under the name of the Kshatriya, the trader and money-getter under the name of the Vaishya, the half-fed labourer and economic serf under the name of the Shudra. When the economic basis also breaks down, then the unclean and diseased decrepitude of the old system has begun; it has become a name, a shell, a sham and must either be dissolved in the crucible of an individualist period of society or else fatally affect with weakness and falsehood the system of life that clings to it. That in visible fact is the last and present state of the caste system in India.

The tendency of the conventional age of society is to fix, to arrange firmly, to formalise, to erect a system of rigid grades and hierarchies, to stereotype religion, to bind education and training to a traditional and unchangeable form, to subject thought to infallible authorities, to cast a stamp of finality on what seems to it the finished life of man. The conventional period of society has its golden age when the spirit and thought that inspired its forms are confined but yet living, not yet altogether walled in, not yet stifled to death and petrified by the growing hardness of the structure in which they are cased. That golden age is often very beautiful and attractive to the distant view of posterity by its precise order, symmetry, fine social architecture, the admirable subordination of its parts to a general and noble plan. Thus at one time the modern litterateur, artist or thinker looked back often with admiration and with something like longing to the mediaeval age of Europe; he forgot in its distant appearance of poetry, nobility, spirituality the much folly, ignorance, iniquity, cruelty and oppression of those harsh ages, the suffering and revolt that simmered below these fine surfaces, the misery and squalor that was hidden behind that splendid façade. So too the Hindu orthodox idealist looks back to a perfectly regulated society devoutly obedient to the wise yoke of the Shastra, and that is his golden age, — a nobler one than the European in which the apparent gold was mostly hard burnished copper with a thin gold-leaf covering it, but still of an alloyed metal, not the true Satya Yuga. In these conventional periods of society there is much indeed that is really fine and sound and helpful to human progress, but still they are its copper age and not the true golden; they are the age when the Truth we strive to arrive at is not realised, not accomplished,[4] but the exiguity of it eked out or its full appearance imitated by an artistic form, and what we have of the reality has begun to fossilise and is doomed to be lost in a hard mass of rule and order and convention.

For always the form prevails and the spirit recedes and diminishes. It attempts indeed to return, to revive the form, to modify it, anyhow to survive and even to make the form survive; but the time-tendency is too strong. This is visible in the history of religion; the efforts of the saints and religious reformers become progressively more scattered, brief and superficial in their actual effects, however strong and vital the impulse. We see this recession in the growing darkness and weakness of India in her last millennium; the constant effort of the most powerful spiritual personalities kept the soul of the people alive but failed to resuscitate the ancient free force and truth and vigour or permanently revivify a conventionalised and stagnating society; in a generation or two the iron grip of that conventionalism has always fallen on the new movement and annexed the names of its founders. We see it in Europe in the repeated moral tragedy of ecclesiasticism and Catholic monasticism. Then there arrives a period when the gulf between the convention and the truth becomes intolerable and the men of intellectual power arise, the great "swallowers of formulas", who, rejecting robustly or fiercely or with the calm light of reason symbol and type and convention, strike at the walls of the prison-house and seek by the individual reason, moral sense or emotional desire the Truth that society has lost or buried in its whited sepulchres. It is then that the individualistic age of religion and thought and society is created; the Age of Protestantism has begun, the Age of Reason, the Age of Revolt, Progress, Freedom. A partial and external freedom, still betrayed by the conventional age that preceded it into the idea that the Truth can be found in outsides, dreaming vainly that perfection can be determined by machinery, but still a necessary passage to the subjective period of humanity through which man has to circle back towards the recovery of his deeper self and a new upward line or a new revolving cycle of civilisation.

---

[4] The Indian names of the golden age are Satya, the Age of the Truth, and Krita, the Age when the law of the Truth is accomplished.

Chapter II

The Age of Individualism and Reason

AN INDIVIDUALISTIC age of human society comes as a result of the corruption and failure of the conventional, as a revolt against the reign of the petrified typal figure. Before it can be born it is necessary that the old truths shall have been lost in the soul and practice of the race and that even the conventions which ape and replace them shall have become devoid of real sense and intelligence; stripped of all practical justification, they exist only mechanically by fixed idea, by the force of custom, by attachment to the form. It is then that men in spite of the natural conservatism of the social mind are compelled at last to perceive that the Truth is dead in them and that they are living by a lie. The individualism of the new age is an attempt to get back from conventionalism of belief and practice to some solid bed-rock, no matter what, of real and tangible Truth. And it is necessarily individualistic, because all the old general standards have become bankrupt and can no longer give any inner help; it is therefore the individual who has to become a discoverer, a pioneer, and to search out by his individual reason, intuition, idealism, desire, claim upon life or whatever other light he finds in himself the true law of the world and of his own being. By that, when he has found or thinks he has found it, he will strive to rebase on a firm foundation and remould in a more vital even if a poorer form religion, society, ethics, political institutions, his relations with his fellows, his strivings for his own perfection and his labour for mankind.

It is in Europe that the age of individualism has taken birth and exercised its full sway; the East has entered into it only by contact and influence, not from an original impulse. And it is to its passion for the discovery of the actual truth of things and for the governing of human life by whatever law of the truth it has found that the West owes its centuries of strength, vigour, light, progress, irresistible expansion. Equally, it is due not to any original falsehood in the ideals on which its life was founded, but to the loss of the living sense of the Truth it once held and its long contented slumber in the cramping bonds of a mechanical conventionalism that the East has found itself helpless in the hour of its awakening, a giant empty of strength, inert masses of men who had forgotten how to deal freely with facts and forces because they had learned only how to live in a world of stereotyped thought and customary action. Yet the truths which Europe has found by its individualistic age covered only the first more obvious, physical and outward facts of life and only such of their more hidden realities and powers as the habit of analytical reason and the pursuit of practical utility can give to man. If its rationalistic civilisation has swept so triumphantly over the world, it is because it found no deeper and more powerful truth to confront it; for all the rest of mankind was still in the inactivity of the last dark hours of the conventional age.

The individualistic age of Europe was in its beginning a revolt of reason, in its culmination a triumphal progress of physical Science. Such an evolution was historically inevitable. The dawn of individualism is always a questioning, a denial. The individual finds a religion imposed upon him which does not base its dogma and practice upon a living sense of ever verifiable spiritual Truth, but on the letter of an ancient book, the infallible dictum of a Pope, the tradition of a Church, the learned casuistry of schoolmen and Pundits, conclaves of ecclesiastics, heads of monastic orders, doctors of all sorts, all of them unquestionable tribunals whose sole function is to judge and pronounce, but none of whom seems to think it necessary or even allowable to search, test, prove, inquire, discover. He finds that, as is inevitable under such a regime, true science and knowledge are either banned, punished and persecuted or else rendered obsolete by the habit of blind reliance on fixed authorities; even what is true in old authorities is no longer of any value, because its words are learnedly or ignorantly repeated but its real sense is no longer lived except at most by a few. In politics he finds everywhere divine rights, established privileges, sanctified tyrannies which are evidently armed with an oppressive power and justify themselves by long prescription, but seem to have no real claim or title to exist. In the social order he finds an equally stereotyped reign of convention, fixed disabilities, fixed privileges, the self-regarding arrogance of the high, the blind prostration of the low, while the old functions which might have justified at one time such a distribution of status are either not performed at all or badly performed without any sense of obligation and merely as a part of caste pride. He has to rise in revolt; on every claim of authority he has to turn the eye of a resolute inquisition; when he is told that this is the sacred truth of things or the command of God or the immemorial order of human life, he has to reply, "But is it really so? How shall I know that this is the truth of things and not superstition and falsehood? When did God command it, or how do I know that this was the sense of His command and not your error or invention, or that the book on which you found yourself is His word at all, or that He has ever spoken His will to mankind? This immemorial order of which you speak, is it really immemorial, really a law of Nature or an imperfect result of Time and at present a most false convention? And of all you say, still I must ask, does it agree with the facts of the world, with my sense of right, with my judgment of truth, with my experience of reality?" And if it does not, the revolting individual flings off the yoke, declares the truth as he sees it and in doing so strikes inevitably at the root of the religious, the social, the political, momentarily perhaps even the moral order of the community as it stands, because it stands upon the authority he discredits and the convention he destroys and not upon a living truth which can be successfully opposed to his own. The champions of the old order may be right when they seek to suppress him as a destructive agency perilous to social security, political order or religious tradition; but he stands there and can no other, because to destroy is his mission, to destroy falsehood and lay bare a new foundation of truth.

But by what individual faculty or standard shall the innovator find out his new foundation or establish his new measures? Evidently, it will depend upon the available enlightenment of the time and the possible forms of knowledge to which he has access. At first it was in religion a personal illumination supported in the West by a theological, in the East by a philosophical reasoning. In society and politics it started with a crude primitive perception of natural right and justice which took its origin from the exasperation of suffering or from an awakened sense of general oppression, wrong, injustice and the indefensibility of the existing order when brought to any other test than that of privilege and established convention. The religious motive led at first; the social and political, moderating itself after the swift suppression of its first crude and vehement movements, took advantage of the upheaval of religious reformation, followed behind it as a useful ally and waited its time to assume the lead when the spiritual momentum had been spent and, perhaps by the very force of the secular influences it called to its aid, had missed its way. The movement of religious freedom in Europe took its stand first on a limited, then on an absolute right of the individual experience and illumined reason to determine the true sense of inspired Scripture and the true Christian ritual and order of the Church. The vehemence of its claim was measured by the vehemence of its revolt from the usurpations, pretensions and brutalities of the ecclesiastical power which claimed to withhold the Scripture from general knowledge and impose by moral authority and physical violence its own arbitrary interpretation of Sacred Writ, if not indeed another and substituted doctrine, on the recalcitrant individual conscience. In its more tepid and moderate forms the revolt engendered such compromises as the Episcopalian Churches, at a higher degree of fervour Calvinistic Puritanism, at white heat a riot of individual religious judgment and imagination in such sects as the Anabaptist, Independent, Socinian and countless others. In the East such a movement divorced from all political or any strongly iconoclastic social significance would have produced simply a series of religious reformers, illumined saints, new bodies of belief with their appropriate cultural and social practice; in the West atheism and secularism were its inevitable and predestined goal. At first questioning the conventional forms of religion, the mediation of the priesthood between God and the soul and the substitution of Papal authority for the authority of the Scripture, it could not fail to go forward and question the Scripture itself and then all supernaturalism, religious belief or suprarational truth no less than outward creed and institute.

For, eventually, the evolution of Europe was determined less by the Reformation than by the Renascence; it flowered by the vigorous return of the ancient Graeco-Roman mentality of the one rather than by the Hebraic and religio-ethical temperament of the other. The Renascence gave back to Europe on one hand the free curiosity of the Greek mind, its eager search for first principles and rational laws, its delighted intellectual scrutiny of the facts of life by the force of direct observation and individual reasoning, on the other the Roman's large practicality and his sense for the ordering of life in harmony with a robust utility and the just principles of things. But both these tendencies were pursued with a passion, a seriousness, a moral and almost religious ardour which, lacking in the ancient Graeco-Roman mentality, Europe owed to her long centuries of Judaeo-Christian discipline. It was from these sources that the individualistic age of Western society sought ultimately for that principle of order and control which all human society needs and which more ancient times attempted to realise first by the materialisation of fixed symbols of truth, then by ethical type and discipline, finally by infallible authority or stereotyped convention.

Manifestly, the unrestrained use of individual illumination or judgment without either any outer standard or any generally recognisable source of truth is a perilous experiment for our imperfect race. It is likely to lead rather to a continual fluctuation and disorder of opinion than to a progressive unfolding of the truth of things. No less, the pursuit of social justice through the stark assertion of individual rights or class interests and desires must be a source of continual struggle and revolution and may end in an exaggerated assertion of the will in each to live his own life and to satisfy his own ideas and desires which will produce a serious malaise or a radical trouble in the social body. Therefore on every individualistic age of mankind there is imperative the search for two supreme desiderata. It must find a general standard of Truth to which the individual judgment of all will be inwardly compelled to subscribe without physical constraint or imposition of irrational authority. And it must reach too some principle of social order which shall be equally founded on a universally recognisable truth of things; an order is needed that will put a rein on desire and interest by providing at least some intellectual and moral test which these two powerful and dangerous forces must satisfy before they can feel justified in asserting their claims on life. Speculative and scientific reason for their means, the pursuit of a practicable social justice and sound utility for their spirit, the progressive nations of Europe set out on their search for this light and this law.

They found and held it with enthusiasm in the discoveries of physical Science. The triumphant domination, the all-shattering and irresistible victory of Science in nineteenth-century Europe is explained by the absolute perfection with which it at least seemed for a time to satisfy these great psychological wants of the Western mind. Science seemed to it to fulfil impeccably its search for the two supreme desiderata of an individualistic age. Here at last was a truth of things which depended on no doubtful Scripture or fallible human authority but which Mother Nature herself had written in her eternal book for all to read who had patience to observe and intellectual honesty to judge. Here were laws, principles, fundamental facts of the world and of our being which all could verify at once for themselves and which must therefore satisfy and guide the free individual judgment, delivering it equally from alien compulsion and from erratic self-will. Here were laws and truths which justified and yet controlled the claims and desires of the individual human being; here a science which provided a standard, a norm of knowledge, a rational basis for life, a clear outline and sovereign means for the progress and perfection of the individual and the race. The attempt to govern and organise human life by verifiable Science, by a law, a truth of things, an order and principles which all can observe and verify in their ground and fact and to which therefore all may freely and must rationally subscribe, is the culminating movement of European civilisation. It has been the fulfilment and triumph of the individualistic age of human society; it has seemed likely also to be its end, the cause of the death of individualism and its putting away and burial among the monuments of the past.

For this discovery by individual free-thought of universal laws of which the individual is almost a by-product and by which he must necessarily be governed, this attempt actually to govern the social life of humanity in conscious accordance with the mechanism of these laws seems to lead logically to the suppression of that very individual freedom which made the discovery and the attempt at all possible. In seeking the truth and law of his own being the individual seems to have discovered a truth and law which is not of his own individual being at all, but of the collectivity, the pack, the hive, the mass. The result to which this points and to which it still seems irresistibly to be driving us is a new ordering of society by a rigid economic or governmental Socialism in which the individual, deprived again of his freedom in his own interest and that of humanity, must have his whole life and action determined for him at every step and in every point from birth to old age by the well-ordered mechanism of the State.[1] We might then have a curious new version, with very important differences, of the old Asiatic or even of the old Indian order of society. In place of the religio-ethical sanction there will be a scientific and rational or naturalistic motive and rule; instead of the Brahmin Shastrakara the scientific, administrative and economic expert. In the place of the King himself observing the law and compelling with the aid and consent of the society all to tread without deviation the line marked out for them, the line of the Dharma, there will stand the collectivist State similarly guided and empowered. Instead of a hierarchical arrangement of classes each with its powers, privileges and duties there will be established an initial equality of education and opportunity, ultimately perhaps with a subsequent determination of function by experts who shall know us better than ourselves and choose for us our work and quality. Marriage, generation and the education of the child may be fixed by the scientific State as of old by the Shastra. For each man there will be a long stage of work for the State superintended by collectivist authorities and perhaps in the end a period of liberation, not for action but for enjoyment of leisure and personal self-improvement, answering to the Vanaprastha and Sannyasa Asramas of the old Aryan society. The rigidity of such a social state would greatly surpass that of its Asiatic forerunner; for there at least there were for the rebel, the innovator two important concessions. There was for the individual the freedom of an early Sannyasa, a renunciation of the social for the free spiritual life, and there was for the group the liberty to form a sub-society governed by new conceptions like the Sikh or the Vaishnava. But neither of these violent departures from the norm could be tolerated by a strictly economic and rigorously scientific and unitarian society. Obviously, too, there would grow up a fixed system of social morality and custom and a body of socialistic doctrine which one could not be allowed to question practically, and perhaps not even intellectually, since that would soon shatter or else undermine the system. Thus we should have a new typal order based upon purely economic capacity and function, *guṇakarma*, and rapidly petrifying by the inhibition of individual liberty into a system of rationalistic conventions. And quite certainly this static order would at long last be broken by a new individualist age of revolt, led probably by the principles of an extreme philosophical Anarchism.

---

[1] We already see a violent though incomplete beginning of this line of social evolution in Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, Communist Russia. The trend is for more and more nations to accept this beginning of a new order, and the resistance of the old order is more passive than active — it lacks the fire, enthusiasm and self-confidence which animates the innovating Idea.

On the other hand, there are in operation forces which seem likely to frustrate or modify this development before it can reach its menaced consummation. In the first place, rationalistic and physical Science has overpassed itself and must before long be overtaken by a mounting flood of psychological and psychic knowledge which cannot fail to compel quite a new view of the human being and open a new vista before mankind. At the same time the Age of Reason is visibly drawing to an end; novel ideas are sweeping over the world and are being accepted with a significant rapidity, ideas inevitably subversive of any premature typal order of economic rationalism, dynamic ideas such as Nietzsche's Will-to-live, Bergson's exaltation of Intuition above intellect or the latest German philosophical tendency to acknowledge a suprarational faculty and a suprarational order of truths. Already another mental poise is beginning to settle and conceptions are on the way to apply themselves in the field of practice which promise to give the succession of the individualistic age of society not to a new typal order, but to a subjective age which may well be a great and momentous passage to a very different goal. It may be doubted whether we are not already in the morning twilight of a new period of the human cycle.

Secondly, the West in its triumphant conquest of the world has awakened the slumbering East and has produced in its midst an increasing struggle between an imported Western individualism and the old conventional principle of society. The latter is here rapidly, there slowly breaking down, but something quite different from Western individualism may very well take its place. Some opine, indeed, that Asia will reproduce Europe's Age of Reason with all its materialism and secularist individualism while Europe itself is pushing onward into new forms and ideas; but this is in the last degree improbable. On the contrary, the signs are that the individualistic period in the East will be neither of long duration nor predominantly rationalistic and secularist in its character. If then the East, as the result of its awakening, follows its own bent and evolves a novel social tendency and culture, that is bound to have an enormous effect on the direction of the world's civilisation; we can measure its probable influence by the profound results of the first reflux of the ideas even of the unawakened East upon Europe. Whatever that effect may be, it will not be in favour of any re-ordering of society on the lines of the still current tendency towards a mechanical economism which has not ceased to dominate mind and life in the Occident. The influence of the East is likely to be rather in the direction of subjectivism and practical spirituality, a greater opening of our physical existence to the realisation of ideals other than the strong but limited aims suggested by the life and the body in their own gross nature.

But, most important of all, the individualistic age of Europe has in its discovery of the individual fixed among the idea-forces of the future two of a master potency which cannot be entirely eliminated by any temporary reaction. The first of these, now universally accepted, is the democratic conception of the right of all individuals as members of the society to the full life and the full development of which they are individually capable. It is no longer possible that we should accept as an ideal any arrangement by which certain classes of society should arrogate development and full social fruition to themselves while assigning a bare and barren function of service alone to others. It is now fixed that social development and well-being mean the development and well-being of all the individuals in the society and not merely a flourishing of the community in the mass which resolves itself really into the splendour and power of one or two classes. This conception has been accepted in full by all progressive nations and is the basis of the present socialistic tendency of the world. But in addition there is this deeper truth which individualism has discovered, that the individual is not merely a social unit; his existence, his right and claim to live and grow are not founded solely on his social work and function. He is not merely a member of a human pack, hive or ant-hill; he is something in himself, a soul, a being, who has to fulfil his own individual truth and law as well as his natural or his assigned part in the truth and law of the collective existence.[2] He demands freedom, space, initiative for his soul, for his nature, for that puissant and tremendous thing which society so much distrusts and has laboured in the past either to suppress altogether or to relegate to the purely spiritual field, an individual thought, will and conscience. If he is to merge these eventually, it cannot be into the dominating thought, will and conscience of others, but into something beyond into which he and all must be both allowed and helped freely to grow. That is an idea, a truth which, intellectually recognised and given its full exterior and superficial significance by Europe, agrees at its root with the profoundest and highest spiritual conceptions of Asia and has a large part to play in the moulding of the future.

---

[2] This is no longer recognised by the new order, Fascist or Communistic, — here the individual is reduced to a cell or atom of the social body. "We have destroyed" proclaims a German exponent "the false view that men are individual beings; there is no liberty of individuals, there is only liberty of nations or races."

Chapter III

The Coming of the Subjective Age

THE INHERENT aim and effort and justification, the psychological seed-cause, the whole tendency of development of an individualistic age of mankind, all go back to the one dominant need of rediscovering the substantial truths of life, thought and action which have been overlaid by the falsehood of conventional standards no longer alive to the truth of the ideas from which their conventions started. It would seem at first that the shortest way would be to return to the original ideas themselves for light, to rescue the kernel of their truth from the shell of convention in which it has become incrusted. But to this course there is a great practical obstacle; and there is another which reaches beyond the surface of things, nearer to the deeper principles of the development of the soul in human society. The recovery of the old original ideas now travestied by convention is open to the practical disadvantage that it tends after a time to restore force to the conventions which the Time-Spirit is seeking to outgrow and, if or when the deeper truth-seeking tendency slackens in its impulse, the conventions re-establish their sway. They revive, modified, no doubt, but still powerful; a new incrustation sets in, the truth of things is overlaid by a more complex falsity. And even if it were otherwise, the need of a developing humanity is not to return always to its old ideas. Its need is to progress to a larger fulfilment in which, if the old is taken up, it must be transformed and exceeded. For the underlying truth of things is constant and eternal, but its mental figures, its life forms, its physical embodiments call constantly for growth and change.

It is this principle and necessity that justify an age of individualism and rationalism and make it, however short it may be, an inevitable period in the cycle. A temporary reign of the critical reason largely destructive in its action is an imperative need for human progress. In India, since the great Buddhistic upheaval of the national thought and life, there has been a series of recurrent attempts to rediscover the truth of the soul and life and get behind the veil of stifling conventions; but these have been conducted by a wide and tolerant spiritual reason, a plastic soul-intuition and deep subjective seeking, insufficiently militant and destructive. Although productive of great internal and considerable external changes, they have never succeeded in getting rid of the predominant conventional order. The work of a dissolvent and destructive intellectual criticism, though not entirely absent from some of these movements, has never gone far enough; the constructive force, insufficiently aided by the destructive, has not been able to make a wide and free space for its new formation. It is only with the period of European influence and impact that circumstances and tendencies powerful enough to enforce the beginnings of a new age of radical and effective revaluation of ideas and things have come into existence. The characteristic power of these influences has been throughout — or at any rate till quite recently — rationalistic, utilitarian and individualistic. It has compelled the national mind to view everything from a new, searching and critical standpoint, and even those who seek to preserve the present or restore the past are obliged unconsciously or half-consciously to justify their endeavour from the novel point of view and by its appropriate standards of reasoning. Throughout the East, the subjective Asiatic mind is being driven to adapt itself to the need for changed values of life and thought. It has been forced to turn upon itself both by the pressure of Western knowledge and by the compulsion of a quite changed life-need and life-environment. What it did not do from within, has come on it as a necessity from without and this externality has carried with it an immense advantage as well as great dangers.

The individualistic age is, then, a radical attempt of mankind to discover the truth and law both of the individual being and of the world to which the individual belongs. It may begin, as it began in Europe, with the endeavour to get back, more especially in the sphere of religion, to the original truth which convention has overlaid, defaced or distorted; but from that first step it must proceed to others and in the end to a general questioning of the foundations of thought and practice in all the spheres of human life and action. A revolutionary reconstruction of religion, philosophy, science, art and society is the last inevitable outcome. It proceeds at first by the light of the individual mind and reason, by its demand on life and its experience of life; but it must go from the individual to the universal. For the effort of the individual soon shows him that he cannot securely discover the truth and law of his own being without discovering some universal law and truth to which he can relate it. Of the universe he is a part; in all but his deepest spirit he is its subject, a small cell in that tremendous organic mass: his substance is drawn from its substance and by the law of its life the law of his life is determined and governed. From a new view and knowledge of the world must proceed his new view and knowledge of himself, of his power and capacity and limitations, of his claim on existence and the high road and the distant or immediate goal of his individual and social destiny.

In Europe and in modern times this has taken the form of a clear and potent physical Science: it has proceeded by the discovery of the laws of the physical universe and the economic and sociological conditions of human life as determined by the physical being of man, his environment, his evolutionary history, his physical and vital, his individual and collective need. But after a time it must become apparent that the knowledge of the physical world is not the whole of knowledge; it must appear that man is a mental as well as a physical and vital being and even much more essentially mental than physical or vital. Even though his psychology is strongly affected and limited by his physical being and environment, it is not at its roots determined by them, but constantly reacts, subtly determines their action, effects even their new-shaping by the force of his psychological demand on life. His economic state and social institutions are themselves governed by his psychological demand on the possibilities, circumstances, tendencies created by the relation between the mind and soul of humanity and its life and body. Therefore to find the truth of things and the law of his being in relation to that truth he must go deeper and fathom the subjective secret of himself and things as well as their objective forms and surroundings.

This he may attempt to do for a time by the power of the critical and analytic reason which has already carried him so far; but not for very long. For in his study of himself and the world he cannot but come face to face with the soul in himself and the soul in the world and find it to be an entity so profound, so complex, so full of hidden secrets and powers that his intellectual reason betrays itself as an insufficient light and a fumbling seeker: it is successfully analytical only of superficialities and of what lies just behind the superficies. The need of a deeper knowledge must then turn him to the discovery of new powers and means within himself. He finds that he can only know himself entirely by becoming actively self-conscious and not merely self-critical, by more and more living in his soul and acting out of it rather than floundering on surfaces, by putting himself into conscious harmony with that which lies behind his superficial mentality and psychology and by enlightening his reason and making dynamic his action through this deeper light and power to which he thus opens. In this process the rationalistic ideal begins to subject itself to the ideal of intuitional knowledge and a deeper self-awareness; the utilitarian standard gives way to the aspiration towards self-consciousness and self-realisation; the rule of living according to the manifest laws of physical Nature is replaced by the effort towards living according to the veiled Law and Will and Power active in the life of the world and in the inner and outer life of humanity.

All these tendencies, though in a crude, initial and ill-developed form, are manifest now in the world and are growing from day to day with a significant rapidity. And their emergence and greater dominance means the transition from the rationalistic and utilitarian period of human development which individualism has created to a greater subjective age of society. The change began by a rapid turning of the current of thought into large and profound movements contradictory of the old intellectual standards, a swift breaking of the old tables. The materialism of the nineteenth century gave place first to a novel and profound vitalism which has taken various forms from Nietzsche's theory of the Will to be and Will to Power as the root and law of life to the new pluralistic and pragmatic philosophy which is pluralistic because it has its eye fixed on life rather than on the soul and pragmatic because it seeks to interpret being in the terms of force and action rather than of light and knowledge. These tendencies of thought, which had until yesterday a profound influence on the life and thought of Europe prior to the outbreak of the great War, especially in France and Germany, were not a mere superficial recoil from intellectualism to life and action, — although in their application by lesser minds they often assumed that aspect; they were an attempt to read profoundly and live by the Life-Soul of the universe and tended to be deeply psychological and subjective in their method. From behind them, arising in the void created by the discrediting of the old rationalistic intellectualism, there had begun to arise a new Intuitionalism, not yet clearly aware of its own drive and nature, which seeks through the forms and powers of Life for that which is behind Life and sometimes even lays as yet uncertain hands on the sealed doors of the Spirit.

The art, music and literature of the world, always a sure index of the vital tendencies of the age, have also undergone a profound revolution in the direction of an ever-deepening subjectivism. The great objective art and literature of the past no longer commands the mind of the new age. The first tendency was, as in thought so in literature, an increasing psychological vitalism which sought to represent penetratingly the most subtle psychological impulses and tendencies of man as they started to the surface in his emotional, aesthetic and vitalistic cravings and activities. Composed with great skill and subtlety but without any real insight into the law of man's being, these creations seldom got behind the reverse side of our surface emotions, sensations and actions which they minutely analysed in their details but without any wide or profound light of knowledge; they were perhaps more immediately interesting but ordinarily inferior as art to the old literature which at least seized firmly and with a large and powerful mastery on its province. Often they described the malady of Life rather than its health and power, or the riot and revolt of its cravings, vehement and therefore impotent and unsatisfied, rather than its dynamis of self-expression and self-possession. But to this movement which reached its highest creative power in Russia, there succeeded a turn towards a more truly psychological art, music and literature, mental, intuitional, psychic rather than vitalistic, departing in fact from a superficial vitalism as much as its predecessors departed from the objective mind of the past. This new movement aimed like the new philosophic Intuitionalism at a real rending of the veil, the seizure by the human mind of that which does not overtly express itself, the touch and penetration into the hidden soul of things. Much of it was still infirm, unsubstantial in its grasp on what it pursued, rudimentary in its forms, but it initiated a decisive departure of the human mind from its old moorings and pointed the direction in which it is being piloted on a momentous voyage of discovery, the discovery of a new world within which must eventually bring about the creation of a new world without in life and society. Art and literature seem definitely to have taken a turn towards a subjective search into what may be called the hidden inside of things and away from the rational and objective canon or motive.

Already in the practical dealing with life there are advanced progressive tendencies which take their inspiration from this profounder subjectivism. Nothing indeed has yet been firmly accomplished, all is as yet tentative initiation and the first feeling out towards a material shape for this new spirit. The dominant activities of the world, the great recent events such as the enormous clash of nations in Europe and the stirrings and changes within the nations which preceded and followed it, were rather the result of a confused half struggle half effort at accommodation between the old intellectual and materialistic and the new still superficial subjective and vitalistic impulses in the West. The latter unenlightened by a true inner growth of the soul were necessarily impelled to seize upon the former and utilise them for their unbridled demand upon life; the world was moving towards a monstrously perfect organisation of the Will-to-live and the Will-to-power and it was this that threw itself out in the clash of War and has now found or is finding new forms of life for itself which show better its governing idea and motive. The Asuric or even Rakshasic character of the recent world-collision was due to this formidable combination of a falsely enlightened vitalistic motive-power with a great force of servile intelligence and reasoning contrivance subjected to it as instrument and the genius of an accomplished materialistic Science as its Djinn, its giant worker of huge, gross and soulless miracles. The War was the bursting of the explosive force so created and, even though it strewed the world with ruins, its after results may well have prepared the collapse, as they have certainly produced a disintegrating chaos or at least poignant disorder, of the monstrous combination which produced it, and by that salutary ruin are emptying the field of human life of the principal obstacles to a truer development towards a higher goal.

Behind it all the hope of the race lies in those infant and as yet subordinate tendencies which carry in them the seed of a new subjective and psychic dealing of man with his own being, with his fellow-men and with the ordering of his individual and social life. The characteristic note of these tendencies may be seen in the new ideas about the education and upbringing of the child that became strongly current in the pre-war era. Formerly, education was merely a mechanical forcing of the child's nature into arbitrary grooves of training and knowledge in which his individual subjectivity was the last thing considered, and his family upbringing was a constant repression and compulsory shaping of his habits, his thoughts, his character into the mould fixed for them by the conventional ideas or individual interests and ideals of the teachers and parents. The discovery that education must be a bringing out of the child's own intellectual and moral capacities to their highest possible value and must be based on the psychology of the child-nature was a step forward towards a more healthy because a more subjective system; but it still fell short because it still regarded him as an object to be handled and moulded by the teacher, to be educated. But at least there was a glimmering of the realisation that each human being is a self-developing soul and that the business of both parent and teacher is to enable and to help the child to educate himself, to develop his own intellectual, moral, aesthetic and practical capacities and to grow freely as an organic being, not to be kneaded and pressured into form like an inert plastic material. It is not yet realised what this soul is or that the true secret, whether with child or man, is to help him to find his deeper self, the real psychic entity within. That, if we ever give it a chance to come forward, and still more if we call it into the foreground as "the leader of the march set in our front", will itself take up most of the business of education out of our hands and develop the capacity of the psychological being towards a realisation of its potentialities of which our present mechanical view of life and man and external routine methods of dealing with them prevent us from having any experience or forming any conception. These new educational methods are on the straight way to this truer dealing. The closer touch attempted with the psychical entity behind the vital and physical mentality and an increasing reliance on its possibilities must lead to the ultimate discovery that man is inwardly a soul and a conscious power of the Divine and that the evocation of this real man within is the right object of education and indeed of all human life if it would find and live according to the hidden Truth and deepest law of its own being. That was the knowledge which the ancients sought to express through religious and social symbolism, and subjectivism is a road of return to the lost knowledge. First deepening man's inner experience, restoring perhaps on an unprecedented scale insight and self-knowledge to the race, it must end by revolutionising his social and collective self-expression.

Meanwhile, the nascent subjectivism preparative of the new age has shown itself not so much in the relations of individuals or in the dominant ideas and tendencies of social development, which are still largely rationalistic and materialistic and only vaguely touched by the deeper subjective tendency, but in the new collective self-consciousness of man in that organic mass of his life which he has most firmly developed in the past, the nation. It is here that it has already begun to produce powerful results whether as a vitalistic or as a psychical subjectivism, and it is here that we shall see most clearly what is its actual drift, its deficiencies, its dangers as well as the true purpose and conditions of a subjective age of humanity and the goal towards which the social cycle, entering this phase, is intended to arrive in its wide revolution.

Chapter IV

The Discovery of the Nation-Soul

THE PRIMAL law and purpose of the individual life is to seek its own self-development. Consciously or half-consciously or with an obscure unconscious groping it strives always and rightly strives at self-formulation, — to find itself, to discover within itself the law and power of its own being and to fulfil it. This aim in it is fundamental, right, inevitable because, even after all qualifications have been made and caveats entered, the individual is not merely the ephemeral physical creature, a form of mind and body that aggregates and dissolves, but a being, a living power of the eternal Truth, a self-manifesting spirit. In the same way the primal law and purpose of a society, community or nation is to seek its own self-fulfilment; it strives rightly to find itself, to become aware within itself of the law and power of its own being and to fulfil it as perfectly as possible, to realise all its potentialities, to live its own self-revealing life. The reason is the same; for this too is a being, a living power of the eternal Truth, a self-manifestation of the cosmic Spirit, and it is there to express and fulfil in its own way and to the degree of its capacities the special truth and power and meaning of the cosmic Spirit that is within it. The nation or society, like the individual, has a body, an organic life, a moral and aesthetic temperament, a developing mind and a soul behind all these signs and powers for the sake of which they exist. One may say even that, like the individual, it essentially is a soul rather than has one; it is a group-soul that, once having attained to a separate distinctness, must become more and more self-conscious and find itself more and more fully as it develops its corporate action and mentality and its organic self-expressive life.

The parallel is just at every turn because it is more than a parallel; it is a real identity of nature. There is only this difference that the group-soul is much more complex because it has a great number of partly self-conscious mental individuals for the constituents of its physical being instead of an association of merely vital subconscious cells. At first, for this very reason, it seems more crude, primitive and artificial in the forms it takes; for it has a more difficult task before it, it needs a longer time to find itself, it is more fluid and less easily organic. When it does succeed in getting out of the stage of vaguely conscious self-formation, its first definite self-consciousness is objective much more than subjective. And so far as it is subjective, it is apt to be superficial or loose and vague. This objectiveness comes out very strongly in the ordinary emotional conception of the nation which centres round its geographical, its most outward and material aspect, the passion for the land in which we dwell, the land of our fathers, the land of our birth, *country*, *patria*, *vaterland*, *janma-bhūmi*. When we realise that the land is only the shell of the body, though a very living shell indeed and potent in its influences on the nation, when we begin to feel that its more real body is the men and women who compose the nation-unit, a body ever changing, yet always the same like that of the individual man, we are on the way to a truly subjective communal consciousness. For then we have some chance of realising that even the physical being of the society is a subjective power, not a mere objective existence. Much more is it in its inner self a great corporate soul with all the possibilities and dangers of the soul-life.

The objective view of society has reigned throughout the historical period of humanity in the West; it has been sufficiently strong though not absolutely engrossing in the East. Rulers, people and thinkers alike have understood by their national existence a political status, the extent of their borders, their economic well-being and expansion, their laws, institutions and the working of these things. For this reason political and economic motives have everywhere predominated on the surface and history has been a record of their operations and influence. The one subjective and psychological force consciously admitted and with difficulty deniable has been that of the individual. This predominance is so great that most modern historians and some political thinkers have concluded that objective necessities are by law of Nature the only really determining forces, all else is result or superficial accidents of these forces. Scientific history has been conceived as if it must be a record and appreciation of the environmental motives of political action, of the play of economic forces and developments and the course of institutional evolution. The few who still valued the psychological element have kept their eye fixed on individuals and are not far from conceiving of history as a mass of biographies. The truer and more comprehensive science of the future will see that these conditions only apply to the imperfectly self-conscious period of national development. Even then there was always a greater subjective force working behind individuals, policies, economic movements and the change of institutions; but it worked for the most part subconsciously, more as a subliminal self than as a conscious mind. It is when this subconscious power of the group-soul comes to the surface that nations begin to enter into possession of their subjective selves; they set about getting, however vaguely or imperfectly, at their souls.

Certainly, there is always a vague sense of this subjective existence at work even on the surface of the communal mentality. But so far as this vague sense becomes at all definite, it concerns itself mostly with details and unessentials, national idiosyncrasies, habits, prejudices, marked mental tendencies. It is, so to speak, an objective sense of subjectivity. As man has been accustomed to look on himself as a body and a life, the physical animal with a certain moral or immoral temperament, and the things of the mind have been regarded as a fine flower and attainment of the physical life rather than themselves anything essential or the sign of something essential, so and much more has the community regarded that small part of its subjective self of which it becomes aware. It clings indeed always to its idiosyncrasies, habits, prejudices, but in a blind objective fashion, insisting on their most external aspect and not at all going behind them to that for which they stand, that which they try blindly to express.

This has been the rule not only with the nation, but with all communities. A Church is an organised religious community and religion, if anything in the world, ought to be subjective; for its very reason for existence — where it is not merely an ethical creed with a supernatural authority — is to find and realise the soul. Yet religious history has been almost entirely, except in the time of the founders and their immediate successors, an insistence on things objective, rites, ceremonies, authority, church governments, dogmas, forms of belief. Witness the whole external religious history of Europe, that strange sacrilegious tragi-comedy of discords, sanguinary disputations, "religious" wars, persecutions, State churches and all else that is the very negation of the spiritual life. It is only recently that men have begun seriously to consider what Christianity, Catholicism, Islam really mean and are in their soul, that is to say, in their very reality and essence.

But now we have, very remarkably, very swiftly coming to the surface this new psychological tendency of the communal consciousness. Now first we hear of the soul of a nation and, what is more to the purpose, actually see nations feeling for their souls, trying to find them, seriously endeavouring to act from the new sense and make it consciously operative in the common life and action. It is only natural that this tendency should have been, for the most part, most powerful in new nations or in those struggling to realise themselves in spite of political subjection or defeat. For these need more to feel the difference between themselves and others so that they may assert and justify their individuality as against the powerful superlife which tends to absorb or efface it. And precisely because their objective life is feeble and it is difficult to affirm it by its own strength in the adverse circumstances, there is more chance of their seeking for their individuality and its force of self-assertion in that which is subjective and psychological or at least in that which has a subjective or a psychological significance.

Therefore in nations so circumstanced this tendency of self-finding has been most powerful and has even created in some of them a new type of national movement, as in Ireland and India. This and no other was the root-meaning of Swadeshism in Bengal and of the Irish movement in its earlier less purely political stages. The emergence of Bengal as a sub-nation in India was throughout a strongly subjective movement and in its later development it became very consciously that. The movement of 1905 in Bengal pursued a quite new conception of the nation not merely as a country, but a soul, a psychological, almost a spiritual being and, even when acting from economical and political motives, it sought to dynamise them by this subjective conception and to make them instruments of self-expression rather than objects in themselves. We must not forget, however, that in the first stages these movements followed in their superficial thought the old motives of an objective and mostly political self-consciousness. The East indeed is always more subjective than the West and we can see the subjective tinge even in its political movements whether in Persia, India or China, and even in the very imitative movement of the Japanese resurgence. But it is only recently that this subjectivism has become self-conscious. We may therefore conclude that the conscious and deliberate subjectivism of certain nations was only the sign and precursor of a general change in humanity and has been helped forward by local circumstances, but was not really dependent upon them or in any sense their product.

This general change is incontestable; it is one of the capital phenomena of the tendencies of national and communal life at the present hour. The conception to which Ireland and India have been the first to give a definite formula, "to be ourselves", — so different from the impulse and ambition of dependent or unfortunate nations in the past which was rather to become like others, — is now more and more a generally accepted motive of national life. It opens the way to great dangers and errors, but it is the essential condition for that which has now become the demand of the Time-Spirit on the human race, that it shall find subjectively, not only in the individual, but in the nation and in the unity of the human race itself, its deeper being, its inner law, its real self and live according to that and no longer by artificial standards. This tendency was preparing itself everywhere and partly coming to the surface before the War, but most prominently, as we have said, in new nations like Germany or in dependent nations like Ireland and India. The shock of the war brought about from its earliest moments an immediate — and for the time being a militant — emergence of the same deeper self-consciousness everywhere. Crude enough were most of its first manifestations, often of a really barbarous and reactionary crudeness. Especially, it tended to repeat the Teutonic lapse, preparing not only "to be oneself", which is entirely right, but to live solely for and to oneself, which, if pushed beyond a certain point, becomes a disastrous error. For it is necessary, if the subjective age of humanity is to produce its best fruits, that the nations should become conscious not only of their own but of each other's souls and learn to respect, to help and to profit, not only economically and intellectually but subjectively and spiritually, by each other.

The great determining force has been the example and the aggression of Germany; the example, because no other nation has so self-consciously, so methodically, so intelligently, and from the external point of view so successfully sought to find, to dynamise, to live itself and make the most of its own power of being; its aggression, because the very nature and declared watchwords of the attack have tended to arouse a defensive self-consciousness in the assailed and forced them to perceive what was the source of this tremendous strength and to perceive too that they themselves must seek consciously an answering strength in the same deeper sources. Germany was for the time the most remarkable present instance of a nation preparing for the subjective stage because it had, in the first place, a certain kind of vision — unfortunately intellectual rather than illuminated — and the courage to follow it — unfortunately again a vital and intellectual rather than a spiritual hardihood, — and, secondly, being master of its destinies, was able to order its own life so as to express its self-vision. We must not be misled by appearances into thinking that the strength of Germany was created by Bismarck or directed by the Kaiser Wilhelm II. Rather the appearance of Bismarck was in many respects a misfortune for the growing nation because his rude and powerful hand precipitated its subjectivity into form and action at too early a stage; a longer period of incubation might have produced results less disastrous to itself, if less violently stimulative to humanity. The real source of this great subjective force which has been so much disfigured in its objective action, was not in Germany's statesmen and soldiers — for the most part poor enough types of men — but came from her great philosophers, Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Nietzsche, from her great thinker and poet Goethe, from her great musicians, Beethoven and Wagner, and from all in the German soul and temperament which they represented. A nation whose master achievement has lain almost entirely in the two spheres of philosophy and music, is clearly predestined to lead in the turn to subjectivism and to produce a profound result for good or evil on the beginnings of a subjective age.

This was one side of the predestination of Germany; the other is to be found in her scholars, educationists, scientists, organisers. It was the industry, the conscientious diligence, the fidelity to ideas, the honest and painstaking spirit of work for which the nation has been long famous. A people may be highly gifted in the subjective capacities, and yet if it neglects to cultivate this lower side of our complex nature, it will fail to build that bridge between the idea and imagination and the world of facts, between the vision and the force, which makes realisation possible; its higher powers may become a joy and inspiration to the world, but it will never take possession of its own world until it has learned the humbler lesson. In Germany the bridge was there, though it ran mostly through a dark tunnel with a gulf underneath; for there was no pure transmission from the subjective mind of the thinkers and singers to the objective mind of the scholars and organisers. The misapplication by Treitschke of the teaching of Nietzsche to national and international uses which would have profoundly disgusted the philosopher himself, is an example of this obscure transmission. But still a transmission there was. For more than a half-century Germany turned a deep eye of subjective introspection on herself and things and ideas in search of the truth of her own being and of the world, and for another half-century a patient eye of scientific research on the objective means for organising what she had or thought she had gained. And something was done, something indeed powerful and enormous, but also in certain directions, not in all, misshapen and disconcerting. Unfortunately, those directions were precisely the very central lines on which to go wrong is to miss the goal.

It may be said, indeed, that the last result of the something done — the war, the collapse, the fierce reaction towards the rigid, armoured, aggressive, formidable Nazi State, — is not only discouraging enough, but a clear warning to abandon that path and go back to older and safer ways. But the misuse of great powers is no argument against their right use. To go back is impossible; the attempt is always, indeed, an illusion; we have all to do the same thing which Germany has attempted, but to take care not to do it likewise. Therefore we must look beyond the red mist of blood of the War and the dark fuliginous confusion and chaos which now oppress the world to see why and where was the failure. For her failure which became evident by the turn her action took and was converted for the time being into total collapse, was clear even then to the dispassionate thinker who seeks only the truth. That befell her which sometimes befalls the seeker on the path of Yoga, the art of conscious self-finding, — a path exposed to far profounder perils than beset ordinarily the average man, — when he follows a false light to his spiritual ruin. She had mistaken her vital ego for herself; she had sought for her soul and found only her force. For she had said, like the Asura, "I am my body, my life, my mind, my temperament," and become attached with a Titanic force to these; especially she had said, "I am my life and body," and than that there can be no greater mistake for man or nation. The soul of man or nation is something more and diviner than that; it is greater than its instruments and cannot be shut up in a physical, a vital, a mental or a temperamental formula. So to confine it, even though the false formation be embodied in the armour-plated social body of a huge collective human dinosaurus, can only stifle the growth of the inner Reality and end in decay or the extinction that overtakes all that is unplastic and unadaptable.

It is evident that there is a false as well as a true subjectivism and the errors to which the subjective trend may be liable are as great as its possibilities and may well lead to capital disasters. This distinction must be clearly grasped if the road of this stage of social evolution is to be made safe for the human race.

Chapter V

True and False Subjectivism

THE SUBJECTIVE stage of human development is that critical juncture in which, having gone forward from symbols, types, conventions, having turned its gaze superficially on the individual being to discover his truth and right law of action and its relation to the superficial and external truth and law of the universe, our race begins to gaze deeper, to see and feel what is behind the outside and below the surface and therefore to live from within. It is a step towards self-knowledge and towards living in and from the self, away from knowledge of things as the not-self and from the living according to this objective idea of life and the universe. Everything depends on how that step is taken, to what kind of subjectivity we arrive and how far we go in self-knowledge; for here the dangers of error are as great and far-reaching as the results of right seeking. The symbolic, the typal, the conventional age avoid these dangers by building a wall of self-limitation against them; and it is because this wall becomes in the end a prison of self-ignorance that it has to be broken down and the perilous but fruitful adventure of subjectivism undertaken.

A psychic self-knowledge tells us that there are in our being many formal, frontal, apparent or representative selves and only one that is entirely secret and real; to rest in the apparent and to mistake it for the real is the one general error, root of all others and cause of all our stumbling and suffering, to which man is exposed by the nature of his mentality. We may apply this truth to the attempt of man to live by the law of his subjective being whether as an individual or as a social unit one in its corporate mind and body.

For this is the sense of the characteristic turn which modern civilisation is taking. Everywhere we are beginning, though still sparsely and in a groping tentative fashion, to approach things from the subjective standpoint. In education our object is to know the psychology of the child as he grows into man and to found our systems of teaching and training upon that basis. The new aim is to help the child to develop his intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, moral, spiritual being and his communal life and impulses out of his own temperament and capacities, — a very different object from that of the old education which was simply to pack so much stereotyped knowledge into his resisting brain and impose a stereotyped rule of conduct on his struggling and dominated impulses.[1] In dealing with the criminal the most advanced societies are no longer altogether satisfied with regarding him as a law-breaker to be punished, imprisoned, terrified, hanged or else tortured physically and morally, whether as a revenge for his revolt or as an example to others; there is a growing attempt to understand him, to make allowance for his heredity, environment and inner deficiencies and to change him from within rather than crush him from without. In the general view of society itself, we begin to regard the community, the nation or any other fixed grouping of men as a living organism with a subjective being of its own and a corresponding growth and natural development which it is its business to bring to perfection and fruition. So far, good; the greater knowledge, the truer depth, the wiser humanity of this new view of things are obvious. But so also are the limitations of our knowledge and experience on this new path and the possibility of serious errors and stumblings.

If we look at the new attempt of nations, whether subject or imperial, to fulfil themselves consciously and especially at the momentous experiment of the subjective German nationality, we shall see the starting-point of these possible errors. The first danger arises from the historical fact of the evolution of the subjective age out of the individualistic; and the first enormous stumble has accordingly been to transform the error of individualistic egoism into the more momentous error of a great communal egoism. The individual seeking for the law of his being can only find it safely if he regards clearly two great psychological truths and lives in that clear vision. First, the ego is not the self; there is one self of all and the soul is a portion of that universal Divinity. The fulfilment of the individual is not the utmost development of his egoistic intellect, vital force, physical well-being and the utmost satisfaction of his mental, emotional, physical cravings, but the flowering of the divine in him to its utmost capacity of wisdom, power, love and universality and through this flowering his utmost realisation of all the possible beauty and delight of existence.

---

[1] There has been a rude set-back to this development in totalitarian States whose theory is that the individual does not exist and only the life of the community matters, but this new larger view still holds its own in freer countries.

The will to be, the will to power, the will to know are perfectly legitimate, their satisfaction the true law of our existence and to discourage and repress them improperly is to mutilate our being and dry up or diminish the sources of life and growth. But their satisfaction must not be egoistic, — not for any other reason moral or religious, but simply because they cannot so be satisfied. The attempt always leads to an eternal struggle with other egoisms, a mutual wounding and hampering, even a mutual destruction in which if we are conquerors today, we are the conquered or the slain tomorrow; for we exhaust ourselves and corrupt ourselves in the dangerous attempt to live by the destruction and exploitation of others. Only that which lives in its own self-existence can endure. And generally, to devour others is to register oneself also as a subject and predestined victim of Death.

No doubt, so long as we live without self-knowledge, we can do no other; men and nations have to act and think egoistically, because in their self-ignorance that is the only life known to them, and to live is their God-given impulse; therefore they must live egoistically rather than not at all, with whatever curb of law, ethics and practical common sense of self-restraint nature and experience have taught them. But subjectivism is in its very nature an attempt at self-knowledge and at living by a true self-knowledge and by an inner strength, and there is no real gain in it if we only repeat the old error in new terms.

Therefore we must find out that the true individual is not the ego, but the divine individuality which is through our evolution preparing to emerge in us; its emergence and satisfaction and not the satisfaction of the mere egoistic will-to-live for the sake of one's lower members is the true object at which a humanity subjectively seeking to know and fulfil its own deepest law and truth should increasingly aim.

The second psychic truth the individual has to grasp is this, that he is not only himself, but is in solidarity with all of his kind, — let us leave aside for the moment that which seems to be not of his kind. That which we are has expressed itself through the individual, but also through the universality, and though each has to fulfil itself in its own way, neither can succeed independently of the other. The society has no right to crush or efface the individual for its own better development or self-satisfaction; the individual, so long at least as he chooses to live in the world, has no right to disregard for the sake of his own solitary satisfaction and development his fellow-beings and to live at war with them or seek a selfishly isolated good. And when we say, no right, it is from no social, moral or religious standpoint, but from the most positive and simply with a view to the law of existence itself. For neither the society nor the individual can so develop to their fulfilment. Every time the society crushes or effaces the individual, it is inflicting a wound on itself and depriving its own life of priceless sources of stimulation and growth. The individual too cannot flourish by himself; for the universal, the unity and collectivity of his fellow-beings, is his present source and stock; it is the thing whose possibilities he individually expresses, even when he transcends its immediate level, and of which in his phenomenal being he is one result. Its depression strikes eventually at his own sources of life, by its increasing he also increases. This is what a true subjectivism teaches us, — first, that we are a higher self than our ego or our members, secondly, that we are in our life and being not only ourselves but all others; for there is a secret solidarity which our egoism may kick at and strive against, but from which we cannot escape. It is the old Indian discovery that our real "I" is a Supreme Being which is our true self and which it is our business to discover and consciously become and, secondly, that that Being is one in all, expressed in the individual and in the collectivity,[2] and only by admitting and realising our unity with others can we entirely fulfil our true self-being.[3]

Of these two truths mankind has had some vague vision in the principle with regard to the individual, though it has made only a very poor and fragmentary attempt to regard them in practice and in nine-tenths of its life has been busy departing from them — even where it outwardly professed something of the law. But they apply not only to the individual but to the nation. Here was the first error of the German subjectivism. Reasoning of the Absolute and the individual and the universal, it looked into itself and saw that in fact, as a matter of life, That seemed to express itself as the ego and, reasoning from the conclusions of modern Science, it saw the individual merely as a cell of the collective ego. This collective ego was, then, the greatest actual organised expression of life and to that all ought to be subservient, for so could Nature and its evolution best be assisted and affirmed. The greater human collectivity exists, but it is an inchoate and unorganised existence, and its growth can best be developed by the better development of the most efficient organised collective life already existing; practically, then, by the growth, perfection and domination of the most advanced nations, or possibly of the one most advanced nation, the collective ego which has best realised the purpose of Nature and whose victory and rule is therefore the will of God. For all organised lives, all self-conscious egos are in a state of war, sometimes overt, sometimes covert, sometimes complete, sometimes partial, and by the survival of the best is secured the highest advance of the race. And where was the best, which was the most advanced, self-realising, efficient, highest-cultured nation, if not, by common admission as well as in Germany's own self-vision, Germany itself? To fulfil then the collective German ego and secure its growth and domination was at once the right law of reason, the supreme good of humanity and the mission of the great and supreme Teutonic race.[4]

---

[2] *vyaṣṭi* and *samaṣṭi*.

[3] There is another side of the truth in which this interdependence is not so imperative, but that is a phenomenon of spiritual evolution which has nothing to do with the present subject.

From this egoistic self-vision flowed a number of logical consequences, each in itself a separate subjective error. First, since the individual is only a cell of the collectivity, his life must be entirely subservient to the efficient life of the nation. He must be made efficient indeed, — the nation should see to his education, proper living, disciplined life, carefully trained and subordinated activity, — but as a part of the machine or a disciplined instrument of the national Life. Initiative must be the collectivity's, execution the individual's. But where was that vague thing, the collectivity, and how could it express itself not only as a self-conscious, but an organised and efficient collective will and self-directing energy? The State, there was the secret. Let the State be perfect, dominant, all-pervading, all-seeing, all-effecting; so only could the collective ego be concentrated, find itself, and its life be brought to the highest pitch of strength, organisation and efficiency. Thus Germany founded and established the growing modern error of the cult of the State and the growing subordination driving in the end towards the effacement of the individual. We can see what it gained, an immense collective power and a certain kind of perfection and scientific adjustment of means to end and a high general level of economic, intellectual and social efficiency, — apart from the tremendous momentary force which the luminous fulfilment of a great idea gives to man or nation. What it had begun to lose is as yet only slightly apparent, — all that deeper life, vision, intuitive power, force of personality, psychical sweetness and largeness which the free individual brings as his gift to the race.

Secondly, since the State is supreme, the representative of the

---

[4] The emphasis has somewhat shifted now and taken its stand more upon the crude vitalistic notions of blood, race, life-room, but the old idea is there giving more force to the later formulation.

Divine or the highest realised functioning of human existence, and has a divine right to the obedience, the unquestioning service and the whole activity of the individual, the service of State and community is the only absolute rule of morality. Within the State this may include and sanction all other moral rules because there no rebel egoism can be allowed, for the individual ego must be lost in that of the State or become part of it and all condition of covert or overt war must be abrogated in obedience to the collective good as determined by the collective will. But in relation to other States, to other collective egos the general condition, the effective law is still that of war, of strife between sharply divided egoisms each seeking to fulfil itself, each hampered and restricted in its field by the others. War then is the whole business of the State in its relation to other States, a war of arms, a war of commerce, a war of ideas and cultures, a war of collective personalities each seeking to possess the world or at least to dominate and be first in the world. Here there can enter no morality except that of success, though the pretence of morality may be a useful stratagem of war. To serve the State, the German collectivity which is his greater and real self is the business of the German individual whether at home or abroad, and to that end everything which succeeds is justifiable. Inefficiency, incompetence, failure are the only immorality. In war every method is justified which leads to the military success of the State, in peace every method which prepares it; for peace between nations is only a covert state of war. And as war is the means of physical survival and domination, so commerce is the means of economic survival and domination; it is in fact only another kind of war, another department of the struggle to live, one physical, the other vital. And the life and the body are, so Science has assured us, the whole of existence.

Thirdly, since the survival of the best is the highest good of mankind and the survival of the best is secured by the elimination of the unfit and the assimilation of the less fit, the conquest of the world by German culture is the straight path of human progress. But culture is not, in this view, merely a state of knowledge or a system or cast of ideas and moral and aesthetic tendencies;

culture is life governed by ideas, but by ideas based on the truths of life and so organised as to bring it to its highest efficiency. Therefore all life not capable of this culture and this efficiency must be eliminated or trodden down, all life capable of it but not actually reaching to it must be taken up and assimilated. But capacity is always a matter of genus and species and in humanity a matter of race. Logically, then, the Teutonic[5] race is alone entirely capable, and therefore all Teutonic races must be taken into Germany and become part of the German collectivity; races less capable but not wholly unfit must be Germanised; others, hopelessly decadent like the Latins of Europe and America or naturally inferior like the vast majority of the Africans and Asiatics, must be replaced where possible, like the Hereros, or, where not possible, dominated, exploited and treated according to their inferiority. So evolution would advance, so the human race grow towards its perfection.[6]

We need not suppose that all Germany thought in this strenuous fashion, as it was too long represented, or that the majority thought thus consciously; but it is sufficient that an energetic minority of thinkers and strong personalities should seize upon the national life and impress certain tendencies upon it for these to prevail practically or at the least to give a general trend subconsciously even where the thought itself is not actually proposed in the conscious mind. And the actual events of the present hour seem to show that it was this gospel that partly consciously, partly subconsciously or half articulately had taken possession of the collective German mind. It is easy to deride the rigidity of this terrible logic or riddle it with the ideas and truths it has ignored, and it is still easier to abhor, fear, hate and spew at it while practically following its principles in our own action with less openness, thoroughness and courage. But it is more profitable to begin by seeing that behind it there was and is a tremendous sincerity which is the secret of its force, and a sort of perverse honesty in its errors; the sincerity which tries to look straight at one's own conduct and the facts of life and the honesty to proclaim the real principles of that conduct and not — except as an occasional diplomacy — profess others with the lips while disregarding them in the practice. And if this ideal is to be defeated not merely for a time in the battle-field and in the collective person of the nation or nations professing it, as happened abortively in the War, but in the mind of man and in the life of the human race, an equal sincerity and a less perverse honesty has to be practised by those who have arrived at a better law.

---

[5] "Nordic" is now the established term.

[6] This was written more than thirty years ago, but later developments have emphasised and brought out the truth of the description which was indeed much less apparent then.

The German gospel has evidently two sides, the internal and the external, the cult of the State, nation or community and the cult of international egoism. In the first, Germany, even if for a time entirely crushed in the battle-field, seems to have already secured the victory in the moral sense of the human race. The unsparing compulsion as against the assistance of the individual by the State[7] — for his and the common good, of course, but who professes to compel for harm? — is almost everywhere either dominant or else growing into a strong and prevailing current of opinion; the champions of individual freedom are now a morally defeated and dwindling army who can only fight on in the hope of a future reaction or of saving something of their principle from the wreck. On the external side, the international, the battle of ideas still goes on, but there were from the beginning ominous signs;[8] and now after the physical war with its first psychological results is well over, we are already able to see in which direction the tide is likely to flow. War is a dangerous teacher and physical victory leads often to a moral defeat. Germany, defeated in the war, has won in the after war; the German gospel rearisen in a sterner and fiercer avatar threatens to sweep over all Europe.

---

[7] Not always in the form of Socialism, Bolshevik Communism or Fascism. Other forms of government that are nominally based on the principles of individualistic democracy and freedom have begun to follow the same trend under the disguise or the mere profession of its opposite.

[8] The League of Nations was at no time a contrary sign. Whatever incidental or temporary good it might achieve, it could only be an instrument for the domination of the rest of the earth by Europe and of all by two or three major nations.

It is necessary, if we are not to deceive ourselves, to note that even in this field what Germany has done is to systematise certain strong actual tendencies and principles of international action to the exclusion of all that either professed to resist or did actually modify them. If a sacred egoism — and the expression did not come from Teutonic lips — is to govern international relations, then it is difficult to deny the force of the German position. The theory of inferior and decadent races was loudly proclaimed by other than German thinkers and has governed, with whatever assuaging scruples, the general practice of military domination and commercial exploitation of the weak by the strong; all that Germany has done is to attempt to give it a wider extension and more rigorous execution and apply it to European as well as to Asiatic and African peoples. Even the severity or brutality of her military methods or of her ways of colonial or internal political repression, taken at their worst, for much once stated against her has been proved and admitted to be deliberate lies manufactured by her enemies, was only a crystallising of certain recent tendencies towards the revival of ancient and mediaeval hardheartedness in the race. The use and even the justification of massacre and atrocious cruelty in war on the ground of military exigency and in the course of commercial exploitation or in the repression of revolt and disorder has been quite recently witnessed in the other continents, to say nothing of certain outskirts of Europe.[9] From one point of view, it is well that terrible examples of the utmost logic of these things should be prominently forced on the attention of mankind; for by showing the evil stripped of all veils the choice between good and evil instead of a halting between the two will be forced on the human conscience. Woe to the race if it blinds its conscience and buttresses up its animal egoism with the old justifications; for the gods have shown that Karma is not a jest.

But the whole root of the German error lies in its mistaking life and the body for the self. It has been said that this gospel is simply a reversion to the ancient barbarism of the religion of Odin; but this is not the truth. It is a new and a modern gospel born of the application of a metaphysical logic to the conclusions of materialistic Science, of a philosophic subjectivism to the objective pragmatic positivism of recent thought. Just as Germany applied the individualistic position to the realisation of her communal subjective existence, so she applied the materialistic and vitalistic thought of recent times and equipped it with a subjective philosophy. Thus she arrived at a bastard creed, an objective subjectivism which is miles apart from the true goal of a subjective age. To show the error it is necessary to see wherein lies the true individuality of man and of the nation. It lies not in its physical, economic, even its cultural life which are only means and adjuncts, but in something deeper whose roots are not in the ego, but in a Self one in difference which relates the good of each, on a footing of equality and not of strife and domination, to the good of the rest of the world.

---

[9] Witness Egypt, Ireland, India, and afterwards Abyssinia, Spain, China — wherever still man tries to dominate by force over man or nation over nation.

Chapter VI

The Objective and Subjective Views of Life

THE PRINCIPLE of individualism is the liberty of the human being regarded as a separate existence to develop himself and fulfil his life, satisfy his mental tendencies, emotional and vital needs and physical being according to his own desire governed by his reason; it admits no other limit to this right and this liberty except the obligation to respect the same individual liberty and right in others. The balance of this liberty and this obligation is the principle which the individualistic age adopted in its remodelling of society; it adopted in effect a harmony of compromises between rights and duties, liberty and law, permissions and restraints as the scheme both of the personal life and the life of the society. Equally, in the life of nations the individualistic age made liberty the ideal and strove though with less success than in its own proper sphere to affirm a mutual respect for each other's freedom as the proper conduct of nations to one another. In this idea of life, as with the individual, so with the nation, each has the inherent right to manage its own affairs freely or, if it wills, to mismanage them freely and not to be interfered with in its rights and liberties so long as it does not interfere with the rights and liberties of other nations. As a matter of fact, the egoism of individual and nation does not wish to abide within these bounds; therefore the social law of the nation has been called in to enforce the violated principle as between man and man and it has been sought to develop international law in the same way and with the same object. The influence of these ideas is still powerful. In the recent European struggle the liberty of nations was set forth as the ideal for which the war was being waged, — in defiance of the patent fact that it had come about by nothing better than a clash of interests. The development of international law into an effective force which will restrain the egoism of nations as the social law restrains the egoism of individuals, is the solution which still attracts and seems the most practicable to most when they seek to deal with the difficulties of the future.[1]

The growth of modern Science has meanwhile created new ideas and tendencies, on one side an exaggerated individualism or rather vitalistic egoism, on the other the quite opposite ideal of collectivism. Science investigating life discovered that the root nature of all living is a struggle to take the best advantage of the environment for self-preservation, self-fulfilment, self-aggrandisement. Human thought seizing in its usual arbitrary and trenchant fashion upon this aspect of modern knowledge has founded on it theories of a novel kind which erect into a gospel the right for each to live his own life not merely by utilising others, but even at the expense of others. The first object of life in this view is for the individual to survive as long as he may, to become strong, efficient, powerful, to dominate his environment and his fellows and to raise himself on this strenuous and egoistic line to his full stature of capacity and reap his full measure of enjoyment. Philosophies like Nietzsche's, certain forms of Anarchism, — not the idealistic Anarchism of the thinker which is rather the old individualism of the ideal reason carried to its logical conclusion, — certain forms too of Imperialism have been largely influenced and strengthened by this type of ideas, though not actually created by them.

On the other hand, Science investigating life has equally discovered that not only is the individual life best secured and made efficient by association with others and subjection to a law of communal self-development rather than by aggressive self-affirmation, but that actually what Nature seeks to preserve is not the individual but the type and that in her scale of values the pack, herd, hive or swarm takes precedence over the individual animal or insect and the human group over the individual human being. Therefore in the true law and nature of things the individual should live for all and constantly subordinate and sacrifice himself to the growth, efficiency and progress of the race rather than live for his own self-fulfilment and subordinate the race-life to his own needs. Modern collectivism derives its victorious strength from the impression made upon human thought by this opposite aspect of modern knowledge. We have seen how the German mind took up both these ideas and combined them on the basis of the present facts of human life: it affirmed the entire subordination of the individual to the community, nation or State; it affirmed, on the other hand, with equal force the egoistic self-assertion of the individual nation as against others or against any group or all the groups of nations which constitute the totality of the human race.

---

[1] No longer perhaps now, except with a dwindling minority — now that the League of Nations, constantly misused or hampered from its true functioning by the egoism and insincerity of its greater members, has collapsed into impotence and failure.

But behind this conflict between the idea of a nationalistic and imperialistic egoism and the old individualistic doctrine of individual and national liberty and separateness, there is striving to arise a new idea of human universalism or collectivism for the race which, if it succeeds in becoming a power, is likely to overcome the ideal of national separatism and liberty as it has overcome within the society itself the ideal of individual freedom and separate self-fulfilment. This new idea demands of the nation that it shall subordinate, if not merge and sacrifice, its free separateness to the life of a larger collectivity, whether that of an imperialistic group or a continental or cultural unity, as in the idea of a united Europe, or the total united life of the human race.

The principle of subjectivism entering into human thought and action, while necessarily it must make a great difference in the view-point, the motive-power and the character of our living, does not at first appear to make any difference in its factors. Subjectivism and objectivism start from the same data, the individual and the collectivity, the complex nature of each with its various powers of the mind, life and body and the search for the law of their self-fulfilment and harmony. But objectivism proceeding by the analytical reason takes an external and mechanical view of the whole problem. It looks at the world as a thing, an object, a process to be studied by an observing reason which places itself abstractly outside the elements and the sum of what it has to consider and observes it thus from outside as one would an intricate mechanism. The laws of this process are considered as so many mechanical rules or settled forces acting upon the individual or the group which, when they have been observed and distinguished by the reason, have by one's will or by some will to be organised and applied fully much as Science applies the laws it discovers. These laws or rules have to be imposed on the individual by his own abstract reason and will isolated as a ruling authority from his other parts or by the reason and will of other individuals or of the group, and they have to be imposed on the group itself either by its own collective reason and will embodied in some machinery of control which the mind considers as something apart from the life of the group or by the reason and will of some other group external to it or of which it is in some way a part. So the State is viewed in modern political thought as an entity in itself, as if it were something apart from the community and its individuals, something which has the right to impose itself on them and control them in the fulfilment of some idea of right, good or interest which is inflicted on them by a restraining and fashioning power rather than developed in them and by them as a thing towards which their self and nature are impelled to grow. Life is to be managed, harmonised, perfected by an adjustment, a manipulation, a machinery through which it is passed and by which it is shaped. A law outside oneself, — outside even when it is discovered or determined by the individual reason and accepted or enforced by the individual will, — this is the governing idea of objectivism; a mechanical process of management, ordering, perfection, this is its conception of practice.

Subjectivism proceeds from within and regards everything from the point of view of a containing and developing self-consciousness. The law here is within ourselves; life is a self-creating process, a growth and development at first subconscious, then half-conscious and at last more and more fully conscious of that which we are potentially and hold within ourselves; the principle of its progress is an increasing self-recognition, self-realisation and a resultant self-shaping. Reason and will are only effective movements of the self, reason a process in self-recognition, will a force for self-affirmation and self-shaping. Moreover, reason and intellectual will are only a part of the means by which we recognise and realise ourselves. Subjectivism tends to take a large and complex view of our nature and being and to recognise many powers of knowledge, many forces of effectuation. Even, we see it in its first movement away from the external and objective method discount and belittle the importance of the work of the reason and assert the supremacy of the life-impulse or the essential Will-to-be in opposition to the claims of the intellect or else affirm some deeper power of knowledge, called nowadays the intuition, which sees things in the whole, in their truth, in their profundities and harmonies while intellectual reason breaks up, falsifies, affirms superficial appearances and harmonises only by a mechanical adjustment. But substantially we can see that what is meant by this intuition is the self-consciousness feeling, perceiving, grasping in its substance and aspects rather than analysing in its mechanism its own truth and nature and powers. The whole impulse of subjectivism is to get at the self, to live in the self, to see by the self, to live out the truth of the self internally and externally, but always from an internal initiation and centre.

But still there is the question of the truth of the self, what it is, where is its real abiding-place; and here subjectivism has to deal with the same factors as the objective view of life and existence. We may concentrate on the individual life and consciousness as the self and regard its power, freedom, increasing light and satisfaction and joy as the object of living and thus arrive at a subjective individualism. We may, on the other hand, lay stress on the group consciousness, the collective self; we may see man only as an expression of this group-self necessarily incomplete in his individual or separate being, complete only by that larger entity, and we may wish to subordinate the life of the individual man to the growing power, efficiency, knowledge, happiness, self-fulfilment of the race or even sacrifice it and consider it as nothing except in so far as it lends itself to the life and growth of the community or the kind. We may claim to exercise a righteous oppression on the individual and teach him intellectually and practically that he has no claim to exist, no right to fulfil himself except in his relations to the collectivity. These alone then are to determine his thought, action and existence and the claim of the individual to have a law of his own being, a law of his own nature which he has a right to fulfil and his demand for freedom of thought involving necessarily the freedom to err and for freedom of action involving necessarily the freedom to stumble and sin may be regarded as an insolence and a chimera. The collective self-consciousness will then have the right to invade at every point the life of the individual, to refuse to it all privacy and apartness, all self-concentration and isolation, all independence and self-guidance and determine everything for it by what it conceives to be the best thought and highest will and rightly dominant feeling, tendency, sense of need, desire for self-satisfaction of the collectivity.

But also we may enlarge the idea of the self and, as objective Science sees a universal force of Nature which is the one reality and of which everything is the process, we may come subjectively to the realisation of a universal Being or Existence which fulfils itself in the world and the individual and the group with an impartial regard for all as equal powers of its self-manifestation. This is obviously the self-knowledge which is most likely to be right, since it most comprehensively embraces and accounts for the various aspects of the world-process and the eternal tendencies of humanity. In this view neither the separate growth of the individual nor the all-absorbing growth of the group can be the ideal, but an equal, simultaneous and, as far as may be, parallel development of both, in which each helps to fulfil the other. Each being has his own truth of independent self-realisation and his truth of self-realisation in the life of others and should feel, desire, help, participate more and more, as he grows in largeness and power, in the harmonious and natural growth of all the individual selves and all the collective selves of the one universal Being. These two, when properly viewed, would not be separate, opposite or really conflicting lines of tendency, but the same impulse of the one common existence, companion movements separating only to return upon each other in a richer and larger unity and mutual consequence.

Similarly, the subjective search for the self may, like the objective, lean preponderantly to identification with the conscious physical life, because the body is or seems to be the frame and determinant here of the mental and vital movements and capacities. Or it may identify itself with the vital being, the life-soul in us and its emotions, desires, impulses, seekings for power and growth and egoistic fulfilment. Or it may rise to a conception of man as a mental and moral being, exalt to the first place his inner growth, power and perfection, individual and collective, and set it before us as the true aim of our existence. A sort of subjective materialism, pragmatic and outward-going, is a possible standpoint; but in this the subjective tendency cannot long linger. For its natural impulse is to go always inward and it only begins to feel itself and have satisfaction of itself when it gets to the full conscious life within and feels all its power, joy and forceful potentiality pressing for fulfilment. Man at this stage regards himself as a profound, vital Will-to-be which uses body as its instrument and to which the powers of mind are servants and ministers. This is the cast of that vitalism which in various striking forms has played recently so great a part and still exercises a considerable influence on human thought. Beyond it we get to a subjective idealism now beginning to emerge and become prominent, which seeks the fulfilment of man in the satisfaction of his inmost religious, aesthetic, intuitive, his highest intellectual and ethical, his deepest sympathetic and emotional nature and, regarding this as the fullness of our being and the whole object of our being, tries to subject to it the physical and vital existence. These come to be considered rather as a possible symbol and instrument of the subjective life flowing out into forms than as having any value in themselves. A certain tendency to mysticism, occultism and the search for a self independent of the life and the body accompanies this new movement — new to modern life after the reign of individualism and objective intellectualism — and emphasises its real trend and character.

But here also it is possible for subjectivism to go beyond and to discover the true Self as something greater even than mind. Mind, life and body then become merely an instrumentation for the increasing expression of this Self in the world, — instruments not equal in their hierarchy, but equal in their necessity to the whole, so that their complete perfection and harmony and unity as elements of our self-expression become essential to the true aim of our living. And yet that aim would not be to perfect life, body and mind in themselves, but to develop them so as to make a fit basis and fit instruments for the revelation in our inner and outer life of the luminous Self, the secret Godhead who is one and yet various in all of us, in every being and existence, thing and creature. The ideal of human existence personal and social would be its progressive transformation into a conscious outflowering of the joy, power, love, light, beauty of the transcendent and universal Spirit.

Chapter VII

The Ideal Law of Social Development

THE TRUE law of our development and the entire object of our social existence can only become clear to us when we have discovered not only, like modern Science, what man has been in his past physical and vital evolution, but his future mental and spiritual destiny and his place in the cycles of Nature. This is the reason why the subjective periods of human development must always be immeasurably the most fruitful and creative. In the others he either seizes on some face, image, type of the inner reality Nature in him is labouring to manifest or else he follows a mechanical impulse or shapes himself in the mould of her external influences; but here in his subjective return inward he gets back to himself, back to the root of his living and infinite possibilities, and the potentiality of a new and perfect self-creation begins to widen before him. He discovers his real place in Nature and opens his eyes to the greatness of his destiny.

Existence is an infinite and therefore indefinable and illimitable Reality which figures itself out in multiple values of life. It begins, at least in our field of existence, with a material figure of itself, a mould of firm substance into which and upon which it can build, — worlds, the earth, the body. Here it stamps firmly and fixes the essential law of its movement. That law is that all things are one in their being and origin, one in their general law of existence, one in their interdependence and the universal pattern of their relations; but each realises this unity of purpose and being on its own lines and has its own law of variation by which it enriches the universal existence. In Matter variation is limited; there is variation of type, but, on the whole, uniformity of the individuals of the type. These individuals have a separate movement, but yet the same movement; subject to some minute differences, they adhere to one particular pattern and have the same assemblage of properties. Variety within the type, apart from minor unicities of detail, is gained by variation of group sub-types belonging to one general kind, species and sub-species of the same genus. In the development of Life, before mind has become self-conscious, the same law predominates; but, in proportion as life grows and still more when mind emerges, the individual also arrives at a greater and more vital power of variation. He acquires the freedom to develop according, no doubt, to the general law of Nature and the general law of his type, but also according to the individual law of his being.

Man, the mental being in Nature, is especially distinguished from her less developed creatures by a greater power of individuality, by the liberation of the mental consciousness which enables him finally to understand more and more himself and his law of being and his development, by the liberation of the mental will which enables him under the secret control of the universal Will to manage more and more the materials and lines of his development and by the capacity in the end to go beyond himself, beyond his mentality and open his consciousness into that from which mind, life and body proceed. He can even, however imperfectly at present, get at his highest to some consciousness of the Reality which is his true being and possess consciously also, as nothing else in terrestrial Nature can possess, the Self, the Idea, the Will which have constituted him and can become by that the master of his own nature and increasingly, not as now he is, a wrestler with dominant circumstance but the master of Nature. To do this, to arrive through mind and beyond mind at the Self, the Spirit which expresses itself in all Nature and, becoming one with it in his being, his force, his consciousness, his will, his knowledge, to possess at once humanly and divinely — according to the law and nature of human existence, but of human existence fulfilled in God and fulfilling God in the world — both himself and the world is the destiny of man and the object of his individual and social existence.[1]

This is done primarily through the individual man; for this end man has become an individual soul, that the One may find and manifest Himself in each human being. That end is not indeed achieved by the individual human being in his unaided mental force. He needs the help of the secret Divine above his mentality in his superconscient self; he needs the help also of the secret Divine around him in Nature and in his fellow-men. Everything in Nature is an occasion for him to develop his divine potentiality, an occasion which he has a certain relative freedom to use or to misuse, although in the end both his use and misuse of his materials are overruled in their results by the universal Will so as to assist eventually the development of his law of being and his destiny. All life around him is a help towards the divine purpose in him; every human being is his fellow-worker and assists him whether by association and union or by strife and opposition. Nor does he achieve his destiny as the individual Man for the sake of the individual soul alone, — a lonely salvation is not his complete ideal, — but for the world also or rather for God in the world, for God in all as well as above all and not for God solely and separately in one. And he achieves it by the stress, not really of his separate individual Will, but of the universal Will in its movement towards the goal of its cycles.

The object of all society should be, therefore, and must become, as man grows conscious of his real being, nature and destiny and not as now only of a part of it, first to provide the conditions of life and growth by which individual Man, — not isolated men or a class or a privileged race, but all individual men according to their capacity, — and the race through the growth of its individuals may travel towards this divine perfection. It must be, secondly, as mankind generally more and more grows near to some figure of the Divine in life and more and more men arrive at it, — for the cycles are many and each cycle has its own figure of the Divine in man, — to express in the general life of mankind, the light, the power, the beauty, the harmony, the joy of the Self that has been attained and that pours itself out in a freer and nobler humanity. Freedom and harmony express the two necessary principles of variation and oneness, — freedom of the individual, the group, the race, coordinated harmony of the individual's forces and of the efforts of all individuals in the group, of all groups in the race, of all races in the kind, — and these are the two conditions of healthy progression and successful arrival. To realise them and to combine them has been the obscure or half-enlightened effort of mankind throughout its history, — a task difficult indeed and too imperfectly seen and too clumsily and mechanically pursued by the reason and desires to be satisfactorily achieved until man grows by self-knowledge and self-mastery to the possession of a spiritual and psychical unity with his fellow-men. As we realise more and more the right conditions, we shall travel more luminously and spontaneously towards our goal and, as we draw nearer to a clear sight of our goal, we shall realise better and better the right conditions. The Self in man enlarging light and knowledge and harmonising will with light and knowledge so as to fulfil in life what he has seen in his increasing vision and idea of the Self, this is man's source and law of progress and the secret of his impulse towards perfection.

---

[1] It may be said that since man is a mental being limited by the mind, life and body, this development and organisation of a power beyond mind, a supramental power, would be the creation of a new superhuman race and that the use of the words human and humanly would no longer be in place. This is no doubt true, but the possibility for the race still remains, if not for all in the same degree or at the same time, yet in an eventual fulfilment.

Mankind upon earth is one foremost self-expression of the universal Being in His cosmic self-unfolding; he expresses, under the conditions of the terrestrial world he inhabits, the mental power of the universal existence. All mankind is one in its nature, physical, vital, emotional, mental and ever has been in spite of all differences of intellectual development ranging from the poverty of the Bushman and negroid to the rich cultures of Asia and Europe, and the whole race has, as the human totality, one destiny which it seeks and increasingly approaches in the cycles of progression and retrogression it describes through the countless millenniums of its history. Nothing which any individual race or nation can triumphantly realise, no victory of their self-aggrandisement, illumination, intellectual achievement or mastery over the environment, has any permanent meaning or value except in so far as it adds something or recovers something or preserves something for this human march. The purpose which the ancient Indian scripture offers to us as the true object of all human action, *lokasaṅgraha*, the holding together of the race in its cyclic evolution, is the constant sense, whether we know it or know it not, of the sum of our activities.

But within this general nature and general destiny of mankind each individual human being has to follow the common aim on the lines of his own nature and to arrive at his possible perfection by a growth from within. So only can the race itself attain to anything profound, living and deep-rooted. It cannot be done brutally, heavily, mechanically in the mass; the group self has no true right to regard the individual as if he were only a cell of its body, a stone of its edifice, a passive instrument of its collective life and growth. Humanity is not so constituted. We miss the divine reality in man and the secret of the human birth if we do not see that each individual man is that Self and sums up all human potentiality in his own being. That potentiality he has to find, develop, work out from within. No State or legislator or reformer can cut him rigorously into a perfect pattern; no Church or priest can give him a mechanical salvation; no order, no class life or ideal, no nation, no civilisation or creed or ethical, social or religious Shastra can be allowed to say to him permanently, "In this way of mine and thus far shalt thou act and grow and in no other way and no farther shall thy growth be permitted." These things may help him temporarily or they may curb and he grows in proportion as he can use them and then exceed them, train and teach his individuality by them, but assert it always in the end in its divine freedom. Always he is the traveller of the cycles and his road is forward.

True, his life and growth are for the sake of the world, but he can help the world by his life and growth only in proportion as he can be more and more freely and widely his own real self.

True, he has to use the ideals, disciplines, systems of cooperation which he finds upon his path; but he can only use them well, in their right way and to their right purpose if they are to his life means towards something beyond them and not burdens to be borne by him for their own sake or despotic controls to be obeyed by him as their slave or subject; for though laws and disciplines strive to be the tyrants of the human soul, their only purpose is to be its instruments and servants and when their use is over they have to be rejected and broken. True it is, too, that he has to gather in his material from the minds and lives of his fellow-men around him and to make the most of the experience of humanity's past ages and not confine himself in a narrow mentality; but this he can only do successfully by making all this his own through assimilation of it to the principle of his own nature and through its subservience to the forward call of his enlarging future. The liberty claimed by the struggling human mind for the individual is no mere egoistic challenge and revolt, however egoistically or with one-sided exaggeration and misapplication it may sometimes be advanced; it is the divine instinct within him, the law of the Self, its claim to have room and the one primary condition for its natural self-unfolding.

Individual man belongs not only to humanity in general, his nature is not only a variation of human nature in general, but he belongs also to his race-type, his class-type, his mental, vital, physical, spiritual type in which he resembles some, differs from others. According to these affinities he tends to group himself in Churches, sects, communities, classes, coteries, associations whose life he helps, and by them he enriches the life of the large economic, social and political group or society to which he belongs. In modern times this society is the nation. By his enrichment of the national life, though not in that way only, he helps the total life of humanity. But it must be noted that he is not limited and cannot be limited by any of these groupings; he is not merely the noble, merchant, warrior, priest, scholar, artist, cultivator or artisan, not merely the religionist or the worldling or the politician. Nor can he be limited by his nationality; he is not merely the Englishman or the Frenchman, the Japanese or the Indian; if by a part of himself he belongs to the nation, by another he exceeds it and belongs to humanity. And even there is a part of him, the greatest, which is not limited by humanity; he belongs by it to God and to the world of all beings and to the godheads of the future. He has indeed the tendency of self-limitation and subjection to his environment and group, but he has also the equally necessary tendency of expansion and transcendence of environment and groupings. The individual animal is dominated entirely by his type, subordinated to his group when he does group himself; individual man has already begun to share something of the infinity, complexity, free variation of the Self we see manifested in the world. Or at least he has it in possibility even if there be as yet no sign of it in his organised surface nature. There is here no principle of a mere shapeless fluidity; it is the tendency to enrich himself with the largest possible material constantly brought in, constantly assimilated and changed by the law of his individual nature into stuff of his growth and divine expansion.

Thus the community stands as a mid-term and intermediary value between the individual and humanity and it exists not merely for itself, but for the one and the other and to help them to fulfil each other. The individual has to live in humanity as well as humanity in the individual; but mankind is or has been too large an aggregate to make this mutuality a thing intimate and powerfully felt in the ordinary mind of the race, and even if humanity becomes a manageable unit of life, intermediate groups and aggregates must still exist for the purpose of mass-differentiation and the concentration and combination of varying tendencies in the total human aggregate. Therefore the community has to stand for a time to the individual for humanity even at the cost of standing between him and it and limiting the reach of his universality and the wideness of his sympathies. Still the absolute claim of the community, the society or the nation to make its growth, perfection, greatness the sole object of human life or to exist for itself alone as against the individual and the rest of humanity, to take arbitrary possession of the one and make the hostile assertion of itself against the other, whether defensive or offensive, the law of its action in the world — and not, as it unfortunately is, a temporary necessity, — this attitude of societies, races, religions, communities, nations, empires is evidently an aberration of the human reason, quite as much as the claim of the individual to live for himself egoistically is an aberration and the deformation of a truth.

The truth deformed into this error is the same with the community as with the individual. The nation or community is an aggregate life that expresses the Self according to the general law of human nature and aids and partially fulfils the development and the destiny of mankind by its own development and the pursuit of its own destiny according to the law of its being and the nature of its corporate individuality. It has like the individual the right to be itself, and its just claim, as against any attempt at domination by other nations or of attack upon its separate development by any excessive tendency of human uniformity and regimentation, is to defend its existence, to insist on being itself, to persist in developing according to the secret Idea within it or, as we say, according to the law of its own nature. This right it must assert not only or even principally for its own sake, but in the interests of humanity. For the only things that we can really call our rights are those conditions which are necessary to our free and sound development, and that again is our right because it is necessary to the development of the world and the fulfilment of the destiny of mankind.

Nor does this right to be oneself mean with the nation or community any more than with the individual that it should roll itself up like a hedgehog, shut itself up in its dogmas, prejudices, limitations, imperfections, in the form and mould of its past or its present achievement and refuse mental or physical commerce and interchange or spiritual or actual commingling with the rest of the world. For so it cannot grow or perfect itself. As the individual lives by the life of other individuals, so does the nation by the life of other nations, by accepting from them material for its own mental, economic and physical life; but it has to assimilate this material, subject it to the law of its own nature, change it into stuff of itself, work upon it by its own free will and consciousness, if it would live securely and grow soundly. To have the principle or rule of another nature imposed upon it by force or a de-individualising pressure is a menace to its existence, a wound to its being, a fetter upon its march. As the free development of individuals from within is the best condition for the growth and perfection of the community, so the free development of the community or nation from within is the best condition for the growth and perfection of mankind.

Thus the law for the individual is to perfect his individuality by free development from within, but to respect and to aid and be aided by the same free development in others. His law is to harmonise his life with the life of the social aggregate and to pour himself out as a force for growth and perfection on humanity. The law for the community or nation is equally to perfect its corporate existence by a free development from within, aiding and taking full advantage of that of the individual, but to respect and to aid and be aided by the same free development of other communities and nations. Its law is to harmonise its life with that of the human aggregate and to pour itself out as a force for growth and perfection on humanity. The law for humanity is to pursue its upward evolution towards the finding and expression of the Divine in the type of mankind, taking full advantage of the free development and gains of all individuals and nations and groupings of men, to work towards the day when mankind may be really and not only ideally one divine family, but even then, when it has succeeded in unifying itself, to respect, aid and be aided by the free growth and activity of its individuals and constituent aggregates.

Naturally, this is an ideal law which the imperfect human race has never yet really attained and it may be very long before it can attain to it. Man, not possessing, but only seeking to find himself, not knowing consciously, obeying only in the rough subconsciously or half-consciously the urge of the law of his own nature with stumblings and hesitations and deviations and a series of violences done to himself and others, has had to advance by a tangle of truth and error, right and wrong, compulsion and revolt and clumsy adjustments, and he has as yet neither the wideness of knowledge nor the flexibility of mind nor the purity of temperament which would enable him to follow the law of liberty and harmony rather than the law of discord and regimentation, compulsion and adjustment and strife. Still it is the very business of a subjective age when knowledge is increasing and diffusing itself with an unprecedented rapidity, when capacity is generalising itself, when men and nations are drawn close together and partially united though in an inextricable, confused entanglement of chaotic unity, when they are being compelled to know each other and impelled to know more profoundly themselves, mankind, God and the world and when the idea of self-realisation for men and nations is coming consciously to the surface, — it is the natural work and should be the conscious hope of man in such an age to know himself truly, to find the ideal law of his being and his development and, if he cannot even then follow it ideally owing to the difficulties of his egoistic nature, still to hold it before him and find out gradually the way by which it can become more and more the moulding principle of his individual and social existence.

Chapter VIII

Civilisation and Barbarism

ONCE WE have determined that this rule of perfect individuality and perfect reciprocity is the ideal law for the individual, the community and the race and that a perfect union and even oneness in a free diversity is its goal, we have to try to see more clearly what we mean when we say that self-realisation is the sense, secret or overt, of individual and of social development. As yet we have not to deal with the race, with mankind as a unity; the nation is still our largest compact and living unit. And it is best to begin with the individual, both because of his nature we have a completer and nearer knowledge and experience than of the aggregate soul and life and because the society or nation is, even in its greater complexity, a larger, a composite individual, the collective Man. What we find valid of the former is therefore likely to be valid in its general principle of the larger entity. Moreover, the development of the free individual is, we have said, the first condition for the development of the perfect society. From the individual, therefore, we have to start; he is our index and our foundation.

The Self of man is a thing hidden and occult; it is not his body, it is not his life, it is not — even though he is in the scale of evolution the mental being, the Manu, — his mind. Therefore neither the fullness of his physical, nor of his vital, nor of his mental nature can be either the last term or the true standard of his self-realisation; they are means of manifestation, subordinate indications, foundations of his self-finding, values, practical currency of his self, what you will, but not the thing itself which he secretly is and is obscurely groping or trying overtly and self-consciously to become. Man has not possessed as a race this truth about himself, does not now possess it except in the vision and self-experience of the few in whose footsteps the race is unable to follow, though it may adore them as Avatars, seers, saints or prophets. For the Oversoul who is the master of our evolution, has his own large steps of Time, his own great eras, tracts of slow and courses of rapid expansion, which the strong, semi-divine individual may overleap, but not the still half-animal race. The course of evolution proceeding from the vegetable to the animal, from the animal to the man, starts in the latter from the subhuman; he has to take up into him the animal and even the mineral and vegetable: they constitute his physical nature, they dominate his vitality, they have their hold upon his mentality. His proneness to many kinds of inertia, his readiness to vegetate, his attachment to the soil and clinging to his roots, to safe anchorages of all kinds, and on the other hand his nomadic and predatory impulses, his blind servility to custom and the rule of the pack, his mob-movements and openness to subconscious suggestions from the group-soul, his subjection to the yoke of rage and fear, his need of punishment and reliance on punishment, his inability to think and act for himself, his incapacity for true freedom, his distrust of novelty, his slowness to seize intelligently and assimilate, his downward propensity and earthward gaze, his vital and physical subjection to his heredity, all these and more are his heritage from the subhuman origins of his life and body and physical mind. It is because of this heritage that he finds self-exceeding the most difficult of lessons and the most painful of endeavours. Yet it is by exceeding of the lower self that Nature accomplishes the great strides of her evolutionary process. To learn by what he has been, but also to know and increase to what he can be, is the task that is set for the mental being.

The time is passing away, permanently — let us hope — for this cycle of civilisation, when the entire identification of the self with the body and the physical life was possible for the general consciousness of the race. That is the primary characteristic of complete barbarism. To take the body and the physical life as the one thing important, to judge manhood by the physical strength, development and prowess, to be at the mercy of the instincts which rise out of the physical inconscient, to despise knowledge as a weakness and inferiority or look on it as a peculiarity and no necessary part of the conception of manhood, this is the mentality of the barbarian. It tends to reappear in the human being in the atavistic period of boyhood, — when, be it noted, the development of the body is of the greatest importance, — but to the adult man in civilised humanity it is ceasing to be possible. For, in the first place, by the stress of modern life even the vital attitude of the race is changing. Man is ceasing to be so much of a physical and becoming much more of a vital and economic animal. Not that he excludes or is intended to exclude the body and its development or the right maintenance of and respect for the animal being and its excellences from his idea of life; the excellence of the body, its health, its soundness, its vigour and harmonious development are necessary to a perfect manhood and are occupying attention in a better and more intelligent way than before. But the first rank in importance can no longer be given to the body, much less that entire predominance assigned to it in the mentality of the barbarian.

Moreover, although man has not yet really heard and understood the message of the sages,"know thyself", he has accepted the message of the thinker, "educate thyself", and, what is more, he has understood that the possession of education imposes on him the duty of imparting his knowledge to others. The idea of the necessity of general education means the recognition by the race that the mind and not the life and the body are the man and that without the development of the mind he does not possess his true manhood. The idea of education is still primarily that of intelligence and mental capacity and knowledge of the world and things, but secondarily also of moral training and, though as yet very imperfectly, of the development of the aesthetic faculties. The intelligent thinking being, moralised, controlling his instincts and emotions by his will and his reason, acquainted with all that he should know of the world and his past, capable of organising intelligently by that knowledge his social and economic life, ordering rightly his bodily habits and physical being, this is the conception that now governs civilised humanity. It is, in essence, a return to and a larger development of the old Hellenic ideal, with a greater stress on capacity and utility and a very diminished stress on beauty and refinement. We may suppose, however, that this is only a passing phase; the lost elements are bound to recover their importance as soon as the commercial period of modern progress has been overpassed, and with that recovery, not yet in sight but inevitable, we shall have all the proper elements for the development of man as a mental being.

The old Hellenic or Graeco-Roman civilisation perished, among other reasons, because it only imperfectly generalised culture in its own society and was surrounded by huge masses of humanity who were still possessed by the barbarian habit of mind. Civilisation can never be safe so long as, confining the cultured mentality to a small minority, it nourishes in its bosom a tremendous mass of ignorance, a multitude, a proletariate. Either knowledge must enlarge itself from above or be always in danger of submergence by the ignorant night from below. Still more must it be unsafe, if it allows enormous numbers of men to exist outside its pale uninformed by its light, full of the natural vigour of the barbarian, who may at any moment seize upon the physical weapons of the civilised without undergoing an intellectual transformation by their culture. The Graeco-Roman culture perished from within and from without, from without by the floods of Teutonic barbarism, from within by the loss of its vitality. It gave the proletariate some measure of comfort and amusement, but did not raise it into the light. When light came to the masses, it was from outside in the form of the Christian religion which arrived as an enemy of the old culture. Appealing to the poor, the oppressed and the ignorant, it sought to capture the soul and the ethical being, but cared little or not at all for the thinking mind, content that that should remain in darkness if the heart could be brought to feel religious truth. When the barbarians captured the Western world, it was in the same way content to Christianise them, but made it no part of its function to intellectualise. Distrustful even of the free play of intelligence, Christian ecclesiasticism and monasticism became anti-intellectual and it was left to the Arabs to reintroduce the beginnings of scientific and philosophical knowledge into a semi-barbarous Christendom and to the half-pagan spirit of the Renaissance and a long struggle between religion and science to complete the return of a free intellectual culture in the re-emerging mind of Europe. Knowledge must be aggressive, if it wishes to survive and perpetuate itself; to leave an extensive ignorance either below or around it, is to expose humanity to the perpetual danger of a barbaric relapse.

The modern world does not leave room for a repetition of the danger in the old form or on the old scale. Science is there to prevent it. It has equipped culture with the means of self-perpetuation. It has armed the civilised races with weapons of organisation and aggression and self-defence which cannot be successfully utilised by any barbarous people, unless it ceases to be uncivilised and acquires the knowledge which Science alone can give. It has learned too that ignorance is an enemy it cannot afford to despise and has set out to remove it wherever it is found. The ideal of general education, at least to the extent of some information of the mind and the training of capacity, owes to it, if not its birth, at least much of its practical possibility. It has propagated itself everywhere with an irresistible force and driven the desire for increasing knowledge into the mentality of three continents. It has made general education the indispensable condition of national strength and efficiency and therefore imposed the desire of it not only on every free people, but on every nation that desires to be free and to survive, so that the universalisation of knowledge and intellectual activity in the human race is now only a question of Time; for it is only certain political and economic obstacles that stand in its way and these the thought and tendencies of the age are already labouring to overcome. And, in sum, Science has already enlarged for good the intellectual horizons of the race and raised, sharpened and intensified powerfully the general intellectual capacity of mankind.

It is true that the first tendencies of Science have been materialistic and its indubitable triumphs have been confined to the knowledge of the physical universe and the body and the physical life. But this materialism is a very different thing from the old identification of the self with the body. Whatever its apparent tendencies, it has been really an assertion of man the mental being and of the supremacy of intelligence. Science in its very nature is knowledge, is intellectuality, and its whole work has been that of the Mind turning its gaze upon its vital and physical frame and environment to know and conquer and dominate Life and Matter. The scientist is Man the thinker mastering the forces of material Nature by knowing them. Life and Matter are after all our standing-ground, our lower basis and to know their processes and their own proper possibilities and the opportunities they give to the human being is part of the knowledge necessary for transcending them. Life and the body have to be exceeded, but they have also to be utilised and perfected. Neither the laws nor the possibilities of physical Nature can be entirely known unless we know also the laws and possibilities of supraphysical Nature; therefore the development of new and the recovery of old mental and psychic sciences have to follow upon the perfection of our physical knowledge, and that new era is already beginning to open upon us. But the perfection of the physical sciences was a prior necessity and had to be the first field for the training of the mind of man in his new endeavour to know Nature and possess his world.

Even in its negative work the materialism of Science had a task to perform which will be useful in the end to the human mind in its exceeding of materialism. But Science in its heyday of triumphant Materialism despised and cast aside Philosophy; its predominance discouraged by its positive and pragmatic turn the spirit of poetry and art and pushed them from their position of leadership in the front of culture; poetry entered into an era of decline and decadence, adopted the form and rhythm of a versified prose and lost its appeal and the support of all but a very limited audience, painting followed the curve of Cubist extravagance and espoused monstrosities of shape and suggestion; the ideal receded and visible matter of fact was enthroned in its place and encouraged an ugly realism and utilitarianism; in its war against religious obscurantism Science almost succeeded in slaying religion and the religious spirit. But philosophy had become too much a thing of abstractions, a seeking for abstract truths in a world of ideas and words rather than what it should be, a discovery of the real reality of things by which human existence can learn its law and aim and the principle of its perfection. Poetry and art had become too much cultured pursuits to be ranked among the elegances and ornaments of life, concerned with beauty of words and forms and imaginations, rather than a concrete seeing and significant presentation of truth and beauty and of the living idea and the secret divinity in things concealed by the sensible appearances of the universe. Religion itself had become fixed in dogmas and ceremonies, sects and churches and had lost for the most part, except for a few individuals, direct contact with the living founts of spirituality. A period of negation was necessary. They had to be driven back and in upon themselves, nearer to their own eternal sources. Now that the stress of negation is past and they are raising their heads, we see them seeking for their own truth, reviving by virtue of a return upon themselves and a new self-discovery. They have learned or are learning from the example of Science that Truth is the secret of life and power and that by finding the truth proper to themselves they must become the ministers of human existence.

But if Science has thus prepared us for an age of wider and deeper culture and if in spite of and even partly by its materialism it has rendered impossible the return of the true materialism, that of the barbarian mentality, it has encouraged more or less indirectly both by its attitude to life and its discoveries another kind of barbarism, — for it can be called by no other name, — that of the industrial, the commercial, the economic age which is now progressing to its culmination and its close. This economic barbarism is essentially that of the vital man who mistakes the vital being for the self and accepts its satisfaction as the first aim of life. The characteristic of Life is desire and the instinct of possession. Just as the physical barbarian makes the excellence of the body and the development of physical force, health and prowess his standard and aim, so the vitalistic or economic barbarian makes the satisfaction of wants and desires and the accumulation of possessions his standard and aim. His ideal man is not the cultured or noble or thoughtful or moral or religious, but the successful man. To arrive, to succeed, to produce, to accumulate, to possess is his existence. The accumulation of wealth and more wealth, the adding of possessions to possessions, opulence, show, pleasure, a cumbrous inartistic luxury, a plethora of conveniences, life devoid of beauty and nobility, religion vulgarised or coldly formalised, politics and government turned into a trade and profession, enjoyment itself made a business, this is commercialism. To the natural unredeemed economic man beauty is a thing otiose or a nuisance, art and poetry a frivolity or an ostentation and a means of advertisement. His idea of civilisation is comfort, his idea of morals social respectability, his idea of politics the encouragement of industry, the opening of markets, exploitation and trade following the flag, his idea of religion at best a pietistic formalism or the satisfaction of certain vitalistic emotions. He values education for its utility in fitting a man for success in a competitive or, it may be, a socialised industrial existence, science for the useful inventions and knowledge, the comforts, conveniences, machinery of production with which it arms him, its power for organisation, regulation, stimulus to production. The opulent plutocrat and the successful mammoth capitalist and organiser of industry are the supermen of the commercial age and the true, if often occult rulers of its society.

The essential barbarism of all this is its pursuit of vital success, satisfaction, productiveness, accumulation, possession, enjoyment, comfort, convenience for their own sake. The vital part of the being is an element in the integral human existence as much as the physical part; it has its place but must not exceed its place. A full and well-appointed life is desirable for man living in society, but on condition that it is also a true and beautiful life. Neither the life nor the body exist for their own sake, but as vehicle and instrument of a good higher than their own. They must be subordinated to the superior needs of the mental being, chastened and purified by a greater law of truth, good and beauty before they can take their proper place in the integrality of human perfection. Therefore in a commercial age with its ideal, vulgar and barbarous, of success, vitalistic satisfaction, productiveness and possession the soul of man may linger a while for certain gains and experiences, but cannot permanently rest. If it persisted too long, Life would become clogged and perish of its own plethora or burst in its straining to a gross expansion. Like the too massive Titan it will collapse by its own mass, *mole ruet sua.*

Chapter IX

Civilisation and Culture

NATURE starts from Matter, develops out of it its hidden Life, releases out of involution in life all the crude material of Mind and, when she is ready, turns Mind upon itself and upon Life and Matter in a great mental effort to understand all three in their phenomena, their obvious action, their secret laws, their normal and abnormal possibilities and powers so that they may be turned to the richest account, used in the best and most harmonious way, elevated to their highest as well as extended to their widest potential aims by the action of that faculty which man alone of terrestrial creatures clearly possesses, the intelligent will. It is only in this fourth stage of her progress that she arrives at humanity. The atoms and the elements organise brute Matter, the plant develops the living being, the animal prepares and brings to a certain kind of mechanical organisation the crude material of Mind, but the last work of all, the knowledge and control of all these things and self-knowledge and self-control, — that has been reserved for Man, Nature's mental being. That he may better do the work she has given him, she compels him to repeat physically and to some extent mentally stages of her animal evolution and, even when he is in possession of his mental being, she induces him continually to dwell with an interest and even a kind of absorption upon Matter and Life and his own body and vital existence. This is necessary to the largeness of her purpose in him. His first natural absorption in the body and the life is narrow and unintelligent; as his intelligence and mental force increase, he disengages himself to some extent, is able to mount higher, but is still tied to his vital and material roots by need and desire and has to return upon them with a larger curiosity, a greater power of utilisation, a more and more highly mental and, in the end, a more and more spiritual aim in the return. For his cycles are circles of a growing, but still imperfect harmony and synthesis, and she brings him back violently to her original principles, sometimes even to something like her earlier conditions so that he may start afresh on a larger curve of progress and self-fulfilment.

It would seem at first sight that since man is pre-eminently the mental being, the development of the mental faculties and the richness of the mental life should be his highest aim, — his preoccupying aim, even, as soon as he has got rid of the obsession of the life and body and provided for the indispensable satisfaction of the gross needs which our physical and animal nature imposes on us. Knowledge, science, art, thought, ethics, philosophy, religion, this is man's real business, these are his true affairs. To be is for him not merely to be born, grow up, marry, get his livelihood, support a family and then die, — the vital and physical life, a human edition of the animal round, a human enlargement of the little animal sector and arc of the divine circle; rather to become and grow mentally and live with knowledge and power within himself as well as from within outward is his manhood. But there is here a double motive of Nature, an insistent duality in her human purpose. Man is here to learn from her how to control and create; but she evidently means him not only to control, create and constantly re-create in new and better forms himself, his own inner existence, his mentality, but also to control and re-create correspondingly his environment. He has to turn Mind not only on itself, but on Life and Matter and the material existence; that is very clear not only from the law and nature of the terrestrial evolution, but from his own past and present history. And there comes from the observation of these conditions and of his highest aspirations and impulses the question whether he is not intended, not only to expand inwardly and outwardly, but to grow upward, wonderfully exceeding himself as he has wonderfully exceeded his animal beginnings, into something more than mental, more than human, into a being spiritual and divine. Even if he cannot do that, yet he may have to open his mind to what is beyond it and to govern his life more and more by the light and power that he receives from something greater than himself. Man's consciousness of the divine within himself and the world is the supreme fact of his existence and to grow into that may very well be the intention of his nature. In any case the fullness of Life is his evident object, the widest life and the highest life possible to him, whether that be a complete humanity or a new and divine race. We must recognise both his need of integrality and his impulse of self-exceeding if we would fix rightly the meaning of his individual existence and the perfect aim and norm of his society.

The pursuit of the mental life for its own sake is what we ordinarily mean by culture; but the word is still a little equivocal and capable of a wider or a narrower sense according to our ideas and predilections. For our mental existence is a very complex matter and is made up of many elements. First, we have its lower and fundamental stratum, which is in the scale of evolution nearest to the vital. And we have in that stratum two sides, the mental life of the senses, sensations and emotions in which the subjective purpose of Nature predominates although with the objective as its occasion, and the active or dynamic life of the mental being concerned with the organs of action and the field of conduct in which her objective purpose predominates although with the subjective as its occasion. We have next in the scale, more sublimated, on one side the moral being and its ethical life, on the other the aesthetic; each of them attempts to possess and dominate the fundamental mind stratum and turn its experiences and activities to its own benefit, one for the culture and worship of Right, the other for the culture and worship of Beauty. And we have, above all these, taking advantage of them, helping, forming, trying often to govern them entirely, the intellectual being. Man's highest accomplished range is the life of the reason or ordered and harmonised intelligence with its dynamic power of intelligent will, the *buddhi*, which is or should be the driver of man's chariot.

But the intelligence of man is not composed entirely and exclusively of the rational intellect and the rational will; there enters into it a deeper, more intuitive, more splendid and powerful, but much less clear, much less developed and as yet hardly at all self-possessing light and force for which we have not even a name. But, at any rate, its character is to drive at a kind of illumination, — not the dry light of the reason, nor the moist and suffused light of the heart, but a lightning and a solar splendour. It may indeed subordinate itself and merely help the reason and heart with its flashes; but there is another urge in it, its natural urge, which exceeds the reason. It tries to illuminate the intellectual being, to illuminate the ethical and aesthetic, to illuminate the emotional and the active, to illuminate even the senses and the sensations. It offers in words of revelation, it unveils as if by lightning flashes, it shows in a sort of mystic or psychic glamour or brings out into a settled but for mental man almost a supernatural light a Truth greater and truer than the knowledge given by Reason and Science, a Right larger and more divine than the moralist's scheme of virtues, a Beauty more profound, universal and entrancing than the sensuous or imaginative beauty worshipped by the artist, a joy and divine sensibility which leaves the ordinary emotions poor and pallid, a Sense beyond the senses and sensations, the possibility of a diviner Life and action which man's ordinary conduct of life hides away from his impulses and from his vision. Very various, very fragmentary, often very confused and misleading are its effects upon all the lower members from the reason downward, but this in the end is what it is driving at in the midst of a hundred deformations. It is caught and killed or at least diminished and stifled in formal creeds and pious observances; it is unmercifully traded in and turned into poor and base coin by the vulgarity of conventional religions; but it is still the light of which the religious spirit and the spirituality of man is in pursuit and some pale glow of it lingers even in their worst degradations.

This very complexity of his mental being, with the absence of any one principle which can safely dominate the others, the absence of any sure and certain light which can guide and fix in their vacillations the reason and the intelligent will, is man's great embarrassment and stumbling-block. All the hostile distinctions, oppositions, antagonisms, struggles, conversions, reversions, perversions of his mentality, all the chaotic war of ideas and impulses and tendencies which perplex his efforts, have arisen from the natural misunderstandings and conflicting claims of his many members. His reason is a judge who gives conflicting verdicts and is bribed and influenced by the suitors; his intelligent will is an administrator harassed by the conflicts of the different estates of his realm and by the sense of his own partiality and final incompetence. Still in the midst of it all he has formed certain large ideas of culture and the mental life, and his conflicting notions about them follow certain definite lines determined by the divisions of his nature and shaped into a general system of curves by his many attempts to arrive either at an exclusive standard or an integral harmony.

We have first the distinction between civilisation and barbarism. In its ordinary, popular sense civilisation means the state of civil society, governed, policed, organised, educated, possessed of knowledge and appliances as opposed to that which has not or is not supposed to have these advantages. In a certain sense the Red Indian, the Basuto, the Fiji islander had their civilisation; they possessed a rigorously, if simply organised society, a social law, some ethical ideas, a religion, a kind of training, a good many virtues in some of which, it is said, civilisation is sadly lacking; but we are agreed to call them savages and barbarians, mainly it seems, because of their crude and limited knowledge, the primitive rudeness of their appliances and the bare simplicity of their social organisation. In the more developed states of society we have such epithets as semi-civilised and semi-barbarous which are applied by different types of civilisation to each other, — the one which is for a time dominant and physically successful has naturally the loudest and most self-confident say in the matter. Formerly men were more straightforward and simple-minded and frankly expressed their standpoint by stigmatising all peoples different in general culture from themselves as barbarians or Mlechchhas. The word civilisation so used comes to have a merely relative significance or hardly any fixed sense at all. We must therefore get rid in it of all that is temporary or accidental and fix it upon this distinction that barbarism is the state of society in which man is almost entirely preoccupied with his life and body, his economic and physical existence, — at first with their sufficient maintenance, not as yet their greater or richer well-being, — and has few means and little inclination to develop his mentality, while civilisation is the more evolved state of society in which to a sufficient social and economic organisation is added the activity of the mental life in most if not all of its parts; for sometimes some of these parts are left aside or discouraged or temporarily atrophied by their inactivity, yet the society may be very obviously civilised and even highly civilised. This conception will bring in all the civilisations historic and prehistoric and put aside all the barbarism, whether of Africa or Europe or Asia, Hun or Goth or Vandal or Turcoman. It is obvious that in a state of barbarism the rude beginnings of civilisation may exist; it is obvious too that in a civilised society a great mass of barbarism or numerous relics of it may exist. In that sense all societies are semi-civilised. How much of our present-day civilisation will be looked back upon with wonder and disgust by a more developed humanity as the superstitions and atrocities of an imperfectly civilised era! But the main point is this that in any society which we can call civilised the mentality of man must be active, the mental pursuits developed and the regulation and improvement of his life by the mental being a clearly self-conscious concept in his better mind.

But in a civilised society there is still the distinction between the partially, crudely, conventionally civilised and the cultured. It would seem therefore that the mere participation in the ordinary benefits of civilisation is not enough to raise a man into the mental life proper; a farther development, a higher elevation is needed. The last generation drew emphatically the distinction between the cultured man and the Philistine and got a fairly clear idea of what was meant by it. Roughly, the Philistine was for them the man who lives outwardly the civilised life, possesses all its paraphernalia, has and mouths the current stock of opinions, prejudices, conventions, sentiments, but is impervious to ideas, exercises no free intelligence, is innocent of beauty and art, vulgarises everything that he touches, religion, ethics, literature, life. The Philistine is in fact the modern civilised barbarian; he is often the half-civilised physical and vital barbarian by his unintelligent attachment to the life of the body, the life of the vital needs and impulses and the ideal of the merely domestic and economic human animal; but essentially and commonly he is the mental barbarian, the average sensational man. That is to say, his mental life is that of the lower substratum of the mind, the life of the senses, the life of the sensations, the life of the emotions, the life of practical conduct — the first status of the mental being. In all these he may be very active, very vigorous, but he does not govern them by a higher light or seek to uplift them to a freer and nobler eminence; rather he pulls the higher faculties down to the level of his senses, his sensations, his unenlightened and unchastened emotions, his gross utilitarian practicality. His aesthetic side is little developed; either he cares nothing for beauty or has the crudest aesthetic tastes which help to lower and vulgarise the general standard of aesthetic creation and the aesthetic sense. He is often strong about morals, far more particular usually about moral conduct than the man of culture, but his moral being is as crude and undeveloped as the rest of him; it is conventional, unchastened, unintelligent, a mass of likes and dislikes, prejudices and current opinions, attachment to social conventions and respectabilities and an obscure dislike — rooted in the mind of sensations and not in the intelligence — of any open defiance or departure from the generally accepted standard of conduct. His ethical bent is a habit of the sense-mind; it is the morality of the average sensational man. He has a reason and the appearance of an intelligent will, but they are not his own, they are part of the group-mind, received from his environment; or so far as they are his own, merely a practical, sensational, emotional reason and will, a mechanical repetition of habitual notions and rules of conduct, not a play of real thought and intelligent determination. His use of them no more makes him a developed mental being than the daily movement to and from his place of business makes the average Londoner a developed physical being or his quotidian contributions to the economic life of the country make the bank-clerk a developed economic man. He is not mentally active, but mentally reactive, — a very different matter.

The Philistine is not dead, — quite the contrary, he abounds, — but he no longer reigns. The sons of Culture have not exactly conquered, but they have got rid of the old Goliath and replaced him by a new giant. This is the sensational man who has got awakened to the necessity at least of some intelligent use of the higher faculties and is trying to be mentally active. He has been whipped and censured and educated into that activity and he lives besides in a maelstrom of new information, new intellectual fashions, new ideas and new movements to which he can no longer be obstinately impervious. He is open to new ideas, he can catch at them and hurl them about in a rather confused fashion; he can understand or misunderstand ideals, organise to get them carried out and even, it would appear, fight and die for them. He knows he has to think about ethical problems, social problems, problems of science and religion, to welcome new political developments, to look with as understanding an eye as he can attain to at all the new movements of thought and inquiry and action that chase each other across the modern field or clash upon it. He is a reader of poetry as well as a devourer of fiction and periodical literature, — you will find in him perhaps a student of Tagore or an admirer of Whitman; he has perhaps no very clear ideas about beauty and aesthetics, but he has heard that Art is a not altogether unimportant part of life. The shadow of this new colossus is everywhere. He is the great reading public; the newspapers and weekly and monthly reviews are his; fiction and poetry and art are his mental caterers, the theatre and the cinema and the radio exist for him: Science hastens to bring her knowledge and discoveries to his doors and equip his life with endless machinery; politics are shaped in his image. It is he who opposed and then brought about the enfranchisement of women, who has been evolving syndicalism, anarchism, the war of classes, the uprising of labour, waging what we are told are wars of ideas or of cultures, — a ferocious type of conflict made in the very image of this new barbarism, — or bringing about in a few days Russian revolutions which the century-long efforts and sufferings of the intelligentsia failed to achieve. It is his coming which has been the precipitative agent for the reshaping of the modern world. If a Lenin, a Mussolini, a Hitler have achieved their rapid and almost stupefying success, it was because this driving force, this responsive quick-acting mass was there to carry them to victory — a force lacking to their less fortunate predecessors.

The first results of this momentous change have been inspiriting to our desire of movement, but a little disconcerting to the thinker and to the lover of a high and fine culture; for if it has to some extent democratised culture or the semblance of culture, it does not seem at first sight to have elevated or strengthened it by this large accession of the half-redeemed from below. Nor does the world seem to be guided any more directly by the reason and intelligent will of her best minds than before. Commercialism is still the heart of modern civilisation; a sensational activism is still its driving force. Modern education has not in the mass redeemed the sensational man; it has only made necessary to him things to which he was not formerly accustomed, mental activity and occupations, intellectual and even aesthetic sensations, emotions of idealism. He still lives in the vital substratum, but he wants it stimulated from above. He requires an army of writers to keep him mentally occupied and provide some sort of intellectual pabulum for him; he has a thirst for general information of all kinds which he does not care or has not time to coordinate or assimilate, for popularised scientific knowledge, for such new ideas as he can catch, provided they are put before him with force or brilliance, for mental sensations and excitation of many kinds, for ideals which he likes to think of as actuating his conduct and which do give it sometimes a certain colour. It is still the activism and sensationalism of the crude mental being, but much more open and free. And the cultured, the intelligentsia find that they can get a hearing from him such as they never had from the pure Philistine, provided they can first stimulate or amuse him; their ideas have now a chance of getting executed such as they never had before. The result has been to cheapen thought and art and literature, to make talent and even genius run in the grooves of popular success, to put the writer and thinker and scientist very much in a position like that of the cultured Greek slave in a Roman household where he has to work for, please, amuse and instruct his master while keeping a careful eye on his tastes and preferences and repeating trickily the manner and the points that have caught his fancy. The higher mental life, in a word, has been democratised, sensationalised, activised with both good and bad results. Through it all the eye of faith can see perhaps that a yet crude but an enormous change has begun. Thought and Knowledge, if not yet Beauty, can get a hearing and even produce rapidly some large, vague, yet in the end effective will for their results; the mass of culture and of men who think and strive seriously to appreciate and to know has enormously increased behind all this surface veil of sensationalism, and even the sensational man has begun to undergo a process of transformation. Especially, new methods of education, new principles of society are beginning to come into the range of practical possibility which will create perhaps one day that as yet unknown phenomenon, a race of men — not only a class — who have to some extent found and developed their mental selves, a cultured humanity.

Chapter X

Aesthetic and Ethical Culture

THE IDEA of culture begins to define itself for us a little more clearly, or at least it has put away from it in a clear contrast its natural opposites. The unmental, the purely physical life is very obviously its opposite, it is barbarism; the unintellectualised vital, the crude economic or the grossly domestic life which looks only to money-getting, the procreation of a family and its maintenance, are equally its opposites; they are another and even uglier barbarism. We agree to regard the individual who is dominated by them and has no thought of higher things as an uncultured and undeveloped human being, a prolongation of the savage, essentially a barbarian even if he lives in a civilised nation and in a society which has arrived at the general idea and at some ordered practice of culture and refinement. The societies or nations which bear this stamp we agree to call barbarous or semi-barbarous. Even when a nation or an age has developed within itself knowledge and science and arts, but still in its general outlook, its habits of life and thought is content to be governed not by knowledge and truth and beauty and high ideals of living, but by the gross vital, commercial, economic view of existence, we say that that nation or age may be civilised in a sense, but for all its abundant or even redundant appliances and apparatus of civilisation it is not the realisation or the promise of a cultured humanity. Therefore upon even the European civilisation of the nineteenth century with all its triumphant and teeming production, its great developments of science, its achievement in the works of the intellect we pass a certain condemnation, because it has turned all these things to commercialism and to gross uses of vitalistic success. We say of it that this was not the perfection to which humanity ought to aspire and that this trend travels away from and not towards the higher curve of human evolution. It must be our definite verdict upon it that it was inferior as an age of culture to ancient Athens, to Italy of the Renascence, to ancient or classical India. For great as might be the deficiencies of social organisation in those eras and though their range of scientific knowledge and material achievement was immensely inferior, yet they were more advanced in the art of life, knew better its object and aimed more powerfully at some clear ideal of human perfection.

In the range of the mind's life itself, to live in its merely practical and dynamic activity or in the mentalised emotional or sensational current, a life of conventional conduct, average feelings, customary ideas, opinions and prejudices which are not one's own but those of the environment, to have no free and open play of mind, but to live grossly and unthinkingly by the unintelligent rule of the many, to live besides according to the senses and sensations controlled by certain conventions, but neither purified nor enlightened nor chastened by any law of beauty, — all this too is contrary to the ideal of culture. A man may so live with all the appearance or all the pretensions of a civilised existence, enjoy successfully all the plethora of its appurtenances, but he is not in the real sense a developed human being. A society following such a rule of life may be anything else you will, vigorous, decent, well-ordered, successful, religious, moral, but it is a Philistine society; it is a prison which the human soul has to break. For so long as it dwells there, it dwells in an inferior, uninspired and unexpanding mental status; it vegetates infructuously in the lower stratum and is governed not by the higher faculties of man, but by the crudities of the unuplifted sense-mind. Nor is it enough for it to open windows in this prison by which it may get draughts of agreeable fresh air, something of the free light of the intellect, something of the fragrance of art and beauty, something of the large breath of wider interests and higher ideals. It has yet to break out of its prison altogether and live in that free light, in that fragrance and large breath; only then does it breathe the natural atmosphere of the developed mental being. Not to live principally in the activities of the sense-mind, but in the activities of knowledge and reason and a wide intellectual curiosity, the activities of the cultivated aesthetic being, the activities of the enlightened will which make for character and high ethical ideals and a large human action, not to be governed by our lower or our average mentality but by truth and beauty and the self-ruling will is the ideal of a true culture and the beginning of an accomplished humanity.

We get then by elimination to a positive idea and definition of culture. But still on this higher plane of the mental life we are apt to be pursued by old exclusivenesses and misunderstandings. We see that in the past there seems often to have been a quarrel between culture and conduct; yet according to our definition conduct also is a part of the cultured life and the ethical ideality one of the master impulses of the cultured being. The opposition which puts on one side the pursuit of ideas and knowledge and beauty and calls that culture and on the other the pursuit of character and conduct and exalts that as the moral life must start evidently from an imperfect view of human possibility and perfection. Yet that opposition has not only existed, but is a naturally strong tendency of the human mind and therefore must answer to some real and important divergence in the very composite elements of our being. It is the opposition which Arnold drew between Hebraism and Hellenism. The trend of the Jewish nation which gave us the severe ethical religion of the Old Testament, — crude, conventional and barbarous enough in the Mosaic law, but rising to undeniable heights of moral exaltation when to the Law were added the Prophets, and finally exceeding itself and blossoming into a fine flower of spirituality in Judaic Christianity,[1] — was dominated by the preoccupation of a terrestrial and ethical righteousness and the promised rewards of right worship and right doing, but innocent of science and philosophy, careless of knowledge, indifferent to beauty. The Hellenic mind was less exclusively but still largely dominated by a love of the play of reason for its own sake, but even more powerfully by a high sense of beauty, a clear aesthetic sensibility and a worship of the beautiful in every activity, in every creation, in thought, in art, in life, in religion. So strong was this sense that not only manners, but ethics were seen by it to a very remarkable extent in the light of its master idea of beauty; the good was to its instinct largely the becoming and the beautiful. In philosophy itself it succeeded in arriving at the conception of the Divine as Beauty, a truth which the metaphysician very readily misses and impoverishes his thought by missing it. But still, striking as is this great historical contrast and powerful as were its results on European culture, we have to go beyond its outward manifestation if we would understand in its source this psychological opposition.

---

[1] The epithet is needed, for European Christianity has been something different, even at its best of another temperament, Latinised, Graecised, Celticised or else only a rough Teutonic imitation of the old-world Hebraism.

The conflict arises from that sort of triangular disposition of the higher or more subtle mentality which we have already had occasion to indicate. There is in our mentality a side of will, conduct, character which creates the ethical man; there is another side of sensibility to the beautiful, — understanding beauty in no narrow or hyper-artistic sense, — which creates the artistic and aesthetic man. Therefore there can be such a thing as a predominantly or even exclusively ethical culture; there can be too, evidently, a predominantly or even exclusively aesthetic culture. There are at once created two conflicting ideals which must naturally stand opposed and look askance at each other with a mutual distrust or even reprobation. The aesthetic man tends to be impatient of the ethical rule; he feels it to be a barrier to his aesthetic freedom and an oppression on the play of his artistic sense and his artistic faculty; he is naturally hedonistic, — for beauty and delight are inseparable powers, — and the ethical rule tramples on pleasure, even very often on quite innocent pleasures, and tries to put a strait waistcoat on the human impulse to delight. He may accept the ethical rule when it makes itself beautiful or even seize on it as one of his instruments for creating beauty, but only when he can subordinate it to the aesthetic principle of his nature, — just as he is often drawn to religion by its side of beauty, pomp, magnificent ritual, emotional satisfaction, repose or poetic ideality and aspiration, — we might almost say, by the hedonistic aspects of religion. Even when fully accepted, it is not for their own sake that he accepts them. The ethical man repays this natural repulsion with interest. He tends to distrust art and the aesthetic sense as something lax and emollient, something in its nature undisciplined and by its attractive appeals to the passions and emotions destructive of a high and strict self-control. He sees that it is hedonistic and he finds that the hedonistic impulse is non-moral and often immoral. It is difficult for him to see how the indulgence of the aesthetic impulse beyond a very narrow and carefully guarded limit can be combined with a strict ethical life. He evolves the puritan who objects to pleasure on principle; not only in his extremes — and a predominant impulse tends to become absorbing and leads towards extremes — but in the core of his temperament he remains fundamentally the puritan. The misunderstanding between these two sides of our nature is an inevitable circumstance of our human growth which must try them to their fullest separate possibilities and experiment in extremes in order that it may understand the whole range of its capacities.

Society is only an enlargement of the individual; therefore this contrast and opposition between individual types reproduces itself in a like contrast and opposition between social and national types. We must not go for the best examples to social formulas which do not really illustrate these tendencies but are depravations, deformations or deceptive conformities. We must not take as an instance of the ethical turn the middle-class puritanism touched with a narrow, tepid and conventional religiosity which was so marked an element in nineteenth-century England; that was not an ethical culture, but simply a local variation of the general type of bourgeois respectability you will find everywhere at a certain stage of civilisation, — it was Philistinism pure and simple. Nor should we take as an instance of the aesthetic any merely Bohemian society or such examples as London of the Restoration or Paris in certain brief periods of its history; that, whatever some of its pretensions, had for its principle, always, the indulgence of the average sensational and sensuous man freed from the conventions of morality by a superficial intellectualism and aestheticism. Nor even can we take Puritan England as the ethical type; for although there was there a strenuous, an exaggerated culture of character and the ethical being, the determining tendency was religious, and the religious impulse is a phenomenon quite apart from our other subjective tendencies, though it influences them all; it is *sui generis* and must be treated separately. To get at real, if not always quite pure examples of the type we must go back a little farther in time and contrast early republican Rome or, in Greece itself, Sparta with Periclean Athens. For as we come down the stream of Time in its present curve of evolution, humanity in the mass, carrying in it its past collective experience, becomes more and more complex and the old distinct types do not recur or recur precariously and with difficulty.

Republican Rome — before it was touched and finally taken captive by conquered Greece — stands out in relief as one of the most striking psychological phenomena of human history. From the point of view of human development it presents itself as an almost unique experiment in high and strong character-building divorced as far as may be from the sweetness which the sense of beauty and the light which the play of the reason brings into character and uninspired by the religious temperament; for the early Roman creed was a superstition, a superficial religiosity and had nothing in it of the true religious spirit. Rome was the human will oppressing and disciplining the emotional and sensational mind in order to arrive at the self-mastery of a definite ethical type; and it was this self-mastery which enabled the Roman republic to arrive also at the mastery of its environing world and impose on the nations its public order and law. All supremely successful imperial nations have had in their culture or in their nature, in their formative or expansive periods, this predominance of the will, the character, the impulse to self-discipline and self-mastery which constitutes the very basis of the ethical tendency. Rome and Sparta like other ethical civilisations had their considerable moral deficiencies, tolerated or deliberately encouraged customs and practices which we should call immoral, failed to develop the gentler and more delicate side of moral character, but this is of no essential importance. The ethical idea in man changes and enlarges its scope, but the kernel of the true ethical being remains always the same, — will, character, self-discipline, self-mastery.

Its limitations at once appear, when we look back at its prominent examples. Early Rome and Sparta were barren of thought, art, poetry, literature, the larger mental life, all the amenity and pleasure of human existence; their art of life excluded or discouraged the delight of living. They were distrustful, as the exclusively ethical man is always distrustful, of free and flexible thought and the aesthetic impulse. The earlier spirit of republican Rome held at arm's length as long as possible the Greek influences that invaded her, closed the schools of the Greek teachers, banished the philosophers, and her most typical minds looked upon the Greek language as a peril and Greek culture as an abomination: she felt instinctively the arrival at her gates of an enemy, divined a hostile and destructive force fatal to her principle of living. Sparta, though a Hellenic city, admitted as almost the sole aesthetic element of her deliberate ethical training and education a martial music and poetry, and even then, when she wanted a poet of war, she had to import an Athenian. We have a curious example of the repercussion of this instinctive distrust even on a large and aesthetic Athenian mind in the utopian speculations of Plato who felt himself obliged in his Republic first to censure and then to banish the poets from his ideal polity. The end of these purely ethical cultures bears witness to their insufficiency. Either they pass away leaving nothing or little behind them by which the future can be attracted and satisfied, as Sparta passed, or they collapse in a revolt of the complex nature of man against an unnatural restriction and repression, as the early Roman type collapsed into the egoistic and often orgiastic licence of later republican and imperial Rome. The human mind needs to think, feel, enjoy, expand; expansion is its very nature and restriction is only useful to it in so far as it helps to steady, guide and strengthen its expansion. It readily refuses the name of culture to those civilisations or periods, however noble their aim or even however beautiful in itself their order, which have not allowed an intelligent freedom of development.

On the other hand, we are tempted to give the name of a full culture to all those periods and civilisations, whatever their defects, which have encouraged a freely human development and like ancient Athens have concentrated on thought and beauty and the delight of living. But there were in the Athenian development two distinct periods, one of art and beauty, the Athens of Phidias and Sophocles, and one of thought, the Athens of the philosophers. In the first period the sense of beauty and the need of freedom of life and the enjoyment of life are the determining forces. This Athens thought, but it thought in the terms of art and poetry, in figures of music and drama and architecture and sculpture; it delighted in intellectual discussion, but not so much with any will to arrive at truth as for the pleasure of thinking and the beauty of ideas. It had its moral order, for without that no society can exist, but it had no true ethical impulse or ethical type, only a conventional and customary morality; and when it thought about ethics, it tended to express it in the terms of beauty, *to kalon*, *to epieikes*, the beautiful, the becoming. Its very religion was a religion of beauty and an occasion for pleasant ritual and festivals and for artistic creation, an aesthetic enjoyment touched with a superficial religious sense. But without character, without some kind of high or strong discipline there is no enduring power of life. Athens exhausted its vitality within one wonderful century which left it enervated, will-less, unable to succeed in the struggle of life, uncreative. It turned indeed for a time precisely to that which had been lacking to it, the serious pursuit of truth and the evolution of systems of ethical self-discipline; but it could only think, it could not successfully practise. The later Hellenic mind and Athenian centre of culture gave to Rome the great Stoic system of ethical discipline which saved her in the midst of the orgies of her first imperial century, but could not itself be stoical in its practice; for to Athens and to the characteristic temperament of Hellas, this thought was a straining to something it had not and could not have; it was the opposite of its nature and not its fulfilment.

This insufficiency of the aesthetic view of life becomes yet more evident when we come down to its other great example, Italy of the Renascence. The Renascence was regarded at one time as pre-eminently a revival of learning, but in its Mediterranean birth-place it was rather the efflorescence of art and poetry and the beauty of life. Much more than was possible even in the laxest times of Hellas, aesthetic culture was divorced from the ethical impulse and at times was even anti-ethical and reminiscent of the licence of imperial Rome. It had learning and curiosity, but gave very little of itself to high thought and truth and the more finished achievements of the reason, although it helped to make free the way for philosophy and science. It so corrupted religion as to provoke in the ethically minded Teutonic nations the violent revolt of the Reformation, which, though it vindicated the freedom of the religious mind, was an insurgence not so much of the reason, — that was left to Science, — but of the moral instinct and its ethical need. The subsequent prostration and loose weakness of Italy was the inevitable result of the great defect of its period of fine culture, and it needed for its revival the new impulse of thought and will and character given to it by Mazzini. If the ethical impulse is not sufficient by itself for the development of the human being, yet are will, character, self-discipline, self-mastery indispensable to that development. They are the backbone of the mental body.

Neither the ethical being nor the aesthetic being is the whole man, nor can either be his sovereign principle; they are merely two powerful elements. Ethical conduct is not the whole of life; even to say that it is three-fourths of life is to indulge in a very doubtful mathematics. We cannot assign to it its position in any such definite language, but can at best say that its kernel of will, character and self-discipline are almost the first condition for human self-perfection. The aesthetic sense is equally indispensable, for without that the self-perfection of the mental being cannot arrive at its object, which is on the mental plane the right and harmonious possession and enjoyment of the truth, power, beauty and delight of human existence. But neither can be the highest principle of the human order. We can combine them; we can enlarge the sense of ethics by the sense of beauty and delight and introduce into it to correct its tendency of hardness and austerity the element of gentleness, love, amenity, the hedonistic side of morals; we can steady, guide and strengthen the delight of life by the introduction of the necessary will and austerity and self-discipline which will give it endurance and purity. These two powers of our psychological being, which represent in us the essential principle of energy and the essential principle of delight, — the Indian terms are more profound and expressive, Tapas and Ananda,[2] — can be thus helped by each other, the one to a richer, the other to a greater self-expression. But that even this much reconciliation may come about they must be taken up and enlightened by a higher principle which must be capable of understanding and comprehending both equally and of disengaging and combining disinterestedly their purposes and potentialities. That higher principle seems to be provided for us by the human faculty of reason and intelligent will. Our crowning capacity, it would seem to be by right the crowned sovereign of our nature.

---

[2] Tapas is the energising conscious-power of cosmic being by which the world is created, maintained and governed; it includes all concepts of force, will, energy, power, everything dynamic and dynamising. Ananda is the essential nature of bliss of the cosmic consciousness and, in activity, its delight of self-creation and self-experience.

Chapter XI

The Reason as Governor of Life

REASON using the intelligent will for the ordering of the inner and the outer life is undoubtedly the highest developed faculty of man at his present point of evolution; it is the sovereign, because the governing and self-governing faculty in the complexities of our human existence. Man is distinguished from other terrestrial creatures by his capacity for seeking after a rule of life, a rule of his being and his works, a principle of order and self-development, which is not the first instinctive, original, mechanically self-operative rule of his natural existence. The principle he looks to is neither the unchanging, unprogressive order of the fixed natural type, nor in its process of change the mechanical evolution we see in the lower life, an evolution which operates in the mass rather than in the individual, imperceptibly to the knowledge of that which is being evolved and without its conscious cooperation. He seeks for an intelligent rule of which he himself shall be the governor and master or at least a partially free administrator. He can conceive a progressive order by which he shall be able to evolve and develop his capacities far beyond their original limits and workings; he can initiate an intelligent evolution which he himself shall determine or at least be in it a conscious instrument, more, a cooperating and constantly consulted party. The rest of terrestrial existence is helplessly enslaved and tyrannised over by its nature, but the instinct of man when he finds his manhood is to be master of his nature and free.

No doubt all is work of Nature and this too is Nature; it proceeds from the principle of being which constitutes his humanity and by the processes which that principle permits and which are natural to it. But still it is a second kind of Nature, a stage of being in which Nature becomes self-conscious in the individual, tries to know, modify, alter and develop, utilise, consciously experiment with herself and her potentialities. In this change a momentous self-discovery intervenes; there appears something that is hidden in matter and in the first disposition of life and has not clearly emerged in the animal in spite of its possession of a mind; there appears the presence of the Soul in things which at first was concealed in its own natural and outward workings, absorbed and on the surface at least self-oblivious. Afterwards it becomes, as in the animal, conscious to a certain degree on the surface, but is still helplessly given up to the course of its natural workings and, not understanding, cannot govern itself and its movements. But finally, in man, it turns its consciousness upon itself, seeks to know, endeavours to govern in the individual the workings of his nature and through the individual and the combined reason and energy of many individuals to govern too as far as possible the workings of Nature in mankind and in things. This turning of the consciousness upon itself and on things, which man represents, has been the great crisis, a prolonged and developing crisis, in the terrestrial evolution of the soul in Nature. There have been others before it in the past of the earth, such as that which brought about the appearance of the conscious life of the animal; there must surely be another in its future in which a higher spiritual and supramental consciousness shall emerge and be turned upon the works of the mind. But at present it is this which is at work; a self-conscious soul in mind, mental being, *manomaya puruṣa*, struggles to arrive at some intelligent ordering of its self and life and some indefinite, perhaps infinite development of the powers and potentialities of the human instrument.

The intellectual reason is not man's only means of knowledge. All action, all perception, all aesthesis and sensation, all impulse and will, all imagination and creation imply a universal, many-sided force of knowledge at work and each form or power of this knowledge has its own distinct nature and law, its own principle of order and arrangement, its logic proper to itself, and need not follow, still less be identical with the law of nature, order and arrangement which the intellectual reason would assign to it or itself follow if it had control of all these movements. But the intellect has this advantage over the others that it can disengage itself from the work, stand back from it to study and understand it disinterestedly, analyse its processes, disengage its principles. None of the other powers and faculties of the living being can do this: for each exists for its own action, is confined by the work it is doing, is unable to see beyond it, around it, into it as the reason can; the principle of knowledge inherent within each force is involved and carried along in the action of the force, helps to shape it, but is also itself limited by its own formulations. It exists for the fulfilment of the action, not for knowledge, or for knowledge only as part of the action. Moreover, it is concerned only with the particular action or working of the moment and does not look back reflectively or forward intelligently or at other actions and forces with a power of clear coordination. No doubt, the other evolved powers of the living being, as for instance the instinct whether animal or human, — the latter inferior precisely because it is disturbed by the questionings and seekings of reason, — carry in themselves their own force of past experience, of instinctive self-adaptation, all of which is really accumulated knowledge, and they hold sometimes this store so firmly that they are transmitted as a sure inheritance from generation to generation. But all this, just because it is instinctive, not turned upon itself reflectively, is of great use indeed to life for the conduct of its operations, but of none — so long as it is not taken up by the reason — for the particular purpose man has in view, a new order of the dealings of the soul in Nature, a free, rational, intelligently coordinating, intelligently self-observing, intelligently experimenting mastery of the workings of force by the conscious spirit.

Reason, on the other hand, exists for the sake of knowledge, can prevent itself from being carried away by the action, can stand back from it, intelligently study, accept, refuse, modify, alter, improve, combine and recombine the workings and capacities of the forces in operation, can repress here, indulge there, strive towards an intelligent, intelligible, willed and organised perfection. Reason is science, it is conscious art, it is invention. It is observation and can seize and arrange truth of facts; it is speculation and can extricate and forecast truth of potentiality. It is the idea and its fulfilment, the ideal and its bringing to fruition. It can look through the immediate appearance and unveil the hidden truths behind it. It is the servant and yet the master of all utilities; and it can, putting away all utilities, seek disinterestedly Truth for its own sake and by finding it reveal a whole world of new possible utilities. Therefore it is the sovereign power by which man has become possessed of himself, student and master of his own forces, the godhead on which the other godheads in him have leaned for help in their ascent; it has been the Prometheus of the mythical parable, the helper, instructor, elevating friend, civiliser of mankind.

Recently, however, there has been a very noticeable revolt of the human mind against this sovereignty of the intellect, a dissatisfaction, as we might say, of the reason with itself and its own limitations and an inclination to give greater freedom and a larger importance to other powers of our nature. The sovereignty of the reason in man has been always indeed imperfect, in fact, a troubled, struggling, resisted and often defeated rule; but still it has been recognised by the best intelligence of the race as the authority and law-giver. Its only widely acknowledged rival has been faith. Religion alone has been strongly successful in its claim that reason must be silent before it or at least that there are fields to which it cannot extend itself and where faith alone ought to be heard; but for a time even Religion has had to forego or abate its absolute pretension and to submit to the sovereignty of the intellect. Life, imagination, emotion, the ethical and the aesthetic need have often claimed to exist for their own sake and to follow their own bent, practically they have often enforced their claim, but they have still been obliged in general to work under the inquisition and partial control of reason and to refer to it as arbiter and judge. Now, however, the thinking mind of the race has become more disposed to question itself and to ask whether existence is not too large, profound, complex and mysterious a thing to be entirely seized and governed by the powers of the intellect. Vaguely it is felt that there is some greater godhead than the reason.

To some this godhead is Life itself or a secret Will in life; they claim that this must rule and that the intelligence is only useful in so far as it serves that and that Life must not be repressed, minimised and mechanised by the arbitrary control of reason. Life has greater powers in it which must be given a freer play; for it is they alone that evolve and create. On the other hand, it is felt that reason is too analytical, too arbitrary, that it falsifies life by its distinctions and set classifications and the fixed rules based upon them and that there is some profounder and larger power of knowledge, intuition or another, which is more deeply in the secrets of existence. This larger intimate power is more one with the depths and sources of existence and more able to give us the indivisible truths of life, its root realities and to work them out, not in an artificial and mechanical spirit but with a divination of the secret Will in existence and in a free harmony with its large, subtle and infinite methods. In fact, what the growing subjectivism of the human mind is beginning obscurely to see is that the one sovereign godhead is the soul itself which may use reason for one of its ministers, but cannot subject itself to its own intellectuality without limiting its potentialities and artificialising its conduct of existence.

The highest power of reason, because its pure and characteristic power, is the disinterested seeking after true knowledge. When knowledge is pursued for its own sake, then alone are we likely to arrive at true knowledge. Afterwards we may utilise that knowledge for various ends; but if from the beginning we have only particular ends in view, then we limit our intellectual gain, limit our view of things, distort the truth because we cast it into the mould of some particular idea or utility and ignore or deny all that conflicts with that utility or that set idea. By so doing we may indeed make the reason act with great immediate power within the limits of the idea or the utility we have in view, just as instinct in the animal acts with great power within certain limits, for a certain end, yet finds itself helpless outside those limits. It is so indeed that the ordinary man uses his reason — as the animal uses his hereditary, transmitted instinct — with an absorbed devotion of it to the securing of some particular utility or with a useful but hardly luminous application of a customary and transmitted reasoning to the necessary practical interests of his life. Even the thinking man ordinarily limits his reason to the working out of certain preferred ideas; he ignores or denies all that is not useful to these or does not assist or justify or actually contradicts or seriously modifies them, — except in so far as life itself compels or cautions him to accept modifications for the time being or ignore their necessity at his peril. It is in such limits that man's reason normally acts. He follows most commonly some interest or set of interests; he tramples down or through or ignores or pushes aside all truth of life and existence, truth of ethics, truth of beauty, truth of reason, truth of spirit which conflicts with his chosen opinions and interests; if he recognises these foreign elements, it is nominally, not in practice, or else with a distortion, a glossing which nullifies their consequences, perverts their spirit or whittles down their significance. It is this subjection to the interests, needs, instincts, passions, prejudices, traditional ideas and opinions of the ordinary mind[1] which constitutes the irrationality of human existence.

But even the man who is capable of governing his life by ideas, who recognises, that is to say, that it ought to express clearly conceived truths and principles of his being or of all being and tries to find out or to know from others what these are, is not often capable of the highest, the free and disinterested use of his rational mind. As others are subject to the tyranny of their interests, prejudices, instincts or passions, so he is subjected to the tyranny of ideas. Indeed, he turns these ideas into interests, obscures them with his prejudices and passions and is unable to think freely about them, unable to distinguish their limits or the relation to them of other, different and opposite ideas and the equal right of these also to existence. Thus, as we constantly see, individuals, masses of men, whole generations are carried away by certain ethical, religious, aesthetic, political ideas or a set of ideas, espouse them with passion, pursue them as interests, seek to make them a system and lasting rule of life and are swept away in the drive of their action and do not really use the free and disinterested reason for the right knowledge of existence and for its right and sane government. The ideas are to a certain extent fulfilled, they triumph for a time, but their very success brings disappointment and disillusionment. This happens, first, because they can only succeed by compromises and pacts with the inferior, irrational life of man which diminish their validity and tarnish their light and glory. Often indeed their triumph is convicted of unreality, and doubt and disillusionment fall on the faith and enthusiasm which brought victory to their side. But even were it not so, the ideas themselves are partial and insufficient; not only have they a very partial triumph, but if their success were complete, it would still disappoint, because they are not the whole truth of life and therefore cannot securely govern and perfect life. Life escapes from the formulas and systems which our reason labours to impose on it; it proclaims itself too complex, too full of infinite potentialities to be tyrannised over by the arbitrary intellect of man.

---

[1] The ordinary mind in man is not truly the thinking mind proper, it is a life-mind, a vital mind as we may call it, which has learned to think and even to reason but for its own ends and on its own lines, not on those of a true mind of knowledge.

This is the cause why all human systems have failed in the end; for they have never been anything but a partial and confused application of reason to life. Moreover, even where they have been most clear and rational, these systems have pretended that their ideas were the whole truth of life and tried so to apply them. This they could not be, and life in the end has broken or undermined them and passed on to its own large incalculable movement. Mankind, thus using its reason as an aid and justification for its interests and passions, thus obeying the drive of a partial, a mixed and imperfect rationality towards action, thus striving to govern the complex totalities of life by partial truths, has stumbled on from experiment to experiment, always believing that it is about to grasp the crown, always finding that it has fulfilled as yet little or nothing of what it has to accomplish. Compelled by nature to apply reason to life, yet possessing only a partial rationality limited in itself and confused by the siege of the lower members, it could do nothing else. For the limited imperfect human reason has no self-sufficient light of its own; it is obliged to proceed by observation, by experiment, by action, through errors and stumblings to a larger experience.

But behind all this continuity of failure there has persisted a faith that the reason of man would end in triumphing over its difficulties, that it would purify and enlarge itself, become sufficient to its work and at last subject rebellious life to its control. For, apart from the stumbling action of the world, there has been a labour of the individual thinker in man and this has achieved a higher quality and risen to a loftier and clearer atmosphere above the general human thought-levels. Here there has been the work of a reason that seeks always after knowledge and strives patiently to find out truth for itself, without bias, without the interference of distorting interests, to study everything, to analyse everything, to know the principle and process of everything. Philosophy, Science, learning, the reasoned arts, all the agelong labour of the critical reason in man have been the result of this effort. In the modern era under the impulsion of Science this effort assumed enormous proportions and claimed for a time to examine successfully and lay down finally the true principle and the sufficient rule of process not only for all the activities of Nature, but for all the activities of man. It has done great things, but it has not been in the end a success. The human mind is beginning to perceive that it has left the heart of almost every problem untouched and illumined only outsides and a certain range of processes. There has been a great and ordered classification and mechanisation, a great discovery and practical result of increasing knowledge, but only on the physical surface of things. Vast abysses of Truth lie below in which are concealed the real springs, the mysterious powers and secretly decisive influences of existence. It is a question whether the intellectual reason will ever be able to give us an adequate account of these deeper and greater things or subject them to the intelligent will as it has succeeded in explaining and canalising, though still imperfectly, yet with much show of triumphant result, the forces of physical Nature. But these other powers are much larger, subtler, deeper down, more hidden, elusive and variable than those of physical Nature.

The whole difficulty of the reason in trying to govern our existence is that because of its own inherent limitations it is unable to deal with life in its complexity or in its integral movements; it is compelled to break it up into parts, to make more or less artificial classifications, to build systems with limited data which are contradicted, upset or have to be continually modified by other data, to work out a selection of regulated potentialities which is broken down by the bursting of a new wave of yet unregulated potentialities. It would almost appear even that there are two worlds, the world of ideas proper to the intellect and the world of life which escapes from the full control of the reason, and that to bridge adequately the gulf between these two domains is beyond the power and province of the reason and the intelligent will. It would seem that these can only create either a series of more or less empirical compromises or else a series of arbitrary and practically inapplicable or only partially applicable systems. The reason of man struggling with life becomes either an empiric or a doctrinaire.

Reason can indeed make itself a mere servant of life; it can limit itself to the work the average normal man demands from it, content to furnish means and justifications for the interests, passions, prejudices of man and clothe them with a misleading garb of rationality or at most supply them with their own secure and enlightened order or with rules of caution and self-restraint sufficient to prevent their more egregious stumbles and most unpleasant consequences. But this is obviously to abdicate its throne or its highest office and to betray the hope with which man set forth on his journey. It may again determine to found itself securely on the facts of life, disinterestedly indeed, that is to say, with a dispassionate critical observation of its principles and processes, but with a prudent resolve not to venture too much forward into the unknown or elevate itself far beyond the immediate realities of our apparent or phenomenal existence. But here again it abdicates; either it becomes a mere critic and observer or else, so far as it tries to lay down laws, it does so within very narrow limits of immediate potentiality and it renounces man's drift towards higher possibilities, his saving gift of idealism. In this limited use of the reason subjected to the rule of an immediate, an apparent vital and physical practicality man cannot rest long satisfied. For his nature pushes him towards the heights; it demands a constant effort of self-transcendence and the impulsion towards things unachieved and even immediately impossible.

On the other hand, when it attempts a higher action reason separates itself from life. Its very attempt at a disinterested and dispassionate knowledge carries it to an elevation where it loses hold of that other knowledge which our instincts and impulses carry within themselves and which, however imperfect, obscure and limited, is still a hidden action of the universal Knowledge-Will inherent in existence that creates and directs all things according to their nature. True, even Science and Philosophy are never entirely dispassionate and disinterested. They fall into subjection to the tyranny of their own ideas, their partial systems, their hasty generalisations and by the innate drive of man towards practice they seek to impose these upon the life. But even so they enter into a world either of abstract ideas or of ideals or of rigid laws from which the complexity of life escapes. The idealist, the thinker, the philosopher, the poet and artist, even the moralist, all those who live much in ideas, when they come to grapple at close quarters with practical life, seem to find themselves something at a loss and are constantly defeated in their endeavour to govern life by their ideas. They exercise a powerful influence, but it is indirectly, more by throwing their ideas into Life which does with them what the secret Will in it chooses than by a direct and successfully ordered action. Not that the pure empiric, the practical man really succeeds any better by his direct action; for that too is taken by the secret Will in life and turned to quite other ends than the practical man had intended. On the contrary, ideals and idealists are necessary; ideals are the savour and sap of life, idealists the most powerful diviners and assistants of its purposes. But reduce your ideal to a system and it at once begins to fail; apply your general laws and fixed ideas systematically as the doctrinaire would do, and Life very soon breaks through or writhes out of their hold or transforms your system, even while it nominally exists, into something the originator would not recognise and would repudiate perhaps as the very contradiction of the principles which he sought to eternise.

The root of the difficulty is this that at the very basis of all our life and existence, internal and external, there is something on which the intellect can never lay a controlling hold, the Absolute, the Infinite. Behind everything in life there is an Absolute, which that thing is seeking after in its own way; everything finite is striving to express an infinite which it feels to be its real truth. Moreover, it is not only each class, each type, each tendency in Nature that is thus impelled to strive after its own secret truth in its own way, but each individual brings in his own variations. Thus there is not only an Absolute, an Infinite in itself which governs its own expression in many forms and tendencies, but there is also a principle of infinite potentiality and variation quite baffling to the reasoning intelligence; for the reason deals successfully only with the settled and the finite. In man this difficulty reaches its acme. For not only is mankind unlimited in potentiality; not only is each of its powers and tendencies seeking after its own absolute in its own way and therefore naturally restless under any rigid control by the reason; but in each man their degrees, methods, combinations vary, each man belongs not only to the common humanity, but to the Infinite in himself and is therefore unique. It is because this is the reality of our existence that the intellectual reason and the intelligent will cannot deal with life as its sovereign, even though they may be at present our supreme instruments and may have been in our evolution supremely important and helpful. The reason can govern, but only as a minister, imperfectly, or as a general arbiter and giver of suggestions which are not really supreme commands, or as one channel of the sovereign authority, because that hidden Power acts at present not directly but through many agents and messengers. The real sovereign is another than the reasoning intelligence. Man's impulse to be free, master of Nature in himself and his environment cannot be really fulfilled until his self-consciousness has grown beyond the rational mentality, become aware of the true sovereign and either identified itself with him or entered into constant communion with his supreme will and knowledge.

Chapter XII

The Office and Limitations of the Reason

IF THE reason is not the sovereign master of our being nor even intended to be more than an intermediary or minister, it cannot succeed in giving a perfect law to the other estates of the realm, although it may impose on them a temporary and imperfect order as a passage to a higher perfection. The rational or intellectual man is not the last and highest ideal of manhood, nor would a rational society be the last and highest expression of the possibilities of an aggregate human life, — unless indeed we give to this word, reason, a wider meaning than it now possesses and include in it the combined wisdom of all our powers of knowledge, those which stand below and above the understanding and logical mind as well as this strictly rational part of our nature. The Spirit that manifests itself in man and dominates secretly the phases of his development, is greater and profounder than his intellect and drives towards a perfection that cannot be shut in by the arbitrary constructions of the human reason.

Meanwhile, the intellect performs its function; it leads man to the gates of a greater self-consciousness and places him with unbandaged eyes on that wide threshold where a more luminous Angel has to take him by the hand. It takes first the lower powers of his existence, each absorbed in its own urge, each striving with a blind self-sufficiency towards the fulfilment of its own instincts and primary impulses; it teaches them to understand themselves and to look through the reflecting eyes of the intelligence on the laws of their own action. It enables them to discern intelligently the high in themselves from the low, the pure from the impure and out of a crude confusion to arrive at more and more luminous formulas of their possibilities. It gives them self-knowledge and is a guide, teacher, purifier, liberator. For it enables them also to look beyond themselves and at each other and to draw upon each other for fresh motives and a richer working. It strengthens and purifies the hedonistic and the aesthetic activities and softens their quarrel with the ethical mind and instinct; it gives them solidity and seriousness, brings them to the support of the practical and dynamic powers and allies them more closely to the strong actualities of life. It sweetens the ethical will by infusing into it psychic, hedonistic and aesthetic elements and ennobles by all these separately or together the practical, dynamic and utilitarian temperament of the human being. At the same time it plays the part of a judge and legislator, seeks to fix rules, provide systems and regularised combinations which shall enable the powers of the human soul to walk by a settled path and act according to a sure law, an ascertained measure and in a balanced rhythm. Here it finds after a time that its legislative action becomes a force for limitation and turns into a bondage and that the regularised system which it has imposed in the interests of order and conservation becomes a cause of petrifaction and the sealing up of the fountains of life. It has to bring in its own saving faculty of doubt. Under the impulse of the intelligence warned by the obscure revolt of the oppressed springs of life, ethics, aesthetics, the social, political, economic rule begin to question themselves and, if this at first brings in again some confusion, disorder and uncertainty, yet it awakens new movements of imagination, insight, self-knowledge and self-realisation by which old systems and formulas are transformed or disappear, new experiments are made and in the end larger potentialities and combinations are brought into play. By this double action of the intelligence, affirming and imposing what it has seen and again in due season questioning what has been accomplished in order to make a new affirmation, fixing a rule and order and liberating from rule and order, the progress of the race is assured, however uncertain may seem its steps and stages.

But the action of the intelligence is not only turned downward and outward upon our subjective and external life to understand it and determine the law and order of its present movement and its future potentialities. It has also an upward and inward eye and a more luminous functioning by which it accepts divinations from the hidden eternities. It is opened in this power of vision to a Truth above it from which it derives, however imperfectly and as from behind a veil, an indirect knowledge of the universal principles of our existence and its possibilities; it receives and turns what it can seize of them into intellectual forms and these provide us with large governing ideas by which our efforts can be shaped and around which they can be concentrated or massed; it defines the ideals which we seek to accomplish. It provides us with the great ideas that are forces (*idées forces*), ideas which in their own strength impose themselves upon our life and compel it into their moulds. Only the forms we give these ideas are intellectual; they themselves descend from a plane of truth of being where knowledge and force are one, the idea and the power of self-fulfilment in the idea are inseparable. Unfortunately, when translated into the forms of our intelligence which acts only by a separating and combining analysis and synthesis and into the effort of our life which advances by a sort of experimental and empirical seeking, these powers become disparate and conflicting ideals which we have all the difficulty in the world to bring into any kind of satisfactory harmony. Such are the primary principles of liberty and order, good, beauty and truth, the ideal of power and the ideal of love, individualism and collectivism, self-denial and self-fulfilment and a hundred others. In each sphere of human life, in each part of our being and our action the intellect presents us with the opposition of a number of such master ideas and such conflicting principles. It finds each to be a truth to which something essential in our being responds, — in our higher nature a law, in our lower nature an instinct. It seeks to fulfil each in turn, builds a system of action round it and goes from one to the other and back again to what it has left. Or it tries to combine them but is contented with none of the combinations it has made because none brings about their perfect reconciliation or their satisfied oneness. That indeed belongs to a larger and higher consciousness, not yet attained by mankind, where these opposites are ever harmonised and even unified because in their origin they are eternally one. But still every enlarged attempt of the intelligence thus dealing with our inner and outer life increases the width and wealth of our nature, opens it to larger possibilities of self-knowledge and self-realisation and brings us nearer to our awakening into that greater consciousness.

The individual and social progress of man has been thus a double movement of self-illumination and self-harmonising with the intelligence and the intelligent will as the intermediaries between his soul and its works. He has had to bring out numberless possibilities of self-understanding, self-mastery, self-formation out of his first crude life of instincts and impulses; he has been constantly impelled to convert that lower animal or half-animal existence with its imperfect self-conscience into the stuff of intelligent being, instincts into ideas, impulses into ordered movements of an intelligent will. But as he has to proceed out of ignorance into knowledge by a slow labour of self-recognition and mastery of his surroundings and his material and as his intelligence is incapable of seizing comprehensively the whole of himself in knowledge, unable to work out comprehensively the mass of his possibilities in action, he has had to proceed piecemeal, by partial experiments, by creation of different types, by a constant swinging backward and forward between the various possibilities before him and the different elements he has to harmonise.

It is not only that he has to contrive continually some new harmony between the various elements of his being, physical, vitalistic, practical and dynamic, aesthetic, emotional and hedonistic, ethical, intellectual, but each of them again has to arrive at some order of its own disparate materials. In his ethics he is divided by different moral tendencies, justice and charity, self-help and altruism, self-increase and self-abnegation, the tendencies of strength and the tendencies of love, the moral rule of activism and the moral rule of quietism. His emotions are necessary to his development and their indulgence essential to the outflowering of his rich humanity; yet is he constantly called upon to coerce and deny them, nor is there any sure rule to guide him in the perplexity of this twofold need. His hedonistic impulse is called many ways by different fields, objects, ideals of self-satisfaction. His aesthetic enjoyment, his aesthetic creation forms for itself under the stress of the intelligence different laws and forms; each seeks to impose itself as the best and the standard, yet each, if its claim were allowed, would by its unjust victory impoverish and imprison his faculty and his felicity in its exercise. His politics and society are a series of adventures and experiments among various possibilities of autocracy, monarchism, military aristocracy, mercantile oligarchy, open or veiled plutocracy, pseudo-democracy of various kinds, bourgeois or proletarian, individualistic or collectivist or bureaucratic, socialism awaiting him, anarchism looming beyond it; and all these correspond to some truth of his social being, some need of his complex social nature, some instinct or force in it which demands that form for its effectuation. Mankind works out these difficulties under the stress of the spirit within it by throwing out a constant variation of types, types of character and temperament, types of practical activity, aesthetic creation, polity, society, ethical order, intellectual system, which vary from the pure to the mixed, from the simple harmony to the complex; each and all of these are so many experiments of individual and collective self-formation in the light of a progressive and increasing knowledge. That knowledge is governed by a number of conflicting ideas and ideals around which these experiments group themselves: each of them is gradually pushed as far as possible in its purity and again mixed and combined as much as possible with others so that there may be a more complex form and an enriched action. Each type has to be broken in turn to yield place to new types and each combination has to give way to the possibility of a new combination. Through it all there is growing an accumulating stock of self-experience and self-actualisation of which the ordinary man accepts some current formulation conventionally as if it were an absolute law and truth, — often enough he even thinks it to be that, — but which the more developed human being seeks always either to break or to enlarge and make more profound or subtle in order to increase or make room for an increase of human capacity, perfectibility, happiness.

This view of human life and of the process of our development, to which subjectivism readily leads us, gives us a truer vision of the place of the intellect in the human movement. We have seen that the intellect has a double working, dispassionate and interested, self-centred or subservient to movements not its own. The one is a disinterested pursuit of truth for the sake of Truth and of knowledge for the sake of Knowledge without any ulterior motive, with every consideration put away except the rule of keeping the eye on the object, on the fact under enquiry and finding out its truth, its process, its law. The other is coloured by the passion for practice, the desire to govern life by the truth discovered or the fascination of an idea which we labour to establish as the sovereign law of our life and action. We have seen indeed that this is the superiority of reason over the other faculties of man that it is not confined to a separate absorbed action of its own, but plays upon all the others, discovers their law and truth, makes its discoveries serviceable to them and even in pursuing its own bent and end serves also their ends and arrives at a catholic utility. Man in fact does not live for knowledge alone; life in its widest sense is his principal preoccupation and he seeks knowledge for its utility to life much more than for the pure pleasure of acquiring knowledge. But it is precisely in this putting of knowledge at the service of life that the human intellect falls into that confusion and imperfection which pursues all human action. So long as we pursue knowledge for its own sake, there is nothing to be said: the reason is performing its natural function; it is exercising securely its highest right. In the work of the philosopher, the scientist, the savant labouring to add something to the stock of our ascertainable knowledge, there is as perfect a purity and satisfaction as in that of the poet and artist creating forms of beauty for the aesthetic delight of the race. Whatever individual error and limitation there may be, does not matter; for the collective and progressive knowledge of the race has gained the truth that has been discovered and may be trusted in time to get rid of the error. It is when it tries to apply ideas to life that the human intellect stumbles and finds itself at fault.

Ordinarily, this is because in concerning itself with action the intelligence of man becomes at once partial and passionate and makes itself the servant of something other than the pure truth. But even if the intellect keeps itself as impartial and disinterested as possible, — and altogether impartial, altogether disinterested the human intellect cannot be unless it is content to arrive at an entire divorce from practice or a sort of large but ineffective tolerantism, eclecticism or sceptical curiosity, — still the truths it discovers or the ideas it promulgates become, the moment they are applied to life, the plaything of forces over which the reason has little control. Science pursuing its cold and even way has made discoveries which have served on one side a practical humanitarianism, on the other supplied monstrous weapons to egoism and mutual destruction; it has made possible a gigantic efficiency of organisation which has been used on one side for the economic and social amelioration of the nations and on the other for turning each into a colossal battering-ram of aggression, ruin and slaughter. It has given rise on the one side to a large rationalistic and altruistic humanitarianism, on the other it has justified a godless egoism, vitalism, vulgar will to power and success. It has drawn mankind together and given it a new hope and at the same time crushed it with the burden of a monstrous commercialism. Nor is this due, as is so often asserted, to its divorce from religion or to any lack of idealism. Idealistic philosophy has been equally at the service of the powers of good and evil and provided an intellectual conviction both for reaction and for progress. Organised religion itself has often enough in the past hounded men to crime and massacre and justified obscurantism and oppression.

The truth is that upon which we are now insisting, that reason is in its nature an imperfect light with a large but still restricted mission and that once it applies itself to life and action it becomes subject to what it studies and the servant and counsellor of the forces in whose obscure and ill-understood struggle it intervenes. It can in its nature be used and has always been used to justify any idea, theory of life, system of society or government, ideal of individual or collective action to which the will of man attaches itself for the moment or through the centuries. In philosophy it gives equally good reasons for monism and pluralism or for any halting-place between them, for the belief in Being or for the belief in Becoming, for optimism and pessimism, for activism and quietism. It can justify the most mystic religionism and the most positive atheism, get rid of God or see nothing else. In aesthetics it supplies the basis equally for classicism and romanticism, for an idealistic, religious or mystic theory of art or for the most earthy realism. It can with equal power base austerely a strict and narrow moralism or prove triumphantly the thesis of the antinomian. It has been the sufficient and convincing prophet of every kind of autocracy or oligarchy and of every species of democracy; it supplies excellent and satisfying reasons for competitive individualism and equally excellent and satisfying reasons for communism or against communism and for State socialism or for one variety of socialism against another. It can place itself with equal effectivity at the service of utilitarianism, economism, hedonism, aestheticism, sensualism, ethicism, idealism or any other essential need or activity of man and build around it a philosophy, a political and social system, a theory of conduct and life. Ask it not to lean to one idea alone, but to make an eclectic combination or a synthetic harmony and it will satisfy you; only, there being any number of possible combinations or harmonies, it will equally well justify the one or the other and set up or throw down any one of them according as the spirit in man is attracted to or withdraws from it. For it is really that which decides and the reason is only a brilliant servant and minister of this veiled and secret sovereign.

This truth is hidden from the rationalist because he is supported by two constant articles of faith, first that his own reason is right and the reason of others who differ from him is wrong, and secondly that whatever may be the present deficiencies of the human intellect, the collective human reason will eventually arrive at purity and be able to found human thought and life securely on a clear rational basis entirely satisfying to the intelligence. His first article of faith is no doubt the common expression of our egoism and arrogant fallibility, but it is also something more; it expresses this truth that it is the legitimate function of the reason to justify to man his action and his hope and the faith that is in him and to give him that idea and knowledge, however restricted, and that dynamic conviction, however narrow and intolerant, which he needs in order that he may live, act and grow in the highest light available to him. The reason cannot grasp all truth in its embrace because truth is too infinite for it; but still it does grasp the something of it which we immediately need, and its insufficiency does not detract from the value of its work, but is rather the measure of its value. For man is not intended to grasp the whole truth of his being at once, but to move towards it through a succession of experiences and a constant, though not by any means a perfectly continuous self-enlargement. The first business of reason then is to justify and enlighten to him his various experiences and to give him faith and conviction in holding on to his self-enlargings. It justifies to him now this, now that, the experience of the moment, the receding light of the past, the half-seen vision of the future. Its inconstancy, its divisibility against itself, its power of sustaining opposite views are the whole secret of its value. It would not do indeed for it to support too conflicting views in the same individual, except at moments of awakening and transition, but in the collective body of men and in the successions of Time that is its whole business. For so man moves towards the infinity of the Truth by the experience of its variety; so his reason helps him to build, change, destroy what he has built and prepare a new construction, in a word, to progress, grow, enlarge himself in his self-knowledge and world-knowledge and their works.

The second article of faith of the believer in reason is also an error and yet contains a truth. The reason cannot arrive at any final truth because it can neither get to the root of things nor embrace the totality of their secrets; it deals with the finite, the separate, the limited aggregate, and has no measure for the all and the infinite. Nor can reason found a perfect life for man or a perfect society. A purely rational human life would be a life baulked and deprived of its most powerful dynamic sources; it would be a substitution of the minister for the sovereign. A purely rational society could not come into being and, if it could be born, either could not live or would sterilise and petrify human existence. The root powers of human life, its intimate causes are below, irrational, and they are above, suprarational. But this is true that by constant enlargement, purification, openness the reason of man is bound to arrive at an intelligent sense even of that which is hidden from it, a power of passive, yet sympathetic reflection of the Light that surpasses it. Its limit is reached, its function is finished when it can say to man, "There is a Soul, a Self, a God in the world and in man who works concealed and all is his self-concealing and gradual self-unfolding. His minister I have been, slowly to unseal your eyes, remove the thick integuments of your vision until there is only my own luminous veil between you and him. Remove that and make the soul of man one in fact and nature with this Divine; then you will know yourself, discover the highest and widest law of your being, become the possessors or at least the receivers and instruments of a higher will and knowledge than mine and lay hold at last on the true secret and the whole sense of a human and yet divine living."

Chapter XIII

Reason and Religion

IT WOULD seem then that reason is an insufficient, often an inefficient, even a stumbling and at its best a very partially enlightened guide for humanity in that great endeavour which is the real heart of human progress and the inner justification of our existence as souls, minds and bodies upon the earth. For that endeavour is not only the effort to survive and make a place for ourselves on the earth as the animals do, not only having made to keep it and develop its best vital and egoistic or communal use for the efficiency and enjoyment of the individual, the family or the collective ego, substantially as is done by the animal families and colonies, in bee-hive or ant-hill for example, though in the larger, many-sided way of reasoning animals; it is also, and much more characteristically of our human as distinguished from our animal element, the endeavour to arrive at a harmonised inner and outer perfection, and, as we find in the end, at its highest height, to culminate in the discovery of the divine Reality behind our existence and the complete and ideal Person within us and the shaping of human life in that image. But if that is the truth, then neither the Hellenic ideal of an all-round philosophic, aesthetic, moral and physical culture governed by the enlightened reason of man and led by the wisest minds of a free society, nor the modern ideal of an efficient culture and successful economic civilisation governed by the collective reason and organised knowledge of mankind can be either the highest or the widest goal of social development.

The Hellenic ideal was roughly expressed in the old Latin maxim, a sound mind in a sound body. And by a sound body the ancients meant a healthy and beautiful body well-fitted for the rational use and enjoyment of life. And by a sound mind they meant a clear and balanced reason and an enlightened and well-trained mentality, — trained in the sense of ancient, not of modern education. It was not to be packed with all available information and ideas, cast in the mould of science and a rational utility and so prepared for the efficient performance of social and civic needs and duties, for a professional avocation or for an intellectual pursuit; rather it was to be cultured in all its human capacities intellectual, moral, aesthetic, trained to use them rightly and to range freely, intelligently and flexibly in all questions and in all practical matters of philosophy, science, art, politics and social living. The ancient Greek mind was philosophic, aesthetic and political; the modern mind has been scientific, economic and utilitarian. The ancient ideal laid stress on soundness and beauty and sought to build up a fine and rational human life; the modern lays very little or no stress on beauty, prefers rational and practical soundness, useful adaptation, just mechanism and seeks to build up a well-ordered, well-informed and efficient human life. Both take it that man is partly a mental, partly a physical being with the mentalised physical life for his field and reason for his highest attribute and his highest possibility. But if we follow to the end the new vistas opened by the most advanced tendencies of a subjective age, we shall be led back to a still more ancient truth and ideal that overtops both the Hellenic and the modern levels. For we shall then seize the truth that man is a developing spirit trying here to find and fulfil itself in the forms of mind, life and body; and we shall perceive luminously growing before us the greater ideal of a deeply conscious self-illumined, self-possessing, self-mastering soul in a pure and perfect mind and body. The wider field it seeks will be, not the mentalised physical life with which man has started, but a new spiritualised life inward and outward, by which the perfected internal figures itself in a perfected external living. Beyond man's long intelligent effort towards a perfected culture and a rational society there opens the old religious and spiritual ideal, the hope of the kingdom of heaven within us and the city of God upon earth.

But if the soul is the true sovereign and if its spiritual self-finding, its progressive largest widest integral fulfilment by the power of the spirit are to be accepted as the ultimate secret of our evolution, then since certainly the instinctive being of man below reason is not the means of attaining that high end and since we find that reason also is an insufficient light and power, there must be a superior range of being with its own proper powers, — liberated soul-faculties, a spiritual will and knowledge higher than the reason and intelligent will, — by which alone an entire conscious self-fulfilment can become possible to the human being. We must remember that our aim of self-fulfilment is an integral unfolding of the Divine within us, a complete evolution of the hidden divinity in the individual soul and the collective life. Otherwise we may simply come back to an old idea of individual and social living which had its greatness, but did not provide all the conditions of our perfection. That was the idea of a spiritualised typal society. It proceeded upon the supposition that each man has his own peculiar nature which is born from and reflects one element of the divine nature. The character of each individual, his ethical type, his training, his social occupation, his spiritual possibility must be formed or developed within the conditions of that peculiar element; the perfection he seeks in this life must be according to its law. The theory of ancient Indian culture — its practice, as is the way of human practice, did not always correspond to the theory — worked upon this supposition. It divided man in society into the fourfold order — an at once spiritual, psychic, ethical and economic order — of the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, — practically, the spiritual and intellectual man, the dynamic man of will, the vital, hedonistic and economic man, the material man; the whole society organised in these four constituent classes represented the complete image of the creative and active Godhead.

A different division of the typal society is quite possible. But whatever the arrangement or division, the typal principle cannot be the foundation of an ideal human society. Even according to the Indian theory it does not belong either to the periods of man's highest attainment or to the eras of his lowest possibility; it is neither the principle of his ideal age, his age of the perfected Truth, Satyayuga, Kritayuga, in which he lives according to some high and profound realisation of his divine possibility, nor of his iron age, the Kaliyuga, in which he collapses towards the life of the instincts, impulses and desires with the reason degraded into a servant of this nether life of man. This too precise order is rather the appropriate principle of the intermediate ages of his cycle in which he attempts to maintain some imperfect form of his true law, his *dharma*, by will-power and force of character in the Treta, by law, arrangement and fixed convention in the Dwapara.[1] The type is not the integral man, it is the fixing and emphasising of the generally prominent part of his active nature. But each man contains in himself the whole divine potentiality and therefore the Shudra cannot be rigidly confined within his Shudrahood, nor the Brahmin in his Brahminhood, but each contains within himself the potentialities and the need of perfection of his other elements of a divine manhood. In the Kali age these potentialities may act in a state of crude disorder, the anarchy of our being which covers our confused attempt at a new order. In the intermediate ages the principle of order may take refuge in a limited perfection, suppressing some elements to perfect others. But the law of the Satya age is the large development of the whole truth of our being in the realisation of a spontaneous and self-supported spiritual harmony. That can only be realised by the evolution, in the measure of which our human capacity in its enlarging cycles becomes capable of it, of the spiritual ranges of our being and the unmasking of their inherent light and power, their knowledge and their divine capacities.

We shall better understand what may be this higher being and those higher faculties, if we look again at the dealings of the reason with the trend towards the absolute in our other faculties, in the divergent principles of our complex existence. Let us study especially its dealings with the suprarational in them and the infrarational, the two extremes between which our intelligence is some sort of mediator. The spiritual or suprarational is always turned at its heights towards the Absolute; in its extension, living in the luminous infinite, its special power is to realise the infinite in the finite, the eternal unity in all divisions and differences. Our spiritual evolution ascends therefore through the relative to the absolute, through the finite to the infinite, through all divisions to oneness. Man in his spiritual realisation begins to find and seize hold on the satisfying intensities of the absolute in the relative, feels the large and serene presence of the infinite in the finite, discovers the reconciling law of a perfect unity in all divisions and differences. The spiritual will in his outer as in his inner life and formulation must be to effect a great reconciliation between the secret and eternal reality and the finite appearances of a world which seeks to express and in expressing seems to deny it. Our highest faculties then will be those which make this possible because they have in them the intimate light and power and joy by which these things can be grasped in direct knowledge and experience, realised and made normally and permanently effective in will, communicated to our whole nature. The infrarational, on the other hand, has its origin and basis in the obscure infinite of the Inconscient; it wells up in instincts and impulses, which are really the crude and more or less haphazard intuitions of a subconscient physical, vital, emotional and sensational mind and will in us. Its struggle is towards definition, towards self-creation, towards finding some finite order of its obscure knowledge and tendencies. But it has also the instinct and force of the infinite from which it proceeds; it contains obscure, limited and violent velleities that move it to grasp at the intensities of the absolute and pull them down or some touch of them into its finite action: but because it proceeds by ignorance and not by knowledge, it cannot truly succeed in this more vehement endeavour. The life of the reason and intelligent will stands between that upper and this nether power. On one side it takes up and enlightens the life of the instincts and impulses and helps it to find on a higher plane the finite order for which it gropes. On the other side it looks up towards the absolute, looks out towards the infinite, looks in towards the One, but without being able to grasp and hold their realities; for it is able only to consider them with a sort of derivative and remote understanding, because it moves in the relative and, itself limited and definite, it can act only by definition, division and limitation. These three powers of being, the suprarational, rational and infrarational are present, but with an infinitely varying prominence in all our activities.

---

[1] Therefore it is said that Vishnu is the King in the Treta, but in the Dwapara the arranger and codifier of the knowledge and the law.

The limitations of the reason become very strikingly, very characteristically, very nakedly apparent when it is confronted with that great order of psychological truths and experiences which we have hitherto kept in the background — the religious being of man and his religious life. Here is a realm at which the intellectual reason gazes with the bewildered mind of a foreigner who hears a language of which the words and the spirit are unintelligible to him and sees everywhere forms of life and principles of thought and action which are absolutely strange to his experience. He may try to learn this speech and understand this strange and alien life; but it is with pain and difficulty, and he cannot succeed unless he has, so to speak, unlearned himself and become one in spirit and nature with the natives of this celestial empire. Till then his efforts to understand and interpret them in his own language and according to his own notions end at the worst in a gross misunderstanding and deformation. The attempts of the positive critical reason to dissect the phenomena of the religious life sound to men of spiritual experience like the prattle of a child who is trying to shape into the mould of his own habitual notions the life of adults or the blunders of an ignorant mind which thinks fit to criticise patronisingly or adversely the labours of a profound thinker or a great scientist. At the best even this futile labour can extract, can account for only the externals of the things it attempts to explain; the spirit is missed, the inner matter is left out, and as a result of that capital omission even the account of the externals is left without real truth and has only an apparent correctness.

The unaided intellectual reason faced with the phenomena of the religious life is naturally apt to adopt one of two attitudes, both of them shallow in the extreme, hastily presumptuous and erroneous. Either it views the whole thing as a mass of superstition, a mystical nonsense, a farrago of ignorant barbaric survivals, — that was the extreme spirit of the rationalist now happily, though not dead, yet much weakened and almost moribund, — or it patronises religion, tries to explain its origins, to get rid of it by the process of explaining it away; or it labours gently or forcefully to reject or correct its superstitions, crudities, absurdities, to purify it into an abstract nothingness or persuade it to purify itself in the light of the reasoning intelligence; or it allows it a role, leaves it perhaps for the edification of the ignorant, admits its value as a moralising influence or its utility to the State for keeping the lower classes in order, even perhaps tries to invent that strange chimera, a rational religion.

The former attitude has on its positive side played a powerful part in the history of human thought, has even been of a considerable utility in its own way — we shall have to note briefly hereafter how and why — to human progress and in the end even to religion; but its intolerant negations are an arrogant falsity, as the human mind has now sufficiently begun to perceive. Its mistake is like that of a foreigner who thinks everything in an alien country absurd and inferior because these things are not his own ways of acting and thinking and cannot be cut out by his own measures or suited to his own standards. So the thoroughgoing rationalist asks the religious spirit, if it is to stand, to satisfy the material reason and even to give physical proof of its truths, while the very essence of religion is the discovery of the immaterial Spirit and the play of a supraphysical consciousness. So too he tries to judge religion by his idea of its externalities, just as an ignorant and obstreperous foreigner might try to judge a civilisation by the dress, outward colour of life and some of the most external peculiarities in the social manners of the inhabitants. That in this he errs in company with certain of the so-called religious themselves, may be his excuse, but cannot be the justification of his ignorance. The more moderate attitude of the rational mind has also played its part in the history of human thought. Its attempts to explain religion have resulted in the compilation of an immense mass of amazingly ingenious perversions, such as certain pseudo-scientific attempts to form a comparative Science of Religion. It has built up in the approved modern style immense façades of theory with stray bricks of misunderstood facts for their material. Its mild condonations of religion have led to superficial phases of thought which have passed quickly away and left no trace behind them. Its efforts at the creation of a rational religion, perfectly well-intentioned, but helpless and unconvincing, have had no appreciable effect and have failed like a dispersing cloud, *chinnābhram iva naśyati*.

The deepest heart, the inmost essence of religion, apart from its outward machinery of creed, cult, ceremony and symbol, is the search for God and the finding of God. Its aspiration is to discover the Infinite, the Absolute, the One, the Divine, who is all these things and yet no abstraction but a Being. Its work is a sincere living out of the true and intimate relations between man and God, relations of unity, relations of difference, relations of an illuminated knowledge, an ecstatic love and delight, an absolute surrender and service, a casting of every part of our existence out of its normal status into an uprush of man towards the Divine and a descent of the Divine into man. All this has nothing to do with the realm of reason or its normal activities; its aim, its sphere, its process is suprarational. The knowledge of God is not to be gained by weighing the feeble arguments of reason for or against his existence: it is to be gained only by a self-transcending and absolute consecration, aspiration and experience. Nor does that experience proceed by anything like rational scientific experiment or rational philosophic thinking. Even in those parts of religious discipline which seem most to resemble scientific experiment, the method is a verification of things which exceed the reason and its timid scope. Even in those parts of religious knowledge which seem most to resemble intellectual operations, the illuminating faculties are not imagination, logic and rational judgment, but revelations, inspirations, intuitions, intuitive discernments that leap down to us from a plane of suprarational light. The love of God is an infinite and absolute feeling which does not admit of any rational limitation and does not use a language of rational worship and adoration; the delight in God is that peace and bliss which passes all understanding. The surrender to God is the surrender of the whole being to a suprarational light, will, power and love and his service takes no account of the compromises with life which the practical reason of man uses as the best part of its method in the ordinary conduct of mundane existence. Wherever religion really finds itself, wherever it opens itself to its own spirit, — there is plenty of that sort of religious practice which is halting, imperfect, half-sincere, only half-sure of itself and in which reason can get in a word, — its way is absolute and its fruits are ineffable.

Reason has indeed a part to play in relation to this highest field of our religious being and experience, but that part is quite secondary and subordinate. It cannot lay down the law for the religious life, it cannot determine in its own right the system of divine knowledge; it cannot school and lesson the divine love and delight; it cannot set bounds to spiritual experience or lay its yoke upon the action of the spiritual man. Its sole legitimate sphere is to explain as best it can, in its own language and to the rational and intellectual parts of man, the truths, the experiences, the laws of our suprarational and spiritual existence. That has been the work of spiritual philosophy in the East and — much more crudely and imperfectly done — of theology in the West, a work of great importance at moments like the present when the intellect of mankind after a long wandering is again turning towards the search for the Divine. Here there must inevitably enter a part of those operations proper to the intellect, logical reasoning, inferences from the data given by rational experience, analogies drawn from our knowledge of the apparent facts of existence, appeals even to the physical truths of science, all the apparatus of the intelligent mind in its ordinary workings. But this is the weakest part of spiritual philosophy. It convinces the rational mind only where the intellect is already predisposed to belief, and even if it convinces, it cannot give the true knowledge. Reason is safest when it is content to take the profound truths and experiences of the spiritual being and the spiritual life, just as they are given to it, and throw them into such form, order and language as will make them the most intelligible or the least unintelligible to the reasoning mind. Even then it is not quite safe, for it is apt to harden the order into an intellectual system and to present the form as if it were the essence. And, at best, it has to use a language which is not the very tongue of the suprarational truth but its inadequate translation and, since it is not the ordinary tongue either of the rational intelligence, it is open to non-understanding or misunderstanding by the ordinary reason of mankind. It is well-known to the experience of the spiritual seeker that even the highest philosophising cannot give a true inner knowledge, is not the spiritual light, does not open the gates of experience. All it can do is to address the consciousness of man through his intellect and, when it has done, to say, "I have tried to give you the truth in a form and system which will make it intelligible and possible to you; if you are intellectually convinced or attracted, you can now seek the real knowledge, but you must seek it by other means which are beyond my province."

But there is another level of the religious life in which reason might seem justified in interfering more independently and entitled to assume a superior role. For as there is the suprarational life in which religious aspiration finds entirely what it seeks, so too there is also the infrarational life of the instincts, impulses, sensations, crude emotions, vital activities from which all human aspiration takes its beginning. These too feel the touch of the religious sense in man, share its needs and experience, desire its satisfactions. Religion includes this satisfaction also in its scope, and in what is usually called religion it seems even to be the greater part, sometimes to an external view almost the whole; for the supreme purity of spiritual experience does not appear or is glimpsed only through this mixed and turbid current. Much impurity, ignorance, superstition, many doubtful elements must form as the result of this contact and union of our highest tendencies with our lower ignorant nature. Here it would seem that reason has its legitimate part; here surely it can intervene to enlighten, purify, rationalise the play of the instincts and impulses. It would seem that a religious reformation, a movement to substitute a "pure" and rational religion for one that is largely infrarational and impure, would be a distinct advance in the religious development of humanity. To a certain extent this may be, but, owing to the peculiar nature of the religious being, its entire urge towards the suprarational, not without serious qualifications, nor can the rational mind do anything here that is of a high positive value.

Religious forms and systems become effete and corrupt and have to be destroyed, or they lose much of their inner sense and become clouded in knowledge and injurious in practice, and in destroying what is effete or in negating aberrations reason has played an important part in religious history. But in its endeavour to get rid of the superstition and ignorance which have attached themselves to religious forms and symbols, intellectual reason unenlightened by spiritual knowledge tends to deny and, so far as it can, to destroy the truth and the experience which was contained in them. Reformations which give too much to reason and are too negative and protestant, usually create religions which lack in wealth of spirituality and fullness of religious emotion; they are not opulent in their contents; their form and too often their spirit is impoverished, bare and cold. Nor are they really rational; for they live not by their reasoning and dogma, which to the rational mind is as irrational as that of the creeds they replace, still less by their negations, but by their positive quantum of faith and fervour which is suprarational in its whole aim and has too its infrarational elements. If these seem less gross to the ordinary mind than those of less self-questioning creeds, it is often because they are more timid in venturing into the realm of suprarational experience. The life of the instincts and impulses on its religious side cannot be satisfyingly purified by reason, but rather by being sublimated, by being lifted up into the illuminations of the spirit. The natural line of religious development proceeds always by illumination; and religious reformation acts best when either it reilluminates rather than destroys old forms or, where destruction is necessary, replaces them by richer and not by poorer forms, and in any case when it purifies by suprarational illumination, not by rational enlightenment. A purely rational religion could only be a cold and bare Deism, and such attempts have always failed to achieve vitality and permanence; for they act contrary to the *dharma*, the natural law and spirit of religion. If reason is to play any decisive part, it must be an intuitive rather than an intellectual reason, touched always by spiritual intensity and insight. For it must be remembered that the infrarational also has behind it a secret Truth which does not fall within the domain of the Reason and is not wholly amenable to its judgments. The heart has its knowledge, the life has its intuitive spirit within it, its intimations, divinations, outbreaks and upflamings of a Secret Energy, a divine or at least semi-divine aspiration and outreaching which the eye of intuition alone can fathom and only intuitive speech or symbol can shape or utter. To root out these things from religion or to purge religion of any elements necessary for its completeness because the forms are defective or obscure, without having the power to illuminate them from within or the patience to wait for their illumination from above or without replacing them by more luminous symbols, is not to purify but to pauperise.

But the relations of the spirit and the reason need not be, as they too often are in our practice, hostile or without any point of contact. Religion itself need not adopt for its principle the formula "I believe because it is impossible" or Pascal's "I believe because it is absurd." What is impossible or absurd to the unaided reason, becomes real and right to the reason lifted beyond itself by the power of the spirit and irradiated by its light. For then it is dominated by the intuitive mind which is our means of passage to a yet higher principle of knowledge. The widest spirituality does not exclude or discourage any essential human activity or faculty, but works rather to lift all of them up out of their imperfection and groping ignorance, transforms them by its touch and makes them the instruments of the light, power and joy of the divine being and the divine nature.

Chapter XIV

The Suprarational Beauty

RELIGION is the seeking after the spiritual, the suprarational and therefore in this sphere the intellectual reason may well be an insufficient help and find itself, not only at the end but from the beginning, out of its province and condemned to tread either diffidently or else with a stumbling presumptuousness in the realm of a power and a light higher than its own. But in the other spheres of human consciousness and human activity it may be thought that it has the right to the sovereign place, since these move on the lower plane of the rational and the finite or belong to that border-land where the rational and the infrarational meet and the impulses and the instincts of man stand in need above all of the light and the control of the reason. In its own sphere of finite knowledge, science, philosophy, the useful arts, its right, one would think, must be indisputable. But this does not turn out in the end to be true. Its province may be larger, its powers more ample, its action more justly self-confident, but in the end everywhere it finds itself standing between the two other powers of our being and fulfilling in greater or less degree the same function of an intermediary. On one side it is an enlightener — not always the chief enlightener — and the corrector of our life-impulses and first mental seekings, on the other it is only one minister of the veiled Spirit and a preparer of the paths for the coming of its rule.

This is especially evident in the two realms which in the ordinary scale of our powers stand nearest to the reason and on either side of it, the aesthetic and the ethical being, the search for Beauty and the search for Good. Man's seeking after beauty reaches its most intense and satisfying expression in the great creative arts, poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, but in its full extension there is no activity of his nature or his life from which it need or ought to be excluded, — provided we understand beauty both in its widest and its truest sense. A complete and universal appreciation of beauty and the making entirely beautiful our whole life and being must surely be a necessary character of the perfect individual and the perfect society. But in its origin this seeking for beauty is not rational; it springs from the roots of our life, it is an instinct and an impulse, an instinct of aesthetic satisfaction and an impulse of aesthetic creation and enjoyment. Starting from the infrarational parts of our being, this instinct and impulse begin with much imperfection and impurity and with great crudities both in creation and in appreciation. It is here that the reason comes in to distinguish, to enlighten, to correct, to point out the deficiencies and the crudities, to lay down laws of aesthetics and to purify our appreciation and our creation by improved taste and right knowledge. While we are thus striving to learn and correct ourselves, it may seem to be the true law-giver both for the artist and the admirer and, though not the creator of our aesthetic instinct and impulse, yet the creator in us of an aesthetic conscience and its vigilant judge and guide. That which was an obscure and erratic activity, it makes self-conscious and rationally discriminative in its work and enjoyment.

But again this is true only in restricted bounds or, if anywhere entirely true, then only on a middle plane of our aesthetic seeking and activity. Where the greatest and most powerful creation of beauty is accomplished and its appreciation and enjoyment rise to the highest pitch, the rational is always surpassed and left behind. The creation of beauty in poetry and art does not fall within the sovereignty or even within the sphere of the reason. The intellect is not the poet, the artist, the creator within us; creation comes by a supraratioal influx of light and power which must work always, if it is to do its best, by vision and inspiration. It may use the intellect for certain of its operations, but in proportion as it subjects itself to the intellect, it loses in power and force of vision and diminishes the splendour and truth of the beauty it creates. The intellect may take hold of the influx, moderate and repress the divine enthusiasm of creation and force it to obey the prudence of its dictates, but in doing so it brings down the work to its own inferior level, and the lowering is in proportion to the intellectual interference. For by itself the intelligence can only achieve talent, though it may be a high and even, if sufficiently helped from above, a surpassing talent. Genius, the true creator, is always suprarational in its nature and its instrumentation even when it seems to be doing the work of the reason; it is most itself, most exalted in its work, most sustained in the power, depth, height and beauty of its achievement when it is least touched by, least mixed with any control of the mere intellectuality and least often drops from its heights of vision and inspiration into reliance upon the always mechanical process of intellectual construction. Art-creation which accepts the canons of the reason and works within the limits laid down by it, may be great, beautiful and powerful; for genius can preserve its power even when it labours in shackles and refuses to put forth all its resources: but when it proceeds by means of the intellect, it constructs, but does not create. It may construct well and with a good and faultless workmanship, but its success is formal and not of the spirit, a success of technique and not the embodiment of the imperishable truth of beauty seized in its inner reality, its divine delight, its appeal to a supreme source of ecstasy, Ananda.

There have been periods of artistic creation, ages of reason, in which the rational and intellectual tendency has prevailed in poetry and art; there have even been nations which in their great formative periods of art and literature have set up reason and a meticulous taste as the sovereign powers of their aesthetic activity. At their best these periods have achieved work of a certain greatness, but predominantly of an intellectual greatness and perfection of technique rather than achievements of a supreme inspired and revealing beauty; indeed their very aim has been not the discovery of the deeper truth of beauty, but truth of ideas and truth of reason, a critical rather than a true creative aim. Their leading object has been an intellectual criticism of life and nature elevated by a consummate poetical rhythm and diction rather than a revelation of God and man and life and nature in inspired forms of artistic beauty. But great art is not satisfied with representing the intellectual truth of things, which is always their superficial or exterior truth; it seeks for a deeper and original truth which escapes the eye of the mere sense or the mere reason, the soul in them, the unseen reality which is not that of their form and process but of their spirit. This it seizes and expresses by form and idea, but a significant form, which is not merely a faithful and just or a harmonious reproduction of outward Nature, and a revelatory idea, not the idea which is merely correct, elegantly right or fully satisfying to the reason and taste. Always the truth it seeks is first and foremost the truth of beauty, — not, again, the formal beauty alone or the beauty of proportion and right process which is what the sense and the reason seek, but the soul of beauty which is hidden from the ordinary eye and the ordinary mind and revealed in its fullness only to the unsealed vision of the poet and artist in man who can seize the secret significances of the universal poet and artist, the divine creator who dwells as their soul and spirit in the forms he has created.

The art-creation which lays a supreme stress on reason and taste and on perfection and purity of a technique constructed in obedience to the canons of reason and taste, claimed for itself the name of classical art; but the claim, like the too trenchant distinction on which it rests, is of doubtful validity. The spirit of the real, the great classical art and poetry is to bring out what is universal and subordinate individual expression to universal truth and beauty, just as the spirit of romantic art and poetry is to bring out what is striking and individual and this it often does so powerfully or with so vivid an emphasis as to throw into the background of its creation the universal, on which yet all true art romantic or classical builds and fills in its forms. In truth, all great art has carried in it both a classical and a romantic as well as a realistic element, — understanding realism in the sense of the prominent bringing out of the external truth of things, not the perverse inverted romanticism of the "real" which brings into exaggerated prominence the ugly, common or morbid and puts that forward as the whole truth of life. The type of art to which a great creative work belongs is determined by the prominence it gives to one element and the subdual of the others into subordination to its reigning spirit. But classical art also works by a large vision and inspiration, not by the process of the intellect. The lower kind of classical art and literature, — if classical it be and not rather, as it often is, pseudo-classical, intellectually imitative of the external form and process of the classical, — may achieve work of considerable, though a much lesser power, but of an essentially inferior scope and nature; for to that inferiority it is self-condemned by its principle of intellectual construction. Almost always it speedily degenerates into the formal or academic, empty of real beauty, void of life and power, imprisoned in its slavery to form and imagining that when a certain form has been followed, certain canons of construction satisfied, certain rhetorical rules or technical principles obeyed, all has been achieved. It ceases to be art and becomes a cold and mechanical workmanship.

This predominance given to reason and taste first and foremost, sometimes even almost alone, in the creation and appreciation of beauty arises from a temper of mind which is critical rather than creative; and in regard to creation its theory falls into a capital error. All artistic work in order to be perfect must indeed have in the very act of creation the guidance of an inner power of discrimination constantly selecting and rejecting in accordance with a principle of truth and beauty which remains always faithful to a harmony, a proportion, an intimate relation of the form to the idea; there is at the same time an exact fidelity of the idea to the spirit, nature and inner body of the thing of beauty which has been revealed to the soul and the mind, its *svarūpa* and *svabhāva*. Therefore this discriminating inner sense rejects all that is foreign, superfluous, otiose, all that is a mere diversion distractive and deformative, excessive or defective, while it selects and finds sovereignly all that can bring out the full truth, the utter beauty, the inmost power. But this discrimination is not that of the critical intellect, nor is the harmony, proportion, relation it observes that which can be fixed by any set law of the critical reason; it exists in the very nature and truth of the thing itself, the creation itself, in its secret inner law of beauty and harmony which can be seized by vision, not by intellectual analysis. The discrimination which works in the creator is therefore not an intellectual self-criticism or an obedience to rules imposed on him from outside by any intellectual canons, but itself creative, intuitive, a part of the vision, involved in and inseparable from the act of creation. It comes as part of that influx of power and light from above which by its divine enthusiasm lifts the faculties into their intense suprarational working. When it fails, when it is betrayed by the lower executive instruments rational or infrarational, — and this happens when these cease to be passive and insist on obtruding their own demands or vagaries, — the work is flawed and a subsequent act of self-criticism becomes necessary. But in correcting his work the artist who attempts to do it by rule and intellectual process, uses a false or at any rate an inferior method and cannot do his best. He ought rather to call to his aid the intuitive critical vision and embody it in a fresh act of inspired creation or re-creation after bringing himself back by its means into harmony with the light and law of his original creative initiation. The critical intellect has no direct or independent part in the means of the inspired creator of beauty.

In the appreciation of beauty it has a part, but it is not even there the supreme judge or law-giver. The business of the intellect is to analyse the elements, parts, external processes, apparent principles of that which it studies and explain their relations and workings; in doing this it instructs and enlightens the lower mentality which has, if left to itself, the habit of doing things or seeing what is done and taking all for granted without proper observation and fruitful understanding. But as with truth of religion, so with the highest and deepest truth of beauty, the intellectual reason cannot seize its inner sense and reality, not even the inner truth of its apparent principles and processes, unless it is aided by a higher insight not its own. As it cannot give a method, process or rule by which beauty can or ought to be created, so also it cannot give to the appreciation of beauty that deeper insight which it needs; it can only help to remove the dullness and vagueness of the habitual perceptions and conceptions of the lower mind which prevent it from seeing beauty or which give it false and crude aesthetic habits: it does this by giving to the mind an external idea and rule of the elements of the thing it has to perceive and appreciate. What is farther needed is the awakening of a certain vision, an insight and an intuitive response in the soul. Reason which studies always from outside, cannot give this inner and more intimate contact; it has to aid itself by a more direct insight springing from the soul itself and to call at every step on the intuitive mind to fill up the gap of its own deficiencies.

We see this in the history of the development of literary and artistic criticism. In its earliest stages the appreciation of beauty is instinctive, natural, inborn, a response of the aesthetic sensitiveness of the soul which does not attempt to give any account of itself to the thinking intelligence. When the rational intelligence applies itself to this task, it is not satisfied with recording faithfully the nature of the response and the thing it has felt, but it attempts to analyse, to lay down what is necessary in order to create a just aesthetic gratification, it prepares a grammar of technique, an artistic law and canon of construction, a sort of mechanical rule of process for the creation of beauty, a fixed code or Shastra. This brings in the long reign of academic criticism superficial, technical, artificial, governed by the false idea that technique, of which alone critical reason can give an entirely adequate account, is the most important part of creation and that to every art there can correspond an exhaustive science which will tell us how the thing is done and give us the whole secret and process of its doing. A time comes when the creator of beauty revolts and declares the charter of his own freedom, generally in the shape of a new law or principle of creation, and this freedom once vindicated begins to widen itself and to carry with it the critical reason out of all its familiar bounds. A more developed appreciation emerges which begins to seek for new principles of criticism, to search for the soul of the work itself and explain the form in relation to the soul or to study the creator himself or the spirit, nature and ideas of the age he lived in and so to arrive at a right understanding of his work. The intellect has begun to see that its highest business is not to lay down laws for the creator of beauty, but to help us to understand himself and his work, not only its form and elements but the mind from which it sprang and the impressions its effects create in the mind that receives. Here criticism is on its right road, but on a road to a consummation in which the rational understanding is overpassed and a higher faculty opens, suprarational in its origin and nature.

For the conscious appreciation of beauty reaches its height of enlightenment and enjoyment not by analysis of the beauty enjoyed or even by a right and intelligent understanding of it, — these things are only a preliminary clarifying of our first unenlightened sense of the beautiful, — but by an exaltation of the soul in which it opens itself entirely to the light and power and joy of the creation. The soul of beauty in us identifies itself with the soul of beauty in the thing created and feels in appreciation the same divine intoxication and uplifting which the artist felt in creation. Criticism reaches its highest point when it becomes the record, account, right description of this response; it must become itself inspired, intuitive, revealing. In other words, the action of the intuitive mind must complete the action of the rational intelligence and it may even wholly replace it and do more powerfully the peculiar and proper work of the intellect itself; it may explain more intimately to us the secret of the form, the strands of the process, the inner cause, essence, mechanism of the defects and limitations of the work as well as of its qualities. For the intuitive intelligence when it has been sufficiently trained and developed, can take up always the work of the intellect and do it with a power and light and insight greater and surer than the power and light of the intellectual judgment in its widest scope. There is an intuitive discrimination which is more keen and precise in its sight than the reasoning intelligence.

What has been said of great creative art, that being the form in which normally our highest and intensest aesthetic satisfaction is achieved, applies to all beauty, beauty in Nature, beauty in life as well as beauty in art. We find that in the end the place of reason and the limits of its achievement are precisely of the same kind in regard to beauty as in regard to religion. It helps to enlighten and purify the aesthetic instincts and impulses, but it cannot give them their highest satisfaction or guide them to a complete insight. It shapes and fulfils to a certain extent the aesthetic intelligence, but it cannot justly pretend to give the definitive law for the creation of beauty or for the appreciation and enjoyment of beauty. It can only lead the aesthetic instinct, impulse, intelligence towards a greatest possible conscious satisfaction, but not to it; it has in the end to hand them over to a higher faculty which is in direct touch with the suprarational and in its nature and workings exceeds the intellect.

And for the same reason, because that which we are seeking through beauty is in the end that which we are seeking through religion, the Absolute, the Divine. The search for beauty is only in its beginning a satisfaction in the beauty of form, the beauty which appeals to the physical senses and the vital impressions, impulsions, desires. It is only in the middle a satisfaction in the beauty of the ideas seized, the emotions aroused, the perception of perfect process and harmonious combination. Behind them the soul of beauty in us desires the contact, the revelation, the uplifting delight of an absolute beauty in all things which it feels to be present, but which neither the senses and instincts by themselves can give, though they may be its channels, — for it is suprasensuous, — nor the reason and intelligence, though they too are a channel, — for it is suprarational, supra-intellectual, — but to which through all these veils the soul itself seeks to arrive. When it can get the touch of this universal, absolute beauty, this soul of beauty, this sense of its revelation in any slightest or greatest thing, the beauty of a flower, a form, the beauty and power of a character, an action, an event, a human life, an idea, a stroke of the brush or the chisel or a scintillation of the mind, the colours of a sunset or the grandeur of the tempest, it is then that the sense of beauty in us is really, powerfully, entirely satisfied. It is in truth seeking, as in religion, for the Divine, the All-Beautiful in man, in nature, in life, in thought, in art; for God is Beauty and Delight hidden in the variation of his masks and forms. When, fulfilled in our growing sense and knowledge of beauty and delight in beauty and our power for beauty, we are able to identify ourselves in soul with this Absolute and Divine in all the forms and activities of the world and shape an image of our inner and our outer life in the highest image we can perceive and embody of the All-Beautiful, then the aesthetic being in us who was born for this end, has fulfilled himself and risen to his divine consummation. To find highest beauty is to find God; to reveal, to embody, to create, as we say, highest beauty is to bring out of our souls the living image and power of God.

Chapter XV

The Supraranational Good

WE BEGIN to see, through the principle and law of our religious being, through the principle and law of our aesthetic being, the universality of a principle and law which is that of all being and which we must therefore hold steadily in view in regard to all human activities. It rests on a truth on which the sages have always agreed, though by the intellectual thinker it may be constantly disputed. It is the truth that all active being is a seeking for God, a seeking for some highest self and deepest Reality secret within, behind and above ourselves and things, a seeking for the hidden Divinity: the truth which we glimpse through religion, lies concealed behind all life; it is the great secret of life, that which it is in labour to discover and to make real to its self-knowledge.

The seeking for God is also, subjectively, the seeking for our highest, truest, fullest, largest self. It is the seeking for a Reality which the appearances of life conceal because they only partially express it or because they express it from behind veils and figures, by oppositions and contraries, often by what seem to be perversions and opposites of the Real. It is the seeking for something whose completeness comes only by a concrete and all-occupying sense of the Infinite and Absolute; it can be established in its integrality only by finding a value of the infinite in all finite things and by the attempt — necessary, inevitable, however impossible or paradoxical it may seem to the normal reason — to raise all relativities to their absolutes and to reconcile their differences, oppositions and contraries by elevation and sublimation to some highest term in which all these are unified. Some perfect highest term there is by which all our imperfect lower terms can be justified and their discords harmonised if once we can induce them to be its conscious expressions, to exist not for themselves but for That, as contributory values of that highest

Truth, fractional measures of that highest and largest common measure. A One there is in which all the entangled discords of this multiplicity of separated, conflicting, intertwining, colliding ideas, forces, tendencies, instincts, impulses, aspects, appearances which we call life, can find the unity of their diversity, the harmony of their divergences, the justification of their claims, the correction of their perversions and aberrations, the solution of their problems and disputes. Knowledge seeks for that in order that Life may know its own true meaning and transform itself into the highest and most harmonious possible expression of a divine Reality. All seeks for that, each power feels out for it in its own way: the infrarational gropes for it blindly along the line of its instincts, needs, impulses; the rational lays for it its trap of logic and order, follows out and gathers together its diversities, analyses them in order to synthetise; the suprarational gets behind and above things and into their inmost parts, there to touch and lay hands on the Reality itself in its core and essence and enlighten all its infinite detail from that secret centre.

This truth comes most easily home to us in Religion and in Art, in the cult of the spiritual and in the cult of the beautiful, because there we get away most thoroughly from the unrestful pressure of the outward appearances of life, the urgent siege of its necessities, the deafening clamour of its utilities. There we are not compelled at every turn to make terms with some gross material claim, some vulgar but inevitable necessity of the hour and the moment. We have leisure and breathing-time to seek the Real behind the apparent: we are allowed to turn our eyes either away from the temporary and transient or through the temporal itself to the eternal; we can draw back from the limitations of the immediately practical and re-create our souls by the touch of the ideal and the universal. We begin to shake off our chains, we get rid of life in its aspect of a prison-house with Necessity for our jailer and utility for our constant taskmaster; we are admitted to the liberties of the soul; we enter God's infinite kingdom of beauty and delight or we lay hands on the keys of our absolute self-finding and open ourselves to the possession or the adoration of the Eternal. There lies the immense value of Religion, the immense value of Art and Poetry to the human spirit; it lies in their immediate power for inner truth, for self-enlargement, for liberation.

But in other spheres of life, in the spheres of what by an irony of our ignorance we call especially practical life, — although, if the Divine be our true object of search and realisation, our normal conduct in them and our current idea of them is the very opposite of practical, — we are less ready to recognise the universal truth. We take a long time to admit it even partially in theory, we are seldom ready at all to follow it in practice. And we find this difficulty because there especially, in all our practical life, we are content to be the slaves of an outward Necessity and think ourselves always excused when we admit as the law of our thought, will and action the yoke of immediate and temporary utilities. Yet even there we must arrive eventually at the highest truth. We shall find out in the end that our daily life and our social existence are not things apart, are not another field of existence with another law than the inner and ideal. On the contrary, we shall never find out their true meaning or resolve their harsh and often agonising problems until we learn to see in them a means towards the discovery and the individual and collective expression of our highest and, because our highest, therefore our truest and fullest self, our largest most imperative principle and power of existence. All life is only a lavish and manifold opportunity given us to discover, realise, express the Divine.

It is in our ethical being that this truest truth of practical life, its real and highest practicality becomes most readily apparent. It is true that the rational man has tried to reduce the ethical life like all the rest to a matter of reason, to determine its nature, its law, its practical action by some principle of reason, by some law of reason. He has never really succeeded and he never can really succeed; his appearances of success are mere pretences of the intellect building elegant and empty constructions with words and ideas, mere conventions of logic and vamped-up syntheses, in sum, pretentious failures which break down at the first strenuous touch of reality. Such was that extraordinary system of utilitarian ethics discovered in the nineteenth century — the great century of science and reason and utility — by one of its most positive and systematic minds and now deservedly discredited. Happily, we need now only smile at its shallow pretentious errors, its substitution of a practical, outward and occasional test for the inner, subjective and absolute motive of ethics, its reduction of ethical action to an impossibly scientific and quite impracticable jugglery of moral mathematics, attractive enough to the reasoning and logical mind, quite false and alien to the whole instinct and intuition of the ethical being. Equally false and impracticable are other attempts of the reason to account for and regulate its principle and phenomena, — the hedonistic theory which refers all virtue to the pleasure and satisfaction of the mind in good or the sociological which supposes ethics to be no more than a system of formulas of conduct generated from the social sense and a ruled direction of the social impulses and would regulate its action by that insufficient standard. The ethical being escapes from all these formulas: it is a law to itself and finds its principle in its own eternal nature which is not in its essential character a growth of evolving mind, even though it may seem to be that in its earthly history, but a light from the ideal, a reflection in man of the Divine.

Not that all these errors have not each of them a truth behind their false constructions; for all errors of the human reason are false representations, a wrong building, effective misconstructions of the truth or of a side or a part of the truth. Utility is a fundamental principle of existence and all fundamental principles of existence are in the end one; therefore it is true that the highest good is also the highest utility. It is true also that, not any balance of the greatest good of the greatest number, but simply the good of others and most widely the good of all is one ideal aim of our outgoing ethical practice; it is that which the ethical man would like to effect, if he could only find the way and be always sure what is the real good of all. But this does not help to regulate our ethical practice, nor does it supply us with its inner principle whether of being or of action, but only produces one of the many considerations by which we can feel our way along the road which is so difficult to travel. Good, not utility, must be the principle and standard of good; otherwise we fall into the hands of that dangerous pretender expediency, whose whole method is alien to the ethical. Moreover, the standard of utility, the judgment of utility, its spirit, its form, its application must vary with the individual nature, the habit of mind, the outlook on the world. Here there can be no reliable general law to which all can subscribe, no set of large governing principles such as it is sought to supply to our conduct by a true ethics. Nor can ethics at all or ever be a matter of calculation. There is only one safe rule for the ethical man, to stick to his principle of good, his instinct for good, his vision of good, his intuition of good and to govern by that his conduct. He may err, but he will be on his right road in spite of all stumblings, because he will be faithful to the law of his nature. The saying of the Gita is always true; better is the law of one's own nature though ill-performed, dangerous is an alien law however speciously superior it may seem to our reason. But the law of nature of the ethical being is the pursuit of good; it can never be the pursuit of utility.

Neither is its law the pursuit of pleasure high or base, nor self-satisfaction of any kind, however subtle or even spiritual. It is true, here too, that the highest good is both in its nature and inner effect the highest bliss. Ananda, delight of being, is the spring of all existence and that to which it tends and for which it seeks openly or covertly in all its activities. It is true too that in virtue growing, in good accomplished there is great pleasure and that the seeking for it may well be always there as a subconscient motive to the pursuit of virtue. But for practical purposes this is a side aspect of the matter; it does not constitute pleasure into a test or standard of virtue. On the contrary, virtue comes to the natural man by a struggle with his pleasure-seeking nature and is often a deliberate embracing of pain, an edification of strength by suffering. We do not embrace that pain and struggle for the pleasure of the pain and the pleasure of the struggle; for that higher strenuous delight, though it is felt by the secret spirit in us, is not usually or not at first conscious in the conscient normal part of our being which is the field of the struggle. The action of the ethical man is not motived by even an inner pleasure, but by a call of his being, the necessity of an ideal, the figure of an absolute standard, a law of the Divine.

In the outward history of our ascent this does not at first appear clearly, does not appear perhaps at all: there the evolution of man in society may seem to be the determining cause of his ethical evolution. For ethics only begins by the demand upon him of something other than his personal preference, vital pleasure or material self-interest; and this demand seems at first to work on him through the necessity of his relations with others, by the exigencies of his social existence. But that this is not the core of the matter, is shown by the fact that the ethical demand does not always square with the social demand, nor the ethical standard always coincide with the social standard. On the contrary, the ethical man is often called upon to reject and do battle with the social demand, to break, to move away from, to reverse the social standard. His relations with others and his relations with himself are both of them the occasions of his ethical growth; but that which determines his ethical being is his relations with God, the urge of the Divine upon him whether concealed in his nature or conscious in his higher self or inner genius. He obeys an inner ideal, not an outer standard; he answers to a divine law in his being, not to a social claim or a collective necessity. The ethical imperative comes not from around, but from within him and above him.

It has been felt and said from of old that the laws of right, the laws of perfect conduct are the laws of the gods, eternal beyond, laws that man is conscious of and summoned to obey. The age of reason has scouted this summary account of the matter as a superstition or a poetical imagination which the nature and history of the world contradict. But still there is a truth in this ancient superstition or imagination which the rational denial of it misses and the rational confirmations of it, whether Kant's categorical imperative or another, do not altogether restore. If man's conscience is a creation of his evolving nature, if his conceptions of ethical law are mutable and depend on his stage of evolution, yet at the root of them there is something constant in all their mutations which lies at the very roots of his own nature and of world-nature. And if Nature in man and the world is in its beginnings infra-ethical as well as infrarational, as it is at its summit supra-ethical as well as suprarational, yet in that infra-ethical there is something which becomes in the human plane of being the ethical, and that supra-ethical is itself a consummation of the ethical and cannot be reached by any who have not trod the long ethical road. Below hides that secret of good in all things which the human being approaches and tries to deliver partially through ethical instinct and ethical idea; above is hidden the eternal Good which exceeds our partial and fragmentary ethical conceptions.

Our ethical impulses and activities begin like all the rest in the infrarational and take their rise from the subconscient. They arise as an instinct of right, an instinct of obedience to an ununderstood law, an instinct of self-giving in labour, an instinct of sacrifice and self-sacrifice, an instinct of love, of self-subordination and of solidarity with others. Man obeys the law at first without any inquiry into the why and the wherefore; he does not seek for it a sanction in the reason. His first thought is that it is a law created by higher powers than himself and his race and he says with the ancient poet that he knows not whence these laws sprang, but only that they are and endure and cannot with impunity be violated. What the instincts and impulses seek after, the reason labours to make us understand, so that the will may come to use the ethical impulses intelligently and turn the instincts into ethical ideas. It corrects man's crude and often erring misprisions of the ethical instinct, separates and purifies his confused associations, shows as best it can the relations of his often clashing moral ideals, tries to arbitrate and compromise between their conflicting claims, arranges a system and many-sided rule of ethical action. And all this is well, a necessary stage of our advance; but in the end these ethical ideas and this intelligent ethical will which it has tried to train to its control, escape from its hold and soar up beyond its province. Always, even when enduring its rein and curb, they have that inborn tendency.

For the ethical being like the rest is a growth and a seeking towards the absolute, the divine, which can only be attained securely in the suprarational. It seeks after an absolute purity, an absolute right, an absolute truth, an absolute strength, an absolute love and self-giving, and it is most satisfied when it can get them in absolute measure, without limit, curb or compromise, divinely, infinitely, in a sort of godhead and transfiguration of the ethical being. The reason is chiefly concerned with what it best understands, the apparent process, the machinery, the outward act, its result and effect, its circumstance, occasion and motive; by these it judges the morality of the action and the morality of the doer. But the developed ethical being knows instinctively that it is an inner something which it seeks and the outward act is only a means of bringing out and manifesting within ourselves by its psychological effects that inner absolute and eternal entity. The value of our actions lies not so much in their apparent nature and outward result as in their help towards the growth of the Divine within us. It is difficult, even impossible to justify upon outward grounds the absolute justice, absolute right, absolute purity, love or selflessness of an action or course of action; for action is always relative, it is mixed and uncertain in its results, perplexed in its occasions. But it is possible to relate the inner being to the eternal and absolute good, to make our sense and will full of it so as to act out of its impulsion or its intuitions and inspirations. That is what the ethical being labours towards and the higher ethical man increasingly attains to in his inner efforts.

In fact ethics is not in its essence a calculation of good and evil in the action or a laboured effort to be blameless according to the standards of the world, — those are only crude appearances, — it is an attempt to grow into the divine nature. Its parts of purity are an aspiration towards the inalienable purity of God's being; its parts of truth and right are a seeking after conscious unity with the law of the divine knowledge and will; its parts of sympathy and charity are a movement towards the infinity and universality of the divine love; its parts of strength and manhood are an edification of the divine strength and power. That is the heart of its meaning. Its high fulfilment comes when the being of the man undergoes this transfiguration; then it is not his actions that standardise his nature but his nature that gives value to his actions; then he is no longer laboriously virtuous, artificially moral, but naturally divine. Actively, too, he is fulfilled and consummated when he is not led or moved either by the infrarational impulses or the rational intelligence and will, but inspired and piloted by the divine knowledge and will made conscious in his nature. And that can only be done, first by communication of the truth of these things through the intuitive mind as it purifies itself progressively from the invasion of egoism, self-interest, desire, passion and all kinds of self-will, finally through the suprarational light and power, no longer communicated but present and in possession of his being. Such was the supreme aim of the ancient sages who had the wisdom which rational man and rational society have rejected because it was too high a truth for the comprehension of the reason and for the powers of the normal limited human will too bold and immense, too infinite an effort.

Therefore it is with the cult of Good, as with the cult of Beauty and the cult of the spiritual. Even in its first instincts it is already an obscure seeking after the divine and absolute; it aims at an absolute satisfaction, it finds its highest light and means in something beyond the reason, it is fulfilled only when it finds God, when it creates in man some image of the divine Reality. Rising from its infrarational beginnings through its intermediate dependence on the reason to a suprarational consummation, the ethical is like the aesthetic and the religious being of man a seeking after the Eternal.

Chapter XVI

The Supramational Ultimate of Life

IN ALL the higher powers of his life man may be said to be seeking, blindly enough, for God. To get at the Divine and Eternal in himself and the world and to harmonise them, to put his being and his life in tune with the Infinite reveals itself in these parts of his nature as his concealed aim and his destiny. He sets out to arrive at his highest and largest and most perfect self, and the moment he at all touches upon it, this self in him appears to be one with some great Soul and Self of Truth and Good and Beauty in the world to which we give the name of God. To get at this as a spiritual presence is the aim of religion, to grow into harmony with its eternal nature of right, love, strength and purity is the aim of ethics, to enjoy and mould ourselves into the harmony of its eternal beauty and delight is the aim and consummation of our aesthetic need and nature, to know and to be according to its eternal principles of truth is the end of science and philosophy and of all our insistent drive towards knowledge.

But all this seems to be something above our normal and usual being; it is something into which we strive to grow, but it does not seem to be the normal stuff, the natural being or atmosphere of the individual and the society in their ordinary consciousness and their daily life. That life is practical and not idealistic; it is concerned not with good, beauty, spiritual experience, the higher truth, but with interests, physical needs, desires, vital necessities. This is real to it, all the rest is a little shadowy; this belongs to its ordinary labour, all the rest to its leisure; this to the stuff of which it is made, all the rest to its parts of ornament and dispensable improvement. To all that rest society gives a place, but its heart is not there. It accepts ethics as a bond and an influence, but it does not live for ethical good; its real gods are vital need and utility and the desires of the body. If it governs its life partly by ethical laws because otherwise vital need, desire, utility in seeking their own satisfaction through many egoistic individuals would clash among themselves and destroy their own aims, it does not feel called upon to make its life entirely ethical. It concerns itself still less with beauty; even if it admits things beautiful as an embellishment and an amusement, a satisfaction and pastime of the eye and ear and mind, nothing moves it imperatively to make its life a thing of beauty. It allows religion a fixed place and portion, on holy days, in the church or temple, at the end of life when age and the approach of death call the attention forcibly away from this life to other life, at fixed times in the week or the day when it thinks it right for a moment to pause in the affairs of the world and remember God: but to make the whole of life a religion, a remembering of God and a seeking after him, is a thing that is not really done even in societies which like the Indian erect spirituality as their aim and principle. It admits philosophy in a still more remote fashion; and if nowadays it eagerly seeks after science, that is because science helps prodigiously the satisfaction of its vital desires, needs and interests: but it does not turn to seek after an entirely scientific life any more than after an entirely ethical life. A more complete effort in any one of these directions it leaves to the individual, to the few, and to individuals of a special type, the saint, the ethical man, the artist, the thinker, the man of religion; it gives them a place, does some homage to them, assigns some room to the things they represent, but for itself it is content to follow mainly after its own inherent principle of vital satisfaction, vital necessity and utility, vital efficiency.

The reason is that here we get to another power of our being which is different from the ethical, aesthetic, rational and religious, — one which, even if we recognise it as lower in the scale, still insists on its own reality and has not only the right to exist but the right to satisfy itself and be fulfilled. It is indeed the primary power, it is the base of our existence upon earth, it is that which the others take as their starting-point and their foundation. This is the life-power in us, the vitalistic, the dynamic nature. Its whole principle and aim is to be, to assert its existence, to increase, to expand, to possess and to enjoy: its native terms are growth of being, pleasure and power. Life itself here is Being at labour in Matter to express itself in terms of conscious force; human life is the human being at labour to impress himself on the material world with the greatest possible force and intensity and extension. His primary insistent aim must be to live and make for himself a place in the world, for himself and his species, secondly, having made it to possess, produce and enjoy with an ever-widening scope, and finally to spread himself over all the earth-life and dominate it; this is and must be his first practical business. That is what the Darwinians have tried to express by their notion of the struggle for life. But the struggle is not merely to last and live, but to increase, enjoy and possess: its method includes and uses not only a principle and instinct of egoism, but a concomitant principle and instinct of association. Human life is moved by two equally powerful impulses, one of individualistic self-assertion, the other of collective self-assertion; it works by strife, but also by mutual assistance and united effort: it uses two diverse convergent forms of action, two motives which seem to be contradictory but are in fact always coexistent, competitive endeavour and cooperative endeavour. It is from this character of the dynamism of life that the whole structure of human society has come into being, and it is upon the sustained and vigorous action of this dynamism that the continuance, energy and growth of all human societies depends. If this life-force in them fails and these motive-powers lose in vigour, then all begins to languish, stagnate and finally move towards disintegration.

The modern European idea of society is founded upon the primary and predominant part played by this vital dynamism in the formation and maintenance of society; for the European, ever since the Teutonic mind and temperament took possession of western Europe, has been fundamentally the practical, dynamic and kinetic man, vitalistic in the very marrow of his thought and being. All else has been the fine flower of his life and culture, this has been its root and stalk, and in modern times this truth of his temperament, always there, has come aggressively to the surface and triumphed over the traditions of Christian piety and Latinistic culture. This triumphant emergence and lead of the vital man and his motives has been the whole significance of the great economic and political civilisation of the nineteenth century. Life in society consists, for the practical human instincts, in three activities, the domestic and social life of man, — social in the sense of his customary relations with others in the community both as an individual and as a member of one family among many, — his economic activities as a producer, wealth-getter and consumer and his political status and action. Society is the organisation of these three things and, fundamentally, it is for the practical human being nothing more. Learning and science, culture, ethics, aesthetics, religion are assigned their place as aids to life, for its guidance and betterment, for its embellishment, for the consolation of its labours, difficulties and sorrows, but they are no part of its very substance, do not figure among its essential objects. Life itself is the only object of living.

The ancients held a different, indeed a diametrically opposite view. Although they recognised the immense importance of the primary activities, in Asia the social most, in Europe the political, — as every society must which at all means to live and flourish, — yet these were not to them primary in the higher sense of the word; they were man's first business, but not his chief business. The ancients regarded this life as an occasion for the development of the rational, the ethical, the aesthetic, the spiritual being. Greece and Rome laid stress on the three first alone, Asia went farther, made these also subordinate and looked upon them as stepping-stones to a spiritual consummation. Greece and Rome were proudest of their art, poetry and philosophy and cherished these things as much as or even more than their political liberty or greatness. Asia too exalted these three powers and valued inordinately her social organisation, but valued much more highly, exalted with a much greater intensity of worship her saints, her religious founders and thinkers, her spiritual heroes. The modern world has been proudest of its economic organisation, its political liberty, order and progress, the mechanism, comfort and ease of its social and domestic life, its science, but science most in its application to practical life, most for its instruments and conveniences, its railways, telegraphs, steamships and its other thousand and one discoveries, countless inventions and engines which help man to master the physical world. That marks the whole difference in the attitude.

On this a great deal hangs; for if the practical and vitalistic view of life and society is the right one, if society merely or principally exists for the maintenance, comfort, vital happiness and political and economic efficiency of the species, then our idea that life is a seeking for God and for the highest self and that society too must one day make that its principle cannot stand. Modern society, at any rate in its self-conscious aim, is far enough from any such endeavour; whatever may be the splendour of its achievement, it acknowledges only two gods, life and practical reason organised under the name of science. Therefore on this great primary thing, this life-power and its manifestations, we must look with especial care to see what it is in its reality as well as what it is in its appearance. Its appearance is familiar enough; for of that is made the very stuff and present form of our everyday life. Its main ideals are the physical good and vitalistic well-being of the individual and the community, the entire satisfaction of the desire for bodily health, long life, comfort, luxury, wealth, amusement, recreation, a constant and tireless expenditure of the mind and the dynamic life-force in remunerative work and production and, as the higher flame-spires of this restless and devouring energy, creations and conquests of various kinds, wars, invasions, colonisation, discovery, commercial victory, travel, adventure, the full possession and utilisation of the earth. All this life still takes as its cadre the old existing forms, the family, the society, the nation and it has two impulses, individualistic and collective.

The primary impulse of life is individualistic and makes family, social and national life a means for the greater satisfaction of the vital individual. In the family the individual seeks for the satisfaction of his vital instinct of possession, as well as for the joy of companionship, and for the fulfilment of his other vital instinct of self-reproduction. His gains are the possession of wife, servants, house, wealth, estates, the reproduction of much of himself in the body and mind of his progeny and the prolongation of his activities, gains and possessions in the life of his children; incidentally he enjoys the vital and physical pleasures and the more mental pleasures of emotion and affection to which the domestic life gives scope. In society he finds a less intimate but a larger expansion of himself and his instincts. A wider field of companionship, interchange, associated effort and production, errant or gregarious pleasure, satisfied emotion, stirred sensation and regular amusement are the advantages which attach him to social existence. In the nation and its constituent parts he finds a means for the play of a remoter but still larger sense of power and expansion. If he has the force, he finds there fame, pre-eminence, leadership or at a lower pitch the sense of an effective action on a small or a large scale, in a reduced or a magnified field of public action; if he cannot have this, still he can feel a share of some kind, a true portion or fictitious image of participation, in the pride, power and splendour of a great collective activity and vital expansion. In all this there is primarily at work the individualist principle of the vital instinct in which the competitive side of that movement of our nature associates with the cooperative but predominates over it. Carried to an excess this predominance creates the ideal of the arriviste, to whom family, society and nation are not so much a sympathetic field as a ladder to be climbed, a prey to be devoured, a thing to be conquered and dominated. In extreme cases the individualist turn isolates itself from the companion motive, reverts to a primitive anti-social feeling and creates the nomad, the adventurer, the ranger of wilds, or the pure solitary, — solitary not from any intellectual or spiritual impulse, but because society, once an instrument, has become a prison and a burden, an oppressive cramping of his expansion, a denial of breathing-space and elbow-room. But these cases grow rarer, now that the ubiquitous tentacles of modern society take hold everywhere; soon there will be no place of refuge left for either the nomad or the solitary, not even perhaps Saharan deserts or the secure remotenesses of the Himalayas. Even, it may be, the refuge of an inner seclusion may be taken from us by a collectivist society intent to make its pragmatic, economic, dynamic most of every individual "cell" of the organism.

For this growing collectivist or cooperative tendency embodies the second instinct of the vital or practical being in man. It shows itself first in the family ideal by which the individual subordinates himself and finds his vital satisfaction and practical account, not in his own predominant individuality, but in the life of a larger vital ego. This ideal played a great part in the old aristocratic views of life; it was there in the ancient Indian idea of the *kula* and the *kuladharma*, and in later India it was at the root of the joint-family system which made the strong economic base of mediaeval Hinduism. It has taken its grossest Vaishya form in the ideal of the British domestic Philistine, the idea of the human individual born here to follow a trade or profession, to marry and procreate a family, to earn his living, to succeed reasonably if not to amass an efficient or ostentatious wealth, to enjoy for a space and then die, thus having done the whole business for which he came into the body and performed all his essential duty in life, — for this apparently was the end unto which man with all his divine possibilities was born! But whatever form it may take, however this grossness may be refined or toned down, whatever ethical or religious conceptions may be superadded, always the family is an essentially practical, vitalistic and economic creation. It is simply a larger vital ego, a more complex vital organism that takes up the individual and englobes him in a more effective competitive and cooperative life unit. The family like the individual accepts and uses society for its field and means of continuance, of vital satisfaction and well-being, of aggrandisement and enjoyment. But this life unit also, this multiple ego can be induced by the cooperative instinct in life to subordinate its egoism to the claims of the society and trained even to sacrifice itself at need on the communal altar. For the society is only a still larger vital competitive and cooperative ego that takes up both the individual and the family into a more complex organism and uses them for the collective satisfaction of its vital needs, claims, interests, aggrandisement, well-being, enjoyment. The individual and family consent to this exploitation for the same reason that induced the individual to take on himself the yoke of the family, because they find their account in this wider vital life and have the instinct in it of their own larger growth, security and satisfaction. The society, still more than the family, is essentially economic in its aims and in its very nature. That accounts for the predominantly economic and materialistic character of modern ideas of Socialism; for these ideas are the full rationalistic flowering of this instinct of collective life. But since the society is one competitive unit among many of its kind, and since its first relations with the others are always potentially hostile, even at the best competitive and not cooperative, and have to be organised in that view, a political character is necessarily added to the social life, even predominates for a time over the economic and we have the nation or State. If we give their due value to these fundamental characteristics and motives of collective existence, it will seem natural enough that the development of the collective and cooperative idea of society should have culminated in a huge, often a monstrous overgrowth of the vitalistic, economic and political ideal of life, society and civilisation.

What account are the higher parts of man's being, those finer powers in him that more openly tend to the growth of his divine nature, to make with this vital instinct or with its gigantic modern developments? Obviously, their first impulse must be to take hold of them and dominate and transform all this crude life into their own image; but when they discover that here is a power apart, as persistent as themselves, that it seeks a satisfaction *per se* and accepts their impress to a certain extent, but not altogether and, as it were, unwillingly, partially, unsatisfactorily, — what then? We often find that ethics and religion especially, when they find themselves in a constant conflict with the vital instincts, the dynamic life-power in man, proceed to an attitude of almost complete hostility and seek to damn them in idea and repress them in fact. To the vital instinct for wealth and well-being they oppose the ideal of a chill and austere poverty; to the vital instinct for pleasure the ideal not only of self-denial, but of absolute mortification; to the vital instinct for health and ease the ascetic's contempt, disgust and neglect of the body; to the vital instinct for incessant action and creation the ideal of calm and inaction, passivity, contemplation; to the vital instinct for power, expansion, domination, rule, conquest the ideal of humility, self-abasement, submission, meek harmlessness, docility in suffering; to the vital instinct of sex on which depends the continuance of the species, the ideal of an unreproductive chastity and celibacy; to the social and family instinct the anti-social ideal of the ascetic, the monk, the solitary, the world-shunning saint. Commencing with discipline and subordination they proceed to complete mortification, which means when translated the putting to death of the vital instincts, and declare that life itself is an illusion to be shed from the soul or a kingdom of the flesh, the world and the devil, — accepting thus the claim of the unenlightened and undisciplined life itself that it is not, was never meant to be, can never become the kingdom of God, a high manifestation of the Spirit.

Up to a certain point this recoil has its uses and may easily even, by *tapasyā*, by the law of energy increasing through compression, develop for a time a new vigour in the life of the society, as happened in India in the early Buddhist centuries. But beyond a certain point it tends, not really to kill, for that is impossible, but to discourage along with the vital instincts the indispensable life-energy of which they are the play and renders them in the end inert, feeble, narrow, unelastic, incapable of energetic reaction to force and circumstance. That was the final result in India of the agelong pressure of Buddhism and its supplanter and successor, Illusionism. No society wholly or too persistently and pervadingly dominated by this denial of the life dynamism can flourish and put forth its possibilities of growth and perfection. For from dynamic it becomes static and from the static position it proceeds to stagnation and degeneration. Even the higher being of man, which finds its account in a vigorous life dynamism, both as a fund of force to be transmuted into its own loftier energies and as a potent channel of connection with the outer life, suffers in the end by this failure and contraction. The ancient Indian ideal recognised this truth and divided life into four essential and indispensable divisions, *artha*, *kāma*, *dharma*, *mokṣa*, vital interests, satisfaction of desires of all kinds, ethics and religion, and liberation or spirituality, and it insisted on the practice and development of all. Still it tended not only to put the last forward as the goal of all the rest, which it is, but to put it at the end of life and its habitat in another world of our being, rather than here in life as a supreme status and formative power on the physical plane. But this rules out the idea of the kingdom of God on earth, the perfectibility of society and of man in society, the evolution of a new and diviner race, and without one or other of these no universal ideal can be complete. It provides a temporary and occasional, but not an inherent justification for life; it holds out no illumining fulfilment either for its individual or its collective impulse.

Let us then look at this vital instinct and life dynamism in its own being and not merely as an occasion for ethical or religious development and see whether it is really rebellious in its very nature to the Divine. We can see at once that what we have described is the first stage of the vital being, the infrarational, the instinctive; this is the crude character of its first native development and persists even when it is trained by the growing application to it of the enlightening reason. Evidently it is in this natural form a thing of the earth, gross, earthy, full even of hideous uglinesses and brute blunders and jarring discords; but so also is the infrarational stage in ethics, in aesthetics, in religion. It is true too that it presents a much more enormous difficulty than these others, more fundamentally and obstinately resists elevation, because it is the very province of the infrarational, a first formulation of consciousness out of the Inconscient, nearest to it in the scale of being. But still it has too, properly looked at, its rich elements of power, beauty, nobility, good, sacrifice, worship, divinity; here too are high-reaching gods, masked but still resplendent. Until recently, and even now, reason, in the garb no longer of philosophy, but of science, has increasingly proposed to take up all this physical and vital life and perfect it by the sole power of rationalism, by a knowledge of the laws of Nature, of sociology and physiology and biology and health, by collectivism, by State education, by a new psychological education and a number of other kindred means. All this is well in its own way and in its limits, but it is not enough and can never come to a truly satisfying success. The ancient attempt of reason in the form of a high idealistic, rational, aesthetic, ethical and religious culture achieved only an imperfect discipline of the vital man and his instincts, sometimes only a polishing, a gloss, a clothing and mannerising of the original uncouth savage. The modern attempt of reason in the form of a broad and thorough rational, utilitarian and efficient instruction and organisation of man and his life is not succeeding any better for all its insistent but always illusory promise of more perfect results in the future. These endeavours cannot indeed be truly successful if our theory of life is right and if this great mass of vital energism contains in itself the imprisoned suprarational, if it has, as it then must have, the instinctive reaching out for something divine, absolute and infinite which is concealed in its blind strivings. Here too reason must be overpassed or surpass itself and become a passage to the Divine.

The first mark of the suprarational, when it intervenes to take up any portion of our being, is the growth of absolute ideals; and since life is Being and Force and the divine state of being is unity and the Divine in force is God as Power taking possession, the absolute vital ideals must be of that nature. Nowhere are they wanting. If we take the domestic and social life of man, we find hints of them there in several forms; but we need only note, however imperfect and dim the present shapes, the strivings of love at its own self-finding, its reachings towards its absolute — the absolute love of man and woman, the absolute maternal or paternal, filial or fraternal love, the love of friends, the love of comrades, love of country, love of humanity. These ideals of which the poets have sung so persistently, are not a mere glamour and illusion, however the egoisms and discords of our instinctive, infrarational way of living may seem to contradict them. Always crossed by imperfection or opposite vital movements, they are still divine possibilities and can be made a first means of our growth into a spiritual unity of being with being. Certain religious disciplines have understood this truth, have taken up these relations boldly and applied them to our soul's communion with God; and by a converse process they can, lifted out of their present social and physical formulas, become for us, not the poor earthly things they are now, but deep and beautiful and wonderful movements of God in man fulfilling himself in life. All the economic development of life itself takes on at its end the appearance of an attempt to get rid of the animal squalor and bareness which is what obligatory poverty really means, and to give to man the divine ease and leisure of the gods. It is pursued in a wrong way, no doubt, and with many ugly circumstances, but still the ideal is darkly there. Politics itself, that apparent game of strife and deceit and charlatanism, can be a large field of absolute idealisms. What of patriotism, — never mind the often ugly instincts from which it starts and which it still obstinately preserves, — but in its aspects of worship, self-giving, discipline, self-sacrifice? The great political ideals of man, monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, apart from the selfishnesses they serve and the rational and practical justifications with which they arm themselves, have had for their soul an ideal, some half-seen truth of the absolute and have carried with them a worship, a loyalty, a loss of self in the idea which have made men ready to suffer and die for them. War and strife themselves have been schools of heroism; they have preserved the heroic in man, they have created the *kṣatriyās tyaktajīvitāḥ* of the Sanskrit epic phrase, the men of power and courage who have abandoned their bodily life for a cause; for without heroism man cannot grow into the Godhead; courage, energy and strength are among the very first principles of the divine nature in action. All this great vital, political, economic life of man with its two powers of competition and cooperation is stumbling blindly forward towards some realisation of power and unity, — in two divine directions, therefore. For the Divine in life is Power possessed of self-mastery, but also of mastery of His world, and man and mankind too move towards conquest of their world, their environment. And again the Divine in fulfilment here is and must be oneness, and the ideal of human unity however dim and far off is coming slowly into sight. The competitive nation-units are feeling, at times, however feebly as yet, the call to cast themselves into a greater unified cooperative life of the human race.

No doubt all is still moving, however touched by dim lights from above, on a lower half rational half infrarational level, clumsily, coarsely, in ignorance of itself and as yet with little nobility of motive. All is being worked out very crudely by the confused clash of life-forces and the guidance of ideas that are half-lights of the intellect, and the means proposed are too mechanical and the aims too material; they miss the truth that the outer life-result can only endure if it is founded on inner realities. But so life in the past has moved always and must at first move. For life organises itself at first round the ego-motive and the instinct of ego-expansion is the earliest means by which men have come into contact with each other; the struggle for possession has been the first crude means towards union, the aggressive assertion of the smaller self the first step towards a growth into the larger self. All has been therefore a half-ordered confusion of the struggle for life corrected by the need and instinct of association, a struggle of individuals, clans, tribes, parties, nations, ideas, civilisations, cultures, ideals, religions, each affirming itself, each compelled into contact, association, strife with the others. For while Nature imposes the ego as a veil behind which she labours out the individual manifestation of the spirit, she also puts a compulsion on it to grow in being until it can at last expand or merge into a larger self in which it meets, harmonises with itself, comprehends in its own consciousness, becomes one with the rest of existence. To assist in this growth Life-Nature throws up in itself ego-enlarging, ego-exceeding, even ego-destroying instincts and movements which combat and correct the smaller self-affirming instincts and movements,— she enforces on her human instrument impulses of love, sympathy, self-denial, self-effacement, self-sacrifice, altruism, the drive towards universality in mind and heart and life, glimmerings of an obscure unanimism that has not yet found thoroughly its own true light and motive-power. Because of this obscurity these powers, unable to affirm their own absolute, to take the lead or dominate, obliged to compromise with the demands of the ego, even to become themselves a form of egoism, are impotent also to bring harmony and transformation to life. Instead of peace they seem to bring rather a sword; for they increase the number and tension of conflict of the unreconciled forces, ideas, impulses of which the individual human consciousness and the life of the collectivity are the arena. The ideal and practical reason of man labours to find amidst all this the right law of life and action; it strives by a rule of moderation and accommodation, by selection and rejection or by the dominance of some chosen ideas or powers to reduce things to harmony, to do consciously what Nature through natural selection and instinct has achieved in her animal kinds, an automatically ordered and settled form and norm of their existence. But the order, the structure arrived at by the reason is always partial, precarious and temporary. It is disturbed by a pull from below and a pull from above. For these powers that life throws up to help towards the growth into a larger self, a wider being, are already reflections of something that is beyond reason, seeds of the spiritual, the absolute. There is the pressure on human life of an Infinite which will not allow it to rest too long in any formulation, — not at least until it has delivered out of itself that which shall be its own self-exceeding and self-fulfilment.

This process of life through a first obscure and confused effort of self-finding is the inevitable result of its beginnings; for life has begun from an involution of the spiritual truth of things in what seems to be its opposite. Spiritual experience tells us that there is a Reality which supports and pervades all things as the Cosmic Self and Spirit, can be discovered by the individual even here in the terrestrial embodiment as his own self and spirit, and is, at its summits and in its essence, an infinite and eternal self-existent Being, Consciousness and Bliss of existence. But what we seem to see as the source and beginning of the material universe is just the contrary — it wears to us the aspect of a Void, an infinite of Non-Existence, an indeterminate Inconscient, an insensitive blissless Zero out of which everything has yet to come. When it begins to move, evolve, create, it puts on the appearance of an inconscient Energy which delivers existence out of the Void in the form of an infinitesimal fragmentation, the electron — or perhaps some still more impalpable minute unit, a not yet discovered, hardly discoverable infinitesimal, — then the atom, the molecule, and out of this fragmentation builds up a formed and concrete universe in the void of its Infinite. Yet we see that this unconscious Energy does at every step the works of a vast and minute Intelligence fixing and combining every possible device to prepare, manage and work out the paradox and miracle of Matter and the awakening of a life and a spirit in Matter; existence grows out of the Void, consciousness emerges and increases out of the Inconscient, an ascending urge towards pleasure, happiness, delight, divine bliss and ecstasy is inexplicably born out of an insensitive Nihil. These phenomena already betray the truth, which we discover when we grow aware in our depths, that the Inconscient is only a mask and within it is the Upanishad's "Conscient in unconscious things". In the beginning, says the Veda, was the ocean of inconscience and out of it That One arose into birth by his greatness, — by the might of his self-manifesting Energy.

But the Inconscient, if a mask, is an effective mask of the Spirit; it imposes on the evolving life and soul the law of a difficult emergence. Life and consciousness, no less than Matter, obey in their first appearance the law of fragmentation. Life organises itself physically round the plasm, the cell, psychologically round the small separative fragmentary ego. Consciousness itself has to concentrate its small beginnings in a poor surface formation and hide behind the veil of this limited surface existence the depths and infinities of its own being. It has to grow slowly in an external formulation till it is ready to break the crust between this petty outer figure of ourselves, which we think to be the whole, and the concealed self within us. Even the spiritual being seems to obey this law of fragmentation and manifest as a unit in the whole a spark of itself that evolves into an individual psyche. It is this little ego, this fragmented consciousness, this concealed soul-spark on which is imposed the task of meeting and striving with the forces of the universe, entering into contact with all that seems to it not itself, increasing under the pressure of inner and outer Nature till it can become one with all existence. It has to grow into self-knowledge and world-knowledge, to get within itself and discover that it is a spiritual being, to get outside of itself and discover its larger truth as the cosmic Individual, to get beyond itself and know and live in some supreme Being, Consciousness and Bliss of existence. For this immense task it is equipped only with the instruments of its original Ignorance. Its limited being is the cause of all the difficulty, discord, struggle, division that mars life. The limitation of its consciousness, unable to dominate or assimilate the contacts of the universal Energy, is the cause of all its suffering, pain and sorrow. Its limited power of consciousness formulated in an ignorant will unable to grasp or follow the right law of its life and action is the cause of all its error, wrongdoing and evil. There is no other true cause; for all apparent causes are themselves circumstance and result of this original sin of the being. Only when it rises and widens out of this limited separative consciousness into the oneness of the liberated Spirit, can it escape from these results of its growth out of the Inconscience.

If we see this as the truth behind Life, we can understand at once why it has had to follow its present curve of ignorant self-formulation. But also we see what through it all it is obscurely seeking, trying to grasp and form, feeling out for in its own higher impulses and deepest motives, and why these are in it — useless, perturbing and chimerical if it were only an animal product of inconscient Nature, — these urgings towards self-discovery, mastery, unity, freedom from its lower self, spiritual release. Evolving out of its first involved condition in Matter and in plant life, effecting a first imperfect organised consciousness in the animal it arrives in man, the mental being, at the possibility of a new, a conscious evolution which will bring it to its goal and at a certain stage of his development it wakes in him the overmastering impulse to pass on from mental to spiritual being. Life cannot arrive at its secret ultimates by following its first infrarational motive forces of instinct and desire; for all here is a groping and seeking without finding, a field of brief satisfactions stamped with the Inconscient's seal of insufficiency and impermanence. But neither can human reason give it what it searches after; for reason can only establish half-lights and a provisional order. Therefore with man as he is the upward urge in life cannot rest satisfied always; its evolutionary impulse cannot stop short at this transitional term, this half-achievement. It has to aim at a higher scale of consciousness, deliver out of life and mind something that is still latent and inchoate.

The ultimates of life are spiritual and only in the full light of the liberated self and spirit can it achieve them. That full light is not intellect or reason, but a knowledge by inner unity and identity which is the native self-light of the fully developed spiritual consciousness and, preparing that, on the way to it, a knowledge by intimate inner contact with the truth of things and beings which is intuitive and born of a secret oneness. Life seeks for self-knowledge; it is only by the light of the spirit that it can find it. It seeks for a luminous guidance and mastery of its own movements; it is only when it finds within itself this inner self and spirit and by it or in obedience to it governs its own steps that it can have the illumined will it needs and the unerring leadership. For it is so only that the blind certitudes of the instincts and the speculative hypotheses and theories and the experimental and inferential certitudes of reason can be replaced by the seeing spiritual certitudes. Life seeks the fulfilment of its instincts of love and sympathy, its yearnings after accord and union; but these are crossed by opposing instincts and it is only the spiritual consciousness with its realised abiding oneness that can abolish these oppositions. Life seeks for full growth of being, but it can attain to it only when the limited being has found in itself its own inmost soul of existence and around it its own widest self of cosmic consciousness by which it can feel the world and all being in itself and as itself. Life seeks for power; it is only the power of the spirit and the power of this conscious oneness that can give it mastery of its self and its world. It seeks for pleasure, happiness, bliss; but the infrarational forms of these things are stricken with imperfection, fragmentariness, impermanence and the impact of their opposites. Moreover infrarational life still bears some stamp of the Inconscient in an underlying insensitiveness, a dullness of fibre, a weakness of vibratory response, — it cannot attain to true happiness or bliss and what it can obtain of pleasure it cannot support for long or bear or keep any extreme intensity of these things. Only the spirit has the secret of an unmixed and abiding happiness or ecstasy, is capable of a firm tenseness of vibrant response to it, can achieve and justify a spiritual pleasure or joy of life as one form of the infinite and universal delight of being. Life seeks a harmonious fulfilment of all its powers, now divided and in conflict, all its possibilities, parts, members; it is only in the consciousness of the one self and spirit that that is found, for there they arrive at their full truth and their perfect agreement in the light of the integral Self-existence.

There is then a suprarational ultimate of Life no less than a suprarational Truth, Good and Beauty. The endeavour to reach it is the spiritual meaning of this seeking and striving Life-nature.

Chapter XVII

Religion as the Law of Life

SINCE the infinite, the absolute and transcendent, the universal, the One is the secret summit of existence and to reach the spiritual consciousness and the Divine the ultimate goal and aim of our being and therefore of the whole development of the individual and the collectivity in all its parts and all its activities, reason cannot be the last and highest guide; culture, as it is understood ordinarily, cannot be the directing light or find out the regulating and harmonising principle of all our life and action. For reason stops short of the Divine and only compromises with the problems of life, and culture in order to attain the Transcendent and Infinite must become spiritual culture, something much more than an intellectual, aesthetic, ethical and practical training. Where then are we to find the directing light and the regulating and harmonising principle? The first answer which will suggest itself, the answer constantly given by the Asiatic mind, is that we shall find it directly and immediately in religion. And this seems a reasonable and at first sight a satisfying solution; for religion is that instinct, idea, activity, discipline in man which aims directly at the Divine, while all the rest seem to aim at it only indirectly and reach it with difficulty after much wandering and stumbling in the pursuit of the outward and imperfect appearances of things. To make all life religion and to govern all activities by the religious idea would seem to be the right way to the development of the ideal individual and ideal society and the lifting of the whole life of man into the Divine.

A certain pre-eminence of religion, the overshadowing or at least the colouring of life, an overtopping of all the other instincts and fundamental ideas by the religious instinct and the religious idea is, we may note, not peculiar to Asiatic civilisations, but has always been more or less the normal state of the human mind and of human societies, or if not quite that, yet a notable and prominent part of their complex tendencies, except in certain comparatively brief periods of their history, in one of which we find ourselves today and are half turning indeed to emerge from it but have not yet emerged. We must suppose then that in this leading, this predominant part assigned to religion by the normal human collectivity there is some great need and truth of our natural being to which we must always after however long an infidelity return. On the other hand, we must recognise the fact that in a time of great activity, of high aspiration, of deep sowing, of rich fruit-bearing, such as the modern age with all its faults and errors has been, a time especially when humanity got rid of much that was cruel, evil, ignorant, dark, odious, not by the power of religion, but by the power of the awakened intelligence and of human idealism and sympathy, this predominance of religion has been violently attacked and rejected by that portion of humanity which was for that time the standard-bearer of thought and progress, Europe after the Renascence, modern Europe.

This revolt in its extreme form tried to destroy religion altogether, boasted indeed of having killed the religious instinct in man, — a vain and ignorant boast, as we now see, for the religious instinct in man is most of all the one instinct in him that cannot be killed, it only changes its form. In its more moderate movements the revolt put religion aside into a corner of the soul by itself and banished its intermiscence in the intellectual, aesthetic, practical life and even in the ethical; and it did this on the ground that the intermiscence of religion in science, thought, politics, society, life in general had been and must be a force for retardation, superstition, oppressive ignorance. The religionist may say that this accusation was an error and an atheistic perversity, or he may say that a religious retardation, a pious ignorance, a contented static condition or even an orderly stagnation full of holy thoughts of the Beyond is much better than a continuous endeavour after greater knowledge, greater mastery, more happiness, joy, light upon this transient earth. But the catholic thinker cannot accept such a plea; he is obliged to see that so long as man has not realised the divine and the ideal in his life, — and it may well be even when he has realised it, since the divine is the infinite, — progress and not unmoving status is the necessary and desirable law of his life, — not indeed any breathless rush after novelties, but a constant motion towards a greater and greater truth of the spirit, the thought and the life not only in the individual, but in the collectivity, in the communal endeavour, in the turn, ideals, temperament, make of the society, in its strivings towards perfection. And he is obliged too to see that the indictment against religion, not in its conclusion, but in its premiss had something, had even much to justify it, — not that religion in itself must be, but that historically and as a matter of fact the accredited religions and their hierarchs and exponents have too often been a force for retardation, have too often thrown their weight on the side of darkness, oppression and ignorance, and that it has needed a denial, a revolt of the oppressed human mind and heart to correct these errors and set religion right. And why should this have been if religion is the true and sufficient guide and regulator of all human activities and the whole of human life?

We need not follow the rationalistic or atheistic mind through all its aggressive indictment of religion. We need not for instance lay a too excessive stress on the superstitions, aberrations, violences, crimes even, which Churches and cults and creeds have favoured, admitted, sanctioned, supported or exploited for their own benefit, the mere hostile enumeration of which might lead one to echo the cry of the atheistic Roman poet, "To such a mass of ills could religion persuade mankind." As well might one cite the crimes and errors which have been committed in the name of liberty or of order as a sufficient condemnation of the ideal of liberty or the ideal of social order. But we have to note the fact that such a thing was possible and to find its explanation. We cannot ignore for instance the blood-stained and fiery track which formal external Christianity has left furrowed across the mediaeval history of Europe almost from the days of Constantine, its first hour of secular triumph, down to very recent times, or the sanguinary comment which such an institution as the Inquisition affords on the claim of religion to be the directing light and regulating power in ethics and society, or religious wars and wide-spread State persecutions on its claim to guide the political life of mankind. But we must observe the root of this evil, which is not in true religion itself, but in its infrarational parts, not in spiritual faith and aspiration, but in our ignorant human confusion of religion with a particular creed, sect, cult, religious society or Church. So strong is the human tendency to this error that even the old tolerant Paganism slew Socrates in the name of religion and morality, feebly persecuted non-national faiths like the cult of Isis or the cult of Mithra and more vigorously what it conceived to be the subversive and anti-social religion of the early Christians; and even in still more fundamentally tolerant Hinduism with all its spiritual broadness and enlightenment it led at one time to the milder mutual hatred and occasional though brief-lived persecution of Buddhist, Jain, Shaiva, Vaishnava.

The whole root of the historic insufficiency of religion as a guide and control of human society lies there. Churches and creeds have, for example, stood violently in the way of philosophy and science, burned a Giordano Bruno, imprisoned a Galileo, and so generally misconducted themselves in this matter that philosophy and science had in self-defence to turn upon Religion and rend her to pieces in order to get a free field for their legitimate development; and this because men in the passion and darkness of their vital nature had chosen to think that religion was bound up with certain fixed intellectual conceptions about God and the world which could not stand scrutiny, and therefore scrutiny had to be put down by fire and sword; scientific and philosophical truth had to be denied in order that religious error might survive. We see too that a narrow religious spirit often oppresses and impoverishes the joy and beauty of life, either from an intolerant asceticism or, as the Puritans attempted it, because they could not see that religious austerity is not the whole of religion, though it may be an important side of it, is not the sole ethico-religious approach to God, since love, charity, gentleness, tolerance, kindliness are also and even more divine, and they forgot or never knew that God is love and beauty as well as purity. In politics religion has often thrown itself on the side of power and resisted the coming of larger political ideals, because it was itself, in the form of a Church, supported by power and because it confused religion with the Church, or because it stood for a false theocracy, forgetting that true theocracy is the kingdom of God in man and not the kingdom of a Pope, a priesthood or a sacerdotal class. So too it has often supported a rigid and outworn social system, because it thought its own life bound up with social forms with which it happened to have been associated during a long portion of its own history and erroneously concluded that even a necessary change there would be a violation of religion and a danger to its existence. As if so mighty and inward a power as the religious spirit in man could be destroyed by anything so small as the change of a social form or so outward as a social readjustment! This error in its many shapes has been the great weakness of religion as practised in the past and the opportunity and justification for the revolt of the intelligence, the aesthetic sense, the social and political idealism, even the ethical spirit of the human being against what should have been its own highest tendency and law.

Here then lies one secret of the divergence between the ancient and the modern, the Eastern and Western ideal, and here also one clue to their reconciliation. Both rest upon a certain strong justification and their quarrel is due to a misunderstanding. It is true in a sense that religion should be the dominant thing in life, its light and law, but religion as it should be and is in its inner nature, its fundamental law of being, a seeking after God, the cult of spirituality, the opening of the deepest life of the soul to the indwelling Godhead, the eternal Omnipresence. On the other hand, it is true that religion when it identifies itself only with a creed, a cult, a Church, a system of ceremonial forms, may well become a retarding force and there may therefore arise a necessity for the human spirit to reject its control over the varied activities of life. There are two aspects of religion, true religion and religionism. True religion is spiritual religion, that which seeks to live in the spirit, in what is beyond the intellect, beyond the aesthetic and ethical and practical being of man, and to inform and govern these members of our being by the higher light and law of the spirit. Religionism, on the contrary, entrenches itself in some narrow pietistic exaltation of the lower members or lays exclusive stress on intellectual dogmas, forms and ceremonies, on some fixed and rigid moral code, on some religio-political or religio-social system. Not that these things are altogether negligible or that they must be unworthy or unnecessary or that a spiritual religion need disdain the aid of forms, ceremonies, creeds or systems. On the contrary, they are needed by man because the lower members have to be exalted and raised before they can be fully spiritualised, before they can directly feel the spirit and obey its law. An intellectual formula is often needed by the thinking and reasoning mind, a form or ceremony by the aesthetic temperament or other parts of the infrarational being, a set moral code by man's vital nature in their turn towards the inner life. But these things are aids and supports, not the essence; precisely because they belong to the rational and infrarational parts, they can be nothing more and, if too blindly insisted on, may even hamper the suprarational light. Such as they are, they have to be offered to man and used by him, but not to be imposed on him as his sole law by a forced and inflexible domination. In the use of them toleration and free permission of variation is the first rule which should be observed. The spiritual essence of religion is alone the one thing supremely needful, the thing to which we have always to hold and subordinate to it every other element or motive.

But here comes in an ambiguity which brings in a deeper source of divergence. For by spirituality religion seems often to mean something remote from earthly life, different from it, hostile to it. It seems to condemn the pursuit of earthly aims as a trend opposed to the turn to a spiritual life and the hopes of man on earth as an illusion or a vanity incompatible with the hope of man in heaven. The spirit then becomes something aloof which man can only reach by throwing away the life of his lower members. Either he must abandon this nether life after a certain point, when it has served its purpose, or must persistently discourage, mortify and kill it. If that be the true sense of religion, then obviously religion has no positive message for human society in the proper field of social effort, hope and aspiration or for the individual in any of the lower members of his being. For each principle of our nature seeks naturally for perfection in its own sphere and, if it is to obey a higher power, it must be because that power gives it a greater perfection and a fuller satisfaction even in its own field. But if perfectibility is denied to it and therefore the aspiration to perfection taken away by the spiritual urge, then it must either lose faith in itself and the power to pursue the natural expansion of its energies and activities or it must reject the call of the spirit in order to follow its own bend and law, *dharma*. This quarrel between earth and heaven, between the spirit and its members becomes still more sterilising if spirituality takes the form of a religion of sorrow and suffering and austere mortification and the gospel of the vanity of things; in its exaggeration it leads to such nightmares of the soul as that terrible gloom and hopelessness of the Middle Ages in their worst moment when the one hope of mankind seemed to be in the approaching and expected end of the world, an inevitable and desirable Pralaya. But even in less pronounced and intolerant forms of this pessimistic attitude with regard to the world, it becomes a force for the discouragement of life and cannot, therefore, be a true law and guide for life. All pessimism is to that extent a denial of the Spirit, of its fullness and power, an impatience with the ways of God in the world, an insufficient faith in the divine Wisdom and Will that created the world and for ever guide it. It admits a wrong notion about that supreme Wisdom and Power and therefore cannot itself be the supreme wisdom and power of the spirit to which the world can look for guidance and for the uplifting of its whole life towards the Divine.

The Western recoil from religion, that minimising of its claim and insistence by which Europe progressed from the mediaeval religious attitude through the Renascence and the Reformation to the modern rationalistic attitude, that making of the ordinary earthly life our one preoccupation, that labour to fulfil ourselves by the law of the lower members, divorced from all spiritual seeking, was an opposite error, the contrary ignorant extreme, the blind swing of the pendulum from a wrong affirmation to a wrong negation. It is an error because perfection cannot be found in such a limitation and restriction; for it denies the complete law of human existence, its deepest urge, its most secret impulse. Only by the light and power of the highest can the lower be perfectly guided, uplifted and accomplished. The lower life of man is in form undivine, though in it there is the secret of the divine, and it can only be divinised by finding the higher law and the spiritual illumination. On the other hand, the impatience which condemns or despairs of life or discourages its growth because it is at present undivine and is not in harmony with the spiritual life, is an equal ignorance, *andhaṁ tamaḥ*. The world-shunning monk, the mere ascetic may indeed well find by this turn his own individual and peculiar salvation, the spiritual recompense of his renunciation and Tapasya, as the materialist may find by his own exclusive method the appropriate rewards of his energy and concentrated seeking; but neither can be the true guide of mankind and its law-giver. The monastic attitude implies a fear, an aversion, a distrust of life and its aspirations, and one cannot wisely guide that with which one is entirely out of sympathy, that which one wishes to minimise and discourage. The sheer ascetic spirit, if it directed life and human society, could only prepare it to be a means for denying itself and getting away from its own motives. An ascetic guidance might tolerate the lower activities, but only with a view to persuade them in the end to minimise and finally cease from their own action. But a spirituality which draws back from life to envelop it without being dominated by it does not labour under this disability. The spiritual man who can guide human life towards its perfection is typified in the ancient Indian idea of the Rishi, one who has lived fully the life of man and found the word of the supra-intellectual, supramental, spiritual truth. He has risen above these lower limitations and can view all things from above, but also he is in sympathy with their effort and can view them from within; he has the complete inner knowledge and the higher surpassing knowledge. Therefore he can guide the world humanly as God guides it divinely, because like the Divine he is in the life of the world and yet above it.

In spirituality, then, understood in this sense, we must seek for the directing light and the harmonising law, and in religion only in proportion as it identifies itself with this spirituality. So long as it falls short of this, it is one human activity and power among others, and, even if it be considered the most important and the most powerful, it cannot wholly guide the others. If it seeks always to fix them into the limits of a creed, an unchangeable law, a particular system, it must be prepared to see them revolting from its control; for although they may accept this impress for a time and greatly profit by it, in the end they must move by the law of their being towards a freer activity and an untrammelled movement. Spirituality respects the freedom of the human soul, because it is itself fulfilled by freedom; and the deepest meaning of freedom is the power to expand and grow towards perfection by the law of one's own nature, *dharma*. This liberty it will give to all the fundamental parts of our being. It will give that freedom to philosophy and science which ancient Indian religion gave, — freedom even to deny the spirit, if they will, — as a result of which philosophy and science never felt in ancient India any necessity of divorcing themselves from religion, but grew rather into it and under its light. It will give the same freedom to man's seeking for political and social perfection and to all his other powers and aspirations. Only it will be vigilant to illuminate them so that they may grow into the light and law of the spirit, not by suppression and restriction, but by a self-searching, self-controlled expansion and a many-sided finding of their greatest, highest and deepest potentialities. For all these are potentialities of the spirit.

Chapter XVIII

The Infrarational Age of the Cycle

IN SPIRITUALITY then would lie our ultimate, our only hope for the perfection whether of the individual or of the communal man; not the spirit which for its separate satisfaction turns away from the earth and her works, but that greater spirit which surpasses and yet accepts and fulfils them. A spirituality that would take up into itself man's rationalism, aestheticism, ethicism, vitalism, corporeality, his aspiration towards knowledge, his attraction towards beauty, his need of love, his urge towards perfection, his demand for power and fullness of life and being, a spirituality that would reveal to these ill-accorded forces their divine sense and the conditions of their godhead, reconcile them all to each other, illumine to the vision of each the way which they now tread in half-lights and shadows, in blindness or with a deflected sight, is a power which even man's too self-sufficient reason can accept or may at least be brought one day to accept as sovereign and to see in it its own supreme light, its own infinite source. For that reveals itself surely in the end as the logical ultimate process, the inevitable development and consummation of all for which man is individually and socially striving. A satisfying evolution of the nascent spirituality still raw and inchoate in the race is the possibility to which an age of subjectivism is a first glimmer of awakening or towards which it shows a first profound potentiality of return. A deeper, wider, greater, more spiritualised subjective understanding of the individual and communal self and its life and a growing reliance on the spiritual light and the spiritual means for the final solution of its problems are the only way to a true social perfection. The free rule, that is to say, the predominant lead, control and influence of the developed spiritual man — not the half-spiritualised priest, saint or prophet or the raw religionist — is our hope for a divine guidance of the race. A spiritualised society can alone bring about a reign of individual harmony and communal happiness; or, in words which, though liable to abuse by the reason and the passions, are still the most expressive we can find, a new kind of theocracy, the kingdom of God upon earth, a theocracy which shall be the government of mankind by the Divine in the hearts and minds of men.

Certainly, this will not come about easily, or, as men have always vainly hoped from each great new turn and revolution of politics and society, by a sudden and at once entirely satisfying change and magical transformation. The advance, however it comes about, will be indeed of the nature of a miracle, as are all such profound changes and immense developments; for they have the appearance of a kind of realised impossibility. But God works all his miracles by an evolution of secret possibilities which have been long prepared, at least in their elements, and in the end by a rapid bringing of all to a head, a throwing together of the elements so that in their fusion they produce a new form and name of things and reveal a new spirit. Often the decisive turn is preceded by an apparent emphasising and raising to their extreme of things which seem the very denial, the most uncompromising opposite of the new principle and the new creation. Such an evolution of the elements of a spiritualised society is that which a subjective age makes at least possible, and if at the same time it raises to the last height of active power things which seem the very denial of such a potentiality, that need be no index of a practical impossibility of the new birth, but on the contrary may be the sign of its approach or at the lowest a strong attempt at achievement. Certainly, the whole effort of a subjective age may go wrong; but this happens oftenest when by the insufficiency of its materials, a great crudeness of its starting-point and a hasty shallowness or narrow intensity of its inlook into itself and things it is foredoomed to a fundamental error of self-knowledge. It becomes less likely when the spirit of the age is full of freedom, variety and a many-sided seeking, a persistent effort after knowledge and perfection in all the domains of human activity; that can well convert itself into an intense and yet flexible straining after the infinite and the divine on many sides and in many aspects. In such circumstances, though a full advance may possibly not be made, a great step forward can be predicted.

We have seen that there are necessarily three stages of the social evolution or, generally, of the human evolution in both individual and society. Our evolution starts with an infrarational stage in which men have not yet learned to refer their life and action in its principles and its forms to the judgment of the clarified intelligence; for they still act principally out of their instincts, impulses, spontaneous ideas, vital intuitions or obey a customary response to desire, need and circumstance, — it is these things that are canalised or crystallised in their social institutions. Man proceeds by various stages out of these beginnings towards a rational age in which his intelligent will more or less developed becomes the judge, arbiter and presiding motive of his thought, feeling and action, the moulder, destroyer and re-creator of his leading ideas, aims and intuitions. Finally, if our analysis and forecast are correct, the human evolution must move through a subjective towards a suprarational or spiritual age in which he will develop progressively a greater spiritual, supra-intellectual and intuitive, perhaps in the end a more than intuitive, a gnostic consciousness. He will be able to perceive a higher divine end, a divine sanction, a divine light of guidance for all he seeks to be, think, feel and do, and able, too, more and more to obey and live in this larger light and power. That will not be done by any rule of infrarational religious impulse and ecstasy, such as characterised or rather darkly illumined the obscure confusion and brute violence of the Middle Ages, but by a higher spiritual living for which the clarities of the reason are a necessary preparation and into which they too will be taken up, transformed, brought to their invisible source.

These stages or periods are much more inevitable in the psychological evolution of mankind than the Stone and other Ages marked out by Science in his instrumental culture, for they depend not on outward means or accidents, but on the very nature of his being. But we must not suppose that they are naturally exclusive and absolute in their nature, or complete in their tendency or fulfilment when they come, or rigidly marked off from each other in their action or their time. For they not only arise out of each other, but may be partially developed in each other and they may come to coexist in different parts of the earth at the same time. But, especially, since man as a whole is always a complex being, even man savage or degenerate, he cannot be any of these things exclusively or absolutely, — so long as he has not exceeded himself, has not developed into the superman, has not, that is to say, spiritualised and divinised his whole being. At his animal worst he is still some kind of thinking or reflecting animal: even the infrarational man cannot be utterly infrarational, but must have or tend to have some kind of play more or less evolved or involved of the reason and a more or less crude suprarational element, a more or less disguised working of the spirit. At his lucid mental best, he is still not a pure mental being, a pure intelligence; even the most perfect intellectual is not and cannot be wholly or merely rational, — there are vital urgings that he cannot exclude, visits or touches of a light from above that are not less suprarational because he does not recognise their source. No god, but at his highest a human being touched with a ray of the divine influence, man's very spirituality, however dominant, must have, while he is still this imperfectly evolved human, its rational and infrarational tendencies and elements. And as with the psychological life of individuals, so must it be with the ages of his communal existence; these may be marked off from each other by the predominant play of one element, its force may overpower the others or take them into itself or make some compromise, but an exclusive play seems to be neither intended nor possible.

Thus an infrarational period of human and social development need not be without its elements, its strong elements of reason and of spirituality. Even the savage, whether he be primitive or degenerate man, has some coherent idea of this world and the beyond, a theory of life and a religion. To us with our more advanced rationality his theory of life may seem incoherent, because we have lost its point of view and its principle of mental associations. But it is still an act of reason, and within its limits he is capable of a sufficient play of thought both ideative and practical, as well as a clear ethical idea and motive, some aesthetic notions and an understood order of society poor and barbarous to our view, but well enough contrived and put together to serve the simplicity of its objects. Or again we may not realise the element of reason in a primitive theory of life or of spirituality in a barbaric religion, because it appears to us to be made up of symbols and forms to which a superstitious value is attached by these undeveloped minds. But this is because the reason at this stage has an imperfect and limited action and the element of spirituality is crude or undeveloped and not yet self-conscious; in order to hold firmly their workings and make them real and concrete to his mind and spirit primitive man has to give them shape in symbols and forms to which he clings with a barbaric awe and reverence, because they alone can embody for him his method of self-guidance in life. For the dominant thing in him is his infrarational life of instinct, vital intuition and impulse, mechanical custom and tradition, and it is that to which the rest of him has to give some kind of primary order and first glimmerings of light. The unrefined reason and unenlightened spirit in him cannot work for their own ends; they are bond-slaves of his infrarational nature.

At a higher stage of development or of a return towards a fuller evolution, — for the actual savage in humanity is perhaps not the original primitive man, but a relapse and reversion towards primitiveness, — the infrarational stage of society may arrive at a very lofty order of civilisation. It may have great intuitions of the meaning or general intention of life, admirable ideas of the arrangement of life, a harmonious, well-adapted, durable and serviceable social system, an imposing religion which will not be without its profundities, but in which symbol and ceremonial will form the largest portion and for the mass of man will be almost the whole of religion. In this stage pure reason and pure spirituality will not govern the society or move large bodies of men, but will be represented, if at all, by individuals at first few, but growing in number as these two powers increase in their purity and vigour and attract more and more votaries.

This may well lead to an age, if the development of reason is strongest, of great individual thinkers who seize on some idea of life and its origins and laws and erect that into a philosophy, of critical minds standing isolated above the mass who judge life, not yet with a luminous largeness, a minute flexibility of understanding or a clear and comprehensive profundity, but still with power of intelligence, insight, acuteness, perhaps even a pre-eminent social thinker here and there who, taking advantage of some crisis or disturbance, is able to get the society to modify or reconstruct itself on the basis of some clearly rational and intelligent principle. Such an age seems to be represented by the traditions of the beginnings of Greek civilisation, or rather the beginnings of its mobile and progressive period. Or if spirituality predominates, there will be great mystics capable of delving into the profound and still occult psychological possibilities of our nature who will divine and realise the truth of the self and spirit in man and, even though they keep these things secret and imparted only to a small number of initiates, may yet succeed in deepening with them the crude forms of the popular life. Even such a development is obscurely indicated in the old traditions of the mysteries. In prehistoric India we see it take a peculiar and unique turn which determined the whole future trend of the society and made Indian civilisation a thing apart and of its own kind in the history of the human race. But these things are only a first beginning of light in the midst of a humanity which is still infrarational as well as infra-spiritual and, even when it undergoes the influence of these precursors, responds only obscurely to their inspirations and without any clearly intelligent or awakened spiritual reception of what they impart or impose. It still turns everything into infrarational form and disfiguring tradition and lives spiritually by ill-understood ceremonial and disguising symbol. It feels obscurely the higher things, tries to live them in its own stumbling way, but it does not yet understand; it cannot lay hold either on the intellectual form or the spiritual heart of their significance.

As reason and spirituality develop, they begin to become a larger and more diffused force, less intense perhaps, but wider and more effective on the mass. The mystics become the sowers of the seed of an immense spiritual development in which whole classes of society and even men from all classes seek the light, as happened in India in the age of the Upanishads. The solitary individual thinkers are replaced by a great number of writers, poets, thinkers, rhetoricians, sophists, scientific inquirers, who pour out a profuse flood of acute speculation and inquiry stimulating the thought-habit and creating even in the mass a generalised activity of the intelligence, — as happened in Greece in the age of the sophists. The spiritual development, arising uncurbed by reason in an infrarational society, has often a tendency to outrun at first the rational and intellectual movement. For the greatest illuminating force of the infrarational man, as he develops, is an inferior intuition, an instinctively intuitional sight arising out of the force of life in him, and the transition from this to an intensity of inner life and the growth of a deeper spiritual intuition which outleaps the intellect and seems to dispense with it, is an easy passage in the individual man. But for humanity at large this movement cannot last; the mind and intellect must develop to their fullness so that the spirituality of the race may rise securely upward upon a broad basis of the developed lower nature in man, the intelligent mental being. Therefore we see that the reason in its growth either does away with the distinct spiritual tendency for a time, as in ancient Greece, or accepts it but spins out around its first data and activities a vast web of the workings of the intelligence, so that, as in India, the early mystic seer is replaced by the philosopher-mystic, the religious thinker and even the philosopher pure and simple.

For a time the new growth and impulse may seem to take possession of a whole community as in Athens or in old Aryan India. But these early dawns cannot endure in their purity, so long as the race is not ready. There is a crystallisation, a lessening of the first impetus, a new growth of infrarational forms in which the thought or the spirituality is overgrown with inferior accretions or it is imbedded in the form and may even die in it, while the tradition of the living knowledge, the loftier life and activity remains the property of the higher classes or a highest class. The multitude remains infrarational in its habit of mind, though perhaps it may still keep in capacity an enlivened intelligence or a profound or subtle spiritual receptiveness as its gain from the past. So long as the hour of the rational age has not arrived, the irrational period of society cannot be left behind; and that arrival can only be when not a class or a few but the multitude has learned to think, to exercise its intelligence actively — it matters not at first however imperfectly — upon their life, their needs, their rights, their duties, their aspirations as human beings. Until then we have as the highest possible development a mixed society, infrarational in the mass, but saved for civilisation by a higher class whose business it is to seek after the reason and the spirit, to keep the gains of mankind in these fields, to add to them, to enlighten and raise with them as much as possible the life of the whole.

At this point we see that Nature in her human mass tends to move forward slowly on her various lines of active mind and life towards a greater application of reason and spirituality which shall at last bring near the possibility of a rational and, eventually, a spiritual age of mankind. Her difficulties proceed from two sides. First, while she originally developed thought and reason and spirituality by exceptional individuals, now she develops them in the mass by exceptional communities or nations, — at least in the relative sense of a nation governed, led and progressively formed and educated by its intellectually or spiritually cultured class or classes. But the exceptional nation touched on its higher levels by a developed reason or spirituality or both, as were Greece and later Rome in ancient Europe, India, China and Persia in ancient Asia, is surrounded or neighboured by enormous masses of the old infrarational humanity and endangered by this menacing proximity; for until a developed science comes in to redress the balance, the barbarian has always a greater physical force and unexhausted native power of aggression than the cultured peoples. At this stage the light and power of civilisation always collapses in the end before the attack of the outer darkness. Then ascending Nature has to train the conquerors more or less slowly, with long difficulty and much loss and delay to develop among themselves what their incursion has temporarily destroyed or impaired. In the end humanity gains by the process; a greater mass of the nations is brought in, a larger and more living force of progress is applied, a starting-point is reached from which it can move to richer and more varied gains. But a certain loss is always the price of this advance.

But even within the communities themselves reason and spirituality at this stage are always hampered and endangered by existing in a milieu and atmosphere not their own. The élite, the classes in charge of these powers, are obliged to throw them into forms which the mass of human ignorance they lead and rule will accept, and both reason and spirituality tend to be stifled by these forms, to get stereotyped, fossilised, void of life, bound up from their natural play. Secondly, since they are after all part of the mass, these higher enlightened elements are themselves much under the influence of their infrarational parts and do not, except in individuals, arrive at the entirely free play of the reason or the free light of the spirit. Thirdly, there is always the danger of these elements gravitating downward to the ignorance below or even collapsing into it. Nature guards herself by various devices for maintaining the tradition of intellectual and spiritual activity in the favoured classes; here she makes it a point of honour for them to preserve and promote the national culture, there she establishes a preservative system of education and discipline. And in order that these things may not degenerate into mere traditionalism, she brings in a series of intellectual or spiritual movements which by their shock revivify the failing life and help to bring about a broadening and an enlarging and to drive the dominant reason or spirituality deeper down into the infrarational mass. Each movement indeed tends to petrify after a shorter or longer activity, but a fresh shock, a new wave arrives in time to save and regenerate. Finally, she reaches the point when, all immediate danger of relapse overcome, she can proceed to her next decisive advance in the cycle of social evolution. This must take the form of an attempt to universalise first of all the habit of reason and the application of the intelligence and intelligent will to life. Thus is instituted the rational age of human society, the great endeavour to bring the power of the reason and intelligence to bear on all that we are and do and to organise in their light and by their guiding force the entire existence of the race.

Chapter XIX

The Curve of the Rational Age

THE PRESENT age of mankind may be characterised from this point of view of a graded psychological evolution of the race as a more and more rapidly accelerated attempt to discover and work out the right principle and secure foundations of a rational system of society. It has been an age of progress; but progress is of two kinds, adaptive, with a secure basis in an unalterable social principle and constant change only in the circumstances and machinery of its application to suit fresh ideas and fresh needs, or else radical, with no long-secure basis, but instead a constant root questioning of the practical foundations and even the central principle of the established society. The modern age has resolved itself into a constant series of radical progressions.

This series seems to follow always a typical course, first a luminous seed-time and a period of enthusiastic effort and battle, next a partial victory and achievement and a brief era of possession, then disillusionment and the birth of a new idea and endeavour. A principle of society is put forward by the thinker, seizes on the general mind and becomes a social gospel; brought immediately or by rapid stages into practice, it dethrones the preceding principle and takes its place as the foundation of the community's social or political life. This victory won, men live for a time in the enthusiasm or, when the enthusiasm sinks, in the habit of their great achievement. After a little they begin to feel less at ease with the first results and are moved to adapt, to alter constantly, to develop more or less restlessly the new system, — for it is the very nature of the reason to observe, to be open to novel ideas, to respond quickly to new needs and possibilities and not to repose always in the unquestioning acceptance of every habit and old association. Still men do not yet think of questioning their social principle or imagine that it will ever need alteration, but are intent only to perfect its forms and make its application more thorough, its execution more sincere and effective. A time, however, arrives when the reason becomes dissatisfied and sees that it is only erecting a mass of new conventions and that there has been no satisfying change; there has been a shifting of stresses, but the society is not appreciably nearer to perfection. The opposition of the few thinkers who have already, perhaps almost from the first, started to question the sufficiency of the social principle, makes itself felt and is accepted by increasing numbers; there is a movement of revolt and the society starts on the familiar round to a new radical progression, a new revolution, the reign of a more advanced social principle.

This process has to continue until the reason can find a principle of society or else a combination and adjustment of several principles which will satisfy it. The question is whether it will ever be satisfied or can ever rest from questioning the foundation of established things, — unless indeed it sinks back into a sleep of tradition and convention or else goes forward by a great awakening to the reign of a higher spirit than its own and opens into a suprarational or spiritual age of mankind. If we may judge from the modern movement, the progress of the reason as a social renovator and creator, if not interrupted in its course, would be destined to pass through three successive stages which are the very logic of its growth, the first individualistic and increasingly democratic with liberty for its principle, the second socialistic, in the end perhaps a governmental communism with equality and the State for its principle, the third — if that ever gets beyond the stage of theory — anarchistic in the higher sense of that much-abused word, either a loose voluntary cooperation or a free communalism with brotherhood or comradeship and not government for its principle. It is in the transition to its third and consummating stage, if or whenever that comes, that the power and sufficiency of the reason will be tested; it will then be seen whether the reason can really be the master of our nature, solve the problems of our interrelated and conflicting egoisms and bring about within itself a perfect principle of society or must give way to a higher guide. For till this third stage has its trial, it is Force that in the last resort really governs. Reason only gives to Force the plan of its action and a system to administer.

We have already seen that it is individualism which opens the way to the age of reason and that individualism gets its impulse and its chance of development because it follows upon an age of dominant conventionalism. It is not that in the pre-individualistic, pre-rational ages there were no thinkers upon society and the communal life of man; but they did not think in the characteristic method of the logical reason, critical, all-observing, all-questioning, and did not proceed on the constructive side by the carefully mechanising methods of the highly rationalised intelligence when it passes from the reasoned perception of a truth to the endeavour after its pure, perfect and universal orderly application. Their thought and their building of life were much less logical than spontaneously intelligent, organic and intuitive. Always they looked upon life as it was and sought to know its secret by keen discernment, intuition and insight; symbols embodying the actual and ideal truth of life and being, types setting them in an arrangement and psychological order, institutions giving them a material fixity in their effectuation by life, this was the form in which they shaped their attempt to understand and mentalise life, to govern life by mind, but mind in its spontaneously intuitive or its reflectively seeing movements before they have been fixed into the geometrical patterns of the logical intelligence.

But reason seeks to understand and interpret life by one kind of symbol only, the idea; it generalises the facts of life according to its own strongly cut ideative conceptions so that it may be able to master and arrange them, and having hold of an idea it looks for its largest general application. And in order that these ideas may not be a mere abstraction divorced from the realised or realisable truth of things, it has to be constantly comparing them with facts. It has to be always questioning facts so that it may find the ideas by which they can be more and more adequately explained, ordered and managed, and it has always to be questioning ideas in order, first, to see whether they square with actual facts and, secondly, whether there are not new facts to suit which they must be modified or enlarged or which can be evolved out of them. For reason lives not only in actual facts, but in possibilities, not only in realised truths, but in ideal truths; and the ideal truth once seen, the impulse of the idealising intelligence is to see too whether it cannot be turned into a fact, cannot be immediately or rapidly realised in life. It is by this inherent characteristic that the age of reason must always be an age of progress.

So long as the old method of mentalising life served its purpose, there was no necessity for men in the mass to think out their way of life by the aid of the reason. But the old method ceased to serve its purpose as soon as the symbols, types, institutions it created became conventions so imprisoning truth that there was no longer a force of insight sufficient to deliver the hidden reality from its artificial coatings. Man may for a time, for a long time even, live by the mere tradition of things whose reality he has lost, but not permanently; the necessity of questioning all his conventions and traditions arises, and by that necessity reason gets her first real chance of an entire self-development. Reason can accept no tradition merely for the sake of its antiquity or its past greatness: it has to ask, first, whether the tradition contains at all any still living truth and, secondly, whether it contains the best truth available to man for the government of his life. Reason can accept no convention merely because men are agreed upon it: it has to ask whether they are right in their agreement, whether it is not an inert and false acquiescence. Reason cannot accept any institution merely because it serves some purpose of life: it has to ask whether there are not greater and better purposes which can be best served by new institutions. There arises the necessity of a universal questioning, and from that necessity arises the idea that society can only be perfected by the universal application of the rational intelligence to the whole of life, to its principle as to its details, to its machinery and to the powers that drive the machine.

This reason which is to be universally applied, cannot be the reason of a ruling class; for in the present imperfection of the human race that always means in practice the fettering and misapplication of reason degraded into a servant of power to maintain the privileges of the ruling class and justify the existing order. It cannot be the reason of a few pre-eminent thinkers; for, if the mass is infrarational, the application of their ideas becomes in practice disfigured, ineffective, incomplete, speedily altered into mere form and convention. It must be the reason of each and all seeking for a basis of agreement. Hence arises the principle of individualistic democracy, that the reason and will of every individual in the society must be allowed to count equally with the reason and will of every other in determining its government, in selecting the essential basis and in arranging the detailed ordering of the common life. This must be, not because the reason of one man is as good as the reason of any other, but because otherwise we get back inevitably to the rule of a predominant class which, however modified by being obliged to consider to some extent the opinion of the ruled, must exhibit always the irrational vice of reason subordinated to the purposes of power and not flexibly used for its own proper and ideal ends. Secondly, each individual must be allowed to govern his life according to the dictates of his own reason and will so far as that can be done without impinging on the same right in others. This is a necessary corollary of the primary principle on which the age of reason founds its initial movement. It is sufficient for the first purposes of the rational age that each man should be supposed to have sufficient intelligence to understand views which are presented and explained to him, to consider the opinions of his fellows and to form in consultation with them his own judgment. His individual judgment so formed and by one device or another made effective is the share he contributes to the building of the total common judgment by which society must be ruled, his little brick in appearance insignificant and yet indispensable to the imposing whole. And it is sufficient also for the first ideal of the rational age that this common judgment should be effectively organised only for the indispensable common ends of the society, while in all else men must be left free to govern their own life according to their own reason and will and find freely its best possible natural adjustment with the lives of others. In this way by the practice of the free use of reason men can grow into rational beings and learn to live by common agreement a liberal, a vigorous, a natural and yet rationalised existence.

In practice it is found that these ideas will not hold for a long time. For the ordinary man is not yet a rational being; emerging from a long infrarational past, he is not naturally able to form a reasonable judgment, but thinks either according to his own interests, impulses and prejudices or else according to the ideas of others more active in intelligence or swift in action who are able by some means to establish an influence over his mind. Secondly, he does not yet use his reason in order to come to an agreement with his fellows, but rather to enforce his own opinions by struggle and conflict with the opinions of others. Exceptionally he may utilise his reason for the pursuit of truth, but normally it serves for the justification of his impulses, prejudices and interests, and it is these that determine or at least quite discolour and disfigure his ideals, even when he has learned at all to have ideals. Finally, he does not use his freedom to arrive at a rational adjustment of his life with the life of others; his natural tendency is to enforce the aims of his life even at the expense of or, as it is euphemistically put, in competition with the life of others. There comes thus to be a wide gulf between the ideal and the first results of its practice. There is here a disparity between fact and idea that must lead to inevitable disillusionment and failure.

The individualistic democratic ideal brings us at first in actual practice to the more and more precarious rule of a dominant class in the name of democracy over the ignorant, numerous and less fortunate mass. Secondly, since the ideal of freedom and equality is abroad and cannot any longer be stifled, it must lead to the increasing effort of the exploited masses to assert their down-trodden right and to turn, if they can, this pseudo-democratic falsehood into the real democratic truth; therefore, to a war of classes. Thirdly, it develops inevitably as part of its process a perpetual strife of parties, at first few and simple in composition, but afterwards as at the present time an impotent and sterilising chaos of names, labels, programmes, war-cries. All lift the banner of conflicting ideas or ideals, but all are really fighting out under that flag a battle of conflicting interests. Finally, individualistic democratic freedom results fatally in an increasing stress of competition which replaces the ordered tyrannies of the infrarational periods of humanity by a sort of ordered conflict. And this conflict ends in the survival not of the spiritually, rationally or physically fittest, but of the most fortunate and vitally successful. It is evident enough that, whatever else it may be, this is not a rational order of society; it is not at all the perfection which the individualistic reason of man had contemplated as its ideal or set out to accomplish.

The natural remedy for the first defects of the individualistic theory in practice would seem to be education; for if man is not by nature, we may hope at least that he can be made by education and training something like a rational being. Universal education, therefore, is the inevitable second step of the democratic movement in its attempt to rationalise human society. But a rational education means necessarily three things, first, to teach men how to observe and know rightly the facts on which they have to form a judgment; secondly, to train them to think fruitfully and soundly; thirdly, to fit them to use their knowledge and their thought effectively for their own and the common good. Capacity of observation and knowledge, capacity of intelligence and judgment, capacity of action and high character are required for the citizenship of a rational order of society; a general deficiency in any of these difficult requisites is a sure source of failure. Unfortunately, — even if we suppose that any training made available to the millions can ever be of this rare character, — the actual education given in the most advanced countries has not had the least relation to these necessities. And just as the first defects and failures of democracy have given occasion to the enemy to blaspheme and to vaunt the superiority or even the quite imaginary perfection of the ideal past, so also the first defects of its great remedy, education, have led many superior minds to deny the efficacy of education and its power to transform the human mind and driven them to condemn the democratic ideal as an exploded fiction.

Democracy and its panacea of education and freedom have certainly done something for the race. To begin with, the people are, for the first time in the historical period of history, erect, active and alive, and where there is life, there is always a hope of better things. Again, some kind of knowledge and with it some kind of active intelligence based on knowledge and strengthened by the habit of being called on to judge and decide between conflicting issues and opinions in all sorts of matters have been much more generalised than was formerly possible. Men are being progressively trained to use their minds, to apply intelligence to life, and that is a great gain. If they have not yet learned to think for themselves or to think soundly, clearly and rightly, they are at least more able now to choose with some kind of initial intelligence, however imperfect as yet it may be, the thought they shall accept and the rule they shall follow. Equal educational equipment and equal opportunity of life have by no means been acquired; but there is a much greater equalisation than was at all possible in former states of society. But here a new and enormous defect has revealed itself which is proving fatal to the social idea which engendered it. For given even perfect equality of educational and other opportunity, — and that does not yet really exist and cannot in the individualistic state of society, — to what purpose or in what manner is the opportunity likely to be used? Man, the half infrarational being, demands three things for his satisfaction, power, if he can have it, but at any rate the use and reward of his faculties and the enjoyment of his desires. In the old societies the possibility of these could be secured by him to a certain extent according to his birth, his fixed status and the use of his capacity within the limits of his hereditary status. That basis once removed and no proper substitute provided, the same ends can only be secured by success in a scramble for the one power left, the power of wealth. Accordingly, instead of a harmoniously ordered society there has been developed a huge organised competitive system, a frantically rapid and one-sided development of industrialism and, under the garb of democracy, an increasing plutocratic tendency that shocks by its ostentatious grossness and the magnitudes of its gulfs and distances. These have been the last results of the individualistic ideal and its democratic machinery, the initial bankruptcies of the rational age.

The first natural result has been the transition of the rational mind from democratic individualism to democratic socialism. Socialism, labouring under the disadvantageous accident of its birth in a revolt against capitalism, an uprising against the rule of the successful bourgeois and the plutocrat, has been compelled to work itself out by a war of classes. And, worse still, it has started from an industrialised social system and itself taken on at the beginning a purely industrial and economic appearance. These are accidents that disfigure its true nature. Its true nature, its real justification is the attempt of the human reason to carry on the rational ordering of society to its fulfilment, its will to get rid of this great parasitical excrescence of unbridled competition, this giant obstacle to any decent ideal or practice of human living. Socialism sets out to replace a system of organised economic battle by an organised order and peace. This can no longer be done on the old lines, an artificial or inherited inequality brought about by the denial of equal opportunity and justified by the affirmation of that injustice and its result as an eternal law of society and of Nature. That is a falsehood which the reason of man will no longer permit. Neither can it be done, it seems, on the basis of individual liberty; for that has broken down in the practice. Socialism therefore must do away with the democratic basis of individual liberty, even if it professes to respect it or to be marching towards a more rational freedom. It shifts at first the fundamental emphasis to other ideas and fruits of the democratic ideal, and it leads by this transference of stress to a radical change in the basic principle of a rational society. Equality, not a political only, but a perfect social equality, is to be the basis. There is to be equality of opportunity for all, but also equality of status for all, for without the last the first cannot be secured; even if it were established, it could not endure. This equality again is impossible if personal, or at least inherited right in property is to exist, and therefore socialism abolishes — except at best on a small scale — the right of personal property as it is now understood and makes war on the hereditary principle. Who then is to possess the property? It can only be the community as a whole. And who is to administer it? Again, the community as a whole. In order to justify this idea, the socialistic principle has practically to deny the existence of the individual or his right to exist except as a member of the society and for its sake. He belongs entirely to the society, not only his property, but himself, his labour, his capacities, the education it gives him and its results, his mind, his knowledge, his individual life, his family life, the life of his children. Moreover, since his individual reason cannot be trusted to work out naturally a right and rational adjustment of his life with the life of others, it is for the reason of the whole community to arrange that too for him. Not the reasoning minds and wills of the individuals, but the collective reasoning mind and will of the community has to govern. It is this which will determine not only the principles and all the details of the economic and political order, but the whole life of the community and of the individual as a working, thinking, feeling cell of this life, the development of his capacities, his actions, the use of the knowledge he has acquired, the whole ordering of his vital, his ethical, his intelligent being. For so only can the collective reason and intelligent will of the race overcome the egoism of individualistic life and bring about a perfect principle and rational order of society in a harmonious world.

It is true that this inevitable character of socialism is denied or minimised by the more democratic socialists; for the socialistic mind still bears the impress of the old democratic ideas and cherishes hopes that betray it often into strange illogicalities. It assures us that it will combine some kind of individual freedom, a limited but all the more true and rational freedom, with the rigours of the collectivist idea. But it is evidently these rigours to which things must tend if the collectivist idea is to prevail and not to stop short and falter in the middle of its course. If it proves itself thus wanting in logic and courage, it may very well be that it will speedily or in the end be destroyed by the foreign element it tolerates and perish without having sounded its own possibilities. It will pass perhaps, unless guided by a rational wisdom which the human mind in government has not yet shown, after exceeding even the competitive individualistic society in its cumbrous incompetence.[1] But even at its best the collectivist idea contains several fallacies inconsistent with the real facts of human life and nature. And just as the idea of individualistic democracy found itself before long in difficulties on that account because of the disparity between life's facts and the mind's idea, difficulties that have led up to its discredit and approaching overthrow, the idea of collectivist democracy too may well find itself before long in difficulties that must lead to its discredit and eventual replacement by a third stage of the inevitable progression. Liberty protected by a State in which all are politically equal, was the idea that individualistic democracy attempted to elaborate. Equality, social and political equality enforced through a perfect and careful order by a State which is the organised will of the whole community, is the idea on which socialistic democracy stakes its future. If that too fails to make good, the rational and democratic Idea may fall back upon a third form of society founding an essential rather than formal liberty and equality upon fraternal comradeship in a free community, the ideal of intellectual as of spiritual Anarchism.[2]

In fact the claim to equality like the thirst for liberty is individualistic in its origin, — it is not native or indispensable to the essence of the collectivist ideal. It is the individual who demands liberty for himself, a free movement for his mind, life, will, action; the collectivist trend and the State idea have rather the opposite tendency, they are self-compelled to take up more and more the compulsory management and control of the mind, life, will, action of the community — and the individual's as part of it — until personal liberty is pressed out of existence. But similarly it is the individual who demands for himself equality with all others; when a class demands, it is still the individual multiplied claiming for himself and all who are of his own grade, political or economic status an equal place, privilege or opportunity with those who have acquired or inherited a superiority of status. The social Reason conceded first the claim to liberty, but in practice (whatever might have been the theory) it admitted only so much equality — equality before the law, a helpful but not too effective political equality of the vote — as was necessary to ensure a reasonable freedom for all. Afterwards when the injustices and irrationalities of an unequalised competitive freedom, the enormity of the gulfs it created, became apparent, the social Reason shifted its ground and tried to arrive at a more complete communal justice on the basis of a political, economic, educational and social equality as complete as might be; it has laboured to make a plain level on which all can stand together. Liberty in this change has had to undergo the former fate of equality; for only so much liberty — perhaps or for a time — could survive as can be safely allowed without the competitive individual getting enough room for his self-assertive growth to upset or endanger the equalitarian basis. But in the end the discovery cannot fail to be made that an artificial equality has also its irrationalities, its contradictions of the collective good, its injustices even and its costly violations of the truth of Nature. Equality like individualistic liberty may turn out to be not a panacea but an obstacle in the way of the best management and control of life by the collective reason and will of the community.

---

[1] These hesitations of social democracy, its uneasy mental poise between two opposing principles, socialistic regimentation and democratic liberty, may be the root cause of the failure of socialism to make good in so many countries even when it had every chance on its side and its replacement by the more vigorous and ruthlessly logical forces of Communism and Fascism. On the other hand, in the northernmost countries of Europe a temporising, reformist, practical Socialism compromising between the right regulation of the communal life and the freedom of the individual has to some extent made good; but it is still doubtful whether it will be allowed to go to the end of its road. If it has that chance, it is still to be seen whether the drive of the idea and the force it carries in it for complete self-effectuation will not prevail in the end over the spirit of compromise.

[2] In the theory of communism State socialism is only a passage; a free classless Stateless communal life is the eventual ideal. But it is not likely that the living State machine once in power with all that are interested in its maintenance would let go its prey or allow itself to be abolished without a struggle.

But if both equality and liberty disappear from the human scene, there is left only one member of the democratic trinity, brotherhood or, as it is now called, comradeship, that has some chance of survival as part of the social basis. This is because it seems to square better with the spirit of collectivism; we see accordingly the idea of it if not the fact still insisted on in the new social systems, even those in which both liberty and equality are discarded as noxious democratic chimeras. But comradeship without liberty and equality can be nothing more than the like association of all — individuals, functional classes, guilds, syndicates, soviets or any other units — in common service to the life of the nation under the absolute control of the collectivist State. The only liberty left at the end would be the "freedom" to serve the community under the rigorous direction of the State authority; the only equality would be an association of all alike in a Spartan or Roman spirit of civic service with perhaps a like status, theoretically equal at least for all functions; the only brotherhood would be the sense of comradeship in devoted dedication to the organised social Self, the State. In fact the democratic trinity, stripped of its godhead, would fade out of existence; the collectivist ideal can very well do without them, for none of them belong to its grain and very substance.

This is indeed already the spirit, the social reason — or rather the social gospel — of the totalitarianism whose swelling tide threatens to engulf all Europe and more than Europe. Totalitarianism of some kind seems indeed to be the natural, almost inevitable destiny, at any rate the extreme and fullest outcome of Socialism or, more generally, of the collectivist idea and impulse. For the essence of Socialism, its justifying ideal, is the governance and strict organisation of the total life of the society as a whole and in detail by its own conscious reason and will for the best good and common interest of all, eliminating exploitation by individual or class, removing internal competition, haphazard confusion and waste, enforcing and perfecting coordination, assuring the best functioning and a sufficient life for all. If a democratic polity and machinery best assure such a working, as was thought at first, it is this that will be chosen and the result will be Social Democracy. That ideal still holds sway in northern Europe and it may there yet have a chance of proving that a successful collectivist rationalisation of society is quite possible. But if a non-democratic polity and machinery are found to serve the purpose better, then there is nothing inherently sacrosanct for the collectivist mind in the democratic ideal; it can be thrown on the rubbish-heap where so many other exploded sanctities have gone. Russian communism so discarded with contempt democratic liberty and attempted for a time to substitute for the democratic machine a new sovietic structure, but it has preserved the ideal of a proletarian equality for all in a classless society. Still its spirit is a rigorous totalitarianism on the basis of the "dictatorship of the proletariate", which amounts in fact to the dictatorship of the Communist party in the name or on behalf of the proletariate. Non-proletarian totalitarianism goes farther and discards democratic equality no less than democratic liberty; it preserves classes — for a time only, it may be, — but as a means of social functioning, not as a scale of superiority or a hierarchic order. Rationalisation is no longer the turn; its place is taken by a revolutionary mysticism which seems to be the present drive of the Time Spirit.

This is a symptom that can have a considerable significance. In Russia the Marxist system of Socialism has been turned almost into a gospel. Originally a rationalistic system worked out by a logical thinker and discoverer and systematiser of ideas, it has been transformed by the peculiar turn of the Russian mind into something like a social religion, a collectivist *mystique*, an inviolable body of doctrines with all denial or departure treated as a punishable heresy, a social cult enforced by the intolerant piety and enthusiasm of a converted people. In Fascist countries the swing away from Rationalism is marked and open; a surface vital subjectivism has taken its place and it is in the name of the national soul and its self-expression and manifestation that the leaders and prophets teach and violently enforce their totalitarian *mystique*. The essential features are the same in Russia and in Fascist countries, so that to the eye of the outsider their deadly quarrel seems to be a blood-feud of kinsmen fighting for the inheritance of their slaughtered parents — Democracy and the Age of Reason. There is the seizure of the life of the community by a dominant individual leader, Führer, Dux, dictator, head of a small active minority, the Nazi, Fascist or Communist party, and supported by a militarised partisan force; there is a rapid crystallisation of the social, economic, political life of the people into a new rigid organisation effectively controlled at every point; there is the compulsory casting of thought, education, expression, action, into a set iron mould, a fixed system of ideas and life-motives, with a fierce and ruthless, often a sanguinary repression of all that denies and differs; there is a total unprecedented compression of the whole communal existence so as to compel a maximum efficiency and a complete unanimity of mind, speech, feeling, life.

If this trend becomes universal, it is the end of the Age of Reason, the suicide or the execution — by decapitation or lethal pressure, *peine forte et dure*, — of the rational and intellectual expansion of the human mental being. Reason cannot do its work, act or rule if the mind of man is denied freedom to think or freedom to realise its thought by action in life. But neither can a subjective age be the outcome; for the growth of subjectivism also cannot proceed without plasticity, without movement of self-search, without room to move, expand, develop, change. The result is likely to be rather the creation of a tenebrous No Man's Land where obscure mysticisms, materialistic, vitalistic or mixed, clash and battle for the mastery of human life. But this consummation is not certain; chaos and confusion still reign and all hangs in the balance. Totalitarian mysticism may not be able to carry out its menace of occupying the globe, may not even endure. Spaces of the earth may be left where a rational idealism can still survive. The terrible compression now exercised on the national mind and life may lead to an explosion from within or, on the other hand, having fulfilled its immediate aim may relax and give way in calmer times to a greater plasticity which will restore to the human mind or soul a more natural line of progress, a freer field for their self-expanding impulse.

In that case the curve of the Age of Reason, now threatened with an abrupt cessation, may prolong and complete itself; the subjective turn of the human mind and life, avoiding a premature plunge into any general external action before it has found itself, may have time and freedom to evolve, to seek out its own truth, its own lines and so become ready to take up the spiral of the human social evolution where the curve of the Age of Reason naturally ends by its own normal evolution and make ready the ways of a deeper spirit.

Chapter XX

The End of the Curve of Reason

THE RATIONAL collectivist idea of society has at first sight a powerful attraction. There is behind it a great truth, that every society represents a collective being and in it and by it the individual lives and he owes to it all that he can give it. More, it is only by a certain relation to the society, a certain harmony with this greater collective self that he can find the complete use for his many developed or developing powers and activities. Since it is a collective being, it must, one would naturally suppose, have a discoverable collective reason and will which should find more and more its right expression and right working if it is given a conscious and effective means of organised self-expression and execution. And this collective will and intelligence, since it is according to the original idea that of all in a perfect equality, might naturally be trusted to seek out and work out its own good where the ruling individual and class would always be liable to misuse their power for quite other ends. The right organisation of social life on a basis of equality and comradeship ought to give each man his proper place in society, his full training and development for the common ends, his due share of work, leisure and reward, the right value of his life in relation to the collective being, society. Moreover it would be a place, share, value regulated by the individual and collective good and not an exaggerated or a depressed value brought to him fortuitously by birth or fortune, purchased by wealth or won by a painful and wasteful struggle. And certainly the external efficiency of the community, the measured, ordered and economical working of its life, its power for production and general well-being must enormously increase, as even the quite imperfect development of collective action in the recent past has shown, in a well-organised and concentrated State.

If it be objected that to bring about this result in its completeness the liberty of the individual will have to be destroyed or reduced to an almost vanishing quantity, it might be answered that the right of the individual to any kind of egoistic freedom as against the State which represents the mind, the will, the good and interest of the whole community, *sarvaṁ brahma*, is a dangerous fiction, a baneful myth. Individual liberty of life and action — even if liberty of thought and speech is for a time conceded, though this too can hardly remain unimpaired when once the socialistic State has laid its grip firmly on the individual, — may well mean in practice an undue freedom given to his infrarational parts of nature, and is not that precisely the thing in him that has to be thoroughly controlled, if not entirely suppressed, if he is to become a reasonable being leading a reasonable life? This control can be most wisely and effectively carried out by the collective reason and will of the State which is larger, better, more enlightened than the individual's; for it profits, as the average individual cannot do, by all the available wisdom and aspiration in the society. Indeed, the enlightened individual may well come to regard this collective reason and will as his own larger mind, will and conscience and find in a happy obedience to it a strong delivery from his own smaller and less rational self and therefore a more real freedom than any now claimed by his little separate ego. It used already to be argued that the disciplined German obeying the least gesture of the policeman, the State official, the military officer was really the freest, happiest and most moral individual in all Europe and therefore in the whole world. The same reasoning in a heightened form might perhaps be applied to the drilled felicities of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. The State, educating and governing the individual, undertakes to intellectualise, ethicise, practicalise and generally perfect him and to see to it that he remains, whether he will or no, always and in all things — strictly on the lines approved by the State — intellectual, ethical, practical and thoroughly perfect.

The pity of it is that this excellent theory, quite as much as the individualist theory that ran before it, is sure to stumble over a discrepancy between its set ideas and the actual facts of human nature; for it ignores the complexity of man's being and all that that complexity means. And especially it ignores the soul of man and its supreme need of freedom, of the control also of his lower members, no doubt, — for that is part of the total freedom towards which he is struggling, — but of a growing self-control, not a mechanical regulation by the mind and will of others. Obedience too is a part of its perfection, — but a free and natural obedience to a true guiding power and not to a mechanised government and rule. The collective being is a fact; all mankind may be regarded as a collective being: but this being is a soul and life, not merely a mind or a body. Each society develops into a sort of sub-soul or group-soul of this humanity and develops also a general temperament, character, type of mind, evolves governing ideas and tendencies that shape its life and its institutions. But the society has no discoverable common reason and will belonging alike to all its members; for the group-soul rather works out its tendencies by a diversity of opinions, a diversity of wills, a diversity of life, and the vitality of the group-life depends largely upon the working of this diversity, its continuity, its richness. Since that is so, government by the organised State must mean always government by a number of individuals, — whether that number be in theory the minority or the majority makes in the end little fundamental difference. For even when it is the majority that nominally governs, in fact it is always the reason and will of a comparatively few effective men — and not really any common reason and will of all — that rules and regulates things with the consent of the half-hypnotised mass.[1] There is no reason to suppose that the immediate socialisation of the State would at all alter, the mass of men not being yet thoroughly rationalised and developed minds, this practical necessity of State government.

---

[1] This truth has come out with a startling force of self-demonstration in Communist Russia and National Socialist Germany, — not to speak of other countries. The vehement reassertion of humanity's need of a King crowned or uncrowned — Dictator, Leader, Duce or Führer — and a ruling and administering oligarchy has been the last outcome of a century and a half of democracy as it has been too the first astonishing result of the supposed rise of the proletariate to power.

In the old infrarational societies, at least in their inception, what governed was not the State, but the group-soul itself evolving its life organised into customary institutions and self-regulations to which all had to conform; for the rulers were only its executors and instruments. This entailed indeed a great subjection of the individual to the society, but it was not felt, because the individualistic idea was yet unborn and such diversities as arose were naturally provided for in one way or another, — in some cases by a remarkable latitude of social variation which government by the State tends more and more to suppress. As State government develops, we have a real suppression or oppression of the minority by the majority or the majority by the minority, of the individual by the collectivity, finally, of all by the relentless mechanism of the State. Democratic liberty tried to minimise this suppression; it left a free play for the individual and restricted as much as might be the role of the State. Collectivism goes exactly to the opposite extreme; it will leave no sufficient elbow-room to the individual free-will, and the more it rationalises the individual by universal education of a highly developed kind, the more this suppression will be felt, — unless indeed all freedom of thought is negated and the minds of all are forced into a single standardised way of thinking.

Man needs freedom of thought and life and action in order that he may grow, otherwise he will remain fixed where he was, a stunted and static being. If his individual mind and reason are ill-developed, he may consent to grow, as does the infrarational mind, in the group-soul, in the herd, in the mass, with that subtle half-conscient general evolution common to all in the lower process of Nature. As he develops individual reason and will, he needs and society must give him room for an increasing play of individual freedom and variation, at least so far as that does not develop itself to the avoidable harm of others and of society as a whole. Given a full development and free play of the individual mind, the need of freedom will grow with the immense variation which this development must bring with it, and if only a free play in thought and reason is allowed, but the free play of the intelligent will in life and action is inhibited by the excessive regulation of the life, then an intolerable contradiction and falsity will be created. Men may bear it for a time in consideration of the great and visible new benefits of order, economic development, means of efficiency and the scientific satisfaction of the reason which the collectivist arrangement of society will bring; but when its benefits become a matter of course and its defects become more and more realised and prominent, dissatisfaction and revolt are sure to set in in the clearest and most vigorous minds of the society and propagate themselves throughout the mass. This intellectual and vital dissatisfaction may very well take under such circumstances the form of anarchistic thought, because that thought appeals precisely to this need of free variation in the internal life and its outward expression which will be the source of revolt, and anarchistic thought must be necessarily subversive of the socialistic order. The State can only combat it by an education adapted to its fixed forms of life, an education that will seek to drill the citizen in a fixed set of ideas, aptitudes, propensities as was done in the old infrarational order of things and by the suppression of freedom of speech and thinking so as to train and compel all to be of one mind, one sentiment, one opinion, one feeling; but this remedy will be in a rational society self-contradictory, ineffective, or if effective, then worse than the evil it seeks to combat. On the other hand, if from the first freedom of thought is denied, that means the end of the Age of Reason and of the ideal of a rational society. Man the mental being disallowed the use — except in a narrow fixed groove — of his mind and mental will, will stop short in his growth and be even as the animal and as the insect a stationary species.

This is the central defect through which a socialistic State is bound to be convicted of insufficiency and condemned to pass away before the growth of a new ideal. Already the pressure of the State organisation on the life of the individual has reached a point at which it is ceasing to be tolerable. If it continues to be what it is now, a government of the life of the individual by the comparatively few and not, as it pretends, by a common will and reason, if, that is to say, it becomes patently undemocratic or remains pseudo-democratic, then it will be this falsity through which anarchistic thought will attack its existence. But the innermost difficulty would not disappear even if the socialistic State became really democratic, really the expression of the free reasoned will of the majority in agreement. Any true development of that kind would be difficult indeed and has the appearance of a chimera: for collectivism pretends to regulate life not only in its few fundamental principles and its main lines, as every organised society must tend to do, but in its details, it aims at a thoroughgoing scientific regulation, and an agreement of the free reasoned will of millions in all the lines and most of the details of life is a contradiction in terms. Whatever the perfection of the organised State, the suppression or oppression of individual freedom by the will of the majority or of a minority would still be there as a cardinal defect vitiating its very principle. And there would be something infinitely worse. For a thoroughgoing scientific regulation of life can only be brought about by a thoroughgoing mechanisation of life. This tendency to mechanisation is the inherent defect of the State idea and its practice. Already that is the defect upon which both intellectual anarchistic thought and the insight of the spiritual thinker have begun to lay stress, and it must immensely increase as the State idea rounds itself into a greater completeness in practice. It is indeed the inherent defect of reason when it turns to govern life and labours by quelling its natural tendencies to put it into some kind of rational order.

Life differs from the mechanical order of the physical universe with which the reason has been able to deal victoriously just because it is mechanical and runs immutably in the groove of fixed cosmic habits. Life, on the contrary, is a mobile, progressive and evolving force, — a force that is the increasing expression of an infinite soul in creatures and, as it progresses, becomes more and more aware of its own subtle variations, needs, diversities. The progress of Life involves the development and interlocking of an immense number of things that are in conflict with each other and seem often to be absolute oppositions and contraries. To find amid these oppositions some principle or standing-ground of unity, some workable lever of reconciliation which will make possible a larger and better development on a basis of harmony and not of conflict and struggle, must be increasingly the common aim of humanity in its active life-evolution, if it at all means to rise out of life's more confused, painful and obscure movement, out of the compromises made by Nature with the ignorance of the Life-mind and the nescience of Matter. This can only be truly and satisfactorily done when the soul discovers itself in its highest and completest spiritual reality and effects a progressive upward transformation of its life-values into those of the spirit; for there they will all find their spiritual truth and in that truth their standing-ground of mutual recognition and reconciliation. The spiritual is the one truth of which all others are the veiled aspects, the brilliant disguises or the dark disfigurements, and in which they can find their own right form and true relation to each other. This is a work the reason cannot do. The business of the reason is intermediate: it is to observe and understand this life by the intelligence and discover for it the direction in which it is going and the laws of its self-development on the way. In order that it may do its office, it is obliged to adopt temporarily fixed view-points none of which is more than partially true and to create systems none of which can really stand as the final expression of the integral truth of things. The integral truth of things is truth not of the reason but of the spirit.

In the realm of thought that does not matter; for as there the reason does not drive at practice, it is able with impunity to allow the most opposite view-points and systems to exist side by side, to compare them, seek for reconciliations, synthetise in the most various ways, change constantly, enlarge, elevate; it is free to act without thinking at every point of immediate practical consequences. But when the reason seeks to govern life, it is obliged to fix its view-point, to crystallise its system; every change becomes or at least seems a thing doubtful, difficult and perilous, all the consequences of which cannot be foreseen, while the conflict of view-points, principles, systems leads to strife and revolution and not to a basis of harmonious development. The reason mechanises in order to arrive at fixity of conduct and practice amid the fluidity of things; but while mechanism is a sufficient principle in dealing with physical forces, because it is in harmony with the law or dharma of physical Nature, it can never truly succeed in dealing with conscious life, because there it is contrary to the law of life, its highest dharma. While, then, the attempt at a rational ordering of society is an advance upon the comparative immobility and slow subconscient or half-conscient evolution of infrarational societies and the confusedly mixed movement of semi-rational societies, it can never arrive at perfection by its own methods, because reason is neither the first principle of life, nor can be its last, supreme and sufficient principle.

The question remains whether anarchistic thought supervening upon the collectivistic can any more successfully find a satisfying social principle. For if it gets rid of mechanism, the one practical means of a rationalising organisation of life, on what will it build and with what can it create? It may be contended as against the anarchistic objection that the collectivist period is, if not the last and best, at least a necessary stage in social progress. For the vice of individualism is that in insisting upon the free development and self-expression of the life and the mind or the life-soul in the individual, it tends to exaggerate the egoism of the mental and vital being and prevent the recognition of unity with others on which alone a complete self-development and a harmless freedom can be founded. Collectivism at least insists upon that unity by entirely subordinating the life of the isolated ego to the life of the greater group-ego, and its office may be thus to stamp upon the mentality and life-habits of the individual the necessity of unifying his life with the life of others. Afterwards, when again the individual asserts his freedom, as some day he must, he may have learned to do it on the basis of this unity and not on the basis of his separate egoistic life. This may well be the intention of Nature in human society in its movement towards a collectivist principle of social living. Collectivism may itself in the end realise this aim if it can modify its own dominant principle far enough to allow for a free individual development on the basis of unity and a closely harmonised common existence.

But to do that it must first spiritualise itself and transform the very soul of its inspiring principle: it cannot do it on the basis of the logical reason and a mechanically scientific ordering of life.

Anarchistic thought, although it has not yet found any sure form, cannot but develop in proportion as the pressure of society on the individual increases, since there is something in that pressure which unduly oppresses a necessary element of human perfection. We need not attach much importance to the grosser vitalistic or violent anarchism which seeks forcibly to react against the social principle or claims the right of man to "live his own life" in the egoistic or crudely vitalistic sense. But there is a higher, an intellectual anarchistic thought which in its aim and formula recovers and carries to its furthest logical conclusions a very real truth of nature and of the divine in man. In its revolt against the opposite exaggeration of the social principle, we find it declaring that all government of man by man by the power of compulsion is an evil, a violation, a suppression or deformation of a natural principle of good which would otherwise grow and prevail for the perfection of the human race. Even the social principle in itself is questioned and held liable for a sort of fall in man from a natural to an unnatural and artificial principle of living.

The exaggeration and inherent weakness of this exclusive idea are sufficiently evident. Man does not actually live as an isolated being, nor can he grow by an isolated freedom. He grows by his relations with others and his freedom must exercise itself in a progressive self-harmonising with the freedom of his fellow-beings. The social principle therefore, apart from the forms it has taken, would be perfectly justified, if by nothing else, then by the need of society as a field of relations which afford to the individual his occasion for growing towards a greater perfection. We have indeed the old dogma that man was originally innocent and perfect; the conception of the first ideal state of mankind as a harmonious felicity of free and natural living in which no social law or compulsion existed because none was needed, is as old as the Mahabharata. But even this theory has to recognise a downward lapse of man from his natural perfection. The fall was not brought about by the introduction of the social principle in the arrangement of his life, but rather the social principle and the governmental method of compulsion had to be introduced as a result of the fall. If, on the contrary, we regard the evolution of man not as a fall from perfection but a gradual ascent, a growth out of the infrarational status of his being, it is clear that only by a social compulsion on the vital and physical instincts of his infrarational egoism, a subjection to the needs and laws of the social life, could this growth have been brought about on a large scale. For in their first crudeness the infrarational instincts do not correct themselves quite voluntarily without the pressure of need and compulsion, but only by the erection of a law other than their own which teaches them finally to erect a yet greater law within for their own correction and purification. The principle of social compulsion may not have been always or perhaps ever used quite wisely, — it is a law of man's imperfection, imperfect in itself, and must always be imperfect in its method and result: but in the earlier stages of his evolution it was clearly inevitable, and until man has grown out of the causes of its necessity, he cannot be really ready for the anarchistic principle of living.

But it is at the same time clear that the more the outer law is replaced by an inner law, the nearer man will draw to his true and natural perfection. And the perfect social state must be one in which governmental compulsion is abolished and man is able to live with his fellow-man by free agreement and cooperation. But by what means is he to be made ready for this great and difficult consummation? Intellectual anarchism relies on two powers in the human being of which the first is the enlightenment of his reason; the mind of man, enlightened, will claim freedom for itself, but will equally recognise the same right in others. A just equation will of itself emerge on the ground of a true, self-found and unperverted human nature. This might conceivably be sufficient, although hardly without a considerable change and progress in man's mental powers, if the life of the individual could be lived in a predominant isolation with only a small number of points of necessary contact with the lives of others. Actually, our existence is closely knit with the existences around us and there is a common life, a common work, a common effort and aspiration without which humanity cannot grow to its full height and wideness. To ensure coordination and prevent clash and conflict in this constant contact another power is needed than the enlightened intellect. Anarchistic thought finds this power in a natural human sympathy which, if it is given free play under the right conditions, can be relied upon to ensure natural cooperation: the appeal is to what the American poet calls the love of comrades, to the principle of fraternity, the third and most neglected term of the famous revolutionary formula. A free equality founded upon spontaneous cooperation, not on governmental force and social compulsion, is the highest anarchistic ideal.

This would seem to lead us either towards a free cooperative communism, a unified life where the labour and property of all is there for the benefit of all, or else to what may better be called communalism, the free consent of the individual to live in a society where the just freedom of his individuality will be recognised, but the surplus of his labour and acquisitions will be used or given by him without demur for the common good under a natural cooperative impulse. The severest school of anarchism rejects all compromise with communism. It is difficult to see how a Stateless Communism which is supposed to be the final goal of the Russian ideal, can operate on the large and complex scale necessitated by modern life. And indeed it is not clear how even a free communalism could be established or maintained without some kind of governmental force and social compulsion or how it could fail to fall away in the end either on one side into a rigorous collectivism or on the other to struggle, anarchy and disruption. For the logical mind in building its social idea takes no sufficient account of the infrarational element in man, the vital egoism to which the most active and effective part of his nature is bound: that is his most constant motive and it defeats in the end all the calculations of the idealising reason, undoes its elaborate systems or accepts only the little that it can assimilate to its own need and purpose. If that strong element, that ego-force in him is too much overshadowed, cowed and depressed, too much rationalised, too much denied an outlet, then the life of man becomes artificial, top-heavy, poor in the sap of vitality, mechanical, uncreative. And on the other hand, if it is not suppressed, it tends in the end to assert itself and derange the plans of the rational side of man, because it contains in itself powers whose right satisfaction or whose final way of transformation reason cannot discover.

If Reason were the secret highest law of the universe or if man the mental being were limited by mentality, it might be possible for him by the power of the reason to evolve out of the dominance of infrarational Nature which he inherits from the animal. He could then live securely in his best human self as a perfected rational and sympathetic being, balanced and well-ordered in all parts, the sattwic man of Indian philosophy; that would be his summit of possibility, his consummation. But his nature is rather transitional; the rational being is only a middle term of Nature's evolution. A rational satisfaction cannot give him safety from the pull from below nor deliver him from the attraction from above. If it were not so, the ideal of intellectual Anarchism might be more feasible as well as acceptable as a theory of what human life might be in its reasonable perfection; but, man being what he is, we are compelled in the end to aim higher and go farther.

A spiritual or spiritualised anarchism might appear to come nearer to the real solution or at least touch something of it from afar. As it expresses itself at the present day, there is much in it that is exaggerated and imperfect. Its seers seem often to preach an impossible self-abnegation of the vital life and an asceticism which instead of purifying and transforming the vital being, seeks to suppress and even kill it; life itself is impoverished or dried up by this severe austerity in its very springs. Carried away by a high-reaching spirit of revolt, these prophets denounce civilisation as a failure because of its vitalistic exaggerations, but set up an opposite exaggeration which might well cure civilisation of some of its crying faults and uglinesses, but would deprive us also of many real and valuable gains. But apart from these excesses of a too logical thought and a one-sided impulsion, apart from the inability of any "ism" to express the truth of the spirit which exceeds all such compartments, we seem here to be near to the real way out, to the discovery of the saving motive-force. The solution lies not in the reason, but in the soul of man, in its spiritual tendencies. It is a spiritual, an inner freedom that can alone create a perfect human order. It is a spiritual, a greater than the rational enlightenment that can alone illumine the vital nature of man and impose harmony on its self-seekings, antagonisms and discords. A deeper brotherhood, a yet unfound law of love is the only sure foundation possible for a perfect social evolution, no other can replace it. But this brotherhood and love will not proceed by the vital instincts or the reason where they can be met, baffled or deflected by opposite reasonings and other discordant instincts. Nor will it found itself in the natural heart of man where there are plenty of other passions to combat it. It is in the soul that it must find its roots; the love which is founded upon a deeper truth of our being, the brotherhood or, let us say, — for this is another feeling than any vital or mental sense of brotherhood, a calmer more durable motive-force, — the spiritual comradeship which is the expression of an inner realisation of oneness. For so only can egoism disappear and the true individualism of the unique godhead in each man found itself on the true communism of the equal godhead in the race; for the Spirit, the inmost self, the universal Godhead in every being is that whose very nature of diverse oneness it is to realise the perfection of its individual life and nature in the existence of all, in the universal life and nature.

This is a solution to which it may be objected that it puts off the consummation of a better human society to a far-off date in the future evolution of the race. For it means that no machinery invented by the reason can perfect either the individual or the collective man; an inner change is needed in human nature, a change too difficult to be ever effected except by the few. This is not certain; but in any case, if this is not the solution, then there is no solution, if this is not the way, then there is no way for the human kind. Then the terrestrial evolution must pass beyond man as it has passed beyond the animal and a greater race must come that will be capable of the spiritual change, a form of life must be born that is nearer to the divine. After all there is no logical necessity for the conclusion that the change cannot begin at all because its perfection is not immediately possible. A decisive turn of mankind to the spiritual ideal, the beginning of a constant ascent and guidance towards the heights may not be altogether impossible, even if the summits are attainable at first only by the pioneer few and far-off to the tread of the race. And that beginning may mean the descent of an influence that will alter at once the whole life of mankind in its orientation and enlarge for ever, as did the development of his reason and more than any development of the reason, its potentialities and all its structure.

Chapter XXI

The Spiritual Aim and Life

A SOCIETY founded upon spirituality will differ in two essential points from the normal human society which begins from and ends with the lower nature. The normal human society starts from the gregarious instinct modified by a diversity and possible antagonism of interests, from an association and clash of egos, from a meeting, combination, conflict of ideas, tendencies and principles; it tries first to patch up an accommodation of converging interests and a treaty of peace between discords, founded on a series of implied contracts, natural or necessary adjustments which become customs of the aggregate life, and to these contracts as they develop it gives the name of social law. By establishing, as against the interests which lead to conflict, the interests which call for association and mutual assistance, it creates or stimulates sympathies and habits of helpfulness that give a psychological support and sanction to its mechanism of law, custom and contract. It justifies the mass of social institutions and habitual ways of being which it thus creates by the greater satisfaction and efficiency of the physical, the vital and the mental life of man, in a word, by the growth and advantages of civilisation. A good many losses have indeed to be written off as against these gains, but those are to be accepted as the price we must pay for civilisation.

The normal society treats man essentially as a physical, vital and mental being. For the life, the mind, the body are the three terms of existence with which it has some competence to deal. It develops a system of mental growth and efficiency, an intellectual, aesthetic and moral culture. It evolves the vital side of human life and creates an ever-growing system of economic efficiency and vital enjoyment, and this system becomes more and more rich, cumbrous and complex as civilisation develops. Depressing by its mental and vital overgrowth the natural vigour of the physical and animal man, it tries to set the balance right by systems of physical culture, a cumbrous science of habits and remedies intended to cure the ills it has created and as much amelioration as it can manage of the artificial forms of living that are necessary to its social system. In the end, however, experience shows that society tends to die by its own development, a sure sign that there is some radical defect in its system, a certain proof that its idea of man and its method of development do not correspond to all the reality of the human being and to the aim of life which that reality imposes.

There is then a radical defect somewhere in the process of human civilisation; but where is its seat and by what issue shall we come out of the perpetual cycle of failure? Our civilised development of life ends in an exhaustion of vitality and a refusal of Nature to lend her support any further to a continued advance upon these lines; our civilised mentality, after disturbing the balance of the human system to its own greater profit, finally discovers that it has exhausted and destroyed that which fed it and loses its power of healthy action and productiveness. It is found that civilisation has created many more problems than it can solve, has multiplied excessive needs and desires the satisfaction of which it has not sufficient vital force to sustain, has developed a jungle of claims and artificial instincts in the midst of which life loses its way and has no longer any sight of its aim. The more advanced minds begin to declare civilisation a failure and society begins to feel that they are right. But the remedy proposed is either a halt or even a retrogression, which means in the end more confusion, stagnation and decay, or a reversion to "Nature" which is impossible or can only come about by a cataclysm and disintegration of society; or even a cure is aimed at by carrying artificial remedies to their acme, by more and more Science, more and more mechanical devices, a more scientific organisation of life, which means that the engine shall replace life, the arbitrary logical reason substitute itself for complex Nature and man be saved by machinery. As well say that to carry a disease to its height is the best way to its cure.

It may be suggested on the contrary and with some chance of knocking at the right door that the radical defect of all our systems is their deficient development of just that which society has most neglected, the spiritual element, the soul in man which is his true being. Even to have a healthy body, a strong vitality and an active and clarified mind and a field for their action and enjoyment, carries man no more than a certain distance; afterwards he flags and tires for want of a real self-finding, a satisfying aim for his action and progress. These three things do not make the sum of a complete manhood; they are means to an ulterior end and cannot be made for ever an aim in themselves. Add a rich emotional life governed by a well-ordered ethical standard, and still there is the savour of something left out, some supreme good which these things mean, but do not in themselves arrive at, do not discover till they go beyond themselves. Add a religious system and a widespread spirit of belief and piety, and still you have not found the means of social salvation. All these things human society has developed, but none of them has saved it from disillusionment, weariness and decay. The ancient intellectual cultures of Europe ended in disruptive doubt and sceptical impotence, the pieties of Asia in stagnation and decline. Modern society has discovered a new principle of survival, progress, but the aim of that progress it has never discovered, — unless the aim is always more knowledge, more equipment, convenience and comfort, more enjoyment, a greater and still greater complexity of the social economy, a more and more cumbrously opulent life. But these things must lead in the end where the old led, for they are only the same thing on a larger scale; they lead in a circle, that is to say, nowhere: they do not escape from the cycle of birth, growth, decay and death, they do not really find the secret of self-prolongation by constant self-renewal which is the principle of immortality, but only seem for a moment to find it by the illusion of a series of experiments each of which ends in disappointment. That so far has been the nature of modern progress. Only in its new turn inwards, towards a greater subjectivity now only beginning, is there a better hope; for by that turning it may discover that the real truth of man is to be found in his soul. It is not indeed certain that a subjective age will lead us there, but it gives us the possibility, can turn in that direction, if used rightly, the more inward movement.

It will be said that this is an old discovery and that it governed the old societies under the name of religion. But that was only an appearance. The discovery was there, but it was made for the life of the individual only, and even for him it looked beyond the earth for its fulfilment and at earth only as the place of his preparation for a solitary salvation or release from the burden of life. Human society itself never seized on the discovery of the soul as a means for the discovery of the law of its own being or on a knowledge of the soul's true nature and need and its fulfilment as the right way of terrestrial perfection. If we look at the old religions in their social as apart from their individual aspect, we see that the use society made of them was only of their most unspiritual or at any rate of their less spiritual parts. It made use of them to give an august, awful and would-be eternal sanction to its mass of customs and institutions; it made of them a veil of mystery against human questioning and a shield of darkness against the innovator. So far as it saw in religion a means of human salvation and perfection, it laid hands upon it at once to mechanise it, to catch the human soul and bind it on the wheels of a socio-religious machinery, to impose on it in the place of spiritual freedom an imperious yoke and an iron prison. It saddled upon the religious life of man a Church, a priesthood and a mass of ceremonies and set over it a pack of watchdogs under the name of creeds and dogmas, dogmas which one had to accept and obey under pain of condemnation to eternal hell by an eternal judge beyond, just as one had to accept and to obey the laws of society on pain of condemnation to temporal imprisonment or death by a mortal judge below. This false socialisation of religion has been always the chief cause of its failure to regenerate mankind.

For nothing can be more fatal to religion than for its spiritual element to be crushed or formalised out of existence by its outward aids and forms and machinery. The falsehood of the old social use of religion is shown by its effects. History has exhibited more than once the coincidence of the greatest religious fervour and piety with darkest ignorance, with an obscure squalor and long vegetative stagnancy of the mass of human life, with the unquestioned reign of cruelty, injustice and oppression, or with an organisation of the most ordinary, unaspiring and unraised existence hardly relieved by some touches of intellectual or half-spiritual light on the surface, — the end of all this a widespread revolt that turned first of all against the established religion as the key-stone of a regnant falsehood, evil and ignorance. It is another sign when the too scrupulously exact observation of a socio-religious system and its rites and forms, which by the very fact of this misplaced importance begin to lose their sense and true religious value, becomes the law and most prominent aim of religion rather than any spiritual growth of the individual and the race. And a great sign too of this failure is when the individual is obliged to flee from society in order to find room for his spiritual growth; when, finding human life given over to the unregenerated mind, life and body and the place of spiritual freedom occupied by the bonds of form, by Church and Shastra, by some law of the Ignorance, he is obliged to break away from all these to seek for growth into the spirit in the monastery, on the mountain-top, in the cavern, in the desert and the forest. When there is that division between life and the spirit, sentence of condemnation is passed upon human life. Either it is left to circle in its routine or it is decried as worthless and unreal, a vanity of vanities, and loses that confidence in itself and inner faith in the value of its terrestrial aims, *śraddhā*, without which it cannot come to anything. For the spirit of man must strain towards the heights; when it loses its tension of endeavour, the race must become immobile and stagnant or even sink towards darkness and the dust. Even where life rejects the spirit or the spirit rejects life, there may be a self-affirmation of the inner being; there may even be a glorious crop of saints and hermits in a forcing-soil of spirituality, but unless the race, the society, the nation is moved towards the spiritualisation of life or moves forward led by the light of an ideal, the end must be littleness, weakness and stagnation. Or the race has to turn to the intellect for rescue, for some hope or new ideal, and arrive by a circle through an age of rationalism at a fresh effort towards the restatement of spiritual truth and a new attempt to spiritualise human life.

The true and full spiritual aim in society will regard man not as a mind, a life and a body, but as a soul incarnated for a divine fulfilment upon earth, not only in heavens beyond, which after all it need not have left if it had no divine business here in the world of physical, vital and mental nature. It will therefore regard the life, mind and body neither as ends in themselves, sufficient for their own satisfaction, nor as mortal members full of disease which have only to be dropped off for the rescued spirit to flee away into its own pure regions, but as first instruments of the soul, the yet imperfect instruments of an unseized diviner purpose. It will believe in their destiny and help them to believe in themselves, but for that very reason in their highest and not only in their lowest or lower possibilities. Their destiny will be, in its view, to spiritualise themselves so as to grow into visible members of the spirit, lucid means of its manifestation, themselves spiritual, illumined, more and more conscious and perfect. For, accepting the truth of man's soul as a thing entirely divine in its essence, it will accept also the possibility of his whole being becoming divine in spite of Nature's first patent contradictions of this possibility, her darkened denials of this ultimate certitude, and even with these as a necessary earthly starting-point. And as it will regard man the individual, it will regard too man the collectivity as a soul-form of the Infinite, a collective soul myriadly embodied upon earth for a divine fulfilment in its manifold relations and its multitudinous activities. Therefore it will hold sacred all the different parts of man's life which correspond to the parts of his being, all his physical, vital, dynamic, emotional, aesthetic, ethical, intellectual, psychic evolution, and see in them instruments for a growth towards a diviner living. It will regard every human society, nation, people or other organic aggregate from the same standpoint, sub-souls, as it were, means of a complex manifestation and self-fulfilment of the Spirit, the divine Reality, the conscious Infinite in man upon earth. The possible godhead of man because he is inwardly of one being with God will be its one solitary creed and dogma.

But it will not seek to enforce even this one uplifting dogma by any external compulsion upon the lower members of man's natural being; for that is *nigraha*, a repressive contraction of the nature which may lead to an apparent suppression of the evil, but not to a real and healthy growth of the good; it will rather hold up this creed and ideal as a light and inspiration to all his members to grow into the godhead from within themselves, to become freely divine. Neither in the individual nor in the society will it seek to imprison, wall in, repress, impoverish, but to let in the widest air and the highest light. A large liberty will be the law of a spiritual society and the increase of freedom a sign of the growth of human society towards the possibility of true spiritualisation. To spiritualise in this sense a society of slaves, slaves of power, slaves of authority, slaves of custom, slaves of dogma, slaves of all sorts of imposed laws which they live under rather than live by them, slaves internally of their own weakness, ignorance and passions from whose worst effect they seek or need to be protected by another and external slavery, can never be a successful endeavour. They must shake off their fetters first in order to be fit for a higher freedom. Not that man has not to wear many a yoke in his progress upward; but only the yoke which he accepts because it represents, the more perfectly the better, the highest inner law of his nature and its aspiration, will be entirely helpful to him. The rest buy their good results at a heavy cost and may retard as much as or even more than they accelerate his progress.

The spiritual aim will recognise that man as he grows in his being must have as much free space as possible for all its members to grow in their own strength, to find out themselves and their potentialities. In their freedom they will err, because experience comes through many errors, but each has in itself a divine principle and they will find it out, disengage its presence, significance and law as their experience of themselves deepens and increases. Thus true spirituality will not lay a yoke upon science and philosophy or compel them to square their conclusions with any statement of dogmatic religious or even of assured spiritual truth, as some of the old religions attempted, vainly, ignorantly, with an unspiritual obstinacy and arrogance. Each part of man's being has its own dharma which it must follow and will follow in the end, put on it what fetters you please. The dharma of science, thought and philosophy is to seek for truth by the intellect dispassionately, without prepossession and prejudgment, with no other first propositions than the law of thought and observation itself imposes. Science and philosophy are not bound to square their observations and conclusions with any current ideas of religious dogma or ethical rule or aesthetic prejudice. In the end, if left free in their action, they will find the unity of Truth with Good and Beauty and God and give these a greater meaning than any dogmatic religion or any formal ethics or any narrower aesthetic idea can give us. But meanwhile they must be left free even to deny God and good and beauty if they will, if their sincere observation of things so points them. For all these rejections must come round in the end of their circling and return to a larger truth of the things they refuse. Often we find atheism both in individual and society a necessary passage to deeper religious and spiritual truth: one has sometimes to deny God in order to find him; the finding is inevitable at the end of all earnest scepticism and denial.

The same law holds good in Art; the aesthetic being of man rises similarly on its own curve towards its diviner possibilities. The highest aim of the aesthetic being is to find the Divine through beauty; the highest Art is that which by an inspired use of significant and interpretative form unseals the doors of the spirit. But in order that it may come to do this greatest thing largely and sincerely, it must first endeavour to see and depict man and Nature and life for their own sake, in their own characteristic truth and beauty; for behind these first characters lies always the beauty of the Divine in life and man and Nature and it is through their just transformation that what was at first veiled by them has to be revealed. The dogma that Art must be religious or not be at all, is a false dogma, just as is the claim that it must be subservient to ethics or utility or scientific truth or philosophic ideas. Art may make use of these things as elements, but it has its own *svadharma*, essential law, and it will rise to the widest spirituality by following out its own natural lines with no other yoke than the intimate law of its own being.

Even with the lower nature of man, though here we are naturally led to suppose that compulsion is the only remedy, the spiritual aim will seek for a free self-rule and development from within rather than a repression of his dynamic and vital being from without. All experience shows that man must be given a certain freedom to stumble in action as well as to err in knowledge so long as he does not get from within himself his freedom from wrong movement and error; otherwise he cannot grow. Society for its own sake has to coerce the dynamic and vital man, but coercion only chains up the devil and alters at best his form of action into more mitigated and civilised movements; it does not and cannot eliminate him. The real virtue of the dynamic and vital being, the Life Purusha, can only come by his finding a higher law and spirit for his activity within himself; to give him that, to illuminate and transform and not to destroy his impulse is the true spiritual means of regeneration.

Thus spirituality will respect the freedom of the lower members, but it will not leave them to themselves; it will present to them the truth of the spirit in themselves, translated into their own fields of action, presented in a light which illumines all their activities and shows them the highest law of their own freedom. It will not, for instance, escape from scientific materialism by a barren contempt for physical life or a denial of Matter, but pursue rather the sceptical mind into its own affirmations and denials and show it there the Divine. If it cannot do that, it is proved that it is itself unenlightened or deficient, because one-sided, in its light. It will not try to slay the vitality in man by denying life, but will rather reveal to life the divine in itself as the principle of its own transformation. If it cannot do that, it is because it has itself not yet wholly fathomed the meaning of the creation and the secret of the Avatar.

The spiritual aim will seek to fulfil itself therefore in a fullness of life and man's being in the individual and the race which will be the base for the heights of the spirit, — the base becoming in the end of one substance with the peaks. It will not proceed by a scornful neglect of the body, nor by an ascetic starving of the vital being and an utmost bareness or even squalor as the rule of spiritual living, nor by a puritanic denial of art and beauty and the aesthetic joy of life, nor by a neglect of science and philosophy as poor, negligible or misleading intellectual pursuits, — though the temporary utility even of these exaggerations as against the opposite excesses need not be denied; it will be all things to all, but in all it will be at once their highest aim and meaning and the most all-embracing expression of themselves in which all they are and seek for will be fulfilled. It will aim at establishing in society the true inner theocracy, not the false theocracy of a dominant Church or priesthood, but that of the inner Priest, Prophet and King. It will reveal to man the divinity in himself as the Light, Strength, Beauty, Good, Delight, Immortality that dwells within and build up in his outer life also the kingdom of God which is first discovered within us. It will show man the way to seek for the Divine in every way of his being, *sarvabhāvena*,[1] and so find it and live in it, that however — even in all kinds of ways — he lives and acts, he shall live and act in that,[2] in the Divine, in the Spirit, in the eternal Reality of his being.

---

[1] Gita.

[2] Gita. *Sarvathā vartamāno'pi sa yogī mayi vartate.*

Chapter XXII

The Necessity of the Spiritual Transformation

OUR NORMAL conduct of life, whether the individual or the social, is actually governed by the balance between two complementary powers, — first, an implicit will central to the life and inherent in the main power of its action and, secondly, whatever modifying will can come in from the Idea in mind — for man is a mental being — and operate through our as yet imperfect mental instruments to give this life force a conscious orientation and a conscious method. Life normally finds its own centre in our vital and physical being, in its cravings and its needs, in its demand for persistence, growth, expansion, enjoyment, in its reachings after all kinds of power and possession and activity and splendour and largeness. The first self-direction of this Life-Force, its first orderings of method are instinctive and either entirely or very largely subconscient and magnificently automatic: the ease, spontaneity, fine normality, beauty, self-satisfaction, abundant vital energy and power of the subhuman life of Nature up to the animal is due to its entire obedience to this instinctive and automatic urge. It is a vague sense of this truth and of the very different and in this respect inferior character of human life that makes the thinker, when dissatisfied with our present conditions, speak of a life according to Nature as the remedy for all our ills. An attempt to find such a rule in the essential nature of man has inspired many revolutionary conceptions of ethics and society and individual self-development down to the latest of the kind, the strangely inspired vitalistic philosophy of Nietzsche. The common defect of these conceptions is to miss the true character of man and the true law of his being, his Dharma.

Nietzsche's idea that to develop the superman out of our present very unsatisfactory manhood is our real business, is in itself an absolutely sound teaching. His formulation of our aim, "to become ourselves", "to exceed ourselves", implying, as it does, that man has not yet found all his true self, his true nature by which he can successfully and spontaneously live, could not be bettered. But then the question of questions is there, what is our self, and what is our real nature? What is that which is growing in us, but into which we have not yet grown? It is something divine, is the answer, a divinity Olympian, Apollonian, Dionysiac, which the reasoning and consciously willing animal, man, is labouring more or less obscurely to become. Certainly, it is all that; but in what shall we find the seed of that divinity and what is the poise in which the superman, once self-found, can abide and be secure from lapse into this lower and imperfect manhood? Is it the intellect and will, the double-aspected *buddhi* of the Indian psychological system? But this is at present a thing so perplexed, so divided against itself, so uncertain of everything it gains, up to a certain point indeed magically creative and efficient but, when all has been said and done, in the end so splendidly futile, so at war with and yet so dependent upon and subservient to our lower nature, that even if in it there lies concealed some seed of the entire divinity, it can hardly itself be the seed and at any rate gives us no such secure and divine poise as we are seeking. Therefore we say, not the intellect and will, but that supreme thing in us yet higher than the Reason, the spirit, here concealed behind the coatings of our lower nature, is the secret seed of the divinity and will be, when discovered and delivered, luminous above the mind, the wide ground upon which a divine life of the human being can be with security founded.

When we speak of the superman, we speak evidently of something abnormal or supernormal to our present nature, so much so that the very idea of it becomes easily alarming and repugnant to our normal humanity. The normal human does not desire to be called out from its constant mechanical round to scale what may seem to it impossible heights and it loves still less the prospect of being exceeded, left behind and dominated,

— although the object of a true supermanhood is not exceeding and domination for its own sake but precisely the opening of our normal humanity to something now beyond itself that is yet its own destined perfection. But mark that this thing which we have called normal humanity, is itself something abnormal in Nature, something the like and parity of which we look around in vain to discover; it is a rapid freak, a sudden miracle. Abnormality in Nature is no objection, no necessary sign of imperfection, but may well be an effort at a much greater perfection. But this perfection is not found until the abnormal can find its own secure normality, the right organisation of its life in its own kind and power and on its own level. Man is an abnormal who has not found his own normality, — he may imagine he has, he may appear to be normal in his own kind, but that normality is only a sort of provisional order; therefore, though man is infinitely greater than the plant or the animal, he is not perfect in his own nature like the plant and the animal. This imperfection is not a thing to be at all deplored, but rather a privilege and a promise, for it opens out to us an immense vista of self-development and self-exceeding. Man at his highest is a half-god who has risen up out of the animal Nature and is splendidly abnormal in it, but the thing which he has started out to be, the whole god, is something so much greater than what he is that it seems to him as abnormal to himself as he is to the animal. This means a great and arduous labour of growth before him, but also a splendid crown of his race and his victory. A kingdom is offered to him beside which his present triumphs in the realms of mind or over external Nature will appear only as a rough hint and a poor beginning.

What precisely is the defect from which all his imperfection springs? We have already indicated it, — that has indeed been the general aim of the preceding chapters, — but it is necessary to state it now more succinctly and precisely. We see that at first sight man seems to be a double nature, an animal nature of the vital and physical being which lives according to its instincts, impulses, desires, its automatic orientation and method, and with that a half-divine nature of the self-conscious intellectual, ethical, aesthetic, intelligently emotional, intelligently dynamic being who is capable of finding and understanding the law of his own action and consciously using and bettering it, a reflecting mind that understands Nature, a will that uses, elevates, perfects Nature, a sense that intelligently enjoys Nature. The aim of the animal part of us is to increase vital possession and enjoyment; the aim of the semi-divine part of us is also to grow, possess and enjoy, but first to possess and enjoy intelligently, aesthetically, ethically, by the powers of the mind much more than by the powers of the life and body, and, secondly, to possess and enjoy, not so much the vital and physical except in so far as that is necessary as a foundation and starting-point, a preliminary necessity or condition, a standing-ground and basis, but things intellectual, ethical and aesthetic, and to grow not so much in the outward life, except in so far as that is necessary to the security, ease and dignity of our human existence, but in the true, the good and the beautiful. This is the manhood of man, his unique distinction and abnormality in the norm of this inconscient material Nature.

This means that man has developed a new power of being, — let us call it a new soul-power, with the premiss that we regard the life and the body also as a soul-power, — and the being who has done that is under an inherent obligation not only to look at the world and revalue all in it from this new elevation, but to compel his whole nature to obey this power and in a way reshape itself in its mould, and even to reshape, so far as he can, his environmental life into some image of this greater truth and law. In doing this lies his *svadharma*, his true rule and way of being, the way of his perfection and his real happiness. Failing in this, he fails in the aim of his nature and his being, and has to begin again until he finds the right path and arrives at a successful turning-point, a decisive crisis of transformation. Now this is precisely what man has failed to do. He has effected something, he has passed a certain stage of his journey. He has laid some yoke of the intellectual, ethical, aesthetic rule on his vital and physical parts and made it impossible for himself to be content with or really to be the mere human animal. But more he has not been able to do successfully. The transformation of his life into the image of the true, the good and the beautiful seems as far off as ever; if ever he comes near to some imperfect form of it, — and even then it is only done by a class or by a number of individuals with some reflex action on the life of the mass, — he slides back from it in a general decay of his life, or else stumbles on from it into some bewildering upheaval out of which he comes with new gains indeed but also with serious losses. He has never arrived at any great turning-point, any decisive crisis of transformation.

The main failure, the root of the whole failure indeed, is that he has not been able to shift upward what we have called the implicit will central to his life, the force and assured faith inherent in its main power of action. His central will of life is still situated in his vital and physical being, its drift is towards vital and physical enjoyment, enlightened indeed and checked to a certain extent in its impulses by the higher powers, but enlightened only and very partially, not transformed, — checked, not dominated and uplifted to a higher plane. The higher life is still only a thing superimposed on the lower, a permanent intruder upon our normal existence. The intruder interferes constantly with the normal life, scolds, encourages, discourages, lectures, manipulates, readjusts, lifts up only to let fall, but has no power to transform, alchemise, re-create. Indeed it does not seem itself quite to know where all this effort and uneasy struggle is meant to lead us, — sometimes it thinks, to a quite tolerable human life on earth, the norm of which it can never successfully fix, and sometimes it imagines our journey is to another world whither by a religious life or else an edifying death it will escape out of all this pother and trouble of mortal being. Therefore these two elements live together in a continual, a mutual perplexity, made perpetually uneasy, uncomfortable and ineffectual by each other, somewhat like an ill-assorted wife and husband, always at odds and yet half in love with or at least necessary to each other, unable to beat out a harmony, yet condemned to be joined in an unhappy leash until death separates them. All the uneasiness, dissatisfaction, disillusionment, weariness, melancholy, pessimism of the human mind comes from man's practical failure to solve the riddle and the difficulty of his double nature.

We have said that this failure is due to the fact that this higher power is only a mediator, and that thoroughly to transform the vital and physical life in its image is perhaps not possible, but at any rate not the intention of Nature in us. It may be urged perhaps that after all individuals have succeeded in effecting some figure of transformation, have led entirely ethical or artistic or intellectual lives, even shaped their life by some ideal of the true, the good and the beautiful, and whatever the individual has done, the race too may and should eventually succeed in doing; for the exceptional individual is the future type, the forerunner. But to how much did their success really amount? Either they impoverished the vital and physical life in them in order to give play to one element of their being, lived a one-sided and limited existence, or else they arrived at a compromise by which, while the higher life was given great prominence, the lower was still allowed to graze in its own field under the eye more or less strict or the curb more or less indulgent of the higher power or powers: in itself, in its own instincts and demands it remained unchanged. There was a dominance, but not a transformation.

Life cannot be entirely rational, cannot conform entirely to the ethical or the aesthetic or the scientific and philosophic mentality; mind is not the destined archangel of the transformation. All appearances to the contrary are always a *trompe l'oeil*, an intellectual, aesthetic or ethical illusion. Dominated, repressed life may be, but it reserves its right; and though individuals or a class may establish this domination for a time and impose some simulacrum of it upon the society, Life in the end circumvents the intelligence; it gets strong elements in it — for always there are traitor elements at work — to come over to its side and re-establishes its instincts, recovers its field; or if it fails in this, it has its revenge in its own decay which brings about the decay of the society, the disappointment of the perennial hope. So much so, that there are times when mankind perceives this fact and, renouncing the attempt to dominate the life-instinct, determines to use the intelligence for its service and to give it light in its own field instead of enslaving it to a higher but chimerical ideal.

Such a period was the recent materialistic age, when the intellect of man seemed decided to study thoroughly Life and Matter, to admit only that, to recognise mind only as an instrument of Life and Matter, and to devote all its knowledge to a tremendous expansion of the vital and physical life, its practicality, its efficiency, its comfort and the splendid ordering of its instincts of production, possession and enjoyment. That was the character of the materialistic, commercial, economic age of mankind, a period in which the ethical mind persisted painfully, but with decreasing self-confidence, an increasing self-questioning and a tendency to yield up the fortress of the moral law to the life-instinct, the aesthetic instinct and intelligence flourished as a rather glaring exotic ornament, a sort of rare orchid in the button-hole of the vital man, and reason became the magnificent servant of Life and Matter. The titanic development of the vital Life which followed, is ending as the Titans always end; it lit its own funeral pyre in the conflagration of a world-war, its natural upshot, a struggle between the most "efficient" and "civilised" nations for the possession and enjoyment of the world, of its wealth, its markets, its available spaces, an inflated and plethoric commercial expansion, largeness of imperial size and rule. For that is what the great war signified and was in its real origin, because that was the secret or the open intention of all pre-war diplomacy and international politics; and if a nobler idea was awakened at least for a time, it was only under the scourge of Death and before the terrifying spectre of a gigantic mutual destruction. Even so the awakening was by no means complete, nor everywhere quite sincere, but it was there and it was struggling towards birth even in Germany, once the great protagonist of the vitalistic philosophy of life. In that awakening lay some hope of better things. But for the moment at least the vitalistic aim has once more raised its head in a new form and the hope has dimmed in a darkness and welter in which only the eye of faith can see chaos preparing a new cosmos.

The first result of this imperfect awakening seemed likely to be a return to an older ideal, with a will to use the reason and the ethical mind better and more largely in the ordering of individual, of national and of international life. But such an attempt, though well enough as a first step, cannot be the real and final solution; if our effort ends there, we shall not arrive. The solution lies, we have said, in an awakening to our real, because our highest self and nature, — that hidden self which we are not yet, but have to become and which is not the strong and enlightened vital Will hymned by Nietzsche, but a spiritual self and spiritual nature that will use the mental being which we already are, but the mental being spiritualised, and transform by a spiritual ideality the aim and action of our vital and physical nature. For this is the formula of man in his highest potentiality, and safety lies in tending towards our highest and not in resting content with an inferior potentiality. To follow after the highest in us may seem to be to live dangerously, to use again one of Nietzsche's inspired expressions, but by that danger comes victory and security. To rest in or follow after an inferior potentiality may seem safe, rational, comfortable, easy, but it ends badly, in some futility or in a mere circling, down the abyss or in a stagnant morass. Our right and natural road is towards the summits.

We have then to return to the pursuit of an ancient secret which man, as a race, has seen only obscurely and followed after lamely, has indeed understood only with his surface mind and not in its heart of meaning, — and yet in following it lies his social no less than his individual salvation, — the ideal of the kingdom of God, the secret of the reign of the Spirit over mind and life and body. It is because they have never quite lost hold of this secret, never disowned it in impatience for a lesser victory, that the older Asiatic nations have survived so persistently and can now, as if immortal, raise their faces towards a new dawn; for they have fallen asleep, but they have not perished. It is true that they have for a time failed in life, where the European nations who trusted to the flesh and the intellect have succeeded; but that success, speciously complete but only for a time, has always turned into a catastrophe. Still Asia had failed in life, she had fallen in the dust, and even if the dust in which she was lying was sacred, as the modern poet of Asia has declared, —

though the sacredness may be doubted, — still the dust is not the proper place for man, nor is to lie prostrate in it his right human attitude. Asia temporarily failed not because she followed after things spiritual, as some console themselves by saying, — as if the spirit could be at all a thing of weakness or a cause of weakness, — but because she did not follow after the spirit sufficiently, did not learn how entirely to make it the master of life. Her mind either made a gulf and a division between life and the Spirit or else rested in a compromise between them and accepted as final socio-religious systems founded upon that compromise. So to rest is perilous; for the call of the Spirit more than any other demands that we shall follow it always to the end, and the end is neither a divorce and departure nor a compromise, but a conquest of all by the spirit and that reign of the seekers after perfection which, in the Hindu religious symbol, the last Avatar comes to accomplish.

This truth it is important to note, for mistakes made on the path are often even more instructive than the mistakes made by a turning aside from the path. As it is possible to superimpose the intellectual, ethical or aesthetic life or the sum of their motives upon the vital and physical nature, to be satisfied with a partial domination or a compromise, so it is possible to superimpose the spiritual life or some figure of strength or ascendency of spiritual ideas and motives on the mental, vital and physical nature and either to impoverish the latter, to impoverish the vital and physical existence and even to depress the mental as well in order to give the spiritual an easier domination, or else to make a compromise and leave the lower being to its pasture on condition of its doing frequent homage to the spiritual existence, admitting to a certain extent, greater or less, its influence and formally acknowledging it as the last state and the finality of the human being. This is the most that human society has ever done in the past, and though necessarily that must be a stage of the journey, to rest there is to miss the heart of the matter, the one thing needful. Not a humanity leading its ordinary life, what is now its normal round, touched by spiritual influences, but a humanity aspiring whole-heartedly to a law that is now abnormal to it until its whole life has been elevated into spirituality, is the steep way that lies before man towards his perfection and the transformation that it has to achieve.

The secret of the transformation lies in the transference of our centre of living to a higher consciousness and in a change of our main power of living. This will be a leap or an ascent even more momentous than that which Nature must at one time have made from the vital mind of the animal to the thinking mind still imperfect in our human intelligence. The central will implicit in life must be no longer the vital will in the life and the body, but the spiritual will of which we have now only rare and dim intimations and glimpses. For now it comes to us hardly disclosed, weakened, disguised in the mental Idea; but it is in its own nature supramental and it is its supramental power and truth that we have somehow to discover. The main power of our living must be no longer the inferior vital urge of Nature which is already accomplished in us and can only whirl upon its rounds about the ego-centre, but that spiritual force of which we sometimes hear and speak but have not yet its inmost secret. For that is still retired in our depths and waits for our transcendence of the ego and the discovery of the true individual in whose universality we shall be united with all others. To transfer from the vital being, the instrumental reality in us, to the spirit, the central reality, to elevate to that height our will to be and our power of living is the secret which our nature is seeking to discover. All that we have done hitherto is some half-successful effort to transfer this will and power to the mental plane; our highest endeavour and labour has been to become the mental being and to live in the strength of the idea. But the mental idea in us is always intermediary and instrumental; always it depends on something other than it for its ground of action and therefore although it can follow for a time after its own separate satisfaction, it cannot rest for ever satisfied with that alone. It must either gravitate downwards and outwards towards the vital and physical life or it must elevate itself inwards and upwards towards the spirit.

And that must be why in thought, in art, in conduct, in life we are always divided between two tendencies, one idealistic, the other realistic. The latter very easily seems to us more real, more solidly founded, more in touch with actualities because it relies upon a reality which is patent, sensible and already accomplished; the idealistic easily seems to us something unreal, fantastic, unsubstantial, nebulous, a thing more of thoughts and words than of live actualities, because it is trying to embody a reality not yet accomplished. To a certain extent we are perhaps right; for the ideal, a stranger among the actualities of our physical existence, is in fact a thing unreal until it has either in some way reconciled itself to the imperfections of our outer life or else has found the greater and purer reality for which it is seeking and imposed it on our outer activities; till then it hangs between two worlds and has conquered neither the upper light nor the nether darkness. Submission to the actual by a compromise is easy; discovery of the spiritual truth and the transformation of our actual way of living is difficult: but it is precisely this difficult thing that has to be done, if man is to find and fulfil his true nature. Our idealism is always the most rightly human thing in us, but as a mental idealism it is a thing ineffective. To be effective it has to convert itself into a spiritual realism which shall lay its hands on the higher reality of the spirit and take up for it this lower reality of our sensational, vital and physical nature.

This upward transference of our will to be and our power of life we have, then, to make the very principle of our perfection. That will, that power must choose between the domination of the vital part in us and the domination of the spirit. Nature can rest in the round of vital being, can produce there a sort of perfection, but that is the perfection of an arrested development satisfied with its own limits. This she can manage in the plant and the animal, because the life and the body are there at once the instrument and the aim; they do not look beyond themselves. She cannot do it in man because here she has shot up beyond her physical and vital basis; she has developed in him the mind which is an outflowering of the life towards the light of the Spirit, and the life and the body are now instrumental and no longer their own aim. Therefore the perfection of man cannot consist in pursuing the unillumined round of the physical life. Neither can it be found in the wider rounds of the mental being; for that also is instrumental and tends towards something else beyond it, something whose power indeed works in it, but whose larger truth is superconscient to its present intelligence, supramental. The perfection of man lies in the unfolding of the ever-perfect Spirit.

The lower perfection of Nature in the plant and the animal comes from an instinctive, an automatic, a subconscient obedience in each to the vital truth of its own being. The higher perfection of the spiritual life will come by a spontaneous obedience of spiritualised man to the truth of his own realised being, when he has become himself, when he has found his own real nature. For this spontaneity will not be instinctive and subconscient, it will be intuitive and fully, integrally conscious. It will be a glad obedience to a spontaneous principle of spiritual light, to the force of a unified and integralised highest truth, largest beauty, good, power, joy, love, oneness. The object of this force acting in life will and must be as in all life growth, possession, enjoyment, but a growth which is a divine manifestation, a possession and enjoyment spiritual and of the spirit in things, — an enjoyment that will use, but will not depend on the mental, vital and physical symbols of our living. Therefore this will not be a limited perfection of arrested development dependent on the repetition of the same forms and the same round of actions, any departure from which becomes a peril and a disturbance. It will be an illimitable perfection capable of endless variation in its forms, — for the ways of the Spirit are countless and endless, — but securely the same in all variations, one but multitudinously infinite.

Therefore, too, this perfection cannot come by the mental idea dealing with the Spirit as it deals with life. The idea in mind seizing upon the central will in Spirit and trying to give this higher force a conscious orientation and method in accordance with the ideas of the intellect is too limited, too darkened, too poor a force to work this miracle. Still less can it come if we chain the spirit to some fixed mental idea or system of religious cult, intellectual truth, aesthetic norm, ethical rule, practical action, way of vital and physical life, to a particular arrangement of forms and actions and declare all departure from that a peril and a disturbance or a deviation from spiritual living. That was the mistake made in Asia and the cause of its arrested development and decline; for this is to subject the higher to the lower principle and to bind down the self-disclosing Spirit to a provisional and imperfect compromise with mind and the vital nature. Man's true freedom and perfection will come when the spirit within bursts through the forms of mind and life and, winging above to its own gnostic fiery height of ether, turns upon them from that light and flame to seize them and transform into its own image.

In fact, as we have seen, the mind and the intellect are not the key-power of our existence. For they can only trace out a round of half-truths and uncertainties and revolve in that unsatisfying circle. But concealed in the mind and life, in all the action of the intellectual, the aesthetic, the ethical, the dynamic and practical, the emotional, sensational, vital and physical being, there is a power that sees by identity and intuition and gives to all these things such truth and such certainty and stability as they are able to compass. Obscurely we are now beginning to see something of this behind all our science and philosophy and all our other activities. But so long as this power has to work for the mind and life and not for itself, to work in their forms and not by its own spontaneous light, we cannot make any great use of this discovery, cannot get the native benefit of this inner Daemon. Man's road to spiritual supermanhood will be open when he declares boldly that all he has yet developed, including the intellect of which he is so rightly and yet so vainly proud, are now no longer sufficient for him, and that to uncase, discover, set free this greater Light within shall be henceforward his pervading preoccupation. Then will his philosophy, art, science, ethics, social existence, vital pursuits be no longer an exercise of mind and life, done for themselves, carried in a circle, but a means for the discovery of a greater Truth behind mind and life and for the bringing of its power into our human existence. We shall be on the right road to become ourselves, to find our true law of perfection, to live our true satisfied existence in our real being and divine nature.

Chapter XXIII

Conditions for the Coming of a Spiritual Age

A CHANGE of this kind, the change from the mental and vital to the spiritual order of life, must necessarily be accomplished in the individual and in a great number of individuals before it can lay any effective hold upon the community. The Spirit in humanity discovers, develops, builds its formations first in the individual man: it is through the progressive and formative individual that it offers the discovery and the chance of a new self-creation to the mind of the race. For the communal mind holds things subconsciently at first or, if consciously, then in a confused chaotic manner: it is only through the individual mind that the mass can arrive at a clear knowledge and creation of the thing it held in its subconscient self. Thinkers, historians, sociologists who belittle the individual and would like to lose him in the mass or think of him chiefly as a cell, an atom, have got hold only of the obscurer side of the truth of Nature's workings in humanity. It is because man is not like the material formations of Nature or like the animal, because she intends in him a more and more conscious evolution, that individuality is so much developed in him and so absolutely important and indispensable. No doubt what comes out in the individual and afterwards moves the mass, must have been there already in the universal Mind and the individual is only an instrument for its manifestation, discovery, development: but he is an indispensable instrument and an instrument not merely of subconscient Nature, not merely of an instinctive urge that moves the mass, but more directly of the Spirit of whom that Nature is itself the instrument and the matrix of his creations. All great changes therefore find their first clear and effective power and their direct shaping force in the mind and spirit of an individual or of a limited number of individuals. The mass follows, but unfortunately in a very imperfect and confused fashion which often or even usually ends in the failure or distortion of the thing created. If it were not so, mankind could have advanced on its way with a victorious rapidity instead of with the lumbering hesitations and soon exhausted rushes that seem to be all of which it has yet been capable.

Therefore if the spiritual change of which we have been speaking is to be effected, it must unite two conditions which have to be simultaneously satisfied but are most difficult to bring together. There must be the individual and the individuals who are able to see, to develop, to re-create themselves in the image of the Spirit and to communicate both their idea and its power to the mass. And there must be at the same time a mass, a society, a communal mind or at the least the constituents of a group-body, the possibility of a group-soul which is capable of receiving and effectively assimilating, ready to follow and effectively arrive, not compelled by its own inherent deficiencies, its defect of preparation to stop on the way or fall back before the decisive change is made. Such a simultaneity has never yet happened, although the appearance of it has sometimes been created by the ardour of a moment. That the combination must happen some day is a certainty, but none can tell how many attempts will have to be made and how many sediments of spiritual experience will have to be accumulated in the subconscient mentality of the communal human being before the soil is ready. For the chances of success are always less powerful in a difficult upward effort affecting the very roots of our nature than the numerous possibilities of failure. The initiator himself may be imperfect, may not have waited to become entirely the thing that he has seen. Even the few who have the apostolate in their charge may not have perfectly assimilated and shaped it in themselves and may hand on the power of the Spirit still farther diminished to the many who will come after them. The society may be intellectually, vitally, ethically, temperamentally unready, with the result that the final acceptance of the spiritual idea by the society may be also the beginning of its debasement and distortion and of the consequent departure or diminution of the Spirit. Any or all of these things may happen, and the result will be, as has so often happened in the past, that even though some progress is made and an important change effected, it will not be the decisive change which can alone re-create humanity in a diviner image.

What then will be that state of society, what that readiness of the common mind of man which will be most favourable to this change, so that even if it cannot at once effectuate itself, it may at least make for its ways a more decisive preparation than has been hitherto possible? For that seems the most important element, since it is that, it is the unpreparedness, the unfitness of the society or of the common mind of man which is always the chief stumbling-block. It is the readiness of this common mind which is of the first importance; for even if the condition of society and the principle and rule that govern society are opposed to the spiritual change, even if these belong almost wholly to the vital, to the external, the economic, the mechanical order, as is certainly the way at present with human masses, yet if the common human mind has begun to admit the ideas proper to the higher order that is in the end to be, and the heart of man has begun to be stirred by aspirations born of these ideas, then there is a hope of some advance in the not distant future. And here the first essential sign must be the growth of the subjective idea of life, — the idea of the soul, the inner being, its powers, its possibilities, its growth, its expression and the creation of a true, beautiful and helpful environment for it as the one thing of first and last importance. The signals must be there that are precursors of a subjective age in humanity's thought and social endeavour.

These ideas are likely first to declare their trend in philosophy, in psychological thinking, in the arts, poetry, painting, sculpture, music, in the main idea of ethics, in the application of subjective principles by thinkers to social questions, even perhaps, though this is a perilous effort, to politics and economics, that hard refractory earthy matter which most resists all but a gross utilitarian treatment. There will be new unexpected departures of science or at least of research, — since to such a turn in its most fruitful seekings the orthodox still deny the name of science. Discoveries will be made that thin the walls between soul and matter; attempts there will be to extend exact knowledge into the psychological and psychic realms with a realisation of the truth that these have laws of their own which are other than the physical, but not the less laws because they escape the external senses and are infinitely plastic and subtle. There will be a labour of religion to reject its past heavy weight of dead matter and revivify its strength in the fountains of the spirit. These are sure signs, if not of the thing to be, at least of a great possibility of it, of an effort that will surely be made, another endeavour perhaps with a larger sweep and a better equipped intelligence capable not only of feeling but of understanding the Truth that is demanding to be heard. Some such signs we can see at the present time although they are only incipient and sporadic and have not yet gone far enough to warrant a confident certitude. It is only when these groping beginnings have found that for which they are seeking, that it can be successfully applied to the remoulding of the life of man. Till then nothing better is likely to be achieved than an inner preparation and, for the rest, radical or revolutionary experiments of a doubtful kind with the details of the vast and cumbrous machinery under which life now groans and labours.

A subjective age may stop very far short of spirituality; for the subjective turn is only a first condition, not the thing itself, not the end of the matter. The search for the Reality, the true self of man, may very easily follow out the natural order described by the Upanishad in the profound apologue of the seekings of Bhrigu, son of Varuna. For first the seeker found the ultimate reality to be Matter and the physical, the material being, the external man our only self and spirit. Next he fixed on life as the Reality and the vital being as the self and spirit; in the third essay he penetrated to Mind and the mental being; only afterwards could he get beyond the superficial subjective through the supramental Truth-Consciousness to the eternal, the blissful, the ever creative Reality of which these are the sheaths.

But humanity may not be as persistent or as plastic as the son of Varuna, the search may stop short anywhere. Only if it is intended that he shall now at last arrive and discover, will the Spirit break each insufficient formula as soon as it has shaped itself and compel the thought of man to press forward to a larger discovery and in the end to the largest and most luminous of all. Something of the kind has been happening, but only in a very external way and on the surface. After the material formula which governed the greater part of the nineteenth century had burdened man with the heaviest servitude to the machinery of the outer material life that he has ever yet been called upon to bear, the first attempt to break through, to get to the living reality in things and away from the mechanical idea of life and living and society, landed us in that surface vitalism which had already begun to govern thought before the two formulas inextricably locked together lit up and flung themselves on the lurid pyre of the world-war. The vital *élan* has brought us no deliverance, but only used the machinery already created with a more feverish insistence, a vehement attempt to live more rapidly, more intensely, an inordinate will to act and to succeed, to enlarge the mere force of living or to pile up a gigantic efficiency of the collective life. It could not have been otherwise even if this vitalism had been less superficial and external, more truly subjective. To live, to act, to grow, to increase the vital force, to understand, utilise and fulfil the intuitive impulse of life are not things evil in themselves: rather they are excellent things, if rightly followed and rightly used, that is to say, if they are directed to something beyond the mere vitalistic impulse and are governed by that within which is higher than Life. The Life-power is an instrument, not an aim; it is in the upward scale the first great subjective supraphysical instrument of the Spirit and the base of all action and endeavour. But a Life-power that sees nothing beyond itself, nothing to be served except its own organised demands and impulses, will be very soon like the force of steam driving an engine without the driver or an engine in which the locomotive force has made the driver its servant and not its controller. It can only add the uncontrollable impetus of a high-crested or broad-based Titanism, or it may be even a nether flaming demonism, to the Nature forces of the material world with the intellect as its servant, an impetus of measureless unresting creation, appropriation, expansion which will end in something violent, huge and "colossal", foredoomed in its very nature to excess and ruin, because light is not in it nor the soul's truth nor the sanction of the gods and their calm eternal will and knowledge.

But beyond the subjectivism of the vital self there is the possibility of a mental subjectivism which would at first perhaps, emerging out of the predominant vitalism and leaning upon the already realised idea of the soul as a soul of Life in action but correcting it, appear as a highly mentalised pragmatism. This first stage is foreshadowed in an increasing tendency to rationalise entirely man and his life, to govern individual and social existence by an ordered scientific plan based upon his discovery of his own and of life's realities. This attempt is bound to fail because reason and rationality are not the whole of man or of life, because reason is only an intermediate interpreter, not the original knower, creator and master of our being or of cosmic existence. It can besides only mechanise life in a more intelligent way than in the past; to do that seems to be all that the modern intellectual leaders of the race can discover as the solution of the heavy problem with which we are impaled. But it is conceivable that this tendency may hereafter rise to the higher idea of man as a mental being, a soul in mind that must develop itself individually and collectively in the life and body through the play of an ever-expanding mental existence. This greater idea would realise that the elevation of the human existence will come not through material efficiency alone or the complex play of his vital and dynamic powers, not solely by mastering through the aid of the intellect the energies of physical Nature for the satisfaction of the life-instincts, which can only be an intensification of his present mode of existence, but through the greatening of his mental and psychic being and a discovery, bringing forward and organisation of his subliminal nature and its forces, the utilisation of a larger mind and a larger life waiting for discovery within us. It would see in life an opportunity for the joy and power of knowledge, for the joy and power of beauty, for the joy and power of the human will mastering not only physical Nature, but vital and mental Nature. It might discover her secret yet undreamed-of mind-powers and life-powers and use them for a freer liberation of man from the limitations of his shackled bodily life. It might arrive at new psychic relations, a more sovereign power of the idea to realise itself in the act, inner means of overcoming the obstacles of distance and division which would cast into insignificance even the last miraculous achievements of material Science. A development of this kind is far enough away from the dreams of the mass of men, but there are certain pale hints and presages of such a possibility and ideas which lead to it are already held by a great number who are perhaps in this respect the yet unrecognised vanguard of humanity. It is not impossible that behind the confused morning voices of the hour a light of this kind, still below the horizon, may be waiting to ascend with its splendours.

Such a turn of human thought, effort, ideas of life, if it took hold of the communal mind, would evidently lead to a profound revolution throughout the whole range of human existence. It would give it from the first a new tone and atmosphere, a loftier spirit, wider horizons, a greater aim. It might easily develop a science which would bring the powers of the physical world into a real and not only a contingent and mechanical subjection and open perhaps the doors of other worlds. It might develop an achievement of Art and Beauty which would make the greatness of the past a comparatively little thing and would save the world from the astonishingly callous reign of utilitarian ugliness that even now afflicts it. It would open up a closer and freer interchange between human minds and, it may well be hoped, a kindlier interchange between human hearts and lives. Nor need its achievements stop here, but might proceed to greater things of which these would be only the beginnings. This mental and psychic subjectivism would have its dangers, greater dangers even than those that attend a vitalistic subjectivism, because its powers of action also would be greater, but it would have what vitalistic subjectivism has not and cannot easily have, the chance of a detecting discernment, strong safeguards and a powerful liberating light.

Moving with difficulty upward from Matter to spirit, this is perhaps a necessary stage of man's development. This was one principal reason of the failure of past attempts to spiritualise mankind, that they endeavoured to spiritualise at once the material man by a sort of rapid miracle, and though that can be done, the miracle is not likely to be of an enduring character if it overleaps the stages of his ascent and leaves the intervening levels untrodden and therefore unmastered. The endeavour may succeed with individuals, — Indian thought would say with those who have made themselves ready in a past existence, — but it must fail with the mass. When it passes beyond the few, the forceful miracle of the spirit flags; unable to transform by inner force, the new religion — for that is what it becomes — tries to save by machinery, is entangled in the mechanical turning of its own instruments, loses the spirit and perishes quickly or decays slowly. That is the fate which overtakes all attempts of the vitalistic, the intellectual and mental, the spiritual endeavour to deal with material man through his physical mind chiefly or alone; the endeavour is overpowered by the machinery it creates and becomes the slave and victim of the machine. That is the revenge which our material Nature, herself mechanical, takes upon all such violent endeavours; she waits to master them by their concessions to her own law. If mankind is to be spiritualised, it must first in the mass cease to be the material or the vital man and become the psychic and the true mental being. It may be questioned whether such a mass progress or conversion is possible; but if it is not, then the spiritualisation of mankind as a whole is a chimera.

From this point of view it is an excellent thing, a sign of great promise, that the wheel of civilisation has been following its past and present curve upward from a solid physical knowledge through a successive sounding of higher and higher powers that mediate between Matter and Spirit. The human intellect in modern times has been first drawn to exhaust the possibilities of materialism by an immense dealing with life and the world upon the basis of Matter as the sole reality, Matter as the Eternal, Matter as the Brahman, *annaṁ brahma*. Afterwards it had begun to turn towards the conception of existence as the large pulsation of a great evolving Life, the creator of Matter, which would have enabled it to deal with our existence on the basis of Life as the original reality, Life as the great Eternal, *prāṇo brahma*. And already it has in germ, in preparation a third conception, the discovery of a great self-expressing and self-finding inner Mind other than our surface mentality as a master-power of existence, and that should lead towards a rich attempt to deal with our possibilities and our ways of living on the basis of Mind as the original reality, the great Eternal, *mano brahma*. It would also be a sign of promise if these conceptions succeeded each other with rapidity, with a large but swift evocation of the possibilities of each level; for that would show that there is a readiness in our subconscient Nature and that we need not linger in each stage for centuries.

But still a subjective age of mankind must be an adventure full of perils and uncertainties as are all great adventures of the race. It may wander long before it finds itself or may not find itself at all and may swing back to a new repetition of the cycle. The true secret can only be discovered if in the third stage, in an age of mental subjectivism, the idea becomes strong of the mind itself as no more than a secondary power of the Spirit's working and of the Spirit as the great Eternal, the original and, in spite of the many terms in which it is both expressed and hidden, the sole reality, *ayam ātmā brahma*. Then only will the real, the decisive endeavour begin and life and the world be studied, known, dealt with in all directions as the self-finding and self-expression of the Spirit. Then only will a spiritual age of mankind be possible.

To attempt any adequate discussion of what that would mean, and in an inadequate discussion there is no fruit, is beyond our present scope; for we should have to examine a knowledge which is rare and nowhere more than initial. It is enough to say that a spiritual human society would start from and try to realise three essential truths of existence which all Nature seems to be an attempt to hide by their opposites and which therefore are as yet for the mass of mankind only words and dreams, God, freedom, unity. Three things which are one, for you cannot realise freedom and unity unless you realise God, you cannot possess freedom and unity unless you possess God, possess at once your highest Self and the Self of all creatures. The freedom and unity which otherwise go by that name, are simply attempts of our subjection and our division to get away from themselves by shutting their eyes while they turn somersaults around their own centre. When man is able to see God and to possess him, then he will know real freedom and arrive at real unity, never otherwise. And God is only waiting to be known, while man seeks for him everywhere and creates images of the Divine, but all the while truly finds, effectively erects and worships images only of his own mind-ego and life-ego. When this ego pivot is abandoned and this ego-hunt ceases, then man gets his first real chance of achieving spirituality in his inner and outer life. It will not be enough, but it will be a commencement, a true gate and not a blind entrance.

A spiritualised society would live like its spiritual individuals, not in the ego, but in the spirit, not as the collective ego, but as the collective soul. This freedom from the egoistic standpoint would be its first and most prominent characteristic. But the elimination of egoism would not be brought about, as it is now proposed to bring it about, by persuading or forcing the individual to immolate his personal will and aspirations and his precious and hard-won individuality to the collective will, aims and egoism of the society, driving him like a victim of ancient sacrifice to slay his soul on the altar of that huge and shapeless idol. For that would be only the sacrifice of the smaller to the larger egoism, larger only in bulk, not necessarily greater in quality or wider or nobler, since a collective egoism, result of the united egoisms of all, is as little a god to be worshipped, as flawed and often an uglier and more barbarous fetish than the egoism of the individual. What the spiritual man seeks is to find by the loss of the ego the self which is one in all and perfect and complete in each and by living in that to grow into the image of its perfection, — individually, be it noted, though with an all-embracing universality of his nature and its conscious circumference. It is said in the old Indian writings that while in the second age, the age of Power, Vishnu descends as the King, and in the third, the age of compromise and balance, as the legislator or codifier, in the age of the Truth he descends as Yajna, that is to say, as the Master of works and sacrifice manifest in the heart of his creatures. It is this kingdom of God within, the result of the finding of God not in a distant heaven but within ourselves, of which the state of society in an age of the Truth, a spiritual age, would be the result and the external figure.

Therefore a society which was even initially spiritualised would make the revealing and finding of the divine Self in man the supreme, even the guiding aim of all its activities, its education, its knowledge, its science, its ethics, its art, its economical and political structure. As it was to some imperfect extent in the ancient Vedic times with the cultural education of the higher classes, so it would be then with all education. It would embrace all knowledge in its scope, but would make the whole trend and aim and the permeating spirit not mere worldly efficiency, though that efficiency would not be neglected, but this self-developing and self-finding and all else as its powers. It would pursue the physical and psychic sciences not in order merely to know the world and Nature in her processes and to use them for material human ends, but still more to know through and in and under and over all things the Divine in the world and the ways of the Spirit in its masks and behind them. It would make it the aim of ethics not to establish a rule of action whether supplementary to the social law or partially corrective of it, the social law that is after all only the rule, often clumsy and ignorant, of the biped pack, the human herd, but to develop the divine nature in the human being. It would make it the aim of Art not merely to present images of the subjective and objective world, but to see them with the significant and creative vision that goes behind their appearances and to reveal the Truth and Beauty of which things visible to us and invisible are the forms, the masks or the symbols and significant figures.

A spiritualised society would treat in its sociology the individual, from the saint to the criminal, not as units of a social problem to be passed through some skilfully devised machinery and either flattened into the social mould or crushed out of it, but as souls suffering and entangled in a net and to be rescued, souls growing and to be encouraged to grow, souls grown and from whom help and power can be drawn by the lesser spirits who are not yet adult. The aim of its economics would be not to create a huge engine of production, whether of the competitive or the cooperative kind, but to give to men — not only to some but to all men each in his highest possible measure — the joy of work according to their own nature and free leisure to grow inwardly, as well as a simply rich and beautiful life for all. In its politics it would not regard the nations within the scope of their own internal life as enormous State machines regulated and armoured with man living for the sake of the machine and worshipping it as his God and his larger self, content at the first call to kill others upon its altar and to bleed there himself so that the machine may remain intact and powerful and be made ever larger, more complex, more cumbrous, more mechanically efficient and entire. Neither would it be content to maintain these nations or States in their mutual relations as noxious engines meant to discharge poisonous gas upon each other in peace and to rush in times of clash upon each other's armed hosts and unarmed millions, full of belching shot and men missioned to murder like war-planes or hostile tanks in a modern battlefield. It would regard the peoples as group-souls, the Divinity concealed and to be self-discovered in its human collectivities, group-souls meant like the individual to grow according to their own nature and by that growth to help each other, to help the whole race in the one common work of humanity. And that work would be to find the divine Self in the individual and the collectivity and to realise spiritually, mentally, vitally, materially its greatest, largest, richest and deepest possibilities in the inner life of all and their outer action and nature.

For it is into the Divine within them that men and mankind have to grow; it is not an external idea or rule that has to be imposed on them from without. Therefore the law of a growing inner freedom is that which will be most honoured in the spiritual age of mankind. True it is that so long as man has not come within measurable distance of self-knowledge and has not set his face towards it, he cannot escape from the law of external compulsion and all his efforts to do so must be vain. He is and always must be, so long as that lasts, the slave of others, the slave of his family, his caste, his clan, his Church, his society, his nation; and he cannot but be that and they too cannot help throwing their crude and mechanical compulsion on him, because he and they are the slaves of their own ego, of their own lower nature. We must feel and obey the compulsion of the Spirit if we would establish our inner right to escape other compulsion: we must make our lower nature the willing slave, the conscious and illumined instrument or the ennobled but still self-subjected portion, consort or partner of the divine Being within us, for it is that subjection which is the condition of our freedom, since spiritual freedom is not the egoistic assertion of our separate mind and life but obedience to the Divine Truth in ourself and our members and in all around us. But we have, even so, to remark that God respects the freedom of the natural members of our being and that he gives them room to grow in their own nature so that by natural growth and not by self-extinction they may find the Divine in themselves. The subjection which they finally accept, complete and absolute, must be a willing subjection of recognition and aspiration to their own source of light and power and their highest being. Therefore even in the unregenerated state we find that the healthiest, the truest, the most living growth and action is that which arises in the largest possible freedom and that all excess of compulsion is either the law of a gradual atrophy or a tyranny varied or cured by outbreaks of rabid disorder. And as soon as man comes to know his spiritual self, he does by that discovery, often even by the very seeking for it, as ancient thought and religion saw, escape from the outer law and enter into the law of freedom.

A spiritual age of mankind will perceive this truth. It will not try to make man perfect by machinery or keep him straight by tying up all his limbs. It will not present to the member of the society his higher self in the person of the policeman, the official and the corporal, nor, let us say, in the form of a socialistic bureaucracy or a Labour Soviet. Its aim will be to diminish as soon and as far as possible the need of the element of external compulsion in human life by awakening the inner divine compulsion of the spirit within and all the preliminary means it will use will have that for its aim. In the end it will employ chiefly if not solely the spiritual compulsion which even the spiritual individual can exercise on those around him, — and how much more should a spiritual society be able to do it, — that which awakens within us in spite of all inner resistance and outer denial the compulsion of the Light, the desire and the power to grow through one's own nature into the Divine. For the perfectly spiritualised society will be one in which, as is dreamed by the spiritual anarchist, all men will be deeply free, and it will be so because the preliminary condition will have been satisfied. In that state each man will be not a law to himself, but *the* law, the divine Law, because he will be a soul living in the Divine Reality and not an ego living mainly if not entirely for its own interest and purpose. His life will be led by the law of his own divine nature liberated from the ego.

Nor will that mean a breaking up of all human society into the isolated action of individuals; for the third word of the Spirit is unity. The spiritual life is the flower not of a featureless but a conscious and diversified oneness. Each man has to grow into the Divine Reality within himself through his own individual being, therefore is a certain growing measure of freedom a necessity of the being as it develops and perfect freedom the sign and the condition of the perfect life. But also, the Divine whom he thus sees in himself, he sees equally in all others and as the same Spirit in all. Therefore too is a growing inner unity with others a necessity of his being and perfect unity the sign and condition of the perfect life. Not only to see and find the Divine in oneself, but to see and find the Divine in all, not only to seek one's own individual liberation or perfection, but to seek the liberation and perfection of others is the complete law of the spiritual being. If the divinity sought were a separate godhead within oneself and not the one Divine, or if one sought God for oneself alone, then indeed the result might be a grandiose egoism, the Olympian egoism of a Goethe or the Titanic egoism imagined by Nietzsche, or it might be the isolated self-knowledge or asceticism of the ivory tower or the Stylites pillar. But he who sees God in all, will serve freely God in all with the service of love. He will, that is to say, seek not only his own freedom, but the freedom of all, not only his own perfection, but the perfection of all. He will not feel his individuality perfect except in the largest universality, nor his own life to be full life except as it is one with the universal life. He will not live either for himself or for the State and society, for the individual ego or the collective ego, but for something much greater, for God in himself and for the Divine in the universe.

The spiritual age will be ready to set in when the common mind of man begins to be alive to these truths and to be moved or desire to be moved by this triple or triune Spirit. That will mean the turning of the cycle of social development which we have been considering out of its incomplete repetitions on a new upward line towards its goal. For having set out, according to our supposition, with a symbolic age, an age in which man felt a great Reality behind all life which he sought through symbols, it will reach an age in which it will begin to live in that Reality, not through the symbol, not by the power of the type or of the convention or of the individual reason and intellectual will, but in our own highest nature which will be the nature of that Reality fulfilled in the conditions — not necessarily the same as now — of terrestrial existence. This is what the religions have seen with a more or less adequate intuition, but most often as in a glass darkly, that which they called the kingdom of God on earth, — his kingdom within in man's spirit and therefore, for the one is the material result of the effectivity of the other, his kingdom without in the life of the peoples.

Chapter XXIV

The Advent and Progress of the Spiritual Age

IF A subjective age, the last sector of a social cycle, is to find its outlet and fruition in a spiritualised society and the emergence of mankind on a higher evolutionary level, it is not enough that certain ideas favourable to that turn of human life should take hold of the general mind of the race, permeate the ordinary motives of its thought, art, ethics, political ideals, social effort, or even get well into its inner way of thinking and feeling. It is not enough even that the idea of the kingdom of God on earth, a reign of spirituality, freedom and unity, a real and inner equality and harmony — and not merely an outward and mechanical equalisation and association — should become definitely an ideal of life; it is not enough that this ideal should be actively held as possible, desirable, to be sought and striven after, it is not enough even that it should come forward as a governing preoccupation of the human mind. That would evidently be a very great step forward, — considering what the ideals of mankind now are, an enormous step. It would be the necessary beginning, the indispensable mental environment for a living renovation of human society in a higher type. But by itself it might only bring about a half-hearted or else a strong but only partially and temporarily successful attempt to bring something of the manifest spirit into human life and its institutions. That is all that mankind has ever attempted on this line in the past. It has never attempted to work out thoroughly even that little, except in the limits of a religious order or a peculiar community, and even there with such serious defects and under such drastic limitations as to make the experiment nugatory and without any bearing on human life. If we do not get beyond the mere holding of the ideal and its general influence in human life, this little is all that mankind will attempt in the future. More is needed; a general spiritual awakening and aspiration in mankind is indeed the large necessary motive-power, but the effective power must be something greater. There must be a dynamic re-creating of individual manhood in the spiritual type.

For the way that humanity deals with an ideal is to be satisfied with it as an aspiration which is for the most part left only as an aspiration, accepted only as a partial influence. The ideal is not allowed to mould the whole life, but only more or less to colour it; it is often used even as a cover and a plea for things that are diametrically opposed to its real spirit. Institutions are created which are supposed, but too lightly supposed to embody that spirit and the fact that the ideal is held, the fact that men live under its institutions is treated as sufficient. The holding of an ideal becomes almost an excuse for not living according to the ideal; the existence of its institutions is sufficient to abrogate the need of insisting on the spirit that made the institutions. But spirituality is in its very nature a thing subjective and not mechanical; it is nothing if it is not lived inwardly and if the outward life does not flow out of this inward living. Symbols, types, conventions, ideas are not sufficient. A spiritual symbol is only a meaningless ticket, unless the thing symbolised is realised in the spirit. A spiritual convention may lose or expel its spirit and become a falsehood. A spiritual type may be a temporary mould into which spiritual living may flow, but it is also a limitation and may become a prison in which it fossilises and perishes. A spiritual idea is a power, but only when it is both inwardly and outwardly creative. Here we have to enlarge and to deepen the pragmatic principle that truth is what we create, and in this sense first, that it is what we create within us, in other words, what we become. Undoubtedly, spiritual truth exists eternally beyond independent of us in the heavens of the spirit; but it is of no avail for humanity here, it does not become truth of earth, truth of life until it is lived. The divine perfection is always there above us; but for man to become divine in consciousness and act and to live inwardly and outwardly the divine life is what is meant by spirituality; all lesser meanings given to the word are inadequate fumblings or impostures.

This, as the subjective religions recognise, can only be brought about by an individual change in each human life. The collective soul is there only as a great half-subconscient source of the individual existence; if it is to take on a definite psychological form or a new kind of collective life, that can only come by the shaping growth of its individuals. As will be the spirit and life of the individuals constituting it, so will be the realised spirit of the collectivity and the true power of its life. A society that lives not by its men but by its institutions, is not a collective soul, but a machine; its life becomes a mechanical product and ceases to be a living growth. Therefore the coming of a spiritual age must be preceded by the appearance of an increasing number of individuals who are no longer satisfied with the normal intellectual, vital and physical existence of man, but perceive that a greater evolution is the real goal of humanity and attempt to effect it in themselves, to lead others to it and to make it the recognised goal of the race. In proportion as they succeed and to the degree to which they carry this evolution, the yet unrealised potentiality which they represent will become an actual possibility of the future.

A great access of spirituality in the past has ordinarily had for its result the coming of a new religion of a special type and its endeavour to impose itself upon mankind as a new universal order. This, however, was always not only a premature but a wrong crystallisation which prevented rather than helped any deep and serious achievement. The aim of a spiritual age of mankind must indeed be one with the essential aim of subjective religions, a new birth, a new consciousness, an upward evolution of the human being, a descent of the spirit into our members, a spiritual reorganisation of our life; but if it limits itself by the old familiar apparatus and the imperfect means of a religious movement, it is likely to register another failure. A religious movement brings usually a wave of spiritual excitement and aspiration that communicates itself to a large number of individuals and there is as a result a temporary uplifting and an effective formation, partly spiritual, partly ethical, partly dogmatic in its nature. But the wave after a generation or two or at most a few generations begins to subside; the formation remains. If there has been a very powerful movement with a great spiritual personality as its source, it may leave behind a central influence and an inner discipline which may well be the starting-point of fresh waves; but these will be constantly less powerful and enduring in proportion as the movement gets farther and farther away from its source. For meanwhile in order to bind together the faithful and at the same time to mark them off from the unregenerated outer world, there will have grown up a religious order, a Church, a hierarchy, a fixed and unprogressive type of ethical living, a set of crystallised dogmas, ostentatious ceremonials, sanctified superstitions, an elaborate machinery for the salvation of mankind. As a result spirituality is increasingly subordinated to intellectual belief, to outward forms of conduct and to external ritual, the higher to the lower motives, the one thing essential to aids and instruments and accidents. The first spontaneous and potent attempt to convert the whole life into spiritual living yields up its place to a set system of belief and ethics touched by spiritual emotion; but finally even that saving element is dominated by the outward machinery, the sheltering structure becomes a tomb. The Church takes the place of the spirit and a formal subscription to its creed, rituals and order is the thing universally demanded; spiritual living is only practised by the few within the limits prescribed by their fixed creed and order. The majority neglect even that narrow effort and are contented to replace by a careful or negligent piety the call to a deeper life. In the end it is found that the spirit in the religion has become a thin stream choked by sands; at the most brief occasional floodings of its dry bed of conventions still prevent it from becoming a memory in the dead chapters of Time.

The ambition of a particular religious belief and form to universalise and impose itself is contrary to the variety of human nature and to at least one essential character of the Spirit. For the nature of the Spirit is a spacious inner freedom and a large unity into which each man must be allowed to grow according to his own nature. Again — and this is yet another source of inevitable failure — the usual tendency of these credal religions is to turn towards an afterworld and to make the regeneration of the earthly life a secondary motive; this tendency grows in proportion as the original hope of a present universal regeneration of mankind becomes more and more feeble. Therefore while many new spiritual waves with their strong special motives and disciplines must necessarily be the forerunners of a spiritual age, yet their claims must be subordinated in the general mind of the race and of its spiritual leaders to the recognition that all motives and disciplines are valid and yet none entirely valid since they are means and not the one thing to be done. The one thing essential must take precedence, the conversion of the whole life of the human being to the lead of the spirit. The ascent of man into heaven is not the key, but rather his ascent here into the spirit and the descent also of the spirit into his normal humanity and the transformation of this earthly nature. For that and not some post mortem salvation is the real new birth for which humanity waits as the crowning movement of its long obscure and painful course.

Therefore the individuals who will most help the future of humanity in the new age will be those who will recognise a spiritual evolution as the destiny and therefore the great need of the human being. Even as the animal man has been largely converted into a mentalised and at the top a highly mentalised humanity, so too now or in the future an evolution or conversion — it does not greatly matter which figure we use or what theory we adopt to support it — of the present type of humanity into a spiritualised humanity is the need of the race and surely the intention of Nature; that evolution or conversion will be their ideal and endeavour. They will be comparatively indifferent to particular belief and form and leave men to resort to the beliefs and forms to which they are naturally drawn. They will only hold as essential the faith in this spiritual conversion, the attempt to live it out and whatever knowledge — the form of opinion into which it is thrown does not so much matter — can be converted into this living. They will especially not make the mistake of thinking that this change can be effected by machinery and outward institutions; they will know and never forget that it has to be lived out by each man inwardly or it can never be made a reality for the kind. They will adopt in its heart of meaning the inward view of the East which bids man seek the secret of his destiny and salvation within; but also they will accept, though with a different turn given to it, the importance which the West rightly attaches to life and to the making the best we know and can attain the general rule of all life. They will not make society a shadowy background to a few luminous spiritual figures or a rigidly fenced and earth-bound root for the growth of a comparatively rare and sterile flower of ascetic spirituality. They will not accept the theory that the many must necessarily remain for ever on the lower ranges of life and only a few climb into the free air and the light, but will start from the standpoint of the great spirits who have striven to regenerate the life of the earth and held that faith in spite of all previous failure. Failures must be originally numerous in everything great and difficult, but the time comes when the experience of past failures can be profitably used and the gate that so long resisted opens. In this as in all great human aspirations and endeavours, an *a priori* declaration of impossibility is a sign of ignorance and weakness, and the motto of the aspirant's endeavour must be the *solvitur ambulando* of the discoverer. For by the doing the difficulty will be solved. A true beginning has to be made; the rest is a work for Time in its sudden achievements or its long patient labour.

The thing to be done is as large as human life, and therefore the individuals who lead the way will take all human life for their province. These pioneers will consider nothing as alien to them, nothing as outside their scope. For every part of human life has to be taken up by the spiritual, — not only the intellectual, the aesthetic, the ethical, but the dynamic, the vital, the physical; therefore for none of these things or the activities that spring from them will they have contempt or aversion, however they may insist on a change of the spirit and a transmutation of the form. In each power of our nature they will seek for its own proper means of conversion; knowing that the Divine is concealed in all, they will hold that all can be made the spirit's means of self-finding and all can be converted into its instruments of divine living. And they will see that the great necessity is the conversion of the normal into the spiritual mind and the opening of that mind again into its own higher reaches and more and more integral movement. For before the decisive change can be made, the stumbling intellectual reason has to be converted into the precise and luminous intuitive, until that again can rise into higher ranges to overmind and supermind or gnosis. The uncertain and stumbling mental will has to rise towards the sure intuitive and into a higher divine and gnostic will, the psychic sweetness, fire and light of the soul behind the heart, *hṛdaye guhāyām*, has to alchemise our crude emotions and the hard egoisms and clamant desires of our vital nature. All our other members have to pass through a similar conversion under the compelling force and light from above. The leaders of the spiritual march will start from and use the knowledge and the means that past effort has developed in this direction, but they will not take them as they are without any deep necessary change or limit themselves by what is now known or cleave only to fixed and stereotyped systems or given groupings of results, but will follow the method of the Spirit in Nature. A constant rediscovery and new formulation and larger synthesis in the mind, a mighty remoulding in its deeper parts because of a greater enlarging Truth not discovered or not well fixed before, is that Spirit's way with our past achievement when he moves to the greatnesses of the future.

This endeavour will be a supreme and difficult labour even for the individual, but much more for the race. It may well be that, once started, it may not advance rapidly even to its first decisive stage; it may be that it will take long centuries of effort to come into some kind of permanent birth. But that is not altogether inevitable, for the principle of such changes in Nature seems to be a long obscure preparation followed by a swift gathering up and precipitation of the elements into the new birth, a rapid conversion, a transformation that in its luminous moment figures like a miracle. Even when the first decisive change is reached, it is certain that all humanity will not be able to rise to that level. There cannot fail to be a division into those who are able to live on the spiritual level and those who are only able to live in the light that descends from it into the mental level. And below these too there might still be a great mass influenced from above but not yet ready for the light. But even that would be a transformation and a beginning far beyond anything yet attained. This hierarchy would not mean as in our present vital living an egoistic domination of the undeveloped by the more developed, but a guidance of the younger by the elder brothers of the race and a constant working to lift them up to a greater spiritual level and wider horizons. And for the leaders too this ascent to the first spiritual levels would not be the end of the divine march, a culmination that left nothing more to be achieved on earth. For there would be still yet higher levels within the supramental realm, as the old Vedic poets knew when they spoke of the spiritual life as a constant ascent, —

brahmāṇas tvā śatakrato
ud vaṁśam iva yemire;
yat sānoḥ sānum āruhat,
bhūri aspaṣṭa kartvam, —

> The priests of the word climb thee like a ladder, O hundred-powered. As one ascends from peak to peak, there is made clear the much that has still to be done.

But once the foundation has been secured, the rest develops by a progressive self-unfolding and the soul is sure of its way. As again it is phrased by the ancient Vedic singers, —

abhyavasthāḥ pra jāyante,
pra vavrer vavriś ciketa;
upasthe mātur vi caṣṭe, —

> State is born upon state; covering after covering becomes conscious of knowledge; in the lap of the Mother the soul sees.

This at least is the highest hope, the possible destiny that opens out before the human view, and it is a possibility which the progress of the human mind seems on the way to redevelop. If the light that is being born increases, if the number of individuals who seek to realise the possibility in themselves and in the world grows large and they get nearer the right way, then the Spirit who is here in man, now a concealed divinity, a developing light and power, will descend more fully as the Avatar of a yet unseen and unguessed Godhead from above into the soul of mankind and into the great individualities in whom the light and power are the strongest. There will then be fulfilled the change that will prepare the transition of human life from its present limits into those larger and purer horizons; the earthly evolution will have taken its grand impetus upward and accomplished the revealing step in a divine progression of which the birth of thinking and aspiring man from the animal nature was only an obscure preparation and a far-off promise.

The Ideal of Human Unity

Preface to the First Edition

The chapters of this book were written in a serial form in the pages of the monthly review, *Arya*, and from the necessity of speedy publication have been reprinted as they stood without the alterations which would have been necessary to give them a greater unity of treatment. They reflect the rapidly changing phases of ideas, facts and possibilities which emerged in the course of the European conflict. The earlier chapters were written when Russia was still an Empire and an autocracy, the later parts after the Russian revolution and when the war had come nearer to its end, but the dramatic circumstances of the issue, in itself inevitable, could not be foreseen. The reader may guide himself in regard to the references to contemporary conditions by observing that the first four chapters cover the close of the year 1915, the next twelve 1916, the seventeenth to the twenty-eighth 1917, while the remaining seven extend to July 1918. The rapid change of circumstances reflected will serve to bring home the swiftness of the evolution by which what was a hesitating idea and a doubtful possibility at the commencement has become a settled necessity awaiting speedy formulation.

Subsequent events have rendered certain speculations and balancings out of date, for they have been solved by the logic of events. Austria is a name of the past, the Empire of the Hohenzollerns has disappeared like a dream of the night, all Europe between the Rhine and the Volga is republican. Finally, most important of all, the League of Nations has now been decided upon, the American idea having triumphed at least in principle, and is in travail of formation. But the main suggestions put forward in the book remain unaffected, or rather acquire a more pressing actuality. The two great difficulties which attend the incipience of this first stage of loose world-union will still be, first, the difficulty of bringing into one system the few great

Empires remaining, few but immensely increased in power, influence and the extent of their responsibilities, and the greatly increased swarm of free nations which the force of events or the Power guiding them rather than the will of nations and Governments has brought into being, and the approaching struggle between Labour and Capitalism. The former is only a difficulty and embarrassment, though it may become serious if it turns into a conflict between the imperialistic and the nationalistic ideas or reproduces in the international scheme the strife of the old oligarchic and democratic tendencies in a new form, a question between control of the world-system by the will and influence of a few powerful imperial States and the free and equal control by all, small nations and great, European and American and Asiatic peoples. The second is a danger which may even lead to disintegration of this first attempt at unification, especially if, as seems to be the tendency, the League undertakes the policing of the world against the forces of extreme revolutionary socialism. On the other hand, the conflict may accelerate, whatever its result, the necessity and actuality of a more close and rigorous system, the incipience at least of the second stage of unification.

The main contentions advanced in these pages also remain unaffected by the course of events, — the inevitability of the unification of the life of humanity as a result of those imperative natural forces which lead always to the creation of larger and larger human aggregates, the choice of the principles which may be followed in the process, the need for preserving and bringing to fullness the principle of individual and group freedom within the human unity, and the insufficiency of formal unity without a growth of the religion of humanity which can alone make it a great psychological advance in the spiritual evolution of the race.

1919

Publisher's Note to the Second Edition

The Ideal of Human Unity first appeared in the "Arya" Vol. II, No. 2 – Vol. IV, No. 12) complete in 35 Chapters, serially from September, 1915 to July, 1918.

It was reproduced in book-form in 1919 by The Sons of India Ltd., Madras (with three Appendices, a Preface and a detailed synopsis of the Chapters. The Appendices contained articles from the "Arya" setting forth the ideals of the Review).

The present edition is a revised version; but the revision was done before the last World War. It is, however, printed almost in that form brought up-to-date by the addition of a Postscript Chapter dealing with the world conditions today.

April, 1950

The Ideal of Human Unity

Part I

Chapter I

The Turn towards Unity: Its Necessity and Dangers

THE SURFACES of life are easy to understand; their laws, characteristic movements, practical utilities are ready to our hand and we can seize on them and turn them to account with a sufficient facility and rapidity. But they do not carry us very far. They suffice for an active superficial life from day to day, but they do not solve the great problems of existence. On the other hand, the knowledge of life's profundities, its potent secrets, its great, hidden, all-determining laws is exceedingly difficult to us. We have found no plummet that can fathom these depths; they seem to us a vague, indeterminate movement, a profound obscurity from which the mind recoils willingly to play with the fret and foam and facile radiances of the surface. Yet it is these depths and their unseen forces that we ought to know if we would understand existence; on the surface we get only Nature's secondary rules and practical bye-laws which help us to tide over the difficulties of the moment and to organise empirically without understanding them her continual transitions.

Nothing is more obscure to humanity or less seized by its understanding, whether in the power that moves it or the sense of the aim towards which it moves, than its own communal and collective life. Sociology does not help us, for it only gives us the general story of the past and the external conditions under which communities have survived. History teaches us nothing; it is a confused torrent of events and personalities or a kaleidoscope of changing institutions. We do not seize the real sense of all this change and this continual streaming forward of human life in the channels of Time. What we do seize are current or recurrent phenomena, facile generalisations, partial ideas. We talk of democracy, aristocracy and autocracy, collectivism and individualism, imperialism and nationalism, the State and the commune, capitalism and labour; we advance hasty generalisations and make absolute systems which are positively announced today only to be abandoned perforce tomorrow; we espouse causes and ardent enthusiasms whose triumph turns to an early disillusionment and then forsake them for others, perhaps for those that we have taken so much trouble to destroy. For a whole century mankind thirsts and battles after liberty and earns it with a bitter expense of toil, tears and blood; the century that enjoys without having fought for it turns away as from a puerile illusion and is ready to renounce the depreciated gain as the price of some new good. And all this happens because our whole thought and action with regard to our collective life is shallow and empirical; it does not seek for, it does not base itself on a firm, profound and complete knowledge. The moral is not the vanity of human life, of its ardours and enthusiasms and of the ideals it pursues, but the necessity of a wiser, larger, more patient search after its true law and aim.

Today the ideal of human unity is more or less vaguely making its way to the front of our consciousness. The emergence of an ideal in human thought is always the sign of an intention in Nature, but not always of an intention to accomplish; sometimes it indicates only an attempt which is predestined to temporary failure. For Nature is slow and patient in her methods. She takes up ideas and half carries them out, then drops them by the wayside to resume them in some future era with a better combination. She tempts humanity, her thinking instrument, and tests how far it is ready for the harmony she has imagined; she allows and incites man to attempt and fail, so that he may learn and succeed better another time. Still the ideal, having once made its way to the front of thought, must certainly be attempted, and this ideal of human unity is likely to figure largely among the determining forces of the future; for the intellectual and material circumstances of the age have prepared and almost impose it, especially the scientific discoveries which have made our earth so small that its vastest kingdoms seem now no more than the provinces of a single country.

But this very commodity of the material circumstances may bring about the failure of the ideal; for when material circumstances favour a great change, but the heart and mind of the race are not really ready — especially the heart — failure may be predicted, unless indeed men are wise in time and accept the inner change along with the external readjustment. But at present the human intellect has been so much mechanised by physical Science that it is likely to attempt the revolution it is beginning to envisage principally or solely through mechanical means, through social and political adjustments. Now it is not by social and political devices, or at any rate not by these chiefly or only, that the unity of the human race can be enduringly or fruitfully accomplished.

It must be remembered that a greater social or political unity is not necessarily a boon in itself; it is only worth pursuing in so far as it provides a means and a framework for a better, richer, more happy and puissant individual and collective life. But hitherto the experience of mankind has not favoured the view that huge aggregations, closely united and strictly organised, are favourable to a rich and puissant human life. It would seem rather that collective life is more at ease with itself, more genial, varied, fruitful when it can concentrate itself in small spaces and simpler organisms.

If we consider the past of humanity so far as it is known to us, we find that the interesting periods of human life, the scenes in which it has been most richly lived and has left behind it the most precious fruits, were precisely those ages and countries in which humanity was able to organise itself in little independent centres acting intimately upon each other but not fused into a single unity. Modern Europe owes two-thirds of its civilisation to three such supreme moments of human history, the religious life of the congeries of tribes which called itself Israel and, subsequently, of the little nation of the Jews, the many-sided life of the small Greek city states, the similar, though more restricted artistic and intellectual life of mediaeval Italy. Nor was any age in Asia so rich in energy, so well worth living in, so productive of the best and most enduring fruits as that heroic period of

India when she was divided into small kingdoms, many of them no larger than a modern district. Her most wonderful activities, her most vigorous and enduring work, that which, if we had to make a choice, we should keep at the sacrifice of all else, belonged to that period; the second best came afterwards in larger, but still comparatively small nations and kingdoms like those of the Pallavas, Chalukyas, Pandyas, Cholas and Cheras. In comparison she received little from the greater empires that rose and fell within her borders, the Moghul, the Gupta or the Maurya — little indeed except political and administrative organisation, some fine art and literature and a certain amount of lasting work in other kinds, not always of the best quality. Their impulse was rather towards elaborate organisation than original, stimulating and creative.

Nevertheless, in this regime of the small city state or of regional cultures there was always a defect which compelled a tendency towards large organisations. The defect was a characteristic of impermanence, often of disorder, especially of defencelessness against the onslaught of larger organisations, even of an insufficient capacity for widespread material well-being. Therefore this earlier form of collective life tended to disappear and give place to the organisation of nations, kingdoms and empires.

And here we notice, first, that it is the groupments of smaller nations which have had the most intense life and not the huge States and colossal empires. Collective life diffusing itself in too vast spaces seems to lose intensity and productiveness. Europe has lived in England, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, the small States of Germany — all her later civilisation and progress evolved itself there, not in the huge mass of the Holy Roman or the Russian Empire. We see a similar phenomenon in the social and political field when we compare the intense life and activity of Europe in its many nations acting richly upon each other, rapidly progressing by quick creative steps and sometimes by bounds, with the great masses of Asia, her long periods of immobility in which wars and revolutions seem to be small, temporary and usually unproductive episodes, her centuries of religious, philosophic and artistic reveries, her tendency towards an increasing isolation and a final stagnancy of the outward life.

Secondly, we note that in this organisation of nations and kingdoms those which have had the most vigorous life have gained it by a sort of artificial concentration of the vitality into some head, centre or capital, London, Paris, Rome. By this device Nature, while acquiring the benefits of a larger organisation and more perfect unity, preserves to some extent that equally precious power of fruitful concentration in a small space and into a closely packed activity which she had possessed in her more primitive system of the city state or petty kingdom. But this advantage was purchased by the condemnation of the rest of the organisation, the district, the provincial town, the village to a dull, petty and somnolent life in strange contrast with the vital intensity of the *urbs* or metropolis.

The Roman Empire is the historic example of an organisation of unity which transcended the limits of the nation, and its advantages and disadvantages are there perfectly typified. The advantages are admirable organisation, peace, widespread security, order and material well-being; the disadvantage is that the individual, the city, the region sacrifice their independent life and become mechanical parts of a machine; life loses its colour, richness, variety, freedom and victorious impulse towards creation. The organisation is great and admirable, but the individual dwindles and is overpowered and overshadowed; and eventually by the smallness and feebleness of the individual the huge organism inevitably and slowly loses even its great conservative vitality and dies of an increasing stagnation. Even while outwardly whole and untouched, the structure has become rotten and begins to crack and dissolve at the first shock from outside. Such organisations, such periods are immensely useful for conservation, even as the Roman Empire served to consolidate the gains of the rich centuries that preceded it. But they arrest life and growth.

We see, then, what is likely to happen if there were a social, administrative and political unification of mankind, such as some have begun to dream of nowadays. A tremendous organisation would be needed under which both individual and regional life would be crushed, dwarfed, deprived of their necessary freedom like a plant without rain and wind and sunlight, and this would mean for humanity, after perhaps one first outburst of satisfied and joyous activity, a long period of mere conservation, increasing stagnancy and ultimately decay.

Yet the unity of mankind is evidently a part of Nature's eventual scheme and must come about. Only it must be under other conditions and with safeguards which will keep the race intact in the roots of its vitality, richly diverse in its oneness.

Chapter II

The Imperfection of Past Aggregates

THE WHOLE process of Nature depends on a balancing and a constant tendency to harmony between two poles of life, the individual whom the whole or aggregate nourishes and the whole or aggregate which the individual helps to constitute. Human life forms no exception to the rule. Therefore the perfection of human life must involve the elaboration of an as yet unaccomplished harmony between these two poles of our existence, the individual and the social aggregate. The perfect society will be that which most entirely favours the perfection of the individual; the perfection of the individual will be incomplete if it does not help towards the perfect state of the social aggregate to which he belongs and eventually to that of the largest possible human aggregate, the whole of a united humanity.

For the gradual process of Nature introduces a complication which prevents the individual from standing in a pure and direct relation to the totality of mankind. Between himself and this too immense whole there erect themselves partly as aids, partly as barriers to the final unity the lesser aggregates which it has been necessary to form in the progressive stages of human culture. For the obstacles of space, the difficulties of organisation and the limitations of the human heart and brain have necessitated the formation first of small, then of larger and yet larger aggregates so that he may be gradually trained by a progressive approach till he is ready for the final universality. The family, the commune, the clan or tribe, the class, the city state or congeries of tribes, the nation, the empire are so many stages in this progress and constant enlargement. If the smaller aggregates were destroyed as soon as the larger are successfully formed, this graduation would result in no complexity; but Nature does not follow this course. She seldom destroys entirely the types she has once made or only destroys that for which there is no longer any utility;

the rest she keeps in order to serve her need or her passion for variety, richness, multiformity and only effaces the dividing lines or modifies the characteristics and relations sufficiently to allow of the larger unity she is creating. Therefore at every step humanity is confronted with various problems which arise not only from the difficulty of accord between the interests of the individual and those of the immediate aggregate, the community, but between the need and interests of the smaller integralities and the growth of that larger whole which is to ensphere them all.

History has preserved for us scattered instances of this travail, instances of failure and success which are full of instruction. We see the struggle towards the aggregation of tribes among the Semitic nations, Jew and Arab, surmounted in the one after a scission into two kingdoms which remained a permanent source of weakness to the Jewish nation, overcome only temporarily in the other by the sudden unifying force of Islam. We see the failure of clan life to combine into an organised national existence in the Celtic races, a failure entire in Ireland and Scotland and only surmounted through the crushing out of clan life by a foreign rule and culture, overcome only at the last moment in Wales. We see the failure of the city states and small regional peoples to fuse themselves in the history of Greece, the signal success of a similar struggle of Nature in the development of Roman Italy. The whole past of India for the last two thousand years and more has been the attempt, unavailing in spite of many approximations to success, to overcome the centrifugal tendency of an extraordinary number and variety of disparate elements, the family, the commune, the clan, the caste, the small regional state or people, the large linguistic unit, the religious community, the nation within the nation. We may perhaps say that here Nature tried an experiment of unparalleled complexity and potential richness, accumulating all possible difficulties in order to arrive at the most opulent result. But in the end the problem proved insoluble or, at least, was not solved and Nature had to resort to her usual *deus ex machina* denouement, the instrumentality of a foreign rule.

But even when the nation is sufficiently organised, — the largest unit yet successfully developed by Nature, — entire unity is not always achieved. If no other elements of discord remain, yet the conflict of classes is always possible. And the phenomenon leads us to another rule of this gradual development of Nature in human life which we shall find of very considerable importance when we come to the question of a realisable human unity. The perfection of the individual in a perfected society or eventually in a perfected humanity — understanding perfection always in a relative and progressive sense — is the inevitable aim of Nature. But the progress of all the individuals in a society does not proceed *pari passu*, with an equal and equable march. Some advance, others remain stationary — absolutely or relatively, — others fall back. Consequently the emergence of a dominant class is inevitable within the aggregate itself, just as in the constant clash between the aggregates the emergence of dominant nations is inevitable. That class will predominate which develops most perfectly the type Nature needs at the time for her progress or, it may be, for her retrogression. If she demands power and strength of character, a dominant aristocracy emerges; if knowledge and science, a dominant literary or savant class; if practical ability, ingenuity, economy and efficient organisation, a dominant bourgeoisie or Vaishya class, usually with the lawyer at the head; if diffusion rather than concentration of general well-being and a close organisation of toil, then even the domination of an artisan class is not impossible.

But this phenomenon, whether of dominant classes or dominant nations, can never be more than a temporary necessity; for the final aim of Nature in human life cannot be the exploitation of the many by the few or even of the few by the many, can never be the perfection of some at the cost of the abject submergence and ignorant subjection of the bulk of humanity; these can only be transient devices. Therefore we see that such dominations bear always in them the seed of their own destruction. They must pass either by the ejection or destruction of the exploiting element or else by a fusion and equalisation. We see in Europe and America that the dominant Brahmin and the dominant Kshatriya have been either abolished or are on the point of subsidence into equality with the general mass. Two rigidly separate classes alone remain, the dominant propertied class and the labourer, and all the most significant movements of the day have for their purpose the abolition of this last superiority. In this persistent tendency, Europe has obeyed one great law of Nature's progressive march, her trend towards a final equality. Absolute equality is surely neither intended nor possible, just as absolute uniformity is both impossible and utterly undesirable; but a fundamental equality which will render the play of true superiority and difference inoffensive, is essential to any conceivable perfectibility of the human race.

Therefore, the perfect counsel for a dominant minority is always to recognise in good time the right hour for its abdication and for the imparting of its ideals, qualities, culture, experience to the rest of the aggregate or to as much of it as is prepared for that progress. Where this is done, the social aggregate advances normally and without disruption or serious wound or malady; otherwise a disordered progress is imposed upon it, for Nature will not suffer human egoism to baffle for ever her fixed intention and necessity. Where the dominant classes successfully avoid her demand upon them, the worst of destinies is likely to overtake the social aggregate, — as in India where the final refusal of the Brahmin and other privileged classes to call up the bulk of the nation as far as possible to their level, their fixing of an unbridgeable gulf of superiority between themselves and the rest of society, has been a main cause of eventual decline and degeneracy. For where her aims are frustrated, Nature inevitably withdraws her force from the offending unit till she has brought in and used other and external means to reduce the obstacle to a nullity.

But even if the unity within is made as perfect as social, administrative and cultural machinery can make it, the question of the individual still remains. For these social units or aggregates are not like the human body in which the component cells are capable of no separate life apart from the aggregate. The human individual tends to exist in himself and to exceed the limits of the family, the clan, the class, the nation; and even, that self-sufficiency on one side, that universality on the other are the essential elements of his perfection. Therefore, just as the systems of social aggregation which depend on the domination of a class or classes over others must change or dissolve, so the social aggregates which stand in the way of this perfection of the individual and seek to coerce him within their limited mould and into the rigidity of a narrow culture or petty class or national interest, must find their term and their day of change or destruction under the irresistible impulsion of progressing Nature.

Chapter III

The Group and the Individual

IT IS a constant method of Nature, when she has two elements of a harmony to reconcile, to proceed at first by a long continued balancing in which she sometimes seems to lean entirely on one side, sometimes entirely to the other, at others to correct both excesses by a more or less successful temporary adjustment and moderating compromise. The two elements appear then as opponents necessary to each other who therefore labour to arrive at some conclusion of their strife. But as each has its egoism and that innate tendency of all things which drives them not only towards self-preservation but towards self-assertion in proportion to their available force, they seek each to arrive at a conclusion in which itself shall have the maximum part and dominate utterly if possible or even swallow up entirely the egoism of the other in its own egoism. Thus the progress towards harmony accomplishes itself by a strife of forces and seems often to be no effort towards concord or mutual adjustment at all, but rather towards a mutual devouring. In effect, the swallowing up, not of one by the other, but of each by the other, so that both shall live entirely in the other and as the other, is our highest ideal of oneness. It is the last ideal of love at which strife tries ignorantly to arrive; for by strife one can only arrive at an adjustment of the two opposite demands, not at a stable harmony, a compromise between two conflicting egoisms and not the fusing of them into each other. Still, strife does lead to an increasing mutual comprehension which eventually makes the attempt at real oneness possible.

In the relations between the individual and the group, this constant tendency of Nature appears as the strife between two equally deep-rooted human tendencies, individualism and collectivism. On one side is the engrossing authority, perfection and development of the State, on the other the distinctive freedom, perfection and development of the individual man. The State idea, the small or the vast living machine, and the human idea, the more and more distinct and luminous Person, the increasing God, stand in perpetual opposition. The size of the State makes no difference to the essence of the struggle and need make none to its characteristic circumstances. It was the family, the tribe or the city, the *polis*; it became the clan, the caste and the class, the *kula*, the *gens*. It is now the nation. Tomorrow or the day after it may be all mankind. But even then the question will remain poised between man and humanity, between the self-liberating Person and the engrossing collectivity.

If we consult only the available facts of history and sociology, we must suppose that our race began with the all-engrossing group to which the individual was entirely subservient and that increasing individuality is a circumstance of human growth, a fruit of increasing conscious Mind. Originally, we may suppose, man was altogether gregarious, association his first necessity for survival; since survival is the first necessity of all being, the individual could be nothing but an instrument for the strength and safety of the group, and if we add to strength and safety growth, efficiency, self-assertion as well as self-preservation, this is still the dominant idea of all collectivism. This turn is a necessity born of circumstance and environment. Looking more into fundamental things we perceive that in Matter uniformity is the sign of the group; free variation and individual development progress with the growth of Life and Mind. If then we suppose man to be an evolution of mental being in Matter and out of Matter, we must assume that he begins with uniformity and subservience of the individual and proceeds towards variety and freedom of the individual. The necessity of circumstance and environment and the inevitable law of his fundamental principles of being would then point to the same conclusion, the same process of his historic and prehistoric evolution.

But there is also the ancient tradition of humanity, which it is never safe to ignore or treat as mere fiction, that the social state was preceded by another, free and unsocial. According to modern scientific ideas, if such a state ever existed, and that is far from certain, it must have been not merely unsocial but anti-social; it must have been the condition of man as an isolated animal, living as the beast of prey, before he became in the process of his development an animal of the pack. But the tradition is rather that of a golden age in which he was freely social without society. Not bound by laws or institutions but living by natural instinct or free knowledge, he held the right law of his living in himself and needed neither to prey on his fellows nor to be restrained by the iron yoke of the collectivity. We may say, if we will, that here poetic or idealistic imagination played upon a deep-seated race-memory; early civilised man read his growing ideal of a free, unorganised, happy association into his race-memory of an unorganised, savage and anti-social existence. But it is also possible that our progress has not been a development in a straight line, but in cycles, and that in those cycles there have been periods of at least partial realisation in which men did become able to live according to the high dream of philosophic Anarchism, associated by the inner law of love and light and right being, right thinking, right action and not coerced to unity by kings and parliaments, laws and policings and punishments with all that tyrant unease, petty or great oppression and repression and ugly train of selfishness and corruption which attend the forced government of man by man. It is even possible that our original state was an instinctive animal spontaneity of free and fluid association and that our final ideal state will be an enlightened, intuitive spontaneity of free and fluid association. Our destiny may be the conversion of an original animal association into a community of the gods. Our progress may be a devious round leading from the easy and spontaneous uniformity and harmony which reflects Nature to the self-possessed unity which reflects the Divine.

However that may be, history and sociology tell us only — outside the attempts of religious or other idealisms to arrive either at a free solitude or a free association — of man as an individual in the more or less organised group. And in the group there are always two types. One asserts the State idea at the expense of the individual, — ancient Sparta, modern Germany;

another asserts the supremacy of the State, but seeks at the same time to give as much freedom, power and dignity as is consistent with its control to the individuals who constitute it, — ancient Athens, modern France. But to these two has been added a third type in which the State abdicates as much as possible to the individual, boldly asserts that it exists for his growth and to assure his freedom, dignity, successful manhood, experiments with a courageous faith whether after all it is not the utmost possible liberty, dignity and manhood of the individual which will best assure the well-being, strength and expansion of the State. Of this type England has been until recently the great exemplar, — England rendered free, prosperous, energetic, invincible by nothing else but the strength of this idea within her, blessed by the Gods with unexampled expansion, empire and good fortune because she has not feared at any time to obey this great tendency and take the risks of this great endeavour and even often to employ it beyond the limits of her own insular egoism. Unfortunately, that egoism, the defects of the race and the exaggerated assertion of a limited idea, which is the mark of our human ignorance, have prevented her from giving it the noblest and richest possible expression or to realise by it other results which the more strictly organised States have attained or are attaining. And in consequence we find the collective or State idea breaking down the old English tradition and it is possible that before long the great experiment will have come to an end in a lamentable admission of failure by the adoption of that Germanic "discipline" and "efficient" organisation towards which all civilised humanity seems now to be tending. One may well ask oneself whether it was really necessary, whether, by a more courageous faith enlightened by a more flexible and vigilant intelligence, all the desirable results might not have been attained by a new and freer method that would yet keep intact the *dharma* of the race.

We must, again, note one other fact in connection with the claim of the State to suppress the individual in its own interest, that it is quite immaterial to the principle what form the State may assume. The tyranny of the absolute king over all and the tyranny of the majority over the individual — which really converts itself by the paradox of human nature into a hypnotised oppression and repression of the majority by itself — are forms of one and the same tendency. Each, when it declares itself to be the State with its absolute *"L'état, c'est moi"*, is speaking a profound truth even while it bases that truth upon a falsehood. The truth is that each really is the self-expression of the State in its characteristic attempt to subordinate to itself the free will, the free action, the power, dignity and self-assertion of the individuals constituting it. The falsehood lies in the underlying idea that the State is something greater than the individuals constituting it and can with impunity to itself and to the highest hope of humanity arrogate this oppressive supremacy.

In modern times the State idea has after a long interval fully reasserted itself and is dominating the thought and action of the world. It supports itself on two motives; one appeals to the external interest of the race, the other to its highest moral tendencies. It demands that individual egoism shall immolate itself to a collective interest; it claims that man shall live not for himself but for the whole, the group, the community. It asserts that the hope of the good and progress of humanity lies in the efficiency and organisation of the State. Its way to perfection lies through the ordering by the State of all the economic and vital arrangements of the individual and the group, the "mobilisation", to use a specious expression the war has set in vogue, of the intellect, capacity, thought, emotion, life of the individual, of all that he is and has, by the State in the interest of all. Pushed to its ultimate conclusion, this means the socialistic ideal in full force and towards that conclusion humanity seems to be heading with a remarkable rapidity. The State idea is rushing towards possession with a great motor force and is prepared to crush under its wheels everything that conflicts with its force or asserts the right of other human tendencies. And yet the two ideas on which it bases itself are full of that fatal mixture of truth and falsehood which pursues all our human claims and assertions. It is necessary to apply to them the solvent of a searching and unbiassed thought which refuses to be cheated by words, if we are not to describe helplessly another circle of illusion before we return to the deep and complex truth of Nature which should rather be our light and guide.

Chapter IV

The Inadequacy of the State Idea

WHAT, after all, is this State idea, this idea of the organised community to which the individual has to be immolated? Theoretically, it is the subordination of the individual to the good of all that is demanded; practically, it is his subordination to a collective egoism, political, military, economic, which seeks to satisfy certain collective aims and ambitions shaped and imposed on the great mass of the individuals by a smaller or larger number of ruling persons who are supposed in some way to represent the community. It is immaterial whether these belong to a governing class or emerge as in modern States from the mass partly by force of character, but much more by force of circumstances; nor does it make any essential difference that their aims and ideals are imposed nowadays more by the hypnotism of verbal persuasion than by overt and actual force. In either case, there is no guarantee that this ruling class or ruling body represents the best mind of the nation or its noblest aims or its highest instincts.

Nothing of the kind can be asserted of the modern politician in any part of the world; he does not represent the soul of a people or its aspirations. What he does usually represent is all the average pettiness, selfishness, egoism, self-deception that is about him and these he represents well enough as well as a great deal of mental incompetence and moral conventionality, timidity and pretence. Great issues often come to him for decision, but he does not deal with them greatly; high words and noble ideas are on his lips, but they become rapidly the claptrap of a party. The disease and falsehood of modern political life is patent in every country of the world and only the hypnotised acquiescence of all, even of the intellectual classes, in the great organised sham, cloaks and prolongs the malady, the acquiescence that men yield to everything that is habitual and makes the present atmosphere of their lives. Yet it is by such minds that the good of all has to be decided, to such hands that it has to be entrusted, to such an agency calling itself the State that the individual is being more and more called upon to give up the government of his activities. As a matter of fact, it is in no way the largest good of all that is thus secured, but a great deal of organised blundering and evil with a certain amount of good which makes for real progress, because Nature moves forward always in the midst of all stumblings and secures her aims in the end more often in spite of man's imperfect mentality than by its means.

But even if the governing instrument were better constituted and of a higher mental and moral character, even if some way could be found to do what ancient civilisations by their enforcement of certain high ideals and disciplines tried to do with their ruling classes, still the State would not be what the State idea pretends that it is. Theoretically, it is the collective wisdom and force of the community made available and organised for the general good. Practically, what controls the engine and drives the train is so much of the intellect and power available in the community as the particular machinery of State organisation will allow to come to the surface; but it is also caught in the machinery and hampered by it and hampered as well by the large amount of folly and selfish weakness that comes up in the emergence. Doubtless, this is the best that can be done under the circumstances, and Nature, as always, utilises it for the best. But things would be much worse if there were not a field left for a less trammelled individual effort doing what the State cannot do, deploying and using the sincerity, energy, idealism of the best individuals to attempt that which the State has not the wisdom or courage to attempt, getting that done which a collective conservatism and imbecility would either leave undone or actively suppress and oppose. It is this energy of the individual which is the really effective agent of collective progress. The State sometimes comes in to aid it and then, if its aid does not mean undue control, it serves a positively useful end. As often it stands in the way and then serves either as a brake upon progress or supplies the necessary amount of organised opposition and friction always needed to give greater energy and a more complete shape to the new thing which is in process of formation. But what we are now tending towards is such an increase of organised State power and such a huge, irresistible and complex State activity as will either eliminate free individual effort altogether or leave it dwarfed and cowed into helplessness. The necessary corrective to the defects, limitations and inefficiency of the State machine will disappear.

The organised State is neither the best mind of the nation nor is it even the sum of the communal energies. It leaves out of its organised action and suppresses or unduly depresses the working force and thinking mind of important minorities, often of those which represent that which is best in the present and that which is developing for the future. It is a collective egoism much inferior to the best of which the community is capable. What that egoism is in its relation to other collective egoisms we know, and its ugliness has recently been forced upon the vision and the conscience of mankind. The individual has usually something at least like a soul, and at any rate he makes up for the deficiencies of the soul by a system of morality and an ethical sense, and for the deficiencies of these again by the fear of social opinion or, failing that, a fear of the communal law which he has ordinarily either to obey or at least to circumvent; and even the difficulty of circumventing is a check on all except the most violent or the most skilful. But the State is an entity which, with the greatest amount of power, is the least hampered by internal scruples or external checks. It has no soul or only a rudimentary one. It is a military, political and economic force; but it is only in a slight and undeveloped degree, if at all, an intellectual and ethical being. And unfortunately the chief use it makes of its undeveloped intellect is to blunt by fictions, catchwords and recently by State philosophies, its ill-developed ethical conscience. Man within the community is now at least a half-civilised creature, but his international existence is still primitive. Until recently the organised nation in its relations with other nations was only a huge beast of prey with appetites which sometimes slept when gorged or discouraged by events, but were always its chief reason for existence. Self-protection and self-expansion by the devouring of others were its *dharma*. At the present day there is no essential improvement; there is only a greater difficulty in devouring. A "sacred egoism" is still the ideal of nations, and therefore there is neither any true and enlightened consciousness of human opinion to restrain the predatory State nor any effective international law. There is only the fear of defeat and the fear, recently, of a disastrous economic disorganisation; but experience after experience has shown that these checks are ineffective.

In its inner life this huge State egoism was once little better than in its outer relations.[1] Brutal, rapacious, cunning, oppressive, intolerant of free action, free speech and opinion, even of freedom of conscience in religion, it preyed upon individuals and classes within as upon weaker nations outside. Only the necessity of keeping alive and rich and strong in a rough sort of way the community on which it lived made its action partially and crudely beneficent. In modern times there has been much improvement in spite of deterioration in certain directions. The State now feels the necessity of justifying its existence by organising the general economic and animal well-being of the community and even of all individuals. It is beginning to see the necessity of assuring the intellectual and, indirectly, the moral development of the whole community. This attempt of the State to grow into an intellectual and moral being is one of the most interesting phenomena of modern civilisation. Even the necessity of intellectualising and moralising it in its external relations has been enforced upon the conscience of mankind by the European catastrophe. But the claim of the State to absorb all free individual activities, a claim which it increasingly makes as it grows more clearly conscious of its new ideals and its possibilities, is, to say the least of it, premature and, if satisfied, will surely end in a check to human progress, a comfortably organised stagnancy such as overtook the Graeco-Roman world after the establishment of the Roman Empire.

---

[1] I am speaking of the intermediate age between ancient and modern times. In ancient times the State had, in some countries at least, ideals and a conscience with regard to the community, but very little in its dealings with other States.

The call of the State to the individual to immolate himself on its altar and to give up his free activities into an organised collective activity is therefore something quite different from the demand of our highest ideals. It amounts to the giving up of the present form of individual egoism into another, a collective form, larger but not superior, rather in many ways inferior to the best individual egoism. The altruistic ideal, the discipline of self-sacrifice, the need of a growing solidarity with our fellows and a growing collective soul in humanity are not in dispute. But the loss of self in the State is not the thing that these high ideals mean, nor is it the way to their fulfilment. Man must learn not to suppress and mutilate but to fulfil himself in the fulfilment of mankind, even as he must learn not to mutilate or destroy but to complete his ego by expanding it out of its limitations and losing it in something greater which it now tries to represent. But the deglutition of the free individual by a huge State machine is quite another consummation. The State is a convenience, and a rather clumsy convenience, for our common development; it ought never to be made an end in itself.

The second claim of the State idea that this supremacy and universal activity of the organised State machine is the best means of human progress, is also an exaggeration and a fiction. Man lives by the community; he needs it to develop himself individually as well as collectively. But is it true that a State-governed action is the most capable of developing the individual perfectly as well as of serving the common ends of the community? It is not true. What is true is that it is capable of providing the cooperative action of the individuals in the community with all necessary conveniences and of removing from it disabilities and obstacles which would otherwise interfere with its working. Here the real utility of the State ceases. The non-recognition of the possibilities of human cooperation was the weakness of English individualism; the turning of a utility for cooperative action into an excuse for rigid control by the State is the weakness of the Teutonic idea of collectivism. When the State attempts to take up the control of the cooperative action of the community, it condemns itself to create a monstrous machinery which will end by crushing out the freedom, initiative and various growth of the human being.

The State is bound to act crudely and in the mass; it is incapable of that free, harmonious and intelligently or instinctively varied action which is proper to organic growth. For the State is not an organism; it is a machinery, and it works like a machine, without tact, taste, delicacy or intuition. It tries to manufacture, but what humanity is here to do is to grow and create. We see this flaw in State-governed education. It is right and necessary that education should be provided for all and in providing for it the State is eminently useful; but when it controls the education, it turns it into a routine, a mechanical system in which individual initiative, individual growth and true development as opposed to a routine instruction become impossible. The State tends always to uniformity, because uniformity is easy to it and natural variation is impossible to its essentially mechanical nature; but uniformity is death, not life. A national culture, a national religion, a national education may still be useful things provided they do not interfere with the growth of human solidarity on the one side and individual freedom of thought and conscience and development on the other; for they give form to the communal soul and help it to add its quota to the sum of human advancement; but a State education, a State religion, a State culture are unnatural violences. And the same rule holds good in different ways and to a different extent in other directions of our communal life and its activities.

The business of the State, so long as it continues to be a necessary element in human life and growth, is to provide all possible facilities for cooperative action, to remove obstacles, to prevent all really harmful waste and friction, — a certain amount of waste and friction is necessary and useful to all natural action, — and, removing avoidable injustice, to secure for every individual a just and equal chance of self-development and satisfaction to the extent of his powers and in the line of his nature. So far the aim in modern socialism is right and good. But all unnecessary interference with the freedom of man's growth is or can be harmful. Even cooperative action is injurious if, instead of seeking the good of all compatibly with the necessities of individual growth, — and without individual growth there can be no real and permanent good of all, — it immolates the individual to a communal egoism and prevents so much free room and initiative as is necessary for the flowering of a more perfectly developed humanity. So long as humanity is not full-grown, so long as it needs to grow and is capable of a greater perfectibility, there can be no static good of all; nor can there be any progressive good of all independent of the growth of the individuals composing the all. All collectivist ideals which seek unduly to subordinate the individual, really envisage a static condition, whether it be a present status or one it soon hopes to establish, after which all attempt at serious change would be regarded as an offence of impatient individualism against the peace, just routine and security of the happily established communal order. Always it is the individual who progresses and compels the rest to progress; the instinct of the collectivity is to stand still in its established order. Progress, growth, realisation of wider being give his greatest sense of happiness to the individual; status, secure ease to the collectivity. And so it must be as long as the latter is more a physical and economic entity than a self-conscious collective soul.

It is therefore quite improbable that in the present conditions of the race a healthy unity of mankind can be brought about by State machinery, whether it be by a grouping of powerful and organised States enjoying carefully regulated and legalised relations with each other or by the substitution of a single World-State for the present half chaotic half ordered comity of nations, — be the form of that World-State a single empire like the Roman or a federated unity. Such an external or administrative unity may be intended in the near future of mankind in order to accustom the race to the idea of a common life, to its habit, to its possibility, but it cannot be really healthy, durable or beneficial over all the true line of human destiny unless something be developed more profound, internal and real. Otherwise the experience of the ancient world will be repeated on a larger scale and in other circumstances. The experiment will break down and give place to a new reconstructive age of confusion and anarchy. Perhaps this experience also is necessary for mankind; yet it ought to be possible for us now to avoid it by subordinating mechanical means to our true development through a moralised and even a spiritualised humanity united in its inner soul and not only in its outward life and body.

Chapter V

Nation and Empire: Real and Political Unities

THE PROBLEM of the unification of mankind resolves itself into two distinct difficulties. There is the doubt whether the collective egoisms already created in the natural evolution of humanity can at this time be sufficiently modified or abolished and whether even an external unity in some effective form can be securely established. And there is the doubt whether, even if any such external unity can be established, it will not be at the price of crushing both the free life of the individual and the free play of the various collective units already created in which there is a real and active life and substituting a State organisation which will mechanise human existence. Apart from these two uncertainties there is a third doubt whether a really living unity can be achieved by a mere economic, political and administrative unification and whether it ought not to be preceded by at least the strong beginnings of a moral and spiritual oneness. It is the first question that must be taken first in the logical order.

At the present stage of human progress the nation is the living collective unit of humanity. Empires exist, but they are as yet only political and not real units; they have no life from within and owe their continuance to a force imposed on their constituent elements or else to a political convenience felt or acquiesced in by the constituents and favoured by the world outside. Austria was long the standing example of such an empire; it was a political convenience favoured by the world outside, acquiesced in until recently by its constituent elements and maintained by the force of the central Germanic element incarnated in the Hapsburg dynasty, — of late with the active aid of its Magyar partner. If the political convenience of an empire of this kind ceases, if the constituent elements no longer acquiesce and are drawn more powerfully by a centrifugal force, if at the same time the world outside no longer favours the combination, then force alone remains as the one agent of an artificial unity. There arose indeed a new political convenience which the existence of Austria served even after it suffered from this tendency of dissolution, but that was the convenience of the Germanic idea which made it an inconvenience to the rest of Europe and deprived it of the acquiescence of important constituent elements which were drawn towards other combinations outside the Austrian formula. From that moment the existence of the Austrian Empire was in jeopardy and depended, not on any inner necessity, but first on the power of the Austro-Magyar partnership to crush down the Slav nations within it and, secondly, on the continued power and dominance of Germany and the Germanic idea in Europe, that is to say, on force alone. And although in Austria the weakness of the imperial form of unity was singularly conspicuous and its conditions exaggerated, still those conditions are the same for all empires which are not at the same time national units. It was not so long ago that most political thinkers perceived at least the strong possibility of an automatic dissolution of the British Empire by the self-detachment of the colonies, in spite of the close links of race, language and origin that should have bound them to the mother country. This was because the political convenience of imperial unity, though enjoyed by the colonies, was not sufficiently appreciated by them and, on the other hand, there was no living principle of national oneness. The Australians and Canadians were beginning to regard themselves as new separate nations rather than as limbs of an extended British nationality. Things are now changed in both respects, a wider formula has been discovered, and the British Empire is for the moment proportionately stronger.

Nevertheless, it may be asked, why should this distinction be made of the political and the real unit when name, kind and form are the same? It must be made because it is of the greatest utility to a true and profound political science and involves the most important consequences. When an empire like

Austria, a non-national empire, is broken to pieces, it perishes for good; there is no innate tendency to recover the outward unity, because there is no real inner oneness; there is only a politically manufactured aggregate. On the other hand, a real national unity broken up by circumstances will always preserve a tendency to recover and reassert its oneness. The Greek Empire has gone the way of all empires, but the Greek nation, after many centuries of political non-existence, again possesses its separate body, because it has preserved its separate ego and therefore really existed under the covering rule of the Turk. So has it been with all the races under the Turkish yoke, because that powerful suzerainty, stern as it was in many respects, never attempted to obliterate their national characteristics or substitute an Ottoman nationality. These nations have revived and have reconstituted or are attempting to reconstitute themselves in the measure in which they have preserved their real national sense. The Serbian national idea attempted to recover and has recovered all territory in which the Serb exists or predominates. Greece attempted to reconstitute herself in her mainland, islands and Asiatic colonies, but could not reconstitute the old Greece because many parts had become Bulgarian, Albanian and Turk and no longer Hellenic. Italy became an external unity again after so many centuries because, though no longer a State, she never ceased to be a single people.

This truth of a real unity is so strong that even nations which never in the past realised an outward unification, to which Fate and circumstance and their own selves have been adverse, nations which have been full of centrifugal forces and easily overpowered by foreign intrusions, have yet always developed a centripetal force as well and arrived inevitably at organised oneness. Ancient Greece clung to her separatist tendencies, her self-sufficient city or regional states, her little mutually repellent autonomies; but the centripetal force was always there manifested in leagues, associations of States, suzerainties like the Spartan and Athenian. It realised itself in the end, first, imperfectly and temporarily by the Macedonian overrule, then, by a strange enough development, through the evolution of the

Eastern Roman world into a Greek and Byzantine Empire, and it has again revived in modern Greece. And we have seen in our own day Germany, constantly disunited since ancient times, develop at last to portentous issues its innate sense of oneness formidably embodied in the Empire of the Hohenzollerns and persistent after its fall in a federal Republic. Nor would it at all be surprising to those who study the working of forces and not merely the trend of outward circumstances, if one yet far-off result of the war were to be the fusion of the one Germanic element still left outside, the Austro-German, into the Germanic whole, although possibly in some other embodiment than Prussian hegemony or Hohenzollern Empire.[1] In both these historic instances, as in so many others, the unification of Saxon England, mediaeval France, the formation of the United States of America, it was a real unity, a psychologically distinct unit which tended at first ignorantly by the subconscious necessity of its being and afterwards with a sudden or gradual awakening to the sense of political oneness, towards an inevitable external unification. It is a distinct group-soul which is driven by inward necessity and uses outward circumstances to constitute for itself an organised body.

But the most striking example in history is the evolution of India. Nowhere else have the centrifugal forces been so strong, numerous, complex, obstinate. The mere time taken by the evolution has been prodigious; the disastrous vicissitudes through which it has had to work itself out have been appalling. And yet through it all the inevitable tendency has worked constantly, pertinaciously, with the dull, obscure, indomitable, relentless obstinacy of Nature when she is opposed in her instinctive purposes by man, and finally, after a struggle enduring through millenniums, has triumphed. And, as usually happens when she is thus opposed by her own mental and human material, it is the most adverse circumstances that the subconscious worker has turned into her most successful instruments. The beginnings of the centripetal tendency in India go back to the earliest times of which we have record and are typified in the ideal of the Samrat or Chakravarti Raja and the military and political use of the Aswamedha and Rajasuya sacrifices. The two great national epics might almost have been written to illustrate this theme; for the one recounts the establishment of a unifying *dharmarājya* or imperial reign of justice, the other starts with an idealised description of such a rule pictured as once existing in the ancient and sacred past of the country. The political history of India is the story of a succession of empires, indigenous and foreign, each of them destroyed by centrifugal forces, but each bringing the centripetal tendency nearer to its triumphant emergence. And it is a significant circumstance that the more foreign the rule, the greater has been its force for the unification of the subject people. This is always a sure sign that the essential nation-unit is already there and that there is an indissoluble national vitality necessitating the inevitable emergence of the organised nation. In this instance, we see that the conversion of the psychological unity on which nationhood is based into the external organised unity by which it is perfectly realised, has taken a period of more than two thousand years and is not yet complete.[2] And yet, since the essentiality of the thing was there, not even the most formidable difficulties and delays, not even the most persistent incapacity for union in the people, not even the most disintegrating shocks from outside have prevailed against the obstinate subconscious necessity. And this is only the extreme illustration of a general law.

---

[1] This possibility realised itself for a time, but by means and under circumstances which made the revival of Austrian national sentiment and a separate national existence inevitable.

It will be useful to dwell a little upon this aid lent by foreign rule to the process of nation-making and see how it works. History abounds with illustrations. But in some cases the phenomenon of foreign domination is momentary and imperfect, in others long-enduring and complete, in others often repeated in various forms. In some instances the foreign element is rejected, its use once over, in others it is absorbed, in others accepted with more or less assimilation for a longer or briefer period as a ruling caste. The principle is the same, but it is worked variously by Nature according to the needs of the particular case. There is none of the modern nations in Europe which has not had to pass through a phase more or less prolonged, more or less complete, of foreign domination in order to realise its nationality. In Russia and England it was the domination of a foreign conquering race which rapidly became a ruling caste and was in the end assimilated and absorbed, in Spain the succession of the Roman, Goth and Moor, in Italy the overlordship of the Austrian, in the Balkans[3] the long suzerainty of the Turk, in Germany the transient yoke of Napoleon. But in all cases the essential has been a shock or a pressure which would either waken a loose psychological unity to the necessity of organising itself from within or would crush out, dispirit or deprive of power, vitality and reality the more obstinate factors of disunion. In some cases even an entire change of name, culture and civilisation has been necessary, as well as a more or less profound modification of the race. Notably has this happened in the formation of French nationality. The ancient Gallic people, in spite of or perhaps because of its Druidic civilisation and early greatness, was more incapable of organising a firm political unity than even the ancient Greeks or the old Indian kingdoms and republics. It needed the Roman rule and Latin culture, the superimposition of a Teutonic ruling caste and finally the shock of the temporary and partial English conquest to found the unequalled unity of modern France. Yet though name, civilisation and all else seem to have changed, the French nation of today is still and has always remained the old Gallic nation with its Basque, Gaelic, Armorican and other ancient elements modified by the Frank and Latin admixture.

---

[2] But it must be remembered that France, Germany, modern Italy took each a thousand or two thousand years and more to form and set into a firm oneness.

Thus the nation is a persistent psychological unit which

---

[3] Here there was no single people to be united but many separate peoples which had each to recover their separate independence or, in some cases, a coalition of kindred peoples.

Nature has been busy developing throughout the world in the most various forms and educating into physical and political unity. Political unity is not the essential factor; it may not yet be realised and yet the nation persists and moves inevitably towards its realisation; it may be destroyed and yet the nation persists and travails and suffers but refuses to be annihilated. In former times the nation was not always a real and vital unit; the tribe, the clan, the commune, the regional people were the living groups. Those unities which in the attempt at national evolution destroyed these older living groups without arriving at a vital nationhood disappeared once the artificial or political unit was broken. But now the nation stands as the one living group-unit of humanity into which all others must merge or to which they must become subservient. Even old persistent race unities and cultural unities are powerless against it. The Catalonian in Spain, the Breton and Provençal and Alsatian in France, the Welsh in England may cherish the signs of their separate existence; but the attraction of the greater living unity of the Spanish, the French, the British nation has been too powerful to be injured by these persistences. The nation in modern times is practically indestructible, unless it dies from within. Poland, torn asunder and crushed under the heel of three powerful empires, ceased to exist; the Polish nation survived and is once more reconstituted. Alsace after forty years of the German yoke remained faithful to her French nationhood in spite of her affinities of race and language with the conqueror. All modern attempts to destroy by force or break up a nation are foolish and futile, because they ignore this law of the natural evolution. Empires are still perishable political units; the nation is immortal. And so it will remain until a greater living unit can be found into which the nation idea can merge in obedience to a superior attraction.

And then the question arises whether the empire is not precisely that destined unit in course of evolution. The mere fact that at present not the empire, but the nation is the vital unity can be no bar to a future reversal of the relations. Obviously, in order that they may be reversed the empire must cease to be a mere political and become rather a psychological entity.

But there have been instances in the evolution of the nation in which the political unity preceded and became a basis for the psychological as in the union of Scotch, English and Welsh to form the British nation. There is no insurmountable reason why a similar evolution should not take place on a larger scale and an imperial unity be substituted for a national unity. Nature has long been in travail of the imperial grouping, long casting about to give it a greater force of permanence, and the emergence of the conscious imperial ideal all over the earth and its attempts, though still crude, violent and blundering, to substitute itself for the national, may not irrationally be taken as the precursory sign of one of those rapid leaps and transitions by which she so often accomplishes what she has long been gradually and tentatively preparing. This then is the possibility we have next to consider before we examine the established phenomenon of nationhood in relation to the ideal of human unity. Two different ideals and therefore two different possibilities were precipitated much nearer to realisation by the European conflict, — a federation of free nations and, on the other hand, the distribution of the earth into a few great empires or imperial hegemonies. A practical combination of the two ideas became the most tangible possibility of the not distant future. It is necessary to pause and consider whether, one element of this possible combination being already a living unit, the other also could not under certain circumstances be converted into a living unit and the combination, if realised, made the foundation of an enduring new order of things. Otherwise it could be no more than a transient device without any possibility of a stable permanence.

Chapter VI

Ancient and Modern Methods of Empire

A CLEAR distinction must be made between two political aggregates which go equally in current language by the name of empire. For there is the homogeneous national and there is the heterogeneous composite empire. In a sense, all empires are composites, at any rate if we go back to their origins; but in practice there is a difference between the imperial aggregate in which the component elements are not divided from each other by a strong sense of their separate existence in the whole and the imperial aggregate in which this psychological basis of separation is still in vigour. Japan before the absorption of Formosa and Korea was a national whole and an empire only in the honorific sense of the word; after that absorption it became a real and a composite empire. Germany again would have been a purely national empire if it had not burdened itself with three minor acquisitions, Alsace, Poland and Schleswig-Holstein which were not united to it by the sense of German nationality but only by military force. Let us suppose this Teutonic aggregate to have lost its foreign elements and at most have acquired instead the Teutonic provinces of Austria. Then we should have had an example of a homogeneous aggregate which would yet be an empire in the true and not merely in the honorific sense of the word; for that would be a composite of homogeneous Teutonic nations or, as we may conveniently call them, sub-nations, which would not naturally harbour any sentiment of separatism, but rather, drawn always to a natural unity, would form easily and inevitably a psychological and not merely a political unit.

But this form in its purity is now difficult to find. The United States are the example of such an aggregate, although from the accident of their rule by a periodically elected President and not a hereditary monarch we do not associate the type with the idea of an empire at all. Still if the imperial aggregate is to be changed from a political to a psychological unit, it would seem that it must be done by reproducing *mutatis mutandis* something of the system of the United States, a system in which each element could preserve a sufficient local State independence and separate power of legislative and executive action and yet be part of an inseparable greater aggregate. This could be effected most easily where the elements are fairly homogeneous as it would be in a federation of Great Britain and her colonies.

A tendency to large homogeneous aggregations has shown itself recently in political thought, as in the dream of a Pan-Germanic empire, a great Russian and Pan-Slavic empire or the Pan-Islamic idea of a united Mahomedan world.[1] But these tendencies are usually associated with the control by this homogeneous aggregate over other elements heterogeneous to it under the old principle of military and political compulsion, the retention by Russia of Asiatic nations under her sway,[2] the seizure by Germany of wholly or partially non-Germanic countries and provinces, the control by the Caliphate of non-Moslem subjects.[3] Even if these anomalies were absent, the actual arrangement of the world would lend itself with difficulty to a remodelling of empire on a racial or cultural basis. Vast aggregates of this kind would find enclaves in their dominion inhabited by elements wholly heterogeneous to them or mixed. Quite apart therefore from the resistance and refusal of kindred nations to renounce their cherished nationality and fuse themselves in combinations of this kind, there would be this incompatibility of mixed or heterogeneous factors, recalcitrant to the idea and the culture that sought to absorb them. Thus a Pan-Slavonic empire would necessitate the control of the Balkan Peninsula by Russia as the premier Slav State; but such a scheme would have to meet not only the independent Serbian nationality and the imperfect Slavism of the Bulgar but the quite incompatible Rumanian, Greek and Albanian elements. Thus it does not appear that this tendency towards vast homogeneous aggregates, although it has for some time played an important part in the world's history and is not exhausted or finally baffled, is ever likely to be the eventual solution; for even if it triumphed, it would have to meet in a greater or less degree the difficulties of the heterogeneous type. The true problem of empire therefore still remains, how to transform the artificial political unity of a heterogeneous empire, heterogeneous in racial composition, language and culture, into a real and psychological unity.

---

[1] All three have been broken by the effects of revolution and war, but, if the nation idea dwindled, the last might still at some future date revive: the second, if Communism destroyed the national idea, may still be a possibility.

[2] This has been modified by the substitution of a Soviet Union claiming to unite these Asiatic peoples voluntarily with Russia: but one is not quite sure whether this is a permanent reality or only a temporary apparent phenomenon.

[3] These two empires have now disappeared and there seems to be no possibility of their revival.

History gives us only one great and definite example of an attempt to solve this problem on this large scale and with antecedent conditions which could at all afford any guidance for the vast heterogeneous modern empires, those of Russia, England,[4] France to which the problem is now offered. The old Chinese empire of the five nations, admirably organised, was not a case in point; for all its constituent parts were Mongolian in race and presented no formidable cultural difficulties. But the imperial Roman had to face essentially the same problems as the moderns minus one or two very important complications and he solved them up to a certain point with a masterly success. His empire endured through several centuries and, though often threatened with disruption, yet by its inner principle of unity and by its overpowering centripetal attraction triumphed over all disruptive tendencies. Its one failure was the bisection into the Eastern and Western Empires which hastened its final ending. Still when that end came it was not by a disruption from within but simply by the decaying of its centre of life. And it was not till this central life faded that the pressure of the barbarian world without, to which its ruin is wrongly attributed, could prevail over its magnificent solidarity.

---

[4] This empire has so altered its form into that of a free Commonwealth that the objection is no longer relevant; there is no longer an old-world empire but a free Commonwealth and a number of subject peoples moving rapidly towards self-government.

The Roman effected his sway by military conquest and military colonisation; but once that conquest was assured, he was not content with holding it together as an artificial political unity, nor did he trust solely to that political convenience of a good, efficient and well-organised government economically and administratively beneficent which made it at first acceptable to the conquered peoples. He had too sure a political instinct to be so easily satisfied; for it is certain that if he had stopped short there, the empire would have broken up at a much earlier date. The peoples under his sway would have preserved their sense of separate nationality and, once accustomed to Roman efficiency and administrative organisation, would inevitably have tended to the separate enjoyment of these advantages as independent organised nations. It was this sense of separate nationality which the Roman rule succeeded in blotting out wherever it established its own dominant influence. And this was done not by the stupid expedient of a brutal force after the Teutonic fashion, but by a peaceful pressure. Rome first compounded with the one rival culture that was superior in certain respects to her own and accepted it as part of her own cultural existence and even as its most valuable part; she created a Graeco-Roman civilisation, left the Greek tongue to spread and secure it in the East, but introduced it everywhere else by the medium of the Latin language and a Latin education and succeeded in peacefully overcoming the decadent or inchoate cultures of Gaul and her other conquered provinces. But since even this process might not have been sufficient to abolish all separatist tendency, she not only admitted her Latinised subjects to the highest military and civil offices and even to the imperial purple, so that within less than a century after Augustus, first an Italian Gaul and then an Iberian Spaniard held the name and power of the Caesars, but she proceeded rapidly enough to deprive of all vitality and then even nominally to abolish all the grades of civic privilege with which she had started and extended the full Roman citizenship to all her subjects, Asiatic, European and African, without distinction.

The result was that the whole empire became psychologically and not only politically a single Graeco-Roman unity. Not only superior force or the recognition of Roman peace and good government, but all the desires, associations, pride, cultural affinities of the provinces made them firmly attached to the maintenance of the empire. Every attempt of provincial ruler or military chief to start provincial empires for their own benefit failed because it found no basis, no supporting tendency, no national sentiment and no sense of either material or any other advantage to be gained by the change in the population on whom the successful continuity of the attempt had to depend. So far the Roman succeeded; where he failed, it was due to the essential vice of his method. By crushing out, however peacefully, the living cultures or the incipient individuality of the peoples he ruled, he deprived these peoples of their sources of vitality, the roots of their force. No doubt he removed all positive causes of disruption and secured a passive force of opposition to all disruptive change; but his empire lived only at the centre and when that centre tended to become exhausted, there was no positive and abounding life throughout the body from which it could be replenished. In the end Rome could not even depend on a supply of vigorous individuals from the peoples whose life she had pressed out under the weight of a borrowed civilisation; she had to draw on the frontier barbarians. And when she fell to pieces, it was these barbarians and not the old peoples resurgent who became her heirs. For their barbarism was at least a living force and a principle of life, but the Graeco-Roman civilisation had become a principle of death. All the living forces were destroyed by whose contact it could have modified and renewed its own force. In the end it had itself to be destroyed in its form and its principle resown in the virgin field of the vital and vigorous culture of mediaeval Europe. What the Roman had not the wisdom to do by his organised empire, — for even the profoundest and surest political instinct is not wisdom, — had to be done by Nature herself in the loose but living unity of mediaeval Christendom.

The example of Rome has haunted the political imagination of Europe ever since. Not only has it been behind the Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne and Napoleon's gigantic attempt and the German dream of a world-empire governed by Teutonic efficiency and Teutonic culture, but all the imperial nations, including France and England, have followed to a certain extent in its footsteps. But, significantly enough, every attempt at renewing the Roman success has failed. The modern nations have not been able to follow Rome completely in the lines she had traced out or if they tried to follow, have clashed against different conditions and either collapsed or been obliged to call a halt. It is as if Nature had said, "That experiment has been carried once to its logical consequences and once is enough. I have made new conditions; find you new means or at least mend and add to the old where they were deficient or went astray."

The European nations have extended their empires by the old Roman method of military conquest and colonisation, abandoning for the most part the pre-Roman principle of simple overlordship or hegemony which was practised by the Assyrian and Egyptian kings, the Indian States and the Greek cities. But this principle also has been sometimes used in the shape of the protectorate to prepare the more normal means of occupation. The colonies have not been of the pure Roman, but of a mixed Carthaginian and Roman type. Official and military, enjoying like the Roman colonies superior civic rights to the indigenous population, they have been at the same time and far more commercial colonies of exploitation. The nearest to the Roman type has been the English settlement in Ulster, while the German system in Poland developed under modern conditions the old Roman principle of expropriation. But these are exceptions, not the rule.

The conquered territory once occupied and secure, the modern nations have found themselves brought up short by a difficulty which they have not been able to surmount as the Romans surmounted it, — the difficulty of uprooting the indigenous culture and with it the indigenous sense of separateness. All these empires have at first carried with them the idea of imposing their culture along with the flag, first simply as an instinct of the conqueror and as a necessary adjunct to the fact of political domination and a security for its permanence, but latterly with the conscious intention of extending, as it is somewhat pharisaically put, the benefits of civilisation to the "inferior" races. It cannot be said that the attempt has anywhere been very prosperous. It was tried with considerable thoroughness and ruthlessness in Ireland, but although the Irish speech was stamped out except in the wilds of Connaught and all distinctive signs of the old Irish culture disappeared, the outraged nationality simply clung to whatever other means of distinctiveness it could find, however exiguous, its Catholic religion, its Celtic race and nationhood, and even when it became Anglicised, refused to become English. The removal or slackening of the foreign pressure has resulted in a violent recoil, an attempt to revive the Gaelic speech, to reconstitute the old Celtic spirit and culture. The German failed to Prussianise Poland or even his own kin who speak his own language, the Alsatians. The Finn remained unconquerably Finnish in Russia. The mild Austrian methods left the Austrian Pole as Polish as his oppressed brother in German Posen. Accordingly there began to rise everywhere a growing sense of the inutility of the endeavour and the necessity of leaving the soul of the subject nation free, confining the action of the sovereign State to the enforcement of new administrative and economic conditions with as much social and cultural change as may be freely accepted or may come about by education and the force of circumstances.

The German, indeed, new and inexperienced in imperial methods, clung to the old Roman idea of assimilation which he sought to execute both by Roman and by un-Roman means. He showed even a tendency to go back beyond the Caesars of old to the methods of the Jew in Canaan and the Saxon in eastern Britain, methods of expulsion and massacre. But since he was after all modernised and had some sense of economic necessity and advantage, he could not carry out this policy with any thoroughness or in times of peace. Still he insisted on the old Roman method, sought to substitute German speech and culture for the indigenous and, as he could not do it by peaceful pressure, he tried it by force. An attempt of this kind is bound to fail; instead of bringing about the psychological unity at which it aims, it succeeds only in accentuating the national spirit and plants a rooted and invincible hatred which is dangerous to the empire and may even destroy it if the opposed elements are not too small in number and weak in force. And if this effacing of heterogeneous cultures is impossible in Europe where the differences are only variations of a common type and there are only small and weak elements to overcome, it is obviously out of the question for those empires which have to deal with great Asiatic and African masses rooted for many centuries in an old and well-formed national culture. If a psychological unity has to be created, it must be by other means.

The impact of different cultures upon each other has not ceased but has rather been accentuated by the conditions of the modern world. But the nature of the impact, the ends towards which it moves and the means by which the ends can most successfully be worked out, are profoundly altered. The earth is in travail now of one common, large and flexible civilisation for the whole human race into which each modern and ancient culture shall bring its contribution and each clearly defined human aggregate shall introduce its necessary element of variation. In the working out of this aim, there must necessarily be some struggle for survival. The fittest to survive will be here all that can best serve the tendencies Nature is working out in humanity, — not only the tendencies of the hour, but the reviving tendencies of the past and the yet inchoate tendencies of the future. And it will be too all that can best help as liberating and combining forces, best make for adaptation and adjustment and for deliverance of the hidden sense of the great Mother in her strivings. But success in this struggle is worst and not best served by military violence or political pressure. German culture for good or ill was making rapid conquests throughout the world before the rulers of Germany were ill-advised enough to rouse the latent force of opposing ideals by armed violence. And even now that which is essential in it, the State idea and the organisation of the life of the community by the State which is common both to

German imperialism and to German socialism, is far more likely to succeed by the defeat of the former in the war than it could have done by its victory in a brute struggle.

This change in the movement and orientation of the world's tendencies points to a law of interchange and adaptation and to the emergence of a new birth out of the meeting of many elements. Only those imperial aggregates are likely to succeed and eventually endure which recognise the new law and shape their organisation to accord with it. Immediate victories of an opposite kind may indeed be gained and violence done to the law; but such present successes are won, as history has repeatedly shown, at the cost of a nation's whole future. The recognition of the new truth had already commenced as a result of increased communication and the widening of knowledge. The value of variations had begun to be acknowledged and the old arrogant claims of this or that culture to impose itself and crush out all others were losing their force and self-confidence when the old outworn creed suddenly leaped up armed with the German sword to vindicate itself, if it might, before it perished. The only result has been to give added force and clear recognition to the truth it sought to deny. The importance even of the smallest States, Belgium, Serbia,[5] as cultural units in the European whole has been lifted almost to the dignity of a creed. The recognition of the value of Asiatic cultures, confined formerly to the thinker, scholar and artist, has now been brought into the popular mind by association on the battle-field. The theory of "inferior" races, an inferiority and superiority measured by approximation to one's own form of culture, has received what may well turn out to have been its death-blow. The seeds of a new order of things are being rapidly sown in the conscious mentality of the race.

This new turn of the impact of cultures shows itself most clearly where the European and the Asiatic meet. French culture in Northern Africa, English culture in India cease at once to be French or English and become simply the common European civilisation in face of the Asiatic; it is no longer an imperial domination intent to secure itself by assimilation, but continent parleying with continent. The political motive sinks into insignificance; the world-motive takes its place. And in this confrontation it is no longer a self-confident European civilisation that offers its light and good to the semi-barbarous Asiatic and the latter that gratefully accepts a beneficent transformation. Even adaptable Japan, after the first enthusiasm of acceptance, has retained all that is fundamental in her culture, and everywhere else the European current has met the opposition of an inner voice and force which cries halt to its victorious impetus.[6] The East is on the whole, in spite of certain questionings and scruples, willing and, where not wholly willing, forced by circumstances and the general tendency of mankind to accept the really valuable parts of modern European culture, its science, its curiosity, its ideal of universal education and uplift, its abolition of privilege, its broadening, liberalising, democratic tendency, its instinct of freedom and equality, its call for the breaking down of narrow and oppressive forms, for air, space, light. But at a certain point the East refuses to proceed farther and that is precisely in the things which are deepest, most essential to the future of mankind, the things of the soul, the profound things of the mind and temperament. Here again all points not to substitution and conquest, but to mutual understanding and interchange, mutual adaptation and new formation.

---

[5] Now Yugoslavia.

The old idea is not entirely dead and will not die without a last struggle. There are still those who dream of a Christianised India, the English tongue permanently dominating if not replacing the indigenous languages, or the acceptance of European social forms and manners as the necessary precondition for an equal status between a European and Asiatic. But they are those who belong in spirit to a past generation and cannot value the signs of the hour which point to a new era. Christianity, for instance, has only succeeded where it could apply its one or two features of distinct superiority, the readiness to stoop and uplift the fallen and oppressed where the Hindu bound in the forms of caste would not touch nor succour, its greater swiftness to give relief where it is needed, in a word, the active compassion and helpfulness which it inherited from its parent Buddhism. Where it could not apply this lever, it has failed totally and even this lever it may easily lose; for the soul of India reawakened by the new impact is beginning to recover its lost tendencies. The social forms of the past are changing where they are unsuited to the new political and economic conditions and ideals or incompatible with the increasing urge towards freedom and equality; but there is no sign that anything but a new Asiatic society broadened and liberalised will emerge from this travail. The signs everywhere are the same; the forces everywhere work in the same sense. Neither France nor England has the power — and they are fast or slowly losing the desire — to destroy and replace the Islamic culture in Africa or the Indian in India. All they can do is to give what they have of value to be assimilated according to the needs and the inner spirit of the older nations.

---

[6] There has been a recrudescence of the Europeanising turn in Turkey and in China reinforced by the influence of Bolshevist Russia. Wherever there is a retardatory orthodoxy to overcome, this movement is likely to appear, but only as a passing phase.

It was necessary to dwell on this question because it is vital to the future of Imperialism. The replacement of the local by the imperial culture and as far as possible by the speech of the conqueror was essential to the old imperial theory, but the moment that becomes out of question and the very desire of it has to be renounced as impracticable, the old Roman model of empire ceases to be of any avail for the solution of the problem. Something of the Roman lesson remains valid, — those features especially that are essential to the very essence of imperialism and the meaning of empire; but a new model is demanded. That new model has already begun to evolve in obedience to the requirements of the age; it is the model of the federal or else the confederate empire. The problem we have to consider narrows itself down to this, is it possible to create a securely federated empire of vast extent and composed of heterogeneous races and cultures? And granting that in this direction lies the future, how can such an empire so artificial in appearance be welded into a natural and psychological unit?

Chapter VII

The Creation of the Heterogeneous Nation

THE PROBLEM of a federal empire founded on the sole foundation that is firm and secure, the creation of a true psychological unity, — an empire that has to combine heterogeneous elements, — resolves itself into two different factors, the question of the form and the question of the reality which the form is intended to serve. The former is of great practical importance, but the latter alone is vital. A form of unity may render possible, may favour or even help actively to create the corresponding reality, but it can never replace it. And, as we have seen, the true reality is in this order of Nature the psychological, since the mere physical fact of political and administrative union may be nothing more than a temporary and artificial creation destined to collapse irretrievably as soon as its immediate usefulness is over or the circumstances that favoured its continuance are radically or even seriously altered. The first question, then, that we have to consider is what this reality may be which it is intended to create in the form of a federal empire; and especially we have to consider whether it is to be merely an enlargement of the nation-type, the largest successful human aggregate yet evolved by Nature, or a new type of aggregate which is to exceed and must tend to supersede the nation, as that has replaced the tribe, the clan and the city or regional state.

The first natural idea of the human mind in facing such a problem is to favour the idea which most flatters and seems to continue its familiar notions. For the human mind is, in the mass, averse to a radical change of conception. It accepts change most easily when its reality is veiled by the continuation of a habitual form of things or else by a ceremonial, legal, intellectual or sentimental fiction. It is such a fiction that some think to create as a bridge from the nation-idea to the empire-idea of political unity. That which unites men most securely now is the physical unity of a common country to live in and defend, a common economic life dependent on that geographical oneness and the sentiment of the motherland which grows up around the physical and economic fact and either creates a political and administrative unity or keeps it to a secure permanence once it has been created. Let us then extend this powerful sentiment by a fiction; let us demand of the heterogeneous constituents of the empire that each shall regard not his own physical motherland but the empire as the mother or at least, if he clings to the old sentiment, learn to regard the empire first and foremost as the greater mother. A variation of this idea is the French notion of the mother country, France; all the other possessions of the empire, although in English phraseology they would rather be classed as dependencies in spite of the large share of political rights conceded to them, are to be regarded as colonies of the mother country, grouped together in idea as France beyond the seas and educated to centre their national sentiments around the greatness, glory and lovableness of France the common mother. It is a notion natural to the Celtic-Latin temperament, though alien to the Teutonic, and it is supported by a comparative weakness of race and colour prejudice and by that remarkable power of attraction and assimilation which the French share with all the Celtic nations.

The power, the often miraculous power of such fictions ought not for a moment to be ignored. They constitute Nature's most common and effective method when she has to deal with her own ingrained resistance to change in her mentalised animal, man. Still, there are conditions without which a fiction cannot succeed. It must in the first place be based on a plausible superficial resemblance. It must lead to a realisable fact strong enough either to replace the fiction itself or eventually to justify it. And this realisable fact must progressively realise itself and not remain too long in the stage of the formless nebula. There was a time when these conditions were less insistently necessary, a time when the mass of men were more imaginative, unsophisticated, satisfied with a sentiment or an appearance; but as the race advances, it becomes more mentally alive, self-conscious, critical and quick to seize dissonances between fact and pretension. Moreover, the thinker is abroad; his words are listened to and understood to an extent unprecedented in the known history of mankind: and the thinker tends to become more and more an inquisitor, a critic, an enemy of fictions.

Is then this fiction based upon a realisable parallel, — in other words, is it true that the true imperial unity when realised will be only an enlarged national unity? or, if not, what is the realisable fact which this fiction is intended to prepare? There have been plenty of instances in history of the composite nation and, if this parallel is to be accepted as effective, it is such a composite nation on a large scale which it is the business of the federal empire to create. We must, therefore, cast a glance at the most typical instances of the successful composite nation and see how far the parallel applies and whether there are difficulties in the way which point rather to the necessity of a new evolution than to the variation of an old success. To have a just idea of the difficulties may help us to see how they can be overcome.

The instance most before our eyes both of the successfully evolved composite or heterogeneous nation and of the fortunately evolving heterogeneous empire is that of the British nation in the past and the British Empire in the present, — successfully, but, fortunately, with a qualification; for it is subject to the perils of a mass of problems yet unsolved.[1] The British nation has been composed of an English-speaking Anglo-Norman England, a Welsh-speaking Cymric Wales, a half-Saxon, half-Gaelic English-speaking Scotland and, very imperfectly, very partially, of a Gaelic Ireland with a mainly Anglo-Scotch colony that held it indeed by force to the united body but was never able to compel a true union. Ireland was, until recently, the element of failure in this formation and it is only now and under another form and other circumstances than its other members that some kind of unity with the whole, still precarious and with the empire, not with the British nation, is becoming possible, although even yet it has hardly begun to be real.[2] What were the determining circumstances of this general success and this partial failure and what light do they shed on the possibilities of the larger problem?

---

[1] It must be remembered that this was written some decades ago and circumstances and the Empire itself have wholly changed; the problem, as it was then, no longer poses itself.

In building up her human aggregates, Nature has followed in general principle the same law that she observes in her physical aggregates. She has provided first a natural body, next, a common life and vital interest for the constituents of the body, last, a conscious mind or sense of unity and a centre or governing organ through which that common ego-sense can realise itself and act. There must be in her ordinary process either a common bond of descent or past association that will enable like to adhere to like and distinguish itself from unlike and a common habitation, a country so disposed that all who inhabit within its natural boundaries are under a sort of geographical necessity to unite. In earlier times when communities were less firmly rooted to the soil, the first of these conditions was the more important. In settled modern communities the second predominates; but the unity of the race, pure or mixed — for it need not have been one in its origin — remains a factor of importance, and strong disparity and difference may easily create serious difficulties in the way of the geographical necessity imposing itself with any permanence. In order that it may impose itself, there must be a considerable force of the second natural condition, that is to say, a necessity of economic unity or habit of common sustenance and a necessity of political unity or habit of common vital organisation for survival, functioning and aggrandisement. And in order that this second condition may fulfil itself in complete force, there must be nothing to depress or destroy the third in its creation or its continuance. Nothing must be done which will have the result of emphasising disunity in sentiment or perpetuating the feeling of separateness from the totality of the rest of the organism; for that will tend to make the centre or governing organ psychologically unrepresentative of the whole and therefore not a true centre of its ego-sense. But we must remember that separatism is not the same thing as particularism which may well coexist with unity; it is the sentiment of the impossibility of true union that separates, not the mere fact of difference.

---

[2] This was written when Home Rule seemed to be a possible solution; the failure has now become a settled fact and Ireland has become the independent Republic of Ireland.

The geographical necessity of union was obviously present in the forming of the British nation; the conquest of Wales and Ireland and the union with Scotland were historical events which merely represented the working of this necessity; but the unity of race and past association were wholly absent and had with greater or less difficulty to be created. It was effected successfully with Wales and Scotland in a greater or less lapse of time, not at all with Ireland. Geographical necessity is only a relative force; it can be overridden by a powerful sentiment of disunion when nothing is done effectively to dissolve the disintegrating impulsion. Even when the union has been politically effected, it tends to be destroyed, especially when there is within the geographical unity a physical barrier or line of division sufficiently strong to be the base of conflicting economic interests, — as in that which divides Belgium and Holland, Sweden and Norway, Ireland and Great Britain. In the case of Ireland, the British rulers not only did nothing to bridge over or dissolve this line of economic division and counteract the sentiment of a separate body, a separate physical country, in the Irish mind, but by a violent miscalculation of cause and effect they emphasised both in the strongest possible manner.

In the first place, the economic life and prosperity of Ireland were deliberately crushed in the interests of British trade and commerce. After that it was of little use to bring about, by means which one shrinks from scrutinising, the political "union" of the two islands in a common legislature, a common governing organ; for that governing organ was not a centre of psychological unity. Where the most vital interests were not only different but in conflict, it could only represent the continued control and assertion of the interests of the "predominant partner" and the continued subjection and denial of the interests of the foreign body bound by legislative fetters to the larger mass but not united through a real fusion. The famine which depopulated Ireland while England throve and prospered was Nature's terrible testimony to the sinister character of this "union" which was not unity but the sharpest opposition of the most essential interests. The Irish movements of Home Rule and separatism were the natural and inevitable expression of Ireland's will to survive; they amounted to nothing more than the instinct of self-preservation divining and insisting on the one obvious means of self-preservation.

In human life economic interests are those which are, ordinarily, violated with the least impunity; for they are bound up with the life itself and the persistent violation of them, if it does not destroy the oppressed organism, provokes necessarily the bitterest revolt and ends in one of Nature's inexorable retaliations. But in the third order of the natural conditions also British statesmanship in Ireland committed an equally radical mistake in its attempt to get rid by violence of all elements of Irish particularism. Wales like Ireland was acquired by conquest, but no such elaborate attempt was made to assimilate it; after the first unease that follows a process of violence, after one or two abortive attempts at resistance, Wales was left to undergo the peaceful pressure of natural conditions and its preservation of its own race and language has been no obstacle to the gradual union of the Cymric race and the Saxon in a common British nationality. A similar non-interference, apart from the minor problem of the Highland clans, has resulted in a still more rapid fusion of the Scotch race with the English. There is now in the island of Great Britain a composite British race with a common country bound together by the community of mingled blood, by a settled past association in oneness, by geographical necessity, by a common political and economic interest, by the realisation of a common ego. The opposite process in Ireland, the attempt to substitute an artificial process where the working of natural conditions with a little help of management and conciliation would have sufficed, the application of old-world methods to a new set of circumstances has resulted in the opposite effect. And when the error was discovered, the result of the past Karma had to be recognised and the union has had to be effected through the method demanded by Irish interests and Irish particularist sentiments, first by the offer of Home Rule and then by the creation of the Free State and not under a complete legislative union.

This result may well reach beyond itself; it may create the necessity of an eventual remodelling of the British Empire and perhaps of the whole Anglo-Celtic nation on new lines with the principle of federation at the base. For Wales and Scotland have not been fused into England with the same completeness as Breton, Alsatian, Basque and Provençal were fused into the indivisible unity of France. Although no economic interest, no pressing physical necessity demands the application of the federative principle to Wales and Scotland, yet a sufficient though minor particularist sentiment remains that may yet feel hereafter the repercussion of the Irish settlement and awake to the satisfaction and convenience of a similar recognition for the provincial separateness of these two countries. And this sentiment is bound to receive fresh strength and encouragement by the practical working out of the federative principle in the reorganisation, which one day may become inevitable, of the colonial empire hitherto governed by Great Britain on the basis of Home Rule without federation.[3] The peculiar circumstances both of the national and the colonial formation and expansion of the races inhabiting the British Isles have indeed been such as to make it almost appear that this Empire has throughout been intended and prepared by Nature in her workings to be the great field of experiment for the creation of this new type in the history of human aggregates, the heterogeneous federal empire.

---

[3] Home Rule now replaced by Dominion Status which means a confederation in fact though not yet in form.

Chapter VIII

The Problem of a Federated Heterogeneous Empire

IF THE building up of a composite nation in the British Isles was from the beginning a foregone conclusion, a geographical and economic necessity only prevented in its entire completion by the most violent and perverse errors of statesmanship, the same cannot be said of the swifter, but still gradual and almost unconscious process by which the colonial empire of Great Britain has been evolving to a point at which it can become a real unity. It was not so long ago that the eventual separation of the colonies carrying with it the evolution of Australia and Canada at least into young independent nations was considered the inevitable end of the colonial empire, its one logical and hardly regrettable conclusion.

There were sound reasons for this mental attitude. The geographical necessity of union was entirely absent; on the contrary, distance created a positive mental separation. Each colony had a clear-cut separate physical body and seemed predestined, on the lines on which human evolution was then running, to become a separate nation. The economic interests of the mother country and the colonies were disparate, aloof from each other, often opposite as was shown by the adoption by the latter of Protection as against the British policy of Free Trade. Their sole political interest in the Empire was the safety given by the British fleet and army against foreign invasion; they did not share and took no direct interest in the government of the Empire or the shaping of its destinies. Psychologically, the sole tie was a frail memory of origin and a tepid sentiment which might easily evaporate and which was combated by a definite separatist sentiment and the natural inclination of strongly marked human groupings to make for themselves an independent life and racial type. The race origin varied, in Australia British, in South Africa predominantly Dutch, in Canada half French, half English; but in all three countries habits of life, political tendencies, a new type of character and temperament and culture, if it can be so called, were being developed which were as the poles asunder from the old British culture, temperament, habits of life and social and political tendencies. On the other hand, the mother country derived no tangible political, military or economic advantage from these offshoots, only the prestige which the possession of an empire in itself could give her. On both sides, therefore, all the circumstances pointed to an eventual peaceful separation which would leave England only the pride of having been the mother of so many new nations.

Owing to the drawing together of the world by physical Science, the resulting tendency towards larger aggregates, changed political world conditions and the profound political, economic and social changes towards which Great Britain has been moving, all the conditions now are altered and it is easy to see that the fusion of the colonial empire into a great federated commonwealth or something that can plausibly go by that name is practically inevitable. There are difficulties in the way, — economic difficulties, to begin with; for, as we have seen, geographical separation does tend towards a divergence, often an opposition of economic interests, and an imperial Zollverein, natural enough between the States of the German Empire or a Central European Confederation such as was planned by one side in the great war, would be an artificial creation as between widely separated countries and would need constant vigilance and tender handling; yet, at the same time, political unity tends to demand economic union as its natural concomitant and seems to itself hardly complete without it. Political and other difficulties also there are which may yet become manifest and destroy the imperial formation if the practical process of unification is rashly and unwisely handled; but none of these need be insuperable or even a real stumbling-block. The race difficulty which was at one time serious and menacing in South Africa and is not yet eliminated, need not be more formidable than in Canada; for in both countries there is the English element which, whether a majority or minority, can by friendly union or fusion attach the foreign element to the Empire. Nor is there any such powerful outside attraction or clash of formed cultures or incompatible temperaments as made so difficult the real union of the Austrian Empire.

All that is needed is that England should continue to handle the problem with a right instinct and not commit anything like her fatal American blunder or the mistake she committed but fortunately receded from in South Africa. She has to keep it always in mind that her possible destiny is not that of a dominant country compelling all the parts of her dominions to uniformity with her or to perpetual subordination, but that of the centre of a great confederation of States and nations coalescing by her attraction into a new supra-national unity. Here the first condition is that she must scrupulously respect the free internal life and will, the social, cultural, economic tendencies of the colonies while giving them an equal part with herself in the management of the great common questions of the Empire. She herself can be nothing more in the future of such a new type of aggregate than a political and cultural centre, the clamp or nodus of the union. Given this orientation of the governing mind in England, nothing short of some unforeseen cataclysm can prevent the formation of an empire-unit in which Home Rule with a loose British suzerainty will be replaced by Federation with Home Rule as its basis.[1]

But the problem becomes much more difficult when the question of the other two great constituent parts of the Empire arises, Egypt and India, — so difficult that the first temptation of the political mind, supported by a hundred prejudices and existing interests, was naturally to leave the problem alone and create a federated colonial empire with these two great countries as subject dependencies.[2] It is obvious that such a solution could not last and, if obstinately persisted in, would lead to the most undesirable results, if not to eventual disaster. The renascence of India is as inevitable as the rising of tomorrow's sun, and the renascence of a great nation of three hundred millions with so peculiar a temperament, such unique traditions and ideas of life, so powerful an intelligence and so great a mass of potential energies cannot but be one of the most formidable phenomena of the modern world. It is evident that the new federated empire-unit cannot afford to put itself in permanent antagonism to this renascent nation of three hundred millions and that the short-sighted statesmanship of those servants of today and its interests who would stave off the inevitable issue as long as possible cannot be allowed to prevail. This has indeed been recognised in principle; the difficulty will be in the handling of the problems that will arise when the practical solution of the Indian question can no longer be put off to an uncertain future.

---

[1] All this, provided the Empire continues to be victorious and prosper; provided, too, Britain's foreign policy does not make the obligations of federated unity too irksome to the smaller members.

The nature of the difficulties in the way of a practical union between such different aggregates is sufficiently obvious. There is first that geographical separateness which has always made India a country and a people apart, even when it was unable to realise its political unity and was receiving by invasion and mutual communication of cultures the full shock of the civilisations around it. There is the mere mass of its population of three hundred millions whose fusion in any sort with the rest of the nations of the Empire would be a far other matter than the fusion of the comparatively insignificant populations of Australia, Canada and South Africa. There is the salient line of demarcation by race, colour and temperament between the European and the Asiatic. There is the age-long past, the absolute divergence of origins, indelible associations, inherent tendencies which forbid any possibility of the line of demarcation being effaced or minimised by India's acceptance of an entirely or predominantly English or European culture. All these difficulties need not necessarily mean the insolubility of the problem; on the contrary, we know that no difficulty can be presented to the human mind which the human mind, if it will, cannot solve. We will assume that in this case there will be both the will and the necessary wisdom; that British statesmanship will commit no irreparable error; that from the minor errors which it cannot fail to commit in the handling of such a problem, it will retreat in time, as has been its temperament and habit in the past; and that, accordingly, a little sooner or a little later some kind of psychological unity may possibly be created between these two widely disparate aggregates of the human race.

---

[2] The question of Egypt has already been settled since the above was written, and in a sense adverse to union. India, already even then on the road to a free status, has already achieved it, although its two separating parts have figured for a time as dominions and one of them may possibly adhere for some time to that status while the other has adopted, although an independent Republic, a new formula of adhesion to the Commonwealth.

The question remains under what conditions this is possible and of what nature the unity will be. It is clear that the governing race must apply with a far greater scrupulosity and firm resolution the principle it has already applied elsewhere with such success and the departure from which has always after a certain stage been so detrimental to its own wider interests. It must allow, respect and even favour actively the free and separate evolution of India subject to the unity of the Empire. So long as India does not entirely govern herself, her interests must take a first place in the mind of those who do govern her, and when she has self-government, it must be of a kind which will not hamper her in her care of her own interests. She must not, for example, be forced into an imperial Zollverein which under present conditions would be disastrous to her economic future until or unless these conditions are changed by a resolute policy of stimulating and encouraging her industrial development, even though that will necessarily be prejudicial to many existing commercial interests within the Empire. No effort must be made to impose English culture or conditions upon her growing life or make them a *sine qua non* for her recognition among the free peoples of the Empire and no effort of her own to defend and develop her own culture and characteristic development must be interfered with or opposed. Her dignity, sentiments, national aspirations must be increasingly recognised in practice as well as in principle. Given these conditions, the security of her political and economic interests and a care for her own untroubled growth might keep her in the Empire and time might be given for the rest, for the more subtle and difficult part of the process of unification to fulfil itself more or less rapidly.

The unity created could never take the form of an Indo-British empire; that is a figment of the imagination, a chimera which it would never do to hunt to the detriment of the real possibilities. The possibilities might be, first, a firm political unity secured by common interests; secondly, a sound commercial interchange and mutual industrial helpfulness on healthy lines; thirdly, a new cultural relation of the two most important sections of humanity, Europe and Asia, in which they could exchange all that is great and valuable in either as equal members of one human household; and finally, it might be hoped, in place of the common past associations of political and economic development and military glory which have chiefly helped in building up the nation-unit, the greater glory of association and close partnership in the building of a new, rich and various culture for the life of a nobler humanity. For such, surely, should be the type of the supra-national unit which is the possible next step in the progressive aggregation of humanity.

It is evident that this next step would have no reason or value except as a stage which would make possible by practical demonstration and the creation of new habits of sentiment, mental attitude and common life the unity of the whole human race in a single family. The mere creation of a big empire-unit would be a vulgar and even reactionary phenomenon if it had not this greater issue beyond it. The mere construction of a multicoloured Indo-British unity arrayed in armour of battle and divided by commercial, political and military egoism from other huge unities, Russian, French, German, American, would be a retrogression, not an advance. If at all, therefore, this kind of development is destined, — for we have only taken the instance of the British Empire as the best example of a possible new type, — then it must be as such a half-way house and with this ideal before us that it can be accepted by the lovers of humanity who are not bound by the limitations of the old local patriotism of nation against nation. Always provided that the political and administrative means are those which are to lead us to the unity of the human race, — for on that doubtful hypothesis we are at present proceeding. The probability of such an eventual development is as yet scanty, for the temper both of Muslim and Hindu India is still overwhelmingly in the direction of independence and nothing has been done on the English side to build up the other possibility. But the possibility had still to be considered, as it is not utterly out of question that under changed conditions there might be an acceptance of virtual independence in place of a separate and isolated autonomy. If so, it would be a sign that one of Nature's steps towards the final result was leading towards this passage. This much could be said for it that if such a combination of two so disparate peoples and cultures proved to be possible, the greater question of a world-union would begin to bear a less remote appearance.[3]

---

[3] Things have taken, as was practically inevitable all through, a different turn; but this part of the chapter has been left as it was because the consideration of this possibility was necessary to the theme. The failure of that possible experiment to come anywhere near realisation is an illustration of the fact that this intermediate stage in the progress towards a total world-union presents difficulties which make it almost impossible. Its place has been taken by such agglomerations as the Commonwealth, the Soviet Union and such possibilities as the proposed United States of Europe and other continental combinations such as are coming into being as between the two Americas and may some day be possible in Asia.

Chapter IX

The Possibility of a World-Empire

THE PROGRESS of the imperial idea from the artificial and constructive stage to the position of a realised psychological truth controlling the human mind with the same force and vitality which now distinguish the national idea above all other group motives, is only a possibility, not a certainty of the future. It is even no more than a vaguely nascent possibility and so long as it has not emerged from this inchoate condition in which it is at the mercy of the much folly of statesmen, the formidable passions of great human masses, the obstinate self-interest of established egoisms, we can have no surety that it will not even now die still-born. And if so, what other possibility can there be of the unification of mankind by political and administrative means? That can only come about if either the old ideal of a single world-empire be, by developments not now apparently possible, converted into an accomplished fact or if the opposite ideal of a free association of free nations overcome the hundred and one powerful obstacles which stand in the way of its practical realisation.

The idea of a world-empire imposed by sheer force is in direct opposition, as we have seen, to the new conditions which the progressive nature of things has introduced into the modern world. Nevertheless, let us isolate these new conditions from the problem and admit the theoretical possibility of a single great nation imposing its political rule and its predominant culture on the whole earth as Rome once imposed hers on the Mediterranean peoples and on Gaul and Britain. Or let us even suppose that one of the great nations might possibly succeed in overcoming all its rivals by force and diplomacy and afterwards, respecting the culture and separate internal life of its subject nations, secure its sway by the attraction of a world-peace, of beneficent administration and of an unparalleled organisation of human knowledge and human resources for the amelioration of the present state of mankind. We have to see whether this theoretical possibility is at all likely to encounter the conditions by which it can convert itself into a practical possibility, and if we consider, we shall find that no such conditions now exist: on the contrary, all are against the realisation of such a colossal dream — it could only come about by immense changes as yet hidden in the secrecy of the future.

It is commonly supposed that the impulse which brought Germany to her recent struggle with the world was rooted in even such a dream of empire. How far there was any such conscious intention in her directing minds is a question open to some doubt; but it is certain that, if she had prevailed in the war as she had first expected, the situation created would inevitably have led her to this greater endeavour. For she would have enjoyed a dominant position such as no nation has yet possessed during the known period of the world's history; and the ideas which have recently governed the German intellect, the idea of her mission, her race superiority, the immeasurable excellence of her culture, her science, her organisation of life and her divine right to lead the earth and to impose on it her will and her ideals, these with the all-grasping spirit of modern commercialism would have inevitably impelled her to undertake universal domination as a divinely given task. The fact that a modern nation and indeed the nation most advanced in that efficiency, that scientific utilisation of Science, that spirit of organisation, State help and intelligent dealing with national and social problems and ordering of economic well-being which Europe understands by the word civilisation, — the fact that such a nation should be possessed and driven by such ideas and impulses is certainly a proof that the old gods are not dead, the old ideal of dominant Force conquering, governing and perfecting the world is still a vital reality and has not let go its hold on the psychology of the human race. Nor is there any certainty that the recent war has killed these forces and this ideal; for the war was decided by force meeting force, by organisation triumphing over organisation, by the superior or at any rate the more fortunate utilisation of those very weapons which constituted the real strength of the great aggressive Teutonic Power. The defeat of Germany by her own weapons could not of itself kill the spirit then incarnate in Germany; it may well lead merely to a new incarnation of it, perhaps in some other race or empire, and the whole battle would then have to be fought over again. So long as the old gods are alive, the breaking or depression of the body which they animate is a small matter, for they know well how to transmigrate. Germany overthrew the Napoleonic spirit in France in 1813 and broke the remnants of her European leadership in 1870; the same Germany became the incarnation of that which it had overthrown. The phenomenon is easily capable of renewal on a more formidable scale.

Nor was the failure of Germany any more a proof of the impossibility of this imperial dream than the previous failure of Napoleon. For the Teutonic combination lacked all the necessary conditions except one for the success of so vast an aim. It had the strongest military, scientific and national organisation which any people has yet developed, but it lacked the gigantic driving impulse which could alone bring an attempt so colossal to fruition, the impulse which France possessed in a much greater degree in the Napoleonic era. It lacked the successful diplomatic genius which creates the indispensable conditions of success. It lacked the companion force of sea-power which is even more necessary than military superiority to the endeavour of world-domination, and by its geographical position and the encircling position of its enemies it was especially open to all the disadvantages which must accompany the mastery of the seas by its natural adversary. The combination of overwhelming sea-power with overwhelming land-power[1] can alone bring so vast an enterprise into the domain of real possibility; Rome itself could only hope for something like a world-empire when it had destroyed the superior maritime force of Carthage. Yet so entirely did German statesmanship miscalculate the problem that it entered into the struggle with the predominant maritime Power of the world already ranked in the coalition of its enemies. Instead of concentrating its efforts against this one natural adversary, instead of utilising the old hostility of Russia and France against England, its maladroit and brutal diplomacy had already leagued these former enemies against itself; instead of isolating England, it had succeeded only in isolating itself and the manner in which it began and conducted the war still farther separated it morally and gave an added force to the physical isolation effected by the British blockade. In its one-sided pursuit of a great military concentration of Central Europe and Turkey, it had even wantonly alienated the one maritime Power which might have been on its side.

---

[1] But now also, in a far greater degree, overwhelming air-power.

It is conceivable that the imperial enterprise may be renewed at some future date in the world's history by a nation or by statesmen better situated, better equipped, gifted with a subtler diplomatic genius, a nation as much favoured by circumstances, temperament and fortune as was Rome in the ancient world. What then would be the necessary conditions for its success? In the first place, its aim would have small chances of prospering if it could not repeat that extraordinary good luck by which Rome was enabled to meet its possible rivals and enemies one by one and avoid a successful coalition of hostile forces. What possibility is there of such a fortunate progress in a world so alert and instructed as the modern where everything is known, spied on, watched by jealous eyes and active minds under the conditions of modern publicity and swift world-wide communication? The mere possession of a dominant position is enough to set the whole world on its guard and concentrate its hostility against the Power whose secret ambitions it instinctively feels. Therefore such a fortunate succession would only seem to be possible if, in the first place, it were carried out half unconsciously without any fixed and visible ambition on the part of the advancing Power to awaken the general jealousy and, secondly, by a series of favouring occurrences which would lead so near to the desired end that it would be within the grasp before those who could still prevent it had awakened to its possibility.

If, for instance, there were a series of struggles between the four or five great Powers now dominating the world, each of which left the aggressor broken without hope of recovery and without any new Power arising to take its place, it is conceivable that at the end one of them would be left in a position of such natural predominance gained without any deliberate aggression, gained at least apparently in resisting the aggression of others as to put world-empire naturally into its grasp. But with the present conditions of life, especially with the ruinous nature of modern war, such a succession of struggles, quite natural and possible in former times, seems to be beyond the range of actual possibilities.

We must then assume that the Power moving towards world-domination would at some time find inevitably a coalition formed against it by almost all the Powers capable of opposing it and this with the sympathy of the world at their back. Given even the happiest diplomacy, such a moment seems inevitable. It must then possess such a combined and perfectly organised military and naval predominance as to succeed in this otherwise unequal struggle. But where is the modern empire that can hope to arrive at such a predominance? Of those that already exist Russia might well arrive one day at an overwhelming military power to which the present force of Germany would be a trifle; but that it should combine with this force by land a corresponding sea-power is unthinkable. England has enjoyed hitherto an overwhelming naval predominance which it might so increase under certain conditions as to defy the world in arms;[2] but it could not even with conscription and the aid of all its colonies compass anything like a similar force by land, — unless indeed it created conditions under which it could utilise all the military possibilities of India. Even then we have only to think of the formidable masses and powerful empires that it must be prepared to meet and we shall see that the creation of this double predominance is a contingency which the facts themselves show to be, if not chimerical, at least highly improbable.

---

[2] This is no longer true since the enormous increase of the American Navy.

Given even largely superior numbers on the side of its possible enemies, a nation might conceivably prevail over the coalition of its opponents by a superior science and a more skilful use of its resources. Germany relied on its superior science for the successful issue of its enterprise; and the principle on which it proceeded was sound. But in the modern world Science is a common possession and even if one nation steals such a march on the others as to leave them in a position of great inferiority at the beginning, yet experience has shown that given a little time, — and a powerful coalition is not likely to be crushed at the first blow, — the lost ground can be rapidly made up or at least methods of defence developed which will largely neutralise the advantage gained. For success, therefore, we should have to suppose the development by the ambitious nation or empire of a new science or new discoveries not shared by the rest which would place it in something like the position of superiority over greater numbers which Cortez and Pizarro enjoyed over the Aztecs and Peruvians. The superiority of discipline and organisation which gave the advantage to the ancient Romans or to the Europeans in India is no longer sufficient for so vast a purpose.

We see, therefore, that the conditions for the successful pursuit of world-empire are such that we need hardly take this mode of unification as within the bounds of practical possibility. That it may again be attempted, is possible; that it will fail, may almost be prophesied. At the same time, we have to take into account the surprises of Nature, the large field we have to allow to the unexpected in her dealings with us. Therefore we cannot pronounce this consummation an absolute impossibility. On the contrary, if that be her intention, she will suddenly or gradually create the necessary means and conditions. But even if it were to come about, the empire so created would have so many forces to contend with that its maintenance would be more difficult than its creation, and either its early collapse would bring the whole problem again into the field for a better solution or else it would have, by stripping itself of the elements of force and domination which inspired its attempt, to contradict the essential aim of its great effort. That, however, belongs to another side of our subject which we must postpone for the moment. At present we may say that if the gradual unification of the world by the growth of great heterogeneous empires forming true psychological unities is only a vague and nascent possibility, its unification by a single forceful imperial domination has passed or is passing out of the range of possibilities and can only come about by a new development of the unexpected out of the infinite surprises of Nature.

Chapter X

The United States of Europe

WE HAVE had to dwell so long upon the possibilities of the Empire-group because the evolution of the imperial State is a dominating phenomenon of the modern world; it governs the political tendencies of the later part of the nineteenth and earlier part of the twentieth centuries very much as the evolution of the free democratised nation governed the age which preceded ours. The dominant idea of the French Revolution was the formula of the free and sovereign people and, in spite of the cosmopolitan element introduced into the revolutionary formula by the ideal of fraternity, this idea became in fact the assertion of the free, independent, democratically self-governed nation. That ideal had not at the time of the great war wholly worked itself out even in the occidental world; for central Europe was only partly democratised and Russia had only just begun to turn its face towards the common goal; and even now there are still subject European peoples or fragments of peoples.[1] Nevertheless, with whatever imperfections, the idea of the free democratic nation had practically triumphed in all America and Europe. The peoples of Asia have equally accepted this governing ideal of the nineteenth century, and though the movements of democratic nationalism in the eastern countries, Turkey, Persia, India, China, were not fortunate in their first attempts at self-realisation, the profound and wide-spread working of the idea cannot be doubted by any careful observer. Whatever modifications may arrive, whatever new tendencies intervene, whatever reactions oppose, it could hardly then be doubted that the principal gifts of the French Revolution must remain and be universalised as permanent acquisitions, indispensable elements in the future order of the world, — national self-consciousness and self-government, freedom and enlightenment for the people and so much social equality and justice at least as is indispensable to political liberty; for with any form of fixed and rigid inequality democratic self-government is incompatible.

---

[1] No longer an evident fact, although the substitution of a state of vassalage may still be there.

But before the great nineteenth-century impulse could work itself out everywhere, before even it could realise itself entirely in Europe, a new tendency has intervened and a new idea seized on the progressive mind of humanity. This is the ideal of the perfectly organised State. Fundamentally, the ideal of the perfectly organised State is socialistic and it is based on the second word of the great revolutionary formula, equality, just as the movement of the nineteenth century centered round the first, liberty. The first impulse given by the great European upheaval attained only to a certain kind of political equality. An incomplete social levelling still left untouched the one inequality and the one form of political preponderance which no competitive society can eliminate, the preponderance of the haves over the have-nots, the inequality between the more successful in the struggle of life and the less successful which is rendered inevitable by difference of capacity, unequal opportunity and the handicap of circumstance and environment. Socialism seeks to get rid of this persistent inequality by destroying the competitive form of society and substituting the cooperative. A cooperative form of human society existed formerly in the shape of the commune; but the restoration of the commune as a unit would imply practically the return to the old city state, and as this is not now possible with the larger groupings and greater complexities of modern life, the socialistic idea could only be realised through the rigorously organised national State. To eliminate poverty, not by the crude idea of equal distribution but by the holding of all property in common and its management through the organised State, to equalise opportunity and capacity as far as possible through universal education and training, again by means of the organised State, is the fundamental idea of modern Socialism. It implies an abrogation or at least a rigorous diminution of all individual liberty. Democratic Socialism still clings indeed to the nineteenth-century ideal of political freedom; it insists on the equal right of all in the State to choose, judge and change their own governors, but all other liberty it is ready to sacrifice to its own central idea.

The progress of the socialistic idea would seem therefore to lead towards the evolution of a perfectly organised national State which would provide for and control the education and training, manage and govern all the economic activities and for that purpose as well as for the assurance of perfect efficiency, morality, well-being and social justice, order the whole or at any rate the greater part of the external and internal life of its component individuals. It would effect, in fact, by organised State control what earlier societies attempted by social pressure, rigorous rule of custom, minute code and Shastra. This was always an inherently inevitable development of the revolutionary ideal. It started to the surface at first under pressure of external danger in the government of France by the Jacobins during the Reign of Terror; it has been emerging and tending to realise itself under pressure of an inner necessity throughout the later part of the nineteenth century; it has emerged not completely but with a first rudimentary sketch of completeness by the combination of the inner and the outer necessity during the present war. What was before only an ideal towards which some imperfect initial steps alone were immediately possible, has now become a realisable programme with its entire feasibility established by a convincing though necessarily hasty and imperfect practical demonstration. It is true that in order to realise it even political liberty has had to be temporarily abolished; but this, it may be argued, is only an accident of the moment, a concession to temporary necessity. In freer conditions what was done partly and for a time by governments which the people have consented to invest with an absolute and temporarily irresponsible authority, may be done, when there is no pressure of war, wholly and permanently by the self-governing democratic State.

In that case the near future of the human group would seem to be the nation, self-governing, politically free, but aiming at perfect social and economic organisation and ready for that purpose to hand over all individual liberty to the control of the organised national State.[2] As France was in the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century the great propagandist and the experimental workshop of political liberty and equality, so Germany has been in the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century the chief propagandist and the experimental workshop of the idea of the organised State. There the theory of Socialism has taken rise and there its propaganda has been most effective, so that a large proportion of the nation committed itself to the new gospel; there also the great socialistic measures and those which have developed the control of the individual by the State for the common good and efficiency of the nation have been most thoroughly and admirably conceived and executed. It matters little that this was done by an anti-socialistic, militarist and aristocratic government; the very fact is a proof of the irresistible strength of the new tendency, and the inevitable transference of the administrative power from its past holders to the people was all that was needed to complete its triumph.

Throughout the recent decades we have seen the growth of German ideas and the increasing tendency to follow German methods of State interference and State control in other countries, even in England, the home of individualism. The defeat of Germany in the European war no more spelt the defeat of her ideals than the defeat of revolutionary and Napoleonic France by the European coalition and even the temporary triumph of the monarchic and aristocratic system prevented the spread of her new ideas over all Europe. Even if German militarism and Junkerism were destroyed, the collapse of the imperial form of government can only hasten the more thorough development and victory of that which has been working behind them and forcing them to minister to it, the great modern tendency of the perfectly organised socialistic

---

[2] This was done with a stupendous beginning of thoroughness in Bolshevist Russia, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and the necessity or the choice of it threatened at one time to spread everywhere.

State, while the evident result of the war in the nations opposed to her has been to force them more rapidly towards the same ideal.

If this were all, the natural development of things aided by the frustration of the German form of imperialism would lead logically to a new ordering of the world on the basis of a system of independent but increasingly organised national States associated together more or less closely for international purposes while preserving their independent existence. Such is the ideal which has attracted the human mind as a yet distant possibility since the great revolutionary ferment set in; it is the idea of a federation of free nations, the parliament of man, the federation of the world. But the actual circumstances forbid any hope of such an ideal consummation in the near future. For the nationalistic, democratic and socialistic ideas are not alone at work in the world; imperialism is equally in the ascendant. Only a few European peoples at the present moment are nations confined to themselves; each is a nation free in itself but dominating over other human groupings who are not free or only partially free. Even little Belgium has its Congo, little Portugal its colonies, little Holland its dependencies in the eastern Archipelago; even little Balkan States have aspired to revive an "empire" and to rule over others not of their own nationality or have cherished the idea of becoming predominant in the peninsula. Mazzini's Italy has its imperialistic ventures and ambitions in Tripoli, Abyssinia, Albania, the Greek islands. This imperialistic tendency is likely to grow stronger for some time in the future rather than to weaken. The idea of a remodelling even of Europe itself on the strict principle of nationality, which captivated liberal minds in England at the beginning of the war, has not yet been made practicable and, if it were effected, there would still remain the whole of Asia and Africa as a field for the imperialistic ambitions of the Western nations and Japan. The disinterestedness that led a majority in America to decree the liberation of the Philippines and restrained the desire to take advantage of the troubles of Mexico is not possible to the mentality of the Old World, and it is doubtful how long it can stand even in America against the rising tide of imperialistic sentiment. National egoism, the pride of domination and the desire of expansion still govern the mind of humanity, however modified they may now be in their methods by the first weak beginnings of higher motives and a better national morality, and until this spirit is radically changed, the union of the human race by a federation of free nations must remain a noble chimera.

Undoubtedly, a free association and unity must be the ultimate goal of our development and until it is realised the world must be subject to constant changes and revolutions. Every established order, because it is imperfect, because it insists on arrangements which come to be recognised as involving injustice or which stand in the way of new tendencies and forces, because it outlasts its utility and justification, must end in *malaise*, resistance and upheaval, must change itself or be changed or else lead to cataclysms such as periodically trouble our human advance. But the time has not come when the true principle of order can replace those which are artificial and imperfect. It is idle to hope for a federation of free nations until either the present inequalities between nation and nation are removed or else the whole world rises to a common culture based upon a higher moral and spiritual status than is now actual or possible. The imperial instinct being alive and dominant and stronger at present than the principle of nationalism, the evolution of great empires can hardly fail to overshadow for a time at least the tendency to the development of free nationalities. All that can be hoped is that the old artificial, merely political empire may be replaced by a truer and more moral type, and that the existing empires, driven by the necessity of strengthening themselves and by an enlightened self-interest, may come to see that the recognition of national autonomy is a wise and necessary concession to the still vital instinct of nationalism and can be used so as to strengthen instead of weakening their imperial strength and unity. In this way, while a federation of free nations is for the present impossible, a system of federated empires and free nations drawn together in a closer association than the world has yet seen is not altogether impossible; and through this and other steps some form of political unity for mankind may at a more or less distant date be realisable.[3]

The war brought up many suggestions for such a closer association, but as a rule they were limited to a better ordering of the international relations of Europe. One of these was the elimination of war by a stricter international law administered by an international Court and supported by the sanction of the nations which shall be enforced by all of them against any offender. Such a solution is chimerical unless it is immediately followed up by farther and far-reaching developments. For the law given by the Court must be enforced either by an alliance of some of the stronger Powers as, for instance, the coalition of the victorious allies dominating the rest of Europe, or by a concert of all the European Powers or else by a United States of Europe or some other form of European federation. A dominating alliance of great Powers would be simply a repetition in principle of the system of Metternich and would inevitably break down after some lapse of time, while a Concert of Europe must mean, as experience has shown, the uneasy attempt of rival groupings to maintain a precarious understanding which may postpone but cannot eventually prevent fresh struggles and collisions. In such imperfect systems the law would only be obeyed so long as it was expedient, so long only as the Powers who desired new changes and readjustments not admitted by the others did not consider the moment opportune for resistance. The Law within a nation is only secure because there is a recognised authority empowered to determine it and to make the necessary changes and possessed of a sufficient force to punish all violation of its statutes. An international or an inter-European law must have the same advantages if it is to exercise anything more than a merely moral force which can be set at nought by those who are strong enough to defy it and who find an advantage in the violation. Some form of European federation, however loose, is therefore essential if the idea behind these suggestions of a new order is to be made practically effective, and once commenced, such a federation must necessarily be tightened and draw more and more towards the form of a United States of Europe.

---

[3] The appearance of Hitler and the colossal attempt at German world-domination have paradoxically helped by his defeat, and the reaction against him entirely altered the world circumstances: the United States of Europe is now a practical possibility and has begun to feel towards self-accomplishment.

Whether such a European unity can be formed or whether, if formed, it can be maintained and perfected against the many forces of dissolution, the many causes of quarrel which would for long try it to the breaking point, only experience can show. But it is evident that in the present state of human egoism it would, if formed, become a tremendously powerful instrument for the domination and exploitation of the rest of the world by the group of nations which are at present in the forefront of human progress. It would inevitably awaken in antagonism to it an idea of Asiatic unity and an idea of American unity, and while such continental groupings replacing the present smaller national unities might well be an advance towards the final union of all mankind, yet their realisation would mean cataclysms of a kind and scope which would dwarf the present catastrophe and in which the hopes of mankind might founder and fatally collapse rather than progress nearer to fulfilment. But the chief objection to the idea of a United States of Europe is that the general sense of humanity is already seeking to travel beyond its continental distinctions and make them subordinate to a larger human idea. A division on the continental basis might therefore be from this point of view a reactionary step of the gravest kind and might be attended with the most serious consequences to human progress.

Europe, indeed, is in this anomalous position that it is at once ripe for the Pan-European idea and at the same time under the necessity of overpassing it. The conflict of the two tendencies was curiously exemplified not so long ago by certain speculations on the nature of the recent European struggle. It was suggested that the sin of Germany in this war was due to its exaggerated egoistic idea of the nation and its disregard of the larger idea of Europe to which the nation-idea must now be subjected and subordinated. The total life of Europe must now be the all-engrossing unity, its good the paramount consideration, and the egoism of the nation must consent to exist only as an organic part of this larger egoism. In effect, this is the acceptance after so many decades of the idea of Nietzsche who insisted that nationalism and war were anachronisms and the ideal of all enlightened minds must be not to be good patriots but good Europeans. But immediately the question arose, what then of the increasing importance of America in world politics, what of Japan and China, what of the renewed stirrings of life in Asia? The writer had therefore to draw back from his first formula and to explain that by Europe he meant not Europe but all nations that had accepted the principles of European civilisation as the basis of their polity and social organisation. This more philosophical formula has the obvious or at least the specious advantage that it brings in America and Japan and thus recognises all the actually free or dominant nations in the circle of the proposed solidarity and holds out too the hope of admission into the circle to others whenever they can prove, after the forceful manner of Japan or otherwise, that they too have come up to the European standard.

Indeed, though Europe is still strongly separate in its own conception from the rest of the world, — as was shown by the often expressed resentment of the continual existence of Turkey in Europe and the desire to put an end to this government of Europeans by Asiatics, — yet as a matter of fact it is inextricably tangled up with America and Asia. Some of the European nations have colonies in America, all have possessions and ambitions in Asia, where Japan alone is outside the shadow cast by Europe, or in Northern Africa which is culturally one with Asia. The United States of Europe would therefore mean a federation of free European nations dominant over a half-subject Asia and possessor of parts of America and there standing in uneasy proximity to nations still free and necessarily troubled, alarmed and overshadowed by this giant immiscence. The inevitable result would be in America to bring together more closely the Latin Centre and South and the English-speaking North and to emphasise immensely the Monroe Doctrine with consequences which cannot easily be foreseen, while in Asia there could be only one of two final endings to the situation, either the disappearance of the remaining free Asiatic States or a vast Asiatic resurgence and the recoil of Europe from Asia. Such movements would be a prolongation of the old line of human development and set at nought the new cosmopolitan conditions created by modern culture and Science; but they are inevitable if the nation-idea in the West is to merge into the Europe-idea, that is to say, into the continental idea rather than into the wider consciousness of a common humanity.

If, therefore, any new supra-national order is to evolve sooner or later as a result of the present upheaval, it must be an association that will embrace Asia, Africa and America as well as Europe and it must be in its nature an organisation of international life constituted by a number of free nations such as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the United States, the Latin republics and a number of imperial and colonising nations such as are most of the peoples of Europe. Either the latter would remain, as they now are, free in themselves but masters of subject peoples who, with the advance of time, would become more and more intolerant of the yoke imposed on them or else they would be, by an ethical advance which is as yet very far from accomplished, partly centres of free federal empires, partly nations holding in trust races yet backward and undeveloped until they arrived at the capacity of self-administration, as the United States have claimed to hold for a time the Philippines. In the former case, the unity, the order, the common law established would perpetuate and be partly founded on an enormous system of injustice and exposed to the revolts and revolutions of Nature and the great revenges by which she finally vindicates the human spirit against wrongs which she tolerates for a time as necessary incidents of human development. In the latter, there would be some chance that the new order, however far in its beginnings from the ultimate ideal of a free association of free human aggregates, might lead peacefully and by a natural unfolding of the spiritual and ethical progress of the race to such a secure, just and healthy political, social and economic foundation as might enable mankind to turn from its preoccupation with these lower cares and begin at last that development of its higher self which is the nobler part of its potential destiny or, if not that, — for who knows whether Nature's long experiment in the human type is foredoomed to success or failure, — at least the loftiest possibility of our future which the human mind can envisage.

Chapter XI

The Small Free Unit and the Larger Concentrated Unity

IF WE consider the possibilities of a unification of the human race on political, administrative and economic lines, we see that a certain sort of unity or first step towards it appears not only to be possible, but to be more or less urgently demanded by an underlying spirit and sense of need in the race. This spirit has been created largely by increased mutual knowledge and close communication, partly by the development of wider and freer intellectual ideals and emotional sympathies in the progressive mind of the race. The sense of need is partly due to the demand for the satisfaction of these ideals and sympathies, partly to economic and other material changes which render the results of divided national life, war, commercial rivalry and consequent insecurity and peril to the complex and easily vulnerable modern social organisation more and more irksome both for the economic and political human animal and for the idealistic thinker. Partly also the new turn is due to the desire of the successful nations to possess, enjoy and exploit the rest of the world at ease without the peril incurred by their own formidable rivalries and competitions and rather by some convenient understanding and compromise among themselves. The real strength of this tendency is in its intellectual, idealistic and emotional parts. Its economic causes are partly permanent and therefore elements of strength and secure fulfilment, partly artificial and temporary and therefore elements of insecurity and weakness. The political incentives are the baser part in the amalgam; their presence may even vitiate the whole result and lead in the end to a necessary dissolution and reversal of whatever unity may be initially accomplished.

Still, a result of some kind is possible in the comparatively near or more distant future. We can see on what lines it is likely to work itself out, if at all, — at first by a sort of understanding and initial union for the most pressing common needs, arrangements of commerce, arrangements of peace and war, arrangements for the common arbitration of disputes, arrangements for the policing of the world. These crude initial arrangements, once accepted, will naturally develop by the pressure of the governing idea and the inherent need into a closer unity and even perhaps in the long end into a common supreme government which may endure till the defects of the system established and the rise of other ideals and tendencies inconsistent with its maintenance lead either to a new radical change or to its entire dissolution into its natural elements and constituents. We have seen also that such a union is likely to take place upon the basis of the present world somewhat modified by the changes that must now inevitably take place, — international changes that are likely to be adjustments rather than the introduction of a new radical principle and social changes within the nations themselves of a much more far-reaching character. It will take place, that is to say, as between the present free nations and colonising empires, but with an internal arrangement of society and an administrative mould progressing rapidly towards a rigorous State socialism and equality by which the woman and the worker will chiefly profit. For these are the master tendencies of the hour. Certainly, no one can confidently predict that the hour will victoriously prevail over the whole future. We know not what surprises of the great human drama, what violent resurgence of the old nation-idea, what collisions, failures, unexpected results in the working out of the new social tendencies, what revolt of the human spirit against a burdensome and mechanical State collectivism, what growth and power perhaps of a gospel of philosophic anarchism missioned to reassert man's ineradicable yearning for individual liberty and free self-fulfilment, what unforeseen religious and spiritual revolutions may not intervene in the very course of this present movement of mankind and divert it to quite another denouement. The human mind has not yet reached that illumination or that sure science by which it can forecast securely even its morrow.

Let us suppose, however, that no such unexpected factor intervenes. The political unity of mankind, of a sort, may then be realised. The question still remains whether it is desirable that it should be realised thus and now, and if so, under what circumstances, with what necessary conditions in the absence of which the result gained can only be temporary as were former partial unifications of mankind. And first let us remember at what cost humanity has gained the larger unities it has already achieved in the past. The immediate past has actually created for us the nation, the natural homogeneous empire of nations kin in race and culture or united by geographical necessity and mutual attractions, and the artificial heterogeneous empire secured by conquest, maintained by force, by yoke of law, by commercial and military colonisation, but not yet welded into true psychological unities. Each of these principles of aggregation has given some actual gain or some possibility of progress to mankind at large, but each has brought with it its temporary or inherent disadvantages and inflicted some wound on the complete human ideal.

The creation of a new unity, when it proceeds by external and mechanical processes, has usually and indeed almost by a practical necessity to go through a process of internal contraction before the unit can indulge again in a new and free expansion of its inner life; for its first need and instinct is to form and secure its own existence. To enforce its unity is its predominant impulse and to that paramount need it has to sacrifice the diversity, harmonious complexity, richness of various material, freedom of inner relations without which the true perfection of life is impossible. In order to enforce a strong and sure unity it has to create a paramount centre, a concentrated State power, whether of king or military aristocracy or plutocratic class or other governing contrivance, to which the liberty and free life of the individual, the commune, the city, the region or any other lesser unit has to be subordinated and sacrificed. At the same time, there is a tendency to create a firmly mechanised and rigid state of society, sometimes a hierarchy of classes or orders in which the lower is appointed to an inferior place and duty and bound down to a narrower life than the higher, such as the hierarchy of king, clergy, aristocracy, middle class, peasantry, servile class which replaced in Europe the rich and free existence of the city and the tribe or else a rigid caste system such as the one that replaced in India the open and natural existence of the vigorous Aryan clans. Moreover, as we have already seen, the active and stimulating participation of all or most in the full vigour of the common life, which was the great advantage of the small but free earlier communities, is much more difficult in a larger aggregate and is at first impossible. In its place, there is the concentration of the force of life into a dominant centre or at most a governing and directing class or classes, while the great mass of the community is left in a relative torpor and enjoys only a minimum and indirect share of that vitality in so far as it is allowed to filter down from above and indirectly affect the grosser, poorer and narrower life below. This at least is the phenomenon we see in the historic period of human development which preceded and led up to the creation of the modern world. In the future also the need of a concentrating and formative rigidity may be felt for the firm formation and consolidation of the new political and social forms that are taking or will take its place.

The small human communities in which all can easily take an active part and in which ideas and movements are swiftly and vividly felt by all and can be worked out rapidly and thrown into form without the need of a large and difficult organisation, turn naturally towards freedom as soon as they cease to be preoccupied with the first absorbing necessity of self-preservation. Such forms as absolute monarchy or a despotic oligarchy, an infallible Papacy or sacrosanct theocratic class cannot flourish at ease in such an environment; they lack that advantage of distance from the mass and that remoteness from exposure to the daily criticism of the individual mind on which their prestige depends and they have not, to justify them, the pressing need of uniformity among large multitudes and over vast areas which they elsewhere serve to establish and maintain. Therefore we find in Rome the monarchical regime unable to maintain itself and in Greece looked upon as an unnatural and brief usurpation, while the oligarchical form of government, though more vigorous, could not assure to itself, except in a purely military community like Sparta, either a high and exclusive supremacy or a firm duration. The tendency to a democratic freedom in which every man had a natural part in the civic life as well as in the cultural institutions of the State, an equal voice in the determination of law and policy and as much share in their execution as could be assured to him by his right as a citizen and his capacity as an individual, — this democratic tendency was inborn in the spirit and inherent in the form of the city state. In Rome the tendency was equally present but could not develop so rapidly or fulfil itself so entirely as in Greece because of the necessities of a military and conquering State which needed either an absolute head, an *imperator*, or a small oligarchic body to direct its foreign policy and its military conduct; but even so, the democratic element was always present and the democratic tendency was so strong that it began to work and grow from almost prehistoric times even in the midst of Rome's constant struggle for self-preservation and expansion and was only suspended by such supreme struggles as the great duel with Carthage for the empire of the Mediterranean. In India the early communities were free societies in which the king was only a military head or civic chief; we find the democratic element persisting in the days of Buddha and surviving in small States in the days of Chandragupta and Megasthenes even when great bureaucratically governed monarchies and empires were finally replacing the free earlier polity. It was only in proportion as the need for a large organisation of Indian life over the whole peninsula or at least the northern part of it made itself increasingly felt that the form of absolute monarchy grew upon the country and the learned and sacerdotal caste imposed its theocratic domination over the communal mind and its rigid Shastra as the binding chain of social unity and the binding link of a national culture.

As in the political and civic, so in the social life. A certain democratic equality is almost inevitable in a small community; the opposite phenomenon of strong class distinctions and superiorities may establish itself during the military period of the clan or tribe, but cannot long be maintained in the close intimacy of a settled city state except by artificial means such as were employed by Sparta and Venice. Even when the distinction remains, its exclusiveness is blunted and cannot deepen and intensify itself into the nature of a fixed hierarchy. The natural social type of the small community is such as we see in Athens, where not only Cleon, the tanner, exercised as strong a political influence as the highborn and wealthy Nicias and the highest offices and civic functions were open to men of all classes, but in social functions and connections also there was a free association and equality. We see a similar democratic equality, though of a different type, in the earlier records of Indian civilisation. The rigid hierarchy of castes with the pretensions and arrogance of the caste spirit was a later development; in the simpler life of old, difference or even superiority of function did not carry with it a sense of personal or class superiority: at the beginning, the most sacred religious and social function, that of the Rishi and sacrificer, seems to have been open to men of all classes and occupations. Theocracy, caste and absolute kingship grew in force *pari passu* like the Church and the monarchical power in mediaeval Europe under the compulsion of the new circumstances created by the growth of large social and political aggregates.

Societies advancing in culture under these conditions of the early Greek, Roman and Indian city states and clan-nations were bound to develop a general vividness of life and dynamic force of culture and creation which the later national aggregates were obliged to forego and could only recover after a long period of self-formation in which the difficulties attending the development of a new organism had to be met and overcome. The cultural and civic life of the Greek city, of which Athens was the supreme achievement, a life in which living itself was an education, where the poorest as well as the richest sat together in the theatre to see and judge the dramas of Sophocles and Euripides and the Athenian trader and shopkeeper took part in the subtle philosophical conversations of Socrates, created for Europe not only its fundamental political types and ideals but practically all its basic forms of intellectual, philosophical, literary and artistic culture. The equally vivid political, juridical and military life of the single city of Rome created for Europe its types of political activity, military discipline and science, jurisprudence of law and equity and even its ideals of empire and colonisation. And in India it was that early vivacity of spiritual life of which we catch glimpses in the Vedic, Upanishadic and Buddhistic literature, which created the religions, philosophies, spiritual disciplines that have since by direct or indirect influence spread something of their spirit and knowledge over Asia and Europe. And everywhere the root of this free, generalised and widely pulsating vital and dynamic force, which the modern world is only now in some sort recovering, was amid all differences the same; it was the complete participation not of a limited class, but of the individual generally in the many-sided life of the community, the sense each had of being full of the energy of all and of a certain freedom to grow, to be himself, to achieve, to think, to create in the undammed flood of that universal energy. It is this condition, this relation between the individual and the aggregate which modern life has tried to some extent to restore in a cumbrous, clumsy and imperfect fashion but with much vaster forces of life and thought at its disposal than early humanity could command.

It is possible that, if the old city states and clan-nations could have endured and modified themselves so as to create larger free aggregates without losing their own life in the new mass, many problems might have been solved with a greater simplicity, direct vision and truth to Nature which we have now to settle in a very complex and cumbrous fashion and under peril of enormous dangers and wide-spread convulsions. But that was not to be. That early life had vital defects which it could not cure. In the case of the Mediterranean nations, two most important exceptions have to be made to the general participation of all individuals in the full civic and cultural life of the community; for that participation was denied to the slave and hardly granted at all in the narrow life conceded to the woman. In India the institution of slavery was practically absent and the woman had at first a freer and more dignified position than in Greece and

Rome; but the slave was soon replaced by the proletariate, called in India the Shudra, and the increasing tendency to deny the highest benefits of the common life and culture to the Shudra and the woman brought down Indian society to the level of its Western congeners. It is possible that these two great problems of economic serfdom and the subjection of woman might have been attacked and solved in the early community if it had lived longer, as it has now been attacked and is in process of solution in the modern State. But it is doubtful; only in Rome do we glimpse certain initial tendencies which might have turned in that direction and they never went farther than faint hints of a future possibility.

More vital was the entire failure of this early form of human society to solve the question of the interrelations between community and community. War remained their normal relation. All attempts at free federation failed, and military conquest was left as the sole means of unification. The attachment to the small aggregate in which each man felt himself to be most alive had generated a sort of mental and vital insularity which could not accommodate itself to the new and wider ideas which philosophy and political thought, moved by the urge of larger needs and tendencies, brought into the field of life. Therefore the old States had to dissolve and disappear, in India into the huge bureaucratic empires of the Gupta and the Maurya to which the Pathan, the Moghul and the Englishman succeeded, in the West into the vast military and commercial expansions achieved by Alexander, by the Carthaginian oligarchy and by the Roman republic and empire. The latter were not national but supranational unities, premature attempts at too large unifications of mankind that could not really be accomplished with any finality until the intermediate nation-unit had been fully and healthily developed.

The creation of the national aggregate was therefore reserved for the millennium that followed the collapse of the Roman Empire; and in order to solve this problem left to it, the world during that period had to recoil from many and indeed most of the gains which had been achieved for mankind by the city states. Only after this problem was solved could there be any real effort to develop not only a firmly organised but a progressive and increasingly perfected community, not only a strong mould of social life but the free growth and completeness of life itself within that mould. This cycle we must briefly study before we can consider whether the intervention of a new effort at a larger aggregation is likely to be free from the danger of a new recoil in which the inner progress of the race will have, at least temporarily, to be sacrificed in order to concentrate effort on the development and affirmation of a massive external unity.

Chapter XII

The Ancient Cycle of Prenational Empire-Building — The Modern Cycle of Nation-Building

WE HAVE seen that the building of the true national unit was a problem of human aggregation left over by the ancient world to the mediaeval. The ancient world started from the tribe, the city state, the clan, the small regional state — all of them minor units living in the midst of other like units which were similar to them in general type, kin usually in language and most often or very largely in race, marked off at least from other divisions of humanity by a tendency towards a common civilisation and protected in that community with each other and in their diversity from others by favourable geographical circumstances. Thus Greece, Italy, Gaul, Egypt, China, Medo-Persia, India, Arabia, Israel, all began with a loose cultural and geographical aggregation which made them separate and distinct culture-units before they could become nation-units. Within that loose unity the tribe, clan or city or regional states formed in the vague mass so many points of distinct, vigorous and compact unity which felt indeed more and more powerfully the divergence and opposition of their larger cultural oneness to the outside world but could feel also and often much more nearly and acutely their own divergences, contrasts and oppositions. Where this sense of local distinctness was most acute, there the problem of national unification was necessarily more difficult and its solution, when made, tended to be more illusory.

The solution was in most cases attempted. In Egypt and Judaea it was successfully found even in that ancient cycle of historical evolution; but in the latter instance certainly, in the former probably, the full result came only by the hard discipline of subjection to a foreign yoke. Where this discipline was lacking, where the nation-unity was in some sort achieved from within, — usually through the conquest of all the rest by one strong clan, city, regional unit such as Rome, Macedon, the mountain clans of Persia, — the new State, instead of waiting to base firmly its achievement and lay the foundations of the national unity deep and strong, proceeded at once to overshoot its immediate necessity and embark on a career of conquest. Before the psychological roots of the national unity had been driven deep, before the nation was firmly self-conscious, irresistibly possessed of its oneness and invincibly attached to it, the governing State impelled by the military impulsion which had carried it so far attempted immediately to form by the same means a larger empire-aggregate. Assyria, Macedon, Rome, Persia, later on Arabia followed all the same tendency and the same cycle. The great invasion of Europe and Western Asia by the Gaelic race and the subsequent disunion and decline of Gaul were probably due to the same phenomenon and proceeded from a still more immature and ill-formed unification than the Macedonian. All became the starting-point of great empire-movements before they had become the keystone of securely built national unities.

These empires, therefore, could not endure. Some lasted longer than others because they had laid down firmer foundations in the central nation-unity, as did Rome in Italy. In Greece Philip, the first unifier, made a rapid but imperfect sketch of unification, the celerity of which had been made possible by the previous and yet looser Spartan domination; and had he been followed by successors of a patient talent rather than by a man of vast imagination and supreme genius, this first rough practical outline might have been filled in, strengthened and an enduring work achieved. One who first founds on a large scale and rapidly, needs always as his successor a man with the talent or the genius for organisation rather than an impetus for expansion. A Caesar followed by an Augustus meant a work of massive durability; a Philip followed by an Alexander an achievement of great importance to the world by its results, but in itself a mere splendour of short-lived brilliance. Rome, to whom careful Nature denied any man of commanding genius until she had firmly unified Italy and laid the basis of her empire, was able to build much more firmly; nevertheless, she founded that empire not as the centre and head of a great nation, but still as a dominant city using a subject Italy for the springing-board to leap upon and subjugate the surrounding world. Therefore she had to face a much more difficult problem of assimilation, that of nation-nebulae and formed or inchoate cultures different from her own, before she had achieved and learned to apply to the new problem the art of complete and absolute unification on a smaller and easier scale, before she had welded into one living national organism, no longer Roman but Italian, the elements of difference and community offered by the Gallic, Latin, Umbrian, Oscan and Graeco-Apulian factors in ancient Italy. Therefore, although her empire endured for several centuries, it achieved temporary conservation at the cost of energy of vitality and inner vigour; it accomplished neither the nation-unit nor the durable empire-unity, and like other ancient empires it had to collapse and make room for a new era of true nation-building.

It is necessary to emphasise where the error lay. The administrative, political, economic organisation of mankind in aggregates of smaller or greater size is a work which belongs at its basis to the same order of phenomena as the creation of vital organisms in physical Nature. It uses, that is to say, primarily external and physical methods governed by the principles of physical life-energy intent on the creation of living forms, although its inner object is to deliver, to manifest and to bring into secure working a supraphysical, a psychological principle latent behind the operations of the life and the body. To build a strong and durable body and vital functioning for a distinct, powerful, well-centred and well-diffused corporate ego is its whole aim and method. In this process, as we have seen, first smaller distinct units in a larger loose unity are formed; these have a strong psychological existence and a well-developed body and vital functioning, but in the larger mass the psychological sense and the vital energy are present but unorganised and without power of definite functioning, and the body is a fluid quantity or a half-nebulous or at most a half-fluid, half-solidified mass, a plasm rather than a body. This has in its turn to be formed and organised; a firm physical shape has to be made for it, a well-defined vital functioning and a clear psychological reality, self-consciousness and mental will-to-be.

Thus a new larger unity is formed; and this again finds itself among a number of similar unities which it looks on first as hostile and quite different from itself, then enters into a sort of community in difference with them, till again we find repeated the original phenomenon of a number of smaller distinct units in a wider loose unity. The contained units are larger and more complex than before, the containing unity is also larger and more complex than before, but the essential position is the same and a similar problem presents itself for solution. Thus in the beginning there was the phenomenon of city states and regional peoples coexisting as disunited parts of a loose geographical and cultural unity, Italy or Hellas, and there was the problem of creating the Hellenic or Italian nation. Afterwards there came instead the phenomenon of nation-units formed or in formation coexisting as disunited parts of the loose geographical and cultural unity, first, of Christendom, then, of Europe, and with it the problem of the union of this Christendom or of this Europe which, though more than once conceived by individual statesmen or political thinkers, was never achieved nor even the first steps attempted. Before its difficulties could be solved, the modern movement with its unifying forces has presented to us the new and more complex phenomenon of a number of nation-units and empire-units embedded in the loose, but growing life-interdependence and commercial close-connection of mankind, and the attendant problem of the unification of mankind already overshadows the unfulfilled dream of the unification of Europe.

In physical Nature vital organisms cannot live entirely on themselves; they live either by interchange with other vital organisms or partly by that interchange and partly by devouring others; for these are the processes of assimilation common to separated physical life. In unification of life, on the other hand, an assimilation is possible which goes beyond this alternative of either the devouring of one by another or a continued separate distinctness which limits assimilation to a mutual reception of the energies discharged by one life upon another. There can be instead an association of units consciously subordinating themselves to a general unity which is developed in the process of their coming together. Some of these, indeed, are killed and used as material for new elements, but all cannot be so treated, all cannot be devoured by one dominant unit; for in that case there is no unification, no creation of a larger unity, no continued greater life, but only a temporary survival of the devourer by the digestion and utilisation of the energy of the devoured. In the unification of human aggregates, this then is the problem, how the component units shall be subordinated to a new unity without their death and disappearance.

The weakness of the old empire-unities created by conquest was that they tended to destroy the smaller units they assimilated, as did imperial Rome, and to turn them into food for the life of the dominant organ. Gaul, Spain, Africa, Egypt were thus killed, turned into dead matter and their energy drawn into the centre, Rome; thus the empire became a great dying mass on which the life of Rome fed for several centuries. In such a method, however, the exhaustion of the life in the subject parts must end by leaving the dominant voracious centre without any source for new storage of energy. At first the best intellectual force of the conquered provinces flowed to Rome and their vital energy poured into it a great supply of military force and governing ability, but eventually both failed and first the intellectual energy of Rome and then its military and political ability died away in the midst of the general death. Nor would Roman civilisation have lived even for so long but for the new ideas and motives it received from the East. This interchange, however, had neither the vividness nor the constant flow which marks the incoming and the return of ever new tides of thought and motives of life in the modern world and it could not really revivify the low vitality of the imperial body nor even arrest very long the process of its decay. When the Roman grasp loosened, the world which it had held so firmly constricted had been for long a huge, decorous, magnificently organised death-in-life incapable of new origination or self-regeneration; vitality could only be restored through the inrush of the vigorous barbarian world from the plains of Germany, the steppes beyond the Danube and the deserts of Arabia. Dissolution had to precede a movement of sounder construction.

In the mediaeval period of nation-building, we see Nature mending this earlier error. When we speak indeed of the errors of Nature, we use a figure illegitimately borrowed from our human psychology and experience; for in Nature there are no errors but only the deliberate measure of her paces traced and retraced in a prefigured rhythm, of which each step has a meaning and its place in the action and reaction of her gradual advance. The crushing domination of Roman uniformity was a device, not to kill out permanently, but to discourage in their excessive separative vitality the old smaller units, so that when they revived again they might not present an insuperable obstacle to the growth of a true national unity. What the mere nation-unity may lose by not passing through this cruel discipline, — we leave aside the danger it brings of an actual death like the Assyrian or Chaldean as well as the spiritual and other gains that may accrue by avoiding it, — is shown in the example of India where the Maurya, Gupta, Andhra, Moghul empires, huge and powerful and well-organised as they were, never succeeded in passing a steam-roller over the too strongly independent life of the subordinate unities from the village community to the regional or linguistic area. It has needed the pressure of a rule neither indigenous in origin nor locally centred, the dominance of a foreign nation entirely alien in culture and morally armoured against the sympathies and attractions of India's cultural atmosphere to do in a century this work which two thousand years of a looser imperialism had failed to accomplish. Such a process implies necessarily a cruel and often dangerous pressure and breaking up of old institutions; for Nature tired of the obstinate immobility of an age-long resistance seems to care little how many beautiful and valuable things are destroyed so long as her main end is accomplished: but we may be sure that if destruction is done, it is because for that end the destruction was indispensable.

In Europe, after the Roman pressure was removed, the city state and regional nation revived as elements of a new construction; but except in one country and curiously enough in Italy itself the city state offered no real resistance to the process of national unification. We may ascribe its strong resuscitation in Italy to two circumstances, first, to the premature Roman oppression of the ancient free city-life of Italy before it had realised its full potentialities and, secondly, to its survival in seed both by the prolonged civil life of Rome itself and by the persistence in the Italian *municipia* of a sense of separate life, oppressed but never quite ground out of existence as was the separate clan-life of Gaul and Spain or the separate city-life of Greece. Thus psychologically the Italian city state neither died satisfied and fulfilled nor was broken up beyond recall; it revived in new incarnations. And this revival was disastrous to the nation-life of Italy, though an incalculable boon and advantage to the culture and civilisation of the world; for as the city-life of Greece had originally created, so the city-life of Italy recovered, renewed and gave in a new form to our modern times the art, literature, thought and science of the Graeco-Roman world. Elsewhere, the city-unit revived only in the shape of the free or half-free municipalities of mediaeval France, Flanders and Germany; and these were at no time an obstacle to unification, but rather helped to form a subconscious basis for it and in the meanwhile to prevent by rich impulses and free movement of thought and art the mediaeval tendency to intellectual uniformity, stagnation and obscuration.

The old clan-nation perished, except in countries like Ireland and Northern and Western Scotland which had not undergone the Roman pressure, and there it was as fatal to unification as the city state in Italy; it prevented Ireland from evolving an organised unity and the Highland Celts from amalgamating with the Anglo-Celtic Scotch nation until the yoke of England passed over them and did what the Roman rule would have done if it had not been stayed in its expansion by the Grampians and the Irish seas. In the rest of Western Europe, the work done by the Roman rule was so sound that even the domination of the

Western countries by the tribal nations of Germany failed to revive the old strongly marked and obstinately separative clan-nation. It created in its stead the regional kingdoms of Germany and the feudal and provincial divisions of France and Spain; but it was only in Germany, which like Ireland and the Scotch highlands had not endured the Roman yoke, that this regional life proved a serious obstacle to unification. In France it seemed for a time to prevent it, but in reality it resisted only long enough to make itself of value as an element of richness and variation in the final French unity. The unexampled perfection of that unity is a sign of the secret wisdom concealed in the prolonged process we watch through the history of France which seems to a superficial glance so miserable and distracted, so long an alternation of anarchy with feudal or monarchic despotism, so different from the gradual, steady and much more orderly development of the national life of England. But in England the necessary variation and richness of the ultimate organism was otherwise provided for by the great difference of the races that formed the new nation and by the persistence of Wales, Ireland and Scotland as separate cultural units with a subordinate self-consciousness of their own in the larger unity.

The European cycle of nation-building differs therefore from the ancient cycle which led from the regional and city state to the empire, first, in its not overshooting itself by proceeding towards a larger unification to the neglect of the necessary intermediate aggregate, secondly, in its slow and ripening progression through three successive stages by which unity was secured and yet the constituent elements not killed nor prematurely nor unduly oppressed by the instruments of unification. The first stage progressed through a long balancing of centripetal and centrifugal tendencies in which the feudal system provided a principle of order and of a loose but still organic unity. The second was a movement of unification and increasing uniformity in which certain features of the ancient imperial system of Rome were repeated, but with a less crushing force and exhausting tendency. It was marked first by the creation of a metropolitan centre which began to draw to it, like Rome, the best life-energies of all the other parts. A second feature was the growth of an absolute sovereign authority whose function was to impose a legal, administrative, political and linguistic uniformity and centralisation on the national life. A third sign of this movement was the establishment of a governing spiritual head and body which served to impose a similar uniformity of religious thought and intellectual education and opinion. This unifying pressure too far pursued might have ended disastrously like the Roman but for a third stage of revolt and diffusion which broke or subordinated these instruments, feudalism, monarchy, Church authority as soon as their work had been done and substituted a new movement directed towards the diffusion of the national life through a strong and well-organised political, legal, social and cultural freedom and equality. Its trend has been to endeavour that as in the ancient city, so in the modern nation, all classes and all individuals should enjoy the benefits and participate in the free energy of the released national existence.

This third stage of national life enjoys the advantages of unity and sufficient uniformity created by the second and is able to safely utilise anew the possibilities of regional and city-life saved from entire destruction by the first. By these gradations of national progress, it has been made increasingly possible for our modern times to envisage, if and where it is willed or needed, the idea of a federated nation or federal empire based securely upon a fundamental and well-realised psychological unity: this indeed was already achieved in a simple type in Germany and in America. Also we can move now safely, if we will, towards a partial decentralisation through subordinate governments, communes and provincial cities which may help to cure the malady of an excessive metropolitan absorption of the best national energies and facilitate their free circulation through many centres and plexuses. At the same time, we contemplate the organised use of a State intelligently representative of the whole conscious, active, vitalised nation as a means for the perfection of the life of the individual and the community. This is the point which the development of the nation-aggregate has reached at the moment when we are again confronted either, according to future trends, with the wider problem of the imperial aggregate or the still vaster problems created by the growing cultural unity and commercial and political interdependence of all mankind.

Chapter XIII

The Formation of the Nation-Unit — The Three Stages

THE THREE stages of development which have marked the mediaeval and modern evolution of the nation-type may be regarded as the natural process where a new form of unity has to be created out of complex conditions and heterogeneous materials by an external rather than an internal process. The external method tries always to mould the psychological condition of men into changed forms and habits under the pressure of circumstances and institutions rather than by the direct creation of a new psychological condition which would, on the contrary, develop freely and flexibly its own appropriate and serviceable social forms. In such a process there must be in the nature of things, first, some kind of looser yet sufficiently compelling order of society and common type of civilisation to serve as a framework or scaffolding within which the new edifice shall arise. Next, there must come naturally a period of stringent organisation directed towards unity and centrality of control and perhaps a general levelling and uniformity under that central direction. Last, if the new organism is not to fossilise and stereotype its life, if it is to be still a living and vigorous creation of Nature, there must come a period of free internal development as soon as the formation is assured and unity has become a mental and vital habit. This freer internal activity assured in its heart and at its basis by the formed needs, ideas and instincts of the community will no longer bring with it the peril of disorder, disruption or arrest of the secure growth and formation of the organism.

The form and principle of the first looser system must depend upon the past history and present conditions of the elements that have to be welded into the new unity. But it is noticeable that both in Europe and Asia there was a common tendency, which we cannot trace to any close interchange of ideas and must therefore attribute to the operation of the same natural cause and necessity, towards the evolution of a social hierarchy based on a division according to four different social activities, — spiritual function, political domination and the double economic function of mercantile production and interchange and dependent labour or service. The spirit, form and equipoise worked out were very different in different parts of the world according to the bent of the community and its circumstances, but the initial principle was almost identical. The motive-force everywhere was the necessity of a large effective form of common social life marked by fixity of status through which individual and small communal interests might be brought under the yoke of a sufficient religious, political and economic unity and likeness. It is notable that Islamic civilisation, with its dominant principle of equality and brotherhood in the faith and its curious institution of a slavery which did not prevent the slave from rising even to the throne, was never able to evolve such a form of society and failed, in spite of its close contact with political and progressive Europe, to develop strong and living, well-organised and conscious nation-units even after the disruption of the empire of the Caliphs; it is only now under the pressure of modern ideas and conditions that this is being done.

But even where this preparatory stage was effectively brought into existence, the subsequent stages did not necessarily follow. The feudal period of Europe with its four orders of the clergy, the king and nobles, the bourgeoisie and the proletariate has a sufficiently close resemblance to the Indian fourfold order of the sacerdotal, military and mercantile classes and the Shudras. The Indian system took its characteristic stamp from a different order of ideas more prominently religious and ethical than political, social or economic; but still, practically, the dominant function of the system was social and economic and there seems at first sight to be no reason why it should not have followed, with whatever differences of detail, the common evolution. Japan with its great feudal order under the spiritual and secular headship of the Mikado and afterwards the double headship of the Mikado and the Shogun evolved one of the most vigorous and self-conscious nation-units the world has seen. China with its great learned class uniting in one the Brahmin and Kshatriya functions of spiritual and secular knowledge and executive rule and its Emperor and Son of Heaven for head and type of the national unity succeeded in becoming a united nation. The different result in India, apart from other causes, was due to the different evolution of the social order. Elsewhere that evolution turned in the direction of a secular organisation and headship; it created within the nation itself a clear political self-consciousness and, as a consequence, either the subordination of the sacerdotal class to the military and administrative or else their equality or even their fusion under a common spiritual and secular head. In mediaeval India, on the contrary, it turned towards the social dominance of the sacerdotal class and the substitution of a common spiritual for a common political consciousness as the basis of the national feeling. No lasting secular centre was evolved, no great imperial or kingly head which by its prestige, power, antiquity and claim to general reverence and obedience could over-balance or even merely balance this sacerdotal prestige and predominance and create a sense of political as well as spiritual and cultural oneness.

The struggle between the Church and the monarchical State is one of the most important and vital features of the history of Europe. Had that conflict ended in an opposite result, the whole future of humanity would have been in jeopardy. As it was, the Church was obliged to renounce its claim to independence and dominance over the temporal power. Even in the nations which remained Catholic, a real independence and dominance of the temporal authority was successfully vindicated; for the King of France exercised a control over the Gallican Church and clergy which rendered all effective interference of the Pope in French affairs impossible. In Spain, in spite of the close alliance between Pope and King and the theoretical admission of the former's complete spiritual authority, it was really the temporal head who decided the ecclesiastical policy and commanded the terrors of the Inquisition. In Italy, the immediate presence of the spiritual head of Catholicism in Rome was a great moral obstacle to the development of a politically united nation; the passionate determination of the liberated Italian people to establish its King in Rome was really a symbol of the law that a self-conscious and politically organised nation can have only one supreme and central authority admitted in its midst and that must be the secular power. The nation which has reached or is reaching this stage must either separate the religious and spiritual claim from its common secular and political life by individualising religion or else it must unite the two by the alliance of the State and the Church to uphold the single authority of the temporal head or combine the spiritual and temporal headship in one authority as was done in Japan and China and in England of the Reformation. Even in India the people which first developed some national self-consciousness not of a predominantly spiritual character were the Rajputs, especially of Mewar, to whom the Raja was in every way the head of society and of the nation; and the peoples which having achieved national self-consciousness came nearest to achieving also organised political unity were the Sikhs for whom Guru Govind Singh deliberately devised a common secular and spiritual centre in the Khalsa, and the Mahrattas who not only established a secular head, representative of the conscious nation, but so secularised themselves that, as it were, the whole people indiscriminately, Brahmin and Shudra, became for a time potentially a people of soldiers, politicians and administrators.

In other words, the institution of a fixed social hierarchy, while it seems to have been a necessary stage for the first tendencies of national formation, needed to modify itself and prepare its own dissolution if the later stages were to be rendered possible. An instrument good for a certain work and set of conditions, if it is still retained when other work has to be done and conditions change, becomes necessarily an obstacle. The direction needed was a change from the spiritual authority of one class and the political authority of another to a centralisation of the common life of the evolving nation under a secular rather than a religious head or, if the religious tendency in the people be too strong to separate things spiritual and temporal, under a national head who shall be the fountain of authority in both departments. Especially was it necessary for the creation of a political self-consciousness, without which no separate nation-unit can be successfully formed, that the sentiments, activities, instruments proper to its creation should for a time take the lead and all others stand behind and support them. A Church or a dominant sacerdotal caste remaining within its own function cannot form the organised political unity of a nation; for it is governed by other than political and administrative considerations and cannot be expected to subordinate to them its own characteristic feelings and interests. It can only be otherwise if the religious caste or sacerdotal class become also as in Tibet the actually ruling political class of the country. In India, the dominance of a caste governed by sacerdotal, religious and partly by spiritual interests and considerations, a caste which dominated thought and society and determined the principles of the national life but did not actually rule and administer, has always stood in the way of the development followed by the more secular-minded European and Mongolian peoples. It is only now after the advent of European civilisation when the Brahmin caste has not only lost the best part of its exclusive hold on the national life but has largely secularised itself, that political and secular considerations have come into the forefront, a pervading political self-consciousness has been awakened and the organised unity of the nation, as distinct from a spiritual and cultural oneness, made possible in fact and not only as an unshaped subconscious tendency.

The second stage of the development of the nation-unit has been, then, the modification of the social structure so as to make room for a powerful and visible centre of political and administrative unity. This stage is necessarily attended by a strong tendency to the abrogation of even such liberties as a fixed social hierarchy provides and the concentration of power in the hands, usually, of a dominant if not always an absolute monarchical government. By modern democratic ideas kingship is only tolerated either as an inoperative figure-head or a servant of the State life or a convenient centre of the executive administration, it is no longer indispensable as a real control; but the historical importance of a powerful kingship in the evolution of the nation-type, as it actually developed in mediaeval times, cannot be exaggerated. Even in liberty-loving, insular and individualistic England, the Plantagenets and Tudors were the real and active nucleus round which the nation grew into firm form and into adult strength; and in Continental countries the part played by the Capets and their successors in France, by the House of Castile in Spain and by the Romanoffs and their predecessors in Russia is still more prominent. In the last of these instances, one might almost say that without the Ivans, Peters and Catherines there would have been no Russia. And even in modern times, the almost mediaeval role played by the Hohenzollerns in the unification and growth of Germany was watched with an uneasy astonishment by the democratic peoples to whom such a phenomenon was no longer intelligible and seemed hardly to be serious. But we may note also the same phenomenon in the first period of formation of the new nations of the Balkans. The seeking for a king to centralise and assist their growth, despite all the strange comedies and tragedies which have accompanied it, becomes perfectly intelligible as a manifestation of the sense of the old necessity, not so truly necessary now[1] but felt in the subconscious minds of these peoples. In the new formation of Japan into a nation of the modern type the Mikado played a similar role; the instinct of the renovators brought him out of his helpless seclusion to meet this inner need. The attempt of a brief dictatorship in revolutionary China to convert itself into a new national monarchy may be attributed quite as much to the same feeling in a practical mind as to mere personal ambition.[2] It is a sense of this great role played by the kingship in centralising and shaping national life at the most critical stage of its growth which explains the tendency common in the East and not altogether absent from the history of the West to invest it with an almost sacred character; it explains also the passionate loyalty with which great national dynasties or their successors have been served even in the moment of their degeneration and downfall.

---

[1] Now replaced by the spiritual-political headship of an almost semi-divine Leader in a Führer who incarnates in himself, as it were, the personality of the race.

[2] It should be noted that even the democratic idealism of the modern mind in China has been obliged to crystallise itself round the “leader”, a Sun Yat Sen or Chiang Kai Shek and the force of inspiration has depended on the power of this living centre.

But this movement of national development, however salutary in its peculiar role, is almost fatally attended with that suppression of the internal liberties of the people which makes the modern mind so naturally though unscientifically harsh in its judgment of the old monarchical absolutism and its tendencies. For always this is a movement of concentration, stringency, uniformity, strong control and one-pointed direction; to universalise one law, one rule, one central authority is the need it has to meet, and therefore its spirit must be to enforce and centralise authority, to narrow or quite suppress liberty and free variation. In England the period of the New Monarchy from Edward IV to Elizabeth, in France the great Bourbon period from Henry IV to Louis XIV, in Spain the epoch which extends from Ferdinand to Philip II, in Russia the rule of Peter the Great and Catherine were the time in which these nations reached their maturity, formed fully and confirmed their spirit and attained to a robust organisation. And all these were periods of absolutism or of movement to absolutism and a certain foundation of uniformity or attempt to found it. This absolutism clothed already in its more primitive garb the reviving idea of the State and its right to impose its will on the life and thought and conscience of the people so as to make it one single, undivided, perfectly efficient and perfectly directed mind and body.[3]

It is from this point of view that we shall most intelligently understand the attempt of the Tudors and the Stuarts to impose both monarchical authority and religious uniformity on the people and seize the real sense of the religious wars in France, the Catholic monarchical rule in Spain with its atrocious method of the Inquisition and the oppressive will of the absolute Czars in Russia to impose also an absolute national Church. The effort failed in England because after Elizabeth it no longer answered to any genuine need; for the nation was already well-formed, strong and secure against disruption from without. Elsewhere it succeeded both in Protestant and Catholic countries, or in the rare cases as in Poland where this movement could not take place or failed, the result was disastrous. Certainly, it was everywhere an outrage on the human soul, but it was not merely due to any natural wickedness of the rulers; it was an inevitable stage in the formation of the nation-unit by political and mechanical means. If it left England the sole country in Europe where liberty could progress by natural gradations, that was due, no doubt, largely to the strong qualities of the people but still more to its fortunate history and insular circumstances.

---

[3] Now illustrated with an astonishing completeness in Russia, Germany and Italy — the totalitarian idea.

The monarchical State in this evolution crushed or subordinated the religious liberties of men and made a subservient or conciliated ecclesiastical order the priest of its divine right, Religion the handmaid of a secular throne. It destroyed the liberties of the aristocracy and left it its privileges, and these even were allowed only that it might support and buttress the power of the king. After using the bourgeoisie against the nobles, it destroyed, where it could, its real and living civic liberties and permitted only some outward forms and its parts of special right and privilege. As for the people, they had no liberties to be destroyed. Thus the monarchical State concentrated in its own activities the whole national life. The Church served it with its moral influence, the nobles with their military traditions and ability, the bourgeoisie with the talent or chicane of its lawyers and the literary genius or administrative power of its scholars, thinkers and men of inborn business capacity; the people gave taxes and served with their blood the personal and national ambitions of the monarchy. But all this powerful structure and closely-knit order of things was doomed by its very triumph and predestined to come down either with a crash or by a more or less unwilling gradual abdication before new necessities and agencies. It was tolerated and supported so long as the nation felt consciously or subconsciously its need and justification; once that was fulfilled and ceased, there came inevitably the old questioning which, now grown fully self-conscious, could no longer be suppressed or permanently resisted. By changing the old order into a mere simulacrum the monarchy had destroyed its own base. The sacerdotal authority of the Church, once questioned on spiritual grounds, could not be long maintained by temporal means, by the sword and the law; the aristocracy keeping its privileges but losing its real functions became odious and questionable to the classes below it; the bourgeoisie conscious of its talent, irritated by its social and political inferiority, awakened by the voice of its thinkers, led the movement of revolt and appealed to the help of the populace; the masses — dumb, oppressed, suffering — rose with this new support which had been denied to them before and overturned the whole social hierarchy. Hence the collapse of the old world and the birth of a new age.

We have already seen the inner justification of this great revolutionary movement. The nation-unit is not formed and does not exist merely for the sake of existing; its purpose is to provide a larger mould of human aggregation in which the race, and not only classes and individuals, may move towards its full human development. So long as the labour of formation continues, this larger development may be held back and authority and order be accepted as the first consideration, but not when the aggregate is sure of its existence and feels the need of an inner expansion. Then the old bonds have to be burst; the means of formation have to be discarded as obstacles to growth. Liberty then becomes the watchword of the race. The ecclesiastical order which suppressed liberty of thought and new ethical and social development, has to be dispossessed of its despotic authority, so that man may be mentally and spiritually free. The monopolies and privileges of the king and aristocracy have to be destroyed, so that all may take their share of the national power, prosperity and activity. Finally, bourgeois capitalism has to be induced or forced to consent to an economic order in which suffering, poverty and exploitation shall be eliminated and the wealth of the community be more equally shared by all who help to create it. In all directions, men have to come into their own, realise the dignity and freedom of the manhood within them and give play to their utmost capacity.

For liberty is insufficient, justice also is necessary and becomes a pressing demand; the cry for equality arises. Certainly, absolute equality is non-existent in this world; but the word was aimed against the unjust and unnecessary inequalities of the old social order. Under a just social order, there must be an equal opportunity, an equal training for all to develop their faculties and to use them, and, so far as may be, an equal share in the advantages of the aggregate life as the right of all who contribute to the existence, vigour and development of that life by the use of their capacities. As we have noted, this need might have taken the form of an ideal of free cooperation guided and helped by a wise and liberal central authority expressing the common will, but it has actually reverted to the old notion of an absolute and efficient State — no longer monarchical, ecclesiastical, aristocratic but secular, democratic and socialistic — with liberty sacrificed to the need of equality and aggregate efficiency. The psychological causes of this reversion we shall not now consider. Perhaps liberty and equality, liberty and authority, liberty and organised efficiency can never be quite satisfactorily reconciled so long as man individual and aggregate lives by egoism, so long as he cannot undergo a great spiritual and psychological change and rise beyond mere communal association to that third ideal which some vague inner sense made the revolutionary thinkers of France add to their watchwords of liberty and equality, — the greatest of all the three, though till now only an empty word on man's lips, the ideal of fraternity or, less sentimentally and more truly expressed, an inner oneness. That no mechanism social, political, religious has ever created or can create; it must take birth in the soul and rise from hidden and divine depths within.

Chapter XIV

The Possibility of a First Step towards International Unity — Its Enormous Difficulties

THE STUDY of the growth of the nation-unit under the pressure indeed of a growing inner need and idea but by the agency of political, economic and social forces, forms and instruments shows us a progress that began from a loose formation in which various elements were gathered together for unification, proceeded through a period of strong concentration and coercion in which the conscious national ego was developed, fortified and provided with a centre and instruments of its organic life, and passed on to a final period of assured separate existence and internal unity as against outside pressure in which liberty and an active and more and more equal share of all in the benefits of the national life became possible. If the unity of the human race is to be brought about by the same means and agents and in a similar fashion to that of the nation, we should expect it to follow a similar course. That is at least the most visible probability and it seems to be consistent with the natural law of all creation which starts from the loose mass, the more or less amorphous vague of forces and materials and proceeds by contraction, constriction, solidification into a firm mould in which the rich evolution of various forms of life is at last securely possible.

If we consider the actual state of the world and its immediate possibilities, we shall see that a first period of loose formation and imperfect order is inevitable. Neither the intellectual preparation of the human race nor the development of its sentiments nor the economic and political forces and conditions by which it is moved and preoccupied have reached to such a point of inner stress or external pressure as would warrant us in expecting a total change of the basis of our life or the establishment of a complete or a real unity. There cannot as yet be even a real external unity, far less a psychological oneness. It is true that the vague sense and need of something of the kind has been growing rapidly and the object lesson of the war brought the master idea of the future out of the nascent condition in which it was no more than the generous chimera of a few pacifists or internationalist idealists. It came to be recognised that it contains in itself some force of eventual reality, and the voice of those who would cry it down as the pet notion of intellectual cranks and faddists had no longer the same volume and confidence, because it was no longer so solidly supported by the common sense of the average man, that short-sighted common sense of the material mind which consists in a strong feeling for immediate actualities and an entire blindness to the possibilities of the future. But there has as yet been no long intellectual preparation of a more and more dominant thought cast out by the intellectuals of the age to remould the ideas of common men, nor has there been any such gathering to a head of the growing revolt against present conditions as would make it possible for vast masses of men seized by the passion for an ideal and by the hope of a new happiness for mankind to break up the present basis of things and construct a new scheme of collective life. In another direction, the replacing of the individualistic basis of society by an increasing collectivism, there has been to a large extent such an intellectual preparation and gathering force of revolt; there the war has acted as a precipitative force and brought us much nearer to the possibility of a realised — not necessarily a democratic — State socialism. But there have been no such favourable preconditions for a strong movement of international unification. No great effective outburst of a massed and dynamic idealism in this direction can be reasonably predicted. The preparation may have begun, it may have been greatly facilitated and hastened by recent events, but it is still only in its first stages.

Under such conditions the ideas and schemes of the world's intellectuals who would replan the whole status of international life altogether and from its roots in the light of general principles, are not likely to find any immediate realisation. In the absence of a general idealistic outburst of creative human hope which would make such changes possible, the future will be shaped not by the ideas of the thinker but by the practical mind of the politician which represents the average reason and temperament of the time and effects usually something much nearer the minimum than the maximum of what is possible. The average general mind of a great mass of men, while it is ready to listen to such ideas as it has been prepared to receive and is accustomed to seize on this or that notion with a partisan avidity, is yet ruled in its action not so much by its thought as by its interests, passions and prejudices. The politician and the statesman — and the world is now full of politicians but very empty of statesmen — act in accordance with this average general mind of the mass; the one is governed by it, the other has always to take it into chief account and cannot lead it where he will, unless he is one of those great geniuses and powerful personalities who unite a large mind and dynamic force of conception with an enormous power or influence over men. Moreover, the political mind has limitations of its own beyond those of the general average mind of the mass; it is even more respectful of the *status quo*, more disinclined to great adventures in which the safe footing of the past has to be abandoned, more incapable of launching out into the uncertain and the new. To do that it must either be forced by general opinion or a powerful interest or else itself fall under the spell of a great new enthusiasm diffused in the mental atmosphere of the times.

If the politician mind is left entirely to itself, we could expect no better tangible result of the greatest international convulsion on record than a rearrangement of frontiers, a redistribution of power and possessions and a few desirable or undesirable developments of international, commercial and other relations. That is one disastrous possibility leading to more disastrous convulsions — so long as the problem is not solved — against which the future of the world is by no means secure. Still, since the mind of humanity has been greatly moved and its sentiments powerfully awakened, since the sense is becoming fairly widespread that the old status of things is no longer tolerable and the undesirability of an international balance reposing on a ring of national egoisms held in check only by mutual fear and hesitation, by ineffective arbitration treaties and Hague tribunals and the blundering discords of a European Concert must be now fairly clear even to the politician mind, we might expect that some serious attempt towards the beginning of a new order should be the result of the moral collapse of the old. The passions and hatreds and selfish national hopes raised by the war must certainly be a great obstacle in the way and may easily render futile or of a momentary stability any such beginning. But, if nothing else, the mere exhaustion and internal reaction produced after the relaxing of the tensity of the struggle, might give time for new ideas, feelings, forces, events to emerge which will counteract this pernicious influence.[1]

Still, the most that we could at all expect must needs be very little. In the internal life of the nations, the ultimate effects of the war cannot fail to be powerful and radical, for there everything is ready, the pressure felt has been enormous and the expansion after it has been removed must be correspondingly great in its results; but in international life we can only look forward at the best to a certain minimum of radical change which, however small, might yet in itself turn out to be an irrevocable departure, a seed of sufficient vitality to ensure the inevitability of future growth. If, indeed, developments had occurred before the end of this world-wide struggle strong enough to change the general mind of Europe, to force the dwarfish thoughts of its rulers into greater depths and generate a more wide-reaching sense of the necessity for radical change than has yet been developed, more might have been hoped for; but as the great conflict drew nearer to its close, no such probability emerged; the dynamic period during which in such a crisis the effective ideas and tendencies of men are formed, passed without the creation of any great and profound impulse. There were only two points on which the general mind of the peoples was powerfully affected. First, there was generated a sense of revolt against the possible repetition of this vast catastrophe; still more strongly felt was the necessity for finding means to prevent the unparalleled dislocation of the economic life of the race which was brought about by the convulsion. Therefore, it is in these two directions that some real development could be expected; for so much must be attempted if the general expectation and desire are to be satisfied and to trifle with these would be to declare the political intelligence of Europe bankrupt. That failure would convict its governments and ruling classes of moral and intellectual impotence and might well in the end provoke a general revolt of the European peoples against their existing institutions and the present blind and rudderless leadership.

---

[1] Written originally in 1916 before the end of the war. This happier possibility could not immediately materialise, but the growing insecurity, confusion and disorder have made the creation of some international system more and more imperative if modern civilisation is not to collapse in bloodshed and chaos. The result of this necessity has been first the creation of the League of Nations and afterwards the U.N.O.: neither has proved very satisfactory from the political point of view, but henceforward the existence of some such arranged centre of order has become very evidently indispensable.

There was to be expected, then, some attempt to provide a settled and effective means for the regulation and minimising of war, for the limitation of armaments, for the satisfactory disposal of dangerous disputes and especially, though this presents the greatest difficulty, for meeting that conflict of commercial aims and interests which is now the really effective, although by no means the only factor in the conditions that compel the recurrence of war. If this new arrangement contained in itself the seed of international control, if it turned out to be a first step towards a loose international formation or perhaps contained its elements or initial lines or even a first scheme to which the life of humanity could turn for a mould of growth in its reaching out to a unified existence, then, however rudimentary or unsatisfactory this arrangement might be at first, the future would carry in it an assured promise. Once begun, it would be impossible for mankind to draw back and, whatever difficulties, disappointments, struggles, reactions, checks or brutal interruptions might mark the course of this development, they would be bound to help in the end rather than hinder the final and inevitable result.

Still, it would be vain to hope that the principle of international control will be thoroughly effective at first or that this loose formation, which is likely to be in the beginning half form, half nebula, will prevent farther conflicts, explosions, catastrophes.[2] The difficulties are too great. The mind of the race has not as yet the necessary experience; the intellect of its ruling classes has not acquired the needed minimum of wisdom and foresight; the temperament of the peoples has not developed the indispensable instincts and sentiments. Whatever arrangement is made will proceed on the old basis of national egoisms, hungers, cupidities, self-assertions and will simply endeavour to regulate them just enough to prevent too disastrous collisions. The first means tried will necessarily be insufficient because too much respect will be paid to those very egoisms which it is sought to control. The causes of strife will remain; the temper that engenders it will live on, perhaps exhausted and subdued for a time in certain of its activities, but unexorcised; the means of strife may be controlled but will be allowed to remain. Armaments may be restricted, but will not be abolished; national armies may be limited in numbers — an illusory limitation — but they will be maintained; science will still continue to minister ingeniously to the art of collective massacre. War can only be abolished if national armies are abolished and even then with difficulty, by the development of some other machinery which humanity does not yet know how to form or, even if formed, will not for some time be able or willing perfectly to utilise. And there is no chance of national armies being abolished; for each nation distrusts all the others too much, has too many ambitions and hungers, needs to remain armed, if for nothing else, to guard its markets and keep down its dominions, colonies, subject peoples. Commercial ambitions and rivalries, political pride, dreams, longings, jealousies are not going to disappear as if by the touch of a magic wand merely because Europe has in an insane clash of long-ripening ambitions, jealousies and hatreds decimated its manhood and flung in three years the resources of decades into the melting-pot of war. The awakening must go much deeper, lay hold upon much purer roots of action before the psychology of nations will be transmuted into that something "wondrous, rich and strange" which will eliminate war and international collisions from our distressed and stumbling human life.

---

[2] This prediction, easy enough to make at that time, and the estimate of its causes have been fully justified by the course of events and the outbreak of a still greater, more disastrous war.

National egoism remaining, the means of strife remaining, its causes, opportunities, excuses will never be wanting. The present war came because all the leading nations had long been so acting as to make it inevitable; it came because there was a Balkan imbroglio and a Near-Eastern hope and commercial and colonial rivalries in Northern Africa over which the dominant nations had been battling in peace long before one or more of them grasped at the rifle and the shell. Sarajevo and Belgium were mere determining circumstances; to get to the root causes we have to go back as far at least as Agadir and Algeciras. From Morocco to Tripoli, from Tripoli to Thrace and Macedonia, from Macedonia to Herzegovina the electric chain ran with that inevitable logic of causes and results, actions and their fruits which we call Karma, creating minor detonations on its way till it found the inflammable point and created that vast explosion which has filled Europe with blood and ruins. Possibly the Balkan question may be definitively settled, though that is far from certain; possibly the definitive expulsion of Germany from Africa may ease the situation by leaving that continent in the possession of three or four nations who are for the present allies. But even if Germany were expunged from the map and its resentments and ambitions deleted as a European factor, the root causes of strife would remain. There will still be an Asiatic question of the Near and the Far East which may take on new conditions and appearances and regroup its constituent elements, but must remain so fraught with danger that if it is stupidly settled or does not settle itself, it would be fairly safe to predict the next great human collision with Asia as either its first field or its origin. Even if that difficulty is settled, new causes of strife must necessarily develop where the spirit of national egoism and cupidity seeks for satisfaction; and so long as it lives, satisfaction it must seek and repletion can never permanently satisfy it. The tree must bear its own proper fruit, and Nature is always a diligent gardener.

The limitation of armies and armaments is an illusory remedy. Even if there could be found an effective international means of control, it would cease to operate as soon as the clash of war actually came. The European conflict has shown that, in the course of a war, a country can be turned into a huge factory of arms and a nation convert its whole peaceful manhood into an army. England which started with a small and even insignificant armed force, was able in the course of a single year to raise millions of men and in two to train and equip them and throw them effectively into the balance. This object-lesson is sufficient to show that the limitation of armies and armaments can only lighten the national burden in peace, leaving it by that very fact more resources for the conflict, but cannot prevent or even minimise the disastrous intensity and extension of war. Nor will the construction of a stronger international law with a more effective sanction behind it be an indubitable or a perfect remedy. It is often asserted that this is what is needed; just as in the nation Law has replaced and suppressed the old barbaric method of settling disputes between individuals, families or clans by the arbitration of Might, a similar development ought to be possible in the life of nations. Perhaps in the end; but to expect it to operate successfully at once is to ignore both the real basis of the effective authority of Law and the difference between the constituents of a developed nation and the constituents of that ill-developed international comity which it is proposed to initiate.

The authority of Law in a nation or community does not really depend on any so-called "majesty" or mystic power in man-made rules and enactments. Its real sources of power are two, first, the strong interest of the majority or of a dominant minority or of the community as a whole in maintaining it and, secondly, the possession of a sole armed force, police and military, which makes that interest effective. The metaphorical sword of justice can only act because there is a real sword behind it to enforce its decrees and its penalties against the rebel and the dissident. And the essential character of this armed force is that it belongs to nobody, to no individual or constituent group of the community except alone to the State, the king or the governing class or body in which sovereign authority is centred. Nor can there be any security if the armed force of the State is balanced or its sole effectivity diminished by the existence of other armed forces belonging to groups and individuals and free in any degree from the central control or able to use their power against the governing authority. Even so, even with this authority backed by a sole and centralised armed force, Law has not been able to prevent strife of a kind between individuals and classes because it has not been able to remove the psychological, economic and other causes of strife. Crime with its penalties is always a kind of mutual violence, a kind of revolt and civil strife and even in the best-policed and most law-abiding communities crime is still rampant. Even the organisation of crime is still possible although it cannot usually endure or fix its power because it has the whole vehement sentiment and effective organisation of the community against it. But what is more to the purpose, Law has not been able to prevent, although it has minimised, the possibility of civil strife and violent or armed discord within the organised nation. Whenever a class or an opinion has thought itself oppressed or treated with intolerable injustice, has found the Law and its armed force so entirely associated with an opposite interest that the suspension of the principle of law and an insurgence of the violence of revolt against the violence of oppression were or appeared the only remedy, it has, if it thought it had a chance of success, appealed to the ancient arbitration of Might. Even in our own days we have seen the most law-abiding of nations staggering on the verge of a disastrous civil war and responsible statesmen declaring their readiness to appeal to it if a measure disagreeable to them were enforced, even though it was passed by the supreme legislative authority with the sanction of the sovereign.

But in any loose international formation presently possible the armed force would still be divided among its constituent groups; it would belong to them, not to any sovereign authority, superstate or federal council. The position would resemble the chaotic organisation of the feudal ages in which every prince and baron had his separate jurisdiction and military resources and could defy the authority of the sovereign if he were powerful enough or if he could command the necessary number and strength of allies among his peers. And in this case there would not be even the equivalent of a feudal sovereign — a king who, if nothing else, if not really a monarch, was at least the first among his peers with the prestige of sovereignty and some means of developing it into a strong and permanent actuality.

Nor would the matter be much improved if there were a composite armed force of control set over the nations and their separate military strength; for this composite would break apart and its elements return to their conflicting sources on the outbreak of overt strife. In the developed nation the individual is the unit and he is lost among the mass of individuals, unable safely to calculate the force he could command in a conflict, afraid of all other individuals not bound to him because he sees in them natural supporters of outraged authority; revolt is to him a most dangerous and incalculable business, even the initial conspiracy fraught at every moment with a thousand terrors and dangers that lower in terrible massed array against a small modicum of scattered chances. The soldier also is a solitary individual, afraid of all the rest, a terrible punishment suspended over him and ready to fall at the least sign of insubordination, never sure of a confident support among his fellows or, even if a little certain, not assured of any effective support from the civil population and therefore deprived of that moral force which would encourage him to defy the authority of Law and Government. And in his ordinary sentiment he belongs no longer to individual or family or class, but to the State and the country or at the very least to the machine of which he is a part. But here the constituents would be a small number of nations, some of them powerful empires, well able to look around them, measure their own force, make sure of their allies, calculate the forces against them; the chances of success or failure would be all that they would have to consider. And the soldiers of the composite army would belong at heart to their country and not at all to the nebulous entity which controlled them.

Therefore, pending the actual evolution of an international State so constituted as to be something other than a mere loose conglomerate of nations or rather a palaver of the deputies of national governments, the reign of peace and unity dreamed of by the idealist could never be possible by these political or administrative means or, if possible, could never be secure. Even if war were eliminated, still as in the nation crime between individuals exists, or as other means such as disastrous general strikes are used in the war of classes, so here too other means of strife would be developed, much more disastrous perhaps than war. And even they would be needed and inevitable in the economy of Nature, not only to meet the psychological necessity of egoistic discord and passion and ambition, but as an outlet and an arm for the sense of injustice, of oppressed rights, of thwarted possibilities. The law is always the same, that wherever egoism is the root of action it must bear its own proper results and reactions and, however minimised and kept down they may be by an external machinery, their eventual outburst is sure and can be delayed but not prevented for ever.

It is apparent at least that no loose formation without a powerful central control could be satisfactory, effective or enduring, even if it were much less loose, much more compact than anything that seems at present likely to evolve in the near future. There must be in the nature of things a second step, a movement towards greater rigidity, constriction of national liberties and the erection of a unique central authority with a uniform control over the earth's peoples.

Chapter XV

Some Lines of Fulfilment

WHAT FAVOURED form, force, system among the many that are possible now or likely to emerge hereafter will be entrusted by the secret Will in things with the external unification of mankind, is an interesting and to those who can look beyond the narrow horizon of passing events, a fascinating subject of speculation; but unfortunately it can at present be nothing more. The very multitude of the possibilities in a period of humanity so rife with the most varied and potent forces, so fruitful of new subjective developments and objective mutations creates an impenetrable mist in which only vague forms of giants can be half glimpsed. Certain ideas suggested by the present status of forces and by past experience are all that we can permit ourselves in so hazardous a field.

We have ruled out of consideration as a practical impossibility in the present international conditions and the present state of international mentality and morality the idea of an immediate settlement on the basis of an association of free nationalities, although this would be obviously the ideal basis. For it would take as its founding motive power a harmony of the two great principles actually in presence, nationalism and internationalism. Its adoption would mean that the problem of human unity would be approached at once on a rational and a sound moral basis, a recognition, on one side, of the right of all large natural groupings of men to live and to be themselves and the enthronement of respect for national liberty as an established principle of human conduct, on the other, an adequate sense of the need for order, help, a mutual, a common participation, a common life and interests in the unified and associated human race. The ideal society or State is that in which respect for individual liberty and free growth of the personal being to his perfection is harmonised with respect for the needs, efficiency, solidarity, natural growth and organic perfection of the corporate being, the society or nation. In an ideal aggregate of all humanity, in the international society or State, national liberty and free national growth and self-realisation ought in the same way to be progressively harmonised with the solidarity and unified growth and perfection of the human race.

Therefore, if this basic principle were admitted, there might indeed be fluctuations due to the difficulty of a perfect working combination, as in the growth of the national aggregate there has been sometimes a stress on liberty and at others a stress on efficiency and order; but since the right conditions of the problem would have been recognised from the beginning and not left to be worked out in a blind tug of war, there would be some chance of an earlier reasonable solution with much less friction and violence in the process.

But there is little chance of such an unprecedented good fortune for mankind. Ideal conditions cannot be expected, for they demand a psychological clarity, a diffused reasonableness and scientific intelligence and, above all, a moral elevation and rectitude to which neither the mass of mankind nor its leaders and rulers have yet made any approach. In their absence, not reason and justice and mutual kindliness, but the trend of forces and their practical and legal adjustment must determine the working out of this as of other problems. And just as the problem of the State and the individual has been troubled and obscured not only by the conflict between individual egoism and the corporate egoism of the society, but by the continual clash between intermediate powers, class strife, quarrels of Church and State, king and nobles, king and commons, aristocracy and demos, capitalist bourgeoisie and labour proletariate, this problem too of nation and international humanity is certain to be troubled by the claims of just such intermediate powers. To say nothing of commercial interests and combinations, cultural or racial sympathies, movements of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism, Pan-Anglo-Saxonism, with a possible Pan-Americanism and Pan-Mongolianism looming up in the future, to say nothing of yet other unborn monsters, there will always be the great intermediate factor of Imperialism, that huge armed and dominant Titan, that must by its very nature demand its own satisfaction at the cost of every suppressed or inconvenient national unit and assert its own needs as prior to the needs of the new-born international comity. That satisfaction, presumably, it must have for a time, that demand it will be for long impossible to resist. At any rate, to ignore its claims or to imagine that they can be put aside with a spurt of the writer's pen, is to build symmetrical castles on the golden sands of an impracticable idealism.

Forces take the first place in actual effectuation; moral principles, reason, justice only so far as forces can be compelled or persuaded to admit them or, as more often happens, use them as subservient aids or inspiring battle-cries, a camouflage for their own interests. Ideas sometimes leap out as armed forces and break their way through the hedge of unideal powers; sometimes they reverse the position and make interests their subordinate helpers, a fuel for their own blaze; sometimes they conquer by martyrdom: but ordinarily they have to work not only by a half-covert pressure but by accommodation to powerful forces or must even bribe and cajole them or work through and behind them. It cannot be otherwise until the average and the aggregate man become more of an intellectual, moral and spiritual being and less predominantly the vital and emotional half-reasoning human animal. The unrealised international idea will have for some time at least to work by this secondary method and through such accommodations with the realised forces of nationalism and imperialism.

It may be questioned whether by the time that things are ready for the elaboration of a firm and settled system, the idea of a just internationalism based on respect for the principle of free nationalities may not by the efforts of the world's thinkers and intellectuals have made so much progress as to exercise an irresistible pressure on States and Governments and bring about its own acceptation in large part, if not in the entirety of its claims. The answer is that States and Governments yield usually to a moral pressure only so far as it does not compel them to sacrifice their vital interests. No established empire will easily liberate its dependent parts or allow, unless compelled, a nation now subject to it to sit at the board of an international council as its free equal. The old enthusiasm for liberty is an ideal which made France intervene to aid the evolution of a free Italy or France and England to create a new Greek nation. The national liberties for which respect was demanded during the war even at the point of the sword — or, we should say now, even with the voice of the cannon-shell — were those already established and considered therefore to have the right still to exist. All that was proposed beyond that limit was the restoration to already existing free States of men of their own nationality still under a foreign yoke. It was proposed to realise a greater Serbia, a greater Rumania, the restoration of "unredeemed" Italy, and the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France. Autonomy under Russian sovereignty was all that was promised to Poland till the German victory over Russia altered the interest and with it the idealism of the Allies. Autonomy of a kind under an imperial sovereignty or, where that does not yet exist, under imperial "protection" or "influence" are by many considered as more practical ideas now than the restoration of national freedom. That is a sign perhaps of the obscure growth of the idea of federated empires which we have discussed as one of the possibilities of the future. National liberty as an absolute ideal has no longer the old general acceptation and creative force. Nations struggling for liberty have to depend on their own strength and enthusiasm; they can expect only a tepid or uncertain support except from enthusiastic individuals or small groups whose aid is purely vocal and ineffective. Many even of the most advanced intellectuals warmly approve of the idea of subordinate autonomy for nations now subject, but seem to look with impatience on their velleities of complete independence. Even so far has imperialism travelled on its prosperous road and the imperial aggregate impressed its figure on the freest imaginations as an accomplished power in human progress.

How much farther may not this sentiment travel under the new impulse of humanity to organise its international existence on larger and more convenient lines! It is even possible that the impatience openly expressed by the German in his imperial days against the continued existence of small nationalities opposing their settled barrier of prescribed rights to large political and commercial combinations may, while softening its rigour, yet justify its claim in the future, may be accepted by the general sense of humanity though in a less brutal, a less arrogant and aggressively egoistic form. That is to say, there may grow up a stronger tendency in the political reason of mankind to desire, perhaps eventually to insist on the rearrangement of States in a system of large imperial combines and not on the basis of a *status quo* of mixed empires and free nationalities.[1]

But even if this development does not take place or does not effect itself in time, the actually existing free and non-imperial States will find themselves included indeed in whatever international council or other system may be established, but this inclusion is likely to be very much like the position of the small nobles in mediaeval times in relation to the great feudal princes, a position rather of vassals than of equals. The war brought into relief the fact that it is only the great Powers that really count in the international scale; all others merely exist by sufferance or by protection or by alliance. So long as the world was arranged on the principle of separate nationalities, this might have been only a latent reality without actually important effects on the life of the smaller nations, but this immunity might cease when the necessity of combined action or a continual active interaction became a recognised part or the foundation of the world-system. The position of a minor State standing out against the will of large Powers or a party of Powers would be worse even than that of small neutrals in the present war or of a private company surrounded by great Trusts. It would be compelled to accept the lead of one group or another of the leviathans around it and its independent weight or action in the council of nations would be nil.

---

[1] If the ambitions of Italy, Germany and Japan and the Fascist idea generally had triumphed, such an order of things might have eventuated.

Undoubtedly, the right of small nations to exist and assert their interests against imperialistic aggression is still a force; it was one at least of the issues in the international collision. But the assertion of this right against the aggression of a single ambitious Power is one thing; its assertion as against any arrangement for the common interest of the nations decided upon by a majority of the great Powers would very likely in the near future be regarded in quite another light. The inconvenience of a number of small neutrals claiming to stand out and be as little affected as possible by an immense international conflict was acutely felt not only by the actual combatants who were obliged to use sometimes an indirect, sometimes a direct pressure to minimise the inconveniences, but by the smaller neutrals themselves to whom their neutrality was preferable only as a lesser evil than the burden and disaster of active participation in the struggle. In any international system, the self-assertion of these smaller liberties would probably be viewed as a petty egoism and intolerable obstacle to great common interests, or, it may be, to the decision of conflicts between great world-wide interests. It is probable indeed that in any constitution of international unity the great Powers would see to it that their voice was equal to their force and influence; but even if the constitution were outwardly democratic, yet in effect it would become an oligarchy of the great Powers. Constitutions can only disguise facts, they cannot abrogate them: for whatever ideas the form of the constitution may embody, its working is always that of the actually realised forces which can use it with effect. Most governments either have now or have passed through a democratic form, but nowhere yet has there been a real democracy; it has been everywhere the propertied and professional classes and the bourgeoisie who governed in the name of the people. So too in any international council or control it would be a few great empires that would govern in the name of humanity.

At the most, if it were otherwise, it could be only for a short time, unless some new forces came into their own which would arrest or dissolve the tendency now dominant in the world towards large imperial aggregations. The position would then be for a time very much like that of feudal Europe while it was in abortive travail of a united Christendom, — a great criss-cross of heterogeneous, complicated, overlapping and mutually interpenetrating interests, a number of small Powers counting for something, but overshadowed and partly coerced by a few great Powers, the great Powers working out the inevitable complication of their allied, divided and contrary interests by whatever means the new world-system provided and using for that purpose whatever support of classes, ideas, tendencies, institutions they could find. There would be questions of Asiatic, African, American fiefs and markets; struggles of classes starting as national questions becoming international; Socialism, Anarchism and the remainder of the competitive age of humanity struggling together for predominance; clashes of Europeanism, Asiaticism, Americanism. And from this great tangle some result would have to be worked out. It might well be by methods very different from those with which history has made us so familiar; war might be eliminated or reduced to a rare phenomenon of civil war in the international commonwealth or confederacy; new forms of coercion, such as the commercial which we now see to be growing in frequency, might ordinarily take its place; other devices might be brought into being of which we have at present no conception. But the situation would be essentially the same for humanity in general as has confronted lesser unformed aggregates in the past and would have to progress to similar issues of success, modified realisation or failure.

The most natural simplification of the problem, though not one that looks now possible, would be the division of the world into a few imperial aggregates consisting partly of federal, partly of confederate commonwealths or empires. Although unrealisable with the present strength of national egoisms, the growth of ideas and the force of changing circumstances might some day bring about such a creation and this might lead to a closer confederacy. America seems to be turning dimly towards a better understanding between the increasingly cosmopolitan United States and the Latin republics of Central and South America which may in certain contingencies materialise itself into a confederate inter-American State. The idea of a confederate Teutonic empire, if Germany and Austria had not been entirely broken by the result of the war, might well have realised itself in the near future; and even though they are now broken it might still realise itself in a more distant future.[2] Similar aggregates may emerge in the Asiatic world. Such a distribution of mankind in large natural aggregates would have the advantage of simplifying a number of difficult world-problems and with the growth of peace, mutual understanding and larger ideas might lead to a comparatively painless aggregation in a World-State.

Another possible solution is suggested by the precedent of the evolution of the nation-type out of its first loose feudal form. As there the continual clash of various forces and equipollent powers necessitated the emergence of one of them, at first only predominant among his equals, the feudal king, into the type of a centralised monarchy, so conceivably, if the empires and nations of the world failed to arrive at a peaceful solution among themselves, if the class troubles, the inter-commercial troubles, the conflict of various new ideas and tendencies resulted in a long confusion and turmoil and constant changing, there might emerge a king-nation with the mission of evolving a real and settled out of a semi-chaotic or half order. We have concluded that the military conquest of the world by a single nation is not possible except under conditions which do not exist and of which there is as yet no visible prospect. But an imperial nation, such as England for example, spread all over the world, possessing the empire of the seas, knowing how to federate successfully its constituent parts and organise their entire potential strength, having the skill to make itself the representative and protector of the most progressive and liberal tendencies of the new times, allying itself with other forces and nations interested in their triumph and showing that it had the secret of a just and effective international organisation, might conceivably become the arbiter of the nations and the effective centre of an international government. Such a possibility in any form is as yet extremely remote, but it could become under new circumstances a realisable possibility of the future.

---

[2] The Nazi Third Reich in Germany seemed for a time to be driving towards the realisation of this possibility in another form, a German empire of central Europe under a totalitarian hegemony.

Conceivably, if the task of organising the world proved too difficult, if no lasting agreement could be arrived at or no firmly constituted legal authority created, the task might be undertaken not by a single empire, but by two or three great imperial Powers sufficiently near in interest and united in idea to sink possible differences and jealousies and strong enough to dominate or crush all resistance and enforce some sort of effective international law and government. The process would then be a painful one and might involve much brutality of moral and economic coercion, but if it commanded the prestige of success and evolved some tolerable form of legality and justice or even only of prosperous order, it might in the end conciliate a general moral support and prove a starting-point for freer and better forms.

Yet another possibility that cannot be ignored is that the merely inter-governmental and political evolution which alone we have considered, may be broken in upon by the long-threatened war of classes. Labour internationalism broke down, like every other form of internationalism — scientific, cultural, pacific, religious — under the fierce test of war and during the great crisis the struggle between Labour and Capital was suspended. It was then hoped that after the war the spirit of unity, conciliation and compromise would continue to reign and the threatened conflict would be averted. Nothing in human nature or in history warranted any such confident trust in the hopes of the moment. The interclass conflict has long been threatening like the European collision. The advent of the latter was preceded by large hopes of world-peace and attempts at a European concert and treaties of arbitration which would render war finally impossible. The hope of a concert between Labour and Capital idyllically settling all their acute causes of conflict in amoebaean stanzas of melodious compromise for the sake of the higher national interests is likely to be as treacherous and delusive. Even the socialisation of governments and the increasing nationalisation of industry will not remove the root cause of conflict. For there will still remain the crucial question of the form and conditions of the new State socialism, whether it shall be regulated in the interests of Labour or of the capitalistic State and whether its direction shall be democratic by the workers themselves or oligarchic or bureaucratic by the present directing classes. This question may well lead to struggles which may easily grow into an international or at least an inter-European conflict; it might even rend each nation in two instead of uniting it as in the war crisis. And the results of such a struggle may have an incalculable effect, either in changing the ideas and life of men dynamically in new directions or in breaking down the barriers of existing nations and empires.[3]

---

[3] This hypothetic forecast was fully justified — and tended to become more and more so — by the post-war developments of national and international life. The internecine butchery in Spain, the development of two opposite types of Socialism in Russia, Italy and Germany, the uneasy political situation in France were examples of the fulfilment of these tendencies. But this tendency has reached its acme in the emergence of Communism and it now seems probable that the future will belong to a struggle between Communism and a surviving capitalistic Industrialism in the New World or even between Communism and a more moderate system of social democracy in the two continents of the Old World. But generally speaking, speculations noted down in this chapter at a time when the possibilities of the future were very different from what they are now and all was in a flux and welter of dubious confusion, are out of date since an even more stupendous conflict has intervened and swept the previous existing conditions out of existence. Nevertheless, some of them still survive and threaten the safe evolution of the new tentative world-order or, indeed, any future world-order.

Chapter XVI

The Problem of Uniformity and Liberty

THE QUESTION with which we started has reached some kind of answer. After sounding as thoroughly as our lights permit the possibility of a political and administrative unification of mankind by political and economic motives and through purely political and administrative means, it has been concluded that it is not only possible, but that the thoughts and tendencies of mankind and the result of current events and existing forces and necessities have turned decisively in this direction. This is one of the dominant drifts which the World-Nature has thrown up in the flow of human development and it is the logical consequence of the past history of mankind and of our present circumstances. At the same time nothing justifies us in predicting its painless or rapid development or even its sure and eventual success. We have seen some of the difficulties in the way; we have seen also what are the lines on which it may practically proceed to the overcoming of those difficulties. We have concluded that the one line it is not likely to take is the ideal, that which justice and the highest expediency and the best thought of mankind demand, that which would ensure it the greatest possibility of an enduring success. It is not likely to take perfectly, until a probably much later period of our collective evolution, the form of a federation of free and equal nations or adopt as its motive a perfect harmony between the contending principles of nationalism and internationalism.

And now we have to consider the second aspect of the problem, its effect on the springs of human life and progress. The political and administrative unification of mankind is not only possible but foreshadowed by our present evolution; the collective national egoism which resists it may be overborne by an increasing flood of the present unifying tendency to which the anguish of the European war gave a body and an articulate voice. But the question remains whether not in its first loose formation, but as it develops and becomes more complete and even vigorous, a strictly unified order will not necessarily involve a considerable overriding of the liberties of mankind, individual and collective, and an oppressive mechanism by which the free development of the soul-life of humanity will be for some time at least seriously hindered or restricted or in danger of an excessive repression. We have seen that a period of loose formation is in such developments usually followed by a period of restriction and constriction in which a more rigid unification will be attempted so that firm moulds may be given to the new unity. And this has meant in past unifications and is likely to mean here also a suppression of that principle of liberty in human life which is the most precious gain of humanity's past spiritual, political and social struggles. The old circle of progression by retrogression is likely to work itself out again on this new line of advance.

Such a development would be not only probable, but inevitable if the unification of mankind proceeded in accordance with the Germanic gospel of the increasing domination of the world by the one fit empire, nation, race. It would be equally inevitable if the means employed by Destiny were the domination of humanity by two or three great imperial nations; or if the effectuating force were a closely organised united Europe which would, developing the scheme of a certain kind of political thinkers, take in hand the rest of the world and hold the darker-coloured races of mankind in tutelage for an indefinite period.

The ostensible object and justification of such a tutelage would be to civilise, that is to say, to Europeanise the less developed races. Practically, we know that it would mean their exploitation, since in the course of human nature the benevolent but forceful guardian would feel himself justified in making the best profit out of his advantageous situation, always of course in the interest at once of his own development and that of the world in general. The regime would rest upon superior force for its maintenance and oppose itself to the velleities of freedom in the governed on the ground either that they were unfit or that the aspiration was immature, two arguments that may well remain valid for ever, since they can never be refuted to the satisfaction of those who advance them. At first this regime might be so worked as to preserve the principle of individual liberty for the governing races while enforcing a beneficial subjection upon the ruled; but that could not endure. The experience of the past teaches us that the habit of preferring the principle of authority to the principle of liberty is engendered in an imperial people, reacts upon it at home and leads it first insensibly and then by change of thought and the development of a fate in circumstances to the sacrifice of its own inner freedom. There could be only two outlets to such a situation, either the growth of the principle of liberty among the peoples still subject or, let us say, administered by others for their own benefit, or else its general decline in the world. Either the higher state must envelop from above or the lower from below; they cannot subsist perpetually together in the same human economy. But nine times out of ten, in the absence of circumstances ending the connection, it is the unhappier possibility that conquers.[1]

All these means of unification would proceed practically by the use of force and compulsion and any deliberately planned, prolonged and extended use of restrictive means tends to discourage the respect for the principle of liberty in those who apply the compulsion as well as the fact of liberty in those to whom it is applied. It favours the growth of the opposite principle of dominating authority whose whole tendency is to introduce rigidity, uniformity, a mechanised and therefore eventually an unprogressive system of life. This is a psychological relation of cause and effect whose working cannot be avoided except by taking care to found all use of authority on the widest possible basis of free consent. But by their very nature and origin the regimes of unification thus introduced would be debarred from the free employment of this corrective; for they would have to proceed by compulsion of what might be very largely a reluctant material and the imposing of their will for the elimination of all resisting forces and tendencies. They would be compelled to repress, diminish, perhaps even abolish all forms of liberty which their experience found to be used for fostering the spirit of revolt or of resistance; that is to say, all those larger liberties of free action and free self-expression which make up the best, the most vigorous, the most stimulating part of human freedom. They would be obliged to abolish, first by violence and then by legal suppression and repression, all the elements of what we now call national freedom; in the process individual liberty would be destroyed both in the parts of humanity coerced and, by inevitable reaction and contagion, in the imperial nation or nations. Relapse in this direction is always easy, because the assertion of his human dignity and freedom is a virtue man has only acquired by long evolution and painful endeavour; to respect the freedom of others he is still less naturally prone, though without it his own liberty can never be really secure; but to oppress and dominate where he can — often, be it noted, with excellent motives — and otherwise to be half dupe and half serf of those who can dominate, are his inborn animal propensities. Therefore in fact all unnecessary restriction of the few common liberties man has been able to organise for himself becomes a step backward, whatever immediate gain it may bring; and every organisation of oppression or repression beyond what the imperfect conditions of human nature and society render inevitable, becomes, no matter where or by whom it is practised, a blow to the progress of the whole race.

---

[1] These considerations have now become irrelevant to the actual condition of things. Asia is now for the most part free or in the process of liberation, the idea of a dominant West or a dominant Europe has no longer any force and has indeed receded out of men's minds and practically out of existence.

If, on the other hand, the formal unification of the race is effectuated by a combination of free nations and empires and if these empires strive to become psychological realities and therefore free organisms, or if by that time the race has advanced so far that the principle of free national or cultural grouping within a unified mankind can be adopted, then the danger of retrogression will be greatly diminished. Still, it will exist. For, as we have seen, the principle of order, of uniformity is the natural tendency of a period of unification. The principle of liberty offers a natural obstacle to the growth of uniformity and, although perfectly reconcilable with a true order and easily coexistent with an order already established into which it has been fitted, is not so easily reconciled as a matter of practice with a new order which demands from it new sacrifices for which it is not yet psychologically prepared. This in itself need not matter; for all movement forward implies a certain amount of friction and difficulty of adjustment, and if in the process liberty suffered a few shocks on one side and order a few shocks on the other, they would still shake down easily enough into a new adjustment after a certain amount of experience. Unfortunately, it is the nature of every self-asserting tendency or principle in the hour of its growth, when it finds circumstances favourable, to over-assert itself and exaggerate its claim, to carry its impulses to a one-sided fruition, to affirm its despotic rule and to depress and even to trample upon other tendencies and principles and especially on those which it instinctively feels to be the farthest removed from its own nature. And if it finds a resistance in these opposite powers, then its impulse of self-assertion becomes angry, violent, tyrannical; instead of the friction of adjustment we have an inimical struggle stumbling through violent vicissitudes, action and reaction, evolution and revolution till one side or the other prevails in the conflict.

This is what has happened in the past development of mankind; the struggle of order and uniformity against liberty has been the dominant fact of all great human formations and developments — religious, social, political. There is as yet no apparent ground for predicting a more reasonable principle of development in the near future. Man seems indeed to be becoming more generally a reasoning animal than in any known past period of his history, but he has not by that become, except in one or two directions, much more of a reasonable mind and a harmonious spirit; for he still uses his reason much more commonly to justify strife and mutual contradiction than to arrive at a wise agreement. And always his mind and reason are very much at the mercy of his vital desires and passions. Therefore we must suppose that even under the best circumstances the old method of development will assert itself and the old struggle be renewed in the attempt at human unification. The principle of authority and order will attempt a mechanical organisation; the principle of liberty will resist and claim a more flexible, free and spacious system. The two ancient enemies will struggle for the control of the human unity as they did in the past for the control of the growing form of the nation. In the process, the circumstances being favourable to the narrower power, both national and individual liberty are likely to go to the wall — happy if they are not set against it before a firing platoon of laws and restrictions to receive a military quietus.

This might not happen if within the nations themselves the spirit of individual liberty still flourished in its old vigour; for that would then demand, both from an innate sympathy and for its own sake, respect for the liberties of all the constituent nations. But, as far as all present appearances go to show, we are entering into a period in which the ideal of individual liberty is destined to an entire eclipse under the shadow of the State idea, if not to a sort of temporary death or at least of long stupor, coma and hibernation. The constriction and mechanisation of the unifying process is likely to coincide with a simultaneous process of constriction and mechanisation within each constituting unit. Where then in this double process will the spirit of liberty find its safeguard or its alimentation? The old practical formulations of freedom would disappear in the double process and the only hope of healthy progress would lie in a new formulation of liberty produced by a new powerful movement spiritual or intellectual of the human mind which will reconcile individual liberty with the collective ideal of a communal life and the liberty of the group-unit with the new-born necessity of a more united life for the human race.

Meanwhile, we have to consider how far it is either likely or possible to carry the principle of unification in those more outward and mechanical aspects which the external, that is to say, political and administrative method is prone to favour, and how far they will in their more extreme formulations favour or retard the true progress of the race to its perfection. We have to consider how far the principle of nationality itself is likely to be affected, whether there is any chance of its entire dissolution or, if it is preserved, what place the subordinated nation-unit will take in the new united life. This involves the question of control, the idea of the "Parliament of Man" and other ideas of political organisation as applied to this new portentous problem in the science of collective living. Thirdly, there is the question of uniformity and how far uniformity is either healthful to the race or necessary to unity. It is evident that we enter here upon problems which we shall have to treat in a much more abstract fashion and with much less sense of actuality than those we have till now been handling. For all this is in the dark future, and all the light we can have is from past experience and the general principles of life and nature and sociology; the present gives us only a dim light on the solution which plunges a little further on in Time into a shadowy darkness full of incalculable possibilities. We can foresee nothing; we can only speculate and lay down principles.

We see that there are always two extreme possibilities with a number of more or less probable compromises. The nation is at present the firm group-unit of the human aggregation to which all other units tend to subordinate themselves; even the imperial has hitherto been only a development of the national and empires have existed in recent times, not consciously for the sake of a wider aggregation as did the imperial Roman world, but to serve the instinct of domination and expansion, the land hunger, money hunger, commodity hunger, the vital, intellectual, cultural aggressiveness of powerful and prosperous nations. This, however, does not secure the nation-unit from eventual dissolution in a larger principle of aggregation. Group-units there must always be in any human unity, even the most entire, intolerant and uniform, for that is the very principle not only of human nature, but of life and of every aggregation; we strike here on a fundamental law of universal existence, on the fundamental mathematics and physics of creation. But it does not follow that the nation need persist as the group-unit. It may disappear altogether; even now the rejection of the nation-idea has begun, the opposite idea of the *sans-patrie*, the citizen of the world, has been born and was a growing force before the war; and though temporarily overborne, silenced and discouraged, it is by no means slain, but is likely to revive with an increased violence hereafter. On the other hand, the nation-idea may persist in full vitality or may assert in the event — after whatever struggle and apparent decline — its life, its freedom, its vigorous particularism within the larger unity. Finally, it may persist, but with a reduced and subjected vitality, or even without real vitality or any living spirit of particularism or separatism, as a convenience, an administrative rather than a psychological fact like a French department or an English county. But still it may preserve just sufficient mechanical distinctness to form a starting-point for that subsequent dissolution of human unity which will come about inevitably if the unification is more mechanical than real, — if, that is to say, it continues to be governed by the political and administrative motive, supported by the experience of economic and social or merely cultural ease and convenience and fails to serve as a material basis for the spiritual oneness of mankind.

So also with the ideal of uniformity; for with many minds, especially those of a rigid, mechanical cast, those in which logic and intellectuality are stronger than the imagination and the free vital instinct or those which are easily seduced by the beauty of an idea and prone to forget its limitations, uniformity is an ideal, even sometimes the highest ideal of which they can think. The uniformity of mankind is not an impossible eventuality, even though impracticable in the present circumstances and in certain directions hardly conceivable except in a far distant future. For certainly there is or has been an immense drive towards uniformity of life habits, uniformity of knowledge, uniformity political, social, economic, educational, and all this, if followed out to its final conclusion, will lead naturally to a uniformity of culture. If that were realised, the one barrier left against a dead level of complete uniformity would be the difference of language; for language creates and determines thought even while it is created and determined by it, and so long as there is difference of language there will always be a certain amount of free variation of thought, of knowledge and of culture. But it is easily conceivable that the general uniformity of culture and intimate association of life will give irresistible force to the need already felt of a universal language, and a universal language once created or once adopted may end by killing out the regional languages as Latin killed out the languages of Gaul, Spain and Italy or as English has killed out Cornish, Gaelic, Erse and has been encroaching on the Welsh tongue. On the other hand, there is a revival nowadays, due to the growing subjectivism of the human mind, of the principle of free variation and refusal of uniformity. If this tendency triumphs, the unification of the race will have so to organise itself as to respect the free culture, thought, life of its constituent units. But there is also the third possibility of a dominant uniformity which will allow or even encourage such minor variations as do not threaten the foundations of its rule. And here again the variations may be within their limits vital, forceful, to a certain extent particularist though not separatist, or they may be quite minor tones and shades, yet sufficient to form a starting-point for the dissolution of uniformity into a new cycle of various progress.

So again with the governing organisation of the human race. It may be a rigid regimentation under a central authority such as certain socialistic schemes envisage for the nation, a regime suppressing all individual and regional liberty in the interests of a close and uniform organisation of human training, economic life, social habits, morals, knowledge, religion even, every department of human activity. Such a development may seem impossible, as it would be indeed impracticable in the near future, because of the immense masses it would have to embrace, the difficulties it would have to surmount, the many problems that would have to be solved before it could become possible. But this idea of impossibility leaves out of consideration two important factors, the growth of Science with its increasingly easy manipulation of huge masses — witness the present war

— and of large-scale problems and the rapid march of Socialism.[2] Supposing the triumph of the socialistic idea — or of its practice, in whatever disguise — in all the continents, it might naturally lead to an international socialisation which would be rendered possible by the growth of science and scientific organisation and by the annihilation of space difficulties and numerical difficulties. On the other hand, it is possible that after a cycle of violent struggle between the ideal of regimentation and the ideal of liberty the socialistic period of mankind might prove comparatively of brief duration like that of monarchical absolutism in Europe and might be followed by another more inspired by the principles of philosophic Anarchism, that is to say, of unity based upon the completest individual freedom and freedom also of natural unforced grouping. A compromise might also be reached, a dominant regimentation with a subordinate freedom more or less vital, but even if less vital, yet a starting-point for the dissolution of the regime when humanity begins to feel that regimentation is not its ultimate destiny and that a fresh cycle of search and experiment has become again indispensable to its future.

It is impossible here to consider these large questions with any thoroughness. To throw out certain ideas which may guide us in our approach to the problem of unification is all that we can attempt. The problem is vast and obscure and even a ray of light upon it here and there may help to diminish its difficulty and darkness.

---

[2] Even such apparent reactions as the now-defeated Fascist regime in Italy merely prepare or embody new possibilities of the principle of State control and direction which is the essence of Socialism.

The Ideal of Human Unity

Part II

Chapter XVII

Nature's Law in Our Progress — Unity in Diversity, Law and Liberty

FOR MAN alone of terrestrial creatures to live rightly involves the necessity of knowing rightly, whether, as rationalism pretends, by the sole or dominant instrumentation of his reason or, more largely and complexly, by the sum of his faculties; and what he has to know is the true nature of being and its constant self-effectuation in the values of life, in less abstract language the law of Nature and especially of his own nature, the forces within him and around him and their right utilisation for his own greater perfection and happiness or for that and the greater perfection and happiness of his fellow-creatures. In the old phrase his business is to learn to live according to Nature. But Nature can no longer be imaged, as once it was, as an eternal right rule from which man has wandered, since it is rather a thing itself changing, progressing, evolving, ascending from height to more elevated height, widening from limit to broader limit of its own possibilities. Yet in all this changing there are certain eternal principles or truths of being which remain the same and upon them as bedrock, with them as a primary material and within them as a framework our progress and perfection are compelled to take place. Otherwise there would be an infinite chaos and not a world ordered even in the clash of its forces.

The subhuman life of animal and plant is not subjected to this necessity of knowledge nor of that which is the necessary accompaniment of knowledge, a conscious will impelled always to execute what knowledge perceives. By this exemption it is saved from an immense amount of error, deformation and disease, for it lives spontaneously according to Nature, its knowledge and will are hers and incapable, whether conscient or subconscient, of variation from her laws and dictates. Man seems, on the contrary, to possess a power of turning his mind and will upon Nature and a possibility of governing her movement, even of varying from the course she dictates to him. But here there is really a deformative trick of language. For man's mentality is also a part of Nature; his mentality is even the most important, if not the largest part of his nature. It is, we may say, Nature become partly conscious of her own laws and forces, conscious of her struggle of progression and inspired with the conscious will to impose a higher and higher law on her own processes of life and being. In subhuman life there is a vital and physical struggle, but no mental conflict. Man is subjected to this mental conflict and is therefore at war not only with others but with himself; and because he is capable of this war with himself, he is also capable of that which is denied to the animal, of an inner evolution, a progression from higher to higher type, a constant self-transcending.

This evolution takes place at present by a conflict and progress of ideas applied to life. In their primary aspect human ideas of life are simply a mental translation of the forces and tendencies of life itself as they emerge in the form of needs, desires and interests. The human mind has a practical intelligence more or less clear and exact which takes these things into account and gives to one and another a greater or less value according to its own experience, preference and judgment. Some the man accepts and helps in their growth by his will and intelligence, others he rejects, discourages and even succeeds in eliminating. But from this elementary process there emerges a second and more advanced character of man's ideas about life; he passes beyond the mere mental translation and ready dynamic handling to a regulated valuation of the forces and tendencies that have emerged or are emerging in him and his environment. He studies them as fixed processes and rules of Nature and endeavours to understand their law and norm. He tries to determine the laws of his mind and life and body, the law and rule of the facts and forces about him that constitute his environment and determine the field and the mould of his action. Since we are imperfect and evolutionary beings, this study of the laws of life is bound to envisage two aspects: it perceives the rule of what is and the rule of what may or ought to be, the law of our actualities and the law of our potentialities. The latter takes for the human intellect which tends always to an arbitrary and emphatic statement of things, the form of a fixed ideal standard or set of principles from which our actual life is a fall and deviation or towards which it is a progress and aspiration.

The evolutionary idea of Nature and life brings us to a profounder view. Both what is and what may be are expressions of the same constant facts of existence and forces or powers of our Nature from which we cannot and are not meant to escape, since all life is Nature fulfilling itself and not Nature destroying or denying itself; but we may raise and we are intended to raise, change and widen the forms, arrangements and values of these constant facts and forces of our nature and existence, and in the course of our progress the change and perfectioning may amount to what seems a radical transformation, although nothing essential is altered. Our actualities are the form and value or power of expression to which our nature and life have attained; their norm or law is the fixed arrangement and process proper to that stage of evolution. Our potentialities point us to a new form, value, power of expression with their new and appropriate arrangement and process which is their proper law and norm. Standing thus between the actual and the possible, our intellect tends to mistake present law and form for the eternal law of our nature and existence and regard any change as a deviation and fall or else, on the contrary, to mistake some future and potential law and form for our ideal rule of life and all actual deviation from that as an error or sin of our nature. In reality, only that is eternal which is constant through all changes and our ideal can be no more than a progressive expression of it. Only the utmost limit of height, wideness and fullness of self-expression possible to man, if any such limit there be, could be regarded, did we know of it, — and as yet we do not know our utmost possibilities, — as the eternal ideal.

Whatever the ideas or ideals which the human mind extracts from life or tries to apply to life, they can be nothing but the expression of that life itself as it attempts to find more and more and fix higher and higher its own law and realise its potentialities. Our mentality represents the conscious part of the movement of Nature in this progressive self-realisation and self-fulfilment of the values and potentialities of her human way of living. If that mentality were perfect, it would be one in its knowledge and will with the totality of the secret Knowledge and Will which she is trying to bring to the surface and there would be no mental conflict. For we should then be able to identify ourself with her movement, know her aim and follow intelligently her course, — realising the truth on which the Gita lays stress that it is Nature alone that acts and the movements of our mind and life are only the action of her modes. The subhuman life vitally, instinctively and mechanically does this very thing, lives according to Nature within the limits of its type and is free from internal conflict though not from conflict with other life. A superhuman life would reach consciously this perfection, make the secret Knowledge and Will in things its own and fulfil itself through Nature by her free, spontaneous and harmonious movement unhasting, unresting, towards that full development which is her inherent and therefore her predestined aim. Actually, because our mentality is imperfect, we catch only a glimpse of her tendencies and objects and each glimpse we get we erect into an absolute principle or ideal theory of our life and conduct; we see only one side of her process and put that forward as the whole and perfect system which must govern our ordering of our life. Working through the imperfect individual and still more imperfect collective mind, she raises up the facts and powers of our existence as opposing principles and forces to which we attach ourselves through our intellect and emotions, and favouring and depressing now this and now another she leads them in the mind of man through struggle and conflict towards a mutual knowledge and the sense of their mutual necessity and towards a progressively right relation and synthesis of their potentialities which is represented in an increasing harmony and combination of realised powers in the elastic potentiality of human life.

The social evolution of the human race is necessarily a development of the relations between three constant factors, individuals, communities of various sorts and mankind. Each seeks its own fulfilment and satisfaction, but each is compelled to develop them not independently but in relation to the others. The first natural aim of the individual must be his own inner growth and fullness and its expression in his outer life; but this he can only accomplish through his relations with other individuals, to the various kinds of community religious, social, cultural and political to which he belongs and to the idea and need of humanity at large. The community must seek its own fulfilment, but, whatever its strength of mass consciousness and collective organisation, can accomplish its growth only through its individuals under the stress of the circumstances set for it by its environment and subject to the conditions imposed by its relations to other communities and individuals and to humanity at large. Mankind as a whole has at present no consciously organised common life; it has only an inchoate organisation determined much more by circumstances than by human intelligence and will. And yet the idea and the fact of our common human existence, nature, destiny has always exercised its strong influence on human thought and action. One of the chief preoccupations of ethics and religion has been the obligations of man to mankind. The pressure of the large movements and fluctuations of the race has always affected the destinies of its separate communities, and there has been a constant return-pressure of separate communities social, cultural, political, religious to expand and include, if it might be, the totality of the race. And if or when the whole of humanity arrives at an organised common life and seeks a common fulfilment and satisfaction, it can only do it by means of the relation of this whole to its parts and by the aid of the expanding life of individual human beings and of the communities whose progress constitutes the larger terms of the life of the race.

Nature works always through these three terms and none of them can be abolished. She starts from the visible manifestation of the one and the many, from the totality and its constituent units and creates intermediary unities between the two without which there can be no full development either of the totality or of the units. In the life-type itself she creates always the three terms of genus, species and individual. But while in the animal life she is satisfied to separate rigidly and group summarily, in the human she strives, on the contrary, to override the divisions she has made and lead the whole kind to the sense of unity and the realisation of oneness. Man's communities are formed not so much by the instinctive herding together of a number of individuals of the same genus or species as by local association, community of interests and community of ideas; and these limits tend always to be overcome in the widening of human thoughts and sympathies brought about by the closer intermingling of races, nations, interests, ideas, cultures. Still, if overcome in their separatism, they are not abolished in their fact, because they repose on an essential principle of Nature, — diversity in unity. Therefore it would seem that the ideal or ultimate aim of Nature must be to develop the individual and all individuals to their full capacity, to develop the community and all communities to the full expression of that many-sided existence and potentiality which their differences were created to express, and to evolve the united life of mankind to its full common capacity and satisfaction, not by suppression of the fullness of life of the individual or the smaller commonalty, but by full advantage taken of the diversity which they develop. This would seem the soundest way to increase the total riches of mankind and throw them into a fund of common possession and enjoyment.

The united progress of mankind would thus be realised by a general principle of interchange and assimilation between individual and individual and again between individual and community, between community and community and again between the smaller commonalty and the totality of mankind, between the common life and consciousness of mankind and its freely developing communal and individual constituents. As a matter of fact, although this interchange is what Nature even now contrives to bring about to a certain extent, life is far from being governed by such a principle of free and harmonious mutuality.

There is a struggle, an opposition of ideas, impulses and interests, an attempt of each to profit by various kinds of war on the others, by a kind of intellectual, vital, physical robbery and theft or even by the suppression, devouring, digestion of its fellows rather than by a free and rich interchange. This is the aspect of life which humanity in its highest thought and aspiration knows that it has to transcend, but has either not yet discovered the right means or else has not had the force to apply it. It now endeavours instead to get rid of strife and the disorders of growth by a strong subordination or servitude of the life of the individual to the life of the community and, logically, it will be led to the attempt to get rid of strife between communities by a strong subordination or servitude of the life of the community to the united and organised life of the human race. To remove freedom in order to get rid of disorder, strife and waste, to remove diversity in order to get rid of separatism and jarring complexities is the impulse of order and regimentation by which the arbitrary rigidity of the intellectual reason seeks to substitute its straight line for the difficult curves of the process of Nature.

But freedom is as necessary to life as law and regime; diversity is as necessary as unity to our true completeness. Existence is one only in its essence and totality, in its play it is necessarily multiform. Absolute uniformity would mean the cessation of life, while on the other hand the vigour of the pulse of life may be measured by the richness of the diversities which it creates. At the same time, while diversity is essential for power and fruitfulness of life, unity is necessary for its order, arrangement and stability. Unity we must create, but not necessarily uniformity. If man could realise a perfect spiritual unity, no sort of uniformity would be necessary; for the utmost play of diversity would be securely possible on that foundation. If again he could realise a secure, clear, firmly-held unity in the principle, a rich, even an unlimited diversity in its application might be possible without any fear of disorder, confusion or strife. Because he cannot do either of these things he is tempted always to substitute uniformity for real unity. While the life-power in man demands diversity, his reason favours uniformity. It prefers it because uniformity gives him a strong and ready illusion of unity in place of the real oneness at which it is so much more difficult to arrive. It prefers it, secondly, because uniformity makes easy for him the otherwise difficult business of law, order and regimentation. It prefers it too because the impulse of the mind in man is to make every considerable diversity an excuse for strife and separation and therefore uniformity seems to him the one secure and easy way to unification. Moreover, uniformity in any one direction or department of life helps him to economise his energies for development in other directions. If he can standardise his economic existence and escape from its problems, he is likely to have more leisure and room to attend to his intellectual and cultural growth. Or again, if he standardises his whole social existence and rejects its farther possible problems, he is likely to have peace and a free mind to attend more energetically to his spiritual development. Even here, however, the complex unity of existence asserts its truth: in the end man's total intellectual and cultural growth suffers by social immobility, — by any restriction or poverty of his economic life; the spiritual existence of the race, if it attains to remote heights, weakens at last in its richness and continued sources of vivacity when it depends on a too standardised and regimented society; the inertia from below rises and touches even the summits.

Owing to the defects of our mentality uniformity has to a certain extent to be admitted and sought after; still the real aim of Nature is a true unity supporting a rich diversity. Her secret is clear enough from the fact that though she moulds on one general plan, she insists always on an infinite variation. The plan of the human form is one, yet no two human beings are precisely alike in their physical characteristics. Human nature is one in its constituents and its grand lines, but no two human beings are precisely alike in their temperament, characteristics and psychological substance. All life is one in its essential plan and principle; even the plant is a recognisable brother of the animal; but the unity of life admits and encourages an infinite variety of types. The natural variation of human communities from each other proceeds on the same plan as the variation of individuals; each develops its own character, variant principle, natural law. This variation and fundamental following of its own separate law is necessary to its life, but it is equally necessary to the healthy total life of mankind. For the principle of variation does not prevent free interchange, does not oppose the enrichment of all from a common stock and of the common stock by all which we have seen to be the ideal principle of existence; on the contrary, without a secure variation such interchange and mutual assimilation would be out of the question. Therefore we see that in this harmony between our unity and our diversity lies the secret of life; Nature insists equally in all her works upon unity and upon variation. We shall find that a real spiritual and psychological unity can allow a free diversity and dispense with all but the minimum of uniformity which is sufficient to embody the community of nature and of essential principle. Until we can arrive at that perfection, the method of uniformity has to be applied, but we must not over-apply it on peril of discouraging life in the very sources of its power, richness and sane natural self-unfolding.

The quarrel between law and liberty stands on the same ground and moves to the same solution. The diversity, the variation must be a free variation. Nature does not manufacture, does not impose a pattern or a rule from outside; she impels life to grow from within and to assert its own natural law and development modified only by its commerce with its environment. All liberty, individual, national, religious, social, ethical, takes its ground upon this fundamental principle of our existence. By liberty we mean the freedom to obey the law of our being, to grow to our natural self-fulfilment, to find out naturally and freely our harmony with our environment. The dangers and disadvantages of liberty, the disorder, strife, waste and confusion to which its wrong use leads are indeed obvious. But they arise from the absence or defect of the sense of unity between individual and individual, between community and community, which pushes them to assert themselves at the expense of each other instead of growing by mutual help and interchange and to assert freedom for themselves in the very act of encroaching on the free development of their fellows. If a real, a spiritual and psychological unity were effectuated, liberty would have no perils and disadvantages; for free individuals enamoured of unity would be compelled by themselves, by their own need, to accommodate perfectly their own growth with the growth of their fellows and would not feel themselves complete except in the free growth of others. Because of our present imperfection and the ignorance of our mind and will, law and regimentation have to be called in to restrain and to compel from outside. The facile advantages of a strong law and compulsion are obvious, but equally great are the disadvantages. Such perfection as it succeeds in creating tends to be mechanical and even the order it imposes turns out to be artificial and liable to break down if the yoke is loosened or the restraining grasp withdrawn. Carried too far, an imposed order discourages the principle of natural growth which is the true method of life and may even slay the capacity for real growth. We repress and over-standardise life at our peril; by over-regimentation we crush Nature's initiative and habit of intuitive self-adaptation. Dwarfed or robbed of elasticity, the devitalised individuality, even while it seems outwardly fair and symmetrical, perishes from within. Better anarchy than the long continuance of a law which is not our own or which our real nature cannot assimilate. And all repressive or preventive law is only a makeshift, a substitute for the true law which must develop from within and be not a check on liberty, but its outward image and visible expression. Human society progresses really and vitally in proportion as law becomes the child of freedom; it will reach its perfection when, man having learned to know and become spiritually one with his fellow-man, the spontaneous law of his society exists only as the outward mould of his self-governed inner liberty.

Chapter XVIII

The Ideal Solution — A Free Grouping of Mankind

THESE principles founded on the essential and constant tendencies of Nature in the development of human life ought clearly to be the governing ideas in any intelligent attempt at the unification of the human race. And it might so be done if that unification could be realised after the manner of a Lycurgan constitution or by the law of an ideal Manu, the perfect sage and king. Attempted, as it will be, in very different fashion according to the desires, passions and interests of great masses of men and guided by no better light than the half-enlightened reason of the world's intellectuals and the empirical opportunism of the world's statesmen and politicians, it is likely to be done by a succession of confused experiments, recoils and returns, resistances and persistences; it will progress in spite of human unreason in the midst of a clamour of rival ideas and interests, stumble through a war of principles, advance by a clash of vehement parties ending in more or less clumsy compromises. It may even, as we have said, be managed in the most unideal, though not the most inconvenient method of all, by a certain amount of violence, the domination of a few vast and powerful empires or even the emergence of a single predominant world-empire, a king-state that will be accepted or will impose itself as the arbiter, if not the ruler of mankind. Not any intelligent principle, but necessity and convenience, not urgent light, but urgent power is likely to be the effective force in any political, administrative and economic unification of the race.

Still, though the ideal may not be immediately practicable, it is that to which our action ought more and more to move. And if the best method cannot always be employed, it is well to know the best method, so that in the strife of principles and forces and interests something of it may enter into our dealings with each other and mitigate the errors, stumblings and sufferings which our ignorance and unreason compel us to pay as the price of our progress. In principle, then, the ideal unification of mankind would be a system in which, as a first rule of common and harmonious life, the human peoples would be allowed to form their own groupings according to their natural divisions of locality, race, culture, economic convenience and not according to the more violent accidents of history or the egoistic will of powerful nations whose policy it must always be to compel the smaller or less timely organised to serve their interests as dependents or obey their commands as subjects. The present arrangement of the world has been worked out by economic forces, by political diplomacies, treaties and purchases and by military violence without regard to any moral principle or any general rule of the good of mankind. It has served roughly certain ends of the World-Force in its development and helped at much cost of bloodshed, suffering, cruelty, oppression and revolt to bring humanity more together. Like all things that, though in themselves unideal, have been and have asserted themselves with force, it has had its justification, not moral but biological, in the necessity of the rough methods which Nature has to use with a half-animal mankind as with her animal creation. But the great step of unification once taken, the artificial arrangements which have resulted would no longer have any reason for existence. It would be so in the first place because the convenience and good of the world at large and not the satisfaction of the egoism, pride and greed of particular nations would be the object to be held in view, in the second because whatever legitimate claim any nation might have upon others, such as necessities of economic well-being and expansion, would be arranged for in a soundly organised world-union or world-state no longer on the principle of strife and competition, but on a principle of cooperation or mutual adjustment or at least of competition regulated by law and equity and just interchange. Therefore no ground would remain for forced and artificial groupings except that of historical tradition or accomplished fact which would obviously have little weight in a great change of world conditions impossible to achieve unless the race is prepared to break hundreds of traditions and unsettle the great majority of accomplished facts.

The first principle of human unity, groupings being necessary, should be a system of free and natural groupings which would leave no room for internal discords, mutual incompatibilities and repression and revolt as between race and race or people and people. For otherwise the world-state would be founded in part at least upon a system of legalised injustice and repression or at the best upon a principle of force and compulsion, however mitigated. Such a system would contain dissatisfied elements eager to seize upon any hope of change and throw their moral force and whatever material power they might still keep on the side of any velleities that might appear in the race towards disorder, secession, dissolution of the system and perhaps a return to the old order of things. Moral centres of revolt would thus be preserved which, given the restlessness of the human mind, could not fail to have, in periods favourable to them, a great power of contagion and self-diffusion. In fact, any system which would appear to stereotype anomalies, eternise injustice and inequality or rest permanently on a principle of compulsion and forced subjection, could have no security and would be condemned by its very nature to transience.

This was the principal weakness of the drift during the war towards the settlement of the world on the basis of the actual *status quo* that followed the recent world convulsion. Such a settlement must have had the vice of fixing conditions which in their nature must be transient. It would mean not only the rule of this or that nation over dissatisfied foreign minorities but the supremacy of Europe over most of Asia and all Africa. A league or incipient unity of the nations would be equivalent under such conditions to the control of the enormous mass of mankind by an oligarchy of a few white races. Such could not be the principle of a long-enduring settlement of the world. For then one of two alternatives would be inevitable. The new system would have to support by law and force the existing condition of things and resist any attempt at radical change; but this would lead to an unnatural suppression of great natural and moral forces and in the end a tremendous disorder, perhaps a world-shattering explosion. Or else some general legislative authority and means of change would have to be established by which the judgment and sentiment of mankind would be able to prevail over imperialistic egoisms and which would enable the European, Asiatic and African peoples now subject to make the claims of their growing self-consciousness felt in the councils of the world.[1] But such an authority, interfering with the egoisms of great and powerful empires, would be difficult to establish, slow to act and not by any means at ease in its exercise of power or moral influence or likely to be peaceful or harmonious in its deliberations. It would either reduce itself to a representative of the sentiments and interests of a ruling oligarchy of great Powers or end in such movements of secession and civil war between the States as settled the question of slavery in America. There would be only one other possible issue, — that the liberal sentiments and principles at first aroused by the war in Europe should become settled and permanent forces of action and extend themselves to the dealings of European nations with their non-European dependencies. In other words, it must become a settled political principle with European nations to change the character of their imperialism and convert their empires as soon as might be from artificial into true psychological unities.

But that would end inevitably in the recognition of the principle we have advanced, the arrangement of the world in a system of free and natural and not as hitherto of partly free and partly forced groupings. For a psychological unity could only be assured by a free assent of nations now subject to their inclusion in the imperial aggregate and the power of free assent would imply a power of free dissent and separation. If owing to incompatibility of culture, temperament or economic or other interest the psychological unity could not be established, either such separation would be inevitable or else there must be a resort to the old principle of force, — a difficult matter when dealing with great masses of men who must in the course of the new process have arrived at self-consciousness and recovered their united intellectual force and vitality. Imperial unities of this kind must be admitted as a possible, but by no means an inevitable next step in human aggregation easier to realise than a united mankind in present conditions; but such unities could have only two rational purposes, one as a half-way house to the unity of all the nations of the world and an experiment in administrative and economic confederation on a large scale, the other as a means of habituating nations of different race, traditions, colour, civilisation to dwell together in a common political family as the whole human race would have to dwell in any scheme of unity which respected the principle of variation and did not compel a dead level of uniformity. The imperial heterogeneous unit has a value in Nature's processes only as a means towards this greater unity and, where not maintained afterwards by some natural attraction or by some miracle of entire fusion, — a thing improbable, if possible, — would cease to exist once the greater unity was accomplished. On this line of development also and indeed on any line of development the principle of a free and natural grouping of peoples must be the eventual conclusion, the final and perfect basis. It must be so because on no other foundation could the unification of mankind be secure or sound. And it must be so because once unification is firmly accomplished and war and jealous national competition replaced by better methods of intercourse and mutual adjustment, there can be no object in maintaining any other more artificial system, and therefore both reason and convenience would compel the change. The institution of a natural system of grouping would become as much a matter of course as the administrative arrangement of a country according to its natural provinces. And it would be as much a necessity of reason or convenience as the regard necessarily paid in any system of devolution or free federation to race or national sentiment or long-established local unities. Other considerations might modify the application of the principle, but there would be none that could be strong enough to abrogate it.

---

[1] The League of Nations started with some dim ideal of this kind; but even its first halting attempts at opposing imperial egoisms ended in secession and avoided a civil war among its members only by drawing back from its own commitments. In fact, it was never more than an instrument subservient to the policy of a few great Powers.

The natural unit in such a grouping is the nation, because that is the basis natural evolution has firmly created and seems indeed to have provided with a view to the greater unity. Unless, therefore, unification is put off to a much later date of our history and in the meanwhile the national principle of aggregation loses its force and vitality and is dissolved in some other, the free and natural nation-unit and perhaps the nation-group would be the just and living support of a sound and harmonious world-system. Race still counts and would enter in as an element, but only as a subordinate element. In certain groupings it would predominate and be decisive; in others it would be set at nought partly by a historic and national sentiment overriding differences of language and race, partly by economic and other relations created by local contact or geographical oneness. Cultural unity would count, but need not in all cases prevail; even the united force of race and culture might not be sufficiently strong to be decisive.

The examples of this complexity are everywhere. Switzerland belongs by language, race and culture and even by affinities of sentiment to different national aggregations, two of sentiment and culture, the Latin and the Teutonic, three of race and language, the German, French and Italian, and these differences worked sufficiently to bewilder and divide Swiss sympathies in the clash of nations; but the decisive feeling overriding all others is the sentiment of Helvetian nationality and that would seem to forbid now and always any idea of a voluntary partition or dissolution of Switzerland's long-standing natural, local and historic unity. Alsace belongs predominantly by race, language and early history to a Germanic union, but the German appealed in vain to these titles and laboured in vain to change Alsace-Lorraine into Elsass-Lothringen; the living sentiments and affinities of the people, national, historical, cultural, bound it still to France. Canada and Australia have no geographical connection with the British Isles or with each other and the former would seem to belong by predestination to an American group-unity; but certainly, in the absence of a change of sentiment not now easily foreseen, both would prefer to belong to a British grouping rather than the one fuse itself into an increasingly cosmopolitan American nation or the other stand apart as an Australasian union. On the other hand the Slavonic and Latin elements of Austro-Hungary, though they belonged by history, geographical position and economic convenience to that empire, moved strongly towards separation and, where local sentiments permitted, to union with their racial, cultural and linguistic kin. If Austria had dealt with her Slav subjects as with the Magyars or had been able to build a national culture of her own out of her German, Slav, Magyar and Italian elements, it would have been otherwise and her unity would have been secure against all external or internal forces of disruption. Race, language, local relations and economic convenience are powerful factors, but what decides must be a dominant psychological element that makes for union. To that subtler force all others, however restless they may be, must succumb; however much they may seek for free particularist expression and self-possession within a larger unity, they must needs subordinate themselves to the more powerful attraction.

For this very reason the basic principle adopted must be a free grouping and not that of some abstract or practical rule or principle of historic tradition or actual status imposed upon the nations. It is easy to build up a system in the mind and propose to erect it on foundations which would be at first sight rational and convenient. At first sight it would seem that the unity of mankind could most rationally and conveniently arrange itself upon the basis of a European grouping, an Asiatic grouping, an American grouping, with two or three sub-groups in America, Latin and English-speaking, three in Asia, the Mongolian, Indian and West-Asian, with Moslem North Africa perhaps as a natural annexe to the third of these, four in Europe, the Latin, Slavonic, Teutonic and Anglo-Celtic, the latter with the colonies that still chose to adhere to it, while Central and Southern Africa might be left to develop under present conditions but with the more humane and progressive principles upon which the sentiment of a united humanity would insist. Certain of the actual and obvious difficulties might not be of great importance under a better system of things. We know, for instance, that nations closely connected by every apparent tie, are actually divided by stronger antipathies than those more ideative and less actual which separate them from peoples who have with them no tie of affinity. Mongolian Japan and Mongolian China are sharply divided from each other in sentiment; Arab and Turk and Persian, although one in Islamic religion and culture, would not, if their present sentiments towards each other persisted, make an entirely happy family. Scandinavian Norway and Sweden had everything to draw them together and perpetuate their union, — except a strong, if irrational sentiment which made the continuance of that union impossible. But these antipathies really persist only so long as there is some actual unfriendly pressure or sense of subjugation or domination or fear of the oppression of the individuality of one by the other; once that is removed they would be likely to disappear. It is notable, for instance, that since the separation of Norway and Sweden the three Scandinavian States have been increasingly disposed to act together and regard themselves as a natural grouping in Europe. The long antipathy of the Irish and English nations is declining in the actuality of a juster, though still imperfect relation between these two national individualities, as the antipathy of Austrian and Magyar gave way when once a just relation had been established between the two kingdoms. It is easily conceivable therefore that with a system in which the causes of hostility would disappear, natural affinities would prevail and a grouping of the kind imagined might become more easily practicable. It is arguable also that the trend of mankind under a great stress of tendency towards unification would naturally move to the creation of such a symmetry. It may be that a great change and revolution in the world would powerfully and rapidly abolish all the obstacles, as the obstacles of the old regime to a uniform democratic system were abolished in France by the French Revolution. But any such arrangement would be quite impracticable unless and until the actual sentiments of the peoples corresponded with these systems of rational convenience: the state of the world is at present far removed from any such ideal correspondence.

The idea of a new basis founded on the principle of national sentiment seemed at one time to be taking within a limited field the shape of a practical proposition. It was confined to a European resettlement and even there it was only to be imposed by the logic of war and force upon defeated empires. The others proposed to recognise it for themselves only in a restricted form, Russia by the concession of autonomy to Poland, England by Home Rule in Ireland and a federation with her colonies, while other denials of the principle were still to persist and even perhaps one or two new denials of it to be established in obedience to imperial ambitions and exigencies. A name even was given to this new principle and for a time the idea of self-determination received an official sanction and almost figured as a gospel. However imperfect the application, this practical enforcement of it, if effected, would have meant the physical birth and infancy of a new ideal and would have held forth to the hopes of mankind the prospect of its eventual application in a larger field until it came to be universalised. Even if the victory of the Allies put an end to these high professions, it is no longer possible to consider this ideal of a rearrangement of the world on the basis of free national groupings as an impossible dream, an altogether chimerical ideal.

Still, the forces against it are considerable and it is idle to hope that they will be overcome except after long and difficult struggles. National and imperial egoism is the first and most powerful of the contrary forces. To give up the instinct of domination and the desire still to be rulers and supreme where rule and supremacy have been the reward of past efforts, to sacrifice the advantages of a commercial exploitation of dependencies and colonies which can only be assured by the confirmation of dominance and supremacy, to face disinterestedly the emergence into free national activity of vigorous and sometimes enormous masses of men, once subjects and passive means of self-enrichment but henceforth to be powerful equals and perhaps formidable rivals, is too great a demand upon egoistic human nature to be easily and spontaneously conceded where concession is not forced upon the mind by actual necessity or the hope of some great and palpable gain that will compensate the immediate and visible loss. There is, too, the claim of Europe, not yet renounced, to hold the rest of the world in the interests of civilisation, by which is meant European civilisation, and to insist upon its acceptance as a condition for the admission of Asiatic races to any kind of equality or freedom. This claim which is destined soon to lose all its force in Asia, has still a strong justification in the actual state of the African continent. For the present, let us note that it works strongly against a wider recognition of the new-born ideal and that until the problems it raises are resolved, the settlement of the world on any such ideal principle must wait upon the evolution of new forces and the coming to a head both in Asia and Europe of yet unaccomplished spiritual, intellectual and material revolutions.[2]

---

[2] These revolutions have now happened and these obstacles, though not yet entirely, have faded or are fading out of existence.

Chapter XIX

The Drive towards Centralisation and Uniformity — Administration and Control of Foreign Affairs

SUPPOSING the free grouping of the nations according to their natural affinities, sentiments, sense of economic and other convenience to be the final basis of a stable world-union, the next question that arises is what precisely would be the status of these nation-units in the larger and more complex unity of mankind. Would they possess only a nominal separateness and become parts of a machine or retain a real and living individuality and an effective freedom and organic life? Practically, this comes to the question whether the ideal of human unity points to the forcible or at least forceful fusing and welding of mankind into a single vast nation and centralised world-state with many provinces or to its aggregation under a more complex, loose and flexible system into a world-union of free nationalities. If the former more rigorous idea or tendency or need dominated, we must have a period of compression, constriction, negation of national and individual liberties as in the second of the three historical stages of national formation in Europe. This process would end, if entirely successful, in a centralised world-government which would impose its uniform rule and law, uniform administration, uniform economic and educational system, one culture, one social principle, one civilisation, perhaps even one language and one religion on all mankind. Centralised, it would delegate some of its powers to national authorities and councils, but only as the centralised French government — Parliament and bureaucracy — delegate some of their powers to the departmental prefects and councils and their subordinate officials and communes.

Such a state of things seems a sufficiently far-off dream and assuredly not, except to the rigid doctrinaire, a very beautiful dream. Certainly, it would take a long time to become entirely practicable and would have to be preceded by a period of loose formation corresponding to the feudal unity of France or Germany in mediaeval Europe. Still, at the rate of ever accelerated speed with which the world is beginning to progress and with the gigantic revolutions of international thought, outlook and practice which the future promises, we have to envisage it as not only an ultimate, but, it may very well be, a not immeasurably far-off possibility. If things continued to move persistently, victoriously in one direction and Science still farther to annihilate the obstacles of space and of geographical and mental division which yet exist and to aggrandise its means and powers of vast and close organisation, it might well become feasible within a century or two, at the most within three or four. It would be the logical conclusion of any process in which force and constraint or the predominance of a few great nations or the emergence of a king-state, an empire predominant on sea and land, became the principal instrument of unification. It might come about, supposing some looser unity to be already established, by the triumph throughout the world of the political doctrine and the coming to political power of a party of socialistic and internationalistic doctrinaires alike in mentality to the unitarian Jacobins of the French Revolution who would have no tenderness for the sentiments of the past or for any form of group individualism and would seek to crush out of existence all their visible supports so as to establish perfectly their idea of an absolute human equality and unity.

A system of the kind, however established, by whatever forces, governed by the democratic State idea which inspires modern socialism or by the mere State idea socialistic perhaps, but undemocratic or anti-democratic, would stand upon the principle that perfect unity is only to be realised by uniformity. All thought in fact that seeks to establish unity by mechanical or external means is naturally attracted towards uniformity. Its thesis would seem to be supported by history and the lessons of the past; for in the formation of national unity, the trend to centralisation and uniformity has been the decisive factor, a condition of uniformity the culminating point. The precedent of the formation of diverse and often conflicting elements of a people into a single national State would naturally be the determining precedent for the formation of the populations of the earth, the human people, into a single world-nation and World-State. In modern times there have been significant examples of the power of this trend towards uniformity which increases as civilisation progresses. The Turkish movement began with the ideal of toleration for all the heterogeneous elements — races, languages, religions, cultures — of the ramshackle Turkish empire, but inevitably the dominant Young Turk element was carried away by the instinct for establishing, even by coercion, a uniform Ottoman culture and Ottoman nationality.[1] Belgium, composed almost equally of Teutonic Flemings and Gallic Walloons, grew into a nationality under the aegis of a Franco-Belgian culture with French as the dominant language; the Fleming movement which should logically have contented itself with equal rights for the two languages, aimed really at a reversal of the whole position and not merely the assertion but the dominance of the Flemish language and an indigenous Flemish culture. Germany, uniting her ancient elements into one body, suffered her existing States with their governments and administrations to continue, but the possibility of considerable diversities thus left open was annulled by the centralisation of national life in Berlin; a nominal separateness existed, but overshadowed by a real and dominant uniformity which all but converted Germany into the image of a larger Prussia in spite of the more democratic and humanistic tendencies and institutions of the Southern States. There are indeed apparent types of a freer kind of federation, Switzerland, the United States, Australia, South Africa, but even here the spirit of uniformity really prevails or tends to prevail in spite of variation in detail and the latitude of free legislation in minor matters conceded to the component States. Everywhere unity seems to call for and strive to create a greater or less uniformity as its secure basis.

---

[1] This trend has found its completion, after the elimination of the Greek element and the loss of the empire, in the small purely Turkish State of today, but curiously the national uniformity has been topped by the association with it and assimilation of European culture and social forms and habits.

The first uniformity from which all the rest takes its start is that of a centralised government whose natural function is to create and ensure a uniform administration. A central government is necessary to every aggregate which seeks to arrive at an organic unity of its political and economic life. Although nominally or to begin with this central government may be only an organ created by several States that still claim to be sovereign within their own borders, an instrument to which for convenience' sake they attribute a few of their powers for common objects, yet in fact it tends always to become itself the sovereign body and desires always to concentrate more and more power into its hands and leave only delegated powers to local legislatures and authorities. The practical inconveniences of a looser system strengthen this tendency and weaken gradually the force of the safeguards erected against an encroachment which seems more and more to be entirely beneficial and supported by the logic of general utility. Even in the United States with its strong attachment to its original constitution and slowness in accepting constitutional innovations on other than local lines, the tendency is manifesting itself and would certainly have resulted by this time in great and radical changes if there had not been a Supreme Court missioned to nullify any legislative interference with the original constitution, or if the American policy of aloofness from foreign affairs and complications had not removed the pressure of those necessities that in other nations have aided the central government to engross all real power and convert itself into the source as well as the head or centre of national activities. The traditional policy of the United States, its pacificism, its anti-militarism, its aversion to entanglement in European complications or any close touch with the politics of Europe, its jealousy of interference by the European Powers in American affairs in spite of their possession of colonies and interests in the Western hemisphere, are largely due to the instinct that this separateness is the sole security for the maintenance of its institutions and the peculiar type of its national life. Once militarised, once cast into the vortex of old-world politics, as it at times threatens to be, nothing could long protect the States from the necessity of large changes in the direction of centralisation and the weakening of the federal principle.[2] Switzerland owes the security of its federal constitution to a similarly self-centred neutrality.

For the growth of national centralisation is due to two primary needs of which the first and most pressing is the necessity of compactness, single-mindedness, a single and concentrated action against other nations, whether for defence against external aggression or for aggression upon others in the pursuit of national interests and ambitions. The centralising effect of war and militarism, its call for a concentration of powers, has been a commonplace of history from the earliest times. It has been the chief factor in the evolution of centralised and absolute monarchies, in the maintenance of close and powerful aristocracies, in the welding together of disparate elements and the discouragement of centrifugal tendencies. The nations which, faced with this necessity, have failed to evolve or to preserve this concentration of powers, have always tended to fare ill in the battle of life, even if they have not shared the fate long endured by Italy and Poland in Europe or by India in Asia. The strength of centralised Japan, the weakness of decentralised China was a standing proof that even in modern conditions the ancient rule holds good. Only yesterday the free States of Western Europe found themselves compelled to suspend all their hard-earned liberties and go back to the ancient Roman device of an irresponsible Senate and even to a covert dictatorship in order to meet the concentrated strength of a nation powerfully centralised and organised for military defence and attack. If the sense of this necessity could covertly or overtly survive the actual duration of war, there can be no doubt that democracy and liberty would receive the most dangerous and possibly fatal blow they have yet suffered since their re-establishment in modern times.[3]

---

[2] The Roosevelt policy and the difficulties it encountered illustrate vividly the power of these two conflicting forces in the United States; but the trend towards the strengthening of the federal case, however slow, is unmistakable.

The power of Prussia to take the life of Germany into its grasp was due almost wholly to the sense of an insecure position between two great and hostile nations and to the feeling of encirclement and insecurity for its expansion which was imposed on the Reich by its peculiar placement in Europe. Another example of the same tendency was the strength which the idea of confederation acquired as a result of war in England and her colonies. So long as the colonies could stand aloof and unaffected by England's wars and foreign policy, this idea had little chance of effectuation; but the experience of the war and its embarrassments and the patent inability to compel a concentration of all the potential strength of the empire under a system of almost total decentralisation seem to have made inevitable a tightening up of the loose and easy make of the British Empire which may go very far once the principle has been recognised and put initially into practice.[4] A loose federation in one form or another serves well where peace is the rule; wherever peace is insecure or the struggle of life difficult and menacing, looseness becomes a disadvantage and may turn even into a fatal defect, the opportunity of fate for destruction.

The pressure of peril from without and the need of expansion create only the tendency towards a strong political and military centralisation; the growth of uniformity arises from the need of a close internal organisation of which the centre thus created becomes the instrument. This organisation is partly called for by the same needs as create the instrument, but much more by the advantages of uniformity for a well-ordered social and economic life based upon a convenience of which life is careless but which the intelligence of man constantly demands, — a clear, simple and, as far as the complexity of life will allow, a facile principle of order. The human intelligence as soon as it begins to order life according to its own fashion and not according to the more instinctively supple and flexible principle of organic order inherent in life, aims necessarily at imitating physical Nature in the fixity of her uniform fundamental principles of arrangement, but tries also to give to them, as much as may be, a uniform application. It drives at the suppression of all important variations. It is only when it has enlarged itself and feels more competent to understand and deal with natural complexities that it finds itself at all at ease in managing what the principle of life seems always to demand, the free variation and subtly diverse application of uniform principles. First of all, in the ordering of a national society, it aims naturally at uniformity in that aspect of it which most nearly concerns the particular need of the centre of order which has been called into existence, its political and military function. It aims first at a sufficient and then at an absolute unity and uniformity of administration.

---

[3] Even as it is, the direction of the drive of forces tends to be evidently away from democracy towards a more and more rigid State control and regimentation.

[4] As yet this has only gone so far as equality of status with close consultation in foreign affairs, attempts at a closer economic cooperation, but a continuation of large wars might either according to its fortunes dissolve the still loose or compel a more coherent system. At present, however, this possibility is held back by the arrival of true Dominion Status and the Westminster Statute which make federation unnecessary for any practical purpose and even perhaps undesirable for the sentiment in favour of a practical independence.

The monarchies which the need of concentration called into being, drove first at a preliminary concentration, a gathering of the main threads of administration into the hands of the central authority. We see this everywhere, but the stages of the process are most clearly indicated in the political history of France; for there the confusion of feudal separatism and feudal jurisdictions created the most formidable difficulties and yet by a constant centralising insistence and a final violent reaction from their surviving results it was there that they were most successfully resolved and removed. The centralising monarchy, brought to supreme power by the repeated lessons of the English invasions, the Spanish pressure, the civil wars, developed inevitably that absolutism which the great historic figure of Louis XIV so strikingly personifies. His famous dictum, "I am the State", expressed really the need felt by the country of the development of one undisputed sovereign power which should concentrate in itself all military, legislative and administrative authority as against the loose and almost chaotic organisation of feudal France. The system of the Bourbons aimed first at administrative centralisation and unity, secondarily at a certain amount of administrative uniformity. It could not carry this second aim to an entirely successful conclusion because of its dependence on the aristocracy which it had replaced, but to which it was obliged to leave the confused debris of its feudal privileges. The Revolution made short work of this aristocracy and swept away the relics of the ancient system. In establishing a rigorous uniformity it did not reverse but rather completed the work of the monarchy. An entire unity and uniformity legislative, fiscal, economic, judicial, social was the goal towards which French absolutism, monarchical or democratic, was committed by its original impulse. The rule of the Jacobins and the regime of Napoleon only brought rapidly to fruition what was slowly evolving under the monarchy out of the confused organism of feudal France.

In other countries the movement was less direct and the survival of old institutions even after the loss of their original reason for existence more obstinate; but everywhere in Europe, even in Germany[5] and Russia, the trend has been the same and the eventual result is inevitable. The study of that evolution is of considerable importance for the future; for the difficulties to be surmounted were identical in essence, however different in form and extent, to those which would stand in the way of the evolution of a world-state out of the loose and still confused organism of the modern civilised world.

---

[5] Note the absolute culmination of this drive in Germany in the unprecedented centralisation, the rigid standardisation and uniformity of the Nationalist Socialist regime under Hitler.

Chapter XX

The Drive towards Economic Centralisation

THE OBJECTIVE organisation of a national unity is not yet complete when it has arrived at the possession of a single central authority and the unity and uniformity of its political, military and strictly administrative functions. There is another side of its organic life, the legislative and its corollary, the judicial function, which is equally important; the exercise of legislative power becomes eventually indeed, although it was not always, the characteristic sign of the sovereign. Logically, one would suppose that the conscious and organised determination of its own rules of life should be the first business of a society from which all others should derive and on which they should be dependent and therefore it would naturally be the earliest to develop. But life develops in obedience to its own law and the pressure of forces and not according to the law and the logic of the self-conscious mind; its first course is determined by the subconscient and is only secondarily and derivatively self-conscious. The development of human society has been no exception to the rule; for man, though in the essence of his nature a mental being, has practically started with a largely mechanical mentality as the conscious living being, Nature's human animal, and only afterwards can he be the self-conscious living being, the self-perfecting Manu. That is the course the individual has had to follow; the group-man follows in the wake of the individual and is always far behind the highest individual development. Therefore, the development of the society as an organism consciously and entirely legislating for its own needs, which should be by the logic of reason the first necessary step, is actually in the logic of life the last and culminative step. It enables the society at last to perfect consciously by means of the State the whole organisation of its life, military, political, administrative, economic, social, cultural. The completeness of the process depends on the completeness of the development by which the State and society become, as far as that may be, synonymous. That is the importance of democracy; that is the importance also of socialism. They are the sign that the society is getting ready to be an entirely self-conscious and therefore a freely and consciously self-regulating organism.[1] But it must be remarked that modern democracy and modern socialism are only a first crude and bungling attempt at that consummation, an inefficient hint and not a freely intelligent realisation.

At first, in the early stage of society, there is no such thing as what we understand by law, the Roman *lex*; there are only a mass of binding habits, *nomoi*, *mores*, *ācāra*, determined by the inner nature of the group-man and according to the action upon it of the forces and the necessities of his environment. They become *instituta*, things that acquire a fixed and formal status, institutions, and crystallise into laws. Moreover, they embrace the whole life of the society; there is no distinction between the political and administrative, the social and the religious law; these not only all meet in one system, but run inextricably into and are determined by each other. Such was the type of the ancient Jewish law and of the Hindu Shastra which preserved up to recent times this early principle of society in spite of the tendencies of specialisation and separation which have triumphed elsewhere as a result of the normal development of the analytical and practical reason of mankind. This complex customary law evolved indeed, but by a natural development of the body of social habits in obedience to changing ideas and more and more complex necessities. There was no single and fixed legislative authority to determine them by conscious shaping and selection or in anticipation of popular consent or by direct ideative action upon the general consensus of need and opinion. Kings and prophets and Rishis and Brahmin jurists might exercise such an action according to their power and influence, but none of these were the constituted legislative sovereign; the king in India was the administrator of the Dharma and not at all or only exceptionally and to a hardly noticeable extent the legislator.

---

[1] Fascism, National Socialism have cut out the "freely" in this formula and set about the task of creating the organised self-regulating consciousness by a violent regimentation.

It is worth noting, indeed, that this customary law was often attributed to an original legislator, a Manu, Moses, Lycurgus; but the historic truth of any such tradition has been discredited by modern inquiry and perhaps rightly, if we consider only the actual ascertainable facts and the ordinary process of the human mind and its development. In fact, if we examine the profound legendary tradition of India, we see that its idea of the Manu is more a symbol than anything else. His name means man the mental being. He is the divine legislator, the mental demi-god in humanity who fixes the lines upon which the race or people has to govern its evolution. In the Purana he or his sons are said to reign in subtle earths or worlds or, as we may say, they reign in the larger mentality which to us is subconscient and from there have power to determine the lines of development of the conscious life of man. His law is the *mānava-dharmaśāstra*, the science of the law of conduct of the mental or human being and in this sense we may think of the law of any human society as being the conscious evolution of the type and lines which its Manu has fixed for it. If there comes an embodied Manu, a living Moses or Mahomed, he is only the prophet or spokesman of the Divinity who is veiled in the fire and the cloud, Jehovah on Sinai, Allah speaking through his angels. Mahomed, as we know, only developed the existing social, religious and administrative customs of the Arab people into a new system dictated to him often in a state of trance, in which he passed from his conscient into his superconscient self, by the Divinity to his secret intuitive mind. All that may be suprarational or, if you will, irrational, but it represents a different stage of human development from the government of society by its rational and practical mind which in contact with life's changing needs and permanent necessities demands a created and codified law determined by a fixed legislative authority, the society's organised brain or centre.

This rational development consists, as we have seen, in the creation of a central authority, — at first a distinct central force but afterwards more and more conterminous with the society itself or directly representing it, — which gradually takes over the specialised and separated parts of the social activity. At first this authority was the king, elective or hereditary, in his original character a war-leader and at home only the chief, the head of the elders or the strong men and the convener of the nation and the army, a nodus of its action, but not the principal determinant: in war only, where entire centralisation of power is the first condition of effective action, was he entirely supreme. As host-leader, *strategos*, he was also *imperator*, the giver of the absolute command. When he extended this combination of headship and rule from outside inward, he tended to become the executive power, not merely the chief instrument of social administration but the executive ruler.

It was naturally easier for him to become thus supreme in foreign than in internal politics. Even now European governments which have in internal affairs to defer to the popular will or to persuade and cajole the nation, are able in foreign politics to act either entirely or very largely according to their own ideas: for they are allowed to determine their acts by a secret diplomacy in which the people can have no voice and the representatives of the nation have only a general power of criticising or ratifying its results. Their action in foreign politics is nominal or at any rate restricted to a minimum, since they cannot prevent secret arrangements and treaties; even to such as are made early public they can only withhold their ratification at the risk of destroying the sureness and continuity, the necessary uniformity of the external action of the nation and thus destroying too the confidence of foreign governments without which negotiations cannot be conducted nor stable alliances and combinations formed. Nor can they really withhold their sanction in a crisis, whether for war or peace, at the only moment when they are effectively consulted, the last hour or rather the last minute when either has become inevitable. Much more necessarily was this the case in the old monarchies when the king was the maker of war and peace and conducted the external affairs of the country according to his personal idea of the national interests, largely affected by his own passions, predilections and personal and family interests. But whatever the attendant disadvantages, the conduct of war and peace and foreign politics as well as the conduct of the host in the field of battle had at least been centralised, unified in the sovereign authority. The demand for real parliamentary control of foreign policy and even for an open diplomacy — a difficult matter to our current notions, yet once practised and perfectly capable of practice — indicates one more step in the transformation, far from complete in spite of the modern boast of democracy, from a monarchical and oligarchic to a democratic system, the taking over of all sovereign functions from the one sovereign administrator or the few dominant executive men by the society as a whole organised in the democratic State.

In its seizure of the internal functionings the central authority has a more difficult task, because its absorption of them or of their chief control has to reckon with powerful competing or modifying forces and interests and the strength of established and often cherished national habits and existing rights and privileges. But it is bound in the end to arrive at some unified control of those which are in their nature executive and administrative. This administrative side of the national organisation has three principal parts, financial, executive proper and judicial. The financial power carries with it the control of the public purse and the expenditure of the wealth contributed by the society for national purposes, and it is evident that this must pass into the hands of whatever authority has taken up the business of organising and making efficient the united action of the community. But that authority in its impulse towards an undivided and uncontrolled gestation, a complete unification of powers must naturally desire not only to determine the expenditure according to its own free will, but to determine also the contributions of the society to the public purse both in its amount and in its repartition over the individuals and classes who constitute the nation. Monarchy in its impulse towards a despotic centrality has always sought to engross and struggled to retain this power; for the control over the purse of the nation is the most important sign and the most effective element of real sovereignty, more essential perhaps than the control over life and limb. In the most despotic regimes, this control is absolute and extends to the power of confiscation and despoliation otherwise than by judicial procedure. On the other hand, a ruler who has to bargain with his subjects over the amount of their contribution and the methods of taxation, is at once hedged in in his sovereignty and is not in fact the sole and entire sovereign. A vital power is in the hands of an inferior estate of the realm and can be turned against him fatally in any struggle for the shifting of the sovereignty from him to that estate. That is the reason why the supreme political instinct of the English people fixed, in the struggle with the monarchy, upon this question of taxation as the first vital point in a conflict for the power of the purse. Once that was settled in the Parliament by the defeat of the Stuarts, the transformation of the monarchical sovereignty into the sovereignty of the people or, more accurately, the shifting of the organic control from the throne to the aristocracy, thence to the bourgeoisie, and again to the whole people, — the latter two steps comprising the rapid evolution of the last eighty years, — was only a question of time. In France, the successful practical absorption of this control was the strength of the monarchy; it was its inability to manage with justice and economy the public purse, its unwillingness to tax the enormous riches of the aristocracy and clergy as against the crushing taxation on the people and the consequent necessity of deferring again to the nation which provided the opportunity for the Revolution. In advanced modern countries we have a controlling authority which claims at least to represent more or less perfectly the whole nation; individuals and classes have to submit because there is no appeal from the will of the whole society. But even so it is questions, not of taxation, but of the proper organisation and administration of the economic life of the society which are preparing the revolutions of the future.

Chapter XXI

The Drive towards Legislative and Social Centralisation and Uniformity

THE GATHERING of the essential powers of administration into the hands of the sovereign is completed when there is unity and uniformity of judicial administration, — especially of the criminal side; for this is intimately connected with the maintenance of order and internal peace. And it is, besides, necessary for the ruler to have the criminal judicial authority in his hands so that he may use it to crush all rebellion against himself as treason and even, so far as may be possible, to stifle criticism and opposition and penalise that free thought and free speech which, by their continual seeking for a more perfect social principle and their subtle or direct encouragement to progress, are so dangerous to established powers and institutions, so subversive of the dominant thing in being by their drive towards a better thing in becoming. Unity of jurisdiction, the power to constitute tribunals, to appoint, salary and remove judges and the right to determine offences and their punishments comprise on the criminal side the whole judicial power of the sovereign. A similar unity of jurisdiction, power to constitute tribunals administering the civil law and the right to modify the laws relating to property, marriage and other social matters which concern the public order of society, comprise its civil side. But the unity and uniformity of the civil law is of less pressing and immediate importance to the State when it is substituting itself for the natural organic society; it is not so directly essential as an instrument. Therefore it is the criminal jurisdiction which is first absorbed in a greater or less entirety.

Originally, all these powers belonged to the organic society and were put into force mainly by various natural devices of a loose and entirely customary character, such as the Indian panchayat or village jury, the jurisdiction of guilds or other natural associations, the judicial power of the assembly or convocations of the citizens as in the various Roman comitia or large and unwieldy juries chosen by lot or otherwise as in Rome and Athens, and only to a minor extent by the judicial action of the king or elders in their administrative capacity. Human societies, therefore, in their earlier development retained for a long time an aspect of great complexity in their judicial administration and neither possessed nor felt any need of a uniformity of jurisdiction or of a centralised unity in the source of judicial authority. But as the State idea develops, this unity and uniformity must arrive. It accomplishes itself at first by the gathering up of all these various jurisdictions with the king as at once the source of their sanctions and a high court of appeal and the possessor of original powers, which are exercised sometimes as in ancient India by judicial process but sometimes in more autocratic polities by ukase — the latter especially on the criminal side, in the awarding of punishments and more particularly punishments for offences against the person of the king or the authority of the State. Against this tendency to unification and State authority there militates often a religious sense in the community which attaches as in most countries of the East a sacrosanct character to its laws and customs and tends to keep the king or State in bounds; the ruler is accepted as the administrator of justice, but he is supposed to be strictly bound by the law of which he is not the fountain but the channel. Sometimes this religious sense develops a theocratical element in the society, a Church with its separate ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction, a Shastra in the keeping of Brahmin jurists, a law entrusted to the Ulemas. Where the religious sense maintains its predominance, a solution is found by the association of Brahmin jurists with the king or with the judge appointed by him in every State tribunal and by maintenance of the supreme authority of the Pundits or Ulemas in all moot judicial questions. Where, as in Europe, the political instinct is stronger than the religious, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction comes in time to be subordinated to the State's and finally disappears.

Thus eventually the State — or the monarchy, that great instrument of the transition from the organic to the rational society — becomes the head of the law as well as the embodiment of public order and efficiency. The danger of subordinating the judiciary entirely to an executive possessed at all of arbitrary and irresponsible powers is obvious; but it is only in England — the one country always where liberty has been valued as of equal importance with order and not considered a lesser necessity or no necessity at all — that there was a successful attempt from an early period to limit the judicial power of the State. This was done partly by the firm tradition of the independence of the tribunals supported by the complete security of the judges, once appointed, in their position and emoluments and partly by the institution of the jury system. Much room was left for oppression and injustice, as in all human institutions social or political, but the object was roughly attained. Other countries, it may be noted, have adopted the jury system but, more dominated by the instinct of order and system, have left the judiciary under the control of the executive. This, however, is not so serious a defect where the executive not only represents but is appointed and controlled by the society as where it is independent of public control.

Uniformity of the law develops on different lines from the unity and uniformity of judicial administration. In its beginnings, law is always customary and where it is freely customary, where, that is to say, it merely expresses the social habits of the people, it must, except in small societies, naturally lead to or permit considerable variety of custom. In India, any sect or even any family was permitted to develop variations of the religious and civil custom which the general law of the society was bound within vague limits to accept, and this freedom is still part of the theory of Hindu law, although now in practice it is very difficult to get any new departure recognised. This spontaneous freedom of variation is the surviving sign of a former natural or organic life of society as opposed to an intellectually ordered, rationalised or mechanised living. The organic group-life fixed its general lines and particular divergences by the general sense and instinct or intuition of the group-life rather than by the stricter structure of the reason.

The first marked sign of a rational evolution is the tendency of code and constitution to prevail over custom. But still there are codes and codes. For first there are systems that are unwritten or only partly written and do not throw themselves into the strict code form, but are a floating mass of laws, *decreta*, precedents, and admit still of a large amount of merely customary law. And again there are systems that do take the strict code form, like the Hindu Shastra, but are really only an ossification of custom and help to stereotype the life of the society but not to rationalise it. Finally, there are those deliberately ordered codes which are an attempt at intelligent systematisation; a sovereign authority fixes the *cadres* of the law and admits from time to time changes that are intelligent accommodations to new needs, variations that do not disturb but merely modify and develop the intelligent unity and reasonable fixity of the system. The coming to perfection of this last type is the triumph of the narrower but more self-conscious and self-helpful rational over the larger but vaguer and more helpless life-instinct in the society. When it has arrived at this triumph of a perfectly self-conscious and systematically rational determination and arrangement of its life on one side by a fixed and uniform constitution, on the other by a uniform and intelligently structural civil and criminal law, the society is ready for the second stage of its development. It can undertake the self-conscious, uniform ordering of its whole life in the light of the reason which is the principle of modern socialism and has been the drift of all the Utopias of the thinkers.

But before we can arrive at this stage, the great question must be settled, who is to be the State? Is the embodiment of the intellect, will and conscience of the society to be a king and his counsellors or a theocratic, autocratic or plutocratic governing class or a body which shall at least seem to stand sufficiently for the whole society, or is it to be a compromise between some or all of these possibilities? The whole course of constitutional history has turned upon this question and to all appearance wavered obscurely between various possibilities; but in reality, we can see that throughout there has been acting the pressure of a necessity which travelled indeed through the monarchical, aristocratic and other stages, but had to debouch in the end in a democratic form of government. The king in his attempt to be the State — an attempt imposed on him by the impulse of his evolution — must try indeed to become the fountain as well as the head of the law; he must seek to engross the legislative as well as the administrative functions of the society, its side of efficient thought as well as its side of efficient action. But even in so doing he was only preparing the way for the democratic State.

The king, his council military and civil, the priesthood and the assembly of freemen converting itself for the purposes of war into the host, were perhaps everywhere, but certainly in the Aryan races, the elements with which the self-conscious evolution of society began: they represent the three orders of the free nation in its early and elementary form with the king as the keystone of the structure. The king may get rid of the power of the priesthood, he may reduce his council to an instrument of his will or the nobility which they represent to a political and military support for his actions, but until he has got rid of the assembly or is no longer obliged to convoke it, — like the French monarchy with its States-General summoned only once or twice in the course of centuries and under the pressure of great difficulties, — he cannot be the chief, much less the sole legislative authority. Even if he leaves the practical work of legislation to a non-political, a judicial body like the French Parliaments, he is bound to find there a centre of resistance. Therefore the disappearance of the assembly or the power of the monarch to convoke it or not at his pleasure is always the real mark of his absolutism. But when he has succeeded, when his decrees are laws, when he has got rid of or subordinated to himself all the other powers of the social life, there at that point of his highest success his failure begins; the monarchical system has fulfilled its positive part in the social evolution and all that is left to it is either to hold the State together until it has transformed itself or else to provoke by oppression the movement towards the sovereignty of the people.

The reason is that in engrossing the legislative power the monarchy has exceeded the right law of its being, it has gone beyond its dharma, it has undertaken functions which it cannot healthily and effectively fulfil. Administration is simply the regulation of the outward life of the people, the ordered maintenance of the external activities of its developed or developing being, and the king may well be their regulator; he may well fulfil the function which the Indian polity assigned to him, the upholder of the "dharma". But legislation, social development, culture, religion, even the determination of the economic life of the people are outside his proper sphere; they constitute the expression of the life, the thought, the soul of the society which, if he is a strong personality in touch with the spirit of the age, he may help to influence but which he cannot determine. They constitute the national dharma, — we must use the Indian word which alone is capable of expressing the whole idea; for our dharma means the law of our nature and it means also its formulated expression. Only the society itself can determine the development of its own dharma or can formulate its expression; and if this is to be done not in the old way by a naturally organic and intuitive development, but by a self-conscious regulation through the organised national reason and will, then a governing body must be created which will more or less adequately represent, if it cannot quite embody, the reason and will of the whole society. A governing class, aristocracy or intelligent theocracy may represent, not indeed this but some vigorous or noble part of the national reason and will; but even that can only be a stage of development towards a democratic State. Certainly, democracy as it is now practised is not the last or penultimate stage; for it is often merely democratic in appearance and even at the best amounts to the rule of the majority and works by the vicious method of party government, defects the increasing perception of which enters largely into the present-day dissatisfaction with parliamentary systems. Even a perfect democracy is not likely to be the last stage of social evolution, but it is still the necessary broad standing-ground upon which the self-consciousness of the social being can come to its own.[1] Democracy and Socialism are, as we have already said, the sign that that self-consciousness is beginning to ripen into fullness.

Legislation may seem at first sight to be something external, simply a form for the administration, not part of the intimate grain of the social life like its economic forms, its religion, its education and culture. It so appears because in the past polity of the European nations it has not been like oriental legislation or Shastra all-embracing, but has confined itself until recently to politics and constitutional law, the principles and process of administration and so much only of social and economic legislation as was barely necessary for the security of property and the maintenance of public order. All this, it might seem, might well fall within the province of the king and be discharged by him with as much efficiency as by a democratic government. But it is not so in reality, as history bears witness; the king is an inefficient legislator and unmixed aristocracies are not much better. For the laws and institutions of a society are the framework it builds for its life and its dharma. When it begins to determine these for itself by a self-conscious action of its reason and will within whatever limits, it has taken the first step in a movement which must inevitably end in an attempt to regulate self-consciously its whole social and cultural life; it must, as its self-consciousness increases, drive towards the endeavour to realise something like the Utopia of the thinker. For the Utopian thinker is the individual mind forerunning in its turn of thought the trend which the social mind must eventually take.

But as no individual thinker can determine in thought by his arbitrary reason the evolution of the rational self-conscious society, so no executive individual or succession of executive individuals can determine it in fact by his or their arbitrary power. It is evident that he cannot determine the whole social life of the nation, it is much too large for him; no society would bear the heavy hand of an arbitrary individual on its whole social living. He cannot determine the economic life, that too is much too large for him; he can only watch over it and help it in this or that direction where help is needed. He cannot determine the religious life, though that attempt has been made; it is too deep for him; for religion is the spiritual and ethical life of the individual, the relations of his soul with God and the intimate dealings of his will and character with other individuals, and no monarch or governing class, not even a theocracy or priesthood, can really substitute itself for the soul of the individual or for the soul of a nation. Nor can he determine the national culture; he can only in great flowering times of that culture help by his protection in fixing for it the turn which by its own force of tendency it was already taking. To attempt more is an irrational attempt which cannot lead to the development of a rational society. He can only support the attempt by autocratic oppression which leads in the end to the feebleness and stagnation of the society, and justify it by some mystical falsity about the divine right of kings or monarchy a peculiarly divine institution. Even exceptional rulers, a Charlemagne, an Augustus, a Napoleon, a Chandragupta, Asoka or Akbar, can do no more than fix certain new institutions which the time needed and help the emergence of its best or else its strongest tendencies in a critical era. When they attempt more, they fail. Akbar's effort to create a new dharma for the Indian nation by his enlightened reason was a brilliant futility. Asoka's edicts remain graven upon pillar and rock, but the development of Indian religion and culture took its own line in other and far more complex directions determined by the soul of a great people. Only the rare individual Manu, Avatar or prophet who comes on earth perhaps once in a millennium can speak truly of his divine right, for the secret of his force is not political but spiritual. For an ordinary political ruling man or a political institution to have made such a claim was one of the most amazing among the many follies of the human mind.

---

[1] It does not follow that a true democracy must necessarily come into being at some time. For man individually or collectively to come to a full self-consciousness is a most difficult task. Before a true democracy can be established, the process is likely to be overtaken by a premature socialistic endeavour.

Yet the attempt in itself and apart from its false justifications and practical failure was inevitable, fruitful and a necessary step in social evolution. It was inevitable because this transitional instrument represented the first idea of the human reason and will seizing on the group-life to fashion, mould and arrange it according to its own pleasure and power and intelligent choice, to govern Nature in the human mass as it has already learned partly to govern it in the human individual. And since the mass is unenlightened and incapable of such an intelligent effort, who can do this for it, if not the capable individual or a body of intelligent and capable individuals? That is the whole rationale of absolutism, aristocracy and theocracy. Its idea is false or only a half-truth or temporary truth, because the real business of the advanced class or individual is progressively to enlighten and train the whole body consciously to do for itself its own work and not eternally to do things for it.[2] But the idea had to take its course and the will in the idea, — for every idea has in itself a mastering will for self-fulfilment, — had necessarily to attempt its own extreme. The difficulty was that the ruling man or class could take up the more mechanical part of the life of society, but all that represented its more intimate being eluded their grasp; they could not lay hands on its soul. Still, unless they could do so, they must remain unfulfilled in their trend and insecure in their possession, since at any time they might be replaced by more adequate powers that must inevitably rise up from the larger mind of humanity to oust them and occupy their throne.

Two principal devices alone seemed adequate and have been employed in all such attempts at complete mastery. One was chiefly negative; it worked by an oppression on the life and soul of the community, a more or less complete inhibition of its freedom of thought, speech, association, individual and associated action, — often attended by the most abominable methods of inquisition and interference and pressure on the most sacred relations and liberties of man the individual and social being, — and an encouragement and patronage of only such thought and culture and activities as accepted, flattered and helped the governing absolutism. Another was positive; it consisted in getting a control over the religion of the society and calling in the priest as the spiritual helper of the king. For in natural societies and in those which, even if partly intellectualised, still cling to the natural principles of our being, religion, if it is not the whole life, yet watches over and powerfully influences and moulds the whole life of the individual and society, as it did till recent times in India and to a great extent in all Asiatic countries. State religions are an expression of this endeavour. But a State religion is an artificial monstrosity, although a national religion may well be a living reality; but even that, if it is not to formalise and kill in the end the religious spirit or prevent spiritual expansion, has to be tolerant, self-adaptive, flexible, a mirror of the deeper soul of the society. Both these devices, however seemingly successful for a time, are foredoomed to failure, failure by revolt of the oppressed social being or failure by its decay, weakness and death or life in death. Stagnation and weakness such as in the end overtook Greece, Rome, the Mussulman nations, China, India, or else a saving spiritual, social and political revolution are the only issues of absolutism. Still it was an inevitable stage of human development, an experiment that could not fail to be made. It was also fruitful in spite of its failure and even by reason of it; for the absolutist monarchical and aristocratic State was the father of the modern idea of the absolutist socialistic State which seems now to be in process of birth. It was, for all its vices, a necessary step because only so could the clear idea of an intelligently self-governing society firmly evolve.

---

[2] It is not meant that in a perfect society there would be no place for monarchical, aristocratic or theocratic elements; but there these would fulfil their natural function in a conscious body, not maintain and propel an unconscious mass.

For what king or aristocracy could not do, the democratic State may perhaps with a better chance of success and a greater security attempt and bring nearer to fruition, — the conscious and organised unity, the regularised efficiency on uniform and intelligent principles, the rational order and self-governed perfectioning of a developed society. That is the idea and, however imperfectly, the attempt of modern life; and this attempt has been the whole rationale of modern progress. Unity and uniformity are its principal trend; for how else are the incalculable complexities of the vast and profound thing we call life to be taken hold of, dominated, made calculable and manageable by a logical intelligence and unified will? Socialism is the complete expression of this idea. Uniformity of the social and economic principles and processes that govern the collectivity secured by means of a fundamental equality of all and the management of the whole social and economic life in all its parts by the State; uniformity of culture by the process of a State education organised upon scientific lines; to regularise and maintain the whole a unified, uniform and perfectly organised government and administration that will represent and act for the whole social being, this is the modern Utopia which in one form or another it is hoped to turn, in spite of all extant obstacles and opposite tendencies, into a living reality. Human science will, it seems, replace the large and obscure processes of Nature and bring about perfection or at least some approach to perfection in the collective human life.

Chapter XXII

World-Union or World-State

THIS, then, in principle is the history of the growth of the State. It is a history of strict unification by the development of a central authority and of a growing uniformity in administration, legislation, social and economic life and culture and the chief means of culture, education and language. In all, the central authority becomes more and more the determining and regulating power. The process culminates by the transformation of this governing sole authority or sovereign power from the rule of the central executive man or the capable class into that of a body whose proposed function is to represent the thought and will of the whole community. The change represents in principle an evolution from a natural and organic to a rational and mechanically organised state of society. An intelligent centralised unification aiming at a perfect rational efficiency replaces a loose and natural unity whose efficiency is that of life developing with a certain spontaneity its organs and powers under the pressure of inner impulse and the needs of the environment and the first conditions of existence. A rational, ordered, strict uniformity replaces a loose oneness full of natural complexities and variations. The intelligent will of the whole society expressed in a carefully thought-out law and ordered regulation replaces its natural organic will expressed in a mass of customs and institutions which have grown up as the result of its nature and temperament. In the last perfection of the State a carefully devised, in the end a giant machinery productive and regulative replaces the vigour and fertility of life with the natural simplicity of its great lines and the obscure, confused, luxuriant complexity of its details. The State is the masterful but arbitrary and intolerant science and reason of man that successfully takes the place of the intuitions and evolutionary experimentations of Nature; intelligent organisation replaces natural organism.

The unity of the human race by political and administrative means implies eventually the formation and organisation of a single World-State out of a newly created, though still loose, natural organic unity of mankind. For the natural organic unity already exists, a unity of life, of involuntary association, of a closely interdependent existence of the constituent parts in which the life and movements of one affect the life of the others in a way which would have been impossible a hundred years ago. Continent has no longer a separate life from continent; no nation can any longer isolate itself at will and live a separate existence. Science, commerce and rapid communications have produced a state of things in which the disparate masses of humanity, once living to themselves, have been drawn together by a process of subtle unification into a single mass which has already a common vital and is rapidly forming a common mental existence. A great precipitating and transforming shock was needed which should make this subtle organic unity manifest and reveal the necessity and create the will for a closer and organised union, and this shock came with the Great War. The idea of a World-State or world-union has been born not only in the speculating forecasting mind of the thinker, but in the consciousness of humanity out of the very necessity of this new common existence.

The World-State must now either be brought about by a mutual understanding or by the force of circumstances and a series of new and disastrous shocks. For the old still-prevailing order of things was founded on circumstances and conditions which no longer exist. A new order is demanded by the new conditions and, so long as it is not created, there will be a transitional era of continued trouble or recurrent disorders, inevitable crises through which Nature will effect in her own violent way the working out of the necessity which she has evolved. There may be in the process a maximum of loss and suffering through the clash of national and imperial egoisms or else a minimum, if reason and goodwill prevail. To that reason two alternative possibilities and therefore two ideals present themselves, a World-State founded upon the principle of centralisation and uniformity, a mechanical and formal unity, or a world-union founded upon the principle of liberty and variation in a free and intelligent unity. These two ideals and possibilities we have successively to consider.

Chapter XXIII

Forms of Government

THE IDEA of a world-union of free nations and empires, loose at first, but growing closer-knit with time and experience, seems at first sight the most practicable form of political unity; it is the only form indeed which would be immediately practicable, supposing the will to unity to become rapidly effective in the mind of the race. On the other hand, it is the State idea which is now dominant. The State has been the most successful and efficient means of unification and has been best able to meet the various needs which the progressive aggregate life of societies has created for itself and is still creating. It is, besides, the expedient to which the human mind at present has grown accustomed, and it is too the most ready means both for its logical and its practical reason to work with because it provides it with what our limited intelligence is always tempted to think its best instrument, a clear-cut and precise machinery and a stringent method of organisation. Therefore it is by no means impossible that, even though beginning with a loose union, the nations may be rapidly moved by the pressure of the many problems which would arise from the ever closer interworking of their needs and interests, to convert it into the more stringent form of a World-State. We can found no safe conclusion upon the immediate impracticability of its creation or on the many difficulties which would stand in its way; for past experience shows that the argument of impracticability is of very little value. What the practical man of today denies as absurd and impracticable is often enough precisely the thing that future generations set about realising and eventually in some form or other succeed in bringing into effective existence.

But a World-State implies a strong central organ of power that would represent or at least stand for the united will of the nations. A unification of all the necessary powers in the hands of this central and common governing body, at least in their source — powers military, administrative, judicial, economic, legislative, social, educational — would be indispensable. And as an almost inevitable result there would be an increasing uniformity of human life throughout the world in all these departments, even perhaps to the choice or creation of one common and universal language. This, indeed, is the dream of a unified world which Utopian thinkers have been more and more moved to place before us. The difficulties in the way of arriving at this result are at present obvious, but they are perhaps not so great as they seem at first sight and none of them are insoluble. It is no longer a Utopia that can be put aside as the impracticable dream of the ideal thinker.

The first difficulty would be the character and composition of this governing body, a problem beset with doubts and perils. In ancient times it was solved readily enough in smaller limits by the absolutist and monarchical solution with the rule of a conquering race as the starting-point, as in the Persian and Roman empires. But that resource is no longer as easily open to us in the new conditions of human society, whatever dreams may in the past have entered into the minds of powerful nations or their Czars and Kaisers. The monarchical idea itself is beginning to pass away after a brief and fallacious attempt at persistence and revival. Almost it seems to be nearing its final agony; the seal of the night is upon it. Contemporary appearances are often enough deceptive, but they are less likely to be so in the present instance than in many others, because the force which makes for the disappearance of the still-surviving monarchies is strong, radical and ever increasing. The social aggregates have ripened into self-conscious maturity and no longer stand in need of a hereditary kingship to do their governing work for them or even to stand for them — except perhaps in certain exceptional cases such as the British Empire — as the symbol of their unity. Either then the monarchy can only survive in name, — as in England where the king has less power even, if that be possible, than the French President and infinitely less than the heads of the American republics, — or else it becomes a source of offence, a restraint to the growing democratic spirit of the peoples and to a greater or less degree a centre, a refuge or at least an opportunity for the forces of reaction. Its prestige and popularity tend therefore not to increase but to decline, and at some crisis when it comes too strongly into conflict with the sentiment of the nation, it falls with small chance of lasting revival.

Monarchy has thus fallen or is threatened almost everywhere — and most suddenly in countries where its tradition was once the strongest. Even in these days it has fallen in Germany and Austria, in China, in Portugal, in Russia; it has been in peril in Greece and Italy;[1] and it has been cast out of Spain. In no continental country is it really safe except in some of the smaller States. In most of them it exists for reasons that already belong to the past and may soon lose if they are not already losing their force. The continent of Europe seems destined to become in time as universally republican as the two Americas. For kingship there is now only a survival of the world's past; it has no deep root in the practical needs or the ideals or the temperament of present-day humanity. When it disappears, it will be truer to say of it that it has ceased to survive than to say that it has ceased to live.

The republican tendency is indeed Western in its origin, stronger as we go more and more to the West, and has been historically powerful chiefly in Western Europe and dominant in the new societies of America. It might be thought that with the entrance of Asia into the active united life of the world, when the eastern continent has passed through its present throes of transition, the monarchical idea might recover strength and find a new source of life. For in Asia kingship has been not only a material fact resting upon political needs and conditions, but a spiritual symbol and invested with a sacrosanct character. But in Asia no less than in Europe, monarchy has been a historical growth, the result of circumstances and therefore subject to disappearance when those circumstances no longer exist. The true mind of Asia has always remained, behind all surface appearances, not political but social, monarchical and aristocratic at the surface but with a fundamental democratic trend and a theocratic spirit. Japan with its deep-rooted monarchic sentiment is the one prominent exception to this general rule. Already a great tendency of change is manifest. China, always a democratic country at bottom though admitting in its democratic system an official aristocracy of intellect and a symbolic imperial head, is now definitely republican. The difficulty of the attempt to revive monarchy or to replace it by temporary dictatorships has been due to an innate democratic sentiment now invigorated by the acceptance of a democratic form for the supreme government, the one valuable contribution of Western experience to the problem at which the old purely social democracies of the East were unable to arrive. In breaking with the last of its long succession of dynasties China had broken with an element of her past which was rather superficial than at the very centre of her social temperament and habits. In India the monarchical sentiment, which coexisted with but was never able to prevail over the theocratic and social except during the comparatively brief rule of the Moghuls, was hopelessly weakened, though not effaced, by the rule of a British bureaucracy and the political Europeanising of the active mind of the race.[2] In Western Asia monarchy has disappeared in Turkey, it exists only in the States which need the monarch as a centralising power or keystone.

---

[1] Now in Italy too it is gone with practically no hope of return.

At the two extremes of the Asiatic world in Japan and in Turkey the monarchy after the close of the war still preserved something of its old sacrosanct character and its appeal to the sentiment of the race. In Japan, still imperfectly democratised, the sentiment which surrounds the Mikado is visibly weakened, his prestige survives but his actual power is very limited, and the growth of democracy and socialism is bound to aid the weakening and limiting process and may well produce the same results as in Europe. The Moslem Caliphate, originally the head of a theocratic democracy, was converted into a political institution by the rapid growth of a Moslem empire, now broken into pieces. The Caliphate now abolished could only have survived as a purely religious headship and even in that character its unity was threatened by the rise of new spiritual and national movements in Persia, Arabia and Egypt. But the one real and important fact in Asia of today is this that the whole active force of its future is centred not in priesthood or aristocracy, but, as it was formerly in Russia before the Revolution, in a newly-created intelligentsia, small at first in numbers, but increasing in energy and the settled will to arrive and bound to become exceedingly dynamic by reason of the inherited force of spirituality. Asia may well preserve its ancient spirituality; even in its hour of greatest weakness it has been able to impose its prestige increasingly even on the positive European mind. But whatever turn that spirituality takes, it will be determined by the mentality of this new intelligentsia and will certainly flow into other channels than the old ideas and symbols. The old forms of Asiatic monarchy and theocracy seem therefore destined to disappear; at present there is no chance of their revival in new figures, although that may happen in the future.

---

[2] Now with the liberation of the country and the establishment of a republican and democratic constitution, the ruling princes have either disappeared or become subordinate heads with their small kingdoms becoming partly or wholly democratised or destined to melt into a united India.

The only apparent chance eventually for the monarchical idea is that its form may be retained as a convenient symbol for the unity of the heterogeneous empires which would be the largest elements in any unification based upon the present political configuration of the world. But even for these empires the symbol has not proved to be indispensable. France has done without it, Russia has recently dispensed with it. In Austria it had become odious to some of the constituent races as the badge of subjection and was bound to perish even without the collapse of the Great War. Only in England and in some small countries is it at once innocuous and useful and therefore upheld by a general feeling. Conceivably, if the British Empire,[3] even now the leading, the most influential, the most powerful force in the world, were to become the nucleus or the pattern of the future unification, there might be some chance of the monarchical element surviving in the figure — and even an empty figure is sometimes useful as a support and centre for future potentialities to grow and fill with life. But against this stands the fixed republican sentiment of the whole of America and the increasing spread of the republican form; there is little chance that even a nominal kingship representing one element of a very heterogeneous whole would be accepted by the rest in any form of general unification. In the past, at least, this has only happened under the stress of conquest. Even if the World-State found it convenient as the result of experience to introduce or to reintroduce the monarchical element into its constitution, it could only be in some quite new form of a democratic kingship. But a democratic kingship, as opposed to a passive figure of monarchy, the modern world has not succeeded in evolving.

---

[3] Now no longer Empire but Commonwealth.

The two determining facts in modern conditions which alter the whole problem are that in this kind of unification nations take the place of individuals and that these nations are mature self-conscious societies, predestined therefore to pass through pronounced forms of social democracy or some other form of socialism. It is reasonable to suppose that the World-State will tend to strive after the same principle of formation as that which obtains in the separate societies which are to constitute it. The problem would be simpler if we could suppose the difficulties created by conflicting national temperaments, interests and cultures to be either eliminated or successfully subordinated and minimised by the depression of separative nationalistic feeling and the growth of a cosmopolitan internationalism. That solution is not altogether impossible in spite of the serious check to internationalism and the strong growth of nationalistic feeling developed by the world war. For, conceivably, internationalism may revive with a redoubled force after the stress of the feelings created by the war has passed. In that case, the tendency of unification may look to the ideal of a world-wide Republic with the nations as provinces, though at first very sharply distinct provinces, and governed by a council or parliament responsible to the united democracies of the world. Or it might be something like the disguised oligarchy of an international council reposing its rule on the assent, expressed by election or otherwise, of what might be called a semi-passive democracy as its first figure. For that is what the modern democracy at present is in fact; the sole democratic elements are public opinion, periodical elections and the power of the people to refuse re-election to those who have displeased it. The government is really in the hands of the bourgeoisie, the professional and business men, the landholders, — where such a class still exists, — strengthened by a number of new arrivals from the working-class who very soon assimilate themselves to the political temperament and ideas of the governing classes.[4] If a World-State were to be established on the present basis of human society, it might well try to develop its central government on this principle.

But the present is a moment of transition and a bourgeois World-State is not a probable consummation. In each of the more progressive nations, the dominance of the middle class is threatened on two sides. There is first the dissatisfaction of the intellectuals who find in its unimaginative business practicality and obstinate commercialism an obstacle to the realisation of their ideals. And there is the dissatisfaction of the great and growing power of Labour which sees democratic ideals and changes continually exploited in the interests of the middle class, though as yet it has found no alternative to the Parliamentarism by which that class ensures its rule.[5] What changes the alliance between these two dissatisfactions may bring about, it is impossible to foresee. In Russia, where it was strongest, we have seen it taking the lead of the Revolution and compelling the bourgeoisie to undergo its control, although the compromise so effected could not long outlast the exigencies of the war. Since then the old order there has been "liquidated" and the triumph of the new tendencies has been complete. In two directions it may lead to a new form of modified oligarchy with a democratic basis. The government of a modern society is now growing an exceedingly complicated business in each part of which a special knowledge, special competence, special faculties are required and every new step towards State socialism must increase this tendency. The need of this sort of special training or faculty in the councillor and administrator combined with the democratic tendencies of the age might well lead to some modern form of the old Chinese principle of government, a democratic organisation of life below, above the rule of a sort of intellectual bureaucracy, an official aristocracy of special knowledge and capacity recruited from the general body without distinction of classes. Equal opportunity would be indispensable but this governing élite would still form a class by itself in the constitution of the society. On the other hand, if the industrialism of the modern nations changes, as some think it will, and develops into a sort of guild socialism, a guild aristocracy of Labour might well become the governing body in the society.[6] If any of these things were done, any movement towards a World-State would then take the same direction and evolve a governing body of the same model.

---

[4] This has now changed and the Trade Unions and similar institutions have attained an equal power with the other classes.

[5] Written before the emergence of the Soviet State in Russia and of the Fascist States. In the latter it is the middle class itself that rose against democracy and established for a time a new form of government and society.

But in these two possibilities we leave out of consideration the great factor of nationalism and the conflicting interests and tendencies it creates. To overcome these conflicting interests, it has been supposed, the best way is to evolve a sort of world Parliament in which, it is to be presumed, the freely formed and freely expressed opinion of the majority would prevail. Parliamentarism, the invention of the English political genius, is a necessary stage in the evolution of democracy, for without it the generalised faculty of considering and managing with the least possible friction large problems of politics, administration, economics, legislation concerning considerable aggregates of men cannot easily be developed. It has also been the one successful means yet discovered of preventing the State executive from suppressing the liberties of the individual and the nation. Nations emerging into the modern form of society are therefore naturally and rightly attracted to this instrument of government. But it has not yet been found possible to combine Parliamentarism and the modern trend towards a more democratic democracy; it has been always an instrument either of a modified aristocratic or of a middle-class rule. Besides, its method involves an immense waste of time and energy and a confused, swaying and uncertain action that "muddles out" in the end some tolerable result. This method accords ill with the more stringent ideas of efficient government and administration that are now growing in force and necessity and it might be fatal to efficiency in anything so complicated as the management of the affairs of the world. Parliamentarism means too, in practice, the rule and often the tyranny of a majority, even of a very small majority, and the modern mind attaches increasing importance to the rights of minorities. And these rights would be still more important in a World-State where any attempt to override them might easily mean serious discontents and disorders or even convulsions fatal to the whole fabric. Above all, a Parliament of the nations must necessarily be a united parliament of free nations and could not well come into successful being in the present anomalous and chaotic distribution of power in the world. The Asiatic problem alone, if still left unsolved, would be a fatal obstacle and it is not alone; the inequalities and anomalies are all-pervasive and without number.

---

[6] Something of the kind was attempted in Soviet Russia for a time. The existing conditions were not favourable and a definite form of government not revolutionary and provisional is not anywhere in sight. In Fascist Italy a cooperative State was announced but this too took no effectual or perfect shape.

A more feasible form would be a supreme council of the free and imperial nations of the existing world-system, but this also has its difficulties. It could only be workable at first if it amounted in fact to an oligarchy of a few strong imperial nations whose voice and volume would prevail at every point over that of the more numerous but smaller non-imperialistic commonwealths and it could only endure by a progressive and, if possible, a peaceful evolution from this sort of oligarchy of actual power to a more just and ideal system in which the imperialistic idea would dissolve and the great empires merge their separate existence into that of a unified mankind. How far national egoism would allow that evolution to take place without vehement struggles and dangerous convulsions, is, in spite of the superficial liberalism now widely professed, a question still fraught with grave and ominous doubts.

On the whole, then, whichever way we turn, this question of the form of a World-State is beset with doubts and difficulties that are for the moment insoluble. Some arise from the surviving sentiments and interests of the past; some menace from the rapidly developing revolutionary forces of the future. It does not follow that they can never or will never be solved, but the way and the line any such solution would take are beyond calculation and can really be determined only by practical experience and experiment under the pressure of the forces and necessities of the modern world. For the rest, the form of government is not of supreme importance. The real problem is that of the unification of powers and the uniformity which any manageable system of a World-State would render inevitable.

Chapter XXIV

The Need of Military Unification

IN THE process of centralisation by which all the powers of an organised community come to be centred in one sovereign governing body, — the process which has been the most prominent characteristic of national formations, — military necessity has played at the beginning the largest overt part. This necessity was both external and internal, — external for the defence of the nation against disruption or subjection from without, internal for its defence against civil disruption and disorder. If a common administrative authority is essential in order to bind together the constituent parts of a nation in the forming, the first need and claim of that central authority is to have in its hands the means to prevent mortal dissidence and violent strife that would weaken or break up the organic formation. The monarchy or any other central body must effect this end partly by moral force and psychological suggestion. For it stands as the symbol of union and imposes respect for their visible and consecrated unity on the constituent parts, however strong may be their local, racial, clan or class instincts of separatism. It embodies the united authority of the nation entitled to impose its moral force as greater than the moral right of the separate parts, even if they be something like sub-nations, and to command their obedience. But in the last resort, since these motives may at any moment fail when revolting interests or sentiments are strong and passions run high, the governing body must have always the greatest military force at its command so as to overawe the constituent elements and prevent the outbreak of a disruptive civil war. Or if the civil war or rebellion comes about, as can always happen when the monarchy or the government is identified closely with one of the parties in a quarrel or is itself the subject of dissatisfaction and attack, then it must have so great a predominance of force behind it as to be morally sure of victory in the conflict. This can only be secured to the best possible perfection, — it cannot be done absolutely except by an effective disarmament, — if the whole military authority is centred in the central body and the whole actual or potential military force of the society subjected to its undivided control.

In the trend to the formation of the World-State, however subconscient, vague and formless it may yet be, military necessity has begun to play the same large visible part. The peoples of the world already possess a loose and chaotic unity of life in which none can any longer lead an isolated, independent and self-dependent existence. Each feels in its culture, political tendencies and economic existence the influence and repercussion of events and movements in other parts of the world. Each already feels subtly or directly its separate life overshadowed by the life of the whole. Science, international commerce and the political and cultural penetration of Asia and Africa by the dominant West have been the agents of this great change. Even in this loose unacknowledged and underlying unity the occurrence or the possibility of great wars has become a powerful element of disturbance to the whole fabric, a disturbance that may one day become mortal to the race. Even before the European war, the necessity of avoiding or minimising a collision between one or two that might prove fatal to all was keenly felt and various well-intentioned but feeble and blundering devices were tentatively introduced which had that end in view. Had any of these makeshifts been tolerably effective, the world might long have remained content with its present very unideal conditions and the pressing need of a closer international organisation would not have enforced itself on the general mind of the race. But the European collision rendered the indefinite continuance of the old chaotic regime impossible. The necessity of avoiding any repetition of the catastrophe was for a time universally acknowledged. A means of keeping international peace and of creating an authority which shall have the power to dispose of dangerous international questions and prevent what from the new point of view of human unity we may call civil war between the peoples of mankind, had somehow or other to be found or created.

Various ideas were put forward with more or less authority as to the necessary conditions of international peace. The crudest of these was the foolish notion, created by a one-sided propaganda, which imagined that the destruction of German militarism was the one thing needful and in itself sufficient to secure the future peace of the world. The military power, the political and commercial ambitions of Germany and her acute sense of her confined geographical position and her encirclement by an unfriendly alliance were the immediate moral cause of this particular war; but the real cause lay in the very nature of the international situation and the psychology of national life. The chief feature of this psychology is the predominance and worship of national egoism under the sacred name of patriotism. Every national ego, like every organic life, desires a double self-fulfilment, intensive and extensive or expansive. The deepening and enriching of its culture, political strength and economic well-being within its borders is not felt to be sufficient if there is not, without, an extension or expansion of its culture, an increase of its political extent, dominion, power or influence and a masterful widening of its commercial exploitation of the world. This natural and instinctive desire is not an abnormal moral depravity but the very instinct of egoistic life; and what life at present is not egoistic? But it can be satisfied only to a very limited degree by peaceful and unaggressive means. And where it feels itself hemmed in by obstacles that it thinks it can overcome, opposed by barriers, encircled, dissatisfied with a share of possession and domination it considers disproportionate to its needs and its strength, or where new possibilities of expansion open out to it in which only its strength can obtain for it its desirable portion, it is at once moved to the use of some kind of force and can only be restrained by the amount of resistance it is likely to meet. If it has a weak opposition of unorganised or ill-organised peoples to overcome, it will not hesitate; if it has the opposition of powerful rivals to fear, it will pause, seek for alliances or watch for its moment. Germany had not the monopoly of this expansive instinct and egoism; but its egoism was the best organised and least satisfied, the youngest, crudest, hungriest, most self-confident and presumptuous, most satisfied with the self-righteous brutality of its desires. The breaking of German militarism might ease for a moment the intensity of the many-headed commercial wrestle but it cannot, by the removal of a dangerous and restless competitor, end it. So long as any kind of militarism survives, so long as fields of political or commercial aggrandisement are there and so long as national egoisms live and are held sacred and there is no final check on their inherent instinct of expansion, war will be always a possibility and almost a necessity of the life of the human peoples.

Another idea put forward with great authorities behind it was a league of free and democratic nations which would keep the peace by pressure or by the use of force if need be. If less crude, this solution is not for that any more satisfactory than the other. It is an old idea, the idea Metternich put into practice after the overthrow of Napoleon; only in place of a Holy Alliance of monarchs to maintain peace and monarchical order and keep down democracy, it was proposed to have a league of free — and imperial — peoples to enforce democracy and to maintain peace. One thing is perfectly sure that the new league would go the way of the old; it would break up as soon as the interests and ambitions of the constituent Powers became sufficiently disunited or a new situation arose such as was created by the violent resurgence of oppressed democracy in 1848 or such as would be created by the inevitable future duel between the young Titan, Socialism, and the old Olympian gods of a bourgeois-democratic world. That conflict was already outlining its formidable shadow in revolutionary Russia, has now taken a body and cannot be very long delayed throughout Europe. For the war and its after consequences momentarily suspended but may very well turn out to have really precipitated the advent and accentuated its force. One cause or the other or both together would bring a certain dissolution. No voluntary league can be permanent in its nature. The ideas which supported it, change; the interests which made it possible and effective become fatally modified or obsolete.

The supposition is that democracies will be less ready to go to war than monarchies; but this is true only within a certain measure. What are called democracies are bourgeois States in the form either of a constitutional monarchy or a middle-class republic. But everywhere the middle class has taken over with certain modifications the diplomatic habits, foreign policies and international ideas of the monarchical or aristocratic governments which preceded them.[1] This continuity seems to have been a natural law of the mentality of the ruling class. In Germany it was the aristocratic and the capitalist class combined that constituted the Pan-German party with its exaggerated and almost insane ambitions. In the new Russia the bourgeoisie during its brief rule rejected the political ideas of the Czardom in internal affairs and helped to overturn autocracy, but preserved its ideas in external affairs minus the German influence and stood for the expansion of Russia and the possession of Constantinople. Certainly, there is an important difference. The monarchical or aristocratic State is political in its mentality and seeks first of all territorial aggrandisement and political predominance or hegemony among the nations, commercial aims are only a secondary preoccupation attendant on the other. In the bourgeois State there is a reverse order; for it has its eye chiefly on the possession of markets, the command of new fields of wealth, the formation or conquest of colonies or dependencies which can be commercially and industrially exploited and on political aggrandisement only as a means for this more cherished object. Moreover, the monarchical or aristocratic statesman turned to war as almost his first expedient. As soon as he was dissatisfied with the response to his diplomacy, he grasped at the sword or the rifle. The bourgeois statesman hesitates, calculates, gives a longer rope to diplomacy, tries to gain his ends by bargainings, arrangements, peaceful pressure, demonstrations of power. In the end he is ready to resort to war, but only when these expedients have failed him and only if the end seems commensurate with the means and the great speculation of war promises a very strong chance of success and solid profit. But on the other hand, the bourgeois-democratic State has developed a stupendous military organisation of which the most powerful monarchs and aristocracies could not dream. And if this tends to delay the outbreak of large wars, it tends too to make their final advent sure and their proportions enormous and nowadays incalculable and immeasurable.

---

[1] So also has Socialist Russia taken over from the Czars these ideas and habits with very little or no modification.

There was a strong suggestion at the time that a more truly democratic and therefore a more peaceful spirit and more thoroughly democratic institutions would reign after the restoration of peace by the triumph of the liberal nations. One rule of the new international situation was to be the right of nations to dispose of their own destinies and to be governed only by their free consent. The latter condition is impossible of immediate fulfilment except in Europe, and even for Europe the principle is not really recognised in its total meaning or put into entire practice. If it were capable of universal application, if the existing relations of peoples and the psychology of nations could be so altered as to establish it as a working principle, one of the most fertile causes of war and revolution would be removed, but all causes would not disappear. The greater democratisation of the European peoples affords no sure guarantee. Certainly, democracy of a certain kind, democracy reposing for its natural constitution on individual liberty would be likely to be indisposed to war except in moments of great and universal excitement. War demands a violent concentration of all the forces, a spirit of submission, a suspension of free-will, free action and of the right of criticism which is alien to the true democratic instinct. But the democracies of the future are likely to be strongly concentrated governments in which the principle of liberty is subordinated to the efficient life of the community by some form of State socialism. A democratic State of that kind might well have even a greater power for war, might be able to put forward a more violently concentrated military organisation in event of hostilities than even the bourgeois democracies and it is not at all certain that it would be less tempted to use its means and power. Socialism has been international and pacific in its tendencies because the necessity of preparation for war is favourable to the rule of the upper classes and because war itself is used in the interests of the governments and the capitalists; the ideas and classes it represents are at present depressed and do not grow by the uses or share visibly in the profits of war. What will happen when they have hold of the government and its temptations and opportunities has to be seen but can easily be forecast. The possession of power is the great test of all idealisms and as yet there have been none religious or secular which have withstood it or escaped diminution and corruption.

To rely upon the common consent of conflicting national egoisms for the preservation of peace between the nations is to rely upon a logical contradiction. A practical improbability which, if we can judge by reason and experience, amounts to an impossibility, can hardly be a sound foundation for the building of the future. A League of Peace can only prevent armed strife for a time. A system of enforced arbitration, even with the threat of a large armed combination against the offender, may minimise the chance of war and may absolutely forbid it to the smaller or weaker nations; but a great nation which sees a chance of making itself the centre of a strong combination of peoples interested in upsetting the settled order of things for their own benefit, might always choose to take the risks of the adventure in the hope of snatching advantages which in its estimation outweighed the risks.[2] Moreover, in times of great upheaval and movement when large ideas, enormous interests and inflamed passions divide the peoples of the world, the whole system would be likely to break to pieces and the very elements of its efficacy would cease to exist. Any tentative and imperfect device would be bound before long to disclose its inefficacy and the attempt at a deliberate organisation of international life would have to be abandoned and the work left to be wrought out confusedly by the force of events. The creation of a real, efficient and powerful authority which would stand for the general sense and the general power of mankind in its collective life and spirit and would be something more than a bundle of vigorously separate States loosely tied together by the frail bond of a violable moral agreement is the only effective step possible on this path. Whether such an authority can really be created by agreement, whether it must not rather create itself partly by the growth of ideas, but still more by the shock of forces, is a question to which the future alone can answer.

---

[2] The subsequent history of the League of Nations, which had not been formed at the time of writing, has amply proved the inefficacy of these devices.

An authority of this nature would have to command the psychological assent of mankind, exercise a moral force upon the nations greater than that of their own national authority and compel more readily their obedience under all normal circumstances. It would have not only to be a symbol and a centre of the unity of the race, but make itself constantly serviceable to the world by assuring the effective maintenance and development of large common interests and benefits which would outweigh all separate national interests and satisfy entirely the sense of need that had brought it into existence. It must help more and more to fix the growing sense of a common humanity and a common life in which the sharp divisions which separate country from country, race from race, colour from colour, continent from continent would gradually lose their force and undergo a progressive effacement. Given these conditions, it would develop a moral authority which would enable it to pursue with less and less opposition and friction the unification of mankind. The nature of the psychological assent it secured from the beginning would depend largely on its constitution and character and would in its turn determine both the nature and power of the moral authority it could exercise on the earth's peoples. If its constitution and character were such as to conciliate the sentiment and interest in its maintenance the active support of all or most of the different sections of mankind or at least those whose sentiment and support counted powerfully and to represent the leading political, social, cultural ideas and interests of the time, it would have the maximum of psychological assent and moral authority and its way would be comparatively smooth. If defective in these respects, it would have to make up the deficiency by a greater concentration and show of military force at its back and by extraordinary and striking services to the general life, culture and development of the human race such as assured for the Roman imperial authority the long and general assent of the Mediterranean and Western peoples to their subjection and the obliteration of their national existence.

But in either case the possession and concentration of military power would be for long the first condition of its security, and the effectiveness of its own control and this possession would have to be, as soon as possible, a sole possession. It is difficult at present to foresee the consent of the nations of the world to their own total disarmament. For so long as strong national egoisms of any kind remained and along with them mutual distrust, the nations would not sacrifice their possession of an armed force on which they could rely for self-defence if their interests, or at least those that they considered essential to their prosperity and their existence, came to be threatened. Any distrust of the assured impartiality of the international government would operate in the same direction. Yet such a disarmament would be essential to the assured cessation of war — in the absence of some great and radical psychological and moral change. If national armies exist, the possibility, even the certainty of war will exist along with them. However small they might be made in times of peace, and international authority, even with a military force of its own behind it, would be in the position of the feudal king never quite sure of his effective control over his vassals. The international authority must hold under its command the sole trained military force in the world for the policing of the nations and also — otherwise the monopoly would be ineffective — the sole disposal of the means of manufacturing arms and implements of war. National and private munition factories and arms factories must disappear. National armies must become like the old baronial armies a memory of past and dead ages.

This consummation would mark definitely the creation of a World-State in place of the present international conditions. For it can be brought into truly effective existence only if the international authority became, not merely the arbiter of disputes, but the source of law and the final power behind their execution. For the execution of its decrees against recalcitrant countries or classes, for the prevention of all kinds of strife not merely political but commercial, industrial and others or at least of their decision by any other ways than a peaceful resort to law and arbitration, for the suppression of any attempt at violent change and revolution, the World-State, even at its strongest, would still need the concentration of all force in its own hands. While man remains what he is, force in spite of all idealisms and generous pacific hopes must remain the ultimate arbiter and governor of his life and its possessor the real ruler. Force may veil its crude presence at ordinary times and take only mild and civilised forms, — mild in comparison, for are not the jail and the executioner still the two great pillars of the social order? — but it is there silently upholding the specious appearances of our civilisation and ready to intervene, whenever called upon, in the workings of the fairer but still feebler gods of the social cosmos. Diffused, force fulfils the free workings of Nature and is the servant of life but also of discord and struggle; concentrated, it becomes the guarantee of organisation and the bond of order.

Chapter XXV

War and the Need of Economic Unity

THE MILITARY necessity, the pressure of war between nations and the need for prevention of war by the assumption of force and authority in the hands of an international body, World-State or Federation or League of Peace, is that which will most directly drive humanity in the end towards some sort of international union. But there is behind it another necessity which is much more powerful in its action on the modern mind, the commercial and industrial, the necessity born of economic interdependence. Commercialism is a modern sociological phenomenon; one might almost say that is the whole phenomenon of modern society. The economic part of life is always important to an organised community and even fundamental; but in former times it was simply the first need, it was not that which occupied the thoughts of men, gave the whole tone to the social life, stood at the head and was clearly recognised as standing at the root of social principles. Ancient man was in the group primarily a political being, in the Aristotelian sense, — as soon as he ceased to be primarily religious, — and to this preoccupation he added, wherever he was sufficiently at ease, the preoccupation of thought, art and culture. The economic impulses of the group were worked out as a mechanical necessity, a strong desire in the vital being rather than a leading thought in the mind. Nor was the society regarded or studied as an economic organism except in a very superficial aspect. The economic man held an honourable, but still a comparatively low position in the society; he was only the third caste or class, the Vaishya. The lead was in the hands of the intellectual and political classes, — the Brahmin, thinker, scholar, philosopher and priest, the Kshatriya, ruler and warrior.

It was their thoughts and preoccupations that gave the tone to society, determined its conscious drift and action, coloured most powerfully all its motives. Commercial interests entered into the relations of States and into the motives of war and peace; but they entered as subordinate and secondary predisposing causes of amity or hostility and only rarely and as it were accidentally came to be enumerated among the overt and conscious causes of peace, alliance and strife. The political consciousness, the political motive dominated; increase of wealth was primarily regarded as a means of political power and greatness and opulence of the mobilisable resources of the State than as an end in itself or a first consideration.

Everything now is changed. The phenomenon of modern social development is the decline of the Brahmin and Kshatriya, of the Church, the military aristocracy and the aristocracy of letters and culture, and the rise to power or predominance of the commercial and industrial classes, Vaishya and Shudra, Capital and Labour. Together they have swallowed up or cast out their rivals and are now engaged in a fratricidal conflict for sole possession in which the completion of the downward force of social gravitation, the ultimate triumph of Labour and the remodelling of all social conceptions and institutions with Labour as the first, the most dignified term which will give its value to all others seem to be the visible writing of Fate. At present, however, it is the Vaishya who still predominates and his stamp on the world is commercialism, the predominance of the economic man, the universality of the commercial value or the utilitarian and materially efficient and productive value for everything in human life. Even in the outlook on knowledge, thought, science, art, poetry and religion the economic conception of life overrides all others.[1]

---

[1] It is noticeable that the bourgeois habit of the predominance of commercialism has been taken up and continued in an even larger scale by the new Socialist societies though on the basis of a labour, instead of a bourgeois economy, and an attempt at a new distribution of its profits or else, more characteristically, a concentration of all in the hands of the State.

For the modern economic view of life, culture and its products have chiefly a decorative value; they are costly and desirable luxuries, not at all indispensable necessities. Religion is in this view a by-product of the human mind with a very restricted utility — if indeed it is not a waste and a hindrance. Education has a recognised importance but its object and form are no longer so much cultural as scientific, utilitarian and economic, its value the preparation of the efficient individual unit to take his place in the body of the economic organism. Science is of immense importance not because it discovers the secrets of Nature for the advancement of knowledge, but because it utilises them for the creation of machinery and develops and organises the economic resources of the community. The thought-power of the society, almost its soul-power — if it has any longer so unsubstantial and unproductive a thing as a soul — is not in its religion or its literature, although the former drags on a feeble existence and the latter teems and spawns, but in the daily Press primarily an instrument of commercialism and governed by the political and commercial spirit and not like literature a direct instrument of culture. Politics, government itself are becoming more and more a machinery for the development of an industrialised society, divided between the service of bourgeois capitalism and the office of a half-involuntary channel for the incoming of economic Socialism. Free thought and culture remain on the surface of this great increasing mass of commercialism and influence and modify it, but are themselves more and more influenced, penetrated, coloured, subjugated by the economic, commercial and industrial view of human life.

This great change has affected profoundly the character of international relations in the past and is likely to affect them still more openly and powerfully in the future. For there is no apparent probability of a turn in a new direction in the immediate future. Certain prophetic voices announce indeed the speedy passing of the age of commercialism. But it is not easy to see how this is to come about; certainly, it will not be by a reversion to the predominantly political spirit of the past or the temper and forms of the old aristocratic social type. The sigh of the extreme conservative mind for the golden age of the past, which was not so golden as it appears to an imaginative eye in the distance, is a vain breath blown to the winds by the rush of the car of the Time-Spirit in the extreme velocity of its progress. The end of commercialism can only come about either by some unexpected development of commercialism itself or through a reawakening of spirituality in the race and its coming to its own by the subordination of the political and economic motives of life to the spiritual motive.

Certain signs are thought to point in this direction. The religious spirit is reviving and even the old discouraged religious creeds and forms are recovering a kind of vigour. In the secular thought of mankind there are signs of an idealism which increasingly admits a spiritual element among its motives. But all this is as yet slight and superficial; the body of thought and practice, the effective motive, the propelling impulsion remain untouched and unchanged. That impulsion is still towards the industrialising of the human race and the perfection of the life of society as an economic and productive organism. Nor is this spirit likely to die as yet by exhaustion, for it has not yet fulfilled itself and is growing, not declining in force. It is aided, moreover, by modern Socialism which promises to be the master of the future; for Socialism proceeds on the Marxian principle that its own reign has to be preceded by an age of bourgeois capitalism of which it is to be the inheritor and to seize upon its work and organisation in order to turn it to its own uses and modify it by its own principles and methods. It intends indeed to substitute Labour as the master instead of Capital;[2] but this only means that all activities will be valued by the labour contributed and work produced rather than by the wealth contribution and production. It will be a change from one side of economism to the other, but not a change from economism to the domination of some other and higher motive of human life. The change itself is likely to be one of the chief factors with which international unification will have to deal and either its greatest aid or its greatest difficulty.

---

[2] The connection between Socialism and the democratic or equalitarian idea or the revolt of the proletariate is however an accident of its history, not its essence. In Italian Fascism there arose a Socialism undemocratic and non-equalitarian in its form, idea and temper. Fascism has gone, but there is no inevitable connection between Socialism and the domination of Labour.

In the past, the effect of commercialism has been to bind together the human race into a real economic unity behind its apparent political separativeness. But this was a subconscient unity of inseparable interrelations and of intimate mutual dependence, not any oneness of the spirit or of the conscious organised life. Therefore these interrelations produced at once the necessity of peace and the unavoidability of war. Peace was necessary for their normal action, war frightfully perturbatory to their whole system of being. But because the organised units were politically separate and rival nations, their commercial interrelations became relations of rivalry and strife or rather a confused tangle of exchange and interdependence and hostile separatism. Self-defence against each other by a wall of tariffs, a race for closed markets and fields of exploitation, a struggle for place or predominance in markets and fields which could not be monopolised and an attempt at mutual interpenetration in spite of tariff walls have been the chief features of this hostility and this separatism. The outbreak of war under such conditions was only a matter of time; it was bound to come as soon as one nation or else one group of nations felt itself either unable to proceed farther by pacific means or threatened with the definite limitation of its expansion by the growing combination of its rivals. The Franco-German was the last great war dictated by political motives. Since then the political motive has been mainly a cover for the commercial. Not the political subjugation of Serbia which could only be a fresh embarrassment to the Austrian empire, but the commercial possession of the outlet through Salonika was the motive of Austrian policy. Pan-Germanism covered the longings of German industry for possession of the great resources and the large outlet into the North Sea offered by the countries along the Rhine. To seize African spaces of exploitation and perhaps French coal fields, not to rule over French territory, was the drift of its real intention. In Africa, in China, in Persia, in Mesopotamia, commercial motives determined political and military action. War is no longer the legitimate child of ambition and earth-hunger, but the bastard offspring of wealth-hunger or commercialism with political ambition as its putative father.

On the other hand the effect, the shock of war have been rendered intolerable by the industrial organisation of human life and the commercial interdependence of the nations. It would be too much to say that it laid that organisation in ruins, but it turned it topsy-turvy, deranged its whole system and diverted it to unnatural ends. And it produced a wide-spread suffering and privation in belligerent and a *gêne* and perturbation of life in neutral countries to which the history of the world offers no parallel. The angry cry that this must not be suffered again and that the authors of this menace and disturbance to the modern industrial organisation of the world, self-styled civilisation, must be visited with condign punishment and remain for some time as international outcastes under a ban and a boycott, showed how deeply the lesson had gone home. But it showed too, as the post-war mentality has shown, that the real, the inner truth of it all has not yet been understood or not seized at its centre. Certainly, from this point of view also, the prevention of war must be one of the first preoccupations of a new ordering of international life. But how is war to be entirely prevented if the old state of commercial rivalry between politically separate nations is to be perpetuated? If peace is still to be a covert war, an organisation of strife and rivalry, how is the physical shock to be prevented? It may be said, through the regulation of the inevitable strife and rivalry by a state of law as in the competitive commercial life of a nation before the advent of Socialism. But that was only possible because the competing individuals or combines were part of a single social organism subject to a single governmental authority and unable to assert their individual will of existence against it. Such a regulation between nations can therefore have no other conclusion, logically or practically, than the formation of a centralised World-State.

But let us suppose that the physical shock of war is prevented, not by law, but by the principle of enforced arbitration in extreme cases which might lead to war, not by the creation of an international authority, but by the overhanging threat of international pressure. The state of covert war will still continue; it may even take new and disastrous forms. Deprived of other weapons the nations are bound to have increasing resort to the weapon of commercial pressure, as did Capital and Labour in their chronic state of "pacific" struggle within the limits of the national life. The instruments would be different, but would follow the same principle, that of the strike and the lock-out which are on one side a combined passive resistance by the weaker party to enforce its claims, on the other a passive pressure by the stronger party to enforce its wishes. Between nations, the corresponding weapon to the strike would be a commercial boycott, already used more than once in an unorganised fashion both in Asia and Europe and bound to be extremely effective and telling if organised even by a politically or commercially weak nation. For the weaker nation is necessary to the stronger, if as nothing else, yet as a market or as a commercial and industrial victim. The corresponding weapons to the lock-out would be the refusal of capital or machinery, the prohibition of all or of any needed imports into the offending or victim country, or even a naval blockade leading, if long maintained, to industrial ruin or to national starvation. The blockade is a weapon used originally only in a state of war, but it was employed against Greece as a substitute for war, and this use may easily be extended in the future. There is always too the weapon of prohibitive tariffs.

It is clear that these weapons need not be employed for commercial purposes or motives only, they may be grasped at to defend or to attack any national interest, to enforce any claim of justice or injustice between nation and nation. It has been shown into how tremendous a weapon commercial pressure can be turned when it is used as an aid to war. If Germany was crushed in the end, the real means of victory was the blockade, the cutting off of money, resources and food and the ruin of industry and commerce. For the military debacle was not directly due to military weakness, but primarily to the diminution and failure of resources, to exhaustion, semi-starvation and the moral depression of an intolerable position cut off from all hope of replenishment and recovery. This lesson also may have in the future considerable application in a time of "peace". Already it was proposed at one time in some quarters to continue the commercial war after the political had ceased, in order that Germany might not only be struck off the list of great imperial nations but also permanently hampered, disabled or even ruined as a commercial and industrial rival. A policy of refusal of capital and trade relations and a kind of cordon or hostile blockade has been openly advocated and was for a time almost in force against Bolshevist Russia. And it has been suggested too that a League of Peace[3] might use this weapon of commercial pressure against any recalcitrant nation in place of military force.

But so long as there is not a firm international authority, the use of this weapon would not be likely to be limited to such occasions or used only for just and legitimate ends. It might be used by a strong nation secure of general indifference to crush and violate the weak; it might be used by a combination of strong imperial Powers to enforce their selfish and evil will upon the world. Force and coercion of any kind not concentrated in the hands of a just and impartial authority are always liable to abuse and misapplication. Therefore inevitably in the growing unity of mankind the evolution of such an authority must become an early and pressing need. The World-State even in its early and imperfect organisation must begin not only to concentrate military force in its hands, but to commence consciously in the beginning what the national State only arrived at by a slow and natural development, the ordering of the commercial, industrial, economic life of the race and the control at first, no doubt, only of the principal relations of international commerce,[4] but inevitably in the end of its whole system and principles. Since industry and trade are now five-sixths of social life and the economic principle the governing principle of society, a World-State which did not control human life in its chief principle and its largest activity would exist only in name.

---

[3] Afterwards realised as the League of Nations.

[4] Some first beginnings of this kind of activity were trying to appear in the activities of the now almost moribund League of Nations. These activities were still only platonic and advisory as in its futile discussions about disarmament and its inconclusive attempts to regulate certain relations of Capital and Labour, but they showed that the need is already felt and were a signpost on the road to the future.

Chapter XXVI

The Need of Administrative Unity

IN ALMOST all current ideas of the first step towards international organisation, it is taken for granted that the nations will continue to enjoy their separate existence and liberties and will only leave to international action the prevention of war, the regulation of dangerous disputes, the power of settling great international questions which they cannot settle by ordinary means. It is impossible that the development should stop there; this first step would necessarily lead to others which could travel only in one direction. Whatever authority were established, if it is to be a true authority in any degree and not a mere concert for palaver, would find itself called upon to act more and more frequently and to assume always increasing powers. To avoid preventible disturbance and friction, to avert hereafter the recurrence of troubles and disasters which in the beginning the first limitations of its powers had debarred the new authority from averting by a timely intervention before they came to a head, to bring about a coordination of activities for common ends, would be the principal motives impelling humanity to advance from a looser to a closer union, from a voluntary self-subordination in great and exceptional matters to an obligatory subordination in most matters. The desire of powerful nations to use it for their own purposes, the utility for weaker nations of appealing to it for the protection of their interests, the shock of actual or threatened internal disturbances and revolutions would all help to give the international authority greater power and provide occasions for extending its normal action. Science, thought and religion, the three great forces which in modern times tend increasingly to override national distinctions and point the race towards unity of life and spirit, would become more impatient of national barriers, hostilities and divisions and lend their powerful influence to the change. The great struggle between Capital and Labour might become rapidly world-wide, arrive at such an international organisation as would precipitate the inevitable step or even present the actual crisis which would bring about the transformation.

Our supposition for the moment is that a well-unified World-State with the nations for its provinces would be the final outcome. At first taking up the regulation of international disputes and of economic treaties and relations, the international authority would start as an arbiter and an occasional executive power and change by degrees into a legislative body and a standing executive power. Its legislation would be absolutely necessary in international matters, if fresh convulsions are to be avoided; for it is idle to suppose that any international arrangement, any ordering of the world arrived at after the close of a great war and upheaval could be permanent and definitive. Injustice, inequalities, abnormalities, causes of quarrel or dissatisfaction would remain in the relations of nation with nation, continent with continent which would lead to fresh hostilities and explosions. As these are prevented in the nation-State by the legislative authority which constantly modifies the existing system of things in conformity with new ideas, interests, forces and necessities, so it would have to be in the developing World-State. This legislative power, as it developed, extended, regularised its action, powers and processes, would become more complex and would be bound to interfere at many points and override or substitute its own for the separate national action. That would imply the growth also of its executive power and the development of an international executive organisation. At first it might confine itself to the most important questions and affairs which obviously demanded its control; but it would tend increasingly to stretch its hand to all or most matters that could be viewed as having an international effect and importance. Before long it would invade and occupy even those fields in which the nations are now jealous of their own rights and power. And eventually it would permeate the whole system of the national life and subject it to international control in the interests of the better coordination of the united life, culture, science, organisation, education, efficiency of the human race. It would reduce the now free and separate nations first to the position of the States of the American union or the German empire and eventually perhaps to that of geographical provinces or departments of the single nation of mankind.

The present obstacle to any such extreme consummation is the still strong principle of nationalism, the sense of group separateness, the instinct of collective independence, its pride, its pleasure in itself, its various sources of egoistic self-satisfaction, its insistence on the subordination of the human idea to the national idea. But we are supposing that the new-born idea of internationalism will grow apace, subject to itself the past idea and temper of nationalism, become dominant and take possession of the human mind. As the larger nation-group has subordinated to itself and tended to absorb all smaller clan, tribal and regional groups, as the larger empire-group now tends to subordinate and might, if allowed to develop, eventually absorb the smaller nation-groups, we are supposing that the complete human group of united mankind will subordinate to itself in the same way and eventually absorb all smaller groups of separated humanity. It is only by a growth of the international idea, the idea of a single humanity, that nationalism can disappear, if the old natural device of an external unification by conquest or other compulsive force continues to be no longer possible; for the methods of war have become too disastrous and no single empire has the means and the strength to overcome, whether rapidly or in the gradual Roman way, the rest of the world. Undoubtedly, nationalism is a more powerful obstacle to farther unification than was the separativeness of the old pettier and less firmly self-conscious groupings which preceded the developed nation-State. It is still the most powerful sentiment in the collective human mind, still gives an indestructible vitality to the nation and is apt to reappear even where it seemed to have been abolished. But we cannot argue safely from the present balance of tendencies in the beginning of a great era of transitions. Already there are at work not only ideas but forces, all the more powerful for being forces of the future and not established powers of the present, which may succeed in subordinating nationalism to themselves far earlier than we can at present conceive.

If the principle of the World-State is carried to its logical conclusion and to its extreme consequences, the result will be a process analogous in principle, with whatever necessary differences in the manner or form or extent of execution, to that by which in the building of the nation-State the central government, first as a monarchy, then as a democratic assembly and executive, gathered up the whole administration of the national life. There will be a centralisation of all control, military and police, administrative, judicial, legislative, economic, social and cultural in the one international authority. The spirit of the centralisation will be a strong unitarian idea and the principle of uniformity enforced for the greatest practical convenience and the result a rationalised mechanism of human life and activities throughout the world with justice, universal well-being, economy of effort and scientific efficiency as its principal objects. Instead of the individual activities of nation-groups each working for itself with the maximum of friction and waste and conflict, there will be an effort at coordination such as we now see in a well-organised modern State, of which the complete idea is a thoroughgoing State socialism, nowhere yet realised indeed, but rapidly coming into existence.[1] If we glance briefly at each department of the communal activity, we shall see that this development is inevitable.

We have seen already that all military power — and in the World-State that would mean an international armed police — must be concentrated in the hands of one common authority; otherwise the State cannot endure. A certain concentration of the final power of decision in economic matters would be also in time inevitable. And in the end this supremacy could not stop short of a complete control. For the economic life of the world is becoming more and more one and indivisible; but the present state of international relations is an anomalous condition of opposite principles partly in conflict, partly accommodated to each other as best they can be, — but the best is bad and harmful to the common interest. On the one side, there is the underlying unity which makes each nation commercially dependent on all the rest. On the other there is the spirit of national jealousy, egoism and sense of separate existence which makes each nation attempt at once to assert its industrial independence and at the same time reach out for a hold of its outgoing commercial activities upon foreign markets. The interaction of these two principles is regulated at present partly by the permitted working of natural forces, partly by tacit practice and understanding, partly by systems of tariff protection, bounties, State aid of one kind or another on the one hand and commercial treaties and agreements on the other. Inevitably, as the World-State grew, this would be felt to be an anomaly, a wasteful and uneconomical process. An efficient international authority would be compelled more and more to intervene and modify the free arrangements of nation with nation. The commercial interests of humanity at large would be given the first place; the independent proclivities and commercial ambitions or jealousies of this or that nation would be compelled to subordinate themselves to the human good. The ideal of mutual exploitation would be replaced by the ideal of a fit and proper share in the united economic life of the race. Especially, as socialism advanced and began to regulate the whole economic existence of separate countries, the same principle would gain ground in the international field and in the end the World-State would be called upon to take up into its hands the right ordering of the industrial production and distribution of the world. Each country might be allowed for a time to produce its own absolute necessities: but in the end it would probably be felt that this was no more necessary than for Wales or Scotland to produce all its own necessities independently of the rest of the British Isles or for one province of India to be an economic unit independent of the rest of the country. Each would produce and distribute only what it could to the best advantage, most naturally, most efficiently and most economically, for the common need and demand of mankind in which its own would be inseparably included. It would do this according to a system settled by the common will of mankind through its State government and under a method made uniform in its principles, however variable in local detail, so as to secure the simplest, smoothest and most rational working of a necessarily complicated machinery.

---

[1] Since this was written, this coming into existence has become much more rapid and thoroughgoing in three at least of the greatest nations and a more hesitating and less clearly self-conscious imitation of it is in evidence in smaller countries.

The administration of the general order of society is a less pressing matter of concern than it was to the nation-States in their period of formation, because those were times when the element of order had almost to be created and violence, crime and revolt were both more easy and more a natural and general propensity of mankind. At the present day, not only are societies tolerably well-organised in this respect and equipped with the absolutely necessary agreements between country and country, but by an elaborate system of national, regional and municipal governments linked up by an increasingly rapid power of communication the State can regulate parts of the order of life with which the cruder governments of old were quite unable to deal with any full effect. In the World-State, it may be thought, each country may be left to its own free action in matters of its internal order and, indeed, of all its separate political, social and cultural life. But even here it is probable that the World-State would demand a greater centralisation and uniformity than we can now easily imagine.

In the matter, for instance, of the continual struggle of society with the still ineradicable element of crime which it generates in its own bosom, the crudity of the present system is sure to be recognised and a serious attempt made to deal with it in a very radical manner. The first necessity would be the close observation and supervision of the great mass of constantly re-created corrupt human material in which the bacillus of crime finds its natural breeding-ground. This is at present done very crudely and imperfectly and, for the most part, after the event of actual crime by the separate police of each nation with extradition treaties and informal mutual aid as a device against evasion by place-shift. The World-State would insist on an international as well as a local supervision, not only to deal with the phenomenon of what may be called international crime and disorder which is likely to increase largely under future conditions, but for the more important object of the prevention of crime.

For the second necessity it would feel would be the need to deal with crime at its roots and in its inception. It may attempt this, first, by a more enlightened method of education and moral and temperamental training which would render the growth of criminal propensities more difficult; secondly, by scientific or eugenic methods of observation, treatment, isolation, perhaps sterilisation of corrupt human material; thirdly, by a humane and enlightened gaol system and penological method which would have for its aim not the punishment but the reform of the incipient and the formed criminal. It would insist on a certain uniformity of principle so that there might not be countries that would persevere in backward and old-world or inferior or erratic systems and so defeat the general object. For this end centralisation of control would be necessary or at least strongly advisable. So too with the judicial method. The present system is still considered as enlightened and civilised, and it is so comparatively with the mediaeval methods; but a time will surely come when it will be condemned as grotesque, inefficient, irrational and in many of its principal features semi-barbaric, a half-conversion at most of the more confused and arbitrary methods of an earlier state of social thought and feeling and social life. With the development of a more rational system, the preservation of the old juridical and judicial principles and methods in any part of the world would be felt to be intolerable and the World-State would be led to standardise the new principles and the new methods by a common legislation and probably a general centralised control.

In all these matters, it might be admitted, uniformity and centralisation would be beneficial and to some extent inevitable; no jealousy of national separateness and independence could be allowed under such conditions to interfere with the common good of humanity. But at least in the choice of their political system and in other spheres of their social life the nations might well be left to follow their own ideals and propensities and to be healthily and naturally free. It may even be said that the nations would never tolerate any serious interference in these matters and that the attempt to use the World-State for such a purpose would be fatal to its existence. But, as a matter of fact, the principle of political non-interference is likely to be much less admitted in the future than it has been in the past or is at present. Always in times of great and passionate struggle between conflicting political ideas, — between oligarchy and democracy in ancient Greece, between the old regime and the ideas of the French Revolution in modern Europe, — the principle of political non-interference has gone to the wall. But now we see another phenomenon — the opposite principle of interference slowly erecting itself into a conscious rule of international life. There is more and more possible an intervention like the American interference in Cuba, not on avowed grounds of national interest, but ostensibly on behalf of liberty, constitutionalism and democracy or of an opposite social and political principle, on international grounds therefore and practically in the force of this idea that the internal arrangements of a country concern, under certain conditions of disorder or insufficiency, not only itself, but its neighbours and humanity at large. A similar principle was put forward by the Allies in regard to Greece during the war. It was applied to one of the most powerful nations of the world in the refusal of the Allies to treat with Germany or, practically, to re-admit it into the comity of nations unless it set aside its existing political system and principles and adopted the forms of modern democracy, dismissing all remnant of absolutist rule.[2]

This idea of the common interest of the race in the internal affairs of a nation is bound to increase as the life of humanity becomes more unified. The great political question of the future is likely to be the challenge of Socialism, the full evolution of the omnipotent and omnipresent social State. And if Socialism triumphs in the leading nations of the world, it will inevitably seek to impose its rule everywhere not only by indirect pressure, but even by direct interference in what it would consider backward countries. An international authority, Parliamentary or other, in which it commanded the majority or the chief influence, would be too ready a means to be neglected. Moreover, a World-State would probably no more find it possible to tolerate the continuance of certain nations as capitalist societies, itself being socialistic in major part, than a capitalist — or socialist — Great Britain would tolerate a socialist — or capitalist — Scotland or Wales. On the other hand, if all nations become socialistic in form, it would be natural enough for the World-State to coordinate all these separate socialisms into one great system of human life. But Socialism pursued to its full development means the destruction of the distinction between political and social activities; it means the socialisation of the common life and its subjection in all its parts to its own organised government and administration. Nothing small or great escapes its purview. Birth and marriage, labour and amusement and rest, education, culture, training of physique and character, the socialistic sense leaves nothing outside its scope and its busy intolerant control. Therefore, granting an international Socialism, neither the politics nor the social life of the separate peoples is likely to escape the centralised control of the World-State.[3]

---

[2] The hardly disguised intervention of the Fascist Powers in Spain to combat and beat down the democratic Government of the country is a striking example of a tendency likely to increase in the future. Since then there has been the interference in an opposite sense with the Franco regime in the same country and the pressure put upon it, however incomplete and wavering, to change its method and principle.

Such a world-system is remote indeed from our present conceptions and established habits of life, but these conceptions and habits are already subjected at their roots to powerful forces of change. Uniformity is becoming more and more the law of the world; it is becoming more and more difficult, in spite of sentiment and in spite of conscious efforts of conservation and revival, for local individualities to survive. But the triumph of uniformity would naturally make for centralisation; the radical incentive to separateness would disappear. And centralisation once accomplished would in its turn make for a more complete uniformity. Such decentralisation as might be indispensable in a uniform humanity would be needed for convenience of administration, not on the ground of true separative variations. Once the national sentiment has gone under before a dominant internationalism, large questions of culture and race would be the only grounds left for the preservation of a strong though subordinate principle of separation in the World-State. But difference of culture is quite as much threatened today as any other more outward principle of group variation. The differences between the European nations are simply minor variations of a common occidental culture. And now that Science, that great power for uniformity of thought and life and method, is becoming more and more the greater part and threatens to become the whole of culture and life, the importance of these variations is likely to decrease. The only radical difference that still exists is between the mind of the Occident and the mind of the Orient. But here too Asia is undergoing the shock of Europeanism and Europe is beginning to feel, however slightly, the reflux of Asiaticism. A common world-culture is the most probable outcome. The valid objection to centralisation will then be greatly diminished in force, if not removed altogether. Race-sense is perhaps a stronger obstacle because it is more irrational; but this too may be removed by the closer intellectual, cultural and physical intercourse which is inevitable in the not distant future.

---

[3] This aspect of Socialism in action has received a striking confirmation in the trend to total governmental control in Germany and Italy. The strife between national (Fascist) Socialism and pure Marxist Socialism could not have been foreseen at the time of writing; but whichever form prevails, there is an identical principle.

The dream of the cosmopolitan socialist thinker may therefore be realised after all. And given the powerful continuance of the present trend of world-forces, it is in a way inevitable. Even what seems now most a chimera, a common language, may become a reality. For a State naturally tends to establish one language as the instrument of all its public affairs, its thought, its literature; the rest sink into patois, dialects, provincial tongues, like Welsh in Great Britain or Breton and Provençal in France; exceptions like Switzerland are few, hardly more than one or two in number, and are preserved only by unusually favourable conditions. It is difficult indeed to suppose that languages with powerful literatures spoken by millions of cultured men will allow themselves to be put into a quite secondary position, much less snuffed out by any old or new speech of man. But it cannot be quite certainly said that scientific reason, taking possession of the mind of the race and thrusting aside separative sentiment as a barbaric anachronism, may not accomplish one day even this psychological miracle. In any case, variety of language need be no insuperable obstacle to uniformity of culture, to uniformity of education, life and organisation or to a regulating scientific machinery applied to all departments of life and settled for the common good by the united will and intelligence of the human race. For that would be what a World-State, such as we have imagined, would stand for, its meaning, its justification, its human object. It is likely indeed that this and nothing less would come in the end to be regarded as the full justification of its existence.

Chapter XXVII

The Peril of the World-State

THIS THEN is the extreme possible form of a World-State, the form dreamed of by the socialistic, scientific, humanitarian thinkers who represent the modern mind at its highest point of self-consciousness and are therefore able to detect the trend of its tendencies, though to the half-rationalised mind of the ordinary man whose view does not go beyond the day and its immediate morrow, their speculations may seem to be chimerical and utopian. In reality they are nothing of the kind; in their essence, not necessarily in their form, they are, as we have seen, not only the logical outcome, but the inevitable practical last end of the incipient urge towards human unity, if it is pursued by a principle of mechanical unification, — that is to say, by the principle of the State. It is for this reason that we have found it necessary to show the operative principles and necessities which have underlain the growth of the unified and finally socialistic nation-State, in order to see how the same movement in international unification must lead to the same results by an analogous necessity of development. The State principle leads necessarily to uniformity, regulation, mechanisation; its inevitable end is socialism. There is nothing fortuitous, no room for chance in political and social development, and the emergence of socialism was no accident or a thing that might or might not have been, but the inevitable result contained in the very seed of the State idea. It was inevitable from the moment that idea began to be hammered out in practice. The work of the Alfreds and Charlemagnes and other premature national or imperial unifiers contained this as a sure result, for men work almost always without knowing for what they have worked. But in modern times the signs are so clear that we need not be deceived or imagine, when we begin to lay a mechanical base for world-unification, that the result contained in the very effort will not insist on developing, however far-off it may seem at present from any immediate or even any distant possibilities. A strict unification, a vast uniformity, a regulated socialisation of united mankind will be the predestined fruit of our labour.

This result can only be avoided if an opposite force interposes and puts in its veto, as happened in Asia where the State idea, although strongly affirmed within its limits, could never go in its realisation beyond a certain point, because the fundamental principle of the national life was opposed to its full intolerant development. The races of Asia, even the most organised, have always been peoples rather than nations in the modern sense. Or they were nations only in the sense of having a common soul-life, a common culture, a common social organisation, a common political head, but not nation-States. The State machine existed only for a restricted and superficial action; the real life of the people was determined by other powers with which it could not meddle. Its principal function was to preserve and protect the national culture and to maintain sufficient political, social and administrative order — as far as possible an immutable order — for the real life of the people to function undisturbed in its own way and according to its own innate tendencies. Some such unity for the human race is possible in the place of an organised World-State, if the nations of mankind succeed in preserving their developed instinct of nationalism intact and strong enough to resist the domination of the State idea. The result would then be not a single nation of mankind and a World-State, but a single human people with a free association of its nation-units. Or, it may be, the nation as we know it might disappear, but there would be some other new kind of group-units, assured by some sufficient machinery of international order in the peaceful and natural functioning of their social, economic and cultural relations.

Which then of these two major possibilities would be preferable? To answer that question we have to ask ourselves, what would be the account of gain and loss for the life of the human race which would result from the creation of a unified

World-State. In all probability the results would be, with all allowance for the great difference between then and now, very much the same in essence as those which we observe in the ancient Roman Empire. On the credit side, we should have first one enormous gain, the assured peace of the world. It might not be absolutely secure against internal shocks and disturbances but, supposing certain outstanding questions to be settled with some approach to permanence, it would eliminate even such occasional violences of civil strife as disturbed the old Roman imperial economy and, whatever perturbations there might still be, need not disturb the settled fabric of civilisation so as to cast all again into the throes of a great radical and violent change. Peace assured, there would be an unparalleled development of ease and well-being. A great number of outstanding problems would be solved by the united intelligence of mankind working no longer in fragments but as one. The vital life of the race would settle down into an assured rational order comfortable, well-regulated, well-informed, with a satisfactory machinery for meeting all difficulties, exigencies and problems with the least possible friction, disturbance and mere uncertainty of adventure and peril. At first, there would be a great cultural and intellectual efflorescence. Science would organise itself for the betterment of human life and the increase of knowledge and mechanical efficiency. The various cultures of the world — those that still exist as separate realities — would not only exchange ideas more intimately, but would throw their gains into one common fund, and new motives and forms would arise for a time in thought and literature and Art. Men would meet each other much more closely and completely than before, develop a greater mutual understanding rid of many accidental motives of strife, hatred and repugnance which now exist, and arrive, if not at brotherhood, — which cannot come by mere political, social and cultural union, — yet at some imitation of it, a sufficiently kindly association and interchange. There would be an unprecedented splendour, ease and amenity in this development of human life, and no doubt some chief poet of the age, writing in the common or official tongue — shall we say, Esperanto? — would sing confidently of the approach of the golden age or even proclaim its actual arrival and eternal duration. But after a time, there would be a dying down of force, a static condition of the human mind and human life, then stagnation, decay, disintegration. The soul of man would begin to wither in the midst of his acquisitions.

This result would come about for the same essential reasons as in the Roman example. The conditions of a vigorous life would be lost, liberty, mobile variation and the shock upon each other of freely developing differentiated lives. It may be said that this will not happen, because the World-State will be a free democratic State, not a liberty-stifling empire or autocracy, and because liberty and progress are the very principle of modern life and no development would be tolerated which went contrary to that principle. But in all this, there is not really the security that seems to be offered. For what is now, need not endure under quite different circumstances and the idea that it will is a strange mirage thrown from the actualities of the present on the possibly quite different actualities of the future. Democracy is by no means a sure preservative of liberty; on the contrary, we see today the democratic system of government march steadily towards such an organised annihilation of individual liberty as could not have been dreamed of in the old aristocratic and monarchical systems. It may be that from the more violent and brutal forms of despotic oppression which were associated with those systems, democracy has indeed delivered those nations which have been fortunate enough to achieve liberal forms of government, and that is no doubt a great gain. It revives now only in periods of revolution and excitement, often in the form of mob tyranny or a savage revolutionary or reactionary repression. But there is a deprivation of liberty which is more respectable in appearance, more subtle and systematised, more mild in its method because it has a greater force at its back, but for that very reason more effective and pervading. The tyranny of the majority has become a familiar phrase and its deadening effects have been depicted with a great force of resentment by certain of the modern intellectuals;[1] but what the future promises us is something more formidable still, the tyranny of the whole, of the self-hypnotised mass over its constituent groups and units.[2]

This is a very remarkable development, the more so as in the origins of the democratic movement individual freedom was the ideal which it set in front both in ancient and modern times. The Greeks associated democracy with two main ideas, first, an effective and personal share by each citizen in the actual government, legislation, administration of the community, secondly, a great freedom of individual temperament and action. But neither of these characteristics can flourish in the modern type of democracy, although in the United States of America there was at one time a tendency to a certain extent in this direction. In large States, the personal share of each citizen in the government cannot be effective; he can only have an equal share — illusory for the individual although effective in the mass — in the periodical choice of his legislators and administrators. Even if these have not practically to be elected from a class which is not the whole or even the majority of the community, at present almost everywhere the middle class, still these legislators and administrators do not really represent their electors. The Power they represent is another, a formless and bodiless entity, which has taken the place of monarch and aristocracy, that impersonal group-being which assumes some sort of outward form and body and conscious action in the huge mechanism of the modern State. Against this power the individual is much more helpless than he was against old oppressions. When he feels its pressure grinding him into its uniform moulds, he has no resource except either an impotent anarchism or else a retreat, still to some extent possible, into the freedom of his soul or the freedom of his intellectual being.

---

[1] E.g. Ibsen in his drama, “An Enemy of the People”.

[2] There was first seen the drastic beginning of this phenomenon in Fascist Italy and Soviet Russia. At the time of writing this development could be seen only in speculative prevision. It assumed afterwards the proportions of a growing fact and we can now see its full and formidable body.

For this is one gain of modern democracy which ancient liberty did not realise to the same extent and which has not yet been renounced, a full freedom of speech and thought. And as long as this freedom endures, the fear of a static condition of humanity and subsequent stagnation might seem to be groundless, — especially when it is accompanied by universal education which provides the largest possible human field for producing an effectuating force. Freedom of thought and speech — the two necessarily go together, since there can be no real freedom of thought where a padlock is put upon freedom of speech — is not indeed complete without freedom of association; for free speech means free propagandism and propagandism only becomes effective by association for the realisation of its objects. This third liberty also exists with more or less of qualifying limitations or prudent safeguards in all democratic States. But it is a question whether these great fundamental liberties have been won by the race with an entire security, — apart from their occasional suspensions even in free nations and the considerable restrictions with which they are hedged in subject countries. It is possible that the future has certain surprises for us in this direction.[3] Freedom of thought would be the last human liberty directly attacked by the all-regulating State, which will first seek to regulate the whole life of the individual in the type approved by the communal mind or by its rulers. But when it sees how all-important is the thought in shaping the life, it will be led to take hold of that too by forming the thought of the individual through State education and by training him to the acceptance of the approved communal, ethical, social, cultural, religious ideas, as was done in many ancient forms of education. Only if it finds this weapon ineffective, is it likely to limit freedom of thought directly on the plea of danger to the State and to civilisation. Already we see the right of the State to interfere with individual thought announced here and there in a most ominous manner. One would have imagined religious liberty at least was assured to mankind, but recently we have seen an exponent of "new thought" advancing positively the doctrine that the State is under no obligation to recognise the religious liberty of the individual and that even if it grants freedom of religious thought, it can only be conceded as a matter of expediency, not of right. There is no obligation, it is contended, to allow freedom of cult; and indeed this seems logical; for if the State has the right to regulate the whole life of the individual, it must surely have the right to regulate his religion, which is so important a part of his life, and his thought, which has so powerful an effect upon his life.[4]

---

[3] A surprise no longer, but more and more an accomplished fact. At this moment freedom of speech and thought exists no longer in Russia; it was entirely suspended for a time in Germany and Southern Europe.

Supposing an all-regulating socialistic World-State to be established, freedom of thought under such a regime would necessarily mean a criticism not only of the details, but of the very principles of the existing state of things. This criticism, if it is to look not to the dead past but to the future, could only take one direction, the direction of anarchism, whether of the spiritual Tolstoyan kind or else the intellectual anarchism which is now the creed of a small minority but still a growing force in many European countries. It would declare the free development of the individual as its gospel and denounce government as an evil and no longer at all a necessary evil. It would affirm the full and free religious, ethical, intellectual and temperamental growth of the individual from within as the true ideal of human life and all else as things not worth having at the price of the renunciation of this ideal, a renunciation which it would describe as the loss of his soul. It would preach as the ideal of society a free association or brotherhood of individuals without government or any kind of compulsion.

What would the World-State do with this kind of free thought? It might tolerate it so long as it did not translate itself into individual and associated action; but the moment it spread or turned towards a practical self-affirmation in life, the whole principle of the State and its existence would be attacked and its very base would be sapped and undermined and in imminent danger. To stop the destruction at its root or else consent to its own subversion would be the only alternatives before the established Power. But even before any such necessity arises, the principle of regulation of all things by the State would have extended itself to the regulation of the mental as well as the physical life of man by the communal mind, which was the ideal of former civilisations. A static order of society would be the necessary consequence, since without the freedom of the individual a society cannot remain progressive. It must settle into the rut or the groove of a regulated perfection or of something to which it gives that name because of the rationality of system and symmetrical idea of order which it embodies. The communal mass is always conservative and static in its consciousness and only moves slowly in the tardy process of subconscient Nature. The free individual is the conscious progressive: it is only when he is able to impart his own creative and mobile consciousness to the mass that a progressive society becomes possible.

---

[4] It was an error of prevision to suppose that the State would hesitate for a time to suppress freedom of thought altogether. It has been done at once and decisively by Bolshevist Russia and the totalitarian States. Religious liberty is not yet utterly destroyed, but is being slowly ground out in Russia, as it was in Germany, by State pressure.

Chapter XXVIII

Diversity in Oneness

IT IS essential to keep constantly in view the fundamental powers and realities of life if we are not to be betrayed by the arbitrary rule of the logical reason and its attachment to the rigorous and limiting idea into experiments which, however convenient in practice and however captivating to a unitarian and symmetrical thought, may well destroy the vigour and impoverish the roots of life. For that which is perfect and satisfying to the system of the logical reason, may yet ignore the truth of life and the living needs of the race. Unity is an idea which is not at all arbitrary or unreal; for unity is the very basis of existence. The oneness that is secretly at the foundation of all things, the evolving spirit in Nature is moved to realise consciously at the top; the evolution moves through diversity from a simple to a complex oneness. Unity the race moves towards and must one day realise.

But uniformity is not the law of life. Life exists by diversity; it insists that every group, every being shall be, even while one with all the rest in its universality, yet by some principle or ordered detail of variation unique. The over-centralisation which is the condition of a working uniformity, is not the healthy method of life. Order is indeed the law of life, but not an artificial regulation. The sound order is that which comes from within as the result of a nature that has discovered itself and found its own law and the law of its relations with others. Therefore the truest order is that which is founded on the greatest possible liberty; for liberty is at once the condition of vigorous variation and the condition of self-finding. Nature secures variation by division into groups and insists on liberty by the force of individuality in the members of the group. Therefore the unity of the human race to be entirely sound and in consonance with the deepest laws of life must be founded on free groupings, and the groupings again must be the natural association of free individuals. This is an ideal which it is certainly impossible to realise under present conditions or perhaps in any near future of the human race; but it is an ideal which ought to be kept in view, for the more we can approximate to it, the more we can be sure of being on the right road. The artificiality of much in human life is the cause of its most deep-seated maladies; it is not faithful to itself or sincere with Nature and therefore it stumbles and suffers.

The utility, the necessity of natural groupings may be seen if we consider the purpose and functioning of one great principle of division in Nature, her insistence on diversity of language. The seeking for a common language for all mankind was very strong at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century and gave rise to several experiments, none of which could get to any vital permanence. Now whatever may be the need of a common medium of communication for mankind and however it may be served by the general use either of an artificial and conventional language or of some natural tongue, as Latin, and later on to a slight extent French, was for some time the common cultural tongue of intercourse between the European nations or Sanskrit for the Indian peoples, no unification which destroyed or overshadowed, dwarfed and discouraged the large and free use of the varying natural languages of humanity, could fail to be detrimental to human life and progress. The legend of the Tower of Babel speaks of the diversity of tongues as a curse laid on the race; but whatever its disadvantages, and they tend more and more to be minimised by the growth of civilisation and increasing intercourse, it has been rather a blessing than a curse, a gift to mankind rather than a disability laid upon it. The purposeless exaggeration of anything is always an evil, and an excessive pullulation of varying tongues that serve no purpose in the expression of a real diversity of spirit and culture is certainly a stumbling-block rather than a help: but this excess, though it existed in the past,[1] is hardly a possibility of the future. The tendency is rather in the opposite direction. In former times diversity of language helped to create a barrier to knowledge and sympathy, was often made the pretext even of an actual antipathy and tended to a too rigid division. The lack of sufficient interpenetration kept up both a passive want of understanding and a fruitful crop of active misunderstandings. But this was an inevitable evil of a particular stage of growth, an exaggeration of the necessity that then existed for the vigorous development of strongly individualised group-souls in the human race. These disadvantages have not yet been abolished, but with closer intercourse and the growing desire of men and nations for the knowledge of each other's thought and spirit and personality, they have diminished and tend to diminish more and more and there is no reason why in the end they should not become inoperative.

---

[1] In India the pedants enumerate I know not how many hundred languages. This is a stupid misstatement; there are about a dozen great tongues; the rest are either dialects or aboriginal survivals of tribal speech that are bound to disappear.

Diversity of language serves two important ends of the human spirit, a use of unification and a use of variation. A language helps to bring those who speak it into a certain large unity of growing thought, formed temperament, ripening spirit. It is an intellectual, aesthetic and expressive bond which tempers division where division exists and strengthens unity where unity has been achieved. Especially it gives self-consciousness to national or racial unity and creates the bond of a common self-expression and a common record of achievement. On the other hand, it is a means of national differentiation and perhaps the most powerful of all, not a barren principle of division merely, but a fruitful and helpful differentiation. For each language is the sign and power of the soul of the people which naturally speaks it. Each develops therefore its own peculiar spirit, thought-temperament, way of dealing with life and knowledge and experience. If it receives and welcomes the thought, the life-experience, the spiritual impact of other nations, still it transforms them into something new of its own and by that power of transmutation it enriches the life of humanity with its fruitful borrowings and does not merely repeat what had been gained elsewhere. Therefore it is of the utmost value to a nation, a human group-soul, to preserve its language and to make of it a strong and living cultural instrument. A nation, race or people which loses its language cannot live its whole life or its real life. And this advantage to the national life is at the same time an advantage to the general life of the human race.

How much a distinct human group loses by not possessing a separate tongue of its own or by exchanging its natural self-expression for an alien form of speech, can be seen by the examples of the British colonies, the United States of America and Ireland. The colonies are really separate peoples in the psychological sense, although they are not as yet separate nations. English, for the most part or at the lowest in great part, in their origin and political and social sympathy, they are yet not replicas of England, but have already a different temperament, a bent of their own, a developing special character. But this new personality can only appear in the more outward and mechanical parts of their life and even there in no great, effective and fruitful fashion. The British colonies do not count in the culture of the world, because they have no native culture, because by the fact of their speech they are and must be mere provinces of England. Whatever peculiarities they may develop in their mental life tend to create a type of provincialism and not a central intellectual, aesthetic, spiritual life of their own with its distinct importance for mankind. For the same reason the whole of America, in spite of its powerfully independent political and economic being, has tended to be culturally a province of Europe, the south and centre by their dependence on the Spanish, and the north by its dependence on the English language. The life of the United States alone tends and strives to become a great and separate cultural existence, but its success is not commensurate with its power. Culturally, it is still to a great extent a province of England. Neither its literature, in spite of two or three great names, nor its art nor its thought, nor anything else on the higher levels of the mind, has been able to arrive at a vigorous maturity independent in its soul-type. And this because its instrument of self-expression, the language which the national mind ought to shape and be in turn shaped by it, was formed and must continue to be formed by another country with a different mentality and must there find its centre and its law of development. In old times, America would have evolved and changed the English language according to its own needs until it became a new speech, as the mediaeval nations dealt with Latin, and arrived in this way at a characteristic instrument of self-expression; but under modern conditions this is not easily possible.[2]

Ireland had its own tongue when it had its own free nationality and culture and its loss was a loss to humanity as well as to the Irish nation. For what might not this Celtic race with its fine psychic turn and quick intelligence and delicate imagination, which did so much in the beginning for European culture and religion, have given to the world through all these centuries under natural conditions? But the forcible imposition of a foreign tongue and the turning of a nation into a province left Ireland for so many centuries mute and culturally stagnant, a dead force in the life of Europe. Nor can we count as an adequate compensation for this loss the small indirect influence of the race upon English culture or the few direct contributions made by gifted Irishmen forced to pour their natural genius into a foreign mould of thought. Even when Ireland in her struggle for freedom was striving to recover her free soul and give it a voice, she has been hampered by having to use a tongue which does not naturally express her spirit and peculiar bent. In time she may conquer the obstacle, make this tongue her own, force it to express her, but it will be long, if ever, before she can do it with the same richness, force and unfettered individuality as she would have done in her Gaelic speech. That speech she had tried to recover but the natural obstacles have been and are likely always to be too heavy and too strongly established for any complete success in that endeavour.

Modern India is another striking example. Nothing has stood more in the way of the rapid progress in India, nothing has more successfully prevented her self-finding and development under modern conditions than the long overshadowing of the Indian tongues as cultural instruments by the English language. It is significant that the one sub-nation in India which from the first refused to undergo this yoke, devoted itself to the development of its language, made that for long its principal preoccupation, gave to it its most original minds and most living energies, getting through everything else perfunctorily, neglecting commerce, doing politics as an intellectual and oratorical pastime, — that it is Bengal which first recovered its soul, re-spiritualised itself, forced the whole world to hear of its great spiritual personalities, gave it the first modern Indian poet and Indian scientist of world-wide fame and achievement, restored the moribund art of India to life and power, first made her count again in the culture of the world, first, as a reward in the outer life, arrived at a vital political consciousness and a living political movement not imitative and derivative in its spirit and its central ideal.[3] For so much does language count in the life of a nation; for so much does it count to the advantage of humanity at large that its group-souls should preserve and develop and use with a vigorous group-individuality their natural instrument of expression.

---

[2] It is affirmed that now such an independent development is taking place in America; it has to be seen how far this becomes a truly vigorous reality: at present it has amounted only to a provincial turn, a sort of national slang or a racy oddity. Even in the farthest development it would only be a sort of dialect, not a national language.

A common language makes for unity and therefore it might be said that the unity of the human race demands unity of language; the advantages of diversity must be foregone for this greater good, however serious the temporary sacrifice. But it makes for a real, fruitful, living unity, only when it is the natural expression of the race or has been made natural by a long adaptation and development from within. The history of universal tongues spoken by peoples to whom they were not natural, is not encouraging. Always they have tended to become dead tongues, sterilising so long as they kept their hold, fruitful only when they were decomposed and broken up into new derivative languages or departed leaving the old speech, where that still persisted, to revive with this new stamp and influence upon it. Latin, after its first century of general domination in the West, became a dead thing, impotent for creation, and generated no new or living and evolving culture in the nations that spoke it; even so great a force as Christianity could not give it a new life. The times during which it was an instrument of European thought, were precisely those in which that thought was heaviest, most traditional and least fruitful. A rapid and vigorous new life only grew up when the languages which appeared out of the detritus of dying Latin or the old languages which had not been lost took its place as the complete instruments of national culture. For it is not enough that the natural language should be spoken by the people; it must be the expression of its higher life and thought. A language that survives only as a patois or a provincial tongue like Welsh after the English conquest or Breton or Provençal in France or as Czech survived once in Austria or Ruthenian and Lithuanian in imperial Russia, languishes, becomes sterile and does not serve all the true purpose of survival.

---

[3] Now, of course, everything has changed and these remarks are no longer applicable to the actual state of things in India.

Language is the sign of the cultural life of a people, the index of its soul in thought and mind that stands behind and enriches its soul in action. Therefore it is here that the phenomena and utilities of diversity may be most readily seized, more than in mere outward things; but these truths are important because they apply equally to the thing which it expresses and symbolises and serves as an instrument. Diversity of language is worth keeping because diversity of cultures and differentiation of soul-groups are worth keeping and because without that diversity life cannot have full play; for in its absence there is a danger, almost an inevitability of decline and stagnation. The disappearance of national variation into a single uniform human unity, of which the systematic thinker dreams as an ideal and which we have seen to be a substantial possibility and even a likelihood if a certain tendency becomes dominant, might lead to political peace, economic well-being, perfect administration, the solution of a hundred material problems, as did on a lesser scale the Roman unity in old times; but to what eventual good if it leads also to an uncreative sterilisation of the mind and the stagnation of the soul of the race? In laying this stress on culture, on the things of the mind and the spirit there need be no intention of undervaluing the outward material side of life; it is not at all my purpose to belittle that to which Nature always attaches so insistent an importance. On the contrary, the inner and the outer depend upon each other. For we see that in the life of a nation a great period of national culture and vigorous mental and soul life is always part of a general stirring and movement which has its counterpart in the outward political, economic and practical life of the nation. The cultural brings about or increases the material progress but also it needs it that it may itself flourish with an entirely full and healthy vigour. The peace, well-being and settled order of the human world is a thing eminently to be desired as a basis for a great world-culture in which all humanity must be united; but neither of these unities, the outward or inward, ought to be devoid of an element even more important than peace, order and well-being, — freedom and vigour of life, which can only be assured by variation and by the freedom of the group and of the individual. Not then a uniform unity, not a logically simple, a scientifically rigid, a beautifully neat and mechanical sameness, but a living oneness full of healthy freedom and variation is the ideal which we should keep in view and strive to get realised in man's future.

But how is this difficult end to be secured? For if an excessive uniformity and centralisation tends to the disappearance of necessary variations and indispensable liberties, a vigorous diversity and strong group-individualism may lead to an incurable persistence or constant return of the old separatism which will prevent human unity from reaching completeness or even will not allow it to take firm root. For it will not be enough for the constituent groups or divisions to have a certain formal administrative and legislative separateness like the States of the American union if, as there, there is liberty only in mechanical variations and all vivid departures from the general norm proceeding from a profounder inner variation are discouraged or forbidden. Nor will it be sufficient to found a unity plus local independence of the German type; for there the real overriding force was a unifying and disciplined Prussianism and independence survived only in form. Nor will even the English colonial system give us any useful suggestion; for there is there local independence and a separate vigour of life, but the brain, heart and central spirit are in the metropolitan country and the rest are at the best only outlying posts of the Anglo-Saxon idea.[4] The Swiss cantonal life offers no fruitful similitude; for apart from the exiguity of its proportions and frame, there is the phenomenon of a single Swiss life and practical spirit with a mental dependence on three foreign cultures sharply dividing the race; a common Swiss culture does not exist. The problem is rather, on a larger and more difficult scale and with greater complexities, that which offered itself for a moment to the British Empire, how, if it is at all possible, to unite Great Britain, Ireland, the Colonies, Egypt, India in a real oneness, throw their gains into a common stock, use their energies for a common end, help them to find the account of their national individuality in a supra-national life, yet preserve that individuality, — Ireland keeping the Irish soul and life and cultural principle, India the Indian soul and life and cultural principle, the other units developing theirs, not united by a common Anglicisation, which was the past empire-building ideal, but held together by a greater as yet unrealised principle of free union. Nothing was suggested at any time in the way of a solution except some sort of bunch or rather bouquet system, unifying its clusters not by the living stalk of a common origin or united past, for that does not exist, but by an artificial thread of administrative unity which might at any moment be snapped irretrievably by centrifugal forces.

But after all, it may be said, unity is the first need and should be achieved at any cost, just as national unity was achieved by crushing out the separate existence of the local units; afterwards a new principle of group-variation may be found other than the nation-unit. But the parallel here becomes illusory, because an important factor is lacking. For the history of the birth of the nation is a coalescence of small groups into a larger unit among many similar large units. The old richness of small units which gave such splendid cultural, but such unsatisfactory political results in Greece, Italy and India was lost, but the principle of life made vivid by variative diversity was preserved with nations for the diverse units and the cultural life of a continent for the common background. Here nothing of the kind is possible. There will be a sole unity, the world-nation; all outer source of diversity will disappear. Therefore the inner source has to be modified indeed, subordinated in some way, but preserved and encouraged to survive. It may be that this will not happen; the unitarian idea may forcefully prevail and turn the existing nations into mere geographical provinces or administrative departments of a single well-mechanised State. But in that case the outraged need of life will have its revenge, either by a stagnation, a collapse and a detrition fruitful of new separations or by some principle of revolt from within. A gospel of Anarchism might enforce itself, for example, and break down the world-order for a new creation. The question is whether there is not somewhere a principle of unity in diversity by which this method of action and reaction, creation and destruction, realisation and relapse cannot be, if not altogether avoided, yet mitigated in its action and led to a more serene and harmonious working.

---

[4] This may be less so than before, but the improvement does not go very far.

Chapter XXIX

The Idea of a League of Nations

THE ONLY means that readily suggests itself by which a necessary group-freedom can be preserved and yet the unification of the human race achieved, is to strive not towards a closely organised World-State, but towards a free, elastic and progressive world-union. If this is to be done, we shall have to discourage the almost inevitable tendency which must lead any unification by political, economic and administrative means, in a word, by the force of machinery, to follow the analogy of the evolution of the nation-State. And we shall have to encourage and revive that force of idealistic nationalism which, before the war, seemed on the point of being crushed on the one side under the weight of the increasing world-empires of England, Russia, Germany and France, on the other by the progress of the opposite ideal of internationalism with its large and devastating contempt for the narrow ideas of country and nation and its denunciation of the evils of nationalistic patriotism. But at the same time we shall have to find a cure for the as yet incurable separative sentiments natural to the very idea to which we shall have to give a renewed strength. How is all this to be done?

On our side in the attempt we have the natural principle of compensating reactions. The law of action and reaction, valid even in physical Science, is in human action, which must always depend largely on psychological forces, a more constant and pervading truth. That in life to every pressure of active forces there is a tendency of reaction of opposite or variative forces which may not immediately operate but must eventually come into the field or which may not act with an equal and entirely compensating force, but must act with some force of compensation, may be taken as well established. It is both a philosophical necessity and a constant fact of experience. For

Nature works by a balancing system of the interplay of opposite forces. When she has insisted for some time on the dominant force of one tendency as against all others, she seeks to correct its exaggerations by reviving, if dead, or newly awakening, if only in slumber, or bringing into the field in a new and modified form the tendency that is exactly opposite. After long insistence on centralisation, she tries to modify it by at least a subordinated decentralisation. After insisting on more and more uniformity, she calls again into play the spirit of multiform variation. The result need not be an equipollence of the two tendencies, it may be any kind of compromise. Or, instead of a compromise it may be in act a fusion and in result a new creation which shall be a compound of both principles. We may expect her to apply the same method to the tendencies of unification and group-variation in dealing with the great mass unit of humanity. At present, the nation is the fulcrum which the latter tendency has been using for its workings as against the imperialistic tendency of unifying assimilation. Now the course of Nature's working in humanity may destroy the nation-unit, as she destroyed the tribe and clan, and develop a quite new principle of grouping; but also she may preserve it and give it sufficient power of vitality and duration to balance usefully the trend towards too heavy a force of unification. It is this latter contingency that we have to consider.

The two forces in action before the war were imperialism — of various colours, the more rigid imperialism of Germany, the more liberal imperialism of England, — and nationalism. They were the two sides of one phenomenon, the aggressive or expansive and the defensive aspects of national egoism. But in the trend of imperialism this egoism had some eventual chance of dissolving itself by excessive self-enlargement, as the aggressive tribe disappeared, for example, the Persian tribe, first into the empire and then into the nationality of the Persian people, or as the city state also disappeared, first into the Roman Empire and then both tribe and city state without hope of revival into the nations which arose by fusion out of the irruption of the German tribes into the declining Latin unity.

In the same or a similar way aggressive national imperialism by overspreading the world might end in destroying altogether the nation-unit as the city state and tribe were destroyed by the aggressive expansion of a few dominant city states and tribes. The force of defensive nationalism has reacted against this tendency, restricted it and constantly thwarted its evolutionary aim. But before the war, the separative force of nationalism seemed doomed to impotence and final suppression in face of the tremendous power with which science, organisation and efficiency had armed the governing States of the large imperial aggregates.

All the facts were pointing in one direction. Korea had disappeared into the nascent Japanese empire on the mainland of Asia. Persian nationalism had succumbed and lay suppressed under a system of spheres of influence which were really a veiled protectorate, — and all experience shows that the beginning of a protectorate is also the beginning of the end of the protected nation; it is a euphemistic name for the first process of chewing previous to deglutition. Tibet and Siam were so weak and visibly declining that their continued immunity could not be hoped for. China had only escaped by the jealousies of the world-Powers and by its size which made it an awkward morsel to swallow, let alone to digest. The partition of all Asia between four or five or at the most six great empires seemed a foregone conclusion which nothing but an unexampled international convulsion could prevent. The European conquest of Northern Africa had practically been completed by the disappearance of Morocco, the confirmed English protectorate over Egypt and the Italian hold on Tripoli. Somaliland was in a preliminary process of slow deglutition; Abyssinia, saved once by Menelik but now torn by internal discord, was the object of a revived dream of Italian colonial empire. The Boer republics had gone under before the advancing tide of imperialistic aggression. All the rest of Africa practically was the private property of three great Powers and two small ones. In Europe, no doubt, there were still a few small independent nations, Balkan and Teutonic, and also two quite unimportant neutralised countries. But the Balkans were a constant theatre of uncertainty and disturbance and the rival national egoisms could only have ended, in case of the ejection of Turkey from Europe, either by the formation of a young, hungry and ambitious Slav empire under the dominance of Serbia or Bulgaria or by their disappearance into the shadow of Austria and Russia. The Teutonic States were coveted by expanding Germany and, had that Power been guided by the prudently daring diplomacy of a new Bismarck, — a not unlikely contingency, could William II have gone to the grave before letting loose the hounds of war, — their absorption might well have been compassed. There remained America where imperialism had not yet arisen, but it was already emerging in the form of Rooseveltian Republicanism, and the interference in Mexico, hesitating as it was, yet pointed to the inevitability of a protectorate and a final absorption of the disorderly Central American republics; the union of South America would then have become a defensive necessity. It was only the stupendous cataclysm of the world war which interfered with the progressive march towards the division of the world into less than a dozen great empires.

The war revived with a startling force the idea of free nationality, throwing it up in three forms, each with a stamp of its own. First, in opposition to the imperialistic ambitions of Germany in Europe the allied nations, although themselves empires, were obliged to appeal to a qualified ideal of free nationality and pose as its champions and protectors. America, more politically idealistic than Europe, entered the war with a cry for a league of free nations. Finally, the original idealism of the Russian revolution cast into this new creative chaos an entirely new element by the distinct, positive, uncompromising recognition, free from all reserves of diplomacy and self-interest, of the right of every aggregate of men naturally marked off from other aggregates to decide its own political status and destiny. These three positions were in fact distinct from each other, but each has in effect some relation to the actually possible future of humanity. The first based itself upon the present conditions and aimed at a certain practical rearrangement. The second tried to hasten into immediate practicability a not entirely remote possibility of the future. The third aimed at bringing into precipitation by the alchemy of revolution — for what we inappropriately call revolution, is only a rapidly concentrated movement of evolution — a yet remote end which in the ordinary course of events could only be realised, if at all, in the far distant future. All of them have to be considered; for a prospect which only takes into view existing realised forces or apparently realisable possibilities is foredoomed to error. Moreover, the Russian idea by its attempt at self-effectuation, however immediately ineffective, rendered itself an actual force which must be counted among those that may influence the future of the race. A great idea already striving to enforce itself in the field of practice is a power which cannot be left out of count, nor valued only according to its apparent chances of immediate effectuation at the present hour.

The position taken by England, France and Italy, the Western European section of the Allies, contemplated a political rearrangement of the world, but not any radical change of its existing order. It is true that it announced the principle of free nationalities; but in international politics which is still a play of natural forces and interests and in which ideals are only a comparatively recent development of the human mind, principles can only prevail where and so far as they are consonant with interests, or where and so far as, being hostile to interests, they are yet assisted by natural forces strong enough to overbear these interests which oppose them. The pure application of ideals to politics is as yet a revolutionary method of action which can only be hoped for in exceptional crises; the day when it becomes a rule of life, human nature and life itself will have become a new phenomenon, something almost superterrestrial and divine. That day is not yet. The Allied Powers in Europe were themselves nations with an imperial past and an imperial future; they could not, even if they wished, get away by the force of a mere word, a mere idea from that past and that future. Their first interest, and therefore the first duty of their statesmen, must be to preserve each its own empire, and even, where it can in their view be legitimately done, to increase it. The principle of free nationality could only be applied by them in its purity where their own imperial interests were not affected, as against Turkey and the Central Powers, because there the principle was consonant with their own interests and could be supported as against German, Austrian or Turkish interests by the natural force of a successful war which was or could be made to appear morally justified in its results because it was invited by the Powers which had to suffer. It could not be applied in its purity where their own imperial interests were affected, because there it was opposed to existing forces and there was no sufficient countervailing force by which that opposition could be counteracted. Here, therefore, it must be acted upon in a qualified sense, as a force moderating that of pure imperialism. So applied, it would amount in fact at most to the concession of internal self-government or Home Rule in such proportion, at such a time or by such stages as might be possible, practicable and expedient for the interests of the empire and of the subject nation so far as they could be accommodated with one another. It must be understood, in other words, as the common sense of the ordinary man would understand it; it could not be and has nowhere been understood in the sense which would be attached to it by the pure idealist of the Russian type who was careless of all but the naked purity of his principle.

What then would be the practical consequences of this qualified principle of free nationality as it would have been possible to apply it after a complete victory of the Allied Powers, its representatives? In America it would have no field of immediate application. In Africa there are not only no free nations, but with the exception of Egypt and Abyssinia no nations, properly speaking; for Africa is the one part of the world where the old tribal conditions have still survived and only tribal peoples exist, not nations in the political sense of the word. Here then a complete victory of the Allies meant the partition of the continent between three colonial empires, Italy, France and England, with the continuance of the Belgian, Spanish and Portuguese enclaves and the precarious continuance for a time of the Abyssinian kingdom. In Asia it meant the appearance of three or four new nationalities out of the ruins of the Turkish empire; but these by their immaturity would all be foredoomed to remain, for a time at least, under the influence or the protection of one or other of the great Powers. In Europe it implied the diminution of Germany by the loss of Alsace and Poland, the disintegration of the Austrian empire, the reversion of the Adriatic coast to Serbia and Italy, the liberation of the Czech and Polish nations, some rearrangement in the Balkan Peninsula and the adjacent countries. All this, it is clear, meant a great change in the map of the world, but no radical transformation. The existing tendency of nationalism would gain some extension by the creation of a number of new independent nations; the existing tendency of imperial aggregation would gain a far greater extension by the expansion of the actual territory, world-wide influence and international responsibilities of the successful empires.

Still, certain very important results could not but be gained which must make in the end for a free world-union. The most important of these, the result of the Russian Revolution born out of the war and its battle-cry of free nationality but contingent on the success and maintenance of the revolutionary principle, is the disappearance of Russia as an aggressive empire and its transformation from an imperialistic aggregate into a congeries or a federation of free republics.[1] The second is the destruction of the German type of imperialism and the salvation of a number of independent nationalities which lay under its menace.[2] The third is the multiplication of distinct nationalities with a claim to the recognition of their separate existence and legitimate voice in the affairs of the world, which makes for the strengthening of the idea of a free world-union as the ultimate solution of international problems. The fourth is the definite recognition by the British nation of the qualified principle of free nationality in the inevitable reorganisation of the Empire.

---

[1] Not so free in practice under Bolshevik rule as in principle; but still the principle is there and capable of development in a freer future.

[2] Unfortunately this result seems destined to disappear by the formidable survival of a military Germany under the Führer.

This development took two forms, the recognition of the principle of Home Rule[3] in Ireland and India and the recognition of the claim of each constituent nation to a voice, which in the event of Home Rule must mean a free and equal voice, in the councils of the Empire. Taken together, these things would mean the ultimate conversion from an empire constituted on the old principle of nationalistic imperialism which was represented by the supreme government of one predominant nation, England, into a free and equal commonwealth of nations managing their common affairs through a supple coordination by mutual goodwill and agreement. In other words, such a development could mean in the end the application within certain limits of precisely that principle which would underlie the constitution, on the larger scale, of a free world-union. Much work would have to be done, several extensions made, many counterforces overcome before such a commonwealth could become a realised fact, but that it should have taken shape in the principle and in the germ, constitutes a notable event in world-history. Two questions remained for the future. What would be the effect of this experiment on the other empires which adhere to the old principle of a dominant centralisation? Probably it would have this effect, if it succeeded, that as they are faced by the growth of strong nationalistic movements, they may be led to adopt the same or a similar solution, just as they adopted from England with modifications her successful system of Parliamentary government in the affairs of the nation. Secondly, what of the relations between these empires and the many independent non-imperial nations or republics which would exist under the new arrangement of the world? How are they to be preserved from fresh attempts to extend the imperial idea, or how is their existence to be correlated in the international comity with the huge and overshadowing power of the empires? It is here that the American idea of the League of free nations intervened and found a justification in principle.

---

[3] Now called Dominion Status. Unfortunately, this recognition could not be put into force except after a violent struggle in Ireland and was marred by the partition of the country. After a vehement passive resistance in India it came to be recognised there but in a truncated form shifting the full concession to a far future. In Egypt also it was only after a struggle that freedom was given but subject to a controlling British alliance. Still the nationalistic principle worked in the creation of a free Iraq, the creation of Arab kingdom and Syrian republic, the withdrawal of imperialistic influence from Persia and, above all, in the institution of Dominion Status substituting an internally free and equal position in a commonwealth of peoples for a dominating Empire. Yet these results, however imperfect, prepared the greater fulfilments which we now see accomplished as part of a new world of free peoples.

Unfortunately, it was always difficult to know what exactly this idea would mean in practice. The utterances of its original spokesman, President Wilson, were marked by a magnificent nebulous idealism full of inspiring ideas and phrases, but not attended by a clear and specific application. For the idea behind the head of the President we must look for light to the past history and the traditional temperament of the American people. The United States were always pacific and non-imperialistic in sentiment and principle, yet with an undertone of nationalistic susceptibility which threatened recently to take an imperialistic turn and led the nation to make two or three wars ending in conquests whose results it had then to reconcile with its non-imperialistic pacifism. It annexed Mexican Texas by war and then turned it into a constituent State of the union, swamping it at the same time with American colonists. It conquered Cuba from Spain and the Philippines first from Spain and then from the insurgent Filipinos and, not being able to swamp them with colonists, gave Cuba independence under the American influence and promised the Filipinos a complete independence. American idealism was always governed by a shrewd sense of American interests, and highest among these interests is reckoned the preservation of the American political idea and its constitution, to which all imperialism, foreign or American, has to be regarded as a mortal peril.

As a result and as the result of its inevitable amalgamation with that much more qualified aim of the Allied Powers, a League of Nations was bound to have both an opportunist and an idealistic element. The opportunist element was bound to take in its first form the legalisation of the map and political formation of the world as it emerged from the convulsion of the war. Its idealistic side, if supported by the use of the influence of America in the League, could favour the increasing application of the democratic principle in its working and its result might be the final emergence of a United States of the world with a democratic Congress of the nations as its governing agency. The legalisation might have the good effect of minimising the chances of war, if a real League of Nations proved practicable and succeeded, — even under the best conditions by no means a foregone conclusion.[4] But it would have the bad effect of tending to stereotype a state of things which must be in part artificial, irregular, anomalous and only temporarily useful. Law is necessary for order and stability, but it becomes a conservative and hampering force unless it provides itself with an effective machinery for changing the laws as soon as circumstances and new needs make that desirable. This can only happen if a true Parliament, Congress or free Council of the nations becomes an accomplished thing. Meanwhile, how is the added force for the conservation of old principles to be counteracted and an evolution assured which will lead to the consummation desired by the democratic American ideal? America's presence and influence in such a League would not be sufficient for that purpose; for it would have at its side other influences interested in preserving the *status quo* and some interested in developing the imperialist solution. Another force, another influence would be needed. Here the Russian ideal, if truly applied and made a force, could intervene and find its justification. For our purpose, it would be the most interesting and important of the three anti-imperialistic influences which Nature might throw as elements into her great crucible to reshape the human earth-mass for a yet unforeseen purpose.

---

[4] The League was eventually formed with America outside it and as an instrument of European diplomacy, which was a bad omen for its future.

Chapter XXX

The Principle of Free Confederation

THE ISSUES of the original Russian idea of a confederation of free self-determining nationalities were greatly complicated by the transitory phenomenon of a revolution which has sought, like the French Revolution before it, to transform immediately and without easy intermediate stages the whole basis not only of government, but of society, and has, moreover, been carried out under pressure of a disastrous war. This double situation led inevitably to an unexampled anarchy and, incidentally, to the forceful domination of an extreme party which represented the ideas of the Revolution in their most uncompromising and violent form. The Bolshevik despotism corresponds in this respect to the Jacobin despotism of the French Reign of Terror. The latter lasted long enough to secure its work, which was to effect violently and irrevocably the transition from the post-feudal system of society to the first middle-class basis of democratic development. The Labourite despotism in Russia, the rule of the Soviets, fixing its hold and lasting long enough, could effect the transition of society to a second and more advanced basis of the same or even to a still farther development. But we are concerned only with the effect on the ideal of free nationality. On this point all Russia except the small reactionary party was from the first agreed; but the resort to the principle of government by force brought in a contradictory element which endangered its sound effectuation even in Russia itself and therefore weakened the force which it might have had in the immediate future of the world-development.[1] For it stands on a moral principle which belongs to the future, while government of other nations by force belongs to the past and present and is radically inconsistent with the founding of the new world-arrangement on the basis of free choice and free status. It must therefore be considered in itself apart from any application now received, which must necessarily be curbed and imperfect.

---

[1] The component States of Sovietic Russia are allowed a certain cultural, linguistic and other autonomy, but the rest is illusory as they are in fact governed by the force of a highly centralised autocracy in Moscow.

The political arrangement of the world hitherto has rested on an almost entirely physical and vital, that is to say, a geographical, commercial, political and military basis. Both the nation idea and the State idea have been built and have worked on this foundation. The first unity aimed at has been a geographical, commercial, political and military union, and in establishing this unity the earlier vital principle of race on which the clan and tribe were founded, has been everywhere overridden. It is true that nationhood still founds itself largely on the idea of race, but this is in the nature of a fiction. It covers the historical fact of a fusion of many races and attributes a natural motive to a historical and geographical association. Nationhood founds itself partly on this association, partly on others which accentuate it, common interests, community of language, community of culture, and all these in unison have evolved a psychological idea, a psychological unity, which finds expression in the idea of nationalism. But the nation idea and the State idea do not everywhere coincide, and in most cases the former has been overridden by the latter and always on the same physical and vital grounds — grounds of geographical, economic, political and military necessity or convenience. In the conflict between the two, force, as in all vital and physical struggle, must always be the final arbiter. But the new principle proposed,[2] that of the right of every natural grouping which feels its own separateness to choose its own status and partnerships, makes a clean sweep of these vital and physical grounds and substitutes a purely psychological principle of free-will and free choice as against the claims of political and economic necessity. Or rather the vital and physical grounds of grouping are only to be held valid when they receive this psychological sanction and are to found themselves upon it.

---

[2] This principle was recognised in theory by the Allies under the name of self-determination but, needless to say, it has been disregarded as soon as the cry had served its turn.

How the two rival principles work out, can be seen by the example of Russia itself which is now prominently before our eyes. Russia has never been a nation-State in the pure sense of the word, like France, Spain, Italy, Great Britain or modern Germany; it has been a congeries of nations, Great Russia, Ruthenian Ukraine, White Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Siberia, all Slavic with a dash of Tartar and German blood, Courland which is mostly Slav but partly German, Finland which has no community of any kind with the rest of Russia, and latterly the Asiatic nations of Turkistan, all bound together by one bond only, the rule of the Tsar. The only psychological justification of such a union was the future possibility of fusion into a single nation with the Russian language as its instrument of culture, thought and government, and it was this which the old Russian regime had in view. The only way to bring this about was by governmental force, the way that had been long attempted by England in Ireland and was attempted by Germany in German Poland and Lorraine. The Austrian method of federation employed with Hungary as a second partner or of a pressure tempered by leniency, by concessions and by measures of administrative half-autonomy, might have been tried, but their success in Austria has been small. Federation has not as yet proved a successful principle except between States and nations or subnations already disposed to unite by ties of common culture, a common past or an already developed or developing sense of common nationhood; such conditions existed in the American States and in Germany and they exist in China and in India, but they have not existed in Austria or Russia. Or, if things and ideas had been ripe, instead of this attempt, there might have been an endeavour to found a free union of nations with the Tsar as the symbol of a supra-national idea and bond of unity; but for this the movement of the world was not yet ready. Against an obstinate psychological resistance the vital and physical motive of union could only resort to force, military, administrative and political, which has succeeded often enough in the past. In Russia, it was probably on the way to a slow success as far as the Slavic portions of the Empire were concerned; in Finland, perhaps also in Poland, it would probably have failed much more irretrievably than the long reign of force failed in Ireland, partly because even a Russian or a German autocracy cannot apply perfectly and simply the large, thoroughgoing and utterly brutal and predatory methods of a Cromwell or Elizabeth,[3] partly because the resisting psychological factor of nationalism had become too self-conscious and capable of an organised passive resistance or at least a passive force of survival.

But if the psychological justification was deficient or only in process of creation, the vital and physical case for a strictly united Russia, not excluding Finland, was overwhelming. The work of the Peters and Catherines was founded on a strong political, military and economic necessity. From the political and military point of view, all these Slavic nations had everything to lose by disunion, because, disunited, they were each exposed and they exposed each other to the oppressive contact of any powerful neighbour, Sweden, Turkey, Poland, while Poland was a hostile and powerful State, or Germany and Austria. The union of the Ukraine Cossacks with Russia was indeed brought about by mutual agreement as a measure of defence against Poland. Poland itself, once weakened, stood a better chance by being united with Russia than by standing helpless and alone between three large and powerful neighbours, and her total inclusion would certainly have been a better solution for her than the fatal partition between these three hungry Powers. On the other hand, by union a State was created, so geographically compact, yet so large in bulk, numerous in population, well-defended by natural conditions and rich in potential resources that, if it had been properly organised, it could not only have stood secure in itself, but dominated half Asia, as it already does, and half Europe, as it was once, even without proper organisation and development, almost on the way to do, when it interfered as armed arbiter, here deliverer, there champion of oppression in Austro-Hungary and in the Balkans. Even the assimilation of Finland was justified from this point of view; for a free Finland would have left Russia geographically and economically incomplete and beset and limited in her narrow Baltic outlet, while a Finland dominated by a strong Sweden or a powerful Germany would have been a standing military menace to the Russian capital and the Russian empire. The inclusion of Finland, on the contrary, made Russia secure, at ease and powerful at this vital point. Nor, might it be argued, did Finland herself really lose, since, independent, she would be too small and weak to maintain herself against neighbouring imperial aggressiveness and must rely on the support of Russia. All these advantages have been destroyed, temporarily at least, by the centrifugal forces let loose by the Revolution and its principle of the free choice of nationalities.

---

[3] This could no longer be said after the revival of mediaeval barbaric cruelty in Nazi Germany, one of the most striking recent developments of "modern" humanity. But this may be regarded perhaps as a temporary backsliding, though it sheds lurid lights on the still existing darker possibilities of human nature.

It is evident that these arguments, founded as they are on vital and physical necessity and regardless of moral and psychological justification, might be carried very far. They would not only justify Austria's now past domination of Trieste and her Slavic territories, as they justified England's conquest and holding of Ireland against the continued resistance of the Irish people, but also, extended a little farther, Germany's scheme of Pan-Germanism and even her larger ideas of absorption and expansion. It could be extended to validate all that imperial expansion of the European nations which has now no moral justification and could only have been justified morally in the future by the creation of supra-national psychological unities; for the vital and physical grounds always exist. Even the moral, at least the psychological and cultural justification of a unified Russian culture and life in process of creation, could be extended, and the European claim to spread and universalise European civilisation by annexation and governmental force presents on its larger scale a certain moral analogy. This, too, extended, might justify the pre-war German ideal of a sort of unification of the world under the aegis of German power and German culture. But, however liable to abuse by extension, vital necessity must be allowed a word in a world still dominated fundamentally by the law of force, however mitigated in its application, and by vital and physical necessity, so far at least as concerns natural geographical unities like Russia, the United Kingdom,[4] even Austria within its natural frontiers.[5]

The Russian principle belongs, in fact, to a possible future in which moral and psychological principles will have a real chance to dominate and vital and physical necessities will have to suit themselves to them, instead of, as now, the other way round; it belongs to an arrangement of things that would be the exact reverse of the present international system. As things are at present, it has to struggle against difficulties which may well be insuperable. The Russians were much ridiculed and more vilified for their offer of a democratic peace founded on the free choice of nations to autocratic and militarist Germany bent on expansion like other empires by dishonest diplomacy and by the sword. From the point of view of practical statesmanship the ridicule was justified; for the offer ignored facts and forces and founded itself on the power of the naked and unarmed idea. The Russians, thoroughgoing idealists, acted, in fact, in the same spirit as did once the French in the first fervour of their revolutionary enthusiasm; they offered their new principle of liberty and democratic peace to the world, — not, at first, to Germany alone, — in the hope that its moral beauty and truth and inspiration would compel acceptance, not by the Governments but by the peoples who would force the hands of their governments or overturn them if they opposed. Like the French revolutionists, they found that ours is still a world in which ideals can only be imposed if they have a preponderating vital and physical force in their hands or at their backs. The French Jacobins with their ideal of unitarian nationalism were able to concentrate their energies and make their principle triumph for a time by force of arms against a hostile world. The Russian idealists found in their attempt to effectuate their principle that the principle itself was a source of weakness; they found themselves helpless against the hard-headed German cynicism, not because they were disorganised, — for revolutionary France was also disorganised and overcame the difficulty, — but because the dissolution of the old Russian fabric to which they had consented deprived them of the means of united and organised action. Nevertheless, their principle was a more advanced, because a moral principle, than the aggressive nationalism which was all the international result of the French Revolution; it has a greater meaning for the future.

---

[4] Now we must say Great Britain and Ireland, for the United Kingdom exists no longer.

[5] Note from this point of view the disastrous economic results of the breaking up of the Austrian empire in the small nations that have arisen in its place.

For it belongs to a future of free world-union in which precisely this principle of free self-determination must be either the preliminary movement or the main final result, to an arrangement of things in which the world will have done with war and force as the ultimate basis of national and international relations and be ready to adopt free agreement as a substitute. If the idea could work itself out, even if only within the bounds of Russia,[6] and arrive at some principle of common action, even at the cost of that aggressive force which national centralisation can alone give, it would mean a new moral power in the world. It would certainly not be accepted elsewhere, except in case of unexpected revolutions, without enormous reserves and qualifications; but it would be there working as a power to make the world ready for itself and, when it is ready, would play a large determining part in the final arrangement of human unity. But even if it fails entirely in its present push for realisation, it will still have its part to play in a better prepared future.

---

[6] The idea was sincere at the time, but it has lost its significance because of the principle of revolutionary force on which Sovietism still rests.

Chapter XXXI

The Conditions of a Free World-Union

A FREE world-union must in its very nature be a complex unity based on a diversity and that diversity must be based on free self-determination. A mechanical unitarian system would regard in its idea the geographical groupings of men as so many conveniences for provincial division, for the convenience of administration, much in the same spirit as the French Revolution reconstituted France with an entire disregard of old natural and historic divisions. It would regard mankind as one single nation and it would try to efface the old separative national spirit altogether; it would arrange its system probably by continents and subdivide the continents by convenient geographical demarcations. In this other quite opposite idea, the geographical, the physical principle of union would be subordinated to a psychological principle; for not a mechanical division, but a living diversity would be its object. If this object is to be secured, the peoples of humanity must be allowed to group themselves according to their free-will and their natural affinities; no constraint or force could be allowed to compel an unwilling nation or distinct grouping of peoples to enter into another system or join itself or remain joined to it for the convenience, aggrandisement or political necessity of another people or even for the general convenience, in disregard of its own wishes. Nations or countries widely divided from each other geographically like England and Canada or England and Australia might cohere together. Nations closely grouped locally might choose to stand apart, like England and Ireland or like Finland and Russia. Unity would be the largest principle of life, but freedom would be its foundation-stone.[1]

---

[1] Necessarily to every principle there must be in application a reasonable limit; otherwise fantastic and impracticable absurdities might take the place of a living truth.

In a world built on the present political and commercial basis this system of groupings might present often insuperable difficulties or serious disadvantages; but in the condition of things in which alone a free world-union would be possible, these difficulties and disadvantages would cease to operate. Military necessity of forced union for strength of defence or for power of aggression would be non-existent, because war would no longer be possible; force as the arbiter of international differences and a free world-union are two quite incompatible ideas and practically could not coexist. The political necessity would also disappear; for it is largely made up of that very spirit of conflict and the consequent insecure conditions of international life apportioning predominance in the world to the physically and organically strongest nations out of which the military necessity arose. In a free world-union determining its affairs and settling its differences by agreement or, where agreement failed, by arbitration, the only political advantage of including large masses of men not otherwise allied to each other in a single State would be the greater influence arising from mass and population. But this influence could not work if the inclusion were against the will of the nations brought together in the State; for then it would rather be a source of weakness and disunion in the State's international action — unless indeed it were allowed in the international system to weigh by its bulk and population without regard to the will and opinion of the peoples constituting it. Thus the population of Finland and Poland might swell the number of voices which a united Russia could count in the council of the nations, but the will, sentiment and opinions of the Finns and Poles be given no means of expression in that mechanical and unreal unity.[2] But this would be contrary to the modern sense of justice and reason and incompatible with the principle of freedom which could alone ensure a sound and peaceful basis for the world-arrangement. Thus the elimination of war and the settlement of differences by peaceful means would remove the military necessity for forced unions, while the right of every people to a free voice and status in the world would remove its political necessity and advantage. The elimination of war and the recognition of the equal rights of all peoples are intimately bound up with each other. That interdependence, admitted for a moment, even though imperfectly, during the European conflict, will have to be permanently accepted if there is to be any unification of the race.

---

[2] The inclusion of India in the League of Nations has evidently been an arrangement of this type.

The economic question remains, and it is the sole important problem of a vital and physical order which might possibly present in this kind of world-arrangement any serious difficulties, or in which the advantages of a unitarian system might really outweigh those of this more complex unity. In either, however, the forcible economic exploitation of one nation by another, which is so large a part of the present economic order, would necessarily be abolished. There would remain the possibility of a sort of peaceful economic struggle, a separativeness, a building up of artificial barriers, — a phenomenon which has been a striking and more and more prominent feature of the present commercial civilisation. But it is likely that once the element of struggle were removed from the political field, the stress of the same struggle in the economic field would greatly decrease. The advantages of self-sufficiency and predominance, to which political rivalry and struggle and the possibility of hostile relations now give an enormous importance, would lose much of their stringency and the advantages of a freer give and take would become more easily visible. It is obvious, for example, that an independent Finland would profit much more by encouraging the passage of Russian commerce through Finnish ports or an Italian Trieste by encouraging the passage of the commerce of the present Austrian provinces than by setting up a barrier between itself and its natural feeders. An Ireland politically or administratively independent, able to develop its agricultural and technical education and intensification of productiveness, would find a greater advantage in sharing the movement of the commerce of Great Britain than in isolating itself, even as Great Britain would profit more by an agreement with such an Ireland than by keeping her a poor and starving helot on her estate. Throughout the world, the idea and fact of union once definitely prevailing, unity of interests would be more clearly seen and the greater advantage of agreement and mutual participation in a naturally harmonised life over the feverish artificial prosperity created by a stressing of separative barriers. That stressing is inevitable in an order of struggle and international competition; it would be seen to be prejudicial in an order of peace and union which would make for mutual accommodation. The principle of a free world-union being that of the settlement of common affairs by common agreement, this could not be confined to the removal of political differences and the arrangement of political relations alone, but must naturally extend to economic differences and economic relations as well. To the removal of war and the recognition of the right of self-determination of the peoples the arrangement of the economic life of the world in its new order by mutual and common agreement would have to be added as the third condition of a free union.

There remains the psychological question of the advantage to the soul of humanity, to its culture, to its intellectual, moral, aesthetic, spiritual growth. At present, the first great need of the psychological life of humanity is the growth towards a greater unity; but its need is that of a living unity, not in the externals of civilisation, in dress, manners, habits of life, details of political, social and economic order, not a uniformity, which is the unity towards which the mechanical age of civilisation has been driving, but a free development everywhere with a constant friendly interchange, a close understanding, a feeling of our common humanity, its great common ideals and the truths towards which it is driving and a certain unity and correlation of effort in the united human advance. At present it may seem that this is better helped and advanced by many different nations and cultures living together in one political State-union than by their political separateness. Temporarily, this may be true to a certain extent, but let us see within what limits.

The old psychological argument for the forcible inclusion of a subject nation by a dominant people was the right or advantage of imposing a superior civilisation upon one that was inferior or upon a barbarous race. Thus the Welsh and Irish people used to be told that their subjugation was a great blessing to their countries, their languages petty patois which ought to disappear as soon as possible, and in embracing English speech, English institutions, English ideas lay their sole road to civilisation, culture and prosperity. The British domination in India was justified by the priceless gift of British civilisation and British ideals, to say nothing of the one and only true religion, Christianity, to a heathen, orientally benighted and semi-barbarous nation. All this is now an exploded myth. We can see clearly enough that the long suppression of the Celtic spirit and Celtic culture, superior in spirituality if inferior in certain practical directions to the Latin and Teutonic, was a loss not only to the Celtic peoples, but to the world. India has vehemently rejected the pretensions to superiority of British civilisation, culture and religion, while still admitting, not so much the British, as the modern ideals and methods in politics and in the trend to a greater social equality; and it is becoming clear now, even to the more well-informed European minds that the Anglicisation of India would have been a wrong not only to India itself but to humanity.

Still it may be said that, if the old principle of the association was wrong, yet the association itself leads eventually to a good result. If Ireland has lost for the most part its old national speech and Wales has ceased to have a living literature, yet as a large compensation the Celtic spirit is now reviving and putting its stamp on the English tongue spoken by millions throughout the world, and the inclusion of the Celtic countries in the British Empire may lead to the development of an Anglo-Celtic life and culture better for the world than the separate development of the two elements. India by the partial possession of the English language has been able to link herself to the life of the modern world and to reshape her literature, life and culture on a larger basis and, now that she is reviving her own spirit and ideals in a new mould, is producing an effect on the thought of the West; a perpetual union of the two countries and a constant mutual interaction of their culture by this close association would be more advantageous to them and to the world than their cultural isolation from each other in a separate existence.

There is a temporary apparent truth in this idea, though it is not the whole truth of the position, and we have given it full weight in considering the claims of the imperialistic solution or line of advance on the way to unity. But even the elements of truth in it can only be admitted, provided a free and equal union replaces the present abnormal, irritating and falsifying relations. Moreover, these advantages could only be valuable as a stage towards a greater unity in which this close association would no longer be of the same importance. For the final end is a common world-culture in which each national culture should be, not merged into or fused with some other culture differing from it in principle or temperament, but evolved to its full power and could then profit to that end by all the others as well as give its gains and influences to them, all serving by their separateness and their interaction the common aim and idea of human perfection. This would best be served, not by separateness and isolation, of which there would be no danger, but yet by a certain distinctness and independence of life not subordinated to the mechanising force of an artificial unity. Even within the independent nation itself, there might be with advantage a tendency towards greater local freedom of development and variation, a sort of return to the vivid local and regional life of ancient Greece and India and mediaeval Italy; for the disadvantages of strife, political weakness and precariousness of the nation's independence would no longer exist in a condition of things from which the old terms of physical conflict had been excluded, while all the cultural and psychological advantages might be recovered. A world secure of its peace and freedom might freely devote itself to the intensification of its real human powers of life by the full encouragement and flowering of the individual, local, regional, national mind and power in the firm frame of a united humanity.

What precise form the framework might take, it is impossible to forecast and useless to speculate; only certain now current ideas would have to be modified or abandoned. The idea of a world-parliament is attractive at first sight, because the parliamentary form is that to which our minds are accustomed; but an assembly of the present unitarian national type could not be the proper instrument of a free world-union of this large and complex kind; it could only be the instrument of a unitarian World-State. The idea of a world-federation, if by that be understood the Germanic or American form, would be equally inappropriate to the greater diversity and freedom of national development which this type of world-union would hold as one of its cardinal principles. Rather some kind of confederation of the peoples for common human ends, for the removal of all causes of strife and difference, for interrelation and the regulation of mutual aid and interchange, yet leaving to each unit a full internal freedom and power of self-determination, would be the right principle of this unity.

But, since this is a much looser unity, what would prevent the spirit of separativeness and the causes of clash and difference from surviving in so powerful a form as to endanger the endurance of the larger principle of oneness, — even if that spirit and those causes at all allowed it to reach some kind of sufficient fulfilment? The unitarian ideal, on the contrary, seeks to efface these opposite tendencies in their forms and even in their root cause and by so doing would seem to ensure an enduring union. But it may be pointed out in answer that, if it is by political ideas and machinery, under the pressure of the political and economic spirit that the unity is brought about, that is to say, by the idea and experience of the material advantages, conveniences, well-being secured by unification, then the unitarian system also could not be sure of durability. For in the constant mutability of the human mind and earthly circumstances, as long as life is active, new ideas and changes are inevitable. The suppressed desire to recover the lost element of variability, separateness, independent living might well take advantage of them for what would then be considered as a wholesome and necessary reaction. The lifeless unity accomplished would dissolve from the pressure of the need of life within, as the Roman unity dissolved by its lifelessness in helpless response to a pressure from without, and once again local, regional, national egoism would reconstitute for itself fresh forms and new centres.

On the other hand, in a free world-union, though originally starting from the national basis, the national idea might be expected to undergo a radical transformation; it might even disappear into a new and less strenuously compact form and idea of group-aggregation which would not be separative in spirit, yet would preserve the necessary element of independence and variation needed by both individual and grouping for their full satisfaction and their healthy existence. Moreover, by emphasising the psychological quite as much as the political and mechanical idea and basis, it would give a freer and less artificial form and opportunity for the secure development of the necessary intellectual and psychological change; for such an inner change could alone give some chance of durability to the unification. That change would be the growth of the living idea or religion of humanity; for only so could there come the psychological modification of life and feeling and outlook which would accustom both individual and group to live in their common humanity first and most, subduing their individual and group egoism, yet losing nothing of their individual or group power to develop and express in its own way the divinity in man which, once the race was assured of its material existence, would emerge as the true object of human existence.

Chapter XXXII

Internationalism

THE IDEA of humanity as a single race of beings with a common life and a common general interest is among the most characteristic and significant products of modern thought. It is an outcome of the European mind which proceeds characteristically from life-experience to the idea and, without going deeper, returns from the idea upon life in an attempt to change its outward forms and institutions, its order and system. In the European mentality it has taken the shape known currently as internationalism. Internationalism is the attempt of the human mind and life to grow out of the national idea and form and even in a way to destroy it in the interest of the larger synthesis of mankind. An idea proceeding on these lines needs always to attach itself to some actual force or developing power in the life of the times before it can exercise a practical effect. But usually it suffers by contact with the interests and prepossessions of its grosser ally some lesser or greater diminution of itself or even a distortion, and in that form, no longer pure and absolute, enters on the first stage of practice.

The idea of internationalism was born of the thought of the eighteenth century and it took some kind of voice in the first idealistic stages of the French Revolution. But at that time, it was rather a vague intellectual sentiment than a clear idea seeing its way to practice; it found no strong force in life to help it to take visible body. What came out of the French Revolution and the struggle that grew around it, was a complete and self-conscious nationalism and not internationalism. During the nineteenth century we see the larger idea growing again in the minds of thinkers, sometimes in a modified form, sometimes in its own pure idealism, till allying itself with the growing forces of socialism and anarchism it took a clear body and a recognisable vital force. In its absolute form, it became the internationalism of the intellectuals, intolerant of nationalism as a narrow spirit of the past, contemptuous of patriotism as an irrational prejudice, a maleficent corporate egoism characteristic of narrow intellects and creative of arrogance, prejudice, hatred, oppression, division and strife between nation and nation, a gross survival of the past which the growth of reason was destined to destroy. It is founded on a view of things which looks at man in his manhood only and casts away all those physical and social accidents of birth, rank, class, colour, creed, nationality, which have been erected into so many walls and screens behind which man has hidden himself from his fellow-man; he has turned them into sympathy-proof shelters and trenches from which he wages against him a war of defence and aggression, war of nations, war of continents, war of classes, war of colour with colour, creed with creed, culture with culture. All this barbarism the idea of the intellectual internationalist seeks to abolish by putting man face to face with man on the basis of their common human sympathy, aims, highest interests of the future. It is entirely futurist in its view; it turns away from the confused and darkened good of the past to the purer good of the future when man, at last beginning to become a truly intelligent and ethical being, will shake away from him all these sources of prejudice and passion and evil. Humanity will become one in idea and feeling, and life be consciously what it now is in spite of itself, one in its status on earth and its destiny.

The height and nobility of the idea is not to be questioned and certainly a mankind which set its life upon this basis would make a better, purer, more peaceful and enlightened race than anything we can hope to have at present. But as the human being is now made, the pure idea, though always a great power, is also afflicted by a great weakness. It has an eventual capacity, once born, of taking hold of the rest of the human being and forcing him in the end to acknowledge its truth and make some kind of attempt to embody it; that is its strength. But also because man at present lives more in the outward than in the inward, is governed principally by his vital existence, sensations, feelings and customary mentality rather than by his higher thought-mind and feels himself in these to be really alive, really to exist and be, while the world of ideas is to him something remote and abstract and, however powerful and interesting in its way, not a living thing, the pure idea seems, until it is embodied in life, something not quite real; in that abstractness and remoteness lies its weakness.

The sense of this abstractness imposes on the idea an undue haste to get itself recognised by life and embodied in a form. If it could have confidence in its strength and be content to grow, to insist, to impress itself till it got well into the spirit of man, it might conceivably become a real part of his soul-life, a permanent power in his psychology and might succeed in remoulding his whole life in its image. But it has inevitably a desire to get as soon as possible admitted into a form of the life, for until then it does not feel itself strong and cannot quite be sure that it has vindicated its truth. It hurries into action before it has real knowledge of itself and thereby prepares its own disappointment, even when it seems to triumph and fulfil its object. For in order to succeed, it allies itself with powers and movements which are impelled by another aim than its own, but are glad enough to get its aid so that they may strengthen their own case and claim. Thus when it realises itself at last, it does it in a mixed, impure and ineffective form. Life accepts it as a partial habit, but not completely, not quite sincerely. That has been the history of every idea in succession and one reason at least why there is almost always something unreal, inconclusive and tormented about human progress.

There are many conditions and tendencies in human life at present which are favourable to the progress of the internationalist idea. The strongest of these favourable forces is the constant drawing closer of the knots of international life, the multiplication of points of contact and threads of communication and an increasing community in thought, in science and in knowledge. Science especially has been a great force in this direction; for science is a thing common to all men in its conclusions, open to all in its methods, available to all in its results: it is international in its very nature; there can be no such thing as a national science, but only the nations' contributions to the work and growth of science which are the indivisible inheritance of all humanity. Therefore it is easier for men of science or those strongly influenced by science to grow into the international spirit and all the world is now beginning to feel the scientific influence and to live in it. Science also has created that closer contact of every part of the world with every other part, out of which some sort of international mind is growing. Even cosmopolitan habits of life are now not uncommon and there are a fair number of persons who are as much or more citizens of the world as citizens of their own nation. The growth of knowledge is interesting the peoples in each other's art, culture, religion, ideas and is breaking down at many points the prejudice, arrogance and exclusiveness of the old nationalistic sentiment. Religion, which ought to have led the way, but owing to its greater dependence on its external parts and its infrarational rather than its spiritual impulses has been as much, or even more, a sower of discord as a teacher of unity, — religion is beginning to realise, a little dimly and ineffectively as yet, that spirituality is after all its own chief business and true aim and that it is also the common element and the common bond of all religions. As these influences grow and come more and more consciously to cooperate with each other, it might be hoped that the necessary psychological modification will quietly, gradually, but still irresistibly and at last with an increasing force of rapidity take place which can prepare a real and fundamental change in the life of humanity.

But this is at present a slow process, and meanwhile the internationalist idea, eager for effectuation, allied and almost identified itself with two increasingly powerful movements which have both assumed an international character, Socialism and Anarchism. Indeed, it is this alliance that most commonly went by the name of internationalism. But this socialistic and anarchistic internationalism was recently put to the test, the fiery test of the European war, and thus tried, it was found sadly wanting. In every country, the Socialist party shed its internationalist promise with the greatest ease and lightness, German socialism, the protagonist of the idea, massively leading the way in this formidable abjuration. It is true that a small minority in each country either remained heroically faithful to its principles or soon returned to them, and as the general weariness of the great international massacre grew, even the majority showed a sensible turn in the same direction; but this was rather the fruit of circumstance than of principle. Russian socialism, it may be said, has, at least in its extremer form, shown a stronger root of internationalistic feeling. But what it has actually attempted to accomplish is a development of Labour rule on the basis of a purified nationalism, non-aggressive except for revolutionary purposes and self-contained, and not on the larger international idea. In any case, the actual results of the Russian attempt show only up to the present a failure of the idea to acquire the vital strength and efficiency which would justify it to life; it is possible to use them much more as a telling argument against internationalism than as a justification of its truth or at least of its applicability in the present stage of human progress.

But what is the cause of this almost total bankruptcy of the international ideal under the strong test of life? Partly it may be because the triumph of socialism is not necessarily bound up with the progress of internationalism. Socialism is really an attempt to complete the growth of the national community by making the individual do what he has never yet done, live for the community more than for himself. It is an outgrowth of the national, not of the international idea. No doubt, when the society of the nation has been perfected, the society of nations can and even must be formed; but this is a later possible or eventual result of Socialism, not its primary vital necessity. In the crises of life it is the primary vital necessity which tells, while the other and remoter element betrays itself to be a mere idea not yet ready for accomplishment; it can only become powerful when it also becomes either a vital or a psychological necessity. The real truth, the real cause of the failure is that internationalism is as yet, except with some exceptional men, merely an idea; it is not yet a thing near to our vital feelings or otherwise a part of our psychology. The normal socialist or syndicalist cannot escape from the general human feeling and in the test he too turns out, even though he were a professed *sans-patrie* in ordinary times, in his inner heart and being a nationalist. As a vital fact, moreover, these movements have been a revolt of Labour aided by a number of intellectuals against the established state of things, and they have only allied themselves with internationalism because that too is an intellectual revolt and because its idea helps them in the battle. If Labour comes to power, will it keep or shed its internationalistic tendencies? The experience of countries in which it is or has been at the head of affairs does not give an encouraging answer, and it may at least be said that, unless at that time the psychological change in humanity has gone much farther than it has now, Labour in power is likely to shed more of the internationalist feeling than it will succeed in keeping and to act very much from the old human motives.

No doubt, the European war itself was an explosion of all that was dangerous and evil in successful nationalism, and the resulting conflagration may well turn out to have been a purificatory process that has burned up many things that needed to die. It has already strengthened the international idea and forced it on governments and peoples. But we cannot rely too greatly on ideas and resolutions formed in a moment of abnormal crisis under the violent stress of exceptional circumstances. Some effect there may be in the end, some first recognition of juster principles in international dealings, some attempt at a better, more rational or at least a more convenient international order. But until the idea of humanity has grown not only upon the intelligence but in the sentiments, feelings, natural sympathies and mental habits of man, the progress made is likely to be more in external adjustments than in the vital matters, more in a use of the ideal for mixed and egoistic purposes than at once or soon in a large and sincere realisation of the ideal. Until man in his heart is ready, a profound change of the world conditions cannot come; or it can only be brought about by force, physical force or else force of circumstances, and that leaves all the real work to be done. A frame may have then been made, but the soul will have still to grow into that mechanical body.

Chapter XXXIII

Internationalism and Human Unity

THE GREAT necessity, then, and the great difficulty is to help this idea of humanity which is already at work upon our minds and has even begun in a very slight degree to influence from above our actions, and turn it into something more than an idea, however strong, to make it a central motive and a fixed part of our nature. Its satisfaction must become a necessity of our psychological being, just as the family idea or the national idea has become each a psychological motive with its own need of satisfaction. But how is this to be done? The family idea had the advantage of growing out of a primary vital need in our being and therefore it had not the least difficulty in becoming a psychological motive and need; for our readiest and strongest mental motives and psychological needs are those which grow out of our vital necessities and instincts. The clan and the tribe ideas had a similar origin, less primary and compelling, and therefore looser and more dissoluble; but still they arose from the vital necessity in human nature for aggregation and the ready basis given to it by the inevitable physical growth of the family into clan or tribe. These were natural aggregations, evolutionary forms already prepared on the animal level.

The nation idea, on the contrary, did not arise from a primary vital need, but from a secondary or even tertiary necessity which resulted not from anything inherent in our vital nature, but from circumstances, from environmental evolution; it arose not from a vital, but from a geographical and historical necessity. And we notice that as one result it had to be created most commonly by force, force of circumstances partly, no doubt, but also by physical force, by the power of the king and the conquering tribe converted into a military and dominant State. Or else it came by a reaction against force, a revolt against conquest and domination that brought a slow or sudden compactness to peoples who, though geographically or even historically and culturally one, had lacked power of cohesion and remained too conscious of an original heterogeneity or of local and regional and other divisions. But still the necessity was there and the nation form after many failures and false successes got into being, and the psychological motive of patriotism, a sign of the growth of a conscious national ego, arose in the form as the expression of its soul and the guarantee of its durability. For without such a soul, such a psychological force and presence within the frame, there can be no guarantee of durability. Without it, what circumstances have created, circumstances easily will destroy. It was for this reason that the ancient world failed to create nations, except on a small scale, little clans and small regional nations of brief duration and usually of loose structure; it created only artificial empires which went to pieces and left chaos behind them.

What then of this international unity now in the first obscure throes of the pre-formatory state resembling a ferment of cells drawing together for amalgamation? What is the compelling necessity behind it? If we look at outward things only, the necessity is much less direct and much less compelling than any that preceded it. There is here no vital necessity; mankind as a whole can get on well enough without international unity, so far as mere living goes; it will not be at all a perfect, rational or ideal collective living of the race, — but after all where is there yet any element in human life or society which is perfect, rational or ideal? As yet at least none; still we get on somehow with life, because the vital man in us, who is the dominant element in our instincts and in our actions, cares for none of these things and is quite satisfied with any just tolerable or any precariously or partly agreeable form of living, because that is all to which he is accustomed and all therefore that he feels to be necessary. The men who are not satisfied, the thinkers, the idealists, are always a minority and in the end an ineffectual minority, because though always in the end they do get their way partly, their victory yet turns into a defeat; for the vital man remains still the majority and degrades the apparent success into a pitiful parody of their rational hope, their clear-sighted ideal or their strong counsel of perfection.

The geographical necessity for a unification of this kind does not exist, unless we consider that it has been created through the drawing closer together of the earth and its inhabitants by Science and her magical lessening of physical distances and attenuation of barriers. But whatever may happen in the future, this is as yet not sufficient; earth is still large enough and her divisions still real enough for her to do without any formal unity. If there is any strong need, it may be described — if such an epithet can be applied to a thing in the present and the future — as a historical necessity, that is, a need which has arisen as the result of certain actual circumstances that have grown up in the evolution of international relations. And that need is economic, political, mechanical, likely under certain circumstances to create some tentative or preliminary framework, but not at first a psychological reality which will vivify the frame. Moreover, it is not yet sufficiently vital to be precisely a necessity; for it amounts mainly to a need for the removal of certain perils and inconveniences, such as the constant danger of war, and at most to the strong desirability of a better international coordination. But by itself this creates only a possibility, not even a moral certainty, of a first vague sketch and loose framework of unity which may or may not lead to something more close and real.

But there is another power than that of external circumstance which we have a right to take into consideration. For behind all the external circumstances and necessities of which we are more easily aware in Nature, there is always an internal necessity in the being, a will and a design in Nature itself which precedes the outward signals of its development and in spite of all obstacles and failures must in the long end inevitably get itself realised. Nowadays we can see this truth everywhere in Nature down to her lowest forms; a will in the very seed of the being, not quite conscious or only partially conscious in the form itself, but still present there in Nature. It is subconscious or even inconscient if you like, but it is still a blind will, a mute idea which contains beforehand the form it is going to create, is aware of a necessity other than the environmental, a necessity contained in the very being itself, and creates persistently and inevitably a form that best answers to the necessity, however we may labour to interfere with or thwart its operations.

This is true biologically, but it is also, though in a more subtle and variable way, psychologically true. Now the very nature of man is that of an individual who on one side is always emphasising and developing his individual being to the extent of his power but who is also driven by the Idea or Truth within him to unify himself with others of his species, to join himself to them or agglutinate them to him, to create human groups, aggregates and collectivities. And if there is an aggregate or collectivity which it is possible for him to realise but is not yet realised, we may be sure that that too in the end he will create. This will in him is not always or often quite conscient or foreseeing; it is often largely subconscient, but even then it is eventually irresistible. And if it gets into his conscious mind, as the international idea has now done, we may count on a more rapid evolution. Such a will in Nature creates for itself favourable external circumstances and happenings or finds them created for it in the stress of events. And even if they are insufficient, she will still often use them beyond their apparent power of effectivity, not minding the possibility of failure, for she knows that in the end she will succeed and every experience of failure will help to better the eventual success.

Well then, it may be said, let us trust to this inevitable will in Nature and let us follow out her method of operation. Let us create anyhow this framework, any framework of the aggregate; for she knows already the complete form she intends and she will work it out eventually in her own time; by the power of the idea and our will to realise it, by help of strong force of circumstances, by pressure of all kinds, by physical force even, if need be, since that too seems still to be a part of her necessary machinery, let us create it. Let us have the body; the soul will grow in the body. And we need not mind if the bodily formation is artificial with at first a small or no conscious psychological reality to vivify it. That will begin to form itself as soon as the body has been formed. For the nation too was at first more or less artificially formed out of incoherent elements actually brought together by the necessity of a subconscient idea, though apparently it was done only by physical force and the force of circumstances. As a national ego formed which identified itself with the geographical body of the nation and developed in it the psychological instinct of national unity and the need of its satisfaction, so a collective human ego will develop in the international body and will evolve in it the psychological instinct of human unity and the need of its satisfaction. That will be the guarantee of duration. And that possibly is how the thing will happen, man being what he is; indeed if we cannot do better, it will so happen, since happen somehow it must, whether in the worse way or the better.

It may be as well to review here briefly in the light of these considerations the main possibilities and powers which are shaping us towards such an end in the present world conditions. The old means of unification, conquest by a single great Power, which would reduce part of the world by force and bring the remaining nations into the condition of dependencies, protectorates and dependent allies, the whole forming the basic structure of a great final unification, — this was the character of the ancient Roman precedent, — does not seem immediately possible. It would require a great predominance of force simultaneously by sea and land,[1] an irresistibly superior science and organisation and with all this a constantly successful diplomacy and an invincible good fortune. If war and diplomacy are still to be the decisive factors in international politics in the future as in the past, it would be rash to predict that such a combination may not arise, and if other means fail, it must arise; for there is nothing that can be set down as impossible in the chances of the future, and the urge in Nature always creates its own means. But, at present, the possibilities of the future do not seem to point in this direction. There is, on the other hand, a very strong possibility of the whole earth, or at least the three continents of the eastern hemisphere, being dominated by three or four great empires largely increased in extent of dominion, spheres of influence, protectorates, and thereby exercising a pre-eminence which they could either maintain by agreements, avoiding all causes of conflict, or in a rivalry which would be the cause of fresh wars and changes. This would normally have been the result of the great European conflict.

---

[1] Now also by air.

But there has struck across this possibility a revived strength of the idea of nationality expressed in the novel formula of the principle of self-determination to which the great world-empires have had to pay at least a verbal homage. The idea of international unity to which this intervention of the revived force of nationality is leading, takes the form of a so-called League of Nations. Practically, however, the League of Nations under present conditions or any likely to be immediately realised would still mean the control of the earth by a few great Powers, — a control that would be checked only by the necessity of conciliating the sympathy and support of the more numerous smaller or less powerful nations. On the force and influence of these few would rest practically, if not admittedly, the decision of all important debatable questions. And without it there could be no chance of enforcing the decisions of the majority against any recalcitrant great Power or combination of Powers. The growth of democratic institutions would perhaps help to minimise the chances of conflict and of the abuse of power, — though that is not at all certain; but it would not alter this real character of the combination.

In all this there is no immediate prospect of any such form of unification as would give room for a real psychological sense of unity, much less necessitate its growth. Such a form might evolve; but we should have to trust for it to the chapter of accidents or at best to the already declared urge in Nature expressed in the internationalist idea. On that side, there was at one time a possibility which seemed to be very suddenly and rapidly growing into something more, the emergence of a powerful party in all the advanced countries of the world pledged to internationalism, conscious of its necessity as a first condition for their other aims and more and more determined to give it precedence and to unite internationally to bring it about. That combination of the intellectuals with Labour which created the Socialist parties in Germany, Russia and Austria, formed anew recently the Labour party in England and has had its counterparts in most other European countries, seems to be travelling in that direction. This world-wide movement which made internationalism and Labour rule its two main principles, had already created the Russian revolution and seemed ready to bring about another great socialistic revolution in central Europe. It was conceivable that this party might everywhere draw together. By a chain of revolutions such as took place in the nineteenth century and of less violent but still rapid evolutions brought about by the pressure of their example, or even by simply growing into the majority in each country, the party might control Europe. It might create counterparts of itself in all the American republics and in Asiatic countries. It might by using the machinery of the League of Nations or, where necessary, by physical force or economic or other pressure persuade or compel all the nations into some more stringent system of international unification. A World-State or else a close confederation of democratic peoples might be created with a common governing body for the decision of principles and for all generally important affairs or at least for all properly international affairs and problems; a common law of the nations might grow up and international courts to administer it and some kind of system of international police control to maintain and enforce it. In this way, by the general victory of an idea, Socialist or other, seeking to organise humanity according to its own model or by any other yet unforeseen way, a sufficient formal unity might come into existence.

The question then arises, how out of this purely formal unity a real psychological unity can be created and whether it can be made a living oneness. For a mere formal, mechanical, administrative, political and economic union does not necessarily create a psychological unity. None of the great empires have yet succeeded in doing that, and even in the Roman where some sense of unity did come into being, it was nothing very close and living; it could not withstand all shocks from within and without, it could not prevent what was much more dangerous, the peril of decay and devitalisation which the diminution of the natural elements of free variation and helpful struggle brought with it. A complete world-union would have indeed this advantage that it would have no need to fear forces from without, for no such forces would any longer exist. But this very absence of outer pressure might well give greater room and power to internal elements of disintegration and still more to the opportunities of decay. It might indeed for a long time foster an internal intellectual and political activity and social progress which would keep it living; but this principle of progress would not be always secure against a natural tendency to exhaustion and stagnation which every diminution of variety and even the very satisfaction of social and economic well-being might well hasten. Disruption of unity would then be necessary to restore humanity to life. Again, while the Roman Empire appealed only to the idea of Roman unity, an artificial and accidental principle, this World-State would appeal to the idea of human unity, a real and vital principle. But if the idea of unity can appeal to the human mind, so too can the idea of separative life, for both address themselves to vital instincts of his nature. What guarantee will there be that the latter will not prevail when man has once tried unity and finds perhaps that its advantages do not satisfy his whole nature? Only the growth of some very powerful psychological factor will make unity necessary to him, whatever other changes and manipulations might be desirable to satisfy his other needs and instincts.

The formal unification of mankind would come in upon us in the shape of a system which would be born, grow, come to its culmination. But every system by the very nature of things tends after its culmination to decay and die. To prevent the organism from decaying and dying there must be such a psychological reality within as will persist and survive all changes of its body. Nations have that in a sort of collective national ego which persists through all vital changes. But this ego is not by any means self-existent and immortal; it supports itself on certain things with which it is identified. First, there is the geographical body, the country; secondly, the common interests of all who inhabit the same country, defence, economic well-being and progress, political liberty, etc.; thirdly, a common name, sentiment, culture. But we have to mark that this national ego owes its life to the coalescence of the separative instinct and the instinct of unity; for the nation feels itself one as distinguished from other nations; it owes its vitality to interchange with them and struggle with them in all the activities of its nature. Nor are all these altogether sufficient; there is a deeper factor. There must be a sort of religion of country, a constant even if not always explicit recognition not only of the sacredness of the physical mother, the land, but also, in however obscure a way, of the nation as a collective soul which it is the first duty and need of every man to keep alive, to defend from suppression or mortal attaint or, if suppressed, then to watch, wait and struggle for its release and rehabilitation, if sicklied over with the touch of any fatal spiritual ailment, then to labour always to heal and revivify and save alive.

The World-State will give its inhabitants the great advantages of peace, economic well-being, general security, combination for intellectual, cultural, social activity and progress. None of these are in themselves sufficient to create the thing needed. Peace and security we all desire at present, because we have them not in sufficiency; but we must remember that man has also within him the need of combat, adventure, struggle, almost requires these for his growth and healthy living; that instinct would be largely suppressed by a universal peace and a flat security and it might rise up successfully against suppression. Economic well-being by itself cannot permanently satisfy and the price paid for it might be so heavy as to diminish its appeal and value. The human instinct for liberty, individual and national, might well be a constant menace to the World-State, unless it so skilfully arranged its system as to give them sufficient free play. A common intellectual and cultural activity and progress may do much, but need not by themselves be sufficient to bring into being the fully powerful psychological factor that would be required. And the collective ego created would have to rely on the instinct of unity alone; for it would be in conflict with the separative instinct which gives the national ego half its vitality.

It is not impossible that the indispensable inner factor for this outer frame might be increasingly created in its very process of growth, but certain psychological elements would have to be present in great strength. There would be needed, to make the change persist, a religion of humanity or an equivalent sentiment much more powerful, explicit, self-conscious, universal in its appeal than the nationalist's religion of country; the clear recognition by man in all his thought and life of a single soul in humanity of which each man and each people is an incarnation and soul-form; an ascension of man beyond the principle of ego which lives by separativeness, — and yet there must be no destruction of individuality, for without that man would stagnate; a principle and arrangement of the common life which would give free play to individual variation, interchange in diversity and the need of adventure and conquest by which the soul of man lives and grows great, and sufficient means of expressing all the resultant complex life and growth in a flexible and progressive form of human society.

Chapter XXXIV

The Religion of Humanity

A RELIGION of humanity may be either an intellectual and sentimental ideal, a living dogma with intellectual, psychological and practical effects, or else a spiritual aspiration and rule of living, partly the sign, partly the cause of a change of soul in humanity. The intellectual religion of humanity already to a certain extent exists, partly as a conscious creed in the minds of a few, partly as a potent shadow in the consciousness of the race. It is the shadow of a spirit that is yet unborn, but is preparing for its birth. This material world of ours, besides its fully embodied things of the present, is peopled by such powerful shadows, ghosts of things dead and the spirit of things yet unborn. The ghosts of things dead are very troublesome actualities and they now abound, ghosts of dead religions, dead arts, dead moralities, dead political theories, which still claim either to keep their rotting bodies or to animate partly the existing body of things. Repeating obstinately their sacred formulas of the past, they hypnotise backward-looking minds and daunt even the progressive portion of humanity. But there are too those unborn spirits which are still unable to take a definite body, but are already mind-born and exist as influences of which the human mind is aware and to which it now responds in a desultory and confused fashion. The religion of humanity was mind-born in the eighteenth century, the *mānasa putra*[1] of the rationalist thinkers who brought it forward as a substitute for the formal spiritualism of ecclesiastical Christianity. It tried to give itself a body in Positivism, which was an attempt to formulate the dogmas of this religion, but on too heavily and severely rationalistic a basis for acceptance even by an Age of Reason. Humanitarianism has been its most prominent emotional result.

---

[1] Mind-born child, an idea and expression of Indian Puranic cosmology.

Philanthropy, social service and other kindred activities have been its outward expression of good works. Democracy, socialism, pacificism are to a great extent its by-products or at least owe much of their vigour to its inner presence.

The fundamental idea is that mankind is the godhead to be worshipped and served by man and that the respect, the service, the progress of the human being and human life are the chief duty and the chief aim of the human spirit. No other idol, neither the nation, the State, the family nor anything else ought to take its place; they are only worthy of respect so far as they are images of the human spirit and enshrine its presence and aid its self-manifestation. But where the cult of these idols seeks to usurp the place of the spirit and makes demands inconsistent with its service, they should be put aside. No injunctions of old creeds, religious, political, social or cultural, are valid when they go against its claims. Science even, though it is one of the chief modern idols, must not be allowed to make claims contrary to its ethical temperament and aim, for science is only valuable in so far as it helps and serves by knowledge and progress the religion of humanity. War, capital punishment, the taking of human life, cruelty of all kinds whether committed by the individual, the State or society, not only physical cruelty, but moral cruelty, the degradation of any human being or any class of human beings under whatever specious plea or in whatever interest, the oppression and exploitation of man by man, of class by class, of nation by nation and all those habits of life and institutions of society of a similar kind which religion and ethics formerly tolerated or even favoured in practice, whatever they might do in their ideal rule or creed, are crimes against the religion of humanity, abominable to its ethical mind, forbidden by its primary tenets, to be fought against always, in no degree to be tolerated. Man must be sacred to man regardless of all distinctions of race, creed, colour, nationality, status, political or social advancement. The body of man is to be respected, made immune from violence and outrage, fortified by science against disease and preventable death. The life of man is to be held sacred, preserved, strengthened, ennobled, uplifted. The heart of man is to be held sacred also, given scope, protected from violation, from suppression, from mechanisation, freed from belittling influences. The mind of man is to be released from all bonds, allowed freedom and range and opportunity, given all its means of self-training and self-development and organised in the play of its powers for the service of humanity. And all this too is not to be held as an abstract or pious sentiment, but given full and practical recognition in the persons of men and nations and mankind. This, speaking largely, is the idea and spirit of the intellectual religion of humanity.

One has only to compare human life and thought and feeling a century or two ago with human life, thought and feeling in the pre-war period to see how great an influence this religion of humanity has exercised and how fruitful a work it has done. It accomplished rapidly many things which orthodox religion failed to do effectively, largely because it acted as a constant intellectual and critical solvent, an unsparing assailant of the thing that is and an unflinching champion of the thing to be, faithful always to the future, while orthodox religion allied itself with the powers of the present, even of the past, bound itself by its pact with them and could act only at best as a moderating but not as a reforming force. Moreover, this religion has faith in humanity and its earthly future and can therefore aid its earthly progress, while the orthodox religions looked with eyes of pious sorrow and gloom on the earthly life of man and were very ready to bid him bear peacefully and contentedly, even to welcome its crudities, cruelties, oppressions, tribulations as a means for learning to appreciate and for earning the better life which will be given us hereafter. Faith, even an intellectual faith, must always be a worker of miracles, and this religion of humanity, even without taking bodily shape or a compelling form or a visible means of self-effectuation, was yet able to effect comparatively much of what it set out to do. It to some degree humanised society, humanised law and punishment, humanised the outlook of man on man, abolished legalised torture and the cruder forms of slavery, raised those who were depressed and fallen, gave large hopes to humanity, stimulated philanthropy and charity and the service of mankind, encouraged everywhere the desire of freedom, put a curb on oppression and greatly minimised its more brutal expressions. It had almost succeeded in humanising war and would perhaps have succeeded entirely but for the contrary trend of modern Science. It made it possible for man to conceive of a world free from war as imaginable even without waiting for the Christian millennium. At any rate, this much change came about that, while peace was formerly a rare interlude of constant war, war became an interlude, if a much too frequent interlude of peace, though as yet only of an armed peace. That may not be a great step, but still it was a step forward. It gave new conceptions of the dignity of the human being and opened new ideas and new vistas of his education, self-development and potentiality. It spread enlightenment; it made man feel more his responsibility for the progress and happiness of the race; it raised the average self-respect and capacity of mankind; it gave hope to the serf, self-assertion to the down-trodden and made the labourer in his manhood the potential equal of the rich and powerful. True, if we compare what is with what should be, the actual achievement with the ideal, all this will seem only a scanty work of preparation. But it was a remarkable record for a century and a half or a little more and for an unembodied spirit which had to work through what instruments it could find and had as yet no form, habitation or visible engine of its own concentrated workings. But perhaps it was in this that lay its power and advantage, since that saved it from crystallising into a form and getting petrified or at least losing its more free and subtle action.

But still in order to accomplish all its future this idea and religion of humanity has to make itself more explicit, insistent and categorically imperative. For otherwise it can only work with clarity in the minds of the few and with the mass it will be only a modifying influence, but will not be the rule of human life. And so long as that is so, it cannot entirely prevail over its own principal enemy. That enemy, the enemy of all real religion, is human egoism, the egoism of the individual, the egoism of class and nation. These it could for a time soften, modify, force to curb their more arrogant, open and brutal expressions, oblige to adopt better institutions, but not to give place to the love of mankind, not to recognise a real unity between man and man. For that essentially must be the aim of the religion of humanity, as it must be the earthly aim of all human religion, love, mutual recognition of human brotherhood, a living sense of human oneness and practice of human oneness in thought, feeling and life, the ideal which was expressed first some thousands of years ago in the ancient Vedic hymn and must always remain the highest injunction of the Spirit within us to human life upon earth. Till that is brought about, the religion of humanity remains unaccomplished. With that done, the one necessary psychological change will have been effected without which no formal and mechanical, no political and administrative unity can be real and secure. If it is done, that outward unification may not even be indispensable or, if indispensable, it will come about naturally, not, as now it seems likely to be, by catastrophic means, but by the demand of the human mind, and will be held secure by an essential need of our perfected and developed human nature.

But this is the question whether a purely intellectual and sentimental religion of humanity will be sufficient to bring about so great a change in our psychology. The weakness of the intellectual idea, even when it supports itself by an appeal to the sentiments and emotions, is that it does not get at the centre of man's being. The intellect and the feelings are only instruments of the being and they may be the instruments of either its lower and external form or of the inner and higher man, servants of the ego or channels of the soul. The aim of the religion of humanity was formulated in the eighteenth century by a sort of primal intuition; that aim was and it is still to re-create human society in the image of three kindred ideas, liberty, equality and fraternity. None of these has really been won in spite of all the progress that has been achieved. The liberty that has been so loudly proclaimed as an essential of modern progress is an outward, mechanical and unreal liberty. The equality that has been so much sought after and battled for is equally an outward and mechanical and will turn out to be an unreal equality. Fraternity is not even claimed to be a practicable principle of the ordering of life and what is put forward as its substitute is the outward and mechanical principle of equal association or at the best a comradeship of labour. This is because the idea of humanity has been obliged in an intellectual age to mask its true character of a religion and a thing of the soul and the spirit and to appeal to the vital and physical mind of man rather than his inner being. It has limited his effort to the attempt to revolutionise political and social institutions and to bring about such a modification of the ideas and sentiments of the common mind of mankind as would make these institutions practicable; it has worked at the machinery of human life and on the outer mind much more than upon the soul of the race. It has laboured to establish a political, social and legal liberty, equality and mutual help in an equal association.

But though these aims are of great importance in their own field, they are not the central thing; they can only be secure when founded upon a change of the inner human nature and inner way of living; they are themselves of importance only as means for giving a greater scope and a better field for man's development towards that change and, when it is once achieved, as an outward expression of the larger inward life. Freedom, equality, brotherhood are three godheads of the soul; they cannot be really achieved through the external machinery of society or by man so long as he lives only in the individual and the communal ego. When the ego claims liberty, it arrives at competitive individualism. When it asserts equality, it arrives first at strife, then at an attempt to ignore the variations of Nature, and, as the sole way of doing that successfully, it constructs an artificial and machine-made society. A society that pursues liberty as its ideal is unable to achieve equality; a society that aims at equality will be obliged to sacrifice liberty. For the ego to speak of fraternity is for it to speak of something contrary to its nature. All that it knows is association for the pursuit of common egoistic ends and the utmost that it can arrive at is a closer organisation for the equal distribution of labour, production, consumption and enjoyment.

Yet is brotherhood the real key to the triple gospel of the idea of humanity. The union of liberty and equality can only be achieved by the power of human brotherhood and it cannot be founded on anything else. But brotherhood exists only in the soul and by the soul; it can exist by nothing else. For this brotherhood is not a matter either of physical kinship or of vital association or of intellectual agreement. When the soul claims freedom, it is the freedom of its self-development, the self-development of the divine in man in all his being. When it claims equality, what it is claiming is that freedom equally for all and the recognition of the same soul, the same godhead in all human beings. When it strives for brotherhood, it is founding that equal freedom of self-development on a common aim, a common life, a unity of mind and feeling founded upon the recognition of this inner spiritual unity. These three things are in fact the nature of the soul; for freedom, equality, unity are the eternal attributes of the Spirit. It is the practical recognition of this truth, it is the awakening of the soul in man and the attempt to get him to live from his soul and not from his ego which is the inner meaning of religion, and it is that to which the religion of humanity also must arrive before it can fulfil itself in the life of the race.

Chapter XXXV

Summary and Conclusion

IN OTHER words, — and this is the conclusion at which we arrive, — while it is possible to construct a precarious and quite mechanical unity by political and administrative means, the unity of the human race, even if achieved, can only be secured and can only be made real if the religion of humanity, which is at present the highest active ideal of mankind, spiritualises itself and becomes the general inner law of human life.

The outward unity may well achieve itself, — possibly, though by no means certainly, in a measurable time, — because that is the inevitable final trend of the working of Nature in human society which makes for larger and yet larger aggregations and cannot fail to arrive at a total aggregation of mankind in a closer international system.

This working of Nature depends for its means of fulfilment upon two forces which combine to make the larger aggregation inevitable. First, there is the increasing closeness of common interests or at least the interlacing and interrelation of interests in a larger and yet larger circle which makes old divisions an obstacle and a cause of weakness, obstruction and friction, and the clash and collision that comes out of this friction a ruinous calamity to all, even to the victor who has to pay a too heavy price for his gains; and even these expected gains, as war becomes more complex and disastrous, are becoming more and more difficult to achieve and the success problematical. An increasing perception of this community or interrelation of interests and a growing unwillingness to face the consequences of collision and ruinous struggle must push men to welcome any means for mitigating the divisions which lead to such disasters. If the trend to the mitigation of divisions is once given a definite form, that commences an impetus which drives towards closer and closer union. If she cannot arrive by these means, if the incoherence is too great for the trend of unification to triumph, Nature will use other means, such as war and conquest or the temporary domination of the powerful State or empire or the menace of such a domination which will compel those threatened to adopt a closer system of union. It is these means and this force of outward necessity which she used to create nation-units and national empires, and, however modified in the circumstances and workings, it is at bottom the same force and the same means which she is using to drive mankind towards international unification.

But, secondly, there is the force of a common uniting sentiment. This may work in two ways; it may come before as an originating or contributory cause or it may come afterwards as a cementing result. In the first case, the sentiment of a larger unity springs up among units which were previously divided and leads them to seek after a form of union which may then be brought about principally by the force of the sentiment and its idea or by that secondarily as an aid to other and more outward events and causes. We may note that in earlier times this sentiment was insufficiently effective, as among the petty clan or regional nations; unity had ordinarily to be effected by outward circumstances and generally by the grossest of them, by war and conquest, by the domination of the most powerful among many warring or contiguous peoples. But in later times the force of the sentiment of unity, supported as it has been by a clearer political idea, has become more effective. The larger national aggregates have grown up by a simple act of federation or union, though this has sometimes had to be preceded by a common struggle for liberty or a union in war against a common enemy; so have grown into one the United States, Italy, Germany, and more peacefully the Australian and South African federations. But in other cases, especially in the earlier national aggregations, the sentiment of unity has grown up largely or entirely as the result of the formal, outward or mechanical union. But whether to form or to preserve the growth of the sentiment, the psychological factor is indispensable; without it there can be no secure and lasting union. Its absence, the failure to create such a sentiment or to make it sufficiently living, natural, forcible has been the cause of the precariousness of such aggregates as Austro-Hungary and of the ephemeral character of the empires of the past, even as it is likely to bring about, unless circumstances change, the collapse or disintegration of the great present-day empires.

The trend of forces towards some kind of international world-organisation eventuating in a possible far-off unification, which is now just beginning to declare itself as an idea or aspiration though the causes which made it inevitable have been for some time at work, is enforced by the pressure of need and environment, by outward circumstances. At the same time, there is a sentiment helped and stimulated by these outward circumstances, a cosmopolitan, international sentiment, still rather nebulous and vaguely ideal, which may accelerate the growth of the formal union. In itself this sentiment would be an insufficient cement for the preservation of any mechanical union which might be created; for it could not easily be so close and forcible a sentiment as national feeling. It would have to subsist on the conveniences of union as its only substantial provender. But the experience of the past shows that this mere necessity of convenience is in the end not strong enough to resist the pressure of unfavourable circumstances and the reassertion of old or the effective growth of new centrifugal forces. There is, however, at work a more powerful force, a sort of intellectual religion of humanity, clear in the minds of the few, vaguely felt in its effects and its disguises by the many, which has largely helped to bring about much of the trend of the modern mind and the drift of its developing institutions. This is a psychological force which tends to break beyond the formula of the nation and aspires to replace the religion of country and even, in its more extreme forms, to destroy altogether the national sentiment and to abolish its divisions so as to create the single nation of mankind.

We may say, then, that this trend must eventually realise itself, however great may be the difficulties; and they are really enormous, much greater than those which attended the national formation. If the present unsatisfactory condition of international relations should lead to a series of cataclysms, either large and world-embracing like the present war or, though each more limited in scope, yet in their sum world-pervading and necessarily, by the growing interrelation of interests, affecting even those who do not fall directly under their touch, then mankind will finally be forced in self-defence to a new, closer and more stringently unified order of things. Its choice will be between that and a lingering suicide. If the human reason cannot find out the way, Nature herself is sure to shape these upheavals in such a way as to bring about her end. Therefore, — whether soon or in the long run, whether brought about by its own growing sentiment of unity, stimulated by common interest and convenience, or by the evolutionary pressure of circumstances, — we may take it that an eventual unification or at least some formal organisation of human life on earth is, the incalculable being always allowed for, practically inevitable.

I have tried to show from the analogy of the past evolution of the nation that this international unification must culminate or at least is likely to culminate in one of two forms. There is likely to be either a centralised World-State or a looser world-union which may be either a close federation or a simple confederacy of the peoples for the common ends of mankind. The last form is the most desirable, because it gives sufficient scope for the principle of variation which is necessary for the free play of life and the healthy progress of the race. The process by which the World-State may come starts with the creation of a central body which will at first have very limited functions, but, once created, must absorb by degrees all the different utilities of a centralised international control, as the State, first in the form of a monarchy and then of a parliament, has been absorbing by degrees the whole control of the life of the nation, so that we are now within measurable distance of a centralised socialistic State which will leave no part of the life of its individuals unregulated. A similar process in the World-State will end in the taking up and the regulation of the whole life of the peoples into its hands; it may even end by abolishing national individuality and turning the divisions that it has created into mere departmental groupings, provinces and districts of the one common State. Such an eventuality may seem now a fantastic dream or an unrealisable idea; but it is one which, under certain conditions that are by no means beyond the scope of ultimate possibility, may well become feasible and even, after a certain point is reached, inevitable. A federal system and still more a confederacy would mean, on the other hand, the preservation of the national basis and a greater or less freedom of national life, but the subordination of the separate national to the larger common interests and of full separate freedom to the greater international necessities.

It may be questioned whether past analogies are a safe guide in a problem so new and whether something else might not be evolved more intimately and independently arising from it and suitable to its complexities. But mankind even in dealing with its new problems works upon past experience and therefore upon past motives and analogies. Even when it seizes on new ideas, it goes to the past for the form it gives to them. Behind the apparent changes of the most radical revolutions we see this unavoidable principle of continuity surviving in the heart of the new order. Moreover, these alternatives seem the only way in which the two forces in presence can work out their conflict, either by the disappearance of the one, the separative national instinct, or by an accommodation between them. On the other hand, it is quite possible that human thought and action may take so new a turn as to bring in a number of unforeseen possibilities and lead to a quite different ending. And one might upon these lines set one's imagination to work and produce perhaps a utopia of a better kind. Such constructive efforts of the human imagination have their value and often a very great value; but any such speculations would evidently have been out of place in the study I have attempted.

Assuredly, neither of the two alternatives and none of the three forms considered are free from serious objections. A centralised World-State would signify the triumph of the idea of mechanical unity or rather of uniformity. It would inevitably mean the undue depression of an indispensable element in the vigour of human life and progress, the free life of the individual, the free variation of the peoples. It must end, if it becomes permanent and fulfils all its tendencies, either in a death in life, a stagnation, or by the insurgence of some new saving but revolutionary force or principle which would shatter the whole fabric into pieces. The mechanical tendency is one to which the logical reason of man, itself a precise machine, is easily addicted and its operations are obviously the easiest to manage and the most ready to hand; its full evolution may seem to the reason desirable, necessary, inevitable, but its end is predestined. A centralised socialistic State may be a necessity of the future, once it is founded, but a reaction from it will be equally an eventual necessity of the future. The greater its pressure, the more certainly will it be met by the spread of the spiritual, the intellectual, the vital and practical principle of Anarchism in revolt against that mechanical pressure. So, too, a centralised mechanical World-State must rouse in the end a similar force against it and might well terminate in a crumbling up and disintegration, even in the necessity for a repetition of the cycle of humanity ending in a better attempt to solve the problem. It could be kept in being only if humanity agreed to allow all the rest of its life to be regularised for it for the sake of peace and stability and took refuge for its individual freedom in the spiritual life, as happened once under the Roman Empire. But even that would be only a temporary solution. A federal system also would tend inevitably to establish one general type for human life, institutions and activities; it would allow only a play of minor variations. But the need of variation in living Nature could not always rest satisfied with that scanty sustenance. On the other hand, a looser confederacy might well be open to the objection that it would give too ready a handle for centrifugal forces, were such to arise in new strength. A loose confederation could not be permanent; it must turn in one direction or the other, end either in a close and rigid centralisation or at last by a break-up of the loose unity into its original elements.

The saving power needed is a new psychological factor which will at once make a united life necessary to humanity and force it to respect the principle of freedom. The religion of humanity seems to be the one growing force which tends in that direction; for it makes for the sense of human oneness, it has the idea of the race, and yet at the same time it respects the human individual and the natural human grouping. But its present intellectual form seems hardly sufficient. The idea, powerful in itself and in its effects, is yet not powerful enough to mould the whole life of the race in its image. For it has to concede too much to the egoistic side of human nature, once all and still nine-tenths of our being, with which its larger idea is in conflict. On the other side, because it leans principally on the reason, it turns too readily to the mechanical solution. For the rational idea ends always as a captive of its machinery, becomes a slave of its own too binding process. A new idea with another turn of the logical machine revolts against it and breaks up its machinery, but only to substitute in the end another mechanical system, another credo, formula and practice.

A spiritual religion of humanity is the hope of the future. By this is not meant what is ordinarily called a universal religion, a system, a thing of creed and intellectual belief and dogma and outward rite. Mankind has tried unity by that means; it has failed and deserved to fail, because there can be no universal religious system, one in mental creed and vital form. The inner spirit is indeed one, but more than any other the spiritual life insists on freedom and variation in its self-expression and means of development. A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one, that humanity is its highest present vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. It implies a growing attempt to live out this knowledge and bring about a kingdom of this divine Spirit upon earth. By its growth within us oneness with our fellow-men will become the leading principle of all our life, not merely a principle of cooperation but a deeper brotherhood, a real and an inner sense of unity and equality and a common life. There must be the realisation by the individual that only in the life of his fellow-men is his own life complete. There must be the realisation by the race that only on the free and full life of the individual can its own perfection and permanent happiness be founded. There must be too a discipline and a way of salvation in accordance with this religion, that is to say, a means by which it can be developed by each man within himself, so that it may be developed in the life of the race. To go into all that this implies would be too large a subject to be entered upon here; it is enough to point out that in this direction lies the eventual road. No doubt, if this is only an idea like the rest, it will go the way of all ideas. But if it is at all a truth of our being, then it must be the truth to which all is moving and in it must be found the means of a fundamental, an inner, a complete, a real human unity which would be the one secure base of a unification of human life. A spiritual oneness which would create a psychological oneness not dependent upon any intellectual or outward uniformity and compel a oneness of life not bound up with its mechanical means of unification, but ready always to enrich its secure unity by a free inner variation and a freely varied outer self-expression, this would be the basis for a higher type of human existence.

Could such a realisation develop rapidly in mankind, we might then solve the problem of unification in a deeper and truer way from the inner truth to the outer forms. Until then, the attempt to bring it about by mechanical means must proceed. But the higher hope of humanity lies in the growing number of men who will realise this truth and seek to develop it in themselves, so that when the mind of man is ready to escape from its mechanical bent, — perhaps when it finds that its mechanical solutions are all temporary and disappointing, — the truth of the Spirit may step in and lead humanity to the path of its highest possible happiness and perfection.

A Postscript Chapter

AT THE time when this book was being brought to its close, the first attempt at the foundation of some initial hesitating beginning of the new world-order, which both governments and peoples had begun to envisage as a permanent necessity if there was to be any order in the world at all, was under debate and consideration but had not yet been given a concrete and practical form; but this had to come and eventually a momentous beginning was made. It took the name and appearance of what was called a League of Nations. It was not happy in its conception, well-inspired in its formation or destined to any considerable longevity or a supremely successful career. But that such an organised endeavour should be launched at all and proceed on its way for some time without an early breakdown was in itself an event of capital importance and meant the initiation of a new era in world history; especially, it was an initiative which, even if it failed, could not be allowed to remain without a sequel but had to be taken up again until a successful solution has safeguarded the future of mankind, not only against continued disorder and lethal peril but against destructive possibilities which could easily prepare the collapse of civilisation and perhaps eventually something even that could be described as the suicide of the human race. Accordingly, the League of Nations disappeared but was replaced by the United Nations Organisation which now stands in the forefront of the world and struggles towards some kind of secure permanence and success in the great and far-reaching endeavour on which depends the world's future.

This is the capital event, the crucial and decisive outcome of the world-wide tendencies which Nature has set in motion for her destined purpose. In spite of the constant shortcomings of human effort and its stumbling mentality, in spite of adverse possibilities that may baulk or delay for a time the success of this great adventure, it is in this event that lies the determination of what must be. All the catastrophes that have attended this course of events and seem to arise of purpose in order to prevent the working out of her intention have not prevented, and even further catastrophes will not prevent, the successful emergence and development of an enterprise which has become a necessity for the progress and perhaps the very existence of the race. Two stupendous and world-devastating wars have swept over the globe and have been accompanied or followed by revolutions with far-reaching consequences which have altered the political map of the earth and the international balance, the once fairly stable equilibrium of five continents, and changed the whole future. A third still more disastrous war with a prospect of the use of weapons and other scientific means of destruction far more fatal and of wider reach than any ever yet invented, weapons whose far-spread use might bring down civilisation with a crash and whose effects might tend towards something like extermination on a large scale, looms in prospect; the constant apprehension of it weighs upon the mind of the nations and stimulates them towards further preparations for war and creates an atmosphere of prolonged antagonism, if not yet of conflict, extending to what is called "cold war" even in times of peace. But the two wars that have come and gone have not prevented the formation of the first and second considerable efforts towards the beginning of an attempt at union and the practical formation of a concrete body, an organised instrument with that object: rather they have caused and hastened this new creation. The League of Nations came into being as a direct consequence of the first war, the U.N.O. similarly as a consequence of the second world-wide conflict. If the third war which is regarded by many if not by most as inevitable does come, it is likely to precipitate as inevitably a further step and perhaps the final outcome of this great world-endeavour. Nature uses such means, apparently opposed and dangerous to her intended purpose, to bring about the fruition of that purpose. As in the practice of the spiritual science and art of Yoga one has to raise up the psychological possibilities which are there in the nature and stand in the way of its spiritual perfection and fulfilment so as to eliminate them, even, it may be, the sleeping possibilities which might arise in future to break the work that has been done, so too Nature acts with the world-forces that meet her on her way, not only calling up those which will assist her but raising too, so as to finish with them, those that she knows to be the normal or even the unavoidable obstacles which cannot but start up to impede her secret will. This one has often seen in the history of mankind; one sees it exampled today with an enormous force commensurable with the magnitude of the thing that has to be done. But always these resistances turn out to have assisted by the resistance much more than they have impeded the intention of the great Creatrix and her Mover.

We may then look with a legitimate optimism on what has been hitherto achieved and on the prospects of further achievement in the future. This optimism need not and should not blind us to undesirable features, perilous tendencies and the possibilities of serious interruptions in the work and even disorders in the human world that might possibly subvert the work done. As regards the actual conditions of the moment it may even be admitted that most men nowadays look with dissatisfaction on the defects of the United Nations Organisation and its blunders and the malignancies that endanger its existence and many feel a growing pessimism and regard with doubt the possibility of its final success. This pessimism it is unnecessary and unwise to share; for such a psychology tends to bring about or to make possible the results which it predicts but which need not at all ensue. At the same time, we must not ignore the danger. The leaders of the nations, who have the will to succeed and who will be held responsible by posterity for any avoidable failure, must be on guard against unwise policies or fatal errors; the deficiencies that exist in the organisation or its constitution have to be quickly remedied or slowly and cautiously eliminated; if there are obstinate oppositions to necessary change, they have somehow to be overcome or circumvented without breaking the institution; progress towards its perfection, even if it cannot be easily or swiftly made, must yet be undertaken and the frustration of the world's hope prevented at any cost. There is no other way for mankind than this, unless indeed a greater way is laid open to it by the Power that guides through some delivering turn or change in human will or human nature or some sudden evolutionary progress, a not easily foreseeable leap, *saltus*, which will make another and greater solution of our human destiny feasible.

In the first idea and form of a beginning of world-union which took the shape of the League of Nations, although there were errors in the structure such as the insistence on unanimity which tended to sterilise, to limit or to obstruct the practical action and effectuality of the League, the main defect was inherent in its conception and in its general build, and that again arose naturally and as a direct consequence from the condition of the world at that time. The League of Nations was in fact an oligarchy of big Powers each drawing behind it a retinue of small States and using the general body so far as possible for the furtherance of its own policy much more than for the general interest and the good of the world at large. This character came out most in the political sphere, and the manoeuvres and discords, accommodations and compromises inevitable in this condition of things did not help to make the action of the League beneficial or effective as it purposed or set out to be. The absence of America and the position of Russia had helped to make the final ill-success of this first venture a natural consequence, if not indeed unavoidable. In the constitution of the U.N.O. an attempt was made, in principle at least, to escape from these errors; but the attempt was not thoroughgoing and not altogether successful. A strong surviving element of oligarchy remained in the preponderant place assigned to the five great Powers in the Security Council and was clinched by the device of the veto; these were concessions to a sense of realism and the necessity of recognising the actual condition of things and the results of the second great war and could not perhaps have been avoided, but they have done more to create trouble, hamper the action and diminish the success of the new institution than anything else in its make-up or the way of action forced upon it by the world situation or the difficulties of a combined working inherent in its very structure. A too hasty or radical endeavour to get rid of these defects might lead to a crash of the whole edifice; to leave them unmodified prolongs a malaise, an absence of harmony and smooth working and a consequent discredit and a sense of limited and abortive action, cause of the wide-spread feeling of futility and regard of doubt the world at large has begun to cast on this great and necessary institution which was founded with such high hopes and without which world conditions would be infinitely worse and more dangerous, even perhaps irremediable. A third attempt, the substitution of a differently constituted body, could only come if this institution collapsed as the result of a new catastrophe: if certain dubious portents fulfil their menace, it might emerge into being and might even this time be more successful because of an increased and a more general determination not to allow such a calamity to occur again; but it would be after a third cataclysmal struggle which might shake to its foundations the international structure now holding together after two upheavals with so much difficulty and unease. Yet, even in such a contingency, the intention in the working of Nature is likely to overcome the obstacles she has herself raised up and they may be got rid of once and for all. But for that it will be necessary to build, eventually at least, a true World-State without exclusions and on a principle of equality into which considerations of size and strength will not enter. These may be left to exercise whatever influence is natural to them in a well-ordered harmony of the world's peoples safeguarded by the law of a new international order. A sure justice, a fundamental equality and combination of rights and interests must be the law of this World-State and the basis of its entire edifice.

The real danger at the present second stage of the progress towards unity lies not in any faults, however serious, in the building of the United Nations Assembly but in the division of the peoples into two camps which tend to be natural opponents and might at any moment become declared enemies irreconcilable and even their common existence incompatible.

This is because the so-called Communism of Bolshevist Russia came to birth as the result, not of a rapid evolution, but of an unprecedentedly fierce and prolonged revolution sanguinary in the extreme and created an autocratic and intolerant State system founded upon a war of classes in which all others except the proletariat were crushed out of existence, "liquidated", upon a "dictatorship of the proletariat" or rather of a narrow but all-powerful party system acting in its name, a Police State, and a mortal struggle with the outside world: the fierceness of this struggle generated in the minds of the organisers of the new State a fixed idea of the necessity not only of survival but of continued struggle and the spread of its domination until the new order had destroyed the old or evicted it, if not from the whole earth, yet from the greater part of it and the imposition of a new political and social gospel or its general acceptance by the world's peoples. But this condition of things might change, lose its acrimony and full consequence, as it has done to some degree, with the arrival of security and the cessation of the first ferocity, bitterness and exasperation of the conflict; the most intolerant and oppressive elements of the new order might have been moderated and the sense of incompatibility or inability to live together or side by side would then have disappeared and a more secure *modus vivendi* been made possible. If much of the unease, the sense of inevitable struggle, the difficulty of mutual toleration and economic accommodation still exists, it is rather because the idea of using the ideological struggle as a means for world domination is there and keeps the nations in a position of mutual apprehension and preparation for armed defence and attack than because the coexistence of the two ideologies is impossible. If this element is eliminated, a world in which these two ideologies could live together, arrive at an economic interchange, draw closer together, need not be at all out of the question; for the world is moving towards a greater development of the principle of State control over the life of the community, and a congeries of socialistic States on the one hand, and on the other, of States coordinating and controlling a modified Capitalism might well come to exist side by side and develop friendly relations with each other. Even a World-State in which both could keep their own institutions and sit in a common assembly might come into being and a single world-union on this foundation would not be impossible. This development is indeed the final outcome which the foundation of the U.N.O. presupposes; for the present organisation cannot be itself final, it is only an imperfect beginning useful and necessary as a primary nucleus of that larger institution in which all the peoples of the earth can meet each other in a single international unity: the creation of a World-State is, in a movement of this kind, the one logical and inevitable ultimate outcome.

This view of the future may under present circumstances be stigmatised as a too facile optimism, but this turn of things is quite as possible as the more disastrous turn expected by the pessimists, since the cataclysm and crash of civilisation sometimes predicted by them need not at all be the result of a new war. Mankind has a habit of surviving the worst catastrophes created by its own errors or by the violent turns of Nature and it must be so if there is any meaning in its existence, if its long history and continuous survival is not the accident of a fortuitously self-organising Chance, which it must be in a purely materialistic view of the nature of the world. If man is intended to survive and carry forward the evolution of which he is at present the head and, to some extent, a half-conscious leader of its march, he must come out of his present chaotic international life and arrive at a beginning of organised united action; some kind of World-State, unitary or federal, or a confederacy or a coalition he must arrive at in the end; no smaller or looser expedient would adequately serve the purpose. In that case, the general thesis advanced in this book would stand justified and we can foreshadow with some confidence the main line of advance which the course of events is likely to take, at least the main trend of the future history of the human peoples.

The question now put by evolving Nature to mankind is whether its existing international system, if system it can be called, a sort of provisional order maintained with constant evolutionary or revolutionary changes, cannot be replaced by a willed and thought-out fixed arrangement, a true system, eventually a real unity serving all the common interests of the earth's peoples. An original welter and chaos with its jumble of forces forming, wherever it could, larger or smaller masses of civilisation and order which were in danger of crumbling or being shaken to pieces by attacks from the outer chaos was the first attempt at cosmos successfully arrived at by the genius of humanity. This was finally replaced by something like an international system with the elements of what could be called international law or fixed habits of intercommunication and interchange which allowed the nations to live together in spite of antagonisms and conflicts, a security alternating with precariousness and peril and permitting of too many ugly features, however local, of oppression, bloodshed, revolt and disorder, not to speak of wars which sometimes devastated large areas of the globe. The indwelling deity who presides over the destiny of the race has raised in man's mind and heart the idea, the hope of a new order which will replace the old unsatisfactory order and substitute for it conditions of the world's life which will in the end have a reasonable chance of establishing permanent peace and well-being. This would for the first time turn into an assured fact the ideal of human unity which, cherished by a few, seemed for so long a noble chimera; then might be created a firm ground of peace and harmony and even a free room for the realisation of the highest human dreams, for the perfectibility of the race, a perfect society, a higher upward evolution of the human soul and human nature. It is for the men of our day and, at the most, of tomorrow to give the answer. For, too long a postponement or too continued a failure will open the way to a series of increasing catastrophes which might create a too prolonged and disastrous confusion and chaos and render a solution too difficult or impossible; it might even end in something like an irremediable crash not only of the present world-civilisation but of all civilisation. A new, a difficult and uncertain beginning might have to be made in the midst of the chaos and ruin after perhaps an extermination on a large scale, and a more successful creation could be predicted only if a way was found to develop a better humanity or perhaps a greater, a superhuman race.

The central question is whether the nation, the largest natural unit which humanity has been able to create and maintain for its collective living, is also its last and ultimate unit or whether a greater aggregate can be formed which will englobe many and even most nations and finally all in its united totality. The impulse to build more largely, the push towards the creation of considerable and even very vast supra-national aggregates has not been wanting; it has even been a permanent feature in the life-instincts of the race. But the form it took was the desire of a strong nation for mastery over others, permanent possession of their territories, subjugation of their peoples, exploitation of their resources: there was also an attempt at quasi-assimilation, an imposition of the culture of a dominant race and, in general, a system of absorption wholesale or as complete as possible. The Roman Empire was the classic example of this kind of endeavour and the Graeco-Roman unity of a single way of life and culture in a vast framework of political and administrative unity was the nearest approach within the geographical limits reached by this civilisation to something one might regard as a first figure or an incomplete suggestion of a figure of human unity. Other similar attempts have been made though not on so large a scale and with a less consummate ability throughout the course of history, but nothing has endured for more than a small number of centuries. The method used was fundamentally unsound in as much as it contradicted other life-instincts which were necessary to the vitality and healthy evolution of mankind and the denial of which must end in some kind of stagnation and arrested progress. The imperial aggregate could not acquire the unconquerable vitality and power of survival of the nation-unit. The only enduring empire-units have been in reality large nation-units which took that name like Germany and China and these were not forms of the supra-national State and need not be reckoned in the history of the formation of the imperial aggregate. So, although the tendency to the creation of empire testifies to an urge in Nature towards larger unities of human life, — and we can see concealed in it a will to unite the disparate masses of humanity on a larger scale into a single coalescing or combined life-unit, — it must be regarded as an unsuccessful formation without a sequel and unserviceable for any further progress in this direction. In actual fact a new attempt of world-wide domination could succeed only by a new instrumentation or under novel circumstances in englobing all the nations of the earth or persuading or forcing them into some kind of union. An ideology, a successful combination of peoples with one aim and a powerful head like Communist Russia, might have a temporary success in bringing about such an objective. But such an outcome, not very desirable in itself, would not be likely to ensure the creation of an enduring World-State. There would be tendencies, resistances, urges towards other developments which would sooner or later bring about its collapse or some revolutionary change which would mean its disappearance. Finally, any such stage would have to be overpassed; only the formation of a true World-State, either of a unitary but still elastic kind, — for a rigidly unitary State might bring about stagnation and decay of the springs of life, — or a union of free peoples could open the prospect of a sound and lasting world-order.

It is not necessary to repeat or review, except in certain directions, the considerations and conclusions set forward in this book with regard to the means and methods or the lines of divergence or successive development which the actual realisation of human unity may take. But still on some sides possibilities have arisen which call for some modification of what has been written or the conclusions arrived at in these chapters. It had been concluded, for instance, that there was no likelihood of the conquest and unification of the world by a single dominant people or empire. This is no longer altogether so certain, for we have just had to admit the possibility of such an attempt under certain circumstances. A dominant Power may be able to group round itself strong allies subordinated to it but still considerable in strength and resources and throw them into a world struggle with other Powers and peoples. This possibility would be increased if the dominating Power managed to procure, even if only for the time being, a monopoly of an overwhelming superiority in the use of some of the tremendous means of aggressive military action which Science has set out to discover and effectively utilise. The terror of destruction and even of large-scale extermination created by these ominous discoveries may bring about a will in the governments and peoples to ban and prevent the military use of these inventions, but, so long as the nature of mankind has not changed, this prevention must remain uncertain and precarious and an unscrupulous ambition may even get by it a chance of secrecy and surprise and the utilisation of a decisive moment which might conceivably give it victory and it might risk the tremendous chance. It may be argued that the history of the last war runs counter to this possibility, for in conditions not quite realising but approximating to such a combination of circumstances the aggressive Powers failed in their attempt and underwent the disastrous consequences of a terrible defeat. But after all, they came for a time within a hair's breadth of success and there might not be the same good fortune for the world in some later and more sagaciously conducted and organised adventure. At least, the possibility has to be noted and guarded against by those who have the power of prevention and the welfare of the race in their charge.

One of the possibilities suggested at the time was the growth of continental agglomerates, a united Europe, some kind of a combine of the peoples of the American continent under the leadership of the United States, even possibly in the resurgence of Asia and its drive towards independence from the dominance of the European peoples, a drawing together for self-defensive combination of the nations of this continent; such an eventuality of large continental combinations might even be a stage in the final formation of a world-union. This possibility has tended to take shape to a certain extent with a celerity that could not then be anticipated. In the two American continents it has actually assumed a predominating and practical form, though not in its totality. The idea of a United States of Europe has also actually taken shape and is assuming a formal existence, but is not yet able to develop into a completed and fully realised possibility because of the antagonism based on conflicting ideologies which cuts off from each other Russia and her satellites behind their iron curtain and Western Europe. This separation has gone so far that it is difficult to envisage its cessation at any foreseeable time in a predictable future. Under other circumstances a tendency towards such combinations might have created the apprehension of huge continental clashes such as the collision, at one time imagined as possible, between a resurgent Asia and the Occident. The acceptance by Europe and America of the Asiatic resurgence and the eventual total liberation of the Oriental peoples, as also the downfall of Japan which figured at one time and indeed actually presented itself to the world as the liberator and leader of a free Asia against the domination of the West, have removed this dangerous possibility. Here again, as elsewhere, the actual danger presents itself rather as a clash between two opposing ideologies, one led by Russia and Red China and trying to impose the Communistic extreme partly by military and partly by forceful political means on a reluctant or at least an infected but not altogether willing Asia and Europe, and on the other side a combination of peoples, partly capitalist, partly moderate socialist who still cling with some attachment to the idea of liberty, — to freedom of thought and some remnant of the free life of the individual. In America there seems to be a push, especially in the Latin peoples, towards a rather intolerant completeness of the Americanisation of the whole continent and the adjacent islands, a sort of extended Monroe Doctrine, which might create friction with the European Powers still holding possessions in the northern part of the continent. But this could only generate minor difficulties and disagreements and not the possibility of any serious collision, a case perhaps for arbitration or arrangement by the U.N.O., not any more serious consequence. In Asia a more perilous situation has arisen, standing sharply across the way to any possibility of a continental unity of the peoples of this part of the world, in the emergence of Communist China. This creates a gigantic bloc which could easily englobe the whole of Northern Asia in a combination between two enormous Communist Powers, Russia and China, and would overshadow with a threat of absorption South-Western Asia and Tibet and might be pushed to overrun all up to the whole frontier of India, menacing her security and that of Western Asia with the possibility of an invasion and an overrunning and subjection by penetration or even by overwhelming military force to an unwanted ideology, political and social institutions and dominance of this militant mass of Communism whose push might easily prove irresistible. In any case, the continent would be divided between two huge blocs which might enter into active mutual opposition and the possibility of a stupendous world-conflict would arise dwarfing anything previously experienced: the possibility of any world-union might, even without any actual outbreak of hostilities, be indefinitely postponed by the incompatibility of interests and ideologies on a scale which would render their inclusion in a single body hardly realisable. The possibility of a coming into being of three or four continental unions, which might subsequently coalesce into a single unity, would then be very remote and, except after a world-shaking struggle, hardly feasible.

At one time it was possible to regard as an eventual possibility the extension of Socialism to all the nations; an international unity could then have been created by its innate tendencies which turned naturally towards an overcoming of the dividing force of the nation-idea with its separatism and its turn towards competitions and rivalries often culminating in open strife; this could have been regarded as the natural road and could have turned in fact into the eventual way towards world-union. But, in the first place, Socialism has under certain stresses proved to be by no means immune against infection by the dividing national spirit and its international tendency might not survive its coming into power in separate national States and a resulting inheritance of competing national interests and necessities: the old spirit might very well survive in the new socialist bodies. But also there might not be or not for a long time to come an inevitable tide of the spread of Socialism to all the peoples of the earth: other forces might arise which would dispute what seemed at one time and perhaps still seems the most likely outcome of existing world tendencies; the conflict between Communism and the less extreme socialistic idea which still respects the principle of liberty, even though a restricted liberty, and the freedom of conscience, of thought, of personality of the individual, if this difference perpetuated itself, might create a serious difficulty in the formation of a World-State. It would not be easy to build a constitution, a harmonised State-law and practice in which any modicum of genuine freedom for the individual or any continued existence of him except as a cell in the working of a rigidly determined automatism of the body of the collectivist State or a part of a machine would be possible or conceivable. It is not that the principle of Communism necessitates any such results or that its system must lead to a termite civilisation or the suppression of the individual; it could well be, on the contrary, a means at once of the fulfilment of the individual and the perfect harmony of a collective being. The already developed systems which go by the name are not really Communism but constructions of an inordinately rigid State Socialism. But Socialism itself might well develop away from the Marxist groove and evolve less rigid modes; a cooperative Socialism, for instance, without any bureaucratic rigour of a coercive administration, of a Police State, might one day come into existence, but the generalisation of Socialism throughout the world is not under existing circumstances easily foreseeable, hardly even a predominant possibility: in spite of certain possibilities or tendencies created by recent events in the Far East, a division of the earth between the two systems, capitalistic and socialistic, seems for the present a more likely issue. In America the attachment to individualism and the capitalistic system of society and a strong antagonism not only to Communism but to even a moderate Socialism remains complete and one can foresee little possibility of any abatement in its intensity. The extreme success of Communism creeping over the continents of the Old World, which we have had to envisage as a possibility, is yet, if we consider existing circumstances and the balance of opposing Powers, highly improbable and, even if it occurred, some accommodation would still be necessary, unless one of the two forces gained an overwhelming eventual victory over its opponent. A successful accommodation would demand the creation of a body in which all questions of possible dispute could be solved as they arose without any breaking out of open conflict, and this would be a successor of the League of Nations and the U.N.O. and move in the same direction. As Russia and America, in spite of the constant opposition of policy and ideology, have avoided so far any step that would make the preservation of the U.N.O. too difficult or impossible, this third body would be preserved by the same necessity or imperative utility of its continued existence. The same forces would work in the same direction and a creation of an effective world-union would still be possible; in the end the mass of general needs of the race and its need of self-preservation could well be relied on to make it inevitable.

There is nothing then in the development of events since the establishment of the United Nations Organisation, in the sequel to the great initiation at San Francisco of the decisive step towards the creation of a world-body which might end in the establishment of a true world-unity, that need discourage us in the expectation of an ultimate success of this great enterprise. There are dangers and difficulties, there can be an apprehension of conflicts, even of colossal conflicts that might jeopardise the future, but total failure need not be envisaged unless we are disposed to predict the failure of the race. The thesis we have undertaken to establish of the drive of Nature towards larger agglomerations and the final establishment of the largest of all and the ultimate union of the world's peoples still remains unaltered: this is evidently the line which the future of the human race demands and which conflicts and perturbations, however immense, may delay, even as they may modify greatly the forms it now promises to take, but are not likely to prevent; for a general destruction would be the only alternative destiny of mankind. But such a destruction, whatever the catastrophic possibilities balancing the almost certain beneficial results, hardly limitable in their extent, of the recent discoveries and inventions of Science, has every chance of being as chimerical as any early expectation of final peace and felicity or a perfected society of the human peoples. We may rely, if on nothing else, on the evolutionary urge and, if on no other greater hidden Power, on the manifest working and drift or intention in the World-Energy we call Nature to carry mankind at least as far as the necessary next step to be taken, a self-preserving next step: for the necessity is there, at least some general recognition of it has been achieved and of the thing to which it must eventually lead the idea has been born and the body of it is already calling for its creation. We have indicated in this book the conditions, possibilities, forms which this new creation may take and those which seem to be most desirable without dogmatising or giving prominence to personal opinion; an impartial consideration of the forces that work and the results that are likely to ensue was the object of this study. The rest will depend on the intellectual and moral capacity of humanity to carry out what is evidently now the one thing needful.

We conclude then that in the conditions of the world at present, even taking into consideration its most disparaging features and dangerous possibilities, there is nothing that need alter the view we have taken of the necessity and inevitability of some kind of world-union; the drive of Nature, the compulsion of circumstances and the present and future need of mankind make it inevitable. The general conclusions we have arrived at will stand and the consideration of the modalities and possible forms or lines of alternative or successive development it may take. The ultimate result must be the formation of a World-State and the most desirable form of it would be a federation of free nationalities in which all subjection or forced inequality and subordination of one to another would have disappeared and, though some might preserve a greater natural influence, all would have an equal status. A confederacy would give the greatest freedom to the nations constituting the World-State, but this might give too much room for fissiparous or centrifugal tendencies to operate; a federal order would then be the most desirable. All else would be determined by the course of events and by general agreement or the shape given by the ideas and necessities that may grow up in the future. A world-union of this kind would have the greatest chances of long survival or permanent existence. This is a mutable world and uncertainties and dangers might assail or trouble for a time; the formed structure might be subjected to revolutionary tendencies as new ideas and forces emerged and produced their effect on the general mind of humanity, but the essential step would have been taken and the future of the race assured or at least the present era overpassed in which it is threatened and disturbed by unsolved needs and difficulties, precarious conditions, immense upheavals, huge and sanguinary world-wide conflicts and the threat of others to come. The ideal of human unity would be no longer an unfulfilled ideal but an accomplished fact and its preservation given into the charge of the united human peoples. Its future destiny would lie on the knees of the gods and, if the gods have a use for the continued existence of the race, may be left to lie there safe.

War and Self-Determination

Foreword to the First Edition

THE FOUR essays published in this volume[1] were not written at one time or conceived with any intentional connection between them in idea or purpose. The first was written in the early months of the war, two others when it was closing, the last recently during the formation and first operations of that remarkably ill-jointed, stumbling and hesitating machine, the League of Nations. But still they happen to be bound together by a common idea or at least look at four related subjects from a single general standpoint, — the obvious but practically quite forgotten truth that the destiny of the race in this age of crisis and revolution will depend much more on the spirit which we are than on the machinery we shall use. A few words on the present bearing of this truth by way of foreword may not be out of place.

The whole difficulty of the present situation turns upon the peculiar and critical character of the age in which we are living. It is a period of immense and rapid changes so swift that few of us who live among them can hope to seize their whole burden or their inmost meaning or to form any safe estimate of their probable outcome. Great hopes are abroad, high and large ideals fill the view, enormous forces are in the field. It is one of those vast critical moments in the life of the race when all is pressing towards change and reconstitution. The ideals of the future, especially the ideals of freedom, equality, commonalty, unity, are demanding to be brought out from their limited field in the spiritual life or the idealism of the few and to be given some beginning of a true soul of action and bodily shape in the life of the race. But banded against any such fulfilment there are powerful obstacles, and the greatest of them come not from outside but from within. For they are the old continued impulsions and obstinate recalcitrance of mankind's past nature, the almost total subjection of its normal mind to egoistic, vital and material interests and ambitions which make not for union but for strife and discord, the plausibilities of the practical reason which looks at the possibilities of the day and the morrow and shuts its eyes to the consequences of the day after, the habits of pretence and fiction which impel men and nations to pursue and forward their own interest under the camouflage of a specious idealism, a habit made up only partly of the diplomatic hypocrisy of politicians, but much more of a general half-voluntary self-deception, and, finally, the inrush of blinder unsatisfied forces and crude imperfect idealisms — of such is the creed of Bolshevism — to take advantage of the unrest and dissatisfaction prevalent in such times and lay hold for a while on the life of mankind. It is these things which we see dominant around us and not in the least degree any effort to be of the right spirit and evolve from it the right method. The one way out harped on by the modern mind which has been as much blinded as enlightened by the victories of physical science, is the approved western device of salvation by machinery; get the right kind of machine to work and everything can be done, this seems to be the modern creed. But the destinies of mankind cannot be turned out to order in an American factory. It is a subtler thing than that which is now putting its momentous problem before us, and if the spirit of the things we profess is absent or falsified, no method or machinery can turn them out for us or deliver the promised goods. That is the one truth which the scientific and industrialised modern mind forgets always, because it looks at process and commodity and production and ignores the spirit in man and the deeper inner law of his being.

---

[1] *The present edition includes two additional essays. — Ed.*

The elimination of war is one of the cherished ideals and expectations of the age. But what lies at the root of this desire? A greater unity of heart, sympathy, understanding between men and nations, a settled will to get rid of national hatreds, greeds, ambitions, all the fertile seeds of strife and war? If so, it is well with us and success will surely crown our efforts. But of this deeper thing there may be something in sentiment, but there is still very little in action and dominant motive. For the masses of men the idea is rather to labour and produce and amass at ease and in security without the disturbance of war; for the statesmen and governing classes the idea is to have peace and security for the maintenance of past acquisitions and an untroubled domination and exploitation of the world by the great highly organised imperial and industrial nations without the perturbing appearance of new unsatisfied hungers and the peril of violent unrests, revolts, revolutions. War, it was hoped at one time, would eliminate itself by becoming impossible, but that delightfully easy solution no longer commands credit. But now it is hoped to conjure or engineer it out of existence by the machinery of a league of victorious nations admitting the rest, some if they will, others whether they like it or not, as subordinate partners or as protégés. In the magic of this just and beautiful arrangement the intelligence and good will of closeted statesmen and governments supported by the intelligence and good will of the peoples is to combine and accommodate interests, to settle or evade difficulties, to circumvent the natural results, the inevitable Karma of national selfishness and passions and to evolve out of the present chaos a fair and charmingly well-mechanised cosmos of international order, security, peace and welfare. Get the clockwork going, put your pennyworth of excellent professions or passably good intentions in the slot and all will go well, this seems to be the principle. But it is too often the floor of Hell that is paved with these excellent professions and passable intentions, and the cause is that while the better reason and will of man may be one hopeful factor in Nature, they are not the whole of nature and existence and not by any means the whole of our human nature. There are other and very formidable things in us and in the world and if we juggle with them or put on them, in order to get them admitted, these masks of reason and sentiment, — as unfortunately we have all the habit of doing and that is still the greater part of the game of politics, — the results are a foregone conclusion. War and violent revolution can be eliminated, if we will, though not without immense difficulty, but on the condition that we get rid of the inner causes of war and the constantly accumulating Karma of successful injustice of which violent revolutions are the natural reactions. Otherwise, there can be only at best a fallacious period of artificial peace. What was in the past will be sown still in the present and continue to return on us in the future.

The intelligent mind or the best intellectual reason and science of man are not the sole disposers of our future. Fortunately for the order of things a greater unseen power, a Universal Will, or, if you please, a universal Force or Law is there which not only gives us all the framework and conditions of our idea and effort, but evolves by them and by the law of these conditions out of the thing in being the thing that is to be. And this power deals with us not so much according to the devices of our reason, the truths or fictions of our intelligence, but much rather according to the truth of what man is and the real soul and meaning of what he does. God is not to be deceived, says the Scripture. The modern mind does not believe in God, but it believes in Nature: but Nature too is not to be deceived; she enforces her law, she works out always her results from the thing that really is and from the real spirit and character of the energy we put into action. And this especially is one of the ages in which mankind is very closely put to the question. The hopes, the ideals, the aspirations that are abroad in it are themselves so many severe and pregnant questions put to us, not merely to our intelligence but to the spirit of our being and action. In this fateful examination it is not skill and cleverness, machinery and organisation which will ultimately prevail, — that was the faith which Germany professed, and we know how it ended, — but the truth and sincerity of our living. It is not impossible for man to realise his ideals so that he may move on to yet greater undreamed things, but on condition that he makes them totally an inner in order that they may become too an outer reality. The changes which this age of reconstruction portends will certainly come, but the gain they will bring to humanity depends on the spirit which governs us during the time of their execution.

We of today have not the excuse of ignorance since we have before us perfectly clear ideals and conditions. Freedom and unity, the self-determination of men and nations in the framework of a life drawn together by cooperation, comradeship, brotherhood if it may be, the acceptance of a close interrelation of the common aims and interests of the race, an increasing oneness of human life in which we cannot deny any longer to others what we claim for ourselves, — are things of which we have formed a definite conception. The acknowledgment of them is there in the human mind, but not as yet any settled will to practise. Words and professions are excellent things in themselves and we will do them all homage; but facts are for the present more powerful and the facts will have their results, but the results which we deserve and not those aimed at by our egoism. The principle of self-determination is not in itself a chimera, it is only that if we choose to make it so. It is the condition of the better order of the world which we wish to bring into being, and to make jettison of it at the very first opportunity is an unpromising beginning for so great and difficult an endeavour. Self-determination is not a principle which can stand by itself and be made the one rule to be followed; no principle can rightly stand in that way isolated and solely dominant in the complicated web of life and, if we so treat it, it gets falsified in its meaning and loses much of its virtue. Moreover, individual self-determination must harmonise with a common self-determination, freedom must move in the frame of unity or towards the realisation of a free unity. And it may readily be conceded to the opportunist, the practical man and all the minds that find a difficulty in looking beyond the circumstances of the past and present, that there are in very many instances great difficulties in the way of applying the principle immediately and in its full degree. But when in the light of a great revealing moment a principle of this kind has been recognised not only as an ideal but as a clear condition of the result at which we aim, it has to be accepted as a leading factor of the problem to be worked out, the difficulties sincerely considered and met and a way found by which without evasion or equivocation and without unnecessary delay it can be developed and given its proper place in the solution. But it is the very opposite method that has been adopted by the governments of the world, and admitted by its peoples. The natural result is that things are being worked out in the old way with a new name or at the most with some halting change and partial improvement of the method.

The botched constitution and limping action of the League of Nations is the result of this ancient manoeuvre. The League has been got into being by sacrificing the principles which governed the idea behind its inception. The one thing that has been gained is a formal, regularised and established instrument by which the governments of the leading nations can meet together habitually, consult, accommodate their interests, give some kind of consideration to the voice and the claim of the smaller free nations, try to administer with a common understanding certain common or conflicting interests, delay dangerous outbreaks and collisions or minimise them when they come, govern the life of the nations that are not free and not already subjects of the successful empires under the cover of a mandate instead of the rough-and-tumble chances of a scramble for markets, colonies and dependencies. The machine does not seem to be acting even for these ends with any remarkable efficiency, but it is at least something, it may be said, that it can be got to act at all. In any case it is an accomplished fact which has to be accepted without enthusiasm, for it merits none, but with a practical acquiescence or an enforced recognition. All the more reason that the imperfections it embodies and the evils and dangers its action involves or keeps in being, should not be thrust into the background, but kept in the full light so that the imperfections may be recognised and mended and there may be some chance of avoiding the worst incidence of the threatened evils and dangers. And all the more reason too that the ideals which have been ignored or converted in the practice into a fiction, should insist on themselves and, defrauded of the present, still lift their voice to lay their claim on the future.

For these ideals stand and they represent the greater aims of the spirit in man which through all the denials, obstacles and imperfections of his present incomplete nature knows always the perfection towards which it moves and the greatness of which it is capable. Circumstance and force and external necessity and past nature may still be too strong for us, the Rudra powers still govern our destinies and the Lords of truth and justice and the Lords of love have to wait for their reign, but if the light of the ideal is kept burning in its flame of knowledge and its flame of power, it will seize even on these things and create out of their evil its greater inevitable good. At present it may seem only an idea and a word unable to become a living reality, but it is the Idea and the Word expressing what was concealed in the Spirit which preside over creation. The time will come when they will be able to seize on the Force that works and turn it into the instrument of a greater and fairer creation. The nearness or the distance of the time depends on the fidelity of the mind and will of man to the best that he sees and the insistence of his self-knowledge, unobsessed by subjection to the circumstances he suffers and the machinery he uses, to live out its truth within himself so that his environment may accept it and his outward life be shaped in its image.

The Passing of War?

THE PROGRESS of humanity proceeds by a series of imaginations which the will in the race turns into accomplished facts and a train of illusions which contain each of them an inevitable truth. The truth is there in the secret Will and Knowledge that are conducting our affairs for us and it reflects itself in the soul of mankind; the illusion is in the shape we give to that reflection, the veil of arbitrary fixations of time, place and circumstance which that deceptive organ of knowledge, the human intellect, weaves over the face of the Truth. Human imaginations are often fulfilled to the letter; our illusions on the contrary find the truth behind them realised most unexpectedly, at a time, in ways, under circumstances far other than those we had fixed for them.

Man's illusions are of all sorts and kinds, some of them petty though not unimportant, — for nothing in the world is unimportant, — others vast and grandiose. The greatest of them all are those which cluster round the hope of a perfected society, a perfected race, a terrestrial millennium. Each new idea religious or social which takes possession of the epoch and seizes on large masses of men, is in turn to be the instrument of these high realisations; each in turn betrays the hope which gave it its force to conquer. And the reason is plain enough to whosoever chooses to see; it is that no change of ideas or of the intellectual outlook upon life, no belief in God or Avatar or prophet, no victorious science or liberating philosophy, no social scheme or system, no sort of machinery internal or external can really bring about the great desire implanted in the race, true though that desire is in itself and the index of the goal to which we are being led. Because man is himself not a machine nor a device, but a being and a most complex one at that, therefore he cannot be saved by machinery; only by an entire change which shall affect all the members of his being can he be liberated from his discords and imperfections.

One of the illusions incidental to this great hope is the expectation of the passing of war. This grand event in human progress is always being confidently expected and since we are now all scientific minds and rational beings, we no longer expect it by a divine intervention, but assign sound physical and economic reasons for the faith that is in us. The first form taken by this new gospel was the expectation and the prophecy that the extension of commerce would be the extinction of war. Commercialism was the natural enemy of militarism and would drive it from the face of the earth. The growing and universal lust of gold and the habit of comfort and the necessities of increased production and intricate interchange would crush out the lust of power and dominion and glory and battle. Gold-hunger or commodity-hunger would drive out earth-hunger, the dharma of the Vaishya would set its foot on the dharma of the Kshatriya and give it its painless quietus. The ironic reply of the gods has not been long in coming. Actually this very reign of commercialism, this increase of production and interchange, this desire for commodities and markets and this piling up of a huge burden of unnecessary necessities has been the cause of half the wars that have since afflicted the human race. And now we see militarism and commercialism united in a loving clasp, coalescing into a sacred biune duality of national life and patriotic aspiration and causing and driving by their force the most irrational, the most monstrous and nearly cataclysmic, the hugest war of modern and indeed of all historic times.

Another illusion was that the growth of democracy would mean the growth of pacifism and the end of war. It was fondly thought that wars are in their nature dynastic and aristocratic; greedy kings and martial nobles driven by earth-hunger and battle-hunger, diplomatists playing at chess with the lives of men and the fortunes of nations, these were the guilty causes of war who drove the unfortunate peoples to the battle-field like sheep to the shambles. These proletariates, mere food for powder, who had no interest, no desire, no battle-hunger driving them to armed conflict, had only to become instructed and dominant to embrace each other and all the world in a free and fraternal amity. Man refuses to learn from that history of whose lessons the wise prate to us; otherwise the story of old democracies ought to have been enough to prevent this particular illusion. In any case the answer of the gods has been, here too, sufficiently ironic. If kings and diplomatists are still often the movers of war, none more ready than the modern democracy to make itself their enthusiastic and noisy accomplice, and we see even the modern spectacle of governments and diplomats hanging back in affright or doubt from the yawning and clamorous abyss while angry shouting peoples impel them to the verge. Bewildered pacifists who still cling to their principles and illusions, find themselves howled down by the people and, what is piquant enough, by their own recent comrades and leaders. The socialist, the syndicalist, the internationalist of yesterday stands forward as a banner-bearer in the great mutual massacre and his voice is the loudest to cheer on the dogs of war.

Another recent illusion was the power of Courts of Arbitration and Concerts of Europe to prevent war. There again the course that events immediately took was sufficiently ironic; for the institution of the great Court of international arbitration was followed up by a series of little and great wars which led by an inexorable logical chain to the long-dreaded European conflict and the monarch who had first conceived the idea, was also the first to unsheathe his sword in a conflict dictated on both sides by the most unrighteous greed and aggression. In fact this series of wars, whether fought in Northern or Southern Africa, in Manchuria or the Balkans, were marked most prominently by the spirit which disregards cynically that very idea of inherent and existing rights, that balance of law and equity upon which alone arbitration can be founded. As for the Concert of Europe, it seems far enough from us now, almost antediluvian in its antiquity, — as it belongs indeed to the age before the deluge; but we can remember well enough what an unmusical and discordant concert it was, what a series of fumblings and blunderings and how its diplomacy led us fatally to the inevitable event against which it struggled. Now it is suggested by many to substitute a United States of Europe for the defunct Concert and for the poor helpless Hague tribunal an effective Court of international law with force behind it to impose its decisions. But so long as men go on believing in the sovereign power of machinery, it is not likely that the gods either will cease from their studied irony.

There have been other speculations and reasonings; ingenious minds have searched for a firmer and more rational ground of faith. The first of these was propounded in a book by a Russian writer which had an enormous success in its day but has now passed into the silence. Science was to bring war to an end by making it physically impossible. It was mathematically proved that with modern weapons two equal armies would fight each other to a standstill, attack would become impossible except by numbers thrice those of the defence and war therefore would bring no military decision but only an infructuous upheaval and disturbance of the organised life of the nations. When the Russo-Japanese war almost immediately proved that attack and victory were still possible and the battle-fury of man superior to the fury of his death-dealing engines, another book was published, called by a title which has turned into a jest upon the writer, *The Great Illusion*, to prove that the idea of a commercial advantage to be gained by war and conquest was an illusion and that as soon as this was understood and the sole benefit of peaceful interchange realised, the peoples would abandon a method of settlement now chiefly undertaken from motives of commercial expansion, yet whose disastrous result was only to disorganise fatally the commercial prosperity it sought to serve. The present war came as the immediate answer of the gods to this sober and rational proposition. It has been fought for conquest and commercial expansion and it is proposed, even when it has been fought out on the field, to follow it up by a commercial struggle between the belligerent nations.

The men who wrote these books were capable thinkers but they ignored the one thing that matters, human nature. The present war has justified to a certain extent the Russian writer though by developments he did not foresee; scientific warfare has brought military movement to a standstill and baffled the strategist and the tactician, it has rendered decisive victory impossible except by overwhelming numbers or an overwhelming weight of artillery. But this has not made war impossible, it has only changed its character; it has at the most replaced the war of military decisions by that of military and financial exhaustion aided by the grim weapon of famine. The English writer on the other hand erred by isolating the economic motive as the one factor that weighed; he ignored the human lust of dominion which, carried into the terms of commercialism, means the undisputed control of markets and the exploitation of helpless populations. Again, when we rely upon the disturbance of organised national and international life as a preventive of war, we forget the boundless power of self-adaptation which man possesses; that power has been shown strikingly enough in the skill and ease with which the organisation and finance of peace were replaced in the present crisis by the organisation and finance of war. And when we rely upon Science to make war impossible, we forget that the progress of Science means a series of surprises and that it means also a constant effort of human ingenuity to overcome impossibilities and find fresh means of satisfying our ideas, desires and instincts. Science may well make war of the present type with shot and shell and mines and battleships an impossibility and yet develop and put in their place simpler or more summary means which may bring back an easier organisation of warfare.

So long as war does not become psychologically impossible, it will remain or, if banished for a while, return. War itself, it is hoped, will end war; the expense, the horror, the butchery, the disturbance of tranquil life, the whole confused sanguinary madness of the thing has reached or will reach such colossal proportions that the human race will fling the monstrosity behind it in weariness and disgust. But weariness and disgust, horror and pity, even the opening of the eyes to reason by the practical fact of the waste of human life and energy and the harm and extravagance are not permanent factors; they last only while the lesson is fresh. Afterwards, there is forgetfulness;

human nature recuperates itself and recovers the instincts that were temporarily dominated. A long peace, even a certain organisation of peace may conceivably result, but so long as the heart of man remains what it is, the peace will come to an end, the organisation will break down under the stress of human passions. War is no longer, perhaps, a biological necessity, but it is still a psychological necessity; what is within us, must manifest itself outside.

Meanwhile it is well that every false hope and confident prediction should be answered as soon as may well be by the irony of the gods; for only so can we be driven to the perception of the real remedy. Only when man has developed not merely a fellow-feeling with all men, but a dominant sense of unity and commonalty, only when he is aware of them not merely as brothers, — that is a fragile bond, — but as parts of himself, only when he has learned to live not in his separate personal and communal ego-sense, but in a larger universal consciousness can the phenomenon of war, with whatever weapons, pass out of his life without the possibility of return. Meanwhile that he should struggle even by illusions towards that end, is an excellent sign; for it shows that the truth behind the illusion is pressing towards the hour when it may become manifest as reality.

The Unseen Power

A WAR has ended, a world has perished in the realm of thought and begun to disappear in the order of outward Nature. The war that has ended, was fought in physical trenches, with shell and shot, with machine-gun and tank and aeroplane, with mangling of limbs and crash of physical edifices and rude uptearing of the bosom of our mother earth; the new war, or the old continued in another form, that is already beginning, will be fought more with mental trenches and bomb-proof shelters, with reconnaissances and batteries and moving machines of thought and word, propaganda and parties and programmes, with mangling of the desire-souls of men and of nations, crash of many kinds of thrones and high-built institutions and strong uptearing of the old earth of custom which man has formed as a layer over the restless molten forces of evolutionary Nature. The old world that is shaken outwardly in its bases and already crumbling in some of its parts, is the economic and materialistic civilisation which mankind has been forming for the last few centuries from once new materials now growing rapidly effete pieced out with broken remnants of antiquity and the middle ages. The period of military conflict just at an end came to breach that which thought had already been sapping, an era of revolutions has opened which is likely to complete the ruin and prepare the building of a new structure. In this struggle the question arises to the thinking man, what Power or what Powers are expressing their will or their strivings in this upheaval? and we, what power or powers shall we serve? to what thing inward or superhuman, since outward thrones and systems are but as leaves driven before the storm-wind of the breath of Time, shall we owe allegiance? what or whom is it that we shall fight to enthrone?

Men fight for their personal or communal or national interests or for ideas and principles of which they make watchwords and battle-cries. But the largest human interests are only means and instruments which some Force greater than themselves breaks or uses in its inconscient impulse or else for its conscious purposes; ideas and principles are births of our minds which are born, reign and pass away and they are mere words unless they express some power of our being and of world-being which finds in them a mental self-expression. Something there is greater than our thoughts and desires, something more constant and insistent which lasts and grows beyond and yet by their changings. If no such thing were, then all this human effort would be a vain perturbation, the life of man only the busy instinctive routine of the hive and the ant-hill on a little higher scale, but with more useless suffering in it and less economy and wisdom, and our thought a vain glittering of imaginations weaving out involuntarily a web like that of old legend that is spun and respun only to be undone and again undone and of reasonings that build a series of intellectual and practical conventions which we represent to ourselves as the truth and the right, making the fallacies of our minds a substitute for wisdom and the fallacies of our social living a substitute for happiness. For this is certain that nothing we form and no outward system we create can last beyond its appointed or else its possible time. As this great materialistic civilisation of Europe to which the high glowing dawn of the Renaissance gave its brilliant birth and the dry brazen afternoon of nineteenth-century rationalism its hard maturity, is passing away and the bosom of earth and the soul of man heave a sigh of relief at its going, so whatever new civilisation we construct after this evening of the cycle, *yuga-sandhyā*, on which we are entering, — for those are surely mistaken who think it is already the true dawn, — will also live its time and collapse fiercely or decay dully, — unless indeed there is that eternal Spirit in things and he should have found in its keynote the first sounds of the strain of his real harmony, in which case it may be the first of an ascending series of changes to the creation of a greater humanity. Otherwise, all this vast clash and onset of peoples and world-wide bloodshed would be only a fortuitous nightmare, and the happiest known age of nation or mankind only the pleasant dream of a moment. Then the old-world gospel which bade us look upon human life as a vanity of vanities, would be the only wisdom.

But with that creed the soul of man has never remained contented and still less can we at the present day live in it, because this intuition of a greater Power than our apparent selves in the workings of the world is now growing upon the race and the vast sense of an unaccomplished aim in the urge of life is driving it to an unprecedented effort of human thought and energy. In such a moment even the hugest calamities cannot exhaust the life or discourage its impetus, but rather impel it to a new élan of endeavour; for the flames of thought rise higher than the flames of the conflagration that destroys and see in it a meaning and the promise of a new creation. In the destruction that has been effected, in the void that has been left the mind sees only more room for hope to grow and a wide space that the Spirit who builds in Time has cleared for his new structure. For who that has eyes at all to see cannot see this, that in what has happened, immense Powers have been at work which nourish a vaster world-purpose than the egoistic mind of individual or nation could mete with their yard-measure of narrow personal idea or communal interest and for which the motives and passions of governments and peoples were only tools or opportunities? When the autocrats and the war-lords of the east and the centre resolved to dare this huge catastrophe in order to seize from it the crown of their ambitions, when they drove madly to the precipice of an incalculable world-conflict, they could have no inkling that within four years or less their thrones would have fallen, themselves be slain or flee into exile and all for which they stood be hastening into the night of the past; only that which impelled them foresaw and intended it. Nor were the peoples who staggered unwillingly over the brink of war, more enlightened of the secret purpose: defence of what they were and possessed, wrath at a monstrous aggression which was a menace to their ordered European civilisation, drove their will and inflamed their resolution. Yet to convict that civilisation of error and prepare another era of humanity was the intention of the Force that has given them victory, its voice echoed confusedly in their thought and growing clearer in the minds of those who entered later with a deliberate and conscious will into the struggle.

Great has been the havoc and ruin, immense the suffering, thick the blood-red cloud of darkness enveloping the world, heavy the toll of life, bottomless the expenditure of treasure and human resources, and all has not yet been worked out, the whole price has not yet been paid; for the after-effects of the war are likely to be much greater than its present effects and much that by an effort of concentration has resisted the full shock of the earthquake will fall in the after-tremblings. Well might the mind of a man during the calamity, aware of the Power that stood over the world wrapped in this tempest, repeat the words of Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra, —

dṛṣṭvādbhutaṁ rūpam ugraṁ tavedaṁ
lokatrayaṁ pravyathitaṁ mahātman. . . .
dṛṣṭvā hi tvāṁ pravyathitāntarātmā
dhṛtiṁ na vindāmi śamaṁ ca viṣṇo. . . .
yathā nadīnāṁ bahavo'mbuvegāḥ
samudram evābhimukhā dravanti,
tathā tavāmī nara-loka-vīrā
viśanti vaktrāṇyabhivijvalanti.
yathā pradīptaṁ jvalanaṁ pataṅgā
viśanti nāśāya samṛddhavegāḥ,
tathaiva nāśāya viśanti lokās
tavāpi vaktrāṇi samṛddhavegāḥ.
lelihyase grasamānaḥ samantāl
lokān samagrān vadanair jvaladbhiḥ,
tejobhir āpūrya jagat samagraṁ
bhāsas tavogrāḥ pratapanti viṣṇo.
ākhyāhi me ko bhavān ugrarūpo
namo'stu te devavara prasīda,
vijñātum icchāmi bhavantam ādyaṁ
na hi prajānāmi tava pravṛttim.

"When is seen this thy fierce and astounding form, the three worlds are all in pain and suffer, O thou mighty Spirit. . . . Troubled and in anguish is the soul within me as I look upon thee and I find no peace or gladness. . . . As the speed of many rushing waters races towards the ocean, so all these heroes of the world of man are entering into thy many mouths of flame. As a swarm of moths with ever increasing speed fall to their destruction into a fire that someone has kindled, so now the nations with ever increasing speed are entering into thy jaws of doom. Thou lickest the regions all around with thy tongues and thou art swallowing up all the nations in thy mouths of burning; all the world is filled with the blaze of thy energies; fierce and terrible are thy lustres and they burn us, O Vishnu. Declare to me who art thou that comest to us in this form of fierceness; salutation to thee, O thou great godhead, turn thy heart to grace! I would know who art thou who wast from the beginning, for I know not the will of thy workings."

If the first answer might seem to come in the same words that answered the appeal of Arjuna, "I am the Time-Spirit, destroyer of the world, arisen huge-statured for the destruction of the nations,"

kālo'smi loka-kṣaya-kṛt pravṛddho
lokān samāhartum iha pravṛttaḥ,

and the voice the same to those who would shrink back hesitating from participation in the devastating struggle and massacre, "Without thee even all these shall cease to be who stand in the opposing hosts, for already have I slain them in my foreseeing will; know thyself to be an instrument only of an end predestined," — still in the end it is the Friend of man, the Charioteer of his battle and his journey who appears in the place of the form of destruction and the outcome of all the ruin is the *dharmarājya*, the kingdom of the Dharma. To humanity as to the warrior of Kurukshetra the concluding message has been uttered, "Therefore arise, destroy the foe, enjoy a rich and happy kingdom." But the kingdom of what Dharma? It is doubtful enough whether as the nations were blind to the nature of the destruction that was coming, they may not be at least purblind to the nature of the construction that is to be created. An increase of mechanical freedom to be lavished or doled out according to the needs, interests, hesitations of the old-world forces that still remain erect, a union effected by a patchwork of the remnants of the past and the unshaped materials of the future, a credit and debit account with fate writing off so much of the evil and error of the past as can no longer be kept and writing up as good capital, — with some diminutions by way of acquitment of conscience, part payment of overdue debts, — all that has not been hopelessly destroyed, an acceptance of the change already effected by the tempest or made immediately inevitable and a new system of embankments to prevent the farther encroachments of the flood, is not likely to put a successful term to the cataclysm. Even if a short-sighted sagacity could bring this about for a time by a combined effort of successful and organised egoisms making terms with the powerful Idea-forces that are abroad as the messengers of the Time-Spirit, still it would be only an artificial check leading to a new upheaval in the not distant future. A liquidation of the old bankrupt materialistic economism which will enable it to set up business again under a new name with a reserve capital and a clean ledger, will be a futile attempt to cheat destiny. Commercialism has no doubt its own dharma, its ideal of utilitarian justice and law and adjustment, its civilisation presided over by the sign of the Balance, and, its old measures being now annulled, it is eager enough to start afresh with a new system of calculated values. But a *dharmarājya* of the half-penitent Vaishya is not to be the final consummation of a time like ours pregnant with new revelations of thought and spirit and new creations in life, nor is a golden or rather a copper-gilt age of the sign of the Balance to be the glorious reward of this anguish and travail of humanity. It is surely the kingdom of another and higher dharma that is in preparation.

What that dharma is we can only know if we know this Power whose being and whose thought are at work behind all that we attempt and suffer, conceive and strive for. A former humanity conceived of it as a creative Divinity or almighty Power high above man and his being and his effort or of a pantheon or hierarchy of universal Powers who looked upon and swayed the labour and passion and thought of the race. But the system of cosmic deities lacked a base and a principle of unity in their workings and above it the ancients were obliged to conceive of a vague and ineffable Divinity, the unknown God to whom they built a nameless altar, or a Necessity with face of sphinx and hands of bronze to whom the gods themselves had to give an ignorant obedience, and it left the life of man at once the victim of an inscrutable fate and the puppet of superhuman caprices. That to a great extent he is so long as he lives in his vital ego and is the servant of his own personal ideas and passions. Later religions gave a name and some body of form and quality to the one unknown Godhead and proclaimed an ideal law which they gave out as his word and scripture. But the dogmatism of a partial and unlived knowledge and the external tendencies of the human mind darkened the illuminations of religion with the confusions of error and threw over its face strange masks of childish and cruel superstitions. Religion too by putting God far above in distant heavens made man too much of a worm of the earth little and vile before his Creator and admitted only by a caprice of his favour to a doubtful salvation in superhuman worlds. Modern thought seeking to make a clear riddance of these past conceptions had to substitute something else in its place, and what it saw and put there was the material law of Nature and the biological law of life of which human reason was to be the faithful exponent and human science the productive utiliser and profiteer. But to apply the mechanical blindness of the rule of physical Nature as the sole guide of thinking and seeing man is to go against the diviner law of his being and maim his higher potentiality. Material and vital Nature is only a first form of our being and to overcome and rise beyond its formula is the very sense of a human evolution. Another and greater Power than hers is the master of this effort, and human reason or human science is not that Godhead, but can only be at best one and not the greatest of its ministers. It is not human reason and human science which have been working out their ends in or through the tempest that has laid low so many of their constructions. A greater Spirit awaits a deeper questioning to reveal his unseen form and his hidden purpose.

Something of this truth we have begun to see dimly, in the return to more spiritual notions and in the idea of a kingdom of God to be built in the life of humanity. On the old sense of a Power in the universe of which the world that we live in is the field, is supervening the nearer perception of a Godhead in man, the unseen king of whom the outer man is the veil and of whom our mind and life can be the servants and living instruments and our perfected souls the clear mirrors. But we have to see more lucidly and in the whole before we can know this Godhead. There are three powers and forms in which the Being who is at work in things presents himself to our vision. There is first the form of him that we behold in the universe, but that, or at least what we see of it in the appearances of things, is not the whole truth of him; it is indeed only a first material shape and vital foundation which he has offered for the starting-point of our growth, an initial sum of preliminary realisations from which we have to proceed and to transcend them. The next form is that of which man alone here has the secret, for in him it is progressively revealing itself in a partial and always incomplete accomplishing and unfolding. His thoughts, his ideals, his dreams, his attempts at a high self-exceeding are the clues by which he attempts to discover the Spirit, the moulds in which he tries to seize the form of the Divinity. But they too are only a partial light and not the whole form of the Godhead. Something waits beyond which the human mind approaches in a shapeless aspiration to an ineffable Perfection, an infinite Light, an infinite Power, an infinite Love, a universal Good and Beauty. This is not something that is not yet in perfect being, a God who is becoming or who has to be created by man; it is the Eternal of whom this infinite ideal is a mental reflection. It is beyond the form of the universe and these psychological realisations of the human being and yet it is here too in man and subsists surrounding him in all the powers of the world he lives in. It is both the Spirit who is in the universe and the invisible king in man who is the master of his works. It develops in the universe through laws which are not complete here or not filled in in their sense and action until humanity shall have fully evolved in its nature the potentialities of the mind and spirit. It works in man, but through his individual and corporate ego so long as he dwells within the knot of his present mentality. Only when his race knows God and lives in the Divine, will the ideal sense of his strivings begin to unfold itself and the kingdom be founded, *rājyaṁ samṛddham*.

When we try to build our outer life in obedience to our ego, our interests, our passions or our vital needs only or else in a form of our vital needs served and enlarged by our intellect, but not enlightened with a greater spiritual meaning, we are living within the law of the first cosmic formulation. It is as insistent Rudra that the unseen Power meets us there, the Master of the evolution, the Lord of Karma, the King of justice and judgment, who is easily placated with sacrifice and effort, for even to the Asura and Rakshasa, the Titan and the giant he gives the fruit of their *tapasyā*, but who is swift also to wrath and every time that man offends against the law, even though it be in ignorance, or stands stiff in his ego against the urge of the evolution or provokes the rebound of Karma, he strikes without mercy; through strife and stumblings, through passioning and yearning and fierce stress of will and giant endeavour, construction and destruction, slow labour of evolution and rushing speed of revolution Rudra works out the divine purpose. When on the contrary we seek to shape our life by the Ideal, it is the severe Lord of Truth who meets us with his questioning. Then in so far as we work in the sincerity of the inner truth, we shall live in an increasing harmony of the result of a divine working. But if the measures of our ideal are false or if we cast into the balance the unjust weights of our egoism and hypocrisy and self-deceiving or if we misuse the truth for our narrower ends, if we turn it into a lie or a convention or an outward machinery without the living soul of the truth in it, then we must pay a heavy reckoning. For as before we fell into the terrible hand of Rudra, so now we fall into the subtler more dangerous noose of Varuna. Only if we can see the Truth and live in it, shall our aspiration be satisfied.

Then it is the Master of Freedom, the Lord of Love, the Spirit of unity who shall inform the soul of the individual and take up the world's endeavour. He is the great Liberator and the strong and gentle founder of Perfection.

It is the wrath of Rudra that has swept over the earth and the track of his footprints can be seen in these ruins. There has come as a result upon the race the sense of having lived in many falsehoods and the need of building according to an ideal. Therefore we have now to meet the question of the Master of Truth. Two great words of the divine Truth have forced themselves insistently on our minds through the crash of the ruin and the breath of the tempest and are now the leading words of the hoped-for reconstruction, — freedom and unity. But everything depends, first, upon the truth of our vision of them, secondly, upon the sincerity with which we apply it, last and especially on the inwardness of our realisation. Vain will be the mechanical construction of unity, if unity is not in the heart of the race and if it be made only a means for safeguarding and organising our interests; the result will then be only, as it was in the immediate past, a fiercer strife and new outbreaks of revolution and anarchy. No paltering mechanisms which have the appearance but not the truth of freedom, will help us; the new structure, however imposing, will only become another prison and compel a fresh struggle for liberation. The one safety for man lies in learning to live from within outward, not depending on institutions and machinery to perfect him, but out of his growing inner perfection availing to shape a more perfect form and frame of life; for by this inwardness we shall best be able both to see the truth of the high things which we now only speak with our lips and form into outward intellectual constructions, and to apply their truth sincerely to all our outward living. If we are to found the kingdom of God in humanity, we must first know God and see and live the diviner truth of our being in ourselves; otherwise how shall a new manipulation of the constructions of the reason and scientific systems of efficiency which have failed us in the past, avail to establish it? It is because there are plenty of signs that the old error continues and only a minority, leaders perhaps in light, but not yet in action, are striving to see more clearly, inwardly and truly, that we must expect as yet rather the last twilight which divides the dying from the unborn age than the real dawning. For a time, since the mind of man is not yet ready, the old spirit and method may yet be strong and seem for a short while to prosper; but the future lies with the men and nations who first see beyond both the glare and the dusk the gods of the morning and prepare themselves to be fit instruments of the Power that is pressing towards the light of a greater ideal.

Self-Determination

A NEW phrase has recently been cast out from the blood-stained yeast of war into the shifty language of politics, — that strange language full of Maya and falsities, of self-illusion and deliberate delusion of others, which almost immediately turns all true and vivid phrases into a jargon, so that men may fight in a cloud of words without any clear sense of the thing they are battling for, — it is the luminous description of liberty as the just power, the freely exercised right of self-determination. The word is in itself a happy discovery, a thought-sign of real usefulness. For it helps to make definite and manageable what was apt till now to be splendidly vague and nebulous. Its invention is a sign at once of a growing clarity of conception about this great good which man has been striving to achieve for himself through the centuries, as yet without any satisfying success to boast of anywhere, and of the increasing subjectivity of our ideas about life. This clarity and this subjectivity must indeed go together; for we can only get good hold of the right end of the great ideas which should govern our ways of living when we begin to understand that their healthful process is from within outward, and that the opposite method, the mechanical, ends always by turning living realities into formal conventions. No doubt, to man the animal the mechanical alone seems to be real; but to man the soul, man the thinker through whom we arrive at our inner manhood, only that is true which he can feel as a truth within him and feel without as his external self-expression. All else is a deceptive charlatanry, an acceptance of shows for truths, of external appearances for realities, which are so many devices to keep him in bondage.

Liberty in one shape or another ranks among the most ancient and certainly among the most difficult aspirations of our race: it arises from a radical instinct of our being and is yet opposed to all our circumstances; it is our eternal good and our condition of perfection, but our temporal being has failed to find its key. That perhaps is because true freedom is only possible if we live in the infinite, live, as the Vedanta bids us, in and from our self-existent being; but our natural and temporal energies seek for it at first not in ourselves, but in our external conditions. This great indefinable thing, liberty, is in its highest and ultimate sense a state of being; it is self living in itself and determining by its own energy what it shall be inwardly and, eventually, by the growth of a divine spiritual power within determining too what it shall make of its external circumstances and environment; that is the largest and freest sense of self-determination. But when we start from the natural and temporal life, what we practically come to mean by liberty is a convenient elbow-room for our natural energies to satisfy themselves without being too much impinged upon by the self-assertiveness of others. And that is a difficult problem to solve, because the liberty of one, immediately it begins to act, knocks up fatally against the liberty of another; the free running of many in the same field means a free chaos of collisions. That was at one time glorified under the name of the competitive system, and dissatisfaction with its results has led to the opposite idea of State socialism, which supposes that the negation of individual liberty in the collective being of the State can be made to amount by some mechanical process to a positive sum of liberty nicely distributable to all in a carefully guarded equality. The individual gives up his freedom of action and possession to the State which in return doles out to him a regulated liberty, let us say, a sufficient elbow-room so parcelled out that he shall not at all butt into the ribs of his neighbour. It is admirable in theory, logically quite unexceptionable, but in practice, one suspects, it would amount to a very oppressive, because a very mechanical slavery of the individual to the community, or rather to something indefinite that calls itself the community.

Experience has so far shown us that the human attempt to arrive at a mechanical freedom has only resulted in a very relative liberty and even that has been enjoyed for the most part by some at the expense of others. It has amounted usually to the rule of the majority by a minority, and many strange things have been done in its name. Ancient liberty and democracy meant in Greece the self-rule — variegated by periodical orgies of mutual throat-cutting — of a smaller number of freemen of all ranks who lived by the labour of a great mass of slaves. In recent times liberty and democracy have been, and still are, a cant assertion which veils under a skilfully moderated plutocratic system the rule of an organised successful bourgeoisie over a proletariate at first submissive, afterwards increasingly dissatisfied and combined for recalcitrant self-assertion. The earliest use of liberty and democracy by the emancipated proletariate has been the crude forceful tyranny of an ill-organised labour oligarchy over a quite disorganised peasantry and an impotently recalcitrant bourgeoisie. And just as the glorious possession of liberty by the community has been held to be consistent with the oppression of four-fifths or three-fifths of the population by the remaining fraction, so it has till lately been held to be quite consistent with the complete subjection of one half of mankind, the woman half, to the physically stronger male. The series continues through a whole volume of anomalies, including of course the gloriously beneficent and profitable exploitation of subject peoples by emancipated nations who, it seems, are entitled to that domination by their priesthood of the sacred cult of freedom. They mean no doubt to extend it to the exploited at some distant date, but take care meanwhile to pay themselves the full price of their holy office before they deliver the article. Even the best machinery of this mechanical freedom yet discovered amounts to the unmodified will of a bare majority, or rather to its selection of a body of rulers who coerce in its name all minorities and lead it to issues of which it has itself no clear perception.

These anomalies, — anomalies of many kinds are inseparable from the mechanical method, — are a sign that the real meaning of liberty has not yet been understood. Nevertheless the aspiration and the effort itself towards the realisation of a great idea cannot fail to bear some fruit, and modern liberty and democracy, however imperfect and relative, have had this result that for the communities which have followed them, they have removed the pressure of the more obvious, outward and aggressive forms of oppression and domination which were inherent in the systems of the past. They have made life a little more tolerable for the mass, and if they have not yet made life free, they have at least given more liberty to thought and to the effort to embody a freer thought in a more adequate form of life. This larger space for the thought in man and its workings was the necessary condition for a growing clarity which must enlighten in the end the crude conceptions with which the race has started and refine the crude methods and forms in which it has embodied them. The attempt to govern life by an increasing light of thought rather than allow the rough and imperfect actualities of life to govern and to limit the mind is a distinct sign of advance in human progress. But the true turning-point will come with the farther step which initiates the attempt to govern life by that of which thought itself is only a sign and an instrument, the soul, the inner being, and to make our ways of living a freer opportunity for the growing height and breadth of its need of self-fulfilment. That is the real, the profounder sense which we shall have to learn to attach to the idea of self-determination as the effective principle of liberty.

The principle of self-determination really means this that within every living human creature, man, woman and child, and equally within every distinct human collectivity growing or grown, half developed or adult there is a self, a being, which has the right to grow in its own way, to find itself, to make its life a full and a satisfied instrument and image of its being. This is the first principle which must contain and overtop all others; the rest is a question of conditions, means, expedients, accommodations, opportunities, capacities, limitations, none of which must be allowed to abrogate the sovereignty of the first essential principle. But it can only prevail if it is understood with a right idea of this self and its needs and claims. The first danger of the principle of self-determination, as of all others, is that it may be interpreted, like most of the ideals of our human existence in the past, in the light of the ego, its interests and its will towards self-satisfaction. So interpreted it will carry us no farther than before; we shall arrive at a point where our principle is brought up short, fails us, turns into a false or a half-true assertion of the mind and a convention of form which covers realities that are quite the opposite of itself.

For the ego has inalienably the instinct of a double self-assertion, its self-assertion against other egos and its self-assertion by means of other egos; in all its expansion it is impelled to subordinate their need to its own, to use them for its own purpose and for that purpose to establish some kind of control or domination or property in what it uses, whether by force or by dexterity, openly or covertly, by absorption or by some skilful turn of exploitation. Human lives cannot run upon free parallels; for they are compelled by Nature continually to meet, impinge on each other, intermix, and in the ego life that means always a clash. The first idea of our reason suggests that our human relations may be subjected to a mechanical accommodation of interests which will get rid of the clash and the strife; but this can only be done up to a certain point: at best we diminish some of the violence and crude obviousness of the clashing and the friction and give them a more subtle and less grossly perceptible form. Within that subtler form the principle of strife and exploitation continues; for always the egoistic instinct must be to use the accommodations to which it is obliged or induced to assent, as far as possible for its own advantage, and it is only limited in this impulse by the limits of its strength and capacity, by the sense of expediency and consequence, by the perception of some necessity for respecting other egoisms in order that its own egoism too may be respected. But these considerations can only tone down or hedge in the desire of a gross or a subtle domination and exploitation of others; they do not abrogate it.

The human mind has resorted to ethics as a corrective; but the first laws of ethical conduct also succeed at best in checking only the egoistic rule of life and do not overcome it. Therefore the ethical idea has pushed itself forward into the other and opposite principle of altruism. The main general results have been a clearer perception of collective egoisms and their claim on the individual egoism and, secondly, a quite uncertain and indefinable mixture, strife and balancing of egoistic and altruistic motive in our conduct. Often enough altruism is there chiefly in profession or at best a quite superficial will which does not belong to the centre of our action; it becomes then either a deliberate or else a half-conscious camouflage by which egoism masks itself and gets at its object without being suspected. But even a sincere altruism hides within itself the ego, and to be able to discover the amount of it hidden up in our most benevolent or even self-sacrificing actions is the acid test of sincere self-introspection, nor can anyone really quite know himself who has not made ruthlessly this often painful analysis. It could not be otherwise; for the law of life cannot be self-immolation; self-sacrifice can only be a step in self-fulfilment. Nor can life be in its nature a one-sided self-giving; all giving must contain in itself some measure of receiving to have any fruitful value or significance. Altruism itself is more important even by the good it does to ourselves than by the good it does to others; for the latter is often problematical, but the former is certain, and its good consists in the growth of self, in an inner self-heightening and self-expansion. Not then any general law of altruism, but rather a self-recognition based upon mutual recognition must be the broad rule of our human relations. Life is self-fulfilment which moves upon a ground of mutuality; it involves a mutual use of one by the other, in the end of all by all. The whole question is whether this shall be done on the lower basis of the ego, attended by strife, friction and collision with whatever checks and controls, or whether it cannot be done by a higher law of our being which shall discover a means of reconciliation, free reciprocity and unity.

A right idea of the rule of self-determination may help to set us on the way to the discovery of this higher law. For we may note that this phrase self-determination reconciles and brings together in one complex notion the idea of liberty and the idea of law. These two powers of being tend in our first conceptions, as in the first appearances of life itself, to be opposed to each other as rivals or enemies; we find therefore ranged against each other the champions of law and order and the defenders of liberty. There is the ideal which sets order first and liberty either nowhere or in an inferior category, because it is willing to accept any coercion of liberty which will maintain the mechanical stability of order; and there is the ideal which on the contrary sets liberty first and regards law either as a hostile compression or a temporarily necessary evil or at best a means of securing liberty by guarding against any violent and aggressive interference with it as between man and man. This use of law as a means of liberty may be advocated only in a minimum reducible to the just quantity necessary for its purpose, the individualistic idea of the matter, or raised to a maximum as in the socialistic idea that the largest sum of regulation will total up to or at least lead up to or secure the larger sum of freedom. We have continually too the most curious mixing up of the two ideas, as in the old-time claim of the capitalist to prevent the freedom of labour to organise so that the liberty of contract might be preserved, or in the singular sophistical contention of the Indian defenders of orthodox caste rigidity on its economic side that coercion of a man to follow his ancestral profession in disregard not only of his inclinations, but of his natural tendencies and aptitudes is a securing to the individual of his natural right, his freedom to follow his hereditary nature. We see a similar confusion of ideas in the claim of European statesmen to train Asiatic or African peoples to liberty, which means in fact to teach them in the beginning liberty in the school of subjection and afterwards to compel them at each stage in the progress of a mechanical self-government to satisfy the tests and notions imposed on them by an alien being and consciousness instead of developing freely a type and law of their own. The right idea of self-determination makes a clean sweep of these confusions. It makes it clear that liberty should proceed by the development of the law of one's own being determined from within, evolving out of oneself and not determined from outside by the idea and will of another. There remains the problem of relations, of the individual and the collective self-determination and of the interaction of the self-determination of one on the self-determination of another. That cannot be finally settled by any mechanical solution, but only by the discovery of some meeting-place of the law of our self-determination with the common law of mutuality, where they begin to become one. It signifies in fact the discovery of an inner and larger self other than the mere ego, in which our individual self-fulfilment no longer separates us from others but at each step of our growth calls for an increasing unity.

But it is from the self-determination of the free individual within the free collectivity in which he lives that we have to start, because so only can we be sure of a healthy growth of freedom and because too the unity to be arrived at is that of individuals growing freely towards perfection and not of human machines working in regulated unison or of souls suppressed, mutilated and cut into one or more fixed geometrical patterns. The moment we sincerely accept this idea, we have to travel altogether away from the old notion of the right of property of man in man which still lurks in the human mind where it does not possess it. The trail of this notion is all over our past, the right of property of the father over the child, of the man over the woman, of the ruler or the ruling class or power over the ruled, of the State over the individual. The child was in the ancient patriarchal idea the live property of the father; he was his creation, his production, his own reproduction of himself; the father, rather than God or the universal Life in place of God, stood as the author of the child's being; and the creator has every right over his creation, the producer over his manufacture. He had the right to make of him what he willed, and not what the being of the child really was within, to train and shape and cut him according to the parental ideas and not rear him according to his own nature's deepest needs, to bind him to the paternal career or the career chosen by the parent and not that to which his nature and capacity and inclination pointed, to fix for him all the critical turning-points of his life even after he had reached maturity. In education the child was regarded not as a soul meant to grow, but as brute psychological stuff to be shaped into a fixed mould by the teacher. We have travelled to another conception of the child as a soul with a being, a nature and capacities of his own who must be helped to find them, to find himself, to grow into their maturity, into a fullness of physical and vital energy and the utmost breadth, depth and height of his emotional, his intellectual and his spiritual being. So too the subjection of woman, the property of the man over the woman, was once an axiom of social life and has only in recent times been effectively challenged. So strong was or had become the instinct of this domination in the male animal man, that even religion and philosophy have had to sanction it, very much in that formula in which Milton expresses the height of masculine egoism, "He for God only, she for God in him," — if not actually indeed for him in the place of God. This idea too is crumbling into the dust, though its remnants still cling to life by many strong tentacles of old legislation, continued instinct, persistence of traditional ideas; the fiat has gone out against it in the claim of woman to be regarded, she too, as a free individual being. The right of property of the rulers in the ruled has perished by the advance of liberty and democracy; in the form of national imperialism it still indeed persists, though more now by commercial greed than by the instinct of political domination; intellectually this form too of possessional egoism has received its death-blow, vitally it still endures. The right of property of the State in the individual which threatened to take the place of all these, has now had its real spiritual consequence thrown into relief by the lurid light of the war, and we may hope that its menace to human liberty will be diminished by this clearer knowledge. We are at least advancing to a point at which it may be possible to make the principle of self-determination a present and pressing, if not yet an altogether dominant force in the whole shaping of human life.

Self-determination viewed from this subjective standpoint carries us back at once towards the old spiritual idea of the Being within, whose action, once known and self-revealed, is not an obedience to external and mechanical impulses, but proceeds in each from the powers of the soul, an action self-determined by the essential quality and principle of which all our becoming is the apparent movement, *svabhāva-niyataṁ karma*. But it is only as we rise higher and higher in ourselves and find out our true self and its true powers that we can get at the full truth of this swabhava. Our present existence is at the most a growth towards it and therefore an imperfection, and its chief imperfection is the individual's egoistic idea of self which reappears enlarged in the collective egoism. Therefore an egoistic self-determination or a modified individualism, is not the true solution; if that were all, we could never get beyond a balance and, in progress, a zigzag of conflict and accommodation. The ego is not the true circle of the self; the law of mutuality which meets it at every turn and which it misuses, arises from the truth that there is a secret unity between our self and the self of others and therefore between our own lives and the lives of others. The law of our self-determination has to wed itself to the self-determination of others and to find the way to enact a real union through this mutuality. But its basis can only be found within and not through any mechanical adjustment. It lies in the discovery within by the being in the course of its self-expansion and self-fulfilment that these things at every turn depend on the self-expansion and self-fulfilment of those around us, because we are secretly one being with them and one life. It is in philosophical language the recognition of the one self in all who fulfils himself variously in each; it is the finding of the law of the divine being in each unifying itself with the law of the divine being in all. At once the key of the problem is shifted from without to within, from the visible externalities of social and political adjustment to the spiritual life and truth which can alone provide its key.

Not that the outer life has to be neglected; on the contrary the pursual of the principle in one field or on one level, provided we do not limit or fix ourselves in it, helps its disclosure in other fields and upon other levels. Still if we have not the unity within, it is in vain that we shall try to enforce it from without by law and compulsion or by any assertion in outward forms. Intellectual assertion too, like the mechanical, is insufficient; only the spiritual can give it, because it alone has the secure power of realisation. The ancient truth of the self is the eternal truth; we have to go back upon it in order to carry it out in newer and fuller ways for which a past humanity was not ready. The recognition and fulfilment of the divine being in oneself and in man, the kingdom of God within and in the race is the basis on which man must come in the end to the possession of himself as a free self-determining being and of mankind too in a mutually possessing self-expansion as a harmoniously self-determining united existence.

A League of Nations

ANCIENT tradition believed in a golden age of mankind which lay in the splendid infancy of a primeval past; it looked back to some type or symbol of original perfection, Saturnian epoch, Satya Yuga, an age of sincere being and free unity when the sons of heaven were leaders of the human life and mind and the law of God was written, not in ineffective books, but on the tablets of man's heart. Then he needed no violence of outer law or government to restrain him from evil or to cut and force his free being into the machine-made Procrustean mould of a social ideal; for a natural divine rule in his members was the spontaneous and sufficient safeguard of his liberty. This tradition was once so universal that one might almost be tempted to see in it the race memory of some golden and splendid realisation, not perhaps a miraculous divine beginning, but some past spiral cusp and apex, some topmost gloriously mounting arc of the cycles, — if there were not the equal chance of its being no more than a heightened example of that very common ideally retrospective tendency in the human mind which glorifies the past out of all perspective or proportion, blots out its shadows and sees it in some haze or deceiving light against the dark immediate shadow of the present, or else a projection from his sense of the something divine, pure and perfect within him from which he has fallen, placed by symbolic legend not in the eternal but in time, not inwardly in his spiritual being, but outwardly in his obscure existence on this crude and transient crust of Earth. What concerns us more is that we find often associated with this memory or this backward-looking illusion, a vague hope far or near, or even a more precise prophetic or religious forward-looking tradition of a coming back to us of that golden perfection, *Astraea redux, Saturnia regna*, — let us say, a return from the falling line of the cycle to another similar, perhaps even greater high-glowing cusp and apex. Thus in the human mind which looks always before and after, its great dream of the ideal past completed itself by a greater dream of the ideal future.

These things modern man with his scientific and secularised mentality finds it difficult to believe in unless he has first theosophised or mysticised himself into a fine freedom from the positive scientific intelligence. Science which traces so confidently the nobly complete and astonishing evolution of our race in a fairly swift straight line from the ape man to the dazzlingly unfixable brilliancy of Mr. Lloyd George and the dyspeptic greatness of Rockefeller, rejects the old traditions as dreams and poetic figments. But to recompense us for our loss it has given us instead a more practicable, persistent and immediate vision of modern progress and the future hope of a rational and mechanically perfectible society: that is the one real religion still left, the new Jerusalem of the modern creed of a positivist sociology. The ideal past has lost its glamour, but a sober glamour of the future is brought near to us and takes on to the constructive human reason a closer hue of reality. The Asiatic mind is indeed still incurably prone to the older type of imagination which took and still takes so many inspiring forms, second coming of Christ, City of God, the Divine Family, advent of Messiah, Mahdi or Avatar, — but whatever the variety of the form, the essence is the same, a religious or spiritual idealisation of a possible future humanity. The European temperament — and we are all trying to become for the moment, superficially at least, white, brown, yellow or black Europeans, — demands something more familiarly terrestrial and tangible, a secular, social, political dream of evolving humanity, a perfected democracy, socialism, communism, anarchism. But whichever line we take and whether it be truth or illusion, the thing behind is the same and would seem to be a necessity of our human mind and will to action. We cannot do without some kind of futurist idealism. Something we must labour to build individually and collectively out of ourselves and our life, unless we would be content with the commonness and stumbling routine of a half-made and half-animal manhood, — a self-dethronement to which that which is greatest in us will never consent, — and man cannot build greatly whether in art or life, unless he can conceive an idea and form of perfection and, conceiving, believe in his power to achieve it out of however rebellious and unductile a stuff of nature. Deprive him of this faith in his power for perfection and you slay or maim his greatest creative or self-creative faculty. In the absence then of any immediate practicability of that higher and profounder dream of a spiritually united and perfected humanity, the dream of social and political meliorism may be accepted as the strongest available incentive to keep humanity going forward. It is better that it should have the ideal of a saving machinery than that it should have no ideal at all, no figure of a larger, better and sweeter life.

This secular dream of a future golden or half-golden age of a more perfected, rational and peacefully cooperative society has taken recently a singular step forward in the effectuating imagination of mankind and even got as far as some attempt at a first step towards actual effectuation. In ideal and imagination it has assumed the form of a political and economic society of the nations which will get rid of the cruel and devastating device of war, establish a reign of international law and order and solve without clash, strife or collision, by reason, by cooperation, by arbitration, by mutual accommodation all the more dangerous problems which still disturb or imperil the comfortable peace, amity and organised productiveness which should be the reasonable state of mankind. International peace, an ordered legality and arrangement of the world's affairs, a guaranteed liberty, — or for the unfit a preparation and schooling for liberty, — an organised unity of the life of the race, this is the figure of the golden age which we are now promised. At the first sight one has some sense of a lacuna somewhere, a suspicion of a perfection too external and too well-regulated by clockwork and a timidly insistent idea that it may perhaps be neither so readily feasible nor so lyrically enchanting as its prophets pretend. One may be disposed to ask, what of the spirit and soul of man, the greatness of the inner perfection which can alone support and give security and some kind of psychological reality to even the most ideal arrangement of his outer life, — how far that has gone or is likely to go in the near future, or what means or opportunities the new order proposes to offer for its growth and satisfaction. But this is no doubt too esoteric a way of looking at things. The practical western mind does not trouble itself overmuch with these subtleties; it prefers, and rightly enough, since to get something done seems to be the chief actual business of man in life, to hasten to the matter in hand and realise something useful, visible and tangible, good enough for a practical beginning or step forward. It believes besides in the omnipotence of law and institution to make the life of man conformable to his intellectual or spiritual ideals; it is satisfied if it can write down and find sanctions for a good and convenient system of laws, a compact or constitution, set up the mechanical means for the enforcement of its idea, build into effective form a workable institution. Other less palpable things, if they are at all indispensable, are expected to develop of themselves, as surely they ought under good mechanical conditions.

Good philosophical as well as practical justification may be put forward for this attitude. Form after all is an effective suggestion to the soul; machinery, as even churches and religions have been prone to believe, is all-powerful and can be trusted to create whatever you may need of the spirit. God himself or contriving Nature had first to invent the machinery and form of a universe and could only then work out in its mould some figure of the spirit. Therefore the sign of great hope, the good tidings of peace and good will unto men is not that a new and diviner or simply a more human spirit has been born into humanity, seized upon its leaders and extended itself among its ego-ridden, passion-driven, interest-governed millions, but that an institution has been begotten at Paris with the blessings of Premiers and Presidents, — the constitution of an international society, supported by the armed force of great nations and empires and therefore sure to be practicable, prosper and succeed, has been got into shape which will make war, militarism, oppression, exploitation an ugly dream of the past, induce Capital and Labour, lion and lamb, to lie down side by side in peace and not, as a wicked Bolshevism proposes, one well digested inside the other, and in fact bring about before long, sooner it is hoped rather than later, the grand fraternity of mankind. This is good news, if true. Still, before we enter the house of thanksgiving, let us pause a little and cast an eye of scrutiny on this new infant phenomenon.

A just, generous, cordial and valid League of nations is the thing which has been created, it seems, to replace the old unjust Balances of Power and stumbling, quarrelsome Concerts. And if it is to succeed better than the loose, ineffective and easily dissoluble things which it supplants, it must satisfy, one would think, certain conditions which they did not even attempt to fulfil. And one would at first sight fix something like the following as the indispensable conditions. First, this League must draw into its circle in one way or another all the existing nations of the earth; and that it must do on both just and agreeable terms so that they may join willingly and gladly and without any serious misgivings, reservations or heart-burnings; it must satisfy each and all by a fair and effective and, one must add in these democratic days, an honourable and equal position in this new society of the peoples. Since it should command and retain their moral assent and support, if it is to maintain in being an otherwise insecure material adhesion, it must, in order to do that constantly, not only at the moment of formation but in the future, base itself on no self-regarding law or established table of institutions fixed by any arbitrary will of those who for the moment are the strongest but on some firm, recognisable and always evolvable principle of equity and justice, for only where these things are is there a moral guarantee and security. The constitution of the League must provide a trustworthy means for the solution of all difficult, delicate and embarrassing questions which may hereafter endanger the infant and precarious framework of international society, and for that purpose it must establish a permanent, a central and a strong authority which all nations can readily recognise and accept as a natural head and faithful dynamic expression of the corporate being of mankind. These, one would think, are not at all nebulous, fanciful or too idealistic demands, but the practical necessities of any system of yet loose unification such as now is contemplated, conditions it must from the first and increasingly satisfy if it is to survive the enormous difficulties of an enterprise which, as it proceeds, will have to work out of being most of the natural egoistic instincts and rooted past habits of the international mentality of the race.

This new gigantic bantling which has come into existence with War for its father and an armed and enforced Peace for its mother, with threatening and bloodily suppressed revolutions, a truncated internationalistic idealism and many half-curbed, just snaffled rearing national egoisms for its witnesses and god-parents, has not, when looked at from this standpoint, in spite of certain elements of promise, an altogether reassuring appearance. The circumstances of its inception were adverse and except by a tremendous effort of self-conquest in the minds of the rulers and statesmen of the victorious nations, a self-conquest rendered a thousand times more difficult by the stupendous magnitude and the intoxicating completeness of their victory, any at all complete result and auspicious new beginning could not be hoped for. This league now in the last throes of formation has not been a spontaneous creation of a peaceful, equal and well-combined will towards unity of all the world's peoples. It comes into being overshadowed by the legacy of hatreds, reprisals, apprehensions, ambitions of a murderous world war chequered by revolutions which have opened a new and alarming vista of world-wide unrest and disturbance. It has grown out of a vague but strong aspiration, — more among the rank and file of the nations, and even so not equally common to all of them, than among their governing men or classes, — to find some means for the future avoidance of violent catastrophes in the international life of mankind. It has been precipitated into actual and immediate being by the determination of an eminent idealistic statesman with the modified and in some cases unwilling assent of others who shared only partially or not at all his idealism, one man of strong will who aided by a commanding position given to him by circumstances and a flexible obstinacy in his use of them, has been able to impose some shadow or some first incomplete form of his ideal — the future alone can show which it is to be — on the crude course of events and the realistic egoism of governments and imperial nations. But in present fact the large and complete ideal with which he began his work, has been so impinged upon by the necessities of national passions, ambition, self-interest and by pressure of the force of circumstances — still in spite of all idealism the chief determining factors of life — that it is difficult to put one's hand on anything in the concrete arrangement formulated and say without doubt or qualm that here is the very embodiment of the high principles in whose name the great war was fought and won. This is not surprising, nor should it be disappointing except to those who trusted more to their hopes than to experience. All we have to see is whether those high original principles were indeed necessary to the future security and evolution of this new association of the peoples and, if so, what chance they have of emerging from the forms in which they now seem to have been rather buried than given a body. And that will depend on the extent to which the conditions already suggested are realised or evolvable from the league's incipient constitution.

An effective League of Nations must draw into itself all the existing nations of mankind; for any considerable omission or exclusion will bring in almost inevitably an element of future danger, of possible disagreements and collisions, perhaps of a rival grouping with jealousies which must lead to another and more colossal catastrophe. In its ostensible figure this new League does not by any means wear a catholic appearance. Professedly, it is nothing but an association of actual friends and allies. In the front rank stand confident and masterful five great and powerful empires or nations, — the sole great powers left standing by the hurricane in unimpaired strength, and two of them indeed with an enormously increased power, influence and dominion: behind crowd in dimly and ineffectively a number of smaller European and American peoples, those who were allied to them or otherwise on their side in the war, and one feeble and disjointed oriental leviathan; but all these seem to partake only with a passive assent or a subordinate cooperation, — and in fact with very much of the first and very little of the latter, — whether in the determining of the form of the League or in its control and government. And the immediate professed object of the association is not to knit the world together in the beginnings of a well-conceived unity, — that could only have been done if all the peoples had taken a free and equal part in these deliberations, whereas in fact the whole thing has been hastily constructed in semi-secret conference by the victors of the war, and chiefly by the will of the five leading powers. Its object is to regulate the interests and mutual relations of the members of the League by rule, agreement, deliberation and arbitration and their relations with other states outside the League as much as may be by the same means; it is this only and in the beginning it is nothing more. But a door is left open for the nations still outside to enter in a given time, provided they subscribe unquestioningly to a system which they will have had no hand in framing, though under it they will have to live. On the other hand a door of egress is also provided for any nation wishing to recede hereafter from the League, and if disunion should set in among the greater powers, this dangerous, though under the circumstances perhaps unavoidable provision, may easily lead to the automatic dissolution of even this hesitating first frame of a partial unity.

But the facts and forces of the situation are perhaps more favourable than ostensible paper provisions. The nations not yet included are with two great and perilous exceptions small and inconsiderable and their position outside will be so disadvantageous, they will be at every turn so much at the mercy of this formidable combination, — for the five dominant powers will easily be able, if they are determined and united, to enforce their will vigorously against all dissidents, — that they may be expected to subscribe more or less readily to its terms or at any rate to enter in after a few years' experience of exclusion. The Great Powers too are not likely to have strong reasons for breaking asunder for some years to come, and time may perhaps, provided no new revolutions sweep across the world, confirm the habit of united action. We may assume that here we have in fact, though not yet in name, the beginnings of a council or an imperfect federation of the world's peoples.

But the constitution of this Council and the conditions under which the variously circumstanced nations are admitted into or brought under it, have a still more baffling appearance. They do not at all correspond with the democratic idealism of the human mind of today but rather strike one as a structure of almost mediaeval irregularity, complexity, incoherent construction, a well-nigh feudal political building with some formal concessions on its ground floor to the modern canon of liberty and equality. A unification of mankind may proceed very much on the same lines as past unifications of smaller peoples into nations or empires. It might have been brought about by the military force or the political influence of some powerful king-state preponderant by land and sea, — *pampotent par terre et mer*, as Nostradamus prophetically described the British Empire, — not necessarily despotic and absolute but easily first among equals; and that I suppose is what would have happened if Germany had come up top dog in the struggle instead of a very much mutilated and flattened undermost. Nor is it at all certain that something of the sort will not eventually come about if the present attempt or crude sketch of a system should come to grief; but for the moment this contingency has been prevented or at least postponed. That possibility eliminated, the unification may still take the form of an oligarchy or hegemony of great powers, leaders and masters of the herd, with the weaker rabble rest hanging on the flanks or posteriors of their mighty bellwethers and following them and their omnipotent decisions in sometimes a submissive and approbatory, sometimes a mutinous and discordant chorus; something very much of this kind is what this new league has certainly been in its formation and is likely to turn out in its execution. But there was also the vain present hope or dream, the strong future though far-off possibility of an equal, just and democratic federation of the peoples in which the dwarf and Goliath nations, the strong and the weak, the wealthy and the less wealthy, the immediately successful and the long or temporarily unfortunate, — who may yet have better gifts, have done really more for mankind than the arrivistes among the nations, — will have, as is the rule or the ideal in all democratic bodies, in law and in initial fact an equal position, and there will be only a natural leadership and influence to differentiate by a freely accorded greater weight and voice. These were the three possibilities, and they represent respectively the ideal of the past which is said to have been buried in the grave of imperial Germany, the fact of the present which is a fact only and to none an ideal, and the ideal of the future, loudly trumpeted during the war, though there is none now, except the vanquished, the subject and the revolutionary, so poor and weak as to do it reverence.

The initial constitution of the League is almost frankly oligarchic in its disposal of the international balance of power, — not quite an absolute oligarchy, indeed, for there is certainly a general assembly which is so far democratic that all its members will exult in the dignifying possession of an equal vote. Honduras and Guatemala may, if the fancy pleases them, indulge themselves in some feeling of being lifted up to an equality with imperial England, America, the new arbiter of the world, and victorious France. But this is an illusion, a *trompe l'oeil.* For we find that this general assembly is in no sense the governing body but only a secondary authority, a court of approval and reference, to which the powerful executive nations will refer, mostly at their own discretion, this or that doubtful question for discussion. In practice and fact the new sovereign of the world under this constitution, — *jagadīśvaro vā?* — will be the executive body of the League of Nations. But there the five great powers will sit in a secure and formidable permanence, while a changeable selection of representatives picked out from the common herd will diminutively assist their deliberations, assisting or discussing in the giant obscurity of their shadow. One can easily see how the superior management of the world's affairs will go under these conditions and in fact have already had a taste of its quality in the process of this formation and this building of a basis for what it is still hoped by many will be a long or even a permanent peace. Evidently in such a governing body the Great

Five will determine the whole policy and action; nothing will readily pass which will be at all displeasing to these new masters of the earth, or let us say, to this new composite hegemony, — for its decisions will at no time be guided by that perilous, ductile and variable thing, a majority, but must be by unanimity. What in principle is this system but a novel, an improved, an enlarged and regularised edition of the Concert of Powers — liberalised a little in form because buttressed by a democratic general assembly which may, indeed, as circumstances develop and conditions change, become something, but may equally remain a dignified or undignified cypher, — but still in essence another and firmer Avatar of that old loose and dubious body? Even something of that historic device, the balance of power, though now much changed, shifted, disjointed and perilously lopsided, still remains subtly concealed in this form of a novel order. And that element is likely to pronounce itself later on; for where there is no impersonal governing principle and no clear original structure in the international body, its motions must be determined by a balance of interests, and the balance of interests can only be kept reasonably steady by carefully preserving an established balance of power. That was the justification of the old armed order; it is likely to be a necessity of this new system for regulating chaos.

This creation is a realistic practical construction with a very minimum concession to the new idealism: it has been erected by statesmen who have been concerned to legalise the actual facts and organise the actual forces which have emerged from the world-war; a few inconveniently new-born and of a menacing significance have been barred and boycotted, blockaded or pressed out of existence: it is hoped also to secure their system against attack by any resuscitable ghost of the past or violently subversive genius of the future. From that point of view it has been constructed with a remarkable skill and fidelity to present realities, though one may be tempted to think with an insufficient allowance for obscure but already visible potentialities. The correspondence between fact and form is accurate to perfection. Five powers have been the real victors of the war, three of them central and decisive forces who now actually control the world by their will, and two others who intervened as less powerful subsidiary strengths, but can put in some effective claim and material weight into the future balance of forces. This fact is reproduced in the constitution of the governing body; it is these five who by virtue of their wealth and force are to have in it a permanent voice, the three great ones to strike the major chords and determine the general harmony of the concert, the two others to bring in, as best they can and when they can, minor chords and unessential variations. Then there are the great number of small or weaker nations who have at their command minor material effectives and, though incapable of being principals in any very great conflict may be useful as minor auxiliaries, the free peoples, allies included from the beginning by right, neutrals invited to participate in a settled organisation of peace though they did not throw their weight into the decision of war, enemies, old or new, who may be admitted when they have satisfied more or less onerous or crushing and disabling conditions. These will make the general assembly: some of them will have from time to time an uncertain voice in the governing body; the rest will be the mass, the commons, the general body who will possess some limited amount of actual power and some kind of moral force behind the executive. Labour too has been made by the War a great though as yet incoherent international power, and the League, wishing evidently to be wise in time and make terms with this formidable new fact, recognises at its side Labour in a special separate conference.

But there are also new Asiatic peoples who cannot now be admitted, because they are infants and unripe; there are subject and protected nations for whom the war was not fought and who cannot share in the once hoped-for general freedom, but must trust to the generous and unselfish liberalism of their rulers and protectors; there are African tribes who are the yet unmanufactured raw material of humanity. These are to be left under the old or put under a new control or are to be entrusted to the paternal hands of this or that governing power who will be in the legal style of the new dispensation, not masters and conquerors, — for in this just and miraculous peace there are no annexations, only rectified arrangements of control and territory, — but trustees, mandatories. A mandate from the League will be the safeguard of these less fortunate peoples. For we are, it seems, about to live in quite a new moralised world in which the general conscience of mankind will be wide awake and effective and the League is there to represent it. As its representative it will take a periodical report of their trust from the trustees, — who also as the great powers of the League will be themselves at once mandatories, leaders and deputies of this same general conscience. All existing forces are represented in just proportions in this very remarkable constitution.

The idealist may find much to object against the perpetuation and hardening of the unideal existent fact on which the system of the League is founded, but undoubtedly that system has a good deal to say for itself, can urge very urgent considerations from the point of view of practical possibility. One indispensable condition of its success is a solid central authority, strong and permanent, capable of enforcing its decisions, and it must be an organ which all nations can accept as the natural head and faithful dynamic expression of the corporate being of mankind. As far as is at all practicable at the moment, here is, it may be said, just such an authority. The international body of mankind is still an amorphous mass, its constituent peoples unaccustomed to act together, heterogeneous by virtue of their various degrees of development, organised power, experience, civilisation: a free general assembly, a parliament of the world, an equal federation of mankind, is out of the question; even an equal federation of free and civilised peoples is likely to be an incoherent and futile body incapable of effective corporate action. What is to enforce and give practicality to the general needs and desires if not the power, influence, authority and, where need is, the strong arm of the great nations and empires acting in concert but with a due regard for the common interests and general voice? Who else are to determine preponderatingly the decisions they will have to enforce or can give to them a permanent principle or sustained practical policy? No combination of little American republics and minor European powers could dictate a world policy to the United States, France and the British Empire or could be allowed to play by the blind rule of a majority with these great interests. But in the League the various constituents of the corporate body are so ranked and related as to give precisely a faithful dynamic expression of it in its present conditions; whatever evolution is necessary can be worked out through a general control and a periodical revision of treaties and relations. In brief, the whole international condition of the world is a chaos that has to be brought into order and shape, and that is a work which cannot be done by an idyllic idealism or an abstract perfection of principles which are not in correspondence with the actualities of things and, if prematurely applied, are likely to bring in a worse confusion, but can only be accomplished by a strong and capable organised Force which will take things as they stand, impose a new system of law and order on this chaos, some firm however imperfect initial framework, and watch over its development with a strict eye on the practical possibilities of progress. On that safe and firm basis a slow but sure and deliberate advance can be made towards a future better law and ideal order. There is another side to the question, but let us suppress it for the moment and give full value and weight to these considerations.

But all the more indispensable does it then become that the principles of the progress to be made shall be recognised from the beginning in the law and constitution of the League, or at least indicated in such a way and so impressed on its system as to ensure that on those lines or towards the fulfilment of those principles its action should proceed and not be diverted to other, baser, reactionary or obstructive uses. The declaration of general principles and their embodiments and safeguards in the democratic constitutions promulgated in the eighteenth century were no barren ideologists' formularies, — any more than the affirmation of constitutional principles in earlier documents like the Magna Charta, — but laid down the basis on which government and progress must proceed in the new-born order of the world and were at once a signpost and an effective moral guarantee for the assured march of Democracy.

We look in vain in the constitution of the League for any such great guiding principles. The provisions for the diminution of the possibilities of war, the creation of some new small nations and the safety given to those that already existed can hardly be called by that name. There is here no hint of any charter of the international rights and duties of the peoples in a new order making at once for liberty and union. The principle of self-determination over which the later stages of the war were fought has been ruthlessly thrown overboard and swallowed up in the jaws of a large pot-bellied diplomatic transaction, — it may be only for a time like the prophet in the stomach of the whale, but for the nonce there is an almost perfect disappearance. Some infinitesimal shadow of it we see in petty transactions like the arrangement about Schleswig-Holstein, but for the rest the map of the world has been altered very much in the old familiar fashion without any consistent regard to nationality or choice, but rather by the agreement and fiat of armed victorious nations. A famous pronouncement during the war had denounced the theory of trusteeship, that cloak which can cover with so noble a grace the hard reality of domination and exploitation, — things now too gross in their nakedness to be presented undraped to the squeamish moral sense of a modern humanity. But in this after-war system that very theory of trusteeship is glorified and consecrated, though with the gloss of a mandate subject to examination — by a body whose action and deliberation will be controlled by the trustees. Subject nations are still to exist in this world; for the system of mandates is only to be applied where a previous subjection has been abrogated, it is to be applied to some of the Asiatic or African peoples who lay under the uplifted scourge of the now fallen empires; the rest who had the advantage of milder masters, the remaining subject peoples from Ireland to Korea, have no need of any such safeguard!

It may be that all this denial of a too ideal principle of liberty was inevitable; for we must, we are now told, not be in too great a hurry to get from midnight to midday; the law of the times and seasons must be observed, a mitigated darkness must first come and then twilight and then dawn and then the glad confident morning before we can live in the golden noon of a universalised liberty and justice. But meanwhile what other guiding principle, what embodied idea of law and right, what equitable and equal balance of obligations is to be the firm basis of the new order? We find none, only a machinery for the diminution of the chances of war, not for their removal, by compulsory arbitration, by the threat or actuality of armed force and economic pressure; for the revision of treaties; for the secured possession of colonies, dependencies, markets, frontiers, ports, mandates; for the international discussion and settlement of the conflicting claims of Capital and Labour. There is a system of immediately practicable relations, an attempt to affirm and to secure a new *status quo*, a provision for minor manipulations and alterations; but there is little actual foundation for a new and nobler world-order. A preparation for it may have been the intention of the institutors, but the fulfilment of their intention is left very much at the mercy of the uncertain chances of the future. The idealism of the founder has so far triumphed as to get some limited form of a League of Nations admitted and put into shape, but at every other point the idealist has gone under and the stamp of the politician and diplomat is over this whole new modern machine, — of the mere practical man with his short sight and his rough and ready methods. It is a leaky and ill-balanced ship launched on waters of tempest and chaos without a chart or compass or sailing instructions.

Well, but in other times devices as rough and unbecoming have been the foundations of great structures, and if this League can be kept in being there may be some chance of getting it suffused with the principles and ideals for whose realisation the vague heart and conscience of mankind, baffled always by its own lax complicities, is beginning to thirst and weary. But to the eye of the critic this new pact would seem to carry in itself the ominous seeds of its own future mutability and perhaps dissolution. For first of all the League is entering into being with a very limited and feeble enthusiasm on its behalf even in the nations which are interested in its maintenance; America does not seem to be in a quite flawless harmony of agreement with its President in his self-satisfaction over the shapely beauty of his nursling; the world of Labour and socialism is critical, dissatisfied, distrustful, uneasy, simmering over into brief and uncertain but wide-spread and menacing strikes and formidable demands and murmurings. These are not favourable signs. The League will need all the support and hearty acquiescence it can get to overcome the difficulties that it will meet in constructing the world according to its own idea and fashion, a task which will not end but only be just beginning when peace is concluded, and it is doubtful whether it will have what it needs in any but the most grudging measure. Not enthusiastic support, but a sort of muttering acquiescence for want of any chance of a better thing at the moment is the general mood of the world's peoples whose interests it proposes to manage. A poor starting wind for so momentous a voyage.

But let us suppose the system accepted and under way, — what are the actual facts which will meet it in the future? Its system will stand for a long time to come for the nations conquered in the war as a perpetuation of their downfall, diminution and disgrace; it will be to them a gaoler and inflicter of penalties, a guardian of tasks and payments with an uplifted scourge. It need not have been so, if a generous and equal peace had been made or, better, if apart from all such questions, there had been a peace based not on the will of a conquering might, even though better-minded than the might it conquered, but on clear and undeniable principles, such as the utmost possible self-determination, equal opportunity, equal position for the world's peoples; that would have been indeed a peace without any other victors or vanquished than vanquished force and wrong and victorious equity. But the leading nations have chosen to impose a diplomatic peace in which the league which imposes it figures as an administrator of criminal justice. The vanquished nations, now for the most part democracies and no longer the old aggressive militarisms which made the war, were, it is said, criminals and breakers of peace and the penalty inflicted is far too light in comparison with their crimes. It may be so in literal terms, — though a criminal justice inflicted by one of two parties in a quarrel on his beaten opponent and not by an impartial judge is apt rightly or wrongly to be suspect to the mere human reason and at best much of what is called justice is only legalised revenge, — but still it may be that nothing but justice or even less than justice has been done. But that makes no difference to the fact that a number of new democracies, vigorous and intellectual peoples, born to a new life which should have been one of hope and good will to the coming order, will be there inevitably as a source of revolt and disorder, eager to support any change which will remove their burdens, gratify their resentment and heal their festering wounds. They may be held down, kept weak and maimed, even though one of them is laborious, skilful, organised Germany, but that will mean a weakness and an ill-balance in the new order itself, and if they recover strength, it will not be to acquiesce in their inferior place and the perpetual triumph and greatness of their ancient rivals. Only in a legalised system of equal democracies can there be some true chance of the cessation of these jealousies, enmities, recurrent struggles. Otherwise war will break out again or in some other form the old battle continue. An unequal balance can never be a security for a steady and peaceful world-system.

Pass, if this were the only peril of the newly inaugurated system. But this league seems also to stand for a perpetuation of a new *status quo* to be arrived at by the peace which is being made its foundation. The great powers, it would seem, have arrived at a compact to secure their dominions and holdings against any future menace of diminution. This arrangement is of the nature at once of a balance of power — but with all the dangers of an unequal balance — and of an attempt to perpetuate for ever certain at present preponderating influences and established greatnesses. That attempt is against all the teaching of history and all the perennial movement of Nature; the league which stands committed to it is committed to a jealously guarded insecurity and the preservation of an unstable equilibrium. It is not certain that the constructing powers will themselves remain consistently satisfied with the terms of their compact or able to resist that urge of national and of human destiny which is greater than any diplomatic arrangement or the wills of governments and statesmen. But even if that unheard-of thing be realised between them, a durable international friendship and alliance, it may serve for a time, but will it serve for a very long time against the world's urge towards change? Power rots by having and security, and those who are powerful today to impose their will on the nations, may not always keep that force in spite of their bulk and wealth and armed magnitudes. Then there are old sores perpetuated and new sores opened by this arrangement of a hastily made peace of devices and compromises. Whether the Balkan question will be permanently settled is at least dubious; but there will be now the question of a German Bohemia, a particoloured Poland, perhaps a Saar region with its wealth in the possession of a foreign power, an insoluble question of Yugoslav and Italian, a new question of Tyrol, an Irish trouble and a Korean trouble in which the League cannot interfere without deep offence to England and Japan and which yet clamour more and more for a settlement, a Russian chaos. There is a Mahomedan world which will one day have a word to say about the new *status quo*. There is the whole question of Asia and Africa, which is the most formidable but of which much need not be said, for its issues are patent to every eye. The partition of Africa between a few European powers with all its economic advantages can be no permanent solution. Asia is arising in the surge of an upward wave and cannot always be kept in a condition of weakness, tutelage and vassalage. When the time comes, how will a league mainly of European and American peoples deal with her claims? Will Europe be content to recede from Asia? Will the mandatories be in any haste to determine their mandate? Can there be any modified perpetuation of present conditions which will be at all compatible with an equality between the two continents? These are questions which no imperfect sketch of a league of nations on the existing basis can decide according to its phantasy; only the onward moving world-spirit can give them their answer.

None of these dangers and difficulties are as yet formidable in their immediate incidence, but there is another problem of a pressing, immediate insistency and menace which touches with its close foreshadowing finger the very life of any new international system and that is the approaching struggle for supremacy between Capital and Labour. This is a far other matter than the clash of conflicting imperialisms in the broad spaces or the wrangle of quarrelsome nationalisms snarling at each other's heels or tearing each other in the narrower ways of the Earth; for those are questions at most of division of power, territory and economic opportunity on the present basis of society, but this means a questioning of that basis and a shaking of the very foundations of the European world-order. This League is a league of governments, and all these governments are bourgeois monarchies or republics, instruments of a capitalistic system assailed by the tides of socialism. Their policy is to compromise, to concede in detail, but to prolong their own principle so that they may survive and capitalism be still the dominant power of a new mixed semi-socialistic order, very much as the governments which formed the Holy Alliance sought to save the dominance of the old idea of aristocratic monarchy by a compromise with the growing spirit of democracy. What they offer is better and more human conditions for the labourer, even a certain association in the government of the society, but still a second and not a primary place in the scale. This was indeed all to which Labour itself formerly aspired, and it is all to which the rear of its army still looks forward, but it is already ceasing to be the significance of the Labour movement; a new idea has arisen, the dominance, the rule of labour, and it has already formulated itself and captured a great portion of the forces of socialism. It has even established for a while in Russia a new kind of government, a dictatorship of the proletariate, which aspires to effect a rapid transition to another order of society.

Against this novel idea and its force the existing governments are compelled by the very principle of their being to declare war and to struggle against its coming with all the strength at their disposal and strive to mobilise against it whatever faith in existing things still remains in the mind of the peoples. The old order has still no doubt strength enough to crush out of existence, if it wills, the form which this coming of Demogorgon has already taken and to make a more or less speedy end of Russian Bolshevism. The Bolshevist system, isolated in a single country, weakened by its own initial crudities and revolutionary violences, struggling fiercely against impracticable odds, may well be annihilated; but the thing which is behind Bolshevism and has given it its unexpected virility and vitality, cannot be so easily conjured or pressed out of being. That thing is the transference of the basis of society from wealth to labour, from the power of money to the simple power of the man and his work, and that cannot be stopped or prevented, — though it may be for a time put off, — not because labour any more than wealth is the true basis of society, but because this is the logical and inevitable outcome of the whole evolution of European society. The rule of the warrior and aristocrat, the Kshatriya, founded upon power has given place to the rule of the Vaishyas, the professional and industrial classes, founded upon wealth and legalism, and that again must yield to the rule of the Shudra, the proletariate, founded upon work and association. This change like the others cannot be accomplished without much strife and upheaval and there is every sign that its course will be attended with the shattering violence of revolution.

It is proposed indeed to the new force that it shall work itself out calmly, slowly, peacefully by the recognised means of Parliamentarism; but Parliamentarism is passing through a phase of considerable discredit, and a doubt has arisen in the minds of the workers whether it is at all a right or possible means for their object and whether by a reliance upon it they will not be playing into the hands of their opponents: for Parliament is actually a great machine of the propertied classes and even the Parliamentary socialist tends easily to become a semi-disguised or a half and half bourgeois. The new order of society would seem to demand the institution of a new system of government. If then a new order of society is bound to come with its inevitable reversal of existing conditions, and still more if it comes by a revolutionary struggle, how will a system of a League of Nations based upon existing conditions, a League not really of nations but of governments, and of governments committed to the maintenance of the old order and using their closer association as a means for combating the new idea which is hostile to their own form of existence, be likely to fare in this earth-shaking or this tornado? It is more likely to disappear than to undergo a gentle transformation, and if it disappears, another system of international comity may replace it, but it will not be a League of Nations.

We will suppose, however, or even trust, that the League, embodying in spite of appearances the best combined statesmanship of the world, circumvents all these perils, weathers every storm and leads forward the destinies of mankind in the paths of an at first more or less uneasy, but eventually firmer increasing peace and mutual accommodation. What is it then that it will have at the beginning or in the end actually accomplished? It will have made some beginning of the substitution of a state of law for the older international status which alternated and oscillated between outbreaks of war and an armed peace. That, no doubt, if at all firmly done, will be a great step forward in the known history of human civilisation. For it will mean that what was founded in the unit of the nation centuries ago, will be now at last founded in the society of the nations. But let us not leap too easily at what may well be an unsound parallel. What civilised society has done most effectively from the beginning is to substitute some kind of legalised relation, legalised offence and defence, legalised compensation or revenge for injuries in place of the state of insecure peace and frequent private or tribal warfare in which each man had to claim what he considered to be justice by the aid of his kin or the strength of his own hand. At present the persistent survival of crime is the only remnant of that earlier pre-legal state of natural violence. But for an organised society to deal with the refractory individual is a comparatively facile task; here the units are nations with a complex corporate personality, great masses of men themselves too organised, representing the vital interests, claims, passions of millions of men divided by corporate, powerful and persistent exclusivenesses, hatreds, jealousies, antipathies which the founding of this would-be all-healing League and new society of peoples finds much acerbated, much more pronounced than in the days before the deluge when a tolerant and easy cosmopolitanism was more in fashion, and which its dispositions seem calculated to deepen and perpetuate rather than to heal and abolish. And it is on this incoherent mass of peoples void of all living principle or urgent will of union that a status of peace and settled law has to be imposed and this in a period of increasing chaos, upheaval and menace of revolution.

The national society succeeded only in proportion as it developed an indivisible unity and a single homogeneous authority which could both legislate, or at least codify and maintain law, and see to the rigorous execution of its settled rules, decrees, and ordinances. Here the work has to be done by an institution which represents no embodied unity, but rather a jamming or stringing together of very strongly separate units, and which does not legislate, but only passes very partial and opportunist special decrees *ad hoc*, and to enforce them has constantly to resort to intimidation, blockade, economic pressure, menace of a wholesale starvation of peoples, menace of violent military occupation, — things which prolong the after-war state of unrest and recoil in their secondary effects upon the countries whose governments are engaged in this singular international pastime. It is not difficult to see that a better system and a better means must be found if the latest strong hope of humanity is to turn out anything more than one other generous illusion of the intellectuals and one other chimerical wave of longing in the vague heart of the peoples.

Even the national society has not been able after so long a time and so much experience to eliminate in its own body the disease of strife between its members, class war, bitter hostility of interests and ideas breaking out at times into bloody clashes, civil wars, sanguinary revolutions or disastrous, grimly obstinate and ruthless economic struggles which are the preparers of an eventual physical conflict. And the reason is not far to seek. Law for all its ermine of pomp and solemn bewigged pretension of dignity was in its origin nothing but the law of the stronger and the more skilful and successful who imposed their rule on the acquiescent or subjugated rest of the people. It was the decrees of the dominant class which were imposed on the previous mass of existing customs and new-shaped them into the mould of the prevailing idea and interest; Law was itself a regulated and organised Force establishing its own rules of administration and maintaining them by an imminent menace of penalty and coercion. That is the sense of the symbolic sword of Justice, and as for her more mythical balance, a balance is a commercial and artificial sign, not a symbol of either natural or ideal equity, and even so this balance of Justice had for its use only a theoretical or not always even a theoretical equality of weights and measures. Law was often in great measure a system of legalised oppression and exploitation and on its political side has had often enough plainly that stamp, though it has assumed always the solemn face of a sacrosanct order and government and justice.

The history of mankind has been very largely a long struggle to get unjust law changed into justice, — not a mystic justice of an imposed decree and rule "by law established" claiming to be right because it is established, but the intelligible justice of equality and equity. Much has been done, but as much or more still remains to be done, and so long as it is not established, there can be no sure end to civil strife and unrest and revolution. For the injustice of law can only be tolerated so long as there is either in those who suffer by it a torpid blindness or acquiescent submission or else, the desire of equity once awakened, a ready means to their hand of natural and peaceful rectification. And a particular unjust law may indeed be got altered with less of effort and difficulty, but if injustice or, let us say simply, absence of just equality and equity pervades a state of things, a system, then there must be grave trouble and there can be no real equilibrium and peace till it is amended. Thus in modern society strikes and lockouts are its form of civil war, disastrous enough to both sides, but still they are constantly resorted to and cannot be replaced by a better way, because there is no confidence in any possible legal award or "compulsory" arbitration which can be provided for under the existing conditions. The stronger side relies on the advantage which it enjoys under the established system, the weaker feels that the legalised balance of the State exists by a law which still favours the capitalist interest and the domination of wealth and that at most it can get from this State only inadequate concessions which involve by their inadequacy more numerous struggles in the future. They cling to the strike as their natural weapon and one trustworthy resource. For that reason all ingeminations and exhortations to economic peace and brotherhood are a futile counsel. The only remedy is a better, more equal and more equitable system of society. And this is only a particular instance of a situation common enough in different forms under the present world-order.

The application is evident to the present international attempt and its hopes of a legalised and peaceful human society. The League of Nations has been established by victorious Force, claiming no doubt to be the force of victorious right and justice, but incapable by the vice of its birth of embodying the real non-combatant justice of an equal and impartial equity. Its decrees and acts are based on no ascertainable impersonal principle, but are mainly the decrees, the *sic volo, sic jubeo* of three or four mighty nations. Even if they happen to be just, they have this fatal vice that there is nothing to convince the mind of the losing parties or even the common mind that there is behind them any surety of a general and reliable equity, and as a matter of fact many of them have aroused very generally grave dissatisfaction and hostile criticism. And the Supreme Council, that veiled hieratic autocrat of the situation, does not seem itself to appeal to any distinct higher principles in its action, even when such do actually exist and could be insisted on with force and clarity. At the time of writing, there has been a case of the denudation of a suffering and now half-starved country by the army of a small occupying power — victorious not by its own arms, but by the moral and economic pressure of the League — and the council has very rightly interfered. But it has not done that publicly on grounds that have anything to do with international justice or humanity or even the rudiments of international ethics, such as they are, but on this ground that the property of the vanquished country is the common spoil, or, let us say, means of compensation of the victors and this one little rapacious ally cannot be allowed to appropriate it all by main force to the detriment of its greater fellow-administrators of a self-regarding justice, — who may even as a result find Hungary thrown as a starving pauper on their hands instead of serving their will as a solvent debtor! If this realistic spirit is to be the spirit of the new international system and that is to persist, its success is likely to be more formidable to humanity than its failure. For it may mean to the suffering portions of mankind the legalisation and perpetuation of intolerable existing injustices for which there could have been a hope of more easy remedy and redress in the previous looser conditions. If this league of nations is to serve and not merely to dominate mankind, if it is to raise and free, as it claims and professes, and not to bind and depress humanity, it must be cast in another mould and animated by another spirit. This age is not like that in which the reign of law was established in individual nations; men are no longer inclined, as then they were, to submit to existing conditions in the idea that they are an inevitable dispensation of nature. The idea of equity, of equality, of common rights has been generalised in the mind of the race, and human society must move henceforward steadily towards its satisfaction on peril of constant unrest and a rising gradation of catastrophe.

That means that the whole spirit and system of the league will have to be remodelled, the initial mistakes of its composition rectified and the defects inherent in its origin got rid of, before it can be brought into real consonance with the nobler hopes or even the pressing needs of the human race. At present it is, to reverse the old phrase, a pouring of an old and very musty wine into showy new bottles, — the old discredited spirit of the diplomacy of concert and balance and the government of the strongest, of the few dominant kingdoms, states and empires. That must disappear in a more just and democratic international system. The evil legacy of the war with its distinctions between "enemy", allied and friendly nations or more favoured or less favoured peoples, will have to be got out of the system of the league, for so long as it is there, it will act as a virus which will prevent all healthy growth and functioning. A league of nations which is to bring a real peace and beginning of justice and ordered comity in progress to the world and a secret council of allied governments imposing as best they can their irresponsible will on a troubled and dissatisfied Europe, Asia and Africa are two very different things, and while one lasts, the other cannot be got into being. The haphazard make of the League will have to be remoulded into a thing of plain and candid structure and meaning and made to admit that element of clear principle which it has omitted from its constitution. An equal system of international rights and obligations, just liberties and wholesome necessary restrictions can alone be a sound basis of international law and order. And there can be no other really sound basis of the just and equal liberty of the peoples than that principle of self-determination which was so loudly trumpeted during the war, but of which an opportunist statesmanship has made short work and reduced to a deplorable nullity. A true principle of self-determination is not at all incompatible with international unity and mutual obligation, the two are rather indispensable complements, even as individual liberty in its right sense of a just and sufficient room for healthy self-development and self-determination is not at all incompatible with unity of spirit and mutual obligation between man and man. How to develop it out of present conditions, antipathies, ambitions, grievances, national lusts, jealousies, egoisms is indeed a problem, but it is a problem which will have to be attended to today or tomorrow on peril of worse things. To say that these developments are impossible is to say that a league of nations in the real sense as opposed to a league of some nations for their common benefit, a dominant alliance, is an impossibility. In that case the present institution called by that imposing name can only be an enlarged and more mechanised edition of the old Concert or a latter-day Holy Alliance of the governments and will sooner or later go the way of its predecessors. If that is so, then the sooner we recognise it, the better for all concerned; there will be less of false hopes and misdirected energies with their burden of disappointment, unrest, irritation and perilous reaction. To go on upon the present lines is to lead straight towards another and greater catastrophe.

To insist on these things is not to discourage unduly the spirit of hope which humanity needs for its progress; it is necessary in order that that hope may not nourish itself on illusions and turn towards misdirecting paths, but may rather see clearly the right conditions of its fulfilment and fix its energy on their realisation. It is a comfortable but a dangerous thing to trust with a facile faith that a bad system will automatically develop into a good thing or that some easy change is bound to come which will make for salvation, as for instance that Europe will evolve true democracy and that the League of Nations, now so imperfectly established, will be made perfect by its better spirit. The usual result of this temper of sanguine acceptance or toleration is that the expected better state makes indeed some ameliorations when it comes, but takes into it too a legacy of the past, much of its obscure spirit and a goodly inheritance of its evils, while it adds to the burden new errors of its own making. Certainly, the thing which was behind this new formation, this league of governments, is bound in some way or other to come; for I take it that a closer system of international life is sooner or later inevitable because it is a necessary outcome of modern conditions, of the now much closer relations and interactions of the life of the human race, and the only alternative is increasing trouble, disorder and ultimate chaos. But this inevitable development may take, according to the way and principle we follow, a better or a worse turn. It may come in the form of a mechanical and oppressive system as false and defective as the industrial civilisation of Europe which in its inflated and monstrous course brought about the present wreck, or it may come in the form and healthy movement of a sounder shaping force which can be made the basis or at least the starting-point for a still greater and more beneficial human progress. No system indeed by its own force can bring about the change that humanity really needs; for that can only come by its growth into the firmly realised possibilities of its own higher nature, and this growth depends on an inner and not an outer change. But outer changes may at least prepare favourable conditions for that more real amelioration, — or on the contrary they may lead to such conditions that the sword of Kalki can alone purify the earth from the burden of an obstinately Asuric humanity. The choice lies with the race itself; for as it sows, so shall it reap the fruit of its Karma.

And that brings us back to the idea with which we started and with it we may as well close, however remote it may sound to the practical mind of a still materialistic generation. The idea which Europe follows of an outer political and social perfection reposes, as far as it goes, on a truth, but only on one half of the truth and that the lower half of its periphery. A greater side of it is hidden behind the other older idea, still not quite dead in Asia and now strong enough to be born again in Europe, that as with the individual, so with the community of mankind, salvation cannot come by the outer Law alone; for the Law is only an intermediate means intended to impose a rein of stringent obligation and a better standard on the original disorder of our egoistic nature. Salvation for individual or community comes not by the Law but by the Spirit.[1] The conditions of individual and social perfection are indeed the same, freedom and unity; the two things are complements and to follow one at the expense of the other is a vain heresy. But real unity cannot come to the race, until man surmounting his egoistic nature is one in heart and spirit with man and real freedom cannot be till he is free from his own lower nature and finds the force of the truth which has been so vainly taught by the saints and sages that the fullness of his perfected individuality is one thing with a universality by which he can embrace all mankind in his heart, mind and spirit. But at present individuals and nations are equally remote from accepting any such inner mantra of unity and we can only hope at most that the best will increasingly turn their minds in that direction and create again and this time with a newer and more luminous insistence a higher standard of human aspiration. Till then jarring leagues of nations and some mechanical dissoluble federation of the race must serve our turn for practice and for a far-off expectation. But only then can the dream of a golden age of a true communal living become feasible and be founded on a spiritual and therefore a real reign of freedom and unity when the race learns to turn its eyes inward and not any longer these things, but mankind, the people of God and a soul and body of the Divine, becomes the ideal of our perfection.

---

[1] We in India have also yet to realise that truth — not by the Shastra, but by the Atman.

1919

THE YEAR 1919 comes to us with the appearance of one of the most pregnant and historic dates of the modern world. It has ended the greatest war in history, begotten a new thing in the history of mankind, a League of Nations which claims to be the foundation-stone for the future united life of the human race, and cleared the stage for fresh and momentous other constructions or destructions, which will bring us into another structure of society and of the framework of human life than has yet been known in the recorded memory of the earth's peoples. This is record enough for a single year and it looks as if there were already sufficient to give this date an undisputed pre-eminence in the twentieth century. But it is possible that things are not quite what they look to the contemporary eye and that posterity may see them in a very different focus. 1815 must have seemed the date of dates to the men of the day whose minds were filled with the view of the long struggle between the ancient regimes and revolutionary France and then between Europe and Napoleon. But when we look back at present, we see that it was only a stage, the end of the acutest phase of struggle, the commencement of a breathing-time, the date of a makeshift which could not endure. We look back from it to 1789 which began the destruction of an old order and the birth of a new ideal and beyond it to later dates which mark the progress of that ideal towards its broadening realisation. So too posterity may look back beyond this year 1919 to the beginning of the catastrophe which marks the first collapse of the former European order and forward beyond it to dates yet in the womb of the future which will mark the progress towards realisation of whatever order and ideal is destined to replace it. This year too may be only the end of an acute phase of a first struggle, the commencement of a breathing-time, the year of a makeshift, the temporary halt of a flood in motion. That is so because it has not realised the deeper mind of humanity nor answered to the far-reaching intention of the Time-Spirit.

In the enthusiasm of the struggle a hope arose that it would sweep away all the piled-up obstacles to human progress and usher in with a miraculous immediateness a new age. A vague ideal also syllabled eloquently of peace, of brotherhood, of freedom, of unity, which for the moment partly enlightened and kindled the soul of the race and gave its intellect a broader vista. Men spoke of the powers of good and evil separated on opposite sides and locked in a decisive conflict. These ideas were the exaggerations of sentiment and idealistic reason and in their excessive and blinding light many things took covert which were of a very different nature. The hope could not but be an illusion, a halo scene of the dream mind when it sees a future possibility in its own light apart from existing conditions. Human mind and action are too much of a tangled coil to admit of such miraculous suddennesses; the physical shock of war and revolution can break down stifling obstructions, but they cannot of themselves create either the kingdom of good or the kingdom of God; for that a mental and spiritual change is needed to which our slowly moving human nature takes time to shape its customary being. The ideal, a thing of the intellect and the sentiment only, cannot so easily bring about its own effectuation; force of circumstance, the will to survive of existing actualities, the insistent past of our own nature are not so easily blown away by the eager shouting of a few high and great words or even by the breath of the thought behind them, however loudly blare the trumpets of the ideal. Nor was the war itself precisely a definite issue between pure good and pure evil, — such distinctions belong to the world of the idealistic reason of which our actual intricate existence in whose net opposites are very bafflingly fused together, is as yet at least no faithful reproduction, — but a very confused clash and catastrophe of the intertangled powers of the past, present and future. The result actually realised is only such as might have been expected from the balance of the forces at work. It is not the last result nor the end of the whole matter, but it represents the first sum of things that was ready for working out in the immediateness of the moment's potency. More was involved which will now press for its reign, but belongs to the future.

The cataclysm of the last five years had a Janus face, one side turned towards the past, one turned towards the future. In its dealings with the past it was a conflict between two forces, one represented by Germany and the central Powers, the other by America and the western nations of Europe. Outwardly, imperial Germany represented a very nakedly brutal imperialism and militarism satisfied of its own rightful claim and perfection and opposed to the broader middle-class democracy — but democracy tainted with a half-hearted, uneasy, unwilling militarism and a liberalised, comfortably half-idealistic imperialism — of western Europe. But this was only the outside of the matter, in itself it would not have been a sufficient occasion for so great a catastrophe. Imperial Germany and all it represented had to go because it was the worst side of European civilisation enthroned in all the glory of a perfect mechanical and scientific efficiency. Its figure was a composite godhead of Moloch and Mammon seated between the guardian figures of Intelligence and Science. It had its ideal, a singular combination of the remnants of the old spirit of monarchy and feudalism now stripped of all its past justification, of a very modern burdensome organised aggressive commercialism and industrialism and of a mechanised State socialism administered by an empire and a bureaucracy, all guided by an expert intelligence and power of science. This triple-headed caricature of a future ideal for the world with its claim to take possession of the race and mechanise its life for it had to be broken, and with it passed away almost all the old phantoms of aristocracy and survivals of aristocratic monarchy which still lived on in an increasingly democratic Europe. So much the war has swept away; but its more important and positive result is not the destruction of the past, but a shaking even of the present bases and a clearing of the field for the forces of the future.

The future does not belong to that hybrid thing, a middle-class democracy infected with the old theory of international relations, however modified by concessions to a new broader spirit of idealism. The peace which closes the war is evidently in part a prolongation of the past and a thing of the moment, its only importance for the future is its association with the plan for a league of nations. But this league also is a makeshift, a temporary device awaiting the possibility of a more perfect formation. Its insecurity lies in the degree to which it is a concession to the past and founded on a present which is indeed still dominant, but very evidently doomed to a rapid passing. The future destined to replace this present is evident enough in some of its main outward tendencies, in society away from plutocracy and middle-class democracy to some completeness of socialism and attempt at a broad and equal commonalty of social living, in the relations of the peoples away from aggressive nationalism and balances of power to some closer international comity. But these are only symptoms, feelings out, mechanical tendencies, not likely by themselves, whatever changes they bring, to satisfy for long the soul of humanity. Behind them lies a greater question of the spirit and ideal which are to govern the relations of man with man and people with people in the age that is opening, the most critical because the most far-reaching in its hopes of all the historic ages of humanity.

Meanwhile much is gone that had to go, though relics and dregs of it remain for destruction, and the agony of a sanguinary struggle is ended, and for that there may well be rejoicing. But if something is ended, all has yet to be begun. The human spirit has still to find itself, its idea and its greater orientation.

After the War

THE GREAT war has for some time been over: it is already receding into the near distances of the past. Around us is a black mist and welter of the present, before us the face of a dim and ambiguous future. It is just possible, however, to take some stock of the immediate results of the war, although by no stretch of language can the world situation be called clear, for it is marked rather by chaotic drift and an unexampled confusion. The ideals which were so loud of mouth during the collision — mainly as advertising agents of its conflicting interests — are now discredited and silent: an uneasy locked struggle of irreconcilable forces entangled in an inextricable clasp of enmity, but too weak or too exhausted to prevail against each other and unable to separate, a bewildered opportunism incapable of guiding itself or finding an issue is the character of the present situation. Humanity has the figure of a derelict with broken mast and rudder drifting on a sea still upheaved by the after swell of the tempest, the statesmen of the Supreme Council figuring as its impotent captains and shouting directions that have not the least chance of useful execution and have to be changed from moment to moment. Nowhere is there a guiding illumination or a just idea that is at all practicable. A great intellectual and moral bankruptcy, an immense emptiness and depression has succeeded to the delirium of massacre.

This is indeed the most striking immediate after result of the war, the atmosphere of a world-wide disappointment and disillusionment and the failure of great hopes and ideals. What high and large and dazzling things were promised us during the war, and where are they now? Rejected, tarnished, dishonoured they lie cast aside dead and stripped and desecrated on the blood-stained refuse heap that the war has left behind it. Not one remains to us. The war that was fought to end war has been only the parent of fresh armed conflict and civil discord and it is the exhaustion that followed it which alone prevents as yet another vast and sanguinary struggle. The new fair and peaceful world-order that was promised us has gone far away into the land of chimeras. The League of Nations that was to have embodied it hardly even exists or exists only as a mockery and a byword. It is an ornamental, a quite helpless and otiose appendage to the Supreme Council, at present only a lank promise dangled before the vague and futile idealism of those who are still faithful to its sterile formula, a League on paper and with little chance, even if it becomes more apparently active, of being anything more than a transparent cover or a passive support for the domination of the earth by a close oligarchy of powerful governments or, it may be even, of two allied and imperialistic nations. The principle of self-determination once so loudly asserted is now openly denied and summarily put aside by the victorious empires. In its place we have the map of Europe remade on old diplomatic principles, Africa appropriated and partitioned as the personal property of two or three great European powers and western Asia condemned to be administered under a system of mandates that are now quite openly justified as instruments of commercial exploitation and have to be forced on unwilling peoples by the sovereign right of the machine-gun and the bayonet. The spectacle of subject peoples and "protected" nations demanding freedom and held down by military force continues to be a principal feature of the new order. The promised death of militarism is as far off as ever: its spirit and its actuality survive everywhere, and only its centre of strength and main operation has shifted westward — and eastward. All these things were foreseen while yet the war continued by a few who even while holding to the ideal persisted in seeing clearly: they are now popular commonplaces.

This however is only one side of the situation, the most present, insistent and obvious, but not therefore the most important and significant. It marks a stage, it is not the definite result of the great upheaval. The expectation of an immediate and magically complete transformation and regeneration of the world by the radical operation of the war was itself an error. It was an error to imagine that the power of the past rooted in the soil of long-seated human custom and character would disappear in one fierce moment or abdicate at once to the virgin power of the future. The task to be accomplished is too great to be so easy: the regeneration of man and his life, his rebirth into a higher nature is not to be effected by so summary and outward a process. It was an error to suppose that the war was or could be the painful, the terrible, but in the end the salutary crisis by which that great change would be decisively effected, — a change that would mean a complete renovation and purification of the soul, mind and life of humanity. The war came only as a first shock and overturn, an opportunity for certain clearances, a death-blow to the moral though not as yet to the material hold of certain ideas and powers that were till then confident and throned, sure of the present and hopeful of their possession of the future. It has loosened the soil, but the uprooting of all the old growths was more than it could effectuate. It has cleared a certain amount of ground, but the fruitful filling of that ground is an operation for other forces: it has ploughed and upturned much soil, but it is as yet a far cry to the new sowing and the harvest. It was, finally, and it still continues a cherished error to imagine that the mere alteration, however considerable, of political or other machinery is the sufficient panacea for the shortcomings of civilisation. It is a change of spirit, therefore a spiritual change, that can alone be the sanction and the foundation of a greater and better human existence.

The survival of old principles and conditions is still not the important matter. However great their appearance of outward and material strength, inwardly they are sick, weakened and have forfeited the promise of the future: all their intellectual and moral hold is gone and with that disappearance there is evident a notable failing of their practical effectuating wisdom and of their sustaining self-confidence. The instinct of self-continuation, the impetus of their past motion keeps them going, and they must last so long as they have some hold in the inert continuity of the past mental and vital habit of the peoples and are not pushed over by the growing and arising strength of the new forces that belong to the future. All their movements only serve to increase that strength, and whether they seek to perpetuate themselves by a violent insistence on their own principle or haggle and compromise with the quite opposite principles that are destined to replace them, each step they take brings them nearer to their ending. It is more fruitful to regard rather the new things that are not yet in possession of the present but already struggling to assert themselves against its ponderous and effective but ephemeral pressure.

It was very evident during the progress of the war that there were two great questions that it would not solve but rather must prepare for an acute stage of crisis, the growing struggle between Capital and Labour and the Asiatic question, no longer a quarrel now between rival exploiters but the issue between invading Europe and a resurgent Asia. The war itself was in its immediate aspect a battle between the German idea and the middle-class liberalism represented by the western peoples, France, England, America, and during the settlement of that present issue the other two questions more momentous for the future had to be held in abeyance. There was a truce between Capital and Labour, a truce determined only by a violent concentration of national feeling that proved too strong for the vague idealistic internationalism of the orthodox socialistic idea, not by any essential issue; for the futile idyllic promise of a rapprochement and a reconciliation between the hostile classes was too hollow an unreality to count as a factor. At the same time the Asiatic question too was in suspension and even enticing prospects of self-determination and independence or more qualified but still tempting allurements were proffered by the liberal empires to peoples who had been till then held as beyond the pale of civilisation. The Asiatic peoples too weak for an independent action ranged themselves on the side whose success seemed to offer to them the greater hope or else the least formidable menace. All this is now of the past: the natural and inevitable relations have reasserted themselves and these great questions are coming to a head. The modern contest between Capital and Labour has entered into a new phase and the two incurably antagonistic principles are evidently moving in spite of many hesitations and indecisions towards the final and decisive battle. In Asia the issue has already been joined between the old rule of dependency and protectorate with their new particoloured variation the mandate and the clear claim of the Asiatic peoples to equality and independence. All other things still in the forefront belong to the prolongation of the surviving or else to the liquidation of the dead past: these two alone are living questions of the immediate future.

The forces of Socialism and Capitalism now look each other in the face all over Europe, — all other distinctions are fading, the old minor political quarrels within the nation grow meaningless, — but have not yet joined battle. The old middle-class regime still holds the material power, keeps by the prestige of possession and men's habit of preferring present ills to an insecure adventure the mind of the uncertain mass and summons all its remaining forces to maintain its position. It is faced by the first actuality of a successful socialistic and revolutionary regime in Russia, but hitherto, although its repeated efforts to stifle it in its birth have been in vain, it has succeeded in isolating, in blockading and half starving it, in erecting against its westward urge an artificial frontier and in stemming the more rapid propagation of its master ideas by a constant campaign of discredit. Attempts at any soviet revolution west of the Russian line have been put an end to for the moment by legal or military repression. On the other hand, the economic condition of the world becomes worse and not better every year and it is becoming more and more evident that Capitalism has not only lost its moral credit but that it is unable to solve the material problems it has itself raised and brought to a head, while it blocks the way to any other solution. Every year that passes in this deadlock sees an enormous increase in the strength of the socialistic idea and the number and quality and the extremist fervour of its adherents. There is undoubtedly almost everywhere a temporary stiffening and concentration of the old regime; this as a phenomenon very much resembles the similar stiffening and concentration of the old monarchic and aristocratic regime that was the first result of the war between revolutionary France and Europe: but it has less reality of force and little chance of an equal duration; for the current of revolution is now only checked and not as then temporarily fatigued and exhausted and the accumulated rush of the ideas and forces that make for change is in our day immeasurably greater. The materials of an immense political, social and economic overturn, perhaps of a series of formidable explosions strengthened in force by each check and compression, everywhere visibly accumulate.

The outstanding portent of things to come is the continued existence, success, unbroken progress of the Russian revolution. This event promises to be as significant in human history as the great overturn of established ideas and institutions initiated in France in the eighteenth century, and to posterity it may well be this and not the downfall of Germany for which the great war will be ever memorable. Its importance is quite independent of the merits and demerits or the chances of survival of the present Bolshevik regime. The Bolshevik dictatorship is admittedly only an instrument of transition, a temporary concentration of revolutionary force, just as the Supreme Council and all that it supports is a temporary concentration of the opposing conservative forces. The achievements of this extraordinary government have been of a sufficiently astonishing character. Assailed continually from within and without, ruthlessly blockaded and starved and deprived of all means of sustenance and action except those it could create for itself out of itself or else conquer, repeatedly brought to the verge of downfall, it has survived all difficulties and dangers and rather derived always new strength from misfortune, overcome its internal and withstood its external enemies, spread itself in Asia beyond its own borders, organised out of chaos a strong civil and military instrument, and has had the force in the midst of scarcity, civil strife and foreign menace to lay the initial basis of a new type of society. This miracle of human energy is in itself no more than that, a repetition under more unfavourable circumstances of the extraordinary achievement of the Jacobins during the French Revolution. More important is the power of the idea that is behind these successes and has made them possible. It is a fact of only outward significance that the Bolsheviks not so long ago threatened with the loss of Moscow are now on the road to Warsaw. It is of much more significance that the western Powers find themselves driven at last to negotiate with the first successful communist government of modern times still denounced by them as a monstrosity to be destroyed and a danger to civilisation. But the thing of real significance is not these events that might have gone and might still go otherwise and might turn out to be only an episode; it is rather this fundamental fact affecting future possibilities that a great nation marked out as one of the coming leaders of humanity has taken a bold leap into the hidden gulfs of the future, abolished the past foundations, made and persisted in a radical experiment of communism, replaced middle-class parliamentarism by a new form of government and used its first energy of free life to initiate an entirely novel social order. It is acts of faith and audacities of this scale that change or hasten the course of human progress. It does not follow necessarily that what is being attempted now is the desirable or the definite form of the future society, but it is a certain sign that a phase of civilisation is beginning to pass and the Time-Spirit preparing a new phase and a new order.

It may well take time for the communistic idea to make its way westward and it may too undergo considerable modifications in the passage, but there is already a remarkable evolution in that sense. The Labour movement is everywhere completing its transformation from a reformist into a socialistic and therefore necessarily, in spite of present hesitations, a revolutionary type. The struggle of Labour for a better social status and a share in the government has grown obsolete: the accepted ideal is now the abolition of the capitalistic structure of society and the substitution of labour for wealth as the social basis and the governing power. The differences within the body of the movement touch no longer the principle but the means and process of the change and the precise form to be given to the coming socialistic government and society. It is only this division of counsels that still retards the onward motion and prevents the joining of the decided issue of battle. It is noticeable that the strength of the socialist and communistic idea increases as one goes eastward, diminishes in the opposite direction: the movement of progress is no longer from the west eastwards but from the east towards the occident. The more extreme forces are however daily increasing everywhere and are making themselves felt even in plutocratic America. In any case, whatever retardation of pace there may be, the direction of the stream is already clear and the result hardly doubtful. The existing European system of civilisation at least in its figure of capitalistic industrialism has reached its own monstrous limits, broken itself by its own mass and is condemned to perish. The issue of the future lies between a labour industrialism not very different except in organisation from its predecessor, some greater spirit and form of socialistic or communistic society such as is being attempted in Russia or else the emergence of a new and as yet unforeseen principle.

The upcoming force that opens a certain latitude for this last possibility is the resurgence of Asia. It is difficult to believe that Asia once free to think, act and live for herself will be for long content merely to imitate the past or the present evolution of Europe. The temperament of her peoples is marked off by too deep-seated a difference, the build and movement of their minds is of another character. At present, however, the movement of resurgence in Asia is finding expression more by a preface, an attempt to vindicate her bare right to live for herself, than by any pregnant effort of independent creative thought or action. The Asiatic unrest is still the second prominent feature of the situation. It is manifest in different forms from Egypt to China. It takes the shape in the Moslem world of a rejection of protectorates and mandates and a ferment of formation of independent Asiatic states. It manifests in India in a growing dissatisfaction with half methods and a constantly accentuated vehemence of the demand for complete and early self-government. It is creating in the Far East obscurer movements the sense of which has yet to emerge. This unrest envisages as yet little beyond the beginnings of a free action and existence. It appeals to the ideas of liberty that have long been fully self-conscious and the formulas that are systematically applied in Europe, self-government, Home Rule, democracy, national independence. At the same time there is involved, subconscient as yet in the great Asiatic masses but already defining itself in more awakened minds, another issue that may seem at first sight incompatible or at least disparate with this imitative seizing on principles associated with the modern forms of freedom and progress, — an ideal of spiritual and moral independence and the defence against the European invasion of the subtle principle of Asiatic culture. In India the notion of an Asiatic, a spiritualised democracy has begun to be voiced, though it is as yet vague and formless. The Khilafat agitation has a religious and therefore a cultural as well as a political motive and temper. The regime of the mandate is resisted because it signifies the political control and economic exploitation of Asia by Europe, but there is another more latent source of repugnance. The effective exploitation is impossible without the breaking and recasting of Asiatic life into the harsh moulds of European capitalism and industrialism and, although Asia must learn to live no longer in the magnificent but insufficient past but in the future, she must too demand to create that future in her own image. It is this twofold claim carrying in it the necessity of a double, an inner and an outer resistance that is the present meaning of the Asiatic unrest and the destined meaning of the Asiatic resurgence.

The capitalistic governments of Europe embarrassed by Asiatic unrest and resistance attempt to meet it with a concession in form and a denial in fact and principle. India is granted not the beginning of responsible government, but a first "substantial" step towards it; but it is a step hedged in with a paralysing accumulation of safeguards for British political and capitalistic interests and a significant condition that her farther progress must depend on the extent to which she is prepared to reform herself politically, economically and socially in the image of the British spirit. A French military force occupies Damascus, expels the king and government elected by the people, but promises to establish an indigenous government subservient to the European interest and its mandate. England offers Mesopotamia an Arab government saddled with an Anglo-Indian administration and the moral and material benefits of the exploitation of the oil of Mosul; meanwhile she is fighting the insurgent population in order to force on it its own greater good against its own barbarous and ignorant will to independence. A British control is to guarantee the integrity of Persia. Palestine is to be colonised by a Jewish immigration from Europe and to be administered by a High Commissioner in the interests — but against the will — of all its races. The Turkish people stripped of temporal empire and the prestige of the Caliphate are to be free under a strict and close international control and to be compelled by a Greek army to accept this unprecedented happiness and this unequalled opportunity of becoming a civilised modern nation. Here much more than against the organised forces of Labour the old regime has the material power to enforce its dictates. It remains none the less certain that a solution of this kind will not put an end to the unrest of Asia. The attempt is likely to recoil upon itself, for these new burdens must impose a greatly added strain on an already impossible financial condition and hasten the social and economic revolution in Europe. And even if it were otherwise, the resurgence of a great continent cannot be so held under. One day it will surely prevail against whatever difficulties and possess its inevitable future.

These two predestined forces of the future, socialism and the Asiatic resurgence, tend for the moment to form at least a moral alliance. The Labour and socialistic parties in the now dominant nations are strongly opposed to the policy of their governments and extend their support to the claims of subject or menaced nationalities in Asia as well as in Europe. In the more advanced Asiatic countries, as in Ireland, the national movement allies itself closely with a nascent labour movement. Bolshevik Russia is in alliance with or sovietises and controls the policy of the existing independent states of central Asia, casts a ferment into Persia and lends whatever moral support it can to the Turk or the Arab. This tendency may have in itself little meaning beyond the sympathy created by reaction against a common pressure.

Forces and interests in action are always opportunist and grasp in emergency at help or convenience from whatever quarter; but these alliances of pure interest, unless they find some more permanent support, are fragile and ephemeral combinations. Bolshevist Russia may set up Soviet governments in Georgia and Azerbaijan, but if these are only governments of occasion, if Sovietism does not correspond to or touch something more profound in the instinct, temperament and idea of these peoples, they are not likely to be durable. British Labour, although it makes no present conditions, expects a self-governing India to evolve in the sense of its own social and economic idea, but it is conceivable that a self-governing India may break away from the now normal line of development and discover her own and an unexpected social and economic order. All that we can say certainly at present is that the dominant governments of Europe have so managed that they find their scheme of things in opposition at once to the spirit and menaced by the growth of two great world forces, both compressed and held back by it and both evident possessors of the future.

That means that we are as yet far from a durable order and can therefore look forward to no suspension of the earth's troubles. The balance of the present, if such a chaotic fluctuation of shifts and devices can be called a balance, has no promise of duration, is only a moment of arrest, and we must expect, as soon as the sufficient momentum can come or circumstance open a door of escape for the release of compressed forces, more surprising and considerable movements, radical reversals and immense changes. The subject of supreme interest is not the circumstance that will set free their paths, for fate when it is ready takes advantage of any and every circumstance, but the direction they will take and the meaning they will envelop. The evolution of a socialistic society and the resurgence of Asia must effect great changes and yet they may not realise the larger human hope. Socialism may bring in a greater equality and a closer association into human life, but if it is only a material change, it may miss other needed things and even aggravate the mechanical burden of humanity and crush more heavily towards the earth its spirit. The resurgence of Asia, if it means only a redressing or shifting of the international balance, will be a step in the old circle, not an element of the renovation, not a condition of the step forward and out of the groove that is now felt however vaguely to be the one thing needful. The present international policy of Labour carries in itself indeed at its end, — provided Labour in power is faithful to the mind of Labour in opposition, — one considerable promise, a juster equation between the national and the international idea, an international comity of free nations, a free, equal and democratic league of peoples in place of the present close oligarchy of powers that only carries the shadow of an unreal League as its appendage. An international equality and cooperation in place of the past disorder or barbaric order of domination and exploitation is indeed a first image that we have formed of the better future. But that is not all: it is only a framework. It may be at lowest a novel machinery of international convenience, it may be at most a better articulated body for the human race. The spirit, the power, the idea and will that are meant to inform or use it is the greater question, the face and direction of destiny that will be decisive.

The two forces that are arising to possess the future represent two great things, the intellectual idealism of Europe and the soul of Asia. The mind of Europe laboured by Hellenism and Christianity and enlarging its horizons by free thought and science has arrived at an idea of human perfectibility or progress expressed in the terms of an intellectual, material and vital freedom, equality and unity of close association, an active fraternity or comradeship in thought and feeling and labour. The difficulty is to make of the component parts of this idea a combined and real reality in practice and the effort of European progress has been a labour to discover and set up a social machinery that shall automatically turn out this production. The first equation discovered, an individualistic democracy, a system of political liberty and equality before the law, has helped only to a levelling as between the higher orders, the competitive liberty of the strongest and most skilful to arrive, an inhuman social inequality and economic exploitation, an incessant class war and a monstrous and opulently sordid reign of wealth and productive machinery. It is the turn now of another equation, an equality as absolute as can be fabricated amid the inequalities of Nature by reason and social science and machinery, — and most of all an equal association in the labour and the common profits of a collective life. It is not certain that this formula will succeed very much better than its predecessor. This equality can only be presently secured by strict regulation, and that means that liberty at least for a time must go under. And at any rate the root of the whole difficulty is ignored, that nothing can be real in life that is not made real in the spirit. It is only if men can be made free, equal and united in spirit that there can be a secure freedom, equality and brotherhood in their life. The idea and sentiment are not enough, for they are incomplete and combated by deep-seated nature and instinct and they are besides inconstant and fluctuate. There must be an immense advance that will make freedom, equality and unity our necessary internal and external atmosphere. This can come only by a spiritual change and the intellect of Europe is beginning to see that the spiritual change is at least a necessity; but it is still too intent on rational formula and on mechanical effort to spare much time for discovery and realisation of the things of the spirit.

Asia has made no such great endeavour, no such travail of social effort and progress. Order, a secure ethical and religious framework, a settled economic system, a natural, becoming fatally a conventional and artificial, hierarchy have been her ordinary methods, everywhere indeed where she reached a high development of culture. These things she founded on her religious sense and sweetened and made tolerable by a strong communal feeling, a living humanity and sympathy and certain accesses to a human equality and closeness. Her supreme effort was to discover not an external but a spiritual and inner freedom and that carried with it a great realisation of spiritual equality and oneness. This spiritual travail was not universalised nor any endeavour made to shape the whole of human life in its image. The result was a disparateness between the highest inner individual and the outward social life, in India the increasing ascetic exodus of the best who lived in the spirit out of the secure but too narrow walls of the ordinary existence and the sterilising idea that the greatest universal truth of spirit discovered by life could yet not be the spirit of that life and is only realisable outside it. But now Asia enduring the powerful pressure of Europe is being forced to face the life problem again under the necessity of another and a more active solution. Assimilative, she may reproduce or imitate the occidental experiment of industrialism, its first phase of capitalism, its second phase of socialism; but then her resurgence will bring no new meaning or possibility into the human endeavour. Or the closer meeting of these two halves of the mind of humanity may set up a more powerful connection between the two poles of our being and realise some sufficient equation of the highest ideals of each, the inner and the outer freedom, the inner and the outer equality, the inner and the outer unity. That is the largest hope that can be formed on present data and circumstance for the human future.

But also, as from the mixing of various elements an unforeseen form emerges, so there may be a greater unknown something concealed and in preparation, not yet formulated in the experimental laboratory of Time, not yet disclosed in the design of Nature. And that then, some greater unexpected birth from the stress of the evolution, may be the justifying result of which this unquiet age of gigantic ferment, chaos of ideas and inventions, clash of enormous forces, creation and catastrophe and dissolution is actually amid the formidable agony and tension of this great imperfect body and soul of mankind in creative labour.

Appendixes

The two pieces that follow are connected with *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *War and Self-Determination*. Appendix I is a note Sri Aurobindo wrote during the 1930s or 1940s with reference to a proposed solution of international problems on the basis of principles put forward in *The Ideal of Human Unity*. Appendix II consists of a fragment found in a notebook containing miscellaneous writings by Sri Aurobindo. It appears to be a draft for the opening of an essay like those included in *War and Self-Determination*. It is clear from its content that it was written not long after the end of World War I, perhaps in 1919.

APPENDIX I

We seem at the present moment to be very far away from such a rational solution[1] and indeed at the opposite pole of human possibility; we have swung back to an extreme of international disorder and to an entire application of the vital and animal principle of the struggle for survival, not of the humanly fittest, but of the strongest.

But the very intensity of this struggle and disorder may be the path Nature has chosen towards the true escape from it; for it is becoming more and more evident that a long continuance of the present international state of humanity will lead not to any survival, but to the destruction of civilisation and the relapse of the race towards barbarism, decadence, an evolutionary failure. The antipathy or hostility or distrust of nations, races, cultures, religions towards each other is due to the past habit of egoistic self-assertion, desire for domination, for encroachment upon the lebensraum one of another and the consequent sense of unfriendly pressure, the fear of subjugation or domination and the oppression of the individuality of one by the other. A state of things must be brought about in which mutual toleration is the law, an order in which many elements, racial, national, cultural, spiritual can exist side by side and form a multiple unity; in such an order all these antipathies, hostilities, distrusts would die from lack of nourishment. That would be a true state of perfectly developed human civilisation, a true basis for the higher progress of the race. In this new order India with her spiritual culture turned towards the highest aims of humanity would find her rightful place and would become one of the leaders of the human evolution by the greatness of her ideals and the capacity of her peoples for the spiritualisation of life.

---

[1] The "rational solution" referred to was a proposal for solving international problems along the lines sketched by Sri Aurobindo in chapter 18 of *The Ideal of Human Unity*, "The Ideal Solution — A Free Grouping of Mankind".

APPENDIX II

The war is over, though peace still lingers, her way sadly embarrassed by blockades, armistices, secret negotiations, conferences where armed and victorious national egoisms dispute the bloodstained spoils of the conflict, political and other advantages, captured navies, indemnities, colonies, protectorates, torn fragments of dismembered States and nations, embarrassed most of all perhaps by the endeavour of the world's rulers and wise men to found upon the ephemeral basis of the results of war an eternal peace for humanity. But still the cannon at least is silent except where the embers of war still smoke and emit petty flames in distracted Poland and Russia, and peace though a lame and perhaps much mutilated peace must before long arrive. The great war is over and that may seem the main thing to [*sentence left incomplete*]

Note on the Texts

The chapters that make up the principal contents of *The Human Cycle*, *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *War and Self-Determination* were first published in the monthly review *Arya* between 1915 and 1920. The three works subsequently were revised by the author and published as books.

The Human Cycle. The twenty-four chapters making up this work appeared in the *Arya* under the title *The Psychology of Social Development* between August 1916 and July 1918. Sri Aurobindo began with a discussion of the psychological theory of social and political development put forward by the German historian Karl Lamprecht (1856–1915), about which he had read in an article published in the May/June 1916 issue of the *Hindustan Review*. Retaining some of Lamprecht's terminology, he went on to develop his own theory of "the cycle of society". During the 1930s, probably around 1937, he revised the *Arya* text of *The Psychology of Social Development* in two stages: the first revision was marked on a set of pages from the *Arya*, the second revision on a typed copy of the first. The revised text remained unpublished until 1949. At that time Sri Aurobindo considered making extensive alterations and additions to bring it up to date, but abandoned the idea and dictated only minor changes in the final stage of revision.

The book was published in 1949 by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram under the new title *The Human Cycle*. An American edition was brought out the next year. In 1962 a combined edition of *The Human Cycle*, *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *War and Self-Determination* was published by the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education. In 1971 the three works were published under the title *Social and Political Thought* as volume 15 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. This has been reprinted several times under the combined titles of the constituent works. A separate edition of *The Human Cycle* was published in 1977.

The Ideal of Human Unity first appeared in the *Arya* in thirty-five chapters between September 1915 and July 1918. At the time he commenced the series, Sri Aurobindo wrote to the Mother:

> I have begun in the issue of the Arya which is just out a number of articles on the Ideal of Human Unity. I intend to proceed very cautiously and not go very deep at first, but as if I were leading the intelligence of the reader gradually towards the deeper meaning of unity — especially to discourage the idea that mistakes uniformity and mechanical association for unity.

The *Arya* text of *The Ideal of Human Unity* was brought out as a book by the Sons of India, Ltd., Madras, in 1919. Sri Aurobindo revised this during the late 1930s, apparently in 1938. (The date is inferred partly from a footnote he added while revising Chapter 5 — later replaced by a different footnote — referring to the "Anschluss", Germany's annexation of Austria in March 1938. Sri Aurobindo is unlikely to have worked on the revision after his accident in November 1938.) The revised text remained unpublished for more than a decade. In June 1949, asked about the possiblity of publishing this book and *The Psychology of Social Development* (which had not yet been renamed *The Human Cycle*), Sri Aurobindo answered that

> they have to be altered by the introduction of new chapters and rewriting of passages and in *The Ideal* changes have to be made all through the book in order to bring it up to date, so it is quite impossible to make these alterations on the proofs. I propose however to revise these two books as soon as possible; they will receive my first attention.

Sri Aurobindo did not revise either book to the extent he had proposed. Although he made minor changes throughout *The Ideal of Human Unity*, his attempt to bring it up to date was largely confined to adding and revising footnotes (see the next paragraph). The only new chapter introduced was a long Postscript Chapter reviewing the book's conclusions in the light of recent international developments. The second edition of *The Ideal of Human Unity* was published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1950; it was followed by an American edition later the same year. (In the American edition the Postscript Chapter appeared as an Introduction.) In 1962, 1971 and subsequently this work was included in the combined editions mentioned above under *The Human Cycle*.

Footnotes to *The Ideal of Human Unity*. The seventy-eight footnotes in the present edition of *The Ideal of Human Unity* reflect the complex history of the text. Only three of these can be traced to the *Arya* (two other footnotes found in the *Arya* were deleted during revision). Sri Aurobindo added more than fifty footnotes in his first revision, many of them referring to political developments of the 1930s such as the rise of Fascism. In his second, lighter revision, undertaken more than ten years later, he also made extensive use of footnotes for updating the text. Some two dozen new footnotes were added at this time and an equal number of the earlier ones revised. Thus the majority of the footnotes in the final version may be taken to represent the standpoint of 1949–50. Detailed information on the dating of footnotes and other significant revision is provided in the reference volume (volume 35).

War and Self-Determination. Sri Aurobindo published five articles on current political topics in the *Arya*: "The Passing of War?" (April 1916), "Self-Determination" (September 1918), "The Unseen Power" (December 1918), "1919" (July 1919) and "After the War" (August 1920). In 1920 the first three of these, along with a Foreword and a newly written essay, "The League of Nations", were brought out as a book by S. R. Murthy & Co., Madras. A second edition was published by Sarojini Ghose (Sri Aurobindo's sister) in 1922. Sri Aurobindo dictated a few scattered revisions to these essays during the late 1940s or in 1950. A third edition of the book was brought out in 1957. "After the War", which had been published as a separate booklet in 1949, was added to this edition. Since 1962 *War and Self-Determination* has appeared in the combined editions mentioned above under *The Human Cycle*. "1919" was first reproduced in the 1962 edition, where it was placed at the end. In the present edition, "1919" and "After the War" are printed in the order in which they were written.

The present edition. This edition of *The Human Cycle*, *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *War and Self-Determination* has been thoroughly checked against the *Arya* and the texts of all revised editions. A note written with reference to *The Ideal of Human Unity* and a fragment related thematically to *War and Self-Determination* have been included as Appendixes.

The Future Poetry

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 26
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1997
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

The Future Poetry

with

On Quantitative Metre

Publisher's Note

The Future Poetry was first published in the monthly review *Arya* in thirty-two instalments between December 1917 and July 1920. These instalments were written immediately before their publication.

Sri Aurobindo twice undertook to revise *The Future Poetry*. During the late 1920s or early 1930s he revised seventeen chapters; in 1950 he dictated changes and additions to twenty chapters, thirteen of which had been revised earlier. The work of revision was never completed and *The Future Poetry* was not published in the form of a book during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime.

In 1953 the *Arya* text of *The Future Poetry* was brought out as a book, with only two passages of the later revision added. In 1985 an edition incorporating all available revision was published.

On Quantitative Metre was published in 1942 as an appendix to *Collected Poems and Plays* and as a separate book. It was written shortly before its publication.

This edition of *The Future Poetry with On Quantitative Metre* has been checked against the author's manuscripts and the original printed texts.

CONTENTS

THE FUTURE POETRY
PART ONE

Chapter I
The Mantra 3

Chapter II
The Essence of Poetry 11

Chapter III
Rhythm and Movement 19

Chapter IV
Style and Substance 25

Chapter V
Poetic Vision and the Mantra 31

Chapter VI
The National Evolution of Poetry 41

Chapter VII
The Character of English Poetry – 1 48

Chapter VIII
The Character of English Poetry – 2 53

Chapter IX
The Course of English Poetry – 1
Chaucer and the Poetry of External Life 63

Chapter X
The Course of English Poetry – 1
Elizabethan Drama
Shakespeare and the Poetry of the Life-Spirit 72

CONTENTS

Chapter XI
The Course of English Poetry – 3 83

Chapter XII
The Course of English Poetry – 4 90

Chapter XIII
The Course of English Poetry – 5 100

Chapter XIV
The Movement of Modern Literature – 1 107

Chapter XV
The Movement of Modern Literature – 2 116

Chapter XVI
The Poets of the Dawn – 1 124

Chapter XVII
The Poets of the Dawn – 2
Byron and Wordsworth 128

Chapter XVIII
The Poets of the Dawn – 3 138

Chapter XIX
The Victorian Poets 148

Chapter XX
Recent English Poetry – 1 160

Chapter XXI
Recent English Poetry – 2 172

Chapter XXII
Recent English Poetry – 3 183

Chapter XXIII
Recent English Poetry – 4 192

Chapter XXIV
New Birth or Decadence? 205

CONTENTS

THE FUTURE POETRY
PART TWO

Chapter I
The Ideal Spirit of Poetry 217

Chapter II
The Sun of Poetic Truth 227

Chapter III
The Breath of Greater Life 241

Chapter IV
The Soul of Poetic Delight and Beauty 254

Chapter V
The Power of the Spirit 268

Chapter VI
The Form and the Spirit 276

Chapter VII
The Word and the Spirit 287

Chapter VIII
Conclusion 302

Appendixes to *The Future Poetry* 311

ON QUANTITATIVE METRE

On Quantitative Metre 317

Poems in Quantitative Metres 367

The Future Poetry

Part I

Sri Aurobindo

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry

Chapter I

The Mantra

IT IS not often that we see published in India literary criticism which is of the first order, at once discerning and suggestive, criticism which forces us both to see and think. A book which recently I have read and more than once reperused with a yet unexhausted pleasure and fruitfulness, Mr. James Cousins' *New Ways in English Literature*, is eminently of this kind. It raises thought which goes beyond the strict limits of the author's subject and suggests the whole question of the future of poetry in the age which is coming upon us, the higher functions open to it — as yet very imperfectly fulfilled, — and the part which English literature on the one side and the Indian mind and temperament on the other are likely to take in determining the new trend. The author is himself a poet, a writer of considerable force in the Irish movement which has given contemporary English literature its two greatest poets, and the book on every page attracts and satisfies by its living force of style, its almost perfect measure, its delicacy of touch, its fineness and depth of observation and insight, its just sympathy and appreciation.

For the purpose for which these essays have been, not indeed written, but put together, the criticism, fine and helpful as it is, suffers from one great fault, — there is too little of it. Mr. Cousins is satisfied with giving us the essential, just what is necessary for a trained mind to seize intimately the spirit and manner and poetic quality of the writers whose work he brings before us. This is done sometimes in such a masterly manner that even one touch more might well have been a touch in excess. The essay on Emerson is a masterpiece in this kind; it gives perfectly in a few pages all that should be said about Emerson's poetry and nothing that need not be said. But some of the essays, admirable in themselves, are too slight for our need. The book is not indeed intended to be exhaustive in its range. Mr. Cousins wisely takes for the most part, — there is one notable exception, — writers with whom he is in close poetical sympathy or for whom he has a strong appreciation; certain names which have come over to our ears with some flourish of the trumpets of renown, Thompson, Masefield, Hardy, do not occur at all or only in a passing allusion. But still the book deals among contemporary poets with Tagore, A. E. and Yeats, among recent poets with Stephen Phillips, Meredith, Carpenter, great names all of them, not to speak of lesser writers. This little book with its 135 short pages is almost too small a pedestal for the figures it has to support, not, be it understood, for the purposes of the English reader interested in poetry, but for ours in India who have on this subject a great ignorance and, most of us, a very poorly trained critical intelligence. We need something a little more ample to enchain our attention and fix in us a permanent interest; a fingerpost by the way is not enough for the Indian reader, you will have to carry him some miles on the road if you would have him follow it.

But Mr. Cousins has done a great service to the Indian mind by giving it at all a chance to follow this direction with such a guide to point out the way. The English language and literature is practically the only window the Indian mind, with the narrow and meagre and yet burdensome education given to it, possesses into the world of European thought and culture; but at least as possessed at present, it is a painfully small and insufficient opening. English poetry for all but a few of us stops short with Tennyson and Browning, when it does not stop with Byron and Shelley. A few have heard of some of the recent, fewer of some of the contemporary poets; their readers are hardly enough to make a number. In this matter of culture this huge peninsula, once one of the greatest centres of civilisation, has been for long the most provincial of provinces; it has been a patch of tilled fields round a lawyer's office and a Government cutcherry, a cross between a little district town and the most rural of villages, at its largest a dried-up bank far away from the great stream of the world's living thought and action, visited with no great force by occasional and belated waves, but for the rest a bare field for sluggish activities, the falsest possible education, a knowledge always twenty-five or fifty years behind the time. The awakening brought by the opening years of the twentieth century has chiefly taken the form of a revival of cultural patriotism, highly necessary for a nation which has a distinctive contribution to make to the human spirit in its future development, some new and great thing which it must evolve out of a magnificent past for the opening splendours of the future; but in order that this may evolve rapidly and surely, it needs a wide and sound information, a richer stuff to work upon, a more vital touch with the life and master tendencies of the world around it. Such books as this will be of invaluable help in creating what is now deficient.

The helpfulness of this suggestive work comes more home to me personally because I have shared to the full the state of mere blank which is the ordinary condition of the Indian mind with regard to its subject. Such touch as in the intellectual remoteness of India I have been able to keep up with the times, had been with contemporary continental rather than contemporary English literature. With the latter all vital connection came to a dead stop with my departure from England a quarter of a century ago; it had for its last events the discovery of Meredith as a poet, in his *Modern Love*, and the perusal of *Christ in Hades*, — some years before its publication, — the latter an unforgettable date. I had long heard, standing aloof in giant ignorance, the great name of Yeats, but with no more than a fragmentary and mostly indirect acquaintance with some of his work; A. E. only lives for me in Mr. Cousins' pages; other poets of the day are still represented in my mind by scattered citations. In the things of culture such a state of ignorance is certainly an unholy state of sin; but in this immoral and imperfect world even sin has sometimes its rewards, and I get that now in the joy and light of a new world opening to me all in one view while I stand, Cortez-like, on the peak of the large impression created for me by Mr. Cousins' book. For the light we get from a vital and illuminative criticism from within by another mind can sometimes almost take the place of a direct knowledge.

There disengages itself from these essays not so much a special point of view as a distinctive critical and literary temperament, which may be perhaps not so much the whole mind of the critic as the response to his subject in a mind naturally in sympathy with it. Mr. Cousins is a little nervous about this in his preface; he is apprehensive of being labelled as an idealist. The cut and dried distinction between idealism and realism in literature has always seemed to me to be a little arbitrary and unreal, and whatever its value in drama and fiction, it has no legitimate place in poetry. What we find here is a self-identification with what is best and most characteristic of a new spirit in the age, a new developing aesthetic temper and outlook, — or should we rather say, inlook? Its mark is a greater (not exclusive) tendency to the spiritual rather than the merely earthly, to the inward and subjective than the outward and objective, to the life within and behind than to the life in front, and in its purest, which seems to be its Irish form, a preference of the lyrical to the dramatic and of the inwardly suggestive to the concrete method of poetical presentation. Every distinctive temperament has naturally the defect of an insufficient sympathy, often a pronounced and intolerant antipathy towards all that departs from its own motives. Moreover contemporary criticism is beset with many dangers; there is the charm of new thought and feeling and expression of tendency which blinds us to the defects and misplaces or misproportions to our view the real merits of the expression itself; there are powerful cross-currents of immediate attraction and repulsion which carry us from the true track; especially, there is the inevitable want of perspective which prevents us from getting a right vision of things too near us in time. And if in addition one is oneself part of a creative movement with powerful tendencies and a pronounced ideal, it becomes difficult to get away from the standpoint it creates to a larger critical outlook. From these reefs and shallows Mr. Cousins' sense of measure and justice of appreciation largely, generally indeed, preserve him, though not, I think, quite invariably. But still it is not a passionless, quite disinterested criticism which we get or want from this book, but a much more helpful thing, an interpretation of work which embodies the creative tendencies of the time by one who has himself lived in them and helped both to direct and to form.

Mr. Cousins' positive criticism is almost always fine, just and inspired by a warm glow of sympathy and understanding tempered by discernment, restraint and measure; whatever the future critic, using his scales and balance, may have to take away from it, will be, one would imagine, only by way of a slight alteration of stress here and there. His depreciations, though generally sound enough, are not, I think, invariably as just as his appreciations. Thus his essay on the work of J. M. Synge, "The Realist on the Stage", is, in sharp distinction from the rest of the book, an almost entirely negative and destructive criticism, strong and interesting, but written from the point of view of the ideals and aims of the Irish literary movement against a principle of work which seemed entirely to depart from them; yet we are allowed to get some glimpse of a positive side of dramatic power which the critic does not show us, but leaves us rather to guess at. Mr. Cousins seems to me to take the dramatist's theory of his own art more seriously than it should be taken; for the creator can seldom be accepted — there may of course be exceptions, rare instances of clairvoyant self-sight — as a sound exponent of his own creative impulse. He is in his central inspiration the instrument of a light and power not his own, and his account of it is usually vitiated, out of focus, an attempt to explain the workings of this impersonal power by motives which were the contribution of his own personal effort, but which are often quite subordinate or even accidental side-lights of the lower brain-mind, not the central moving force.

Mr. Cousins has pointed out clearly enough that art can never be a copy of life. But it is also true, I think, that that is not the secret object of most realism, whatever it may say about itself; realism is in fact a sort of nether idealism, or, perhaps more correctly, sometimes an inverse, sometimes a perverse romanticism which tries to get a revelation of creative truth by an effective force of presentation, by an intensity, often an exaggeration at the opposite side of the complex phenomenon of life. All art starts from the sensuous and sensible, or takes it as a continual point of reference or, at the lowest, uses it as a symbol and a fount of images; even when it soars into invisible worlds, it is from the earth that it soars; but equally all art worth the name must go beyond the visible, must reveal, must show us something that is hidden, and in its total effect not reproduce but create. We may say that the artist creates an ideal world of his own, not necessarily in the sense of ideal perfection, but a world that exists in the idea, the imagination and vision of the creator. More truly, he throws into significant form a truth he has seen, which may be truth of hell or truth of heaven or an immediate truth behind things terrestrial or any other, but is never merely the external truth of earth. By that ideative truth and the power, the perfection and the beauty of his presentation and utterance of it his work must be judged.

Some occasional utterances in this book seem to spring from very pronounced idiosyncrasies of its distinctive literary temperament or standpoint and cannot always be accepted without reservation. I do not myself share its rather disparaging attitude towards the dramatic form and motive or its comparative coldness towards the architectural faculty and impulse in poetry. When Mr. Cousins tells us that "its poetry and not its drama, will prove to be the thing of life" in Shakespeare's work, I feel that the distinction is not sound all through, that there is a truth behind it, but it is overstated. Or when still more vivaciously he dismisses Shakespeare the dramatist to "a dusty and reverent immortality in the libraries" or speaks of the "monstrous net of his life's work" which but for certain buoys of line and speech "might sink in the ocean of forgetfulness," I cannot help feeling that this can only be at most the mood of the hour born of the effort to get rid of the burden of its past and move more freely towards its future, and not the definitive verdict of the poetic and aesthetic mind on what has been so long the object of its sincere admiration and a powerful presence and influence. Perhaps I am wrong, I may be too much influenced by my own settled idiosyncrasies of an aesthetic temperament and being impregnated with an early cult for the work of the great builders in Sanskrit and Greek, Italian and English poetry. At any rate, this is true that whatever relation we may keep with the great masters of the past, our present business is to go beyond and not to repeat them, and it must always be the lyrical motive and spirit which find a new secret and begin a new creation; for the lyrical is the primary poetical motive and spirit and the dramatic and epic must wait for it to open for them their new heaven and new earth.

I have referred to these points which are only side issues or occasional touches in Mr. Cousins' book, because they are germane to the question which it most strongly raises, the future of English poetry and of the world's poetry. It is still uncertain how that future will deal with the old quarrel between idealism and realism, for the two tendencies these names roughly represent are still present in the tendencies of recent work. More generally, poetry always sways between two opposite trends, towards predominance of subjective vision and towards an emphasis on objective presentation, and it can rise too beyond these to a spiritual plane where the distinction is exceeded, the divergence reconciled. Again, it is not likely that the poetic imagination will ever give up the narrative and dramatic form of its creative impulse; a new spirit in poetry, even though primarily lyrical, is moved always to seize upon and do what it can with them, — as we see in the impulsion which has driven Maeterlinck, Yeats, Rabindranath to take hold of the dramatic form for self-expression as well as the lyrical in spite of their dominant subjectivity. We may perhaps think that this was not the proper form for their spirit, that they cannot get there a full or a flawless success; but who shall lay down rules for creative genius or say what it shall or shall not attempt? It follows its own course and makes its own shaping experiments. And it is interesting to speculate whether the new spirit in poetry will take and use with modifications the old dramatic and narrative forms, as did Rabindranath in his earlier dramatic attempts, or quite transform them to its own ends, as he has attempted in his later work. But after all these are subordinate issues.

It will be more fruitful to take the main substance of the matter for which the body of Mr. Cousins' criticism gives a good material. Taking the impression it creates for a starting-point and the trend of English poetry for our main text, but casting our view farther back into the past, we may try to sound what the future has to give us through the medium of the poetic mind and its power for creation and interpretation. The issues of recent activity are still doubtful and it would be rash to make any confident prediction; but there is one possibility which this book strongly suggests and which it is at least interesting and may be fruitful to search and consider. That possibility is the discovery of a closer approximation to what we might call the *mantra* in poetry, that rhythmic speech which, as the Veda puts it, rises at once from the heart of the seer and from the distant home of the Truth, — the discovery of the word, the divine movement, the form of thought proper to the reality which, as Mr. Cousins excellently says, "lies in the apprehension of a something stable behind the instability of word and deed, something that is a reflection of the fundamental passion of humanity for something beyond itself, something that is a dim shadowing of the divine urge which is prompting all creation to unfold itself and to rise out of its limitations towards its Godlike possibilities." Poetry in the past has done that in moments of supreme elevation; in the future there seems to be some chance of its making it a more conscious aim and steadfast endeavour.

Chapter II

The Essence of Poetry

WHAT THEN is the nature of poetry, its essential law? what is the highest power we can demand from it, what the supreme music that the human mind, reaching up and in and out to its own widest breadths, deepest depths and topmost summits, can extract from this self-expressive instrument? and how out of that does there arise the possibility of its use as the *mantra* of the Real? Not that we need spend any energy in a vain effort to define anything so profound, elusive and indefinable as the breath of poetic creation; to take the myriad-stringed harp of Saraswati to pieces for the purpose of scientific analysis is a narrow and barren amusement. But we stand in need of some guiding intuitions, some helpful descriptions which will serve to enlighten our search; to fix in that way, not by definition, but by description, the essential things in poetry is neither an impossible, nor an unprofitable endeavour.

We meet here two common enough errors, to one of which the ordinary uninstructed mind is most liable, to the other the too instructed critic or the too intellectually conscientious artist or craftsman. To the ordinary mind, judging poetry without really entering into it, it looks as if it were nothing more than an aesthetic pleasure of the imagination, the intellect and the ear, a sort of elevated pastime. If that were all, we need not have wasted time in seeking for its spirit, its inner aim, its deeper law. Anything pretty, pleasant and melodious with a beautiful idea in it would serve our turn; a song of Anacreon or a plaint of Mimnermus would be as satisfying to the poetic sense as the Oedipus, Agamemnon or Odyssey, for from this point of view they might well strike us as equally and even, one might contend, more perfect in their light but exquisite unity and brevity. Pleasure, certainly, we expect from poetry as from all art; but the external sensible and even the inner imaginative pleasure are only first elements. For these must not only be refined in order to meet the highest requirements of the intelligence, the imagination and the ear; but afterwards they have to be still farther heightened and in their nature raised beyond even their own noblest levels, so that they may become the support for something greater beyond them; otherwise they cannot lead to the height on which lives the Mantra.

For neither the intelligence, the imagination nor the ear are the true or at least the deepest or highest recipients of the poetic delight, even as they are not its true or highest creators; they are only its channels and instruments: the true creator, the true hearer is the soul. The more rapidly and transparently the rest do their work of transmission, the less they make of their separate claim to satisfaction, the more directly the word reaches and sinks deep into the soul, the greater the poetry. Therefore poetry has not really done its work, at least its highest work, until it has raised the pleasure of the instrument and transmuted it into the deeper delight of the soul. A divine Ananda,[1] a delight interpretative, creative, revealing, formative, — one might almost say, an inverse reflection of the joy which the universal Soul felt in its great release of energy when it rang out into the rhythmic forms of the universe the spiritual truth, the large interpretative idea, the life, the power, the emotion of things packed into an original creative vision, — such spiritual joy is that which the soul of the poet feels and which, when he can conquer the human difficulties of his task, he succeeds in pouring also into all those who are prepared to receive it. This delight is not merely a godlike pastime; it is a great formative and illuminative power.

The critic — of a certain type — or the intellectually conscientious artist will, on the other hand, often talk as if poetry were mainly a matter of a faultlessly correct or at most an exquisite technique. Certainly, in all art good technique is the first step towards perfection; but there are so many other steps, there is a whole world beyond before you can get near to what you seek; so much so that even a deficient correctness of execution will not prevent an intense and gifted soul from creating great poetry which keeps its hold on the centuries. Moreover, technique, however indispensable, occupies a smaller field perhaps in poetry than in any other art, — first, because its instrument, the rhythmic word, is fuller of subtle and immaterial elements; then because, the most complex, flexible, variously suggestive of all the instruments of the artistic creator, it has more — almost infinite — possibilities in many directions than any other. The rhythmic word has a subtly sensible element, its sound value, a quite immaterial element, its significance or thought value, and both of these again, its sound and its sense, have separately and together a soul value, a direct spiritual power, which is infinitely the most important thing about them. And though this comes to birth with a small element subject to the laws of technique, yet almost immediately, almost at the beginning of its flight, its power soars up beyond the province of any laws of mechanical construction: and this form of speech carries in it on its summits an element which draws close to the empire of the ineffable.

---

[1] Ananda, in the language of Indian spiritual experience, is the essential delight which the Infinite feels in itself and in its creation. By the infinite Self's Ananda all exists, for the Self's Ananda all was made.

Poetry rather determines its own form; the form is not imposed on it by any law mechanical or external to it. The poet least of all artists needs to create with his eye fixed anxiously on the technique of his art. He has to possess it, no doubt; but in the heat of creation the intellectual sense of it becomes a subordinate action or even a mere undertone in his mind, and in his best moments he is permitted, in a way, to forget it altogether. For then the perfection of his sound-movement and style come entirely as the spontaneous form of his soul: that utters itself in an inspired rhythm and an innate, a revealed word, even as the universal Soul created the harmonies of the universe out of the power of the word secret and eternal within him, leaving the mechanical work to be done in a surge of hidden spiritual excitement by the subconscient part of his Nature. It is this highest speech which is the supreme poetic utterance, the immortal element in his poetry, and a little of it is enough to save the rest of his work from oblivion. *Svalpam apyasya dharmasya!*

This power makes the rhythmic word of the poet the highest form of speech available to man for the expression whether of his self-vision or of his world-vision. It is noticeable that even the deepest experience, the pure spiritual which enters into things that can never be wholly expressed, still, when it does try to express them and not merely to explain them intellectually, tends instinctively to use, often the rhythmic forms, almost always the manner of speech characteristic of poetry. But poetry attempts to extend this manner of vision and utterance to all experience, even the most objective, and therefore it has a natural urge towards the expression of something in the object beyond its mere appearances, even when these seem outwardly to be all that it is enjoying.

We may usefully cast a glance, not at the last inexpressible secret, but at the first elements of this heightening and intensity peculiar to poetic utterance. Ordinary speech uses language mostly for a limited practical utility of communication; it uses it for life and for the expression of ideas and feelings necessary or useful to life. In doing so, we treat words as conventional signs for ideas with nothing but a perfunctory attention to their natural force, much as we use any kind of common machine or simple implement; we treat them as if, though useful for life, they were themselves without life. When we wish to put a more vital power into them, we have to lend it to them out of ourselves, by marked intonations of the voice, by the emotional force or vital energy we throw into the sound so as to infuse into the conventional word-sign something which is not inherent in itself. But if we go back earlier in the history of language and still more if we look into its origins, we shall, I think, find that it was not always so with human speech. Words had not only a real and vivid life of their own, but the speaker was more conscious of it than we can possibly be with our mechanised and sophisticated intellects. This arose from the primitive nature of language which, probably, in its first movement was not intended, — or shall we say, did not intend, — so much to stand for distinct ideas of the intelligence as for feelings, sensations, broad indefinite mental impressions with minute shades of quality in them which we do not now care to pursue. The intellectual sense in its precision must have been a secondary element which grew more dominant as language evolved along with the evolving intelligence.

For the reason why sound came to express fixed ideas, lies not in any natural and inherent equivalence between the sound and its intellectual sense, for there is none, — intellectually any sound might express any sense, if men were agreed on a conventional equivalence between them; it started from an indefinable quality or property in the sound to raise certain vibrations in the life-soul of the human creature, in his sensational, his emotional, his crude mental being. An example may indicate more clearly what I mean. The word wolf, the origin of which is no longer present to our minds, denotes to our intelligence a certain living object and that is all, the rest we have to do for ourselves: the Sanskrit word *vṛka*, "tearer", came in the end to do the same thing, but originally it expressed the sensational relation between the wolf and man which most affected the man's life, and it did so by a certain quality in the sound which readily associated it with the sensation of tearing. This must have given early language a powerful life, a concrete vigour, in one direction a natural poetic force which it has lost, however greatly it has gained in precision, clarity, utility.

Now, poetry goes back in a way and recovers, though in another fashion, as much as it can of this original element. It does this partly by a stress on the image replacing the old sensational concreteness, partly by a greater attention to the suggestive force of the sound, its life, its power, the mental impression it carries. It associates this with the definitive thought value contributed by the intelligence and increases both by each other. In that way it succeeds at the same time in carrying up the power of speech to the direct expression of a higher reach of experience than the intellectual or vital. For it brings out not only the definitive intellectual value of the word, not only its power of emotion and sensation, its vital suggestion, but through and beyond these aids its soul-suggestion, its spirit. So poetry arrives at the indication of infinite meanings beyond the finite intellectual meaning the word carries. It expresses not only the life-soul of man as did the primitive word, not only the ideas of his intelligence for which speech now usually serves, but the experience, the vision, the ideas, as we may say, of the higher and wider soul in him. Making them real to our life-soul as well as present to our intellect, it opens to us by the word the doors of the Spirit.

Prose style carries speech to a much higher power than its ordinary use, but it differs from poetry in not making this yet greater attempt. For it takes its stand firmly on the intellectual value of the word. It uses rhythms which ordinary speech neglects, and aims at a general fluid harmony of movement. It seeks to associate words agreeably and luminously so as at once to please and to clarify the intelligence. It strives after a more accurate, subtle, flexible and satisfying expression than the rough methods of ordinary speech care to compass. A higher adequacy of speech is its first object. Beyond this adequacy it may aim at a greater forcefulness and effectiveness by various devices of speech, by many rhetorical means for heightening the stress of its intellectual appeal. Passing beyond this first limit, this just or strong, but always restrained measure, it may admit a more emphatic rhythm, more directly and powerfully stimulate the emotion, appeal to a more vivid aesthetic sense. It may even make such a free or rich use of images as to suggest an outward approximation to the manner of poetry; but it employs them decoratively, as ornaments, *alaṅkāra*, or for their effective value in giving a stronger intellectual vision of the thing or the thought it describes or defines; it does not use the image for that profounder and more living vision for which the poet is always seeking. And always it has its eye on its chief hearer and judge, the intelligence, and calls in other powers only as important aids to capture his suffrage. Reason and taste, two powers of the intelligence, are rightly the supreme gods of the prose stylist, while to the poet they are only minor deities.

If it goes beyond these limits, approaches in its measures a more striking rhythmic balance, uses images for sheer vision, opens itself to a mightier breath of speech, prose style passes beyond its normal province and approaches or even enters the confines of poetry. It becomes poetical prose or even poetry itself using the apparent forms of prose as a disguise or a loose apparel. A high or a fine adequacy, effectivity, intellectual illuminativeness and a carefully tempered aesthetic satisfaction are the natural and proper powers of its speech. But the privilege of the poet is to go beyond and discover that more intense illumination of speech, that inspired word and supreme inevitable utterance, in which there meets the unity of a divine rhythmic movement with a depth of sense and a power of infinite suggestion welling up directly from the fountain-heads of the spirit within us. He may not always or often find it, but to seek for it is the law or at least the highest trend of his utterance, and when he can not only find it, but cast into it some deeply revealed truth of the spirit itself, he utters the *mantra*.

But always, whether in the search or the finding, the whole style and rhythm of poetry are the expression and movement which come from us out of a certain spiritual excitement caused by a vision in the soul of which it is eager to deliver itself. The vision may be of anything in Nature or God or man or the life of creatures or the life of things; it may be a vision of force and action, or of sensible beauty, or of truth of thought, or of emotion and pleasure and pain, of this life or the life beyond. It is sufficient that it is the soul which sees and the eye, sense, heart and thought-mind become the passive instruments of the soul. Then we get the real, the high poetry. But if what acts is too much an excitement of the intellect, the imagination, the emotions, the vital activities seeking rhythmical and forceful expression, without that greater spiritual excitement embracing them, or if all these are not sufficiently sunk into the soul, steeped in it, fused in it, and the expression does not come out purified and uplifted by a sort of spiritual transmutation, then we fall to lower levels of poetry and get work of a much more doubtful immortality. And when the appeal is altogether to the lower things in us, to the mere mind, we arrive outside the true domain of poetry; we approach the confines of prose or get prose itself masking in the apparent forms of poetry, and the work is distinguished from prose style only or mainly by its mechanical elements, a good verse form and perhaps a more compact, catching or energetic expression than the prose writer will ordinarily permit to the easier and looser balance of his speech. It will not have at all or not sufficiently the true essence of poetry.

For in all things that speech can express there are two elements, the outward or instrumental and the real or spiritual. In thought, for instance, there is the intellectual idea, that which the intelligence makes precise and definite to us, and the soul-idea, that which exceeds the intellectual and brings us into nearness or identity with the whole reality of the thing expressed. Equally in emotion, it is not the mere emotion itself the poet seeks, but the soul of emotion, that in it for the delight of which the soul in us and the world desires or accepts emotional experience. So too with the poetical sense of objects, the poet's attempt to embody in his speech truth of life or truth of Nature. It is this greater truth and its delight and beauty for which he is seeking, beauty which is truth and truth beauty and therefore a joy for ever, because it brings us the delight of the soul in the discovery of its own deeper realities. This greater element the more timid and temperate speech of prose can sometimes shadow out to us, but the heightened and fearless style of poetry makes it close and living and the higher cadences of poetry carry in on their wings what the style by itself could not bring. This is the source of that intensity which is the stamp of poetical speech and of the poetical movement. It comes from the stress of the soul-vision behind the word; it is the spiritual excitement of a rhythmic voyage of self-discovery among the magic islands of form and name in these inner and outer worlds.

Chapter III

Rhythm and Movement

THE MANTRA, poetic expression of the deepest spiritual reality, is only possible when three highest intensities of poetic speech meet and become indissolubly one, a highest intensity of rhythmic movement, a highest intensity of interwoven verbal form and thought-substance, of style, and a highest intensity of the soul's vision of truth. All great poetry comes about by a unison of these three elements; it is the insufficiency of one or another which makes the inequalities in the work of even the greatest poets, and it is the failure of some one element which is the cause of their lapses, of the scoriae in their work, the spots in the sun. But it is only at a certain highest level of the fused intensities that the Mantra becomes possible.

It is from a certain point of view the rhythm, the poetic movement that is of primary importance; for that is the first fundamental and indispensable element without which all the rest, whatever its other value, remains inacceptable to the Muse of poetry. A perfect rhythm will often even give immortality to work which is slight in vision and very far from the higher intensities of style. But it is not merely metrical rhythm, even in a perfect technical excellence, which we mean when we speak of poetic movement; that perfection is only a first step, a physical basis. There must be a deeper and more subtle music, a rhythmical soul-movement entering into the metrical form and often overflooding it before the real poetic achievement begins. A mere metrical excellence, however subtle, rich or varied, however perfectly it satisfies the outer ear, does not meet the deeper aims of the creative spirit; for there is an inner hearing which makes its greater claim, and to reach and satisfy it is the true aim of the creator of melody and harmony.

Nevertheless metre, by which we mean a fixed and balanced system of the measures of sound, *mātrā*, is not only the traditional, but also surely the right physical basis for the poetic movement. A recent modern tendency — that which has given us the poetry of Whitman and Carpenter and the experimentalists in *vers libre* in France and Italy, — denies this tradition and sets aside metre as a limiting bondage, perhaps even a frivolous artificiality or a falsification of true, free and natural poetic rhythm. That is, it seems to me, a point of view which cannot eventually prevail, because it does not deserve to prevail. It certainly cannot triumph, unless it justifies itself by supreme rhythmical achievements beside which the highest work of the great masters of poetic harmony in the past shall sink into a clear inferiority. That has not yet been done. On the contrary, *vers libre* has done its best when it has either limited its aim in rhythm to a kind of chanting poetical prose or else based itself on a sort of irregular and complex metrical movement which in its inner law, though not in its form, recalls the idea of Greek choric poetry.

Milton disparaging rhyme, which he had himself used with so much skill in his earlier, less sublime, but more beautiful poetry, forgot or ignored the spiritual value of rhyme, its power to enforce and clinch the appeal of melodic or harmonic recurrence which is a principal element in the measured movement of poetry, its habit of opening sealed doors to the inspiration, its capacity to suggest and reveal beauty to that supra-intellectual something in us which music is missioned to awake. The Whitmanic technique falls into a similar, but wider error. When mankind found out the power of thought and feeling thrown into fixed and recurring measures of sound to move and take possession of the mind and soul, they were not discovering a mere artistic device, but a subtle truth of psychology, of which the conscious theory is preserved in the Vedic tradition. And when the ancient Indians chose more often than not to throw whatever they wished to endure, even philosophy, science and law, into metrical form, it was not merely to aid the memory, — they were able to memorise huge prose Brahmanas quite as accurately as the Vedic hymnal or the metrical Upanishads, — but because they perceived that metrical speech has in itself not only an easier durability, but a greater natural power than unmetrical, not only an intenser value of sound, but a force to compel language and sense to heighten themselves in order to fall fitly into this stricter mould. There is perhaps a truth in the Vedic idea that the Spirit of creation framed all the movements of the world by *chandas*, in certain fixed rhythms of the formative Word, and it is because they are faithful to the cosmic metres that the basic world-movements unchangingly endure. A balanced harmony maintained by a system of subtle recurrences is the foundation of immortality in created things, and metrical movement is nothing else than creative sound grown conscious of this secret of its own powers.

Still there are all sorts of heights and gradations in the use of this power. General consent seems indeed to have sanctioned the name of poetry for any kind of effective language set in a vigorous or catching metrical form, and although the wideness of this definition is such that it has enabled even the Macaulays and Kiplings to mount their queer poetic thrones, I will not object: catholicity is always a virtue. Nevertheless, mere force of language tacked on to the trick of the metrical beat does not answer the higher description of poetry; it may have the form or its shadow, it has not the essence. There is a whole mass of poetry, — the French metrical romances and most of the mediaeval ballad poetry may be taken as examples, — which relies simply on the metrical beat for its rhythm and on an even level of just tolerable expression for its style; there is hardly a line whose rhythm floats home or where the expression strikes deep. Even in later European poetry, though the art of verse and language has been better learned, essentially the same method persists, and poets who use it have earned not only the popular suffrage, but the praise of the critical mind. Still the definitive verdict on their verse is that it is nothing more than an effective jog-trot of Pegasus, a pleasing canter or a showy gallop. It has great staying-power, — indeed there seems no reason why, once begun, it should not go on for ever, — it carries the poet easily over his ground, but it does nothing more. Certainly, no real soul-movement can get easily into this mould. It has its merits and its powers; it is good for metrical romances of a sort, for war poetry and popular patriotic poetry, or perhaps any poetry which wants to be an "echo of life"; it may stir, not the soul, but the vital being in us like a trumpet or excite it like a drum. But after all the drum and the trumpet do not carry us far in the way of music.

But even high above this level we still do not get at once the greater sound-movement of which we are speaking. Poets of considerable power, sometimes even the greatest in their less exalted moments, are satisfied ordinarily with a set harmony or a set melody, which is very satisfying to the outward ear and carries the aesthetic sense along with it in a sort of even, indistinctive pleasure, and into this mould of easy melody or harmony they throw their teeming or flowing imaginations without difficulty or check, without any need of an intenser heightening, a deeper appeal. It is beautiful poetry; it satisfies the aesthetic sense, the imagination and the ear; but there the charm ends. Once we have heard its rhythm, we have nothing new to expect, no surprise for the inner ear, no danger of the soul being suddenly seized and carried away into unknown depths. It is sure of being floated along evenly as if upon a flowing stream. Or sometimes it is not so much a flowing stream as a steady march or other even movement: this comes oftenest in poets who appeal more to the thought than to the ear; they are concerned chiefly with the thing they have to say and satisfied to have found an adequate rhythmic mould into which they can throw it without any farther preoccupation.

But even a great attention and skill in the use of metrical possibilities, in the invention of rhythmical turns, devices, modulations, variations, strong to satisfy the intelligence, to seize the ear, to maintain its vigilant interest, will not bring us yet to the higher point we have in view. There are periods of literature in which this kind of skill is carried very far. The rhythms of Victorian poetry seem to me to be of this kind; they show sometimes the skill of the artist, sometimes of the classical or romantic technician, of the prestigious melodist or harmonist, sometimes the power of the vigorous craftsman or even the performer of robust metrical feats. All kinds of instrumental faculties have been active; but the one thing that is lacking, except in moments or brief periods of inspiration, is the soul behind creating and listening to its own greater movements.

Poetic rhythm begins to reach its highest levels, the greater poetic movements become possible when, using any of these powers but rising beyond them, the soul begins to make its direct demand and yearn for a profounder satisfaction: they awake when the inner ear begins to listen. Technically, we may say that this comes in when the poet becomes, in Keats' phrase, a miser of sound and syllable, economical of his means, not in the sense of a niggardly sparing, but of making the most of all its possibilities of sound. It is then that poetry gets farthest away from the method of prose-rhythm. Prose-rhythm aims characteristically at a general harmony in which the parts are subdued to get the tone of a total effect; even the sounds which give the support or the relief, yet to a great extent seem to be trying to efface themselves in order not to disturb by a too striking particular effect the general harmony which is the whole aim. Poetry on the contrary makes much of its beats and measures; it seeks for a very definite and insistent rhythm. But still, where the greater rhythmical intensities are not pursued, it is only some total effect that predominates and the rest is subdued to it. But in these highest, intensest rhythms every sound is made the most of, whether in its suppression or in its swelling expansion, its narrowness or its open wideness, in order to get in the combined effect something which the ordinary harmonic flow of poetry cannot give us.

But this is only the technical side, the physical means by which the effect is produced. It is not the artistic intelligence or the listening physical ear that is most at work, but something within that is trying to bring out the echo of a hidden harmony, to discover a secret of rhythmic infinities within us. It is not a labour of the devising intellect or the aesthetic sense which the poet has achieved, but a labour of the spirit within itself to cast something out of the surge of the eternal depths. The other faculties are there in their place, but the conductor of the orchestral movement is the soul suddenly and potently coming forward to get its own work done by its own higher and unanalysable methods. The result is something as near to wordless music as word-music can get, and with the same power of soul-life, of soul-emotion, of profound supra-intellectual significance. In these higher harmonies and melodies the metrical rhythm is taken up by the spiritual; it is filled with or sometimes it seems rolled away and lost in a music that has really another unseizable and spiritual secret of movement.

This is the intensity of poetic movement out of which the greatest possibility of poetic expression arises. It is where the metrical movement remains as a base, but either enshrines and contains or is itself contained and floats in an element of greater music which exceeds it and yet brings out all its possibilities, that the music fit for the Mantra makes itself audible. It is the triumph of the embodied spirit over the difficulties and limitations of the physical instrument. And the listener seems to be that other vaster and yet identical eternal spirit whom the Upanishad speaks of as the ear of the ear, he who listens to all hearings; "behind the instabilities of word and speech" it is the profound inevitable harmonies of his own thought and vision for which he is listening.

Chapter IV

Style and Substance

RHYTHM is the premier necessity of poetical expression because it is the sound-movement which carries on its wave the thought-movement in the word; and it is the musical sound-image which most helps to fill in, to extend, subtilise and deepen the thought impression or the emotional or vital impression and to carry the sense beyond itself into an expression of the intellectually inexpressible, — always the peculiar power of music. This truth was better understood on the whole or at least more consistently felt by the ancients than by the modern mind and ear, perhaps because they were more in the habit of singing, chanting or intoning their poetry while we are content to read ours, a habit which brings out the intellectual and emotional element, but unduly depresses the rhythmic value. On the other hand modern poetry has achieved a far greater subtlety, minute fineness and curious depth of suggestion in style and thought than was possible to the ancients, — at the price perhaps of some loss in power, height and simple largeness. The ancients would not so easily as the moderns have admitted into the rank of great poets writers of poor rhythmic faculty or condoned, ignored or praised in really great poets rhythmic lapses, roughnesses and crudities for the sake of their power of style and substance.

In regard to poetic style we have to make, for the purpose of the idea we have in view, the starting-point of the Mantra, precisely the same distinctions as in regard to poetic rhythm, — since here too we find actually everything admitted as poetry which has some power of style and is cast into some kind of rhythmical form. But the question is, what kind of power and in that kind what intensity of achievement? There is plenty of poetry signed by poets of present reputation or lasting fame which one is obliged to consign to a border region of half-poetry, because its principle of expression has not got far enough away from the principle of prose expression. It seems to forget that while the first aim of prose style is to define and fix an object, fact, feeling, thought before the appreciating intelligence with whatever clearness, power, richness or other beauty of presentation may be added to that essential aim, the first aim of poetic style is to make the thing presented living to the imaginative vision, the responsive inner emotion, the spiritual sense, the soul-feeling and soul-sight. Where the failure is to express at all with any sufficient power, to get home in any way, the distinction becomes palpable enough, and we readily say of such writings that this is verse but not poetry. But where there is some thought-power or other worth of substance attended with some power of expression, false values more easily become current and even a whole literary age may dwell on this borderland or be misled into an undue exaltation and cult for this half-poetry.

Poetry, like the kindred arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, appeals to the spirit of man through significant images, and it makes no essential difference that in this case the image is mental and verbal and not material. The essential power of the poetic word is to make us see, not to make us think or feel; thought and feeling[1] must arise out of the sight or be included in it, but sight is the primary consequence and power of poetic speech. For the poet has to make us live in the soul and in the inner mind and heart what is ordinarily lived in the outer mind and the senses, and for that he must first make us see by the soul, in its light and with its deeper vision, what we ordinarily see in a more limited and halting fashion by the senses and the intelligence. He is, as the ancients knew, a seer and not merely a maker of rhymes, not merely a jongleur, rhapsodist or troubadour, and not merely a thinker in lines and stanzas. He sees beyond the sight of the surface mind and finds the revealing word, not merely the adequate and effective, but the illumined and illuminating, the inspired and inevitable word, which compels us to see also. To arrive at that word is the whole endeavour of poetic style.

---

[1] I speak here of the outer emotional or sensational feeling, not of the spiritual sense and soul-stir which is the invariable concomitant of the soul's sight.

The modern distinction is that the poet appeals to the imagination and not to the intellect. But there are many kinds of imagination; the objective imagination which visualises strongly the outward aspects of life and things; the subjective imagination which visualises strongly the mental and emotional impressions they have the power to start in the mind; the imagination which deals in the play of mental fictions and to which we give the name of poetic fancy; the aesthetic imagination which delights in the beauty of words and images for their own sake and sees no farther. All these have their place in poetry, but they only give the poet his materials, they are only the first instruments in the creation of poetic style. The essential poetic imagination does not stop short with even the most subtle reproductions of things external or internal, with the richest or delicatest play of fancy or with the most beautiful colouring of word or image. It is creative, not of either the actual or the fictitious, but of the more and the most real; it sees the spiritual truth of things, — of this truth too there are many gradations, — which may take either the actual or the ideal for its starting-point. The aim of poetry, as of all true art, is neither a photographic or otherwise realistic imitation of Nature, nor a romantic furbishing and painting or idealistic improvement of her image, but an interpretation by the images she herself affords us, not on one but on many planes of her creation, of that which she conceals from us, but is ready, when rightly approached, to reveal.

This is the true, because the highest and essential aim of poetry; but the human mind arrives at it only by a succession of steps, the first of which seems far enough from its object. It begins by stringing its most obvious and external ideas, feelings and sensations of things on a thread of verse in a sufficient language of no very high quality. But even when it gets to a greater adequacy and effectiveness, it is often no more than a vital, an emotional or an intellectual adequacy and effectiveness. There is a strong vital poetry which powerfully appeals to our sensations and our sense of life, like much of Byron or the less inspired mass of the Elizabethan drama; a strong emotional poetry which stirs our feelings and gives us the sense and active image of the passions; a strong intellectual poetry which satisfies our curiosity about life and its mechanism, or deals with its psychological and other "problems", or shapes for us our thoughts in an effective, striking and often quite resistlessly quotable fashion. All this has its pleasures for the mind and the surface soul in us, and it is certainly quite legitimate to enjoy them and to enjoy them strongly and vividly on our way upward; but if we rest content with these only, we shall never get very high up the hill of the Muses.

The style of such poetry corresponds usually to its substance; for between the word and the vision there tends to be, though there is not by any means perfectly or invariably, a certain equation. There is a force of vital style, a force of emotional style, a force of intellectual style which we meet constantly in poetry and which it is essential to distinguish from the language of the higher spiritual imagination. The forceful expression of thought and sentiment is not enough for this higher language. To take some examples, it is not enough for it to express its sense of world-sorrow in a line of cheap sentimental force like Byron's

> There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,

or to voice an opposite truth in the sprightly-forcible manner of Browning's

> God's in his heaven,
> All's right with the world,

or to strike the balance in a sense of equality with the pointed and ever quotable intellectuality of Pope's

> God sees with equal eyes as lord of all
> A hero perish or a sparrow fall.

This may be the poetical or half-poetical language of thought and sentiment; it is not the language of real poetic vision. Note that all three brush the skirts of ideas whose deeper expression from the vision of a great poet might touch the very heights of poetic revelation. Byron's line is the starting-point in the emotional sensations for that high world-pessimism and its spiritual release which finds expression in the Gita's

> *Anityam asukhaṁ lokam imaṁ prāpya bhajasva mām*;[2]

and one has only to compare the manner of the two in style and rhythm, even leaving the substance aside, to see the difference between the lesser and the greater poetry. Browning's language rises from a robust cheerfulness of temperament, it does not touch the deeper fountain-heads of truth in us; an opposite temperament may well smile at it as vigorous optimistic fustian. Pope's actually falsifies by its poetical inadequacy that great truth of the Gita's teaching, the truth of the divine equality, because he has not seen and therefore cannot make us see; his significant images of the truth are, like his perception of it, intellectual and rhetorical, not poetic figures.

There is a higher style of poetry than this which yet falls below the level to which we have to climb. It is no longer poetical language of a merely intellectual, vital or emotional force, but instead or in addition a genuinely imaginative style, with a certain, often a great beauty of vision in it, whether objective or subjective, or with a certain, often a great but indefinite soul-power bearing up its movement of word and rhythm. It varies in intensity: for the lower intensity we can get plenty of examples from Chaucer, when he is indulging his imagination rather than his observation, and at a higher pitch from Spenser; for the loftier intensity we can cite at will for one kind from Milton's early poetry, for another from poets who have a real spiritual vision like Keats and Shelley. English poetry runs, indeed, ordinarily in this mould. But this too is not that highest intensity of the revelatory poetic word from which the Mantra starts. It has a certain power of revelation in it, but the deeper vision is still coated up in something more external; sometimes the poetic intention of decorative beauty, sometimes some other deliberate intention of the poetic mind overlays with the more outward beauty, beauty of image, beauty of thought, beauty of emotion, the deeper intention of the spirit within, so that we have still to look for that beyond the image rather than are seized by it through the image. A high pleasure is there, not unspiritual in its nature, but still it is not that point where pleasure passes into or is rather drowned in the pure spiritual Ananda, the ecstasy of the creative, poetic revelation.

---

[2] "Thou who hast come to this transient and unhappy world, love and turn to Me."

That intensity comes where everything else may be present, but all is powerfully carried on the surge of a spiritual vision which has found its inspired and inevitable speech. All or any of the other elements may be there, but they are at once subordinated and transfigured to their highest capacity for poetic light and rapture. This intensity belongs to no particular style, depends on no conceivable formula of diction. It may be the height of the decorative imaged style as often we find it in Kalidasa or Shakespeare; it may be that height of bare and direct expression where language seems to be used as a scarcely felt vaulting-board for a leap into the infinite; it may be the packed intensity of language which uses either the bare or the imaged form at will, but fills every word with its utmost possible rhythmic and thought suggestion. But in itself it depends on none of these things; it is not a style, but poetic style itself, the Word; it creates and carries with it its elements rather than is created by them. Whatever its outward forms, it is always the one fit style for the Mantra.

Chapter V

Poetic Vision and the Mantra

THIS HIGHEST intensity of style and movement which is the crest of the poetical impulse in its self-expression, the point at which the aesthetic, the vital, the intellectual elements of poetic speech pass into the spiritual, justifies itself perfectly when it is the body of a deep, high or wide spiritual vision into which the life-sense, the thought, the emotion, the appeal of beauty in the thing discovered and in its expression — for all great poetic utterance is discovery, — rise on the wave of the culminating poetic inspiration and pass into an ecstasy of sight. In the lesser poets these moments are rare and come like brilliant accidents, angels' visits; in the greater they are more frequent outbursts; but in the greatest they abound because they arise from a constant faculty of poetic vision and poetic speech which has its lesser and its greater moments, but never entirely fails these supreme masters of the expressive word.

Vision is the characteristic power of the poet, as is discriminative thought the essential gift of the philosopher and analytic observation the natural genius of the scientist. The Kavi[1] was in the idea of the ancients the seer and revealer of truth, and though we have wandered far enough from that ideal to demand from him only the pleasure of the ear and the amusement of the aesthetic faculty, still all great poetry instinctively preserves something of that higher turn of its own aim and significance. Poetry, in fact, being Art, must attempt to make us see, and since it is to the inner senses that it has to address itself, — for the ear is its only physical gate of entry and even there its real appeal is to an inner hearing, — and since its object is to make us live within ourselves what the poet has embodied in his verse, it is an inner sight which he opens in us, and this inner sight must have been intense in him before he can awaken it in us.

---

[1] The Sanskrit word for poet. In classical Sanskrit it is applied to any maker of verse or even of prose, but in the Vedic it meant the poet-seer who saw the Truth and found in a subtle truth-hearing the inspired word of his vision.

Therefore the greatest poets have been always those who have had a large and powerful interpretative and intuitive vision of Nature and life and man and whose poetry has arisen out of that in a supreme revelatory utterance of it. Homer, Shakespeare, Dante, Valmiki, Kalidasa, however much they may differ in everything else, are at one in having this as the fundamental character of their greatness. Their supremacy does not lie essentially in a greater thought-power or a more lavish imagery or a more penetrating force of passion and emotion; these things they may have had, one being more gifted in one direction, another in others, but these other powers were aids to their poetic expression rather than its essence or its source. There is often more thought in a short essay of Bacon's than in a whole play of Shakespeare's, but not even a hundred cryptograms can make him the author of the dramas; for, as he showed when he tried to write poetry, the very nature of his thought-power and the characteristic way of expression of the born philosophic thinker hampered him in poetic expression. It was the constant outstreaming of form and thought and image from an abundant inner vision of life which made Shakespeare, whatever his other deficiencies, the sovereign dramatic poet. Sight is the essential poetic gift. The archetypal poet in a world of original ideas is, we may say, a Soul that sees in itself intimately this world and all the others and God and Nature and the life of beings and sets flowing from its centre a surge of creative rhythm and word-images which become the expressive body of the vision. The great poets are those who repeat in some measure this ideal creation, *kavayaḥ satyaśrutaḥ*, seers of the poetic truth and hearers of its word.

The tendency of the modern mind at the present day seems to be towards laying a predominant value on the thought in poetry. We live still in an age which is in a great intellectual trouble and ferment about life and the world and is developing enormously the human intelligence, — often at the expense of other powers which are no less necessary to self-knowledge, — in order to grapple with life and master it. We are seeking always and in many directions to decipher the enigma of things, the cryptogram of the worlds which we are set to read, and to decipher it by the aid of the intellect; and for the most part we are much too busy living and thinking to have leisure to be silent and see. We expect the poet to use his great mastery of language to help us in this endeavour; we ask of him not so much perfect beauty of song or largeness of creative vision as a message to our perplexed and seeking intellects. Therefore we hear constantly today of the "philosophy" of a poet, even the most inveterate beautifier of commonplaces being forcibly gifted by his admirers with a philosophy, or of his message, — the message of Tagore, the message of Whitman. We are asking then of the poet to be, not a supreme singer or an inspired seer of the worlds, but a philosopher, a prophet, a teacher, even something perhaps of a religious or ethical preacher. It is necessary therefore to say that when I claim for the poet the role of a seer of Truth and find the source of great poetry in a great and revealing vision of life or God or the gods or man or Nature, I do not mean that it is necessary for him to have an intellectual philosophy of life or a message for humanity, which he chooses to express in verse because he has the metrical gift and the gift of imagery, or that he must give us a solution of the problems of the age, or come with a mission to improve mankind, or, as it is said, "to leave the world better than he found it." As a man, he may have these things, but the less he allows them to get the better of his poetic gift, the happier it will be for his poetry. Material for his poetry they may give, an influence in it they may be, provided they are transmuted into vision and life by the poetic spirit, but they can be neither its soul nor its aim, nor give the law to its creative activity and its expression.

The poet-seer sees differently, thinks in another way, voices himself in quite another manner than the philosopher or the prophet. The prophet announces the Truth as the Word, the Law or the command of the Eternal, he is the giver of the message; the poet shows us Truth in its power of beauty, in its symbol or image, or reveals it to us in the workings of Nature or in the workings of life, and when he has done that, his whole work is done; he need not be its explicit spokesman or its official messenger. The philosopher's business is to discriminate Truth and put its parts and aspects into intellectual relation with each other; the poet's is to seize and embody aspects of Truth in their living relations, or rather — for that is too philosophical a language — to see her features and, excited by the vision, create in the beauty of her image.

No doubt, the prophet may have in him a poet who breaks out often into speech and surrounds with the vivid atmosphere of life the directness of his message; he may follow up his injunction "Take no thought for the morrow," by a revealing image of the beauty of the truth he enounces, in the life of Nature, in the figure of the lily, or link it to human life by apologue and parable. The philosopher may bring in the aid of colour and image to give some relief and hue to his dry light of reason and water his arid path of abstractions with some healing dew of poetry. But these are ornaments and not the substance of his work; and if the philosopher makes his thought substance of poetry, he ceases to be a philosophic thinker and becomes a poet-seer of Truth. Thus the more rigid metaphysicians are perhaps right in denying to Nietzsche the name of philosopher; for Nietzsche does not think, but always sees, turbidly or clearly, rightly or distortedly, but with the eye of the seer rather than with the brain of the thinker. On the other hand we may get great poetry which is full of a prophetic enthusiasm of utterance or is largely or even wholly philosophic in its matter; but this prophetic poetry gives us no direct message, only a mass of sublime inspirations of thought and image, and this philosophic poetry is poetry and lives as poetry only in so far as it departs from the method, the expression, the way of seeing proper to the philosophic mind. It must be vision pouring itself into thought-images and not thought trying to observe truth and distinguish its province and bounds and fences.

In earlier days this distinction was not at all clearly understood and therefore we find even poets of great power attempting to set philosophic systems to music or even much more prosaic matter than a philosophic system, Hesiod and Virgil setting about even a manual of agriculture in verse! In Rome, always a little blunt of perception in the aesthetic mind, her two greatest poets fell a victim to this unhappy conception, with results which are a lesson and a warning to all posterity. Lucretius' work lives only, in spite of the majestic energy behind it, by its splendid digressions into pure poetry, Virgil's *Georgics* by fine passages and pictures of Nature and beauties of word and image; but in both the general substance is lifeless matter which has floated to us on the stream of Time, saved only by the beauty of its setting. India, and perhaps India alone, managed once or twice to turn this kind of philosophic attempt into a poetic success, in the Gita, in the Upanishads and some minor works modelled upon them. But the difference is great. The Gita owes its poetical success to its starting from a great and critical situation in life, its constant keeping of that in view and always returning upon it, and to its method which is to seize on a spiritual experience or moment or stage of the inner life and throw it into the form of thought; and this, though a delicate operation, can well abide within the limits of the poetic manner of speech. Only where it overburdens itself with metaphysical matter and deviates into sheer philosophic definition and discrimination, which happens especially in two or three of its closing chapters, does the poetic voice sink under the weight, even occasionally into flattest versified prose. The Upanishads too, and much more, are not at all philosophic thinking, but spiritual seeing; these ancient stanzas are a rush of spiritual intuitions, flames of a burning fire of mystic experience, waves of an inner sea of light and life, and they throw themselves into the language and cadence of poetry because that is their natural speech and a more intellectual utterance would have falsified their vision.

Nowadays we have clarified our aesthetic perceptions sufficiently to avoid the mistake of the Roman poets; but in a subtler form the intellectual tendency still shows a dangerous spirit of encroachment. For the impulse to teach is upon us, the inclination to be an observer and critic of life, — there could be no more perilous definition than Arnold's poetic "criticism of life", in spite of the saving epithet, — to clothe, merely, in the forms of poetry a critical or philosophic idea of life to the detriment of our vision. Allegory with its intellectual ingenuities, its facile wedding of the abstract idea and the concrete image, shows a tendency to invade again the domain of poetry. And there are other signs of the intellectual malady of which we are almost all of us the victims. Therefore it is well to insist that the native power of poetry is in its sight, not in its intellectual thought-matter, and its safety is in adhering to this native principle of vision; its conception, its thought, its emotion, its presentation, its structure must rise out of that or else rise into it before it takes its finished form. The poetic vision of things is not a criticism of life, not an intellectual or philosophic view of it, but a soul-view, a seizing by the inner sense. The Mantra too is not in its substance or its form a poetic enunciation of philosophic verities, but a rhythmic revelation or intuition arising out of the soul's sight of God and Nature and itself and of the world and of the inner truth — occult to the outward eye — of all that peoples it, the secrets of their life and being.

In the attempt to fix the view of life which Art must take, distinctions are constantly laid down, such as the necessity of a subjective or an objective treatment or of a realistic or an idealistic view, which mislead more than they enlighten. Certainly, one poet may seem to excel in the concrete presentation of things and falter or be less sure in his grasp of the purely subjective, while another may move freely in the more subjective worlds and be less at home in the concrete; and both may be poets of a high order. But when we look closer, we see that just as a certain objectivity is necessary to make poetry live and the thing seen stand out before our eyes, so on the other hand even the most objective presentation starts from an inner view and subjective process of creation or at least a personal interpretation and transmutation of the thing seen. The poet really creates out of himself and not out of what he sees outwardly: that outward seeing only serves to excite the inner vision to its work. Otherwise his work would be a mechanical construction and putting together, not a living creation.

Sheer objectivity brings us down from art to photography; and the attempt to diminish the subjective view to the vanishing-point so as to get an accurate presentation is proper to science, not to poetry. We are not thereby likely to get a greater truth or reality, but very much the reverse; for the scientific presentation of things, however valid in its own domain, that of the senses and the observing reason, is not true to the soul. It is not the integral truth or the whole vision of things, for it gives only their process and machinery and mechanic law, but not their inner life and spirit. That is the error in realism, — in its theory, at least, for its practice is something other than what it intends or pretends to be. Realistic art does not and cannot give us a scientifically accurate presentation of life, because Art is not and cannot be Science. What it does do, is to make an arbitrary selection of motives, forms and hues, here of dull blues and greys and browns and dingy whites and sordid yellows, there of violent blacks and reds, and the result is sometimes a thing of power and sometimes a nightmare. Idealistic art makes a different selection and produces either a work of nobly-coloured power or soft-hued beauty or else a high-pitched and false travesty or a specious day-dream. In these distinctions there is no safety; nor can any rule be laid down for the poet, since he must necessarily go by what he is and what he sees, except that he should work from the living poetic centre within him and not exile himself into artificial standpoints.

From our present point of view we may say that the poet may do as he pleases in all that is not the essential matter. Thought-matter may be prominent in his work or life-substance predominate. He may proceed by sheer force of presentation or by direct power of interpretation. He may make this world his text, or wander into regions beyond, or soar straight into the pure empyrean of the infinite. To arrive at the Mantra he may start from the colour of a rose, or the power or beauty of a character, or the splendour of an action, or go away from all these into his own secret soul and its most hidden movements.

The one thing needful is that he should be able to go beyond the word or image he uses or the form of the thing he sees, not be limited by them, but get into the light of that which they have the power to reveal and flood them with it until they overflow with its suggestions or seem even to lose themselves and disappear into the revelation and the apocalypse. At the highest he himself disappears into sight; the personality of the seer is lost in the eternity of the vision, and the Spirit of all seems alone to be there speaking out sovereignly its own secrets.

But the poetic vision, like everything else, follows necessarily the evolution of the human mind and according to the age and environment, it has its ascents and descents, its high levels and its low returns. Ordinarily, it follows the sequence of an abrupt ascent pushing to a rapid decline. The eye of early man is turned upon the physical world about him, the interest of the story of life and its primary ideas and emotions; he sees man and his world only, or he sees the other worlds and their gods and beings, but it is still his own physical world in a magnified and heightened image. He asks little of poetry except a more forceful vision of familiar things, things real and things commonly imagined, which will help him to see them more largely and feel them more strongly and give him a certain inspiration to live them more powerfully. Next, — but this transition is sometimes brief or even quite overleaped, — there comes a period in which he feels the joy and curiosity and rich adventure of the expanding life-force within him, the passion and romance of existence and it is this in all its vivid colour that he expects art and poetry to express and satisfy him through the imagination and the emotions with its charm and power. Afterwards he begins to intellectualise, but still on the same subject-matter; he asks now from the poet a view of things enlightened by the inspired reason and beautifully shaped by the first strong and clear joy of his developed aesthetic sense. A vital poetry appealing to the imagination through the sense-mind and the emotions and a poetry interpretative of life to the intelligence are the fruit of these ages. A later poetry tends always to return on these forms with a more subtilised intellect and a richer life-experience. But, having got so far, it can go no farther and there is the beginning of a decadence.

Great things may be done by poetry within these limits and the limited lifetime it gives to a literature; but it is evident that the poet will have a certain difficulty in getting to a deeper vision, because he has to lean entirely on the external thought and form; he must be subservient to them because they are the only safe support he knows, and he gets at what truth he can that may be beyond them with their veil still thickly interposing between him and a greater light. A higher level can come, bringing with it the possibility of a renewed and prolonged course for the poetic impulse, if the mind of man begins to see more intimately the forces behind life, the powers concealed by our subjective existence. The poet can attempt to reveal these unsuspected ranges and motives and use the outward physical and vital and thought symbol only as a suggestion of greater things. Yet a higher level can be attained, deeper depths, larger horizons when the soul in things comes nearer to man or when other worlds than the physical open themselves to him. And the entire liberation of the poetic vision to see most profoundly and the poetic power to do its highest work will arrive when the spiritual itself is the possession of the greatest minds and the age stands on the verge of its revelation.

Therefore it is not sufficient for poetry to attain high intensities of word and rhythm; it must have, to fill them, an answering intensity of vision and always new and more and more uplifted or inward ranges of experience. And this does not depend only on the individual power of vision of the poet, but on the mind of his age and country, its level of thought and experience, the adequacy of its symbols, the depth of its spiritual attainment. A lesser poet in a greater age may give us occasionally things which exceed in this kind the work of less favoured immortals. The religious poetry of the later Indian tongues has for us fervours of poetic revelation which in the great classics are absent, even though no mediaeval poet can rank in power with Valmiki and Kalidasa. The modern literatures of Europe commonly fall short of the Greek perfection of harmony and form, but they give us what the greatest Greek poets had not and could not have. And in our own days a poet of secondary power in his moments of inspiration can get to a vision far more satisfying to the deepest soul within us than Shakespeare's or Dante's. Greatest of all is the promise of the age that is coming, if the race fulfils its highest and largest opening possibilities and does not founder in a vitalistic bog or remain tied in the materialistic paddock; for it will be an age in which all the worlds are beginning to withdraw their screens from man's gaze and invite his experience, and he will be near to the revelation of the Spirit of which they are, as we choose, the obscuring veils, the significant forms and symbols or else the transparent raiment. It is as yet uncertain to which of these consummations destiny is leading us.

Chapter VI

The National Evolution of Poetry

THE WORK of the poet depends not only on himself and his age, but on the mentality of the nation to which he belongs and the spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic tradition and environment which it creates for him. It is not that he is or need be entirely limited or conditioned by his environment or that he must regard himself as only a voice of the national mind or bound by some past national tradition and debarred from striking out a novel and original road of his own. In nations which are returning under difficulties to a strong self-consciousness, like the Irish or the Indians at the present moment, this kind of conscious nationalism in literature may be for some time a living idea and a powerful motive. In others which have had a vivid collective life that has exercised a common and intimate influence on all its individuals or in those which have cherished an acute sense of a great national culture and tradition, the more stable elements of that tradition may exert a very conscious influence on the mind of the poets. At once sustaining and limiting the weaker spirits, they give to genius an exceptional power for sustained beauty of form and a satisfying perfection. But this is no essential condition for the birth of great poetry. The poet, we must always remember, creates out of himself and has the indefeasible right to follow freely the breath of the spirit within him, provided he satisfies in his work the law of poetic beauty. The external forms of his age and his nation only give him his starting-point and some of his materials and determine to some extent, by education, by a subconscious and automatic environmental pressure, the room he finds for the free play of his poetic spirit.

Nor is it necessary to subscribe to the theory of the man and his milieu or the dogma of the historical school of criticism which asks of us to study all the precedents, circumstances, influences, surroundings, all that "created" the man and his work, — as if there were not something in him apart from these which made all the difference, something that made him a man apart and not like others. It is supposed that out of this elaborate scientific study the right estimate of his poetry will arise. But even the right historical or psychological understanding of him need not inevitably arise out of this method; for we may very easily read into him and his work things which may perhaps have been there in front of him or around him, but never really got inside him. And the right estimate of his work we certainly shall not form if we bring in so much that is accidental and unessential to cloud our free and direct impression. Rather the very opposite is the true method of appreciation; we have to go straight to the poet and his poem for all we need essentially to know about them, — we shall get there all that we really want for any true aesthetic or poetic purpose. Afterwards we can go elsewhere, if we like, for any minor elucidations or rummage about laboriously to satisfy our scientific and historical curiosity. In this more natural order things accidental are much more likely to fall into their right place and the freshness and authenticity of our poetic appreciation have some chance of remaining unobscured and still vibrant. But quite apart from its external and therefore unreal method, there is a truth in the historical theory of criticism which is of real help towards grasping something that is important and even essential, if not for our poetic appreciation, yet for our intellectual judgment of a poet and his work.

In poetry, as in everything else that aims at perfection, there are always two elements, the eternal true substance and the limitations and accidents brought in by the time element. The first alone really and always matters, and it is that which must determine our definitive appreciation, our absolute verdict, or rather our essential response to poetry. A soul expressing the eternal spirit of Truth and Beauty through some of the infinite variations of beauty, with the word for its instrument, that is, after all, what the poet is, and it is to a similar soul in us seeking the same spirit and responding to it that he makes his appeal. It is when we can get this response at its purest and in its most direct and heightened awakening that our faculty of poetic appreciation becomes at once surest and most intense. It is, we may say, the impersonal enjoyer of creative beauty in us responding to the impersonal creator and interpreter of beauty in the poet. For it is the impersonal spirit of Truth and Beauty that is seeking to express itself through his personality; and it is that and not his personal intelligence which finds its own word and seems itself to create through him in his highest moments of inspiration. And this Impersonal is concerned only with the creative idea and the motive of beauty which is seeking expression; its sole purpose is to find the perfect expression, the inevitable word and the rhythm that reveals. All else is subordinate, accidental, the crude material and the conditioning medium of this essential endeavour.

Still there is also the personality of the poet and the personality of the hearer; the one gives the pitch and the form of the success arrived at, the other determines the characteristic intellectual and aesthetic judgment to which its appeal arrives. The correspondence or the dissonance between the two decides the relation between the poet and his reader, and out of that arises whatever is personal in our appreciation and judgment of his poetry. In this personal or time element there is always much that is merely accidental and this rather limits and deflects our judgment than helps usefully to form it. How much it interferes can be seen when we try to value contemporary poetry.[1] It is a matter of continual experience that even critics of considerable insight and sureness of taste are yet capable of the most extraordinarily wrong judgments, whether on the side of appreciation or of depreciation, when they have to pass a verdict on their contemporaries. And this is because a crowd of accidental influences belonging to the effect of the time and the mental environment upon our mentality exercise an exaggerated domination and distort or colour the view of our mental eye upon its object. But apart from this disabling intrusion there is always something essential to our present personality which is of more value and has a right to be heard. For we are all of us souls developing our unfinished nature in a constant endeavour to get into unity with the spirit in life through its many forms of manifestation and on many different lines. And as there is in Indian Yoga a principle of varying capacity, *adhikāra*, something in the immediate power of a man's nature that determines by its characteristics his right to this or that way of Yoga, of union with the Divine, which, whatever its merits or its limitations, is his right way because it is most helpful to him personally, so in all our activities of life and mind there is this principle of *adhikāra*. That which we can appreciate in poetry and still more the way in which we appreciate it, is that in it and us which is most helpful to us and therefore, for the time being at least, right for us in our attempt to get into union either with universal or transcendent Beauty through the revealing ideas and motives and suggestive forms of poetic creation.

---

[1] Or even the poetry that has just preceded us, e.g. the nineteenth century's contemptuous estimate of the eighteenth or the twentieth century's equally contemptuous dismissal of the fallen Victorian demigods.

This is the individual aspect of the personal or time element. But there is also a larger movement to which we belong, ourselves and the poet and his poetry; or rather it is the same movement of the general soul of mankind in the same endeavour as the individual's and towards the same objective. In poetry this shows itself in a sort of evolution from the objective to the inward and from the inward to the inmost, the spiritual, — an evolution which has many curves and turns and cycles, many returns upon past motives and imperfect anticipations of future motives, but is on the whole and up to a certain point a growth and progress, a constant labour of self-enlargement and self-finding. It is a clear idea of this evolution which may most helpfully inform the historical element in our judgment and appreciation of poetry; it is a judgment of it from the viewpoint of the evolution of the human spirit and the subtler consciousness and larger experience which that progress brings. We can see this general movement working itself out in different forms and on different lines through the souls of the nations and peoples, not so many after all, who have arrived at a strong self-expression through the things of the mind, through art and thought and poetry. These things of the mind do not indeed form or express the whole of the movement, even as they do not make up the whole of the life of the people; they represent its highest points, — or in the two or three peoples that have powerfully developed the spiritual force within, the highest with the exception of the spiritual summit. In these few we can best see the inner character and aim of any one line of the movement, — whether it be the line of poetry, the line of art or the line of religious and spiritual endeavour.

This general evolution has its own natural periods or ages; but as with the stone, bronze and other ages discovered by the archaeologists, their time periods do not always correspond, are not the same for all the peoples which have evolved them. Moreover, they do not always follow each other in quite the same rigorous order; there are occasional reversals, extraordinary anticipations, violent returns; for in things psychological the Spirit in the world varies its movements more freely than in physical things. There, besides, the spirit of the race can anticipate the motives of a higher stratum of psychological development while yet it lives outwardly the general life of a lower stratum. So too when it has got well on to a higher level of development, it may go strongly back to a past and inferior motive and see how that works out when altered and uplifted or enlarged or even only subtilised by the motives and powers of the superior medium. There is here, besides, a greater complexity of unseen or half-seen subconscient and superconscient tendencies and influences at work upon the comparatively small part of us which is conscious of what it is doing. And very often a nation in its labour of self-expression is both helped and limited by what has been left behind from the evolution of a past self which, being dead, yet lives.

Thus, the Indian spirit could seize powerfully the spiritual motive in an age in which the mass of the people lived a strenuous external life and was strongly outward-going and objective in its normal mentality. It succeeded in expressing the supreme spiritual experiences, so difficult to put at all into speech, in forms and images proper to the simplest physical life and the most external customary mentality converting them into physical symbols of the supraphysical and then, by a rapid liberation, in its own proper voice, so producing the sacred poetry of the Veda and Upanishads. An Italy with the Graeco-Roman past in its blood could seize intellectually on the motives of catholic Christianity and give them a precise and supremely poetic expression in Dante, while all Germanised Europe was still stammering its primitive thoughts in the faltering infantile accents of romance verse or shadowing them out in Gothic stone, successful only in the most material form of the spiritual. In another direction, when it seized upon the romantic life-motive, the meeting-place of the Teuton and the Celt, we see it losing entirely the mystically sentimental Celtic element, Italianising it into the sensuousness of Tasso, and Italianising the rest into an intellectualised, a half imaginative, half satiric play with the superficial motives of romance, — the inevitable turn of the Italianised Roman spirit. On the other hand the English spirit, having got rid of the Latin culture and holding the Celtic mind for a long time at bay, exiled into the Welsh mountains or parked beyond the pale in Ireland, followed with remarkable fidelity the natural curve and stages of the psychological evolution of poetry, taking several centuries to arrive at the intellectual motive and more to get at something like a spiritual turn still too intellectualised to find any absolute intensity of the spirit, only the first shimmerings of an outbreak of vision.

Generally, every nation or people has or develops a spirit in its being, a special soul-form of the human all-soul and a law of its nature which determines the lines and turns of its evolution. All that it takes from its environment it naturally attempts to assimilate to this spirit, transmute into stuff of this soul-form, make apt to and governable by this law of its nature. All its self-expression is in conformity with them. And its poetry, art and thought are the expression of this self and of the greater possibilities of its self to which it moves. The individual poet and his poetry are part of its movement. Not that they are limited by the present temperament and outward forms of the national mind; they may exceed them. The soul of the poet may be like a star and dwell apart; even, his work may seem not merely a variation from but a revolt against the limitations of the national mind. But still the roots of his personality are there in its spirit and even his variation and revolt are an attempt to bring out something that is latent and suppressed or at least something which is trying to surge up from the secret all-soul into the soul-form of the nation. Therefore to appreciate this national evolution of poetry and the relations of the poet and his work with it cannot but be fruitful, if we observe them from the point of view not so much of things external to poetry, but of its own spirit and characteristic forms and motives.

Chapter VII

The Character of English Poetry – 1

OF ALL the modern European tongues the English language — I think this may be said without any serious doubt, — has produced, not always the greatest or most perfect, but at least the most rich and naturally powerful poetry, the most lavish of energy and innate genius. The unfettered play of poetic energy and power has been here the most abundant and brought forth the most constantly brilliant fruits. And yet it is curious to note that English poetry and literature have been a far less effective force in the shaping of European culture than the poetry and literature of other tongues inferior actually in natural poetic and creative energy. At least they have had to wait till quite a recent date before they produced any potent effect and even then their direct influence was limited and not always durable.

A glance will show how considerable has been this limitation. The poetic mind of Greece and Rome has pervaded and largely shaped the whole artistic production of Europe; Italian poetry of the great age has thrown on some part of it at least a stamp only less profound; French prose and poetry — but the latter in a much less degree, — have helped more than any other literary influence to form the modern turn of the European mind and its mode of expression; the shortlived outbursts of creative power in the Spain of Calderón and the Germany of Goethe exercised an immediate, a strong, though not an enduring influence; the newly created Russian literature has been, though more subtly, among the most intense of recent cultural forces. But if we leave aside Richardson and Scott and, recently, Dickens in fiction and in poetry the very considerable effects of the belated continental discovery of Shakespeare and the vehement and sudden wave of the Byronic influence, which did much to enforce the note of revolt and of a half sentimental, half sensual pessimism which is even now one of the strongest shades in the literary tone of modern Europe, — to the present day Shakespeare and Byron are the only two great names of English poetry which are generally familiar on the continent and have had a real vogue, — we find the literature of the English tongue and especially its poetry flowing in a large side-stream, always receiving much from the central body of European culture but returning upon it in comparison very little. This insularity, not of reception but of reaction, is a marked phenomenon and calls for explanation.

If we look for the causes, — for such a paucity of influence cannot, certainly, be put down to any perversity or obtuseness in the general mind of Europe, but must be due to some insufficiency or serious defect in the literature, — we shall find, I think, if we look with other than English-trained eyes, that there is even in this rich and vigorous poetry abundant cause for the failure. English poetry is powerful but it is imperfect, strong in spirit, but uncertain and tentative in form; it is extraordinarily stimulating, but not often quite satisfying. It aims high, but its success is not as great as its effort. Especially, its imaginative force exceeds its thought-power; it has indeed been hardly at all a really great instrument of poetic thought-vision; it has not dealt fruitfully with life. Its history has been more a succession of individual poetic achievements than a constant national tradition; in the mass it has been a series of poetical revolutions without any strong inner continuity. That is to say that it has had no great self-recognising idea or view of life expressive of the spiritual attitude of the nation or powerful to determine from an early time its own sufficient artistic forms. But it is precisely the possession of such a self-recognising spiritual attitude and the attainment of a satisfying artistic form for it which make the poetry of a nation a power in the world's general culture. For that which recognises its self will most readily be recognised by others. And, again, that which attains the perfect form of its own innate character, will be most effective in forming others and leave its stamp in the building of the general mind of humanity.

One or two examples will be sufficient to show the vast difference. No poetry has had so powerful an influence as Greek poetry; no poetry is, I think, within its own limits so perfect and satisfying. The limits indeed are marked and even, judged by the undulating many-sidedness and wideness of the modern mind, narrow; but on its own lines this poetry works with a flawless power and sufficiency. From beginning to end it dealt with life from one large view-point; it worked always from the inspired reason, used a luminous intellectual observation and harmonised all it did by the rule of an enlightened and chastened aesthetic sense; whatever changes overtook it, it never departed from this motive and method which are the very essence of the Greek spirit. And of this motive it was very conscious and by its clear recognition of it and fidelity to it it was able to achieve an artistic beauty and sufficiency of expressive form which affect us like an easily accomplished miracle and which have been the admiration of after ages. Even the poetry of the Greek decadence preserved enough of this power to act as a shaping influence on Latin literature.

French poetry is much more limited than the Greek, much less powerful in inspiration. For it deals with life from the standpoint not of the inspired reason, but of the clear-thinking intellect, not of the enlightened aesthetic sense, but of emotional sentiment. These are its two constant powers; the one gives it its brain-stuff, the other its poetical fervour and grace and charm and appeal. Throughout all the changes of the last century, in spite of apparent cultural revolutions, the French spirit has remained in its poetry faithful to these two motives which are of its very essence, and because of this fidelity it has always or almost always found for its work a satisfying and characteristic form. To that combination of a clear and strong motive and a satisfying form it owes the immense influence it has exercised from time to time on other European literatures. The cultural power of the poetry of other tongues may be traced to similar causes. But what has been the distinct spirit and distinguishing form of English poetry? Certainly, there is an English spirit which could not fail to be reflected in its poetry; but, not being clearly self-conscious, it is reflected obscurely and confusedly, and it has been at war within itself, followed a fluctuation of different motives and never succeeded in bringing about between them a conciliation and fusion. Therefore its form has suffered; it has had indeed no native and characteristic principle of form which would be, through all changes, the outward reflection of a clear self-recognising spirit.

The poetry of a nation is only one side of its self-expression and its characteristics may be best understood if we look at it in relation to the whole mental and dynamic effort of the people. If we so look at the general contribution of the English nation to human life and culture, the eye is arrested by some remarkable lacunae. These are especially profound in the arts: English music is a zero, English sculpture an unfilled void, English architecture only a little better;[1] English painting, illustrated by a few great names, has been neither a great artistic tradition nor a powerful cultural force and merits only a casual mention by the side of the rich achievement of Italy, Spain, France, Holland, Belgium. When we come to the field of thought we get a mixed impression like that of great mountain eminences towering out of a very low and flat plain. We find great individual philosophers, but no great philosophical tradition, two or three remarkable thinkers, but no high fame for thinking, a great multitude of the most famous names in science, but no national scientific culture. Still in these fields there has been remarkable accomplishment and the influence on European thought has been frequently considerable and sometimes capital. But when finally we turn to the business of practical life, there is an unqualified preeminence: in mechanical science and invention, in politics, in commerce and industry, in colonisation, travel, exploration, in the domination of earth and the exploitation of its riches England has been till late largely, sometimes entirely the world's leader, the creator of its forms and the shaper of its motives.

This peculiar distribution of the national capacities finds its root in certain racial characteristics. We have first the dominant Anglo-Saxon strain quickened, lightened and given force, power and initiative by the Scandinavian and Celtic elements. This mixture has made a national mind remarkably dynamic and practical, with all the Teutonic strength, patience, industry, but liberated from the Teutonic heaviness and crudity, yet retaining enough not to be too light of balance or too sensitive to the shocks of life; therefore, a nation easily first in practical intelligence and practical dealing with the facts and difficulties of life. Not, be it noted, by any power of clear intellectual thought or by force of imagination or mental intuition, but rather by a strong vital instinct, a sort of tentative dynamic intuition. No spirituality, but a robust ethical turn; no innate power of the thought and the word, but a strong turn for action; no fine play of emotion or quickness of sympathy, but an abundant energy and force of will. This is one element of the national mind; the other is the submerged, half-insistent Celtic spirit, gifted with precisely the opposite qualities, inherent spirituality, the gift of the word, the rapid and brilliant imagination, the quick and luminous intelligence, the strong emotional force and sympathy, the natural love of the things of the mind and still more of those beyond the mind, left to it from an ancient mystic tradition and an old forgotten culture, forgotten in its mind, but still flowing in its blood, still vibrant in its subtler nerve-channels. In life a subordinate element, modifying the cruder Anglo-Saxon characteristics, breaking across them or correcting their excess, sometimes refining and toning, sometimes exaggerating the energy of the Norman and the Scandinavian strength and drive, we may perhaps see it emerging at its best, least hampered, least discouraged, in English poetry, coming there repeatedly to the surface and then working with a certain force and vehement but still embarrassed power, like an imprisoned spirit let out for a holiday but within not quite congenial bounds and with an unadaptable companion. From the ferment of these two elements, from the vigorous but chaotic motion created by their fusion and their clash, arise both the greatness and the limitations of English poetry.

---

[1] Outside the Gothic, and even there there is not the continental magnificence of the past's riches.

Chapter VIII

The Character of English Poetry – 2

WHAT KIND or quality of poetry should we naturally expect from a national mind so constituted? The Anglo-Saxon strain is dominant and in that circumstance there lay just a hazardous possibility that there might have been no poetical literature at all. The Teutonic nations have in this field been conspicuous by their silence or the rarity of their speech. After the old rude epics, saga or Nibelungenlied, we have to wait till quite recent times for poetic utterance, nor, when it came, was it rich or abundant. In Germany, so rich in music, in philosophy, in science, the great poetic word has burst out rarely: one brief and strong morning time illumined by the calm, large and steady blaze of Goethe's genius and the wandering fire of Heine, afterwards a long unlighted stillness. In the North here or there a solitary genius, Ibsen, Strindberg. Holland, another Teutonic country which developed an art of a considerable but almost wholly objective power, is mute in poetry.[1] It would almost seem that there is still something too thick and heavy in the strength and depth of the Teutonic composition for the ethereal light and fire of the poetic word to make its way freely through the intellectual and vital envelope. What has saved the English mind from a like taciturnity? It must have been the mixture of other racial strains, sublimating this strong but heavy material temperament with a quicker and more impetuous element; the submerged Celtic genius must have pushed the rest from behind, intervening as a decisive force to liberate and uplift the poetic spirit. And as a necessary aid we have the fortunate accident of the reshaping of a Teutonic tongue by French and Latinistic influences which gave it clearer and more flowing forms and turned it into a fine though difficult linguistic material sufficiently malleable, sufficiently plastic for Poetry to produce in it both her larger and her subtler effects, but also sufficiently difficult to compel her to put forth her greatest energies. A stuff of speech which, without being harsh and inapt, does not tempt by too great a facility, but offers a certain resistance in the material, increases the strength of the artist by the measure of the difficulty conquered and can be thrown into shapes at once of beauty and of concentrated power. That is eminently the character of the English language.

---

[1] I do not include here any consideration of contemporary names; it would be unsafe to go by the great reputations of today which may sink tomorrow to a much lower status.

At any rate we have this long continuity of poetic production. And once supposing a predominantly Anglo-Saxon or, more strictly an Anglo-Norman national mind moved to express itself in poetry, we should, ignoring for a moment the Celtic emergence, expect the groundwork to be a strong objective poetry, a powerful presentation of the forms of external life, a ready and energetic portrayal of action and character in action, the pleasant or the melancholy outsides of Nature, the robust play of the will and the passions, a vigorous flow of a strenuous vital and physical verse creation. Even we might look for a good deal of deviation into themes and motives for which prose will always be the more adequate and characteristic instrument; we should not be surprised to meet here a self-styled Augustan age which makes these things the greater part of its realm and indulges with a self-satisfied contentment in a confident and obvious "criticism" of external life, preferring to more truly poetic forms and subjects the poetry of political and ecclesiastical controversy, didactic verse, satire. There would be in this Anglo-Norman poetry a considerable power of narrative and a great energy in the drama of character and incident; but any profounder use of the narrative and dramatic forms we would not look for, — at most we might arrive in the end at some powerful dramatic analysis of character. The romantic element would be of an external Teutonic kind sensational and outward, appealing to the life and the senses; there would be no touch of the delicate and beautiful imaginative, mystic and almost spiritual Celtic romanticism. We should have perhaps much poetical thinking or even poetical philosophy of a rather obvious kind, sedate or vigorous, prompt and direct or robustly powerful, but not the finer and subtler poetic thought which comes easily to the clear Latin intellect. Form too of a kind we might hope for, though we could not be quite sure of it, but at best bright and plain or strongly balanced and not those greater forms in which a high and deep creative thought presides or those more exquisite of which a delicate sense of beauty or a subtle poetic intuition is the magic builder. Both the greater and more profound depths and magnitudes and the subtler intensities of style and rhythm would be absent; but there would be a boldly forcible or a well-beaten energy of speech and much of the more metallic vigours of verse. This side of the national mind would prepare us for English poetry as it was until Chaucer and beyond, for the ground-type of the Elizabethan drama, the work of Dryden and Pope, the whole mass of eighteenth-century verse, Cowper, Scott, Wordsworth in his more outward moments, Byron without his Titanism and unrest, much of the lesser Victorian verse, Tennyson without his surface aestheticism and elaborate finesse, the poetry of Browning. For this much we need not go outside the Anglo-Norman temperament.

That also would give, but subject to a potent alchemy of transformation, the basic form and substance of most English poetry. That alchemy we can fairly attribute to the submerged Celtic element which emerges, as time goes on, in bright upstreamings and sometimes in exceptional outbursts of power. It comes up in a blaze of colour, light, emotion and imaginative magic; in a passionate hungering for beauty in its more subtle and delicately sensuous forms, for the ideal which escapes definition and yet has to be seized and cast into interpretative lines; in a lyrical intoxication; in a charm of subtle romance. It casts into the mould a higher urge of thought than the vital common sense of the Saxon can give, not the fine, calm and measured poetical thinking of the Greeks and the Latin races which deals sovereignly with life within the limits of the intellect and the inspired reason, but an excitement of thought seeking for something beyond itself and behind life through the intensities of creative sight. It brings in a look upon Nature which pierces beyond her outsides and her external spirit and lays its touch on the mysteries of her inner life and sometimes on that in her which is most intimately spiritual. It awakens rare outbreaks of mysticism, a vein of subtler sentiment, a more poignant pathos; it refines passion from a violence of the vital being into an intensity of the soul, modifies vital sensuousness into a thing of imaginative beauty by a warmer aesthetic perception. It carries with it a seeking for exquisite lyrical form, touches narrative poetry to finer issues, throws its romantic beauty and force and fire and its greater depth of passion across the drama and makes it something more than a tumultuous external action and heavily powerful character-drawing. At one period it strives to rise beyond the English mould, seems about to disengage itself and reveal through poetry the Spirit in things. In language and music it is always a quickening and refining force; where it can do nothing more, it breathes a more intimate energy; where it gets its free characteristic movement, it creates that intensity of style and rhythm, that sheer force of imaginative vision and that peculiar unseizable beauty of turn which are the highest qualities of English poetry.

The varied commingling and separating of these two elements mark the whole later course of the literature and present as their effect a side of failure and defect and a side of achievement. There are evidently two opposite powers at work in the same field, often compelled to labour in the same mind at a common production; and when two such opposites can coalesce, seize each other's motives and, fusing them, become one, the very greatest achievement becomes possible. For each fills in the other's deficiencies; they light each other up with a new light and bring in a fresh revelation which neither by itself could have accomplished. The greatest things in English poetry have come where this fusion was effected in the creative mind and soul of the poet. But that could not always be done and there results from the failure a frequent uncertainty of motive, a stumbling unsureness of touch, an oscillation, a habit of too often falling short of the mark. It does not prevent great triumphs of poetic power, but it does prevent a high equality and sustained perfection of self-expression and certainty of form. We must expect inequality in all human work, but not necessarily on this scale nor with so frequent and extensive a sinking below what should be the normal level.

To the same uncertainty may be attributed the rapid starts and turns of the course of English poetry, its want of conscious continuity, — for there is a secret, underground and inevitable continuity which we have to dig for and disengage. It takes a very different course from the external life of the nation which has always been faithful to its inner motive and spirit and escaped from the shattering and suddenly creative changes that have at once afflicted and quickened the life of other peoples. The revolutions of the spirit of English poetry are extreme and violent, astonishing in their decisiveness and abruptness. We can mark off first the early English poetry which found its solitary greater expression in Chaucer; indeed it marks itself off by an absolute exhaustion and cessation, a dull and black Nirvana. The magnificent Elizabethan outburst has another motive, spirit and manner of expression which seem to have nothing to do with the past; it is a godhead self-born under the impulse of a new age and environment. As this fades away, we see standing high and apart the lonely figure of Milton with his strenuous effort at an intellectual poetry cast in the type of the ancients. The age which succeeds, hardly linked to it by a slender stream of Caroline lyrics, is that of a trivial intellectuality which does not follow the lead of Milton and is the exact contrary of the Elizabethan form and spirit, the thin and arid reign of Pope and Dryden. Another violent and impatient breaking away, a new outburst of wonderful freshness gives us the poetry of Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Blake with another spirit and another language of the spirit. The Victorian period did not deny their influences; it felt them in the first form of its work, and we might have expected it to have gone nobly forward and brought to some high or beautiful issue what had been only a great beginning that did not arrive at its full fruition. But it did nothing of the kind; it deviated into a new way which has nothing to do with the finer spirit of the preceding poets. Descending it fell away into an intellectual, half-artistic, carefully but not finely or sovereignly wrought and mostly superficial and external poetry. And afterwards we have this age which is still trying to find itself, but in its most characteristic tendencies seems to start from a summary rejection of the Victorian forms and motives. These reversals and revolutions of the spirit are not in themselves a defect or a disability; on the contrary, they open the door to large opportunities and unforeseen achievements. English poetical literature has been a series of bold experiments less shackled by the past than in countries which have a stronger sense of cultural tradition. Revolutions are distracting things, but they are often good for the human soul; for they bring a rapid unrolling of new horizons.

Here comes in the side of success and greatness in this poetry. There is a force which overrides its defects and compensates richly for its limitations; its lapses and failures are the price it pays for its gains. For nowhere else has individual genius found so free a field; nowhere has it been able to work so directly out of itself and follow so boldly its own line of poetic adventure. Form is a great power, but sureness of form is not everything. A strong tradition of form gives a firm ground upon which genius can work in safety, protected from its own wanderings; but it limits and stands in the way of daring individual adventure. The spirit of adventure, if its path is strewn with accidents, stumblings or fatal casualties, brings, when it does succeed, new revelations which are worth all the price paid for them. English poetry is full of such new revelations. Its richness, its constant freshness, its lavish expenditure of genius exulting in chainless freedom, delivered from all meticulous caution, its fire and penetrating force of imagination, its lambent energy of poetic speech, its constant self-liberation into intensest beauty of self-expression are the rewards of its courage and its liberty. These things are of the greatest value in poetry. They lead besides to possibilities which are of the highest importance to the poetry of the future.

We may briefly anticipate and indicate in what manner. We have to accept one constant tendency of the spirit of English poetry, which loves to dwell with all its weight upon the presentation of life and action, feeling and passion and to give that its full force and make of it the basis and the source and, not only the point of reference, but the utility of all else. A strong hold upon this life, the earth-life, is the characteristic of the English mind, and it is natural that it should take possession of its poetry. The pure Celtic genius leans towards the opposite extreme: it seems to care little for the earth-life for its own sake and has little hold on it or only a light and ethereal hold; it accepts it as a starting-point for the expression of other-life, but is attracted by all that is hidden and secret. The Latin mind insists on the presentation of life, but for the purposes of thought; its eye is on the universal truths and realities of which life is the visible expression, — not the remoter, the spiritual or soul-truths, but those which present themselves to the clarities of the intelligence. But the English mind looks at life and loves it for its own sake, in all its externalities, its play of outer individualities, its immediate subjective idiosyncrasies. Even when it is strongly attracted by other motives, the intellectual, the aesthetic or the spiritual, it seldom follows these with a completely disinterested fidelity, but comes back with them on the external life and tries to subject them to its mould and use them for its purpose. This turn is not universal, — Blake escapes from it; nor is it the single dominant power, — Keats and Shelley and Wordsworth have their hearts elsewhere: but it is a constant power; it attracts even the poets who have not a real genius for it and vitiates their work by the immixture of an alien motive.

This objective and external turn might be strong enough in some other arts, — fiction, for instance, or painting or sculpture, — to create a clear national tradition and principle of form, but not easily in poetry. For here the mere representation of life cannot be enough, however vivid or however strongly subjected to the law of poetic beauty it may be. Poetry must strive at least towards a presentation from within and not at simple artistic reproduction; and the principle of presentation must be something more than that of the eye on the visible object. It is by a process from within, a passing of all one meets, thinks or feels through some kind of intimately subjective vision that life is turned into poetry. If this subjective medium is the inspired reason or the intuitive mind, the external presentation of life gives place inevitably to an interpretation, a presentation in which its actual lines are either neglected or subordinated in order that some inner truth of it may emerge. But in English poetry the attempt is to be or at least to appear true to the actual lines of life, to hold up a mirror to Nature. It is the mirror then which has to do the poetising of life; the vital, the imaginative, the emotional temperament of the poet is the reflecting medium and it has to supply unaided the creative and poetical element. We have then a faithfully unfaithful reflection which always amounts to a transformation, because the temperament of the poet lends to life and Nature its own hues, its own lines, its own magnitudes. But the illusion of external reality, of an "imitation" of Nature is created, — the illusion which has been for so long a first canon of Western artistic conceptions, — and the English mind which carries this tendency to an extreme, feels then that it is building upon the safe foundation of the external and the real; it is satisfied of the earth even when it is singing in the heavens.

But this sole reliance on the temperament of the poet has certain strong results. It gives an immense importance to individuality, much greater than that which it must always have in poetical creation: the transformation of life and Nature in the individuality becomes almost the whole secret of this poetry. Therefore English poetry is much more powerfully and consciously personal and individual than that of any other language; it aims much less directly at the impersonal and universal. This individual subjective element creates enormous differences between the work of poets of the same age; they cannot escape from the common tendencies, but give to them a quite independent turn and expression and subordinate them to the assertion of the individuality; in other literatures, until recently, the reverse has oftener happened. Besides, the higher value given to the intensity of the imaginative, vital or emotional response favours and is perhaps a first cause of that greater intensity of speech and immediate vision which is the strength of English poetry.

For since the heightening cannot come mainly from the power and elevation of the medium through which life is seen, as in Greek and ancient Indian poetry, it has to come almost entirely from the individual response in the poet, his force of personal utterance, his intensity of personal vision.

Three general characteristics emerge. The first is a constant reference and return of the higher poetical motives to the forms of external life, as if the enriching of that life were its principal artistic aim. The second is a great force of subjective individuality and personal temperament as a leading power of poetic creation. The third is a great intensity of speech and ordinarily of a certain kind of direct vision. But in the world's literature generally these are the tendencies that have been on the increase and two of them at least are likely to be persistent. There is everywhere a considerable stressing of the individual subjective element, a drift towards making the most of the poet's personality, an aim at a more vivid response and the lending of new powers of colour and line from within to the vision of life and Nature, a search for new intensities of word and rhythm which will translate into speech a deeper insight. In following out the possible lines of the future the defect of the English mind is its inability to follow the higher motives disinterestedly to their deepest and largest creative results, but this is being remedied by new influences. The entrance of the pure Celtic temperament into English poetry through the Irish revival is likely to do much; the contribution of the Indian mind in work like Tagore's may act in the same direction.

If this change is effected, the natural powers of the English spirit will be of the highest value to the future poetry. For that poetry is likely to move to the impersonal and universal, not through the toning down of personality and individuality, but by their heightening to a point where they are liberated into the impersonal and universal expression. Subjectivity is likely to be its greater power, the growth to the universal subjective enriched by all the forces of the personal soul-experience. The high intensity of speech which English poetry has brought to bear upon all its material, its power of giving the fullest and richest value to the word and the image, is needed for the expression of the values of the spiritual, which will be one of the aims of a supreme intuitive utterance. If the pursuit of the higher godheads into their own sphere will be one of its endeavours, their return upon the earth-life to transform our vision of it will be its other side. If certain initial movements we can even now see in English poetry outline and emphasise themselves in the future, this long stream of strong creation and utterance may arrive at a point where it will discover a supreme utility for all its past powers. It may go deeper within itself and find and live in the greater spirit which has till now only occasionally broken into its full native utterance. Arriving at a more comprehensive spiritual motive it may successfully interweave into it the conflicting lines of its past forces. It may achieve clear and powerful forms of a new intuitive utterance in which the Anglo-Celtic spirit will find its highest harmonised and perfect self-expression. The Elizabethan poet wrote in the spacious days of its first birth into greatness,

> Or who can tell for what great work in hand
> The greatness of our style is now ordained?
> What powers it shall bring in, what spirits command?

It has since brought in many powers, commanded many spirits; but it may be that the richest powers, the highest and greatest spirit yet remain to be found, brought in, commanded, put into the service of the greatest work and achievement of which our evolving humanity is capable.

Chapter IX

The Course of English Poetry – 1

Chaucer and the Poetry of External Life

THE SPIRIT and temper that have stood behind the creative force and come to the front in a literature are the one essential thing that we must discern, for it is these that predestine the course the poetry of a people will take and the turn it gives to its forms. For if the field which poetry covers is common ground and its large general lines the same everywhere, yet each nation has its own characteristic spirit and creative quality which determine the province in which it will best succeed, the turn or angle of its vision and the shape of its work. The genius of English poetry was evidently predestined by the complexity of its spirit and its union of opposite powers to an adventurous consecutive seeking over the whole field, and this is in fact the first character of it that strikes the eye, a series of bold and powerful creative adventures, each quite different in spirit from its predecessor. But in its first natural potentiality certain pronounced limitations point to a facile and vigorous success in a forcefully accurate or imaginative presentation of life and a more difficult and incomplete success in the intellectual or spiritual interpretation of life; most difficult for it would be a direct presentation of the things beyond, a concrete image of mystic realities, a poetic approach to the higher truths of the spirit. Yet on the other hand if this difficulty could once be overcome, then because of the profounder intensity of the power of poetical speech which this literature has developed, the very highest and most penetrating expression of these profoundest things would be possible. A nearer significant imaging of them would be close to the hand here than could easily be achieved without much new fashioning of language in the Latin tongues whose speech has been cast in the mould of a clear or high intellectuality rather than into the native utterance of imaginative vision adventuring beyond the normal bounds of a high poetic intelligence. We see in modern French creation a constant struggle with this limitation: even we find a poet like Mallarmé driven to break the mould of French speech in his desperate effort to force it to utter what is to its natural clear lucidity almost unutterable. No such difficulty presents itself in English poetry; the depths, the vistas of suggestion, the power to open the doors of the infinite are already there, ready to hand for the mind rightly gifted to evoke them, waiting and almost asking to be used for the highest purposes. Much less naturally fitted for fine prose utterance, this language has developed all the close lights and shades, the heights and depths, the recesses of fathomless sense needed by the poet.

It has to be seen how this has come about; for it has not been accomplished at all easily, but only by much seeking and effort. We observe first that English poetry has covered the rising field that lies before the genius of poetry by strictly successive steps, and these steps have followed the natural ascending order of our developing perceptions as the human consciousness rises from the first physical view of things through the more inward life-vision, through the constructing and pondering intellect and last through a vivid or a brooding intuition to the gateways of the spirit. The English creative genius began by a quite external, a clear and superficial substance and utterance. It proceeded to a deeper vital poetry, a poetry of the power and beauty and wonder and spontaneous thought, the joy and passion and pain, the colour and music of Life, in which the external presentation of life and things was taken up, but heightened, exceeded and given its full dynamic and imaginative content. From that it turned to an attempt at mastering the secret of the Latins, the secret of a clear, measured and intellectual dealing with life, things and ideas. Then came an attempt, a brilliant and beautiful attempt to get through Nature and thought and the veiled mind in life and Nature and its profounder aesthetic suggestions to some large and deep spiritual truth behind these things. This attempt did not come to perfect fruition; it stopped short partly because there had not been the right intellectual preparation or a sufficient basis of spiritual knowledge and experience; only so much could be given as the solitary individual intuition of the poet could attain by a difficult groping or a sudden sovereign effort. But partly also it failed because after the lapse into an age of reason the spontaneous or the intense language of spiritual poetry could not easily be found or, if found at times, could not be securely kept. So we get a deviation into a second age of intellectualism, an aesthetic or reflective poetry with a much wider range, but much less profound in its roots, much less high in its growth, the creation of a more informed, but less inspired intelligence. And partly out of this increasing wideness of the observing intelligence, partly by a dissatisfaction and recoil from these limitations has come the trend of a recent and contemporary poetry which seems at last to be approaching on some of its lines and in spite of many mistakes and divagations the secret of the utterance of profounder truth and the right magic of a speech and rhythm which will be the apt body and motion of its spirit.

The first definite starting-point of this long movement is the poetry of Chaucer. Then first the rough poverty of the Anglo-Saxon mind succeeded in assimilating the French influence and refined and clarified by it its own rude speech and crude aesthetic sense. It is characteristic of the difficulty of the movement that as in its beginning, so at each important turn, or at least on the three first occasions of a new orientation, it has had thus to go to school, to make almost a fresh start under the influences of a foreign culture and foreign poetic forms and motives. It has needed each time in spite of so much poetic originality and energy and genius a strong light of suggestion from outside to set it upon its way. All modern literatures have had indeed at one time or another to open out to this kind of external help and stimulus; but, once formed and in possession of themselves, they adopt these impresses more or less lightly and only as a secondary assistance. But here we have a remodelling of the whole plan under foreign teaching. Chaucer gives English poetry a first shape by the help of French romance models and the work of Italian masters; the Elizabethans start anew in dependence on Renaissance influences from France and Italy and a side wind from Spain; Milton goes direct to classical models; the Restoration and the eighteenth century take pliantly the pseudo-classical form from the contemporary French poets and critics. Still this dependence is only in externals; in the essential things of poetry some native character prevails, a new turn is rapidly given, an original power and method emerges; the dynamic vitality of the race was too great not to arrive at an immediate transmutation of the invading force.

The first early motive and style of this poetry as it emerges in Chaucer strikes at once an English note. The motive is a direct and concrete poetic observation of ordinary human life and character. There is no preoccupying idea, no ulterior design; life, the external figure and surface of things is reflected as near as possible to its native form in the individual mind and temperament of the poet. Chaucer has his eye fixed on the object, and that object is the visible action of life as it passes before him throwing its figures on his mind and stirring it to a kindly satisfaction in the movement and its interest, a blithe sense of humour or a light and easy pathos. He does not seek to add anything to it or to see anything below it or behind its outsides. He is not concerned to look at all into the souls or deeply into the minds of the men and women whose appearance, action and easily apparent traits of character he describes with so apt and observant a fidelity. There is no call on the poet yet to ask himself what is the meaning of all this movement of life or the power in it or draw any large poetic idea from its vivid scheme and structure. He is not moved to interpret life; a clear and happy presentation is his business. It is there simply in the sunlight with its familiar lines and normal colours, sufficiently interesting in itself, by its external action, and he has to record it, to give it a shape in lucid poetic speech and rhythm; for to turn it into stuff of poetry that and the sunlight of his own happy poetic temperament in which he bathes it is all he needs. The form he gives to it is within its limits and for its work admirably apt, sufficient and satisfying, — altogether and excellently satisfying if we ask from it nothing more than it has to offer. Chaucer had captured the secret of ease, grace and lucidity from French romance poetry and had learned from the great Italians more force and compactness of expression than French verse had yet attained, a force diluted and a compactness lightened for his purpose. But neither his poetic speech nor his rhythm has anything of the plastic greatness and high beauty of the Italians. It is an easy, limpid and flowing movement, a well-spring of natural English utterance without depths in it, but limpid and clear and pure. It is a form just fitted for the clear and pleasing poetic presentation of external life as if in an unsoiled mirror. At times it rises into an apt and pointed expression, but for the most part is satisfied with a first primitive power of poetic speech; a subdued and well-tempered even adequacy is its constant gift. Only once or twice does Chaucer, as if by accident, strike out a really memorable line of poetry; yet Dante and Petrarch were among his masters.

No other great poetical literature has had quite such a beginning. Others also started with a poetry of external life, Greek with the poetry of Homer, Latin with the historical epic of Ennius, French with the feudal romances of the Charlemagne cycle and the Arthurian cycle. But in none of these was the artistic aim simply the observant accurate presentation of Greek or Roman or feudal life. Homer gives us the life of man always at a high intensity of impulse and action and without subjecting it to any other change he casts it in lines of beauty and in divine proportions; he deals with it as Phidias dealt with the human form when he wished to create a god in marble. When we read the Iliad and the Odyssey, we are not really upon this earth, but on the earth lifted into some plane of a greater dynamis of life, and so long as we remain there we have a greater vision in a more lustrous air and we feel ourselves raised to a semi-divine stature. Ennius' object was to cast into poetical utterance the masculine and imperial spirit of Rome. So the spirit of catholic and feudal Europe transmutes life in the French romances and gives in its own way an ideal presentation of it which only misses greatness by the inadequacy of its speech and rhythmic movement and the diffuse prolixity of its form. Chaucer's poetic method has no such great conscious idea or natural uplifting motive or spirit. Whether the colour he gives happens to be realistic or romantic, it falls within the same formula. It is the clear and vivid reflection of external life, with sometimes just a first tinge of romantic illumination, in an observing mind that makes itself a shining poetic mirror.

The spirit of English poetry thus struck its first strong note, a characteristic English note, got as far as the Anglo-Saxon mind refined by French and Italian influence could go in its own proper way and unchanged nature, and then came suddenly to a pause. Many outward reasons might be given for that abrupt cessation, but none sufficient; for the cause lay deeper in the inner destiny of this spirit. The real cause was that to have developed upon this line would have been to wander up and down in a cul-de-sac; it would have been to anticipate in a way in poetry the self-imprisonment of Dutch art in a strong externalism, of a fairer kind indeed, but still too physical and outward in its motive. English poetry had greater things to do and it waited for some new light and more powerful impulse to come. Still this external motive and method are native to the English mind and with many modifications have put their strong impress upon the literature. It is the ostensible method of English fiction from Richardson to Dickens; it got into the Elizabethan drama and prevented it, except in Shakespeare, from equalling the nobler work of other great periods of dramatic poetry. It throws its limiting shade over English narrative poetry, which after its fresh start in the symbolism of the *Faerie Queene* and the vital intensity of Marlowe ought either to have got clear away from this first motive or at least to have transmuted it by the infusion of much higher artistic motives. To give only one instance in many, it got sadly in the way of Tennyson, who yet had no real turn for the reproduction of life, and prevented him from working out the fine subjective and mystic vein which his first natural intuitions had discovered in such work as the *Lady of Shalott* and the *Morte d'Arthur*. Instead of any deepening of this new original note we have to put up with the *Princess* and *Enoch Arden* and the picturesque triviality of the *Idylls of the King* which give us the impression of gentlemen and ladies of Victorian drawing-rooms masquerading as Celtic-mediaeval knights and dames. If there is a meaning of some kind in it all, that does not come home to us because it is lost in a falsetto mimicking of the external strains of life. Certainly, it is useless to quarrel with national tendencies and characteristics which must show themselves in poetry as elsewhere; but English poetry had opened the gates of other powers and if it could always have lifted up the forms of external life by these powers, the substance of its work might then have meant much more to the world and the strength of its vision of things might constantly have equalled the power and beauty of its utterance. As it is, even poets of great power have been constantly drawn away by this tendency from the fulfilment of their more characteristic potentialities or misled into throwing them into inapt forms, and to this day there continues this confusion and waste of poetic virtue.

The new light and impulse that set free the silence of the poetic spirit in England for its first abundant and sovereign utterance, came from the Renaissance in Italy and Spain and France. The Renaissance meant many things and it meant too different things in different countries, but one thing above all everywhere, the discovery of beauty and joy in every energy of life. The Middle Ages had lived strongly and with a sort of deep and sombre force, but, as it were, always under the shadow of death and under the burden of an obligation to aspire through suffering to a beyond; their life is bordered on one side by the cross and on the other by the sword. The Renaissance brings in the sense of a liberation from the burden and the obligation; it looks at life and loves it in excess; it is carried away by the beauty of the body and the senses and the intellect, the beauty of sensation and action and speech and thought, — but of thought hardly at all for its own sake, but thought as a power of life. It is Hellenism returning with its strong sense of humanity and things human, *nihil humani alienum*,[1] but at first a barbarised Hellenism, unbridled and extravagant, riotous in its vitalistic energy, too much overjoyed for restraint and measure.

Elizabethan poetry is an expression of this energy, passion and wonder of life, and it is much more powerful, disorderly and unrestrained than the corresponding poetry in other countries; for it has neither a past traditional culture nor an innate taste to restrain its extravagances. It springs up in a chaos of power and of beauty in which forms emerge and shape themselves by a stress within it for which there is no clear guiding knowledge except such as the instinctive genius of the age and the individual can give. It is constantly shot through with brilliant threads of intellectual energy, but is not at all intellectual in its innate spirit and dominant character. It is too vital for that, too much moved and excited; for its mood is passionate, sensuous, loose of rein; its speech sometimes liquid with sweetness, sometimes vehement and inordinate in pitch, enamoured of the variety of its own notes, revelling in image and phrase, a tissue of sweet or violent colours, of many-hued fire, of threads of golden and silver light.

It bestowed on the nation a new English speech, rich in capacity, gifted with an extraordinary poetic intensity and wealth and copiousness, but full also of the excesses of new formation and its disorder. A drama exultant in action and character and passion and incident and movement, a lyric and romantic poetry of marvellous sweetness, richness and force are its strong fruits. The two sides of the national mind threw themselves out for the first time, each with its full energy, but within the limits of a vital, sensuous and imaginative mould, fusing into each other and separating and alternating in outbursts of an unrestrained joy of self-expression, an admirable confusion of their autonomous steps, an exhilarating and stimulating licence. The beauty and colour of one was dominant in its pure poetry, the vigour of the other took the lead in its drama, but both in Shakespeare were welded into a supreme phenomenon of poetic and dramatic genius. It is on the whole the greatest age of utterance, though not of highest spirit and aim, through which the genius of English poetry has yet travelled, unsurpassed in its spontaneous force and energy, unsurpassed in its brilliance of the expressive word and the creative image.

---

[1] Nothing human is alien to me.

Chapter X

The Course of English Poetry – 2

Elizabethan Drama
Shakespeare and the Poetry of the Life-Spirit

THE ELIZABETHAN age, perhaps the era of most opulent output in the long history of English poetic genius, is abundant, untrammelled and unbridled in its power, but not satisfying in its performance. Beautiful as are many of its productions, powerful as it is in the mass, if we look at it not in detail, not merely revelling in beauty of line and phrase and image, in snatches of song and outbursts of poetic richness and creative force, but as a whole, in its total artistic creation, it bears a certain stamp of defect and failure. It cannot be placed for a moment as a supreme force of excellence in literary culture by the side of the great ages of Greek and Roman poetry which started with an equal, if different creative impetus, but more self-knowledge. But, unhappily, it falls short too in aesthetic effect and virtue in comparison with other poetic periods less essentially vigorous and mobile in their plastic force; it has an inferior burden of meaning and, if a coursing of richer life-blood, no settled fullness of spirit and a less adequate body of forms. The great magician, Shakespeare, by his marvellous poetic rendering of life and the spell his poetry casts upon us, conceals this general inadequacy of the work of his time: the whole age which he embodies is magnified by his presence and the adjacent paler figures catch something of the light and kinship of his glory and appear in it more splendid than they are. But Shakespeare is an exception, a genius that transcends all laws, a miracle of poetic force; he survives untouched all adverse criticism, not because there are not plenty of fairly large spots in this sun, but because in any complete view of him they disappear in the greatness of his lustre. Spenser and Marlowe are poets of a high order, great in spite of an eventual failure. But the rest owe their stature to an uplifting power in the age and not chiefly to their own intrinsic height of genius; and that power had many vices, flaws and serious limitations which their work exaggerates wilfully rather than avoids, so that it is only exceptionally free from glaring flaws. The gold of this golden age of English poetry is often very beautifully and richly wrought, but it is seldom worked into a perfect artistic whole; it disappears continually in masses of alloy, and there is on the whole more of a surface gold-dust than of the deeper yield of the human spirit.

The defect of this Elizabethan work is most characteristic and prominent in that part of it which has been vaunted as its chief title to greatness, its drama. Shakespeare and Marlowe can be looked at in their separate splendours; but the rest of Elizabethan dramatic work is a brilliantly smoky nebula, powerful in effort rather than sound and noble in performance. All its vigorous presentation of life has not been able to keep it alive; it is dead or keeps only "the dusty immortality of the libraries", and this in spite of the attention drawn to it in quite recent times by scholars and critics and the hyperbolic eulogies of two or three eminent writers. This is not to say that it has not merits and, in a way, very striking merits. The Elizabethan playwrights were men of a confident robust talent; some of them had real, if an intermittent genius. They had too the use of the language of an age in which the power of literary speech was a common possession and men were handling the language with delight as a quite new and rich instrument, lavishly and curiously, turning it this way and that, moulding and new-moulding it, exulting in its novel capacities of expression. The first elements of the dramatic form, the temper and some of the primary faculties which go to make dramatic creation possible were there in the literary spirit of the age, and all these writers in more or less degree possessed these things and could use them. A certain force of vital creation was common to them all, a vigorous turn for the half romantic, half realistic reproduction of life and manners. The faculty of producing very freely a mass or a stream of incident and movement was there, much power of exuberant dialogue, a knack of expression both in verse and prose, some skill in the trick of putting the language of the passions into the mouth of cleverly constructed human figures which walk actively about the stage, if not in a quite natural manner, yet with enough of it to give for the time the illusion of living creatures. Especially, it was a time in which there was a fresh and vivid interest in life and man and action, in the adventure and wonder and appeal of the mere vital phenomenon of living and feeling and thinking, and their work is full of this freshness and interest and intense spontaneous delight in living and acting. All this, it might be thought, is quite enough to build a great dramatic poetry; and certainly, if we require no more than this, we shall give a prominent place to the Elizabethan drama, higher perhaps than to the Greek or any other. But these things are enough only to produce plays which will live their time on the stage and in the library; they are not, by themselves, sufficient for great dramatic creation. Something else is needed for that, which we get in Shakespeare, in Racine, Corneille and Molière, in Calderón, in the great Greeks, in the leading Sanskrit dramatists; but these other Elizabethans show themselves in the bulk of their work to be rather powerful writers and playwrights than inspired dramatic poets and creators.

Dramatic poetry cannot live by the mere presentation of life and action and the passions, however truly they may be portrayed or however vigorously and abundantly pushed across the scene. Its object is something greater and its conditions of success much more onerous. It must have, to begin with, as the fount of its creation or in its heart an interpretative vision and in that vision an explicit or implicit seeing idea of life and the human being; and the vital presentation which is its outward instrument, must arise out of that deeper sight harmoniously, whether by a spontaneous creation, as in Shakespeare, or by the compulsion of an intuitive artistic will, as with the Greeks. This interpretative vision and seeing idea have in the presentation to seem to arise out of the inner life of a few vital types of the human soul or individual representatives of its enigma and to work themselves out through an evolution of speech leading to an evolution of action. And of these two speech in the drama is the first and more important instrument, because through it the poet reveals the action of the soul; outward action and event are only the second, important, but less essential, reducible even to an indispensable minimum, because the outward movements serve only to make visible and concrete to us the result of the inner action and have no other intrinsic purpose. In all very great drama the true movement and result is psychological; and the outward action, even when it is considerable, and the consummating event, even though loud and violent, are either its symbol or else its condition of culmination. All has to be cast into a close dramatic form, a successful weaving of interdependent relations, relations of soul to soul, of speech to speech, of action to action, the more close and inevitable the better, because so the truth of the whole evolution comes home to us. And if it is asked what in a word is the essential purpose of all this creation, I think we might possibly say that drama is the poet's vision of some part of the world-act in the life of the human soul, it is in a way his vision of Karma, in an extended and very flexible sense of the word; and at its highest point it becomes a poetic rendering or illustration of the Aeschylean *drasanti pathein*, "the doer shall feel the effect of his act," in an inner as well as an outer, a happy no less than an austere significance, whether that effect be represented as psychological or vital, whether it comes to its own through sorrow and calamity, ends in a judgment by laughter or finds an escape into beauty and joy, whether the presentation be tragic or comic or tragi-comic or idyllic. To satisfy these conditions is extremely difficult and the great dramatists are few in their number; the entire literature of the world has hardly given us more than a dozen. The difficult evolution of dramatic poetry is always more hard to lead than the lyric which is poetry's native expression, or than the narrative which is its simpler expansion.

The greatness of a period of dramatic poetry can be measured by the extent to which these complex conditions were understood in it or were intuitively practised. But in the mass of the Elizabethan drama the understanding is quite absent and the practice comes, if at all, only rarely, imperfectly and by a sort of accident. Shakespeare himself seems to have divined these conditions or contained them in the shaping flame of his genius rather than perceived them by the artistic intelligence. The rest have ordinarily no light of interpretative vision, no dramatic idea. Their tragedy and comedy are both oppressively external; this drama presents, but does not at all interpret; it is an outward presentation of manners and passions and lives by vigour of action and a quite outward-going speech; it means absolutely nothing. The tragedy is irrational, the comedy has neither largeness nor subtlety of idea; they are mixed together too without any artistic connection such as Shakespeare manages to give to them so as to justify thoroughly their coexistence. The characters are not living beings working out their mutual Karma, but external figures of humanity jostling each other on a crowded stage, mere tossing drift of the waves of life. The form of the drama too is little more than a succession of speech and incident,[1] as in a story, with a culminating violent or happy ending, which comes not because psychologically it must, but because a story has to have a release of ending, or, if tragic, its point of loud detonation. To make up for their essential defects these poets have to heap up incident and situation and assail us with vehement and often grossly exaggerated speech and passion, frequently tearing the passion into glaringly coloured tatters, almost always overstraining or in some way making too much of it. They wish to pile on us the interest of life in whose presentation their strength lies, to accumulate in a mass, so as to carry us away, things attracting, things amusing, things striking, things horrible; they will get at us through the nerves and the lower emotional being, — and in this they succeed eminently, — since they cannot get at us through a higher intellectual and imaginative appeal. The evolution of the action is rather theatrically effective than poetic, the spirit and the psychology melodramatic rather than dramatic.

---

[1] Ben Jonson is an exception. He has the idea of construction, but his execution is heavy and uninspired, the work of a robustly conscientious craftsman rather than a creative artist.

Nor are these radical dramatic defects atoned for by any great wealth of poetry, for their verse has more often some formal merit and a great air of poetry than its essence, — though there are exceptions as in lines and passages of Peele and Webster. The presentation of life with some surface poetic touch but without any transforming vision or strongly suffusing power in the poetic temperament is the general character of their work. It is necessary to emphasise these defects because indiscriminate praise of these poets helps to falsify or quite exclude the just artistic view of the aim of sound dramatic creation, and imitation of the catching falsities of this model has been the real root of the inefficacy of subsequent attempts in the dramatic form even by poets of great gifts. It explains the failure of even a mind which had the true dramatic turn, a creator like Browning, to achieve drama of the first excellence.

Marlowe alone of the lesser Elizabethan dramatists stands apart from his fellows, not solely by his strong and magnificent vein of poetry, but because he knows what he is about; he alone has some clearly grasped dramatic idea. And not only is he conscious of his artistic aim, but it is a sound aim on the higher levels of the dramatic art. He knows that the human soul in action is his subject and Karma the power of the theme, and he attempts to create a drama of the human will throwing itself on life, the will egoistic and Asuric, conquering only to succumb to the great adversary Death or breaking itself against the forces its violence has brought into hostile play. This is certainly a high and fit subject for tragic creation and his boldly coloured and strongly cut style and rhythm are well-suited for its expression. Unhappily, Marlowe had the conception, but not any real power of dramatic execution. He is unable to give the last awakening breath of life to his figures; in the external manner so common in English poetry and fiction he rather constructs than evolves, portrays than throws out into life, paints up or sculptures from outside than creates from within, — and yet it is this other inward way that is the sole true method of poetic or at least of dramatic creation. He has not, either, the indispensable art of construction; only in one of his tragedies does he vitally relate together his characters and their action throughout, and even that, though a strong work, falls far short of the greatness of a masterpiece. He had too, writing for the Elizabethan stage, to adopt a model which was too complex for the strong simplicity of his theme and the narrow intensity of his genius. And he had, working for that semi-barbarous public, to minister to tastes which were quite incongruous with his purpose and which he had not flexibility enough to bring within its scope or to elevate towards its level. In fact, Marlowe was not a born dramatist; his true genius was lyrical, narrative and epic. Limited by his inborn characteristics, he succeeds in bringing out his poetic motive only in strong detached scenes and passages or in great culminating moments in which the lyrical cry and the epic touch break out through the form of drama.

Shakespeare stands out alone, both in his own age when so many were drawn to the form and circumstances were favourable to this kind of genius, and in all English literature, as the one great and genuine dramatic poet; but this one is indeed equal to a host. He stands out too as quite unique in his spirit, method and quality. For his contemporaries resemble him only in externals; they have the same outward form and crude materials, but not the inner dramatic method by which he transformed and gave them a quite other meaning and value. Later romantic drama, not only in England but elsewhere, though it has tried hard to imitate the Shakespearian motive and touch, has been governed by another kind of poetic mind; its intrinsic as distinguished from its external method has been really different. Romantic drama, in Hugo and in others, takes hold of life, strings together its unusual effects and labours to make it out of the way, brilliant, coloured, conspicuous. Shakespeare does not do that, except rarely, in early imitative work or when he is uninspired. He does not need to lay violent hands on life and turn it into romantic pyrotechnics; for life itself has taken hold of him in order to recreate itself in his image, and he sits within himself at its heart and pours out from its impulse a throng of beings, as real in the world he creates as men are in this other world from which he takes his hints, a multitude, a riot of living images carried on a many-coloured sea of revealing speech and a never failing surge of movement. His dramatic method seems indeed to have usually no other intellectual purpose, aesthetic motive or spiritual secret: ordinarily it labours simply for the joy of a multiple poetic vision of life and vital creation with no centre except the life-power itself, no coordination except that thrown out spontaneously by the unseizable workings of its energy, no unity but the one unity of man and the life-spirit in Nature working in him and before his eyes. It is this sheer creative *ānanda* of the life-spirit which is Shakespeare; abroad everywhere in that age, it incarnates itself in him for the pleasure of poetic self-vision.

All Shakespeare's powers and limitations — for it is now permissible to speak of his limitations — arise from this character of the force that moved him to poetic utterance. He is not primarily an artist, a poetic thinker or anything else of the kind, but a great vital creator and intensely, though within marked limits, a seer of life. His art itself is life arranging its forms in its own surge and excitement, not in any kind of symmetry, — for symmetry here there is none, — nor in fine harmonies, but still in its own way supremely and with a certain intimately metric arrangement of its many loose movements, in mobile perspectives, a succession of crowded but successful and satisfying vistas. While he has given a wonderful language to poetic thought, he yet does not think for the sake of thought, but for the sake of life. His way indeed is not so much the poet himself thinking about life, as life thinking itself out in him through many mouths, in many moods and moments, with a rich throng of fine thought-effects, but not for any clear sum of intellectual vision or to any high power of either ideal or spiritual result. His development of human character has a sovereign force within its bounds, but it is the soul of the human being as seen through outward character, passion, action, — the life-soul, and not either the thought-soul or the deeper psychic being, still less the profounder truth of the human spirit. Something of these things we may get, but only in shadow or as a partial reflection in a coloured glass, not in their own action. In his vision and therefore in his poetic motive Shakespeare never really either rises up above life or gets behind it; he neither sees what it reaches out to nor the great unseen powers that are active within it. At one time, in two or three of his tragedies, he seems to have been striving to do this, but all that he does see then is the action of certain tremendous life-forces, which he either sets in a living symbol or indicates behind the human action, as in *Macbeth*, or embodies, as in *King Lear*, in a tragically uncontrollable possession of his human characters. Nevertheless, his is not a drama of mere externalised action, for it lives from within and more deeply than our external life. This is not Virat, the seer and creator of gross forms, but Hiranyagarbha, the luminous mind of dreams, looking through those forms to see his own images behind them. More than any other poet Shakespeare has accomplished mentally the legendary feat of the impetuous sage Vishwamitra; his power of vision has created a Shakespearian world of his own, and it is, in spite of its realistic elements, a romantic world in a very true sense of the word, a world of the wonder and free power of life and not of its mere external realities, where what is here dulled and hampered finds a greater enlarged and intense breath of living, an ultra-natural play of beauty, curiosity and amplitude.

It is needful in any view of the evolution of poetry to note the limits within which Shakespeare did his work, so that we may fix the point reached; but still within the work itself his limitations do not matter. And even his positive defects and lapses cannot lower him, because there is an unfailing divinity of power in his touch which makes them negligible. He has, however much toned down, his share of the Elizabethan crudities, violences, extravagances; but they are upborne on a stream of power and end by falling in into the general greatness of his scheme. He has deviations into stretches of half prosaic verse and vagaries of tortured and bad poetic expression, sometimes atrociously bad; but they are yet always very evidently not failures of power, but the wilful errors of a great poet, more careful of dramatic truth and carried on by his force of expression than bound to verbal perfection. We feel obliged to accept his defects, which in another poet our critical sense would be swift to condemn or reject, because they are part of his force, just as we accept the vigorous errors of a great personality. His limitations are very largely the condition of his powers. Certainly, he is no universal revealer, as his idolators would have him be, — for even in the life-soul of man there are a multitude of things beyond him; but to have given a form so wonderful, so varied, so immortally alive, in so great a surge of the intensest poetical expression, to a life-vision of this kind and this power, is a unique achievement of poetic genius. The future may find for us a higher and profounder, even a more deeply and finely vital aim for the dramatic form than any Shakespeare ever conceived; but until that has been done with an equal power, grasp and fullness of vision and an equal intensity of revealing speech, he keeps his sovereign station. The claim made for him that he is the greatest of poets may very well be challenged, — he is not quite that, — but that he is first among dramatic poets cannot well be questioned.

So far then the English poetic spirit had got in the drama, and it has never got any farther. And this is principally because it has allowed itself to be obsessed by the Elizabethan formula; for it has clung not merely to the Shakespearian form, — which might after due modification still be used for certain purposes, especially for a deeper life-thought expressing itself through the strong colours of a romantic interpretation, — but to the whole crude inartistic error of that age. Great poets, poets of noble subjective power, delicate artists, fine thinkers and singers, all directly they turn to the dramatic form, begin fatally to externalise; they become violent, they gesticulate, they press to the action and forget to have an informing thought, hold themselves bound to the idea of drama as a robust presentation of life and incident and passion. And because this is not a true idea and, in any case, it is quite inconsistent with the turn of their own genius, they fail inevitably. Dryden stumbling heavily through his rhymed plays, Wordsworth of all people, the least Elizabethan of poets, penning with a conscientious dullness his *Borderers*, Byron diffusing his elemental energy in bad blank verse and worse dramatic construction, Keats turning from his unfinished *Hyperion* to wild schoolboy imitations of the worst

Elizabethan type, Shelley even, forgetting his discovery of a new and fine literary form for dramatic poetry to give us the Elizabethan violences of the *Cenci*, Tennyson, Swinburne, even after *Atalanta*, following the same ignis fatuus, a very flame of fatuity and futility, are all victims of the same hypnotism. Recently a new turn is visible; but as yet it is doubtful whether the right conditions for a renovation of the dramatic form and a true use of the dramatic motive have come into being. At any rate the predestined creator, if he is to come, is not yet among us.

Chapter XI

The Course of English Poetry – 3

THE ELIZABETHAN drama is an expression of the stir of the life-spirit; at its best it has a great or strong, buoyant or rich or beautiful, passionately excessive or gloomily tenebrous force of vital poetry. The rest of the utterance of the time is full of the lyric joy, sweetness or emotion or moved and coloured self-description of the same spirit. There is much in it of curious and delighted thinking, but little of a high and firm intellectual value. Culture is still in its imaginative childhood and the thinking mind rather works for the curiosity and beauty of thought and even more for the curiosity and beauty of the mere expression of thought than for its light and its vision. The poetry which comes out of this mood is likely to have great charm and imaginative, emotional or descriptive appeal, but may very well miss that depth of profounder substance and that self-possessing plenitude of form which are the other and indispensable elements of a rounded artistic creation. Beauty of poetical expression abounds in an unstinted measure, but for the music of a deeper spirit or higher significance we have to wait; the attempt at it we get, but not often all the success of its presence.

Spenser, the poet of second magnitude of the time, gives us in his work this beauty in its fullest abundance, but also the limited measure of that greater but not quite successful endeavour. The *Faerie Queene* is indeed a poem of unfailing imaginative charm and its two opening cantos are exquisite in execution; there is a stream of liquid harmony, of curiously opulent, yet finely tempered description, of fluid poetical phrase and minutely seen image. For these are Spenser's constant gifts, the native form of his genius which displays more of descriptive vision than of any larger creative power or narrative force. An inspired idea is worked out; a little too much lost in detail and in the diffusion of a wealthy prolixity, it still holds well together its rather difficult and entangling burden of symbols and forms and achieves in the end some accomplished totality of fine poetic effect. But if we read on after this fine opening and look at the poem as a whole, the effect intended fails, not because it happened to be left unfinished, nor even because the power in it is not equally sustained and is too evidently running thinner and thinner as it proceeds, but because it could not have come to a successful completion. Kalidasa's *Birth of the War-God* was left unfinished, or finished by a very inferior hand, yet even in the fragment there is already a masterly totality of effect; there is the sense of a great and admirable design. Virgil's *Aeneid*, though in a way finished, did not receive those last touches which sometimes make all the difference between perfection and the approach to it; and we feel too, not a failure of art, — for that is a defect which could never be alleged against Virgil, — but a relative thinning of the supporting power and inspiration. Still the consummate artistic intelligence of the poet has been so steadily at work, so complete from the very inception, it has so thought out and harmonised its idea from the beginning that a fine and firm total effect is given. But here there is a defect of the artistic intellect, a vice or insufficiency in its original power of harmonising construction, characteristic of the Elizabethan, almost of the English mind.

Spenser's intention seems to have been to combine in his own way the success of Ariosto with the success of Dante. His work was to have been in its form a rich and beautiful romance; but it must be too at the same time a great interpretation by image and symbol, not here of the religious or spiritual, but of the ethical meaning of human life. A faery-tale and a vivid ethical symbol in one is his conception of his artistic task. That is a kind of combination difficult enough to execute, but capable of a great and beautiful effect in a master hand. But the Elizabethan intellectual direction runs always towards conceit and curious complication; it is unable to follow an idea for the sake of what is essential in it, but tangles it up in all sorts of turns and accessories: seizing on all manner of disparates, it tends to throw them together without any real fusion. Spenser in his idea and its execution fell a victim to all these defects of the intelligence. He has taken his intellectual scheme from his Hellenism, the virtues to be figured in typical human beings; but he has dressed it up with the obvious and trivial mediaeval ingenuity of the allegory. Nor is he satisfied with a simple form of this combination; he has an ambition of all-including representativeness which far exceeds his or perhaps any possible power of fusing creation. The turn of the allegory must be at once ethical, ecclesiastical and political in one fell complexity; his witch of Faery-land embodies Falsehood, the Roman Catholic Church and Mary Queen of Scots in an irritating and impossible jumble. The subject of a poem of this kind has to be the struggle of the powers of good and evil, but the human figures through whom it works out to its issues, cannot be merely the good or the evil, this or that virtue or vice; they should stand for them as their expressive opportunity of life, not merely as their allegorical body. Spenser, a great poet, is not blind to this elementary condition; but his tangled skein of allegory continually hampers the sounder conception, and the interpretative narration works itself out through the confused maze of its distracting elements which we are obliged to accept, not for their own interest or living force and appeal, but for the beauty of the poetic expression and description to which they give occasion.

Besides this fault of the initial conception, there are defects in the execution. After a time at least the virtues and vices altogether lose their way in faery-land or they become mistily vague and negligible; and this, considering the idea of the poem, ought not to be, but certainly is a great relief to the reader. We are well contented to read the poem or, still better, each canto apart as a romance and leave the ulterior meaning to take care of itself; what was intended as a great ethical interpretative poem of the human soul, lives only as a beautiful series of romantic descriptions and incidents. We can see where the defect is if we make a comparison with the two greater poems of Greece and India which had an intention not altogether unsimilar, the Ramayana fusing something like a vast faery-tale with the story of an immense struggle between world-powers of good and evil, the Odyssey with its magic of romance and its story of the assertion of right and of domestic and personal virtue against unbridled licence and wrong in an epic encounter between these opposite forces. The Odyssey is a battle of human will and character supported by divine power against evil men and wrathful gods and adverse circumstance and the deaf opposition of the elements, and its scenes move with an easy inevitability between the lands of romance and the romance of actual human life; but nowhere does the poet lose in the wealth of incident and description either the harmonising aesthetic colour or the simple central idea. The Ramayana too is made up of first materials which belong to the world of faery romance; but, lifted into an epic greatness, they support easily a grandiose picture of the struggle of incarnate God and Titan, of a human culture expressing the highest order and range of ethical values with a giant empire of embattled anarchic force, egoistic violence and domination and lawless self-assertion. The whole is of a piece, and even in its enormous length and protracted detail there is a victorious simplicity, largeness and unity. The English poet loses himself in the outward, in romantic incident and description pursued by his imagination for their own sake. His idea is often too much and too visibly expressed, yet in the end finds no successful expression. Instead of relying upon the force of his deeper poetic idea to sustain him, he depends on intellectual device and parades his machinery. The thread of connection is wandering and confused. He achieves a diffuse and richly confused perplexity, not the unity of a living whole.

These are the natural limitations of the Elizabethan age, and we have to note them with what may seem at first a disproportionate emphasis, because they are the key to the immediately following reaction of English poetry with its turn in Milton towards a severe and serious intellectual effort and discipline and its fall in Dryden and Pope to a manner which got away from the most prominent defects of the Elizabethan mind at the price of a complete and disastrous loss of all its great powers. English poetry before Milton had not passed through any training of the poetic and artistic intelligence; it had abounding energy and power, but no self-discipline of the idea. Except in Shakespeare it fails to construct; it at once loses and finds itself in a luxurious indulgence of its force, follows with a loose sweetness or a vehement buoyancy all its impulses good, bad or indifferent. Still what it does achieve, is unique and often superlative in its kind. It achieves an unsurpassed splendour of imaginative vitality and eager vision of the life spirit, and an unsurpassed intensity of poetical expression; life vents itself in speech, pours its lyric emotion, lavishes its intimate and intuitive description of itself in passionate detail, thinks aloud in a native utterance of poetry packed with expressive image or felicitous in directness. There is no other poetry which has in at all the same degree this achievement.

This poetry is then great in achievement within the limits of its method and substance. That substance and method belong to the second step of the psychological gradations by which poetry becomes a more and more profound and subtle instrument of the self-expression of the human spirit. English poetry, I have remarked, follows the grades of this ascension with a singular fidelity of sequence. At first it was satisfied with only a primary superficial response to the most external appearances of life, its visible figures and incidents, its primary feelings and characteristics. To mirror these things clearly, justly, with a certain harmony of selection and a just sufficient transmutation in the personality and aesthetic temperament is enough for this earlier type of poetry, all the more easily satisfied because everything seen by the eye is fresh, interesting, stimulating, and the liveliness of the poetic impression replaces the necessity of subtlety or depth. Great poetry can be written in early times with this as its substantial method, but not afterwards when the race mind has begun to make an intenser and more inward response to life. It then becomes the resort of a secondary inspiration which is unable to rise to the full heights of poetic possibility. Or else, if this external method still persists as part of the outward manner of a more subjective creation, it is with a demand for more heightened effects and a more penetrating expression. The last was the demand and method of the Elizabethan age.

In Elizabethan poetry the physical and external tendency still persists, but it is no longer sufficient to satisfy either the perceiving spirit or its creative force. Where it is most preserved, it still demands a more vehement response, strong colours, violent passions, exaggerated figures, out-of-the-way or crowding events. Life is still the Muse of this poetry, but it is a Life which demands to feel itself more and is already knocking or trying to knock at the gates of the deeper subjective being. And in all the best work of the time it has already got there, not very deep, but still enough to be initially subjective. Whatever Shakespeare may suggest, — a poet's critical theories are not always a just clue to his inspiration, — there is not here any true or exact holding up of a mirror to life and Nature, but instead a moved and excited reception and evocation. Life throws its impressions, but what seizes upon them is a greater and deeper life-power in the poet which is not satisfied with mirroring or just beautifully responding to what is cast upon it, but begins to throw up at once around them its own rich matter of receptive being and shaping force and so creates something new, something more personal, intimate, fuller of a first inner vision, emotion, passion of self-expression. This is the source of the new intensity; it is this impulse towards an utterance of the creative life-power within which drives towards the dramatic form and acts with such unexampled power in Shakespeare. At another extremity of the Elizabethan mind, in Spenser, it gets much farther away from the actuality of life; it takes the impressions of the surrounding physical world as hints only for a purely imaginative creation which seems to be truly drawn not from the life of earth, but from a more beautiful and harmonious life-scene that exists either within our own unplumbed depths or on other subtler vital or physical planes. This creation has an aim in it at things symbolic, otherwise revelatory, deeper down in the soul itself, and it tries to shadow them out through the magic of romance, since it cannot yet intimately seize and express them. Still even there the method of the utterance, if not altogether its aim, is the voice of Life lifting itself out into waves of word and colour and image and sheer beauty of sound. Imagination, thought, vision work with the emotional life-mind as their instrument or rather work in it as a medium, accepted as the very form of their being and the very force of their nature.

Great poetry is the result, but there are other powers of the human consciousness which have not yet been mastered, and to get at these is the next immediate step of English poetry. The way it follows is to bring forward the intellect as its chief instrument; the thought-mind is no longer carried along in the wave of life, but detaches itself from it to observe and reflect upon it. At first there is an intermediate manner, that of Milton's early work and of the Carolean poets, in which something of the Elizabethan impulse, something of its intense imaginative sight or its charm of emotion, prolongs itself for a while, but is fast fading away under the stress of an increasing intellectuality, a strong dryness of the light of the reason and a growing hardness of form and concentrated narrowness of the observing eye. This movement rises on one side into the ripened classical perfection of Milton, and falls away on the other through Waller into the reaction in Dryden and Pope.

Chapter XII

The Course of English Poetry – 4

IN THE work of the intellectual and classical age of English poetry, one is again struck by the same phenomenon that we meet throughout, an extraordinary force for achievement limited by a characteristic defect which turns in the actual execution to half-success or a splendid failure. A big streak of rawness somewhere, a wrong turn of the hand or an imperfect balance of the faculties wastes the power spent and makes the total result much inferior to what it should have been with so much nerve of energy to speed it or so broad a wing of genius to raise it into the highest empyrean heights. The mind of this age went for its sustaining influence and its suggestive models to Greece, Rome and France. That was inevitable; for these have been the three typically intellectual nations of Europe. It is these three literatures that have achieved, each following its own different way and peculiar spirit, the best in form and substance that that kind of inspiration can produce. The English mind, not natively possessed of any inborn intellectual depth and subtlety, not trained to a fine classical lucidity and sure aesthetic taste, had to turn to these sources, if the attempt was to be made at all. Steeping itself in these sources, it might hope to blend with the classical clarity and form its own masculine force and strenuousness, its strong imagination, its deeper colour and profounder intuitive suggestiveness and so arrive at something new and great to which the world could turn as another supreme element of its aesthetic culture. But the effect actually obtained did not answer to the possibility offered. To arrive at this perfection, this new turn of poetry ought to have kept, transmuted but not diminished, all that was best in the Elizabethan spirit and to have coloured, enriched and sweetened with its magic touch the classical form and the intellectual motive. There was instead a revolutionary departure, a breaking away, decisive rejection, and entirely new attempt with no roots in the past. In the end not only was the preceding structure of poetry abolished, but all its strong and brilliant Muses were expelled from their seats. A stucco imitation classical temple, very elegant, very cold and very empty, was erected in the vacant place, and the gods of satire and didactic commonplace set up in a shrine which was built more like a coffee-house than a sanctuary. A sterile brilliance, a set polished rhetoric was the poor final outcome.

The age set out with a promise of better things; for a time it seemed almost on the right path. Milton's early poetry is the fruit of a strong classical intellectuality still touched with a glow and beauty which has been left by a fast receding tide of romantic colour, spontaneous warmth of emotion and passion and vital intuition, gifts of a greater depth and force of life. Many softer influences wove themselves together into his high language and rhythm and were fused in his personality into something wonderfully strong, rich and beautiful. Suggestions and secrets were caught from Chaucer, Peele, Spenser, Shakespeare, and their hints gave a strange grace to a style whose austerity of power had been nourished by great classical influences. A touch of Virgilian beauty and majesty, a poise of Lucretian grandeur, a note of Aeschylean sublimity, the finest gifts of the ancients coloured or mellowed by richer romantic elements and subtly toned into each other, entered in and helped to prepare the early Miltonic manner. Magnified and exalted by the stress of an original personality, noble and austere, their result was the blending of a peculiar kind of greatness and beauty not elsewhere found in English verse. The substance is often slight, for it is as yet Milton's imagination rather than his soul or his whole mind that is using the poetic form; but the form itself is of a faultless beauty. Already, in spite of this slenderness of substance, we can see the coming change; the retreat of the first exuberant life-force and a strong turning of the intelligence upon life to view it sedately from its own intellectual centre of vision are now firmly in evidence. Some of the Elizabethans had tried their hand at this turn, but with no great poetical success; when they wrote their best, even though they tried to think closely and strongly, life took possession of the thought or itself quivered out into thought-expression. Here on the contrary, even in the two poems that are avowedly expressions of vital moods, it is the intellect and its imaginations that are making the mood a material for reflective brooding; there is no longer here the free and spontaneous life mood chanting its own sight and emotion to its own moved delight. In the minor Carolean poets we have some lingering of the colours of the Elizabethan sunset; something of the life-sense and quick emotional value are still there but too thinned and diluted to support any intensity or greatness of speech or manner, and finally they die away into trivialities of the intelligence playing insincerely with the movements of the emotional nature. For the reflective idea already predominates over sight and intimate emotion; the mind is looking at the thing felt and is no longer taken up and carried away in the wave of feeling. Some of this work is mystic in its subject or motive; but that too, except in some luminous lines or passages, suffers from the same desiccating influence. The opening of an age of intellect was not the time when a great mystical poetry could leap into existence.

This ebb is rapid and the change is soon complete. The colour has faded, the sweetness has vanished, song has fallen into a dead hush. For a whole long dry metallic century the lyrical faculty disappeared from the English tongue. The grandiose epic chant of Milton breaks what would be otherwise a complete silence of all higher or profounder poetic power; but it is a Milton who has turned away from the richer beauty and promise of his youth, lost the Virgilian accent, put away from him all Pagan delicacies of colour and grace and sweetness to express only in fit greatness of speech and form the conception of Heaven and Hell and man and the universe which his imagination had built out of his beliefs and reviewed in the vision of his soul. One is moved to speculate on what we might have had from him if, instead of writing after the long silence of his poetic genius during which he remained absorbed in barren political controversy until public and private calamities compelled him to go back to himself and his true power, he had written his master work in a ripened continuity and deepened strength of his earlier style and vision. Nothing quite so great perhaps, but surely something more opulent, many-toned and perfect. As things happened, it is by *Paradise Lost* that he occupies his high rank among the poets. That too imperfect grandiose epic is the one supreme fruit left by the attempt of English poetry to seize the classical manner, achieve beauty of poetic expression disciplined by a high intellectual severity and forge a complete balance and measured perfection of architectonic form and structure.

Paradise Lost is one of the few great epic poems in the world's literature; certain qualities in it reach heights which no other of them had climbed, even though as a whole it has defects and elements of failure which are absent in the other great world epics. Rhythm and speech have never attained to a mightier amplitude of epic expression and movement; seldom has there been an equal sublimity of flight. And to a great extent Milton has done in this respect what he had set out to do; he has given English poetic speech a language of intellectual thought which is of itself highly poetic without depending on any of the formal aids of poetic expression except those which are always essential and indispensable, a speech which succeeds by its own intrinsic force and is in its very grain poetry and in its very grain inspired intellectual thought-utterance. This is always the aim of the classical poet in his style and movement, and Milton has fulfilled it. At the same time he has raised this achievement to a highest possible pitch by that peculiar grandeur in the soul and manner of the utterance and that magnificence of sound-tones and amplitude of gait in the rhythm which belong to him alone of poets. These qualities are easily sustained throughout this long work, because with him they are less an art, great artist though he is, than the natural language of his spirit and the natural sound of its motion. His aim is high, his subject loftier than that of any one of his predecessors except Dante. There is nowhere any more magnificently successful opening than the conception and execution of his Satan and Hell; nowhere has there been a more powerful portraiture of the living spirit of egoistic revolt fallen to its natural element of darkness and pain and yet still sustained by the greatness of the divine principle from which it was born, even when it has lost oneness with it and faces it with dissonance and defiance. If the rest of the epic had been equal to its opening books, there would have been no greater poem, few as great in literature.

But here too the total performance failed and fell below the promise. *Paradise Lost* compels our admiration throughout by its greatness of style and rhythm, but as a whole, in spite of its mighty opening, its whole substance as distinct from its more magnificent or striking parts has failed to enter victoriously either into the mind or into the heart of the world; much of it has not lodged itself deeply in its imagination or enriched sovereignly the acquired stock of its more intimate poetical thought and experience. But the poem that does neither of these things, however noble its powers of language and rhythm, has missed its destiny. The reason is not to be found in the disparity between Milton's professed aim, which was to justify the ways of God to man, and the intellectual means available to him for fulfilling his purpose. The theology of the Puritan religion was a poor enough aid for so ambitious a purpose; but the Scriptural legend treated was poetically sufficient if only it had received throughout a deeper interpretation. Dante's theology had the advantage of the richness of import and spiritual experience of mediaeval Catholicism, but intellectually for so deep and vast a purpose it was not any more satisfying or durable. Still through his primitive symbols Dante has seen and has revealed things which make his work throughout poetically and creatively great and sufficient up to a certain high, if narrow level. It is here that Milton failed altogether. Nor is the failure mainly intellectual; it is of a more radical kind. It is true that he had not an original intellect; his mind was scholastic and traditional to a point that discouraged any free thinking power; but he had an original soul and personality and the vision of a poet. It is not the province of poetry to justify intellectually the ways of God to man; what it can do, is to reveal them: but just here is the point of failure. Milton has seen Satan and Death and Sin and Hell and Chaos; there is a scriptural greatness in his account of these things. But he has not seen God and heaven and man or the soul embodied in humanity, at once divine and fallen, enslaved to suffering and evil, striving for redemption, yearning for a forfeited bliss and perfection. On this side there is no inner greatness in the poetic interpretation of his materials. In other words, he has ended by stumbling over the rock of offence that always awaits poetry in which the intellectual element is too predominant, the fatal danger of a failure of vision: he has tried to poetise the stock ideas of his religion and not reached through sight to a living figure of Truth and its great expressive thoughts or revelatory symbols.

This failure extends itself to all the elements of his later work; it is definitive and he never, except in passages, recovered from it. His language and rhythm remain unfalteringly great to the end, but they are only a splendid robe and the body they clothe is a nobly carved but lifeless image. His architectural structure is always greatly and classically proportioned; but structure has two elements or two methods, — there is the schematic form that is thought out and there is the incarnating organic body which grows from an inward artistic and poetic vision. Milton's structures are thought out; they have not been seen, much less been lived out into their inevitable measures and free lines of inspired perfection. The difference will become evident if we make a simple comparison with Homer and Dante or even with the structural power, much less inspired and vital than theirs, but always finely aesthetic and artistic, of Virgil. Poetry may be intellectual, but only in the sense of having a strong intellectual strain in it and of putting forward as its aim the play of imaginative thought in the service of the poetical intelligence; but that must be supported very strongly by the quickening emotion or by the imaginative vision to which the idea opens. Milton's earlier work is suffused by his power of imaginative vision; the opening books of *Paradise Lost* are upborne by the greatness of the soul that finds expression in its harmonies of speech and sound and by the greatness of its sight. But in the later books and still more in the *Samson Agonistes* and the *Paradise Regained* this flame sinks; the thought becomes intellectually externalised, the sight is obvious and on the surface. Milton writing poetry could never fail in greatness and power, nor could he descend, as did Wordsworth and others, in style, turn and rhythm below his well-attained high poetical level; but the supreme vitalising fire has sunk. The method and idea retain sublimity, but the deeper spirit has departed.

Much greater, initial and essential was the defect in the poetry that followed this strong beginning. Here all is unredeemed intellectuality and even the very first elements of the genuine poetic inspiration are for the most part, one might almost say, entirely absent. Pope and Dryden and their school, except now and then and as if by accident, — Dryden especially has lines sometimes in which he suddenly rises above his method, — are busy only with one aim, with thinking in verse, thinking with a clear force, energy and point or with a certain rhetorical pomp and effectiveness, in a well-turned and well-polished metrical system. That seems to have been their sole idea of "numbers", of poetry, and it is an idea of unexampled poverty and falsity. No doubt this was a necessary phase, and perhaps, the English creative mind being what it then was, rich and strong but confused and lawless and always addicted in its poetry to quite the reverse of a clear intellectual method, it had to go to an opposite extreme. It had to sacrifice for a time many of its native powers in order to learn as best it could how to arrive at a firm and straightforward expression of thought in a just, well-harmonised, precise and lucid speech; an inborn gift in all the Latin tongues, in a half-Teutonic speech attacked by the Celtic richness of imagination this power had to be acquired even at a cost. But the sacrifice made was immense and entailed much effort of recovery in the later development of the language. The writers of this rationalising age got rid of the Elizabethan language with its opulent confusion, its often involved expression, its lapses into trailing and awkward syntax, its perplexed turn in which ideas and images jostle and stumble together, fall into each other's arms and strain and burden the expression in a way which is sometimes stimulating and exhilarating, but sometimes merely embarrassing and awkward; they got rid of the crudeness and extravagance but lost all the rich imagination and vision, the sweetness, lyrism, grace and colour, and replaced it with acute point and emphatic glitter. They got rid too of Milton's Latinisms and poetic inversions, substituting smaller rhetorical artifices of their own device, — dismissed his great and packed turns of speech, filling in the void left by the departure of this grandeur with what claimed to be a noble style, but was no more than a spurious rhetorical pomp. Still the work they had to do they did effectively, with talent, energy, even an undeniable genius.

If the substance of this poetry had been of a higher worth, it would have been less open to depreciation and need not have excited so vehement a reaction or fallen so low from its exaggerated pride of place. But the substance was too often on a par with the method and often below it. It took for its models the Augustan poets of Rome, but it substituted a certain perfection of polish and brilliance and often an element of superficiality and triviality for the strength and weight of the Latin manner. It followed more sincerely the contemporary French models; but it missed their best normal qualities, their culture, taste, tact of expression, and missed too the greater gifts of the classical French poetry. For, though that poetry may often fall short of the intensest poetic delight by its excessive cult of reason and taste, though it may run often in too thin a stream, though it may indulge the rhetorical turn too consistently to achieve utterly the highest heights of speech, yet it has ideas and a strong or delicate power, a true nobility of character in Corneille, a fine grace of poetic sentiment and a supreme delicacy and fine passion in Racine. But the verse of these pseudo-Augustan writers does not call in these greater gifts: it is occupied with expressing thought, but its thought has most often little or none of the greater values. This Muse is all brain of facile reasoning, but has no heart, no depth or sweetness of character, no high nobility of will, no fine appeal or charm of the joy and sorrow of life. In this flood of brilliant and forcefully phrased commonplace, even ideas which have depths behind them tend to become shallow and external by the way of their expression. The mind of these writers has no great seeing eye on life. Its satire is the part of their work which is still most alive; for here the Anglo-Saxon spirit gets back to itself, leaves the attempt at a Gallicised refinement, finds its own robust vigour and arrives at a brutal, but still a genuine and sometimes really poetic vigour and truth of expression. Energy and driving force, the English virtues, are, indeed, a general merit of the verse of Pope and Dryden and in this respect they excel their French exemplars. Their expression is striking in its precision; each couplet rings out with a remarkable force of finality and much coin of their minting has passed into common speech and citation. If there is not much gold of poetry here, there is at least much well-gilt copper coin of a good currency, useful for small purchases and petty traffic. But in the end one is tired of a monotonous brilliance of language, wearied out by the always repeated trick of decisiveness and point of rhythm. This verse has to be read by couplets and passages; for each poem is only a long string of them and, except in one or two instances, the true classical gift, the power of structure is absent. There is an almost complete void of the larger genuine thought-power which is necessary for structure. This intellectual age of English poetry did its work, but, as was inevitable with so pronounced a departure from the true or at least the higher line, that work gives the impression, if not of a resonant failure, at least of a fall or a considerable descent to lower levels. This Augustan age not only falls infinitely far below the Roman from which it drew so much of its inspiration, but gives an impression of great inferiority when compared with the work of the Victorians and one is tempted to say that a little of the work of Wordsworth and Keats and Shelley has immeasurably more poetic value than all this silver and tin and copper and the less precious metals of these workers whose superficiality of workmanship was a pride of this age.

But although this much has to be said, it would be by itself too one-sided and depreciative a view of the work of what is after all a period of the most brilliant and energetic writing and a verse which in its own way and its own technique is most carefully wrought and might even claim a title to a supreme craftsmanship: nor can we ignore the fact that in certain types such as satire, the mock heroic, the set didactic poem these writers achieved the highest height of a consummate and often impeccable excellence. Moreover some work was done especially by Dryden which even on the higher levels of poetry can challenge comparison with the work of the Elizabethans and the greater poets of later times. Even the satire of Pope and Dryden rises sometimes into a high poetic value beyond the level they normally reached and they have some great outbursts which have the power not only to please or delight by their force and incisiveness or their weight of thought or their powerful presentation of life, but to move to emotion, as great poetry moves us. It is not necessary here to say more in vindication of the excelling work of these writers; their fame abides and no belittling can successfully depreciate their work or discount its excellence. We are concerned here only with their place in the development, and mainly, the psychological development of English poetry. Its place there, its value is mostly in the direction of a sheer intellectuality concerned with the more superficial aspects of thought and life deliberately barren of emotion except the more superficial; lyricism has run dry, beauty has become artificial where at all it survives, passion is replaced by rhetoric, the heart is silent, life has civilised, urbanised, socialised and stylised itself too much to have any more a very living contact with Nature. As the literature of an age of this kind this poetry or this powerful verse has an enormous merit of its own and could hardly be better for its purpose. Much more perhaps than any other age of intellectual writing it has restricted itself to its task; in doing so it has restricted its claims to poetic greatness of the highest kind, but it has admirably done its work. That work is not faultless; it has too much of the baser lead of rhetoric, too frequent a pomposity and artifice, too little of Roman nobility and too little of English sincerity to be of the first value. But it stands out well enough on its own lower summit and surveys well enough from that inferior eminence a reach of country that has, if not any beauty, its own interest, order and value. There we may leave it and turn to the next striking and always revolutionary outburst of this great stream of English poetic literature.

Chapter XIII

The Course of English Poetry – 5

WHEN a power of poetry in a highly evolved language describes so low a downward curve as to reach this dry and brazen intellectualism, it is in danger of losing much of its vitality and flexibilities of expression and it may even, if it has lived too long, enter into a stage of decadence and perish by a dull slow decay of its creative force. That has happened more than once in literary history; but there can always be a saving revulsion, a return of life by a shock from without or a liberating impulse from within. And this saving revulsion, when it comes, is likely, if bold enough, to compensate for the past prone descent by an equally steep ascension to an undreamed-of novelty of revealing vision and illumined motive. This is the economy of Nature's lapses in the things of the mind no less than in the movements of life. For when the needed energy is within, these falls are an obscure condition for an unprecedented elevation, these emptyings a preface to large inrushes of plenty. In the recoil, in the rush or upwinging to the opposite extreme, some discovery is made which would otherwise have been long postponed or not have arrived at all; doors are burst open which might have been passed by unseen or would have resisted any less vehement or rapidly illumined effort to unlock them. On the other hand it is a frequent disadvantage of these revolutions or these forced rapidities of evolution, that they carry in them a premature light and an element of quick unripeness and a subsequent reaction and return to lower levels becomes inevitable. For the contemporary mind is not really ready for the complete implanting of this new seed or stock; and what is accomplished is itself rather an intuitive anticipation than a firmly based knowledge or an execution of the thing seen equal to its true significance. All these familiar phenomena are visible in the new swift and far-reaching upward curve, which carries

English poetry from the hard, glittering, well-turned and well-rhymed intellectual superficialities of a thin pseudo-classicism to its second luminous outbreak of sight and beauty and an inspired creative impulse.

Intellect, reason, a firm clarity of the understanding and arranging intelligence are not the highest powers of our nature. If this were our summit, many things which have now a great or a supreme importance for human culture, religion, art, poetry, would either be no more than a lure or a graceful play of the imagination and emotions, or, though admissible and useful for certain human ends, would still be deprived of the truth of their own highest indications. Poetry, even when it is dominated by intellectual tendency and motive, cannot really live and work by intellect alone. Its impetus is not created and its functioning and results are not shaped either wholly or predominantly by reason and judgment; an intuitive seeing and an inspired hearing are its natural means or its native sources. But intuition and inspiration are not only spiritual in their essence, they are the characteristic means of all spiritual vision and utterance; they are rays from a greater and intenser Light than the tempered clarity of our intellectual understanding. Ordinarily these powers are turned in human action and creation to a use which is not spiritual and not perhaps their last or most intrinsic purpose. Their common use in poetry is to give a deeper and more luminous force and a heightened beauty to the perceptions of outward life or to sublimate the more inward but still untransformed and comparatively surface movements of human emotion and passion or to empower thought to perceive and utter certain individual and universal truths which enlighten or which raise to a greater meaning the sensible appearances of the inner and outer life of Nature and man. But every power in the end finds itself drawn towards its own proper home and own highest capacity and field of expression and one day or another the spiritual faculties of intuitive hearing and seeing must climb at last to the expression of things spiritual and eternal and their power and working in temporal things. Poetry will yet find in that supreme interpretation its own richest account, its largest and most satisfied possible action, its purest zenith of native force. An ideal and spiritual poetry revealing the spirit in itself and in things, showing to us the unseen present in the seen, unveiling ranges of existence which the physical mind ignores, pointing man himself to undreamed capacities of godhead, future heights of being, truth, beauty, power, joy which are beyond the highest of his common or his now realised values of existence, — this will surely appear as the last potentiality of this high and beautiful creative power. When the eye of the poet has seen the life of man and the world externally or penetrated into its more vital inwardness or has risen to the clarities and widenesses of a thought which observantly perceives or intimately understands it, and when his word has caught some revealing speech and rhythm of what he has seen, much has been done, but not all that is possible to poetic vision and utterance. This other and greater realm still remains open for a last transcendence.

For the first time in occidental literature, we get in this fourth turn of the evolution of English poetry some faint initial falling of this higher light upon the poetic intelligence. Some ancient poets may have received something of it through myth and symbol; a religious mystic here and there may have attempted to give his experience rhythmic and imaginative form. But here is the first poetic attempt of the intellectual faculty striving at a high height of its own development to look beyond its own level directly into the unseen and the unknown and to unveil some ideal truth of its own highest universal conceptions hidden behind the veil of the ordinary mind and supporting them in their return to their eternal source. This high departure was not an inevitable outcome of the age that preceded Wordsworth, Blake and Shelley. The intellectual endeavour had been in Milton inadequate in range, subtlety and depth, in those who followed paltry, narrow and elegantly null, in both supported by an insufficient knowledge. A new and larger endeavour in the same field might rather have been expected which would have set before it the aim of a richer, deeper, wider, more curious intellectual humanism, poetic, artistic, many-sided, sounding by the poetic reason the ascertainable truth of God and man and Nature. That was the line followed by the main stream of European thought and culture, and to that too English poetry had eventually to turn in the intellectual fullness of the nineteenth century. It was already the indistinct and half-conscious drift of the slow transitional movement which intervenes between Pope and Wordsworth; but as yet this movement was obscure, faltering and poor in its achievement. When a greater force came streaming in, the influences that were abroad were those which elsewhere found expression in the revolutionary idealism of the French Revolution and in German transcendentalism and romanticism. Intellectual in their idea and substance, they were in the mind of five or six English poets, each of them a remarkable individuality, carried beyond themselves by the sudden emergence of some half-mystical Celtic turn of the national mind into supra-intellectual sources of inspiration. Insufficiently supported by any adequate spiritual knowledge, unable to find except rarely the right and native word of their own meaning, these greater tendencies faded away or were lost by the premature end of the poets who might, had they lived, have given them a supreme utterance. But still theirs was the dawn of whose light we shall find the noon in the age now opening before us if it fulfils all its intimations. Blake, Shelley, Wordsworth were first explorers of a new world of poetry other than that of the ancients or of the intermediate poets, which may be the familiar realm of the aesthetic faculty in the future, must be in fact if we are not continually to describe the circle of efflorescence, culmination and decay within the old hardly changing circle.

Certain motives which led up to this new poetry are already visible in the work of the middle eighteenth century. There is, first, a visible attempt to break quite away from the prison of the formal metrical mould, rhetorical style, limited subject-matter, absence of imagination and vision imposed by the high pontiffs of the pseudo-classical cult. Poets like Gray, Collins, Thomson, Chatterton, Cowper seek liberation by a return to Miltonic blank verse and manner, to the Spenserian form, — an influence which prolonged itself in Byron, Keats and Shelley, — to lyrical movements, but more prominently the classical ode form, or to freer and richer moulds of verse. Some pale effort is made to recover something of the Shakespearian wealth of language or of the softer, more pregnant colour of the pre-Restoration diction and to modify it to suit the intellectualised treatment of thought and life which was now an indispensable element; for the old rich vital utterance was no longer possible, an intellectualised speech had become a fixed and a well-acquired need of a more developed mentality. Romanticism of the modern type now makes its first appearance in the choice of the subjects of poetic interest and here and there in the treatment, though not yet quite in the grain and the spirit. Especially, there is the beginning of a direct gaze of the poetic intelligence and imagination upon life and Nature and of another and a new power in English speech, the poetry of sentiment as distinguished from the inspired voice of sheer feeling or passion. But all these newer motives are only incipient and unable to get free expression because there is still a heavy weight of the past intellectual tradition. Rhetoric yet loads the style or, when it is avoided, still the purer intensity of poetic emotion is not altogether found. Verse form tends to be still rather hard and external or else ineffective in its movement; the native lyric note has not yet returned, but only the rhetorical stateliness of the ode, not lyricised as in Keats and Shelley, or else lyrical forms managed with only an outward technique but without any cry in them. Romanticism is still rather of the intellect than in the temperament, sentiment runs thinly and feebly and is weighted with heavy intellectual turns. Nature and life and things are seen accurately as objects and forms, but not with any vision, emotion or penetration into the spirit behind them. Many of the currents which go to make up the great stream of modern poetry are beginning to run in thin tricklings, but still in a hard and narrow bed. There is no sign of the swift uplifting that was to come as if upon the sudden wings of a splendid moment.

In Burns these new-born imprisoned spirits break out from their bounds and get into a free air of natural, direct and living reality, find a straightforward speech and a varied running or bounding movement of freedom. This is the importance of this solitary voice from the north in the evolution, apart from the intrinsic merits of his poetry. His work has its limitations; the language is often too intellectualised to give the lyrical emotion, though it comes from the frank, unartificial and sturdy intellect of a son of the soil; the view on life is close, almost too close to give the deeper poetic or artistic effect, but it deals much with outsides and surfaces and the commonnesses and realisms of action, sometimes only does it suggest to us the subtler something which gives lyrical poetry not only its form and lilt and its power to stir, — all these he has, — but its more moving inmost appeal. Nevertheless, Burns has in him the things which are most native to the poetry of our modern times; he brings in the new naturalness, the nearness of the fuller poetic mind, intellectualised, informed with the power of clear reflective thought awake to life and nature, the closely observing eye, the stirring force of great general ideas, the spirit of revolt and self-assertion, the power of personality and the free play of individuality, the poignant sentiment, sometimes even a touch of psychological subtlety. These things are in him fresh, strong, initial as in a forerunner impelled by the first breath of the coming air, but not in that finished possession of the new motives which is to be the greatness of the future master-singers. That we begin to get first in Wordsworth. His was the privilege of the earliest initiation.

This new poetry has six great voices who fall naturally in spite of their pronounced differences into pairs, Wordsworth and Byron, Blake and Coleridge, Shelley and Keats. Byron sets out with a strangely transformed echo of the past intellectualism, is carried beyond it by the elemental force of his personality, has even one foot across the borders of the spiritual, but never quite enters into that kingdom. Wordsworth breaks away with deliberate purpose from the past, forces his way into this new realm, but finally sinks under the weight of the narrower intellectual tendencies which he carries with him into its amplitudes. Blake and Coleridge open magical gates, pass by flowering sidelanes with hedges laden with supernatural blooms into a middle world whence their voices come to us ringing with an unearthly melody. In Shelley the idealism and spiritual impulse rise to almost giddy heights in a luminous ether and are lost there, unintelligible to contemporary humanity, only now beginning to return to us with their message. Keats, the youngest and in many directions the most gifted of these initiators, enters the secret temple of ideal Beauty, but has not time to find his way into the deepest mystic sanctuary. In him the spiritual seeking stops abruptly short and prepares to fall away down a rich sensuous incline to a subsequent poetry which turns from it to seek poetic Truth or pleasure through the senses and an artistic or curiously observing or finely psychologising intellectualism. This dawn has no noon, hardly even a morning.

Chapter XIV

The Movement of Modern Literature – 1

MODERN poetry carrying in it the fullness of imaginative self-expression of the entirely modernised mind begins with the writers of the later eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. Here are the free, impetuous but often narrow sources of these wider flowings. Here we see the initial tendencies which have undergone a rapid growth of meaning and changes of form in the subsequent decades, until now all their sense and seeking have reached in the early twentieth a quite unprecedented subtle intensity, refinement and variety of motives and even a tense straining on many lines to find in everything some last occult truth and hitherto unimagined utterance, to go beyond all that poetry has ever done. This is in its very nature an effort which must end either in a lingering, a hectic extravagant or dull exhausted decadence or in a luminous and satisfied self-exceeding. At the very beginning and still more and increasingly afterwards this modern movement, in literature as in thought and science, takes the form of an ever widening and deepening intellectual and imaginative curiosity, an insatiable passion for knowledge, an eager lust of finding, a seeking eye of intelligence awakened to all the multiform possibilities of an endless new truth and discovery. The Renascence was an awakening of the life spirit to wonder and curiosity and reflection and the stirred discovery of all that is brilliant and curious in the things of the life and the mind on their surface; but the fullness of the modern age has been a much larger comprehensive awakening of the informed and clarified intellect to a wider curiosity, a much more extensive adventure of discovery and an insistent need to penetrate deeper and know and possess the truth of Nature and man and the universe, — both their outer truth and process and whatever deeper mystery may lie hidden behind their first appearances and suggestions. And now it is culminating in something that promises to go beyond it, to bring about a new futurist rather than modernist age in which the leader of the march shall be intuition rather than the reasoning and critical intelligence. The long intellectual search for truth that went probing always deeper into the physical, the vital and the subjective, into the action of body and life, into the yet ill-grasped motions of mind and emotion and sensation and thought, is now beginning to reach beyond these things or rather through their subtlest and strongest intensities of sight and feeling towards the truths of the Spirit. The soul of the Renascence was a lover of life and an amateur of knowledge; but the modern spirit has been drawn rather by the cult of a clear, broad and minute intellectual and practical Truth: the dominating necessity of its being is a straining after knowledge and a power of life founded on the power of knowledge. Poetry in the modern age has followed intellectually and imaginatively the curve of this great impulse.

Continental literature displays the mass of this movement with a much more central completeness and in a stronger and more consistent body and outline than English poetry. In the Teutonic countries the intellectual and romantic literature of the Germans at the beginning with its background of transcendental philosophy, at the end the work of the Scandinavian and Belgian writers with their only apparently opposite sides of an intellectual or a sensuous realism and a sentimental or a psychological mysticism, the two strands sometimes separate, sometimes mingled, among the Latins the like commencement in the work of Rousseau, Chateaubriand, Chénier, Hugo, the intermediate artistic development of most of the main influences by the Parnassians, the like later turn towards the poetry of Mallarmé, Verlaine, D'Annunzio, stigmatised by some as the beginning of a decadence, give us a distinct view of the curve. In English poetry the threads are more confused, the work has on the whole a less clear and definite inspiration and there is in spite of the greatness of individual poets an inferior total effectivity; but at the beginning and the end it has one higher note, a lifting of sight beyond the stress of the intellect and the senses, which is reached either not at all or much less directly realised with a less pure vision in the more artistically sound and sufficient poetry of the Continent. Still the principal identical elements are distinguishable, sometimes very strongly pronounced and helped to some fullest expression by the great individual energy of imagination and force of character which are the most distinct powers of the English poetic mind. Often they thus stand out all the more remarkable by the magnificent narrowness of their self-concentrated isolation.

Earliest among these many new forces to emerge with distinctness is an awakening of the eye to a changed vision of Nature, of the imagination to a more perfect and intimate visualisation, of the soul to a closer spiritual communion. An imaginative, scrutinising, artistic or sympathetic dwelling on the details of Nature, her sights, sounds, objects, sensible impressions is a persistent characteristic of modern art and poetry; it is the poetic side of the same tendency which upon the intellectual has led to the immeasurable development of the observing and analysing eye of Science. The poetry of older times directed an occasional objective eye on Nature, turning a side glance from life or thought to get some colouring or decorative effect or a natural border or background for life or something that illustrated, ministered to or enriched the human thought or mood of the moment, at most for a casual indulgence of the imagination and senses in natural beauty. But the intimate subjective treatment of Nature, the penetrated human response to her is mostly absent or comes only in rare and brief touches. On the larger scale her subjective life is realised not with an immediate communion, but through myth and the image of divine personalities that govern her powers. In all these directions modern poetry represents a great change of our mentality and a swift and vast extension of our imaginative experience. Nature now lives for the poet as an independent presence, a greater or equal power dwelling side by side with him or embracing and dominating his existence. Even the objective vision and interpretation of her has developed, where it continues at all the older poetic method, a much more minute and delicate eye and touch in place of the large, strong and simply beautiful or telling effects which satisfied an earlier imagination. But where it goes beyond that fine outwardness, it has brought us a whole world of new vision; working sometimes by a vividly suggestive presentation, sometimes by a separation of effects and an imaginative reconstruction which reveals aspects the first outward view had hidden in, sometimes by a penetrating impressionism which in its finest subtleties seems to be coming back by a detour to a sensuously mystical treatment, it goes within through the outward and now not so much presents as recreates physical Nature for us through the imaginative vision.[1] By that new creation it penetrates through the form nearer to the inner truth of her being.

But the direct subjective approach to Nature is the most distinctly striking characteristic turn of the modern mentality. The approach proceeds from two sides which constantly meet each other and create between them a nexus of experience between man and Nature which is the modern way of responding to the universal Spirit. On one side there is the subjective sense of Nature herself as a great life, a being, a Presence, with impressions, moods, emotions of her own expressed in her many symbols of life and stressing her objective manifestations. In the poets in whom this turn first disengages itself, that is a living conscious view of her to which they are constantly striving to give expression whether in a large sense of her presence or in a rendering of its particular impressions. On the other side there is a sensitive human response, moved in emotion or thrilling in sensation or stirred by sheer beauty or responsive in mood, a response of satisfaction and possession or of dissatisfied yearning and seeking, in the whole an attempt to relate or harmonise the soul and mind and sensational and vital being of the human individual with the soul and mind and life and body of the visible and sensible universe. Ordinarily it is through the imagination and the intellect and the soul of sensibility that this approach is made; but there is also a certain endeavour to get through these instruments to a closer spiritual relation and, if not yet to embrace Nature by the Spirit in man, to harmonise and unite the spiritual soul of man with the spiritual Presence in Nature.

---

[1] I am speaking here of Western literature. Oriental art and poetry at any rate in the far East had already in a different way anticipated this more intimate and imaginative seeing.

Another widening of experience which modern poetry renders much more universally and with a constant power and insistence is a greater awakening of man to himself, to man in this warp and weft of Space and Time and in the stress of the universe, to all that is meant by his present, his past and his future. Here too we have a parallel imaginative movement in poetry to the intellectual movement of thought and science with its large and its minute enquiry into the origins and antiquity and history of the race, into the sources of its present development, into all its physical, psychological, sociological being and the many ideal speculations and practical aspirations of its future which have arisen from this new knowledge of the human being and his possibilities. Formerly, the human mind in its generality did not go very far in these directions. Its philosophy was speculative and metaphysical, but with little actuality except for the intellectual and spiritual life of the individual, its science explorative of superficial phenomenon rather than opulent both in detail and fruitful generalisation; its view of the past was mythological, traditional and national, not universal and embracing; its view of the present was limited in objective scope and, with certain exceptions, of no very great subjective profundity; an outlook on the future was remarkable by its absence. The constant self-expansion of the modern mind has broken down many limiting barriers; a vast objective knowledge, an increasingly subtle subjectivity, a vivid living in the past, present and future, a universal view of man as of Nature are its strong innovations. This change has found inevitably its vivid reflections in the wider many-sided interests, the delicate refinements, fine searchings, large and varied outlook and profound inlook of modern poetry.

The first widening breadth of this universal interest in man, not solely the man of today and our own country and type or of the past tradition of our own culture, but man in himself in all his ever-changing history and variety, came in the form of an eager poetic and romantic valuing of all that had been ignored and put aside as uncouth and barbarous by the older classical or otherwise limited type of mentality. It sought out rather all that was unfamiliar and attractive by its unlikeness to the present; its imagination was drawn towards the primitive, the savage, to mediaeval man and his vivid life and brilliant setting, to the Orient very artificially seen through a heavily coloured glamour, to the ruins of the past, to the life of the peasant or the solitary, the outlaw, to man near to Nature undisguised by conventions and uncorrupted by an artificial culture or man in revolt against conventions: there is a willed preference for these strange and interesting aspects of humanity, as in Nature for her wild and grand, savage and lonely scenes or her rich and tropical haunts or her retired spots of self-communion. On one side a sentimental or a philosophic naturalism, on the other a flamboyant or many-hued romanticism, superficial mediaevalism, romanticised Hellenism, an interest in the fantastic and the supernatural, tendencies of an intellectual or an ideal transcendentalism, are the salient constituting characters. They make up that brilliant and confusedly complex, but often crude and unfinished literature, stretching from Rousseau and Chateaubriand to Hugo and taking on its way Goethe, Schiller and Heine, Wordsworth, Byron, Keats and Shelley, which forms a hasty transition from the Renascence and its after-fruits to the modernism of today which is already becoming the modernism of yesterday. Much of it we can now see to have been ill-grasped, superficial and tentative; much, as in Chateaubriand and in Byron, was artificial, a pose and affectation; much, as in the French Romanticists, merely bizarre, overstrained and overcoloured; a later criticism condemned in it a tendency to inartistic excitement, looseness of form, an unintellectual shallowness or emptiness, an ill-balanced imagination. It laid itself open certainly in some of its more exaggerated turns to the reproach, — not justly to be alleged against the true romantic element in poetry, — that the stumbling-block of romanticism is falsity. Nevertheless behind this often defective frontage was the activity of a considerable force of new truth and power, much exceedingly great work was done, the view of the imagination was immensely widened and an extraordinary number of new motives brought in which the later nineteenth century developed with a greater care and finish and conscientious accuracy, but with crudities of its own and perhaps with a less fine gust of self-confident genius and large inspiration.

The recoil from these primary tendencies took at first the aspect of a stress upon artistic execution, on form, on balance and design, on meticulous beauty of language and a minute care and finished invention in rhythm. An unimpassioned or only artistically impassioned portraiture and sculpture of scene and object and idea and feeling, man and Nature was the idea that governed this artistic and intellectual effort. A wide, calm and impartial interest in all subjects for the sake of art and a poetically intellectual satisfaction, — this poise had already been anticipated by Goethe, — is the atmosphere which it attempts to create around it. There is here a certain imaginative reflection of the contemporary scientific, historic and critical interest in man, in his past and present, his creations and surroundings, a cognate effort to be unimpassioned, impersonal, scrupulous, sceptically interested and reflective. In poetry, however, it loses the cold accuracy of the critical intellect and assumes the artistic colour, emphasis, warmth of the constructive imagination: but even here there is the same tendency to a critical observation of man and things and world tendencies and a reflective judgment sometimes overweighting the natural tendency of poetry to the living and creative presentation which is its native power. There is amidst a wide atmosphere of sceptical or positive thinking an attempt to enter into the psychology of barbaric and civilised, antique, mediaeval, and modern, occidental and oriental humanity, to reproduce in artistic form the spirit of the inner truth and outer form of its religions, philosophic notions, societies, arts, monuments, constructions, to reflect its past inner and outer history and present frames and mentalities. This movement too was brief in duration and soon passed away into other forms which arose out of it, though they seemed a revolt against its principles. This apparent paradox of a development draped in the colours of revolt is a constant psychological feature of all human evolution.

In this turn we are struck by its most glaring feature, the vehement waving of the revolutionary red flag of realism. Realism is in its essence an attempt to see man and his world as they really are without veils and pretences; it is imagination turning upon itself and trying to get rid of its native tendency to give a personal turn or an enhanced colouring to the object, art trying to figure as a selective process of scientific observation and synthetised analysis. Necessarily, whenever it is art at all, it betrays itself in the process. Its natural movement is away from the vistas of the past to a preoccupation with the immediate present, although it began with a double effort, to represent the past with a certain vividness of hard and often brutal truth, not in the colours in which the ideally constructive imagination sees it through the haze of distance, and to represent the present too with the same harsh and violent actuality. But success in this kind of representation of the past is impossible; it carries in it always a sense of artificiality and willed construction. Realism tends naturally to take the present as its field; for that alone can be brought under an accurate because an immediate observation. Scientific in its inspiration, it subjects man's life and psychology to the scalpel and the microscope, exaggerates all that strikes the first outward view of him, his littlenesses, imperfections, uglinesses, morbidities, and comes easily to regard these things as the whole or the greater part of him and to treat life as if it were a psychological and physiological disease, a fungoid growth upon material Nature: it ends, indeed almost begins, by an exaggeration and overstressing which betrays its true character, the posthumous child of romanticism perverted by a pseudo-scientific preoccupation. Romanticism also laid a constant stress on the grotesque, diseased, abnormal, but for the sake of artistic effect, to add another tone to its other glaring colours. Realism professes to render the same facts in the proportions of truth and science, but being art and not science, it inevitably seeks for pronounced effects by an evocative stress which falsifies the dispositions and shades of natural truth in order to arrive at a conspicuous vividness. In the same movement it falsifies the true measure of the ideal, which is a part of the totality of human life and nature, by bringing the idealism in man down to the level of his normal daily littlenesses; in attempting to show it as one strand in his average humanity, it reduces it to a pretension and figment; it ignores the justification of the idealistic element in art which is that the truth of the ideal consists essentially in its aspiration beyond the limitations of immediate actuality, in what our strain towards self-exceeding figures and not in the moment's failure to accomplish. Realism on both those sides, in what it ignores and what it attempts, lies open to the reproach aimed at romanticism; its stumbling-block is a falsity which pursues both its idea and its method. Nevertheless this movement too behind its crudities has brought in new elements and motives. It has done very considerable work in fiction and prose drama; in poetry, even, it has brought in some new strains and greater powers, but here it cannot dominate without risking to bring about the death of the very spirit of poetry whose breath of life is the exceeding of outward reality. Realism is still with us, but has already evolved out of itself another creative power whose advent announces its own passing.

Chapter XV

The Movement of Modern Literature – 2

OUT OF the period of dominant objective realism what emerges with the strongest force is a movement to quite an opposite principle of creation, a literature of pronounced and conscious subjectivity. There is throughout the nineteenth century an apparent contradiction between its professed literary aim and theory and the fundamental unavoidable character of much of its inspiration. In aim throughout, — though there are notable exceptions, — it professes a strong objectivity. The temper of the age has been an earnest critical and scientific curiosity, a desire to see, know and understand the world as it is: that requires a strong and clear eye turned on the object and it would seem to require also as far as possible an elimination of one's own personality; a strongly personal view of things would appear to be the very contrary of an accurate observation, for the first constructs and colours the object from within, the second would allow it to impress its own colour and shape on the mind, — we have to suppose, of course, that, as the modern intellect has generally held, objects exist in themselves and not in our own consciousness of them. Goethe definitely framed this theory of literary creation when he laid it down that the ideal of art and poetry was to be beautifully objective. With the exception of some of the first initiators and until yesterday, modern creation has followed more or less this line: it has tried to give either a striking, moving and exciting or an aesthetically sound or a realistically powerful presentation, — all three methods often intermingling or coalescing, — rather than a subjective interpretation; thought, feeling, aesthetic treatment of the object are supposed to intervene upon and arise from a clear or strong objective observation.

But on the other hand an equally strong characteristic of the modern mind is its growing subjectivity, an intense consciousness of the I, the soul or the self, not in any mystic withdrawal within or inward meditation, or not in that preeminently, but in relation to the whole of life and Nature. This characteristic distinguishes modern subjectivism from the natural subjectivity of former times, which either tended towards an intense solitary inwardness or was superficial and confined to a few common though often strongly emphasised notes. Ancient or mediaeval individuality might return more self-assertive or violent responses to life, but the modern kind is more subtly and pervasively self-conscious and the stronger in thought and feeling to throw its own image on things, because it is more precluded from throwing itself out freely in action and living. This turn was in fact an inevitable result of an increasing force of intellectualism; for great intensity of thought, when it does not isolate itself from emotion, reactive sensation and aesthetic response, as in science and in certain kinds of philosophy, must be attended by a quickening and intensity of these other parts of our mentality. In science and critical thought, where this isolation is possible, the objective turn prevailed, — though much that we call critical thought is after all a personal construction, a use of the reason and the observation of things for a view of what is around us which, far from being really disinterested and impersonal, is a creation of our own temperament and a satisfaction of our intellectualised individuality. But in artistic creation where the isolation is not possible, we find quite an opposite phenomenon, the subjective personality of the poet asserting itself to a far greater extent than in former ages of humanity.

Goethe himself, in spite of his theory, could not escape from this tendency; his work, as he himself recognised, is always an act of reflection of the subjective changes of his personality, a history of the development of his own soul in the guise of objective creation. From the work of a poet like Leconte de Lisle who attempted with the most deliberate conscientiousness a perfect fidelity to the ideal of an impersonal artistic objectiveness, there disengages itself in the mass an almost poignant impression of the strong subjective personality shaping everything into a mask-reflection of its own characteristic moods; the attempt to live in the thoughts and feelings of other men, other civilisations betrays itself as only the multiple imaginative and sympathetic extension of the poet's own psychology. This peculiarity of the age is noticeable even in many creators whose aim is deliberately realistic or their method founded upon a minute psychological observation, Ibsen or Tolstoy and the Russian novelists. The self of the creator very visibly overshadows the work, is seen everywhere like the conscious self of Vedanta both containing and inhabiting all his creations. Shakespeare succeeds, as far as a poet can, in veiling himself behind his creatures; he gives us at least the illusion of mirroring the world around him, a world universally represented rather than personally and individually thought and imaged, and at any rate the Life-spirit sees and creates in him through a faithful reflecting instrument, quite sufficiently universal and impersonal for its dramatic purpose even in his personality. Browning, the English poet who best represented the spirit of the age in its temperament of curious observation and its aim at a certain force of large and yet minute reality, who was eminently a poet of life observed and understood and of thought playing around the observation, as Shakespeare was the poet of life seen through an identity of feeling with it and of thought arising up out of the surge of life, — Browning, though he seems to have considered this self-concealment especially admirable and the essence of the Shakespearian method of creation, fails himself to achieve it in anything like the same measure. The self-conscious thinking of the modern mind which brings into prominent relief the rest of the mental personality and stamps the whole work with it, gets into his way; everywhere we feel the presence of the creator bringing forward his living puppets, analysing, commenting, thinking about them or else about life through a variation of many voices so that they become as much his masks as his creations.

Thus both the subjective personality of the man and the artistic personality of the creator tend to count for much more in modern work than at any previous time; the poet is a much greater part of his work. It is doubtful whether we have not altogether lost the old faculty of impersonal self-effacement in the creation which was so common in the ancient and mediaeval ages when many men working in one spirit could build great universal works of combined architecture, painting and sculpture or in literature the epic or romantic cycles or lyric cycles like the Vedic Mandalas or the mass of Vaishnava poetry. Even when there are definite schools marked by a common method, we do not find, as in the old French romance writers or the Elizabethan dramatists or the poets of the eighteenth century, a spiritual resemblance which overshadows individual differences; in the moderns the technical method may have in all similar motives, but difference of subjective treatment so stresses its values as to prevent all spiritual unity. There is here a gain which more than compensates any loss; but we have to note the cause, a growth of subjectivism, an enhanced force, enrichment and insistence of the inner personality.

This trend, though for some time held back from its full development by the aim at the objective method, betrays itself in that love of close and minute psychological observation which pervades the work of the time. There too the modern mind has left far behind all the preceding ages. Although most prominent in fiction and drama, the characteristic has laid some hold too on poetry. Compared with its work all previous creation seems psychologically poor both in richness of material and in subtlety and the depth of its vision; half the work of Shakespeare in spite of its larger and greater treatment hardly contains as much on this side as a single volume of Browning. Realism has carried this new trend to the farthest limit possible to a professedly objective method, stressing minute distinctions, forcing the emphasis of extreme notes, but in so doing it has opened to the creative mind of the age a door of escape from realism. For, in the first place, while in the representation of outward objects, of action, of character and temperament thrown out in self-expressive movement we may with success affect the method of a purely objective observation, from the moment we begin to psychologise deeply, we are at once preparing to go back into ourselves. For it is only through our own psychology, through its power of response to and of identification with the mind and soul in others that we can know their inner psychology; for the most part our psychological account of others is only an account of the psychological impressions of them they produce in our own mentality. This we see even in the realistic writers in the strongly personal and limited way in which they render the psychology of their creatures in one or two always recurring main notes upon which they ring minute variations. In the end the creative mind could not fail to become conscious of this self within which was really doing the whole work and to turn to it for a theme or for the mould of its psychological creations, to a conscious intimate subjectivism. Again, the emphasising of extreme notes brings us to a point where to go farther we have to go within and to make ourselves a sort of laboratory of new psychological experiment and discovery.

This is the turn we get in the poetry of Verlaine which is throughout a straining after an intimate and subtle experience of the senses, vital sensations, emotions pushed beyond ordinary limits into a certain vivid and revealing abnormality, in the earlier work of Maeterlinck which is not so much an action of personalities as the drama of a childlike desire-soul uttering half inarticulate cries of love and longing, terror and distress and emotion, in the work of Mallarmé where there is a constant seeking for subjective symbols which will reveal to our own soul the soul of the things that we see. The rediscovery of the soul is the last stage of the round described by this age of the intellect and reason. It is at first mainly the perceptions of a desire-soul, a soul of sense and sensation and emotion, and an arriving through them at a sort of psychological mysticism, a psychism which is not yet true mysticism, much less spirituality, but is still a movement of the lower self in that direction. The movement could not stop here: the emergence of the higher perceptions of a larger and purer psychical and intuitive entity in direct contact with the Spirit could not but come, and this greater impulse is represented by the work of the Irish poets. It is the sign of the end, now in sight, of a purely intellectual modernism and the coming of a new age of creation, intellectualism fulfilled ceasing by a self-exceeding in a greater motive of intuitive art and poetry.

Thus this wide movement of interests, so many-sided and universal, in man past and present after embracing all that attracts the observing eye in his life and history and apparent nature comes back to a profounder interest in the movements of his deeper self which reveals itself to an extended psychological experience and an intuitive sense. But an insistent interest in future man has been the most novel, the most fruitfully distinguishing characteristic of the modern mind. Once limited to the far-off dream of religions or the distant speculation of isolated thinkers, the attempt to cast a seeing eye as well as a shaping will on the future is now an essential side of the human outlook. Formerly the human mentality of the present lived in the great shadow thrown on it by its past, nowadays on the contrary it turns more to some image of coming possibility. The colour of this futurism has changed with the changes of modern intellectualism. At first it came in on the wave of a partly naturalistic, partly transcendentalist idealism, a reverie of the perfected individual and the perfected society, and was commonly associated with the passion for civic or the idea of a spiritual and personal liberty. A more sober colouring intervened, the intellectual constructions of positivism, liberalism, utilitarian thought which were soon in their turn followed by broader democratic and socialistic utopias. Touched sometimes with an aesthetic and idealistic colouring, they have grown for a time more scientific, economic, practical with the advance of realism and rationalism. But the new force of subjectivism will have probably the effect of rehabilitating the religious and spiritually idealistic element in our vision of the future of the race. Poetry, which has been less able to follow this stream of thought than prose literature, will find its account in the change; for it will be the natural interpreter of this more inner and intuitive vision. The futurist outlook has never been more pronounced than at the present day; on all sides, in thought, in life, in the motives and forms of literary and artistic creation, we are swinging violently away from the past into an unprecedented adventure of new teeming possibilities. Never has the past counted so little for its own sake, — its tradition is still effectual only when it can be made a power or an inspiration for the future; never has the present looked so persistently and creatively forward.

But Nature and man in his active, intellectual and emotional life and physical environment are not the whole subject of man's thought or of his creative presentment of his mind's seeings and imaginings. He has been even more passionately occupied by the idea of things beyond, other worlds and an after life, symbols and powers of that which exceeds him or of his own self-exceeding, the cult of gods of nature and supernature, the belief in or the seeking after God. On this side of the human mind modern literature, though not a blank, has been during the greater part of the nineteenth century inferior in its matter and in its power, because it has been an age of scepticism and of denial or else of a doubtful and tormented, a merely intellectual or a conventional clinging to the residuum of past beliefs. They have not formed a real and vital part of its inner life and what is not real or vital to thought, imagination and feeling cannot be powerfully creative. At first this ebb of positive faith was to some extent compensated by the ideal element of a philosophic transcendentalism, vague and indefinite but with its own large light and force of inspiration. As scepticism became more positive, this light fades, the most poetic notes of the age which deal with the foundations of life are either the poignant expression of a regretful scepticism, or a defiant atheism exulting in the revolt of the great denial, the hymn of the Void, an eternal Nihil which has taken the place of God, or else the large idea of Nature as a universal entity, the Mother of our being. To Science this Nature is only an inconscient Force; the poetic mind with its natural turn for finding a reality even behind what are to the intellect abstract conceptions, has passed through this conception to a new living sense of the universal, the infinite. It has even evolved from it now and then a vivid pantheism. The difficult self-defence or reaction of the old faiths against the prevalent scepticism and intellectualism has given too some minor notes; but these are the greater voices of negation and affirmation in this sphere of poetic thought and creation which have added some novel and powerful strains to poetry. With the return to subjective intuition and a fresh adventuring of knowledge and imagination into the beyond modern poetry, freed from the sceptical attitude, is beginning in this field too to turn the balance in its favour as against the old classical and mediaeval literature. The vision of the worlds beyond which it is gaining is nearer, less grossly human, more supernatural to physical Nature; the symbols it is beginning to create and its reinterpretation of the old symbols are more adequate and more revealing; rid of the old insufficient forms and limiting creeds, it is admitting a near, direct and fearless seeing and experience of God in Nature, God in man, God in the universal and the eternal. From faith it has advanced through the valley of doubt to the heights of a more luminous knowledge. These are the main movements of the modern mind constituting the turns of a psychological evolution of the most rapid and remarkable kind which have dominated the literature of Europe, now more than ever before growing into a single though varied whole. We have to see how they have worked themselves out in English poetry during this period. We shall then be able to form a clearer idea of the dominant possibilities of the future: for though it has been a side stream and not the central current, yet in the end the highest and most significant, though not yet the strongest forces of the future poetry have converged here and given their first clearest and most distinct sounds. The continent is still overshadowed by the crepuscule of the intellectual age sick unto death but unable to die. Here there are some clear morning voices, English precursors, the revived light of Celtic spirituality, not least significant the one or two accents of a more self-assured message which have broken across the mental barrier between East and West from resurgent India.

Chapter XVI

The Poets of the Dawn – 1

THE SUPERIORITY of the English poets who lead the way into the modern age is that sudden almost unaccountable spiritual impulse, insistent but vague in some, strong but limited in one or two, splendid and supreme in its rare moments of vision and clarity, which breaks out from their normal poetic mentality and strives constantly to lift their thought and imagination to its own heights, a spirit or Daemon who does not seem to trouble at all with his voice or his oestrus the contemporary poets of continental Europe. But they have no clearly seen or no firmly based constant idea of the greater work which this spirit demands from them; they get at its best only in an inspiration over which they have not artistic control, and they have only an occasional or uncertain glimpse of its self motives. Thus they give to it often a form of speech and movement which is borrowed from their intellect, normal temperament or culture rather than wells up as the native voice and rhythm of the spirit within, and they fall away easily to a lower kind of work. They have a greater thing to reveal than the Elizabethan poets, but they do not express it with that constant fullness of native utterance or that more perfect correspondence between substance and form which is the greatness of Shakespeare and Spenser.

This failure to grasp the conditions of a perfect intuitive and spiritual poetry has not yet been noted, because the attempt itself has not been understood by the critical mind of the nineteenth century. That mind was heavily intellectualised, sometimes lucid, reasonable and acute, sometimes cloudily or fierily romantic, sometimes scientific, minutely delving, analytic, psychological, but in none of these moods and from none of these outlooks capable of understanding the tones of this light which for a moment flushed the dawning skies of its own age or tracing it to the deep and luminous fountains from which it welled. Taine's grotesquely misproportioned appreciation in which Byron figures as the colossus and Titan of the age while the greater and more significant work of Wordsworth and Shelley is dismissed as an ineffective attempt to poetise a Germanic transcendentalism, Carlyle's ill-tempered and dyspeptic depreciation of Keats, Arnold's inability to see in Shelley anything but an unsubstantially beautiful poet of cloud and dawn and sunset, a born musician who had made a mistake in taking hold of the word as his instrument, are extreme, but still characteristic misunderstandings. In our own day we see the singers who lead the van of the future entering with a nearer intimacy into the domains of which these earlier poets only just crossed the threshold, but the right art and technique of this poetry have been rather found by the intuitive sense of their creators than yet intellectually understood so as to disengage their form from the obstruction of old-world ideas and standards of appreciation.

Each essential motive of poetry must find its own characteristic speech, its own law of rhythms, — even though metrically the mould may appear to be the same, — its own structure and development in the lyric, dramatic, narrative and, if that can still be used, the epic form and medium. The objective poetry of external life, the vital poetry of the life-spirit, the poetry of the intellect or the inspired reason, each has its own spirit and, since the form and word are the measure, rhythm, body of the spirit, must each develop its own body. There may be a hundred variations within the type which spring from national difference, the past of the civilisation, the cultural atmosphere, the individual idiosyncrasy, but some fundamental likeness of spirit will emerge. Elizabethan poetry was the work of the life-spirit in a new, raw and vigorous people not yet tamed by a restraining and formative culture, a people with the crude tendencies of the occidental mind rioting almost in the exuberance of a state of nature. The poetry of the classical Sanskrit writers was the work of Asiatic minds, scholars, court-poets in an age of immense intellectual development and an excessive, almost over-cultivated refinement, but still that too was a poetry of the life-spirit. In spite of a broad gulf of difference we yet find an extraordinary basic kinship between these two very widely separated great ages of poetry, though there was never any possibility of contact between that earlier oriental and this later occidental work, — the dramas of Kalidasa and some of the dramatic romances of Shakespeare, plays like the Sanskrit *Seal of Rakshasa* and *Toy-Cart* and Elizabethan historic and melodramatic pieces, the poetry of the *Cloud-Messenger* and erotic Elizabethan poetry, the romantically vivid and descriptive narrative method of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and the more intellectually romantic vividness and descriptive elaborateness of the *Line of Raghu*, the tone and manner of Drayton and that of the much greater work of Bharavi. This kinship arises from the likeness of essential motive and psychological basic type and emerges and asserts itself in spite of the enormous cultural division. A poetry of spiritual vision and the sense of things behind life and above the intellect must similarly develop from its essence a characteristic voice, cry, mould of speech, natural way of development, habits of structure.

The great poets of this earlier endeavour had all to deal with the same central problem of creation and were embarrassed by the same difficulty of a time which was not ready for work of this kind, not prepared for it by any past development, not fitted for it by anything in the common atmosphere of the age. They breathed the rarity of heights lifted far beyond the level of the contemporary surrounding temperament, intellect and life. But each besides had an immense development of that force of separate personality which is in art at least the characteristic of our later humanity. Each followed his own way, was very little influenced by the others, was impelled by a quite distinct spiritual idea, worked it out in a quite individual method and, when he fell away from it or short of it, failed in his own way and by shortcomings peculiar to his own nature. There is nothing of that common aim and manner which brings into one category the Elizabethan dramatists or the contemporaries of Pope and Dryden. We have to cast an eye upon them successively at their separate work and see how far they carried their achievement and where they stopped short or else deviated from the path indicated by their own highest genius.

Chapter XVII

The Poets of the Dawn – 2

Byron and Wordsworth

A POETRY whose task is to render truth of the Spirit by passing behind the appearances of the sense and the intellect to their spiritual reality, is in fact attempting a work for which no characteristic power of language has been discovered, — except the symbolic, but the old once established symbols will no longer entirely serve, and the method itself is not now sufficient for the need, — no traditional form of presentation native to the substance, no recognised method of treatment or approach, or none at once sufficiently wide and subtle, personal and universal for the modern mind. In the past indeed there have been hieratic and religious ways of approaching the truths of spirit which have produced some remarkable forms in art and literature. Sufi poetry, Vaishnava poetry are of this order, in more ancient times the symbolic and mystic way of the Vedic singers, while the unique revelatory utterance of the Upanishads stands by itself as a form of inspired thought which penetrates either direct or through strong unveiling images to the highest truths of self and soul and the largest seeing of the Eternal. One or two modern poets have attempted to use in a new way the almost unworked wealth of poetical suggestion in Catholic Christianity. But the drift of the modern mind in this direction is too large in its aim and varied in its approach to be satisfied by any definite or any fixed symbolic or hieratic method, it cannot rest within the special experience and figures of a given religion. There has been too universal a departure from all specialised forms and too general a breaking down of the old cut channels; in place of their intensive narrowness we have a straining through all that has been experienced by an age of wide intellectual curiosity to the ultimate sense of that experience. The truth behind man and Nature and things, behind intellectual and emotional and vital perception is sought to be seized by a pressure upon these things themselves, and the highly intellectualised language and way of seeing developed by this age is either used as it is with more meaning or strained or moulded anew or given some turn or transformation which will bring in the intensity of the deeper truth and vision. An intellectualism which takes this turn can choose one of three methods. It may prolong the language and forms it already possesses and trust to the weight of the thing it has to say and the power of its vision to inform this vehicle with another spirit. It may strain, heighten, transfigure the language and forms into a more intensive force of image, mould and expression. Or it may strive for some new and direct tone, some sheer cry of intuitive speech and sound born from the spirit itself and coming near to its native harmonies. The moulds too may either be the established moulds turned or modified to a greater and subtler use or else strange unprecedented frames, magical products of a spiritual inspiration. On any of these lines the poetry of the future may arrive at its objective and cross the borders of a greater kingdom of experience and expression.

But these earlier poets came in an age of imperfect, unenriched and uncompleted intellectuality. The language which they inherited was admirable for clear and balanced prose speech, but in poetry had been used only for adequate or vigorous statement, rhetorical reasoning, superficial sentimentalising or ornate thought, narrative, description in the manner of a concentrated, elevated and eloquent prose. The forms and rhythmical movements were unsuitable for any imaginative, flexible or subtly feeling poetry. The new writers dealt with the forms of the preceding literary age by a clear and complete rejection; they swept them aside and created new forms or took old ones from the earlier masters or from song and ballad moulds modified or developed to serve a more fluid and intellectualised mind and imagination. But the language was a more difficult problem and could not be entirely solved by such short cuts as Wordsworth's recipe of a resort to the straightforward force of the simplest speech dependent on the weight of the substance and thought for its one sufficient source of power. We find the tongue of this period floating between various possibilities. On its lower levels it is weighted down by some remnant of the character of the eighteenth century and proceeds by a stream of eloquence, no longer artificial, but facile, fluid, helped by a greater force of thought and imagination. This turn sometimes rises to a higher level of inspired and imaginative poetic eloquence. But beyond this pitch we have a fuller and richer style packed with thought and imaginative substance, the substitute of this new intellectualised poetic mind for the more spontaneous Elizabethan richness and curiosity; but imaginative thought is the secret of its power, no longer the exuberance of the life-soul in its vision. On the other side we have a quite different note, a sheer poetical directness, which sometimes sinks below itself to poverty and insufficiency or at least to thinness, as in much of the work of Wordsworth and Byron, but, when better supported and rhythmed, rises to quite new authenticities of great or perfect utterance, and out of this there comes in some absolute moments a native voice of the spirit, in Wordsworth's revelations of the spiritual presence in Nature and its scenes and peoples, in Byron's rare forceful sincerities, in the luminous simplicities of Blake, in the faery melodies of Coleridge, most of all perhaps in the lyrical cry and ethereal light of Shelley. But these are comparatively rare moments, the mass of their work is less certain and unequal in expression and significance. Finally we get in Keats a turning away to a rich, artistic and sensuous poetical speech marvellous in its perfection of opulence, resource and colour which prepares us for the more various but lower fullnesses of the intellectual and aesthetic epoch that had to intervene. The greatest intuitive and revealing poetry has yet to come.

Byron and Wordsworth are the two poets who are the most hampered by this difficulty of finding and keeping to the native speech of their greater self, most often depressed in their elevation, because they are both drawn by a strong side of their nature, the one to a forceful, the other to a weighty intellectualised expression; neither of them are born singers or artists of word and sound, neither of them poets in the whole grain of their mind and temperament, not, that is to say, always dominated by the aesthetic, imaginative or inspired strain in their being, but doubled here by a man of action and passion, there by a moralist and preacher, in each too a would-be "critic of life", who gets into the way of the poet and makes upon him illegitimate demands; therefore they are readily prone to fall away to what is, however interesting it may otherwise be, a lower, a not genuinely poetic range of substance and speech. But both in the deepest centre or on the highest peak of their inspiration are moved by powers for which their heavily or forcibly intellectualised language of poetry was no adequate means. It is only when they escape from it that they do their rare highest work. Byron, no artist, intellectually shallow and hurried, a poet by compulsion of personality rather than in the native colour of his mind, inferior in all these respects to the finer strain of his great contemporaries, but in compensation a more powerful elemental force than any of them and more in touch with all that had begun to stir in the mind of the times, — always an advantage, if one knows how to make use of it, for a poet's largeness and ease of execution, — succeeds more amply on the inferior levels of his genius, but fails more in giving an adequate voice to his highest possibility. Wordsworth, meditative, inward, concentrated in his thought, is more often able by force of brooding to bring out the voice of his greater self, but flags constantly, brings in a heavier music surrounding his few great clear tones, drowns his genius at last in a desolate sea of platitude. Neither arrives at that amplitude of achievement which might have been theirs in a more fortunate time, if ready forms had been given to them, or if they had lived in the stimulating atmosphere of a contemporary culture harmonious with their personality.

Byron's prodigious reputation, greater and more prolonged on the continent than in his own country, led perhaps to too severely critical an undervaluing when his defects became nakedly patent in the fading away of the helpful glamour of contemporary sympathies. That is the penalty of an exaggerated fame lifted too high on the wings or the winds of the moment. But his fame was no accident or caprice of fortune; it was his due from the Time-Spirit. His hasty vehement personality caught up and crowded into its work in a strong though intellectually crude expression an extraordinary number of the powers and motives of the modern age. The passion for liberty found in him its voice of Tyrrhenian bronze. The revolt and self-assertion of the individual against the falsities and stifling conventions of society, denial, unbelief, the scorn of the sceptic for established things, the romance of the past, the restlessness of the present, the groping towards the future, the sensuous, glittering, artificial romance of the pseudo-East, the romance of the solitary, the rebel, the individual exaggerated to himself by loneliness, the immoral or amoral superman, all that flawed romanticism, passionate sentimentalism, insatiable satiety of sensualism, cynicism, realism which are the chaotic fermentation of an old world dying and a new world in process of becoming, — a century and a half's still unfinished process, — caught hold of his mood and unrolled itself before the dazzled, astonished and delighted eyes of his contemporaries in the rapid succession of forcibly ill-hewn works impatiently cut out or fierily molten from his single personality in a few crowded years from its first rhetorical and struggling outburst in *Childe Harold* to the accomplished ease of its finale in *Don Juan*. Less than this apparent plenitude would have been enough to create the rumour that rose around the outbreak of this singular and rapid energy. No doubt, his intellectual understanding of these things was thin and poverty-stricken in the extreme, his poetic vision of the powers that moved him had plenty of force, but wanted depth and form and greatness. But he brought to his work what no other poet could give and what the mentality of the time, moved itself by things which it had not sufficient intellectual preparation to grasp, was fitted to appreciate, the native elemental force, the personality, the strength of nervous and vital feeling of them which they just then needed and which took the place of understanding and vision. To this pervading power, to this lava flood of passion and personality, were added certain preeminent gifts, a language at first of considerable rhetorical weight and drive, afterwards of great nervous strength, directness, precision, force of movement, a power of narrative and of vivid presentation, and always, whatever else might lack, an unfailing energy. It was enough for the immediate thing he had to do, though not at all enough for the highest assured immortality.

These things which Byron more or less adequately expressed, were the ferment of the mind of humanity in its first crude attempt to shake off the conventions of the past and struggle towards a direct feeling of itself and its surrounding world in their immediate reality. But behind it there is something else which seems sometimes about to emerge vaguely, an element which may be called spiritual, a feeling of the greatness of man the individual spirit commensurate with Nature and his world, man in communion with the greatness of Nature, man able to stand in the world in his own strength and puissance, man affirming his liberty, the claim to freedom of a force as great within as the forces which surround and seem to overwhelm him. One feels oneself as if in the presence of a Titan striving to be born, a Titanism of the spirit of man awake in its soul of desire, in a passion of seeking without conquest of finding, in revolt, not in self-possession, man the fallen archangel, not man returning to godhead: but it reposes on, it is the obscure side of a spiritual reality. He could not break through the obstructions of his lower personality and express this thing that he felt in its native tones of largeness and power. If he could have done so, his work would have been of a lasting greatness. But he never found the right form, never achieved the liberation into right thought and speech of the Daemon within him. The language and movement he started from were an intellectual and sentimental rhetoric, the speech of the eighteenth century broken down, melted and beaten into new shape for stronger uses; he went on to a more chastened and rapid style of great force, but void of delicacy, subtlety and variety; he ended in a flexible and easy tongue which gave power to even the most cynical trivialities and could rise to heights of poetry and passion: but none of these things, however adapted to his other gifts, was the style wanted for this greater utterance. Art, structure, accomplished mould were needs of which he had no idea; neither the weight of a deep and considered, nor the sureness of an inspired interpretation were at his command. But sometimes language and movement rise suddenly into a bare and powerful sincerity which, if he could have maintained it, would have given him the needed instrument: but the patience and artistic conscientiousness or the feeling for poetic truth which could alone have done this, were far from him. Considerable work of a secondary kind he did, but he had something greater to say which he never said, but only gave rare hints of it and an obscured sense of the presence of its meaning.

Wordsworth, with a much higher poetic mind than Byron's, did not so entirely miss his greatest way, though he wandered much in adjacent paths and finally lost himself in the dry desert sands of the uninspired intellectual mentality. At the beginning he struck in the midst of some alloy full into his purest vein of gold. His earliest vision of his task was the right vision, and whatever may be the general truth of his philosophy of childhood in the great Ode, it seems to have been true of him. For as intellectuality grew on him, the vision failed; the first clear intimations dimmed and finally passed leaving behind an unillumined waste of mere thought and moralising. But always, even from the beginning, it got into the way of his inspiration. Yet Wordsworth was not a wide thinker, though he could bring a considerable weight of thought to the aid of the two or three great things he felt and saw lucidly and deeply, and he was unfitted to be a critic of life of which he could only see one side with power and originality, — for the rest he belongs to his age rather than to the future and is limited in his view of religion, of society, of man by many walls of convention. But what the poet sees and feels, not what he opines, is the real substance of his poetry. Wordsworth saw Nature and he saw man near to Nature, and when he speaks of these things, he finds either his noblest or his purest and most penetrating tones. His view of them is native to his temperament and personality and at the opposite pole to Byron's. Not that which is wild, dynamic or tumultuously great in Nature, but her calm, her serenity, the soul of peace, the tranquil Infinite, the still, near, intimate voice that speaks from flower and bird, sky and star, mountain and stream, this he knew, felt and lived in as no poet before or after him has done, with a spiritual closeness and identity which is of the nature of a revelation, the first spiritual revelation of this high near kind to which English poetry had given voice. Some soul of man, too, he sees, not in revolt, — he has written unforgettable lines about liberty, but a calm and ordered liberty, — in harmony with this tranquil soul in Nature, finding in it some original simplicity and purity of his being and founding on it a life in tune with the order of an eternal law. On this perception the moralist in Wordsworth founds a rule of simple faith, truth, piety, self-control, affection, grave gladness in which the sentimental naturalism of the eighteenth century disappears into an ethical naturalism, a very different idealisation of humanity in the simplicity of its direct contact with Nature unspoiled by the artifice and corruption of a too developed society. All that Wordsworth has to say worth saying is confined to these motives and from them he draws his whole genuine thought inspiration.

But it is in the Nature strain of which he is the discoverer that he is unique, for it is then that the seer in him either speaks the revelatory thought of his spirit or gives us strains greater than thought's, the imperishable substance of spiritual consciousness finding itself in sight and speech. At other times, especially when he fuses this Nature-strain with his thought and ethical motive, he writes sometimes poetry of the very greatest; at others again it is of a varying worth and merit; but too often also he passes out from his uninspired intelligence work with no stamp of endurance, much less of the true immortality. In the end the poet in him died while the man and the writer lived on; the moralist and concentred thinker had killed the singer, the intellect had walled up the issues of the imagination and spiritual vision. But even from the beginning there is an inequality and uncertainty which betray an incomplete fusion of the sides of his personality, and the heavy weight of intellectuality shadows over and threatens the spiritual light which it eventually extinguished. A certain number of his shorter poems rank among the greatest things in poetry and this number is not inconsiderable. But elsewhere he rises high, sometimes astonishingly high, for a few lines but cannot keep long to the high poetic expression and sometimes can sink low and sometimes astonishingly low, even to bathos and triviality, especially when he strains towards an excessive simplicity which can become puerile or worse. He intellectualises his poetic statement overmuch and in fact states too much and sings too little, has a dangerous turn for a too obvious sermonising, pushes too far his reliance on the worth of his substance and is not jealously careful to give it a form of beauty. In his works of long breath there are terrible stretches of flattest prose in verse with lines of power, sometimes of fathomless depth like that wonderful

Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone,

interspersed or occurring like a lonely and splendid accident, *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*.[1] It has been said with justice that he talks too much in verse and sings too little; there is a deficient sense of the more subtle spirit of rhythm, a deficiency which he overcomes when moved or lifted up, but which at other times, hampers greatly his effectiveness. His theory of poetic diction, though it has a certain truth in it, was, as he practised it, narrow and turned to unsoundness; it betrayed him into the power of the prosaic and intellectual element in his mind. These defects grew on him as the reflective moralist and monk and the conventional citizen, — there was always in him this curious amalgam, — prevailed over the seer and poet.

But still one of the seer-poets he is, a seer of the calm spirit in Nature, the poet of man's large identity with her and serene liberating communion: it is on this side that he is admirable and unique. He has other strains too of great power. His chosen form of diction, often too bare and trivial in the beginning, too heavy afterwards, helps him at his best to a language and movement of unsurpassed poetic weight and gravity charged with imaginative insight, in which his thought and his ethical sense and spiritual sight meet in a fine harmony, as in his one great Ode, in some of his sonnets, in *Ruth*, even in *Laodamia*, in lines and passages which uplift and redeem much of his less satisfying work, while when the inner light shines wholly out, it admits him to the secret of the very self-revealing voice of Nature herself speaking through the human personality in some closest intimacy with her or else uttering the greatness of an impersonal sight and truth. He has transparencies in which the spirit gets free of the life-wave, the intelligence, the coloured veils of the imagination, and poetic speech and rhythm become hints of the eternal movements and the eternal stabilities, voices of the depths, rare moments of speech direct from our hidden immortality.

---

[1] "Rare swimming in the vast gurge."

Chapter XVIII

The Poets of the Dawn – 3

IF WORDSWORTH and Byron failed by an excess of the alloy of untransmuted intellect in their work, two other poets of the time, Blake and Coleridge, miss the highest greatness they might otherwise have attained by an opposite defect, by want of the gravity and enduring substance which force of thought gives to the poetical inspiration. They are, Coleridge in his scanty best work, Blake almost always, strong in sight, but are unable to command the weight and power in the utterance which arises from the thinking mind when it is illumined and able to lay hold on and express the reality behind the idea. They have the faculty of revelatory sense in a high degree, but little of the revelatory thought which should go with it; or at least though they can suggest this sometimes with the intense force which comes from spiritual feeling, they cannot command it and constantly give it greatness and distinctness of body. And their sight is only of the middle kind; it is not the highest things they see, but only those of a borderland or middle region. Their poetry has a strange and unique quality and charm, but it stops short of something which would have made it supreme. They are poets of the supernatural and of such spiritual truth as may be shadowed by it or penetrate through it, but not of the greatest truths of the spirit. And this supernature remains in them a thing seen indeed and objectively real, but abnormal; but it is only when supernature becomes normal to the inner experience that it can be turned into material of the very greatest poetry.

Coleridge more than any of his great contemporaries missed his poetic crown; he has only found and left to us three or four scattered jewels of a strange and singular beauty. The rest of his work is a failure. There is a disparateness in his gifts, an inconsequence and incoherence which prevented him from bringing them together, aiding one with the other and producing great work rich in all the elements of his genius. Intellectuality he had in abundance, a wide, rich and subtle intellect, but he squandered rather than used it in discursive metaphysics and criticism and was most at home when pouring it out in the spontaneity of conversation or rather monologue, an outlet in which the labour of giving it the firmness of an enduring form could be avoided. The poet in him never took into himself the thinker. The consequence is that very much the greater part of his poetry, though his whole production is small enough in bulk, is unconvincing in the extreme. It has at best a certain eloquence or a turn of phrase and image which has some intellectual finish but not either force or magic, or a fluidity of movement which fails to hold the ear. But there are three poems of his which are unique in English poetry, written in moments when the too active intellect was in abeyance, an occult eye of dream and vision opened to supraphysical worlds and by a singular felicity the other senses harmonised, the speech caught strange subtleties and marvellous lights and hues and the ear the melodies of other realms. It is indeed only just over the mystic border that his sight penetrates and to its most inferior forms, and he does not enter into these worlds as did Blake, but catches only their light and influence upon the earth life; but it is caught with a truth and intensity which makes magical the scenes and movements of the earth life and transforms light of physical nature into light of supernature. This is to say that for the first time, except for rare intimations, the middle worlds and their beings have been seen and described with something of reality and no longer in the crude colours of vulgar tradition or in the forms of myth. The Celtic genius of second sight has begun to make its way into poetry. It is by these poems that he lives, though he has also two or three others of a more human charm and grace; but here Coleridge shows within narrow limits a superlative power and brings in a new element and opens a new field in the realms of poetic vision.

Blake lives ordinarily far up in this middle world of which Coleridge only catches some glimpses or at most stands occasionally just over its border. Blake's seeing teems with images of this other world, he hears around him the echoes of its sounds and voices. He is not only a seer, but almost an inhabitant of other planes, another domain of being; or at least this second subtle sight is his normal sight. His power of expression is akin in its strangeness to his eye of vision. His speech like his seeing has a singular other-world clarity and sheerness of expression in it, the light of supernature. When he prophetises as in some of his more ambitious efforts, he mentalises too much the mystic and misses the marvel and the magic. It is when he casts into some echo of the language of the luminous children of those shores the songs of their childhood and their innocence, that he becomes limpid to us and sheds upon our earth some clear charm, felicity, wonder of a half divine otherwhere. Here again we have something unique, a voice of things which had not been heard before nor has it been heard since; for the Celtic poets who sometimes give us something that is in its source akin, bring a ripe reflective knowledge and a colour of intellectuality into their speech and vision, but Blake seeks to put away from him as much as possible the intellectual mind, to see only and sing. By this effort and his singularity and absorption he stands apart solitary and remote, a unique voice among the poets of the time; he occupies indeed a place unique in the poetry of the English language, for there is no other singer of the beyond who is like him or equal to him in the strangeness, supernatural lucidity, power and directness of vision of the beyond and the rhythmic clarity and beauty of his singing.

A greater poet by nature than almost any of these, Shelley was alone of them all very nearly fitted to be a sovereign voice of the new spiritual force that was at the moment attempting to break into poetry and possess there its kingdom. He has on the one hand, one feels, been a native of the heights to which he aspires and the memory of them, not indeed quite distinct, but still environing his imagination with its luminous ethereality, is yet with him. If the idea of a being not of our soil fallen into the material life and still remembering his skies can be admitted as an actual fact of human birth, then Shelley was certainly a living example of one of these luminous spirits half obscured by earth;

the very stumblings of his life came from the difficulty of such a nature moving in the alien terrestrial environment in which he is not at home nor capable of accepting its muddy vesture and iron chain, attempting impatiently to realise there the law of his own being in spite of the obstruction of the physical clay. This mind and nature cannot live at ease in their dusk day and time, but escape to dwell prophetically in a future heaven and earth in which the lower life shall have accepted the law of his own celestial worlds. As a poet his intellect is suffused with their light and his imagination is bathed in it; they are steeped in the brilliances of a communion with a higher law, another order of existence, another meaning behind Nature and terrestrial things. But in addition he possesses the intellectual equipment possible in his age and can speak with a subtle beauty and perfect melody the tongue of the poetic intelligence. He is a seer of spiritual realities, much more radiantly near to them than Wordsworth, has, what Coleridge had not, a poetic grasp of metaphysical truths, can see the forms and hear the voices of higher elemental spirits and natural godheads than those seen and heard by Blake, while he has a knowledge too of some fields of the same middle realm, is the singer of a greater and deeper liberty and a purer and nobler revolt than Byron, has the constant feeling of a high spiritual and intellectual beauty, not sensuous in the manner of Keats, but with a hold on the subtler beauty of sensible things which gives us not their glow of vital warmth and close material texture, but their light and life and the rarer atmosphere that environs them on some meeting line between spirit and body. He is at once seer, poet, thinker, prophet, artist. In his own day and after, the strangeness of his genius made him unintelligible to the rather gross and mundane intellectual mind of the nineteenth century; those who admired him most, were seized only by the externalities of his work, its music, delicacy, diffusely lavish imaginative opulence, enthusiasm, but missed its inner significance. Now that we are growing more into the shape of his ideas and the forms of his seeing, we can get nearer to the hidden heart of his poetry. Still high-pinnacled as is his flight, great as is his work and his name, there is in him too a limitation which prevents the perfect self-expression that we find only in the few supreme poets.

This was due to the conditions under which the evolution of his poetry had to take place and to the early death which found him at the time when it was rounding towards the full orb of its maturity. His earlier poetry shows him striving with the difficulty of the too intellectual manner of speech from which these poets of supra-intellectual truth had to take their departure. Shelley uses language throughout as a poet; he was incapable of falling into the too hard and outward manner of Byron or yielding to the turn towards mere intellectuality which always beset Wordsworth. The grain of his mind was too saturated with the hues of poetic vision, he had too splendid and opulent an imagination, too great a gift of flowing and yet uplifted and inspired speech for such descents, and even in his earlier immature poetry, *Queen Mab*, *Alastor*, *The Revolt of Islam*, these powers are there and sustain him, but still the first form of his diction is a high, sometimes a magnificent poetic eloquence, which sometimes enforces the effect of what he has to say, but more often loses it in a flood of diffuse and overabundant expression. It is not yet the native language of his spirit. As his power develops, the eloquence remains, but is subdued to the growing splendour of his vision and its hints and images, but the thought seems almost to disappear from the concrete grasp of the intelligence into a wonder of light and a music of marvellous sound. The *Prometheus* and *Epipsychidion* show this turn of his genius at its height; they are two of the three greatest things he has left to us on the larger scale. Here he does come near to something like the natural speech of his strange, beautiful and ethereal spirit; but the one thing that is wanting is a more ascetic force of *tapasyā* economising and compressing its powers to bring in a new full and seizing expression of the thought element in his poetry, not merely opulent and eloquent or bright with the rainbow hues of imagination, but sovereign in poetic perfection and mastery. Towards this need his later style is turning, but except once in *Adonais* he does not seize on the right subject matter for his genius. Only in the lyric of which he has always the secret, — for of all English poets he has perhaps the most natural, spontaneous, sweet and unfailing gift of melody, and his emotion and lyrical cry are at once of the most delicate and the most intense, — is he frequently and constantly equal alike in his thought, feeling, imagery, music. But it is not often that he uses the pure lyrical form for his greatest sight, for what would now be called his "message". When he turns to that, he attempts always a larger and more expansive form. The greatness of *Prometheus Unbound* which remains, when all is said, his supreme effort and one of the masterpieces of poetry, arises from the combination of this larger endeavour and profounder substance with the constant use of the lyrical mould in which he most excelled, because it agreed with the most intimate turn of his temperament and subtly exalted spirit.

The spiritual truth which had possession of Shelley's mind was higher than anything opened to the vision of any of his contemporaries, and its power and reality which was the essence of his inspiration can only be grasped, when it is known and lived, by a changed and future humanity. Light, Love, Liberty are the three godheads in whose presence his pure and radiant spirit lived; but a celestial light, a celestial love, a celestial liberty. To bring them down to earth without their losing their celestial lustre and hue is his passionate endeavour, but his wings constantly buoy him upward and cannot beat strongly in an earthlier atmosphere. The effort and the unconquered difficulty are the cause of the ethereality, the want of firm earthly reality that some complain of in his poetry. There is an air of luminous mist surrounding his intellectual presentation of his meaning which shows the truths he sees as things to which the mortal eye cannot easily pierce or the life and temperament of earth rise to realise and live; yet to bring about the union of the mortal and the immortal, the terrestrial and the celestial is always his passion. He is himself too much at war with his age to ignore its contradictions and pass onward to the reconciliation. He has to deny God in order to affirm the Divine, and his denial brings in a note too high, discordant and shrill. He has not the symbols or the thought-forms through which he can make the spirit of light, love and freedom intimate and near to men; he has, as in the *Prometheus*, to go for them to his imagination or to some remote luminous experience of ideal worlds and to combine these beautiful ideal images, too delicately profound in their significance, too veiled in robe upon robe of light to be distinct in limb and form, with traditional names and symbols which are converted into this other sense and fail to be perfect links because by the conversion they cease to be familiar to the mind. To bring his difficult significance home he lavishes inexhaustibly image on radiant image, line on dazzling beauty of line, the sense floats in a storm of coruscations and dissolving star-showers; the more we look and accustom our eyes to this new kind of light, the more loveliness and light we see, but there is not that immediate seizing and taking captive of the whole intelligence which is the sign of an assured and sufficient utterance.

He is in revolt too against the law of earth, in arms against its dominations and powers, and would substitute for it by some immediate and magical change the law of heaven; but so he fails to make the needed transition and reconciliation and his image of the thing to be remains too ideal, too fine and abstract in spite of the beauty of the poetical forms he gives it as its raiment or atmosphere. Heaven cannot descend to take possession of the gross, brute and violent earth he sees around him, therefore he carries up the delivered earth into a far and ideal heaven. Something of the same excess of another light than ours surrounds and veils his intercourse with the spirit in Nature. He sees her earthly forms in a peculiar radiance and light and through them the forms and spirits of his ideal world. He has not Wordsworth's distinctness and intimate spiritual communion with Nature as she is on earth; the genii of the worlds of dream and sleep cluster too thickly round all that his waking eye seizes. He tries to let them in through the force of crowding images, brilliant tossings aside of the lucent curtain, *tiraskariṇī*, which veils them from us: but they remain half-hidden in their means of revelation. The earth-nature is seen in the light of another nature more than in its own, and that too is only half visible in the mixed luminosity, "burning through the vest that hides it." Tradition governs very largely his choice of rhythms, but wonderfully melodious as is his use or conversion of them to the mould of his spirit, one feels that he would have done better to seek more often for self-formed movements. Shelley is the bright archangel of this dawn and he becomes greater to us as the light he foresaw and lived in returns and grows, but he sings half concealed in the too dense halo of his own ethereal beauty.

As with Wordsworth and Byron, so too we find Shelley and Keats standing side by side, but with a certain antinomy. They are perhaps the two most purely poetic minds that have used the English tongue; but one sings from the skies earthwards, the other looks from earth towards Olympus. Keats is the first entire artist in word and rhythm in English poetry, — not grandiose, classical and derived like Milton, but direct and original in his artistry, he begins a new era. His astonishing early performance leaves us wondering what might have been the masterpieces of his prime, of which even *Hyperion* and the Odes are only the unfulfilled promise. His death in the beginning of his powers is the greatest loss ever suffered by human achievement in this field. Alone of all the chief poets of his time he is in possession of a perfect or almost perfected instrument of his native temperament and genius, but he had not yet found the thing he had to say, not yet seen what he was striving to see. All the other high things that interested his great equals, had for him no interest; one godhead only he worshipped, the image of divine Beauty, and through this alone he wished to see Truth and by her to achieve spiritual delight and not so much freedom as completeness. And he saw her in three of her four forms, sensuous beauty, imaginative beauty, intellectual and ideal beauty. But it is the first only which he had entirely expressed when his thread was cut short in its beginning; the second he had carried far, but it was not yet full-orbed; towards the third and highest he was only striving, "to philosophise he dared not yet", but it was from the first the real sense and goal of his genius.

On life he had like the others — Byron alone excepted — no hold; such work as *Lamia*, *Isabella*, *The Eve of St. Agnes*, in which he followed the romantic tendency of the time, was not his own deeper self-expression; they are wonderful richly woven robes of sound and word and image curiously worked and brocaded, but they clothe nothing. The Odes, where fulfilment of imaginative beauty rises out of a higher sensuous seeking and satisfaction to an admirable sweetness, fullness, largeness and opulence and admits intimations of the ideal goddess, are almost all of them among the scanty number of the chief masterpieces in this high and deliberate lyrical form. But the real soul of Keats, his inner genius, the thing he was striving to bring out of himself is not to be altogether found even here; it lay in that attempt which, first failing in *Endymion*, was again resumed in *Hyperion*. It was the discovery of the divine Idea, Power and living norm of Beauty which by its breath of delight has created the universe, supports it and moves towards a greater perfection, inspires the harmonies of inward sight and outward form, yearns and strives towards the fullness of its own self-discovery by love and delight. Not yet in possession of his idea, he tries to find and to figure it in *Endymion* by sensuous images of a rich and dim moonlit dream with a sort of allegory or weft of symbols behind the words and thoughts, but his hand is still inexpert and fails in the execution. In *Hyperion* the idea is clearer and in bolder relief, but it is misconceived under a too intellectual, external and conventionally epic Miltonic influence, and in his second version he turns not quite happily to a renewal of the form of his first attempt. He has found a clue in thought and imagination, but not quite its realisation in the spiritual idea, has already its imaginative, sensuous, something of its intellectual suggestion, but not yet what the spirit in him is trying to reveal, its mystically intellectual, mystically sensuous, mystically imaginative vision, form and word. The intimation of it in his work, his growing endeavour to find it and the unfulfilled promise of its discovery and unique fullness of expression are the innermost Keats and by it he belongs in spirit to these prophetic, but half-foiled singers of the dawn. He lives more than any other poet in the very temple of Beauty, traverses its sculptured and frescoed courts with a mind hued and shaped to her forms and colours and prepares, but is never permitted, to enter the innermost sanctuary. The time had not yet come when these spiritual significances could be more than hinted. Therefore Keats and Shelley were taken before their powers could fully expand, Byron led far out of the path, Blake isolated in his own splendour of remoteness, Coleridge and Wordsworth drawn away to lose the poet and seer in the mere intellectual mind. All wandered round their centre of inspiration, missed something needed and stopped or were stopped short. Another age had to arrive which worshipped other and lesser godheads.

Chapter XIX

The Victorian Poets

THE EPOCH associated in England with the name of Victoria was in poetry, like that of Pope and Dryden, an age of dominant intellectualism; but, unlike that hard and sterile period, it has been an imaginative, artistic intellectualism, touched with the greater and freer breath of modern thought and its wide interest and fullness of matter, not brass-bound in furbished and narrow bands of social ease and polite refinement, but alive, astir, capable of personal energy and inspiration, aesthetical in its refinements, above all not entirely satisfied with itself, but opened up to some mountain-top prospects, struck across by some moments of prophecy. But still whether we compare it with the inspirations from which it turned or with the inspiration which followed and replaced it, it is a depression, not a height, and without being either faultily faultless or splendidly null, as epochs of a too self-satisfied intellectual enlightenment tend to appear to be in the eyes of the more deeply thinking ages, it fails to satisfy, unlike the Roman Augustan, the French grand century, or even in its own kind the English Augustan. It leaves an impression of a too cramped fullness and a too level curiosity. It is a descent into a comfortable and pretty hollow or a well-cultured flatness between high, wild or beautiful mountain ranges behind and in front a great confused beginning of cliff and seashore, sands and rocks and breakers and magic of hills and sea-horizons. There is much in this work to admire, something here and there to stimulate, but only a little that lifts off the feet and carries to the summits of the poetic enthusiasm.

The descent from the uncertain but high elevations of the first romantic, half spiritual outbreak is very marked, baffling and sudden. This is not in the nature of a revolt, an energetic audacity of some new thing, — except for a moment in Swinburne, — but a change of levels, a transition to other more varied but less elevated interests, the substitution of a more curious but less impetuous movement. The rich beauty of Keats is replaced by the careful opulent cultivated picturesqueness of Tennyson, the concentrated personal force of Byron by the many-sided intellectual robustness and energy of Browning, the intense Nature poetry and the strong and grave ethical turn of Wordsworth by the too intellectually conscious eye on Nature and the cultured moralising of Arnold, the pure ethereal lyricism of Shelley by Swinburne's turgid lyrical surge and all too self-conscient fury of foam-tossing sound, and in place of the supernatural visions of Blake and Coleridge we have the mediaeval glamour and languorous fields of dream of Rossetti and Morris. There is a considerable gain, but a deep loss; for this poetry has a more evolved richness, but in that greater richness a greater poverty. The gain is in fullness of a more varied use of language, a more conscious and careful art, a more informed and varied range of thought and interest; but the loss is in spiritual substance and the Pythian height of inspiration. There is a more steady working, but with it a clogged and heavier breath; a wealth of colour and nearer strain of thinking, but a lower flame of the spirit. This labour is assured and careful enough in its workmanship but, less inspired, it has a paucity of greatness and a too temperate impulsion.

The intellectual preparation of the previous poetry, the depth and wealth of experience which must found the greatest and most successful audacities of spiritual vision, had been insufficient, coming as it did after a shallow and superficial age of the acute, but limited cult of Reason. The work of the middle nineteenth century was to prepare anew the intellectual ground and to lead up to a more conscious, enriched and careful artistic execution. But it was a tract of intellectual effort in which there was much width of a kind and considerable invention, but a very insufficient height and profundity. In England there was the added misfortune of a reign of rampant philistinism. The Victorian period for all its activity and fruitfulness was by no means one of those great intellectual humanistic ages which the world will look back to with a satisfied sense of clarity or of uplifting. The great flood of free thinking, free inquiry, scientific and artistic vivacity, the rapid breaking of fresh ground, the noble political enthusiasms which stirred France and Germany and Italy and created a new force of democratic humanism in Russia, swept in vain past the English shores defended by their chalk cliffs and downs of self-content or only broke across them in a few insignificant waves. It is the most unlovely and uninspiring period of the English spirit. Never was the aesthetic sense so drowned in pretentious ugliness, seldom the intelligence crusted in such an armoured imperviousness to fine and subtle thinking, the ebb of spirituality so far out and low. It was a period of smug commercial middle-class prosperity, dull mechanism, hard utilitarianism and a shoddy liberalism bursting and running over with self-content in its narrow practical rationality, spiritual poverty and intellectual ineptitude. Unteachable, it bore with a scornful complacency or bewildered anger or a listening ear of impervious indulgence the lightning shafts of Arnold's irony, the turbid fulminations of Carlyle, the fiery raids of Ruskin or saw unaffected others of its fine or great spirits turn for refuge to mediaevalism or socialistic utopias. The work of these forerunners was done in a wilderness of intellectual commonness and busy mediocre energy; it bore fruit afterwards, but only when the century was in its wane and other infant powers of the immenser future were beginning to raise their heads of cloud and light.

But this work of revolt and preparation was done chiefly in prose. Poetry flourishes best when it is the rhythmical expression of the soul of its age, of what is greatest and deepest in it, but still belongs to it, and the poetry of this period suffers by the dull smoke-laden atmosphere in which it flowered; though it profited by the European stir of thought and seeking around and held its own, achieved beauty, achieved in one or two poets a considerable energy, some largeness, occasional heights, there is still something sickly in its luxuriance, a comparative depression and poverty in its thought, a lack in its gifts, in its very accomplishment a sense of something not done. It cannot compare in power, wing, abundance of genius and talent with the contemporary work done in France: as in all intellectual ages the grand stream of poetical achievement is to be found, in spite of the greater poetic energy of the Anglo-Celtic mind, on the continent, in the clear and competent labour of the Latin intelligence. There is certainly much imaginative beauty, much artistic or fine or strong technical execution, — a great deal more in fact of this element than at any previous time, — much excellent work high enough in the second rank, but the inner surge and satisfaction of a free or deep spirit, the strong high-riding pinion or the skyward look, these things are rare in Victorian poetry.

The fame of Tennyson, now a little dimmed and tarnished by the breath of Time, occupied this epoch with a great and immediate brilliance. He is unquestionably the representative English poet of his time. He mirrors its ordinary cultivated mind as it shaped in the English temperament and intelligence, with an extraordinary fidelity and in a richly furnished and heavily decorated mirror set round with all the art and device that could be appreciated by the contemporary taste. There has been no more consummate master of the language, and this mastery is used with a careful, sure and unfailing hand. Whatever has to be expressed, whether it be of considerable, mediocre or no worth, is yet given a greater than its intrinsic value by a power of speech which without any such remarkable or astonishing energy as would excite or exalt the mind or disturb it from a safe acquiescence and a luxurious ease of reception, has always a sufficient felicity, curiously worked even when it affects simplicity, but with a chastened if not quite chaste curiosity. The turn of phrase almost always hits the mind with a certain, sometimes easy, sometimes elaborate poetic device. It turns always to find and does find the pictorial value of the thing to be described, and even, if such a phrase can be used, the pictorial value of the thought to be seized. There is a similar happiness of device and effect in the verse; if there are no great lyrical, odic or epic outbursts to sweep us out of ourselves, there is the same well-governed craft of effective turn and invention as in the language, the same peculiar manner of easily carried elaborateness, a leisurely but never sluggish self-considering self-adorning flow which succeeds in being immediately received and accepted. The art with which the subject matter is dressed up is of the same kind; a restrained elaborateness, a curious picturesqueness of presentation, a taking, sometimes opulent and effective form. The refinement and felicity are not of a kind which call for any unusual receptive power or aesthetic fineness to meet it and feel all its beauty; there is enough and to spare to attract the cultured, nothing to baffle or exceed the ordinary mind. This art is that of a master craftsman, a goldsmith, silversmith, jeweller of speech and substance with much of the decorative painter in his turn, who never travels beyond general, well-understood and popular ideas and forms, but gives them by his fineness of manner and felicity of image a charm and distinction which belong more properly to rarer and greater or lovelier motives. The achievement is of a kind which would hardly be worth doing more than once, but done that once and with such mastery it takes its place and compels admiration. The spirit is not filled and satisfied, much less uplifted, but the outer aesthetic mind is caught and for a time held captive.

But it is doubtful whether the future will attach to Tennyson's poetry anything at all near to the value it assumed for the contemporary English mind. When we try to estimate the substance and see what it permanently gives or what new thing it discovers for the poetic vision, we find that there is extraordinarily little in the end. Tennyson wrote much narrative poetry, but he is not a great narrative poet. There is a curious blending of incompatible intentions in all his work of this kind and even his exceptional skill could not save him from a brilliant failure. He has on the one side a will to convey some high spiritual and ethical intention of life through the imaginative use of tale and legend, and that could give a scope for a very noble kind of poetry, but he has not the power to lay a great hold on the ancient figures and recreate them to be symbols of a new significance. The *Idylls of the King* miss both the romantic and the idyllic beauty and arrive only at a graceful decorated effective triviality. The grand old Celtic myths and traditions already strangely mediaevalised by Malory, but full still of life and large humanity and colour are modernised into a baffling and disappointing superficiality and miss all greatness and power of life. There is no congruity between the form and symbol and the feeling and substance. They seem solely to be used to frame a conventional sentimentalism of Victorian domesticity and respectable social ethics. But the wearing of the white and scentless flower of a blameless life in a correct button-hole and a tepid sinning without the least tinge of passion or conviction by decorated puppets who are too evidently lay-figures of very modern ladies and gentlemen disguised as knights and dames, was hardly a sufficient justification for evoking the magic figures of old legend and romance. The life so masqueraded misses reality and it does not arrive at any great compensating imaginative or interpretative representation; modernism and the affectation of mediaevalism, conventional reality and the falsetto tones of pseudo-romance destroy each other and produce a glittering incongruity. There is a void of the true sincerity of poetic vision at the heart of the original conception and no amount of craft and skill in language or descriptive detail and picture can cure that original deficiency. The poet has no meditative, no emotional or impassioned, no close or revealing grasp on life, and on the other hand no deep interpretative idea, and without one or other of these things narrative poetry of the modern kind cannot succeed; it becomes a body without soul or life-breath. Even when Tennyson confines himself to the poetic modern tale without these disguises or any motive but the ethically pointed telling, he arrives at the same result, a richly coloured triviality.

This principal work of his maturity fails; its popularity springs from its work of detail and its appeal to the superficial sentiment of the time: but some earlier work of the kind had a nobler success. In the *Morte d'Arthur* there is some natural magic and vision which if it had been sustained and kept the same delicate and mystic strain, might have made the cycle of idylls a new poetic revelation. In other poems, in the *Lotos-Eaters*, *Ulysses*, *Oenone*, where set narrative is avoided and the legend is a starting-point or support for thought, vision and beauty, some fullness of these things is reached; but still the form is greater than the substance which has no heights and only occasionally strikes depths. Tennyson does not figure largely as a lyrical poet in spite of one or two inspired and happy moments; for he has neither the lyrical passion and intoxication nor the profounder depth of lyrical feeling. In his description of Nature there is no greater seeing, but a painting of vivid details detached for simile and ornament, and though he worked up a great accuracy of observation and colour, the deeper sincerity of the born Nature-poets is absent. Finally he gives us a good deal of thinking of a kind in often admirably telling phrase and with much art of setting, but he is not a revealing poetical thinker. His thought seldom escapes from the conventional limits of a cultivated, but not a large or original Victorian mind; it beautifies most often the obvious and commonplace or the current and acceptable ideas; with rare exceptions he has neither exaltations nor profundities nor subtleties nor surprises. A great poetical craftsman turning many forms to account for the displaying of an unusual power of descriptive and decorative language and a verse of most skilled device, but no very great purpose and substance, this he is from beginning to end of his creation. His art suffers from the excess of value of form over value of content; it incurs a liability to a besetting note of artificiality, a frequent falsetto tone of prettiness, an excessive stress, a colouring which is often too bright for the stuff it hues and is unevenly laid, but it is always taking and effective. By his very limitation of mind he becomes the representative poet of a certain side of the English mentality, not in its originality and adventurous power, but in its temperate convention and fixity, renders its liberalism and its conservatism, its love of freedom and dislike of idealism, its surface common sense of doubt and traditional belief, its successful way of dealing with its material, its formal ethicism and its absence of passion. But to all these things he brings an artistic decorative quality which is new in English poetry. He has left his stamp on the language and has given starting-points and forms for poets of a rarer force to turn to greater uses and pass beyond them to a new construction.

Tennyson is the most representative and successful poet of the Victorian epoch. Others who have not the same limitations, either fall below him in art or have a less sustained and considerable bulk and variety of work. Swinburne brings in into the poetry of the time elements to which the rest are strangers. He has a fire and passion and vehemence of song which is foreign to their temperament. He brings in too the continental note of denial, atheistic affirmation, sceptical revolt, passionate political idealism, but to these things he gives the Anglo-Celtic aggressiveness and violence, not the Latin sureness and clarity. He is a great lyrist, but like many of his contemporaries revels too much in device and virtuosities of form and his lyrical thought and sentiment turn easily to the dithyrambic note, are marred by excess, diffuseness, an inequality in the inspiration and the height and tone. But he has especially in his earlier poetry done work of a perfect and highly wrought beauty, a marvellous music. There is often a captivatingly rich and sensuous appeal in his language and not unoften it rises to a splendid magnificence. *Atalanta in Calydon*, *Dolores*, *Hertha*, *The Garden of Proserpine* and numerous other poems with the same perfect workmanship will always stand among the consummate achievements of English poetry. He is at his best one of the great lyrical singers; he writes in a flood and sweep and passion of melody: he is unique as a voice of all-round revolt, political, moral and of every kind, and in this lies his main significance. But he exhausts himself too soon; the reproach of emptiness can be brought against much of his work and his later voice becomes empty of significance but not of resonance. The quieter classical power of Arnold which voices the less confident search of a self-doubting scepticism, has lucidity, balance and grace, a fine though restricted and tenuous strain of thought and a deep and penetrating melancholy, the mediaevalism and aesthetic mysticism of Rossetti, the slow dreamy narrative of Morris which takes us to a refuge from the blatancy and ugliness of the Victorian environment into the gracious world of old story and legend, bring in each their own significance for the age and help towards that enrichment of the language of thought and artistic poetical feeling which is the chief work of this intervening time. They have all three this characteristic that they are studious artists, — it is significant that two of them are painters and decorative craftsmen, — who are concerned to give beauty and finish to the material of poetry rather than original poets with a large power of inspiration. Their range is small, but they have brought into English poetry a turn for fine execution which is likely to be a long-abiding influence.

Among the Victorians Browning stands next to Tennyson in the importance of his poetic work and station as a representative figure of the age and creator. He surpasses him indeed in the mass and force and abundant variety of his work and the protean energy of his genius. His inventiveness of form and range and variety of subject are prodigious; he turns to every quarter of the world, seizes on every human situation, seems to be trying to exhaust a study of all possible human personalities and minds and characters and turn his eye on every age and period of history and many countries and all possible scenes and extract from them their meaning and their interest for the satisfaction of his universal curiosity and his living and inexhaustible interest in the vividness and abundance of the life of earth and man. He has an equal interest in the human mind and its turns of thinking of all kinds and its human aims, ambitions, seekings and wants to pursue it everywhere in its ramifications, in its starts of individuality, peaks, windings, even all manner of borrowings of thought and feeling, nothing human is foreign to his research and pursuit, all enters into this prodigious embrace. This gives to his poetry a range and unceasing interest and richness of attraction which surpasses immeasurably all that his contemporaries can give us in wideness of the call of life, even though in them the poetic height to which they draw us may be greater than his. In his mass of creation he can be regarded as the most remarkable in invention and wideness, if not the most significant builder and narrator of the drama of human life in his time.

Browning stands apart also from the other contemporary poets in the character and personality of his work. He is in many ways the very opposite of them all. He is the one robust and masculine voice among these artists, sceptics, idealists or dreamers, always original, vigorous, inexhaustible; with a great range of interests, a buoyant hold on life, a strong and clear eye, an assured belief and hope but no traditional conventionality, he alone adequately represents the curious, critical, eager, exploring mind of the age. He has depth and force and abundance of a certain kind of thought, which if not of the very first greatness and originality, is open to all manner of questioning and speculation and new idea. His regard ranges over history and delights in its pictures of the stir and energy of life and its changing scenes, over man and his thought and character and emotion and action, looks into every cranny, follows every tortuous winding, seizes on each leap and start of the human machine. He is a student, critic, psychologist, thinker. He seeks to interpret, like certain French poets, the civilisations and the ages. His genius is essentially dramatic; for though he has written in many lyrical forms, the lyric is used to represent a moment in the drama of life or character, and though he uses the narrative, his treatment of it is dramatic and not narrative, as when he takes an Italian *fait-divers* and makes each personage relate or discuss it in such a way as to reveal his own motive, character, thought and passion. He does not succeed except perhaps once as a dramatist in the received forms because he is too analytic, too much interested in the mechanism of temperament, character, emotion and changing idea to concentrate sufficiently on their results in action; but he has an unrivalled force in seizing on a moment of the soul or mind and in following its convolutions as they start into dramatic thought, feeling and impulse. He of all these writers has hold of the substance of the work marked out for a poet of the age. And with all these gifts we might have had in him the great interpretative poet, one might almost say, the Shakespeare of his time. But by the singular fatality which so often pursues the English poetical genius, the one gift needed to complete him was denied. Power was there and the hold of his material; what was absent was the essential faculty of artistic form and poetic beauty, so eminent in his contemporaries, a fatal deficiency. This great creator was no artist; this strength was too robust and direct to give forth sweetness. There was no lack of a certain kind of skill. If not an artist in verse, Browning is a consummate technician, one might almost say a mechanician in verse; his very roughnesses and crudities and contortions have the appearance of device and calculation. He had an immense command of language and was never at a lack for forcible and efficient expression, but in its base though not in all its turns it was the language of a vigorous and vivid and colourful prosaist rather than of a poet, of the intellect and not the imagination. He could throw into it strong hues of the imagination, has sometimes though too seldom a vigorous richness and strong grace, achieves often a lyric elevation, but they supervene upon this base and do not ordinarily suffuse and change it or elevate it to a high customary level. Much strong and forceful work he did of a great and robust substance, won many victories, but the supreme greatness cannot come in poetry without the supreme beauty.

Arnold is a third considerable Victorian poet of the epoch, though he bulks less than the two more abundant writers who have till now held the first place. But as time goes on his figure emerges and assumes in quality though not in mass of work a first importance. His poetic work and quality may even be regarded as finer in its essence of poetic value if more tenuous in show of power than that of his two contemporaries. There is a return to the true classic style of poetry in the simplicity and straightforward directness of his diction and turn of thought that brings us back to the way of the earlier poets and gives a certain seriousness and power which we do not find in the over-consciousness and the too studied simplicity or elaborate carefulness and purposeful artistry of the other poets of the time. This imparts a note of depth and sincerity to his passion and his pathos, a character of high seriousness to his reflection and meditative thought, a greatness and strength to his moments of height and elevated force which raise him above the ordinary levels around him and create an impression of the truest poetry, the most genuine in poetic value, if not in effect the greatest of this Victorian age. His simplicity is a true thing and not the over-studied false simplicity of Tennyson; his thought is free from the conventionality and platitude which constantly meets us in Tennyson's thinking; he can achieve the strongest effects, even the romantic effect without the overwrought romantic colour of Rossetti, Swinburne's overpitch or Tennyson's too frequent overcharge and decorative preciosity of expression. We are at ease with him and can be sure that he will not say too much but just what the true poet in him has to say and no more. For this reason he was able to bring into Victorian poetry the expression of the most characteristic trains of thought expressing the contemporary mind and temperament at its highest and best. Tennyson voices the conventional English mind, Swinburne a high-pitched cry of revolt or a revolutionary passion for freedom or even for licence; Rossetti and Morris take refuge in mediaevalism as they saw it: Arnold strikes out the more serious notes of contemporary thinking. He fails however to look beyond to the future. In one respect of literary workmanship he does however anticipate future trends; for he makes a departure towards certain tendencies of modernist forms of verse. He made the first attempt at any regular free verse and thus anticipated the modernist departure from metrical forms. He attempted also an imitation of the Greek dramatic form but not with Swinburne's originality and the success achieved in *Atalanta in Calydon*.

This is the balance of the Victorian epoch; a considerable intellectual and artistic endeavour, contradicting, overcoming but still hampered by an ungenial atmosphere; two remarkable poets held back from the first greatness, one by imperfection of form, the other by imperfection of substance; four artists of less range, but with work of an accomplished, but overpitched or thin or languorous beauty; an enrichment and strengthening of the language which makes it more capable of fine and varied and curious thought, and the creation of an artistic conscience which may impose in the future a check on the impulse of an overabundant energy to imperfection of eager haste and vagary in execution. If the promise of the coming age is fulfilled, it may be remembered as a fine, if limited period of preparation for the discovery of new, more beautiful and grander fields of poetry.

Chapter XX

Recent English Poetry – 1

THE MOVEMENT away from the Victorian type in recent and contemporary English poetry cannot be said to have yet determined its final orientation. But we may distinguish in its uncertain fluctuations, its attempts in this or that direction certain notes, certain strong tones, certain original indications which may help us to disengage the final whither of its seekings. In the mass it appears as a broadening of the English poetic mind into a full oneness with the great stream of modern thought and tendency, an opening up out of the narrower Victorian insularity to admit a greater strength, subtlety and many-sidedness of the intelligence. For this very reason it is still in the nature of a very uncertain feeling out in several directions which has not found itself and decided what shall be the centre and guide of its inspiration. There are experiments of all kinds in language and rhythm and subject and treatment, many notable names each with his special turn and personality, but no supreme decisive speech and no gathering up of the many threads into a great representative work. The whole of European literature at the present time is of this character; it is a fluid mass with a hundred conflicting tendencies, a multitude of experiments, many minor formations, which has not yet run into any clear universal mould. All that can be done is to distinguish some common characteristics of an indicative value which emerge in the more significant work and have touched more or less the performance of the lesser writers. Here we can get at least at a certain persistent element, certain potential issues.

The thing that strikes at once in a general view is that it is a period of transition, not yet a new age, but the preparation for a new age of humanity. Everywhere there is a seeking after some new thing, a discontent with the moulds, ideas and powers of the past, a spirit of innovation, a desire to get at deeper powers of language, rhythm, form, because a subtler and vaster life is in birth, there are deeper and more significant things to be said than have yet been spoken, and poetry, the highest essence of speech, must find a fitting voice for them. The claim of tradition is still strong, but even those who keep most in the old ways, are impelled to fill in their lines with more searching things of a more compelling substance, to strike from their instrument sounds, variations, meanings for which it had not before the capacity. The attempt has not yet been supremely successful in its whole purpose, in spite of some poetic achievement of considerable beauty, originality and compass, but it has liberated at least with some initial force novel powers and opened fresh paths; a few bright streams of initiation meet the eye running to form some mighty Brahmaputra or Ganges which is not yet in sight, though we get here and there a blue Yamuna or white Saraswati or some large impetuous torrent making its way through open plain or magic woodland towards the great unseen confluence. There are many widely separate attempts, some fine or powerful beginnings, as yet no large consummation.

The straining for a new power of rhythm is the first indication of the coming change. Not quite so marked, not by any means so successful as the change in the type and power of poetical expression, it is still indicative; rhythm is the subtle soul of poetry and a change in the spirit of the rhythm must come if this change in the spirit of the poetry is fully to discover itself and altogether realise its own characteristic greatness and perfection. Mankind is moving to another spirit in its thought and life founded on another and deeper and larger truth of its inner being than it has yet in the mass been able to see, hold and put into form of living. This change must find its echo and interpretation or even some of its power of revelation and initiation in poetry, and poetry to express this greater spirit must find out a deeper, larger, more flexible, or, if one may say so, more multitudinously expressive rhythm than the great poets of the past were under the necessity of using; something of the same change has to be achieved as has been successfully accomplished in music. We see accordingly some attempt to break or enlarge, deepen or subtilise the traditional moulds, to substitute others of a more delicate character or with a more varied and flexible principle, to search out new packed or dissolved movements. There have been some considerable successes, but nothing of such a complete, sweeping and satisfying force as would quite content a certain eagerness and impatient urge of the arriving age to find a full rhythmic basis for its own way of self-expression. And so we find too the attempt to initiate a violent and unprecedented revolution in the whole fundamental method of poetic rhythm.

This tendency in some writers goes no farther than an irregular use of metre which does not really carry us any farther towards the desired result and is in no way an improvement on the past since it has no true artistic principle to guide us to freer and more consummate harmonies. But pushed to its logical issue it has created the still growing form of free verse of which we now find examples in most of the great literary languages and coupled with it a theory that this is the one future chance for poetry. Metre and rhyme are said to be played out, things of the past, which can no longer be allowed to chain and hamper the great and free movement which the enlarging spirit of poetry demands; as rhyme was in Milton's later view only a dainty trifle which he flung aside for the organ harmonies of his blank verse, so metre itself is a petty thing, half ornament, half fetter, which has to be flung aside for some nobly self-governed democratic anarchy that is to develop from this new type. That is a theory of very doubtful validity. In the hands of most of its exponents it seems to be in practice nothing but a licence for writing prose in variously cut lengths, prose breaking off at the end of a clause or in the middle of it to go on refreshed in the line below, — I have seen even a line of free verse consisting of a majestic solitary pronoun, — and that is more an eccentric method of printing than a new rhythm. But without accepting the theory in its intolerant entirety one can appreciate the motive which moved the greater masters and more skilful craftsmen of this form, if form it can be called, to make the innovation. There is something large and many-sided and constantly mutable in the life, thought and spirit of today which needs, to express it sympathetically, vast and flowing movements or on the contrary brief, sudden and abrupt paces or the alternation of these and intermediate and variant lengths and turns: there is something at the same time densely full and singularly and minutely subtle in the modern thinking mind which is with difficulty accommodable by the restricted range of subtleties, variations and fullnesses of any given poetic measure. Why not then break away from all the old hampering restrictions and find a new principle of harmony in accordance with the freedom, the breadth and largeness of view, the fineness of feeling and sensation of the modern spirit, some form which shall have the liberty of prose and yet command the intensified heights and fluctuations and falls of the cadence of poetry? There is no reason why not, if the thing can be done, — the proof of these things lies in the execution; but it may be doubted whether the method used is the right method. At any rate it has not been fully justified even in the hands of its greatest or most skilful exponents. It is used, as in Whitman, to give the roll of the sea of life or the broad and varying movements of the spirit of humanity in its vigorous experience and aspiration, or, as in Carpenter, to arrive at the free and harmonious accession of the human intelligence to profound, large and powerful truths of the spirit, or, as in certain French writers, to mould into accurate rhythm the very substance and soul and characteristic movement of soul-states, ideas or objects described and seen. These are things that need to be done, but it remains to be seen whether they cannot be done in the recognised and characteristic movement of poetry, rather than in a compromise with prose cadences. The genius of poetic measure walking in the path opened by the ancient discovery of cadenced beat and concentrated rhythm has not yet exhausted itself, nor is there any proof that it cannot accommodate its power to new needs or any sign that it can only survive in an arrested senility or fall into a refined decadence.

The most considerable representatives of this new and free form of poetic rhythm are English and American, Carpenter and Whitman. Tagore's translations of his lyrics have come in as a powerful adventitious aid, but are not really to the point in the question at issue; for these translations are nothing but a rhythmically poetic prose and that kind of writing, cadenced prose poetry, a well recognised form, cannot and does not try to compete with the established principle of measure; it is an indulgence, a minor variation which has yet its definite place and serves certain purposes which could not otherwise be fulfilled with any adequacy. It is perhaps the only method for the work Tagore intended, a poetic translation of poetry reproductive of the exact thought and spiritual intention of the original; for a version in the fixed measures of another language not only substitutes another mould for the original movement, but by the substitution gives it almost another soul, so powerful, distinct and creative a thing is poetic rhythm; but the more flexible, less insistent cadence of poetic prose does not so seize on and recast the spirit of the original movement; it may even give a far-off minimised shadow, echo, illusion of it, if the same or a similar spirit is at work: it can never have the same power, but it may have some echo of a similar suggestion. When for instance Tagore writes in English, —

> Thou settest a barrier in thine own being and thou callest thy severed self in myriad notes. This thy self-separation has taken body in me. The great pageant of thee and me has overspread the sky. With the tune of thee and me all the air is vibrant, and all ages pass with the hiding and seeking of thee and me. —

we have a very beautiful delicately cadenced poetic prose and nothing more. Tagore is what some of the French writers of *vers libre* are and Whitman and Carpenter are not, a delicate and subtle craftsman, and he has done his work with a perfect grace and spiritual fineness; but there is no attempt to do anything more than the just work in hand, no intention of displacing the old way of poetry in which he has done in his own language such wonderful things, by a new principle of poetic movement. If there were any such intention, it would have to be pronounced a failure. One has only to compare this English prose, beautiful as it is, with the original poetry to see how much has gone out with the change; something is successfully substituted which may satisfy the English reader, but can never satisfy the ear or the mind that has once listened to the singer's own native and magical melodies. And this is so even though the intellectual substance, the intellectual precision and distinctness of the thought are often more effective, carry home more quickly in the translation, because in the original the intellectual element, the thought limits are being constantly overborne and are sometimes almost swallowed up by the waves of suggestion that come stealing in with the music: so much more is heard than is said that the soul listening goes floating into that infinity and counts the definite contribution of the intelligence as of a lesser value. Precisely there lies the greatest power of poetic rhythm for the very highest work that the new age has to do, and that it can be done by a new use of the poetic method without breaking the whole form of poetry, Tagore's own lyrical work[1] in his mother tongue is the best evidence.

Whitman's aim is consciently, clearly, professedly to make a great revolution in the whole method of poetry, and if anybody could have succeeded, it ought to have been this giant of poetic thought with his energy of diction, this spiritual crowned athlete and vital prophet of democracy, liberty and the soul of man and Nature and all humanity. He is a great poet, one of the greatest in the power of his substance, the energy of his vision, the force of his style, the largeness at once of his personality and his universality. His is the most Homeric voice since Homer, in spite of the modern's ruder less elevated aesthesis of speech and the difference between that limited Olympian and this broad-souled Titan, in this that he has the nearness to something elemental which makes everything he says, even the most common and prosaic, sound out with a ring of greatness, gives a force even to his barest or heaviest phrases, throws even upon the coarsest, dullest, most physical things something of the divinity; and he has the elemental Homeric power of sufficient straightforward speech, the rush too of oceanic sound though it is here the surging of the Atlantic between continents, not the magic roll and wash of the Aegean around the isles of Greece. What he has not, is the unfailing poetic beauty and nobility which saves greatness from its defects — that supreme gift of Homer and Valmiki — and the self-restraint and obedience to a divine law which makes even the gods more divine. Whitman will remain great after all the objections that can be made against his method or his use of it, but the question is whether what served his unique personality, can be made a rule for lesser or different spirits, and whether the defects which we see but do not and cannot weigh too closely in him, will not be fatal when not saved by his all-uplifting largeness. A giant can pile up Pelion and Ossa and make of it an unhewn chaotic stair to Olympus, but others would be better and more safely employed in cutting steps of marble or raising by music a ladder of sapphires and rubies to their higher or their middle heavens. Personality, force, temperament can do unusual miracles, but the miracle cannot always be turned into a method or a standard.

---

[1] This cannot quite be said or not in the same degree about other work of Tagore's where this great lyrist is not so much himself in his movement, though he is always a master of rhythm.

Whitman's verse, if it can be so called, is not simply a cadenced prose, though quite a multitude of his lines only just rise above the prose rhythm. The difference is that there is a constant will to intensify the fall of the movement so that instead of the unobtrusive ictus of prose, we have a fall of the tread, almost a beat, and sometimes a real beat, a meeting and parting, sometimes a deliberate clash or even crowding together of stresses which recall the spirit of the poetical movement, though they obey no recognised structural law of repetitions and variations. In this kind of rhythm we find actually three different levels — the distinction may be a little rough, but it will serve, — a gradation which is very instructive. First we have a movement which just manages to be other than prose movement, but yet is full of the memory of a certain kind of prose rhythm. Here the first defect is that the ear is sometimes irritated, sometimes disappointed and baulked by a divided demand, memory or expectation, hears always the prose suggestion behind pursuing and dragging down the feet of the poetic enthusiasm. It is as if one were watching the "aerial walk" of a Hathayogin who had just conquered the force of gravitation, but only to the extent of a few inches, so that one is always expecting the moment which will bring him down with a bump to mother earth. It is something like a skimming just above the ground of prose, sometimes a dragging of the feet with a frequent touch and upkicking of the dust, for inevitably the poetic diction and imaginative power of style fall to the same level. Much of Whitman's work is in this manner; he carries it off by the largeness and sea-like roll of the total impression, but others have not the same success, — even the French craftsmen are weighed down, — and in them the whole has a draggled and painful effect of an amphibious waddling incertitude. But there is a nobler level at which he often keeps which does not get out of sight of the prose plain or lift up above all its gravitation, but still has a certain poetic power, greatness and nobility of movement. But it is still below what an equal force would have given in the master measures of poetry.

But the possibilities of an instrument have to be judged by its greatest effects, and there are poems, lines, passages in which Whitman strikes out a harmony which has no kinship to nor any memory of the prose gravitation, but is as far above it as anything done in the great metrical cadences. And here, and not only in Whitman, but in all writers in this form who rise to that height, we find that consciously or unconsciously they arrive at the same secret principle, and that is the essential principle of Greek choric and dithyrambic poetry turned to the law of a language which has not the strong resource of quantity. Arnold deliberately attempted such an adaptation but, in spite of beautiful passages, with scant success; still when he writes such a line as

> The too vast orb of her fate,

it is this choric movement that he reproduces. Whitman's first poem in *Sea-Drift* and a number of others are written partly or throughout in this manner. When he gives us the dactylic and spondaic harmony of his lines,

Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,
Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle,
Out of the ninth-month midnight,

one of them wanting only one foot to be a very perfect hexameter or the subtly varied movement of this other passage,

Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one, the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama,

one has almost the rhythmical illusion of listening to a Sophoclean or Aeschylean chorus. In the opening stanzas of the noble *Prayer of Columbus*, there is a continuous iambic metrical stress, but with the choric movement. One finds the same thing sometimes in French *vers libre*, — one poem at least of the kind I have seen of wonderful beauty, — though the success is not so easy in that language. Tagore has recently attempted a kind of free verse in Bengali, not so good as his regular metres, though melodious enough, as everything must be that is written by this master musician of the word, and throughout there is the same choric or dithyrambic principle of movement. This then seems to be the natural high-water mark of free poetical rhythm; it is a use of the poetic principle of measure in its essence without the limitations of a set form. Evidently much can be done in this rhythmical method. But it is yet doubtful whether in languages which lack the support of quantitative measure, poetical expression in this form can carry home with at all the same force as in the received ways of word-music.

We may get some idea of the limitations of the form by one or two examples from the poetry of Carpenter I find quoted by Mr. Cousins in his essay. Carpenter with a poetic faculty of a high order, a prophet of democracy and of the Self, like Whitman, but of a higher more spiritual truth of the Self, has like him found it impossible to restrain the largeness of his vision and personality in the bonds of metrical poetry. In both we see that the prophet and thinker predominate over the poet and artist. Less rough and great than the epic voice from the other side of the ocean, his poetry has a more harmonious, limpid and meditative fullness. But the lesser abundance of force and drive makes us feel more the limitations of his form. The thought is not only great, but poetically great and satisfying, the expression as form of thought is noble and admirable, but we miss the subtler rhythmic uplift of the poetic enthusiasm which is given to minds of much less power by the inspiring cadence and the ordered measures of the poetic spirit, *chandas*. His flow is ordinarily of the middle kind with occasional choric turns and movements, but the latter do not carry with them the full force of the intenser poetic cadence. To cite one passage, —

> There in the region of equality in the world of Freedom no longer limited, standing on a lofty peak in heaven above the clouds,
> From below hidden. Yet to all who pass into that region most clearly visible
> He the Eternal appeared.

Whitman would have broken that up into five lines and got by it a more distinct and forcible effect, — for the breath of poetry best rises and falls in brief and intense lengths; so printed, it would be at once apparent that we have a varied choric movement, a little stumbling into half-prose just before the end, but otherwise admirable, with two sudden turns of great poetic force, where the movement is precisely that of the Greek chorus. But the total effect is the sense of what one might almost call a noble and chanting superprose rhythm.

This appears more clearly in another passage where Carpenter's movement is more at its normal level. He begins with a strain which is only just distinguishable from the prose strain, but suddenly rises from it to the beginning of a choric elevation,

> As one shuts a door after a long confinement in the house — so out of your own plans and purposes escaping, —

then comes the full choric rise,

> Out of the mirror-lined chambers of self (grand though they be, but O how dreary!) in which you have hitherto spent your life, —

where, if the line had only ended with the parenthesis, it would have been a strain of perfect choric poetry, magnificently thought, imaged and cadenced, but the closing words spoil the effect, for they are a sharp descent towards the prose level. There are too elevations rising up from a rhythmical prose cadence but lifted high by the scriptural nobility of phrase and spiritual turn which we get so often in Carpenter. These fluctuations appear then to be inherent in the form and it seems to me that being in their nature a constant fall from the striving after a sustained perfection, they take away altogether from the claims of this "free verse". In lesser writers there is a similar but much more pronounced inadequacy; they rise little and fall or drag along with the most easily satisfied self-content in lowness. But that poets of great power should be satisfied with these deficiencies of their instrument and their most cultured readers accept them without question, indicates an inferiority, almost a depravation in the modern ear, or at least a great remissness in the austerity of the search after perfection. It is now sometimes said that the lines of poetry should follow the lines of life, and life, it might be contended, is of this kind, thought itself is of this kind, and the rhythm of poetry gains in sincerity by following them. But art is not of this kind, the poetic spirit is not of this kind; the nature of art is to strive after a nobler beauty and more sustained perfection than life can give, the nature of poetry is to soar on the wings of the inspiration to the highest intensities and keep winging, as far as may be, always near to them. A form which in the name of freedom remits and relaxes this effort, whatever its other merits and advantages, means a laxity of effort and is a dangerous downward concession.

But there is another objection which may be denied, but seems to me true, that this kind of verse does not give its full spiritual value to the poet's speech. Carpenter has a power of substance, thought-vision, image, expression which is very rare and in all these respects he would have been recognised as not only equal but superior to many who have enjoyed in their own day the reputation of poets of the first rank. That he is not so recognised is due to the inferior form, a form legitimate enough for lesser uses, but not easily capable of the greatest poetic effects. Whitman too for all his energy loses in this way; even his greatest things do not go absolutely and immediately home, or having entered they do not so easily seize on the soul, take possession and rest in a calm, yet vibrating mastery. The real poetic cadence has that power, and to make the full use of it is the sign of the greatest masters; it has in it then something magical, immediate and miraculous, an unanalysable triumph of the spirit. But this other movement has not that stamp, it does only a little more than a highly concentrated prose might do, and this is because of the three indispensable intensities of poetry it may have intensity of thought and soul-substance, intensity of expression, but the intensity of rhythm, which is poetry's primal need, is lowered and diluted, — even, one feels, to a certain extent in its choric movements: by that lowering the two other intensities suffer, the poet himself tends to loosen them to the level of his movement. If that is so, those who use the form to meet the demands of the new age, are on the wrong track. But a demand is there and it indicates a real need. It is evident that Whitman and Carpenter could not have expressed themselves altogether in the existing forms, even if they had made the attempt. But if the new age is to express itself with the highest poetical power, it must be by new discoveries within the principle of the intenser poetical rhythm. The recent or living masters may not have done this, though we may claim that some beginnings have been made, but the new age is only at its commencement; the decisive departures, the unforeseen creations may yet be due which will equip it with an instrument or many instruments suited to the largeness, depth and subtlety of the coming spirit.

Chapter XXI

Recent English Poetry – 2

THE EFFECTIVE stream of poetry in the English tongue has followed no such strong distinctive turn as would be able to sweep the effort of rhythmic expression along with it in one mastering direction. The poets of this age pursue much more even than their predecessors the bent of their personality, not guided by any uniting thought or standard of form, and have no other connecting link than the subtle similarities which the spirit of the age always gives to its work of creation. But the present age is so loose, fluid and many-motived that this subtler community is not easily tangible and works out in much less of an open family resemblance than in the Victorian poets or their predecessors. Only in the Celtic revival in Ireland have there been a number of considerable writers united by a common artistic motive and ideal, and it may be for that reason that a certain persistent thing which is striving to be and to get expression in the poetry of the time finds itself in a first illumination, emerges as a conscious power and seeks for its adequate form and rhythm. But we find it elsewhere too in obscurer forms; on this element we may pause to lay stress while we leave aside as of less importance the crowding variety of other temperamental and personal emphasis which hides it from view or chokes up its channels of emergence. This subtler element, although far from being yet victorious over the tradition of the past or the more clamorous powers of the present, is the most original, the most unworked and fruitful in promise for the future and represents the highest possibility of a greater coming poetry. A distinct spiritual turn, the straining towards a deeper, more potent, supra-intellectual and supravital vision of things is its innermost secret of creative power. Now increasingly the highest turn of the human mind indicates a large opening of its vision to the self as well as the person of man and the spirit of Nature, to supernature, to the cosmic, the universal and the eternal, but without any loosing of the hold on life and earth, which is likely to survive and govern thought and creation and the forms of our living when the present multitude of standpoints, all the conflict and chaos of a manifold seeking and new formation, have resolved themselves into the harmony of a centralising and embracing outlook. That infinite self-discovery would be the logical outcome of the movement of the past and the present century and the widest possibility and best chance open to the human spirit: taking up the thought of the ages into a mightier arc of interpretation and realisation, it would be the crowning of one and the opening of a new and greater cycle.

The poets of yesterday and today, Whitman, Carpenter, the Irish poets, Tagore, but also others in their degree are forerunners of this new spirit and way of seeing, prophets sometimes, but at others only illumined by occasional hints or by side rays of a light which has not flooded all their vision. I may take for my purpose four of them whose names stand behind or are still with us and their station already among those whose work endures, Meredith and Phillips among recent English poets, A. E. and Yeats of the Irish singers.[1] There is a very great difference of the degree and power with which the spirit has opened to them its secret and a great difference too in the turn which they give to its promptings. The two English poets have it at moments in a high clarity, but at others it is only a suggestion behind which gives a penetrating, original and profound tone to their work. This is their native secret when they go deepest into themselves, a thing they get sometimes into clear speech perhaps by right of their Celtic inheritance; but they work in the English tradition, follow other attractions, bear the burden of a tendency of aesthetic feeling, form and treatment which lead away from the pursuit of the direct seeking and the perfect manner. The consistent note we get more constantly in the Irish poets who, freer in mind from this past tradition, though something of it must cling perhaps to all who write in the English tongue, unless they start with the superb revolutionary defiance of Whitman, — are able to strike out with a less encumbered gait into new paths of thought and movement. They have too an original well of inspiration in the Celtic spirit, temperament and tradition from which they draw a magical and delicate draught of other air naturally stimulative of a subtler and more spiritual vision: they escape, and that is another supreme advantage, from the overstress of the intellectual and vital notes which in their English kindred and compeers take from the direct purity of utterance of their spirit. None of them has indeed the large and puissant voice of Whitman or his dominant force of poetic personality, though they have what he has not or did not care to evolve, the artistic faculty and genius, but each has a high peculiar power in his own way of light, is at his best, and the best is not infrequent even in the least of them, a poet of the first rank. The greatness of scope and unified plenitude of power is absent which would have been needed to make any one of them a grand representative voice of the time. But they lead and prepare, they strike great new notes, open or at least give hints of great new ways for a future poetry.

---

[1] I take most of my citations from Mr. Cousins' book, the only source I have at present before me; but though few, they are made from the same standpoint and selected with singular felicity and serve fully my purpose.

One thing that comes home to us when we take a comparative view of this poetry, when we look at the inmost strands of the expression at which it arrives in these four poets, all of them among its boldest and most original and therefore most revealing representatives, is a certain common element behind their differences; this we find in a novel use of rhythmic movement, a sudden new moving force, turn, stamp and fashion in the minting of the gold and silver of their language and as the secret of this departure a quite other innate or conscious aim, not always manifest in the visible form of the substance, though that too is there in plenty, but in the way of seeing the object on which the inner eye is turned, whether it be idea, thing or person, significant emotion or glint of soul-power in man or revealing object or suggestive hint in Nature. This aim we may perhaps best express if we take up and modify a phrase of Meredith's when he speaks of the hampered human voice that could never say

> Our inmost in the sweetest way —

hampered by the austerity of its wisdom or the excess of its sense and passion. But if it is rarely that this sweetest way is found — yet do we not get near to it sometimes in Yeats and Tagore? — at least this new turn of the poetic voice is characteristically an endeavour to see and to say our inmost in the inmost way.

The natural turn of poetry, that which gives to it its soul of superiority to other ways of human utterance, is the endeavour of the interpretative cast of its mind always to look beyond the object, even to get behind it and evoke from a something that was waiting for us within its own inevitable speech and rhythm. That inwardness is the triumph of great poetical speech, whether the poet has his eye like Homer on physical object and power of action and the externalised thought and emotion which they throw up into the surface roll of life, or else like Shakespeare on the surge of the life-spirit and its forms of character and passion and its waves of self-interpreting thought and reflection, or on the play of the detached or half-detached seeing intellect or the inspired reason, or on the strainings of the desire-soul of man striving to find the delight of things in the thousand-coloured threads of the double web of our existence. The manner and yield of poetry vary according to the depth we penetrate into that inner something which is hidden by layer upon layer of many an intervening medium, but which offers and gives itself wonderfully in all of them, yet seems to retreat always and invites to a profounder pursuit and discovery; it varies according to the insistence of the eye on the object or its liberation into the greater significance of which the object is only the seizable symbol, or according as we are stopped by the medium or break through it to some truth of the one thing in all which throws out in these various sheaths such different richnesses of form, colour and suggestion of idea and sound, but is yet one in all things to the soul that can discover its eternal unity.

But this new way of seeing is a first effort to get through the object and the medium and employ them only as suggestive instruments, to break beyond the life-force and the emotion, the imagination and the idea, not to be stopped by these things, though using the inmost life-stress, the inmost releasing force of the emotion, the inmost plunge of the imagination or its most searching power of form, colour and symbol, the inmost penetrating subtlety of the idea and to arrive at what we may call the soul-sense, the soul-sound and as far as may be the soul-word interpretative of some yet deeper revealing truth in all their objects. There is in most recent poetry that counts, though less here, more there, some element of this kind of straining, force, pressure on sound and word and vision, and though it often turns into strange, obscure and devious paths, obstructed by the insistence of the superficial desire-soul or weighted by the intellect, — the two powers in us which modern humanity has developed into an exaggerated predominance, — still it reaches out towards this effort to see our inmost in the inmost way, and when it gets free, delivers voices of a supreme power, vision and purity. And what it must lead to in the end if it gets to its end, does not stop short or turn aside after some other lure, must be some direct seeing by the soul of the soul or self everywhere in its own delivered force of vision, — the direct vision of Indian aspiration, *ātmani ātmānam ātmanā*, — not the sensuous or the imaginative or the intellectual or the vital insistence, but a greater Potency using and surmounting them, the Soul's own delivered self-vision in all things and delight of its own greatness and light and beauty. That is the turn of mind which is now making itself heard in effort, though not in full mastery, stammered here, there sung with a slight, delicate and subtle sweetness or with an initial load of rare or crowding suggestion, but waiting still the splendour of the master song that shall rise into the light of the spirit, —

So pure that it salutes the suns,
The voice of one for millions,
In whom the millions rejoice
For giving their one spirit voice.

The inmost seeing must bring out of itself to be poetically effective the inmost word and sound, must find out a luminous purity of its steps or a profound depth of its movement, must be said in the inmost way. Rhythm is the most potent, founding element of poetic expression, and though most modern poets depend or at least lean more heavily on force of thought and substance than on the greater musical suggestions of rhythm, — Shelley, Swinburne, Yeats are exceptions, — there must always be a change in this basis of the poet's art when there is a substantial change of the constituting spirit and motive. Especially when there is this more subtle spiritual aim, the rhythmical movement becomes of a new importance. Whether as an aid to help out by the subtle meaning of the cadence the total spiritual suggestion of the speech or, more supremely, to bring in out of the depths, as great music does, some surge or outwelling of the infinite movement and cry of the spirit and bear like a jewel of light on its breast the outbreak of the inevitable revealing word, it must be persuaded to find some new unity of measure and speech, the thought echoing with the very native sound of its Idea. We find accordingly the beginning, sometimes something more, of another spirit in the movement of this poetry. These poets use for the most part old established metrical forms or variations of them; when there are departures, they do not go very far from the familiar base: but in their way of using them we are as far as possible in its intrinsic principle from the method of the older poets. The change may be described as a more complete subordination of the metrical insistence to the inner suggestion of the movement. The old poets depended greatly on the metrical fall, made much of the external mould and its possible devices and filled it with the tones of life or thought or the excitement of the thing that possessed them and moved them to speech. Shakespeare's lines,

> Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
> Seal up the shipboy's eyes and rock his brains
> In cradle of the rude imperious surge,

are a supreme instance of the manner, or Milton's

Those thoughts that wander through eternity,

or any of his stately rolling lines or periods of organ music will do for a great illustration. Pope and Dryden simply overdid the reliance on measure and chained themselves up in a monotony of pointed metrical effect. The succeeding poets got back to the greater freedoms of tone and used them in a new way, but the principle remains the same, — as in Shelley's

Rarely, rarely comest thou,
  Spirit of Delight,

or Wordsworth's

For old unhappy far-off things
  And battles long ago, —

both of them examples of the ordinary base used with a deep simplicity of single tone and a melodious insistence; or otherwise, where the tone on the contrary makes the most of the mould,

And wild-roses and ivy serpentine,

or,

Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

The base of the old poetry is a march, a walk or a lilt, a measured flow, roll or surge, — or it is with less competent metrists a tripping trot, dance or gallop: but even in the freest movements there is a prevailing metrical insistence. In the new movement the old base is there, but whatever show it may make, its real importance tends to drop into a very second place. Insistence of tone has taken full possession of or even conquered the insistence of the fall. A spiritual intonation, not content to fill and at its strongest overflow the metrical mould, but insistent to take it into itself and carrying it rather than carried in it, is the secret of its melody or its harmony. There is here the sound of the coming in, perhaps only the first suggestion of a new music.

The main reliance on the metrical stress can leave room in powerful hands for very great rhythms, but it has its limitations, from which different poets try to get release by different devices. Milton sought it in variations of pause and the engulfing swell of periods of large and resonant harmony, Swinburne by the cymbal clang of his alliterations and a rush and surge of assonant lyrical sound, Browning by a calculated roughness. Shakespeare himself under a great stress of crowding life and thought suggestions simply broke the back and joints of his instrument and tortured it into shapes from which he got out masterfully irregular harmonies sometimes of a great power, a process of which we may perhaps see in Whitmanesque free verse the far-off logical consequence. These more recent poets, whatever metrical devices they may use, depend upon something else, on a method which at its clearest becomes a principle of pure sound intonation.

Phillips' blank verse which is of a very original mould, is built on this principle. The poet first gets as his basis the most simple, direct and easy form possible of the metre, which he can loosen as much as possible, suppress or shift or add as many stresses as he chooses, or on the contrary weigh extraordinarily upon his stresses so as to give an impression of long space or burdened lingering or some echo of infinite duration; but in either case the object is to get free room for the play of tone. Four lines come together,

> The history of a flower in the air
> Liable but to breezes and to time,
> As rich and purposeless as is the rose,
> Thy simple doom is to be beautiful,

in which there are only three stresses, in the last one might almost say two and a half, a small number of quantitatively long syllables are the physical support of the verse, — as if quantity were trying to come back to first importance in a language of stresses, — and the rest is made up of varying minor tones. Or the long drawn out syllables are brought in in great abundance, in a variety of combinations, closely packed and largely spaced, as in

> The fiery funeral of foliage old,

or,

> With slow sweet surgery restore the brain,

or again,

> The vault closed back, woe upon woe, the wheel
> Revolved, the stone rebounded, for that time
> Hades her interrupted life resumed.

These and others are the means used, but at their back is the principle of a free intonation. It is the tone that builds the verse, gives it its real form and the metrical mould, forced to become and to do whatever the tone chooses, whatever is needed for the intonation of the inmost thought, is a flexible convenience and a needed restraint, — for if loosened or freely spaced, it is not broken, — but no longer a chain and hardly felt even as a limitation. The significance is that the poet has a rhythm of thought and spirit already sounding somewhere within him and in bringing it out he imposes it consciously on his outer instrument with an imperious sovereignty and does not get to it, like the older masters, as the result of a faithful observance of the metrical harmony.

The other poets use a different, less open and forceful outer method, but the same principle emerges in greater or less degree as if by some spiritual necessity. Meredith's poetry belongs to an earlier technique, observes faithfully the metrical law, but the subtler thing is already coming: some curious turn is given to the beat which persistently compels it to serve some dominant soul-tone of the thought and seeing and to dance attendance on that, as in the four lines already quoted from *The Lark Ascending*, or else there is the turn towards long spaces and lingering tones where the metrical sound floats and seems always on the point of drowning in some deep sea of inner intonation, —

Through widening chambers of surprise to where
Throbs rapture near an end that aye recedes,
Because his touch is infinite and lends
A yonder to all ends, —

a description which might well be applied to the whole drift and cause of this spiritual principle of rhythm. A. E. is not a great rhythmist, he is too preoccupied with his vision, more of a truth-seer than a truth-hearer of the Spirit, but when the hearing comes, the *śruti*, somehow or other without any expenditure of device the full spiritual intonation rises up and takes possession of the music, — to give one instance only,

Like winds and waters were her ways:
They heed not immemorial cries;
They move to their high destinies
Beyond the little voice that prays.

And in Yeats, a supreme artist in rhythm, this spiritual intonation is the very secret of all his subtlest melodies and harmonies and reveals itself whether in the use of old and common metres which cease to be either old or common in his hands or in delicate new turns of verse. We get it in his blank verse, taken at random, —

A sweet miraculous terrifying sound, —

or in the mounting flight of that couplet on the flaming multitude

That rise, wing upon wing, flame above flame
And like a storm cry the ineffable name,

or heard through the slowly errant footfalls of that other,

In all poor foolish things that live a day
Eternal Beauty wandering on her way, —

but most of all in the lyrical movements, —

With all the earth and the sky and the water remade, like a
casket of gold
For my dream of your image that blossoms, a rose in the deeps
of my heart.

There we have, very near to the ear of the sense, that inaudible music floating the vocal music, the song unheard, or heard only behind and in the inner silence, to catch some echo of which is the privilege of music but also the highest intention of poetical rhythm.

Beyond all analysis or set provision of means that is the constant attempt to which poetry must move, if this new realm is to open to its footsteps, not to suit the metre to the intellectual or even the emotional sense or to cast it in the moulds of life, but to seize some sound, some intonation of the voice of the soul, the lyric or the epic *chandas* or the large or simple measures of its meditation and creation, which, as the old Vedic theory would say, initiate, roll out and support all the steps of the universe. This intoned music in which the outer form becomes an external subtle means and suggestion, but the building power is other and brings in a spiritual accompaniment which is the real thing we have to listen to, opens at least one line on which we can arrive at that greater hearing whose wave can bring with it the inspiring word of a higher vision. For the musical tone of the older poetry is the simply sensuous, the emotional, the thought or the life tone with the spiritual cadence as the result of some strong intensity of these things, but here is some beginning of a direct spiritual intonation.

Chapter XXII

Recent English Poetry – 3

THE RHYTHMIC change which distinguishes the new poetry, may not be easy to seize at the first hearing, for it is a subtle thing in its spirit more than in its body, commencing only and obscured by the outward adherence to the apparent turn-out and method of older forms; but there is a change too, more readily tangible, in the language of this poetry, in that fusion of a concentrated substance of the idea and a transmuting essence of the speech which we mean by poetic style. But here too, if we would understand in its issues the evolution of poetic speech in a language, it is on the subtler things of the spirit, the significant inner changes that we must keep our eye; for it is these that determine the rest and are the heart of the matter. We take little account of the psychology of poetic genius and are content with saying that the word of the poet is the speech of the imagination or that he works by an inspiration. But this is an insufficient account; for imagination is of many different kinds and inspiration touches the mind at different levels and breaks out through different media before it issues through the gates of the creative imagination. What we mean by inspiration is that the impetus to poetic creation and utterance comes to us from a superconscient source above the ordinary mentality, so that what is written seems not to be the fabrication of the brain-mind, but something more sovereign breathed or poured in from above. That is the possession by the divine *enthousiasmos* of which Plato has spoken. But it is seldom that the whole word leaps direct from that source, that cavern of natal light ready-shaped and with the pure stamp of its divine origin, — ordinarily it goes through some secondary process in the brain-mind itself, gets its impulse and unformed substance perhaps from above, but subjects it to an intellectual or other earthly change; there is in that change always indeed some superior power born of the excitement of the higher possession, but also some alloy too of our mortality. And the character, value and force of the word of the poet vary according to the action of those parts of our mentality which dominate in the change, — the vital mind, the emotional temperament, the imaginative or reflective intellect or the higher intuitive intelligence. The Tantric theory of Speech, the inspired seeing and creative goddess enthroned in our various soul-centres in her several forms and with her higher and higher stations, becomes here an actual and luminously perceptible truth of our being. But also there is in us a direct medium between that divine and this human mentality, an intuitive soul-mind supporting the rest, which has its share both in the transmission and the formal creation, and it is where this gets out into overt working, discloses its shaping touch or makes heard its transmitting voice that we get the really immortal tones of speech and heights of creation. And it is the epochs when there is in the mind of a race some enthusiastic outburst or some calm august action of this intuitive power, intermediary of the inspirations of the spirit or its revelations, that make the great ages of poetry.

In English literature this period was the Elizabethan. Then the speech of poetry got into it a ring and turn of direct intuitive power, a spontaneous fullness of vision and divine fashion in its utterance which it had not at all before and has hardly had afterwards. Even the lesser poets of the time are touched by it, but in Shakespeare it runs in a stream and condenses to a richly-loaded and crowding mass of the work and word of the intuition almost unexampled in any poetry. The difference can be measured by taking the work of Chaucer or of subsequent poets almost at their best and of Shakespeare at a quite ordinary level and feeling the effect on the poetic listener in our own intuitive being. We take Chaucer with his easy adequate limpidity, —

> He was a very parfit gentle knight,

and then pass on to Shakespeare's rapid seizing of the intuitive inevitable word and the disclosing turn of phrase which admits us at once to a direct vision of the thing he shows us, —

Of moving accidents by flood and field,
Of hair-breadth scapes in the imminent deadly breach,

where with quite as simple a thing to say and a perfect force of directness in saying it, it is yet a vastly different kind of directness. The one speaks from the poetic intellect and satisfies by a just and pleasing expression, in the other the words get, one might say, into the entrails of vision and do not stop short at the clear measure of the thing seen, but evoke their very quality and give us immediately the inmost vital fibre and thrill of the life they describe and interpret. It is not merely a difference of the measure of the genius, but of its source. This language of Shakespeare's is a unique and wonderful thing; it has everywhere the royalty of the sovereign intuitive mind looking into and not merely at life and in this most myriad-minded of poets it takes like life itself many tones, but that intuitive readiness to get through, seize the lurking word and bring it out from the heart of the thing itself is almost always its secret. From that, he might have said, could he have given a better account of his own working, and not by any mere mirroring of things in Nature,

It was my hint to speak, such was the process.

We are most readily struck in Shakespeare by the lines and passages in which the word thus seized and brought out is followed swiftly on the heels by another and another of its kind, many crowding together or even fused and run into each other in a single phrase of many suggestions, — for this manner is peculiarly his own and others can only occasionally come near to it. Such passages recur to the mind as those in the soliloquy on sleep or the well-known lines in *Macbeth*,

Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart.

His is often a highly imaged style, but Shakespeare's images are not, as with so many poets, decorative or brought in to enforce and visualise the intellectual sense, they are more immediately revelatory, intimate to the thing he speaks and rather the proper stuff of the fact itself than images. But he has too a clearer, less crowded, still swifter fashion of speech in which they are absent; for an example,

> She should have died hereafter;
> There would have been a time for such a word, —

which has yet the same deep and penetrating intuitive spirit in its utterance. Or the two manners meet together and lean on each other, —

> I have lived long enough; my way of life
> Is fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf,

or become one, as in the last speeches of Antony, —

> I am dying, Egypt, dying; only
> I here importune death awhile, until
> Of many thousand kisses the poor last
> I lay upon thy lips.

But all have the same characteristic stamp of the intuitive mind rapidly and powerfully at work; but always too, — and this is the important distinction, — that mediator between the secret spirit and our ordinary surface mentality works in him through and behind the life vision to give the vital impression, the vital psychology, the life-burden of the thought, the emotion, the act or the thing seen in Nature.

The movement that immediately followed, abandoned this power which Shakespeare and the Elizabethans had brought into English poetry; it sought after a language cut into the precision or full with the suggestions of the poetical intellect, and it gained something by its sacrifice; it purified the language, got rid of Elizabethan conceit and extravagance, laid a clearer basis of thought, went back to ordinary speech and raised it into a fit instrument of the poetical imagination. But it lost this Shakespearian directness of intuitive vision and spontaneous power of utterance. Gray in a notable passage observes and laments the loss, without penetrating into its cause and nature, and he tried sometimes in his own way, within the cadre of an intellectualised language, to recover something of the power. The later poets get a compensation in other directions by a heightening of the clarified thought and imagination, but the basic substance of the speech seems to have irrecoverably changed and its more tenuous spirit and make impose on the searching audacities of the intuition the curbing restraints and limits of the imaginative intelligence. Shelley's

> Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought,

Keats'

> A thing of beauty is a joy for ever,

or his

> To that large utterance of the early Gods,

or Wordsworth's

> the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world,

give the force and pitch and measure of this often clear, strong, large and luminous, but less intensely surprising and uplifting manner. English poetry has got away from the Elizabethan outbreak nearer to a kinship with the mind and manner of the Greek and Latin poets and their intellectual descendants, though still, it is to be noted, keeping something, a subtle and intimate turn, a power of fire and ether which has become native to it, a legacy from the Shakespearian speech which was not there in its beginnings. This imaginatively intellectual basis of speech remains constant down to the end of the Victorian era.

But at the same time there emerges, at times, a certain effort to recapture the Shakespearian potency and intensity accompanied by a new and higher element in the workings of the poetic inspiration. When we try to put a name on it, — a thing which the poet himself seldom does successfully, for the creative instinct does not usually care to burden itself with a too intellectual self-consciousness, — we can see that this is an attempt to return to the fullness and the awakening turn of the direct intuitive expression on a subtler and more ethereal level. The clarified intellect observing life from above is in itself a higher thing than the vital and emotional mind which responds more immediately and powerfully to life, but is caught in its bonds; and if the direct intuitive power can be got to work on the level just above the ordinary thinking mind where that mind opens through the full intuitive intelligence to a greater supra-intellectual mass and subtlety of light, it will bring in the revelation and inspiration of mightier and profounder things than when it works from behind the mind — even the vividly thinking mind of life and its vital sight and feeling. For here, on the lower level, we get at most, as in Shakespeare, at the spirit in life with all its power of vital thought and its potency of passion and emotion; but there we shall get the greater spirit which embraces life, but shows us too all that is behind it, all that it dimly means and strives in embarrassed act and thought to bring into expression. Of this effort and this new thing we get magical first indications in the pre-Victorian poets, as in Wordsworth's

> And beauty born of murmuring sound
> Shall pass into her face,

or see the first motion towards it, the first seeking for a suitable style, as in Keats'

> Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
> Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
> Far from the fiery noon and eve's one star,

but also though less often, a sudden leaping out of the thing itself, —

> Solitary thinkings such as dodge
> Conception to the very bourne of heaven,

or

> The journey homeward to habitual self.

These lines of Keats are Shakespearian in their quality, they have recovered the direct revealing word and intimate image of the full intuitive manner, but they enter into a world of thought and inner truth other than Shakespeare's; by the passage through the detaching intellect and beyond it they have got to the borders of the realm of another and greater self than the life-self, though there we include and take up life into the deeper self-vision. In the Victorian poets we get occasionally the same tendency in a stronger but less happy force; for it is weighted down by an increased intellectuality, in Browning by the robust strenuousness of the analytic intelligence, in Tennyson by the tendency to mere trimming of expression or glitter and wealth of artistic colour; but we have its voice sometimes, as in this line of the *Lotos-Eaters*, —

> Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.

But it has not yet arrived, it is still seeking for itself, beating fitfully at the gates of the greater intuitive vision and expression.

But in more recent work it is precisely the recovery of this supreme power of speech on that loftier and subtler level which to one who comes freshly to this poetry breaks out with a sense of satisfying surprise and discovery. It is not complete; it is not everywhere; it is only just rising from the acquired basis of the previous heights of expression to its own realm; but it is there in a comparative abundance and it is the highest strain of its intensities. We find it in Meredith; when he writes of "Colour, the soul's bridegroom," he has got the intimate revealing image of this fuller and higher intuitive manner, or in his lark's

> silver chain of sound
> Of many links without a break:

when he writes, again,

Nor know they joy of sight
Who deem the wave of rapt desire must be
Its wrecking and last issue of delight,

he has got the perfected turn of the direct intuitive word of thought in its more crowded manner of suggestion, — the kinship in the last line to the Shakespearian manner is close, — as too its more clear and limpid speech in other turns,

The song seraphically free
From taint of personality;

and in the lines,

Dead seasons quicken in one petal spot
Of colour unforgot,

he has it ready for an intuitive and vivid spiritual interpretation of Nature. We find it in Phillips'

Dreadful suspended business and vast life
Pausing,

or in his trees

Motionless in an ecstasy of rain.

In the Irish poets it comes with less of the Shakespearian kinship, though Yeats has often enough a different but corresponding manner, but most characteristically in a delicate and fine beauty of the word of vision and of an intuitive entrance into the mystery of things, as in lines like A. E.'s

Is thrilled by fires of hidden day
And haunted by all mystery,

or passages already quoted from Yeats, or, to give one other instance, his

When God goes by with white footfall.

This is a style and substance which recovers something that had been lost and yet is new and pregnant of new things in English literature.

It is sufficient at present to indicate this new power of language. But we must see whence it arises and to what possibility it points in the widening of the realms of poetic interpretation. It points to a greater thing than has yet been achieved and it is itself a higher achievement, — apart from all question of the force and genius of individual poets. Shakespeare is still — though need he be always? — immeasurably the largest name in English poetry; but still, however preeminent his genius, there remain greater things to be seen by the poet than Shakespeare saw and greater things to be said in poetry than Shakespeare said, — and here we have an indication of the way on which they lie and of the gates which open to their hiding-place and own home of light and self-revelation.

Chapter XXIII

Recent English Poetry – 4

THE INSPIRING spirit and shaping substance of this new poetry, that which gives it its peculiar turn, raises the power of its style to the intuitive closeness or directness and presses on it to bring in another law of its movement, has been indicated to some extent in the core of its meaning, but it is necessary to dwell on it more perusingly, that we may get a closer glimpse of the things towards which we are moving. The change that is coming or at least striving to come, might be described on the surface as a great and subtle deepening and enlarging of the thought-mind in the race and a new profounder, closer, more intimate way of seeing, feeling, appreciating, interpreting life and Nature and existence. The thought of the middle and even the later nineteenth century was wide in its way, especially in its range and breadth of surface or in comparison with the narrower thought of the preceding ages, but it was acute rather than profound, superficial even in its attempt at penetration. It sought for its food over a great country, but it did not wing high in the breadth of the altitudes or plunge down into the largeness of the depths. Perhaps the distinction is best marked by that significant movement of philosophic thought which now repelled by these limitations rejects the supremacy of the intellect and seeks for the secret of things in the intuition, in the inmost suggestions of life, in the innate will and principle of action and points more or less obscurely through these things to a spirit or self or nameless somewhat superconscient to or at least greater than our intellectual mind and reason. The nineteenth century was intellectual, not intuitive, critical rather than creative, or creative mostly by the constructive force of the critical mind, — critically constructive, we may then say, rather than creative by any direct insight and interpretation, — curiously observative of the phenomenon of life and Nature, concerned with many interests, patient, accurate and analytic in its method of scrutiny, occupied by a stress of many problems, moved by strong human and democratic sympathies, attracted by intellectual ideals, but mechanical and outward in stress and rather curious and inventive than deep or fine in its aesthetic feeling. It has looked much at the body and life and active idea, but little at the deeper soul and spirit of things. Poetry has been affected by the turn of the human mind in this age; it has been brilliant, curious, careful, inventive, interested and interesting, moving over a great range of subjects, closely observative and even sometimes analytical, or elaborately aesthetic, or expressive of some intellectual idealism, but without much height of wing or force from the depths or strong or fine spiritual suggestion. Or there has been only some occasional suggestion or isolated foretaste of these things. There has been much stress of thought, but not much deeply moved or spontaneous greatness of creation.

The mind and soul of the race is now moving forward on the basis of what it has gained by a century of intellectual stir and activity, towards a profounder mood and a more internal force of thought and life. The intellectual way of looking at things is being gradually transcended or is raising itself to a power beyond itself; it is moving through the observing mind and reflective reason towards an intimate self-experience, from thought to vision, from intellectual experiment to intuitive experience, from life and Nature as observed by the eye of the intellect in their appearance to life and Nature as seen and felt by the soul in their spirit and reality. Mankind is still engaged in thinking and searching with an immense stress of mental power, but it is now once more in search of its soul and of the spirit and deeper truth of things, although in a way very different from that of its past cultural ages and on the whole with a greater power and subtlety of the mind, though not as yet, but that too seems predestined to come, with a greater power of the spirit. It is, to return to a phrase already used, in search of our inmost and attempting already to find, though it has not yet altogether found, our inmost way of its sense, vision, idea, expression. This change, reflected in the poetry of the time is not an abrupt turn or a casting away of the immediate past from which it was born, but a rapid development of new viewpoints, a shedding of restrictions and limitations and husks and externalities, a transformation by the entrance of a new force of the soul into possession of the gains of the intellectual age and a swift completion and filling of them out in a new flood of light and an at once nearer and more extended sense of their meaning. The whole view and sense of existence has deepened into a greater subjectivity. For the subjectivity of the nineteenth century was a matter of the temperament, an activity of the strongly marked psychological individuality turned upon things held under the lens as an object of the intelligence; but now there are coming a universal subjectivity of the whole spirit, an attempt towards closeness and identity, a greater community of the individual with the universal soul and mind. The wider interest in Man has not lessened in breadth, but it is changing its character. More strenuous than before, it is less concentrated on his outer life and creation, and even where it deals with them, it opens more understandingly to his future and to his inner possibilities, to the psychological and the spiritual sense of his past, to the deeper significance of his present, to his self-creation. The profounder ranges of his being are now sounded and there is an initial feeling and even some actual seeing of the greater individual and the communal or universal self of our kind. Nature is seen more in her hidden suggestions and soul meanings and in the finer impressions by which we enter into them and establish with her a spiritual relation or identity. The things that lie behind the material world are almost for the first time being touched and seen with a close and revealing intimacy. The communion of the human soul with the Divine is becoming once more a subject of thought and utterance, not now limited to the old religious and personal form, but enlightened by a sense of the Infinite and Eternal which has arisen from and vivified the larger cosmic sense for which the thinking and discovery of the last century was a training. This change amounts to a revolution of the whole attitude of man towards existence, but it is commencing by an extension of the intellectual stress and a consequent breaking down of its bounds. A self-exceeding of the intellect and a growth of man into some first freedom and power of an intuitive mentality supported by the liberated intelligence is in its initial travail of new birth. These things have not all arrived, but they are on the way and the first waves of the surge have already broken over the dry beaches of the age of reason.

This considerable change was intellectually anticipated and to some extent prepared in the last century itself by a strain, a little thin in body, but high and continuous, of strenuous intellectuality which strove to rise beyond the level of the ordinary thought of the time to the full height and power of what the intellect of the race could then think out or create in the light of the inheritance of our ages. A small number of writers — in the English language Emerson, Carlyle, Ruskin are the best known among these names, — build for us a bridge of transition from the intellectual transcendentalism of the earlier nineteenth century across a subsequent low-lying scientific, utilitarian, externalised intellectualism, as if from bank to bank across morass or flood, over to the age now beginning to come in towards us. But in the region of poetic thought and creation Whitman was the one prophetic mind which consciously and largely foresaw and prepared the paths and had some sense of that to which they are leading. He belongs to the largest mind of the nineteenth century by the stress and energy of his intellectual seeking, by his emphasis on man and life and Nature, by his idea of the cosmic and universal, his broad spaces and surfaces, by his democratic enthusiasm, by his eye fixed on the future, by his intellectual reconciling vision at once of the greatness of the individual and the community of mankind, by his nationalism and internationalism, by his gospel of comradeship and fraternity in our common average manhood, by almost all in fact of the immense mass of ideas which form the connecting tissue of his work. But he brings into them an element which gives them another potency and meaning and restores something which in most of the literature of the time tended to be overcast and sicklied over by an excessive intellectual tendency more leaned to observe life than strong and swift to live it and which in the practicality of the time was caught up from its healthful soul of nature and converted into a huge grinding mechanism. He has the intimate pulse and power of life vibrating in all he utters, an almost primitive force of vitality, delivered from the enormous mechanical beat of the time by a robust closeness to the very spirit of life, — that closeness he has more than any other poet since Shakespeare, — and ennobled by a lifting up of its earthly vigour into a broad and full intellectual freedom. Thought leads and all is made subject and object and substance of a free and a powerful thinking, but this insistence of thought is made one with the pulse of life and the grave reflective pallor and want of blood of an overburdened intellectualism is healed by that vigorous union. Whitman writes with a conscious sense of his high function as a poet, a clear self-conception and consistent idea of what he has to cast into speech, —

> One's-self I sing, a simple separate person
> Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En Masse . . .
> Of Life immense in passion, pulse and power,
> Cheerful, for freest action formed under the laws divine,
> The Modern Man I sing.

No other writer of the time has had this large and definite consciousness of the work of a modern poet as a representative voice of his age, this inspiring vital sentiment of the nation conceived as a myriad-souled pioneer of human progress, of mankind, of universal Nature, of the vast web of a universal thought and action. His creation, triumphing over all defect and shortcoming, draws from it a unique broadness of view, vitality of force and sky-wide atmosphere of greatness.

But beyond this representation of the largest thought and life and broadest turn to the future possible to his age, there is something else which arises from it all and carries us forward towards what is now opening to man around or above, towards a vision of new reaches and a profounder interpretation of existence. Whitman by the intensity of his intellectual and vital dwelling on the things he saw and expressed, arrives at some first profound sense of the greater self of the individual, of the greater self in the community of the race and in all its immense past action opening down through the broadening eager present to an immenser future, of the greater self of Nature and of the eternal, the divine Self and Spirit of existence who broods over these things, who awaits them and in whom they come to the sense of their oneness. That which the old Indian seers called the *mahān ātmā*, the Great Self, the Great Spirit, which is seen through the vast strain of the cosmic thought and the cosmic life, — the French poets, influenced in their form and substance by Whitman, have seized on this element with the clear discernment and intellectual precision and lucidity of the Latin mind and given it the name of unanimism, — is the subject of some of his highest strains. He gets to it repeatedly through his vision of the past opening to the ideal future, the organic universal movement of bygone nations and ages and the labour and creation of the present and some nobler coming turn to a freedom of unified completion, —

> The journey done, the journeyman come home,
> And man and art with Nature fused again . . .
> The Almighty leader now for once has signalled with his wand.

And some part of his work, as in the *Passage to India*, opens out even into a fuller and profounder sense of its meaning. He sees it here as a new voyage of the human spirit, — "O farther sail!"

> Sail forth, steer for the deep waters only . . .
> For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
> And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all . . .
> O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?

And with a singularly clear first seeing of the ideal goal and the ideal way of the conversion of the intellectual and vital into the spiritual self, he calls the spirit of man to the adventure.

> The circumnavigation of the world begin,
> Of man, the voyage of his mind's return,
> To reason's early paradise,
> Back, back to wisdom's birth, to innocent intuitions,
> Again with fair creation.

He casts forward too the ideal heart of this wider movement of man into the sense of the divine unity which is its completion, brings out the divinity of the soul in man and its kinship to the divinity of the Eternal, —

> O Thou transcendent,
> Nameless, the fibre and the breath,
> Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou centre of them,
> Thou mightier centre of the true, the good, the loving, . . .
> How should I think, how breathe a single breath, how speak, if
> out of myself
> I could not launch to those superior universes?
> Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,
> At nature and its wonders, Time and Space and Death,
> But that I, turning, call to thee, O soul, O actual Me,
> And, lo, thou gently masterest the orbs,
> Thou matest Time, smilest content at Death,
> And fillest, swellest full the vastnesses of space, —

and he foresees the coming of that kinship of God and man to conscious fruition in oneness,

> Greater than stars or suns,
> Bounding, O soul, thou journeyest forth;
> What love than thine and ours could wider amplify?
> What aspirations, wishes outvie thine and ours, O soul?
> What dreams of the ideal? what plans of purity, perfection,
> strength?
> What cheerful willingness for others' sake to give up all?
> For others' sake to suffer all?
> Reckoning ahead, O soul, when thou, the time achieved, . . .
> Surrounded, copest, frontest God, yieldest, the aim attained,
> As filled with friendship, love complete, the Elder Brother found,
> The Younger melts in fondness in his arms.

These passages, — one of the seers of old time reborn in ours might so have expressed himself in a modern and intellectualised language, — send forward an arclight of prophetic expression on what is at the very heart of the new movement of humanity. It is in some degree an indication of that which the twentieth century is slowly turning to lay hold of, to develop and to make its own in a closer actuality of insight and experience.

The idea in these and cognate passages anticipates the new age, but the language and method are still that of the poetic intellect straining to some fullest power of its intelligence and speech-force, and the thought and writing of those who follow Whitman, like the French "unanimist" poets, bear the same character. At the centre of English poetry, in England itself, we have found another turn of intuitive speech which is more native to that closer actuality of experience for which we seek, a turn and power brought about perhaps by the greater fire of poetic genius and imagination, the special gift of the Anglo-Celtic mind, which leaps at once to the forceful, native, instinctive energy of poetic expression of the thing it has to say. The full idea of that thing, the large and clearly conceived substance of thought and vision which should fill this mould of intuitive utterance, we do not get in any considerable degree or range, — again perhaps because of the inferior turn for large and straight thinking on the great scale, a full-orbed thinking with a sustained and total conception, which is the defect of the English mind, — but we have constant partial intuitions in detail and a treatment of life and thought and nature which presses towards the greater coming significance. That is as yet only one strain of recent poetry, but it is the most powerful and original and turns sometimes almost with a full face towards the future. These are strong touches only, but they give already some impression and mould of the thing that has to be, the ultimate creation. A new intuitive interpretation of the soul and mind of man, of the soul and mind in Nature, a thought which casts its fathom beyond the passion of life and the clarity of the intelligence and starts sounding a suggestion of the hidden and the infinite in all it touches is the shaping power and the mode of this utterance.

The citations I have already given to illustrate the new rhythm and language indicate also this power and thought-turn in the substance. A few more citations from the same poets may help to bring it out with more precision. The early and greater poetry of Phillips has much of this stamp, — afterwards he unhappily turned to a more outward dramatic motive which was not the true and original bent of his genius, but even there his best is that which prolongs the high beauty of his first inspiration. He has no great conscious range of poetical thinking, but all the more remarkable is the power with which this new influence comes out in what he can give us. We note a new treatment of life and human emotion. The love of Idas for Marpessa is not satisfied with the old forms of passion and feeling and imaginative idealism, there are here other notes which carry the individual emotion out of itself and strive to cast it into unity with the life of Nature and the whole past life and love of humanity and the eternal continuity of passion and seeking and all the suggestion of the Infinite. The very passion for physical beauty takes on this almost mystic character; it is the passion for a body

> packed with sweet
> Of all this world, that cup of brimming June,
> That jar of violet wine set in the air,
> That palest rose sweet in the night of life.

But, says Idas,

> Not for this only do I love thee, but
> Because Infinity upon thee broods,
> And thou art full of whispers and of shadows.
> Thou meanest what the sea has striven to say
> So long, and yearned up to the cliffs to tell;
> Thou art what all the winds have uttered not,
> What the still night suggesteth to the heart.
> Thy voice is like to music heard ere birth,
> Some spirit lute touched on a spirit sea;
> Thy face remembered is from other worlds.
> It has been died for though I know not where,
> It has been sung of though I know not when.
> I am aware of other times and lands,
> Of births far back, of lives in many stars.

Here we have the reconciliation, already suggested by Whitman, of the full power and meaning of the individual with the full power and meaning of the universal, eternal and infinite, but it is concentrated and brought to bear on a single feeling for its enlargement with a great power of intuitive and revealing suggestion. This enlarging of the particular to meet and become one with the universal and infinite — Tennyson's knowing of what God and man is from a deep and intimate perception of all that is meant by Nature in a single little flower in the crannies — is a very characteristic and indicative feature of this new poetry.

The same turn emerges in a more indirect and subtle, but not less significant way of treatment even in lines which apparently seek only to concentrate for the thought the essence of a common human idea and emotion. When the poet speaks of

> Beautiful friendship tried by sun and wind,
> Durable from the daily dust of life,

or of Marpessa's maternal human longing,

> And he shall give me passionate children, not
> Some radiant god that will despise me quite,
> But clambering limbs and little hearts that err,

the thought in itself is not uncommon, but what makes it uncommon is the turn of the utterance which by an intuitive pressure towards some deeper significance of the personal thought and emotion carries it beyond the personality of the idea and feeling into a suggestion of profound universality, a rhythm and light of some entire vibration from the depths of life caught up and held by a human self-knowledge. The same force of suggestion emerges in the treatment of Nature, whether it takes the form of an intensity of sensation,

> the moment deep
> When we are conscious of the secret dawn
> Amidst the darkness that we feel is green,

or passes through that intensity to the sense of the very soul and emotion of what seems to us in less seeing moods an inconscient and inanimate Nature, as in the

trees
Motionless in an ecstasy of rain.

Meredith with his greater force of thinking gives us the clear significance of what is here only a powerful indication, a seeing identity of the soul of man with the hidden soul in earth-nature.

I neighbour the invisible
So close that my consent
Is only asked for spirits masked
To leap from trees and flowers.
And this because with them I dwell
In thought, while calmly bent
To read the lines dear earth designs
Shall speak her life on ours.

And the same turn emerges too in direct thought on the large aspects of life, as in such a phrase as

Lonely antagonist of destiny,

or that which describes

The listless ripple of oblivion,

lines which give us by some deep suggestion to the spiritual sight a whole abiding soul aspect of man and the universe in a single revealing expression. The effort of poetry of this kind of inspiration may be defined by adapting another expression of Meredith's,

To spell the letters of the sky and read
A reflex upon earth else meaningless.

And the fullness of that which it points to beyond itself, is a movement to unite the life of the earth, not lessened, not denied, not cast away, but accepted, with its own hidden spiritual reality, the one crucial movement necessary for man before he can reach that perfection which the race shall have on its heights, when

> The vile plucked out of them, the unlovely slain,
> Not forfeiting the beast with which they are crossed,
> To stature of the Gods they shall attain.
> They shall uplift their earth to meet her Lord,
> Themselves the attuning chord.

This is in substance the same strain that arises finally from the more puissant voice of Whitman, but it has if a less forceful, a profounder touch, — a more delicate, intimate and spiritual closeness of seeing, experience and utterance is its charm and distinction.

The indications that we get in these and other English poets open to a clearer totality in the two great Irish voices. They have, helped by the strand of a spiritual lucidity of thought in the finer Celtic mind, a sustained and conscious idea of the thing that is most inwardly stirring them to utterance. That shapes into a singular light, delicacy and beauty the whole of Yeats' poetry. Here I must be content to note three of its more distinctive features, the remarkable interweaving into one, whether against a background of Irish tradition and legend or by a directer thought, of the earthly life of man with the unseen psychical life which, if we could only see it, as we can when we go back from the frontage of things into the inner soul-spaces, presses upon the earth-life and supports it, so that at times our world seems only its detached projection; the reading through the signs of life of the brighter letters of an ideal and eternal Beauty; the insistence, even when touching exclusively our external life, on the suggestion of finer soul-values which exceed its material meanings. The poetry of A. E. is still more remarkable. What the others suggest or give us in more or less luminous glimpses, he casts into concentrated expression from a nearer spiritual knowledge, — as when he strikes out in a brief verse the living spiritual perception of the universal and infinite source of love, —

> We bade adieu to love the old,
> We heard another lover then,
> Whose forms are myriad and untold,
> Sigh to us from the hearts of men.

He lives on the spiritual plane to which so much of this poetry is an indistinct or a less distinct aspiration, and his whole self-expression is bathed, perhaps rendered sometimes a little remote and unseizable by its immergence, in an unusual light, the light of the spirit breaking through the veils of the intelligence in which it has to find its means of speech. This is not the frank marriage and close unity of the earth and heavens of which Whitman and Meredith speak, but a rare, high and exclusive pinnacle of the soul's greater sight. The rest of this side of recent poetry is a climbing or pointing up from the earth-levels to the heights of Truth; but from one region of those loftiest elevations this sight looks down and opens its eye of light on the life of man and the cycles of the universe.

Chapter XXIV

New Birth or Decadence?

AT THIS point we stand in the evolution of English poetry. Its course, we can see, is only one line of a common evolution, and I have singled it out to follow because, for two reasons, it seems to me the most complete and suggestive. It follows most faithfully the natural ascending curve of the human spirit in this kind of rhythmic imaginative self-expression and, again, because of all the modern European languages it has the largest freest poetic energy and natural power, it responds on the whole most directly of all of them — in spite of certain serious limitations of the English mind — to the fountain motives, the essential impetus of the soul of poetry in its ascent and shows them, if not always in their greatest or most perfect, yet almost always in their most characteristic and revealing form. Poetry like everything else in man evolves. Its fundamental nature, function and law are no doubt always the same, because each thing and each activity too in our being must be faithful to the divine idea in it, to its dharma, and can try to depart from it only on peril, whatever momentarily it may seem to gain, of eventual inferiority and futility, or even of disintegration and death. But still there is an evolution within this law of its being. And evolution means a bringing out of new powers which lay concealed in the seed or the first form; the simple develops to the more complex, — more complex even in some apparent simplicity, — the superficial gives place to the more and more profound, the lesser gives place to the greater nature of the common manifestation. But poetry is a psychological phenomenon, the poetic impulse a highly charged force of expression of the mind and soul of man, and therefore in trying to follow out its line of evolution it is the development of the psychological motive and power, it is the kind of feeling, vision, mentality which is seeking in it for its word and idea and form of beauty and it is the power of the soul through which it finds expression or the level of mind from which it speaks which we must distinguish to get a right idea of the progress of poetry. All else is subsidiary, variations of rhythm, language, structure; they are the form, the vehicle; they derive subtly and get their character and meaning from the psychological power and the fundamental motive.

If poetry is a highly charged power of aesthetic expression of the soul of man, it must follow in its course of evolution the development of that soul. I put it that from this point of view the soul of man like the soul of Nature can be regarded as an unfolding of the spirit in the material world. Our unfolding has its roots in the soil of the physical life; its growth shoots up and out in many directions in the stalk and branches of the vital being; it puts forth the opulence of the buds of mind and there, nestling in the luxuriant leaves of mind and above it, out from the spirit which was concealed in the whole process must blossom the free and infinite soul of man, the hundred-petalled rose of God. Man indeed, unlike other forms of being in terrestrial Nature, though rooted in body, proceeds by the mind and all that is characteristic of him belongs to the wonderful play of mind taking up physicality and life and developing and enriching its gains till it can exceed itself and become a spiritual mind, the divine Mind in man. He turns first his view on the outward physical world and on his own life of outward action and concentrates on that or throws into its mould his life-suggestions, his thought, his religious idea, and, if he arrives at some vision of an inner spiritual truth, he puts even that into forms and figures of the physical life and physical Nature.[1] Poetry at a certain stage or of a certain kind expresses this turn of the human mentality in word and in form of beauty. It can reach great heights in this kind of mental mould, can see the physical forms of the gods, lift to a certain greatness by its vision and disclose a divine quality in even the most obvious, material and outward being and action of man; and in this type we have Homer. Arrived to a greater depth of living, seeing from a vivid half outward half inward turn of mind his thought and action and self and world and Nature, man begins to feel more sensitively the passion and power of life, its joy and pain, its wonder and terror and beauty and romance, to turn everything into moved thought and sentiment and sensation of the life-soul, the desire soul in him which first forces itself on his introspection when he begins to go inward. Poetry too takes this turn, rises and deepens to a new kind of greatness; and at the summit in this kind we have Shakespeare.

---

[1] As in the hymns of the Vedic Rishis.

This way of seeing and creating, in which thought is involved in life and the view is that of the life-spirit feeling, thinking, imagining, carried forward in its own surge of self, cannot permanently hold the greater activities of the mental being. He ceases to identify himself entirely with the passion, the emotion, the thought-suggestions of life; for he needs to know from a freer height what it is and what he is, to get a clear detached idea of its workings, to dominate his emotions and vital intuitions and see with the calm eye of his reason, to probe, analyse, get at the law and cause and general and particular rule of himself and Nature. He does this at first on large and comparatively bare lines dwelling only on the salient details for a first strong and provisionally adequate view. Poetry following this movement takes on the lucid, restrained, intellectual and ideal classic form, in which high or strong ideas govern and develop the presentation of life and thought in an atmosphere of clear beauty and the vision of the satisfied intelligence; that is the greatness of the Greek and Latin poets. But afterwards the intelligence sets more comprehensively to work, opens itself to all manner of the possibilities of truth and to a crowding stream and mass of interests, a never satisfied minuteness of detail, an endless succession of pregnant generalisations. This is the type of modern intellectualism.

The poetry which arises from this mentality is full of a teeming many-sided poetic ideation which takes up the external and life motives not for their own sake, but to make them food for the poetic intelligence, blends the classical and romantic motives, adds to them the realistic, aesthetic, impressionist, idealistic ways of seeing and thinking, makes many experiments and combinations, passes through many phases. The true classic form is then no longer possible; if it is tried, it is not quite genuine, for what informs it is no longer the classic spirit; it is too crowded with subtle thought-matter, too brooding, sensitive, responsive to many things; no new Parthenon can be built whether in the white marble subdued to the hand or in the pure and lucid spacings of the idea and the word: the mind of man has become too full, complex, pregnant with subtle and not easily expressible things to be capable of that earlier type of perfection. The romantic strain is a part of this wider intelligence, but the pure and genuine romanticism of the life-spirit which cares nothing for thought except as it enriches its own being, is also no longer possible. If it tries to get back to that, it falls into an affectation, an intellectual pose and, whatever genius may be expended upon it, this kind cannot remain long alive. That is the secret of the failure of modern romanticism in Germany and France. In Germany, Goethe and Heine alone got away from this falsity and were able to use this strain in its proper way as one enriching chord serving the complex harmonic purpose of the intelligence; the rest of German literary creation of the time is interesting and suggestive in its way, but very little of it is intimately alive and true, and afterwards Germany failed to keep up a sustained poetic impulse; she turned aside to music on the one side and on the other to philosophy and science for her field. The French mind got away very soon from romanticism and, though greatly enriched by its outbreak into that phase, went on to a more genuine intellectual and intellectually aesthetic form of creation. In England with the greater spontaneity of its poetic spirit the mistake never went so far. The poetry of the time of Wordsworth and Shelley is sometimes called romantic poetry, but it was not so in its essence, but only in certain of its moods and motives. It lives really by its greater and more characteristic element, by its half spiritual turn, by Wordsworth's force of ethical thought and communion with Nature, by Shelley's imaginative transcendentalism, Keats' worship of Beauty, Byron's Titanism and force of personality, Coleridge's supernaturalism or, as it should more properly be called, his eye for other nature, Blake's command of the inner psychic realms. Only in drama was there, owing to the prestige of Shakespeare, an attempt at pure romanticism, and therefore in this domain nothing great and living could be done, but only a record of failures. Realism is a more native turn of this kind of intelligence, and it invades poetry too to a certain extent, but if it dominates, then poetry must decline and cease. The poetry of an age of many-sided intellectualism can live only by its many-sidedness and by making everything as it comes a new material for the aesthetic creations of the observing, thinking, constructing intelligence.

But then comes the now vital question in this cultural evolution, — in what is this intellectualism to culminate? For if it leads to nothing beyond itself, it must end, however brilliant its work, in a poetic decadence, and that must come nearer, the more intellect dominates the other powers of our being. The intellect moves naturally between two limits, the abstractions or solving analyses of the reason and the domain of positive and practical reality; its great achievements are in these two fields or in a mediation between them, and it can do most and go farthest, can achieve its most native and characteristic and therefore its greatest and completest work either in philosophy or in Science. The age of developed intellectualism in Greece killed poetry; it ended in the comedy of Menander, the intellectual artificialities of Alexandrianism, the last flush of beauty in the aesthetic pseudo-naturalism of the Sicilian pastoral poetry; philosophy occupied the field. In the more rich and complex modern mind this result could not so easily come and has not yet come. At the same time the really great, perfect and securely characteristic work of the age has not been in the field of art and poetry, but in critical thought and science. Criticism and science, by a triumphant force of abstraction and analysis turned on the world of positive fact, have in this period been able to become enormously effective for life. They have been able to reign sovereignly, not so much by their contributions to pure knowledge, but by their practical, revolutionary and constructive force. If modern thought with its immense scientific achievement has not enriched life at its base or given it a higher and purer action, — it has only created a yet unrealised possibility in that direction by its idealistic side, — it has wonderfully equipped it with powerful machinery and an imposing paraphernalia and wrought conspicuous and unprecedented changes in its superstructure. But poetry in this atmosphere has kept itself alive not by any native and spontaneous power born of agreement between its own essential spirit and the spirit of the age, but by a great effort of the imagination and aesthetic intelligence labouring for the most part to make the best of what material it could get in the shape of new thought and new view-points for the poetic criticism or the thoughtful presentation of life. It has been an aesthetic byplay rather than a leading or sometimes even premier force in the cultural life of the race such as it was in the ancient ages and even, with a certain limited action, in more recent times.

That a certain decline, not of the activity of the poetic mind, but of its natural vigour, importance and effective power has been felt, if not quite clearly appreciated in its causes, we can see from various significant indications. Throughout the later nineteenth century one observes a constant apprehension of approaching aesthetic decadence, a tendency to be on the look-out for it and to find the signs of it in innovations and new turns in art and poetry. The attempt to break the whole mould of poetry and make a new thing of it so that it may be easier to handle and may shape itself to all the turns, the high and low, noble and common, fair or unseemly movements of the modern mind and its varied interest in life, is itself due to a sense of some difficulty, limitation and unease, some want of equation between the fine but severely self-limiting character of this kind of creative power and the spirit of the age. At one time indeed it was hardily predicted that since the modern mind is increasingly scientific and less and less poetically and aesthetically imaginative, poetry must necessarily decline and give place to science, — for much the same reason, in fact, for which philosophy replaced poetry in Greece. On the opposite side it was sometimes suggested that the poetic mind might become more positive and make use of the materials of science or might undertake a more intellectual though always poetic criticism of life and might fill the place of philosophy and religion which were supposed for a time to be dead or dying powers in human nature; but this came to the same thing, for it meant a deviation from the true law of aesthetic creation and only a more protracted decadence.

And behind these uneasy suggestions lay the one fact that for causes already indicated an age of reason dominated by the critical, scientific or philosophic intelligence is ordinarily unfavourable and, even when it is most catholic and ample, cannot be quite favourable to great poetic creation. The pure intellect cannot create poetry. The inspired or the imaginative reason does indeed play an important, sometimes a leading part, but even that can only be a support or an influence; the thinking mind may help to give a final shape, a great and large form, *saṁ mahemā manīṣayā*, as the Vedic poets said of the Mantra, but the word must start first from a more intimate sense in the heart of the inner being, *hṛdā taṣṭam*; it is the spirit within and not the mind without that is the fount of poetry. Poetry too is an interpreter of truth, but in the forms of an innate beauty, and not so much of intellectual truth, the truths offered by the critical mind, as of the intimate truth of being. It deals not so much with things thought as with things seen, not with the authenticities of the analytic mind, but with the authenticities of the synthetic vision and the seeing spirit. The abstractions, generalisations, minute precisions of our ordinary intellectual cerebration are no part of its essence or texture; but it has others, more luminous, more subtle, those which come to us after passing through the medium and getting drenched in the light of the intuitive and revealing mind. And therefore when the general activity of thought runs predominantly into the former kind, the works of the latter are apt to proceed under rather anaemic conditions, they are affected by the pervading atmosphere; poetry either ceases or falls into a minor strain or takes refuge in virtuosities of its outer instruments and aids or, if it still does any considerable work, lacks the supreme spontaneity, the natural perfection, the sense of abundant ease or else of sovereign mastery which the touch of the spirit manifests even amidst the fullest or austerest labour of its creation.

But this incompatibility is not the last word of the matter. The truth which poetry expresses takes two forms, the truth of life and the truth of that which works in life, the truth of the inner spirit. It may take its stand on the outer life and work in an intimate identity, relation or close dwelling upon it, and then what it does is to bring some light of intuitive things, some power of revelation of the beauty that is truth and the truth that is beauty into the outer things of life, even into those that are most common, obvious, of daily occurrence. But also it may get back into the truth of the inner spirit and work in an intimate identity, relation or close dwelling upon it, and then what it will do is to give a new revelation of our being and life and thought and Nature and the material and the psychical and spiritual worlds. That is the effort to which it seems to be turning now in its most characteristic, effective and beautiful manifestations. But it cannot fully develop in this sense unless the general mind of the age takes that turn. There are signs that this will indeed be the outcome of the new direction taken by the modern mind, not an intellectual petrifaction or a long spinning in the grooves of a critical intellectualism, but a higher and more authentic thinking and living. The human intelligence seems on the verge of an attempt to rise through the intellectual into an intuitive mentality; it is no longer content to regard the intellect and the world of positive fact as all or the intellectual reason as a sufficient mediator between life and the spirit, but is beginning to perceive that there is a spiritual mind which can admit us to a greater and more comprehensive vision. This does not mean any sacrifice of the gains of the past, but a raising and extending of them not only by a seeking of the inner as well as the outer truth of things, but also of all that binds them together and a bringing of them into true relation and oneness. A first opening out to this new way of seeing is the sense of the work of Whitman and Carpenter and some of the recent French poets, of Tagore and Yeats and A. E., of Meredith and some others of the English poets. There are critics who regard this tendency as only another sign of decadence; they see in it a morbid brilliance, a phosphorescence of decay or the phosphorescence which we observe on the sea when the sun has gone down and night occupies the waters. But this is to suppose that poetry can only repeat what it has done in the past and can accomplish no new and great thing and that a clear, strong or brilliant dealing with the outer mind and world is its last word and the one condition of its healthy creativeness. There is much that is morbid, perverse or unsound in some recent poetry; but this comes from an artificial prolongation of the past or a temporary mixed straining, it does not belong to that element in the new poetry which escapes from it and turns firmly to the things of the future. Decadence arrives when in the decline of a culture there is nothing more to be lived or seen or said, or when the poetic mind settles irretrievably into a clumsy and artificial repetition of past forms and conventions or can only escape from them into scholastic or aesthetic prettinesses or extravagance. But an age which brings in large and new vital and spiritual truths, truths of our being, truths of the self of man and the inner self of Nature and opens vast untrod ranges to sight and imagination, is not likely to be an age of decadence, and a poetry which voices these things, — unless its creative power has been fatally atrophied by long conventionalism, and that is not at present our case, — is not likely to be a poetry of decadence.

The more perfectly intuitive poetry of the future, supposing it to emerge successfully from its present incubation, find itself and develop all its possibilities, will not be a mystic poetry recondite in expression or quite remote from the earthly life of man. Some element of the kind may be there; for always when we open into these fields, mysteries more than the Orphic or the Eleusinian revive and some of them are beyond our means of expression; but mysticism in its unfavourable or lesser sense comes when either we glimpse but do not intimately realise the now secret things of the spirit or, realising, yet cannot find their direct language, their intrinsic way of utterance, and have to use obscurely luminous hints or a thick drapery of symbol, when we have the revelation, but not the inspiration, the sight but not the word. And remoteness comes when we cannot relate the spirit with life or bring the power of the spirit to transmute the other members of our being. But the new age is one which is climbing from a full intellectuality towards some possibility of an equal fullness of the intuitive mind, and the full intuitive mind, not that of glimpses, but of a luminous totality, opens to the mind of revelation and inspiration. The aesthetic mind, whether it take form in the word of the poet or in the word of the illumined thinker, the prophet or the seer, can be one of the main gateways. And what the age will aim at is neither materialism nor an intuitive vitalism nor a remote detached spirituality, but a harmonious and luminous totality of man's being. Therefore to this poetry the whole field of existence will be open for its subject, God and Nature and man and all the worlds, the field of the finite and the infinite. It is not a close, even a high close and ending in this or any field that the future offers to us, but a new and higher evolution, a second and greater birth of all man's powers and his being and action and creation.

The Future Poetry

Part II

Chapter I

The Ideal Spirit of Poetry

TO ATTEMPT to presage the future turn or development of mind or life in any of its fields must always be a hazardous venture. For life and mind are not like physical Nature; the processes of physical Nature run in precise mechanical grooves, but these are more mobile and freer powers. The gods of life and still more the gods of mind are so incalculably self-creative that even where we can distinguish the main lines on which the working runs or has so far run, we are still unable to foresee with any certainty what turn they will yet take or of what new thing they are in labour. It is therefore impossible to predict what the poetry of the future will actually be like. We can see where we stand today, but we cannot tell where we shall stand a quarter of a century hence. All that one can do is to distinguish for oneself some possibilities that lie before the poetic mind of the race and to figure what it can achieve if it chooses to follow out certain great openings which the genius of recent and contemporary poets has made free to us; but what path it will actually choose to tread or what new heights attempt, waits still for its own yet unformed decision.

What would be the ideal spirit of poetry in an age of the increasingly intuitive mind: that is the question which arises from all that has gone before and to which we may attempt some kind of answer. I have spoken in the beginning of the Mantra as the highest and intensest revealing form of poetic thought and expression. What the Vedic poets meant by the Mantra was an inspired and revealed seeing and visioned thinking, attended by a realisation, to use the ponderous but necessary modern word, of some inmost truth of God and self and man and Nature and cosmos and life and thing and thought and experience and deed. It was a thinking that came on the wings of a great soul rhythm, *chandas*. For the seeing could not be separated from the hearing; it was one act. Nor could the living of the truth in oneself which we mean by realisation, be separated from either, for the presence of it in the soul and its possession of the mind must precede or accompany in the creator or human channel that expression of the inner sight and hearing which takes the shape of the luminous word. The Mantra is born through the heart and shaped or massed by the thinking mind into a chariot of that godhead of the Eternal of whom the truth seen is a face or a form. And in the mind too of the fit outward hearer who listens to the word of the poet-seer, these three must come together, if our word is a real Mantra; the sight of the inmost truth must accompany the hearing, the possession of the inmost spirit of it by the mind and its coming home to the soul must accompany or follow immediately upon the rhythmic message of the Word and the mind's sight of the Truth. That may sound a rather mystic account of the matter, but substantially there could hardly be a more complete description of the birth and effect of the inspired and revealing word, and it might be applied, though usually on a more lowered scale than was intended by the Vedic Rishis, to all the highest outbursts of a really great poetry. But poetry is the Mantra only when it is the voice of the inmost truth and is couched in the highest power of the very rhythm and speech of that truth. And the ancient poets of the Veda and Upanishads claimed to be uttering the Mantra because always it was this inmost and almost occult truth of things which they strove to see and hear and speak and because they believed themselves to be using or finding its innate soul rhythms and the sacrificial speech of it cast up by the divine Agni, the sacred Fire in the heart of man. The Mantra in other words is a direct and most heightened, an intensest and most divinely burdened rhythmic word which embodies an intuitive and revelatory inspiration and ensouls the mind with the sight and the presence of the very self, the inmost reality of things and with its truth and with the divine soul-forms of it, the Godheads which are born from the living Truth. Or, let us say, it is a supreme rhythmic language which seizes hold upon all that is finite and brings into each the light and voice of its own infinite.

This is a theory of poetry, a view of the rhythmic and creative self-expression to which we give that name, which is very different from any that we now hold, a sacred or hieratic *ars poetica* only possible in days when man believed himself to be near to the gods and felt their presence in his bosom and could think he heard some accents of their divine and eternal wisdom take form on the heights of his mind. And perhaps no thinking age has been so far removed from any such view of our life as the one through which we have recently passed and even now are not well out of its shadow, the age of materialism, the age of positive outward matter of fact and of scientific and utilitarian reason. And yet curiously enough — or naturally, since in the economy of Nature opposite creates itself out of opposite and not only like from like, — it is to some far-off light at least of the view of ourselves at our greatest of which such ideas were a concretised expression that we seem to be returning. For we can mark that although in very different circumstances, in broader forms, with a more complex mind and an enormously enlarged basis of culture and civilisation, the gain and inheritance of many intermediate ages, it is still to something very like the effort which was the soul of the Vedic or at least the Vedantic mind that we almost appear to be on the point of turning back in the circle of our course. Now that we have seen minutely what is the material reality of the world in which we live and have some knowledge of the vital reality of the Force from which we spring, we are at last beginning to seek again for the spiritual reality of that which we and all things secretly are. Our minds are once more trying to envisage the self, the spirit of Man and the spirit of the universe, intellectually, no doubt, at first, but from that to the old effort at sight, at realisation within ourselves and in all is not a very far step. And with this effort there must rise too on the human mind the conception of the godheads in whom this Spirit, this marvellous Self and Reality which broods over the world, takes shape in the liberated soul and life of the human being, his godheads of Truth and Freedom and Unity, his godheads of a greater more highly visioned Will and Power, his godheads of Love and universal Delight, his godheads of universal and eternal Beauty, his godheads of a supreme Light and Harmony and Good. The new ideals of the race seem already to be affected by some first bright shadow of these things, and even though it be only a tinge, a flush colouring the duller atmosphere of our recent mentality, there is every sign that this tinge will deepen and grow, in the heavens to which we look up if not at once in the earth of our actual life.

But this new vision will not be as in the old times something hieratically remote, mystic, inward, shielded from the profane, but rather a sight which will endeavour to draw these godheads again to close and familiar intimacy with our earth and embody them not only in the heart of religion and philosophy, nor only in the higher flights of thought and art, but also, as far as may be, in the common life and action of man. For in the old days these things were Mysteries, which men left to the few, to the initiates and by so leaving them lost sight of them in the end, but the endeavour of this new mind is to reveal, to divulge and to bring near to our comprehension all mysteries, — at present indeed making them too common and outward in the process and depriving them of much of their beauty and inner light and depth, but that defect will pass, — and this turn towards an open realisation may well lead to an age in which man as a race will try to live in a greater Truth than has as yet governed our kind. For all that we know, we now tend to make some attempt to form clearly and live. His creation too will then be moved by another spirit and cast on other lines.

And if this takes place or even if there is some strong mental movement towards it, poetry may recover something of an old sacred prestige. There will no doubt still be plenty of poetical writing which will follow the old lines and minister to the old commoner aesthetic motives, and it is as well that it should be so, for the business of poetry is to express the soul of man to himself and to embody in the word whatever power of beauty he sees; but also there may now emerge too and take the first place souls no longer niggardly of the highest flame, the poet-seer and seer-creator, the poet who is also a Rishi, master singers of Truth, hierophants and magicians of a diviner and more universal beauty. There has no doubt always been something of that in the greatest masters of poetry in the great ages, but to fulfil such a role has not often been the one fountain idea of their function; the mind of the age has made other demands on them, needed at that time, and the highest things in this direction have been rare self-exceedings and still coloured by and toned to the half light in which they sang. But if an age comes which is in common possession of a deeper and greater and more inspiring Truth, then its masters of the rhythmic word will at least sing on a higher common level and may rise more often into a fuller intenser light and capture more constantly the greater tones of which this harp of God, to use the Upanishad's description of man's created being, is secretly capable.

A greater era of man's living seems to be in promise, whatever nearer and earthier powers may be striving to lead him on a side path away to a less exalted ideal, and with that advent there must come a new great age of his creation different from the past epochs which he counts as his glories and superior to them in its vision and motive. But first there must intervene a poetry which will lead him towards it from the present faint beginnings. It will be aided by new views in philosophy, a changed and extended spirit in science and new revelations in the other arts, in music, painting, architecture, sculpture, as well as high new ideals in life and new powers of a reviving but no longer limited or obscurantist religious mind. A glint of this change is already visible. And in poetry there is already the commencement of such a greater leading; the conscious effort of Whitman, the tone of Carpenter, the significance of the poetry of A. E., the rapid immediate fame of Tagore are its first signs. The idea of the poet who is also the Rishi has made again its appearance. Only a wider spreading of the thought and mentality in which that idea can live and the growth of an accomplished art of poetry in which it can take body, are still needed to give the force of permanence to what is now only an incipient and just emerging power. Mankind satiated with the levels is turning its face once more towards the heights, and the poetic voices that will lead us thither with song will be among the high seer voices. For the great poet interprets to man his present or reinterprets for him his past, but can also point him to his future and in all three reveal to him the face of the Eternal.

An intuitive revealing poetry of the kind which we have in view would voice a supreme harmony of five eternal powers, Truth, Beauty, Delight, Life and the Spirit. These are indeed the five greater ideal lamps or rather the five suns of poetry. And towards three of them the higher mind of the race is in many directions turning its thought and desire with a new kind and force of insistence. The intellectual side of our recent progress has in fact been for a long time a constant arduous pursuit of Truth in certain of its fields; but now the limited truth of yesterday can no longer satisfy or bind us. Much has been known and discovered of a kind which had not been found or had only been glimpsed before, but the utmost of that much appears now very little compared with the infinitely more which was left aside and ignored and which now invites our search. The description which the old Vedic poet once gave of the seeking of divine Truth, applies vividly to the mind of our age, "As it climbs from height to height, there becomes clear to its view all the much that is yet to be done." But also it is beginning to be seen that only in some great awakening of the self and spiritual being of man is that yet unlived truth to be found and that infinite much to be achieved. It is only then that the fullness of a greater knowledge for man living on earth can unfold itself and get rid of its coverings and again on his deeper mind and soul, in the words of another Vedic poet-seer, "New states come into birth, covering upon covering awaken to knowledge, till in the lap of the Mother one wholly sees." This new-old light is now returning upon our minds. Men no longer so completely believe that the world is a machine and they only so much transient thinking matter, a view of existence in the midst of which however helpful it might be to a victorious concentration on physical science and social economy and material well-being, neither religion nor philosophic wisdom could renew their power in the fountains of the spirit nor art and poetry, which are also things of the soul like religion and wisdom, refresh themselves from their native sources of strength. Now we are moving back from the physical obsession to the consciousness that there is a soul and greater self within us and the universe which finds expression here in the life and the body.

But the mind of today insists too and rightly insists on life, on humanity, on the dignity of our labour and action. We have no longer any ascetic quarrel with our mother earth, but rather would drink full of her bosom of beauty and power and raise her life to a more perfect greatness. Thought now dwells much on the idea of a vast creative will of life and action as the secret of existence. That way of seeing, though it may give room for a greater power of art and poetry and philosophy and religion, for it brings in real soul-values, has by its limitation its own dangers. A spirit which is all life because it is greater than life, is rather the truth in which we shall most powerfully live. Aditi, the infinite Mother, cries in the ancient Vedic hymn to Indra the divine Power now about to be born in her womb, "This is the path of old discovered again by which all the gods rose up into birth, even by that upward way shouldst thou be born in thy increase; but go not forth by this other to turn thy mother to her fall," but if, refusing the upward way, the new spirit in process of birth replies like the god, "By that way I will not go forth, for it is hard to tread, let me come out straight on the level from thy side; I have many things to do which have not yet been done; with one I must fight and with another I must question after the Truth," then the new age may do great things, as the last also did great things, but it will miss the highest way and end like it in a catastrophe. There is no reason why we should so limit our new birth in time; for the spirit and life are not incompatible, but rather a greater power of the spirit brings a greater power of life. Poetry and art most of all our powers can help to bring this truth home to the mind of man with an illumining and catholic force, for while philosophy may lose itself in abstractions and religion turn to an intolerant otherworldliness and asceticism, poetry and art are born mediators between the immaterial and the concrete, the spirit and life. This mediation between the truth of the spirit and the truth of life will be one of the chief functions of the poetry of the future.

The two other sister lamps of God, colour suns of the Ideal, which our age has most dimmed and of whose reviving light it is most sadly in need, but still too strenuously outward and utilitarian to feel sufficiently their absence, Beauty and Delight, are also things spiritual and they bring out the very heart of sweetness and colour and flame of the other three. Truth and Life have not their perfection until they are suffused and filled with the completing power of delight and the fine power of beauty and become one at their heights with this perfecting hue and this secret essence of themselves; the spirit has no full revelation without these two satisfying presences. For the ancient Indian idea is absolutely true that delight, Ananda, is the inmost expressive and creative nature of the free self because it is the very essence of the original being of the Spirit. But beauty and delight are also the very soul and origin of art and poetry. It is the significance and spiritual function of art and poetry to liberate man into pure delight and to bring beauty into his life. Only there are grades and heights here as in everything else and the highest kinds of delight and beauty are those which are one with the highest Truth, the perfection of life and the purest and fullest joy of the self-revealing Spirit. Therefore will poetry most find itself and enter most completely into its heritage when it arrives at the richest harmony of these five things in their most splendid and ample sweetness and light and power; but that can only wholly be when it sings from the highest skies of vision and ranges through the widest widths of our being.

These powers can indeed be possessed in every scale, because on whatever grade of our ascent we stand, the Spirit, the divine Self of man is always there, can break out into a strong flame of manifestation carrying in it all its godheads in whatever form, and poetry and art are among the means by which it thus delivers itself into expression. Therefore the essence of poetry is eternally the same and its essential power and the magnitude of the genius expended may be the same whatever the frame of the sight, whether it be Homer chanting of the heroes in god-moved battle before Troy and of Odysseus wandering among the wonders of remote and magic isles with his heart always turned to his lost and far-off human hearth, Shakespeare riding in his surge of the manifold colour and music and passion of life, or Dante errant mid his terrible or beatific visions of Hell and Purgatory and Paradise, or Valmiki singing of the ideal man embodying God and egoistic giant Rakshasa embodying only fierce self-will approaching each other from their different centres of life and in their different law of being for the struggle desired by the gods, or some mystic Vamadeva or Vishwamitra voicing in strange vivid now forgotten symbols the action of the gods and the glories of the Truth, the battle and the journey to the Light, the double riches and the sacrificial climbing of the soul to Immortality. For whether it be the inspired imagination fixed on earth or the soul of life or the inspired reason or the high intuitive spiritual vision which gives the form, the genius of the great poet will seize on some truth of being, some breath of life, some power of the spirit and bring it out with a certain supreme force for his and our delight and joy in its beauty. But nevertheless the poetry which can keep the amplitude of its breadth and nearness of its touch and yet see all things from a higher height will, the rest being equal, give more and will more fully satisfy the whole of what we are and therefore the whole of what we demand from this most complete of all the arts and most subtle of all our means of aesthetic self-expression.

The poetry of the future, if it fulfils in amplitude the promise now only there in rich hint, will kindle these five lamps of our being, but raise them up more on high and light with them a broader country, many countries indeed now hidden from our view, will make them not any longer lamps in some limited temple of beauty, but suns in the heavens of our highest mind and illuminative of our widest as well as our inmost life. It will be a poetry of a new largest vision of himself and Nature and God and all things which is offering itself to man and of its possible realisation in a nobler and more divine manhood; and it will not sing of them only with the power of the imaginative intelligence, the exalted and ecstatic sense or the moved joy and passion of life, but will rise to look at them from an intenser light and embody them in a more revealing force of the word. It will be first and most a poetry of the intuitive reason, the intuitive senses, the intuitive delight-soul in us, getting from this enhanced source of inspiration a more sovereign poetic enthusiasm and ecstasy, and then, it may even be, rise towards a still greater power of revelation nearer to the direct vision and word of the Overmind from which all creative inspiration comes.

A poetry of this kind need not be at all something high and remote or beautifully and delicately intangible, or not that alone, but will make too the highest things near, close and visible, will sing greatly and beautifully of all that has been sung, all that we are from outward body to very God and Self, of the finite and the infinite, the transient and the Eternal, but with a new reconciling and fusing vision that will make them other to us than they have been even when yet the same. If it wings to the heights, it will not leave earth unseen below it, but also will not confine itself to earth, but find too other realities and their powers on man and take all the planes of existence for its empire. It will take up and transform the secrets of the older poets and find new undiscovered secrets, transfigure the old rhythms by the insistence of the voice of its deeper subtler spirit and create new characteristic harmonies, reveal other greater powers and spirits of language, proceeding from the past and present yet will not be limited by them or their rule and forms and canon, but compass its own altered perfected art of poetry. This at least is its possible ideal endeavour, and then the attempt itself would be a rejuvenating elixir and put the poetic spirit once more in the shining front of the powers and guides of the ever-progressing soul of humanity. There it will lead in the journey like the Vedic Agni, the fiery giver of the word, *yuvā kaviḥ*, *priyo atithir amartyo mandrajihvo*, *ṛtacid ṛtāvā*, the Youth, the Seer, the beloved and immortal Guest with his honeyed tongue of ecstasy, the Truth-conscious, the Truth-finder, born as a flame from earth and yet the heavenly messenger of the Immortals.

Chapter II

The Sun of Poetic Truth

WHAT IS the kind of Truth which we can demand from the spirit of poetry, from the lips of the inspired singer, or what do we mean when we speak of Truth as one of the high powers and godheads of his work and of its light as a diviner sunlight in which he must see and shape from its burning rays within and around him the flame-stuff of his creation? We have all our own notions of the Truth and that gives an ambiguous character to the word and brings in often a narrow and limited sense of it into our idea of poetry. But first there is the primary objection, plausible enough if we look only at the glowing robe and not at the soul of creative expression, that the poet has nothing at all to do with any other kind of truth or with Truth at all for her own sake, but is a lover only of Beauty, she his only worshipped goddess, and not truth but imagination her winged servant and the radiant messenger of the Muse. If it cannot absolutely be said that most poetry is most feigning and the whole art amounts to a power of beautiful fiction, yet it is apparent that the poet most succeeds when he takes outward or actual truth only as a first hint and steeps most subtly whatever crude matter it gives to his mind in the delightful hues of imagination and transmutes it into the unfettered beauty of her shapes. That might seem at first sight to mean or so might be interpreted that truth and art are two unconnected or little connected things, and if truth is to be made at all the subject-matter of art, it yet does not become art unless it has come out transfigured and, it may be, unrecognisable in the imagination's characteristic process. But in fact it does not mean that, but only that art is not an imitation or reproduction of outward Nature, but rather missioned to give by the aid of a transmuting faculty something more inwardly true than the external life and appearance.

And next, there is the quite opposite idea, which one finds sometimes rampant and self-confident in an age of realism and the cult of vital power, that the truth which is the material of poetry and has to be set out and rhythmed in her process, is the reality of life in its most strenuous vital sense, the reality of what we see and hear and touch and vitally feel and energetically think with the most positive impact of the mind, the raw rough concrete and dynamic fact of experience to be transferred without any real change into rhythmic form, relieved with image and dressed in its just idea and word. And we are even told that poetry to be faithful to life must manage not only her seeing and expression, but her rhythmic movement so as to create some subjective correspondence with life, creep and trip and walk and run and bound along with it, reproduce every bang and stumble and shuffle and thump of the vital steps, and then we shall get a quite new large and vigorous music and in comparison with its sincere and direct power the old melodies will fade into false and flimsy sweetnesses of insipid artifice. Here what is demanded is not beauty but power or rather force. If beauty can get in, if she can dress herself in these new and strong colours, we shall gratefully accept her, provided she is not too beautiful to be true and does not bring in again with her the unreal, the romantic or remotely ideal or some novel kind of perverse[1] imagination. But if ugly, brutal and sordid things are shown powerfully in their full ugliness, brutality and sordidness without any work of transmutation, so much the better since truth of life, force of vital reality of whatever kind set and made vivid in a strong outlining illumination is what we shall henceforth demand of the artist in verse. And it cannot be denied that the crudity of actual life so treated and heightened in art — for art cannot merely reproduce, it cannot help heightening — gives us a new sensation, becomes a crude and heady wine setting up an agreeable disturbance in the midriff and bowels and a violent satisfaction in the brain and can be given by a powerful writer a wide appeal demanding no effort of taste or understanding from the average man who makes the multitude. A robust muscular and masculine poetry suitable to the Anglo-Saxon genius can no doubt be the result of this kind of aesthesis.

---

[1] In the sense in which a critic of some note, I am told, applies the epithet to Yeats' poetry. I have not read the criticism, but the expression itself is a sufficient condemnation not of the poet, but of the mind — and of its poetic theory — which can use such a word in such a connection.

Then again there is the old academic conception, truth of the cultivated intelligence, truth of reason, philosophic and scientific truth, or, more pertinent to the matter, truth of a certain selective imagination and taste consonant with reason and strong to give a tempered beauty to just presentation and idea, the classical or in its more formal shape the pseudo-classical aesthetic rule. And in this connection we have many familiar notions chasing each other across the field, such as on one side the compatibility or incompatibility of philosophy and poetry or on the other the definition of poetry as substantially a criticism of life though set in an artistic form and a high and serious tone. And associated with this view also we find very commonly a dislike of free imagination and rich colour and the audacities of the fancy and the far-off and shrouded voices and things visionary, subtle and remote. The aesthetic mind varies, follows its own bent, fashions its idea of poetic truth according to its own standard of satisfaction and sets up as a canon and law its own manner of response; there is a multitude of counsels, and each has this common characteristic that it overstresses one side of the norm of poetic creation. For the spirit of poetry is many-sided and flexible in its processes, but firm and invariable in the central law of its nature.

The poetic Truth of which I am speaking has nothing to do with any of these limitations. Truth, as she is seen by us in the end, is an infinite goddess, the very front and face of Infinity and Aditi herself, the illimitable mother of all the gods. This infinite, eternal and eternally creative Truth is no enemy of imagination or even of free fancy, for they too are godheads and can wear one of her faces or one of her expressive masks, while imagination is perhaps the very colour of her creative process, her births and movements are innumerable, her walk supple and many-pathed, and through all divine powers and universal means she can find her way to her own riches, and even error is her illegitimate child and serves, though wantonly, rebelliously and through many a giddy turn, her mother's many-formed self-adaptive world-wide aim. Now it is something of this infinite Truth which poetry succeeds in giving us with a high power, in its own way of beauty, by its own opulent appointed means. The channel is different from those of her other activities because the power is of another kind. Infinite Truth has her many distinct ways of expressing and finding herself and each way must be kept distinct and the law of one must not be applied to the law of another form of her self-expression; and yet that does not mean that the material of one cannot be used as the material of another, though it must be cast by a different power into a different mould, or that all do not meet on their tops. Truth of poetry is not truth of philosophy or truth of science or truth of religion only, because it is another way of self-expression of infinite Truth so distinct that it appears to give quite another face of things and reveal quite another side of experience. A poet may have a religious creed or subscribe to a system of philosophy or take rank himself like Lucretius or certain Indian poets as a considerable philosophical thinker or succeed like Goethe as a scientist as well as a poetic creator, but the moment he begins to argue out his system intellectually in verse or puts a dressed-up science straight into metre or else inflicts like Wordsworth or Dryden rhymed sermons or theological disputations on us, he is breaking the law. And even if he does not move so far astray, yet the farther he goes in that direction even within the bounds of his art, he is, though it has often been done with a tolerable, sometimes a considerable or total success, treading on unfirm or at any rate on lower ground. It is difficult for him there to maintain the authentic poetic spirit and pure inspiration.

For this is another cult and worship and the moment he stands before the altar of the Muse, he has to change his robes of mind and serve the rites of a different consecration. He has to bring out into the front that other personality in him who looks with a more richly irised seeing eye and speaks with a more rapturous voice. The others have not normally the same joy of the word because they do not go to its fountain-head, even though each has its own intense delight, as philosophy has its joy of deep and comprehensive understanding and religion its hardly expressible rapture. Still it remains true that the poet may express precisely the same thing in essence as the philosopher or the man of religion or the man of science, may even give us truth of philosophy, truth of religion, truth of science, provided he transmutes it, abstracts from it something on which the others insist in their own special form and gives us the something more which poetic sight and expression bring. He has to convert it into truth of poetry, and it will be still better for his art if he saw it originally with the poetic insight, the creative, intuitive, directly perceiving and interpreting eye; for then his utterance of truth is likely to be more poetic, authentic, inspired and compelling. This distinction between poetic and other truth, well enough felt but not always well observed, and their fusion and meeting-place are worth dwelling upon; for if poetry is to do all it can for us in the new age, it will include increasingly in its scope much that will be common to it with philosophy, religion and even in a broader sense with science, and yet it will at the same time develop more intensely the special beauty and peculiar power of its own insight and its own manner. The poetry of Tagore is already a new striking instance of what differently seen and followed out might have been a specifically philosophic and religious truth, but here turned into beauty and given a new significance by the transforming power of poetic vision.

The difference which separates these great things of the mind is a difference of the principal, the indispensable instrument we must use and of the appeal to the mind and the whole manner. There is a whole gulf of difference. The philosopher sees in the dry light of the reason, proceeds dispassionately by a severe analysis and abstraction of the intellectual content of the truth, a logical slow close stepping from idea to pure idea, a method difficult and nebulous to the ordinary, hard, arid, impossible to the poetic mind. For the poetic mind sees at once in a flood of coloured light, in a moved experience, in an ecstasy of the coming of the word, in splendours of form, in a spontaneous leaping out of inspired idea upon idea, sparks of the hoof-beats of the white flame horse Dadhikravan galloping up the mountain of the gods or breath and hue of wing striking into wing of the irised broods of Thought flying over earth or up towards heaven. The scientist proceeds also by the intellectual reason but with a microscopic scrutiny which brings it to bear on an analysis of sensible fact and process and on the correct measure and relation of force and energy as it is seen working on the phenomenal stuff of existence, and joins continually link of fact with fact and coil of process with process till he has under his hand at least in skeleton and tissue the whole connected chain of apparent things. But to the poetic mind this is a dead mechanical thing; for the eye of the poet loves to look on breathing acting life in its perfected synthesis and rhythm, not on the constituent measures, still less on the dissected parts, and his look seizes the soul of wonder of things, not the mechanical miracle. The method of these other powers moves by the rigorously based and patiently self-assured steps of the systematising intelligence and the aspect of Truth which they uncover is a norm measured and cut out from the world of ideas and the world of sense by the eye of the intellectual reason. The brooding philosopher or the discovering scientist cannot indeed do without the aid of a greater power, intuition, but ordinarily he has to bring what that nearer more swiftly luminous faculty gives him into a more deliberate air under the critical light of the intelligence and establish it in the dialectical or analytical way of philosophy and science before the intellect as judge. The mind of the poet sees by intuition and direct perception and brings out what they give him by a formative stress on the total image, and the aspect to which he thrills is the living truth of the form, of the life that inspires it, of the creative thought behind and the supporting movement of the soul and a rhythmic harmony of these things revealed to his delight in their beauty. These fields and paths lie very wide apart, and if any voices from the others reach and claim the ear of the poetic creator, they must change greatly in their form and suit themselves to the warmth and colour of his atmosphere before they can find right of entry into his kingdom.

The meeting is not here at the base, but on the tops. The philosopher's reasoning intelligence discovers only a system of thought symbols and the reality they figure cannot be seized by the intelligence, but needs direct intuition, a living contact, a close experience by identity in our self of knowledge. That is work not for a dialectical, but a bright revelatory thinking, a luminous body of intuitive thought and spiritual experience which carries us straight into sight, into vision of knowledge. The first effort of philosophy is to know for the sake of pure understanding, but her greater height is to take Truth alive in the spirit and clasp and grow one with her and be consciously within ourselves all the reality we have learned to know. But that is precisely what the poet strives to do in his own way by intuition and imagination, when he labours to bring himself close to and be one by delight with the thing of beauty which awakes his joy. He does not always seize the very self of the thing, but to do so lies within his power. The language of intuitive thinking moves always therefore to an affinity with poetic speech and in the ancient Upanishads it used that commonly as its natural vehicle. "The Spirit went abroad, a thing pure, bright, unwounded by sin, without body or sinew or scar; the Seer, the Thinker, the Self-born who breaks into being all around us, decreed of old all things in their nature from long eternal years." "There sun shines not nor moon nor star nor these lightnings blaze nor this fire; all this world is luminous only with his light." Are we listening, one might ask, to the voice of poetry or philosophy or religion? It is all three voices cast in one, indistinguishable in the eternal choir. And there is too and similarly a pure intuitive science which comes into the field when we enter the ranges of the psychical and spiritual being and can from there work for the discovery of greater secrets of the physical or at least of the psycho-physical world. Indian Yoga founds itself on that greater process, and there, though as in all true science the object is an assured method of personal discovery or living repetition and possession of past discovery and a working out of all the thing found, there is too a high final intention to hold the truth, the light found in our inner power of being and turn it to a power of our psychical self, our spirit, our self of knowledge and will, our self of love and joy, our self of life and action. This too, though not the same thing in form, is akin to the higher work of poetry when it acts, as the ancients would have had it consciously act, as a purifier and builder of the soul.

The initial function of religion again is to make clear the approaches of the soul to the Highest, to God. And it does that at first by laying on the mind a scheme of religious knowledge or guiding creed and dogma, a taming yoke of moral instruction or purifying law of religious conduct and an awakening call of religious emotion, worship, cult, and so far it is a thing apart in its own field, but in its truly revealing side of intuitive being and experience we find that the essence of religion is an aspiration and adoration of the soul towards the Divine, the Self, the Supreme, the Eternal, the Infinite, and an effort to get close to and live with or in that or to enjoy in love and be like or one with that which we adore. But poetry also on its heights turns to the same things in ourselves and the world, not indeed with religious adoration, but by a regarding closeness and moved oneness in beauty and delight. The characteristic method and first field of all these things is indeed wide apart, but at their end when they come into their deepest spirit, they begin to approach each other and touch; and because of this greater affinity philosophy, psychic and spiritual science and religion are found in the ancient Indian culture woven into one unity, and when they turn to the expression of their most intimate experience, it is always the poetic word which they use.

The steps of Poetry rise to these heights on her own side of the mountain of the gods. Poetry comes into being at the direct call of three powers, inspiration, beauty and delight, and brings them to us and us to them by the magic charm of the inspired rhythmic word. If it can do that at all perfectly, its essential work has been done. It is in its beginning concerned with close and simple natural things and, when it grows more subtle, still it has only to create a power of beauty, move the soul with aesthetic delight and make it feel and see, and its function seems at an end. The kind does not seem to matter, and it has nothing to do primarily or directly, nor at any time in a set formal will taking that as its function and aim, with the presentation of intellectual concepts to the reason or with truth of science or with moral betterment or the working out of religious aspiration, not often even with so near a thing to it as religious emotion and love. But yet because of that greater affinity we see it actually doing what is an equivalent to these things by its own power, in a strange and beautiful mould, with an indirect and yet subtly direct touch. The poet too brings out sometimes as if by accident, sometimes with a conscious intention the same essential truths as the philosopher or the man of religion. An instance or two will be sufficient to show the approximation and the difference. Religion brings us a command to love our neighbour as ourselves and even our enemies, a thing impossible to our normal nature, a law honoured with the consent of the lips and universally ignored in the observance. A few only seeking perfection in spiritual experience discover in it the natural rule of our real and our highest being, quite possible if we can only get some abiding realisation of that secret oneness which is the foundation of the law of universal love. Then, not seeking this at all but only poetic delight or, if you are so inclined, the criticism of life, we listen to Creon's fierce reproach to Antigone that in her refusal to hate the national enemy she stands unnaturally apart from the mind and heart of all her people and hear suddenly start out the high and proud reply of one lonely and doomed but inflexibly true to her nature, her soul's will under the shadow of a cruel death, "Not to join in hate, but to join in love was I born!" The Athenian poet intended no moral instruction, calls up no religious emotion into his line, is concerned only with a crucial situation in life, the revolt of natural affection against the rigid claim of the law, nation, State. It is a simple cry of the voice of nature and life, yet there breathes behind it a greater thought which is not so far from the truth underlying religious teaching and spiritual experience. The poet, his eyes fixed on life, shows us as if by accident the seed in our normal nature which can grow into the prodigious spiritual truth of universal love. He has to do it in his own way in the mould of poetic beauty and delight, and if we judge by such instances, we shall say that so only he has to do it, to cast as if casually the seed of the beauty and delight of some high mood of life and nature into the mind and pass on leaving it to its work on the soul's reflecting emotional experience, perhaps hardly himself knowing what he has done since he is absorbed in sight and satisfied with the joy of beautiful creation.

And yet actually we find that we cannot quite set these limits or they are not regarded by poets of a high order. The poet of the Gita has the conscious intention of laying the form of unity on the soul of the hearer and moving him to seek the full experience. "He is the greatest Yogin who, come happiness by that or come grief, sees wherever he turns his eyes all equally in the image of his self." That is something high, grave, couched in the language of the inspired reason, uplifted in the original by a sweet and noble diction and rhythm, religious and philosophical in its strain and yet poetical, because it adds to the fundamental idea the visualising and bringing home of the spiritual experience, the sustaining emotion of the thing felt and a touch of its life. And in the much older Yajur Veda we find breaking out with a different, a more moved and less reflective voice the same truth of experience, the same touch on the soul, "Where I am wounded, make me firm and whole. May all creatures gaze on me with the eye of the Friend, may I gaze on all creatures, may we all gaze on all with the eye of the Friend." There poetry and religious emotion become powerfully fused and one in the aspiration to the heart's perfection and the loving unity of all life. The same uniting alchemy and fusion can take place between truth of philosophy and poetic truth and it is continually found in Indian literature. And so too all the old Rig Veda, all the Vaishnava poetry of North and South had behind it an elaborate Yoga or practised psychical and spiritual science, without which it could not have come into birth in that form. Today much of the poetry of Tagore is the sign of such a Sadhana, a long inheritance of assured spiritual discovery and experience. But what is given whether directly or in symbol or in poetic image is not the formal steps of the Sadhana, but the strongly felt movement and the living outcome, the vision and life and inner experience, the spirit and power and body of sweetness and beauty and delight. The tracing of close and too meticulous bounds round the steps of poetic truth or turning of its wide continental spheres into some limiting magic circle seems therefore to have no real foundation. One may almost though not quite say that there is nothing in infinite Truth that the poet cannot make his material, even if it seems to belong to other provinces of the mind, because all forms of human experience approach each other on their sides of intuition and inner life and vision and all meet in the spirit. The condition, the limitation is only in the way and manner, — but that means enormously much, — the necessity of the purely poetic way of seeing and the subjection of the thing seen to the law of poetic harmony and moved delight and beauty.

The real distinction therefore is in the primary or essential aim of poetry and in the imperative condition which that aim lays upon the art. Its function is not to teach truth of any particular kind, nor indeed to teach at all, nor to pursue knowledge nor to serve any religious or ethical aim, but to embody beauty in the word and give delight. But at the same time it is at any rate part of its highest function to serve the spirit and to illumine and lead through beauty and build by a high informing and revealing delight the soul of man. And its field is all soul experience, its appeal is to the aesthetic response of the soul to all that touches it in self or world; it is one of the high and beautiful powers of our inner and may be a power of our inmost life. All of the infinite Truth of being that can be made part of that life, all that can be made true and beautiful and living to that experience, is poetic truth and a fit subject matter of poetry. But there are always three things which we find present in the utterance and which may be taken as the tests of its measure of power. First there is a force of inspired seeing which gives us the appeal of some reality of self or mind or world, whether in this material field or the other planes of universal existence or of our own being to which imagination is one of the gates, a seeing which brings to us the power of its truth and the beauty of its image and gives it body in the mind by the word. Then there must be the touch, presence, breath of the very life, not the outward only, but the inward life, not an imitation by force of speech or the holding up of a mirror to some external movement or form of Nature, but a creative interpretation which brings home to us as much as may be of what she is or things or we are. And again that must carry in it and arouse in us an emotion of its touch on the soul, not the raw emotion of the vital parts, — though that comes in in certain kinds of poetry, — but a spiritual essence of feeling to which our inner strands can vibrate. The intellectual, vital, sensible truths are subordinate things; the breath of poetry should give us along with them, or it may even be apart from them, some more essential truth of the being of things, their very power which springs in the last resort from something eternal in their heart and secrecy, *hṛdaye guhāyām*, expressive even in the moments and transiences of life. The soul of the poet, and the soul too of the hearer by a response to his word, enters into some direct contact through vision and straight touch and emotion, possesses and feels at its strongest by a union in our own stuff of being, a moved identity. A direct spiritual perception and vision called by us intuition, however helped or prepared by other powers, can alone avail to give us these things. Imagination is only the poet's most powerful aid for this discovery and interpretative creation, fancy a brilliant opener of hidden or out-of-the-way doors. The finding of a new image is itself a joy to the poet and the hearer because it reveals some new significant correspondence or sheds a stronger disclosing light on the thing seen and makes it stand out and live more opulently, luminously, with a greater delight of itself in the mind. The poet having to bring home something, even in things common, which is not obvious to surface experience, avails himself of image, symbol, whatever is just, beautiful, meaningful, suggestive. His fictions are not charming airy nothings, but as with every true artist significant figures and creations which serve to bring very real realities close to the spirit, and their immortality is the immortality of truth.

It is in this sense that we can speak of the sun of poetic truth in whose universal light the poet creates. But all depends on how he sees or uses the light. He can catch this or that sight in an isolated ray, or sometimes lights with it his own personality and kindles a lamp in the house of his own being, or looks through its radiance over the material earth and the forms and first movements of her children or searches with the lustre the surge of the life-soul and its passion and power or discovers the lesser or the greater secrets of the mind and heart of man, or looks upwards through a loftier flood of beams and sees the mid-worlds and heavens and the actions of the gods and the scenes and moments of an immortal life. And sometimes the dark sun of the Vedic image lodging in the blind cave gives him a negative light; a darkness visible revealing darkness immeasurable shows him the gloomy secrets of some city of dreadful Night, shadow of Hades or lowest Tartarean clot of Hell. The sun of Truth may be still for him below the verge with its light already on the tops and flushing the chill of the snows, ride regal in heaven or gravely sunken or splendid in some setting light. He may stand on the earth or wander winged like the symbolic birds of the Veda still in the terrestrial atmosphere or rise into worlds beyond nearer to the sun and see in a changed light all that is below. And one or two may perhaps be strong to look with unblinded eyes into the source of all light, see that splendour which is its happiest form of all, to which approaching or entering one can say "He am I", discover the identity of his spirit with all things and find in that oneness the word of light which can most powerfully illumine our human utterance.

And where then is the highest range of sight into which the mind of the poet can rise and according to the power of his genius find a deeper and deeper and larger and larger truth of already spoken things and of new things to be spoken and as yet unattempted in prose or rhyme? If some kind of intuitive seeing is at the back of his imaginative vision and the real power that calls down the inspired word, it will be when he can rise to its source and live in the fullness of a highest intuitive mind which is greater than the awakened sense, intuitive life-vision or inspired reason, though it will see all that they can see, that he will get his fullest power, deepest sight, broadest scope. To throw light on the self of things in some power and beauty of it is after all the native aim of poetry, and that can be done entirely by this greatest intuitive mind, for it can bring near or going beyond itself actually reach the vision of identity, that seeing of our whole self and the self of the world which is the last object and the highest spirit of all our mental powers and seekings. The poetry which will accomplish that will be able to see, though in another way than that of philosophy and religion, the self of the Eternal, to know God and his godheads, to know the freedom and immortality which is our divinest aim, to see in the delight of a union in beauty the self of the Infinite, the self of Nature and the whole self of man. But so to see the self is to meet the spirit in everything and the spirit reveals to us the inner and the inmost truth of all that comes from it, life and thought and form and every image and every power. Much has been done by the art of rhythmic self-expression; much remains to be done. To express these greatest things and to gather up all that man has come and is yet coming to see and know and feel in a new and greater light and give to him the universal spirit and power of beauty and delight behind all this existence is a work that will open to poetry a larger territory and the perfect greatness of its function. A beginning of such an endeavour we have seen to be the noblest strain in recent work; the possibility of a refreshed and long continued vitality and a hardly exhaustible fount of inspiration lies in that direction. The Veda speaks in one of its symbolic hints of the fountain of eternal Truth round which stand the illumined powers of thought and life. There under the eyes of delight and the face of imperishable beauty of the Mother of creation and bride of the eternal Spirit they lead their immortal dance. The poet visits that marvellous source in his superconscient mind and brings to us some strain or some vision of her face and works. To find the way into that circle with the waking self is to be the seer-poet and discover the highest power of the inspired word, the Mantra.

Chapter III

The Breath of Greater Life

THE TURN of poetry in the age which we have now left behind, was, as was inevitable in a reign of dominant intellectuality, a preoccupation with reflective thought and therefore with truth, but it was not at its core and in its essence a poetic thought and truth and its expression, however artistically dressed with image and turn or enforced by strong or dexterous phrase, however frequently searching, apt or picturesque, had not often, except in one or two exceptional voices, the most moving and intimate tones of poetry. The poets of the middle nineteenth century in England and America philosophised, moralised or criticised life in energetic and telling or beautiful and attractive or competent and cultured verse; but they did not represent life with success or interpret it with high poetic power or inspired insight and were not stirred and uplifted by any deeply great vision of truth. The reasoning and observing intellect is a most necessary and serviceable instrument, but an excess of reason and intellectuality does not create an atmosphere favourable to moved vision and the uplifting breath of life, and for all its great stir of progress and discovery that age, the carnival of industry and science, gives us who are in search of more living, inner and potent things the impression of a brazen flavour, a heavy air, an inhibition of the greater creative movements, a level spirit of utility and prose. The few poets who strained towards a nearer hold upon life, had to struggle against this atmosphere which weighed upon their mind and clogged their breath. Whitman, striving by stress of thought towards a greater truth of the soul and life, found refuge in a revolutionary breaking out into new anarchic forms, a vindication of freedom of movement which unfortunately at its ordinary levels brings us nearer to the earth and not higher up towards a more illumined air; Swinburne, excited by the lyric fire within him, had too often to lash himself into a strained violence of passion in order to make a way through the clogging thickness for its rush of sound; Meredith's strains, hymning life in a word burdened and packed with thought, are strong and intimate, but difficult and few. And therefore in this epoch of a bursting into new fields and seeking for new finer and bolder impulses of creation, one of the most insistent demands and needs of the human mind, not only in poetry, but in thought itself and in spirit, has been to lessen the tyranny of the reasoning and critical intellect, to return to the power and sincerity of life and come by a greater deepness of the intuition of its soul of meaning. That is the most striking turn of all recent writing of any importance.

This turn is in itself perfectly sound and its direction is to a certain extent on the right line, even if it does not yet altogether see its own end. But the firm grasp on a greater life has not quite come and there are many mistaken directions of this urge. The enlightening power of the poet's creation is vision of truth, its moving power is a passion of beauty and delight, but its sustaining power and that which makes it great and vital is the breath of life. A poetry which is all thought and no life or a thought which does not constantly keep in touch with and refresh itself from the fountains of life, even if it is something more than a strong, elegant or cultured philosophising or moralising in skilled verse, even if it has vision and intellectual beauty, suffers always by lack of fire and body, wants perfection of grasp and does not take full hold on the inner being to seize and uplift as well as sweeten and illumine, as poetry should do and all great poetic writing does. The function of the poet even when he is most absorbed in thinking, is still to bring out not merely the truth and interest, but the beauty and power of the thought, its life and emotion, and not only to do that, not only to make the thought a beautiful and living thing, but to make it one thing with life. But words are ambiguous things and we must see what is the full extent of our meaning when we say, as we may say, that the poet's first concern and his concern always is with living beauty and reality, with life.

As we can say that the truth with which poetry is touched, is an infinite truth, all the truth that lives in the eternal and universal and fills, informs, vivifies, holds and shapes the spirit and form of creation, so we may say too that the life, something of which the poet has to reembody in the beauty of the word, is all life, the infinite life of the spirit thrown out in its many creations. The poet's business most really, most intimately is not with the outward physical life as it is or the life of the passions and emotions only for its own sake or even with some ideal life imaged by the mind or some combining and new shaping of these things into a form of beauty, but with the life of the soul and with these other things only as its expressive forms. Poetry is the rhythmic voice of life, but it is one of the inner and not one of the surface voices. And the more of this inner truth of his function the poet brings out in his work, the greater is his creation, while it does not seem to matter essentially or not at the first whether his method is professedly subjective or objective, his ostensible power that of a more outward or a more inward spirit or whether it is the individual or the group soul or the soul of Nature or mankind or the eternal and universal spirit in them whose beauty and living reality find expression in his word. This universal truth of poetry is apt to be a little hidden from us by the form and stress of preoccupation with this or that medium of outward soul-expression in the poet's work. Mankind in its development seems to begin with the most outward things and go always more and more inward in order that the race may mount to greater heights of the spirit's life. An early poetry therefore is much occupied with a simple, natural, straightforward, external presentation of life. A primitive epic bard like Homer thinks only by the way and seems to be carried constantly forward in the stream of his strenuous action and to cast out as he goes only so much of surface thought and character and feeling as obviously emerges in a strong and single and natural speech and action. And yet it is the adventures and trials and strength and courage of the soul of man in Odysseus which makes the greatness of the Odyssey and not merely the vivid incident and picturesque surrounding circumstance, and it is the clash of great and strong spirits with the gods leaning down to participate in their struggle which makes the greatness of the Iliad and not merely the action and stir of battle. The outward form of Shakespeare's work is a surge of emotion and passion and thought and act and event arising out of character at ferment in the yeast of feeling and passion, but it is its living interpretation of the truth and powers of the life-soul of man that are the core of greatness of his work and the rest without it would be a vain brute turmoil. The absence or defect of this greater element makes indeed the immense inferiority of the rest of Elizabethan dramatic work. And whatever the outward character or form of the poetry, the same law holds that poetry is a self-expressive power of the spirit and where the soul of things is most revealed in its very life by the rhythmic word, there is the fullest achievement of the poet's function.

And so long as the poet's medium is the outward life of things or the surface inward life of the passions and emotions, he is moving in a strong and fresh natural element and in an undivided wholeness of the inner and outer man, and his work, given the native power in him, has all the vitality of a thing fully felt and lived. But when intellectual thought has begun its reign in the mind of a more cultured race, the poet's difficulty also begins and increases as that reign becomes more sovereign and imperative. For intellectual thought makes a sort of scission in our being and on one side of the line is the vital urge carrying on life and on the other side the deliberate detached reason trying to observe it, take an intelligent view and extract from it all its thought values. The poet, as a child of the age and one of its voices, is moved to follow this turn. He too observes life, extracts the thought values of his theme, criticises while attempting to create, or even lingers to analyse his living subject, as Browning is constantly doing with the thinking and feeling mind of his characters. But this can only be done without detriment to the vital power of the poetic spirit and the all-seizing effect of its word, when there is a balance maintained between thought and life, the life passing into self-observing thought and the thought returning on the life to shape it in its own vital image. It has been remarked that the just balance between thought and the living word was found by the Greeks and not again. That is perhaps an excessive affirmation, but certainly a just balance between observing thought and life is the distinctive effort of classical poetry and that endeavour gave it its stamp whether in Athens or Rome or in much of the epic or classical literature of ancient India. But this balance is easily lost, a difficult thing, and, once it has gone, thought begins to overweight life which loses its power and élan and joy, its vigorous natural body and its sincere and satisfied passion and force. We get more of studies of life than of creation, thought about the meaning of character and emotion and event and elaborate description rather than the living presence of these things. Passion, direct feeling, ardent emotion, sincerity of sensuous joy are chilled by the observing eye of the reason and give place to a play of sentiment, — sentiment which is an indulgence of the intelligent observing mind in the aesthesis, the *rasa* of feeling, passion, emotion, sense thinning them away into a subtle, at the end almost unreal fineness. There is then an attempt to get back to the natural fullness of the vital and physical life, but the endeavour fails in sincerity and success because it is impossible; the mind of man having got so far cannot return upon its course, undo what it has made of itself and recover the glad childhood of its early vigorous nature. There is instead of the simplicity of spontaneous life a search after things striking, exaggerated, abnormal, violent, new, in the end a morbid fastening on perversities, on all that is ugly, glaring and coarse on the plea of their greater reality, on exaggerations of vital instinct and sensation, on physical wrynesses and crudities and things unhealthily strange. The thought-mind, losing the natural full-blooded power of the vital being, pores on these things, stimulates the failing blood with them and gives itself an illusion of some forceful sensation of living. This is not the real issue, but the way to exhaustion and decadence.

The demand for life, for action, the tendency to a pragmatic and vitalistic view of things, a certain strenuous and even strident note has been loud enough in recent years. Life, action, vital power are great indispensable things, but to get back to them by thinking less is a way not open to us in this age of time, even if it were a desirable remedy for our disease of over-intellectuality and a mechanised existence. In fact we do not think less than the men of the past generation but much more insistently, with a more packed and teeming thought, with a more eager more absorbed hunting of the mind along all the royal high-roads and alluring byways of life. And it could not be otherwise. The very school of poetry which insists on actual life as the subject matter of the poet carries into it with or without conscious intention the straining of the thought mind after something quite other than the obvious sense of the things it tries to force into relief, some significance deeper than what either the observing reason or the normal life-sense gives to our first or our second view of existence. The way out lies not in cessation of thinking and the turn to a strenuous description of life, nor even in a more vitally forceful thinking, but in another kind of thought mind. The filled activity of the thinking mind is as much part of life as that of the body and vital and emotional being, and its growth and predominance are a necessary stage of human progress and man's self-evolution. To go back from it is impossible or, if possible, would be undesirable, a lapse and not a betterment of our spirit. But the full thought-life does not come by the activity of the intellectual reason and its predominance. That is only a step by which we get above the first immersion in the activity and excitement and vigour of the life and the body and give ourselves a first freedom to turn to a greater and higher reach of the fullness of existence. And that higher reach we gain when we get above the limited crude physical mind, above the vital power and its forceful thought and self-vision, above the intellect and its pondering and measuring reason, and tread the illumined realm of an intuitive and spiritual thinking, an intuitive feeling, sense and vision. This is not that vital intuition which is sometimes confused with a much broader, loftier, vaster and more seeing power, but the high original power itself, a supra-intellectual and spiritual intuition. The all-informing spirit, when found in all its fullness, heals the scission between thought and life, the need of a just balance between them disappears, instead there begins a new and luminous and joyful fusion and oneness. The spirit gives us not only a greater light of truth and vision, but the breath of a greater living; for the spirit is not only the self of our consciousness and knowledge, but the great self of life. To find our self and the self of things is not to go through a rarefied ether of thought into Nirvana, but to discover the whole greatest integral power of our complete existence.

This need is the sufficient reason for attaching the greatest importance to those poets in whom there is the double seeking of this twofold power, the truth and reality of the eternal self and spirit in man and things and the insistence on life. All the most significant and vital work in recent poetry has borne this stamp; the rest is of the hour, but this is of the future. It is the highest note of Whitman; in him, as in one who seeks and sees much but has not fully found, it widens the sweep of a great pioneer poetry, but is an opening of a new view rather than a living in its accomplished fullness; it is constantly repeated from the earth side in Meredith, comes down from the spiritual side in all A. E.'s work, moves between earth and the life of the worlds behind in Yeats' subtle rhythmic voices of vision and beauty, echoes with a large fullness in Carpenter. The poetry of Tagore owes its sudden and universal success to this advantage that he gives us more of this discovery and fusion for which the mind of our age is in quest than any other creative writer of the time. His work is a constant music of the overpassing of the borders, a chant-filled realm in which the subtle sounds and lights of the truth of the spirit give new meanings to the finer subtleties of life. The objection has been made that this poetry is too subtle, too remote, goes too far away from the broad, near, present and vital actualities of terrestrial existence. Yeats is considered by some a poet of Celtic romance and nothing more, Tagore accused in his own country of an unsubstantial poetic philosophising, a lack of actuality, of reality of touch and force of vital insistence. But this is to mistake the work of this poetry and to mistake too in a great measure the sense of life as it must reveal itself to the greatening mind of humanity now that that mind is growing in world-knowledge and towards self-knowledge. These poets have not indeed done all that has to be done or given the complete poetic synthesis and fusion. Their work has been to create a new and deeper manner of seeing life, to build bridges of visioned light and rhythm between the infinite and eternal and the limited mind and soul and embodied life of man. The future poetry has not to stay in their achievement; it has yet to step from these first fields into new and yet greater ranges, to fathom all the depths yet unplumbed, to complete what has been left half done or not yet done, to bring all it can of the power of man's greater self and the universal spirit into a broader and even the broadest possible all of life. That cannot and will not be achieved in its fullness at once, but to make a foundation of this new infinite range of poetic vision and creation is work enough to give greatness to a whole age.

The demand for activity and realism or for a direct, exact and forceful presentation of life in poetry proceeds upon a false sense of what poetry gives or can give us. All the highest activities of the mind of man deal with things other than the crude actuality or the direct appearance or the first rough appeal of existence. A critical or a scientific thought may attempt to give an account of the actuality as it really is, though even to do that they have to go far behind its frontage and make a mental reconstruction and surprising change in its appearance. But the creative powers cannot stop there, but have to make new things for us as well as to make existing things new to the mind and eye. It is no real portion of the function of art to cut out palpitating pieces from life and present them raw and smoking or well-cooked for the aesthetic digestion. For in the first place all art has to give us beauty and the crude actuality of life is not often beautiful, and in the second place poetry has to give us a deeper reality of things and the outsides and surface faces of life are only a part of its reality and do not take us either very deep or very far. Moreover, the poet's greatest work is to open to us new realms of vision, new realms of being, our own and the world's, and he does this even when he is dealing with actual things. Homer with all his epic vigour of outward presentation does not show us the heroes and deeds before Troy in their actuality as they really were to the normal vision of men, but much rather as they were or might have been to the vision of the gods. Shakespeare's greatness lies not in his reproduction of actual human events or men as they appear to us buttoned and cloaked in life, — others of his time could have done that as well, if with less radiant force of genius, yet with more of the realistic crude colour or humdrum drab of daily truth, — but in his bringing out in his characters and themes of things essential, intimate, eternal, universal in man and Nature and Fate on which the outward features are borne as fringe and robe and which belong to all times, but are least obvious to the moment's experience: when we do see them, life presents to us another face and becomes something deeper than its actual present mask. That is why the poet oftenest instinctively prefers to go away from the obsession of a petty actuality, from the realism of the prose of life to his inner creative self or an imaginative background of the past or the lucent air of myth or dream or on into a greater outlook on the future. Poetry may indeed deal with the present living scene, at some peril, or even with the social or other questions and problems of the day, — a task which is now often laid on the creative mind, as if that were its proper work; but it does that successfully only when it makes as little as possible of what belongs to the moment and time and the surface and brings out their roots of universal or eternal interest or their suggestion of great and deep things. What the poet borrows from the moment, is the most perishable part of his work and lives at all only by being subordinated and put into intimate relation with less transient realities. And this is so because it is the eternal increasing soul of man and the intimate self of things and their more abiding and significant forms which are the real object of his vision.

The poetry of the future can least afford to chain itself to the outward actualities which we too often mistake for the whole of life, because it will be the voice of a human mind which is pressing more and more towards the very self of the self of things, the very spirit of which the soul of man is a living power and to a vision of unity and totality which is bound to take note of all that lies behind our apparent material life. What man sees and experiences of God and himself and his race and Nature and the spiritual, mental, psychic and material worlds in which he moves, his backlook upon the past, his sweep of vision over the present, his eye of aspiration and prophecy cast towards the future, his passion of self-finding and self-exceeding, his reach beyond the three times to the eternal and immutable, this is his real life. Poetry in the past wrote much of the godheads and powers behind existence, but in the mask of legends and myths, sometimes of God, but not often with a living experience, oftener in the set forms taught by religions and churches and without true beauty and knowledge. But now the mind of man is opening more largely to the deepest truth of the Divine, the Self, the Spirit, the eternal Presence not separate and distant, but near us, around us and in us, the Spirit in the world, the greater Self in man and his kind, the Spirit in all that is and lives, the Godhead, the Existence, the Power, the Beauty, the eternal Delight that broods over all, supports all and manifests itself in every turn of creation. A poetry which lives in this vision must give us quite a new presentation and interpretation of life; for of itself and at the first touch this seeing reconstructs and reimages the world for us and gives us a greater sense and a vaster, subtler and profounder form of our existence. The real faces of the gods are growing more apparent to the eye of the mind, though not yet again intimate with our life, and the forms of legend and symbol and myth must open to other and deeper meanings, as already they have begun to do, and come in changed and vital again into poetry to interpret the realities behind the veil. Nature wears already to our eye a greater and more transparent robe of her divine and her animal and her terrestrial and cosmic life and a deeper poetry of Nature than has yet been written is one of the certain potentialities of the future. The material realm too cannot for very much longer be our sole or separate world of experience, for the partitions which divide it from psychic and other kingdoms behind it are wearing thin and voices and presences are beginning to break through and reveal their impact on our world. This too must widen our conception of life and make a new world and atmosphere for poetry which may justify as perhaps never before the poet's refusal to regard as unreal what to the normal mind was only romance, illusion or dream. A larger field of being made more real to man's experience will be the realm of the future poetry.

These things are often given an appearance of remoteness, of withdrawal from the actuality of life, because to discover them the mind had at first to draw away from the insistent outward preoccupation and live as if in a separate world. The seeker of the Self and Spirit, the God-lover, tended to become the cloistered monk, the ascetic, the mystic, the eremite and to set the spiritual apart from and against the material life. The lover of Nature went away from the noise of man and daily things to commune with her largeness and peace. The gods were found more in the lights of solitude than in the thoughts and actions of men. The seer of other worlds lived surrounded by the voices and faces of supernature. And this was a legitimate seclusion, for these are provinces and realms and presences and one has often to wander apart in them or live secluded with them to know their nearest intimacies. The spirit is real in itself even apart from the world, the gods have their own home beyond our sky and air, Nature her own self-absorbed life and supernature its brilliant curtains and its dim mysterious fences. None of these things are unreal, and if the supernatural as handled by older poets seemed often mere legend, fancy and romance, it was because it was seen from a distance by the imagination, not lived in by the soul and in its spirit, as is done by the true seer and poet of this supernature or other-nature. And all these things, because they have their own reality, have their life and a poetry which makes them its subject can be as vital, as powerful, as true as the song which makes beautiful the physical life and normal passions and emotions of men and the objects of our bodily sense-experience.

But still all life is one and a new human mind moves towards the realisation of its totality and oneness. The poetry which voices the oneness and totality of our being and Nature and the worlds and God, will not make the actuality of our earthly life less but more real and rich and full and wide and living to men. To know other countries is not to belittle but enlarge our own country and help it to a greater power of its own being, and to know the other countries of the soul is to widen our bounds and make more opulent and beautiful the earth on which we live. To bring the gods into our life is to raise it to its own diviner powers. To live in close and abiding intimacy with Nature and the spirit in her is to free our daily living from its prison of narrow preoccupation with the immediate moment and act and to give the moment the inspiration of all Time and the background of eternity and the daily act the foundation of an eternal peace and the large momentum of the universal Power. To bring God into life, the sense of the self in us into all our personality and becoming, the powers and vistas of the Infinite into our mental and material existence, the oneness of the self in all into our experience and feelings and relations of heart and mind with all that is around us is to help to divinise our actual being and life, to force down its fences of division and blindness and unveil the human godhead that individual man and his race can become if they will and lead us to our most vital perfection. This is what a future poetry may do for us in the way and measure in which poetry can do these things, by vision, by the power of the word, by the attraction of the beauty and delight of what it shows us. What philosophy or other mental brooding makes precise or full to our thought, poetry can by its creative power, imaging force and appeal to the emotions make living to the soul and heart. This poetry will present to us indeed in forms of power and beauty all the actual life of man, his wonderful and fruitful past, his living and striving present, his yet more living aspiration and hope of the future, but will present it more seeingly as the life of the vast self and spirit within the race and the veiled divinity in the individual, as an act of the power and delight of universal being, in the greatness of an eternal manifestation, in the presence and intimacy of Nature, in harmony with the beauty and wonder of the realms that stretch out beyond earth and its life, in the march to godhead and the significances of immortality, in the ever clearer letters and symbols of the self-revealing mystery and not only in its first crude and incomplete actualities; these actualities will themselves be treated with a firmer and finer vision, find their own greater meaning and become to our sight thread of the fine tissue and web of the cosmic work of the Spirit. This poetry will be the voice and rhythmic utterance of our greater, our total, our infinite existence, and will give us the strong and infinite sense, the spiritual and vital joy, the exalting power of a greater breath of life.

Chapter IV

The Soul of Poetic Delight and Beauty

THE LIGHT of truth, the breath of life, great and potent things though they are, are insufficient to give poetry the touch of immortality and perfection, even a little of which is enough to carry it safe through the ages, unless the soul and form of delight and beauty take possession of the seeing of truth and give immortality to the breath and body of the life. Delight is the soul of existence, beauty the intense impression, the concentrated form of delight; and these two fundamental things tend to be one for the mind of the artist and the poet, though they are often enough separated in our cruder vital and mental experience. These twin powers meet, make a consonance of the perfect harmony of his work and are the first deities he serves, all the others only group themselves about them, strive to be admitted to the soul of delight and the privilege of beauty and have to make themselves acceptable to them before they can mix with them in a compelling and attracting oneness. For the poet the moon of beauty and delight is a greater godhead even than the sun of truth or the breath of life, as in the symbolic image of the Vedic moon-god Soma, whose plant of intoxication has to be gathered on lonely mountain heights in the moonlight and whose purified juice and essence is the sacred wine and nectar of sweetness, *rasa*, *madhu*, *amṛta*, without which the gods themselves could not be immortal. A lightest trifle, if it manages to get itself saturated with this sweetness of poetic delight and beauty, will be preserved for its sake, while the highest strenuous labour of the thinking mind and the most forceful assertion of the life-power, if deprived of or deficient in this subtlest immortalising essence, may carry on for a time, but soon drops, grows old, sinks into the gulf of oblivion or has at most a lifeless survival and belongs to the dead history of literature, not to its eternal present. But beauty and delight, whatever form it takes, — for we may speak here of the two as one, — has an unaging youth, an eternal moment, an immortal presence.

The imperative instinct for beauty and the aesthetic demand which set that among the first needs and was not satisfied with anything else if this were neglected or put second in importance, are now things that are almost lost, nowhere general to the human mind, but once they were the sign of the poetic and artistic peoples and the great ages of art and poetry and supreme creation. The ancient communities who created those fine many-sided cultures which still remain the fountain-head of all our evolving civilisation, had the instinct for beauty, the aesthetic turn of the temperament and formation of the mind almost, it would seem, from the beginning, planted in their spirit and their blood, colouring their outlook so that even before they got the developed intellectual consciousness of it, they created instinctively in the spirit and form of beauty and that is quite half the secret of the compelling and attractive power of the antique cultures. The earliest surviving poetry of ancient India was philosophical and religious, the Veda, the Upanishads, and our modern notions tend to divorce these things from the instinct of delight and beauty, to separate the religious and the philosophic from the aesthetic sense; but the miracle of these antique writings is their perfect union of beauty and power and truth, the word of truth coming out spontaneously as a word of beauty, the revealed utterance of that universal spirit who is described in the Upanishads as the eater of the honey of sweetness, *madhvadam puruṣam*; and this high achievement was not surprising in these ancient deep-thinking men who discovered the profound truth that all existence derives from and lives by the bliss of the eternal spirit, in the power of a universal delight, Ananda. The idea of beauty, the spontaneous satisfaction in it, the worship of it as in itself something divine, became more intellectually conscious afterwards, was a dominant strain of the later Indian mind and got to its richest outward colour and sensuous passion in the work of the classical writers, while the expression of the spiritual through the aesthetic sense is the constant sense of Indian art, as it is also the inspiring motive of a great part of the later religion and poetry. Japan and China, more especially perhaps southern China, for the north has been weighted by a tendency to a more external and formal idea of measure and harmony, had in a different way this fusion of the spiritual and aesthetic mind and it is a distinguishing stamp of their art and culture. The Persian had a sort of sensuous magic of the transforming aesthesis born of psychic delight and vision. Ancient Greece did all its work of founding European civilisation by a union of a subtle and active intelligence with a fine aesthetic spirit and worship of beauty. The Celtic nations again seem always to have had by nature a psychic delicacy and subtlety united with an instinctive turn for imaginative beauty to which we surely owe much of the finer strain in English literature. But there these spontaneous miracles of fusion end and in the mind of later peoples who come in and take possession with a less innate, a more derivative culture, the sense of beauty works with a certain effort and is clogged by many heavier elements which are in conflict with and prevent the sureness of the aesthetic perception. There is in their cruder temperament and intelligence a barbaric strain which worships rudely the power and energy of life and is not at home with the delight of beauty, an ethical and puritanic strain which looks askance at art and beauty and pleasure, a heavy scholastic or a dry scientific intellectual strain which follows after truth with a conscientious and industrious diligence but without vision and fine aesthesis. And the modern mind, inheritor of all this past, is a divided and complex mind which strives at its best to get back at the old thing on a larger scale and realise some oneness of its many strands of experience, but has not yet found the right meeting-place; and it is besides still labouring under the disadvantage of its aberration into a mechanical, economical, materialistic, utilitarian civilisation from which it cannot get free, though it is struggling to shake off that dullest side of it for which a naked and unashamed riot of ugliness could be indulged in without any prickings of the spiritual conscience but rather with a smug self-righteousness in the hideous, the vulgar and the ignoble. The day when we get back to the ancient worship of delight and beauty, will be our day of salvation; for without these things there can be neither an assured nobility and sweetness in poetry and art, nor a satisfied dignity and fullness of life nor a harmonious perfection of the spirit.

An insufficiently profound and intimate perception of the real deep soul of poetic delight and beauty is the first obstacle to a recovery of the old strong soundness of the aesthetic sense and spontaneity of the aesthetic impulse. This comes from the peculiar character of the modern intelligence and its want of harmony between our internal selves and our external experience; there is little spontaneous joy of their meeting, an active labour to assimilate, but no happy, deep or satisfied possession either of self or life, a continual seeking but no repose in the thing found, a feverish restlessness without home and abiding-place. The spirit of man can make its home in either one of two things, the depths of our self arrived at through vision of self-knowledge, through power of self-mastery or through ecstasy, or a profound, a glad and satisfied acceptance of the truth, the delight and beauty of the world and life, of existence and experience. And either of these things can help too to bring in the other, — possess the inner self and life can become happy and illumined by a full sense of its hidden significance, or get hold of the complete delight and beauty of life and the world and you have then only a thin layer of shining mist to break through to get also at the self and spirit behind it, the eater of the honey of sweetness who is seated in the soul of man and extends himself through the universe. The ancient peoples had in a very large measure this foundation of satisfaction and harmony, took the greatest interest in the reality of the inner self, as once in India and China, the Atman, the Tao, and life and the world as its field of expression and self-experience or, like the Greeks, felt at once the naturalness and profundity of human existence and gave to it an immediate and subtle aesthetic response. The modern mind on the contrary looks little into our deepest self, takes little interest in sounding that depth and has hardly any confidence in its reality, and concentrates not on the truth and delight and beauty of life, but upon the stress of its results and circumstances, which in themselves have only an incidental and no satisfying and harmonious meaning, and on the agitating or attractive turmoil of the mind excited by their contact or their siege.[1] This difference results in a fundamental difference of aesthesis. The pure aesthetic spirit ought to be left free, trusted in, made master of its own action and creation and it will then create with greatness and beauty, in a calm and satisfied ecstasy, and yet safely harmonise its action with the other spiritual powers of our existence, the need of the life-soul, the insistent seeking of the thought-mind, the demand of the active will and the senses. But we now make the aesthetic sense and intelligence a servant of these other powers; it is condemned to serve first and foremost our external interest in life or our interest in thought or in troubled personality or the demand of the senses or passions and bidden to make them beautiful or vivid to us by an active aesthetic cerebration and artistic manufacture of the word or a supply of carefully apt or beautiful forms and measures. The secondary things are put in the first rank, the primary, the one thing needful has to get in as best it can to give some firm base to the creation. This aesthesis aided by the vast curiosity of the modern intelligence has done some great and much interesting work, but it arrives with difficulty at the readily fused harmonies and assured stamp of the perfect way of spiritual creation.

There is a profound intrinsic delight and beauty in all things and behind all experience whatever face it wears to the surface mind, which makes it to a spirit housed within us other than its first appearance, makes it, that is to say, no longer a thing exciting mental interest, pain, pleasure, but rather a revelation of the truth and power and delight of being and our feeling of it a form of the universal Ananda of the old philosophical thinkers, the calm yet moved ecstasy with which the spirit of existence regards itself and its creations. This deeper spiritual feeling, this Ananda is the fountain of poetic delight and beauty. It springs from a supreme essence of experience, a supreme aesthesis which is in its own nature spiritual, impersonal, independent of the personal reactions and passions of the mind, and that is why the poet is able to transmute pain and sorrow and the most tragic and terrible and ugly things into forms of poetic beauty, because of this impersonal joy of the spirit in all experience, whatever its nature. And as, therefore, the subject of the poet is all that he can feel of the infinite life of the spirit that creates in existence and all that he can seize of the infinite truth of God and Nature and our own and the world's being, so too what he brings out from his subject is all that he can pour into speech of his vision of eternal and universal beauty, all that he can express of the soul's universal delight in existence. That is what he has to reveal, and to make others share in, to render more expressive and firmly present to them what experience they have of it and help the race towards its greater fullness in the soul of man and embodiment in our mind and life. This Ananda is not the pleasure of a mood or a sentiment or the fine aesthetic indulgence of the sense in the attraction of a form, superficial results and incidents which are often mistaken for that much deeper and greater thing by the minor poetic faculty, the lesser artistic mind, but the enduring delight which, as the ancient idea justly perceived, is the essence of spirit and being and the beauty which all things assume when the spirit lives in the pure joy of creation and experience.

---

[1] This is the result perhaps of an ill-assimilated Christian influence intervening on the external vitalism of the Teutonic temperament and on Latin intellectualism, and bringing in new needs and experiences which disturbed the mind and emotions without possessing the soul with peace or arriving at a harmony of spiritual emotion and spiritual self-knowledge.

The universality of this delight and beauty does not mean that we can take whatever we will straight from life and experience, just as it is, and by making it precise and vivid through word and image or dressing it in imaginative colour achieve poetic effect and beauty. That is the theory by which a great deal of our modern endeavour at poetry seems to be guided, as it is the ruling method of inferior poets and the mark too of the lesser or unsuccessful or only partially successful work of greater writers. The error made is to confuse the sources of poetic delight and beauty with the more superficial interest, pain and pleasure which the normal mind takes in the first untransmuted appeal of thought and life and feeling. That in its first crude form or a little deepened by sensitiveness of emotion and a reflective intelligence is the response to existence of the natural mind, the only instrument of the majority, and what it is apt to expect from the poet is that this is what he too shall give to the world and only think it more profoundly, feel it more sensitively, live it with a greater excitement and find for it beauty of word and attraction of rhythm. The poet has in him a double personality, a double instrument of his response to life and existence. There is in him the normal man absorbed in mere living who thinks and feels and acts like others, and there is the seer of things, the supernormal man, the super-soul or delight-soul in touch with the impersonal and eternal fountains of joy and beauty who creates from that source and transmutes by its alchemy all experience into a form of the spirit's Ananda. It is easy for him, if the demand of his genius is not constant or if he is not held back by a natural fineness of the poetic conscience, to subject this deeper and greater power to the lower and general demand and put it at the service of his superficial mental experience. He has then to rely on the charm and beauty of word and form to save the externality of his substance. But the genius in him when he is faithful to it, knows that this is not his high way of perfection nor the thing his spirit gave him to do; it is a spiritual transmutation of the substance got by sinking the mental and vital interests in a deeper soul experience which brings the inevitable word and the supreme form and the unanalysable rhythm. The poet is then something more than a maker of beautiful word and phrase, a favoured child of the fancy and imagination, a careful fashioner of idea and utterance or an effective poetic thinker, moralist, dramatist or storyteller; he becomes a spokesman of the eternal spirit of beauty and delight and shares that highest creative and self-expressive rapture which is close to the original ecstasy that made existence, the divine Ananda.

This rapture, the Platonic divine possession and enthusiasm, is born not of mental, but of soul experience, and the more the surface mind gets into the way, the more this divine passion is weakened and diluted by a less potent spirit. The surface mind is powerfully attracted by the stir of the outward passion and excitement, the stress of immediate thought, life and action, hastens to embody it in speech or in deed and has no leisure to transmute life into those greater abiding values of which the soul in its depths is alone capable. But the higher faculties are given us as keys to a deeper experience; the seer, the poet, the artist, the children of the spirit's light and intuition are only true to themselves when they live in the depths of the soul, refuse to be hurried away by the surface call of mind and life and wait rather for their own greater voices. The poetry which insists on an external effectiveness, on immediate thought and life and experience, may seize very powerfully the ear of the moment, but is singularly frail in its affectation of power and even if it has strength of body, is hollow and null inside; it fails because it is concerned with immediately vital things perhaps, but not with that which is immortal. That is just why patriotic poetry, war poetry or poetry of the occasion and the moment are so difficult to write greatly and, although it would seem that these things are among the most dynamic and should move most easily to powerful utterance, are oftenest poor in poetic substance and inferior in value. For life they may be dynamic, but they are not so readily dynamic for art and poetry, and precisely because the vital interest, the life attraction is so strong that it is difficult to draw back from the external to the spiritual delight and the spiritual significance. A great poet may do it sometimes, because the constant instinct of his genius is to look beyond the surface and the moment to that which is universal and eternal behind the personal experience and the occasion is only for him an excuse for its utterance. The drama of action and mere passion is for the same reason short-lived in its gusto of vitality, fades in a century or less into a lifeless mask, while the drama of the soul abides, because it gets near to the subtler eternal element, the soul's essential aesthesis, the spirit's delight in self-creation and experience. Philosophical and religious poetry too fails so often by a neglect of the same fine distinction, because the interest of the thought pursued by the intellectual activity, the interest of the mind in its surface religious ideas and feelings get the upper hand

and do not consent to sink themselves in the spiritual emotion of the seeing of truth and the abiding spiritual experience. The mental and vital interest, pleasure, pain of thought, life, action is not the source of poetic delight and beauty and can be turned into that deeper thing only when they have sunk into the soul and been transmuted in the soul's radiant memory into spiritual experience, — that perhaps was what the Greeks meant when they made Mnemosyne the eternal mother of the muses; the passions can only change into poetic matter when they have been spiritualised in the same bright sources and have undergone the purification, the *katharsis*, spoken of by the Greek critic; the life values are only poetic when they have come out heightened and changed into soul values. The poetic delight and beauty are born of a deeper rapture and not of the surface mind's excited interest and enjoyment of life and existence.

The ancient Indian critics defined the essence of poetry as *rasa* and by that word they meant a concentrated taste, a spiritual essence of emotion, an essential aesthesis, the soul's pleasure in the pure and perfect sources of feeling. The memory of the soul that takes in, broods over and transmutes the mind's thought, feeling and experience, is a large part of the process which comes by this aesthesis, but it is not quite the whole thing; it is rather only a common way by which we get at something that stands behind, the spiritual being in us which has the secret of the universal delight and the eternal beauty of existence. That which we call genius works or comes out from something deep within which calls down the word, the vision, the light and power from a level above the normal mind and it is the sense of the inrush from above which makes the rapture and the enthusiasm of illumination and inspiration. That source, when we know better the secrets of our being, turns out to be the spiritual self with its diviner consciousness and knowledge, happier fountains of power, inalienable delight of existence. The cultures that were able directly or indirectly to feel the joy of this self and spirit, got into the very strain of their aesthesis the touch of its delight, its Ananda, and this touch was the secret of the generalised instinct for beauty which has been denied to a later mind limited by intellectual activity, practical utility and the externals of life: we have to go for it to exceptional individuals gifted with a finer strain, but the wide-spread aesthetic instinct has been lost and has yet to be recovered for the common mind and recognised once more as a part of human perfection as indispensable as intellectual knowledge and at least as necessary to happiness as vital well-being. But this Ananda, this delight, this aesthesis which is the soul of poetic beauty works like other things, like poetic truth or the poetic breath of life, on different levels, in different provinces of its action, with the same law that we have observed in the rest, of the emergence of a richer and profounder face of itself the more it gets inward and upward from the less to the more occult powers of its revelation. This finer soul of delight throws itself out on the physical mind and being, takes up its experiences and turns them by its own innate and peculiar power into things of beauty, fuses into itself the experiences of the life soul and transmutes to beauty their power and passion in the surge of its poetic ecstasy, takes up all life and form into the reflective thought-mind and changes them in the beauty and rapture of thought discovering and embodying new values of soul and Nature and existence. And in all its working there is felt its own essence of an intuitive delight which acts in these moulds and gets into them whatever it can of its own intimate and eternal delight values. But when that intuitive mind self-finding, self-seeing, self-creating in a higher power of light and vision than is possible on the intellectual or other levels gets out into full play, and now there is some sign of this emergence, then we come nearer to the most potent sources of universal and eternal delight and beauty, nearer to its full and wide seeing, and its all-embracing rapture. This inner mind is the first native power of the self and spirit dropping its lower veils and the very life and aesthesis of the spirit in its creation is a life of self-experiencing spiritual delight and a luminous Ananda.

The beauty and delight of such a greater intuitive inspiration, a poetry of this spiritual Ananda making all existence luminous and wonderful and beautiful to us may be one of the gifts of the future. It is that of which we stand in need and of which there is some promise in the highest strains that we have now begun to hear. This change will mean that poetry may resume on a larger scale, with a wider and more shining vision the greater effect it once had on the life of the race in the noble antique cultures. At one time poetry was a revelation to the race of the life of the gods and man and the meaning of the world and the beauty and power of existence and through its vision and joy and the height and clarity of its purpose it became creative of the life of the people. Ananda, the joy of the spirit in itself carrying in it a revelation of the powers of its conscious being, was to the ancient Indian idea the creative principle, and ancient poetry did thus creatively reveal to the people its soul and its possibilities by forms of beauty and suggestions of power in a way we have to a great extent lost by our later pettier use of this always great art and medium. One might almost say that ancient India was created by the Veda and Upanishads and that the visions of inspired seers made a people. That sublime poetry with its revelation of godhead and the joy and power of life and truth and immortality or its revelation of the secrets of the self and the powers of its manifestation in man and the universe and of man's return to self-knowledge got into the very blood and mind and life of the race and made itself the fountain-head of all that incessant urge to spirituality which has been its distinguishing gift and cultural motive. The Mahabharata and the Ramayana revealing to it in forms of noble beauty and grandiose or beautiful or telling types of character the joy of its forms of life, the significance of its spiritual, ethical and aesthetic ideals, the powers and dangers of the human soul, its godheads and its titanisms have played a great and well-recognised formative part second only to religion and the stress of religio-social training in the life of the Indian peoples. And even later the religious poetry of the Vaishnavas, Shaivas, Shaktas has entered powerfully into the life of the nation and helped to shape its temperament and soul-type. The effect of the Homeric poems in Greece, the intimate connection of poetry and art with the public life of Athens sprang from a similar but less steep height of poetic and artistic motive. The epic poems revealed the Hellenic people to itself in the lucid and clear nobility and beauty of an uplifting of life and an aesthetic sense of the humanity and divinity of man; the later art and poetry interpreted to Athens her religious ideas, her thought, her aesthetic instincts, the soul of grandeur and beauty of her culture.

And in all these instances, as in others like the art and poetry of Japan and of China, a more or less profoundly intuitive creation from the depths and expression through poetic delight of the soul of a people has been the secret of this effect and this power of creation or influence. But in other times and places poetry has been more a servant of aesthetic pleasure than a creative master of life and great spiritual agent; when it is at all great, it cannot fail to be that to a certain extent, but it has not so acted as a whole, centrally, in the same large and effective way or with the same high conscience of its function. It has leaned too much on the surface or external interests of life for the pleasure of the intellect and imagination and failed too much to create life from within by a deeper delight in the power of vision of the soul and spirit. The high energy of English poetry has done great and interesting things; it has portrayed life with charm and poetic interest in Chaucer, made thought and character and action and passion wonderful to the life soul in us in Shakespeare, seen and spoken with nobility and grandeur of vision and voice in Milton, intellectualised vigorous or pointed commonplace in Pope and Dryden, played with elegance and beauty on the lesser strings with the Victorians or cast out here and there a profounder strain of thought or more passionate and aspiring voice, and if the most spiritual strains have been few, yet it has dreamed in light in Shelley or drawn close in Wordsworth to the soul in Nature. And it may seem hard to say in the face of all this splendour and vigour and glow and beauty and of the undeniable cultural influence, that something was too often lacking which would have made the power of this poetry more central and intimate and a greater direct force on the life of the people, and yet this is, I think, true in spite of exceptions, not only here, but of almost all the later European literature. To get back to a profounder centre, to create from within in a more universal power of the spirit and its vision and delight of existence will supply the missing element and make poetry once again young and mighty and creative and its word deeply effective on life by the power of a greater Ananda.

The mind of man, a little weary now of the superficial pleasure of the life and intellect, demands, obscurely still, not yet perceiving what will satisfy it, a poetry of the joy of self, of the deeper beauty and delight of existence. A merely cultured poetry fair in form and word and playing on the surface strings of mind and emotion will not serve its purpose. The human mind is opening to an unprecedented largeness of vision of the greatness of the worlds, the wonder of life, the self of man, the mystery of the spirit in him and the universe. The future poetry must seek in that vision its inspiration, and the greater its universality of joy in existence, the more it seeks through intuitive sight and aesthesis the deepest fountains of poetic delight and beauty, the more it will become powerfully creative of a greater life for the race. The modern poet is perfectly right in a way in breaking down in whatever direction the bounds erected by the singers of the past around their magic palace and its grounds; he must claim all things in heaven or earth or beyond for his portion: but that care for a fine poetic beauty and delight which they safeguarded by excluding all or most that did not readily obey its law or turn to fair material of poetic shaping, he must preserve as jealously and satisfy by steeping all that he finds in his wider field in that profoundest vision which delivers out of each thing its spiritual Ananda, the secret of truth and beauty in it for which it was created; it is in the sense of that spiritual joy of vision, and not in any lower sensuous, intellectual or imaginative seeing, that Keats' phrase becomes true for the poet, beauty that is truth, truth that is beauty, and this all that we need to know as the law of our aesthetic knowledge. He is right too in wishing to make poetry more intimately one with life, but again in this sense only, in going back to those creative fountains of the spirit's Ananda from which life is seen and reshaped by the vision that springs from a moved identity, — the inmost source of the authentic poet vision. The beauty and delight of all physical things illumined by the wonder of the secret spiritual self that is the inhabitant and self-sculptor of form, the beauty and delight of the thousand-coloured, many-crested, million-waved miracle of life made a hundred times more profoundly meaningful by the greatness and the sweetness and attracting poignancy of the self-creating inmost soul which makes of life its epic and its drama and its lyric, the beauty and delight of the spirit in thought, the seer, the thinker, the interpreter of his own creation and being who broods over all he is and does in man and the world and constantly resees and shapes it new by the stress and power of his thinking, this will be the substance of the greater poetry that has yet to be written. And that can be discovered only if and so far as the soul of man looks or feels beyond even these things and sees and voices the eternal and knows its godheads and gets to some close inward touch of the infinite ecstasy which is the source of the universal delight and beauty. For the nearer we get to the absolute Ananda, the greater becomes our joy in man and the universe and the receptive and creative spiritual emotion which needs for its voice the moved tones of poetic speech.

Chapter V

The Power of the Spirit

A POETRY born direct from and full of the power of the spirit and therefore a largest and a deepest self-expression of the soul and mind of the race is that for which we are seeking and of which the more profound tendencies of the creative mind seem to be in travail. This poetry will be a voice of eternal things raising to a new significance and to a great satisfied joy in experience the events and emotions and transiences of life which will then be seen and sung as the succession of signs, the changing of the steps of an eternal manifestation; it will be an expression of the very self of man and the self of things and the self of nature; it will be a creative and interpretative revelation of the infinite truth of existence and of the universal delight and beauty and of a greater spiritualised vision and power of life. This can only come if the mind of the race takes actually the step over which it is now hesitating and passes from the satisfaction of the liberated intellect which has been its preoccupation for the last two centuries to the pursuit of the realisation of the larger self, from the scrutiny of the things that explain to the experience of the things that reveal, the truths of the spirit. The progress of the mind of humanity takes place by a constant enlarging attended with a constant transmutation of its experience which is reflected in its ways of self-expression, and the tendency of this progression is always more and more inward, a movement that cannot cease till we get to the inmost, and even then there can be no real cessation because the inmost is the infinite. The progress of poetry, as it has been viewed in these pages, has been an index of an advance of the cultural mind of humanity which has enlarged its scope by a constant raising of the scale of the soul's experience and has now risen to a great height and breadth of intellectual vision and activity, and the question is at present of the next step in the scale of ascension, and whether it can now be firmly taken or will be missed once more with a fall back to another retracing of the psychological circuit. That will determine the character of the coming era of the mind and life of man and consequently the character of all his methods of aesthetic self-expression.

The one thing that man sees above the intellect is the spirit, and therefore the developed intellect of the race, if it is at all to go forward, must open now to an understanding and seeing spirituality, other than the rather obscure religionism of the past which belonged to the lower levels of the life and the emotion and which has had its bounds broken and its narrownesses condemned by the free light of intellectual thought: this will be rather an illumined self-knowledge and God-knowledge and a world-knowledge too which transmuted in that greater light will spiritualise the whole view and motive of our existence. That is the one development to which an accomplished intellectualism can open and by exceeding itself find its own right consummation. The alternative is a continual ringing of changes in the spinnings of the intellectual circle which leads nowhere or else a collapse to the lower levels which may bring human civilisation down with a run to a new corrupted and intellectualised barbarism. This is a catastrophe which has happened before in the world's history, and it was brought about ostensibly by outward events and causes, but arose essentially from an inability of the intellect of man to find its way out of itself and out of the vital formula in which its strainings and questionings can only exhaust itself and life into a full illumination of the spirit and an enlightened application of the saving spiritual principle to mind and life and action. The possibility of such a catastrophe is by no means absent from the present human situation. On the one hand the straining of the intellect to its limits of elasticity has brought in a recoil to a straining for unbridled vital, emotional and sensational experience and a morbid disorder in the economy of the nature and on the other there have come in, perhaps as a result, perturbations of the earth system that threaten to break up the mould of civilisation, and the problem of the race is whether a new and greater mould can be created or instead a collapse and decadence intervene and a recommencing of the circle. The hope of the race in this crisis lies in the fidelity of its intellect to the larger perceptions it now has of the greater self of humanity, the turning of its will to the inception of delivering forms of thought, art and social endeavour which arise from those perceptions and the raising of the intellectual mind to the intuitive supra-intellectual spiritual consciousness which can alone give the basis for a spiritualised life of the race and the realisation of its diviner potentialities. The meaning of spirituality is a new and greater inner life of man founded in the consciousness of his true, his inmost, highest and largest self and spirit by which he receives the whole of existence as a progressive manifestation of the self in the universe and his own life as a field of a possible transformation in which its divine sense will be found, its potentialities highly evolved, the now imperfect forms changed into an image of the divine perfection, and an effort not only to see but to live out these greater possibilities of his being. And this consciousness of his true self and spirit must bring with it a consciousness too of the oneness of the individual and the race and a harmonious unity of the life of man with the spirit in Nature and the spirit of the universe.

The voice of a new deeper intuitive poetry can be a powerful aid to this necessary change of seeing and aspiration, because what the thought comprehends with a certain abstraction, it can make living to the imagination by the word and a thing of beauty and delight and inspiration for the soul's acceptance. This poetry will speak of new things and of old things in a new way and with a new voice, not by any exclusion or diminution of its province, but by a great heightening above, a great intimacy within, a great enlargement and wideness around, a vision of inmost things and therefore a changed vision of the world and life and the untold potentialities of the soul's experience. It will restore to us the sense of the Eternal, the presence of the Divine which has been taken from us for a time by an intellect too narrowly and curiously fixed on the external and physical world, but it will not speak of these things in the feeble and conventional tones of traditional religion, but as a voice of intuitive experience and the rhythm and chant of the revelation of an eternal presence. The voice of the poet will reveal to us by the inspired rhythmic word the God who is the Self of all things and beings, the Life of the universe, the Divinity in man, and he will express all the emotion and delight of the endeavour of the human soul to discover the touch and joy of that Divinity within him in whom he feels the mighty founts of his own being and life and effort and his fullness and unity with all cosmic experience and with Nature and with all creatures. The note which has already begun and found many of its tones in Whitman and Carpenter and A. E. and Tagore will grow into a more full and near and intimate poetic knowledge and vision and feeling which will continue to embrace more and more, no longer only the more exceptional inner states and touches which are the domain of mystic poetry, but everything in our inner and outer existence until all life and experience has been brought within the mould of the spiritual sense and the spiritual interpretation. A poetry of this kind will be in a supreme way what all art should be, a thing of harmony and joy and illumination, a solution and release of the soul from its vital unrest and questioning and struggle, not by any ignoring of these things but by an uplifting into the strength of the self within and the light and air of its greater view where there is found not only the point of escape but the supporting calmness and power of a seated knowledge, mastery and deliverance. In the greatest art and poetry there should be something of the calm of the impersonal basing and elevating the effort and struggle of the personality, something of the largeness of the universal releasing and harmonising the troubled concentrations of the individual existence, something of the sense of the transcendent raising the inferior, ignorant and uncertain powers of life towards a greater strength and light and Ananda. And when art and poetry can utter the fullest sense of these things, it is then that they will become the greatest fortifiers and builders of the soul of man and assure it in the grandeur of its own largest self and spirit. The poetry of Europe has been a voice intensely eager and moved but restless, troubled and without a sure base of happiness and repose, vibrating with the passion of life and avid of its joy and pleasure and beauty, but afflicted also by its unrest, grief, tragedy, discord, insufficiency, incertitude, capable only of its lesser harmonies, not of any great release and satisfaction. The art and poetry of the East have been the creation of a larger and quieter spirit, intensely responsive as in the far East to deeper psychic significances and finding there fine and subtle harmonies of the soul's experience or, as in India, expressing in spite of the ascetic creed of vanity and illusion much rather the greatness and power and satisfied activity of human thought and life and action and behind it the communion of the soul with the Eternal. The poetry of the future reconciling all these strains, taking the highest as its keynote and interpreting the rest in its intensity and its largeness, will offer to the human mind a more complex aesthetic and spiritual satisfaction, express a more richly filled content of self-experience raised to a more persistent sight of things absolute and infinite and a more potent and all-comprehending release into the calm and delight of the spirit.

And this poetry must bring with it too a new depth of the intimacies of the soul with Nature. The early poetry of Nature gave us merely the delight of the forms of objects and the beauty of the setting of the natural world around man's life, but not any inner communion between him and the universal Mother. A later tone brought in more of the subtleties of the vital soul of the natural world and a response of the moved sensation and emotion of the life-spirit in us and out of this arose an intellectual and aesthetic sense of hidden finer and subtler things and, more profound, in the poetry of Wordsworth, Byron and Keats and Shelley an attempt at communion with a universal presence in Nature and a living principle of peace or light and love or universal power or conscious delight and beauty. A more deeply seeing and intimate poetry will take up these things into a yet greater Nature sense and vision and make us aware of the very self and soul and conscious being of Nature, her profoundest psychic suggestion and significance, the spirit in her and the intuition of all that she keeps hidden in her forms and veils and reveals more and more to the soul that has entered into unity with that spirit. The more intuitive human mind of the future, delivered from its present limitation of sympathy by the touch of the one self in all being, will feel as has not been felt before a unity with other consciousness in Nature and hear the voice of self-revelation of all that is mute to us, the soul and life of things that now seem inert and lifeless, the soul and life of the animal world, the soul and life of the things that grow in silence and are enclosed in the absorbed dream of their own half-conscient existence. And it will open to and interpret not only man and terrestrial Nature, for a poetry concerned with that alone excludes large ranges of self-experience, but other domains also of our spirit. It will give the key of the worlds of supernature, and allow us to move among the beings and scenes, images and influences and presences of the psychic kingdoms which are near to us behind their dark or luminous curtain and will not be afraid to enter into vaster realms of the self and other universal states and the powers that stand behind our life and the soul's eternal spaces. It will do this not merely in a symbol of greatened human magnitudes, as the old poets represented the gods, or in hues of romantic glamour or in the far-off light of a mystic remoteness, but with the close directness and reality that comes from intimate vision and feeling, and make these things a part of our living experience.

A poetry of large spiritual inspiration must necessarily be, when it is not dealing directly with eternal things and turns its eye on the movement of time and the actual life and destiny of man, largely present and futurist in its insistence. The poet will continue though in a new way and with a new eye to transfigure the past for us, but will not feel that need to live in an imaginative preoccupation with the past which withdraws compelled from the unmanageable and transformable actuality of the present: for to live in the spirit is to be able to distinguish the eternal in the transient forms of the moment and to see too in these forms a revelation of the spirit's greater significances. His vision will search all the ways of the present and interpret deeply to man the sense of that which is making him and which he is making: it will reveal the divinity in all its disguises, face all even that is ugly and terrible and baffling in the enigma of our actual human life, find its deeper aesthesis, disengage what is struggling untransformed in its outsides and make out of it by poetic sympathy material of spiritual truth and beauty. This is a strain that has been growing in recent poetic creation and it suffers as yet too often from an insufficient fineness of insight and a too crude handling, but, that immaturity once overcome, must hold a large and assured place among the great poetic motives. But especially a clearer and more inspiring vision of the destiny of the spirit in man will be a large part of the poetry of the future. For the spiritual eye is not only able to see the divinity in man as he is, the divinity in his struggle and victory and failure and even in his sin and offence and littleness, but the spirit is master of the future, its past and present in time not only the half-formed stuff of its coming ages, but in a profound sense it is the call and attraction of the future that makes the past and present, and that future will be more and more seen to be the growth of the godhead in the human being which is the high fate of this race that thinks and wills and labours towards its own perfection. This is a strain that we shall hear more and more, the song of the growing godhead of the kind, of human unity, of spiritual freedom, of the coming supermanhood of man, of the divine ideal seeking to actualise itself in the life of the earth, of the call to the individual to rise to his godlike possibility and to the race to live in the greatness of that which humanity feels within itself as a power of the spirit which it has to deliver into some yet ungrasped perfect form of clearness. To embellish life with beauty is only the most outward function of art and poetry, to make life more intimately beautiful and noble and great and full of meaning is its higher office, but its highest comes when the poet becomes the seer and reveals to man his eternal self and the godheads of its manifestation.

These new voices must needs be the result of the growth of the power of the spirit on the mind of man which is the promise of a coming era. It is always indeed the spirit in him that shapes his poetic utterance; but when that spirit is preoccupied with the outward life, the great poets are those who make his common life and action and its surroundings splendid and beautiful and noble to him by the power of their vision; when it is the intellect through which it labours, the great poets are those who give a profound enlightening idea and creative interpretation of the world and nature and all that man is and does and thinks and dreams, but when the spirit turns to its own large intuitive will and vision, then it is yet profounder things to which the great poet must give utterance, the inmost sense of things, the inmost consciousness of Nature, the movement of the deepest soul of man, the truth that reveals the meaning of existence and the universal delight and beauty and the power of a greater life and the infinite potentialities of our experience and self-creation. These may not be the only strains, but they will be the greatest and those which the highest human mind will demand from the poet and they will colour all the rest by their opening of new vistas to the general intelligence and life sense of the race. And whatever poetry may make its substance or its subject, this growth of the power of the spirit must necessarily bring into it a more intense and revealing speech, a more inward and subtle and penetrating rhythm, a greater stress of sight, a more vibrant and responsive sense, the eye that looks at all smallest and greatest things for the significances that have not yet been discovered and the secrets that are not on the surface. That will be the type of the new utterance and the boundless field of poetic discovery left for the inspiration of the humanity of the future.

Chapter VI

The Form and the Spirit

A CHANGE in the spirit of poetry must necessarily bring with it a change of its forms, and this departure may be less or greater to the eye, more inward or more outward, but always there must be at least some subtle and profound alteration which, whatever the apparent fidelity to old moulds, is certain to amount in fact to a transmutation, since even the outward character and effect become other than they were and the soul of substance and movement a new thing. The opening of the creative mind into an intuitive and revelatory poetry need not of itself compel a revolution and total breaking up of the old forms and a creation of altogether new moulds: it may, especially where a preparatory labour in that sense has been doing a work of modification and adaptation, be effected for the most part by an opening up of new potentialities in old instruments and a subtle inner change of their character. Actually, however, while the previous revolutions in the domain of poetry have moved within the limits of the normal and received action of the poetic intelligence, the upward and inward movement and great widening of which the human mind is now in labour is an effort of such rapidity and magnitude that it appears like an irresistible breaking out of all familiar bounds and it is natural that the mentality in its effort at a completely new creation should wish to break too the old moulds as a restriction and a fettering narrowness and be desirous of discovering novel and unprecedented forms, fitting tenements and temples of the freer, subtler, vaster spirit that is preparing to enter into occupation. To remould seems to be an insufficient change, the creation of a new body for a quite new spirit the commanded discovery and labour. There must certainly take place in order to satisfy the changed vision a considerable departure in all the main provinces of poetic creation, the lyric, the drama, the narrative or epic, and the question for solution is how far and in what way the technique of each kind will necessarily be affected or should with advantage be transformed so as to allow free room for the steps and the constructive figures of a finer and ampler poetic idea and a changed soul movement and a just correspondence to it in the art of the poet.

The lyrical impulse is the original and spontaneous creator of the poetic form, song the first discovery of the possibility of a higher because a rhythmic intensity of self-expression. It wells out from the intensity of touch and the spiritualised emotion of a more delicate or a deeper and more penetrating sight and feeling in the experience, captures and sustains the inevitable cadences of its joy or its attraction, sets the subtle measure of its feeling and keeps it by the magic of its steps in sound vibrating on the inner strings and psychic fibres. The lyric is a moment of heightened soul experience, sometimes brief in a lightness of aerial rapture, in a poignant ecstasy of pain, of joy or of mingled emotion or in a swift graver exaltation, sometimes prolonged and repeating or varying the same note, sometimes linking itself in a sustained succession to other moments that start from it or are suggested by its central motive. It is at first a music of simple melodies coming out of itself to which the spirit listens with pleasure and makes eternal by it the charm of self-discovery or of reminiscence. And the lyrical spirit may rest satisfied with these clear spontaneities of song or else it may prefer to weight its steps with thought and turn to a meditative movement or, great-winged, assume an epic elevation, or lyricise the successive moments of an action, or utter the responses of heart to heart, mind to mind, soul to soul, move between suggestions and counter-suggestions of mood and idea and feeling and devise a lyrical seed or concentration of drama. The widest in range as it is the most flexible in form and motive of all the poetic kinds, the others have grown out of it by the assumption of a more settled and deliberate and extended speech and a more ample structure. It is therefore in the lyric nearest to the freshness of an original impulse that a new spirit in poetry is likely to become aware of itself and feel out for its right ways of expression and to discover with the most adaptable freedom and variety its own essential motives and cadences, first forms and simpler structures before it works out victoriously its greater motions or ampler figures in narrative and drama.

The freshest and most spontaneous liquidities of song utterance abounded in past literature at times when the direct movement of the life-spirit, whether confined to simple primary emotion and experience or deepening to the more vivid probings of its own richer but still natural self-aesthesis, has been the fountain-head of a stirred poetic utterance. It is then that there come the pure lyric outbursts and the poet is content to sing and let the feeling create its own native moulds of music. The thought satisfied with its own emotion is not too insistent to elaborate the lyrical form for its more intricate purposes or to give it certainly a weightier but almost inevitably a less simply rapturous movement. The intellectual ages sing less easily. It is their care to cut and carve the lyrical form with a self-conscious and considering art and their practice arrives at measures and movements of a consummate literary perfection, much power of modulation, a moved thinking and sentiment deliberately making the most of its own possibilities; but except in the voices of the one or two who are born with the capacity and need of the pure lyrical impulse, the too developed intellect cannot often keep or recover life's first fine careless rapture or call the memory of it into its own more loaded tones and measures. The lyric poetry of the ancient classical tongues is largely of this character and we find it there confined to a certain number of highly developed forms managed with a perfect and careful technique, and the movement of poetic feeling, sometimes grave, sometimes permitted a lighter and more rapid impulsion, is chastened and subdued to the service of the reflective poetic intelligence. The absolute simplicities and spontaneities of the soul's emotion which were the root of the original lyric impulse get only an occasional opportunity of coming back to the surface, and in their place there is the movement of a more thoughtful and often complex sentiment and feeling, not freshets of song, but the larger wave of the chant and elegy and ode: the flowers of the field and mountain self-sown on the banks or near the sources are replaced by the blossoms of a careful culture. Still however reined in or penetrated and rendered grave by thought, the life of feeling is still there and the power and sincerity of the lyrical impulse abide as the base of the workings of the moved intelligence. But in the literary ages that are classical by imitation, there is ordinarily a great poverty, an absence or thinness of the lyrical element, the sincerity and confident self-pleasure of the feeling indispensable to the lyrical movement wither under the coldly observant and too scrutinising eye of the reflective reason, and the revival of song has to await the romantic movement of interest of a more eager and a wider intelligence which will endeavour to get back to some joy of the intimate powers of life and the vivid lyricism of the heart and the imagination. There is then a return by an imaginative effort to old cultivated forms of lyrical expression and to early simple movements like the ballad motive and in the end a great variety of experiments in new metrical moulds and subtle modifications of old structures, an attempt of the idea to turn back the thought mind to grave or happy sincerities of emotion or impose on it a more absolute assent to bare simplicities of thought and feeling and finally a living curiosity of the intelligence in the expression of all kinds and shades of sensation and emotion. The work of this developed poetic intellectuality differs from the early work whose spirit and manner it often tries hard to recover because it is the thought that is primarily at work and the form less a spontaneous creation of the soul than a deliberately intelligent structure, and while the movement of the pure lyrical impulse is entirely shaped by the feeling and the thought only accompanies it in its steps, here the thought actively intervenes and determines and cannot but sophisticate the emotional movement. This distinction has many consequences and most this pregnant result that even the simplicities of a developed poetical thought are willed simplicities and the end is a curiosity of work that has many triumphs of aesthetic satisfaction but not often any longer the native tones of the soul when the pure lyrical feeling was still possible.

The turn to a more direct self-expression of the spirit must find out its way first by the emergence of a new kind of lyrical sincerity which is neither the directness of the surface life emotions nor the moved truth of the thought mind seizing or observing the emotion and bringing out its thought significances. There are in fact only two pure and absolute sincerities here, the power of the native intuition of itself by life which has for its result a direct and obvious identity of the thing felt and its expression, and the power of identity of the spirit when it takes up thought and feeling and life and makes them one with some inmost absolute truth of their and our existence. There is a power too of the sincerities of thought, but that is an intermediary between life and the spirit and only poetic when it fills itself with the sense of one of the others or links them together or aids to bring them to oneness. It is therefore a transition from the lyricism of life weighted by the stresses of thought to the lyricism of the inmost spirit which uses but is beyond thought that has to be made. And here we notice a significant tendency, an endeavour to present life in an utmost clarity of its intention and form and outline stripped and discharged of the thought's abundant additions, made naked of the haze of the reflective intelligence, the idea being that we shall thus get at its bare truth and feeling, its pure vital intuition where that starts out of the subconscious suggestion and meets the seeing mind and a conscious identity can be created with its sense in our souls by the revealing fidelity of the expression. There is often added to this endeavour the injunction that the rhythmic movement should follow the fluctuations of life with a subtle adaptation of the verbal music, and this notion is used to justify the now common free or else irregular and often broken-backed verse which is supposed to be the medium of a subtler correspondence than is at all possible to the formal rigidity of fixed metres. But in actual fact this kind of verse, whatever its power of lyric intention, sensibly fails to give us the satisfaction of a true lyrical form, because it ignores the truth that what sustains the lyrical spirit is the discovery and consistent following of some central cadence revealing the very spirit of the feeling and not at all the sole pursuit of its more outward movements and changes: these can only rightly come in as a modulation of the constant essential music. This double need may possibly be met by a very skilful free movement, but not so easily, straightforwardly and simply as in a fidelity, much more really natural than these overdone niceties, to the once discovered fixed cadence. And besides the bare truth of the vital intuition is not that inmost truth of things our minds are striving to see; that is something much greater, profounder, more infinite in its content and unending in its suggestion; not our identity in sight and spiritual emotion with the limited subconscient intention of life, but rather a oneness with something in it at once superconscient, immanent and comprehensive of which that is only a blind index will be the moving power of a greater utterance. And until we have found, whether by spiritual experience or poetic insight, this identity and its revelations in ourselves and in things, we shall not have laid a sound and durable basis for the future creation.

The essential and decisive step of the future art of poetry will perhaps be to discover that it is not the form which either fixes or reveals the spirit but the spirit which makes out of itself the form and the word and this with so sure a discovery, once we can live in it and create out of it without too much interference from the difficult and devising intellect, that their movement becomes as spontaneously inevitable as the movements and their mould as structurally perfect as the magical formations of inconscient Nature. Nature creates perfectly because she creates directly out of life and is not intellectually self-conscious, the spirit will create perfectly because it creates directly out of self and is spontaneously supra-intellectually all-conscious. It is no doubt this truth of a spiritually just and natural creation that some of the present ideas and tendencies are trying to adumbrate, but not as yet as understandingly as one could desire. The decisive revealing lyrical outburst must come when the poet has learnt to live creatively only in the inmost spiritual sight and identity of his own self with the self of his objects and images and to sing only from the deepest spiritual emotion which is the ecstasy of feeling of that identity or at least of some extreme nearness to its sheer directness of touch and vision. And then we may find that this Ananda, this spiritual delight, for it is something more intimate and rapturous than emotion, has brought with it an unprecedented freedom of manifold and many-suggestioned and yet perfectly sufficient and definite formation and utterance. The poetry born from the inmost spirit will not bind the poet in any limiting circle or narrow theory of an intellectual art principle, but create at will according to the truth of the spirit's absolute moments. According to the innate rightnesses of the motive and its needed cadence the spirit will move him to discover infinite possibilities of new spiritual measure and intonation in time-old lyrical rhythms or to find a new principle of rhythm and structure or to make visible developments which will keep past treasures of sound and yet more magically innovate than can be done by any breaking up of forms in order to build a new order out of chaos. The intimate and intuitive poetry of the future will have on the one side all the inexhaustible range and profound complexities of the cosmic imagination of which it will be the interpreter and to that it must suit a hundred single and separate and combined and harmonic lyrical tones of poignantly or richly moved utterance, and on the other it will reach those bare and absolute simplicities of utter and essential sight in which thought sublimates into a translucidity of light and vision, feeling passes beyond itself into sheer spiritual ecstasy and the word rarefies into a pure voice out of the silence. The sight will determine the lyrical form and discover the identities of an inevitable rhythm and no lesser standard prevail against the purity of this spiritual principle.

A spiritual change must equally come over the intention and form of the drama when once the age has determined its tendencies, and this change is already foreshadowed in an evolution which is still only at its commencement and first tentatives. Hitherto there have been two forms consecrated by great achievements, the drama of life, whether presenting only vivid outsides and significant incidents and morals and manners or expressive of the life-soul and its workings in event and character and passion, and the drama of the idea or, more vitally, of the idea-power that is made to work itself out in the life movement, lay its hold on the soul's motions, create the type, use the character and the passion for its instruments and at its highest tension appear as an agent of the conflict of ideal forces that produce the more lofty tragedies of human action. The paucity of great creation in the modern drama after one very considerable moment of power and vision has been due largely to an inability to decide between these two motives or to discover a great poetic form for the drama of the idea or effect in the poetic imagination some fusion of the intellectual and the life motive which would be an effective dramatic rendering of the modern way of seeing man and his life. The only recent vital and effective dramatic writing has been in prose and that has taken the questionable shape of the problem play which is peculiarly congenial to the dominating interests of the highly intellectualised but always practical mind of humanity today. The poetic form has long been for the most part a reproduction of past moulds and motives without any roots of vitality in the living mind of the age; but recently there has been a more inward and profounder movement which promises some chance of replacing this sort of unsatisfying imitation by a novel and a sincerer kind of dramatic poetry. An attempt has been initiated to create an inner drama of the soul with the soul itself for the real stage. There is in the spirit and the forms of this endeavour a predominance as yet of the lyrical rather than the dramatic motive, an insufficient power of making the characters living beings rather than unsubstantial types or shadows of soul movements or even the figures of a veiled allegory and parable; and there is needed perhaps for a greater vitality a freer and more nobly aesthetic stage which would not be limited by the external realism that now stands in the way of a living revival of the poetic and artistic theatre. Nevertheless this attempt is a true though not a complete index of the direction the creative mind must take in the future.

The soul of man, a many-motioned representative of the world-spirit, subsisting and seeking for itself and its own meanings amid the laws and powers and moving forces of the universe and discovering and realising its spiritual relations with others will be the vision and intention of a dramatic poetry fully reflective of the now growing intuitive mind of the future. All drama must be a movement of life and of action because its mode of presentation is through the speech of living beings and the interaction of their natures, but equally the real interest except in the least poetic kinds is an internal movement and an action of the soul because dramatic speech is poetically interesting only when it is an instrument of human self-expression and not merely a support for a series of stirring incidents. The drama of the future will differ from the romantic play or tragedy because the thing which dramatic speech will represent will be something more internal than the life soul and its brilliant pageant of passion and character. The external web of events and action, whether sparing or abundant, strongly marked or slight in incidence, will only be outward threads and indices and the movement that will throughout occupy the mind will be the procession of the soul phases or the turns of the soul action: the character, whether profusely filled in in detail in the modern fashion or simply and strongly outlined in the purer ancient method, will not be mistaken for the person, but accepted as only an inner life notation of the spirit: the passions, which have hitherto been prominently brought forward as the central stuff of the drama, will be reduced to their proper place as indicative colour and waves on the stream of spiritual self-revelation. And this greater kind will differ too from the classical tragedy of which the method was some significant and governing idea working out its life issues, because the idea will only be to a larger human mind better instructed in the secret of existence the self-view by the soul of its own greater and more intimate issues and of the conscient turns of its existence. The personage of the play will be the spirit in man diversified or multitudinous in many human beings whose inner spiritual much more intimately than their external life relations will determine the development, and the culminations will be steps of solution of those spiritual problems of our existence which after all are at the root of and include and inform all the others. The drama will be no longer an interpretation of Fate or self-acting Karma or of the simple or complex natural entanglements of the human life-movement, but a revelation of the Soul as its own fate and determiner of its life and its karma and behind it of the powers and the movements of the spirit in the universe. It will not be limited by any lesser idealisms or realisms, but representing at will this and other worlds, the purpose of the gods and the actions of men, man's dreams and man's actualities each as real as the other, the struggles and the sufferings and the victories of the spirit, the fixities of Nature and her mutabilities and significant perversions and fruitful conversions, interpret in dramatic form the inmost truth of the action of man the infinite. It will not be limited either by any old or new formal convention, but transmute old moulds and invent others and arrange according to the truth of its vision its acts and the evolution of its dramatic process or the refrain of its lyrical or the march of its epic motive. This clue at least is the largest and the most suggestive for a new and living future creation in the forms of the drama.

The spirit and intention of the narrative and epic forms of poetry must undergo the same transmuting change. Hitherto the poetical narrative has been a simple relation or a vivid picturing or transcript of life and action varied by description of surrounding circumstance and indication of mood and feeling and character or else that with the development of an idea or a mental and moral significance at the basis with the story as its occasion or form of its presentation. The change to a profounder motive will substitute a soul significance as the real substance, the action will not be there for its external surface interest but as a vital indication of the significance, the surrounding circumstance will be only such as helps to point and frame it and bring out its accessory suggestions and mood and feeling and character its internal powers and phases. An intensive narrative, intensive in simplicity or in richness of significant shades, tones and colours, will be the more profound and subtle art of this kind in the future and its appropriate structures determined by the needs of this inner art motive. A first form of the intensive and spiritually significant poetic narrative has already been created and attempts to replace the more superficially intellectual motives, where the idea rather supervened upon the story or read into it the sense of its turns or its total movement, but here the story tends more to be the living expression of the idea and the idea itself vibrant in the speech and description and action the index of a profounder soul motive. The future poetry will follow this direction with a more and more subtle and variable inwardness and a greater fusion and living identity of soul motive, indicative idea, suggestive description and intensely significant speech and action. The same governing vision will be there as in lyric and drama; the method of development will alone be different according to the necessities of the more diffused, circumstanced and outwardly processive form which is proper to narrative.

The epic is only the narrative presentation on its largest canvas and at its highest elevation, greatness and amplitude of spirit and speech and movement. It is sometimes asserted that the epic is solely proper to primitive ages when the freshness of life made a story of large and simple action of supreme interest to the youthful mind of humanity, the literary epic an artificial prolongation by an intellectual age and a genuine epic poetry no longer possible now or in the future. This is to mistake form and circumstance for the central reality. The epic, a great poetic story of man or world or the gods, need not necessarily be a vigorous presentation of external action: the divinely appointed creation of Rome, the struggle of the principles of good and evil as presented in the great Indian poems, the pageant of the centuries or the journey of the seer through the three worlds beyond us are as fit themes as primitive war and adventure for the imagination of the epic creator. The epics of the soul most inwardly seen as they will be by an intuitive poetry, are his greatest possible subject, and it is this supreme kind that we shall expect from some profound and mighty voice of the future. His indeed may be the song of greatest flight that will reveal from the highest pinnacle and with the largest field of vision the destiny of the human spirit and the presence and ways and purpose of the Divinity in man and the universe.

Chapter VII

The Word and the Spirit

A DEVELOPMENT of the kind of which we are speaking must affect not only the frames of poetry, but initiate also a subtle change of its word and rhythmic movement. The poetic word is a vehicle of the spirit, the chosen medium of the soul's self-expression, and any profound modification of the inner habit of the soul, its thought atmosphere, its way of seeing, its type of feeling, any change of the light in which it lives and the power of the breath which it breathes, greatening of its elevations or entry into deeper chambers of its self must reflect itself in a corresponding modification, changed intensity of light or power, inner greatening and deepening of the word which it has to use, and if there is no such change or if it is not sufficient for the new intention of the spirit, then there can be no living or no perfect self-expression. The old habits of speech cannot contain the new spirit and must either enlarge and deepen themselves and undergo a transformation or else be broken up and make way for another figure. The conservatism of the human mind stands in the way of the transforming force and insists for a time on the authority of traditional or already current standards of literary and poetic perfection, but the eternally self-renewing spirit must have eventually its way or else there will come a petrifaction, a decay by too much stability, which is a much worse danger than the decadence predicted by the purist when faced by what seems to him a morbid strangeness and distortion of the poetic moulds of speech or a perilous departure from safe and enduring rules of perfection. A change of this kind very considerable in its magnitude and force of renovation has been for some time at work in most living literatures.

I have already suggested that the governing spirit and intention of this change, not always very clearly envisaged even by those who are most active in bringing it about, is a turn to a more intimate and directly or fully intuitive speech and rhythm. The thing is in itself so subtle that it can better be indicated than analysed, adequately described or made precise to the intelligence. And moreover all poetry except that of the most outward kind, — a verse movement which is separable rather by distinction of form than power of the soul from prose, — is in its inmost inspiration and character intuitive, more a creation of the vision and feeling than of the intelligence, and the change made is one of the level or the depth of the self from which the poetic intuition, usually modified in transmission, immediately acts, and of its intervening psychological instrument rather than its primary initiating movement. The initiating inspiration must always be intuitive in a greater or lesser degree and it is the form or expression that differs. The intellect in its use of speech is apt to regard it as an intellectual device, a means for the precise connotation of object and idea or at most an elegant and pleasing or an effective and forceful presentation. The poetic view and use of speech is of a very different kind and enters more into the vital reality of the word and the more mystic connection between the movement of the spirit and the significances of the mental utterance. The poet has to do much more than to offer a precise, a harmonious or a forcefully presented idea to the intelligence: he has to give a breath of life to the word and for that must find out and make full use of its potential power of living suggestion; he has to make it carry in it not only the intellectual notion but the emotion and the psychical sensation of the thing he would make present to us; he has to erect an image of its presence and appeal with which we can inwardly live as we live with the presence and appeal of the objects of the actual universe. As in the Vedic theory the Spirit was supposed to create the worlds by the Word, so the poet brings into being in himself and us by his creative word fragmentarily or largely, in isolated pieces or massed spaces an inner world of beings, objects and experiences. But all creation is a mystery in its secret of inmost process and it is only at best the most outward or mechanical part of it which admits analysis; the creative faculty of the poetic mind is no exception. The poet is a magician who hardly knows the secret of his own spell; even the part taken by the consciously critical or constructive mind is less intellectual than intuitive; he creates by an afflatus of spiritual power of which his mind is the channel and instrument and the appreciation of it in himself and others comes not by an intellectual judgment but by a spiritual feeling. It is that which must tell him whether the word that comes is the true body of his vision or whether he has to seek or to wait for another that shall be felt as its adequate, its effective, its illuminative, its inspired or its inevitable utterance. The distinction that I am trying to draw here between the various powers of the always intuitive speech of poetry can therefore better be felt than critically stated, but at the same time certain indications may serve to make it more clearly sensed in its spirit with the sympathetic aid of the critical intelligence.

The words which we use in our speech seem to be, if we look only at their external formation, mere physical sounds which a device of the mind has made to represent certain objects and ideas and perceptions, — a machinery nervous perhaps in origin, but developed for a constantly finer and more intricate use by the growing intelligence; but if we look at them in their inmost psychological and not solely at their more external aspect, we shall see that what constitutes speech and gives it its life and appeal and significance is a subtle conscious force which informs and is the soul of the body of sound: it is a superconscient Nature-Force raising its material out of our subconscience but growingly conscious in its operations in the human mind that develops itself in one fundamental way and yet variously in language. It is this Force, this Shakti to which the old Vedic thinkers gave the name of Vak, the goddess of creative Speech, and the Tantric psychists supposed that this Power acts in us through different subtle nervous centres on higher and higher levels of its force and that thus the word has a graduation of its expressive powers of truth and vision. One may accept as a clue of great utility this idea of different degrees of the force of speech, each separately characteristic and distinguishable, and recognise one of the grades of the Tantric classification, Pashyanti the seeing word, as the description of that degree of power to which the poetic mind is called to elevate itself and which is original and native to its manner of expression. The degree of word-force characteristic of prose speech avails ordinarily to distinguish and state things to the conceptual intelligence; the word of the poet sees and presents in its body and image to a subtle visual perception in the mind awakened by an inner rhythmic audition truth of soul and thought experience and truth of sense and life, the spiritual and living actuality of idea and object. The prosaist may bring to his aid more or less of the seeing power, the poet dilute his vision with intellectual observation and statement, but the fundamental difference remains that ordinary speech proceeds from and appeals to the conceiving intelligence while it is the seeing mind that is the master of poetic utterance.

This seeing speech has itself, however, different grades of its power of vision and expression of vision. The first and simplest power is limited to a clear poetic adequacy and at its lowest difficult to distinguish from prose statement except by its more compact and vivid force of presentation and the subtle difference made by the rhythm which brings in a living appeal and adds something of an emotional and sensational nearness to what would otherwise be little more than an intellectual expression; but in a higher and much finer clarity this manner has the power to make us not only conceive adequately, but see the object or idea in a certain temperate lucidity of vision. The difference can best be illustrated by an example of each kind taken at random, one from Dryden,

> Whate'er he did was done with so much ease,
> In him alone 'twas natural to please: —

and the other from Wordsworth,

> The waves beside them danced, but they
> Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:
> A poet could not but be gay
> In such a jocund company.

The first is in the manner of terse prose statement, but made just poetical by a certain life and vividness and a rhythmic suggestion touching though not deeply some emotional centre of response just sufficient to make it a thought felt and not merely presented to the conception: the other though not going beyond a luminously clear and strong poetical adequacy in its manner of speech is far away from this doubtful borderland and from the beginning a thing seen and lived within us and awakening a satisfied soul response. It has the native action of the seeing word and bears the stamp of a spiritual sincerity greater, profounder, more beautiful than that of the intelligence.

The second power tries to go beyond this fine and perfect adequacy in its intensities, attempts a more rich or a more powerful expression, not merely sound and adequate to poetic vision, but dynamic and strongly effective. In prose also there is this difference and on its lower levels its attempt at effect takes the shape of rhetoric and appeals to a kind of nervous energy of the intelligence but, when its mood is more intellectually deep and sincere, it prefers to arrive rather by subtler means, suggestive turn, aptness and vividness and richness and beauty of phrase. Poetic speech follows the same methods but in another and higher manner and with a different atmosphere. There is indeed a poetic rhetoric which differs from prose rhetoric only in the same way as the lower kind of poetic adequacy differs from prose adequacy by just managing to bring in some element of rhythmic emotion and vision, and of this kind we may take an effective example from Pope, —

Atoms and systems into ruins hurled
And now a bubble burst and now a world.

A greater spirit and a less intellectual and more imaginative sincerity and elevation of thought, feeling and vision will give us a sublimer poetic rhetoric, as in certain lines of Milton belonging to his more external manner, —

Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky
With hideous ruin and combustion down

To bottomless perdition.

At a more temperate pitch and more capable of a certain subtlety of suggestion we can see the adequate changing into the more rhetorical poetic manner, as in many passages of Wordsworth, —

And oft when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task in smoother walks to stray.

A richer, subtler and usually a truer poetic effectivity is attained not by this rhetorical manner, but through a language succeeding by apt and vivid metaphor and simile, richness and beauty of phrase or the forceful word that makes the mind see the body of the thought with a singularly living distinctness or energy of suggestion and nearness, — Wordsworth's

Her eyes as stars of twilight fair,
Like twilight's too her dusky hair,
But all things else about her drawn
From Maytime and the cheerful dawn:

Shelley's

When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest,
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed;

or

Its passions will rock thee,
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee
Like the sun from a wintry sky.

In this manner English poetry is especially opulent and gets from it much of its energy and power; but yet we feel that this is not the highest degree of which poetic speech is capable. There is a more intimate vision, a more penetrating spiritual emotion, a more intense and revealing speech, to which the soul can be more vibrantly sensible.

This comes to its first self-discovery when either the adequate or the dynamically effective style is raised into a greater illumination in which the inner mind sees and feels object, emotion, idea not only clearly or richly or distinctly and powerfully, but in a flash or outbreak of transforming light which kindles the thought or image into a disclosure of new significances of a much more inner character, a more profoundly revealing vision, emotion, spiritual response. This illuminating poetic speech comes suddenly and rarely, as in Dryden's

And Paradise was opened in his face,

breaking out of a surrounding merely effective poetical eloquence, or intervening at times as in Shelley's

    The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute,
    No song but sad dirges
Like the wind through a ruined cell,

where the effective force of image and feeling that makes us see and respond by a strong suggestion, at work throughout the rest of the lyric, passes now beyond itself into an illuminative closeness and then we feel, we bear, we ourselves live at the moment through the power of the poetic word the authentic identity of the experience. It comes in luminous phrases emerging from a fine and lucid adequacy and the justice or the delicacy makes place for a lustrous profundity of suggestion, as in Shelley's

And now, alas! the poor sprite is
Imprisoned for some fault of his
In a body like a grave,

or it strikes across a movement of strong and effective poetical thinking, as in Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*,

Me this unchartered freedom tires,

or leaps up at once to set the tone of a poem,

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight,
A lovely apparition sent
To be a moment's ornament.

And supreme examples within the limits of this power which will bring out all their difference from the more common texture of poetry, may be taken from the same poets, — Shelley's

The silent moon
In her interlunar swoon,

and Wordsworth's

They flash upon the inner eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.

Here we get the pure illuminative speech of poetry not mixed with or arising out of the lucid adequate or the richly or forcefully effective or dynamic manner, but changed into an altogether supra-intellectual light of intuitive substance and vision and utterance.

The difference here we find to be an increasing intensity and finally a concentrated purity and fullness of the substance and language of intuitive expression. In the less intense styles the thing conveyed is indeed something suggested to and by the intuitive mind, — only the least inspired poetry is purely intellectual in substance, — but it is expressed with a certain indirectness or else with a dilution of the body of the intuitive light, and this is due to an intellectualised language or to the speech of an imagination which tries to bridge the gulf between the intuitive mind and the normal intelligence. The two powers seem to lean on and support each other, at a certain point are brought very close and even up to the point of fusion, and then suddenly the border is crossed, the difficulty of getting out through the doors of the mind the pure untranslated language of intuitive vision overcome and we have a word of intense light in which the intellect and its imagination count for nothing and the mind's language, even while remaining in material the same, undergoes an unanalysable alchemy and spiritual change. And beyond this first language of intuitive illumination we arrive at a more uplifted range of an inspired poetic speech which brings to us not only pure light and beauty and inexhaustible depth, but a greater moved ecstasy of highest or largest thought and sight and speech and at its highest culminates in the inevitable, absolute and revealing word. This too is sometimes a magical transformation of the adequate manner, as in Wordsworth's

A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In springtime from the cuckoo bird
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides —

sometimes of the richer or more dynamic imaged style,

Flowers laugh before thee in their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens through thee are fresh and strong

— and sometimes it is the illuminative speech powerfully inspired and rising suddenly into the highest revealing word,

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep,
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong,
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep.

There the inspiration takes up the effort of the poetic intelligence and imagination into a stirred concentration of the speech of sight and in its last movement seems to leap even beyond itself and beyond any pursuit or touch of the intellect into a pure revelatory spiritual vision.

The genius of the poet can do work of a high beauty or of a considerable greatness in any of these degrees of poetic speech, but it is the more purely intuitive, inspired or revelatory utterance that is the most rare and difficult for the human mind to command, and it is these kinds that we peculiarly value. Their power not only moves and seizes us the most, but it admits the soul to a most spiritually profound light of seeing and ecstasy of feeling even of ordinary ideas and objects and in its highest force to thoughts and things that surpass the manner and range and limits of depth of the normal intelligence. The greatest poets have been those in whom these moments of a highest intensity of intuitive and inspired speech have been of a frequent occurrence and in one or two, as in Shakespeare, of a miraculous abundance. There is however this subtle farther variation that this kind of utterance, though essentially the same always, takes a different colour according to the kind of object vision and subjective vision which is peculiar to the mind of the poet in its normal action. The citations I have made have been all taken from writers in whom the poetic intelligence and its type of imagination have been the leading forces. The same power in poets who speak more with the direct voice of the life-soul assumes quite another hue and seems even of a very different texture of language. The characteristic distinction of its note from that of the more intellectualised intuition can best be illustrated from Shakespeare and by such a passage as the speech of Claudio,

> Ay, but to die and go we know not where;
> To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;
> This sensible warm motion to become
> A kneaded clod: and the delighted spirit
> To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
> In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice;
> To be imprisoned in the viewless winds
> And blown with restless violence round about
> The pendant world:

and the rest. There is an illumination, an intuitive intensity of the life spirit and its feeling in that thought and its speech which we can no longer command in the same direct and essential manner. And even the ideas that seem to belong to the region of the thinking intelligence have subtly in these poets the same inspiration. It is sufficient to compare Shakespeare's

> Life's but a walking shadow . . .
> it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing —

and Shelley's voicing of a kindred idea of transience,

> Heaven's light forever shines, earth's shadows fly;
> Life like a dome of many-coloured glass
> Stains the white radiance of eternity,
> Until death tramples it to fragments.

The one has the colour of an intuition of the life-soul in one of its intense moods and we not only think the thought but seem to feel it even in our nerves of mental sensation, the other is the thought mind itself uttering in a moved, inspired and illuminative language an idea of the pure intelligence. It would be difficult for the present human mind to recover the same spirit as moved Shakespeare's speech; it is nearer to that of the later poets and their voice of the brooding or the moved poetic intelligence or of the intuitive mind rising out of the intellect and still preserving something of its tones. Still the manner of the coming poetry is likely to recover and hold as its central secret something akin to the older poet, a greater straight impact and natural body of intuitive intensity, because it too will take up the thought and feeling into a concentrated expression of an equal though a different directness. It will be the language of a higher intuitive mind swallowing up the intellectual tones into the closenesses and identities of a supra-intellectual light and Ananda.

The future poetry, assuming it to be of the kind I have suggested, its object to express some inmost truth of the things which it makes its subject, must to be perfectly adequate to its task express them in the inmost way, and that can only be done if, transcending the more intellectualised or externally vital and sensational expression, it speaks wholly in the language of an intuitive mind and vision and imagination, intuitive sense, intuitive emotion, intuitive vital feeling, which can seize in a peculiarly intimate light of knowledge by a spiritual identity the inmost thought, sight, image, sense, life, feeling of that which it is missioned to utter. The voice of poetry comes from a region above us, a plane of our being above and beyond our personal intelligence, a supermind which sees things in their innermost and largest truth by a spiritual identity and with a lustrous effulgency and rapture and its native language is a revelatory, inspired, intuitive word limpid or subtly vibrant or densely packed with the glory of this ecstasy and lustre. It is the possession of the mind by the supramental touch and the communicated impulse to seize this sight and word that creates the psychological phenomenon of poetic inspiration and it is the invasion of it by a superior power to that which it is normally able to harbour that produces the temporary excitement of brain and heart and nerve which accompanies the inrush of the influence. The inspired word comes, as said of old the Vedic seers, from the home of Truth, *sadanād ṛtasya*, the high and native level of a superior self which holds the light of a reality that is hidden by the lesser truth of the normal sense and intelligence. It is rarely however that it comes direct and unaltered, ready embodied and perfect and absolute: ordinarily there is an influx and a suggestion of its light and speech hidden in a cloud of formless lustre and we have to receive as best we can, to find and disengage or to reshape word and substance with the aid of our mental powers while they are still possessed and excited and enlightened by the influence. The word comes secretly from above the mind, but it is plunged first into our intuitive depths and emerges imperfectly to be shaped by the poetic feeling and intelligence, *hṛdā taṣṭaṁ manīṣā*. An intuitive self in the depth of each of our parts of being, hid in sense, life, heart, mind, is the transmitting agent, a subliminal power concealed in some secret cavern within of which the curtained and crystal doors disclose only occasional and partial transparencies or are sometimes half open or ajar, — *nihitaṁ guhāyām*, *guhāhitaṁ gahvareṣṭham*. The less we are near and awake to this agent, the more externally intellectualised and vitalised becomes the tone and substance of the poetic speech; the more we can bring in of its direct power and vision, the more intuitive and illumined becomes the word of our utterance. And the more we can light up the veil and have the direct transmission, the greater the force of inspiration and revelation and the nearer we shall get to an absolute and inevitable word straight from the supramental sight and language.

The most characteristic trend of recent poetry has been an attempt, sometimes lucid, sometimes half understanding or obscure, to break open the doors of the luminous cavern and to get the seeing and phrase which would be that of this intuitive self of our intelligence and imagination and sensation and life and feeling. In a certain kind of continental poetry it is a search for the sheer intuitivities of sensation and of the more vital emotions and states and experiences and relations with objects and persons, the spirit's sense of itself, as it were, externalised and made vital and physical and some illumination of the inner meaning of this externality, that motives a new kind of utterance. Much of present-day English poetry drives in the same direction but with less subtlety and a more forceful outwardness of sight and tone. The Irish poets and in a different way the few Indians, Tagore and Chattopadhyay and Mrs. Naidu, who have written in English or transferred their poetical thought into that medium, aim at pure intuitivities of a more psychic feeling, sensation and life-vision or a subtle and psychic or spiritualised imagination and intelligence. All however are secretly moved to their very different and often contradictory tendencies by the same fundamental endeavour of the Time-spirit. The difficulty has been to find the intuitive language which will be the true medium and the condition of perfect success of this endeavour. The old habits of poetic speech still cling around and encrust or dilute the subtler subtlety, the more luminous light, the intenser intensities, the deeper depths sought for by the intuitive utterance. These things however are already there and are shaping a new manner of speech, a basis for the more inner and illumined poetic language of the future. At its best, and oftenest in the greater poets, it emerges from the admixture of older methods and manifests the whole and pure characteristic note of the intuitive manner. It is the greatening, deepening and making normal of this kind that is likely to bring the perfect voice of the poetry of the future.

The character of this change is a raising of what I have called the adequate and the dynamic degrees of poetic speech to the third intuitive and illuminative power or a touching and penetrating of them with its peculiar lustre. The more potent inspired or revelatory inevitable word occasionally intervenes as in the older poets, but it is the greater generalising of the intermediate, the first more purely intuitive degree that is the common feature, the level of the endeavour, the distinctive stamp where it succeeds of this new utterance. It takes the clear and strong or the lucid and delicate poetical adequacy of speech from which the older poets started and takes too the dynamic poetical eloquence or the richer suggestive and imaginatively effective power of language and tries to effect commonly what they were content to do only in moments of greater elevation, — to put into its mould or even surcharge it with a stronger or subtler content of illumination and this also to discharge of the intellectual tone and colour which so usually holds or else makes its way into all but their rarest utterances and to arrive at a pure intuitive expression of sensation and feeling and thought or of an inwardly intuitive vital vision or of a strong or a subtle psychic or spiritualised intelligence. This is a language which aims at bare or strange or subtle or pregnant identities between the mind's intuitive thought and perception and emotion and a rarer than the surface truth and meaning of the object or experience. And very often the work is done not so much by the language as the subtle sense suggestion of the rhythm and word music, the sound doing the alchemic labour of transfiguration which the expression is not yet strong and adult enough to lead and compass.

These are beginnings and beyond lies much that has to be done to effectuate the complete change; an uncertain transition has yet to pass into a great transformation. The moulds or at least the spirit and manner of poetic expression have to be recast, very much as Shakespeare and his contemporaries recast the poetic speech of the English tongue so as to give shape and room to the surge of self-seeing and self-feeling and self-thinking of the life soul of man: but this time it has to be done in many languages by the minds of many nation entities at once and to make shape and room for the multitudinous vastitudes, the finer and finer subtleties, the absolute transparencies of the seeing, feeling, and thinking of the inmost self and spirit in man in intimate touch with the opening truths of all the levels of his existence and all his surroundings in Nature and in supernature. The voices we already have, the as yet strange and not yet universally accepted subtleties of some, the immature strainings and violences of others, the work of those who have something of the new substance but not a mastery of its native expression and those who have the new speech and rhythm but a poverty of the substance that should have made it rich and ample, the perfections attained even, are to be regarded only as incipient efforts and successes and stimulations to a more complete disclosure of the unfolding spirit. The speech that opens more constantly the doors of the intuitive self in the caverns of light of our nature has not done all that is to be done. The speech also has to be found that shall come by the rending or removal of the golden lid between our intelligence and the effulgent supra-intelligence and effect a direct and sovereign descent and pouring of some absolute sight and word of the spirit into the moulds of human language.

Chapter VIII

Conclusion

THE POETRY of the future has to solve, if the suggestions I have made are sound, a problem new to the art of poetic speech, an utterance of the deepest soul of man and of the universal spirit in things, not only with another and a more complete vision, but in the very inmost language of the self-experience of the soul and the sight of the spiritual mind. The attempt to speak in poetry the inmost things of the spirit or to use a psychical and spiritual seeing other than that of the more outward imagination and intelligence has indeed been made before, but for the most part and except in rare moments of an unusually inspired speech it has used some kind of figure or symbol more than a direct language of inmost experience; or else, where it has used such a language, it has been within the limited province of a purely inward experience as in the lofty philosophic and spiritual poetry of the Upanishads, the expression of a peculiar psychic feeling of Nature common in far eastern poets or the poetic setting of mystic states or of an especial religious emotion and experience of which we have a few examples in Europe and many in the literature of western Asia and India. It is a different and much larger creative and interpretative movement that we now see in its first stages, an expansion of the inner way of vision to outer no less than to inner things, to all that is subjective to us and all that is objective, a seeing by a closer identity in the self of man with the self of things and life and Nature and of all that meets him in the universe. The poet has to find the language of these identities, and even symbol and figure, when brought in to assist the more direct utterance, must be used in a different fashion, less as a veil, more as a real correspondence.

The first condition of the complete emergence of this new poetic inspiration and this vaster and deeper significance of poetic speech must be the completion of an as yet only initial spiritualised turn of our general human feeling and intelligence. At present the human mind is occupied in passing the borders of two kingdoms. It is emerging out of a period of active and mostly materialistic intellectualism towards a primary intuitive seeking to which the straining of the intellect after truth has been brought in the very drive of its own impulse by a sort of slipping over unexpected borders. There is therefore an uncertain groping in many directions some of which are only valuable as a transitional effort and, if they could be the end and final movement, might land us only in a brilliant corruption and decadence. There is a vitalistic intuitivism sometimes taking a more subjective, sometimes a more objective form, that lingers amid dubious lights on the border and cannot get through its own rather thick and often violent lustres and colours to a finer and truer spiritual vision. There is an emotional and sensational psychical intuitivism half emerging from and half entangled in the vitalistic motive that has often a strange beauty and brilliance, sometimes stained with morbid hues, sometimes floating in a vague mist, sometimes — and this is a common tendency — strained to an exaggeration of half vital, half psychic motive. There is a purer and more delicate psychic intuition with a spiritual issue, that which has been brought by the Irish poets into English literature. The poetry of Whitman and his successors has been that of life, but of life broadened, raised and illumined by a strong intellectual intuition of the self of man and the large soul of humanity. And at the subtlest elevation of all that has yet been reached stands or rather wings and floats in a high intermediate region the poetry of Tagore, not in the complete spiritual light, but amid an air shot with its seekings and glimpses, a sight and cadence found in a psycho-spiritual heaven of subtle and delicate soul experience transmuting the earth tones by the touch of its radiance. The wide success and appeal of his poetry is indeed one of the most significant signs of the tendency of the mind of the age. At the same time one feels that none of these things are at all the whole of what we are seeking or the definite outcome and issue. That can only be assured when a supreme light of the spirit, a perfect joy and satisfaction of the subtlety and complexity of a finer psychic experience and a wide strength and amplitude of the life soul sure of the earth and open to the heavens have met, found each other and fused together in the sovereign unity of some great poetic discovery and utterance.

It is possible that it may be rather in Eastern languages and by the genius of Eastern poets that there will come the first discovery of this perfection: the East has always had in its temperament a greater constant nearness to the spiritual and psychic sight and experience and it is only a more perfect turning of this sight on the whole life of man to accept and illuminate that is needed for the realisation of that for which we are still waiting. On the other hand the West has this advantage that though it is only now emerging not so much into the spiritual light as into an outer half-lit circle and though it is hampered by an excessive outward, intellectual and vital pressure, it has at present a more widely ranging thought and a more questing and active eye, and if these once take the right direction, the expression is not so much encircled by past spiritual forms and traditions. It is in any case the shock upon each other of the oriental and occidental mentalities, on the one side the large spiritual mind and inward eye turned upon self and eternal realities, on the other the free inquiry of thought and the courage of the life energy assailing the earth and its problems that is creating the future and must be the parent of the poetry of the future. The whole of life and of the world and Nature seen, fathomed, accepted, but seen in the light of man's deepest spirit, fathomed by the fathoming of the self of man and the large self of the universe, accepted in the sense of its inmost and not only its more outward truth, the discovery of the divine reality within it and of man's own divine possibilities, — this is the delivering vision for which our minds are seeking and it is this vision of which the future poetry must find the inspiring aesthetic form and the revealing language.

The world is making itself anew under a great spiritual pressure, the old things are passing away and the new things ready to come into being, and it may be that some of the old nations that have been the leaders of the past and the old literatures that have been hitherto the chosen vehicles of strong poetic creation may prove incapable of holding the greater breath of the new spirit and be condemned to fall into decadence. It may be that we shall have to look for the future creation to new poetical literatures that are not yet born or are yet in their youth and first making or, though they have done something in the past, have still to reach their greatest voice and compass. A language passes through its cycle and grows aged and decays by many maladies: it stagnates perhaps by the attachment of its life to a past tradition and mould of excellence from which it cannot get away without danger to its principle of existence or a straining and breaking of its possibilities and a highly coloured decadence; or, exhausted in its creative vigour, it passes into that attractive but dangerous phase of art for art's sake which makes of poetry no longer a high and fine outpouring of the soul and the life but a hedonistic indulgence and dilettantism of the intelligence. These and other signs of age are not absent from the greater European literary tongues, and at such a stage it becomes a difficult and a critical experiment to attempt at once a transformation of spirit and of the inner cast of poetic language. There is yet in the present ferment and travail a compelling force of new potentiality, a saving element in the power that is at the root of the call to change, the power of the spirit ever strong to transmute life and mind and make all young again, and once this magical force can be accepted in its completeness and provided there is no long-continued floundering among perverted inspirations or half motives, the old literatures may enter rejuvenated into a new creative cycle.

The poetry of the English language in direct relation to which I have made these suggestions, has certain disadvantages for the task that has to be attempted but also certain signal advantages. It is a literature that has long done great things but has neither exhausted its great natural vigour nor fixed itself in any dominant tradition, but rather has constantly shown a free spirit of poetical adventure and a perfect readiness to depart from old moorings and set its sail to undiscovered countries. It has an unsurpassed power of imaginative and intuitive language and has shown it to a very high degree in the intuitive expression of the life soul and to some degree in that of the inspired intelligence. It seems therefore a predestined instrument for the new poetic language of the intuitive spirit. The chief danger of failure arises from the external direction of the Anglo-Saxon mind. That has been a source of strength in combination with the finer Celtic imagination and has given English poetry a strong hold on life, but the hold has been also something of a chain continually drawing it back from the height and fullness of some great spiritual attempt to inferior levels. Today however the language is no longer the tongue only of the English people: the Irish mind with its Celtic originality and psychic delicacy of vision and purpose has entered into this poetic field. It is receiving too for a time an element or at least an embassy and message from the higher spiritual mind and imagination of India. The countries beyond the seas, still absorbed in their material making, have yet to achieve spiritual independence, but once that comes, the poetry of Whitman shows what large and new elements they can bring to the increase of the spiritual potentialities of the now widespreading language. On the whole therefore it is here among European tongues that there is the largest present chance of the revolution of the human spirit finding most easily its poetic utterance. It is also here by the union of a great vital energy and a considerable possibility of the spiritual vision that there may be most naturally a strong utterance of that which most has to be expressed, the seen and realised unity of life and the spirit.

The pouring of a new and greater self-vision of man and Nature and existence into the idea and the life is the condition of the completeness of the coming poetry. It is a large setting and movement of life opening a considerable expansion to the human soul and mind that has been in the great ages of literature the supreme creative stimulus. The discovery of a fresh intellectual or aesthetic motive of the kind that was common in the last century initiates only an ephemeral ripple on the surface and seldom creates work of the very first order. The real inspiration enters with a more complete movement, an enlarged horizon of life, a widening of the fields of the idea, a heightening of the flight of the spirit. The change that is at present coming over the mind of the race began with a wider cosmic vision, a sense of the greatness and destiny and possibilities of the individual and the race, the idea of humanity and of the unity of man with man and a closer relation too and unity of his mind with the life of Nature. It is the endeavour to make the expression of these things one with the expression of life that imparts to the poetry of Whitman so much more large and vital an air than the comparatively feeble refinement and careful art of most of the contemporary poetry of Europe — not that the art has to be omitted, but that it must be united with a more puissant sincerity of spirit and greatness of impulse and a sense of new birth and youth and the potencies of the future. The intellectual idea was yet not enough, for it had to find its own greater truth in the spiritual idea and its finer cultural field in a more delicate and complex and subtle psychic sight and experience. It is this that has been prepared by recent and contemporary poets. The expression of this profounder idea and experience is again not enough until the spiritual idea has passed into a complete spiritual realisation and not only affected individual intellect and psychic mind and imagination, but entered into the general sense and feeling of the race and taken hold upon all thought and life to reinterpret and remould them in their image. It is this spiritual realisation that the future poetry has to help forward by giving to it its eye of sight, its shape of aesthetic beauty, its revealing tongue and it is this greatening of life that it has to make its substance.

It is in effect a larger cosmic vision, a realising of the godhead in the world and in man, of his divine possibilities as well as of the greatness of the power that manifests in what he is, a spiritualised uplifting of his thought and feeling and sense and action, a more developed psychic mind and heart, a truer and a deeper insight into his nature and the meaning of the world, a calling of diviner potentialities and more spiritual values into the intention and structure of his life that is the call upon humanity, the prospect offered to it by the slowly unfolding and now more clearly disclosed Self of the universe. The nations that most include and make real these things in their life and culture are the nations of the coming dawn and the poets of whatever tongue and race who most completely see with this vision and speak with the inspiration of its utterance are those who shall be the creators of the poetry of the future.

Appendixes
to *The Future Poetry*

The three fragmentary pieces that follow, all written at different times, are each connected in some way with the text of *The Future Poetry*. Appendix I is an incomplete review of James Cousins' book *New Ways in English Literature*. Written in November 1917, the review was abandoned when Sri Aurobindo decided to make his consideration of Cousins' book the starting-point for a presentation of his own ideas on poetry. The two paragraphs of the review were rewritten as the first two paragraphs of the first chapter of *The Future Poetry*.

Appendix II consists of a fragment found in a notebook used by Sri Aurobindo in 1920. Evidently intended for *The Future Poetry*, it is closely linked to the book's last chapter, which was published in the *Arya* in July 1920. One might suppose that the fragment was intended to be part of the last chapter, or that it is the beginning of a new chapter that was never completed. The subject at which it hints does not seem to have been given full treatment anywhere in *The Future Poetry*.

The paragraph printed as Appendix III was dictated by Sri Aurobindo in the later stage of his revision of the book, probably in 1950. It is all that was written of a new chapter meant to replace the first chapter of *The Future Poetry*.

APPENDIX I

New Ways in English Literature

(*Review*)

Amid the commonplace, vapid and undiscriminating stuff which mostly does duty for literary criticism in India, here is at last a work of the first order, something in which the soul can take pleasure for the beauty of its style, its perfect measure, its insight, its subtle observation and just appreciation. Such a book would be a miracle in its environment, but the miracle disappears when we know the name of the author; Mr. James Cousins is one of the leading spirits of the Irish movement which has given contemporary English literature its two greatest poets. This book therefore comes to us from Ireland, although it is published in India. One would like to see a significant link in this circumstance of Mr. Cousins' presence and activities among us. For Ireland is a predestined home of the new spiritual illumination rising in Europe from the ashes of the age of rationalism and she has already, in literature at least, found the path of her salvation: India, that ancient home of an imperishable spirituality, has still, Rabindranath and the Bengal school of painting notwithstanding, to find hers, has yet to create the favourable imaginative, intellectual and aesthetic conditions for her voice to be heard again with the old power, but a renewed message. The atmosphere is at present raw and chill, thick with the crude mists of a false education and a meagre and imitative culture. Mr. Cousins' work is avowedly part of a movement intended to make a salutary change and bring in the large air and light of a living culture and education.

Mr. Cousins deals here with the contemporary and recent English poets, a subject for the most part quite unfamiliar to the Indian mind. He treats it with an admirable sympathy, an illuminating power of phrase and a fine certainty of touch; but for the purpose for which these essays were put together, his criticism has one great fault, — there is too little of it. The first part deals with four contemporary poets, three of them of the first importance, and a group; the second deals with five recent poets and a dramatist and of these writers three again are of the first importance; but this slender volume of 135 pages is a small pedestal for so many figures. To catch the eye of the Indian reader [he tries] to give the greater of these something like life size, while putting the rest in smaller proportions — after a convention familiar to Indian art. Each essay is indeed excellent in itself; that on Emerson is a masterpiece of fullness in brevity, for it says perfectly in a few pages all that need be said about Emerson the poet and nothing that need not be said; others are quite full and conclusive enough for their purpose, for instance the admirable "defence" of Alfred Austin; and in all the essential things are said and said finely and tellingly. There is quite enough for the experienced reader of English poetry who can seize on implications and follow out suggestions; but the Indian reader is inexperienced and has not ordinarily a well-cultivated critical faculty or receptiveness; he needs an ampler treatment to familiarise him with the subject and secure his permanent interest. The essays do act admirably as finger-posts; but finger-posts are not enough for him, he needs to be carried some miles along the road before he will consent to follow it.

APPENDIX II

The poetry of the future will be unlike that of the past in one very important circumstance that in whatever languages it may be written, it will be more and more moved by the common mind and motives of all the human peoples. Mankind is now being drawn to a fundamental unity of thought and culture among all its racial and national differences to which there has been no parallel

APPENDIX III

Part I
Chapter I

The Mantra

A supreme, an absolute of itself, a reaching to an infinite and utmost, a last point of perfection of its own possibilities is that to which all action of Nature intuitively tends in its unconscious formations and when it has arrived to that point it has justified its existence to the spirit which has created it and fulfilled the secret creative will within it. Speech, the expressive Word, has such a summit or absolute, a perfection which is the touch of the infinite upon its finite possibilities and the seal upon it of its Creator. This absolute of the expressive Word can be given the name which was found for it by the inspired singers of the Veda, the Mantra. Poetry especially claimed for its perfected expression in the hymns of the Veda this name. It is not confined however to this sense, for it is extended to all speech that has a supreme or an absolute power; the Mantra is the word that carries the godhead in it or the power of the godhead, can bring it into the consciousness and fix there it and its workings, awaken there the thrill of the infinite, the force of something absolute, perpetuate the miracle of the supreme utterance. This highest power of speech and especially of poetic speech is what we have to make here the object of our scrutiny, discover, if we can, its secret, regard the stream of poetry as a long course of the endeavour of human speech to find it and the greater generalisation of its presence and its power as the future sign of an ultimate climbing towards an ultimate evolution as a poetic consciousness towards the conquest of its ultimate summits.

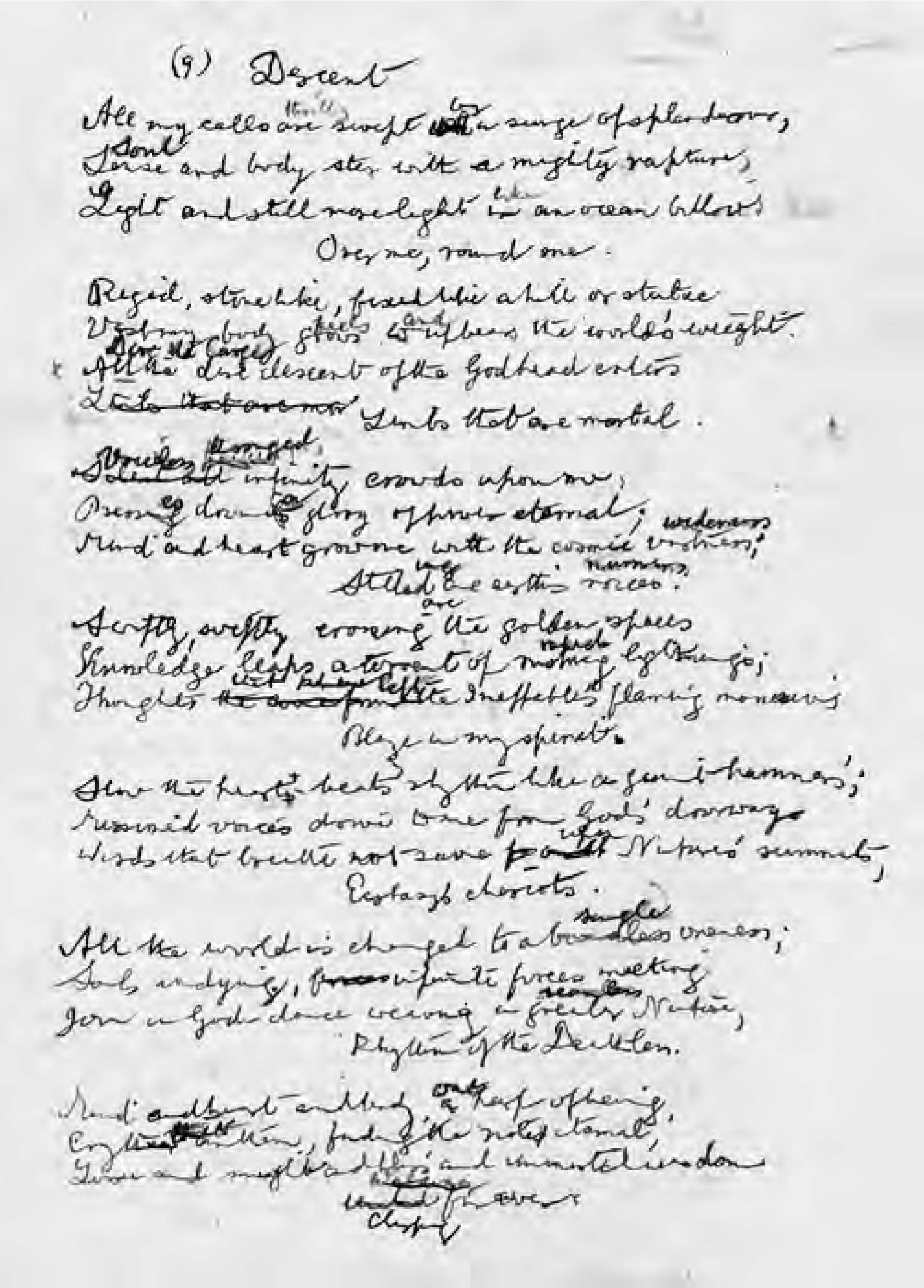

(9) Descent

All my cells are thrilled swept ~~with~~ by a surge of splendours,
~~Sense~~ Soul and body stir with a mighty rapture,
Light and still more light ~~in~~ like an ocean billows
Over me, round me.

Rigid, stonelike, fixed like a hill or statue
Vast my body ~~glows to~~ feels and upbears the world's weight.
x All the dire descent of the Godhead enters
~~Limbs that are mor~~ Limbs that are mortal.

~~Silent all~~ Voiceless thronged infinity crowds upon me;
Pressing down a glory of power eternal;
Mind and heart grow one with the cosmic ~~vastness~~ wideness;
Stilled are earth's ~~voices~~ murmurs.

Swiftly, swiftly crossing the golden spaces
Knowledge leaps, a torrent of ~~mystic~~ rapid lightnings;
Thoughts ~~[illegible]~~ from the Ineffable's flaming [illegible]
Blaze in my spirit.

Slow the heart-beats' rhythm like a giant hammer's;
Rumoured voices drone to me from God's doorways
Words that breathe not save ~~from~~ upon Nature's summits,
Ecstasy's chariots.

All the world is changed to a ~~boundless~~ single oneness;
Souls undying, ~~[illegible]~~ infinite forces meeting
Join in God's dance weaving a greater Nature,
Rhythm of the Deathless.

Mind and heart and body, one harp of offering,
Cry their ~~[illegible]~~ anthem, fading the notes eternal,
Power and might and bliss and immortal wisdom
~~united~~ clasping Heaven.

A draft of the poem on pages 377–78

On Quantitative Metre

On Quantitative Metre

The Reason of Past Failures

A DEFINITIVE verdict seems to have been pronounced by the critical mind on the long-continued attempt to introduce quantitative metres into English poetry. It is evident that the attempt has failed, and it can even be affirmed that it was predestined to failure; quantitative metre is something alien to the rhythm of the language. Pure quantity, dependent primarily on the length or brevity of the vowel of the syllable, but partly also on the consonants on which the vowel sustains itself, quantity as it was understood in the ancient classical languages, is in the English tongue small in its incidence, compared with stress and accent, and uncertain in its rules; at any rate, even in the most capable hands it has failed to form a practicable basis of metre. Accentual metre is normal in English poetry, stress metres are possible, but quantitative metres can only be constructed by a *tour de force*; artificial and incapable of normality or of naturalisation, they cannot get a certified right of citizenship. If quantity has to be understood in that and no other sense, this verdict must stand; all attempts made hitherto have been a failure, and not usually a brilliant failure. And yet this does not dispose of the question: an appeal is possible against the sentence of illegitimacy and banishment on the ground that from the very first the problem has been misunderstood and misstated, the methods used either a deviation from the true line or, even when close to it, a misfit; a better statement may lead to a solution that could well be viable.

At the very beginning of these attempts a double thesis was raised; two separate problems were closely associated together which are in their nature distinct, although they can be brought into close relation. There was, first, the problem of the naturalisation of classical metres in English poetry, and there was, mixed up with it, the problem of the free creation of quantitative English verse in its own right, on its own basis, with its own natural laws, not necessarily identical with those laid down in the ancient tongues. The main attempt then made was not to discover a true English principle of quantitative metre, — what was done was to bring in classical metres built according to the laws of quantity proper to a classical tongue but of doubtful validity in a modern language. Chaucer, influenced by mediaeval French and Italian poetry, had naturalised their metrical inventions by making accentual pitch and inflexion the basis of English metre. This revolution succeeded because he had called to his aid one of the most important elements in the natural rhythm of the language and it was easy for him by that happy choice to establish a perfect harmony between this rhythm and his new art of metrical building. The metrical movement he perfected — for others before him had attempted it — passed easily into the language, because he caught and lifted its native rhythm into a perfect beauty of sound captivating to the ear and moving to the inner witness and listener silent within us — the soul, to whom all art and all life should appeal and minister. This great victory was essential for the free flowering of poetry in the English tongue; the absence of any such *coup d'œil* of genius was one chief reason of its failure to flower as freely in so many human languages, — no creative genius found for them the route which leads to the discovery of a perfect plasticity of word and sound, a perfect expressiveness, a perfect beauty of rhythm. But with the Renaissance came a new impulse, a new influence; an enthusiasm was vividly felt by many for the greatness of structure and achievement of the Greek and Latin tongues — an achievement far surpassing anything done in the mediaeval Romance languages — and a desire arose to bring this greatness of structure and achievement into English poetry. As Chaucer by the success of the accentual structure in verse and his discovery of its true and natural rhythm was able to bring in the grace and fluidity of the Romance tongues, so they too conceived that the best way to achieve their aim was to bring in the greatness of classical harmony and the nobility and beauty of Greek and Latin utterance by naturalising the quantitative metres of Virgil, Ovid, Horace. It was also natural that some of these innovators should conceive that this could be best done by imposing the classical laws of quantity wholesale on the English language.

At the first attempt a difference of view on this very point arose; there was a bifurcation of paths, but neither of these branchings led anywhere near the goal. One led nowhere at all, there was a laborious trudging round in a futile circle; the other turned straight back towards accentual metre and ended in the entire abandonment of the quantitative principle. Spenser in his experiments used all his sovereign capacity to force English verse into an unnatural classical mould, Sidney followed his example. Harvey thought, rightly enough, that an adaptation to the natural rhythm of English was indispensable, but he failed to take more than a first step towards the right path; after him, those who followed his line could not get any farther, — in the end, in place of the attempt at quantitative verse, there was an adaptation of classical metres to the accentual system. Some who still experimented with quantity, feeling the necessity of making their verse normally readable, did this by taking care that their long quantities and stress or accentual pitch, wherever these came in, coincided as far as possible. But the result was not encouraging; it made the verse readable indeed, but stiff beyond measure. Even Tennyson in his lines on Milton, where he attempts this combination, seems to be walking on stilts, — very skilfully and nobly, but still on stilts and not on his own free God-given feet. As for other attempts which followed the Spenserian line of approach, they can best be described in Tennyson's own language —

> Barbarous hexameters, barbarous pentameters

— and the alcaics, sapphics and galliambics were no better. A metre which cannot be read as normal English is read, in which light syllables are forced to carry a voice-weight which they have no strength to bear and strong stresses are compelled to efface themselves while small insignificant sounds take up their burden, is not a real and natural verse movement; it is an artificial structure which will never find an agreed place in the language.

No make-believe can reconcile us to such rhythms as Sidney's

> – – – – – – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ –
> In wind | or wa|ter's || stream do re|quire to be | writ. |

Here two intractably iambic feet followed by a resolutely short syllable are compelled to dance a jig garbed as two spondees followed by a solitary long syllable; so disguised, they pretend to be the first half of a pentameter, — the second half with its faultless and natural metre and rhythm is of itself a condemnation of its predecessor. Neither can one accept Bridges'

> – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ – – – – – ˘ ˘ – –
> Flowery do|main the flush|ing soft | crowding | loveliness | of Spring |

where length is forced on an inexorable short like the "ing" of "flushing" and "crowding" and a pretence is made that an accentual iamb, "of Spring", can be transformed into a quantitative spondee. Still worse, still more impossible to digest or even to swallow, is his forced hexameter ending,

> ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ – –
> the se|renely so|lemn spells. |

There two successive accentual trochees and a terminal long syllable are turned by force or by farce into a closing dactyl and spondee. Such are the ungainly antics into which the natural movements of verse have to be compelled in this game of thrusting the laws of quantity of an ancient language upon a modern tongue which has quite another spirit and body. What is possible and natural in a clear-cut ancient language where there is a more even distribution of the voice and both the short and long syllables can get their full sound-value, is impossible or unnatural in the English tongue; for there the alternation of stresses with unstressed short and light sounds is a constant and inescapable feature. That makes all the difference; it turns this kind of verse into a frolic of false quantities. In any case, the method has invariably resulted in failure from Spenser to Bridges; the greatness of some of the poets who have made this too daring and unnatural effort, has not been great enough to bring success to an impossible adventure.

There remains the alternative way, the adaptation of classical metres to the accentual mould, of which the accentual hexameter is the not too successful consequence; but this is not a solution of the problem of English quantitative verse. Even if successful, in every field and not only in the treatment of the hexameter, it would have only solved the other quite distinct problem of naturalising Greek and Latin metres in English. But even in this direction success has been either nil or partial and defective. The experiments have always remained experiments; there has been no opening of new paths, no new rhythmic discoveries or triumphant original creations. The writers carry with them very evidently the feeling of being experimenters in an abnormal kind; they achieve an artificial rhythm, their very language has an artificial ring: there is always a stamp of manufacture, not a free outflow of significant sound and harmonious word from the depths of the spirit. A poet trying to naturalise in English the power of the ancient hexameter or to achieve a new form of its greatness or beauty natural to the English tongue must have absorbed its rhythm into his very blood, made it a part of himself, then only could he bring it out from within him as a self-expression of his own being, realised and authentic. If he relies, not on this inner inspiration, but solely on his technical ability for the purpose, there will be a failure; yet this is all that has been done. There have been a few exceptions like Swinburne's magnificent sapphics; but these are isolated triumphs, there has been no considerable body of such poems that could stand out in English literature as a new form perfectly accomplished and accepted. This may be perhaps because the attempt was always made as a sort of leisure exercise and no writer of great genius like Spenser, Tennyson or Swinburne has made it a main part of his work; but, more probably, there is a deeper cause inherent in the very principle and method of the endeavour.

Two poets, Clough and Longfellow, have ventured on a considerable attempt in this kind and have succeeded in creating something like an English hexameter; but this was only a half accomplishment. The rhythm that was so great, so beautiful or, at the lowest, so strong or so happy in the ancient tongues, the hexameter of Homer and Virgil, the hexameter of Theocritus, the hexameter of Horace and Juvenal becomes in their hands something poor, uncertain of itself and defective. There is here the waddle and squawk of a big water-fowl, not the flight and challenge of the eagle. Longfellow was an admirable literary craftsman in his own limits, the limits of ordinary metre perfectly executed in the ordinary way, but his technique like his poetic inspiration had no subtlety and no power. Yet both subtlety and power, or at the very least one of these greater qualities, are imperatively called for in the creation of a true and efficient English hexameter; it is only a great care and refinement or a great poetic force that can overcome the obstacles. Longfellow had his gift of a certain kind of small perfection on his own level; Clough had energy, some drive of language, often a vigorous if flawed and hasty force of self-expression. It cannot be said that their work in this line was a total failure; "The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich", "Evangeline" and "The Courtship of Miles Standish" have their place, though not a high place, in English poetry. But the little they achieved was not enough to acclimatise the hexameter permanently in English soil; nor did their work encourage others to do better, on the contrary the imperfection of its success has been a deterrent, not an incentive.

It is probable indeed that the real reason of the failure went much deeper; it lay in the very character of the mould they invented. The accentual hexameter was a makeshift and could not be the true thing; its false plausibility could not be an equivalent for the great authentic rhythms of old, its mechanically regular beat, common, uninspiring, sometimes stumbling or broken, is something quite different from the powerful sweep, the divine rush or the assured truth of tread of that greater word-music. The hexameter is a quantitative verse or nothing; losing the element of quantity, it loses also its quality. Admitting that quantity as it is ordinarily understood cannot be the sole basic element in any English metre, yet for the hexameter, perhaps for any classical rhythm, the discovery and management of true quantity is an intimate part of its technique; to neglect or to omit it is to neglect or omit something essential, indispensable. Accentual pitch gives beat, but its beat does not depend on quantity except in so far as the stress ictus creates a genuine length valid for any rhythm which is native to the language. To find out what does constitute true quantity is the first need, only then can there be any solution of the difficulty. Tennyson, like Harvey, missed this necessity; he was content to fuse long syllable and stress and manage carefully his short quantities conceived according to the classical law; this he did admirably, but two or three efforts in this kind of tightrope acrobatics were as much as he cared to manage. But true quantity in English must be something else; it must be something inherent in the tongue, recognisable everywhere in its rhythm, — not an artifice or convention governing its verse forms alone, but a technique of Nature flowing spontaneously through the very texture of the language as a whole.

Metre and the Three Elements of English Rhythm

There are three elements which constitute the general exterior forms of rhythm in the English language, — accent, stress, quantity. Each of them can be made in theory the one essential basis of metre, relegating the other indispensable elements to the position of subordinate factors which help out the rhythm but are not counted in the constitution of the metrical basis. But in practice accent and stress combining with it and aiding it have alone successfully dominated English verse-form; intrinsic quantity has been left to do what it can for itself under their rule. The basis commonly adopted in most English poetry since Chaucer is the accentual rhythm, the flow of accentual pitch and inflexion which is so all-important an element in the intonation of English speech. In any common form of English poetry we find all based on pitch and inflexion; the feet are accentual feet, the metrical "length" or "shortness" of syllables — not their inherent quantity — is determined by natural or willed location of a pitch of accent or some helping inflexion falling on the main supporting syllable of the foot and by the absence of any such pitch or accentual inflexion on those that are subordinate and supported: the main accented syllables are supposed to be metrically long, the subordinate unaccented short, there is no other test or standard. To take a familiar example:

> The wáy | was lóng, | the wínd | was cóld, |
>
> The mín|strel wàs | infírm | and óld. |[1]

Here there is a regular iambic beat determined by the persistent accentual high pitch or low pitch falling on the second syllable of the foot. In a stress scansion the second foot of the second line would rank not as an iamb but as a pyrrhic, for it is composed of two short unstressed syllables; but there is the minor accentual inflexion which commonly occurs as a sort of stepping-stone helping the voice across a number of unstressed syllables; that, slight as it is, is sufficient to justify in accentual theory the description of this foot as an iamb. Stress usually coincides with the high accentual pitch and is indispensable as the backbone of the rhythm, but it was not treated until recently either as an independent or as the main factor. Inherent quantity is not at all regarded; long-syllable quantity sometimes coincides with both high pitch and stress, sometimes it stands by itself as a rhythmic element, but that makes no difference to the metre.

The instance given is an example of the iambic verse with an extreme, an almost mechanical regularity of beat; so, for completeness, we may turn to poetry of a freer and larger type.

> Full mán|y a gló|rious mór|ning hàve | I séen
>
> Fláttering | the móun|tain-tóps | with sóve|reign éye.

Here there are two glide-anapaests in the first line, an initial dactyl in the second, — three departures from the regular iambic beat. Such liberty of variation can always be indulged in English verse and it is sometimes pushed to much greater lengths — as in the line

---

[1] The sign / indicates the accentual high pitch, the sign \ the transitional inflexion, unobtrusive and without stress or with only a half-stress.

> /   /   /   /   /   /
> Cover | her face; | my eyes daz|zle; she | died young |

where there is only one iamb in the five feet of the line; the other four feet are respectively a trochee, a bacchius, a pyrrhic and a closing spondee. Nevertheless the basic system of the metre or at least some form of its spirit asserts itself even here by a predominant beat on the final syllable of most of the feet: all the variations are different from each other, none predominates so as to oust and supplant the iamb in its possession of the metric base. In Webster's line this forceful irregularity is used with a remarkable skill and freedom; the two first feet are combined in a choriamb to bring out a vehemence of swift and abrupt unexpressed emotion; in the rest intrinsic quantitative longs combine with short-vowel stress lengths to embody a surcharged feeling — still unexpressed — in a strong and burdened movement: all is divided into three brief and packed word-groups to bring out by the subtly potent force of the rhythm the overpowering yet suppressed reactions of the speaker. The language used, however vivid in itself, could not have done as much as it does, if it were deprived of this sound-effect; it would have given the idea by its external indices, but it is the rhythm that brings out the concealed feeling. Each word-group has a separate rhythm, an independent life, yet it is by following each other rapidly in a single whole that the three together achieve a complete force and beauty. If the three clauses of this line were cut up into successive lines in modern free-verse fashion, they would lose most of their beauty; it is the total rhythmic power of these three hammer-strokes that brings to the surface all that underlies the words. But without the aid of the unusual arrangements of stress and quantity it could not have been done.

This shows up the true nature of the accentual system as distinguished from its formal theory. It becomes clear that the supposed longs and shorts constituting its feet are not real quantities, they are not composed of long and short syllables, — on the contrary, a very short sound can be made to bear the weight of the whole foot while longer ones trail after it in dependence on their diminutive leader. What we really have is a system of recurrent strokes or beats intervening at a fixed place in each foot, while the syllables which are not hammered into prominent place by this kind of stroke or beat fill the interspaces. A regular metrical base is thus supplied, but the rhythm can be varied or modulated by departures from the base — from it but always upon it; for these departures, variations or modulations, relieve its regularity which might otherwise become monotonous, but do not replace or frustrate the essential rhythm. If the modulations overlay too much the basic sound-system so as to obliterate it or if they are so ill-managed as to substitute another rhythm for it, then we have a rhythmic mixture; or else there is a break of the metrical movement which can be legitimate only if it is done with set purpose and justified by the success of that purpose.

In all these instances it will be seen that inherent quantity combined with distribution of stress — which is also as we shall see a true quantity-builder — plays always the same role; it is used as an accessory or important element of the rhythm, to give variety, subtlety, deeper significance. A longer quotation may illustrate this position and function of stress distribution and distribution of quantity in accentual metre with more amplitude —

     ⊥ | ⊥
The lun|atic, | the lov|er and | the poet
‾ | ⊥   ⊥ |
Are of | imag|ina|tion all | compact:
| ⊥   ‾ | ‾ | ⊥
One sees | more de|vils than | vast hell | can hold;
  | | | ⊥ |
That is, | the mad|man; the lov|er, all | as fran|tic,
  ‾ | ⊥   ⊥   ⊥
Sees Hel|en's beau|ty in | a brow | of Egypt:
     ⊥ ⊥   ⊥ | ⊥
The po|et's eye, | in a | fine fren|zy roll|ing,
       | | ⊥   ⊥ |
Doth glance | from heav|en to earth, | from earth | to heaven;
           | ⊥ | ⊥
And as | imag|ina|tion bo|dies forth

> ⊥ | ⊥ ⊥ |
> The forms | of things | unknown, | the po|et's pen
> ⊥ ⊥ | ⊥ |
> Turns them | to shapes | and gives | to air|y no|thing
> ⊥ | ⊥ ⊥
> A lo|cal ha|bita|tion and | a name.[2]

The first six lines of this passage owe much of their beauty to the unusual placing of the stresses and the long-vowelled syllables; in each line the distribution differs and creates a special significant rhythm which deepens and reinforces the outward sense and adds to it that atmosphere of the unexpressed reality of the thing in itself which it is in the power of rhythm, of word-music as of all music, to create. In the first line two pyrrhics separate the two long-vowelled sounds which give emphasis and power to the first and last feet from the narrower short-vowel stressed foot in the middle: this gives a peculiar rhythmic effect which makes the line no longer a mere enumerative statement, it evokes three different rhythmic significances isolating and locating each of the three pure Imaginatives in his own kind. In the second line a swift short movement in its first half slows down to a heavy prolonged movement in its second, a swift run with a long and tangled consequence; here too the expressiveness of the rhythm is evident. In the third line there are no fewer than four long vowels and a single pyrrhic separates two rhythmic movements of an unusual power and amplitude expressive of the enormity of the lunatic's vision and imagination; here too, short-vowel stress and intrinsic-quantity longs are combined no less than three times and it is this accumulation that brings about the effect. In the fifth and sixth lines the separative pyrrhic in the middle serves again a similar purpose. In the fifth it helps to isolate in contrast two opposites each emphasised by its own significant rhythm. In the sixth line there are again four long vowels and a very expressive combination of short-vowel stressed length with intrinsic long syllables, a spacious amphibrach like a long plunge of a wave at the end; no more expressive rhythm could have been contrived to convey potently the power, the excitement and the amplitude of the poet's vision.[3] Afterwards there follow five lines of a normal iambic movement, but still with a great subtlety of variation of rhythm and distribution of quantity creating another kind of rhythmic beauty, a beauty of pure harmonious word-music, but this too is the native utterance of the thing seen and conveys by significant sound its natural atmosphere. This passage shows us how much the metrically unrecognised element of intrinsic quantity can tell in poetic rhythm bringing real significations into what would be otherwise only sheer beauty of sound; quantity is one among its most important elements, even though it is not reckoned in the constitution of the metre. It combines with stress distribution to give power and expressive richness to the beat or, as it has been called, the strokes and flicks of accentual verse.

---

[2] Here only the stresses are marked, by the sign |, and the long-vowel syllables, by the sign ¯; the quantitative shorts are left unmarked: the accents need no indication.

It has been seen that accentual high pitch and stress most frequently coincide; — indeed, many refuse to make any distinction between stress of accent and stress proper. The identity is so close that all the passages cited — and accentual verse generally — can, if we so choose, be scanned by stress instead of accentual inflexion. But that at once brings in a difference: for the lesser accentual inflexions have then to be ignored because they do not carry in them anything that can be called a stress; as a result, syllables which are treated as long in the conventional scansion because of this slight accentual help have now, since they are unstressed, to be regarded as short. Iambs, so reputed, cease, in this reckoning, to be iambs and become pyrrhics; an iambic pentameter has often to be read in the stress scansion as an imperfectly iambic stress verse because of the frequent modulations, trochee or pyrrhic, anapaest, amphibrach or spondee. But apart from this, there can be a more independent stress principle of metre; for, properly speaking, stress means not accentual high pitch, but weight of voice emphasis; it is a brief hammer-stroke of the voice from above which comes down on a long-vowel or a short-vowel syllable and gives even to the latter a metrical length and power which, when without stress, it does not naturally have. This stroke can thus confer metrical length even on a very short vowel or slightest short syllable, because it drives it firmly in like a nail into the wall, so that other unstressed sounds can hang loosely upon it. This provides a distinctive sound-frame which can be generalised and so made into a metrical base.

---

[3] A combination of powerful intrinsic longs and equally powerful short-vowel stresses help to create two of the most famous "mighty lines" of Marlowe, —

Was $\overset{|}{\text{this}}$ the $\overset{-}{\text{face}}$ that $\overset{-}{\text{launched}}$ a $\overset{\perp}{\text{thousand}}$ $\overset{|}{\text{ships}}$
And $\overset{\perp}{\text{burnt}}$ the $\overset{|}{\text{top}}$less $\overset{\perp}{\text{towers}}$ of $\overset{\perp}{\text{Ilium}}$?

There can then be a pure stress scansion and pure stress metres in their own right without any justification by accent. For in stress metre proper the high accentual pitches are swallowed up into stress; any other rise or fall of accentual inflexion is ignored, — it is allowed to influence the rhythm but it does not determine or affect the basic metrical structure. Accent can in this way disappear altogether as a metrical base; stress replaces it. Here, for example, are lines composed entirely of stress paeons —

I have wa̍ndered | in the va̍lleys | of E̍cstasy, | I have li̍stened | to the
mu̍rmur | and the pa̍ssion | of its stre̍ams, |
I have sto̍od up|on the mou̍ntains | of the Sple̍ndour, | I have spu̍n
a|round my spi̍rit | like a ga̍rment | the pu̍rple of | its skie̍s.

It is evident that here there are accentual inflexions other than those taken up into stress, on one syllable even a low pitch, but because they are not reckoned as stresses, they do not count in the metrical structure of the lines. Or there may be a still freer stress metrification which rejects any scheme of regular feet and refuses to recognise the necessity of a fixed number of syllables either to the foot or the line; it regards only the fall of the stress and is faithful to that measure alone.

A fa̍r sai̍l | on the uncha̍ngeable mo̍noto̍ne | of a slo̍w slu̍mbering sea̍. |

The line is divided into three word-groups; the first contains two stresses, the others carry each three stresses, but the beats are distributed at pleasure: sometimes they are close together, sometimes they stand separated by far intervals amid a crowd of short unstressed syllables. Sometimes there is a closely packed movement loosening itself at the end, —

> O̍ver its hea̍d | like a go̍ld ba̍ll the su̍n | to̍ssed by the go̍ds in their pla̍y. |

Sometimes a loose run gathers itself up in its close into a compact movement:

> He̍re or o̍therwhere,| — po̍ised on the unre̍achable abru̍pt |
> sno̍w-so̍litary asce̍nt. |

Or any other movement can be chosen which is best suited to the idea or the feeling of the individual line. Quantity as such is here immaterial for metre building; it is of value only in so far as it coincides with stress and gives it an ampler fullness of metrical length so as to build and sustain more strongly the rhythmic totality of the line and the stanza.

But what then of this third element, quantity? Its importance is evident, but it does not form by itself the backbone of the natural rhythm of the language; quantity in English seems to intervene only as a free element taking its chance part in the general movement or its place assigned at will in the architecture. And yet quantity of some kind, shorts, longs, intermediate sounds, is ubiquitous and there seems to be no reason why it should not regulate metre. Indeed, every system affirms some kind of quantity as its constituent material. Stress metre arranges its rhythms by taking all stressed syllables as long, all unstressed syllables as metrically short; accent affirms similarly its own principle of quantity, though here the word seems to be a misnomer. Can then quantity properly speaking, pure quantity, stand by itself as the whole basis of a metrical system, as accent and stress have done? Can it similarly leave the other two elements, stress and accent, to influence and vary the rhythm but not allow them to interfere in the building of the metre? Can there be in English poetry a quantitative as well as an accentual or a stress building of verse, natural to the turn of the language, recognised and successful? and must stress or accentual lengths in such a metrical system be excluded from the idea of length? For everything here depends upon what we understand by quantity; if stress lengths are admitted, the problem of quantitative metre loses its difficulty, otherwise it seems insoluble.

The experimenters in pure quantitative verse have excluded stress from their theory of metrical lengths; they have admitted only intrinsic lengths determined by the vowel of the syllable and positional lengths determined by the number of succeeding consonants. That there is a fundamental falsity in this theory is shown by the fact that their lines cannot be read; or else in order to make them readable, an unnatural weight has to be thrown on sounds that are too slender to bear it; a weird sound-system full of false values is artificially created. But stress is a main, if not the main, feature of English rhythm; a metrical method ignoring it is impracticable. A pure quantitative verse of this manufacture has therefore to be ruled out, both because of its intrinsic artificiality and its unsuccessful result; it has to be abandoned as impossible or as inherently false. Those experimenters who avoid these false values and try to get rid of the difficulty by allowing only those stresses which coincide with intrinsic and positional longs, are on firmer ground and have some chance of arriving at something practicable. But their efforts too are hampered by the classical theory that the support of more than one consonant after a short vowel is sufficient to make short syllables metrically long, a statement which is true of the classical languages but not true of English. This either leads them into the introduction of false quantities which cannot stand the test of natural reading or drives them to oblige their longs and shorts to coincide with accentual or stress longs and shorts. Thus we see quantitative feet come to coincide exactly or predominantly with stress or accentual feet in Harvey's hexameter verse, —

> Fāme wĭth ă|būndānce | mākĕth ă | mān thrīce | blēssĕd ănd[4] | hāppў̆. |

In Sidney's line

> These be her words, but a woman's words to a love that is eager

there happens to be a similar predominant identification of quantity with accent or stress and it is this that makes the line readable. In reality these are stress hexameters, for in each there are syllables, as in *w$\overset{\downarrow}{o}$man's*, *l$\overset{\downarrow}{o}$ve*, *h$\overset{\downarrow}{a}$ppy*, which are long by stress only and not by either inherent or positional quantity. But, on the other hand, feet which would be trochees in accentual or stress verse are reckoned here quite artificially as spondees, *abundance*, *woman's*, because of the two-or-more-consonants theory; but the closing syllables of these two words, if listened to by the ear and not measured by the eye, are very clearly short, even though not among the shortest possible, and it is only by a violence of the mind or a convention that they can be reckoned as long and this kind of very slightly loaded trochee promoted to the full dignity of a spondee. Evidently, we must seek elsewhere for a true theory of English quantity and a sound basis for quantitative verse.

A Theory of True Quantity

If we are to get a true theory of quantity, the ear must find it; it cannot be determined by mental fictions or by reading with the eye: the ear too in listening must exercise its own uninfluenced pure hearing if it is not to go astray. So listening, we shall find that intrinsic or inherent quantity and the positional sound-values are not the only factors in metrical length, there is also another factor, the weight-length; it may even be said that all quantity in English is determined by weight, all syllables that bear the weight of the voice are long, all over which the voice passes lightly are short. But the voice-weight on a vowel is determined in three different ways. There is a dwelling of the voice, a horizontal weight-bar laid across the syllable, or there is its rapid passing, an absence of the weight-bar: that difference decides its natural length, it creates the inherent or intrinsic long or short, *lāzĭly̆*, *swēetnĕss*. There is, again, a vertical ictus weight of the voice, the hammer-stroke of stress on the syllable; that of itself makes even a short-vowel syllable metrically long, as in *h$\overset{\perp}{e}$avĭly̆*, *ăr$\overset{\perp}{\imath}$dĭty̆*, *ch$\overset{\perp}{a}$nnĕl*,[5] *căn$\overset{\perp}{a}$l*; the short-vowel syllables that have not the lengthening ictus or vertical weight and have not, either, the horizontal weight of the voice upon them remain light and therefore short. It is evident that these words are respectively a natural dactyl, second paeon, trochee, iamb, yet all their syllables are short, apart from the stress; but what true rhythm or metre could treat as other than long these stressed short-vowel syllables? In the words, *n$\overset{\perp}{a}$rrātĭve*, *m$\overset{\perp}{a}$n-ēatĕr*, *brūt$\overset{\perp}{a}$lĭty̆*, *cŏnt$\overset{\perp}{e}$mplātĭve*, *ĭnc$\overset{\perp}{a}$rnāte*, we see this triple power of length at work within one word, — weight-bar long syllables stressed or unstressed, hammer-stroke-weighted short-vowel longs, natural unweighted short syllables. It is clear that there can be no true reduction of stressed or unstressed or of intrinsic long or short to a sole one-kind principle; both stress and vowel length work together to make a complex but harmonious system of quantity. But, yet again, there is a third factor of length-determination; there is consonantal weight, a lingering or retardation of the voice compelled by a load of consonants, or there is a free unencumbered light movement. This distinction creates the positionally long syllable, short by its vowel but lengthened by its consonants, *strēngth*, *swīft*, *ābstrāct*; where there is no such weight or no sufficient weight of consonants buttressing up the short syllable, it remains short, unless lengthened by stress. We must consider separately how far this third or consonantal element is operative, whether its effect is invariable and absolute as the classicists would have it or only produces its result according to circumstance.

---

[4] The word *and* here ought by the classicist theory to be long because of its two consonants after the vowel and still longer because it is further supported by the initial *h* of *happy*.

---

[5] The double consonant here, as in other words like *happy*, *tell*, can make no difference even in the classicist theory, because it is a mere matter of spelling and represents a single, not a double sound, — the sound is the same as in *p$\overset{\perp}{a}$nĕl*.

It is evident to the natural ear that stress confers in its own right metrical length on the syllable in which it occurs; even an extreme shortness of the vowel does not take away the lengthening force given. To the ear it stands out that the feet in Webster's line, "my̆ ēyes da̍z|zle" and "she | diēd yo̍ung," are, quantitatively, bacchius[6] and spondee; the one is not and cannot be a true anapaest, as it would or can be accounted by convention in accentual scansion, the other is not and cannot be either iamb or trochee. The stress long naturally combines here with the intrinsic long to make bacchius or spondee, because it has itself a true metrical length which is equivalent to that of the long-vowel syllable, though not identical in nature. This stress length, in any valid theory of quantity, cannot be ignored; its ictus weight and the conveyed force of length which the weight carries with it cannot be whittled down to shortness by any mental decree. In accentual verse its power is usually absorbed by coincidence with accentual high pitch and so it is satisfied and does not need to put in a separate claim; but in quantitative verse too it insists on its right and, if denied, fatally disturbs by its presence the rhythm that tries to disown or ignore it. In true quantitative verse, stress lengths and intrinsic lengths can and must be equally accepted because they both carry weight enough to burden the syllable with an enhanced sound-value. The admission or generalisation of the idea of weight lengths clears up many cobwebs and, because it corresponds with the facts, provides us with a rational system of quantitative verse.

What difficulty remains arises from the theory drawn from the classical languages that a sequence of more than one consonant after a short vowel — whether in the word itself or with the help of an initial consonant or consonants in the word that follows — compensates for the shortness and gives the syllable, inexorably, a value of metrical length. This is palpably untrue, as has already been shown by the stumbles of Sidney and Bridges and every other classicist operator in quantitative verse. Let us again consult the ear, not the theorising mind; what is its judgment on this point if we listen, for instance, to these four hexameter lines based on natural and true quantity?

---

[6] Unless we consider *my* as long, which is a disputable point; the sound is inherently a long-vowel one, but depressed by the absence of stress or accentual high pitch. In quantitative verse this should not matter; it can retain in spite of the depression its native dignity as a long-vowel syllable.

> Ōne ănd ŭn|ārmed ĭn thĕ | cār wăs thĕ | drīvĕr; | grēy wăs hĕ, |
> shrūnkĕn,
>
> Wōrn wĭth hĭs | dēcādes. Tŏ | Pērgămă | cīnctŭred wĭth | strēngth
> Cȳclŏ|pēăn
>
> Ōld ănd ă|lōne hĕ ăr|rīved, ĭnsĭg|nīfĭcănt, | fēeblĕst ŏf | mōrtăls,
>
> Cārry̆ĭng | Fāte ĭn hĭs | hēlplĕss | hānds ănd thĕ | dōom ŏf ăn | ēmpīre.

According to the classical theory words and syllables like “and”, “of”, “in”, “the”, “he”, “ing” should be treated as long since or when two or three consonants come immediately after the vowel within the line. But this is quite false; the “dr” of “driver” does not as a matter of fact make the “the” before it long; the natural shortness of “with” is not abolished by the “h” of the following word “his”, or the shortness of “his” by the “d” of “decades”. All these small light words are so intrinsically short, so light in their very nature, that nothing, or nothing short of an unavoidable stress, can force quantitative length or weight of sound upon them. Even the short “i”s and short “a” of “insignificant” and the short “e” of “feeblest” retain their insignificance and feebleness in spite of the help of the two consonants occurring after them, — the voice passes too swiftly away for any length to accrue before it has left them; there is no weight, no dwelling or lingering upon them sufficient to give them a greater sound-value. It would be a strange and extravagant prosody that could scan the first line —

> – – ˘ – – ˘ – – – – – – – –
> One and un|armed in the | car was the | driver; | grey was he, |
> – ˘
> shrunken,

though it might still scan as a hexameter with antibacchius and molossus twice repeated as modulations in place of the dactyl; but it could not be read aloud in that way, — the ear would immediately contradict the arbitrary dictates of the eye and the inapplicable rigidity of the mental theory.

This is not to deny that an additional consonant or consonants within the word after and before the vowel do give greater length to the syllable as a whole; but this does not necessarily transfer it from the category of shorts to the category of longs. At most, when the weight of consonants is not heavy and decisive, it makes it easier for these midway sounds to figure as lengthened shorts; it helps a trochee to serve as a substitute modulation for a spondee but it does not transform it into a spondee. To take an instance from a hexameter movement —

> Wind in the forests, bees in the grove, — spring's ardent cymbal
> Thrilling, the cry of the cuckoo.

Here the word "ardent" easily replaces a dactyl or spondee as a modulation, but it remains trochaic. There is more possibility of treating "forests" here with its three heavy consonants as a spondee, — a possibility, not a necessity invariable in all places, for one could very well write "in the forests of autumn", in spite of the three consonants, as the orthodox dactylic close of a hexameter. Let us try again with yet another example, this time of wholly or fundamentally dactylic hexameters, —

> Onward from continent sailing to continent, ever from harbour
> Hasting to harbour, a wanderer joining[7] ocean to ocean.

---

[7] This word is a trochaic modulation; it is not intended to figure as a spondee.

Here the word "continent" clearly does not become a cretic, even when a third consonant follows like the "s" of "sailing", still less when a vowel follows; a slight weight is there, but it is altogether insufficient to hamper the pure dactylic flow of the line.

It is only a sufficient consonant weight that can change the category; but even then the result depends less on the number than on the power and heaviness of the consonants composing the word; the theory that it is the number of consonants that determines metrical length cannot stand always. Thus the word *strength* or the word *stripped* is long wherever it may occur, but *string* with its five consonant sounds is long mainly by the voice ictus falling on it; where that lacks it may remain short by the inherent value of its vowel: *heart-string*, *hamstring* sound more natural as trochees than as spondees; *hamstringing* carries weight as a dactyl, it is too weak to be a good antibacchius. In these matters it is always the ear that must judge, there can be no rule of thumb or fixed mathematical measure determinable by the eye of the reader; it is the weight or lightness of the syllable, the slowed down or unencumbered rapid passage of the voice, the pressure or slightness of its step in passing that makes the difference, and of that the ear alone can be the true judge or arbiter.

In any case it is only the internal consonants that matter; for it is doubtful whether initial consonants in a word that follows can, even when they are many, radically influence the quantity of a preceding syllable. This rule of backward influence could prevail in the classical tongues because there the voice was more evenly distributed over the words; this evenness gave a chance to the short syllables to have their full sound-value and a slight addition of consonantal sound might overweight them and give them, either internally or in position, a decisive length value. Intrinsic quantity also was not crushed under the weight of stress as in English and turned into a secondary factor, — it was and remained a prime factor in the rhythm. There is accentual pitch and inflexion, but it does not take the first place. Thus the first lines of the Aeneid, —

–́ ⏑ ⏑́ – ⏑ ⏑́ – –́ – – –́ ⏑ ⏑ –́ –
Arma vir|umque ca|no, Tro|jae qui | primus ab | oris
– ⏑́ ⏑ – –́ – ⏑́ ⏑ – – –́ ⏑ ⏑ –́ ⏑
Itali|am, fa|to profu|gus, La|vinaque | venit
–́ ⏑ ⏑
Litora.| —

if they were read like an English line, would become some kind of irregular and formless accentual hexameter, —

/ / / / / /
Arma | virumque | cano, | Trojae qui | primus ab | oris
/ / / / /
Itali|am, fato | profugus, La|vinaque | venit
/
Litora.| —

stress would preside and quantity fall into a subordinate second place. If this did not and could not happen, it was evidently because the accent was an inflexion or pitch of the voice and not stress, not an emphatic pressure.[8] In English stress or voice emphasis predominates and there is a very uneven distribution of sound-values in which quantity is partly determined and, where not determined, considerably influenced by stress; it has some difficulty in asserting its full independent value. Moreover the words do not cohere or run into each other as in a Sanskrit line, (this cohesion was the *raison d'être* of the complicated law of Sandhi by which the closing letter of one word so frequently unites with the initial letter of its successor in a conjunct sound); each word in English is independent and has its own metrical value unaffected by the word that follows. In Sanskrit, as in Latin and Greek, the short syllable having already its full natural sound-value is affected by the additional consonant and passes into the category of longs by the force of the consonant weightage, but these conditions are not naturally present in English verse.

---

[8] In the Latin metre accent and quantity coincide in the last two feet but not in the earlier four feet; the Harvey type of hexameter has been criticised for not following this rule, but the writers had no choice, — to do otherwise would have brought in the conflict between stress and quantity which for the reason here stated could not occur in Latin. In the English hexameter accent, stress and quantity have inevitably to fuse together in the main long syllable of the foot; relief from a too insistent beat has to be sought by other natural means or technical devices, modulation, the greater value given to long unstressed syllables, variation of foot-grouping, pause, caesura.

There is therefore no good reason, or at least no essential reason, for the admission of a rule allowing or obliging a throwback of influence from a following word upon its predecessor. In accentual or stress metre no such rule prevails, — one never thinks of this element in arranging one's line; there is nothing that compels its adoption in quantitative verse. If these initial consonants created an obstacle to the pace of the voice sufficient to make it linger or pause, then such an effect would be justified, — the closing short syllable of the preceding word would or might be lengthened: but, normally, the obstacle is so slight that it is not felt and the voice takes it in its stride and passes on without any slackening or with only a slight slackening of its pace. The distinctness of each word from another does not, indeed, create any gap or pause, but it is strong enough to preserve for it its independence, its separate self-value in the total rhythm of the line, the word-group or the clause. This does not destroy the value of consonant weight in the sound system; it is evident that a crowding or sparseness of consonants will make a great difference to the total rhythm, it will produce a greater or less heaviness or lightness; but that is a rhythmic effect quite distinct from any imperative influence on the metre. A trochee does not become a spondee, a dactyl does not become a cretic because its final syllable is followed by a consonant or even by a group of consonants. There is, then, no sense in dragging in the classical rule where its admission is quite contrary to the natural instinct and practice of the language.

If these considerations are accepted as valid, the way lies open for the construction of true quantitative metre; a sound and realistic theory of it becomes possible. Four rules or sets of rules can be formulated which will sum up the whole base of the theory: —

(1) All stressed syllables are metrically long, as are also all long-vowel syllables even without stress.

All short-vowel syllables are metrically short, unless they are lengthened by stress — or else by a sufficient weight of consonants or some other lengthening sound-element; but the mere fact of more than one consonant coming after a short vowel, whether within the word or after it, or both in combination, is not sufficient to confer length upon the syllable. Heaviness caused by a crowding of consonants affects the rhythm of a line or part of a line but does not alter its metrical values.

Each word has its own metrical value which cannot be radically influenced or altered by the word that follows.

(2) The English language has many sounds which are doubtful or variable in quantity; these may be sometimes used as short and sometimes as long according to circumstance. Here the ear must be the judge.

(3) Quantity within the syllable itself is not so rigidly fixed as in the ancient languages; often position or other circumstances may alter the metrical value of a syllable. A certain latitude has to be conceded in such cases, and there again the ear must be the judge.

(4) Quantity metres cannot be as rigid and unalterable in English as in the old classical tongues; for the movement of the language is pliant and flexible and averse to rigidity and monotone. English poetry has always a fundamental metrical basis, a fixed normality of the feet constituting a line; but it relieves the fixity by the use of modulations substituting, with sometimes a less, sometimes a greater freedom, other feet for the normal. This rule of variation, very occasionally admitted in the classical tongues but natural in English poetry, must be applied or at least permitted in quantitative metres also; otherwise, in poems of some length, their rhythms may become stereotyped in a too rigid sameness and fatigue the ear.

No other rules than these four need be laid down, for the rest must be left to individual choice and skill in technique.

In the basic structure of quantitative verse so arranged the three elements of English rhythm, accent, stress and intrinsic quantity are none of them excluded; all are united or even fused together. Accentual high pitch is taken up into stress; low pitch, not amounting to stress, as also slighter accentual inflexions have their place in the rhythm and the intonation but not in the metre; they are not allowed to determine the metrical quantity of the syllable on which they fall. For, in fact, unless they amount to stress, these voice inflexions do not confer length of true quantity; the quantity conferred by them in accentual verse is conventional and need not be admitted where the accentual basis is abandoned and the convention is not needed. Stress itself is admitted as a quantitative element because it constitutes, by the weight of the voice which it lays on the syllable, a true metrical length, a strong sound-value. Intrinsic quantity, which is not recognised as a metrical constituent in the traditional verse system, recovers here its legitimate place. As a result quantitative metres can be constructed which, like accentual and stress metres but unlike the abortive constructions of the classicists, can flow naturally in a free movement, a movement native to the language; for they will combine in themselves without disfiguration or forcing all the natural elements of the rhythm or sound-movement proper to the English tongue.

It may even be said that all English speech, colloquial, prose or verse, has this as its natural rhythm, preserves these normal sound-values. This universality will be at once evident if we take at will or even take at random any snatch of conversation or any prose passage caught from anywhere or everywhere and test by it this rule of quantity; it will be found that the rule is in all cases applicable.

> – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ⊥ – ˘ ˘ – – ⊥ ˘ ⊥ –
> I have de|cided to | start to|morrow. | It is no use | putting off | my
>
> –˘ ⊥ ˘ – ˘
> going | any longer. |

These sentences set out with a dactylo-trochaic movement and change to less simple feet, ionic a minore, cretic, antibacchius, double trochee. Or if you hear an irate voice shouting

> ˘ ⊥ ˘ ⊥ ˘ – ⊥ ˘
> Get out of that | or I'll kick you, |

and have sufficient leisure and equanimity of mind to analyse the rhythm of this exhortation, you will find yourself in the presence of an excited double iamb followed by a vehement antispast, and can then conscientiously determine the rhythm of your own answer. Or if one takes, as a resting-house between colloquial speech and literary prose, the first advertisement that meets the eye in any daily newspaper, the result will still infallibly illustrate our rule. For example,

˘ ⊥ ˘ ˘ ˘ ⊥ ˘ ˘ ⊥ ˘ ⊥ ˘ ˘ ˘ ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ ˘
This column | is intended | to give | publicity | to the a|menities | and

˘ ⊥ ˘ ⊥ ˘ – ˘ ⊥ ˘ –
commercial | interests | of Bangalore. | —

where amphibrach, paeons, iamb, tribrach, dactyl, cretic, double iamb are harmoniously blended together by an unconscious master of quantitative rhythm. It can be at once and easily established, by multiplying instances, that the daily talk and writing of English-speaking peoples, though not by any means always poetry, is still, in spite of itself and by an unfelt compulsion, always rhythmic and always quantitative in its rhythm.

If we take similarly passages from literary prose, we shall find the same law of rhythm lifted to a higher level. Shakespeare and the Bible will give us the best and most concentrated examples of this rhythm in prose. Our first quotation, from the New Testament, can indeed be arranged, omitting the superfluous word "even" before "Solomon", as a very perfect and harmonious stanza of free quantitative verse.

˘ – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ ˘ – – – –
Consider | the lilies | of the field | how they grow, |

– – ˘ – ˘ ˘ – –
They toil not | neither do | they spin, |

˘ – – ˘ ˘ ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ ˘ – ˘ – ˘
Yet I | say unto you | that Solomon | in all his | glory |

˘ ˘ ˘ – – ˘ ˘ – ˘ –
Was not arrayed | like unto | one of these. |

Or again, let us take the opening verses of the Sermon on the Mount,

– ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘
Blessed are | the poor | in spirit; | for theirs is | the kingdom | of

– ˘
heaven. |

– ˘ – – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘
Blessed are | they that mourn; | for they shall be | comforted. |

¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯
Blessed are | the meek; | for they shall | inherit | the earth. |
¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘
Blessed are | the merciful; | for they shall | obtain mercy. |
¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ¯
Blessed are | the pure in heart; | for they shall see | God. |

Or from St. Paul, —

¯ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯
Though I speak | with the tongues | of men | and of angels | and have
˘ ¯ ˘ ˘
not | charity, |
¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘
I am become | as sounding brass | or a tinkling | cymbal. |
˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘
And though I have | the gift | of prophecy |
˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘
and understand | all mysteries | and all knowledge, |
˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ¯ ¯ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘
and though I have | all faith | so that I could | remove mountains, |
˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘
and have | not charity, | I am nothing. |

If we take Shakespeare's prose in a well-known passage, we shall find the same law of quantitative rhythm automatically arranging his word-movement —

˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘
This goodly frame, | the earth, seems to | me a sterile | promontory; |
˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯ ¯
this most excel|lent canopy, | the air, look you, | this brave o'erhang-
˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯
|ing firmament, | this majesti|cal roof fretted | with golden fire,| —
¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘
why, it appears | to me no oth|er thing than a | foul and pesti|lent
¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ¯
congrega|tion of vapours. | What a piece of | work is a man! | How
¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘
noble in | reason, | how infinite | in faculty! | in form, | in moving |
¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘
how express and | admirable! | in action how | like an angel! | in
¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘
apprehension | how like a god! | the beauty of | the world! | the
¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘
paragon | of animals! | And yet, to me, | what is this quint|essence of
¯
dust? |

The measures of this prose rhythm find their units of order in word-groups and not as in poetry in metrical lines; the syllabic combinations which we call feet do not follow here any fixed sequence. In colloquial speech the sequence is arranged by impulse of Nature or by the automatic play of the subconscious mind, in prose either by the instinctive or by the conscious action of an inner ear, by a secret and subtle hearing in our subliminal parts. There is not an arrangement of feet previously set by the mind and fixedly recurrent as in metre. But still the measures of speech are the same and in all these prose passages there is a dominant rhythm, — even sometimes a free recurrence or dominance of certain measures, not laid down or fixed, but easy and natural, — which gives an underlying unity to the whole passage. In the instance taken from Shakespeare a remarkable persistence of four-foot measures, with occasional shorter ones intervening, builds up a grave and massive rhythmic feeling and imparts even a poetic motion to the unified whole.

In free verse the difference of prose movement and poetic rhythm tends to disappear; poetry steps down to or towards the level of rhythmic, sometimes a very poorly rhythmic prose; but it is too often a rhythm which misses its aim at the ear and is not evident, still less convincing, though it may exist incommunicably somewhere in the mind of the writer. That indeed is the general modernistic tendency — to step back to the level of prose, sometimes to the colloquial level, both in language and in sound movement; the tendency, the aim even, is to throw away the intensities of poetic rhythm and poetic language and approximate to a prose intonation and to a prose diction; one intensity only is kept in view and that too not always, the intensity of the thought substance. It is the thought substance that is expected to determine its own sound harmonies — as in prose: the thought must not subject itself to a preconceived or set rhythm, it must be free from the metrical strait-waistcoat; or else the metrical mould must be sufficiently irregular, capricious, easily modifiable to give a new freedom and ease of movement to the thought substance.

Our immediate concern, however, is with quantitative metre constructed on this principle of quantity, — though free verse also on that basis has to be taken into consideration as a subordinate possibility. After all, the swing against metre has not justified itself; it goes contrary to a very profound law of speech, contradicts a very strong need of the ear, and the metreless verse it prefers disappoints, by the frequent flatness and inequality which seems natural to it at its ordinary level, the listening consciousness. All creation proceeds on a basis of oneness and sameness with a superstructure of diversity, and there is the highest creation where is the intensest power of basic unity and sameness and on that supporting basis the intensest power of appropriate and governed diversity. In poetic speech metre gives us this intensest power of basic unity and sameness — rhythmic variation gives us this intensest power of expressive diversity. Metre was in the thought of the Vedic poets the reproduction in speech of great creative world-rhythms; it is not a mere formal construction, though it may be made by the mind into even such a lifeless form: but even that lifeless form or convention, when genius and inspiration breathe the force of life into it, becomes again what it was meant to be, it becomes itself and serves its own true and great purpose. There is an intonation of poetry which is different from the flatter and looser intonation of prose, and with it a heightened or gathered intensity of language, a deepened vibrating intensity of rhythm, an intense inspiration in the thought substance. One leaps up with this rhythmic spring or flies upon these wings of rhythmic exaltation to a higher scale of consciousness which expresses things common with an uncommon power both of vision and of utterance and things uncommon with their own native and revealing accent; it expresses them, as no mere prose speech can do, with a certain kind of deep appealing intimacy of truth which poetic rhythm alone gives to expressive form and power of language: the greater this element, the greater is the poetry. The essence of this power can be there without metre, but metre is its spontaneous form, raises it to its acme. The tradition of metre is not a vain and foolish convention followed by the great poets of the past in a primitive ignorance unconscious of their own bondage; it is in spite of its appearance of human convention a law of Nature, an innermost mind-nature, a highest speech-nature.

But it does not immediately follow that the metrical application to poetry of the normal rhythm of the language, discoverable even in its colloquial speech and prose, is imperatively called for or that the construction of quantitative metres in that mould will be a needed or a right procedure. It might be reasoned, on the contrary, that precisely because this is a normal movement for colloquial speech and prose, it must be ill-fitted for poetry; poetic speech is supernormal, above the ordinary level, and its principle of rhythm should be other than that of common language. Moreover, it may be said, the admission of intrinsic rhythmic quantities to a share in determining the metrical basis would in practice only give us an accentual or stress metre with a slight difference, and the difference would be for the worse. For the function which quantity now serves in accentual verse as a powerful free element in the variation of the rhythm, would be sacrificed; quantitative verse would be bound to a rigid beat which would impose on it the character of a monotonous drone or would fix it in a shackled stiffness like the drumming of the early "decasyllabon" or that treadmill movement which has been charged, as an incurable defect, against the English hexameter.

But let us note, first, that there can be no idea of replacing altogether the normal accentual mould of English verse by a quantitative structure; the object can only be to introduce new rhythms which would extend and vary the established achievement of English poetry, to create new moulds, to add a rich and possibly a very spacious modern wing to an old edifice. Even if the new forms are only an improvement on stress metre, a rhythm starting from the same swing of the language, that is no objection; it may still be worth doing if it brings in new tunes, other cadences, fresh subtleties of word-music. As for the objection of a tied-up monotony caused by the disappearance of the free placing and variation of the pure quantitative elements in metrical rhythm, that need not be the consequence: there are other means of variation which are sufficient to dispel that peril. A free use of modulation, an avoidance of metrical rigidity by other devices natural to the flexibility of the English tongue, a skilful employment of overlapping (*enjambement*), of caesura, of word-grouping are presupposed in any reasonable quantitative system. Even where a very regular movement is necessitated or desirable, the resources of the play of sound, a subtle play of vowellation and of consonant harmonies, rhythmic undertones and overtones ought to cure the alleged deficiency. It is not the nature of the material but the unskilful hand that creates the flaw; for each kind of material has its own limitations and its own possibilities, and the hand of the craftsman is needed to restrict or overcome the limitations, even to take advantage of the natural bounds and bring out the full force of the latent creativeness concealed in the obstructing matter.

The application of the quantitative principle and the discovery of the forms that are possible are the task of the creator, not of the theoretical critic. It is, first and foremost, English quantitative forms that we have to create; the reproduction or new-creation of classical metres in English speech is only a side issue. Here the possibilities are endless, but they fall into two or three categories. First, there can be fixed quantitative metres repeated from line to line without variation except for such modulations as are, in the form chosen, possible or desirable. Secondly, stanza forms can be found, either analogous to those used in accentual verse or else analogous to the Greek arrangement in strophe and antistrophe. Thirdly, one can use a freer quantitative verse in which each line has its own appropriate movement, the feet being variable, but with a predominant single rhythm unifying the whole. Lastly, there can be entirely free quantitative verse, true verse with a poetic rhythm, but not bound by any law of metre. The stanza form is the most suitable to quantitative verse, for here there can be much variety and the danger of rigidity or monotony is non-existent. The use of set stanza metres simple or composite is less obligatory than it was in classical verse; even, each poem can discover its own metrical stanza form most in consonance with its own thought and feeling. The fixed metre unchanging from line to line needs greater skill; modulation is here of great importance. A semi-free quantitative verse also gives considerable scope; it can be planned in a form resembling that of the Greek chorus but without the fixed balance of strophe and antistrophe, or a still looser use can be made of it escaping towards the freedom of modernistic verse. There are in this collection of poems examples of the first two methods, the fixed metre and the set stanza or the strophe and antistrophe arrangement;[9] a few more, illustrative of these and other forms, are added at the end of this appendix. There is one illustration of semi-free and one of free quantitative verse.

An unconsciously quantitative free verse may be said to exist already in the writings of Whitman and contemporary modernist poets. In modern free verse the underlying impulse is to get away from the fixed limitations of accentual metre, its set forms and its traditional "poetic" language, and to create forms and a diction more kin to the natural rhythm and turns of language which we find in common speech and in prose. To throw away the bonds of metre altogether, to approximate not only in the language but in the rhythmic movement to normal speech and to prose tone and prose expression was the method first preferred; a great deal of free verse is nothing but prose cut up into lines to make it look like verse. But in the more skilful treatment by the greater writers there is a labour to arrive at a certain power of rhythm and a sufficient unity of movement. Free verse cannot justify itself unless it makes a thing of beauty of every line and achieves at the same time an underlying rhythmic oneness; this is imperative when the power for form and the uplifting intensity of metrical verse is absent, if this kind of writing is not to be, as it too often is, a failure. In the best poetry of the kind the attempt to achieve this end arrives precisely at a form of free quantitative verse based on the natural rhythm of the language liberated from all metrical convention of regularity, and there is sometimes an approximation to its highest possibilities. But the approximation is not so near as it might have been in the work of one who had the theory before him; for it was not the conscious mind, but the creative ear that was active and compelled this result, helped no doubt by the will to outdo the beauty of accentual metrical rhythm in a freer poetry.

---

[9] *"On Quantitative Metre" first appeared as an appendix to Sri Aurobindo's* Collected Poems and Plays *(1942). The examples mentioned as occurring "in this collection of poems" are now published in* Collected Poems. *They include "Ahana" and some of the poems in "Six Poems" and "Poems [1941]". — Ed.*

In Whitman the attempt at perfection of rhythm is often present and, when he does his best as a rhythmist, it rises to a high-strung acuteness which gives a great beauty of movement to his finest lines; but what he arrives at is a true quantitative free verse.

> Cōme, | lōvely̆ ănd | sōothĭng | dēath, |
> Ūndŭlāte | rōund thĕ wōrld, | sĕrēnely̆ | ărrīvĭng, | ărrīvĭng, |
> Ĭn thĕ dāy, | ĭn thĕ nīght, | tŏ āll, | tŏ ēach |
> Sōonĕr ŏr | lātĕr, | dēlĭcăte | dēath. | . . . .
> Ăpproāch, | strōng dĕ|līvĕrĕss, |
> Whĕn ĭt ĭs sō, | whĕn thōu hăst | tākĕn thĕm | Ī jōyŏusly̆ | sīng thĕ dēad, |
> Lōst ĭn thĕ | lōvĭng | flōatĭng | ōcĕan ŏf thēe, |
> Lāved ĭn thĕ | flōod ŏf thȳ | blīss, Ŏ dēath. | . . . .
> Ănd thĕ sīghts | ŏf thĕ ōpĕn | lāndscāpe | ănd thĕ hīgh-sprĕad | skȳ ăre fīttĭng |
> Ănd līfe | ănd thĕ fīelds | ănd thĕ hūge ănd | thōughtfŭl nīght. |

That is comparatively rare in its high beauty; but everywhere the rhythmic trend is the same wherever we look at it, — as in the rhymed freedom of this opening, —

> Wēapŏn | shāpely̆, | nākĕd, | wān, |

– ˘ ˘ – ˘ – ˘ –
Head from the | mother's | bowels | drawn, |
– ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – – – ˘ – ˘ – – ˘ –
Wooded | flesh and | metal bone, | limb | only one | and lip | only one, |
– – – ˘ – – – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ – ˘
Grey-blue | leaf by | red-heat | grown, | helve produced | from a little |
– –
seed sown, |
– ˘ ˘ – ˘ – ˘ ˘ –
Resting the | grass amid | and upon, |
˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ – –
To be leaned | and to lean on. |

Even when he loosens into a laxity nearer to prose, the compact quantitative movement, though much less high-strung, is still there, —

– – – ˘ – – – ˘ ˘ –
I see | male and | female | everywhere, |
– – ˘ ˘ – – ˘ ˘ ˘ – ˘ –
I see | the serene | brotherhood | of philosophs, |
– – ˘ ˘ – ˘ ˘ ˘ ˘ –
I see the | constructiveness | of my race. |

It is only when he lies back or lolls indolently content with spreading himself out in a democratic averageness of rhythm that the intensity of poetic movement fades out; but the free quantitative movement is there even then, though near now to the manner and quality of prose.

The later practicians of free verse have not often the heightened rhythmic movement of Whitman at his best, but still they are striving towards the same kind of thing, and their work apparently and deliberately amorphous receives something like a shape, a balance, a reasoned meaning when scanned as quantitative free verse. We find this in passages of *The Waste Land* and *The Hollow Men*, e.g.,

– – ˘ – ˘ –
We are the | hollow men |
– – ˘ – –
We are the | stuffed men |
– ˘ ˘ – ˘
Leaning to|gether |
– – – ˘ – ˘ –
Headpiece | filled with straw. | Alas! |

Oūr drīed | vōicĕs, whĕn |
Wĕ whīspĕr | tŏgēthĕr, |
Āre quīĕt | ănd mēanĭnglĕss |
Ăs wīnd | ĭn drȳ grāss |
Ŏr rāts’ fēet | ōvĕr | brōkĕn glāss |
Ĭn oūr drȳ | cēllăr, |

Shāpe wĭthōut fōrm, | shāde wĭthōut | cōloŭr, |
Pārălȳsed fōrce, | gēstŭre wĭth|ōut mōtiŏn. |

Or let us take a passage from Stephen Spender, —

Ŏh cōmrādes, | lĕt nŏt thōse | whō fōllŏw | āftĕr |
— Thĕ beāutĭfŭl | gĕnĕrātiŏn | thăt shăll sprīng frŏm | oūr sīdes — |
Lĕt nŏt thĕm | wōndĕr | hōw āftĕr | thĕ fāilŭre ŏf | bānks |
Thĕ fāilŭre | ŏf căthēdrăls | ănd thĕ dĕclāred | ĭnsānĭty̆ | ŏf oūr rūlĕrs, |
Wĕ lācked | thĕ sprīng-līke | rĕsōurcĕs | ŏf thĕ tīgĕr |
Ŏr ŏf plānts | whō strīke ōut | nēw rōots tŏ | gūshĭng wātĕrs. |
Bŭt thrōugh | thĕ tōrn dōwn | pōrtiŏns ŏf | ōld fābrĭc | lĕt thēir ēyes |
Wātch thĕ ăd|mīrĭng dāwn | ĕxplōde | līke ă shēll |
Ărōund ŭs, | dāzĭng ŭs | wĭth ĭts līght | līke snōw. |

There is a rhythm there, but it is not sufficiently gathered up or vivid and it is much more subdued than Eliot’s towards the atony and flatness of ordinary prose rhythm. The last lines of the quotation from *The Hollow Men* could be used to describe with a painful accuracy most of this ametric poetry. Some kind of poetic shape is there but no realised and convincing form; shade there is plenty, but colour — except perhaps blacks, browns, greys and silver-greys — is mostly absent; force is there but paralysed or only half-carrying out its intention, gestures with much effort and straining, but no successful motion. In less excellent passages of the free verse writers this atony comes out very evidently; all intensity of poetic rhythm disappears and we plod through arid waste-lands. There is an insistence on formlessness as the basis and each writer tries to shape his own rhythm out of this arhythmic amorphousness, sometimes with a half success, but not always or very often. This is clearly the reason of the failure of free verse and the reason too of several besetting general deficiencies of modernist verse; for even where there is form or metre, it seems ashamed of itself and tries to look as if there were none. It is the reason also of the discouraging inequality of modernist poetry, its failure to achieve any supreme beauty or greatness, any outstanding work which could compare with the masterpieces of other epochs. Inspiration is the source of poetic intensity and, while inspiration comes when it will and not at command, yet it is more tempted to come and can be more sustained when there is a conscious and constant form to receive it, — not necessarily metre in the received sense, — and although the highest breath of inspiration cannot, even so, be continuous, for the human mind is too frail to sustain the supernormal luminous inrush, yet the form sustains quality, keeps it at a higher level than can any licence of caprice or freedom of shapelessness. When the form is not there the inspiration, the intensity that gives perfect poetic expression to idea, feeling or vision, keeps more at a distance and has to be dragged in with an effort; even if it comes in lines, phrases, passages, afterwards its impulse ceases or flags and toils and through long weary pages one feels its persistent absence or unwilling half-presence and the mass of the work remains unsatisfying. What is done may be strong or interesting in substance, but it lacks the immortal shape. Mind is there, a fertile and forceful, sometimes too acute and forceful intelligence, but not life, not a firm lasting body. It is possible that one day the impulse which created free verse may be justified; but, if so, it can only be done when a free form is achieved, a free rhythmic unity. For that end the best work of Whitman would seem to point to a free but finely built quantitative rhythm as the most promising base. But, even at its highest, free verse is not likely to replace metre.

The Problem of the Hexameter

It is now possible to transfer our attention to the minor problem of the naturalisation of classical quantitative metres in English poetry; for in the light of this more natural theory of quantity we can hope to find an easier solution. Among these metres the hexameter stands as the central knot of the problem; if that is loosened, the rest follows. But first let us return on past attempts and their failure and find by that study a basis of comparison between the true and the false hexameter. There are here two elements to be considered, the metrical form and the characteristic rhythm; both Clough and Longfellow have failed for the most part to get into their form the true metrical movement and missed too by that failure to get the true inner rhythm, the something more that is the soul of the hexameter. Of the two, Longfellow achieved the smoother half-success — or rather the more plausible failure. He realised that the metre must be predominantly dactylic and maintained a smooth dactylic flow, broken only by the false, because mechanical, use of trochees to vary the continuous dactylic beat. Other modulations could not be used with effect because the accentual system only admits in the hexameter the dactyl, the spondee and the trochee. For all three-syllabled feet are in the accentual hexameter reduced to dactyls. The tribrach gets right of entry by imposing an accentual low pitch on its inherently unaccented and unstressed first syllable, e.g.,

> And with the | others in haste went hurrying down to the sea-shore.

The anapaest is cooked up into a pseudo-dactyl by a similar device of false accentuation and by the belittling of its long vowel, the antibacchius and cretic by a depression or half-suppression of the value of the unstressed long syllable, the second long bar that gives them their musical value; the molossus is shorn of its strength by a similar treatment of all its syllables except the opening long sound. All are disabled from coming out in relief on the dactylic background and so cannot do their work as modulating variants; for that they should enter in their own right as themselves and not as false dactyls and with their full metrical value. Even among the three available feet the trochee gives poor service; for it rarely fits in, — its effect, when it is used mechanically as a device and with no meaningful appropriateness or rhythmic beauty, disturbs the dactylic flow without giving any relief to the dactylic monotone. Dactyl and spondee by themselves, pure and unmodulated, or the dactyl by itself cannot, unhelped and unrelieved, bear successfully the burden of a long poem in accentual metre.

Longfellow treats us to a non-stop flow of even hexameters with few overlappings and insufficient use of pauses; such overlappings as there are are hardly noticeable, so mechanical is their intervention, so entirely uncalled by rhythmic necessity and unburdened with meaning; the pauses are sometimes well-done but the whole tone of the rhythm is so mechanical that even then they lose their effect and seem almost artificial. The result on the rhythmic whole is disastrous; a smooth even sing-song is the constant note, a movement without nobility or beauty or power or swiftness. Sometimes we come across passages that are adequate and achieve a quiet and subdued beauty —

> Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light, and the landscape
> Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.
> Peace seemed to reign upon earth and the restless heart of the ocean
> Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony blended.

In such passages, the metre, though accentual, satisfies the quantitative demand and so escapes from its deficiencies, but the rhythm is too flatly smooth and still indistinctive; it fails to support and achieve fully by the something more behind the metrical movement the beauty that the words intended. Some charm of delicacy is achieved, but it lacks power, height and depth; here certainly is not the tread of the great Olympian measure. Ordinarily, the note sinks lower and even descends to a very low pitch; we hear, not the roll of the hexameter, but some six-foot dactylic rhythm resembling a sort of measured prose recitative —

> Then he arose from his bed and heard what the people were saying,
> Joined in the talk at the door with Stephen and Richard and Gilbert,
> Joined in the morning prayer and in the reading of Scripture.[10]

And yet even the accentual (or perhaps one should say the stress) hexameter is capable of better things. Clough, aiming at this stronger efficiency, tries to escape from the treadmill motion, the sing-song, the monotone; but he does not altogether get away from it and arrives only at a familiar vigour or a capable but undistinguished movement, or falls into a trotting and stumbling rhythm which is sometimes hardly even a rhythm. In attempting to shun the monotony of the unuplifted dactylic beat, he often totally overlays or half overlays the metrical basis of the hexameter rhythm which must be always a sustained dactylic movement. He perpetrates frequently lines that are wholly trochaic and have only this in common with the hexameter that they walk on six feet; a host of other lines are, if not wholly, yet predominantly trochaic. This, which can sometimes be done in a true hexameter rhythm with a special intonation and a special purpose, is fatal if constantly used as an ordinary action of a machine. Very often the trochees break a line that would otherwise have been adequate; sometimes there is what seems to be a cross between hexameter and pentameter; often he indulges in an anapaestic line, sometimes three at a time, disguised as hexameters by turning an initial pyrrhic into a false trochee. The result tends to be tedious, trivial and disappointing; let us take a sample —

> So they bathed, they read, they roamed in glen and forest
> Far amid blackest pines to the waterfalls they shadow,
> Far up the long long glens to the loch and the loch behind it
> Deep under huge red cliffs, a secret, and oft by the starlight

---

[10] Note the detestable combination of two flat trochees with a falsified tribrach in the middle of this line. These false movements abound in the accentual hexameter.

> Ŏr thĕ āur|ōră, pĕr|chānce, rācĭng | hōme tŏ thĕ | ēight-ŏ-clŏck | mūttŏn;[11] |
> So they bathed and read and roamed in heathery Highland.

This indistinctive paddling has even less of the sound and rhythm of the true hexameter than Longfellow's verses which are at least hexametric in form and surface appearance.

But still there are passages, not numerous enough, in which he loses his fear of the pure dactylic movement and does not replace it or break it with the disturbing intrusion of unmanaged or unassimilated trochees; he arrives then at "accentual" lines, — if they must be so called, but they are really stress lines, — with a firm beat that makes the metrical structure adequate; or he achieves a movement in which the trochees come in with a distinct rhythmic meaning and significant effect or, at the least, make themselves at home in the dactylic rhythm, or he brings in other modulations in a way proper to the quantitative hexameter.

> Found amid granite dust on the frosty scalp of the Cairngorm. . . .
> Eying one moment the beauty, the life, ere he flung himself in it,
> Drinking in, deep in his soul, the beautiful hue and the clearness. . . .
> Often I find myself saying and know not myself as I say it,
> Perish the poor and the weary! what can they better than perish,
> Perish in labour for her who is worth the destruction of empires? . . .
> Dig in thy deep dark prison, O miner! and finding be thankful,
> Whīle thōu ārt | ēatĭng blāck | brēad ĭn thĕ | pōisŏnŏus | āir ŏf thȳ | cāvĕrn, |
> Far away glitters the gem on the peerless neck of a princess. . . .
> Into a granite bason the amber torrent descended.

These lines are metrically and rhythmically adequate; the treatment of the metre is unexceptionable: there is a true form, a good basis and beginning of a genuine hexameter movement; and yet something is lacking, something which ought to be there and is not, and its absence prevents them from being quite effective. It is the rhythm that in spite of its soundness is not altogether alive, does not keep sufficiently alert, has not found the true movement that would give it the full power and speed of the true hexameter. A second fault is that while individual lines are good and may sound even excellent when read by themselves or even two or three at a time, there is no rhythmic harmony of the long passage or paragraph; one has, in the mass, the sense of listening to the same indifferent and undistinguished movement repeated without sufficient meaningful variation and without any harmonious total significance. Above all the large hexameter rhythm, such as we have it in Greek or Latin, has not been found, nor anything that would equal it as a native English harmony fitted for great poetic speech, for great thoughts and feelings, for great action and movement. There is a tameness of sound, a flatness of level, or, even when beauty or energy is there, it is a tenuous beauty, a strength that is content to be low-toned and moderate.

---

[11] Note that this, the sole truly dactylic line, with quantitative modulations, is in spite of its deliberate prosaism less unsatisfactory in sound than the rest of the passage.

One reason of this deficiency must be that in all this work the hexameter is compelled to express subjects whose triviality brings it down far below its natural pitch of greatness, force or beauty. A pathetically sentimental love story, a rather dull-hued tale of courtship among New England Puritans, the trifling doings and amours and chaff and chat of holiday-making undergraduates, these are not subjects in which either language or rhythm can rise to any great heights or reach out into revealing largenesses; they are obliged to key themselves to commonness and flatness; the language is as often as not confidentially familiar or prosaic, a manner good enough for some other kinds of verse but not entitled to call in the power of the great classical metre. There can be in such an atmosphere no room and no courage to dare to rise into any uplifting grandeur or break out into any extreme of beauty. Both Clough and Longfellow tell their stories well and it is more for the interest of the contents than for the beauty of the poetry that we read them. But the hexameter was made for nobler purposes; it has been the medium of epic or pastoral or it tuned itself to a powerful or forcefully pointed expression of thought and observation; power and beauty are its native character and, even when it turns to satire or to familiar speech, it keeps always one or other or both of these characteristics. There is no sound reason why it should be otherwise in English, why this great metre should be condemned to an inferior level and inferior purpose; if that is done, it fails its user and dissatisfies the reader.

In fact, Clough does once or twice rise above these limitations. Here, following immediately three lines that have been already quoted as good in their limits, come three others that suddenly realise the true hexameter rhythm; there is the life and energy natural to that rhythm, there is the characteristic swiftness, rush, force, which is one of its notes, there is an exact clothing of the thought, feeling or action in its own native movement —

> What! for a mite, or a mote, an impalpable odour of honour
> Armies shall bleed, cities burn, and the soldier red from the storming
> Carry hot rancour and lust into chambers of mothers and daughters!

At another place he rises still higher and suddenly discovers, though only once in a way and apparently without being conscious of his find, the rhythm of the true quantitative hexameter —

> Hē līke ă | gōd cāme | lēavĭng hĭs | āmplĕ Ŏ|lȳmpĭăn | chāmbĕr

where the opening antibacchius and spondee followed by bounding and undulating dactyls give a sound-value recognisable as akin to the ancient movement. It would be an epic line if it were not in the mock-heroic style; but, even so, if we met it apart from its context, it would remind us at once of the Homeric rhythms —

> Bē de kat' Oulumpoio karēnōn chōömenos kēr . . . .

If all the poem had been written in that manner or in accordant rhythms, the problem of the English hexameter would have been solved; there would have been no failure or half failure.[12]

We begin to glimpse the conditions of success and may now summarily state them. The hexameter is a dactylic metre and it must remain unequivocally and patently dactylic; there can be no escape from its difficulties by diminishing the dactylic beat: rather its full quantitative force has to be brought out, — the more that is done, the more the true rhythm will appear. But this need not bring in any sing-song, treadmill walk or monotone. In Longfellow, in Clough at their ordinary level, it is the low even tone without relief, the repetition of a semi-trochaic jog-trot or a smooth unvarying canter, the beat of tame dactyls, that gives this impression. In Harvey or similar writers it is the constrained artificial treatment of the metre that enforces a treadmill labour. But this is not the true hexameter movement; the true movement is a swift stream or a large flow, an undulating run, the impetuous bounding of a torrent, an ocean surge or a divine gallop of the horses of the sungod. There must be one underlying sameness as in all metre, but there can and should be at the same time a considerable diversity on the surface. That can be secured by several means, each of which gives plenty of room for rhythmic subtlety and for many turns of sound significance. There is the pause in various places of the line, near the beginning, at the middle or just after it or close to the end; all admit of a considerable variety in the exact placing, modulation, combination of the pause or pauses. There is also the line caesura and the foot caesura. The hexameter line in English may be cut into two or else three equal dactylic parts, or it may be cut anywhere in the middle of a foot and this admits of a number of very effective variations which obviate monotony altogether. For example —

---

[12] Kingsley's "Andromeda" deserves a mention, for it is the most readable of English hexameter poems; the verse is well-constructed, much better than Clough's; it has not the sing-song tameness of Longfellow, there is rhythm, there is resonance. But though the frame is correct and very presentable, there is nothing or little inside it. Kingsley has the trick of romantic language, romantic imagination and thinking, but he is not an original poet; the poetic value of his work is far inferior to Clough's or Longfellow's, it is not sound and good stuff but romantic tinsel.

In the dawn-ray lofty and voiceless
Ida climbed with her god-haunted peaks | into diamond lustres,
Ida first of the hills | with the ranges silent beyond her
Watching the dawn in their giant companies, | as since the ages
First began | they had watched her, | upbearing Time on their summits. . . .

"Hero Aeneas, swift be thy stride to the Ilian hill-top.
Dardanid, haste! for the gods are at work; they have risen with the morning,
Each from his starry couch, and they labour. Doom, we can see it,
Glows on their anvils of destiny, clang we can hear of their hammers.
Something they forge there sitting unknown in the silence eternal,
Whether of evil or good it is they who shall choose who are masters
Calm, unopposed; they are gods and they work out their iron caprices.
Troy is their stage and Argos their background; we are their puppets.
Always our voices are prompted to speech for an end that we know not,
Always we think that we drive, but are driven. Action and impulse,
Yearning and thought are their engines, our will is their shadow and helper."

There are many other devices for variation: there is overlapping, — but it must be skilfully managed so as to coincide with perceptible movements of the thought, not used merely as a customary technical device; there is the constant attention to the right vowellation and consonant harmonies which can give an individual character to each line and are also intimately connected with the rhythmic rendering of significance. Even though the free rhythmic placing of intrinsic long syllables is taken away, since they are now bound down to a metrical use, still much can be done with the distribution of stressed long vowels and stressed short vowels among the six beats; for the predominance of either in a line or passage or their more or less equal distribution in various ways creates different psychologies of sound and dictates large or wide or narrow or subtle motions of both rhythm and feeling. In this opening of a poem —

> Dawn in her journey eternal compelling the labour of mortals,
> Dawn the beginner of things with the night for their rest or their ending,
> Pallid and bright-lipped arrived from the mists and the chill of the Euxine —

in the first line the stressed long vowels predominate, in the second the stressed short vowels, in the third there is an equal distribution; in each case there is a suiting of the choices of sound to a different shade of movement-sense. In another passage —

> Doffing his mantle
> Started to run at the bidding a swift-footed youth of the Trojans
> First in the race and the battle, Thrasymachus son of Aretes,

we can see that the predominance of short stresses amounting to an almost unbroken succession of natural short-vowel syllables creates a long running swiftness of the rhythm which fits in exactly with the action. All these minutiae are part of the technique and the possibilities of the hexameter and, if they are neglected or ineffectively used, the fault does not lie with the metre. The natural resources of the true quantitative hexameter are so great that even a long series of end-stopped lines would not necessarily create a monotone.

Finally, there is the resource of modulation, and in the quantitative hexameter this can be used with great effect, either sparingly or in abundance, best sparing perhaps in epic or high narrative, abundant in poems of complex thinking and emotion. There is only one possible modulation in place of the spondee and that is the trochee. In the quantitative hexameter the trochee, unless unskilfully used, does not break or hurt the flow; it modifies the total rhythm so as to give it an expressive turn and it can easily make itself a part of the general dactylic streaming. For example —

> High over all that a nation had built and its love and its laughter,
> Lighting the last time highway and homestead, market and temple,
> Looking on men who must | dīe ănd | wōmĕn | destined to sorrow,
> Looking on | beāuty̆ | fīre mŭst lāy | low and the sickle of slaughter.

Here the two trochees together — a combination almost always awkward or crippling in the accentual hexameter — and the trochee followed by a cretic fit easily into the movement and create by their unusual and appropriate turn of sound a modulation of the rhythmic feeling. If the third line were written

> Looking on men who must die and on women predestined to sorrow,

the common indistinguishable metrical run would not at all serve the intended meaning, — it would be a statement and would inform the mind but, robbed of the special turn of sound, it would not move. For the dactyl there is a great number of possible modulations; the antibacchius can be used freely, the lighter cretic less freely but still frequently, the first paeon often but not too often; even the lighter molossus can come in to our aid; the tribrach or the anapaest can introduce the first foot of a line or step in after a pause in the middle, but elsewhere they can seldom intervene or only if it is done very carefully. Even the choriamb or the double trochee can be employed in place of the paeon, if the second long syllable of the foot is unstressed and therefore not burdensome. Heavy trisyllables can be allowed only now and then, if the movement demands them. But in fact all modulations must be employed only when there is the rhythmic necessity or for rhythmic significance; if they are used mechanically without reason or at random, it does not help the harmony and often destroys it. Rhythmic necessity intervenes when the special movement needed by the thought, feeling or action must so be brought about, by modulation of the fixed rhythm or a departure from it;[13] rhythmic significance occurs when the deeper unexpressed soul sense behind the words is brought out, not by word but by sound, to the surface.

The efficacy of this technique depends on the power of the writer to discover and sustain the true movement of the hexameter, its spirit and character, such as we find it in the ancient epics, pastorals, epistles, satires in which it was used with a supreme greatness or a consummate mastery. That movement can be of many kinds; it admits a considerable variation of pace, sometimes swift, sometimes slow, short in its rapidity or long-drawn-out with many rhythmic turns, and there are several possibilities in each kind. Only a considerable poetic genius could bring out the full power and subtleties of its rhythms; but it is essential for even a tolerable success to find and keep up a true length and pitch in the delivery of the lines; the dactylic flow is especially exacting in this respect on the care of the rhythmist. An undulant run is the easiest to maintain, the most simple and natural pace, but it has to be varied by other movements, a long or a brief bounding swiftness, the light rapid run or a slower deliberate running; a large even stream is a second possibility as a basic rhythm, but this needs a Virgilian genius or talent; the surge is the greatest of all, but only the born epic poet could sustain it for a long time, — it suits indeed only the epic or high-pitched narrative, but it can come in from time to time as an occasional high rise from a lower level of rhythmic plenitude. Finally, rhyme can be used for poems of reflective thought or lyrical feeling; but it must not be made the excuse for a melodic monotone. That kind of melodic fixity is permissible in very short dactylic pieces, but the hexameter does not move at ease in a short range: it has fluted in the pastoral grove and walked on the Appian way, but it loves better the free sky and the winds of the ocean; it finds its natural self in the wide plain, on high mountains or in the surge and roll of a long venturous voyage.

---

[13] Thus even an almost wholly trochaic or a wholly spondaic line can be admitted when it is demanded by the action, e.g.,

> He from the carven couch upreared his giant stature

or,

> Fate-weighed up Troy's slope strode musing strong Aeneas.

If the difficulty of the hexameter can be successfully overcome, no insuperable impossibility need be met in the naturalisation of other classical metres, for the harmonic principle will be the same. All that is necessary is that artificial quantity and the atmosphere of a pastime or an experiment must be abandoned; there must not be the sense of an importation or a construction, the metre must read as if it were a born English rhythm, not a naturalised alien. It would be a mistake to cling to rigid scholarly correctness in the process; these metres must submit to the natural law of English poetry, to movements and liberties which the classical rhythms do not admit, to modulation, to slight facilitating changes of form, to the creation of different models of itself, as there are different models of the sonnet. The Alcaic is the most attractive and manageable of the ancient lyrical metres, but in English even the Alcaic cannot easily be the same in all respects as the original verse form of its creator. The original model can indeed be reproduced; but modulations have to be brought in to help the difficulties experienced by English speech in taking a foreign metre into itself; trochees have very usually to be substituted for the not easily found spondee, an occasional anapaest, a paeon lengthening out the orthodox dactyl should not be excluded; the omission of the first syllable in the opening line of the stanza can be admitted as an occasional licence. Otherwise the full harmonic possibilities of this rhythmic measure in its new tongue cannot be richly exploited. The Horatian form in which the two opening lines very commonly end in a cretic doing duty for the theoretic dactyl, is more manageable in English, in which a constant dactylic close to the line is not easily handled: this change gives a less melodious, a graver and more sculptural turn to the outlines of the stanza. Finally, to this Horatian form it is possible to give a greater amplitude by admitting a feminine ending in these two lines, the cretic turning into a double trochee. That does not break or destroy the spirit and character of the Alcaic verse; it gives it more largeness and resonance.

Other lyrical forms may be less amenable to change; there is sometimes too close an identity between the body and the spirit. It is so with the Sapphic, an alluring metre but, as experimenters have found, difficult to change and anglicise: here only slight modulations are admissible, the trochee for the spondee, the antibacchius or light cretic for the dactyl. Still others would need the minute and scrupulous art of a goldsmith or the force of a giant to make anything of them; yet they are worth trying, for one never knows whether the difficulty may not be the way to a triumph or a *trouvaille*. In any case, the hexameter, half a dozen of the greater or more beautiful lyrical forms and the freedom of the use of quantitative verse for the creation of new original rhythms would be enough to add a wide field to the large and opulent estate of English poetry.

Poems
in Quantitative Metres

Ocean Oneness[1]

Silence is round me, wideness ineffable;
White birds on the ocean diving and wandering;
    A soundless sea on a voiceless heaven,
        Azure on azure, is mutely gazing.

Identified with silence and boundlessness
My spirit widens clasping the universe
    Till all that seemed becomes the Real,
        One in a mighty and single vastness.

Someone broods there nameless and bodiless,
Conscious and lonely, deathless and infinite,
    And, sole in a still eternal rapture,
        Gathers all things to his heart for ever.

---

[1] Alcaics. Modulations are allowed, trochee or iamb in the first foot or a long monosyllable; an occasional anapaest in place of an iamb is permitted; an antibacchius can replace a dactyl.

Trance of Waiting[2]

Lone on my summits of calm I have brooded with voices around me,
Murmurs of silence that steep mind in a luminous sleep,
Whispers from things beyond thought in the Secrecy flame-white for ever,
Unscanned heights that reply seek from the inconscient deep.
Distant below me the ocean of life with its passionate surges
Pales like a pool that is stirred by the wings of a shadowy bird.
Thought has flown back from its wheelings and stoopings, the nerve-beat of living
Stills; my spirit at peace bathes in a mighty release.
Wisdom supernal looks down on me, Knowledge mind cannot measure;
Light that no vision can render garments the silence with splendour.
Filled with a rapturous Presence the crowded spaces of being
Tremble with the Fire that knows, thrill with the might of repose.
Earth is now girdled with trance and Heaven is put round her for vesture.
Wings that are brilliant with fate sleep at Eternity's gate.
Time waits, vacant, the Lightning that kindles, the Word that transfigures;
Space is a stillness of God building his earthly abode.
All waits hushed for the fiat to come and the tread of the Eternal;
Passion of a bliss yet to be sweeps from Infinity's sea.

---

[2] Elegiacs, with rhyme in the pentameter. A syllable or two introducing the last hemistich of the pentameter is allowed, but this must not be made the rule. This licence, impossible in the strict cut of classical metre, comes in naturally in English and is therefore permissible.

Flame-Wind[3]

A flame-wind ran from the gold of the east,
Leaped on my soul with the breath of a sevenfold noon.
Wings of the angel, gallop of the beast!
Mind and body on fire, but the heart in swoon.

O flame, thou bringest the strength of the noon,
But where are the voices of morn and the stillness of eve?
Where the pale-blue wine of the moon?
Mind and life are in flower, but the heart must grieve.

Gold in the mind and the life-flame's red
Make of the heavens a splendour, the earth a blaze,
But the white and rose of the heart are dead.
Flame-wind, pass! I will wait for Love in the silent ways.

---

[3] Dactylic tetrameter and pentameter catalectic; an additional foot in the last line; trochee or spondee freely admitted anywhere; first paeon, antibacchius, cretic can replace a dactyl. One or two extra syllables are allowed sometimes at the beginning of the line.

The River[4]

Wild river in thy cataract far-rumoured and rash rapids to sea
hasting,
Far now is that birth-place mid abrupt mountains and slow
dreaming of lone valleys
Where only with blue heavens was rapt converse or green
orchards with fruit leaning
Stood imaged in thy waves and, content, listened to thy
rhapsody's long murmur.

Vast now in a wide press and a dense hurry and mass
movement of thronged waters
Loud-thundering, fast-galloping, might, speed is the stern
message of thy spirit,
Proud violence, stark claim and the dire cry of the heart's
hunger on God's barriers
Self-hurled, and a void lust of unknown distance, and pace
reckless and free grandeur.

Calm yet shall release thee; an immense peace and a large
streaming of white silence,
Broad plains shall be thine, greenness surround thee, and
wharved cities and life's labour
Long thou wilt befriend, human delight help with the waves'
coolness, with ships' furrows
Thrill, — last become, self losing, a sea-motion and joy
boundless and blue laughter.

---

[4] Ionic a majore pentameter catalectic. In one place an epitrite replaces the ionic.

Journey's End[5]

The day ends lost in a stretch of even,
A long road trod — and the little farther.
  Now the waste-land, now the silence;
A blank dark wall, and behind it heaven.

[5] Lines 1, 2, 4, epitrite, third paeon, trochee,
◡ — — — | ◡ ◡ — ◡ | — ◡.
In line 3, two double trochees,
— ◡ — ◡ | — ◡ — ◡.

The Dream Boat[6]

Who was it that came to me in a boat made of dream-fire,
With his flame brow and his sun-gold body?
Melted was the silence into a sweet secret murmur,
"Do you come now? is the heart's fire ready?"

Hidden in the recesses of the heart something shuddered.
It recalled all that the life's joy cherished,
Imaged the felicity it must leave lost for ever,
And the boat passed and the gold god vanished.

Now within the hollowness of the world's breast inhabits —
For the love died and the old joy ended —
Void of a felicity that has fled, gone for ever,
And the gold god and the dream boat come not.

---

[6] Lines 1, 3, dactyl, second paeon, ionic a minore, amphibrach (or bacchius),
— ◡◡ | ◡ — ◡◡ | ◡◡ — — | ◡ — ◡.
| ◡ — —
Lines 2, 4, two ionics a minore with a closing trochee,
◡◡ — — | ◡◡ — — | — ◡.

Soul in the Ignorance[7]

Soul in the Ignorance, wake from its stupor.
Flake of the world-fire, spark of Divinity,
Lift up thy mind and thy heart into glory.
Sun in the darkness, recover thy lustre.

One, universal, ensphering creation,
Wheeling no more with inconscient Nature,
Feel thyself God-born, know thyself deathless.
Timeless return to thy immortal existence.

---

[7] Dactylic tetrameter, usually catalectic, with the ordinary modulations.

The Witness and the Wheel[8]

Who art thou in the heart comrade of man who sitst
August, watching his works, watching his joys and griefs,
Unmoved, careless of pain, careless of death and fate?
Witness, what hast thou seen watching this great blind world
Moving helpless in Time, whirled on the Wheel in Space,
That yet thou with thy vast Will biddest toil our hearts,
Mystic, — for without thee nothing can last in Time?
We too, when from the urge ceaseless of Nature turn
Our souls, far from the breast casting her tool, desire,
Grow like thee. In the front Nature still drives in vain
The blind trail of our acts, passions and thoughts and hopes;
Unmoved, calm, we look on, careless of death and fate,
Of grief careless and joy, — signs of a surface script
Without value or sense, steps of an aimless world.
Something watches behind, Spirit or Self or Soul,
Viewing Space and its toil, waiting the end of Time.
Witness, who then art thou, one with thee who am I,
Nameless, watching the Wheel whirl across Time and Space?

---

[8] The metre is the little Asclepiad used by Horace in his Ode addressed to Maecenas, two choriambs between an initial spondee and a final iamb. Here modulations are admitted, trochee or iamb for the spondee, occasionally a spondee for the concluding iamb; an epitrite or ionic a minore can replace the choriamb.

Descent[9]

All my cells thrill swept by a surge of splendour,
Soul and body stir with a mighty rapture,
Light and still more light like an ocean billows
Over me, round me.

Rigid, stonelike, fixed like a hill or statue,
Vast my body feels and upbears the world's weight;
Dire the large descent of the Godhead enters
Limbs that are mortal.

Voiceless, thronged, Infinity crowds upon me;
Presses down a glory of power eternal;
Mind and heart grow one with the cosmic wideness;
Stilled are earth's murmurs.

Swiftly, swiftly crossing the golden spaces
Knowledge leaps, a torrent of rapid lightnings;
Thoughts that left the Ineffable's flaming mansions,
Blaze in my spirit.

Slow the heart-beats' rhythm like a giant hammer's;
Missioned voices drive to me from God's doorway
Words that live not save upon Nature's summits,
Ecstasy's chariots.

All the world is changed to a single oneness;
Souls undying, infinite forces, meeting,
Join in God-dance weaving a seamless Nature,
Rhythm of the Deathless.

---

[9] Sapphics. But the second-foot spondee is very usually replaced by a trochee, the final trochee sometimes by a spondee; an antibacchius, cretic or molossus can replace the dactyl. In the fifteenth line elision is used; in a sapphic line there can be only one dactyl.

Mind and heart and body, one harp of being,
Cry that anthem, finding the notes eternal, —
Light and might and bliss and immortal wisdom
Clasping for ever.

The Lost Boat[10]

At the way's end when the shore raised up its dim line and
remote lights from the port glimmered,
Then a cloud darkened the sky's brink and the wind's scream
was the shrill laugh of a loosed demon
And the huge passion of storm leaped with its bright stabs and
the long crashing of death's thunder;
As if haled by an unseen hand fled the boat lost on the wide
homeless forlorn ocean.

Is it Chance smites? is it Fate's irony? dead workings or blind
purpose of brute Nature?
Or man's own deeds that return back on his doomed head with
a stark justice, a fixed vengeance?
Or a dread Will from behind Life that regards pain and salutes
death with a hard laughter?
Is it God's might or a Force rules in this dense jungle of events,
deeds and our thought's strivings?

Yet perhaps sank not the bright lives and their glad venturings
foiled, drowned in the grey ocean,
But with long wandering they reached an unknown shore and
a strange sun and a new azure,
Amid bright splendour of beast glories and birds' music and
deep hues, an enriched Nature
And a new life that could draw near to divine meanings and
touched close the concealed purpose.

---

[10] Ionic a minore pentameter with an overflow of one short syllable,
◡◡ — — | ◡◡ — — | ◡◡ — — | ◡◡ — — | ◡◡ — — | ◡.

In a chance happening, fate's whims and the blind workings or dead drive of a brute Nature,
In her dire Titan caprice, strength that to death drifts and to doom, hidden a Will labours.
Not with one moment of sharp close or the slow fall of a dim curtain the play ceases:
Yet is there Time to be crossed, lives to be lived out, the unplayed acts of the soul's drama.

Renewal[11]

When the heart tires and the throb stills recalling
　　Things that were once and again can be never,
When the bow falls and the drawn string is broken,
　　Hands that were clasped, yet for ever are parted,

When the soul passes to new births and bodies,
　　Lands never seen and meetings with new faces,
Is the bow raised and the fall'n arrow fitted,
　　Acts that were vain rewedded to the Fate-curve?

To the lives sundered can Time bring rejoining,
　　Love that was slain be reborn with the body?
In the mind null, from the heart's chords rejected,
　　Lost to the sense, but the spirit remembers!

---

[11] Lines 1, 3, two ionics a minore with a final amphibrach,
◡ ◡ — — | ◡ ◡ — — | ◡ — ◡.
Lines 2, 4, choriamb, paeon, antibacchius (or sometimes bacchius or amphibrach),
— ◡ ◡ — | ◡ ◡ — ◡ | — — ◡
| ◡ — ◡ ◡ | ◡ — —
| ◡ — ◡

Soul's Scene[12]

The clouds lain on forlorn spaces of sky, weary and lolling,
Watch grey waves of a lost sea wander sad, reckless and rolling,
A bare anguish of bleak beaches made mournful with the breath of the Northwind
And a huddle of melancholy hills in the distance.

The blank hour in some vast mood of a Soul lonely in Nature
On earth's face puts a mask pregnantly carved, cut to misfeature,
And man's heart and his stilled mind react hushed in a spiritual passion
Imitating the contours of her desolate waiting.

Impassible she waits long for the sun's gold and the azure,
The sea's song with its slow happy refrain's plashes of pleasure, —
As man's soul in its depths waits the outbreaking of the light and the godhead
And the bliss that God felt when he created his image.

---

[12] Lines 1, 2, three antispasts (or in the first foot a second paeon), amphibrach,
◡ — — ◡ | ◡ — — ◡ | ◡ — — ◡ | ◡ — ◡.
◡ — ◡ ◡ |
Line 3, two antispasts, ionic a majore, second paeon, trochee,
◡ — — ◡ | ◡ — — ◡ | — — ◡ ◡ | ◡ — ◡ ◡ | — ◡.
Line 4, three paeons, trochee, but the middle paeon can be replaced by an antispast or an ionic a majore; a double iamb once replaces the third paeon.

Ascent[13]

(1) The Silence

Into the Silence, into the Silence,
Arise, O Spirit immortal,
Away from the turning Wheel, breaking the magical Circle.
Ascend, single and deathless:
Care no more for the whispers and the shoutings in the darkness,
Pass from the sphere of the grey and the little,
Leaving the cry and the struggle,
Into the Silence for ever.

Vast and immobile, formless and marvellous,
Higher than Heaven, wider than the universe,
In a pure glory of being,
In a bright stillness of self-seeing,
Communing with a boundlessness voiceless and intimate,
Make thy knowledge too high for thought, thy joy too deep for emotion;
At rest in the unchanging Light, mute with the wordless self-vision,
Spirit, pass out of thyself; Soul, escape from the clutch of Nature.
All thou hast seen cast from thee, O Witness.
Turn to the Alone and the Absolute, turn to the Eternal:
Be only eternity, peace and silence,
O world-transcending nameless Oneness,
Spirit immortal.

---

[13] Free quantitative verse with a predominant dactylic movement.

(2) Beyond the Silence

Out from the Silence, out from the Silence,
Carrying with thee the ineffable Substance,
Carrying with thee the splendour and wideness,
Ascend, O Spirit immortal.
Assigning to Time its endless meaning,
Blissful enter into the clasp of the Timeless.
Awake in the living Eternal, taken to the bosom of love of the Infinite,
Live self-found in his endless completeness,
Drowned in his joy and his sweetness,
Thy heart close to the heart of the Godhead for ever.

Vast, God-possessing, embraced by the Wonderful,
Lifted by the All-Beautiful into his infinite beauty,
Love shall envelop thee endless and fathomless,
Joy unimaginable, ecstasy illimitable,
Knowledge omnipotent, Might omniscient,
Light without darkness, Truth that is dateless.
One with the Transcendent, calm, universal,
Single and free, yet innumerably living,
All in thyself and thyself in all dwelling,
Act in the world with thy being beyond it.
Soul, exceed life's boundaries; Spirit, surpass the universe.
Outclimbing the summits of Nature,
Transcending and uplifting the soul of the finite,
Rise with the world in thy bosom,
O Word gathered into the heart of the Ineffable.
One with the Eternal, live in his infinity,
Drowned in the Absolute, found in the Godhead,
Swan of the supreme and spaceless ether wandering winged through the universe,
Spirit immortal.

The Tiger and the Deer[14]

Brilliant, crouching, slouching, what crept through the green
heart of the forest,
Gleaming eyes and mighty chest and soft soundless paws of
grandeur and murder?
The wind slipped through the leaves as if afraid lest its voice
and the noise of its steps perturb the pitiless Splendour,
Hardly daring to breathe. But the great beast crouched and
crept, and crept and crouched a last time, noiseless, fatal,
Till suddenly death leaped on the beautiful wild deer as it
drank
Unsuspecting at the great pool in the forest's coolness and
shadow,
And it fell and, torn, died remembering its mate left sole in the
deep woodland, —
Destroyed, the mild harmless beauty by the strong cruel beauty
in Nature.
But a day may yet come when the tiger crouches and leaps no
more in the dangerous heart of the forest,
As the mammoth shakes no more the plains of Asia;
Still then shall the beautiful wild deer drink from the coolness
of great pools in the leaves' shadow.
The mighty perish in their might;
The slain survive the slayer.

---

[14] Free quantitative verse, left to find out its own line by line rhythm and unity.

Ilion[15]

Dawn over Ilion

Dawn in her journey eternal compelling the labour of mortals,
Dawn the beginner of things with the night for their rest or their ending,
Pallid and bright-lipped arrived from the mists and the chill of the Euxine.
Earth in the dawn-fire delivered from starry and shadowy vastness
Woke to the wonder of life and its passion and sorrow and beauty,
All on her bosom sustaining, the patient compassionate Mother.
Out of the formless vision of Night with its look on things hidden
Given to the gaze of the azure she lay in her garment of greenness,
Wearing light on her brow. In the dawn-ray lofty and voiceless
Ida climbed with her god-haunted peaks into diamond lustres,
Ida first of the hills with the ranges silent beyond her
Watching the dawn in their giant companies, as since the ages
First began they had watched her, upbearing Time on their summits.
Troas cold on her plain awaited the boon of the sunshine.
There, like a hope through an emerald dream sole-pacing for ever,
Stealing to wideness beyond, crept Simois lame in his currents,
Guiding his argent thread mid the green of the reeds and the grasses.
Headlong, impatient of Space and its boundaries, Time and its slowness,
Xanthus clamoured aloud as he ran to the far-surging waters,
Joining his call to the many-voiced roar of the mighty Aegean,
Answering Ocean's limitless cry like a whelp to its parent.
Forests looked up through their rifts, the ravines grew aware of their shadows.
Closer now gliding glimmered the golden feet of the goddess.
Over the hills and the headlands spreading her garment of splendour,
Fateful she came with her eyes impartial looking on all things,
Bringer to man of the day of his fortune and day of his downfall.

---

[15] Hexameters. Some opening passages of a poem left unfinished have been recast and added here to illustrate to some extent the theory of the hexameter put forward in the preceding pages.

Full of her luminous errand, careless of eve and its weeping,
Fateful she paused unconcerned above Ilion's mysteried greatness,
Domes like shimmering tongues of the crystal flames of the morning,
Opalesque rhythm-line of tower-tops, notes of the lyre of the sungod.
High over all that a nation had built and its love and its laughter,
Lighting the last time highway and homestead, market and temple,
Looking on men who must die and women destined to sorrow,
Looking on beauty fire must lay low and the sickle of slaughter,
Fateful she lifted the doom-scroll red with the script of the Immortals,
Deep in the invisible air that folds in the race and its morrows
Fixed it, and passed on smiling the smile of the griefless and deathless, —
Dealers of death though death they know not, who in the morning
Scatter the seed of the event for the reaping ready at nightfall.
Over the brooding of plains and the agelong trance of the summits
Out of the sun and its spaces she came, pausing tranquil and fatal,
And, at a distance followed by the golden herds of the sungod,
Carried the burden of Light and its riddle and danger to Hellas.

The Coming of the Herald

Even as fleets on a chariot divine through the gold streets of ether,
Swiftly when Life fleets, invisibly changing the arc of the soul-drift,
And, with the choice that has chanced or the fate man has called and now suffers
Weighted, the moment travels driving the past towards the future,
Only its face and its feet are seen, not the burden it carries.
Weight of the event and its surface we bear, but the meaning is hidden.
Earth sees not; life's clamour deafens the ear of the spirit:
Man knows not; least knows the messenger chosen for the summons.
Only he listens to the voice of his thoughts, his heart's ignorant whisper,
Whistle of winds in the tree-tops of Time and the rustle of Nature.
Now too the messenger hastened driving the car of the errand:
Even while dawn was a gleam in the east, he had cried to his coursers.
Half yet awake in light's turrets started the scouts of the morning
Hearing the jar of the wheels and the throb of the hooves' exultation,
Hooves of the horses of Greece as they galloped to Phrygian Troya.
Proudly they trampled through Xanthus thwarting the foam of his anger,

Whinnying high as in scorn crossed Simois' tangled currents,
Xanthus' reed-girdled twin, the gentle and sluggard river.
One and unarmed in the car was the driver; grey was he, shrunken,
Worn with his decades. To Pergama cinctured with strength Cyclopean
Old and alone he arrived, insignificant, feeblest of mortals,
Carrying Fate in his helpless hands and the doom of an empire.
Ilion, couchant, saw him arrive from the sea and the darkness.
Heard mid the faint slow stirrings of life in the sleep of the city,
Rapid there neared a running of feet, and the cry of the summons
Beat round the doors that guarded the domes of the splendour of Priam.
"Wardens charged with the night, ye who stand in Laomedon's gateway,
Waken the Ilian kings. Talthybius, herald of Argos,
Parleying stands at the portals of Troy in the grey of the dawning."
High and insistent the call. In the dimness and hush of his chamber
Charioted far in his dreams amid visions of glory and terror,
Scenes of a vivider world, — though blurred and deformed in the brain-cells,
Vague and inconsequent, there full of colour and beauty and greatness, —
Suddenly drawn by the pull of the conscious thread of the earth-bond
And of the needs of Time and the travail assigned in the transience
Warned by his body, Deiphobus, reached in that splendid remoteness,
Touched through the nerve-ways of life that branch to the brain of the dreamer,
Heard the terrestrial call and slumber startled receded
Sliding like dew from the mane of a lion. Reluctant he travelled
Back from the light of the fields beyond death, from the wonderful kingdoms
Where he had wandered a soul among souls in the countries beyond us,
Free from the toil and incertitude, free from the struggle and danger:
Now, compelled, he returned from the respite given to the time-born,
Called to the strife and the wounds of the earth and the burden of daylight.
He from the carven couch upreared his giant stature.
Haste-spurred he laved his eyes and regained earth's memories, haste-spurred
Donning apparel and armour strode through the town of his fathers,
Watched by her gods on his way to his fate, towards Pergama's portals.

The Siege

Nine long years had passed and the tenth now was wearily ending,
Years of the wrath of the gods, and the leaguer still threatened the ramparts
Since through a tranquil morn the ships came past Tenedos sailing
And the first Argive fell slain as he leaped on the Phrygian beaches;
Still the assailants attacked, still fought back the stubborn defenders.
When the reward is withheld and endlessly lengthens the labour,
Weary of fruitless toil grows the transient heart of the mortal.
Weary of battle the invaders warring hearthless and homeless
Prayed to the gods for release and return to the land of their fathers:
Weary of battle the Phrygians beset in their beautiful city
Prayed to the gods for an end of the danger and mortal encounter.
Long had the high-beached ships forgotten their measureless ocean.
Greece seemed old and strange to her children camped on the beaches,
Old like a life long past one remembers hardly believing
But as a dream that has happened, but as the tale of another.
Time with his tardy touch and Nature changing our substance
Slowly had dimmed the faces loved and the scenes once cherished:
Yet was the dream still dear to them longing for wife and for children,
Longing for hearth and glebe in the far-off valleys of Hellas.
Always like waves that swallow the shingles, lapsing, returning,
Tide of the battle, race of the onset relentlessly thundered
Over the Phrygian corn-fields. Trojan wrestled with Argive,
Caria, Lycia, Thrace and the war-lord mighty Achaia
Joined in the clasp of the fight. Death, panic and wounds and disaster,
Glory of conquest and glory of fall, and the empty hearth-side,
Weeping and fortitude, terror and hope and the pang of remembrance,
Anguish of hearts, the lives of the warriors, the strength of the nations
Thrown were like weights into Destiny's scales, but the balance wavered
Pressed by invisible hands. For not only the mortal fighters,
Heroes half divine whose names are like stars in remoteness,
Triumphed and failed and were winds or were weeds on the dance of the surges,
But from the peaks of Olympus and shimmering summits of Ida

Gleaming and clanging the gods of the antique ages descended.
Hidden from human knowledge the brilliant shapes of Immortals
Mingled unseen in the mellay, or sometimes, marvellous, maskless,
Forms of undying beauty and power that made tremble the heart-strings
Parting their deathless secrecy crossed through the borders of vision,
Plain as of old to the demigods out of their glory emerging,
Heard by mortal ears and seen by the eyeballs that perish.
Mighty they came from their spaces of freedom and sorrowless splendour.
Sea-vast, trailing the azure hem of his clamorous waters,
Blue-lidded, maned with the Night, Poseidon smote for the future,
Earth-shaker who with his trident releases the coils of the Dragon,
Freeing the forces unborn that are locked in the caverns of Nature.
Calm and unmoved, upholding the Word that is Fate and the order
Fixed in the sight of a Will foreknowing and silent and changeless,
Hera sent by Zeus and Athene lifting his aegis
Guarded the hidden decree. But for Ilion, loud as the surges,
Ares impetuous called to the fire in men's hearts, and his passion
Woke in the shadowy depths the forms of the Titan and demon;
Dumb and coerced by the grip of the gods in the abyss of the being,
Formidable, veiled they sit in the grey subconscient darkness
Watching the sleep of the snake-haired Erinnys. Miracled, haloed,
Seer and magician and prophet who beholds what the thought cannot witness,
Lifting the godhead within us to more than a human endeavour,
Slayer and saviour, thinker and mystic, leaped from his sun-peaks
Guarding in Ilion the wall of his mysteries Delphic Apollo.
Heaven's strengths divided swayed in the whirl of the Earth-force.
All that is born and destroyed is reborn in the sweep of the ages;
Life like a decimal ever recurring repeats the old figure;
Goal seems there none for the ball that is chased throughout Time by the Fate-teams;
Evil once ended renews and no issue comes out of living:
Only an Eye unseen can distinguish the thread of its workings.
Such seemed the rule of the pastime of Fate on the plains of the Troad;
All went backwards and forwards tossed in the swing of the death-game.
Vain was the toil of the heroes, the blood of the mighty was squandered,
Spray as of surf on the cliffs when it moans unappeased, unrequited

Age after fruitless age. Day hunted the steps of the nightfall;
Joy succeeded to grief; defeat only greatened the vanquished,
Victory offered an empty delight without guerdon or profit.
End there was none of the effort and end there was none of the failure.
Triumph and agony changing hands in a desperate measure
Faced and turned as a man and a maiden trampling the grasses
Face and turn and they laugh in their joy of the dance and each other.
These were gods and they trampled lives. But though Time is immortal,
Mortal his works are and ways and the anguish ends like the rapture.
Artists of Nature content with their work in the plan of the transience,
Beautiful, deathless, august, the Olympians turned from the carnage,
Leaving the battle already decided, leaving the heroes
Slain in their minds, Troy burned, Greece left to her glory and downfall.
Into their heavens they rose up mighty like eagles ascending
Fanning the world with their wings. As the great to their luminous mansions
Turn from the cry and the strife, forgetting the wounded and fallen,
Calm they repose from their toil and incline to the joy of the banquet,
Watching the feet of the wine-bearers rosily placed on the marble,
Filling their hearts with ease, so they to their sorrowless ether
Passed from the wounded earth and its air that is ploughed with men's anguish;
Calm they reposed and their hearts inclined to the joy and the silence.
Lifted was the burden laid on our wills by their starry presence:
Man was restored to his smallness, the world to its inconscient labour.
Life felt a respite from height, the winds breathed freer delivered;
Light was released from their blaze and the earth was released from their greatness.
But their immortal content from the struggle titanic departed.
Vacant the noise of the battle roared like the sea on the shingles;
Wearily hunted the spears their quarry; strength was disheartened;
Silence increased with the march of the months on the tents of the leaguer.
But not alone on the Achaians the steps of the moments fell heavy;
Slowly the shadow deepened on Ilion mighty and scornful:
Dragging her days went by; in the rear of the hearts of her people
Something that knew what they dared not know and the mind would not utter,

Something that smote at her soul of defiance and beauty and laughter,
Darkened the hours. For Doom in her sombre and giant uprising
Neared, assailing the skies: the sense of her lived in all pastimes;
Time was pursued by unease and a terror woke in the midnight:
Even the ramparts felt her, stones that the gods had erected.
Now no longer she dallied and played, but bounded and hastened,
Seeing before her the end and, imagining massacre calmly,
Laughed and admired the flames and rejoiced in the cry of the captives.
Under her, dead to the watching immortals, Deiphobus hastened
Clanging in arms through the streets of the beautiful insolent city,
Brilliant, a gleaming husk but empty and left by the daemon.
Even as a star long extinguished whose light still travels the spaces,
Seen in its form by men, but itself goes phantom-like fleeting
Void and null and dark through the uncaring infinite vastness,
So now he seemed to the sight that sees all things from the Real.
Timeless its vision of Time creates the hour by things coming.
Borne on a force from the past and no more by a power for the future
Mighty and bright was his body, but shadowy the shape of his spirit
Only an eidolon seemed of the being that had lived in him, fleeting
Vague like a phantom seen by the dim Acherontian waters.

The Herald

But to the guardian towers that watched over Pergama's gateway
Out of the waking city Deiphobus swiftly arriving
Called, and swinging back the huge gates slowly, reluctant,
Flung Troy wide to the entering Argive. Ilion's portals
Parted admitting her destiny, then with a sullen and iron
Cry they closed. Mute, staring, grey like a wolf descended
Old Talthybius, propping his steps on the staff of his errand;
Feeble his body, but fierce still his glance with the fire within him;
Speechless and brooding he gazed on the hated and coveted city.
Suddenly, seeking heaven with her buildings hewn as for Titans,
Marvellous, rhythmic, a child of the gods with marble for raiment,
Smiting the vision with harmony, splendid and mighty and golden,
Ilion stood up around him entrenched in her giant defences.
Strength was uplifted on strength and grandeur supported by grandeur;

Beauty lay in her lap. Remote, hieratic and changeless,
Filled with her deeds and her dreams her gods looked out on the Argive,
Helpless and dumb with his hate as he gazed on her, they too like mortals
Knowing their centuries past, not knowing the morrow before them.
Dire were his eyes upon Troya the beautiful, his face like a doom-mask:
All Greece gazed in them, hated, admired, grew afraid, grew relentless.
But to the Greek Deiphobus cried and he turned from his passion
Fixing his ominous eyes with the god in them straight on the Trojan:
"Messenger, voice of Achaia, wherefore confronting the daybreak
Comest thou driving thy car from the sleep of the tents that besiege us?
Fateful, I deem, was the thought that, conceived in the silence of midnight,
Raised up thy aged limbs from the couch of their rest in the stillness, —
Thoughts of a mortal but forged by the Will that uses our members
And of its promptings our speech and our acts are the tools and the image.
Oft from the veil and the shadow they leap out like stars in their brightness,
Lights that we think our own, yet they are but tokens and counters,
Signs of the Forces that flow through us serving a Power that is secret.
What in the dawning bringst thou to Troya the mighty and dateless
Now in the ending of Time when the gods are weary of struggle?
Sends Agamemnon challenge or courtesy, Greek, to the Trojans?"
High like the northwind answered the voice of the doom from Achaia:
"Trojan Deiphobus, daybreak, silence of night and the evening
Sink and arise and even the strong sun rests from his splendour.
Not for the servant is rest nor Time is his, only his death-pyre.
I have not come from the monarch of men or the armoured assembly
Held on the wind-swept marge of the thunder and laughter of ocean.
One in his singleness greater than kings and multitudes sends me.
I am a voice out of Phthia, I am the will of the Hellene.
Peace in my right I bring to you, death in my left hand. Trojan,
Proudly receive them, honour the gifts of the mighty Achilles.
Death accept, if Ate deceives you and Doom is your lover,
Peace if your fate can turn and the god in you chooses to hearken.
Full is my heart and my lips are impatient of speech undelivered.
It was not made for the streets or the market, nor to be uttered
Meanly to common ears, but where counsel and majesty harbour
Far from the crowd in the halls of the great and to wisdom and foresight

Secrecy whispers, there I will speak among Ilion's princes."
"Envoy," answered the Laomedontian, "voice of Achilles,
Vain is the offer of peace that sets out with a threat for its prelude.
Yet will we hear thee. Arise who are fleetest of foot in the gateway, —
Thou, Thrasymachus, haste. Let the domes of the mansion of Ilus
Wake to the bruit of the Hellene challenge. Summon Aeneas."
Even as the word sank back into stillness, doffing his mantle
Started to run at the bidding a swift-footed youth of the Trojans
First in the race and the battle, Thrasymachus son of Aretes.
He in the dawn disappeared into swiftness. Deiphobus slowly,
Measuring Fate with his thoughts in the troubled vasts of his spirit,
Back through the stir of the city returned to the house of his fathers,
Taming his mighty stride to the pace infirm of the Argive.

Aeneas

But with the god in his feet Thrasymachus rapidly running
Came to the halls in the youth of the wonderful city by Ilus
Built for the joy of the eye; for he rested from war and, triumphant,
Reigned adored by the prostrate nations. Now when all ended,
Last of its mortal possessors to walk in its flowering gardens,
Great Anchises lay in that luminous house of the ancients
Soothing his restful age, the far-warring victor Anchises,
High Bucoleon's son and the father of Rome by a goddess;
Lonely and vagrant once in his boyhood divine upon Ida
White Aphrodite ensnared him and she loosed her ambrosial girdle
Seeking a mortal's love. On the threshold Thrasymachus halted
Looking for servant or guard, but felt only a loneness of slumber
Drawing the soul's sight within away from its life and things human;
Soundless, unheeding, the vacant corridors fled into darkness.
He to the shades of the house and the dreams of the echoing rafters
Trusted his high-voiced call, and from chambers still dim in their twilight
Strong Aeneas armoured and mantled, leonine striding,
Came, Anchises' son; for the dawn had not found him reposing,
But in the night he had left his couch and the clasp of Creüsa,
Rising from sleep at the call of his spirit that turned to the waters
Prompted by Fate and his mother who guided him, white Aphrodite.

Still with the impulse of speed Thrasymachus greeted Aeneas:
“Hero Aeneas, swift be thy stride to the Ilian hill-top.
Dardanid, haste! for the gods are at work; they have risen with the morning,
Each from his starry couch, and they labour. Doom, we can see it,
Glows on their anvils of destiny, clang we can hear of their hammers.
Something they forge there sitting unknown in the silence eternal,
Whether of evil or good it is they who shall choose who are masters
Calm, unopposed; they are gods and they work out their iron caprices.
Troy is their stage and Argos their background; we are their puppets.
Always our voices are prompted to speech for an end that we know not,
Always we think that we drive, but are driven. Action and impulse,
Yearning and thought are their engines, our will is their shadow and helper.
Now too, deeming he comes with a purpose framed by a mortal,
Shaft of their will they have shot from the bow of the Grecian leaguer,
Lashing themselves at his steeds, Talthybius sent by Achilles.”
“Busy the gods are always, Thrasymachus son of Aretes,
Weaving Fate on their looms, and yesterday, now and tomorrow
Are but the stands they have made with Space and Time for their timber,
Frame but the dance of their shuttle. What eye unamazed by their workings
Ever can pierce where they dwell and uncover their far-stretching purpose?
Silent they toil, they are hid in the clouds, they are wrapped with the midnight.
Yet to Apollo I pray, the Archer friendly to mortals,
Yet to the rider on Fate I abase myself, wielder of thunder,
Evil and doom to avert from my fatherland. All night Morpheus,
He who with shadowy hands heaps error and truth upon mortals,
Stood at my pillow with images. Dreaming I erred like a phantom
Helpless in Ilion’s streets with the fire and the foeman around me.
Red was the smoke as it mounted triumphant the house-top of Priam,
Clang of the arms of the Greeks was in Troya, and thwarting the clangour
Voices were crying and calling me over the violent Ocean
Borne by the winds of the West from a land where Hesperus harbours.”
Brooding they ceased, for their thoughts grew heavy upon them and voiceless.

Then, in a farewell brief and unthought and unconscious of meaning,
Parting they turned to their tasks and their lives now close but soon severed:
Destined to perish even before his perishing nation,
Back to his watch at the gate sped Thrasymachus rapidly running;
Large of pace and swift, but with eyes absorbed and unseeing,
Driven like a car of the gods by the whip of his thoughts through the highways,
Turned to his mighty future the hero born of a goddess.
One was he chosen to ascend into greatness through fall and disaster,
Loser of his world by the will of a heaven that seemed ruthless and adverse,
Founder of a newer and greater world by daring adventure.
Now, from the citadel's rise with the townships crowding below it
High towards a pondering of domes and the mystic Palladium climbing,
Fronted with the morning ray and joined by the winds of the ocean,
Fate-weighed up Troy's slope strode musing strong Aeneas.
Under him silent the slumbering roofs of the city of Ilus
Dreamed in the light of the dawn; above watched the citadel, sleepless
Lonely and strong like a goddess white-limbed and bright on a hill-top,
Looking far out at the sea and the foe and the prowling of danger.
Over the brow he mounted and saw the palace of Priam,
Home of the gods of the earth, Laomedon's marvellous vision
Held in the thought that accustomed his will to unearthly achievement
And in the blaze of his spirit compelling heaven with its greatness,
Dreamed by the harp of Apollo, a melody caught into marble.
Out of his mind it arose like an epic canto by canto;
Each of its halls was a strophe, its chambers lines of an epode,
Victor chant of Ilion's destiny. Absent he entered,
Voiceless with thought, the brilliant megaron crowded with paintings,
Paved with a splendour of marble, and saw Deiphobus seated,
Son of the ancient house by the opulent hearth of his fathers,
And at his side like a shadow the grey and ominous Argive.
Happy of light like a lustrous star when it welcomes the morning,
Brilliant, beautiful, glamoured with gold and a fillet of gem-fire,
Paris, plucked from the song and the lyre by the Grecian challenge,
Came with the joy in his face and his eyes that Fate could not alter.

Ever a child of the dawn at play near a turn of the sun-roads,
Facing destiny's look with the careless laugh of a comrade,
He with his vision of delight and beauty brightening the earth-field
Passed through its peril and grief on his way to the ambiguous Shadow.
Last from her chamber of sleep where she lay in the Ilian mansion
Far in the heart of the house with the deep-bosomed daughters of Priam,
Noble and tall and erect in a nimbus of youth and of glory,
Claiming the world and life as a fief of her strength and her courage,
Dawned through a doorway that opened to distant murmurs and laughter,
Capturing the eye like a smile or a sunbeam, Penthesilea.

Note on the Texts

THE FUTURE POETRY was first published serially in the monthly review *Arya* between December 1917 and July 1920 in thirty-two instalments. The starting-point for these chapters was a book by James H. Cousins, *New Ways in English Literature* (Ganesh & Co., Madras, preface dated November 1917). A copy of this book was sent to Sri Aurobindo shortly after its publication for review in the *Arya*. He began a review (see Appendix I) but soon abandoned it in favour of a larger work drawn, as he wrote later, from his "own ideas and his already conceived view of art and life".

Revision of *The Future Poetry*. *The Future Poetry* was not published as a book during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. He wished to revise the *Arya* chapters before republishing them and twice undertook this task, first in the late 1920s or early 1930s, and then in the last years of his life, apparently in 1950. During the first period he revised seventeen chapters: 2–14, 16, 25, 27 and 32. The work done ranges from very light retouching to the rewriting of entire chapters. During the second period he dictated to his amanuensis changes and additions to twenty chapters, thirteen of which had been revised during the earlier period. This later revision is mostly light — in some chapters only a word or two was added or changed — but it does include two considerable additions to Chapter 19 and an incomplete opening for a planned new first chapter (see Appendix III). Sri Aurobindo had plans for much more extensive additions. In particular he wished to write a chapter or chapters on contemporary poetry, and was considering a treatment of the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century.

All told twenty-four of the book's thirty-two chapters received some revision at one time or another. A table outlining the nature and extent of the revision of each chapter appears in the reference volume (volume 35).

When asked in 1949 about the possibility of publishing *The Future Poetry*, Sri Aurobindo replied that it

> cannot be published as it is, for there must be a considerable rearrangement of its matter since publication from month to month left its plan straggling and ill-arranged and also one or two chapters will have to be omitted or replaced by other new ones. I do not wish it to be published in its present imperfect form.

Editions of *The Future Poetry*. In 1953, three years after Sri Aurobindo's passing, *The Future Poetry* was published as a book by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. The publishers were at that time unaware of the existence of the bulk of Sri Aurobindo's revision. The edition therefore was practically a reprint of the *Arya* chapters. The only parts of the revision used were the two long passages added to Chapter 19 in 1950. In 1971, the 1953 text was reproduced along with "Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art" as volume 9 of the de luxe edition of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. The next year the popular edition of this volume was issued, as well as a separate, photographically reduced edition. In 1985 a new edition of *The Future Poetry*, incorporating for the first time all the author's revision, was published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. This edition was reprinted in 1991 and 1994. It omitted the letters; in THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO these are included in volume 27, *Letters on Poetry and Art*.

The present edition differs very little from the edition of 1985. The text has been checked against Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts, which consist of (1) pages torn from the *Arya*, many of which have his handwritten or dictated changes and additions, and (2) a few loose sheets containing longer additions. Only fragments remain of the manuscript used for printing the *Arya*.

Sri Aurobindo quoted almost a hundred lines or passages of English poetry as illustrations. The sources of these quotations are given in a table in the reference volume. He seems to have quoted from the works of older poets largely from memory; for contemporary writers he relied mostly on Cousins' *New Ways in English Literature*. The editors have reproduced the quotations as they appear in the *Arya* except when a misprint obviously occurred.

On Quantitative Metre. Sri Aurobindo wrote this essay for inclusion in his *Collected Poems and Plays*, which was brought out in 1942 by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and printed at the Government Central Press, Hyderabad. A separate booklet was also printed at that time from the same setting of type. *On Quantitative Metre* included as examples fifteen poems written in quantitative metres. The fifteenth consisted of the first 371 lines of *Ilion* divided into five sections with headings. These poems are reproduced here with the notes on metre Sri Aurobindo provided for them. In *Collected Poems*, volume 2 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, they appear without notes. *Ilion* is printed there in its entirety.

In the present volume *On Quantitative Metre* is published along with *The Future Poetry* for the first time. The text of the essay has been carefully checked against Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts and the text printed in 1942.

Letters on Poetry and Art

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 27
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2004
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Letters on Poetry and Art

Publisher's Note

Letters on Poetry and Art comprises letters written by Sri Aurobindo on poetry and other forms of literature, painting and the other arts, beauty, aesthetics and the relation of these to the practice of yoga. He wrote most of these letters to members of his ashram during the 1930s and 1940s, primarily between 1931 and 1937. Only around a sixth of the letters were published during his lifetime. The rest have been transcribed from his manuscripts.

The present volume is the first collection of Sri Aurobindo's letters on poetry, literature, art and aesthetics to bear the title *Letters on Poetry and Art*. It incorporates material from three previous books: (1) *Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art*; (2) *Letters on "Savitri"*, and (3) *On Himself* (section entitled "The Poet and the Critic"). It also contains around five hundred letters that have not appeared in any previous collection published under his name. The arrangement is that of the editors. The texts of the letters have been checked against all available manuscripts and printed versions.

CONTENTS

PART ONE
POETRY AND ITS CREATION

Section One. The Sources of Poetry

Poetic Creation 5
Sources of Inspiration 14
Overhead Poetry 20
Examples of Overhead Poetry 50

Section Two. The Poetry of the Spirit

Psychic, Mystic and Spiritual Poetry 83
Poet, Yogi, Rishi, Prophet, Genius 102
The Poet and the Poem 106

Section Three. Poetic Technique

Technique, Inspiration, Artistry 117
Rhythm 124
English Metres 128
Greek and Latin Classical Metres 137
Quantitative Metre in English and Bengali 141
Metrical Experiments in Bengali 145
Rhyme 155
English Poetic Forms 157
Substance, Style, Diction 164
Grades of Perfection in Poetic Style 185
Examples of Grades of Perfection in Poetic Style 188

Section Four. Translation

Translation: Theory 199
Translation: Practice 201

PART TWO
ON HIS OWN AND OTHERS' POETRY

Section One. On His Poetry and Poetic Method

Inspiration, Effort, Development 211
Early Poetic Influences 219
On Early Translations and Poems 223
On Poems Published in *Ahana and Other Poems* 227
Metrical Experiments 231
On Some Poems Written during the 1930s 239
On *Savitri* 261
Comments on Some Remarks by a Critic 332
On the Publication of His Poetry 359

Section Two. On Poets and Poetry

Great Poets of the World 367
Remarks on Individual Poets 372
Comments on Some Examples of Western Poetry (up to 1900) 387
Twentieth-Century Poetry 412
Comments on Examples of Twentieth-Century Poetry 430
Indian Poetry in English 442
Poets of the Ashram 453
Comments on the Work of Poets of the Ashram 467
Philosophers, Intellectuals, Novelists and Musicians 519
Comments on Some Passages of Prose 554

Section Three. Practical Guidance for Aspiring Writers

Guidance in Writing Poetry 567
Guidance in Writing Prose 627
Remarks on English Pronunciation 629
Remarks on English Usage 640
Remarks on Bengali Usage 656

CONTENTS

PART THREE
LITERATURE, ART, BEAUTY AND YOGA

Section One. Appreciation of Poetry and the Arts

Appreciation of Poetry 663
Appreciation of the Arts in General 675
Comparison of the Arts 678
Appreciation of Music 682

Section Two. On the Visual Arts

General Remarks on the Visual Arts 685
Problems of the Painter 687
Painting in the Ashram 692

Section Three. Beauty and Its Appreciation

General Remarks on Beauty 699
Appreciation of Beauty 705

Section Four. Literature, Art, Music and the Practice of Yoga

Literature and Yoga 711
Painting, Music, Dance and Yoga 733

APPENDIXES

Appendix I. The Problem of the Hexameter 743
Appendix II. An Answer to a Criticism 745
Appendix III. Remarks on a Review 749

NOTE ON THE TEXTS 759

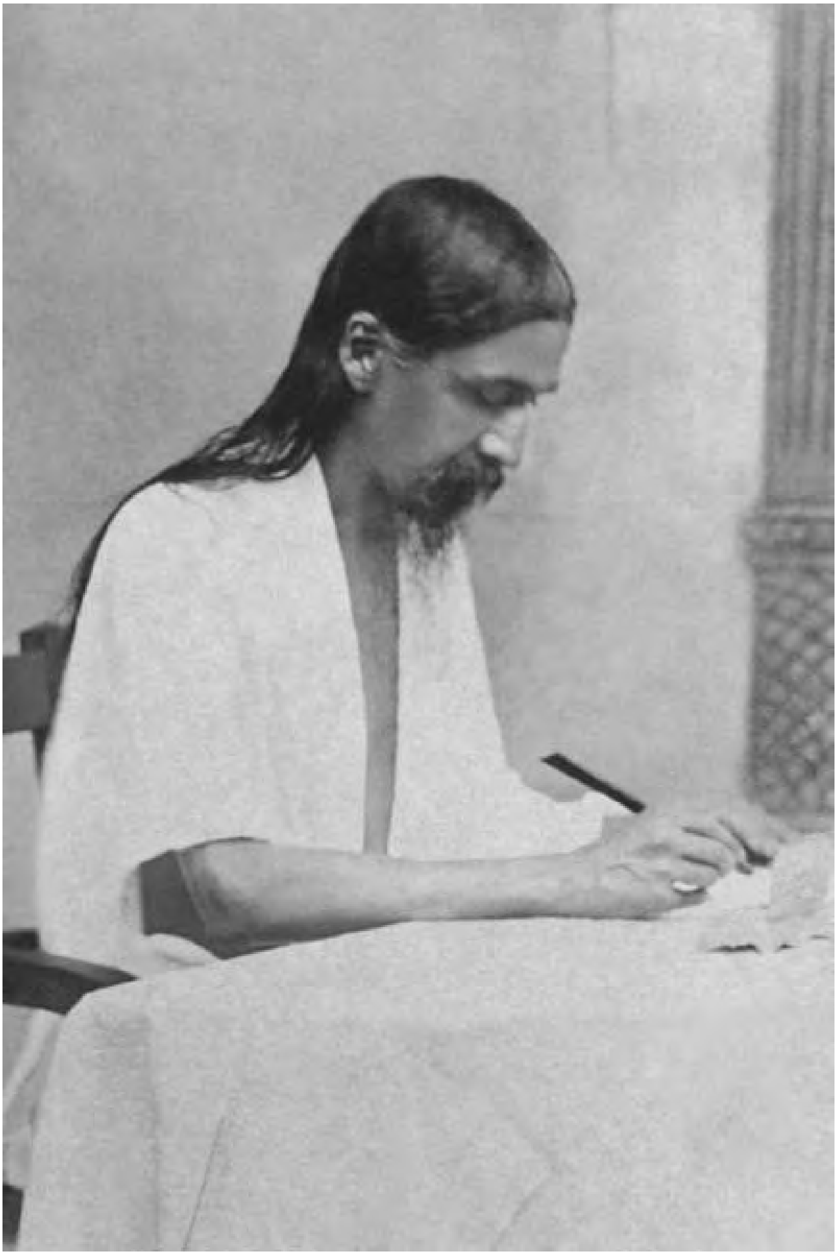

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry

Part One

Poetry and Its Creation

Section One

The Sources of Poetry

Poetic Creation

Three Elements of Poetic Creation

Poetry, or at any rate a truly poetic poetry, comes always from some subtle plane through the creative vital and uses the outer mind and other external instruments for transmission only. There are three elements in the production of poetry; there is the original source of inspiration, there is the vital force of creative beauty which contributes its own substance and impetus and often determines the form, except when that also comes ready made from the original sources; there is, finally, the transmitting outer consciousness of the poet. The most genuine and perfect poetry is written when the original source is able to throw its inspiration pure and undiminished into the vital and there takes its true native form and power of speech exactly reproducing the inspiration, while the outer consciousness is entirely passive and transmits without alteration what it receives from the godheads of the inner or the superior spaces. When the vital mind and emotion are too active and give too much of their own initiation or a translation into more or less turbid vital stuff, the poetry remains powerful but is inferior in quality and less authentic. Finally, if the outer consciousness is too lethargic and blocks the transmission or too active and makes its own version, then you have the poetry that fails or is at best a creditable mental manufacture. It is the interference of these two parts either by obstruction or by too great an activity of their own or by both together that causes the difficulty and labour of writing. There would be no difficulty if the inspiration came through without obstruction or interference in a pure transcript — that is what happens in a poet's highest or freest moments when he writes not at all out of his own external human mind, but by inspiration, as the mouthpiece of the Gods.

The originating source may be anywhere; the poetry may arise or descend from the subtle physical plane, from the higher or lower vital itself, from the dynamic or creative intelligence, from the plane of dynamic vision, from the psychic, from the illumined mind or Intuition, — even, though this is the rarest, from the Overmind widenesses. To get the Overmind inspiration is so rare that there are only a few lines or short passages in all poetic literature that give at least some appearance or reflection of it. When the source of inspiration is in the heart or the psychic there is more easily a good will in the vital channel, the flow is spontaneous; the inspiration takes at once its true form and speech and is transmitted without any interference or only a minimum of interference by the brain-mind, that great spoiler of the higher or deeper splendours. It is the character of the lyrical inspiration, to flow in a jet out of the being — whether it comes from the vital or the psychic, it is usually spontaneous, for these are the two most powerfully impelling and compelling parts of the nature. When on the contrary the source of inspiration is in the creative poetic intelligence or even the higher mind or the illumined mind, the poetry which comes from this quarter is always apt to be arrested by the outer intellect, our habitual thought-production engine. This intellect is an absurdly overactive part of the nature; it always thinks that nothing can be well done unless it puts its finger into the pie and therefore it instinctively interferes with the inspiration, blocks half or more than half of it and labours to substitute its own inferior and toilsome productions for the true speech and rhythm that ought to have come. The poet labours in anguish to get the one true word, the authentic rhythm, the real divine substance of what he has to say, while all the time it is waiting complete and ready behind; but it is denied free transmission by some part of the transmitting agency which prefers to translate and is not willing merely to receive and transcribe. When one gets something through from the illumined mind, then there is likely to come to birth work that is really fine and great. When there comes with labour or without it something reasonably like what the poetic intelligence wanted to say, then there is something fine or adequate, though it may not be great unless there is an intervention from the higher levels. But when the outer brain is at work trying to fashion out of itself or to give its own version of what the higher sources are trying to pour down, then there results a manufacture or something quite inadequate or faulty or, at the best, "good on the whole", but not *the* thing that ought to have come. 2 June 1931

Creation by the Word

The word is a sound expressive of the idea. In the supra-physical plane when an idea has to be realised, one can by repeating the word-expression of it, produce vibrations which prepare the mind for the realisation of the idea. That is the principle of the Mantra and of japa. One repeats the name of the Divine and the vibrations created in the consciousness prepare the realisation of the Divine. It is the same idea that is expressed in the Bible, "God said, Let there be Light, and there was Light." It is creation by the Word. 6 May 1933

Creative Power and the Human Instrument

A poem may pre-exist in the timeless as all creation pre-exists there or else in some plane where the past, present and future exist together. But it is not necessary to presuppose anything of the kind to explain the phenomena of inspiration. All is here a matter of formation or creation. By the contact with the source of inspiration the creative Power at one level or another and the human instrument, receptacle or channel get into contact. That is the essential point, all the rest depends upon the individual case. If the substance, rhythm, form, words come down all together ready-formed from the plane of poetic creation, that is the perfect type of inspiration; it may give its own spontaneous gift or it may give something which corresponds to the idea or the aspiration of the poet, but in either case the human being is only a channel or receptacle, although he feels the joy of the creation and the joy of the *āveśa*, *enthousiasmos*, elation of the inrush and the passage. On the other hand it may be that the creative source sends down the substance or stuff, the force and the idea, but the language, rhythm etc. are formed somewhere in the instrument; he has to find the human transcription of something that is there in diviner essence above; then there is an illumination or excitement, a conscious labour of creation swift or slow, hampered or facile. Something of the language may be supplied by the mind or vital, something may break through from somewhere behind the veil, from whatever source gets into touch with the transcribing mind in the liberating or stimulating excitement or uplifting of the consciousness. Or a line or lines may come through from some plane and the poet excited to creation may build around them constructing his material or getting it from any source he can tap. There are many possibilities of this nature. There is also the possibility of an inspiration not from above, but from somewhere within on the ordinary levels, some inner mind, emotional vital etc. which the mind practised in poetical technique works out according to its habitual faculty. Here again in a different way similar phenomena, similar variations may arise.

As for the language, the tongue in which the poem comes or the whole lines from above, that offers no real difficulty. It all depends on the contact between the creative Power and the instrument or channel, the Power will naturally choose the language of the instrument or channel, that to which it is accustomed and can therefore readily hear and receive. The Power itself is not limited and can use any language, but although it is possible for things to come through in a language unknown or ill-known — I have seen several instances of the former — it is not a usual case, since the *saṅskāra* of the mind, its habits of action and conception would normally obstruct any such unprepared receptiveness; only a strong mediumistic faculty might be unaffected by this difficulty. These things however are obviously exceptional, abnormal or supernormal phenomena.

If the parts of a poem come from different planes, it is because one starts from some high plane but the connecting consciousness cannot receive uninterruptedly from there and as soon as it flickers or wavers it comes down to a lower, perhaps without noticing it, or the lower comes in to supply the continuation of the flow or on the contrary the consciousness starts from a lower plane and is lifted in the *āveśa*, perhaps occasionally, perhaps more continuously higher for a time or else the higher force attracted by the creative will breaks through or touches or catches up the less exalted inspiration towards or into itself. I am speaking here especially of the overhead planes where this is quite natural; for the Overmind for instance is the ultimate source of intuition, illumination or heightened power of the planes immediately below it. It can lift them up into its own greater intensity or give out of its intensity to them or touch or combine their powers together with something of its own greater power — or they can receive or draw something from it or from each other. On the lower planes beginning from the mental downwards there can also be such variations or combinations, but the working is not the same, for the different powers here stand more on a footing of equality whether they stand apart from each other, each working in its own right, or cooperate. 29 April 1937

*

Human creation comes from the vital planes into the physical — but there is often enough something more behind it than is expressed — it gets altered or diminished in the human physical transcription. 9 March 1933

Joy of Poetic Creation

Poetry takes its start from any plane of the consciousness, but, like all art, one might even say all creation, it must be passed *through* the vital, the life-soul, gather from it a certain force for manifestation if it is to be itself alive. And as there is always a joy in creation, that joy along with a certain *enthousiasmos* — not enthusiasm, if you please, but an invasion and exultation of creative force and creative ecstasy, *ānandamaya āveśa* — must always be there, whatever the source. But where the inspiration comes from the linking of the vital creative instrument to a deeper psychic experience, that imparts another kind of intensive originality and peculiar individual power, a subtle and delicate perfection, a linking on to something that is at once fine to etheriality and potent, intense as fire yet full of sweetness. But this is exceedingly rare in its absolute quality, — poetry as an expression of mind and life is common, poetry of the mind and life touched by the soul and given a spiritual fineness is to be found but more rare; the pure psychic note in poetry breaks through only once in a way, in a brief lyric, a sudden line, a luminous passage. It was indeed because this linking-on took place that the true poetic faculty suddenly awoke in you, — for it was not there before, at least on the surface. The joy you feel, therefore, was no doubt partly the simple joy of creation, but there comes also into it the joy of expression of the psychic being which was seeking for an outlet since your boyhood. It is this inner expression that makes the writing of poetry a part of sadhana. 29 May 1931

Essence of Inspiration

There can be inspiration also without words — a certain intensity in the light and force and substance of the knowledge is the essence of inspiration. 18 June 1933

Inspiration and Effort

Inspiration is always a very uncertain thing; it comes when it chooses, stops suddenly before it has finished its work, refuses to descend when it is called. This is a well-known affliction, perhaps of all artists, but certainly of poets. There are some who can command it at will; those who, I think, are more full of an abundant poetic energy than careful for perfection; others who oblige it to come whenever they put pen to paper but with these the inspiration is either not of a high order or quite unequal in its level. Again there are some who try to give it a habit of coming by always writing at the same time; Virgil with his nine lines first written, then perfected every morning, Milton with his fifty epic lines a day, are said to have succeeded in regularising their inspiration. It is, I suppose, the same principle which makes gurus in India prescribe for their disciples a meditation at the same fixed hour every day. It succeeds partially of course, for some entirely, but not for everybody. For myself, when the inspiration did not come with a rush or in a stream, — for then there is no difficulty, — I had only one way, to allow a certain kind of incubation in which a large form of the thing to be done threw itself on the mind and then wait for the white heat in which the entire transcription could rapidly take place. But I think each poet has his own way of working and finds his own issue out of inspiration's incertitudes. 26 January 1932

*

Merciful heavens, what a splashing and floundering! When you miss a verse or a poem, it is better to wait in an entire quietude about it (with only a silent expectation) until the true inspiration comes, and not to thrash the inner air vainly for possible variants — like that the true form is much more likely to come, as people go to sleep on a problem and find it solved when they awake. Otherwise, you are likely to have only a series of misses, the half-gods of the semi-poetic mind continually intervening with their false enthusiasms and misleading voices. 11 July 1931

*

Few poets can keep for a very long time a sustained level of the highest inspiration. The best poetry does not usually come by streams except in poets of a supreme greatness though there may be in others than the greatest long-continued wingings at a considerable height. The very best comes by intermittent drops, though sometimes three or four gleaming drops at a time. Even in the greatest poets, even in those with the most opulent flow of riches like Shakespeare, the very best is comparatively rare.

13 February 1936

Aspiration, Opening, Recognition

Impatience does not help — intensity of aspiration does. The use of keeping the consciousness uplifted is that it then remains ready for the inflow from above when that comes. To get as early as possible to the highest range one must keep the consciousness steadily turned towards it and maintain the call. First one has to establish the permanent opening — or get it to establish itself, then the ascension and frequent, afterwards constant descent. It is only afterwards that one can have the ease. 21 April 1937

*

Perhaps one reason why your mind is so variable is because it has learned too much and has too many influences stamped upon it; it does not allow the real poet in you who is a little at the back to be himself — it wants to supply him with a form instead of allowing him to breathe into the instrument his own notes. It is besides too ingenious. . . . What you have to learn is the art of allowing things to come through and recognising among them the one right thing — which is very much what you have to do in Yoga also. It is really this recognition that is the one important need — once you have that, things become much easier. 3 July 1932

Self-criticism

It is no use being disgusted because there is a best you have not reached yet; every poet should have that feeling of "a miraculous poetic creation existing on a plane" he has not reached, but he should not despair of reaching it, but rather he has to regard present achievement not as something final but as steps towards what he hopes one day to write. That is the true artistic temper. 1 May 1934

*

It is precisely the people who are careful, self-critical, anxious for perfection who have interrupted visits from the Muse. Those who don't mind what they write, trusting to their genius, vigour or fluency to carry it off are usually the abundant writers. There are exceptions, of course. "The poetic part caught in the mere mind" is an admirable explanation of the phenomenon of interruption. Fluent poets are those who either do not mind if they do not always write their very best or whose minds are sufficiently poetic to make even their "not best" verse pass muster or make a reasonably good show. Sometimes you write things that are good enough, but not your best, but both your insistence and mine — for I think it essential for you to write your best always, at least your "level best" — may have curbed the fluency a good deal.

The check and diminution forced on your prose was compensated by the much higher and maturer quality to which it attained afterwards. It would be so, I suppose, with the poetry; a new level of consciousness once attained, there might well be a new fluency. So there is not much justification for the fear.

6 October 1936

*

You seem to suffer from a mania of self-depreciatory criticism. Many artists and poets have that; as soon as they look at their work they find it awfully poor and bad. (I had that myself often varied with the opposite feeling, Arjava also has it); but to have it while writing is its most excruciating degree of intensity. Better get rid of it if you want to write freely. 14 December 1936

Correction by Second Inspiration

It is a second inspiration which has come in improving on the first. When the improving is done by the mind and not by a pure inspiration, then the retouches spoil more often than they perfect. 8 August 1936

Sources of Inspiration

Sources of Inspiration and Variety

If there were not different sources of inspiration, every poet would write the same thing and in the same way as every other, which would be deplorable. Each draws from a different realm and therefore a different kind and manner of inspiration — except of course those who make a school and all write on the same lines. 18 July 1936

*

Different sources of inspiration may express differently the same thing. I can't say what plane is imaged in the poem [*submitted by the correspondent*]. Planes are big regions of being with all sorts of things in them. 17 October 1936

Poetry of the Material or Physical Consciousness

The Vedic times were an age in which men lived in the material consciousness as did the heroes of Homer. The Rishis were the mystics of the time and took the frame of their symbolic imagery from the material life around them. 20 October 1936

*

Homer and Chaucer are poets of the physical consciousness — I have pointed that out in *The Future Poetry*. 31 May 1937

*

You can't drive a sharp line between the subtle physical and the physical like that in these matters. If a poet writes from the outward physical only his work is likely to be more photographic than poetic. 1937

Poetry of the Vital World

I had begun something about visions of this kind and A.E.'s and other theories but that was a long affair — too long, as it turned out, to finish or even do more than begin. I can only now answer your questions rather briefly.

There is an earth-memory from which one gets or can get things of the past more or less accurately according to the quality of the mind that receives them. But this experience is not explicable on that basis — for the Gopis here are evidently not earthly beings and the place Raihana saw was not a terrestrial locality. If she had got it from the earth-mind at all, it could only be from the world of images created by Vaishnava tradition with perhaps a personal transcription of her own. But this also does not agree with all the details.

It is quite usual for poets and musicians and artists to receive things — they can even be received complete and direct, though oftenest with some working of the individual mind and consequent alteration — from a plane above the physical mind, a vital world of creative art and beauty in which these things are prepared and come down through the fit channel. The musician, poet or artist, if he is conscious, may be quite aware and sensitive of the transmission, even feel or see something of the plane from which it comes. Usually, however, this is in the waking state and the contact is not so vivid as that felt by Raihana.

There are such things as dream inspirations — it is rare however that these are of any value. For the dreams of most people are recorded by the subconscient. Either the whole thing is a creation of the subconscient and turns out, if recorded, to be incoherent and lacking in any sense or, if there is a real communication from a higher plane, marked by a feeling of elevation and wonder, it gets transcribed by the subconscient and what that forms is either flat or ludicrous. Moreover, this was seen between sleep and waking — and things so seen are not dreams, but experiences from other planes — either mental or vital or subtle physical or more rarely psychic or higher plane experiences.

In this case it is very possible that she got into some kind of connection with the actual world of Krishna and the Gopis — through the vital. This seems to be indicated first by the sense of extreme rapture and light and beauty and secondly by the contact with the "Blue Radiance" that was Krishna — that phrase and the expressions she uses have a strong touch of something that was authentic. I say through the vital, because of course it was presented to her in forms and words that her human mind could seize and understand; the original forms of that world would be something that could hardly be seizable by the human sense. The Hindi words of course belong to the transcribing agency. That would not mean that it was a creation of her personal mind, but only a transcription given to her just within the bounds of what it could seize, even though unfamiliar to her waking consciousness. Once the receptivity of the mind awakened, the rest came to her freely through the channel created by the vision. That her mind did not create the song is confirmed by the fact that it came in Hindi with so much perfection of language and technique.

To anyone familiar with occult phenomena and their analysis, these things will seem perfectly normal and intelligible. The vision-mind in us is part of the inner being, and the inner mind, vital, physical are not bound by the dull and narrow limitations of our outer physical personality and the small scope of the world it lives in. Its scope is vast, extraordinary, full of inexhaustible interest and, as one goes higher, of glory and sweetness and beauty. The difficulty is to get it through the outer human instruments which are so narrow and crippled and unwilling to receive them. 9 June 1935

*

I may say that purely vital poetry can be very remarkable. Many nowadays in Europe seem even to think that poetry should be written only from the vital (I mean from poetic sensations, not from ideas) and that that is the only pure *poetry*. The poets of the vital plane seize with a great vividness and extraordinary force of rhythm and phrase the life-power and the very sensation of the things they describe and express them to the poetic sense. What is often lacking in them is a perfect balance between this power and the other powers of poetry: intellectual, psychic, emotional etc. There is something in them which gives an impression of excess — when they are great in genius, splendid excess, but still not the perfect perfection.

*

In purely or mainly vital poetry the appeal to sense or sensation, to the vital thrill, is so dominant that the mental content of the poetry takes quite a secondary place. Indeed in the lower kinds of vital poetry the force of word and sound and the force of the stirred sensation tend to predominate over the mental sense or else the nerves and blood are thrilled (as in war-poetry) but the mind and soul do not find an equal satisfaction. But this does not mean that there should be no vital element in poetry — without the vital nothing living can be done. But for a deeper or greater appeal the vital element must be surcharged with something more forward or else something from above, an element of superior inspiration or influence.

Poetry essentially psychic can have a strong vital element, but the psychic being is always behind it; it intervenes and throws its self-expression into what is written. There comes an utterance with an inner life in it, a touch perhaps even of the spiritual, easily felt by those who have themselves an inner life, but others may miss it.

The World of Word-Music

Nishikanta seems to have put himself into contact with an inexhaustible source of flowing word and rhythm — with the world of word-music, which is one province of the World of Beauty. It is part of the vital World no doubt and the joy that comes of contact with that beauty is vital — but it is a subtle vital which is not merely sensuous. It is one of the powers by which the substance of the consciousness can be refined and prepared for sensibility to a still higher beauty and Ananda. Also it can be made a vehicle for the expression of the highest things. The Veda, the Upanishad, the Mantra, everywhere owe half their power to the rhythmic sound that embodies their inner meanings.

6 December 1936

Mental and Vital Poetry

All poetry is mental or vital or both, sometimes with a psychic tinge; the power from above mind comes in only in rare lines and passages lifting up the mental and vital inspiration towards its own light or power. To work freely from that higher inspiration is a thing that has not yet been done, though certain tendencies of modern poetry seem to be an unconscious attempt to prepare for that. But in the mind and vital there are many provinces and kingdoms and what you have been writing recently is by no means from the ordinary mind or vital; its inspiration comes from a higher or deeper occult or inner source. 17 May 1937

Poetic Intelligence and Dynamic Sight

On the plane of poetic intelligence the creation is by thought, the Idea force is the inspiring Muse and the images are constructed by the idea, they are mind-images; on the plane of dynamic vision one creates by sight, by direct grasp either of the thing in itself or of some living significant symbol or expressive body of it. This dynamic sight is not the vision that comes by an intense reconstruction of physical seeing or through a strong vital experience; it is a kind of inner occult sight which sees the things behind the veil, the forms that are more intimate and expressive than any outward appearance. It is a very vivid sight and the expression that comes with it is also extremely vivid and living but with a sort of inner super-life. To be able to write at will from this plane is sufficiently rare, — but a poet habitually writing from some other level may stumble into it from time to time or it may come to him strongly and lift him up out of his ordinary sight or intelligence. Coleridge had it with great vividness at certain moments. Blake's poems are full of it, but it is not confined to the poetry of the occult or of the supernormal; this vision can take up outward and physical things, the substance of normal experience, and recreate them in the light of something deep behind which makes their outward figure look like mere symbols of some more intense reality within them. In contemporary poetry there is an attempt at a more frequent or habitual use of the dynamic vision, but the success is not always commensurate with the energy of the endeavour. 9 July 1931

Poetic Eloquence

It [*poetic eloquence*] belongs usually to the poetic intelligence, but, as in much of Milton, it can be lifted up by the touch of the Higher Mind rhythm and largeness. 29 November 1936

Overhead Poetry

Higher Mind and Poetic Intelligence

I mean by the Higher Mind a first plane of spiritual [consciousness] where one becomes constantly and closely aware of the Self, the One everywhere and knows and sees things habitually with that awareness; but it is still very much on the mind-level although highly spiritual in its essential substance; and its instrumentation is through an elevated thought-power and comprehensive mental sight — not illumined by any of the intenser upper lights but as if in a large strong and clear daylight. It acts as an intermediate state between the Truth-Light above and the human mind; communicating the higher knowledge in a form that the Mind intensified, broadened, made spiritually supple, can receive without being blinded or dazzled by a Truth beyond it. The poetic intelligence is not at all part of that clarified spiritual seeing and thinking — it is only a high activity of the mind and its vision moving on the wings of imagination, but still akin to the intellect proper, though exalted above it. The Higher Mind is a spiritual plane, — this does not answer to that description. But the larger poetic intelligence like the larger philosophic, though in a different cast of thinking, is nearer to the Higher Mind than the ordinary intellect and can more easily receive its influence. When Milton starts his poem

> Of Man's first disobedience and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree —

he is evidently writing from the poetic intelligence. There is nothing of the Higher Mind knowledge or vision either in the style or the substance. But there is often a largeness of rhythm and sweep of language in Milton which has a certain distant kinship to the manner natural to a higher supra-intellectual vision, and something from the substance of the planes of spiritual seeing can come into this poetry whose medium is the poetic intelligence and uplift it.

Milton is a classical poet and most classical poetry is fundamentally a poetry of the pure poetic intelligence. But there are other influences which can suffuse and modify the pure poetic intelligence, making it perhaps less clear by limitation but more vivid, colourful, vivid with various lights and hues; it becomes less intellectual, more made of vision and a flame of insight. Very often this comes by an infiltration of the veiled inner Mind which is within us and has its own wider and deeper fields and subtler movements, — and can bring also the tinge of a higher afflatus to the poetic intelligence, sometimes a direct uplifting towards what is beyond it. It must be understood however that the greatness of poetry as poetry does not necessarily or always depend on the level from which it is written. Shelley has more access to the inner Mind and through it to greater things than Milton, but he is not the greater poet. 19 October 1936

Higher Mind and Inner Mind

When I say that the inner Mind can get the tinge or reflection of the higher experience I am not speaking here of the "descent" in Yoga by which the higher realisation can come down into the inferior planes and enlighten or transform them. I mean that the Higher Mind is itself a spiritual plane and one who lives in it has naturally and normally the realisation of the Self, the unity and harmony everywhere, and a vision and activity of knowledge that proceeds from this consciousness but the inner Mind has not that naturally and in its own right, yet can open to its influence more easily than the outer intelligence. All the same between the reflected realisation in the mind and the automatic and authentic realisation in the spiritual mental planes there is a wide difference.

. . . There is also a plane of dynamic Vision which is a part of the inner Mind and perhaps should be called not a plane but a province. There are many kinds of vision in the inner Mind and not this dynamic vision alone. So to fix invariable characteristics for the poetry of the inner Mind is not easy or even possible; it is a thing to be felt rather than mentally definable. A certain spontaneous intensity of vision is usually there, but that large or rich sweep or power which belongs to the illumined Mind is not part of its character. Moreover it is subtle and fine and has not the wideness which is the characteristic of the planes that rise towards the vast universality of the Overmind level.

. . . That is why the lower planes cannot express the Spirit with its full and native voice as the higher planes do — unless something comes down into them from the higher and overrides their limitations for the moment. October 1936

Poetic Intelligence and Illumined Mind

Certainly, if you want to achieve a greater poetry, more unique, you will yourself have to change, to alter the poise of your consciousness. At present you write, as you do other things, too much with the brain, the mere human intelligence. To get back from the surface vital into the psychic and psychic vital, to raise the level of your mental from the intellect to the illumined mind is your need both in poetry and in Yoga. I have told you already that your best poetry comes from the illumined mind, but as a rule it either comes from there with too much of the transcription diminished in its passage through the intellect or else is generated only in the creative poetic intelligence. But so many poets have written from that intelligence. On the other hand if you could always write direct from the illumined mind — finding not only the substance, as you often do, but the rhythm and language, that indeed would be a poetry exquisite, original and unique. The intellect produces the idea, even the poetic idea, too much for the sake of the idea alone; coming from the illumined mind the idea in a form of light and music is itself but the shining body of the Light Divine.

On the other hand to cease writing altogether might be a doubtful remedy. By your writing here you have at least got rid of most of your former defects, and reached a stage of preparation in which you may reasonably hope for a greater development hereafter. I myself have more than once abstained for some time from writing because I did not wish to produce anything except as an expression from a higher plane of consciousness, but to do that you must be sure of your poetic gift, that it will not rust by too long a disuse. 4 September 1931

Poetry of the Illumined Mind and of the Intuition

The poetry of the illumined mind is usually full of a play of lights and colours, brilliant and striking in phrase, for illumination makes the Truth vivid — it acts usually by a luminous rush. The poetry of the Intuition may have play of colour and bright lights, but it does not depend on them — it may be quite bare; it tells by a sort of close intimacy with the Truth, an inward expression of it. The illumined mind sometimes gets rid of its trappings, but even then it always keeps a sort of lustrousness of robe which is its characteristic. 1934

Overmind Touch

What super-excellence?[1] As poetry? When I say that a line comes from a higher or overhead plane or has the Overmind touch, I do not mean that it is superior in pure poetic excellence to others from lower planes — that Amal's lines outshine Shakespeare or Homer for instance. I simply mean that it has some vision, light, etc. from up there and the character of its expression and rhythm are from there.

You do not appreciate probably because you catch only the surface mental meaning. The [*first*] line is very fine from the technical point of view, the distribution of consonantal and vowel sounds being perfect. That however is possible on any level of inspiration.

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo was asked: "You said that these two lines of Amal's poem:*
Flickering no longer with the cry of clay,
The distance-haunted fire of mystic mind
have an Overmind touch. . . . Can you show me where their super-excellence lies?"

These [*assonance, etc.*] are technical elements, the Overmind touch does not consist in that, but in the undertones or overtones of the rhythmic cry and a language which carries in it a great depth or height or width of spiritual truth or spiritual vision, feeling or experience. But all that has to be felt, it is not analysable. If I say that the second line is a magnificent expression of an inner reality most intimate and powerful and the first line, with its conception of the fire once "flickering" with the "cry" of clay, but now no longer, is admirably revelatory — you would probably reply that it does not convey anything of the kind to you. That is why I do not usually speak of these things in themselves or in their relation to poetry — only with Amal who is trying to get his inspiration into touch with these planes. Either one must have the experience — e.g., here one must have lived in or glimpsed the mystic mind, felt its fire, been aware of the distances that haunt it, heard the cry of clay mixing with it and the consequent unsteady flickering of its flames and the release into the straight upward burning and so known that this is not mere romantic rhetoric, not mere images or metaphors expressing something imaginative but unreal (that is how many would take it perhaps) but facts and realities of the self, actual and concrete, or else there must be a conspiracy between the "solar plexus" and the thousand-petalled lotus which makes one feel, if not know, the suggestion of these things through the words and rhythm. As for technique, there is a technique of this higher poetry but it is not analysable and teachable. If for instance Amal had written "No longer flickering with the cry of clay", it would no longer have been the same thing though the words and mental meaning would be just as before — for the overtone, the rhythm would have been lost in the ordinary staccato clipped movement and with the overtone the rhythmic significance. It would not have given the suggestion of space and wideness full with the cry and the flicker, the intense impact of that cry and the agitation of the fire which is heard through the line as it is. But to realise that one must have the inner sight and inner ear for these things;

one must be able to hear the sound-meaning, feel the sound-spaces with their vibrations. Again if he had written "Quivering no longer with the touch on clay", it would have been a good line, but meant much less and something quite different to the inner experience, though to the mind it would have been only the same thing expressed in a different image — not so to the solar plexus and the thousand-petalled lotus. In this technique it must be the right word and no other, in the right place, and in no other, the right sounds and no others, in a design of sound that cannot be changed even a little. You may say that it must be so in all poetry; but in ordinary poetry the mind can play about, chop and change, use one image or another, put this word here or that word there — if the sense is much the same and has a poetical value, the mind does not feel that all is lost unless it is very sensitive and much influenced by the solar plexus. In the overhead poetry these things are quite imperative, it is all or nothing — or at least all or a fall. 8 May 1937

*

Rhythms may come from the same source and yet be entirely dissimilar. It would be a very bad job if the overmind touch made all rhythms similar. 14 February 1934

Overmind Rhythm and Inspiration

In the lines you quote from Wordsworth[2] the overmind movement is not there in the first three lines; in the last line there is something of the touch, not direct but through some high intuitive consciousness and, because it is not direct, the fully characteristic rhythm is absent or defective. The poetic value or perfection of a line, passage or poem does not depend on the plane from which it comes; it depends on the purity and authenticity and power with which it transcribes an intense vision and inspiration from whatever source. Shakespeare is a poet of the vital inspiration, Homer of the subtle physical, but there are no greater poets in any literature. No doubt, if one could get a continuous inspiration from the overmind, that would mean a greater, sustained height of perfection and spiritual quality in poetry than has yet been achieved; but it is only in short passages and lines that even a touch of it is attainable. One gets nearer the overmind rhythm and inspiration in another line of Wordsworth —

---

[2] *The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;*
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,

> a mind . . .
> Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone

or in a line like Milton's

> Those thoughts that wander through eternity.

One has the sense here of a rhythm which does not begin or end with the line, but has for ever been sounding in the eternal planes and began even in Time ages ago and which returns into the infinite to go sounding on for ages after. In fact, the word-rhythm is only part of what we hear; it is a support for the rhythm we listen to behind in "the Ear of the ear", *śrotrasya śrotram*. To a certain extent, that is what all great poetry at its highest tries to have, but it is only the overmind rhythm to which it is altogether native and in which it is not only behind the word-rhythm but gets into the word-movement itself and finds a kind of fully supporting body there.

P.S. Lines from the highest intuitive mind-consciousness, as well as those from the overmind, can have a mantric character — the rhythm too may have a certain kinship with mantric rhythm, but it may not be the thing itself, only the nearest step towards it.

10 July 1931

The Mantra

The *mantra* as I have tried to describe it in *The Future Poetry* is a word of power and light that comes from the Overmind inspiration or from some very high plane of Intuition. Its characteristics are a language that conveys infinitely more than the mere surface sense of the words seems to indicate, a rhythm that means even more than the language and is born out of the Infinite and disappears into it, and the power to convey not merely the mental, vital or physical contents or indications or values of the thing uttered, but its significance and figure in some fundamental and original consciousness which is behind all these and greater. The passages you mention from the Upanishad and the Gita have certainly the Overmind accent. But ordinarily the Overmind inspiration does not come out pure in human poetry — it has to come down to an inferior consciousness and touch it or else to lift it by a seizure and surprise from above into some infinite largeness. There is always a mixture of the two elements, not an absolute transformation though the higher may sometimes dominate. You must remember that the Overmind is a superhuman consciousness and to be able to write always or purely from an overmind inspiration would mean the elevation of at least a part of the nature beyond the human level.

But how then do you expect a supramental inspiration to come down here when the Overmind itself is so rarely in human reach? That is always the error of the impatient aspirant, to think he can get the Supermind without going through the intervening stages or to imagine that he has got it when in fact he has only got something from the illumined or intuitive or at the highest *some kind* of mixed overmind consciousness. 22 June 1931

The Overmind and Aesthetics

Obviously, the Overmind and aesthetics cannot be equated together. Aesthetics is concerned mainly with beauty, but more generally with *rasa*, the response of the mind, the vital feeling and the sense to a certain "taste" in things which often may be but is not necessarily a spiritual feeling. Aesthetics belongs to the mental range and all that depends upon it; it may degenerate into aestheticism or may exaggerate or narrow itself into some version of the theory of "Art for Art's sake". The Overmind is essentially a spiritual power. Mind in it surpasses its ordinary self and rises and takes its stand on a spiritual foundation. It embraces beauty and sublimates it; it has an essential aesthesis which is not limited by rules and canons; it sees a universal and an eternal beauty while it takes up and transforms all that is limited and particular. It is besides concerned with things other than beauty or aesthetics. It is concerned especially with truth and knowledge or rather with a wisdom that exceeds what we call knowledge; its truth goes beyond truth of fact and truth of thought, even the higher thought which is the first spiritual range of the thinker. It has the truth of spiritual thought, spiritual feeling, spiritual sense and at its highest the truth that comes by the most intimate spiritual touch or by identity. Ultimately, truth and beauty come together and coincide, but in between there is a difference. Overmind in all its dealings puts truth first; it brings out the essential truth (and truths) in things and also its infinite possibilities; it brings out even the truth that lies behind falsehood and error; it brings out the truth of the Inconscient and the truth of the Superconscient and all that lies in between. When it speaks through poetry, this remains its first essential quality; a limited aesthetical artistic aim is not its purpose. It can take up and uplift any or every style or at least put some stamp of itself upon it. More or less all that we have called overhead poetry has something of this character whether it be from the Overmind or simply intuitive, illumined or strong with the strength of the higher revealing Thought; even when it is not intrinsically overhead poetry, still some touch can come in. Even overhead poetry itself does not always deal in what is new or striking or strange; it can take up the obvious, the common, the bare and even the bald, the old, even that which without it would seem stale and hackneyed and raise it to greatness. Take the lines:

> I spoke as one who ne'er would speak again
> And as a dying man to dying men.

The writer is not a poet, not even a conspicuously talented versifier. The statement of the thought is bare and direct and the rhetorical device used is of the simplest, but the overhead touch somehow got in through a passionate emotion and sincerity and is unmistakable. In all poetry a poetical aesthesis of some kind there must be in the writer and the recipient; but aesthesis is of many kinds and the ordinary kind is not sufficient for appreciating the overhead element in poetry. A fundamental and universal aesthesis is needed, something also more intense that listens, sees and feels from deep within and answers to what is far behind the surface. A greater, wider and deeper aesthesis then which can answer even to the transcendent and feel too whatever of the transcendent or spiritual enters into the things of life, mind and sense.

The business of the critical intellect is to appreciate and judge and here too it must judge; but it can judge and appreciate rightly here only if it first learns to see and sense inwardly and interpret. But it is dangerous for it to lay down its own laws or even laws and rules which it thinks it can deduce from some observed practice of the overhead inspiration and use that to wall in the inspiration; for it runs the risk of seeing the overhead inspiration step across its wall and pass on leaving it bewildered and at a loss. The mere critical intellect not touched by a rarer sight can do little here. We can take an extreme case, for in extreme cases certain incompatibilities come out more clearly. What might be called the Johnsonian critical method has obviously little or no place in this field, — the method which expects a precise logical order in thoughts and language and pecks at all that departs from a matter-of-fact or a strict and rational ideative coherence or a sober and restrained classical taste. Johnson himself is plainly out of his element when he deals crudely with one of Gray's delicate trifles and tramples and flounders about in the poet's basin of goldfish breaking it with his heavy and vicious kicks. But also this method is useless in dealing with any kind of romantic poetry. What would the Johnsonian critic say to Shakespeare's famous lines

> Or take up arms against a sea of troubles
> And by opposing end them?

He would say, "What a mixture of metaphors and jumble of ideas! Only a lunatic could take up arms against a sea! A sea of troubles is a too fanciful metaphor and, in any case, one can't end the sea by opposing it, it is more likely to end you." Shakespeare knew very well what he was doing; he saw the mixture as well as any critic could and he accepted it because it brought home, with an inspired force which a neater language could not have had, the exact feeling and idea that he wanted to bring out. Still more scared would the Johnsonian be by any occult or mystic poetry. The Veda, for instance, uses with what seems like a deliberate recklessness the mixture, at least the association of disparate images, of things not associated together in the material world which in Shakespeare is only an occasional departure. What would the Johnsonian make of this *ṛk* in the Veda: "That splendour of thee, O Fire, which is in heaven and in the earth and in the plants and in the waters and by which thou hast spread out the wide mid-air, is a vivid ocean of light which sees with a divine seeing"? He would say, "What is this nonsense? How can there be a splendour of light in plants and in water and how can an ocean of light see divinely or otherwise? Anyhow, what meaning can there be in all this, it is a senseless mystical jargon." But, apart from these extremes, the mere critical intellect is likely to feel a distaste or an incomprehension with regard to mystical poetry even if that poetry is quite coherent in its ideas and well-appointed in its language. It is bound to stumble over all sorts of things that are contrary to its reason and offensive to its taste: association of contraries, excess or abruptness or crowding of images, disregard of intellectual limitations in the thought, concretisation of abstractions, the treating of things and forces as if there were a consciousness and a personality in them and a hundred other aberrations from the straight intellectual line. It is not likely either to tolerate departures in technique which disregard the canons of an established order. Fortunately here the modernists with all their errors have broken old bounds and the mystic poet may be more free to invent his own technique.

Here is an instance in point. You refer to certain things I wrote and concessions I made when you were typing an earlier draft of the first books of *Savitri*. You instance my readiness to correct or do away with repetitions of words or clashes of sound such as "magnificent" in one line and "lucent" in the next. True, but I may observe that at that time I was passing through a transition from the habits of an old inspiration and technique to which I often deferred and the new inspiration that had begun to come. I would still alter this clash because it was a clash, but I would not as in the old days make a fixed rule of this avoidance. If lines like the following were to come to me now,

His forehead was a dome magnificent,
And there gazed forth two orbs of lucent truth
That made the human air a world of light,

I would not reject them but accept "magnificent" and "lucent" as entirely in their place. But this would not be an undiscriminating acceptance; for if it had run

His forehead was a wide magnificent dome
And there gazed forth two orbs of lucent truth

I would not be so ready to accept it, for the repetition of sound here occurring in the same place in the line would lack the just rhythmical balance. I have accepted in the present version of *Savitri* several of the freedoms established by the modernists including internal rhyme, exact assonance of syllable, irregularities introduced into the iambic run of the metre and others which would have been equally painful to an earlier taste. But I have not taken this as a mechanical method or a mannerism, but only where I thought it rhythmically justified; for all freedom must have a truth in it and an order, either a rational or an instinctive and intuitive order.

26 April 1946

The Overmind Aesthesis

Something more might need to be said in regard to the overhead note in poetry and the overmind aesthesis; but these are exactly the subjects on which it is difficult to write with any precision or satisfy the intellect's demand for clear and positive statement.

I do not know that it is possible for me to say why I regard one line or passage as having the overhead touch or the overhead note while another misses it. When I said that in the lines about the dying man the touch came in through some intense passion and sincerity in the writer, I was simply mentioning the psychological door through which the thing came. I did not mean to suggest that such passion and sincerity could of itself bring in the touch or that they constituted the overhead note in the lines. I am afraid I have to say what Arnold said about the grand style; it has to be felt and cannot be explained or accounted for. One has an intuitive feeling, a recognition of something familiar to one's experience or one's deeper perception in the substance and the rhythm or in one or the other which rings out and cannot be gainsaid. One might put forward a theory or a description of what the overhead character of the line consists in, but it is doubtful whether any such mentally constructed definition could be always applicable. You speak, for instance, of the sense of the Infinite and the One which is pervasive in the overhead planes; that need not be explicitly there in the overhead poetic expression or in the substance of any given line: it can be expressed indeed by overhead poetry as no other can express it, but this poetry can deal with quite other things. I would certainly say that Shakespeare's lines

> Absent thee from felicity awhile,
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain

have the overhead touch in the substance, the rhythm and the feeling; but Shakespeare is not giving us here the sense of the One and the Infinite. He is, as in the other lines of his which have this note, dealing as he always does with life, with vital emotions and reactions or the thoughts that spring out in the life-mind under the pressure of life. It is not any strict adhesion to a transcendental view of things that constitutes this kind of poetry, but something behind not belonging to the mind or the vital and physical consciousness and with that a certain quality or power in the language and the rhythm which helps to bring out that deeper something. If I had to select the line in European poetry which most suggests an almost direct descent from the overmind consciousness there might come first Virgil's line about "the touch of tears in mortal things":

> sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.

Another might be Shakespeare's

> In the dark backward and abysm of time

or again Milton's

> Those thoughts that wander through eternity.

We might also add Wordsworth's line

> The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep.

There are others less ideative and more emotional or simply descriptive which might be added, such as Marlowe's

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?

If we could extract and describe the quality and the subtle something that mark the language and rhythm and feeling of these lines and underlie their substance we might attain hazardously to some mental understanding of the nature of overhead poetry.

The Overmind is not strictly a transcendental consciousness — that epithet would more accurately apply to the supramental and to the Sachchidananda consciousness — though it looks up to the transcendental and may receive something from it and though it does transcend the ordinary human mind and in its full and native self-power, when it does not lean down and become part of mind, is superconscient to us. It is more properly a cosmic consciousness, even the very base of the cosmic as we perceive, understand or feel it. It stands behind every particular in the cosmos and is the source of all our mental, vital or physical actualities and possibilities which are diminished and degraded derivations and variations from it and have not, except in certain formations and activities of genius and some intense self-exceeding, anything of the native overmind quality and power. Nevertheless, because it stands behind as if covered by a veil, something of it can break through or shine through or even only dimly glimmer through and that brings the overmind touch or note. We cannot get this touch frequently unless we have torn the veil, made a gap in it or rent it largely away and seen the very face of what is beyond, lived in the light of it or established some kind of constant intercourse. Or we can draw upon it from time to time without ever ascending into it if we have established a line of communication between the higher and the ordinary consciousness. What comes down may be very much diminished but it has something of that. The ordinary reader of poetry who has not that experience will usually not be able to distinguish but would at the most feel that here is something extraordinarily fine, profound, sublime or unusual, — or he might turn away from it as something too high-pitched and excessive; he might even speak depreciatingly of "purple passages", rhetoric, exaggeration or excess. One who had the line of communication open, could on the other hand feel what is there and distinguish even if he could not adequately characterise or describe it. The essential character is perhaps that there is something behind of which I have already spoken and which comes not primarily from the mind or the vital emotion or the physical seeing but from the cosmic self and its consciousness standing behind them all and things then tend to be seen not as the mind or heart or body sees them but as this greater consciousness feels or sees or answers to them. In the direct overmind transmission this something behind is usually forced to the front or close to the front by a combination of words which carries the suggestion of a deeper meaning or by the force of an image or, most of all, by an intonation and a rhythm which carry up the depths in their wide wash or long march or mounting surge. Sometimes it is left lurking behind and only suggested so that a subtle feeling of what is not actually expressed is needed if the reader is not to miss it. This is oftenest the case when there is just a touch or note pressed upon something that would be otherwise only of a mental, vital or physical poetic value and nothing of the body of the overhead power shows itself through the veil, but at most a tremor and vibration, a gleam or a glimpse. In the lines I have chosen there is always an unusual quality in the rhythm, as prominently in Virgil's line, often in the very building and constantly in the intonation and the association of the sounds which meet in the line and find themselves linked together by a sort of inevitable felicity. There is also an inspired selection or an unusual bringing together of words which has the power to force a deeper sense on the mind as in Virgil's

> sunt lacrimae rerum.

One can note that this line if translated straight into English would sound awkward and clumsy as would many of the finest lines in Rig Veda; that is precisely because they are new and felicitous turns in the original language, discoveries of an unexpected and absolute phrase; they defy translation. If you note the combination of words and sounds in Shakespeare's line

> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain

so arranged as to force on the mind and still more on the subtle nerves and sense the utter absoluteness of the difficulty and pain of living for the soul that has awakened to the misery of the world, you can see how this technique works. Here and elsewhere the very body and soul of the thing seen or felt come out into the open. The same dominant characteristic can be found in other lines which I have not cited, — in Leopardi's

> l'insano indegno mistero delle cose
> "The insane and ignoble mystery of things"

or in Wordsworth's

> Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone.

Milton's line lives by its choice of the word "wander" to collocate with "through eternity"; if he had chosen any other word, it would no longer have been an overhead line, even if the surface sense had been exactly the same. On the other hand, take Shelley's stanza —

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

This is perfect poetry with the most exquisite melody and beauty of wording and an unsurpassable poignancy of pathos, but there is no touch or note of the overhead inspiration: it is the mind and the heart, the vital emotion, working at their highest pitch under the stress of a psychic inspiration. The rhythm is of the same character, a direct, straightforward, lucid and lucent movement welling out limpidly straight from the psychic source. The same characteristics are found in another short lyric of Shelley's which is perhaps the purest example of the psychic inspiration in English poetry:

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not, —
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

We have again extreme poetic beauty there, but nothing of the overhead note.

In the other lines I have cited it is really the overmind language and rhythm that have been to some extent transmitted; but of course all overhead poetry is not from the Overmind, more often it comes from the higher thought, the illumined mind or the pure intuition. This last is different from the mental intuition which is frequent enough in poetry that does not transcend the mental level. The language and rhythm from these other overhead levels can be very different from that which is proper to the Overmind; for the Overmind thinks in a mass; its thought, feeling, vision is high or deep or wide or all these things together:

to use the Vedic expression about fire, the divine messenger, it goes vast on its way to bring the divine riches, and it has a corresponding language and rhythm. The higher thought has a strong tread often with bare unsandalled feet and moves in a clear-cut light: a divine power, measure, dignity is its most frequent character. The outflow of the illumined mind comes in a flood brilliant with revealing words or a light of crowding images, sometimes surcharged with its burden of revelations, sometimes with a luminous sweep. The intuition is usually a lightning flash showing up a single spot or plot of ground or scene with an entire and miraculous completeness of vision to the surprised ecstasy of the inner eye; its rhythm has a decisive inevitable sound which leaves nothing essential unheard, but very commonly is embodied in a single stroke. These however are only general or dominant characters; any number of variations is possible. There are besides mingled inspirations, several levels meeting and combining or modifying each other's notes, and an overmind transmission can contain or bring with it all the rest, but how much of this description will be to the ordinary reader of poetry at all intelligible or clearly identifiable?

There are besides in mental poetry derivations or substitutes for all these styles. Milton's "grand style" is such a substitute for the manner of the Higher Thought. Take it anywhere at its ordinary level or in its higher elevation, there is always or almost always that echo there:

> Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree

or

> On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues

or

> Blind Thamyris, and blind Maeonides,
> And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old.

Shakespeare's poetry coruscates with a play of the hues of imagination which we may regard as a mental substitute for the inspiration of the illumined mind and sometimes by aiming at an exalted note he links on to the illumined overhead inspiration itself as in the lines I have more than once quoted:

> Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
> Seal up the ship-boy's eyes and rock his brains
> In cradle of the rude imperious surge.

But the rest of that passage falls away in spite of its high-pitched language and resonant rhythm far below the overhead strain. So it is easy for the mind to mistake and take the higher for the lower inspiration or *vice versa*. Thus Milton's lines might at first sight be taken because of a certain depth of emotion in their large lingering rhythm as having the overhead complexion, but this rhythm loses something of its sovereign right because there are no depths of sense behind it. It conveys nothing but the noble and dignified pathos of the blindness and old age of a great personality fallen into evil days. Milton's architecture of thought and verse is high and powerful and massive, but there are usually no subtle echoes there, no deep chambers: the occult things in man's being are foreign to his intelligence, — for it is in the light of the poetic intelligence that he works. He does not stray into "the mystic cavern of the heart", does not follow the inner fire entering like a thief with the Cow of Light into the secrecy of secrecies. Shakespeare does sometimes get in as if by a splendid psychic accident in spite of his preoccupation with the colours and shows of life.

I do not know therefore whether I can speak with any certainty about the lines you quote; I would perhaps have to read them in their context first, but it seems to me that there is just a touch, as in the lines about the dying man. The thing that is described there may have happened often enough in times like those of the recent wars and upheavals and in times of violent strife and persecution and catastrophe, but the greatness of the experience does not come out or not wholly, because men feel with the mind and heart and not with the soul; but here there is by some accident of wording and rhythm a suggestion of something behind, of the greatness of the soul's experience and its courageous acceptance of the tragic, the final, the fatal — and its resistance; it is only just a suggestion, but it is enough: the Overhead has touched and passed back to its heights. There is something very different but of the same essential calibre in the line you quote:

> While sad eyes watch for feet that never come.

It is still more difficult to say anything very tangible about the overmind aesthesis. When I wrote about it I was thinking of the static aesthesis that perceives and receives rather than of the dynamic aesthesis which creates; I was not thinking at all of superior or inferior grades of poetic greatness or beauty. If the complete Overmind power or even that of the lower overhead plane could come down into the mind and entirely transform its action, then no doubt there might be greater poetry written than any that man has yet achieved, just as a greater superhuman life might be created if the supermind could come down wholly into life and lift life wholly into itself and transform it. But what happens at present is that something comes down and accepts to work under the law of the mind and with a mixture of the mind and it must be judged by the laws and standards of the mind. It brings in new tones, new colours, new elements, but it does not change radically as yet the stuff of the consciousness with which we labour.

Whether it produces great poetry or not depends on the extent to which it manifests its power and overrides rather than serves the mentality which it is helping. At present it does not do that sufficiently to raise the work to the full greatness of the worker.

And then what do you mean exactly by greatness in poetry? One can say that Virgil is greater than Catullus and that many of Virgil's lines are greater than anything Catullus ever achieved. But poetical perfection is not the same thing as poetical greatness. Virgil is perfect at his best, but Catullus too is perfect at his best: even, each has a certain exquisiteness of perfection, each in his own kind. Virgil's kind is large and deep, that of Catullus sweet and intense. Virgil's art reached or had from its beginning a greater and more constant ripeness than that of Catullus. We can say then that Virgil was a greater poet and artist of word and rhythm but we cannot say that his poetry, at his best, was more perfect poetry and that of Catullus less perfect. That renders futile many of the attempts at comparison like Arnold's comparison of Wordsworth's *Skylark* with Shelley's. You may say that Milton was a greater poet than Blake, but there can always be people, not aesthetically insensitive, who would prefer Blake's lyrical work to Milton's grander achievement, and there are certainly things in Blake which touch deeper chords than the massive hand of Milton could ever reach. So all poetic superiority is not summed up in the word greatness. Each kind has its own best which escapes from comparison and stands apart in its own value.

Let us then leave for the present the question of poetic greatness or superiority aside and come back to the overmind aesthesis. By aesthesis is meant a reaction of the consciousness, mental and vital and even bodily, which receives a certain element in things, something that can be called their taste, Rasa, which passing through the mind or sense or both, awakes a vital enjoyment of the taste, Bhoga, and this can again awaken us, awaken even the soul in us to something yet deeper and more fundamental than mere pleasure and enjoyment, to some form of the spirit's delight of existence, Ananda. Poetry, like all art, serves the seeking for these things, this aesthesis, this Rasa, Bhoga, Ananda; it brings us a Rasa of word and sound but also of the idea and, through the idea, of the things expressed by the word and sound and thought, a mental or vital or sometimes the spiritual image of their form, quality, impact upon us or even, if the poet is strong enough, of their world-essence, their cosmic reality, the very soul of them, the spirit that resides in them as it resides in all things. Poetry may do more than this, but this at least it must do to however small an extent or it is not poetry. Aesthesis therefore is of the very essence of poetry, as it is of all art. But it is not the sole element and aesthesis too is not confined to a reception of poetry and art; it extends to everything in the world: there is nothing we can sense, think or in any way experience to which there cannot be an aesthetic reaction of our conscious being. Ordinarily, we suppose that aesthesis is concerned with beauty, and that indeed is its most prominent concern: but it is concerned with many other things also. It is the universal Ananda that is the parent of aesthesis and the universal Ananda takes three major and original forms, beauty, love and delight, the delight of all existence, the delight in things, in all things. Universal Ananda is the artist and creator of the universe witnessing, experiencing and taking joy in its creation. In the lower consciousness it creates its opposites, the sense of ugliness as well as the sense of beauty, hate and repulsion and dislike as well as love and attraction and liking, grief and pain as well as joy and delight; and between these dualities or as a grey tint in the background there is a general tone of neutrality and indifference born from the universal insensibility into which the Ananda sinks in its dark negation in the Inconscient. All this is the sphere of aesthesis, its dullest reaction is indifference, its highest is ecstasy. Ecstasy is a sign of a return towards the original or supreme Ananda: that art or poetry is supreme which can bring us something of the supreme tone of ecstasy. For as the consciousness sinks from the supreme levels through various degrees towards the Inconscience the general sign of this descent is an always diminishing power of its intensity, intensity of being, intensity of consciousness, intensity of force, intensity of the delight in things and the delight of existence. So too as we ascend towards the supreme level these intensities increase. As we climb beyond Mind, higher and wider values replace the values of our limited mind, life and bodily consciousness. Aesthesis shares in this intensification of capacity. The capacity for pleasure and pain, for liking and disliking is comparatively poor on the level of our mind and life; our capacity for ecstasy is brief and limited; these tones arise from a general ground of neutrality which is always dragging them back towards itself. As it enters the overhead planes the ordinary aesthesis turns into a pure delight and becomes capable of a high, a large or a deep abiding ecstasy. The ground is no longer a general neutrality, but a pure spiritual ease and happiness upon which the special tones of the aesthetic consciousness come out or from which they arise. This is the first fundamental change.

Another change in this transition is a turn towards universality in place of the isolations, the conflicting generalities, the mutually opposing dualities of the lower consciousness. In the Overmind we have a first firm foundation of the experience of a universal beauty, a universal love, a universal delight. These things can come on the mental and vital plane even before those planes are directly touched or influenced by the spiritual consciousness; but they are there a temporary experience and not permanent or they are limited in their field and do not touch the whole being. They are a glimpse and not a change of vision or a change of nature. The artist for instance can look at things only plain or shabby or ugly or even repulsive to the ordinary sense and see in them and bring out of them beauty and the delight that goes with beauty. But this is a sort of special grace for the artistic consciousness and is limited within the field of his art. In the overhead consciousness, especially in the Overmind, these things become more and more the law of the vision and the law of the nature. Wherever the overmind spiritual man turns he sees a universal beauty touching and uplifting all things, expressing itself through them, moulding them into a field or objects of its divine aesthesis; a universal love goes out from him to all beings; he feels the Bliss which has created the worlds and upholds them and all that is expresses to him the universal delight, is made of it, is a manifestation of it and moulded into its image. This universal aesthesis of beauty and delight does not ignore or fail to understand the differences and oppositions, the gradations, the harmony and disharmony obvious to the ordinary consciousness: but, first of all, it draws a Rasa from them and with that comes the enjoyment, Bhoga, and the touch or the mass of the Ananda. It sees that all things have their meaning, their value, their deeper or total significance which the mind does not see, for the mind is only concerned with a surface vision, surface contacts and its own surface reactions. When something expresses perfectly what it was meant to express, the completeness brings with it a sense of harmony, a sense of artistic perfection; it gives even to what is discordant a place in a system of cosmic concordances and the discords become part of a vast harmony, and wherever there is harmony, there is a sense of beauty. Even in form itself, apart from the significance, the overmind consciousness sees the object with a totality which changes its effect on the percipient even while it remains the same thing. It sees lines and masses and an underlying design which the physical eye does not see and which escapes even the keenest mental vision. Every form becomes beautiful to it in a deeper and larger sense of beauty than that commonly known to us. The Overmind looks also straight at and into the soul of each thing and not only at its form or its significance to the mind or to the life; this brings to it not only the true truth of the thing but the delight of it. It sees also the one spirit in all, the face of the Divine everywhere and there can be no greater Ananda than that; it feels oneness with all, sympathy, love, the bliss of the Brahman. In a highest, a most integral experience it sees all things as if made of existence, consciousness, power, bliss, every atom of them charged with and constituted of Sachchidananda. In all this the overmind aesthesis takes its share and gives its response; for these things come not merely as an idea in the mind or a truth-seeing but as an experience of the whole being and a total response is not only possible but above a certain level imperative.

I have said that aesthesis responds not only to what we call beauty and beautiful things but to all things. We make a distinction between truth and beauty; but there can be an aesthetic response to truth also, a joy in its beauty, a love created by its charm, a rapture in the finding, a passion in the embrace, an aesthetic joy in its expression, a satisfaction of love in the giving of it to others. Truth is not merely a dry statement of facts or ideas to or by the intellect; it can be a splendid discovery, a rapturous revelation, a thing of beauty that is a joy for ever. The poet also can be a seeker and lover of truth as well as a seeker and lover of beauty. He can feel a poetic and aesthetic joy in the expression of the true as well as in the expression of the beautiful. He does not make a mere intellectual or philosophical statement of the truth; it is his vision of its beauty, its power, his thrilled reception of it, his joy in it that he tries to convey by an utmost perfection in word and rhythm. If he has the passion, then even a philosophical statement of it he can surcharge with this sense of power, force, light, beauty. On certain levels of the Overmind, where the mind element predominates over the element of gnosis, the distinction between truth and beauty is still valid. It is indeed one of the chief functions of the Overmind to separate the main powers of the consciousness and give to each its full separate development and satisfaction, bring out its utmost potency and meaning, its own soul and significant body and take it on its own way as far as it can go. It can take up each power of man and give it its full potentiality, its highest characteristic development. It can give to intellect its austerest intellectuality and to logic its most sheer unsparing logicality. It can give to beauty its most splendid passion of luminous form and the consciousness that receives it a supreme height and depth of ecstasy. It can create a sheer and pure poetry impossible for the intellect to sound to its depths or wholly grasp, much less to mentalise and analyse. It is the function of Overmind to give to every possibility its full potential, its own separate kingdom. But also there is another action of Overmind which sees and thinks and creates in masses, which reunites separated things, which reconciles opposites. On that level truth and beauty not only become constant companions but become one, involved in each other, inseparable: on that level the true is always beautiful and the beautiful is always true. Their highest fusion perhaps only takes place in the Supermind; but Overmind on its summits draws enough of the supramental light to see what the Supermind sees and do what the Supermind does though in a lower key and with a less absolute truth and power. On an inferior level Overmind may use the language of the intellect to convey as far as that language can do it its own greater meaning and message but on its summits Overmind uses its own native language and gives to its truths their own supreme utterance, and no intellectual speech, no mentalised poetry can equal or even come near to that power and beauty. Here your intellectual dictum that poetry lives by its aesthetic quality alone and has no need of truth or that truth must depend upon aesthetics to become poetic at all, has no longer any meaning. For there truth itself is highest poetry and has only to appear to be utterly beautiful to the vision, the hearing, the sensibility of the soul. There dwells and from there springs the mystery of the inevitable word, the supreme immortal rhythm, the absolute significance and the absolute utterance.

I hope you do not feel crushed under this avalanche of metaphysical psychology; you have called it upon yourself by your questioning about the Overmind's greater, larger and deeper aesthesis. What I have written is indeed very scanty and sketchy, only some of the few essential things that have to be said; but without it I could not try to give you any glimpse of the meaning of my phrase. This greater aesthesis is inseparable from the greater truth, it is deeper because of the depth of that truth, larger by all its immense largeness. I do not expect the reader of poetry to come anywhere near to all that, he could not without being a Yogi or at least a sadhak: but just as the overhead poetry brings some touch of a deeper power of vision and creation into the mind without belonging itself wholly to the higher reaches, so also the full appreciation of all its burden needs at least some touch of a deeper response of the mind and some touch of a deeper aesthesis. Until that becomes general the Overhead or at least the Overmind is not going to do more than to touch here and there as it did in the past, a few lines, a few passages, or perhaps as things advance, a little more, nor is it likely to pour into our utterance its own complete power and absolute value.

I have said that overhead poetry is not necessarily greater or more perfect than any other kind of poetry. But perhaps a subtle qualification may be made to this statement. It is true that each kind of poetical writing can reach a highest or perfect perfection in its own line and in its own quality and what can be more perfect than a perfect perfection or can we say that one kind of absolute perfection is "greater" than another kind? What can be more absolute than the absolute? But then what do we mean by the perfection of poetry? There is the perfection of the language and there is the perfection of the word-music and the rhythm, beauty of speech and beauty of sound, but there is also the quality of the thing said which counts for something. If we consider only word and sound and what in themselves they evoke, we arrive at the application of the theory of art for art's sake to poetry. On that ground we might say that a lyric of Anacreon is as good poetry and as perfect poetry as anything in Aeschylus or Sophocles or Homer. The question of the elevation or depth or intrinsic beauty of the thing said cannot then enter into our consideration of poetry; and yet it does enter, with most of us at any rate, and is part of the aesthetic reaction even in the most "aesthetic" of critics and readers. From this point of view the elevation from which the inspiration comes may after all matter, provided the one who receives it is a fit and powerful instrument; for a great poet will do more with a lower level of the origin of inspiration than a smaller poet can do even when helped from the highest sources. In a certain sense all genius comes from Overhead; for genius is the entry or inrush of a greater consciousness into the mind or a possession of the mind by a greater power. Every operation of genius has at its back or infused within it an intuition, a revelation, an inspiration, an illumination or at the least a hint or touch or influx from some greater power or level of conscious being than those which men ordinarily possess or use. But this power has two ways of acting: in one it touches the ordinary modes of mind and deepens, heightens, intensifies or exquisitely refines their action but without changing its modes or transforming its normal character; in the other it brings down into these normal modes something of itself, something supernormal, something which one at once feels to be extraordinary and suggestive of a superhuman level. These two ways of action when working in poetry may produce things equally exquisite and beautiful, but the word "greater" may perhaps be applied, with the necessary qualifications, to the second way and its too rare poetic creation.

The great bulk of the highest poetry belongs to the first of these two orders. In the second order there are again two or perhaps three levels; sometimes a felicitous turn or an unusual force of language or a deeper note of feeling brings in the overhead touch. More often it is the power of the rhythm that lifts up language that is simple and common or a feeling or idea that has often been expressed and awakes something which is not ordinarily there. If one listens with the mind only or from the vital centre only, one may have a wondering admiration for the skill and beauty of woven word and sound or be struck by the happy way or the power with which the feeling or idea is expressed. But there is something more in it than that; it is this that a deeper, more inward strand of the consciousness has seen and is speaking, and if we listen more profoundly we can get something more than the admiration and delight of the mind or Housman's thrill of the solar plexus. We can feel perhaps the Spirit of the universe lending its own depth to our mortal speech or listening from behind to some expression of itself, listening perhaps to its memories of

old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago

or feeling and hearing, it may be said, the vast oceanic stillness and the cry of the cuckoo

Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides

or it may enter again into Vyasa's

"A void and dreadful forest ringing with the crickets' cry"
Vanaṁ pratibhayaṁ śūnyaṁ jhillikāgaṇanāditam.

or remember its call to the soul of man,

Anityam asukhaṁ lokam imaṁ prāpya bhajasva mām
"Thou who hast come to this transient and unhappy world, love and worship Me."

There is a second level on which the poetry draws into itself a fuller language of intuitive inspiration, illumination or the higher thinking and feeling. A very rich or great poetry may then emerge and many of the most powerful passages in Shakespeare, Virgil or Lucretius or the Mahabharata and Ramayana, not to speak of the Gita, the Upanishads or the Rig Veda, have this inspiration. It is a poetry "thick inlaid with patines of bright gold" or welling up in a stream of passion, beauty and force. But sometimes there comes down a supreme voice, the overmind voice and the overmind music and it is to be observed that the lines and passages where that happens rank among the greatest and most admired in all poetic literature. It would be therefore too much to say that the overhead inspiration cannot bring in a greatness into poetry which could surpass the other levels of inspiration, greater even from the purely aesthetic point of view and certainly greater in the power of its substance.

A conscious attempt to write overhead poetry with a mind aware of the planes from which this inspiration comes and seeking always to ascend to those levels or bring down something from them, would probably result in a partial success; at its lowest it might attain to what I have called the first order, ordinarily it would achieve the two lower levels of the second order and in its supreme moments it might in lines and in sustained passages achieve the supreme level, something of the highest summit of its potency. But its greatest work will be to express adequately and constantly what is now only occasionally and inadequately some kind of utterance of the things above, the things beyond, the things behind the apparent world and its external or superficial happenings and phenomena. It would not only bring in the occult in its larger and deeper ranges but the truths of the spiritual heights, the spiritual depths, the spiritual intimacies and vastnesses as also the truths of the inner mind, the inner life, an inner or subtle physical beauty and reality. It would bring in the concreteness, the authentic image, the inmost soul of identity and the heart of meaning of these things, so that it could never lack in beauty. If this could be achieved by one possessed, if not of a supreme, still of a sufficiently high and wide poetic genius, something new could be added to the domain of poetry and there would be no danger of the power of poetry beginning to fade, to fall into decadence, to fail us. It might even enter into the domain of the infinite and inexhaustible, catch some word of the Ineffable, show us revealing images which bring us near to the Reality that is secret in us and in all, of which the Upanishad speaks,

> *Anejad ekaṁ manaso javīyo nainad devā āpnuvan pūrvam arṣat. . . .*
> *Tad ejati tan naijati tad dūre tad u antike.*
>
> "The One unmoving is swifter than thought, the gods cannot overtake It, for It travels ever in front; It moves and It moves not, It is far away from us and It is very close."

The gods of the overhead planes can do much to bridge that distance and to bring out that closeness, even if they cannot altogether overtake the Reality that exceeds and transcends them.

29 July 1946

Examples of Overhead Poetry

Examples from Various Poets
Evaluations of 1932 – 1935

Does Wordsworth's ode on immortality contain any trace, however vague, of the Overmind inspiration?

I don't remember, but I think not.

And what about the rhythm and substance of

solitary thinkings; such as dodge
Conception to the very bourne of heaven.

No. The substance may be overmind, but the rhythm is ordinary and the expression intellectual and imaginative.

and of

I come, O Sea,
To measure my enormous self with thee.

No; the poem "To the Sea" was produced by a collaboration of the dynamic poetic intelligence with the higher vital urge.

April 1932

*

I shall be obliged if you will indicate the origin of the few examples below — only the first of which is from my own work.

Plumbless inaudible waves of shining sleep.

Illumined mind.

The diamond dimness of the domèd air.

Illumined mind.

> Withdrawn in a lost attitude of prayer.

Intuition.

> This patter of time's marring steps across the solitude
> Of Truth's abidingness, self-blissful and alone.

Illumined mind with an intuitive element and strong overmind touch.

> Million d'oiseaux d'or, ô future Vigueur!

Illumined mind.

> Rapt above earth by power of one fair face.

Difficult to say. More of higher mind perhaps than anything else — but something of illumination and intuition also.

> Measuring vast pain with his immortal mind.

Don't know.

> Piercing the limitless unknowable,
> Breaking the vacancy and voiceless peace.

Don't know — the substance is overmental, but for the rest I cannot judge. 2 March 1934

*

From what plane do these lines by Vaughan come?

> I see them walking in an air of glory,
> Whose light doth trample on my days:
> My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
> Mere glimmering and decays.

I thought they were from the illumined mind.

It is a mixture. Something of the illumined mind, something of the poetic intelligence diluting it and preventing the full sovereignty of the higher expression. 17 March 1935

*

What about these lines of Vaughan's — are they from the illumined mind?

1) But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness . . .

2) I saw Eternity the other night
Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright . . .

This Ring the Bridegroom did for none provide
But for his Bride.

Yes, for the first two. In (1) there is something from the Intuition also and in (2) from the Overmind. 21 March 1935

*

Is this table showing the degrees of style and rhythm of revelation in mystic poetry correct? —

1) solitary thinkings; such as dodge
Conception to the very bourne of heaven
(Higher Mind)[1]

2) I saw Eternity the other night
Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright.
(Illumined Mind)

3) Your spirit in my spirit, deep in the deep,
Walled by a wizardry of shining sleep
(Intuition)

4) Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone.
(Overmind)

Though the expression and the rhythm differ, the substance of 1, 2, 4 is Overmind: what about 3? I suppose the table would be more consistent if the substance came in each case from the Overmind.

---

[1] combined with Illumined [*Sri Aurobindo's addition*]

Overmind is very various in its expression. All forms and rhythms are there in the Overmind.

> From what planes are these lines?
>
> Withdrawn in a lost attitude of prayer . . .
>
> The lonely waters of eternal ease . . .
>
> A hush dew-drenched with immortality . . .
>
> A sea unheard where spume nor spray is blown . . .
>
> Eternal truth's time-measuring sun-blaze . . .

The first two are intuitive. The last is higher mind mixed with illumination. The other two are mixed. 23 March 1935

Examples from Amal Kiran Evaluations of 1934–1937

Madonna Mia

I echo her life's rhythm of reverie
By spacious vigil-lonelinesses drawn
From star-birds winging through the vacancy
Of night's incomprehensible spirit-dawn.

My whole heart fills but with the glowing gloom
Where God-love blossoms her ethereal grace:
The sole truth my lips bear is the perfume
From the ecstatic flower of her face.

> Will you please tell me its effect as a whole and, if possible, where the inspiration comes from?

It is good. I could not very definitely say from where the inspiration comes. It seems to come from the Illumination through the higher Mind — but there is an intuitive touch here and there, even some indirect touch of "mental overmind"[2] vision hanging about the first stanza.

---

[2] There are two ranges of overmind which might be called "mental" and "gnostic" overmind respectively — the latter in direct touch with supermind, the former more like a widened and massive intuition.

9 February 1934

*

> May I ask whether, when you speak of inspiration, you mean the substance only or the rhythm as well? I had the impression that lines 2 and 3 of the first stanza had some mantric quality, but I felt it would be too presumptuous to ask you about it before you had indicated their source.

Yes, that was what I meant by the touch of the overmind.

10 February 1934

*

> Is it only lines 2 and 3 that have a touch of the Overmind, or line 4 also?

Line 4 also though 2 and 3 have most of it.

> Have you felt that touch anywhere else in my poetry? And is this rhythm in any way similar to that of Wordsworth's
>
> Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone?

No — it is quite a different rhythm — a rhythm of flight through sky-space not of ploughing lonely seas.

> Of course by "similarity" I mean the source of inspiration being more or less the same.

There may have been other lines, but I do not remember any.

12 February 1934

*

> What I should have said is: "Does that line of Wordsworth's have those special qualities which mark out the substance, language and rhythm of a line from the mental Overmind — the same qualities which are to be found in the three lines of my poem, which you consider to have an Overmind touch?" I am no competent judge, but I think that it contains all those qualities in a more intense and undiluted form: is that true?

Probably you are right.

> Of my three lines, only
>
> From star-birds winging through the vacancy
>
> seems to be somewhere near it in pure inspiration from the mental Overmind.

I am not sure about the *pure* inspiration — I said a *touch* from the *mental* overmind. But perhaps I am overcautious in these matters.

*

> To help me distinguish the planes of inspiration, would you just indicate where the following lines from various poems of mine have their sources?

What visionary urge
Has stolen from horizons watched alone
Into thy being with ethereal guile?

[*Second line*] Intuitive with overmind touch.
[*Third line*] Imaginative poetic intelligence.

A huge sky-passion sprouting from the earth
In branchèd vastnesses of leafy rapture.

Ditto with something of the higher Mind.

The mute unshadowed spaces of her mind.

Intuitive with overmind touch.

A sea unheard where spume nor spray is blown.

Intuitive.

Irradiant wing-waft through eternal space,
Pride of lone rapture and invincible sun-gaze.

Higher Mind with mental overmind touch.

Born nomad of the infinite heart!
Time-tamer! star-struck debauchee of light!

Warrior who hurls his spirit like a dart
Across the terrible night
Of death to conquer immortality!

Illumined Mind with mental overmind touch.

. . . And to the earth-self suddenly
Came through remote entrancèd marvelling
Of adoration ever-widening
A spacious sense of immortality.

Mixture of higher and illumined mind — in the last line the mental overmind touch.

Here life's lost heart of splendour beats immense.

Illumined mind with mental overmind touch.

The haunting rapture of the vast dream-wind
That blows, star-fragrant, from eternity.

Ditto.

An ocean-hearted ecstasy am I
Where time flows inward to eternal shores.

Intuitive, illumined, overmind touch all mixed together.

I have analysed but very imperfectly — because these influences are so mixed together that the descriptions are not exhaustive.

Also remember that I speak of a *touch,* of the *mental* overmind touch and that when there is the touch it is not always complete — it may be more apparent from something either in the language or substance or rhythm than in all three together.

Even so perhaps some of my descriptions are overhasty and denote the impression of the moment. Also the poetical value of the poetry exists independent of its source. 13 February 1934

*

It was extremely kind of you to analyse, as you did, a few weeks back, the influences of different planes in my poetry. I seem to have some feeling now for the qualities in them.

> I should like to know whether you intend any distinction when you speak of "Overmind touch" and "mental Overmind touch."

Yes — the overmind proper has some gnostic light in it which is absent in the mental overmind. 2 March 1934

*

Overself

All things are lost in Him, all things are found:
He rules an infinite hush that hears each sound.

But fragmentary quivers blossom there
To voice on mingling voice of shadowless air,

Bodies of fire and ecstasies of line
Where passion's mortal music grows divine —

For in that vasty region glimmers through
Each form one single trance of breakless blue!

Well, the first and third couplets are quite admirable. The rest not quite as inevitable as it should be though lines 4 and 8 could be so if coupled with perfect lines that made them also perfect. Your emendations do not mend matters; the first [*"rules" changed to "makes"*] only spoils the second line of the couplet without bringing the first up to level. . . . "Vasty region" does not appeal to me — it sounds pseudo-Miltonic and ineffective.

P.S. Higher mind throughout, illumined. 10 October 1936

*

> I understand your objection to "vasty region" . . . though I don't know if Milton ever used "vasty". It is a Shakespearean word, a famous instance being in that line about calling "spirits from the vasty deep". . . .
>
> I am describing, of course, the Overmind, but does the fact that the poem is only from the Higher Mind, however illumined, come in the way?

I know very well the Shakespearean line and I don't think Milton uses "vasty"; but I did not at all mean that the choice of the word "vasty" was Miltonic. I meant that the phrase here gave a pseudo-Miltonic effect and so do "lofty region" and "myriad region" [*proposed by the poet as emendations*]; in some other context they might give some other impression, but that is the effect here. . . .

I don't think the lines express distinctively the Overmind — they would apply equally to any plane where the unity of the Self governed the diversity of its creation, — so the illumined Higher Mind is quite appropriate for the purpose.

P.S. By pseudo-Miltonic I mean a certain kind of traditional poetic eloquence which finds its roots in Milton but even when well done lacks in originality and can easily be vapid and sonantly hollow. In the last line there is inspiration but it has to be brought out by this preceding line; that must be inspired also. An expression like "lofty region", "vasty region", "myriad region" even expresses nothing but a bare intellectual fact with no more vision in it than would convey mere wideness without any significance in it. 13 October 1936

*

[*after revision of line 7 to "For in that spacious revel glimmers through"*]

There is nothing to be altered in what I said about the poem. It is a fine poem — in the first and third couplets exceedingly fine, perfect poetic expressions of what they want to say, — the other couplets are less inevitable, although the second lines in both are admirable. Line 2, lines 5, 6 are among the best you have written; they have a certain revelatory power. 17 October 1936

*

Consummation

Immortal overhead the gold expanse —
An ultimate crown of inexhaustible joy!
But a king-power must grip all passion numb

And with gigantic loneliness draw down
This large gold throbbing on its silver hush.
For only an ice-pure peak of trance can bear
The benediction of that aureole.

I would suggest "a gigantic loneliness". "With" makes the line rather weak; the loneliness must be brought out in its full effect and "with"subordinates it and prevents it from standing out.

There is something wrong in the fifth line. Perhaps it is the excess of sibilants — not that one cannot have a sibilant line, but the sounds must be otherwise dispersed. Besides your style of consonant and vowel harmonisation is of the liquid kind and here such combinations as "its silver hush" are best avoided. How would "the large gold throbbing in a silver hush" do?

The second line is strong and dignified, but it impresses me as too mental and Miltonic. Milton has very usually (in *Paradise Lost*) some of the largeness and rhythm of the higher mind, but his substance except at certain heights is mental, mentally grand and noble. The interference of this mental Miltonic is one of the great stumbling-blocks when one tries to write from "above".

17 November 1936

*

[*after revision*]

It is very fine now — it is the higher mind vision and movement throughout, except that in the fifth line a flash of illumination comes through. Intense light-play and colour in this kind of utterance is usually the illumined mind's contribution.

18 November 1936

*

Mere of Dream

The Unknown above is a mute vacancy —
But in the mere of dream wide wings are spread,
An ageless bird poising a rumour of gold
Upon prophetic waters hung asleep.

A ring of hills around a silver hush,
The far mind haloed with mysterious dawn
Treasures in the deep eye of thought-suspense
An eagle-destiny beaconing through all time.

> You say this poem is "not as a whole quite as absolute as some that went before." . . . I am glad you have mentioned that the highest flight is not present here on the whole, for I am thereby stung to make an intenser effort. I should like, however, to have a formulation from you of the ideal you would like me to follow.

What you are writing now is "overhead" poetry — I mean poetry inspired from those planes; before you used to write poems very often from the intuitive mind — these had a beauty and perfection of their own. What I mean by absoluteness here is a full intensely inevitable expression of what comes down from above. These lines are original, convincing, have vision, they are not to be rejected, but they are not the highest flight except in single lines. Such variations are to be expected and will be more prominent if you were writing longer poems, for then to keep always or even usually to that highest level would be an extraordinary feat — no poet has managed as yet to write always at his highest flight and here in that kind of poetry it would be still more difficult. The important point is not to fall below a certain level. 12 May 1937

*

A Poet's Stammer

My dream is spoken
As if by sound
Were tremulously broken
Some oath profound.

A timeless hush
Draws ever back
The winging music-rush
Upon thought's track.

Though syllables sweep
    Like golden birds,
Far lonelihoods of sleep
    Dwindle my words.

Beyond life's clamour,
    A mystery mars
Speech-light to a myriad stammer
    Of flickering stars.

It is a very true and beautiful poem — the subject of the outward stammer seems to be only a starting point or excuse for expressing an inner phenomenon of inspiration. Throughout the inspiration of the poem is intuitive.

> You have said before I used to write poems very often from the intuitive mind, but the term you have employed connotes for us the plane between the Illumined Mind and the Overmind. But that would be an overhead source of inspiration. Do you mean the intuitivised poetic intelligence? If so, what is its character as compared to the mystic or inner mind?

The intuitive mind, strictly speaking, stretches from the Intuition proper down to the intuitivised inner mind — it is therefore at once an overhead power and a mental intelligence power. All depends on the amount, intensity, quality of the intuition and how far it is mixed with mind or pure. The inner mind is not necessarily intuitive, though it can easily become so. The mystic mind is mind turned towards the occult and spiritual, but the inner mind can act without direct reference to the occult and spiritual, it can act in the same field and in the same material as the ordinary mind, only with a larger and deeper power, range and light and in greater unison with the Universal Mind; it can open also more easily to what is within and what is above. Intuitive intelligence, mystic mind, inner mind intelligence are all part of the inner mind operations. In today's poem, for instance, it is certainly the inner mind that has transformed the idea of stammering into a symbol of inner phenomena and into that operation a certain strain of mystic mind enters, but what is prominent is the intuitive inspiration throughout. It starts with the intuitive poetic intelligence in the first stanza, gets touched by the overhead intuition in the second, gets full of it in the third and again rises rapidly to that in the two last lines of the fourth stanza. This is what I call poetry of the intuitive Mind.

13 May 1937

Bengali Overhead Poetry

> We are sorry to hear that you can't decide about Bengali overhead poetry. I consider it a defect, Sir, in your poetic supramental make-up, which you should try to mend or remove!

Why a defect? In any case all qualities have their defects, which are also a quality. For the rest, by your logic, I ought to be able to pronounce on the merits of Czechoslovakian or Arabic poetry. To pronounce whether a rhythm is O.P. or not, one must have an infallible ear for overtones and undertones of the sound music of the language — that expertness I have not got with regard to Bengali.

23 September 1938

Overhead Poetry: Re-evaluations of 1946

> It is a bit of a surprise to me that Virgil's
>
> sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt
>
> is now considered by you "an almost direct descent from the overmind consciousness" [*see page 33*]. I was under the impression that, like that other line of his —
>
> O passi graviora, dabit deus his quoque finem
>
> it was a perfect mixture of the Higher Mind with the Psychic; and the impression was based on something you had yourself written to me in the past [*see page 295*]. Similarly I remember you definitely declaring Wordsworth's
>
> The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep
>
> to be lacking precisely in the Overmind note and having only the note of Intuition in an intense form [*see pages 25–26*].

> What you write now means a big change of opinion in both the instances — but how and why the change?

Yes, certainly, my ideas and reactions to some of the lines and passages about which you had asked me long ago, have developed and changed and could not but change. For at that time I was new to the overhead regions or at least to the highest of them — for the higher thought and the illumination were already old friends — and could not be sure or complete in my perception of many things concerning them. I hesitated therefore to assign anything like overmind touch or inspiration to passages in English or other poetry and did not presume to claim any of my own writing as belonging to this order. Besides, the intellect took still too large a part in my reactions to poetry; for instance, I judged Virgil's line too much from what seemed to be its surface intellectual import and too little from its deeper meaning and vision and its reverberations of the Overhead. So also with Wordsworth's line about the "fields of sleep": I have since then moved in those fields of sleep and felt the breath which is carried from them by the winds that came to the poet, so I can better appreciate the depth of vision in Wordsworth's line. I could also see more clearly the impact of the Overhead on the work of poets who wrote usually from a mental, a psychic, an emotional or other vital inspiration, even when it gave only a tinge.

The context of Virgil's line has nothing to do with and cannot detract from its greatness and its overhead character. If we limit its meaning so as to unify it with what goes before, if we want Virgil to say in it only, "Oh yes, even in Carthage, so distant a place, these foreigners too can sympathise and weep over what has happened in Troy and get touched by human misfortune," then the line will lose all its value and we would only have to admire the strong turn and *recherché* suggestiveness of its expression. Virgil certainly did not mean it like that; he starts indeed by stressing the generality of the fame of Troy and the interest in her misfortune but then he passes from the particularity of this idea and suddenly rises from it to a feeling of the universality of mortal sorrow and suffering and of the chord of human sympathy and participation which responds to it from all who share that mortality. He rises indeed much higher than that and goes much deeper: he has felt a brooding cosmic sense of these things, gone into the depth of the soul which answers to them and drawn from it the inspired and inevitable language and rhythm which came down to it from above to give to this pathetic perception an immortal body. Lines like these seldom depend upon their contexts, they rise from it as if a single Himalayan peak from a range of low hills or even from a flat plain. They have to be looked at by themselves, valued for their own sake, felt in their own independent greatness. Shakespeare's lines upon sleep[3] depend not at all upon the context which is indeed almost irrelevant, for he branches off into a violent and resonant description of a storm at sea which has its poetic quality, but that quality has something comparatively quite inferior, so that these few lines stand quite apart in their unsurpassable magic and beauty. What has happened is that the sudden wings of a supreme inspiration from above have swooped down upon him and abruptly lifted him for a moment to highest heights, then as abruptly dropped him and left him to his own normal resources. One can see him in the lines that follow straining these resources to try and get something equal to the greatness of this flight but failing except perhaps partly for one line only. Or take those two lines in *Hamlet*.[4] They arise out of a rapid series of violent melodramatic events but they have a quite different ring from all that surrounds them, however powerful that may be. They come from another plane, shine with another light: the close of the sentence — "to tell my story" — which connects it with the thread of the drama, slips down in a quick incline to a lower inspiration. It is not a dramatic interest we feel when we read these lines; their appeal does not arise from the story but would be the same anywhere and in any context. We have passed from the particular to the universal, to a voice from the cosmic self, to a poignant reaction of the soul of man and not of Hamlet alone to the pain and sorrow of this world and its longing for some unknown felicity beyond. Virgil's

---

[3] *Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast*
Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge,

[4] *Absent thee from felicity awhile,*
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain

> O passi graviora, dabit deus his quoque finem. . . .
> . . . forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit

is only incidentally connected with the storm and wreck of the ships of Aeneas; its appeal is separate and universal and for all time; it is again the human soul that is speaking moved by a greater and deeper inspiration of cosmic feeling with the thought only as a mould into which the feeling is poured and the thinking mind only as a passive instrument. This applies to many or most of the distinctly overhead lines we meet or at least to those which may be called overhead transmissions. Even the lines that are perfect and absolute, though not from the Overhead, tend to stand out if not away from their surroundings. Long passages of high inspiration there are or short poems in which the wing-beats of some surpassing Power and Beauty gleam out amidst flockings of an equal or almost equal radiance of light. But still the absolutely absolute is rare; it is not often that the highest peaks crowd together.

As to the translations of Virgil's great line I may observe that the English translation you quote repeats the "here too" of the previous line and so rivets his high close to its context, thus emphasising unduly the idea of a local interest and maiming the universality.[5] Virgil has put in no such close riveting, he keeps a bare connection from which he immediately slips away; his single incomparable line rises sheer and abrupt into the heights both in its thought and in its form out of the sustained Virgilian elegance of what precedes it. The psychological movement by which this happens is not at all mysterious; he speaks first of the local and particular, then in the penultimate line passes to the general — "here too as wherever there are human beings are rewards for excellence", and then passes to the universal, to the reaction of all humanity, to all that is human and mortal in a world of suffering. In your prose translation also there are superfluities which limit and lower the significance.[6] Virgil does not say "tears for earthly things", "earthly" is your addition; he says nothing about "mortal fortune" which makes the whole thing quite narrow. His single word *rerum* and his single word *mortalia* admit in them all the sorrow and suffering of the world and all the affliction and misery that beset mortal creatures in this transient and unhappy world, *anityam asukhaṁ lokam imam.* The superfluous words bring in a particularising intellectual insistence which impoverishes a great thought and a great utterance. Your first hexametric version[7] is rather poor; the second[8] is much better and the first half is very fine; the second half is good but it is not an absolute hit. I would like to alter it to

---

[5] *Here, too, virtue has its due rewards; here, too, there are tears for misfortune and mortal sorrows touch the heart. — H. R. Fairclough*

Haunted by tears is the world and our hearts by the touch of things mortal.

But this version has a density of colour which is absent from the bare economy and direct force Virgil manages to combine with his subtle and unusual turn of phrase. As for my own translation — "the touch of tears in mortal things" — it is intended not as an accurate and scholastic prose rendering but as a poetic equivalent. I take it from a passage in *Savitri* where the mother of Savitri is lamenting her child's fate and contrasting the unmoved and unfeeling calm of the gods with human suffering and sympathy. I quote from memory,

We sorrow for a greatness that has passed
And feel the touch of tears in mortal things.
Even a stranger's anguish rends my heart,
And this, O Narad, is my well-loved child.

---

[6] *Here too there is reward for honour, there are tears for earthly things and mortal fortunes touch the heart.*

[7] *Tears are in all things and touched is our heart by the fate of the mortals.*

[8] *Haunted by tears is the world; on our heart is the touch of things mortal.*

In Virgil's line the two halves are not really two separate ideas and statements; they are one idea with two symmetrical limbs; the meaning and force of *mortalia tangunt* derives wholly from the *lacrimae rerum* and this, I think, ought to be brought out if we are to have an adequate poetic rendering. The three capital words, *lacrimae*, *mortalia*, *tangunt*, carry in them in an intimate connection the whole burden of the inner sense; the touch which falls upon the mind from mortal things is the touch of tears *lacrimae rerum*. I consider therefore that the touch of tears is there quite directly enough, spiritually, if not syntactically, and that my translation is perfectly justifiable.

As to the doubt you have expressed, I think there is some confusion still about the use of the word "great" as distinct from the beautiful. In poetry greatness must, no doubt, be beautiful in the wider and deeper sense of beauty to be poetry, but the beautiful is not always great. First, let me deal with the examples you give, which do not seem to me to be always of an equal quality. For instance, the lines you quote from Squire[9] do not strike me as deserving supreme praise. There is one line "on rocks forlorn and frore" which is of a very high beauty, but the rest is lofty and eloquent poetry and suggestive of something deep but not more than that; above all, there is a general lack of the rhythm that goes home to the soul and keeps sounding there except indeed in that one line and without such a rhythm there cannot be the absolute perfection; a certain kind of perfection there may be with a lesser rhythmic appeal but I do not find it here, the pitch of sound is only that of what may be described as the highly moved intellect. In the lines from Dryden[10] the second has indeed the true note but the first is only clever and forcible with that apposite, striking and energetic cleverness which abounds in the chief poets of that period and imposes their poetry on the thinking mind but usually fails to reach deeper. Of course, there can be a divine or at least a deified cleverness, but that is when the intellect after finding something brilliant transmits it to some higher power for uplifting and transfiguration. It is because that is not always done by Pope and Dryden that I once agreed with Arnold in regarding their work as a sort of half poetry; but since then my view and feeling have become more catholic and I would no longer apply that phrase, — Dryden especially has lines and passages which rise to a very high poetic peak, — but still there is something in this limitation, this predominance of the ingenious intellect which makes us understand Arnold's stricture. The second quotation from Tennyson[11] is eloquent and powerful, but absolute perfection seems to me an excessive praise for these lines, — at least I meant much more by it than anything we find here. There is absolute perfection of a kind, of sound and language at least, and a supreme technical excellence in his moan of doves and murmur of bees.[12] As to your next comparison, you must not expect me to enter into a comparative valuation of my own poetry[13] with that of Keats;[14] I will only say that the "substance" of these lines of Keats is of the highest kind and the expression is not easily surpassable, and even as regards the plane of their origin it is above and not below the boundary of the overhead line. The other lines you quote have their own perfection; some have the touch from above while others, it might be said, touch the Overhead from below.

---

[9] *And that aged Brahmapootra*
Who beyond the white Himalayas
Passes many a lamasery
On rocks forlorn and frore,
A block of gaunt grey stone walls
With rows of little barred windows,
Where shrivelled monks in yellow silk
Are hidden for evermore.... —J. C. Squire

[10] *In liquid burnings or on dry to dwell*
Is all the sad variety of hell. — Dryden

---

[11] *Well is it that no child is born of thee.*
The children born of thee are sword and fire,
Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws. — Tennyson

[12] *The moan of doves in immemorial elms,*
And murmuring of innumerable bees. — Tennyson

[13] *Above the reason's brilliant slender curve,*
Released like radiant air dimming a moon,
White spaces of a vision without line
Or limit . . . — Sri Aurobindo

[14] *. . . solitary thinkings; such as dodge*
Conception to the very bourne of heaven,
Then leave the naked brain. — Keats

But what is the point? I do not think I have ever said that all overhead poetry is superior to all that comes from other sources. I am speaking of greatness and said that greatness of substance does count and gives a general superiority; I was referring to work in the mass and not to separate lines and passages. I said, practically, that art in the sense of perfect mastery of technique, perfect expression in word and sound was not everything and greatness and beauty of the substance of the poetry entered into the reckoning. It might be said of Shakespeare that he was not predominantly an artist but rather a great creator, even though he has an art of his own, especially an art of dramatic architecture and copious ornament; but his work is far from being always perfect. In Racine, on the other hand, there is an unfailing perfection; Racine is the complete poetic artist. But if comparisons are to be made, Shakespeare's must surely be pronounced to be the greater poetry, greater in the vastness of its range, in its abundant creativeness, in its dramatic height and power, in the richness of his inspiration, in his world-view, in the peaks to which he rises and the depths which he plumbs — even though he sinks to flatnesses which Racine would have abhorred — and generally a glory of God's making which is marvellous and unique. Racine has his heights and depths and widenesses, but nothing like this; he has not in him the poetic superman, he does not touch the superhuman level of creation. But all this is mainly a matter of substance and also of height and greatness in language, not of impeccable beauty and perfection of diction and rhythm which ought to rank higher on the principle of art for art's sake.

That is one thing and for the sake of clarity it must be seen by itself in separation from the other points I put forward. The comparison of passages each perfectly beautiful in itself but different in their kind and source of inspiration is a different matter. Here it is a question of the perfection of the poetry, not of its greatness. In the valuation of whole poems Shelley's *Skylark* may be described as a greater poem than his brief and exquisite lyric — "I can give not what men call love" — because of its greater range and power and constant flow of unsurpassable music, but it is not more perfect; if we take separate lines and passages, the stanza "We look before and after" is not superior in perfection or absoluteness to that in the other poem "The desire of the moth for the star", even though it strikes a deeper note and may be said to have a richer substance. The absolute is the absolute and the perfect perfect, whatever difference there may be in the origin of the inspiration; but from the point of view of greatness one perfection may be said to be greater, though not more perfect than another. I would myself say that Wordsworth's line about Newton is greater, though not more perfect than many of those which you have put side by side with it. And this I say on the same principle as the comparison between Shakespeare and Racine: according to the principle of art for art's sake Racine ought to be pronounced a poet superior to Shakespeare because of his consistent and impeccable flawlessness of word and rhythm, but on the contrary Shakespeare is universally considered greater, standing among the few who are supreme. Theocritus is always perfect in what he writes, but he cannot be ranked with Aeschylus and Sophocles. Why not, if art is the only thing? Obviously, because what the others write has an ampler range, a much more considerable height, breadth, depth, largeness. There are some who say that great and long poems have no true value and are mainly composed of padding and baggage and all that matters are the few perfect lines and passages which shine like jewels among a mass of inferior half-worked ore. In that case, the "great" poets ought to be debunked and the world's poetic production valued only for a few lyrics, rare superb passages and scattered lines that we can rescue from the laborious mass production of the artificers of word, sound and language.

I come now to the question of the Overmind and whether there is anything in it superior or more perfectly perfect, more absolutely absolute than in the lower planes. If it is true that one can get the same absolute fully on any plane and from any kind of inspiration, whether in poetry or other expressions of the One, then it would seem to be quite useless and superfluous for any human being to labour to rise above mind to Overmind or Supermind and try to bring them down upon earth; the idea of transformation would become absurd since it would be possible to have the "form" perfect and absolute anywhere and by a purely earthly means, a purely earthly force. I am reminded of Ramana Maharshi's logical objection to my idea of the descent of the Divine into us or into the world on the ground, as he put it, that "the Divine is here, from where is He to descend?" My answer is that obviously the Divine is here, although very much concealed; but He is here in essence and He has not chosen to manifest all His powers or His full power in Matter, in Life, in Mind; He has not even made them fit by themselves for some future manifestation of all that, whereas on higher planes there is already that manifestation and by a descent from them the full manifestation can be brought here. All the planes have their own power, beauty, some kind of perfection realised even among their imperfections; God is everywhere in some power of Himself though not everywhere in His full power, and if His face does not appear, the rays and glories from it do fall upon things and beings through the veil and bring something of what we call perfect and absolute. And yet perhaps there may be a more perfect perfection, not in the same kind but in a greater kind, a more utter revelation of the absolute. Ancient thought speaks of something that is highest beyond the highest, *parātparam*; there is a supreme beyond what is for us or seems to us supreme. As Life brings in something that is greater than Matter, as Mind brings in something that is greater than Life, so Overmind brings in something that is greater than Mind, and Supermind something that is greater than Overmind, — greater, superior not only in the essential character of the planes, but in all respects, in all parts and details, and consequently in all its creation.

But you may say each plane and its creations are beautiful in themselves and have their own perfection and there is no superiority of one to the other. What can be more perfect, greater or more beautiful than the glories and beauties of Matter, the golden splendours of the sun, the perpetual charm of the moon, the beauty and fragrance of the rose or the beauty of the lotus, the yellow mane of the Ganges or the blue waters of the Jamuna, forests and mountains, and the leap of the waterfall, the shimmering silence of the lake, the sapphire hue and mighty roll of the ocean and all the wonder and marvel that there is on the earth and in the vastness of the material universe? These things are perfect and absolute and there can be nothing more perfect or more greatly absolute. Life and mind cannot surpass them; they are enough in themselves and to themselves: Brindavan would have been perfect even if Krishna had never trod there. It is the same with Life: the lion in its majesty and strength, the tiger in its splendid and formidable energy, the antelope in its grace and swiftness, the bird of paradise, the peacock with its plumes, the birds with their calls and their voices of song, have all the perfection that Life can create and thinking man cannot better that; he is inferior to the animals in their own qualities, superior only in his mind, his thought, his power of reflection and creation: but his thought does not make him stronger than the lion and the tiger or swifter than the antelope, more splendid to the sight than the bird of paradise or the human beauty of the most beautiful man and woman superior to the beauty of the animal in its own kind and perfect form. Here too there is a perfection and absoluteness which cannot be surpassed by any superior greatness of nature. Mind also has its own types of perfection and its own absolutes. What intrusion of Overmind or Supermind could produce philosophies more perfect in themselves than the systems of Shankara or Plato or Plotinus or Spinoza or Hegel, poetry superior to Homer's, Shakespeare's, Dante's or Valmiki's, music more superb than the music of Beethoven or Bach, sculpture greater than the statues of Phidias and Michael Angelo, architecture more utterly beautiful than the Taj Mahal, the Parthenon or Borobudur or St. Peter's or of the great Gothic cathedrals? The same may be said of the crafts of ancient Greece and Japan in the Middle Ages or structural feats like the Pyramids or engineering feats like the Dnieper Dam or inventions and manufactures like the great modern steamships and the motor car. The mind of man may not be equally satisfied with life in general or with its own dealings with life, it may find all that very imperfect, and here perhaps it may be conceded that the intrusion of a higher principle from above might have a chance of doing something better: but here too there are sectional perfections, each complete and sufficient for its purpose, each perfectly and absolutely organised in its own type, the termite society for instance, the satisfying structure of ant societies or the organised life of the beehive. The higher animals have been less remarkably successful than these insects, though perhaps a crows' parliament might pass a resolution that the life of the rookery was one of the most admirable things in the universe. Greek societies like the Spartan evidently considered themselves perfect and absolute in their own type and the Japanese structure of society and the rounding off of its culture and institutions were remarkable in their pattern of perfect organisation. There can be always variations in kind, new types, a progress in variation, but progress in itself towards a greater perfection or towards some absolute is an idea which has been long indulged in but has recently been strongly denied and at least beyond a certain point seems to have been denied by fact and event. Evolution there may be, but it only creates new forms, brings in new principles of consciousness, new ingenuities of creation but not a more perfect perfection. In the old Hebrew scriptures it is declared that God created everything from the first, each thing in its own type, and looked on his own creation and saw that it was good. If we conclude that Overmind or Supermind do not exist or, existing, cannot descend into mind, life and body or act upon them or, descending and acting, cannot bring in a greater or more absolute perfection into anything man has done, we should, with the modification that God has taken many ages and not six days to do his work, be reduced to something like this notion, at any rate in principle.

It is evident that there is something wrong and unsatisfying in such a conclusion. Evolution has not been merely something material, only a creation of new forms of Matter, new species of inanimate objects or animate creatures as physical science has at first seen it: it has been an evolution of consciousness, a manifestation of it out of its involution and in that a constant progress towards something greater, higher, fuller, more complete, ever increasing in its range and capacity, therefore to a greater and greater perfection and perhaps finally to an absolute of consciousness which has yet to come, an absolute of its truth, an absolute of its dynamic power. The mental consciousness of man is greater in its perfection, more progressive towards the absolute than the consciousness of the animal, and the consciousness of the overman, if I may so call him, must very evidently be still more perfect, while the consciousness of the superman may be absolute. No doubt, the instinct of the animal is superior to that of man and we may say that it is perfect and absolute within its limited range and in its own type. Man's consciousness has an infinitely greater range and is more capable in the large, though less automatically perfect in the details of its work, more laborious in its creation of perfection: the Overmind when it comes will decrease whatever deficiencies there are in human intelligence and the Supermind will remove them altogether; they will replace the perfection of instinct by the more perfect perfection of intuition and what is higher than intuition and thus replace the automatism of the animal by the conscious and self-possessed automatic action of a more luminous gnosis and finally, of an integral truth-consciousness. It is after all the greater consciousness that comes in with mind that enables us to develop the idea of values and this idea of the quality of certain values which seem to us perfect and absolute is a viewpoint which has its validity but must be completed by others if our perception of things is to be entire. No single and separate idea of the mind can be entirely true by itself, it has to complete itself by others which seem to differ from it, even others which seem logically to contradict it, but in reality only enlarge its viewpoints and put its idea in its proper place. It is quite true that the beauty of material things is perfect in itself and you may say that the descent of Overmind cannot add to the glory of the sun or the beauty of the rose. But in the first place I must point out that the rose as it is is something evolved from the dog-rose or the wild rose and is largely a creation of man whose mind is still creating further developments of this type of beauty. Moreover, it is to the mind of man that these things are beautiful, to his consciousness as evolution has developed it, in the values that mind has given to them, to his perceptive and sometimes his creative aesthesis: Overmind, I have pointed out, has a greater aesthesis and, when it sees objects, sees in them what the mind cannot see, so that the value it gives to them can be greater than any value that the mind can give. That is true of its perception, it may be true also of its creation, its creation of beauty, its creation of perfection, its expression of the power of the absolute.

This is in principle the answer to the objection you made, but pragmatically the objection may still be valid; for what has been done by any overhead intervention may not amount for the present to anything more than the occasional irruption of a line or a passage or at most of a new still imperfectly developed kind or manner of poetry which may have larger contents and a higher or richer suggestion but is not intrinsically superior in the essential elements of poetry, word and rhythm and cannot be confidently said to bring in a more perfect perfection or a more utter absolute. Perhaps it does sometimes, but not so amply or with such a complete and forcible power as to make it recognisable by all. But that may be because it is only an intervention in mind that it has made, a touch, a partial influence, at most a slight infiltration: there has been no general or massive descent or, if there has been any such descent in one or two minds, it has been general and not yet completely organised or applied in every direction; there has been no absolute transformation of the whole being, whole consciousness and whole nature. You say that if the Overmind has a superior consciousness and a greater aesthesis it must also bring in a greater form. That would be true on the overmind level itself: if there were an overmind language created by the Overmind itself and used by overmind beings not subject to the limitations of the mental principle or the turbidities of the life principle or the opposition of the inertia of Matter, the half light of ignorance and the dark environing wall of the Inconscient, then indeed all things might be transmuted and among the rest there might be a more perfect and absolute poetry, perfect and absolute not only in snatches and within boundaries but always and in numberless kinds and in the whole: for that is the nature of Overmind, it is a cosmic consciousness with a global perception and action tending to carry everything to its extreme possibility; the only thing lacking in its creation might be a complete harmonisation of all possibles, for which the intervention of the highest Truth-Consciousness, the Supermind, would be indispensable. But at present the intervention of Overmind has to take mind, life and matter as its medium and field, work under their dominant conditions, accept their fundamental law and method; its own can enter in only initially or partially and under the obstacle of a prevailing mental and vital mixture. Intuition entering into the human mind undergoes a change; it becomes what we may call the mental intuition or the vital intuition or the intuition working inconsciently in physical things: sometimes it may work with a certain perfection and absoluteness, but ordinarily it is at once coated in mind or life with the mental or vital substance into which it is received and gets limited, deflected or misinterpreted by the mind or the life; it becomes a half intuition or a false intuition and its light and power gives indeed a greater force to human knowledge and will but also to human error. Life and mind intervening in Matter have been able only to vitalise or mentalise small sections of it, to produce and develop living bodies or thinking lives and bodies but they have not been able to make a complete or general transformation of the ignorance of life, of the inertia and inconscience of Matter and large parts of the minds, lives and forms they occupy remain subconscient or inconscient or are still ignorant, like the human mind itself or driven by subconscient forces. Overmind will certainly, if it descends, go further in that direction, effect a greater transformation of life and bodily function as well as mind but the integral transformation is not likely to be in its power; for it is not in itself the supreme consciousness and does not carry in it the supreme force: although different from mind in the principle and methods of its action, it is only a highest kind of mind with the pure intuition, illumination and higher thought as its subordinates and intermediaries; it is an instrument of cosmic possibilities and not the master. It is not the supreme Truth-Consciousness; it is only an intermediary light and power.

As regards poetry, the Overmind has to use a language which has been made by mind, not by itself, and therefore fully capable of receiving and expressing its greater light and greater truth, its extraordinary powers, its forms of greatness, perfection and beauty. It can only strain and intensify this medium as much as possible for its own uses, but not change its fundamental or characteristically mental law and method; it has to observe them and do what it can to heighten, deepen and enlarge. Perhaps what Mallarmé and other poets were or are trying to do was some fundamental transformation of that kind, but that incurs the danger of being profoundly and even unfathomably obscure or beautifully and splendidly unintelligible. There is here another point of view which it may be useful to elaborate. Poets are men of genius whose consciousness has in some way or another attained to a higher dynamis of conception and expression than ordinary men can hope to have, — though ordinary men often have a good try for it, with the result that they sometimes show a talent for verse and an effective language which imposes itself for a time but is not durable. I have said that genius is the result of an intervention or influence from a higher consciousness than the ordinary human mental, a greater light, a greater force; even an ordinary man can have strokes of genius resulting from such an intervention but it is only in a few that the rare phenomenon occurs of a part of the consciousness being moulded into a habitual medium of expression of its greater light and force. But the intervention of this higher consciousness may take different forms. It may bring in, not the higher consciousness itself but a substitute for it, an uplifted movement of mind which gives a reflection of the character and qualities of the overhead movement. There is a substitute for the expression of the Higher Thought, the Illumination, the pure Intuition giving great or brilliant results, but these cannot be classed as the very body of the higher consciousness. So also there can be a mixed movement, a movement of mind in its full force with flashes from the overhead or even a light sustained for some time. Finally, there can be the thing itself in rare descents, but usually these are not sustained for a long time though they may influence all around and produce long stretches of a high utterance. All this we can see in poetry but it is not easy for the ordinary mind to make these distinctions or even to feel the thing and more difficult still to understand it with an exact intelligence. One must have oneself lived in the light or have had flashes of it in oneself in order to recognise it when it manifests outside us. It is easy to make mistakes of appreciation: it is quite common to miss altogether the tinge of the superior light even while one sees it or to think and say only, "Ah, yes, this is very great poetry."

There are other questions that can arise, objections that can be raised against our admission of a complete equality between the best of all kinds in poetry. First of all, is it a fact that all kinds of poetry actually stand on an equal level or are potentially capable by intensity in their own kind, of such a divine equality? Satirical poetry, for instance, has often been considered as inferior in essential quality to the epic or other higher kinds of creation. Can the best lines of Juvenal, for instance, the line about the *graeculus esuriens* be the equal of Virgil's *O passi graviora,* or his *sunt lacrimae rerum*? Can Pope's attack on Addison, impeccable in expression and unsurpassable in its poignancy of satiric point and force and its still more poignant conclusion

> Who would not laugh, if such a man there be?
> Who would not weep if Atticus were he?

be put on a same poetical level with the great lines of Shakespeare which I have admitted as having the overmind inspiration? The question is complicated by the fact that some lines or passages of what is classed as satirical verse are not strictly satirical but have the tone of a more elevated kind of poetry and rise to a very high level of poetic beauty, — for instance Dryden's descriptions of Absalom and Achitophel as opposed to his brilliant assault on the second duke of Buckingham. Or can we say that apart from this question of satire we can equal together the best from poetry of a lighter kind with that which has a high seriousness or intention, for instance the mock epic with the epic? There are critics now who are in ecstasies over Pope's *Rape of the Lock* and put it on the very highest level, but we could hardly reconcile ourselves to classing any lines from it with a supreme line from Homer or Milton. Or can the perfect force of Lucan's line

> Victrix causa deis placuit sed victa Catoni

which has made it immortal induce us to rank it on a level of equality with the greater lines of Virgil? We may escape from this difficulty of our own logic by pointing out that when we speak of perfection we mean perfection of something essential for poetic beauty and not only perfection of speech and verse however excellent and consummate in its own inferior kind. Or we may say that we are speaking not only of perfection but of a kind of perfection that has something of the absolute. But then we may be taxed with throwing overboard our own first principle and ranking poetry according to the greatness or beauty of its substance, its intention and its elevation and not solely on its artistic completeness of language and rhythm in its own kind.

We have then to abandon any thorough-going acceptance of the art for art's sake standpoint and admit that our proposition of the equality of absolute perfection of different kinds, different inspirations of poetry applies only to all that has some quintessence of highest poetry in it. An absolutely accomplished speech and metrical movement, a sovereign technique, are not enough; we are thinking of a certain pitch of flight and not only of its faultless agility and grace. Overmind or overhead poetry must always have in its very nature that essential quality, although owing to the conditions and circumstances of its intervention, the limitations of its action, it can only sometimes have it in any supreme fullness or absoluteness. It can open poetry to the expression of new ranges of vision, experience and feeling, especially the spiritual and the higher mystic, with all their inexhaustible possibilities, which a more mental inspiration could not so fully and powerfully see and express except in moments when something of the overhead power came to its succour; it can bring in new rhythms and a new intensity of language: but so long as it is merely an intervention in mind, we cannot confidently claim more for it. At the same time if we look carefully and subtly at things we may see that the greatest lines or passages in the world's literature have the overmind touch or power and that they bring with them an atmosphere, a profound or an extraordinary light, an amplitude of wing which, if the Overmind would not only intervene but descend, seize wholly and transform, would be the first glimpses of a poetry, higher, larger, deeper and more consistently absolute than any which the human past has been able to give us. An evolutionary ascent of all the activities of mind and life is not impossible.

20 November 1946

Section Two

The Poetry of the Spirit

Psychic, Mystic and Spiritual Poetry

Inspiration from the Illumined Mind and from the Psychic

Your question — "What distinguishes, in manner and quality, a pure inspiration from the illumined mind from that which has the psychic for its origin?" — reads like a poser in an examination paper. Even if I could give a satisfactory definition, Euclideanly rigid, I don't know that it would be of much use or would really help you to distinguish between the two kinds: these things have to be felt and perceived by experience. I would prefer to give examples. I suppose it would not be easy to find a more perfect example of psychic inspiration in English literature than Shelley's well-known lines,

I can give not what men call love,
        But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
        And the Heavens reject not, —
The desire of the moth for the star,
        Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
        From the sphere of our sorrow?

— you will find there the true rhythm, expression and substance of poetry full of the psychic influence. For full examples of the poetry which comes from the illumined mind purely and simply and that in which the psychic and the spiritual illumination meet together, one has to go to poetry that tries to express a spiritual experience. You have yourself written things which can illustrate the difference. The lines

The longing of ecstatic tears
From infinite to infinite

will do very well as an instance of the pure illumination, for here what would otherwise be a description of a spiritual heart-experience, psychic therefore in its origin, is lifted up to a quite different spiritual level and expressed with the vision and language sufficiently characteristic of a spiritual-mental illumination. In another passage there is this illumination but it is captured and dominated by the inner heart and by the psychic thrill, a certain utterance of the yearning and push of psychic love for the Divine incarnate.

> If Thou desirest my weak self to outgrow
> Its mortal longings, lean down from above,
> Temper the unborn light no thought can trace,
> Suffuse my mood with a familiar glow!
> For 'tis with mouth of clay I supplicate.
> Speak to me heart to heart words intimate,
> And all Thy formless glory turn to love
> And mould Thy love into a human face.

July 1931

Psychic and Overhead Inspiration

There is too the psychic source of inspiration which can give a beautiful spiritual poetry. The psychic has two aspects — there is the soul principle itself which contains all soul possibilities and there is our psychic personality which represents whatever soul-power is developed from life to life or put forward for action in our present life-formation. The psychic being usually expresses itself through its instruments, mental, vital and physical; it tries to put as much of its own stamp on them as possible. But it can seldom put on them the full psychic stamp — unless it comes fully out from its rather secluded and overshadowed position and takes into its hands the direct government of the nature. It can then receive and express all spiritual realisations in its own way and manner. For the tone of the psychic is different from that of the overhead planes, — it has less of greatness, power, wideness, more of a smaller sweetness, delicate beauty; there is an intense beauty of emotion, a fine subtlety of true perception, an intimate language. The expression “sweetness and light” can very well be applied to the psychic as the kernel of its nature. The spiritual plane, when it takes up these things, gives them a wider utterance, a greater splendour of light, a stronger sweetness, a breath of powerful authority, strength and space.

20 October 1936

*

To get the psychic being to emerge is not easy, though it is a very necessary thing for sadhana and when it does it is not certain that it will switch on to the above-head planes at once. But obviously anyone who could psychicise his poetry would get a unique place among the poets. 20 October 1936

*

I don’t suppose the emergence of the psychic would interfere at all with the inspiration from above. It would be more likely to help it by making the connection with these planes more direct and conscious. . . . The direct psychic touch is not frequent in poetry. It breaks in sometimes — more often there is only a tinge here and there. 20 October 1936

Psychic and Esoteric Poetry

These poems are quite new in manner — simple and precise and penetrating.[1] What you describe is the psychic fire, *agni pāvaka*, which burns in the deeper heart and from there is lighted in the mind, the vital and the physical body. In the mind Agni creates a light of intuitive perception and discrimination which sees at once what is the true vision or idea and the wrong vision or idea, the true feeling and the wrong feeling, the true movement and the wrong movement. In the vital he is kindled as a fire of right emotion and a kind of intuitive feeling, a sort of tact which makes for the right impulse, the right action, the right sense of things and reaction to things. In the body he initiates a similar but still more automatic correct response to the things of physical life, sensation, bodily experience. Usually it is the psychic light in the mind that is first lit of the three, but not always — for sometimes it is the psycho-vital flame that takes precedence.

---

[1] *Certain poems in Bengali by Dilip Kumar Roy:* Agni Disha, Agni Bedan, *etc. — Ed.*

In ordinary life also there is no doubt an action of the psychic — without it man would be only a thinking and planning animal. But its action there is very much veiled, needing always the mental or vital to express it, usually mixed and not dominant, not unerring therefore; it does often the right thing in the wrong way, is moved by the right feeling but errs as to the application, person, place, circumstance. The psychic, except in a few extraordinary natures, does not get its full chance in the outer consciousness; it needs some kind of Yoga or sadhana to come by its own and it is as it emerges more and more "in front" that it gets clear of the mixture. That is to say, its presence becomes directly felt, not only behind and supporting, but filling the frontal consciousness and no longer dependent on or dominated by its instruments — mind, vital and body, but dominating them and moulding them into luminosity and teaching them their own true action.

It is not easy to say whether the poems are esoteric; for these words "esoteric" and "exoteric" are rather ill-defined in their significance. One understands the distinction between exoteric and esoteric religion — that is to say, on one side, creed, dogma, mental faith, religious worship and ceremony, religious and moral practice and discipline, on the other an inner seeking piercing beyond the creed and dogma and ceremony or finding their hidden meaning, living deeply within in spiritual and mystic experience. But how shall we define an esoteric poetry? Perhaps what deals in an occult way with the occult may be called esoteric — e.g., the *Bird of Fire, Trance,* etc. *The Two Moons*[2] is, it is obvious, desperately esoteric. But I don't know whether an intimate spiritual experience simply and limpidly told without veil or recondite image can be called esoteric — for the word usually brings the sense of something kept back from the ordinary eye, hidden, occult. Is *Nirvana* for instance an esoteric poem? There is no veil or symbol there — it tries to state the experience as precisely and overtly as possible. The experience of the psychic fire and psychic discrimination is an intimate spiritual experience, but it is direct and simple like all psychic things. The poem which expresses it may easily be something deeply inward, esoteric in that sense, but simple, unveiled and clear, not esoteric in the more usual sense. I rather think, however, the term "esoteric poem" is a misnomer and some other phraseology would be more accurate. 30 April 1935

---

[2] *Now called* Moon of Two Hemispheres. — *Ed.*

*

I don't think your poetry is more "esoteric" than in the earlier poems — for esoteric means something that only the initiated in the mysteries can understand; to be concerned with spiritual aspiration does not make a poem esoteric, such poems can be perfectly well understood by those who are not mystics or Yogis. Yours are certainly not more esoteric or Yogic than Nishikanta's with his frequent incursions into the occult and if Tagore could be knocked over by the Rajahansa poem, that shows that Yogic poetry can be appreciated by him and by others. I take it that it is a transition to a new style of writing that meets with so much opposition and these are only excuses for the refusal of the mind to appreciate what is new. On the other hand those who have not the prejudice have not the difficulty. With time the obstacle will disappear. 24 July 1936

Mystic Poetry

Mystic poetry does not mean anything exactly or apparently; it means things suggestively and reconditely, — things that are not known and classified by the intellect.

What you are asking is to reduce what is behind to intellectual terms, which is to make it something quite different from itself. 3 December 1936

*

Mystic poetry has a perfectly concrete meaning, much more than intellectual poetry which is much more abstract. The nature of the intellect is abstraction; spirituality and mysticism deal with the concrete by their very nature. 8 December 1936

*

The difficulty most people feel is that they expect an intellectual meaning quite clear on the surface and through that they get at the *bhāva* of the deeper significance (if there is any) — but in mystic poetry, often though not always, one has to catch the *bhāva* of the deeper significance directly through the figures and by that arrive at the form of the intellectual meaning or else share in the inner vision, whichever may be the thing to be conveyed by the poem.

*

Mystic poetry can be written from any plane, provided the writer gets an inspiration from the inner consciousness whether mind, vital or subtle physical. 20 October 1936

The Aim of the Mystic Poet

There are truths and there are transcriptions of truths; the transcriptions may be accurate or may be free and imaginative. The truth behind a poetic creation is there on some plane or other, supraphysical generally — and from there the suggestion of the image too originally comes; even the whole transcription itself can be contributed from there, but ordinarily it is the mind's faculty of imagination which gives it form and body. Poetic imagination is very usually satisfied with beauty of idea and image only and the aesthetic pleasure of it, but there is something behind it which supplies the Truth in its images, and to get the transcription also direct from that something or somewhere behind should be the aim of mystic or spiritual poetry. When Shelley made the spirits of Nature speak, he was using his imagination, but there was something behind in him which felt and knew and believed in the truth of the thing he was expressing —

he felt that there were forms more real than living man behind the veil. But his method of presentation was intellectual and imaginative, so one misses the full life in these impalpable figures. To get a more intimate and spiritually concrete presentation should be the aim of the mystic poet. 16 November 1933

Symbolism and Allegory

There is a considerable difference between symbolism and allegory; they are not at all the same thing. Allegory comes in when a quality or other abstract thing is personalised and the allegory proper should be something carefully stylised and deliberately sterilised of the full aspect of embodied life, so that the essential meaning or idea may come out with sufficient precision and force of clarity. One can find this method in the old mystery plays and it is a kind of art that has its value. Allegory is an intellectual form; one is not expected to believe in the personalisation of the abstract quality, it is only an artistic device. When in an allegory as in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* the personalisation, the embodiment takes first place and absorbs the major part of the mind's interest, the true style and principle of this art have been abandoned. The allegorical purpose here becomes a submerged strain and is really of secondary importance, our search for it a by-play of the mind; we read for the beauty and interest of the figures and movements presented to us, not for this submerged significance. An allegory must be intellectually precise and clear in its representative figures as well as in their basis, however much adorned with imagery and personal expression; otherwise it misses its purpose. A symbol expresses on the contrary not the play of abstract things or ideas put into imaged form, but a living truth or inward vision or experience of things, so inward, so subtle, so little belonging to the domain of intellectual abstraction and precision that it cannot be brought out except through symbolic images — the more these images have a living truth of their own which corresponds intimately to the living truth they symbolise, suggests the very vibration of the experience itself, the greater becomes the art of the symbolic expression. When the symbol is a representative sign or figure and nothing more, then the symbolic approaches nearer to an intellectual method, though even then it is not the same thing as allegory. In mystic poetry the symbol ought to be as much as possible the natural body of the inner truth or vision, itself an intimate part of the experience. 16–18 November 1933

*

Lord, what an incorrigible mentaliser and allegorist you are! If the bird were either consciousness or the psychic or light, it would be an allegory and all the mystic beauty would be gone. A living symbol and a mental allegorical symbol are not the same thing. You can't put a label on the Bird of Marvel any more than on the Bird of Fire or any other of the fauna or flora or population of the mystic kingdoms. They can be described, but to label them destroys their life and makes them only stuffed specimens in an allegorical museum. Mystic symbols are living things, not abstractions. Why insist on killing them? Jyoti has described the Bird and told you all that is necessary about him — the rest you have to feel and live inside, not dissect and put the fragments into neatly arranged drawers. 8 August 1936

Symbolic Poetry and Mystic Poetry

I suppose the poem you sent me might be described as the poetic rendering of a symbolic vision — it is not a mystic poem. A poem can no doubt be symbolic and mystic at the same time. For instance Nishikanta's English poem of the vision of the Lion-flame and the Deer-flame, beauty and power, was symbolic and mystic at once. It is when the thing seen is spiritually lived and has an independent vivid reality of its own which exceeds any conceptual significance it may have on the surface that it is mystic. Symbols may be of various kinds; there are those that are concealing images capable of intellectual interpretation but still different from either symbolic or allegorical figures — and there are those that have a more intimate life of their own and are not conceptual so much as occultly vital in their significance; there are still others that need a psychic or spiritual or at least an inner and intuitive insight to identify oneself fully with their meaning. In a poem which uses conceptual symbols the mind is more active and the reader wants to know what it means to the mind; but as minds differ, the poet may attach one meaning to it and the reader may find another, if the image used is at all an enigmatic one, not mentally clear and precise. In the more deeply symbolist — still more in the mystic — poem the mind is submerged in the vividness of the reality and any mental explanation falls far short of what is felt and lived in the deeper vital or psychic response. This is what Housman in his book tries to explain with regard to Blake's poetry, though he seems to me to miss altogether the real nature of the response. It is not the mere sensation to which what he calls pure poetry appeals but to a deeper inner life or life-soul within us which has profounder depths than the thinking mind and responds with a certain kind of soul-excitement or ecstasy — the physical vibrations on which he lays stress are merely a very outward result of this sudden stir within the occult folds of the being. Mystic poetry can strike still deeper — it can stir the inmost and subtlest recesses of the life-soul and the secret inner mind at the same time; it can even, if it is of the right kind, go beyond these also to the pure inmost psyche.

Some Mystic Symbols

If you expect matter of fact verisimilitude from N. or a scientific ornithologically accurate swan, you are knocking at the wrong door. But I don't see exactly the point of your objection. The lake [*in a poem*] is not a lake but a symbol; the swan is not a swan but a symbol. You can't expect the lake merely to ripple and do nothing else or the swan simply to swim and eat and do nothing else. It is as much a symbol as the Bird of Fire or the Bird of the Vedic poet who faced the guardians of the Soma and brought the Soma to Indra (or was it to a Rishi? I have forgotten) — perhaps carrying a pot or several pots in his claws and beak!! for I don't know how else he could have done it. How is he to use his symbol if you do not make allowances for a miraculous Swan? If the swan does nothing but what an ordinary swan does, it ceases to be a symbol and becomes only a metaphor. The animals of these symbols belong not to earth but to Wonderland. 13 March 1936

*

The objection that stars do not get নত stands only if the poem describes objective phenomena or aims at using purely objective images. But if the vision behind the poem is subjective, the objection holds no longer. The mystic subjective vision admits a consciousness in physical things and gives them a subtle physical life which is not that of the material existence. If a consciousness is felt in the stars and if that consciousness expresses itself in subtle physical images to the vision of the poet, there can be no impossibility of a star being নত আপনহারা — such expressions attribute a mystical life to the stars and can appropriately express this in mystic images. I agree with you about the fineness of the line. 27 May 1936

*

Surely the image of a "last star of the night" is not so difficult to understand. It is not a physical star obviously. It is a light in the night and the night is not physical. There is no variation.

Star is a light in the night, I suppose — night is the night of ignorance here, very evidently — so a star is an illumination of the ignorance which is very different from the illumination of dawn and must disappear in the dawn. That is common sense, it seems to me. I am not aware that I have set up "deer" as a symbol of beauty. It was Nishikanta who did so in his fable of the deer and the lion. Every poet can use symbols in his own way, he is not bound by any fixed mathematics of symbolism.
26 January 1937

*

A symbol must always convey a sense of reality to the feeling (not the intellect), but here (if it has the meaning I give it) it is obviously only a metaphorical figure for a ray of Light, Consciousness etc. 29 December 1936

Some Problems in Writing Mystic Poetry

This is the real stumbling-block of mystic poetry and specially mystic poetry of this kind. The mystic feels real and present, even ever-present to his experience, intimate to his being, truths which to the ordinary reader are intellectual abstractions or metaphysical speculations. He is writing of experiences that are foreign to the ordinary mentality. Either they are unintelligible to it and in meeting them it flounders about as in an obscure abyss or it takes them as poetic fancies expressed in intellectually devised images. He uses words and images in order to convey to the mind some perception, some figure of that which is beyond thought. To the mystic there is no such thing as an abstraction. Everything which to the intellectual mind is abstract has a concreteness, substantiality which is more real than the sensible form of an object or of a physical event. To him, consciousness is the very stuff of existence and he can feel it everywhere enveloping and penetrating the stone as much as man or the animal. A movement, a flow of consciousness is not to him an image but a fact. What is to be done under these circumstances? The mystical poet can only describe what he has felt, seen in himself or others or in the world just as he has felt or seen it or experienced through exact vision, close contact or identity and leave it to the general reader to understand or not understand or misunderstand according to his capacity. A new kind of poetry demands a new mentality in the recipient as well as in the writer.

Another question is the place of philosophy in poetry or whether it has any place at all. Some romanticists seem to believe that the poet has no right to think at all, only to see and feel. I hold that philosophy has its place and can even take a leading place along with psychological experience as it does in the Gita. All depends on how it is done, whether it is a dry or a living philosophy, an arid intellectual statement or the expression not only of the living truth of thought but of something of its beauty, its light or its power.

The theory which discourages the poet from thinking or at least from thinking for the sake of the thought proceeds from an extreme romanticist temper; it reaches its acme on one side in the question of the surrealist, “Why do you want poetry to mean anything?” and on the other in Housman’s exaltation of pure poetry which he describes paradoxically as a sort of sublime nonsense which does not appeal at all to the mental intelligence but knocks at the solar plexus and awakes a vital and physical rather than intellectual sensation and response. It is of course not that really but a vividness of imagination and feeling which disregards the mind’s positive view of things and its logical sequences; the centre or centres it knocks at are not the brain-mind, not even the poetic intelligence but the subtle physical, the nervous, the vital or the psychic centre. The poem he quotes from Blake is certainly not nonsense, but it has no positive and exact meaning for the intellect or the surface mind; it expresses certain things that are true and real, not nonsense but a deeper sense which we feel powerfully with a great stirring of some inner emotion, but any attempt at exact intellectual statement of them sterilises their sense and spoils their appeal. This is not the method of the highest spiritual poetry. Its expression aims at a certain force, directness and spiritual clarity and reality. When it is not understood, it is because the truths it expresses are unfamiliar to the ordinary mind or belong to an untrodden domain or domains or enter into a field of occult experience; it is not because there is any attempt at a dark or vague profundity or at an escape from thought. The thinking is not intellectual but intuitive or more than intuitive, always expressing a vision, a spiritual contact or a knowledge which has come by entering into the thing itself, by identity.

It may be noted that the greater romantic poets did not shun thought; they thought abundantly, almost endlessly. They have their characteristic view of life, something that one might call their philosophy, their world-view, and they express it. Keats was the most romantic of poets, but he could write “To philosophise I dare not yet”; he did not write “I am too much of a poet to philosophise.” To philosophise he regarded evidently as mounting on the admiral’s flag-ship and flying an almost royal banner.

Spiritual philosophic poetry is different; it expresses or tries to express a total and many-sided vision and experience of all the planes of being and their action upon each other. Whatever language, whatever terms are necessary to convey this truth of vision and experience it uses without scruple, not admitting any mental rule of what is or is not poetic. It does not hesitate to employ terms which might be considered as technical when these can be turned to express something direct, vivid and powerful. That need not be an introduction of technical jargon, that is to say, I suppose, special and artificial language, expressing in this case only abstract ideas and generalities without any living truth or reality in them. Such jargon cannot make good literature, much less good poetry. But there is a "poeticism" which establishes a sanitary cordon against words and ideas which it considers as prosaic but which properly used can strengthen poetry and extend its range. That limitation I do not admit as legitimate.

I am justifying a poet's right to think as well as to see and feel, his right to "dare to philosophise". I agree with the modernists in their revolt against the romanticist's insistence on emotionalism and his objection to thinking and philosophical reflection in poetry. But the modernist went too far in his revolt. In trying to avoid what I may call poeticism he ceased to be poetic; wishing to escape from rhetorical writing, rhetorical pretension to greatness and beauty of style, he threw out true poetic greatness and beauty, turned from a deliberately poetic style to a colloquial tone and even to very flat writing; especially he turned away from poetic rhythm to a prose or half-prose rhythm or to no rhythm at all. Also he has weighed too much on thought and has lost the habit of intuitive sight; by turning emotion out of its intimate chamber in the house of Poetry, he has had to bring in to relieve the dryness of much of his thought, too much exaggeration of the lower vital and sensational reactions untransformed or else transformed only by exaggeration. Nevertheless he has perhaps restored to the poet the freedom to think as well as to adopt a certain straightforwardness and directness of style.

Now I come to the law prohibiting repetition. This rule aims at a certain kind of intellectual elegance which comes into poetry when the poetic intelligence and the call for a refined and classical taste begin to predominate. It regards poetry as a cultural entertainment and amusement of the highly civilised mind; it interests by a faultless art of words, a constant and ingenious invention, a sustained novelty of ideas, incidents, word and phrase. An unfailing variety or the outward appearance of it is one of the elegances of this art. But all poetry is not of this kind; its rule does not apply to poets like Homer or Valmiki or other early writers. The Veda might almost be described as a mass of repetitions; so might the work of Vaishnava poets and the poetic literature of devotion generally in India. Arnold has noted this distinction when speaking of Homer; he mentioned especially that there is nothing objectionable in the close repetition of the same word in the Homeric way of writing. In many things Homer seems to make a point of repeating himself. He has stock descriptions, epithets always reiterated, lines even which are constantly repeated again and again when the same incident returns in his narrative, e.g. the line,

> doupēsen de pesōn arabēse de teuche' ep' autōi.
> "Down with a thud he fell and his armour clangoured upon him."

He does not hesitate also to repeat the bulk of a line with a variation at the end, e.g.

> bē de kat' Oulumpoio karēnōn chōomenos kēr.

And again the

> bē de kat' Oulumpoio karēnōn aïxasa.

"Down from the peaks of Olympus he came, wrath vexing his heart-strings" and again, "Down from the peaks of Olympus she came impetuously darting." He begins another line elsewhere with the same word and a similar action and with the same nature of a human movement physical and psychological in a scene of Nature, here a man's silent sorrow listening to the roar of the ocean:

> bē d’akeōn para thina poluphloisboio thalassēs
> “Silent he walked by the shore of the many-rumoured ocean.”

In mystic poetry also repetition is not objectionable; it is resorted to by many poets, sometimes with insistence. I may note as an example the constant repetition of the word Ritam, truth, sometimes eight or nine times in a short poem of nine or ten stanzas and often in the same line. This does not weaken the poem, it gives it a singular power and beauty. The repetition of the same key ideas, key images and symbols, key words or phrases, key epithets, sometimes key lines or half lines is a constant feature. They give an atmosphere, a significant structure, a sort of psychological frame, an architecture. The object here is not to amuse or entertain but the self-expression of an inner truth, a seeing of things and ideas not familiar to the common mind, a bringing out of inner experience. It is the true more than the new that the poet is after. He uses *āvṛtti*, repetition, as one of the most powerful means of carrying home what has been thought or seen and fixing it in the mind in an atmosphere of light and beauty. Moreover, the object is not only to present a secret truth in its true form and true vision but to drive it home by the finding of the true word, the true phrase, the *mot juste*, the true image or symbol, if possible the inevitable word; if that is there, nothing else, repetition included, matters much. This is natural when the repetition is intended, serves a purpose; but it can hold even when the repetition is not deliberate but comes in naturally in the stream of the inspiration. I see, therefore, no objection to the recurrence of the same or similar image such as sea and ocean, sky and heaven in a lone long passage provided each is the right thing and rightly worded in its place. The same rule applies to words, epithets, ideas. It is only if the repetition is clumsy or awkward, too burdensomely insistent, at once unneeded and inexpressive or amounts to a disagreeable and meaningless echo that it must be rejected. 19 March 1946

Repetition of Images in Mystic Poetry

What she writes has a living beauty in it. But this constant repetition of the same images has been there since the beginning. It is perhaps inevitable in a restricted mystic vision; for you find it in the Veda and the Vaishnava poets and everywhere almost. To be more various one must get a wide consciousness where all is possible. 17 February 1937

Mystic Poetry and Spiritual Poetry

I do not remember the context of the passage you quote from *The Future Poetry*,[3] but I suppose I meant to contrast the veiled utterance of what is usually called mystic poetry with the luminous and assured clarity of the fully expressed spiritual experience. I did not mean to contrast it with the mental clarity which is aimed at usually by poetry in which the intelligence or thinking mind is consulted at each step. The concreteness of intellectual imaged description is one thing and spiritual concreteness is another. "Two birds, companions, seated on one tree, but one eats the fruit, the other eats not but watches his fellow" — that has an illumining spiritual clarity and concreteness to one who has had the experience, but mentally and intellectually it might mean anything or nothing. Poetry uttered with the spiritual clarity may be compared to sunlight — poetry uttered with the mystic veil to moonlight. But it was not my intention to deny beauty, power or value to the moonlight. Note that I have distinguished between two kinds of mysticism, one in which the realisation or experience is vague, though inspiringly vague, the other in which the experience is revelatory and intimate, but the utterance it finds is veiled by the image, not thoroughly revealed by it. I do not know to which Tagore's recent poetry belongs, I have not read it.

---

[3] *" . . . mysticism in its unfavourable or lesser sense comes when either we glimpse but do not intimately realise the now secret things of the spirit or, realising, yet cannot find their direct language, their intrinsic way of utterance, and have to use obscurely luminous hints or a thick drapery of symbol, when we have the revelation, but not the inspiration, the sight but not the word." — Sri Aurobindo,* The Future Poetry, *volume 26 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 213–14.*

The latter kind of poetry (where there is the intimate experience) can be of great power and value — witness Blake. Revelation is greater than inspiration — it brings the direct knowledge and seeing, inspiration gives the expression, but the two are not always equal. There is even an inspiration without revelation, when one gets the word but the thing remains behind the veil; the transcribing consciousness expresses something with power, like a medium, of which it has not itself the direct sight or the living possession. It is better to get the sight of the thing itself than merely express it by an inspiration which comes from behind the veil, but this kind of poetry too has often a great light and power in it. The highest inspiration brings the *intrinsic* word, the spiritual mantra; but even where the inspiration is less than that, has a certain vagueness or fluidity of outline, you cannot say of such mystic poetry that it has no inspiration, not the inspired word at all. Where there is no inspiration, there can be no poetry. 10 June 1936

Spiritual Poetry

The spiritual vision must never be intellectual, philosophical or abstract, it must always give the sense of something vivid, living and concrete, a thing of vibrant beauty or a thing of power. An abstract spiritual poetry is possible but that is not Amal's manner. The poetry of spiritual vision as distinct from that of spiritual thought abounds in images, unavoidably because that is the straight way to avoid abstractness; but these images must be felt as very real and concrete things, otherwise they become like the images used by the philosophic poets, decorative to the thought rather than realities of the inner vision and experience.

28 May 1937

*

Spiritual imagery is perfectly free. Occult imagery usually fixes itself to a system of symbols, otherwise it can't be understood even by the initiates. But spiritual imagery is usually simple and clear. 26 January 1937

Use of "High Light" Words in Spiritual Poetry

A. E.'s remarks about "immensity" etc. are very interesting to me; for these are the very words, with others like them, that are constantly recurring at short intervals in my poetry when I express, not spiritual thought, but spiritual experience. I knew perfectly well that this recurrence would be objected to as bad technique or an inadmissible technique; but this seems to me a reasoning from the conventions of a past order which cannot apply to a new poetry dealing with spiritual things. A new art of words written from a new consciousness demands a new technique. A. E. himself admits that this rule makes a great difficulty because these "high light" words are few in the English language. This solution may do well enough for him, because the realisations which they represent are in him *mental* realisations or intuitions occurring on the summits of the consciousness, rare "high lights" over the low tones of the ordinary natural or occult experience (ordinary, of course, to him, not to the average man), and so his solution does not violate the truth of his vision, does not misrepresent the balance or harmony of its natural tones. But what of one who lives in an atmosphere full of these high lights — in a consciousness in which the finite, not only the occult but even the earthly finite is bathed in the sense of the eternal, the illimitable and infinite, the immensities or intimacies of the timeless. To follow A. E.'s rule might well mean to falsify this atmosphere, to substitute a merely aesthetic fabrication for a true seeing and experience. Truth first — a technique expressive of the truth in the forms of beauty has to be found, if it does not exist. It is no use arguing from the spiritual inadequacy of the English language; the inadequacy does not exist and, even if it did, the language will have to be made adequate. It has been plastic enough in the past to succeed in expressing all that it was asked to express, however new; it must now be urged to a new progress. In fact, the power is there and has only to be brought out more fully to serve the full occult, mystic, spiritual purpose.

5 February 1932

Spiritual Poetry in India

But what a change in India. Once religious or spiritual poetry held the first place (Tukaram, Mirabai, Tulsidas, Surdas, the Tamil Alwars and Shaiva poets, and a number of others) — and now spiritual poetry is not poetry, altogether অচল! But luckily things are সচল and the movability may bring back an older and sounder feeling.

Poet, Yogi, Rishi, Prophet, Genius

The Poet, the Yogi and the Rishi

It is quite natural for the poets to vaunt their *métier* as the highest reach of human capacity and themselves as the top of creation; it is also natural for the intellectuals to run down the Yogi or the Rishi who claims to reach a higher consciousness than that which they conceive to be the summit of human achievement. The poet indeed lives still in the mind and is not yet a spiritual seer, but he represents to the human intellect the highest point of mental seership where the imagination tries to figure and embody in words its intuition of things, though that stands far below the vision of things that can be grasped only by spiritual experience. It is for that the poet is exalted as the real seer and prophet. There is too, helping the idea, the error of the modern or European mentality which so easily confuses the mentalised vital or life being with the soul and the idealising mind with spirituality. The poet imaging mental or physical beauty is for the outer mind something more spiritual than the seer or the God-lover experiencing the eternal peace or the ineffable ecstasy. Yet the Rishi or Yogi can drink of a deeper draught of Beauty and Delight than the imagination of the poet at its highest can conceive. (রসো বৈ সঃ — *The Divine is Delight.*) And it is not only the unseen Beauty that he can see but the visible and tangible also has for him a face of the All-Beautiful which the mind cannot discover. 10 November 1934

*

You seem almost to say that the poet is necessarily not a seer or Rishi. But if the mere poet is not a Rishi, the Rishi after all can be a poet — the greater can contain the less, even though the less is not the greater. 11 November 1934

*

A Rishi is one who *sees* or discovers an inner truth and puts it into self-effective language — the mantra. Either new truth or old truth made new by expression and intuitive realisation.

He [*Ramana Maharshi*] has experienced certain eternal truths by process of Yoga — I don't think it is by Rishilike intuition or illumination, nor has he the mantra.

10 February 1936

*

A Rishi may be a Yogi, but also he may not; a Yogi too may be a Rishi, but also he may not. Just as a philosopher may or may not be a poet and a poet may or may not be a philosopher.

Poetic intuition and illumination is not the same thing as Rishi intuition and illumination. 11 February 1936

The Poet and the Prophet

Essentially the poet's value lies in his poetic and not in his prophetic power. If he is a prophet also, the intrinsic worth of his prophecy lies in its own value, his poetic merit does not add to that, only it gives to its expression a power that perhaps it would not have otherwise. 7 November 1934

The Poet and the Verse Writer

No poet feels his poetry as a "normal phenomenon" — he feels it as an inspiration — of course anybody could "make" poetry by learning the rules of prosody and a little practice. In fact many people write verse, but the poets are few. Who are the ordinary poets? There is no such thing as an ordinary poet.

30 June 1936

*

All that is written in metre is called verse. If it is written with inspiration, it is poetry. 27 May 1937

The "Born" Poet

You must remember that you are not a "born" poet — you are trying to bring out something from the Unmanifest inside you. You can't demand that that should be an easy job. It may come out suddenly and without apparent reason like the Ananda — but you can't demand it. The pangs of delivery cannot always be avoided. 8 June 1934

*

A born poet is usually a genius, poetry with any power or beauty in it implies genius. 13 February 1936

Poetic Genius

Poetic genius — without which there cannot be any originality — is inborn, but it takes time to come out — the first work even of great poets is often unoriginal. That is in ordinary life. In Yoga poetic originality can come by an opening from within, even if it was not there before in such a way as to be available in this life. 22 March 1934

*

For poetry one must have a special inspiration or genius. With literary capacity one can write good verse only.

Genius usually means an inborn power which develops of itself. Talent and capacity are not genius, that can be acquired. But that is the ordinary rule, by Yoga one can manifest what is concealed in the being. 22 September 1934

Genius

I never heard of anyone getting genius by effort. One can increase one's talent by training and labour, but genius is a gift of Nature. By sadhana it is different, one can do it; but that is not the fruit of effort, but either of an inflow or by an opening or liberation of some impersonal power or manifestation of unmanifested

power. No rule can be made in such things; it depends on persons and circumstances how far the manifestation of genius by Yoga will go or what shape it will take or to what degree or height it will rise.
28 July 1938

*

Of course it is quite possible to be an idiot and a genius at the same time — one can, that is to say, be the medium of a specialised and specific force which leaves the rest of the being brute stuff, unchanged and undeveloped. Genius is a phenomenon *sui generis* and many anomalies occur in its constitution by Nature.
13 February 1936

The Poet and the Poem

Power of Expression and Spiritual Experience

All depends on the power of expression of the poet. A poet like Shakespeare or Shelley or Wordsworth though without spiritual experience may in an inspired moment become the medium of an expression of spiritual Truth which is beyond him and the expression, as it is not that of his own mind, may be very powerful and living, not merely aesthetically agreeable. On the other hand a poet with spiritual experience may be hampered by his medium or by his transcribing brain or by an insufficient mastery of language and rhythm and give an expression which may mean much to him but not convey the power and breath of it to others. The English poets of the 17th century often used a too intellectual mode of expression for their poetry to be a means of living communication to others — except in rare moments of an unusual vision and inspiration; it is these that give their work its value. 8 July 1935

Experience and Imagination

But is it necessary to say which is which?[1] It is not possible to deny that it was an experience, even if one cannot affirm it — not being in the consciousness of the writer. But even if it is an imagination, it is a powerful poetic imagination which expresses what would be the exact feeling in the real experience. It seems to me that that is quite enough. There are so many things in Wordsworth and Shelley which people say were only mental feelings and imaginations and yet they express the deeper seeings or feelings of the seer. For poetry it seems to me the point *is* irrelevant. 27 May 1936

---

[1] *Someone said to the correspondent, in regard to a certain poem: "This may not be an experience at all; who knows if it is not an imagination, and how are we to say which is which?" — Ed.*

Poetic Expression and Personal Feeling

What you say is quite true. Poets are mediums for a force of vision and expression that is not theirs, so they need not feel except by reflection the emotions they utter. But of course that is not always the case — sometimes they express what they feel or at any rate what a part of their being feels. 25 September 1934

*

What the poets feel when writing (those who are truly inspired) is the great Ananda of creation, possession by a great Power superior to their ordinary minds which puts some emotion or vision of things into a form of beauty. They feel the emotion of the thing they express, but not always as a personal feeling, but as something which seizes hold of them for self-expression. But the personal feeling also may form a basis for the creation.

26 September 1934

*

These designations, a magnified ego, an exalted outlook of the vital mind, apply in sadhana, but hardly to poetic expression which lifts or ought to lift to a field of pure personal-impersonal *bhāva*. An utterance of this kind can express a state of consciousness or an experience which is not necessarily the writer's personal position or ego attitude but that of an inner spirit. So long as it is so the question of ego does not arise. It arises only if one turns away from the poem to the writer and asks in what mood he wrote it and that is a question of psychological fact alien to the purpose of poetry. 29 June 1935

The Two Parts of the Poetic Creator

Your poem[2] is forcible enough, but the quality is rather rhetorical than poetic. Yet at the end there are two lines that are very fine poetry

---

[2] To a German Soldier Left Behind in Retreat *by Arjava. — Ed.*

> Gay singing birds caught in a ring of fire

and

> A silent scorn that sears Eternity.

If you could not write the whole in that strain, which would have made it epic almost in pitch, it is, I think, because your indignation was largely mental and moral, the emotion though very strong being too much intellectualised in expression to give the poetic intensity of speech and movement. Indignation, the *saeva indignatio* of Juvenal, can produce poetry, but it must be either vividly a vital revolt which stirs the whole feeling into a white heat of self-expression — as in Milton's famous sonnet — or a high spiritual or deep psychic rejection of the undivine. Besides, it is well known that the emotion of the external being, in the raw as it were, does not make good material for poetry; it has to be transmuted into something deeper, less externally personal, more permanent before it can be turned into good poetry. There are always two parts of oneself which collaborate in poetry — the instrumental which lives and feels what is written, makes a sort of projective identification with it, and the Seer-Creator within who is not involved, but sees the inner significance of it and listens for the word that shall entirely express this significance. It is in some meeting-place of these two that what is felt or lived is transmuted into true stuff of poetry. Probably you are not sufficiently detached from this particular life-experience and the reactions it created to go back deeper into yourself and transmute it in this way. And yet you have done it in the two magnificent lines I have noted, which have the virtue of seizing the inner significance behind the thing experienced in the poetic or interpretative and not in the outward mental way. The first of these two lines conveys the pathos and tragedy of the thing and also the stupidity of the waste much more effectively than pages of denunciation or comment and the other stresses with an extraordinary power in a few words the problem as flung by the revolting human mind and life against the Cosmic Impersonal.

The detachment of which you speak, comes by attaining the poise of the Spirit, the equality, of which the Gita speaks always, but also by sight, by knowledge. For instance, looking at what happened in 1914 — or for that matter at all that is and has been happening in human history — the eye of the Yogin sees not only the outward events and persons and causes, but the enormous forces which precipitate them into action. If the men who fought were instruments in the hands of rulers and financiers, these in turn were mere puppets in the clutch of those forces. When one is habituated to see the things behind, one is no longer prone to be touched by the outward aspects — or to expect any remedy from political, institutional or social changes; the only way out is through the descent of a consciousness which is not the puppet of these forces but is greater than they are and can compel them either to change or disappear. 17 July 1931

Personal Character and Creative Work

The statement that a man's poetry or art need not express anything that has happened in his outer personal life is too obvious to be made so much of; the real point is how far his work can be supposed to be a transcript of his inner mind or mental life. It is obvious that his vital cast, his character may have very little to do with his writing, it may be its very opposite. His physical mind also does not determine it; the physical mind of a romantic poet or artist may very well be that of a commonplace respectable bourgeois. One who in his fiction is a benevolent philanthropist and reformer full of sentimental pathos, gushful sympathy or cheery optimistic sunshine may have been in actual life selfish, hard, even cruel. All that is now well known and illustrated by numerous examples in the lives of great poets and artists. It is evidently in the inner mental personality of a man that the key to his creation must be discovered, not in "his" outward mind or life or not solely or chiefly these. But a poem or work of art need not be (though it may be) an exact transcription of a mental or spiritual experience; even, if the creating mind takes up an incident of the life, a vital impression, emotion or reaction that had actually taken place, it need not be anything more than a starting point for the poetic creation. The "I" of a poem is more often than not a dramatic or representative I, nothing less and nothing more. But it does not help to fall back on the imagination and say that a man's poetry or art is only the web of his imagination working with whatever material it may happen to choose. The question is how the imagination of a poet came to be cast in this peculiar mould which differentiates him as a creator not only from the millions who do not create but from all other poetic creators. There are two possible answers. A poet or artist may be merely a medium for a creative Force which uses him as a channel and is concerned only with expression in art and not with the man's personality or his inner or outer life. Or, man being a multiple personality, a crowd of personalities which are tangled up on the surface, but separate within, the poet or artist in him may be only one of these many personalities concerned solely with its inner and creative function; it may retire when the creative act is over leaving the field to the others. In his work the poet personality may — or may not — use the experiences of the others as material for his work, but he will then modify them to suit his own turns and tendencies or express his own ideal of self or ideal of things. He may too take a hand in the life of the composite personality, meddle with the activity of the others, try to square their make-up and action with his own images and ideals. In fact there is a mixture of the two things that makes the poet. Fundamentally he is a medium for the creative Force, which acts through him and uses or picks up anything stored up in his mind from its inner life or its memories or impressions of outer life and things, or anything subconscious, subliminal or superconscious in him, anything it can or cares to make use of and it moulds it as it chooses for its purpose. But still it is through the poet personality in him that it works and this poet personality may be either a mere reed through which the Spirit blows but which is laid aside after the tune is over or it may be an active power having some say even in the surface mental composition and vital and physical activities of the total composite creature. In that general possibility there is room for a hundred degrees and variations and no rule can be laid down that covers all possible or actual cases. 7 November 1935

Literary Style and Hereditary Influences

It seems to me that this statement[3] is quite untrue. A man's style expresses himself, not the sum and outcome of his ancestors.
24 January 1937

Life-Experience and Literary Creation

Emotion alone is not enough for producing anything that can be called great creation. It can bring out something lyrical and slight or subjectively expressive and interpretative; but for a great or significant creation there must be a background of life, a vital rich and stored or a mind and an imagination that has seen much and observed much or a soul that has striven and been conscious of its strivings. These or at least one or other of them are needed, but a limited and ignorant way of living is not likely to produce them. There may indeed be a lucky accident even in the worst circumstances — but one cannot count on accidents. A George Eliot, a George Sand, a Virginia Woolf, a Sappho, or even a Comtesse de Noailles grew up in other circumstances.
30 April 1933

*

What a stupidly rigid principle![4] Can Buddhadev really write nothing except what he has seen or experienced? What an unimaginative man he must be! And how dull his stories must be and how limited.

---

[3] *"For style in the full sense is more than the deliberate and designed creation, more even than the unconscious and involuntary creation, of the individual man who therein expresses himself. The self that he thus expresses is a bundle of inherited tendencies that came the man himself can never entirely know whence." — Havelock Ellis,* The Dance of Life *(London: Constable, 1923), p. 175.*

[4] *The Bengali writer Buddhadev Bose remarked that great literature could not be produced by people living in entire seclusion in Pondicherry. — Ed.*

I wonder whether Victor Hugo had to live in a convicts' prison before he created Jean Valjean. Certainly one has to look at life, but there is no obligation to copy faithfully from life. The man of imagination carries a world in himself and a mere hint or suggestion from life is enough to start it going. It is recognised now that Balzac and Dickens created out of themselves their greatest characters which were not at all faithful to the life around them. Balzac's descriptions of society are hopelessly wrong, he knew nothing about it, but his world is much more striking and real than the actual world around him which he misrepresented — even life has imitated the figures he made rather than the other way round.

Besides who is living in entire seclusion in Pondicherry? There are living men and women around you and human nature is in full play here as much as in the biggest city — only one has to have an eye to see what is within them and the imagination that takes a few bricks and can make out of them a great edifice — one must be able to see that human nature is one everywhere and pick out of it the essential things or the interesting things that can be turned into great art. 26 May 1934

The Illusion of Realism

I am afraid your correspondent is under the grip of what I may call the illusion of realism. What all artists do is to take something from life — even if it be only a partial hint — and transfer it by the magic of their imagination and make a world of their own; the realists, e.g., Zola, Tolstoy, do it as much as anybody else. Each artist is a creator of his own world — why then insist on this legal fiction that the artist's world must appear as an exact imitation of the actual world around us? Even if it does so seem, that is only a skilful make-up, an appearance. It may be constructed to look like that — but why must it be? The characters and creations of even the most sternly objective fiction, much more the characters and creations of poetry live by the law of their own life, which is something in the inner mind of their creator — they cannot be constructed as copies of things outside.

30 January 1933

Section Three

Poetic Technique

Technique, Inspiration, Artistry

Inspiration and Technique

You do not need at all to afflict your inspiration by studying metrical technique — you have all the technique you need, within you. I have *never* studied prosody myself — in English, at least, — what I know I know by reading and writing and following my ear and using my intelligence. If one is interested in the technical study of prosody for its own sake, that is another matter — but it is not at all indispensable. 28 April 1934

Knowledge of Technique and Intuitive Cognition

As for the technique, there are two different things, the intellectual knowledge which one applies, the intuitive cognition which acts in its own right, even if it is not actually possessed by the worker. Many poets for instance have little knowledge of metrical or linguistic technique and cannot explain how they write or what are the qualities and elements of their success, but they write all the same things that are perfect in rhythm and language. Intellectual knowledge of technique helps of course, provided one does not make of it a mere device or a rigid fetter. There are some arts that cannot be done well without some technical knowledge, e.g. painting, sculpture. 14 May 1936

Artistry of Technique

I don't know that Swinburne failed for this reason — before assenting to such a dictum I should like to know which were these poems he spoiled by too much artistry of technique. So far as I remember, his best poems are those in which he is most perfect in artistry, most curious or skilful, most subtle. I think his decline began when he felt himself too much at ease and poured himself out in an endless waste of melody without caring for substance and the finer finenesses of form. Attention to technique harms only when a writer is so busy with it that he becomes indifferent to substance. But if the substance is adequate, the attention to technique can only give it greater beauty. Even devices like a refrain, internal rhymes, etc. can indeed be great aids to the inspiration and the expression — just as can ordinary rhyme. It is in my view a serious error to regard metre or rhyme as artificial elements, mere external and superfluous equipment restraining the movement and sincerity of poetic form. Metre, on the contrary, is the most natural mould of expression for certain states of creative emotion and vision, it is much more natural and spontaneous than a non-metrical form; the emotion expresses itself best and most powerfully in a balanced rather than in a loose and shapeless rhythm. The search for technique is simply the search for the best and most appropriate form for expressing what has to be said and once it is found, the inspiration can flow quite naturally and fluently into it. There can be no harm therefore in close attention to technique so long as there is no inattention to substance. 24 August 1935

*

There are only two conditions about artistry: (1) that the artistry does not become so exterior as to be no longer art and (2) that substance (in which of course I include *bhāva*) is not left behind in the desert or else art and *bhāva* not woven into each other.

*

Swinburne's defect is his preference of sound to sense, but I would find it difficult to find fault with his music or his rhythmical method. There is no reason why one should not use assonance and alliteration, if one knows how to use them as Swinburne did. Everybody cannot succeed like that and those who cannot must be careful and restrained in their use.

2 November 1934

Art for Art's Sake

Art for Art's sake? But what after all is meant by this slogan and what is the real issue behind it? Is it meant, as I think it was when the slogan first came into use, that the technique, the artistry is all in all? The contention would then be that it does not matter what you write or paint or sculpt or what music you make or about what you make it so long as it is beautiful writing, competent painting, good sculpture, fine music. It is very evidently true in a certain sense, — in this sense that whatever is perfectly expressed or represented or interpreted under the conditions of a given art proves itself by that very fact to be legitimate material for the artist's labour. But that free admission cannot be confined only to all objects, however common or deemed to be vulgar — an apple, a kitchen pail, a donkey, a dish of carrots, — it can give a right of citizenship in the domain of art to a moral theme or thesis, a philosophic conclusion, a social experiment; even the Five Years' Plan or the proceedings of a District Board or the success of a drainage scheme, an electric factory or a big hotel can be brought, after the most modern or the still more robustious Bolshevik mode, into the artist's province. For, technique being all, the sole question would be whether he as poet, novelist, dramatist, painter or sculptor has been able to triumph over the difficulties and bring out creatively the possibilities of his subject. There is no logical basis here for accepting an apple and rejecting the Apple-Cart. But still you may say that at least the object of the artist must be art only, — even if he treats ethical, social or political questions, he must not make it his main object to wing with the enthusiasm of aesthetic creation a moral, social or political aim. But if in doing it he satisfies the conditions of his art, shows a perfect technique and in it beauty, power, perfection, why not? The moralist, preacher, philosopher, social or political enthusiast is often doubled with an artist — as shining proofs and examples there are Plato and Shelley, to go no farther. Only, you can say of him on the basis of this theory that as a work of art his creation should be judged by its success of craftsmanship and not by its contents; it is not made greater by the value of his ethical ideas, his enthusiasms or his metaphysical seekings.

But then the theory itself is true only up to a certain point. For technique is a means of expression; one does not write merely to use beautiful words or paint for the sole sake of line and colour; there is something that one is trying through these means to express or to discover. What is that something? The first answer would be — it is the creation, it is the discovery of Beauty. Art is for that alone and can be judged only by its revelation or discovery of Beauty. Whatever is capable of being manifested as Beauty, is the material of the artist. But there is not only physical beauty in the world — there is moral, intellectual, spiritual beauty also. Still one might say that Art for Art's sake means that only what is aesthetically beautiful must be expressed and all that contradicts the aesthetic sense of beauty must be avoided, — Art has nothing to do with Life in itself, things in themselves, Good, Truth or the Divine for their own sake, but only in so far as they appeal to some aesthetic sense of beauty. And that would seem to be a sound basis for excluding the Five Years' Plan, a moral sermon or a philosophical treatise. But here again, what after all is Beauty? How much is it in the thing itself and how much in the consciousness that perceives it? Is not the eye of the artist constantly catching some element of aesthetic value in the plain, the ugly, the sordid, the repellent and triumphantly conveying it through his material, — through the word, through line and colour, through the sculptured shape?

There is a certain state of Yogic consciousness in which all things become beautiful to the eye of the seer simply because they spiritually are — because they are a rendering in line and form of the quality and force of existence, of the consciousness, of the Ananda that rules the worlds, — of the hidden Divine. What a thing is to the exterior sense may not be, often is not beautiful for the ordinary aesthetic vision, but the Yogin sees in it the something More which the external eye does not see, he sees the soul behind, the self and spirit, he sees too lines, hues, harmonies and expressive dispositions which are not to the first surface sight visible or seizable. It may be said that he brings into the object something that is in himself, transmutes it by adding out of his own being to it — as the artist too does something of the same kind but in another way. It is not quite that however, — what the Yogin sees, what the artist sees, is there — his is a transmuting vision because it is a revealing vision; he discovers behind what the object appears to be the something More that it is. And so from this point of view of a realised supreme harmony all is or can be subject-matter for the artist because in all he can discover and reveal the Beauty that is everywhere. Again we land ourselves in a devastating catholicity; for here too one cannot pull up short at any given line. It may be a hard saying that one must or may discover and reveal beauty in a pig or its poke or in a parish pump or an advertisement of somebody's pills, and yet something like that seems to be what modern Art and literature are trying with vigour and a conscientious labour to do. By extension one ought to be able to extract beauty equally well out of morality or social reform or a political caucus or allow at least that all these things can, if he wills, become legitimate subjects for the artist. Here too one cannot say that it is on condition he thinks of beauty only and does not make moralising or social reform or a political idea his main object. For if with that idea foremost in his mind he still produces a great work of art, discovering Beauty as he moves to his aim, proving himself in spite of his unaesthetic preoccupations a great artist, it is all we can justly ask from him — whatever his starting point — to be a creator of Beauty. Art is discovery and revelation of Beauty and we can say nothing more by way of prohibition or limiting rule.

But there is one thing more that can be said, and it makes a big difference. In the Yogin's vision of universal beauty all becomes beautiful, but all is not reduced to a single level. There are gradations, there is a hierarchy in this All-Beauty and we see that it depends on the ascending power (vibhuti) of consciousness and Ananda that expresses itself in the object. All is the Divine, but some things are more divine than others. In the artist's vision too there are or can be gradations, a hierarchy of values. Shakespeare can get dramatic and therefore aesthetic values out of Dogberry and Malvolio, and he is as thorough a creative artist in his treatment of them as in his handling of Macbeth or Lear. But if we had only Dogberry or Malvolio to testify to Shakespeare's genius, no Macbeth, no Lear, would he be so great a dramatic artist and creator as he now is? It is in the varying possibilities of one subject or another that there lies an immense difference. Apelles' grapes deceived the birds that came to peck at them, but there was more aesthetic content in the Zeus of Phidias, a greater content of consciousness and therefore of Ananda to express and with it to fill in and intensify the essential principle of Beauty even though the essence of beauty might be realised perhaps with equal aesthetic perfection by either artist and in either theme.

And that is because just as technique is not all, so even Beauty is not all in Art. Art is not only technique or form of Beauty, not only the discovery or the expression of Beauty, — it is a self-expression of Consciousness under the conditions of aesthetic vision and a perfect execution. Or to put it otherwise there are not only aesthetic values but life-values, mind-values, soul-values, that enter into Art. The artist puts out into form not only the powers of his own consciousness but the powers of the Consciousness that has made the worlds and their objects. And if that Consciousness according to the Vedantic view is fundamentally equal everywhere, it is still in manifestation not an equal power in all things. There is more of the Divine expression in the Vibhuti than in the common man, *prākṛto janaḥ*; in some forms of life there are less potentialities for the self-expression of the Spirit than in others. And there are also gradations of consciousness which make a difference, if not in the aesthetic value or greatness of a work of art, yet in its contents value. Homer makes beauty out of man's outward life and action and stops there. Shakespeare rises one step farther and reveals to us a life-soul and life-forces and life-values to which Homer had no access. In Valmiki and Vyasa there is the constant presence of great Idea-Forces and Ideals supporting life and its movements which were beyond the scope of Homer and Shakespeare. And beyond the Ideals and Idea-Forces even there are other presences, more inner or inmost realities, a soul behind things and beings, the spirit and its powers, which could be the subject-matter of an art still more rich and deep and abundant in its interest than any of these could be. A poet finding these and giving them a voice with a genius equal to that of the poets of the past might not be greater than they in a purely aesthetical valuation, but his art's contents-value, its consciousness-values could be deeper and higher and much fuller than in any achievement before him. There is something here that goes beyond any considerations of Art for Art's sake or Art for Beauty's sake; for while these stress usefully sometimes the indispensable first elements of artistic creation, they would limit too much the creation itself if they stood for the exclusion of the something More that compels Art to change always in its constant seeking for more and more that must be expressed of the concealed or the revealed Divine, of the individual and the universal or the transcendent Spirit.

If we take these three elements as making the whole of Art, perfection of expressive form, discovery of beauty, revelation of the soul and essence of things and the powers of creative consciousness and Ananda of which they are the vehicles, then we shall get perhaps a solution which includes the two sides of the controversy and reconciles their difference. Art for Art's sake certainly — Art as a perfect form and discovery of Beauty; but also Art for the soul's sake, the spirit's sake and the expression of all that the soul, the spirit wants to seize through the medium of beauty. In that self-expression there are grades and hierarchies — widenings and steps that lead to the summits. And not only to enlarge Art towards the widest wideness but to ascend with it to the heights that climb towards the Highest is and must be part both of our aesthetic and our spiritual endeavour.

17 April 1933

Rhythm

Two Factors in Poetic Rhythm

If your purpose is to acquire not only metrical skill but the sense and the power of rhythm, to study the poets may do something, but not all. There are two factors in poetic rhythm, — there is the technique (the variation of movement without spoiling the fundamental structure of the metre, right management of vowel and consonantal assonances and dissonances, the masterful combination of the musical element of stress with the less obvious element of quantity, etc.), and there is the secret soul of rhythm which uses but exceeds these things. The first you can learn, if you read with your ear always in a *tapasyā* of vigilant attention to these constituents, but without the second what you achieve may be technically faultless and even skilful, but poetically a dead letter. This soul of rhythm can only be found by listening in to what is behind the music of words and sounds and things. You will get something of it by listening for that subtler element in great poetry, but mostly it must either grow or suddenly open in yourself. This sudden opening can come if the Power within wishes to express itself in that way. I have seen more than once a sudden flowering of capacities in every kind of activity come by a rapid opening of the consciousness, so that one who laboured long without the least success to express himself in rhythm becomes a master of poetic language and cadences almost in a day. Poetry is a question of the right concentrated silence or seeking somewhere in the mind with the right openness to the Word that is trying to express itself — for the Word is there ready to descend in those inner planes where all artistic forms take birth, but it is the transmitting mind that must change and become a perfect channel and not an obstacle.

*

How can rhythm be explained? It is a matter of the ear, not of the intellect. Of course there are the technical elements, but you say you do not understand yet about them. But it is not a matter of technique only, — the same outer technique can produce successful or unsuccessful rhythms (live or dead rhythms). One has to learn to distinguish by the ear, and the difficulty for you is to get the right sense of the cadences of the English language. That is not easy, for it has many outer and inner elements.

8 September 1938

Rhythmical Overtones and Undertones

I was speaking of rhythmical overtones and undertones. That is to say, there is a metrical rhythm which belongs to the skilful use of metre — any good poet can manage that; but besides that there is a music which rises up out of this rhythm or a music that underlies it, carries it as it were as the movement of the water carries the movement of a boat. They can both exist together in the same line; but it is more a matter of the inner than the outer ear and I am afraid I can't define farther. To go into the subject would mean a long essay. But to give examples

> Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
> Every wise man's son doth know,

is excellent metrical rhythm, but there are no overtones and undertones. In

> Golden lads and girls all must
> As chimney-sweepers come to dust

there is a beginning of undertone, but no overtone, while the "Take, O take those lips away" (the whole lyric) is all overtones. Again

> Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
> I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him

has admirable rhythm, but there are no overtones or undertones. But

In maiden meditation fancy-free

has beautiful running undertones, while

In the deep backward and abysm of Time

is all overtones, and

Absent thee from felicity awhile
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain

is all overtones and undertones together. I don't suppose this will make you much wiser, but it is all I can do for you at present.

11 May 1937

Rhythm and Significance

You seem to suggest that significance does not matter and need not enter into the account in judging or feeling poetry! Rhythm and word music are indispensable, but are not the whole of poetry. For instance lines like these —

In the human heart of Heligoland
A hunger wakes for the silver sea;
For waving the might of his magical wand
God sits on his throne in eternity,

have plenty of rhythm and word music — a surrealist might pass it, but I certainly would not. Your suggestion that my seeing the inner truth behind a line magnifies it to me, i.e. gives a false value to me which it does not really have as poetry, may or may not be correct. But, certainly, the significance and feeling suggested and borne home by the words and rhythm are in my view a capital part of the value of poetry. Shakespeare's lines

Absent thee from felicity awhile
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,

have a skilful and consummate rhythm and word combination, but this gets its full value as the perfect embodiment of a profound and moving significance, the expression in a few words of a whole range of human world-experience.[1] 1 September 1938

English Metre and Rhythm

English metre is simple on the contrary. It is the management of the rhythm that makes a more difficult demand on the writer.
5 May 1937

---

[1] *This is an abbreviated and lightly revised version of a letter published in full on pages 496–97 — Ed.*

English Metres

Octosyllabic Metre

The regular octosyllabic metre is at once the easiest to write and the most difficult to justify by a strong and original rhythmic treatment; it may be that it is only by filling it with very original thought-substance and image and the deeper tones and sound-significances which these would bring that it could be saved from its besetting obviousness. On the other hand, the melody to which it lends itself, if raised to a certain intensity, can be fraught with a rescuing charm that makes us forget the obviousness of the metre.
4 February 1932

Iambic Pentameter

An inspiration which leans more on sublimated or illumined thought than on some strong or subtle or very simple psychic or vital intensity and swiftness of feeling, seems to call naturally for the iambic pentameter, though it need not confine itself to that form. I myself have not yet found another metre which gives room enough along with an apposite movement — shorter metres are too cramped, the longer ones need a technical dexterity (if one is not to be either commonplace or clumsy) for which I have not leisure.
8 March 1932

Blank Verse

I have often seen that Indians who write in English, immediately they try blank verse, begin to follow the Victorian model and especially a sort of pseudo-Tennysonian movement or structure which makes their work in this kind weak, flat and ineffective. The language inevitably suffers by the same faults, for with a weak verse-cadence it is impossible to find a strong or effective turn of language. But Victorian blank verse at its best is not strong or great, though it may have other qualities, and at a more common level it is languid or crude or characterless. Except for a few poems, like Tennyson's early *Morte d'Arthur, Ulysses* and one or two others or Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustam*, there is nothing of a very high order. Tennyson is a perilous model and can have a weakening and corrupting influence and the *Princess* and *Idylls of the King* which seem to have set the tone for Indo-English blank verse are perhaps the worst choice possible for such a role. There is plenty of clever craftsmanship but it is mostly false and artificial and without true strength or inspired movement or poetic force — the right kind of blank verse for a Victorian drawing-room poetry, that is all that can be said for it. As for language and substance his influence tends to bring a thin artificial decorative prettiness or picturesqueness varied by an elaborate false simplicity and an attempt at a kind of brilliant, sometimes lusciously brilliant sentimental or sententious commonplace. The higher quality in his best work is not easily assimilable; the worst is catching but undesirable as a model.

Blank verse is the most difficult of all English metres; it has to be very skilfully and strongly done to make up for the absence of rhyme, and if not very well done, it is better not done at all. In the ancient languages rhyme was not needed, for they were written in quantitative metres which gave them the necessary support, but modern languages in their metrical forms need the help of rhyme. It is only a very masterly hand that can make blank verse an equally or even a more effective poetic movement. You have to vary your metre by a skilful play of pauses or by an always changing distribution of caesura and of stresses and supple combinations of long and short vowels and by much weaving of vowel or consonant variation and assonance; or else, if you use a more regular form you have to give a great power and relief to the verse as did Marlowe at his best. If you do none of these things, if you write with effaced stresses, without relief and force or, if you do not succeed in producing harmonious variations in your rhythm, your blank verse becomes a monotonous vapid wash and no amount of mere thought-colour or image-colour can save it.

28 April 1931

Blank Verse Technique

I don't know any factors by which blank verse can be built up. When good blank verse comes one can analyse it and assign certain elements of technique, but these come in the course of the formation of the verse. Each poet finds his own technique — that of Shakespeare differs from Marlowe's, both from Milton's and all from Keats'. In English I can say that variations of rhythm, of lengths of syllable, of caesura, of the structure of lines help and neglect of them hinders — so too with pause variations if used; but to explain all that would mean a treatise. Nor could anyone make himself a great blank verse writer by following the instructions deliberately and constructing his verse. Only if he knows, the inspiration answers better and if there is failure in the inspiration he can see and call again and the thing will come. But I am no expert in Bengali blank verse. 30 April 1937

*

Building of each line, building of the passage, variation of balance, the arrangement of tone and stress and many other things have to be mastered before you can be a possessor of the instrument — unless you are born with a blank verse genius; but that is rare. 7 July 1933

*

It is in order to make it more flexible — to avoid the "drumming decasyllabon" and to introduce other relief of variety than can be provided by differing caesura, enjambement etc.[1] There are four possible principles for the blank verse pentameter.

(1) An entirely regular verse with sparing use of enjambements — here an immense skill is needed in the variation of

---

[1] *The question was: "Why is so much irregularity in the rhythm of consecutive lines permissible in blank verse?" — Ed.*

caesura, use of long and short vowels, closed and open sounds, all the devices of rhythm. Each line must be either sculptured and powerful, a mighty line — as Marlowe tried to write it — or a melodious thing of beauty by itself as in much of Shakespeare's earlier blank verse.

(2) A regular iambic verse (of course with occasional trochees and rare anapaests) and frequent play of enjambement etc.

(3) A regular basis with a frequent intervention of irregular movements to give the necessary variety and surprise to the ear.

(4) A free irregular blank verse as in some of Shakespeare's later dramas (*Cymbeline* if I remember right).

The last two principles, I believe, are coming more and more to be used as the possibilities of the older forms have come to be exhausted — or seem to be — for it is not sure that they are.

24 January 1933

*

In English variation of pauses is not indispensable to blank verse. There is much blank verse of the first quality in which it is eschewed or minimised, much also of the first quality in which it is freely used. Shakespeare has both kinds. 30 April 1937

The Alexandrine

I suppose the Alexandrine has been condemned because no one has ever been able to make effective use of it as a staple metre. The difficulty, I suppose, is its normal tendency to fall into two monotonously equal halves while the possible variations on that monotony seem to stumble often into awkward inequalities. The Alexandrine is an admirable instrument in French verse because of the more plastic character of the movement, not bound to its stresses, but only to an equality of metric syllables capable of a sufficient variety in the rhythm. In English it does not work so well; a single Alexandrine or an occasional Alexandrine couplet can have a great dignity and amplitude of sweep in English, but a succession fails or has most often failed to impose itself on the ear. All this, however, may be simply because the secret of the right handling has not been found: it is at least my impression that a very good rhythmist with the Alexandrine movement secretly born somewhere in him and waiting to be brought out could succeed in rehabilitating the metre. 5 February 1932

The Loose Alexandrine

I do not understand how this[2] can be called an accentual rhythm except in the sense that all English rhythm, prose or verse, is accentual. What one usually means by accentual verse is verse with a fixed number of accents for each line, but here accents can be of any number and placed anywhere as it would be in a prose cut up into lines. The only distinctive feature is thus of the number of "effective" syllables. The result is a kind of free verse movement with a certain irregular regularity in the lengths of the lines. 1936

The Caesura

Voltaire's dictum is quite baffling,[3] unless he means by caesura any pause or break in the line; then of course a comma does create such a break or pause. But ordinarily caesura is a technical term meaning a rhythmical (not necessarily a metrical) division of a line in two parts equal or unequal, in the middle or near the middle, that is, just a little before or just a little after. I think in my account of my Alexandrines I myself used the word caesura in the sense of a pause anywhere which breaks the line in two equal or unequal parts, but usually such a break very near the beginning or end of a line would not be counted as an orthodox caesura. In French there are two metres which insist on a caesura — the Alexandrine and the pentameter. The Alexandrine always takes the caesura in the middle of the line, that is after the sixth *sonant* syllable, the pentameter always after the fourth, there is no need for any comma there, e.g.

---

[2] *"The novelty (in English)* [of Robert Bridges's "loose alexandrine"] *is to make the number of* syllables *the fixt base of the metre; but these are the* effective syllables, *those which pronunciation easily slurs or combines with following syllables being treated as metrically ineffective. The line consists of twelve metrically effective syllables; and within this constant scheme the metre allows of any variation in the number and placing of the accents. Thus the rhythm obtained is purely accentual, in accordance with the genius of the English language; but a new freedom has been achieved within the confines of a new kind of discipline." — Lascelles Abercrombie,* Poetry: Its Music and Meaning *(London: Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 35.*

[3] *The "dictum" of Voltaire that the correspondent sent to Sri Aurobindo was the following: "la césure . . . rompt le vers . . . partout où elle coupe la phrase."*

> Ce que dit l'aube || et la flamme à la flamme.

This is the position and all the Voltaires in the world cannot make it otherwise. I don't know about the modernists however, perhaps they have broken this rule like every other.

As for caesura in English I don't know much about it in theory, only in the practice of the pentameter decasyllabic and hexameter verses. In the blank verse decasyllabic I would count it as a rule for variability of rhythm to make the caesura at the fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh syllable, e.g. from Milton:

(1) for who would lose
Though full of pain, | this intellectual being, (4th)
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, | swallowed up and lost? (5th)

(2) Here we may reign secure, | and in my choice (6th)
To reign is worth ambition | though in hell: (7th)
Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven.

Or from Shakespeare:

(1) Sees Helen's beauty | in a brow of Egypt (5th)

(2) To be or not to be, | that is the question (6th)

But I don't know whether your prosodist would agree to all that. As for the hexameter, the Latin classical rule is to make the caesura either at the middle of the third or the middle of the fourth foot, e.g. (you need not bother about the Latin words but follow the scansion only):

(1) Quadrupe|dante pu|trem || cur|su quatit | ungula | campum.
(Virgil)

Horse-hooves | trampled the | crumbling | plain || with
a | four-footed | gallop.

(2) O pass|i gravi|ora, || dab|it deus | his quoque | finem. (Virgil)
Fiercer | griefs you have | suffered; || to | these too | God will
give | ending.

(3) Nec fa|cundia | deseret | hunc || nec | lucidus | ordo
(Horace)
Him shall not | copious | eloquence | leave || nor | clearness
and | order.

In the first example, the caesura comes at the third foot; in the second example, it comes at the third foot but note that it is a trochaic caesura; in the third example the caesura comes at the fourth foot. In the English hexameter you can follow that or you may take greater liberties. I have myself cut the hexameter sometimes at the end of the third foot and not in the middle, e.g.

(1) Opaline | rhythm of | towers, || notes of the | lyre of the | Sun
God . . .

(2) Even the | ramparts | felt her, || stones that the | Gods had
e|rected . . .

and there are other combinations possible which can give a great variety to the run of the line as if standing balanced between one place of caesura and another.

Some Questions of Scansion

Words like "tire", "fire" etc. can be scanned as a dissyllable in verse as well as a monosyllable, though it is something of a licence nowadays, but a still well-recognised licence. Of course, it would not do to do it always. 19 November 1930

*

You have taken an anapaestic metre varied by an occasional iambus or spondee. But you have inserted sometimes four syllables in a foot instead of three — this is not allowed in normal anapaestic verse which is always ◡◡⊥ and never ◡◡◡⊥. But I have accepted this and put occasionally an amphibrach foot ◡⊥◡ instead of ◡◡— as Arjava and myself are trying to vary the normal metre in this way.

In ordinary English scansion no account is taken of naturally short and long syllables. All unaccented syllables are treated as short, all accented syllables as long, thus br$\overset{\perp}{\text{i}}$ght-|nīghtĕd d$\overset{\perp}{\text{a}}$y | [*in a poem by the correspondent*] would count metrically as br$\overset{\perp}{\text{i}}$ght-|nǐghtĕd d$\overset{\perp}{\text{a}}$y | in the scansion, but the variation of natural long and natural short syllables is a very important element in the beauty or failure of beauty of the *rhythm* as opposed to mere scansion of *metre*. So I have indicated the naturally long and short syllables — if you study it, you may get an idea of this important element in the rhythm. 18 October 1933

*

I certainly think feet longer than the three syllable maximum can be brought in and ought to be. I do not see for instance why a foot like this ◡◡◡— should not be as legitimate as the anapaest. Only, of course, if frequently used, they would mean the institution of another principle of harmony not provided for by the essentially melodic basis of English prosody in the past; as

Ĭntĕrspērsed | ĭn thĕ ĭmmēnse | ănd ŭnăvāi|lĭng vōid, | wīngĭng
thĕir | līght thrŏugh thĕ | dārknĕss ĭn|āne. |

Or,

Ĭntĕrspērsed | ĭn thĕ ĭmmēnse | ănd ŭnăvāi|lĭng vōid, | scāttĕrĭng |
thĕir līght thrŏugh | thĕ dārknĕss | ĭnāne. |

I agree that this freedom would be more pressingly needed in longer metres than in short ones, but they need not be excluded from the short ones either.

Iambics and Anapaests — Free Verse

Iambics and anapaests can be combined in English verse at any time, provided one does not set out to write a purely iambic or a purely anapaestic metre. Mixed anapaest and iamb make a most beautifully flexible lyric rhythm. It has no more connection with free verse than the constellation of the Great Bear has to do with a cat's tail! "Free" verse indicates verse free from the shackles of rhyme and metre, but rhythmic (or trying to be rhythmic) in one way or another. If you put rhymes, that will be considered a shackle and the "free" will kick at the chain.

10 December 1935

The Problem of Free Verse

The problem of free verse is to keep the rhythm and afflatus of poetry while asserting one's liberty as in prose to vary the rhythm and movement at will instead of being tied down to metre and to a single unchangeable form throughout the whole length of a poem. But most writers in this kind achieve prose cut up into lines or something that is half and half and therefore unsatisfying. I think few have escaped this kind of shipwreck.

18 September 1936

Prose Poetry and Free Verse

Prose poetry or free verse, if it is to be effective, must be very clear-cut in each line so that the weight of the thought and expression may compensate for the absence of the supporting metrical rhythm. From that standpoint the weakness here [*in two poems submitted by the correspondent*] would be too much profusion of word and image, preventing a clear strong outline of the significance.

5 November 1936

Greek and Latin Classical Metres

Acclimatisation of Classical Metres in English

In the attempt to acclimatise the classical scansions in English, everything depends on whether they are acclimatised or not. That is to say, there must be a spontaneous, natural, seemingly native-born singing or flowing or subtly moving rhythm. The lines must glide or run or walk easily or, if you like, execute a complex dance, stately or light, but not stumble, not shamble and not walk like the Commander's statue suddenly endowed with life but stiff and stony in its march. Now the last is just what happens to classical metres in English when they are not acclimatised, naturalised, made to seem even natively English, although new. It is like cardboard cut into measures, there is no life or movement of life. . . . It was this inability to naturalise that ruined the chances of the admission of classic metres in the attempts of earlier poets — we must avoid that mistake.

23 November 1933

The Hexameter in English

Former poets failed in the attempt at hexameter because they did not find the right basic line and measure; they forgot that stress and quantity must both be considered in English; even though in theory the stress alone makes the quantity, there is another kind of true quantity which must be given a subordinate but very necessary recognition; besides, even in stress there are kinds, true and fictitious, major and minor. In analysing the movement of an English line, one could make three independent schemes according to these three bases and the combination would give the value of the rhythm. You can ignore all this in an established metre and go safely by the force of instinct and habit; but for making so difficult an innovation as the hexameter instinct and habit were not enough, a clear eye upon all these constituents was needed and it was not there. Longfellow, even Clough, went on the theory of accentual quantity alone and in spite of their talent as versifiers made a mess — producing something that discredited the very idea of the creation of an English hexameter. Other poets made no serious or sustained endeavour. Arnold was interesting so long as he theorised about it, but his practical specimens were disastrous. I have not time to make my point clearer for the moment; I may return to it hereafter.

23 July 1932

Hexameters, Alcaics, Sapphics

Lines from [*an early version of*] *Ilion*, an unfinished poem in English hexameter (quantitative):

Īdă | rōse wĭth hĕr | gōd-hāuntĕd | pēaks || ĭntŏ | dīămŏnd | lūstrĕs, |

Īdă, | fīrst ŏf thĕ | hīlls, || wĭth thĕ | rāngĕs | sīlĕnt bĕ|yōnd hĕr |

Wātchĭng thĕ | dāwn ĭn thĕir | gīănt| || cōmpănĭes, | ās sĭncĕ thĕ | āgĕs |

Fīrst bĕ|gān thĕy hăd | wātched hĕr, || ŭp|beārĭng | Tīme ŏn

thĕir | sūmmĭts. |

Triumph and agony changing hands in a desperate measure
Faced and turned, as a man and a maiden trampling the grasses
Face and turn and they laugh for their joy in the dance and each other.
These were gods and they trampled lives. But though Time is immortal,
Mortal his works are and ways and the anguish ends like the rapture.
Artisans satisfied now with their works in the plan of the transience,
Beautiful, wordless, august, the Olympians turned from the carnage.
Vast and unmoved they rose up mighty as eagles ascending,
Fanning the world with their wings. In the bliss of a sorrowless ether
Calm they reposed from their deeds and their hearts were inclined to the Stillness.
Less now the burden laid on our race by their star-white presence,
There was a respite from height; the winds breathed freer, delivered.

But their immortal content from the struggle titanic departed.
Vacant the noise of the battle roared like a sea on the shingles;
Wearily hunted the spears their quarry, strength was disheartened;
Silence increased with the march of the months on the tents of the leaguer.

The principle is a line of six feet, preponderantly dactylic, but anywhere the dactyl can be replaced by a spondee; but in English hexameter a trochee can be substituted, as the spondee comes in rarely in English rhythm. The line is divided by a caesura, and the variations of the caesura are essential to the harmony of the verse.

An example of Alcaics from the *Jivanmukta* (Alcaics is a Greek metre invented by the poet Alcaeus):

Thēre ĭs | ă sī|lĕnce | grēatĕr thăn | āny̆ | knōwn |
Tŏ ēarth's | dūmb spī|rĭt, | mōtiŏnlĕss | ĭn thĕ | sōul |
Thăt hās | bĕcōme | ĕtēr|nĭtȳ's fōot|hŏld
Tōuched by̆ thĕ | īnfĭnĭ|tūdes fŏr | ēvĕr. |

In the Latin it is:

— — | ◡ — | — | — ◡ ◡ | — ◡ | — |
— — | ◡ — | — | — ◡ ◡ | — ◡ | — |
— — | ◡ — | — — | ◡ — | — |
— ◡ ◡ | — ◡ ◡ | — ◡ | — ◡ |

But in English, variations (modulations) are allowed, only one has to keep to the general plan.

Swinburne's Sapphics are to be scanned thus:

Āll thĕ | nīght slĕep | cāme nŏt ŭ|pōn mȳ | ēyelīds, |
Shēd nŏt | dēw, nŏr | shōok nŏr ŭn|clōsed ă | fēathĕr, |
Yēt wĭth | līps shŭt | clōse ănd wĭth | ēyes ŏf | īrŏn
Stōod ănd bĕ|hēld mĕ. |

Two trochees at the beginning, two trochees at the end, a dactyl separating the two trochaic parts of the line — that is the Sapphics in its first three lines, then a fourth line composed of a dactyl and a trochee.

May 1934

Quantitative Metre in English and Bengali

English Quantitative Verse — Rhythm in English and Bengali

There have been attempts to write in English quantitative verse on the Greek and Latin principle with the classical metres, attempts which began in the Elizabethan times, but they have not been successful because the method was either too slipshod or tried to adhere too rigidly to the rules of quantity natural to Greek and Latin but not to the English tongue instead of making an adaptation of it for the English ear or, still better, discovering directly in English itself the true principle of an English quantitative metre. I believe it is perfectly possible to acclimatise the quantitative principle in English and with great advantage. I have not seen Bridges' attempts, but I do not see why his failure — if it was one — should damn the possibility. I think one day it will be done.

It is true that English rhythm falls most naturally into the iambic movement. But I do not admit the adverse strictures passed on the other bases of metre. All depends on how you handle them, — if as much pain is bestowed as on the iambic, the fault attributed to them will disappear. Even as it is, the trochaic metre in the hands of great poets like Milton, Shelley, Keats does not pall — I do not get tired of the melody of the *Skylark*. Swinburne's anapaestic rhythms, as in *Dolores*, are kept up for pages without difficulty with the most royal ease, without fatigue either to the writer or the reader. Both trochee and anapaest are surely quite natural to the language. The dactyl is more difficult to continue, but I believe it can be done, even in a long dactylic metre like the hexameter, if interspersed with spondees (as the metre allows) and supported by subtle modulations of rhythm, variations of pause and caesura. The iambic metre itself was at first taxed with monotony in a drumming beat until it was used in a more plastic way by Shakespeare and Milton. All depends on the skill which one brings to the work and the tool is quarrelled with only when the workman does not know how to use it.

The English language is not naturally melodious like the Italian or Bengali — no language with a Teutonic base can be — but it is capable of remarkable harmonic effects and also it can by a skilful handling be made to give out the most beautiful melodies. Bengali and Italian are soft, easy and mellifluous languages — English is difficult and has to be struggled with in order to produce its best effects, but out of that very difficulty has arisen an astonishing plasticity, depth and manifold subtlety of rhythm. These qualities do not repose on metrical building alone but much more on the less analysable elements of the entire rhythmic structure. The metrical basis itself is a peculiar and subtle combination on which English rhythm depends without explicitly avowing it, a skilful and most extraordinarily variable combination of three elements — the numeric foot dependent on the number of syllables, the use of the stress foot and a play of stresses, and a recognisable but free and plastic use of quantitative play (not quantitative feet), all three running into each other.

I am afraid your estimate here is marred by the personal or national habit. One is always inclined to make this claim for one's own language because one can catch every shade and element of it while in another language, however well-learned, the ear is not so clair-audient. I cannot agree that the examples you give of Bengali melody beat hollow the melody of the greatest English lyrists. Shakespeare, Swinburne's best work in *Atalanta* and elsewhere, Shelley at his finest and some others attain a melody that cannot be surpassed. It is a different kind of melody, but not inferior.

Bengali has a more melodious basis, it can accomplish melody more easily than English, it has a freer variety of melodies now, for formerly as English poetry was mostly iambic, Bengali poetry used to be mostly *akṣaravṛtta.* (I remember how my brother Manmohan would annoy me by denouncing the absence of melody, the featureless monotony of Bengali rhythm and tell me how Tagore ought to be read to be truly melodious — like English in stress, with ludicrous effects. That however is by the way.) What I mean is that variety of melodic bases was not conspicuous at that time in Bengali poetry. Nowadays this variety is there and undoubtedly opens possibilities such as perhaps do not exist in other languages.

I do not see, however, how the metrical aspect by itself can really be taken apart from other more subtle elements. I do not mean the spirit and feeling or the sense of the language only, though without depth or adequacy there metrical melody is only a melodious corpse, but the spirit and feeling or subtle (not intellectual) elements of rhythm and it is on these that English depends for the greater power and plasticity of its harmonic and even if to a less extent of its melodic effects. In a word there is truth in what you say but it cannot be pushed so far as you push it.

May 1934

Bengali and English Quantitative Poetry

Nishikanta's poem in *laghu-guru* is splendid. But perhaps Girija would say that it is a pure Bengali rhythm, which means I suppose that it reads as well and easily in Bengali as if it were not written on an unusual rhythmic principle. I suppose that must necessarily be the aim of a new metre or metrical principle; it is what I am trying to do with quantitative efforts in English.

*

Is it true that the *laghu-guru* is to the Bengali ear as impossible as would be to the English ear the line made up by Tagore: "Autumn flaunteth in his bushy bowers"? In English such a violence could not be entertained for a moment. It was because Spenser and others tried to base their hexameters and pentameters on this flagrant violation of the first law of English rhythm that the first attempt to introduce quantitative metres in English proved a failure. Accent cannot be ignored in English rhythm — it is why in my attempts at quantitative metre I always count a strongly accentuated syllable, even if the vowel is short, as a long one —

for the stress does really make it long for metrical purposes.

21 July 1936

English Prosody and Bengali Metrics

You have set me two very intricate subjects to wrestle with — English prosody and the *yaugmika–akṣara* tangle! English prosody is neither syllabic nor quantitative nor anything else; it is simply English prosody — that is to say, everything together, except what it pretends to be. As to the other, you and Prabodh Sen and Anilbaran and Tagore and the rest are already in such a tangle of controversy from which there seems no hope of your ever getting out that I don't propose to add any cord of my own to the knot, and probably, if I tried, it would be a very incorrect cord indeed. However I will try to explain myself as soon as possible. . . .

4 June 1934

Metrical Experiments in Bengali

New Metres in Bengali

Of course, Prabodh Sen is right. I suppose what Buddhadev means is that none of the very great poets invented a metre — they were all too lazy and preferred stealing other people's rhythms and polishing them up to perfection, just as Shakespeare stole all his plots from wherever he could find any worth stealing. But all the same, if that applies to Shakespeare, Homer, Virgil, what about Alcaeus, Sappho, Catallus, Horace? they did a good deal of inventing or of transferring — introducing Greek metres into Latin, for example. I can't spot a precedent in modern European literature, but there must be some. And after all, hang precedents! A good thing — I mean, combining metric invention with perfect poetry — would be still a good thing to do, even if no one had had the good sense to do it before.

4 November 1932

*

It is certainly not true that a good metre must necessarily be an easy metre — easy to read or easy to write. In fact even with old established perfectly familiar metres how many of the readers of poetry have an ear which seizes the true movement and the whole subtlety and beauty of the rhythm — it is only in the more popular kind of poems that it gets in their hearing its full value. It is all the more impossible when you bring in not only new rhythms but a new principle of rhythm — or at least one that is not very familiar — to expect it to be easily followed at first by the many. It is only if you are already a recognised master that by force of your reputation you can impose whatever you like on your public — for then even if they do not catch your drift, they will still applaud you and will take some pains to learn the new principle. If you are imposing a principle not only of rhythm but of scansion to which the ear in spite of past attempts is not trained so as to seize the basic law of the movement in all its variations, a fair amount of incomprehension, some difficulty in knowing how to read the verse is very probable. Easier forms of a new rhythm may be caught in their movement, — even if some will not be able to scan it; but other more difficult forms may give trouble. All that is no true objection to the attempt at something new; novelty is difficult for the human mind — or ear — to accept, but novelty is asked for all the same in all human activities for their growth, amplitude, richer life. As you say, the ear has to be educated — once it is trained, familiar with the principle, what was a difficulty becomes easy, the unusual, — first condemned as abnormal or impossible, — becomes a normal and daily movement.

As for the charge of being cryptic, that is quite another matter. Obscurity due to inadequate expression is one thing, but the cryptic may be simply the expression of more than can be seized at first sight by the ordinary mind. It may be that the ideas are not of a domain in which that mind is accustomed to move or that there is a new turn of expression other than the kind which it has been trained to follow. Again the ordinary turn of a language, as in French or Bengali, may be lucid, direct, easy: if you bring into it a more intricate and suggestive manner in which the connections or transitions of thought are less obvious, that may create a difficulty. A poet can be too easy to read, because there is not much in what he writes and it is exhausted at the first glance, — or too difficult because you have to burrow for the meaning. But otherwise it makes no difference to the excellence of the work, if the reader can catch its burden at the first glance or has to dwell a little on it for the full force of it to come to the surface. The feeling, the way of expression, the combinations of thought, word or image tend often to be new and unfamiliar, but that can very well be a strength and a merit, not an element of failure.

28 January 1933

*

I am, as you know quite in agreement with you as regards the principle. At the same time there is a greater difficulty in Bengali than in Hindi and Gujerati. For in these languages the stylisation is a long-accepted fact and the ear of the writer and reader are trained to appreciate it, but in Bengali the trend has been on the contrary to more and more naturalism in metre and such stylisation as there was was not quantitative. Now the writer has the double difficulty of finding out how to stylise successfully in detail and of getting the ear of the public to train itself also. . . .

Quantitative Metre in Bengali

This question of quantity is one in which I find it difficult to arrive at a conclusion. You can prove that it can be done and has been successfully done in Bengali, and you can prove and have proved it yourself over again by writing these poems and bringing in the rhythm, the কল্লোল, which is absent in Satyen Datta. It is quite true also that stylisation is permissible and a recognised form of art — I mean professed and overt stylisation and not that which hides itself under a contrary profession of naturalness or faithful following of external nature. The only question is how much of it Bengali poetry can bear. I do not think the distinction between song and poem goes at all to the root of the matter. The question is whether it is possible to have ease of movement in this kind of quantitative metre. For a few lines it can be very beautiful or for a short poem or a song; that much cannot be doubted. But can it be made a spontaneous movement of Bengali poetry like the ordinary *mātrā-vṛtta* or the others, in which one can walk or run at will without looking at one's steps to see that one does not stumble and without concentrating the reader's mind too much on the technique so that his attention is diverted from the sense and *bhāva*? If you can achieve some large and free structure in which quantity takes a recognised place as part of the foundation, — it need not be reproduction of a Sanskrit metre, — that would solve the problem in the affirmative. 31 May 1932

Quantity in Classical and Modern Languages

I can't agree with your statement about Sanskrit आ, ए, ओ, that they are long by stylisation only! In fact, I don't quite understand what this can mean; for in Sanskrit आ at least is the corresponding long to the short vowel अ and is naturally as long as the devil — and the other two are in fact no better. The difference between ए and ऐ and ओ and औ is the difference between long and ultra-long, not between short and long. Take for instance the Sanskrit phrase येन तेन प्रकारेण; I can't for the life of me see how anyone can say that the ये ते रे or the का there are naturally short to the ear, but long by stylisation. The classical languages (Sanskrit, Greek, Latin) are perfectly logical, coherent and consistent in the matter of quantity; they had to be because quantity was the very life of their rhythm and they could not treat longs as shorts and shorts as longs as it is done, at every step, in English. Modern languages can do that because their rhythm rests on intonation and stress, quantity is only a subordinate element, a luxury, not the very basis of the rhythmic structure. In English you can write "thĕ ōld rŏad rūns" pretending that "road" is short and "runs" is long, or "ă grēat hăte" — where the sound corresponding to Sanskrit ए (grēat hăte) or that corresponding to Sanskrit ओ (ōld rŏad) is made short or long at pleasure; but to the Sanskrit, Greek or Latin ear it would have sounded like a defiance of the laws of Nature. Bengali is a modern language, so there this kind of stylisation is possible, for there ए can be long, short or doubtful.

All this, not to write more about stylisation, but only as a protest against forcing modern ideas of language sound on an ancient language. Bengali can go on its way very freely without that, Sanskritising when it likes, refusing to Sanskritise when it doesn't like. 2 June 1932

Akṣara-vṛtta and *Mātrā-vṛtta*

I have read your account of the *tridhārā* and my mind is now clear about it; I have not yet read Anilbaran's contentions, so there I am still in the dark. But here are certain points that I want to make clear.

(1) Prabodh Sen's rule of the *yaugika-vṛtta* does not agree with what I was taught about the *akṣara-vṛtta*. When I first heard of Bengali metre in England, my informant was quite at sea. He confidently described Michael's blank verse as a 14 syllable line (8+6), but when asked to give examples we found that the lines as pronounced were of 12, 13, 14 or more syllables and when my brother Manmohan asked him to explain this discrepancy, he could merely gape — no explanation was forthcoming! However, when I took up seriously the study of the literature, it was explained to me by competent people, themselves poets and *littérateurs* — thus

"The line is strictly a line of 14 syllables, no more, no less (i.e. it is a true *akṣara-vṛtta*), but the *akṣara* or syllable here is not the sonant Bengali syllable as it is actually pronounced, but the syllable as it is understood on the Sanskrit principle. In Sanskrit each consonant letter (*akṣara*) is supposed to make a separate sound (syllable), either with the aid of other vowels or by force of the short *a* sound inherent in it — except in two cases. First, if there is a conjunct consonant, e.g. *gandha*, the *n* is not sonant, not separate, but *yukta* to the *dh*, and therefore does not stand for a separate syllable; secondly, if there is a *virāma-cihna* as in *daibāt*, then also it loses its sonant force, there is no third syllable — it is a dissyllable, not a trisyllable. Bengali has applied this rule, dropping only the last part of it, in disregard of the actual pronunciation. Thus দান or ধন is in Sanskrit (as in Oriya) a dissyllable, in Bengali also it is treated as such in poetry, although in fact it is a monosyllable to the ear. Externally this sounds artificial and false to fact, but rhythmically it is unexceptionable, the cadence of the voice supplying a double metre there. গন্ধ will be a dissyllable as in Sanskrit, because *ndh* is a *yuktākṣara*. On the other hand দৈবাৎ will be a trisyllable because there is no distinction made of a *virāma-cihna*, no distinction therefore between সরিৎ and নিধন, each is a trisyllable."

According to this explanation and the rule it supplies, it is true that a *yugma-dhvani* at the close of a word has always two *mātrās*, but the other part of Prabodh Sen's rule is not always true, viz. that in the middle of a word it counts only as one. That would be invariably true of an indubitable যুক্তাক্ষর, as in গন্ধ, but not otherwise. On this principle there is no difficulty at all about মহাভারতের কথা, the line is of 14 syllables and cannot be reckoned in *akṣara-vṛtta* as anything else. There is no difficulty about such lines as Michael's

রাবণ শ্বশুর মম মেঘনাদ স্বামী, —

10 *svaras*, but 14 *akṣaras*, — because the মেঘ, though in the middle of a word, must be two *mātrās*, since the *ghn* in Meghnad is not a compound consonant, but two separate *akṣaras*. There *is* a difficulty about দিক্‌প্রান্তে and মৃৎপাত্র, but that is because one is undecided whether to treat it as a compound ক্‌প্রা and a compound ত্‌পা or as two separate words joined together, দিক্, মৃৎ being kept apart as with the *t* of সরিৎ or the *k* of ত্বক্. In the latter case মৃৎ and দিক্ are dissyllables, in the former, trisyllables. And so on, as regards other doubtful points like চাওয়া.

This, I say, was what I was taught and it is according to this rule that I have hitherto scanned the *akṣara-vṛtta*. I am quite prepared to adopt a new principle if it is more scientific, but I think that *historically* this explanation is not unsound, that it represents the idea Michael and Nabin Sen and the rest had of the basis of their verse and shows why it was considered as of a syllabic character.

(2) I did not think or hear that Tagore invented the *mātrā-vṛtta* — I could not, because I never heard of the *mātrā-vṛtta* at that time. What I understood was that the *svara-vṛtta* was not recognised as a serious or poetic metre before Tagore, — it was used only for nursery rhymes etc. or in some kinds of loose popular verse. Tagore did not invent, but he popularised the *svara-vṛtta* as a vehicle for serious poetry — it was at least professedly under his banner that a violent attack was made on the supremacy of the *akṣara-vṛtta*. I remember reading articles even in which it was reviled as a nonsensical conventional fiction: Oriya Bengali. "If you want to keep it" thundered the

polemist, "let us all learn to read like Oriyas, 'Rabana swasura mama, Meghanada swami', but let us rather be Bengalis and drop this absurd convention of a pseudo-Sanskritic past." The article amused me so much by its violence in spite of my prepossession for the *akṣara-vṛtta* that I remember it as if I had read it yesterday — and it was only one of a numerous type. At any rate as a result of this campaign, *svara-vṛtta* fixed itself on an equal throne by the side of *akṣara-vṛtta*. I mention it only as a point of literary history of which I was a contemporary witness. I suppose, as usually happens, Tagore's share in the revolution was exaggerated and there were others who played a large part in its success.

(3) *Mātrā-vṛtta* is therefore to me a new development, not as an invention perhaps, but as a clearly understood distinct principle of metre. But it exists, if I have understood your explanation, by a thorough extension of the principle which the *akṣara-vṛtta* applied only with restrictions. As the Sanskrit limitation about the *virāma-cihna* was swept away in the *akṣara-vṛtta*, so now in the *mātrā-vṛtta* the limitation about conjuncts like ক্ক is swept away and all *yugma-dhvanis* are reckoned as two *mātrās*. In that sense Anilbaran's description of it as সগোত্র of the *akṣara-vṛtta* would have some meaning, but at the same time it would not diminish the validity of your contention that it is a new opening with endless possibilities in a new principle of metrical rhythm. Two men may be cousins or brothers or near relatives, but one a conservative, the other a revolutionary creating a new world and a new order.

All this is no part of my final formed opinion in the matter. I have not yet gone through either Anilbaran's writing or Prabodh Sen's letter. It is only to put down my present understanding of the situation and explain what I meant in my letter.

Mātrā-vṛtta

I am quite convinced of the possibilities of the *mātrā-vṛtta* — which would exist even if Anilbaran is right in insisting that it is the সগোত্র of the *akṣara-vṛtta*. Two people may be cousins and yet have different characters, possibilities and destinies — and so may two metres. 9 September 1932

*

I shall go through Prabodh Sen's letter, but it may take me some time. What is the exact scope of the discussion with Anilbaran, is it that he does not recognise the reality of the *mātrā-vṛtta* as a separate principle of Bengali metre? That I suppose was the position before. Originally, indeed, there was only one stream recognised, — that I remember very well, for it was the time when I was learning and assiduously reading Bengali literature; at that time what you now call *svara-vṛtta* was regarded as mere popular verse or an old irregular verse-form. Afterwards with the advent and development of Tagore's poetry, one began to hear of two recognised principles of Bengali metre, Swara (I was going to say Kshara) and Akshara. Is it Anilbaran's contention that only these two are real and legitimate? Whatever it be Anilbaran is a born fighter and if you tell him that all the *Mahāratha*s are against him and his squashing defeat a foregone conclusion, he will only gallop faster towards the battle. My own difficulty is that I have not yet grasped the principle of the *mātrā-vṛtta* — *what* is it that determines the long or the short *mātrā* in Bengali?

Mātrā-vṛtta and *Laghu-guru*

I return you the former letter from Prabodh Sen which I managed to find time to read only today. He has a most acute, ingenious and orderly mind, and what he says is always thought-provoking and interesting; but I am not persuaded that the form of Bengali *mātrā-vṛtta* and Sanskrit *laghu-guru* is *really and intrinsically* the same. Equivalent, no doubt, in a way, — if we substitute Bengali metre for Sanskrit quantity; but not the same because Bengali metre and Sanskrit quantity are two quite different things. It is something like the equivoque by which one pretends that an English iambic metre or any other with a Greek name is the same as a Latin or Greek metre with that name — an equivoque based on the fiction that a stressed and an unstressed English syllable are quantitatively long and short. There is a certain kind of general equivalence, but a fundamental difference — as those who have tried to find an equivalent in the English stress system to the quantitative Latin or Greek hexameter, alcaic or sapphic metres have discovered — they could not be transplanted, because it is only in true quantity that they can live. 23 September 1932

Laghu-guru

If you can establish *laghu-guru* as a recognised metrical principle in Bengali, you will fulfil one of my two previsions for the future with regard to the language. When I was first introduced to Bengali prosody, I was told that Madhusudan's blank verse was one of fourteen syllables, but to my astonishment found that sometimes ten syllables even counted as fourteen — e.g.

রাবণ শ্বশুর মম মেঘনাদ স্বামী

Of course, it was afterwards explained to me that the syllables were counted on the Sanskrit system, and I got the real run of the rhythmic movement; but I always thought: why not have an alternative system with a true sonant syllabic basis — and, finally, I saw the birth (I mean as a recognised serious metre) of the *svara-vṛtta*. Afterwards I came across Hemchandra's experiments in bringing in a quantitative element and fell in love with the idea and hoped somebody would try it on a larger scale. But up till now this attempt to influence the future did not materialise. Now perhaps in your hands it will — even apart from songs. 20 October 1932

*

It [*a song composed by a disciple*] is good. But there is a tendency to run into a conventional model. Originality, plasticity, vigour, a new utterance and a new music are needed to give the *laghu-guru* an undisputed standing equal to that of the other rhythms. 4 June 1934

Gadya-chanda

I can't say that I have studied or even read Bengali গদ্যছন্দ, so I am unable to pronounce. In fact what is গদ্যছন্দ? Is it the equivalent of European free verse? But there the essence of the thing is that you model each line freely as you like — regularity of any kind is out of court there. Is it Nishikanta's aim to create a kind of rhymed prose metre? On what principle? He seems to want a movement which will give more volume, strength and sonority than Bengali verse can succeed in creating but which is yet poetry, not prose arranged in lines and not even, at the best, poetic prose cut into lines of different lengths. All things can be tried — the test is success, true poetic excellence. Nishikanta has sent me some of his গদ্যছন্দ before. It seemed to me to have much flow and energy, but there is something hanging on to it which weighs, almost drags — is it the ghost of prose? But that is only a personal impression; as I have said, on this subject I am not a qualified judge.

29 September 1936

Rhyme

Rhyme and Inspiration

Some rhyme with ease — others find a difficulty. The coming of the rhyme is a part of the inspiration just like the coming of the form of the language. The rhyme often comes of itself and brings the language and connection of ideas with it. For all these things are quite ready behind somewhere and it is only a matter of reception and transmission — it is the physical mind and brain that make the difficulty. 2 February 1934

Imperfect Rhymes

These [*"life" and "cliff", "smile" and "will"*] are called in English imperfect rhymes and can be freely but not too freely used. Only you have to understand the approximations and kinships of vowel sounds in English, otherwise you will produce illegitimate children like "splendour" and "wonder" which is not a rhyme but an assonance. 19 December 1935

*

It is no use applying a Bengali ear to English rhythms any more than a French ear to English or an English ear to French metres. The Frenchman may object to English blank verse because his own ear misses the rhyme or the Englishman to the French Alexandrine because he finds it rhetorical and monotonous. Irrelevant objections both. Imperfect rhymes are regarded in English metre as a source of charm in the rhythmic field bringing in possibilities of delicate variation in the constant clang of exact rhymes. 21 November 1935

*

"Lure" and "more" are rhymes? It is enough to make the English prosodists of the past turn in their graves or if they are in heaven to make their imaginative hair angelic or archangelic stand up erect on their beatified heads. I am aware that modernist poets rhyme anything with everything. They would not shudder even in rhyming "hand" with "fiend" or "heat" with "bit" or "kid", — probably they would do it with a wicked leer of triumph. But all the same crime is crime even if it becomes fashionable.

21 May 1937

*

I never heard of two pronunciations of "lure" and "pure" one of which approximates to "lore" and "pore" — of course they may exist in some dialect, but anything that would make "pure" rhyme with "more" seems to be horribly impure and "lure" rhyming with "gore" does not lure me at all. I am aware of Arjava's rhyming of "bore" and "law" etc., — but that is quite new as a permissible imperfect rhyme — "dawn" and "morn" were in my time held up as a vulgarism, the type of all that is damnable. As for "decrease" and "earthiness" that is quite a different matter from "lure" and "more"; the former are long and short of the same vowel sounds, long e sound and short e sound, the latter are two quite different vowel sounds. If you can rhyme a pure long u sound with a pure long o sound, there is no reason why you should not rhyme Cockney fashion "day" with "high", "paid" with "wide", and by a little extension why not "jade" with "solitude". Finally we can come to the rhyming of any word with any word provided there is the same or a similar consonant at the end. Modernism admits imperfect — very imperfect rhymes, but that is really a different principle and cannot be extended to blank verse, mongrelising all similar ending sounds.

22 May 1937

English Poetic Forms

The Sonnet — Regular and Irregular Rhyme Schemes

The two regular sonnet rhyme-sequences are (1) the Shakespearean ab ab cd cd ef ef gg — that is three quatrains with alternate rhymes with a closing couplet and (2) the Miltonic with an octet abba abba (as in your second and third quatrains) and a sestet of three rhymes arranged according to choice. The Shakespearean is closer to the natural lyric rhythm, the Miltonic to the ode movement — i.e. something large and grave. The Miltonic is very difficult for it needs either a strong armoured structure of the thought or a carefully developed unity of the building which all poets can't manage. However there have been attempts at an irregular sonnet rhyme-sequence. Keats tried his hand at one a century ago and I vaguely believe (but that may be only an illusion of Maya) that modern poets have played loose fantastic tricks of their own invention; but I don't have much first-hand knowledge of modern (contemporary) poetry. Anyhow I have myself written a series of sonnets with the most heterodox rhyme arrangements, so I couldn't very well go for you when you did the same. One who has committed many murders can't very well rate another for having done a few. All the same, this sequence is rather rather — a Miltonic octet with a Shakespearean close would be more possible; I think I have done something of the kind with not too bad an effect, but I have no time to consult my poetry file and am not sure. In the sonnet too it might be well for you to do the regular thing first, soberly and well, and afterwards when you are sure of your steps, frisk and dance.

22 February 1936

Sonnet and Satire

In a sonnet thought should be set to thought, line added to line in a sort of architectural sequence, or else there should be a progression like the pressing of waves to the shore, with the finality of arrival swift in a closing couplet or deliberate as in the Miltonic form.

As to your other proposition, I am not sure that satiric verse and the metaphysical lyrical can rightly be put together. Naturally, a great poetic genius could or might do it with success; but genius can do anything. Satire is more often than not a kind of half-poetry, because its inspiration comes primarily from the critical mind and a not very high part of it, not from the creative vision or a moved intensity of poetic feeling. Creative vision or the moved intensity can come in to lift this motive but, except rarely, it does not lift it very high.

It is Dryden and Juvenal who have oftenest made something like genuine poetry out of satire, the first because he often changes satire into a vision of character and the play of psychological forces, the other because he writes not from a sense of the incongruous but from an emotion, from a strong poetic "indignation" against the things he sees around him. Aristophanes is a comic creator — like Shakespeare when he turns in that direction — the satiric is only a strong line in his creation; that is a different kind of inspiration, not the ordinary satire. Pope attempted something creative in his *Rape of the Lock*, but the success, if brilliant, is thin because the deeper creative founts and the kindlier sources of vision are not there. 27 April 1931

The Ode

A successful ode must be a perfect architectural design and Keats' Odes are among the best, if not the best in English poetry, as I think they are, at any rate from the point of view of artistic creation, because of the perfect way in which the central thought is developed and each part related to the whole like the design of the masses in a perfect building — each taking its inevitable place in the whole. In yours the ideas, words, images flow like your "Ocean" with a certain fluent grandeur of diction and richness of colour, but there is not any inevitable beginning, middle, connections and end. An ode in that respect should be like a sonnet though on a bigger scale and with a different principle of structure — but it must be, like the sonnet, a perfect structure.

4 March 1935

The Ballad

I have not much taste for the English ballad form; it is generally either too flat or too loud and artificial and its basic stuff is a strenuous popular obviousness that needs a very rare genius to transform it. 20 November 1932

Poem and Song

No, a song is not a kind of poem — or, at least, it need not be. There are some very good songs which are not poems at all. In Europe, song-writers as such or the writers of the librettos of the great operas are not classed among poets. In Asia the attempt to combine song-quality with poetic value has been more common; in ancient Greece also lyric poetry was often composed with a view to being set to music. But still poetry and song-writing, though they can be combined, are two different arts, because the aim and the principle of their building is not the same.

The difference is not that poetry has to be understood and music or singing has to be felt (*anubhūti*); that one has to reach the soul through the precise written sense and the other through the suggestion of sound and its appeal to some inner chord within us. If you only understand the intellectual content of a poem, its words and ideas, you have not really appreciated the poem at all, and a poem which contains only that and nothing else, is not true poetry. A true poem contains something more which has to be felt just as you feel music, and that is its more important and essential part. Poetry has a rhythm, just as music has, though of a different kind, and it is the rhythm that helps this something else to come out through the medium of the words. The words by themselves do not carry it or cannot bring it out altogether, and this is shown by the fact that the same words written in a different order and without rhythm or without the proper rhythm would not at all move or impress you in the same way. This something else is an inner content or suggestion, a soul-feeling or soul-experience, a life-feeling or life-experience, a mental emotion, vision or experience (not merely an idea), and it is only when you can catch this and reproduce some vibration of the experience — if not the experience itself — in you that you have got what the poem can give you, not otherwise.

The real difference between a poem and a song is that a song is written with a view to be set to musical rhythm and a poem is written with the ear listening for the needed poetic rhythm or word-music. These two rhythms are quite different. That is why a poem cannot be set to music unless it has either been written with an eye to both kinds of rhythm or else happens to have (without especially intending it) a movement which makes it easy or at least possible to set it to music. This happens often with lyrical poetry, less often with other kinds. There is also this usual character of a song that it is satisfied to be very simple in its content, just bringing out an idea or feeling, and leaving it to the music to develop its unspoken values. Still this reticence is not always observed; the word claims for itself sometimes a larger importance.

4 July 1931

*

No, a song need not have a less intricate metre than a poem; and if it appears usually more simple in its rhythmical turns, yet in that apparent simplicity a considerable, though very delicate subtlety is possible. A certain *liquidity* of sound is essential, but so long as you keep that, you can play variations to a great extent. I don't think an identical regularity or unbroken recurrence is imperative — though equivalence of sound values may be. It is a matter of the inner ear and its guidance rather than of any exact external measurements — especially in the English language, which is too free and plastic for the theories which are sometimes imposed upon its movements. The theories don't matter much, because the language contrives to go its own way even while pretending to conform to the theories. I don't know what models to propose to you — old style English practice was too regular for the freer spirit of the modern lyric and my reading in contemporary poetry has been too fragmentary and unsystematic for me to remember the right models, though they must be there. 17 December 1931

*

About French or German songs I know nothing — but as for the English, except for a few like Cardinal Newman's hymn "Lead, kindly Light" they don't exist so far as I know, — I mean of course as regards their contents, manner, style. I believe in European music the words are of a very minor importance, they matter only as going with the music. But I am not an expert on the subject, so I can't go farther into it. When religious songs were written in mediaeval Latin, they were very fine, but with the use of the modern languages the art was lost — the modern European hymnals are awful stuff. 13 May 1936

Nursery Rhymes and Folk Songs

The question you have put, as you put it, can admit of only one answer. I cannot agree that nursery rhymes or folk songs are entitled to take an important place or any place at all in the history of the prosody of the English language or that one should start the study of English metre by a careful examination of the rhythm of "Humpty Dumpty", "Mary, Mary, quite contrary" or the tale of the old woman in a shoe. There are many queer theories abroad nowadays in all the arts, but I doubt whether any English or French critic or prosodist would go so far as to dub "Who killed Cock Robin?" the true movement of English rhythm, putting aside Chaucer, Spenser, Pope or Shelley as too cultivated and accomplished or too much under foreign influence or to seek for his models in popular songs or the products of the *café chantant* in preference to Hugo or Musset or Verlaine.

But perhaps something else is meant — is it that one gets the crude indispensable elements of metre better from primitive just-shaped or unshaped stuff than from more perfect work in which these are overlaid by artistic developments and subtle devices — an embryo or a skeleton is more instructive for the study of men than the developed flesh-and-blood structure? That may have a certain truth in some lines of scientific research, but it cannot stand in studying the technique of an art. At that rate one could be asked to go for the basic principles of musical sound to the jazz or even to the hurdy-gurdy and for the indispensable rules of line and colour to the pavement artist or to the signboard painter. Or perhaps the suggestion is that here one gets the primary unsophisticated rhythms native to the language and free from the artificial movements of mere literature. Still, I hardly fancy that the true native spirit or bent of English metre is to be sought or can be discovered in

> Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
> Humpty Dumpty had a great fall

and is lost in

> Rarely, rarely, comest thou,
>   Spirit of Delight.

Popular verse catches the child ear or the common ear much more easily than the music of developed poetry because it relies on a crude jingle or infantile lilt — not because it enshrines in its movement the true native spirit of the tongue. I hold it to be a fallacy to think that the real spirit and native movement of a language can be caught only in crude or primitive forms and that it is disguised in the more perfect work in which it has developed its own possibilities to their full pitch, variety and scope. It is as if one maintained that the true note and fundamental nature of the evolving soul were to be sought in the earthworm or the scarabaeus and not in the developed human being — or in the divinised man or Jivanmukta.

As for foreign influences, most of the elements of English prosody, rhyme, foot-scansion, line lengths, stanza forms and many others have come in from outside and have altered out of all recognition the original mould, but the spirit of the language has found itself as much in these developments as in the first free alliterative verse — as much and more. The spirit of a language ought to be strong enough to assimilate any amount of imported elements or changes of structure and measure.

23 February 1933

Substance, Style, Diction

Form and Substance

On the general question [*of rhythm vs. substance*] the truth seems to me to be very simple. It may be quite true that fine or telling rhythms without substance (substance of idea, suggestion, feeling) are hardly poetry at all, even if they make good verse. But that is no ground for belittling beauty or excellence of form or ignoring its supreme importance for poetic perfection. Poetry is after all an art and a poet ought to be an artist of word and rhythm, even though, necessarily, like other artists, he must also be something more than that, even much more. I hold therefore that harshness and roughness, কর্কশতা, are not merits, but serious faults to be avoided by anyone who wants his work to be true poetry and survive. One can be strong and powerful, full of sincerity and substance without being harsh, rough or aggressive to the ear. Swinburne's later poetry is a mere body of rhythmic sound without a soul; but what of Browning's constant deliberate roughness or, let us say, excessive sturdiness which deprives much of his work of the claim to be poetry — it is already much discredited and it is certain there is much in it that posterity will carefully and with good reason forget to read. Energy enough there is and abundance of matter and these carry the day for a time and give fame, but it is only perfection that endures. Or, if the cruder work lasts, it is only by association with the perfection of the same poet's work at his best. I may say also that if mere rhythmic acrobacies of the kind to which you very rightly object condemn a poet's work to inferiority and a literature deviating on to that line to decadence, the drive towards a harsh strength and rough energy of form and substance may easily lead to other kind of undesirable acrobacy and an opposite road towards individual inferiority and general decadence. Why should not Bengali poetry go on the straight way of its progress without running either upon the rocks of roughness or into the shallows of mere melody? Austerity of course is another matter — rhythm can be either austere to bareness or sweet and subtle, and a harmonious perfection can be attained in either of these extreme directions if the mastery is there.

As for rules, — rules are necessary but they are not absolute; one of the chief tendencies of genius is to break old rules and make departures, which create new ones. English poetry of today luxuriates in movements which to the mind of yesterday would have been insanity or chaotic licence, yet it is evident that this freedom of experimentation has led to discoveries of new rhythmic beauty with a very real charm and power and opened out possible lines of growth, — however unfortunate many of its results may be. Not the formal mind, but the ear must be the judge.

Moreover the development of a new note — the expression of a deeper yogic or mystic experience in poetry — may very well demand for its fullness new departures in technique, a new turn or turns of rhythm, but these should be, I think, subtle in their difference rather than aggressive. 4 January 1932

Richness of Image

Richness of image is not the whole of poetry. There are many "born poets" who avoid too much richness of image. There are certain fields of consciousness which express themselves naturally through image most — there are others that do it more through idea and feeling. 13 February 1936

*

Poetry depends on power of thought, feeling, language — not on abundance of images. Some poets are rich in images, all need not be. 18 February 1936

*

What is this superstition? At that rate Sophocles, Chaucer, Milton, Wordsworth are not good poets, because their poetry is not full of images? Is Kalidasa a greater poet than Vyasa or Valmiki because he is fuller of images? 18 February 1936

*

Poetry does not consist only in images or fine phrases. When Homer writes simply "Sing, Goddess, the baleful wrath of Achilles, son of Peleus, which laid a thousand woes on the Achaeans and hurled many strong souls of heroes down to Hades and made their bodies a prey for dogs and all the birds; and the will of Zeus was accomplished", he is writing in the highest style of poetry. 13 June 1936

Conceit

When an image comes out from the mind not properly transmuted in the inner vision or delivered by the alchemy of language, it betrays itself as coin of the fancy or the contriving intellect and is then called a conceit.[1] 26 August 1931

*

Conceit means a too obviously ingenious or far-fetched or extravagant idea or image which is evidently an invention of a clever brain, not a true and convincing flight of the imagination. E.g. Donne's (?) comparison of a child's small-pox eruptions to the stars of the milky way or something similar: I have forgotten the exact thing, but that will serve.

> This hill turns up its nose at heaven's height,
> Heaven looks back with a blue contemptuous eye —

that's a conceit.

> O cloud, thou wild black wig on heaven's bald head

would be another. These are extravagant specimens.

---

[1] *This sentence was extracted for separate publication from a letter given in full on pages 505 – 06. — Ed.*

I haven't time to think out any ingenious ones, nor to discuss trochees adequately — have given one or two hints in the margin.

Some more conceits, ingenious all of them.

> Am I his tail and is he then my head?
> But head by tail, I think, is often led.

Also

> Like a long snake came wriggling out his laugh.

Also

> How the big Gunner of the upper sphere
> Is letting off his cannon in the sky!
> Flash, bang bang bang! he has some gunpowder
> With him, I think. Again! Whose big bow-wow
> Goes barking through the hunting fields of Heaven?
> What a magnificent row the gods can make!

And don't forget

> The long slow scolopendra of the train.

Or if you think these are not dainty or poetic enough, here's another

> God made thy eyes sweet cups to hold blue wine;
> By sipping at them rapture-drunk are mine.

Enough? Amen! 16 May 1937

Oxymoron

An oxymoron often necessitates what you call echolalia — e.g.

> For good like this can be
> An obstacle against the highest Good
> And light itself denial of the Light.

Whether such things make good poetry or not is a matter of opinion. 28 January 1934

Simplicity and Condensation

Simplicity is not the test. There can be a supreme beauty of simplicity and there can be the opposite. 10 November 1938

*

Too violent condensations of language or too compressed thoughts always create a sense either of obscurity or, if not that, then of effort and artifice, even if a powerful and inspired artifice. It is why Yeats finds your sonnets stiff and laboured, I suppose. Yet very great poets and writers have used them, so great a poet as Aeschylus or so great a prose stylist as Tacitus. Then there are the famous "knots" in the Mahabharata, the recurrence of lines so compressed in thought and speech (although the normal style of the poem is of a crystal clearness,) that even the divine scribe Ganesha, lord of wisdom and learning who wrote the poem to Vyasa's dictation, had to stop and cudgel his brains for minutes to find out their significance, — thus giving the poet a chance to breathe and compose his lines. For the condition laid down was that the inspiration must be continuous and Ganesha would not even once have to pause for want of lines to write! I think one can say that these condensations are justified when they say something with more power and depth and full, if sometimes recondite, significance than an easier speech would give, but to make it a constant element of the language (without a constant justification of that kind) would turn it into a mannerism or artifice. 1 October 1932

Bareness and Ruggedness

I am afraid the language of your appreciations or criticisms here is not apposite. There is nothing "bare and rugged" in the two lines you quote;[2] on the contrary they are rather violently figured — the *osé* image of a fire opening a door of a treasure-house would probably be objected to by Cousins or any other purist. The language of poetry is called bare when it is confined rigorously to just the words necessary to express the thought or feeling or to visualise what is described, without superfluous epithets, without images, without any least rhetorical turn in it. E.g. Cowper's

---

[2] *A rhythmic fire that opens a secret door,*
And the treasures of eternity are found;

Toll for the brave,
The brave who are no more —

is bare. Byron's

Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless heathen's wine;

does not quite succeed because of a rhetorical tinge that he has not been able to keep out of the expression. When Baxter (I think it was Baxter) writes

I spoke as one who never would speak again
And as a dying man to dying men,

that might be taken as an example of strong and bare poetic language. I have written of Savitri waking on the day of destiny —

Immobile in herself she gathered force.
This was the day when Satyavan must die, —

that is designedly bare.

But none of these lines or passages can be called rugged; for ruggedness and austerity are not the same thing; poetry is rugged when it is rough in language and rhythm or rough and unpolished but sincere in feeling. Donne is often rugged, —

Yet dare I almost be glad, I do not see
That spectacle of too much weight for me.
Who sees God's face that is self-life must die;
What a death were it then to see God die?

but it is only the first line that is at all bare.

On the other side you describe the line of your preference

My moments pass with moon-imprinted sail

by the epithets "real, wonderful, flashing". Real or surreal? It is precisely its unreality that makes the quality of the line; it is surreal, not in any depreciatory sense, but because of its supraphysical imaginativeness, its vivid suggestion of occult vision; one does not quite know what it means, but it suggests something that one can vividly see. It is not flashing — gleaming or glinting would be nearer the mark — it penetrates the imagination and awakens sight and stirs or thrills with a sense of beauty but it is not something that carries one away by its sudden splendour.

You say that it is more poetic than the other quotation — perhaps, but not for the reason you give, rather because it is more felicitously complete in its image and more suggestive. But you seem to attach the word poetic to the idea of something remotely beautiful, deeply coloured or strangely imaged with a glitter in it or a magic glimmer. On the whole, what you seem to mean is that this line is "real" poetry, because it has this quality and because it has a melodious sweetness of rhythm, while the other is of a less attractive character. Your solar plexus refuses to thrill where these qualities are absent — obviously that is a serious limitation in the plasticity of your solar plexus, not that it is wrong in thrilling to these things but that it is sadly wrong in thrilling to them only. It means that your plexus will remain deaf and dead to most of the greater poetry of the world — to Homer, Milton, Valmiki, Vyasa, a great part even of Shakespeare. That is surely a serious limitation of the appreciative faculty. What is strange and beautiful has its appeal, but one ought to be able also to stir to what is great and beautiful or strong and noble or simple and beautiful or pure and exquisite. Not to do so would be like being blind of one eye and seeing with the other only very vividly strange outlines and intensely bright colours.

I may add that if really I appreciate any lines for something which I see behind them but they do not actually suggest or express, then I must be a very bad critic. The lines you quote not only say nothing about the treasures except that they are found but do not suggest anything more. If then I see from some knowledge that has nothing to do with the actual expression and suggestion of the lines all the treasures of eternity and cry "How rich" — meaning the richness, not of the treasures, but of the poetry, then I am doing something quite illegitimate which is the sign of a great unreality and confusion in my mind, very undesirable in a critic. It is not for any reason of that kind that I made a mark indicating appreciation but because I find in the passage a just and striking image with a rhythm and expression which are a sufficient body for the significance.

2 September 1938

Nobility and Grandeur

I am unable to agree with you that Chapman's poetry is noble or equal, even at its best, to Homer and it seems to me that you have not seized the subtler quality of what Arnold means by noble. "Muscular vigour, strong nervous rhythm" are forceful, not noble. Everywhere in your remarks you seem to confuse nobility and forcefulness, but there is between the two a gulf of difference. Chapman is certainly forceful, next to Marlowe, I suppose, the most forceful poet among the Elizabethans. Among the lines you quote from him to prove your thesis, there is only one that approaches nobility:

> Much have I suffered for thy love, much laboured, wishèd much

and even then it is spoilt for me by the last two words which are almost feeble. The second quotation:

> When the unmeasured firmament bursts to disclose her light

has a rhythm which does not mate with the idea and the diction; these are exceedingly fine and powerful — but not noble. There is no nobility at all in the third:

> And such a stormy day shall come, in mind and soul I know,
> When sacred Troy shall shed her towers, for tears of overthrow.

The first line of the couplet is rhetorical and padded, the second is a violent, indeed an extravagant conceit which does not convey any true and high emotion but is intended to strike and startle the intellectual imagination. One has only to compare Homer's magnificent lines absolute in their nobility of restrained yet strong emotion, in which the words and rhythm give the very soul of the emotion

> essetai ēmar hot' an pot' olōlē Ilios hirē
> (There shall be a day when sacred Ilion shall perish)

but in its depths, not with any outward vehemence. In the fourth quotation:

> Heard Thetis' foul petition and wished in any wise
> The splendour of the burning ships might satiate his eyes

the first line has the ordinary ballad movement and diction and cannot rank, the second is fine poetry, vivid and impressive, with a beginning of grandeur — but the nobility of Homer, Virgil or Milton is not there. The line strikes at the mind with a great vehemence in order to impress it — nobility in poetry enters in and takes possession with an assured gait, by its own right. It would seem to me that one has only to put the work of these greater poets side by side with Chapman's best to feel the difference. Chapman no doubt lifts rocks and makes mountains suddenly to rise — in that sense he has elevation or rather elevations; but in doing it he gesticulates, wrestles, succeeds finally with a shout of triumph; that does not give a noble effect or a noble movement. See in contrast with what a self-possessed grandeur, dignity or godlike ease Milton, Virgil, Homer make their ascensions or keep their high levels.

Then I come to Arnold's examples of which you question the nobility on the strength of my description of one essential of the poetically noble. Mark that the calm, self-mastery, beautiful control which I have spoken of as essential to nobility is a poetic, not an ethical or Yogic calm and control. It does not exclude the poignant expression of grief or passion, but it expresses it with a certain high restraint so that even when the mood is personal it yet borders on the widely impersonal. Cleopatra's words[3] are an example of what I mean; the disdainful compassion for the fury of the chosen instrument of self-destruction which vainly thinks it can truly hurt her, the call to death to act swiftly and yet the sense of being high above what death can do, which these few simple words convey has the true essence of nobility. "Impatience" only! You have not caught the significance of the words "poor venomous fool", the tone of the "Be angry and despatch", the tense and noble grandeur of the suicide scene with the high light it sheds on Cleopatra's character. For she was a remarkable woman, a great queen, a skilful ruler and politician, not merely the erotic *détraquée* people make of her. Shakespeare is not good at describing greatness, he poetised the *homme moyen*, but he has caught something here. The passage stands comparison with the words of Antony "I am dying, Egypt, dying" (down to "A Roman by a Roman, valiantly vanquished") which stand among the noblest expressions of high, deep, yet collected and contained emotion in literature — though that is a masculine and this a feminine nobility. There is in the ballad of Sir Patrick Spense the same poignancy and restraint — something that gives a sense of universality and almost impersonality in the midst of the pathetic expression of sorrow. There is a quiver but a high compassionate quiver, there is no wail or stutter or vehemence. As for the rhythm, it may be the ballad "alive", but it is not "kicking" — and it has the overtones and undertones which ballad rhythm has not at its native level. Then for the other example you have given — lines didactic in intention can be noble, as for instance, the example quoted by Arnold from Virgil,

> Disce, puer, virtutem ex me verumque laborem,
> Fortunam ex aliis

---

[3] *If thou and nature can so gently part,*
The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch
Which hurts and is desired. . . .
. . . Come, thou mortal wretch,
With thy sharp teeth this knot intrinsicate
Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool,
Be angry and dispatch. — *Shakespeare,* Antony and Cleopatra

or the line quoted from Apollo's speech about the dead body of Hector and Achilles' long-nourished and too self-indulgent rage against it

> tlēton gar Moirai thumon thesan anthrōpoisin.

These two lines

> Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
> But leave to heaven the measure and the choice,

are less fine and harmonious in their structure; there is something of a rhetorical turn and therefore it reaches a lower height of nobility, but nobility there is, especially in the second line of the couplet. I do not find it cold; there is surely a strong touch of poetic emotion there.

I may say however that grandeur and nobility are kindred but not interchangeable terms. One can be noble without reaching grandeur — one can be grand without the subtle quality of nobility. Zeus Olympius is grand and noble; Ravana or Briareus with the thousand arms is grand without being noble. Lear going mad in the storm is grand, but too vehement and disordered to be noble. I think the essential difference between the epic movement and ballad rhythm and language lies in this distinction between nobility and force — in the true ballad usually a bare, direct and rude force. The ballad metre has been taken by modern poets and lifted out of its normal form and movement, given subtle turns and cadences and made the vehicle of lyric beauty and fervour or of strong or beautiful narrative; but this is not the true original ballad movement and ballad motive. Scott's movement is narrative, not epic — there is also a lyrical narrative movement and that is the quality reached by Coleridge, perhaps the finest use yet made of the ballad movement. It is doubtful whether the ballad form can bear the epic lift for more than a line or two, a stanza or two — under the epic stress the original jerkiness remains while the lyric flow smooths it out. When it tries to lift to the epic height, it does so with a jerk, an explosive leap or a quick canter; one feels the rise, but there is still something of the old trot underneath the movement. It is at least what I feel throughout in Chesterton — there is a sense of effort, of disguise with the crudity of the original material still showing through the brilliantly coloured drapery that has been put upon it. If there is no claim to epic movement, I do not mind and can take it for what it can give, but comparisons with Homer and Virgil and the classic hexameter are perilous and reveal the yawning gulf between the two movements. As to the line of fourteen syllables, Chapman often overcomes its difficulties but the jog-trot constantly comes out. It may be that all that can be surmounted, but Chapman and Chesterton do not surmount it — whatever their heights of diction or imagination, the metre interferes with their maintenance, even, I think, with their attaining their full eminence. Possibly a greater genius might wipe out the defect — but would a greater genius have cared to make the endeavour?

I have left myself no space or time for Chesterton as a poet and it is better so because I have not read the poem [*The Ballad of the White Horse*] and know him only by extracts. Your passages establish him as a poet, a fine and vivid poet by intervals, but not as a great or an epic poet — that is my impression. Sometimes I find your praise of particular passages extravagant, as when you seem to put Marlowe's mighty line

> See, see where Christ's blood streams in the firmament

and Chesterton's facetious turn about the stretched necks and burned beards on a par. Humour can be poetic and even epic, like Kaikeyi's praise of Manthara's hump in the Ramayana; but this joke of Chesterton's does not merit such an apotheosis. That is ballad style, not mighty or epic. Again all that passage about Colan and Earl Harold is poor ballad stuff — except the first three lines and the last two — poor in diction, poor in movement. I am unable to enthuse over

> It smote Earl Harold over the eye
> And blood began to run.

The lines marrying the soft sentimentalism of the "small white daisies" with the crude brutality of the "blood out of the brain" made me at first smile with the sense of the incongruous, it seemed almost like an attempt at humour — at least at the grotesque. I prefer Scott's *Marmion*; in spite of its want of imagination and breadth it is as good a thing as any Scott has written; on the contrary, these lines show Chesterton far below his best. The passage about the cholera and wheat is less flat; it is even impressive in a way, but impressive by an exaggerated bigness and forced attempt at epic greatness on one side and a forced and exaggerated childish sentimentalism on the other. The two do not fuse and the contrast is grotesque. This cholera image might be fine out of its context, it is at least powerful and vivid, but applied to a man (not a god or a demigod) it sounds too inflated — while the image of the massacrer muttering sentimentally about bread while he slew is so unnatural as to tread on or over the borders of the grotesque — it raises even a smile like the poor small white daisies red with blood out of Earl Harold's brain. I could criticise farther, but I refrain. On the other hand, Chesterton is certainly very fine by flashes. His images and metaphors and similies are rather explosive, sometimes they are mere conceits like the "cottage in the clouds", but all the same they have very often a high poetic quality of revealing vividness. At times also he has fine ideas finely expressed and occasionally he achieves a great lyrical beauty and feeling. He is terribly unequal and unreliable, violent, rocketlike, ostentatious, but at least in parts of this poem he does enter into the realms of poetry. Only I refuse to regard the poem as an epic — a sometimes low-falling, sometimes high-swinging lyrical narrative is the only claim I can concede to it. 2 February 1935

*

"Noble" has a special meaning, also "elevation" is used in a certain sense by Arnold. In that sense these words do not seem to me to be applicable either to Chapman or to the ballad metre. Strong, forceful, energetic, impressive they may be — but nobility is a rarer, calmer, more self-mastered, highly harmonious thing than these are. Also nobility and grandeur are not quite the same thing. 2 February 1935

Austerity and Exuberance

I am still at a loss what to answer about উচ্ছ্বাস, because I still don't understand exactly what your correspondent is aiming at in his criticism. There is not more *ucchvāsa* in Bengali poetry than in English, if by the word is meant rhetoric, free resort to imagery, prolix weaving of words and ideas and sentiments around what one has to say. Indian poetry in the Sanskritic languages — there are exceptions of course — was for the most part more restrained and classic in taste or else more impressionist and incisive than most English poetry; the qualities or defects noted above came into Bengali under the English influence. I don't see therefore the point of his remark that the English language cannot express the Indian temperament. It is true of course to a certain extent, first, because no foreign language can express what is intimate and peculiar in a national temperament, it tends at once to become falsified and seems exotic, and especially the imagery or sentiment of one language does not go well into that of another; least of all can the temperament of an Oriental tongue be readily transferred into a European tongue — what is perfectly simple and straightforward in one becomes emphatic or over-coloured or strange in the other. But that has nothing to do with *ucchvāsa* in itself. As to emotion — if that is what is meant, — your word effusiveness is rather unfortunate, for effusiveness is not praiseworthy in poetry anywhere; but vividness of emotion is no more reprehensible in English than in Bengali poetry. You give as examples of *ucchvāsa* among other things Madhusudan's style, Tagore's poem to me, a passage from Gobinda Das. I don't think there is anything in Madhusudan which an English poet writing in Bengali would have hesitated to father. Tagore's poem is written at a high pitch of feeling perfectly intelligible to anyone who had passed through the exaltation of the Swadeshi days, but not more high pitched than certain things in Milton, Shelley, Swinburne. In Gobinda Das's lines, — let us translate them into English

> Am I merely thine? O Love, I am there clinging
> In every limb of thee — there ever is my creation and my
> dissolution,

the idea is one that would not so easily occur to an English poet, it is an erotic mysticism, easily suggested to a mind familiar with the experiences of Vedantic or Vaishnava mystics; but this is not effusiveness, it is intensity — and an English writer — e.g. Lawrence — could be quite as intense but would use a different idea or image. 1 October 1932

*

It is not easy to say precisely what is austerity in the poetic sense — for it is a quality that can be felt, a spirit in the writer and the writing, but if you put it in the strait-waistcoat of a definition — or of a set technical method — you are likely to lose the spirit altogether. In the spirit of the writing you can feel it as something constant, — self-gathered, grave and severe; it is the quality that one at once is aware of in Milton, Wordsworth, Aeschylus and which even their most fervent admirers would hardly attribute to Shakespeare, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, Euripides. But there is also an austerity in the poetic manner and that is more difficult to describe or to fix its borders. At most one can say that it consists in a will to express the thing of which you write, thought, object or feeling, in its just form and exact power without addition and without exuberance. The austerer method of poetry avoids all lax superfluity, all profusion of unnecessary words, excess of emotional outcry, self-indulgent daub of colour, over-brilliant scattering of images, all mere luxury of external art or artifice. To use just the necessary words and no others, the thought in its simplicity and bare power, the one expressive or revealing image, the precise colour and nothing more, just the exact impression, reaction, simple feeling proper to the object, — nothing spun out, additional, in excess. Any rioting in words, colour, images, emotions, sound, phrase for their own sake, for their own beauty, attraction, luxury of abundant expression or creation would, I suppose, be what your friend means by *ucchvāsa*. Even, an extreme contemporary tendency seems to condemn the use of image, epithet, colour, pitch or emphasis of any kind, except on the most sparing scale, as a vice. Length in a poem is itself a sin, for length means padding — a long poem is a bad poem, only brief work, intense, lyrical in spirit can be throughout pure poetry. Milton, for example, considered austere by the common run of mortals, would be excluded from the list of the pure for his sprawling lengthiness, his epic rhetoric, his swelling phrases, his cult of the grandiose. To be perfect you must be small, brief and restrained, meticulous in cut and style.

This extremism in the avoidance of excess is perhaps itself an excess. Much can be done by bareness in poetry — a poetic nudism if accompanied by either beauty and grace or strength and power has its excellence. There can be a vivid or striking or forceful or a subtle, delicate or lovely bareness which reaches to the highest values of poetic expression. There can be also a compact or a stringent bareness — the kind of style deliberately aimed at by Landor; but this can be very stiff and stilted as Landor is in his more ambitious attempts — although he did magnificent things sometimes, like his lines on Rose Aylmer, — you can see there how emotion itself can gain by a spare austerity in self-expression. But it is doubtful whether all these kinds — Wordsworth's lyrics, for example, the "Daffodils", the "Cuckoo" — can be classed as austere. On the other hand there can be a very real spirit and power of underlying austerity behind a considerable wealth and richness of expression. Arnold in one of his poems gives the image of a girl beautiful, rich and sumptuous in apparel on whose body, killed in an accident, was found beneath the sumptuousness, next to the skin, an underrobe of sackcloth. If that is admitted, then Milton can keep his claim to austerity in spite of his epic fullness and Aeschylus in spite of the exultant daring of his images and the rich colour of his language. Dante is, I think, the perfect type of austerity in poetry, standing between the two extremes and combining the most sustained severity of expression with a precise power and fullness in the language which gives the sense of packed riches — no mere bareness anywhere.

But after all exclusive standards are out of place in poetry; there is room for all kinds and all methods. Shakespeare was to the French classicists a drunken barbarian of genius; but his spontaneous exuberance has lifted him higher than their willed severity of classical perfection. All depends on the kind one aims at — expressing what is in oneself — and an inspired faithfulness to the law of perfection in that kind. That needs some explanation, perhaps, — but I have here perforce to put a dash and finish — 8 October 1932

*

I said that Aeschylus like Milton was austere *au fond* — there is as in Dante a high serious restrained power behind all they write; but the outward form in Milton is grandiose, copious, lavish of strength and sweep, in Aeschylus bold, high-imaged, strong in colour, in Dante full of concise, packed and significantly forceful turn and phrase. These external riches might seem not restrained enough to the purists of austerity: they want the manner and not the *fond* only to be impeccably austere. I did not mean that Dante reached the summit of austerity in this sense; in fact I said he stood between the two extremes of bare austerity and sumptuosity of language. But even in his language there is a sense of *tapasyā*, of concentrated restraint in his expressive force. Amal in his translation [*from Dante*] has let himself go in the direction of eloquence more than Dante who is too succinct for eloquence, and he uses also a mystical turn of phrase which is not Dante's — yet he has got something of the spirit in the language, something of Dante's concentrated force of expression into his lines. You have spread yourself out more even than Amal, but still there is the Dantesque in your lines also, — very much so, I should say; with only this difference that Dante would have put it into fewer words than you do. It is the Dantesque stretching itself out a little — more large-limbed, permitting itself more space.

Aeschylus' manner cannot be described as *ucchvāsa*, at least in the sense given to it in my letter. He is not carefully restrained and succinct in his language like Dante, but there is a certain royal measure even in his boldness of colour and image which has in it the strength of *tapasyā* and cannot be called *ucchvāsa*. I suppose in Bengali this term is used a little indiscriminately for things that are not quite the same in spirit. If mere use of bold image and fullness of expression, epithet, colour, splendour of phrase is *ucchvāsa*, apart from the manner of their use, I would say that austerity and *ucchvāsa* of a certain kind are perfectly compatible. At any rate two-thirds of the poetry hitherto recognised as the best in different literatures comes of a combination of these two elements. If I find time I shall one day try to explain this point with texts to support it.

I don't know the Bengali for austerity. গাম্ভীর্য and other kindred things are or can be elements of austerity, but are not austerity itself. *Anucchvāsa* is not accurate; one can be free from উচ্ছ্বাস without being austere. The soul of austerity in poetry as in Yoga is আত্মসংযম all the rest is variable, the outward quality of the austerity itself may be variable. 9 October 1932

Sentimentality and Clichés

It is all right as it is except the first lines, " . . . *so* grief-hearted . . . *strangely* lone", strike at once the romantically sentimental note of more than a hundred years ago which is dead and laughed out of court nowadays. Especially in writing anything about vital love, avoid like the plague anything that descends into the sentimental or, worse, the namby-pamby. 30 May 1932

*

"Young heart", "thrilled companionship", "warm hour . . . lip to lip", "passionate unease" are here poorly sensuous *clichés* — they or any one or two of them might have been carried off in a more moved and inspired style, gathering colour from their surroundings or even a new and rich life; but here they stand out in a fashionable dressed-up insufficiency. This secret of fusing all in such a white heat or colour heat of sincerity of inspiration that even the common or often-used phrases and ideas catch fire and burn brilliantly with the rest is one of the secrets of the true poetic afflatus. But if you stop short of that inspiration and begin to write only efficient poetry, then you must be careful about your "P"s and "Q"s. 19 March 1932

Undignified Words

I dispute the legitimacy of the comment.[4] It is based on a conventional objection to undignified and therefore presumably unpoetic words and images — an objection which has value only when the effect is uncouth or trivial, but cannot be accepted otherwise as a valid rule. Obviously, it might be difficult to bring in "bobbing" in an epic or other "high" style, although I suppose Milton could have managed it and one remembers the famous controversy about Hugo's *"mouchoir"*. But in poetry of a mystic (occult or spiritual) kind this does not count. The aim is to bring up a vivid suggestion of the thing seen and some significance of the form, movement, etc. through which one can get at the life behind and its meaning; a familiar adjective here can serve its purpose very well as a touch in the picture and there are occasions when no other could be as true and living or give so well the precise movement needed.

It is the same with the metre — an identical principle applies, a natural kinship between the subject or substance of the poem and its soul-movement. For instance, a certain lightness, a suggestion of faery dance or faery motion may be needed as one element and this would be lost by the choice of a heavier more dignified rhythm. After all, subject to a proper handling, that is the first important desideratum, an essential harmony between the metrical rhythm and the thing it has to express.

5 February 1932

Sensuousness and Vulgarity

পূর্ণকুম্ভ, if it means the breasts, would be described in English as sensuous but not as vulgar. The word vulgar is only used for coarse and crude expressions of the sensual, trivial or ugly. But it does not seem to me that it should naturally be taken = breast, but indicate the whole vital and physical being regarded as a vessel or jar which can be filled with honey or water or poison. Nothing vulgar in that. 30 January 1937

---

[4] *Someone commented, apropos of a poem written by the correspondent: "There is one adjective I take objection to,* 'bobbing *globelets'." — Ed.*

Erotic Poetry

An expression of the lower vital lashed to imaginative fury is likely to produce not poetry but simply "sound and fury", — "tearing a passion to tatters" — and in its full furiousness may even rise to rant and fustian. Erotic poetry more than any other needs the restraint of beauty and form and measure, otherwise it risks being no longer poetic but merely pathologic.

14 June 1932

Poetry and Philosophy

What does your correspondent mean by "philosophy" in a poem? Of course if one sets out to write a metaphysical argument or treatise in verse like the Greek Empedocles or the Roman Lucretius, it is a risky business and is likely to land you into prosaic poetry which is a less pardonable mixture than poetic prose! Even when philosophising in a less perilous way, one has to be careful not to be flat or heavy. It is obviously easier to be poetic when singing about a skylark than when one tries to weave a robe of verse to clothe the attributes of the Brahman! But that does not mean that there can be no spiritual thought or no expression of truth in poetry; there is no great poet who has not tried to philosophise. Shelley wrote about the skylark, but he also wrote about the Brahman. "Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass" is as good poetry as "Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!". There are flights of unsurpassable poetry in the Gita and the Upanishads. These rigid dicta are always excessive and there is no reason why a poet should allow the expression of his personality or the spirit within him or his whole poetic mind to be clipped, cabined or stifled by any theories or "thou shalt not"s of that character. 7 December 1931

*

I can take no stock in your friend's theories — at that rate half the world's poetry would have to disappear. And what is meant by philosophy — there is none in your poem, there is only vision and emotion of spiritual experience, which is a different thing altogether. Truth and thought and sight cast into forms of beauty cannot be banished in that cavalier way. Music and art and poetry have striven from the beginning to express the vision of the deepest and greatest things and not the things of the surface only, and it will be so as long as there are poetry and art and music. 27 February 1932

*

The only remedy is to extend the philosophy through the whole poem so as to cure the disparateness. Also it must be a figured philosophy. Philosophy can become poetry if it ceases to be intellectual and abstract in statement and becomes figured and carries a stamp of poetic emotion and vision. 14 June 1938

Grades of Perfection in Poetic Style

Grades of Perfection in Poetry

> I suppose "inevitability of expression" consists of two things producing one effect: (1) the rightness of individual words and phrases, (2) the rightness of the general lingual reconstruction of the poetic vision — that is, the manner, syntactical and psychological, of whole sentences and their coordination.

To the two requisites you mention which are technical, two others have to be added, a certain smiling sureness of touch and inner breath of perfect perfection, born not made, in the words themselves, and a certain absolute winging movement in the rhythm. Without an inevitable rhythm there can be no inevitable wording. If you understand all that, you are lucky. But how to explain the inexplicable, something that is self-existent? That simply means an absoluteness, one might say, an inexplicably perfect and in-fitting thusness and thereness and thatness and everything-elseness so satisfying in every way as to be unalterable. All perfection is not necessarily inevitability. I have tried to explain in *The Future Poetry* — very unsuccessfully I am afraid — that there are different grades of perfection in poetry: adequateness, effectivity, illumination of language, inspiredness — finally, inevitability. These are things one has to learn to feel, one can't analyse.

All the styles, "adequate", "effective", etc. can be raised to inevitability in their own line.[1]

The supreme inevitability is something more even than that, a speech overwhelmingly sheer, pure and true, a quintessential essence of convincingly perfect utterance. That goes out of all classifications and is unanalysable. Instances would include the most different kinds of style — Keats' "magic casements", Wordsworth's [*lines on*] Newton and his "fields of sleep", Shakespeare's "Macbeth has murdered sleep", Homer's descent of Apollo from Olympus, Virgil's "Sunt lachrimae rerum" and his "O passi graviora". 16 September 1934

---

[1] *This item is composed of parts of three letters that were typed together and revised by Sri Aurobindo in that form. This sentence is from a letter reproduced in full on page 191. — Ed.*

*

> You write, in regard to a poem of mine, "it is difficult to draw the line" between the illumined and inspired styles. Was that a general statement, or was it meant to apply only in that particular instance? I suppose there must be some characteristic in the rhythm and the manner of expression to mark out the inspired style.

It is often a little difficult. The illumined is on the way to the inspired and a little more intensity of vision and expression is enough to make the difference. 24 September 1934

Grades of Perfection and Planes of Inspiration

> Is there any coordination between the differences of style and the different planes of inspiration?

I don't think so — unless one can say that the effective style comes from the higher mind, the illumined from the illumined mind, the inspired from the plane of intuition. But I don't know whether that would stand at all times — especially when each style reaches its inevitable power. 23 September 1934

*

> If one can write from the highest plane, i.e. overmind and supermind plane — as you have done in *Savitri* — is it evidently going to be greater poetry than any other poetry?

Nobody ever spoke of supermind plane poetry. Is *Savitri* all from overhead plane? I don't know.

> You lay down certain features of overhead poetry, e.g. greater depth and height of spiritual vision, inner life and experience

> and character of rhythm and expression. But it won't necessarily outshine Shakespeare in poetic excellence.

Obviously if properly done it would have a deeper and rarer substance, but would not be necessarily greater in poetic excellence.

> You say also that for overhead poetry technique, it must be the right word and no other in the right place, right sounds and no others in a design of sound that cannot be changed even a little. Well, is that not what is called sheer inevitability which is the sole criterion of highest poetry?

Yes, but mental and vital poetry can be inevitable also. Only in O.P. there must be a rightness throughout which is not the case elsewhere — for without this inevitability it is no longer fully O.P., while without this sustained inevitability there can be fine mental and vital poetry. But practically that means O.P. comes usually by bits only, not in a mass.

> You may say that in overhead poetry expression of spiritual vision is more important. True, but why can't it be clothed in as fine poetry as in the case of Shakespeare? The highest source of inspiration will surely bring in all the characteristics of highest poetry, no?

It can, but it is more difficult to get. It can be as fine poetry as Shakespeare's if there is the equal genius, but it needn't by the fact of being O.P. become finer. 17 May 1937

Examples of Grades of Perfection in Poetic Style

Examples from Classical and Mediaeval Writers

> Would you please tell me where in Homer the "descent of Apollo" occurs?[1]

It is in the first fifty or a hundred lines of the first book of the Iliad.[2]

> I don't suppose Chapman or Pope have rendered it adequately.

Of course not — nobody could translate that — they have surely made a mess of it.

Homer's passage translated into English would sound perfectly ordinary. He gets the best part of his effect from his rhythm. Translated it would run merely like this, "And he descended from the peaks of Olympus, wroth at heart, bearing on his shoulders arrows and doubly pent-in quiver, and there arose the clang of his silver bow as he moved, and he came made like unto the night." His words too are quite simple but the vowellation and the rhythm make the clang of the silver bow go smashing through the world into universes beyond while the last words give a most august and formidable impression of godhead.

> Would you consider this line of Dante's as miraculously inevitable as Virgil's "O passi graviora"?
>
> e venni dal martiro a questa pace

That is rather the adequate inevitable.

---

[1] *See page 186 — Ed.*

[2] *The passage begins with line 44 of the first book of the* Iliad*:* bē de kat' Oulumpoio karēnōn chōomenos kēr. — *Ed.*

> And, is it possible to achieve a prose-inevitability — with rhythm and everything as perfectly wonderful as in poetry? Take, for instance (I quote from memory):
>
> O mors quam amara est memoria tua homini pacem
> habenti in substantiis suis.
>
> or
>
> Fulcite me floribus stipate me malis quia amore langueo
>
> or
>
> Et his malis omnibus mors furibunda succedit.

I don't think any of these has at all the same note as poetry gets — it is fine writing, but not the inevitable. 18 September 1934

*

> What exactly is Dante's style? Is it the forceful adequate (of course at an "inevitable" pitch)? Or is it a mixture of the adequate and the effective? A line like —
>
> e venni dal martiro a questa pace —
>
> is evidently adequate; but has this the same style —
>
> sí come quando Marsia traesti
> della vagina delle membra sue?

The "forceful adequate" might apply to much of his writing, but much else is pure inevitable; elsewhere it is the inspired style as in the last lines quoted. I would not call the other line merely adequate; it is much more than that. Dante's simplicity comes from a penetrating directness of poetic vision, it is not the simplicity of an adequate style. 3 November 1936

Examples from Amal Kiran and Sri Aurobindo

> I should like to know whether, when you call a poem very good, very fine, very beautiful, very powerful, or magnificent, you mean that it is inevitable — at least in its total impression, whatever slight declivities there may be in one or two places.

Not necessarily.

> And does the difference of epithet in the above descriptions indicate levels of excellence or merely kinds of excellence on the same level?

Rather kinds than levels.

> Also, if you say that a poem or part of it is very effective, do you always have in mind that which you have termed "effectivity" in the grade of perfections, as distinct from "adequateness", "illumination of language", "inspiredness" and "inevitability"?

No, I am not usually thinking of that classification.

> For example, what do you think of these lines?

. . . For I have viewed,
Astir within my clay's engulfing sleep,
An alien astonishment of light!
Let me be merged with its unsoundable deep
And mirror in futile farness the full height
Of a heaven barred for ever to my distress,
Rather than hoard life's happy littleness!

This is indeed an example of the effective style at its best, that is to say rising to some touch of illumination, especially in the second, fourth and sixth lines. 16 September 1934

*

> Do you find the lines of this sonnet any good?

Seeing You walk our little ways, they wonder
That I who scorn the common loves of life
Should kneel to You in absolute surrender,
Deeming Your visible perfection wife
Unto my spirit's immortality.
They think I have changed one weakness for another,
Because they mark not the new birth of me —

This body which by You, the Mystic Mother,
Has now become a child of my vast soul!
Loving Your feet's earth-visitation, I
Find each heart-throb miraculously flower
Out of the unplumbable God-mystery
Behind dark clay, and hour by dreamful hour,
Upbear that fragrance like an aureole.

Exceedingly good. Here you have got to inevitability. I forgot to say that all the styles "adequate", "effective" etc. can be raised to inevitability in their own line.[3] The octet here is adequateness raised to inevitability except the fourth and fifth lines in which the effective undergoes the same transformation. In the sestet on the other hand it is the illumined style that becomes inevitable.

17 September 1934

*

What kind of style are these lines?

Is the keen voice of tuneful ecstasy
To be denied its winged omnipotence,
Its ancient kinship to immensity
And the swift suns?

This seems to me the effective style at a high pitch.

Or these?

But plunged o'er difficult gorge and prone ravine
And rivers thundering between dim walls,
Driven by immense desire, until he came
To dreadful silence of the peaks and trod
Regions as vast and lonely as his love.

This is also high-pitch effective except the last line which is in the inspired style — perhaps!

23 September 1934

*

---

[3] *This sentence was incorporated in the composite letter printed on pages 185–86, which was revised in that form by Sri Aurobindo. — Ed.*

What about these lines?

Far-visaged wanderer, dost Thou rejoice
Straining towards the empty-hearted gloom
To kiss the cold lips of eternity?

Not with sage calm but thrilled vast hands I claim
The unfathomed dark which round my spirit lies—
And touch immortal rapturous loveliness!

All effective-illumined.

O star of creation pure and free,
Halo-moon of ecstasy unknown,
Storm-breath of the soul-change yet to be,
Ocean self enraptured and alone!

Can't say.

Withdrawn in a lost attitude of prayer.

Illumined passing into the inspired. 24 September 1934

*

I feel my poem *The Triumph of Dante* has now been sufficiently quintessenced. If it satisfies you, will you make whatever analysis is possible of its inspirational qualities?

These arms, stretched through ten hollow years, have brought her
Back to my heart! A light, a hush immense
Falls suddenly upon my voice of tears,
Out of a sky whose each blue moment bears
The sun-touch of a rapt omnipotence.
Ineffable the secrecies supreme
Pass and elude my gaze—an exquisite
Failure to hold some nectarous Infinite!
The uncertainties of time grow shadowless
And never but with startling loveliness,
A white shiver of breeze on moonlit water,
Flies the chill thought of death across my dream.

For, how shall earth be dark when human eyes
Mirror the love whose smile is paradise? —
A smile that misers not its golden store
But gives itself and yearns to give yet more,
As though God's light were inexhaustible
Not for His joy but this one heart to fill!

There are three different tones or pitches of inspiration in the poem, each in its own manner reaching inevitability. The first seven lines up to "gaze" bear as a whole the stamp of a high elevation of thought and vision — height and illumination lifted up still farther by the Intuition to its own inspired level; one passage (lines 3, 4) seems to me almost to touch in its tone of expression an overmind seeing. But here "A light, a hush . . . a voice of tears" anticipates the second movement by an element of subtle inner intensity in it. This inner intensity — where a deep secret intimacy of feeling and seeing replaces the height and large luminosity — characterises the rest of the first part. This passage has a seizing originality and authenticity in it — it is here that one gets a pure inevitability. In the last lines the intuition descends towards the mental plane with a less revelatory power in it but more precise in its illumination. That is the difference between sheer vision and thought. But the poem is exceedingly fine as a whole; the close also is of the first order. 16 November 1936

Examples from Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

Your satisfaction with today's poems is certainly justified, for they are very fine — they are among the best. The conciseness and clarity — which, by the way, were always there in lyric and sonnet — have grown very rapidly and there is nothing here of their opposites. To quote particular lines is difficult, but I may instance

a tremulous drop of rain
Silverly slipped over the voiceless hill

as an example of some kind of inevitability, — for there are many kinds, — or again in another kind

His marvellous experiment of wings
Crowned with a rich assurance of the height;

or, in yet another

Unmemory yourself of sign and mark
Which draw you still towards the greying earth.

The mark of this inevitability or perfect perfection is the saying of a thing that has to be said with such a felicity of phrase and rhythm that it seems as if it could not be better or otherwise said in the highest poetic way, it sounds final and irrevocable. All in a poem cannot be like that; one has to be satisfied with a more ordinary perfection — some critics even hold that this should be so as a matter of deliberate technique so as to bring the greater moments of the poetry into relief — all ought not to be Himalayan peaks clustering one upon the other, there must be valleys, plains, plateaus from which they rise. But in any case these moments lift poetical expression to its highest possibilities. There are other lines that could be quoted, but these will suffice.

Examples from Nirodbaran

> About yesterday's poem . . . I don't see what beauty is there to make you mark certain lines twice — e.g. "Into a heaven of light", which is a very simple, ordinary sort of line.

There is probably a defect in your solar plexus which makes it refuse to thrill unless it receives a strong punch from poetry — an ornamental, romantic or pathetic punch. But there is also a poetry which expresses things with an absolute truth but without effort, simply and easily, without a word in excess or any laying on of colour, only just the necessary. That kind of achievement is considered as among the greatest things poetry can do.

A phrase, word or line may be quite simple and ordinary and yet taken with another phrase, line or word become the perfect thing.

A line like "Life that is deep and wonder-vast" has what I have called the inevitable quality; with a perfect simplicity and straightforwardness it expresses something in a definitive and perfect way that cannot be bettered; so does "lost in a breath of sound" with less simplicity but with the same inevitability. I don't mean that highly coloured poetry cannot be absolutely inevitable, it can, e.g. Shakespeare's "In cradle of the rude imperious surge" and many others. But most often highly coloured poetry attracts too much attention to the colour and its brilliancy so that the thing in itself is less felt than the magnificence of its dress. All kinds are legitimate in poetry. I only wanted to point out that poetry can be great or perfect even if it uses simple or ordinary expressions, e.g. Dante simply says "In His will is our peace" and in writing that in Italian produces one of the greatest lines in all poetic literature. 1 April 1938

Section Four

Translation

Translation: Theory

Literalness and Freedom

A translator is not necessarily bound to the exact word and letter of the original he chooses; he can make his own poem out of it, if he likes, and that is what is very often done. This is all the more legitimate since we find that literal translations more completely betray than those that are reasonably free — turning life into death and poetic power into poverty and flatness. It is not many who can carry over the spirit of a poem, the characteristic power of its expression and the turn of its rhythmical movement from one language to another, especially when the tongues in question are so alien in temperament to each other as English and Bengali. When that can be done, there is the perfect translation.

*

The proper rule about literalness, I suppose, is that one should keep as close as possible to the original provided the result is that the translation does not read like a translation but like an original poem in Bengali and as far as possible as if it were the original poem originally written in Bengali. Whether that ideal is always realisable is another matter. When it can't be done one has to dodge or deviate. I admit that I have not practised what I preached, — whenever I translated, I was careless of the hurt feelings of the original text and transmogrified it without mercy into whatever my fancy chose. But that is a high and mighty criminality which one ought not to imitate. Latterly I have tried to be more moral in my ways, I don't know with what success. But anyhow it is a case of "Do what I preach and avoid what I practise."

10 October 1934

Translation of Prose into Poetry

I think it is quite legitimate to translate poetic prose into poetry; I have done it myself when I translated *The Hero and the Nymph* on the ground that the beauty of Kalidasa's prose is best rendered by poetry in English, or at least that I found myself best able to render it in that way. Your critic's rule seems to me rather too positive; like all rules it may stand in principle in a majority of cases, but in the minority (which is the best part, for the less is often greater than the more) it need not stand at all. Pushed too far, it would mean that Homer and Virgil can be translated only in hexameters. Again, what of the reverse cases — the many fine prose translations of poets so much better and more akin to the spirit of the original than any poetic version of them yet made? One need not go farther than Tagore's English version of his *Gitanjali.* If poetry can be translated so admirably (and therefore legitimately) into prose, why should not prose be translated legitimately (and admirably) into poetry? After all, rules are made more for the convenience of critics than as a binding law for creators. 9 November 1931

Translation: Practice

Remarks on Some Translations

I do not think it is the ideas that make the distinction between European and Indian tongues — it is the turn of the language. By taking over the English turn of language into Bengali one may very well fail to produce the effect of the original because this turn will seem outlandish in the new tongue, but one can always by giving a right turn of language more easily acceptable to the Bengali mind and ear make the idea as natural and effective as in the original; or even if the idea is strange to the Bengali mind one can by the turn of language acclimatise it, make it acceptable. The original thought in the passage you are translating[1] may be reduced to something like this: "Here is all this beautiful world, the stars, the forest, the birds — I have not yet lived long enough to know them all or for them to know me so that there shall be friendship and familiarity between us and now I am thus untimely called away to die." That is a perfectly human feeling, quite as possible, more easily possible, to an Indian than to a European (witness Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*) and can very well be acceptable. But the turn given it in English is abrupt and bold though quite forcible and going straight home — in Bengali it may sound strange and not go home. If so you have to find a turn in Bengali for the idea which will be as forcible and direct; not here only but everywhere this should be the rule. Naturally one should not go too far away from the original and say something quite different in substance but, subject to that limitation, any necessary freedom is quite admissible. October 1934

*

---

[1] *I have not numbered half the brilliant birds*
In one green forest . . .
Nor have I seen the stars so very often
That I should die. — *Sri Aurobindo,* Love and Death

It is not that I find the translations here satisfactory in the full sense of the word, but they are better than I expected. There is none of them, not even the best, which I would pronounce to be quite the thing. But this "quite the thing" is so rare a *trouvaille,* it is as illusive as the capture of eternity in the hours. As for catching the subtleties, the difficulty lies in one supreme faculty of the English language which none other I know possesses, the ease with which it finds the packed allusive turn, the suggestive unexpressed, the door opening on things ineffable. Bengali, like French, is very clear and luminous and living and expressive, but to such clear languages the expression of the inexpressible is not so easy — one has to go out of one's way to find it. Witness Mallarmé's wrestlings with the French language to find the symbolic expression — the right turn of speech for what is behind the veil. I think that even in these languages the power to find it with less effort must come; but meanwhile there is the difference.

*

Your translations.

1. Translation of Baudelaire,[2] very good, third and fourth verse superb. Literalness here does not matter so long as you are faithful to the spirit and the sense. But I don't think you are justified in inserting ইন্দ্রিয়ের — *volupté* here means bold and intense pleasure of the higher vital, not the lesser pleasure of the senses, — it is the *volupté* you do actually get when you rise, whether inwardly or outwardly like the aviators into the boundless heights.

2. Shelley.[3] Good poetry, but as a translation vulnerable in the head and the tail. In the head because, it seems to me that your সে ধন and তা বলি lays or may lay itself open to the construction that human love is a rich precious thing which the poet unfortunately does not possess and it is only because of this deplorable poverty that he offers the psychic devotion, less warm and rich and desirable: but still in its own way rare and

---

[2] Élévation *(in* Les fleurs du mal) — *Ed.*

[3] One word is too often profaned — *Ed.*

valuable! I exaggerate perhaps, but, still, if it is at all open to a meaning of this kind, then it says the very reverse of Shelley's intended significance. For in the English "what men call love" is strongly depreciatory, and can only mean something inferior, something that is poor and not rich, not truly love. Shelley says, in substance, "Human vital love is a poor inferior thing, a counterfeit of true love, which *I* cannot offer to *you*. But there is a greater thing, a true psychic love, all worship and devotion, which men do not readily value, being led away by the vital glamour, but which the heavens do not reject, though it is offered from something so far below them, so maimed and ignorant and sorrow-vexed as the human consciousness which is to the divine consciousness as the moth to the star, as night to the day. And will not you accept this from me, you who in your nature are kin to the heavens, you who seem to me to have something of the divine nature, to be something bright and happy and pure, far above the 'sphere of our sorrow'?" Of course all that is not said, but only suggested — but it is obviously the spirit of the poem. As to the tail, I doubt whether your last line brings out the sense of "something afar from the sphere of our sorrow". If I make these criticisms at all, it is not because your version is not good, but because you have accustomed me to find in you a power of rendering the spirit and sense of your original while turning it into fine poetry in its new tongue which I would not expect or exact from any other translator.

3. Amal.[4] I think here you have not so much rendered the English lines into Bengali as translated Amal into Dilip. Is not that the sense of your plea for Bengali colour and simile? Amal's lines are not easily translatable, least of all, I imagine, into Bengali. There is in them a union or rather fusion of high severity of speech with exaltation and both with a pervading intense sweetness which it is almost impossible to transfer bodily without loss into another language. There is no word in excess, none that could have been added or changed without spoiling the expression, every word just the right revelatory one — no colour,

---

[4] This errant life *(see page 501 – 02) — Ed.*

no ornamentation, but a sort of suppressed burning glow; no similes, but images which have been fused inseparably into the substance of the thought and feeling — the thought itself perfectly developed, not idea added to idea at the will of the fancy, but perfectly interrelated and linked together like the limbs of an organic body. It is high poetic style in its full perfection and nothing of all that is transferable. You have taken his last line and put in a lotus face and made divine love bloom in it, — a pretty image, but how far from the glowing impassioned severity of phrase, "And mould thy love into a human face"! So with your মধুর গোপনে and the "heart to heart words intimate". I do not suppose it could have been done otherwise, however, or done better; and what you write now is always good poetry — which is what I suppose Tagore meant to say when he wrote "তোমার আর ভয় নাহি".

And after all I have said nothing about Huxley or Baudelaire! 11 July 1931

*

Your translations are very good, but much more poetic than the originals: some would consider that a fault, but I do not. The songs of these Bhaktas (Kabir and others) are very much in a manner and style that might be called the "hieratic primitive", like a picture all in intense line, but only two or three essential lines at a time; the only colour is the hue of a single and very simple strong spiritual idea or emotion or experience. It is hardly possible to carry that over into modern poetry; the result would probably be, instead of the bare sincerity of the original, some kind of ostensible artificial artlessness that would not be at all the same thing.

I have no objection to your substituting Krishna for Rama, and if Kabir makes any, which is not likely, you have only to sing to him softly, *"Rām Shyām judā mat karo bhāī"*, and he will be silenced at once.

The bottom reason for the preference of Rama or Krishna is not sectarian but psychological. The Northerner prefers Rama because the Northerner is the mental, moral and social man in his type, and Rama is a congenial Avatar for that type; the Bengali, emotional and intuitive, finds all that very dry and plumps for Krishna. I suspect that is the whole mystery of the choice. Apart from these temperamental preferences and turning to essentials, one might say that Rama is the Divine accepting and glorifying a mould of the human mental, while Krishna seems rather to break the human moulds in order to create others from the higher planes; for he comes down direct from the Overmind and hammers with its forces on the mind and vital and heart of man to change and liberate and divinise them. At least that is one way of looking at their difference. March 1932

*

If your translations are read as independent poems they are very beautiful, but they have more of the true "eclogue" than Baudelaire. To be literal (grammatically) is hardly possible in a poetic version and the style of Baudelaire is not easy to transcribe into another language. There is an effect of masculine ease and grace which is really the result of the verbal economy and restraint of which you speak and has therefore at its base a kind of strong austerity supporting the charm and apparent ease — it is very difficult to get all that in together. It is what has happened in your translation — one element has been stressed at the expense of the other. Certain elements that are not Baudelaire have got in here and there, as in the lines you point out. On the other hand at other places by departing from closeness to the original you have got near to the Baudelaire manner at its strongest, e.g.

> I'ld have my eyrie hard against the sky.

20 March 1934

*

There is no question of defective poetry or lines. There are two ways of rendering a poem from one language into another — one is to keep strictly to the manner and turn of the original, the other to take its spirit, sense and imagery and reproduce them freely so as to suit the new language. Amal's poem is exceedingly succinct, simply-direct and compact in word, form, rhythm, yet full of suggestion — it would perhaps not be possible to do the same thing in Bengali; it is necessary to use an ampler form, and this is what you have done. Your translation is very beautiful; only, side by side with the original, one looks like a delicate miniature, the other like a rich enlargement. If you compare his

> Where is it calling
> The eyes of night

with the corresponding lines in your poem, you can see the difference. I did not mean to suggest that it was necessary to change anything. 11 July 1937

The English Bible

The English Bible is a translation, but it ranks among the finest pieces of literature in the world. 27 February 1936

Part Two

On His Own and Others' Poetry

Section One

On His Poetry and Poetic Method

Inspiration, Effort, Development

Writing and Rewriting

> It will be valuable knowledge to learn how *Six Poems* were written and the three recent sonnets and how *Savitri* is being led forward to its consummation.

There is no invariable how — except that I receive from above my head and receive changes and corrections from above without any initiation by myself or labour of the brain. Even if I change a hundred times, the mind does not work at that, it only receives. Formerly it used not to be so; the mind was always labouring at the stuff of an unshaped formation. The sonnets by the way are not recent, except *Nirvana* — two are some years old already. In any case, the poems come as a stream, beginning at the first line and ending at the last — only some remain with one or two changes only, others have to be recast if the first inspiration was an inferior one. *Savitri* is a work by itself unlike all the others. I made some eight or ten recasts of it originally under the old insufficient inspiration. Afterwards I am altogether rewriting it, concentrating on the first Book and working on it over and over again with the hope that every line may be of a perfect perfection — but I have hardly any time now for such work. 31 October 1934

*

Harin used to write ten or twelve poems in a day or any number more. It takes me usually a day or two days to write and perfect one or three days even, or if very inspired, I get two short ones out, and have perhaps to revise the next day. Another poet will be like Virgil writing nine lines a day and spending all the rest of his time polishing and polishing. A fourth will be like Manmohan as I knew him setting down half lines and fragments and taking 2 weeks or 2 months to put them into shape. The time does not matter, getting it done and the quality alone matter. So forge ahead and don't be discouraged by the prodigious rapidity of Nishikanta. 8 December 1935

*

> If Harin could receive his inspiration without any necessity for rewriting, why not you?

So could I if I wrote every day and had nothing else to do and did not care what the level of inspiration was so long as I produced something exciting.

> Do you have to rewrite because of some obstruction in the way of the inspiration?

The only obstruction is that I have no time to put myself constantly into the poetic creative posture and if I write at all have to get out something in the intervals of quite another concentration.

> With your silent consciousness, it should be possible to draw from the highest planes with the slightest pull.

The highest planes are not so accommodating as all that. If they were so, why should it be so difficult to bring down and organise the supermind in the physical consciousness? What happy-go-lucky fancy-web-spinning ignoramuses you all are. You speak of silence, consciousness, overmental, supramental etc. as if they were so many electric buttons you have only to press and there you are. It may be one day but meanwhile I have to discover everything about the working of all possible modes of electricity, all the laws, possibilities, perils etc., construct modes of connection and communication, make the whole far-wiring system, try to find out how it can be made fool-proof and all that in the course of a single lifetime. And I have to do it while my blessed disciples are firing off their gay or gloomy *a priori* reasonings at me from a position of entire irresponsibility and expecting me to divulge everything to them not in hints — but at length. Lord God *in omnibus*! 29 March 1936

*

> Every time I complain of difficulty in writing, you quote the names of Milton and Virgil, but you forget they had no Supramental Avatar or Guru to push them on.

Considering that the Supramental Avatar himself is quite incapable of doing what Nishikanta or Jyoti do, i.e. producing a poem or several poems a day, why do you bring him in? In England indeed I could write a lot every day but most of that has gone to the Waste Paper Basket. 13 November 1936

*

> A great bother and an uninteresting business, this chiselling, I find. But perhaps it is very pleasant to you, as you cast and recast *ad infinitum*, we hear, poetry or prose.

Poetry only, not prose. And in poetry only one poem, *Savitri*. My smaller poems are written off at once and if any changes are to be made, it is done the same day or the next day and very rapidly done. 9 May 1937

*

> After so much trouble and pain, yesterday's poem was maimed! What a capricious Goddess is the Muse! But how partial to you!

Not at all. I have to labour much more than you, except for sonnets which come easily and short lyrics which need only a single revision. But for the rest I have to rewrite 20 or 30 times. Moreover I write only at long intervals. 3 October 1938

Pressure of Creative Formation

I know very well these pressures of a mental Power or creative formation to express itself and be fulfilled. When it presses like that, there is nothing to do but to let it have way, so as to leave the mind unoccupied and clear; otherwise it will be pushed two ways and not in the condition of ease and clearness necessary for the concentration.

Inspiration and the Silent Mind

> When I ask for "advice" I want to know how to direct my consciousness. Should I concentrate on anything in particular or just quiet my mind and turn it upwards and inwards? And I should like you also to tell me why it is that poetry seems to have fled.

I don't know why poetry has fled you — it seems to me to have intervals in its visits to you very often, is it not? I used to have the same malady myself when I was writing poetry. I rather think it is fairly common: Dilip and Nishikanta who can write whenever they feel inclined are rare birds, now-infant phenomena.

I don't know about the direction of consciousness. My own method is not to quiet the mind, for it is eternally quiet, but to turn it upward and inward. You, I suppose, would have to quiet it first which is not always easy. You have tried it?

5 October 1936

*

> Do you mean that the method you advised [*to "sit in vacant meditation and see what comes from the intuitive Gods"*] can really do something?

It was a joke. But all the same that is the way things are supposed to come. When the mind becomes decently quiet, an intuition perfect or imperfect is supposed to come hopping along and jump in and look round the place. Of course, it is not the only way.

> I understand that you wrote many things in that way, but people also say that Gods — no, Goddesses — used to come and tell you the meaning of the Vedas.

People talk a stupendous amount of rubbish. I wrote everything

I have written since 1909 in that way, i.e. out of or rather through a silent mind and not only a silent mind but a silent consciousness. But Gods and Goddesses had nothing to do with the matter. 22 October 1935

Reading, Yogic Force and the Development of Style

> To manufacture your style, you will hardly deny that your enormous reading contributed to it.

Excuse me! I never manufactured my style; style with any life in it cannot be manufactured. It is born and grows like any other living thing. Of course it was fed on my reading which was not enormous — I have read comparatively little — (there are people in India who have read fifty times or a hundred times as much as I have) only I have made much out of that little. For the rest it is Yoga that has developed my style by the development of consciousness, fineness and accuracy of thought and vision, increasing inspiration and an increasing intuitive discrimination (self-critical) of right thought, word form, just image and figure.
29 October 1935

*

> Methinks you are making just a little too much of Yogic Force. Its potency as regards matters spiritual is undeniable, but for artistic or intellectual things one can't be so sure about its effectiveness. Take Dilip's case; one could very well say: "Why give credit to the Force? Had he been as assiduous, sincere etc. elsewhere, he would have done just the same."

Will you explain to me how Dilip who could not write a single good poem and had no power over rhythm and metre before he came here, suddenly, not after long "assiduous" efforts, blossomed into a poet, rhythmist and metrist after he came here? Why was Tagore dumbfounded by the "lame man throwing away his crutches and running freely" and surely on the paths of rhythm? Why was it that I who never understood or cared for painting, suddenly in a single hour by an opening of vision got the eye to see and the mind of understanding about colour, line and design? How was it that I who was unable to understand and follow a metaphysical argument and whom a page of Kant or Hegel or Hume or even Berkeley left either dazed and uncomprehending and fatigued or totally uninterested because I could not fathom or follow, suddenly began writing pages of the stuff as soon as I started the *Arya* and am now reputed to be a great philosopher? How is it that at a time when I felt it difficult to produce more than a paragraph of prose from time to time and more than a rare poem, short and laboured, perhaps one in two months, suddenly after concentrating and practising Pranayama daily began to write pages and pages in a single day and kept sufficient faculty to edit a big daily paper and afterwards to write 60 pages of philosophy every month? Kindly reflect a little and don't talk facile nonsense. Even if a thing can be done in a moment or a few days by Yoga which would ordinarily take a long, "assiduous, sincere and earnest" cultivation, that would of itself show the power of the Yoga force. But here a faculty that did not exist appears quickly and spontaneously or impotence changes into highest potency or an obstructed talent changes with equal rapidity into fluent and facile sovereignty. If you deny that evidence, no evidence will convince you, because you are determined to think otherwise.

> So about your style too, it is difficult to understand how much the Force has contributed towards its perfection.

It may be difficult for you to understand, but it is not difficult for me, since I have followed my own evolution from stage to stage with a perfect vigilance and following up of the process. I have made no endeavours in writing. I have simply left the higher Power to work and when it did not work I made no efforts at all. It was in the old intellectual days that I sometimes tried to force things, but not after I started the development of poetry and prose by Yoga. Let me remind you also that when I was writing the *Arya* and also since whenever I write these letters or replies, I never think or seek for expressions or try to write in good style; it is out of a silent mind that I write whatever comes ready-shaped from above. Even when I correct, it is because the correction comes in the same way. Where then is the place for even a slight endeavour or any room at all for "my great endeavours"? Well?

By the way, please try to understand that the supra-intellectual (not the supramental only) is the field of a spontaneous automatic action. To get it or to get yourself open to it needs efforts, but once it acts there is no effort. Your grey matter does not easily open; it closes up also too easily, so each time an effort has to be made, perhaps too much effort — if your grey matter would sensibly accommodate itself to the automatic flow there would not be the difficulty and the need of "assiduous, earnest and sincere endeavour" each time. Methinks. Well?

I challenge your assertion that the Force is more easily potent to produce spiritual results than mental (literary) results. It seems to me the other way round. In my own case the first time I started Yoga, Pranayama etc., I laboured 5 hours a day for a long time and concentrated and struggled for five years without any least spiritual result[1], but poetry came like a river and prose like a flood and other things too that were mental, vital or physical, not spiritual, richnesses and openings. I have seen in many cases an activity of the mind in various directions as the first or at least an early result. Why? Because there is less resistance, more cooperation from the confounded lower members for these things than for a psychic or a spiritual change. That is easy to understand at least. Well? 1 November 1935

*

> To try to be a literary man and yet not to know what big literary people have contributed would be inexcusable.

Why is it inexcusable? I don't know what the Japanese or the Soviet Russian writers have contributed, but I feel quite happy and moral in my ignorance. As for reading Dickens in order to be a literary man, that's a strange idea. He was the most unliterary bloke that ever succeeded in literature and his style is a howling desert. 19 September 1936

---

[1] N.B. When the spiritual experiences did come, they were as unaccountable and automatic as — as blazes.

*

> You have nowhere said anything about Firdausi, the epic poet of Persia, author of *Shahnameh*? How is it that you who have made your own culture so wide by means of learning so many languages have allowed a serious gap in it by not knowing Persian?

I have read Firdausi in a translation long ago, but it gave no idea at all of the poetic qualities of the original. As for gaps in the culture — well, I don't know Russian or Finnish (missing the *Kalevala*) and have not read the *Nibelungenlied* in the original, nor for that matter Pentaur's poem on the conquests of Rameses in ancient Egyptian or at least the fragment of it that survives. I don't know Arabic either but I don't mind that having read Burton's translation of the *Arabian Nights* which is as much a classic as the original. Anyhow the gaps are vast and many.
13 July 1937

Old Forms into New Shapes

> Jyoti doesn't want to rest content with the forms. The *yugadharma* must be satisfied.

I don't follow the যুগধর্ম্ম myself in English poetry. There I have done the opposite, tried to develop old forms into new shapes instead of being gloriously irregular. In my blank verse, I have minimised or exiled pauses and overflows. 20 March 1937

Exceeding Past Formulas

I have crossed out "turned Rishi" [*in an essay called "Sri Aurobindo — the Poet"*], because that suggests an old formula of the past, and the future poet should exceed all past formulas.
5 February 1931

Early Poetic Influences

Influences on *Love and Death*

> I shall be really happy if you will tell me the way in which you created *Love and Death* — the first falling of the seed of the idea, the growth and maturing of it, the influences assimilated from other poets, the mood and atmosphere you used to find most congenial and productive, the experience and the frequency of the afflatus, the pace at which you composed, the evolution of that multifarious, many-echoed yet perfectly original style . . . In my essay, "Sri Aurobindo — the Poet", I tried to show the white harmony, so to speak, of *Love and Death* in a kind of spectrum analysis, how colours from Latin, Italian, Sanskrit and English verse had fused here together with an absolutely original ultra-violet and infra-red not to be traced anywhere. Among English influences the most outstanding are, to my mind, Shakespeare, Milton, Keats and Stephen Phillips, along with something of Shelley and Coleridge.

I cannot tell you much about it from that point of view; I did not draw consciously from any of the poets you mention except from Phillips. I read *Marpessa* and *Christ in Hades* before they were published and as I was just in the stage of formation then — at the age of 17 — they made a powerful impression which lasted until it was worked out in *Love and Death*. I dare say some influence of most of the great English poets and of others also, not English, can be traced in my poetry — I can myself see that of Milton, sometimes of Wordsworth and Arnold; but it was of the automatic kind — they came in unnoticed. I am not aware of much influence of Shelley and Coleridge, but since I read Shelley a great deal and took an intense pleasure in some of Coleridge's poetry, they may have been there without my knowledge. The one work of Keats that influenced me was *Hyperion* — I dare say my blank verse got something of his stamp through that. The poem itself was written in a white heat of inspiration during 14 days of continuous writing — in the mornings only of course, for I had to attend office the rest of the day and saw friends in the evening. I never wrote anything with such ease and rapidity before or after. Your other questions I can't very well answer — I have lived ten lives since then and don't remember. I don't think there was any falling of the seed of the idea or growth and maturing of it; it just came — from my reading about the story of Ruru in the *Mahabharata*; I thought, Well, here's a subject, and the rest burst out of itself. Mood and atmosphere? I never depended on these things that I know of — something wrote in me or didn't write, more often didn't, and that is all I know about it. Evolution of style and verse? Well, it evolved, I suppose — I assure you I didn't build it. I was not much of a critic in those days — the critic grew in me by Yoga like the philosopher, and as for self-criticism the only standard I had was whether I felt satisfied with what I wrote or not, and generally I felt it was very fine when I wrote it and found it was very bad after it had been written, but I could not at that time have given you a reason either for the self-eulogy or the self-condemnation. Nowadays it is different, of course, — for I am conscious of what I do and how things are done. I am afraid this will not enlighten you much but it is all I can tell you. 3 July 1933

General Influences on His Early Poetry

In that long letter on your own poetry, apropos of my friend's criticisms [*see pp. 332–57*], you have written of certain influences of the later Victorian period on you. Meredith's from *Modern Love* I have been unable to trace concretely — unless I consider some of the more pointed and bitter-sweetly reflective turns in *Songs to Myrtilla* to be Meredithian. That of Tennyson is noticeable in only a delicate picturesqueness here and there or else in the use of some words. Perhaps more than in your early blank verse the Tennysonian influence of this kind in general is there in *Songs to Myrtilla*. Arnold has influenced your blank verse in respect of particular constructions like two or three "buts" as in

> No despicable wayfarer, but Ruru,
> But son of a great Rishi,
>
> or
>
> But tranquil, but august, but making easy . . .
>
> Arnold is also observable in the way you build up and elaborate your similes both in *Urvasie* and in *Love and Death*. Less openly, a general tone of poetic mind from him can also be felt: it persists subtly in even the poems collected in *Ahana*, not to mention *Baji Prabhou*. I don't know whether Swinburne is anywhere patent in your narratives: he probably does have something to do with *Songs to Myrtilla*. Stephen Phillips is the most direct influence in *Urvasie* and *Love and Death*. But as I have said in my essay on your blank verse he is assimilated into a stronger and more versatile genius, together with influences from the Elizabethans, Milton and perhaps less consciously Keats. In any case, whatever the influences, your early narratives are intensely original in essential spirit and movement and expressive body. It is only unreceptiveness or inattention that can fail to see this and to savour the excellence of your work.

The influences I spoke of were of course influences only such as every poet undergoes before he has entirely found himself. What you say about Arnold's influence is quite correct; it acted mainly however as a power making for restraint and refinement, subduing any uncontrolled romanticism and insisting on clear lucidity and right form and building. Meredith had no influence on *Songs to Myrtilla*; even afterwards I did not make myself acquainted with all his poetry, it was only *Modern Love* and poems like the sonnet on Lucifer and on the ascent to earth of the daughter of Hades [*The Day of the Daughter of Hades*] that I strongly admired and it had its effect in the formation of my poetic style and its after-effects in that respect are not absent from *Savitri*. It is only Swinburne's early lyrical poems that exercised any power upon me, *Dolores, Hertha, The Garden of Proserpine* and others that rank among his best work,— also *Atalanta in Calydon*; his later lyrical poetry I found too empty and his dramatic and narrative verse did not satisfy me.

One critic characterised *Love and Death* as an extraordinarily brilliant and exact reproduction of Keats: what do you say to that? I think Stephen Phillips had more to do with it.

7 July 1947

On Early Translations and Poems

Translation of the *Meghadut*

I did translate the *Meghadut*, but it was lost by the man with whom I kept it — so mention of it is useless. 28 January 1931

The Hero and the Nymph and *Urvasie*

> On an old advertisement page of the *Arya* I find: "*The Hero and the Nymph*, a translation in verse of Kalidasa's *Vikramorvasie*."

Yes, I had forgotten the *Hero and the Nymph*.

> Our library hasn't got this translation, nor your poem *Urvasie*, both of which are out of print.

I don't think I have the *Urvasie*, neither am I very anxious to have this poem saved from oblivion. 5 February 1931

Love and Death, *Urvasie* and *The Hero and the Nymph*

> Was *Love and Death* your first achievement in blank verse, or did a lot of trial and experiment precede it? Was the brilliant success of your translation from Kalidasa its forerunner?

There was no trial or experiment — as I wrote, I did not proceed like that, — I put down what came, changing afterwards, but there too only as it came. At that time I had no theories, no methods or process. But *Love and Death* was not my first blank verse poem — I had written one before in the first years of my stay in Baroda which was privately published, but afterwards I got disgusted with it and rejected it. I made also some translations from the Sanskrit (in blank verse and heroic verse); but I don't remember to what you are referring as the translations of Kalidasa. Most of all that has disappeared into the unknown in the whirlpools and turmoil of my political career. 4 July 1933

The Hero and the Nymph and *Baji Prabhou*

> It is curious how you repeatedly forget that you have so wonderfully Englished Kalidasa's *Hero and the Nymph*. Surely it cannot be that you want it to be rejected and forgotten? Its blank verse is excellent, and I shall be very much obliged if out of the three typed copies of it I sent you a couple of years ago you will kindly let me have one. Was this work composed before *Love and Death*? Does *Baji Prabhou* also antedate the latter?

Baji Prabhou was written much later. I do not remember just now about the *Hero and the Nymph* — it might have been earlier, but I am not sure. I shall see about the typed copy of the translation. No, I do not reject it. I had merely forgotten all about it. 5 July 1933

Urvasie

On Sunday also I shall look at the *Urvasie*. It is a poem I am not in love with — not that there is not some good poetry in it, but it seems to me as a whole lacking in originality and life. However, I may be mistaken; a writer's opinions on his productions generally are. 5 April 1935

Love and Death

> Those that buy books like *Love and Death* do so to get the yogic knowledge — the mystery of death solved. I bought it for the same reason and was disappointed to find it is a story!

There is no Yogic knowledge there. It was written before I started Yoga.

*

> The other day Arjava told me that he considered the long speech of the Love-god Kama or Madan about himself in *Love and Death* one of the peaks in that poem — he as good as compared it to the descent into Hell.[1] Somehow I couldn't at the time wax extremely enthusiastic about it. Except for the opening eight or ten lines and some three or four in the middle, I couldn't regard it as astonishing poetry — at least not one of the peaks. What is your own private opinion? I need not of course, quote it to anyone.

My private opinion agrees with Arjava's estimate rather than with yours. These lines may not be astonishing in the sense of an unusual effort of constructive imagination and vision like the descent into Hell; but I do not think I have, elsewhere, surpassed this speech in power of language, passion and truth of feeling and nobility and felicity of rhythm all fused together into a perfect whole. And I think I have succeeded in expressing the truth of the godhead of Kama, the godhead of vital love (I am not using "vital" in the strict Yogic sense; I mean, the love that draws lives passionately together or throws them into or upon each other) with a certain completeness of poetic sight and perfection of poetic power, which puts it on one of the peaks — even if not the highest possible peak — of achievement. That is my private opinion — but, of course, all do not need to see alike in these matters.

10 February 1932

Chitrangada

> Months ago I typed out, from the last two numbers (I think) of *The Karmayogin*, part of a poem by you called *Chitrangada*. Is it possible to get the whole of it from you, so that I could type it for you as well as for the library and myself?

The publication of *Chitrangada* was a mistake. I wrote the poem hastily — a rough draught, intending to rewrite it and make it worth something. But the rewriting was never done. I am not

---

[1] *See* Love and Death, *lines 409–53, in* Collected Poems, *Volume 2 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

very anxious for the thing to survive in its present crude form.
21 May 1931

*

> Was *Chitrangada* ever finished?

It was certainly finished, but I suppose the MS is now lost.
24 June 1937

*

> Am I to conclude either that your *Chitrangada* is not worth revising because it is a fragment or that whatever of it we have is already perfect poetry? Else why have you shelved the question of revision?

It is under consideration and will probably remain so for some time. As for perfect poetry, I don't know that it can be made into that — some revision here and there at the most is all that is possible. But this is not the moment. 25 June 1937

Ilion

Ilion is a fragment — and by no means *ne plus ultra* — only the verse is good; I imagine I have found the solution for introducing the hexameter into English verse which others have tried but, till now, without success. That is all I can say about it at present; we shall see hereafter. 19 September 1931

On Poems Published in *Ahana and Other Poems*

On Two Translations of *Revelation*

The rendering of *Revelation* is even better than the two others, well inspired from beginning to end; the colouring is not quite the same as in my poem, but that is hardly avoidable in a poetic version in another language. To alter it, as you propose, would be to spoil it. There is no point in rendering literally "wind-blown locks", and it would be a pity to throw out দিপ্তিময়ী, for it is just the touch needed to avoid the suggestion of a merely human figure. It *is* needed — for readers are often dense. An Indian critic (very competent, if a little academic) disregarding all the mystic suggestions and even the plain statement of the closing couplet, actually described the poem as the poet's memory of a girl running past him on the seashore!! 25 January 1931

*

The translation is very good poetry. It is perhaps not quite the original, for what you describe is an obviously superhuman figure while the details in the poem might be those of a human figure and it is something subtle and not expressed but only hinted which gives the impression expressed only at the end that it is someone of the heavenly rout. That however does not matter; your version can be taken as an adaptation of the idea in the poem and not a strict translation of it.

On Two Translations of *The Vedantin's Prayer*

You have made a very fine and true rendering of the *Vedantin's Prayer*. Perhaps so hard and rocky a person as the Vedantin, who is very much of a converted Titan, would not have thought of such a sweet and luxurious word as কুসুমি in the midst of his ascent and struggle, but these few alterations do not make any real difference to the spirit. There is a quite sufficient nobility and power in your translation. With that, it seems to me as literal as it can be. 6 May 1932

*

Kshitish Sen's translation of the opening lines of the *Vedantin's Prayer* are magnificently done. He has quite caught the tone of the original, its austerity and elevation of thought and feeling and severe restraint of expression with yet a certain massiveness of power in it, — these at least were what tried to come out when I wrote it, and they are all unmistakably and nobly there in his rendering. If he can complete it without falling from the high force of this opening, it will be a *chef-d'oeuvre*. I notice he has got the exactly corresponding verse movement also.

24 June 1932

On a Translation of *God*

It is not a very satisfactory translation, but your changes improve it as far as it can be improved.

Why তবু in the fourth line? The idea is that work and knowledge and power can only obey the Divine and give him service; Love alone can compel him — because, of course, Love is self-giving and the Divine gives himself in return.

As for the second verse it does not give the idea at all. To have no contempt for the clod or the worm does not indicate that the non-despiser is the Divine, — such an idea would be absolutely meaningless and in the last degree feeble. Any Yogi could have that equality, or somebody much less than a Yogi. The idea is that, being omnipotent, omniscient, infinite, Supreme, the Divine does not scorn to descend even into the lowest forms, the obscurest figures of Nature and animate them with the divine Presence, — *that* shows his Divinity. The whole sense has fizzled out in the translation.

You need not say all that to the poetess, but perhaps you might very delicately hint to her that if she could bring in this point, it would be better. Then perhaps she would herself change the verse.

25 December 1930

On a Word in *In the Moonlight*

> What is the meaning of the word "ground" in these two lines from your poem *In the Moonlight*? —
>
> . . . Are Nature's bye-laws merely, meant to ground
> A grandiose freedom building peace by strife.
>
> Does "ground" mean "crush"?

"Ground" means here not to crush, but to make a ground or foundation for the freedom. What Science calls laws of Nature are not the absolute or principal laws of existence, but only minor rules meant to build up a material basis for the life of the Spirit in the body. On that has to be erected in the end, not a rule of material Law, but an immortal Liberty — not law of Nature, but freedom of the Spirit. The strife of forces which is regulated by these minor laws of Nature is only the battle through which man has to win the peace of Spirit. This is the sense.

February 1929

James Cousins on *In the Moonlight* and *The Rishi*

> I hear that James Cousins said about your poem *The Rishi* that it was only spiritual philosophy, not poetry.

I never heard that. If I had I would have noted that Cousins had no capacity for appreciating intellectual poetry. But that I knew already — just as he had no liking for epic poetry either, only for poetic "jewellery". His criticism was of *In the Moonlight* which he condemned as brain-stuff only except the early stanzas for which he had high praise. That criticism was of great use to me — though I did not agree with it. But the positive part of it helped me to develop towards a supra-intellectual style. As *Love and Death* was poetry of the vital, so *Ahana* [*Ahana and other Poems*] is mostly work of the poetic intelligence. Cousins' criticism helped me to go a stage farther. 11 November 1936

*

> Amal says Cousins ignored *The Rishi* while speaking of the others. Isn't that far worse?

Neither worse nor better. What does Cousins' bad opinion about *The Rishi* matter to me? I know the limitations of my poetry and also its qualities. I know also the qualities of Cousins as a critic and also his limitations. If Milton had written during the life of Cousins instead of having an established reputation for centuries, Cousins would have said of *Paradise Lost* and still more of *Paradise Regained* "This is not poetry, this is theology." Note that I don't mean to say that *The Rishi* is anywhere near *Paradise Lost*, but it is poetry as well as spiritual philosophy.
13 November 1936

Metrical Experiments

The Genesis of *In Horis Aeternum*

> Is there some way of keeping the loose swinging gait of anapaests within bounds? If one has used them freely in one or more lines, does it sound too abrupt to close with a strict iambic line — as in the final Alexandrine of:
>
> The wind hush comes, the varied colours westward stream:
> Were they joy-tinted coral, or song-light seen-heard in a shell fitfully,
> Drifted ashore by the hours as a waif from the day-wide sea
> Of Loveliness that smites awake our sorrow-dream?
>
> It is perhaps a pity that the rhythm of the first three lines runs in such well-worn familiar channels. Is this intensified by the sing-song of the second line, which slipped into the Saturnian metre lengthened out by anapaests? The third line might possibly be taken as four dactyls followed by the spondee "day-wide" and the monosyllabic foot "sea". What do you think? And would the four dactyls make the earlier part of a passable hexameter, or would at least one spondee be needed to break up the monotony and too-obvious lilt?

These are things decided by the habit or training of the ear. The intervention of a dactylic (or, if you like, anapaestic) line followed by an Alexandrine would to the ear of a former generation have sounded abrupt and inadmissible. But, I suppose, it would not to an ear accustomed to the greater liberty — or even licence — of latter-day movements.

I do not find that the rhythm of the first three lines is well-worn, though that of the first and third are familiar in type. The second seems to me not only not familiar, but unusual and very effective.

The canter of anapaests can, I suppose, be only relieved by variation or alternation with another metre, as you have done here — or by a very powerful music which would turn the canter into a torrent rush or an oceanic sweep or surge. But the proper medium for the latter up till now has been a large dactylic movement like the Greek or Latin hexameter; Swinburne has tried to get it into the anapaest, but with only occasional success because of his excessive facility and looseness, which makes the sound empty owing to want of spiritual substance. But this third line seems to be naturally dactylic and not anapaestic. Can one speak of catalectic and acatalectic hexameters? If so, this is a very beautiful catalectic hexameter.

I may say that the four lines seem to be in their variation very remarkably appropriate and effective, each exactly expressing by the rhythm the spirit and movement of the thing inwardly seen. I am speaking of each line by itself; the only objection that could be made is to the coming together of so many variations in so brief a whole (if it had been longer, I imagine it would not have mattered) as disturbing to the habit of the ear; but I am inclined to think that this objection would rest less on a reality than a prejudice. The habit of the ear is not fundamental, it can change. What is fundamental in the inner hearing is not, I think, disturbed by the swiftness of the change from the controlled flow of the first line to the wave dance and shimmer of the second, the rapid drift of the third and then the deliberate subtlety of the last line.

Is there in recent poetry an unconscious push towards a new metrical basis altogether for English poetry — shown by the outbreak of free verse, which fails because it is most often not verse at all — and the seeking sometimes for irregularity, sometimes for greater plasticity of verse-movement? Originally, Anglo-Saxon verse depended, if I remember right, on alliteration and rhythm, not on measured feet; Greece and Rome through France and Italy imposed the foot measure on English; perhaps the hidden seeking for freedom, for elbow-room, for the possibility of a varied rhythmic expression necessitated by the complexity of the inner consciousness might find some vent in a measure which would depend not on feet but on lengths and stresses. I have sometimes thought that and it recurred to me while looking at your second line, for on that principle it might be read

Were they jo̍y-ti̍nted co̍ral, or so̍ng-li̍ght se̍en-hea̍rd in a she̍ll fi̍tfully̍.

One could imagine a measure made of lines in a given number of lengths like that and each length allowed a given number of stresses; there would be many combinations and variations possible. For example (not of good poetry, but of the form),

A fa̍r sa̍il on the uncha̍ngeable mo̍noto̍ne of a slo̍w slu̍mbering se̍a,

A wo̍rld of po̍wer hu̍shed into sy̍mbols of hu̍e, si̍lent une̍ndingly̍;

O̍ver its he̍ad like a go̍ld ba̍ll the su̍n to̍ssed by the go̍ds in their pla̍y

Fo̍llows its cu̍rve, — a bla̍zing e̍ye of Ti̍me wa̍tching the mo̍tionless da̍y.

Perhaps it is only a curious imagination, too difficult and complex to realise, but it came on me strongly, so I put it down on paper.

*

I have written two more stanzas of the stress-scansion poem so as to complete it and send them to you. In this scansion as I conceive it, the lines may be analysed into feet, as you say all good rhythm can, but in that case the foot measures must be regarded as a quite subsidiary element without any fixed regularity — just as the (true) quantitative element is treated in ordinary verse. The whole indispensable structure of the lines depends upon stress and they must be read on a different principle from the current view — full value must be given to the true stresses and no fictitious stresses, no weight laid on naturally unstressed syllables must be allowed — that is the most important point. Thus:

A far sail on the unchangeable monotone of a slow slumbering sea,
A world of power hushed into symbols of hue, silent unendingly;
Over its head like a gold ball the sun tossed by the gods in their play
Follows its curve, — a blazing eye of Time watching the motionless day.

Here or otherwhere, — poised on the unreachable abrupt snow-solitary ascent
Earth aspiring lifts to the illimitable Light, then ceases broken and spent,
Or in the glowing expanse, arid, fiery and austere, of the desert's hungry soul, —
A breath, a cry, a glimmer from Eternity's face, in a fragment the mystic Whole.

Moment-mere, yet with all eternity packed, lone, fixed, intense,
Out of the ring of these hours that dance and die, caught by the spirit in sense,
In the greatness of a man, in music's outspread wings, in a touch, in a smile, in a sound,
Something that waits, something that wanders and settles not, a once Nothing that was all and is found.

It is an experiment and I shall have to do more before I can be sure that I have caught the whole spirit or sense of this movement; nor do I mean to say that stress-scansion cannot be built on any other principle, — say, on one with more concessions to the old music or with less, breaking more away in the direction of free verse; but the essential, I think, is there.

P.S. It is with some hesitation that I write "a once Nothing", because I am far from sure that the "once" does not overweight the rhythm and make the expression too difficult and compact; but on the other hand without it the sense appears ambiguous and incomplete, — for "a Nothing that was all" might be taken in a too metaphysical light and my object is not to thrust in a metaphysical subtlety but to express the burden of an experience. In the final form I shall probably risk the ambiguity and reject the intruding "once". 19 April 1932

The Genesis of *Winged with dangerous deity*

Your model is exceedingly difficult for the English language — for this reason that except in lines closing with triple rhymes the language draws back from a regular dactylic ending — more still from a dactylic last foot to a stanza. It can be done perhaps in a rhymeless lyrical movement such as Arnold was fond of, taking his inspiration from the Greek choruses — a first unconscious step towards the licence of free verse. I have at any rate made the following attempt.

> Winged with dangerous deity,
> Passion swift and implacable
> Arose and, storm-footed
> Ĭn thĕ dĭm | hēart ŏf hĭm,
>
> Ran, insatiate, conquering,
> Worlds devouring and hearts of men,
> Then perished, broken by
> Thĕ ĭrrĕs|īstĭblĕ
>
> Occult masters of destiny, —
> They who sit in the secrecy
> Ănd wātch ŭn|mōved ĕvĕr
> Ŭntŏ thĕ | ēnd ŏf ăll.

But there are several snags here. Especially the tribrach is difficult to keep up: the average reader will turn it into a dactyl or amphibrach. I started a rhymed endeavour also, but had no time to pursue it; it is not easy either. 20 June 1934

The Genesis of *Moon of Two Hemispheres*

After two days of wrestling I have to admit that I am beaten by your last metre. I have written something, but it is a fake. I will first produce the fake.

> Ă gŏld mōon|-răft flōats | ănd swīngs | slŏwly̆
>
> Ănd ĭt cāsts | ă fīre | ŏf pāle | hŏly̆ | blūe līght
>
> Ŏn thĕ drāg|ŏn tāil | ăglōw | ŏf thĕ | fāint nīght |

Thăt glīmm|ĕrs fār, | swĭmmĭng,
Thĕ ĭllūm|ĭned shōals | ŏf stārs | skĭmmĭng,
Ŏvĕrsprēad|ĭng ēarth | ănd drōwn|ĭng thĕ | hēart ĭn sīght |
Wĭth thĕ | ōcĕan-dēpths | ănd brēadths | ŏf thĕ | Īnfĭnīte. |

That is the official scansion and except in the last foot of the two last lines it professes to follow very closely the metre of Nishikanta's poem. But in fact it is full of sins and the appearance is a counterfeit. In the first line the first foot is really a bacchius:

Ă gōld mōon|-răft flōats

and quantitatively though not accentually the second is a spondee which also disturbs the true rhythmic movement. "Slowly" and "holy" are in truth trochees disguised as pyrrhics, and if "slowly" can pass off the deceit a little, "holy" is quite unholy in the brazenness of its pretences. If I could have got a compound adjective like "god-holy", it would have been all right and saved the situation, but I could find none that was appropriate. The next three lines are, I think, on the true model and have an honest metre. But the closing cretic of the last two is nothing but a cowardly flight from the difficulty of the spondee. I console myself by remembering that even Hector ran when he found himself in difficulties with Achilles and that the Bhagavat lays down पलायनम् as one of the ordinary occupations of the Avatar. But the evasion is a fact and I am afraid it spoils the correspondence of the metres. I have some idea of adding a second stanza, — this one will look less guilty perhaps if it has a companion in sin — but if you use this at all, you need not wait for the other, as it may never take birth at all. 2 July 1934

The Genesis of O *pall of black Night*

At first sight your metre seemed to me impossible in English, especially because of the four short syllables at the end of two lines and the five short syllables in two others. English rhythm hardly allows of that — quantitatively it can be managed, but five unaccented unstressed syllables altogether even if it can be done once in a way causes an extreme difficulty when it is made a regular feature of the metre. But it seems that there is hardly anything impossible in the realm of metre and I succeeded after all subject to one change, the substitution of a long for a short syllable at the end of the fourth and fifth lines. I suppose I could have avoided even this concession if I had fallen back on the device of unrhymed verse, but I wanted to use rhyme. However after finishing I found my stanza right enough as metre, but poor in rhythmic opulence, something bald and lame. So I had to make yet another concession; I took the option, used in all but one line, to prefix a metrically superfluous syllable to each or any line. I give you the finished stanza below; if you want to get it such as I originally wrote it, you have only to strike off the first syllable or word in each line except the fifth; but it is better rhythm and better poetry as it is.

Ŏ | pāll ŏf blāck | Nīght paīn|tĕd wĭth | thy̆ gōld stārs, |

Hăng, | hāng thy̆ fōlds | clōse, clōs|ĕr ŭp|ŏn eārth's bārs, |

Ŏ dīm Nīght! |

Thĕn | slēep shăll cōme | pārtĭng thĕ | ŭnseēn |

Gātes ănd, fār|-guārdĕd by̆ | ă screēn |

Ŏf strānge Līght, |

Frēe, | sāfe, my̆ sōul | chārĭ|ŏtĕd ĭn | ă swīft drēam |

Frŏm | ēarth ĕscāpe | slīppĭng | ĭntŏ thĕ | ŭnknōwn Glēam,

Thĕ Rāy whīte. |

I hope you will find this satisfactory in spite of the two departures from your model.

P.S. In Horace's line upon the eloquence and clear order, I have found that I dropped a word and truncated the hexameter. I have restored the full line.

The Genesis of *Thought the Paraclete* and *Rose of God*

I am sending you copies of two poems. One, *Thought the Paraclete*, is a development of four lines (now 3–6) originally written some time ago as an English metrical correspondence for a Bengali new metre of Dilip's. He had asked for some more lines and I thought the four I had written good enough to warrant a complete poem. Dilip's scheme was

—⏑—|——|⏑⏑|—⏑—|,

but in English another arrangement might be preferable, either

—⏑—|——⏑|⏑—⏑|—
|⏑—⏑|

or

—⏑—|——⏑|⏑—⏑—|
|⏑—⏑|

It is not an easy metre and does not seem to admit of sufficient variations for a longer poem.

The other, *Rose of God*, is a lyric, an invocation. The metrical plan is — for the first two lines of the stanza, three parts with 2 main stresses in each, the first identical throughout, the other two variable at pleasure; for the last two lines, two parts of equal length, three stresses in each part.

On Some Poems Written during the 1930s

[*The first five letters were published together as an appendix to* Six Poems of Sri Aurobindo *in 1934*]

The Bird of Fire and *Trance*

These two poems are in the nature of metrical experiments. The first is a kind of compromise between the stress system and the foot measure. The stanza is of four lines, alternately of twelve and ten stresses. The second and fourth line in each stanza can be read as a ten-foot line of mixed iambs and anapaests, the first and third, though a similar system subject to replacement of a foot anywhere by a single-syllable half-foot could be applied, are still mainly readable by stresses.

The other poem is an experiment in the use of quantitative foot measures not following any existing model, but freely invented. It is a four-line stanza reading alternately

⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ – ⏑ | – ⏑ – |
– – ⏑ | ⏑ – – |
and – ⏑ – | ⏑ – ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ – |

It could indeed be read otherwise, in several ways, but read in the ordinary way of accentual feet it would lose all lyrical quality and the soul of its rhythm.

The Bird of Fire is the living vehicle of the gold fire of the Divine Light and the white fire of the Divine Tapas and the crimson fire of Divine Love — and everything else of the Divine Consciousness.

Shiva — The Inconscient Creator

The quantitative metre of *Trance* is suited only for a very brief lyrical poem. For longer poems I have sought to use it as a base but to liberate it by the introduction of an ample number of modulations which allow a fairly free variation of the rhythm without destroying the consistency of the underlying rhythmic measure. This is achieved in *Shiva* by allowing as the main modulations (1) a paeon anywhere in place of an amphibrach, (2) the substitution of a long for a short syllable either in the first or the last syllable of an amphibrach, at will, thus substituting a bacchius or anti-bacchius (3) the substitution of a dactyl for an initial amphibrach, (4) the substitution of a long instead of short syllable in the middle of the final anapaest, both this and the ultimate syllable to be in that case stressed in reading, e.g.,

deathless | and lo̍ne he̍ad —

a bacchius replacing the anapaest.

The suppression of the full value of long syllables to make them figure as metrical shorts has to be avoided in quantitative metre.

Scan:

Ă fāce ŏn | thĕ cōld dīre | mōuntăin pēaks
Grānd ănd stīll; | ĭts līnes whīte | ănd ā̆[1]ustēre
Mātch wĭth thĕ | ŭnmēasŭred | snōwy̆ strēaks
Cūttĭng hēav|ĕn, | ĭmplācă|blĕ ănd shēer.

The Inconscient as the source and author of all material creation is one of the main discoveries of modern psychology, but it agrees with the idea of a famous Vedic hymn. In the Upanishads, Prajna, the Master of Sushupti, is the Ishwara and therefore the original Creator out of a superconscient sleep. The idea of the poem is that this creative Inconscient also is Shiva creating here life in matter out of an apparently inconscient material trance as from above he creates all the worlds (not the material only) from a superconscient trance. The reality is a supreme Consciousness — but that is veiled by the appearance on one side of the superconscient sleep, on the other of the material Inconscience.

---

[1] Intermediate stress.

Here the emphasis is on the latter; the superconscient is only hinted at, not indicated, — it is the Infinity out of which comes the revealing Flame.

The Life Heavens

Further modulations have been introduced in this poem — a greater use is made of tetrasyllabic feet such as paeons, epitrites, di-iambs, double trochees, ionics and, once only, the antispast — and in a few places the foot of three long syllables (molossus) has been used, and in others a foot extending to five syllables (e.g., Dĕlīvĕred frŏm grīef).

Scan:

Ă līfe ŏf | ĭntēnsĭtĭes | wīde, ĭmmūne
    Flōats bĕhīnd | thĕ ēarth ănd | hĕr līfe-frēt,
Ă māgĭc ŏf | rēalms māstĕred by̆ | spēll ănd rūne,
    Grāndĭŏ̄se, blīss|fŭl, cōloŭred, | ĭncrĕāte.

There were two places in which at the time of writing there did not seem to me to be a satisfactory completeness and the addition of a stanza seemed to be called for — one at the end of the description of the Life Heavens, a stanza which would be a closing global description of the essence of the vital Heavens, the other (less imperatively called for) in the utterance of the Voice. There it is no doubt very condensed, but it cannot be otherwise. I thought, however, that one stanza might be added hinting rather than stating the connection between the two extremes. The connection is between the Divine suppressed in its opposites and the Divine eternal in its own unveiled and undescended nature. The idea is that the other worlds are not evolutionary but typal and each presents in a limited perfection some aspect of the Infinite, but each complete, perfectly satisfied in itself, not asking or aspiring for anything else, for self-exceeding of any kind. That aspiration, on the contrary, is self-imposed on the imperfection of Earth; the very fact of the Divine being there, but suppressed in its phenomenal opposites, compels an effort to arrive at the unveiled Divine — by ascent, but also by a descent of the Divine Perfection for evolutionary manifestation here. That is why the Earth declares itself a deeper Power than Heaven because it holds in itself that possibility implied in the presence of the suppressed Divine here, — which does not exist in the perfection of the vital (or even the mental) Heavens.

Jivanmukta

Written in Alcaics. These Alcaics are not perhaps very orthodox. I have treated the close of the first two lines not as a dactyl but as a cretic and have taken the liberty in any stanza of turning this into a double trochee. In one closing line I have started the dactylic run with two short preliminary syllables and there is occasionally a dactyl or anapaest in unlawful places; the dactyls too are not all pure dactyls. The object is to bring in by modulations some variety and a more plastic form and easier run than strict orthodoxy could give. But in essence, I think, the alcaic movement remains in spite of these departures.

The basic form of this Alcaic would run,

1, 2 ⏓= | ⏑— | ⏓ ‖ —⏑⏑ | =⏖=⏑
3 ⏑— | ⏑— | ⏑— | ⏑— | ⏓
4 —⏑⏑ | —⏑⏑ | —⏑=⏓

but with an opening to other modulations.

The subject is the Vedantic ideal of the living liberated man — *jīvanmukta* — though perhaps I have given a pull towards my own ideal which the strict Vedantin would consider illegitimate.

In Horis Aeternum

This poem on its technical side aims at finding a halfway house between free verse and regular metrical poetry. It is an attempt to avoid the chaotic amorphousness of free verse and keep to a regular form based on the fixed number of stresses in each line and part of a line while yet there shall be a great plasticity and variety in all the other elements of poetic rhythm, the number of syllables, the management of the feet, if any, the distribution of the stress-beats, the changing modulation of the rhythm. *In Horis Aeternum* was meant as a first essay in this kind, a very simple and elementary model. The line here is cast into three parts, the first containing two stresses, the second and third each admitting three, four such lines rhymed constituting the stanza.

The Bird of Fire

> Your *Bird of Fire* is full of symbolic images, but if one can follow the *bhāva* behind or through them, I believe the appreciation becomes complete.

What do you mean by following the *bhāva* behind? Putting a label on the bird and keeping it dried up in your intellectual museum, for Professors to describe to their pupils — "this is the species and that's how it is constituted, these are the bones, feathers etc. etc. and now you know all about the bird. Or would you like me to dissect it farther?" 3 December 1936

Replies to Questions on *The Bird of Fire*

> Does the line
>
> Late and slow you have come from the timeless Angel
>
> mean that the sadhaka struggled long before the attainment? Does the "timeless Angel" mean the transcendent?

There must be a mistake in the copy. There is a full stop at "timeless". "Angel" begins a new sentence and is addressed to the bird. It is the Bird who went out to reach the Timeless Divine and comes late (while the Sadhak and the world have been long struggling and waiting in vain) with the gift.

> Purani thinks that the "Bird of Fire" represents aspiration. Is this true?

No — the Bird is not merely aspiration.

> Is the "Dancer in Time" Nataraja?

Yes.

> The "flame-petalled love" you mention in one of the lines is, I think, possible only at some level near the Supermind.

It is possible in the psychic also.

> The phrase "arrives at its luminous term thy flight" means, I suppose, the complete descent into the material consciousness after breaking the barriers of mind and life.

No. It reaches the Eternal and brings back to the material world that which is beyond Mind and Life. 25 October 1933

*

The Dancer is not the Time-Spirit, but the Divine in Time.
1933

*

The flame means the Bird of Flame and the Bird is the symbol of an inner Power that rises from the "sacrifice" i.e. the Yoga. The last lines mean that it has the power of going beyond mind and life to that which is beyond mind and life. 2 December 1933

Replies to Questions on *Trance*

> Were *Trance* and the *Bird of Fire* each composed at a single sitting and can the date be given?

The *Bird of Fire* was written on two consecutive days — and afterwards revised. The *Trance* at one sitting — it took only a few minutes. You may perhaps have the date as they were both completed on the same day and sent to you the next.

*

> In the line —
>
> Halo-moon of ecstasy unknown —
>
> is the "o" assonance satisfactory, or does the ear feel the two sounds come too close or for some reason are too insistent?

It seems to me that there is a sufficient space between to prevent the assonance from being too prominent; it came like that and I kept it because the repetition and prolongation of the full "o" sound seemed to me to carry in it a certain unexpressed (and inexpressible) significance.

> What exactly does "Halo-moon" signify? In line 2 there was the concrete physical moon ringed with a halo. Is the suggestion of line 10 that a glory or indefinable presence is imaged by a lunar halo — the moon as a distinct object now being swallowed up in the halo? My difficulty is that if it is "halo" simply it cannot be a "moon" as well. But possibly the compound "halo-moon" is elliptical for "moon with its surrounding halo".

Well, it is of course the "moon with its halo", but I wanted to give a suggestion if not of the central form being swallowed up in the halo, at least of moon and halo being one ecstatic splendour as when one is merged in ecstasy.

*

> The last line —
>
> Ocean self enraptured and alone —
>
> I took as meaning "self, who art symbolised by this ocean", since otherwise you would probably have written "self-enraptured"?

Yes, that is right.

The Metre of *Trance*

> Have you yourself invented the metre of *Trance* or is it adopted from some former poet?

No. I am not aware that anyone has used this metre before. It came to me just as I finished the *Bird of Fire* and I put it down.

23 October 1933

*

> Is it not the case that, in the metre of *Trance* (quantitative trimeter) one must either keep a rather staccato movement, pausing with almost unbroken regularity at the end of each foot, or else risk the iambic pentameter approximation by the use of an easy and fluent movement? Thus it is your very beautiful line
>
> Mute the body aureate with light,
>
> that would seem least out of place if inserted amidst other iambic pentameters.

Possibly — though the line does not read to my ear very well as an iambic pentameter — the movement sounds then common and rather lame. It goes better as a trochaic rhythm. It is true that there is this dilemma and the whole skill will then be in avoiding the staccato effect, but that necessitates a very light movement.

*

I think the principle of this metre should be to say a few very clear-cut things in a little space. At least it looks so to me at present — though a more free handling of the metre might show that the restriction was not justifiable.

*

I had chosen this metre — or rather it came to me and I accepted it — because it seemed to me both brief and easy, so suitable for an experiment. But I find now that it was only seemingly easy and in fact very difficult. The ease with which I wrote it only came from the fact that by a happy inspiration the right rhythm for it came into my consciousness and wrote itself out by virtue of the rhythm being there. If I had consciously experimented, I might have stumbled over the same difficulties as have come in your way.

On Some Words in *The Life Heavens*

The "last finite" is the material finite where finiteness reaches its acme (based on the atomic infinitesimal). It is this finite that on earth yearns and strives to reach the last (highest, farthest) infinity's Unknown.

*

By the way in the last line "bore" does not mean "carried" but "endured". I had written originally "through seas of light to epiphanies of love". The epiphanies of love are above the seas of light and part of the goal reached. 1933

Tagore and *The Life Heavens*

> The other day Prithwi Singh said that Tagore has said your *Life Heavens* was not poetry proper.

I am very much intrigued by Tagore's dictum. I am always ready to admit and profit by criticism of my poetry however adverse, if it is justified — but I should like to understand it first. Why is it not poetry proper? Is it because it is not good poetry — the images, language are unpoetic or not sufficiently poetic, the rhythm harsh or flat? Or is it because it is too intellectual, dealing in ideas more than in vision and feelings? Or is it that the spiritual genre is illegitimate — spiritual subjects not proper for poetic treatment? But in that case much of Tagore's poetry would be improper, not to speak of much of Donne (now considered a great poet), Vaughan, Crashaw etc., Francis Thompson and I do not know how many others in all climes and ages. Is it the dealing with other worlds that makes it not proper? But what then about Blake, whose work Housman declares to be the essence of poetry? I am at sea about this "poetry proper". Did he only use this cryptic expression? Was there nothing elucidatory said which would make it intelligible? Or has Tagore by any chance thought that I was trying to convey a moral lesson or a philosophical tenet — there is nothing of the kind there, it is a frequent experience on the spiritual path that is being described in its own proper, one might almost say, objective figures — and that is surely a method of poetry proper. Or is it that the expression is too bad or clear-cut for the soft rondures of poetry proper. I swim helplessly in conjectures. 1934

*

In regard to Tagore, I understand from Prithwi Singh that his objections to *The Life Heavens* were personal rather than in principle — that is, *he himself* had no such experience and could not take them as true (for himself), so they aroused in him no emotion, while *Shiva* was just the contrary. I can't say anything to that, as I could not say anything if somebody condemned a poem of mine root and branch because he did not like it or on good grounds — such as Cousins' objection to the inferiority of the greater part of *In the Moonlight* to the opening stanzas. I learned a great deal from that objection; it pointed me the way I had to go towards the Future Poetry. Not that I did not know before, but it gave precision and point to my previous perception. But still I don't quite understand Tagore's objection. I myself do not take many things as true in poetry — e.g. Dante's Hell etc. — of which I yet feel the emotion. It is surely part of the power of poetry to open new worlds to us as well as to give a supreme voice to our own ideas, experiences and feelings. *The Life Heavens* may not do that for its readers, but, if so, it is a fault of execution, not of principle. 4 October 1934

On Bengali Translations of *Shiva* and *Jivanmukta*

Your translation of *Shiva* is a very beautiful poem, combining strength and elegance in the Virgilian manner. I have put one or two questions relating to the correctness of certain passages as a translation, but except for the care for exactitude it has not much importance.

Anilbaran's translation [*of* Shiva] pleased me on another ground — he has rendered with great fidelity and, as it seemed to me, with considerable directness, precision and force the thought and spiritual substance of the poem — he has rendered, of course in more mental terms than mine, exactly what I wanted to say. What might be called the "mysticity" of the poem, the expression of spiritual vision in half-occult, half-revealing symbols is not successfully caught, but that is a thing which may very well be untranslatable; it depends on an imponderable element which can hardly help escaping or evaporating in the process of transportation from one language to another. What he has done seems to me very well done. Questions of diction or elegance are another matter.

There remains Nishikanta's two translations of *Jivanmukta*. I do not find the *mātra-vṛtta* one altogether satisfactory, but the other is a very good poem. But as a translation! Well, there are some errors of the sense which do not help, e.g., *mahimā* for splendour; splendour is light. Silence, Light, Power, Ananda, these are the four pillars of the Jivanmukta consciousness. So too the all-seeing, flame-covered eye gets transmogrified into something else; but the worst is the divine stillness surrounding the world which is not at all what I either said or meant. The lines:

> Revealed it wakens when God's stillness
> Heavens the ocean of moveless Nature

express an exact spiritual experience with a visible symbol which is not a mere ornamental metaphor but corresponds to exact and concrete spiritual experience, an immense oceanic expanse of Nature-consciousness (not the world) in oneself covered with the heavens of the Divine Stillness and itself rendered calm and motionless by that over-vaulting influence. Nothing of that appears in the translation; it is a vague mental statement with an ornamental metaphor. . . .

I do not stress all that to find fault, but because it points to a difficulty which seems to me insuperable. This *Jivanmukta* is not merely a poem, but a transcript of a spiritual condition, one of the highest in the inner Overmind experience. To express it at all is not easy. If one writes only ideas about what it is or should be, there is failure. There must be something concrete, the form, the essential spiritual emotion of the state. The words chosen must be the right words in their proper place and each part of the statement in its place in an inevitable whole. Verbiage, flourishes there must be none. But how can all that be turned over into another language without upsetting the apple-cart? I don't see how it can be easily avoided. For instance in the fourth stanza, "Possesses", "sealing", "grasp" are words of great importance for the sense. The feeling of possession by the Ananda rapture, the pressure of the ecstatic force sealing the love so that there can never again be division between the lover and the All-Beloved, the sense of the grasp of the All-Beautiful are things more than physically concrete to the experience ("grasp" is specially used because it is a violent, abrupt, physical word — it cannot be replaced by "In the hands" or "In the hold") and all that must have an adequate equivalent in the translation. But reading [*Nishikanta's Bengali line*] I no longer know where I am, unless perhaps in a world of Vedantic abstractions where I never intended to go. So again what has [*Nishikanta's Bengali line*] to do with the tremendous and beautiful experience of being ravished, thoughtless and wordless, into the "breast" of the Eternal who is the All-Beautiful, All-Beloved?

That is what I meant when I wrote yesterday about the impossibility — and also what I apprehended when I qualified my assent to Nolini's proposal [*to print Bengali translations of the poems*] with a condition. 3 June 1934

*

These translations [*of the line "Although consenting here to a mortal body"*] only state what is true of everybody, not only of the jivanmukta. They have therefore no force. In the English the word "consenting" has a great force which makes the meaning of "He is the Undying" quite clear, viz. He is consciously that and his consenting to the mortal body does not diminish that consciousness — the consent being also free and quite conscious. 1934

In Horis Aeternum and *The Bird of Fire*

Is *The Bird of Fire* more of a compromise between a quan-

> titative and a purely stress scansion than *In Horis Aeternum* (where the quantity-aspect seems to be less important than in *The Bird of Fire*)?

In the *In Horis Aeternum* I did not follow any regular scheme of quantities, letting them come as was needed by the rhythm. In *The Bird of Fire* I started with the idea of a quantitative element but abandoned it and remodelled the part of the poem in which I had used the quantitative system.

On a Bengali Translation of *In Horis Aeternum*

I think it is a very fine rendering.

In line 4 however I would note that there is no reference to day as a movement of time but one to the noon, the day as sunlit space rather than time, it is the fixed moment, as it were, the motionless scene of noon. The eye is of course the sun itself. I mark by the dash that I have finished with my first symbol of the gold ball and go off to a second, quite different one.

In the last line your translation is indeed very clear and precise in meaning, but it is perhaps too precise — the "something" twice repeated is meant to give a sense of just the opposite, an imprecise unseizable something which is at once nothing and all things at a time. It is found no doubt in the momentary things and all is there but the finding is less definite than your translation suggests. But the expression নাস্তিরূপে ছিল যে সর্ব্বাস্তি is very good.

One point more. "Caught by the spirit in sense" means "there is a spirit in sense (sense not being sense alone) that catches the eternal out of the perishable hours in these things."

*

But it is not the spirit in the body; it is the spirit in sense, why then দেহে? দেহ brings in something much too solid and it would mean the soul in the body which is not at all my meaning — it is a spiritual something in sight, sound, touch etc. that catches the eternal essential in what seems to be a thing of the moment.

I may add that "moment mere" does not and cannot mean "merely one moment" — it means "something that seems to be merely of the moment". It is not the moment that is caught but the essence of the momentary scene, etc. or as is next said something essential and eternal (not "fixed, intense", but slight and fugitive) in a sound, smile, etc. 1934

On a Review of *Six Poems*

I dare say Swaminathan is a good critic of a sort. But I cannot see what is the objection to "O marvel bird". His "raw metaphysics" refers I suppose to expressions like the "unthinkable Above". But he is quite out there. It is a rendering not of metaphysics whether raw or ripe, but of a concrete experience, and for my part I don't see how else it can be expressed unless one launches into literary circumvolutions and padding for which I have no inclination. "Moment mere" is an unusual combination but there again there is nothing else which will give the sense with the necessary compactness and it seems to me to be a very good phrase. Has Swaminathan a phobia for new or unusual or bold turns of language? "Good scholars" in a language very often have. For myself, I think they are necessary to keep the language alive.

I do not quite know what he wants me to do — is it to dilute my experiences or my seeing into diffuse intellectual expression? That seems to me what he means by electric light. It can be done, but it was not my purpose in writing these poems. I wrote what came as the closest expression of the thing seen and was not at all occupied with the repercussions or absence of repercussions in the ordinary reader. I dare say the critic is right in his view of what those repercussions would be. But what does he mean by his reference to the Vedas? The Vedas are the most enigmatic book in the world and nobody has the least idea what they mean; they out-Blake Blake all together. As for the Old Testament, it expresses not mystic but religious experience which is quite another affair altogether.

I am afraid Swaminathan's capacities for responding to mystic poetry are not very brilliant. His reference to Blake shows that — for Blake is an acid test for critics in this matter. However these are only passing comments. I shall consider the review more at leisure hereafter and defer till then the subject of metre.

15 February 1935

*

About Swaminathan, I think his chief defect as a critic must be that he has no ear or very little of an ear. The man who can approve of the dictum "Take care of the sense and the metre will take care of itself", ignoring the fact that the metre is only the basis of the rhythm without which poetry cannot exist or who says that the true quantity of "its" and of the last syllable of "delivered" cannot be short, must have something lacking in his auditory sense. He has also totally mistaken my phrase "Read in the ordinary way"[2] which means read in the way of the ordinary conventional iambic or trochaic metre. For instance

Ocean | self en|raptured | and a|lone.

If that is read as a trochaic line with a fictitious accent on "and", the lyrical movement disappears. If it is read as it would be in ordinary speech with the natural stresses and quantities, you get the exact movement of my verse. If for example you find in prose "As he looked on the ocean's radiant solitude, the seen passed into the unseen and he seemed to be looking on his own ocean self enraptured and alone"; the notation of the last words would be ōcĕăn sēlf | ĕnrāptŭred | ănd ălōne|, which is just the metre of the even lines in my poem. The rhythm is at once accentual and quantitative. I quite agree that you cannot ignore the accentual basis of the English language, but what you can do is to take account of both stress accent and quantity, assuming it as a rule that a major and true accent (as opposed to minor and fictitious ones) is sufficient to transform a naturally short syllable into a long one for practical purposes. That is what I have done, and that is why the accented syllables in delivered, magic, implacable are taken as long. The result may be a success for this kind of quantitative verse or not, but the basis must be understood before it can be judged, and Swaminathan has missed the basis altogether. I shall have to write someday an essay on the data of the problem of quantitative verse in English and the true road to the solution of the difficulty — it is badly needed. 15 February 1935

---

[2] *See page 239.*

On a Word in *Nirvana*

> In *Nirvana*, does "reef" mean a piece of sail or a rock?

No, it is not a sail — it is a long rock. I was thinking especially of coral reefs which sometimes subside in the sea.

31 August 1934

On an Image in *Moon of Two Hemispheres*

> I am unable to get the connection between the first three lines and the next three.

Connection of syntax or sense? It is the dragon tail of the Night illumined by the moon that goes swimming through the stars and imposing on the earth the sense of a dark Infinite.

2 September 1934

Thought the Paraclete

> *Thought the Paraclete* is a difficult poem liable to many interpretations. I would be very happy if you could give a brief analysis of the thought-structure of the poem or at least indicate the main lines of the ascent.

Well, then leave each to find out one of the many interpretations for himself. Analysis! Well, well!

There is no thought-structure in the poem; there is only a succession of vision and experience; it is a mystic poem, its unity is spiritual and concrete, not a mental and logical building. When you see a flower, do you ask the gardener to reduce the flower to its chemical components? There would then be no flower left and no beauty. The poem is not built upon intellectual definitions or philosophical theorisings; it is something seen. When you ascend a mountain, you see the scenery and feel the delight of the ascent; you don't sit down to make a map with names for every rock and peak or spend time studying its geological structure — that is work for the geologist, not for the traveller. Iyengar's geological account (to make one is part of his *métier* as a critic and a student and writer on literature) is probably as good as any other is likely to be; but each is free to make his own according to his own idea. Reasoning and argumentation are not likely to make one account truer and invalidate the rest. A mystic poem may explain itself or a general idea may emerge from it, but it is the vision that is important or what one can get from it by intuitive feeling, not the explanation or idea; it [*Thought the Paraclete*] is a vision or revelation of an ascent through spiritual planes, but gives no names and no photographic descriptions of the planes crossed. I leave it there.

> The "pale blue" or intuitivised aspect of the face is only at the start; when it "gleamed" it had already overpassed the Overmind phase beyond which there are only the "world-bare summits".

How do you know there are not many world-bare summits one above the other? Where do you place the self of the last line?

18 March 1944

*

As thought rises in the scale, it ceases to be intellectual, becomes illumined, then intuitive, then overmental and finally disappears seeking the last Beyond. The poem does not express any philosophical thought, however, it is simply a perception of a certain movement, that is all. "Pale blue" is the colour of the higher ranges of mind up to the intuition. Above it begins to be golden with the supramental light.

14 January 1935

*

Thought is not the giver of Knowledge but the "mediator" between the Inconscient and the Superconscient. It compels the world born from the Inconscient to reach for a Knowledge other than the instinctive vital or merely empirical, for the Knowledge that itself exceeds thought; it calls for that superconscient Knowledge and prepares the consciousness here to receive it. It rises itself into the higher realms and even in disappearing into the supramental and Ananda levels is transformed into something that will bring down their powers into the silent Self which its cessation leaves behind it.

Gold-red is the colour of the supramental in the physical — the poem describes Thought in the stage when it is undergoing transformation and about to ascend into the Infinite above and disappear into it. The "flame-word rune" is the Word of the higher Inspiration, Intuition, Revelation which is the highest attainment of Thought. 29 December 1936

Rose of God

> Two questions have arisen in the mind in connection with *Rose of God.*
>
> (1) Does the rose of all flowers most perfectly and aptly express the divine ecstasies or has it not any symbolic allusion in the Veda or the Upanishad?

There were no roses in those times in India — roses came in with the Mahomedans from Persia. The rose is usually taken by us as the symbol of surrender, love etc. But here it is not used in that sense, but as the most intense of all flowers it is used as symbolic of the divine intensities — Bliss, Light, Love etc.

> (2) Are the seven ecstasies referred to there the following: Bliss, Light, Power, Immortality, Life, Love and Grace?

No, it is not seven kinds, but seven levels of Ananda that are meant by the seven ecstasies. 2 January 1935

Overhead Inspiration in Some Poems of the 1930s

> A long time ago, you wrote to me that the Overmind has two levels — the intuitive and the gnostic. There are surely several passages in your own poetry as well as in the Upanishads and

> the Gita that sustain an inspiration from the former; but has no poetry ever come from the Overmind proper which is turned towards the full supramental Gnosis? Do you remember anything either in Sanskrit or in your own work which derives from there? If not, is it possible to give some idea as to what quality of rhythm, language and substance would constitute the difference between the expression of the Overmind Intuition and the Overmind Gnosis? Those four lines I quoted to you from yourself the other day — where do they hail from?
>
> Arms taking to a voiceless supreme delight,
> Life that meets the Eternal with close breast,
> An unwalled mind dissolved in the Infinite,
> Force one with unimaginable rest?

It is really very difficult for me to say anything in this respect about my own poetry; there is too complex a working of the Consciousness for it to be possible for me to classify and define. As for the Overmind Gnosis, I cannot yet say anything — I am familiar with its workings, but they are not easily definable or describable and, as for poetry, I have not yet observed sufficiently to say whether it enters in anywhere or not. I should expect its intervention to be extremely rare even as a touch; but I refer at present all higher overmind intervention to the O.I. [*Overmind Intuition*] in order to avoid any risk of overstatement. In the process of overmental transformation what I have observed is that the Overmind first takes up the illumined and higher mind and intellect (thinking, perceiving and reasoning intelligence) into itself and modifies itself to suit the operation — the result is what may be called a mental Overmind — then it lifts these lower movements and the intuitive mind together into a higher reach of itself, forming there the Overmind Intuition, and then all that into the Overmind Gnosis awaiting the supramental transformation. The overmind "touch" on the Higher Mind and Illumined Mind can thus raise towards the O.I. or to the O.G. or leave it in the M.O.; but, estimating at a glance as I have to do, it is not easy to be quite precise. I may have to revise my estimates later on a little, though not perhaps very appreciably, when I am able to look at things in a more leisurely way and fix the meeting lines which often tend to fade away, leaving an indefinable border. 3 May 1937

*

> I mentioned your recent poems as my aid to drawing inspiration from the Overhead planes. I quoted also the famous lines from other poets which have derived from the highest levels. Jyoti begged me to type for her all the lines of this character from your poems. I have chosen the following:
>
> 1. O marvel bird with the burning wings of light and the
> unbarred lids that look beyond all space . . .
>
> 2. Lost the titan winging of the thought.
>
> 3. Arms taking to a voiceless supreme delight,
> Life that meets the Eternal with close breast,
> An unwalled mind dissolved in the Infinite,
> Force one with unimaginable rest?
>
> 4. My consciousness climbed like a topless hill . . .
>
> 5. He who from Time's dull motion escapes and thrills
> Rapt thoughtless, wordless into the Eternal's breast,
> Unrolls the form and sign of being,
> Seated above in the omniscient Silence.
>
> 6. Calm faces of the gods on backgrounds vast
> Bringing the marvel of the infinitudes . . .
>
> 7. A silent unnamed emptiness content
> Either to fade in the Unknowable
> Or thrill with the luminous seas of the
> Infinite.
>
> 8. Crossing power-swept silences rapture-stunned,
> Climbing high far ethers eternal-sunned . . .
>
> 9. I have drunk the Infinite like a giant's wine.
>
> 10. My soul unhorizoned widens to measureless sight . . .
>
> 11. Rose of God, like a blush of rapture on Eternity's face,

Rose of Love, ruby depth of all being, fire-passion of
Grace!
Arise from the heart of the yearning that sobs in
Nature's abyss:
Make earth the home of the Wonderful and life
beatitude's kiss.

> I shan't ask you to tell me in detail the sources of all these lines — but what do you think in general of my choice? Only for one quotation I must crave the favour of your closer attention. Please do try to tell me something about it, for I like it so much that I cannot remain without knowing all that can be known: it is, of course, Number 3 here. I consider these lines the most satisfying I have ever read: poetically as well as spiritually, you have written others as great — but what I mean to say is that the whole essence of the truth of life is given by them and every cry in the being seems answered. So be kind enough to take a little trouble and give me an intimate knowledge of them. I'll be very happy to know their sources and the sort of *enthousiasmos* you had when writing them. How exactly did they come into being?

The choice is excellent. I am afraid I could not tell you in detail the sources, though I suppose they all belong to the overhead inspiration. In all I simply remained silent and allowed the lines to come down shaped or shaping themselves on the way — I don't know that I know anything else about it. All depends on the stress of the *enthousiasmos*, the force of the creative thrill and largeness of the wave of its Ananda, but how is that describable or definable? What is prominent in No. 3 is a certain calm, deep and intense spiritual emotion taken up by the spiritual vision that sees exactly the state or experience and gives it its exact revelatory words. It is an overmind vision and experience and condition that is given a full power of expression by the word and the rhythm — there is a success in "embodying" them or at least the sight and emotion of them which gives the lines their force. 4 May 1937

*

A General Comment on the Poems of the 1930s

> Could you tell me what your object is in manifesting something through the form of poetry?

I am expressing spiritual truth or spiritual experience through poetry.

12 September 1934

On *Savitri*

On the Composition of the Poem
Letters of 1931 – 1936

> You once quoted to me two lines written by yourself:
>
> Piercing the limitless unknowable,
> Breaking the vacancy and voiceless peace.
>
> Where do they occur? They produce such a wonderful impression of a slow, majestic widening out into infinity.

The lines I quoted from myself are not in any published poem, but in the unfinished first book of "Savitri, A Legend and a Symbol" which was in intention a sort of symbolic epic of the aim of supramental Yoga! I may send it to you for typing when I have completed it; but in view of my abundant absence of leisure, the completion seems still to lurk in the mists of the far-off future. 15 September 1931

*

As to *Savitri*, there is a previous draft, the result of the many retouchings of which somebody told you; but in that form it would not have been a magnum opus at all. Besides, it would have been only a legend and not a symbol. I therefore started recasting the whole thing; only the best passages and lines of the old draft will remain, altered so as to fit into the new frame. No, I do not work at the poem once a week; I have other things to do. Once a month perhaps, I look at the new form of the first book and make such changes as inspiration points out to me — so that nothing shall fall below the minimum height which I have fixed for it. 19 September 1931

*

> I humbly pray that you may send me some quotations from your *Ilion* and, if I may dare name it, *Savitri*.

It is quite impossible for me to do it just now. If the sky clears a little, I shall see. 28 September 1932

*

> What of the first version of *Savitri*? Do you consider it surpasses *Love and Death*, and if so in what respects? Is it less than crying for the moon to ask for a few passages from it? If it is in an untyped or ill-typed condition, I would deem it the seventh heaven of rapture to dedicate as many as possible of my bedridden hours as are needed to produce the neatest typed copy of it imaginable.

What is the first version of *Savitri*? What I wrote at first was only the first raw material of the *Savitri* I am evolving now. I made about ten versions of the first cantos and none were satisfactory — it is only now I have arrived at a stable something out of the nebula, — only for the first Canto — but it is still not *au point*.
4 July 1933

*

> Will you be able after all to give quotations from *Savitri*?

Possibly — but in this world certitudes are few. Anyhow in the effort to quote I have succeeded in putting the first few hundred lines into something like a final form — which is a surprising progress and very gratifying to me — even if it brings no immediate satisfaction to you. 1 August 1933

*

> If the first hundred lines or so of *Savitri* have attained their final form, it is indeed an occasion for great rejoicing — even for me, as you won't now be averse to quoting from it. If you like, I shall very carefully type out for you whatever you think does not need further improvement. In any case, please do send me the toes of the Hercules if not his whole foot.

The difficulty is that I had always an instinctive shrinking from amputation or any other surgical operation of the kind in matters of art as well as the body. 2 August 1933

*

> Dash it all! if you don't write for your disciples as well as for the Divine that is yourself, whom do you write for? I wonder if you realise how passionately I long to be in contact with the visions and vibrations that are the stuff of your highest poetry. Of course, anything you have written will be most welcome, but to get quotations from *Savitri*, if not all of it, is the top of my aspiration.

Well, I tried to do it — but the condition of timelessness = not enough time to do anything in which I am and have been for a long time, made it impossible. My box is full of things that ought to be done and are not done and, the box being insufficient, they are trailing all over the table and everywhere else — wherever there is a superficies capable of holding papers. Important correspondents are waiting for months for an answer. If I have a moment's leisure stern Duty, daughter of the voice of God, (or something of that kind) insists on my dealing with this labour of Sisyphus and if I even think of poetry she becomes as raucous and anathematous (don't consult Oxford — this is my own) as a revivalist preacher thundering about sin and hell-fire.

> Once I promised you that I wouldn't send you any letter for a week if only you would employ the time thus saved in picking out a few things for me from your *Savitri*. I stuck to my part of the bargain and you did look at *Savitri* and even managed to give its first book a form that could at last satisfy you — but I got nothing! . . . You will say that you don't like sending fragments, but that excuse won't wash, for you *have* sent fragments: what about the opening lines of the *Ilion* which you sent Dilip?

A form that would at last satisfy me? No sir, that is a mistake. Part of the first book only and then also only "almost satisfy". "Fragments"? yes, but they should be perfected fragments. Perhaps some day I shall be able to throw a few lines at your head from time to time which you can carefully collect? Oh, I promise nothing — it is only a wild, wandering idea. 5 October 1936

*

> I shall consider it such a great favour if you will give me an instance in English of the inspiration of the pure Overmind — I don't mean just a line (like Milton's "Those thoughts . . . " or Wordsworth's "Voyaging . . . ") which has only a touch of it, but something sustained and plenary. . . . Please don't disappoint me by saying that, as no English writer has a passage of this kind, you cannot do anything for me.

Good Heavens! how am I to avoid saying that when it is the only possible answer — at least so far as I can remember. Perhaps if I went through English poetry again with my present consciousness I might find more intimations like the line of Wordsworth, but a passage sustained and plenary? These surely are things yet to come — the "future poetry" perhaps, but not the past.

22 October 1936

*

> I think the favour I asked was expressed in perfectly clear language. If no English poet has produced the passage I want, then who has done so in English? God alone knows. But who is capable of doing it? All of us know. Well, then why not be kind enough to grant this favour? If difficult metres could be illustrated on demand, is it impossible to illustrate in a satisfying measure something so natural as the Overmind? I am not asking for hundreds of lines — even eight will more than do.

I have to say Good Heavens again. Because difficult metres can be illustrated on demand, which is a matter of metrical skill, how does it follow that one can produce poetry from any blessed plane on demand? It would be easier to furnish you with hundreds of lines already written out of which you could select for yourself anything overmindish if it exists (which I doubt) rather than produce 8 lines of warranted overmind manufacture to order. All I can do is to give you from time to time some lines from *Savitri*, on condition you keep them to yourself for the present. It may be a poor substitute for the Overmental, but if you like the sample, the opening lines, I can give you more hereafter — and occasionally better. E.g.

> It was the hour before the Gods awake.
> Across the path of the divine Event
> The huge unslumbering spirit of Night, alone
> In the unlit temple of immensity,
> Lay stretched immobile upon silence' marge,
> Mute with the unplumbed prevision of her change.
> The impassive skies were neutral, waste and still.
> Then a faint hesitating glimmer broke.
> A slow miraculous gesture dimly came,
> The insistent thrill of a transfiguring touch
> Persuaded the inert black quietude
> And beauty and wonder disturbed the fields of God.
> A wandering hand of pale enchanted light
> That glowed along the moment's fading brink,
> Fixed with gold panel and opalescent hinge
> A gate of dreams ajar on mystery's verge.

There! Promise fulfilled for a wonder. 24 October 1936

On the Composition of the Poem
Letters of 1936–1937

Sorry to impose on you this labour of Penelope, but new lines — unless the lightning-footed comes through whole-bodied, — generally need three or four revisions before I am reasonably satisfied, so again these scratchings and trans-shipments. I hope the latter won't baffle you. 10 November 1936

*

> When shall I see more of your *Savitri*? It has been six days since you have sent anything.

It is because the Asuras refuse to enter into any harmonious expression; they are too jagged and discordant altogether. There are also the worlds of Mind and the Mind is always a cause of trouble. But I haven't got so far yet. As soon as I have traversed this gulf I shall resume. 27 November 1936

*

Are the "Asuras" ready?

Not yet — the first part of them has got into some kind of form, but the latter half has still gaps to be filled etc. etc. and the whole thing has to be given its final revision. 5 December 1936

*

As for what awaits you on your return, I mean the typing work — Hell and the Asuras have been dealt with in a sort of way, I am now labouring in the mental worlds and trying to negotiate a passage through the psychic regions — beyond that things are more easy. 22 December 1936

*

Since I wrote to you I have been once more overwhelmed with correspondence, no time for poetry — so the Mind Worlds are still in a crude embryonic form and the Psychic World not yet begun. The remainder of the vital worlds is finished but only in a way — nothing yet final and a line missing here and there, but that last defect can be filled up *ambulando*. The revision of the last preceding section is also done, but that too in a way — not many changes, but a good number of lines added, and I shall have to wait and see whether all these will stand or not. But the whole thing has been lengthening out so much that I expect I shall have to rearrange the earlier part of *Savitri*, turning the Book of Birth into a Book of Beginnings and lumping together in the second a Book of Birth and Quest. 5 January 1937

*

Any climbing done in *Savitri* of the "mountains of mind"?

Not quite reached the summit yet — the lower heights are negotiated, but the tops are still too rough, have to be made more practicable. 27 January 1937

*

> Is it possible to proceed with *Savitri*? Today is Sunday, so please try to do something, or at least let me have the third section, revised.

I have not had time to think even of *Savitri* or of poetry at all: so none of these things are ready. 28 February 1937

*

> May I dare to hope that tomorrow you really will send me an instalment of *Savitri*?

Physically, mentally, psychologically and temporally impossible.
29 March 1937

*

> But why is *Savitri* impossible — and in so many ways?

Physically, I have to expend too much energy continuously on other things to have any left for poetry. Psychologically, I have no push to poetry just now even if I had the time, which I haven't. Poetry needs time and space to be born and neither exists for me now. Temporally, your undeniable decrease in correspondence means only that instead of having no time to finish the correspondence except by a breakneck hurry — and even then not — I have just time to do it. Even so outside letters pile up in a neglected heap. Of course, if I give up the little time I have for concentration, I might by slaving all the day make all other ends meet — but that I have no intention of doing. 30 March 1937

*

> If at present you can't get any further in *Savitri*, please do me the favour of sending back the third section, finally corrected. Surely you can find some time for that on Sunday. May I send you a big empty envelope on Sunday evening?

There is no surety about it. On Sunday I try to decrease the ever increasing mountain of unanswered outside correspondence. You can always send a big empty envelope, but God knows when you will get it back. 2 April 1937

*

> If you have time please look at the third section of *Savitri*.

I have gone over it once more and made some more changes, but now I have to keep it in a drawer for some time and then look again to see whether new and old are all right. 24 April 1937

*

> When shall I get the third section of *Savitri*? I'll be much obliged if you will give it a final luminous look kindling up all that remains a little below the mark. But are you sure anything does remain unkindled?

God knows. I am trying to kindle, but each time I find something that could be more up to the mark; I have some hope however that today's revision is the penultimate. Let us see. When you get it you will find yourself in an awful tangle and I can only hope you will see your way through the forest. 9 May 1937

*

> When will you continue *Savitri*? Your bucking-up seems to take a long time.

No time for the buck to appear — I mean inner, not outer time.
25 May 1937

*

> Don't you think it's a pretty long time since you touched *Savitri* last? You wrote to me once that if those psychic and mental worlds could be captured, the rest would be smooth sailing. Can't you put yourself in the right mood and have done with the obstacle for good and all?

It is not a question of mood at all but inability to take up any poetry till certain preoccupying things have been done.
4 July 1937

On the Composition of the Poem
Letters of 1938

> Is it not possible to send me, as you used to, new instalments

> of *Savitri* as they get written? I'll send you the next day a typed copy to revise. Why not file this sheet?

Nothing quite ready yet. If "Mind" gets ready before you go, I shall send it. 12 February 1938

*

I have been kept too occupied with other things to make much headway with the poem — except that I have spoiled your beautiful neat copy of the "Worlds" under the oestrus of the restless urge for more and more perfection; but we are here for World-improvement, so I hope that is excusable. 12 March 1938

*

I have not been able to make any headway with *Savitri* — owing to lack of time and also to an appalled perception of the disgraceful imperfection of all the sections after the first two. But I have tackled them again as I think I wrote to you and have pulled up the third section to a higher consistency of level; the "Worlds" have fallen into a state of manuscript chaos, corrections upon corrections, additions upon additions, rearrangements on rearrangements out of which perhaps some cosmic beauty will emerge! 9 October 1938

*

I have done an enormous amount of work with *Savitri*. The third section has been recast if not rewritten — so as to give it a more consistent epic swing and amplitude and elevation of level. The fourth section, the Worlds, is undergoing transformation. The "Life" part is in a way finished, though I shall have to go over the ground perhaps some five or six times more to ensure perfection of detail. I am now starting a recasting of the "Mind" part of which I had only made a sort of basic rough draft. I hope that this time the work will stand as more final and definitive.

1938

*

> Can't you send some of your poems? You owe me one, you know.

What poems? I am not writing any, except occasionally my long epic, *Savitri*, which cannot see the light of day in an embryonic state.[1] 15 May 1938

On the Composition of the Poem
Letters of 1945 – 1948

Don't wait for any poems for your Annual, I think the Pondicherry poets will have to march without a captain, unless you take the lead. I have been hunting among a number of poems which I perpetrated at intervals, mostly sonnets, but I am altogether dissatisfied with the inspiration which led me to perpetrate them, none of them is in my present opinion good enough to publish, at any rate in their present form, and I am too busy to recast, especially as poetically I am very much taken up with *Savitri* which is attaining a giant stature, she has grown immensely since you last saw the baby. I am besides revising and revising without end so as to let nothing pass which is not up to the mark. And I have much else to do. 18 March 1945

*

Your inference that ten books have been completed is unfortunately not correct. What has been completed, in a general way, with a sufficient finality of the whole form but subject to final changes in detail, is the first three books of the second part, The Book of Birth and Quest, The Book of Love, The Book of Fate; also in the same way, two books of the third part, The Book of Eternal Light and The Book of the Double Twilight. But a drastic recasting of the last two books still remains to be done and only a part of the eleventh has been subjected to that process. Worse still, the original Book of Death has not only to be recast but has to be split into two, The Book of Yoga and The Book of Death, and the first of these exists only in its first canto and a confused multi-versioned draft of the second, while all the rest, and that means many long cantos, has still to be written quite new, no draft of them yet exists. 22 April 1947

---

[1] *This letter was written to a different correspondent from the one who was the recipient of all the other letters in this section. — Ed.*

*

The first reason [*for not writing*] is my inability to write with my own hand, owing to the failure of the sight and other temporary reasons; the sight is improving but the improvement is not so rapid as to make reading and writing likely in the immediate future. Even *Savitri* is going slow, confined mainly to revision of what has already been written, and I am as yet unable to take up the completion of Parts II and III which are not yet finally revised and for which a considerable amount of new matter has to be written. 10 July 1948

*

I am afraid I am too much preoccupied with the constant clashes with the world and the devil to write anything at length even about your new poems: a few lines must suffice. In fact as I had to explain the other day to Dilip, my only other regular correspondent, my push to write letters or to new literary production has dwindled almost to zero — this apart from *Savitri* and even *Savitri* has very much slowed down and I am only making the last revisions of the First Part already completed; the other two parts are just now in cold storage. 1948

On the Inspiration and Writing of the Poem

I have gone through your article. I have struck out "like that of *Savitri*" and changed "will be" into "would be". Don't make prophecies. And how do you know that *Savitri* is or is going to be supramental poetry? It is not, in fact — it is only an attempt to render into poetry a symbol of things occult and spiritual.
1933

*

> You wrote to me the other day that *Savitri* is not supramental poetry, but I suppose there are lines in it which can be considered supramental. And why have you refrained from making it all supramental? . . . As everything in the universe, including human language, is derived at the highest from the Overmind, I wonder if it will not be necessary to introduce some radical change in language to express supramental idea and rhythm. Can supramental speech be understood or appreciated by those who haven't any glimmering of the influence of its source? Of course if it has a special symbology, one who is not supramentalised will find it very hard to grasp it, until explained, but will even its rhythm be incomprehensible?

All these are questions for the Supermind to settle when it has got down and settled into power. 2 August 1933

*

> We have been wondering why you should have to write and rewrite your poetry — for instance *Savitri* — ten or twelve times.

That is very simple. I used *Savitri* as a means of ascension. I began with it on a certain mental level, each time I could reach a higher level I rewrote from that level. Moreover I was particular — if part seemed to me to come from any lower level, I was not satisfied to leave it because it was good poetry. All had to be as far as possible of the same mint. In fact, *Savitri* has not been regarded by me as a poem to be written and finished, but as a field of experimentation to see how far poetry could be written from one's own Yogic consciousness and how that could be made creative. I did not rewrite *Rose of God* or the Sonnets except for two or three verbal alterations made at the moment. 29 March 1936

*

> In *Savitri* there is no attempt — as in the poetry of us lesser fry — to make things specially striking or strange or new, but a simple largeness of gesture which most naturally makes one surprising revelation after another of beauty and power.

Well, it is the difference of receiving from above and living in the ambience of the Above — whatever comes receives the breadth of largeness which belongs to that plane. 26 October 1936

*

I don't know yet whether every line [*of a passage*] is final, but I send it all the same. 29 October 1936

*

> Why shouldn't every line be final? . . . Do you ever have to pay attention to technique? That is, when revising do you think whether you have varied the pauses and the rhythm-modulations and the sentence-lengths? I suppose that if the expression satisfies you it automatically means a perfection of technique also, without your having to keep a special eye on it.

Every line was not sure of being final because three or four were newly written in the rebuilding, and I can never be certain of newly written stuff (I mean in this *Savitri*) until I have looked at it again after an interval. Apart from the quality of new lines, there is the combination with others in the whole which I have modified more than anything else in my past revisions. . . .

I don't think about the technique because thinking is no longer in my line. But I see and feel first when the lines are coming through and afterwards in revision of the work. I don't bother about details while writing, because that would only hamper the inspiration. I let it come through without interference; only pausing if there is an obvious inadequacy felt, in which case I conclude that it is a wrong inspiration or inferior level that has cut across the communication. If the inspiration is the right one, then I have not to bother about the technique then or afterwards, for there comes through the perfect line with the perfect rhythm inextricably intertwined or rather fused into an inseparable and single unity; if there is anything wrong with the expression that carries with it an imperfection in the rhythm, if there is a flaw in the rhythm, the expression also does not carry its full weight, is not absolutely inevitable. If on the other hand the inspiration is not throughout the right one, then there is an after examination and recasting of part or whole. The things

I lay most stress on then are whether each line in itself is the inevitable thing not only as a whole but in each word; whether there is the right distribution of sentence lengths (an immensely important thing in this kind of blank verse); whether the lines are in their right place, for all the lines may be perfect, but they may not combine perfectly together — bridges may be needed, alterations of position so as to create the right development and perspective etc., etc. Pauses hardly exist in this kind of blank verse; variations of rhythm as between the lines, of caesura, of the distribution of long and short, clipped and open syllables, manifold combinations of vowel and consonant sounds, alliteration, assonances, etc., distribution into one line, two line, three or four or five line, many line sentences, care to make each line tell by itself in its own mass and force and at the same time form a harmonious whole sentence — these are the important things. But all that is usually taken care of by the inspiration itself, for as I know and have the habit of the technique, the inspiration provides what I want according to standing orders. If there is a defect I appeal to headquarters till a proper version comes along or the defect is removed by a word or phrase substitute that flashes — with the necessary sound and sense. These things are not done by thinking or seeking for the right thing — the two agents are sight and call. Also feeling — the solar plexus has to be satisfied and, until it is, revision after revision has to continue. I may add that the technique does not go by any set mental rule — for the object is not perfect technical elegance according to precept, but sound-significance filling out word-significance. If that can be done by breaking rules, well, so much the worse for the rule.

30 October 1936

*

The poem was originally written from a lower level, a mixture perhaps of the inner mind, psychic, poetic intelligence, sublimised vital, afterwards with the Higher Mind, often illumined and intuitivised, intervening. Most of the stuff of the first book is new or else the old so altered as to be no more what it was; the best of the old has sometimes been kept almost intact because it had already the higher inspiration. Moreover there have been made successive revisions each trying to lift the general level higher and higher towards a possible Overmind poetry. As it now stands there is a general Overmind influence, I believe, sometimes coming fully through, sometimes colouring the poetry of the other higher planes fused together, sometimes lifting any one of these higher planes to its highest or the psychic, poetic intelligence or vital towards them. 3 November 1936

*

> It will take you exactly eight minutes to read the third section and two more minutes are enough for you to decide in the matter of alternatives.

You have queer ideas about poetic time! Sometimes it takes me months to get the right form of a line. 19 November 1936

*

> As far as I know, you don't need to recast anything in the third section, except an occasional word which is too closely repeated. As for the rest you have only to decide in a few places which of the two alternatives already found by you is the right one — a problem which your solar plexus can polish off in a jiffy.

Allow me to point out that whatever I did in a jiffy would not be any more than provisionally final. It is not a question of making a few changes in individual lines, that is a very minor problem; the real finality only comes when all is felt as a perfect whole, no line jarring with or falling away from the level of the whole though some may rise above it and also all the parts in their proper place making the right harmony. It is an inner feeling that has to decide that and my inner feeling is not as satisfied in that respect with parts of the third section as it is with the first two. Unfortunately the mind can't arrange these things, one has to wait till the absolutely right thing comes in a sort of receptive self-opening and calling-down condition. Hence the months.

20 November 1936

On the Characters of the Poem

> What a flight! — nobody can describe so marvellously our Mother. Isn't Savitri she and she only?

Savitri is represented in the poem as an incarnation of the Divine Mother. 3 November 1936

*

> If Savitri is represented as an incarnation of the Divine Mother, Aswapati must be meant to represent Theon.

What has Theon to do with it?

> If Aswapati is he, I'll learn about his role from the poem — but couldn't you say something about him in direct reference to Mother and yourself?

This incarnation is supposed to have taken place in far past times when the whole thing had to be opened, so as to "hew the ways of Immortality". Theon and the circumstances of this life have nothing to do with it. 10 November 1936

On the Verse and Structure of the Poem

> Please send me some passages from *Savitri* together with my selections from the blank-verse poetry of Abercrombie that I sent you in order to help me distinguish at a glance "Hyperion from a satyr".

Savitri is built on another plan altogether. It is blank verse without enjambements (except rarely) — each line a thing by itself and arranged in paragraphs of one, two, three, four, five lines (rarely a longer series), in an attempt to catch something of the Upanishadic and Kalidasian movements, so far as that is a possibility in English. You can't take that as a model — it is too difficult a rhythm-sculpture to be a model. I shall myself know whether it is a success or not, only when I have finished 2 or 3 books. But where is the time now for such a work? When the supramental has finished coming down — then perhaps.

25 December 1932

*

This First Book is divided into sections and the larger sections into subsections; you might wait till one section is with you before you type. E.g. the first section is "the last Dawn", i.e. the dawn of the day of Satyavan's death (but it must be remembered that everything is symbolic or significant in the poem, so this dawn also,) the next is the Issue — both of these are short. Then comes a huge section of the Yoga of the Lord of the Horse (Aswapati, father of Savitri) relating how came about the birth of Savitri and its significance — finally the birth and childhood of Savitri.

25 October 1936

*

Savitri was originally written many years ago before the Mother came as a narrative poem in two parts, Part I Earth and Part II Beyond (these two parts are still extant in the scheme) each of four books — or rather Part II consisted of 3 books and an epilogue. Twelve books to an epic is a classical superstition, but this new *Savitri* may extend to ten books — if much is added in the final revision it may be even twelve. The first book has been lengthening and lengthening out till it must be over 2000 lines, but I shall break up the original first four into five, I think — in fact I have already started doing so. These first five will be, as I conceive them now, the Book of Birth, the Book of Quest, the Book of Love, the Book of Fate, the Book of Death. As for the second Part, I have not touched it yet. There was no climbing of planes there in the first version — rather Savitri moves through the worlds of Night, of Twilight, of Day — all of course in a spiritual sense — and ended by calling down the power of the Highest Worlds of Sachchidananda. I had no idea of what the supramental World could be like at that time, so it could not enter into the scheme. As for expressing the supramental inspiration, that is a matter of the future.

31 October 1936

*

Here is the beginning of the second section which is entitled "The Issue" — that is of course the issue between Savitri and Fate or rather between the incarnate Light, the Sun Goddess, and Death the Creator and Devourer of this world with his Law of darkness, limitation, ignorance. 31 October 1936

*

I was trying doublets again because in the third Section, first subsection (Yoga of the Lord of the Horse — Ascent to Godhead) there is a long passage describing Aswapati's progress through the subtle physical, vital and mental worlds towards the Overmind which is far yet from being either complete or *au point*. It was only a brief interlude of a few lines formerly, but I had been lengthening it out afterwards with much difficulty in getting it right. I have now got the subtle physical and lower vital worlds into some kind of order, but the big dark Asuric vital and the vital heavens are still roaming about in a state of half solid incompleteness. Still I suppose as I am taking my vacation (from correspondence), I may have time to put all that right. 1 November 1936

*

> Don't you consider it rather necessary that some interpretative hint ought to be given of the term "Horse" in this section? Otherwise the section title [*"The Yoga of the Lord of the Horse"*] may mystify somewhat.

No. The name is Aswapati, Lord of the Horse, and it will be explained elsewhere. I don't want to be allegorical, only mystic and allusive. 10 November 1936

*

> I suppose the name of the section finished yesterday is "Aswapati, Lord of the Horse" and not, as originally conceived, "The Yoga of the Lord of the Horse"?

No. The proposed title would have no connection with the text except the name of the man which is not relevant as yet. "The Yoga of the Lord of the Horse" covers a number of sections making the greater part of the first book, — it is not the title of one section only. This title is essential to the plan of the work. The subtitle "Ascent to Godhead" covers the two sections, the one just finished and the one now begun. 16 November 1936

*

I am not quite sure of the sections (titles) yet — the fourth section is obviously a continuation of the Ascent to Godhead — it is the realisation of Godhead with which it will ascend — after that the Unknowable Brahman, then the Purushottama and finally the Mother. 19 May 1937

*

You will see when you get the full typescript [*of the first three books*] that *Savitri* has grown to an enormous length so that it is no longer quite the same thing as the poem you saw then. There are now three books in the first part. The first, the Book of Beginnings, comprises five cantos which cover the same ground as what you typed but contains also much more that is new. The small passage about Aswapati and the other worlds has been replaced by a new book, the Book of the Traveller of the Worlds, in fourteen cantos with many thousand lines. There is also a third sufficiently long book, the Book of the Divine Mother. In the new plan of the poem there is a second part consisting of five books: two of these, the Book of Birth and Quest and the Book of Love, have been completed and another, the Book of Fate, is almost complete. Two others, the Book of Yoga and the Book of Death, have still to be written, though a part needs only a thorough recasting. Finally, there is the third part consisting of four books, the Book of Eternal Night, the Book of the Dual Twilight, the Book of Everlasting Day and the Return to Earth, which have to be entirely recast and the third of them largely rewritten. So it will be a long time before *Savitri* is complete.

In the new form it will be a sort of poetic philosophy of the Spirit and of Life much profounder in its substance and vaster in its scope than was intended in the original poem. I am trying of course to keep it at a very high level of inspiration, but in so large a plan covering most subjects of philosophical thought and vision and many aspects of spiritual experience there is bound to be much variation of tone: but that is, I think, necessary for the richness and completeness of the treatment. 1946

Comments on Specific Lines and Passages of the Poem

As if solicited in an alien world
With timid and hazardous instinctive grace,
Orphaned and driven out to seek a home,
An errant marvel with no place to live,[2]

I see no sufficient reason to alter the passage; certainly, I could not alter the line beginning "Orphaned . . . "; it is indispensable to the total idea and its omission would leave an unfilled gap. If I may not expect a complete alertness from the reader, — but how without it can he grasp the subtleties of a mystical and symbolic poem? — he surely ought to be alert enough when he reads the second line to see that it is somebody who is soliciting with a timid grace and it can't be somebody who is being gracefully solicited; also the line "Orphaned etc." ought to suggest to him at once that it is some orphan who is soliciting and not the other way round: the delusion of the past participle passive ought to be dissipated long before he reaches the subject of the verb in the fourth line. The obscurity throughout, if there is any, is in the mind of the hasty reader and not in the grammatical construction of the passage. 1946

*

Then a faint hesitating glimmer broke.
A slow miraculous gesture dimly came,

---

[2] *Sri Aurobindo,* Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol, *volume 33 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 3. Subsequent page references are given in square brackets after the line or lines quoted. The passages Sri Aurobindo was asked to comment on were often revised later. Here the passages are reproduced from a version written at or near the time of Sri Aurobindo's comment. Where this version differs significantly from the final version, the page reference is preceded by "cf." (compare). The letters are arranged according to the order of the lines in the final text of* Savitri. *— Ed.*

> The insistent thrill of a transfiguring touch
> Persuaded the inert black quietude
> And beauty and wonder disturbed the fields of God.
> A wandering hand of pale enchanted light
> That glowed along the moment's fading brink,
> Fixed with gold panel and opalescent hinge
> A gate of dreams ajar on mystery's verge. [*cf. p. 3*]

Can't see the validity of any prohibition of double adjectives in abundance. If a slow rich wealth-burdened movement is the right thing, as it certainly is here in my judgment, the necessary means have to be used to bring it about — and the double adjective is admirably suited for the purpose. 25 October 1936

*

Now as to the double adjectives — well, man alive, your proposed emendations are an admirable exposition of the art of bringing a line down the steps till my poor "slow miraculous" above-mind line meant to give or begin the concrete portrayal of an act of some hidden Godhead finally becomes a mere metaphor thrown out from its more facile mint by a brilliantly imaginative poetic intelligence. First of all, you shift my "dimly" out of the way and transfer it to something to which it does not inwardly belong, make it an epithet of the gesture or an adverb qualifying its epithet instead of something that qualifies the atmosphere in which the act of the godhead takes place. That is a preliminary havoc which destroys what is very important to the action, its atmosphere. I never intended the gesture to be dim, it is a luminous gesture, but forcing its way through the black quietude it comes dimly. Then again the bald phrase "a gesture came" without anything to psychicise it becomes simply something that "happened", "came" being a poetic equivalent for "happened" instead of the expression of the slow coming of the gesture. The words "slow" and "dimly" assure this sense of motion and this concreteness to the word's sense here. Remove one or both whether entirely or elsewhere and you ruin the vision and change altogether its character. That is at least what happens wholly in your penultimate version and as for the last the "came" gets another meaning and one feels that somebody very slowly decided to let out the gesture from himself and it was quite a miracle that it came out at all! "Dimly miraculous" means what precisely or what "miraculously dim" — it was miraculous that it managed to be so dim or there was something vaguely miraculous about it after all? No doubt they try to mean something else — but these interpretations lurk in their way and trip them over. The only thing that can stand is the first version which is no doubt fine poetry, but the trouble is that it does not give the effect I wanted to give, the effect which is necessary for the dawn's inner significance. Moreover what becomes of the slow lingering rhythm of my line which is absolutely indispensable?

Do not forget that the *Savitri* is an experiment in mystic poetry, spiritual poetry cast into a symbolic figure. Done on this scale, it is really a new attempt and cannot be hampered by old ideas of technique except when they are assimilable. Least of all by standards proper to a mere intellectual and abstract poetry which makes "reason and taste" the supreme arbiters, aims at a harmonised poetic-intellectual balanced expression of the sense, elegance in language, a sober and subtle use of imaginative decoration, a restrained emotive element etc. The attempt at mystic spiritual poetry of the kind I am at demands above all a spiritual objectivity, an intense psycho-physical concreteness. I do not know what you mean exactly here by "obvious" and "subtle". According to certain canons epithets should be used sparingly, free use of them is rhetorical, an "obvious" device, a crowding of images is bad taste, there should be a subtlety of art not displayed but severely concealed — *summa ars est celare artem*. Very good for a certain standard of poetry, not so good or not good at all for others. Shakespeare kicks over these traces at every step, Aeschylus freely and frequently, Milton whenever he chooses. Such lines as

> In hideous ruin and combustion down

or

Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge

(note two double adjectives in three lines in the last) — are not subtle or restrained, or careful to conceal their elements of powerful technique, they show rather a vivid richness or vehemence, forcing language to its utmost power of expression. That has to be done still more in this kind of mystic poetry. I cannot bring out the spiritual objectivity if I have to be miserly about epithets, images, or deny myself the use of all available resources of sound significance.

The double epithets are indispensable here and in the exact order in which they are arranged by me. You say the rich burdened movement can be secured by other means, but a rich burdened movement of any kind is not my primary object, it is desirable only because it is needed to express the spirit of the action here; and the double epithets are wanted because they are the best, not only one way of securing it. The "gesture" must be "slow miraculous" — if it is merely miraculous or merely slow that does not create a picture of the thing as it is, but of something quite abstract and ordinary or concrete but ordinary — it is the combination that renders the exact nature of the mystic movement, with the "dimly came" supporting it, so that "gesture" is not here a metaphor, but a thing actually done. Equally a pale light or an enchanted light may be very pretty, but it is only the combination that renders the luminosity which is that of the hand acting tentatively in the darkness. That darkness itself is described as a quietude, which gives it a subjective spiritual character and brings out the thing symbolised, but the double epithet "inert black" gives it the needed concreteness so that the quietude ceases to be something abstract and becomes something concrete, objective, but still spiritually subjective. I might go on, but that is enough. Every word must be the right word, with the right atmosphere, the right relation to all the other words, just as every sound in its place and the whole sound together must bring out the imponderable significance which is beyond verbal expression. One can't chop and change about on the principle that it is sufficient if the same mental sense or part of it is given with some poetical beauty or power. One can only change if the change brings out more perfectly the thing behind that is seeking for expression — brings out in full objectivity and also in the full mystic sense. If I can do that, well, other considerations have to take a back seat or seek their satisfaction elsewhere. 31 October 1936

*

A lonely splendour from the invisible goal
Almost was flung on the opaque Inane. [*p. 4*]

No word will do except "invisible". I don't think there are too many "l's" — in fact such multiplications of a vowel or consonant assonance or several together as well as syllabic assonances in a single line or occasionally between line-endings (e.g. face – fate in the next instalment) are an accepted feature of the technique in *Savitri*. Purposeful repetitions also, or those which serve as echoes or key notes in the theme. 27 October 1936

*

> I notice that you have changed "twixt" to "between" when substituting "link" for "step" in the line, "Air was a vibrant link between earth and heaven." [*p. 4*] Is it merely because several lines earlier "twixt" has been used?

No, it is because "link twixt", two heavy syllables (heavy because ending in two consonants) with the same vowel, makes an awkward combination which can only be saved by good management of the whole line — but here the line was not written to suit such a combination, so it won't do. 28 October 1936

*

Here where our half-lit ignorance skirts the gulfs
On the dumb bosom of the ambiguous earth,
Here where one knows not even the step in front
And Truth has her throne on the shadowy back of doubt,

An anguished and precarious field of toil
Outspread beneath some large indifferent gaze,
Our prostrate soil bore the awakening Light.
Here too the glamour and prophetic flame
Touched for an instant trivial daylong shapes,
Then the divine afflatus, lost, withdrew,
Dimmed, fading slowly from the mortal's range.
A sacred yearning lingered in its trace,
The worship of a Presence and a Power
Too perfect to be held by death-bound hearts,
The prescience of a marvellous birth to come.
Affranchised from its respite of fatigue,
Once more the rumour of the speed of Life
Renewed the cycles of the blinded quest.
All sprang to their unvarying daily acts;
The thousand peoples of the soil and tree
Obeyed the unforeseeing instant's urge,
And, leader here with his uncertain mind,
Alone who seeks the future's covered face,
Man lifted up the burden of his fate. [*cf. pp. 5–6*]

> A deep and large suggestive tone is here, with every word doing perfect expressive duty; but it would be interesting to know if there is some shifting of the plane — if the poetry is nearer the Higher Mind than in the preceding passages where a more direct luminosity seemed to be at work.

The former pitch continues, as far as I can see, up to "Light", then it begins to come down to an intuitivised higher mind in order to suit the change of the subject — but it is only occasionally that it is pure higher mind — a mixture of the intuitive or illumined is usually there except when some truth has to be stated to the philosophic intelligence in as precise a manner as possible.
28 October 1936

*

[*As typed*] Its passive flower of love and doom it gave.
[*cf. p. 7*]

Good Heavens! how did Gandhi come in there? Passion-flower, sir — passion, *not* passive. 30 October 1936

*

Into how many feet do you scan the line

> Draped in the leaves' emerald vivid monotone [*cf. p. 13*]?

Five, the first being taken as a dactyl. A little gambol like that must be occasionally allowed in an otherwise correct metrical performance. 2 November 1936

*

> The Gods above and Nature sole below
> Were the spectators of that mighty strife. [*p. 13*]

The last line drops only in appearance, I think, towards Miltonism.

Miltonism? Surely not. The Miltonic has a statelier more spreading rhythm and a less direct more loftily arranged language. Miltonically I should have written

> Only the Sons of Heaven and that executive She
> Watched the arbitrament of the high dispute.

1 November 1936

*

Is the *r*-effect in

> Never a rarer creature bore his shaft [*p. 14*]

deliberate?

Yes, like Shakespeare's

> . . . *r*ock his b*r*ains
> In c*r*adle of the *r*ude impe*r*ious surge.

Mine has only three sonant *r*'s, the others being inaudible — Shakespeare pours himself 5 in a close space.

2 November 1936

*

All in her pointed to a nobler kind. [*p. 14*]

It is a "connecting" line which prepares for what follows. It is sometimes good technique, as I think, to intersperse lines like that (provided they don't fall below standard) so as to give the intellect the foothold of a clear unadorned statement of the gist of what is coming, before taking a higher flight. This is of course a technique for long poems and long descriptions, not for shorter things or lyrical writing. 2 November 1936

*

I refuse entirely to admit that that [*"All in her pointed to a nobler kind"*] is poor poetry. It is not only just the line that is needed to introduce what follows but it is very good poetry with the strength and pointed directness, not intellectualised like Pope's, but intuitive, which we often find in the Elizabethans, for instance in Marlowe supporting adequately and often more than adequately his "mighty lines". But the image must be understood, as it was intended, in its concrete sense and not as a vague rhetorical phrase substituted for a plainer wording, — it shows Savitri as the forerunner or first creator of a new race. All poets have lines which are bare and direct statements and meant to be that in order to carry their full force; but to what category their simplicity belongs or whether a line is only passable or more than that depends on various circumstances. Shakespeare's

To be or not to be, that is the question

introduces powerfully one of the most famous of all soliloquies and it comes in with a great dramatic force, but in itself it is a bare statement and some might say that it would not be otherwise written in prose and is only saved by the metrical rhythm. The same might be said of the well-known passage in Keats which I have already quoted in this connection:

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty" — that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

The same might be said of Milton's famous line,

> Fallen Cherub! to be weak is miserable.

But obviously in all these lines there is not only a concentrated force, power or greatness of the thought, but also a concentration of intense poetic feeling which makes any criticism impossible. Then take Milton's lines,

> Were it not better done as others use,
> To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
> Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?

It might be said that the first line has nothing to distinguish it and is merely passable or only saved by the charm of what follows; but there is a beauty of rhythm and a *bhāva* or feeling brought in by the rhythm which makes the line beautiful in itself and not merely passable. If there is not some saving grace like that then the danger of laxity may become possible. I do not think there is much in *Savitri* which is of that kind. But I can perfectly understand your anxiety that all should be lifted to or towards at least the minimum overhead level or so near as to be touched by its influence or at the very least a good substitute for it. I do not know whether that is always possible in so long a poem as *Savitri* dealing with so many various heights and degrees and so much varying substance of thought and feeling and descriptive matter and narrative. But that has been my general aim throughout and it is the reason why I have made so many successive drafts and continual alterations till I felt that I had got the thing intended by the higher inspiration in every line and passage. It is also why I keep myself open to every suggestion from a sympathetic and understanding quarter and weigh it well, rejecting only after due consideration and accepting when I see it to be well-founded. But for that the critic must be one who has seen and felt what is in the thing written, not like your friend Mendonça, one who has not seen anything and understood only the word surface and not even always that; he must be open to this kind of poetry, able to see the spiritual vision it conveys, capable too of feeling the overhead touch when it comes, — the fit reader. 22 April 1947

*

Are not these lines a snatch of the sheer Overmind?

All in her pointed to a nobler kind.
Near to earth's wideness, intimate with heaven,
Exalted and swift her young large-visioned spirit,
Winging through worlds of splendour and of calm,
O'erflew the ways of Thought to unborn things.
Ardent was her self-poised unstumbling will,
Her mind, a sea of white sincerity,
Passionate in flow, had not one turbid wave.
As in a mystic and dynamic dance
A priestess of immaculate ecstasies,
Inspired and ruled from Truth's revealing vault,
Moves in some prophet cavern of the Gods,
A heart of silence in the hands of joy
Inhabited with rich creative beats
A body like a parable of dawn
That seemed a niche for veiled divinity
Or golden temple-door to things beyond.
Immortal rhythms swayed her time-born steps;
Her look, her smile awoke celestial sense
In this earth-stuff and their intense delight
Poured a supernal beauty on men's lives.
The great unsatisfied godhead here could dwell.
Vacant of the dwarf self's imprisoned air,
Her mood could harbour his sublimer breath
Spiritual that can make all things divine:
For even her gulfs were secrecies of light.
At once she was the stillness and the Word,
An ocean of untrembling virgin fire,
A continent of self-diffusing peace.
In her he met a vastness like his own;
His warm high subtle ether he refound
And moved in her as in his natural home. [*cf. pp. 14–16*]

This passage is, I believe, what I might call the Overmind Intuition at work expressing itself in something like its own rhythm and language. It is difficult to say about one's own poetry, but I think I have succeeded here and in some passages later on in catching that very difficult note; in separate lines or briefer passages (i.e. a few lines at a time) I think it comes in not unoften.

3 November 1936

*

I shall answer in this letter only about the passage in the description of Savitri which has been omitted.[3] The simplest thing would be to leave the description itself and the article as they are. I am unable to accept the alterations you suggest because they are romantically decorative and do not convey any impression of directness and reality which is necessary in this style of writing. A "sapphire sky" is too obvious and common and has no significance in connection with the word "magnanimity" or its idea and "boundless" is somewhat meaningless and inapt when applied to sky. The same objections apply to both "opulence" and "amplitude"; but apart from that they have only a rhetorical value and are not the right word for what I want to say. Your "life's wounded wings of dream" and "the wounded wings of life" have also a very pronounced note of romanticism and do not agree with the strong reality of things stressed everywhere in this passage. In the poem I dwell often upon the idea of life as a dream, but here it would bring in a false note. It does not seem to me that magnanimity and greatness are the same thing or that this can be called a repetition. I myself see no objection to "heaven" and "haven"; it is not as if they were in successive lines; they are divided by two lines and it is surely an excessively meticulous ear that can take their similarity of sound at this distance as an offence. Most of your other objections hang upon your overscrupulous law against repetitions. I shall speak about that in a later letter; at present I can only say that I consider that this law has no value in the technique of a mystic poem of this kind and that repetition of a certain kind can be even part of the technique; for instance, I see no objection to "sea" being repeated in a different context in the same passage or to the image of the ocean being resorted to in a third connection. I cannot see that the power and force or inevitability of these lines is at all diminished in their own context by their relative proximity or that that proximity makes each less inevitable in its place.

---

[3] *This letter was written in response to suggestions made by K. D. Sethna (Amal Kiran) before he reproduced certain passages from* Savitri *in his article "Sri Aurobindo — A New Age of Mystic Poetry"* (Sri Aurobindo Circle 2 [1946]). *In that article Sethna omitted a number of lines from passages he quoted from the poem. The lines under discussion here are those that begin "Near to earth's wideness, intimate with heaven" (pp. 14–16). — Ed.*

Then about the image about the bird and the bosom, I understand what you mean, but it rests upon the idea that the whole passage must be kept at the same transcendental level. It is true that all the rest gives the transcendental values in the composition of Savitri's being, while here there is a departure to show how this transcendental greatness contacts the psychic demand of human nature in its weakness and responds to it and acts upon it. That was the purpose of the new passage and it is difficult to accomplish it without bringing in a normal psychic instead of a transcendental tone. The image of the bird and the bosom is obviously not new and original, it images a common demand of the human heart and does it by employing a physical and emotional figure so as to give it a vivid directness in its own kind. This passage was introduced because it brought in something in Savitri's relation with the human world which seemed to me a necessary part of a complete psychological description of her. If it had to be altered, — which would be only if the descent to the psychic level really spoils the consistent integrality of the description and lowers the height of the poetry, — I would have to find something equal and better, and just now I do not find any such satisfying alteration.

As for the line about the strength and silence of the gods, that has a similar motive of completeness. The line about the "stillness" and the "word" gives us the transcendental element in Savitri, — for the Divine Savitri is the word that rises from the transcendental stillness; the next two lines render that element into the poise of the spiritual consciousness; this last line brings the same thing down to the outward character and temperament in life. A union of strength and silence is insisted upon in this poem as one of the most prominent characteristics of Savitri and

I have dwelt on it elsewhere, but it had to be brought in here also if this description of her was to be complete. I do not find that this line lacks poetry or power; if I did, I would alter it. Your objection to the substitution of wideness for vastness[4] is quite justified though not because of any reason of repetition, but because vastness is the right word and wideness is much inferior; the change was not deliberate but came by inadvertence due to a lapse of memory. I have restored vastness in the poem.

But, for all this, it may perhaps be better to keep the passage as you have written it [*with omissions*] since it is a particular characteristic of poetic style at its highest which you want to emphasise, and anything which you feel to lower or depart from that height may very properly be omitted. So unless you positively want to include the omitted passage kept as I have written it, we will leave your article and quotations to stand in their present form. The rest in another letter.

P.S. One thing occurs to me that the lines you most want to include might be kept, while the passage about the bird and the "haven" down to the "warmth and colour's rule" could be left out. This would throw out all the things to which you object except the frequency of the sea and sky images and the recurrence of "great" after "greatness"; those have to remain, for I feel no disposition to alter those defects, if defects they are. Unless you think otherwise, we will so arrange it. In that case the alteration you want made in your article will find its place.
11 March 1946

*

As might a soul fly like a hunted bird,
Escaping with tired wings from a world of storms,
And a quiet reach like a remembered breast,
In a haven of safety and splendid soft repose
One could drink life back in streams of honey-fire,
Recover the lost habit of happiness, [*p. 15*]

---

[4] *In her he met a wideness like his own; [cf. p. 16].*

> "One" who is himself a soul is compared to "a soul" acting like a bird taking shelter, as if to say: "A soul who is doing so-and-so is like a soul doing something similar" — a comparison which perhaps brings in some loss of surprise and revelation.

The suggestion you make about the "soul" and the "bird" may have a slight justification, but I do not think it is fatal to the passage. On the other hand there is a strong objection to the alteration you propose; it is that the image of the soul escaping from a world of storms would be impaired if it were only a physical bird that was escaping: a "world of storms" is too big an expression in relation to the smallness of the bird, it is only with the soul especially mentioned or else suggested and the "bird" subordinately there as a comparison that it fits perfectly well and gets its full value. The word "one" which takes up the image of the "bird" has a more general application than the "soul" and is not quite identical with it; it means anyone who has lost happiness and is in need of spiritual comfort and revival. It is as if one said: "as might a soul like a hunted bird take refuge from the world in the peace of the Infinite and feel that as its own remembered home, so could one take refuge in her as in a haven of safety and like the tired bird reconstitute one's strength so as to face the world once more."

As to the sixfold repetition of the indefinite article "a" in this passage, one should no doubt make it a general rule to avoid any such excessive repetition, but all rules have their exception and it might be phrased like this, "Except when some effect has to be produced which the repetition would serve or for which it is necessary." Here I feel that it does serve subtly such an effect; I have used the repetition of this "a" very frequently in the poem with a recurrence at the beginning of each successive line in order to produce an accumulative effect of multiple characteristics or a grouping of associated things or ideas or other similar massings.

22 April 1947

*

My remarks about the Bird passage [*in the above letter*] are written from the point of view of the change made and the new character and atmosphere it gives. I think the old passage was right enough in its own atmosphere, but not so good as what has replaced it: the alteration you suggest may be as good as that was but the objections to it are valid from the new standpoint.

7 July 1947

*

Almost they saw who lived within her light
The white-fire dragon-bird of endless bliss,
Her playmate in the sempiternal spheres
In her attracting advent's luminous wake
Descended from his unattainable realms,
Drifting with burning wings above her days. [*cf. p. 16*]

> I suppose the repetition of adjective and noun in four consecutive line-endings is meant to create an accumulating grandiose effect.

Yes; the purpose is to create a large luminous trailing repetitive movement like the flight of the Bird with its dragon tail of white fire.

> Will you please say something about this bird?

What to say about him? One can only see. 4 November 1936

*

> About that bird, it is true that "one can only see"; but if not more than one can see, don't others need a bit of explanation? To *what region* does it belong? Is it any relation of the Bird of Fire with "gold-white wings" or the Hippogriff with a face "lustred, pale-blue-lined"?

All birds of that region are relatives. But this is the bird of eternal Ananda, while the Hippogriff was the divinised Thought and the Bird of Fire is the Agni-bird, psychic and tapas. All that however is to mentalise too much and mentalising always takes most of the life out of spiritual things. That's why I say it can be seen, but nothing said about it.

> But joy cannot endure until the end:
> There is a darkness in terrestrial things
> That will not suffer long too glad a note. [*pp. 16–17*]

> Are these lines the poetic intelligence at its deepest, say, like a mixture of Sophocles and Virgil? They may be the pure or the intuitivised higher mind.

I do not think it is the poetic intelligence any more than Virgil's *Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt,* which I think to be the Higher Mind coming through to the psychic and blending with it. So also his *O passi graviora, dabit deus his quoque finem.* Here it may be the intuitive inner mind with the psychic fused together. 5 November 1936

*

> One dealt with her who meets the burdened great. [*p. 17*]

> Who is "One" here? Is it Love, the godhead mentioned before? If not, does this "dubious godhead with his torch of pain" correspond to "the image white and high of godlike Pain" spoken of a little earlier? Or is it Time whose "snare" occurs in the last line of the preceding passage?

Love? It is not Love who meets the burdened great and governs the fates of men! Nor is it Pain. Time also does not do these things — it only provides the field and movement of events. If I had wanted to give a name, I would have done it, but it has purposely to be left nameless because it is indefinable. He may use Love or Pain or Time or any of these powers, but is not any of them. You can call him the Master of the Evolution, if you like. 5 November 1936

*

> Her spirit refused struck from the starry list
> To quench in dull despair the God-given light. [*cf. p. 19*]

> Any punctuation missing in the first line? Perhaps a dash after "refused" as well as after "list"?

I omitted any punctuation because it is a compressed construction meant to signify refused to be struck from the starry list and quenched in dull despair etc. — the quenching being the act of assent that would make effective the sentence of being struck from the starry list. 7 November 1936

*

> Beyond life's arc in spirit's immensities. [*p. 44*]

"Spirit" instead of "spirit's" might mean something else, the word "spirit" as an epithet is ambiguous — it might be spiritistic and not spiritual. 1936

*

> The calm immensities of spirit space,
> The golden plateaus of immortal Fire,
> The moon-flame oceans of unfallen Bliss. [*cf. p. 47*]
>
> Less than 20 lines earlier you have
>
> Beyond life's arc in spirit's immensities.
>
> Is it not possible to recast a little the first half of that line?

"Immensities" was the proper word because it helped to give the whole soul-scape of those worlds — the immensities of space, the plateaus of fire, the oceans of bliss. "Infinities" could just replace it, but now something has to be sacrificed. The only thing I can think of now is

> The calm immunity of spirit space.

22 May 1937

*

> Why "immunity" — the singular — and not "immunities" to replace "immensities"?

"Immunities" in the plural is much feebler and philosophically abstract — one begins to think of things like "qualities" — naturally it suggested itself to me as keeping up the plural sequence, but it grated on the sense of spiritual objective reality and I had to reject it at once. The calm immunity was a thing I could at once feel, with immunities the mind has to cavil: "Well, what are they?" 23 May 1937

*

As if the original Ukase still held back [*cf. p. 76*]

I have accented on the first syllable as I have done often with words like "occult", "divine". It is a Russian word and foreign words in English tend often to get their original accent shifted as far backward as possible. I have heard many do that with "ukase". 20 May 1937

*

Resiled from poor assent to Nature's terms, [*p. 77*]

It [*"resiled"*] is a perfectly good English word, meaning originally to leap back, rebound (like an elastic) — so to draw back from, recoil, retreat (in military language it means to fall back from a position gained or to one's original position); but it is specially used for withdrawing from a contract, agreement, previous statement. It is therefore quite the just word here. Human nature has assented to Nature's terms and been kept by her to them, but now Aswapati resiles from the contract and the assent to it made by humanity to which he belonged. Resiled, resilient, resilience are all good words and in use. 1937

*

The incertitude of man's proud confident thought, [*p. 78*]

> Is "incertitude" preferable to "uncertainty" — with "Infinitudes" so closely preceding it?

"Uncertainty" would mean that the thought was confident but uncertain of itself, which would be a contradiction. "Incertitude" means that its truth is uncertain in spite of its proud confidence in itself. I don't think the repetition of the sound is objectionable in a technique of this kind. 12 November 1936

*

> Aware of his occult omnipotent Source,
> Allured by the omniscient Ecstasy,
> He felt the invasion and the nameless joy. [*p. 79*]

I certainly won't have "attracted" [*in place of "allured"*] — there is an enormous difference between the force of the two words and merely "attracted" by the Ecstasy would take away all my ecstasy in the line — nothing so tepid can be admitted. Neither do I want "thrill" [*in place of "joy"*] which gives a false colour — precisely it would mean that the ecstasy was already touching him with its intensity which is far from my intention. Your statement that "joy" is just another word for "ecstasy" is surprising. "Comfort", "pleasure", "joy", "bliss", "rapture", "ecstasy" would then be all equal and exactly synonymous terms and all distinction of shades and colours of words would disappear from literature. As well say that "flashlight" is just another word for "lightning" — or that glow, gleam, glitter, sheen, blaze are all equivalents which can be employed indifferently in the same place. One can feel allured to the supreme omniscient ecstasy and feel a nameless joy touching one without that joy becoming itself the supreme Ecstasy. I see no loss of expressiveness by the joy coming in as a vague nameless hint of the immeasurable superior Ecstasy. 22 May 1937

*

> But aren't there two tendencies in poetry — one to emphasise the shades, another to blend and blur them owing to technical exigencies? What poet would not use "gleam", "glow" and "sheen" indifferently for the sake of rhyme, rhythm or metre?

That might be all right for mental poetry — it won't do for what I am trying to create — in that one word *won't* do for the other. Even in mental poetry I consider it an inferior method. "Gleam" and "glow" are two quite different things and the poet who uses them indifferently has constantly got his eye upon words rather than upon the object. 23 May 1937

*

Across the soul's unmapped immensitudes. [*cf. p. 80*]

Whatever you have written, it is not "immensities".

The word is "immensitudes" as you have written. I take upon myself the right to coin new words. It is not any more fantastic than "infinitudes" to pair "infinity". 13 November 1936

*

Would you also use "eternitudes"?

Not likely! I would think of the French *éternuer* and sneeze.

The body and the life no more were all.[5]

Don't care to [*change the line*] — it says precisely what I want to convey and I don't see how I can say it otherwise without diminishing or exaggerating the significance.

14 November 1936

*

I still consider the line a very good one and it did perfectly express what I wanted to say — as for "baldness", an occasionally bare and straightforward line without any trailing of luminous robes is not an improper element. E.g. "This was the day when Satyavan must die", which I would not remove from its position even if you were to give me the crown and income of the Kavi Samrat for doing it. If I have changed here, it is because the alterations all around it made the line no longer in harmony with its immediate environment. 21 May 1937

*

Your line

The body and the life no more were all

is no doubt a very good line in itself but it seemed to be, in its context here, baldness for baldness' sake.

---

[5] *This line does not form part of the final version of* Savitri. — *Ed.*

Not at all. It was bareness for expression's sake which is a different matter.

> Even if not quite that, it did not appear to justify itself completely: if it had been so very *juste* you would have scorned the Kavi Samrat's crown and income resolutely for its sake also.

It was *juste* for expressing what I had to say then in a certain context. The context being entirely changed in its sense, bearing and atmosphere, it was no longer *juste* in that place. Its being an interloper in a new house does not show that it was an interloper in an old one. The colours and the spaces being heightened and widened this tint which was appropriate and needed in the old design could not remain in the new one. These things are a question of design; a line has to be viewed not only in its own separate value but with a view to its just place in the whole.

22 May 1937

*

> What plane is spoken of by Virgil in these lines:
>
> Largior hic campos aether et lumine vestit
> purpureo, solemque suum, sua sidera norunt.

I don't know, but purple is a light of the vital. It may have been one of the vital heavens he was thinking of. The ancients saw the vital heavens as the highest and most of the religions also have done the same. I have used the suggestion of Virgil to insert a needed new line:

And griefless countries under purple suns. [*p. 120*]

17 November 1936

*

> Here too the gracious mighty Angel poured
> Her splendour and her swiftness and her thrill,
> Hoping to fill this new fair world with her joy, [*cf. p. 130*]
>
> Would not "pours" be better?

No, that would take away all meaning from "*new* fair world"

— it is the attempted conquest of earth by life when earth had been created, — a past event though still continuing in its sequel and result. 18 November 1936

*

> The hopes that fade to drab realities [*cf. p. 159*]

> "Dun" occurred to me as less common than "drab" with "realities".

I need "dun" afterwards, besides "drab" gives the more correct colour. 20 November 1936

*

The Mask is mentioned not twice but four times in this opening passage [*Book Two, Canto Seven, pp. 202–03*] and it is purposely done to keep up the central connection of the idea running through the whole. The ambassadors wear this grey Mask, so your criticism cannot stand since there is no separate mask coming as part of a new idea but a very pointed return to the principal note indicating the identity of the influence throughout. It is not a random recurrence but a purposeful touch carrying a psychological meaning. 1948

*

> And overcast with error, grief and pain
> The soul's native will for truth and joy and light. [*p. 203*]

The two trios are not intended to be exactly correspondent; "joy" answers to both "grief" and "pain" while "light" is an addition in the second trio indicating the conditions for "truth" and "joy". 1948

*

> All evil starts from that ambiguous face. [*p. 205*]

Here again the same word "face" occurs a second time at the end of a line but it belongs to a new section and a new turn of ideas. I am not attracted by your suggestion; the word "mien" here is an obvious literary substitution and not part of a straight and positive seeing: as such it sounds deplorably weak. The only thing would be to change the image, as for instance,

> All evil creeps from that ambiguous source.

But this is comparatively weak. I prefer to keep the "face" and insert a line before it so as to increase a little the distance between the two faces:

> Its breath is a subtle poison in men's hearts.

1948

*

As to the two lines with "no man's land" [*in Book Two, Canto Seven, pages 206 and 211*] there can be no capital in the first line because there it is a description while the capital is needed in the other line, because the phrase has acquired there the force of a name or appellation. I am not sure about the hyphen; it could be put but the no hyphen might be better as it suggests that no one in particular has as yet got possession. 1948

*

The cliché you object to . . . "he quoted Scripture and Law" was put in there with fell purpose and was necessary for the effect I wanted to produce, the more direct its commonplace the better. However, I defer to your objection and have altered it to

> He armed untruth with Scripture and the Law. [*p. 207*]

I don't remember seeing the sentence about

> Agreeing on the right to disagree

anywhere in a newspaper or in any book either; colloquial it is and perhaps for that reason only out of harmony in this passage. So I substitute

> Only they agreed to differ in Evil's paths. [*p. 208*]

1946

*

Oft, some familiar visage studying,
Discovered suddenly Hell's trademark there. [*cf. p. 215*]

It is a reference to the beings met in the vital worlds that seem like human beings but, if one looks closely, they are seen to be Hostiles, often assuming the appearance of a familiar face, they try to tempt or attack by surprise, and betray the stamp of their origin — there is also a hint that on earth also they take up human bodies or possess them for their own purpose.

11 January 1937

*

Bliss into black coma fallen, insensible. [*p. 221*]

Neither of your scansions can stand. The best way will be to spell "fallen" "fall'n" as is occasionally done and treat "bliss into" as a dactyl. 1948

*

Bliss into black coma fallen, insensible,
Coiled back to itself and God's eternal joy
Through a false poignant figure of grief and pain
Still dolorously nailed upon a cross
Fixed in the soil of a dumb insentient world
Where birth was a pang and death an agony,
Lest all too soon should change again to bliss. [*p. 221*]

This has nothing to do with Christianity or Christ but only with the symbol of the cross used here to represent a seemingly eternal world-pain which appears falsely to replace the eternal bliss. It is not Christ but the world-soul which hangs here. 1948

*

Performs the ritual of her Mysteries. [*p. 221*]

It is "Mysteries" with capital M and means mystic symbolic rites as in the Orphic and Eleusinian "Mysteries". When written with capital M it does not mean secret mysterious things, but has this sense, e.g. a "Mystery play". 1936

*

> The passage running from "It was the gate of a false Infinite" to "None can reach heaven who has not passed through hell" [*pp. 221–27*] suggests that there was an harmonious original plan of the Overmind Gods for earth's evolution, but that it was spoiled by the intrusion of the Rakshasic worlds. I should, however, have thought that an evolution, arising from the stark inconscient's sleep and the mute void, would hardly be an harmonious plan. The Rakshasas only shield themselves with the covering "Ignorance", they don't create it. Do you mean that, if they had not interfered, there wouldn't have been resistance and conflict and suffering? How can they be called the artificers of Nature's fall and pain?

An evolution from the Inconscient need not be a painful one if there is no resistance; it can be a deliberately slow and beautiful efflorescence of the Divine. One ought to be able to see how beautiful outward Nature can be and usually is although it is itself apparently "inconscient" — why should the growth of consciousness in inward Nature be attended by so much ugliness and evil spoiling the beauty of the outward creation? Because of a *perversity* born from the Ignorance, which came in with Life and increased in Mind — that is the Falsehood, the Evil that was born because of the starkness of the Inconscient's sleep separating its action from the secret luminous Conscience that was all the time within it. But it need not have been so except for the overriding Will of the Supreme which meant that the possibility of Perversion by inconscience and ignorance should be manifested in order to be eliminated though being given their chance, since all possibility has to manifest somewhere. Once it is eliminated the Divine Manifestation in Matter will be greater than it otherwise could be because it will gather all the possibilities involved in this difficult creation and not some of them as in an easier and less strenuous creation might naturally be. 15 January 1937

*

And the articles of the bound soul's contract, [*p. 231*]

Liberty is very often taken with the last foot nowadays and usually it is just the liberty I have taken here. This liberty I took long ago in my earlier poetry. 1948

*

Their slopes were a laughter of delightful dreams . . .
[*eight lines*]
There Love fulfilled her gold and roseate dreams
And Strength her crowned and mighty reveries.
[*two lines*]
Dream walked along the highway of the stars; . . .
[*cf. pp 234–35*]

"Gold and roseate dreams" cannot be changed. "Muse" would make it at once artificial. "Dreams" alone is the right word there. "Reveries" also cannot be changed, especially as it is not any particular "reverie" that is meant. Also, "dream" at the beginning of a later line departs into another idea and is appropriate in its place; I see no objection to this purposeful repetition. Anyway the line cannot be altered. The only concession I can make to you is to alter the first. 1948

*

All reeled into a world of Kali's dance. [*p. 255*]

It is "world", not "whirl". It means "all reeling in a clash and confusion became a world of Kali's dance". 1948

*

Knowledge was rebuilt from cells of inference
Into a fixed body flasque and perishable; [*p. 267*]

"Flasque" is a French word meaning "slack", "loose", "flaccid" etc. I have more than once tried to thrust in a French word like this, for instance, "A harlot empress in a bouge" — somewhat after the manner of Eliot and Ezra Pound. 1946

*

> To unify their task, excluding life
> Which cannot bear the nakedness of the Vast, [*p. 273*]

> I suppose the intransitive use of "unify" is not illegitimate, though the Oxford dictionary gives only the transitive.

Quite possible to use a transitive verb in this way with an unexpressed object, things in general being understood.

31 March 1948

*

> For Truth is wider, greater than her forms.
> A thousand icons they have made of her
> And find her in the idols they adore;
> But she remains herself and infinite. [*p. 276*]

"They" means nobody in particular but corresponds to the French "On dit" meaning vaguely "people in general". This is a use permissible in English; for instance, "They say you are not so scrupulous as you should be." 1948

*

> Would it be an improvement if one of the two successive "it"s in
>
> In the world which sprang from it it took no part [*p. 283*]
>
> is avoided? Why not put something like "its depths" for the first "it"?

"Depths" will not do, since the meaning is not that it took no part in what came from the depths but did take part in what came from the shallows; the word would be merely a rhetorical flourish and take away the real sense. It would be easy in several ways to avoid the two "it"s coming together but the direct force would be lost. I think a comma at "it" and the slight pause it would bring in the reading would be sufficient. For instance, one could write "no part it took", instead of "it took no part", but the direct force I want would be lost. 1948

*

> Travestied with a fortuitous sovereignty [*p. 285*]

I am unable to follow your criticism. I find nothing pompous or bombastic in the line unless it is the resonance of the word "fortuitous" and the many closely packed "t"s that give you the impression. But "fortuitous" cannot be sacrificed as it exactly hits the meaning I want. Also I fail to see what is abstract and especially mental in it. Neither a travesty nor sovereignty are abstract things and the images here are all concrete, as they should be to express the inner vision's sense of concreteness of subtle things. The whole passage is of course about mental movements and mental powers, therefore about what the intellect sees as abstractions, but the inner vision does not feel them as that. To it mind has a substance and its energies and actions are very real and substantial things. Naturally there is a certain sense of scorn in this passage, for what the Ignorance regards as its sovereignty and positive truth has been exposed by the "sceptic ray" as fortuitous and unreal. 1948

*

> That clasped him in from day and night's pursuit, [*p. 289*]

I do not realise what you mean by "stickiness", since there are only two hard labials and some nasals; is it that combination which makes you feel sticky, or does the addition of some hard dentals also help? Anyhow, sticky or not, I am unwilling to change anything.

I do not want to put "day's" and "night's"; I find it heavy and unnecessary. It ought to be clear enough to the reader that "day and night" are here one double entity or two hounds in a leash pursuing a common prey. 1948

*

Your line,

> In a stillness of the voices of the world, [*cf. p. 294*]

is separated by twenty lines from

> In the formless force and the still fixity. [*p. 294*]

> So there is no fault here in "stillness", but an added poetic quality might come if "stillness" were avoided and some such word as "lulling" used, especially as the line before runs:
>
> And cradles of heavenly rapture and repose.

"Lulling" will never do. It is too ornamental and romantic and tender. I have put "slumber" in its place.

*

> A Panergy that harmonised all life [*p. 300*]

I do not think the word "Panergy" depends for its meaning on the word "energies" in a previous line. The "Panergy" suggested is a self-existent total power which may carry the cosmic energies in it and is their cause but is not constituted by them. 1948

*

Your new objection to the line,

> All he had been and all that still he was, [*cf. p. 307*]

is somewhat self-contradictory. If a line has a rhythm and expressive turn which makes it poetic, then it must be good poetry; but I suppose what you mean is fine or elevated poetry. I would say that the line even in its original form is good poetry and is further uplifted by rising towards its subsequent context which gives it its full poetic meaning and suggestion, the evolution of the inner being and the abrupt end or failure of all that had been done unless it could suddenly transcend itself and become something greater. I do not think that this line in its context is merely passable, but I admit that it is less elevated and intense than what precedes or what follows. I do not see how that can be avoided without truncating the thought significance of the whole account by the omission of something necessary to its evolution or else overpitching the expression where it needs to be direct or clear and bare in its lucidity. In any case the emended version ["*All he had been and all towards which he* *grew"*] cures any possibility of the line being merely passable as it raises both the idea and the expression through the vividness of image which makes us feel and not merely think the living evolution in Aswapati's inner being. 1946

General Comments on Some Criticisms of the Poem

Now as to the many criticisms contained in your letter I have a good deal to say; some of them bring forward questions of the technique of mystic poetry about which I wanted to write in an introduction to *Savitri* when it is published, and I may as well say something about that here.

I am glad, however, that you have called my attention to some lapses such as the inadvertent substitution of "wideness" for "vastness"in the line about love and Savitri.[6] In all these cases there was the same inadvertent and unintentional change. "A prophet cavern" should certainly have remained as "some prophet cavern".[7] Also, it should be "a niche for veiled divinity" and "of" is an obvious slip.[8] Again, "still depths" is a similar inadvertent mistake for "sealed depths" which, of course, I have restored.[9] Also "step twixt" instead of "link between" was a similar mistake.[10]

Now as to some other passages. You have made what seems to me a strange confusion as regards the passage about the "errant marvel"[11] owing to the mistake in the punctuation which is now corrected. You took the word "solicited" as a past participle passive and this error seems to have remained fixed in your mind so as to distort the whole building and sense of the passage. The word "solicited" is the past tense and the subject of this verb is “an errant marvel” delayed to the fourth line by the parenthesis “Orphaned etc.” This kind of inversion, though longer than usual, is common enough in poetical style and the object is to throw a strong emphasis and prominence upon the line, “An errant marvel with no place to live”; that being explained, the rest about the “gesture” should be clear enough.

---

[6] *In her he met a wideness like his own, [cf. p. 16]*

[7] *Moves in a prophet cavern of the gods, [cf. p. 15]*

[8] *That seemed a niche of veiled divinity [cf. p. 15]*

[9] *And, scattered on still depths, her luminous smile [cf. p. 4]*

[10] *Air was a vibrant step twixt earth and heaven, [cf. p. 4]*

[11] *As if solicited in an alien world*
With timid and hazardous instinctive grace,
Orphaned and driven out to seek a home

Your objection to the “finger” and the “clutch” moves me only to change “reminding” to “reminded” in the second line of that passage.[12] It is not intended that the two images “finger laid” and “clutch” should correspond exactly to each other; for the “void” and the “Mother of the universe” are not the same thing. The “void” is only a mask covering the Mother’s cheek or face. What the “void” feels as a clutch is felt by the Mother only as a reminding finger laid on her cheek. It is one advantage of the expression “as if” that it leaves the field open for such variation. It is intended to suggest without saying it that behind the sombre void is the face of a mother. The other two “as if”s[13] have the same motive and I do not find them jarring upon me. The second is at a sufficient distance from the first and it is not obtrusive enough to prejudice the third which more nearly follows. In any case your suggestion “as though” [*for the third “as if”*] does not appeal to me: it almost makes a suggestion of falsity and in any case it makes no real difference as the two expressions are too much kin to each other to repel the charge of reiteration.

In the passage about Dawn[14] your two suggestions I again find unsatisfying. “Windowing hidden things” presents a vivid

---

An errant marvel with no place to live,
Into a far-off nook of heaven there came
A slow miraculous gesture’s dim appeal. [cf. p. 3]

[12] *As if a childlike finger laid on a cheek*
Reminding of the endless need in things
The heedless Mother of the universe,
An infant longing clutched the sombre Vast. [cf. p. 2]

[13] *As if a soul long dead were moved to live: . . .*
As if solicited in an alien world . . . [p. 3]

[14] *One lucent corner windowing hidden things*
Forced the world’s blind immensity to sight.
The darkness failed and slipped like a falling cloak. [cf. p. 3]

image and suggests what I want to suggest and I must refuse to alter it; "vistaing" brings in a very common image and does not suggest anything except perhaps that there is a long line or wide range of hidden things. But that is quite unwanted and not a part of the thing seen. "Shroud" sounds to me too literary and artificial and besides it almost suggests that what it covers is a corpse which would not do at all; a slipping shroud sounds inapt while "slipped like a falling cloak" gives a natural and true image. In any case, "shroud" would not be more naturally continuous in the succession of images than "cloak". As to this succession, I may say that rapid transitions from one image to another are a constant feature in *Savitri* as in most mystic poetry. I am not here building a long sustained single picture of the Dawn with a single continuous image or variations of the same image. I am describing a rapid series of transitions, piling one suggestion upon another. There is first a black quietude, then the persistent touch, then the first "beauty and wonder" leading to the magical gate and the "lucent corner". Then comes the failing of the darkness, the simile used suggesting the rapidity of the change. Then as a result the change of what was once a rift into a wide luminous gap, — if you want to be logically consistent you can look at the rift as a slit in the "cloak" which becomes a big tear.[15] Then all changes into a "brief perpetual sign", the iridescence, then the blaze and the magnificent aura. In such a race of rapid transitions you cannot bind me down to a logical chain of figures or a classical monotone. The mystic Muse is more of an inspired Bacchante of the Dionysian wine than an orderly housewife.

As for other suggestions, I am afraid, "soil"[16] must remain because that was what I meant, it cannot elevate itself even into a prostrate soul as that would be quite irrelevant. Your "barely enough", instead of the finer and more suggestive "hardly",[17] falls flat upon my ear; one cannot substitute one word for another in this kind of poetry merely because it means intellectually the same thing; "hardly" is the *mot juste* in this context and, repetition or not, it must remain unless a word not only *juste* but inevitable comes to replace it. I am not disposed either to change "suns" to "stars" in the line about the creative slumber of the ignorant Force;[18] "stars" does not create the same impression and brings in a different tone in the rhythm and the sense. This line and that which follows it bring in a general subordinate idea stressing the paradoxical nature of the creation and the contrasts which it contains, the drowsed somnambulist as the mother of the light of the suns and the activities of life. It is not intended as a present feature in the darkness of the Night. Again, do you seriously want me to give an accurate scientific description of the earth half in darkness and half in light so as to spoil my impressionist symbol[19] or else to revert to the conception of earth as a flat and immobile surface? I am not writing a scientific treatise, I am selecting certain ideas and impressions to form a symbol of a partial and temporary darkness of the soul and Nature which seems to a temporary feeling of that which is caught in the Night as if it were universal and eternal. One who is lost in that Night does not think of the other half of the earth as full of light; to him all is Night and the earth a forsaken wanderer in an enduring darkness. If I sacrifice this impressionism and abandon the image of the earth wheeling through dark space I might as well abandon the symbol altogether, for this is a necessary part of it. As a matter of fact in the passage itself earth in its wheeling does come into the dawn and pass from darkness into the light. You must take the idea as a whole and in all its transitions and not press one detail with too literal an insistence. In this poem I present constantly one partial view of life or another temporarily as if it were the whole in order to give full value to the experience of those who are bound by that view, as for instance, the materialist conception and experience of life, but if any one charges me with philosophical inconsistency, then it only means that he does not understand the technique of the Overmind interpretation of life.

---

[15] *And through the pallid rift that seemed at first*
Hardly enough for a trickle from the suns,
Outpoured the revelation and the flame.
The brief perpetual sign recurred above. [cf. p. 3]

[16] *Our prostrate soil bore the awakening ray. [p. 5]*

[17] *Hardly enough for a trickle from the suns, [p. 3]*

---

[18] *Cradled the cosmic drowse of ignorant Force*
Whose moved creative slumber kindles the suns
And carries our lives in its somnambulist whirl. [p. 1]

[19] *Athwart the vain enormous trance of Space,*
Its formless stupor without mind or life,
A shadow spinning through a soulless Void,
Thrown back once more into unthinking dreams,
Earth wheeled abandoned in the hollow gulfs,
Forgetful of her spirit and her fate. [p. 1]

The line about "Wisdom nursing the child Laughter of Chance" [*cf. p. 41*] contained one of the inadvertent changes of which I have spoken; the real reading was and will remain "Wisdom suckling". The verbal repetition of "nursing" and "nurse" therefore disappears, though there is the idea of nursing repeated in two successive lines and to that I see no objection. But for other reasons I have changed the two lines that follow as I was not altogether satisfied with them. I have changed them into

> Silence, the nurse of the Almighty's power,
> The omnipotent hush, womb of the immortal Word. [*p. 41*]

As to the exact metrical identity in the first half of the two lines that follow,[20] it was certainly intentional, if by intention is meant, not a manufacture by my personal mind but the spontaneous deliberateness of the inspiration which gave the lines to me and an acceptance in the receiving mind. The first halves of the two lines are metrically identical closely associating together the two things seen as of the same order, the "still Timeless" and the "dynamic creative Eternity" both of them together originating the manifest world: the latter halves of the lines diverge altogether, one into the slow massiveness of the "still brooding face", with its strong close, the other into the combination of two high and emphatic syllables with an indeterminate run of short syllables between and after, allowing the line to drop away into some unuttered endlessness rather than cease. In this rhythmical significance I can see no weakness.

---

[20] *And of the Timeless the still brooding face,*
And the creative eye of Eternity. [p. 41]

I come next to the passage which you so violently attack, about the Inconscient waking Ignorance. In the first place, the word "formless" is indeed defective, not so much because of any repetition but because it is not the right word or idea and I was not myself satisfied with it. I have changed the passage as follows:

Then something in the inscrutable darkness stirred;
A nameless movement, an unthought Idea
Insistent, dissatisfied, without an aim,
Something that wished but knew not how to be,
Teased the Inconscient to wake Ignorance. . . . [*pp. 1–2*]

But the teasing of the Inconscient remains and evidently you think that it is bad poetic taste to tease something so bodiless and unreal as the Inconscient. But here several fundamental issues arise. First of all, are words like Inconscient and Ignorance necessarily an abstract technical jargon? If so, do not words like consciousness, knowledge etc. undergo the same ban? Is it meant that they are abstract philosophical terms and can have no real or concrete meaning, cannot represent things that one feels and senses or must often fight as one fights a visible foe? The Inconscient and the Ignorance may be mere empty abstractions and can be dismissed as irrelevant jargon if one has not come into collision with them or plunged into their dark and bottomless reality. But to me they are realities, concrete powers whose resistance is present everywhere and at all times in its tremendous and boundless mass. In fact, in writing this line I had no intention of teaching philosophy or forcing in an irrelevant metaphysical idea, although the idea may be there in implication. I was presenting a happening that was to me something sensible and, as one might say, psychologically and spiritually concrete. The Inconscient comes in persistently in the cantos of the First Book of *Savitri*, e.g.

Opponent of that glory of escape,
The black Inconscient swung its dragon tail
Lashing a slumbrous Infinite by its force

Into the deep obscurities of form. [*p. 79*]

There too a metaphysical idea might be read into or behind the thing seen. But does that make it technical jargon or the whole thing an illegitimate mixture? It is not so to my poetic sense. But you might say, "It is so to the non-mystical reader and it is that reader whom you have to satisfy, as it is for the general reader that you are writing and not for yourself alone." But if I had to write for the general reader I could not have written *Savitri* at all. It is in fact for myself that I have written it and for those who can lend themselves to the subject-matter, images, technique of mystic poetry.

This is the real stumbling-block of mystic poetry and specially mystic poetry of this kind.[21]The mystic feels real and present, even ever-present to his experience, intimate to his being, truths which to the ordinary reader are intellectual abstractions or metaphysical speculations. He is writing of experiences that are foreign to the ordinary mentality. Either they are unintelligible to it and in meeting them it flounders about as in an obscure abyss or it takes them as poetic fancies expressed in intellectually devised images. That was how a critic in *The Hindu* condemned such poems as *Nirvana* and *Transformation*. He said that they were mere intellectual conceptions and images and there was nothing of religious feeling or spiritual experience. Yet *Nirvana* was as close a transcription of a major experience as could be given in language coined by the human mind of a realisation in which the mind was entirely silent and into which no intellectual conception could at all enter. One has to use words and images in order to convey to the mind some perception, some figure of that which is beyond thought. The critic's non-understanding was made worse by such a line as: "Only the illimitable Permanent, Is there". Evidently he took this as technical jargon, abstract philosophy. There was no such thing; I felt with an overpowering vividness the illimitability or at least something which could not be described by any other term and no other description except the "Permanent" could be made of That which alone existed. To the mystic there is no such thing as an abstraction. Everything which to the intellectual mind is abstract has a concreteness, substantiality which is more real than the sensible form of an object or of a physical event. To me, for instance, consciousness is the very stuff of existence and I can feel it everywhere enveloping and penetrating the stone as much as man or the animal. A movement, a flow of consciousness is not to me an image but a fact. If I wrote "His anger climbed against me in a stream", it would be to the general reader a mere image, not something that was felt by me in a sensible experience; yet I would only be describing in exact terms what actually happened once, a stream of anger, a sensible and violent current of it rising up from downstairs and rushing upon me as I sat in the veranda of the guest-house, the truth of it being confirmed afterwards by the confession of the person who had the movement. This is only one instance, but all that is spiritual or psychological in *Savitri* is of that character. What is to be done under these circumstances? The mystical poet can only describe what he has felt, seen in himself or others or in the world just as he has felt or seen it or experienced through exact vision, close contact or identity and leave it to the general reader to understand or not understand or misunderstand according to his capacity. A new kind of poetry demands a new mentality in the recipient as well as in the writer.

---

[21] *This and the next five paragraphs were published separately in 1946 in a slightly different form. They are reproduced in that form on pages 93–97 of the present volume. — Ed.*

Another question is the place of philosophy in poetry or whether it has any place at all. Some romanticists seem to believe that the poet has no right to think at all, only to see and feel. This accusation has been brought against me by many that I think too much and that when I try to write in verse, thought comes in and keeps out poetry. I hold, to the contrary, that philosophy has its place and can even take a leading place along with psychological experience as it does in the Gita. All depends on how it is done, whether it is a dry or a living philosophy, an arid intellectual statement or the expression not only of the living truth of thought but of something of its beauty, its light or its power.

The theory which discourages the poet from thinking or at least from thinking for the sake of the thought proceeds from an extreme romanticist temper; it reaches its acme on one side in the question of the surrealist, "Why do you want poetry to mean anything?" and on the other in Housman's exaltation of pure poetry which he describes paradoxically as a sort of sublime nonsense which does not appeal at all to the mental intelligence but knocks at the solar plexus and awakes a vital and physical rather than intellectual sensation and response. It is of course not that really but a vividness of imagination and feeling which disregards the mind's positive view of things and its logical sequences; the centre or centres it knocks at are not the brain-mind, not even the poetic intelligence but the subtle physical, the nervous, the vital or the psychic centre. The poem he quotes from Blake is certainly not nonsense, but it has no positive and exact meaning for the intellect or the surface mind; it expresses certain things that are true and real, not nonsense but a deeper sense which we feel powerfully with a great stirring of some inner emotion, but any attempt at exact intellectual statement of them sterilises their sense and spoils their appeal. This is not the method of *Savitri*. Its expression aims at a certain force, directness and spiritual clarity and reality. When it is not understood, it is because the truths it expresses are unfamiliar to the ordinary mind or belong to an untrodden domain or domains or enter into a field of occult experience; it is not because there is any attempt at a dark or vague profundity or at an escape from thought. The thinking is not intellectual but intuitive or more than intuitive, always expressing a vision, a spiritual contact or a knowledge which has come by entering into the thing itself, by identity.

It may be noted that the greater romantic poets did not shun thought; they thought abundantly, almost endlessly. They have their characteristic view of life, something that one might call their philosophy, their world-view, and they express it. Keats was the most romantic of poets, but he could write "To philosophise I dare not yet"; he did not write "I am too much of a poet to philosophise." To philosophise he regarded evidently as mounting on the admiral's flag-ship and flying an almost royal banner. The philosophy of *Savitri* is different but it is persistently there; it expresses or tries to express a total and many-sided vision and experience of all the planes of being and their action upon each other. Whatever language, whatever terms are necessary to convey this truth of vision and experience it uses without scruple, not admitting any mental rule of what is or is not poetic. It does not hesitate to employ terms which might be considered as technical when these can be turned to express something direct, vivid and powerful. That need not be an introduction of technical jargon, that is to say, I suppose, special and artificial language, expressing in this case only abstract ideas and generalities without any living truth or reality in them. Such jargon cannot make good literature, much less good poetry. But there is a "poeticism" which establishes a sanitary cordon against words and ideas which it considers as prosaic but which properly used can strengthen poetry and extend its range. That limitation I do not admit as legitimate.

I have been insisting on these points in view of certain criticisms that have been made by reviewers and others, some of them very capable, suggesting or flatly stating that there was too much thought in my poems or that I am even in my poetry a philosopher rather than a poet. I am justifying a poet's right to think as well as to see and feel, his right to "dare to philosophise". I agree with the modernists in their revolt against the romanticist's insistence on emotionalism and his objection to thinking and philosophical reflection in poetry. But the modernist went too far in his revolt. In trying to avoid what I may call poeticism he ceased to be poetic, wishing to escape from rhetorical writing, rhetorical pretension to greatness and beauty of style, he threw out true poetic greatness and beauty, turned from a deliberately poetic style to a colloquial tone and even to very flat writing; especially he turned away from poetic rhythm to a prose or half-prose rhythm or to no rhythm at all. Also he has weighed too much on thought and has lost the habit of intuitive sight; by turning emotion out of its intimate chamber in the house of Poetry, he has had to bring in to relieve the dryness of much of his thought, too much exaggeration of the lower vital and sensational reactions untransformed or else transformed only by exaggeration. Nevertheless he has perhaps restored to the poet the freedom to think as well as to adopt a certain straightforwardness and directness of style.

Now I come to the law prohibiting repetition. This rule aims at a certain kind of intellectual elegance which comes into poetry when the poetic intelligence and the call for a refined and classical taste begin to predominate. It regards poetry as a cultural entertainment and amusement of the highly civilised mind; it interests by a faultless art of words, a constant and ingenious invention, a sustained novelty of ideas, incidents, word and phrase. An unfailing variety or the outward appearance of it is one of the elegances of this art. But all poetry is not of this kind; its rule does not apply to poets like Homer or Valmiki or other early writers. The Veda might almost be described as a mass of repetitions; so might the work of Vaishnava poets and the poetic literature of devotion generally in India. Arnold has noted this distinction when speaking of Homer; he mentioned especially that there is nothing objectionable in the close repetition of the same word in the Homeric way of writing. In many things Homer seems to make a point of repeating himself. He has stock descriptions, epithets always reiterated, lines even which are constantly repeated again and again when the same incident returns in his narrative, e.g. the line,

> doupēsen de pesōn arabēse de teuche' ep' autōi.
> "Down with a thud he fell and his armour clangoured upon him."

He does not hesitate also to repeat the bulk of a line with a variation at the end, e.g.

> bē de kat' Oulumpoio karēnōn chōomenos kēr.

And again the

> bē de kat' Oulumpoio karēnōn aïxasa.

"Down from the peaks of Olympus he came, wrath vexing his heart-strings" and again, "Down from the peaks of Olympus she came impetuously darting." He begins another line elsewhere with the same word and a similar action and with the same nature of a human movement physical and psychological in a scene of Nature, here a man's silent sorrow listening to the roar of the ocean:

> bē d'akeōn para thina poluphloisboio thalassēs
> "Silent he walked by the shore of the many-rumoured ocean."

In mystic poetry also repetition is not objectionable; it is resorted to by many poets, sometimes with insistence. I may note as an example the constant repetition of the word Ritam, truth, sometimes eight or nine times in a short poem of nine or ten stanzas and often in the same line. This does not weaken the poem, it gives it a singular power and beauty. The repetition of the same key ideas, key images and symbols, key words or phrases, key epithets, sometimes key lines or half lines is a constant feature. They give an atmosphere, a significant structure, a sort of psychological frame, an architecture. The object here is not to amuse or entertain but the self-expression of an inner truth, a seeing of things and ideas not familiar to the common mind, a bringing out of inner experience. It is the true more than the new that the poet is after. He uses *āvṛtti*, repetition, as one of the most powerful means of carrying home what has been thought or seen and fixing it in the mind in an atmosphere of light and beauty. This kind of repetition I have used largely in *Savitri*. Moreover, the object is not only to present a secret truth in its true form and true vision but to drive it home by the finding of the true word, the true phrase, the *mot juste*, the true image or symbol, if possible the inevitable word; if that is there, nothing else, repetition included, matters much. This is natural when the repetition is intended, serves a purpose; but it can hold even when the repetition is not deliberate but comes in naturally in the stream of the inspiration. I see, therefore, no objection to the recurrence of the same or similar image such as sea and ocean, sky and heaven in one long passage provided each is the right thing and rightly worded in its place. The same rule applies to words, epithets, ideas. It is only if the repetition is clumsy or awkward, too burdensomely insistent, at once unneeded and inexpressive or amounts to a disagreeable and meaningless echo that it must be rejected.

There is one place, perhaps two, where I am disposed to make some concession. The first is where the word "awake" occurs at the beginning of the poem, twice within six lines in the same prominent place at the end of a line.[22] In neither line can the word be changed, for it is needed and to change would spoil; but some modification can be made by restoring the original order putting the lines about the unbodied Infinite first and pushing those about the fallen self afterwards. The other place was in the other long passage where the word "delight" occurs also twice at the end of a line but with a somewhat longer interval between;[23] here, however, I have not yet found any satisfying alternative.

I think there is none of your objections that did not occur to me as possible from a certain kind of criticism when I wrote or I re-read what I had written; but I brushed them aside as invalid or as irrelevant to the kind of poem I was writing. So you must not be surprised at my disregard of them as too slight and unimperative.

You have asked what is my positive opinion about your article. Well, it seems to me very fine both in style and substance, but as it is in high eulogy of my own writing, you must not expect me to say any more.

---

[22] *It was the hour before the Gods awake. . . .*
[four lines]
A power of fallen boundless self, awake [cf. p. 1]

[23] *Her looks, her smile awoke celestial sense*
Even in earth-stuff, and their intense delight
Poured a supernal beauty on men's lives. . . .
As to a sheltering bosom a stricken bird
Escapes with tired wings from a world of storms,
In a safe haven of soft and splendid rest
One could restore life's wounded happiness,
Recover the lost habit of delight, [cf. p. 15]

P.S. I have just received your last letter of the 15th. I have maintained all the omissions[24] you had made except the new lines in the description of Savitri which we have agreed to insert. The critic has a right to include or omit as he likes in his quotations. I doubt whether I shall have the courage to throw out again the stricken and too explicit bird into the cold and storm outside;[25] at most I might change that one line, the first and make it stronger. I confess I fail to see what is so objectionable in its explicitness; usually, according to my idea, it is only things that are in themselves vague that have to be kept vague. There is plenty of room for the implicit and suggestive, but I do not see the necessity for that where one has to bring home a physical image. I have, of course, restored the original reading where you have made an alteration not approved by me, as in the substitution of the word "barely" for "hardly". On this point I may add that in certain contexts "barely" would be the right word, as for instance, "There is barely enough food left for two or three meals", where "hardly" would be adequate but much less forceful. It is the other way about in this line. I think I have answered everything else in the body of this letter.

19 March 1946

*

What you have written as the general theory of the matter seems to be correct and it does not differ substantially from what I wrote. But your phrase about unpurposive repetition might carry a suggestion which I would not be able to accept; it might seem to indicate that the poet must have a "purpose" in whatever he writes and must be able to give a logical account of it to the critical intellect. That is surely not the way in which the poet or at least the mystic poet has to do his work. He does not himself deliberately choose or arrange word and rhythm but only sees it as it comes in the very act of inspiration. If there is any purpose of any kind, it also comes by and in the process of inspiration. He can criticise himself and the work; he can see whether it was a wrong or an inferior movement, he does not set about correcting it by any intellectual method but waits for the true thing to come in its place. He cannot always account to the logical intellect for what he has done; he feels or intuits, and the reader or critic has to do the same.

---

[24] *Lines omitted when passages from* Savitri *were reproduced in the article "Sri Aurobindo — A New Age of Mystical Poetry", by K. D. Sethna (see above, page 290, footnote 3). — Ed.*

[25] *As to a sheltering bosom a stricken bird*
Escapes with tired wings from a world of storms, [cf. p. 15]

Thus I cannot tell you for what purpose I admitted the repetition of the word "great" in the line about the "great unsatisfied godhead" [*p. 15*], I only felt that it was the one thing to write in that line as "her greatness" was the only right thing in a preceding line; I also felt that they did not and could not clash and that was enough for me. Again, it might be suggested that the "high" "warm" subtle ether of love was not only the right expression but that repetition of these epithets after they had been used in describing the atmosphere of Savitri's nature was justified and had a reason and purpose because it pointed and brought out the identity of the ether of love with Savitri's atmosphere. But as a matter of fact I have no such reason or purpose. It was the identity which brought spontaneously and inevitably the use of the same epithets and not any conscious intention which deliberately used the repetition for a purpose.

Your contention that in the lines which I found to be inferior to their original form and altered back to that form, the inferiority was due to a repetition is not valid. In the line, "And found in her a vastness like his own" [*cf. p. 16*], the word "wideness" which had accidentally replaced "vastness" would have been inferior even if there had been no "wide" or "wideness" anywhere within a hundred miles and I would still have altered it back to the original word. So too with "sealed depths" and so many others. These alterations were due to inadvertence and not intentional; repetition or non-repetition had nothing to do with the matter. It was the same with "Wisdom nursing Chance":[26] if "nursing" had been the right word and not a slip replacing the original phrase I would have kept it in spite of the word "nurse" occurring immediately afterwards: only perhaps I would have taken care to so arrange that the repetition of the figure would simply have constituted a two-headed instead of a one-headed evil. Yes, I have changed in several places where you objected to repetitions but mostly for other reasons: I have kept many where there was a repetition and changed others where there was no repetition at all. I have indeed made modifications or changes where repetition came at a short distance at the end of a line; that was because the place made it too conspicuous. Of course where the repetition amounts to a mistake, I would have no hesitation in making a change; for a mistake must always be acknowledged and corrected. 26 April 1946

---

[26] *See page 313 above. — Ed.*

*

I am afraid I shall not be able to satisfy your demand for rejection and alteration of the lines about the Inconscient and the cloak any more than I could do it with regard to the line about the silence and strength of the gods. I looked at your suggestion about adding a line or two in the first case, but could get nothing that would either improve the passage or set your objection at rest. I am quite unable to agree that there is anything jargonish about the line any more than there is in the lines of Keats,

> "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," — that is all
> Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

That amounts to a generalised philosophical statement or enunciation and the words "beauty" and "truth" are abstract metaphysical terms to which we give a concrete and emotional value because they are connected in our associations with true and beautiful things of which our senses or our minds are vividly aware. Men have not learnt yet to recognise the Inconscient on which the whole material world they see is built, or the Ignorance of which their whole nature including their knowledge is built; they think that these words are only abstract metaphysical jargon flung about by the philosophers in their clouds or laboured out in long and wearisome books like *The Life Divine*. But it is not so with me and I take my stand on my own feeling and experience about them as Keats did about his own Truth and Beauty. My readers will have to do the same if they want to appreciate my poetry, which, of course, they are not bound to do.

Is it really a fact that even the ordinary reader would not be able to see any difference between the Inconscient and Ignorance unless the difference is expressly explained to him? This is not a matter of philosophical terminology but of common sense and the understood meaning of English words. One would say "even the inconscient stone" but one would not say, as one might of a child, "the ignorant stone". One must first be conscious before one can be ignorant. What is true is that the ordinary reader might not be familiar with the philosophical content of the word Inconscient and might not be familiar with the Vedantic idea of the Ignorance as the power behind the manifested world. But I don't see how I can acquaint him with these things in a single line, even with the most illuminating image or symbol. He might wonder, if he were Johnsonianly minded, how an Inconscient could be teased or how it could wake Ignorance. I am afraid, in the absence of a miracle of inspired poetical exegesis flashing through my mind, he will have to be left wondering. I am not set against adding a line if the miracle comes or if some vivid symbol occurs to me, but as yet none such is making its appearance.

In the other case also, about the cloak, I maintain my position. Here, however, while I was looking at the passage an additional line occurred to me and I may keep it:

> The darkness failed and slipped like a falling cloak
> From the reclining body of a god. [*p. 3*]

But this additional line does not obviate your objection and it was not put in with that aim. You have, by the way, made a curious misapplication of my image of the careful housewife[27]; you attribute this line to her inspiration. A careful housewife is meticulously and methodically careful to arrange everything in a perfect order, to put every object in its place and see that there is no disharmony anywhere; but according to you she has thrust a wrong object into a wrong place, something discordant with the surroundings and inferior in beauty to all that is near it; if so, she is not a careful housewife but a slattern. The Muse has a careful housewife, — there is Pope's, perfect in the classical or pseudo-classical style or Tennyson's, in the romantic or semi-romantic manner, while as a contrast there is Browning's with her energetic and rough-and-tumble dash and clatter.

---

[27] *See page 311 above — Ed.*

You ask why in these and similar cases I could not convince you while I did in others. Well, there are several possible explanations. It may be that your first reaction to these lines was very vivid and left the mark of a *saṁskāra* which could not be obliterated. Or perhaps I was right in the other matters while your criticism may have been right in these, — my partiality for these lines may be due to an unjustified personal attachment founded on the vision which they gave me when I wrote them. Again, there are always differences of poetical appreciation due either to preconceived notions or to different temperamental reactions. Finally, it may well be that my vision was true but for some reason you are not able to share it. For instance, you may have seen in the line about the cloak only the objective image in a detailed picture of the dawn where I felt a subjective suggestion in the failure of the darkness and the slipping of the cloak, not an image but an experience. It must be the same with the line,

> The strength, the silence of the gods were hers. [*p. 16*]

You perhaps felt it to be an ordinary line with a superficial significance; perhaps it conveyed to you not much more than the stock phrase about the "strong silent man" admired by biographers, while to me it meant very much and expressed with a bare but sufficient power what I always regarded as a great reality and a great experience. 1946

*

I have seen your letter to Nolini and considered the points you raised. The reading of the mistyped line should run

His self-discovery's flaming witnesses; [*p. 97*]

the error was only of a single letter. I do not agree with you that the two lines you stigmatise are not poetic. The first, however, I had already thought of altering, because it did not fully express what ought to have been said; so please change it to

All he had been and all towards which he grew. [*p. 307*]

The second line, though good enough as poetry, might perhaps be improved upon and you may change it to

Grew near to him, his daily associates. [*p. 96*]

As to the repetitions, the second one, I think, must remain as it is. As to the repetition of "peace", I was of course aware of it, but I have left it as it was because I found nothing that would not spoil one or other of the lines, but perhaps it might be altered to

Passionless, wordless, absorbed in its fathomless hush [*p. 308*]

without altogether losing its force. In the other repetition passage I notice that in one line in the manuscript "nearness-self" has been written which is incorrect; in your letter you write it correctly "nearness' self". 15 October 1946

*

In the two passages ending with the same word "alone"[28] I think that there is sufficient space between them and neither ear nor mind need be offended. The word "sole", I think, would flatten the line too much and the word "aloof" would here have no atmosphere and it would not express the idea. It is not distance and aloofness that has to be stressed but uncompanioned solitude.

---

[28] *There knowing herself by her own termless self,*
Wisdom supernal, wordless, absolute
Sat uncompanioned in the eternal Calm,
All-seeing, motionless, sovereign and alone.
[and, after 61 lines:]
The superconscient realms of motionless Peace
Where judgment ceases and the world is mute
And the Unconceived lies pathless and alone. [pp. 32, 33–34]

The line you object to on account of forced rhythm "in a triumph of fire" has not been so arranged through negligence. It was very deliberately done and deliberately maintained. If it were altered the whole effect of rhythmic meaning and suggestion which I intended would be lost and the alterations you suggest would make a good line perhaps but with an ordinary and inexpressive rhythm. Obviously it is not a "natural" rhythm, but there is no objection to its being forced when it is a forcible and violent action that has to be suggested. The rhythm cannot be called artificial, for that would mean something not true and genuine or significant but only patched up and insincere: the rhythm here is a turn of art and not a manufacture. The scansion is iamb, reversed spondee, pyrrhic, trochee, iamb. By reversed spondee I mean a foot with the first syllable long and highly stressed and the second stressed but short or with a less heavy ictus. In the ordinary spondee the greater ictus is on the second syllable while there are equal spondees with two heavy stresses, e.g. "vast space" or in such a line as

> He has seized life in his resistless hands.[29]

In the first part of the line the rhythm is appropriate to the violent breaking in of the truth while in the second half it expresses a high exultation and exaltation in the inrush. This is brought out by the two long and highly stressed vowels in the first syllable of "triumph" and in the word "fire" (which in the elocution of the line have to be given their full force), coming after a pyrrhic with two short syllables between them. If one slurs over the slightly weighted short syllable in "triumph" where the concluding consonants exercise a certain check and delay in the voice, one could turn this half line into a very clumsy double anapaest, the first a glide and the second a stumble; this would be bad elocution and contrary to the natural movement of the words.

I have wholly failed to feel the prosaic flatness of which you accuse the line

---

[29] *This line does not form part of the final version of* Savitri. — *Ed.*

> All he had been and all that now he was. [*cf. p. 307*]

No doubt, the diction is extremely simple, direct and unadorned but that can be said of numberless good lines in poetry and even of some great lines. If there is style, if there is a balanced rhythm (rhyme is not necessary) and a balanced language and significance (for these two elements combined always create a good style), and if the line or the passage in which it occurs has some elevation or profundity or other poetic quality in the idea which it expresses, then there cannot be any flatness nor can any such line or passage be set aside as prosaic.

By the way, I think you said in a letter that in the line

> Our prostrate soil bore the awakening light [*cf. p. 5*]

"soil" was an error for "soul". But "soil" is correct; for I am describing the revealing light falling upon the lower levels of the earth, not on the soul. No doubt, the whole thing is symbolic, but the symbol has to be kept in front and the thing symbolised has to be concealed or only peep out from behind, it cannot come openly into the front and push aside the symbol.

As to the title of the three Cantos about the Yoga of the King,[30] I intended the repetition of the word "Yoga" to bring out and emphasise the fact that this part of Aswapati's spiritual development consisted of two yogic movements, one a psycho-spiritual transformation and the other, a greater spiritual transformation with an ascent to a supreme power. The omission which you suggest would destroy this significance and leave only something more abstract. In the second of these three Cantos there is a pause between the two movements and a description of the secret knowledge to which he is led and of which the results are described in the last Canto, but there is no description of the Yoga itself or of the steps by which this knowledge came. That is only indicated, not narrated; so to bring in "The Yoga of the King" as the title of this Canto would not be very apposite.

---

[30] *Book I. Canto 3: The Yoga of the King: The Yoga of the Soul's Release.*
Canto 4: The Secret Knowledge.
Canto 5: The Yoga of the King: The Yoga of the Spirit's Freedom and Greatness.

Aswapati's Yoga falls into three parts. First, he is achieving his own spiritual self-fulfilment as an individual and this is described as the Yoga of the King. Next, he makes the ascent as a typical representative of the race to win the possibility of discovery and possession of all the planes of consciousness and this is described in the second book: but this too is as yet only an individual victory. Finally, he aspires no longer for himself but for all, for a universal realisation and new creation. That is described in the Book of the Divine Mother.

As to the Nirvana poem, I have said that the poem announces no metaphysical philosophy but is only the description of a spiritual experience. So how can any metaphysics be derived from it true or false — if you mean truly or falsely derived? If you want to ask whether the metaphysics you derived is in itself true or false, well, I don't remember what it was; so I would have to read your letter again before I could answer, and for that you may have to wait for some time.

As regards the other points you have drawn attention to, they have all been set right in the original version but your typescript seems to have been sent without making these changes. The "bird" passage has been changed thus:

> As might a soul fly like a hunted bird,
> Escaping with tired wings from a world of storms,
> And a quiet reach like a remembered breast,
> In a haven of safety and splendid soft repose
> One could drink life back in streams of honey-fire,
> Recover the lost habit of happiness,
> Feel her bright nature's glorious ambience etc. etc. [*p. 15*]

29 October 1946

*

I am not at all times impervious to criticism; I have accepted some of yours and changed my lines accordingly; I have also though not often accepted some adverse criticisms from outside and remoulded a line or a passage from here and there. But your criticisms are based upon an understanding appreciation of the poem, its aim, meaning, method, the turn and quality of its language and verse technique. In your friend's judgments I find an entire absence of any such understanding and accordingly I find his criticisms to be irrelevant and invalid. What one does not understand or perceive its meaning and spirit, one cannot fruitfully criticise. 1947

Comments on Some Remarks by a Critic

You have asked me to comment on your friend Mendonça's comments on my poetry and especially on *Savitri*. But, first of all, it is not usual for a poet to criticise the criticisms of his critics though a few perhaps have done so; the poet writes for his own satisfaction, his own delight in poetical creation or to express himself and he leaves his work for the world, and rather for posterity than for the contemporary world, to recognise or to ignore, to judge and value according to its perception or its pleasure. As for the contemporary world he might be said rather to throw his poem in its face and leave it to resent this treatment as an unpleasant slap, as a contemporary world treated the early poems of Wordsworth and Keats, or to accept it as an abrupt but gratifying attention, which was ordinarily the good fortune of the great poets in ancient Athens and Rome and of poets like Shakespeare and Tennyson in modern times. Posterity does not always confirm the contemporary verdict, very often it reverses it, forgets or depreciates the writer enthroned by contemporary fame, or raises up to a great height work little appreciated or quite ignored in its own time. The only safety for the poet is to go his own way careless of the blows and caresses of the critics; it is not his business to answer them. Then you ask me to right the wrong turn your friend's critical mind has taken; but how is it to be determined what is the right and what is the wrong turn, since a critical judgment depends usually on a personal reaction determined by the critic's temperament or the aesthetic trend in him or by values, rules or canons which are settled for his intellect and agree with the viewpoint from which his mind receives whatever comes to him for judgment; it is that which is right for him though it may seem wrong to a different temperament, aesthetic intellectuality or mental viewpoint. Your friend's judgments, according to his own account of them, seem to be determined by a sensitive temperament finely balanced in its own poise but limited in its appreciations, clear and open to some kinds of poetic creation, reserved towards others, against yet others closed and cold or excessively depreciative. This sufficiently explains his very different reactions to the two poems, *Descent* and *Flame-Wind*, which he unreservedly admires and to *Savitri*. However, since you have asked me, I will answer, as between ourselves, in some detail and put forward my own comments on his comments and my own judgments on his judgments. It may be rather long; for if such things are done, they may as well be clearly and thoroughly done. I may also have something to say about the nature and intention of my poem and the technique necessitated by the novelty of the intention and nature.

Let me deal first with some of the details he stresses so as to get them out of the way. His detailed intellectual reasons for his judgments seem to me to be often arbitrary and fastidious, sometimes based on a misunderstanding and therefore invalid or else valid perhaps in other fields but here inapplicable. Take, for instance, his attack upon my use of the prepositional phrase. Here, it seems to me, he has fallen victim to a grammatical obsession and lumped together under the head of the prepositional twist a number of different turns some of which do not belong to that category at all. In the line,

Lone on my summits of calm I have brooded with voices around me,

there is no such twist; for I did not mean at all "on my calm summits", but intended straightforwardly to convey the natural, simple meaning of the word. If I write "the fields of beauty" or "walking on the paths of truth", I do not expect to be supposed to mean "in beautiful fields" or "in truthful paths"; it is the same with "summits of calm", I mean "summits of calm" and nothing else; it is a phrase like "He rose to high peaks of vision" or "He took his station on the highest summits of knowledge". The calm is the calm of the highest spiritual consciousness to which the soul has ascended, making those summits its own and looking down from their highest heights on all below: in spiritual experience, in the occult vision or feeling that accompanies it, this calm is not felt as an abstract quality or a mental condition but as something concrete and massive, a self-existent reality to which one reaches, so that the soul standing on its peak is rather a tangible fact of experience than a poetical image. Then there is the phrase "A face of rapturous calm": he seems to think it is a mere trick of language, a substitution of a prepositional phrase for an epithet, as if I had intended to say "a rapturously calm face" and I said instead "a face of rapturous calm" in order to get an illegitimate and meaningless rhetorical effect. I meant nothing of the kind, nothing so tame and poor and scanty in sense: I meant a face which was an expression or rather a living image of the rapturous calm of the supreme and infinite consciousness, — it is indeed so that it can well be "Infinity's centre". The face of the liberated Buddha as presented to us by Indian art is such an expression or image of the calm of Nirvana and could, I think, be quite legitimately described as a face of Nirvanic calm, and that would be an apt and live phrase and not an ugly artifice or twist of rhetoric. It should be remembered that the calm of Nirvana or the calm of the supreme Consciousness is to spiritual experience something self-existent, impersonal and eternal and not dependent on the person — or the face — which manifests it. In these two passages I take then the liberty to regard Mendonça's criticism as erroneous at its base and therefore invalid and inadmissible.

Then there are the lines from the *Songs of the Sea*:

> The rains of deluge flee, a storm-tossed shade,
> Over thy breast of gloom.

"Thy breast of gloom" is not used here as a mere rhetorical and meaningless variation of "thy gloomy breast"; it might have been more easily taken as that if it had been a human breast, though even then, it could have been entirely defensible in a fitting context; but it is the breast of the sea, an image for a vast expanse supporting and reflecting or subject to the moods or movements of the air and the sky. It is intended, in describing the passage of the rains of deluge over the breast of the sea, to present a picture of a storm-tossed shade crossing a vast gloom: it is the gloom that has to be stressed and made the predominant idea and the breast or expanse is only its support and not the main thing: this could not have been suggested by merely writing "thy gloomy breast". A prepositional phrase need not be merely an artificial twist replacing an adjective; for instance, "a world of gloom and terror" means something more than "a gloomy and terrible world", it brings forward the gloom and terror as the very nature and constitution, the whole content of the world and not merely an attribute. So also if one wrote "Him too wilt thou throw to thy sword of sharpness" or "cast into thy pits of horror", would it merely mean "thy sharp sword" and "thy horrible pits"? and would not the sharpness and the horror rather indicate or represent formidable powers of which the sword is the instrument and the pits the habitation or lair? That would be rhetoric but it would be a rhetoric not meaningless but having in it meaning and power. Rhetoric is a word with which we can batter something we do not like; but rhetoric of one kind or another has been always a great part of the world's best literature; Demosthenes, Cicero, Bossuet and Burke are rhetoricians, but their work ranks with the greatest prose styles that have been left to us. In poetry the accusation of rhetoric might be brought against such lines as Keats'

> Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
>   No hungry generations tread thee down.

To conclude, there is the "swords of sheen" in the translation of *Bande Mataram*. That might be more open to the critic's stricture, for the expression can be used and perhaps has been used in verse as merely equivalent to "shining swords"; but for anyone with an alert imagination it can mean in certain contexts something more than that, swords that emit brilliance and seem to be made of light. Mendonça says that to use this turn in any other than an adjectival sense is unidiomatic, but he admits that there need be no objection provided that it creates a sense of beauty, but he finds no beauty in any of these passages. But the beauty can be perceived only if the other sense is seen, and even then we come back to the question of personal reaction; you and other readers may feel beauty where he finds none. I do not myself share his sensitive abhorrence of this prepositional phrase; it may be of course because there are coarser rhetorical threads in my literary taste. I would not, for instance, shrink from a sentence like this in a sort of free verse, "Where is thy wall of safety? Where is thy arm of strength? Whither has fled thy vanished face of glory?" Rhetoric of course, but it has in it an element which can be attractive, and it seems to me to bring in a more vivid note and mean more than "thy strong arm" or "thy glorious face" or than "the strength of thy arm" and "the glory of thy face".

I come next to the critic's trenchant attack on that passage in my symbolic vision of Night and Dawn in which there is recorded the conscious adoration of Nature when it feels the passage of the omniscient Goddess of eternal Light. Trenchant, but with what seems to me a false edge; or else if it is a sword of Damascus that would cleave the strongest material mass of iron, he is using it to cut through subtle air, the air closes behind his passage and remains unsevered. He finds here only poor and false poetry, unoriginal in imagery and void of true wording and true vision, but that is again a matter of personal reaction and everyone has a right to his own, you to yours as he to his. I was not seeking for originality but for truth and the effective poetical expression of my vision. He finds no vision there, and that may be because I could not express myself with any power; but it may also be because of his temperamental failure to feel and see what I felt and saw. I can only answer to the intellectual reasonings and judgments which turned up in him when he tried to find the causes of his reaction. These seem to me to be either fastidious and unsound or founded on a mistake of comprehension and therefore invalid or else inapplicable to this kind of poetry. His main charge is that there is a violent and altogether illegitimate transference of epithet in the expression "the wide-winged hymn of a great priestly wind". A transference of epithet is not necessarily illegitimate, especially if it expresses something that is true or necessary to convey a sound feeling and vision of things: for instance, if one writes in an Ovidian account of the *dénouement* of a lovers' quarrel

> In spite of a reluctant sullen heart
> My willing feet were driven to thy door,

it might be said that it was something in the mind that was willing and the ascription of an emotion or state of mind to the feet is an illegitimate transfer of epithet; but the lines express a conflict of the members, the mind reluctant, the body obeying the force of the desire that moves it and the use of the epithet is therefore perfectly true and legitimate. But here no such defence is necessary because there is no transfer of epithets. The critic thinks that I imagined the wind as having a winged body and then took away the wings from its shoulders and clapped them on to its voice or hymn which could have no body. But I did nothing of the kind; I am not bound to give wings to the wind. In an occult vision the breath, sound, movement by which we physically know of a wind is not its real being but only the physical manifestation of the wind-god or the spirit of the air, as in the Veda the sacrificial fire is only a physical birth, temporary body or manifestation of the god of Fire, Agni. The gods of the Air and other godheads in the Indian tradition have no wings, the Maruts or storm-gods ride through the skies in their galloping chariots with their flashing golden lances, the beings of the middle world in the Ajanta frescoes are seen moving through the air not with wings but with a gliding natural motion proper to ethereal bodies. The epithet "wide-winged" then does not belong to the wind and is not transferred from it, but is proper to the voice of the wind which takes the form of a conscious hymn of aspiration and rises ascending from the bosom of the great priest, as might a great-winged bird released into the sky and sinks and rises again, aspires and fails and aspires again on the "altar hills". One can surely speak of a voice or a chant of aspiration rising on wide wings and I do not see how this can be taxed as a false or unpoetic image. Then the critic objects to the expression "altar hills" on the ground that this is superfluous as the imagination of the reader can very well supply this detail for itself from what has already been said: I do not think this is correct, a very alert reader might do so but most would not even think of it, and yet the detail is an essential and central feature of the thing seen and to omit it would be to leave a gap in the middle of the picture by dropping out something which is indispensable to its totality. Finally he finds that the line about the high boughs praying in the revealing sky does not help but attenuates, instead of more strongly etching the picture. I do not know why, unless he has failed to feel and to see. The picture is that of a conscious adoration offered by Nature and in that each element is conscious in its own way, the wind and its hymn, the hills, the trees. The wind is the great priest of this sacrifice of worship, his voice rises in a conscious hymn of aspiration, the hills offer themselves with the feeling of being an altar of the worship, the trees lift their high boughs towards heaven as the worshippers, silent figures of prayer, and the light of the sky into which their boughs rise reveals the Beyond towards which all aspires. At any rate this "picture" or rather this part of the vision is a complete rendering of what I saw in the light of the inspiration and the experience that came to me. I might indeed have elaborated more details, etched out at more length but that would have been superfluous and unnecessary; or I might have indulged in an ampler description but this would have been appropriate only if this part of the vision had been the whole. This last line is an expression of an experience which I often had whether in the mountains or on the plains of Gujarat or looking from my window in Pondicherry not only in the dawn but at other times and I am unable to find any feebleness either in the experience or in the words that express it. If the critic or any reader does not feel or see what I so often felt and saw, that may be my fault, but that is not sure, for you and others have felt very differently about it; it may be a mental or a temperamental failure on their part and it will be then my or perhaps even the critic's or reader's misfortune.

I may refer here to Mendonça's disparaging characterisation of my epithets. He finds that their only merit is that they are good prose epithets, not otiose but right words in their right place and exactly descriptive but only descriptive without any suggestion of any poetic beauty or any kind of magic. Are there then prose epithets and poetic epithets and is the poet debarred from exact description using always the right word in the right place, the *mot juste?* I am under the impression that all poets, even the greatest, use as the bulk of their adjectives words that have that merit, and the difference from prose is that a certain turn in the use of them accompanied by the power of the rhythm in which they are carried lifts all to the poetic level. Take one of the passages I have quoted from Milton,

> On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues . . .

or

> Blind Thamyris, and blind Maeonides,
> And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old,

here the epithets are the same that would be used in prose, the right word in the right place, exact in statement, but all lies in the turn which makes them convey a powerful and moving emotion and the rhythm which gives them an uplifting passion and penetrating insistence. In more ordinary passages such as the beginning of *Paradise Lost* the epithets "forbidden tree" and "mortal taste" are of the same kind, but can we say that they are merely prose epithets, good descriptive adjectives and have no other merit? If you take the lines about Nature's worship in *Savitri*, I do not see how they can be described as prose epithets; at any rate I would never have dreamt of using in prose unless I wanted to write poetic prose such expressions as "wide-winged hymn" or "a great priestly wind" or "altar hills" or "revealing sky"; these epithets belong in their very nature to poetry alone whatever may be their other value or want of value. He says they are obvious and could have been supplied by any imaginative reader; well, so are Milton's in the passages quoted and perhaps there too the very remarkable imaginative reader whom Mendonça repeatedly brings in might have supplied them by his own unfailing poetic verve. Whether they or any of them prick a hidden beauty out of the picture is for each reader to feel or judge for himself; but perhaps he is thinking of such things as Keats' "magic casements" and "foam of perilous seas" and "fairy lands forlorn", but I do not think even in Keats the bulk of the epithets are of that unusual character.

I have said that his objections are sometimes inapplicable. I mean by this that they might have some force with regard to another kind of poetry but not to a poem like *Savitri*. He says, to start with, that if I had had a stronger imagination, I would have written a very different poem and a much shorter one. Obviously, and to say it is a truism; if I had had a different kind of imagination, whether stronger or weaker, I would have written a different poem and perhaps one more to his taste; but it would not have been *Savitri*. It would not have fulfilled the intention or had anything of the character, meaning, world-vision, description and expression of spiritual experience which was my object in writing this poem. Its length is an indispensable condition for carrying out its purpose and everywhere there is this length, critics may say an "unconscionable length" — I am quoting the *Times'* reviewer's description in his otherwise eulogistic criticism of *The Life Divine* — in every part, in every passage, in almost every canto or section of a canto. It has been planned not on the scale of *Lycidas* or *Comus* or some brief narrative poem, but of the longer epical narrative, almost a minor, though a very minor *Ramayana*; it aims not at a minimum but at an exhaustive exposition of its world-vision or world-interpretation. One artistic method is to select a limited subject and even on that to say only what is indispensable, what is centrally suggestive and leave the rest to the imagination or understanding of the reader. Another method which I hold to be equally artistic or, if you like, architectural is to give a large and even a vast, a complete interpretation, omitting nothing that is necessary, fundamental to the completeness: that is the method I have chosen in *Savitri*. But Mendonça has understood nothing of the significance or intention of the passages he is criticising, least of all, their inner sense — that is not his fault, but is partly due to the lack of the context and partly to his lack of equipment and you have there an unfair advantage over him which enables you to understand

and see the poetic intention. He sees only an outward form of words and some kind of surface sense which is to him vacant and merely ornamental or rhetorical or something pretentious without any true meaning or true vision in it: inevitably he finds the whole thing false and empty, unjustifiably ambitious and pompous without deep meaning or, as he expresses it, pseudo and phoney. His objection of *longueur* would be perfectly just if the description of the night and the dawn had been simply of physical night and physical dawn; but here the physical night and physical dawn are, as the title of the canto clearly suggests, a symbol, although what may be called a real symbol of an inner reality and the main purpose is to describe by suggestion the thing symbolised; here it is a relapse into Inconscience broken by a slow and difficult return of consciousness followed by a brief but splendid and prophetic outbreak of spiritual light leaving behind it the "day" of ordinary human consciousness in which the prophecy has to be worked out. The whole of *Savitri* is, according to the title of the poem, a legend that is a symbol and this opening canto is, it may be said, a key beginning and announcement. So understood there is nothing here otiose or unnecessary; all is needed to bring out by suggestion some aspect of the thing symbolised and so start adequately the working out of the significance of the whole poem. It will of course seem much too long to a reader who does not understand what is written or, understanding, takes no interest in the subject; but that is unavoidable.

To illustrate the inapplicability of some of his judgments one might take his objection to repetition of the cognates "sombre Vast", "unsounded Void", "opaque Inane", "vacant Vasts" and his clinching condemnation of the inartistic inelegance of their occurrence in the same place at the end of the line. I take leave to doubt his statement that in each place his alert imaginative reader, still less any reader without that equipment, could have supplied these descriptions and epithets from the context, but let that pass. What was important for me was to keep constantly before the view of the reader, not imaginative but attentive to seize the whole truth of the vision in its totality, the ever-present sense of the Inconscience in which everything is occurring. It is the frame as well as the background without which all the details would either fall apart or stand out only as separate incidents. That necessity lasts until there is the full outburst of the dawn and then it disappears; each phrase gives a feature of this Inconscience proper to its place and context. It is the entrance of the "lonely splendour" into an otherwise inconscient obstructing and unreceptive world that has to be brought out and that cannot be done without the image of the "opaque Inane" of the Inconscience which is the scene and cause of the resistance. There is the same necessity for reminding the reader that the "tread" of the Divine Mother was an intrusion on the vacancy of the Inconscience and the herald of deliverance from it. The same reasoning applies to the other passages. As for the occurrence of the phrases in the same place each in its line, that is a rhythmic turn helpful, one might say necessary to bring out the intended effect, to emphasise this reiteration and make it not only understood but felt. It is not the result of negligence or an awkward and inartistic clumsiness, it is intentional and part of the technique. The structure of the pentameter blank verse in *Savitri* is of its own kind and different in plan from the blank verse that has come to be ordinarily used in English poetry. It dispenses with enjambement or uses it very sparingly and only when a special effect is intended; each line must be strong enough to stand by itself, while at the same time it fits harmoniously into the sentence or paragraph like stone added to stone; the sentence consists usually of one, two, three or four lines, more rarely five or six or seven: a strong close for the line and a strong close for the sentence are almost indispensable except when some kind of inconclusive cadence is desirable; there must be no laxity or diffusiveness in the rhythm or in the metrical flow anywhere, — there must be a flow but not a loose flux. This gives an added importance to what comes at the close of the line and this placing is used very often to give emphasis and prominence to a key phrase or a key idea, especially those which have to be often reiterated in the thought and vision of the poem so as to recall attention to things that are universal or fundamental or otherwise of the first consequence — whether for the immediate subject or in the total plan. It is this use that is served here by the reiteration at the end of the line.

I have not anywhere in *Savitri* written anything for the sake of mere picturesqueness or merely to produce a rhetorical effect; what I am trying to do everywhere in the poem is to express exactly something seen, something felt or experienced; if, for instance, I indulge in the wealth-burdened line or passage, it is not merely for the pleasure of the indulgence, but because there is that burden, or at least what I conceive to be that, in the vision or the experience. When the expression has been found, I have to judge, not by the intellect or by any set poetical rule, but by an intuitive feeling, whether it is entirely the right expression and, if it is not, I have to change and go on changing until I have received the absolutely right inspiration and the right transcription of it and must never be satisfied with any *à peu près* or imperfect transcription even if that makes good poetry of one kind or another. This is what I have tried to do. The critic or reader will judge for himself whether I have succeeded or failed; but if he has seen nothing and understood nothing, it does not follow that his adverse judgment is sure to be the right and true one, there is at least a chance that he may so conclude, not because there is nothing to see and nothing to understand, only poor pseudo-stuff or a rhetorical emptiness but because he was not equipped for the vision or the understanding. *Savitri* is the record of a seeing, of an experience which is not of the common kind and is often very far from what the general human mind sees and experiences. You must not expect appreciation or understanding from the general public or even from many at the first touch; as I have pointed out, there must be a new extension of consciousness and aesthesis to appreciate a new kind of mystic poetry. Moreover if it is really new in kind, it may employ a new technique, not perhaps absolutely new, but new in some or many of its elements: in that case old rules and canons and standards may be quite inapplicable; evidently, you cannot justly apply to the poetry of Whitman the principles of technique which are proper to the old metrical verse or the established laws of the old traditional poetry; so too when we deal with a modernist poet. We have to see whether what is essential to poetry is there and how far the new technique justifies itself by new beauty and perfection, and a certain freedom of mind from old conventions is necessary if our judgment is to be valid or rightly objective.

Your friend may say as he has said in another connection that all this is only special pleading or an apology rather than an apologia. But in that other connection he was mistaken and would be so here too, for in neither case have I the feeling that I had been guilty of some offence or some shortcoming and therefore there could be no place for an apology or special pleading such as is used to defend or cover up what one knows to be a false case. I have enough respect for truth not to try to cover up an imperfection; my endeavour would be rather to cure the recognised imperfection; if I have not poetical genius, at least I can claim a sufficient, if not an infinite capacity for painstaking: that I have sufficiently shown by my long labour on *Savitri*. Or rather, since it was not labour in the ordinary sense, not a labour of painstaking construction, I may describe it as an infinite capacity for waiting and listening for the true inspiration and rejecting all that fell short of it, however good it might seem from a lower standard until I got that which I felt to be absolutely right. Mendonça was evidently under a misconception with regard to my defence of the wealth-burdened line; he says that the principle enounced by me was sound but what mattered was my application of the principle, and he seems to think that I was trying to justify my application although I knew it to be bad and false by citing passages from Milton and Shakespeare as if my use of the wealth-burdened style were as good as theirs. But I was not defending the excellence of my practice, for the poetical value of my lines was not then in question; the question was whether it did not violate a valid law of a certain chaste economy by the use of too many epithets massed together: against this I was asserting the legitimacy of a massed richness, I was defending only its principle, not my use of the principle. Even a very small poet can cite in aid of his practice examples from greater poets without implying that his poetry is on a par with theirs. But he further asserts that I showed small judgment in choosing my citations, because Milton's passage[1] is not at all an illustration of the principle and Shakespeare's[2] is inferior in poetic value, lax and rhetorical in its richness and belongs to an early and inferior Shakespearean style. He says that Milton's astounding effect is due only to the sound and not to the words. That does not seem to me quite true: the sound, the rhythmic resonance, the rhythmic significance is undoubtedly the predominant factor; it makes us hear and feel the crash and clamour and clangour of the downfall of the rebel angels: but that is not all, we do not merely hear as if one were listening to the roar of ruin of a collapsing bomb-shattered house, but saw nothing, we have the vision and the full psychological commotion of the "hideous" and flaming ruin of the downfall, and it is the tremendous force of the words that makes us see as well as hear. Mendonça's disparagement of the Shakespearean passage on "sleep" and the line on the sea considered by the greatest critics and not by myself only as ranking amongst the most admired and admirable things in Shakespeare is surprising and it seems to me to illustrate a serious limitation in his poetic perception and temperamental sympathies. Shakespeare's later terse and packed style with its more powerful dramatic effects can surely be admired without disparaging the beauty and opulence of his earlier style; if he had never written in that style, it would have been an unspeakable loss to the sum of the world's aesthetic possessions. The lines I have quoted are neither lax nor merely rhetorical, they have a terseness or at least a compactness of their own, different in character from the lines, let us say, in the scene of Antony's death or other memorable passages written in his great tragic style but none the less at every step packed with pregnant meanings and powerful significances which would not be possible if it were merely a loose rhetoric. Anyone writing such lines would deserve to rank by them alone among the great and even the greatest poets.

---

[1] *With hideous ruin and combustion down*
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,

[2] *Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast*
Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge,

That is enough for the detail of the criticism and we can come to the general effect and his pronounced opinion upon my poetry. Apart from his high appreciation of *Flame-Wind* and *Descent, Jivanmukta* and *Thought the Paraclete* and his general approval of the mystic poems published along with my essay on quantitative metre in English, it is sufficiently damning and discouraging and if I were to accept his verdict on my earlier and latest poetry, the first comparatively valueless and the last for the most part pseudo and phoney and for the rest offering only a few pleasant or pretty lines but not charged with the power and appeal of true or great poetry, I would have to withdraw the *Collected Poems* from circulation, throw *Savitri* into the waste-paper-basket and keep only the mystical poems, — but these also have been banned by some critics, so I have no refuge left to me. As Mendonça is not a negligible critic and his verdict agrees with that of the eulogist of my philosophy in *The Times Literary Supplement*, not to speak of others less authoritative like the communist reviewer of Iyengar's book who declared that it was not at all certain that I would live as a poet, it is perhaps incumbent on me to consider in all humility my dismal position and weigh whether it is really as bad as all that. There are some especial judgments in your friend's comments on the *Collected Poems* but these seem to concern only the translations. It is curious that he should complain of the lack of the impulse of self-expression in the *Songs of the Sea* as in this poem I was not busy with anything of the kind but was only rendering into English the self-expression of my friend and fellow-poet C. R. Das in his fine Bengali poem *Sagar Sangit*. I was not even self-moved to translate this work, however beautiful I found it; I might even be accused of having written the translation as a pot-boiler, for Das knowing my impecunious and precarious condition at Pondicherry offered me Rs. 1,000 for the work. Nevertheless I tried my best to give his beautiful Bengali lines as excellent a shape of English poetry as I could manage. The poet and *littérateur* Chapman condemned my work because I had made it too English, written too much in a manner imitative of traditional English poetry and had failed to make it Bengali in its character so as to keep its native spirit and essential substance. He may have been right; Das himself was not satisfied as he appended a more literal translation in free verse but this latter version does not seem to have caught on while some at least still read and admire the English disguise. If Mendonça is right in finding an overflow of sentiment in the *Songs*, that must be my own importation of an early romantic sentimentalism, a contribution of my own "self-expression" replacing Das's. The sea to the Indian imagination is a symbol of life, — one speaks of the ocean of the *saṁsāra* and Indian Yoga sees in its occult visions life in the image of a sea or different planes of being as so many oceans. Das's poem expresses his communing with this ocean of universal life and psychic intimacies with the Cosmic Spirit behind it and these have a character of grave emotion and intense feeling, not of mere sentimentalism, but they come from a very Indian and even a very Bengali mentality and may seem in translation to a different mind a profuse display of fancy and sentiment. The *Songs* are now far away from me in a dim backward of memory and I will have to read them again to be sure, but for that I have no time.

Again, I am charged with modern nineteenth-century romanticism and a false imitation of the Elizabethan drama in my rendering of Kalidasa's *Vikramorvasie*; but Kalidasa's play *is* romantic in its whole tone and he might almost be described as an Elizabethan predating by a thousand years at least the Elizabethans; indeed most of the ancient Sanskrit dramas are of this kind, though the tragic note is missing, and the general spirit resembles that of Elizabethan romantic comedy. So I do not think I committed any fault in making the translation romantic and in trying to make it Elizabethan, even if I only achieved a "sapless pseudo-Elizabethan" style. One who knew the Sanskrit original and who, although an Indian, was recognised as a good critic in England as well as a poet, one too whose attitude towards myself and my work had been consistently adverse, yet enthusiastically praised my version and said if Kalidasa could be translated at all, it was only so that he could be translated. This imprimatur of an expert may perhaps be weighed against the discouraging criticism of Mendonça. The comment on my translation of Bhartrihari is more to the point; but the fault is not Bhartrihari's whose epigrams are as concise and lapidary as the Greek, but in translating I indulged my tendency at the time which was predominantly romantic: the version presents faithfully enough the ideas of the Sanskrit poet but not the spirit and manner of his style. It is comforting, however, to find that it makes "attractive reading", — I must be content with small mercies in an adversely critical world. After all, these poems are translations and not original works and not many can hope to come within a hundred miles of the more famous achievements of this kind such as Fitzgerald's splendid misrepresentation of Omar Khayyam, or Chapman's and Pope's mistranslations of Homer which may be described as first-class original poems with a borrowed substance from a great voice of the past. Mendonça does not refer specifically to *Love and Death*, to which your enthusiasm first went out, to *Poems*, to *Urvasie* and to *Perseus the Deliverer* though this last he would class, I suppose, as sapless pseudo-Elizabethan drama; but that omission may be there because he only skimmed through them and afterwards could not get the first volume. But perhaps they may come under his general remark that this part of my work lacks the glow and concentration of true inspired poetry and his further judgment classing it with the works of Watson and Stephen Phillips and other writers belonging to the decline of romantic poetry. I know nothing about Watson's work except for one or two short pieces met by chance; if I were to judge from them, I would have to regard him as a genuine poet with a considerable elevation of language and metrical rhythm but somewhat thin in thought and substance; my poems may conceivably have some higher quality than his in this last respect since the reviewer in *The Times Literary Supplement* grants deep thought and technical excellence as the only merits of my uninspired poetry. It is otherwise with Stephen Phillips: I read *Marpessa* and *Christ in Hades*, the latter in typescript, shortly before I left England and they aroused my admiration and made a considerable impression on me. I read recently a reference to Phillips as a forgotten poet, but if that includes these two poems I must consider the oblivion as a considerable loss to the generation which has forgotten them. His later poetry disappointed me, there was still some brilliance but nothing of that higher promise. The only other poet of that time who had some influence on me was Meredith, especially his *Modern Love* which may have helped in forming the turn of my earlier poetic expression. I have not read the other later poets of the decline. Of subsequent writers or others not belonging to this decline I know only A. E. and Yeats, something of Francis Thompson, especially the *Hound of Heaven* and the *Kingdom of God*, and a poem or two of Gerard Hopkins; but the last two I came across very late, Hopkins only quite recently, and none of them had any influence on me, although one English reviewer in India spoke of me in eulogistic terms as a sort of combination of Swinburne and Hopkins and some have supposed that I got my turn for compound epithets from the latter! The only romantic poets of the Victorian Age who could have had any influence on me, apart from Arnold whose effect on me was considerable, were Tennyson perhaps, subconsciously, and Swinburne of the earlier poems, for his later work I did not at all admire. Still it is possible that the general atmosphere of the later Victorian decline, if decline it was, may have helped to mould my work and undoubtedly it dates and carries the stamp of the time in which it was written. It is a misfortune of my poetry from the point of view of recognition that the earlier work forming the bulk of the *Collected Poems* belongs to the past and has little chance of recognition now that the aesthetic atmosphere has so violently changed, while the later mystical work and *Savitri* belong to the future and will possibly have to wait for recognition of any merit they have for another strong change. As for the mystical poems which your friend praises in such high terms, they are as much challenged by others as the rest of my work. Some reviewers have described them as lacking altogether in spiritual feeling and void of spiritual experience; they are, it seems, mere mental work, full of intellectually constructed images and therefore without the genuine value of spiritual or mystic poetry.

Well, then, what is the upshot? What have I to decide as a result of my aesthetic examination of conscience? It is true that there are voices on the other side, not only from my disciples but from others who have no such connection with me. I have heard of individuals nameless or fameless in England who chanced to come across *Love and Death* and had the same spontaneous enthusiasm for it as yourself; others have even admired and discovered in my earlier work the beauty and the inspiration which Mendonça and the *Times* reviewer find to be badly lacking in it. It is true that they have differed in the poems they have chosen; Andrews cited particularly the *Rishi* and the epigram on Goethe as proof of his description of me as a great poet; an English critic, Richardson, singled out *Urvasie* and *Love and Death* and the more romantic poems, but thought that some of my later work was less inspired, too intellectual and philosophical, too much turned towards thought, while some work done in the middle he denounced altogether, complaining that after feeding my readers on nectar for so long I came later on to give them mere water. This critic made a distinction between great poets and good poets and said that I belonged to the second and not to the first category, but as he classed Shelley and others of the same calibre as examples of the good poets, his praise was sufficiently "nectarous" for anybody to swallow with pleasure! Krishnaprem, Moore and others have also had a contrary opinion to the adverse critics and these, both English and Indian, were men whose capacity for forming a true literary judgment is perhaps as good as any on the other side. Krishnaprem I mention, because his judgment forms a curious and violent contrast to Mendonça's: the latter finds no overtones in my poetry while Krishnaprem who similarly discourages Harin's poetry on the ground of a lack of overtones finds them abundant in mine. One begins to wonder what overtones really are, or are we to conclude that they have no objective existence but are only a term for some subjective personal reaction in the reader? I meet the same absolute contradiction everywhere; one critic says about *Perseus* that there is some good poetry in it but it is not in the least dramatic except for one scene and that the story of the play is entirely lacking in interest, while another finds in it most of all a drama of action and the story thrilling and holding a breathless interest from beginning to end. Highest eulogy, extreme disparagement, faint praise, mixed laudation and censure — it is a see-saw on which the unfortunate poet who is incautious enough to attach any value to contemporary criticism is balanced without any possibility of escape. Or I may flatter myself with the idea that this lively variation of reaction from extreme eulogy to extreme damnation indicates that my work must have after all something in it that is real and alive. Or I might perhaps take refuge in the supposition that the lack of recognition is the consequence of an untimely and too belated publication, due to the egoistic habit of writing for my own self-satisfaction rather than any strong thirst for poetical glory and immortality and leaving most of my poetry in the drawer for much longer than, even for twice or thrice the time recommended by Horace who advised the poet to put by his work and read it again after ten years and then only, if he still found it of some value, to publish it. *Urvasie*, the second of the only two poems published early, was sent at first to Lionel Johnson, a poet and *littérateur* of some reputation who was the Reader of a big firm. He acknowledged some poetic merit, but said that it was a repetition of Matthew Arnold and so had no sufficient reason for existence. But Lionel Johnson, I was told, like the Vedantic sage who sees Brahman in all things, saw Arnold everywhere, and perhaps if I had persisted in sending it to other firms, some other Reader, not similarly obsessed, might have found the merit and, as romanticism was still the fashion, some of the critics and the public too might have shared your and Richardson's opinion of this and other work and, who knows, I might have ranked in however low a place among the poets of the romantic decline. Perhaps then I need not decide too hastily against any republication of the *Collected Poems* or could even cherish the hope that, when the fashion of anti-romanticism has passed, it may find its proper place, whatever that may be, and survive.

As regards your friend's appraisal of the mystical poems, I need say little. I accept his reservation that there is much inequality as between the different poems: they were produced very rapidly — in the course of a week, I think — and they were not given the long reconsideration that I have usually given to my poetic work before publication; he has chosen the best, though there are others also that are good, though not so good; in others, the metre attempted and the idea and language have not been lifted to their highest possible value. I would like to say a word about his hesitation over some lines in *Thought the Paraclete* which describe the spiritual planes. I can understand this hesitation; for these lines have not the vivid and forceful precision of the opening and the close and are less pressed home, they are general in description and therefore to one who has not the mystic experience may seem too large and vague. But they are not padding; a precise and exact description of these planes of experience would have made the poem too long, so only some large lines are given, but the description is true, the epithets hit the reality and even the colours mentioned in the poem, "gold-red feet" and "crimson-white mooned oceans", are faithful to experience. Significant colour, supposed by intellectual criticism to be symbolic but there is more than that, is a frequent element in mystic vision; I may mention the powerful and vivid vision in which Ramakrishna went up into the higher planes and saw the mystic truth behind the birth of Vivekananda. At least, the fact that these poems have appealed so strongly to your friend's mind may perhaps be taken by me as a sufficient proof that in this field my effort at interpretation of spiritual things has not been altogether a failure.

But how then are we to account for the same critic's condemnation or small appreciation of *Savitri* which is also a mystic and symbolic poem although cast into a different form and raised to a different pitch, and what value am I to attach to his criticism? Partly, perhaps, it is this very difference of form and pitch which accounts for his attitude and, having regard to his aesthetic temperament and its limitations, it was inevitable.

He himself seems to suggest this reason when he compares this difference to the difference of his approach as between *Lycidas* and *Paradise Lost*. His temperamental turn is shown by his special appreciation of Francis Thompson and Coventry Patmore and his response to *Descent* and *Flame-Wind* and the fineness of his judgment when speaking of the *Hound of Heaven* and the *Kingdom of God*, its limitation by his approach towards *Paradise Lost*. I think he would be naturally inclined to regard any very high-pitched poetry as rhetorical and unsound and declamatory, wherever he did not see in it something finely and subtly true coexisting with the high-pitched expression, — the combination we find in Thompson's later poem and it is this he seems to have missed in *Savitri*. For *Savitri* does contain or at least I intended it to contain what you and others have felt in it but he has not been able to feel because it is something which is outside his own experience and to which he has no access. One who has had the kind of experience which *Savitri* sets out to express or who, not having it, is prepared by his temperament, his mental turn, his previous intellectual knowledge or psychic training, to have some kind of access to it, the feeling of it if not the full understanding, can enter into the spirit and sense of the poem and respond to its poetic appeal; but without that it is difficult for an unprepared reader to respond, — all the more if this is, as you contend, a new poetry with a new law of expression and technique.

Lycidas is one of the finest poems in any literature, one of the most consistently perfect among works of an equal length and one can apply to it the epithet "exquisite" and it is to the exquisite that your friend's aesthetic temperament seems specially to respond. It would be possible to a reader with a depreciatory turn to find flaws in it, such as the pseudo-pastoral setting, the too powerful intrusion of St. Peter and puritan theological controversy into that incongruous setting and the image of the hungry sheep which someone not in sympathy with Christian feeling and traditional imagery might find even ludicrous or at least odd in its identification of pseudo-pastoral sheep and theological human sheep: but these would be hypercritical objections and are flooded out by the magnificence of the poetry. I am prepared to admit the very patent defects of *Paradise Lost*: Milton's heaven is indeed unconvincing and can be described as grotesque and so too is his gunpowder battle up there, and his God and angels are weak and unconvincing figures, even Adam and Eve, our first parents, do not effectively fill their part except in his outward description of them; and the later narrative falls far below the grandeur of the first four books but those four books stand for ever among the greatest things in the world's poetic literature. If *Lycidas* with its beauty and perfection had been the supreme thing done by Milton even with all the lyrical poetry and the sonnets added to it, Milton would still have been a great poet but he would not have ranked among the dozen greatest; it is *Paradise Lost* that gives him that place. There are deficiencies if not failures in almost all the great epics, the *Odyssey* and perhaps the *Divina Commedia* being the only exceptions, but still they are throughout in spite of them great epics. So too is *Paradise Lost*. The grandeur of his verse and language is constant and unsinking to the end and makes the presentation always sublime. We have to accept for the moment Milton's dry Puritan theology and his all too human picture of the celestial world and its denizens and then we can feel the full greatness of the epic. But the point is that this greatness in itself seems to have less appeal to Mendonça's aesthetic temperament; it is as if he felt less at home in its atmosphere, in an atmosphere of grandeur and sublimity than in the air of a less sublime but a fine and always perfect beauty. It is the difference between a magic hill-side woodland of wonder and a great soaring mountain climbing into a vast purple sky: to accept fully the greatness he needs to find in it a finer and subtler strain as in Thompson's *Kingdom of God*. On a lower scale this, his sentence about it seems to suggest, is the one fundamental reason for his complete pleasure in the mystical poems and his very different approach to *Savitri*. The pitch aimed at by *Savitri*, the greatness you attribute to it, would of itself have discouraged in him any abandonment to admiration and compelled from the beginning a cautious and dubious approach; that soon turned to lack of appreciation or a lowered appreciation even of the best that may be there and to depreciation and censure of the rest.

But there is the other reason which is more effective. He sees and feels nothing of the spiritual meaning and the spiritual appeal which you find in *Savitri*; it is for him empty of anything but an outward significance and that seems to him poor, as is natural since the outward meaning is only a part and a surface and the rest is to his eyes invisible. If there had been what he hoped or might have hoped to find in my poetry, a spiritual vision such as that of the Vedantin, arriving beyond the world towards the Ineffable, then he might have felt at home as he does with Thompson's poetry or might at least have found it sufficiently accessible. But this is not what *Savitri* has to say or rather it is only a small part of it and, even so, bound up with a cosmic vision and an acceptance of the world which in its kind is unfamiliar to his mind and psychic sense and foreign to his experience. The two passages with which he deals do not and cannot give any full presentation of this way of seeing things since one is an unfamiliar symbol and the other an incidental and, taken by itself apart from its context, an isolated circumstance. But even if he had had other more explicit and clearly revealing passages at his disposal, I do not think he would have been satisfied or much illuminated; his eyes would still have been fixed on the surface and caught only some intellectual meaning or outer sense. That at least is what we may suppose to have been the cause of his failure, if we maintain that there is anything at all in the poem; or else we must fall back on the explanation of a fundamental personal incompatibility and the rule *de gustibus non est disputandum*, or to put it in the Sanskrit form *nānārucirhi lokaḥ*. If you are right in maintaining that *Savitri* stands as a new mystical poetry with a new vision and expression of things, we should expect, at least at first, a widespread, perhaps, a general failure even in lovers of poetry to understand it or appreciate; even those who have some mystical turn or spiritual experience are likely to pass it by if it is a different turn from theirs or outside their range of experience. It took the world something like a hundred years to discover Blake; it would not be improbable that there might be a greater time-lag here, though naturally we hope for better things. For in India at least some understanding or feeling and an audience few and fit may be possible. Perhaps by some miracle there may be before long a larger appreciative audience.

At any rate this is the only thing one can do, especially when one is attempting a new creation, — to go on with the work with such light and power as is given to one and leave the value of the work to be determined by the future. Contemporary judgments we know to be unreliable; there are only two judges whose joint verdict cannot easily be disputed, the World and Time. The Roman proverb says, *securus judicat orbis terrarum*; but the world's verdict is secure only when it is confirmed by Time. For it is not the opinion of the general mass of men that finally decides, the decision is really imposed by the judgment of a minority and êlite which is finally accepted and settles down as the verdict of posterity; in Tagore's phrase it is the universal man, *viśva mānava*, or rather something universal using the general mind of man, we might say the Cosmic Self in the race that fixes the value of its own works. In regard to the great names in literature this final verdict seems to have in it something of the absolute, — so far as anything can be that in a temporal world of relativities in which the Absolute reserves itself hidden behind the veil of human ignorance. It is no use for some to contend that Virgil is a tame and elegant writer of a wearisome work in verse on agriculture and a tedious pseudo-epic written to imperial order and Lucretius the only really great poet in Latin literature or to depreciate Milton for his Latin English and inflated style and the largely uninteresting character of his two epics; the world either refuses to listen or there is a temporary effect, a brief fashion in literary criticism, but finally the world returns to its established verdict. Lesser reputations may fluctuate, but finally whatever has real value in its own kind settles itself and finds its just place in the durable judgment of the world. Work which was neglected and left aside like Blake's or at first admired with reservation and eclipsed like Donne's is singled out by a sudden glance of Time and its greatness recognised; or what seemed buried slowly emerges or re-emerges; all finally settles into its place. What was held as sovereign in its own time is rudely dethroned but afterwards recovers not its sovereign throne but its due position in the world's esteem; Pope is an example and Byron, who at once burst into a supreme glory and was the one English poet, after Shakespeare, admired all over Europe but is now depreciated, may also recover his proper place. Encouraged by such examples, let us hope that these violently adverse judgments may not be final and absolute and decide that the waste-paper-basket is not the proper place for *Savitri*. There may still be a place for a poetry which seeks to enlarge the field of poetic creation and find for the inner spiritual life of man and his now occult or mystical knowledge and experience of the whole hidden range of his and the world's being, not a corner and a limited expression such as it had in the past, but a wide space and as manifold and integral an expression of the boundless and innumerable riches that lie hidden and unexplored as if kept apart under the direct gaze of the Infinite, as has been found in the past for man's surface and finite view and experience of himself and the material world in which he has lived striving to know himself and it as best he can with a limited mind and senses. The door that has been shut to all but a few may open; the kingdom of the Spirit may be established not only in man's inner being but in his life and his works. Poetry also may have its share in that revolution and become part of the spiritual empire.

I had intended as the main subject of this letter to say something about technique and the inner working of the intuitive method by which *Savitri* was and is being created and of the intention and plan of the poem. Mendonça's idea of its way of creation, an intellectual construction by a deliberate choice of words and imagery, badly chosen at that, is the very opposite of the real way in which it was done. That was to be the body of the letter and the rest only a preface. But the preface has become so long that it has crowded out the body. I shall have to postpone it to a later occasion when I have more time. 4 May 1947

*

The Mendonça letter [*of 4 May 1947*] was to be, as I suggested, "between ourselves"; there is too much that is private and personal in it for publicity. It is something that can be shown to those who can appreciate and understand, but to an ordinary reader I might seem to be standing on my defence rather than attacking and demolishing a criticism which might damage the appreciation of it in readers who are not sure of their own critical standard and reliability of their taste and so might be shaken by well-phrased judgments and plausible reasonings such as Mendonça's: they might make the same confusion as Mendonça himself between an apology and an apologia. An idea might rise that I am not sure of the value of my own poetry especially the earlier poetry and accept his valuation of it. The humility you speak of is very largely a Socratic humility, the element of irony in it is considerable; but readers not accustomed to fineness of shades might take it literally and conclude wrongly that I accepted the strictures passed by an unfavourable criticism. A poet who puts no value or a very low value on his own writing has no business to write poetry or to publish it or keep it in publication; if I allowed the publication of the *Collected Poems* it is because I judged them worth publishing. Kishor Gandhi's objection has therefore some value. On the other hand in defending I may seem to be eulogising my own work, which is not a thing that can be done in public even if a poet's estimate of his achievement is as self-assured as that of Horace, *Exegi monumentum aere perennius*, or as magnificent as Victor Hugo's. Similarly, the reply was not meant for Mendonça himself and I do not think the whole can be shown to him without omissions or some editing, but if you wish and if you think that he will not resent any strictures I have made you can show to him the passages relevant to his criticisms. 7 July 1947

On the Publication of His Poetry

The Question of Publication

I do not attach much importance to the publication or non-publication of my poetry and never have done. Most of it (the published part) appeared five, ten, fifteen or even thirty or more years after they were written. The few recently published in magazines (not all of them new, e.g. the sonnets) owed their fate to Nolini's eagerness and not to my initiative. But the vast bulk of what I have written (long poems mostly) lies on shelf and in drawer, most of it for more than a decade, awaiting either dissolution or an interminable revision or total recasting which at the present rate may well retain them there a decade or two more. But that is my own idiosyncrasy — it cannot be a rule or example for others. However, for those that are "circulated" Nolini and Doraiswami have found a trick which — I hope — will prevent any farther push for premature publication in the future — i.e. printing them as they come and letting them pile up for private circulation hereafter. 8 January 1935

On an Early Publication Proposal

> Here are my selections from your shorter poems. Dara wants me to send it to you so that you may judge whether I have selected rightly and whether it is what may be printed, as he suggests, by the Aligarh or Osmania University. But please tell me: is this Aligarh or Osmania University business a possible scheme? . . .
>
> What about *Love and Death* and *Baji Prabhou*? Are they to be printed *in toto* or in part?

I have not the least notion whether it is possible; I suppose that ordinarily no University in India would accept as text-book the (English) poems of a writer not yet consecrated (*qua* poet) by

European fame. It is Dara's idea; I don't know if the Osmania or Aligarh Universities are really so original and unconventional as to do such a thing. I thought however that a selection of the kind might prove useful, if not for this, for some other purpose, and it would not be a bad thing to have one ready; for Dara's idea of a selection is in itself a happy one. And I have often seen that circumstances arise and, because one is not ready with the materials, a chance is lost of getting something done.

Love and Death is too long for inclusion in a book of selections; passages would be sufficient. For *Baji Prabhou* that holds still more, since it has not so much poetic value as *Love and Death*.

As to your selections, it *seems* to me that you have chosen with judgment and taste; but the comparative judgment of a poet on his own writings is so often at fault that outside voices are needed for confirmation — even though I fancy I have a sufficient attitude of detachment towards my past work. But perhaps detachment is not enough.

P.S. I have altered the passage about Paris in two or three places where the rhythm is clumsy. At that time I had not evolved the "perfect hexameter". 22 July 1932

A Selection of Short Poems

1 Transformation
2 Bird of Fire √
3 Rose of God √
4 Who?
5 Revelation
6 To the Sea
7 God
8 Invitation
9 Epigram on Goethe
10 Renewal
11 Descent
12 Estelle (I find this is not a translation)

I think these may be sent for his own selection of six. No translation or extracts from dramas or long poems are included, only short poems and small lyrics.

The mark √ means that we think these two ought to be included in any selection made.

On Two Proposals to Publish *Love and Death* in England

> By the way, the copy of your *Love and Death* is ready to go to England. I wonder how the critics will receive the poem.

You expect . . . *Love and Death* to make a sensation in England — I don't expect it in the least: I shall be agreeably surprised if it gets more than some qualified praise, and if it does not get even that, I shall be neither astonished nor discomfited. I know the limitations of the poem and its qualities and I know that the part about the descent into Hell can stand comparison with some of the best English poetry; but I don't expect my contemporaries to see it. If they do, it will be good luck or divine grace, that is all. 2 February 1932

*

I am afraid you are under an illusion as to the success of *Love and Death* in England. *Love and Death* dates, — it belongs to the time when Meredith and Phillips were still writing and Yeats and A.E. were only in bud if not *in ovo*. Since then the wind has changed and even Yeats and A.E. are already a little high and dry on the sands of the past, while the form, manner, characteristics of *Love and Death* are just the things that are anathema to the post-war writers and literary critics. I fear it would be, if not altogether ignored which is most likely, regarded as a feeble and belated Indian imitation of an exploded literary model dead and buried long ago. I don't regard it in that light myself, but it is not my opinion that counts for success but that of the modern highbrows. If it had been published when it was written, it might have been a success — but now! Of course, I know that there are many people still in England, if it got into their hands, who would read it with enthusiasm, but I don't think it would get into their hands at all. As for the other poems, they could not go with *Love and Death*. When the time comes for publication, the sonnets will have to be published in a separate book of Sonnets and the others in another separate book of (mainly) lyrical poems — so it cannot be now. That at least is my present idea. It is not that I am against publication for all time, but my idea was to wait for the proper time rather than do anything premature.

One thing however could be done. Prithwi Singh could send his friend *Love and Death* and perhaps the *Six Poems* and sound the publishers as to whether the publication, in their eyes, would be worthwhile from their point of view. That would at least give a clue. 24 October 1934

On Two Other Publication Proposals

I have seen the opinion of the publisher consulted by Amiya Chakrabarty: Dilip's friend, the novelist Thompson, has also written to him offering to get a small selection of my poems published. Both opinions agree that poetry has very little chance of success nowadays. Thompson says that poetry is out of fashion; the publisher also indicates that new and original poetry has very little chance with the public. I believe they are both right. I also agree that if anything is to be published in Europe, it should be something in prose rather than in poetry. But I do not feel inclined to be in any haste in either direction; when anything of the kind ought to happen — I mean "ought" from the inner truth of things, I suppose it will arrange itself. You will remember that when I consented to let your friend show my poems to some publishers there, it was more to know what they would say and how they would take such poetry of an entirely new kind (I speak of course of the six poems and the sonnets) and not with an idea of immediate publication. Neither mere selling nor having the books in good print and in a good and pleasing form seems to me a sufficient justification for the expenditure. If publication agrees with an inner truth and serves a deeper purpose, then it will be worth while. I hope my decision will not disappoint you too much; it seems to me from my point of view the right one. 16 June 1935

*

> I wish a volume could be prepared containing either the complete poetical works of Sri Aurobindo or selections from his poetry. One or the other will certainly be very popular and invite an interest or bring things like the Nobel Prize etc.

You are mistaken. Nobody in England now reads poetry except for a very small circle of readers and in India poetry in English does not command a public. The time has not come.

Section Two

On Poets and Poetry

Great Poets of the World

The World's Greatest Poets

Goethe certainly goes much deeper than Shakespeare; he had an incomparably greater intellect than the English poet and sounded problems of life and thought Shakespeare had no means of approaching even. But he was certainly not a greater poet; I do not find myself very ready to admit either that he was Shakespeare's equal. He wrote out of a high poetic intelligence, but his style and movement nowhere come near the poetic power, the magic, the sovereign expression and profound or subtle rhythms of Shakespeare. Shakespeare was a supreme poet and, one might almost say, nothing else; Goethe was by far the greater man and the greater brain, but he was a poet by choice, his mind's choice among its many high and effulgent possibilities, rather than by the very necessity of his being. He wrote his poetry, as he did everything else, with a great skill and effective genius and an inspired subtlety of language, but it was only part of his genius and not the whole. There is too a touch mostly wanting in spite of his strength and excellence, — the touch of an absolute, an intensely inspired or revealing inevitability; few quite supreme poets have that in abundance, in others it comes only by occasional jets or flashes.

When I said there were no greater poets than Homer and Shakespeare, I was thinking of their essential poetic force and beauty — not of the scope of their work as a whole, for there are poets greater in their range. The Mahabharata is from that point of view a far greater creation than the Iliad, the Ramayana than the Odyssey, and either spreads its strength and its achievement over a larger field than the whole dramatic world of Shakespeare; both are built on an almost cosmic vastness of plan and take all human life (the Mahabharata all human thought as well) in their scope and touch too on things which the Greek and Elizabethan poets could not even glimpse. But as poets — as masters of rhythm and language and the expression of poetic beauty — Vyasa and Valmiki are *not inferior*, but also not greater than the English or the Greek poet. We can leave aside for the moment the question whether the Mahabharata was not the creation of the mind of a people rather than of a single poet, for that doubt has been raised also with regard to Homer.

*

> You once spoke of Goethe as not being one of the world's absolutely supreme singers. Who are these, then? Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Valmiki, Kalidasa? And what about Aeschylus, Virgil and Milton?

I suppose all the names you mention except Goethe can be included; or if you like you can put them all including Goethe in three rows — e.g.:

1st row Homer, Shakespeare, Valmiki
2nd row Dante, Kalidasa, Aeschylus, Virgil, Milton
3rd row Goethe

and there you are! To speak less flippantly, the first three have at once supreme imaginative originality, supreme poetic gift, widest scope and supreme creative genius. Each is a sort of poetic Demiurge who has created a world of his own. Dante's triple world beyond is more constructed by the poetic seeing mind than by this kind of elemental demiurgic power — otherwise he would rank by their side; the same with Kalidasa. Aeschylus is a seer and creator but on a much smaller scale. Virgil and Milton have a less spontaneous breath of creative genius; one or two typal figures excepted, they live rather by what they have said than by what they have made. 31 March 1932

*

> Is the omission of Vyasa deliberate?

It was you who omitted Vyasa, Sophocles and others — not I.

*

> Yes, I plead guilty. But that, I hope, will be no reason why Vyasa and Sophocles should remain unclassified by you. And "the others" — they intrigue me even more. Who are these others? Saintsbury as good as declares that poetry is Shelley and Shelley poetry — Spenser alone, to his mind, can contest the right to that equation. (Shakespeare, of course, is admittedly *hors concours*.) Aldous Huxley abominates Spenser: the fellow has got nothing to say and says it with a consummately cloying melodiousness! Swinburne, as is well known, could never think of Victor Hugo without bursting into half a dozen alliterative superlatives, while Matthew Arnold it was, I believe, who pitied Hugo for imagining that poetry consisted in using "divinité", "infinité" "éternité", as lavishly as possible. And then there is Keats, whose *Hyperion* compelled even the sneering Byron to forget his usual condescending attitude towards "Johnny" and confess that nothing grander had been seen since Aeschylus. Racine, too, cannot be left out — can he? Voltaire adored him, Voltaire who called Shakespeare a drunken barbarian. Finally, what of Wordsworth, whose Immortality Ode was hailed by Mark Pattison as the *ne plus ultra* of English poetry since the days of *Lycidas*? Kindly shed the light of infallible *viveka* on this chaos of jostling opinions.

I am not prepared to classify all the poets in the universe — it was the front bench or benches you asked for. By others I meant poets like Lucretius, Euripides, Calderon, Corneille, Hugo. Euripides (*Medea, Bacchae* and other plays) is a greater poet than Racine whom you want to put in the first ranks. If you want only the very greatest, none of these can enter — only Vyasa and Sophocles. Vyasa could very well claim a place beside Valmiki, Sophocles beside Aeschylus. The rest, if you like, you can send into the third row with Goethe, but it is something of a promotion about which one can feel some qualms. Spenser too, if you like; it is difficult to draw a line.

Shelley, Keats and Wordsworth have not been brought into consideration although their best work is as fine poetry as any written, but they have written nothing on a larger scale which would place them among the greatest creators. If Keats had finished *Hyperion* (without spoiling it), if Shelley had lived, or if Wordsworth had not petered out like a motor car with insufficient petrol, it might be different, but we have to take things as they are. As it is, all began magnificently, but none of them finished, and what work they did, except a few lyrics, sonnets, short pieces and narratives, is often flawed and unequal. If they had to be admitted, what about at least fifty others in Europe and Asia?

The critical opinions you quote are, many of them, flagrantly prejudiced and personal. The only thing that results from Aldous Huxley's opinion, shared by many but with less courage, is that Spenser's melodiousness cloyed upon Aldous Huxley and that perhaps points to a serious defect somewhere in Spenser's art or in his genius but this does not cancel the poetic value of Spenser. Swinburne and Arnold are equally unbalanced on either side of their see-saw about Hugo. He might be described as a great but imperfect genius who just missed the very first rank because his word sometimes exceeded his weight, because his height was at the best considerable, even magnificent, but his depth insufficient and especially because he was often too oratorical to be quite sincere. The remarks of Voltaire and Mark Pattison go into the same basket. 2 April 1932

Epic Greatness and Sublimity

> How do you differentiate between epic power and the Aeschylean sublime? Into what category would the grandeur, at its best, of Marlowe and Victor Hugo fall?

I don't know how I differentiate. Victor Hugo in the *Légende des siècles* tries to be epic and often succeeds, perhaps even on the whole. Marlowe is sometimes great or sublime, but I would not call him epic. There is a greatness or sublimity that is epic, there is another that is not epic, but more of a romantic type. Shakespeare's line

In cradle of the rude imperious surge

is as sublime as anything in Homer or Milton, but it does not seem to me to have the epic ring, while a very simple line can have it, e.g. Homer's

> Bē de kat' Oulumpoio karēnōn chōomenos kēr
> "He went down from the peaks of Olympus wroth at heart"

or Virgil's

> Disce, puer, virtutem ex me verumque laborem,
> Fortunam ex aliis.

or Milton's

> Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable.

What is there in these lines that is not in Shakespeare's and makes them epic (Shakespeare's of course has something else as valuable)? For the moment at least, I can't tell you, but it is there. A tone of the inner spirit perhaps, expressing itself in the rhythm and the turn of the language.

> As regards epic and non-epic sublimity, it strikes me that the former has a more natural turn of imagination — that is to say, it is powerfully wide or deep or high without being outstandingly bold, it also displays less colour.

Dante has the epic spirit and tone, what he lacks perhaps is the epic élan and swiftness. The distinction you draw applies, no doubt, but I do not know whether it is the essence of the thing or only one result of a certain austerity in the epic Muse. I do not know whether one cannot be coloured provided one keeps that austerity which, be it understood, is not incompatible with a certain fineness and sweetness. 19 May 1937

Remarks on Individual Poets

The Author of the *Bhagavad Gita*

Sri Krishna is not supposed to have written anything. The Gita is part of the Mahabharata which is attributed to the sage Vyasa, the contemporary of Krishna. But in its present form the Mahabharata seems to be of later origin and many scholars say that the Gita was composed afterwards by someone and put into the Mahabharata.

In any case whoever wrote it was a great Yogi and certainly received his inspiration from Krishna.

Catullus and Horace

You prefer Catullus [*to Horace*] because he was a philosopher? You have certainly rolled Lucretius here into Catullus — Lucretius who wrote an epic about the "Nature of Things" and invested the Epicurean philosophy with a rudely Roman and most unepicurean majesty and grandeur. Catullus had no more philosophy in him than a red ant. He was an exquisite lyrist — much more spontaneous in his lyrism than the more sophisticated and well-balanced Horace, a poet of passionate and irregular love, and he got out of the Latin language a melody no man could persuade it to before him or after. But that was all. Horace on the other hand knew everything there was to be known about philosophy at that time and had indeed all the culture of the age at his fingers' ends and carefully put in its place in his brain also — but he did not make the mistake of writing a philosophical treatise in verse. A man of great urbanity, a perfectly balanced mind, a vital man with a strong sociability, faithful and ardent in friendship, a *bon vivant* fond of good food and good wine, a lover of women but not ardently passionate like Catullus, an Epicurean who took life gladly but not superficially — this was his character. As a poet he was the second among the great Augustan poets, a great master of phrase — the most quoted of all the Roman writers, — a dexterous metrist who fixed the chief lyric Greek metres in Latin in their definitive form, with a style and rhythm in which strength and grace were singularly united, a writer also of satire[1] and familiar epistolary verse as well as a master of the ode and the lyric — that sums up his work. June or July 1933

Virgil

> I don't think Virgil would be classed by you as a psychic poet, and yet what is the source of that "majestic sadness" and that word-magic and vision which make his verse, more than that of almost any other poet, fill one with what Belloc calls the sense of the Unknown Country?

I don't at all agree that Virgil's verse fills one with the sense of the unknown country — he is not in the least a mystic poet, he was too Latin and Roman for that. Majestic sadness, word-magic and vision need not have anything to do with the psychic; the first can come from the higher mind and the noble parts of the vital, the others from almost anywhere. I do not mean to say there was no psychic touch at all anywhere in Virgil. And what is this unknown country? There are plenty of unknown countries (other than the psychic worlds) to which many poets give us some kind of access or sense of their existence behind much more than Virgil. But if when you say verse you mean his rhythm, his surge of word music, that does no doubt come from somewhere else, much more than the thoughts or the words that are carried on the surge. 31 March 1932

---

[1] Yes, he wrote a series of satires in verse — he ranks among the greatest satirists, but without malice or violence, his satire is good-humoured but often pungent criticism of life and men.

Dante

> Somehow Dante's verse as well as his life-story move me so much: it is I think mainly because of Beatrice — his conception of her gives him that excellence and that appeal. Will you please write also a few words on the real truth and significance of his devotion to her?

I am afraid I know very little about it.

*

As regards Beatrice, I have never thought about the matter. Outwardly, it was an idealisation, probably due to a psychic connection of the past which could not fulfil itself in that life. But I do not see how his conception of her gives him his excellence — it was only one element in a very powerful and complex nature.

10 July 1932

Dante and Milton

> Would it be correct to call Dante a mystic poet? And how would you compare the inspiration-sources of Dante and Milton? Both the poets have a metaphysical background and a strong religious fervour.

I don't think either can be called mystic poets — Milton not at all. A religious fervour or metaphysical background belongs to the mind and vital, not to a mystic consciousness. Dante writes from the poetic intelligence with a strong intuitive force behind it.

18 October 1936

Marlowe

> To me he seems an experiment wherein the occult voices were conceiving an epic drama with the central conception bodied forth a little loosely in semi-dissolving scenes.

What about *Edward II*? Marlowe had already moved towards the well-built drama.

Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

> Would you take, as many critics do, Hamlet as typically a mental being? How would you characterise his essential psychology?

Hamlet is a Mind, an intellectual, but like many intellectuals a mind that looks too much all round and sees too many sides to have an effective will for action. He plans ingeniously without coming to anything decisive. And when he does act, it is on a vital impulse. Shakespeare suggests but does not bring out the idealist in him, the man of bright illusions.

Donne

> Donne is very much in the limelight these days. How far can we regard the present high estimate of him as justified?

It seems to me that Donne falls between two stools. The Elizabethan ingenuities pass because of the great verve of the life force that makes them attractive; Donne's ingenuities remain intellectual and do not get alive except at times, the vital fire or force is not there to justify them and make them alive and lively. On the other hand he keeps to an Elizabethan or semi-Elizabethan style, but the Elizabethan energy is no longer there — he does not launch himself as Milton did into a new style suitable for the predominant play of the poetic intelligence. Energy and force of a kind he has, but it is twisted, laboured, something that has not found itself. That is why he is not so great a poet as he might have been. He is admired today because the modern mind has become like his — it too is straining for energy and force without having the life-impulse necessary for a true vividness and verve nor that higher vision which would supply another kind of energy — its intellect too is twisted, laboured, not in possession of itself.

28 February 1935

Blake

Blake stands out among the mystic poets of Europe. His occasional obscurity, — he is more often in his best poems lucid and crystal clear, — is due to his writing of things that are not familiar to the physical mind and writing them with fidelity instead of accommodating them to the latter. In reading such writing the inner being has to feel first, then only the mind can catch what is behind. 27 July 1936

*

> You said that Blake put down with fidelity whatever came down.

I didn't mean that he never altered. I don't know about that. I meant he did not let his mind disfigure what came by trying to make it intellectual. He transcribed what he saw and heard.
29 July 1936

Wordsworth

I am rather astonished at your finding Wordsworth's realisation, however mental and incomplete, to be abstract and vague or dictated by emotional effervescence. Wordsworth's was hardly an emotional or effervescent character. As for an abstract realisation, it sounds like a round square; I have never had one myself and find it difficult to believe in it. But certainly a realisation in its beginning can be vague and nebulous or it can be less or more vivid. Still, Wordsworth's did not make that impression on me and to him it certainly came as something positive, wonderfully luminous, direct, powerful and determinative. He stayed there and went no farther, did not get to the source, because more was hardly possible in his time and surroundings, at least to a man of his mainly moral and intellectual temper.

In a more deep and spiritual sense a concrete realisation is that which makes the thing realised more real, dynamic, intimately present to the consciousness than any physical thing can be. Such a concrete spiritual realisation whether of the personal

Divine or of the impersonal Brahman or of the Self does not, except in rare cases, come at or anywhere near the beginning of a sadhana, in the first years or for many years: one has to go deep to get it and deeper to keep it. But a vivid and very personal sense of a spirit or infinite in Nature can very well come in a flash and remain strongly behind a man's outlook on the universe. June 1934

Wordsworth and Keats

> It is better to be as simple and direct as possible in one's writing.

One can't make rigid rules like that. Wordsworth is as simple and direct as possible (not always though). Keats aims at word-magic. One can't say Wordsworth is a greater poet than Keats. Whatever style is poetically successful, is admissible.

21 December 1935

Keats and Shelley

As regards Keats and Shelley why attach so much importance to fluency? Keats besides produced enough in his few years of productivity and enough besides of a high excellence to rank him among the greater English poets. What might he not have done if he had lived to fifty? But I don't believe he had any dramatic genius in him. None of these poets had. Shelley's *Cenci* is a remarkable feat of dramatic construction and poetic imagination, but it has no organic life like the work of the Elizabethans or the Greeks or like such dramas as the *Cid* or Racine's tragedies.

7 February 1935

*

> With regard to Keats, is it not rather difficult to deny a great poet a possibility when his whole ambition is set towards acquiring it? If we didn't have *Hyperion*, would we have thought it possible for him to strike the epic note? None of the poets round him had the least epical gift.

It can easily be seen from Keats' earlier work. And with ripeness he could do great things in the narrative form. His dramatic attempt is rubbish. All these poets — Shelley, Wordsworth, Keats had the gift which if sublimated leads to epic power — none had the dramatic gift. The ambition to do a thing is not a proof that he can do it — now and here.

8 February 1935

Tennyson

I suppose you know that I have no great consideration for Tennyson. I read him much and admired him when I was young and raw, but even then his *In Memoriam* style seemed to me mediocre and his attempts at thinking insufferably second-rate and dull. These lines ["*An infant crying in the night . . .* "] are better than others, but they are still Tennyson.

12 September 1931

*

Crossing the Bar was considered when I was in England as the *ne plus ultra* of modern lyrical beauty; but that modern is now today's antiquated and out of date. It is so far off from me in memory that it is difficult to say how I would now estimate it. It should have a place, I suppose — but a really high place? Perhaps.

23 January 1935

Tennyson and Wilde

I could never swallow *In Memoriam* even in the days when I admired him — very early days! It has been well described as "sorrow in kid gloves". I suppose he was sincere, but he failed to make his expression sincere. The thought is perfectly shallow and conventional for the most part and there is no depth or strength of feeling. As for Wilde, there was always a strain of insincerity somewhere, he posed even over his sufferings — but he was a marvellous artist of speech and his imagination and his colouring are superb. In spite of the touch of insincerity, of overstress, [*De Profundis*] remains one of the greatest things [written in] English prose.[2]

Browning

My opinion of Browning has been expressed, I think, in *The Future Poetry*. I had a fervent passion for him when I was from seventeen to eighteen, after a previous *penchant* for Tennyson; but like most calf-love both these fancies were of short duration. While I had it, I must have gone through most of his writings (*Fifine at the Fair* and some others excepted) some half-dozen times at least. There is much stuff of thought in him, seldom of great depth, but sometimes unexpected and subtle, a vast range not so much of character as of dramatic human moods, and a considerable power and vigour of rough verse and rugged language. But there is very little of the pure light of poetry in him or of sheer poetic beauty or charm and magic; he gets the highest or finest inspiration only in a line or two here and there. His expression is often not only rough and hasty but inadequate; in his later work he becomes tiresome. He is not one of the greatest *poets*, but he is a great *creator*. 5 December 1931

Baudelaire

> It is a pity that Baudelaire could not allow the Spirit in him to find tongue in the highest key possible to his consciousness.

But what on earth did you expect from Baudelaire beyond what he has written. Baudelaire had to be Baudelairean just as Homer had to be Homeric. 7 November 1934

*

> Herbert said yesterday that though Baudelaire is a great poet, he is considered an immoral one.

That is not anything against his greatness — only against his morality. Plenty of great people have been "immoral".

---

[2] *One corner of the manuscript of this letter has been lost. The words printed within square brackets are conjectural reconstructions. — Ed.*

> I had just a glance at Baudelaire's *Flowers of Evil* and I found this:
>
> The moon more indolently dreams tonight
> Than a fair woman on her couch at rest,
> Caressing, with a hand distraught and light,
> Before she sleeps, the contour of her breast.
>
> What a queer imagination, but vulgar or immoral?

What is there vulgar in it or immoral? It is as an indolent distraught gesture that he puts it. How does it offend against morality? 31 January 1937

*

Baudelaire was never vulgar — he was too refined and perfect an artist to be that. He chose the evil of life as his frequent subject and tried to extract poetic beauty out of it, as a painter may deal with a subject that to the ordinary eye may be ugly or repellent and extract artistic beauty from it. But that is not the only stuff of his poetry. 22 July 1936

Mallarmé

Blake is Europe's greatest mystic poet and Mallarmé turned the current of French poetry (one might almost say of all modernist poetry) into a channel of which his poems were the opening.

> Mallarmé's works are, in one word, "unintelligible".

Then why did they have so much influence on the finest French writers and why is modernist poetry trying to burrow into the subliminal in order to catch something even one quarter as fine as his language, images and mystic suggestions?

> Is it really true that he wrote with a set determination to make his works unintelligible?

Certainly not. The French language was too clear and limited to express mystic truth, so he had to wrestle with it and turn it this way and that to arrive at a mystic speech. Besides he refused to be satisfied with anything that was a merely intellectual or even at all intellectual rendering of his vision. That is why the surface understanding finds it difficult to follow him. But he is so great that it has laboured to follow him all the same.

14 December 1936

*

> Please read pages 19–21 of this book.[3] The editor speaks of Mallarmé as an acknowledged master and of his great influence on contemporary poetry.

He can't deny such an obvious fact, I suppose — but he would like to.

> He says, "A purely intellectual artist, convinced that sentiment was an inferior element of art, Mallarmé never evokes emotion, but only thought about thought; and the thoughts called forth in his mind by the symbol are generally so subtle and elliptical that they find no echo in the mind of the ordinary mortal." [*pp. 19–20*] Do you agree?

Certainly not — this man is a mere pedant; his remarks are unintelligent, commonplace, often perfectly imbecile.

> He continues: "Obscurity was part of his doctrine and he wrote for the select few only and exclusively . . . " [*p. 20*]

Rubbish! His doctrine is perfectly tenable and intelligible. It is true that the finest things in art and poetry are appreciated only by the few and he chose therefore not to sacrifice the truth of his mystic (impressionist, symbolist) expression in order to be easily understood by the multitude, including this professor.

---

[3] *L. E. Kastner, ed.,* A Book of French Verse: From Marot to Mallarmé *(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936).*

> "Another cause of his obscurity is that he chose his words and phrases for their evocative value alone, and here again the verbal sonorities suggested by the tortuous trend of his mind make no appeal except to the initiated." [*p. 20*] (I suppose here he means what you meant about the limitedness of the French language?)

Not only that — his will to arrive at a true and deep, instead of a superficial and intellectual language. I gave two reasons for Mallarmé's unusual style and not this one of the limitedness of the French language only.

> "His life-long endeavour to achieve an impossible ideal accounts for his sterility (he has left some sixty poems only, most of them quite short) and the darkness of his later work, though he did write, before he had fallen a victim to his own theories, a few poems of great beauty and perfectly intelligible." [*p. 20*]

60 poems if they have beauty are as good as 600. It is not the mass of the poet's work that determines his greatness. Gray and Catullus wrote little; we have only seven plays of Sophocles and seven of Aeschylus (though they wrote more), but these seven put them still in the front rank of poets.

> He says that " Mallarmé's verse is acquired and intricate" i.e. a thing not of spontaneity, but of intellectualisation. Saying that Verlaine is an inspired poet, he seems to imply the contrary about Mallarmé.

If these two magnificent poems (the last two)[4] are not inspired, then there is no such thing as inspiration. It is rubbish to say of a man who refused to limit himself by intellectual expression, that he was an intellectual artist. Symbolism, impressionism go beyond intellect to pure sight — and Mallarmé was the creator of symbolism.

---

[4] *"Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui" (see page 404 below), and* Les fleurs. — *Ed.*

> Nolini says that in poetry simplicity leads to beauty. Applied to Mallarmé, would this mean that due to his acrobatics with words, his poems are not beautiful.

Only Nolini can say what he meant, but to refuse beauty to Mallarmé's poetry would be itself an acrobacy of the intellect. For what then is beauty? Simplicity and beauty are not convertible terms, there can be a difficult beauty. What about Aeschylus then? or Blake?

> "According to Mallarmé's own definition, the poet's mission is either 'to evoke gradually an object in order to suggest a mood, or, inversely, to choose an object as a symbol and disengage from it a mood by a series of decipherments'." [*p. 19*]

It is a very good description of the impressionist method in literature. Verlaine and others do the same, even if they do not hold the theory.

> I do not understand what Mallarmé means here, but it seems different from what Housman says, that the poet's mission is to transfuse emotion — of which Mallarmé had none!

I do not know what you mean by emotion. If you mean the surface vital joy and grief of outer life, these poems of Mallarmé do not contain it. But if emotion can include also the deeper spiritual or inner feeling which does not weep or shout, then they are here in these two poems. The Swan [*in "Le vierge . . . "*] is to my understanding not merely the poet who has not sung in the higher spaces of the consciousness, which is already a fine idea, but the soul that has not risen there and found its higher expression, said poet being, if Mallarmé thought of that specially, only a signal instance of this spiritual frustration. There can be no more powerful, moving and formidable expression of this spiritual frustration, this chilled and sterile greatness, than the image of the frozen lake and the imprisoned Swan as developed by Mallarmé.

I do not say that the spiritual or the occult cannot be given an easier expression or that if one can arrive at that without minimising the inner significance, it is not perhaps the greatest achievement. (That is, I suppose, Nolini's contention.) But there is room for more than one kind of spiritual or mystic poetry. One has to avoid mere mistiness or vagueness, one has to be true, vivid, profound in one's images; but, that given, I feel free to write either as in *Nirvana* or *Transformation*, giving a clear mental indication along with the image or I can suppress the mental indication and give the image only with the content suggested in the language but not expressed so that even those can superficially understand who are unable to read behind the mental idea — that is what I have done in *The Bird of Fire*. It seems to me that both methods are legitimate.

16 December 1936

Heredia and Swinburne

I don't think Heredia and Swinburne go very well together; one is a passionate and chaotic imperfection and the other is a passionless perfection, but it is a passion of the music of words only and a perfection of word and rhythm only; for they resemble each other only in one thing, an excess of the word over the substance. 19 August 1932

Michael Madhusudan Dutt

I had once the regret that the line of possibility opened out by Michael [Madhusudan Dutt] was not carried any farther in Bengali poetry; but after all it may turn out that nothing has been lost by the apparent interruption. Magnificent as are the power and swing of his language and rhythm, there was a default of richness and thought-matter, and a development in which subtlety, fineness and richness of thought and feeling could learn to find a consummate expression was very much needed. More mastery of colour, form and design was a necessity as well as more depth and wealth in the thought-substance — and this has now been achieved and, if added to the *ojas*, can fulfil what Madhusudan left only half done. 14 June 1932

Rabindranath Tagore

Of course Tagore's worshippers will go for Prabodh Sen, what did you expect? Literary nature (artistic generally, or at least very often) is human nature at its most susceptible — *genus irritabile vatum*. And besides where is the joy of literature if you cannot use your skill of words in pummelling some opposite faction's nose? Man is a reasoning animal (perhaps), but a belligerent reasoning animal and must fight with words if he cannot do it with fists, swords, guns, or poison gas. All the more, I applaud your decision not to pursue farther the ত্রৈরথ.

24 November 1932

*

I am afraid his powers are very much on the wane, but let us not whisper it too loud. The setting of a great genius and one that, after all, created on a very high level for a very long time!

10 October 1933

*

> Tagore, I think, is substantially right in dubbing his spiritual poems imaginative rather than spiritual.

Well, yes, he mentalises, aestheticises, sentimentalises the things of the spirit — but I can't say that I have ever found the expression of a concrete spiritual realisation in his poetry — though ideas, emotions, ideal dreamings in plenty. That is something, but —

23 March 1934

*

Tagore has been a wayfarer towards the same goal as ours in his own way — that is the main thing, the exact stage of advance and putting of the steps are minor matters. His exact position as a poet or a prophet or anything else will be assigned by posterity and we need not be in haste to anticipate the final verdict. The immediate verdict after his departure or soon after it may very well be a rough one, — for this is a generation that seems to take a delight in trampling with an almost Nazi rudeness on the bodies of the Ancestors, especially the immediate ancestors. I have read with an interested surprise that Napoleon was only a bustling and self-important nincompoop all whose great achievements were done by others, that Shakespeare was "no great things" and that most other great men were by no means so great as the stupid respect and reverence of past ignorant ages made them out to be! What chance has then Tagore? But these injustices of the moment do not endure — in the end a wise and fair estimate is formed and survives the changes of time.

Tagore, of course, belonged to an age which had faith in its ideas and whose very denials were creative affirmations. That makes an immense difference. Your strictures on his later development may or may not be correct, but this mixture even was the note of the day and it expressed a tangible hope of a fusion into something new and true — therefore it could create. Now all that idealism has been smashed to pieces by the immense adverse Event and everybody is busy exposing its weakness, but nobody knows what to put in its place. A mixture of scepticism and slogans, "Heil-Hitler" and the Fascist salute and Five-Year Plan and the beating of everybody into one amorphous shape, a disabused denial of all ideals on one side and on the other a blind shut-my-eyes and shut-everybody's-eyes plunge into the bog in the hope of finding some firm foundation there, will not carry us very far. And what else is there? Until new spiritual values are discovered, no great enduring creation is possible.

24 March 1934

Comments on Some Examples of Western Poetry (up to 1900)

Catullus

> Quaenam te mala mens, miselle Ravide,
> agit praecipitem in meos iambos?
> quis deus tibi non bene advocatus
> vecordem parat excitare rixam?
> an ut pervenias in ora vulgi?
> quid vis? qualubet esse notus optas?
> eris, quandoquidem meos amores
> cum longa voluisti amare poena.

> Unless *meos amores* is purposely vague, at least two objects of Catullus's affections must be in question? Would you say that this piece is in a vein of good-humoured banter?

I do not think *meos amores* necessarily alludes to more than one love affair. I think it is more than good-humoured banter; there seems to me to be a note of careless scorn in it, but no serious anger. I suppose with Catullus one cannot take either his self-depreciation or his self-assertion as a poet very seriously — like most poets of his power he must have been aware of his genius, but expressed it half humourously as one would expect from a well-bred man of the world. I don't know either about his scurrilous attacks — literary invective perhaps, but is there not a little more to it than that? He puts the lash with something more than a whimsical violence in many places — the verses he wrote after the rupture leave a terrible mark. 11 January 1937

*

> Disertissime Romuli nepotum,
> quot sunt quotque fuere, Marce Tulli,
> quotque post aliis erunt in annis,
> gratias tibi maximas Catullus
> agit pessimus omnium poeta,
> tanto pessimus omnium poeta,
> quanto tu optimus omnium patronus.
>
> Would you not say that Catullus was bound to have looked upon Cicero the man as a pompous ass, however sincerely he may have admired Cicero the man of letters?

I am not sure how his contemporaries regarded Cicero — were they not hypnotised by his eloquence, scholarship, literary versatility, conversational and epistolatory powers, overflowing vitality? One would think that men like Catullus and Caesar would see through him, though. There is certainly a note that sounds very like irony in the last three lines, but it is very subtle and others than Cicero may have regarded it as a graceful eulogy enhanced by the assumption of extreme humility (though only a courteous assumption) in the comparison between the *poeta* and the *patronus*.

Virgil, Shakespeare, Hugo

> I think what Belloc meant in crediting Virgil with the power to give us a sense of the Unknown Country [*see page 373*] was that Virgil specialises in a kind of wistful vision of things across great distances in space or time, which renders them dream-like, gives them an air of ideality. He mentions as an instance the passage (perhaps in the sixth book of the Aeneid) where the swimmer sees all Italy from the top of a wave
>
> prospexsi Italiam summa sublimis ab unda.
>
> I dare say —
>
> Sternitur infelix alieno volnere caelumque
> aspicit et dulcis moriens reminiscitur Argos
>
> as well as

> tendebantque manus ripae ulterioris amore.
>
> belong to the same category. To an ordinary Roman Catholic mind like Belloc's, which is not conscious of the subtle hierarchy of unseen worlds, whatever is vaguely or remotely appealing — in short, beautifully misty — is mystical, and "revelatory" of the native land of the soul. Add to this that Virgil's rhythm is exquisitely euphonious, and it is no wonder Belloc should feel as if the very harps of heaven were echoed by the Mantuan.
>
> He couples Shakespeare with Virgil as a master of (to put it in a phrase of Arjava's) "earth-transforming gramarye". The quotations he gives from Shakespeare struck me as rather peculiar in the context: I don't exactly remember them but something in the style of "Night's tapers are burnt out and jocund day" etc. seems to give him a wonderful flash of the Unknown Country! He also alludes to the four magical lines of Keats about Ruth "amid the alien corn" and Victor Hugo's at-least-for-once truly delicate, unrhetorical passage on the same theme in *La légende des siècles*. I wonder if you recollect the passage. Its last two stanzas are especially enchanting:
>
> Tout reposait dans Ur et dans Jérimadeth;
> Les astres émaillaient le ciel profond et sombre;
> Le croissant fin et clair parmi ces fleurs de l'ombre
> Brillait à l'occident, et Ruth se demandait,
>
> Immobile, ouvrant l'oeil à moitié sous ses voiles,
> Quel dieu, quel moissonneur de l'éternel été,
> Avait, en s'en allant, négligemment jeté
> Cette faucille d'or dans le champ des étoiles.
>
> What do you think of them?

If that is Belloc's idea of the mystic, I can't put much value on his Roman Catholic mind! Shakespeare's line and Hugo's also are good poetry and may be very enchanting, as you say, but there is nothing in the least deep or mystic about them. Night's tapers are the usual poetic metaphor, Hugo's *moissonneur* and *faucille d'or* is an ingenious fancy — there is nothing true behind it, not the least shadow of a mystical experience. The lines quoted from Virgil are exceedingly moving and poetic, but it is pathos of the life planes, not anything more — Virgil would have stared if he had been told that his *ripae ulterioris* was revelatory of the native land of the soul. These sentimental modern intellectuals are terrible: they will read anything into anything; that is because they have no touch on the Truth, so they make up for it by a gambolling fancy. 1 April 1932

Shakespeare

From what plane are the substance and rhythm of this from Shakespeare? —

the prophetic soul
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come.

Are they really from his usual plane — the vital?

The origin of the inspiration may be from anywhere, but in Shakespeare it always comes through the vital and strongly coloured by it as in some others it comes through the poetic intelligence. What play or poem is this from? I don't remember it. It sounds almost overmental in origin. 19 February 1935

*

The phrase occurs in Sonnet CVII, beginning

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.

What I should like to know is whether the *rhythm* of the words I have picked out is a fusion of the overmental and the vital; or is only the substance from the overmind?

There is something from the Above in the rhythm also, but it is rather covered up by the more ordinary rhythm of the first half line and the two lines that follow. It is curious that this line and a half should have come in as if by accident and have nothing really to do with the restricted subject of the rest. 19 February 1935

*

> Is there something definitely in the rhythm or language of a line of poetry which would prove it to be from a certain plane? From what you wrote some days back [*see the previous page*] I gather that the quotation from Shakespeare I sent has an Overmind movement as well as substance coming strongly coloured by the vital. But where and in what lies the vital colour which makes it the highest Shakespearean and not, say, the highest Wordsworthian — the line inspired by Newton?

It is a question of feeling, not of intellectual understanding; to distinguish the vital or psychic or any other element one must have the feeling for its presence — an intellectual definition is of little value. Take these lines from Shakespeare —

> Eternity was in our lips and eyes,
> Bliss in our brows' bent; none our parts so poor
> But was a race of heaven —

they are plainly vital in their excited thrill, for only the vital can speak with that thrill and pulse of passion — the rhythm also has the vital undulation and surge so common in Shakespeare.

I have given an instance elsewhere of Shakespeare's thought-utterance which is really vital, not intellectual —

> Life is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

Here is a "thought", a judgment on life, and its origin would naturally be assigned to the intellect, but as a matter of fact it is a throw-up from Macbeth's vital being, an emotional or sensational, not an intellectual judgment and its whole turn and rhythm are strongly vital in their vibration and texture. But yet in this passage there is a greater power that has rushed down from above and taken up the vital surge into its movement — so much so that if it had been a spiritual experience of which the poet was speaking, we could at once have detected an action of the illumined spiritual Mind taking up the vital love and soaring into spiritual greatness.

Or take the quotation —

the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come.

Here both style and language come ultimately from a higher above-mind level, but still it is quite different from Wordsworth's line on Newton which also has altogether an above-head vision and utterance — and the difference comes because the vision of the "dreaming soul" is felt through the vital mind and heart before it finds expression; in the lines of Wordsworth the vision of the lone voyager through strange seas of thought has not that peculiar thrill but rather remains in an exaltation of light between the mind and some vastness above it. It is this constant vitality, this magnificent vital surge in Shakespeare's language which makes it a sovereign expression, but of life and, so far as it is also a voice of mind or knowledge, not of pure intellectual thought but of life-mind and of life-knowledge.

27 February 1935

*

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

The meaning, on the surface, is that for each of us life will pass away as if it were a dream and what will remain is the sleep of death, an undetailed everlasting rest. . . . But from the fourth line onward the language and the rhythm serve to evoke by a certain large and deep suggestiveness an intuition of some transcendental God-self . . . We are reminded of the Upanishad's description of the mystic trance in which the whole world fades like an illusion and the individual soul enters the supreme

> Spirit's unfeatured ecstasy of repose. Shakespeare's intuition is not pure Upanishad, the supreme Spirit is not clearly felt and whatever profundity is there is vague and unintentional; still, a looming mystic light does appear, stay a little, find a suggestive contour before receding and falling away to a music sublimely defunctive.

I don't think Shakespeare had any such idea in his mind. What he is dwelling on is the insubstantiality of the world and of human existence. "*We* are such stuff" does not point to any God-self. "Dream" and "sleep" would properly imply Somebody who dreams and sleeps, but the two words are merely metaphors. Shakespeare was not an intellectual or philosophic thinker nor a mystic one. All that you can say is that there comes out here an impression or intimation of the illusion of Maya, the dream-character of life but without any vision or intuition of what is behind the dream and the illusion. There is nothing in the passage that even hints vaguely the sense of something abiding — all is insubstantial, "into air, into thin air", "baseless fabric", "insubstantial pageant", "*we* are such stuff as dreams are made on". "Stuff" points to some inert material rather than a spirit dreamer or sleeper. Of course one can always read things into it for one's own pleasure, but — 8 March 1935

*

> I admit that Shakespeare was not a philosophic or mystic thinker. . . . What, however, surprises me is your saying that there is not the vaguest hint of something abiding. In the magic performance which Prospero gave to Ferdinand and Miranda . . . Prospero reminded them of what he had said before — namely, that "these our actors . . . were all spirits". They melt into thin air but do not disappear from existence, from conscious being of some character however unearthly: they just become invisible and what disappears is the visible pageant produced by them, a seemingly material construction which yet was a mere phantom. From this seeming, Prospero catches the suggestion that all that looks material is like a phantom, a dream, which must vanish, leaving no trace. . . .

One can read anything into anything. But Shakespeare says nothing about the material world or there being a base somewhere else or of our being projected into a dream. He says "we *are* such stuff." The spirits vanish into air, into thin air, as Shakespeare emphasises by repetition, which means to any plain interpretation that they too are unreal, only dream-stuff; he does not say that they disappear from view but are there behind all the time. The whole stress is on the unreality and insubstantiality of existence, whether of the pageant or of the spirits or of ourselves — there is no stress anywhere, no mention or hint of an eternal spiritual existence. Shakespeare's idea here as everywhere is the expression of a mood of the vital mind, it is not a reasoned philosophical conclusion. However if you like to argue that, logically, this or that is the true philosophical consequence of what Shakespeare says and that therefore the Daemon who inspired him must have meant that, I have no objection. I was simply interpreting the passage as Shakespeare's transcribing mind has put it. 9 March 1934

*

Just a word more about that passage. If it is taken *in vacuo*, there is no internal justification for my idea which turns on the survival of the spirits after the pageant has faded. But almost immediately after the stage indication: " . . . *to a strange, hollow and confused noise, they heavily vanish*", occurs this aside on the part of Prospero: "(*To the Spirits*) Well done; avoid; no more." The quoted passage follows a little later. Then again Prospero says after Ferdinand and Miranda are gone: "Come with a thought: — I thank you: — Ariel, come." Thereupon Ariel enters:

ARIEL: Thy thoughts I cleave to. What's thy pleasure?
PROSPERO: Spirit,
We must prepare to meet with Caliban.

What do you make of all this? And when Ariel reports how he has lured Prospero's enemies into a "foul lake", Prospero commends him:

This was well done, my bird.

> Thy shape invisible retain thou still.
>
> Still later, comes another stage-direction: "*A noise of hunters heard. Enter divers Spirits, in shape of dogs and hounds . . . ; Prospero and Ariel setting them on.*" Even if this is taken to refer to Spirits other than those who produce that masque, the previous quotations are sufficient to prove that only the visible shapes and formations vanished — the entities themselves remained behind all the time.

I don't see what all that has to do with the meaning of the passage in question which plainly insists that nothing endures. Obviously Ariel had an invisible shape — invisible to human eyes, but the point of the passage is that all shapes and substances and beings disappear into nothingness. We are concerned with Prospero's meaning, not with what actually happened to the spirits or for that matter to the pageant which we might conceive also of having an invisible source or material. He uses the total disappearance of the pageant and the spirits as a base for the idea that all existence is an illusion — it is the idea of the illusion that he enforces. If he had wanted to say, "we disappear, all disappears to view but the reality of us and of all things persists in a greater immaterial reality", he would surely have said so or at least not left it to be inferred or reasoned out by you in the twentieth century. I repeat however that this is my view of Shakespeare's meaning and does not affect any possibility of reading into it something that Shakespeare's outer mind did not receive or else did not express. 10 March 1935

Milton

> And they bowed down to the Gods of their wives . . . [1]
>
> Burnt after them to the bottomless pit . . .

Certainly, Milton in the passages you quote had a rhythmical effect in mind; he was much too careful and conscientious a metrist and much too consummate a master of rhythm to do anything carelessly or without good reason. If he found his inspiration stumbling or becoming slipshod in its rhythmical effects, he would have corrected it. 22 April 1947

---

[1] *This is apparently a misquotation of Milton's line: "And made him bow, to the gods of his wives". — Ed.*

Coleridge

May I say a word about the four lines of Coleridge which you bash in your essay? —

> He prayeth best who loveth best,
> All things both great and small:
> For the dear God, who loveth us,
> He made and loveth all.

The sentimentalism of the "dear God" is obviously extra childlike and sounds childish even. If it had been written by Coleridge as his own contribution to thought or his personal feeling described in its native language it would have ranked him very low. But Coleridge was a great metaphysician or at any rate an acute and wide-winged thinker, not a sentimental prattling poet of the third order. Mark that the idea in the lines is not essentially poor; otherwise expressed it could rank among great thoughts and stand as the basis of a philosophy and ethics founded on bhakti. There are one or two lines of the Gita which are based on a similar thought, though from the Vedantic, not the dualist point of view. But throughout the *Ancient Mariner* Coleridge is looking at things from the point of view and the state of mind of the most simple and childlike personality possible, the Ancient Mariner who feels and thinks only with the barest ideas and the most elementary and primitive emotions. The lines he writes here record the feeling which such a mind and heart would draw from what he had gone through. Are they not then perfectly in place and just in the right tone for such a purpose? You may say that it lowers the tone of the poem. I don't know — the tone of the poem is deliberately intended to be that of an unsophisticated ballad simplicity and ballad mentality — it is not the ideas but the extraordinary beauty of rhythm and vividness of vision and fidelity to a certain mystic childlike key that makes it such a wonderful and perfect poem. This is of course only a point of view; but it came to me several times as an answer that could be made to your criticism, so I put it on paper. 4 February 1935

*

> In Shelley's *Skylark* my heart does not easily melt towards one simile —
>
> Like a high-born maiden
> In a palace-tower,
> Soothing her love-laden
> Soul in secret hour
> With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower.
>
> Sometimes I am inclined even to feel this is an atrocity. Then I wonder whether the sentimental stuff shouldn't be cut out and replaced by something deeper although in Shelley's style as much as possible — something like:
>
> Like a child who wanders
> In an ancient wood
> Where the strange glow squanders
> All its secret mood
> Upon her lilting soul lost in that solitude.

The attempt to rewrite Shelley better than Shelley himself is a rash and hopeless endeavour. Your proposed stanza is twentieth century mysticism quite out of place in the *Skylark* and has not the simple felicity and magic and music of Shelley's verse. I fail to see why the high-born maiden is an atrocity — it expresses the romantic attitude towards love which was sentimental and emotional, attempting to lift it out of the coarseness of life into a mental-vital idealism which was an attempt to resuscitate the attitude of chivalry and the troubadours. Romantic and unreal, if you like, but not atrocious. 8 November 1934

*

I objected to your criticisms and cutting up of the *Skylark*, because the whole of it seems to me to proceed from a wrong starting point altogether. You seem to start with the assumption that the poem ought to be an intellectual whole with coherent parts, a logical structure. Your contention is that the main idea, consistent in other stanzas, is of a spiritual something, an incorporeal joy etc., and the stanzas you condemn as not consistent with the idea and tone of the rest come from an inferior less spiritual inspiration and lower the level of the poem. Accordingly you propose to cut out these excrescences and insert some manipulations which would make the amended whole the perfect poem the *Skylark* should be.

I do not deny that from that standpoint your deductions are logical. The poem arranged as you want it, without these too earthly verses, would be a single ethereal impalpable shining tissue. It would be more subtly ethereal (not more spiritual), far from the earth, winging between the rainbow and the lightnings and ignorant of anything less brilliant and unearthly. Only it would be Shelley with something of himself left out, the *Skylark* incomplete with part of its fullness of tone vanished and a big hole in the middle — a beautiful poem, but no longer so worthy of its place among the few supreme English lyrics. That at least is what I feel. One thing more — even if these stanzas are an imperfection, I do not think it wise to meddle with them either by elimination or re-doing. To interfere with the imperfections of the great poets of the past is a hazardous business — their imperfections as well as their perfections are part of themselves. Imagine a drama of Shakespeare with all the blots scratched out and all the scoriae done over and smoothed to a perfect polish! It would be Shakespeare no longer. And this is Shelley whose strange and sweet and luminous magic of lyrical rhythm and language, when he is at his best and here he is at his best, in the impugned stanzas as well as in the others, is his own secret and no other shall ever recover it. To meddle here is inevitably to mar. Things as great or greater in another kind may be done, but not with this unique and inimitable note. To omit, to change words or lines, to modify rhythms seems to me inadmissible.[2]

---

[2] The result is bound to be like Landor's rewriting of Milton — very good Landor but very bad Milton.

I do not altogether appreciate your references to Mrs. Shelley and the firefly and your cynical and sarcastic picture of the high-born maiden as she appears to you — all that has nothing to do with Shelley's poetic conception which is alone relevant to the matter. I could draw a realistic picture of the poet "singing hymns unbidden" and unwanted and asking occasionally as he wrote whether dinner was ready — with hopes, but also with fears that he might not get it, his butcher's bill being unpaid for a long time. Or I might cavil scientifically about the nature of sunsets and sunrise and rainbow drops and ask what was the use of all this romantic flummery when there are real things to write about. Or I might quote the critic — I don't remember who he was — who said that Shelley certainly did not believe that the skylark was a spirit and not a bird and so the whole conception of the poem is false, insincere, ethereal humbug and therefore not true poetry because poetry must be sincere. Such points of view are irrelevant. Shelley is not concerned with the real life of the high-born maiden or the poet any more than with the ornithology of the skylark or with other material things. His glow-worm is something more than a material glow-worm. He is concerned with the soul love-laden, with the dreams of the poet, with the soul of beauty behind the glow-worm's light and the colour and fragrance of the rose. It is that he is feeling and it is linked in his vision with the essential something he has felt behind the song of the skylark. And because he so felt it he was not only entitled but bound to make place for it in his inspired lyrical theme.

I may observe in passing that the ethereal and impalpable are not more spiritual than the tangible and the concrete — they may seem more easily subtle and ideal to the idealising and abstracting mind, but that is a different affair. One can feel the spiritual through the embodied and concrete as well as through its opposite. But Shelley was not a spiritual poet and the *Skylark* is not a spiritual lyric. Shelley looked, it is true, always towards a light, a beauty, a truth behind the appearance of things, but he never got through the idealising mind to the spiritual experience. What he did get was something of the purest emotional or aesthetic feeling or purest subtle mind-touch of an essence behind the appearance, an essence of ideal light, truth or beauty. It is that he expresses with a strange aerial magic or a curious supersensuously sensuous intensity in his finest lyrics. It is that we must seek in the *Skylark* and, if we find it, we have no right to claim something else. It is there all through and in abundance — it is its perfection that creates the sustained perfection of the poem. There is not and there ought not to be an intellectual sequence, a linked argument, a logical structure. It is a sequence of feeling and of ideal perceptions with an occult logic of their own that sustains the lyric and makes it a faultless whole. In this sequence the verses you condemn have an indefeasible right of place. Shelley was not only a poet of other worlds, of *Epipsychidion* and of *The Witch of Atlas*; he was passionately interested in bringing the light, beauty and truth of the ideal super-world from which he came into the earth life — he tried to find it there wherever he could, he tried to infuse it wherever he missed it. The mental, the vital, the physical cannot be left out of the whole he saw in order to yield place only to the ethereal and impalpable. As he heard the skylark and felt the subtle essence of light and beauty in its song, he felt too the call of the same essence of light and beauty elsewhere and it is the things behind which he felt that he compares to the hymn of the skylark — the essence of ideal light and beauty behind things mental, the poet and his hymn, behind things vital, the soul of romantic love, behind things physical, the light of the glow-worm, the passionate intensity of the perfume of the rose. I cannot see an ordinary glow-worm in the lines of Shelley's stanza — it is a light from beyond finding expression in that glimmer and illumining the dell of dew and the secrecy of flowers and grass, that is there. This illumination of the earthly mind, vital, physical with his super-world light is a main part of Shelley; excise that and the whole of Shelley is no longer there, there is only the ineffectual angel beating his wings in the void; excise it from the *Skylark* and the true whole of the *Skylark* is no longer there.

18 November 1934

Swinburne

> I want to make a short series of notes according to some responses to great poetry — and what I am sending tonight is meant to be the opening section:
>
> > No better example, perhaps, of a certain style of great poetry can be produced than these lines from Swinburne:
> >
> > > Take thy limbs living, and new-mould with these
> > > A lyre of many faultless agonies.
> >
> > Considered thus separately, they have a suggestion richer than in their context, and convey on their passionate music a stimulus towards an idealistic discipline and high ascetic transport. . . .
>
> Does it all sound a stale old story?

It is not new — but it is difficult to say anything new in these matters. It is well written. I don't know though that there is any "aching idealism" or "high ascetic transport" in these lines of Swinburne. An acceptance of suffering for oneself may have it — an infliction of suffering from one's own perversely passionate pleasure on another can hardly have it. 23 December 1934

*

> I don't understand how it is possible to take objection to my reading, for the vision is certainly of the acceptance of the suffering inflicted.

I cannot accept this "certainly". I do not see that any acceptance of the suffering is implied, still less a rapturous acceptance. If I remember right, the supposed recipient of the pain is made to object that it is cruel — she is not supposed to reply "Oh how exquisite!" 24 December 1934

*

> Don't you think the idea of the infliction of suffering must be kept apart from the point made by you in your first note that the infliction was for a perversely passionate pleasure — and also from the question whether in Swinburne's poetry it

> is objected to by the recipient or not, since the lines are now *taken by themselves*?

Why should the lines be taken by themselves as if they were not a part of Swinburne's poem? I cannot see any idealistic discipline or high ascetic transport in a sadistic desire however poetically expressed. An erotic perversity is neither ideal nor a discipline.

25 December 1934

*

> If I took the lines *in vacuo* and stopped there, you might object, but I have not done that in my notes. What I have done, after saying that the lines are great poetry, is to catch their suggestion, first supposing one had come across them by themselves and did not know their original context, and, then, taking them in their proper context. If one saw them separately, would not one be inclined to read in them the suggestion I have submitted, owing to the image-word "lyre" and the adjective "faultless" applied to "agonies"? What harm can there be in using such an illustrative device?

I am unable to see what there is in the lines, whether taken separately or in the context or both that is anything more than what Swinburne meant to put it, a rhapsodic glorification and *enthusiasmos* of sadistic passion — just as the other passage[3] is a magnificent outburst of the magnified ego. But one is no more ascetic or ideal or a discipline than the other — unless you mean the ideal of sadistic passion or the ideal of the magnified ego. The poetry is superb, but I do not see what the passion in them transfigures or into what it is transfigured — it is sublimated into its own extreme expression or figure, if you like — but that is all. To make somebody else's body into a "lyre" of agonies does not transfigure the fact itself, the erotic side on which it expresses. Or if it does, what is this something high of which it is a glimmer? When one meets one's own suffering with fortitude, there is an ascetic discipline, an ideal of self-mastery — but to meet somebody else's pain caused by oneself with an ecstasy of pleasure in it is not quite the same thing. Or if one can turn one's own pain into a sort of ecstasy of Ananda, not of perverse masochistic pleasure, so that pain disappears from one's existence, then that is some kind of transfiguration — but can the same be said of turning somebody else's agony into a subject for one's own rapture? It may be a transfiguration, but a very Asuric transfiguration. 26 December 1934

---

[3] *Yea, thou shalt be forgotten like spilt wine,*
Except these kisses of my lips on thine
Brand them with immortality; . . .
But in the light and laughter, in the moan
And music, and in grasp of lip and hand
And shudder of water that makes felt on land
The immeasurable tremour of all the sea,
Memories shall mix and metaphor of me.

*

> Your explanation has convinced me that the lines in their context had better be considered without any idealising ingenuity; so I shall recast that portion and send it to you.

It does not seem to me legitimate to turn the meaning of lines in a poem upside down like that by lopping the syntax and giving it a twist which turns into something else — *une autre histoire*. But even so, it only turns an acme of perverse sadism into an acme of perverse masochism. To make one's body a lyre of agonies, faultless (?) or not — I don't know quite what is meant by a faultless agony — is not an ascetic discipline or a spiritual sacrifice. One has to bear pain with fortitude when it comes, but to inflict it wantonly on oneself is not spiritual. I am aware of the austerities of the Tapaswis of old, but these, condemned by the Gita as Asuric tapasya, had at least for their motive a mastery over the physical consciousness and might therefore be called a discipline, but to torture oneself or allow oneself to be tortured either for the joy of it or the beauty of it was not their idea — be it either the victim's joy or the torturer's; for I don't quite know to whom is the fierce sacrifice here supposed to be dedicated. An extremity of pain has nothing in it that is ideal or spiritual. 27 December 1934

Mallarmé

Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui
Va-t-il nous déchirer avec un coup d'aile ivre
Ce lac dur oublié que hante sous le givre
Le transparent glacier des vols qui n'ont pas fui!

Un cygne d'autrefois se souvient que c'est lui
Magnifique mais qui sans espoir se délivre
Pour n'avoir pas chanté la région où vivre
Quand du stérile hiver a resplendi l'ennui.

Tout son col secouera cette blanche agonie
Par l'espace infligé à l'oiseau qui le nie,
Mais non l'horreur du sol où le plumage est pris.

Fantôme qu'à ce lieu son pur éclat assigne,
Il s'immobilise au songe froid de mépris
Que vêt parmi l'exil inutile le Cygne.

> I tried to break this nut of Mallarmé's . . . but, *pardi*, it was a hard nut. Really what a tortuous trend and how he has turned the images! "The transparent glacier of flights haunting the hard lake under the frost"! The frost or snow has become the glacier (icefield) and the icefield composes the lake — that's what I imaged.

How does hoar-frost or rime become the glacier? "Givre" is not the same as "glace" — it is not ice, but a covering of hoar-frost such as you see on the trees etc., the congealed moisture of the air — that is the "blanche agonie" which has come down from the insulted Space on the swan and on the lake. He can shake off that but the glacier holds him; he can no more rise into the skies, caught in the frozen cold mass of the failures of the soul that refused to fly upward and escape.

> What do you think of the sonnet?

One of the finest sonnets I have ever read.

Magnificent line, by the way, "*Le transparent glacier des vols qui n'ont pas fui!*" This idea of the denied flights (imprisoned powers) of the soul that have frozen into a glacier seems to me as powerful as it is violent. Of course in French such expressions were quite new — in some other languages they were already possible. You will find lots of kindred things in the most modern poetry which specialises in violent revelatory (or at least would-be revelatory) images. You disapprove? Well, one may do so, — classical taste does; but I find myself obliged here to admire. 16 December 1936

Heredia

Comme un vol de gerfauts hors du charnier natal,
Fatigués de porter leurs misères hautaines,
De Palos de Moguer, routiers et capitaines
Partaient, ivres d'un rêve héroïque et brutal.

Ils allaient conquérir le fabuleux métal
Que Cipango mûrit dans ses mines lointaines,
Et les vents alizés inclinaient leurs antennes
Aux bords mystérieux du monde Occidental.

Chaque soir, espérant des lendemains épiques,
L'azur phosphorescent de la mer des Tropiques
Enchantait leur sommeil d'un mirage doré;

Ou penchés à l'avant des blanches caravelles,
Ils regardaient monter en un ciel ignoré
Du fond de l'Océan des étoiles nouvelles.

> Many Frenchmen regard Heredia's "Les Conquérants" as the eighth wonder of the world. Flecker says of Heredia that he was "the most perfect poet that ever lived (Horace not in it)".

I cannot say that I find Heredia's sonnet to be either an eighth wonder or any wonder. Heredia was a careful workman in word and rhythm and from that point of view the sonnet is faultless. If that is all that is needed for perfection, it is perfect. But otherwise, except for the image in the first two lines and the vigour of the fourth, I find it empty: Horace, at least, was seldom that. These extravagant estimates of minor poets are only the self-assertive challenge put forth by a personal preference they have.

24 June 1932

Samain and Flecker

I am sending you two poems — one is Albert Samain's famous *Pannyre aux talons d'or* and the other is Flecker's much-praised translation of it. I shall be very much interested in your comparison of the two. Here is Samain:

Dans la salle en rumeur un silence a passé...
Pannyre aux talons d'or s'avance pour danser.
Un voile aux mille plis la cache tout entière.
D'un long trille d'argent la flûte la première,
L'invite; elle s'élance, entre-croise ses pas,
Et, du lent mouvement imprimé par ses bras,
Donne un rythme bizarre à l'étoffe nombreuse,
Qui s'élargit, ondule, et se gonfle et se creuse,
Et se déploie enfin en large tourbillon...
Et Pannyre devient fleur, flamme, papillon!
Tous se taisent; les yeux la suivent en extase.
Peu à peu la fureur de la danse l'embrase.
Elle tourne toujours; vite! plus vite encor!
La flamme éperdument vacille aux flambeaux d'or!...
Puis, brusque, elle s'arrête au milieu de la salle;
Et le voile qui tourne autour d'elle en spirale,
Suspendu dans sa course, apaise ses longs plis,
Et, se collant aux seins aigus, aux flancs polis,
Comme au travers d'une eau soyeuse et continue,
Dans un divin éclair, montre Pannyre nue.

Here is Flecker:

The revel pauses and the room is still:
The silver flute invites her with a trill,
And, buried in her great veils fold on fold,
Rises to dance Pannyra, Heel of Gold.
Her light steps cross; her subtle arm impels
The clinging drapery; it shrinks and swells,
Hollows and floats, and bursts into a whirl:

She is a flower, a moth, a flaming girl.
All lips are silent; eyes are all in trance:
She slowly wakes the madness of the dance,
Windy and wild the golden torches burn;
She turns, and swifter yet she tries to turn,
Then stops: a sudden marble stiff she stands.
The veil that round her coiled its spiral bands,
Checked in its course, brings all its folds to rest,
And clinging to bright limb and pointed breast
Shows, as beneath silk waters woven fine,
Pannyra naked in a flash divine!

> "All here," says a critic, "is bright and sparkling as the jewels on the dancer's breast, but there is one ill-adjusted word — *pointed* breast — which is perhaps more physiological than poetic." Personally I don't somehow react very happily to the word "girl" in line 8.

Samain's poem is a fine piece of work, inspired and perfect; Flecker's is good only in substance, an adequate picture, one may say, but the expression and verse are admirable within their limits. The difference is that the French has vision and the inspired movement that comes with vision — all on the vital plane, of course, — but the English version has only physical sight, sometimes with a little glow in it, and the precision that comes with that sight. I do not know why your critical sense objects to "girl". This line ["*She is a flower, a moth, a flaming girl*"] and one other, "Windy and wild the golden torches burn" are the only two that rise above the plane of physical sight.

But both these poems have the distinction of being perfectly satisfying in their own kind. . . .

P.S. "Flaming girl" and "pointed breast" might be wrong in spirit as a translation of the French — but that is just what Flecker's poem is not, in spite of its apparent or outward fidelity, it is in spirit quite a different poem. 23 June 1932

Hopkins and Kipling

I should like to have a few words from you on the poetic style and technique of these two quotations. The first is an instance of Gerard Manley Hopkins' polyphony "at its most magnificent and intricate":

> Earnest, earthless, equal, attuneable, | vaulty, voluminous, . . . stupendous
> Evening strains to be tíme's vást, | womb-of-all, home-of-all, hearse-of-all night.
> Her fond yellow hornlight wound to the west, | her wild hollow hoarlight hung to the height
> Waste; her earliest stars, earlstars, | stárs principal, overbend us,
> Fíre-féaturing heaven. For earth | her being has unbound; her dapple is at an end, as-
> tray or aswarm, all throughther, in throngs; | self ín self steepèd and páshed — qúite
> Disremembering, dísmémbering | áll now. Heart, you round me right
> With: Óur évening is over us; óur night | whélms, whélms, ánd will end us . . .

The next quotation illustrates Kipling's Tommy-Atkins-music at its most vivid and onomatopoeic — lines considered by Lascelles Abercrombie to be a masterly fusion of all the elements necessary in poetic technique:

> 'Less you want your toes trod off you'd better get back at once,
> For the bullocks are walking two by two,

The *byles* are walking two by two,
And the elephants bring the guns.
Ho! Yuss!
Great — big — long — black — forty-pounder guns.
Jiggery-jolty to and fro,
Each as big as a launch in tow —
Blind — dumb — broad-breached — beggars o'
battering-guns.

My verdict on Kipling's lines would be that they are fit for the columns of *The Illustrated Weekly of India* and nowhere else. I refuse to accept this journalistic jingle as poetry. As for Abercrombie's comment, — unspeakable rubbish, unhappily spoken!

Hopkins is a different proposition; he is a poet, which Kipling never was nor could be. He has vision, power, originality; but his technique errs by excess; he piles on you his effects, repeats, exaggerates and in the end it is perhaps great in effort, but not great in success. Much material is there, many new suggestions, but not a work realised, not a harmoniously perfect whole. 30 December 1932

George Santayana

There we live o'er, amid angelic powers,
Our lives without remorse, as if not ours,
And others' lives with love, as if our own;
For we behold, from those eternal towers,
The deathless beauty of all wingèd hours,
And have our being in their truth alone.

. . . and I knew
The wings of sacred Eros as he flew
And left me to the love of things not seen.
'T is a sad love, like an eternal prayer,
And knows no keen delight, no faint surcease.
Yet from the seasons hath the earth increase,
And heaven shines as if the gods were there.

> Had Dian passed there could no deeper peace
> Embalm the purple stretches of the air.

> George Santayana, the writer of these, is a Spaniard who has a post at Harvard — English is not his mother tongue. In spite of traditionalism and lack of any very individual or developed technique, is there not some arrresting quality in the above extracts?

It [*the two extracts considered as a unit*] has a considerable beauty of thought and language in it. It is a great pity that it is so derivative in form as to sound like an echo. With so much mastery of language and ease of rhythm it should have been possible to find a form of his own and an original style. The poetic power and vision are there and he has done as much with it as could be done with a borrowed technique. If he had found his own, he might have ranked high as a poet.

Fiona Macleod

> Would you please comment on the passages from Fiona Macleod?
>
> 1) So through the grey dune-grasses
> Not the wind only cries,
> But a dim sea-wrought Shadow
> Breathes drownëd sighs.
>
> 2) . . . with trampling sounds
> As of herds confusedly crowding gorges? — . . .
>
> The gloom that is the hush'd air of the Grave, . . .
>
> 3) As the bird of Brigid, made of foam and the pale moonwhite wine
> Of dreams, flits under the sombre windless plumes of the pine.
>
> 4) . . . the wheeling cry
> Where in the dusk the lapwing slips and falls
> From ledge to ledge of darkness.

1) There is a very distinct charm about it. I am not sure of the entire success.

2) I could not pronounce on this without seeing the poem as a whole or at least more of it. It depends on how it comes into the general scheme of the rhythm.

3) Very fine and original and authentic in rhythm, it is absolutely the native rhythm of what she expresses.

4) This I think magnificent.

Twentieth-Century Poetry

Georgian Poetry

The stanzas are not quite successful. [*Certain lines*] have too much a stamp of what I think was called Georgian poetry — though I suppose it would more properly be called late-Victorian-Edwardian-early-Georgian. The defect of that poetry is that it has a fullness of language which fails to go home — things that ought to be very fine, but miss being so; so much of the poetry of Rupert Brooke as I have seen, for instance, always gives me that impression. In our own language I might say that it is an inspiration which tries to come from the higher mind but only succeeds in inflating the voice of the poetic intelligence.

1 November 1936

Early Twentieth-Century English Poetry

> About modern English poetry of the early part of this century Livingston Lowes, writing in 1918, remarks in his *Convention and Revolt in Poetry*: "That which does allure it in the East is an amazing tininess and finesse — the delicacy, that is to say, and the deftness, and the crystalline quality of the verse of China and Japan. . . .
>
> The strange, the remote, in its larger, more broadly human aspects . . . — all this has been gradually losing its hold upon poetry. Instead, when we fly from the obsession of the familiar, it is growingly apt to be to the more recondite, or precious, or quintessential, or even perverse embodiments of the strange or far — to 'the special, exquisite perfume' of Oriental art, . . . to the exceptional and the esoteric, in a word, rather than to the perennial and universal."

The remark of Livingston Lowes is no doubt correct. Even now and even where it is the external, everyday, obvious that is being taken as theme, we see often enough that what the mind is trying to find is some recondite, precious or quintessential aspect of the everyday and obvious — something in it exceptional or esoteric. But while in the East, the way to do it is known, the West does not seem yet to have found it. Instead of going inside, getting intimate with what is behind, and writing of the outside also from that inside experience, they are still trying to stare through the surface into the inner depths with some X-ray of mental imagination or "intuition" and the result is not the quintessence itself, but a shadow-picture of the quintessence. That is perhaps why there is so much feeling of effort, artifice, "even perverse embodiment" in much of this poetry — and no very definitive success as yet. But, I suppose, the way itself, the endeavour to leave the obvious surfaces and get deeper is the only road left for poetry, otherwise it can but repeat itself in the old modes with slight alterations till exhaustion brings decadence. On the road that is being now followed there is also evident danger of decadence, through an excess of mere technique and artifice or through a straining towards the merely out-of-the-way or the perverse. But there seems to be no other door of progress than to make the endeavour.

10 October 1932

Housman, Watson, Hardy, Bridges

> I hear from Nolini that you want two books (reviewed in the *New Statesman*) representing the achievement of the seventeenth-century "Metaphysicals", in order to add something about them to your *Future Poetry*. . . . There is another gap also, perhaps as serious: there is nothing about Coventry Patmore, Francis Thompson and Alice Meynell. And one other name — not belonging to either group but verging on the mystical domain — is worth inclusion: Christina Rossetti. Perhaps something on Gerard Manly Hopkins wouldn't be uninteresting, too. Among non-mystical poets there are some omissions also: Chapman, for instance — and in the recent group, William Watson, Thomas Hardy, A.E. Housman and Robert Bridges.

I did not deal with all these poets because it was not in the scope of my idea to review the whole literature, but to follow only the main lines. But the main difficulty was that at the time I had no books and could only write from memory. I have read nothing of Housman — what I had read of Watson or Hardy did not attract me and these are anyhow not central figures nor near the centre. Bridges was also a side figure at the time I wrote, it is only after his Laureateship that he came much forward. I had read only his *Eros and Psyche* and a few other things, and he did not give me the impression of being on one of the main lines. But I feel now that before the book can be published it has to be brought more up to date and the place of the poets who attempted spiritual poetry more fully indicated. 23 January 1934

Chesterton

I have not read Chesterton's poetry as a whole, but what I have seen of it does not attract me. Scott no longer ranks as a poet; Chesterton's verse struck me as a modernisation of Scott. I have told you I do not share contemporary enthusiasms. As for the "best war-scenes since Homer", that is exactly the phrase that was used for a long time about Scott. 1932

*

> I am sending you the first pages of an essay on Chesterton. I hope you will wait till you have finished the whole before declaring that the case is not proven.

You have made good to a certain extent — but are these strikingnesses all that there is in Chesterton? Something more is needed to make a poet of rank.

I do not think the comparison with Coleridge can hold if it is intended to indicate anything like equality. Coleridge's poetry tells by its union of delicate and magical beauty with exquisite simplicity and straightness. Chesterton never loses the rhetorician. Even in these passages there is something of the rhetorician's brazen clang, an excited violence, a forced note however striking. It rises into sheer poetry, so far as I can see, only in three of the passages quoted, the Wessex dog simile,[1] that of the illumined manuscripts[2] and finally the description of the Dark Ages and the fall of Rome.[3]The last in spite of haunting ghosts of Kipling and Macaulay pursuing it is fine in vision and expression and substance. Chesterton however exceeds his ghosts — he has something of the racer in him and not merely of the prancing cart-horses they were.

*

If Chesterton is noble, grand style, epic (Chapman also) — it becomes difficult to deny these epithets to many others also. Even Kipling and Macaulay can put in a claim. What then is the difference between them and Homer, Milton etc.? Only that Homer is polysyllabic (he is not really) and Chesterton monosyllabic?

31 January 1935

Yeats and the Occult

The perfection here of Yeats' poetic expression of things occult is due to this that at no point has the mere intellectual or thinking mind interfered — it is a piece of pure vision, a direct sense, almost sensation of the occult, a light not of earth flowing through without anything to stop it or to change it into a product of the terrestrial mind. When one writes from pure occult vision there is this perfection and direct sense though it may be of different kinds, for the occult world of one is not that of another. But when there is the intervention of the intellectual mind in a poem this intervention may produce good lines of another power, but they will not coincide in tone with what is before them or after — there is an alternation of the subtler occult and the heavier intellectual notes and the purity of vision becomes blurred by the intrusion of the earth-mind into a seeing which is beyond our earth-nature.

---

[1] *And Wessex lay in a patch of peace,*
Like a dog in a patch of sun —

[2] *It was wrought in the monk's slow manner,*
From silver and sanguine shell,
Where the scenes are little and terrible
Keyholes of heaven and hell.

[3] *When Caesar's sun fell out of the sky*
And whoso hearkened right
Could only hear the plunging
Of the nations in the night.

But these observations are valid only if the object is as in Yeats' lines to bring out a veridical and flawless transcript of the vision and atmosphere of faeryland. If the object is rather to create symbol-links between the seen and the unseen and convey the significance of the mediating figures, there is no obligation to avoid the aid of the intellectualising note. Only, a harmony and fusion has to be effected between the two elements, the light and beauty of the beyond and the less remote power and interpretative force of the intellectual thought-links. Yeats does that, too, very often, but he does it by bathing his thought also in the faery light; in the lines quoted [*from* The Stolen Child *and* The Man Who Dreamed of Faeryland], however, he does not do that, but leaves the images of the other world shimmering in their own native hue of mystery. There is not the same beauty and intense atmosphere when a poem is made up of alternating notes. The finest lines [*of these poems*] are those in which the other-light breaks out most fully — but there are others also which are very fine too in their quality and execution.

November 1934

Yeats and A. E.

I do not think I have been unduly enthusiastic over Yeats, but one must recognise his great artistry in language and verse in which he is far superior to A.E. — just as A.E. as a man and a seer was far superior to Yeats. Yeats never got beyond a beautiful mid-world of the vital *antarikṣa*, he has not penetrated beyond to spiritual-mental heights as A.E. did. But all the same, when one speaks of poetry, it is the poetical element to which one must give the most importance. What Yeats expressed, he expressed with great poetical beauty, perfection and power and he has, besides, a creative imagination. A. E. had an unequalled profundity of vision and power and range in the spiritual and psychic field. A. E.'s thought and way of seeing and saying things is much more sympathetic to me than Yeats' who only touches a brilliant floating skirt-edge of the truth of things — but I cannot allow that to influence me when I have to judge of the poetic side of their respective achievements.

*

The depths of A. E. are greater than those of Yeats, assuredly. His suggestiveness must therefore be profounder. In this poem [*Sibyl*] which you have translated very beautifully, his power of expression, always penetrating, simple and direct, is at its best and his best can be miraculously perfect.

A. E.

The substance of A. E.'s poetry is always very good — he is one of the two or three whose poetry comes nearest to spiritual knowledge and experience. He has too a very fine and subtle perception of things — a little more vital élan (of which he seems to have had abundance in his *life* but not so much in his poetry) and he would have been not only a fine but a very great poet.

11 February 1932

Abercrombie

I have the Abercrombie extracts. I am sorry that I cannot participate in the general admiration for these great poets; I suppose it must be my fault, though at the request of an earlier [*disciple named*] Chandrasekhar I read some of Abercrombie's dramas and tried to give him the benefit of the doubt. I have had no time as yet to write anything about his blank verse. I shall make a last attempt at admiration when I am free.

Lawrence

To continue about Lawrence's poetry from where I stopped.[4]

The idea is to get rid of all over-expression, of language for the sake of language, of form for the sake of form, even of indulgence of poetic emotion for the sake of the emotion, because all that veils the thing in itself, dresses it up, prevents it from coming out in the seizing nudity of its truth, the power of its intrinsic appeal. There is a sort of mysticism here that wants to express the inexpressible, the concealed, the invisible — reduce expression to its barest bareness and you get nearer the inexpressible, suppress as much of the form as may be and you get nearer that behind which is invisible. It is the same impulse that pervaded recent endeavours in Art. Form hides, not expresses the reality; let us suppress the concealing form and express the reality by its appropriate geometrical figures — and you have cubism. Or since that is too much, suppress exactitude of form and replace it by more significant forms that indicate rather than conceal the truth — so you have "abstract" paintings. Or, what is within reveals itself in dreams, not in waking phenomena, let us have in poetry or painting the figures, visions, sequences, designs of dreams — and you have surrealist art and poetry. The idea of Lawrence is akin; let us get rid of rhyme, metre, artifices which please us for their own sake and draw us away from the thing in itself, the real behind the form. So suppressing these things let us have something bare, rocky, primally expressive. There is nothing to find fault with in the theory provided it does lead to a new creation which expresses the inner truth in things better and more vividly and directly than with rhyme and metre the old poetry, now condemned as artificial and rhetorical, succeeded in expressing it. But the results do not come up to expectation. Take the four lines of Lawrence[5] — in what do they differ from the old poetry except in having a less sure rhythmical movement, a less seizing perfection of language? It is a fine image and Keats or Thompson would have made out of it something unforgettable. But after reading these lines one has a difficulty in recalling any clear outline of image, any seizing expression, any rhythmic cadence that goes on reverberating within and preserves the vision forever. What the modernist metreless verse does is to catch up the movements of prose and try to fit them into varying lengths and variously arranged lengths of verse. Sometimes something which has its own beauty or power is done — though nothing better or even equal to the best that was done before, but for the most there is either an easy or a strained ineffectiveness. No footsteps hitting the earth? Footsteps on earth can be a walk, can be prose; the beats of poetry can on the contrary be a beat of wings. As for the bird image, well, there is more lapsing than flying in this movement. But where is the bareness, the rocky directness — where is the something more real than any play of outer form can give? The attempt at colour, image, expression is just the same as in the old poetry — whatever is new and deep comes from Lawrence's peculiar vision, but could have been more powerfully expressed in a closer-knit language and metre.

---

[4] *Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter a day after one published on pages 561 under the heading "Lawrence's Letters" — Ed.*

[5] *Just a few of the roses gathered by the Isar*
Are fallen, and their bloodred petals on the cloth
Float like boats on a river, waiting
For a fairy wind to wake them from their sloth.

Of course, it does not follow that new and freer forms are not to be attempted or that they cannot succeed at all. But if they succeed it will be by bringing the fundamental quality, power, movement of the old poetry — which is the eternal quality of all poetry — into new metrical or rhythmic discoveries and new secrets of poetic expression. It can't be done by reducing these to skeletonic bareness or suppressing them by subdual and dilution in a vain attempt to unite the free looseness of prose with the gathered and intent paces of poetry. 29 June 1936

*

I have been glancing at odd times at *Pansies*. Flashes of genius, much defiant triviality of revolt-stuff, queer strainings after things not grasped, a gospel of "conscientious sensuality" rushing in at favourable opportunities — all in a formless deliberate disorder, that is the impression up till now — I shall wait to see if there is something else. 9 February 1933

*

I am sending you *Pansies*. Before sending I opened it at random and found this —

> I can't stand Willy Wet-leg,
> can't stand him at any price.
> He's resigned, and when you hit him
> he lets you hit him twice.

Well, well, this the bare, rockily, direct poetry? God help us!

P.S. I think Dara could do the companion of that in his lighter moments! This is the sort of things to which theories lead even a man of genius. 2 July 1936

*

What I have written [*about modern poetry*] is too slight and passing and general a comment, such as one can hazard in a private letter; but for a criticism that has to see the light of day something more ample and sufficient would be necessary. Lawrence's poetry, whatever one may think of his theory or technique, has too much importance and significance to be lightly handled and the "modernism" of contemporary poetry is a *fait accompli*. One can refuse to recognise as legitimate the *fait accompli*, whether in Abyssinia or in the realms of literature, but it is too solid to be met with a mere condemnation in principle.

*

> Please take a look at this — form *perfect* as against its *imperfect* model. The formal perfection justifies my faith in rhyme, rhythm, etc. as against Lawrence's free verse.

There can be no doubt of that. Lawrencists however would say that the question is not between imperfect and perfect metrical work, but between metrical rhythm in poetry and poetry stripped bare of metre and presented with a bare elemental energy of language, vision and movement. Theory for theory it can stand, but in the practice and result the effects seem to me to be against Lawrence's theory. 1936

*

What a pity that Lawrence did not give his poetry a rhythmic form, that would have given it its full sound and sense-value and made it sure of immortality.

The Poetry of the 1930s and 1940s

I admit I have not read as much of "modern" (contemporary) poetry as I should have — but the little I have is mostly of the same fundamental quality. It is very carefully written and versified, often *recherché* in thought and expression; it lacks only two things, the inspired phrase and inevitable word and the rhythm that keeps a poem for ever alive. . . . Speech carefully studied and made as perfect as it can be without reaching to inspiration, verse as good as verse can be without rising to inspired rhythm — there seem to be an extraordinary number of poets writing like that in England just now. . . . It is not the irregular verses and rhymes that matter, one can make perfection out of irregularity — it is that they write their poetry from the cultured striving mind, not from the elemental soul-power within. Not a principle to accept or a method to imitate! June 1931

*

> The things you will see him [*a critic in the* New Statesman and Nation] assuming . . . may be more widely prevalent, to the exclusion of more catholic tastes and liberal views, than I have hitherto believed. In which case there perhaps could be no sort of public in England for poetry which is mystical or spiritual.

I imagine it is only one dominant tendency of the day that is represented by these autocrats; the other is precisely the "mystic" tendency — and I don't think it will be so easily snuffed out as that. 23 June 1932

*

It is probably modern (contemporary) English poetry of which your friend is thinking. Here I am no expert; but I understand that the turn there is to suppress emotion, rhetoric, colouring, sentiment and arrive at something very direct, vivid, expressive, recording either the thing exactly as it is or some intimate essential truth of the thing without wrapping it up in ideas and sentiments, superfluous images and epithets. It does not look as if all contemporary English poetry were like that, it is only one strong trend; but such as it is, it has not as yet produced anything very decisive, great or successful. Much of it seems to be mere flat objectivity or, what is worse, an exaggerated emphatic objectivity; emotion seems often to be replaced by an intensified vital-physical sensation of the object. You will perhaps understand what I mean if you read the poem quoted on pages 316–17 of the *Parichay* (also made much of in a book on English modernistic poetry sent to me by Arjava) — "red pieces of day — hills made of blue and green paper — Satanic and blasé — black goat lookingly wanders", images expressing vividly an impression made on the nerves through the sight by the described objects. Admittedly it is — at least when pushed to such a degree, — a new way of looking at things in poetry, but not essentially superior to the impressions created on the heart or the mental imagination by the object. All the same there is behind, but still not successfully achieved, something real, an attempt to get away from ornate mental constructions about things to the expression of the intimate truth of the things themselves as directly seen by a deeper sight within us. Only it seems to me a mistake to theorise that only by this kind of technique and in this particular way the thing can be done. I have to form my idea more fully when I have finished Arjava's book, but this is what impresses me at present. 1 October 1932

*

The latest craze in England is either for intellectual quintessence or sensations (not emotions) of life, while any emotional and ideal element in poetry is considered as a deadly sin. But beautiful poetry remains beautiful poetry even if it is not in the current style. And after all Yeats and A.E. are still there in spite of this new fashion of the last one or two decades. 8 October 1934

*

> Please give me a few names of poets — especially modern poets, whom I should study.

I have very little familiarity with the names of modern poets subsequent to A.E. and Yeats and De la Mare, all of whom you know. There are about a hundred of them moderns, Spender + $x + y + z + p^2$ etc. Before that there were Hopkins and Flecker and others and before that Meredith and Hardy and Francis Thompson. You can tackle any of them you can lay your hands on in the library. Watson and Brooke and other Edwardians and Georgians would not be good for you. 16 October 1938

*

Originality is all right, but if you become so original that nobody can follow you and all fall behind gasping for breath, that is an excess of virtue. The modernist poets do that with the result that nobody has the least idea what they mean, not even themselves, and the farther result that, as it has been said "there are more people now who write poetry than read it". 8 June 1938

*

Somebody once said of modernist poetry that it could be understood only by the writer himself and appreciated by a few friends who pretended to understand it. That is because the ideas, images, symbols do not follow the line of the intellect, its logic or its intuitive connections, but are pushed out on the mind from some obscure subliminal depth or mist-hung shallow; they have connections of their own which are not those of the surface intelligence. One has to read them not with the intellect but with the solar plexus, try not to understand but feel the meaning. The surrealist poetry is the extreme in this kind — you remember our surrealist Baron's question: "Why do you want poetry to have a meaning?" Of course, you can put an intellectual explanation on the thing, but then you destroy its poetical appeal. Very great poetry can be written in that way from the subliminal depths, e.g. Mallarmé, but it needs a supreme power of expression, like Blake's or Mallarmé's, to make it truly powerful, convincing, and there must be sincerity of experience and significant rhythm.

2 August 1943

Surrealism

> What the deuce is this Surrealism? I gather Baudelaire was its father, and Mallarmé his son.

Surrealism is a new phrase invented only the other day and I am not really sure what it conveys. According to some it is a dream poetry making a deeper truth, a deeper reality than the surface reality. I don't know if this is the whole theory or only one side or phase of the practice. Baudelaire as a surrealist is a novel idea, nobody ever called him that before. Mallarmé, Verlaine and others used to be classed as impressionist poets: sometimes as symbolists. But now the surrealists seem to claim descent from these poets. 12 February 1937

*

I really can't tell you what surrealism is, because it is something — at least the word is — quite new and I have not read either the reliable theorists of the school nor much of their poetry. What I picked up on the way was through reviews and quotations, the upshot being that it is a poetry based on the dream consciousness, but I don't know if this is correct or merely an English critic's idea of it. The inclusion of Baudelaire and Valéry seems to indicate something wider than that. But the word is of quite recent origin and nobody spoke formerly of Baudelaire as a surrealist or even of Mallarmé. Mallarmé was supposed to be the founder of a new trend of poetry — impressionist and symbolist, followed in varying degrees and not by any means in the same way by Verlaine, Rimbaud, — both of them poets of great fame. Verlaine is certainly a great poet and people now say Rimbaud also, but I have never come across his poetry except in extracts — and developing in Valéry and other noted writers of today. It seems that all these are now claimed as part of or the origin of the surrealist movement. But I cannot say what are the exact boundaries or who comes in where. I suppose if Baron communicates to you books on the subject or more precise information, we shall know more clearly now. In any case surrealism is part of an increasing attempt of the European mind to escape from the surface consciousness (in poetry as well as in painting and in thought) and grope after a deeper truth of things which is not on the surface. The Dream Consciousness as it is called — meaning not merely what we see in dreams, but the inner consciousness in which we get into contact with deeper worlds which underlie, influence and to some extent explain much in our lives, what the psychologists call the subliminal or the subconscient (the latter a very ambiguous phrase) offers the first road of escape and the surrealists seem to be trying to force it. My impression is that there is much fumbling and that more often it is certain obscure and not always very safe layers that are tapped. That accounts for the note of diabolism that comes in in Baudelaire, in Rimbaud also, I believe, and in certain ugly elements in English surrealist poetry and painting. But this is only an impression.

Nirod's poetry (what he writes now) is from the Dream Consciousness, no doubt about that. It has suddenly opened in him and he finds now a great joy of creation and abundance of inspiration which were and are quite absent when he tries to write laboriously in the mental way. This seems to indicate either that the poet in him has his real power there or that he has opened to the same Force that worked in poets like Mallarmé. My labelling him as surrealist is partly — though not altogether — a joke. How far it applies depends on what the real aim and theory of the surrealist school may be. Obscurity and unintelligibility are not the essence of any poetry and — except for unconscious or semi-conscious humorists like the Dadaists — cannot be its aim or principle. True dream-poetry (let us call it so for the nonce) has and must always have a meaning and a coherence. But it may very well be obscure or seem meaningless to those who take their stand on the surface or "waking" mind and accept only its links and its logic. Dream poetry is usually full of images, visions, symbols, phrases that seek to strike at things too deep for the ordinary means of expression. Nirod does not deliberately make his poems obscure, he writes what comes through from the source he has tapped and does not interfere with its flow by his own mental volition. In many modernist poets there may be labour and a deliberate posturing, but it is not so in his case. I interpret his poems because he wants me to do it, but I have always told him that an intellectual rendering narrows the meaning — it has to be seen and felt, not thought out. Thinking it out may give a satisfaction and an appearance of mental logicality, but the deeper sense and sequence can only be apprehended by an inner sense. I myself do not try to find out the meaning of his poems, I try to feel what they mean in vision and experience and then render into mental terms. This is a special kind of poetry and has to be dealt with according to its kind and nature. There is a sequence, a logic, a design in them, but not one that can satisfy the more rigid law of the logical intelligence.

About Housman's theory; it is not merely the appeal to emotion that he posits as the test of pure poetry — he deliberately says that pure poetry does not bother about intellectual meaning at all — it is to the intellect nonsense. He says that the interpretations of Blake's famous poem rather spoil them — they appeal better without being dissected in that way. His theory is questionable but that is what it comes to; he is wrong in using the word "nonsense" and perhaps in speaking of pure and impure poetry. All the same, to Blake and to writers of the Dream Consciousness, his rejection of the intellectual standard is quite applicable. 12 February 1937

*

About your points:

(1) If the surrealist dream-experiences are flat, pointless or ugly, it must be because they penetrate only as far as the "subconscious" physical and "subconscious" vital dream layers which are the strata nearest to the surface. Dream-consciousness is a vast world in which there are a multitude of provinces

and kingdoms, but ordinary dreamers for the most part penetrate consciously only to these first layers which belong to what may properly be called the subconscious belt. When they pass into deeper sleep regions, their recording surface dream-mind becomes unconscious and no longer gives any transcript of what is seen and experienced there; or else in coming back these experiences of the deeper strata fade away and are quite forgotten before one reaches the waking state. But when there is a stronger dream-capacity, or the dream-state becomes more conscious, then one is aware of these deeper experiences and can bring back a transcript which is sometimes a clear record, sometimes a hieroglyph, but in either case possessed of a considerable interest and significance.

(2) It is only the subconscious belt that is chaotic in its dream-sequences — for its transcriptions are fantastic and often mixed, combining a jumble of different elements; some play with impressions from the past, some translate outward touches pressing on the sleep-mind; most are fragments from successive dream-experiences that are not really part of one connected experience — as if a gramophone record were to be made up of snatches of different songs all jumbled together. The vital dreams, even in the subconscious range, are often coherent in themselves and only seem incoherent to the waking intelligence because the logic and law of their sequences is different from the logic and law which the physical reason imposes on the incoherences of physical life. But if one gets the guiding clue and if one has some dream-experience and dream-insight, then it is possible to seize the links of the sequences and make out the significance, often very profound or very striking, both of the detail and of the whole. Deeper in, we come to perfectly coherent dreams recording the experience of the inner vital and inner mental planes; there are also true psychic dreams — the latter usually are of a great beauty. Some of these mental or vital plane dream-experiences, however, are symbolic, very many in fact, and can only be understood if one is familiar with or gets the clue to the symbols.

(3) It depends on the nature of the dreams. If they are of the

right kind, they need no aid of imagination to be converted into poetry. If they are significant, imagination in the sense of a free use of mental invention might injure their truth and meaning — unless of course the imagination is of the nature of an inspired vision coming from the same plane and filling out or reconstructing the recorded experience so as to bring out the Truth held in it more fully than the dream transcript could do, — for a dream record is usually compressed and often hastily selective.

(4) The word psyche is used by most people to mean anything belonging to the inner mind, vital or physical, — though the true psyche is different from these things. Poetry does come from these sources or even from the superconscient sometimes; but it does not come usually through the form of dreams — it comes either through word-vision or through conscious vision and imagery whether in a fully waking or an inward-drawn state: the latter may go so far as to be a state of *samādhi* — *svapna samādhi*. In all these cases it is vision rather than dream that is the imaging power. Dreams also can be made a material for poetry; but everyone who dreams or has visions or has a flow of images cannot by that fact be a poet. To say that a predisposition and discipline are needed to bring them to light in the form of written words is merely a way of saying that it is not enough to be a dreamer, one must have the poetic faculty and some training — unless the surrealists mean by this statement something else than what the words naturally signify. What is possible, however, is that by going into the inner (what is usually called the subliminal) consciousness — this is not really subconscious but a veiled or occult consciousness — or getting somehow into contact with it, one not originally a poet can awake to poetic inspiration and power. No poetry can be written without access to some source of Inspiration. Mere recording of dreams or images or even visions could never be sufficient, unless it is a poetic inspiration that records them with the right use of words and rhythm bringing out their poetic substance. On the other hand, I am bound to admit that among the records of dream-experiences even from people unpractised in writing I have met with a good many that read like a brilliant and colourful poetry

which does hit — satisfying Housman's test — the solar plexus. So much I can concede to the surrealist theory; but if they say on that basis that all can with a little training turn themselves into poets — well, one needs a little more proof before one can accept so wide a statement. 13 February 1937

*

> Now I find that in spite of your long letters, I haven't yet grasped what this blessed surrealism is.

I wrote very clearly in my letter to Dilip [*published on pages 424–26*] that I did not know myself what Surrealism is since I have not studied either surrealistic theory or surrealistic literature. I gathered from what I have read — reviews, citations — that it was dream-consciousness of a lower type (therefore incoherent and often ugly). I also explained at great length in another letter that there was a Dream Consciousness of a higher type. Are these distinctions really so difficult to understand?
19 February 1937

Comments on Examples of Twentieth-Century Poetry

W. B. Yeats

DECTORA:

No. Take this sword
And cut the rope, for I go on with Forgael. . . .
The sword is in the rope —
The rope's in two — it falls into the sea,
It whirls into the foam. O ancient worm,
Dragon that loved the world and held us to it,
You are broken, you are broken. The world drifts away,
And I am left alone with my beloved,
Who cannot put me from his sight for ever.
We are alone for ever, and I laugh,
Forgael, because you cannot put me from you.
The mist has covered the heavens, and you and I
Shall be alone for ever. We two — this crown —
I half remember. It has been in my dreams.
Bend lower, O king, that I may crown you with it.
O flower of the branch, O bird among the leaves,
O silver fish that my two hands have taken
Out of the running stream, O morning star,
Trembling in the blue heavens like a white fawn
Upon the misty border of the wood,
Bend lower, that I may cover you with my hair,
For we will gaze upon this world no longer.

FORGAEL [*gathering Dectora's hair about him*]:

Beloved, having dragged the net about us,
And knitted mesh to mesh, we grow immortal;

> And that old harp awakens of itself
> To cry aloud to the grey birds, and dreams,
> That have had dreams for father, live in us.

> Forgael might be the Yogin in the act of the irrevocable and immediately effectual renunciation of a life in the world and entering into his kingdom, having found and been accepted by the individual divine within him.

It is certainly a very beautiful passage and has obviously a mystic significance; but I don't know whether we can put into it such precise meaning as you suggest. Yeats' contact, unlike A.E.'s, is not so much with the sheer spiritual Truth as with the hidden intermediate regions, from the faery worlds to certain worlds of larger mind and life. What he has seen there, he is able to clothe rather than embody in strangely beautiful and suggestive forms, dreams and symbols. I have read some of his poems which touch these behind-worlds with as much actuality as an ordinary poet would achieve in dealing with physical life — this is not surprising in a Celtic poet, for the race has the key to the occult worlds or some of them at least — but this strange force of suggestive mystic life is not accompanied by a mental precision which would enable us to say, it is this or that his figures symbolise. If we could say it, it might take away something of that glowing air in which his symbols stand out with such a strange unphysical reality. The perception, feeling, sight of Yeats in this kind of poetry are remarkable, but his mental conception often veils itself in a shimmering light — it has then shining vistas but no strong contours. 1 September 1932

Edward Shanks

> I am sending you a sonnet by Edward Shanks, considered to be "one of our best younger poets":
>
> O dearest, if the touch of common things
> Can taint our love or wither, let it die.
> The freest-hearted lark that soars and sings
> Soon after dawn amid a dew-brushed sky

Takes song from love and knows well where love lies,
        Hid in the grass, the dear domestic nest,
The secret, splendid, common paradise.
        The strangest joys are not the loveliest;

Passion far-sought is dead when it is found,
        But love that's born of intimate common things
Cries with a voice of splendour, with a sound
        That over stranger feeling shakes and rings.

The best of love, the highest ecstasy
Lies in the intimate touch of you and me.

I do not know whether you intended me to comment on the sonnet of Shanks — Phoebus, what a name!! I am not in love with it, though it is smoothly and musically rhythmed. The sentiment is rather namby-pamby, some of the lines weak, others too emphatic, e.g. the twelfth. It just misses being a really good poem, or is so, like the curate's egg, in parts. E.g. the two opening lines of the third verse are excellent, but they are immediately spoiled by two lines that shout and rattle. So too the last couplet promises well in its first line, but the last disappoints, it is too obvious a turn and there is no fusion of the idea with the emotion that ought to be there — and isn't. Still, the writer is evidently a poet and the sonnet very imperfect but by no means negligible. 12 June 1931

Richard Hughes

. . . The air stands still: the very roots
        Of all the trees lie still and cold:
— What is it gallops in the dark?
        Gallops around that chapel old?

"We are those limber horses
        That round your graveyard go:
Can you hear our feet crackle,
        See our blue eyes glow?

"We are those limber horses;

Our bending necks are steel,
Our mighty flanks swing all like bells,
Chiming together as we wheel . . .

By the way, I read the poem in that paper, *The Limber Horses*. It is evidently inspired from the vital world — from a certain part of it which seems to be breaking out in much of today's literature and art. All that comes from this source is full of a strange kind of force, but out of focus, misshaped in thought or vision or feeling, sometimes in the form too, ominous and perverse. For that matter, the adverse vital world is very much with us now, — the War was the sign of its descent on the earth and the After-war bears its impress. But from another point of view that is not a cause for alarm or discouragement — for it has always been predicted from occult sources that such a descent would be the precursor of the Divine Manifestation. 1931

W. H. Auden

> I so often fail to detect the poetry in modern "poems" that the enclosed piece (by a quite young man), was a welcome exception — also it hints at an unusual warmth of interest in England. But neither grammar nor sense is plain to me in the opening line and elsewhere.
>
> O Love, the interest itself in thoughtless Heaven
> Make simpler daily the beating of man's heart; within
> There in the ring where name and image meet
>
> Inspire them with such a longing as will make his thought
> Alive like patterns a murmuration of starlings
> Rising in joy over wolds unwittingly weave;
>
> Here too on our little reef display your power
> This fortress perched on the edge of the Atlantic scarp
> The mole between all Europe and the exile-crowded sea;
>
> And make us as Newton was who in his garden watching
> The apple falling towards England became aware
> Between himself and her of an eternal tie.

. . . and Glamorgan hid a life
Grim as a tidal rock-pool's in its glove-shaped valleys,
Is already retreating into her maternal shadow
Leaving the furnaces gasping in the impossible air . . .

The cluster of mounds like a midget golf-course, graves
Of some who created these intelligible dangerous marvels;
Affectionate people, but crude their sense of glory

Far-sighted as falcons, they looked down another future,
For the seed in their loins were hostile, though afraid of
their pride,
And tall with a shadow now, inertly wait . . .

Consider the years of the measured world begun
The barren spiritual marriage of stone and water.
Yet, O, at this very moment of our hopeless sigh

When inland they are thinking their thoughts but are
watching these islands . . .

Some dream, say yes, long coiled in the ammonite's slumber
Is uncurling, prepared to lay on our talk and kindness
Its military silence, its surgeon's idea of pain.

And called out of tideless peace by a living sun
As when Merlin, tamer of horses, and his lords to whom
Stonehenge was still a thought, the Pillars passed

And into the undared ocean swung north their prow,
Drives through the night and star-concealing dawn
For the virgin roadsteads of our hearts an unwavering keel.

It took me all these three days to overcome the obscurity of the phrasing and the uncouthness of some of the lines; even so I do not know whether I can give a very decided answer to your question. The poetical quality of much of the piece is undoubted, though very uneven; for some of the lines, as those about Newton, seem to me to be quite prosaic whether in expression or rhythm; at other places even where the expression is strong and poetic, the movement falls short of an equal excellence. All the same, there is a rhythm and there is a power of thought and poetic speech, rising to a climax in the nine or ten lines of the close. What seems most to contribute is the skilful and happy vowellation and consonantal assonances, — the rhythmic form of the lines is not always so happy, — and on the side of expression the concise power of much of the phrasing at once clear-cut in line and full in significance — in spirit though not in manner akin to the Dantesque turn of phrase. I mean such lines and expressions as

(1) a murmuration of starlings
(2) This fortress perched on the edge of the Atlantic scarp
The mole between all Europe and the exile-crowded sea;
(3) a life
Grim as a tidal rock-pool's in its glove-shaped valleys,
(4) gasping in the impossible air

(this is quite Dante; (3) also)

(5) these intelligible dangerous marvels;
(6) Far-sighted as falcons, they looked down another future,

(and the two lines that follow)

(7) the years of the measured world
(8) The barren spiritual marriage of stone and water.
(9) Its military silence, its surgeon's idea of pain.
(10) And called out of tideless peace by a living sun
(11) And into the undared ocean swung north their prow
Drives through the night and star-concealing dawn

(These two lines again very Dantesque)

It is a pity he did not take pains to raise the whole to the same or a similar equal level — and more still that he did not think it worth while to make the underlying meaning of the whole as clear and powerfully precise as are in themselves these phrases.

15 September 1932

Stephen Spender

> Here is a poem by Stephen Spender, one of the most promising of the young modernist poets, in *The New Statesman and Nation* of November 4, 1933:
>
> *Perhaps*
>
> the explosion of a bomb
> the submarine — a burst bubble filled with water —
> the chancellor clutching his shot arm (and that was Perhaps
> a put-up job for their own photographers)
> the parliament their own side set afire
> & then our party forbidden
> & the mine flooded, an accident I hope . . .
>
> In his skidding car he wonders
> when watching landscape attack him
> "is it rushing? (I cannot grasp it) or is it
> at rest with its own silence I cannot touch?"
>
> Was that final when they shot him? did that war
> lop our dead branches? are my new leaves splendid?
> is it leviathan, that revolution
> hugely nosing at edge of antarctic?
>
> only Perhaps. Can be that we grow smaller
> donnish and bony shut in our racing prison:
> headlines are walls that shake and close
> the dry dice rattled in their wooden box.
>
> Can be deception of things only changing. Out there
> perhaps growth of humanity above the plain
> hangs: not the timed explosion, oh but Time
> monstrous with stillness like the himalayan range.
>
> Aren't the emotion and the rhythm all in a rather subdued key — but that appears to be universal among up-to-date poets?

It seems to me they are so subdued as hardly to be there except at places. A certain subdued force of statement getting less subdued and more evidently powerful at the close — this there is, but it is the only power there.

How did the poem impress you?

I am afraid it made no impression on me — no poetical impression. I cannot persuade myself that this kind of writing has any chance of survival once the mode is over.

On consideration I should say that whatever merits there are in *Perhaps* lie in the last four stanzas. The first three seem to me distinguishable from a strong prose only by the compression of the language and the stiffness of the movement — too stiff for prose, in quite another way too stiff for the fineness and plasticity there should be in poetic rhythm — especially needed, it seems to me, in free verse. From the fourth line of the fourth stanza I begin to find what seems to me the real poetic touch. The fifth and seventh have the substance and diction of very fine poetry — what I miss is the rhythm that would carry it home to the inner consciousness and leave it with its place permanently there. There seems to be in this technique an unwillingness to get too far away from the characteristic manner of prose rhythm, an unwillingness either to soar or run, as if either would be an unbecoming and too ostentatious action — in three or four lines only the poet is just about to let himself go. Or perhaps there is the same tendency as in some modern painting and architecture, a demand for geometric severity and precision? But the result is the same. It may be that this kind of writing cuts into the intellect — it touches only the surface of the vital, the life-spirit which after all has its rights in poetry, and does not get through into the soul. That at least is the final impression it leaves on me. 1933

W. J. Turner

The Word made Flesh?

How often does a man need to see a woman?
Once!
Once is enough, but a second time will confirm if it be she,

She who will be a fountain of everlasting mystery,
Whose glance escaping hither and thither
Returns to him who troubles her. . . .

No light travelling through space-time immeasurable
Has leapt so great a distance as their eyes;
Naked together their spirits commingling
Stir the seed in their genitals —
Like a babe never to be born that leaps up crying,
A voice crying in the wilderness. . . .

The head of Satan is curled
Close, crisp, like the Gorgon;
They are the serpents of the spirit
Curled like the hair of the chaste body,
Emblem of the God who is not creative,
Who has not made the heavens and the earth,
Nor from an Adam of dust
Took that white bone, woman. . . .

This it is to be excluded from the bliss
Of the angels of God,
And of the men and women that He made in His image;
The joy of making images in the image of his maker is not his,

But his are the children of the spirit:
Sweeter and fairer are they than the children of the flesh,
But they are born solitary
And agony is their making-kiss.

Is there any justification for my impression that this was a ghost of the nineties (the meretricious "diabolism", cult of the bizarre etc.) that had gone to a Fancy Dress Ball in the clothes of 1934? There seemed to be a certain *slickness* in achieving the fashionable formula of today — and of course the inevitable sop to the anti-Victorian Cerberus, the introduction of something to offend the conventions of last century.

But I did not feel any inevitability behind it all. Some "modern" verse is perverse but powerful; these lines seemed just built up by an adroit mind that knows how to tickle the modern fancy.

I think your criticism is very much to the point. The writer is a very clever manipulator of words, but he is dressing up an idea so as to catch the surface mind — there is no sincerity and therefore no power or conviction or poetical suggestion. Such made-up stuff as

> The head of Satan is curled

and the rest of it has no real significance and is therefore rhetorical, not poetic. The rest is no better — there is no single line that carries conviction, not an image or a phrase or a movement of rhythm that is inevitable.

There is room for sex poetry if it is felt as truth and rendered either with beauty or power, but this crude braggadocio of the flesh is not telling nor attractive. The diabolism and cult of the bizarre in the nineties had a certain meaning, — it was at least a revolt against false conventions and an attempt to escape from the furbished obviousness of much that had gone before. But now it has itself become the obvious and conventional — not it exactly in its old form but the things it attempted to release and these are now trying to escape from their own obviousness by excess, the grotesque, the perverse. The writer brings in or brings back Satan (for whom there is no longer any need) to give, I suppose, a diabolical thrill to that excess — but, as poetry at least, it is not successful. Satan and sexual realism (e.g. the "spirit stirring the genitals") do not match together. 1934

Edwin Muir

Who curbed the lion long ago
And penned him in this towering field
And reared him wingless in the sky?
And quenched the dragon's burning eye,
Chaining him here to make a show,
The faithful guardian of the shield?

A fabulous wave far back in time
Flung these calm trophies to this shore

That looks out on a different sea.
These relics of a buried war,
Empty as shape and cold as rhyme,
Gaze now on fabulous wars to be.

So well the storm must have fulfilled
Its work of perfect overthrow
That this new world to them must seem
Irrecognizably the same,
And looking from the flag and shield
They see the selfsame road they know.

Here now heraldic watch them ride
This path far up the mountainside
And backward never cast a look;
Ignorant that the dragon died
Long since and that the mountain shook
When the great lion was crucified.

Very good indeed — admirable throughout. It is refreshing to read a poem with such a good form, build, depth of suggested meaning amidst so much that is so freakish and uncertain as to take away half the value of what is attempted. Here the writer has something to say and knows how to say it. 1934

Robert Frost, William Plomer, Roy Campbell

Something inspires the only cow of late
To make no more of a wall than an open gate,
And think no more of wall-builders than fools.
Her face is flecked with pomace and she drools
A cider syrup. Having tasted fruit
She scorns a pasture withering to the root.
She runs from tree to tree where lie and sweeten
The windfalls spiked with stubble and worm-eaten.
She leaves them bitten when she has to fly.
She bellows on a knoll against the sky.
Her udder shrivels and the milk goes dry.

— Robert Frost

Now the edge of the jungle rustles. In a hush
The crowd parts. Nothing happens. Then
The dancers totter adroitly out on stilts,
Weirdly advancing, twice as high as men.

Sure as fate, strange as the mantis, cruel
As vengeance in a dream, four bodies hung
In cloaks of rasping grasses, turning
Their tiny heads, the masks besmeared with dung;

Each mops and mows, uttering no sound,
Each stately, awkward, giant marionette,
Each printed shadow frightful on the ground
Moving in small distorted silhouette. . . .

— Williams Plomer

Through the mixed tunnels of whose angry brain
Creeps the slow scolopendra of the Train!

— Roy Campbell

Have you seen the "Golden Cowboy and Others" in the *New Statesman*? Gives a good idea of modernist poetry, I think. Frost is a rather elaborate frost. Plomer is a "terrible" contortionist, but Roy Campbell is really amusing — I like his "slow scolopendra" immensely. He has at least the courage of his images. Evidently poetry is following the same gallop into extravagance as painting. And yet there is an attempt behind it which looks like a seeking after the "Future Poetry" gone astray. 1937

Indian Poetry in English

Writing in a Learned Language

> I was surprised last night how *les mots justes* sprang ready to the pen's call. Alas I can't say the same thing for my English poetry, where I always fumble so.

One cannot expect to seize in poetry the finer and more elusive tones, which are so important, in a learned language, however well-learnt, as in one's native or natural tongue. Unless of course one succeeds in making it natural, if not native.

5 December 1935

*

> What do you think of Yeats' letter to Purohit Swami, in which he says: "Write in your mother tongues. Choose that smaller audience. You cannot have style and vigour in English. You did not learn it at your mother's knee. . . . It is not your fault that you are under a curse. It is the fault of wicked policy. Defeat this policy. Write and speak Marathi, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil. . . . "

All very well for those who can write in some language of India and don't know English intimately. But what of those who think and write naturally in English? Why didn't Yeats write in Gaelic?

17 September 1936

*

It is not true in all cases that one can't write first-class things in a learned language. Both in French and English people to whom the language was not native have done remarkable work, although that is rare. What about Jawaharlal's autobiography? Many English critics think it first-class in its own kind; of course he was educated at an English public school, but I suppose he was not born to the language. Some of Toru Dutt's poems, Sarojini's, Harin's have been highly placed by good English critics, and I don't think we need be more queasy than Englishmen themselves. Of course there were special circumstances, but in your case also there are special circumstances; I don't find that you handle the English language like a foreigner. If first-class excludes everything inferior to Shakespeare and Milton, that is another matter. I think, as time goes on, people will become more and more polyglot and these mental barriers will begin to disappear. 1 October 1943

Indo-English Poetry

> I suppose our oriental way of expression, which is as luxuriant as oriental nature itself, is unappealing to Westerners.

What you say may be correct, but on the other hand it is possible that the mind of the future will be more international than it is now. In that case the expression of various temperaments in English poetry will have a chance.

If our aim is not success and personal fame, but to arrive at the expression of spiritual truth and experience of all kinds in poetry, the English tongue is the most widespread and is capable of profound turns of mystic expression which make it admirably fitted for the purpose; if it could be used for the highest spiritual expression, that is worth trying. 10 December 1935

*

> As for Conrad, according to Thompson, he is a Westerner, and surely there is a greater difference in tradition, expression, feeling between an Easterner and an Englishman than between an Englishman and another European.

In other words, any Western tradition, expression, feeling — even Polish or Russian — can be legitimately expressed in English, however unEnglish it may be, but an Eastern spirit, tradition or temper cannot? He differs from Gosse who told Sarojini Naidu that she must write Indian poems in English

— poems with an Indian tradition, feeling, way of expression, not reproduce the English mind and turn, if she wanted to do something great and original as a poet in the English tongue.

> I think that however much we try, we shan't be able to enter the subtleties of a foreign tongue.

Who is this we? Many Indians write better English than many educated Englishmen.

> Is there any chance of our being able to express spirituality in English poetry?

I put forward four reasons why the experiment could be made. (1) The expression of spirituality in the English tongue is needed and no one can give the real stuff like Easterners and especially Indians. (2) We are entering an age when the stiff barriers of insular and national mentality are breaking down (Hitler notwithstanding), the nations are being drawn into a common universality with whatever differences, and in the new age there is no reason why the English should not admit the expression of other minds than the English in their tongue. (3) For ordinary minds it may be difficult to get over the barrier of a foreign tongue, but extraordinary minds (Conrad etc.) can do it. (4) In this case the experiment is to see whether what extraordinary minds can do, cannot be done by Yoga. *Sufficit* — or as Ramchandra eloquently puts it "'Nuff said!" 28 February 1936

*

The doctrine that no one who is not a born and bred Englishman, especially no Oriental, should try to write or can really write English poetry because the traditions, sentiments, expressions of the English language — or of any language — are so different from others and so peculiar to itself that a foreigner cannot acquire them, is no new discovery; it is a statement that has been often made. But it fails at one point — birth does not matter. A pure Italian by blood like Rossetti or his sister Christina, a Pole like Conrad, a Spaniard like Santayana (I am speaking of prose also, however,) can do as well in English as born English writers. It is said however that this applies only to Europeans, — for their native tradition, sentiments, expressions are not entirely alien to those of the English tongue and by education or adaptation they can acquire, but the Indian mind is of too alien a character, too far off and cut away by a gulf from the English to be able to write in that language. It may be said also that an Indian may succeed in writing correct English, but can never write great English prose, still less perfect or enduring poetry. I doubt whether this is true — I remember having read some extracts from letters by Sarojini Naidu in her youth that seemed to be very perfect and beautiful English prose. But let us keep to poetry which has no doubt a special language or a special spirit and turn in its language and it is true of it that no one who cannot acquire that spirit and turn can succeed in writing English poetry. But in the first place I do not see why an Indian bred in England or an Indian to whom English has become his natural tongue should be any more disqualified [*incomplete*][1] 28 February 1936

On Some Indian Writers of English

> I should very much value *your* assurance that, scant though my stock is, I need not feel inferior to the other Indian poets who have written in English — Manmohan Ghose and Harindranath and Sarojini.

I don't altogether appreciate your request for being declared by me "not inferior" to other "Indo-English" poets. What have you to do with what others have achieved? If you write poetry, it should be from the stand-point that you have something of your own which has not yet found full expression, a power within which you can place at the service of the Divine and which can help you to grow — you have to get rid of all in it that is merely mental or merely vital, to develop what is true and fine in it and leave the rest until you can write from a higher level of consciousness things that come from the deepest self and the highest spiritual levels. Your question is that of a *littérateur* and not in the right spirit. Besides, even from a mental point of view, such comparisons are quite idle. Sarojini Naidu has at best a strange power of brilliant colour and exquisite melody which you are not likely ever to have; on the other hand she is narrowly limited by her gift. Harindranath has an unfailing sense of beauty and rhythm (or had before he became a Bolshevik and Gandhist) — while your writing is very unequal — but I do not suppose he will ever do much better than he has done or produce anything that will put him in the first rank of poets, unless he changes greatly in the future. As for my brother, I do not know enough of his poetry to judge; I knew he had a better knowledge of technique than any of these poets, but my impression was that life and enduring quality were not there. How am I to compare you in these things with them? You have another turn and gift and you have in the resources of Yoga a chance of constant progression and growth and of throwing all imperfections behind you. Measure what you do by the standard of your own possible perfection; what is the use of measuring it by the achievement of others? 1931

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo wrote this passage on the back of a typed copy of the letter of 28 February 1936 printed above. It appears to be the draft of a letter that was not completed or sent. — Ed.*

*

The idea that Indians cannot succeed in English poetry is very much in the air just now but it cannot be taken as absolutely valid. Toru Dutt and Romesh of the same ilk prove nothing; Toru Dutt was an accomplished verse-builder with a delicate talent and some outbreaks of genius and she wrote things that were attractive and sometimes something that had a strong energy of language and a rhythmic force. Romesh was a smart imitator of English poetry of the second or third rank. What he wrote, if written by an Englishman, might not have had even a temporary success. Sarojini is different. Her work has a real beauty, but it has for the most part only one highly lyrical note and a vein of riches that has been soon exhausted. Some of her lyrical work is likely, I think, to survive among the lasting things in English literature and by these, even if they are fine rather than great, she may take her rank among the immortals. I know no other Indian poets who have published in English anything that is really alive and strong and original.[2] The test will be when something is done that is of real power and scope and gets its due chance. Tagore's *Gitanjali* is not in verse, but the place it has taken has some significance. For the obstacles from the other side are that the English mind is apt to look on poetry by an Indian as a curiosity, something exotic (whether it really is or not, the suggestion will be there), and to stress the distance at which the English temperament stands from the Indian temperament. But Tagore's *Gitanjali* is most un-English, yet it overcame this obstacle. For the poetry of spiritual experience, even if it has true poetic value, the difficulty might lie in the remoteness of the subject. But nowadays this difficulty is lessening with the increasing interest in the spiritual and the mystic. It is an age in which Donne, once condemned as a talented but fantastic weaver of extraordinary conceits, is being hailed as a great poet, and Blake lifted to a high eminence; even small poets with the mystic turn are being pulled out of their obscurity and held up to the light. At present many are turning to India for its sources of spirituality, but the eye has been directed only towards yoga and philosophy, not to the poetical expression of it. When the full day comes, however, it may well be that this too will be discovered, and then an Indian who is at once a mystic and a true poet and able to write in English as if in his mother-tongue (that is essential) would have his full chance. Many barriers are breaking; moreover both in French and English there are instances of foreigners who have taken their place whether as prose-writers or poets.

P.S. About decadence: a language becomes decadent when the race decays, when life and soul go out and only the dry intellect and the tired senses remain. Europe is in imminent peril of decadence and all its literatures are attacked by this malady, though it is only beginning and energy is still there which may

---

[2] This was written some years ago and does not apply to more recent work in English by Indian poets.

bring renewal. But the English language has still several strings to its bow and is not confined to an aged worn-out England. Moreover, there are two tendencies active in the modern mind, the over-intellectualised, over-sensualised decadent that makes for death, and the spiritual which may bring rebirth. At present the decadent tendency may be stronger, but the other is also there.
24 January 1935

Manmohan Ghose

I have not read much of my brother's poetry except what he wrote in England and in the early years in India before we ceased to meet. That was very cultured poetry and good in form, but it seemed to me to lack the inner force and elemental drive which makes for successful creation. I don't know whether his later work had it. My brother was very intimate with Oscar Wilde, but, if I remember right, none of the singing birds except Phillips and Binyon went very far. But I think Manmohan published very little in his lifetime — nothing ever came my way.
25 January 1935

*

> You write in your note to Harin [*of 24 January 1935*] about Toru Dutt and "Romesh of the same ilk" and Sarojini Naidu that you know of no other Indian than Sarojini to have published in English anything that is really alive and strong and original. I can understand your forgetting your own work, but how is it that you have omitted Harin himself? Surely he has published things that are bound to remain? Also, how was it that Oscar Wilde and Laurence Binyon could give praise to Manmohan Ghose? Has he done nothing that could touch Sarojini's level, though in another way?

I did not speak of Harin because that was a separate question altogether — besides, whether in criticising or in paying compliments, present company is always supposed to be excepted unless they are specially mentioned, and for this purpose Harin and myself are present company. About Manmohan I said that I knew very little of his later work. As for his earlier work it had qualities which evoked the praise of Wilde. I do not know what Binyon has written, but he is a fine poet and an admirable critic, not likely to praise work that has not quality. (Wilde and Binyon were both intimate friends of my brother, — at a time Manmohan was almost Wilde's disciple. If I were inclined to be Wildely malicious I might say that even Oscar's worst enemies never accused him of sincerity of speech, so if he liked someone very much he would not scruple to overpraise his poetry; but I think he considered my brother's poems to carry in them a fine promise. Binyon and Manmohan had almost the relations of Wordsworth and Southey in the first days, strongly admiring and stimulating each other.) Let me say then that my opinion was a personal one, perhaps born of brotherly intimacy — for if familiarity breeds contempt, fraternity may easily breed criticism — and based on insufficient data. I liked Manmohan's poetry well enough, but I never thought it to be great. He was a conscientious artist of word and rhyme almost painfully careful about technique. Virgil wrote nine lines every day and spent the whole morning rewriting and rerewriting them out of all recognition. Manmohan did better. He would write five or six half lines and quarter lines and spend the week filling them up. I remember the sacred wonder with which I regarded this process — something like this:

> The morn ... red ... sleepless eyes
> ....lilac ....rest.

Perhaps I exaggerate, but it was very much like that! That seemed to me to indicate an inspiration not very much on fire or in flood. But I suppose he became more fluent afterwards and I am ready to change my opinion if I have materials for doing so. I made no comparison with Sarojini. The two poets are poles asunder in their inspiration and manner. Sarojini has a true originality whatever its limits; even if she does not live for ever, she deserves to live. My brother was perhaps a finer artist, but has Manmohan's poetry similarly an unique and original power?

26 January 1935

*

> I suppose you have read this poem of Manmohan's:
>
> Augustest! dearest! whom no thought can trace,
> Name, murmuring out of birth's infinity,
> Mother! like heaven's great face is thy sweet face,
> Stupendous with the mystery of me.
> Eyes, elder than the light; cheek, that no flower
> Remembers; brow, at which my infant care
> Gazed weeping up and saw the skies enshower
> With tender rain of vast mysterious hair!
> Thou at whose breast the sunbeams sucked, whose arms
> Cradled the lisping ocean, art thou she,
> Goddess, at whose dim heart the world's deep charms,
> Tears, terrors, sobbing things, were yet to be?
> She, from whose tearing pangs in glory first
> I and the infinite wide heavens burst?
>
> Each line is wonderfully inspired; but is there in the total effect a sense of construction rather than creation, a splendid confusion instead of a supreme luminosity?

The poem has a considerable elevation of thought, diction and rhythm. It is certainly a fine production and, if all had been equal to the first three lines which are pure and perfect in inspiration, the sonnet might have stood among the finest things in the English language. But somehow it fails as a whole. The reason is that the intellectual mind took up the work of transcription and a Miltonic rhetorical note comes in, all begins to be thought rather than seen or felt; the poet seems to be writing what he thinks he ought to write on such a subject and doing it very well — one admires, the mind is moved and the vital stirred, but the deeper satisfying spiritual thrill which the first lines set out to give is no longer there. Already in the fourth line there is the touch of poetic rhetoric. The original afflatus continues to persist behind, but can no longer speak itself out in its native language, there is a mental translation. It tries indeed to get back —

> Eyes, elder than the light; cheek, that no flower
> Remembers —

then loses hold almost altogether — what follows is purely mental. Another effort brings the eighth line which is undoubtedly very fine and has sight behind it. Then there is a compromise; the spiritual seeing mind seems to say to the thinking poetic intellect, "All right, have it your own way — I will try at least to keep you up at your best", and we have the three lines that follow those two others that are forcible and vivid poetic (very poetic) rhetoric — finally a close that goes back to the level of the stupendous mystery. No, it is not a "splendid confusion" — the poem is well-constructed from the point of view of arrangement of the thought, so there can be no confusion. It is the work of a poet who got into touch with some high level of spiritual sight, a living vision of some spirit Truth, but, that not being his native domain, could not keep its perfect voice throughout and mixed his inspiration — that seems to me the true estimate. A very fine poem, all the same. 5 November 1935

Remarks on Minor Indian Writers

I don't remember [Jehangir] Vakil's poems very well, but they gave me the impression, I think, of much talent not amounting to genius, considerable achievement in language and rhythm but nothing that will stand out and endure. But how many can do more in a foreign language? Here the poem certainly attempts and almost achieves something fine — there are admirable lines and images — but the whole gives an impression of something constructed by the mind, a work built up by a very skilful and well-endowed intelligence. 12 September 1931

*

The poetry of your friend is rather irritating, because it is always just missing what it ought to achieve, — one feels a considerable poetic possibility which does not produce work of some permanence because it is not scrupulous enough or has not a true technique. The reasons for the failure can be felt, but are not easy to analyse. Among them there is evidently the misfortune of having passed strongly under the influence of poets who are quite out of date and learned a poetic style and language full of turns that smell of the schoolroom and the bookworm's closet. Such awful things as "unsoughten", "a-journeying", "a-knocking", "strayèd gift" and the constant abuse of the auxiliary verb "to do" would be enough to damn even the best poem. If he would rigorously modernise his language, one obstacle to real poetic success would perhaps disappear, — provided he does not, on the contrary, colloquialise it too much — e.g. "my dear", etc. But the other grave defect is that he is constantly composing out of his brain, while one feels that a pressure from a deeper source is there and might break through; if only he would let it. Of course, it is a foreign language he is writing and very few can do their poetic best in a learned medium; but still the defect is there.

22 June 1931

Poets of the Ashram

Some General Remarks

I fear I don't approve of any article on the "Ashram poets" — least of all a dithyramb of this too splendiferous kind. I shall give my reasons when I have had time to look at it again — at present I am slowly recovering from the electric shock it gave me.
11 September 1934

*

> Prithwi Singh was telling me that cultivation of literature here hasn't much sense, since none will be able to get first class, or outclass Tagore. He must always remain the only brilliant star in literature. Others won't even get a chance to shine by his side, not to speak of outshining him. Only Dilip can be somehow given a second class privilege, but that too for his prose, and not for poetry. He further asserts that Yoga has no power to bring any pursuit — literature, painting, etc. to a height of perfection.

I don't agree with Prithwi Singh. If a man has a capacity for poetry or anything else, it will certainly come out and rise to greater heights than it would have done elsewhere. Witness Dilip who was unable to write poetry till he came here though he had the instinct and the suppressed power in him, Nishikanta whose full flow came only here, Arjava, Punjalal whose recent poems in Gujarati seem to me to have an extraordinary beauty — though I admit that I am no expert there. Harin wrote beautifully before but the sovereign excellence of his recent poetry is new. There are others who are developing a power of writing they had not before. All that does not show that Yoga has no power to develop capacity. I myself have developed many capacities by Yoga. Formerly I could not have written a line of philosophy —

now people have started writing books about my philosophy to my great surprise. It is not a question of first class or second class. One has to produce one's best and develop — the "class" if class there must be will be decided by posterity. Tagore himself was once considered second class by any number of people and the nature of his poetry was fiercely questioned — until the Nobel prize and consequent fame ended their discussions. One has not to consider fame or the appreciation of others, but do whatever work one can do as an offering of one's capacity to the Divine.

11 November 1934

*

I look at these things from a more impersonal or, if you like, a personal-impersonal point of view. There is on one side my effort at perfection, for myself and others and for the possibility of a greater perfection in a changed humanity: on the other side there is a play of forces some favouring it but more trying to prevent it. The challenge I speak of comes from these forces. On one side it is a pressure from the pro-forces saying "Your work is not good enough; learn to do better"; on the other it is a pressure from the contrary forces saying "Your work? It is a delusion and error, — a poor mediocre thing, and we will trample and break it to pieces." Part of the work was an attempt to inspire a poetry which would express first the aspiration and labour towards the spiritual or divine and afterwards its realisation and manifestation. There are many who write poetry in the Ashram under this impulse but in the languages which I know best (English perfectly — at least I hope so — Bengali a little), there were four here whose work seemed to me to contain already in a fairly ample way the ripe possibility of the thing I wanted — yourself [*Dilip Kumar Roy*], Arjava, Amal, Harin. (I do not speak of Nishikanta and others because they are new or emergent only). There are some Gujarati poets but I do not know the poetic language and technique in that tongue well enough to form an indubitable judgment. These four then I have encouraged and tried to push on towards a greater and richer expression: I have praised but there was nothing insincere in my praise. For some time however I have received intimations from many quarters that my judgment was mistaken, ignorant, partial and perhaps not wholly sincere. It began with your poetry even at the time of *Anami* and the forces at play spoke through some literary coteries of Bengal and reached here through reviews, letters etc. There has been much inability to appreciate Arjava's poetry, Yeats observing that he had evidently something to say but struggled to say it with too much obscurity and roughness. Amal's work is less criticised, but A.E.'s attitude towards it was rather condescending as to an Indian who writes unexpectedly well in English. Finally, there is the ignoring or rejection of Harin's work by this array of authorities — there are as good authorities on the other side, but that is irrelevant. That makes the issue complete and clear. If I have made so big a mistake, then the whole thing is a hallucination — I am an incompetent critic of poetry, at least of contemporary poetry, and my pretension to inspire cannot stand for a moment. Personally that would not matter to me, for personally I have my own feeling of these things and what it may be in the eyes of others makes no difference — just as it makes no difference to me if my own poetry is really no poetry, as Anandashanker and so many others think and may from their own viewpoint — there are a million possible viewpoints in the world — be justified in thinking. But for my work it does matter. I recognise in it the challenge of the forces and, once I recognise that in whatever field, I never think myself entitled to ignore it. If it is a challenge to do better (from the favourable forces), I must see that and get it done. If it is a challenge from the other forces, I must see that too and know how far it is justifiable or else what can be put against it. That is what I have always done both in my own Yoga looking carefully to see what was imperfect in the instrumentation of my own consciousness as a vehicle of the manifestation and working to set it right or else maintaining what was right against all challenge. So I began to do it here. Instead of reading rapidly through Harin's poems every day, I began to weigh and consider looking to see what could be justly said from Krishnaprem's viewpoint and what could be fairly said from mine. I took Krishnaprem's criticism because it is the only thing I have that is definite and, though his technical strictures are obviously mistaken, the general ones have to be weighed even though they are far from conclusive. But this is a work for my personal use, — its main object is not a weighing of Harin's work but of my own capacity and judgment and that is too personal in scope for me to lay before others. That is why I said I was not writing it to circulate.

I have written all this to explain to you that you have not pained or hurt or displeased me, nor has Krishnaprem either. It would be childish to be displeased with someone because his opinions on literature or a particular piece of literature are not identical with my own at every point. I may also say that I was not displeased with you for your letter. I was a little disappointed that you should have gone back to mental doubts or to vital feelings after you had started so well for something else. But these temporary reversions are too common on the path to the Divine for me to be displeased or discouraged. The work I have to do for myself or for the world or for you or others can only be achieved if I have love for all and faith for all and go firmly on till it is done. It is why I urge you to do the same, because I know that if one does not give up, one is sure to arrive. That is the attitude you had started to take, to go quietly on and give time for the right development however slow. I want you to return to that and keep to it.

By the way, what I have written about the poetry is just for yourself, because it is too personal to me to be made general.

December 1934

*

It was not with any intention of bringing in personal matters that I mentioned names and examples in my letter. The personal merits or demerits of the external human instrument — the frail outer man — are irrelevant and have no importance when one considers the value or power of the Word. What matters is the truth of the Inspiration and the power of what it utters. I was not saying either that this poetry — I try to avoid names this time — appeals to everybody; I was referring to those whom it did touch and especially to certain incidents within my personal observation and knowledge.

I am keeping Krishnaprem's letter. I don't know that it is very advisable for me to give my view: if I do so I will try to restrict myself to general considerations about poetry and literature. I will only say that my opinions about this poetry or yours or Amal's or Arjava's are personal to myself and nobody need attach any value to them if his own do not agree. As they are personal, what others think, however eminent they may be, cannot make any difference. I experience a certain beauty, power or charm, an expression of things I feel and know in the occult or spiritual province with what seems to me a great or a sufficient breath of poetry in it. I do not expect all or many to share my feeling and I do not need it. I can understand Krishnaprem's strictures or his reservations (without endorsing, refuting or qualifying them) but I have had the same view about very great poets like Shelley or Spenser at one time, so that does not seriously touch my feeling that this is poetry of beauty and value. Also I do not make comparisons — I take it by itself as a thing apart in its own province. I know of course that my old schoolfellow Binyon and others in England have spoken in this connection of Keats and Shelley; but I do not myself feel the need of that comparative valuation. After all one can only give one's own view of contemporary poetry, — we must leave it to Tagore's *viśva-mānava* (posterity?) to decide. 29 December 1934

*

Amal is rather fond of high notes in his criticism, (an essay he sent long ago on the "Ashram poets" — what a phrase! — made me aghast with horror at its Pindaric — or rather Swinburnean — tone, it gave me an impression that Homer and Shakespeare and Valmiki had all been beaten into an insignificant jelly by our magnificent creations.) He is also sometimes too elaborately ingenious in his hunt for detail significances. But what he says is usually acute and interesting and, when he drives his pen instead of letting it gallop away with him, he can write exceedingly well.

His selection from your poems is not so surprising. Everyone reacts to poetry in his own way and except with regard to long-established favourites from the classics few would make the same choice. Give ten good critics the task of selecting the best lines of Shakespeare, avoiding stock passages, and the ten will each make a different list — and probably Shakespeare himself would disagree with all the ten. That must be still more the case with a "contemporary" poet where all is new stuff with no indications except one's own personal reactions. I myself do not agree with your condemnation of these pieces to the W. P. B.

30 January 1935

*

> Take this Poetry business. It has always been rare for me to write any poetry without a heavy dose of mental exercise. I have not, except once or twice, felt some force coming down and delivering a poem out of me, even a worthless one, in a second. . . . You yourself had to concentrate for 4 or 5 hours a day for so many years, after which everything flowed in a river. But I am not Sri Aurobindo! I am not born with such a will and determination. . . . Since I can't spend so much labour, I have to conclude that such big things are not for me.

As there are several lamentations today besieging me, I have very little time to deal with each separate Jeremiad. Do I understand rightly that your contention is this,"I can't believe in the Divine doing everything for me because it is by my own mighty and often fruitless efforts that I write or do not write poetry and have made myself into a poet"? Well, that itself is *épatant*, magnificent, unheard of. It has always been supposed since the infancy of the human race that while a verse-maker can be made or self-made, a poet cannot. "*Poeta nascitur non fit*", a poet is born not made, is the dictum that has come down through the centuries and millenniums and was thundered into my ears by the first pages of my Latin Grammar. The facts of literary history seem to justify this stern saying. But here in Pondicherry we have tried, not to manufacture poets, but to give them birth, a spiritual, not a physical birth into the body.

In a number of instances we are supposed to have succeeded — one of these is your noble self — or if I am to believe the man of sorrows in you, your abject, miserable, hopeless and ineffectual self. But how was it done? There are two theories, it seems — one that it was by the Force, the other that it was done by your own splashing, kicking, groaning Herculean efforts. Now, sir, if it is the latter, if you have done that unprecedented thing, made yourself by your own laborious strength into a poet (for your earlier efforts were only very decent literary exercises), then, sir, why the deuce are you so abject, self-depreciatory, miserable? Don't say that it is only a poet who can produce no more than a few poems in many months. Even to have done that, to have become a poet at all, a self-made poet is a miracle over which one can only say Sabash! Sabash! without ever stopping. If your effort could do that, what is there that it can't do? All miracles can be effected by it and a giant self-confident faith ought to be in you. On the other hand if, as I aver, it is the Force that has done it, what then can it not do? Here too faith, a giant faith is the only logical conclusion. So either way there is room only for Hallelujahs, none for Jeremiads. Q.E.D.

By the way what is this story about my four or five hours' concentration a day for several years before anything came down? Such a thing never happened, if by concentration you mean laborious meditation. What I did was four or five hours a day pranayam — which is quite another matter. And what flow do you speak of? The flow of poetry came down while I was doing pranayam, not some years afterwards. If it is the flow of experiences, that did come after some years, but after I had stopped the Pranayam for a long time and was doing nothing and did not know what to do or where to turn once all my efforts had failed. And it came as a result not of years of Pranayam or concentration, but in a ridiculously easy way, by the grace either of a temporary guru (but it wasn't that, for he was himself bewildered by it) or by the grace of the eternal Brahman and afterwards by the the grace of Mahakali and Krishna. So don't try to turn me into an argument against the Divine; that attempt will be perfectly ineffective.

I am obliged to stop — if I go on, there will be no Pranam till 12 o'clock. So send your Jeremiad back tonight and I will see what else to write. Have written this in a headlong hurry — I hope it is not full of *lapsus calami*.

> I send you back the "Jeremiad", Sir. My observations are reserved.

To continue. The fact that you don't feel a force does not prove that it is not there. The steam-engine does not feel a force moving it, but the force is there. A man is not a steam-engine? He is very little better, for he is conscious only of some bubbling on the surface which he calls himself and is absolutely unconscious of all the subconscient, subliminal, superconscient forces moving him. (This is a fact which is being more and more established by modern psychology though it has got hold only of the lower forces and not the higher, so you need not turn up your rational nose at it.) He twitters intellectually (= foolishly) about the surface results and attributes them all to his "noble self", ignoring the fact that his noble self is hidden far away from his own vision behind the veil of his dimly sparkling intellect and the reeking fog of his vital feelings, emotions, impulses, sensations and impressions. So your argument is utterly absurd and futile. Our aim is to bring the secret forces out and unwalled into the open so that instead of getting some shadows or lightnings of themselves out through the veil or being wholly obstructed they may "pour down" and "flow in a river". But to expect that all at once is a presumptuous demand which shows an impatient ignorance and inexperience. If they begin to trickle at first, that is sufficient to justify the faith in a future downpour. You admit that you once or twice felt a "force coming down and delivering a poem out of me" (your opinion about its worth or worthlessness is not worth a cent, that is for others to pronounce). That is sufficient to blow the rest of your Jeremiad into smithereens; it proves that the force was and is there and at work and it is only your sweating Herculean labour that prevents you feeling it. Also it is the trickle that gives assurance of the possibility of the downpour. One has only to go on and by one's patience deserve the downpour or else, without deserving, stick on till one gets it. In Yoga itself the experience that is a promise and foretaste but gets shut off till the nature is ready for the fulfilment is a phenomenon familiar to every Yogin when he looks back on his past experience. Such were the brief visitations of Ananda you had some time before. It does not matter if you have not a leechlike tenacity — leeches are not the only type of Yogins. If you can stick anyhow or get stuck that is sufficient. The fact that you are not Sri Aurobindo (who said you were?) is an inept irrelevance. One needs only to be oneself in a reasonable way and shake off the hump when it is there or allow it to be shaken off without clinging to it with a "leechlike tenacity" worthy of a better cause.

All the rest is dreary stuff of the tamasic ego. As there is a rajasic ego which shouts "What a magnificent powerful sublime divine individual I am, unique and peerless" (of course there are gradations in the pitch,) so there is a tamasic ego which squeaks "What an abject, hopeless, worthless, incapable, unluckily unendowed and uniquely impossible creature I am, — all, all are great, Aurobindos, Dilips, Anilkumars (great by an unequalled capacity of novel-reading and self-content, according to you), but I, oh I, oh I!" That's your style. It is this tamasic ego (of course it expresses itself in various ways at various times, I am only rendering your present pitch) which is responsible for the Man of Sorrows getting in. It's all bosh — stuff made up to excuse the luxury of laziness, melancholy and despair. You are in that bog just now because you have descended faithfully and completely into the inert stupidity and die-in-the-mudness of your physical consciousness which, I admit, is a specimen! But so after all is everybody's, only there are different kinds of specimens. What to do? Dig yourself out if you can; if you can't, call for ropes and wait till they come. If God knows what will happen when the Grace descends, that is enough, isn't it? That you don't know is a fact which may be baffling to your — well, your intelligence, but is not of great importance — any more than your supposed unfitness. Who ever was fit, for that matter — fitness and unfitness are only a way of speaking; man is unfit and a misfit (so far as things spiritual are concerned) — in his outward nature. But within there is a soul and above there is Grace. "This is all you know or need to know" and, if you don't, well, even then you have at least somehow stumbled into the path and have got to remain there till you get haled along it far enough to wake up to the knowledge. Amen. 20–21 January 1936

*

> How is it that people find my poetry difficult? Dilip used to say that it usually passed a little over his head. I suspect that only Nolini and Arjava get the hang of it properly. Of course many appreciate when I have explained it to them — but otherwise they admire the beauty of individual phrases without grasping the many-sided whole the phrases form. This morning Premanand, Vijayrai and Nirod read my *Agni*. None of them caught the precise relevances, the significant connections of the words and phrases of the opening lines:
>
> Not from the day but from the night he's born,
> Night with her pang of dream — star on pale star
> Winging strange rumour through a secret dawn.
> For all the black uncanopied spaces mirror
> The brooding distance of our plumbless mind.
>
> In the rest of the poem too they generally failed to get the true point of felicity which constitutes poetic expression. My work is not surrealist: I put meaning into everything, not intellectualism but a coherent vision worked out suggestively in various detail. Is there some peculiarity in my turn of imagination or in my English, which baffles Indian readers especially?

It is precisely because what you put in is not intellectualism or a product of mental imagination that your poetry is difficult to those who are accustomed to a predominantly mental strain in poetry. One can grasp fully only if one has some clue to what you put in, either the clue of personal experience or the clue of a sympathetic insight. One who has had the concrete experience of the consciousness as a night with the stars coming out and the sense of the secret dawn can at once feel the force of these two lines, as one who has had experience of the mind as a wide space or infinity or a thing of distances and expanses can fathom those that follow. Or even if he has had, not these experiences, but others of the same order, he can feel what you mean and enter into it by a kind of identification. Failing this experience, a sympathetic insight can bring the significance home; certainly, Nolini and Arjava who write poems of the inner vision and feeling must have that, moreover their minds are sufficiently subtle and plastic to enter into all kinds of poetic vision and expression. Premanand and Vijayrai have no such training; it is natural that they should find it difficult. Nirod ought to understand, but he would have to ponder and take some trouble before he got it; night with her labour of dream, the stars, the bird-winging, the bird-voices, the secret dawn are indeed familiar symbols in the poetry he is himself writing or with which he is familiar; but his mind seeks usually at first for precise allegories to fit the symbols and is less quick to see and feel by identification what is behind them — it is still intellectual and not concrete in its approach to these things, although his imagination has learned to make itself their transcribing medium. That is the difficulty, the crux of imaged spiritual poetry; it needs not only the fit writer but the fit audience — and that has yet to be made.

> But what about Dilip? Arjava's poems simply frighten him but mine too he finds difficult. Everybody feels at home in Harin's poetry, though I am sure that often, if I catechised them, I would find the deepest felicities missed. Perhaps my tendency to pack too much meaning into my words becomes a difficulty in others, but would they have the same difficulty with Bengali poetry?

Dilip wrote to me in recent times expressing great admiration for Arjava's poems and wanting to get something of the same quality into his own poetic style. But in any case Dilip has not the mystic mind and vision — Harin also. In quite different ways they receive and express their vision or experience through the poetic mind and imagination — even so because it expressed something not usual, Dilip's poetry has had a difficulty in getting itself recognised except by people who were able to give the right response. Harin's poetry deals very skilfully with spiritual ideas or feelings through the language of the emotion and the poetic imagination and intelligence — no difficulty there. As regards your poetry, it is indeed much more compressed and carefully packed with substance and that creates a difficulty except for those who are alive to the language or have become alive to subtle shades, implications, depths in the words. Even those who understand a foreign language well in the ordinary way, find it sometimes difficult to catch these in its poetry. Indications and suggestions easy to catch in one's own tongue are often missed there. So probably your last remark is founded.

14 March 1937

*

> I hope people won't misunderstand what you have remarked about the mystic mind [*in the above letter*]. One's not having the mystic mind and vision does not reflect upon one's poetic excellence, even as a singer of the Spirit. As regards Harin, you had said long ago that he wrote from several planes [*see page 476*]. And surely his *Dark Well* poems come from a source beyond the poetic intelligence?

I used the word "mystic" in the sense of a certain kind of inner seeing and feeling of things, a way which to the intellect would seem occult and visionary — for this is something different from imagination and its work with which the intellect is familiar. It was in this sense that I said Dilip had not the mystic mind and vision. One can go far in the spiritual way, have plenty of spiritual experiences, spiritual knowledge, spiritual feelings, significant visions and dreams even without having this mystic mind and way of seeing things. So too one may write poetry from different planes or sources of inspiration and expressing spiritual feelings, knowledge, experiences and yet use the poetic intelligence as the thought medium which gives them shape in speech; such poems are not of the mystic type. One may be mystic in this sense without being spiritual — one may also be spiritual without being mystic; or one may be both spiritual and mystic in one. Poems ditto.

I had not in view the *Dark Well* poems when I wrote about Harin. I was thinking of his ordinary way of writing. If I remember right, the *Dark Well* poems came from the inner mind centre, some from the Higher Mind — other planes may have sent their message to his mind to put in poetic speech, but the main worker was the poetic intelligence which took what was given and turned it into something very vivid, coloured and beautiful, — but surely not mystic in the sense given above.

15 March 1937

On Bengali Poetry Written in the Ashram

I am not competent in respect to the technique of Bengali poetry. I can only follow my feeling, what I call the inner ear — so in this point I can say nothing beyond my own feeling. In your first poems written here I thought that your rhythmic movement departed sometimes from the norm — I suppose that is what they mean by ছন্দভঙ্গ? — but on a second reading my impression was, more often than not, that there was a (rhythmic) justification for the departure. I do not know whether Buddhadeva is referring to these poems or to others written before the opening of your poetic faculty here, which were poor both in expression and in rhythm. In any case, there can surely be no exception taken to your rhythm now; your mastery seems to me complete. I suppose in this province Tagore's verdict can be taken as final.

4 January 1932

*

> It is a great mystery to me. Comparing Jyotirmayi's original turn, expressions, speed with her past work — what a miraculously rapid development!

But, my dear sir, it often happens like that. I believe you were not here when Dilip's poetry blossomed; but it was quite as sudden. Remember Tagore's description of him as the cripple who suddenly threw away his crutches and began to run and his astonishment at the miracle. Nishikanta too came out in much the same way, a sudden Brahmaputra of inspiration. The only peculiarity in Jyoti's case is the source she struck — the pure mystic source. 23 August 1936

Comments on the Work of Poets of the Ashram

Dilip Kumar Roy

...যে-বারিধার ভরে তড়াগ-নদী হ্রদ,
তারেই ফিরায় বারিদ-রূপে ধরাতল;
যে-রশ্মিটি বক্ষে ধরে কোকনদ
ফুটায় তারেই গন্ধরূপে সমুচ্ছল ।

ধন্য হব প্রাণটি আজি ঢেলে তাই,
তোর-দেওয়া-দান তোর পদে সমর্পণে,
আর কিসে বল্ পূজ্‌তে পারি?—সর্ব্বদাই
গঙ্গাপূজা গঙ্গাজলের তর্পণে ।

It is again a beautiful poem that you have written,[1] but not better than the other. Why erect mental theories and suit your poetry to them whether your father's or Tagore's? I would suggest to you not to be bound by either, but to write as best suits your own inspiration and poetic genius. I imagine that each of them wrote in the way suited to his own inspiration and substance and, as is the habit of the human mind, put that way forward as a general rule for all. You have developed an original poetic turn of your own, quite unlike your father's and not by any means a reflection of Tagore's. Besides, there is now as a result of your sadhana a new quality in your work, a power of expressing with great felicity a subtle *psychic* delicacy and depth of thought and emotion which I have not seen elsewhere in modern Bengali verse. If you insist on being rigidly simple and direct as a mental rule, you might spoil something of the subtlety of the expression, even if the delicacy of the substance remained. Obscurity, artifice, rhetoric have to be avoided, but for the rest follow the inner movement. . . .

---

[1] Gangāpūjā Gangājale, *a poem of twenty-one stanzas, the last two of which are reproduced above. — Ed.*

I think I prefer the original form of your penultimate verse. I did not myself find it ambiguous and it has a native glow of colour in it which the second version misses — at least, so it seems to me on a comparative reading.[2]

*

I have just finished hearing the second act of your drama on Chaitanya;[3] there is much fine poetry in it and the dramatic interest of the dialogue and of the presentation of character seems to me considerable. We have not had time yet to read the last act; we shall do that tomorrow and then I can write about your drama with more finality, but it is already turning into a fine play. As for the historical question, I do not consider that any objections which might be raised from that standpoint would have much value. Poetry, drama, fiction also are not bound to be historically accurate; they cannot indeed develop themselves successfully unless they deal freely with any historical material they may choose to include or take for their subject. One can be faithful to history if one likes but even then one has to expand and deal creatively with characters and events, otherwise the work will come to nothing or little. In many of his dramas Shakespeare takes names from history or local tradition, but uses them as he chooses; he places his characters in known countries and surroundings, but their stories are either his own inventions, or the idea only is borrowed from facts and the rest is of his own making: or else he indulges in pure fantasy and cares nothing even for geographical accuracy or historical possibility. It is true that sometimes he follows closely the authorities he had at his disposal, such as Holinshed or another and in plays like *Julius Caesar* he sticks to the main events and keeps many of the details, but not so as to fetter the play of his imagination. So I don't think you need worry at all about either historians or biographers, even if *Chaitanya Charitamrita* could be regarded as a biography. That is all, I think, for the present. I shall write again after hearing the third act of your drama. 21 January 1950

---

[2] *These are the first and last paragraphs of a letter that was subsequently revised. The revised version is published on page 568. — Ed.*

[3] *Dilip Kumar Roy,* Sri Chaitanya: A Drama in Three Acts *(Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1950).*

*

We have finished reading your *Chaitanya*. The third act which is the most remarkable of the three confirms the impression already made by the other two of a very fine and successful play well-written and constructed with many outbursts of high poetry and outstanding in its dramatic interest and its thought substance. The third is original in its design and structure, especially its idea, admirably conceived and worked out, of a whole scene of action with many persons and much movement shown in the vision of a single character sitting alone in her room; it was difficult to work out but it has fitted in extremely well. It has also at the same time a remarkable combination of the three unities of the Greek drama into which this distant scene, though not too distant, manages to dovetail very well, — the unity of one place, sometimes one spot in the Greek play or a small restricted area, one time, one developing action completed in that one time and spot, an action rigorously developed and unified in its interest. Indeed, the play as a whole has this unity of action in a high degree.

Advocates of the old style drama might object to the great length of the discussions as detrimental to compactness and vividness of dramatic interest and dramatic action and they might object too that the action, — though this does not apply to the Jagai Madhai episode, — is more subjective and psychological than the external objective succession of happenings or interchanges represented on a stage would seem to demand; this was the objection made to Shaw's most characteristic and important play. But where the dramatic interest is itself of a subjective and psychological character involving more elaboration of thought and speech than of rapid or intensive happenings and activities, this kind of objection is obviously invalid; what matters is how the subjective interest, the play or development of ideas, or if high ideals are involved that call to the soul, is presented and made effective. Here it is great spiritual ideals and their action on the mind and lives of human beings that are put before us and all that matters is how they are presented and made living in their appeal. Here there is, I think, full success and that entirely justifies the method of the drama.

For the rest I have only heard once rapidly read the play in three acts and it is not possible with that short reading to pass judgment on details of a purely literary character, so on that I can only give my general impression. A drama has to accommodate itself to different levels and intensities of expression proper to the circumstances and different characters, moods and events; but here too, I think, the handling is quite successful. I believe the verdict must be, from every point of view, an admirable *Chaitanya*. 23 January 1950

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

I can understand very well what Suhrawardy objects to in Harin's poetry, though his expression of it is absurdly exaggerated ("trash"), and he may be right in thinking it an exotic in English literature; but I am under the impression that Harin will stand in spite of that, though he has still to write something so sovereign in its own kind as to put all doubt out of court; but, even as it is, the poetic quality of his work appears to me undeniable. 1 October 1932

*

Harin's new poems are a little difficult to follow sometimes because they render a special form of experience — but they are very powerful and genuine. He has the eye of one who can *see* in the occult sense. 3 September 1933

*

> Do poets like Harin feel more than others or is it rather that they simply express themselves better?

It depends on the poet. Harin expresses what he sees through feeling, perception or actual vision — he was strongly impressed and he wrote. But it is quite possible that the word written may bring a stronger feeling or more vivid and extended experience to some reader than anything the poet actually felt.

21 September 1933

*

> The following lines from one of Harin's poems seem to indicate an overmind view of the worlds:
>
> Whatever I contact I sum
> Up in an instant as my own, —
> All life around me I become:
> A rarified immense Alone. . . .
>
> And slowly in myself I seem
> Infinitudes of worlds and men.

Yes, it is the overmind view — but it can be felt in any of the higher planes (intuition, illumined or higher mind); something of it can be thrown by reflection even into the liberated mind and vital — I mean when there comes into them the sense of the cosmic Self, the cosmic Mind and vital etc. and they are no longer shut up within individual limits. 9 July 1934

*

It appears that Thompson, the English Sannyasi, told Jaswant that Harin's poetry was all of the old kind and that now people in England were doing marvels and wonders which left all such old fashioned stuff in the shade. So far as I know this modern poetry in English, it is mostly second rate decadent stuff without form or true rhythm or else without greatness or emotion, seeking only to be new and not seeking to be great or true. There are exceptions but few in number. 17 July 1934

*

Harmony

. . . What ways shall baulk
These feet that have with Thee begun to walk
The only Way, the shining lonely Way
Leading out of the darkness and the clay

Into the sweet invulnerable bliss
Of inevitable [*changed to* irrevocable] apotheosis?

The defect you point to in the last lines of *Harmony* was an obvious flaw and the change was necessary. In any case "irrevocable" is better than "inevitable" — it has more depth and power of significance. These poems mark a very distinct advance on the earlier ones in the "Rose of God";[4] those carried a slight sense of seeking and uncertainty, a new inspiration still feeling after its right diction, force of expression, rhythmic movement, finding them on the whole but not altogether. Here there is in all these respects an assured handling and full values. The new manner is very different from the "Bird of Fire"'s — in place of the rush and volume there is a subdued but very full richness of substance and subtlety of expression and a much more deliberately felicitous choice of word and phrase. This creates a quite different colour, tone and atmosphere. 18 January 1935

*

Reverie

. . . Then my heart within me cries
To the skies:

"Art thou jealous, God above!
Of our love?

"Dost Thou grieve to see us stand
Hand in hand,

"On the painted shore of life,
Man and wife,

"Full of dreaming, full of fire
And desire?"

Blossomed His immaculate voice:
"I rejoice

---

[4] *The name of the series of poems in which* Harmony *occurs. This and an earlier series,* "The Bird of Fire", *were named after poems written by Sri Aurobindo. Neither series was published. — Ed.*

"In the sorrow of the sod,
I am God! . . .

Desert

Floated noontides of spirit-austerities nakedly
    burning on every side
While I stand like a straight tall tree in the
    centre of Time, a desert bare,
High up, suspended, the full sun seems an image of One
    who is golden-eyed,
With shimmering beams for arrowy lashes which pierce
    like liquid points through the air. . . .

I shall see about "The Jealous God" [*published as* Reverie]; I remember to have read some poems in which you "trifled with Divinity" with great poetic effect, but the suggestions were quite extreme enough to startle A.E. into remonstrance; I imagine the Divinity himself read them with much aesthetic pleasure and a gracious smile. 30 January 1935

*

I have seen the poems marked by you — they are certainly among the best you have written before you came here. I have looked carefully at the "Jealousy of God"; it has much poetic beauty throughout. The idea of the Divine jealousy is a very apt imagination and serves to carry the meaning of the poem beyond the earth-limits to the beyond — as such it is striking and legitimate. But it has to be taken as a God constructed out of universal appearances by the lover's mood — it is evidently not A. E.'s Divinity, so A. E. need not have been in pain for him — and as such any objections (I don't know precisely what they may be) are out of court. I should like to read *Forgiveness* again before I pronounce as between Binyon and Amal. There is no bathos in the *Desert*; it has not the sustained level of some other poems, but throughout there is much imagination and colour and many fine lines, not only at the close.

P.S. I have looked again at *Forgiveness* [*text of poem not avail-*

able], — both Binyon and Amal have some foundation for their opinions. It is an exceedingly fine poem and quite perfect in its expression of the underlying idea or rather psychic perception of an occult truth hidden from the surface mind. I don't see anything fanciful in it or discern what is according to Amal fancy and what genuine imagination — if you look at it with the surface intellect the whole thing is a mere fancy or else a fine imagination, but if you look at it with the psychic perception there is neither, only a truth of behind the veil. *But* — it is here that Amal is right, the two closing lines are a terrible anticlimax; they spoil the perfection altogether. 31 January 1935

*

> Harin has sent me your remarks about his *Forgiveness* and *Reverie* . . . *Forgiveness* seems to suffer by an omission of a line or two which might give its psychic perception a force even in the domain of the outer mind. Harin perhaps tried to give this force in the "clod" – "God" conclusion, but the words there are not only bathetic but also insufficiently suggestive — they do not suggest however crudely that it is the *Divine* who is "forgiving" man *through* everything, or better still, that it is the Divine in everything who is forgiving man. What do you think?

I do not at all agree with what you say. For the truth of the poem it is not necessary to bring in the Divine — the two last lines are quite unnecessary — it is sufficient to know that there is a consciousness in things even the most material. There is no question of imagination — except in the reader who ought to have sufficient imagination to feel the profundities behind — it is a deep perception of an occult truth. I find the expression of it perfect.

> Now *Reverie*. Is there any indication in the poem that the God spoken of is not the *sole* Divinity? . . . For the time being there is no God but the jealous God — all Godhead is seen as a jealousy directed against human love and happiness. It was this that drew from A.E. that remark: he could find nowhere in the poem the distinction you make between the time and essential Godhead and a construction out of universal appearances. . . .

> Do you wish me to drop the sentence altogether?

If Harin had indicated that the God spoken of was not the sole Divinity, he would have spoiled the poem. For the purposes of the poem he has to be spoken of as the sole Divinity. Why must we take the poem as an exercise in philosophy? A poem is a poem, not a doctrine. It expresses something in the poet's mind or his feeling. If it agrees with the total truth or the highest truth of the Universe, so much the better, but we cannot demand that of every poet and every poem. I do not ask you to expunge the sentence, if it expresses your feeling with regard to the *Reverie*. Much is given from the purely aesthetic standpoint even if a poet were to assert a false doctrine such as a malevolent God creating a painful universe. That is, if it were a fine poem, I would enjoy and praise it — although it would be there too an appearance of the universe but approached by putting it forward as a doctrine.

1 February 1935

*

> Look at Harin's poetry. We're so ecstatic over it here, but outside he hardly gets a good audience; not even Krishnaprem seems to like his poetry.

I don't think I can put as much value on Krishnaprem's literary judgments as on his comments on Yoga etc. Some of his criticisms astonished me. For instance he found fault with Harin for using rhymes which Shelley uses freely in his best poems.

You must remember also that Harin's poetry has been appreciated by some of the finest English writers like Binyon and De la Mare. But anyway all growing writers (unless they are very lucky) meet with depreciation and criticism at first until people get accustomed to it. Perhaps if Harin had published his poems under the name let us say of Harry Chatto he would have succeeded by this time and no one would have talked of Oriental ineptness.

10 December 1935

*

> When he was here, Harin wrote things full of psychic perception, like

Infinitude in form!
Illimitable Power and Love conjoint!
Thy utter peace takes all the world by storm!

> Now he has gone back to his old ways and seems to have forgotten the great visions he had. Do you think the poetry he wrote here was not really his, but was prepared by beings of a higher plane and Harin simply wrote it down?

Yes — that is, Harin was a medium, the poetry came in to him from a plane which he did not possess; also whatever visions or experiences he had were poured into him by the Mother. But his personal being remained without any radical uplifting or alteration. 29 October 1936

The Sources of Inspiration of Harin and of Arjava

> We were wondering from what plane Harin gets his poetry. We should also like to know from what plane Arjava has his source of inspiration. And is it possible to tell us in brief what peculiarity of vision and style each of us has?

I doubt whether I can enter into all that just now or whether it would be useful — it would mean a critical appreciation of all of you for which I have no time (I have some poems to finish and some things to write on Yoga which are waiting for a long time, so I cannot deviate into anything like that). All I can say is that Arjava writes most often from the plane of inner thought and occult vision (the plane indicated in Yoga by the forehead centre). As for Harin, I can't say, he varies and most often writes from several planes at a time — so it is impossible to define.

2 December 1933

Arjava (J. A. Chadwick)

An Afternoon

Earth-fashioned hush, dream-woken trees becalmed
On fields entranced, on sea of frozen sound

Rimmed by faint watchers billowing haze-embalmed,
Whose legions vast our dream-like raft surround.
Nature looks strange. Strange that, e'en so, she's found
Closer to man. The dumb do voiceless meet,
Babel avoiding. See, — the very ground
Is silence-drenched — untrodden by earth's feet.
On such a stillness might leap forth the Word,
On such sink down to rest Creative Power:
All those six days through which the Work occurred
Revolved round Rest, enshrined a silent bower.
Earth's many melodies all are on Silence weaved.
Sleep foretells dawn's fanfare. And peace is toil achieved.

You have a beginning of power of poetic speech, but it is quite unfinished and the technique is not there.

There are three defects in your verses —

(1) Failure of rhythm. In this poem the rhythm is laboured and heavy; there are often too many ponderous syllables packed together — especially the last line, first half, — it is so heavy with packed long syllables that it can hardly move. What rhythm there is is too staccato, not varied enough or varied in the wrong way, sometimes a conventional ineffective way, sometimes by adopting an impossible metrical movement (this last more in the other poem than here).

(2) The style in this poem is too laboured, as if you had tried to pack the expression overmuch, and gives a slow heavy movement to the sense as well as to the verse. There is an occasional tendency to obscurity of expression (more in the other poem than here) due probably to the same reason or sometimes to a rather recondite allusiveness as if you expected the reader to understand the thoughts passing in you — without your either expressly stating them or else suggesting them by some perfectly significant word or sound.

(3) A certain habit of prose-structure in the form given to the thought comes up from time to time, e.g. in the fifth and eleventh lines of this poem, and sometimes in the choice of words e.g. "occurred" in the latter line.

At the same time there is not only the potency of speech at least in promise, but some promise also of a rhythmical faculty struggling to be born. April 1931

*

Lift the Stone

Before the chronicles of time began
Or sundering space her canopy unfurled,
The uncreated Over-Thought had plan
Itself to lose — self-offered, form a world.
Smooth as untrodden snow the gleaming Host,
Fraught with all history, ringed by opal pyx,
Shone through eternity rays innermost
'Pon[5] all symbolic forms that intermix
Silence of Heaven with lisping speech. God takes
His very substance that from Beauty came;
Then with world-urging power He freely breaks
The bread that builds the fabric of His Name.
Seven great realms the fragments make; and we
In meanest dust may touch Divinity.

You seem to me to have acquired already the three most important elements of poetic excellence.

(1) Mastery of the rhythmic form — at any rate of the right rhythm and building of the sonnet form you are using.

(2) A just felicity and firm construction of the thought architecture proper to the sonnet.

(3) A very considerable power of harmonious and effective poetic diction and suggestive image.

The last seven lines are truly very fine poetry — but the whole sonnet is remarkable in form and power. 6 May 1931

*

---

[5] Why not "On"; it would be more euphonious.

The Valley of the Fleece

A windless eve in a quiet coomb;
Rock-rose yellow and golden broom.
Sandmartins wheel aloft
Watching day's goblet quaffed
By the priestess, Venus-adorned, rising from eastern tomb.

A dream-laden wind from the sky escorts
The starry ships of the Argonauts.
Sandmartin stirs in the hole;
Peeps out one guardian troll —
"Will they carry our golden fleece back to the day-break ports?"

It is a very beautiful and exquisite lyric; I would not dream of spoiling it by suggesting any change.

*

Your scansion of the poem *The Valley of the Fleece* is on the whole correct, I think, although in one or two places — especially the two you select — there *might* be a difference of opinion. But it seems to me the classical short long ◡— is not a sufficient notation for the intricate stress + quantity system of the English rhythm. There are several syllable values intermediate between the long and the short and these count very much in the management of a line or a series of lines. Much of the subtler effects in the beauty of rhythm of an English poem is due to a skilful though often not quite intellectually conscious handling of these intermediate values — it is often in the hands of a born harmonist more an instinctive or an inspired than a deliberately purposeful skill. But for a conscious handling I should like to see a system of weightage (to take a word from current politics) allowed for syllables that are not pure longs and shorts or are not used as such in the line. One could possibly invent three additional signs ¯˘, ˘¯, ∞, the first for longer, the second for shorter intermediates, the third for pure shorts weighted by a meeting of several consonants after them. To give some examples from your poem — *rōckrō̆se* and *wheēl ă*(loft), present two different cases, both trochees, equal in *metrical*, but not equal in *rhythmic* value. Again *sāndmā̆rtĭn* has the same metrical but a different rhythmical value from *bāck tŏ thĕ* (day-break); the second is a pure dactyl, the first I would call an impure, mixed or weighted dactyl. Again *ēastē̆rn* marked by you as a trochee, I would almost mark as a spondee — certainly even, if I had to use it in one of my hexameters; but we can compromise the difference by marking it in my proposed notation as an impure or weighted trochee. The most striking example however is in the line,

> Wā̆tchĭng dāy's | gōblĕt | quāffed, |

so marked by me, not to complicate too much, but it could also be notated:

> Wā̆tchi᪲ng dāy's | gōble᪲t | quāffed. |

Here most people would take the first foot as a dactyl and I did so myself when I read it, assuming it to be identical in metrical, though not in rhythmic value with the preceding line. But your scansion also is defensible and legitimate; it depends upon the intonation one gives to the line. For that is another (very useful and valuable) complication of English rhythm, the part intonation plays in varying lines with an identical metre or even modifying the metre. All these differences (and the multiple possibilities that go with them) arise from the play of the language with these weighted syllables which can be made long or short according to the distribution of the voice — this foot being at will a dactyl or anapaest but a very impure dactyl or a very impure anapaest. I don't know if I have made myself clear, — perhaps more examples would be needed to justify my system, — but I lay stress on it because I have found the recognition of these weighted syllables and their importance for rhythmic variation, an indispensable aid (not the notation but the mental feeling of them) in evolving in my later (unpublished) poetry a new distinct individuality in blank verse and the very possibility of a successful English hexameter. It is their non-recognition and the clumsy use or misuse of weighted dactyls and false spondees that seems to me to have been at the root of the failure to evolve a sound English hexameter; all that has been achieved is a make-believe or a clumsy makeshift.

To return to your poems — I may say that *The Valley* is a very remarkable poem from the rhythmical point of view, quite apart from the exact scansion one gives to it, by the free and always felicitous use of the many elements of variation possible in the language, metrical variation, intonation, weightage, with others more unnameable and subtle. I find that in lyrical poems your *inner* ear which determines these things, seems to be — at least has been in the poems you have yet written — most felicitously infallible. It is only in the less lyrical metres that you have a less inborn gift and made mistakes at the beginning. Even if you do not find models, I imagine that this inner ear in you will find its way if you go on experimenting under its guidance.

Incidentally, I quite approve of your first suggestion about “ă drēam-lā|dĕn wīnd.” I have often thought, why not make some more liberal use of classical feet like the cretic, dochmiac combination etc. (I have tried to do so occasionally to vary my latest type of blank verse.) Here to speak of the first foot as a spondee is to force things a little. To treat it as a dochmiac movement at once puts it on the true footing — or so it seems to me.

I have written nothing about the other poem yet, because I was perplexed a little by the choice between two systems of scansion. In the old style metrics it would be:

Rĕd lā|dy̆bīrd, | blăck lā|dy̆bīrd,
    Lādy̆bĭrd | sāblĕ ănd | gōld,
Lōwly̆ yoŭ | swīng, | flūttĕr yŏur | wīng,
    Ănd | fāre tŏ thĕ | fēte ŏn thĕ | wōld.

Yours is more new and in consonance with the modern way of looking at lyrical movement. But whichever way you take it, the melody is exquisite — and the language and substance also.

17 December 1931

*

New-Risen Moon's Eclipse

Harsh like the shorn head high of a gaunt grey-hooded friar
Who fears the beauty and use of sculptured limbs
(Branding the sculptor-archetype a liar),
O moon but lately risen from the foam where the seamew skims —
Form that a wan light cassocks, grace that a tonsure dims.

Joy that the leaden curse is rolled away to leave the golden
Tresses of earth-transforming gramarye
Whereby our wildered flesh-fret is enfolden —
O fair as the foam-fashioned goddess that awoke from the wondering sea,
Love with the earth-shroud lifted, star from the shade set free!

The poem is, on the contrary, a very good one. The one thing that can be said against it is that you need to go through it twice or thrice before the full beauty of the thought, rhythm and imagery comes to the surface, — but is that a demerit? Poems that are too easily read, as a French critic puts it, are not always the best. I myself doubted a little at first reading about the rhythm of the three first lines of the second verse, but that was because I was listening with the outer ear, my attention having been dulled by much dealing with miscellaneous correspondence before I turned to the poem; but as soon as it got inside to the inner ear, I felt the subtlety and rareness of the movement. There is a great beauty and significant force in the imagery and a remarkably successful fusion of the supporting object (physical symbol) into the revealing or transmuting image and the image into the object, which is part of the highest art of symbolic or mystic poetry. Heard before? If you refer to elements of the rhythm, words or phrases here and there, or images used before though not in the same way, where is the poetry in so old and rich a literature as the English that altogether escapes this suspicion of "heard before"? Absolute originality in that sense is rare, almost non-existent; we are all those who went before us with something new added that is ourselves, and it is this something new added that transfigures and is the real originality. In this sense there is a great impression of original power in the beauty of the first verse and hardly less in the second. It seems to me very successful, and "triviality" is the description that can be least applied to it while it could lack interest only to those who have no mind for poetry of this character. March 1932

*

> Does not a compound like "flesh-fret" recall such typically Hopkinsian compounds as "bugle-blue", "cuckoo-call", "fast-flying" or "dapple-dawn-drawn"?

Surely, one cannot be accused of being Hopkinsian, merely because of a successfully copious alliteration and an alliterative compound? These things have happened before Hopkins and will go on happening after him even if he is no longer read. It may be that these turns came to Arjava because of the influence of Hopkins, — to that only he can plead Yes or No. What I say is that the way he uses them is *not* Hopkinsian, not Swinburnian, but Arjavan. "Flesh-fret" has not the least resemblance to "bugle-blue" or "cuckoo-call" or "fast-flying", still less to "dapple-dawn-drawn" except the mere external fact of the alliterative structure; its spiritual quality is quite different. To take an idea or a formation or anything else from a former poet — as Molière took his "bien" wherever he found it, — is common to every maker of verse; we don't write on a blank slate virgin of the past. Indian sculpture or architecture may have taken this form from the Greeks or that form from the Persians; but neither is in the least degree Achaemenian or Hellenistic. 1 April 1932

*

Twilight Hush

A forest | of shadows | gliding fast,
    Magnetwise, | as drawn on | by the sun
˘ ˘ ¯ ˘
For wester|ly converging | sunset-goal —
    Zenith past, | how eeri|ly they run!

Ŏn pāths thăt | meander | ’cross the sky,

Cloudy-maned | the centaurs | bĕnd ăfār

Mōon-bōw thăt | is aiming, | silver-taut,

Arrows made | of silence | at a star.

This seems to me successful. The last stanza especially is very beautiful in idea and expression and rhythm. 19 October 1933

*

> The second stanza has “that” repeated in the first and third lines in the same metrical place; is this not a defect?

It is a slight defect, but it is a defect.

> Though *in practice* I am still a long way from your subtly balanced rhythm, I think I see *in theory* one at least of the secrets. There must be very little partition of *words* between two feet — and still less of feet between two successive *rhythmic phrases*; that is to say, the pauses between successive rhythmic phrases must mark the ending of a complete foot, and in almost all cases the foot must end with the syllable at the end of a word.

Yes, you have seen the main principle.

> Does the modulation in the second foot of line 3 (a third paeon in place of an amphibrach) interfere with the metrical movement I am in quest of?

It depends on the character of the rhythm you want to embody. If it is the purely lyrical as in the *Trance*, then it interferes — if it is a graver and slower movement, then not.

The whole difficulty of transferring classical metres or the classical quantitative system into English seems to me to hinge on this great difference that quantities and quantitative feet in Greek and Latin are clear-cut settled unmistakable things — while in English quantity is loose, uncertain, plastic. How to solve the problem? If we try to follow the same unmistakably exact quantitative system in English (which means a coincidence of feet and rhythmic phrases), will not monotony be inevitable? On the other hand if we allow plasticity, free modulations, etc., will not there be a metrical chaos and the absence of all clear character in the rhythm? It is the problem that has to be solved — how to get through between Scylla and Charybdis. My own line of approach is to try and reproduce the classical metres as exactly as possible in English *first* and then see what plasticity, what modulations, what devices to avoid monotony can be discovered — and how far they can be used without destroying the fundamental character of the metre. In *Trance* I avoided all experiments, using the pure form only — and the sole device used to prevent the effect of an unrelieved monotone was the use of rhyme. I tried even to accept the monotone and make it a part of the charm of the rhythm, by suiting it to the treatment of the subject — a single tone thrice repeated. This involved a purely lyrical treatment — the brevity was also essential. I not only observed the principle of equating the rhythmic phrases with the feet, but I was careful to use unmistakably short quantities for the classic shorts. Thus my closing anapaest was a true unmistakable anapaest in all the six lines where it came. In your last attempt (*Twilight Hush*) you have done the first and third lines perfectly and the effect is very good, but in the second line of the second stanza your "bend afar" does not give the effect of an anapaest because it comes after an unaccented syllable and one inevitably reads it as a cretic. There were many of these doubtful feet — doubtful on the classic principle — in your first two attempts. I state simply what has happened — and the problem underlying it. How to solve the problem completely I shall yet have to see. It can only come by experiment and observation — *ambulando*.

*

Across triumphant acres of the night
Slow-swung pinions of the unborn dream
To the hidden daybreak pursue primeval flight.

> Chartless unfrontiered aeons of the dark,
> On their lonely silence breaks no morning theme, —
> Our dreams have held the Promethean spark.
>
> But half descried, the dawn-lit peaks of joy, —
> There, living hues shall blend in a rainbow stream,
> And there no sundering thought can enter or destroy.
>
> I feel rather oppressed by the contrast between the genuineness and depth and strength of the feeling in my experience, and the surely very inadequate means of conveying any of it to the reader. Words like "triumphant . . . night", "hidden daybreak", "lonely silence", "sundering thought" are surely being entrusted with a task which can never be carried out with a reader who does not go out far more than half way to meet the emotional significance?

It is always the difficulty of expression that words can only suggest these deeper things though they can suggest them with a certain force — even a creative force — but there must be the receptivity in the reader also. Your phrases "triumphant acres of the night" etc. have a considerable power in them; all the lines indeed are such that the significance could hardly be better conveyed, but still the full significance (the suggestion not merely of the idea, but of the experience behind it) can only be got if the reader listens not only with the mind, but with the inner sense and feeling. 8 January 1935

*

Totalitarian

Night was closing on the traveller
    When he came
To the empty eerie courtyard
    With no name.
Loud he called; no echo answered;
    Nothing stirred:
But a crescent moon swung wanly,
    White as curd.
When he flashed his single sword-blade

Through the gloom,
None resisted — till he frantic,
Filled with doom,
Hurled his weapon through the gloaming.
Took no aim;
Saw his likenesses around him
Do the same:
Viewed a thousand swordless figures
Like his own —
Then first knew in that cold starlight
Hell, alone.

Exceedingly original and vivid — the description with its economy and felicity of phrase is very telling. 11 October 1936

*

> My appreciation of the effect of Arjava's poem, especially its first eight lines, was a little staled by the memory of De la Mare's *Listeners*.

De la Mare's poem has a delicate beauty throughout and a sort of daintily fanciful suggestion of the occult world. I do not know if there is anything more. The weakness of it is that it reads like a thing imagined — the images and details are those that might be written of a haunted house on earth which has got possessed by some occult presences. Arjava must no doubt have taken his starting point from a reminiscence of this poem, but there is nothing else in common with De la Mare — his poem is an extraordinarily energetic and powerful vision of an occult world and every phrase is intimately evocative of the beyond as a thing vividly seen and strongly lived — it is not on earth, this courtyard and this crescent moon, we are at once in an unearthly world and in a place somewhere in the soul of man and all the details, sparing, with a powerful economy of phrase and image and brevity of movement but revelatory in each touch as opposed to the dim moonlight suggestiveness supported by a profusion of detail and long elaborating development in De la Mare — of course that has its value also — make us entirely feel ourselves there. I therefore maintain my description "original" not only for the latter part of the poem but for the opening also. It is not an echo, it is an independent creation. Indeed the difference of the two poems comes out most strongly in these very lines.

> . . . the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
> That goes down to the empty hall,
>
> . . . the dark turf,
> 'Neath the starred and leafy sky

are a description of things on earth made occult only by the presence of the phantom listeners. But

> . . . the empty eerie courtyard
> With no name

or

> . . . the crescent moon swung wanly,
> White as curd

are not earthly, they belong to a terrible elsewhere, while the later part of the poem carries this elsewhere into a province of the soul. That is the distinction and makes the perfect successfulness of Arjava's poem. 13 October 1936

*

The Flower of Light

This whiteness has no withering;
When petals fall,
Miraculous swan's-down through the air,
A hundred petals build the crowning flower
Still, nor all
Dissevering gusts can make that stateliness less fair.
The bee can settle in its heart of light —
O wingèd soul;
But we with fettered feet and soiled with clay
Gaze through bewildered tears
At that quintessenced goal,
Craving one prized petal-touch may light on our dismay.

> I have been long an admirer of Nolini's poems in free verse. Does this experiment of mine fall between two stools, creating expectations of regularity which it then disappoints — and sounding more like a metrical medley or "salad" than one piece of rhythmic movement?

Well, it is not free verse as people understand it. But it is verse which the usual thing is not and at the same time it is free. I find it fascinating — the rhythm is subtle, delicate and faultless. I don't know enough of modern (contemporary) poetry to be sure that it is a new form you have found, but at any rate it is one well worth following out. It enables one to vary the length and movement, form and distribution of rhymes as the thought and feeling need without falling into the formlessness of a prose movement — it has, that is to say, the quality of metrical poetry without its fetters. As for the poem itself, it is magnificently beautiful; it has that psychic quality — here the expression of a psychic sorrow — which is so rare and the language is luminous and felicitous all through. 1 November 1936

*

The High-flashing Fountains of Song

Subdued the light at the gray evenhush,
As the shadowy helmets of night's vague host
Make dim the East and the North and the South.
Spendthrift day keeps but a dwindling heap of gold
Low on the westward margins of the sky.
Spirit with wings of light and darkness
Sail through the fast-closing gates of the West
And bear me out of the world;
The world that is frozen music (but the performers were
faulty).
Haply the high-flashing fountains of song
Play still in Supernal Eden
And the air is a diamond undimmed by Time's
misadventures.
The unchanging light of the One, enmeshed in the
murmuring spray,

Builds all the colours of the soul.
And the speechless telling of mysteries
Leaves them in the song-hidden heart of Light.

I find this superb — in every line. The thought and language and imagery are very beautiful, but most I find that its rhythmic achievement solves entirely for the first time (it was partly done in some former poems) the problem of free verse. The object of free verse is to find a rhythm in which one can dispense with rhyme and the limitations of a fixed metre and yet have a poetic rhythm, not either a flat or an elevated prose rhythm cut up into lengths. I think this poem shows how it can be done. There is a true poetic rhythm, even a metrical beat, but without any fixity, pleasant and verging with the curve or sweep of the thought and carrying admirably its perfect poetic expression. It may not be the only way in which the problem can be solved, but it is one and a very beautiful way. 27 February 1937

Jyotirmayi

কোন গোপন মায়ায় তিমির-ছায়ায়
গ্রহ শশী নীড় বাঁধে —
নিশি আলো-ফুল মালা গাঁথে!
ঘন যামিনীর কোলে সুর-সম দোলে
কোটি তারা — ঘিরি' চাঁদে!

ওগো স্বপন-তরির গীতি-দীপালির
যে পথে পরাণ খোলে,
কেন প্রখর দিবসে গগন-সরসে
আঁখি সেই পথ ভোলে!

কেন কমলা লুকায়ে ব্যথা-বীথিছায়ে
অলকা রাগিণী সাধে!
বুঝি উজল প্রহরে — সে সুধা শিহরে,
কৌমুদী-হিয়া কাঁদে!

I find no difficulty in the last stanza of Jyotirmayi's poem nor any in connecting it with the two former stanzas. It is a single feeling and subjective idea or vision expressing itself in three facets. In the full night of the spirit there is a luminosity from above in the very heart of the darkness — imaged by the moon and stars in the bosom of the Night. (The night-sky with the moon (spiritual light) and the stars is a well-known symbol and it is seen frequently by sadhaks even when they do not know its meaning.) In that night of the spirit is the Dream to which or through which a path is found that in the ordinary light of waking day one forgets or misses. In the night of the spirit are shadowy avenues of pain, but even in that shadow the Power of Beauty and Beatitude sings secretly and unseen the strains of Paradise. But in the light of day the mystic heart of moonlight sorrowfully weeps, suppressed, for, even though the nectar of it is there behind, it falters away from this garish light — because it is itself a subtle thing of dream, not of conscious waking mind-nature. That is how I understand or rather try mentally to express it. In this kind of poetry it is a mistake to fix a very intellectual or a very abstract sense on what should be kept vague in outline but vivid in feeling — by mentalising one puts at once too much and too little in it. 10 June 1936

Nirodbaran

What do you say to today's poem?

দিনান্তে কল্পনাময়ী কনকদুহিতা
একাকী বসিয়া ওই বিটপী-তলায়,
সমুত্থিত স্বরূপের সরসী দোলায়
চেয়ে থাকে নির্নিমেষ; অতল-প্রোথিতা
নির্ঝরিণী-বিদ্যুতের বিলাপ-কাহিনী
—ধমনী-শোণিতে যেন স্তম্ভিত বিষাদ—
ঢালে আলোকণ্ঠ হ'তে সে অভিসম্পাত।
গন্ধহারা পবনের তরঙ্গবাহিনী
নিয়ে যায় তারি মন্ত্ররশ্মির ভূষণ
নিঃশব্দ ঊষার নীল স্বয়ম্ভূ সাগরে;
নিহিত রবির লিখা অসাঙ্গ স্পন্দন
সৃষ্টি করে ইন্দ্রজাল-মন্দ্রিত অন্তরে

অলোক রহস্য-ছবি; সে প্রোজ্জ্বল হাসি
বিধাতার মর্মঝরা স্বর্ণাঙ্কিত বাঁশি ।

Very fine, this time.

Well, let us put it in English — without trying to be too literal, turning the phrases to suit the English language. If there are any mistakes of rendering they can be adjusted.

At the day-end behold the Golden Daughter of Imaginations —
She sits alone under the Tree of Life —
A form of the Truth of Being has risen before her rocking there like a lake
And on it is her unwinking gaze. But from the unfathomed Abyss where it was buried, upsurges
A tale of lamentation, a torrent-lightning passion,
A melancholy held fixed in the flowing blood of the veins, —
A curse thrown from a throat of light.
The rivers of a wind that has lost its perfumes are bearing away
On their waves the Mantra-rays that were her ornaments
Into the blue self-born sea of a silent Dawn;
The ceaseless vibration-scroll of a hidden Sun
Creates within her, where all is a magic incantation,
A picture of the transcendent Mystery; — that luminous laughter
(Or, A mystery-picture of the Transcendent?)
Is like the voice of a gold-fretted flute flowing from the inmost heart of the Creator.

Now, I don't know whether that was what you meant, but it is the meaning I find there. Very likely it has no head or tail, but it has a body and a very beautiful body — and I ask with Baron, why do you want to understand? why do you want to cut it up into the dry mathematical figures of the Intellect? Hang it all, sir! In spite of myself you are making me a convert to the Housman theory and Surrealism. No, Sir — feel, instand, overstand, interstand, but don't try to understand the creations of a supra-intellectual Beauty.

It is enough to feel and grasp without trying to "understand" the creations of a supra-intellectual Beauty. 17 February 1937

*

~~The growing~~ **A glowing** heart of day[6]
~~Is lily white~~[7]**Woke diamond-white,**
~~Rising out of the~~ **From its prison-bed of** clay[8]
Clothed with the night.

Silent and slow and dim
~~Are its hidden~~ **Its infant** beat:
~~On its~~ **But in the** invisible rim
~~Various~~ **Worlds on** worlds ~~meet~~ [9]**met**

And flow**ed** upon a high
Current of thought
To an unknown ~~destiny~~ **ecstasy**
Transparence-~~shot~~ **wrought.**

Behind ~~an~~ **the** emptiness
Of light and shade
~~Dreams of a heaven-~~ **Heaven's intimate** caress
~~Are secretly laid~~ **Secretly played**

And ~~the~~ luminous ~~wings~~ **eyes** of stars
~~Come out of~~ **Looked from** the deep
And its ~~E~~engulfing ~~darkness~~ bars[10]
~~With its~~ **Of** passion-sleep~~,~~**,**

~~Then~~ **And** voices ~~can~~ **could** be heard
Across the sky,
~~Falling like a~~ **Calling the white** sun-word
~~From~~ **Of** infinity.

~~They are the~~ **Transient** voices of time
Fading away
~~Beyond~~ **Around** the mystic chime
Of the heart of day.

---

[6] *Here and in several other places in this section, the poem as submitted to Sri Aurobindo is printed in* roman *type, words cancelled by him are printed in* ~~strike-out~~ *mode, and words added by him are printed in* **bold** *type. — Ed.*
[7] Not only cheap but gratis.
[8] It doesn't usually.
[9] Terribly prosaic.
[10] I don't think bars ever engulf, but as it is surrealistically appropriate —

> This again is a riddle! I absolutely surrendered. To whom? Can you tell me and solve the mystery?

Not very cogent, whether realistically or surrealistically. But see how with a few alterations I have coged it. (Excuse the word, it is surrealistic). I don't put double lines as I don't want to pay too many compliments to myself. I don't say that the new version has any more meaning than the first. But significance, sir, significance! Fathomless!

As for the inspiration it was a very remarkable source you tapped — super-Blakish, but your transcription is faulty, e.g. lily-white, rising out of the clay, that horrible "various", and constant mistakes in the last four stanzas. Only the third came out altogether right — subject to the change you yourself made of "destiny" to "ecstasy" and "shot" to "wrought". But obviously the past tense is needed instead of the present so as to give the sense of something that has been seen. 7 July 1938

*

> I have seen how your little touches have "coged" the poem. Does it then show that if my transcription becomes perfect some day, the whole thing will drop perfectly O.K.?

Of course. At present the mind still interferes too much, catching at an expression which will somehow approximate to the thing meant instead of waiting for the one true word. This catching is of course involuntary and the mind does it passively without knowing what it is doing — a sort of instinctive haste to get the thing down. In so doing it gets an inferior layer of inspiration to comb for the words even when the substance is from a higher one.

> I didn't get the time to revise it. But even if I had revised it, do you think I could have made it better?

Not necessarily.

> When a thing is not at all comprehended, how to correct? By inner feeling?

No; by getting into touch with the real source. The defects come from a non-contact or an interception by some inferior source as explained above.

> Wherever alternatives came, I put them and in two places they stuck. If I try to understand the thing every bit seems ridiculous.

Because you are trying to find a mental meaning and your mind is not familiar with the images, symbols, experiences that are peculiar to this realm. Each realm of experience has its own figures, its own language, its own vision and the physical mind not catching the link finds it all absurd. At the same time the main idea in yesterday's is quite clear. The heart of day evolving from clay and night is obviously the upward luminous movement of the awakened spiritual consciousness covering the intermediate worlds (vital, mental, psychic) in its passage to the supreme Ananda (unknown ecstasy, transparence-wrought, the transparence being that well-known-to-mystics experience of the pure spiritual consciousness and existence). In the light of the main idea the last four stanzas should surely be clear — the stars and the sun being well-known symbols.

> What "remarkable source", please? Inner or over?

Can't specify — as these things have no name. Inner — over also in imagery, but not what I call the overhead planes. These belong to the inner mind or inner vital or to the intuitive mind or anywhere else that is mystic. 8 July 1938

*

The breath of life is a ~~flaming~~ **flame**-mystery~~!~~**,**
~~It~~ **That** circles ~~round~~ **towards** a hidden altitude,
~~Each~~ **A spark, a** movement ~~being a spark~~ of eternity
And ~~every~~ **its occult** seed a veiled God-hood.

Creation is a ~~shadow~~ **child** of **God**-delight;
| Born from ~~the~~ illimitable ~~hush~~ **seas** of sound

~~And gains~~ **It turns to** its ~~primal state~~ **tranquil source** in the Infinite
~~Like a wave freed from time's monotonous round.~~
Escaping from the monotone of Time's round.

The mystic ~~hues~~ **Light** that shines in every heart
||Climbs towards ~~the~~ **an** unknown solitary Sun
~~Where they are joined to their~~ **And joins its own** immortal counterpart
~~And grows into a~~ **Accomplished in that** timeless union.

~~Everything~~ **Thus all things born** passe~~s~~ into a divine
Nothingness and ~~begins to bear~~ **reach that single Bliss** again
|||**Whence they sprang** like stars ~~out of~~ **on** a nebulous sky-line,
||||A fathomless beauty ~~with~~in a sphere of pain.

> This is really disappointing! Oh, the time it took! I am sure you will find plenty of hurdles.

There are indeed very difficult hurdles but I have leaped them all — only in the process the poem has got considerably reshaped. So, I don't put lines except for the few that have remained almost as they were. The last line is magnificent — the others mostly needed a revision which they don't seem to have got.

> Day by day things are getting difficult, more than yoga, sir! My head will break one day! Be prepared, please!

Well, well, when the head is broken, a passage for a superior light is often created — so either way you gain, a safe head or an illumined one. 31 August 1938

*

> In yesterday's poem you hurdled very well indeed. Your comment about the last line has comforted me very much. When I wrote it, it came like a shot; but I didn't feel its magnificence. The rhythm, word-music, etc. are not that striking. Perhaps you find some inner truth behind these things that magnifies them to you?

Well, have you become a disciple of Baron and the surrealists? You seem to suggest that significance does not matter and need not enter into the account in judging or feeling poetry! Rhythm and word music are indispensable, but are not the whole of poetry. For instance lines like these

> In the human heart of Heligoland
> A hunger wakes for the silver sea;
> For waving the might of his magical wand
> God sits on his throne in eternity,

has plenty of rhythm and word music — a surrealist might pass it, but I certainly would not. Your suggestion that my seeing the inner truth behind a line magnifies it to me, i.e. gives it a false value to me which it does not really have as poetry, may or may not be correct. But, certainly, the significance and feeling suggested and borne home by the words and rhythm are in my view a capital part of the value of poetry. Shakespeare's lines "Absent thee from felicity awhile And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain" have a skilful and consummate rhythm and word combination, but this gets its full value as the perfect embodiment of a profound and moving significance, the expression in a few words of a whole range of human world-experience. It is for a similar quality that I have marked this line. Coming after the striking and significant image of the stars on the sky-line and the single Bliss that is the source of all, it expresses with a great force of poetic vision and emotion the sense of the original Delight contrasted with the world of sorrow born from it and yet the deep presence of that Delight in an unseizable beauty of things. But even isolated and taken by itself there is a profound and moving beauty in the thought, expression and rhythm of the line and it is surprising to me that anyone can miss it. It expresses it not intellectually but through vision and emotion. As for rhythm and word music, it is certainly not striking in the sense of being out of the way or unheard of, but it is perfect — technically in the variation of vowels and the weaving of the consonants and the distribution of longs and shorts, more deeply in the modulated rhythmic movement and the calling in of overtones. I don't know what more you want in that line. 1 September 1938

Amal Kiran (K. D. Sethna)

Out of the Unknown

Out of the Unknown, like meteor-rain
~~Glimmered across~~ **Fell glimmering on** my dark despair
The syllables of a prophetic tongue:
"~~O thou whose heart is~~ **O heart disconsolate,** beauty-wrung,
~~And roams~~ **Wanderer** unsated, — not in vain
The ~~wingéd~~ **floating** shadow of a melody
~~Floating in~~ **Winging through** heavenly air
~~Fell~~ **Was cast** on thy human happiness
And dimmed ~~its~~ **the** eyes ~~to~~ **with** longing pain
~~With~~ **And** Brindavun's immortal memory!
Thy life's ~~a quest~~ **quest is** not meaningless
Though Jumuna's banks are ~~wild~~ **void** and bare;
~~For hark,~~ **Now too** a spirit-flute
~~Now wafts~~ **Conveys** again ~~such holy~~ **so holy a** calm abroad,
That ~~on the lips of anguish~~ **even on misery's lips fall'n** mute
~~With~~ **In** uncompanioned throes
Pale silence blossoms like a rose
Deep-rooted in the soul's eternity.
Rest not till thou find sanctuary
Where Brindavun has gone behind its God.
~~There the red~~ **For there the** veil shall draw aside,
Which hangs between thy inturned gaze
And Him of the irradiant face:
His musical tranquillity
Shall once more in thy ear abide
And all the heart-beats of thy life's increase
Count but the starlike moments of His peace."

[*Sri Aurobindo wrote the paragraphs published, in revised form, on pages 5 to 7 above, and continued*:]

Your present effort is slightly improved, but most of it comes from or through the outer intelligence. Only in the closing passage are there five lines from your highest source, and the rest is reasonably like what the creative intelligence in you wanted to transmit. But the "red" veil with its splash of pseudo-colour comes from the brain, not from the true source. All the opening part is an attempt of the outer intelligence to put into its own language something it did not catch in its pure form. It is in a quite different tone and speech from the close; for that is either grave and deep or of a high elevation and illumined power, but this opening is all imitative intellect stuff — romantic pseudo-colour, Shelley-Byronic, fairly well done in its own kind of stuff, but not the thing at all. I have suggested some alterations — supposing you want to give to this opening too the same tone or nearly the same — grave and deep — as the major part of the close. The alterations may seem slight to you, but in all writing, prose or poetry, indeed in all art, a few slight alterations, a touch here and a touch there can alter the whole tone and quality of a work or a passage. My alterations are meant either to set right verbal poverties or awkwardnesses or to wipe out false vital colour and give instead the gravity of the higher poetic source.

2 June 1931

*

> This sonnet was more or less suggested by one written by Edward Shanks [*see pages 431–32*]. I should like to ascertain whether the seed fell on really fruitful soil or not. The form, I must admit, is not perfect, because while the sestet is Italian the octet does not correspond to the necessary abba abba.

Not only with the voice of mighty things,
    Exultant rain or swift importunate sea,
But even on the unnoticeable wings
    Of nameless birdsong I shall quest for Thee.
No fragmentary passion I aspire
    To consecrate, howe'er magnificent:
    But one glad life of mingling hours intent
Upon thy beauty, touched with self-same fire.

For, what avail great moments if their flight
Leave the familiar day a soulless din;
Nor give their glory a true antiphonal note
Each wandering wind-lark; nor the common night
Find the inward eye a placid mere wherein
Worship holds argently the heavens afloat?

(1) This can hardly be called a sonnet; fantasy of form is inconsistent with the severe building of a sonnet. If you want a new form and wish to make it by combining the Shakespearean rhyme sequence in the octet with the Miltonic in the sestet, you *can* make that venture, but in that case you will have to transpose the fifth and sixth lines

To consecrate, howe'er magnificent, —
No fragmentary passion I aspire,
But one glad life of mingling hours intent
Upon thy beauty, touched with self-same fire.

That would, to my mind, be an improvement in expression as well as in form. But the present *khichadi* is impossible.

(2) "Nor give their glory a true antiphonal note"

with its double anapaest is too jerky a movement. Anapaests and dactyls can be thrown into a modern pentameter, but they must be managed more skilfully than that. I would suggest

Nor give their glory's true antiphonal note
Each wanderer wind-lark

(3) "Find the inward eye" is again rhythmically clumsy; especially amid so many lines of a smooth liquid movement it brings one up with a jerk like the sudden jolt of a smoothly running car.

Find the soul's gaze a placid mere wherein

or something like that would do much better.

(4) Why semi-colons after "din" and "wind-lark" instead of the expected commas?

Apart from these defects of detail, the poem is a good one; once they are mended, it becomes a fine work. 12 June 1931

*

Is this poem nearer perfection now?

"O thou who wast enamoured of earth's bloom
And intimate fragrance and charmed throbbing voice
Of mutable pleasure now disdained by Thee —
Far-visaged wanderer, dost thou rejoice
Straining towards the empty-hearted gloom
To kiss the cold lips of Eternity?"

"Fruitless and drear has proved each carnal prize
When he who strove could bring no face of flame,
And[11] wild magnificence of youth's caress....
Not with sage calm, but thrilled vast hands, I claim
The unfathomed dark which round my spirit lies —
And touch undying, rapturous Loveliness!"

The second verse is slightly better, but it is not at all equal to the first. Poetry that arrives at its aim gives the reader a sense of satisfying finality in the expression (even when the substance is insignificant); it is like an arrow that hits the target in the centre. Poetry that passes by the target or hits only the outside of it, either fails or gets a partial success, but in any case it does not carry that sense of satisfying finality. This is the difference between the two verses. 10 July 1931

*

This errant life is dear although it dies;
And human lips are sweet though they but sing
Of stars estranged from us; and youth's emprise
Is wondrous yet, although an unsure thing.

Cloud-lucent Bliss untouched by earthiness!
I fear to soar lest tender bonds grow less

---

[11] Better repeat the "No"; it will strengthen a little these two lines, which are rather weak compared with the rest.

Beyond the waving verdure of our sighs.[12]
If Thou desirest my weak self to outgrow
Its mortal longings, lean down from above,
Temper the unborn light no thought can trace,
Suffuse my mood with a familiar glow!
For 'tis with mouth of clay I supplicate;
Speak to me heart to heart words intimate,
And all Thy formless glory turn to love
And mould Thy love into a human face!

But for this one unfortunate line a beautiful poem, one of the very best you have written. The last six lines, one may say even the last eight, are absolutely perfect. If you could always write like that, you would take your place among English poets and no low place either.[13] July 1931

*

> I was wondering whether a second such burst of quintessential romantic poetry as Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* was not possible. The day before yesterday I got some kind of inspiration and wrote the first draft of these lines that form a fragment on the same theme as that of Coleridge. But can it come anywhere near that gem?

Kubla Khan

"For thy unforgettable sake
See my royal passion wake
Marmoreal sleep to towering dreamery,
In wide felicitous splendour hazed,
With echoes magic, numberless, that throng
Through blossoming vales, an ever-vigilant song
Of naked waters tremulously embraced
By shadows of my shining ecstasy! . . .

" . . . The moon enkindles in the eyes
A lonely virginal surprise —

---

[12] This line is terribly fanciful in expression. Green sighs? Sighs with branches?
[13] *For Sri Aurobindo's opinion of the final version of this poem, see pp. 203 – 04. — Ed.*

O hasten while the warm blood runs,
To odorous gardens born for thy delight!
What memories that oppose the charm of night
Allure towards unseen magnificence
The inaccessible beauty of thy face?
Must Kubla ever in thy silence trace
The strange voice of the sacred river flowing
Beyond the lustrous hours of Xanadu
And the sweet foison of their passionate sowing,
Down to cold caverns hidden from his view,
In search of some unpathed phantasmal sea's
Remote profundities?"

I fear your inspiration has played you false — far from the quintessence, I do not find even the essence of romantic poetry here. It is not inspiring either. I do not know why this fancy has seized on you to follow in the trace of others, improving on Abercrombie, "rivalling" Coleridge, — and if to improve on Abercrombie is easy (though why anyone should try it, I don't know), to rival Coleridge is not such an easy job, I can assure you. In any case, no good work is likely to come out of such a second-hand motive.

Let me add that this poem of Coleridge is a masterpiece, not because it is the quintessence of romantic poetry, but because it is a genuine supraphysical experience caught and rendered in a rare hour of exaltation with an absolute accuracy of vision and authenticity of rhythm. Farther, romantic poetry could be genuine in the early nineteenth century, but the attempt to walk back into it in the year of grace 1931 is not likely to be a success, it can only result in an artificial literary exercise. You have a genuine vein of poetic inspiration somewhere above your intellect which comes through sometimes when the said intellect can be induced to be quiet and the lower vital does not meddle. If I were you, I should try to find that always and make the access to it free and the transcriptions from it pure (for then your writing becomes marvellously good); that would be a truer line of progress than these exercises. 21 August 1931

*

> Do you think my poem *Kubla Khan* will be much improved if I give it a conclusion improvised from an early, unequal, effort of mine, so that it ends:
>
> That longing of mysterious tears
> From infinite to infinite?
>
> I write "mysterious" because Kubla, though not quite innocent of spiritual things, would not exactly agree to calling the "tears" ecstatic and thus weaken his appeal.

There is nothing more dangerous — I was going to say criminal — than to alter a perfect line or passage of poetry, especially when it is done from a mere intellectual motive. If Kubla cannot have a longing of ecstatic tears, let him go to the devil where he belongs, his limitations are no reason for spoiling a perfect thing. With "ecstatic" these two lines are authentic, inspired, inevitable — suggestive of a deep spiritual experience, — with "mysterious" they become falsely romantic and commonplace, with nothing true or genuine behind the pretentiousness of the words.

21 August 1931

*

O Grace that flowest from the Master's Will,
How fondly Thou dost mitigate the power
Of utter summit for our valleyed sake,[1]*
That like a wondrous yet familiar hour
Eternity may claim soul's countryside![2] . . .
On heights Thou hast Thy ancient dwelling, still
From the majestic altitudes to us
Thou com'st with gifts a beauty riverine,[3]
Of all Thy aerial secrets rumourous,
So we may find the glimmering crests that make
Signal of ultimate destiny, not chill, —
Nor godhead Thou hast planned to make us quest,
A dizzy strangeness, — we who now wind rest,
From mortal coils, with the white rapturous wine

---

* *The numbers 1 – 6 refer to the corresponding numbers on the next page. — Ed.*

Of Thy prophetic cadence, and inhale
The mountain coolness in Thy streaming hair![4] . . .
Beauteous, divine, whose mercies never fail,[5]
O Ganga of the in-world! From life's care
Freed by Thy love, our hearts are fortified
To seek the stainless fountain of Thy tide
And contemplate the illimitable form
Of Shiva silent like a frozen storm.[6]

1. "for our valleyed sake" is a locution that offers fascinating possibilities but fails to sound English. One might risk "Let fall some tears for my unhappy sake" in defiance of grammar or, humourously, "Oh, shed some sweat-drops for my corpulent sake", but "valleyed sake" carries the principle of the "*Arṣa prayog*" (Rishi's license) beyond the boundaries of the possible.

2. When an image comes out from the mind not properly transmuted in the inner vision or delivered by the alchemy of language, it betrays itself as coin of the fancy or the contriving intellect and is then called a conceit. These two lines sound very much like a conceit; transmuted it might have been a fine image.

3. I first missed this adjective in a search in Chambers, but now I find it. Even so I cannot reconcile myself to it — it sounds Vanagramic (to invent an adjective not found in Chambers!).

4. I am obliged to say that I cannot make anything very lucid or coherent or effective out of these seven lines; I fail possibly to follow the turns of your thought — or its connections. Or is it the images that are thrust into each other rather than fused into a whole?

5. [*In answer to the question: "should I say 'superb' instead? Or something else?"*] "Beauteous, divine" is terribly flat and commonplace; but superb would make bad worse.

6. These last lines could be very fine if they were recast under a more powerful and magic-working inspiration.

As a whole, this poem is one of those that can have a *succès d'estime* by reason of its ideas and a certain talent in the form and the language, but seems to be rather strongly constructed than inspired. The transmutation, the alchemy of language I have already spoken of are missing. Certain turns of the style in this poem suggest an (perhaps subconscious) imitation of the liberties (not in correction, but bold or contracted terms) which Arjava occasionally takes with the English language, but Arjava's audacities are saved and justified by the abounding poetic energy of his diction and rhythm. I do not think you can afford to follow in that line — for that energy is not yours (otherwise you would write better blank verse than you do); your possibility rather lies in a combination of refined elevation and subtle elegance, the Virgilian not the Aeschylean manner, with which an attempt at over-terse compactness of thought does not agree. 26 August 1931

*

The Temple-Girl of Mo-Hen-Jo-Daro

Behold her face: unto that glorious smile
All sorrow was an ecstasy of gloom
Fragrant with an invisible flame of flowers.
And never but with startling loveliness
Like the white shiver of breeze on moonlit water
Flew the chill thought of death across her dream...

A far cry fades along her kindled curves
To beauty ineffable: shameless and pure,
The rhythm of adoration her sole vesture,
Upon the wayward heart of time she dawns —
A passion wedded to some glowing hush
Beyond the world, in tense eternity!

Your poem has colour and grace and vision in it, but its rhythm is a colourless monotone. Each line is a good blank verse line by itself — except

> Like the white shiver of breeze on moonlit water

which has no rhythm at all, — but together they are flat and ineffective. In blank verse of this type, with few enjambements and even these hardly seem to *enjamber* at all, it is essential to see to two things.

(1) each line must be a thing of force by itself — it is the Marlowesque type and, although you cannot always command a mighty line, either an armoured strength or a clear-cut beauty must be the form of each decasyllable;

(2) each line must be different from the other in its metrical build so as to give the utmost variety possible — otherwise monotony is inevitable.

It is possible to use either of these methods by itself, but the two together are more effective.

I suppose I ought to give an illustration of what I mean and I can do it best by altering slightly your lines to make them conform to the first rule. I am not suggesting substitutes for them, for these would not be in your style; I only want to make my meaning clear.

Behold her face; unto that glorious smile
All sorrow was an ecstasy of gloom,[14]
A rapturous devastating flame of flowers.
Seldom with a rare startling loveliness,
A white shiver of breeze in moonlit waters,
Death flew chill winds of thought across her dream.

A far cry fades along those kindled curves
Into ineffable beauty; shameless-pure,
A rhythm of adoration her sole vesture,
She dances on the wayward heart of time,
And is passion-wedded to some glowing hush,
And is the world caught by eternity.

You will see that the movement of each line is differentiated from that of almost every other and yet there is a sufficient kinship in the whole.

I have done it of course in my own way; yours tends to a more harmonious and coloured beauty and you achieved what was necessary in your *Shakuntala's Farewell*, where each line was a cut gem by itself and there was sufficient variation of movement or at least of rhythmic tone; but here the materials of a good poem are there but the effect fails, the chief fault lying in the defect of rhythm which denies the poetry the value to which it has a right. 8 July 1933

---

[14] These two lines satisfy the rule, so I don't change them.

*

Men dreamed of her strange hair**;** ~~and~~ **they** saw it fall
A cataract of nectar through their sleep,
Crushing the soul with sweetness**;** ~~—~~ ~~and~~ **they** woke ~~a~~ ~~-~~**from** dread,[15]
~~In~~ **With** all their limbs a speechless heaven of pain!

Her voice ~~reached~~ **soared**[16] to Creation's highest peak,
And ~~though a music~~ **that** most delicate ~~its~~ **music with its** rapture
Swe~~pt~~**eping** through ~~the~~ seven worlds ~~and~~ found **out** the gods
Helpless like flames swaying in a huge wind!

A ~~terror~~ beautiful ~~were~~ **terror were** those dark **conscious** eddies,
Her ~~fathomless~~ **pure** vague-glimmering ~~pure~~ **and fathomless** eyes,
~~Wherein~~ **Therein** the spirits that rashly plunged their love
Fell ~~W~~whirled through ~~a~~ lifetime**s** of bewildering bliss!

But all in vain**,** her voice and gaze and hair
Before the snow~~y calm~~ **-pale and** immutable **calm**
Of Shiva's meditation, a frozen fire
Of **lone** omnipotence ~~alone with its~~ **locked in** self-~~splendour~~ **light**!

His far face glowed ~~L~~like an immortal death**:** ~~his far face glowed~~ **—** [17]
The ~~I~~inaudible disclosure of some white
Eternity**, some** ~~of~~[18] unperturbed dream-vast**,**
~~Behind~~ **It slew** the colour and passion of time's heart-beat!

It looks as if you were facing the problem of blank verse by attempting it under conditions of the maximum difficulty. Not content with choosing a form which is based on the single-line[19] blank verse (as opposed to the flowing and freely enjambed variety) you try to unite flow-lines and single-line and farther undertake a form of blank verse quatrains! I have myself tried the blank verse quatrain; even, when I attempted the single-line blank verse base on a large scale in *Savitri*, I found myself falling involuntarily into a series of four-line movement. But even though I was careful in the building, I found it led to a stiff monotony and had to make a principle of variation — one line, two line, three line, four line or longer passages (paragraphs as it were) alternating with each other; otherwise the system would be a failure.

---

[15] "A-dread" seems to me rather feeble.
[16] "Reached" is very weak.
[17] Why this inversion? It spoils the power and directness of the line.
[18] The double "of" is very awkward and spoils both force and flow.
[19] I mean, of course, each line a clear-cut entity by itself.

In attempting the blank verse quatrain one has to avoid like poison all flatness of movement — a flat movement immediately creates a sense of void and sets the ear asking for the absent rhyme. The last line of each verse especially must be a powerful line acting as a strong satisfying close so that the rhyming close-cadence is missed no more. And, secondly, there must be a very careful building of the structure. A mixture of sculpture and architecture is indicated — there should be plenty of clear-cut single lines but they must be built into a quatrain that is itself a perfect structural whole. In your lines it is these qualities that are lacking, so that the poetic substance fails in its effect owing to rhythmic insufficiency. One closing line of yours will absolutely not do — that of the fourth stanza — its feminine ending is enough to damn it; you may have feminine endings but not in the last line of the quatrain, and its whole movement is an unfixed movement. The others would do, but they lose half their force by being continuations of clauses which look back to the previous line for their sense. They can do that sometimes, but only on condition of their still having a clear-cut wholeness in themselves and coming in with a decisive force. In the structure you have attempted to combine the flow of the lyrical quatrain with the force of a single-line blank verse system. I suppose it can be done, but here the single-line has interfered with the flow and the flow has interfered with the single-line force.

In my version I have made only minor changes for the most part, but many of them, — in order to secure what I feel to be the missing elements. I have indicated, in the places where my reasons for change were of another kind, what those reasons were; the rest are dictated by the two considerations of rhythmic efficiency and quatrain structure. In the first verse this structure is secured by putting two pauses in the middle of lines, each clause taking up the sense from there and enlarging into amplitude and then bringing to a forceful close. In the second verse and in the fourth I have attempted a sweeping continuous quatrain movement, but taken care to separate them by a different structure so as to avoid monotony. The third is made of two blank verse couplets, each complementary in sense to the other; the fifth is based on a one-line monumental phrase worked out in sense by a three-line development with a culminating close-line. The whole thing is not perhaps as perfect as it needs to be, but it is in the nature of a demonstration, to show on what principles the blank verse quatrain can be built, if it has to be done at all — I have founded it on the rule of full but well-sculptured single lines and an architectural quatrain structure: others are possible, but I think would be more difficult to execute.

I had half a mind to illustrate my thesis by quotations from *Savitri*, but I resist the temptation, worried by the scowling forehead of Time — this will do.

P.S. I don't consider the proximity of the closing words "light" and "white" in the last stanzas an objection since the quatrains stand as separate entities — so I did not alter; of course in continuous blank verse an objection would be called for.

18 July 1933

*

Would you describe the following poem of mine as "coin of the fancy"? What is the peculiarity of poetic effect, if any, here?

Night

No more the press and play of light release
Thrilling bird-news between high columned trees.
Upon the earth a blank of slumber drops:
Only cicadas toil in grassy shops —
But all their labours seem to cry "Peace, peace."
Nought travels down the roadway save the breeze;

And though beyond our gloom — throb after throb —
Gathers the great heart of a silver mob,
There is no haste in heaven, no frailty mars
The very quiet business of the stars.

It is very successful — the last two lines are very fine and the rest have their perfection. I should call it a mixture of inspiration and cleverness — or perhaps ingenious discovery would be a better phrase. I am referring to such images as "thrilling bird-news", "grassy shops", "silver mob". Essentially they are conceits but saved by the note of inspiration running through the poem — while in the last line the conceit "quiet business" is lifted beyond itself and out of conceitedness by the higher tone at which the inspiration arrives there. 20 August 1936

*

Pharphar

Where is the glassy gold of Pharphar, —
    Or its echoing silver-gray
When the magic ethers of evening
    Wash one the various day?

I have travelled the whole earth over,
    Yet never found
The beautiful body of Pharphar
    Or its soul of secret sound.

But all my dreams are an answer
    To Pharphar's blind career;
And the songs that I sing are an image
    Of quiets I long to hear.

For, only this beauty unreachèd
    No time shall mar —
This river of infinite distance,
    Pharphar.

Very beautiful indeed, subtle and gleaming and delicate. The sound-suggestions are perfect. I suppose it comes from some plane of intuitive inspiration. 15 October 1936

*

> I wonder whether you would indicate the resemblances and differences between De la Mare's *Arabia* — a charming poem — and this one written by myself [*Pharphar*] which was partially influenced by his.

It is indeed charming — De la Mare seems to have an unfailing beauty of language and rhythm and an inspired loveliness of fancy that is captivating. But still it is fancy, the mind playing with its delicate imaginations. A hint of something deeper tries to get through sometimes, but it does not go beyond a hint. That is the difference between his poem and the one it inspired from you. There is some kinship though no sameness in the rhythm and the tone of delicate remoteness it brings with it. But in your poem that something deeper is not hinted, it is caught — throughout — in all the expression, but especially in such lines as

When the magic ethers of evening
Wash one the various day

or

The beautiful body of Pharphar
Or its soul of secret sound

or

This river of infinite distance,
Pharphar.

These expressions give a sort of body to the occult without taking from it its strangeness and do not leave it in mist or in shadowy image or luminous silhouette. That is what a fully successful spiritual or occult poetry has to do, to make the occult and the spiritual real to the vision of the consciousness, the feeling. The occult is most often materialised as by Scott and Shakespeare or else pictured in mists, the spiritual mentalised as in many attempts at spiritual poetry — a reflection in the mind is not enough. For success in the former Arjava's *Totalitarian* with the stark occult reality of its vision is a good example; for the latter there are lines both in his poems and yours that I could instance, but I cannot recall them accurately just now, — but have you not somewhere a line

> The mute unshadowed spaces of her mind?

That would be an instance of the concrete convincing reality of which I am speaking — a spiritual state not hinted at or abstractly put as the metaphysical poets most often do it but presented with a tangible accuracy which one who has lived in the silent wideness of his spiritualised mind can at once recognise as the embodiment in word of his experience.

I do not mean for a moment to deny the value of the exquisite texture of dream in De la Mare's representation, but still this completer embodiment achieves more. 16 October 1936

*

> Why this relapse on my part? Will this gift of expression be always so treacherously fluctuating?

It is not a relapse, but an oscillation which one finds in almost every poet. Each has a general level, a highest level and a lower range in which some defects of his poetical faculty come out. You have three manners: (1) a sort of decorative romantic manner that survives from your early days, — this at a lower pitch turns to too much dressiness of an ornamental kind, at a higher to post-Victorian, Edwardian or Georgian rhetoric with a frequent saving touch of Yeats; (2) a level at which all is fused into a fine intuitive authenticity and beauty, there is seldom anything to change; (3) a higher level of grander movement and language in which you pull down or reach the influences of the Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Overmind Intuition. This last you have not yet fully mastered so as to write with an absolute certainty and faultlessness except by lines and stanzas or else as a whole in rare moments of total inspiration, but you are moving towards mastery in it. Sometimes these inspirations get mixed up together. It is this straining towards greater height that creates the difficulty, yet it is indispensable for the evolution of your genius. It is not surprising therefore that inspiration comes with difficulty often, or that there are dormant periods or returns of the decorative inspiration. All that is part of the day's work and dejection is quite out of place. 20 April 1937

*

Seated Above

Seated above in a measureless trance of truth —
A thunder wearing the lightning's streak of smile,
A lonely monolith of frozen fire,
Sole pyramid piercing to the vast of the One —
Waits Shiva throned on an all-supporting void.
Wing after wing smites to the cosmic sky.
Gathering flame-speed out of their own wild heart —
That tunnel of dream through the body's swoon of rock —
They find their home in this sweet silent Face
With the terrible brain that bursts to a hammer of heaven
And deluges hell with mercies without end.
The abysmal night opens its secret smile
And all the world cries out it is the dawn!

Seated Above is a striking poem but its violent connections and disconnections — I am not condemning them — have somehow awakened the Johnsonian critic in me and I give voice to his objections here without supporting them. His first objection is to "streak of smile" and he wants to know how thunder can wear a smile, because thunder is a sound, not a visible object. The next three lines are very fine, he admits though he wriggles a little at the frozen fire. He would like to know how a wing can have a heart and wants also to know whether it is the heart that is a tunnel of dream and whether it is the tunnel that finds a home and what can be meant by the home of a tunnel. He is startled by the deluge from Shiva's brain and his own brain is ready to burst at the idea that Shiva's brain is being knocked out of his head by the hammer of heaven. The last two lines elicit his first unquestioning approval; that, he says, is the right union of poetry and common-sense expression.

I don't ask you to take these Johnsonianisms seriously; I have only been taking a little exercise in a field foreign to me; but I am not sure this is not how some critics will grumble and groan under this particular hammer of heaven.

12 November 1948

A. E. on Amal Kiran — Sri Aurobindo on A. E.

> A. E. has made some interesting remarks about some of my poems — remarks curious in some places, while finely critical in others. He is puzzled by an unrhythmical line — due really to a typographical error.
>
> To the inexhaustible vastness that lure.
>
> It occurs in the poem which you thought could rank with *This errant life*. Of course it should be "vastnesses". In "A madrigal to enchant her" only the phrase "the song-impetuous mind" seems to have struck his fancy. About *This Errant Life*, which pleased you so much, he has nothing to say. Isn't it strange? What do you think is the reason? Is it that his poetic criterion differs absolutely from yours?

Not strange at all. Simply, there was nothing in him that answered to the emotion and vision of the lines.

*

Your letter suggested a more critical attitude on A. E.'s part than his actual appreciation warrants. His appreciation is, on the contrary, sufficiently warm; "a genuine poetic quality" and "many fine lines" — he could not be expected to say more. The two quotations he makes[20] certainly deserve the praise he gives them, and they are moreover of the kind A. E. and Yeats also, I think, would naturally like. But the poem I selected for especial praise had no striking expressions like these standing out from the rest, just as in a Greek statue there would be no single feature standing out in a special beauty (eyes, lips, head or hands), but the whole has a perfectly modelled grace of equal perfection everywhere, like, let us say, the perfect charm of a statue by Praxiteles. This apart from the idea and feeling, which goes psychically and emotionally much deeper than the ideas in the lines quoted by A.E. which are poetically striking but have not the same strong spiritual appeal; they touch the mind and vital strongly, but the other goes home into the soul.

---

[20] *The song-impetuous mind . . .*
The Eternal Glory is a wanderer
Hungry for lips of clay

It is strange that A.E. should say that the line about "inexhaustible vastnesses" could not scan; of course, "as it stands", there is no possibility of scanning it; but he says "even so", even supposing it is only a typographical error. Perhaps, he is not inclined to tolerate the two anapaests or rather the initial tribrach and medial anapaest in the line? But that would be strange — for it is precisely this kind of freedom that the poetry of today is supposed to effect even in the pentameter. So at least I understood from a review in the *Nation* and from the example of poets like Abercrombie and others. Besides an opening tribrach (one could justify it as an iamb by the elision of the *e* in "the") and a medial anapaest of this kind are, it seems to me, permissible even in fairly regular pentameters. And what of Shakespeare's freedoms in blank verse or Swinburne's or Webster's famous line

Cōvĕr|hĕr fāce; | my̆ ēyes dāz|zlĕ; shĕ | dīed yōung. |

I only read A. E.'s poetry once and had no time to form a reliable impression; but I seem to remember a too regular and obvious rhythm, not sufficiently plastic, which did not carry the remarkable vision and thought-substance of the poet entirely home. That, however, may be a mistaken memory, and the rest is speculation. I cannot make out why he should say "it is not a verse rhythm". It is a strong rather than a melodious rhythm, but it is as good a verse rhythm as the others. 5 February 1932

*

I don't think I can consent to sending the letter [*of 5 February 1932*] to A.E. — unasked-for criticism is the last thing I would dream of sending to someone personally unknown to me — especially to a man of A. E.'s standing and value. Besides, I can express casual *dicta* of that kind to you or Dilip or Arjava, because our minds are in sufficiently close communication to throw out an isolated point without balancing it by the other things that would have to be said if I were writing for a distant mind or for the public. My remarks, even about his rhythm, are quite incomplete and based on an uncertain remembrance — I read his poems hastily in a volume brought from a library and kept only for a short time — and it was at least seven or eight years ago — more, for I must have been writing *The Future Poetry* at the time. For that reason, too, I would rather like to have a more leisurely glance at your selections [*from A. E.'s poetry*], if you can spare them for some time. 6 February 1932

Nishikanta

বহ্নিধারা

তুমি মোর সঙ্গোপন-উৎস হ’তে
উচ্ছলিয়া দিলে বহ্নিধারা;
ফুটে ওঠে বিহঙ্গের গোলাপের গভীর প্রবাল;
চন্দ্র-লোভী বাসনার মর্ম-পথে
দেখা দেয় অগ্রদূত-তারা,
দীর্ণ করি’ অঙ্কুরের জলদ-জঙ্গাল । . . .
ছিন্নকরে তিমির-গ্রন্থিলা;
স্বপনের তীরে তীরে তরণীর স্পর্শমণি লাগে । . . .
মাতঙ্গের শুভ্র শির বহি’ আনে
বৃন্তহীন বৈদূর্য-কমল;
তুরঙ্গ যে দেয় দিশা ঊর্ধ্বপানে . . .
পূর্ণশশী আদিত্যের আসঙ্গ-সন্ধ্যায় ।

The separate images are very usual symbols of the inner experience, but they have been combined together here in a rather difficult way. The fire of course is the psychic fire which wells up from the veiled psychic source. The bird is the soul and the flower is the rose of love and surrender. The moon is the symbol of spirituality. As the star is within it is described as piercing through the knots of the inner darkness and worsting the vital growths that are like clouds enwrapping it. The boat also is a usual symbol in the inner visions. The elephant is the spiritual strength that removes obstacles and the horse the force of tapasya that gallops to the summits of the spiritual realisation. The sun is the symbol of the higher Truth. The lotus is the symbol of the inner consciousness.

February 1937

*

স্বর্ণশিশু

… রহস্যময় মাঠে   হঠাৎ পড়ল ঝ'রে   চাঁদের রূপোর বল।…
    ছুটতে ছুটতে এলো   সোনার বরণ ছেলে।…
একটা গাছের তলের   সবুজ কালো জলের
    ডোবার মধ্যে ডুবে   চাঁদটি হল হারা।
    ডুক্‌রে কেঁদে উঠে   ডুবল সোনার ছেলে।
আমি তখন ছুটে…   ধরেছি সেই শিশুর   স্বর্ণ-কেশেররাজি।…
অমনি সে-জল থেকে   ওঠে বিপুল বেগে
    সাতটি স্বচ্ছ-ধারার   উজল উৎসখানি।…
স্বচ্ছ দীপ্ত তোয়া-   উৎসে হল ধোয়া
সোনার শিশুর তনুর   কাজল জলের কালো   পথচিহ্নগুলি।…
তখন দেখি ছেলের   দুই কাঁধে দুই ডানা।
আমায় শুধুই বলে   "যাবো যাবো যাবো"…   মায়ের কাছেই যাবো।
বলেই দোলায় পাখা   যায় সে উড়ে উড়ে   যেন সোনার স্বপন।

I suppose the golden child is the Truth-Soul which follows after the silver light of the spiritual. When it plunges into the black waters of the subconscient, it releases from it the spiritual light and the sevenfold streams of the Divine Energy and, clearing itself of the stains of the subconscient, it prepares its flight towards the supreme Divine (the Mother). It is a very beautiful and significant poem.

Philosophers, Intellectuals, Novelists and Musicians

Western Notions of the History of Philosophy

> It is very strange that in books on philosophy by European writers, even in standard textbooks like Alfred Weber's *History of Philosophy*,[1] there is no mention of any of the Indian philosophies. To the Western writer philosophy means only European philosophy — they begin with the Greek Thales and Anaximander, as if human thinking began with them.

That is the old style European mind. It used to be the same in Art and other matters. Now Chinese and Japanese art is recognised and to a less degree the art of India, Persia and the former Indian colonies in the Far-East, but in philosophy the old ideas still reign. "From Thales to Bergson" is their idea of the History of Philosophy.
2 May 1936

Plato

> Plato says [*according to Weber, p. 86*]: "The world of sense is the copy of the world of Ideas, and conversely, the world of ideas resembles its image; it forms a hierarchy. . . . In our visible world there is a gradation of beings. . . . The same holds true of the intelligible realm or the pattern of the world; the Ideas are joined together by means of other Ideas of a higher order; . . . the Ideas constantly increase in generality and force, until we reach the top, the last, the highest, the most powerful Idea or the Good, which comprehends, contains or summarizes the entire system." I think he is nearly on the verge of a mental understanding of the Overmind.

He was trying to express in a mental way the One containing the multiplicity which is brought out (created) from the One — that is the Overmind realisation. Plato had these ideas not as realisations but as intuitions which he expressed in his own mental form.

---

[1] *Alfred Weber,* History of Philosophy *(London: Longmans, Green, 1904).*

> There are many such thoughts in Plato's philosophy. Did he get them from Indian books?

Not from Indian books — something of the philosophy of India got through by means of Pythagoras and others. But I think Plato got most of these things from intuition. 8 October 1933

*

> Paul Brunton in his book *A Search in Secret Egypt* repeatedly speaks of Atlantis. I always thought that belief in Atlantis was only an imagination of the Theosophists. Is there any truth in the belief?

Atlantis is not an imagination. Plato heard of this submerged continent from Egyptian sources and geologists are also agreed that such a submersion was one of the great facts of earth history.

22 June 1936

*

> In his book *Plato*, Taylor says that "the standing Academic definition of 'man' " is "Soul *using* a body" and that "the soul *is* the man".[2] But it is not clear whether the soul is the mental being or something which uses the mind also.

The European mind, for the most part, has never been able to go beyond the formula of soul + body — usually including mind in soul and everything except body in mind. Some occultists make a distinction between spirit, soul and body. At the same time there must be some vague feeling that soul and mind are not quite the same thing, for there is the phrase "this man has no soul", or "he is a soul" meaning he has something in him beyond a mere mind and body. But all that is very vague. There is no clear distinction between mind and soul and none between mind and vital and often the vital is taken for the soul. 30 June 1936

---

[2] *A.E. Taylor,* Plato, The Man and His Work *(London: Methuen, 1926), p. 27. Taylor bases his discussion on passages from Plato's* Alcibiades I *and* Euthydemus. — *Ed.*

*

> Taylor [*Plato, p. 27*] writes: "The first condition of enjoying real good and making a real success of life is that a man's soul should be in a good or healthy state", that is, his soul should have the wisdom or knowledge "which ensures that a man shall make the right use of his body and of everything else which is his". This clearly indicates that by "soul" he means the vital and the mental being. Otherwise how can the soul be not "in good or healthy state"? Can we even say that the mental Purusha is or is not "in good or healthy state"?

Of course not. It is obvious that they are thinking of the mental and vital Prakriti or that part of the being which is involved in Prakriti, not of the Purusha.

> The idea that the soul has to get "knowledge" at all would seem to us to be without meaning unless we take it in the sense that one has to develop the intuition as an instrumental faculty.

Yes, all these phrases are loose. At most one could say that the soul must bring out or develop the inner knowledge — that which is already there within or that the lower nature must receive the higher knowledge, — but not that the soul must get knowledge. I believe Plato himself held that all knowledge already was there within, — so even from that point of view this expression would be inaccurate. 2 July 1936

*

> Plato's book *The Banquet* is said to be about Love and Beauty. Is it a kind of philosophy?

Not much philosophy there, more poetry.

> Shelley has translated *The Banquet* into English. Could I read it?

If you want to read it as a piece of literature, it is all right.
2 January 1937

*

> I did not find so much poetry in the book. Perhaps you have read it in the original Greek?

Even in a good translation the poetry ought to come out to some extent. Plato was a great writer as well as a philosopher — no more perfect prose has been written by any man. In some of his books his prose carries in it the qualities of poetry and his thought has poetic vision. That is what I meant when I said it was poetry.
3 January 1937

*

> How do you find Plato's ideas about philosophy, about Nature, existence of the soul, etc.?

I don't know what are his ideas about philosophy or Nature. He believes in the soul and immortality and that is of course true.
4 January 1937

Aristotle

> I tried to read Aristotle but found him dry and abstract.

I always found him exceedingly dry. It is a purely mental philosophy, unlike Plato's.
9 October 1933

Plotinus

> I find Plotinus very interesting.

Yes. Plotinus was not a mere philosopher, — his philosophy was founded on yogic experience and realisation.
11 October 1933

*

> Plotinus says [*according to Weber, p. 171*]: "Intelligence is the first divine emanation. . . . Creation is a fall, a progressive degeneration of the divine. In the intelligence, the absolute

> unity of God splits up into intelligence proper . . . and the intelligible world." Does he mean the separation that begins to take place at Overmind or the Para and Apara Prakriti?

He was speaking of the cosmic mind, I suppose. In these philosophies there is no distinction made between different grades of mind or between intellect and the consciousness beyond the intellectual.

> Plotinus says [*according to Weber, p. 173*]: "The intelligence, too, is creative. . . . Its emanation or radiation is the soul. . . . The soul is not, like the intellect, endowed with immediate and complete intuition: it is restricted to the discursive thought, or analysis. . . .
>
> "It is subordinate to the intellect. . . . There is, at the bottom of all individual souls, but one single soul manifesting itself infinitely in different forms: the soul of the world." What does Plotinus mean by soul and intelligence in this passage?

I think simply Plotinus in speaking of soul has made a jumble of vital (*prāna*), *manas* and soul (ψυχή) — while by intelligence he means *buddhi* (cosmic), but endows the *buddhi* with the qualities proper to the Intuition and Overmind.

12 October 1933

Shankaracharya on the *Bhagavad Gita*

On this shloka in the second chapter of the *Gita*:

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति।
स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति॥

Shankara says:

सैषा ज्ञाननिष्ठा स्तूयते। यथोक्ता . . . ब्राह्मी स्थितिः सर्वं कर्म संन्यस्य ब्रह्मरूपेणैवावस्थानमिति . . .

Where is there even in the preceding shlokas the idea of सर्वं कर्म संन्यस्य?

But the final stroke comes here:

अन्ते वयस्यपि . . . मोक्षमृच्छति . . . किमु वक्तव्यं ब्रह्मचर्यादेव संन्यस्य यावज्जीवं . . . ब्रह्मण्येवावतिष्ठते स ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति॥

> This is pure insinuation. Nowhere in the whole of the Gita can there be found the idea of ब्रह्मचर्यादेव संन्यस्य!

How can a commentator do without insinuation? He has to make the Gita (or the Upanishads) mean what he teaches; if it doesn't actually say what he teaches, he has to explain that it meant that all the same. If the Gita doesn't teach what he teaches, it would be teaching something that is not the Truth, and how can the Gita teach untruth?

> In Krishna's time were there any Sannyasis at all? Rishis there were, but few, and not the sort to promote ब्रह्मचर्यादेव संन्यस्य.

Perhaps at the time of Krishna there were no Sannyasis; but the Gita speaks of Sannyasa and Sannyasis, it even speaks of कर्म सन्न्यस्य but it says मयि कर्माणि संन्यस्य and declares फलत्याग to be the true Sannyasa. Arjuna is supposed to remain in the ब्रह्मी स्थिति and fight, so that would be hardly consistent with the other kind of Sannyasa — not to speak of enjoying राज्यं समृद्धम् also.

25 March 1936

*

> In Shankara's Bhashya on the Gita it seems he takes any opportunity to thrust in the ideas of कर्मसन्न्यास and ज्ञाननिष्ठा. For example, in the famous shloka कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते, the Bhashya speaks of ज्ञाननिष्ठा though it seems quite irrelevant.

Of course. There is nothing about ज्ञाननिष्ठा in the text, only in Shankara's thrust.

> Shankara considers all *karma* useful only as preparation for *jñāna*. According to him even the object of the Gita is परं निःश्रेयसं संसारस्य अत्यन्तोपरमलक्षणम्.

The object of the Gita was to make Arjuna act, i.e. fight and it is only when he consented to do so that Krishna stopped the discourse. If it had been as Shankara says he would not have stopped until he had got Arjuna well-started for a cave in the

Himalayas far away from the noise of the battle.

26 March 1936

Intellectual Capacity of Mystics

> A great scientist has written that mystics and spiritual men the world over have in general always been men of very average intelligence, a handful of rare instances excepted.

As for your great scientist I wonder who he had in mind as spiritual men — so far as I know history both in the East and the West there have been any number of spiritual men and mystics who have had a great or fine intellectual capacity or were endowed with a great administrative and organising ability implying a keen knowledge of men and much expenditure of brain-power. With a little looking up of the records of the past I think one could collect some hundreds of names — which would not include of course the still greater number not recorded in history or the transmitted memory of the past.

Augustus Caesar and Leonardo da Vinci

Augustus Caesar organised the life of the Roman Empire and it was this that made the framework of the first transmission of the Graeco-Roman civilisation to Europe — he came for that work and the writings of Virgil and Horace and others helped greatly towards the success of his mission. After the interlude of the Middle Ages, this civilisation was reborn in a new mould in what is called the Renaissance, not in its life-aspects but in its intellectual aspects. It was therefore a supreme intellectual, Leonardo da Vinci, who took up again the work and summarised in himself the seeds of modern Europe.

29 July 1937

Leonardo and Einstein

> I do not know if by chance Einstein's theory of relativity may also be found in one of the yet undeciphered books of Leonardo.

Not likely. The age of art and science which Leonardo set in motion was that which closed with the nineteenth century. Relativity belongs to a new movement of knowledge.

11 December 1935

René Descartes

> I have three letters of yours before me and all three require some elucidation. I think and think but can't get anywhere. Perhaps you will say, "Make the mind silent"! But Descartes says, "Je pense, donc je suis."

Descartes was talking nonsense. There are plenty of things that don't think but still are — from the stone to the Yogi in samadhi. If he had simply meant that the fact of his thinking showed that he wasn't dead, that of course would have been quite right and scientific. 9 September 1935

William James

James' book [*on psychology*] is certainly a very interesting one. I read it a long time ago and do not remember it very well except that it was very interesting and not at all an ordinary book in its kind, but full of valuable suggestions. 1 July 1933

Henri Bergson

> Bergson writes that the progress of Life is marked by tensions succeeded by flowerings. What do you think of that, since the great philosopher too agrees with our way of marching to Beatitude through struggles and sufferings?

Humph! Such a method is all very well, but one has so much of it in life and in this Ashram that I rather yearn for some other unBergsonian evolution. Even if the Lord God and Bergson planned it together, I move an amendment. 11 December 1935

*

> In his latest book, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*,

> Bergson says that the imagelessness or blankness of mind is a pure myth and an impossibility. As a Vedantist, I have always cherished the imagelessness of mind as the highest ideal. But I must admit that I have not made any appreciable advance in this direction, even after many years' practice.

European scientists and thinkers have no authority in the matter, as they are perfectly ignorant of even the rudiments of these things. It is certainly impossible for any man to have experience of such a condition without practice of Yoga, or alternatively, a state of Grace. But among Yogis it is a well-known state; they can attain to this state and keep it at will or if they allow any external activity, it does not touch the inner silence and they can always have the complete silence at will. You [*Sri Aurobindo's secretary*] can refer him to the *Bases of Yoga*, but also say that it is best to prepare oneself first. Usually it does not come except after a long discipline of self-purification etc. — it can be called down, but that is not always safe, if the outer nature is not yet ready. 6 March 1938

Sigmund Freud

> You had once written that things rejected from the conscious parts go down into the subconscient physical. Is Freud's theory of suppression somewhat similar to this?

Freud has observed the fact, but he has built on it a number of theories that are either unsound or exaggerated.

2 August 1933

*

> It seems Freud's discovery centres round this idea: " . . . underlying the closeness of the bond between mother and child, there exists in infancy on the part of the child . . . a wish . . . for reentrance into the comfort and security of the mother's womb", and this persists in maturity and adolescence till death.[3] How does he know the wish of the child?

---

[3] *John M. Thorburn,* Art and the Unconscious *(London: Kegan Paul & Co., 1925), p. 50.*

God knows. It seems a wild idea. For a psychologist to talk about the child remembering his stay in the womb — surely, it is an extravagance.

> How does he know that there *was* comfort and security in the womb?

I have not the least idea. Perhaps it is his own "complex" from which he generalises.

> Why, then, does man not seek only comfort and security in life — why does he make much attempt for other things?

He says he does seek. The wish to get back into that wonderful womb, he says, "persists in maturity and adolescence till death". I suppose he would say that when man is attempting other things, he is really though without quite knowing it trying to get back into his mother's womb, e.g. Mussolini getting into Abyssinia, it was a straight drive for his mother's womb.

> The extreme of ridiculousness is reached when Freud analyses Leonardo da Vinci to show how he was pathological, how he failed disastrously in his adaptation to life, how his artistic imagination was an aberration and a maladaptation. All poets, all imaginative people, all genuises, all religious people were to Freud the result of aberration and maladaptation.

Well, his own theory is very clearly that, the result of aberration and maladaptation. 1 June 1936

Carl Gustav Jung

> Jung [*according to Thorburn, pp. 58–59*] accepts Freud's view, and considers religion as something to be escaped from. "The primal desire for re-entrance to the womb, never expressing itself nakedly, but veiling itself as Freud had supposed under all kinds of symbolism, gives us in this very symbolism what history has called religion." This is what I should call "mental aberration and encephalitis" as a result of biological psychology.

It is part of the general “aberration” that has beset the modern world owing to the descent of the vital world into the physical — cubist and surrealist painting, modernist poetry, Nazi politics, psycho-analysis — the more extravagant the thing, the greater its reputation and success. 1 June 1936

*

> What is it that makes the intellectual world believe without scrutinising ideas such as Freud’s? Is it a force which acts as a sort of “prestidigitation” on the brains even of great men like Jung? There would be several objections to Freud’s idea about the child’s wish to re-enter the mother’s womb, yet Jung accepts it as a premise and builds upon it his theories of religion and God and gods. According to Jung [*as presented by Thorburn, p. 59*] : “The idea of God . . . or of the gods, is such a bondage in so far as it is supposed that God exists or that there are gods.” It would, thus, be very ignominious to believe that God or the gods exist — much more ignominious than believing a hypothesis (and an absurdity) which has no historical or biological basis — whereas the fact of God existing can be found in all the literature of the past and the present! It seems it is less the correctness of an idea than the novelty and extravagance that appeals to the modern mind.

At present in the European world it is novelty and extravagance in ideas that are run after.

I don’t know anything first-hand about Jung but the two extracts from him you have given do not encourage me to make acquaintance.[4] Why on earth should the idea of God or gods be a bondage? I suppose it is the Semitic idea (common in Europe) of God as a terrible gentleman upstairs, emperor, law-maker, judge and policeman who sends you to Hell at his pleasure. To the Indian mind the gods are friends and helpers. 2 June 1936

---

[4] *The correspondent did not make it clear that the extracts he quoted were from Thorburn’s book and not from the works of Jung and Freud. — Ed.*

Lowes Dickinson

> What would you say on the contrast between Lowes Dickinson's *Modern Symposium* (1905) and his post-war dialogue, *On the Discovery of Good*?

The pre-war and the post-war Dickinson are indeed a contrast. This appreciation of human life is not without the force of a half-truth, but it is just the other half that he misses when he sweeps idealism out of the field. Man's utopias may be the projection of his hopes and desires, but he has to go on building them on pain of death, decline or collapse. As for the gospel of pleasure, it has been tried before and always failed — Life and Nature after a time weary of it and reject it, as if after a surfeit of cheap sweets. Man has to rush from his pursuit of pleasure, with all its accompaniment of petrifying shallowness, cynicism, hardness, frayed nerves, *ennui*, dissatisfaction and fatigue, to a new idealism or else sink towards a dull or catastrophic decadence. Even if the Absolute Good were a high spiritual or ideal chimera, the pursuit of it is rooted in the very make of humanity and it is one of the main sources of the perennial life of the race. And that it is so would seem to indicate that it is not a chimera — something still beyond man, no doubt, but into which or towards which he is called by Nature to grow.

Bertrand Russell

About Russell — I have never disputed his abilities or his character, — I am concerned only with his opinions and there too only with those opinions which touch upon my own province — that of spiritual Truth. In all religions, the most narrow and stupid even, and in all non-religions also there are great minds, great men, fine characters. I know little about Russell, but I never dreamed of disputing the greatness of Lenin, for instance, merely because he was an atheist — nobody would unless he was an imbecile. But the greatness of Lenin does not debar me from refusing assent to the credal dogmas of Bolshevism, and the beauty of character of an atheist does not prove that spirituality is a lie of the imagination and that there is no Divine. I may add that if you can find the utterances of famous Yogis childish when they talk about marriage or on other mental matters, I cannot be blamed for finding the ideas of Russell about spiritual experience, of which he knows nothing, very much wanting in light and substance. You have not named the Yogis in question, and till you do, I am afraid I shall cherish a suspicion about either the height or the breadth of their spiritual experience.

1932

*

I have not yet found a moment's time to go through Russell's book [*Why I Am Not a Christian*]; as soon as I can do so I will let you know if I have anything to say about him. I have already said that I have no objection to anybody admiring Russell or Lowes Dickinson or any other atheist. Genius or fine qualities are always admirable in whomever they are found; all that has nothing to do with the turn of a man's opinions or the truth or untruth of atheism or of spiritual experience. Neither for that matter is the fact that there are people who believe out of fear or desire a valid argument against the existence of the Divine. I will read the book as soon as I can, but I do not expect to find anything very much in it, as I am perfectly familiar with European atheism and it is for the most part a shallow and rather childish reaction against a shallow and childish religionism — that of orthodox exoteric Christianity as it was believed and practised in Europe. Not much food on either side of the controversy either for the intellect or the spirit!

18 October 1932

*

I seized a few moments to run through Russell [*Why I Am Not a Christian*]; a few moments were enough. It is just as I expected it to be. I have no doubt that Russell is a competent philosophic thinker, but this might have been written by an ordinary tract-writer of the Rationalists Publications Society (I don't remember the proper name any longer). The arguments of the ordinary Christian apologists to prove the existence of God are futile drivel and Russell in answering them has descended to their level. He was appealing to the mass mind, I suppose, but that is enough to deprive the book of any real thought-value. And yet the questions raised are interesting enough if treated with true philosophic insight or from the standpoint of true spiritual experience. It is queer that the European mind, capable enough in other directions, should sink to so much puerility when it begins to deal with religion and spiritual experience. All the same I shall see if there is anything that can be said in the matter. 1932

Russell, Eddington, Jeans

I don't understand why Amal expects me to bow to the criticism of Bertrand Russell.[5]

(1.) Russell's opinions are as much determined by his upbringing, temperament etc. as those of Jeans or Eddington. He was born in the heyday of the most uncompromising materialism; he is unwilling to change the ideas which have got embedded in his nature. It is this that determines his view of the result of the recent developments of science, it is not a clear infallible logic; logic can serve any turn proposed to it by the mind's preferences. Nor is it a dispassionate impersonal view of facts dictated by unbiassed reason as opposed to Eddington's personal outlook, imaginative fancies and idealistic prejudices. This idea of pure mental impersonality in the human reason is an exploded superstition of the rationalist mind; psychology in its recent inquiries has shown that this supposed impersonal observation of pure objective facts and impartial conclusion from them, an automatic writing of truth on the blank paper of the pure mind is a myth; it has shown that the personal factor is inevitable; we think according to what we are.

(2.) Russell is not, I believe, a great scientist or preeminent in any field of science. Eddington is, I am told, one of the finest authorities in astrophysics. Jeans and Eddington, though not great discoverers, are otherwise in the front rank. Russell ranks as a great mathematician, but there too Eddington has one superiority over him; he is supposed to be the only one, so say some, one of the only five, say others, who have a complete understanding of Einstein's mathematical formulation; Russell is not counted among them and that perhaps disables him from understanding the full consequences of Relativity. Russell, however, is an eminent philosopher, though not one of the great ones. I would count him rather as a strong and acute thinker on philosophy and science. Here he has an advantage, for Jeans and Eddington are only amateur philosophers with a few general ideas for their stock in trade.

---

[5] *This is an incomplete draft of a letter that was never sent. — Ed.*

(3.) As for their general intellectual standing Russell is a clear and strong materialistic intellect with a wide and general play of its own kind and range; the others are strong in their own field, trained in scientific knowledge and judgment, outside that they do not count: Eddington's mind is more intuitive and original in its limits but often shooting beyond the mark. Russell, when he goes outside his limits, can flounder and blunder. Well, then where is there any foundation for exalting the authority of Russell at the expense of the other two? I disagree with the conclusions of all three; I am neither a mentalist nor a vitalist nor a materialist. Why then throw Russell at me? I am not likely to change my decision in the matter in deference to his materialistic bias. And to what does his judgment or his argument amount to? He admits as against Amal that there has been a "revolution" in science; he admits that the old materialistic philosophy has no longer even half a rotten leg to stand upon; its dogmatic theory of Matter has been kicked out God knows where. But still, says Russell, Matter is there and everything in this world obeys the laws of physical science. This is merely a personal opinion on a now very doubtful matter: he is fighting a rearguard action against what he feels to be the advanced forces of the future; his gallant but tremulous asseveration is a defensive parade not an aggressive blow; it lacks altogether the old assured self-confidence.

As for Russell's logic, a dry and strong or even austere logic is not a key to Truth; an enthusiastic vision often reaches it more quickly. The business of logic is to give order to a thinker's ideas, to establish firm relations between them and firm distinctions from other people's ideas, but when that is done, we are no nearer to indisputable truth than we were before. It is vision that sees Truth, not logic — the outer vision that sees facts but not their inner sense, the inner vision that sees inner facts and can see the inner sense of them, the total vision (not belonging to mind) that sees the whole. A strong and clear and powerful intellect, Russell, but nothing more — not certainly an infallible authority whether in science or anything else. Jeans and Eddington have their own logical reasoning; I do not accept it any more than I accept Russell's.[6]

Let us, however, leave the flinging of authorities, often the same authority for opposing conclusions, Russell quoted against Russell and Darwin against Darwin, and let us come to the point [*incomplete*]

Shaw

I do not think Harris' attack on Shaw as you describe it can be taken very seriously any more than can Wells' jest about his pronunciation of English being the sole astonishing thing about him. Wells, Chesterton, Shaw and others joust at each other like the *kabiwālās* of old Calcutta, though with more refined weapons, and you cannot take their humorous sparrings as considered appreciations; if you do, you turn exquisite jests into solemn nonsense. Mark that their method in these sparrings, the turn of phrase, the style of their wit is borrowed from Shaw himself with personal modifications; for this kind of humour, light as air and sharp as a razor-blade, epigrammatic, paradoxical, often flavoured with burlesque seriousness and urbane hyperbole, good-humoured and cutting at once, is not English in origin; it was brought in by two Irishmen, Shaw and Wilde. Harris' stroke about the Rodin bust and Wells' sally are entirely in the Shavian turn and manner; they are showing their cleverness by spiking their guru in swordsmanship with his own rapier. Harris' attack on Shaw's literary reputation may have been serious, there was a sombre and violent brutality about him which makes it possible; but his main motive was to prolong his own notoriety by a clever and vigorous assault on the mammoth of the hour. Shaw himself supplied materials for his critic, knowing well what he would write, and edited this damaging assault on his own fame,[7] a typical Irish act at once of chivalry, shrewd calculation of effect and whimsical humour. I should not think Harris had much understanding of Shaw the man as apart from the writer; the Anglo-Saxon is not usually capable of understanding either Irish character or Irish humour, it is so different from his own. And Shaw was Irish through and through; there was nothing English about him except the language he wrote and even that he changed into the Irish ease, flow, edge and clarity — though not bringing into it, as Wilde did, Irish poetry and colour.

---

[6] *This paragraph was written separately. It has been inserted here by the editors.*

Shaw's seriousness and his humour, real seriousness and mock seriousness, run into each other in a baffling inextricable *mélange*, thoroughly Irish in its character — for it is the native Irish turn to speak lightly when in deadly earnest and to utter the most extravagant jests with a profound air of seriousness, — and it so puzzled the British public that they could not for a long time make up their mind how to take him. At first they took him for a jester dancing with cap and bells, then for a new kind of mocking Hebrew prophet or Puritan reformer! Needless to say, both judgments were entirely out of focus. The Irishman is, on one side of him, the vital side, a *passioné*, imaginative and romantic, intensely emotional, violently impulsive, easily impelled to poetry or rhetoric, moved by indignation and suffering to a mixture of aggressive militancy, wistful dreaming and sardonic extravagant humour: on another side he is keen in intellect, positive, downright, hating all loose foggy sentimentalism and solemn pretence and prone, in order to avoid the appearance of them in himself, to cover himself with a jest at every step; it is at once his mask and his defence. At bottom he has the possibility in him of a modern Curtius leaping into the yawning pit for a cause, an Utopist or a Don Quixote, — according to occasion a fighter for dreams, an idealistic pugilist, a knight-errant, a pugnacious rebel or a brilliant sharp-minded realist or a reckless but often shrewd and successful adventurer. Shaw has all that in him, but with it is a cool intellectual clearness, also Irish, which dominates it all and tones it down, subdues it into measure and balance, gives an even harmonising colour. There is as a result a brilliant tempered edge of flame, lambent, lighting up what it attacks and destroys, and destroying it by the light it throws upon it, not fiercely but trenchantly — though with a trenchant playfulness — aggressive and corrosive. An ostentation of humour and parade covers up the attack and puts the opponent off his defence. That is why the English mind never understood Shaw and yet allowed itself to be captured by him, and its old established ideas, "moral" positions, impenetrable armour of commercialised Puritanism and self-righteous Victorian assurance to be ravaged and burned out of existence by Shaw and his allies. Anyone who knew Victorian England and sees the difference now cannot but be struck by it and Shaw's part in it, at least in preparing and making it possible, is undeniable. That is why I call him devastating, — not in any ostentatiously catastrophic sense, for there is a quietly trenchant type of devastatingness, — because he has helped to lay low all these things with his scythe of sarcastic mockery and lightly, humorously penetrating seriousness — effective, as you call it, but too deadly in its effects to be called merely effective.

---

[7] *Harris's biography of Shaw, edited and published by Shaw himself after Harris's death. — Ed.*

That is Shaw as I have seen him and I don't believe there is anything seriously wrong in my estimate. I don't think we can complain of his seriousness about pacifism, Socialism and the rest of it; it was simply the form in which he put his dream, the dream he needed to fight for, needed by his Irish nature. Shaw's bugbear was unreason and disorder, his dream was a humanity delivered from vital illusions and deceptions, organising the life-force in obedience to reason, casting out waste and folly as much as possible. It is not likely to happen in the way he hoped; the reason has its own illusions and, though he strove against imprisonment in his own rationalistic ideals, trying to escape from them by the issue of his mocking critical humour, he could not help being their prisoner. As for his pose of self-praise, — no doubt he valued himself, — the public fighter like the man of action needs to do so in order to act or to fight. Most, though not all, try to veil it under an affectation of modesty; Shaw on the contrary took the course of raising it to a humorous pitch of burlesque and extravagance. It was at once part of his strategy in commanding attention and a means of mocking at himself — I was not speaking of analytical self-mockery, but of the whimsical Irish kind — so as to keep himself straight and at the same time mocking his audience. It is a peculiarly Irish kind of humour to say extravagant things with a calm convinced tone as if announcing a perfectly serious proposition — the Irish exaggeration of the humour called by the French *pince-sans-rire*; his hyperboles of self-praise actually reek with this humorous savour. If his extravagant comparison of himself with Shakespeare had to be taken in dull earnest without any smile in it, he would be either a witless ass or a giant of humourless arrogance, — and Bernard Shaw could be neither.

As to his position in literature, I have given my opinion; but, more precisely, I imagine that he will take some place but not a very large place, once the drums have ceased beating and the fighting is over. He has given too much to the battles of the hour, perhaps, to claim a large share of the future. I suppose some of his plays will survive for their wit and humour and cleverness more than for any higher dramatic quality, like those of three other Irishmen, Goldsmith, Sheridan, Wilde. His prefaces *may* be saved by their style and force, but it is not sure. At any rate, as a personality he is not likely to be forgotten, even if his writings fade. To compare him with [Anatole] France is futile — they were minds too different and moving in too different domains for comparison to be possible.

3 February 1932

*

> I would be obliged if you would tell me your opinion of the apostrophe of Caesar to the Sphinx in Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*. I find it very fine, but Dilip says he is not thrilled by it.

I am not thrilled by the speech either; it is a creation of the intellect, eloquent and on the surface. I do not see how you are going to manufacture a mystic out of Shaw with these scanty materials: he has a very clear and incisive intelligence, independent and unconventional rather than original and creative, but beyond the intellect he does not go. The speculative imaginations of which you speak and the feelings in the aesthetic vital which accompany them sometimes are common enough in men with some reach of mind, but they do not constitute either a mystic feeling or a mystic experience. 6 May 1932

Was Shaw a Mystic?

> It is, of course, difficult to manufacture a mystic out of Shaw in the Yogic sense of the word, but in the philosophic sense I think it can be said that his conception of the universal life-force and his vision of man's future are prompted by a keen sense of the infinite, divine potencies of the human consciousness and of the secret urge towards godhead which is the motive power behind all evolution. . . . What Shaw claims to be is an artist-philosopher — that is to say, a man with a constructive as well as critical vision of life, who is able to express that vision in a spirited and cogently attractive form by means of his literary gift. So the real question is whether his vision is great enough, inspired enough, and he brings a sufficient power of interpretation to render his insight compellingly intelligible and valuable.

Your reasoning seems to proceed by abolishing the necessary distinctions and running different things into each other.

1st equation. Philosopher (artist kind) = a man with a constructive as well as a critical vision of life = Shaw. I may add = all poets, if Matthew Arnold's equation about poetry and criticism of life is correct. Hundreds of others also can at this rate be called philosophers.

2nd equation. Mystic = mystic philosopher = philosopher who has notions about supraphysical entities or forces, e.g. Life-Force = Shaw. But a mystic is currently supposed to be one who has mystic experience, and a mystic philosopher is one who has such experience and has formed a view of life in harmony with his experience. Merely to have metaphysical notions about the Infinite and Godhead and underlying or overshadowing forces does not make a man a mystic. One would never think of applying such a term to Spinoza, Kant or Hegel: even Plato does not fit into the term though Pythagoras has a good claim to it. Hegel and other transcendental or idealistic philosophers were great intellects, not mystics. Shaw is a keen and forceful intellect (I cannot call him a great thinker[8]) but his ideas about the Life-Force certainly do not make him a mystic. And do you really call that a constructive vision of life — a vague notion about a Life-Force pushing towards an evolutionary manifestation and a brilliant *jeu d'esprit* about long life and people born out of eggs and certain extraordinary operations of mind and body in these semi-immortals who seem to have been very much at a loss what to do with their immortality? I do not deny that there are keen and brilliant ideas and views everywhere (that is Shaw's wealthy stock-in-trade), even an occasional profound perception; but that does not make a man either a mystic or a philosopher or a great thought-creator. Shaw has a sufficiently high place in his own kind — why try to make him out more than he is? Shakespeare is a great poet and dramatist, but to try to make him out a great philosopher also would not increase but rather imperil his high repute. May 1932

*

> I admit that in the real, experiential sense Shaw is not a mystic, though definitely religious at the core — in an unconventional way of his own. Nor does he belong to the company of the

---

[8] An admirable many-sided intelligence and an acute critic discussing penetratingly or discoursing acutely or constructively on many problems or presenting with force or point many aspects of life, he is not a creator or disseminator of the great illuminating ideas that leave their mark on the centuries.

> giant abstractionists. He is a philosopher only in as much as his outlook on basic realities is, unlike as in poets, sufficiently argued and interpreted by him in relation to general issues of philosophy and life, and a mystic philosopher only from the western view-point.

At that rate anybody is a mystic or a philosopher and these two words have no longer any value. I do not admit that Shaw has a reasoned theory about basic realities; the only realities he or his characters have argued about are the things of the surface; even his Life-Force is only a thing of the surface or, at the most, just under the surface.

> The right of Plato [*to be considered a mystic*] is regarded as beyond question; Spinoza with his "amor intellectualis Dei" is, outside the Catholic Church, also hailed as such; and even Kant I have found looked upon in the same light. In our own day it is common, I believe, to refer to Bergson or Bradley as mystical.

Regarded, looked upon by whom? It was not so in my time at least in Europe. Plato was never called a mystic then; Hegel was regarded as a transcendentalist but no mystic; if you had called Kant or Spinoza mystics people would have stared. To believe in the Absolute or something metaphysical or supraphysical does not make one a mystic philosopher, nor does belief in the *élan vital* or a dry and geometric *amor intellectualis Dei*. The Neo-Platonists and the Neo-Hegelians stand on the border. If all these are the Western view-point packed in one mystic box, it is a very new Western view-point, a new language of confusion in this age of confusion, I suppose. It must be like the idea of spirituality in the minds of many people in the West in which mind and spirit are the same thing and to have a fine feeling or an idealistic thought is the very height of spirituality.

> I should like to know whether, in your opinion, Shaw comes off badly in comparison with Wells or Chesterton or Russell as a thinker. And do you mind expatiating on Shaw as a dramatist and a writer of prose?

I refuse to accept the men you name, with the exception of Russell, as serious thinkers. Wells is a super-journalist, super-pamphleteer and story-teller. I imagine that within a generation of his death his speculations will cease to be read or remembered; his stories may endure longer. Chesterton is a brilliant essayist who has written verse too of an appreciable brilliance and managed some good stories. Unlike Wells he has some gift of style and he has caught the trick of wit and constant paradox which gives a fictitious semblance of enhanced value to his ideas. These are men of contemporary fame; Shaw has more chance of lasting, but there is no certain certitude, because he has no atom of constructive power. He has constructed nothing large, but he has criticised most things. At every page he shows the dissolvent critical mind and it is a dissolvent of great power; beyond that, he has popularised the ideas of Fabian Socialism and other constructive view-points caught up by him from the surrounding atmosphere, but with temperamental qualifications and variations, for the inordinately critical character of his mind prevents him from entirely agreeing with anybody. Criticism is also a great power and there are some purely critical minds that have become immortals, Voltaire for instance; Shaw on his own level may survive — only his thinking is more of a personal type and not classic and typical of a fundamental current of the human intellect like Voltaire. His personality may help him, as Johnson was helped by his personality to live.

Shaw is not a dramatist; I don't think he ever wrote a drama; *Candida* is perhaps the nearest he came to one. He is a first-class play-writer, — a brilliant conversationalist in stage dialogue and a manufacturer of speaking intellectualised puppets made to develop and represent by their talk and carefully wire-pulled movements his ideas about men, life and things. He gives his characters minds of various quality and they are expressing their minds all the time; sometimes he paints on them some striking vital colour, but with a few exceptions they are not living beings like those of the great or even of the lesser dramatists. There *are*, however, a few exceptions, such as the three characters in *Candida*, and as a supremely clever playwright with a strong intellectual force and some genius he may very well survive. He has a very striking and cogent and incisive style admirably fitted for its work, and he sometimes tries his hand at eloquence, but "heights of passionate eloquence" is a very unreal phrase. I never found that in Shaw anywhere; whatever mental ardours he may have, his mind as a whole is too cool, balanced, incisive to let itself go in that manner. May 1932

Shaw's Personality and Place in Literature

The Shavian assertiveness is not offensive (as the Hugoesque tends to be) because it is full also of a smiling self-mockery, an irony that out of a form of deliberate self-praise cuts at itself and the world in one lump. It is curious that so many people seem to miss this character of Shaw's self-assertiveness and self-praise, its essential humour. 28 August 1932

*

I do not agree that Wells and others are more serious than Shaw — if by seriousness is meant earnestness of belief in one's ideals and sincerity in the intelligence. These can exist very well behind a triple breast-plate of satire and humour. Shaw's merits are surely greater than you seem disposed to admit in your letter. The tide is turning against him after being strongly for him — under compulsion from his own power and will, but nothing can alter the fact that he was one of the keenest and most powerful minds of the age with an originality in his way of looking at things which no one else could equal. If what was original in him has become the common stock of contemporary thought, it was his power and forcefulness that made it so — it is no more to be counted against him than the deplorable fact that *Hamlet* is only "a string of quotations" is damaging to Shakespeare! I do not share your exasperation against Shavianism — I find in it a delightful note and am thankful to Shaw for being so refreshingly different from other men that to read even an ordinary interview with him in a newspaper is always an intellectual pleasure. As for his being one of the most orginal personalities of the age, there can be no doubt of that. All that I deny to him is a constructive and creative mind — but his critical force, in certain fields at least, as a critic of man and life was very great and in that field he can in a sense be called creative — in the sense that he created a singularly effective and living form for his criticism of life. It is not great tragic or comic drama, but it is something original and strong and altogether of its own kind — so, up to that limit, I qualify my statement that Shaw was no creator.

As to the other writers about whom you ask for my judgment, I do not feel inclined to be drawn at present; I would have to say too much, if I started saying anything at all. Galsworthy I have not read — all I can say of the rest is that I do not share the contemporary idea about them — so far as I have read their work. Contemporary fame, contemporary opinion are creations of the hour and can die with the hour. I fail to see in many of these much-praised writers of the time either the power of style or the power of critical mind or creative imagination that ensures survival. There is plenty of effective writing or skilful workmanship, but that is not enough to make literary immortals. 8 September 1932

*

Why do you want Shaw to be tied to some intellectual dogma and square all his acts, views and sullies to it? He is too penetrating and sincere a mind to be a stiff partisan — when he sees something which qualifies the "ism" — even that on whose side he is standing — he says so; that need not weaken the ideal behind, it is likely to make it more plastic and practicable. However, enough of Shaw; I have to answer Amal's question and that ought to finish with him. I will only add that whatever his manner, it does not appear to me that he writes merely to shock but to expose in a vivid way the stupidity of the human mind in taking established things and ideas for granted. If he does it in a striking and amusing way, why so much the livelier and the better! 9 September 1932

Kipling

No use of success unless it is deserved. Can't forget that Kipling for whose poetry I have a Noble contempt (his prose has value, at least the *Jungle Book* and some short stories) was illegitimately Nobelised by this confounded prize. Contemporary "success" of fame is a deceit and a snare. 12 September 1938

Lawrence

I have not read anything of Lawrence, but I have recently seen indications about him from many quarters; the impression given was that of a man of gifts who failed for want of vital balance — like so many others. The prose you have turned into verse — very well, as usual, — has certainly quality, though there is not enough to form a definite judgment. A seeker who missed the issue, I should imagine — misled by the vitalistic stress to which the mind of today is a very harassed captive. 16 June 1932

*

As far as the photograph of which you speak can be taken as showing the man — it is that of a nature of which the chief character is intensity, but in a very narrow range. There is here no wide range of ideas or feelings; a few ruling ideas, a few persistent and keenly acute feelings. The face of a man whose vital is also intense, but without strength and therefore oversensitive. There may well be a strong idealistic tendency — but there is not likely to be much power to carry out the ideals. This is the character; as for the genius, if there is any, it will depend on other things which may not find positive expression in the outward appearance; for the external man is often the medium of a Power that is beyond him.

I shall keep the book for a few days — if you don't need it, — just to glance through it; it is too big to read in detail. I know nothing of Lawrence; I shall see if I can pick up something from here. 25 September 1932

*

I must read Huxley's preface [*to* The Letters of D. H. Lawrence] and glance at some letters before venturing on any comments — like the reviewers who frisk about, a page here and a page there, and then write an ample or devastating review. Anyhow it seems to me Lawrence must have been a difficult man to live with, even for him it must have been difficult to live with himself. His photograph confirms that view. But a man at war with himself can write excellent poetry — if he is a poet; often better poetry than another, just as Shakespeare wrote his best tragedies when he was in a state of chaotic upheaval; at least so his interpreters say. But one needs a higher and more calm and poised inspiration to write poems of harmony and divine balance than any Lawrence ever had. I stick to my idea of the evil influence of theories on a man of genius. If he had been contented to write things of beauty instead of bare rockies and dry deserts, he might have done splendidly and ranked among the great poets. 3 July 1936

*

All great personalities have a strong ego of one kind or another — for that matter it does not need to be a big personality to be ego-centred; ego-centricity is the very nature of life in the Ignorance, — even the sattwic man, the philanthropist, the altruist live for and round their ego. Society imposes an effort to restrain and when one cannot restrain at least to disguise it. Morality's highest business is to control or widen, refine or sublimate it so that it shall be able to exceed itself or use itself in the service of things bigger than its own primary egoism. But none of these things enables one to escape from it. It is only by finding something deep within or above ourselves and making *laya* (dissolution) of the ego in that that it is possible. It is what Lawrence saw and it was his effort to do it that made him "other" than those who associated with him — but he could not find out the way. It was a strange mistake to seek it in sexuality; it was also a great mistake to seek it at the wrong end of the nature.

What you say about the discovery of the defects of human nature is no doubt true. Human nature is full of defects and cannot be otherwise, but there are other elements and possibilities in it which, although never quite unmixed, have to be seen to get a whole view. But the discovery of the truth about human beings need not lead to cynicism; it may lead to a calm aloofness and irony which has nothing disappointed or bitter in it; or it may lead to a large psychic charity which recognises the truth but makes all allowances and is ready to love and to help in spite of all. In the spiritual consciousness one is blind to nothing, but sees also that which is within behind these coverings, the divine element not yet released, and is neither deceived nor repelled and discouraged. That inner greater thing that was in Lawrence and which he sought for is in everybody: he may not have found it and his defects of nature may have prevented its release, but it is there.

I do not know about the lovableness; what you say is partly true, but lovableness may exist in spite of ego and all kinds of defects and people may feel it. 3 July 1936

*

Lawrence had the psychic push inside towards the Unseen and Beyond at the same time as a push towards the vital life which came in its way. He was trying to find his way between the two and mixed them up together till at the end he got his mental liberation from the tangle though not yet any clear knowledge of the way — for that I suppose he will have to be born nearer the East or in any case in surroundings which will enable him to get at the Light. 9 July 1936

Sri Aurobindo and Criticism of Fiction

It is true I read through Aldous Huxley's monster, but it took me several months to finish it. This is not because I object to "light" literature, but because I had only an occasional quarter of an hour in three or four days to glance at it. If Sarat Chatterji does not mind my treating his book to the same tortoise dharma, I will undertake to read it; but I can make no promise as to time etc. Possibly it will take less time than the Round Table

Conference. As to giving him a new turn, that, I fear, is beyond me; besides, in this field I was once a voracious reader, but never a critic or creator. 8 June 1931

*

As to the novel, perhaps I simply meant that I was unwilling to exercise my critic's scalpel on a living master of the art. In poetry it is different because I am there both a critic and a creator.
22 June 1931

Great Novelists

The great novelists like the great dramatists have been usually men who lived widely or intensely and brought a world out of the combination of their inner and their outer observation, vision, experience. Of course if you have a world in yourself, that is another matter. 22 September 1936

Bankim Chandra Chatterji

Depreciation of Bankim is absurd; he is and will always rank as one of the great creators and his prose stands among the ten or twelve best prose-styles in the world's literature.
December 1932

Great Prose Stylists

I stand rather aghast at your summons to stand and deliver the names of the ten or twelve best prose styles in the world's literature. I had no names in mind and I used the incautious phrase only to indicate the high place I thought Bankim held among the great masters of language. To rank the poets on different grades of the Hill of Poetry is a pastime which may be a little frivolous and unnecessary, but possible if not altogether permissible. I would not venture to try the same game with the prose-writers who are multitudinous and do not present the same marked and unmistakable differences of level and power.

The prose field is a field, it is not a mountain. It has eminences, but its high tops are not so high, the drops not so low as in poetical literature.

Then again there are great writers in prose and great prose-writers and the two are by no means the same thing. Dickens and Balzac are great novelists, but their style or their frequent absence of style had better not be described; Scott attempts a style, but it is neither blameless nor has distinguishing merit. Other novelists have an adequate style and a good one but their prose is not quoted as a model and they are remembered not for that but as creators. You speak of Meredith, and if Meredith had always written with as pure a mastery as he did in *Richard Feverel* he might have figured as a pre-eminent master of language, but the creator and the thinker played many tricks on the stylist in the bulk of his work. I was writing of prose styles and what was in my mind was those achievements in which language reached its acme of perfection in one manner or other so that whatever the writer touched became a thing of beauty — no matter what its substance — or a perfect form and memorable. Bankim seemed to me to have achieved that in his own way as Plato in his or Cicero or Tacitus in theirs or in French literature, Voltaire, Flaubert or Anatole France. I could name others, especially in French which is the greatest store-house of fine prose among the world's languages — there is no other to match it. Matthew Arnold once wrote a line something like this:

> France great in all great arts, in none supreme,

to which someone very aptly replied, "And what then of the art of prose-writing? Is it not a great art and who can approach France there? All prose of other languages seems beside its perfection, lucidity, measure almost clumsy."

There are many remarkable prose-writers in English, but that perfection which is almost like a second nature to the French writers is not so common. The great prose-writers in English seem to seize by the personality they express in their styles, rather than by its perfection as an instrument — it is true at least of the earliest and I think too of the later writers. Lamb whom you mention is a signal example of a writer who erected his personality into a style and lives by that achievement — Pater and Wilde are other examples.

As for Bengali we have had Bankim and have still Tagore and Sarat Chatterji. That is sufficient achievement for a single century.

I have not answered your question — but I have explained my phrase and I think that is all you can expect from me.

15 September 1933

Saratchandra Chatterji

What is stamped on Saratchandra's work everywhere is a large intelligence, an acute and accurate observation of men and things and a heart full of sympathy for sorrow and suffering. Too sensitive to be quite at ease with the world and also perhaps too clear-sighted. Much fineness of mind and refinement of the vital nature.

March 1935

*

Novels deal with the vital life of men, so necessarily they bring that atmosphere. Saratchandra is a highly emotional writer with a great power of presenting the feelings and movements of the human vital.

13 March 1936

Alexander Dumas

Dumas' "history" is all slap and dash adventure — amusing, rather than solidly interesting. But it is all the history known to many people in France — just as many in England gather their history from Shakespeare's plays.

2 December 1934

Victor Hugo

> When I said to Pavitra that *Les Misérables* was one of the great works of art he replied "Faugh! What a shallow thing." But I believe I heard from Amrita that you used to regard it as one of the world's great novels.

It is not one of the masterpieces of "art", but I regard it as the work of a powerful genius and certainly one of the great novels. It is certainly not philosophically or psychologically deep, but it is exceedingly vivid and powerful. 25 April 1937

*

People have different tastes — some regard Hugo as a childish writer, a rhetorician without depth — others regard him as a great poet and novelist. One has to form one's own judgment and leave others to hold theirs. 26 April 1937

*

> I should like to know whether, in criticising novels, one has a right to depreciate a work because it is not very deep.

That is again a matter of opinion. There is the position that plot and character-presentation are sufficient and for the rest a large or great theme — one of the well-recognised human situations or a picture of life largely dealt with — and no more is necessary. Most famous English novels of the past are like that. There is another position that subtle psychology, deep and true presentation (not merely imaginative or idealistic) of the profounder problems or secrets of life and nature are needed. Hugo's characters and situations are thought by many to be melodramatic or superficial and untrue. His novels like his dramas are "romantic" and the present trend is against the romantic treatment of life as superficial, childishly over-coloured and false. The disparagement of what was formerly considered great is common on that ground. "Faugh!" expresses the feeling. 27 April 1937

Dickens and Balzac

> For literary creation and effective expression, who will deny that style has a great force?

Of course; without style there is no literature — except in fiction, where a man with bad style like Dickens or Balzac can make up by vigour and the power of his substance. 29 October 1933

*

> Charles Dickens says, that is, makes a character speak (seriously): "My eyes stood staring above his head"!

Dickens is the most slipshod of all English writers — his English style is not worth a cuss. This sentence is the proof. The character's "eyes stood above somebody else's head staring" no doubt at their own position in astonishment at his English.

His merit lies in his stories and characters (some of them) not in his language which is bad. The same may be said of Balzac who is the greatest of French novelists but the worst of French writers. 13 June 1938

Romain Rolland

> Somnath was drawn to the spiritual life through reading novels like *Jean Christophe*.

I have not read *Jean Christophe*, but Rolland is an idealist who takes interest in spiritual mysticism — not himself a man of spiritual experience. It is quite natural that such a man's writings should produce an effect on an intellectual man more easily than a religious or spiritual work. Somnath was not religious-minded, so a religious work would not move him because it would be too far from his own way of thinking and turn of seeing. A spiritual book would not reach him, for he would not understand or feel the spiritual experiences or knowledge contained in it, they being quite foreign to his then consciousness. On the other hand a book by an intellectual idealist with an intellectual turn towards spirituality would suit his own temperament and outlook and draw his thoughts that way. 26 October 1935

French "Psychic" Romances

> If and when chemistry advances and enters the supraphysical regions it will try to bring down peace in a vacuum bottle and analyse and synthetise it in some way.

If you read the French romances about "psychic" matters you will find that their highest imagination is machinery, — machines for registering peoples' thoughts, machines for storing up the psychic energy of "a living Buddha" (a Buddha, by the way, with some hundred concubines) into which he puts his will-force so that when it is turned on millions of soldiers will march in a hypnotised trance to battle performing manoeuvres according to silent orders from the machine, etc. etc. So your suppositions are not unlikely. One of the reasons why many Americans want Yoga is that it may make them successful in all they undertake, professors, businessmen etc. 29 April 1935

Contemporary Detective Stories

The detective stories of today are much better than those of the Sherlock Holmes time. This kind of writing has been taken up by men with imagination and literary talent who would not have touched it before. 30 September 1935

On Some Musicians

As to Sahana's question, I am unable to say much — I have no special competence in this sphere of music and do not know on what aesthetic ground she stands in this matter. These things are mysterious in their origin and so it is said "*De gustibus non est disputandum*" — "There can be no disputing about tastes." Some connoisseurs of music exalt Wagner as a god or a Titan, others speak of him with depreciation and celebrate the godhead of Verdi who is disclaimed by their opponents. Yet I suppose the genius of neither can be disputed. So far as I can make out from her statement, Sahana does not dispute your genius or the aesthetic quality of your music, but something in her does not respond — if so, it is either a matter of temperament or it is that she is looking for something else, some other vibration than that given by your music. If it is only conservatism and an unwillingness to admit new forms or new laws of creation, that is obviously a mental limitation and can disappear only with more plasticity of mind or a change of the angle of vision — I don't know that I can say anything more — or more definite.

As for Sahana's singing, she seems to succeed when she can forget herself in her singing and to fail when she has to think of her audience or of success and failure. That would mean that she is in a certain stage of inner development where the inner state makes all the difference. I would hazard the conclusion that her future as a singer on the old psychological lines hardly exists, but she has to find fully her soul, her inner self and with it the inner singer. 8 September 1937

Beethoven

There can be no doubt that Beethoven's music was often from another world; so it is quite possible for it to give the key to an inwardly sensitive hearer or to one who is seeking or ready for the connection to be made. But I think it is very few who get beyond being aesthetically moved by a sense of greater things; to lay the hand on the key and use it is rare.

Bhatkhande

Yes, I have read your article on Bhatkhande. Very interesting: the character came home to me as a sublimation of a type I was very familiar with when in Baroda. Very amusing his encounters with the pundits — especially the Socratic way of self-depreciation heightened almost to the Japanese pitch. His photograph you sent me shows a keen and powerful face full of genius and character. February 1937

Comments on Some Passages of Prose

Anatole France's Irony

> I so much enjoyed Anatole France's joke about God in the mouth of the arch-scoffer Brotteaux in his book *Les dieux ont soif* that I must ask you to read it.
>
> > Ou Dieu veut empêcher le mal et ne le peut, ou il ne peut et ne le veut, ou il ne le peut ni ne le veut, ou il le veut et le peut. S'il le veut et ne le peut, il est impuissant; s'il le peut et ne le veut, il est pervers; s'il ne le peut ni ne le veut, il est impuissant et pervers; s'il le peut et le veut, que ne le fait-il, mon Père?[1]
>
> I wonder what God might answer to it, supposing he should ever feel inclined to?

Anatole France is always amusing whether he is ironising about God and Christianity or about that rational animal, man or Humanity (with a big H), and the follies of his reason and his conduct. But I presume you never heard of God's explanation of his non-interference to Anatole France when they met in some Heaven of Irony, I suppose — it can't have been in the heaven of Karl Marx, in spite of France's conversion before his death. God is reported to have strolled up to him and said, "I say, Anatole, you know that was a good joke of yours; but there was a good cause too for my non-interference... Reason came along and told me, 'Look here, why do you pretend to exist? you know you don't exist and never existed or, if you do, you have made such a mess of your creation that we can't tolerate you any longer. Once we have got you out of the way, all will be right upon earth, tip-top, A-1: my daughter Science and I have arranged that between us. Man will raise his noble brow, the head of creation, dignified, free, equal, fraternal, democratic, depending upon nothing but himself, with nothing greater than himself anywhere in existence. There will be no God, no gods, no churches, no priestcraft, no religion, no kings, no oppression, no poverty, no war or discord anywhere. Industry will fill the earth with abundance, Commerce will spread her golden reconciling wings everywhere. Universal education will stamp out ignorance and leave no room for folly or unreason in any human brain; man will become cultured, disciplined, rational, scientific, well-informed, arriving always at the right conclusion upon full and sufficient data. The voice of the scientist and the expert will be loud in the land and guide mankind to the earthly paradise. A perfected society; health universalised by a developed medical science and sound hygiene; everything rationalised; science evolved, infallible, omnipotent, omniscient; the riddle of existence solved; the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the world; evolution, of which man, magnificent man, is the last term, completed in the noble white race, a humanitarian kindness and uplifting for our backward brown, yellow and black brothers; peace, peace, peace, reason, order, unity everywhere.' There was a lot more like that, Anatole, and I was so much impressed by the beauty of the picture and its convenience, for I would have nothing to do or to supervise, that I at once retired from business, — for, you know that I was always of a retiring disposition and inclined to keep myself behind the veil or in the background at the best of times. But what is this I hear? — it does not seem to me from reports that Reason even with the help of Science has kept her promise. And if not, why not? Is it because she would not or because she could not? or is it because she both would not and could not, or because she would and could, but somehow did not? And I say, Anatole, these children of theirs, the State, Industrialism, Capitalism, Communism and the rest have a queer look — they seem very much like Titanic monsters. Armed too with all the power of Intellect and all the weapons and organisation of Science. And it does look as if mankind were no freer under them than under the Kings and the Churches. What has happened —

---

[1] *Anatole France,* Les dieux ont soif *(Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1965), p. 146. — Ed.*

or is it possible that Reason is *not* supreme and infallible, even that she has made a greater mess of it than I could have done myself?" Here the report of the conversation ends; I give it for what it is worth, for I am not acquainted with this God and have to take him on trust from Anatole France. 1 August 1932

Croce's Aesthetics

"Knowledge has two forms: it is either *intuitive* knowledge or *logical* knowledge; knowledge obtained through the imagination or knowledge obtained through the intellect; knowledge of the individual or knowledge of the universal; of individual things or of the relations between them; it is the production either of images or of concepts." [B. Croce, *Esthetic*, 1902, p. 1.] The origin of art, therefore, lies in the power of forming images. "Art is ruled uniquely by the imagination. Images are its only wealth. It does not classify objects, it does not pronounce them real or imaginary, does not qualify them, does not define them; it feels and presents them — nothing more." [In Carr, *The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce*, London, 1917, p. 35.] Because imagination precedes thought, and is necessary to it, the artistic, or image-forming, activity of the mind is prior to the logical, concept-forming, activity. Man is an artist as soon as he imagines, and long before he reasons.

The great artists understood the matter so. "One paints not with the hands but with the brain," said Michelangelo; and Leonardo wrote: "The minds of men of lofty genius are most active in invention when they are doing the least external work." Everybody knows the story told of da Vinci, that when he was painting the "Last Supper", he sorely displeased the Abbot who had ordered the work, by sitting motionless for days before an untouched canvas; and revenged himself for the importunate Abbot's persistent query — When would he begin to work? — by using the gentleman as an unconscious model for the figure of Judas.

The essence of the esthetic activity lies in this motionless effort of the artist to conceive the perfect image that

> shall express the subject he has in mind; it lies in a form of intuition that involves no mystic insight, but perfect sight, complete perception, and adequate imagination. The miracle of art lies not in the externalization but in the conception of the idea; externalization is a matter of mechanical technique and manual skill.
>
> "When we have mastered the internal word, when we have vividly and clearly conceived a figure or a statue, when we have found a musical theme, expression is born and is complete, nothing more is needed. If, then, we open our mouth, and speak or sing, . . . what we do is to say aloud what we have already said within, to sing aloud what we have already sung within. If our hands strike the keyboard of the pianoforte, if we take up pencil or chisel, such actions are willed" (they belong to the practical, not to the aesthetic, activity), "and what we are then doing is executing in great movements what we have already executed briefly and rapidly within." [*Esthetic*, p. 50.]
>
> — Will Durant, presenting the aesthetics of
> Benedetto Croce in *The Story of Philosophy*

I have not read Croce but it seems to me that Durant must have taken something of their depth out of them in his presentation. At any rate, I cannot accept the proposition that there are only two forms of knowledge, imaginative and intellectual, — still less if these two are made to coincide with the division between knowledge of the individual and that of the universal and again with image-production and concepts. Art can be conceptual as well as imaginative — it may embody ideas and not merely produce images. I do not see the relevancy of the Da Vinci story — one can sit motionless to summon up concepts as well as images or a concept and image together. Moreover what is this intuition which is perfect sight and adequate imagination, i.e., production of an image: is it empty of all "idea", of all conception? Evidently not, — for immediately it is said that the miracle of art lies in the conception of an idea. What then becomes of the division between the production of images and the production of concepts; and how can it be said that Art is ruled only by the image-producing power and images are its only wealth? All this seems to be very contradictory and confusing. You cannot cut up the human mind in that way — the attempt is that of the analysing intellect which is always putting things as trenchantly divided and opposite. If it had been said that in art the synthetic action of the idea is more prominent than the analytic idea which we find most prominent in logic and science and philosophical reasoning, then one could understand the statement. The integrating or direct integral conception and the image-making faculty are the two leading powers of art with intuition as the driving force behind it — that too would be a statement that is intelligible.

Still more strange is the statement that the externalisation is outside the miracle of art and is not needed; beauty, he says, is adequate expression, but how can there be expression, an expressive image without externalisation? The inner image may be the thing to be expressed, it may itself be expressive of some truth, but unless it is externalised how can the spectator contemplating beauty contemplate it at all or get into unity of vision with the artist who creates it? The difference between Shakespeare and ourselves lies only in the power of inwardly forming an image, not in the power of externalising it? But there are many people who have the power of a rich inner imaging of things, but are quite unable to put them down on paper or utter them in speech or transfer them to canvas or into clay or bronze or stone. They are then as great creative artists as Shakespeare or Michael Angelo? I should have thought that Shakespeare's power of the word and Michael Angelo's of translating his image into visible form is at least an indispensable part of the art of expression, creation or image-making. I cannot conceive of a Shakespeare or Michael Angelo without that power — the one would be a mute inglorious Shakespeare and the other a rather helpless and ineffective Angelo.

P.S. This is of course a comment on the statement as presented — I would have to read Croce myself in order to form a conception of what is behind his philosophy of Aesthetics.

19 December 1936

Russell's Introvert

> We are all prone to the malady of the introvert, who, with the manifold spectacle of the world spread out before him, turns away and gazes only upon the emptiness within.[2]

I have not forgotten Russell, but I have neglected him, first, for want of time, second because for the moment I have mislaid your letter, third because of lack of understanding on my part. What is the meaning of taking interest in external things for their own sake? And what is an introvert? Both these problems baffle me.

The word introvert has come into existence only recently and sounds like a companion of pervert. Literally, it means one who is turned inwards. The Upanishad speaks of the doors of the senses that are turned outwards absorbing man in external things (for their own sake, I suppose) and of the rare man among a million who turns his vision inwards and sees the Self. Is that man an introvert? And is Russell's ideal man, interested in externals for their own sake, Cheloo the day-labourer, for instance, or Joseph the chauffeur, *homo externalis Russellius*, an extrovert? Or is an introvert one who has an inner life stronger, more brilliant, more creative than his external life, — the poet, the musician, the artist? Was Beethoven in his deafness bringing out music from within him an introvert? Or does it mean one who measures external things by an inner standard and is interested in them not for their own sake but for their value to the soul's self-development, its psychic, religious, ethical or other self-expression? Are Tolstoy and Gandhi examples of introverts? Or in another field Goethe? Or does it mean one who cares for external things only as they touch his own mind or else concern his own ego? But that I suppose would include 999,999 men out of every million.

What are external things? Russell is a mathematician. Are mathematical formulae external things — even though they exist here only in the World-Mind and the mind of Man? If not, is

---

[2] *Bertrand Russell,* The Conquest of Happiness *(London: George Allen and Unwin, 1943), p. 160.*

Russell as mathematician an introvert? Again, Yajnavalkya says that one loves the wife not for the sake of the wife, but for the self's sake and so with other objects of interest or desire — whether the self be the inner self or the ego.[3] Who desires external things for their own sake and not for some value to the conscious being? Even Cheloo is not interested in a two-anna piece for its own sake, but for some vital satisfaction it can bring him; even with the hoarding miser it is the same. It is his vital being's passion for possession that he satisfies and that is something not external but internal, part of his inner make-up, the unseen personality that moves inside behind the veil of the body. What then is meant by Russell's for their own sake? If you will enlighten me on these points, I may still make an effort to comment on the *mahāvākya* of your former guru.

More important is his wonderful phrase about the emptiness within — on that at least I hope to make a comment one day or another.

27 December 1930

Lawrence's Letters

> I write to let you know what is occupying me — Yoga meditation alternating with Lawrence's engrossing letters,[4] of which I give you some lines that I liked very much.
>
> > Why are you so sad about your life? Only let go all this will to have things in your own control. We must all submit to be helpless and obliterated, quite obliterated, destroyed, cast away into nothingness. There is something will rise out of it, something new, that now is not. This which we are must cease to be, that we may come to pass in another being. Do not struggle, with your will, to dominate your conscious life — do not do it. Only drift, and let go — let go, entirely, and become dark, quite dark — like winter which mows away all the leaves and flowers, and lets only the dark underground roots remain. . . .

---

[3] In Yoga it is the valuing of external things in the terms of the desire of the ego that is discouraged — their only value is their value in the manifestation of the Divine.

[4] *Aldous Huxley, ed.,* The Letters of D. H. Lawrence *(London: William Heinemann, 1934).*

> I tell this to you, I tell it to myself — to let go, to release from my will everything that my will would hold, to lapse back into darkness and unknowing. There must be deep winter before there can be spring. [*pp. 285–86*]

I suppose Lawrence was a Yogi who had missed his way and come into a European body to work out his difficulties. "To lapse back into darkness and unknowing" sounds like the Christian mystic's passing into the "night of God", but I think Lawrence thought of a new efflorescence from the subconscient while the mystic's night of God was a stage between ordinary consciousness and the Superconscient Light. 26 June 1936

*

The passage you have quoted certainly shows that Lawrence had an idea of the new spiritual birth. What he has written there could be a very accurate indication of the process of the change, the putting away of the old mind, vital, physical consciousness and the emergence of a new consciousness from the now invisible Within, not an illusory periphery like the present mental, vital, physical ignorance but a truth-becoming from the true being within us. He speaks of the transition as a darkness created by the rejection of the outer mental light, a darkness intervening before the true light from the Invisible can come. Certain Christian mystics have said the same thing and the Upanishad also speaks of the luminous Being beyond the darkness. But in India the rejection of the mental light, the vital stir, the physical hard narrow concreteness leads more often, not to a darkness, but to a wide emptiness and silence which begins afterwards to fill with the light of a deeper greater truer consciousness, a consciousness full of peace, harmony, joy and freedom. I think Lawrence was held back from realising because he was seeking for the new birth in the subconscient vital and taking that for the Invisible Within — he mistook Life for Spirit; whereas Life can only be an expression of the Spirit. That too perhaps was the reason for his preoccupation with a vain and baffled sexuality.

> Did you like the Ajanta frescos? I *loved* them: the pure

> fulfilment — the pure simplicity — the complete, almost perfect relations between the men and the women — the most perfect things I have *ever* seen. Botticelli is vulgar beside them. They are the zenith of a very lovely civilisation, the crest of a very perfect wave of human development. . . . [*pp. 299 – 300*]

His appreciation of the Ajanta paintings must have been due to the same drive that made him seek for a new poetry as well as a new truth from within. He wanted to get rid of the outward forms that for him hide the Invisible and arrive at something that would express with bare simplicity and directness some reality within. It is what made people begin to prefer the primitives to the developed art of the Renaissance. That is why he depreciates Botticelli as not giving the real thing, but only an outward grace and beauty which he considers vulgar in comparison with the less formal art of old that was satisfied with bringing out the pure emotion from within and nothing else.

It is the same thing which makes him want a stark bare rocky directness for modern poetry.[5] 28 June 1936

*

> In one of his letters, Lawrence says: "You see one can only write creative stuff when it comes — otherwise it's not much good." [*p. 89*]

All statements are subject to qualification. What Lawrence states is true in principle, but in practice most poets have to sustain the inspiration by industry. Milton in his later days used to write every day fifty lines; Virgil nine which he corrected and recorrected till it was within half way of what he wanted. In other words he used to write under any other conditions and pull at his inspiration till it came.

> To go by my own experience, the first part of the statement doesn't seem always to be true. But perhaps the best creations

---

[5] *A letter of 29 June 1936 containing Sri Aurobindo's comments on Lawrence's poetry is published on pages 418 – 19 above. — Ed.*

> are those which come in that way.

Yes. Usually the best lines, passages etc. come like that.

10 November 1936

*

> Every time I complain of great difficulty, no inspiration, you quote the names of Virgil, Milton, etc. Same in Yoga — you say 10 years, 12 years — pooh!

I thought you were honestly asking for the truth about inspiration according to Lawrence and effort; and I answered to that. I did not know that it was connected purely with your personal reactions. You did not put it like that. You asked whether Lawrence's ideas were correct and I was obliged to point out that they were subject to qualification since both great and second class and all kinds of poets have not waited for a fitful inspiration but tried to regularise it. 13 November 1936

Section Three

Practical Guidance for Aspiring Writers

Guidance in Writing Poetry

Three Essentials for Writing Poetry

I have gone through your poems. For poetry three things are necessary. First, there must be emotional sincerity and poetical feeling and this your poems show that you possess. Next, a mastery over language and a faculty of rhythm perfected by a knowledge of the technique of poetic and rhythmic expression; here the technique is imperfect, some faculty is there but in the rough and there is not yet an original and native style. Finally, there must be the power of inspiration, the creative energy, and that makes the whole difference between the poet and the good verse-writer. In your poems this is still very uncertain, — in some passages it almost comes out, but in the rest it is not evident.

I would suggest to you not to turn your energies in this direction at present. Allow your consciousness to grow. If when the consciousness develops, a greater energy of inspiration comes, not out of the ordinary but out of the Yogic consciousness, then you can write and, if it is found that the energy not only comes from the true source but is able to mould for itself the true transcription in rhythm and language, can continue.

6 June 1932

Suggestions for Indians Writing English Poetry

If you want to write English poetry which can stand, I would suggest three rules for you to observe:

1. Avoid rhetorical turns and artifices and the rhetorical tone generally. An English poet can use these things at will because he has the intimate sense of his language and can keep the right proportion and measure. An Indian using them kills his poetry and produces a scholastic exercise.

2. Write modern English. Avoid frequent inversions or turns of language that belong to the past poetic styles. Modern English poetry uses a straightforward order and a natural style, not different in vocabulary, syntax, etc., from that of prose. An inversion can be used sometimes, but it must be done deliberately and for a distinct and particular effect.

3. For poetic effect rely wholly on the power of your substance, the magic of rhythm and the sincerity of your expression — if you can add subtlety so much the better, but not at the cost of sincerity and straightforwardness. Do not construct your poetry with the brain-mind, the mere intellect — that is not the source of true inspiration; write always from the inner heart of emotion and vision. 17 November 1930

*

Why erect mental theories and suit your poetry to them?[1] I would suggest to you not to be bound by either [*of two models*], but to write as best suits your own inspiration and poetic genius. I imagine that each poet should write in the way suited to his own inspiration and substance; it is only a habit of the human mind fond of erecting rules and rigidities that would like to put one way forward as a general law for all. If you insist on being rigidly simple and direct as a mental rule, you might spoil something of the subtlety of the expression you now have, even if the delicacy of substance remained with you. Obscurity, artifice, rhetoric have to be avoided, but for the rest follow the inner movement.

I do not remember the precise words I used in laying down the rule to which you refer, — I think I advised sincerity and straightforwardness as opposed to rhetoric and artifice. In any case it was far from my intention to impose any strict rule of bare simplicity and directness as a general law of poetic style. I was speaking of "twentieth century" English poetry and of what was necessary for an Indian writing in the English tongue.[2]

---

[1] *This is the revised version of a letter that is printed in its unrevised form (with the omission of one paragraph) on pages 467–68. — Ed.*

[2] *Sri Aurobindo is referring here to the advice he gave in the letter of 17 November 1930 published on pages 567–68. — Ed.*

English poetry in former times used inversions freely and had a law of its own — at that time natural and right, but the same thing nowadays sounds artificial and false. English has now acquired a richness and flexibility and power of many-sided suggestion which makes it unnecessary for poetry to depart from the ordinary style and form of the language. But there are other languages in which this is not yet true. Bengali is in its youth, in full process of growth and has many things not yet done, many powers and values it has still to acquire. It is necessary that its poets should keep a full and entire freedom to turn in whichever way the genius leads, to find new forms and movements; if they like to adhere to the ordinary norm of the language to which prose has to keep and do what they can in it, they should be free to do so; but also they should be free to depart from it, if it is by doing so that they can best liberate their souls in speech. At present it is this that most matters. 8 December 1930

Help to Young Poets

Yes, of course, I have been helping Jyotirmayi. Always when somebody really wants to develop the literary power, I put some force to help him or her. If there is faculty and application, however latent the faculty, it always grows under the pressure and can even be turned in this or that direction. Naturally, some are more favourable *ādhāras* than others and grow more decisively and quickly. Others drop off, not having the necessary power of application. But on the whole it is easy enough to make this faculty grow, for there is cooperation on the part of the recipient and only the tamas of the *apravṛtti* and *aprakāśa* in the human instrument to overcome which are not such serious obstacles in the things of the mind as a vital resistance or non-cooperation of the will or idea which confronts one when there is a pressure for change or progress in other directions. 10 June 1935

*

[X's] poems are only attempts — good attempts for his age — so I encourage him by telling him that they are good attempts. It is his English poems I correct, as he has talent, but his mastery of the language is still naturally very imperfect. The other three are masters of language and [Y] is a poet of a very high order. I give my general opinion only when they want it. I never make suggestions. It is in English poetry that I give my opinions or correct or make suggestions. 22 November 1933

Criticism of Bengali Poetry

I do not know that I can suggest any detailed criticisms of Bengali poetry, as I have to rely more on what I feel than on any expert knowledge of language and metre.

Sri Aurobindo's Force and the Writing of Poetry

> You give me Force for English poetry — some lines come all right, others are jumbled, wrong, etc., and these things you correct by outer guidance, i.e. by correcting, checking, etc. till I become sufficiently receptive and then only a few changes will be necessary.

I do so in your English poetry because I am an expert in English poetry. In Bengali poetry I don't do it. I only select among alternatives offered by yourself. Mark that for Amal I nowadays avoid correcting or changing as far as possible — that is in order to encourage the inspiration to act in himself. Sometimes I see what he should have written but do not tell it to him, leaving him to get it or not from my silence. 10 April 1937

*

> I can understand your yogic success in Dilip's Bengali poetry, because the field was ready, but the opening of his channel in English has staggered me. I can't understand whether it is your success or his.

What do you mean by Yoga? There is a Force here in the atmosphere which will give itself to anyone open to it. Naturally it will work best when the native tongue is used — but it can do big things through English if the channel used is a poetic one and if that channel offers itself. Two things are necessary — no personal resistance and some willingness to take trouble about understanding the elementary technique at least so that the transcription may not meet with too many obstacles. Nishikanta has a fine channel and with a very poetic turn in it — he offers no resistance to the flow of the force, no interference of his mental ego, only the convenience of his mental individuality. Whether he takes the trouble for the technique is another matter.

> I had written to you that Nishikanta bows in front of your photograph before he sits down to write, and that I am ready to bow a hundred times, if that is the trick. You answered that it depends on how one bows. Methinks it does not depend on that. Even if it did I don't think Nishikanta knows it. Or was it in his past life that he knew it?

Well, there is a certain faculty of effacing oneself and letting the Universal Force run through you — that is the way of bowing. It can be acquired by various means, but also one may have the capacity for doing it in certain directions by nature.

10 December 1935

*

> We feel that your Force gives us the necessary inspiration for poetry, but I often wonder if you send it in a continuous current.

Of course not. Why should I? It is not necessary. I put my Force from time to time and let it work out what has to be worked out. It is true that with some I have to put it often to prevent too long stretches of unproductivity, but even there I don't put a continuous current. I have not time for such things.

> If it were so, we would not write 15 to 20 lines at a stretch and then go on for days together producing only 3 or 4 lines.

That depends on the mental instruments. Some people write freely — others do so only when in a special condition.

> Had your special Force been constantly acting, why should we have this difficulty? We should be able to feel the inspiration as soon as we sit down with pen and paper, shouldn't we?

No. At least I myself don't have continuous inspiration at command like that in poetry.

> I don't think a latent faculty brought out by Yogic Force would achieve such a height of perfection as a faculty which manifests in the natural way.

Of course, not so long as it is latent or not fully emerged. But once it is manifested and settled, there is no reason why it should not achieve an equal perfection. All depends on the quality of the inspiration that comes and the response of the instrument.
12 June 1935

*

> When the current of inspiration comes to a stop, I think sometimes that perhaps you have forgotten me in your busy moments.

It does not depend on that at all. It depends on a certain state of receptivity — an opening of the channel between the inner plane where the inspiration comes and the outer through which it has to pass. 27 March 1934

*

> As regards the "opening of the channel", can it be done sooner by more concentration, meditation, etc., disregarding the literary side for the time being?

One can get the power of receptivity to inspiration by concentration and meditation making the inner being stronger and the outer less gross, tamasic and insistent. 29 March 1934

*

> I tried to write a poem, but failed in spite of prayer and call. Then I wrote to you to send me some Force. Before the letter had reached you, lo, the miracle was done! Can you explain

> the process? Was it simply the writing that helped establish the contact with the Grace?

The call for the Force is very often sufficient, not absolutely necessary that it should reach my physical mind first. Many get as soon as they write — or, (if they are outside), when the letter reaches the atmosphere.

Yes, it is the success in establishing the contact that is important. It is a sort of hitching on or getting hold of the invisible button or whatever you like to call it.

> When you send the Force, is there a time limit for its functioning or does it work itself out in the long run or get washed off after a while, finding the *ādhāra* unreceptive?

There is no time limit. I have known cases in which I put a Force for getting a thing done and it seemed to fail damnably at the moment; but after two years everything carried itself out in exact detail and order just as I had arranged it, although I was thinking no more at all of the matter. You ought to know but I suppose you don't that "Psychic" Research in Europe has proved that all so-called "psychic" communications can sink into the consciousness without being noticed and turn up long afterwards. It is like that with the communication of Force also.

21 May 1936

Opening to the Force

> All I can say is that opening is a mysterious business!

Who says it is not? Some people have the trick of always opening to a Force (e.g. Dilip, Nishikanta for creative literary activity), some have it sometimes, don't have it sometimes (you, Arjava, myself). Why make it a case of kicks and despair?

19 September 1936

Sending Inspiration

But what precisely do you mean by sending the inspiration?

The inspiration comes from above, — through your inner being who, very evidently, is not only a Yogin and a bhakta but a poet of Yoga and bhakti. The Yoga-force which woke up the power in you came from me. It was when you were translating my poems that you got into touch and the power woke in you because you came inwardly into my Light. Since then I have been acting on you to develop this poetic power, and as there is a large opening there it has been an easy matter. As for the Power itself that works, that gives you words and rhythms, you ought to know or at least your inner being knows very well that all divine powers are the powers of the Mother. But the way in which these things work is the occult and not the physical (not the crudely mediumistic) way, and it works in each according to his nature and the material and capacities, actual or latent, it finds there. 8 September 1931

*

> Please send me some inspiration to complete my *Triumph of Dante*. What is the best way of receiving it? I'll be thankful if you'll teach me how to be able to fill up those gaps.

Good Lord! it is not a thing that can be taught. As for the best way — well, silence of the mind, relative silence if one can't get the absolute. 6 November 1936

*

> You give inspiration only for supramental poetry? Startling news, Sir!

Where have I said that I give inspiration for supramental poetry either only or at all? You said that your inspirer for this or for any other poem of yours was my supramental self. I simply said that it can't be, because a supramental self would produce or inspire supramental poetry — and yours is not that, nor, I may add, is Jyoti's or Dilip's or my own or anybody's.

> We fondly believe that you give inspiration, set apart a time for it, and now you say that you are not the Inspirer?

I say that my supramental Self is not the inspirer — which is a very different matter.

> Pray explain the mystery to me. Why shirk the responsibility now, because a surrealist poem has come out? You are responsible for it, I think.

Excuse me, no. As the Gita says, the Lord takes not on himself the good or the evil deeds (or writings) of any. I may send a force of inspiration, but I am not responsible for the results.

19 January 1937

The Necessity and Nature of Inspiration

> I hope to be able to write not only good but very good and very fine poems as a part of Yoga.

To write such poetry, one must first be open to a high or strong or beautiful source of inspiration and secondly one must not be too facile — one must be careful of the quality. 30 May 1934

*

> I am doubting if there is even one drop of poetical faculty in me.

There is evidence of literary talent in your poems — what has not yet come is the inspiration that vivifies the writing. It may come hereafter. 20 September 1934

*

As for the "urge", if you resist the inspiration, the chances are that you will lose both the urge and your meditation. So it is better to let the flood have its way — especially in this case, of course, for there is no harm in *this* kind of urge.

7 February 1931

*

But that happens to everybody who is in the habit of writing. The suggesting forces write in the mind without regard to outward

opportunity and it is also quite usual for a line to come without any sequel.
3 April 1936

*

> Would you suggest a way to increase thought-power in poetry?

There is no device for that. You have to open from within to a deeper or higher source of inspiration or grow from within into a deeper or higher consciousness — there is no other way for it.
4 May 1934

*

> Today another poem by Jyoti. I'm staggered by her speed in writing. She says lines, *chanda*, simply drop down, and she jots them down. She feels as if somebody is writing through her.

But that is how inspiration always comes when the way is clear and the mind sufficiently passive. Something drops or pours down; somebody writes through you.

> I don't know that by one's mind one can write such things. What do you say?

Not possible. There would be something artificial or made up in them if it were the mind that did it.

> How has she opened to the mystic plane? Something akin to her nature or one just opens?

It may be either.

> Even when a thing drops down, isn't it rather risky to accept it as it comes, specially the *chanda* part of it?

If anything is defective, it can be only by a mistake in the transcription.

> Does the *chanda* also come down with inspiration or has one to change it afterwards?

Yes, it comes and is usually faultless — if the mind is passive and the source a high, deep or true one. Of course metre as the Supraphysicals understand it!

> I shall illustrate my point. Jyoti says she sometimes rejects lines because she doesn't understand their meaning. But since they repeatedly throw themselves on her, she accepts them. When the poem is completed the meaning becomes clear.

The mind ought to be quiet till all is written. Afterwards one can look and see if there is anything to be altered. 27 July 1936

*

> Isn't it a fact that the best poetry almost always comes down without any resistance at all?

Usually the best poetry a poet writes, the things that make him immortal, come like that. 28 July 1936

*

> After reading Jyoti's whole poem, I realised it would have been impossible to write it simply from facility. It is an inspiration-poem.

Of course it is impossible. There must be inspiration. The value of the poem does not rise from the labour or difficulty felt in writing it. Shakespeare, it is said, wrote at full speed and never erased a line. 29 July 1936

Inspiration and Understanding

> Everything depends on the inspiration. But then I can't change any line or word since I don't understand what I am writing.

From your explanations you seem to understand all right. The question is about the inspiration itself. It is sometimes more successful, sometimes less — for various reasons. What one has to see is whether what has come through is quite satisfactory in language, image, harmonious building, poetic force. If not, one can call a farther inspiration to emend what is deficient. At first one allows the inspiration to come through without interference, to establish the habit of free flow. But that does not mean one must not afterwards alter or improve — only it should be done not by the mind but by a fresh and better inspiration. If in the course of writing itself, a correcting inspiration comes, that can be accepted — otherwise one does the perfecting afterwards.

23 February 1937

*

> The poet herself says that, as far as she can tell, the sestet has no relationship to the previous lines.

What does that matter? Is she the intellectual creator of these poems or is she the medium of their transmission? If the latter it does not matter a penny damn that she does not intellectually understand her poem — provided she transmits it correctly.

7 December 1936

*

> Does it help a writer to know the particular source of inspiration from where he or she writes?

Not at all necessary. 18 July 1936

*

> Some poems that come are unintelligible to the mind. Why? Is it because they come from higher planes?

Yes, the mind is used as a medium: it may be an understanding — transcribing agent or it may be only a passive channel. If an agent, it transcribes what comes from above, understands but does not pass its opinion — only transmits. If it is only a channel, then it sees the words and passes them but knows no more.

> If one could understand it when it comes, would that not help to improve the poem?

Not to improve — for that would mean the mind interfering, refusing to be a medium and trying to do better in its own active account. But to understand is desirable. If the mind is watchful and awake to the symbols being used or the images it can acquire the habit or knack of understanding. 27 January 1937

*

> But seriously, how can I write this surrealist sort of stuff better? What is the trick?

The trick is to put your demand on the source for what you want. If you want to fathom (not understand) what you are writing, ask for the vision of the thing to come along with the word, a vision bringing an inner comprehension. If you want something mystic but convincing to the non-mystic reader, ask for that till you get it. 17 February 1937

*

> So you are getting plenty of surrealist poets, eh? Happy at the prospect?

Not at all. Look here, sir, two are enough in all conscience, with an occasional Nishikantian outburst thrown in. If others cut in I will have to strike. I can't spend all my life from set to dawn explaining the inexplicable.

Inspiration and Effort

> I have ceased even to aspire, believing that you will give me inspiration. I refuse to make even a mental effort.

Mental effort is one thing and aspiring and holding yourself in readiness is another. 10 May 1934

*

> If I have discovered some lines I must not think of the next lines, but try instead to keep absolutely silent so that with a leap I find that the Greater Mind has simply dropped the necessary rhymed lines, like a good fellow, and I finish off excellently without a drop of black sweat on my wide forehead?

That is the ideal way; but usually there is always an activity of the mind jumping up and trying to catch the inspiration. Sometimes the inspiration, the right one, comes in the midst of this futile jumping, sometimes it sweeps it aside and brings in the right thing, sometimes it inserts itself between two blunders, sometimes it waits till the noise quiets down. But even this jumping need not be a mental effort — it is often only a series of suggestions, the mind of itself seizing on one or eliminating another, not by laborious thinking and choice, but by a quiet series of perceptions. This is method no. 2. No. 3 is your Herculean way, quite the slowest and worst. 31 March 1936

*

> Inspiration leaves one sometimes and one goes on beating and beating, hammering and hammering, but it comes not! Inspiration failing to descend, perhaps.

Exactly. When any real effect is produced, it is not because of the beating and the hammering, but because an inspiration slips down between the raising of the hammer and the falling and gets in under cover of the beastly noise. It is when there is no need of effort that the best comes. Effort is all right, but only as an excuse for inducing the Inspiration to come. If it wants to come, it comes — if it doesn't, it doesn't and one is obliged to give up after producing nothing or an inferior mind-made something. I have had that experience often enough myself. I have also seen Amal after producing something good but not perfect, beating the air and hammering it with proposed versions each as bad as the other, — for it is only a new inspiration that can really improve a defect in the transcription of the first one. Still one makes efforts, but it is not the effort that produces the result, but the inspiration that comes in answer to it. You knock at the door to make the fellow inside answer. He may or he mayn't — if he lies mum, you have only to walk off swearing. That's effort and inspiration.

> You proclaim the force and inspiration from the house-top, but fail to see that one has to work hour after hour to get it. What would you call this labour?

Hammering, making a beastly noise so that Inspiration may get excited and exasperated and fling something through the window, muttering "I hope that will keep this insufferable tinsmith quiet." 6 March 1936

Mentalisation of Inspiration

> You have spoken of the original inspiration becoming "mentalised". Could you tell me how it gets mentalised?

This mentalisation is a subtle process which takes place unobserved. The inspiration, as soon as it strikes the mental layer (where it first becomes visible) is met by a less intense receptivity of the mind which passes the inspired substance through but substitutes its own expression, an expression stressed by the force of inspiration into a special felicity but not reproducing or transmitting the inspired beat itself. 6 April 1938

Capturing Lines and Expressions

> As regards poetry, I am invaded by hazy ideas for two or three compositions and many lines seem to peep out.

What is the meaning of this "seem"? Do they peep or do they not peep?

> But they seem more bent on tantalising me than meaning anything serious, because as soon as I sit down to transcribe them, they evaporate like ether or camphor.

What do you mean? Why should you sit down to transcribe them? Keep hold of the lines and expressions by the nose as soon as they peep out, jump on a piece of paper and dash them down for prospective immortality.

> It appears so easy to catch all these amorphous beauties and put them into morphological Grecian statues! . . .

Why amorphous, if they are lines and expressions — lines and expressions are either morphous or they don't exist. Explain yourself, please. 5 December 1935

*

> You ask why "amorphous"? The lines, expressions, words that I feel swarming all around me, but I cannot put into form, what else shall I call them?

If you simply feel things swarming without a shape, then you can't call that lines and expressions — it is only the chaotic potentiality of them.

> One begins with the morphous lines hoping that the amorphous chaos will sweep in ecstatically and help me build a splendidly original cosmos, and what do I find? Either they elude me or what comes is something commonplace.

That's another matter. It's like dreams in which one gets splendid lines that put Shakespeare into the shade and one wakes up and enthusiastically jots them down, it turns out to be "O you damned goose, where are you going While the river is flowing, flowing, flowing" and things like that.

> Do you mean that I should scribble down all these expressions as soon as they hop in? Good Lord! there will be parts and pieces only. How shall I make a whole poem out of them?

Many poets do that — jot down something that comes isolated in the hope that some day it will be utilisable. Tennyson did it, I believe. You don't want to be like Tennyson? Of course it is always permissible for you to pick and choose among these divine fragments and throw away those that are only semi-divine.

> Already words and lines of four or five poems in halves and quarters are lying in a comatose condition, without any hope of resurrection.

Well, well — all that shows you are a poet in the making with hundreds of poems in you also in the making, very much so. The mountains in labour, you know — what? 6 December 1935

Inspiration during Sleep

> Of late my poetic inspiration has shifted from the waking to the sleep state. I often compose poetry in sleep but cannot remember exactly what I write.

Concentrate in the will to remember before going to sleep — when you wake remain quiet a little before moving and try to remember (not struggling to do it but leaving your mind open with a will that it should come back). You say sometimes a line remains. Of what kind? any good? Sometimes these subliminal compositions are pure rubbish. If so, it is not worthwhile making an effort to remember. 3 October 1933

*

> This morning a little before 5.30 I got a poem which seemed to me grave and rich at the same time. Suddenly my eyes opened and the poem faded. But I had a very strong sense that it was really good. Is there any way to make good the loss?

These things do not come back. The feeling that it was very good is not reliable. Unless you remember the thing, it cannot be decided. I have more than once woken up with a line which seemed splendid to the subconscient, but which my waking mind found to be very flat. Of course it depends from what source it came. October 1933

Variations in Inspiration

> It is queer that one writes a few lines in no time and the rest perhaps at no time!

This is too cryptic for me. I may say however that inspiration for poetry is always an uncertain thing (except for a phenomenon like Harin). Sometimes it comes in a rush, sometimes one has to labour for days to get a poem right, sometimes it does not come at all. Besides each poet is treated by the Muse in a different way. 24 August 1935

*

> You wrote that today's poem is only "good". Where is the progress?

No writer of poetry can count on keeping the same level of inspiration in all his poems. The results are sometimes good, sometimes better, sometimes at his best. There can be failures also so long as one is not perfectly mature in capacity.

11 July 1936

Writing and Concentration

> Which of these two methods is better: to go on writing till one comes in contact with the original source of inspiration, or to concentrate first and get the contact?

Dhyana is perhaps the best way — for if you can get into the consciousness which makes all poetry which proceeds from it original, that is the best, even if it means postponement of the actual writing of poetry. The habit of writing no doubt increases the skill and mastery of verse, but then it might only be verse such as all good *littérateurs* can write. A higher inspiration is necessary. As for translation I don't know — if one has the translator's gift like Dilip or Nishikanta, then it is all right — but otherwise translation is more difficult than original writing.

*

> I cannot come in touch with poetry or its source. My mind is full of the most ordinary things.

You must put aside these things when you write. Every writer has to do that, to put aside his ordinary self and its preoccupations and concentrate on his overhead inspiration. 18 July 1936

Receptivity and Silence

> My mind does not know precisely how to silence itself. The same is true of Dilip. How then does he manage to receive from Above?

The difference is that as his mind has opened to the Above, the

Above can turn its activity into an activity of the Inspiration — its quickness, energy, activity enable it to transcribe quickly, actively, energetically what comes into it from the Above. Of course if one day it becomes silent also, it may probably become the channel of a still higher Inspiration.

> Is silencing the mind to be done only at the time of writing or at other times too?

Silencing the mind at the time of writing should be sufficient — even not silencing it, but its falling quiet to receive.

31 March 1936

Difficulty and Ease of Production

> The sentence "the reason is rather the seeking for new inspiration which has not yet come" in your letter to Jyoti is rather enigmatic or cryptic to us.

If one wants a new inspiration or development there may very well be during the period of transition or attempted transition a period of difficulty or suspension because the old feels itself no longer called for or not so much, while the new is not yet there. That is all I meant.

3 January 1937

*

> The sense of difficulty made me feel an unwillingness and somehow I dread it even now.

If the inspiration comes, the sense of difficulty is not likely to remain and the poem will take the form and tone which is the right one for the subject.

26 January 1937

*

> The same difficulty of transmission appears to hinder the proper finish. Will you tell me where the defect lies — insufficient mastery over language and style, or insufficient inspiration?

All writers have the difficulty — it is the tamas of the physical

mind which finds it difficult to transcribe the inspiration.
29 August 1933

Mind Fatigue

> Jyoti wants to know why or how the mind-fag has come in and by what attitude or process it can quickly pass off.

There is nothing serious in it. Very often when the mind has been doing something for a long time (I mean of course the physical mind), something which demands intensity of work or action, not what can be done as a routine, it finds itself unable to do it well any longer. That means that it is strained, needs rest so that the force may gather again. Rest or a variation. A little rest given to it or a variation of work should set it right again.

> I thought that one or two hours' work without undue effort might perhaps keep the channel open and at the same time produce no fatigue.

It is not a question of ordinary fatigue by overwork — but of a temporary inability to go on doing the same thing over and over any longer. That is what I mean by the mind-fag. It is not the mere writing of poetry of any kind but the intensity to bring down that kind of poetry that is in question. The channel in fact is not working because of the fag — it can work again only after rest, by not forcing oneself. 17 August 1936

The Poetic Influence and the Physical Consciousness

> Sometimes *chandas* are at the tip of my tongue but I'm unable to express myself in verse. Is there no way for me to learn?

Any necessary power may come with the sadhana — but many get the poetic impulse from within, but are not able to transcribe it in really good poetic form — it depends on how it comes out through the physical consciousness. 22 December 1933

Aspiration

> Jyoti says formerly she used to aspire for beautiful things, etc. instead of letting herself go. Now she remains passive — and this poem is the result. Any answer?

There is no incompatibility between aspiring and letting the thing come through. The aspiration gives the necessary intensity so that what comes has a better chance of being a true transcription. In this case probably the pain she felt in the neck etc. was a proof of some fatigue in the physical parts which spoiled the transmission. 30 July 1936

*

> Dilip had to work in spite of your Grace. My aspiration for your Grace in this mental occupation is as great as for spiritual progress.

Aspire for the opening to the right plane of inspiration. You forget that Dilip got his opening by grace and never lost it — all his work only helps him to utilise and develop what is already there. 22 May 1934

Passivity of Mind

> If I don't surrender more or less passively, all is spoilt, I cannot produce anything real. Yet the mind struggles and I feel depressed and heavy in the head.

Why should the mind struggle? In all these things the mind has to remain passive and only a witness consciousness behind watching what is passing. It can be seen afterwards if anything has to be altered, but the mind interfering can only hamper the inspiration or pervert it. 27 July 1936

*

> I seem to force and hurry myself rather than surrender to the Force above. The result is annoyance, mental labour, headaches and nervous irritation. Also, the desire to write this and that, this way or that way.

The remedy is to draw back and let the inspiration flow, keeping the attitude of the instrument and witness not involved in the work. 19 December 1936

The Joy of Creation

> I had a unique experience in the realm of poetry.
>
> Last night the inspiration came and as I sat down to write the whole thing dropped, so to say. I simply let myself be led to see how and where it would end. Never before have I written a whole poem in this way. I was very joyous and recovered all lost hope.
>
> Why is it that people get so much joy out of writing a poem?

It is the joy of creation partly, partly the joy or "*enthousiasmos*", the sense of exaltation and Ananda which always comes when one is freely and powerfully used by a greater Force.

> Does this spontaneous, automatic inpouring depend on some inner state?

It does not depend on any inner spiritual state, but on an opening to some supraphysical plane of inspiration. 21 April 1934

*

> I will put in any amount of labour and that should be enough for things to pour down.

Labour is not enough for the things to pour down. What is done with labour only, is done with difficulty, not with a downpour. The joy in the labour must be there for a free outflow. You have very queer psychological ideas, I must say. 14 December 1936

Rapture and Application

> Would you advise me to cease trying to write poetry for some time? The one or two recent failures (what you call "a good poem" falls for me more or less in the same category) perhaps shows that I am pumping when the well is dry? The poetry

> I really want to write — miraculous and perfect — seems so impossible at present. I wonder and wonder whether I shall ever be able to offer you the rapture and the glory I dream of.

I don't see why you object to writing good poems or why you call them failures. The rapture and the glory are all right, but how are you to arrive at them if you don't write? 6 October 1934

Practice, Cultivation, Regularity

> Dilip and others say I should practise writing, but can one write by practice?

Writing improves with practice — there comes a greater mastery over language, provided one has the faculty and you seem to have it. 5 February 1933

*

> Am I a "writer by nature" and should I cultivate writing like Dilip?

Dilip got the power of writing poetry through the inspiration awaking, otherwise he might have laboured all his life and never produced anything of any value. It was the grace of a sudden opening of power that he got, it was not the fruit of cultivation.

> Nirod writes as well or even better than I do, why then do you say he is not a writer by nature? Has he not the faculty?

I said that to Nirod because he wanted to do these things as part of his development in sadhana. Apart from that one can by cultivation learn to write well in an ordinary way, but inspiration and the power to write things worth writing do not come in that way.

> As a help in the beginning Dilip suggests that I should write long letters to friends, translate others' poems and writings, read a lot of books etc. And Amal says I should write essays and criticism of poems and of others' writings. Please tell me if these are the right ways to begin.

Of course you can do all that. If you can really do it it will at least be a lesson in work and application and patience, if nothing else. 27 August 1933

*

> What should I do in order to make everything perfect? Should I work hard and go on writing or rather sit and wait for the inclination to write?

There is no rule about these things — it acts differently with different people. Some acquire the capacity of writing regularly — others can only do it when the push comes. 31 March 1934

Silence and Creative Activity

It would be a mistake to silence the poetic flow on principle. Creative activity is a tonic to the vital and keeps it in good condition, and a strong and widening vital is helpful as a support to the practice of sadhana. There is no real incompatibility between the creative power and silence; for the real silence is something inward and it does not or at least need not cease when a strong activity or expression rises to the surface. 14 June 1932

Periods of Incubation

> Do you think it better for me to stop writing for four or five days in order to be quiet?

You may stop for a few days. It is sometimes well to do so at times. 11 August 1936

*

> My ballad seems to have fallen between two stools — it's neither true ballad nor pure poem. Has it no saving grace at all? What do you advise me to do with it? Limbo?

As to the sentence on your poem, I told you I could not pronounce even a definitive verdict. There was a recommendation by Horace or some other impossibly wise critic that when you have written a poem the safest rule is to put it in your desk, leave it there for ten years and then only take it out and read and see whether it is worth anything. Perhaps with a mitigation of the segregation period, the rule could be applied here. 1932

*

> What about my poem? I hope it is mentally quite clear.

Very fine indeed, very. You have suddenly reached a remarkable maturity of the poetic power. Which seems to suggest that the periods of sterility were not so sterile after all or were rather an incubation period, a work of opening going on in the inner being behind the veil before it manifested in the outer. Let us hope the same is going on in the direct sadhana. 7 August 1936

Labour and the Appearance of Ease

> I can't, for the life of me, get new expressions or thoughts. What can be done? I break my head over them but they remain damn hard and unprofitable as the Divine! I am paying the penalty of trying to become an English poet and of facing a hard task-master.

What the deuce are you complaining about? You are writing very beautiful poetry with apparent ease and one a day of this kind is a feat. If the apparent ease covers a lot of labour, that is the lot of the poet and artist except when he is a damned phenomenon of fluency. "It is the highest art to conceal art" "The long and conscientious labour of the artist giving in the result an appearance of divine and perfect ease" — console yourself with these titbits. As for repetitions, they are almost inevitable when you are writing a poem a day. You are gaining command of your medium and that is the main thing. An inexhaustible original fecundity is a thing you have to wait for — when you are more spiritually experienced and mature.

7 September 1938

Dissatisfaction and Persistence

> If one could express the Divine through poetry, it would have some value. Otherwise why should one bother?

There is a general tendency in the vital to get dissatisfied with everything. It is a restlessness that should not be encouraged. If one could be concentrated always on the Divine, then there would be no need of any admonitions, one would naturally do so. But until then it is no use dropping something that has opened in you.

> If the poems do not turn out to be of the highest grade, should I write daily?

If one gives up writing whenever the writing is not always of the highest grade — it would not be possible for anybody to develop his poetical power. 30 July 1936

Writing and Self-criticism

> I concentrate or meditate for some time before writing. Even then I have to pause after every expression.

Pause to do what? Think? You have to cultivate the power of feeling instinctively the value of what you write — either while writing or immediately you go over it when it is completed.

23 February 1937

*

> Nirod says my rhythm is sometimes not very smooth and spontaneous, and that I should read the poem aloud when it is finished. I prefer to read it silently. What is the right way: aloud or silently?

It is better always to read it aloud once so as to make sure of the rhythmic sound. 15 October 1933

*

> I have scratched the whole poem out of existence! And yet

> when I completed it, I was so happy thinking it was something great! Fool!

Every poet is such a fool. His work is done in an exalting excitement of the vital mind — judgment and criticism can only come when he has cooled down. 6 April 1937

Using Criticism from Others

> I do not like to show my poems to others; I'm afraid their criticism will take away all impulse to write.

If you do not show them and face criticism how will you improve? 12 October 1933

Contact with Other Writers

> I notice some queer things happening in the realm of poetry between Nishikanta and myself. I wrote a line:
>
> চলছে ভেসে চাঁদের তরী ওই সুনীলের সাগরে[3]
>
> and did not follow it up. Two days later I find Nishikanta writing a poem wherein occurs the line
>
> কে ভাসালে চাঁদের তরী[4]
>
> Some time back a similar thing happened. These are about expressions; similar things are happening about *chanda* also. Strange, isn't it?

Nothing queer about that. You dropped the inspiration and did not work it out; so it went off and prodded N who let it through. That often happens. 31 July 1936

*

> I thought I have so far avoided taking any beautiful expressions used by others.

---

[3] *"The moon-boat is sailing on the ocean of the blue sky." — Ed.*

[4] *"Who made it sail, the moon-boat?" — Ed.*

As a rule it is better to avoid taking over special expressions used by others. 15 February 1937

Sameness and Variety

> Harin has suns and moons in plenty in his poetry. A friend of Amal's has remarked that stars come in almost every one of his poems. This seems to be one point against spiritual poetry. Another is that spiritual poetry is bound to be limited in scope and lack *rasa vaicitrya*, to use Tagore's expression.

Ordinary poems (and novels) always write about love and similar things. Is it one point against ordinary (non-spiritual) poetry? If there is sameness of expression in spiritual poems, it is due either to the poet's binding himself by the tradition of a fixed set of symbols (e.g. Vaishnava poets, Vedic poets) or to his having only a limited field of expression or imagination or to his deliberately limiting himself to certain experiences or emotions that are clear to him. To readers who feel these things it does not appear monotonous. Those who listen to Mirabai's songs, don't get tired of them, nor do I get tired of reading the Upanishads. The Greeks did not tire of reading Anacreon's poems though he always wrote of wine and beautiful boys (one example of sameness in unspiritual poetry). The Vedic and Vaishnava poets remain immortal in spite of their sameness which is in another way like that of the poetry of the troubadours in mediaeval Europe, deliberately chosen. *Rasa vaicitrya* is all very well, but it is the power of the poetry that really matters. After all every poet writes always in the same style, repeats the same vision of things in "different garbs".

> When Sahana sent some of her poems to Tagore, he replied that the poet's mind should not be confined to a single *preraṇā*, however vast it might be.

But Tagore's poetry is all from one প্রেরণা. He may write of different things, but it is always Tagore and his *preraṇā* repeating themselves interminably. Every poet does that.

> He hints that a poet's creation should not be confined to spiritual inspiration dealing with things spiritual and mystic.

Well, and if a poet is a spiritual seeker what does Tagore want him to write about? Dancing girls? Amal has done that. Wine and women? Hafiz has done that. But he can only use them as symbols as a rule. Must he write about politics, — communism, for instance, like modernist poets? Why should he describe the outer aspects of world nature, বিশ্ব প্রকৃতি, for their own sake, when his vision is of something else within বিশ্ব প্রকৃতি or even apart from her? Merely for the sake of variety? He then becomes a mere *littérateur*. Of course if a man simply writes to get poetic fame and a lot of readers, if he is only a poet, Tagore's advice may be good for him. 15 May 1938

*

What the deuce is Yogic poetry, not to speak of too Yogic? Poetry is poetry, whatever the subject. If one can't appreciate the subject one can at least appreciate its poetical expression. One may not love wine-drinking yet appreciate the beauty of Anacreon's lyrics and one may be a pacifist and yet appreciate the poetic power of your father's war-song. However, perhaps since there is a conversion in other things, there may be an eleventh hour repentance here also.

Repetition

> Words or phrases may be reiterated provided they acquire by their content a new colour each time. The word white has been fairly common of late in my work though perhaps the line in which it occurs, "A white word breaks the eternal quietude", is not so stale as the other.

Obviously, it is desirable not to repeat oneself or if one has to it is desirable to repeat in another language and in a new light. Still even that cannot be overdone. The difficulty about most writers of spiritual poetry is that they have either a limited field of experience or are tacked on to a limited inspiration though an intense one. How to get out of it? The only recipe I know is to widen oneself (or one's receptivity) always. Or else perhaps wait in the eternal quietude for a new white word to break it — if it does not come, telephone. 30 August 1937

*

But why should not one repeat oneself sometimes — provided it is done with a difference? It is better, unless there is imperative need for change or unless a very striking improvement offers itself, not to make any small alterations in a thing that has come out well — for then the better one tries after tends to spoil the good that has already been achieved.

*

It is not possible always to say something quite new. If one has a subject old or new worth treating and treats it with originality, that is all that is essential. 18 August 1936

Spontaneity

All poetry is not necessarily spontaneous, and if all poetry that is not spontaneous were to be put aside, the stock of the world's poetic literature would be much reduced; so let the sonnet stand.
25 October 1934

Originality

It is a good poem; its rhythm and expression are sufficiently chaste and strong to convey an effect of restrained power and give a poetic body to the thought — and the thought itself is on a high level and has the emotion and truth of what comes from the higher mind. Judged independently, the one defect is that the style has not the note of perfect originality, the intensity of discovery in it; I find too much echo of my own poetry in *Ahana*. But this derivativeness is inevitable when one is learning how to write — it is only when you have got a certain mastery of the medium that you can express in your own way. 6 December 1932

*

> Once you wrote to me that the occasional failure of inspiration I experience is due to my mind having learned too much and being too ingenious [*see page 12*]. Has that characteristic given a subtly *réchauffé* turn to all my style? Do you find it at its best an inspired pastiche? I should be grateful to realise what particular influences I ought specially to outgrow. I sometimes doubt if I am not, except of course in the insight kindled by you, almost wholly derivative, full of traditional mannerisms.

No. I find no pastiche in your poems and I could not lay my hand on any special influence to be outgrown. What I meant was that the contriving mind (intellectual and ingenious) was too busy and blocked the way of the poetic intuitive inspiration too often. I did not mean at all that it was wholly derivative or full of traditional mannerisms. 10 September 1933

*

> I feel Jyoti's poem is an exceedingly fine piece and some expressions are remarkably original, aren't they?

Yes, quite so. It is the freedom from the intellectual limitations which bring in these original expressions — as in many English poets. Ordinarily in French, or in Bengali, (French before Mallarmé and the Symbolists) there is too much lucidity and rationality to let these things get through. 29 October 1936

Poetry Writing and Fiction

> Can I, without losing the force needed for fiction or poetry, carry on *both* at the same time?

There is no rule for these things. You must see for yourself, for with each person it is different. There is no general or necessary incompatibility between fiction and poetry. 28 March 1936

*

> If a writer devoted part of the day to stories and part to poems, would the two sorts of writing come in each other's way?

One cannot say what will be the immediate effect. But it is not likely that the poetic consciousness once opened will stop — though it may be suspended if the concentration is strongly to something else. 7 January 1937

Poetic Inspiration and Prose-Work

> I am at present too much caught in the prose-work. No wonder poetry is impossible. I suppose the prose has to run its course before the poetic inspiration gets a chance to return?

Why the deuce should your poetic inspiration wait for the results of the prose canter? The ground being still cumbered ought to be no obstacle to an aerial flight. 16 March 1935

Literary Ambition and Aspiration

> If a poem does not come up to expectation, all is dark.

That is a weakness that ought to be overcome.

> I want to write in many ways and many forms; to write long poems as well as short ones; to write expressing many and various ideas; in the future to write books even — and so to prepare myself for this now by doing shorter works.

But surely you do not expect to do all that all at once? One has to grow in consciousness and ability before these things can be done. Because all that is not yet done, is not a ground for being dissatisfied with the present work done.

> I hold before myself the example of Sri Aurobindo, Tagore, Kalidasa, Shakespeare — of all the great poets. I am afraid this is all ambition.

Ambition has to be outgrown, if one wants to succeed in sadhana. The will to use the energies for the best, not for ego but as a work for the Divine must replace it.

> Something within wants to shake off this bondage to the old habits and old ways of writing, wants to soar higher, bring in newer, deeper, truer and more beautiful things: but I feel bound and full of despair.

There is no harm in such an aspiration, but despair is not the way to it. You have to aspire and grow into these new things — already there is a distinct progress, a new writing of a stronger kind.

> A peculiar hopelessness now and then will not let me concentrate; how shall I be able to break into a newer region of inspiration by myself and my own aspiration and concentration?

You can't do it by hopelessness and the consequent inability to concentrate. It is precisely by aspiration and concentration that it can be done. Nor are you called upon to do it "by yourself".

> I don't want to write poetry in the same forms and metres. But I cannot help myself; there seems to be a canal cut and things come in that way, that form, and no other.

One can try new forms and metres and they will come, but it is to be observed that the greatest poets have written in a few forms and metres — e.g. Shakespeare, dramatic blank verse, sonnet, short lyric. In narrative he was a failure. Milton, blank verse, narrative, sonnet, long meditative lyric, ode. His drama form is not dramatic. Kalidas, narrative epic, drama, one elegiac poem, one poem of nature description — not an inexhaustible variation of metres. Valmiki, Vyasa epic only — *anuṣṭubh* and *triṣṭubh* metres. Dante, *terza rima* metre — little variation of kind in his poetic writing.

> I am rejecting the impulse to do other literary work — stories, novels etc. — simply for the sake of producing maturer work in poetry, though novel-writing would have been easier.

I do not know that there is any reason why you should not write other things. You have now a great mastery of poetry in its constituent parts of language, rhythm, building — it is only the variation that is needed. Perhaps by doing other work that variation might be assisted.

> Lastly, I want to have your guidance, as when you told Nirod what were his drawbacks.

In your case I do not find any drawbacks of importance — except the one fact that you are bound within one channel or stream of poetry with always the same images and ideas as the base of your work. The construction in that base varies and is always fine. But the base and the kind are always the same.

> Neither Arjava nor Amal are guided by anybody except you. Why should not that be the right thing for me?

Arjava and Amal write in English and I can guide or suggest things to them in detail as well as in general. I can't do that with Bengali poetry; I can only pass judgment on points put before me.

Consultation with Nolini might be useful — he has a different mind from Nirod's and can see things from another angle. Nirod's help is, I think, indispensable. As for Nishikanta, I do not think it advisable — he has a strong individuality of his own as a poet and at the same time a great assimilative power. With the first he would make suggestions which would be good poetry but not kin to your individuality; with the other he would absorb your poetry and produce Nishikantisations of that — I don't think you would like such drawings upon you. 20 March 1937

Ambition and the Desire for Fame

> I cannot deny that along with my urge for acquiring a fine style etc., there is hiding some desire for fame as a good writer which, however, one can reject, at least one can hope to.

Better not force the inspiration. You have some literary gift and can let it grow — but no desire for fame, if you please.

4 October 1933

*

There should be no "desire" to be a "great" writer. If there is a genuine inspiration or coming of a power to write, then it can be done but to use it as a means of service to the Divine is the proper spirit. 14 May 1934

*

Every artist almost (there can be rare exceptions) has got something of the public man in him in his vital-physical parts, which makes him crave for the stimulus of an audience, social applause, satisfied vanity, appreciation, fame. That must go absolutely if you want to be a yogi; your art must be a service not of your own ego, nor of anyone or anything else, but solely of the Divine.

14 September 1929

*

It is your aim to write from the Divine and for the Divine — you should then try to make all equally a pure transcription from the inner source and where the inspiration fails return upon your work so as to make the whole worthy of its origin and its object. All work done for the Divine, from poetry and art and music to carpentry or baking or sweeping a room, should be made perfect even in its smallest external detail, as well as in the spirit in which it is done; for only then is it an altogether fit offering.

11 November 1931

Public Exposure

> With Dilip as a patron, the "poetess" will no longer remain unknown and unheard of.

Do you want fame? If one succeeds, it means much meaningless and insincere adulation on one side, on the other hatred, jealousy, backbiting, adverse criticism, attack and unjust depreciation. Are you ready for all that? 18 March 1937

Public Reception

> I don't know how many people will understand Jyoti's poems. If they were published, I am sure people will howl at her. It will only be a century later that she will be appreciated, as in the case of Blake.

What you predict is extremely probable — unless she writes hereafter something they can understand. Then they will say these were her mystic amusements by the way. A great poetess, but with a queer side to her. 27 October 1936

Reading Things in Manuscript and in Print

It is curious but true that one can often get a more final judgment of a thing written when one surveys it in print or even typescript than in manuscript. Perhaps in the latter what is active but irrelevant in the personality of the writer comes in and evokes the personal response of the reader and so prevents detachment? 1932

Prefaces and Reviews

> Is it good to have a preface, introduction or *bhūmikā* to one's book? I would prefer any appreciation to be published separately as a review or criticism.

It is not a question of principle but of feeling and circumstances. One can do either way. To do without anything of the kind (which seems like a recommendation or advertisement) seems the finer way — letting one's creation stand on its own merits. But the other is the fashion nowadays and I suppose there is something to be said for it. 28 October 1935

Some Metrical Matters

It is very necessary to learn metre and to arrange your thoughts — not have them pell-mell, as you yourself describe them — otherwise no amount of poetic substance or imagination will make your poetry effective. 9 July 1935

*

> After scanning this poem I showed it to Nolini. He has scanned some lines differently, I am quoting only three lines because I want to know which scansion is right:
>
> My scansion: Flāme ŏf | ă tīme|lĕss Sūn
>
> Nolini's: Flāme | ŏf ă tīme|lĕss Sūn
>
> Mine: Rĕcōil | frŏm thĕ | lēast spārk
>
> Nolini's: Rĕcōil | frŏm thĕ lēast | spārk
>
> Mine: Ŏf hĕr | grēat lū|mĭnŏus Blīss
>
> Nolini: Ŏf hĕr grēat | lūmĭ|nŏus Blīss

As the poem is intended to be in the orthodox iambic metre, your scansions are quite correct. At the present time there are many who write in less even metres and to this kind of writing Nolini's scansion would apply. But it is better for you to learn the regular scansion and metre first so as to have a firm base.
14 April 1936

*

It is absolutely necessary in order to learn the trochaic rhythm to write at first strictly regular trochaic metres with equal lines. There can be irregularities in the verse, but this type of metre least of all can bear a free licence — variations must be occasional, not altered about with a free hand. Such variations are an additional syllable at the beginning, an occasional dactyl — but these must be occasional only. . . . A word like glorious can be scanned either as a dactyl or a trochee, the two vowels in the latter case being run into each other as if *i* were *y*.

*

> I understand that trochees are to be avoided in an iambic-anapaestic poem. But I may be wrong. I find in a metre-book

> that the trochee is a common modulation for the iamb, especially in the first line.

Trochees are perfectly admissible in an iambic line as a modulation — especially in the first *foot* (not first line), but also occasionally in the middle. In the last foot a trochee is *not* admissible. Also these trochees must not be so arranged as to turn an iambic into a trochaic line.

> In one of my poems you changed the line "Crystals at her feet" to "Is a crystal at her feet", saying that "Crȳstăls | āt hĕr | fēet", with two trochees, could not come in an iambic anapaestic poem. Does this mean then that in an iamb-anapaest poem every line must have at least one iambic-anapaest foot?

My dear sir, this is an instance of importing one's own inferences instead of confining oneself to the plain meaning of the statement. First of all the rules concerning a mixed iambic anapaestic cannot be the same as those that govern a pure iambic. Secondly what I objected to was the trochaic run of the line. Two trochees followed by a long syllable, not a single iamb or anapaest in the whole! How can there be an iambic line or an iambic anapaestic without a single iamb or anapaest in it? The line as written could only scan either as a trochaic, therefore not iambic line, or thus —◡|◡◡—|, that is a trochee followed by an anapaest. Here of course there is an anapaest, but the combination is impossible rhythmically because it involves three short syllables one after another in an unreadable collocation — one is obliged to put a minor stress on the "at" and that at once makes the trochaic line. In the iambic anapaestic line a trochee followed by an iamb can be allowed in the first foot; elsewhere it has to be admitted with caution so as not to disturb the rhythm. 22 December 1935

*

You have not got the metrical movement or the rhythm right. In English poetry one has to be careful about that — merely ideas or good writing will not make it poetry. The free verse was better. 1 October 1933

*

> This is my first attempt to write a poem from imagination. I tried to give a vivid picture of Spring. I feel that the rhyme and metre is lacking.

It is true there is no rhyme and no metre. If you want rhyme and metre you must put them there — they don't come of themselves.

5 May 1933

*

> Nishikanta wants to know how to get the right rhythm and the right poetic style. I said by reading English poetry.

Yes, reading and listening with the inner ear to the modulation of the lines. 12 December 1935

Comments on Some Experiments in Metre

I think you failed [*in an experiment to write in a classical metre*] not for any of the reasons you suggest but because you had no unwritten rhythm behind your mind when you started writing and none came through by accident — or what seems one — as sometimes happens. There is an inspiration of language and there is an inspiration of rhythm and the two must fuse together for poetic perfection to come. As it is, you set out to manufacture your rhythm and piece together its parts — that must be the cause of this result. Your failure does not predestine you to eventual failure. Most people fail at first when they try this kind of departure from the established norms — this rejuvenation of the old in the new. I do not remember my own previous attempts in the classical metres, but I feel sure they were failures of the kind I stigmatise. If I succeed now, it will be by the Grace of God, in other words the established Yoga consciousness, for in that consciousness things come through from behind the veil with ease, — so long as a veil exists at all. Of course with genius too in its moments of inspiration — surer than the layman imagines; but genius also is a kind of accidental Yoga, a contact, an opening into an occult Power. 25 November 1933

*

This liability to be read as an iambic pentameter is the pitfall of this metre [*quantitative trimeter*] — everything else is easy, this is the critical point in the movement. All the same, it seems to me that it is only the standing convention which imposes the iambic movement here. The reason why it can do so at all, is that in both the lines you keep up what one accustomed to the ordinary rhythms would take to be three successive trochees and would be irresistibly tempted to go on on the same lines. In order to get the right pace, the reader in dealing with these transplanted classic metres must be prepared to make the most of quantities and stresses (true ones) and then, if the verse is well executed, there should be no difficulty. One can help him sometimes by a crowding of stresses in the first part of the line and a refusal of all but the lightest sounds in the close with of course a strong stress at the end. 22 October 1933

Writing Poetry in French

If you want to write French poetry, the first thing you have to do is to learn the principles and rules of French prosody. Good verse is the first requisite and good rhythm. 10 July 1933

*

The point is that in French you must express yourself straightforwardly and clearly so that your meaning is at once apparent to the reader.

Some Questions of Diction

> The diction of my poems is childish, too simple.

Good poetry can be written in a very simple style. Yours are quite good for a beginner.

> Please do not forget to say something about why I do not succeed in poetry: also if I should devote my time more to the stories etc.

That is a matter for yourself to decide. It is always easier to succeed in one's own tongue than in a foreign language.

25 March 1936

*

These last two stanzas [*of a poem submitted by the correspondent*] have a very poor diction with commonplace and overworn expressions; it sounds like an imitation of Scott, Moore and other poets who have no style.

> I would like to have your comments on the poetic quality of these poems.

There is an improvement, but the recurring fault is a diction that seems to be caught from the second-rate poets and made still more common and conventional in imitation — it becomes what anybody trying his hand at verse might write. When you escape this snare, your images and turns of language are very good, though not often quite perfect.

> I am not intimate with the English tongue. What should I do in order to acquire the required delicacy of language?

Study the more subtle and delicate writers — their language, their rhythm; don't imitate, but draw into your mind their influence.

19 October 1933

*

I am reading what you wrote and shall send [it back] in a few days — it has merit, but the style needs chastening. English style cannot bear too much crowding of images as it creates a coloured mist and blurs the outline of the thought, the line of the thought has to be kept strong and clear, neither draped in too much diffuse wording nor blurred by excess of images. There are also some errors in the use of the language, but these are of less importance. If you read the best writers, observe their way of writing and absorb their influence, that might help you.

10 January 1936

*

The one stumbling block in the way of perfect poetic expression for you now is the difficulty in combining clear directness and lucidity with your turn for a richly packed and imaged thought. There is a tendency sometimes to put too many images together, shooting them into each other in a way which is not always easy to carry off — even the greatest masters of poetic style have sometimes stumbled in this kind of effort. And generally there is a tendency to pack the thought and clip the expression to the utmost and sometimes this goes to an excess of compression which makes it a little difficult to seize at once the significance. When you do combine the lucidity with the pressed thought, the result is often very fine. 20 May 1931

Rhetoric and Eloquence

The style of these two prayers is too rhetorical — the meditations — addresses to the mind — were better in this respect.

A rhetorical style fails to convey the impression of sincerity in the thoughts and feelings: it gives the opposite impression that phrases are being turned only for the sake of good writing. This should be avoided. 9 July 1932

*

> I want to produce something Upanishadic. But I get no glimmering at all of the sovereignly spiritual-poetic. The poem, *Yoga*, which I am sending you, almost tells me what I should do to solve my difficulty; but the manner in which it tells seems to drive home the fact of my being so far from what I want — the sheer stupendous *mantra*.

I fear it is only eloquence — a long way from the *mantra*. From the point of view of a poetic eloquence there are some forceful lines and the rest is well done, but — there is too much play of the mind, not the hushed intense receptivity of the seer which is necessary for the *mantra*. 11 April 1933

*

This fineness in details is an imperative need for your poetry; you have too often a false note (rhetorical) or a just adequate expression — every turn, all the minutiae must be fine if the whole is to be exquisite. Otherwise even a fine poem can miss its effect by the inequality of its movement — as a fine dance can be spoilt by even two or three false steps or stumbles. A few changes here and there in a poem, slight in themselves, can make all the difference between a tolerable and a perfect whole — as a touch or two with the brush can transform a picture. 4 September 1931

The Right Words in the Right Places

> How I struggled with the line, and you, Sir, by just a touch here and there fixed it up! I wish I could do that.

It is a question of getting the right words in the right places instead of allowing them to wander haphazard. Naturally it depends on inspiration, not on any clever piecing together. One sits still (mentally), looks at the words and somebody flashes the thing through you. 24 May 1937

*

How can "anything" be used in a poem? A slight change makes all the difference between something forceful and a mere literary expression that misses its mark. 27 May 1936

*

> I am sending you another weak poem. Please correct and tell me what you think of it.

The lines have poetic substance, but are imperfect in expression. A very slight refinement in these respects is enough to bring out the poetic substance. The exact word or turn, the exact rhythmic movement needed is all-important in poetry and a slight change makes a big difference.

*

> In the poem I've sent you today, the first line of the third stanza should run:

With tones of fathomless joy we instil

instead of

Our tones of fathomless joy instil.

If you alter in that way, the whole beauty is gone. When a perfect inspiration comes, to alter it is a crime and usually carries its own punishment. The alteration you propose makes a deep and solemn psychic truth turn at once into an intellectual statement.

Some Questions of Word-Use

Is there any advantage in changing the phrase —

as though a press
Of benediction lay on me unseen —

to

as though the press
Of a benediction lay on me unseen?

No, no. The first was immeasurably better. "A press of benediction" is striking and effective; "the press of a benediction" is flat and means nothing. Besides it is not good English. You can say "a press of affairs", "a press of matter"; you can say "the pressure of this affair", but you cannot say "the press of an affair". 1931

*

Here is a sonnet for your judgment. It deals with the massive spiritual light descending into the brain like an inverted pyramid. The final phrase has a historical allusion:

a conscious hill
Down-kindled by some Cheops of the skies
To monument his lordship over death.

You must have heard of Cheops, the Egyptian King who built the Great Pyramid at Gizeh?

Of course I have heard of Cheops, but did not expect to hear of him again in this context. Don't you think the limiting proper name brings in an excessive touch of intellectual ingenuity, almost as if the poem were built for the sake of this metaphor and not for its subject? I would myself prefer a general term so as to prevent any drop from sublimity, e.g.

Down-sloped by some King-Builder of the skies.

But it is a good sonnet and there is certainly both vision and poetry in it. 25 September 1933

*

"Revealed her mateless beauty the (or their) true paradise" is not permissible in prose, but it is one of those contracted expressions which are allowed in poetry and it is quite intelligible. The other form "revealed their mateless love as their true paradise" seems to me rather tame and prosaic. 8 October 1934

*

And if great music rolled from his far mouth,

This doesn't sound right. Either "rolled" must be changed or it should be something like "A mighty music rolled": that is to say, rolled is too sonant unless what precedes it is sonant also.

16 April 1937

*

> Your remark about my fifth line ["And if great music . . . "] is liable to seem hypercritical but really there is a subtle truth in it. However, it is not possible to begin the line with an "A" — for then the connection with the rest of the stanza is not so direct nor will the balance between the two quatrains be very clear.

I do not agree about the hypercriticism — the reason I gave is of course a mental account, but the main test is the fall and feel of the words either on the "solar plexus" or on the receptive intuition and here a slight alteration makes all the difference. "a great music rolled" is obviously unconvincing whether as expression or rhythm. I had thought of "when" in view of the intellectual construction of the lines, but dropped it because it lowered the rhythm and impressiveness of the line. If "when" however is to be there, I don't know whether "mighty" is any longer the right word though better than "great". For inevitability (of whatever height) everything depends on the combination of words and the suggestive sound rhythm. 17 April 1937

On Writing Sonnets

A sonnet is a poem of fourteen iambic pentameter lines arranged either in an octet and sestet with a particular arrangement of the rhyme-structure — two-rhymed octet (of eight lines) abba abba and the sestet (of six lines) three rhymed, the arrangement according to choice, except that a closing couplet is avoided — or else in three quatrains with alternate rhymes and a closing couplet. The building of the thought in the sonnet must be very carefully worked out. A thought is built up or prepared in the octet and its culmination or outcome expressed in the sestet — . Or else it is worked up in the three quatrains and the climax or culminating point reached in the closing couplet. The first is the Miltonic, the second the Shakespearean form of the sonnet. Other forms can be made but these are the two classic sonnet structures in English literature.

Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Keats are the greatest sonnet writers in English. You can find the best sonnets in the *Golden Treasury*. There are others also who have written sonnets of the highest quality e.g. Sidney, Shelley — you will find there these also. 17 April 1936

*

> Has it struck you that these sonnets are rather simple as regards their rhythm? Should not there be variations in pauses and overflows, different rhymes, etc.?

It is the Shakespearean model, three quatrains each with alternate rhymes and a couplet. Pauses and overflows are not usual in this type. Variations — depends on what variations.

For example, the rhymes in the sestet could be CDE, CDE.

It would no longer be the Shakespearean model. In the Miltonic form the sestet is rhymed anyhow, the one you prefer being only one sequence, provided there are three rhymes and no couplet; but then the octet has to follow a fixed system of two rhymes only ABBA ABBA. Nowadays however people throw the sonnet into all sorts of irregular forms, I believe. 20 December 1936

The Ode

What is meant by an ode? Is it another name for an invocation?

No. It is a lyrical poem of some length on a single subject e.g. the Skylark (Shelley), Autumn (Keats), the Nativity (Birth of Christ) (Milton) working out a description or central idea on the subject. 14 June 1937

Lyric, Narrative, Epic

I am having much difficulty with the *akṣara-vṛtta* (*yaugika* as it is now called). I can manage *svara-vṛtta* and *mātra-vṛtta*, but not the other.

It is a question of the inspiration adopting the form proposed. At first there may be a little difficulty as it is the more lyric movements in which it has been accustomed to flow.

11 August 1936

*

It is quite natural that the narrative should flow less than the lyrical — it is a work that demands more strenuous qualities and a well-built preparation. But it is by overcoming the difficulties that the poetic capacity grows. If one is satisfied with the lyrical vein it is all right — but if one wants to do great work in more difficult forms, one must face the difficulties. 24 July 1937

*

Narratives then can be made or written very poetically, not like a mere fact-to-fact storytelling?

But what do you mean by poetically? A fact-to-fact storytelling can be very poetic. Poetry is poetic whether it is put in simple language or freely adorned with images and rich phrases. The latter kind is not the only "poetic" poetry nor is necessarily the best. Homer is very direct and simple, Virgil less so but still restrained in his diction; Keats tends always to richness; but one cannot say that Keats is poetic and Homer and Virgil are not. The rich style has this danger that it may drown the narration so that its outlines are no longer clear. This is what has happened with Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*; so that Shakespeare cannot be called a great narrative poet. 13 July 1937

*

As narrative poetry and epic are not the same, why should the former give me a training in the latter?

It is necessary to be able to work out a subject at length in a clear well-built way — epic is usually of a narrative build — so narrative poetry is the best training for that. The narrative writers you speak of did not aspire to be epic poets. 6 June 1937

*

How may I learn the epic style of blank verse?

I suppose it is best done by reading the epic writers until you get the epic rush or sweep.

Is it too early for me to learn it?

Epic writing needs a sustained energy of rhythm and word which is not easy to get or maintain. I am not sure whether you can get it now. I think you would first have to practise maintaining the level of the more energetic among the lines you have been writing. 3 May 1937

*

> Is your *Love and Death* an epic, and *Urvasie* and *Baji Prabhou*?

Love and Death is epic in long passages. *Urvasie* is written on the epic model. *Baji Prabhou* is not epic in style or rhythm.

> Are your twelve recent poems too in the epic style?

No, they are lyrical, though sometimes there may come in an epic elevation.

> Will reading *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* help?

Paradise Lost, yes. In the other Milton's fire had dimmed.

> Kindly mention all the epic writers in all the languages — it is good to know, at least.

In English *Paradise Lost* and Keats' *Hyperion* (unfinished) are the two chief epics. In Sanskrit Mahabharata, Ramayana, Kalidasa's Kumarsambhava, Bharavi's Kiratarjuniya. In Bengali Meghnadbodh. In Italian Dante's Divine Comedy and Tasso's (I have forgotten the name for the moment) are in the epic cast. In Greek of course Homer, in Latin Virgil. There are other poems which attempt the epic style, but are not among the masterpieces. There are also primitive epics in German and Finnish (Nibelungenlied, Kalevala) — 4 May 1937

*

> This afternoon, in a kind of sleep, I read a whole passage of an epic in English. All fled like vapour on waking up. I caught only this:
>
> Nee̍d we | our mo̍r|tal blo̍od. . . .

This is only part of a line, three feet — the blank verse line is five feet. As far as it goes, it is quite correct. Full lines could be something like this:

Nee̍d we | our mo̍r|tal blo̍od | to spri̍nk|le e̍arth

That ma̍n | may gro̍w | by the | re̍d sa̍c|ri̍fice|.

A foot in the pentameter blank verse is of two syllables; normally the accent is on the second syllable of the foot, but for variety's sake it can fall on the first. e.g. Ne̍ed we|. Or there can be a foot without stress e.g. by̆ thĕ | followed sometimes by a foot of double stress as re̍d sa̍c|rifice. Sometimes an anapaest, very light, can be put in in place of the 2 syllable foot, e.g. In the su̍d|den fa̍ll|and tra̍|gic e̍nd | of thi̍ngs|. Other variations there can be, but they are more rare. 5 May 1937

*

> Is there a difference between blank verse and poetry which is quite epic and blank verse and poetry which is written only in the epic style, model or manner?

I don't quite understand the point of the question. Poetry is epic or it is not. There may be differences of elevation in the epic style, but this seems to be a distinction without a difference.

> Surely there must be some difference between an epic, true and genuine throughout and a poem which is only in the epic style or has the epic tone?

An epic is a long poem usually narrative on a great subject written in a style and rhythm that is of a high nobility or sublime. But short poems, a sonnet for instance can be in the epic style or tone, e.g. some of Milton's or Meredith's sonnet on Lucifer or, as far as I can remember it, Shelley's on Ozymandias.

> What are the qualities or characteristics that tell one "This is an epic"?

I think the formula I have given is the only possible definition. Apart from that, each epic poet has his own qualities and characteristics that differ widely from the others. For the rest one can feel what is the epic nobility or sublimity, one can't very well analyse it.

> In Sanskrit epics, e.g. *Kumarsambhav*, what has made up the rhythm? And how does it sound so grave, lofty, wide and deep?

It is a characteristic that comes natural to Sanskrit written in the classical style.

> How can one have all these qualities together?

Why not? they are not incompatible qualities.

> English seems to have the necessary tone more easily, but is it possible in Bengali?

I don't know why it shouldn't be. Madhu Sudan's style is a lofty epical style; it is not really grave and deep because his mind was not grave or deep — but that was the defect of the poet, not necessarily an incapacity of the language.

11 May 1937

*

> I would like my present poems to come in a few lines, but the epical tone to be more and more perfect every day.

The epic movement is something that flows; it may not be good to try to shut it into a few lines. There might be a danger of making something too compact. If that can be avoided, then of course it is better to write a few lines with a heightened epic tone than many with the lesser tone. 13 May 1937

*

> One day after reading something you wrote about epics and epic poetry, a flaming aspiration entered my heart that one day I must write an epic. [*Details of the proposed epic given.*] Please tell me what an epic should consist of.

There must be a great subject — the one you propose is obviously a very big one; there must be what is called an architecture of the poem, each part of it clearly planned and in its right place so as to create a perfect harmony, like the noble or magnificent mass and detail of a great building; there must be a perfect working out of the subject.

> Will the study of the structure and characteristics of the great epics help me to learn about the building and technique?

It is not necessary to read all the epics — two or three if properly appreciated, i.e. if you see and feel the right things in it to learn from would be sufficient.

> I shall wait till I hear from you whether you approve of the aspiration at all.

The idea you have given is a very vast one, but if the epic faculty develops in you there is no reason why you should not carry it out. Only there must be no impatience. Milton waited twenty years before he started the epic he had dreamt of. Also from the point of view and kind of style in which you want to write it, you will have not only to get the access to the inspiration of the overhead poetry but to be quite open to the flow of that consciousness — otherwise you would only do small poems in it like Amal's, such a vast work would be impossible. At present go on with your development — you have the epic flow but not as yet the epic building, that must come in small things before you can do it in large ones. It will come in time, but time is necessary. 21 May 1937

*

> Please tell me why I often jump back to the sonnet source instead of steadily keeping to the epic source. The more I try to be "fine" the more I lose the epic source.

It is a matter of habit. Also the attempt to be "fine" is not good for epic writing. None of the great epic poets wrote "finely" — nobility or power or a clear and great strength of style and substance and spirit is their characteristic.

> What shall I do in order to get access to the inspiration of overhead poetry? And more especially, "to be quite open to

> the flow of that consciousness" [*see letter of 21 May 1937, p. 618*]? What is this over-consciousness? Will it come to me so early? Or were you speaking only with regard to the future?

I spoke of the future. This is a thing that can only be done by growth of consciousness through sadhana.

> Why did Milton wait so long? To prepare himself?

If he had written it when he first conceived the idea, he would have written a beautiful and noble romance, but not an epic. He felt he was not ready. For a long time afterwards he was engaged in politics and wrote only a few sonnets. 27 May 1937

*

> Were all the epic poets quite advanced in age when they began their work? Has age anything to do with one's best work?

At a more advanced age the mind is more mature and capable of a large and great subject. The greatest works in literature have usually been done at such an age. 14 June 1937

*

> Must I wait till I am 48 or 50? By doing sadhana, may I not be ready between 35 and 38? Forty or after is too far.

There is no fixed age, but most work (great work) of that kind has been done at 40 or 50 or after. Sadhana is another matter, but as I have said sadhana cannot be done with the sole object of writing an epic. 29 June 1937

An Epic Line

> Do you think the blank verse here [*in the poem* Agni Jatavedas] has any epical ring?

No — there are sometimes epic or almost epic lines, but the whole or most of it has not the epic ring. There is one epic line

An infinite rapture veiled by infinite pain.

Perhaps the first three lines are near the epic — there may be one or two others. 19 May 1937

The Line and the Poem

In English poetry it will not do only to string beautiful lines together — the subject must be thought out to the end — there is necessary a harmonious building, idea structure or feeling structure or vision structure. It is necessary to learn this also for the epic poetry. 29 May 1937

*

> The first line [*in a poem sent for approval*] is one I have used before, but it didn't stir you so much, perhaps because the necklace of which it was one jewel was not harmoniously beautiful.

Naturally — poetry is not a matter of separate lines — a poem is beautiful as a whole — when it is perfect each line has its own beauty but also the beauty of the whole. 4 November 1938

Sri Aurobindo's Critical Comments on Poetry Written in the Ashram

You seem to demand a very rigid and academic fixity of meaning from my hastily penned comments on the poetry sent to me. I have no unvarying aesthetic standard or fixed qualitative criterion, — not only so but I hold any such thing to be impossible with regard to so subtle and unintellectual an essence as poetry. It is only physical things that can be subjected to fixed measures and unvarying criteria. Appreciation of poetry is a question of feeling, of intuitive perception, of a certain aesthetic sense, it is not the result of an intellectual judgment.

My judgment does differ with different writers and also with different kinds of writing. If I put "very good" on a poem of Shailen's, it does *not* mean that it is on a par with Harin's or Arjava's or yours. It means that it is very good Shailen, but not that it is very good Harin or very good Arjava. “If ‘very good’ was *won* by them all,” you write! But, good heavens, you write that as if I were a master giving marks in a class. I may write “good” or “very good” on the work of a novice if I see that it has succeeded in being poetry and not mere verse however correct or well rhymed — but if Harin or if Arjava or you were to produce work like that, I would not say “very good” at all. There are poems of yours which I have slashed and pronounced unsatisfactory, but if certain others were to send me that, I would say, “Well, you have been remarkably successful this time.” I am not giving comparative marks according to a fixed scale. I am using words flexibly according to the occasion and the individual. It would be the same with different kinds of writing. If I write “very good” or “excellent” on some verses of Dara about his chair, I am not giving it a certificate of equality with some poem of yours similarly appreciated — I am only saying that as humorous easy verse in the lightest vein it is very successful, an entertaining piece of work. Applied to your poem it would mean something different altogether.

Coming from your huge P.S. to the tiny body of your letter, what do you mean by “a perfect success”? I meant that pitched in a certain key and style it [*a certain poem*] had worked itself out very well in that key and style in a very satisfying way from the point of view of thought, expression and rhythm. From that standpoint it is a perfect success. If you ask whether it is at your highest possible pitch of inspiration, I would say no, but it is nowhere weak or inadequate and it says something poetically well worth saying and says it well. One cannot always be writing at the highest pitch of one’s possibility, but that is no reason why work of very good quality in itself should be rejected.

15 November 1934

*

> I see no earthly use in producing something that is just “all right” when I am obsessed with an intuition of some hitherto unrevealed miraculous poetic creation existing on a plane I absolutely despair of reaching. . . . I beg to be excused, again,

> for this much ado about nothing but I am awfully disgusted with myself.

You should get rid of the disgust. The sonnet in its amended form is fine enough — if I do not shoot up into enthusiasm about it, it is for two reasons — 1st because I am becoming cautious about the use of superlatives nowadays, not for poetical or critical but for other reasons and secondly because I expect you to do much better than your present best and if I use high expressions, what the devil shall I do when you rise to yet unexpected summits. So you need not be damped by my "all rights" etc. — on the contrary you should give full value to both the *all* and the *right*.
1 May 1934

*

> Could you just mark for me the nuances of "very good", "very fine" and "very beautiful"? Sometimes you write: "exceedingly fine and beautiful".

But these remarks of mine are not intended to summarise a considered and measured criticism — they simply express the impression made on me at the time of reading. I shall be very badly embarrassed if you insist on my explaining the nuances of such very summary expressions. "Exceedingly" for instance does not convey that the poem was "inevitable", it simply means that I was exceedingly pleased with it for some reason or another. If I wanted to pronounce a measured criticism or appreciation, I should do it in more precise language and at greater length than that. 17 September 1934

*

> If I could be told what exactly to change in order that my recent lines might achieve full success and become "very fine", I would be thankful.

I have told you once that I have become more subdued in my appreciations of poetry — so "fine" may very well be changed to "very fine". The poem you wrote was without a flaw positive or negative — to alter it would be to spoil it. 11 October 1934

*

> The word "fine" means not, of course, "full of flaws" but there is something, somehow, somewhere wrong — for the following reason. "Good" means some imperfection, some flaw. Now, when I asked you whether the terms"very good", "very fine", "very beautiful" indicated different levels of excellence or merely different kinds on the same level, you said different kinds rather than levels. This means, analogically, that "good" and "fine" indicate also the same level. Ergo, "fine" means, too, some imperfection, some *flaw*.

What an extraordinarily sinuous and fantastic knowledge! My language would indeed be peculiar if the words I use mean just their opposites — i.e. good = bad, fine = flawed, beautiful = ugly. A poem may be good poetry without being a complete success, but if it is very good then it is a complete success. Fine cannot possibly mean something that is not fine, as it always implies a high excellence. Naturally the kind of fineness may vary and the degree also. There is no new unprecedented superior shade or transvaluation of values. I mean just the same thing as when I speak of fine lines — i.e. lines reaching a high level of excellence. These words are only summary words giving the general impression. 11 October 1934

*

> Originally you said [*of a certain poem*], "it is a fine poem" but when I asked whether that meant any inferiority to those you had designated as "very fine" or "very good" etc., you answered "No." Does that imply that I might add "very" here also?

Really, I *don't* measure my appreciations or rather my impressions in the dreadfully professorial way you suggest. What is wrong with "fine"? A fine poem is not worth keeping?

11 May 1936

*

> Now if one poem you have considered "very fine" and another only "fine", is it illogical of me to suppose that there is some difference of quality between the two? Even if I keep the poem I cannot feel that I have done my best — but the situation

> becomes strange if by "fine" and "very fine" you mean the same thing sometimes. Does it really amount to asking you to be "dreadfully professorial" if I beg you to let this distinction, created by "very" or some such expression, be clear?

But, again, what is wrong with fine? How is fineness a failure? — It is professorial because, when you insist on the curious distinction between very fine and "only" fine, it seems to be like an examiner giving marks, alpha class, beta class, gamma, delta class etc. Poetry can't be marked in that way, that's why I objected. If any of your poems is unsatisfactory, I generally say so and sharply enough too. May 1936

*

> Jyotirmayi confided to me that when you call any of her poems "very successful" she feels quite depressed for not being able to write something "very fine" or "very beautiful". I told her that as soon as she saw "very" anywhere she must shoot straight up to the seventh heaven of joy. But surely, surely, if that blessed word is pointedly omitted, even a pachyderm like me might feel a little pricked!

What an importance to give to an adverb! Fine by itself is quite equal to "very good" — shall I start other categories e.g. "very very" and "very very very"? 2 August 1936

*

> It is a fact that "very good" doesn't appeal as much as "very beautiful", "very fine".

There is some difference of course but the words must not be taken as exact weight measures. They simply record an impression. 6 August 1936

*

> You've said that the poem now is "very fine", but why is it so?

Why is a poem fine? By its power of expression and rhythm, I suppose, and its force of substance and image. As all these are there, I call it a fine poem. 5 December 1936

*

You all attach too much importance to the exact letter of my remarks of the kind as if it were a giving of marks. I have been obliged to renounce the use of the word "good" or even "very good" because it depressed Nirod — though I would be very much satisfied myself if I could always write poetry certified to be very good. I write "very fine" against work which is not improvable, so why ask me for suggestions for improving the unimprovable? As for rising superior to yourself that is another matter — one always hopes to do better than one has yet done, but that means not an avoidance of defects — I always point out ruthlessly anything defective in your work — but to rise higher, wider, deeper etc., etc. in the consciousness. Incidentally, even if my remarks are taken to be of mark-giving value, what shall I do in future if I have exhausted all adverbs? How shall I mark your self-exceeding if I have already certified your work as exceeding? I shall have to fall back on roars "Oh, damned fine, damned damned damned fine!" 15 May 1937

Sri Aurobindo's Comments on Poetry Written Outside the Ashram

As to Suhrawardy, you can if you like send the complimentary portion of my remarks with perhaps a hint that I found his writing rather unequal, so that it may not be all sugar. But the phrases about "album poetry" and chaotic technique are too vivid — being meant only for private consumption — to be transmitted to the writer of the poems criticised; I would for that have expressed the same view in less drastic language. As I have already said once, I do not like to write anything disparaging or discouraging for those whom I cannot help to do better. I received much poetry from Indian writers for review in the *Arya*, but I always refrained because I would have had to be very severe. I wrote only about Harindranath because there I could sincerely, and I think justly, write unqualified praise. 25 May 1931

*

I hope Dilip is not sending Kshitish Sen my adverse criticism of his translation — it was not meant for him. I do not like to discourage people uselessly, — that is to say, where I cannot show them how to do better; where I cannot encourage, I prefer to say nothing. For the rest (omitting the sentence about rhetorical flatness) he can do as he likes. 19 November 1930

*

I don't want to say anything [*about a certain book*], because when I cannot positively encourage a young and new writer, I prefer to remain mum. . . . Each writer must be left to develop in his own way. 31 May 1943

Guidance in Writing Prose

Suggestions for Writing Good English

> I wonder what to do in order to bring my essay up to the mark. Could you please make some suggestions?

I am afraid I can't make suggestions. Just now I am too busy with other and more strenuous things to be very fit for literary suggestions. I can only say generally avoid over-writing; let all your sentences be the vehicle of something worth saying and say it with a vivid precision neither defective nor excessive. Don't let either thought or speech trail or drag or circumvolute. Don't let the language be more abundant than the sense. Don't indulge in mere clever ingenuities without a living truth behind them. I think that is all. 14 June 1935

*

Your English is already correct as a rule. If you want style and expression, that is another matter. The usual outward means is to read good styles and impregnate oneself with them; it has of itself an influence on the writing. 27 May 1934

*

This book, returned herewith, is not in my opinion suitable for the purpose. The author wanted to make it look like a translation of a romance in Sanskrit and he has therefore made the spirit and even partly the form of the language more Indian than English. It is not therefore useful for getting into the spirit of the English language. Indians have naturally in writing English a tendency to be too coloured, sometimes flowery, sometimes rhetorical and a book like this would increase the tendency. One ought to have in writing English a style which is at its base capable of going to the point, saying with a simple and energetic straightforwardness what one means to say, so that one can add grace of language without disturbing this basis. Arnold is a very good model for this purpose. Emerson less, but his book will also do.

It is surely better to write your own thoughts. The exercise of writing in your own words what another has said or written is a good exercise or test for accuracy, clear understanding of ideas, an observant intelligence; but your object is, I suppose, to be able to understand English and express *yourself* in good English. 16 May 1932

Poetry and Novel

No need to put poetry against novel and make a case between them. Both can be given admission into the spiritual Parnassus — but not all poetry and all novels. All depends on the consciousness from which the thing is done. If it is done from the psychic or the spiritual consciousness and bears the stamp of its source, that is sufficient. Of course there are certain things that cannot be done from there, but neither poetry nor fiction is in that case. They can be lifted to a higher level and made the expression of the psychic or spiritual mind and vision. When that is said, all is said. I hope my brevity has been of the right kind — and not left the question mystically obscure.

9 June 1936

Tragedy in Fiction

> I did not like the tragic ending of Jyotirmayi's story. The conditions of true tragedy are not fulfilled, so far as I can see. Why create sorrow in literature wantonly?

That depends on the work itself. If it involves inevitably a tragic end, that has to be allowed to come. It is only if the tragedy is dragged in unnaturally for the sake of a forceful ending that it is inartistic. 13 January 1936

Remarks on English Pronunciation

Monosyllables and Dissyllables

> I wonder why you find fault with the rhythm of "A vision whose God-delight embraces all." "Vision" is really a monosyllable, and I don't suppose the frequent poetic dissyllabification of it precludes the use of its original sound-length.

You use your intellect too much and with too much ingenuity where you should train your ear. Another line with the same scansion might very well make an extremely good rhythm; this one does not. Its rhythm is at once flat and jerky. How is "vision" a monosyllable? You might just as well say that "omnibus" is a monosyllable. At any rate I get no thrill, subtle or other, no surprise, no revelation. 27 September 1934

*

> The Oxford dictionary seems to leave me no choice as regards the number of syllables in the word "vision". I quote below some of the words explained as monosyllables in the same way as "Rhythm" and "Prism", which are given as Rhy̆·thm (-dhm); Prĭ·sm (-zm).
>
> Fă·shion (-shn)
> Passion (pă·shn)
> Prĭ·son (-zn)
> Scission (sĭ·shn)
> Trea·son (-ēzn)
> Vĭ·sion (-zhn)
>
> Chambers's Dictionary makes "vision" a dissyllable, which is quite sensible, but the monosyllabic pronunciation of it deserves to be considered at least a legitimate variant when H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler — the name of Fowler is looked upon as a synonym for authority on the English language —

> give no other. I don't think I am mistaken in interpreting their intention.[1] Take "realm", which they pronounce in brackets as "rĕlm"; now I see no difference as regards syllabification between their intention here and in the instances above.

You may not have a choice — but I have a choice, which is to pronounce and scan words like "vision" and "passion" and similar words as all the poets of the English language (those at least whom I know) have consistently pronounced and scanned them — as dissyllables. If you ask me to scan Shakespeare's line in the following way in order to please H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler

Ĭn maī|dĕn mēd|ĭtatiōn | fān|cy̆ frēe,

I shall decline without thanks. Shakespeare wrote, if I remember right, "trēasŏns, strategems and spoils"; Shelley, Tennyson, any poet of the English language, I believe, would do the same — though I have no books with me to give chapter and verse. I lived in both northern and southern England, but I never heard vision pronounced "vizhn", it was always "vizhun"; "treason", of course, is pronounced "trez'n", but that does not make it a monosyllable in scansion because there is in these words a very perceptible slurred vowel sound in pronunciation which I represent by the ' — in "poison" also. If "realm", "helm" etc. are taken as monosyllables, that is quite reasonable, for there is no vowel between "l" and "m" and none is heard, slurred or otherwise in pronunciation. The words "rhythm" and "prism" are technically monosyllables, because they are so pronounced in French (i.e. that part of the word, for there is a mute e in French): but in fact most Englishmen take the help of a slurred vowel sound in pronouncing "rhythms" and it would be quite permissible to write in English as a blank verse line, "The unheard rhythms that sustain the world".

This is my conviction and not all the Fowlers in the world will take it away from me. I only hope the future lexicographers will not fowl the language any more in that direction; otherwise we shall have to write lines like this —

---

[1] *In fact, the correspondent was mistaken. The six words he listed, as well as "rhythm" and "prism", were marked in the third edition of* The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English *(H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler, eds., 1934) to be pronounced as dissyllables. — Ed.*

O vizhn! O pashn! O fashn! m'd'tashn! h'rr'p'lashn!
Why did the infern'l Etern'l und'take creash'n?
Or else, creat'ng, could he not have afford'd
Not to allow the Engl'sh tongue to be Oxford'd?

P.S. I remember a book (Hamer's? someone else's? I don't remember) in which the contrast was drawn between the English and French languages, that the English tongue tended to throw all the weight on the first or earliest possible syllable and slurred the others, the French did the opposite — so that when an Englishman pretends to say "strawberries", what he really says is "strawb's". That is the exaggeration of a truth — but all the same there is a limit!

27 September 1934

*

> I should like to ask you a few questions suggested by your falling foul of the Fowlers. The poetic pronunciation of words cannot be accepted as a standard for current speech — can it? On your own showing, "treason" and "poison" which are monosyllables in prose or current speech are scanned as dissyllables in verse; Shelley makes "evening" three syllables and Harin has used even "realm" as a dissyllable, while the practice of taking "precious" and "conscious" to be three syllables is not even noticeable, I believe. All the same, current speech, if your favourite Chambers's Dictionary as well as my dear Oxford Concise is to be believed, insists on "evening", "precious" and "conscious" being dissyllabic and "realm" monosyllabic. I am mentioning this disparity between poetic and current usages not because I wish "meditation" to be robbed of its full length or "vision" to lose half its effect but because it seems to me that Shelley's or Tennyson's or any poet's practice does not in itself prove anything definitely for English as it is spoken. And spoken English, very much more than written English, undergoes change; even the line you quote from Shakespeare was perhaps not scanned in his time as you would do it now, for "meditation" — as surely

> "passion" and "fashion" also and most probably "vision" as well — was often if not always given its full vowel-value and the fourth foot of the line in question might to an Elizabethan ear have been very naturally an anapaest:
>
> In mai|den me|dita|tĭŏn fān|cy free.
>
> When, however, you say that your personal experience in England, both north and south, never recorded a monosyllabic "vision", we are on more solid ground, but the Concise Oxford Dictionary is specially stated to be in its very title as "of Current English": is all its claim to be set at nought? It is after all a responsible compilation and, so far as my impression goes, not unesteemed. If its errors were so glaring as you think, would there not have been a general protest? Or is it that English has changed so much in "word of mouth" since your departure from England? This is not an ironical query — I am just wondering.
>
> P.S. Your exclamatory-interrogatory elegiacs illustrating the predicament we should fall into if the Fowlers were allowed to spread their nets with impunity were very enjoyable. But I am afraid the tendency of the English language is towards contraction of vowel sounds, at least terminal ones; and perhaps the Oxford Dictionary has felt the need to monumentalise — clearly and authoritatively — the degree to which this tendency has, in some cases more definitely, in others less but still perceptibly enough, advanced? The vocalised "e" of the suffix"-ed" of the Spenserian days is now often mute; the trisyllabic suffix "-ation" of the "spacious times" has shrunk by one syllable, and "treason" and "poison" and "prison", all having the same terminal sound if fully vowelised as "-ation", are already monosyllables in speech — so, if "passion" and "fashion" which too have lost their Elizabethan characteristic like "meditation" should contract by a natural analogy, carrying all "ation"-suffixed words as well as "vision" and "scission" and the like with them, it would be quite as one might expect. And if current speech once fixes these contractions, they will not always keep outside the pale of poetry. What do you think?

Where the devil have I admitted that "treason" and "poison" are monosyllables or that their use as dissyllables is a poetic licence? Will you please quote the words in which I have made that astounding and imbecile admission? I have said distinctly that they are dissyllables,—like risen, dozen, maiden, garden, laden, and a thousand others which nobody (at least before the world went mad) ever dreamed of taking as monosyllables. On my own showing, indeed! After I had even gone to the trouble of explaining at length about the slurred syllable "e" in these words, for the full sound is not given, so that you cannot put it down as pronounced maid-en, you have to indicate the pronunciation as maid'n. But for that to dub maiden a monosyllable and assert that Shakespeare, Shelley and every other poet who scans maiden as a dissyllable was a born fool who did not know the "current" pronunciation or was indulging in a constant poetic licence whenever he used the words garden, maiden, widen, sadden etc. is a long flight of imagination. I say that these words are dissyllables and the poets in so scanning them (not as an occasional licence but normally and every time) are much better authorities than any owl—or fowl—of a dictionary-maker in the universe. Of course the poets use licences in lengthening out words occasionally, but these are exceptions; to explain away their normal use of words as a perpetually repeated licence would be a wild wooden-headedness (5 syllables, please). That these words are dissyllables is proved farther by the fact that "saddened", "maidenhood" cannot possibly be anything but respectively dissyllabic and trisyllabic, yet "saddened" could I suppose be correctly indicated in a dictionary as pronounced "saddnd". A dictionary indication or a dictionary theory cannot destroy the living facts of the language.

I do not know why you speak of my "favourite" Chambers. Your attachment to Oxford is not balanced by any attachment of mine to Chambers or any other lexicographer. I am not inclined to swear by any particular dictionary as an immaculate virgin authority for pronunciation or a papal Infallible. It was you who quoted Chambers as differing from Oxford, not I. You seem indeed to think that the Fowlers are a sort of double-headed Pope to the British public in all linguistic matters and nobody could dare question their dictates or ukases — only I do so because I am antiquated and am living in India. I take leave to point out to you that this is not yet a universally admitted catholic dogma. The Fowlers indeed seem to claim something of the kind, they make their enunciations with a haughty papal arrogance, condemning those who differ from them as outcasts and brushing them aside in a few words or without a mention. But it is not quite like that. What is current English? As far as pronunciation goes, every Englishman knows that for an immense number of words there is no such thing — Englishmen of equal education pronounce them in different ways, sometimes in more than two different ways. "Either" "neither" is a current pronunciation, so is "eether" "neether". In some words the "th" is pronounced variably as a soft "d" or a soft "t" or as "th" — and so on. If the Oxford pronunciation of "vision" and "meditation" is correct current English, then the confusion has much increased since my time, for then at least everybody pronounced "vizhun", "meditashun", as I do still and shall go on doing so. Or if the other existed, it must have been confined to uneducated people. But you suggest that my pronunciation is antiquated, English has changed since then as since Shakespeare. But I must point out that you yourself quote Chambers for "vizhun" and following your example — not out of favouritism — I may quote him for "summation" = "summashun" — not "shn". The latest edition of Chambers is dated 1931, and the editors have not thought themselves bound by the decisive change of the English language to change "shun" into "shn". Has the decisive change taken place since 1931? Moreover in the recent dispute about the standard Broadcast pronunciation, the decisions of Bernard Shaw's committee were furiously disputed — if Fowler and Oxford were "papal authorities" in England for current speech — it is current speech the Committee was trying to fix through the broadcasts — would it not have been sufficient simply to quote the Oxford in order to produce an awed and crushed silence?

So your P.S. has no solid ground to stand on since there is no "fixed" current speech and Fowler is not its Pope and there is no universal currency of his vizhn of things. Language is not bound by analogy and because "meditātĭŏn" has become "meditashun" it does not follow that it must become "meditashn" and that "tation" is now a monosyllable contrary to all common sense and the privilege of the ear. It might just as well be argued that it will necessarily be clipped farther until the whole word becomes a monosyllable. Language is neither made nor developed in that way — if the English language were so to deprive itself of all beauty and by turning vision into vizn and then into vzn and all other words into similar horrors, I would hasten to abandon it for Sanskrit or French or Bengali — or even Swahili.

P.S. By the way, one point. Does the Oxford pronounce in cold blood and so many set words that vision, passion (and by logical extension treason, maiden, madden, garden etc.) are monosyllables? Or is it your inference from "realm" and "prism"? If the latter, I would only say, Beware of too rigidly logical inferences. If the former, I can only say that Oxford needs some gas from Hitler to save the English mind from its pedants. This is quite apart from the currency of vizhns. 29 September 1934

*

> I am sincerely sorry for mistaking you on an important point. But before my argumentative wooden-headedness gives up the ghost under your sledge-hammer it is bursting to cry a Themistoclean "Strike, but hear". Please try to understand my misunderstanding. What you wrote was: "'Treason', of course, is pronounced 'trez'n', but that does not make it a monosyllable in scansion because there is in these words a very perceptible slurred vowel sound in pronunciation which I represent by the ' — in 'poison' also." I think it must have been the word "scansion" which led me astray — as if you had meant that these words were non-monosyllabic in poetry only. But am I really misjudging Chambers as well as the Fowlers when I draw the logical inference that, since a dictionary is no dictionary if it does not follow a coherent system and since these people absolutely omit to make any distinction between the indicated scansion of "prism", "realm", "rhythm" etc., and that of "treason" and "poison", they definitely mean us to take all these words as monosyllables? If Chambers who

> writes "vizhun" but "trezn" and "poizn" just as he writes "relm" and "rithm", intends us to understand that there is some difference between the scansions of the latter pairs he, in my opinion, completely de-dictionaries his work by so illogical an expectation. He and the Fowlers may not say in cold blood and so many set words that "treason" and "poison" are monosyllables but it is their design, in most freezing blood and more eloquently than words can express, that they fall into the same category as "realm" and "rhythm". Else, what could have prevented them from inventing some such sign as your ' to mark the dissimilarity? My sin was to have loved logic not wisely but too well where logicality had been obstreperously announced in flaring capitals on the title page and throughout the whole book by a fixed system of spelling and pronunciation. My Othello-like extremity of love plunged me into abysmal errors, but oh the Iagoistic "motiveless malignity" of lexicographers!

It seemed to me impossible that even the reckless Fowler — reckless in the excess of his learning — should be so audacious as to announce that this large class of words accepted as dissyllables from the beginning of (English) time were really monosyllables. After all the lexicographers do not set out to give the number of syllables in a word. Pronunciation is a different matter. "Realm" cannot be a dissyllable unless you violently make it so, because "l" is a liquid like "r" and you cannot make a dissyllable of words like "charm", unless you Scotchify the English language and make it "char'r'r'm" or vulgarise it and make it "charrum" — and even "char'r'r'm" is after all a monosyllable. "Prism", the "ism" in "Socialism", "pessimism", "rhythm" can be made dissyllabic, but by convention (convention has much to do with these things) the "ism", "rhythm" are treated as a single syllable, because of the etymology. But there is absolutely no reason to bring in this convention with "treason", "poison", "garden" or "maiden" (coming from French *trahison, poison* and some O.E. equivalent of the German *Garten, Mädchen*). The dictionaries give the same mark of pronunciation for "thm", "sm" and the "den" (dn) of maiden and son (sn) of treason because they are practically the same. The French pronounce "rhythme" =

"reethm" (I use the English sound indications) without anything to help them out in passing from "th" to "m", but the English tongue can't do that, there is a very perceptible quarter vowel sound or one-eighth vowel sound between "th" and "m" — if it were not so the plural "rhythms" would be unpronounceable. I remember in my French class at St. Paul's our teacher (a Frenchman) insisted on our pronouncing *ordre* in the French way — in his mouth "orrdrr"; I was the only one who succeeded, the others all made it *auder*, *orrder*, *audrer*, or some such variation. There is the same difference of habit with words like "rhythm", and yet conventionally the French treatment is accepted so far as to impose rhythm as a monosyllable. Realm on the other hand is pronounced truly as a monosyllable without the help of any fraction of a vowel. 30 September 1934

Some Problems of Stress Accent

> Why have you bucked at my "azùre" as a line-ending? And why so late in the day? Twice before I have used the same inversion and it caused no alarm. Simple poetic licence, Sir. If Wordsworth could write
>
> What awful pérspective! while from our sight . . .
>
> and leave no reverberation of "awful" in the reader's mind, and if Abercrombie boldly come out with
>
> To smite the horny eyes of men
> With the renown of our Heaven,
>
> and our horny eyes remain unsmitten by his topsy-turvy "Heaven" — why, then, Amal need not feel too shy to shift the accent of "azure" just because the poor chap happens to be an Indian. Not that an alternative line getting rid of that word is not possible — quite a fine one can be written with "obscure". But how does this particular inversion shock you? There is nothing un-English or unpoetic about it — so far as I can see, though of course such things should not be done often. What do you say?

I can swallow "pérspective" with some difficulty, but if anybody tried to justify by it a line like this (let us say in a poem to Miss Mayo):

> O ínspectór, why súggestíve of drains?

I would buck. I disapprove totally of Abercrombie's bold wriggle with Heaven, but even he surely never meant to put the accent on the second syllable and pronounce it "hevénn". I absolutely refuse to pronounce "azure" as "azúre". "Perspective" can just be managed by making it practically atonal or unaccented or evenly accented, which comes to the same thing. "Sapphire" can be managed at the end of a line, e.g. "stróng sapphire", because "phire" is long and the voice trails over it, but the "ure" of "azure" is more slurred into shortness than trailed out into length as if it were "azyoore". In any case, even if the somersault is admitted the line won't do.

P.S. It is not to the use of "azure" in place of an iambic in the last foot that I object but to your blessed accent on the last syllable. I will even, if you take that sign off, allow you to rhyme "ázure" with "púre" and pass it off as an Abercrombiean acrobacy by way of fun. But not otherwise — the accent mark must go.

2 October 1936

*

> In your sonnet *Man the Enigma* occurs the magnificent line:
>
> > His heart is a chaos and an empyrean.
>
> But I am very much saddened by the fact that the rhythm of these words gets spoiled at the end by a mis-stressing in "empyrean". "Empyrean" is stressed in the penultimate syllable, thus: "empyréan". Your line puts the stress on the second syllable. It is in the adjective "empyreal" that the second syllable is stressed, but the noun is never stressed that way, so far as I know.

First of all let me deal with your charge against my "empýrean". I find in the Chambers Dictionary the noun "empyrean" is given two alternative pronunciations, each with a different stress, — first, "empyréan" and secondly, "empýrean". Actually in the book the accent seems to fall on the consonant “r” instead of the vowel. That must be a mistake in printing; it is evident that it is meant to fall on the second vowel. If that is so, my variation is justified and needs no further defence. The adjective “empyreal” the dictionary gives as having the same alternative accentuation as the noun, that is to say, either “empyréal” with the accent on the long “e” or “empýreal” with the accent on the second syllable, but the “e” although unaccented still keeps its long pronunciation. Then? But even if I had no justification from the dictionary and the noun “empýrean” were only an Aurobindonian freak and a wilful shifting of the accent, I would refuse to change it; for the rhythm here is an essential part of whatever beauty there is in the line.

P.S. Your view is supported by the small Oxford Dictionary which, I suppose, gives the present usage, Chambers being an older authority. But Chambers must represent a former usage and I am entitled to revive even a past or archaic form if I choose to do so.

4 August 1949

Remarks on English Usage

Some Questions of Pronunciation and Usage

I am in general agreement with your answer to Mendonça strictures on certain points in your style and your use of the English language. His objections have usually some ground, but are not unquestionably valid; they would be so only if the English language were a fixed and unprogressive and invariable medium demanding a scrupulous correctness and purity and chaste exactness like the French; but this language is constantly changing and escaping from boundaries and previously fixed rules and its character and style, you might almost say, is whatever the writer likes to make it. Stephen Phillips once said of it in a libertine image that the English language is like a woman who will not love you unless you take liberties with her. As for the changeableness, it is obvious in recent violences of alteration, now fixed and recognised, such as the pronunciation of words like "nation" and "ration" which now sound as "gnashun" and "rashun"; one's soul and one's ear revolt, at least mine do, against degrading the noble word "nation" into the clipped indignity of the plebian and ignoble "gnashun", but there is no help for it. As for "aspire for", it may be less correct than "aspire to" or "aspire after", but it is psychologically called for and it seems to me to be much more appropriate than "aspire at" which I would never think of using. The use of prepositions is one of the most debatable things, or at least one of the most frequently debated in the language. The Mother told me of her listening in Japan to interminable quarrels between Cousins and the American Hirsch on debatable points in the language but especially on this battlefield and never once could they agree. It is true that one was an Irish poet from Belfast and the other an American scholar and scientist, so perhaps neither could be taken as an unquestionable authority on the English tongue; but among Englishmen themselves I have known of such constant disputes. Cousins had remarkably independent ideas in these matters; he always insisted that "infinite" must be pronounced "infighnight" on the ground that "finite" was so pronounced and the negative could not presume to differ so unconscionably from the positive. That was after all as good a reason as that alleged for changing the pronunciation of "nation" and "ration" on the ground that as the "a" in "national" and "rational" is short, it is illogical to use a different quantity in the substantive. "To contact" is a phrase that has established itself and it is futile to try to keep America at arm's length any longer; "global" also has established itself and it is too useful and indeed indispensable to reject; there is no other word that can express exactly the same shade of meaning. I heard it first from Arjava who described the language of *Arya* as expressing a global thinking and I at once caught it up as the right and only word for certain things, for instance, the thinking in masses which is a frequent characteristic of the Overmind. As for the use of current French and Latin phrases, it may be condemned as objectionable on the same ground as the use of *clichés* and stock phrases in literary style, but they often hit the target more forcibly than any English equivalent and have a more lively effect on the mind of the reader. That may not justify a too frequent use of them, but in moderation it is at least a good excuse for it. I think the expression "bears around it a halo" has been or can be used and it is at least not worn out like the ordinary "wears a halo". One would more usually apply the expression "devoid of method" to an action or procedure than to a person, but the latter turn seems to me admissible. I do not think I need say anything in particular about other objections, they are questions of style and on that there can be different opinions; but you are right in altering the obviously mixed metaphor "in full cry", though I do not think any of your four substitutes have anything of its liveliness and force. Colloquial expressions have, if rightly used, the advantage of giving point, flavour, alertness and I think in your use of them they do that; they can also lower and damage the style, but that danger is mostly when there is a set character of uniform dignity or elevation. The chief character of your style is rather a constant life and vividness and supple and ample abounding energy of thought and language which can soar or run or sweep along at will but does not simply walk or creep or saunter and in such a style forcible colloquialisms can do good service.

2 April 1947

*

> Your "through whom" in place of my "wherethrough" is an improvement, but it is difficult to reject that word as a legal archaism inadmissible in good poetry. Your remark about "whereas" in my essay seemed to me just in pointing out the obscurity of connection it introduced between the two parts of my sentence, but the term itself has no stigma on it of obsolescence as does for instance "whenas": in poetry it would be rather prosaic, while "wherethrough" is a special poetic usage as any big dictionary will tell us, and in certain contexts it would be preferable to "through which", just as "whereon", "wherein", and "whereby" would sometimes be better than their ordinary equivalents. I wonder why you have become so ultra-modern: I remember you jibe also at "from out" a phrase which has not fallen into desuetude yet, and can be used occasionally even in a common context: e.g. "from out the bed".

I don't suggest that "whereas" was obsolete. It is a perfectly good word in its place, e.g. He pretended the place was empty, whereas in reality it was crowded, packed, overflowing; but its use as a loose conjunctive turn which can be conveniently shoved into any hole to keep two sentences together is altogether reprehensible. None of these words is obsolete, but "wherethrough" is rhetorically pedantic, just as "whereabout" or "wherewithal" would be. It is no use throwing the dictionary at my head — the dictionary admits many words which poetry refuses to admit. Of course you can drag any word in the D. into poetry if you like — e.g.:

My spirit parenthetically wise
Gave me its *obiter dictum*; *à propos*
I looked within with weird and brilliant eyes

> And found in the pit of my stomach — the *juste mot*.

But all that is possible is not commendable. So if you seek a pretext wherethrough to bring in these heavy visitors, I shall buck and seek a means whereby to eject them. 2 October 1934

*

> As between the forms — "with a view to express" and "with a view to expressing" — the Oxford Concise calls the former vulgar.

I don't agree with Oxford. Both forms are used. If "to express" is vulgar, "to expressing" is cumbrous and therefore inelegant.

On Three Words Used by Sri Aurobindo

> I should like to know what exactly the meaning of the word "absolve" is in the following lines from your *Love and Death*.
>
> But if with price, ah God! what easier! Tears
> Dreadful, innumerable I will absolve,
> Or pay with anguish through the centuries . . .
>
> There is another passage a few pages later where the same word is used:
>
> For late
> I saw her mid those pale inhabitants
> Whom bodily anguish visits not, but thoughts
> Sorrowful and dumb memories absolve,
> And martyrdom of scourged hearts quivering.

In the second passage it is used in its ordinary sense. "Absolution" means release from sins or from debts — the sorrowful thoughts and memories are the penalty or payment which procures the release from the debt which has been accumulated by the sins and errors of human life.

In the first passage "absolve" is used in its Latin and not in its English sense, = "to pay off a debt", but here the sense is stretched a little. Instead of saying "I will pay off with tears" he says: "I will pay off tears" as the price of the absolution.

This Latinisation and this inversion of syntactical connections are familiar licences in English poetry — of course, it is incorrect, but a deliberate incorrectness, a violence purposely done to the language in order to produce a poetic effect. The English language, unlike the French and some others, likes, as Stephen Phillips used to say, to have liberties taken with it. But, of course, before one can take these liberties, one must be a master of the language — and, in this case, of the Latin also.

> The word "reboant" occurs in *The Rishi*. Evidently it is a misprint. What ought to be in its place?

Why is it evidently a misprint? It is a recognised (though rare and poetic) English word, from Latin *reboans*. *Reboare* in Latin means "to cry aloud again and again". 1931

*

> What do you mean when you write of my poem, "It is very felicitous in expression and taking."

I think Shakespeare wrote somewhere "Daffodils that come before the swallow dares and take the winds of March with beauty." Charm or beauty that takes the mind like that, is taking.

26 September 1936

On Some Words and Expressions Used by Writers of the Ashram

Under the gloam, like a withdrawing wave
I heard some flute-soul's visionary woe . . .

If you can justify the word "gloam" I would suggest

I heard in gloam like a withdrawing wave
A visionary flute-soul's plumbless woe.

23 September 1934

*

> What is wrong with "gloam"?

I have no personal objection to the word "gloam", I find it perfect — I was only doubtful about its existence because I did not remember ever to have met it before. I thought it might be a gap in my knowledge, so I looked at Chambers and the Concise Oxford but they share my ignorance. Then I thought it might be Spenserian, archaic or dialect, like Arjava's *trouvailles* and in that case I would welcome it not only with pleasure but with confidence; so I asked you whether you could justify it. Your answer sent me at once diving again into Chambers — you seemed to be so sure of this little gem of a word that I thought I must have looked at the wrong place or made some other frightful blunder. But no, there is "gloaming" marching at the head of the words beginning with "glo" in a proud precedence but with no gleam of a gloam before it. There is only glitter which is not the same thing at all, not at all at all. Of course the word ought to exist, it is full of charm and suggests other beauties like "gloamy", "gloamful" etc., but none of these language people seem to know anything about it. Or perhaps it is in the less concise and longer-winded lexicographers? Anyhow my remark stands; if you can justify it, it is a beautiful phrase. I prefer "in gloam" to "at gloam" though that too has its merits. 24 September 1934

*

> Of course the big dictionary in the library mentions "gloam" — and not just as an archaism or obsolecism: it does it the honour, which it more than deserves, of calling it a variant of "gloaming". Etymologically too, there can be no objection: "gloaming" and "gloom" derive from the same Anglo-Saxon "glōm," so if "gloom" is legitimate, "gloam" is *a fortiori* so.

Not necessarily — if one proceeded in that argument, the English language would soon be a chaos.

> Besides, at least twice before it has passed under your eyes and you have never demurred: I used it over a year ago in *Pointers*:
>
> From the sea rise up
> Fingers of foam
> Trying to pierce through

> The veil of gloam
>
> And I remember Harin's use of it:
>
> In me, the timeless, time forgets to roam,
> Drunk with my poise, grown sudden unaware,
> Offering up its noontide and its gloam
> Withdrawn in a lost attitude of prayer.
>
> If it were an obscure uglification, I could understand your objection; but as you admit its rare beauty and cannot doubt its sense nor its etymological coinability, and still reiterate your remark about the necessity of my justifying it I conjecture some solid principle behind your diffidence. Why should one hesitate to enrich the language?

It did not strike me in your poem. As for Harin, I never object to what he may invent in language or in grammar, because so much mastery of language carries with it a right to take liberties with it. But I am more severe with myself and others. However, if it is in the big dictionary, that is sufficient. Even if it had been an archaism, it would have been worth reviving. But if it had been a new invention, it would have been more doubtful — one could invent hundreds of beautiful words but the liberty to do so would end in a language like Joyce's which is not desirable.

25 September 1934

*

> The English reader has digested Carlyle and swallowed Meredith and is not quite unwilling to REJOYCE in even more startling strangenesses of expression at the present day. Will his stomach really turn at my little novelties. "The voice of an eye" sounds idiotic, but "the voice of a devouring eye" seems to me effective. "Devouring eye" is then a synecdoche — isolating and emphasising Shakespeare's most remarkable quality, his eager multitudinous sight, and the "oral" epithet provides a connection with the idea of a voice, thus preventing the catachresis from being too startling. If Milton could give us "blind mouths" and Wordsworth
>
> thou Eye among the blind,

> That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
>
> is there very much to object to in this visioned voice?

Can't accept all that. "A voice of a devouring eye" is even more reJoycingly mad than a voice of an eye pure and simple. If the English language is to go to the dogs, let it go, but the Joyce cut by the way of Bedlam does not recommend itself to me.

The poetical examples have nothing to do with the matter. Poetry is permitted to be insane — the poet and the madman go together: though even there there are limits. Meredith and Carlyle are tortuous or extravagant in their style only — though they can be perfectly sane when they want. In poetry anything can pass — For instance, my "voice of a tilted nose":

O voice of a tilted nose,
Speak but speak not in prose!
Nose like a blushing rose,
O Joyce of a tilted nose!

That is high poetry, but put it in prose and it sounds insane.

5 May 1935

*

> What about this: "It is the voice of an insatiable picturesqueness . . . "

A voice of picturesqueness is less startling but hardly better English than "a voice of an eye". I can't stomach the two expressions because they are not English. You can't say "voice of a devouring eye" any more than you can say "voice of a tilted nose". To the English reader the expression would sound grotesque, incongruous, almost comic.

A voice of picturesqueness would also sound incongruous, for picturesqueness applies to visible things, not to things audible like a voice. 5 May 1935

*

> In my lines —
>
> This heart grew brighter when your breath's proud chill
> Flung my disperse life-blood more richly in!
>
> a terminal "d" will at once English that Latin fellow "disperse",[1] but is he really objectionable? At first I had "Drove" instead of "Flung" — so the desire for a less dental rhythm was his *raison d'être*, but if he seems a trifle weaker than his English avatar, he can easily be dispensed with now.

I don't think "disperse" as an adjective can pass, — the dentals are certainly an objection but do not justify this Latin-English neologism. 12 June 1937

*

> Why should that poor "disperse" be inadmissible when English has many such Latin forms — e.g. "consecrate", "dedicate", "intoxicate"?

I don't think people use "consecrate", "intoxicate" etc. as adjectives nowadays — at any rate it sounds to me too scholastic. Of course, if one chose, this kind of thing might be perpetrate —

O wretched man intoxicate,
Let not thy life be consecrate
    To wine's red yell (spell, if you want to be "poetic")
Else will thy soul be dedicate
    To Hell.

but it is better not to do it. It makes no difference if there are other words like "diffuse" taken from French (not Latin) which have this form and are generally used as adjectives. Logic is not the sole basis of linguistic use. I thought at first it was an archaism and there might be some such phrase in old poetry as "lids disperse", but as I could not find it even in the Oxford which claims to be exhaustive and omniscient, I concluded it must be a neologism of yours. But archaism or neologism does not matter. "Dispersed life-blood" brings three d's so near together that they collide a little — if they were farther from each other it would not matter — or if they produced some significant or opportune effect. I think "diffuse" will do. 13 June 1937

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo had written in the margin of a typed copy of this poem: "What is this Latin fellow "disperse" doing here?" — Ed.*

*

> What do I find this afternoon? Just read:
>
> Suddenly
> From motionless battalions as outride
> A speed disperse of horsemen, from that mass
> Of livid menace went a frail light cloud
> Rushing through heaven, and behind it streamed
> The downpour all in wet and greenish lines.
>
> This is from your own *Urvasie*! Of course, it is possible that the printer has omitted a terminal "d" — but is that really the explanation?

I dare say I tried to Latinise. But that doesn't make it a permissible form. If it is obsolete, it must remain obsolete. I thought at first it was an archaism you were trying on, I seemed to remember something of the kind, but as I could find it nowhere I gave up the idea — it was probably my own crime that I remembered.
29 June 1937

*

The noons of heart betray the lofts
Which splendid strength of Truth enfurls.

Now, look here! What are these lofts? I read in the Dictionary "loft": Attic; room over stable; pigeon-house; flock of pigeons; gallery in church or hall; (Golf) backward slope in clubhead, lofting strokes. Now if some of these things can be betrayed by the noons (at a pinch, but not of the heart), none of them, not even the last can be enfurled. Not even the most splendid strength has ever enfurled any loft in the world, not even if it be curled and whirled a hundred times over for the desperate effort. 27 December 1936

*

> In my use of "loft" I follow its derivation from German "*Luft*" = the air, and Icelandic "*lopt*" = sky, upper room.

Derivations are depravations — even when they are right they are useless, — what matters is what the word means, not what something else meant which gave birth to the word.

Notes on Usage Apropos of a Translation of Sarat Chandra Chatterji's *Nishkriti*[2]

I have gone carefully through the proof of the first chapters of *The Deliverance*, but find most of these unexplained red marks totally unintelligible; sometimes I can make a guess, but most often not even that. What, for instance, is the objection to the use of "its" and "it" for a river?

There seems to be an objection to any metaphors or figures such as "the scales of public opinion" or "a river rejecting someone from its borders". This seems to me astonishing; at any rate the figures are there in the original and one cannot suppress them in a translation or alter arbitrarily the author's substance.

Objections are made also against quite good and appropriate English words such as "beggared" and "quadrupled" or against perfectly correct phrases like "All that was now a history of the past" or "reaching" a figure or "dropping" some money or "he sat at home in his room" in the sense of remaining inactive. One can say, for instance, "He sat in his palace listening to the footsteps of approaching Doom". So too there appears to be some objection to the phrase "neither X nor another", a common English turn; to "started (in the sense of beginning an action or movement) a relentless insistence and importunity".[3] Vivid epithets, e.g., "rapid visits" or familiar and lively phrases such as "she was back again", are found to be improper and objectionable. "Cares of her household" gets a red mark, though one speaks of "household cares", "cares of State", cares of all kinds. A fever (one must not refer to it as "it") is allowed to throw a person down, but not to let him rise from his bed. Incomprehensible?

---

[2] *Above a typed copy of this letter, Sri Aurobindo wrote the jocular heading: "Note on the red marks in the proof of 'The Deliverance' " — Ed.*

[3] One can say for instance, "He started an obstinate resistance which never flagged nor ceased".

All these startling red-ink surprises are packed together in the short space of the first chapter. But in the second we meet with still bigger surprises. One is not allowed to "make time" for anything, a most common phrase, or to "leave" a responsibility to someone. A meal must not be "vegetarian" though a diet can be, and though one speaks in English of "a frugal vegetarian dinner". One is not allowed to have a school task to do or to "prepare" a task; but unhappily that is done in England at least and in English.

"Today" is objected to because it is applied to past "time"; but it is put here as part of the tone of vivid remembered actuality, the past described as if still present before the mind, which is constant in the original. Similarly, a little later on, "the early dusk had fallen a couple of hours ago"; in strict narrative time it should be "before" and not "ago", but though the author writes in the past tense, he is always suggesting a past which is passing immediately before our eyes. I do not see how else the translator is to keep this suggestion. One could use more correctly the historic present: "It is winter and the dusk has fallen a couple of hours ago"; but that would be to falsify the original.

All right of passage is refused to a humorous use of the phrase "give voice", nor can one "retort" instead of merely replying. There is perhaps a syntactical objection to the use of "desperate" at the beginning of the sentence, on p. 6, but the objection is itself incorrect. One says "Pale and haggard, he rose from his bed". One is not allowed to speak humorously of a "portion" instead of a "part" of a big bed so as to emphasise its bigness and the dividing of it into occupied regions by the "gang". A heart is not allowed to "pound away", still less to pound "dismally". The objector seems to damn everything vividly descriptive, everything new in turn, phrase or image, everything in fact not said before by everyone else. A man lying down is not allowed to "start up", though the dictionary meaning of the word is just that, "to rise up quickly or suddenly", e.g. "he started up from his bed" or "from his chair". What again is meant by the objection to such recognised locutions as "to take away the (bad) taste" or "much she cares", and why should there not be an "implacable pressure" or why is one forbidden to "get out money" from a box? These red marks are terribly mysterious.

The criticism of the sentences "How could you etc." and the use of "today" is intelligible and to a certain extent tenable. I have tried to explain on the proof itself why the ordinary tense-sequence can be disregarded here. In the latter case it is not so much a question of grammar as of the use of the word "today" for a past time. If it can be so used in order to express more vividly the actual thought in the mind of a person at the time, the unusual tense-sequence follows as a matter of course. I have, however, yielded the point for the sake of Sarat Chatterji's reputation which, we are told, is imperilled by our audacities of language.

Chapter III. The objector begins with a queer missing of the obvious sense in the use of "my" and "us". He goes on to challenge the possibility of "entering into" explanations, discussions etc. though it is commonly done, e.g. "He entered into a long discussion" or "You needn't enter into tedious explanations; a few words will be enough."

Chapter IV continues the inexplicable chain and "implacable" series of red objections. I have written "a discussion was in process", which is a quite permissible phrase, but alter it to "progress" just to soften the redness of the red mark. But why cannot Atul "hold forth" as every orator does and what is the matter with the "cut" of a coat, a phrase sacred to every tailor? People in England do, after all, "blurt out" things every day and they "laugh in the face" of others, though of course it may be considered rude; but "to laugh in the face" is not considered as bad grammar — or bad English. "To give *the* order" is wrong in the opinion of the objector; but since the purchase of particular things like coats or suits has just been talked about, it is quite correct to say “*the* order” instead of “*an* order”.

One can’t “speak out”, apparently, (or perhaps “speak up” either, one can only just speak?), nor can one “see to the making of coats” for a family. Also it is wrong to ask “what is wrong”. It is wrong, it seems, to say “All in the room”; so an Englishman is mistaken when he says “Tell all at home that I am not coming”! So too you can’t speak “once more” or “seek for”[4] anything! The use of the plural of “devotion”, common in English,[5] is red marked as an error!

Chapter V. One can’t “labour” to get a result, or “cover up” anything in the sense of “hiding” or even try to do it; one can’t put somebody up[6] to do something, though in English it is constantly done. There is an objection to such perfectly natural figures as “could not summon up any reply” or “the sharp edge of your tongue” or “smouldering secretly within herself”. The objector seems indeed to cherish a deadly grudge against figures and images; he is opposed also to colloquial expressions (e.g. “get” out money, “give it here”) even in dialogue. He objects to my putting straight into English the Bengali figure of “falling from the sky”. There is an almost identical phrase in French with exactly the same sense, “to fall from on high” or “to fall from the clouds”:[7] so I do not see why it should not be done, since it ought to be at once intelligible to an English reader. I note also that words cannot “jump” to the tongue, but why not? they manage to do it every day. Poor Shaila cannot “need” a cup.[8] Then what is wrong with the sentence “Do you think everybody is your sister” i.e. the speaker herself? It is simply a vivid way of saying "Do you think everybody will be as patient with you as myself", or, "Do you think you can speak to everybody as you do to me".

---

[4] “For” and “after” *can* be used with “seek”. One can say “He sought for an excuse but found none”; one would not usually say “He sought an excuse”. So too you can say “He has long been seeking for spiritual light but in vain.”

[5] E.g. “She was still at her devotions”.

[6] Cf., in kindred but slightly different senses, “He has not acted on his own initiative, I know by whom he has been put up to do this”; “A straw candidate put up for the occasion by a small secret clique”; “This is a put up job; there is nothing sincere or spontaneous in the whole affair”.

[7] *“tomber d’en haut”, “tomber des nuages”*.

[8] One can say, “she needs help and sympathy in her trouble”, or “you need rest and a change of air”, or “for this I need scissors and paste, get them”. Then why not “I need the cup”?

I have written at length because the publisher and perhaps others seem to have been upset by the vicious red jabs of this high authority. In most cases they seem to me to have no meaning whatever. If they have, we should be informed to some extent at least of their why and wherefore.

There are, too, a few doubtful points in half a dozen sentences, points on which Englishmen themselves differ or might differ. I am ready to go through the whole book if the proofs are sent here. But I cannot revise or alter phrases, locutions or figures which, so far as I know English, are either current or natural or permissible, — unless I am told why these are thought to be incorrect or improper.

I cannot altogether understand Professor Maniyar's criticism. What does he mean by irregular language? If he refers to the style and means that it is bad, unchaste, too full of familiar or colloquial terms, not sufficiently dignified, bookish, conventional in phrase, not according to precedent, he is entitled to his view, of course. If he and the objector represent the Indian English-reading public, then Dilip must consider the matter. For in that case it is clear the book will not be understood by that public, may be banged and bashed by the reviewers, or may for kindred reasons be a failure. The suggestion that Sarat Chandra's high reputation will be tarnished and lowered by Dilip's deplorable style and my bad English and horrible grammar, not from any fault of his own, is very alarming. In that case Dilip ought to have the book corrected by some University professor who knows what to write and what not to write and its style chastened, made correct, common and unnoticeable. I don't think Amal will do. He is too brilliant and might make the hair of the correct and timid reader rise on his head in horror; besides Amal does not know Bengali.

The question also arises whether an English reader (an English Englishman, not made in India) would equally fail to appreciate the book; he might find it too Bengali in character and substance and — who knows? — agree that the style of the translation is unorthodox and "irregular". But here we are helpless — we cannot make the experiment, for the war is on and England is far away and paper scarce there as here.

5 August 1944

Remarks on Bengali Usage

Laws and Caprices of Usage

It is not very clear why the dictum about বৎসর should not apply to হৃৎপাত্রে and মৃৎপাত্রে. My own feeling is against this extra syllable in such words (দিক্প্রান্তে seems to me different, because দিক্ is a separate word in Bengali), but neither feeling nor logic can stand against usage. A language is like an absolute queen; you have to obey her laws, reasonable or unreasonable, and not only her laws, but her caprices — so long as they last, — unless you are one of her acknowledged favourites and then you can make hay of her laws and (sometimes) defy even her caprices provided you are quite sure of the favour. In this case, Tagore perhaps feels the absoluteness of some usage with regard to these particular words? But one can always break through law and usage and even pass over the judgment of an "arbiter of elegances", — at one's own risk.

26 January 1932

*

> Funny thing — this word-coinage! Sometimes people accept it, sometimes they reject.

After all when one coins a new word, one has to take the chance. If the word is properly formed and not ugly or unintelligible, it seems to me all right to venture.

> If it is not accepted it will remain a blot in the poem. Tagore coined the word তৃণাঙ্কিত but he laments that people have not accepted it.

Why a blot? There are many words in Greek poetry which occur only once in the whole literature, but that is not considered a defect in the poem. It is called a *hapax legomenon*, "a once-spoken word" and that's all. তৃণাঙ্কিত for instance is a fine word and can adorn, not blot Tagore's poetry even if no one else uses it. I think Shakespeare has many words coined by him or at least some that do not occur elsewhere. 16 January 1937

A Language Grows and Is Not Made

> Will it be a narrowness on the part of the Calcutta University if it does not include foreign words for the enrichment of Bengali literature?

It is a matter of opinion and tastes differ. But I don't see how a University can change the language. A language grows and is not made, except in so far as it is the great poets and prose writers who make it. 15 July 1937

Part Three

Literature, Art, Beauty and Yoga

Section One

Appreciation of Poetry and the Arts

Appreciation of Poetry

The Subjective Element

All criticism of poetry is bound to have a strong subjective element in it and that is the source of the violent differences we find in the appreciation of any given author by equally "eminent" critics. All is relative here, Art and Beauty also, and our view of things and our appreciation of them depends on the consciousness which views and appreciates. Some critics recognise this and go in frankly for a purely subjective criticism — "this is why I like this and disapprove of that, I give my own values". Most labour to fit their personal likes and dislikes to some standard of criticism which they conceive to be objective; this need of objectivity, of the support of an impersonal truth independent of our personality or anybody else's, is the main source of theories, canons, standards of art. But the theories, canons, standards themselves vary and are set up in one age only to be broken in another. Is there then no beauty of art independent of our varying mentalities? Is beauty a creation of our minds, a construction of our ideas and our senses, not at all existent in itself? In that case Beauty is non-existent in Nature, it is put upon Nature by our minds through mental imposition, *adhyāropa*. But this contradicts the fact that it is in response to an object and not independently of it that the idea of beautiful or not beautiful originally rises within us. Beauty does exist in what we see, but there are two aspects of it, essential beauty and the forms it takes. "Eternal beauty wandering on her way" does that wandering by a multitudinous variation of forms appealing to a multitudinous variation of consciousnesses. There comes in the difficulty. Each individual consciousness tries to seize the eternal beauty expressed in a form (here a particular poem or work of art), but is either assisted by the form or repelled by it, wholly attracted or wholly repelled, or partially attracted and partially repelled. There may be errors in the poet's or artist's transcription of beauty which mar the reception, but even these have different effects on different people. But the more radical divergences arise from the variation in the constitution of the mind and its difference of response. Moreover there are minds, the majority indeed, who do not respond to "artistic" beauty at all — something inartistic appeals much more to what sense of beauty they have — or else they are not seeking beauty, but only vital pleasure.

A critic cannot escape altogether from these limitations. He can try to make himself catholic and objective and find the merit or special character of all he reads or sees in poetry and art, even when they do not evoke his strongest sympathy or deepest response. I have little temperamental sympathy for much of the work of Pope and Dryden, but I can see their extraordinary perfection or force in their own field, the masterly conciseness, energy, point, metallic precision into which they cut their thought or their verse, and I can see too how that can with a little infusion of another quality be the basis of a really great poetic style, as Dryden himself has shown in his best work. But there my appreciation stops; I cannot rise to the heights of admiration of those who put them on a level with or on a higher level than Wordsworth, Keats or Shelley — I cannot escape from the feeling that their work, even though more consistently perfect within their limits and in their own manner (at least Pope's), was less great in poetic quality. These divergences rise from a conception of beauty and a feeling for beauty which belongs to the temperament. So too Housman's exaltation of Blake results directly from his feeling and peculiar conception of poetic beauty as an appeal to an inner sensation, an appeal marred and a beauty deflowered by bringing in a sharp coating or content of intellectual thought. But that I shall not discuss now. All this however does not mean that criticism is without any true use. The critic can help to open the mind to the kinds of beauty he himself sees and not only to discover but to appreciate at their full value certain elements that make them beautiful or give them what is most characteristic or unique in their peculiar beauty. Housman for instance may help many minds to see in Blake something which they did not see before. They may not agree with him in his comparison of Blake and Shakespeare, but they can follow him to a certain extent and seize better that element in poetic beauty which he overstresses but makes at the same time more vividly visible. 5 October 1934

Abiding Intuition of Poetic and Artistic Greatness

Yes, of course there is an intuition of greatness by which the great poet or artist is distinguished from those who are less great and these again from those who are not great at all. But you are asking too much when you expect this intuition to work with a mechanical instantaneousness and universality so that all shall have the same opinion and give the same values. The greatness of Shakespeare, of Dante, of others of the same rank is unquestioned and unquestionable and the recognition of it has always been there in their own time and afterwards. Virgil and Horace stood out in their own day in the first rank among the poets and that verdict has never been reversed since. The area of a poet's fame may vary; it may have been seen first by a few, then by many, then by all. At first there may be adverse critics and assailants, but these negative voices die away. Questionings may rise from time to time — e.g. as to whether Lucretius was not a greater poet than Virgil — but these are usually from individuals and the general verdict abides always. Even lesser poets retain their rank in spite of fluctuations of their fame. You speak of the discrediting of some and the rehabilitation of the discredited. That happened to Pope and Dryden. Keats and his contemporaries broke their canons and trampled over their corpses to reach romantic freedom; now there is a rehabilitation. But all this is something of an illusion — for mark that even at the worst Pope and Dryden retained a place among the great names of English poetic literature. No controversy, no depreciation could take that away from them. This proves my contention that there is an abiding intuition of poetic and artistic greatness.

The attempts at comparison of poets like Blake and Shakespeare or Dante and Shakespeare by critics like Housman and Eliot? It seems to me that these are irrelevant and otiose. Both Dante and Shakespeare stand at the summit of poetic fame, but each with so different a way of genius that comparison is unprofitable. Shakespeare has powers which Dante cannot rival; Dante has heights which Shakespeare could not reach; but in essence they stand as mighty equals. As for Blake and Shakespeare, that opinion is more a personal fantasy than anything else. Purity and greatness are not the same thing; Blake's may be pure poetry in Housman's sense and Shakespeare's not except in a few passages; but nobody can contend that Blake's genius had the width and volume and riches of Shakespeare's. It can be said that Blake as a mystic poet achieved things beyond Shakespeare's measure — for Shakespeare had not the mystic's vision; but as a poet of the play of life Shakespeare is everywhere and Blake nowhere. These are tricks of language and idiosyncrasies of preference. One has only to put each thing in its place, without confusing issues and one can see that Housman's praise of Blake may be justified but any exaltation of him by comparison with Shakespeare is not in accordance with the abiding intuition of these things which remains undisturbed by any individual verdict.

The errors of great poets in judging their contemporaries are personal freaks — they are failures in intuition due to the mind's temporary movements getting in the way of the intuition. The errors of Goethe and Bankim were only an overestimation of a genius or a talent that was new and therefore attractive at the time. Richardson's *Pamela* was after all the beginning of modern fiction. As I have said, the general intuition does not work at once and with a mechanical accuracy. Overestimation of a contemporary is frequent; underestimation also. But, taken on the whole, the real poet commands at first or fairly soon the verdict of the few whose eyes are open — and often the attacks of those whose eyes are shut — and the few grow in numbers till the general intuition affirms their verdict. There may be exceptions, for there is hardly a rule without exceptions, but this is, I think, generally true.

As for the verdict of Englishmen upon a French poet or *vice versa*, that is due to a difficulty in entering into the finer spirit and subtleties of a foreign language. It is difficult for a Frenchman to get a proper appreciation of Keats or Shelley or for an Englishman to judge Racine, — for this reason. But a Frenchman like Maurois who knows English as an Englishman knows it, can get the full intuition of a poet like Shelley well enough. These variations must be allowed for; the human mind is not a perfect instrument, its best intuitions are veiled by irrelevant mental formations; but in these matters the truth affirms itself and stands fairly firm and clear in essence through all changes of mental weather. 6 October 1934

Contemporary Judgment of Poetry

If you send your poems to five different poets, you are likely to get five absolutely disparate and discordant estimates of them. A poet likes only the poetry that appeals to his own temperament or taste, the rest he condemns or ignores. (My own case is different, because I am not primarily a poet and have made in criticism a practice of appreciating everything that can be appreciated, as a catholic critic would.) Contemporary poetry, besides, seldom gets its right judgment from contemporary critics.

Nothing can be more futile than for a poet to write in expectation of contemporary fame or praise, however agreeable that may be, if it comes: but it is not of any definitive value; for very poor poets have enjoyed a great contemporary fame and very great poets have been neglected in their time, their merit known only to a few and gathering very slowly a greater volume of appreciation around it. A poet has to go on his way, trying to gather hints from what people say for or against, when their criticisms are things he can profit by, but not otherwise moved (if he can manage it) — seeking mainly to sharpen his own sense of self-criticism by the help of others. Differences of estimate need not surprise him at all. 2 February 1932

*

It is quite true that all art and poetry is largely dependent on the vital for its activity and if there is no force of vitality in the poetry then it cannot be strong or great. But it does not follow that the vital element in poetry will appeal to everybody or a great number of people; it depends on the kind of vital movement that is there. The forceful but inferior sort of vital energy that you find in Kipling's ballads appeals to a large mass of people, — the vital element in Milton which is very powerful affects only a few in comparison — the rest take him on trust because he is a great classic but have not the true intense enjoyment of him as of Kipling. Yet Milton's greatness will endure — that cannot be said certainly of Kipling's ballads. The problem therefore remains where it was. Spiritual poetry also needs the vital force for expression; mere spiritual philosophy without the uplifting poetic force in its expression (which needs the vital energy for its action) cannot appeal to anybody. But all the same in spiritual poetry the vital element adopts a turn which may not go home to many, unless it takes a popular religious form which has a general appeal. There I do not follow quite Khagen Mitra's position — does he contend that one ought to suit one's poetry to the mentality of others so that it may have a general appeal, not keeping it to its natural purpose of expressing what is felt and seen by the poet according to the truth of the inspiration within him? Surely that cannot be recommended; but if it is not done, the possibility of reaching (at first, of course) only a few remains uneliminated. It is not that a poet deliberately sets out to be appreciated by a few only — he sets out to be himself in his poetry and the rest follows. But consider a poet like Mallarmé. In writing his strange enigmatic profound style which turned the whole structure of French upside down he cannot have expected or cared to be read and appreciated even by that part of the general public which is interested in and appreciative of poetry. Yet there is no one who has had more influence on modern French poets — he helped to create Verlaine, Valéry and a number of others who rank among the great ones in French literature and he himself too now ranks very high though he must still, I should think, be read only by a comparatively small though select audience;

yet he has practically turned the current of French poetry. So there is something to be said for writing for oneself even if that implies writing only for the few and not for the many.

As for the actor, that is quite a different art, meant for the public, depending on its breath of applause, ineffective if its public is not moved or captured. A poet publishes, but he can take his chance; if he does not succeed in commanding widespread attention, he can still continue to write; there is something in him which maintains its energy and will to create. If he seeks acknowledged greatness and success — though that is a secondary matter to the force that makes him write — he can still sustain himself on the hope of a future greatness with posterity — there are plenty of illustrious examples to console him. But an actor unappreciated is an actor already dead — there is nothing before him. 5 November 1936

*

> Valéry, whom you mention, is unintelligible to all but a very narrow coterie, and even they say that he is too intellectual and divorced from the life of the emotions. This makes his poetry admirable as a specimen of great workmanship, but it will not last.

Well, but did they not say the same thing about Mallarmé? And what of Blake? Contemporary opinion is a poor judge of what shall live or not live. The fact remains that the impressionist movement in poetry initiated by Mallarmé has proved to be the most powerful stream in France and its influence is not confined to that country. The whole thing is that it is a mistake to erect a mental theory and try to force into its narrow mould the infinite variety of the processes of Nature. Shakespeare may have so much vital force as to recommend himself to a large audience not so much for his poetry at first as for his dramatic vividness and power; it must be remembered that it was the German romantics two centuries later who brought about the apotheosis of Shakespeare — before that he had a much more limited circle of admirers. Other great poets have started with a more scanty recognition. Others have had a great popularity in their lifetime and sunk afterwards to a much lower level of fame. What is important is to preserve the right of the poet to write for himself, that is to say, for the Spirit that moves him, not to demand from him that he should write down to the level of the general or satisfy even the established taste and standard of the critics or connoisseurs of his time. For that would mean the end or decay of poetry — it would perish of its own debasement. A poet must be free to use his wings even if they carry him above the comprehension of the public of the day or of the general run of critics or lead him into lonely places. That is all that matters.

Tolstoy's logic is out of place. Nobody says that the value of the poet must be measured by the scantiness of his audience any more than it can be measured by the extent of his contemporary popularity. So there is no room for his *reductio ad absurdum*. What is contended is that it cannot be measured by either standard. It is to be measured by the power of his vision, of his speech, of his feeling, by his rendering of the world within or the world without or of any world to which he has access. It may be the outer world that he portrays like Homer and Chaucer or a vivid life-world like Shakespeare or an inmost world of experience like Blake or other mystic poets. The recognition of that power will come first from the few who recognise good poetry when they see it and from those who can enter into his world; afterwards it can spread to the larger number who can recognise good poetry when it is shown to them; finally, the still larger public may come in who learn to appreciate by a slow education, not by instinct and nature. There was a sound principle in the opinion always held in former times that it is time alone that can test the enduring power of a poet's work, for contemporary opinion is not reliable.

There remains the case of the poets great or small or null who immediately command a general hearing. They have an element in them which catches at once the mind of the time: they are saying things which have a general appeal in a way that everybody can understand, in a language and rhythm that all can appreciate. As you say, there must be a vital element in the poetry of such a writer which gets him his public. The question is, has he anything else and, again what is the value of this vital element? If he has nothing else or not much of any high value, his aureole will not endure. If he has something but not of the best and highest, he will sink in the eyes of posterity, but not set out of sight. If he has in him something of the very greatest and best, his fame will grow and grow as time goes on — some of the elements that caught him his contemporary public may fade and lose their value but the rest will shine with an increasing brightness. But even the vital and popular elements in the work may have different values — Shakespeare's vitality has the same appeal now as then; Tennyson's has got very much depreciated; Longfellow's is now recognised for the easily current copper coin that it always was. You must remember that when I speak of the vital force in a poet as something necessary, I am not speaking of something that need be low or fitted only to catch the general mind, not fit to appeal to a higher judgment, but of something that can be very valuable — from the highest point of view. When Milton writes

> Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,

or describes the grandeur of the fallen archangel, there is a vital force there that is of the highest quality, — so is that of Shakespeare; so is that of many pieces of Blake. This vital energy makes the soul stir within you. Nothing can be more high and sublime than the vital energy in Arjuna's description of the Virat Purusha in the Gita. 6 November 1936

*

I remain convinced that fame is a fluke. Even a settled literary fame seems to be a very fluctuating affair. Who gave a thought to Blake or Donne in former times, when I was in England, for instance? But now they bid fair to be reckoned among the great poets. I see that Byron is in the depths, the quotations for Pope and Dryden are rising; it was very different in those days. 5 February 1932

*

> Dilip says, “If you want to publish your literary work, you must see that people understand it — not the public at large but, as Virginia Woolf says, a select public.”

What is not understood or appreciated by one select circle may be understood or appreciated by another select circle or in the future like Blake’s poetry. Nobody appreciated Blake in his own time — now he ranks as a great poet, — more poetic than Shakespeare, says Housman. Tagore wrote he could not appreciate Dilip’s poetry because it is too “Yogic” for him. Is Tagore unselect, one of the public at large?

I don’t agree at all with not publishing because you won’t be understood. At that rate many great poets would have remained unpublished. What about the unintelligible Mallarmé who had such a great influence on later French poetry? 24 July 1936

Housman’s Poetics

> I have been waiting for a long time to take a look at A. E. Housman’s little book *The Name and Nature of Poetry*. It’s been with you for months now. Perhaps you could spare it for a while? How did you like it?

> [*A few days later*] What has happened to my Housman letter?

Housed, man!

[*Still later*] Here is the book. I kept it with the hope of noting down my own ideas on Housman’s theory, but all this time has elapsed without my being able to do it. Apart from the theory, Housman, judging from the book, has a fine sense of true poetic quality — in others. For his own poetry, from the extracts I have seen, looks rather thin. I have read the book three or four times and always with satisfaction to my solar plexus.

22 September 1936

*

Read the remarks of Housman on the magnificent poem of Blake he quotes in full [*“My Spectre around me night and day”*] and the attempts of people to explain it. I quite agree with him there though not in his too sweeping theory of poetry. To explain that poem is to murder it and dissect the corpse. One can't explain it, one can only feel and live the truth behind it.

3 December 1936

Spiritual Poetry and Popular Taste

> In a recently published lecture on art, Tagore writes [*in Bengali*]:
>
>> The question naturally arises, "Why has this [*mathematical delight*] not been made the subject of poetry?" The reason is that the experience of it is confined to very few people, it is out of the reach of the general public. The language through which it can be known is technical, it has not been made into a living material by contact with the hearts of the people.
>
> Put "yogic poetry" in place of mathematics and you will at once understand why he cannot accept yogic poetry as poetry proper. Khagendra Mitra has echoed this identical view in his rather obscure term অনুভাবের স্বাজাত্য.

Mathematical delight be blowed! What does he mean? that you can't write mathematics in verse? I suppose not, it was not meant to be. You can't start off

Oh, two by three plus four plus seven!
To add things is to be in heaven.

But all the same, if one thinks it worth while to take the trouble, one can express the mathematician's delight in discovery or the grammarian's in grammatising or the engineer's in planning a bridge or a house. What about Browning's *Grammarian's Funeral*? The reason why these subjects do not easily get into poetry is because they do not lend themselves to poetic handling, their substance being intellectual and abstract and their language also, not as the substance and language of poetry must be, emotional and intuitive. It is not because they appeal only to a few people and not to the general run of humanity. A good dinner appeals not to a few people but to the general run of humanity, but it would all the same be a little difficult to write an epic or a lyric on the greatness of cooking and fine dishes or the joys of the palate and the belly. Spiritual subjects on the other hand can lend themselves to poetic handling because they can be expressed in the language of high emotion and radiant intuition. How many people will appreciate it is a question which is irrelevant to the merit of the poetry. More people have appreciated sincerely Macaulay's *Lays* or Kipling's *Barrack Room Ballads* than ever really appreciated *Timon of Athens* or *Paradise Regained* — but that does not determine the relative value or appropriateness of these things as poetry. Artistic or poetic value cannot be reckoned by the plaudits or the reactions of the greatest number. I am only just reading Khagen Mitra's স্বাজাত্য — this is only a splenetic comment on your quotation from Tagore. 2 November 1936

*

> Mystic poetry will ever remain for Tagore mystic and mysterious and occupy a second place.

That is another matter. It is a question of personal idiosyncrasy. There are people who thrill to Pope and find Keats and Shelley empty and misty. The clear precise intellectual meanings of Pope are to them the height of poetry — the emotional and romantic suggestions of the *Skylark* or the *Ode to the Nightingale* unsatisfactory. How the devil, they ask, can a skylark be a spirit, not a bird? What the hell has "a glow-worm golden in a dell of dew" to do with the song of the skylark? They are unable to feel these things and say Pope would never have written in that incoherent inconsequential way. Of course he wouldn't. But that simply means they like things that are intellectually clear and can't appreciate the imaginative connections which reveal what is deeper than the surface. You can, I suppose, catch something of these, but when you are asked to go still deeper into the concrete of concretes, you lose your breath and say "Lord! what an unintelligible mess. Give me an allegorical clue for God's sake, something superficial, which I can mentally formulate." Same attitude as the Popists' — in essence. 8 December 1936

Appreciation of the Arts in General

Poetic and Artistic Value and Popular Appeal

I do not know why your correspondent puts so much value on *general* understanding and acceptance. Really it is only the few that can be trusted to discern the true value of things in poetry and art and if the "general" run accept it is usually because acceptance is sooner or later imposed or induced in their minds at first by the authority of the few and afterwards by the verdict of Time. There are exceptions of course of a wide spontaneous acceptance because something that is really good happens to meet a taste or a demand in the general mind of the moment. Poetic and artistic value does not necessarily command mass understanding and acceptance. 24 October 1936

*

I do not find your argument from numbers very convincing. Your 999,999 people would also prefer a jazz and turn away from Beethoven or only hear him as a duty and would feel happy in a theatre listening to a common dance tune and cold and dull to the music of Tansen. They would also prefer (even many who pretend otherwise) a catching theatre song to one of Tagore's lyrics — which proves to the hilt, I suppose, that Beethoven, Tansen, Tagore are pale distant highbrow things, not the real, true, human, joy-giving stuff. In the case of Yogic or divine peace, which is not something neutral, but intense, overwhelming and positive (the neutral quiet is only a first or prefatory stage,) there is this further disadvantage that your million minus one have never known Yogic peace, and what then is the value of their turning away from what they never experienced and could not possibly understand even if it were described to them? The man of the world knows only vital excitement and pleasure or what he can get of it, but does not know the Yogic peace and joy and cannot compare, — but the Yogin has known both and can compare. I have never heard of a Yogin who got the peace of God and turned away from it as something poor, neutral and pallid, rushing back to cakes and ale. If satisfaction in the experience is to be the test, Yogic peace wins by a hundred lengths. However, you write as if I had said peace was the one and only thing to be had by Yoga. I said it was a basis, the only possible secure basis for all other divine experience, even for a fulfilled and lasting intensity of bhakti and Ananda. 29 October 1932

Art and Life

There are artists and artists. A real artist with the spirit of artistry in his very blood will certainly be artistic in everything. But there are artists who have no taste and there are artists who are not born but made. Your example of Tagore is a different matter. A mastery in one department of art does not give mastery in another — though there may be a few who excel equally in many arts. Gandhi's phrase about asceticism is only a phrase. You might just as well say that politics is an art or that cooking is the greatest of arts or apply that phrase to bridge or boxing or any other human field of effort. As for Tolstoy's dictum it is that of a polemist, a man who had narrowed himself to one line of ideas — and such people can say anything. There is the same insufficiency about the other quotations. An artist or a poet may be the medium of a great power but in his life he may be a very ordinary man or else a criminal like Villon or Cellini. All kinds go to make this rather queer terrestrial creation. 15 August 1933

Modern Art and Poetry

Not only are there no boundaries left in some arts (like poetry of the ultra-modern schools or painting) but no foundations and no Art either. I am referring to the modernist painters and to the extraordinary verbal jazz which is nowadays often put forward as poetry. . . .

Modern Art opines that beauty is functional! that is, whatever serves its function or serves a true purpose is artistic and beautiful — for instance, if a clerk produces a neat copy of an official letter without mistakes, the clerk and his copy are both of them works of art and beautiful! March 1935

Unity of Idea and Design in the Arts

> I would recommend that you send the architect Raymond to Hyderabad to observe the modernised Moghul style of some of the buildings. He could then make some improvements to his design: a big dome in the centre, for instance, and dome-like decorations in the corners.

Two quite different styles cannot be mixed together — it would make a horribly inartistic effect. A dome would be utterly out of place in the plan of this building. Unity of idea and design is the first requisite in architecture as in any other art.

Comparison of the Arts

Each Art Has Its Own Province

I fear I must disappoint you. I am *not* going to pass the Gods through a competitive examination and assign a highest place to one and lower places to others. What an idea! Each has his or her own province on the summits and what is the necessity of putting them in rivalry with each other? It is a sort of Judgment of Paris you want to impose on me? Well, but what became of Paris and Troy? You want me to give the crown or the apple to Music and enrage the Goddesses of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Embroidery, all the Nine Muses, so that they will kick at our publications and exhibitions and troop off to other places? We shall have to build in the future — what then shall we do if the Goddess of Architecture turns severely and says, "I am an inferior Power, am I? Go and ask your Nirod to build your house with his beloved music!"

Your test of precedence — universal appeal — is all wrong. I don't know that it is true, in the first place. Some kind of sound called music appeals to everybody, but has really good music a universal appeal? And, speaking of arts, more people go to the theatre or read fiction than go to the opera or a concert. What becomes then of the superior universality of music, even in the cheapest sense of universality? Rudyard Kipling's *Barrack Room Ballads* exercises a more universal appeal than was ever reached by Milton or Keats — we will say nothing of writers like Blake or Francis Thompson; a band on the pier at a seaside resort will please more people than a great piece of music with the orchestration conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. In a world of gods it might be true that the highest made the most universal appeal but here in a world of beasts and men (you bring in the beasts — why not play to Bushy and try how she responds?) it is usually the inferior things that have the more general if not quite universal appeal. On the other hand the opposite system you suggest (the tables turned upside down — the least universal and most difficult appeal makes the greatest art) would also have its dangers. At that rate we should have to concede that the cubist and abstract painters had reached the highest art possible, only rivalled by the up to date modernist poets of whom it has been said that their works are not at all either read or understood by the public, are read and understood only by the poet himself, and are read without being understood by his personal friends and admirers.

When you speak of direct appeal, you are perhaps touching something true. Technique does not come in — for although to have a complete and expert judgment or appreciation you must know the technique not only in music and painting where it is more difficult, but in poetry and architecture also, it is something else and not that kind of judgment of which you are speaking. It is perhaps true that music goes direct to the intuition and feeling with the least necessity of using the thinking mind with its strongly limiting conceptions as a self-imposed middleman, while painting and sculpture do need it and poetry still more. At that rate music would come first, architecture next, then sculpture and painting, poetry last. I am aware that Housman posits nonsense as the essence of pure poetry and considers its appeal to be quite direct — not to the soul but to somewhere about the stomach. But then there is hardly any pure poetry in this world and the little there is is still *mélangé* with at least a homeopathic dose of intellectual meaning. But again if I admit this thesis of excellence by directness, I shall be getting myself into dangerous waters. For modern painting has become either cubist or abstract and it claims to have got rid of mental representation and established in art the very method of music; it paints not the object but the truth behind the object by the use of pure line and colour and geometrical form which is the very basis of all forms or else by figures that are not representations but significances. For instance a modern painter wishing to make a portrait of you will now paint at the top a clock surrounded by three triangles, below them a chaos of rhomboids and at the bottom two table castors to represent your feet and he will put underneath this powerful design, "Portrait of Nirod". Perhaps your soul will leap up in answer to its direct appeal and recognise at once the truth behind the object, behind your vanished physical self, — you will greet your psychic being or your Atman or at least your inner physical or vital being. Perhaps also you won't. Poetry also seems to be striving towards the same end by the same means — the getting away from mind into the depths of life or, as the profane might put it, arriving at truth and beauty through ugliness and unintelligibility. From that you will perhaps deduce that the attempt of painting and poetry to do what music alone can do easily and directly without these acrobatics is futile because it is contrary to their nature — which proves your thesis that music is the highest art because most direct in its appeal to the soul and the feelings. Maybe — or maybe not; as the Jains put it, *syād vā na syād vā*.

I have written so much, you will see, in order to say nothing — or at least to avoid your attempt at putting me in an embarrassing dilemma. Q.E.F. 6 January 1936

*

I did not know what to make of your reply on art.

If you did know, it would mean I had committed myself, which was just what I did not want to do. Or shall we put it in this way "Each of the great arts has its own appeal and its own way of appeal and each in its own way is supreme above all others"? That ought to do. 7 January 1936

Music and Poetry

I do not know what to say on the subject you propose to me — the superiority of music to poetry, — for my appreciation of music is bodiless and inexpressible while about poetry I can write at ease and with an expert knowledge. But is it necessary to fix a scale of greatness between two fine arts when each has its own greatness and can touch in its own way the extremes of aesthetic Ananda? Music, no doubt, goes nearest to the infinite and to the essence of things because it relies wholly on the ethereal vehicle, *śabda* (architecture by the by can do something of the same kind at the other extreme even in its imprisonment in mass); but painting and sculpture have their revenge by liberating visible form into ecstasy, while poetry though it cannot do with sound what music does, yet can make a many-stringed harmony, a sound-revelation winging the creation by the word and setting afloat vivid suggestions of form and colour, — that gives it in a very subtle kind the combined power of all the arts. Who shall decide between such claims or be a judge between these godheads?

26 April 1933

Appreciation of Music

On Music

Written words are pale and lifeless things when one has to express the feelings raised by superb music and seem hardly to mean anything — not being able to convey what is beyond word and mere mental form — that is, at least, what I have felt and why I always find it a little difficult to write anything about music. 20 March 1933

Musical Excellence and General Culture

I have not seen the remarks in question. I don't suppose all-round general culture has much to do with excelling in music. Music is a gift independent of any such thing and it can hardly be said that, given a musical gift in two people, the one with an all-round culture would go farther than the other in musical excellence. That would not be true in any of the arts. But something else was meant, perhaps, — that there is a certain turn or element in the excellence which an all-round culture makes possible? It is only in that sense that it could be true. Shakespeare's poetry for instance is that of a man with a vivid and many-sided response to life; it gives the impression of a multifarious knowledge of things but it was a knowledge picked up from life as he went; Milton's gets a certain colour from his studies and learning; in neither case is the genius or the excellence of the poetry due to culture, but there is a certain turn or colouring in Milton which would have not been there otherwise and is not there in Shakespeare. It does not give any superiority in poetic excellence to one over the other. 12 November 1936

Section Two

On the Visual Arts

General Remarks on the Visual Arts

Art and Nature

There is no incompatibility between the inspiration from within and the dependence on Nature. The essence of the inspiration always comes from within but the forms of expression are based on Nature though developed and modified by the selective or interpretative sight of the artist. 6 September 1933

*

A painter can certainly bring home the aspects of the sea and the beauty of Nature, but he does it as an artist, in the way of Art. He does it by representation and suggestion, not by mere reproduction of the object. The question of Art or Nature being more beautiful therefore does not arise. 16 March 1936

*

Art cannot give what Nature gives; it gives something else.
20 June 1934

On Nandalal Bose's Ideas on Art

> Nandalal Bose says: "In art three points are essential. We may say that the top point of the triangle is inspiration and the two points of the base are the study of nature and the study of tradition."

Nandalal's saying is true; but the three have to be combined and developed and harmonised in their combination to a sufficient degree before they bear the fruit of finished or great art.
10 January 1936

*

> In a letter to me, Nandalal wrote of love as "the only thing for Art".

It is a way of speaking, I suppose, in accordance with his own experience. It is the creative Force which he calls Love — others might call it by another name because they see it in another aspect.
4 November 1933

Inspiration and the Vital

> For the last two or three days I have been getting inspirations for painting. But I have a question about that. Do these inspirations come from the vital world? Is this harmful?

It is of course vital. All art comes through the vital. But what manifests through it can only be said when one sees what it produces.
7 November 1933

Form and Colour

In order to get a significance through a picture there must be a definite form — form and colour are the essentials of painting and neither by itself is enough. Here [*in a painting sent to Sri Aurobindo*] there is colour but no form — or only a shapeless shape — as if you were trying to get rid of form and paint only forces or indefinite suggestions. But that is contrary to an art which depends on colour, line and design.

Cinema

I see no objection to your going for two or three days to Madras for this purpose [*to make a recording*]. I don't suppose you will paint the town red and the Cinema sounds harmless, though if the newspaper pictures are any guide, it is likely to be disappointing; I have yet to see anything that really suggested an artistic piece.
28 November 1936

Problems of the Painter

Nature and the Human Figure

The Mother had told you once that in your human figures you did not seem to be in contact with the right Influence and you had said that you felt the contact with an eternal Beauty in Nature but had not the same contact with regard to the human figure. It will be better then, now that you are practising the Yoga and to be in contact with right Influences only is very important, to avoid dealing with the human face and figure at present. In Yoga what may seem to the mind a detail may yet open the door to things that have strong effects on the consciousness, disturb its harmony or interfere with the sources of inspiration, vision and experience.

*

Your relation with Nature has been much more psychic than your relation with human beings. You must have met the latter mainly on the vital plane and not come in close contact with the eternal Beauty behind. In Nature you have felt the touch of the eternal and infinite and entered therefore into a truer relation with her.

The influence that comes in the human figure is a force of disharmony and ugliness — a manifestation of ignorance in form.

13 January 1934

Portrait Painting

> I would very much like to have instructions from the Mother on portrait painting: drawing, developing the features, finishing the details and bringing out the personality of the sitter.

For that each one must find his own technique. Only for you what you must find is a way to express the psychic instead of the vital. At present it is the vital you bring out. The psychic is the eternal character, the vital brings out only transient movements.

15 July 1935

*

The failure to bring out the personality is not at all due to any defect in the technique. With any technique the personality can be brought out. But to get it one must come out from one's own personality, one's ego with its characteristic and limited look on things, and identify oneself with the person of the sitter — that is how one seizes it and can naturally bring it out in the painting.

14 December 1936

*

The portrait does not seem to us to be successful. In the externals the long projection of the nose over the lips and the eyes close together modify the type of the face and give it another character. It is not a question of resemblance or external appearance, but the basis of character is affected. This however would not be so much of an objection — but for the inner expression as it comes out through the mouth and eyes. There is something introduced here from a vital world — undivine — which is not part of the Mother's vital. It has come in through that Influence of which the Mother spoke — it throws its own shadow and so changes the inner vision of the thing to be done, the face to be portrayed. There is no such element in your paintings of Nature, which catch very finely the inner truth of what you paint.

It was not with this portrait that we connected what I wrote about the wrong Influence that brought the obstruction and depression.

21 September 1933

Drawing from Nature

> I have drawn four faces from my imagination, each with a different character and personality.

Drawing from imagination is useless.

> I have the idea of drawing the pictures of Nandalal Bose.

You can copy Nandalal — but drawing from Nature is best.
23 April 1933

*

> You said that studies of human figures should be done from nature. I would like to ask if this could be done other ways as well — from photographs and paintings, for instance.

They must be done from nature. It is impossible to do it properly from photographs and paintings. 6 September 1935

Mastery of Drawing

> May I enlarge your photograph? This will help me in drawing the human figure.

You can try by copying human figures from drawings, not photographs. 12 March 1933

*

> I don't think I have succeeded in bringing out the resemblance in this sketch.

To get the resemblance, one must concentrate so much as to be identified with what you see — then it comes. 22 June 1933

*

> Again that clumsiness in the drawing. It is due to want of practice, I suppose.

Want of practice and some tamas of the body. It is when the consciousness comes in the body that the skill comes — when you shake off the tamas, there is no clumsiness in you.
17 May 1934

*

An Artist's Temperament

> I was surprised at Krishnalal's refusal to do the fresco.

These things are matters of temperament. It is not a question of mastery of technique only as with a craftsman. A craftsman can go on working regularly always for any amount of time. An artist is not the same. He depends on his temperament (whether he is poet, painter or sculptor) and its response to a certain flow of force. If anything in it gets dull or jaded or does not respond, he ceases working — or if anything else goes wrong or is not responsive in him. Copy or original makes no difference to his method — he brings the same temperamental attitude to both. Of course there are artists whose temperament is so buoyant that they keep the flow at command almost (like Harin with his poems), painting or working every day for hours together. Others cannot — they work sometimes more, sometimes less — sometimes after long intervals etc. 27 September 1934

Uncreative Periods

> I have noticed that after doing some pictures, there comes a period when I do not feel like doing any painting, there is no inspiration.

It is very common with artists, poets and all creators. The usual reason is that the vital gets fatigued and needs some time to recuperate itself and get back the creative effort.

> During such periods I have to deal with the impulses of the vital nature. Is it because of this that I cannot concentrate on painting?

It is more likely that the vital, fatigued of the effort, begins to have movements of other kinds which you have then to control.

> I feel that I should go to deeper and higher sources of inspiration. Am I correct in having this feeling?

It is correct. There is a movement to get at deeper and higher sources. 18 March 1935

*

> Sometimes something comes in and my inspiration for writing and painting fails. What is this?

It is an obstruction to the natural action of the mind; that happens often enough. People who do creative work, writing or painting, are often stopped like that for a time — they do not feel the obstruction, only the result which they call a failure of inspiration.

Painting in the Ashram

A General Remark

What you write about the expression of beauty through painting and the limitations of the work as yet done here, is quite accurate. The painters here have capacity and disposition, but as yet the work done ranks more as studies and sketches, some well done, some less well, than as great or finished art. What they need is not to be easily satisfied because they have put their ideas or imaginations in colour or because they have done some good work, but always to see what has not been yet achieved and train vision and execution-power till they have reached a truly high power of themselves. 10 January 1936

On Some Artists of the Ashram

Anilkumar is still learning; he is very clever and ingenious, loves painting and works hard at it and recently he has been making remarkable progress in technique.

Nishikanta has already his own developed technique and a certain originality of vision — two things which must be there before a man can take rank as a painter. There are on the other hand certain defects and limitations. Power he has but not as yet any consummate harmony.

These observations of course are private and for you only. Mother does not want to pass any public judgment. Let each grow in his own way and to his own possible stature — with as little rivalry or vainglory as may be.

*

It is true that Romen has an instinctive artistic sense but also he has spent much time in painting and given much attention to it, so he has progressed fast. He has also great self-confidence.

The artistic sense can be had by training — the capacity you have, but it has to be brought out more and more and disciplined by study and practice. By development you will get self-confidence. 7 November 1935

The Need of Artistic Training

You can write to him that the Mother has seen his pictures. If he wants seriously to take up painting, it can't be done out of his own mind without help of competent teachers. He would have to undergo a complete and long training so as to train his eye as well as his hand; his eye to see things as they appear to the artistic vision and his hand to execute that vision with a sure technique. Technique cannot be acquired without a sound training. Also he must learn to know all that is necessary about the human body and its details; otherwise he will not be able to build faultlessly a human face or figure. For instance in his picture of the flowers he has a put a hand in which the thumb is in an impossible position and the fingers begin at the same level as the thumb and not far below. In art a taste for the art or even a faculty for it is not sufficient; there is necessary also a training. 8 September 1932

*

Do you think that I shall be able to learn painting?

You can learn on condition you study and take pains. Painting is not like poetry which you can develop by the innate faculty and a growing inspiration with just a little knowledge of metrical technique. In painting you have to learn carefully any number of things — learn not by theory only but by practice with a good teacher, e.g. firm line and strong drawing, perspective, how to mix colours, how to use the right colours and what colours can go together and so on — all that goes by the name of technique. If you do not study that, no amount of inspiration will make you a good painter. You were progressing very well, but you must learn these things carefully and you must take more pains about details.

*

That is a great error of the human vital — to want compliments for their own sake and to be depressed by their absence and imagine that it means there is no capacity. In this world one starts with ignorance and imperfection in whatever one does — one has to find out one's mistakes and to learn, one has to commit errors and find out by correcting them the right way to do things. Nobody in the world has ever escaped from this law. So what one has to expect from others is not compliments all the time, but praise of what is right or well done and criticism of errors and mistakes. The more one can bear criticism and see one's mistakes, the more likely one is to arrive at the fullness of one's capacity. Especially when one is very young — before the age of maturity — one cannot easily do perfect work. What is called the juvenile work of poets and painters — work done in their early years — is always imperfect, it is a promise and has qualities — but the real perfection and full use of their powers comes afterwards. They themselves know that very well, but they go on writing or painting because they know also that by doing so they will develop their powers.

As for comparison with others, one ought not to do that. Each one has his own lesson to learn, his own work to do and he must concern himself with that, not with the superior or inferior progress of others in comparison with himself. If he is behind today, he can be in full capacity hereafter and it is for that future perfection of his powers that he must labour. You are young and have everything yet to learn — your capacities are yet only in bud, you must wait and work for them to be in full bloom — and you must not mind if it takes months and years even to arrive at something satisfying and perfect. It will come in its proper time, and the work you do now is always a step towards it.

But learn to welcome criticism and the pointing out of imperfections — the more you do so, the more rapidly you will advance. 1933

*

If you work hard and patiently you can surely learn [*painting*] — but you must realise that you are very young and it takes years before an artist can learn to produce something really perfect.

Wanting to Learn

The difficulty with him [*a young painter of the Ashram*] is that he does not want to learn — it must all come by inspiration, as if such a thing were possible in things in which knowledge of technique and careful and long assiduous practice are needed, as in art and music. Besides he cannot bear to be criticised and [to have] his mistakes shown to him. All the talent in the world will not serve, if he does not change in these two things.

11 June 1934

*

Someone who is learning to paint or play music or write and does not like to have his mistakes pointed out by those who already know — how is he to learn at all or reach any perfection of technique? 12 June 1934

Section Three

Beauty and Its Appreciation

General Remarks on Beauty

Beauty

Beauty is the way in which the physical expresses the Divine — but the principle and law of Beauty is something inward and spiritual which expresses itself through the form.

23 August 1933

*

> What is the meaning of Supramental Beauty? Is it the perception of the Divine as the All-Beautiful and All-Delight?

No, that you can get on any plane, and it becomes easy as soon as one is in contact with the higher Mind. Beauty is the special divine Manifestation in the physical as Truth is in the mind, Love in the heart, Power in the vital. Supramental beauty is the highest divine beauty manifesting in Matter. 19 February 1934

Supramental Action and Beauty

> Is the work of supermind direct, as one sees in the lower grades of creation?

Yes — supermind action is direct, spontaneous and automatic like that of inframental Nature — the difference is that it is perfectly conscious. As there is no disagreement or strife within itself, it produces a perfect harmony and beauty.

19 September 1933

Art, Beauty and Ananda

Art is a thing of beauty and beauty and Ananda are closely connected — they go together. If the Ananda is there, then the beauty comes out more easily — if not, it has to struggle out painfully and slowly. That is quite natural. 14 December 1936

*

Beauty is Ananda taking form — but the form need not be a physical shape. One speaks of a beautiful thought, a beautiful act, a beautiful soul. What we speak of as beauty is Ananda in manifestation; beyond manifestation beauty loses itself in Ananda or, you may say, beauty and Ananda become indistinguishably one. 14 March 1933

*

Your poem expresses very beautifully an aspect of beauty as it is circumstanced in this world. The lines of Keats also give one aspect only which it tries to generalise. In fact, Beauty is Ananda thrown into form — if it casts a shadow of pain, it is because the Divine Bliss which we mean by Ananda is watered down in the dullness of terrestrial consciousness into mere joy or pleasure and also because even that does not last for long and can easily have its opposite as a companion or a reaction. But if the consciousness of earth could be so deepened and strengthened and made so intensively receptive as not only to feel but hold the true Ananda, then the lines of Keats would be altogether true. But for that it would have to acquire first a complete liberation and an abiding peace. 16 February 1935

*

Beauty is not the same as delight, but like Love it is an expression, a form of Ananda, — created by Ananda and composed of Ananda, it conveys to the mind that delight of which it is made. Aesthetically, the delight takes the appearance of Rasa and the enjoyment of this Rasa is the mind's and the vital's reaction to the perception of beauty. The spiritual realisation has a sight, a perception, a feeling which is not that of the mind and vital; — it passes beyond the aesthetic limit, sees the universal beauty, sees behind the object what the eye cannot see, feels what the emotion of the heart cannot feel and passes beyond Rasa and

Bhoga to pure Ananda — a thing more deep, intense, rapturous than any mental or vital or any physical rasa reaction can be. It sees the One everywhere, the Divine everywhere, the Beloved everywhere, the original bliss of existence everywhere, and all these can create an inexpressible Ananda of beauty — the beauty of the One, the beauty of the Divine, the beauty of the Beloved, the beauty of the eternal Existence in things. It can see also the beauty of forms and objects, but with a seeing other than the mind's, other than that of a limited physical vision — what was not beautiful to the eye becomes beautiful, what was beautiful to the eye wears now a greater, marvellous and ineffable beauty. The spiritual realisation can bring the vision and the rapture of the All-Beautiful everywhere. 26 October 1935

*

The word "expression" [*in the first sentence of the preceding letter*] means only something that is manifested by the Ananda and of which Ananda is the essence. Love and Beauty are powers of Ananda as Light and Knowledge are of Consciousness. Force is inherent in Consciousness and may be called part of the Divine Essence. Ananda is always there even when Sachchidananda takes on an impersonal aspect or appears as the sole essential Existence; but Love needs a Lover and Beloved, Beauty needs a manifestation to show itself. So in the same way Consciousness is always there, but Knowledge needs a manifestation to be active, there must be a Knower and a Known. That is why the distinction is made between Ananda which is of the essence and Beauty which is a power or expression of Ananda in manifestation. These are of course philosophical distinctions necessary for the mind to think about the world and the Divine.

4 November 1935

*

> You say [*in the letter of 26 October 1935, pp. 700–701*], "Aesthetically, the delight takes the appearance of Rasa and the enjoyment of this Rasa is the mind's and the vital's reaction to the perception of beauty." I find it hard to understand how beauty, Rasa and delight are connected with one another.

That can hardly be realised except by experience of Ananda. Ananda is not ordinary mental or vital delight in things. Rasa is the mind's understanding of beauty and pleasure in it accompanied usually by the vital's enjoyment of it (bhoga). Mental pleasure or vital enjoyment are not Ananda, but only derivations from the concealed universal Ananda of the Spirit in things.

7 November 1935

Universal Beauty and Ananda

There is a certain consciousness in which all things become full of beauty and Ananda — what is painful or ugly becomes an outward play, and becomes suffused with the beauty and Ananda behind. It is specially the Overmind consciousness of things — although it can be felt from time to time on the other planes also. A great equality and the view of the Divine everywhere is necessary for this to come fully. 10 March 1934

*

As you say, there is a truth behind Tagore's statement.[1] There is such a thing as a universal Ananda and a universal beauty and the vision of it comes from an intensity of sight which sees what is hidden and more than the form — it is a sort of *viśvarasa* such as the Universal Spirit may have had in creating things. To this intensity of sight a thing that is ugly becomes beautiful by its fitness for expressing the significance, the guna, the rasa which it was meant to embody. But I doubt how far one can make an aesthetic canon upon this foundation. It is so far true that an artist can out of a thing that is ugly, repellent, distorted create a form of aesthetic power, intensity, revelatory force. The murder of Duncan is certainly not an act of beauty, but Shakespeare can use it to make a great artistic masterpiece. But we cannot go so far as to say that the intensity of an ugly thing makes it beautiful. It is the principle of a certain kind of modern caricature to make a face intensely ugly so as to bring out some side of the character more intensely by a hideous exaggeration of lines. In doing that it may be successful, but the intensity of the ugliness it creates does not make the caricature a thing of beauty; it serves its purpose, that is all. So too ugliness in painting must remain ugly, even if it gets out of itself a sense of vital force or expressiveness which makes it preferable in the eyes of some to real beauty. All that hits you in the midriff violently and gives you a sense of intense living is not necessarily a work of art or a thing of beauty. I am answering of course on the lines of your letter. I do not know what Tagore had precisely in view in thus defining beauty. 3 November 1936

---

[1] *It is not known to what "statement" Sri Aurobindo is referring here. — Ed.*

Beauty and Truth

> Is it not true that Beauty and Truth are always one — wherever there is Beauty there is Truth too?

In beauty there is the truth of beauty. What do you mean by Truth? There are truths of various kinds and they are not all beautiful. 10 September 1933

The Good and the Beautiful

> In one of his recent essays, Rabindranath Tagore says that goodness and beauty are so intimately correlated that they are always found together. "The good is necessarily beautiful," he says, and "Beauty is the picture of the good; goodness is the reality behind beauty."

I can't say that I understand these epigrammatic sentences. What is meant by good? what is meant by beauty? The divine Good is no doubt necessarily beautiful, because on a higher plane good and beauty and all else that is divine in origin meet, coalesce, harmonise. But what men call good is often ugly or drab or unattractive. Human beauty is not always the picture of the good, it is sometimes the mask of evil — the reality behind that mask is not always goodness. These things are obvious, but probably Rabindranath meant good and beauty in their higher aspects or their essence. 9 September 1937

Experience of Beauty

> In a recent poem, Harin makes the following observation on Beauty:
>
> Beauty is not an attitude of sense
> Nor an inherent something everywhere,
> But keen reality of experience
> Of which even beauty is all unaware,
> Adding to it a living truth; intense
> And ever living, that were else, not there.
>
> How far is it correct to say that Beauty has no objective existence in itself and that it consists only of the subjective experience of the observer?

All things are creations of the Universal Consciousness, Beauty also. The "experience" of the individual is his response or his awakening to the beauty which the Universal Consciousness has placed in things; that beauty is not created by the individual consciousness. The philosophy of these lines is not at all clear. It says that the experience of beauty is a living truth added to beauty, a truth of which beauty is unaware. But if beauty is only the experience itself, then the experience constitutes beauty, it does not add anything to beauty; for such addition would only be possible if beauty already existed in itself apart from the experience. What is meant by saying that beauty is unaware of the experience which creates it? The passage makes sense only if we suppose it to mean that beauty is a "reality" already existing apart from the experience, but unconscious of itself and the consciousness of experience is therefore a living truth added to the unconscious reality, something which brings into it consciousness and life.

6 January 1937

Appreciation of Beauty

The Right Way of Appreciating Beauty

That is the right consciousness, not to desire or to be attached to the possession of anything for oneself, but to take the universal beauty etc. for a spiritual selfless Ananda. 6 November 1933

*

There is nothing harmful in the thing [*aspiration for beauty*] itself — on the contrary to awake to the universal beauty and refinement of the Mahalakshmi force is good. It is not an expression of greed or lust — only into these things a perversion can always come if one allows it, as into the Mahakali experience there may come rajasic anger and violence, so here there may come vital passion for possession and enjoyment. One must look at the beauty as the artist does without desire of possession or vital enjoyment of the lower kind. 8 October 1933

*

> Is it possible to get rid of vital impurities without getting rid of vital enjoyment?

How can that be done? The enjoyment you speak of is vital-physical, while beauty has to be enjoyed with the aesthetic sense — either human or divinised. 6 April 1933

*

It is usually a good rule for other inward things beside the appreciation of the beauty of Nature — to keep it for oneself or else to share it only with those who have the same sense or the same experience. 15 March 1934

Beauty in Women

> In regard to beauty in women, is there something inherent in the body that we call beautiful, a well-formed shape, physiognomy, harmony of movements, etc. It seems to most men it is colour + skin + physiognomy. But there are some women who do not have these in the body and yet are attractive. Is it something in their vital that gives them this beauty?

It is something vital in some cases, something psychic in others that gives a beauty which appears in the body but is not beauty of shape, colour or texture.

> Often the vital and mental character of persons who have physical beauty is not good, sometimes it is even repulsive. Many would refuse to recognise it as beautiful.

If it is vital in its origin, it need not come from beauty of mind or character; it is something in the life-force which may go with a good character but also with a bad one.

> Indians hardly appreciate the beauty of the Chinese or Japanese; like Europeans, they cannot appreciate beauty in Negroes. Many Asiatics could not appreciate the beauty of European models or actresses, who are so lacking in modesty according to their conceptions.

Modesty is not part of physical beauty, that is a mental-vital element. As for physical beauty, different races have different conceptions. Indians and Europeans like curves, Chinese detest them in a woman.

> An intellectual would find beauty only in an intellectual woman; an emotional person would call a woman beautiful only if she has refined tender feelings; for a Gandhian a woman would be beautiful only if she spins eight hours a day or works for Harijans.

That has nothing to do with beauty in the ordinary sense as it is beauty of intellect or beauty of character or beauty of spinning and Harijanising.

> Perhaps at a certain stage of psychic development one could look at human beauty as one looks at beauty in cats or dogs — recognising the beauty without any attraction.

One can recognise and feel without any desire of possession or sexual feeling etc. That is how the artists look at beauty — they delight in it for its own sake.

> Supposing people developed the faculty of seeing the layers below the skin, would not their whole conception of beauty crumble down?

Yes, probably, unless the mind reconstructed a new idea of it.

> Does not the conception of beauty differ according to race, temperament and level of consciousness?

Yes.

> Are not attractiveness and beauty different?

Yes.

> Is there nothing constant called "beauty"?

There are two kinds of beauty. There is that universal beauty which is seen by the inner eye, heard by the inner ear etc. — but the individual consciousness responds to some forms, not to others, according to its own mental, vital and physical reactions. There is also the aesthetic beauty which depends on a particular standard of harmony, but different race or individual consciousnesses form different standards of aesthetic harmony.

18 October 1935

Physical Beauty and Sex-Sensation

> Why should the pure sense of beauty have been so distorted by human beings as to be turned into desire for touch or sex?

It is part of the general degradation which things divine have been subjected to in the evolution out of the material Inconscience under the pressure of the Powers of the Ignorance.

> Are there people who have not been affected by this vital impurity and who appreciate beauty in a subtle aesthetic way only?

Yes, certainly. Artists who have trained their mind to a purely aesthetic look at beauty and beautiful things — for one instance. There are many others also, who have a sufficiently developed refinement of the aesthetic sense not to associate it with the crude vital wish for possession, enjoyment or sensual contact.

6 April 1933

*

The aesthetic and impersonal vision of things can develop into the sight of the Divine Beauty everywhere which is in its nature entirely pure.

19 April 1933

*

> What is the difference between the artistic look and the vital look?

In the artistic look there is only the perception of beauty and the joy of it because it exists and one has seen and felt it. There is no desire to possess or enjoy in the vital way.

4 August 1933

Section Four

Literature, Art, Music and the Practice of Yoga

Literature and Yoga

Poetry and Sadhana

> Can one gain as much profit (I mean spiritually) from writing poems, etc. as from devoting one's time to sadhana — meditation, etc. In other words, can literary activity be taken as part of one's sadhana?

Any activity can be taken as part of the sadhana if it is offered to the Divine or done with the consciousness or faith that it is done by the Divine Power. That is the important point.

29 March 1934

*

It is obvious that poetry cannot be a substitute for sadhana; it can be an accompaniment only. If there is a feeling (of devotion, surrender etc.), it can express and confirm it; if there is an experience, it can express and strengthen the force of experience. As reading of books like the Upanishads or Gita or singing of devotional songs can help, especially at one stage or another, so this can help also. Also it opens a passage between the exterior consciousness and the inner mind or vital. But if one stops at that, then nothing much is gained. Sadhana must be the main thing and sadhana means the purification of the nature, the consecration of the being, the opening of the psychic and the inner mind and vital, the contact and presence of the Divine, the realisation of the Divine in all things, surrender, devotion, the widening of the consciousness into the cosmic Consciousness, the Self one in all, the psychic and the spiritual transformation of the nature. If these things are neglected and only poetry and mental development and social contacts occupy all the time, then that is not sadhana. Also the poetry must be written in the true spirit, not for fame or self-satisfaction, but as a means of contact with the Divine through aspiration or of the expression of one's own inner being, as it was written formerly by those who left behind them so much devotional and spiritual poetry in India; it does not help if it is written only in the spirit of the Western artist or *littérateur*. Even works or meditation cannot succeed unless they are done in the right spirit of consecration and spiritual aspiration gathering up the whole being and dominating all else. It is the lack of this gathering up of the whole life and nature and turning it towards the one aim, which is the defect in so many here, that lowers the atmosphere and stands in the way of what is being done by myself and the Mother. 19 May 1938

*

What I wrote to you about poetry was an entirely general answer to the question of the relation of poetry to sadhana. I wrote how poetry could be part of sadhana and under what conditions, what were its limitations and also that it could not be a substitute for sadhana. I made no personal application; I have not said or suggested anywhere that the ideas or bhakti expressed in your poetry were humbug or hypocrisy and I have not said or suggested anywhere that all our labour on you had been wasted and gone for nothing. These absurd ideas, like all the rest, are imaginations and inventions of the vital ego foisted by it on your mind in order to justify its pressure on you to leave Pondicherry and the Yoga.

I understood from what you had written and said before that you wanted to concentrate altogether on the sadhana — to do what I call "the gathering up of the *whole* life and nature and turning it towards the one aim", and I wrote that the lack of this was the defect of the majority of the sadhaks here. What I wrote implied therefore an approval of your resolution. No doubt, it implied also that you had not yet made this total gathering up and turning; if you had, there would have been no need of this resolution of yours and no room for it. If your whole life and every part of your being has already been gathered up and entirely consecrated to the Divine, then you are on the perfect way and there is obviously no need of any change in your way of life or your sadhana. But this can be said of very few in the Ashram. But that does not mean that all the people in the Ashram except a few are insincere and that all our work on them has been thrown away. What it means is that for our work to be fully done, for the decisive realisations and the complete inner and outer change, the entire gathering up and turning of the whole life and nature is indispensable and that if it is only partially done, it is a defect in the sadhana and stands in the way of a full working and decisive and total change of the consciousness. If your whole vital nature and all the movements of your outer life had been already gathered up and turned towards the Divine alone without any other aim or interest, how is it that this vital revolt came about? And how is it that it whirls furiously around such things as the refusal of an easy chair or an almirah or of a special room which the Mother has reserved for another purpose? Or around the gossip of sadhaks and what this one may have said or that one may have said or the attitude of sadhaks towards you? It is evident that the part of your vital which was concerned with these outward things or with the outward contacts with others was not yet turned solely towards the one aim, that it was still interested and affected by these things which have nothing to do with the realisation of the Divine or with Yoga.

It is quite true that when you first came, the Mother was not in favour of your staying and taking up the Yoga here, for you had then a very strong obscurity and impurity in your vital nature and this could easily make the Yoga too difficult for you and create serious trouble. When however you persisted in staying, we gave you your opportunity as we had done in similar cases before. For it is always possible for the psychic being to prevail, if it is determined to do so, over the difficulties of the vital nature, even though it may mean severe inner struggles for a time. This concession was justified by certain results; you opened in a remarkable way into the inner being by the poetic aspiration and you had experiences which strengthened the psychic call and created a psychic and mental basis for your sadhana. Even you were able to throw out from the vital the sexual obsession which had been one of the chief difficulties there.[1]

*

It won't do to put excessive and sweeping constructions on what I write, otherwise it is easy to misunderstand its real significance. I said that there was no reason why poetry *of a spiritual character* (not any poetry like Verlaine's or Swinburne's or Baudelaire's) should bring *no realisation at all*. This did not mean that poetry was a major means of realisation of the Divine. I did not say that it would lead us to the Divine or that anyone had achieved the Divine through poetry or that poetry by itself can lead us straight into the sanctuary. Obviously if such exaggerations are put into my words, they become absurd and untenable.

My statement is perfectly clear and there is nothing in it against reason or common sense. The Word has power — even the ordinary written word has a power. If it is an inspired word it has still more power. What kind of power or power for what depends on the nature of the inspiration and the theme and the part of the being it touches. If it is the Word itself, — as in certain utterances of the great Scriptures — Veda, Upanishads, Gita, — it may well have a power to awaken a spiritual impulse, an uplifting, even certain kinds of realisation. To say that it cannot contradicts spiritual experience.

The Vedic poets regarded their poetry as *mantras*, they were the vehicles of their own realisations and could become vehicles of realisation for others. Naturally, these mostly would be illuminations, not the settled and permanent realisation that is the goal of Yoga — but they could be steps on the way or at least lights on the way. Many have such illuminations, even initial realisations while meditating on verses of the Upanishads or the Gita. Anything that carries the Word, the Light in it, spoken or written, can light this fire within, open a sky, as it were, bring the effective vision of which the Word is the body. In all ages spiritual seekers have expressed their aspirations or their experiences in poetry or inspired language and it has helped themselves and others. Therefore there is nothing absurd in my assigning to such poetry a spiritual or psychic value and effectiveness to poetry of a psychic or spiritual character. 24 December 1934

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo broke off here. He did not send this incomplete letter in this form. It is reproduced from his manuscripts. — Ed.*

*

I have always told you that you ought not to stop your poetry and similar activities. It is a mistake to do so out of asceticism or with the idea of *tapasyā*. One can stop these things when they drop of themselves, because one is in full experience and so interested in one's inner life that one has no energy to spare for the rest. Even then, there is no rule for giving up; for there is no reason why the poetry, etc., should not be a part of sadhana. The love of applause, of fame, the ego-feeling have to be given up, but that can be done without giving up the activity itself.
16 April 1935

*

It is perfectly true that all human greatness and fame and achievement are nothing before the greatness of the Infinite and Eternal. There are two possible deductions from that, first, that all human action has to be renounced and one should go into a cave; the other is that one should grow out of ego so that the activities of the nature may become one day consciously an action of the Infinite and Eternal. But it does not follow that one must or can grow out of ego and the vital absorption at once and, if one does not, that proves incapacity for Yoga. I myself never gave up poetry or other creative human activities out of *tapasyā*; they fell into a subordinate position because the inner life became stronger and stronger slowly: nor did I really drop them, only I had so heavy a work laid upon me that I could not find time to go on. But it took me years and years to get the ego out of them or the vital absorption, but I never heard anybody say and it never occurred to me that that was a proof that I was not born for the Yoga. . . .

As to the born Yogi what I said was that there was a born Yogi in you, and I very explicitly based it on the personality that showed itself in your earlier experiences in a vivid way which no one accustomed to the things of Yoga or having any knowledge about them could fail to recognise. But I did not mean that there was nothing in you which was not "born Yogic". Everyone has many personalities in him and many of them are not Yogic at all in their propensities. But if one has the will to Yoga, the born Yogi prevails as soon as he gets a chance of manifesting himself through the crust of the mind and vital nature. Only, very often that takes time. One must be prepared to give the time.

16 April 1935

*

Of course when you are writing poems or composing you are in contact with your inner being, that is why you feel so different then. The whole art of Yoga is to get that contact and get from it into the inner being itself, for so one can enter directly into and remain in all that is great and luminous and beautiful. Then one can try to establish them in this troublesome and defective outer shell of oneself and in the outer world also. 10 November 1934

*

Literature and art are or can be first introductions to the inner being — the inner mind and vital; for it is from there that they come. And if one writes poems of bhakti, poems of divine seeking etc., or creates music of that kind, it means that there is a bhakta or seeker inside who is supporting himself by that self-expression. There is also the point of view behind Lele's answer to me when I told him that I wanted to do Yoga but for work, for action, not for Sannyasa and Nirvana, — but after years of spiritual effort I had failed to find the way and it was for that I had asked to meet him. His first answer was, "It should be easy for you as you are a poet." But it was not from any point of view like that that Nirod put his question and it was not from that point of view that I gave my answer. It was about some special character-making virtue that he seemed to attribute to literature. 18 November 1936

*

> I don't understand why Lele told you that because you are a poet, sadhana will be easy to you through poetry.

Because I told him I wanted to do Yoga in order to get a new inner Yogic consciousness for life and action, not for leaving life. So he said that. A poet writes from an inner source, not from the external mind, he is moved by inspiration to write, i.e. he writes what a greater Power writes through him. So the Yogi karmachari has to act from an inner source, to derive his thoughts and movements from that, to be inspired and impelled by a greater Power which acts through him. He never said that sadhana will be easy for me through poetry. Where is "through poetry" phrase? Poetry can be done as a part of sadhana and help the sadhana — but sadhana "through" poetry is a quite different matter. 23 May 1938

*

If poetic progress meant a progress in the whole range of Yoga, Nishikanta would be a great Yogi by this time. The opening in poetry or any other part helps to prepare the general opening when it is done under the pressure of Yoga, but it is at first something special, like the opening of the subtle vision or subtle senses. It is the opening of a special capacity in the inner being.
8 August 1936

*

I do not think you need be anxious about the poetry; the power is sure to re-express itself as soon as you are ready for a progress. It has probably stopped working temporarily because the pressure is now for the inner self-creation more than for the outer expression — I am speaking, of course, of your case in particular. The expression in poetry and other forms must be, for the Yogin, a flowing out from a growing self within and not merely a mental creation or an aesthetic pleasure. Like that the inner self grows and the poetic power will grow with it. 9 December 1931

*

What you say about the spontaneous development of the capacity in the metre after a silent and inactive incubation of over two years, is quite true. But it is not amazing; it often happens and is perfectly natural to those who know the laws of the being by observation and experience. In the same way one suddenly finds oneself knowing more of a language or a subject after returning to it subsequent to a short interim without study, problems which had been abandoned as unsolvable solving themselves spontaneously and easily after sleep or when they are taken up again; knowledge or ideas coming up from within without reading or learning or hearing from others. Sudden efflorescences of capacity, intuitions, wellings up of all sorts of things point to the same inner power or inner working. It is what we mean when we speak of the word, knowledge or activity coming out of the silence, of a working behind the veil of which the outer mind is unconscious but which one day bears its results, of the inner manifesting itself in the outer. It makes at once true and practical what sounds only a theory to the uninitiated, — the strong distinction made by us between the inner being and the outer consciousness. It is how also unexpected Yogic capacity reveals itself, sometimes no doubt as a result of long and apparently fruitless effort, sometimes as a spontaneous outflowering of what was concealed there all the time or else as a response to a call which had been made but at the time and for long seemed to be without an answer. 22 February 1935

*

I like very much both the feeling and the form of your poem. Of course when you are writing poems or composing you are in contact with your inner being, that is why you feel so different then. The whole art of Yoga is to get that contact and get from it into the inner being itself, for so one can enter directly into and remain in all that is great and luminous and beautiful. Then one can try to establish them in this troublesome and defective outer shell of oneself and in the outer world also. 20 November 1934

*

This poetry, even if it does not lead to any realisation, — though there is no reason why it should not, since it is not mundane, — is yet a link with the inner being and expresses its ideal. That is its value for the sadhana. 25 December 1934

*

The use of your writing is to keep you in touch with the inner source of inspiration and intuition, so as to wear thin the crude external crust in the consciousness and encourage the growth of the inner being. 24 July 1938

*

> What do you wish me to be, an artist, a literary man, or a poet?

A sadhak — all these things can be included in sadhana.

*

> Why is my mind so wretchedly limited, my soul such a feeble flame?

It is not the question, for this is not a question of personal capacity but of the development of the receptivity and for that the sole thing necessary is an entire or at least a dominant will to receive. What you call your mind and your soul are only a small surface part of you, not your whole being. Personal capacity belongs to the temporary surface personality which you have put forward in this life and which is mutable, is already changing and can change much farther — e.g. the poems you are writing are certainly beyond what was your original capacity — they belong to a range of experience to the Word of which you have opened by a development beyond your old mental self — a farther development beyond not only your old mental self but also your old vital self is needed to get the concrete realisation of that range of experience.

What is standing in the way is something that is still attached to the limitations of the old personality and hesitates to take the plunge because by doing so it may lose these cherished limitations. It stands back in apprehension from the plunge because it is afraid of being taken out of its depths — but unless one is taken out of the very shallow depth of this small part of the self, how can one get into the Infinite at all? Furthermore, there is no real danger in finding oneself in the Infinite, it is a place of greater safety and greater riches, not less; but this something in you does not like the prospect because it has to merge itself into a larger self-existence. You asked the Mother to press on you the lighting of the fire within and she has been doing so, but this is standing back with the feeling "Oh Lord! what will become of me if this flame gets lit." You must get rid of this clinging to the past self and life, then you can have a fire which will not be feeble. You have not fallen between two stools, — you are hesitating between two consciousnesses, the old and the new, the small and the great, that is all.

As for the poetry, well — you have developed up to a point at which your work is of a very rare and unique quality — in no way inferior to that of the others of whom you speak, — the difficulty of intermittency of production is nothing, for all feel that except Nishikanta and Dilip who have no misgivings about their creative power. Yours rises probably from the fact that in order to have free command of the highest planes of poetry, you have to rise into them and not only open to the Word from them — it is therefore the same difficulty in another form. Otherwise, if you had the old self-satisfaction of which you draw so glowing a picture, you would have found your present poetry marvellous and gone on writing freely only oscillating between the different planes achieved and content to do so. This is not a proof of incapacity but of the will to greater things. Only that will must not be in the mind only but take full hold of the vital also and must be a will that what you write of shall be a part not only of thought but of life. Which comes back to what I have written above — get free from the obscure hesitation to open and let the force do its work.

One must either do that if one wants a rapid change or go quietly and wait for the slower working from behind the veil to reduce and break the obstacle. 10 August 1937

*

There is nothing definite that I can tell you. Mother finds no conscious opposition in your mind or will to surrender and transformation. But probably the difficulty lies in the vital (not mind) of the artist (the poet, painter etc. in you), because the vital of the artist is always accustomed to its independence, to follow its own way, to make and live in its own world and pursue the impulses of its nature. If that element changes then probably surrender and transformation could be more rapid, but it is not always easy for it to change at once, it usually goes by a gradual and almost unobserved change.

*

> I hesitate to write in this high tone: "I am the Light of the One," etc. It sounds too high and grand. Some don't like this tone at all. Dilip is one. They call it insincere. Is there no justification for a poet-sadhak to use this tone?

If such poems are put as a claim, or vaunted as a personal experience of Yoga, they may be objected to on that ground. But a poet is not bound to confine himself to his personal experience. A poet writes from inspiration or from imagination or vision. Milton did not need to go to Heaven or Hell or the Garden of Eden before he wrote *Paradise Lost*. Are all Dilip's bhakti poems an exact transcription of his inner state? If so, he must be a wonderful Yogi and bhakta. 14 April 1938

Poetry, Peace and Ananda

> I seek for Ananda, it eludes me — Love, Peace are nowhere. If poetry doesn't give them, what's the use?

Poetry does not give love and peace, it gives Ananda, intense but not wide or lasting.

> You will say that it is my mind that obstructs by its struggle.

Your mind has obstructed the free flow of the poetry — but what it has obstructed more is the real peace and Ananda that is "deep, great and wide". A quiet mind turned towards the ভূমা is what you need. 28 July 1936

Literary Activity and Sadhana

> I have no hesitation at all and feel very glad when I tell you of my aspiration to do the sadhana through literary activity.

Literary activity can be made a part of sadhana like other things, but sadhana through literary activity is a phrase whose meaning is not very clear. 29 June 1937

*

> What is the use of literature if the nature stays just the same?

Good heavens! where did you get this idea that literature can transform people? Literary people are often the most impossible on the face of the earth. 10 November 1936

*

> We may have progressed in literature, but the outer human nature remains almost the same.

Outer human nature can only change either by an intense psychic development or a strong and all-pervading influence from above. It is the inner being that has to change first — a change which is not always visible outside. That has nothing to do with the development of the faculties which is another side of the personality. That is another question altogether. But such sadhana means a slow laborious work of self-change in most cases, so why not sing on the way? 11 November 1936

*

To be a literary man is not a spiritual aim; but to use literature as a means of spiritual expression is another matter. Even to make expression a vehicle of a superior power helps to open the consciousness. The harmonising rests on that principle.

19 September 1936

*

Literature like everything else can be made an instrumentation for the Divine Life. It can be made of some spiritual importance if it is taken up with that aim and, even so, it cannot have that importance for everybody. In ordinary life no particular pursuit or study can be imposed as necessary for everybody; it cannot be positively necessary for everybody to have a mastery of English literature or to be a reader of poetry or a scientist or acquainted with all the sciences (or encyclopaedia of knowledge). What is important is to have an instrument of knowledge that will apply itself accurately, calmly, perfectly to all that it has to handle.

29 December 1934

*

Literature, poetry, science and other studies can be a preparation of the consciousness for life. When one does Yoga they can become part of the sadhana only if done for the Divine or taken up by the Divine Force, but then one should not want to be a poet for the sake of being a poet only, or for fame, applause, etc.

16 April 1935

*

Has my writing any spiritual value?

No present value spiritually — it may have a mental value. It is the same with the work — it has a value of moral training, discipline, obedience, acceptance of work for the Mother. The spiritual value and result come afterwards when the consciousness in the vital opens upward. So with the mental work. It is a preparation. If you cannot yet do it with the true spiritual consciousness, it, the work as well as the mental occupation, must be done with the right mental or vital will in it.

14 May 1934

*

Well, of course the first business of Yoga is not to make geniuses at all, but to make spiritual men — but Yoga can do the other thing also. 11 November 1934

*

> Am I right in feeling that the writing is doing me some good at present?

Yes, as it keeps you in the right frame of mind without the sinking into tamas and nervous troubles. 6 September 1934

*

There is no incompatibility between spirituality and creative activity — they can be united.

Creative Activity Subordinate to One's Spiritual Life

Nirod, Nolini and Sahana are all wrong in laying down a rule of that kind for my conduct. I do not base my action on mental rules which have to be applied to every case. It is a still greater error to suppose that because I (or the Mother) do something in the case of one person or another, we are bound to do it for everybody and to complain of our not doing it as "making a difference". All that belongs to the ignorance and clamour of the vital egoistic nature and has nothing to do with spiritual life.

I cannot allow myself to be drawn back into a preoccupation with the poetry of the sadhaks. I have much more serious things to deal with on which depends the whole work and Yoga. I have ceased to deal with Bengali poetry — if any is sent, which is no longer done, I send it back with or without a word of comment. But neither can I spend time in teaching beginners how to write English verse. Nirod's case is one in which for special reasons I have made an exception, nor is he any more a beginner. Neither on his own nor on Romen's poems have I need to spend a long time. Even so, I do it only because I have a few moments to dispose of; if they claimed it as a right, I would refuse.

The spiritual life and one's own inner psychic and spiritual change should be the first preoccupation of a sadhak — poetry or painting is something quite subordinate and even then it should be done not to be a great poet or artist but as a help to the inner sadhana. It is time that everyone got away from the vital view of things to the psychic and spiritual on which alone can stand Yoga and the spiritual life.

Fiction-Writing and Sadhana

> Will it do any harm to my sadhana if I attempt stories or a novel?

You can try, if you like. The difficulty is that the subject matter of a novel belongs mostly to the outer consciousness, so that a lowering or externalising can easily come. This apart from the difficulty of keeping the inner poise when putting the mind into outer work. If you could get your established peace within, then it would be possible to do any work without disturbing or lowering the consciousness. 21 August 1934

*

> Sahana once told me that she gave up writing because you thought it was doing harm to her sadhana.

What is necessary for one, need not be necessary for another.
6 September 1934

*

> We remembered that Sahana had said you stopped her writing a novel, because her mind or consciousness was being externalised.

That is when one is already in a steady stream of spiritual experience, living partly at least in an inner realisation, while the rest of the being is not yet in it. Writing a novel means then going out of the inner state of experience and stimulating the rest of the nature. If the writing is something in harmony with the inner consciousness, then there would be no necessity for one to stop. On the other hand if one has attained the full consciousness in both the inner and the outer nature then also one could write anything one is moved by that consciousness to write, whatever it might be. In certain cases this rule may not hold. One may be strong enough to do all kinds of outward things without affecting the inner state of experience. But ordinarily this can be done freely only in the earlier stages before one is drawn inwards and kept there or in the later stages when one is fully conscious spiritually in the outer being also. It is simply a question of "spiritual tactics" not a hard and fast rule for all in all states and stages.

> Why did Sahana find it necessary to stop?

Because she was losing hold of her inner experience and thinking only of her novel.

> When I was writing that novel or even while busy with poems, I had often a curious experience. I used to feel an inclination to read a passage from Sri Aurobindo's *Essays on the Gita*. . . . There I felt a depth which moved and inspired me and I could then sit down to write my novel. . . . What has a novel to do with the Gita or with Truth Supramental?

There is obviously nothing on their surface connecting the two. It may have been that the literary quality of the *Essays* and its depth of thought satisfied some ideal in your temperament and therefore put you into touch with the creative force behind you. A poet for instance can feel himself stimulated enough to creation after reading Homer, yet his own work may be quite different, not epic at all and dealing with quite another order of ideas and things. It is only that the reading stimulates his inner being to create, but according to its own quite different way and purpose. 26 October 1935

Reading and Sadhana

> If I intend to take literature as a work to be done for sadhana, I must read all good stories, novels, poems, dramas etc., must I not?

No rule can be made, it differs with different people.

> I felt that it will be a mistake to give up all that and to want to meditate all the time or to do only such things which do not hinder me from an inner concentration on you. I felt that all our faculties and capacities have to be given to you.

It is a question of the right consciousness — no unvarying mental rule can be made for these things.

> All meditation and no work is not good and helpful to sadhana, I have heard; I don't know if it is true.

Writing and reading absorb the mind and fill it with images and influences; if the images and influences are not of the right kind they naturally turn one away from the true consciousness. It is only if one has the true consciousness well established already that one can read or write anything whatever without losing it or without any other harm. 17 May 1934

*

> To acquire a good style in prose I am reading any and every book in Bengali.

Any and every! That is more likely to spoil the style.

> But I don't want to lose the peace and the joy I am in now. If you think that over-reading or reading anything will lower the consciousness I shall lessen the activity.

I do not know whether the peace and joy will stand over-reading. It may if it is very strong. 8 June 1934

*

A "literary man" is one who loves literature and literary activity for their own separate sake. A Yogi who writes is not a literary man for he writes only what the inner Will and Word wants him to express. He is a channel and an instrument of something greater than his own literary personality.

Of course the literary man and the intellectual love reading — books are their mind's food. But writing is another matter. There are plenty of people who never write a word in the literary way, but are enormous readers. One reads for ideas, for knowledge, for the stimulation of the mind by all that the world has thought or is thinking.

Poetry, even perhaps all perfect expression of whatever kind, comes by inspiration; reading helps only to acquire for the outer instrument the full possession of a language or to get the technique of literary expression. Afterwards one develops one's own use of the language, one's own style, one's own technique. Reading and painstaking labour are very good for the literary man, but even for him they are not the cause of his good writing, only an aid to it. The cause is within himself.

If one lives in the inner consciousness, if the inner mind or higher mind become dynamic, all the ideas in the world and all sorts of knowledge come crowding in from within or from above; there is little or no need of outside food any longer. At most reading can be then an utility for keeping oneself informed of what is happening in the world — but not as food or one's own seeing of the world and Truth and things. One becomes an independent Mind in communion with the cosmic Thinker. It is a decade or two that I have stopped all but the most casual reading. Poetry too need no longer depend on any outer stimulus; the power of poetical and perfect expression can of itself increase tenfold; what was written with some difficulty, often great difficulty, comes with ease. There is a heightening of the consciousness and the greater inspiration that comes from the heightening. 11 September 1934

*

Reading and study though they can be useful for preparing the mind, are not themselves the best means of entering the Yoga. It is self-dedication from within that is the means. It is with the consciousness of the Mother that you must unite, a sincere self-consecration in the mind and heart and the Will is the means for it. The work given by the Mother is always meant as field for that self-consecration, it has to be done as an offering to her so that through the self-offering one may come to feel her force acting and her presence. 27 February 1935

*

I do not think you should stop reading so long as the reading itself does not, as a passion, fall away from the mind; that happens when a higher order of consciousness and experiences begins within the being. Nor is it good to force yourself too much to do only the one work of painting. Such compulsion of the mind and vital tends usually either to be unsuccessful and make them more restless or else to create some kind of dullness and inertia.

For the work simply aspire for the Force to use you, put yourself inwardly in relation with the Mother when doing it and make it your aim to be the instrument for the expression of beauty without regard to personal fame or the praise and blame of others. 8 October 1936

Reading and Real Knowledge

Does not the knowledge of yoga come by itself?

Yes. The real knowledge comes of itself from within, by the touch of the Divine.

If so, then isn't it better to have only that knowledge and not the knowledge obtained by reading?

Reading can be only a momentary help to prepare the mind. But the real knowledge does not come by reading. Some preparation for the inner knowledge may be helpful — but the mind should not be too superficially active or seek to know only for curiosity's sake. 6 July 1933

Novel-Reading and Sadhana

Reading novels is always distracting if you are deep in sadhana. It is better to avoid it now. 12 May 1933

*

If novels touch the lower vital or raise it, they ought not to be read by the sadhak. One can read them only if one can look at them from the literary point of view as a picture of human life and nature which one can observe, as the Yogi looks at life itself, without being involved in it or having any reaction.

28 March 1936

Religious and Secular Literature

> How is it that sometimes secular literature moves one more, and gives a greater light and illumination than religious literature?

Religious literature inspires only the religious-minded, — and most religious literature, apart from the comparatively few great books, is poor stuff. Secular literature either appeals to the idealistic mind or to the emotions or to the aesthetic element in us, and all that has a much easier and more common appeal. As for spiritual light, it is another thing altogether. Spirituality is other than mental idealism and other than religion.

> In literary expression, I think, it is the inner man that counts. But that would be tantamount to saying that an insincere man can't write things which will move readers with a genuine and concrete something.

Plenty of insincere men have written inspiring things. That is because something in them felt it, though they could not carry it out in life, and that something was used by a greater power behind. Very often in his art, in his writings, the higher part of a man comes out, while the lower dominates his life.

18 October 1935

*

> How is it that one person reads sacred books, yet is very far from the Divine, while another reads the most stupid so-called literary productions and remains in contact with the Divine?

It is not reading that brings the contact, it is the will and aspiration in the being that bring it. 11 August 1933

Development of the Mind and Sadhana

The development of the mind is a useful preliminary for the sadhak; it can also be pursued along with the sadhana on condition that it is not given too big a place and does not interfere with the one important thing, the sadhana itself. 1933

Language-Study and Yoga

> Learning languages makes the mind active. Does not the Yoga mean to keep the mind quiet and turn it always to the Divine?

Do you mean to say that in order to have quietness of the mind one must do nothing? Then neither the Mother nor I nor anyone else here has a quiet mind. 6 April 1937

*

> What is the need for so many here to learn French? Are you preparing them for giving lectures or opening centres in France or French-knowing countries?

Are life and mind to be governed only by material utility or outward practicality? Spiritual life would then be inferior even to ordinary mental life where people learn for the sake of acquiring knowledge and culturing the mind and not only for the sake of some outward utility. 24 March 1937

Reading Newspapers and Yoga

> Is it very important in our sadhana to give up reading newspapers? I find that almost all the sadhaks including some of the best ones like Anilbaran read them. Moreover, since you also

> read, there is an excuse that it is useful to read newspapers, otherwise one remains uninformed and blank.

These things depend on oneself and one's own conditions — there can be no general rule. It is true I read newspapers, but Mother never does unless her attention is called to a particular item. I dare say if Anilbaran stopped reading papers for a year, it might be very good for him. One has to see what is one's necessity for the sadhana. If the newspapers disperse the mind or externalise the consciousness too much, they should be avoided. If on the other hand one is dawdling over the sadhana and having no particular inner endeavour one can read newspapers — it is no worse than anything else. On the other hand if the newspapers do not affect the formed or forming inner consciousness in any way (by dispersion, lowering, externalisation etc.) one can read them. I read the newspapers mainly because I have to see what events are happening which might any day have an effect on my work etc. I don't read for the interest of reading. 9 July 1936

Painting, Music, Dance and Yoga

Yoga and the Arts

> In the new creation would there not be great musicians, painters, poets, athletes etc. created from the Ashram?

All kinds that are needed for the work or the manifestation would, I suppose, come. 24 May 1933

Painting and Sadhana

Painting also is sadhana; so it is perfectly possible to make them one. It is a matter of dedicating the painting and feeling the force that makes you paint as the Mother's force. 4 September 1935

*

Of course everybody is here for Yoga and not for painting. Painting or any other activity has to be made here a part of Yoga and cannot be pursued for its own sake. If it stands insuperably in the way, then it has to be given up; but there is no reason why it should if it be pursued in the proper spirit, as a field or aid for spiritual growth, or as a work done for the Mother.

18 January 1936

*

You have painting and music in you and if you apply yourself they will develop in you. Only it is best to do it as an instrument of the Mother and as an offering to her, and not allow any personal desire for fame or appreciation by others or any personal pride to be the motives — for it is that that gives trouble. All work done as an offering is a great help and does not give trouble.

*

> Is it really possible to get anything simply by faith and surrender? I heard Mother said to Sanjiban that if one wants to be an artist one must work hard. What is true of art, is true of everything, isn't it?

For heaven's sake, don't be so universal in your rules. Art means a technique (especially painting, sculpture, etc., music also, poetry less), and technique has to be developed. But that does not mean that there is nothing that can come by simply faith and surrender. 6 April 1935

*

> Let Thy grace abide with me so that I may keep the right attitude towards Thee at the time of painting. Often I feel a vital atmosphere around me and a sort of vital excitement in me.

What do you mean by vital excitement? There is an intensity and enthusiasm of the vital without which it would be difficult to do any poem, picture or music of a creative kind. That intensity is not harmful. 7 October 1933

*

The Mother finds the pictures of Tagore hideous and monstrous, she would not dignify them with the name of art. But it is not because they depart from tradition. The Mother does not believe in tradition — she considers that Art should always develop new forms — but still these must be according to a truth of Beauty which is universal and eternal — something of the Divine.

8 December 1933

Music and Sadhana

I quite understood your main point to which I shall answer, but there were many side-issues which obscure the main one in your letter and I took the occasion to try to get rid of one of them at once. For the moment I am answering only to your question about the music. Let me say at once that all of you seem to have too great an aptitude for making drastic conclusions on the strength of very minor facts. It is always perilous to take two or three small facts, put them together and build upon them a big inference. It becomes still more dangerous when you emphasise minor facts and set aside or belittle the meaning of the main ones. In this case the main facts are (1) that the Mother has loved music all her life and found it a key to spiritual experience, (2) that she has given all encouragement to your music in special and to the music of others also. She has also made clear the relation of Art and Beauty with Yoga. It is therefore rather extraordinary that anyone should think she only tolerates music here and considers it inconsistent with Yoga. It is perfectly true that Music or Art are not either the first or the only thing in life for her, — any more than Poetry or Literature are with me, — the Divine, the divine consciousness, the discovery of the conditions for a divine life are and must be our one concern, with Art, Poetry or Music as parts or means only of the divine life or expression of the Divine Truth and the Divine Beauty. That does not mean that they are only "tolerated", but that they are put in their right place.

Then the minor facts and their significance. The Mother limited the concerts to one hour because that was the utmost she could give to them in the afternoons for which they are fixed and that meant checking a very natural tendency to spread over a greater length of time. On this occasion she first wanted it to be a half an hour affair because the more important occasion was to be reserved for November. But it was found that certain very undesirable psychological movements were tending to appear which would turn the occasion not into a part of the preparation for true expression or a part of the Yoga, but an occasion for the exhibition of a very mundane, almost professional egoism, vanity, rivalry, anger and spite at one's talent being "neglected" etc. It was decided that this anti-Yogic stuff should not be allowed to mix with the atmosphere of the 24th November and therefore the Sunday concert could be lengthened out and the November one dropped — and this was what was written to Venkataraman. It is not an objection to music that the decision represented, but an objection to bringing into music here these very undivine and unyogic and, if human, yet not very reputable human elements and movements. The Mother said nothing to you about it because these things did not directly concern *you* and she did not besides care to make the causes of the change public.

Let us have music by all means; but also more rhythm and harmony in the atmosphere! 29 October 1932

*

I don't think I can say anything about your non-appreciation of [X's] singing or rather your failure to feel it, for this is a matter of personality and its responses. [X] has put me the question as coming from you and I have made some kind of answer. His idea is that you have no appreciation of his music from the aesthetic point of view because it is new in its lines and you cling conservatively to the traditional music. If that is so, it is obviously a mental and aesthetic limitation. But what you say is that you admit his genius and the qualities of his singing — only you don't feel what you seek in his music. That is a different matter. Your interpretation may then be the right one. In any case what is important for you is to develop your inner realisation till it can take up all the feeling and outer action — whether for your own singing or for a new appreciation of music in general that is the one line opened to you and the one thing needful. 8 September 1937

*

I meant exactly the same thing as when I wrote to you that the "famous singer" must disappear and the "inner singer" take her place. "The old psychological lines" means the mental and vital aesthetic source of the singing, the desire of fame or success, singing for an audience — the singing must come from the soul within and it must be for the Divine.

What I wrote about the conservative clinging to traditional music was in answer to Dilip's supposition about the source of your non-appreciation. I said if it were that it would be a mental limitation. I had written before that I gathered from what you had written that it was not that but a temperamental difference or a seeking for another vibration than what his music could give. As to the newness of Dilip's music and how far he has been successful, I am not a musical expert and cannot pronounce. It was the Mother who gave him the advice and impulse to create something new. If Tagore's most recent verdict is sincere, he has succeeded in doing it, since Tagore speaks of him as a creator in music.

A new creation need not be on one line only, each creator follows his own line, otherwise he would be more of an imitator than a creator. There are many who receive inspiration from me in poetry but they do not all write on the same line. Nishikanta's poetry is different from Dilip's, Nirod's from Amal's.

As for your singing, I was not speaking of any new creation from the aesthetic point of view, but of the spiritual change — what form it takes must depend on what you find *within* you when the deeper basis is there.

I do not see any necessity for giving up singing altogether. I only meant, — it is the logical conclusion from what I have written to you not now only but before, — that the inner change must be the first consideration and the rest must arise out of that. If singing to an audience pulls you out of the inner condition, then you could postpone that and sing for yourself and the Divine until you are able, even in facing an audience, to forget the audience. If you are troubled by failure or exalted by success, that also you must overcome. 10 September 1935

*

If Sahana gives up music, — I presume it is only a temporary step — I suppose it must be for a reason personal to her sadhana. There is no incompatibility in principle between music and sadhana. 28 June 1931

*

You can learn the song and sing — do it as Mother's work without desire, such as even the wish to sing before her — but simply as something to be done for her service.

Only you must not allow it to interfere with your painting which is your main work — that in which you are making much progress. That you must go on doing every day.

7 December 1933

*

> Can I take up the esraj when my hands get tired from practising the sitar?

One instrument is enough. If you feel tired so soon, it may be that the physical takes no pleasure in it, and then you should not trouble to learn. 10 October 1932

*

> When I first took up the sitar, I could practise only for ten minutes without exhaustion, then went on to half-an-hour. But Dilip says if I can't do it for at least three or four hours a day, I should give it up.

What Dilip says is not untrue. It is hard work if you want really to learn and otherwise it is not much use.

> It is only for myself when I am alone and tired of other things that I want music. I really want to learn one instrument. I hope you will not forbid my asking Nirod or someone else for help.

I don't think it will be very helpful to your sadhana; but if you want to ask, you can do so. 28 January 1933

*

> Yesterday suddenly I felt a great desire or impulse to sing. The music seemed to come or rather pushed out from inside me by an automatic force. Something was felt — very tangibly so — to be doing it as if I was a mere instrument in its hold. Since then I had tried again to do it, but it won't come.

It is no use trying — it comes or it does not come. One must be open for its coming, that is all. 9 April 1933

*

It is absurd to say that you have narrowed or deteriorated because one no longer sings erotic songs. One is not narrowed if one loses taste for jazz and can hear with real pleasure only the great masters or music of a high or exquisite quality. It is not deterioration when one rises from a lower to a higher plane of thinking, feeling or artistic self-expression. Can one say of the man who has grown out of childishness and no longer plays with nursery toys that he has narrowed and deteriorated by the change? 26 August 1933

*

> I often catch myself acting as the great composer, musician, *littérateur* and all that sort of rot.

Well, that is an almost universal human weakness, especially with artists, poets, musicians and the whole splendid tribe — I have known even great Yogis suffer from just a touch of it! If one can see mentally the humour of it, it will fall off in the end. 19 July 1943

Dance and Sadhana

Dance alone with rhythm and significance can express something of the occult or of the Divine as much as writing or poetry or art — why should it not and why should there be anything in it condemnable? 17 July 1933

*

To feel the vibration and develop from it the rhythm of the dance is the right way to create something true; the other way, to understand with the mind and work out with the mind only or mainly, is the mental way; it is laborious and difficult and has not the same spontaneous inspiration. 28 April 1932

*

> After seeing Udayshankar dance, I asked him for instructions and he showed me some exercises. May I know whether it is desirable for me to continue?

Dancing is a private thing — we can't deal with it as part of the

Yoga. So it depends on your choice.

> Can dancing not become part of the yoga, like poetry, music and painting?

If it is done in the right spirit, it can. But we answered like that because Udayshankar's coming brought only the vital side with it and dancing in its vital side is a personal affair and cannot be part of Yoga. It would only raise the vital turn in the consciousness. 15 October 1934

*

I know nothing about Udayshankar or his qualities; but if he was calm himself, his coming certainly did not create calm in the Ashram but much unnecessary excitement. I do not quite see how Udayshankar is to be useful to the Ashram. The visits of celebrities are not the means by which the work of the Ashram can be helped. These are ideas that belong to the ordinary external consciousness in which the coming of famous So and So creates an exultation and a flutter. 5 October 1934

*

Appendixes

APPENDIX I

The Problem of the Hexameter

The perfection of the hexameter is one of the unsolved problems of English prosody. Either the problem is insoluble, the noble rhythm so satisfying in Greek and Latin unsuited to the brief Saxon vocables — or else the secret of a successful measure has not yet been discovered. Even were the solution found, there are many obstacles in the way of its acceptation. Yet a new metrical movement is felt to be a necessity and half-unconsciously strained after by the modern mind in poetry. If one could be found that, without admitting too wide a licence, without breaking down the mould of metre in which poetry by a wise instinct has always sought to restrain herself, yet provided a freer scope and a fuller mould for the more subtle and complex emotions and the vaster conceptions in which we have begun to live, the change might mean a new life and energy for a great literature now too much overburdened and fettered by its past successes and triumphs. The present poem is an experiment in this direction. No doubt the definite entry of the hexameter among the ordinary forms of English prosody must wait until it is chosen by a supreme poetical genius or a master rhythmist. But meanwhile something may possibly be done by a careful attempt founded on a clear and definite conception of the difficulties to be solved and a consistent method in their solution.

The poems of Clough and Longfellow are, I think, the only serious essays in the hexameter in English literature. Many have dallied with the problem, from the strange experiments of Spenser to the insufficient but carefully reasoned attempts of Matthew Arnold. But it is only by a long and sustained effort like *Evangeline* or the *Bothie* that the solution can really come. Longfellow in this connexion can be safely neglected, but Clough's work is of a different order. Occasionally he really grappled with his task and for a moment [conquered] [...........][1]. But it is Clough's defect that he is unable ordinarily to combine force with harmony. Either he produces verse of a rough energy, like the general type of hexameter used by him in the *Bothie*, or, as in the pentameter experiments in the *Amours de Voyage*, the breath of life and power is wanting in a harmonious shell of sound. Yet once or twice he has surmounted every difficulty. Especially is there one verse with the right Homeric movement in the *Bothie,* —

> He like a god came leaving his ample Olympian chamber

which gave to my mind the key to the just use of the hexameter.

---

[1] *Manuscript damaged. Two or three words missing. — Ed.*

APPENDIX II

An Answer to a Criticism

Milford accepts, (incidentally, with special regard to the word *frosty* in Clough's line about the Cairngorm[1]), the rule that two consonants after a short vowel make the short vowel long, even if they are outside the word and come in another word following it. To my mind this rule accepted and generally applied would amount in practice to an absurdity; it would result, not indeed in ordinary verse where quantity by itself has no metrical value, but in any attempt at quantitative metre, in eccentricities like the scansions of Bridges. I shall go on pronouncing the *y* of *frōsty̆* as short whether it has two consonants after it or only one or none; it remains *frōsty̆* whether it is a *frosty scalp* or *frosty top* or a frosty anything. In no case does the second syllable assume a length of sound equivalent to that of two long vowels. My hexameters are intended to be read naturally as one would read any English sentence; stress is given its full metrical value, long syllables also are given their full metrical value and not flattened out so as to assume a fictitious metrical brevity; short vowels even with two consonants after them are treated as short, because they have that value in any natural reading. But if you admit a short syllable to be long whenever there are two consonants after it, then Bridges' scansions are perfectly justified. Milford does not accept that conclusion; he says Bridges' scansions are an absurdity and I agree with him there. But he bases this on his idea that quantitative length does not count in English verse. It is intonation that makes the metre, he says, high tones or low tones — not longs and shorts; obviously, stress is a high tone of the greatest importance and to ignore it is fatal to any metrical theory or metrical treatment of the language —

---

[1] *"Found amid granite-dust on the frosty scalp of the Cairn-Gorm",* Bothie of Tober-Na-Vuolich, *Part I. — Ed.*

and so far I agree. But on that ground he refuses to discuss my idea of weight or dwelling of the voice or admit quantity or anything else but tone as determinative of the metre; he even declares that there can be no such thing as metrical length; the very idea is an error. Perhaps also that is the reason why he counts *frosty* as a spondee before *scalp*; he thinks that it causes it to be intoned in a different way. I don't see how it does that; for my part, I intone it just the same before *top* as before *scalp*. The ordinary theory is, I believe, that the *sc* of *scalp* acts as a sort of stile (because of the opposition of the two consonants to rapid motion) which you take time to cross, so that *ty* must be considered as long because of this delay of the voice, while the *t* of *top* is merely a line across the path which gives no trouble. I don't see it like that; the delay of motion, such as it is and it is very slight, is not caused by any dwelling on the last syllable of the preceding word, it is in the word *scalp* itself that the delay is made; one takes longer to pronounce *scalp, scalp* is a slightly longer sound than *top* and there is too a slight initial impediment to the voice which is absent in the lighter vocable and this may have an effect for the rhythm of the line but it cannot change the metre; it cannot lengthen the preceding syllable so as to turn a trochee into a spondee. Sanskrit quantitation is irrelevant here (it is the same as Latin or Greek in respect to this rule); but both of us agree that the Classical quantitative conventions are not reproducible in English metre and it is for that reason that we reject Bridges' eccentric scansions. Where we disagree is that I treat stress as equivalent to length and give quantity as well as stress a metrical and not merely a rhythmic value.

This answers also your question as to what Milford means by "fundamental confusion" regarding *aridity.* He refuses to accept the idea of metrical length. But I am concerned with natural *metrical* as well as natural vowel (and consonantal) quantities. My theory is that natural length in English depends on the dwelling of the voice giving a high or strong sound value or weight of voice to the syllable; in quantitative verse one has to take account of all such dwelling or weight of the voice, both weight or sharp dwelling by ictus (= stress) and weight by prolongation or long dwelling of the voice (ordinary syllabic length); the two are different, but at any rate for metrical purposes in a quantitative verse can rank as of equal value. I do not say that stress turns a short vowel into a long one, but that it gives a strong sound value (= metrical length) to the syllable it falls upon, even if that syllable has a short vowel and no extra consonants to support it. There is a heavier voice incidence on the first *i* of *aridity* than on the second: this incidence I call weight; the voice dwells more on it, sharply, and that dwelling gives it what I call metrical length and equates it to the long syllable, gives it an equal value.

Milford does not take the trouble to understand the details of my theory — he ignores the importance I give to modulations and treats cretics and antibacchii and molossi as if they were dactyls, whereas I regard them as only substitutes for dactyls; he ignores my objection to stressing short insignificant words like *and, with, but, the* — and thinks that I do that everywhere, which would be to ignore my theory. In fact I have scrupulously applied my theory in every detail of my practice. Take for instance

Ārt thoū nŏt | heaven-bound | even as | I with the | earth? Hast thou | ended.

Here *art* is long by natural quantity though *unstressed*,[2] which disproves Milford's criticism that in practice I never put an unstressed long as the first syllable of a dactylic foot or spondee, as I should do by my theory. I don't do it often because normally in English rhythm stress bears the foot — a fact on which I have laid emphasis in my theory as well as in my practice. That is the reason why I condemn the Bridgean disregard of stress in the rhythm, — still whenever it can come in quite naturally, this variation can occasionally be made. It is a question of the relations possible between stress value and unstressed quantitative values in a quantitative metrical system, which is not the same as their relations in accentual or stress verse. My quantitative system, as I have shown at great length, is based on the natural movement of the English tongue, the same in prose and poetry, not on any artificial theory.

---

[2] I refuse to put an artificial stress here; if one wrote "Yes, thou art beautiful, but with a magical terrible beauty", the *art* is obviously unstressed, though long (creating an initial molossus); in the interrogative inversion it does not acquire any stress by its coming first in the sentence or in the line.

In stress hexameter only dactyls, spondees and trochees doing duty for spondees are counted; but in quantitative verse all feet have to take their natural value and to act as modulations of the dactyl and spondee while both in the opening foot and the body of the line amphibrachii and cretics abound, even molossi come in at times. Opening tribrachs are very frequent in my hexameter

Ĭs hĕ thĕ | fīrst? wăs thēre | none then before him? shall none come after?

Milford seems to think I have stressed the first short syllable in what would be naturally tribrachs and anapaests to make them into dactyls — a thing I abhor. Cf. also in *Ahana* initial anapaests:

Ĭn thĕ hārd | reckoning | māde bȳ thĕ | grēy-rōbed ăc|countant at even

or

Yĕt sŭrvīves | bliss in the | rhythm of our | heart-beats, | yĕt ĭs thēre | wonder

or again

Ănd wĕ gō | stumbling, maddened and thrilled to his dreadful embraces

or in my poem *Ilion*

Ănd thĕ fīrst | Ārgīve fĕll | slain as he leaped on the Phrygian beaches.

There are even opening amphibrachs here and there

Ĭllūmĭ|nations, | trānce-sēeds ŏf | silence, flowers of musing.

24 December 1942

APPENDIX III

Remarks on a Review[2]

[A]

Marginal Comments

> The writer justly contends that Quantitative Verse has, hitherto, been misunderstood by English poets who have used it, because the constituent elements of such verse have not been correctly appreciated. These elements are accent, stress, and quantity. Accent is voice-weightage on a syllable; stress is voice-weightage on a one-syllable word (which may or may not be accented by itself) considered *hic et nunc* as a component part of a phrase, clause or sentence;

Not in my theory; stress occurs in English words of all lengths, not only in monosyllables.

> quantity is this voice-weightage in poetry. The best (and the only true) Quantitative Verse is that in which accent, stress and quantity fall on the same syllable.

This is not part of my theory, where accent is disregarded for metrical purposes (though it counts in the intonation and rhythm) except when it coincides with stress. On the other hand unstressed long syllables count as long and here stress and quantity do *not* fall on the same syllable.

> English being an accentual language, poets writing in English have a natural bias towards accentual verse. The result is, that

---

[2] *In April 1943 a review of Sri Aurobindo's* On Quantitative Metre *by a certain F. J. Friend-Pereira was published by the* New Review *of Calcutta. Sri Aurobindo jotted down some comments in the margins of a copy of the journal, and also began a reply, which he abandoned after writing a single paragraph. Here, in [A], Sri Aurobindo's marginal comments are published, along with the relevant passages of the review. (Page references to* On Quantitative Metre *have been altered to agree with* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO *edition.) Sri Aurobindo's incomplete reply follows in [B].*

> they tend to regard quantity in verse as secondary, and by misplacing both accent and stress produce (when they venture into such fields) Quantitative Verse of unbelievable badness. This is written in a slipshod metre whose "tread-mill movement" (p. 346) has been charged against it as an incurable defect. . . .
>
> All this is, assuredly, excellent in theory. But in practice, certain serious objections arise. If it be true, as the author asserts that it is true, that only certain heroic themes can be treated in English hexameter (the most practised of the numerous types of Quantitative Verse),

This has nowhere been said; epic, pastoral, epistle, satire, familiar speech, poems of reflection have all been admitted, — only there must be either power or beauty.

> then the utility of the suggested adoption of verse based on quantity will be utility in name alone, since the just claim of poetry at present to give not only airy nothing, but everything, a local habitation and a name, would be effectively quashed.

This objection would arise if it were proposed to write quantitative verse *only*; that is not so.

> If it be true, further, that because of the undactylic nature of English, the hexameter needs to be "modulated" by bacchius, by lighter cretic, by the first paeon, by the choriamb or double trochee (similar variations to be used in the other quantitative metres), what remains of the fundamental metric of the original form?

The ground given is not the undactylic nature of English, but the natural tendency of English poetry to resort to modulation for the sake of freedom and variety. I have said that this device should be adopted in transferring classical metres into English, so as to create a natural English quantitative verse — not a rigid imitation of Greek and Latin models.

> The verse so written would, doubtless, be something rich and strange:

So much the better.

> but would it be really hexameter, simply because it would (and then not always) have a dactyl in the 5th, and a spondee (or more likely a trochee) in the 6th?

Why not? All that is necessary is that it should be a six-foot verse with a sound and predominant dactylic basis.

> Would sapphics, with the changes advocated as a relief to monotony, remain genuine sapphics?

Again, why not? The modulations are few and do not destroy the characteristic swing of the Sapphic verse.

> And ionics, ionics? It would seem, then, that the learned author's scheme would amount merely to *some* sort of quantitative verse; this is native to English, as Langland, Hopkins and others have shown, and shown most successfully.

If it is some sort of quantitative verse, rich and strange, and based on the recovery by quantity of its place in metre, that would be enough. Hopkins, I believe, wrote sprung verse — it is not entirely quantitative.

> There are a number of other points, of more or less importance, to which attention must, in fairness, be drawn. The punctuation leaves something to be desired: on p. 322, line 13 from the bottom, there should be a colon or a fullstop instead of a comma; on p. 323, line 8 . . . a semi-colon instead of a comma.

No, that would disturb the connection and balance. The comma is intended to preserve the close connection of the two statements.

> Grammar is also defective, as in the following:

> (i) " . . . they can seldom intervene or only if *it* is done very carefully" (p. 362) where *it* lacks a true antecedent.

"It" refers to the intervention; there is an unexpressed or implied antecedent. This is a liberty, but one that can be taken. Literary style *can* take such liberties sometimes with schoolmaster's grammar.

> (ii) "All that is necessary is that artificial quantity . . . *must* be abandoned." (p. 363) *Must* ought to be *should*.

"must" ought to remain "must". It is meant to indicate the nature of the necessity and its imperativeness.

> (iii) "A better statement may lead to a solution that *could* well be viable." (p. 317) *May* or *might* instead of *could* would be an improvement.

No. "Could" has a different shade of meaning from "may" or "might".

> (iv) On p. 318, bottom line, "they" lacks an antecedent, unless it be "desire"!

Yes, there should be in the previous sentence "by many" after "vividly felt".

> (v) The order of words in "He perpetrates frequently lines that are wholly trochaic" (p. 355) could scarcely be more un-English. *Frequently* should be the first or, preferably, the second word in the sentence.

The word can be where it is to give a certain effect.

> (vi) What, one wonders, is meant by "no insuperable impossibility"? (p. 363) If a thing is an impossibility, there is no necessity to say that it is insuperable; if it is not insuperable, then it cannot be an impossibility. What the author meant was either "no *apparently* insuperable impossibility" or "no insuperable difficulty".

"insuperable impossibility" gives a single idea, something that is impossible and therefore insuperable; it is not meant that there are impossibilities that are not insuperable.

> (vii) On p. 352, line 5, "verily evidently" is a misprint for "very evidently".
>
> These are, however, flaws of little importance. More serious is the claim, put forward on p. 321 that Spenser, Tennyson and Swinburne were great geniuses. It would be nearer the truth to say that they were poets whose technical ability was considerable.

New and strange opinions! "My opinion" would be preferable to "the truth".

> And in a treatise on metre, one hardly expects to find the following:
> (i) "The way was long, the wind was cold" is referred to as iambic *pentameter*! (p. 324)

The "pentameter" is evidently a slip of the pen; it should be "iambic verse".

> (ii) We are told (p. 338) that the correct way to read the first line of the Aeneid is to place a stress on *que*.

That is obviously a misprint, quite as obvious as the "verily evidently". The stress mark should be omitted.

> (iii) In a detailed scanning of the speech beginning "The lunatic, the lover and the poet" from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, one of the lines is quoted as
>
> And as imagination bodies forth.
>
> In all the editions of Shakespeare your reviewer has consulted, this line runs
>
> And, as imagination bodies forth.

> In the second form, it is clear that *And*, followed by a comma, must be stressed: the line then has 5 stresses; therefore is regular. But its irregularity (without the comma and hence with only 4 stresses) is pointed out by our author. (p. 326)

Even with the comma (is it Shakespeare's?) it is an accentual inflexion that I should put on "and" not a stress.

> (iv) On p. 333, we find the following accentuations: *narrâtive*; *contemplâtive*, *incarnâte*, *swîft*, *abstrâct*. These are wrong; except the last, if it is a verb.

The signs do not indicate accentuations, but natural long quantities. Accentually these "a"s are short because unaccented, but in quantitative reckoning they should recover their native value. The second "a" in "abstract" is a short vowel, but the 4 consonants of the syllable can be taken as giving it quantitative force.

> Moreover, when producing examples from prose to show that accent, stress and quantity do fall on the same syllables, and that therefore English "preserves the natural sound values", (p. 341), it might appear to some readers that the author is out-Jourdaining Monsieur Jourdain.

Why? The idea that English prose is capable of scansion is not at all new or absurd.

> Nor is he quite certain whether poetic composition is conscious or unconscious (p. 348 and ff.)

Psychologically it is both, or let us say, partly conscious and partly subconscious.

> and he sometimes mars the utility of his criticism by taking refuge in such phrases as "the rhythmic rendering of significance" (p. 360) and "the native utterance of things seen" which "conveys by significant sound its natural atmosphere." (p. 328)

Why? These are not phrases in which I took refuge, but express a recognised fact, both psychological and practical, of poetic technique. Is it denied that either in music or word-music sound can convey significance or reproduce the natural atmosphere of a thing seen? This is a constant experience of a sensitive reader of poetry.

> The book is intended to show the possibility of writing in a metre that will "read as if it were a born English rhythm, not a naturalised alien." (p. 363) The words that give the clue to the result, are, one feels, the words *as if*. Quantitative Verse, except what is written in Sprung Rhythm, will always masquerade in English *as if* it were in everyday garb: it will always be meretricious.

"As if" here refers to the fact that the hexameter is in origin an importation from Greek and Latin, but it must not read as such, it must not sound like a naturalised alien music; it must have a native English sound and for that it must follow the native rhythm of the English tongue. If it sounds "meretricious" the condition has not been satisfied. "As if" does not mean that it must be a false metre pretending to be a native one. The hexameter has not to pretend to be in everyday garb, for it is admittedly a new dress, but it has to fit perfectly the body of the English language. It may use the Sprung Rhythm which is also not an everyday garb, but a dress novel, reinvented and artistically fashioned. It seems to me that "meretricious" here means simply new and unfamiliar and therefore felt by the conservative mind to be foreign and artificial, just as blank verse first sounds when it is first brought into a language accustomed to rhymes; after a while it becomes quite natural, native, to the manner born — as has happened in French, in Bengali and other tongues.

> Is this book, then, one of which "love's labour's lost" must be said? By no means. There is in it a great deal of illuminating criticism on Longfellow, Clough and Kingsley. There are some extremely wise remarks on poetry, of which these are samples:

> It is evident that a crowding or sparseness of consonants will make a great difference to the total rhythm, it will produce a greater or less heaviness or lightness; but that is a rhythmic effect quite distinct from any imperative influence on the metre. (p. 339)
>
> A great deal of free verse is nothing but prose cut up into lines to make it look like verse. (p. 348)

> And one must admire the generous "expense of spirit" that went to the writing of *On Quantitative Metre*, and acknowledge that Sri Aurobindo's poems are far more than mere illustrations of a poetic theory.

In spite of being written in a false and artificial rhythm? Queer!

[B]

Incomplete Reply

A criticism of my book *On Quantitative Metre* in the Calcutta *New Review* (*Pitfalls on Parnassus* by F. J. Friend-Pereira) attacks, not the principles of quantitative verse put forward by me, — these it holds excellent in theory, but the practice and even the possibility of putting them in practice. Unfortunately even the approval of the theory loses its value, as it seems to be based on a misconception. For the writer starts by thus describing the three constituent elements of quantitative verse, — accent, stress and quantity. "Accent is voice-weightage on a syllable; stress is voice-weightage on a one-syllable word (which may or may not be accented in itself) considered *hic et nunc* as a component part of a phrase, clause or sentence; quantity is this voice-weightage in poetry." The reviewer evidently accepts the theory of voice-weightage as determining quantitative sound-value and accepts these three different weights, accent weight, stress weight, quantity weight. But the exact sense of the description of quantity is not clear to me and that of stress I find bewildering. In my own theory I have admitted two kinds of quantity, stress weight, weight of natural syllable quantity depending on vowel length or consonant weight, while accentual weight is disregarded as I accept it is a metrical length producer only when it coincides with stress and there its action is superfluous, since stress by itself is sufficient for the purpose. Other accentual pitches I disregard for metrical purposes and leave them only a rhythmic importance. Practically, then, in quantitative verse accent disappears as a quantity-determiner and takes a back place in the rhythm; just as does natural syllabic quantity in accentual verse.

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

LETTERS ON POETRY AND ART includes most of the letters on poetry, literature, art and aesthetics that Sri Aurobindo wrote between 1929 and 1950. During these years he was living in retirement in his ashram in Pondicherry and had no direct contact with others, but he carried on an enormous correspondence with the members of his ashram as well as outsiders. Most of the letters he wrote at this time were concerned with the recipients' practice of yoga and day-to-day life. But a significant number were about literary and artistic matters. The most important of such letters are published in the present volume.

Sri Aurobindo's letters on poetry, literature, art and aesthetics have been published previously in three different books: *Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art*; *Letters on "Savitri"*; and *On Himself*. (The literary letters in *On Himself* appeared in the section entitled "The Poet and the Critic".) The appropriate contents of these books, along with around five hundred letters that have not appeared in any previous collection of Sri Aurobindo's letters, are combined in the present volume under a new title.

Sri Aurobindo wrote most of the letters in this volume in reply to questions posed by his correspondents, and they deal for the most part with points the correspondents raised. As a result, the letters cannot be said to constitute a fully worked-out theory of poetics. (Such a theory is presented in Sri Aurobindo's major work of literary criticism, *The Future Poetry*, published as volume 26 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. This theory is elaborated in some of the letters.) Likewise, the critical judgments Sri Aurobindo made in the letters were confined largely to works that had been submitted to him by his correspondents. Many of these works were written by the correspondents themselves. Accordingly the poets and poems dealt with should not be taken as a catalogue of Sri Aurobindo's critical preferences, though they may be said to constitute a representative sampling of his literary interests.

The Writing of the Letters

Sri Aurobindo's correspondents wrote to him in notebooks or on loose sheets of paper that were sent to him in an internal "post" once or twice a day. He generally replied on the same sheet of paper as the question, below it or in the margin or between the lines. Sometimes, however, he wrote his answer on a separate sheet. In a few cases he had his secretary prepare a typed copy of a letter, which he revised before it was sent. All the letters were written between 1929 and 1950, the majority between 1931 and 1937. Sometimes Sri Aurobindo dated his answers, but most of the dates given at the end of the letters in this volume are those of the letter to which he was replying.

The present volume, excluding the appendixes, comprises 976 separate items, an "item" being defined as what is published here between one heading or asterisk and another heading or asterisk. Many items correspond precisely to individual letters; a good number, however, consist of portions of single letters, or (portions of) two or more letters that were joined together by earlier editors or typists and revised as such by Sri Aurobindo. A few of the items were not written as letters, but rather as comments on poems and articles that were submitted to him.

Sri Aurobindo wrote most of the letters in this volume to around a dozen correspondents, all of them members of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. Seven of these recipients deserve special mention, since their names occur frequently in the correspondence, and their poems are discussed in letters reproduced in Part Two: Dilip Kumar Roy (1897–1980), Harindranath Chattopadhyaya (1898–1990), Arjava (J. A. Chadwick) (1899–1939), Jyotirmayi (1902–?), Nirodbaran (1903–), Amal Kiran (K. D. Sethna) (1904–), and Nishikanta (1909–1973).

The Revision of the Letters

As early as 1933, plans were made to bring out a printed collection of Sri Aurobindo's letters on poetry. Towards the end of that year, K. D. Sethna wrote to Sri Aurobindo asking whether portions of two letters he had received ought to be typed "for your book on art and literature, to be published after *The Riddle*". (*The Riddle of This*

World, published in November 1933, was the first collection of Sri Aurobindo's letters on yoga to be published.) Sri Aurobindo replied: "The best thing would be to type both the letters and send them to me so that I may put them into some possible form — of course only the general parts need be typed." The letters were duly typed, but Sri Aurobindo was unable to do much revision as there was, he wrote, "an ocean of paper drowning me". In 1935 and 1936, two further books of letters on yoga, *Lights on Yoga* and *Bases of Yoga*, were brought out. In February 1936, just before the publication of the latter volume, there was another push to bring out a collection of letters on poetry. Sri Aurobindo's secretary, Nolini Kanta Gupta, had by this time made a selection of literary letters, which he gave to Sethna for arrangement. On 25 February 1936, Sethna wrote to Sri Aurobindo asking him for advice on editorial categories and headings. Sri Aurobindo replied that he had no time to look into the matter, but remarked by the way that he could "not conceive how these stray letters can be classified under groups". He does however seem to have begun revising some of the letters around this time. He did his work on sheets that were typed from the originals or else from earlier typed or printed versions. Many of these copies had been typed immediately after the reception of the original letters, in order to be circulated among interested members of the ashram. Often minor errors crept in when the letters were typed. Moreover the recipients sometimes deliberately omitted passages that seemed to them to be of no general interest, or added words or phrases that were meant to make Sri Aurobindo's intentions more clear. As a result, the typed copies that Sri Aurobindo used for his revision did not always correspond exactly to the letters he had written.

The revision that Sri Aurobindo did during the middle and late thirties amounted sometimes to a full rewriting of the letter, sometimes to minor touches here and there. He normally removed personal references if this had not already been done by the typist. He also, when necessary, rewrote the openings or other parts of the answers in order to free them from dependence on the correspondent's question. As a result, many items now read more like brief essays than personal communications. A letter Sri Aurobindo wrote to Sethna in August 1937 reflects this approach to the revision:

> I had no idea of the book being published as a collection of personal letters — if that were done, they would have to be published whole as such without a word of alteration. I understood the book was meant like the others [*i.e., like* Bases of Yoga, *etc.*] where only what was helpful for an understanding of things Yogic was kept with necessary alterations and modifications. Here it was not Yoga, but certain judgments etc. about art and literature. With that idea I have been not only omitting but recasting and adding freely. Otherwise as a book it would be too scrappy and random for public interest. In the other books things too personal were omitted — it seems to me that the same rule must hold here — except very sparingly where unavoidable.

The work of revision seems to have gone on slowly until the end of 1938. It was discontinued in November of that year after Sri Aurobindo fractured his leg, and not resumed for almost a decade. (During the interval Sri Aurobindo was busy with the revision of his major works: *The Life Divine*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, etc.) In 1947, the Sri Aurobindo Circle, Bombay, published a collection of Sri Aurobindo's letters on yoga under the title *Letters of Sri Aurobindo: First Series*. Around this time, Kishor Gandhi, the editor of the Circle's publications, began to collect material for a volume of letters on literature. His manuscript was sent to Sri Aurobindo in December 1948, and read out to him by his scribe, Nirodbaran, who took down Sri Aurobindo's dictated revisions. These were generally less extensive than the handwritten revisions of the 1930s.

The Publication of the Letters

The third series of Sri Aurobindo's correspondence, *Letters of Sri Aurobindo: Third Series (On Poetry and Literature)*, was published in 1949 by the Sri Aurobindo Circle, Bombay. It consisted of 162 items. Most of these were preceded by headings, which, with one or two exceptions, were provided by the editor. The manuscript of the book had been typed from various sources. Some items incorporated the revision work of the 1930s. More often, however, the basis of the text of the 1949 manuscript was the original handwritten letter or a typed copy of it. At some point during the revision of 1948–49, parts of the earlier revision were uncovered, and an effort was made to incorporate some of this work in the final version. Editorial dilemmas sometimes resulted, since the two sets of revision were not always compatible.

Selections from Sri Aurobindo's letters on literature continued to be published after his passing in 1950. Sixty-two items dealing with his epic poem *Savitri* were issued as *Letters on "Savitri"* (1951). This book was meant to serve as a sort of introduction to that poem, which had been published in 1950–51. (Since 1954, these letters, along with some others, have been appended to most editions of *Savitri*.) In 1953, twenty-one items relating to Sri Aurobindo as poet and critic were included in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*. During the 1950s, disciples of Sri Aurobindo began to publish their correspondences with him. K. D. Sethna brought out a collection of letters on various topics under the title *Life — Literature — Yoga* in 1952. Two years later, Nirodbaran released the first volume of his *Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo*. In both of these books, and in subsequent collections of letters from Sri Aurobindo to specific disciples, a summary of the disciple's question was often put before Sri Aurobindo's reply in order, as Sethna put it, "to give the utmost point to the replies, bring out best the personal touch in them and frame more definitely both their profundity and their humour".

In 1970–73, Sri Aurobindo's collected works were published as the *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library* (SABCL). Letters on poetry, literature and art appeared in three volumes of this set. The main series of letters, consisting of the 162 items published in *Letters of Sri Aurobindo: Third Series (On Poetry and Literature)*, along with 145 additional items from manuscript and printed sources, was published as the second part of SABCL volume 9, *The Future Poetry and Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art* (1972). The 21 items that had been published in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, along with 101 additional items, were reproduced in SABCL volume 26, *On Himself*, in a section entitled "The Poet and the Critic". Most of the additional items in this section were from *Life — Literature — Yoga*, and included the questions that had been published with them there. The 62 items from *Letters on "Savitri"*, along with 26 others, were printed at the end of the second volume of *Savitri* (SABCL volume 29). Finally, five items dealing with some of Sri Aurobindo's lyrical poems were published after the poems in *Collected Poems* (SABCL volume 5). Summing up, 522 items of correspondence on literary and artistic matters were reproduced in four volumes of the Centenary Library. Around twenty of these items were duplicated in two or even three volumes. Thus a total of around five hundred letters on poetry and art were published in the SABCL.

The Present Edition

This edition, the first to be entitled *Letters on Poetry and Art*, includes almost all the letters on poetry, literature and art reproduced in volumes 5, 9, 26 and 29 of the SABCL, along with around five hundred items that have not appeared in any previous collection of Sri Aurobindo's letters (collections edited by recipients excepted). Most of the new items are relatively short; nevertheless the present volume contains 757 pages, as against the 492 pages devoted to letters on poetry and art in the four SABCL volumes. It is difficult to establish precise correspondences between the number of items published in the SABCL and the COMPLETE WORKS, because certain letters published as two or more items in the SABCL have been combined, while other letters published as single items in the SABCL have been split into separate items. These operations have been done in accordance with Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts, as explained below.

The 162 items in *Letters of Sri Aurobindo: Third Series (On Poetry and Literature)* (1949) were arranged by the editor in nine sections. When these and other items were reproduced in SABCL volume 9, a tenth section was added. In the present volume, owing to the large number of additional items, it proved impossible for the editors to preserve the earlier arrangement. The material is now placed in three parts, containing a total of eleven sections and fifty-five subsections.

The letters in Part One differ in kind and in manner of presentation from most of those published in the other two parts. As noted above, Sri Aurobindo revised a number of the letters, removing personal references and making it possible for them to stand independent of the questions that elicited them. Such letters are published here as he revised them. For the sake of consistency, most unrevised letters placed by the editors in this part have been published without questions. If some contextual information was required for intelligibility, it has been given in footnotes. (Questions have been included in three sections of Part One, in which examples of specific passages of poetry are discussed.)

Many letters that appeared for the first time in volumes like K. D. Sethna's *Life — Literature — Yoga* and Nirodbaran's *Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo*, and later in *On Himself*, were published with the correspondent's question. These have been retained (often in modified form) by the present editors. When appropriate, the editors have included the questions of letters reproduced for the first time. They have also reproduced the questions of certain letters that have hitherto been published without them. The two types of presentation — without and with questions and personal references — are each appropriate for a certain sort of material. Statements about the nature of poetry and the elements of poetic technique, which make up the bulk of Part One, are best presented in the impersonal way. This keeps the discussion from getting tied down to the immediate context of the letter's creation. Comments on specific writers and their work, and advice intended for specific individuals, which make up the bulk of Parts Two and Three, are best presented along with their context. This prevents specific judgments and advice from being taken as universal dicta.

Most questions have been copy-edited and abbreviated. A few that reveal the correspondent's relationship with Sri Aurobindo in an interesting way have been reproduced at some length.

While preparing the present edition for publication, the editors have consulted every available state of every letter: handwritten manuscripts, revised typescripts, versions in the manuscript of *Letters of Sri Aurobindo* (1949), and printed versions. Special attention has been given to manuscript versions. In earlier editions many "letters" were actually extracts from single letters or (parts of) different letters published as one. In the present edition, single letters are generally printed in their entirety. The editors have sometimes restored parts of letters that have hitherto been omitted. This has not been done when (1) Sri Aurobindo's revision of the letter made restoration impossible,

(2) the letter was of the kind that was better off published without personal references, or (3) the omitted material was irrelevant to the topic under discussion. In a few of Sri Aurobindo's letters, different paragraphs or groups of paragraphs deal with subjects that are covered in different sections of the book. In some such cases, the passages are printed as separate items. Items composed of more than one letter that were typed as units and revised by Sri Aurobindo in that form have generally been retained as compound items in the present edition.

Portions of the original letters that do not deal with the subject under discussion have generally been omitted. If the omitted portion is from a part of the letter preceding or following the printed portion, the elision has not been indicated. If the omitted portion is from the midst of the printed portion, it has been indicated by ellipsis points (. . .). Ellipsis points at the end of an item indicate that the end of the letter has been lost.

Each letter or group of letters in volumes 9 and 26 of the SABCL had a heading. With one exception, these headings were the work of the editors. The exception, "Yeats and the Occult" (page 415 of the present volume) was written by Sri Aurobindo when he revised a typed copy of the letter in question.

The text of each of the items has been checked against all its available handwritten, typed and printed versions. The number of versions available varies greatly from letter to letter. For items published in the 1949 edition, there may be a handwritten manuscript, one or more typed copies, and the version in the typed manuscript of the book. In other instances, there may be only a single handwritten manuscript. In cases where no manuscript was available, the editors have used reliably produced typed or printed versions as the basis of the text.

In previous editions the names of individuals were represented by their initials or by "X", "Y", etc. In the present edition, names written by Sri Aurobindo in the manuscripts have been spelled out. (In two letters initials remain, because these letters are preserved only in the form of copies in which initials replaced the names.) In one or two cases Sri Aurobindo himself used initials. These have been preserved.

All quotations from poets and prose writers in the letters have been checked against the original texts as well as against Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts. If Sri Aurobindo misquoted a line, his version has been allowed to stand, as his choice of words may be significant. If the misquotation was introduced by someone else (for example, the person who typed out a passage for Sri Aurobindo's opinion), it has been corrected against a reliable text of the original work. Following Sri Aurobindo's own preference, the editors have used modernised editions of sixteenth and seventeenth century poets. The Reference Volume of the COMPLETE WORKS includes a table that gives the source of all quotations, and the correct text of misquoted lines.

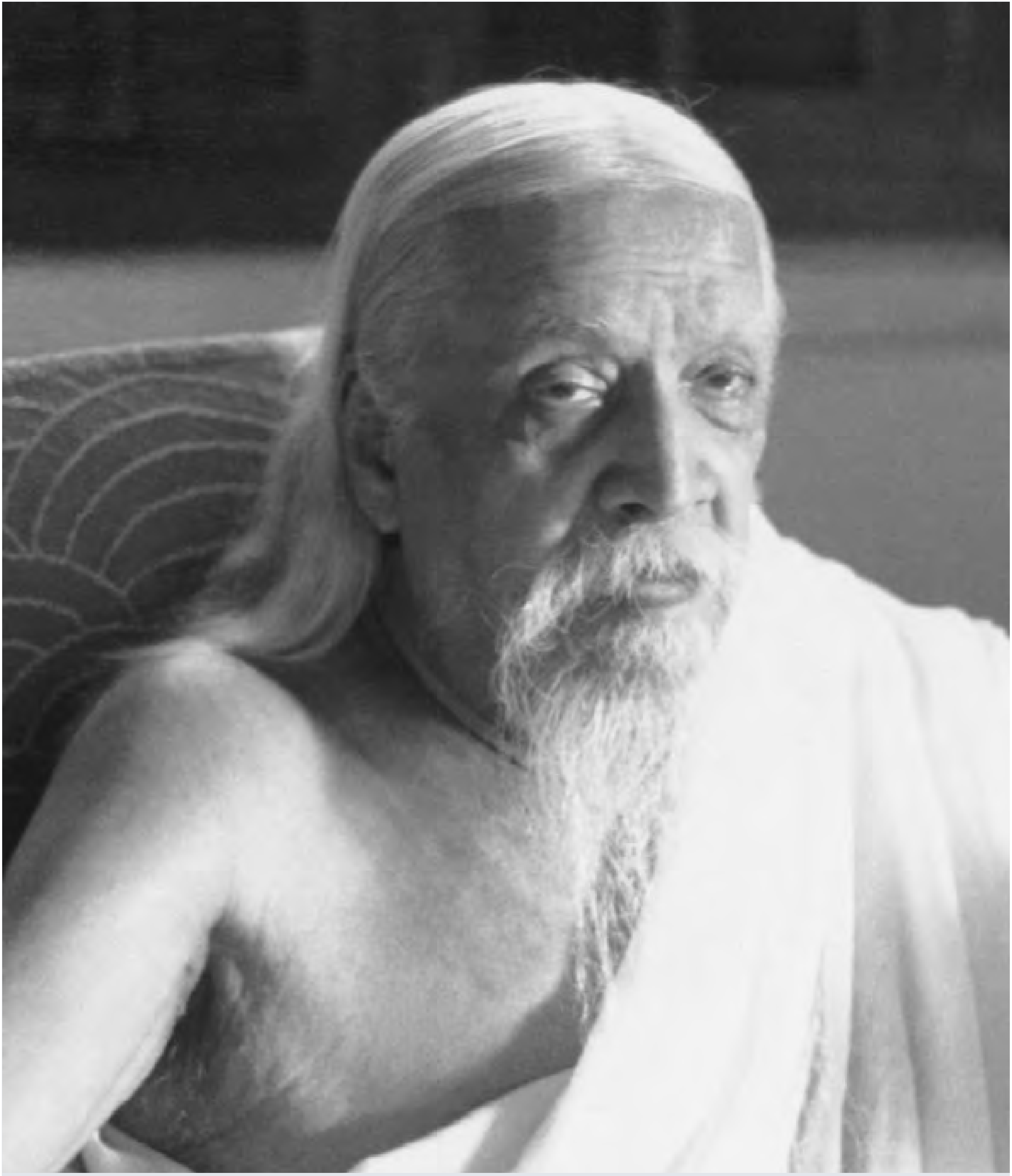

Sri Aurobindo

Savitri

www.holybooks.com

VOLUMES 33 and 34
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1997
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Savitri

a Legend and a Symbol

Publisher's Note

The writing of *Savitri* extended over much of the later part of Sri Aurobindo's life. The earliest known manuscript is dated 1916. The original narrative poem was recast several times in the first phase of composition. By around 1930, Sri Aurobindo had begun to turn it into an epic with a larger scope and deeper significance.

Transformed into "A Legend and a Symbol", *Savitri* became his major literary work which he continued to expand and perfect until his last days. In the late 1940s, when his eyesight was failing, he took the help of a scribe and dictated the extensive final stages of revision.

Separate cantos started to appear in print in 1946. Part One of the first edition was published in 1950. The next year, after Sri Aurobindo's passing, the rest of the poem was brought out in a second volume.

In the second edition (1954), Sri Aurobindo's letters on *Savitri* were added. They are omitted from the present edition and included in *Letters on Poetry and Art*.

The present text is that of the fourth ("revised") edition which came out in 1993. Each line has been checked to eliminate any unintentional discrepancies between the final manuscript or dictation and the printed form of the poem.

CONTENTS

PART ONE

Book One

The Book of Beginnings

Canto I
The Symbol Dawn 1

Canto II
The Issue 11

Canto III
The Yoga of the King: The Yoga of the Soul's Release 22

Canto IV
The Secret Knowledge 46

Canto V
The Yoga of the King: The Yoga of the Spirit's Freedom and Greatness 74

Book Two

The Book of the Traveller of the Worlds

Canto I
The World-Stair 95

Canto II
The Kingdom of Subtle Matter 103

Canto III
The Glory and the Fall of Life 116

Canto IV
The Kingdoms of the Little Life 132

Canto V
The Godheads of the Little Life 151

Canto VI
The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Greater Life 173

Canto VII
The Descent into Night 202

Canto VIII
The World of Falsehood, the Mother of Evil and the Sons of Darkness 220

Canto IX
The Paradise of the Life-Gods 233

Canto X
The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Little Mind 238

Canto XI
The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Greater Mind 260

Canto XII
The Heavens of the Ideal 277

Canto XIII
In the Self of Mind 283

Canto XIV
The World-Soul 289

Canto XV
The Kingdoms of the Greater Knowledge 297

Book Three

The Book of the Divine Mother

Canto I
The Pursuit of the Unknowable 305

Canto II
The Adoration of the Divine Mother 310

Canto III
The House of the Spirit and the New Creation 317

Canto IV
The Vision and the Boon 334

PART TWO

Book Four

The Book of Birth and Quest

Canto I
The Birth and Childhood of the Flame 349

Canto II
The Growth of the Flame 359

Canto III
The Call to the Quest 369

Canto IV
The Quest 377

Book Five

The Book of Love

Canto I
The Destined Meeting-Place 389

Canto II
Satyavan 392

Canto III
Satyavan and Savitri 400

Book Six

The Book of Fate

Canto I
The Word of Fate 415

Canto II
The Way of Fate and the Problem of Pain 437

CONTENTS

Book Seven

The Book of Yoga

Canto I
The Joy of Union; the Ordeal of the Foreknowledge of Death and the Heart's Grief and Pain 465

Canto II
The Parable of the Search for the Soul 474

Canto III
The Entry into the Inner Countries 488

Canto IV
The Triple Soul-Forces 503

Canto V
The Finding of the Soul 522

Canto VI
Nirvana and the Discovery of the All-Negating Absolute 532

Canto VII
The Discovery of the Cosmic Spirit and the Cosmic Consciousness 551

Book Eight

The Book of Death

"Canto III"
Death in the Forest 561

PART THREE

Book Nine

The Book of Eternal Night

Canto I
Towards the Black Void 571

Canto II
The Journey in Eternal Night and the Voice of the Darkness 582

Book Ten

The Book of the Double Twilight

Canto I
The Dream Twilight of the Ideal 599

Canto II
The Gospel of Death and Vanity of the Ideal 607

Canto III
The Debate of Love and Death 621

Canto IV
The Dream Twilight of the Earthly Real 641

Book Eleven

The Book of Everlasting Day

Canto I
The Eternal Day: The Soul's Choice and the Supreme Consummation 671

Book Twelve

Epilogue

The Return to Earth 715

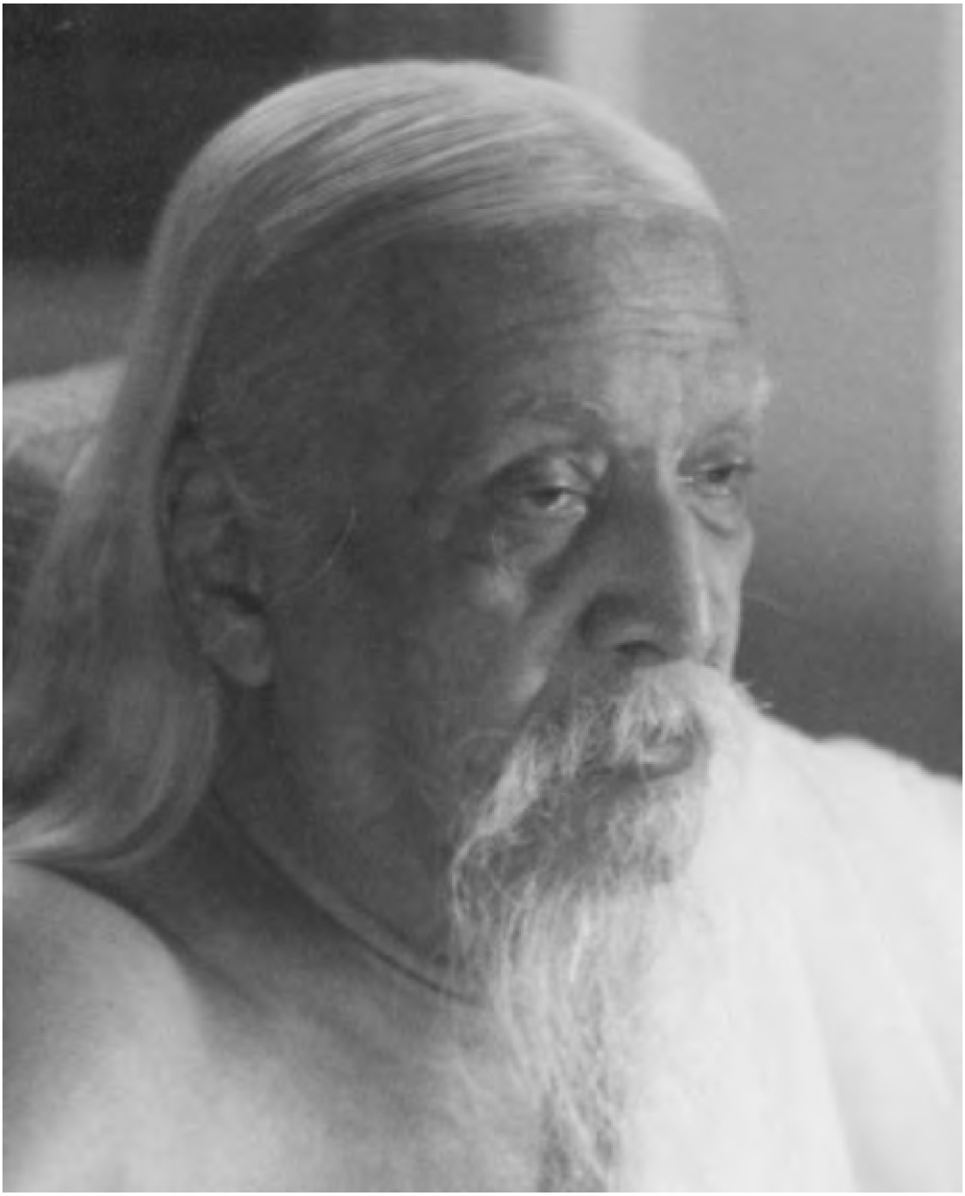

Sri Aurobindo in 1950

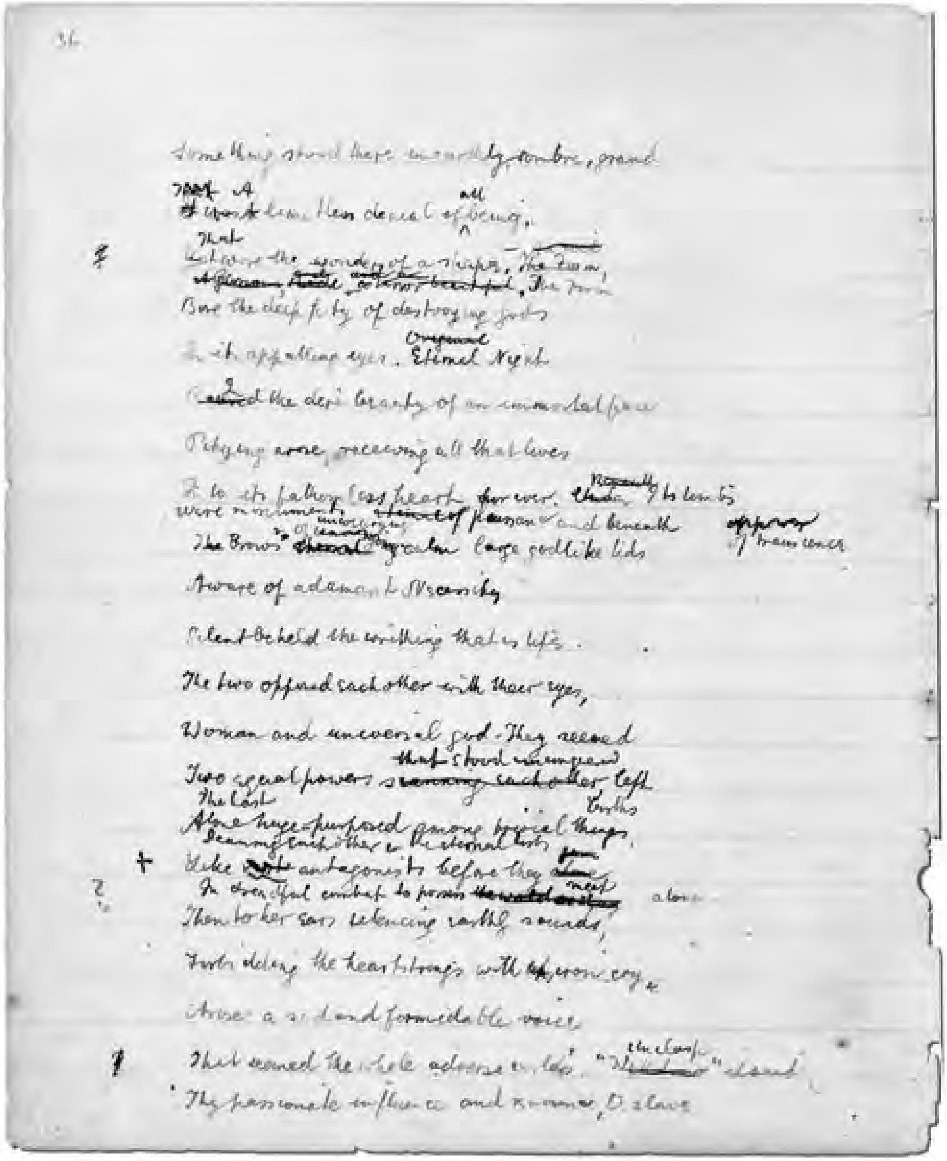

36

Something stood there, unearthly, sombre, grand
~~That~~ A
~~It~~ [illegible] limitless denial of all being,
That
~~Who~~ wore the wonder of a shape, ~~The Form,~~
~~A glorious, dreadful~~ ~~and the~~ ~~so terrible beautiful~~, The Form
Bore the deep pity of destroying gods
With appalling eyes. Eternal Night
~~Caused~~ In the dire beauty of an immortal face
Pitying arose, receiving all that lives
Into its fathomless heart for ever. ~~Their~~ Necessity its limits
Were monuments ~~eternal~~ of passion and beneath
The Brows of ~~eternal~~ unforgiving [illegible] large godlike lids
Aware of adamant Necessity
Silent beheld the writhing that is life.
The two opposed each other with their eyes,
Woman and universal god. They seemed
Two equal powers ~~scanning each other~~ that stood unmingled left
The Last
Alone, huge-purposed among typical things,
Scanning each other in the eternal lists
Like ~~[illegible]~~ antagonists before they ~~[illegible]~~ meet
In dreadful combat to possess ~~the world~~ alone.
Then to her ears silencing earthly sounds,
Forbidding the heartstrings with ~~its~~ iron cry,
Arose a sad and formidable voice
That seemed the whole adverse world's. "~~Unhappy~~ Unclasp" [illegible]
Thy passionate influence and sorrow, O slave

1916 version of a passage in Book Nine, Canto One

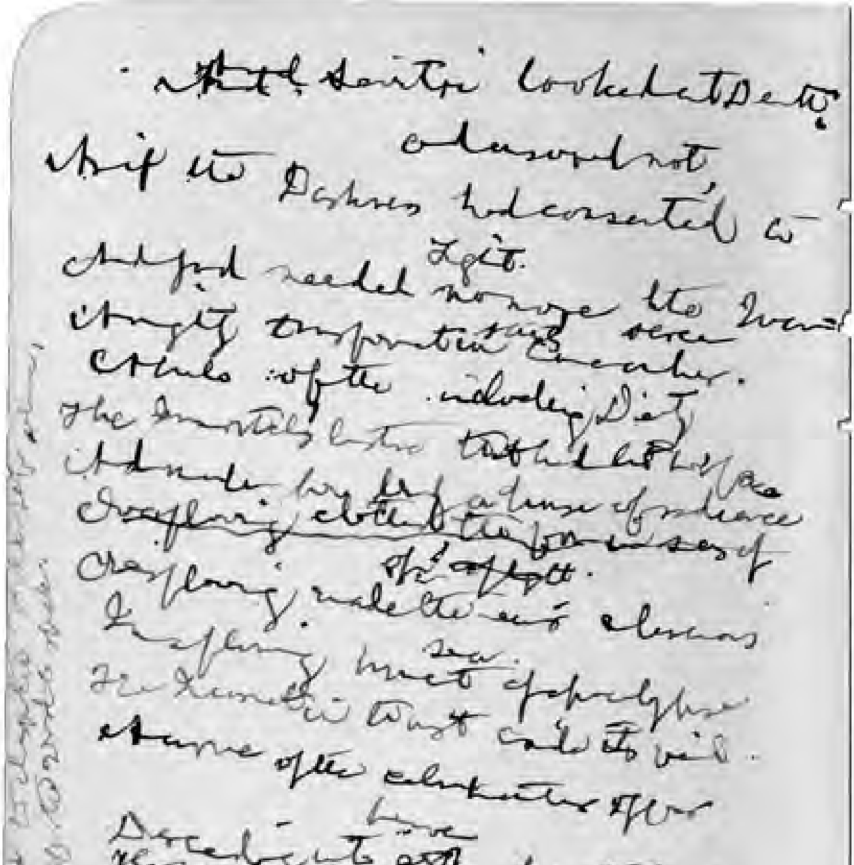

A page of a 1947 draft for Book Ten, Canto Four

Author's Note

The tale of Satyavan and Savitri is recited in the Mahabharata as a story of conjugal love conquering death. But this legend is, as shown by many features of the human tale, one of the many symbolic myths of the Vedic cycle. Satyavan is the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself but descended into the grip of death and ignorance; Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the supreme Truth who comes down and is born to save; Aswapati, the Lord of the Horse, her human father, is the Lord of Tapasya, the concentrated energy of spiritual endeavour that helps us to rise from the mortal to the immortal planes; Dyumatsena, Lord of the Shining Hosts, father of Satyavan, is the Divine Mind here fallen blind, losing its celestial kingdom of vision, and through that loss its kingdom of glory. Still this is not a mere allegory, the characters are not personified qualities, but incarnations or emanations of living and conscious Forces with whom we can enter into concrete touch and they take human bodies in order to help man and show him the way from his mortal state to a divine consciousness and immortal life.

SRI AUROBINDO

PART ONE

BOOKS I–III

BOOK ONE

The Book of Beginnings

Canto One

The Symbol Dawn

It was the hour before the Gods awake.
Across the path of the divine Event
The huge foreboding mind of Night, alone
In her unlit temple of eternity,
Lay stretched immobile upon Silence' marge.
Almost one felt, opaque, impenetrable,
In the sombre symbol of her eyeless muse
The abysm of the unbodied Infinite;
A fathomless zero occupied the world.
A power of fallen boundless self awake
Between the first and the last Nothingness,
Recalling the tenebrous womb from which it came,
Turned from the insoluble mystery of birth
And the tardy process of mortality
And longed to reach its end in vacant Nought.
As in a dark beginning of all things,
A mute featureless semblance of the Unknown
Repeating for ever the unconscious act,
Prolonging for ever the unseeing will,
Cradled the cosmic drowse of ignorant Force
Whose moved creative slumber kindles the suns
And carries our lives in its somnambulist whirl.
Athwart the vain enormous trance of Space,
Its formless stupor without mind or life,
A shadow spinning through a soulless Void,
Thrown back once more into unthinking dreams,
Earth wheeled abandoned in the hollow gulfs
Forgetful of her spirit and her fate.
The impassive skies were neutral, empty, still.
Then something in the inscrutable darkness stirred;
A nameless movement, an unthought Idea

Insistent, dissatisfied, without an aim,
Something that wished but knew not how to be,
Teased the Inconscient to wake Ignorance.
A throe that came and left a quivering trace,
Gave room for an old tired want unfilled,
At peace in its subconscient moonless cave
To raise its head and look for absent light,
Straining closed eyes of vanished memory,
Like one who searches for a bygone self
And only meets the corpse of his desire.
It was as though even in this Nought's profound,
Even in this ultimate dissolution's core,
There lurked an unremembering entity,
Survivor of a slain and buried past
Condemned to resume the effort and the pang,
Reviving in another frustrate world.
An unshaped consciousness desired light
And a blank prescience yearned towards distant change.
As if a childlike finger laid on a cheek
Reminded of the endless need in things
The heedless Mother of the universe,
An infant longing clutched the sombre Vast.
Insensibly somewhere a breach began:
A long lone line of hesitating hue
Like a vague smile tempting a desert heart
Troubled the far rim of life's obscure sleep.
Arrived from the other side of boundlessness
An eye of deity peered through the dumb deeps;
A scout in a reconnaissance from the sun,
It seemed amid a heavy cosmic rest,
The torpor of a sick and weary world,
To seek for a spirit sole and desolate
Too fallen to recollect forgotten bliss.
Intervening in a mindless universe,
Its message crept through the reluctant hush
Calling the adventure of consciousness and joy

And, conquering Nature's disillusioned breast,
Compelled renewed consent to see and feel.
A thought was sown in the unsounded Void,
A sense was born within the darkness' depths,
A memory quivered in the heart of Time
As if a soul long dead were moved to live:
But the oblivion that succeeds the fall,
Had blotted the crowded tablets of the past,
And all that was destroyed must be rebuilt
And old experience laboured out once more.
All can be done if the god-touch is there.
A hope stole in that hardly dared to be
Amid the Night's forlorn indifference.
As if solicited in an alien world
With timid and hazardous instinctive grace,
Orphaned and driven out to seek a home,
An errant marvel with no place to live,
Into a far-off nook of heaven there came
A slow miraculous gesture's dim appeal.
The persistent thrill of a transfiguring touch
Persuaded the inert black quietude
And beauty and wonder disturbed the fields of God.
A wandering hand of pale enchanted light
That glowed along a fading moment's brink,
Fixed with gold panel and opalescent hinge
A gate of dreams ajar on mystery's verge.
One lucent corner windowing hidden things
Forced the world's blind immensity to sight.
The darkness failed and slipped like a falling cloak
From the reclining body of a god.
Then through the pallid rift that seemed at first
Hardly enough for a trickle from the suns,
Outpoured the revelation and the flame.
The brief perpetual sign recurred above.
A glamour from unreached transcendences
Iridescent with the glory of the Unseen,

A message from the unknown immortal Light
Ablaze upon creation's quivering edge,
Dawn built her aura of magnificent hues
And buried its seed of grandeur in the hours.
An instant's visitor the godhead shone.
On life's thin border awhile the Vision stood
And bent over earth's pondering forehead curve.
Interpreting a recondite beauty and bliss
In colour's hieroglyphs of mystic sense,
It wrote the lines of a significant myth
Telling of a greatness of spiritual dawns,
A brilliant code penned with the sky for page.
Almost that day the epiphany was disclosed
Of which our thoughts and hopes are signal flares;
A lonely splendour from the invisible goal
Almost was flung on the opaque Inane.
Once more a tread perturbed the vacant Vasts;
Infinity's centre, a Face of rapturous calm
Parted the eternal lids that open heaven;
A Form from far beatitudes seemed to near.
Ambassadress twixt eternity and change,
The omniscient Goddess leaned across the breadths
That wrap the fated journeyings of the stars
And saw the spaces ready for her feet.
Once she half looked behind for her veiled sun,
Then, thoughtful, went to her immortal work.
Earth felt the Imperishable's passage close:
The waking ear of Nature heard her steps
And wideness turned to her its limitless eye,
And, scattered on sealed depths, her luminous smile
Kindled to fire the silence of the worlds.
All grew a consecration and a rite.
Air was a vibrant link between earth and heaven;
The wide-winged hymn of a great priestly wind
Arose and failed upon the altar hills;
The high boughs prayed in a revealing sky.

Here where our half-lit ignorance skirts the gulfs
On the dumb bosom of the ambiguous earth,
Here where one knows not even the step in front
And Truth has her throne on the shadowy back of doubt,
On this anguished and precarious field of toil
Outspread beneath some large indifferent gaze,
Impartial witness of our joy and bale,
Our prostrate soil bore the awakening ray.
Here too the vision and prophetic gleam
Lit into miracles common meaningless shapes;
Then the divine afflatus, spent, withdrew,
Unwanted, fading from the mortal's range.
A sacred yearning lingered in its trace,
The worship of a Presence and a Power
Too perfect to be held by death-bound hearts,
The prescience of a marvellous birth to come.
Only a little the god-light can stay:
Spiritual beauty illumining human sight
Lines with its passion and mystery Matter's mask
And squanders eternity on a beat of Time.
As when a soul draws near the sill of birth,
Adjoining mortal time to Timelessness,
A spark of deity lost in Matter's crypt
Its lustre vanishes in the inconscient planes,
That transitory glow of magic fire
So now dissolved in bright accustomed air.
The message ceased and waned the messenger.
The single Call, the uncompanioned Power,
Drew back into some far-off secret world
The hue and marvel of the supernal beam:
She looked no more on our mortality.
The excess of beauty natural to god-kind
Could not uphold its claim on time-born eyes;
Too mystic-real for space-tenancy
Her body of glory was expunged from heaven:
The rarity and wonder lived no more.

There was the common light of earthly day.
Affranchised from the respite of fatigue
Once more the rumour of the speed of Life
Pursued the cycles of her blinded quest.
All sprang to their unvarying daily acts;
The thousand peoples of the soil and tree
Obeyed the unforeseeing instant's urge,
And, leader here with his uncertain mind,
Alone who stares at the future's covered face,
Man lifted up the burden of his fate.

And Savitri too awoke among these tribes
That hastened to join the brilliant Summoner's chant
And, lured by the beauty of the apparent ways,
Acclaimed their portion of ephemeral joy.
Akin to the eternity whence she came,
No part she took in this small happiness;
A mighty stranger in the human field,
The embodied Guest within made no response.
The call that wakes the leap of human mind,
Its chequered eager motion of pursuit,
Its fluttering-hued illusion of desire,
Visited her heart like a sweet alien note.
Time's message of brief light was not for her.
In her there was the anguish of the gods
Imprisoned in our transient human mould,
The deathless conquered by the death of things.
A vaster Nature's joy had once been hers,
But long could keep not its gold heavenly hue
Or stand upon this brittle earthly base.
A narrow movement on Time's deep abysm,
Life's fragile littleness denied the power,
The proud and conscious wideness and the bliss
She had brought with her into the human form,
The calm delight that weds one soul to all,
The key to the flaming doors of ecstasy.

Earth's grain that needs the sap of pleasure and tears
Rejected the undying rapture's boon:
Offered to the daughter of infinity
Her passion-flower of love and doom she gave.
In vain now seemed the splendid sacrifice.
A prodigal of her rich divinity,
Her self and all she was she had lent to men,
Hoping her greater being to implant
And in their body's lives acclimatise
That heaven might native grow on mortal soil.
Hard is it to persuade earth-nature's change;
Mortality bears ill the eternal's touch:
It fears the pure divine intolerance
Of that assault of ether and of fire;
It murmurs at its sorrowless happiness,
Almost with hate repels the light it brings;
It trembles at its naked power of Truth
And the might and sweetness of its absolute Voice.
Inflicting on the heights the abysm's law,
It sullies with its mire heaven's messengers:
Its thorns of fallen nature are the defence
It turns against the saviour hands of Grace;
It meets the sons of God with death and pain.
A glory of lightnings traversing the earth-scene,
Their sun-thoughts fading, darkened by ignorant minds,
Their work betrayed, their good to evil turned,
The cross their payment for the crown they gave,
Only they leave behind a splendid Name.
A fire has come and touched men's hearts and gone;
A few have caught flame and risen to greater life.
Too unlike the world she came to help and save,
Her greatness weighed upon its ignorant breast
And from its dim chasms welled a dire return,
A portion of its sorrow, struggle, fall.
To live with grief, to confront death on her road, —
The mortal's lot became the Immortal's share.

Thus trapped in the gin of earthly destinies,
Awaiting her ordeal's hour abode,
Outcast from her inborn felicity,
Accepting life's obscure terrestrial robe,
Hiding herself even from those she loved,
The godhead greater by a human fate.
A dark foreknowledge separated her
From all of whom she was the star and stay;
Too great to impart the peril and the pain,
In her torn depths she kept the grief to come.
As one who watching over men left blind
Takes up the load of an unwitting race,
Harbouring a foe whom with her heart she must feed,
Unknown her act, unknown the doom she faced,
Unhelped she must foresee and dread and dare.
The long-foreknown and fatal morn was here
Bringing a noon that seemed like every noon.
For Nature walks upon her mighty way
Unheeding when she breaks a soul, a life;
Leaving her slain behind she travels on:
Man only marks and God's all-seeing eyes.
Even in this moment of her soul's despair,
In its grim rendezvous with death and fear,
No cry broke from her lips, no call for aid;
She told the secret of her woe to none:
Calm was her face and courage kept her mute.
Yet only her outward self suffered and strove;
Even her humanity was half divine:
Her spirit opened to the Spirit in all,
Her nature felt all Nature as its own.
Apart, living within, all lives she bore;
Aloof, she carried in herself the world:
Her dread was one with the great cosmic dread,
Her strength was founded on the cosmic mights;
The universal Mother's love was hers.
Against the evil at life's afflicted roots,

Her own calamity its private sign,
Of her pangs she made a mystic poignant sword.
A solitary mind, a world-wide heart,
To the lone Immortal's unshared work she rose.
At first life grieved not in her burdened breast:
On the lap of earth's original somnolence
Inert, released into forgetfulness,
Prone it reposed, unconscious on mind's verge,
Obtuse and tranquil like the stone and star.
In a deep cleft of silence twixt two realms
She lay remote from grief, unsawn by care,
Nothing recalling of the sorrow here.
Then a slow faint remembrance shadowlike moved,
And sighing she laid her hand upon her bosom
And recognised the close and lingering ache,
Deep, quiet, old, made natural to its place,
But knew not why it was there nor whence it came.
The Power that kindles mind was still withdrawn:
Heavy, unwilling were life's servitors
Like workers with no wages of delight;
Sullen, the torch of sense refused to burn;
The unassisted brain found not its past.
Only a vague earth-nature held the frame.
But now she stirred, her life shared the cosmic load.
At the summons of her body's voiceless call
Her strong far-winging spirit travelled back,
Back to the yoke of ignorance and fate,
Back to the labour and stress of mortal days,
Lighting a pathway through strange symbol dreams
Across the ebbing of the seas of sleep.
Her house of Nature felt an unseen sway,
Illumined swiftly were life's darkened rooms,
And memory's casements opened on the hours
And the tired feet of thought approached her doors.
All came back to her: Earth and Love and Doom,
The ancient disputants, encircled her

Like giant figures wrestling in the night:
The godheads from the dim Inconscient born
Awoke to struggle and the pang divine,
And in the shadow of her flaming heart,
At the sombre centre of the dire debate,
A guardian of the unconsoled abyss
Inheriting the long agony of the globe,
A stone-still figure of high and godlike Pain
Stared into Space with fixed regardless eyes
That saw grief's timeless depths but not life's goal.
Afflicted by his harsh divinity,
Bound to his throne, he waited unappeased
The daily oblation of her unwept tears.
All the fierce question of man's hours relived.
The sacrifice of suffering and desire
Earth offers to the immortal Ecstasy
Began again beneath the eternal Hand.
Awake she endured the moments' serried march
And looked on this green smiling dangerous world,
And heard the ignorant cry of living things.
Amid the trivial sounds, the unchanging scene
Her soul arose confronting Time and Fate.
Immobile in herself, she gathered force.
This was the day when Satyavan must die.

END OF CANTO ONE

Canto Two

The Issue

AWHILE, withdrawn in secret fields of thought,
Her mind moved in a many-imaged past
That lived again and saw its end approach:
Dying, it lived imperishably in her;
Transient and vanishing from transient eyes,
Invisible, a fateful ghost of self,
It bore the future on its phantom breast.
Along the fleeting event's far-backward trail
Regressed the stream of the insistent hours,
And on the bank of the mysterious flood
Peopled with well-loved forms now seen no more
And the subtle images of things that were,
Her witness spirit stood reviewing Time.
All that she once had hoped and dreamed and been,
Flew past her eagle-winged through memory's skies.
As in a many-hued flaming inner dawn,
Her life's broad highways and its sweet bypaths
Lay mapped to her sun-clear recording view,
From the bright country of her childhood's days
And the blue mountains of her soaring youth
And the paradise groves and peacock wings of Love
To joy clutched under the silent shadow of doom
In a last turn where heaven raced with hell.
Twelve passionate months led in a day of fate.
An absolute supernatural darkness falls
On man sometimes when he draws near to God:
An hour arrives when fail all Nature's means;
Forced out from the protecting Ignorance
And flung back on his naked primal need,
He at length must cast from him his surface soul
And be the ungarbed entity within:

That hour had fallen now on Savitri.
A point she had reached where life must be in vain
Or, in her unborn element awake,
Her will must cancel her body's destiny.
For only the unborn spirit's timeless power
Can lift the yoke imposed by birth in Time.
Only the Self that builds this figure of self
Can rase the fixed interminable line
That joins these changing names, these numberless lives,
These new oblivious personalities
And keeps still lurking in our conscious acts
The trail of old forgotten thoughts and deeds,
Disown the legacy of our buried selves,
The burdensome heirship to our vanished forms
Accepted blindly by the body and soul.
An episode in an unremembered tale,
Its beginning lost, its motive and plot concealed,
A once living story has prepared and made
Our present fate, child of past energies.
The fixity of the cosmic sequences
Fastened with hidden inevitable links
She must disrupt, dislodge by her soul's force
Her past, a block on the Immortal's road,
Make a rased ground and shape anew her fate.
A colloquy of the original Gods
Meeting upon the borders of the unknown,
Her soul's debate with embodied Nothingness
Must be wrestled out on a dangerous dim background:
Her being must confront its formless Cause,
Against the universe weigh its single self.
On the bare peak where Self is alone with Nought
And life has no sense and love no place to stand,
She must plead her case upon extinction's verge,
In the world's death-cave uphold life's helpless claim
And vindicate her right to be and love.
Altered must be Nature's harsh economy;

Acquittance she must win from her past's bond,
An old account of suffering exhaust,
Strike out from Time the soul's long compound debt
And the heavy servitudes of the Karmic Gods,
The slow revenge of unforgiving Law
And the deep need of universal pain
And hard sacrifice and tragic consequence.
Out of a timeless barrier she must break,
Penetrate with her thinking depths the Void's monstrous hush,
Look into the lonely eyes of immortal Death
And with her nude spirit measure the Infinite's night.
The great and dolorous moment now was close.
A mailed battalion marching to its doom,
The last long days went by with heavy tramp,
Long but too soon to pass, too near the end.
Alone amid the many faces loved,
Aware among unknowing happy hearts,
Her armoured spirit kept watch upon the hours
Listening for a foreseen tremendous step
In the closed beauty of the inhuman wilds.
A combatant in silent dreadful lists,
The world unknowing, for the world she stood:
No helper had she save the Strength within;
There was no witness of terrestrial eyes;
The Gods above and Nature sole below
Were the spectators of that mighty strife.
Around her were the austere sky-pointing hills,
And the green murmurous broad deep-thoughted woods
Muttered incessantly their muffled spell.
A dense magnificent coloured self-wrapped life
Draped in the leaves' vivid emerald monotone
And set with chequered sunbeams and blithe flowers
Immured her destiny's secluded scene.
There had she grown to the stature of her spirit:
The genius of titanic silences
Steeping her soul in its wide loneliness

Had shown to her her self's bare reality
And mated her with her environment.
Its solitude greatened her human hours
With a background of the eternal and unique.
A force of spare direct necessity
Reduced the heavy framework of man's days
And his overburdening mass of outward needs
To a first thin strip of simple animal wants,
And the mighty wildness of the primitive earth
And the brooding multitude of patient trees
And the musing sapphire leisure of the sky
And the solemn weight of the slowly-passing months
Had left in her deep room for thought and God.
There was her drama's radiant prologue lived.
A spot for the eternal's tread on earth
Set in the cloistral yearning of the woods
And watched by the aspiration of the peaks
Appeared through an aureate opening in Time,
Where stillness listening felt the unspoken word
And the hours forgot to pass towards grief and change.
Here with the suddenness divine advents have,
Repeating the marvel of the first descent,
Changing to rapture the dull earthly round,
Love came to her hiding the shadow, Death.
Well might he find in her his perfect shrine.
Since first the earth-being's heavenward growth began,
Through all the long ordeal of the race,
Never a rarer creature bore his shaft,
That burning test of the godhead in our parts,
A lightning from the heights on our abyss.
All in her pointed to a nobler kind.
Near to earth's wideness, intimate with heaven,
Exalted and swift her young large-visioned spirit
Voyaging through worlds of splendour and of calm
Overflew the ways of Thought to unborn things.
Ardent was her self-poised unstumbling will;

Her mind, a sea of white sincerity,
Passionate in flow, had not one turbid wave.
As in a mystic and dynamic dance
A priestess of immaculate ecstasies
Inspired and ruled from Truth's revealing vault
Moves in some prophet cavern of the gods,
A heart of silence in the hands of joy
Inhabited with rich creative beats
A body like a parable of dawn
That seemed a niche for veiled divinity
Or golden temple-door to things beyond.
Immortal rhythms swayed in her time-born steps;
Her look, her smile awoke celestial sense
Even in earth-stuff, and their intense delight
Poured a supernal beauty on men's lives.
A wide self-giving was her native act;
A magnanimity as of sea or sky
Enveloped with its greatness all that came
And gave a sense as of a greatened world:
Her kindly care was a sweet temperate sun,
Her high passion a blue heaven's equipoise.
As might a soul fly like a hunted bird,
Escaping with tired wings from a world of storms,
And a quiet reach like a remembered breast,
In a haven of safety and splendid soft repose
One could drink life back in streams of honey-fire,
Recover the lost habit of happiness,
Feel her bright nature's glorious ambience,
And preen joy in her warmth and colour's rule.
A deep of compassion, a hushed sanctuary,
Her inward help unbarred a gate in heaven;
Love in her was wider than the universe,
The whole world could take refuge in her single heart.
The great unsatisfied godhead here could dwell:
Vacant of the dwarf self's imprisoned air,
Her mood could harbour his sublimer breath

Spiritual that can make all things divine.
For even her gulfs were secrecies of light.
At once she was the stillness and the word,
A continent of self-diffusing peace,
An ocean of untrembling virgin fire;
The strength, the silence of the gods were hers.
In her he found a vastness like his own,
His high warm subtle ether he refound
And moved in her as in his natural home.
In her he met his own eternity.

Till then no mournful line had barred this ray.
On the frail breast of this precarious earth,
Since her orbed sight in its breath-fastened house,
Opening in sympathy with happier stars
Where life is not exposed to sorrowful change,
Remembered beauty death-claimed lids ignore
And wondered at this world of fragile forms
Carried on canvas-strips of shimmering Time,
The impunity of unborn Mights was hers.
Although she leaned to bear the human load,
Her walk kept still the measures of the gods.
Earth's breath had failed to stain that brilliant glass:
Unsmeared with the dust of our mortal atmosphere
It still reflected heaven's spiritual joy.
Almost they saw who lived within her light
Her playmate in the sempiternal spheres
Descended from its unattainable realms
In her attracting advent's luminous wake,
The white-fire dragon-bird of endless bliss
Drifting with burning wings above her days:
Heaven's tranquil shield guarded the missioned child.
A glowing orbit was her early term,
Years like gold raiment of the gods that pass;
Her youth sat throned in calm felicity.
But joy cannot endure until the end:

There is a darkness in terrestrial things
That will not suffer long too glad a note.
On her too closed the inescapable Hand:
The armed Immortal bore the snare of Time.
One dealt with her who meets the burdened great.
Assigner of the ordeal and the path
Who chooses in this holocaust of the soul
Death, fall and sorrow as the spirit's goads,
The dubious godhead with his torch of pain
Lit up the chasm of the unfinished world
And called her to fill with her vast self the abyss.
August and pitiless in his calm outlook,
Heightening the Eternal's dreadful strategy,
He measured the difficulty with the might
And dug more deep the gulf that all must cross.
Assailing her divinest elements,
He made her heart kin to the striving human heart
And forced her strength to its appointed road.
For this she had accepted mortal breath;
To wrestle with the Shadow she had come
And must confront the riddle of man's birth
And life's brief struggle in dumb Matter's night.
Whether to bear with Ignorance and death
Or hew the ways of Immortality,
To win or lose the godlike game for man,
Was her soul's issue thrown with Destiny's dice.
But not to submit and suffer was she born;
To lead, to deliver was her glorious part.
Here was no fabric of terrestrial make
Fit for a day's use by busy careless Powers.
An image fluttering on the screen of Fate,
Half-animated for a passing show,
Or a castaway on the ocean of Desire
Flung to the eddies in a ruthless sport
And tossed along the gulfs of Circumstance,
A creature born to bend beneath the yoke,

A chattel and a plaything of Time's lords,
Or one more pawn who comes destined to be pushed
One slow move forward on a measureless board
In the chess-play of the earth-soul with Doom, —
Such is the human figure drawn by Time.
A conscious frame was here, a self-born Force.
In this enigma of the dusk of God,
This slow and strange uneasy compromise
Of limiting Nature with a limitless Soul,
Where all must move between an ordered Chance
And an uncaring blind Necessity,
Too high the fire spiritual dare not blaze.
If once it met the intense original Flame,
An answering touch might shatter all measures made
And earth sink down with the weight of the Infinite.
A gaol is this immense material world:
Across each road stands armed a stone-eyed Law,
At every gate the huge dim sentinels pace.
A grey tribunal of the Ignorance,
An Inquisition of the priests of Night
In judgment sit on the adventurer soul,
And the dual tables and the Karmic norm
Restrain the Titan in us and the God:
Pain with its lash, joy with its silver bribe
Guard the Wheel's circling immobility.
A bond is put on the high-climbing mind,
A seal on the too large wide-open heart;
Death stays the journeying discoverer, Life.
Thus is the throne of the Inconscient safe
While the tardy coilings of the aeons pass
And the Animal browses in the sacred fence
And the gold Hawk can cross the skies no more.
But one stood up and lit the limitless flame.
Arraigned by the dark Power that hates all bliss
In the dire court where life must pay for joy,
Sentenced by the mechanic justicer

To the afflicting penalty of man's hopes,
Her head she bowed not to the stark decree
Baring her helpless heart to destiny's stroke.
So bows and must the mind-born will in man
Obedient to the statutes fixed of old,
Admitting without appeal the nether gods.
In her the superhuman cast its seed.
Inapt to fold its mighty wings of dream
Her spirit refused to hug the common soil,
Or, finding all life's golden meanings robbed,
Compound with earth, struck from the starry list,
Or quench with black despair the God-given light.
Accustomed to the eternal and the true,
Her being conscious of its divine founts
Asked not from mortal frailty pain's relief,
Patched not with failure bargain or compromise.
A work she had to do, a word to speak:
Writing the unfinished story of her soul
In thoughts and actions graved in Nature's book,
She accepted not to close the luminous page,
Cancel her commerce with eternity,
Or set a signature of weak assent
To the brute balance of the world's exchange.
A force in her that toiled since earth was made,
Accomplishing in life the great world-plan,
Pursuing after death immortal aims,
Repugned to admit frustration's barren role,
Forfeit the meaning of her birth in Time,
Obey the government of the casual fact
Or yield her high destiny up to passing Chance.
In her own self she found her high recourse;
She matched with the iron law her sovereign right:
Her single will opposed the cosmic rule.
To stay the wheels of Doom this greatness rose.
At the Unseen's knock upon her hidden gates
Her strength made greater by the lightning's touch

Awoke from slumber in her heart's recess.
It bore the stroke of That which kills and saves.
Across the awful march no eye can see,
Barring its dreadful route no will can change,
She faced the engines of the universe;
A heart stood in the way of the driving wheels:
Its giant workings paused in front of a mind,
Its stark conventions met the flame of a soul.
A magic leverage suddenly is caught
That moves the veiled Ineffable's timeless will:
A prayer, a master act, a king idea
Can link man's strength to a transcendent Force.
Then miracle is made the common rule,
One mighty deed can change the course of things;
A lonely thought becomes omnipotent.
All now seems Nature's massed machinery;
An endless servitude to material rule
And long determination's rigid chain,
Her firm and changeless habits aping Law,
Her empire of unconscious deft device
Annul the claim of man's free human will.
He too is a machine amid machines;
A piston brain pumps out the shapes of thought,
A beating heart cuts out emotion's modes;
An insentient energy fabricates a soul.
Or the figure of the world reveals the signs
Of a tied Chance repeating her old steps
In circles around Matter's binding-posts.
A random series of inept events
To which reason lends illusive sense, is here,
Or the empiric Life's instinctive search,
Or a vast ignorant mind's colossal work.
But wisdom comes, and vision grows within:
Then Nature's instrument crowns himself her king;
He feels his witnessing self and conscious power;
His soul steps back and sees the Light supreme.

A Godhead stands behind the brute machine.
This truth broke in in a triumph of fire;
A victory was won for God in man,
The deity revealed its hidden face.
The great World-Mother now in her arose:
A living choice reversed fate's cold dead turn,
Affirmed the spirit's tread on Circumstance,
Pressed back the senseless dire revolving Wheel
And stopped the mute march of Necessity.
A flaming warrior from the eternal peaks
Empowered to force the door denied and closed
Smote from Death's visage its dumb absolute
And burst the bounds of consciousness and Time.

END OF CANTO TWO

Canto Three

The Yoga of the King:
The Yoga of the Soul's Release

A WORLD'S desire compelled her mortal birth.
One in the front of the immemorial quest,
Protagonist of the mysterious play
In which the Unknown pursues himself through forms
And limits his eternity by the hours
And the blind Void struggles to live and see,
A thinker and toiler in the ideal's air,
Brought down to earth's dumb need her radiant power.
His was a spirit that stooped from larger spheres
Into our province of ephemeral sight,
A colonist from immortality.
A pointing beam on earth's uncertain roads,
His birth held up a symbol and a sign;
His human self like a translucent cloak
Covered the All-Wise who leads the unseeing world.
Affiliated to cosmic Space and Time
And paying here God's debt to earth and man
A greater sonship was his divine right.
Although consenting to mortal ignorance,
His knowledge shared the Light ineffable.
A strength of the original Permanence
Entangled in the moment and its flow,
He kept the vision of the Vasts behind:
A power was in him from the Unknowable.
An archivist of the symbols of the Beyond,
A treasurer of superhuman dreams,
He bore the stamp of mighty memories
And shed their grandiose ray on human life.
His days were a long growth to the Supreme.
A skyward being nourishing its roots

On sustenance from occult spiritual founts
Climbed through white rays to meet an unseen Sun.
His soul lived as eternity's delegate,
His mind was like a fire assailing heaven,
His will a hunter in the trails of light.
An ocean impulse lifted every breath;
Each action left the footprints of a god,
Each moment was a beat of puissant wings.
The little plot of our mortality
Touched by this tenant from the heights became
A playground of the living Infinite.
This bodily appearance is not all;
The form deceives, the person is a mask;
Hid deep in man celestial powers can dwell.
His fragile ship conveys through the sea of years
An incognito of the Imperishable.
A spirit that is a flame of God abides,
A fiery portion of the Wonderful,
Artist of his own beauty and delight,
Immortal in our mortal poverty.
This sculptor of the forms of the Infinite,
This screened unrecognised Inhabitant,
Initiate of his own veiled mysteries,
Hides in a small dumb seed his cosmic thought.
In the mute strength of the occult Idea
Determining predestined shape and act,
Passenger from life to life, from scale to scale,
Changing his imaged self from form to form,
He regards the icon growing by his gaze
And in the worm foresees the coming god.
At last the traveller in the paths of Time
Arrives on the frontiers of eternity.
In the transient symbol of humanity draped,
He feels his substance of undying self
And loses his kinship to mortality.
A beam of the Eternal smites his heart,

His thought stretches into infinitude;
All in him turns to spirit vastnesses.
His soul breaks out to join the Oversoul,
His life is oceaned by that superlife.
He has drunk from the breasts of the Mother of the worlds;
A topless Supernature fills his frame:
She adopts his spirit's everlasting ground
As the security of her changing world
And shapes the figure of her unborn mights.
Immortally she conceives herself in him,
In the creature the unveiled Creatrix works:
Her face is seen through his face, her eyes through his eyes;
Her being is his through a vast identity.
Then is revealed in man the overt Divine.
A static Oneness and dynamic Power
Descend in him, the integral Godhead's seals;
His soul and body take that splendid stamp.
A long dim preparation is man's life,
A circle of toil and hope and war and peace
Tracked out by Life on Matter's obscure ground.
In his climb to a peak no feet have ever trod,
He seeks through a penumbra shot with flame
A veiled reality half-known, ever missed,
A search for something or someone never found,
Cult of an ideal never made real here,
An endless spiral of ascent and fall
Until at last is reached the giant point
Through which his Glory shines for whom we were made
And we break into the infinity of God.
Across our nature's border line we escape
Into Supernature's arc of living light.
This now was witnessed in that son of Force;
In him that high transition laid its base.
Original and supernal Immanence
Of which all Nature's process is the art,
The cosmic Worker set his secret hand

To turn this frail mud-engine to heaven-use.
A Presence wrought behind the ambiguous screen:
It beat his soil to bear a Titan's weight,
Refining half-hewn blocks of natural strength
It built his soul into a statued god.
The Craftsman of the magic stuff of self
Who labours at his high and difficult plan
In the wide workshop of the wonderful world,
Modelled in inward Time his rhythmic parts.
Then came the abrupt transcendent miracle:
The masked immaculate Grandeur could outline,
At travail in the occult womb of life,
His dreamed magnificence of things to be.
A crown of the architecture of the worlds,
A mystery of married Earth and Heaven
Annexed divinity to the mortal scheme.
A Seer was born, a shining Guest of Time.
For him mind's limiting firmament ceased above.
In the griffin forefront of the Night and Day
A gap was rent in the all-concealing vault;
The conscious ends of being went rolling back:
The landmarks of the little person fell,
The island ego joined its continent.
Overpassed was this world of rigid limiting forms:
Life's barriers opened into the Unknown.
Abolished were conception's covenants
And, striking off subjection's rigorous clause,
Annulled the soul's treaty with Nature's nescience.
All the grey inhibitions were torn off
And broken the intellect's hard and lustrous lid;
Truth unpartitioned found immense sky-room;
An empyrean vision saw and knew;
The bounded mind became a boundless light,
The finite self mated with infinity.
His march now soared into an eagle's flight.
Out of apprenticeship to Ignorance

Wisdom upraised him to her master craft
And made him an archmason of the soul,
A builder of the Immortal's secret house,
An aspirant to supernal Timelessness:
Freedom and empire called to him from on high;
Above mind's twilight and life's star-led night
There gleamed the dawn of a spiritual day.

As so he grew into his larger self,
Humanity framed his movements less and less;
A greater being saw a greater world.
A fearless will for knowledge dared to erase
The lines of safety Reason draws that bar
Mind's soar, soul's dive into the Infinite.
Even his first steps broke our small earth-bounds
And loitered in a vaster freer air.
In hands sustained by a transfiguring Might
He caught up lightly like a giant's bow
Left slumbering in a sealed and secret cave
The powers that sleep unused in man within.
He made of miracle a normal act
And turned to a common part of divine works,
Magnificently natural at this height,
Efforts that would shatter the strength of mortal hearts,
Pursued in a royalty of mighty ease
Aims too sublime for Nature's daily will:
The gifts of the spirit crowding came to him;
They were his life's pattern and his privilege.
A pure perception lent its lucent joy:
Its intimate vision waited not to think;
It enveloped all Nature in a single glance,
It looked into the very self of things;
Deceived no more by form he saw the soul.
In beings it knew what lurked to them unknown;
It seized the idea in mind, the wish in the heart;
It plucked out from grey folds of secrecy

The motives which from their own sight men hide.
He felt the beating life in other men
Invade him with their happiness and their grief;
Their love, their anger, their unspoken hopes
Entered in currents or in pouring waves
Into the immobile ocean of his calm.
He heard the inspired sound of his own thoughts
Re-echoed in the vault of other minds;
The world's thought-streams travelled into his ken;
His inner self grew near to others' selves
And bore a kinship's weight, a common tie,
Yet stood untouched, king of itself, alone.
A magical accord quickened and attuned
To ethereal symphonies the old earthy strings;
It raised the servitors of mind and life
To be happy partners in the soul's response,
Tissue and nerve were turned to sensitive chords,
Records of lustre and ecstasy; it made
The body's means the spirit's acolytes.
A heavenlier function with a finer mode
Lit with its grace man's outward earthliness;
The soul's experience of its deeper sheaths
No more slept drugged by Matter's dominance.
In the dead wall closing us from wider self,
Into a secrecy of apparent sleep,
The mystic tract beyond our waking thoughts,
A door parted, built in by Matter's force,
Releasing things unseized by earthly sense:
A world unseen, unknown by outward mind
Appeared in the silent spaces of the soul.
He sat in secret chambers looking out
Into the luminous countries of the unborn
Where all things dreamed by the mind are seen and true
And all that the life longs for is drawn close.
He saw the Perfect in their starry homes
Wearing the glory of a deathless form,

Lain in the arms of the Eternal's peace,
Rapt in the heart-beats of God-ecstasy.
He lived in the mystic space where thought is born
And will is nursed by an ethereal Power
And fed on the white milk of the Eternal's strengths
Till it grows into the likeness of a god.
In the Witness's occult rooms with mind-built walls
On hidden interiors, lurking passages
Opened the windows of the inner sight.
He owned the house of undivided Time.
Lifting the heavy curtain of the flesh
He stood upon a threshold serpent-watched,
And peered into gleaming endless corridors,
Silent and listening in the silent heart
For the coming of the new and the unknown.
He gazed across the empty stillnesses
And heard the footsteps of the undreamed Idea
In the far avenues of the Beyond.
He heard the secret Voice, the Word that knows,
And saw the secret face that is our own.
The inner planes uncovered their crystal doors;
Strange powers and influences touched his life.
A vision came of higher realms than ours,
A consciousness of brighter fields and skies,
Of beings less circumscribed than brief-lived men
And subtler bodies than these passing frames,
Objects too fine for our material grasp,
Acts vibrant with a superhuman light
And movements pushed by a superconscient force,
And joys that never flowed through mortal limbs,
And lovelier scenes than earth's and happier lives.
A consciousness of beauty and of bliss,
A knowledge which became what it perceived,
Replaced the separated sense and heart
And drew all Nature into its embrace.
The mind leaned out to meet the hidden worlds:

Air glowed and teemed with marvellous shapes and hues,
In the nostrils quivered celestial fragrances,
On the tongue lingered the honey of paradise.
A channel of universal harmony,
Hearing was a stream of magic audience,
A bed for occult sounds earth cannot hear.
Out of a covert tract of slumber self
The voice came of a truth submerged, unknown
That flows beneath the cosmic surfaces,
Only mid an omniscient silence heard,
Held by intuitive heart and secret sense.
It caught the burden of secrecies sealed and dumb,
It voiced the unfulfilled demand of earth
And the song of promise of unrealised heavens
And all that hides in an omnipotent Sleep.
In the unceasing drama carried by Time
On its long listening flood that bears the world's
Insoluble doubt on a pilgrimage without goal,
A laughter of sleepless pleasure foamed and spumed
And murmurings of desire that cannot die:
A cry came of the world's delight to be,
The grandeur and greatness of its will to live,
Recall of the soul's adventure into space,
A traveller through the magic centuries
And being's labour in Matter's universe,
Its search for the mystic meaning of its birth
And joy of high spiritual response,
Its throb of satisfaction and content
In all the sweetness of the gifts of life,
Its large breath and pulse and thrill of hope and fear,
Its taste of pangs and tears and ecstasy,
Its rapture's poignant beat of sudden bliss,
The sob of its passion and unending pain.
The murmur and whisper of the unheard sounds
Which crowd around our hearts but find no window
To enter, swelled into a canticle

Of all that suffers to be still unknown
And all that labours vainly to be born
And all the sweetness none will ever taste
And all the beauty that will never be.
Inaudible to our deaf mortal ears
The wide world-rhythms wove their stupendous chant
To which life strives to fit our rhyme-beats here,
Melting our limits in the illimitable,
Tuning the finite to infinity.
A low muttering rose from the subconscient caves,
The stammer of the primal ignorance;
Answer to that inarticulate questioning,
There stooped with lightning neck and thunder's wings
A radiant hymn to the Inexpressible
And the anthem of the superconscient light.
All was revealed there none can here express;
Vision and dream were fables spoken by truth
Or symbols more veridical than fact,
Or were truths enforced by supernatural seals.
Immortal eyes approached and looked in his,
And beings of many kingdoms neared and spoke:
The ever-living whom we name as dead
Could leave their glory beyond death and birth
To utter the wisdom which exceeds all phrase:
The kings of evil and the kings of good,
Appellants at the reason's judgment seat,
Proclaimed the gospel of their opposites,
And all believed themselves spokesmen of God:
The gods of light and titans of the dark
Battled for his soul as for a costly prize.
In every hour loosed from the quiver of Time
There rose a song of new discovery,
A bow-twang's hum of young experiment.
Each day was a spiritual romance,
As if he was born into a bright new world;
Adventure leaped an unexpected friend,

And danger brought a keen sweet tang of joy;
Each happening was a deep experience.
There were high encounters, epic colloquies,
And counsels came couched in celestial speech,
And honeyed pleadings breathed from occult lips
To help the heart to yield to rapture's call,
And sweet temptations stole from beauty's realms
And sudden ecstasies from a world of bliss.
It was a region of wonder and delight.
All now his bright clairaudience could receive;
A contact thrilled of mighty unknown things.
Awakened to new unearthly closenesses,
The touch replied to subtle infinities,
And with a silver cry of opening gates
Sight's lightnings leaped into the invisible.
Ever his consciousness and vision grew;
They took an ampler sweep, a loftier flight;
He passed the border marked for Matter's rule
And passed the zone where thought replaces life.
Out of this world of signs suddenly he came
Into a silent self where world was not
And looked beyond into a nameless vast.
These symbol figures lost their right to live,
All tokens dropped our sense can recognise;
There the heart beat no more at body's touch,
There the eyes gazed no more on beauty's shape.
In rare and lucent intervals of hush
Into a signless region he could soar
Packed with the deep contents of formlessness
Where world was into a single being rapt
And all was known by the light of identity
And Spirit was its own self-evidence.
The Supreme's gaze looked out through human eyes
And saw all things and creatures as itself
And knew all thought and word as its own voice.
There unity is too close for search and clasp

And love is a yearning of the One for the One,
And beauty is a sweet difference of the Same
And oneness is the soul of multitude.
There all the truths unite in a single Truth,
And all ideas rejoin Reality.
There knowing herself by her own termless self,
Wisdom supernal, wordless, absolute
Sat uncompanioned in the eternal Calm,
All-seeing, motionless, sovereign and alone.
There knowledge needs not words to embody Idea;
Idea, seeking a house in boundlessness,
Weary of its homeless immortality,
Asks not in thought's carved brilliant cell to rest
Whose single window's clipped outlook on things
Sees only a little arc of God's vast sky.
The boundless with the boundless there consorts;
While there, one can be wider than the world;
While there, one is one's own infinity.
His centre was no more in earthly mind;
A power of seeing silence filled his limbs:
Caught by a voiceless white epiphany
Into a vision that surpasses forms,
Into a living that surpasses life,
He neared the still consciousness sustaining all.
The voice that only by speech can move the mind
Became a silent knowledge in the soul;
The strength that only in action feels its truth
Was lodged now in a mute omnipotent peace.
A leisure in the labour of the worlds,
A pause in the joy and anguish of the search
Restored the stress of Nature to God's calm.
A vast unanimity ended life's debate.
The war of thoughts that fathers the universe,
The clash of forces struggling to prevail
In the tremendous shock that lights a star
As in the building of a grain of dust,

The grooves that turn their dumb ellipse in space
Ploughed by the seeking of the world's desire,
The long regurgitations of Time's flood,
The torment edging the dire force of lust
That wakes kinetic in earth's dullard slime
And carves a personality out of mud,
The sorrow by which Nature's hunger is fed,
The oestrus which creates with fire of pain,
The fate that punishes virtue with defeat,
The tragedy that destroys long happiness,
The weeping of Love, the quarrel of the Gods,
Ceased in a truth which lives in its own light.
His soul stood free, a witness and a king.
Absorbed no more in the moment-ridden flux
Where mind incessantly drifts as on a raft
Hurried from phenomenon to phenomenon,
He abode at rest in indivisible Time.
As if a story long written but acted now,
In his present he held his future and his past,
Felt in the seconds the uncounted years
And saw the hours like dots upon a page.
An aspect of the unknown Reality
Altered the meaning of the cosmic scene.
This huge material universe became
A small result of a stupendous force:
Overtaking the moment the eternal Ray
Illumined That which never yet was made.
Thought lay down in a mighty voicelessness;
The toiling Thinker widened and grew still,
Wisdom transcendent touched his quivering heart:
His soul could sail beyond thought's luminous bar;
Mind screened no more the shoreless infinite.
Across a void retreating sky he glimpsed
Through a last glimmer and drift of vanishing stars
The superconscient realms of motionless Peace
Where judgment ceases and the word is mute

And the Unconceived lies pathless and alone.
There came not form or any mounting voice;
There only were Silence and the Absolute.
Out of that stillness mind new-born arose
And woke to truths once inexpressible,
And forms appeared, dumbly significant,
A seeing thought, a self-revealing voice.
He knew the source from which his spirit came:
Movement was married to the immobile Vast;
He plunged his roots into the Infinite,
He based his life upon eternity.

Only awhile at first these heavenlier states,
These large wide-poised upliftings could endure.
The high and luminous tension breaks too soon,
The body's stone stillness and the life's hushed trance,
The breathless might and calm of silent mind;
Or slowly they fail as sets a golden day.
The restless nether members tire of peace;
A nostalgia of old little works and joys,
A need to call back small familiar selves,
To tread the accustomed and inferior way,
The need to rest in a natural pose of fall,
As a child who learns to walk can walk not long,
Replace the titan will for ever to climb,
On the heart's altar dim the sacred fire.
An old pull of subconscious cords renews;
It draws the unwilling spirit from the heights,
Or a dull gravitation drags us down
To the blind driven inertia of our base.
This too the supreme Diplomat can use,
He makes our fall a means for greater rise.
For into ignorant Nature's gusty field,
Into the half-ordered chaos of mortal life
The formless Power, the Self of eternal light
Follow in the shadow of the spirit's descent;

The twin duality for ever one
Chooses its home mid the tumults of the sense.
He comes unseen into our darker parts
And, curtained by the darkness, does his work,
A subtle and all-knowing guest and guide,
Till they too feel the need and will to change.
All here must learn to obey a higher law,
Our body's cells must hold the Immortal's flame.
Else would the spirit reach alone its source
Leaving a half-saved world to its dubious fate.
Nature would ever labour unredeemed;
Our earth would ever spin unhelped in Space,
And this immense creation's purpose fail
Till at last the frustrate universe sank undone.
Even his godlike strength to rise must fall:
His greater consciousness withdrew behind;
Dim and eclipsed, his human outside strove
To feel again the old sublimities,
Bring the high saving touch, the ethereal flame,
Call back to its dire need the divine Force.
Always the power poured back like sudden rain,
Or slowly in his breast a presence grew;
It clambered back to some remembered height
Or soared above the peak from which it fell.
Each time he rose there was a larger poise,
A dwelling on a higher spirit plane;
The Light remained in him a longer space.
In this oscillation between earth and heaven,
In this ineffable communion's climb
There grew in him as grows a waxing moon
The glory of the integer of his soul.
A union of the Real with the unique,
A gaze of the Alone from every face,
The presence of the Eternal in the hours
Widening the mortal mind's half-look on things,
Bridging the gap between man's force and Fate

Made whole the fragment-being we are here.
At last was won a firm spiritual poise,
A constant lodging in the Eternal's realm,
A safety in the Silence and the Ray,
A settlement in the Immutable.
His heights of being lived in the still Self;
His mind could rest on a supernal ground
And look down on the magic and the play
Where the God-child lies on the lap of Night and Dawn
And the Everlasting puts on Time's disguise.
To the still heights and to the troubled depths
His equal spirit gave its vast assent:
A poised serenity of tranquil strength,
A wide unshaken look on Time's unrest
Faced all experience with unaltered peace.
Indifferent to the sorrow and delight,
Untempted by the marvel and the call,
Immobile it beheld the flux of things,
Calm and apart supported all that is:
His spirit's stillness helped the toiling world.
Inspired by silence and the closed eyes' sight
His force could work with a new luminous art
On the crude material from which all is made
And the refusal of Inertia's mass
And the grey front of the world's Ignorance
And nescient Matter and the huge error of life.
As a sculptor chisels a deity out of stone
He slowly chipped off the dark envelope,
Line of defence of Nature's ignorance,
The illusion and mystery of the Inconscient
In whose black pall the Eternal wraps his head
That he may act unknown in cosmic Time.
A splendour of self-creation from the peaks,
A transfiguration in the mystic depths,
A happier cosmic working could begin
And fashion the world-shape in him anew,

God found in Nature, Nature fulfilled in God.
Already in him was seen that task of Power:
Life made its home on the high tops of self;
His soul, mind, heart became a single sun;
Only life's lower reaches remained dim.
But there too, in the uncertain shadow of life,
There was a labour and a fiery breath;
The ambiguous cowled celestial puissance worked
Watched by the inner Witness's moveless peace.
Even on the struggling Nature left below
Strong periods of illumination came:
Lightnings of glory after glory burned,
Experience was a tale of blaze and fire,
Air rippled round the argosies of the Gods,
Strange riches sailed to him from the Unseen;
Splendours of insight filled the blank of thought,
Knowledge spoke to the inconscient stillnesses,
Rivers poured down of bliss and luminous force,
Visits of beauty, storm-sweeps of delight
Rained from the all-powerful Mystery above.
Thence stooped the eagles of Omniscience.
A dense veil was rent, a mighty whisper heard;
Repeated in the privacy of his soul,
A wisdom-cry from rapt transcendences
Sang on the mountains of an unseen world;
The voices that an inner listening hears
Conveyed to him their prophet utterances,
And flame-wrapped outbursts of the immortal Word
And flashes of an occult revealing Light
Approached him from the unreachable Secrecy.
An inspired Knowledge sat enthroned within
Whose seconds illumined more than reason's years:
An ictus of revealing lustre fell
As if a pointing accent upon Truth,
And like a sky-flare showing all the ground
A swift intuitive discernment shone.

One glance could separate the true and false,
Or raise its rapid torch-fire in the dark
To check the claimants crowding through mind's gates
Covered by the forged signatures of the gods,
Detect the magic bride in her disguise
Or scan the apparent face of thought and life.

Oft inspiration with her lightning feet,
A sudden messenger from the all-seeing tops,
Traversed the soundless corridors of his mind
Bringing her rhythmic sense of hidden things.
A music spoke transcending mortal speech.
As if from a golden phial of the All-Bliss,
A joy of light, a joy of sudden sight,
A rapture of the thrilled undying Word
Poured into his heart as into an empty cup,
A repetition of God's first delight
Creating in a young and virgin Time.
In a brief moment caught, a little space,
All-Knowledge packed into great wordless thoughts
Lodged in the expectant stillness of his depths
A crystal of the ultimate Absolute,
A portion of the inexpressible Truth
Revealed by silence to the silent soul.
The intense creatrix in his stillness wrought;
Her power fallen speechless grew more intimate;
She looked upon the seen and the unforeseen,
Unguessed domains she made her native field.
All-vision gathered into a single ray,
As when the eyes stare at an invisible point
Till through the intensity of one luminous spot
An apocalypse of a world of images
Enters into the kingdom of the seer.
A great nude arm of splendour suddenly rose;
It rent the gauze opaque of Nescience:
Her lifted finger's keen unthinkable tip

Bared with a stab of flame the closed Beyond.
An eye awake in voiceless heights of trance,
A mind plucking at the unimaginable,
Overleaping with a sole and perilous bound
The high black wall hiding superconscience,
She broke in with inspired speech for scythe
And plundered the Unknowable's vast estate.
A gleaner of infinitesimal grains of Truth,
A sheaf-binder of infinite experience,
She pierced the guarded mysteries of World-Force
And her magic methods wrapped in a thousand veils;
Or she gathered the lost secrets dropped by Time
In the dust and crannies of his mounting route
Mid old forsaken dreams of hastening Mind
And buried remnants of forgotten space.
A traveller between summit and abyss,
She joined the distant ends, the viewless deeps,
Or streaked along the roads of Heaven and Hell
Pursuing all knowledge like a questing hound.
A reporter and scribe of hidden wisdom talk,
Her shining minutes of celestial speech,
Passed through the masked office of the occult mind,
Transmitting gave to prophet and to seer
The inspired body of the mystic Truth.
A recorder of the inquiry of the gods,
Spokesman of the silent seeings of the Supreme,
She brought immortal words to mortal men.
Above the reason's brilliant slender curve,
Released like radiant air dimming a moon,
Broad spaces of a vision without line
Or limit swam into his spirit's ken.
Oceans of being met his voyaging soul
Calling to infinite discovery;
Timeless domains of joy and absolute power
Stretched out surrounded by the eternal hush;
The ways that lead to endless happiness

Ran like dream-smiles through meditating vasts:
Disclosed stood up in a gold moment's blaze
White sun-steppes in the pathless Infinite.
Along a naked curve in bourneless Self
The points that run through the closed heart of things
Shadowed the indeterminable line
That carries the Everlasting through the years.
The magician order of the cosmic Mind
Coercing the freedom of infinity
With the stark array of Nature's symbol facts
And life's incessant signals of event,
Transmuted chance recurrences into laws,
A chaos of signs into a universe.
Out of the rich wonders and the intricate whorls
Of the spirit's dance with Matter as its mask
The balance of the world's design grew clear,
Its symmetry of self-arranged effects
Managed in the deep perspectives of the soul,
And the realism of its illusive art,
Its logic of infinite intelligence,
Its magic of a changing eternity.
A glimpse was caught of things for ever unknown:
The letters stood out of the unmoving Word:
In the immutable nameless Origin
Was seen emerging as from fathomless seas
The trail of the Ideas that made the world,
And, sown in the black earth of Nature's trance,
The seed of the Spirit's blind and huge desire
From which the tree of cosmos was conceived
And spread its magic arms through a dream of space.
Immense realities took on a shape:
There looked out from the shadow of the Unknown
The bodiless Namelessness that saw God born
And tries to gain from the mortal's mind and soul
A deathless body and a divine name.
The immobile lips, the great surreal wings,

The visage masked by superconscient Sleep,
The eyes with their closed lids that see all things,
Appeared of the Architect who builds in trance.
The original Desire born in the Void
Peered out; he saw the hope that never sleeps,
The feet that run behind a fleeting fate,
The ineffable meaning of the endless dream.
Hardly for a moment glimpsed viewless to Mind,
As if a torch held by a power of God,
The radiant world of the everlasting Truth
Glimmered like a faint star bordering the night
Above the golden Overmind's shimmering ridge.
Even were caught as through a cunning veil
The smile of love that sanctions the long game,
The calm indulgence and maternal breasts
Of Wisdom suckling the child-laughter of Chance,
Silence, the nurse of the Almighty's power,
The omniscient hush, womb of the immortal Word,
And of the Timeless the still brooding face,
And the creative eye of Eternity.
The inspiring goddess entered a mortal's breast,
Made there her study of divining thought
And sanctuary of prophetic speech
And sat upon the tripod seat of mind:
All was made wide above, all lit below.
In darkness' core she dug out wells of light,
On the undiscovered depths imposed a form,
Lent a vibrant cry to the unuttered vasts,
And through great shoreless, voiceless, starless breadths
Bore earthward fragments of revealing thought
Hewn from the silence of the Ineffable.
A Voice in the heart uttered the unspoken Name,
A dream of seeking Thought wandering through Space
Entered the invisible and forbidden house:
The treasure was found of a supernal Day.
In the deep subconscient glowed her jewel-lamp;

Lifted, it showed the riches of the Cave
Where, by the miser traffickers of sense
Unused, guarded beneath Night's dragon paws,
In folds of velvet darkness draped they sleep
Whose priceless value could have saved the world.
A darkness carrying morning in its breast
Looked for the eternal wide returning gleam,
Waiting the advent of a larger ray
And rescue of the lost herds of the Sun.
In a splendid extravagance of the waste of God
Dropped carelessly in creation's spendthrift work,
Left in the chantiers of the bottomless world
And stolen by the robbers of the Deep,
The golden shekels of the Eternal lie,
Hoarded from touch and view and thought's desire,
Locked in blind antres of the ignorant flood,
Lest men should find them and be even as Gods.
A vision lightened on the viewless heights,
A wisdom illumined from the voiceless depths:
A deeper interpretation greatened Truth,
A grand reversal of the Night and Day;
All the world's values changed heightening life's aim;
A wiser word, a larger thought came in
Than what the slow labour of human mind can bring,
A secret sense awoke that could perceive
A Presence and a Greatness everywhere.
The universe was not now this senseless whirl
Borne round inert on an immense machine;
It cast away its grandiose lifeless front,
A mechanism no more or work of Chance,
But a living movement of the body of God.
A spirit hid in forces and in forms
Was the spectator of the mobile scene:
The beauty and the ceaseless miracle
Let in a glow of the Unmanifest:
The formless Everlasting moved in it

Seeking its own perfect form in souls and things.
Life kept no more a dull and meaningless shape.
In the struggle and upheaval of the world
He saw the labour of a godhead's birth.
A secret knowledge masked as Ignorance;
Fate covered with an unseen necessity
The game of chance of an omnipotent Will.
A glory and a rapture and a charm,
The All-Blissful sat unknown within the heart;
Earth's pains were the ransom of its prisoned delight.
A glad communion tinged the passing hours;
The days were travellers on a destined road,
The nights companions of his musing spirit.
A heavenly impetus quickened all his breast;
The trudge of Time changed to a splendid march;
The divine Dwarf towered to unconquered worlds,
Earth grew too narrow for his victory.
Once only registering the heavy tread
Of a blind Power on human littleness,
Life now became a sure approach to God,
Existence a divine experiment
And cosmos the soul's opportunity.
The world was a conception and a birth
Of Spirit in Matter into living forms,
And Nature bore the Immortal in her womb,
That she might climb through him to eternal life.
His being lay down in bright immobile peace
And bathed in wells of pure spiritual light;
It wandered in wide fields of wisdom-self
Lit by the rays of an everlasting sun.
Even his body's subtle self within
Could raise the earthly parts towards higher things
And feel on it the breath of heavenlier air.
Already it journeyed towards divinity:
Upbuoyed upon winged winds of rapid joy,
Upheld to a Light it could not always hold,

It left mind's distance from the Truth supreme
And lost life's incapacity for bliss.
All now suppressed in us began to emerge.

Thus came his soul's release from Ignorance,
His mind and body's first spiritual change.
A wide God-knowledge poured down from above,
A new world-knowledge broadened from within:
His daily thoughts looked up to the True and One,
His commonest doings welled from an inner Light.
Awakened to the lines that Nature hides,
Attuned to her movements that exceed our ken,
He grew one with a covert universe.
His grasp surprised her mightiest energies' springs;
He spoke with the unknown Guardians of the worlds,
Forms he descried our mortal eyes see not.
His wide eyes bodied viewless entities,
He saw the cosmic forces at their work
And felt the occult impulse behind man's will.
Time's secrets were to him an oft-read book;
The records of the future and the past
Outlined their excerpts on the etheric page.
One and harmonious by the Maker's skill,
The human in him paced with the divine;
His acts betrayed not the interior flame.
This forged the greatness of his front to earth.
A genius heightened in his body's cells
That knew the meaning of his fate-hedged works
Akin to the march of unaccomplished Powers
Beyond life's arc in spirit's immensities.
Apart he lived in his mind's solitude,
A demigod shaping the lives of men:
One soul's ambition lifted up the race;
A Power worked, but none knew whence it came.
The universal strengths were linked with his;
Filling earth's smallness with their boundless breadths,

He drew the energies that transmute an age.
Immeasurable by the common look,
He made great dreams a mould for coming things
And cast his deeds like bronze to front the years.
His walk through Time outstripped the human stride.
Lonely his days and splendid like the sun's.

END OF CANTO THREE

Canto Four

The Secret Knowledge

ON A height he stood that looked towards greater heights.
Our early approaches to the Infinite
Are sunrise splendours on a marvellous verge
While lingers yet unseen the glorious sun.
What now we see is a shadow of what must come.
The earth's uplook to a remote Unknown
Is a preface only of the epic climb
Of human soul from its flat earthly state
To the discovery of a greater self
And the far gleam of an eternal Light.
This world is a beginning and a base
Where Life and Mind erect their structured dreams;
An unborn Power must build reality.
A deathbound littleness is not all we are:
Immortal our forgotten vastnesses
Await discovery in our summit selves;
Unmeasured breadths and depths of being are ours.
Akin to the ineffable Secrecy,
Mystic, eternal in unrealised Time,
Neighbours of Heaven are Nature's altitudes.
To these high-peaked dominions sealed to our search,
Too far from surface Nature's postal routes,
Too lofty for our mortal lives to breathe,
Deep in us a forgotten kinship points
And a faint voice of ecstasy and prayer
Calls to those lucent lost immensities.
Even when we fail to look into our souls
Or lie embedded in earthly consciousness,
Still have we parts that grow towards the light,
Yet are there luminous tracts and heavens serene
And Eldorados of splendour and ecstasy

And temples to the godhead none can see.
A shapeless memory lingers in us still
And sometimes, when our sight is turned within,
Earth's ignorant veil is lifted from our eyes;
There is a short miraculous escape.
This narrow fringe of clamped experience
We leave behind meted to us as life,
Our little walks, our insufficient reach.
Our souls can visit in great lonely hours
Still regions of imperishable Light,
All-seeing eagle-peaks of silent Power
And moon-flame oceans of swift fathomless Bliss
And calm immensities of spirit space.
In the unfolding process of the Self
Sometimes the inexpressible Mystery
Elects a human vessel of descent.
A breath comes down from a supernal air,
A Presence is born, a guiding Light awakes,
A stillness falls upon the instruments:
Fixed, motionless like a marble monument,
Stone-calm, the body is a pedestal
Supporting a figure of eternal Peace.
Or a revealing Force sweeps blazing in;
Out of some vast superior continent
Knowledge breaks through trailing its radiant seas,
And Nature trembles with the power, the flame.
A greater Personality sometimes
Possesses us which yet we know is ours:
Or we adore the Master of our souls.
Then the small bodily ego thins and falls;
No more insisting on its separate self,
Losing the punctilio of its separate birth,
It leaves us one with Nature and with God.
In moments when the inner lamps are lit
And the life's cherished guests are left outside,
Our spirit sits alone and speaks to its gulfs.

A wider consciousness opens then its doors;
Invading from spiritual silences
A ray of the timeless Glory stoops awhile
To commune with our seized illumined clay
And leaves its huge white stamp upon our lives.
In the oblivious field of mortal mind,
Revealed to the closed prophet eyes of trance
Or in some deep internal solitude
Witnessed by a strange immaterial sense,
The signals of eternity appear.
The truth mind could not know unveils its face,
We hear what mortal ears have never heard,
We feel what earthly sense has never felt,
We love what common hearts repel and dread;
Our minds hush to a bright Omniscient;
A Voice calls from the chambers of the soul;
We meet the ecstasy of the Godhead's touch
In golden privacies of immortal fire.
These signs are native to a larger self
That lives within us by ourselves unseen;
Only sometimes a holier influence comes,
A tide of mightier surgings bears our lives
And a diviner Presence moves the soul;
Or through the earthly coverings something breaks,
A grace and beauty of spiritual light,
The murmuring tongue of a celestial fire.
Ourself and a high stranger whom we feel,
It is and acts unseen as if it were not;
It follows the line of sempiternal birth,
Yet seems to perish with its mortal frame.
Assured of the Apocalypse to be,
It reckons not the moments and the hours;
Great, patient, calm it sees the centuries pass,
Awaiting the slow miracle of our change
In the sure deliberate process of world-force
And the long march of all-revealing Time.

It is the origin and the master-clue,
A silence overhead, an inner voice,
A living image seated in the heart,
An unwalled wideness and a fathomless point,
The truth of all these cryptic shows in Space,
The Real towards which our strivings move,
The secret grandiose meaning of our lives.
A treasure of honey in the combs of God,
A Splendour burning in a tenebrous cloak,
It is our glory of the flame of God,
Our golden fountain of the world's delight,
An immortality cowled in the cape of death,
The shape of our unborn divinity.
It guards for us our fate in depths within
Where sleeps the eternal seed of transient things.
Always we bear in us a magic key
Concealed in life's hermetic envelope.
A burning Witness in the sanctuary
Regards through Time and the blind walls of Form;
A timeless Light is in his hidden eyes;
He sees the secret things no words can speak
And knows the goal of the unconscious world
And the heart of the mystery of the journeying years.

But all is screened, subliminal, mystical;
It needs the intuitive heart, the inward turn,
It needs the power of a spiritual gaze.
Else to our waking mind's small moment look
A goalless voyage seems our dubious course
Some Chance has settled or hazarded some Will,
Or a Necessity without aim or cause
Unwillingly compelled to emerge and be.
In this dense field where nothing is plain or sure,
Our very being seems to us questionable,
Our life a vague experiment, the soul
A flickering light in a strange ignorant world,

The earth a brute mechanic accident,
A net of death in which by chance we live.
All we have learned appears a doubtful guess,
The achievement done a passage or a phase
Whose farther end is hidden from our sight,
A chance happening or a fortuitous fate.
Out of the unknown we move to the unknown.
Ever surround our brief existence here
Grey shadows of unanswered questionings;
The dark Inconscient's signless mysteries
Stand up unsolved behind Fate's starting-line.
An aspiration in the Night's profound,
Seed of a perishing body and half-lit mind,
Uplifts its lonely tongue of conscious fire
Towards an undying Light for ever lost;
Only it hears, sole echo of its call,
The dim reply in man's unknowing heart
And meets, not understanding why it came
Or for what reason is the suffering here,
God's sanction to the paradox of life
And the riddle of the Immortal's birth in Time.
Along a path of aeons serpentine
In the coiled blackness of her nescient course
The Earth-Goddess toils across the sands of Time.
A Being is in her whom she hopes to know,
A Word speaks to her heart she cannot hear,
A Fate compels whose form she cannot see.
In her unconscious orbit through the Void
Out of her mindless depths she strives to rise,
A perilous life her gain, a struggling joy;
A Thought that can conceive but hardly knows
Arises slowly in her and creates
The idea, the speech that labels more than it lights;
A trembling gladness that is less than bliss
Invades from all this beauty that must die.
Alarmed by the sorrow dragging at her feet

And conscious of the high things not yet won,
Ever she nurses in her sleepless breast
An inward urge that takes from her rest and peace.
Ignorant and weary and invincible,
She seeks through the soul's war and quivering pain
The pure perfection her marred nature needs,
A breath of Godhead on her stone and mire.
A faith she craves that can survive defeat,
The sweetness of a love that knows not death,
The radiance of a truth for ever sure.
A light grows in her, she assumes a voice,
Her state she learns to read and the act she has done,
But the one needed truth eludes her grasp,
Herself and all of which she is the sign.
An inarticulate whisper drives her steps
Of which she feels the force but not the sense;
A few rare intimations come as guides,
Immense divining flashes cleave her brain,
And sometimes in her hours of dream and muse
The truth that she has missed looks out on her
As if far off and yet within her soul.
A change comes near that flees from her surmise
And, ever postponed, compels attempt and hope,
Yet seems too great for mortal hope to dare.
A vision meets her of supernal Powers
That draw her as if mighty kinsmen lost
Approaching with estranged great luminous gaze.
Then is she moved to all that she is not
And stretches arms to what was never hers.
Outstretching arms to the unconscious Void,
Passionate she prays to invisible forms of Gods
Soliciting from dumb Fate and toiling Time
What most she needs, what most exceeds her scope,
A Mind unvisited by illusion's gleams,
A Will expressive of soul's deity,
A Strength not forced to stumble by its speed,

A Joy that drags not sorrow as its shade.
For these she yearns and feels them destined hers:
Heaven's privilege she claims as her own right.
Just is her claim the all-witnessing Gods approve,
Clear in a greater light than reason owns:
Our intuitions are its title-deeds;
Our souls accept what our blind thoughts refuse.
Earth's winged chimaeras are Truth's steeds in Heaven,
The impossible God's sign of things to be.
But few can look beyond the present state
Or overleap this matted hedge of sense.
All that transpires on earth and all beyond
Are parts of an illimitable plan
The One keeps in his heart and knows alone.
Our outward happenings have their seed within,
And even this random Fate that imitates Chance,
This mass of unintelligible results,
Are the dumb graph of truths that work unseen:
The laws of the Unknown create the known.
The events that shape the appearance of our lives
Are a cipher of subliminal quiverings
Which rarely we surprise or vaguely feel,
Are an outcome of suppressed realities
That hardly rise into material day:
They are born from the spirit's sun of hidden powers
Digging a tunnel through emergency.
But who shall pierce into the cryptic gulf
And learn what deep necessity of the soul
Determined casual deed and consequence?
Absorbed in a routine of daily acts,
Our eyes are fixed on an external scene;
We hear the crash of the wheels of Circumstance
And wonder at the hidden cause of things.
Yet a foreseeing Knowledge might be ours,
If we could take our spirit's stand within,
If we could hear the muffled daemon voice.

Too seldom is the shadow of what must come
Cast in an instant on the secret sense
Which feels the shock of the invisible,
And seldom in the few who answer give
The mighty process of the cosmic Will
Communicates its image to our sight,
Identifying the world's mind with ours.
Our range is fixed within the crowded arc
Of what we observe and touch and thought can guess
And rarely dawns the light of the Unknown
Waking in us the prophet and the seer.
The outward and the immediate are our field,
The dead past is our background and support;
Mind keeps the soul prisoner, we are slaves to our acts;
We cannot free our gaze to reach wisdom's sun.
Inheritor of the brief animal mind,
Man, still a child in Nature's mighty hands,
In the succession of the moments lives;
To a changing present is his narrow right;
His memory stares back at a phantom past,
The future flees before him as he moves;
He sees imagined garments, not a face.
Armed with a limited precarious strength,
He saves his fruits of work from adverse chance.
A struggling ignorance is his wisdom's mate:
He waits to see the consequence of his acts,
He waits to weigh the certitude of his thoughts,
He knows not what he shall achieve or when;
He knows not whether at last he shall survive,
Or end like the mastodon and the sloth
And perish from the earth where he was king.
He is ignorant of the meaning of his life,
He is ignorant of his high and splendid fate.
Only the Immortals on their deathless heights
Dwelling beyond the walls of Time and Space,
Masters of living, free from the bonds of Thought,

Who are overseers of Fate and Chance and Will
And experts of the theorem of world-need,
Can see the Idea, the Might that change Time's course,
Come maned with light from undiscovered worlds,
Hear, while the world toils on with its deep blind heart,
The galloping hooves of the unforeseen event,
Bearing the superhuman Rider, near
And, impassive to earth's din and startled cry,
Return to the silence of the hills of God;
As lightning leaps, as thunder sweeps, they pass
And leave their mark on the trampled breast of Life.
Above the world the world-creators stand,
In the phenomenon see its mystic source.
These heed not the deceiving outward play,
They turn not to the moment's busy tramp,
But listen with the still patience of the Unborn
For the slow footsteps of far Destiny
Approaching through huge distances of Time,
Unmarked by the eye that sees effect and cause,
Unheard mid the clamour of the human plane.
Attentive to an unseen Truth they seize
A sound as of invisible augur wings,
Voices of an unplumbed significance,
Mutterings that brood in the core of Matter's sleep.
In the heart's profound audition they can catch
The murmurs lost by Life's uncaring ear,
A prophet-speech in Thought's omniscient trance.
Above the illusion of the hopes that pass,
Behind the appearance and the overt act,
Behind this clock-work Chance and vague surmise,
Amid the wrestle of force, the trampling feet,
Across the cries of anguish and of joy,
Across the triumph, fighting and despair,
They watch the Bliss for which earth's heart has cried
On the long road which cannot see its end
Winding undetected through the sceptic days

And to meet it guide the unheedful moving world.
Thus will the masked Transcendent mount his throne.
When darkness deepens strangling the earth's breast
And man's corporeal mind is the only lamp,
As a thief's in the night shall be the covert tread
Of one who steps unseen into his house.
A Voice ill-heard shall speak, the soul obey,
A Power into mind's inner chamber steal,
A charm and sweetness open life's closed doors
And beauty conquer the resisting world,
The Truth-Light capture Nature by surprise,
A stealth of God compel the heart to bliss
And earth grow unexpectedly divine.
In Matter shall be lit the spirit's glow,
In body and body kindled the sacred birth;
Night shall awake to the anthem of the stars,
The days become a happy pilgrim march,
Our will a force of the Eternal's power,
And thought the rays of a spiritual sun.
A few shall see what none yet understands;
God shall grow up while the wise men talk and sleep;
For man shall not know the coming till its hour
And belief shall be not till the work is done.

A Consciousness that knows not its own truth,
A vagrant hunter of misleading dawns,
Between the being's dark and luminous ends
Moves here in a half-light that seems the whole:
An interregnum in Reality
Cuts off the integral Thought, the total Power;
It circles or stands in a vague interspace,
Doubtful of its beginning and its close,
Or runs upon a road that has no end;
Far from the original Dusk, the final Flame
In some huge void Inconscience it lives,
Like a thought persisting in a wide emptiness.

As if an unintelligible phrase
Suggested a million renderings to the Mind,
It lends a purport to a random world.
A conjecture leaning upon doubtful proofs,
A message misunderstood, a thought confused
Missing its aim is all that it can speak
Or a fragment of the universal word.
It leaves two giant letters void of sense
While without sanction turns the middle sign
Carrying an enigmatic universe,
As if a present without future or past
Repeating the same revolution's whirl
Turned on its axis in its own Inane.
Thus is the meaning of creation veiled;
For without context reads the cosmic page:
Its signs stare at us like an unknown script,
As if appeared screened by a foreign tongue
Or code of splendour signs without a key
A portion of a parable sublime.
It wears to the perishable creature's eyes
The grandeur of a useless miracle;
Wasting itself that it may last awhile,
A river that can never find its sea,
It runs through life and death on an edge of Time;
A fire in the Night is its mighty action's blaze.
This is our deepest need to join once more
What now is parted, opposite and twain,
Remote in sovereign spheres that never meet
Or fronting like far poles of Night and Day.
We must fill the immense lacuna we have made,
Re-wed the closed finite's lonely consonant
With the open vowels of Infinity,
A hyphen must connect Matter and Mind,
The narrow isthmus of the ascending soul:
We must renew the secret bond in things,
Our hearts recall the lost divine Idea,

Reconstitute the perfect word, unite
The Alpha and the Omega in one sound;
Then shall the Spirit and Nature be at one.
Two are the ends of the mysterious plan.
In the wide signless ether of the Self,
In the unchanging Silence white and nude,
Aloof, resplendent like gold dazzling suns
Veiled by the ray no mortal eye can bear,
The Spirit's bare and absolute potencies
Burn in the solitude of the thoughts of God.
A rapture and a radiance and a hush,
Delivered from the approach of wounded hearts,
Denied to the Idea that looks at grief,
Remote from the Force that cries out in its pain,
In his inalienable bliss they live.
Immaculate in self-knowledge and self-power,
Calm they repose on the eternal Will.
Only his law they count and him obey;
They have no goal to reach, no aim to serve.
Implacable in their timeless purity,
All barter or bribe of worship they refuse;
Unmoved by cry of revolt and ignorant prayer
They reckon not our virtue and our sin;
They bend not to the voices that implore,
They hold no traffic with error and its reign;
They are guardians of the silence of the Truth,
They are keepers of the immutable decree.
A deep surrender is their source of might,
A still identity their way to know,
Motionless is their action like a sleep.
At peace, regarding the trouble beneath the stars,
Deathless, watching the works of Death and Chance,
Immobile, seeing the millenniums pass,
Untouched while the long map of Fate unrolls,
They look on our struggle with impartial eyes,
And yet without them cosmos could not be.

Impervious to desire and doom and hope,
Their station of inviolable might
Moveless upholds the world's enormous task,
Its ignorance is by their knowledge lit,
Its yearning lasts by their indifference.
As the height draws the low ever to climb,
As the breadths draw the small to adventure vast,
Their aloofness drives man to surpass himself.
Our passion heaves to wed the Eternal's calm,
Our dwarf-search mind to meet the Omniscient's light,
Our helpless hearts to enshrine the Omnipotent's force.
Acquiescing in the wisdom that made hell
And the harsh utility of death and tears,
Acquiescing in the gradual steps of Time,
Careless they seem of the grief that stings the world's heart,
Careless of the pain that rends its body and life;
Above joy and sorrow is that grandeur's walk:
They have no portion in the good that dies,
Mute, pure, they share not in the evil done;
Else might their strength be marred and could not save.
Alive to the truth that dwells in God's extremes,
Awake to a motion of all-seeing Force,
The slow outcome of the long ambiguous years
And the unexpected good from woeful deeds,
The immortal sees not as we vainly see.
He looks on hidden aspects and screened powers,
He knows the law and natural line of things.
Undriven by a brief life's will to act,
Unharassed by the spur of pity and fear,
He makes no haste to untie the cosmic knot
Or the world's torn jarring heart to reconcile.
In Time he waits for the Eternal's hour.
Yet a spiritual secret aid is there;
While a tardy Evolution's coils wind on
And Nature hews her way through adamant
A divine intervention thrones above.

Alive in a dead rotating universe
We whirl not here upon a casual globe
Abandoned to a task beyond our force;
Even through the tangled anarchy called Fate
And through the bitterness of death and fall
An outstretched Hand is felt upon our lives.
It is near us in unnumbered bodies and births;
In its unslackening grasp it keeps for us safe
The one inevitable supreme result
No will can take away and no doom change,
The crown of conscious Immortality,
The godhead promised to our struggling souls
When first man's heart dared death and suffered life.
One who has shaped this world is ever its lord:
Our errors are his steps upon the way;
He works through the fierce vicissitudes of our lives,
He works through the hard breath of battle and toil,
He works through our sins and sorrows and our tears,
His knowledge overrules our nescience;
Whatever the appearance we must bear,
Whatever our strong ills and present fate,
When nothing we can see but drift and bale,
A mighty Guidance leads us still through all.
After we have served this great divided world
God's bliss and oneness are our inborn right.
A date is fixed in the calendar of the Unknown,
An anniversary of the Birth sublime:
Our soul shall justify its chequered walk,
All will come near that now is naught or far.
These calm and distant Mights shall act at last.
Immovably ready for their destined task,
The ever-wise compassionate Brilliances
Await the sound of the Incarnate's voice
To leap and bridge the chasms of Ignorance
And heal the hollow yearning gulfs of Life
And fill the abyss that is the universe.

Here meanwhile at the Spirit's opposite pole
In the mystery of the deeps that God has built
For his abode below the Thinker's sight,
In this compromise of a stark absolute Truth
With the Light that dwells near the dark end of things,
In this tragi-comedy of divine disguise,
This long far seeking for joy ever near,
In the grandiose dream of which the world is made,
In this gold dome on a black dragon base,
The conscious Force that acts in Nature's breast,
A dark-robed labourer in the cosmic scheme
Carrying clay images of unborn gods,
Executrix of the inevitable Idea
Hampered, enveloped by the hoops of Fate,
Patient trustee of slow eternal Time,
Absolves from hour to hour her secret charge.
All she foresees in masked imperative depths;
The dumb intention of the unconscious gulfs
Answers to a will that sees upon the heights,
And the evolving Word's first syllable
Ponderous, brute-sensed, contains its luminous close,
Privy to a summit victory's vast descent
And the portent of the soul's immense uprise.

All here where each thing seems its lonely self
Are figures of the sole transcendent One:
Only by him they are, his breath is their life;
An unseen Presence moulds the oblivious clay.
A playmate in the mighty Mother's game,
One came upon the dubious whirling globe
To hide from her pursuit in force and form.
A secret spirit in the Inconscient's sleep,
A shapeless Energy, a voiceless Word,
He was here before the elements could emerge,
Before there was light of mind or life could breathe.
Accomplice of her cosmic huge pretence,

His semblances he turns to real shapes
And makes the symbol equal with the truth:
He gives to his timeless thoughts a form in Time.
He is the substance, he the self of things;
She has forged from him her works of skill and might:
She wraps him in the magic of her moods
And makes of his myriad truths her countless dreams.
The Master of being has come down to her,
An immortal child born in the fugitive years.
In objects wrought, in the persons she conceives,
Dreaming she chases her idea of him,
And catches here a look and there a gest:
Ever he repeats in them his ceaseless births.
He is the Maker and the world he made,
He is the vision and he is the Seer;
He is himself the actor and the act,
He is himself the knower and the known,
He is himself the dreamer and the dream.
There are Two who are One and play in many worlds;
In Knowledge and Ignorance they have spoken and met
And light and darkness are their eyes' interchange;
Our pleasure and pain are their wrestle and embrace,
Our deeds, our hopes are intimate to their tale;
They are married secretly in our thought and life.
The universe is an endless masquerade:
For nothing here is utterly what it seems;
It is a dream-fact vision of a truth
Which but for the dream would not be wholly true,
A phenomenon stands out significant
Against dim backgrounds of eternity;
We accept its face and pass by all it means;
A part is seen, we take it for the whole.
Thus have they made their play with us for roles:
Author and actor with himself as scene,
He moves there as the Soul, as Nature she.
Here on the earth where we must fill our parts,

We know not how shall run the drama's course;
Our uttered sentences veil in their thought.
Her mighty plan she holds back from our sight:
She has concealed her glory and her bliss
And disguised the Love and Wisdom in her heart;
Of all the marvel and beauty that are hers,
Only a darkened little we can feel.
He too wears a diminished godhead here;
He has forsaken his omnipotence,
His calm he has foregone and infinity.
He knows her only, he has forgotten himself;
To her he abandons all to make her great.
He hopes in her to find himself anew,
Incarnate, wedding his infinity's peace
To her creative passion's ecstasy.
Although possessor of the earth and heavens,
He leaves to her the cosmic management
And watches all, the Witness of her scene.
A supernumerary on her stage,
He speaks no words or hides behind the wings.
He takes birth in her world, waits on her will,
Divines her enigmatic gesture's sense,
The fluctuating chance turns of her mood,
Works out her meanings she seems not to know
And serves her secret purpose in long Time.
As one too great for him he worships her;
He adores her as his regent of desire,
He yields to her as the mover of his will,
He burns the incense of his nights and days
Offering his life, a splendour of sacrifice.
A rapt solicitor for her love and grace,
His bliss in her to him is his whole world:
He grows through her in all his being's powers;
He reads by her God's hidden aim in things.
Or, a courtier in her countless retinue,
Content to be with her and feel her near

He makes the most of the little that she gives
And all she does drapes with his own delight.
A glance can make his whole day wonderful,
A word from her lips with happiness wings the hours.
He leans on her for all he does and is:
He builds on her largesses his proud fortunate days
And trails his peacock-plumaged joy of life
And suns in the glory of her passing smile.
In a thousand ways he serves her royal needs;
He makes the hours pivot around her will,
Makes all reflect her whims; all is their play:
This whole wide world is only he and she.

This is the knot that ties together the stars:
The Two who are one are the secret of all power,
The Two who are one are the might and right in things.
His soul, silent, supports the world and her,
His acts are her commandment's registers.
Happy, inert, he lies beneath her feet:
His breast he offers for her cosmic dance
Of which our lives are the quivering theatre,
And none could bear but for his strength within,
Yet none would leave because of his delight.
His works, his thoughts have been devised by her,
His being is a mirror vast of hers:
Active, inspired by her he speaks and moves;
His deeds obey her heart's unspoken demands:
Passive, he bears the impacts of the world
As if her touches shaping his soul and life:
His journey through the days is her sun-march;
He runs upon her roads; hers is his course.
A witness and student of her joy and dole,
A partner in her evil and her good,
He has consented to her passionate ways,
He is driven by her sweet and dreadful force.
His sanctioning name initials all her works;

His silence is his signature to her deeds;
In the execution of her drama's scheme,
In her fancies of the moment and its mood,
In the march of this obvious ordinary world
Where all is deep and strange to the eyes that see
And Nature's common forms are marvel-wefts,
She through his witness sight and motion of might
Unrolls the material of her cosmic Act,
Her happenings that exalt and smite the soul,
Her force that moves, her powers that save and slay,
Her Word that in the silence speaks to our hearts,
Her silence that transcends the summit Word,
Her heights and depths to which our spirit moves,
Her events that weave the texture of our lives
And all by which we find or lose ourselves,
Things sweet and bitter, magnificent and mean,
Things terrible and beautiful and divine.
Her empire in the cosmos she has built,
He is governed by her subtle and mighty laws.
His consciousness is a babe upon her knees,
His being a field of her vast experiment,
Her endless space is the playground of his thoughts;
She binds to knowledge of the shapes of Time
And the creative error of limiting mind
And chance that wears the rigid face of fate
And her sport of death and pain and Nescience,
His changed and struggling immortality.
His soul is a subtle atom in a mass,
His substance a material for her works.
His spirit survives amid the death of things,
He climbs to eternity through being's gaps,
He is carried by her from Night to deathless Light.
This grand surrender is his free-will's gift,
His pure transcendent force submits to hers.
In the mystery of her cosmic ignorance,
In the insoluble riddle of her play,

A creature made of perishable stuff,
In the pattern she has set for him he moves,
He thinks with her thoughts, with her trouble his bosom heaves;
He seems the thing that she would have him seem,
He is whatever her artist will can make.
Although she drives him on her fancy's roads,
At play with him as with her child or slave,
To freedom and the Eternal's mastery
And immortality's stand above the world,
She moves her seeming puppet of an hour.
Even in his mortal session in body's house,
An aimless traveller between birth and death,
Ephemeral dreaming of immortality,
To reign she spurs him. He takes up her powers;
He has harnessed her to the yoke of her own law.
His face of human thought puts on a crown.
Held in her leash, bound to her veiled caprice,
He studies her ways if so he may prevail
Even for an hour and she work out his will;
He makes of her his moment passion's serf:
To obey she feigns, she follows her creature's lead:
For him she was made, lives only for his use.
But conquering her, then is he most her slave;
He is her dependent, all his means are hers;
Nothing without her he can, she rules him still.
At last he wakes to a memory of Self:
He sees within the face of deity,
The Godhead breaks out through the human mould:
Her highest heights she unmasks and is his mate.
Till then he is a plaything in her game;
Her seeming regent, yet her fancy's toy,
A living robot moved by her energy's springs,
He acts as in the movements of a dream,
An automaton stepping in the grooves of Fate,
He stumbles on driven by her whip of Force:
His thought labours, a bullock in Time's fields;

His will he thinks his own, is shaped in her forge.
Obedient to World-Nature's dumb control,
Driven by his own formidable Power,
His chosen partner in a titan game,
Her will he has made the master of his fate,
Her whim the dispenser of his pleasure and pain;
He has sold himself into her regal power
For any blow or boon that she may choose:
Even in what is suffering to our sense,
He feels the sweetness of her mastering touch,
In all experience meets her blissful hands;
On his heart he bears the happiness of her tread
And the surprise of her arrival's joy
In each event and every moment's chance.
All she can do is marvellous in his sight:
He revels in her, a swimmer in her sea,
A tireless amateur of her world-delight,
He rejoices in her every thought and act
And gives consent to all that she can wish;
Whatever she desires he wills to be:
The Spirit, the innumerable One,
He has left behind his lone eternity,
He is an endless birth in endless Time,
Her finite's multitude in an infinite Space.

The master of existence lurks in us
And plays at hide-and-seek with his own Force;
In Nature's instrument loiters secret God.
The Immanent lives in man as in his house;
He has made the universe his pastime's field,
A vast gymnasium of his works of might.
All-knowing he accepts our darkened state,
Divine, wears shapes of animal or man;
Eternal, he assents to Fate and Time,
Immortal, dallies with mortality.
The All-Conscious ventured into Ignorance,

The All-Blissful bore to be insensible.
Incarnate in a world of strife and pain,
He puts on joy and sorrow like a robe
And drinks experience like a strengthening wine.
He whose transcendence rules the pregnant Vasts,
Prescient now dwells in our subliminal depths,
A luminous individual Power, alone.
   The Absolute, the Perfect, the Alone
Has called out of the Silence his mute Force
Where she lay in the featureless and formless hush
Guarding from Time by her immobile sleep
The ineffable puissance of his solitude.
The Absolute, the Perfect, the Alone
Has entered with his silence into space:
He has fashioned these countless persons of one self;
He has built a million figures of his power;
He lives in all, who lived in his Vast alone;
Space is himself and Time is only he.
The Absolute, the Perfect, the Immune,
One who is in us as our secret self,
Our mask of imperfection has assumed,
He has made this tenement of flesh his own,
His image in the human measure cast
That to his divine measure we might rise;
Then in a figure of divinity
The Maker shall recast us and impose
A plan of godhead on the mortal's mould
Lifting our finite minds to his infinite,
Touching the moment with eternity.
This transfiguration is earth's due to heaven:
A mutual debt binds man to the Supreme:
His nature we must put on as he put ours;
We are sons of God and must be even as he:
His human portion, we must grow divine.
Our life is a paradox with God for key.

But meanwhile all is a shadow cast by a dream
And to the musing and immobile spirit
Life and himself don the aspect of a myth,
The burden of a long unmeaning tale.
For the key is hid and by the Inconscient kept;
The secret God beneath the threshold dwells.
In a body obscuring the immortal Spirit
A nameless Resident vesting unseen powers
With Matter's shapes and motives beyond thought
And the hazard of an unguessed consequence,
An omnipotent indiscernible Influence,
He sits, unfelt by the form in which he lives
And veils his knowledge by the groping mind.
A wanderer in a world his thoughts have made,
He turns in a chiaroscuro of error and truth
To find a wisdom that on high is his.
As one forgetting he searches for himself;
As if he had lost an inner light he seeks:
As a sojourner lingering amid alien scenes
He journeys to a home he knows no more.
His own self's truth he seeks who is the Truth;
He is the Player who became the play,
He is the Thinker who became the thought;
He is the many who was the silent One.
In the symbol figures of the cosmic Force
And in her living and inanimate signs
And in her complex tracery of events
He explores the ceaseless miracle of himself,
Till the thousandfold enigma has been solved
In the single light of an all-witnessing Soul.
This was his compact with his mighty mate,
For love of her and joined to her for ever
To follow the course of Time's eternity,
Amid magic dramas of her sudden moods
And the surprises of her masked Idea
And the vicissitudes of her vast caprice.

Two seem his goals, yet ever are they one
And gaze at each other over bourneless Time;
Spirit and Matter are their end and source.
A seeker of hidden meanings in life's forms,
Of the great Mother's wide uncharted will
And the rude enigma of her terrestrial ways
He is the explorer and the mariner
On a secret inner ocean without bourne:
He is the adventurer and cosmologist
Of a magic earth's obscure geography.
In her material order's fixed design
Where all seems sure and, even when changed, the same,
Even though the end is left for ever unknown
And ever unstable is life's shifting flow,
His paths are found for him by silent fate;
As stations in the ages' weltering flood
Firm lands appear that tempt and stay awhile,
Then new horizons lure the mind's advance.
There comes no close to the finite's boundlessness,
There is no last certitude in which thought can pause
And no terminus to the soul's experience.
A limit, a farness never wholly reached,
An unattained perfection calls to him
From distant boundaries in the Unseen:
A long beginning only has been made.

This is the sailor on the flow of Time,
This is World-Matter's slow discoverer,
Who, launched into this small corporeal birth,
Has learned his craft in tiny bays of self,
But dares at last unplumbed infinitudes,
A voyager upon eternity's seas.
In his world-adventure's crude initial start
Behold him ignorant of his godhead's force,
Timid initiate of its vast design.
An expert captain of a fragile craft,

A trafficker in small impermanent wares,
At first he hugs the shore and shuns the breadths,
Dares not to affront the far-off perilous main.
He in a petty coastal traffic plies,
His pay doled out from port to neighbour port,
Content with his safe round's unchanging course,
He hazards not the new and the unseen.
But now he hears the sound of larger seas.
A widening world calls him to distant scenes
And journeyings in a larger vision's arc
And peoples unknown and still unvisited shores.
On a commissioned keel his merchant hull
Serves the world's commerce in the riches of Time
Severing the foam of a great land-locked sea
To reach unknown harbour lights in distant climes
And open markets for life's opulent arts,
Rich bales, carved statuettes, hued canvases,
And jewelled toys brought for an infant's play
And perishable products of hard toil
And transient splendours won and lost by the days.
Or passing through a gate of pillar-rocks,
Venturing not yet to cross oceans unnamed
And journey into a dream of distances
He travels close to unfamiliar coasts
And finds new haven in storm-troubled isles,
Or, guided by a sure compass in his thought,
He plunges through a bright haze that hides the stars,
Steering on the trade-routes of Ignorance.
His prow pushes towards undiscovered shores,
He chances on unimagined continents:
A seeker of the islands of the Blest,
He leaves the last lands, crosses the ultimate seas,
He turns to eternal things his symbol quest;
Life changes for him its time-constructed scenes,
Its images veiling infinity.
Earth's borders recede and the terrestrial air

Hangs round him no longer its translucent veil.
He has crossed the limit of mortal thought and hope,
He has reached the world's end and stares beyond;
The eyes of mortal body plunge their gaze
Into Eyes that look upon eternity.
A greater world Time's traveller must explore.
At last he hears a chanting on the heights
And the far speaks and the unknown grows near:
He crosses the boundaries of the unseen
And passes over the edge of mortal sight
To a new vision of himself and things.
He is a spirit in an unfinished world
That knows him not and cannot know itself:
The surface symbol of his goalless quest
Takes deeper meanings to his inner view;
His is a search of darkness for the light,
Of mortal life for immortality.
In the vessel of an earthly embodiment
Over the narrow rails of limiting sense
He looks out on the magic waves of Time
Where mind like a moon illumines the world's dark.
There is limned ever retreating from the eyes,
As if in a tenuous misty dream-light drawn,
The outline of a dim mysterious shore.
A sailor on the Inconscient's fathomless sea,
He voyages through a starry world of thought
On Matter's deck to a spiritual sun.
Across the noise and multitudinous cry,
Across the rapt unknowable silences,
Through a strange mid-world under supernal skies,
Beyond earth's longitudes and latitudes,
His goal is fixed outside all present maps.
But none learns whither through the unknown he sails
Or what secret mission the great Mother gave.
In the hidden strength of her omnipotent Will,
Driven by her breath across life's tossing deep,

Through the thunder's roar and through the windless hush,
Through fog and mist where nothing more is seen,
He carries her sealed orders in his breast.
Late will he know, opening the mystic script,
Whether to a blank port in the Unseen
He goes or, armed with her fiat, to discover
A new mind and body in the city of God
And enshrine the Immortal in his glory's house
And make the finite one with Infinity.
Across the salt waste of the endless years
Her ocean winds impel his errant boat,
The cosmic waters plashing as he goes,
A rumour around him and danger and a call.
Always he follows in her force's wake.
He sails through life and death and other life,
He travels on through waking and through sleep.
A power is on him from her occult force
That ties him to his own creation's fate,
And never can the mighty Traveller rest
And never can the mystic voyage cease
Till the nescient dusk is lifted from man's soul
And the morns of God have overtaken his night.
As long as Nature lasts, he too is there,
For this is sure that he and she are one;
Even when he sleeps, he keeps her on his breast:
Whoever leaves her, he will not depart
To repose without her in the Unknowable.
There is a truth to know, a work to do;
Her play is real; a Mystery he fulfils:
There is a plan in the Mother's deep world-whim,
A purpose in her vast and random game.
This ever she meant since the first dawn of life,
This constant will she covered with her sport,
To evoke a Person in the impersonal Void,
With the Truth-Light strike earth's massive roots of trance,
Wake a dumb self in the inconscient depths

And raise a lost Power from its python sleep
That the eyes of the Timeless might look out from Time
And the world manifest the unveiled Divine.
For this he left his white infinity
And laid on the spirit the burden of the flesh,
That Godhead's seed might flower in mindless Space.

END OF CANTO FOUR

Canto Five

The Yoga of the King: The Yoga of the Spirit's Freedom and Greatness

THIS knowledge first he had of time-born men.
Admitted through a curtain of bright mind
That hangs between our thoughts and absolute sight,
He found the occult cave, the mystic door
Near to the well of vision in the soul,
And entered where the Wings of Glory brood
In the silent space where all is for ever known.
Indifferent to doubt and to belief,
Avid of the naked real's single shock
He shore the cord of mind that ties the earth-heart
And cast away the yoke of Matter's law.
The body's rules bound not the spirit's powers:
When life had stopped its beats, death broke not in;
He dared to live when breath and thought were still.
Thus could he step into that magic place
Which few can even glimpse with hurried glance
Lifted for a moment from mind's laboured works
And the poverty of Nature's earthly sight.
All that the Gods have learned is there self-known.
There in a hidden chamber closed and mute
Are kept the record graphs of the cosmic scribe,
And there the tables of the sacred Law,
There is the Book of Being's index page;
The text and glossary of the Vedic truth
Are there; the rhythms and metres of the stars
Significant of the movements of our fate:
The symbol powers of number and of form,
And the secret code of the history of the world
And Nature's correspondence with the soul
Are written in the mystic heart of Life.

In the glow of the spirit's room of memories
He could recover the luminous marginal notes
Dotting with light the crabbed ambiguous scroll,
Rescue the preamble and the saving clause
Of the dark Agreement by which all is ruled
That rises from material Nature's sleep
To clothe the Everlasting in new shapes.
He could re-read now and interpret new
Its strange symbol letters, scattered abstruse signs,
Resolve its oracle and its paradox,
Its riddling phrases and its blindfold terms,
The deep oxymoron of its truth's repliques,
And recognise as a just necessity
Its hard conditions for the mighty work, —
Nature's impossible Herculean toil
Only her warlock-wisecraft could enforce,
Its law of the opposition of the gods,
Its list of inseparable contraries.
The dumb great Mother in her cosmic trance
Exploiting for creation's joy and pain
Infinity's sanction to the birth of form,
Accepts indomitably to execute
The will to know in an inconscient world,
The will to live under a reign of death,
The thirst for rapture in a heart of flesh,
And works out through the appearance of a soul
By a miraculous birth in plasm and gas
The mystery of God's covenant with the Night.
Once more was heard in the still cosmic Mind
The Eternal's promise to his labouring Force
Inducing the world-passion to begin,
The cry of birth into mortality
And the opening verse of the tragedy of Time.
Out of the depths the world's buried secret rose;
He read the original ukase kept back
In the locked archives of the spirit's crypt,

And saw the signature and fiery seal
Of Wisdom on the dim Power's hooded work
Who builds in Ignorance the steps of Light.
A sleeping deity opened deathless eyes:
He saw the unshaped thought in soulless forms,
Knew Matter pregnant with spiritual sense,
Mind dare the study of the Unknowable,
Life its gestation of the Golden Child.
In the light flooding thought's blank vacancy,
Interpreting the universe by soul signs
He read from within the text of the without:
The riddle grew plain and lost its catch obscure.
A larger lustre lit the mighty page.
A purpose mingled with the whims of Time,
A meaning met the stumbling pace of Chance
And Fate revealed a chain of seeing Will;
A conscious wideness filled the old dumb Space.
In the Void he saw throned the Omniscience supreme.

A Will, a hope immense now seized his heart,
And to discern the superhuman's form
He raised his eyes to unseen spiritual heights,
Aspiring to bring down a greater world.
The glory he had glimpsed must be his home.
A brighter heavenlier sun must soon illume
This dusk room with its dark internal stair,
The infant soul in its small nursery school
Mid objects meant for a lesson hardly learned
Outgrow its early grammar of intellect
And its imitation of Earth-Nature's art,
Its earthly dialect to God-language change,
In living symbols study Reality
And learn the logic of the Infinite.
The Ideal must be Nature's common truth,
The body illumined with the indwelling God,
The heart and mind feel one with all that is,

A conscious soul live in a conscious world.
As through a mist a sovereign peak is seen,
The greatness of the eternal Spirit appeared,
Exiled in a fragmented universe
Amid half-semblances of diviner things.
These now could serve no more his regal turn;
The Immortal's pride refused the doom to live
A miser of the scanty bargain made
Between our littleness and bounded hopes
And the compassionate Infinitudes.
His height repelled the lowness of earth's state:
A wideness discontented with its frame
Resiled from poor assent to Nature's terms,
The harsh contract spurned and the diminished lease.
Only beginnings are accomplished here;
Our base's Matter seems alone complete,
An absolute machine without a soul.
Or all seems a misfit of half ideas,
Or we saddle with the vice of earthly form
A hurried imperfect glimpse of heavenly things,
Guesses and travesties of celestial types.
Here chaos sorts itself into a world,
A brief formation drifting in the void:
Apings of knowledge, unfinished arcs of power,
Flamings of beauty into earthly shapes,
Love's broken reflexes of unity
Swim, fragment-mirrorings of a floating sun.
A packed assemblage of crude tentative lives
Are pieced into a tessellated whole.
There is no perfect answer to our hopes;
There are blind voiceless doors that have no key;
Thought climbs in vain and brings a borrowed light,
Cheated by counterfeits sold to us in life's mart,
Our hearts clutch at a forfeited heavenly bliss.
There is provender for the mind's satiety,
There are thrills of the flesh, but not the soul's desire.

Here even the highest rapture Time can give
Is a mimicry of ungrasped beatitudes,
A mutilated statue of ecstasy,
A wounded happiness that cannot live,
A brief felicity of mind or sense
Thrown by the World-Power to her body-slave,
Or a simulacrum of enforced delight
In the seraglios of Ignorance.
For all we have acquired soon loses worth,
An old disvalued credit in Time's bank,
Imperfection's cheque drawn on the Inconscient.
An inconsequence dogs every effort made,
And chaos waits on every cosmos formed:
In each success a seed of failure lurks.
He saw the doubtfulness of all things here,
The incertitude of man's proud confident thought,
The transience of the achievements of his force.
A thinking being in an unthinking world,
An island in the sea of the Unknown,
He is a smallness trying to be great,
An animal with some instincts of a god,
His life a story too common to be told,
His deeds a number summing up to nought,
His consciousness a torch lit to be quenched,
His hope a star above a cradle and grave.
And yet a greater destiny may be his,
For the eternal Spirit is his truth.
He can re-create himself and all around
And fashion new the world in which he lives:
He, ignorant, is the Knower beyond Time,
He is the Self above Nature, above Fate.

His soul retired from all that he had done.
Hushed was the futile din of human toil,
Forsaken wheeled the circle of the days;
In distance sank the crowded tramp of life.

The Silence was his sole companion left.
Impassive he lived immune from earthly hopes,
A figure in the ineffable Witness' shrine
Pacing the vast cathedral of his thoughts
Under its arches dim with infinity
And heavenward brooding of invisible wings.
A call was on him from intangible heights;
Indifferent to the little outpost Mind,
He dwelt in the wideness of the Eternal's reign.
His being now exceeded thinkable Space,
His boundless thought was neighbour to cosmic sight:
A universal light was in his eyes,
A golden influx flowed through heart and brain;
A Force came down into his mortal limbs,
A current from eternal seas of Bliss;
He felt the invasion and the nameless joy.
Aware of his occult omnipotent Source,
Allured by the omniscient Ecstasy,
A living centre of the Illimitable
Widened to equate with the world's circumference,
He turned to his immense spiritual fate.
Abandoned on a canvas of torn air,
A picture lost in far and fading streaks,
The earth-nature's summits sank below his feet:
He climbed to meet the infinite more above.
The Immobile's ocean-silence saw him pass,
An arrow leaping through eternity
Suddenly shot from the tense bow of Time,
A ray returning to its parent sun.
Opponent of that glory of escape,
The black Inconscient swung its dragon tail
Lashing a slumbrous Infinite by its force
Into the deep obscurities of form:
Death lay beneath him like a gate of sleep.
One-pointed to the immaculate Delight,
Questing for God as for a splendid prey,

He mounted burning like a cone of fire.
To a few is given that godlike rare release.
One among many thousands never touched,
Engrossed in the external world's design,
Is chosen by a secret witness Eye
And driven by a pointing hand of Light
Across his soul's unmapped immensitudes.
A pilgrim of the everlasting Truth,
Our measures cannot hold his measureless mind;
He has turned from the voices of the narrow realm
And left the little lane of human Time.
In the hushed precincts of a vaster plan
He treads the vestibules of the Unseen,
Or listens following a bodiless Guide
To a lonely cry in boundless vacancy.
All the deep cosmic murmur falling still,
He lives in the hush before the world was born,
His soul left naked to the timeless One.
Far from compulsion of created things
Thought and its shadowy idols disappear,
The moulds of form and person are undone:
The ineffable Wideness knows him for its own.
A lone forerunner of the Godward earth,
Among the symbols of yet unshaped things
Watched by closed eyes, mute faces of the Unborn,
He journeys to meet the Incommunicable,
Hearing the echo of his single steps
In the eternal courts of Solitude.
A nameless Marvel fills the motionless hours.
His spirit mingles with eternity's heart
And bears the silence of the Infinite.

In a divine retreat from mortal thought,
In a prodigious gesture of soul-sight,
His being towered into pathless heights,
Naked of its vesture of humanity.

As thus it rose, to meet him bare and pure
A strong Descent leaped down. A Might, a Flame,
A Beauty half-visible with deathless eyes,
A violent Ecstasy, a Sweetness dire,
Enveloped him with its stupendous limbs
And penetrated nerve and heart and brain
That thrilled and fainted with the epiphany:
His nature shuddered in the Unknown's grasp.
In a moment shorter than death, longer than Time,
By a Power more ruthless than Love, happier than Heaven,
Taken sovereignly into eternal arms,
Haled and coerced by a stark absolute bliss,
In a whirlwind circuit of delight and force
Hurried into unimaginable depths,
Upborne into immeasurable heights,
It was torn out from its mortality
And underwent a new and bourneless change.
An Omniscient knowing without sight or thought,
An indecipherable Omnipotence,
A mystic Form that could contain the worlds,
Yet make one human breast its passionate shrine,
Drew him out of his seeking loneliness
Into the magnitudes of God's embrace.
As when a timeless Eye annuls the hours
Abolishing the agent and the act,
So now his spirit shone out wide, blank, pure:
His wakened mind became an empty slate
On which the Universal and Sole could write.
All that represses our fallen consciousness
Was taken from him like a forgotten load:
A fire that seemed the body of a god
Consumed the limiting figures of the past
And made large room for a new self to live.
Eternity's contact broke the moulds of sense.
A greater Force than the earthly held his limbs,
Huge workings bared his undiscovered sheaths,

Strange energies wrought and screened tremendous hands
Unwound the triple cord of mind and freed
The heavenly wideness of a Godhead's gaze.
As through a dress the wearer's shape is seen,
There reached through forms to the hidden absolute
A cosmic feeling and transcendent sight.
Increased and heightened were the instruments.
Illusion lost her aggrandising lens;
As from her failing hand the measures fell,
Atomic looked the things that loomed so large.
The little ego's ring could join no more;
In the enormous spaces of the self
The body now seemed only a wandering shell,
His mind the many-frescoed outer court
Of an imperishable Inhabitant:
His spirit breathed a superhuman air.
The imprisoned deity rent its magic fence.
As with a sound of thunder and of seas,
Vast barriers crashed around the huge escape.
Immutably coeval with the world,
Circle and end of every hope and toil
Inexorably drawn round thought and act,
The fixed immovable peripheries
Effaced themselves beneath the Incarnate's tread.
The dire velamen and the bottomless crypt
Between which life and thought for ever move,
Forbidden still to cross the dim dread bounds,
The guardian darknesses mute and formidable,
Empowered to circumscribe the wingless spirit
In the boundaries of Mind and Ignorance,
Protecting no more a dual eternity
Vanished rescinding their enormous role:
Once figure of creation's vain ellipse,
The expanding zero lost its giant curve.
The old adamantine vetoes stood no more:
Overpowered were earth and Nature's obsolete rule;

The python coils of the restricting Law
Could not restrain the swift arisen God:
Abolished were the scripts of destiny.
There was no small death-hunted creature more,
No fragile form of being to preserve
From an all-swallowing Immensity.
The great hammer-beats of a pent-up world-heart
Burst open the narrow dams that keep us safe
Against the forces of the universe.
The soul and cosmos faced as equal powers.
A boundless being in a measureless Time
Invaded Nature with the infinite;
He saw unpathed, unwalled, his titan scope.

All was uncovered to his sealless eye.
A secret Nature stripped of her defence,
Once in a dreaded half-light formidable,
Overtaken in her mighty privacy
Lay bare to the burning splendour of his will.
In shadowy chambers lit by a strange sun
And opening hardly to hid mystic keys
Her perilous arcanes and hooded Powers
Confessed the advent of a mastering Mind
And bore the compulsion of a time-born gaze.
Incalculable in their wizard modes,
Immediate and invincible in the act,
Her secret strengths native to greater worlds
Lifted above our needy limited scope,
The occult privilege of demigods
And the sure power-pattern of her cryptic signs,
Her diagrams of geometric force,
Her potencies of marvel-fraught design
Courted employment by an earth-nursed might.
A conscious Nature's quick machinery
Armed with a latent splendour of miracle
The prophet-passion of a seeing Mind,

And the lightning bareness of a free soul-force.
All once impossible deemed could now become
A natural limb of possibility,
A new domain of normalcy supreme.
An almighty occultist erects in Space
This seeming outward world which tricks the sense;
He weaves his hidden threads of consciousness,
He builds bodies for his shapeless energy;
Out of the unformed and vacant Vast he has made
His sorcery of solid images,
His magic of formative number and design,
The fixed irrational links none can annul,
This criss-cross tangle of invisible laws;
His infallible rules, his covered processes,
Achieve unerringly an inexplicable
Creation where our error carves dead frames
Of knowledge for a living ignorance.
In her mystery's moods divorced from the Maker's laws
She too as sovereignly creates her field,
Her will shaping the undetermined vasts,
Making a finite of infinity;
She too can make an order of her caprice,
As if her rash superb wagered to outvie
The veiled Creator's cosmic secrecies.
The rapid footsteps of her fantasy,
Amid whose falls wonders like flowers rise,
Are surer than reason, defter than device
And swifter than Imagination's wings.
All she new-fashions by the thought and word,
Compels all substance by her wand of Mind.
Mind is a mediator divinity:
Its powers can undo all Nature's work:
Mind can suspend or change earth's concrete law.
Affranchised from earth-habit's drowsy seal
The leaden grip of Matter it can break;
Indifferent to the angry stare of Death,

It can immortalise a moment's work:
A simple fiat of its thinking force,
The casual pressure of its slight assent
Can liberate the Energy dumb and pent
Within its chambers of mysterious trance:
It makes the body's sleep a puissant arm,
Holds still the breath, the beatings of the heart,
While the unseen is found, the impossible done,
Communicates without means the unspoken thought;
It moves events by its bare silent will,
Acts at a distance without hands or feet.
This giant Ignorance, this dwarfish Life
It can illumine with a prophet sight,
Invoke the bacchic rapture, the Fury's goad,
In our body arouse the demon or the god,
Call in the Omniscient and Omnipotent,
Awake a forgotten Almightiness within.
In its own plane a shining emperor,
Even in this rigid realm, Mind can be king:
The logic of its demigod Idea
In the leap of a transitional moment brings
Surprises of creation never achieved
Even by Matter's strange unconscious skill.
All's miracle here and can by miracle change.
This is that secret Nature's edge of might.
On the margin of great immaterial planes,
In kingdoms of an untrammelled glory of force,
Where Mind is master of the life and form
And soul fulfils its thoughts by its own power,
She meditates upon mighty words and looks
On the unseen links that join the parted spheres.
Thence to the initiate who observes her laws
She brings the light of her mysterious realms:
Here where he stands, his feet on a prostrate world,
His mind no more cast into Matter's mould,
Over their bounds in spurts of splendid strength

She carries their magician processes
And the formulas of their stupendous speech,
Till heaven and hell become purveyors to earth
And the universe the slave of mortal will.
A mediatrix with veiled and nameless gods
Whose alien will touches our human life,
Imitating the World-Magician's ways
She invents for her self-bound free-will its grooves
And feigns for magic's freaks a binding cause.
All worlds she makes the partners of her deeds,
Accomplices of her mighty violence,
Her daring leaps into the impossible:
From every source she has taken her cunning means,
She draws from the free-love marriage of the planes
Elements for her creation's tour-de-force:
A wonder-weft of knowledge incalculable,
A compendium of divine invention's feats
She has combined to make the unreal true
Or liberate suppressed reality:
In her unhedged Circean wonderland
Pell-mell she shepherds her occult mightinesses;
Her mnemonics of the craft of the Infinite,
Jets of the screened subliminal's caprice,
Tags of the gramarye of Inconscience,
Freedom of a sovereign Truth without a law,
Thoughts that were born in the immortals' world,
Oracles that break out from behind the shrine,
Warnings from the daemonic inner voice
And peeps and lightning-leaps of prophecy
And intimations to the inner ear,
Abrupt interventions stark and absolute
And the Superconscient's unaccountable acts,
Have woven her balanced web of miracles
And the weird technique of her tremendous art.
This bizarre kingdom passed into his charge.
As one resisting more the more she loves,

Her great possessions and her power and lore
She gave, compelled, with a reluctant joy;
Herself she gave for rapture and for use.
Absolved from aberrations in deep ways,
The ends she recovered for which she was made:
She turned against the evil she had helped
Her engined wrath, her invisible means to slay;
Her dangerous moods and arbitrary force
She surrendered to the service of the soul
And the control of a spiritual will.
A greater despot tamed her despotism.
Assailed, surprised in the fortress of her self,
Conquered by her own unexpected king,
Fulfilled and ransomed by her servitude,
She yielded in a vanquished ecstasy,
Her sealed hermetic wisdom forced from her,
Fragments of the mystery of omnipotence.

A border sovereign is the occult Force.
A threshold guardian of the earth-scene's Beyond,
She has canalised the outbreaks of the Gods
And cut through vistas of intuitive sight
A long road of shimmering discoveries.
The worlds of a marvellous Unknown were near,
Behind her an ineffable Presence stood:
Her reign received their mystic influences,
Their lion-forces crouched beneath her feet;
The future sleeps unknown behind their doors.
Abysms infernal gaped round the soul's steps
And called to its mounting vision peaks divine:
An endless climb and adventure of the Idea
There tirelessly tempted the explorer mind
And countless voices visited the charmed ear;
A million figures passed and were seen no more.
This was a forefront of God's thousandfold house,
Beginnings of the half-screened Invisible.

A magic porch of entry glimmering
Quivered in a penumbra of screened Light,
A court of the mystical traffic of the worlds,
A balcony and miraculous façade.
Above her lightened high immensities;
All the unknown looked out from boundlessness:
It lodged upon an edge of hourless Time,
Gazing out of some everlasting Now,
Its shadows gleaming with the birth of gods,
Its bodies signalling the Bodiless,
Its foreheads glowing with the Oversoul,
Its forms projected from the Unknowable,
Its eyes dreaming of the Ineffable,
Its faces staring into eternity.
Life in him learned its huge subconscient rear;
The little fronts unlocked to the unseen Vasts:
Her gulfs stood nude, her far transcendences
Flamed in transparencies of crowded light.

A giant order was discovered here
Of which the tassel and extended fringe
Are the scant stuff of our material lives.
This overt universe whose figures hide
The secrets merged in superconscient light,
Wrote clear the letters of its glowing code:
A map of subtle signs surpassing thought
Was hung upon a wall of inmost mind.
Illumining the world's concrete images
Into significant symbols by its gloss,
It offered to the intuitive exegete
Its reflex of the eternal Mystery.
Ascending and descending twixt life's poles
The seried kingdoms of the graded Law
Plunged from the Everlasting into Time,
Then glad of a glory of multitudinous mind
And rich with life's adventure and delight

And packed with the beauty of Matter's shapes and hues
Climbed back from Time into undying Self,
Up a golden ladder carrying the soul,
Tying with diamond threads the Spirit's extremes.
In this drop from consciousness to consciousness
Each leaned on the occult Inconscient's power,
The fountain of its needed Ignorance,
Archmason of the limits by which it lives.
In this soar from consciousness to consciousness
Each lifted tops to That from which it came,
Origin of all that it had ever been
And home of all that it could still become.
An organ scale of the Eternal's acts,
Mounting to their climax in an endless Calm,
Paces of the many-visaged Wonderful,
Predestined stadia of the evolving Way,
Measures of the stature of the growing soul,
They interpreted existence to itself
And, mediating twixt the heights and deeps,
United the veiled married opposites
And linked creation to the Ineffable.
A last high world was seen where all worlds meet;
In its summit gleam where Night is not nor Sleep,
The light began of the Trinity supreme.
All there discovered what it seeks for here.
It freed the finite into boundlessness
And rose into its own eternities.
The Inconscient found its heart of consciousness,
The idea and feeling groping in Ignorance
At last clutched passionately the body of Truth,
The music born in Matter's silences
Plucked nude out of the Ineffable's fathomlessness
The meaning it had held but could not voice;
The perfect rhythm now only sometimes dreamed
An answer brought to the torn earth's hungry need
Rending the night that had concealed the Unknown,

Giving to her her lost forgotten soul.
A grand solution closed the long impasse
In which the heights of mortal effort end.
A reconciling Wisdom looked on life;
It took the striving undertones of mind
And took the confused refrain of human hopes
And made of them a sweet and happy call;
It lifted from an underground of pain
The inarticulate murmur of our lives
And found for it a sense illimitable.
A mighty oneness its perpetual theme,
It caught the soul's faint scattered utterances,
Read hardly twixt our lines of rigid thought
Or mid this drowse and coma on Matter's breast
Heard like disjointed mutterings in sleep;
It grouped the golden links that they had lost
And showed to them their divine unity,
Saving from the error of divided self
The deep spiritual cry in all that is.
All the great Words that toiled to express the One
Were lifted into an absoluteness of light,
An ever-burning Revelation's fire
And the immortality of the eternal Voice.
There was no quarrel more of truth with truth;
The endless chapter of their differences
Retold in light by an omniscient Scribe
Travelled through difference towards unity,
Mind's winding search lost every tinge of doubt
Led to its end by an all-seeing speech
That garbed the initial and original thought
With the finality of an ultimate phrase:
United were Time's creative mood and tense
To the style and syntax of Identity.
A paean swelled from the lost musing deeps;
An anthem pealed to the triune ecstasies,
A cry of the moments to the Immortal's bliss.

As if the strophes of a cosmic ode,
A hierarchy of climbing harmonies
Peopled with voices and with visages
Aspired in a crescendo of the Gods
From Matter's abysses to the Spirit's peaks.
Above were the Immortal's changeless seats,
White chambers of dalliance with eternity
And the stupendous gates of the Alone.
Across the unfolding of the seas of self
Appeared the deathless countries of the One.
A many-miracled Consciousness unrolled
Vast aim and process and unfettered norms,
A larger Nature's great familiar roads.
Affranchised from the net of earthly sense
Calm continents of potency were glimpsed;
Homelands of beauty shut to human eyes,
Half-seen at first through wonder's gleaming lids,
Surprised the vision with felicity;
Sunbelts of knowledge, moonbelts of delight
Stretched out in an ecstasy of widenesses
Beyond our indigent corporeal range.
There he could enter, there awhile abide.
A voyager upon uncharted routes
Fronting the viewless danger of the Unknown,
Adventuring across enormous realms,
He broke into another Space and Time.

END OF CANTO FIVE
END OF BOOK ONE

BOOK TWO

The Book of the Traveller of the Worlds

Canto One

The World-Stair

ALONE he moved watched by the infinity
Around him and the Unknowable above.
All could be seen that shuns the mortal eye,
All could be known the mind has never grasped;
All could be done no mortal will can dare.
A limitless movement filled a limitless peace.
In a profound existence beyond earth's
Parent or kin to our ideas and dreams
Where Space is a vast experiment of the soul,
In an immaterial substance linked to ours
In a deep oneness of all things that are,
The universe of the Unknown arose.
A self-creation without end or pause
Revealed the grandeurs of the Infinite:
It flung into the hazards of its play
A million moods, a myriad energies,
The world-shapes that are fancies of its Truth
And the formulas of the freedom of its Force.
It poured into the Ever-stable's flux
A bacchic rapture and revel of Ideas,
A passion and motion of everlastingness.
There rose unborn into the Unchanging's surge
Thoughts that abide in their deathless consequence,
Words that immortal last though fallen mute,
Acts that brought out from Silence its dumb sense,
Lines that convey the inexpressible.
The Eternal's stillness saw in unmoved joy
His universal Power at work display
In plots of pain and dramas of delight
The wonder and beauty of her will to be.
All, even pain, was the soul's pleasure here;

Here all experience was a single plan,
The thousandfold expression of the One.
All came at once into his single view;
Nothing escaped his vast intuitive sight,
Nothing drew near he could not feel as kin:
He was one spirit with that immensity.
Images in a supernal consciousness
Embodying the Unborn who never dies,
The structured visions of the cosmic Self
Alive with the touch of being's eternity
Looked at him like form-bound spiritual thoughts
Figuring the movements of the Ineffable.
Aspects of being donned world-outline; forms
That open moving doors on things divine,
Became familiar to his hourly sight;
The symbols of the Spirit's reality,
The living bodies of the Bodiless
Grew near to him, his daily associates.
The exhaustless seeings of the unsleeping Mind,
Letterings of its contact with the invisible,
Surrounded him with countless pointing signs;
The voices of a thousand realms of Life
Missioned to him her mighty messages.
The heaven-hints that invade our earthly lives,
The dire imaginations dreamed by Hell,
Which if enacted and experienced here
Our dulled capacity soon would cease to feel
Or our mortal frailty could not long endure,
Were set in their sublime proportions there.
There lived out in their self-born atmosphere,
They resumed their topless pitch and native power;
Their fortifying stress upon the soul
Bit deep into the ground of consciousness
The passion and purity of their extremes,
The absoluteness of their single cry
And the sovereign sweetness or violent poetry

Of their beautiful or terrible delight.
All thought can know or widest sight perceive
And all that thought and sight can never know,
All things occult and rare, remote and strange
Were near to heart's contact, felt by spirit-sense.
Asking for entry at his nature's gates
They crowded the widened spaces of his mind,
His self-discovery's flaming witnesses,
Offering their marvel and their multitude.
These now became new portions of himself,
The figures of his spirit's greater life,
The moving scenery of his large time-walk
Or the embroidered tissue of his sense:
These took the place of intimate human things
And moved as close companions of his thoughts,
Or were his soul's natural environment.
Tireless the heart's adventure of delight,
Endless the kingdoms of the Spirit's bliss,
Unnumbered tones struck from one harmony's strings;
Each to its wide-winged universal poise,
Its fathomless feeling of the All in one,
Brought notes of some perfection yet unseen,
Its single retreat into Truth's secrecies,
Its happy sidelight on the Infinite.
All was found there the Unique has dreamed and made
Tinging with ceaseless rapture and surprise
And an opulent beauty of passionate difference
The recurring beat that moments God in Time.
Only was missing the sole timeless Word
That carries eternity in its lonely sound,
The Idea self-luminous key to all ideas,
The integer of the Spirit's perfect sum
That equates the unequal All to the equal One,
The single sign interpreting every sign,
The absolute index to the Absolute.

There walled apart by its own innerness
In a mystical barrage of dynamic light
He saw a lone immense high-curved world-pile
Erect like a mountain-chariot of the Gods
Motionless under an inscrutable sky.
As if from Matter's plinth and viewless base
To a top as viewless, a carved sea of worlds
Climbing with foam-maned waves to the Supreme
Ascended towards breadths immeasurable;
It hoped to soar into the Ineffable's reign:
A hundred levels raised it to the Unknown.
So it towered up to heights intangible
And disappeared in the hushed conscious Vast
As climbs a storeyed temple-tower to heaven
Built by the aspiring soul of man to live
Near to his dream of the Invisible.
Infinity calls to it as it dreams and climbs;
Its spire touches the apex of the world;
Mounting into great voiceless stillnesses
It marries the earth to screened eternities.
Amid the many systems of the One
Made by an interpreting creative joy
Alone it points us to our journey back
Out of our long self-loss in Nature's deeps;
Planted on earth it holds in it all realms:
It is a brief compendium of the Vast.
This was the single stair to being's goal.
A summary of the stages of the spirit,
Its copy of the cosmic hierarchies
Refashioned in our secret air of self
A subtle pattern of the universe.
It is within, below, without, above.
Acting upon this visible Nature's scheme
It wakens our earth-matter's heavy doze
To think and feel and to react to joy;
It models in us our diviner parts,

Lifts mortal mind into a greater air,
Makes yearn this life of flesh to intangible aims,
Links the body's death with immortality's call:
Out of the swoon of the Inconscience
It labours towards a superconscient Light.
If earth were all and this were not in her,
Thought could not be nor life-delight's response:
Only material forms could then be her guests
Driven by an inanimate world-force.
Earth by this golden superfluity
Bore thinking man and more than man shall bear;
This higher scheme of being is our cause
And holds the key to our ascending fate;
It calls out of our dense mortality
The conscious spirit nursed in Matter's house.
The living symbol of these conscious planes,
Its influences and godheads of the unseen,
Its unthought logic of Reality's acts
Arisen from the unspoken truth in things,
Have fixed our inner life's slow-scaled degrees.
Its steps are paces of the soul's return
From the deep adventure of material birth,
A ladder of delivering ascent
And rungs that Nature climbs to deity.
Once in the vigil of a deathless gaze
These grades had marked her giant downward plunge,
The wide and prone leap of a godhead's fall.
Our life is a holocaust of the Supreme.
The great World-Mother by her sacrifice
Has made her soul the body of our state;
Accepting sorrow and unconsciousness
Divinity's lapse from its own splendours wove
The many-patterned ground of all we are.
An idol of self is our mortality.
Our earth is a fragment and a residue;
Her power is packed with the stuff of greater worlds

And steeped in their colour-lustres dimmed by her drowse;
An atavism of higher births is hers,
Her sleep is stirred by their buried memories
Recalling the lost spheres from which they fell.
Unsatisfied forces in her bosom move;
They are partners of her greater growing fate
And her return to immortality;
They consent to share her doom of birth and death;
They kindle partial gleams of the All and drive
Her blind laborious spirit to compose
A meagre image of the mighty Whole.
The calm and luminous Intimacy within
Approves her work and guides the unseeing Power.
His vast design accepts a puny start.
An attempt, a drawing half-done is the world's life;
Its lines doubt their concealed significance,
Its curves join not their high intended close.
Yet some first image of greatness trembles there,
And when the ambiguous crowded parts have met
The many-toned unity to which they moved,
The Artist's joy shall laugh at reason's rules;
The divine intention suddenly shall be seen,
The end vindicate intuition's sure technique.
A graph shall be of many meeting worlds,
A cube and union-crystal of the gods;
A Mind shall think behind Nature's mindless mask,
A conscious Vast fill the old dumb brute Space.
This faint and fluid sketch of soul called man
Shall stand out on the background of long Time
A glowing epitome of eternity,
A little point reveal the infinitudes.
A Mystery's process is the universe.
At first was laid a strange anomalous base,
A void, a cipher of some secret Whole,
Where zero held infinity in its sum
And All and Nothing were a single term,

An eternal negative, a matrix Nought:
Into its forms the Child is ever born
Who lives for ever in the vasts of God.
A slow reversal's movement then took place:
A gas belched out from some invisible Fire,
Of its dense rings were formed these million stars;
Upon earth's new-born soil God's tread was heard.
Across the thick smoke of earth's ignorance
A Mind began to see and look at forms
And groped for knowledge in the nescient Night:
Caught in a blind stone-grip Force worked its plan
And made in sleep this huge mechanical world,
That Matter might grow conscious of its soul
And like a busy midwife the life-power
Deliver the zero carrier of the All.
Because eternal eyes turned on earth's gulfs
The lucent clarity of a pure regard
And saw a shadow of the Unknowable
Mirrored in the Inconscient's boundless sleep,
Creation's search for self began its stir.
A spirit dreamed in the crude cosmic whirl,
Mind flowed unknowing in the sap of life
And Matter's breasts suckled the divine Idea.
A miracle of the Absolute was born;
Infinity put on a finite soul,
All ocean lived within a wandering drop,
A time-made body housed the Illimitable.
To live this Mystery out our souls came here.

A Seer within who knows the ordered plan
Concealed behind our momentary steps,
Inspires our ascent to viewless heights
As once the abysmal leap to earth and life.
His call had reached the Traveller in Time.
Apart in an unfathomed loneliness,
He travelled in his mute and single strength

Bearing the burden of the world's desire.
A formless Stillness called, a nameless Light.
Above him was the white immobile Ray,
Around him the eternal Silences.
No term was fixed to the high-pitched attempt;
World after world disclosed its guarded powers,
Heaven after heaven its deep beatitudes,
But still the invisible Magnet drew his soul.
A figure sole on Nature's giant stair,
He mounted towards an indiscernible end
On the bare summit of created things.

END OF CANTO ONE

Canto Two

The Kingdom of Subtle Matter

IN THE impalpable field of secret self,
This little outer being's vast support
Parted from vision by earth's solid fence,
He came into a magic crystal air
And found a life that lived not by the flesh,
A light that made visible immaterial things.
A fine degree in wonder's hierarchy,
The kingdom of subtle Matter's faery craft
Outlined against a sky of vivid hues,
Leaping out of a splendour-trance and haze,
The wizard revelation of its front.
A world of lovelier forms lies near to ours,
Where, undisguised by earth's deforming sight,
All shapes are beautiful and all things true.
In that lucent ambience mystically clear
The eyes were doors to a celestial sense,
Hearing was music and the touch a charm,
And the heart drew a deeper breath of power.
There dwell earth-nature's shining origins:
The perfect plans on which she moulds her works,
The distant outcomes of her travailing force,
Repose in a framework of established fate.
Attempted vainly now or won in vain,
Already were mapped and scheduled there the time
And figure of her future sovereignties
In the sumptuous lineaments traced by desire.
The golden issue of mind's labyrinth plots,
The riches unfound or still uncaught by our lives,
Unsullied by the attaint of mortal thought
Abide in that pellucid atmosphere.
Our vague beginnings are overtaken there,

Our middle terms sketched out in prescient lines,
Our finished ends anticipated live.
This brilliant roof of our descending plane,
Intercepting the free boon of heaven's air,
Admits small inrushes of a mighty breath
Or fragrant circuits through gold lattices;
It shields our ceiling of terrestrial mind
From deathless suns and the streaming of God's rain,
Yet canalises a strange irised glow,
And bright dews drip from the Immortal's sky.
A passage for the Powers that move our days,
Occult behind this grosser Nature's walls,
A gossamer marriage-hall of Mind with Form
Is hidden by a tapestry of dreams;
Heaven's meanings steal through it as through a veil,
Its inner sight sustains this outer scene.
A finer consciousness with happier lines,
It has a tact our touch cannot attain,
A purity of sense we never feel;
Its intercession with the eternal Ray
Inspires our transient earth's brief-lived attempts
At beauty and the perfect shape of things.
In rooms of the young divinity of power
And early play of the eternal Child
The embodiments of his outwinging thoughts
Laved in a bright everlasting wonder's tints
And lulled by whispers of that lucid air
Take dream-hued rest like birds on timeless trees
Before they dive to float on earth-time's sea.
All that here seems has lovelier semblance there.
Whatever our hearts conceive, our heads create,
Some high original beauty forfeiting,
Thence exiled here consents to an earthly tinge.
Whatever is here of visible charm and grace
Finds there its faultless and immortal lines;
All that is beautiful here is there divine.

Figures are there undreamed by mortal mind:
Bodies that have no earthly counterpart
Traverse the inner eye's illumined trance
And ravish the heart with their celestial tread
Persuading heaven to inhabit that wonder sphere.
The future's marvels wander in its gulfs;
Things old and new are fashioned in those depths:
A carnival of beauty crowds the heights
In that magic kingdom of ideal sight.
In its antechambers of splendid privacy
Matter and soul in conscious union meet
Like lovers in a lonely secret place:
In the clasp of a passion not yet unfortunate
They join their strength and sweetness and delight
And mingling make the high and low worlds one.
Intruder from the formless Infinite
Daring to break into the Inconscient's reign,
The spirit's leap towards body touches ground.
As yet unwrapped in earthly lineaments,
Already it wears outlasting death and birth,
Convincing the abyss by heavenly form,
A covering of its immortality
Alive to the lustre of the wearer's rank,
Fit to endure the rub of Change and Time.
A tissue mixed of the soul's radiant light
And Matter's substance of sign-burdened Force, —
Imagined vainly in our mind's thin air
An abstract phantasm mould of mental make, —
It feels what earthly bodies cannot feel
And is more real than this grosser frame.
After the falling of mortality's cloak
Lightened is its weight to heighten its ascent;
Refined to the touch of finer environments
It drops old patterned palls of denser stuff,
Cancels the grip of earth's descending pull
And bears the soul from world to higher world,

Till in the naked ether of the peaks
The spirit's simplicity alone is left,
The eternal being's first transparent robe.
But when it must come back to its mortal load
And the hard ensemble of earth's experience,
Then its return resumes that heavier dress.
For long before earth's solid vest was forged
By the technique of the atomic Void,
A lucent envelope of self-disguise
Was woven round the secret spirit in things.
The subtle realms from those bright sheaths are made.
This wonder-world with all its radiant boon
Of vision and inviolate happiness,
Only for expression cares and perfect form;
Fair on its peaks, it has dangerous nether planes;
Its light draws towards the verge of Nature's lapse;
It lends beauty to the terror of the gulfs
And fascinating eyes to perilous Gods,
Invests with grace the demon and the snake.
Its trance imposes earth's inconscience,
Immortal it weaves for us death's sombre robe
And authorises our mortality.
This medium serves a greater Consciousness:
A vessel of its concealed autocracy,
It is the subtle ground of Matter's worlds,
It is the immutable in their mutable forms,
In the folds of its creative memory
It guards the deathless type of perishing things:
Its lowered potencies found our fallen strengths;
Its thought invents our reasoned ignorance;
Its sense fathers our body's reflexes.
Our secret breath of untried mightier force,
The lurking sun of an instant's inner sight,
Its fine suggestions are a covert fount
For our iridescent rich imaginings
Touching things common with transfiguring hues

Till even earth's mud grows rich and warm with the skies
And a glory gleams from the soul's decadence.
Its knowledge is our error's starting-point;
Its beauty dons our mud-mask ugliness,
Its artist good begins our evil's tale.
A heaven of creative truths above,
A cosmos of harmonious dreams between,
A chaos of dissolving forms below,
It plunges lost in our inconscient base.
Out of its fall our denser Matter came.

Thus taken was God's plunge into the Night.
This fallen world became a nurse of souls
Inhabited by concealed divinity.
A Being woke and lived in the meaningless void,
A world-wide Nescience strove towards life and thought,
A Consciousness plucked out from mindless sleep.
All here is driven by an insentient will.
Thus fallen, inconscient, frustrate, dense, inert,
Sunk into inanimate and torpid drowse
Earth lay, a drudge of sleep, forced to create
By a subconscient yearning memory
Left from a happiness dead before she was born,
An alien wonder on her senseless breast.
This mire must harbour the orchid and the rose,
From her blind unwilling substance must emerge
A beauty that belongs to happier spheres.
This is the destiny bequeathed to her,
As if a slain god left a golden trust
To a blind force and an imprisoned soul.
An immortal godhead's perishable parts
She must reconstitute from fragments lost,
Reword from a document complete elsewhere
Her doubtful title to her divine Name.
A residue her sole inheritance,
All things she carries in her shapeless dust.

Her giant energy tied to petty forms
In the slow tentative motion of her power
With only frail blunt instruments for use,
She has accepted as her nature's need
And given to man as his stupendous work
A labour to the gods impossible.
A life living hardly in a field of death
Its portion claims of immortality;
A brute half-conscious body serves as means
A mind that must recover a knowledge lost
Held in stone grip by the world's inconscience,
And wearing still these countless knots of Law
A spirit bound stand up as Nature's king.
   A mighty kinship is this daring's cause.
All we attempt in this imperfect world,
Looks forward or looks back beyond Time's gloss
To its pure idea and firm inviolate type
In an absolute creation's flawless skill.
To seize the absolute in shapes that pass,
To fix the eternal's touch in time-made things,
This is the law of all perfection here.
A fragment here is caught of heaven's design;
Else could we never hope for greater life
And ecstasy and glory could not be.
Even in the littleness of our mortal state,
Even in this prison-house of outer form,
A brilliant passage for the infallible Flame
Is driven through gross walls of nerve and brain,
A Splendour presses or a Power breaks through,
Earth's great dull barrier is removed awhile,
The inconscient seal is lifted from our eyes
And we grow vessels of creative might.
The enthusiasm of a divine surprise
Pervades our life, a mystic stir is felt,
A joyful anguish trembles in our limbs;
A dream of beauty dances through the heart,

A thought from the eternal Mind draws near,
Intimations cast from the Invisible
Awaking from Infinity's sleep come down,
Symbols of That which never yet was made.
But soon the inert flesh responds no more,
Then sinks the sacred orgy of delight,
The blaze of passion and the tide of power
Are taken from us and, though a glowing form
Abides astonishing earth, imagined supreme,
Too little of what was meant has left a trace.
Earth's eyes half-see, her forces half-create;
Her rarest works are copies of heaven's art.
A radiance of a golden artifice,
A masterpiece of inspired device and rule,
Her forms hide what they house and only mime
The unseized miracle of self-born shapes
That live for ever in the Eternal's gaze.
Here in a difficult half-finished world
Is a slow toiling of unconscious Powers;
Here is man's ignorant divining mind,
His genius born from an inconscient soil.
To copy on earth's copies is his art.
For when he strives for things surpassing earth,
Too rude the workman's tools, too crude his stuff,
And hardly with his heart's blood he achieves
His transient house of the divine Idea,
His figure of a Time-inn for the Unborn.
Our being thrills with high far memories
And would bring down their dateless meanings here,
But, too divine for earthly Nature's scheme,
Beyond our reach the eternal marvels blaze.
Absolute they dwell, unborn, immutable,
Immaculate in the Spirit's deathless air,
Immortal in a world of motionless Time
And an unchanging muse of deep self-space.
Only when we have climbed above ourselves,

A line of the Transcendent meets our road
And joins us to the timeless and the true;
It brings to us the inevitable word,
The godlike act, the thoughts that never die.
A ripple of light and glory wraps the brain,
And travelling down the moment's vanishing route
The figures of eternity arrive.
As the mind's visitors or the heart's guests
They espouse our mortal brevity awhile,
Or seldom in some rare delivering glimpse
Are caught by our vision's delicate surmise.
Although beginnings only and first attempts,
These glimmerings point to the secret of our birth
And the hidden miracle of our destiny.
What we are there and here on earth shall be
Is imaged in a contact and a call.
As yet earth's imperfection is our sphere,
Our nature's glass shows not our real self;
That greatness still abides held back within.
Earth's doubting future hides our heritage:
The Light now distant shall grow native here,
The Strength that visits us our comrade power;
The Ineffable shall find a secret voice,
The Imperishable burn through Matter's screen
Making this mortal body godhead's robe.
The Spirit's greatness is our timeless source
And it shall be our crown in endless Time.
A vast Unknown is round us and within;
All things are wrapped in the dynamic One:
A subtle link of union joins all life.
Thus all creation is a single chain:
We are not left alone in a closed scheme
Between a driving of inconscient Force
And an incommunicable Absolute.
Our life is a spur in a sublime soul-range,
Our being looks beyond its walls of mind

And it communicates with greater worlds;
There are brighter earths and wider heavens than ours.
There are realms where Being broods in its own depths;
It feels in its immense dynamic core
Its nameless, unformed, unborn potencies
Cry for expression in the unshaped Vast:
Ineffable beyond Ignorance and death,
The images of its everlasting Truth
Look out from a chamber of its self-rapt soul:
As if to its own inner witness gaze
The Spirit holds up its mirrored self and works,
The power and passion of its timeless heart,
The figures of its formless ecstasy,
The grandeurs of its multitudinous might.
Thence comes the mystic substance of our souls
Into the prodigy of our nature's birth,
There is the unfallen height of all we are
And dateless fount of all we hope to be.
On every plane the hieratic Power,
Initiate of unspoken verities,
Dreams to transcribe and make a part of life
In its own native style and living tongue
Some trait of the perfection of the Unborn,
Some vision seen in the omniscient Light,
Some far tone of the immortal rhapsodist Voice,
Some rapture of the all-creating Bliss,
Some form and plan of the Beauty unutterable.
Worlds are there nearer to those absolute realms,
Where the response to Truth is swift and sure
And spirit is not hampered by its frame
And hearts by sharp division seized and rent
And delight and beauty are inhabitants
And love and sweetness are the law of life.
A finer substance in a subtler mould
Embodies the divinity earth but dreams;
Its strength can overtake joy's running feet;

Overleaping the fixed hurdles set by Time,
The rapid net of an intuitive clasp
Captures the fugitive happiness we desire.
A Nature lifted by a larger breath,
Plastic and passive to the all-shaping Fire,
Answers the flaming Godhead's casual touch:
Immune from our inertia of response
It hears the word to which our hearts are deaf,
Adopts the seeing of immortal eyes
And, traveller on the roads of line and hue,
Pursues the spirit of beauty to its home.
Thus we draw near to the All-Wonderful
Following his rapture in things as sign and guide;
Beauty is his footprint showing us where he has passed,
Love is his heart-beats' rhythm in mortal breasts,
Happiness the smile on his adorable face.
A communion of spiritual entities,
A genius of creative Immanence,
Makes all creation deeply intimate:
A fourth dimension of aesthetic sense
Where all is in ourselves, ourselves in all,
To the cosmic wideness re-aligns our souls.
A kindling rapture joins the seer and seen;
The craftsman and the craft grown inly one
Achieve perfection by the magic throb
And passion of their close identity.
All that we slowly piece from gathered parts,
Or by long labour stumblingly evolve,
Is there self-born by its eternal right.
In us too the intuitive Fire can burn;
An agent Light, it is coiled in our folded hearts,
On the celestial levels is its home:
Descending, it can bring those heavens here.
But rarely burns the flame nor burns for long;
The joy it calls from those diviner heights
Brings brief magnificent reminiscences

And high splendid glimpses of interpreting thought,
But not the utter vision and delight.
A veil is kept, something is still held back,
Lest, captives of the beauty and the joy,
Our souls forget to the Highest to aspire.

In that fair subtle realm behind our own
The form is all, and physical gods are kings.
The inspiring Light plays in fine boundaries;
A faultless beauty comes by Nature's grace;
There liberty is perfection's guarantee:
Although the absolute Image lacks, the Word
Incarnate, the sheer spiritual ecstasy,
All is a miracle of symmetric charm,
A fantasy of perfect line and rule.
There all feel satisfied in themselves and whole,
A rich completeness is by limit made,
Marvel in an utter littleness abounds,
An intricate rapture riots in a small space:
Each rhythm is kin to its environment,
Each line is perfect and inevitable,
Each object faultlessly built for charm and use.
All is enamoured of its own delight.
Intact it lives of its perfection sure
In a heaven-pleased self-glad immunity;
Content to be, it has need of nothing more.
Here was not futile effort's broken heart:
Exempt from the ordeal and the test,
Empty of opposition and of pain,
It was a world that could not fear nor grieve.
It had no grace of error or defeat,
It had no room for fault, no power to fail.
Out of some packed self-bliss it drew at once
Its form-discoveries of the mute Idea
And the miracle of its rhythmic thoughts and acts,
Its clear technique of firm and rounded lives,

Its gracious people of inanimate shapes
And glory of breathing bodies like our own.
Amazed, his senses ravished with delight,
He moved in a divine, yet kindred world
Admiring marvellous forms so near to ours
Yet perfect like the playthings of a god,
Deathless in the aspect of mortality.
In their narrow and exclusive absolutes
The finite's ranked supremacies throned abide;
It dreams not ever of what might have been;
Only in boundaries can this absolute live.
In a supremeness bound to its own plan
Where all was finished and no widths were left,
No space for shadows of the immeasurable,
No room for the incalculable's surprise,
A captive of its own beauty and ecstasy,
In a magic circle wrought the enchanted Might.
The spirit stood back effaced behind its frame.
Admired for the bright finality of its lines
A blue horizon limited the soul;
Thought moved in luminous facilities,
The outer ideal's shallows its swim-range:
Life in its boundaries lingered satisfied
With the small happiness of the body's acts.
Assigned as Force to a bound corner-Mind,
Attached to the safe paucity of her room,
She did her little works and played and slept
And thought not of a greater work undone.
Forgetful of her violent vast desires,
Forgetful of the heights to which she rose,
Her walk was fixed within a radiant groove.
The beautiful body of a soul at ease,
Like one who laughs in sweet and sunlit groves,
Childlike she swung in her gold cradle of joy.
The spaces' call reached not her charmed abode,
She had no wings for wide and dangerous flight,

She faced no peril of sky or of abyss,
She knew no vistas and no mighty dreams,
No yearning for her lost infinitudes.
A perfect picture in a perfect frame,
This faery artistry could not keep his will:
Only a moment's fine release it gave;
A careless hour was spent in a slight bliss.
Our spirit tires of being's surfaces,
Transcended is the splendour of the form;
It turns to hidden powers and deeper states.
So now he looked beyond for greater light.
His soul's peak-climb abandoning in its rear
This brilliant courtyard of the House of Days,
He left that fine material Paradise.
His destiny lay beyond in larger Space.

END OF CANTO TWO

Canto Three

The Glory and the Fall of Life

AN UNEVEN broad ascent now lured his feet.
Answering a greater Nature's troubled call
He crossed the limits of embodied Mind
And entered wide obscure disputed fields
Where all was doubt and change and nothing sure,
A world of search and toil without repose.
As one who meets the face of the Unknown,
A questioner with none to give reply,
Attracted to a problem never solved,
Always uncertain of the ground he trod,
Always drawn on to an inconstant goal
He travelled through a land peopled by doubts
In shifting confines on a quaking base.
In front he saw a boundary ever unreached
And thought himself at each step nearer now, —
A far retreating horizon of mirage.
A vagrancy was there that brooked no home,
A journey of countless paths without a close.
Nothing he found to satisfy his heart;
A tireless wandering sought and could not cease.
There life is the manifest Incalculable,
A movement of unquiet seas, a long
And venturous leap of spirit into Space,
A vexed disturbance in the eternal Calm,
An impulse and passion of the Infinite.
Assuming whatever shape her fancy wills,
Escaped from the restraint of settled forms
She has left the safety of the tried and known.
Unshepherded by the fear that walks through Time,
Undaunted by Fate that dogs and Chance that springs,
She accepts disaster as a common risk;

Careless of suffering, heedless of sin and fall,
She wrestles with danger and discovery
In the unexplored expanses of the soul.
To be seemed only a long experiment,
The hazard of a seeking ignorant Force
That tries all truths and, finding none supreme,
Moves on unsatisfied, unsure of its end.
As saw some inner mind, so life was shaped:
From thought to thought she passed, from phase to phase,
Tortured by her own powers or proud and blest,
Now master of herself, now toy and slave.
A huge inconsequence was her action's law,
As if all possibility must be drained,
And anguish and bliss were pastimes of the heart.
In a gallop of thunder-hooved vicissitudes
She swept through the race-fields of Circumstance,
Or, swaying, she tossed between her heights and deeps,
Uplifted or broken on Time's inconstant wheel.
Amid a tedious crawl of drab desires
She writhed, a worm mid worms in Nature's mud,
Then, Titan-statured, took all earth for food,
Ambitioned the seas for robe, for crown the stars
And shouting strode from peak to giant peak,
Clamouring for worlds to conquer and to rule.
Then, wantonly enamoured of Sorrow's face,
She plunged into the anguish of the depths
And, wallowing, clung to her own misery.
In dolorous converse with her squandered self
She wrote the account of all that she had lost,
Or sat with grief as with an ancient friend.
A romp of violent raptures soon was spent,
Or she lingered tied to an inadequate joy
Missing the turns of fate, missing life's goal.
A scene was planned for all her numberless moods
Where each could be the law and way of life,
But none could offer a pure felicity;

Only a flickering zest they left behind
Or the fierce lust that brings a dead fatigue.
Amid her swift untold variety
Something remained dissatisfied, ever the same
And in the new saw only a face of the old,
For every hour repeated all the rest
And every change prolonged the same unease.
A spirit of her self and aim unsure,
Tired soon of too much joy and happiness,
She needs the spur of pleasure and of pain
And the native taste of suffering and unrest:
She strains for an end that never can she win.
A perverse savour haunts her thirsting lips:
For the grief she weeps which came from her own choice,
For the pleasure yearns that racked with wounds her breast;
Aspiring to heaven she turns her steps towards hell.
Chance she has chosen and danger for playfellows;
Fate's dreadful swing she has taken for cradle and seat.
Yet pure and bright from the Timeless was her birth,
A lost world-rapture lingers in her eyes,
Her moods are faces of the Infinite:
Beauty and happiness are her native right,
And endless Bliss is her eternal home.

This now revealed its antique face of joy,
A sudden disclosure to the heart of grief
Tempting it to endure and long and hope.
Even in changing worlds bereft of peace,
In an air racked with sorrow and with fear
And while his feet trod on a soil unsafe,
He saw the image of a happier state.
In an architecture of hieratic Space
Circling and mounting towards creation's tops,
At a blue height which never was too high
For warm communion between body and soul,
As far as heaven, as near as thought and hope,

Glimmered the kingdom of a griefless life.
Above him in a new celestial vault
Other than the heavens beheld by mortal eyes,
As on a fretted ceiling of the gods,
An archipelago of laughter and fire,
Swam stars apart in a rippled sea of sky.
Towered spirals, magic rings of vivid hue
And gleaming spheres of strange felicity
Floated through distance like a symbol world.
On the trouble and the toil they could not share,
On the unhappiness they could not aid,
Impervious to life's suffering, struggle, grief,
Untarnished by its anger, gloom and hate,
Unmoved, untouched, looked down great visioned planes
Blissful for ever in their timeless right.
Absorbed in their own beauty and content,
Of their immortal gladness they live sure.
Apart in their self-glory plunged, remote
Burning they swam in a vague lucent haze,
An everlasting refuge of dream-light,
A nebula of the splendours of the gods
Made from the musings of eternity.
Almost unbelievable by human faith,
Hardly they seemed the stuff of things that are.
As through a magic television's glass
Outlined to some magnifying inner eye
They shone like images thrown from a far scene
Too high and glad for mortal lids to seize.
But near and real to the longing heart
And to the body's passionate thought and sense
Are the hidden kingdoms of beatitude.
In some close unattained realm which yet we feel,
Immune from the harsh clutch of Death and Time,
Escaping the search of sorrow and desire,
In bright enchanted safe peripheries
For ever wallowing in bliss they lie.

In dream and trance and muse before our eyes,
Across a subtle vision's inner field,
Wide rapturous landscapes fleeting from the sight,
The figures of the perfect kingdom pass
And behind them leave a shining memory's trail.
Imagined scenes or great eternal worlds,
Dream-caught or sensed, they touch our hearts with their depths;
Unreal-seeming, yet more real than life,
Happier than happiness, truer than things true,
If dreams these were or captured images,
Dream's truth made false earth's vain realities.
In a swift eternal moment fixed there live
Or ever recalled come back to longing eyes
Calm heavens of imperishable Light,
Illumined continents of violet peace,
Oceans and rivers of the mirth of God
And griefless countries under purple suns.

This, once a star of bright remote idea
Or imagination's comet trail of dream,
Took now a close shape of reality.
The gulf between dream-truth, earth-fact was crossed,
The wonder-worlds of life were dreams no more;
His vision made all they unveiled its own:
Their scenes, their happenings met his eyes and heart
And smote them with pure loveliness and bliss.
A breathless summit region drew his gaze
Whose boundaries jutted into a sky of Self
And dipped towards a strange ethereal base.
The quintessence glowed of Life's supreme delight.
On a spiritual and mysterious peak
Only a miracle's high transfiguring line
Divided life from the formless Infinite
And sheltered Time against eternity.
Out of that formless stuff Time mints his shapes;
The Eternal's quiet holds the cosmic act:

The protean images of the World-Force
Have drawn the strength to be, the will to last
From a deep ocean of dynamic peace.
Inverting the spirit's apex towards life,
She spends the plastic liberties of the One
To cast in acts the dreams of her caprice,
His wisdom's call steadies her careless feet,
He props her dance upon a rigid base,
His timeless still immutability
Must standardise her creation's miracle.
Out of the Void's unseeing energies
Inventing the scene of a concrete universe,
By his thought she has fixed its paces, in its blind acts
She sees by flashes of his all-knowing Light.
At her will the inscrutable Supermind leans down
To guide her force that feels but cannot know,
Its breath of power controls her restless seas
And life obeys the governing Idea.
At her will, led by a luminous Immanence
The hazardous experimenting Mind
Pushes its way through obscure possibles
Mid chance formations of an unknowing world.
Our human ignorance moves towards the Truth
That Nescience may become omniscient,
Transmuted instincts shape to divine thoughts,
Thoughts house infallible immortal sight
And Nature climb towards God's identity.
The Master of the worlds self-made her slave
Is the executor of her fantasies:
She has canalised the seas of omnipotence;
She has limited by her laws the Illimitable.
The Immortal bound himself to do her works;
He labours at the tasks her Ignorance sets,
Hidden in the cape of our mortality.
The worlds, the forms her goddess fancy makes
Have lost their origin on unseen heights:

Even severed, straying from their timeless source,
Even deformed, obscure, accursed and fallen, —
Since even fall has its perverted joy
And nothing she leaves out that serves delight, —
These too can to the peaks revert or here
Cut out the sentence of the spirit's fall,
Recover their forfeited divinity.
At once caught in an eternal vision's sweep
He saw her pride and splendour of highborn zones
And her regions crouching in the nether deeps.
Above was a monarchy of unfallen self,
Beneath was the gloomy trance of the abyss,
An opposite pole or dim antipodes.
There were vasts of the glory of life's absolutes:
All laughed in a safe immortality
And an eternal childhood of the soul
Before darkness came and pain and grief were born
Where all could dare to be themselves and one
And Wisdom played in sinless innocence
With naked Freedom in Truth's happy sun.
There were worlds of her laughter and dreadful irony,
There were fields of her taste of toil and strife and tears;
Her head lay on the breast of amorous Death,
Sleep imitated awhile extinction's peace.
The light of God she has parted from his dark
To test the savour of bare opposites.
Here mingling in man's heart their tones and hues
Have woven his being's mutable design,
His life a forward-rippling stream in Time,
His nature's constant fixed mobility,
His soul a moving picture's changeful film,
His cosmos-chaos of personality.
The grand creatrix with her cryptic touch
Has turned to pathos and power being's self-dream,
Made a passion-play of its fathomless mystery.

But here were worlds lifted half-way to heaven.
The Veil was there but not the Shadowy Wall;
In forms not too remote from human grasp
Some passion of the inviolate purity
Broke through, a ray of the original Bliss.
Heaven's joys might have been earth's if earth were pure.
There could have reached our divinised sense and heart
Some natural felicity's bright extreme,
Some thrill of Supernature's absolutes:
All strengths could laugh and sport on earth's hard roads
And never feel her cruel edge of pain,
All love could play and nowhere Nature's shame.
But she has stabled her dreams in Matter's courts
And still her doors are barred to things supreme.
These worlds could feel God's breath visiting their tops;
Some glimmer of the Transcendent's hem was there.
Across the white aeonic silences
Immortal figures of embodied joy
Traversed wide spaces near to eternity's sleep.
Pure mystic voices in beatitude's hush
Appealed to Love's immaculate sweetnesses,
Calling his honeyed touch to thrill the worlds,
His blissful hands to seize on Nature's limbs,
His sweet intolerant might of union
To take all beings into his saviour arms,
Drawing to his pity the rebel and the waif
To force on them the happiness they refuse.
A chant hymeneal to the unseen Divine,
A flaming rhapsody of white desire
Lured an immortal music into the heart
And woke the slumbering ear of ecstasy.
A purer, fierier sense had there its home,
A burning urge no earthly limbs can hold;
One drew a large unburdened spacious breath
And the heart sped from beat to rapturous beat.
The voice of Time sang of the Immortal's joy;

An inspiration and a lyric cry,
The moments came with ecstasy on their wings;
Beauty unimaginable moved heaven-bare
Absolved from boundaries in the vasts of dream;
The cry of the Birds of Wonder called from the skies
To the deathless people of the shores of Light.
Creation leaped straight from the hands of God;
Marvel and rapture wandered in the ways.
Only to be was a supreme delight,
Life was a happy laughter of the soul
And Joy was king with Love for minister.
The spirit's luminousness was bodied there.
Life's contraries were lovers or natural friends
And her extremes keen edges of harmony:
Indulgence with a tender purity came
And nursed the god on her maternal breast:
There none was weak, so falsehood could not live;
Ignorance was a thin shade protecting light,
Imagination the free-will of Truth,
Pleasure a candidate for heaven's fire;
The intellect was Beauty's worshipper,
Strength was the slave of calm spiritual law,
Power laid its head upon the breasts of Bliss.
There were summit-glories inconceivable,
Autonomies of Wisdom's still self-rule
And high dependencies of her virgin sun,
Illumined theocracies of the seeing soul
Throned in the power of the Transcendent's ray.
A vision of grandeurs, a dream of magnitudes
In sun-bright kingdoms moved with regal gait:
Assemblies, crowded senates of the gods,
Life's puissances reigned on seats of marble will,
High dominations and autocracies
And laurelled strengths and armed imperative mights.
All objects there were great and beautiful,
All beings wore a royal stamp of power.

There sat the oligarchies of natural Law,
Proud violent heads served one calm monarch brow:
All the soul's postures donned divinity.
There met the ardent mutual intimacies
Of mastery's joy and the joy of servitude
Imposed by Love on Love's heart that obeys
And Love's body held beneath a rapturous yoke.
All was a game of meeting kinglinesses.
For worship lifts the worshipper's bowed strength
Close to the god's pride and bliss his soul adores:
The ruler there is one with all he rules;
To him who serves with a free equal heart
Obedience is his princely training's school,
His nobility's coronet and privilege,
His faith is a high nature's idiom,
His service a spiritual sovereignty.
There were realms where Knowledge joined creative Power
In her high home and made her all his own:
The grand Illuminate seized her gleaming limbs
And filled them with the passion of his ray
Till all her body was its transparent house
And all her soul a counterpart of his soul.
Apotheosised, transfigured by wisdom's touch,
Her days became a luminous sacrifice;
An immortal moth in happy and endless fire,
She burned in his sweet intolerable blaze.
A captive Life wedded her conqueror.
In his wide sky she built her world anew;
She gave to mind's calm pace the motor's speed,
To thinking a need to live what the soul saw,
To living an impetus to know and see.
His splendour grasped her, her puissance to him clung;
She crowned the Idea a king in purple robes,
Put her magic serpent sceptre in Thought's grip,
Made forms his inward vision's rhythmic shapes
And her acts the living body of his will.

A flaming thunder, a creator flash,
His victor Light rode on her deathless Force;
A centaur's mighty gallop bore the god.
Life throned with mind, a double majesty.
Worlds were there of a happiness great and grave
And action tinged with dream, laughter with thought,
And passion there could wait for its desire
Until it heard the near approach of God.
Worlds were there of a childlike mirth and joy;
A carefree youthfulness of mind and heart
Found in the body a heavenly instrument;
It lit an aureate halo round desire
And freed the deified animal in the limbs
To divine gambols of love and beauty and bliss.
On a radiant soil that gazed at heaven's smile
A swift life-impulse stinted not nor stopped:
It knew not how to tire; happy were its tears.
There work was play and play the only work,
The tasks of heaven a game of godlike might:
A celestial bacchanal for ever pure,
Unstayed by faintness as in mortal frames
Life was an eternity of rapture's moods:
Age never came, care never lined the face.
Imposing on the safety of the stars
A race and laughter of immortal strengths,
The nude god-children in their play-fields ran
Smiting the winds with splendour and with speed;
Of storm and sun they made companions,
Sported with the white mane of tossing seas,
Slew distance trampled to death under their wheels
And wrestled in the arenas of their force.
Imperious in their radiance like the suns
They kindled heaven with the glory of their limbs
Flung like a divine largess to the world.
A spell to force the heart to stark delight,
They carried the pride and mastery of their charm

As if Life's banner on the roads of Space.
Ideas were luminous comrades of the soul;
Mind played with speech, cast javelins of thought,
But needed not these instruments' toil to know;
Knowledge was Nature's pastime like the rest.
Investitured with the fresh heart's bright ray,
An early God-instinct's child inheritors,
Tenants of the perpetuity of Time
Still thrilling with the first creation's bliss,
They steeped existence in their youth of soul.
An exquisite and vehement tyranny,
The strong compulsion of their will to joy
Poured smiling streams of happiness through the world.
There reigned a breath of high immune content,
A fortunate gait of days in tranquil air,
A flood of universal love and peace.
A sovereignty of tireless sweetness lived
Like a song of pleasure on the lips of Time.
A large spontaneous order freed the will,
A sun-frank winging of the soul to bliss,
The breadth and greatness of the unfettered act
And the swift fire-heart's golden liberty.
There was no falsehood of soul-severance,
There came no crookedness of thought or word
To rob creation of its native truth;
All was sincerity and natural force.
There freedom was sole rule and highest law.
In a happy series climbed or plunged these worlds:
In realms of curious beauty and surprise,
In fields of grandeur and of titan power,
Life played at ease with her immense desires.
A thousand Edens she could build nor pause;
No bound was set to her greatness and to her grace
And to her heavenly variety.
Awake with a cry and stir of numberless souls,
Arisen from the breast of some deep Infinite,

Smiling like a new-born child at love and hope,
In her nature housing the Immortal's power,
In her bosom bearing the eternal Will,
No guide she needed but her luminous heart:
No fall debased the godhead of her steps,
No alien Night had come to blind her eyes.
There was no use for grudging ring or fence;
Each act was a perfection and a joy.
Abandoned to her rapid fancy's moods
And the rich coloured riot of her mind,
Initiate of divine and mighty dreams,
Magician builder of unnumbered forms
Exploring the measures of the rhythms of God,
At will she wove her wizard wonder-dance,
A Dionysian goddess of delight,
A Bacchant of creative ecstasy.

This world of bliss he saw and felt its call,
But found no way to enter into its joy;
Across the conscious gulf there was no bridge.
A darker air encircled still his soul
Tied to an image of unquiet life.
In spite of yearning mind and longing sense,
To a sad Thought by grey experience formed
And a vision dimmed by care and sorrow and sleep
All this seemed only a bright desirable dream
Conceived in a longing distance by the heart
Of one who walks in the shadow of earth-pain.
Although he once had felt the Eternal's clasp,
Too near to suffering worlds his nature lived,
And where he stood were entrances of Night.
Hardly, too close beset by the world's care,
Can the dense mould in which we have been made
Return sheer joy to joy, pure light to light.
For its tormented will to think and live
First to a mingled pain and pleasure woke

And still it keeps the habit of its birth:
A dire duality is our way to be.
In the crude beginnings of this mortal world
Life was not nor mind's play nor heart's desire.
When earth was built in the unconscious Void
And nothing was save a material scene,
Identified with sea and sky and stone
Her young gods yearned for the release of souls
Asleep in objects, vague, inanimate.
In that desolate grandeur, in that beauty bare,
In the deaf stillness, mid the unheeded sounds,
Heavy was the uncommunicated load
Of Godhead in a world that had no needs;
For none was there to feel or to receive.
This solid mass which brooked no throb of sense
Could not contain their vast creative urge:
Immersed no more in Matter's harmony,
The Spirit lost its statuesque repose.
In the uncaring trance it groped for sight,
Passioned for the movements of a conscious heart,
Famishing for speech and thought and joy and love,
In the dumb insensitive wheeling day and night
Hungered for the beat of yearning and response.
The poised inconscience shaken with a touch,
The intuitive Silence trembling with a name,
They cried to Life to invade the senseless mould
And in brute forms awake divinity.
A voice was heard on the mute rolling globe,
A murmur moaned in the unlistening Void.
A being seemed to breathe where once was none:
Something pent up in dead insentient depths,
Denied conscious existence, lost to joy,
Turned as if one asleep since dateless time.
Aware of its own buried reality,
Remembering its forgotten self and right,
It yearned to know, to aspire, to enjoy, to live.

Life heard the call and left her native light.
Overflowing from her bright magnificent plane
On the rigid coil and sprawl of mortal Space,
Here too the gracious great-winged Angel poured
Her splendour and her swiftness and her bliss,
Hoping to fill a fair new world with joy.
As comes a goddess to a mortal's breast
And fills his days with her celestial clasp,
She stooped to make her home in transient shapes;
In Matter's womb she cast the Immortal's fire,
In the unfeeling Vast woke thought and hope,
Smote with her charm and beauty flesh and nerve
And forced delight on earth's insensible frame.
Alive and clad with trees and herbs and flowers
Earth's great brown body smiled towards the skies,
Azure replied to azure in the sea's laugh;
New sentient creatures filled the unseen depths,
Life's glory and swiftness ran in the beauty of beasts,
Man dared and thought and met with his soul the world.
But while the magic breath was on its way,
Before her gifts could reach our prisoned hearts,
A dark ambiguous Presence questioned all.
The secret Will that robes itself with Night
And offers to spirit the ordeal of the flesh,
Imposed a mystic mask of death and pain.
Interned now in the slow and suffering years
Sojourns the winged and wonderful wayfarer
And can no more recall her happier state,
But must obey the inert Inconscient's law,
Insensible foundation of a world
In which blind limits are on beauty laid
And sorrow and joy as struggling comrades live.
A dim and dreadful muteness fell on her:
Abolished was her subtle mighty spirit
And slain her boon of child-god happiness,
And all her glory into littleness turned

And all her sweetness into a maimed desire.
To feed death with her works is here life's doom.
So veiled was her immortality that she seemed,
Inflicting consciousness on unconscious things,
An episode in an eternal death,
A myth of being that must for ever cease.
Such was the evil mystery of her change.

END OF CANTO THREE

Canto Four

The Kingdoms of the Little Life

A QUIVERING trepidant uncertain world
Born from that dolorous meeting and eclipse
Appeared in the emptiness where her feet had trod,
A quick obscurity, a seeking stir.
There was a writhing of half-conscious force
Hardly awakened from the Inconscient's sleep,
Tied to an instinct-driven Ignorance,
To find itself and find its hold on things.
Inheritor of poverty and loss,
Assailed by memories that fled when seized,
Haunted by a forgotten uplifting hope,
It strove with a blindness as of groping hands
To fill the aching and disastrous gap
Between earth-pain and the bliss from which Life fell.
A world that ever seeks for something missed,
Hunts for the joy that earth has failed to keep.
Too near to our gates its unappeased unrest
For peace to live on the inert solid globe:
It has joined its hunger to the hunger of earth,
It has given the law of craving to our lives,
It has made our spirit's need a fathomless gulf.
An Influence entered mortal night and day,
A shadow overcast the time-born race;
In the troubled stream where leaps a blind heart-pulse
And the nerve-beat of feeling wakes in sense
Dividing Matter's sleep from conscious Mind,
There strayed a call that knew not why it came.
A Power beyond earth's scope has touched the earth;
The repose that might have been can be no more;
A formless yearning passions in man's heart,
A cry is in his blood for happier things:

Else could he roam on a free sunlit soil
With the childlike pain-forgetting mind of beasts
Or live happy, unmoved, like flowers and trees.
The Might that came upon the earth to bless,
Has stayed on earth to suffer and aspire.
The infant laugh that rang through time is hushed:
Man's natural joy of life is overcast
And sorrow is his nurse of destiny.
The animal's thoughtless joy is left behind,
Care and reflection burden his daily walk;
He has risen to greatness and to discontent,
He is awake to the Invisible.
Insatiate seeker, he has all to learn:
He has exhausted now life's surface acts,
His being's hidden realms remain to explore.
He becomes a mind, he becomes a spirit and self;
In his fragile tenement he grows Nature's lord.
In him Matter wakes from its long obscure trance,
In him earth feels the Godhead drawing near.
An eyeless Power that sees no more its aim,
A restless hungry energy of Will,
Life cast her seed in the body's indolent mould;
It woke from happy torpor a blind Force
Compelling it to sense and seek and feel.
In the enormous labour of the Void
Perturbing with her dreams the vast routine
And dead roll of a slumbering universe
The mighty prisoner struggled for release.
Alive with her yearning woke the inert cell,
In the heart she kindled a fire of passion and need,
Amid the deep calm of inanimate things
Arose her great voice of toil and prayer and strife.
A groping consciousness in a voiceless world,
A guideless sense was given her for her road;
Thought was withheld and nothing now she knew,
But all the unknown was hers to feel and clasp.

Obeying the push of unborn things towards birth
Out of her seal of insentient life she broke:
In her substance of unthinking mute soul-strength
That cannot utter what its depths divine,
Awoke a blind necessity to know.
The chain that bound her she made her instrument;
Instinct was hers, the chrysalis of Truth,
And effort and growth and striving nescience.
Inflicting on the body desire and hope,
Imposing on inconscience consciousness,
She brought into Matter's dull tenacity
Her anguished claim to her lost sovereign right,
Her tireless search, her vexed uneasy heart,
Her wandering unsure steps, her cry for change.
Adorer of a joy without a name,
In her obscure cathedral of delight
To dim dwarf gods she offers secret rites.
But vain unending is the sacrifice,
The priest an ignorant mage who only makes
Futile mutations in the altar's plan
And casts blind hopes into a powerless flame.
A burden of transient gains weighs down her steps
And hardly under that load can she advance;
But the hours cry to her, she travels on
Passing from thought to thought, from want to want;
Her greatest progress is a deepened need.
Matter dissatisfies, she turns to Mind;
She conquers earth, her field, then claims the heavens.
Insensible, breaking the work she has done
The stumbling ages over her labour pass,
But still no great transforming light came down
And no revealing rapture touched her fall.
Only a glimmer sometimes splits mind's sky
Justifying the ambiguous providence
That makes of night a path to unknown dawns
Or a dark clue to some diviner state.

In Nescience began her mighty task,
In Ignorance she pursues the unfinished work,
For knowledge gropes, but meets not Wisdom's face.
Ascending slowly with unconscious steps,
A foundling of the Gods she wanders here
Like a child-soul left near the gates of Hell
Fumbling through fog in search of Paradise.

In this slow ascension he must follow her pace
Even from her faint and dim subconscious start:
So only can earth's last salvation come.
For so only could he know the obscure cause
Of all that holds us back and baffles God
In the jail-delivery of the imprisoned soul.
Along swift paths of fall through dangerous gates
He chanced into a grey obscurity
Teeming with instincts from the mindless gulfs
That pushed to wear a form and win a place.
Life here was intimate with Death and Night
And ate Death's food that she might breathe awhile;
She was their inmate and adopted waif.
Accepting subconscience, in dumb darkness' reign
A sojourner, she hoped not any more.
There far away from Truth and luminous thought
He saw the original seat, the separate birth
Of the dethroned, deformed and suffering Power.
An unhappy face of falsity made true,
A contradiction of our divine birth,
Indifferent to beauty and to light,
Parading she flaunted her animal disgrace
Unhelped by camouflage, brutal and bare,
An authentic image recognised and signed
Of her outcast force exiled from heaven and hope,
Fallen, glorying in the vileness of her state,
The grovel of a strength once half divine,
The graceless squalor of her beast desires,

The staring visage of her ignorance,
The naked body of her poverty.
Here first she crawled out from her cabin of mud
Where she had lain inconscient, rigid, mute:
Its narrowness and torpor held her still,
A darkness clung to her uneffaced by Light.
There neared no touch redeeming from above:
The upward look was alien to her sight,
Forgotten the fearless godhead of her walk;
Renounced was the glory and felicity,
The adventure in the dangerous fields of Time:
Hardly she availed, wallowing, to bear and live.

A wide unquiet mist of seeking Space,
A rayless region swallowed in vague swathes,
That seemed, unnamed, unbodied and unhoused,
A swaddled visionless and formless mind,
Asked for a body to translate its soul.
Its prayer denied, it fumbled after thought.
As yet not powered to think, hardly to live,
It opened into a weird and pigmy world
Where this unhappy magic had its source.
On dim confines where Life and Matter meet
He wandered among things half-seen, half-guessed,
Pursued by ungrasped beginnings and lost ends.
There life was born but died before it could live.
There was no solid ground, no constant drift;
Only some flame of mindless Will had power.
Himself was dim to himself, half-felt, obscure,
As if in a struggle of the Void to be.
In strange domains where all was living sense
But mastering thought was not nor cause nor rule,
Only a crude child-heart cried for toys of bliss,
Mind flickered, a disordered infant glow,
And random shapeless energies drove towards form
And took each wisp-fire for a guiding sun.

This blindfold force could place no thinking step;
Asking for light she followed darkness' clue.
An inconscient Power groped towards consciousness,
Matter smitten by Matter glimmered to sense,
Blind contacts, slow reactions beat out sparks
Of instinct from a cloaked subliminal bed,
Sensations crowded, dumb substitutes for thought,
Perception answered Nature's wakening blows
But still was a mechanical response,
A jerk, a leap, a start in Nature's dream,
And rude unchastened impulses jostling ran
Heedless of every motion but their own
And, darkling, clashed with darker than themselves,
Free in a world of settled anarchy.
The need to exist, the instinct to survive
Engrossed the tense precarious moment's will
And an unseeing desire felt out for food.
The gusts of Nature were the only law,
Force wrestled with force, but no result remained:
Only were achieved a nescient grasp and drive
And feelings and instincts knowing not their source,
Sense-pleasures and sense-pangs soon caught, soon lost,
And the brute motion of unthinking lives.
It was a vain unnecessary world
Whose will to be brought poor and sad results
And meaningless suffering and a grey unease.
Nothing seemed worth the labour to become.

But judged not so his spirit's wakened eye.
As shines a solitary witness star
That burns apart, Light's lonely sentinel,
In the drift and teeming of a mindless Night,
A single thinker in an aimless world
Awaiting some tremendous dawn of God,
He saw the purpose in the works of Time.
Even in that aimlessness a work was done

Pregnant with magic will and change divine.
The first writhings of the cosmic serpent Force
Uncoiled from the mystic ring of Matter's trance;
It raised its head in the warm air of life.
It could not cast off yet Night's stiffening sleep
Or wear as yet mind's wonder-flecks and streaks,
Put on its jewelled hood the crown of soul
Or stand erect in the blaze of spirit's sun.
As yet were only seen foulness and force,
The secret crawl of consciousness to light
Through a fertile slime of lust and battening sense,
Beneath the body's crust of thickened self
A tardy fervent working in the dark,
The turbid yeast of Nature's passionate change,
Ferment of the soul's creation out of mire.
A heavenly process donned this grey disguise,
A fallen ignorance in its covert night
Laboured to achieve its dumb unseemly work,
A camouflage of the Inconscient's need
To release the glory of God in Nature's mud.
His sight, spiritual in embodying orbs,
Could pierce through the grey phosphorescent haze
And scan the secrets of the shifting flux
That animates these mute and solid cells
And leads the thought and longing of the flesh
And the keen lust and hunger of its will.
This too he tracked along its hidden stream
And traced its acts to a miraculous fount.
A mystic Presence none can probe nor rule,
Creator of this game of ray and shade
In this sweet and bitter paradoxical life,
Asks from the body the soul's intimacies
And by the swift vibration of a nerve
Links its mechanic throbs to light and love.
It summons the spirit's sleeping memories
Up from subconscient depths beneath Time's foam;

Oblivious of their flame of happy truth,
Arriving with heavy eyes that hardly see,
They come disguised as feelings and desires,
Like weeds upon the surface float awhile
And rise and sink on a somnambulist tide.
Impure, degraded though her motions are,
Always a heaven-truth broods in life's deeps;
In her obscurest members burns that fire.
A touch of God's rapture in creation's acts,
A lost remembrance of felicity
Lurks still in the dumb roots of death and birth,
The world's senseless beauty mirrors God's delight.
That rapture's smile is secret everywhere;
It flows in the wind's breath, in the tree's sap,
Its hued magnificence blooms in leaves and flowers.
When life broke through its half-drowse in the plant
That feels and suffers but cannot move or cry,
In beast and in winged bird and thinking man
It made of the heart's rhythm its music's beat;
It forced the unconscious tissues to awake
And ask for happiness and earn the pang
And thrill with pleasure and laughter of brief delight,
And quiver with pain and crave for ecstasy.
Imperative, voiceless, ill-understood,
Too far from light, too close to being's core,
Born strangely in Time from the eternal Bliss,
It presses on heart's core and vibrant nerve;
Its sharp self-seeking tears our consciousness;
Our pain and pleasure have that sting for cause:
Instinct with it, but blind to its true joy
The soul's desire leaps out towards passing things.
All Nature's longing drive none can resist,
Comes surging through the blood and quickened sense;
An ecstasy of the infinite is her cause.
It turns in us to finite loves and lusts,
The will to conquer and have, to seize and keep,

To enlarge life's room and scope and pleasure's range,
To battle and overcome and make one's own,
The hope to mix one's joy with others' joy,
A yearning to possess and be possessed,
To enjoy and be enjoyed, to feel, to live.
Here was its early brief attempt to be,
Its rapid end of momentary delight
Whose stamp of failure haunts all ignorant life.
Inflicting still its habit on the cells
The phantom of a dark and evil start
Ghostlike pursues all that we dream and do.
Although on earth are firm established lives,
A working of habit or a sense of law,
A steady repetition in the flux,
Yet are its roots of will ever the same;
These passions are the stuff of which we are made.
This was the first cry of the awaking world.
It clings around us still and clamps the god.
Even when reason is born and soul takes form,
In beast and reptile and in thinking man
It lasts and is the fount of all their life.
This too was needed that breath and living might be.
The spirit in a finite ignorant world
Must rescue so its prisoned consciousness
Forced out in little jets at quivering points
From the Inconscient's sealed infinitude.
Then slowly it gathers mass, looks up at Light.
This Nature lives tied to her origin,
A clutch of nether force is on her still;
Out of unconscious depths her instincts leap;
A neighbour is her life to insentient Nought.
Under this law an ignorant world was made.
   In the enigma of the darkened Vasts,
In the passion and self-loss of the Infinite
When all was plunged in the negating Void,
Non-Being's night could never have been saved

If Being had not plunged into the dark
Carrying with it its triple mystic cross.
Invoking in world-time the timeless truth,
Bliss changed to sorrow, knowledge made ignorant,
God's force turned into a child's helplessness
Can bring down heaven by their sacrifice.
A contradiction founds the base of life:
The eternal, the divine Reality
Has faced itself with its own contraries;
Being became the Void and Conscious-Force
Nescience and walk of a blind Energy
And Ecstasy took the figure of world-pain.
In a mysterious dispensation's law
A Wisdom that prepares its far-off ends
Planned so to start her slow aeonic game.
A blindfold search and wrestle and fumbling clasp
Of a half-seen Nature and a hidden Soul,
A game of hide-and-seek in twilit rooms,
A play of love and hate and fear and hope
Continues in the nursery of mind
Its hard and heavy romp of self-born twins.
At last the struggling Energy can emerge
And meet the voiceless Being in wider fields;
Then can they see and speak and, breast to breast,
In a larger consciousness, a clearer light,
The Two embrace and strive and each know each
Regarding closer now the playmate's face.
Even in these formless coilings he could feel
Matter's response to an infant stir of soul.
In Nature he saw the mighty Spirit concealed,
Watched the weak birth of a tremendous Force,
Pursued the riddle of Godhead's tentative pace,
Heard the faint rhythms of a great unborn Muse.

Then came a fierier breath of waking Life,
And there arose from the dim gulf of things

The strange creations of a thinking sense,
Existences half-real and half-dream.
A life was there that hoped not to survive:
Beings were born who perished without trace,
Events that were a formless drama's limbs
And actions driven by a blind creature will.
A seeking Power found out its road to form,
Patterns were built of love and joy and pain
And symbol figures for the moods of Life.
An insect hedonism fluttered and crawled
And basked in a sunlit Nature's surface thrills,
And dragon raptures, python agonies
Crawled in the marsh and mire and licked the sun.
Huge armoured strengths shook a frail quaking ground,
Great puissant creatures with a dwarfish brain,
And pigmy tribes imposed their small life-drift.
In a dwarf model of humanity
Nature now launched the extreme experience
And master-point of her design's caprice,
Luminous result of her half-conscious climb
On rungs twixt her sublimities and grotesques
To massive from infinitesimal shapes,
To a subtle balancing of body and soul,
To an order of intelligent littleness.
Around him in the moment-beats of Time
The kingdom of the animal self arose,
Where deed is all and mind is still half-born
And the heart obeys a dumb unseen control.
The Force that works by the light of Ignorance,
Her animal experiment began,
Crowding with conscious creatures her world-scheme;
But to the outward only were they alive,
Only they replied to touches and surfaces
And to the prick of need that drove their lives.
A body that knew not its own soul within,
There lived and longed, had wrath and joy and grief;

A mind was there that met the objective world
As if a stranger or enemy at its door:
Its thoughts were kneaded by the shocks of sense;
It captured not the spirit in the form,
It entered not the heart of what it saw;
It looked not for the power behind the act,
It studied not the hidden motive in things
Nor strove to find the meaning of it all.
Beings were there who wore a human form;
Absorbed they lived in the passion of the scene,
But knew not who they were or why they lived:
Content to breathe, to feel, to sense, to act,
Life had for them no aim save Nature's joy
And the stimulus and delight of outer things;
Identified with the spirit's outward shell,
They worked for the body's wants, they craved no more.
The veiled spectator watching from their depths
Fixed not his inward eye upon himself
Nor turned to find the author of the plot,
He saw the drama only and the stage.
There was no brooding stress of deeper sense,
The burden of reflection was not borne:
Mind looked on Nature with unknowing eyes,
Adored her boons and feared her monstrous strokes.
It pondered not on the magic of her laws,
It thirsted not for the secret wells of Truth,
But made a register of crowding facts
And strung sensations on a vivid thread:
It hunted and it fled and sniffed the winds,
Or slothed inert in sunshine and soft air:
It sought the engrossing contacts of the world,
But only to feed the surface sense with bliss.
These felt life's quiver in the outward touch,
They could not feel behind the touch the soul.
To guard their form of self from Nature's harm,
To enjoy and to survive was all their care.

The narrow horizon of their days was filled
With things and creatures that could help and hurt:
The world's values hung upon their little self.
Isolated, cramped in the vast unknown,
To save their small lives from surrounding Death
They made a tiny circle of defence
Against the siege of the huge universe:
They preyed upon the world and were its prey,
But never dreamed to conquer and be free.
Obeying the World-Power's hints and firm taboos
A scanty part they drew from her rich store;
There was no conscious code and no life-plan:
The patterns of thinking of a little group
Fixed a traditional behaviour's law.
Ignorant of soul save as a wraith within,
Tied to a mechanism of unchanging lives
And to a dull usual sense and feeling's beat,
They turned in grooves of animal desire.
In walls of stone fenced round they worked and warred,
Did by a banded selfishness a small good
Or wrought a dreadful wrong and cruel pain
On sentient lives and thought they did no ill.
Ardent from the sack of happy peaceful homes
And gorged with slaughter, plunder, rape and fire,
They made of human selves their helpless prey,
A drove of captives led to lifelong woe,
Or torture a spectacle made and holiday,
Mocking or thrilled by their torn victims' pangs;
Admiring themselves as titans and as gods
Proudly they sang their high and glorious deeds
And praised their victory and their splendid force.
An animal in the instinctive herd
Pushed by life impulses, forced by common needs,
Each in his own kind saw his ego's glass;
All served the aim and action of the pack.
Those like himself, by blood or custom kin,

To him were parts of his life, his adjunct selves,
His personal nebula's constituent stars,
Satellite companions of his solar I.
A master of his life's environment,
A leader of a huddled human mass
Herding for safety on a dangerous earth,
He gathered them round him as if minor Powers
To make a common front against the world,
Or, weak and sole on an indifferent earth,
As a fortress for his undefended heart,
Or else to heal his body's loneliness.
In others than his kind he sensed a foe,
An alien unlike force to shun and fear,
A stranger and adversary to hate and slay.
Or he lived as lives the solitary brute;
At war with all he bore his single fate.
Absorbed in the present act, the fleeting days,
None thought to look beyond the hour's gains,
Or dreamed to make this earth a fairer world,
Or felt some touch divine surprise his heart.
The gladness that the fugitive moment gave,
The desire grasped, the bliss, the experience won,
Movement and speed and strength were joy enough
And bodily longings shared and quarrel and play,
And tears and laughter and the need called love.
In war and clasp these life-wants joined the All-Life,
Wrestlings of a divided unity
Inflicting mutual grief and happiness
In ignorance of the Self for ever one.
Arming its creatures with delight and hope
A half-awakened Nescience struggled there
To know by sight and touch the outside of things.
Instinct was formed; in memory's crowded sleep
The past lived on as in a bottomless sea:
Inverting into half-thought the quickened sense
She felt around for truth with fumbling hands,

Clutched to her the little she could reach and seize
And put aside in her subconscient cave.
So must the dim being grow in light and force
And rise to his higher destiny at last,
Look up to God and round at the universe,
And learn by failure and progress by fall
And battle with environment and doom,
By suffering discover his deep soul
And by possession grow to his own vasts.
Half-way she stopped and found her path no more.
Still nothing was achieved but to begin,
Yet finished seemed the circle of her force.
Only she had beaten out sparks of ignorance;
Only the life could think and not the mind,
Only the sense could feel and not the soul.
Only was lit some heat of the flame of Life,
Some joy to be, some rapturous leaps of sense.
All was an impetus of half-conscious Force,
A spirit sprawling drowned in dense life-foam,
A vague self grasping at the shape of things.
Behind all moved seeking for vessels to hold
A first raw vintage of the grapes of God,
On earth's mud a spilth of the supernal Bliss,
Intoxicating the stupefied soul and mind
A heady wine of rapture dark and crude,
Dim, uncast yet into spiritual form,
Obscure inhabitant of the world's blind core,
An unborn godhead's will, a mute Desire.

A third creation now revealed its face.
A mould of body's early mind was made.
A glint of light kindled the obscure World-Force;
It dowered a driven world with the seeing Idea
And armed the act with thought's dynamic point:
A small thinking being watched the works of Time.
A difficult evolution from below

Called a masked intervention from above;
Else this great, blind inconscient universe
Could never have disclosed its hidden mind,
Or even in blinkers worked in beast and man
The Intelligence that devised the cosmic scheme.
At first he saw a dim obscure mind-power
Moving concealed by Matter and dumb life.
A current thin, it streamed in life's vast flow
Tossing and drifting under a drifting sky
Amid the surge and glimmering tremulous wash,
Released in splash of sense and feeling's waves.
In the deep midst of an insentient world
Its huddled waves and foam of consciousness ran
Pressing and eddying through a narrow strait,
Carrying experience in its crowded pace.
It flowed emerging into upper light
From the deep pool of its subliminal birth
To reach some high existence still unknown.
There was no thinking self, aim there was none:
All was unorganised stress and seekings vague.
Only to the unstable surface rose
Sensations, stabs and edges of desire
And passion's leaps and brief emotion's cries,
A casual colloquy of flesh with flesh,
A murmur of heart to longing wordless heart,
Glimmerings of knowledge with no shape of thought
And jets of subconscious will or hunger's pulls.
All was dim sparkle on a foaming top:
It whirled around a drifting shadow-self
On an inconscient flood of Force in Time.
Then came the pressure of a seeing Power
That drew all into a dancing turbid mass
Circling around a single luminous point,
Centre of reference in a conscious field,
Figure of a unitary Light within.
It lit the impulse of the half-sentient flood,

Even an illusion gave of fixity
As if a sea could serve as a firm soil.
That strange observing Power imposed its sight.
It forced on flux a limit and a shape,
It gave its stream a lower narrow bank,
Drew lines to snare the spirit's formlessness.
It fashioned the life-mind of bird and beast,
The answer of the reptile and the fish,
The primitive pattern of the thoughts of man.
A finite movement of the Infinite
Came winging its way through a wide air of Time;
A march of knowledge moved in Nescience
And guarded in the form a separate soul.
Its right to be immortal it reserved,
But built a wall against the siege of death
And threw a hook to clutch eternity.
A thinking entity appeared in Space.
A little ordered world broke into view
Where being had prison-room for act and sight,
A floor to walk, a clear but scanty range.
An instrument-personality was born,
And a restricted clamped intelligence
Consented to confine in narrow bounds
Its seeking; it tied the thought to visible things,
Prohibiting the adventure of the Unseen
And the soul's tread through unknown infinities.
A reflex reason, Nature-habit's glass
Illumined life to know and fix its field,
Accept a dangerous ignorant brevity
And the inconclusive purpose of its walk
And profit by the hour's precarious chance
In the allotted boundaries of its fate.
A little joy and knowledge satisfied
This little being tied into a knot
And hung on a bulge of its environment,
A little curve cut off in measureless Space,

A little span of life in all vast Time.
A thought was there that planned, a will that strove,
But for small aims within a narrow scope,
Wasting unmeasured toil on transient things.
It knew itself a creature of the mud;
It asked no larger law, no loftier aim;
It had no inward look, no upward gaze.
A backward scholar on logic's rickety bench
Indoctrinated by the erring sense,
It took appearance for the face of God,
For casual lights the marching of the suns,
For heaven a starry strip of doubtful blue;
Aspects of being feigned to be the whole.
There was a voice of busy interchange,
A market-place of trivial thoughts and acts:
A life soon spent, a mind the body's slave
Here seemed the brilliant crown of Nature's work,
And tiny egos took the world as means
To sate awhile dwarf lusts and brief desires,
In a death-closed passage saw life's start and end
As though a blind alley were creation's sign,
As if for this the soul had coveted birth
In the wonderland of a self-creating world
And the opportunities of cosmic Space.
This creature passionate only to survive,
Fettered to puny thoughts with no wide range
And to the body's needs and pangs and joys,
This fire growing by its fuel's death,
Increased by what it seized and made its own:
It gathered and grew and gave itself to none.
Only it hoped for greatness in its den
And pleasure and victory in small fields of power
And conquest of life-room for self and kin,
An animal limited by its feeding-space.
It knew not the Immortal in its house;
It had no greater deeper cause to live.

In limits only it was powerful;
Acute to capture truth for outward use,
Its knowledge was the body's instrument;
Absorbed in the little works of its prison-house
It turned around the same unchanging points
In the same circle of interest and desire,
But thought itself the master of its jail.
Although for action, not for wisdom made,
Thought was its apex — or its gutter's rim:
It saw an image of the external world
And saw its surface self, but knew no more.
Out of a slow confused embroiled self-search
Mind grew to a clarity cut out, precise,
A gleam enclosed in a stone ignorance.
In this bound thinking's narrow leadership
Tied to the soil, inspired by common things,
Attached to a confined familiar world,
Amid the multitude of her motived plots,
Her changing actors and her million masks,
Life was a play monotonously the same.
There were no vast perspectives of the spirit,
No swift invasions of unknown delight,
No golden distances of wide release.
This petty state resembled our human days
But fixed to eternity of changeless type,
A moment's movement doomed to last through Time.
Existence bridge-like spanned the inconscient gulfs,
A half-illumined building in a mist,
Which from a void of Form arose to sight
And jutted out into a void of Soul.
A little light in a great darkness born,
Life knew not where it went nor whence it came.
Around all floated still the nescient haze.

END OF CANTO FOUR

Canto Five

The Godheads of the Little Life

A FIXED and narrow power with rigid forms,
He saw the empire of the little life,
An unhappy corner in eternity.
It lived upon the margin of the Idea
Protected by Ignorance as in a shell.
Then, hoping to learn the secret of this world
He peered across its scanty fringe of sight,
To disengage from its surface-clear obscurity
The Force that moved it and the Idea that made,
Imposing smallness on the Infinite,
The ruling spirit of its littleness,
The divine law that gave it right to be,
Its claim on Nature and its need in Time.
He plunged his gaze into the siege of mist
That held this ill-lit straitened continent
Ringed with the skies and seas of ignorance
And kept it safe from Truth and Self and Light.
As when a searchlight stabs the Night's blind breast
And dwellings and trees and figures of men appear
As if revealed to an eye in Nothingness,
All lurking things were torn out of their veils
And held up in his vision's sun-white blaze.
A busy restless uncouth populace
Teemed in their dusky unnoted thousands there.
In a mist of secrecy wrapping the world-scene
The little deities of Time's nether act
Who work remote from Heaven's controlling eye,
Plotted, unknown to the creatures whom they move,
The small conspiracies of this petty reign
Amused with the small contrivings, the brief hopes
And little eager steps and little ways

And reptile wallowings in the dark and dust,
And the crouch and ignominy of creeping life.
A trepidant and motley multitude,
A strange pell-mell of magic artisans,
Was seen moulding the plastic clay of life,
An elfin brood, an elemental kind.
Astonished by the unaccustomed glow,
As if immanent in the shadows started up
Imps with wry limbs and carved beast visages,
Sprite-prompters goblin-wizened or faery-small,
And genii fairer but unsouled and poor
And fallen beings, their heavenly portion lost,
And errant divinities trapped in Time's dust.
Ignorant and dangerous wills but armed with power,
Half-animal, half-god their mood, their shape.
Out of the greyness of a dim background
Their whispers come, an inarticulate force,
Awake in mind an echoing thought or word,
To their sting of impulse the heart's sanction draw,
And in that little Nature do their work
And fill its powers and creatures with unease.
Its seed of joy they curse with sorrow's fruit,
Put out with error's breath its scanty lights
And turn its surface truths to falsehood's ends,
Its small emotions spur, its passions drive
To the abyss or through the bog and mire:
Or else with a goad of hard dry lusts they prick,
While jogs on devious ways that nowhere lead
Life's cart finding no issue from ignorance.
To sport with good and evil is their law;
Luring to failure and meaningless success,
All models they corrupt, all measures cheat,
Make knowledge a poison, virtue a pattern dull
And lead the endless cycles of desire
Through semblances of sad or happy chance
To an inescapable fatality.

All by their influence is enacted there.
Nor there alone is their empire or their role:
Wherever are soulless minds and guideless lives
And in a small body self is all that counts,
Wherever love and light and largeness lack,
These crooked fashioners take up their task.
To all half-conscious worlds they extend their reign.
Here too these godlings drive our human hearts,
Our nature's twilight is their lurking-place:
Here too the darkened primitive heart obeys
The veiled suggestions of a hidden Mind
That dogs our knowledge with misleading light
And stands between us and the Truth that saves.
It speaks to us with the voices of the Night:
Our darkened lives to greater darkness move;
Our seekings listen to calamitous hopes.
A structure of unseeing thoughts is built
And reason used by an irrational Force.
This earth is not alone our teacher and nurse;
The powers of all the worlds have entrance here.
In their own fields they follow the wheel of law
And cherish the safety of a settled type;
On earth out of their changeless orbit thrown
Their law is kept, lost their fixed form of things.
Into a creative chaos they are cast
Where all asks order but is driven by Chance;
Strangers to earth-nature, they must learn earth's ways,
Aliens or opposites, they must unite:
They work and battle and with pain agree:
These join, those part, all parts and joins anew,
But never can we know and truly live
Till all have found their divine harmony.
Our life's uncertain way winds circling on,
Our mind's unquiet search asks always light,
Till they have learned their secret in their source,
In the light of the Timeless and its spaceless home,

In the joy of the Eternal sole and one.
But now the Light supreme is far away:
Our conscious life obeys the Inconscient's laws;
To ignorant purposes and blind desires
Our hearts are moved by an ambiguous force;
Even our mind's conquests wear a battered crown.
A slowly changing order binds our will.
This is our doom until our souls are free.
A mighty Hand then rolls mind's firmaments back,
Infinity takes up the finite's acts
And Nature steps into the eternal Light.
Then only ends this dream of nether life.

At the outset of this enigmatic world
Which seems at once an enormous brute machine
And a slow unmasking of the spirit in things,
In this revolving chamber without walls
In which God sits impassive everywhere
As if unknown to himself and by us unseen
In a miracle of inconscient secrecy,
Yet is all here his action and his will.
In this whirl and sprawl through infinite vacancy
The Spirit became Matter and lay in the whirl,
A body sleeping without sense or soul.
A mass phenomenon of visible shapes
Supported by the silence of the Void
Appeared in the eternal Consciousness
And seemed an outward and insensible world.
There was none there to see and none to feel;
Only the miraculous Inconscient,
A subtle wizard skilled, was at its task.
Inventing ways for magical results,
Managing creation's marvellous device,
Marking mechanically dumb wisdom's points,
Using the unthought inevitable Idea,
It did the works of God's intelligence

Or wrought the will of some supreme Unknown.
Still consciousness was hidden in Nature's womb,
Unfelt was the Bliss whose rapture dreamed the worlds.
Being was an inert substance driven by Force.
At first was only an etheric Space:
Its huge vibrations circled round and round
Housing some unconceived initiative:
Upheld by a supreme original Breath
Expansion and contraction's mystic act
Created touch and friction in the void,
Into abstract emptiness brought clash and clasp:
Parent of an expanding universe
In a matrix of disintegrating force,
By spending it conserved an endless sum.
On the hearth of Space it kindled a viewless Fire
That, scattering worlds as one might scatter seeds,
Whirled out the luminous order of the stars.
An ocean of electric Energy
Formlessly formed its strange wave-particles
Constructing by their dance this solid scheme,
Its mightiness in the atom shut to rest;
Masses were forged or feigned and visible shapes;
Light flung the photon's swift revealing spark
And showed, in the minuteness of its flash
Imaged, this cosmos of apparent things.
Thus has been made this real impossible world,
An obvious miracle or convincing show.
Or so it seems to man's audacious mind
Who seats his thought as the arbiter of truth,
His personal vision as impersonal fact,
As witnesses of an objective world
His erring sense and his instruments' artifice.
Thus must he work life's tangible riddle out
In a doubtful light, by error seize on Truth
And slowly part the visage and the veil.
Or else, forlorn of faith in mind and sense,

His knowledge a bright body of ignorance,
He sees in all things strangely fashioned here
The unwelcome jest of a deceiving Force,
A parable of Maya and her might.
This vast perpetual motion caught and held
In the mysterious and unchanging change
Of the persistent movement we call Time
And ever renewing its recurrent beat,
These mobile rounds that stereotype a flux,
These static objects in the cosmic dance
That are but Energy's self-repeating whorls
Prolonged by the spirit of the brooding Void,
Awaited life and sense and waking Mind.
A little the Dreamer changed his pose of stone.
But when the Inconscient's scrupulous work was done
And Chance coerced by fixed immutable laws,
A scene was set for Nature's conscious play.
Then stirred the Spirit's mute immobile sleep;
The Force concealed broke dumbly, slowly out.
A dream of living woke in Matter's heart,
A will to live moved the Inconscient's dust,
A freak of living startled vacant Time,
Ephemeral in a blank eternity,
Infinitesimal in a dead Infinite.
A subtler breath quickened dead Matter's forms;
The world's set rhythm changed to a conscious cry;
A serpent Power twinned the insensible Force.
Islands of living dotted lifeless Space
And germs of living formed in formless air.
A Life was born that followed Matter's law,
Ignorant of the motives of its steps;
Ever inconstant, yet for ever the same,
It repeated the paradox that gave it birth:
Its restless and unstable stabilities
Recurred incessantly in the flow of Time
And purposeful movements in unthinking forms

Betrayed the heavings of an imprisoned Will.
Waking and sleep lay locked in mutual arms;
Helpless and indistinct came pleasure and pain
Trembling with the first faint thrills of a World-Soul.
A strength of life that could not cry or move,
Yet broke into beauty signing some deep delight:
An inarticulate sensibility,
Throbs of the heart of an unknowing world,
Ran through its somnolent torpor and there stirred
A vague uncertain thrill, a wandering beat,
A dim unclosing as of secret eyes.
Infant self-feeling grew and birth was born.
A godhead woke but lay with dreaming limbs;
Her house refused to open its sealed doors.
Insentient to our eyes that only see
The form, the act and not the imprisoned God,
Life hid in her pulse occult of growth and power
A consciousness with mute stifled beats of sense,
A mind suppressed that knew not yet of thought,
An inert spirit that could only be.
At first she raised no voice, no motion dared:
Charged with world-power, instinct with living force,
Only she clung with her roots to the safe earth,
Thrilled dumbly to the shocks of ray and breeze
And put out tendril fingers of desire;
The strength in her yearning for sun and light
Felt not the embrace that made her breathe and live;
Absorbed she dreamed content with beauty and hue.
At last the charmed Immensity looked forth:
Astir, vibrant, hungering, she groped for mind;
Then slowly sense quivered and thought peered out;
She forced the reluctant mould to grow aware.
The magic was chiselled of a conscious form;
Its tranced vibrations rhythmed a quick response,
And luminous stirrings prompted brain and nerve,
Awoke in Matter spirit's identity

And in a body lit the miracle
Of the heart's love and the soul's witness gaze.
Impelled by an unseen Will there could break out
Fragments of some vast impulse to become
And vivid glimpses of a secret self,
And the doubtful seeds and force of shapes to be
Awoke from the inconscient swoon of things.
An animal creation crept and ran
And flew and called between the earth and sky,
Hunted by death but hoping still to live
And glad to breathe if only for a while.
Then man was moulded from the original brute.
A thinking mind had come to lift life's moods,
The keen-edged tool of a Nature mixed and vague,
An intelligence half-witness, half-machine.
This seeming driver of her wheel of works
Missioned to motive and record her drift
And fix its law on her inconstant powers,
This master-spring of a delicate enginery,
Aspired to enlighten its user and refine
Lifting to a vision of the indwelling Power
The absorbed mechanic's crude initiative:
He raised his eyes; Heaven-light mirrored a Face.
Amazed at the works wrought in her mystic sleep,
She looked upon the world that she had made:
Wondering now seized the great automaton;
She paused to understand her self and aim,
Pondering she learned to act by conscious rule,
A visioned measure guided her rhythmic steps;
Thought bordered her instincts with a frame of will
And lit with the idea her blinded urge.
On her mass of impulses, her reflex acts,
On the Inconscient's pushed or guided drift
And mystery of unthinking accurate steps
She stuck the specious image of a self,
A living idol of disfigured spirit;

On Matter's acts she imposed a patterned law;
She made a thinking body from chemic cells
And moulded a being out of a driven force.
To be what she was not inflamed her hope:
She turned her dream towards some high Unknown;
A breath was felt below of One supreme.
An opening looked up to spheres above
And coloured shadows limned on mortal ground
The passing figures of immortal things;
A quick celestial flash could sometimes come:
The illumined soul-ray fell on heart and flesh
And touched with semblances of ideal light
The stuff of which our earthly dreams are made.
A fragile human love that could not last,
Ego's moth-wings to lift the seraph soul,
Appeared, a surface glamour of brief date
Extinguished by a scanty breath of Time;
Joy that forgot mortality for a while
Came, a rare visitor who left betimes,
And made all things seem beautiful for an hour,
Hopes that soon fade to drab realities
And passions that crumble to ashes while they blaze
Kindled the common earth with their brief flame.
A creature insignificant and small
Visited, uplifted by an unknown Power,
Man laboured on his little patch of earth
For means to last, to enjoy, to suffer and die.
A spirit that perished not with the body and breath
Was there like a shadow of the Unmanifest
And stood behind the little personal form
But claimed not yet this earthly embodiment.
Assenting to Nature's long slow-moving toil,
Watching the works of his own Ignorance,
Unknown, unfelt the mighty Witness lives
And nothing shows the Glory that is here.
A Wisdom governing the mystic world,

A Silence listening to the cry of Life,
It sees the hurrying crowd of moments stream
Towards the still greatness of a distant hour.

This huge world unintelligibly turns
In the shadow of a mused Inconscience;
It hides a key to inner meanings missed,
It locks in our hearts a voice we cannot hear.
An enigmatic labour of the spirit,
An exact machine of which none knows the use,
An art and ingenuity without sense,
This minute elaborate orchestrated life
For ever plays its motiveless symphonies.
The mind learns and knows not, turning its back to truth;
It studies surface laws by surface thought,
Life's steps surveys and Nature's process sees,
Not seeing for what she acts or why we live;
It marks her tireless care of just device,
Her patient intricacy of fine detail,
The ingenious spirit's brave inventive plan
In her great futile mass of endless works,
Adds purposeful figures to her purposeless sum,
Its gabled storeys piles, its climbing roofs
On the close-carved foundations she has laid,
Imagined citadels reared in mythic air
Or mounts a stair of dream to a mystic moon:
Transient creations point and hit the sky:
A world-conjecture's scheme is laboured out
On the dim floor of mind's incertitude,
Or painfully built a fragmentary whole.
Impenetrable, a mystery recondite
Is the vast plan of which we are a part;
Its harmonies are discords to our view
Because we know not the great theme they serve.
Inscrutable work the cosmic agencies.
Only the fringe of a wide surge we see;

Our instruments have not that greater light,
Our will tunes not with the eternal Will,
Our heart's sight is too blind and passionate.
Impotent to share in Nature's mystic tact,
Inapt to feel the pulse and core of things,
Our reason cannot sound life's mighty sea
And only counts its waves and scans its foam;
It knows not whence these motions touch and pass,
It sees not whither sweeps the hurrying flood:
Only it strives to canalise its powers
And hopes to turn its course to human ends:
But all its means come from the Inconscient's store.
Unseen here act dim huge world-energies
And only trickles and currents are our share.
Our mind lives far off from the authentic Light
Catching at little fragments of the Truth
In a small corner of infinity,
Our lives are inlets of an ocean's force.
Our conscious movements have sealed origins
But with those shadowy seats no converse hold;
No understanding binds our comrade parts;
Our acts emerge from a crypt our minds ignore.
Our deepest depths are ignorant of themselves;
Even our body is a mystery shop;
As our earth's roots lurk screened below our earth,
So lie unseen our roots of mind and life.
Our springs are kept close hid beneath, within;
Our souls are moved by powers behind the wall.
In the subterranean reaches of the spirit
A puissance acts and recks not what it means;
Using unthinking monitors and scribes,
It is the cause of what we think and feel.
The troglodytes of the subconscious Mind,
Ill-trained slow stammering interpreters
Only of their small task's routine aware
And busy with the record in our cells,

Concealed in the subliminal secrecies
Mid an obscure occult machinery,
Capture the mystic Morse whose measured lilt
Transmits the messages of the cosmic Force.
A whisper falls into life's inner ear
And echoes from the dun subconscient caves,
Speech leaps, thought quivers, the heart vibrates, the will
Answers and tissue and nerve obey the call.
Our lives translate these subtle intimacies;
All is the commerce of a secret Power.
   A thinking puppet is the mind of life:
Its choice is the work of elemental strengths
That know not their own birth and end and cause
And glimpse not the immense intent they serve.
In this nether life of man drab-hued and dull,
Yet filled with poignant small ignoble things,
The conscious Doll is pushed a hundred ways
And feels the push but not the hands that drive.
For none can see the masked ironic troupe
To whom our figure-selves are marionettes,
Our deeds unwitting movements in their grasp,
Our passionate strife an entertainment's scene.
Ignorant themselves of their own fount of strength
They play their part in the enormous whole.
Agents of darkness imitating light,
Spirits obscure and moving things obscure,
Unwillingly they serve a mightier Power.
Ananke's engines organising Chance,
Channels perverse of a stupendous Will,
Tools of the Unknown who use us as their tools,
Invested with power in Nature's nether state,
Into the actions mortals think their own
They bring the incoherencies of Fate,
Or make a doom of Time's slipshod caprice
And toss the lives of men from hand to hand
In an inconsequent and devious game.

Against all higher truth their stuff rebels;
Only to Titan force their will lies prone.
Inordinate their hold on human hearts,
In all our nature's turns they intervene.
Insignificant architects of low-built lives
And engineers of interest and desire,
Out of crude earthiness and muddy thrills
And coarse reactions of material nerve
They build our huddled structures of self-will
And the ill-lighted mansions of our thought,
Or with the ego's factories and marts
Surround the beautiful temple of the soul.
Artists minute of the hues of littleness,
They set the mosaic of our comedy
Or plan the trivial tragedy of our days,
Arrange the deed, combine the circumstance
And the fantasia of the moods costume.
These unwise prompters of man's ignorant heart
And tutors of his stumbling speech and will,
Movers of petty wraths and lusts and hates
And changeful thoughts and shallow emotion's starts,
These slight illusion-makers with their masks,
Painters of the decor of a dull-hued stage
And nimble scene-shifters of the human play,
Ever are busy with this ill-lit scene.
Ourselves incapable to build our fate
Only as actors speak and strut our parts
Until the piece is done and we pass off
Into a brighter Time and subtler Space.
Thus they inflict their little pigmy law
And curb the mounting slow uprise of man,
Then his too scanty walk with death they close.

This is the ephemeral creature's daily life.
As long as the human animal is lord
And a dense nether nature screens the soul,

As long as intellect's outward-gazing sight
Serves earthy interest and creature joys,
An incurable littleness pursues his days.
Ever since consciousness was born on earth,
Life is the same in insect, ape and man,
Its stuff unchanged, its way the common route.
If new designs, if richer details grow
And thought is added and more tangled cares,
If little by little it wears a brighter face,
Still even in man the plot is mean and poor.
A gross content prolongs his fallen state;
His small successes are failures of the soul,
His little pleasures punctuate frequent griefs:
Hardship and toil are the heavy price he pays
For the right to live and his last wages death.
An inertia sunk towards inconscience,
A sleep that imitates death is his repose.
A puny splendour of creative force
Is made his spur to fragile human works
Which yet outlast their brief creator's breath.
He dreams sometimes of the revels of the gods
And sees the Dionysian gesture pass, —
A leonine greatness that would tear his soul
If through his failing limbs and fainting heart
The sweet and joyful mighty madness swept:
Trivial amusements stimulate and waste
The energy given to him to grow and be.
His little hour is spent in little things.
A brief companionship with many jars,
A little love and jealousy and hate,
A touch of friendship mid indifferent crowds
Draw his heart-plan on life's diminutive map.
If something great awakes, too frail his pitch
To reveal its zenith tension of delight,
His thought to eternise its ephemeral soar,
Art's brilliant gleam is a pastime for his eyes,

A thrill that smites the nerves is music's spell.
Amidst his harassed toil and welter of cares,
Pressed by the labour of his crowding thoughts,
He draws sometimes around his aching brow
Nature's calm mighty hands to heal his life-pain.
He is saved by her silence from his rack of self;
In her tranquil beauty is his purest bliss.
A new life dawns, he looks out from vistas wide;
The Spirit's breath moves him but soon retires:
His strength was not made to hold that puissant guest.
All dulls down to convention and routine
Or a fierce excitement brings him vivid joys:
His days are tinged with the red hue of strife
And lust's hot glare and passion's crimson stain;
Battle and murder are his tribal game.
Time has he none to turn his eyes within
And look for his lost self and his dead soul.
His motion on too short an axis wheels;
He cannot soar but creeps on his long road
Or if, impatient of the trudge of Time,
He would make a splendid haste on Fate's slow road,
His heart that runs soon pants and tires and sinks;
Or he walks ever on and finds no end.
Hardly a few can climb to greater life.
All tunes to a low scale and conscious pitch.
His knowledge dwells in the house of Ignorance;
His force nears not even once the Omnipotent,
Rare are his visits of heavenly ecstasy.
The bliss which sleeps in things and tries to wake,
Breaks out in him in a small joy of life:
This scanty grace is his persistent stay;
It lightens the burden of his many ills
And reconciles him to his little world.
He is satisfied with his common average kind;
Tomorrow's hopes and his old rounds of thought,
His old familiar interests and desires

He has made into a thick and narrowing hedge
Defending his small life from the Invisible;
His being's kinship to infinity
He has shut away from him into inmost self,
Fenced off the greatnesses of hidden God.
His being was formed to play a trivial part
In a little drama on a petty stage;
In a narrow plot he has pitched his tent of life
Beneath the wide gaze of the starry Vast.
He is the crown of all that has been done:
Thus is creation's labour justified;
This is the world's result, Nature's last poise!
And if this were all and nothing more were meant,
If what now seems were the whole of what must be,
If this were not a stade through which we pass
On our road from Matter to eternal Self,
To the Light that made the worlds, the Cause of things,
Well might interpret our mind's limited view
Existence as an accident in Time,
Illusion or phenomenon or freak,
The paradox of a creative Thought
Which moves between unreal opposites,
Inanimate Force struggling to feel and know,
Matter that chanced to read itself by Mind,
Inconscience monstrously engendering soul.
At times all looks unreal and remote:
We seem to live in a fiction of our thoughts
Pieced from sensation's fanciful traveller's tale,
Or caught on the film of the recording brain,
A figment or circumstance in cosmic sleep.
A somnambulist walking under the moon,
An image of ego treads through an ignorant dream
Counting the moments of a spectral Time.
In a false perspective of effect and cause,
Trusting to a specious prospect of world-space,
It drifts incessantly from scene to scene,

Whither it knows not, to what fabulous verge.
All here is dreamed or doubtfully exists,
But who the dreamer is and whence he looks
Is still unknown or only a shadowy guess.
Or the world is real but ourselves too small,
Insufficient for the mightiness of our stage.
A thin life-curve crosses the titan whirl
Of the orbit of a soulless universe,
And in the belly of the sparse rolling mass
A mind looks out from a small casual globe
And wonders what itself and all things are.
And yet to some interned subjective sight
That strangely has formed in Matter's sightless stuff,
A pointillage minute of little self
Takes figure as world-being's conscious base.
Such is our scene in the half-light below.
This is the sign of Matter's infinite,
This the weird purport of the picture shown
To Science the giantess, measurer of her field,
As she pores on the record of her close survey
And mathematises her huge external world,
To Reason bound within the circle of sense,
Or in Thought's broad impalpable Exchange
A speculator in tenuous vast ideas,
Abstractions in the void her currency
We know not with what firm values for its base.
Only religion in this bankruptcy
Presents its dubious riches to our hearts
Or signs unprovisioned cheques on the Beyond:
Our poverty shall there have its revenge.
Our spirits depart discarding a futile life
Into the blank unknown or with them take
Death's passport into immortality.

Yet was this only a provisional scheme,
A false appearance sketched by limiting sense,

Mind's insufficient self-discovery,
An early attempt, a first experiment.
This was a toy to amuse the infant earth;
But knowledge ends not in these surface powers
That live upon a ledge in the Ignorance
And dare not look into the dangerous depths
Or to stare upward measuring the Unknown.
There is a deeper seeing from within
And, when we have left these small purlieus of mind,
A greater vision meets us on the heights
In the luminous wideness of the spirit's gaze.
At last there wakes in us a witness Soul
That looks at truths unseen and scans the Unknown;
Then all assumes a new and marvellous face:
The world quivers with a God-light at its core,
In Time's deep heart high purposes move and live,
Life's borders crumble and join infinity.
This broad, confused, yet rigid scheme becomes
A magnificent imbroglio of the Gods,
A game, a work ambiguously divine.
Our seekings are short-lived experiments
Made by a wordless and inscrutable Power
Testing its issues from inconscient Night
To meet its luminous self of Truth and Bliss.
It peers at the Real through the apparent form;
It labours in our mortal mind and sense;
Amid the figures of the Ignorance,
In the symbol pictures drawn by word and thought,
It seeks the truth to which all figures point;
It looks for the source of Light with vision's lamp;
It works to find the Doer of all works,
The unfelt Self within who is the guide,
The unknown Self above who is the goal.
All is not here a blinded Nature's task:
A Word, a Wisdom watches us from on high,
A Witness sanctioning her will and works,

An Eye unseen in the unseeing vast;
There is an Influence from a Light above,
There are thoughts remote and sealed eternities;
A mystic motive drives the stars and suns.
In this passage from a deaf unknowing Force
To struggling consciousness and transient breath
A mighty Supernature waits on Time.
The world is other than we now think and see,
Our lives a deeper mystery than we have dreamed;
Our minds are starters in the race to God,
Our souls deputed selves of the Supreme.
Across the cosmic field through narrow lanes
Asking a scanty dole from Fortune's hands
And garbed in beggar's robes there walks the One.
Even in the theatre of these small lives
Behind the act a secret sweetness breathes,
An urge of miniature divinity.
A mystic passion from the wells of God
Flows through the guarded spaces of the soul;
A force that helps supports the suffering earth,
An unseen nearness and a hidden joy.
There are muffled throbs of laughter's undertones,
The murmur of an occult happiness,
An exultation in the depths of sleep,
A heart of bliss within a world of pain.
An Infant nursed on Nature's covert breast,
An Infant playing in the magic woods,
Fluting to rapture by the spirit's streams,
Awaits the hour when we shall turn to his call.
In this investiture of fleshly life
A soul that is a spark of God survives
And sometimes it breaks through the sordid screen
And kindles a fire that makes us half-divine.
In our body's cells there sits a hidden Power
That sees the unseen and plans eternity,
Our smallest parts have room for deepest needs;

There too the golden Messengers can come:
A door is cut in the mud wall of self;
Across the lowly threshold with bowed heads
Angels of ecstasy and self-giving pass,
And lodged in an inner sanctuary of dream
The makers of the image of deity live.
Pity is there and fire-winged sacrifice,
And flashes of sympathy and tenderness
Cast heaven-lights from the heart's secluded shrine.
A work is done in the deep silences;
A glory and wonder of spiritual sense,
A laughter in beauty's everlasting space
Transforming world-experience into joy,
Inhabit the mystery of the untouched gulfs;
Lulled by Time's beats eternity sleeps in us.
In the sealed hermetic heart, the happy core,
Unmoved behind this outer shape of death
The eternal Entity prepares within
Its matter of divine felicity,
Its reign of heavenly phenomenon.
Even in our sceptic mind of ignorance
A foresight comes of some immense release,
Our will lifts towards it slow and shaping hands.
Each part in us desires its absolute.
Our thoughts covet the everlasting Light,
Our strength derives from an omnipotent Force,
And since from a veiled God-joy the worlds were made
And since eternal Beauty asks for form
Even here where all is made of being's dust,
Our hearts are captured by ensnaring shapes,
Our very senses blindly seek for bliss.
Our error crucifies Reality
To force its birth and divine body here,
Compelling, incarnate in a human form
And breathing in limbs that one can touch and clasp,
Its Knowledge to rescue an ancient Ignorance,

Its saviour light the inconscient universe.
And when that greater Self comes sea-like down
To fill this image of our transience,
All shall be captured by delight, transformed:
In waves of undreamed ecstasy shall roll
Our mind and life and sense and laugh in a light
Other than this hard limited human day,
The body's tissues thrill apotheosised,
Its cells sustain bright metamorphosis.
This little being of Time, this shadow soul,
This living dwarf-figurehead of darkened spirit
Out of its traffic in petty dreams shall rise.
Its shape of person and its ego-face
Divested of this mortal travesty,
Like a clay troll kneaded into a god
New-made in the image of the eternal Guest,
It shall be caught to the breast of a white Force
And, flaming with the paradisal touch
In a rose-fire of sweet spiritual grace,
In the red passion of its infinite change,
Quiver, awake, and shudder with ecstasy.
As if reversing a deformation's spell,
Released from the black magic of the Night,
Renouncing servitude to the dim Abyss,
It shall learn at last who lived within unseen,
And seized with marvel in the adoring heart
To the enthroned Child-Godhead kneel aware,
Trembling with beauty and delight and love.
But first the spirit's ascent we must achieve
Out of the chasm from which our nature rose.
The soul must soar sovereign above the form
And climb to summits beyond mind's half-sleep;
Our hearts we must inform with heavenly strength,
Surprise the animal with the occult god.
Then kindling the gold tongue of sacrifice,
Calling the powers of a bright hemisphere,

We shall shed the discredit of our mortal state,
Make the abysm a road for Heaven's descent,
Acquaint our depths with the supernal Ray
And cleave the darkness with the mystic Fire.

Adventuring once more in the natal mist
Across the dangerous haze, the pregnant stir,
He through the astral chaos shore a way
Mid the grey faces of its demon gods,
Questioned by whispers of its flickering ghosts,
Besieged by sorceries of its fluent force.
As one who walks unguided through strange fields
Tending he knows not where nor with what hope,
He trod a soil that failed beneath his feet
And journeyed in stone strength to a fugitive end.
His trail behind him was a vanishing line
Of glimmering points in a vague immensity;
A bodiless murmur travelled at his side
In the wounded gloom complaining against light.
A huge obstruction its immobile heart,
The watching opacity multiplied as he moved
Its hostile mass of dead and staring eyes;
The darkness glimmered like a dying torch.
Around him an extinguished phantom glow
Peopled with shadowy and misleading shapes
The vague Inconscient's dark and measureless cave.
His only sunlight was his spirit's flame.

END OF CANTO FIVE

Canto Six

The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Greater Life

As one who between dim receding walls
Towards the far gleam of a tunnel's mouth,
Hoping for light, walks now with freer pace
And feels approach a breath of wider air,
So he escaped from that grey anarchy.
Into an ineffectual world he came,
A purposeless region of arrested birth
Where being from non-being fled and dared
To live but had no strength long to abide.
Above there gleamed a pondering brow of sky
Tormented, crossed by wings of doubtful haze
Adventuring with a voice of roaming winds
And crying for a direction in the void
Like blind souls looking for the selves they lost
And wandering through unfamiliar worlds;
Wings of vague questioning met the query of Space.
After denial dawned a dubious hope,
A hope of self and form and leave to live
And the birth of that which never yet could be,
And joy of the mind's hazard, the heart's choice,
Grace of the unknown and hands of sudden surprise
And a touch of sure delight in unsure things:
To a strange uncertain tract his journey came
Where consciousness played with unconscious self
And birth was an attempt or episode.
A charm drew near that could not keep its spell,
An eager Power that could not find its way,
A Chance that chose a strange arithmetic
But could not bind with it the forms it made,
A multitude that could not guard its sum
Which less than zero grew and more than one.

Arriving at a large and shadowy sense
That cared not to define its fleeting drift,
Life laboured in a strange and mythic air
Denuded of her sweet magnificent suns.
In worlds imagined, never yet made true,
A lingering glimmer on creation's verge,
One strayed and dreamed and never stopped to achieve:
To achieve would have destroyed that magic Space.
The marvels of a twilight wonderland
Full of a beauty strangely, vainly made,
A surge of fanciful realities,
Dim tokens of a Splendour sealed above,
Awoke the passion of the eyes' desire,
Compelled belief on the enamoured thought
And drew the heart but led it to no goal.
A magic flowed as if of moving scenes
That kept awhile their fugitive delicacy
Of sparing lines limned by an abstract art
In a rare scanted light with faint dream-brush
On a silver background of incertitude.
An infant glow of heavens near to morn,
A fire intense conceived but never lit,
Caressed the air with ardent hints of day.
The perfect longing for imperfection's charm,
The illumined caught by the snare of Ignorance,
Ethereal creatures drawn by body's lure
To that region of promise, beating invisible wings,
Came hungry for the joy of finite life
But too divine to tread created soil
And share the fate of perishable things.
The Children of the unembodied Gleam
Arisen from a formless thought in the soul
And chased by an imperishable desire,
Traversed the field of the pursuing gaze.
A Will that unpersisting failed, worked there:
Life was a search but finding never came.

There nothing satisfied, but all allured,
Things seemed to be that never wholly are,
Images were seen that looked like living acts
And symbols hid the sense they claimed to show,
Pale dreams grew real to the dreamer's eyes.
The souls came there that vainly strive for birth,
And spirits entrapped might wander through all time,
Yet never find the truth by which they live.
All ran like hopes that hunt a lurking chance;
Nothing was solid, nothing felt complete:
All was unsafe, miraculous and half-true.
It seemed a realm of lives that had no base.

Then dawned a greater seeking, broadened sky,
A journey under wings of brooding Force.
First came the kingdom of the morning star:
A twilight beauty trembled under its spear
And the throb of promise of a wider Life.
Then slowly rose a great and doubting sun
And in its light she made of self a world.
A spirit was there that sought for its own deep self,
Yet was content with fragments pushed in front
And parts of living that belied the whole
But, pieced together, might one day be true.
Yet something seemed to be achieved at last.
A growing volume of the will-to-be,
A text of living and a graph of force,
A script of acts, a song of conscious forms
Burdened with meanings fugitive from thought's grasp
And crowded with undertones of life's rhythmic cry,
Could write itself on the hearts of living things.
In an outbreak of the might of secret Spirit,
In Life and Matter's answer of delight,
Some face of deathless beauty could be caught
That gave immortality to a moment's joy,
Some word that could incarnate highest Truth

Leaped out from a chance tension of the soul,
Some hue of the Absolute could fall on life,
Some glory of knowledge and intuitive sight,
Some passion of the rapturous heart of Love.
A hierophant of the bodiless Secrecy
Interned in an unseen spiritual sheath,
The Will that pushes sense beyond its scope
To feel the light and joy intangible,
Half found its way into the Ineffable's peace,
Half captured a sealed sweetness of desire
That yearned from a bosom of mysterious Bliss,
Half manifested veiled Reality.
A soul not wrapped into its cloak of mind
Could glimpse the true sense of a world of forms;
Illumined by a vision in the thought,
Upbuoyed by the heart's understanding flame,
It could hold in the conscious ether of the spirit
The divinity of a symbol universe.
   This realm inspires us with our vaster hopes;
Its forces have made landings on our globe,
Its signs have traced their pattern in our lives:
It lends a sovereign movement to our fate,
Its errant waves motive our life's high surge.
All that we seek for is prefigured there
And all we have not known nor ever sought
Which yet one day must be born in human hearts
That the Timeless may fulfil itself in things.
Incarnate in the mystery of the days,
Eternal in an unclosed Infinite,
A mounting endless possibility
Climbs high upon a topless ladder of dream
For ever in the Being's conscious trance.
All on that ladder mounts to an unseen end.
An Energy of perpetual transience makes
The journey from which no return is sure,
The pilgrimage of Nature to the Unknown.

As if in her ascent to her lost source
She hoped to unroll all that could ever be,
Her high procession moves from stage to stage,
A progress leap from sight to greater sight,
A process march from form to ampler form,
A caravan of the inexhaustible
Formations of a boundless Thought and Force.
Her timeless Power that lay once on the lap
Of a beginningless and endless Calm,
Now severed from the Spirit's immortal bliss,
Erects the type of all the joys she has lost;
Compelling transient substance into shape,
She hopes by the creative act's release
To o'erleap sometimes the gulf she cannot fill,
To heal awhile the wound of severance,
Escape from the moment's prison of littleness
And meet the Eternal's wide sublimities
In the uncertain time-field portioned here.
Almost she nears what never can be attained;
She shuts eternity into an hour
And fills a little soul with the Infinite;
The Immobile leans to the magic of her call;
She stands on a shore in the Illimitable,
Perceives the formless Dweller in all forms
And feels around her infinity's embrace.
Her task no ending knows; she serves no aim
But labours driven by a nameless Will
That came from some unknowable formless Vast.
This is her secret and impossible task
To catch the boundless in a net of birth,
To cast the spirit into physical form,
To lend speech and thought to the Ineffable;
She is pushed to reveal the ever Unmanifest.
Yet by her skill the impossible has been done:
She follows her sublime irrational plan,
Invents devices of her magic art

To find new bodies for the Infinite
And images of the Unimaginable;
She has lured the Eternal into the arms of Time.
Even now herself she knows not what she has done.
For all is wrought beneath a baffling mask:
A semblance other than its hidden truth
The aspect wears of an illusion's trick,
A feigned time-driven unreality,
The unfinished creation of a changing soul
In a body changing with the inhabitant.
Insignificant her means, infinite her work;
On a great field of shapeless consciousness
In little finite strokes of mind and sense
An endless Truth she endlessly unfolds;
A timeless mystery works out in Time.
The greatness she has dreamed her acts have missed,
Her labour is a passion and a pain,
A rapture and pang, her glory and her curse;
And yet she cannot choose but labours on;
Her mighty heart forbids her to desist.
As long as the world lasts her failure lives
Astonishing and foiling Reason's gaze,
A folly and a beauty unspeakable,
A superb madness of the will to live,
A daring, a delirium of delight.
This is her being's law, its sole resource;
She sates, though satisfaction never comes,
Her hungry will to lavish everywhere
Her many-imaged fictions of the Self
And thousand fashions of one Reality.
A world she made touched by truth's fleeing hem,
A world cast into a dream of what it seeks,
An icon of truth, a conscious mystery's shape.
It lingered not like the earth-mind hemmed in
In solid barriers of apparent fact;
It dared to trust the dream-mind and the soul.

A hunter of spiritual verities
Still only thought or guessed or held by faith,
It seized in imagination and confined
A painted bird of paradise in a cage.
This greater life is enamoured of the Unseen;
It calls to some highest Light beyond its reach,
It can feel the Silence that absolves the soul;
It feels a saviour touch, a ray divine:
Beauty and good and truth its godheads are.
It is near to heavenlier heavens than earth's eyes see,
A direr darkness than man's life can bear:
It has kinship with the demon and the god.
A strange enthusiasm has moved its heart;
It hungers for heights, it passions for the supreme.
It hunts for the perfect word, the perfect shape,
It leaps to the summit thought, the summit light.
For by the form the Formless is brought close
And all perfection fringes the Absolute.
A child of heaven who never saw his home,
Its impetus meets the eternal at a point:
It can only near and touch, it cannot hold;
It can only strain towards some bright extreme:
Its greatness is to seek and to create.
   On every plane, this Greatness must create.
On earth, in heaven, in hell she is the same;
Of every fate she takes her mighty part.
A guardian of the fire that lights the suns,
She triumphs in her glory and her might:
Opposed, oppressed she bears God's urge to be born:
The spirit survives upon non-being's ground,
World-force outlasts world-disillusion's shock:
Dumb, she is still the Word, inert the Power.
Here fallen, a slave of death and ignorance,
To things deathless she is driven to aspire
And moved to know even the Unknowable.
Even nescient, null, her sleep creates a world.

When most unseen, most mightily she works;
Housed in the atom, buried in the clod,
Her quick creative passion cannot cease.
Inconscience is her long gigantic pause,
Her cosmic swoon is a stupendous phase:
Time-born, she hides her immortality;
In death, her bed, she waits the hour to rise.
Even with the Light denied that sent her forth
And the hope dead she needed for her task,
Even when her brightest stars are quenched in Night,
Nourished by hardship and calamity
And with pain for her body's handmaid, masseuse, nurse,
Her tortured invisible spirit continues still
To toil though in darkness, to create though with pangs;
She carries crucified God upon her breast.
In chill insentient depths where joy is none,
Immured, oppressed by the resisting Void
Where nothing moves and nothing can become,
Still she remembers, still invokes the skill
The Wonder-worker gave her at her birth,
Imparts to drowsy formlessness a shape,
Reveals a world where nothing was before.
In realms confined to a prone circle of death,
To a dark eternity of Ignorance,
A quiver in an inert inconscient mass,
Or imprisoned in immobilised whorls of Force,
By Matter's blind compulsion deaf and mute
She refuses motionless in the dust to sleep.
Then, for her rebel waking's punishment
Given only hard mechanic Circumstance
As the enginery of her magic craft,
She fashions godlike marvels out of mud;
In the plasm she sets her dumb immortal urge,
Helps the live tissue to think, the closed sense to feel,
Flashes through the frail nerves poignant messages,
In a heart of flesh miraculously loves,

To brute bodies gives a soul, a will, a voice.
Ever she summons as by a sorcerer's wand
Beings and shapes and scenes innumerable,
Torch-bearers of her pomps through Time and Space.
This world is her long journey through the night,
The suns and planets lamps to light her road,
Our reason is the confidante of her thoughts,
Our senses are her vibrant witnesses.
There drawing her signs from things half true, half false,
She labours to replace by realised dreams
The memory of her lost eternity.
These are her deeds in this huge world-ignorance:
Till the veil is lifted, till the night is dead,
In light or dark she keeps her tireless search;
Time is her road of endless pilgrimage.
One mighty passion motives all her works.
Her eternal Lover is her action's cause;
For him she leaped forth from the unseen Vasts
To move here in a stark unconscious world.
Its acts are her commerce with her hidden Guest,
His moods she takes for her heart's passionate moulds;
In beauty she treasures the sunlight of his smile.
Ashamed of her rich cosmic poverty,
She cajoles with her small gifts his mightiness,
Holds with her scenes his look's fidelity
And woos his large-eyed wandering thoughts to dwell
In figures of her million-impulsed Force.
Only to attract her veiled companion
And keep him close to her breast in her world-cloak
Lest from her arms he turn to his formless peace,
Is her heart's business and her clinging care.
Yet when he is most near, she feels him far.
For contradiction is her nature's law.
Although she is ever in him and he in her,
As if unaware of the eternal tie,
Her will is to shut God into her works

And keep him as her cherished prisoner
That never they may part again in Time.
A sumptuous chamber of the spirit's sleep
At first she made, a deep interior room,
Where he slumbers as if a forgotten guest.
But now she turns to break the oblivious spell,
Awakes the sleeper on the sculptured couch;
She finds again the Presence in the form
And in the light that wakes with him recovers
A meaning in the hurry and trudge of Time,
And through this mind that once obscured the soul
Passes a glint of unseen deity.
Across a luminous dream of spirit-space
She builds creation like a rainbow bridge
Between the original Silence and the Void.
A net is made of the mobile universe;
She weaves a snare for the conscious Infinite.
A knowledge is with her that conceals its steps
And seems a mute omnipotent Ignorance.
A might is with her that makes wonders true;
The incredible is her stuff of common fact.
Her purposes, her workings riddles prove;
Examined, they grow other than they were,
Explained, they seem yet more inexplicable.
Even in our world a mystery has reigned
Earth's cunning screen of trivial plainness hides;
Her larger levels are of sorceries made.
There the enigma shows its splendid prism,
There is no deep disguise of commonness;
Occult, profound comes all experience,
Marvel is ever new, miracle divine.
There is a screened burden, a mysterious touch,
There is a secrecy of hidden sense.
Although no earthen mask weighs on her face,
Into herself she flees from her own sight.
All forms are tokens of some veiled idea

Whose covert purpose lurks from mind's pursuit,
Yet is a womb of sovereign consequence.
There every thought and feeling is an act,
And every act a symbol and a sign,
And every symbol hides a living power.
A universe she builds from truths and myths,
But what she needed most she cannot build;
All shown is a figure or copy of the Truth,
But the Real veils from her its mystic face.
All else she finds, there lacks eternity;
All is sought out, but missed the Infinite.

A consciousness lit by a Truth above
Was felt; it saw the light but not the Truth:
It caught the Idea and built from it a world;
It made an Image there and called it God.
Yet something true and inward harboured there.
The beings of that world of greater life,
Tenants of a larger air and freer space,
Live not by the body or in outward things:
A deeper living was their seat of self.
In that intense domain of intimacy
Objects dwell as companions of the soul;
The body's actions are a minor script,
The surface rendering of a life within.
All forces are Life's retinue in that world
And thought and body as her handmaids move.
The universal widenesses give her room:
All feel the cosmic movement in their acts
And are the instruments of her cosmic might.
Or their own self they make their universe.
In all who have risen to a greater Life,
A voice of unborn things whispers to the ear,
To their eyes visited by some high sunlight
Aspiration shows the image of a crown:
To work out a seed that she has thrown within,

To achieve her power in them her creatures live.
Each is a greatness growing towards the heights
Or from his inner centre oceans out;
In circling ripples of concentric power
They swallow, glutted, their environment.
Even of that largeness many a cabin make;
In narrower breadths and briefer vistas pent
They live content with some small greatness won.
To rule the little empire of themselves,
To be a figure in their private world
And make the milieu's joys and griefs their own
And satisfy their life-motives and life-wants
Is charge enough and office for this strength,
A steward of the Person and his fate.
This was transition-line and starting-point,
A first immigration into heavenliness,
For all who cross into that brilliant sphere:
These are the kinsmen of our earthly race;
This region borders on our mortal state.
   This wider world our greater movements gives,
Its strong formations build our growing selves;
Its creatures are our brighter replicas,
Complete the types we only initiate
And are securely what we strive to be.
As if thought-out eternal characters,
Entire, not pulled as we by contrary tides,
They follow the unseen leader in the heart,
Their lives obey the inner nature's law.
There is kept grandeur's store, the hero's mould;
The soul is the watchful builder of its fate;
None is a spirit indifferent and inert;
They choose their side, they see the god they adore.
A battle is joined between the true and false,
A pilgrimage sets out to the divine Light.
For even Ignorance there aspires to know
And shines with the lustre of a distant star;

There is a knowledge in the heart of sleep
And Nature comes to them as a conscious force.
An ideal is their leader and their king:
Aspiring to the monarchy of the sun
They call in Truth for their high government,
Hold her incarnate in their daily acts
And fill their thoughts with her inspired voice
And shape their lives into her breathing form,
Till in her sun-gold godhead they too share.
Or to the truth of Darkness they subscribe;
Whether for Heaven or Hell they must wage war:
Warriors of Good, they serve a shining cause
Or are Evil's soldiers in the pay of Sin.
For evil and good an equal tenure keep
Wherever Knowledge is Ignorance's twin.
All powers of Life towards their godhead tend
In the wideness and the daring of that air,
Each builds its temple and expands its cult,
And Sin too there is a divinity.
Affirming the beauty and splendour of her law
She claims life as her natural domain,
Assumes the world's throne or dons the papal robe:
Her worshippers proclaim her sacred right.
A red-tiaraed Falsehood they revere,
Worship the shadow of a crooked God,
Admit the black Idea that twists the brain
Or lie with the harlot Power that slays the soul.
A mastering virtue statuesques the pose,
Or a Titan passion goads to a proud unrest:
At Wisdom's altar they are kings and priests
Or their life a sacrifice to an idol of Power.
Or Beauty shines on them like a wandering star;
Too far to reach, passionate they follow her light;
In Art and life they catch the All-Beautiful's ray
And make the world their radiant treasure house:
Even common figures are with marvel robed;

A charm and greatness locked in every hour
Awakes the joy which sleeps in all things made.
A mighty victory or a mighty fall,
A throne in heaven or a pit in hell,
The dual Energy they have justified
And marked their souls with her tremendous seal:
Whatever Fate may do to them they have earned;
Something they have done, something they have been, they live.
There Matter is soul's result and not its cause.
In a contrary balance to earth's truth of things
The gross weighs less, the subtle counts for more;
On inner values hangs the outer plan.
As quivers with the thought the expressive word,
As yearns the act with the passion of the soul
This world's apparent sensible design
Looks vibrant back to some interior might.
A Mind not limited by external sense
Gave figures to the spirit's imponderables,
The world's impacts without channels registered
And turned into the body's concrete thrill
The vivid workings of a bodiless Force;
Powers here subliminal that act unseen
Or in ambush crouch waiting behind the wall
Came out in front uncovering their face.
The occult grew there overt, the obvious kept
A covert turn and shouldered the unknown;
The unseen was felt and jostled visible shapes.
In the communion of two meeting minds
Thought looked at thought and had no need of speech;
Emotion clasped emotion in two hearts,
They felt each other's thrill in the flesh and nerves
Or melted each in each and grew immense
As when two houses burn and fire joins fire:
Hate grappled hate and love broke in on love,
Will wrestled with will on mind's invisible ground;
Others' sensations passing through like waves

Left quivering the subtle body's frame,
Their anger rushed galloping in brute attack,
A charge of trampling hooves on shaken soil;
One felt another's grief invade the breast,
Another's joy exulting ran through the blood:
Hearts could draw close through distance, voices near
That spoke upon the shore of alien seas.
There beat a throb of living interchange:
Being felt being even when afar
And consciousness replied to consciousness.
And yet the ultimate oneness was not there.
There was a separateness of soul from soul:
An inner wall of silence could be built,
An armour of conscious might protect and shield;
The being could be closed in and solitary;
One could remain apart in self, alone.
Identity was not yet nor union's peace.
All was imperfect still, half-known, half-done:
The miracle of Inconscience overpassed,
The miracle of the Superconscient still,
Unknown, self-wrapped, unfelt, unknowable,
Looked down on them, origin of all they were.
As forms they came of the formless Infinite,
As names lived of a nameless Eternity.
The beginning and the end were there occult;
A middle term worked unexplained, abrupt:
They were words that spoke to a vast wordless Truth,
They were figures crowding an unfinished sum.
None truly knew himself or knew the world
Or the Reality living there enshrined:
Only they knew what Mind could take and build
Out of the secret Supermind's huge store.
A darkness under them, a bright Void above,
Uncertain they lived in a great climbing Space;
By mysteries they explained a Mystery,
A riddling answer met the riddle of things.

As he moved in this ether of ambiguous life,
Himself was soon a riddle to himself;
As symbols he saw all and sought their sense.

Across the leaping springs of death and birth
And over shifting borders of soul-change,
A hunter on the spirit's creative track,
He followed in life's fine and mighty trails
Pursuing her sealed formidable delight
In a perilous adventure without close.
At first no aim appeared in those large steps:
Only the wide source he saw of all things here
Looking towards a wider source beyond.
For as she drew away from earthly lines,
A tenser drag was felt from the Unknown,
A higher context of delivering thought
Drove her towards marvel and discovery;
There came a high release from pettier cares,
A mightier image of desire and hope,
A vaster formula, a greater scene.
Ever she circled towards some far-off Light:
Her signs still covered more than they revealed;
But tied to some immediate sight and will
They lost their purport in the joy of use,
Till stripped of their infinite meaning they became
A cipher gleaming with unreal sense.
Armed with a magical and haunted bow
She aimed at a target kept invisible
And ever deemed remote though always near.
As one who spells illumined characters,
The key-book of a crabbed magician text,
He scanned her subtle tangled weird designs
And the screened difficult theorem of her clues,
Traced in the monstrous sands of desert Time
The thread beginnings of her titan works,
Watched her charade of action for some hint,

Read the Nō-gestures of her silhouettes,
And strove to capture in their burdened drift
The dance-fantasia of her sequences
Escaping into rhythmic mystery,
A glimmer of fugitive feet on fleeing soil.
In the labyrinth pattern of her thoughts and hopes
And the byways of her intimate desires,
In the complex corners crowded with her dreams
And rounds crossed by an intrigue of irrelevant rounds,
A wanderer straying amid fugitive scenes,
He lost its signs and chased each failing guess.
Ever he met key-words, ignorant of their key.
A sun that dazzled its own eye of sight,
A luminous enigma's brilliant hood
Lit the dense purple barrier of thought's sky:
A dim large trance showed to the night her stars.
As if sitting near an open window's gap,
He read by lightning-flash on crowding flash
Chapters of her metaphysical romance
Of the soul's search for lost Reality
And her fictions drawn from spirit's authentic fact,
Her caprices and conceits and meanings locked,
Her rash unseizable freaks and mysteried turns.
The magnificent wrappings of her secrecy
That fold her desirable body out of sight,
The strange significant forms woven on her robe,
Her meaningful outlines of the souls of things
He saw, her false transparencies of thought-hue,
Her rich brocades with imaged fancies sewn
And mutable masks and broideries of disguise.
A thousand baffling faces of the Truth
Looked at him from her forms with unknown eyes
And wordless mouths unrecognisable,
Spoke from the figures of her masquerade,
Or peered from the recondite magnificence
And subtle splendour of her draperies.

In sudden scintillations of the Unknown,
Inexpressive sounds became veridical,
Ideas that seemed unmeaning flashed out truth;
Voices that came from unseen waiting worlds
Uttered the syllables of the Unmanifest
To clothe the body of the mystic Word,
And wizard diagrams of the occult Law
Sealed some precise unreadable harmony,
Or used hue and figure to reconstitute
The herald blazon of Time's secret things.
In her green wildernesses and lurking depths,
In her thickets of joy where danger clasps delight,
He glimpsed the hidden wings of her songster hopes,
A glimmer of blue and gold and scarlet fire.
In her covert lanes, bordering her chance field-paths
And by her singing rivulets and calm lakes
He found the glow of her golden fruits of bliss
And the beauty of her flowers of dream and muse.
As if a miracle of heart's change by joy
He watched in the alchemist radiance of her suns
The crimson outburst of one secular flower
On the tree-of-sacrifice of spiritual love.
In the sleepy splendour of her noons he saw,
A perpetual repetition through the hours,
Thought's dance of dragonflies on mystery's stream
That skim but never test its murmurs' race,
And heard the laughter of her rose desires
Running as if to escape from longed-for hands,
Jingling sweet anklet-bells of fantasy.
Amidst live symbols of her occult power
He moved and felt them as close real forms:
In that life more concrete than the lives of men
Throbbed heart-beats of the hidden reality:
Embodied was there what we but think and feel,
Self-framed what here takes outward borrowed shapes.
A comrade of Silence on her austere heights

Accepted by her mighty loneliness,
He stood with her on meditating peaks
Where life and being are a sacrament
Offered to the Reality beyond,
And saw her loose into infinity
Her hooded eagles of significance,
Messengers of Thought to the Unknowable.
Identified in soul-vision and soul-sense,
Entering into her depths as into a house,
All he became that she was or longed to be,
He thought with her thoughts and journeyed with her steps,
Lived with her breath and scanned all with her eyes
That so he might learn the secret of her soul.
A witness overmastered by his scene,
He admired her splendid front of pomp and play
And the marvels of her rich and delicate craft,
And thrilled to the insistence of her cry;
Impassioned he bore the sorceries of her might,
Felt laid on him her abrupt mysterious will,
Her hands that knead fate in their violent grasp,
Her touch that moves, her powers that seize and drive.
But this too he saw, her soul that wept within,
Her seekings vain that clutch at fleeing truth,
Her hopes whose sombre gaze mates with despair,
The passion that possessed her longing limbs,
The trouble and rapture of her yearning breasts,
Her mind that toils unsatisfied with its fruits,
Her heart that captures not the one Beloved.
Always he met a veiled and seeking Force,
An exiled goddess building mimic heavens,
A Sphinx whose eyes look up to a hidden Sun.

Ever he felt near a spirit in her forms:
Its passive presence was her nature's strength;
This sole is real in apparent things,
Even upon earth the spirit is life's key,

But her solid outsides nowhere bear its trace.
Its stamp on her acts is undiscoverable.
A pathos of lost heights is its appeal.
Only sometimes is caught a shadowy line
That seems a hint of veiled reality.
Life stared at him with vague confused outlines
Offering a picture the eyes could not keep,
A story that was yet not written there.
As in a fragmentary half-lost design
Life's meanings fled from the pursuing eye.
Life's visage hides life's real self from sight;
Life's secret sense is written within, above.
The thought that gives it sense lives far beyond;
It is not seen in its half-finished design.
In vain we hope to read the baffling signs
Or find the word of the half-played charade.
Only in that greater life a cryptic thought
Is found, is hinted some interpreting word
That makes the earth-myth a tale intelligible.
Something was seen at last that looked like truth.
In a half-lit air of hazardous mystery
The eye that looks at the dark half of truth
Made out an image mid a vivid blur
And peering through a mist of subtle tints
He saw a half-blind chained divinity
Bewildered by the world in which he moved,
Yet conscious of some light prompting his soul.
Attracted to strange far-off shimmerings,
Led by the fluting of a distant Player
He sought his way amid life's laughter and call
And the index chaos of her myriad steps
Towards some total deep infinitude.
Around crowded the forest of her signs:
At hazard he read by arrow-leaps of Thought
That hit the mark by guess or luminous chance,
Her changing coloured road-lights of idea

And her signals of uncertain swift event,
The hieroglyphs of her symbol pageantries
And her landmarks in the tangled paths of Time.
In her mazes of approach and of retreat
To every side she draws him and repels,
But drawn too near escapes from his embrace;
All ways she leads him but no way is sure.
Allured by the many-toned marvel of her chant,
Attracted by the witchcraft of her moods
And moved by her casual touch to joy and grief,
He loses himself in her but wins her not.
A fugitive paradise smiles at him from her eyes:
He dreams of her beauty made for ever his,
He dreams of his mastery her limbs shall bear,
He dreams of the magic of her breasts of bliss.
In her illumined script, her fanciful
Translation of God's pure original text,
He thinks to read the Scripture Wonderful,
Hieratic key to unknown beatitudes.
But the Word of Life is hidden in its script,
The chant of Life has lost its divine note.
Unseen, a captive in a house of sound,
The spirit lost in the splendour of a dream
Listens to a thousand-voiced illusion's ode.
A delicate weft of sorcery steals the heart
Or a fiery magic tints her tones and hues,
Yet they but wake a thrill of transient grace;
A vagrant march struck by the wanderer Time,
They call to a brief unsatisfied delight
Or wallow in ravishments of mind and sense,
But miss the luminous answer of the soul.
A blind heart-throb that reaches joy through tears,
A yearning towards peaks for ever unreached,
An ecstasy of unfulfilled desire
Track the last heavenward climbings of her voice.
Transmuted are past suffering's memories

Into an old sadness's sweet escaping trail:
Turned are her tears to gems of diamond pain,
Her sorrow into a magic crown of song.
Brief are her snatches of felicity
That touch the surface, then escape or die:
A lost remembrance echoes in her depths,
A deathless longing is hers, a veiled self's call;
A prisoner in the mortal's limiting world,
A spirit wounded by life sobs in her breast;
A cherished suffering is her deepest cry.
A wanderer on forlorn despairing routes,
Along the roads of sound a frustrate voice
Forsaken cries to a forgotten bliss.
Astray in the echo caverns of Desire,
It guards the phantoms of a soul's dead hopes
And keeps alive the voice of perished things
Or lingers upon sweet and errant notes
Hunting for pleasure in the heart of pain.
A fateful hand has touched the cosmic chords
And the intrusion of a troubled strain
Covers the inner music's hidden key
That guides unheard the surface cadences.
Yet is it joy to live and to create
And joy to love and labour though all fails,
And joy to seek though all we find deceives
And all on which we lean betrays our trust;
Yet something in its depths was worth the pain,
A passionate memory haunts with ecstasy's fire.
Even grief has joy hidden beneath its roots:
For nothing is truly vain the One has made:
In our defeated hearts God's strength survives
And victory's star still lights our desperate road;
Our death is made a passage to new worlds.
This to Life's music gives its anthem swell.
To all she lends the glory of her voice;
Heaven's raptures whisper to her heart and pass,

Earth's transient yearnings cry from her lips and fade.
Alone the God-given hymn escapes her art
That came with her from her spiritual home
But stopped half-way and failed, a silent word
Awake in some deep pause of waiting worlds,
A murmur suspended in eternity's hush:
But no breath comes from the supernal peace:
A sumptuous interlude occupies the ear
And the heart listens and the soul consents;
An evanescent music it repeats
Wasting on transience Time's eternity.
A tremolo of the voices of the hours
Oblivious screens the high intended theme
The self-embodying spirit came to play
On the vast clavichord of Nature-Force.
Only a mighty murmur here and there
Of the eternal Word, the blissful Voice
Or Beauty's touch transfiguring heart and sense,
A wandering splendour and a mystic cry,
Recalls the strength and sweetness heard no more.

Here is the gap, here stops or sinks life's force;
This deficit paupers the magician's skill:
This want makes all the rest seem thin and bare.
A half-sight draws the horizon of her acts:
Her depths remember what she came to do,
But the mind has forgotten or the heart mistakes:
In Nature's endless lines is lost the God.
In knowledge to sum up omniscience,
In action to erect the Omnipotent,
To create her Creator here was her heart's conceit,
To invade the cosmic scene with utter God.
Toiling to transform the still far Absolute
Into an all-fulfilling epiphany,
Into an utterance of the Ineffable,
She would bring the glory here of the Absolute's force,

Change poise into creation's rhythmic swing,
Marry with a sky of calm a sea of bliss.
A fire to call eternity into Time,
Make body's joy as vivid as the soul's,
Earth she would lift to neighbourhood with heaven,
Labours life to equate with the Supreme
And reconcile the Eternal and the Abyss.
Her pragmatism of the transcendent Truth
Fills silence with the voices of the gods,
But in the cry the single Voice is lost.
For Nature's vision climbs beyond her acts.
A life of gods in heaven she sees above,
A demigod emerging from an ape
Is all she can in our mortal element.
Here the half-god, the half-titan are her peak:
This greater life wavers twixt earth and sky.
A poignant paradox pursues her dreams:
Her hooded energy moves an ignorant world
To look for a joy her own strong clasp puts off:
In her embrace it cannot turn to its source.
Immense her power, endless her act's vast drive,
Astray is its significance and lost.
Although she carries in her secret breast
The law and journeying curve of all things born
Her knowledge partial seems, her purpose small;
On a soil of yearning tread her sumptuous hours.
A leaden Nescience weighs the wings of Thought,
Her power oppresses the being with its garbs,
Her actions prison its immortal gaze.
A sense of limit haunts her masteries
And nowhere is assured content or peace:
For all the depth and beauty of her work
A wisdom lacks that sets the spirit free.
An old and faded charm had now her face
And palled for him her quick and curious lore;
His wide soul asked a deeper joy than hers.

Out of her daedal lines he sought escape;
But neither gate of horn nor ivory
He found nor postern of spiritual sight,
There was no issue from that dreamlike space.
Our being must move eternally through Time;
Death helps us not, vain is the hope to cease;
A secret Will compels us to endure.
Our life's repose is in the Infinite;
It cannot end, its end is Life supreme.
Death is a passage, not the goal of our walk:
Some ancient deep impulsion labours on:
Our souls are dragged as with a hidden leash,
Carried from birth to birth, from world to world,
Our acts prolong after the body's fall
The old perpetual journey without pause.
No silent peak is found where Time can rest.
This was a magic stream that reached no sea.
However far he went, wherever turned,
The wheel of works ran with him and outstripped;
Always a farther task was left to do.
A beat of action and a cry of search
For ever grew in that unquiet world;
A busy murmur filled the heart of Time.
All was contrivance and unceasing stir.
A hundred ways to live were tried in vain:
A sameness that assumed a thousand forms
Strove to escape from its long monotone
And made new things that soon were like the old.
A curious decoration lured the eye
And novel values furbished ancient themes
To cheat the mind with the idea of change.
A different picture that was still the same
Appeared upon the cosmic vague background.
Only another labyrinthine house
Of creatures and their doings and events,
A city of the traffic of bound souls,

A market of creation and her wares,
Was offered to the labouring mind and heart.
A circuit ending where it first began
Is dubbed the forward and eternal march
Of progress on perfection's unknown road.
Each final scheme leads to a sequel plan.
Yet every new departure seems the last,
Inspired evangel, theory's ultimate peak,
Proclaiming a panacea for all Time's ills
Or carrying thought in its ultimate zenith flight
And trumpeting supreme discovery;
Each brief idea, a structure perishable,
Publishes the immortality of its rule,
Its claim to be the perfect form of things,
Truth's last epitome, Time's golden best.
But nothing has been achieved of infinite worth:
A world made ever anew, never complete,
Piled always half-attempts on lost attempts
And saw a fragment as the eternal Whole.
In the aimless mounting total of things done
Existence seemed a vain necessity's act,
A wrestle of eternal opposites
In a clasped antagonism's close-locked embrace,
A play without denouement or idea,
A hunger march of lives without a goal,
Or, written on a bare blackboard of Space,
A futile and recurring sum of souls,
A hope that failed, a light that never shone,
The labour of an unaccomplished Force
Tied to its acts in a dim eternity.
There is no end or none can yet be seen:
Although defeated, life must struggle on;
Always she sees a crown she cannot grasp;
Her eyes are fixed beyond her fallen state.
There quivers still within her breast and ours
A glory that was once and is no more,

Or there calls to us from some unfulfilled beyond
A greatness yet unreached by the halting world.
In a memory behind our mortal sense
A dream persists of larger happier air
Breathing around free hearts of joy and love,
Forgotten by us, immortal in lost Time.
A ghost of bliss pursues her haunted depths;
For she remembers still, though now so far,
Her realm of golden ease and glad desire
And the beauty and strength and happiness that were hers
In the sweetness of her glowing paradise,
In her kingdom of immortal ecstasy
Half-way between God's silence and the Abyss.
This knowledge in our hidden parts we keep;
Awake to a vague mystery's appeal,
We meet a deep unseen Reality
Far truer than the world's face of present truth:
We are chased by a self we cannot now recall
And moved by a Spirit we must still become.
As one who has lost the kingdom of his soul,
We look back to some god-phase of our birth
Other than this imperfect creature here
And hope in this or a diviner world
To recover yet from Heaven's patient guard
What by our mind's forgetfulness we miss,
Our being's natural felicity,
Our heart's delight we have exchanged for grief,
The body's thrill we bartered for mere pain,
The bliss for which our mortal nature yearns
As yearns an obscure moth to blazing Light.
Our life is a march to a victory never won.
This wave of being longing for delight,
This eager turmoil of unsatisfied strengths,
These long far files of forward-striving hopes
Lift worshipping eyes to the blue Void called heaven
Looking for the golden Hand that never came,

The advent for which all creation waits,
The beautiful visage of Eternity
That shall appear upon the roads of Time.
Yet still to ourselves we say rekindling faith,
"Oh, surely one day he shall come to our cry,
One day he shall create our life anew
And utter the magic formula of peace
And bring perfection to the scheme of things.
One day he shall descend to life and earth,
Leaving the secrecy of the eternal doors,
Into a world that cries to him for help,
And bring the truth that sets the spirit free,
The joy that is the baptism of the soul,
The strength that is the outstretched arm of Love.
One day he shall lift his beauty's dreadful veil,
Impose delight on the world's beating heart
And bare his secret body of light and bliss."
But now we strain to reach an unknown goal:
There is no end of seeking and of birth,
There is no end of dying and return;
The life that wins its aim asks greater aims,
The life that fails and dies must live again;
Till it has found itself it cannot cease.
All must be done for which life and death were made.
But who shall say that even then is rest?
Or there repose and action are the same
In the deep breast of God's supreme delight.
In a high state where ignorance is no more,
Each movement is a wave of peace and bliss,
Repose God's motionless creative force,
Action a ripple in the Infinite
And birth a gesture of Eternity.
A sun of transfiguration still can shine
And Night can bare its core of mystic light;
The self-cancelling, self-afflicting paradox
Into a self-luminous mystery might change,

The imbroglio into a joyful miracle.
Then God could be visible here, here take a shape;
Disclosed would be the spirit's identity;
Life would reveal her true immortal face.
But now a termless labour is her fate:
In its recurrent decimal of events
Birth, death are a ceaseless iteration's points;
The old question-mark margins each finished page,
Each volume of her effort's history.
A limping Yes through the aeons journeys still
Accompanied by an eternal No.
All seems in vain, yet endless is the game.
Impassive turns the ever-circling Wheel,
Life has no issue, death brings no release.
A prisoner of itself the being lives
And keeps its futile immortality;
Extinction is denied, its sole escape.
An error of the gods has made the world.
Or indifferent the Eternal watches Time.

END OF CANTO SIX

Canto Seven

The Descent into Night

A MIND absolved from life, made calm to know,
A heart divorced from the blindness and the pang,
The seal of tears, the bond of ignorance,
He turned to find that wide world-failure's cause.
Away he looked from Nature's visible face
And sent his gaze into the viewless Vast,
The formidable unknown Infinity,
Asleep behind the endless coil of things,
That carries the universe in its timeless breadths
And the ripples of its being are our lives.
The worlds are built by its unconscious Breath
And Matter and Mind are its figures or its powers,
Our waking thoughts the output of its dreams.
The veil was rent that covers Nature's depths:
He saw the fount of the world's lasting pain
And the mouth of the black pit of Ignorance;
The evil guarded at the roots of life
Raised up its head and looked into his eyes.
On a dim bank where dies subjective Space,
From a stark ridge overlooking all that is,
A tenebrous awakened Nescience,
Her wide blank eyes wondering at Time and Form,
Stared at the inventions of the living Void
And the Abyss whence our beginnings rose.
Behind appeared a grey carved mask of Night
Watching the birth of all created things.
A hidden Puissance conscious of its force,
A vague and lurking Presence everywhere,
A contrary Doom that threatens all things made,
A Death figuring as the dark seed of life,
Seemed to engender and to slay the world.

Then from the sombre mystery of the gulfs
And from the hollow bosom of the Mask
Something crept forth that seemed a shapeless Thought.
A fatal Influence upon creatures stole
Whose lethal touch pursued the immortal spirit,
On life was laid the haunting finger of death
And overcast with error, grief and pain
The soul's native will for truth and joy and light.
A deformation coiled that claimed to be
The being's very turn, Nature's true drive.
A hostile and perverting Mind at work
In every corner ensconced of conscious life
Corrupted Truth with her own formulas;
Interceptor of the listening of the soul,
Afflicting knowledge with the hue of doubt
It captured the oracles of the occult gods,
Effaced the signposts of Life's pilgrimage,
Cancelled the firm rock-edicts graved by Time,
And on the foundations of the cosmic Law
Erected its bronze pylons of misrule.
Even Light and Love by that cloaked danger's spell
Turned from the brilliant nature of the gods
To fallen angels and misleading suns,
Became themselves a danger and a charm,
A perverse sweetness, heaven-born malefice:
Its power could deform divinest things.
A wind of sorrow breathed upon the world;
All thought with falsehood was besieged, all act
Stamped with defect or with frustration's sign,
All high attempt with failure or vain success,
But none could know the reason of his fall.
The grey Mask whispered and, though no sound was heard,
Yet in the ignorant heart a seed was sown
That bore black fruit of suffering, death and bale.
Out of the chill steppes of a bleak Unseen
Invisible, wearing the Night's grey mask,

Arrived the shadowy dreadful messengers,
Invaders from a dangerous world of power,
Ambassadors of evil's absolute.
In silence the inaudible voices spoke,
Hands that none saw planted the fatal grain,
No form was seen, yet a dire work was done,
An iron decree in crooked uncials written
Imposed a law of sin and adverse fate.
Life looked at him with changed and sombre eyes:
Her beauty he saw and the yearning heart in things
That with a little happiness is content,
Answering to a small ray of truth or love;
He saw her gold sunlight and her far blue sky,
Her green of leaves and hue and scent of flowers
And the charm of children and the love of friends
And the beauty of women and kindly hearts of men,
But saw too the dreadful Powers that drive her moods
And the anguish she has strewn upon her ways,
Fate waiting on the unseen steps of men
And her evil and sorrow and last gift of death.
A breath of disillusion and decadence
Corrupting watched for Life's maturity
And made to rot the full grain of the soul:
Progress became a purveyor of Death.
A world that clung to the law of a slain Light
Cherished the putrid corpses of dead truths,
Hailed twisted forms as things free, new and true,
Beauty from ugliness and evil drank
Feeling themselves guests at a banquet of the gods
And tasted corruption like a high-spiced food.
A darkness settled on the heavy air;
It hunted the bright smile from Nature's lips
And slew the native confidence in her heart
And put fear's crooked look into her eyes.
The lust that warps the spirit's natural good
Replaced by a manufactured virtue and vice

The frank spontaneous impulse of the soul:
Afflicting Nature with the dual's lie,
Their twin values whetted a forbidden zest,
Made evil a relief from spurious good,
The ego battened on righteousness and sin
And each became an instrument of Hell.
In rejected heaps by a monotonous road
The old simple delights were left to lie
On the wasteland of life's descent to Night.
All glory of life was dimmed, tarnished with doubt;
All beauty ended in an aging face;
All power was dubbed a tyranny cursed by God
And Truth a fiction needed by the mind:
The chase of joy was now a tired hunt;
All knowledge was left a questioning Ignorance.

As from a womb obscure he saw emerge
The body and visage of a dark Unseen
Hidden behind the fair outsides of life.
Its dangerous commerce is our suffering's cause.
Its breath is a subtle poison in men's hearts;
All evil starts from that ambiguous face.
A peril haunted now the common air;
The world grew full of menacing Energies,
And wherever turned for help or hope his eyes,
In field and house, in street and camp and mart
He met the prowl and stealthy come and go
Of armed disquieting bodied Influences.
A march of goddess figures dark and nude
Alarmed the air with grandiose unease;
Appalling footsteps drew invisibly near,
Shapes that were threats invaded the dream-light,
And ominous beings passed him on the road
Whose very gaze was a calamity:
A charm and sweetness sudden and formidable,
Faces that raised alluring lips and eyes

Approached him armed with beauty like a snare,
But hid a fatal meaning in each line
And could in a moment dangerously change.
But he alone discerned that screened attack.
A veil upon the inner vision lay,
A force was there that hid its dreadful steps;
All was belied, yet thought itself the truth;
All were beset but knew not of the siege:
For none could see the authors of their fall.
   Aware of some dark wisdom still withheld
That was the seal and warrant of this strength,
He followed the track of dim tremendous steps
Returning to the night from which they came.
A tract he reached unbuilt and owned by none:
There all could enter but none stay for long.
It was a no man's land of evil air,
A crowded neighbourhood without one home,
A borderland between the world and hell.
There unreality was Nature's lord:
It was a space where nothing could be true,
For nothing was what it had claimed to be:
A high appearance wrapped a specious void.
Yet nothing would confess its own pretence
Even to itself in the ambiguous heart:
A vast deception was the law of things;
Only by that deception they could live.
An unsubstantial Nihil guaranteed
The falsehood of the forms this Nature took
And made them seem awhile to be and live.
A borrowed magic drew them from the Void;
They took a shape and stuff that was not theirs
And showed a colour that they could not keep,
Mirrors to a phantasm of reality.
Each rainbow brilliance was a splendid lie;
A beauty unreal graced a glamour face.
Nothing could be relied on to remain:

Joy nurtured tears and good an evil proved,
But never out of evil one plucked good:
Love ended early in hate, delight killed with pain,
Truth into falsity grew and death ruled life.
A Power that laughed at the mischiefs of the world,
An irony that joined the world's contraries
And flung them into each other's arms to strive,
Put a sardonic rictus on God's face.
Aloof, its influence entered everywhere
And left a cloven hoof-mark on the breast;
A twisted heart and a strange sombre smile
Mocked at the sinister comedy of life.
Announcing the advent of a perilous Form
An ominous tread softened its dire footfall
That none might understand or be on guard;
None heard until a dreadful grasp was close.
Or else all augured a divine approach,
An air of prophecy felt, a heavenly hope,
Listened for a gospel, watched for a new star.
The Fiend was visible but cloaked in light;
He seemed a helping angel from the skies:
He armed untruth with Scripture and the Law;
He deceived with wisdom, with virtue slew the soul
And led to perdition by the heavenward path.
A lavish sense he gave of power and joy,
And, when arose the warning from within,
He reassured the ear with dulcet tones
Or took the mind captive in its own net;
His rigorous logic made the false seem true.
Amazing the elect with holy lore
He spoke as with the very voice of God.
The air was full of treachery and ruse;
Truth-speaking was a stratagem in that place;
Ambush lurked in a smile and peril made
Safety its cover, trust its entry's gate:
Falsehood came laughing with the eyes of truth;

Each friend might turn an enemy or spy,
The hand one clasped ensleeved a dagger's stab
And an embrace could be Doom's iron cage.
Agony and danger stalked their trembling prey
And softly spoke as to a timid friend:
Attack sprang suddenly vehement and unseen;
Fear leaped upon the heart at every turn
And cried out with an anguished dreadful voice;
It called for one to save but none came near.
All warily walked, for death was ever close;
Yet caution seemed a vain expense of care,
For all that guarded proved a deadly net,
And when after long suspense salvation came
And brought a glad relief disarming strength,
It served as a smiling passage to worse fate.
There was no truce and no safe place to rest;
One dared not slumber or put off one's arms:
It was a world of battle and surprise.
All who were there lived for themselves alone;
All warred against all, but with a common hate
Turned on the mind that sought some higher good;
Truth was exiled lest she should dare to speak
And hurt the heart of darkness with her light
Or bring her pride of knowledge to blaspheme
The settled anarchy of established things.

Then the scene changed, but kept its dreadful core:
Altering its form the life remained the same.
A capital was there without a State:
It had no ruler, only groups that strove.
He saw a city of ancient Ignorance
Founded upon a soil that knew not Light.
There each in his own darkness walked alone:
Only they agreed to differ in Evil's paths,
To live in their own way for their own selves
Or to enforce a common lie and wrong;

There Ego was lord upon his peacock seat
And Falsehood sat by him, his mate and queen:
The world turned to them as Heaven to Truth and God.
Injustice justified by firm decrees
The sovereign weights of Error's legalised trade,
But all the weights were false and none the same;
Ever she watched with her balance and a sword,
Lest any sacrilegious word expose
The sanctified formulas of her old misrule.
In high professions wrapped self-will walked wide
And licence stalked prating of order and right:
There was no altar raised to Liberty;
True freedom was abhorred and hunted down:
Harmony and tolerance nowhere could be seen;
Each group proclaimed its dire and naked Law.
A frame of ethics knobbed with scriptural rules
Or a theory passionately believed and praised
A table seemed of high Heaven's sacred code.
A formal practice mailed and iron-shod
Gave to a rude and ruthless warrior kind
Drawn from the savage bowels of the earth
A proud stern poise of harsh nobility,
A civic posture rigid and formidable.
But all their private acts belied the pose:
Power and utility were their Truth and Right,
An eagle rapacity clawed its coveted good,
Beaks pecked and talons tore all weaker prey.
In their sweet secrecy of pleasant sins
Nature they obeyed and not a moralist God.
Inconscient traders in bundles of contraries,
They did what in others they would persecute;
When their eyes looked upon their fellow's vice,
An indignation flamed, a virtuous wrath;
Oblivious of their own deep-hid offence,
Moblike they stoned a neighbour caught in sin.
A pragmatist judge within passed false decrees,

Posed worst iniquities on equity's base,
Reasoned ill actions just, sanctioned the scale
Of the merchant ego's interest and desire.
Thus was a balance kept, the world could live.
A zealot fervour pushed their ruthless cults,
All faith not theirs bled scourged as heresy;
They questioned, captived, tortured, burned or smote
And forced the soul to abandon right or die.
Amid her clashing creeds and warring sects
Religion sat upon a blood-stained throne.
A hundred tyrannies oppressed and slew
And founded unity upon fraud and force.
Only what seemed was prized as real there:
The ideal was a cynic ridicule's butt;
Hooted by the crowd, mocked by enlightened wits,
Spiritual seeking wandered outcasted, —
A dreamer's self-deceiving web of thought
Or mad chimaera deemed or hypocrite's fake,
Its passionate instinct trailed through minds obscure
Lost in the circuits of the Ignorance.
A lie was there the truth and truth a lie.
Here must the traveller of the upward Way —
For daring Hell's kingdoms winds the heavenly route —
Pause or pass slowly through that perilous space,
A prayer upon his lips and the great Name.
If probed not all discernment's keen spear-point,
He might stumble into falsity's endless net.
Over his shoulder often he must look back
Like one who feels on his neck an enemy's breath;
Else stealing up behind a treasonous blow
Might prostrate cast and pin to unholy soil,
Pierced through his back by Evil's poignant stake.
So might one fall on the Eternal's road
Forfeiting the spirit's lonely chance in Time
And no news of him reach the waiting gods,
Marked "missing" in the register of souls,

His name the index of a failing hope,
The position of a dead remembered star.
Only were safe who kept God in their hearts:
Courage their armour, faith their sword, they must walk,
The hand ready to smite, the eye to scout,
Casting a javelin regard in front,
Heroes and soldiers of the army of Light.
Hardly even so, the grisly danger past,
Released into a calmer purer air,
They dared at length to breathe and smile once more.
Once more they moved beneath a real sun.
Though Hell claimed rule, the spirit still had power.
This No-man's-land he passed without debate;
Him the heights missioned, him the Abyss desired:
None stood across his way, no voice forbade.
For swift and easy is the downward path,
And now towards the Night was turned his face.

A greater darkness waited, a worse reign,
If worse can be where all is evil's extreme;
Yet to the cloaked the uncloaked is naked worst.
There God and Truth and the supernal Light
Had never been or else had power no more.
As when one slips in a deep moment's trance
Over mind's border into another world,
He crossed a boundary whose stealthy trace
Eye could not see but only the soul feel.
Into an armoured fierce domain he came
And saw himself wandering like a lost soul
Amid grimed walls and savage slums of Night.
Around him crowded grey and squalid huts
Neighbouring proud palaces of perverted Power,
Inhuman quarters and demoniac wards.
A pride in evil hugged its wretchedness;
A misery haunting splendour pressed those fell
Dun suburbs of the cities of dream-life.

There Life displayed to the spectator soul
The shadow depths of her strange miracle.
A strong and fallen goddess without hope,
Obscured, deformed by some dire Gorgon spell,
As might a harlot empress in a bouge,
Nude, unashamed, exulting she upraised
Her evil face of perilous beauty and charm
And, drawing panic to a shuddering kiss
Twixt the magnificence of her fatal breasts,
Allured to their abyss the spirit's fall.
Across his field of sight she multiplied
As on a scenic film or moving plate
The implacable splendour of her nightmare pomps.
On the dark background of a soulless world
She staged between a lurid light and shade
Her dramas of the sorrow of the depths
Written on the agonised nerves of living things:
Epics of horror and grim majesty,
Wry statues spat and stiffened in life's mud,
A glut of hideous forms and hideous deeds
Paralysed pity in the hardened breast.
In booths of sin and night-repairs of vice
Styled infamies of the body's concupiscence
And sordid imaginations etched in flesh,
Turned lust into a decorative art:
Abusing Nature's gift her pervert skill
Immortalised the sown grain of living death,
In a mud goblet poured the bacchic wine,
To a satyr gave the thyrsus of a god.
Impure, sadistic, with grimacing mouths,
Grey foul inventions gruesome and macabre
Came televisioned from the gulfs of Night.
Her craft ingenious in monstrosity,
Impatient of all natural shape and poise,
A gape of nude exaggerated lines,
Gave caricature a stark reality,

And art-parades of weird distorted forms,
And gargoyle masques obscene and terrible
Trampled to tormented postures the torn sense.
An inexorable evil's worshipper,
She made vileness great and sublimated filth;
A dragon power of reptile energies
And strange epiphanies of grovelling Force
And serpent grandeurs couching in the mire
Drew adoration to a gleam of slime.
All Nature pulled out of her frame and base
Was twisted into an unnatural pose:
Repulsion stimulated inert desire;
Agony was made a red-spiced food for bliss,
Hatred was trusted with the work of lust
And torture took the form of an embrace;
A ritual anguish consecrated death;
Worship was offered to the Undivine.
A new aesthesis of Inferno's art
That trained the mind to love what the soul hates,
Imposed allegiance on the quivering nerves
And forced the unwilling body to vibrate.
Too sweet and too harmonious to excite
In this regime that soiled the being's core,
Beauty was banned, the heart's feeling dulled to sleep
And cherished in their place sensation's thrills;
The world was probed for jets of sense-appeal.
Here cold material intellect was the judge
And needed sensual prick and jog and lash
That its hard dryness and dead nerves might feel
Some passion and power and acrid point of life.
A new philosophy theorised evil's rights,
Gloried in the shimmering rot of decadence,
Or gave to a python Force persuasive speech
And armed with knowledge the primaeval brute.
Over life and Matter only brooding bowed,
Mind changed to the image of a rampant beast;

It scrambled into the pit to dig for truth
And lighted its search with the subconscient's flares.
Thence bubbling rose sullying the upper air,
The filth and festering secrets of the Abyss:
This it called positive fact and real life.
This now composed the fetid atmosphere.
A wild-beast passion crept from secret Night
To watch its prey with fascinating eyes:
Around him like a fire with sputtering tongues
There lolled and laughed a bestial ecstasy;
The air was packed with longings brute and fierce;
Crowding and stinging in a monstrous swarm
Pressed with a noxious hum into his mind
Thoughts that could poison Nature's heavenliest breath,
Forcing reluctant lids assailed the sight
Acts that revealed the mystery of Hell.
All that was there was on this pattern made.

A race possessed inhabited those parts.
A force demoniac lurking in man's depths
That heaves suppressed by the heart's human law,
Awed by the calm and sovereign eyes of Thought,
Can in a fire and earthquake of the soul
Arise and, calling to its native night,
Overthrow the reason, occupy the life
And stamp its hoof on Nature's shaking ground:
This was for them their being's flaming core.
A mighty energy, a monster god,
Hard to the strong, implacable to the weak,
It stared at the harsh unpitying world it made
With the stony eyelids of its fixed idea.
Its heart was drunk with a dire hunger's wine,
In others' suffering felt a thrilled delight
And of death and ruin the grandiose music heard.
To have power, to be master, was sole virtue and good:
It claimed the whole world for Evil's living room,

Its party's grim totalitarian reign
The cruel destiny of breathing things.
All on one plan was shaped and standardised
Under a dark dictatorship's breathless weight.
In street and house, in councils and in courts
Beings he met who looked like living men
And climbed in speech upon high wings of thought
But harboured all that is subhuman, vile
And lower than the lowest reptile's crawl.
The reason meant for nearness to the gods
And uplift to heavenly scale by the touch of mind
Only enhanced by its enlightening ray
Their inborn nature's wry monstrosity.
Often, a familiar visage studying
Joyfully encountered at some dangerous turn,
Hoping to recognise a look of light,
His vision warned by the spirit's inward eye
Discovered suddenly Hell's trademark there,
Or saw with the inner sense that cannot err,
In the semblance of a fair or virile form
The demon and the goblin and the ghoul.
An insolence reigned of cold stone-hearted strength
Mighty, obeyed, approved by the Titan's law,
The huge laughter of a giant cruelty
And fierce glad deeds of ogre violence.
In that wide cynic den of thinking beasts
One looked in vain for a trace of pity or love;
There was no touch of sweetness anywhere,
But only Force and its acolytes, greed and hate:
There was no help for suffering, none to save,
None dared resist or speak a noble word.
Armed with the aegis of tyrannic Power,
Signing the edicts of her dreadful rule
And using blood and torture as a seal,
Darkness proclaimed her slogans to the world.
A servile blinkered silence hushed the mind

Or only it repeated lessons taught,
While mitred, holding the good shepherd's staff,
Falsehood enthroned on awed and prostrate hearts
The cults and creeds that organise living death
And slay the soul on the altar of a lie.
All were deceived or served their own deceit;
Truth in that stifling atmosphere could not live.
There wretchedness believed in its own joy
And fear and weakness hugged their abject depths;
All that is low and sordid-thoughted, base,
All that is drab and poor and miserable,
Breathed in a lax content its natural air
And felt no yearning of divine release:
Arrogant, gibing at more luminous states
The people of the gulfs despised the sun.
A barriered autarchy excluded light;
Fixed in its will to be its own grey self,
It vaunted its norm unique and splendid type:
It soothed its hunger with a plunderer's dream;
Flaunting its cross of servitude like a crown,
It clung to its dismal harsh autonomy.
A bull-throat bellowed with its brazen tongue;
Its hard and shameless clamour filling Space
And threatening all who dared to listen to truth
Claimed the monopoly of the battered ear;
A deafened acquiescence gave its vote,
And braggart dogmas shouted in the night
Kept for the fallen soul once deemed a god
The pride of its abysmal absolute.

A lone discoverer in these menacing realms
Guarded like termite cities from the sun,
Oppressed mid crowd and tramp and noise and flare,
Passing from dusk to deeper dangerous dusk,
He wrestled with powers that snatched from mind its light
And smote from him their clinging influences.

Soon he emerged in a dim wall-less space.
For now the peopled tracts were left behind;
He walked between wide banks of failing eve.
Around him grew a gaunt spiritual blank,
A threatening waste, a sinister loneliness
That left mind bare to an unseen assault,
An empty page on which all that willed could write
Stark monstrous messages without control.
A travelling dot on downward roads of Dusk
Mid barren fields and barns and straggling huts
And a few crooked and phantasmal trees,
He faced a sense of death and conscious void.
But still a hostile Life unseen was there
Whose deathlike poise resisting light and truth
Made living a bleak gap in nullity.
He heard the grisly voices that deny;
Assailed by thoughts that swarmed like spectral hordes,
A prey to the staring phantoms of the gloom
And terror approaching with its lethal mouth,
Driven by a strange will down ever down,
The sky above a communiqué of Doom,
He strove to shield his spirit from despair,
But felt the horror of the growing Night
And the Abyss rising to claim his soul.
Then ceased the abodes of creatures and their forms
And solitude wrapped him in its voiceless folds.
All vanished suddenly like a thought expunged;
His spirit became an empty listening gulf
Void of the dead illusion of a world:
Nothing was left, not even an evil face.
He was alone with the grey python Night.
A dense and nameless Nothing conscious, mute,
Which seemed alive but without body or mind,
Lusted all beings to annihilate
That it might be for ever nude and sole.
As in a shapeless beast's intangible jaws,

Gripped, strangled by that lusting viscous blot,
Attracted to some black and giant mouth
And swallowing throat and a huge belly of doom,
His being from its own vision disappeared
Drawn towards depths that hungered for its fall.
A formless void oppressed his struggling brain,
A darkness grim and cold benumbed his flesh,
A whispered grey suggestion chilled his heart;
Haled by a serpent-force from its warm home
And dragged to extinction in bleak vacancy
Life clung to its seat with cords of gasping breath;
Lapped was his body by a tenebrous tongue.
Existence smothered travailed to survive;
Hope strangled perished in his empty soul,
Belief and memory abolished died
And all that helps the spirit in its course.
There crawled through every tense and aching nerve
Leaving behind its poignant quaking trail
A nameless and unutterable fear.
As a sea nears a victim bound and still,
The approach alarmed his mind for ever dumb
Of an implacable eternity
Of pain inhuman and intolerable.
This he must bear, his hope of heaven estranged;
He must ever exist without extinction's peace
In a slow suffering Time and tortured Space,
An anguished nothingness his endless state.
A lifeless vacancy was now his breast,
And in the place where once was luminous thought,
Only remained like a pale motionless ghost
An incapacity for faith and hope
And the dread conviction of a vanquished soul
Immortal still but with its godhead lost,
Self lost and God and touch of happier worlds.
But he endured, stilled the vain terror, bore
The smothering coils of agony and affright;

Then peace returned and the soul's sovereign gaze.
To the blank horror a calm Light replied:
Immutable, undying and unborn,
Mighty and mute the Godhead in him woke
And faced the pain and danger of the world.
He mastered the tides of Nature with a look:
He met with his bare spirit naked Hell.

END OF CANTO SEVEN

Canto Eight

The World of Falsehood, the Mother of Evil and the Sons of Darkness

THEN could he see the hidden heart of Night:
The labour of its stark unconsciousness
Revealed the endless terrible Inane.
A spiritless blank Infinity was there;
A Nature that denied the eternal Truth
In the vain braggart freedom of its thought
Hoped to abolish God and reign alone.
There was no sovereign Guest, no witness Light;
Unhelped it would create its own bleak world.
Its large blind eyes looked out on demon acts,
Its deaf ears heard the untruth its dumb lips spoke;
Its huge misguided fancy took vast shapes,
Its mindless sentience quivered with fierce conceits;
Engendering a brute principle of life
Evil and pain begot a monstrous soul.
The Anarchs of the formless depths arose,
Great Titan beings and demoniac powers,
World-egos racked with lust and thought and will,
Vast minds and lives without a spirit within:
Impatient architects of error's house,
Leaders of the cosmic ignorance and unrest
And sponsors of sorrow and mortality
Embodied the dark Ideas of the Abyss.
A shadow substance into emptiness came,
Dim forms were born in the unthinking Void
And eddies met and made an adverse Space
In whose black folds Being imagined Hell.
His eyes piercing the triple-plated gloom
Identified their sight with its blind stare:
Accustomed to the unnatural dark, they saw

Unreality made real and conscious Night.
A violent, fierce and formidable world,
An ancient womb of huge calamitous dreams,
Coiled like a larva in the obscurity
That keeps it from the spear-points of Heaven's stars.
It was the gate of a false Infinite,
An eternity of disastrous absolutes,
An immense negation of spiritual things.
All once self-luminous in the spirit's sphere
Turned now into their own dark contraries:
Being collapsed into a pointless void
That yet was a zero parent of the worlds;
Inconscience swallowing up the cosmic Mind
Produced a universe from its lethal sleep;
Bliss into black coma fallen, insensible,
Coiled back to itself and God's eternal joy
Through a false poignant figure of grief and pain
Still dolorously nailed upon a cross
Fixed in the soil of a dumb insentient world
Where birth was a pang and death an agony,
Lest all too soon should change again to bliss.
Thought sat, a priestess of Perversity,
On her black tripod of the triune Snake
Reading by opposite signs the eternal script,
A sorceress reversing life's God-frame.
In darkling aisles with evil eyes for lamps
And fatal voices chanting from the apse,
In strange infernal dim basilicas
Intoning the magic of the unholy Word,
The ominous profound Initiate
Performed the ritual of her Mysteries.
There suffering was Nature's daily food
Alluring to the anguished heart and flesh,
And torture was the formula of delight,
Pain mimicked the celestial ecstasy.
There Good, a faithless gardener of God,

Watered with virtue the world's upas-tree
And, careful of the outward word and act,
Engrafted his hypocrite blooms on native ill.
All high things served their nether opposite:
The forms of Gods sustained a demon cult;
Heaven's face became a mask and snare of Hell.
There in the heart of vain phenomenon,
In an enormous action's writhen core
He saw a Shape illimitable and vague
Sitting on Death who swallows all things born.
A chill fixed face with dire and motionless eyes,
Her dreadful trident in her shadowy hand
Outstretched, she pierced all creatures with one fate.

When nothing was save Matter without soul
And a spiritless hollow was the heart of Time,
Then Life first touched the insensible Abyss;
Awaking the stark Void to hope and grief
Her pallid beam smote the unfathomed Night
In which God hid himself from his own view.
In all things she sought their slumbering mystic truth,
The unspoken Word that inspires unconscious forms;
She groped in his deeps for an invisible Law,
Fumbled in the dim subconscient for his mind
And strove to find a way for spirit to be.
But from the Night another answer came.
A seed was in that nether matrix cast,
A dumb unprobed husk of perverted truth,
A cell of an insentient infinite.
A monstrous birth prepared its cosmic form
In Nature's titan embryo, Ignorance.
Then in a fatal and stupendous hour
Something that sprang from the stark Inconscient's sleep
Unwillingly begotten by the mute Void,
Lifted its ominous head against the stars;
Overshadowing earth with its huge body of Doom

It chilled the heavens with the menace of a face.
A nameless Power, a shadowy Will arose
Immense and alien to our universe.
In the inconceivable Purpose none can gauge
A vast Non-Being robed itself with shape,
The boundless Nescience of the unconscious depths
Covered eternity with nothingness.
A seeking Mind replaced the seeing Soul:
Life grew into a huge and hungry death,
The Spirit's bliss was changed to cosmic pain.
Assuring God's self-cowled neutrality
A mighty opposition conquered Space.
A sovereign ruling falsehood, death and grief,
It pressed its fierce hegemony on the earth;
Disharmonising the original style
Of the architecture of her fate's design,
It falsified the primal cosmic Will
And bound to struggle and dread vicissitudes
The long slow process of the patient Power.
Implanting error in the stuff of things
It made an Ignorance of the all-wise Law;
It baffled the sure touch of life's hid sense,
Kept dumb the intuitive guide in Matter's sleep,
Deformed the insect's instinct and the brute's,
Disfigured man's thought-born humanity.
A shadow fell across the simple Ray:
Obscured was the Truth-light in the cavern heart
That burns unwitnessed in the altar crypt
Behind the still velamen's secrecy
Companioning the Godhead of the shrine.
Thus was the dire antagonist Energy born
Who mimes the eternal Mother's mighty shape
And mocks her luminous infinity
With a grey distorted silhouette in the Night.
Arresting the passion of the climbing soul,
She forced on life a slow and faltering pace;

Her hand's deflecting and retarding weight
Is laid on the mystic evolution's curve:
The tortuous line of her deceiving mind
The Gods see not and man is impotent;
Oppressing the God-spark within the soul
She forces back to the beast the human fall.
Yet in her formidable instinctive mind
She feels the One grow in the heart of Time
And sees the Immortal shine through the human mould.
Alarmed for her rule and full of fear and rage
She prowls around each light that gleams through the dark
Casting its ray from the spirit's lonely tent,
Hoping to enter with fierce stealthy tread
And in the cradle slay the divine Child.
Incalculable are her strength and ruse;
Her touch is a fascination and a death;
She kills her victim with his own delight;
Even Good she makes a hook to drag to Hell.
For her the world runs to its agony.
Often the pilgrim on the Eternal's road
Ill-lit from clouds by the pale moon of Mind,
Or in devious byways wandering alone,
Or lost in deserts where no path is seen,
Falls overpowered by her lion leap,
A conquered captive under her dreadful paws.
Intoxicated by a burning breath
And amorous grown of a destroying mouth,
Once a companion of the sacred Fire,
The mortal perishes to God and Light,
An Adversary governs heart and brain,
A Nature hostile to the Mother-Force.
The self of life yields up its instruments
To Titan and demoniac agencies
That aggrandise earth-nature and disframe:
A cowled fifth-columnist is now thought's guide;
His subtle defeatist murmur slays the faith

And, lodged in the breast or whispering from outside,
A lying inspiration fell and dark
A new order substitutes for the divine.
A silence falls upon the spirit's heights,
From the veiled sanctuary the God retires,
Empty and cold is the chamber of the Bride;
The golden Nimbus now is seen no more,
No longer burns the white spiritual ray
And hushed for ever is the secret Voice.
Then by the Angel of the Vigil Tower
A name is struck from the recording book;
A flame that sang in Heaven sinks quenched and mute;
In ruin ends the epic of a soul.
This is the tragedy of the inner death
When forfeited is the divine element
And only a mind and body live to die.

For terrible agencies the Spirit allows
And there are subtle and enormous Powers
That shield themselves with the covering Ignorance.
Offspring of the gulfs, agents of the shadowy Force,
Haters of light, intolerant of peace,
Aping to the thought the shining Friend and Guide,
Opposing in the heart the eternal Will,
They veil the occult uplifting Harmonist.
His wisdom's oracles are made our bonds;
The doors of God they have locked with keys of creed
And shut out by the Law his tireless Grace.
Along all Nature's lines they have set their posts
And intercept the caravans of Light;
Wherever the Gods act, they intervene.
A yoke is laid upon the world's dim heart;
Masked are its beats from the supernal Bliss,
And the closed peripheries of brilliant Mind
Block the fine entries of celestial Fire.
Always the dark Adventurers seem to win;

Nature they fill with evil's institutes,
Turn into defeats the victories of Truth,
Proclaim as falsehoods the eternal laws,
And load the dice of Doom with wizard lies;
The world's shrines they have occupied, usurped its thrones.
In scorn of the dwindling chances of the Gods
They claim creation as their conquered fief
And crown themselves the iron Lords of Time.
Adepts of the illusion and the mask,
The artificers of Nature's fall and pain
Have built their altars of triumphant Night
In the clay temple of terrestrial life.
In the vacant precincts of the sacred Fire,
In front of the reredos in the mystic rite
Facing the dim velamen none can pierce,
Intones his solemn hymn the mitred priest
Invoking their dreadful presence in his breast:
Attributing to them the awful Name
He chants the syllables of the magic text
And summons the unseen communion's act,
While twixt the incense and the muttered prayer
All the fierce bale with which the world is racked
Is mixed in the foaming chalice of man's heart
And poured to them like sacramental wine.
Assuming names divine they guide and rule.
Opponents of the Highest they have come
Out of their world of soulless thought and power
To serve by enmity the cosmic scheme.
Night is their refuge and strategic base.
Against the sword of Flame, the luminous Eye,
Bastioned they live in massive forts of gloom,
Calm and secure in sunless privacy:
No wandering ray of Heaven can enter there.
Armoured, protected by their lethal masks,
As in a studio of creative Death
The giant sons of Darkness sit and plan

The drama of the earth, their tragic stage.
All who would raise the fallen world must come
Under the dangerous arches of their power;
For even the radiant children of the gods
To darken their privilege is and dreadful right.
None can reach heaven who has not passed through hell.

This too the traveller of the worlds must dare.
A warrior in the dateless duel's strife,
He entered into dumb despairing Night
Challenging the darkness with his luminous soul.
Alarming with his steps the threshold gloom
He came into a fierce and dolorous realm
Peopled by souls who never had tasted bliss;
Ignorant like men born blind who know not light,
They could equate worst ill with highest good,
Virtue was to their eyes a face of sin
And evil and misery were their natural state.
A dire administration's penal code
Making of grief and pain the common law,
Decreeing universal joylessness
Had changed life into a stoic sacrament
And torture into a daily festival.
An act was passed to chastise happiness;
Laughter and pleasure were banned as deadly sins:
A questionless mind was ranked as wise content,
A dull heart's silent apathy as peace:
Sleep was not there, torpor was the sole rest,
Death came but neither respite gave nor end;
Always the soul lived on and suffered more.
Ever he deeper probed that kingdom of pain;
Around him grew the terror of a world
Of agony followed by worse agony,
And in the terror a great wicked joy
Glad of one's own and others' calamity.
There thought and life were a long punishment,

The breath a burden and all hope a scourge,
The body a field of torment, a massed unease;
Repose was a waiting between pang and pang.
This was the law of things none dreamed to change:
A hard sombre heart, a harsh unsmiling mind
Rejected happiness like a cloying sweet;
Tranquillity was a tedium and ennui:
Only by suffering life grew colourful;
It needed the spice of pain, the salt of tears.
If one could cease to be, all would be well;
Else only fierce sensations gave some zest:
A fury of jealousy burning the gnawed heart,
The sting of murderous spite and hate and lust,
The whisper that lures to the pit and treachery's stroke
Threw vivid spots on the dull aching hours.
To watch the drama of infelicity,
The writhing of creatures under the harrow of doom
And sorrow's tragic gaze into the night
And horror and the hammering heart of fear
Were the ingredients in Time's heavy cup
That pleased and helped to enjoy its bitter taste.
Of such fierce stuff was made up life's long hell:
These were the threads of the dark spider's-web
In which the soul was caught, quivering and rapt;
This was religion, this was Nature's rule.
In a fell chapel of iniquity
To worship a black pitiless image of Power
Kneeling one must cross hard-hearted stony courts,
A pavement like a floor of evil fate.
Each stone was a keen edge of ruthless force
And glued with the chilled blood from tortured breasts;
The dry gnarled trees stood up like dying men
Stiffened into a pose of agony,
And from each window peered an ominous priest
Chanting Te Deums for slaughter's crowning grace,
Uprooted cities, blasted human homes,
Burned writhen bodies, the bombshell's massacre.

"Our enemies are fallen, are fallen," they sang,
"All who once stayed our will are smitten and dead;
How great we are, how merciful art Thou."
Thus thought they to reach God's impassive throne
And Him command whom all their acts opposed,
Magnifying their deeds to touch his skies,
And make him an accomplice of their crimes.
There no relenting pity could have place,
But ruthless strength and iron moods had sway,
A dateless sovereignty of terror and gloom:
This took the figure of a darkened God
Revered by the racked wretchedness he had made,
Who held in thrall a miserable world,
And helpless hearts nailed to unceasing woe
Adored the feet that trampled them into mire.
It was a world of sorrow and of hate,
Sorrow with hatred for its lonely joy,
Hatred with others' sorrow as its feast;
A bitter rictus curled the suffering mouth;
A tragic cruelty saw its ominous chance.
Hate was the black archangel of that realm;
It glowed, a sombre jewel in the heart
Burning the soul with its malignant rays,
And wallowed in its fell abysm of might.
These passions even objects seemed to exude,—
For mind overflowed into the inanimate
That answered with the wickedness it received,—
Against their users used malignant powers,
Hurt without hands and strangely, suddenly slew,
Appointed as instruments of an unseen doom.
Or they made themselves a fateful prison wall
Where men condemned wake through the creeping hours
Counted by the tollings of an ominous bell.
An evil environment worsened evil souls:
All things were conscious there and all perverse.
In this infernal realm he dared to press
Even into its deepest pit and darkest core,

Perturbed its tenebrous base, dared to contest
Its ancient privileged right and absolute force:
In Night he plunged to know her dreadful heart,
In Hell he sought the root and cause of Hell.
Its anguished gulfs opened in his own breast;
He listened to clamours of its crowded pain,
The heart-beats of its fatal loneliness.
Above was a chill deaf eternity.
In vague tremendous passages of Doom
He heard the goblin Voice that guides to slay,
And faced the enchantments of the demon Sign,
And traversed the ambush of the opponent Snake.
In menacing tracts, in tortured solitudes
Companionless he roamed through desolate ways
Where the red Wolf waits by the fordless stream
And Death's black eagles scream to the precipice,
And met the hounds of bale who hunt men's hearts
Baying across the veldts of Destiny,
In footless battlefields of the Abyss
Fought shadowy combats in mute eyeless depths,
Assaults of Hell endured and Titan strokes
And bore the fierce inner wounds that are slow to heal.
A prisoner of a hooded magic Force,
Captured and trailed in Falsehood's lethal net
And often strangled in the noose of grief,
Or cast in the grim morass of swallowing doubt,
Or shut into pits of error and despair,
He drank her poison draughts till none was left.
In a world where neither hope nor joy could come
The ordeal he suffered of evil's absolute reign,
Yet kept intact his spirit's radiant truth.
Incapable of motion or of force,
In Matter's blank denial gaoled and blind,
Pinned to the black inertia of our base
He treasured between his hands his flickering soul.
His being ventured into mindless Void,
Intolerant gulfs that knew not thought nor sense;

Thought ceased, sense failed, his soul still saw and knew.
In atomic parcellings of the Infinite
Near to the dumb beginnings of lost Self,
He felt the curious small futility
Of the creation of material things.
Or, stifled in the Inconscient's hollow dusk,
He sounded the mystery dark and bottomless
Of the enormous and unmeaning deeps
Whence struggling life in a dead universe rose.
There in the stark identity lost by mind
He felt the sealed sense of the insensible world
And a mute wisdom in the unknowing Night.
Into the abysmal secrecy he came
Where darkness peers from her mattress, grey and nude,
And stood on the last locked subconscient's floor
Where Being slept unconscious of its thoughts
And built the world not knowing what it built.
There waiting its hour the future lay unknown,
There is the record of the vanished stars.
There in the slumber of the cosmic Will
He saw the secret key of Nature's change.
A light was with him, an invisible hand
Was laid upon the error and the pain
Till it became a quivering ecstasy,
The shock of sweetness of an arm's embrace.
He saw in Night the Eternal's shadowy veil,
Knew death for a cellar of the house of life,
In destruction felt creation's hasty pace,
Knew loss as the price of a celestial gain
And hell as a short cut to heaven's gates.
Then in Illusion's occult factory
And in the Inconscient's magic printing-house
Torn were the formats of the primal Night
And shattered the stereotypes of Ignorance.
Alive, breathing a deep spiritual breath,
Nature expunged her stiff mechanical code
And the articles of the bound soul's contract,

Falsehood gave back to Truth her tortured shape.
Annulled were the tables of the law of Pain,
And in their place grew luminous characters.
The skilful Penman's unseen finger wrote
His swift intuitive calligraphy;
Earth's forms were made his divine documents,
The wisdom embodied mind could not reveal,
Inconscience chased from the world's voiceless breast;
Transfigured were the fixed schemes of reasoning Thought.
Arousing consciousness in things inert,
He imposed upon dark atom and dumb mass
The diamond script of the Imperishable,
Inscribed on the dim heart of fallen things
A paean-song of the free Infinite
And the Name, foundation of eternity,
And traced on the awake exultant cells
In the ideographs of the Ineffable
The lyric of the love that waits through Time
And the mystic volume of the Book of Bliss
And the message of the superconscient Fire.
Then life beat pure in the corporeal frame;
The infernal Gleam died and could slay no more.
Hell split across its huge abrupt façade
As if a magic building were undone,
Night opened and vanished like a gulf of dream.
Into being's gap scooped out as empty Space
In which she had filled the place of absent God,
There poured a wide intimate and blissful Dawn;
Healed were all things that Time's torn heart had made
And sorrow could live no more in Nature's breast:
Division ceased to be, for God was there.
The soul lit the conscious body with its ray,
Matter and spirit mingled and were one.

End of Canto Eight

Canto Nine

The Paradise of the Life-Gods

AROUND him shone a great felicitous Day.
A lustre of some rapturous Infinite,
It held in the splendour of its golden laugh
Regions of the heart's happiness set free,
Intoxicated with the wine of God,
Immersed in light, perpetually divine.
A favourite and intimate of the Gods
Obeying the divine command to joy,
It was the sovereign of its own delight
And master of the kingdoms of its force.
Assured of the bliss for which all forms were made,
Unmoved by fear and grief and the shocks of Fate
And unalarmed by the breath of fleeting Time
And unbesieged by adverse circumstance,
It breathed in a sweet secure unguarded ease
Free from our body's frailty inviting death,
Far from our danger-zone of stumbling Will.
It needed not to curb its passionate beats;
Thrilled by the clasp of the warm satisfied sense
And the swift wonder-rush and flame and cry
Of the life-impulses' red magnificent race,
It lived in a jewel-rhythm of the laughter of God
And lay on the breast of universal love.
Immune the unfettered Spirit of Delight
Pastured his gleaming sun-herds and moon-flocks
Along the lyric speed of griefless streams
In fragrance of the unearthly asphodel.
A silence of felicity wrapped the heavens,
A careless radiance smiled upon the heights;
A murmur of inarticulate ravishment
Trembled in the winds and touched the enchanted soil;

Incessant in the arms of ecstasy
Repeating its sweet involuntary note
A sob of rapture flowed along the hours.
Advancing under an arch of glory and peace,
Traveller on plateau and on musing ridge,
As one who sees in the World-Magician's glass
A miracled imagery of soul-scapes flee
He traversed scenes of an immortal joy
And gazed into abysms of beauty and bliss.
Around him was a light of conscious suns
And a brooding gladness of great symbol things;
To meet him crowded plains of brilliant calm,
Mountains and violet valleys of the Blest,
Deep glens of joy and crooning waterfalls
And woods of quivering purple solitude;
Below him lay like gleaming jewelled thoughts
Rapt dreaming cities of Gandharva kings.
Across the vibrant secrecies of Space
A dim and happy music sweetly stole,
Smitten by unseen hands he heard heart-close
The harps' cry of the heavenly minstrels pass,
And voices of unearthly melody
Chanted the glory of eternal love
In the white-blue-moonbeam air of Paradise.
A summit and core of all that marvellous world,
Apart stood high Elysian nameless hills,
Burning like sunsets in a trance of eve.
As if to some new unsearched profundity,
Into a joyful stillness plunged their base;
Their slopes through a hurry of laughter and voices sank,
Crossed by a throng of singing rivulets,
Adoring blue heaven with their happy hymn,
Down into woods of shadowy secrecy:
Lifted into wide voiceless mystery
Their peaks climbed towards a greatness beyond life.
The shining Edens of the vital gods

Received him in their deathless harmonies.
All things were perfect there that flower in Time;
Beauty was there creation's native mould,
Peace was a thrilled voluptuous purity.
There Love fulfilled her gold and roseate dreams
And Strength her crowned and mighty reveries;
Desire climbed up, a swift omnipotent flame,
And Pleasure had the stature of the gods;
Dream walked along the highways of the stars;
Sweet common things turned into miracles:
Overtaken by the spirit's sudden spell,
Smitten by a divine passion's alchemy,
Pain's self compelled transformed to potent joy
Curing the antithesis twixt heaven and hell.
All life's high visions are embodied there,
Her wandering hopes achieved, her aureate combs
Caught by the honey-eater's darting tongue,
Her burning guesses changed to ecstasied truths,
Her mighty pantings stilled in deathless calm
And liberated her immense desires.
In that paradise of perfect heart and sense
No lower note could break the endless charm
Of her sweetness ardent and immaculate;
Her steps are sure of their intuitive fall.
After the anguish of the soul's long strife
At length were found calm and celestial rest
And, lapped in a magic flood of sorrowless hours,
Healed were his warrior nature's wounded limbs
In the encircling arms of Energies
That brooked no stain and feared not their own bliss.
In scenes forbidden to our pallid sense
Amid miraculous scents and wonder-hues
He met the forms that divinise the sight,
To music that can immortalise the mind
And make the heart wide as infinity
Listened, and captured the inaudible

Cadences that awake the occult ear:
Out of the ineffable hush it hears them come
Trembling with the beauty of a wordless speech,
And thoughts too great and deep to find a voice,
Thoughts whose desire new-makes the universe.
A scale of sense that climbed with fiery feet
To heights of unimagined happiness,
Recast his being's aura in joy-glow,
His body glimmered like a skiey shell;
His gates to the world were swept with seas of light.
His earth, dowered with celestial competence,
Harboured a power that needed now no more
To cross the closed customs-line of mind and flesh
And smuggle godhead into humanity.
It shrank no more from the supreme demand
Of an untired capacity for bliss,
A might that could explore its own infinite
And beauty and passion and the depths' reply
Nor feared the swoon of glad identity
Where spirit and flesh in inner ecstasy join
Annulling the quarrel between self and shape.
It drew from sight and sound spiritual power,
Made sense a road to reach the intangible:
It thrilled with the supernal influences
That build the substance of life's deeper soul.
Earth-nature stood reborn, comrade of heaven.
A fit companion of the timeless Kings,
Equalled with the godheads of the living Suns,
He mixed in the radiant pastimes of the Unborn,
Heard whispers of the Player never seen
And listened to his voice that steals the heart
And draws it to the breast of God's desire,
And felt its honey of felicity
Flow through his veins like the rivers of Paradise,
Made body a nectar-cup of the Absolute.
In sudden moments of revealing flame,

In passionate responses half-unveiled
He reached the rim of ecstasies unknown;
A touch supreme surprised his hurrying heart,
The clasp was remembered of the Wonderful,
And hints leaped down of white beatitudes.
Eternity drew close disguised as Love
And laid its hand upon the body of Time.
A little gift comes from the Immensitudes,
But measureless to life its gain of joy;
All the untold Beyond is mirrored there.
A giant drop of the Bliss unknowable
Overwhelmed his limbs and round his soul became
A fiery ocean of felicity;
He foundered drowned in sweet and burning vasts:
The dire delight that could shatter mortal flesh,
The rapture that the gods sustain he bore.
Immortal pleasure cleansed him in its waves
And turned his strength into undying power.
Immortality captured Time and carried Life.

End of Canto Nine

Canto Ten

The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Little Mind

THIS too must now be overpassed and left,
As all must be until the Highest is gained
In whom the world and self grow true and one:
Till That is reached our journeying cannot cease.
Always a nameless goal beckons beyond,
Always ascends the zigzag of the gods
And upward points the spirit's climbing Fire.
This breath of hundred-hued felicity
And its pure heightened figure of Time's joy,
Tossed upon waves of flawless happiness,
Hammered into single beats of ecstasy,
This fraction of the spirit's integer
Caught into a passionate greatness of extremes,
This limited being lifted to zenith bliss,
Happy to enjoy one touch of things supreme,
Packed into its sealed small infinity,
Its endless time-made world outfacing Time,
A little output of God's vast delight.
The moments stretched towards the eternal Now,
The hours discovered immortality,
But, satisfied with their sublime contents,
On peaks they ceased whose tops half-way to Heaven
Pointed to an apex they could never mount,
To a grandeur in whose air they could not live.
Inviting to their high and exquisite sphere,
To their secure and fine extremities
This creature who hugs his limits to feel safe,
These heights declined a greater adventure's call.
A glory and sweetness of satisfied desire
Tied up the spirit to golden posts of bliss.
It could not house the wideness of a soul

Which needed all infinity for its home.
A memory soft as grass and faint as sleep,
The beauty and call receding sank behind
Like a sweet song heard fading far away
Upon the long high road to Timelessness.
Above was an ardent white tranquillity.
A musing spirit looked out on the worlds
And like a brilliant clambering of skies
Passing through clarity to an unseen Light
Large lucent realms of Mind from stillness shone.
But first he met a silver-grey expanse
Where Day and Night had wedded and were one:
It was a tract of dim and shifting rays
Parting Life's sentient flow from Thought's self-poise.
A coalition of uncertainties
There exercised uneasy government
On a ground reserved for doubt and reasoned guess,
A rendezvous of Knowledge with Ignorance.
At its low extremity held difficult sway
A mind that hardly saw and slowly found;
Its nature to our earthly nature close
And kin to our precarious mortal thought
That looks from soil to sky and sky to soil
But knows not the below nor the beyond,
It only sensed itself and outward things.
This was the first means of our slow ascent
From the half-conscience of the animal soul
Living in a crowded press of shape-events
In a realm it cannot understand nor change;
Only it sees and acts in a given scene
And feels and joys and sorrows for a while.
The ideas that drive the obscure embodied spirit
Along the roads of suffering and desire
In a world that struggles to discover Truth,
Found here their power to be and Nature-force.
Here are devised the forms of an ignorant life

That sees the empiric fact as settled law,
Labours for the hour and not for eternity
And trades its gains to meet the moment's call:
The slow process of a material mind
Which serves the body it should rule and use
And needs to lean upon an erring sense,
Was born in that luminous obscurity.
Advancing tardily from a limping start,
Crutching hypothesis on argument,
Throning its theories as certitudes,
It reasons from the half-known to the unknown,
Ever constructing its frail house of thought,
Ever undoing the web that it has spun.
A twilight sage whose shadow seems to him self,
Moving from minute to brief minute lives;
A king dependent on his satellites
Signs the decrees of ignorant ministers,
A judge in half-possession of his proofs,
A voice clamant of uncertainty's postulates,
An architect of knowledge, not its source.
This powerful bondslave of his instruments
Thinks his low station Nature's highest top,
Oblivious of his share in all things made
And haughtily humble in his own conceit
Believes himself a spawn of Matter's mud
And takes his own creations for his cause.
To eternal light and knowledge meant to rise,
Up from man's bare beginning is our climb;
Out of earth's heavy smallness we must break,
We must search our nature with spiritual fire:
An insect crawl preludes our glorious flight;
Our human state cradles the future god,
Our mortal frailty an immortal force.
At the glow-worm top of these pale glimmer-realms
Where dawn-sheen gambolled with the native dusk
And helped the Day to grow and Night to fail,

Escaping over a wide and shimmering bridge,
He came into a realm of early Light
And the regency of a half-risen sun.
Out of its rays our mind's full orb was born.
Appointed by the Spirit of the Worlds
To mediate with the unknowing depths,
A prototypal deft Intelligence
Half-poised on equal wings of thought and doubt
Toiled ceaselessly twixt being's hidden ends.
A Secrecy breathed in life's moving act;
A covert nurse of Nature's miracles,
It shaped life's wonders out of Matter's mud:
It cut the pattern of the shapes of things,
It pitched mind's tent in the vague ignorant Vast.
A master Magician of measure and device
Has made an eternity from recurring forms
And to the wandering spectator thought
Assigned a seat on the inconscient stage.
On earth by the will of this Arch-Intelligence
A bodiless energy put on Matter's robe;
Proton and photon served the imager Eye
To change things subtle into a physical world
And the invisible appeared as shape
And the impalpable was felt as mass:
Magic of percept joined with concept's art
And lent to each object an interpreting name:
Idea was disguised in a body's artistry,
And by a strange atomic law's mystique
A frame was made in which the sense could put
Its symbol picture of the universe.
Even a greater miracle was done.
The mediating light linked body's power,
The sleep and dreaming of the tree and plant,
The animal's vibrant sense, the thought in man,
To the effulgence of a Ray above.
Its skill endorsing Matter's right to think

Cut sentient passages for the mind of flesh
And found a means for Nescience to know.
Offering its little squares and cubes of word
As figured substitutes for reality,
A mummified mnemonic alphabet,
It helped the unseeing Force to read her works.
A buried consciousness arose in her
And now she dreams herself human and awake.
But all was still a mobile Ignorance;
Still Knowledge could not come and firmly grasp
This huge invention seen as a universe.
A specialist of logic's hard machine
Imposed its rigid artifice on the soul;
An aide of the inventor intellect,
It cut Truth into manageable bits
That each might have his ration of thought-food,
Then new-built Truth's slain body by its art:
A robot exact and serviceable and false
Displaced the spirit's finer view of things:
A polished engine did the work of a god.
None the true body found, its soul seemed dead:
None had the inner look which sees Truth's whole;
All glorified the glittering substitute.
Then from the secret heights a wave swept down,
A brilliant chaos of rebel light arose;
It looked above and saw the dazzling peaks,
It looked within and woke the sleeping god.
Imagination called her shining squads
That venture into undiscovered scenes
Where all the marvels lurk none yet has known:
Lifting her beautiful and miraculous head,
She conspired with inspiration's sister brood
To fill thought's skies with glimmering nebulae.
A bright Error fringed the mystery-altar's frieze;
Darkness grew nurse to wisdom's occult sun,
Myth suckled knowledge with her lustrous milk;

The infant passed from dim to radiant breasts.
Thus worked the Power upon the growing world;
Its subtle craft withheld the full-orbed blaze,
Cherished the soul's childhood and on fictions fed
Far richer in their sweet and nectarous sap
Nourishing its immature divinity
Than the staple or dry straw of Reason's tilth,
Its heaped fodder of innumerable facts,
Plebeian fare on which today we thrive.
Thus streamed down from the realm of early Light
Ethereal thinkings into Matter's world;
Its gold-horned herds trooped into earth's cave-heart.
Its morning rays illume our twilight's eyes,
Its young formations move the mind of earth
To labour and to dream and new-create,
To feel beauty's touch and know the world and self:
The Golden Child began to think and see.

In those bright realms are Mind's first forward steps.
Ignorant of all but eager to know all,
Its curious slow enquiry there begins;
Ever its searching grasps at shapes around,
Ever it hopes to find out greater things.
Ardent and golden-gleamed with sunrise fires,
Alert it lives upon invention's verge.
Yet all it does is on an infant's scale,
As if the cosmos were a nursery game,
Mind, life the playthings of a Titan's babe.
As one it works who builds a mimic fort
Miraculously stable for a while,
Made of the sands upon a bank of Time
Mid an occult eternity's shoreless sea.
A small keen instrument the great Puissance chose,
An arduous pastime passionately pursues;
To teach the Ignorance is her difficult charge,
Her thought starts from an original nescient Void

And what she teaches she herself must learn
Arousing knowledge from its sleepy lair.
For knowledge comes not to us as a guest
Called into our chamber from the outer world;
A friend and inmate of our secret self,
It hid behind our minds and fell asleep
And slowly wakes beneath the blows of life;
The mighty daemon lies unshaped within,
To evoke, to give it form is Nature's task.
All was a chaos of the true and false,
Mind sought amid deep mists of Nescience;
It looked within itself but saw not God.
A material interim diplomacy
Denied the Truth that transient truths might live
And hid the Deity in creed and guess
That the World-Ignorance might grow slowly wise.
This was the imbroglio made by sovereign Mind
Looking from a gleam-ridge into the Night
In her first tamperings with Inconscience:
Its alien dusk baffles her luminous eyes;
Her rapid hands must learn a cautious zeal;
Only a slow advance the earth can bear.
Yet was her strength unlike the unseeing earth's
Compelled to handle makeshift instruments
Invented by the life-force and the flesh.
Earth all perceives through doubtful images,
All she conceives in hazardous jets of sight,
Small lights kindled by touches of groping thought.
Incapable of the soul's direct inlook
She sees by spasms and solders knowledge-scrap,
Makes Truth the slave-girl of her indigence,
Expelling Nature's mystic unity
Cuts into quantum and mass the moving All;
She takes for measuring-rod her ignorance.
In her own domain a pontiff and a seer,
That greater Power with her half-risen sun

Wrought within limits but possessed her field;
She knew by a privilege of thinking force
And claimed an infant sovereignty of sight.
In her eyes however darkly fringed was lit
The Archangel's gaze who knows inspired his acts
And shapes a world in its far-seeing flame.
In her own realm she stumbles not nor fails,
But moves in boundaries of subtle power
Across which mind can step towards the sun.
A candidate for a higher suzerainty,
A passage she cut through from Night to Light,
And searched for an ungrasped Omniscience.

A dwarf three-bodied trinity was her serf.
First, smallest of the three, but strong of limb,
A low-brow with a square and heavy jowl,
A pigmy Thought needing to live in bounds
For ever stooped to hammer fact and form.
Absorbed and cabined in external sight,
It takes its stand on Nature's solid base.
A technician admirable, a thinker crude,
A riveter of Life to habit's grooves,
Obedient to gross Matter's tyranny,
A prisoner of the moulds in which it works,
It binds itself by what itself creates.
A slave of a fixed mass of absolute rules,
It sees as Law the habits of the world,
It sees as Truth the habits of the mind.
In its realm of concrete images and events
Turning in a worn circle of ideas
And ever repeating old familiar acts,
It lives content with the common and the known.
It loves the old ground that was its dwelling-place:
Abhorring change as an audacious sin,
Distrustful of each new discovery
Only it advances step by careful step

And fears as if a deadly abyss the unknown.
A prudent treasurer of its ignorance,
It shrinks from adventure, blinks at glorious hope,
Preferring a safe foothold upon things
To the dangerous joy of wideness and of height.
The world's slow impressions on its labouring mind,
Tardy imprints almost indelible,
Increase their value by their poverty;
The old sure memories are its capital stock:
Only what sense can grasp seems absolute:
External fact it figures as sole truth,
Wisdom identifies with the earthward look,
And things long known and actions always done
Are to its clinging hold a balustrade
Of safety on the perilous stair of Time.
Heaven's trust to it are the established ancient ways,
Immutable laws man has no right to change,
A sacred legacy from the great dead past
Or the one road that God has made for life,
A firm shape of Nature never to be changed,
Part of the huge routine of the universe.
A smile from the Preserver of the Worlds
Sent down of old this guardian Mind to earth
That all might stand in their fixed changeless type
And from their secular posture never move.
One sees it circling faithful to its task,
Tireless in an assigned tradition's round;
In decayed and crumbling offices of Time
It keeps close guard in front of custom's wall,
Or in an ancient Night's dim environs
It dozes on a little courtyard's stones
And barks at every unfamiliar light
As at a foe who would break up its home,
A watch-dog of the spirit's sense-railed house
Against intruders from the Invisible,
Nourished on scraps of life and Matter's bones

In its kennel of objective certitude.
And yet behind it stands a cosmic might:
A measured Greatness keeps its vaster plan,
A fathomless sameness rhythms the tread of life;
The stars' changeless orbits furrow inert Space,
A million species follow one mute Law.
A huge inertness is the world's defence,
Even in change is treasured changelessness;
Into inertia revolution sinks,
In a new dress the old resumes its role;
The Energy acts, the stable is its seal:
On Shiva's breast is stayed the enormous dance.
   A fiery spirit came, next of the three.
A hunchback rider of the red Wild-Ass,
A rash Intelligence leaped down lion-maned
From the great mystic Flame that rings the worlds
And with its dire edge eats at being's heart.
Thence sprang the burning vision of Desire.
A thousand shapes it wore, took numberless names:
A need of multitude and uncertainty
Pricks it for ever to pursue the One
On countless roads across the vasts of Time
Through circuits of unending difference.
It burns all breasts with an ambiguous fire.
A radiance gleaming on a murky stream,
It flamed towards heaven, then sank, engulfed, towards hell;
It climbed to drag down Truth into the mire
And used for muddy ends its brilliant Force;
A huge chameleon gold and blue and red
Turning to black and grey and lurid brown,
Hungry it stared from a mottled bough of life
To snap up insect joys, its favourite food,
The dingy sustenance of a sumptuous frame
Nursing the splendid passion of its hues.
A snake of flame with a dull cloud for tail,
Followed by a dream-brood of glittering thoughts,

A lifted head with many-tinged flickering crests,
It licked at knowledge with a smoky tongue.
A whirlpool sucking in an empty air,
It based on vacancy stupendous claims,
In Nothingness born to Nothingness returned,
Yet all the time unwittingly it drove
Towards the hidden Something that is All.
Ardent to find, incapable to retain,
A brilliant instability was its mark,
To err its inborn trend, its native cue.
At once to an unreflecting credence prone,
It thought all true that flattered its own hopes;
It cherished golden nothings born of wish,
It snatched at the unreal for provender.
In darkness it discovered luminous shapes;
Peering into a shadow-hung half-light
It saw hued images scrawled on Fancy's cave;
Or it swept in circles through conjecture's night
And caught in imagination's camera
Bright scenes of promise held by transient flares,
Fixed in life's air the feet of hurrying dreams,
Kept prints of passing Forms and hooded Powers
And flash-images of half-seen verities.
An eager spring to seize and to possess
Unguided by reason or the seeing soul
Was its first natural motion and its last,
It squandered life's force to achieve the impossible:
It scorned the straight road and ran on wandering curves
And left what it had won for untried things;
It saw unrealised aims as instant fate
And chose the precipice for its leap to heaven.
Adventure its system in the gamble of life,
It took fortuitous gains as safe results;
Error discouraged not its confident view
Ignorant of the deep law of being's ways
And failure could not slow its fiery clutch;

One chance made true warranted all the rest.
Attempt, not victory, was the charm of life.
An uncertain winner of uncertain stakes,
Instinct its dam and the life-mind its sire,
It ran its race and came in first or last.
Yet were its works nor small and vain nor null;
It nursed a portion of infinity's strength
And could create the high things its fancy willed;
Its passion caught what calm intelligence missed.
Insight of impulse laid its leaping grasp
On heavens high Thought had hidden in dazzling mist,
Caught glimmers that revealed a lurking sun:
It probed the void and found a treasure there.
A half-intuition purpled in its sense;
It threw the lightning's fork and hit the unseen.
It saw in the dark and vaguely blinked in the light,
Ignorance was its field, the unknown its prize.
  Of all these Powers the greatest was the last.
Arriving late from a far plane of thought
Into a packed irrational world of Chance
Where all was grossly felt and blindly done,
Yet the haphazard seemed the inevitable,
Came Reason, the squat godhead artisan,
To her narrow house upon a ridge in Time.
Adept of clear contrivance and design,
A pensive face and close and peering eyes,
She took her firm and irremovable seat,
The strongest, wisest of the troll-like Three.
Armed with her lens and measuring-rod and probe,
She looked upon an object universe
And the multitudes that in it live and die
And the body of Space and the fleeing soul of Time,
And took the earth and stars into her hands
To try what she could make of these strange things.
In her strong purposeful laborious mind,
Inventing her scheme-lines of reality

And the geometric curves of her time-plan,
She multiplied her slow half-cuts at Truth:
Impatient of enigma and the unknown,
Intolerant of the lawless and the unique,
Imposing reflection on the march of Force,
Imposing clarity on the unfathomable,
She strove to reduce to rules the mystic world.
Nothing she knew but all things hoped to know.
In dark inconscient realms once void of thought,
Missioned by a supreme Intelligence
To throw its ray upon the obscure Vast,
An imperfect light leading an erring mass
By the power of sense and the idea and word,
She ferrets out Nature's process, substance, cause.
All life to harmonise by thought's control,
She with the huge imbroglio struggles still;
Ignorant of all but her own seeking mind
To save the world from Ignorance she came.
A sovereign worker through the centuries
Observing and remoulding all that is,
Confident she took up her stupendous charge.
There the low bent and mighty figure sits
Bowed under the arc-lamps of her factory home
Amid the clatter and ringing of her tools.
A rigorous stare in her creative eyes
Coercing the plastic stuff of cosmic Mind,
She sets the hard inventions of her brain
In a pattern of eternal fixity:
Indifferent to the cosmic dumb demand,
Unconscious of too close realities,
Of the unspoken thought, the voiceless heart,
She leans to forge her credos and iron codes
And metal structures to imprison life
And mechanic models of all things that are.
For the world seen she weaves a world conceived:
She spins in stiff but unsubstantial lines

Her gossamer word-webs of abstract thought,
Her segment systems of the Infinite,
Her theodicies and cosmogonic charts
And myths by which she explains the inexplicable.
At will she spaces in thin air of mind
Like maps in the school-house of intellect hung,
Forcing wide Truth into a narrow scheme,
Her numberless warring strict philosophies;
Out of Nature's body of phenomenon
She carves with Thought's keen edge in rigid lines,
Like rails for the World-Magician's power to run,
Her sciences precise and absolute.
On the huge bare walls of human nescience
Written round Nature's deep dumb hieroglyphs
She pens in clear demotic characters
The vast encyclopaedia of her thoughts;
An algebra of her mathematics' signs,
Her numbers and unerring formulas
She builds to clinch her summary of things.
On all sides runs as if in a cosmic mosque
Tracing the scriptural verses of her laws
The daedal of her patterned arabesques,
Art of her wisdom, artifice of her lore.
This art, this artifice are her only stock.
In her high works of pure intelligence,
In her withdrawal from the senses' trap,
There comes no breaking of the walls of mind,
There leaps no rending flash of absolute power,
There dawns no light of heavenly certitude.
A million faces wears her knowledge here
And every face is turbaned with a doubt.
All now is questioned, all reduced to nought.
Once monumental in their massive craft
Her old great mythic writings disappear
And into their place start strict ephemeral signs;
This constant change spells progress to her eyes:

Her thought is an endless march without a goal.
There is no summit on which she can stand
And see in a single glance the Infinite's whole.
  An inconclusive play is Reason's toil.
Each strong idea can use her as its tool;
Accepting every brief she pleads her case.
Open to every thought, she cannot know.
The eternal Advocate seated as judge
Armours in logic's invulnerable mail
A thousand combatants for Truth's veiled throne
And sets on a high horse-back of argument
To tilt for ever with a wordy lance
In a mock tournament where none can win.
Assaying thought's values with her rigid tests
Balanced she sits on wide and empty air,
Aloof and pure in her impartial poise.
Absolute her judgments seem but none is sure;
Time cancels all her verdicts in appeal.
Although like sunbeams to our glow-worm mind
Her knowledge feigns to fall from a clear heaven,
Its rays are a lantern's lustres in the Night;
She throws a glittering robe on Ignorance.
But now is lost her ancient sovereign claim
To rule mind's high realm in her absolute right,
Bind thought with logic's forged infallible chain
Or see truth nude in a bright abstract haze.
A master and slave of stark phenomenon,
She travels on the roads of erring sight
Or looks upon a set mechanical world
Constructed for her by her instruments.
A bullock yoked in the cart of proven fact,
She drags huge knowledge-bales through Matter's dust
To reach utility's immense bazaar.
Apprentice she has grown to her old drudge;
An aided sense is her seeking's arbiter.
This now she uses as the assayer's stone.

As if she knew not facts are husks of truth,
The husks she keeps, the kernel throws aside.
An ancient wisdom fades into the past,
The ages' faith becomes an idle tale,
God passes out of the awakened thought,
An old discarded dream needed no more:
Only she seeks mechanic Nature's keys.
Interpreting stone-laws inevitable
She digs into Matter's hard concealing soil,
To unearth the processes of all things done.
A loaded huge self-worked machine appears
To her eye's eager and admiring stare,
An intricate and meaningless enginery
Of ordered fateful and unfailing Chance:
Ingenious and meticulous and minute,
Its brute unconscious accurate device
Unrolls an unerring march, maps a sure road;
It plans without thinking, acts without a will,
A million purposes serves with purpose none
And builds a rational world without a mind.
It has no mover, no maker, no idea:
Its vast self-action toils without a cause;
A lifeless Energy irresistibly driven,
Death's head on the body of Necessity,
Engenders life and fathers consciousness,
Then wonders why all was and whence it came.
Our thoughts are parts of the immense machine,
Our ponderings but a freak of Matter's law,
The mystic's lore was a fancy or a blind;
Of soul or spirit we have now no need:
Matter is the admirable Reality,
The patent unescapable miracle,
The hard truth of things, simple, eternal, sole.
A suicidal rash expenditure
Creating the world by a mystery of self-loss
Has poured its scattered works on empty Space;

Late shall the self-disintegrating Force
Contract the immense expansion it has made:
Then ends this mighty and unmeaning toil,
The Void is left bare, vacant as before.
Thus vindicated, crowned, the grand new Thought
Explained the world and mastered all its laws,
Touched the dumb roots, woke veiled tremendous powers;
It bound to service the unconscious djinns
That sleep unused in Matter's ignorant trance.
All was precise, rigid, indubitable.
But when on Matter's rock of ages based
A whole stood up firm and clear-cut and safe,
All staggered back into a sea of doubt;
This solid scheme melted in endless flux:
She had met the formless Power inventor of forms;
Suddenly she stumbled upon things unseen:
A lightning from the undiscovered Truth
Startled her eyes with its perplexing glare
And dug a gulf between the Real and Known
Till all her knowledge seemed an ignorance.
Once more the world was made a wonder-web,
A magic's process in a magical space,
An unintelligible miracle's depths
Whose source is lost in the Ineffable.
Once more we face the blank Unknowable.
In a crash of values, in a huge doom-crack,
In the sputter and scatter of her breaking work
She lost her clear conserved constructed world.
A quantum dance remained, a sprawl of chance
In Energy's stupendous tripping whirl:
A ceaseless motion in the unbounded Void
Invented forms without a thought or aim:
Necessity and Cause were shapeless ghosts;
Matter was an incident in being's flow,
Law but a clock-work habit of blind force.
Ideals, ethics, systems had no base

And soon collapsed or without sanction lived;
All grew a chaos, a heave and clash and strife.
Ideas warring and fierce leaped upon life;
A hard compression held down anarchy
And liberty was only a phantom's name:
Creation and destruction waltzed inarmed
On the bosom of a torn and quaking earth;
All reeled into a world of Kali's dance.
Thus tumbled, sinking, sprawling in the Void,
Clutching for props, a soil on which to stand,
She only saw a thin atomic Vast,
The rare-point sparse substratum universe
On which floats a solid world's phenomenal face.
Alone a process of events was there
And Nature's plastic and protean change
And, strong by death to slay or to create,
The riven invisible atom's omnipotent force.
One chance remained that here might be a power
To liberate man from the old inadequate means
And leave him sovereign of the earthly scene.
For Reason then might grasp the original Force
To drive her car upon the roads of Time.
All then might serve the need of the thinking race,
An absolute State found order's absolute,
To a standardised perfection cut all things,
In society build a just exact machine.
Then science and reason careless of the soul
Could iron out a tranquil uniform world,
Aeonic seekings glut with outward truths
And a single-patterned thinking force on mind,
Inflicting Matter's logic on Spirit's dreams
A reasonable animal make of man
And a symmetrical fabric of his life.
This would be Nature's peak on an obscure globe,
The grand result of the long ages' toil,
Earth's evolution crowned, her mission done.

So might it be if the spirit fell asleep;
Man then might rest content and live in peace,
Master of Nature who once her bondslave worked,
The world's disorder hardening into Law, —
If Life's dire heart arose not in revolt,
If God within could find no greater plan.
But many-visaged is the cosmic Soul;
A touch can alter the fixed front of Fate.
A sudden turn can come, a road appear.
A greater Mind may see a greater Truth,
Or we may find when all the rest has failed
Hid in ourselves the key of perfect change.
Ascending from the soil where creep our days,
Earth's consciousness may marry with the Sun,
Our mortal life ride on the spirit's wings,
Our finite thoughts commune with the Infinite.
   In the bright kingdoms of the rising Sun
All is a birth into a power of light:
All here deformed guards there its happy shape,
Here all is mixed and marred, there pure and whole;
Yet each is a passing step, a moment's phase.
Awake to a greater Truth beyond her acts,
The mediatrix sat and saw her works
And felt the marvel in them and the force
But knew the power behind the face of Time:
She did the task, obeyed the knowledge given,
Her deep heart yearned towards great ideal things
And from the light looked out to wider light:
A brilliant hedge drawn round her narrowed her power;
Faithful to her limited sphere she toiled, but knew
Its highest, widest seeing was a half-search,
Its mightiest acts a passage or a stage.
For not by Reason was creation made
And not by Reason can the Truth be seen
Which through the veils of thought, the screens of sense
Hardly the spirit's vision can descry

Dimmed by the imperfection of its means:
The little Mind is tied to little things:
Its sense is but the spirit's outward touch,
Half-waked in a world of dark Inconscience;
It feels out for its beings and its forms
Like one left fumbling in the ignorant Night.
In this small mould of infant mind and sense
Desire is a child-heart's cry crying for bliss,
Our reason only a toys' artificer,
A rule-maker in a strange stumbling game.
But she her dwarf aides knew whose confident sight
A bounded prospect took for the far goal.
The world she has made is an interim report
Of a traveller towards the half-found truth in things
Moving twixt nescience and nescience.
For nothing is known while aught remains concealed;
The Truth is known only when all is seen.
Attracted by the All that is the One,
She yearns towards a higher light than hers;
Hid by her cults and creeds she has glimpsed God's face:
She knows she has but found a form, a robe,
But ever she hopes to see him in her heart
And feel the body of his reality.
As yet a mask is there and not a brow,
Although sometimes two hidden eyes appear:
Reason cannot tear off that glimmering mask,
Her efforts only make it glimmer more;
In packets she ties up the Indivisible;
Finding her hands too small to hold vast Truth
She breaks up knowledge into alien parts
Or peers through cloud-rack for a vanished sun:
She sees, not understanding what she has seen,
Through the locked visages of finite things
The myriad aspects of infinity.
One day the Face must burn out through the mask.
Our ignorance is Wisdom's chrysalis,

Our error weds new knowledge on its way,
Its darkness is a blackened knot of light;
Thought dances hand in hand with Nescience
On the grey road that winds towards the Sun.
Even while her fingers fumble at the knots
Which bind them to their strange companionship,
Into the moments of their married strife
Sometimes break flashes of the enlightening Fire.
Even now great thoughts are here that walk alone:
Armed they have come with the infallible word
In an investiture of intuitive light
That is a sanction from the eyes of God;
Announcers of a distant Truth they flame
Arriving from the rim of eternity.
A fire shall come out of the infinitudes,
A greater Gnosis shall regard the world
Crossing out of some far omniscience
On lustrous seas from the still rapt Alone
To illumine the deep heart of self and things.
A timeless knowledge it shall bring to Mind,
Its aim to life, to Ignorance its close.

Above in a high breathless stratosphere,
Overshadowing the dwarfish trinity,
Lived, aspirants to a limitless Beyond,
Captives of Space, walled by the limiting heavens,
In the unceasing circuit of the hours
Yearning for the straight paths of eternity,
And from their high station looked down on this world
Two sun-gaze Daemons witnessing all that is.
A power to uplift the laggard world,
Imperious rode a huge high-winged Life-Thought
Unwont to tread the firm unchanging soil:
Accustomed to a blue infinity,
It planed in sunlit sky and starlit air;
It saw afar the unreached Immortal's home

And heard afar the voices of the Gods.
Iconoclast and shatterer of Time's forts,
Overleaping limit and exceeding norm,
It lit the thoughts that glow through the centuries
And moved to acts of superhuman force.
As far as its self-winged air-planes could fly,
Visiting the future in great brilliant raids
It reconnoitred vistas of dream-fate.
Apt to conceive, unable to attain,
It drew its concept-maps and vision-plans
Too large for the architecture of mortal Space.
Beyond in wideness where no footing is,
An imagist of bodiless Ideas,
Impassive to the cry of life and sense,
A pure Thought-Mind surveyed the cosmic act.
Archangel of a white transcending realm,
It saw the world from solitary heights
Luminous in a remote and empty air.

END OF CANTO TEN

Canto Eleven

The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Greater Mind

THERE ceased the limits of the labouring Power.
But being and creation cease not there.
For Thought transcends the circles of mortal mind,
It is greater than its earthly instrument:
The godhead crammed into mind's narrow space
Escapes on every side into some vast
That is a passage to infinity.
It moves eternal in the spirit's field,
A runner towards the far spiritual light,
A child and servant of the spirit's force.
But mind too falls back from a nameless peak.
His being stretched beyond the sight of Thought.
For the spirit is eternal and unmade
And not by thinking was its greatness born,
And not by thinking can its knowledge come.
It knows itself and in itself it lives,
It moves where no thought is nor any form.
Its feet are steadied upon finite things,
Its wings can dare to cross the Infinite.
Arriving into his ken a wonder space
Of great and marvellous meetings called his steps,
Where Thought leaned on a Vision beyond thought
And shaped a world from the Unthinkable.
On peaks imagination cannot tread,
In the horizons of a tireless sight,
Under a blue veil of eternity
The splendours of ideal Mind were seen
Outstretched across the boundaries of things known.
Origin of the little that we are,
Instinct with the endless more that we must be,
A prop of all that human strength enacts,

Creator of hopes by earth unrealised,
It spreads beyond the expanding universe;
It wings beyond the boundaries of Dream,
It overtops the ceiling of life's soar.
Awake in a luminous sphere unbound by Thought,
Exposed to omniscient immensities,
It casts on our world its great crowned influences,
Its speed that outstrips the ambling of the hours,
Its force that strides invincibly through Time,
Its mights that bridge the gulf twixt man and God,
Its lights that combat Ignorance and Death.
In its vast ambit of ideal Space
Where beauty and mightiness walk hand in hand,
The Spirit's truths take form as living Gods
And each can build a world in its own right.
In an air which doubt and error cannot mark
With the stigmata of their deformity,
In communion with the musing privacy
Of a truth that sees in an unerring light
Where the sight falters not nor wanders thought,
Exempt from our world's exorbitant tax of tears,
Dreaming its luminous creations gaze
On the Ideas that people eternity.
In a sun-blaze of joy and absolute power
Above the Masters of the Ideal throne
In sessions of secure felicity,
In regions of illumined certitude.
Far are those realms from our labour and yearning and call,
Perfection's reign and hallowed sanctuary
Closed to the uncertain thoughts of human mind,
Remote from the turbid tread of mortal life.
But since our secret selves are next of kin,
A breath of unattained divinity
Visits the imperfect earth on which we toil;
Across a gleaming ether's golden laugh
A light falls on our vexed unsatisfied lives,

A thought comes down from the ideal worlds
And moves us to new-model even here
Some image of their greatness and appeal
And wonder beyond the ken of mortal hope.
Amid the heavy sameness of the days
And contradicted by the human law,
A faith in things that are not and must be
Lives comrade of this world's delight and pain,
The child of the secret soul's forbidden desire
Born of its amour with eternity.
Our spirits break free from their environment;
The future brings its face of miracle near,
Its godhead looks at us with present eyes;
Acts deemed impossible grow natural;
We feel the hero's immortality;
The courage and the strength death cannot touch
Awake in limbs that are mortal, hearts that fail;
We move by the rapid impulse of a will
That scorns the tardy trudge of mortal time.
These promptings come not from an alien sphere:
Ourselves are citizens of that mother State,
Adventurers, we have colonised Matter's night.
But now our rights are barred, our passports void;
We live self-exiled from our heavenlier home.
An errant ray from the immortal Mind
Accepted the earth's blindness and became
Our human thought, servant of Ignorance.
An exile, labourer on this unsure globe
Captured and driven in Life's nescient grasp,
Hampered by obscure cell and treacherous nerve,
It dreams of happier states and nobler powers,
The natural privilege of unfallen gods,
Recalling still its old lost sovereignty.
Amidst earth's mist and fog and mud and stone
It still remembers its exalted sphere
And the high city of its splendid birth.

A memory steals in from lost heavens of Truth,
A wide release comes near, a Glory calls,
A might looks out, an estranged felicity.
In glamorous passages of half-veiled light
Wandering, a brilliant shadow of itself,
This quick uncertain leader of blind gods,
This tender of small lamps, this minister serf
Hired by a mind and body for earth-use
Forgets its work mid crude realities;
It recovers its renounced imperial right,
It wears once more a purple robe of thought
And knows itself the Ideal's seer and king,
Communicant and prophet of the Unborn,
Heir to delight and immortality.
All things are real that here are only dreams,
In our unknown depths sleeps their reserve of truth,
On our unreached heights they reign and come to us
In thought and muse trailing their robes of light.
But our dwarf will and cold pragmatic sense
Admit not the celestial visitants:
Awaiting us on the Ideal's peaks
Or guarded in our secret self unseen
Yet flashed sometimes across the awakened soul,
Hide from our lives their greatness, beauty, power.
Our present feels sometimes their regal touch,
Our future strives towards their luminous thrones:
Out of spiritual secrecy they gaze,
Immortal footfalls in mind's corridors sound:
Our souls can climb into the shining planes,
The breadths from which they came can be our home.
His privilege regained of shadowless sight
The Thinker entered the immortals' air
And drank again his pure and mighty source.
Immutable in rhythmic calm and joy
He saw, sovereignly free in limitless light,
The unfallen planes, the thought-created worlds

Where Knowledge is the leader of the act
And Matter is of thinking substance made,
Feeling, a heaven-bird poised on dreaming wings,
Answers Truth's call as to a parent's voice,
Form luminous leaps from the all-shaping beam
And Will is a conscious chariot of the Gods,
And Life, a splendour stream of musing Force,
Carries the voices of the mystic Suns.
A happiness it brings of whispered truth;
There runs in its flow honeying the bosom of Space
A laughter from the immortal heart of Bliss,
And the unfathomed Joy of timelessness,
The sound of Wisdom's murmur in the Unknown
And the breath of an unseen Infinity.
In gleaming clarities of amethyst air
The chainless and omnipotent Spirit of Mind
Brooded on the blue lotus of the Idea.
A gold supernal sun of timeless Truth
Poured down the mystery of the eternal Ray
Through a silence quivering with the word of Light
On an endless ocean of discovery.
Far-off he saw the joining hemispheres.
On meditation's mounting edge of trance
Great stairs of thought climbed up to unborn heights
Where Time's last ridges touch eternity's skies
And Nature speaks to the spirit's absolute.

A triple realm of ordered thought came first,
A small beginning of immense ascent:
Above were bright ethereal skies of mind,
A packed and endless soar as if sky pressed sky
Buttressed against the Void on bastioned light;
The highest strove to neighbour eternity,
The largest widened into the infinite.
But though immortal, mighty and divine,
The first realms were close and kin to human mind;

Their deities shape our greater thinking's roads,
A fragment of their puissance can be ours:
These breadths were not too broad for our souls to range,
These heights were not too high for human hope.
A triple flight led to this triple world.
Although abrupt for common strengths to tread,
Its upward slope looks down on our earth-poise:
On a slant not too precipitously steep
One could turn back travelling deep descending lines
To commune with the mortal's universe.
The mighty wardens of the ascending stair
Who intercede with the all-creating Word,
There waited for the pilgrim heaven-bound soul;
Holding the thousand keys of the Beyond
They proffered their knowledge to the climbing mind
And filled the life with Thought's immensities.
The prophet hierophants of the occult Law,
The flame-bright hierarchs of the divine Truth,
Interpreters between man's mind and God's,
They bring the immortal fire to mortal men.
Iridescent, bodying the invisible,
The guardians of the Eternal's bright degrees
Fronted the Sun in radiant phalanxes.
Afar they seemed a symbol imagery,
Illumined originals of the shadowy script
In which our sight transcribes the ideal Ray,
Or icons figuring a mystic Truth,
But, nearer, Gods and living Presences.
A march of friezes marked the lowest steps;
Fantastically ornate and richly small,
They had room for the whole meaning of a world,
Symbols minute of its perfection's joy,
Strange beasts that were Nature's forces made alive
And, wakened to the wonder of his role,
Man grown an image undefaced of God
And objects the fine coin of Beauty's reign;

But wide the terrains were those levels serve.
In front of the ascending epiphany
World-Time's enjoyers, favourites of World-Bliss,
The Masters of things actual, lords of the hours,
Playmates of youthful Nature and child God,
Creators of Matter by hid stress of Mind
Whose subtle thoughts support unconscious Life
And guide the fantasy of brute events,
Stood there, a race of young keen-visioned gods,
King-children born on Wisdom's early plane,
Taught in her school world-making's mystic play.
Archmasons of the eternal Thaumaturge,
Moulders and measurers of fragmented Space,
They have made their plan of the concealed and known
A dwelling-house for the invisible king.
Obeying the Eternal's deep command
They have built in the material front of things
This wide world-kindergarten of young souls
Where the infant spirit learns through mind and sense
To read the letters of the cosmic script
And study the body of the cosmic self
And search for the secret meaning of the whole.
To all that Spirit conceives they give a mould;
Persuading Nature into visible moods
They lend a finite shape to infinite things.
Each power that leaps from the Unmanifest
Leaving the largeness of the Eternal's peace
They seized and held by their precisian eye
And made a figurante in the cosmic dance.
Its free caprice they bound by rhythmic laws
And compelled to accept its posture and its line
In the wizardry of an ordered universe.
The All-containing was contained in form,
Oneness was carved into units measurable,
The limitless built into a cosmic sum:
Unending Space was beaten into a curve,

Indivisible Time into small minutes cut,
The infinitesimal massed to keep secure
The mystery of the Formless cast into form.
Invincibly their craft devised for use
The magic of sequent number and sign's spell,
Design's miraculous potency was caught
Laden with beauty and significance
And by the determining mandate of their gaze
Figure and quality equating joined
In an inextricable identity.
On each event they stamped its curves of law
And its trust and charge of burdened circumstance;
A free and divine incident no more
At each moment willed or adventure of the soul,
It lengthened a fate-bound mysterious chain,
A line foreseen of an immutable plan,
One step more in Necessity's long march.
A term was set for every eager Power
Restraining its will to monopolise the world,
A groove of bronze prescribed for force and act
And shown to each moment its appointed place
Forewilled inalterably in the spiral
Huge Time-loop fugitive from eternity.
Inevitable their thoughts like links of Fate
Imposed on the leap and lightning race of mind
And on the frail fortuitous flux of life
And on the liberty of atomic things
Immutable cause and adamant consequence.
Idea gave up the plastic infinity
To which it was born and now traced out instead
Small separate steps of chain-work in a plot:
Immortal once, now tied to birth and end,
Torn from its immediacy of errorless sight,
Knowledge was rebuilt from cells of inference
Into a fixed body flasque and perishable;
Thus bound it grew, but could not last and broke

And to a new thinking's body left its place.
A cage for the Infinite's great-eyed seraphim Thoughts
Was closed with a criss-cross of world-laws for bars
And hedged into a curt horizon's arc
The irised vision of the Ineffable.
A timeless Spirit was made the slave of the hours;
The Unbound was cast into a prison of birth
To make a world that Mind could grasp and rule.
On an earth which looked towards a thousand suns,
That the created might grow Nature's lord
And Matter's depths be illumined with a soul
They tied to date and norm and finite scope
The million-mysteried movement of the One.
   Above stood ranked a subtle archangel race
With larger lids and looks that searched the unseen.
A light of liberating knowledge shone
Across the gulfs of silence in their eyes;
They lived in the mind and knew truth from within;
A sight withdrawn in the concentrated heart
Could pierce behind the screen of Time's results
And the rigid cast and shape of visible things.
All that escaped conception's narrow noose
Vision descried and gripped; their seeing thoughts
Filled in the blanks left by the seeking sense.
High architects of possibility
And engineers of the impossible,
Mathematicians of the infinitudes
And theoricians of unknowable truths,
They formulate enigma's postulates
And join the unknown to the apparent worlds.
Acolytes they wait upon the timeless Power,
The cycle of her works investigate;
Passing her fence of wordless privacy
Their mind could penetrate her occult mind
And draw the diagram of her secret thoughts;
They read the codes and ciphers she had sealed,

Copies they made of all her guarded plans,
For every turn of her mysterious course
Assigned a reason and unchanging rule.
The unseen grew visible to student eyes,
Explained was the immense Inconscient's scheme,
Audacious lines were traced upon the Void;
The Infinite was reduced to square and cube.
Arranging symbol and significance,
Tracing the curve of a transcendent Power,
They framed the cabbala of the cosmic Law,
The balancing line discovered of Life's technique
And structured her magic and her mystery.
Imposing schemes of knowledge on the Vast
They clamped to syllogisms of finite thought
The free logic of an infinite Consciousness,
Grammared the hidden rhythms of Nature's dance,
Critiqued the plot of the drama of the worlds,
Made figure and number a key to all that is:
The psycho-analysis of cosmic Self
Was traced, its secrets hunted down, and read
The unknown pathology of the Unique.
Assessed was the system of the probable,
The hazard of fleeing possibilities,
To account for the Actual's unaccountable sum,
Necessity's logarithmic tables drawn,
Cast into a scheme the triple act of the One.
Unveiled, the abrupt invisible multitude
Of forces whirling from the hands of Chance
Seemed to obey some vast imperative:
Their tangled motives worked out unity.
A wisdom read their mind to themselves unknown,
Their anarchy rammed into a formula
And from their giant randomness of Force,
Following the habit of their million paths,
Distinguishing each faintest line and stroke
Of a concealed unalterable design,

Out of the chaos of the Invisible's moods
Derived the calculus of Destiny.
In its bright pride of universal lore
Mind's knowledge overtopped the Omniscient's power:
The Eternal's winging eagle puissances
Surprised in their untracked empyrean
Stooped from their gyres to obey the beck of Thought:
Each mysteried God forced to revealing form,
Assigned his settled moves in Nature's game,
Zigzagged at the gesture of a chess-player Will
Across the chequerboard of cosmic Fate.
In the wide sequence of Necessity's steps
Predicted, every act and thought of God,
Its values weighed by the accountant Mind,
Checked in his mathematised omnipotence,
Lost its divine aspect of miracle
And was a figure in a cosmic sum.
The mighty Mother's whims and lightning moods
Arisen from her all-wise unruled delight
In the freedom of her sweet and passionate breast,
Robbed of their wonder were chained to a cause and aim;
An idol of bronze replaced her mystic shape
That captures the movements of the cosmic vasts,
In the sketch precise of an ideal face
Forgotten was her eyelashes' dream-print
Carrying on their curve infinity's dreams,
Lost the alluring marvel of her eyes;
The surging wave-throbs of her vast sea-heart
They bound to a theorem of ordered beats:
Her deep designs which from herself she had veiled
Bowed self-revealed in their confessional.
For the birth and death of the worlds they fixed a date,
The diameter of infinity was drawn,
Measured the distant arc of the unseen heights
And visualised the plumbless viewless depths,
Till all seemed known that in all time could be.

All was coerced by number, name and form;
Nothing was left untold, incalculable.
Yet was their wisdom circled with a nought:
Truths they could find and hold but not the one Truth:
The Highest was to them unknowable.
By knowing too much they missed the whole to be known:
The fathomless heart of the world was left unguessed
And the Transcendent kept its secrecy.
  In a sublimer and more daring soar
To the wide summit of the triple stairs
Bare steps climbed up like flaming rocks of gold
Burning their way to a pure absolute sky.
August and few the sovereign Kings of Thought
Have made of Space their wide all-seeing gaze
Surveying the enormous work of Time:
A breadth of all-containing Consciousness
Supported Being in a still embrace.
Intercessors with a luminous Unseen,
They capt in the long passage to the world
The imperatives of the creator Self
Obeyed by unknowing earth, by conscious heaven;
Their thoughts are partners in its vast control.
A great all-ruling Consciousness is there
And Mind unwitting serves a higher Power;
It is a channel, not the source of all.
The cosmos is no accident in Time;
There is a meaning in each play of Chance,
There is a freedom in each face of Fate.
A Wisdom knows and guides the mysteried world;
A Truth-gaze shapes its beings and events;
A Word self-born upon creation's heights,
Voice of the Eternal in the temporal spheres,
Prophet of the seeings of the Absolute,
Sows the Idea's significance in Form
And from that seed the growths of Time arise.
On peaks beyond our ken the All-Wisdom sits:

A single and infallible look comes down,
A silent touch from the supernal's air
Awakes to ignorant knowledge in its acts
The secret power in the inconscient depths,
Compelling the blinded Godhead to emerge,
Determining Necessity's nude dance
As she passes through the circuit of the hours
And vanishes from the chase of finite eyes
Down circling vistas of aeonic Time.
The unseizable forces of the cosmic whirl
Bear in their bacchant limbs the fixity
Of an original foresight that is Fate.
Even Nature's ignorance is Truth's instrument;
Our struggling ego cannot change her course:
Yet is it a conscious power that moves in us,
A seed-idea is parent of our acts
And destiny the unrecognised child of Will.
Infallibly by Truth's directing gaze
All creatures here their secret self disclose,
Forced to become what in themselves they hide.
For He who Is grows manifest in the years
And the slow Godhead shut within the cell
Climbs from the plasm to immortality.
But hidden, but denied to mortal grasp,
Mystic, ineffable is the spirit's truth,
Unspoken, caught only by the spirit's eye.
When naked of ego and mind it hears the Voice;
It looks through light to ever greater light
And sees Eternity ensphering Life.
This greater Truth is foreign to our thoughts;
Where a free Wisdom works, they seek for a rule;
Or we only see a tripping game of Chance
Or a labour in chains forced by bound Nature's law,
An absolutism of dumb unthinking Power.
Audacious in their sense of God-born strength
These dared to grasp with their thought Truth's absolute;

By an abstract purity of godless sight,
By a percept nude, intolerant of forms,
They brought to Mind what Mind could never reach
And hoped to conquer Truth's supernal base.
A stripped imperative of conceptual phrase
Architectonic and inevitable
Translated the unthinkable into thought:
A silver-winged fire of naked subtle sense,
An ear of mind withdrawn from the outward's rhymes
Discovered the seed-sounds of the eternal Word,
The rhythm and music heard that built the worlds,
And seized in things the bodiless Will to be.
The Illimitable they measured with number's rods
And traced the last formula of limited things,
In transparent systems bodied termless truths,
The Timeless made accountable to Time
And valued the incommensurable Supreme.
To park and hedge the ungrasped infinitudes
They erected absolute walls of thought and speech
And made a vacuum to hold the One.
In their sight they drove towards an empty peak,
A mighty space of cold and sunlit air.
To unify their task, excluding life
Which cannot bear the nakedness of the Vast,
They made a cipher of a multitude,
In negation found the meaning of the All
And in nothingness the absolute positive.
A single law simplessed the cosmic theme,
Compressing Nature into a formula;
Their titan labour made all knowledge one,
A mental algebra of the Spirit's ways,
An abstract of the living Divinity.
Here the mind's wisdom stopped; it felt complete;
For nothing more was left to think or know:
In a spiritual zero it sat throned
And took its vast silence for the Ineffable.

This was the play of the bright gods of Thought.
Attracting into time the timeless Light,
Imprisoning eternity in the hours,
This they have planned, to snare the feet of Truth
In an aureate net of concept and of phrase
And keep her captive for the thinker's joy
In his little world built of immortal dreams:
There must she dwell mured in the human mind,
An empress prisoner in her subject's house,
Adored and pure and still on his heart's throne,
His splendid property cherished and apart
In the wall of silence of his secret muse,
Immaculate in white virginity,
The same for ever and for ever one,
His worshipped changeless Goddess through all time.
Or else, a faithful consort of his mind
Assenting to his nature and his will,
She sanctions and inspires his words and acts
Prolonging their resonance through the listening years,
Companion and recorder of his march
Crossing a brilliant tract of thought and life
Carved out of the eternity of Time.
A witness to his high triumphant star,
Her godhead servitor to a crowned Idea,
He shall dominate by her a prostrate world;
A warrant for his deeds and his beliefs,
She attests his right divine to lead and rule.
Or as a lover clasps his one beloved,
Godhead of his life's worship and desire,
Icon of his heart's sole idolatry,
She now is his and must live for him alone:
She has invaded him with her sudden bliss,
An exhaustless marvel in his happy grasp,
An allurement, a caught ravishing miracle.
Her now he claims after long rapt pursuit,
The one joy of his body and his soul:

Inescapable is her divine appeal,
Her immense possession an undying thrill,
An intoxication and an ecstasy:
The passion of her self-revealing moods,
A heavenly glory and variety,
Makes ever new her body to his eyes,
Or else repeats the first enchantment's touch,
The luminous rapture of her mystic breasts
And beautiful vibrant limbs a living field
Of throbbing new discovery without end.
A new beginning flowers in word and laugh,
A new charm brings back the old extreme delight:
He is lost in her, she is his heaven here.
Truth smiled upon the gracious golden game.
Out of her hushed eternal spaces leaned
The great and boundless Goddess feigned to yield
The sunlit sweetness of her secrecies.
Incarnating her beauty in his clasp
She gave for a brief kiss her immortal lips
And drew to her bosom one glorified mortal head:
She made earth her home, for whom heaven was too small.
In a human breast her occult presence lived;
He carved from his own self his figure of her:
She shaped her body to a mind's embrace.
Into thought's narrow limits she has come;
Her greatness she has suffered to be pressed
Into the little cabin of the Idea,
The closed room of a lonely thinker's grasp:
She has lowered her heights to the stature of our souls
And dazzled our lids with her celestial gaze.
Thus each is satisfied with his high gain
And thinks himself beyond mortality blest,
A king of truth upon his separate throne.
To her possessor in the field of Time
A single splendour caught from her glory seems
The one true light, her beauty's glowing whole.

But thought nor word can seize eternal Truth:
The whole world lives in a lonely ray of her sun.
In our thinking's close and narrow lamp-lit house
The vanity of our shut mortal mind
Dreams that the chains of thought have made her ours;
But only we play with our own brilliant bonds;
Tying her down, it is ourselves we tie.
In our hypnosis by one luminous point
We see not what small figure of her we hold;
We feel not her inspiring boundlessness,
We share not her immortal liberty.
Thus is it even with the seer and sage;
For still the human limits the divine:
Out of our thoughts we must leap up to sight,
Breathe her divine illimitable air,
Her simple vast supremacy confess,
Dare to surrender to her absolute.
Then the Unmanifest reflects his form
In the still mind as in a living glass;
The timeless Ray descends into our hearts
And we are rapt into eternity.
For Truth is wider, greater than her forms.
A thousand icons they have made of her
And find her in the idols they adore;
But she remains herself and infinite.

End of Canto Eleven

Canto Twelve

The Heavens of the Ideal

ALWAYS the Ideal beckoned from afar.
Awakened by the touch of the Unseen,
Deserting the boundary of things achieved,
Aspired the strong discoverer, tireless Thought,
Revealing at each step a luminous world.
It left known summits for the unknown peaks:
Impassioned, it sought the lone unrealised Truth,
It longed for the Light that knows not death and birth.
Each stage of the soul's remote ascent was built
Into a constant heaven felt always here.
At each pace of the journey marvellous
A new degree of wonder and of bliss,
A new rung formed in Being's mighty stair,
A great wide step trembling with jewelled fire
As if a burning spirit quivered there
Upholding with his flame the immortal hope,
As if a radiant God had given his soul
That he might feel the tread of pilgrim feet
Mounting in haste to the Eternal's house.
At either end of each effulgent stair
The heavens of the ideal Mind were seen
In a blue lucency of dreaming Space
Like strips of brilliant sky clinging to the moon.
On one side glimmered hue on floating hue,
A glory of sunrise breaking on the soul,
In a tremulous rapture of the heart's insight
And the spontaneous bliss that beauty gives,
The lovely kingdoms of the deathless Rose.
Above the spirit cased in mortal sense
Are superconscious realms of heavenly peace,
Below, the Inconscient's sullen dim abyss,

Between, behind our life, the deathless Rose.
Across the covert air the spirit breathes,
A body of the cosmic beauty and joy
Unseen, unguessed by the blind suffering world,
Climbing from Nature's deep surrendered heart
It blooms for ever at the feet of God,
Fed by life's sacrificial mysteries.
Here too its bud is born in human breasts;
Then by a touch, a presence or a voice
The world is turned into a temple ground
And all discloses the unknown Beloved.
In an outburst of heavenly joy and ease
Life yields to the divinity within
And gives the rapture-offering of its all,
And the soul opens to felicity.
A bliss is felt that never can wholly cease,
A sudden mystery of secret Grace
Flowers goldening our earth of red desire.
All the high gods who hid their visages
From the soiled passionate ritual of our hopes,
Reveal their names and their undying powers.
A fiery stillness wakes the slumbering cells,
A passion of the flesh becoming spirit,
And marvellously is fulfilled at last
The miracle for which our life was made.
A flame in a white voiceless cupola
Is seen and faces of immortal light,
The radiant limbs that know not birth and death,
The breasts that suckle the first-born of the Sun,
The wings that crowd thought's ardent silences,
The eyes that look into spiritual Space.
Our hidden centres of celestial force
Open like flowers to a heavenly atmosphere;
Mind pauses thrilled with the supernal Ray,
And even this transient body then can feel
Ideal love and flawless happiness

And laughter of the heart's sweetness and delight
Freed from the rude and tragic hold of Time,
And beauty and the rhythmic feet of the hours.
This in high realms touches immortal kind;
What here is in the bud has blossomed there.
There is the secrecy of the House of Flame,
The blaze of godlike thought and golden bliss,
The rapt idealism of heavenly sense;
There are the wonderful voices, the sun-laugh,
A gurgling eddy in rivers of God's joy,
And the mysteried vineyards of the gold moon-wine,
All the fire and sweetness of which hardly here
A brilliant shadow visits mortal life.
Although are witnessed there the joys of Time,
Pressed on the bosom the Immortal's touch is felt,
Heard are the flutings of the Infinite.
Here upon earth are early awakenings,
Moments that tremble in an air divine,
And grown upon the yearning of her soil
Time's sun-flowers' gaze at gold Eternity:
There are the imperishable beatitudes.
A million lotuses swaying on one stem,
World after coloured and ecstatic world
Climbs towards some far unseen epiphany.
   On the other side of the eternal stairs
The mighty kingdoms of the deathless Flame
Aspired to reach the Being's absolutes.
Out of the sorrow and darkness of the world,
Out of the depths where life and thought are tombed,
Lonely mounts up to heaven the deathless Flame.
In a veiled Nature's hallowed secrecies
It burns for ever on the altar Mind,
Its priests the souls of dedicated gods,
Humanity its house of sacrifice.
Once kindled, never can its flamings cease.
A fire along the mystic paths of earth,

It rises through the mortal's hemisphere,
Till borne by runners of the Day and Dusk
It enters the occult eternal Light
And clambers whitening to the invisible Throne.
Its worlds are steps of an ascending Force:
A dream of giant contours, titan lines,
Homes of unfallen and illumined Might,
Heavens of unchanging Good pure and unborn,
Heights of the grandeur of Truth's ageless ray,
As in a symbol sky they start to view
And call our souls into a vaster air.
On their summits they bear up the sleepless Flame;
Dreaming of a mysterious Beyond,
Transcendent of the paths of Fate and Time,
They point above themselves with index peaks
Through a pale-sapphire ether of god-mind
Towards some gold Infinite's apocalypse.
A thunder rolling mid the hills of God,
Tireless, severe is their tremendous Voice:
Exceeding us, to exceed ourselves they call
And bid us rise incessantly above.
Far from our eager reach those summits live,
Too lofty for our mortal strength and height,
Hardly in a dire ecstasy of toil
Climbed by the spirit's naked athlete will.
Austere, intolerant they claim from us
Efforts too lasting for our mortal nerve
Our hearts cannot cleave to nor our flesh support;
Only the Eternal's strength in us can dare
To attempt the immense adventure of that climb
And the sacrifice of all we cherish here.
Our human knowledge is a candle burnt
On a dim altar to a sun-vast Truth;
Man's virtue, a coarse-spun ill-fitting dress,
Apparels wooden images of Good;
Passionate and blinded, bleeding, stained with mire

His energy stumbles towards a deathless Force.
An imperfection dogs our highest strength;
Portions and pale reflections are our share.
Happy the worlds that have not felt our fall,
Where Will is one with Truth and Good with Power;
Impoverished not by earth-mind's indigence,
They keep God's natural breath of mightiness,
His bare spontaneous swift intensities;
There is his great transparent mirror, Self,
And there his sovereign autarchy of bliss
In which immortal natures have their part,
Heirs and cosharers of divinity.
He through the Ideal's kingdoms moved at will,
Accepted their beauty and their greatness bore,
Partook of the glories of their wonder fields,
But passed nor stayed beneath their splendour's rule.
All there was an intense but partial light.
In each a seraph-winged high-browed Idea
United all knowledge by one master thought,
Persuaded all action to one golden sense,
All powers subjected to a single power
And made a world where it could reign alone,
An absolute ideal's perfect home.
Insignia of their victory and their faith,
They offered to the Traveller at their gates
A quenchless flame or an unfading flower,
Emblem of a high kingdom's privilege.
A glorious shining Angel of the Way
Presented to the seeking of the soul
The sweetness and the might of an idea,
Each deemed Truth's intimate fount and summit force,
The heart of the meaning of the universe,
Perfection's key, passport to Paradise.
Yet were there regions where these absolutes met
And made a circle of bliss with married hands;
Light stood embraced by light, fire wedded fire,

But none in the other would his body lose
To find his soul in the world's single Soul,
A multiplied rapture of infinity.
Onward he passed to a diviner sphere:
There, joined in a common greatness, light and bliss,
All high and beautiful and desirable powers
Forgetting their difference and their separate reign
Become a single multitudinous whole.
Above the parting of the roads of Time,
Above the Silence and its thousandfold Word,
In the immutable and inviolate Truth
For ever united and inseparable,
The radiant children of Eternity dwell
On the wide spirit height where all are one.

End of Canto Twelve

Canto Thirteen

In the Self of Mind

AT LAST there came a bare indifferent sky
Where Silence listened to the cosmic Voice,
But answered nothing to a million calls;
The soul's endless question met with no response.
An abrupt conclusion ended eager hopes,
A deep cessation in a mighty calm,
A finis-line on the last page of thought
And a margin and a blank of wordless peace.
There paused the climbing hierarchy of worlds.
He stood on a wide arc of summit Space
Alone with an enormous Self of Mind
Which held all life in a corner of its vasts.
Omnipotent, immobile and aloof,
In the world which sprang from it, it took no part:
It gave no heed to the paeans of victory,
It was indifferent to its own defeats,
It heard the cry of grief and made no sign;
Impartial fell its gaze on evil and good,
It saw destruction come and did not move.
An equal Cause of things, a lonely Seer
And Master of its multitude of forms,
It acted not but bore all thoughts and deeds,
The witness Lord of Nature's myriad acts
Consenting to the movements of her Force.
His mind reflected this vast quietism.
This witness hush is the Thinker's secret base:
Hidden in silent depths the word is formed,
From hidden silences the act is born
Into the voiceful mind, the labouring world;
In secrecy wraps the seed the Eternal sows
Silence, the mystic birthplace of the soul.

In God's supreme withdrawn and timeless hush
A seeing Self and potent Energy met;
The Silence knew itself and thought took form:
Self-made from the dual power creation rose.
In the still self he lived and it in him;
Its mute immemorable listening depths,
Its vastness and its stillness were his own;
One being with it he grew wide, powerful, free.
Apart, unbound, he looked on all things done.
As one who builds his own imagined scenes
And loses not himself in what he sees,
Spectator of a drama self-conceived,
He looked on the world and watched its motive thoughts
With the burden of luminous prophecy in their eyes,
Its forces with their feet of wind and fire
Arisen from the dumbness in his soul.
All now he seemed to understand and know;
Desire came not nor any gust of will,
The great perturbed inquirer lost his task;
Nothing was asked nor wanted any more.
There he could stay, the Self, the Silence won:
His soul had peace, it knew the cosmic Whole.
Then suddenly a luminous finger fell
On all things seen or touched or heard or felt
And showed his mind that nothing could be known;
That must be reached from which all knowledge comes.
The sceptic Ray disrupted all that seems
And smote at the very roots of thought and sense.
In a universe of Nescience they have grown,
Aspiring towards a superconscient Sun,
Playing in shine and rain from heavenlier skies
They never can win however high their reach
Or overpass however keen their probe.
A doubt corroded even the means to think,
Distrust was thrown upon Mind's instruments;
All that it takes for reality's shining coin,

Proved fact, fixed inference, deduction clear,
Firm theory, assured significance,
Appeared as frauds upon Time's credit bank
Or assets valueless in Truth's treasury.
An Ignorance on an uneasy throne
Travestied with a fortuitous sovereignty
A figure of knowledge garbed in dubious words
And tinsel thought-forms brightly inadequate.
A labourer in the dark dazzled by half-light,
What it knew was an image in a broken glass,
What it saw was real but its sight untrue.
All the ideas in its vast repertory
Were like the mutterings of a transient cloud
That spent itself in sound and left no trace.
A frail house hanging in uncertain air,
The thin ingenious web round which it moves,
Put out awhile on the tree of the universe,
And gathered up into itself again,
Was only a trap to catch life's insect food,
Winged thoughts that flutter fragile in brief light
But dead, once captured in fixed forms of mind,
Aims puny but looming large in man's small scale,
Flickers of imagination's brilliant gauze
And cobweb-wrapped beliefs alive no more.
The magic hut of built-up certitudes
Made out of glittering dust and bright moonshine
In which it shrines its image of the Real,
Collapsed into the Nescience whence it rose.
Only a gleam was there of symbol facts
That shroud the mystery lurking in their glow,
And falsehoods based on hidden realities
By which they live until they fall from Time.
Our mind is a house haunted by the slain past,
Ideas soon mummified, ghosts of old truths,
God's spontaneities tied with formal strings
And packed into drawers of reason's trim bureau,

A grave of great lost opportunities,
Or an office for misuse of soul and life
And all the waste man makes of heaven's gifts
And all his squanderings of Nature's store,
A stage for the comedy of Ignorance.
The world seemed a long aeonic failure's scene:
All sterile grew, no base was left secure.
Assailed by the edge of the convicting beam
The builder Reason lost her confidence
In the successful sleight and turn of thought
That makes the soul the prisoner of a phrase.
Its highest wisdom was a brilliant guess,
Its mighty structured science of the worlds
A passing light on being's surfaces.
There was nothing there but a schema drawn by sense,
A substitute for eternal mysteries,
A scrawl figure of reality, a plan
And elevation by the architect Word
Imposed upon the semblances of Time.
Existence' self was shadowed by a doubt;
Almost it seemed a lotus-leaf afloat
On a nude pool of cosmic Nothingness.
This great spectator and creator Mind
Was only some half-seeing's delegate,
A veil that hung between the soul and Light,
An idol, not the living body of God.
Even the still spirit that looks upon its works
Was some pale front of the Unknowable;
A shadow seemed the wide and witness Self,
Its liberation and immobile calm
A void recoil of being from Time-made things,
Not the self-vision of Eternity.
Deep peace was there, but not the nameless Force:
Our sweet and mighty Mother was not there
Who gathers to her bosom her children's lives,
Her clasp that takes the world into her arms

In the fathomless rapture of the Infinite,
The Bliss that is creation's splendid grain
Or the white passion of God-ecstasy
That laughs in the blaze of the boundless heart of Love.
A greater Spirit than the Self of Mind
Must answer to the questioning of his soul.
For here was no firm clue and no sure road;
High-climbing pathways ceased in the unknown;
An artist Sight constructed the Beyond
In contrary patterns and conflicting hues;
A part-experience fragmented the Whole.
He looked above, but all was blank and still:
A sapphire firmament of abstract Thought
Escaped into a formless Vacancy.
He looked below, but all was dark and mute.
A noise was heard, between, of thought and prayer,
A strife, a labour without end or pause;
A vain and ignorant seeking raised its voice.
A rumour and a movement and a call,
A foaming mass, a cry innumerable
Rolled ever upon the ocean surge of Life
Along the coasts of mortal Ignorance.
On its unstable and enormous breast
Beings and forces, forms, ideas like waves
Jostled for figure and supremacy,
And rose and sank and rose again in Time;
And at the bottom of the sleepless stir,
A Nothingness parent of the struggling worlds,
A huge creator Death, a mystic Void,
For ever sustaining the irrational cry,
For ever excluding the supernal Word,
Motionless, refusing question and response,
Reposed beneath the voices and the march
The dim Inconscient's dumb incertitude.
Two firmaments of darkness and of light
Opposed their limits to the spirit's walk;

It moved veiled in from Self's infinity
In a world of beings and momentary events
Where all must die to live and live to die.
Immortal by renewed mortality,
It wandered in the spiral of its acts
Or ran around the cycles of its thought,
Yet was no more than its original self
And knew no more than when it first began.
To be was a prison, extinction the escape.

END OF CANTO THIRTEEN

Canto Fourteen

The World-Soul

A COVERT answer to his seeking came.
In a far shimmering background of Mind-Space
A glowing mouth was seen, a luminous shaft;
A recluse gate it seemed, musing on joy,
A veiled retreat and escape to mystery.
Away from the unsatisfied surface world
It fled into the bosom of the unknown,
A well, a tunnel of the depths of God.
It plunged as if a mystic groove of hope
Through many layers of formless voiceless self
To reach the last profound of the world's heart,
And from that heart there surged a wordless call
Pleading with some still impenetrable Mind,
Voicing some passionate unseen desire.
As if a beckoning finger of secrecy
Outstretched into a crystal mood of air,
Pointing at him from some near hidden depth,
As if a message from the world's deep soul,
An intimation of a lurking joy
That flowed out from a cup of brooding bliss,
There shimmered stealing out into the Mind
A mute and quivering ecstasy of light,
A passion and delicacy of roseate fire.
As one drawn to his lost spiritual home
Feels now the closeness of a waiting love,
Into a passage dim and tremulous
That clasped him in from day and night's pursuit,
He travelled led by a mysterious sound.
A murmur multitudinous and lone,
All sounds it was in turn, yet still the same.
A hidden call to unforeseen delight

In the summoning voice of one long-known, well-loved,
But nameless to the unremembering mind,
It led to rapture back the truant heart.
The immortal cry ravished the captive ear.
Then, lowering its imperious mystery,
It sank to a whisper circling round the soul.
It seemed the yearning of a lonely flute
That roamed along the shores of memory
And filled the eyes with tears of longing joy.
A cricket's rash and fiery single note,
It marked with shrill melody night's moonless hush
And beat upon a nerve of mystic sleep
Its high insistent magical reveille.
A jingling silver laugh of anklet bells
Travelled the roads of a solitary heart;
Its dance solaced an eternal loneliness:
An old forgotten sweetness sobbing came.
Or from a far harmonious distance heard
The tinkling pace of a long caravan
It seemed at times, or a vast forest's hymn,
The solemn reminder of a temple gong,
A bee-croon honey-drunk in summer isles
Ardent with ecstasy in a slumbrous noon,
Or the far anthem of a pilgrim sea.
An incense floated in the quivering air,
A mystic happiness trembled in the breast
As if the invisible Beloved had come
Assuming the sudden loveliness of a face
And close glad hands could seize his fugitive feet
And the world change with the beauty of a smile.
Into a wonderful bodiless realm he came,
The home of a passion without name or voice,
A depth he felt answering to every height,
A nook was found that could embrace all worlds,
A point that was the conscious knot of Space,
An hour eternal in the heart of Time.

The silent Soul of all the world was there:
A Being lived, a Presence and a Power,
A single Person who was himself and all
And cherished Nature's sweet and dangerous throbs
Transfigured into beats divine and pure.
One who could love without return for love,
Meeting and turning to the best the worst,
It healed the bitter cruelties of earth,
Transforming all experience to delight;
Intervening in the sorrowful paths of birth
It rocked the cradle of the cosmic Child
And stilled all weeping with its hand of joy;
It led things evil towards their secret good,
It turned racked falsehood into happy truth;
Its power was to reveal divinity.
Infinite, coeval with the mind of God,
It bore within itself a seed, a flame,
A seed from which the Eternal is new-born,
A flame that cancels death in mortal things.
All grew to all kindred and self and near;
The intimacy of God was everywhere,
No veil was felt, no brute barrier inert,
Distance could not divide, Time could not change.
A fire of passion burned in spirit-depths,
A constant touch of sweetness linked all hearts,
The throb of one adoration's single bliss
In a rapt ether of undying love.
An inner happiness abode in all,
A sense of universal harmonies,
A measureless secure eternity
Of truth and beauty and good and joy made one.
Here was the welling core of finite life;
A formless spirit became the soul of form.

All there was soul or made of sheer soul-stuff;
A sky of soul covered a deep soul-ground.

All here was known by a spiritual sense:
Thought was not there but a knowledge near and one
Seized on all things by a moved identity,
A sympathy of self with other selves,
The touch of consciousness on consciousness
And being's look on being with inmost gaze
And heart laid bare to heart without walls of speech
And the unanimity of seeing minds
In myriad forms luminous with the one God.
Life was not there, but an impassioned force,
Finer than fineness, deeper than the deeps,
Felt as a subtle and spiritual power,
A quivering out from soul to answering soul,
A mystic movement, a close influence,
A free and happy and intense approach
Of being to being with no screen or check,
Without which life and love could never have been.
Body was not there, for bodies were needed not,
The soul itself was its own deathless form
And met at once the touch of other souls
Close, blissful, concrete, wonderfully true.
As when one walks in sleep through luminous dreams
And, conscious, knows the truth their figures mean,
Here where reality was its own dream,
He knew things by their soul and not their shape:
As those who have lived long made one in love
Need word nor sign for heart's reply to heart,
He met and communed without bar of speech
With beings unveiled by a material frame.
There was a strange spiritual scenery,
A loveliness of lakes and streams and hills,
A flow, a fixity in a soul-space,
And plains and valleys, stretches of soul-joy,
And gardens that were flower-tracts of the spirit,
Its meditations of tinged reverie.
Air was the breath of a pure infinite.

A fragrance wandered in a coloured haze
As if the scent and hue of all sweet flowers
Had mingled to copy heaven's atmosphere.
Appealing to the soul and not the eye
Beauty lived there at home in her own house,
There all was beautiful by its own right
And needed not the splendour of a robe.
All objects were like bodies of the Gods,
A spirit symbol environing a soul,
For world and self were one reality.

Immersed in voiceless internatal trance
The beings that once wore forms on earth sat there
In shining chambers of spiritual sleep.
Passed were the pillar-posts of birth and death,
Passed was their little scene of symbol deeds,
Passed were the heavens and hells of their long road;
They had returned into the world's deep soul.
All now was gathered into pregnant rest:
Person and nature suffered a slumber change.
In trance they gathered back their bygone selves,
In a background memory's foreseeing muse
Prophetic of new personality
Arranged the map of their coming destiny's course:
Heirs of their past, their future's discoverers,
Electors of their own self-chosen lot,
They waited for the adventure of new life.
A Person persistent through the lapse of worlds,
Although the same for ever in many shapes
By the outward mind unrecognisable,
Assuming names unknown in unknown climes
Imprints through Time upon the earth's worn page
A growing figure of its secret self,
And learns by experience what the spirit knew,
Till it can see its truth alive and God.
Once more they must face the problem-game of birth,

The soul's experiment of joy and grief
And thought and impulse lighting the blind act,
And venture on the roads of circumstance,
Through inner movements and external scenes
Travelling to self across the forms of things.
Into creation's centre he had come.
The spirit wandering from state to state
Finds here the silence of its starting-point
In the formless force and the still fixity
And brooding passion of the world of Soul.
All that is made and once again unmade,
The calm persistent vision of the One
Inevitably re-makes, it lives anew:
Forces and lives and beings and ideas
Are taken into the stillness for a while;
There they remould their purpose and their drift,
Recast their nature and re-form their shape.
Ever they change and changing ever grow,
And passing through a fruitful stage of death
And after long reconstituting sleep
Resume their place in the process of the Gods
Until their work in cosmic Time is done.
   Here was the fashioning chamber of the worlds.
An interval was left twixt act and act,
Twixt birth and birth, twixt dream and waking dream,
A pause that gave new strength to do and be.
Beyond were regions of delight and peace,
Mute birthplaces of light and hope and love,
And cradles of heavenly rapture and repose.
In a slumber of the voices of the world
He of the eternal moment grew aware;
His knowledge stripped bare of the garbs of sense
Knew by identity without thought or word;
His being saw itself without its veils,
Life's line fell from the spirit's infinity.
Along a road of pure interior light,

Alone between tremendous Presences,
Under the watching eyes of nameless Gods,
His soul passed on, a single conscious power,
Towards the end which ever begins again,
Approaching through a stillness dumb and calm
To the source of all things human and divine.
There he beheld in their mighty union's poise
The figure of the deathless Two-in-One,
A single being in two bodies clasped,
A diarchy of two united souls,
Seated absorbed in deep creative joy;
Their trance of bliss sustained the mobile world.
Behind them in a morning dusk One stood
Who brought them forth from the Unknowable.
Ever disguised she awaits the seeking spirit;
Watcher on the supreme unreachable peaks,
Guide of the traveller of the unseen paths,
She guards the austere approach to the Alone.
At the beginning of each far-spread plane
Pervading with her power the cosmic suns
She reigns, inspirer of its multiple works
And thinker of the symbol of its scene.
Above them all she stands supporting all,
The sole omnipotent Goddess ever-veiled
Of whom the world is the inscrutable mask;
The ages are the footfalls of her tread,
Their happenings the figure of her thoughts,
And all creation is her endless act.
His spirit was made a vessel of her force;
Mute in the fathomless passion of his will
He outstretched to her his folded hands of prayer.
Then in a sovereign answer to his heart
A gesture came as of worlds thrown away,
And from her raiment's lustrous mystery raised
One arm half-parted the eternal veil.
A light appeared still and imperishable.

Attracted to the large and luminous depths
Of the ravishing enigma of her eyes,
He saw the mystic outline of a face.
Overwhelmed by her implacable light and bliss,
An atom of her illimitable self
Mastered by the honey and lightning of her power,
Tossed towards the shores of her ocean-ecstasy,
Drunk with a deep golden spiritual wine,
He cast from the rent stillness of his soul
A cry of adoration and desire
And the surrender of his boundless mind
And the self-giving of his silent heart.
He fell down at her feet unconscious, prone.

END OF CANTO FOURTEEN

Canto Fifteen

The Kingdoms of the Greater Knowledge

AFTER a measureless moment of the soul
Again returning to these surface fields
Out of the timeless depths where he had sunk,
He heard once more the slow tread of the hours.
All once perceived and lived was far away;
Himself was to himself his only scene.
Above the Witness and his universe
He stood in a realm of boundless silences
Awaiting the Voice that spoke and built the worlds.
A light was round him wide and absolute,
A diamond purity of eternal sight;
A consciousness lay still, devoid of forms,
Free, wordless, uncoerced by sign or rule,
For ever content with only being and bliss;
A sheer existence lived in its own peace
On the single spirit's bare and infinite ground.
Out of the sphere of Mind he had arisen,
He had left the reign of Nature's hues and shades;
He dwelt in his self's colourless purity.
It was a plane of undetermined spirit
That could be a zero or round sum of things,
A state in which all ceased and all began.
All it became that figures the absolute,
A high vast peak whence Spirit could see the worlds,
Calm's wide epiphany, wisdom's mute home,
A lonely station of Omniscience,
A diving-board of the Eternal's power,
A white floor in the house of All-Delight.
Here came the thought that passes beyond Thought,
Here the still Voice which our listening cannot hear,
The Knowledge by which the knower is the known,

The Love in which beloved and lover are one.
All stood in an original plenitude,
Hushed and fulfilled before they could create
The glorious dream of their universal acts;
Here was engendered the spiritual birth,
Here closed the finite's crawl to the Infinite.
A thousand roads leaped into Eternity
Or singing ran to meet God's veilless face.
The Known released him from its limiting chain;
He knocked at the doors of the Unknowable.
Thence gazing with an immeasurable outlook
One with self's inlook into its own pure vasts,
He saw the splendour of the spirit's realms,
The greatness and wonder of its boundless works,
The power and passion leaping from its calm,
The rapture of its movement and its rest,
And its fire-sweet miracle of transcendent life,
The million-pointing undivided grasp
Of its vision of one same stupendous All,
Its inexhaustible acts in a timeless Time,
A space that is its own infinity.
A glorious multiple of one radiant Self,
Answering to joy with joy, to love with love,
All there were moving mansions of God-bliss;
Eternal and unique they lived the One.
There forces are great outbursts of God's truth
And objects are its pure spiritual shapes;
Spirit no more is hid from its own view,
All sentience is a sea of happiness
And all creation is an act of light.
Out of the neutral silence of his soul
He passed to its fields of puissance and of calm
And saw the Powers that stand above the world,
Traversed the realms of the supreme Idea
And sought the summit of created things
And the almighty source of cosmic change.

There Knowledge called him to her mystic peaks
Where thought is held in a vast internal sense
And feeling swims across a sea of peace
And vision climbs beyond the reach of Time.
An equal of the first creator seers,
Accompanied by an all-revealing light
He moved through regions of transcendent Truth
Inward, immense, innumerably one.
There distance was his own huge spirit's extent;
Delivered from the fictions of the mind
Time's triple dividing step baffled no more;
Its inevitable and continuous stream,
The long flow of its manifesting course,
Was held in spirit's single wide regard.
A universal beauty showed its face:
The invisible deep-fraught significances,
Here sheltered behind form's insensible screen,
Uncovered to him their deathless harmony
And the key to the wonder-book of common things.
In their uniting law stood up revealed
The multiple measures of the upbuilding force,
The lines of the World-Geometer's technique,
The enchantments that uphold the cosmic web
And the magic underlying simple shapes.
On peaks where Silence listens with still heart
To the rhythmic metres of the rolling worlds,
He served the sessions of the triple Fire.
On the rim of two continents of slumber and trance
He heard the ever unspoken Reality's voice
Awaken revelation's mystic cry,
The birthplace found of the sudden infallible Word
And lived in the rays of an intuitive Sun.
Absolved from the ligaments of death and sleep
He rode the lightning seas of cosmic Mind
And crossed the ocean of original sound;
On the last step to the supernal birth

He trod along extinction's narrow edge
Near the high verges of eternity,
And mounted the gold ridge of the world-dream
Between the slayer and the saviour fires;
The belt he reached of the unchanging Truth,
Met borders of the inexpressible Light
And thrilled with the presence of the Ineffable.
Above him he saw the flaming Hierarchies,
The wings that fold around created Space,
The sun-eyed Guardians and the golden Sphinx
And the tiered planes and the immutable Lords.
A wisdom waiting on Omniscience
Sat voiceless in a vast passivity;
It judged not, measured not, nor strove to know,
But listened for the veiled all-seeing Thought
And the burden of a calm transcendent Voice.
He had reached the top of all that can be known:
His sight surpassed creation's head and base;
Ablaze the triple heavens revealed their suns,
The obscure Abyss exposed its monstrous rule.
All but the ultimate Mystery was his field,
Almost the Unknowable disclosed its rim.
His self's infinities began to emerge,
The hidden universes cried to him;
Eternities called to eternities
Sending their speechless message still remote.
Arisen from the marvel of the depths
And burning from the superconscious heights
And sweeping in great horizontal gyres
A million energies joined and were the One.
All flowed immeasurably to one sea:
All living forms became its atom homes.
A Panergy that harmonised all life
Held now existence in its vast control;
A portion of that majesty he was made.
At will he lived in the unoblivious Ray.

In that high realm where no untruth can come,
Where all are different and all is one,
In the Impersonal's ocean without shore
The Person in the World-Spirit anchored rode;
It thrilled with the mighty marchings of World-Force,
Its acts were the comrades of God's infinite peace.
An adjunct glory and a symbol self,
The body was delivered to the soul, —
An immortal point of power, a block of poise
In a cosmicity's wide formless surge,
A conscious edge of the Transcendent's might
Carving perfection from a bright world-stuff,
It figured in it a universe's sense.
There consciousness was a close and single weft;
The far and near were one in spirit-space,
The moments there were pregnant with all time.
The superconscient's screen was ripped by thought,
Idea rotated symphonies of sight,
Sight was a flame-throw from identity;
Life was a marvellous journey of the spirit,
Feeling a wave from the universal Bliss.
In the kingdom of the Spirit's power and light,
As if one who arrived out of infinity's womb
He came new-born, infant and limitless
And grew in the wisdom of the timeless Child;
He was a vast that soon became a Sun.
A great luminous silence whispered to his heart;
His knowledge an inview caught unfathomable,
An outview by no brief horizons cut:
He thought and felt in all, his gaze had power.
He communed with the Incommunicable;
Beings of a wider consciousness were his friends,
Forms of a larger subtler make drew near;
The Gods conversed with him behind Life's veil.
Neighbour his being grew to Nature's crests.
The primal Energy took him in its arms;

His brain was wrapped in overwhelming light,
An all-embracing knowledge seized his heart:
Thoughts rose in him no earthly mind can hold,
Mights played that never coursed through mortal nerves:
He scanned the secrets of the Overmind,
He bore the rapture of the Oversoul.
A borderer of the empire of the Sun,
Attuned to the supernal harmonies,
He linked creation to the Eternal's sphere.
His finite parts approached their absolutes,
His actions framed the movements of the Gods,
His will took up the reins of cosmic Force.

END OF CANTO FIFTEEN
END OF BOOK TWO

BOOK THREE

The Book of the Divine Mother

Canto One

The Pursuit of the Unknowable

ALL IS too little that the world can give:
Its power and knowledge are the gifts of Time
And cannot fill the spirit's sacred thirst.
Although of One these forms of greatness are
And by its breath of grace our lives abide,
Although more near to us than nearness' self,
It is some utter truth of what we are;
Hidden by its own works, it seemed far-off,
Impenetrable, occult, voiceless, obscure.
The Presence was lost by which all things have charm,
The Glory lacked of which they are dim signs.
The world lived on made empty of its Cause,
Like love when the beloved's face is gone.
The labour to know seemed a vain strife of Mind;
All knowledge ended in the Unknowable:
The effort to rule seemed a vain pride of Will;
A trivial achievement scorned by Time,
All power retired into the Omnipotent.
A cave of darkness guards the eternal Light.
A silence settled on his striving heart;
Absolved from the voices of the world's desire,
He turned to the Ineffable's timeless call.
A Being intimate and unnameable,
A wide compelling ecstasy and peace
Felt in himself and all and yet ungrasped,
Approached and faded from his soul's pursuit
As if for ever luring him beyond.
Near, it retreated; far, it called him still.
Nothing could satisfy but its delight:
Its absence left the greatest actions dull,
Its presence made the smallest seem divine.

When it was there, the heart's abyss was filled;
But when the uplifting Deity withdrew,
Existence lost its aim in the Inane.
The order of the immemorial planes,
The godlike fullness of the instruments
Were turned to props for an impermanent scene.
But who that mightiness was he knew not yet.
Impalpable, yet filling all that is,
It made and blotted out a million worlds
And took and lost a thousand shapes and names.
It wore the guise of an indiscernible Vast,
Or was a subtle kernel in the soul:
A distant greatness left it huge and dim,
A mystic closeness shut it sweetly in:
It seemed sometimes a figment or a robe
And seemed sometimes his own colossal shade.
A giant doubt overshadowed his advance.
Across a neutral all-supporting Void
Whose blankness nursed his lone immortal spirit,
Allured towards some recondite Supreme,
Aided, coerced by enigmatic Powers,
Aspiring and half-sinking and upborne,
Invincibly he ascended without pause.
Always a signless vague Immensity
Brooded, without approach, beyond response,
Condemning finite things to nothingness,
Fronting him with the incommensurable.
Then to the ascent there came a mighty term.
A height was reached where nothing made could live,
A line where every hope and search must cease
Neared some intolerant bare Reality,
A zero formed pregnant with boundless change.
On a dizzy verge where all disguises fail
And human mind must abdicate in Light
Or die like a moth in the naked blaze of Truth,
He stood compelled to a tremendous choice.

All he had been and all towards which he grew
Must now be left behind or else transform
Into a self of That which has no name.
Alone and fronting an intangible Force
Which offered nothing to the grasp of Thought,
His spirit faced the adventure of the Inane.
Abandoned by the worlds of Form he strove.
A fruitful world-wide Ignorance foundered here;
Thought's long far-circling journey touched its close
And ineffective paused the actor Will.
The symbol modes of being helped no more,
The structures Nescience builds collapsing failed,
And even the spirit that holds the universe
Fainted in luminous insufficiency.
In an abysmal lapse of all things built
Transcending every perishable support
And joining at last its mighty origin,
The separate self must melt or be reborn
Into a Truth beyond the mind's appeal.
All glory of outline, sweetness of harmony,
Rejected like a grace of trivial notes,
Expunged from Being's silence nude, austere,
Died into a fine and blissful Nothingness.
The Demiurges lost their names and forms,
The great schemed worlds that they had planned and wrought
Passed, taken and abolished one by one.
The universe removed its coloured veil,
And at the unimaginable end
Of the huge riddle of created things
Appeared the far-seen Godhead of the whole,
His feet firm-based on Life's stupendous wings,
Omnipotent, a lonely seer of Time,
Inward, inscrutable, with diamond gaze.
Attracted by the unfathomable regard
The unsolved slow cycles to their fount returned
To rise again from that invisible sea.

All from his puissance born was now undone;
Nothing remained the cosmic Mind conceives.
Eternity prepared to fade and seemed
A hue and imposition on the Void,
Space was the fluttering of a dream that sank
Before its ending into Nothing's deeps.
The spirit that dies not and the Godhead's self
Seemed myths projected from the Unknowable;
From It all sprang, in It is called to cease.
But what That was, no thought nor sight could tell.
Only a formless Form of self was left,
A tenuous ghost of something that had been,
The last experience of a lapsing wave
Before it sinks into a bourneless sea,—
As if it kept even on the brink of Nought
Its bare feeling of the ocean whence it came.
A Vastness brooded free from sense of Space,
An Everlastingness cut off from Time;
A strange sublime inalterable Peace
Silent rejected from it world and soul.
A stark companionless Reality
Answered at last to his soul's passionate search:
Passionless, wordless, absorbed in its fathomless hush,
Keeping the mystery none would ever pierce,
It brooded inscrutable and intangible
Facing him with its dumb tremendous calm.
It had no kinship with the universe:
There was no act, no movement in its Vast:
Life's question met by its silence died on her lips,
The world's effort ceased convicted of ignorance
Finding no sanction of supernal Light:
There was no mind there with its need to know,
There was no heart there with its need to love.
All person perished in its namelessness.
There was no second, it had no partner or peer;
Only itself was real to itself.

A pure existence safe from thought and mood,
A consciousness of unshared immortal bliss,
It dwelt aloof in its bare infinite,
One and unique, unutterably sole.
A Being formless, featureless and mute
That knew itself by its own timeless self,
Aware for ever in its motionless depths,
Uncreating, uncreated and unborn,
The One by whom all live, who lives by none,
An immeasurable luminous secrecy
Guarded by the veils of the Unmanifest,
Above the changing cosmic interlude
Abode supreme, immutably the same,
A silent Cause occult, impenetrable, —
Infinite, eternal, unthinkable, alone.

END OF CANTO ONE

Canto Two

The Adoration of the Divine Mother

A STILLNESS absolute, incommunicable,
Meets the sheer self-discovery of the soul;
A wall of stillness shuts it from the world,
A gulf of stillness swallows up the sense
And makes unreal all that mind has known,
All that the labouring senses still would weave
Prolonging an imaged unreality.
Self's vast spiritual silence occupies Space;
Only the Inconceivable is left,
Only the Nameless without space and time:
Abolished is the burdening need of life:
Thought falls from us, we cease from joy and grief;
The ego is dead; we are freed from being and care,
We have done with birth and death and work and fate.
O soul, it is too early to rejoice!
Thou hast reached the boundless silence of the Self,
Thou hast leaped into a glad divine abyss;
But where hast thou thrown Self's mission and Self's power?
On what dead bank on the Eternal's road?
One was within thee who was self and world,
What hast thou done for his purpose in the stars?
Escape brings not the victory and the crown!
Something thou cam'st to do from the Unknown,
But nothing is finished and the world goes on
Because only half God's cosmic work is done.
Only the everlasting No has neared
And stared into thy eyes and killed thy heart:
But where is the Lover's everlasting Yes,
And immortality in the secret heart,
The voice that chants to the creator Fire,
The symbolled OM, the great assenting Word,

The bridge between the rapture and the calm,
The passion and the beauty of the Bride,
The chamber where the glorious enemies kiss,
The smile that saves, the golden peak of things?
This too is Truth at the mystic fount of Life.
A black veil has been lifted; we have seen
The mighty shadow of the omniscient Lord;
But who has lifted up the veil of light
And who has seen the body of the King?
The mystery of God's birth and acts remains
Leaving unbroken the last chapter's seal,
Unsolved the riddle of the unfinished Play;
The cosmic Player laughs within his mask,
And still the last inviolate secret hides
Behind the human glory of a Form,
Behind the gold eidolon of a Name.
A large white line has figured as a goal,
But far beyond the ineffable suntracks blaze:
What seemed the source and end was a wide gate,
A last bare step into eternity.
An eye has opened upon timelessness,
Infinity takes back the forms it gave,
And through God's darkness or his naked light
His million rays return into the Sun.
There is a zero sign of the Supreme;
Nature left nude and still uncovers God.
But in her grandiose nothingness all is there:
When her strong garbs are torn away from us,
The soul's ignorance is slain but not the soul:
The zero covers an immortal face.
A high and blank negation is not all,
A huge extinction is not God's last word,
Life's ultimate sense, the close of being's course,
The meaning of this great mysterious world.
In absolute silence sleeps an absolute Power.
Awaking, it can wake the trance-bound soul

And in the ray reveal the parent sun:
It can make the world a vessel of Spirit's force,
It can fashion in the clay God's perfect shape.
To free the self is but one radiant pace;
Here to fulfil himself was God's desire.

Even while he stood on being's naked edge
And all the passion and seeking of his soul
Faced their extinction in some featureless Vast,
The Presence he yearned for suddenly drew close.
Across the silence of the ultimate Calm,
Out of a marvellous Transcendence' core,
A body of wonder and translucency
As if a sweet mystic summary of her self
Escaping into the original Bliss
Had come enlarged out of eternity,
Someone came infinite and absolute.
A being of wisdom, power and delight,
Even as a mother draws her child to her arms,
Took to her breast Nature and world and soul.
Abolishing the signless emptiness,
Breaking the vacancy and voiceless hush,
Piercing the limitless Unknowable,
Into the liberty of the motionless depths
A beautiful and felicitous lustre stole.
The Power, the Light, the Bliss no word can speak
Imaged itself in a surprising beam
And built a golden passage to his heart
Touching through him all longing sentient things.
A moment's sweetness of the All-Beautiful
Cancelled the vanity of the cosmic whirl.
A Nature throbbing with a Heart divine
Was felt in the unconscious universe;
It made the breath a happy mystery.
A love that bore the cross of pain with joy
Eudaemonised the sorrow of the world,

Made happy the weight of long unending Time,
The secret caught of God's felicity.
Affirming in life a hidden ecstasy
It held the spirit to its miraculous course;
Carrying immortal values to the hours
It justified the labour of the suns.
For one was there supreme behind the God.
A Mother Might brooded upon the world;
A Consciousness revealed its marvellous front
Transcending all that is, denying none:
Imperishable above our fallen heads
He felt a rapturous and unstumbling Force.
The undying Truth appeared, the enduring Power
Of all that here is made and then destroyed,
The Mother of all godheads and all strengths
Who, mediatrix, binds earth to the Supreme.
The Enigma ceased that rules our nature's night,
The covering Nescience was unmasked and slain;
Its mind of error was stripped off from things
And the dull moods of its perverting will.
Illumined by her all-seeing identity
Knowledge and Ignorance could strive no more;
No longer could the titan Opposites,
Antagonist poles of the world's artifice,
Impose the illusion of their twofold screen
Throwing their figures between us and her.
The Wisdom was near, disguised by its own works,
Of which the darkened universe is the robe.
No more existence seemed an aimless fall,
Extinction was no more the sole release.
The hidden Word was found, the long-sought clue,
Revealed was the meaning of our spirit's birth,
Condemned to an imperfect body and mind,
In the inconscience of material things
And the indignity of mortal life.
A Heart was felt in the spaces wide and bare,

A burning Love from white spiritual founts
Annulled the sorrow of the ignorant depths;
Suffering was lost in her immortal smile.
A Life from beyond grew conqueror here of death;
To err no more was natural to mind;
Wrong could not come where all was light and love.
The Formless and the Formed were joined in her:
Immensity was exceeded by a look,
A Face revealed the crowded Infinite.
Incarnating inexpressibly in her limbs
The boundless joy the blind world-forces seek,
Her body of beauty mooned the seas of bliss.
At the head she stands of birth and toil and fate,
In their slow round the cycles turn to her call;
Alone her hands can change Time's dragon base.
Hers is the mystery the Night conceals;
The spirit's alchemist energy is hers;
She is the golden bridge, the wonderful fire.
The luminous heart of the Unknown is she,
A power of silence in the depths of God;
She is the Force, the inevitable Word,
The magnet of our difficult ascent,
The Sun from which we kindle all our suns,
The Light that leans from the unrealised Vasts,
The joy that beckons from the impossible,
The Might of all that never yet came down.
All Nature dumbly calls to her alone
To heal with her feet the aching throb of life
And break the seals on the dim soul of man
And kindle her fire in the closed heart of things.
All here shall be one day her sweetness' home,
All contraries prepare her harmony;
Towards her our knowledge climbs, our passion gropes;
In her miraculous rapture we shall dwell,
Her clasp shall turn to ecstasy our pain.
Our self shall be one self with all through her.

In her confirmed because transformed in her,
Our life shall find in its fulfilled response
Above, the boundless hushed beatitudes,
Below, the wonder of the embrace divine.
This known as in a thunder-flash of God,
The rapture of things eternal filled his limbs;
Amazement fell upon his ravished sense;
His spirit was caught in her intolerant flame.
Once seen, his heart acknowledged only her.
Only a hunger of infinite bliss was left.
All aims in her were lost, then found in her;
His base was gathered to one pointing spire.

This was a seed cast into endless Time.
A Word is spoken or a Light is shown,
A moment sees, the ages toil to express.
So flashing out of the Timeless leaped the worlds;
An eternal instant is the cause of the years.
All he had done was to prepare a field;
His small beginnings asked for a mighty end:
For all that he had been must now new-shape
In him her joy to embody, to enshrine
Her beauty and greatness in his house of life.
But now his being was too wide for self;
His heart's demand had grown immeasurable:
His single freedom could not satisfy,
Her light, her bliss he asked for earth and men.
But vain are human power and human love
To break earth's seal of ignorance and death;
His nature's might seemed now an infant's grasp;
Heaven is too high for outstretched hands to seize.
This Light comes not by struggle or by thought;
In the mind's silence the Transcendent acts
And the hushed heart hears the unuttered Word.
A vast surrender was his only strength.
A Power that lives upon the heights must act,

Bring into life's closed room the Immortal's air
And fill the finite with the Infinite.
All that denies must be torn out and slain
And crushed the many longings for whose sake
We lose the One for whom our lives were made.
Now other claims had hushed in him their cry:
Only he longed to draw her presence and power
Into his heart and mind and breathing frame;
Only he yearned to call for ever down
Her healing touch of love and truth and joy
Into the darkness of the suffering world.
His soul was freed and given to her alone.

END OF CANTO TWO

Canto Three

The House of the Spirit and the New Creation

A MIGHTIER task remained than all he had done.
To That he turned from which all being comes,
A sign attending from the Secrecy
Which knows the Truth ungrasped behind our thoughts
And guards the world with its all-seeing gaze.
In the unapproachable stillness of his soul,
Intense, one-pointed, monumental, lone,
Patient he sat like an incarnate hope
Motionless on a pedestal of prayer.
A strength he sought that was not yet on earth,
Help from a Power too great for mortal will,
The light of a Truth now only seen afar,
A sanction from his high omnipotent Source.
But from the appalling heights there stooped no voice;
The timeless lids were closed; no opening came.
A neutral helpless void oppressed the years.
In the texture of our bound humanity
He felt the stark resistance huge and dumb
Of our inconscient and unseeing base,
The stubborn mute rejection in life's depths,
The ignorant No in the origin of things.
A veiled collaboration with the Night
Even in himself survived and hid from his view:
Still something in his earthly being kept
Its kinship with the Inconscient whence it came.
A shadowy unity with a vanished past
Treasured in an old-world frame was lurking there,
Secret, unnoted by the illumined mind,
And in subconscious whispers and in dream
Still murmured at the mind's and spirit's choice.
Its treacherous elements spread like slippery grains

Hoping the incoming Truth might stumble and fall,
And old ideal voices wandering moaned
And pleaded for a heavenly leniency
To the gracious imperfections of our earth
And the sweet weaknesses of our mortal state.
This now he willed to discover and exile,
The element in him betraying God.
All Nature's recondite spaces were stripped bare,
All her dim crypts and corners searched with fire
Where refugee instincts and unshaped revolts
Could shelter find in darkness' sanctuary
Against the white purity of heaven's cleansing flame.
All seemed to have perished that was undivine:
Yet some minutest dissident might escape
And still a centre lurk of the blind force.
For the Inconscient too is infinite;
The more its abysses we insist to sound,
The more it stretches, stretches endlessly.
Then lest a human cry should spoil the Truth
He tore desire up from its bleeding roots
And offered to the gods the vacant place.
Thus could he bear the touch immaculate.
A last and mightiest transformation came.
His soul was all in front like a great sea
Flooding the mind and body with its waves;
His being, spread to embrace the universe,
United the within and the without
To make of life a cosmic harmony,
An empire of the immanent Divine.
In this tremendous universality
Not only his soul-nature and mind-sense
Included every soul and mind in his,
But even the life of flesh and nerve was changed
And grew one flesh and nerve with all that lives;
He felt the joy of others as his joy,
He bore the grief of others as his grief;

His universal sympathy upbore,
Immense like ocean, the creation's load
As earth upbears all beings' sacrifice,
Thrilled with the hidden Transcendent's joy and peace.
There was no more division's endless scroll;
One grew the Spirit's secret unity,
All Nature felt again the single bliss.
There was no cleavage between soul and soul,
There was no barrier between world and God.
Overpowered were form and memory's limiting line;
The covering mind was seized and torn apart;
It was dissolved and now no more could be,
The one Consciousness that made the world was seen;
All now was luminosity and force.
Abolished in its last thin fainting trace
The circle of the little self was gone;
The separate being could no more be felt;
It disappeared and knew itself no more,
Lost in the spirit's wide identity.
His nature grew a movement of the All,
Exploring itself to find that all was He,
His soul was a delegation of the All
That turned from itself to join the one Supreme.
Transcended was the human formula;
Man's heart that had obscured the Inviolable
Assumed the mighty beating of a god's;
His seeking mind ceased in the Truth that knows;
His life was a flow of the universal life.
He stood fulfilled on the world's highest line
Awaiting the ascent beyond the world,
Awaiting the descent the world to save.
A Splendour and a Symbol wrapped the earth,
Serene epiphanies looked and hallowed vasts
Surrounded, wise infinitudes were close
And bright remotenesses leaned near and kin.
Sense failed in that tremendous lucency;

Ephemeral voices from his hearing fell
And Thought potent no more sank large and pale
Like a tired god into mysterious seas.
The robes of mortal thinking were cast down
Leaving his knowledge bare to absolute sight;
Fate's driving ceased and Nature's sleepless spur:
The athlete heavings of the will were stilled
In the Omnipotent's unmoving peace.
Life in his members lay down vast and mute;
Naked, unwalled, unterrified it bore
The immense regard of Immortality.
The last movement died and all at once grew still.
A weight that was the unseen Transcendent's hand
Laid on his limbs the Spirit's measureless seal,
Infinity swallowed him into shoreless trance.

As one who sets his sail towards mysteried shores
Driven through huge oceans by the breath of God,
The fathomless below, the unknown around,
His soul abandoned the blind star-field, Space.
Afar from all that makes the measured world,
Plunging to hidden eternities it withdrew
Back from mind's foaming surface to the Vasts
Voiceless within us in omniscient sleep.
Above the imperfect reach of word and thought,
Beyond the sight that seeks support of form,
Lost in deep tracts of superconscient Light,
Or voyaging in blank featureless Nothingness,
Sole in the trackless Incommensurable,
Or past not-self and self and selflessness,
Transgressing the dream-shores of conscious mind
He reached at last his sempiternal base.
On sorrowless heights no winging cry disturbs,
Pure and untouched above this mortal play
Is spread the spirit's hushed immobile air.
There no beginning is and there no end;

There is the stable force of all that moves;
There the aeonic labourer is at rest.
There turns no keyed creation in the void,
No giant mechanism watched by a soul;
There creaks no fate-turned huge machinery;
The marriage of evil with good within one breast,
The clash of strife in the very clasp of love,
The dangerous pain of life's experiment
In the values of Inconsequence and Chance,
The peril of mind's gamble, throwing our lives
As stake in a wager of indifferent gods
And the shifting lights and shadows of the idea
Falling upon the surface consciousness,
And in the dream of a mute witness soul
Creating the error of a half-seen world
Where knowledge is a seeking ignorance,
Life's steps a stumbling series without suit,
Its aspect of fortuitous design,
Its equal measure of the true and false
In that immobile and immutable realm
Find no access, no cause, no right to live:
There only reigns the spirit's motionless power
Poised in itself through still eternity
And its omniscient and omnipotent peace.
Thought clashes not with thought and truth with truth,
There is no war of right with rival right;
There are no stumbling and half-seeing lives
Passing from chance to unexpected chance,
No suffering of hearts compelled to beat
In bodies of the inert Inconscient's make.
Armed with the immune occult unsinking Fire
The guardians of Eternity keep its law
For ever fixed upon Truth's giant base
In her magnificent and termless home.
There Nature on her dumb spiritual couch
Immutably transcendent knows her source

And to the stir of multitudinous worlds
Assents unmoved in a perpetual calm.
All-causing, all-sustaining and aloof,
The Witness looks from his unshaken poise,
An Eye immense regarding all things done.
Apart, at peace above creation's stir,
Immersed in the eternal altitudes,
He abode defended in his shoreless self,
Companioned only by the all-seeing One.
A Mind too mighty to be bound by Thought,
A Life too boundless for the play in Space,
A Soul without borders unconvinced of Time,
He felt the extinction of the world's long pain,
He became the unborn Self that never dies,
He joined the sessions of Infinity.
On the cosmic murmur primal loneliness fell,
Annulled was the contact formed with time-born things,
Empty grew Nature's wide community.
All things were brought back to their formless seed,
The world was silent for a cyclic hour.
Although the afflicted Nature he had left
Maintained beneath him her broad numberless fields,
Her enormous act, receding, failed remote
As if a soulless dream at last had ceased.
No voice came down from the high Silences,
None answered from her desolate solitudes.
A stillness of cessation reigned, the wide
Immortal hush before the gods are born;
A universal Force awaited, mute,
The veiled Transcendent's ultimate decree.

Then suddenly there came a downward look.
As if a sea exploring its own depths,
A living Oneness widened at its core
And joined him to unnumbered multitudes.
A Bliss, a Light, a Power, a flame-white Love

Caught all into a sole immense embrace;
Existence found its truth on Oneness' breast
And each became the self and space of all.
The great world-rhythms were heart-beats of one Soul,
To feel was a flame-discovery of God,
All mind was a single harp of many strings,
All life a song of many meeting lives;
For worlds were many, but the Self was one.
This knowledge now was made a cosmos' seed:
This seed was cased in the safety of the Light,
It needed not a sheath of Ignorance.
Then from the trance of that tremendous clasp
And from the throbbings of that single Heart
And from the naked Spirit's victory
A new and marvellous creation rose.
Incalculable outflowing infinitudes
Laughing out an unmeasured happiness
Lived their innumerable unity;
Worlds where the being is unbound and wide
Bodied unthinkably the egoless Self;
Rapture of beatific energies
Joined Time to the Timeless, poles of a single joy;
White vasts were seen where all is wrapped in all.
There were no contraries, no sundered parts,
All by spiritual links were joined to all
And bound indissolubly to the One:
Each was unique, but took all lives as his own,
And, following out these tones of the Infinite,
Recognised in himself the universe.
A splendid centre of infinity's whirl
Pushed to its zenith's height, its last expanse,
Felt the divinity of its own self-bliss
Repeated in its numberless other selves:
It took up tirelessly into its scope
Persons and figures of the Impersonal,
As if prolonging in a ceaseless count,

In a rapturous multiplication's sum,
The recurring decimals of eternity.
None was apart, none lived for himself alone,
Each lived for God in him and God in all,
Each soleness inexpressibly held the whole.
There Oneness was not tied to monotone;
It showed a thousand aspects of itself,
Its calm immutable stability
Upbore on a changeless ground for ever safe,
Compelled to a spontaneous servitude,
The ever-changing incalculable steps,
The seeming-reckless dance's subtle plan
Of immense world-forces in their perfect play.
Appearance looked back to its hidden truth
And made of difference oneness' smiling play;
It made all persons fractions of the Unique,
Yet all were being's secret integers.
All struggle was turned to a sweet strife of love
In the harmonised circle of a sure embrace.
Identity's reconciling happiness gave
A rich security to difference.
On a meeting line of hazardous extremes
The game of games was played to its breaking-point,
Where through self-finding by divine self-loss
There leaps out unity's supreme delight
Whose blissful undivided sweetness feels
A communality of the Absolute.
There was no sob of suffering anywhere;
Experience ran from point to point of joy:
Bliss was the pure undying truth of things.
All Nature was a conscious front of God:
A wisdom worked in all, self-moved, self-sure,
A plenitude of illimitable Light,
An authenticity of intuitive Truth,
A glory and passion of creative Force.
Infallible, leaping from eternity,

The moment's thought inspired the passing act.
A word, a laughter, sprang from Silence' breast,
A rhythm of Beauty in the calm of Space,
A knowledge in the fathomless heart of Time.
All turned to all without reserve's recoil:
A single ecstasy without a break,
Love was a close and thrilled identity
In the throbbing heart of all that luminous life.
A universal vision that unites,
A sympathy of nerve replying to nerve,
Hearing that listens to thought's inner sound
And follows the rhythmic meanings of the heart,
A touch that needs not hands to feel, to clasp,
Were there the native means of consciousness
And heightened the intimacy of soul with soul.
A grand orchestra of spiritual powers,
A diapason of soul-interchange
Harmonised a Oneness deep, immeasurable.
In these new worlds projected he became
A portion of the universal gaze,
A station of the all-inhabiting light,
A ripple on a single sea of peace.
His mind answered to countless communing minds,
His words were syllables of the cosmos' speech,
His life a field of the vast cosmic stir.
He felt the footsteps of a million wills
Moving in unison to a single goal.
A stream ever new-born that never dies,
Caught in its thousandfold current's ravishing flow,
With eddies of immortal sweetness thrilled,
He bore coiling through his members as they passed
Calm movements of interminable delight,
The bliss of a myriad myriads who are one.

In this vast outbreak of perfection's law
Imposing its fixity on the flux of things

He saw a hierarchy of lucent planes
Enfeoffed to this highest kingdom of God-state.
Attuning to one Truth their own right rule
Each housed the gladness of a bright degree,
Alone in beauty, perfect in self-kind,
An image cast by one deep truth's absolute,
Married to all in happy difference.
Each gave its powers to help its neighbours' parts,
But suffered no diminution by the gift;
Profiteers of a mystic interchange,
They grew by what they took and what they gave,
All others they felt as their own complements,
One in the might and joy of multitude.
Even in the poise where Oneness draws apart
To feel the rapture of its separate selves,
The Sole in its solitude yearned towards the All
And the Many turned to look back at the One.
An all-revealing all-creating Bliss,
Seeking for forms to manifest truths divine,
Aligned in their significant mystery
The gleams of the symbols of the Ineffable
Blazoned like hues upon a colourless air
On the white purity of the Witness Soul.
These hues were the very prism of the Supreme,
His beauty, power, delight creation's cause.
A vast Truth-Consciousness took up these signs
To pass them on to some divine child Heart
That looked on them with laughter and delight
And joyed in these transcendent images
Living and real as the truths they house.
The Spirit's white neutrality became
A playground of miracles, a rendezvous
For the secret powers of a mystic Timelessness:
It made of Space a marvel house of God,
It poured through Time its works of ageless might,
Unveiled seen as a luring rapturous face

The wonder and beauty of its Love and Force.
The eternal Goddess moved in her cosmic house
Sporting with God as a Mother with her child:
To him the universe was her bosom of love,
His toys were the immortal verities.
All here self-lost had there its divine place.
The Powers that here betray our hearts and err,
Were there sovereign in truth, perfect in joy,
Masters in a creation without flaw,
Possessors of their own infinitude.
There Mind, a splendid sun of vision's rays,
Shaped substance by the glory of its thoughts
And moved amidst the grandeur of its dreams.
Imagination's great ensorcelling rod
Summoned the unknown and gave to it a home,
Outspread luxuriantly in golden air
Truth's iris-coloured wings of fantasy,
Or sang to the intuitive heart of joy
Wonder's dream-notes that bring the Real close.
Its power that makes the unknowable near and true,
In the temple of the ideal shrined the One:
It peopled thought and mind and happy sense
Filled with bright aspects of the might of God
And living persons of the one Supreme,
The speech that voices the ineffable,
The ray revealing unseen Presences,
The virgin forms through which the Formless shines,
The Word that ushers divine experience
And the Ideas that crowd the Infinite.
There was no gulf between the thought and fact,
Ever they replied like bird to calling bird;
The will obeyed the thought, the act the will.
There was a harmony woven twixt soul and soul.
A marriage with eternity divinised Time.
There Life pursued, unwearied of her sport,
Joy in her heart and laughter on her lips,

The bright adventure of God's game of chance.
In her ingenious ardour of caprice,
In her transfiguring mirth she mapped on Time
A fascinating puzzle of events,
Lured at each turn by new vicissitudes
To self-discovery that could never cease.
Ever she framed stark bonds for the will to break,
Brought new creations for the thought's surprise
And passionate ventures for the heart to dare,
Where Truth recurred with an unexpected face
Or else repeated old familiar joy
Like the return of a delightful rhyme.
At hide-and-seek on a Mother-Wisdom's breast,
An artist teeming with her world-idea,
She never could exhaust its numberless thoughts
And vast adventure into thinking shapes
And trial and lure of a new living's dreams.
Untired of sameness and untired of change,
Endlessly she unrolled her moving act,
A mystery drama of divine delight,
A living poem of world-ecstasy,
A kakemono of significant forms,
A coiled perspective of developing scenes,
A brilliant chase of self-revealing shapes,
An ardent hunt of soul looking for soul,
A seeking and a finding as of gods.
There Matter is the Spirit's firm density,
An artistry of glad outwardness of self,
A treasure-house of lasting images
Where sense can build a world of pure delight:
The home of a perpetual happiness,
It lodged the hours as in a pleasant inn.
The senses there were outlets of the soul;
Even the youngest child-thought of the mind
Incarnated some touch of highest things.
There substance was a resonant harp of self,

A net for the constant lightnings of the spirit,
A magnet power of love's intensity
Whose yearning throb and adoration's cry
Drew God's approaches close, sweet, wonderful.
Its solidity was a mass of heavenly make;
Its fixity and sweet permanence of charm
Made a bright pedestal for felicity.
Its bodies woven by a divine sense
Prolonged the nearness of soul's clasp with soul;
Its warm play of external sight and touch
Reflected the glow and thrill of the heart's joy,
Mind's climbing brilliant thoughts, the spirit's bliss;
Life's rapture kept for ever its flame and cry.
All that now passes lived immortal there
In the proud beauty and fine harmony
Of Matter plastic to spiritual light.
Its ordered hours proclaimed the eternal Law;
Vision reposed on a safety of deathless forms;
Time was Eternity's transparent robe.
An architect hewing out self's living rock,
Phenomenon built Reality's summer-house
On the beaches of the sea of Infinity.

Against this glory of spiritual states,
Their parallels and yet their opposites,
Floated and swayed, eclipsed and shadowlike
As if a doubt made substance, flickering, pale,
This other scheme two vast negations found.
A world that knows not its inhabiting Self
Labours to find its cause and need to be;
A spirit ignorant of the world it made,
Obscured by Matter, travestied by Life,
Struggles to emerge, to be free, to know and reign;
These were close-tied in one disharmony,
Yet the divergent lines met not at all.
Three Powers governed its irrational course,

In the beginning an unknowing Force,
In the middle an embodied striving soul,
In its end a silent spirit denying life.
A dull and infelicitous interlude
Unrolls its dubious truth to a questioning Mind
Compelled by the ignorant Power to play its part
And to record her inconclusive tale,
The mystery of her inconscient plan
And the riddle of a being born from Night
By a marriage of Necessity with Chance.
This darkness hides our nobler destiny.
A chrysalis of a great and glorious truth,
It stifles the winged marvel in its sheath
Lest from the prison of Matter it escape
And, wasting its beauty on the formless Vast,
Merged into the Unknowable's mystery,
Leave unfulfilled the world's miraculous fate.
As yet thought only some high spirit's dream
Or a vexed illusion in man's toiling mind,
A new creation from the old shall rise,
A Knowledge inarticulate find speech,
Beauty suppressed burst into paradise bloom,
Pleasure and pain dive into absolute bliss.
A tongueless oracle shall speak at last,
The Superconscient conscious grow on earth,
The Eternal's wonders join the dance of Time.
But now all seemed a vainly teeming vast
Upheld by a deluded Energy
To a spectator self-absorbed and mute,
Careless of the unmeaning show he watched,
Regarding the bizarre procession pass
Like one who waits for an expected end.
He saw a world that is from a world to be.
There he divined rather than saw or felt,
Far off upon the rim of consciousness,
Transient and frail this little whirling globe

And on it left like a lost dream's vain mould,
A fragile copy of the spirit's shell,
His body gathered into mystic sleep.
A foreign shape it seemed, a mythic shade.

Alien now seemed that dim far universe,
Self and eternity alone were true.
Then memory climbed to him from the striving planes
Bringing a cry from once-loved cherished things,
And to the cry as to its own lost call
A ray replied from the occult Supreme.
For even there the boundless Oneness dwells.
To its own sight unrecognisable,
It lived still sunk in its own tenebrous seas,
Upholding the world's inconscient unity
Hidden in Matter's insentient multitude.
This seed-self sown in the Indeterminate
Forfeits its glory of divinity,
Concealing the omnipotence of its Force,
Concealing the omniscience of its Soul;
An agent of its own transcendent Will,
It merges knowledge in the inconscient deep;
Accepting error, sorrow, death and pain,
It pays the ransom of the ignorant Night,
Redeeming by its substance Nature's fall.
Himself he knew and why his soul had gone
Into earth's passionate obscurity
To share the labour of an errant Power
Which by division hopes to find the One.
Two beings he was, one wide and free above,
One struggling, bound, intense, its portion here.
A tie between them still could bridge two worlds;
There was a dim response, a distant breath;
All had not ceased in the unbounded hush.
His heart lay somewhere conscious and alone
Far down below him like a lamp in night;

Abandoned it lay, alone, imperishable,
Immobile with excess of passionate will,
His living, sacrificed and offered heart
Absorbed in adoration mystical,
Turned to its far-off fount of light and love.
In the luminous stillness of its mute appeal
It looked up to the heights it could not see;
It yearned from the longing depths it could not leave.
In the centre of his vast and fateful trance
Half-way between his free and fallen selves,
Interceding twixt God's day and the mortal's night,
Accepting worship as its single law,
Accepting bliss as the sole cause of things,
Refusing the austere joy which none can share,
Refusing the calm that lives for calm alone,
To her it turned for whom it willed to be.
In the passion of its solitary dream
It lay like a closed soundless oratory
Where sleeps a consecrated argent floor
Lit by a single and untrembling ray
And an invisible Presence kneels in prayer.
On some deep breast of liberating peace
All else was satisfied with quietude;
This only knew there was a truth beyond.
All other parts were dumb in centred sleep
Consenting to the slow deliberate Power
Which tolerates the world's error and its grief,
Consenting to the cosmic long delay,
Timelessly waiting through the patient years
Her coming they had asked for earth and men;
This was the fiery point that called her now.
Extinction could not quench that lonely fire;
Its seeing filled the blank of mind and will;
Thought dead, its changeless force abode and grew.
Armed with the intuition of a bliss
To which some moved tranquillity was the key,

It persevered through life's huge emptiness
Amid the blank denials of the world.
It sent its voiceless prayer to the Unknown;
It listened for the footsteps of its hopes
Returning through the void immensities,
It waited for the fiat of the Word
That comes through the still self from the Supreme.

END OF CANTO THREE

Canto Four

The Vision and the Boon

THEN suddenly there rose a sacred stir.
Amid the lifeless silence of the Void
In a solitude and an immensity
A sound came quivering like a loved footfall
Heard in the listening spaces of the soul;
A touch perturbed his fibres with delight.
An Influence had approached the mortal range,
A boundless Heart was near his longing heart,
A mystic Form enveloped his earthly shape.
All at her contact broke from silence' seal;
Spirit and body thrilled identified,
Linked in the grasp of an unspoken joy;
Mind, members, life were merged in ecstasy.
Intoxicated as with nectarous rain
His nature's passioning stretches flowed to her,
Flashing with lightnings, mad with luminous wine.
All was a limitless sea that heaved to the moon.
A divinising stream possessed his veins,
His body's cells awoke to spirit sense,
Each nerve became a burning thread of joy:
Tissue and flesh partook beatitude.
Alight, the dun unplumbed subconscient caves
Thrilled with the prescience of her longed-for tread
And filled with flickering crests and praying tongues.
Even lost in slumber, mute, inanimate
His very body answered to her power.
The One he worshipped was within him now:
Flame-pure, ethereal-tressed, a mighty Face
Appeared and lips moved by immortal words;
Lids, Wisdom's leaves, drooped over rapture's orbs.
A marble monument of ponderings, shone

A forehead, sight's crypt, and large like ocean's gaze
Towards Heaven, two tranquil eyes of boundless thought
Looked into man's and saw the god to come.
A Shape was seen on threshold Mind, a Voice
Absolute and wise in the heart's chambers spoke:
"O Son of Strength who climbst creation's peaks,
No soul is thy companion in the light;
Alone thou standest at the eternal doors.
What thou hast won is thine, but ask no more.
O Spirit aspiring in an ignorant frame,
O Voice arisen from the Inconscient's world,
How shalt thou speak for men whose hearts are dumb,
Make purblind earth the soul's seer-vision's home
Or lighten the burden of the senseless globe?
I am the Mystery beyond reach of mind,
I am the goal of the travail of the suns;
My fire and sweetness are the cause of life.
But too immense my danger and my joy.
Awake not the immeasurable descent,
Speak not my secret name to hostile Time;
Man is too weak to bear the Infinite's weight.
Truth born too soon might break the imperfect earth.
Leave the all-seeing Power to hew its way:
In thy single vast achievement reign apart
Helping the world with thy great lonely days.
I ask thee not to merge thy heart of flame
In the Immobile's wide uncaring bliss,
Turned from the fruitless motion of the years,
Deserting the fierce labour of the worlds,
Aloof from beings, lost in the Alone.
How shall thy mighty spirit brook repose
While Death is still unconquered on the earth
And Time a field of suffering and pain?
Thy soul was born to share the laden Force;
Obey thy nature and fulfil thy fate:
Accept the difficulty and godlike toil,

For the slow-paced omniscient purpose live.
The Enigma's knot is tied in humankind.
A lightning from the heights that think and plan,
Ploughing the air of life with vanishing trails,
Man, sole awake in an unconscious world,
Aspires in vain to change the cosmic dream.
Arrived from some half-luminous Beyond
He is a stranger in the mindless vasts;
A traveller in his oft-shifting home
Amid the tread of many infinities,
He has pitched a tent of life in desert Space.
Heaven's fixed regard beholds him from above,
In the house of Nature a perturbing guest,
A voyager twixt Thought's inconstant shores,
A hunter of unknown and beautiful Powers,
A nomad of the far mysterious Light,
In the wide ways a little spark of God.
Against his spirit all is in dire league,
A Titan influence stops his Godward gaze.
Around him hungers the unpitying Void,
The eternal Darkness seeks him with her hands,
Inscrutable Energies drive him and deceive,
Immense implacable deities oppose.
An inert Soul and a somnambulist Force
Have made a world estranged from life and thought;
The Dragon of the dark foundations keeps
Unalterable the law of Chance and Death;
On his long way through Time and Circumstance
The grey-hued riddling nether shadow-Sphinx,
Her dreadful paws upon the swallowing sands,
Awaits him armed with the soul-slaying word:
Across his path sits the dim camp of Night.
His day is a moment in perpetual Time;
He is the prey of the minutes and the hours.
Assailed on earth and unassured of heaven,
Descended here unhappy and sublime,

A link between the demigod and the beast,
He knows not his own greatness nor his aim;
He has forgotten why he has come and whence.
His spirit and his members are at war;
His heights break off too low to reach the skies,
His mass is buried in the animal mire.
A strange antinomy is his nature's rule.
A riddle of opposites is made his field:
Freedom he asks but needs to live in bonds,
He has need of darkness to perceive some light
And need of grief to feel a little bliss;
He has need of death to find a greater life.
All sides he sees and turns to every call;
He has no certain light by which to walk;
His life is a blind-man's-buff, a hide-and-seek;
He seeks himself and from himself he runs;
Meeting himself, he thinks it other than he.
Always he builds, but finds no constant ground,
Always he journeys, but nowhere arrives;
He would guide the world, himself he cannot guide;
He would save his soul, his life he cannot save.
The light his soul had brought his mind has lost;
All he has learned is soon again in doubt;
A sun to him seems the shadow of his thoughts,
Then all is shadow again and nothing true:
Unknowing what he does or whither he tends
He fabricates signs of the Real in Ignorance.
He has hitched his mortal error to Truth's star.
Wisdom attracts him with her luminous masks,
But never has he seen the face behind:
A giant Ignorance surrounds his lore.
Assigned to meet the cosmic mystery
In the dumb figure of a material world,
His passport of entry false and his personage,
He is compelled to be what he is not;
He obeys the Inconscience he had come to rule

And sinks in Matter to fulfil his soul.
Awakened from her lower driven forms
The Earth-Mother gave her forces to his hands
And painfully he guards the heavy trust;
His mind is a lost torch-bearer on her roads.
Illumining breath to think and plasm to feel,
He labours with his slow and sceptic brain
Helped by the reason's vacillating fires,
To make his thought and will a magic door
For knowledge to enter the darkness of the world
And love to rule a realm of strife and hate.
A mind impotent to reconcile heaven and earth
And tied to Matter with a thousand bonds,
He lifts himself to be a conscious god.
Even when a glory of wisdom crowns his brow,
When mind and spirit shed a grandiose ray
To exalt this product of the sperm and gene,
This alchemist's miracle from plasm and gas,
And he who shared the animal's run and crawl
Lifts his thought-stature to the Immortal's heights,
His life still keeps the human middle way;
His body he resigns to death and pain,
Abandoning Matter, his too heavy charge.
A thaumaturge sceptic of miracles,
A spirit left sterile of its occult power
By an unbelieving brain and credulous heart,
He leaves the world to end where it began:
His work unfinished he claims a heavenly prize.
Thus has he missed creation's absolute.
Half-way he stops his star of destiny:
A vast and vain long-tried experiment,
An ill-served high conception doubtfully done,
The world's life falters on not seeing its goal, —
A zigzag towards unknown dangerous ground
Ever repeating its habitual walk,
Ever retreating after marches long

And hardiest victories without sure result,
Drawn endlessly an inconclusive game.
In an ill-fitting and voluminous robe
A radiant purpose still conceals its face,
A mighty blindness stumbles hoping on,
Feeding its strength on gifts of luminous Chance.
Because the human instrument has failed,
The Godhead frustrate sleeps within its seed,
A spirit entangled in the forms it made.
His failure is not failure whom God leads;
Through all the slow mysterious march goes on:
An immutable Power has made this mutable world;
A self-fulfilling transcendence treads man's road;
The driver of the soul upon its path,
It knows its steps, its way is inevitable,
And how shall the end be vain when God is guide?
However man's mind may tire or fail his flesh,
A will prevails cancelling his conscious choice:
The goal recedes, a bourneless vastness calls
Retreating into an immense Unknown;
There is no end to the world's stupendous march,
There is no rest for the embodied soul.
It must live on, describe all Time's huge curve.
An Influx presses from the closed Beyond
Forbidding to him rest and earthly ease,
Till he has found himself he cannot pause.
A Light there is that leads, a Power that aids;
Unmarked, unfelt it sees in him and acts:
Ignorant, he forms the All-Conscient in his depths,
Human, looks up to superhuman peaks:
A borrower of Supernature's gold,
He paves his road to Immortality.
The high gods look on man and watch and choose
Today's impossibles for the future's base.
His transience trembles with the Eternal's touch,
His barriers cede beneath the Infinite's tread;

The Immortals have their entries in his life:
The Ambassadors of the Unseen draw near.
A splendour sullied by the mortal air,
Love passes through his heart, a wandering guest.
Beauty surrounds him for a magic hour,
He has visits of a large revealing joy,
Brief widenesses release him from himself,
Enticing towards a glory ever in front
Hopes of a deathless sweetness lure and leave.
His mind is crossed by strange discovering fires,
Rare intimations lift his stumbling speech
To a moment's kinship with the eternal Word;
A masque of Wisdom circles through his brain
Perturbing him with glimpses half divine.
He lays his hands sometimes on the Unknown;
He communes sometimes with Eternity.
A strange and grandiose symbol was his birth
And immortality and spirit-room
And pure perfection and a shadowless bliss
Are this afflicted creature's mighty fate.
In him the Earth-Mother sees draw near the change
Foreshadowed in her dumb and fiery depths,
A godhead drawn from her transmuted limbs,
An alchemy of Heaven on Nature's base.
Adept of the self-born unfailing line,
Leave not the light to die the ages bore,
Help still humanity's blind and suffering life:
Obey thy spirit's wide omnipotent urge.
A witness to God's parley with the Night,
It leaned compassionate from immortal calm
And housed desire, the troubled seed of things.
Assent to thy high self, create, endure.
Cease not from knowledge, let thy toil be vast.
No more can earthly limits pen thy force;
Equal thy work with long unending Time's.
Traveller upon the bare eternal heights,

Tread still the difficult and dateless path
Joining the cycles with its austere curve
Measured for man by the initiate Gods.
My light shall be in thee, my strength thy force.
Let not the impatient Titan drive thy heart,
Ask not the imperfect fruit, the partial prize.
Only one boon, to greaten thy spirit, demand;
Only one joy, to raise thy kind, desire.
Above blind fate and the antagonist powers
Moveless there stands a high unchanging Will;
To its omnipotence leave thy work's result.
All things shall change in God's transfiguring hour."

August and sweet sank hushed that mighty Voice.
Nothing now moved in the vast brooding space:
A stillness came upon the listening world,
A mute immensity of the Eternal's peace.
But Aswapati's heart replied to her,
A cry amid the silence of the Vasts:
"How shall I rest content with mortal days
And the dull measure of terrestrial things,
I who have seen behind the cosmic mask
The glory and the beauty of thy face?
Hard is the doom to which thou bindst thy sons!
How long shall our spirits battle with the Night
And bear defeat and the brute yoke of Death,
We who are vessels of a deathless Force
And builders of the godhead of the race?
Or if it is thy work I do below
Amid the error and waste of human life
In the vague light of man's half-conscious mind,
Why breaks not in some distant gleam of thee?
Ever the centuries and millenniums pass.
Where in the greyness is thy coming's ray?
Where is the thunder of thy victory's wings?
Only we hear the feet of passing gods.

A plan in the occult eternal Mind
Mapped out to backward and prophetic sight,
The aeons ever repeat their changeless round,
The cycles all rebuild and ever aspire.
All we have done is ever still to do.
All breaks and all renews and is the same.
Huge revolutions of life's fruitless gyre,
The new-born ages perish like the old,
As if the sad Enigma kept its right
Till all is done for which this scene was made.
Too little the strength that now with us is born,
Too faint the light that steals through Nature's lids,
Too scant the joy with which she buys our pain.
In a brute world that knows not its own sense,
Thought-racked upon the wheel of birth we live,
The instruments of an impulse not our own
Moved to achieve with our heart's blood for price
Half-knowledge, half-creations that soon tire.
A foiled immortal soul in perishing limbs,
Baffled and beaten back we labour still;
Annulled, frustrated, spent, we still survive.
In anguish we labour that from us may rise
A larger-seeing man with nobler heart,
A golden vessel of the incarnate Truth,
The executor of the divine attempt
Equipped to wear the earthly body of God,
Communicant and prophet and lover and king.
I know that thy creation cannot fail:
For even through the mists of mortal thought
Infallible are thy mysterious steps,
And, though Necessity dons the garb of Chance,
Hidden in the blind shifts of Fate she keeps
The slow calm logic of Infinity's pace
And the inviolate sequence of its will.
All life is fixed in an ascending scale
And adamantine is the evolving Law;

In the beginning is prepared the close.
This strange irrational product of the mire,
This compromise between the beast and god,
Is not the crown of thy miraculous world.
I know there shall inform the inconscient cells,
At one with Nature and at height with heaven,
A spirit vast as the containing sky
And swept with ecstasy from invisible founts,
A god come down and greater by the fall.
A Power arose out of my slumber's cell.
Abandoning the tardy limp of the hours
And the inconstant blink of mortal sight,
There where the Thinker sleeps in too much light
And intolerant flames the lone all-witnessing Eye
Hearing the word of Fate from Silence' heart
In the endless moment of Eternity,
It saw from timelessness the works of Time.
Overpassed were the leaden formulas of the Mind,
Overpowered the obstacle of mortal Space:
The unfolding Image showed the things to come.
A giant dance of Shiva tore the past;
There was a thunder as of worlds that fall;
Earth was o'errun with fire and the roar of Death
Clamouring to slay a world his hunger had made;
There was a clangour of Destruction's wings:
The Titan's battle-cry was in my ears,
Alarm and rumour shook the armoured Night.
I saw the Omnipotent's flaming pioneers
Over the heavenly verge which turns towards life
Come crowding down the amber stairs of birth;
Forerunners of a divine multitude,
Out of the paths of the morning star they came
Into the little room of mortal life.
I saw them cross the twilight of an age,
The sun-eyed children of a marvellous dawn,
The great creators with wide brows of calm,

The massive barrier-breakers of the world
And wrestlers with destiny in her lists of will,
The labourers in the quarries of the gods,
The messengers of the Incommunicable,
The architects of immortality.
Into the fallen human sphere they came,
Faces that wore the Immortal's glory still,
Voices that communed still with the thoughts of God,
Bodies made beautiful by the spirit's light,
Carrying the magic word, the mystic fire,
Carrying the Dionysian cup of joy,
Approaching eyes of a diviner man,
Lips chanting an unknown anthem of the soul,
Feet echoing in the corridors of Time.
High priests of wisdom, sweetness, might and bliss,
Discoverers of beauty's sunlit ways
And swimmers of Love's laughing fiery floods
And dancers within rapture's golden doors,
Their tread one day shall change the suffering earth
And justify the light on Nature's face.
Although Fate lingers in the high Beyond
And the work seems vain on which our heart's force was spent,
All shall be done for which our pain was borne.
Even as of old man came behind the beast
This high divine successor surely shall come
Behind man's inefficient mortal pace,
Behind his vain labour, sweat and blood and tears:
He shall know what mortal mind barely durst think,
He shall do what the heart of the mortal could not dare.
Inheritor of the toil of human time,
He shall take on him the burden of the gods;
All heavenly light shall visit the earth's thoughts,
The might of heaven shall fortify earthly hearts;
Earth's deeds shall touch the superhuman's height,
Earth's seeing widen into the infinite.
Heavy unchanged weighs still the imperfect world;

The splendid youth of Time has passed and failed;
Heavy and long are the years our labour counts
And still the seals are firm upon man's soul
And weary is the ancient Mother's heart.
O Truth defended in thy secret sun,
Voice of her mighty musings in shut heavens
On things withdrawn within her luminous depths,
O Wisdom-Splendour, Mother of the universe,
Creatrix, the Eternal's artist Bride,
Linger not long with thy transmuting hand
Pressed vainly on one golden bar of Time,
As if Time dare not open its heart to God.
O radiant fountain of the world's delight
World-free and unattainable above,
O Bliss who ever dwellst deep-hid within
While men seek thee outside and never find,
Mystery and Muse with hieratic tongue,
Incarnate the white passion of thy force,
Mission to earth some living form of thee.
One moment fill with thy eternity,
Let thy infinity in one body live,
All-Knowledge wrap one mind in seas of light,
All-Love throb single in one human heart.
Immortal, treading the earth with mortal feet
All heaven's beauty crowd in earthly limbs!
Omnipotence, girdle with the power of God
Movements and moments of a mortal will,
Pack with the eternal might one human hour
And with one gesture change all future time.
Let a great word be spoken from the heights
And one great act unlock the doors of Fate."

His prayer sank down in the resisting Night
Oppressed by the thousand forces that deny,
As if too weak to climb to the Supreme.
But there arose a wide consenting Voice;

The spirit of beauty was revealed in sound:
Light floated round the marvellous Vision's brow
And on her lips the Immortal's joy took shape.
"O strong forerunner, I have heard thy cry.
One shall descend and break the iron Law,
Change Nature's doom by the lone spirit's power.
A limitless Mind that can contain the world,
A sweet and violent heart of ardent calms
Moved by the passions of the gods shall come.
All mights and greatnesses shall join in her;
Beauty shall walk celestial on the earth,
Delight shall sleep in the cloud-net of her hair,
And in her body as on his homing tree
Immortal Love shall beat his glorious wings.
A music of griefless things shall weave her charm;
The harps of the Perfect shall attune her voice,
The streams of Heaven shall murmur in her laugh,
Her lips shall be the honeycombs of God,
Her limbs his golden jars of ecstasy,
Her breasts the rapture-flowers of Paradise.
She shall bear Wisdom in her voiceless bosom,
Strength shall be with her like a conqueror's sword
And from her eyes the Eternal's bliss shall gaze.
A seed shall be sown in Death's tremendous hour,
A branch of heaven transplant to human soil;
Nature shall overleap her mortal step;
Fate shall be changed by an unchanging will."

As a flame disappears in endless Light
Immortally extinguished in its source,
Vanished the splendour and was stilled the word.
An echo of delight that once was close,
The harmony journeyed towards some distant hush,
A music failing in the ear of trance,
A cadence called by distant cadences,
A voice that trembled into strains withdrawn.

Her form retreated from the longing earth
Forsaking nearness to the abandoned sense,
Ascending to her unattainable home.
Lone, brilliant, vacant lay the inner fields;
All was unfilled inordinate spirit space,
Indifferent, waste, a desert of bright peace.
Then a line moved on the far edge of calm:
The warm-lipped sentient soft terrestrial wave,
A quick and many-murmured moan and laugh,
Came gliding in upon white feet of sound.
Unlocked was the deep glory of Silence' heart;
The absolute unmoving stillnesses
Surrendered to the breath of mortal air,
Dissolving boundlessly the heavens of trance
Collapsed to waking mind. Eternity
Cast down its incommunicable lids
Over its solitudes remote from ken
Behind the voiceless mystery of sleep.
The grandiose respite failed, the wide release.
Across the light of fast-receding planes
That fled from him as from a falling star,
Compelled to fill its human house in Time
His soul drew back into the speed and noise
Of the vast business of created things.
A chariot of the marvels of the heavens
Broad-based to bear the gods on fiery wheels,
Flaming he swept through the spiritual gates.
The mortal stir received him in its midst.
Once more he moved amid material scenes,
Lifted by intimations from the heights
And in the pauses of the building brain
Touched by the thoughts that skim the fathomless surge
Of Nature and wing back to hidden shores.
The eternal seeker in the aeonic field
Besieged by the intolerant press of hours
Again was strong for great swift-footed deeds.

Awake beneath the ignorant vault of Night,
He saw the unnumbered people of the stars
And heard the questioning of the unsatisfied flood
And toiled with the form-maker, measuring Mind.
A wanderer from the occult invisible suns
Accomplishing the fate of transient things,
A god in the figure of the arisen beast,
He raised his brow of conquest to the heavens
Establishing the empire of the soul
On Matter and its bounded universe
As on a solid rock in infinite seas.
The Lord of Life resumed his mighty rounds
In the scant field of the ambiguous globe.

END OF BOOK THREE, CANTO FOUR
END OF PART ONE

PART TWO

BOOKS IV – VIII

BOOK FOUR

The Book of Birth and Quest

Canto One

The Birth and Childhood of the Flame

A MAENAD of the cycles of desire
Around a Light she must not dare to touch,
Hastening towards a far-off unknown goal
Earth followed the endless journey of the Sun.
A mind but half-awake in the swing of the void
On the bosom of Inconscience dreamed out life
And bore this finite world of thought and deed
Across the immobile trance of the Infinite.
A vast immutable silence with her ran:
Prisoner of speed upon a jewelled wheel,
She communed with the mystic heart in Space.
Amid the ambiguous stillness of the stars
She moved towards some undisclosed event
And her rhythm measured the long whirl of Time.
In ceaseless motion round the purple rim
Day after day sped by like coloured spokes,
And through a glamour of shifting hues of air
The seasons drew in linked significant dance
The symbol pageant of the changing year.
Across the burning languor of the soil
Paced Summer with his pomp of violent noons
And stamped his tyranny of torrid light
And the blue seal of a great burnished sky.
Next through its fiery swoon or clotted knot
Rain-tide burst in upon torn wings of heat,
Startled with lightnings air's unquiet drowse,
Lashed with life-giving streams the torpid soil,
Overcast with flare and sound and storm-winged dark
The star-defended doors of heaven's dim sleep,
Or from the gold eye of her paramour
Covered with packed cloud-veils the earth's brown face.

Armies of revolution crossed the time-field,
The clouds' unending march besieged the world,
Tempests' pronunciamentos claimed the sky
And thunder drums announced the embattled gods.
A traveller from unquiet neighbouring seas,
The dense-maned monsoon rode neighing through earth's hours:
Thick now the emissary javelins:
Enormous lightnings split the horizon's rim
And, hurled from the quarters as from contending camps,
Married heaven's edges steep and bare and blind:
A surge and hiss and onset of huge rain,
The long straight sleet-drift, clamours of winged storm-charge,
Throngs of wind-faces, rushing of wind-feet
Hurrying swept through the prone afflicted plains:
Heaven's waters trailed and dribbled through the drowned land.
Then all was a swift stride, a sibilant race,
Or all was tempest's shout and water's fall.
A dimness sagged on the grey floor of day,
Its dingy sprawling length joined morn to eve,
Wallowing in sludge and shower it reached black dark.
Day a half darkness wore as its dull dress.
Light looked into dawn's tarnished glass and met
Its own face there, twin to a half-lit night's:
Downpour and drip and seeping mist swayed all
And turned dry soil to bog and reeking mud:
Earth was a quagmire, heaven a dismal block.
None saw through dank drenched weeks the dungeon sun.
Even when no turmoil vexed air's sombre rest,
Or a faint ray glimmered through weeping clouds
As a sad smile gleams veiled by returning tears,
All promised brightness failed at once denied
Or, soon condemned, died like a brief-lived hope.
Then a last massive deluge thrashed dead mire
And a subsiding mutter left all still,
Or only the muddy creep of sinking floods
Or only a whisper and green toss of trees.

Earth's mood now changed; she lay in lulled repose,
The hours went by with slow contented tread:
A wide and tranquil air remembered peace,
Earth was the comrade of a happy sun.
A calmness neared as of the approach of God,
A light of musing trance lit soil and sky
And an identity and ecstasy
Filled meditation's solitary heart.
A dream loitered in the dumb mind of Space,
Time opened its chambers of felicity,
An exaltation entered and a hope:
An inmost self looked up to a heavenlier height,
An inmost thought kindled a hidden flame
And the inner sight adored an unseen sun.
Three thoughtful seasons passed with shining tread
And scanning one by one the pregnant hours
Watched for a flame that lurked in luminous depths,
The vigil of some mighty birth to come.
Autumn led in the glory of her moons
And dreamed in the splendour of her lotus pools
And Winter and Dew-time laid their calm cool hands
On Nature's bosom still in a half sleep
And deepened with hues of lax and mellow ease
The tranquil beauty of the waning year.
Then Spring, an ardent lover, leaped through leaves
And caught the earth-bride in his eager clasp;
His advent was a fire of irised hues,
His arms were a circle of the arrival of joy.
His voice was a call to the Transcendent's sphere
Whose secret touch upon our mortal lives
Keeps ever new the thrill that made the world,
Remoulds an ancient sweetness to new shapes
And guards intact unchanged by death and Time
The answer of our hearts to Nature's charm
And keeps for ever new, yet still the same,
The throb that ever wakes to the old delight

And beauty and rapture and the joy to live.
His coming brought the magic and the spell;
At his touch life's tired heart grew glad and young;
He made joy a willing prisoner in her breast.
His grasp was a young god's upon earth's limbs:
Changed by the passion of his divine outbreak
He made her body beautiful with his kiss.
Impatient for felicity he came,
High-fluting with the coïl's happy voice,
His peacock turban trailing on the trees;
His breath was a warm summons to delight,
The dense voluptuous azure was his gaze.
A soft celestial urge surprised the blood
Rich with the instinct of God's sensuous joys;
Revealed in beauty, a cadence was abroad
Insistent on the rapture-thrill in life:
Immortal movements touched the fleeting hours.
A godlike packed intensity of sense
Made it a passionate pleasure even to breathe;
All sights and voices wove a single charm.
The life of the enchanted globe became
A storm of sweetness and of light and song,
A revel of colour and of ecstasy,
A hymn of rays, a litany of cries:
A strain of choral priestly music sang
And, swung on the swaying censer of the trees,
A sacrifice of perfume filled the hours.
Asocas burned in crimson spots of flame,
Pure like the breath of an unstained desire
White jasmines haunted the enamoured air,
Pale mango-blossoms fed the liquid voice
Of the love-maddened coïl, and the brown bee
Muttered in fragrance mid the honey-buds.
The sunlight was a great god's golden smile.
All Nature was at beauty's festival.

In this high signal moment of the gods
Answering earth's yearning and her cry for bliss,
A greatness from our other countries came.
A silence in the noise of earthly things
Immutably revealed the secret Word,
A mightier influx filled the oblivious clay:
A lamp was lit, a sacred image made.
A mediating ray had touched the earth
Bridging the gulf between man's mind and God's;
Its brightness linked our transience to the Unknown.
A spirit of its celestial source aware
Translating heaven into a human shape
Descended into earth's imperfect mould
And wept not fallen to mortality,
But looked on all with large and tranquil eyes.
One had returned from the transcendent planes
And bore anew the load of mortal breath,
Who had striven of old with our darkness and our pain;
She took again her divine unfinished task:
Survivor of death and the aeonic years,
Once more with her fathomless heart she fronted Time.
Again there was renewed, again revealed
The ancient closeness by earth-vision veiled,
The secret contact broken off in Time,
A consanguinity of earth and heaven,
Between the human portion toiling here
And an as yet unborn and limitless Force.
Again the mystic deep attempt began,
The daring wager of the cosmic game.
For since upon this blind and whirling globe
Earth-plasm first quivered with the illumining mind
And life invaded the material sheath
Afflicting Inconscience with the need to feel,
Since in Infinity's silence woke a word,
A Mother-wisdom works in Nature's breast
To pour delight on the heart of toil and want

And press perfection on life's stumbling powers,
Impose heaven-sentience on the obscure abyss
And make dumb Matter conscious of its God.
Although our fallen minds forget to climb,
Although our human stuff resists or breaks,
She keeps her will that hopes to divinise clay;
Failure cannot repress, defeat o'erthrow;
Time cannot weary her nor the Void subdue,
The ages have not made her passion less;
No victory she admits of Death or Fate.
Always she drives the soul to new attempt;
Always her magical infinitude
Forces to aspire the inert brute elements;
As one who has all infinity to waste,
She scatters the seed of the Eternal's strength
On a half-animate and crumbling mould,
Plants heaven's delight in the heart's passionate mire,
Pours godhead's seekings into a bare beast frame,
Hides immortality in a mask of death.
Once more that Will put on an earthly shape.
A Mind empowered from Truth's immutable seat
Was framed for vision and interpreting act
And instruments were sovereignly designed
To express divinity in terrestrial signs.
Outlined by the pressure of this new descent
A lovelier body formed than earth had known.
As yet a prophecy only and a hint,
The glowing arc of a charmed unseen whole,
It came into the sky of mortal life
Bright like the crescent horn of a gold moon
Returning in a faint illumined eve.
At first glimmering like an unshaped idea
Passive she lay sheltered in wordless sleep,
Involved and drowned in Matter's giant trance,
An infant heart of the deep-caved world-plan
In cradle of divine inconscience rocked

By the universal ecstasy of the suns.
Some missioned Power in the half-wakened frame
Nursed a transcendent birth's dumb glorious seed
For which this vivid tenement was made.
But soon the link of soul with form grew sure;
Flooded was the dim cave with slow conscient light,
The seed grew into a delicate marvellous bud,
The bud disclosed a great and heavenly bloom.
At once she seemed to found a mightier race.
Arrived upon the strange and dubious globe
The child remembering inly a far home
Lived guarded in her spirit's luminous cell,
Alone mid men in her diviner kind.
Even in her childish movements could be felt
The nearness of a light still kept from earth,
Feelings that only eternity could share,
Thoughts natural and native to the gods.
As needing nothing but its own rapt flight
Her nature dwelt in a strong separate air
Like a strange bird with large rich-coloured breast
That sojourns on a secret fruited bough,
Lost in the emerald glory of the woods
Or flies above divine unreachable tops.
Harmoniously she impressed the earth with heaven.
Aligned to a swift rhythm of sheer delight
And singing to themselves her days went by;
Each minute was a throb of beauty's heart;
The hours were tuned to a sweet-toned content
Which asked for nothing, but took all life gave
Sovereignly as her nature's inborn right.
Near was her spirit to its parent Sun,
The Breath within to the eternal joy.
The first fair life that breaks from Nature's swoon,
Mounts in a line of rapture to the skies;
Absorbed in its own happy urge it lives,
Sufficient to itself, yet turned to all:

It has no seen communion with its world,
No open converse with surrounding things.
There is a oneness native and occult
That needs no instruments and erects no form;
In unison it grows with all that is.
All contacts it assumes into its trance,
Laugh-tossed consents to the wind's kiss and takes
Transmutingly the shocks of sun and breeze:
A blissful yearning riots in its leaves,
A magic passion trembles in its blooms,
Its boughs aspire in hushed felicity.
An occult godhead of this beauty is cause,
The spirit and intimate guest of all this charm,
This sweetness's priestess and this reverie's muse.
Invisibly protected from our sense
The Dryad lives drenched in a deeper ray
And feels another air of storms and calms
And quivers inwardly with mystic rain.
This at a heavenlier height was shown in her.
Even when she bent to meet earth's intimacies
Her spirit kept the stature of the gods;
It stooped but was not lost in Matter's reign.
A world translated was her gleaming mind,
And marvel-mooned bright crowding fantasies
Fed with spiritual sustenance of dreams
The ideal goddess in her house of gold.
Aware of forms to which our eyes are closed,
Conscious of nearnesses we cannot feel,
The Power within her shaped her moulding sense
In deeper figures than our surface types.
An invisible sunlight ran within her veins
And flooded her brain with heavenly brilliances
That woke a wider sight than earth could know.
Outlined in the sincerity of that ray
Her springing childlike thoughts were richly turned
Into luminous patterns of her soul's deep truth,

And from her eyes she cast another look
On all around her than man's ignorant view.
All objects were to her shapes of living selves
And she perceived a message from her kin
In each awakening touch of outward things.
Each was a symbol power, a vivid flash
In the circuit of infinities half-known;
Nothing was alien or inanimate,
Nothing without its meaning or its call.
For with a greater Nature she was one.
As from the soil sprang glory of branch and flower,
As from the animal's life rose thinking man,
A new epiphany appeared in her.
A mind of light, a life of rhythmic force,
A body instinct with hidden divinity
Prepared an image of the coming god;
And when the slow rhyme of the expanding years
And the rich murmurous swarm-work of the days
Had honey-packed her sense and filled her limbs,
Accomplishing the moon-orb of her grace,
Self-guarded in the silence of her strength
Her solitary greatness was not less.
Nearer the godhead to the surface pressed,
A sun replacing childhood's nebula
Sovereign in a blue and lonely sky.
Upward it rose to grasp the human scene:
The strong Inhabitant turned to watch her field.
A lovelier light assumed her spirit brow
And sweet and solemn grew her musing gaze;
Celestial-human deep warm slumbrous fires
Woke in the long fringed glory of her eyes
Like altar-burnings in a mysteried shrine.
Out of those crystal windows gleamed a will
That brought a large significance to life.
Holding her forehead's candid stainless space
Behind the student arch a noble power

Of wisdom looked from light on transient things.
A scout of victory in a vigil tower,
Her aspiration called high destiny down;
A silent warrior paced in her city of strength
Inviolate, guarding Truth's diamond throne.
A nectarous haloed moon her passionate heart
Loved all and spoke no word and made no sign,
But kept her bosom's rapturous secrecy
A blissful ardent moved and voiceless world.
Proud, swift and joyful ran the wave of life
Within her like a stream in Paradise.
Many high gods dwelt in one beautiful home;
Yet was her nature's orb a perfect whole,
Harmonious like a chant with many tones,
Immense and various like a universe.
The body that held this greatness seemed almost
An image made of heaven's transparent light.
Its charm recalled things seen in vision's hours,
A golden bridge spanning a faery flood,
A moon-touched palm-tree single by a lake
Companion of the wide and glimmering peace,
A murmur as of leaves in Paradise
Moving when feet of the Immortals pass,
A fiery halo over sleeping hills,
A strange and starry head alone in Night.

END OF CANTO ONE

Canto Two

The Growth of the Flame

A LAND of mountains and wide sun-beat plains
And giant rivers pacing to vast seas,
A field of creation and spiritual hush,
Silence swallowing life's acts into the deeps,
Of thought's transcendent climb and heavenward leap,
A brooding world of reverie and trance,
Filled with the mightiest works of God and man,
Where Nature seemed a dream of the Divine
And beauty and grace and grandeur had their home,
Harboured the childhood of the incarnate Flame.
Over her watched millennial influences
And the deep godheads of a grandiose past
Looked on her and saw the future's godheads come
As if this magnet drew their powers unseen.
Earth's brooding wisdom spoke to her still breast;
Mounting from mind's last peaks to mate with gods,
Making earth's brilliant thoughts a springing-board
To dive into the cosmic vastnesses,
The knowledge of the thinker and the seer
Saw the unseen and thought the unthinkable,
Opened the enormous doors of the unknown,
Rent man's horizons into infinity.
A shoreless sweep was lent to the mortal's acts,
And art and beauty sprang from the human depths;
Nature and soul vied in nobility.
Ethics the human keyed to imitate heaven;
The harmony of a rich culture's tones
Refined the sense and magnified its reach
To hear the unheard and glimpse the invisible
And taught the soul to soar beyond things known,
Inspiring life to greaten and break its bounds,

Aspiring to the Immortals' unseen world.
Leaving earth's safety daring wings of Mind
Bore her above the trodden fields of thought
Crossing the mystic seas of the Beyond
To live on eagle heights near to the Sun.
There Wisdom sits on her eternal throne.
All her life's turns led her to symbol doors
Admitting to secret Powers that were her kin;
Adept of truth, initiate of bliss,
A mystic acolyte trained in Nature's school,
Aware of the marvel of created things
She laid the secrecies of her heart's deep muse
Upon the altar of the Wonderful;
Her hours were a ritual in a timeless fane;
Her acts became gestures of sacrifice.
Invested with a rhythm of higher spheres
The word was used as a hieratic means
For the release of the imprisoned spirit
Into communion with its comrade gods.
Or it helped to beat out new expressive forms
Of that which labours in the heart of life,
Some immemorial Soul in men and things,
Seeker of the unknown and the unborn
Carrying a light from the Ineffable
To rend the veil of the last mysteries.
Intense philosophies pointed earth to heaven
Or on foundations broad as cosmic Space
Upraised the earth-mind to superhuman heights.
Overpassing lines that please the outward eyes
But hide the sight of that which lives within
Sculpture and painting concentrated sense
Upon an inner vision's motionless verge,
Revealed a figure of the invisible,
Unveiled all Nature's meaning in a form,
Or caught into a body the Divine.
The architecture of the Infinite

Discovered here its inward-musing shapes
Captured into wide breadths of soaring stone:
Music brought down celestial yearnings, song
Held the merged heart absorbed in rapturous depths,
Linking the human with the cosmic cry;
The world-interpreting movements of the dance
Moulded idea and mood to a rhythmic sway
And posture; crafts minute in subtle lines
Eternised a swift moment's memory
Or showed in a carving's sweep, a cup's design
The underlying patterns of the unseen:
Poems in largeness cast like moving worlds
And metres surging with the ocean's voice
Translated by grandeurs locked in Nature's heart
But thrown now into a crowded glory of speech
The beauty and sublimity of her forms,
The passion of her moments and her moods
Lifting the human word nearer to the god's.
Man's eyes could look into the inner realms;
His scrutiny discovered number's law
And organised the motions of the stars,
Mapped out the visible fashioning of the world,
Questioned the process of his thoughts or made
A theorised diagram of mind and life.
These things she took in as her nature's food,
But these alone could fill not her wide Self:
A human seeking limited by its gains,
To her they seemed the great and early steps
Hazardous of a young discovering spirit
Which saw not yet by its own native light;
It tapped the universe with testing knocks
Or stretched to find truth mind's divining rod;
There was a growing out to numberless sides,
But not the widest seeing of the soul,
Not yet the vast direct immediate touch,
Nor yet the art and wisdom of the Gods.

A boundless knowledge greater than man's thought,
A happiness too high for heart and sense
Locked in the world and yearning for release
She felt in her; waiting as yet for form,
It asked for objects around which to grow
And natures strong to bear without recoil
The splendour of her native royalty,
Her greatness and her sweetness and her bliss,
Her might to possess and her vast power to love:
Earth made a stepping-stone to conquer heaven,
The soul saw beyond heaven's limiting boundaries,
Met a great light from the Unknowable
And dreamed of a transcendent action's sphere.
Aware of the universal Self in all
She turned to living hearts and human forms,
Her soul's reflections, complements, counterparts,
The close outlying portions of her being
Divided from her by walls of body and mind
Yet to her spirit bound by ties divine.
Overcoming invisible hedge and masked defence
And the loneliness that separates soul from soul,
She wished to make all one immense embrace
That she might house in it all living things
Raised into a splendid point of seeing light
Out of division's dense inconscient cleft,
And make them one with God and world and her.
Only a few responded to her call:
Still fewer felt the screened divinity
And strove to mate its godhead with their own,
Approaching with some kinship to her heights.
Uplifted towards luminous secrecies
Or conscious of some splendour hidden above
They leaped to find her in a moment's flash,
Glimpsing a light in a celestial vast,
But could not keep the vision and the power
And fell back to life's dull ordinary tone.

A mind daring heavenly experiment,
Growing towards some largeness they felt near,
Testing the unknown's bound with eager touch
They still were prisoned by their human grain:
They could not keep up with her tireless step;
Too small and eager for her large-paced will,
Too narrow to look with the unborn Infinite's gaze
Their nature weary grew of things too great.
For even the close partners of her thoughts
Who could have walked the nearest to her ray,
Worshipped the power and light they felt in her
But could not match the measure of her soul.
A friend and yet too great wholly to know,
She walked in their front towards a greater light,
Their leader and queen over their hearts and souls,
One close to their bosoms, yet divine and far.
Admiring and amazed they saw her stride
Attempting with a godlike rush and leap
Heights for their human stature too remote
Or with a slow great many-sided toil
Pushing towards aims they hardly could conceive;
Yet forced to be the satellites of her sun
They moved unable to forego her light,
Desiring they clutched at her with outstretched hands
Or followed stumbling in the paths she made.
Or longing with their self of life and flesh
They clung to her for heart's nourishment and support:
The rest they could not see in visible light;
Vaguely they bore her inner mightiness.
Or bound by the senses and the longing heart,
Adoring with a turbid human love,
They could not grasp the mighty spirit she was
Or change by closeness to be even as she.
Some felt her with their souls and thrilled with her,
A greatness felt near yet beyond mind's grasp;
To see her was a summons to adore,

To be near her drew a high communion's force.
So men worship a god too great to know,
Too high, too vast to wear a limiting shape;
They feel a Presence and obey a might,
Adore a love whose rapture invades their breasts;
To a divine ardour quickening the heart-beats,
A law they follow greatening heart and life.
Opened to the breath is a new diviner air,
Opened to man is a freer, happier world:
He sees high steps climbing to Self and Light.
Her divine parts the soul's allegiance called:
It saw, it felt, it knew the deity.
Her will was puissant on their nature's acts,
Her heart's inexhaustible sweetness lured their hearts,
A being they loved whose bounds exceeded theirs;
Her measure they could not reach but bore her touch,
Answering with the flower's answer to the sun
They gave themselves to her and asked no more.
One greater than themselves, too wide for their ken,
Their minds could not understand nor wholly know,
Their lives replied to hers, moved at her words:
They felt a godhead and obeyed a call,
Answered to her lead and did her work in the world;
Their lives, their natures moved compelled by hers
As if the truth of their own larger selves
Put on an aspect of divinity
To exalt them to a pitch beyond their earth's.
They felt a larger future meet their walk;
She held their hands, she chose for them their paths:
They were moved by her towards great unknown things,
Faith drew them and the joy to feel themselves hers;
They lived in her, they saw the world with her eyes.
Some turned to her against their nature's bent;
Divided between wonder and revolt,
Drawn by her charm and mastered by her will,
Possessed by her, her striving to possess,

Impatient subjects, their tied longing hearts
Hugging the bonds close of which they most complained,
Murmured at a yoke they would have wept to lose,
The splendid yoke of her beauty and her love:
Others pursued her with life's blind desires
And claiming all of her as their lonely own,
Hastened to engross her sweetness meant for all.
As earth claims light for its lone separate need
Demanding her for their sole jealous clasp,
They asked from her movements bounded like their own
And to their smallness craved a like response.
Or they repined that she surpassed their grip,
And hoped to bind her close with longing's cords.
Or finding her touch desired too strong to bear
They blamed her for a tyranny they loved,
Shrank into themselves as from too bright a sun,
Yet hankered for the splendour they refused.
Angrily enamoured of her sweet passionate ray
The weakness of their earth could hardly bear,
They longed but cried out at the touch desired
Inapt to meet divinity so close,
Intolerant of a Force they could not house.
Some drawn unwillingly by her divine sway
Endured it like a sweet but alien spell;
Unable to mount to levels too sublime,
They yearned to draw her down to their own earth.
Or forced to centre round her their passionate lives,
They hoped to bind to their heart's human needs
Her glory and grace that had enslaved their souls.

But mid this world, these hearts that answered her call,
None could stand up her equal and her mate.
In vain she stooped to equal them with her heights,
Too pure that air was for small souls to breathe.
These comrade selves to raise to her own wide breadths
Her heart desired and fill with her own power

That a diviner Force might enter life,
A breath of Godhead greaten human time.
Although she leaned down to their littleness
Covering their lives with her strong passionate hands
And knew by sympathy their needs and wants
And dived in the shallow wave-depths of their lives
And met and shared their heart-beats of grief and joy
And bent to heal their sorrow and their pride,
Lavishing the might that was hers on her lone peak
To lift to it their aspiration's cry,
And though she drew their souls into her vast
And surrounded with the silence of her deeps
And held as the great Mother holds her own,
Only her earthly surface bore their charge
And mixed its fire with their mortality:
Her greater self lived sole, unclaimed, within.
Oftener in dumb Nature's stir and peace
A nearness she could feel serenely one;
The Force in her drew earth's subhuman broods;
And to her spirit's large and free delight
She joined the ardent-hued magnificent lives
Of animal and bird and flower and tree.
They answered to her with the simple heart.
In man a dim disturbing somewhat lives;
It knows but turns away from divine Light
Preferring the dark ignorance of the fall.
Among the many who came drawn to her
Nowhere she found her partner of high tasks,
The comrade of her soul, her other self
Who was made with her, like God and Nature, one.
Some near approached, were touched, caught fire, then failed,
Too great was her demand, too pure her force.
Thus lighting earth around her like a sun,
Yet in her inmost sky an orb aloof,
A distance severed her from those most close.
Puissant, apart her soul as the gods live.

As yet unlinked with the broad human scene,
In a small circle of young eager hearts,
Her being's early school and closed domain,
Apprentice in the business of earth-life,
She schooled her heavenly strain to bear its touch,
Content in her little garden of the gods
As blooms a flower in an unvisited place.
Earth nursed, unconscious still, the inhabiting flame,
Yet something deeply stirred and dimly knew;
There was a movement and a passionate call,
A rainbow dream, a hope of golden change;
Some secret wing of expectation beat,
A growing sense of something new and rare
And beautiful stole across the heart of Time.
Then a faint whisper of her touched the soil,
Breathed like a hidden need the soul divines;
The eye of the great world discovered her
And wonder lifted up its bardic voice.
A key to a Light still kept in being's cave,
The sun-word of an ancient mystery's sense,
Her name ran murmuring on the lips of men
Exalted and sweet like an inspired verse
Struck from the epic lyre of rumour's winds
Or sung like a chanted thought by the poet Fame.
But like a sacred symbol's was that cult.
Admired, unsought, intangible to the grasp
Her beauty and flaming strength were seen afar
Like lightning playing with the fallen day,
A glory unapproachably divine.
No equal heart came close to join her heart,
No transient earthly love assailed her calm,
No hero passion had the strength to seize;
No eyes demanded her replying eyes.
A Power within her awed the imperfect flesh;
The self-protecting genius in our clay
Divined the goddess in the woman's shape

And drew back from a touch beyond its kind
The earth-nature bound in sense-life's narrow make.
The hearts of men are amorous of clay-kin
And bear not spirits lone and high who bring
Fire-intimations from the deathless planes
Too vast for souls not born to mate with heaven.
Whoever is too great must lonely live.
Adored he walks in mighty solitude;
Vain is his labour to create his kind,
His only comrade is the Strength within.
Thus was it for a while with Savitri.
All worshipped marvellingly, none dared to claim.
Her mind sat high pouring its golden beams,
Her heart was a crowded temple of delight.
A single lamp lit in perfection's house,
A bright pure image in a priestless shrine,
Midst those encircling lives her spirit dwelt,
Apart in herself until her hour of fate.

END OF CANTO TWO

Canto Three

The Call to the Quest

A MORN that seemed a new creation's front,
Bringing a greater sunlight, happier skies,
Came burdened with a beauty moved and strange
Out of the changeless origin of things.
An ancient longing struck again new roots:
The air drank deep of unfulfilled desire;
The high trees trembled with a wandering wind
Like souls that quiver at the approach of joy,
And in a bosom of green secrecy
For ever of its one love-note untired
A lyric coïl cried among the leaves.
Away from the terrestrial murmur turned
Where transient calls and answers mix their flood,
King Aswapati listened through the ray
To other sounds than meet the sense-formed ear.
On a subtle interspace which rings our life,
Unlocked were the inner spirit's trance-closed doors:
The inaudible strain in Nature could be caught;
Across this cyclic tramp of eager lives,
Across the deep urgency of present cares,
Earth's wordless hymn to the Ineffable
Arose from the silent heart of the cosmic Void;
He heard the voice repressed of unborn Powers
Murmuring behind the luminous bars of Time.
Again the mighty yearning raised its flame
That asks a perfect life on earth for men
And prays for certainty in the uncertain mind
And shadowless bliss for suffering human hearts
And Truth embodied in an ignorant world
And godhead divinising mortal forms.
A word that leaped from some far sky of thought,

Admitted by the cowled receiving scribe
Traversed the echoing passages of his brain
And left its stamp on the recording cells.
"O Force-compelled, Fate-driven earth-born race,
O petty adventurers in an infinite world
And prisoners of a dwarf humanity,
How long will you tread the circling tracks of mind
Around your little self and petty things?
But not for a changeless littleness were you meant,
Not for vain repetition were you built;
Out of the Immortal's substance you were made;
Your actions can be swift revealing steps,
Your life a changeful mould for growing gods.
A Seer, a strong Creator, is within,
The immaculate Grandeur broods upon your days,
Almighty powers are shut in Nature's cells.
A greater destiny waits you in your front:
This transient earthly being if he wills
Can fit his acts to a transcendent scheme.
He who now stares at the world with ignorant eyes
Hardly from the Inconscient's night aroused,
That look at images and not at Truth,
Can fill those orbs with an immortal's sight.
Yet shall the godhead grow within your hearts,
You shall awake into the spirit's air
And feel the breaking walls of mortal mind
And hear the message which left life's heart dumb
And look through Nature with sun-gazing lids
And blow your conch-shells at the Eternal's gate.
Authors of earth's high change, to you it is given
To cross the dangerous spaces of the soul
And touch the mighty Mother stark awake
And meet the Omnipotent in this house of flesh
And make of life the million-bodied One.
The earth you tread is a border screened from heaven;
The life you lead conceals the light you are.

Immortal Powers sweep flaming past your doors;
Far-off upon your tops the god-chant sounds
While to exceed yourselves thought's trumpets call,
Heard by a few, but fewer dare aspire,
The nympholepts of the ecstasy and the blaze.
An epic of hope and failure breaks earth's heart;
Her force and will exceed her form and fate.
A goddess in a net of transience caught,
Self-bound in the pastures of death she dreams of life,
Self-racked with the pains of hell aspires to joy,
And builds to hope her altars of despair,
Knows that one high step might enfranchise all
And, suffering, looks for greatness in her sons.
But dim in human hearts the ascending fire,
The invisible Grandeur sits unworshipped there;
Man sees the Highest in a limiting form
Or looks upon a Person, hears a Name.
He turns for little gains to ignorant Powers
Or kindles his altar lights to a demon face.
He loves the Ignorance fathering his pain.
A spell is laid upon his glorious strengths;
He has lost the inner Voice that led his thoughts,
And masking the oracular tripod seat
A specious Idol fills the marvel shrine.
The great Illusion wraps him in its veils,
The soul's deep intimations come in vain,
In vain is the unending line of seers,
The sages ponder in unsubstantial light,
The poets lend their voice to outward dreams,
A homeless fire inspires the prophet tongues.
Heaven's flaming lights descend and back return,
The luminous Eye approaches and retires;
Eternity speaks, none understands its word;
Fate is unwilling and the Abyss denies;
The Inconscient's mindless waters block all done.
Only a little lifted is Mind's screen;

The Wise who know see but one half of Truth,
The strong climb hardly to a low-peaked height,
The hearts that yearn are given one hour to love.
His tale half told, falters the secret Bard;
The gods are still too few in mortal forms."
The Voice withdrew into its hidden skies.
But like a shining answer from the gods
Approached through sun-bright spaces Savitri.
Advancing amid tall heaven-pillaring trees,
Apparelled in her flickering-coloured robe
She seemed, burning towards the eternal realms,
A bright moved torch of incense and of flame
That from the sky-roofed temple-soil of earth
A pilgrim hand lifts in an invisible shrine.
There came the gift of a revealing hour:
He saw through depths that reinterpret all,
Limited not now by the dull body's eyes,
New-found through an arch of clear discovery,
This intimation of the world's delight,
This wonder of the divine Artist's make
Carved like a nectar-cup for thirsty gods,
This breathing Scripture of the Eternal's joy,
This net of sweetness woven of aureate fire.
Transformed the delicate image-face became
A deeper Nature's self-revealing sign,
A gold-leaf palimpsest of sacred births,
A grave world-symbol chiselled out of life.
Her brow, a copy of clear unstained heavens,
Was meditation's pedestal and defence,
The very room and smile of musing Space,
Its brooding line infinity's symbol curve.
Amid her tresses' cloudy multitude
Her long eyes shadowed as by wings of Night
Under that moon-gold forehead's dreaming breadth
Were seas of love and thought that held the world;
Marvelling at life and earth they saw truths far.

A deathless meaning filled her mortal limbs;
As in a golden vase's poignant line
They seemed to carry the rhythmic sob of bliss
Of earth's mute adoration towards heaven
Released in beauty's cry of living form
Towards the perfection of eternal things.
Transparent grown the ephemeral living dress
Bared the expressive deity to his view.
Escaped from surface sight and mortal sense
The seizing harmony of its shapes became
The strange significant icon of a Power
Renewing its inscrutable descent
Into a human figure of its works
That stood out in life's bold abrupt relief
On the soil of the evolving universe,
A godhead sculptured on a wall of thought,
Mirrored in the flowing hours and dimly shrined
In Matter as in a cathedral cave.
Annulled were the transient values of the mind,
The body's sense renounced its earthly look;
Immortal met immortal in their gaze.
Awaked from the close spell of daily use
That hides soul-truth with the outward form's disguise,
He saw through the familiar cherished limbs
The great and unknown spirit born his child.
An impromptu from the deeper sight within,
Thoughts rose in him that knew not their own scope.
Then to those large and brooding depths whence Love
Regarded him across the straits of mind,
He spoke in sentences from the unseen Heights.
For the hidden prompters of our speech sometimes
Can use the formulas of a moment's mood
To weigh unconscious lips with words from Fate:
A casual passing phrase can change our life.
"O spirit, traveller of eternity,
Who cam'st from the immortal spaces here

Armed for the splendid hazard of thy life
To set thy conquering foot on Chance and Time,
The moon shut in her halo dreams like thee.
A mighty Presence still defends thy frame.
Perhaps the heavens guard thee for some great soul,
Thy fate, thy work are kept somewhere afar.
Thy spirit came not down a star alone.
O living inscription of the beauty of love
Missalled in aureate virginity,
What message of heavenly strength and bliss in thee
Is written with the Eternal's sun-white script,
One shall discover and greaten with it his life
To whom thou loosenest thy heart's jewelled strings.
O rubies of silence, lips from which there stole
Low laughter, music of tranquillity,
Star-lustrous eyes awake in sweet large night
And limbs like fine-linked poems made of gold
Stanzaed to glimmering curves by artist gods,
Depart where love and destiny call your charm.
Venture through the deep world to find thy mate.
For somewhere on the longing breast of earth,
Thy unknown lover waits for thee the unknown.
Thy soul has strength and needs no other guide
Than One who burns within thy bosom's powers.
There shall draw near to meet thy approaching steps
The second self for whom thy nature asks,
He who shall walk until thy body's end
A close-bound traveller pacing with thy pace,
The lyrist of thy soul's most intimate chords
Who shall give voice to what in thee is mute.
Then shall you grow like vibrant kindred harps,
One in the beats of difference and delight,
Responsive in divine and equal strains,
Discovering new notes of the eternal theme.
One force shall be your mover and your guide,
One light shall be around you and within;

Hand in strong hand confront Heaven's question, life:
Challenge the ordeal of the immense disguise.
Ascend from Nature to divinity's heights;
Face the high gods, crowned with felicity,
Then meet a greater god, thy self beyond Time."
This word was seed of all the thing to be:
A hand from some Greatness opened her heart's locked doors
And showed the work for which her strength was born.
As when the mantra sinks in Yoga's ear,
Its message enters stirring the blind brain
And keeps in the dim ignorant cells its sound;
The hearer understands a form of words
And, musing on the index thought it holds,
He strives to read it with the labouring mind,
But finds bright hints, not the embodied truth:
Then, falling silent in himself to know
He meets the deeper listening of his soul:
The Word repeats itself in rhythmic strains:
Thought, vision, feeling, sense, the body's self
Are seized unutterably and he endures
An ecstasy and an immortal change;
He feels a Wideness and becomes a Power,
All knowledge rushes on him like a sea:
Transmuted by the white spiritual ray
He walks in naked heavens of joy and calm,
Sees the God-face and hears transcendent speech:
An equal greatness in her life was sown.
Accustomed scenes were now an ended play:
Moving in muse amid familiar powers,
Touched by new magnitudes and fiery signs,
She turned to vastnesses not yet her own;
Allured her heart throbbed to unknown sweetnesses;
The secrets of an unseen world were close.
The morn went up into a smiling sky;
Cast from its sapphire pinnacle of trance
Day sank into the burning gold of eve;

The moon floated, a luminous waif through heaven
And sank below the oblivious edge of dream;
Night lit the watch-fires of eternity.
Then all went back into mind's secret caves;
A darkness stooping on the heaven-bird's wings
Sealed in her senses from external sight
And opened the stupendous depths of sleep.
When the pale dawn slipped through Night's shadowy guard,
Vainly the new-born light desired her face;
The palace woke to its own emptiness;
The sovereign of its daily joys was far;
Her moonbeam feet tinged not the lucent floors:
The beauty and divinity were gone.
Delight had fled to search the spacious world.

END OF CANTO THREE

Canto Four

The Quest

THE WORLD-WAYS opened before Savitri.
At first a strangeness of new brilliant scenes
Peopled her mind and kept her body's gaze.
But as she moved across the changing earth
A deeper consciousness welled up in her:
A citizen of many scenes and climes,
Each soil and country it had made its home;
It took all clans and peoples for her own,
Till the whole destiny of mankind was hers.
These unfamiliar spaces on her way
Were known and neighbours to a sense within,
Landscapes recurred like lost forgotten fields,
Cities and rivers and plains her vision claimed
Like slow-recurring memories in front,
The stars at night were her past's brilliant friends,
The winds murmured to her of ancient things
And she met nameless comrades loved by her once.
All was a part of old forgotten selves:
Vaguely or with a flash of sudden hints
Her acts recalled a line of bygone power,
Even her motion's purpose was not new:
Traveller to a prefigured high event,
She seemed to her remembering witness soul
To trace again a journey often made.
A guidance turned the dumb revolving wheels
And in the eager body of their speed
The dim-masked hooded godheads rode who move
Assigned to man immutably from his birth,
Receivers of the inner and outer law,
At once the agents of his spirit's will
And witnesses and executors of his fate.

Inexorably faithful to their task,
They hold his nature's sequence in their guard
Carrying the unbroken thread old lives have spun.
Attendants on his destiny's measured walk
Leading to joys he has won and pains he has called,
Even in his casual steps they intervene.
Nothing we think or do is void or vain;
Each is an energy loosed and holds its course.
The shadowy keepers of our deathless past
Have made our fate the child of our own acts,
And from the furrows laboured by our will
We reap the fruit of our forgotten deeds.
But since unseen the tree that bore this fruit
And we live in a present born from an unknown past,
They seem but parts of a mechanic Force
To a mechanic mind tied by earth's laws;
Yet are they instruments of a Will supreme,
Watched by a still all-seeing Eye above.
A prescient architect of Fate and Chance
Who builds our lives on a foreseen design
The meaning knows and consequence of each step
And watches the inferior stumbling powers.
Upon her silent heights she was aware
Of a calm Presence throned above her brows
Who saw the goal and chose each fateful curve;
It used the body for its pedestal;
The eyes that wandered were its searchlight fires,
The hands that held the reins its living tools;
All was the working of an ancient plan,
A way proposed by an unerring Guide.
Across wide noons and glowing afternoons,
She met with Nature and with human forms
And listened to the voices of the world;
Driven from within she followed her long road,
Mute in the luminous cavern of her heart,
Like a bright cloud through the resplendent day.

At first her path ran far through peopled tracts:
Admitted to the lion eye of States
And theatres of the loud act of man,
Her carven chariot with its fretted wheels
Threaded through clamorous marts and sentinel towers
Past figured gates and high dream-sculptured fronts
And gardens hung in the sapphire of the skies,
Pillared assembly halls with armoured guards,
Small fanes where one calm Image watched man's life
And temples hewn as if by exiled gods
To imitate their lost eternity.
Often from gilded dusk to argent dawn,
Where jewel-lamps flickered on frescoed walls
And the stone lattice stared at moonlit boughs,
Half-conscious of the tardy listening night
Dimly she glided between banks of sleep
At rest in the slumbering palaces of kings.
Hamlet and village saw the fate-wain pass,
Homes of a life bent to the soil it ploughs
For sustenance of its short and passing days
That, transient, keep their old repeated course,
Unchanging in the circle of a sky
Which alters not above our mortal toil.
Away from this thinking creature's burdened hours
To free and griefless spaces now she turned
Not yet perturbed by human joys and fears.
Here was the childhood of primaeval earth,
Here timeless musings large and glad and still,
Men had forborne as yet to fill with cares,
Imperial acres of the eternal sower
And wind-stirred grass-lands winking in the sun:
Or mid green musing of woods and rough-browed hills,
In the grove's murmurous bee-air humming wild
Or past the long lapsing voice of silver floods
Like a swift hope journeying among its dreams
Hastened the chariot of the golden bride.

Out of the world's immense unhuman past
Tract-memories and ageless remnants came,
Domains of light enfeoffed to antique calm
Listened to the unaccustomed sound of hooves
And large immune entangled silences
Absorbed her into emerald secrecy
And slow hushed wizard nets of fiery bloom
Environed with their coloured snare her wheels.
The strong importunate feet of Time fell soft
Along these lonely ways, his titan pace
Forgotten and his stark and ruinous rounds.
The inner ear that listens to solitude,
Leaning self-rapt unboundedly could hear
The rhythm of the intenser wordless Thought
That gathers in the silence behind life,
And the low sweet inarticulate voice of earth
In the great passion of her sun-kissed trance
Ascended with its yearning undertone.
Afar from the brute noise of clamorous needs
The quieted all-seeking mind could feel,
At rest from its blind outwardness of will,
The unwearied clasp of her mute patient love
And know for a soul the mother of our forms.
This spirit stumbling in the fields of sense,
This creature bruised in the mortar of the days
Could find in her broad spaces of release.
Not yet was a world all occupied by care.
The bosom of our mother kept for us still
Her austere regions and her musing depths,
Her impersonal reaches lonely and inspired
And the mightinesses of her rapture haunts.
Muse-lipped she nursed her symbol mysteries
And guarded for her pure-eyed sacraments
The valley clefts between her breasts of joy,
Her mountain altars for the fires of dawn
And nuptial beaches where the ocean couched

And the huge chanting of her prophet woods.
Fields had she of her solitary mirth,
Plains hushed and happy in the embrace of light,
Alone with the cry of birds and hue of flowers,
And wildernesses of wonder lit by her moons
And grey seer-evenings kindling with the stars
And dim movement in the night's infinitude.
August, exulting in her Maker's eye,
She felt her nearness to him in earth's breast,
Conversed still with a Light behind the veil,
Still communed with Eternity beyond.
A few and fit inhabitants she called
To share the glad communion of her peace;
The breadth, the summit were their natural home.
The strong king-sages from their labour done,
Freed from the warrior tension of their task,
Came to her serene sessions in these wilds;
The strife was over, the respite lay in front.
Happy they lived with birds and beasts and flowers
And sunlight and the rustle of the leaves,
And heard the wild winds wandering in the night,
Mused with the stars in their mute constant ranks,
And lodged in the mornings as in azure tents,
And with the glory of the noons were one.
Some deeper plunged; from life's external clasp
Beckoned into a fiery privacy
In the soul's unprofaned star-white recess
They sojourned with an everliving Bliss;
A Voice profound in the ecstasy and the hush
They heard, beheld an all-revealing Light.
All time-made difference they overcame;
The world was fibred with their own heart-strings;
Close drawn to the heart that beats in every breast,
They reached the one self in all through boundless love.
Attuned to Silence and to the world-rhyme,
They loosened the knot of the imprisoning mind;

Achieved was the wide untroubled witness gaze,
Unsealed was Nature's great spiritual eye;
To the height of heights rose now their daily climb:
Truth leaned to them from her supernal realm;
Above them blazed eternity's mystic suns.
Nameless the austere ascetics without home
Abandoning speech and motion and desire
Aloof from creatures sat absorbed, alone,
Immaculate in tranquil heights of self
On concentration's luminous voiceless peaks,
World-naked hermits with their matted hair
Immobile as the passionless great hills
Around them grouped like thoughts of some vast mood
Awaiting the Infinite's behest to end.
The seers attuned to the universal Will,
Content in Him who smiles behind earth's forms,
Abode ungrieved by the insistent days.
About them like green trees girdling a hill
Young grave disciples fashioned by their touch,
Trained to the simple act and conscious word,
Greatened within and grew to meet their heights.
Far-wandering seekers on the Eternal's path
Brought to these quiet founts their spirit's thirst
And spent the treasure of a silent hour
Bathed in the purity of the mild gaze
That, uninsistent, ruled them from its peace,
And by its influence found the ways of calm.
The Infants of the monarchy of the worlds,
The heroic leaders of a coming time,
King-children nurtured in that spacious air
Like lions gambolling in sky and sun
Received half-consciously their godlike stamp:
Formed in the type of the high thoughts they sang
They learned the wide magnificence of mood
That makes us comrades of the cosmic urge,
No longer chained to their small separate selves,

Plastic and firm beneath the eternal hand,
Met Nature with a bold and friendly clasp
And served in her the Power that shapes her works.
One-souled to all and free from narrowing bonds,
Large like a continent of warm sunshine
In wide equality's impartial joy,
These sages breathed for God's delight in things.
Assisting the slow entries of the gods,
Sowing in young minds immortal thoughts they lived,
Taught the great Truth to which man's race must rise
Or opened the gates of freedom to a few.
Imparting to our struggling world the Light
They breathed like spirits from Time's dull yoke released,
Comrades and vessels of the cosmic Force,
Using a natural mastery like the sun's:
Their speech, their silence was a help to earth.
A magic happiness flowed from their touch;
Oneness was sovereign in that sylvan peace,
The wild beast joined in friendship with its prey;
Persuading the hatred and the strife to cease
The love that flows from the one Mother's breast
Healed with their hearts the hard and wounded world.
Others escaped from the confines of thought
To where Mind motionless sleeps waiting Light's birth,
And came back quivering with a nameless Force,
Drunk with a wine of lightning in their cells;
Intuitive knowledge leaping into speech,
Seized, vibrant, kindling with the inspired word,
Hearing the subtle voice that clothes the heavens,
Carrying the splendour that has lit the suns,
They sang Infinity's names and deathless powers
In metres that reflect the moving worlds,
Sight's sound-waves breaking from the soul's great deeps.
Some lost to the person and his strip of thought
In a motionless ocean of impersonal Power,
Sat mighty, visioned with the Infinite's light,

Or, comrades of the everlasting Will,
Surveyed the plan of past and future Time.
Some winged like birds out of the cosmic sea
And vanished into a bright and featureless Vast:
Some silent watched the universal dance,
Or helped the world by world-indifference.
Some watched no more merged in a lonely Self,
Absorbed in the trance from which no soul returns,
All the occult world-lines for ever closed,
The chains of birth and person cast away:
Some uncompanioned reached the Ineffable.

As floats a sunbeam through a shady place,
The golden virgin in her carven car
Came gliding among meditation's seats.
Often in twilight mid returning troops
Of cattle thickening with their dust the shades
When the loud day had slipped below the verge,
Arriving in a peaceful hermit grove
She rested drawing round her like a cloak
Its spirit of patient muse and potent prayer.
Or near to a lion river's tawny mane
And trees that worshipped on a praying shore,
A domed and templed air's serene repose
Beckoned to her hurrying wheels to stay their speed.
In the solemnity of a space that seemed
A mind remembering ancient silences,
Where to the heart great bygone voices called
And the large liberty of brooding seers
Had left the long impress of their soul's scene,
Awake in candid dawn or darkness mooned,
To the still touch inclined the daughter of Flame
Drank in hushed splendour between tranquil lids
And felt the kinship of eternal calm.
But morn broke in reminding her of her quest
And from low rustic couch or mat she rose

And went impelled on her unfinished way
And followed the fateful orbit of her life
Like a desire that questions silent gods
Then passes starlike to some bright Beyond.
Thence to great solitary tracts she came,
Where man was a passer-by towards human scenes
Or sole in Nature's vastness strove to live
And called for help to ensouled invisible Powers,
Overwhelmed by the immensity of his world
And unaware of his own infinity.
The earth multiplied to her a changing brow
And called her with a far and nameless voice.
The mountains in their anchorite solitude,
The forests with their multitudinous chant
Disclosed to her the masked divinity's doors.
On dreaming plains, an indolent expanse,
The death-bed of a pale enchanted eve
Under the glamour of a sunken sky,
Impassive she lay as at an age's end,
Or crossed an eager pack of huddled hills
Lifting their heads to hunt a lairlike sky,
Or travelled in a strange and empty land
Where desolate summits camped in a weird heaven,
Mute sentinels beneath a drifting moon,
Or wandered in some lone tremendous wood
Ringing for ever with the crickets' cry
Or followed a long glistening serpent road
Through fields and pastures lapped in moveless light
Or reached the wild beauty of a desert space
Where never plough was driven nor herd had grazed
And slumbered upon stripped and thirsty sands
Amid the savage wild-beast night's appeal.
Still unaccomplished was the fateful quest;
Still she found not the one predestined face
For which she sought amid the sons of men.
A grandiose silence wrapped the regal day:

The months had fed the passion of the sun
And now his burning breath assailed the soil.
The tiger heats prowled through the fainting earth;
All was licked up as by a lolling tongue.
The spring winds failed; the sky was set like bronze.

END OF CANTO FOUR
END OF BOOK FOUR

BOOK FIVE

The Book of Love

Canto One

The Destined Meeting-Place

BUT NOW the destined spot and hour were close;
Unknowing she had neared her nameless goal.
For though a dress of blind and devious chance
Is laid upon the work of all-wise Fate,
Our acts interpret an omniscient Force
That dwells in the compelling stuff of things,
And nothing happens in the cosmic play
But at its time and in its foreseen place.
To a space she came of soft and delicate air
That seemed a sanctuary of youth and joy,
A highland world of free and green delight
Where spring and summer lay together and strove
In indolent and amicable debate,
Inarmed, disputing with laughter who should rule.
There expectation beat wide sudden wings
As if a soul had looked out from earth's face,
And all that was in her felt a coming change
And forgetting obvious joys and common dreams,
Obedient to Time's call, to the spirit's fate,
Was lifted to a beauty calm and pure
That lived under the eyes of Eternity.
A crowd of mountainous heads assailed the sky
Pushing towards rival shoulders nearer heaven,
The armoured leaders of an iron line;
Earth prostrate lay beneath their feet of stone.
Below them crouched a dream of emerald woods
And gleaming borders solitary as sleep:
Pale waters ran like glimmering threads of pearl.
A sigh was straying among happy leaves;
Cool-perfumed with slow pleasure-burdened feet
Faint stumbling breezes faltered among flowers.

The white crane stood, a vivid motionless streak,
Peacock and parrot jewelled soil and tree,
The dove's soft moan enriched the enamoured air
And fire-winged wild-drakes swam in silvery pools.
Earth couched alone with her great lover Heaven,
Uncovered to her consort's azure eye.
In a luxurious ecstasy of joy
She squandered the love-music of her notes,
Wasting the passionate pattern of her blooms
And festival riot of her scents and hues.
A cry and leap and hurry was around,
The stealthy footfalls of her chasing things,
The shaggy emerald of her centaur mane,
The gold and sapphire of her warmth and blaze.
Magician of her rapt felicities,
Blithe, sensuous-hearted, careless and divine,
Life ran or hid in her delightful rooms;
Behind all brooded Nature's grandiose calm.
Primaeval peace was there and in its bosom
Held undisturbed the strife of bird and beast.
Man the deep-browed artificer had not come
To lay his hand on happy inconscient things,
Thought was not there nor the measurer, strong-eyed toil,
Life had not learned its discord with its aim.
The Mighty Mother lay outstretched at ease.
All was in line with her first satisfied plan;
Moved by a universal will of joy
The trees bloomed in their green felicity
And the wild children brooded not on pain.
At the end reclined a stern and giant tract
Of tangled depths and solemn questioning hills,
Peaks like a bare austerity of the soul,
Armoured, remote and desolately grand
Like the thought-screened infinities that lie
Behind the rapt smile of the Almighty's dance.
A matted forest-head invaded heaven

As if a blue-throated ascetic peered
From the stone fastness of his mountain cell
Regarding the brief gladness of the days;
His vast extended spirit couched behind.
A mighty murmur of immense retreat
Besieged the ear, a sad and limitless call
As of a soul retiring from the world.
This was the scene which the ambiguous Mother
Had chosen for her brief felicitous hour;
Here in this solitude far from the world
Her part she began in the world's joy and strife.
Here were disclosed to her the mystic courts,
The lurking doors of beauty and surprise,
The wings that murmur in the golden house,
The temple of sweetness and the fiery aisle.
A stranger on the sorrowful roads of Time,
Immortal under the yoke of death and fate,
A sacrificant of the bliss and pain of the spheres,
Love in the wilderness met Savitri.

END OF CANTO ONE

Canto Two

Satyavan

ALL SHE remembered on this day of Fate,
The road that hazarded not the solemn depths
But turned away to flee to human homes,
The wilderness with its mighty monotone,
The morning like a lustrous seer above,
The passion of the summits lost in heaven,
The titan murmur of the endless woods.
As if a wicket gate to joy were there
Ringed in with voiceless hint and magic sign,
Upon the margin of an unknown world
Reclined the curve of a sun-held recess;
Groves with strange flowers like eyes of gazing nymphs
Peered from their secrecy into open space,
Boughs whispering to a constancy of light
Sheltered a dim and screened felicity,
And slowly a supine inconstant breeze
Ran like a fleeting sigh of happiness
Over slumbrous grasses pranked with green and gold.
Hidden in the forest's bosom of loneliness
Amid the leaves the inmate voices called,
Sweet like desires enamoured and unseen,
Cry answering to low insistent cry.
Behind slept emerald dumb remotenesses,
Haunt of a Nature passionate, veiled, denied
To all but her own vision lost and wild.
Earth in this beautiful refuge free from cares
Murmured to the soul a song of strength and peace.
Only one sign was there of a human tread:
A single path, shot thin and arrowlike
Into this bosom of vast and secret life,
Pierced its enormous dream of solitude.

Here first she met on the uncertain earth
The one for whom her heart had come so far.
As might a soul on Nature's background limned
Stand out for a moment in a house of dream
Created by the ardent breath of life,
So he appeared against the forest verge
Inset twixt green relief and golden ray.
As if a weapon of the living Light,
Erect and lofty like a spear of God
His figure led the splendour of the morn.
Noble and clear as the broad peaceful heavens
A tablet of young wisdom was his brow;
Freedom's imperious beauty curved his limbs,
The joy of life was on his open face.
His look was a wide daybreak of the gods,
His head was a youthful Rishi's touched with light,
His body was a lover's and a king's.
In the magnificent dawning of his force
Built like a moving statue of delight
He illumined the border of the forest page.
Out of the ignorant eager toil of the years
Abandoning man's loud drama he had come
Led by the wisdom of an adverse Fate
To meet the ancient Mother in her groves.
In her divine communion he had grown
A foster-child of beauty and solitude,
Heir to the centuries of the lonely wise,
A brother of the sunshine and the sky,
A wanderer communing with depth and marge.
A Veda-knower of the unwritten book
Perusing the mystic scripture of her forms,
He had caught her hierophant significances,
Her sphered immense imaginations learned,
Taught by sublimities of stream and wood
And voices of the sun and star and flame
And chant of the magic singers on the boughs

And the dumb teaching of four-footed things.
Helping with confident steps her slow great hands
He leaned to her influence like a flower to rain
And, like the flower and tree a natural growth,
Widened with the touches of her shaping hours.
The mastery free natures have was his
And their assent to joy and spacious calm;
One with the single Spirit inhabiting all,
He laid experience at the Godhead's feet;
His mind was open to her infinite mind,
His acts were rhythmic with her primal force;
He had subdued his mortal thought to hers.
That day he had turned from his accustomed paths;
For One who, knowing every moment's load,
Can move in all our studied or careless steps,
Had laid the spell of destiny on his feet
And drawn him to the forest's flowering verge.
At first her glance that took life's million shapes
Impartially to people its treasure-house
Along with sky and flower and hill and star,
Dwelt rather on the bright harmonious scene.
It saw the green-gold of the slumbrous sward,
The grasses quivering with the slow wind's tread,
The branches haunted by the wild bird's call.
Awake to Nature, vague as yet to life,
The eager prisoner from the Infinite,
The immortal wrestler in its mortal house,
Its pride, power, passion of a striving God,
It saw this image of veiled deity,
This thinking master creature of the earth,
This last result of the beauty of the stars,
But only saw like fair and common forms
The artist spirit needs not for its work
And puts aside in memory's shadowy rooms.
A look, a turn decides our ill-poised fate.
Thus in the hour that most concerned her all,

Wandering unwarned by the slow surface mind,
The heedless scout beneath her tenting lids
Admired indifferent beauty and cared not
To wake her body's spirit to its king.
So might she have passed by on chance ignorant roads
Missing the call of Heaven, losing life's aim,
But the god touched in time her conscious soul.
Her vision settled, caught and all was changed.
Her mind at first dwelt in ideal dreams,
Those intimate transmuters of earth's signs
That make known things a hint of unseen spheres,
And saw in him the genius of the spot,
A symbol figure standing mid earth's scenes,
A king of life outlined in delicate air.
Yet this was but a moment's reverie;
For suddenly her heart looked out at him,
The passionate seeing used thought cannot match,
And knew one nearer than its own close strings.
All in a moment was surprised and seized,
All in inconscient ecstasy lain wrapped
Or under imagination's coloured lids
Held up in a large mirror-air of dream,
Broke forth in flame to recreate the world,
And in that flame to new things she was born.
A mystic tumult from her depths arose;
Haled, smitten erect like one who dreamed at ease,
Life ran to gaze from every gate of sense:
Thoughts indistinct and glad in moon-mist heavens,
Feelings as when a universe takes birth,
Swept through the turmoil of her bosom's space
Invaded by a swarm of golden gods:
Arising to a hymn of wonder's priests
Her soul flung wide its doors to this new sun.
An alchemy worked, the transmutation came;
The missioned face had wrought the Master's spell.
In the nameless light of two approaching eyes

A swift and fated turning of her days
Appeared and stretched to a gleam of unknown worlds.
Then trembling with the mystic shock her heart
Moved in her breast and cried out like a bird
Who hears his mate upon a neighbouring bough.
Hooves trampling fast, wheels largely stumbling ceased;
The chariot stood like an arrested wind.
And Satyavan looked out from his soul's doors
And felt the enchantment of her liquid voice
Fill his youth's purple ambience and endured
The haunting miracle of a perfect face.
Mastered by the honey of a strange flower-mouth,
Drawn to soul-spaces opening round a brow,
He turned to the vision like a sea to the moon
And suffered a dream of beauty and of change,
Discovered the aureole round a mortal's head,
Adored a new divinity in things.
His self-bound nature foundered as in fire;
His life was taken into another's life.
The splendid lonely idols of his brain
Fell prostrate from their bright sufficiencies,
As at the touch of a new infinite,
To worship a godhead greater than their own.
An unknown imperious force drew him to her.
Marvelling he came across the golden sward:
Gaze met close gaze and clung in sight's embrace.
A visage was there, noble and great and calm,
As if encircled by a halo of thought,
A span, an arch of meditating light,
As though some secret nimbus half was seen;
Her inner vision still remembering knew
A forehead that wore the crown of all her past,
Two eyes her constant and eternal stars,
Comrade and sovereign eyes that claimed her soul,
Lids known through many lives, large frames of love.
He met in her regard his future's gaze,

A promise and a presence and a fire,
Saw an embodiment of aeonic dreams,
A mystery of the rapture for which all
Yearns in this world of brief mortality
Made in material shape his very own.
This golden figure given to his grasp
Hid in its breast the key of all his aims,
A spell to bring the Immortal's bliss on earth,
To mate with heaven's truth our mortal thought,
To lift earth-hearts nearer the Eternal's sun.
In these great spirits now incarnate here
Love brought down power out of eternity
To make of life his new undying base.
His passion surged a wave from fathomless deeps;
It leaped to earth from far forgotten heights,
But kept its nature of infinity.
On the dumb bosom of this oblivious globe
Although as unknown beings we seem to meet,
Our lives are not aliens nor as strangers join,
Moved to each other by a causeless force.
The soul can recognise its answering soul
Across dividing Time and, on life's roads
Absorbed wrapped traveller, turning it recovers
Familiar splendours in an unknown face
And touched by the warning finger of swift love
It thrills again to an immortal joy
Wearing a mortal body for delight.
There is a Power within that knows beyond
Our knowings; we are greater than our thoughts,
And sometimes earth unveils that vision here.
To live, to love are signs of infinite things,
Love is a glory from eternity's spheres.
Abased, disfigured, mocked by baser mights
That steal his name and shape and ecstasy,
He is still the godhead by which all can change.
A mystery wakes in our inconscient stuff,

A bliss is born that can remake our life.
Love dwells in us like an unopened flower
Awaiting a rapid moment of the soul,
Or he roams in his charmed sleep mid thoughts and things;
The child-god is at play, he seeks himself
In many hearts and minds and living forms:
He lingers for a sign that he can know
And, when it comes, wakes blindly to a voice,
A look, a touch, the meaning of a face.
His instrument the dim corporeal mind,
Of celestial insight now forgetful grown,
He seizes on some sign of outward charm
To guide him mid the throng of Nature's hints,
Reads heavenly truths into earth's semblances,
Desires the image for the godhead's sake,
Divines the immortalities of form
And takes the body for the sculptured soul.
Love's adoration like a mystic seer
Through vision looks at the invisible,
In earth's alphabet finds a godlike sense;
But the mind only thinks, "Behold the one
For whom my life has waited long unfilled,
Behold the sudden sovereign of my days."
Heart feels for heart, limb cries for answering limb;
All strives to enforce the unity all is.
Too far from the Divine, Love seeks his truth
And Life is blind and the instruments deceive
And Powers are there that labour to debase.
Still can the vision come, the joy arrive.
Rare is the cup fit for love's nectar wine,
As rare the vessel that can hold God's birth;
A soul made ready through a thousand years
Is the living mould of a supreme Descent.
These knew each other though in forms thus strange.
Although to sight unknown, though life and mind
Had altered to hold a new significance,

These bodies summed the drift of numberless births,
And the spirit to the spirit was the same.
Amazed by a joy for which they had waited long,
The lovers met upon their different paths,
Travellers across the limitless plains of Time
Together drawn from fate-led journeyings
In the self-closed solitude of their human past,
To a swift rapturous dream of future joy
And the unexpected present of these eyes.
By the revealing greatness of a look,
Form-smitten the spirit's memory woke in sense.
The mist was torn that lay between two lives;
Her heart unveiled and his to find her turned;
Attracted as in heaven star by star,
They wondered at each other and rejoiced
And wove affinity in a silent gaze.
A moment passed that was eternity's ray,
An hour began, the matrix of new Time.

END OF CANTO TWO

Canto Three

Satyavan and Savitri

OUT OF the voiceless mystery of the past
In a present ignorant of forgotten bonds
These spirits met upon the roads of Time.
Yet in the heart their secret conscious selves
At once aware grew of each other warned
By the first call of a delightful voice
And a first vision of the destined face.
As when being cries to being from its depths
Behind the screen of the external sense
And strives to find the heart-disclosing word,
The passionate speech revealing the soul's need,
But the mind's ignorance veils the inner sight,
Only a little breaks through our earth-made bounds,
So now they met in that momentous hour,
So utter the recognition in the deeps,
The remembrance lost, the oneness felt and missed.
Thus Satyavan spoke first to Savitri:
"O thou who com'st to me out of Time's silences,
Yet thy voice has wakened my heart to an unknown bliss,
Immortal or mortal only in thy frame,
For more than earth speaks to me from thy soul
And more than earth surrounds me in thy gaze,
How art thou named among the sons of men?
Whence hast thou dawned filling my spirit's days,
Brighter than summer, brighter than my flowers,
Into the lonely borders of my life,
O sunlight moulded like a golden maid?
I know that mighty gods are friends of earth.
Amid the pageantries of day and dusk,
Long have I travelled with my pilgrim soul
Moved by the marvel of familiar things.

Earth could not hide from me the powers she veils:
Even though moving mid an earthly scene
And the common surfaces of terrestrial things,
My vision saw unblinded by her forms;
The Godhead looked at me from familiar scenes.
I witnessed the virgin bridals of the dawn
Behind the glowing curtains of the sky
Or vying in joy with the bright morning's steps
I paced along the slumbrous coasts of noon,
Or the gold desert of the sunlight crossed
Traversing great wastes of splendour and of fire,
Or met the moon gliding amazed through heaven
In the uncertain wideness of the night,
Or the stars marched on their long sentinel routes
Pointing their spears through the infinitudes:
The day and dusk revealed to me hidden shapes;
Figures have come to me from secret shores
And happy faces looked from ray and flame.
I have heard strange voices cross the ether's waves,
The Centaur's wizard song has thrilled my ear;
I have glimpsed the Apsaras bathing in the pools,
I have seen the wood-nymphs peering through the leaves;
The winds have shown to me their trampling lords,
I have beheld the princes of the Sun
Burning in thousand-pillared homes of light.
So now my mind could dream and my heart fear
That from some wonder-couch beyond our air
Risen in a wide morning of the gods
Thou drov'st thy horses from the Thunderer's worlds.
Although to heaven thy beauty seems allied,
Much rather would my thoughts rejoice to know
That mortal sweetness smiles between thy lids
And thy heart can beat beneath a human gaze
And thy aureate bosom quiver with a look
And its tumult answer to an earth-born voice.
If our time-vexed affections thou canst feel,

Earth's ease of simple things can satisfy,
If thy glance can dwell content on earthly soil,
And this celestial summary of delight,
Thy golden body, dally with fatigue
Oppressing with its grace our terrain, while
The frail sweet passing taste of earthly food
Delays thee and the torrent's leaping wine,
Descend. Let thy journey cease, come down to us.
Close is my father's creepered hermitage
Screened by the tall ranks of these silent kings,
Sung to by voices of the hue-robed choirs
Whose chants repeat transcribed in music's notes
The passionate coloured lettering of the boughs
And fill the hours with their melodious cry.
Amid the welcome-hum of many bees
Invade our honied kingdom of the woods;
There let me lead thee into an opulent life.
Bare, simple is the sylvan hermit-life;
Yet is it clad with the jewelry of earth.
Wild winds run — visitors midst the swaying tops,
Through the calm days heaven's sentinels of peace
Couched on a purple robe of sky above
Look down on a rich secrecy and hush
And the chambered nuptial waters chant within.
Enormous, whispering, many-formed around
High forest gods have taken in their arms
The human hour, a guest of their centuried pomps.
Apparelled are the morns in gold and green,
Sunlight and shadow tapestry the walls
To make a resting chamber fit for thee."
Awhile she paused as if hearing still his voice,
Unwilling to break the charm, then slowly spoke.
Musing she answered, "I am Savitri,
Princess of Madra. Who art thou? What name
Musical on earth expresses thee to men?
What trunk of kings watered by fortunate streams

Has flowered at last upon one happy branch?
Why is thy dwelling in the pathless wood
Far from the deeds thy glorious youth demands,
Haunt of the anchorites and earth's wilder broods,
Where only with thy witness self thou roamst
In Nature's green unhuman loneliness
Surrounded by enormous silences
And the blind murmur of primaeval calms?"
And Satyavan replied to Savitri:
"In days when yet his sight looked clear on life,
King Dyumatsena once, the Shalwa, reigned
Through all the tract which from behind these tops
Passing its days of emerald delight
In trusting converse with the traveller winds
Turns, looking back towards the southern heavens,
And leans its flank upon the musing hills.
But equal Fate removed her covering hand.
A living night enclosed the strong man's paths,
Heaven's brilliant gods recalled their careless gifts,
Took from blank eyes their glad and helping ray
And led the uncertain goddess from his side.
Outcast from empire of the outer light,
Lost to the comradeship of seeing men,
He sojourns in two solitudes, within
And in the solemn rustle of the woods.
Son of that king, I, Satyavan, have lived
Contented, for not yet of thee aware,
In my high-peopled loneliness of spirit
And this huge vital murmur kin to me,
Nursed by the vastness, pupil of solitude.
Great Nature came to her recovered child;
I reigned in a kingdom of a nobler kind
Than men can build upon dull Matter's soil;
I met the frankness of the primal earth,
I enjoyed the intimacy of infant God.
In the great tapestried chambers of her state,

Free in her boundless palace I have dwelt
Indulged by the warm mother of us all,
Reared with my natural brothers in her house.
I lay in the wide bare embrace of heaven,
The sunlight's radiant blessing clasped my brow,
The moonbeams' silver ecstasy at night
Kissed my dim lids to sleep. Earth's morns were mine;
Lured by faint murmurings with the green-robed hours
I wandered lost in woods, prone to the voice
Of winds and waters, partner of the sun's joy,
A listener to the universal speech:
My spirit satisfied within me knew
Godlike our birthright, luxuried our life
Whose close belongings are the earth and skies.
Before Fate led me into this emerald world,
Aroused by some foreshadowing touch within,
An early prescience in my mind approached
The great dumb animal consciousness of earth
Now grown so close to me who have left old pomps
To live in this grandiose murmur dim and vast.
Already I met her in my spirit's dream.
As if to a deeper country of the soul
Transposing the vivid imagery of earth,
Through an inner seeing and sense a wakening came.
A visioned spell pursued my boyhood's hours,
All things the eye had caught in coloured lines
Were seen anew through the interpreting mind
And in the shape it sought to seize the soul.
An early child-god took my hand that held,
Moved, guided by the seeking of his touch,
Bright forms and hues which fled across his sight;
Limned upon page and stone they spoke to men.
High beauty's visitants my intimates were.
The neighing pride of rapid life that roams
Wind-maned through our pastures, on my seeing mood
Cast shapes of swiftness; trooping spotted deer

Against the vesper sky became a song
Of evening to the silence of my soul.
I caught for some eternal eye the sudden
King-fisher flashing to a darkling pool;
A slow swan silvering the azure lake,
A shape of magic whiteness, sailed through dream;
Leaves trembling with the passion of the wind,
Pranked butterflies, the conscious flowers of air,
And wandering wings in blue infinity
Lived on the tablets of my inner sight;
Mountains and trees stood there like thoughts from God.
The brilliant long-bills in their vivid dress,
The peacock scattering on the breeze his moons
Painted my memory like a frescoed wall.
I carved my vision out of wood and stone;
I caught the echoes of a word supreme
And metred the rhythm-beats of infinity
And listened through music for the eternal Voice.
I felt a covert touch, I heard a call,
But could not clasp the body of my God
Or hold between my hands the World-Mother's feet.
In men I met strange portions of a Self
That sought for fragments and in fragments lived:
Each lived in himself and for himself alone
And with the rest joined only fleeting ties;
Each passioned over his surface joy and grief,
Nor saw the Eternal in his secret house.
I conversed with Nature, mused with the changeless stars,
God's watch-fires burning in the ignorant Night,
And saw upon her mighty visage fall
A ray prophetic of the Eternal's sun.
I sat with the forest sages in their trance:
There poured awakening streams of diamond light,
I glimpsed the presence of the One in all.
But still there lacked the last transcendent power
And Matter still slept empty of its Lord.

The Spirit was saved, the body lost and mute
Lived still with Death and ancient Ignorance;
The Inconscient was its base, the Void its fate.
But thou hast come and all will surely change:
I shall feel the World-Mother in thy golden limbs
And hear her wisdom in thy sacred voice.
The child of the Void shall be reborn in God,
My Matter shall evade the Inconscient's trance.
My body like my spirit shall be free.
It shall escape from Death and Ignorance."
And Savitri, musing still, replied to him:
"Speak more to me, speak more, O Satyavan,
Speak of thyself and all thou art within;
I would know thee as if we had ever lived
Together in the chamber of our souls.
Speak till a light shall come into my heart
And my moved mortal mind shall understand
What all the deathless being in me feels.
It knows that thou art he my spirit has sought
Amidst earth's thronging visages and forms
Across the golden spaces of my life."
And Satyavan like a replying harp
To the insistent calling of a flute
Answered her questioning and let stream to her
His heart in many-coloured waves of speech:
"O golden princess, perfect Savitri,
More I would tell than failing words can speak,
Of all that thou hast meant to me, unknown,
All that the lightning-flash of love reveals
In one great hour of the unveiling gods.
Even a brief nearness has reshaped my life.
For now I know that all I lived and was
Moved towards this moment of my heart's rebirth;
I look back on the meaning of myself,
A soul made ready on earth's soil for thee.
Once were my days like days of other men:

To think and act was all, to enjoy and breathe;
This was the width and height of mortal hope:
Yet there came glimpses of a deeper self
That lives behind Life and makes her act its scene.
A truth was felt that screened its shape from mind,
A Greatness working towards a hidden end,
And vaguely through the forms of earth there looked
Something that life is not and yet must be.
I groped for the Mystery with the lantern, Thought.
Its glimmerings lighted with the abstract word
A half-visible ground and travelling yard by yard
It mapped a system of the Self and God.
I could not live the truth it spoke and thought.
I turned to seize its form in visible things,
Hoping to fix its rule by mortal mind,
Imposed a narrow structure of world-law
Upon the freedom of the Infinite,
A hard firm skeleton of outward Truth,
A mental scheme of a mechanic Power.
This light showed more the darknesses unsearched;
It made the original Secrecy more occult;
It could not analyse its cosmic Veil
Or glimpse the Wonder-worker's hidden hand
And trace the pattern of his magic plans.
I plunged into an inner seeing Mind
And knew the secret laws and sorceries
That make of Matter mind's bewildered slave:
The mystery was not solved but deepened more.
I strove to find its hints through Beauty and Art,
But Form cannot unveil the indwelling Power;
Only it throws its symbols at our hearts.
It evoked a mood of self, invoked a sign
Of all the brooding glory hidden in sense:
I lived in the ray but faced not to the sun.
I looked upon the world and missed the Self,
And when I found the Self, I lost the world,

My other selves I lost and the body of God,
The link of the finite with the Infinite,
The bridge between the appearance and the Truth,
The mystic aim for which the world was made,
The human sense of Immortality.
But now the gold link comes to me with thy feet
And His gold sun has shone on me from thy face.
For now another realm draws near with thee
And now diviner voices fill my ear,
A strange new world swims to me in thy gaze
Approaching like a star from unknown heavens;
A cry of spheres comes with thee and a song
Of flaming gods. I draw a wealthier breath
And in a fierier march of moments move.
My mind transfigures to a rapturous seer.
A foam-leap travelling from the waves of bliss
Has changed my heart and changed the earth around:
All with thy coming fills. Air, soil and stream
Wear bridal raiment to be fit for thee
And sunlight grows a shadow of thy hue
Because of change within me by thy look.
Come nearer to me from thy car of light
On this green sward disdaining not our soil.
For here are secret spaces made for thee
Whose caves of emerald long to screen thy form.
Wilt thou not make this mortal bliss thy sphere?
Descend, O happiness, with thy moon-gold feet
Enrich earth's floors upon whose sleep we lie.
O my bright beauty's princess Savitri,
By my delight and thy own joy compelled
Enter my life, thy chamber and thy shrine.
In the great quietness where spirits meet,
Led by my hushed desire into my woods
Let the dim rustling arches over thee lean;
One with the breath of things eternal live,
Thy heart-beats near to mine, till there shall leap

Enchanted from the fragrance of the flowers
A moment which all murmurs shall recall
And every bird remember in its cry."

Allured to her lashes by his passionate words
Her fathomless soul looked out at him from her eyes;
Passing her lips in liquid sounds it spoke.
This word alone she uttered and said all:
"O Satyavan, I have heard thee and I know;
I know that thou and only thou art he."
Then down she came from her high carven car
Descending with a soft and faltering haste;
Her many-hued raiment glistening in the light
Hovered a moment over the wind-stirred grass,
Mixed with a glimmer of her body's ray
Like lovely plumage of a settling bird.
Her gleaming feet upon the green-gold sward
Scattered a memory of wandering beams
And lightly pressed the unspoken desire of earth
Cherished in her too brief passing by the soil.
Then flitting like pale-brilliant moths her hands
Took from the sylvan verge's sunlit arms
A load of their jewel-faces' clustering swarms,
Companions of the spring-time and the breeze.
A candid garland set with simple forms
Her rapid fingers taught a flower song,
The stanzaed movement of a marriage hymn.
Profound in perfume and immersed in hue
They mixed their yearning's coloured signs and made
The bloom of their purity and passion one.
A sacrament of joy in treasuring palms
She brought, flower-symbol of her offered life,
Then with raised hands that trembled a little now
At the very closeness that her soul desired,
This bond of sweetness, their bright union's sign,
She laid on the bosom coveted by her love.

As if inclined before some gracious god
Who has out of his mist of greatness shone
To fill with beauty his adorer's hours,
She bowed and touched his feet with worshipping hands;
She made her life his world for him to tread
And made her body the room of his delight,
Her beating heart a remembrancer of bliss.
He bent to her and took into his own
Their married yearning joined like folded hopes;
As if a whole rich world suddenly possessed,
Wedded to all he had been, became himself,
An inexhaustible joy made his alone,
He gathered all Savitri into his clasp.
Around her his embrace became the sign
Of a locked closeness through slow intimate years,
A first sweet summary of delight to come,
One brevity intense of all long life.
In a wide moment of two souls that meet
She felt her being flow into him as in waves
A river pours into a mighty sea.
As when a soul is merging into God
To live in Him for ever and know His joy,
Her consciousness grew aware of him alone
And all her separate self was lost in his.
As a starry heaven encircles happy earth,
He shut her into himself in a circle of bliss
And shut the world into himself and her.
A boundless isolation made them one;
He was aware of her enveloping him
And let her penetrate his very soul
As is a world by the world's spirit filled,
As the mortal wakes into Eternity,
As the finite opens to the Infinite.
Thus were they in each other lost awhile,
Then drawing back from their long ecstasy's trance
Came into a new self and a new world.

Each now was a part of the other's unity,
The world was but their twin self-finding's scene
Or their own wedded being's vaster frame.
On the high glowing cupola of the day
Fate tied a knot with morning's halo threads
While by the ministry of an auspice-hour
Heart-bound before the sun, their marriage fire,
The wedding of the eternal Lord and Spouse
Took place again on earth in human forms:
In a new act of the drama of the world
The united Two began a greater age.
In the silence and murmur of that emerald world
And the mutter of the priest-wind's sacred verse,
Amid the choral whispering of the leaves
Love's twain had joined together and grew one.
The natural miracle was wrought once more:
In the immutable ideal world
One human moment was eternal made.

Then down the narrow path where their lives had met
He led and showed to her her future world,
Love's refuge and corner of happy solitude.
At the path's end through a green cleft in the trees
She saw a clustering line of hermit-roofs
And looked now first on her heart's future home,
The thatch that covered the life of Satyavan.
Adorned with creepers and red climbing flowers
It seemed a sylvan beauty in her dreams
Slumbering with brown body and tumbled hair
In her chamber inviolate of emerald peace.
Around it stretched the forest's anchorite mood
Lost in the depths of its own solitude.
Then moved by the deep joy she could not speak,
A little depth of it quivering in her words,
Her happy voice cried out to Satyavan:
"My heart will stay here on this forest verge

And close to this thatched roof while I am far:
Now of more wandering it has no need.
But I must haste back to my father's house
Which soon will lose one loved accustomed tread
And listen in vain for a once cherished voice.
For soon I shall return nor ever again
Oneness must sever its recovered bliss
Or fate sunder our lives while life is ours."
Once more she mounted on the carven car
And under the ardour of a fiery noon
Less bright than the splendour of her thoughts and dreams
She sped swift-reined, swift-hearted but still saw
In still lucidities of sight's inner world
Through the cool-scented wood's luxurious gloom
On shadowy paths between great rugged trunks
Pace towards a tranquil clearing Satyavan.
A nave of trees enshrined the hermit thatch,
The new deep covert of her felicity,
Preferred to heaven her soul's temple and home.
This now remained with her, her heart's constant scene.

END OF CANTO THREE
END OF BOOK FIVE

BOOK SIX

The Book of Fate

Canto One

The Word of Fate

IN SILENT bounds bordering the mortal's plane
Crossing a wide expanse of brilliant peace
Narad the heavenly sage from Paradise
Came chanting through the large and lustrous air.
Attracted by the golden summer-earth
That lay beneath him like a glowing bowl
Tilted upon a table of the Gods,
Turning as if moved round by an unseen hand
To catch the warmth and blaze of a small sun,
He passed from the immortals' happy paths
To a world of toil and quest and grief and hope,
To these rooms of the see-saw game of death with life.
Across an intangible border of soul-space
He passed from Mind into material things
Amid the inventions of the inconscient Self
And the workings of a blind somnambulist Force.
Below him circling burned the myriad suns:
He bore the ripples of the etheric sea;
A primal Air brought the first joy of touch;
A secret Spirit drew its mighty breath
Contracting and expanding this huge world
In its formidable circuit through the Void;
The secret might of the creative Fire
Displayed its triple power to build and form,
Its infinitesimal wave-sparks' weaving dance,
Its nebulous units grounding shape and mass,
Magic foundation and pattern of a world,
Its radiance bursting into the light of stars;
He felt a sap of life, a sap of death;
Into solid Matter's dense communion
Plunging and its obscure oneness of forms

He shared with a dumb Spirit identity.
He beheld the cosmic Being at his task,
His eyes measured the spaces, gauged the depths,
His inner gaze the movements of the soul,
He saw the eternal labour of the Gods,
And looked upon the life of beasts and men.
A change now fell upon the singer's mood,
A rapture and a pathos moved his voice;
He sang no more of Light that never wanes,
And oneness and pure everlasting bliss,
He sang no more the deathless heart of Love,
His chant was a hymn of Ignorance and Fate.
He sang the name of Vishnu and the birth
And joy and passion of the mystic world,
And how the stars were made and life began
And the mute regions stirred with the throb of a Soul.
He sang the Inconscient and its secret self,
Its power omnipotent knowing not what it does,
All-shaping without will or thought or sense,
Its blind unerring occult mystery,
And darkness yearning towards the eternal Light,
And Love that broods within the dim abyss
And waits the answer of the human heart,
And death that climbs to immortality.
He sang of the Truth that cries from Night's blind deeps,
And the Mother-Wisdom hid in Nature's breast
And the Idea that through her dumbness works
And the miracle of her transforming hands,
Of life that slumbers in the stone and sun
And Mind subliminal in mindless life,
And the Consciousness that wakes in beasts and men.
He sang of the glory and marvel still to be born,
Of Godhead throwing off at last its veil,
Of bodies made divine and life made bliss,
Immortal sweetness clasping immortal might,
Heart sensing heart, thought looking straight at thought,

And the delight when every barrier falls,
And the transfiguration and the ecstasy.
And as he sang the demons wept with joy
Foreseeing the end of their long dreadful task
And the defeat for which they hoped in vain,
And glad release from their self-chosen doom
And return into the One from whom they came.
He who has conquered the Immortals' seats,
Came down to men on earth the Man divine.
As darts a lightning streak, a glory fell
Nearing until the rapt eyes of the sage
Looked out from luminous cloud and, strangely limned,
His face, a beautiful mask of antique joy,
Appearing in light descended where arose
King Aswapati's palace to the winds
In Madra, flowering up in delicate stone.
There welcomed him the sage and thoughtful king,
At his side a creature beautiful, passionate, wise,
Aspiring like a sacrificial flame
Skyward from its earth-seat through luminous air,
Queen-browed, the human mother of Savitri.
There for an hour untouched by the earth's siege
They ceased from common life and care and sat
Inclining to the high and rhythmic voice,
While in his measured chant the heavenly seer
Spoke of the toils of men and what the gods
Strive for on earth, and joy that throbs behind
The marvel and the mystery of pain.
He sang to them of the lotus-heart of love
With all its thousand luminous buds of truth,
Which quivering sleeps veiled by apparent things.
It trembles at each touch, it strives to wake
And one day it shall hear a blissful voice
And in the garden of the Spouse shall bloom
When she is seized by her discovered lord.
A mighty shuddering coil of ecstasy

Crept through the deep heart of the universe.
Out of her Matter's stupor, her mind's dreams,
She woke, she looked upon God's unveiled face.

Even as he sang and rapture stole through earth-time
And caught the heavens, came with a call of hooves,
As of her swift heart hastening, Savitri;
Her radiant tread glimmered across the floor.
A happy wonder in her fathomless gaze,
Changed by the halo of her love she came;
Her eyes rich with a shining mist of joy
As one who comes from a heavenly embassy
Discharging the proud mission of her heart,
One carrying the sanction of the gods
To her love and its luminous eternity,
She stood before her mighty father's throne
And, eager for beauty on discovered earth
Transformed and new in her heart's miracle-light,
Saw like a rose of marvel, worshipping,
The fire-tinged sweetness of the son of Heaven.
He flung on her his vast immortal look;
His inner gaze surrounded her with its light
And reining back knowledge from his immortal lips
He cried to her, "Who is this that comes, the bride,
The flame-born, and round her illumined head
Pouring their lights her hymeneal pomps
Move flashing about her? From what green glimmer of glades
Retreating into dewy silences
Or half-seen verge of waters moon-betrayed
Bringst thou this glory of enchanted eyes?
Earth has gold-hued expanses, shadowy hills
That cowl their dreaming phantom heads in night,
And, guarded in a cloistral joy of woods,
Screened banks sink down into felicity
Seized by the curved incessant yearning hands
And ripple-passion of the upgazing stream:

Amid cool-lipped murmurs of its pure embrace
They lose their souls on beds of trembling reeds.
And all these are mysterious presences
In which some spirit's immortal bliss is felt,
And they betray the earth-born heart to joy.
There hast thou paused, and marvelling borne eyes
Unknown, or heard a voice that forced thy life
To strain its rapture through thy listening soul?
Or, if my thought could trust this shimmering gaze,
It would say thou hast not drunk from an earthly cup,
But stepping through azure curtains of the noon
Thou wast surrounded on a magic verge
In brighter countries than man's eyes can bear.
Assailed by trooping voices of delight
And seized mid a sunlit glamour of the boughs
In faery woods, led down the gleaming slopes
Of Gandhamadan where the Apsaras roam,
Thy limbs have shared the sports which none has seen,
And in god-haunts thy human footsteps strayed,
Thy mortal bosom quivered with god-speech
And thy soul answered to a Word unknown.
What feet of gods, what ravishing flutes of heaven
Have thrilled high melodies round, from near and far
Approaching through the soft and revelling air,
Which still surprised thou hearest? They have fed
Thy silence on some red strange-ecstasied fruit
And thou hast trod the dim moon-peaks of bliss.
Reveal, O winged with light, whence thou hast flown
Hastening bright-hued through the green tangled earth,
Thy body rhythmical with the spring-bird's call.
The empty roses of thy hands are filled
Only with their own beauty and the thrill
Of a remembered clasp, and in thee glows
A heavenly jar, thy firm deep-honied heart,
New-brimming with a sweet and nectarous wine.
Thou hast not spoken with the kings of pain.

Life's perilous music rings yet to thy ear
Far-melodied, rapid and grand, a Centaur's song,
Or soft as water plashing mid the hills,
Or mighty as a great chant of many winds.
Moon-bright thou livest in thy inner bliss.
Thou comest like a silver deer through groves
Of coral flowers and buds of glowing dreams,
Or fleest like a wind-goddess through leaves,
Or roamst, O ruby-eyed and snow-winged dove,
Flitting through thickets of thy pure desires
In the unwounded beauty of thy soul.
These things are only images to thy earth,
But truest truth of that which in thee sleeps.
For such is thy spirit, a sister of the gods,
Thy earthly body lovely to the eyes
And thou art kin in joy to heaven's sons.
O thou who hast come to this great perilous world
Now only seen through the splendour of thy dreams,
Where hardly love and beauty can live safe,
Thyself a being dangerously great,
A soul alone in a golden house of thought
Has lived walled in by the safety of thy dreams.
On heights of happiness leaving doom asleep
Who hunts unseen the unconscious lives of men,
If thy heart could live locked in the ideal's gold,
As high, as happy might thy waking be!
If for all time doom could be left to sleep!"
   He spoke but held his knowledge back from words.
As a cloud plays with lightnings' vivid laugh,
But still holds back the thunder in its heart,
Only he let bright images escape.
His speech like glimmering music veiled his thoughts;
As a wind flatters the bright summer air,
Pitiful to mortals, only to them it spoke
Of living beauty and of present bliss:
He hid in his all-knowing mind the rest.

To those who hearkened to his celestial voice,
The veil heaven's pity throws on future pain
The Immortals' sanction seemed of endless joy.
But Aswapati answered to the seer; —
His listening mind had marked the dubious close,
An ominous shadow felt behind the words,
But calm like one who ever sits facing Fate
Here mid the dangerous contours of earth's life,
He answered covert thought with guarded speech:
"O deathless sage who knowest all things here,
If I could read by the ray of my own wish
Through the carved shield of symbol images
Which thou hast thrown before thy heavenly mind
I might see the steps of a young godlike life
Happily beginning luminous-eyed on earth;
Between the Unknowable and the Unseen
Born on the borders of two wonder-worlds,
It flames out symbols of the infinite
And lives in a great light of inner suns.
For it has read and broken the wizard seals;
It has drunk of the Immortal's wells of joy,
It has looked across the jewel bars of heaven,
It has entered the aspiring Secrecy,
It sees beyond terrestrial common things
And communes with the Powers that build the worlds,
Till through the shining gates and mystic streets
Of the city of lapis lazuli and pearl
Proud deeds step forth, a rank and march of gods.
Although in pauses of our human lives
Earth keeps for man some short and perfect hours
When the inconstant tread of Time can seem
The eternal moment which the deathless live,
Yet rare that touch upon the mortal's world:
Hardly a soul and body here are born
In the fierce difficult movement of the stars,
Whose life can keep the paradisal note,

Its rhythm repeat the many-toned melody
Tirelessly throbbing through the rapturous air
Caught in the song that sways the Apsara's limbs
When she floats gleaming like a cloud of light,
A wave of joy on heaven's moonstone floor.
Behold this image cast by light and love,
A stanza of the ardour of the gods
Perfectly rhymed, a pillared ripple of gold!
Her body like a brimmed pitcher of delight
Shaped in a splendour of gold-coloured bronze
As if to seize earth's truth of hidden bliss.
Dream-made illumined mirrors are her eyes
Draped subtly in a slumbrous fringe of jet,
Retaining heaven's reflections in their depths.
Even as her body, such is she within.
Heaven's lustrous mornings gloriously recur,
Like drops of fire upon a silver page,
In her young spirit yet untouched with tears.
All beautiful things eternal seem and new
To virgin wonder in her crystal soul.
The unchanging blue reveals its spacious thought;
Marvellous the moon floats on through wondering skies;
Earth's flowers spring up and laugh at time and death;
The charmed mutations of the enchanter life
Race like bright children past the smiling hours.
If but this joy of life could last, nor pain
Throw its bronze note into her rhythmed days!
Behold her, singer with the prescient gaze,
And let thy blessing chant that this fair child
Shall pour the nectar of a sorrowless life
Around her from her lucid heart of love,
Heal with her bliss the tired breast of earth
And cast like a happy snare felicity.
As grows the great and golden bounteous tree
Flowering by Alacananda's murmuring waves,
Where with enamoured speed the waters run

Lisping and babbling to the splendour of morn
And cling with lyric laughter round the knees
Of heaven's daughters dripping magic rain
Pearl-bright from moon-gold limbs and cloudy hair,
So are her dawns like jewelled leaves of light,
So casts she her felicity on men.
A flame of radiant happiness she was born
And surely will that flame set earth alight:
Doom surely will see her pass and say no word!
But too often here the careless Mother leaves
Her chosen in the envious hands of Fate:
The harp of God falls mute, its call to bliss
Discouraged fails mid earth's unhappy sounds;
The strings of the siren Ecstasy cry not here
Or soon are silenced in the human heart.
Of sorrow's songs we have enough: bid once
Her glad and griefless days bring heaven here.
Or must fire always test the great of soul?
Along the dreadful causeway of the Gods,
Armoured with love and faith and sacred joy,
A traveller to the Eternal's house,
Once let unwounded pass a mortal life."
But Narad answered not; silent he sat,
Knowing that words are vain and Fate is lord.
He looked into the unseen with seeing eyes,
Then, dallying with the mortal's ignorance
Like one who knows not, questioning, he cried:
"On what high mission went her hastening wheels?
Whence came she with this glory in her heart
And Paradise made visible in her eyes?
What sudden God has met, what face supreme?"
To whom the king, "The red asoca watched
Her going forth which now sees her return.
Arisen into an air of flaming dawn
Like a bright bird tired of her lonely branch,
To find her own lord, since to her on earth

He came not yet, this sweetness wandered forth
Cleaving her way with the beat of her rapid wings.
Led by a distant call her vague swift flight
Threaded the summer morns and sunlit lands.
The happy rest her burdened lashes keep
And these charmed guardian lips hold treasured still.
Virgin who comest perfected by joy,
Reveal the name thy sudden heart-beats learned.
Whom hast thou chosen, kingliest among men?"
And Savitri answered with her still calm voice
As one who speaks beneath the eyes of Fate:
"Father and king, I have carried out thy will.
One whom I sought I found in distant lands;
I have obeyed my heart, I have heard its call.
On the borders of a dreaming wilderness
Mid Shalwa's giant hills and brooding woods
In his thatched hermitage Dyumatsena dwells,
Blind, exiled, outcast, once a mighty king.
The son of Dyumatsena, Satyavan,
I have met on the wild forest's lonely verge.
My father, I have chosen. This is done."
Astonished, all sat silent for a space.
Then Aswapati looked within and saw
A heavy shadow float above the name
Chased by a sudden and stupendous light;
He looked into his daughter's eyes and spoke:
"Well hast thou done and I approve thy choice.
If this is all, then all is surely well;
If there is more, then all can still be well.
Whether it seem good or evil to men's eyes,
Only for good the secret Will can work.
Our destiny is written in double terms:
Through Nature's contraries we draw nearer God;
Out of the darkness we still grow to light.
Death is our road to immortality.
'Cry woe, cry woe,' the world's lost voices wail,

Yet conquers the eternal Good at last."
Then might the sage have spoken, but the king
In haste broke out and stayed the dangerous word:
"O singer of the ultimate ecstasy,
Lend not a dangerous vision to the blind
Because by native right thou hast seen clear.
Impose not on the mortal's tremulous breast
The dire ordeal that foreknowledge brings;
Demand not now the Godhead in our acts.
Here are not happy peaks the heaven-nymphs roam
Or Coilas or Vaicountha's starry stair:
Abrupt, jagged hills only the mighty climb
Are here where few dare even think to rise;
Far voices call down from the dizzy rocks,
Chill, slippery, precipitous are the paths.
Too hard the gods are with man's fragile race;
In their large heavens they dwell exempt from Fate
And they forget the wounded feet of man,
His limbs that faint beneath the whips of grief,
His heart that hears the tread of time and death.
The future's road is hid from mortal sight:
He moves towards a veiled and secret face.
To light one step in front is all his hope
And only for a little strength he asks
To meet the riddle of his shrouded fate.
Awaited by a vague and half-seen force,
Aware of danger to his uncertain hours
He guards his flickering yearnings from her breath;
He feels not when the dreadful fingers close
Around him with the grasp none can elude.
If thou canst loose her grip, then only speak.
Perhaps from the iron snare there is escape:
Our mind perhaps deceives us with its words
And gives the name of doom to our own choice;
Perhaps the blindness of our will is Fate."
He said and Narad answered not the king.

But now the queen alarmed lifted her voice:
"O seer, thy bright arrival has been timed
To this high moment of a happy life;
Then let the speech benign of griefless spheres
Confirm this blithe conjunction of two stars
And sanction joy with thy celestial voice.
Here drag not in the peril of our thoughts,
Let not our words create the doom they fear.
Here is no cause for dread, no chance for grief
To raise her ominous head and stare at love.
A single spirit in a multitude,
Happy is Satyavan mid earthly men
Whom Savitri has chosen for her mate,
And fortunate the forest hermitage
Where leaving her palace and riches and a throne
My Savitri will dwell and bring in heaven.
Then let thy blessing put the immortals' seal
On these bright lives' unstained felicity
Pushing the ominous Shadow from their days.
Too heavy falls a Shadow on man's heart;
It dares not be too happy upon earth.
It dreads the blow dogging too vivid joys,
A lash unseen in Fate's extended hand,
The danger lurking in fortune's proud extremes,
An irony in life's indulgent smile,
And trembles at the laughter of the gods.
Or if crouches unseen a panther doom,
If wings of Evil brood above that house,
Then also speak, that we may turn aside
And rescue our lives from hazard of wayside doom
And chance entanglement of an alien fate."
And Narad slowly answered to the queen:
"What help is in prevision to the driven?
Safe doors cry opening near, the doomed pass on.
A future knowledge is an added pain,
A torturing burden and a fruitless light

On the enormous scene that Fate has built.
The eternal poet, universal Mind,
Has paged each line of his imperial act;
Invisible the giant actors tread
And man lives like some secret player's mask.
He knows not even what his lips shall speak.
For a mysterious Power compels his steps
And life is stronger than his trembling soul.
None can refuse what the stark Force demands:
Her eyes are fixed upon her mighty aim;
No cry or prayer can turn her from her path.
She has leaped an arrow from the bow of God."
His words were theirs who live unforced to grieve
And help by calm the swaying wheels of life
And the long restlessness of transient things
And the trouble and passion of the unquiet world.
As though her own bosom were pierced the mother saw
The ancient human sentence strike her child,
Her sweetness that deserved another fate
Only a larger measure given of tears.
Aspiring to the nature of the gods,
A mind proof-armoured mailed in mighty thoughts,
A will entire couchant behind wisdom's shield,
Though to still heavens of knowledge she had risen,
Though calm and wise and Aswapati's queen,
Human was she still and opened her doors to grief;
The stony-eyed injustice she accused
Of the marble godhead of inflexible Law,
Nor sought the strength extreme adversity brings
To lives that stand erect and front the World-Power:
Her heart appealed against the impartial judge,
Taxed with perversity the impersonal One.
Her tranquil spirit she called not to her aid,
But as a common man beneath his load
Grows faint and breathes his pain in ignorant words,
So now she arraigned the world's impassive will:

"What stealthy doom has crept across her path
Emerging from the dark forest's sullen heart,
What evil thing stood smiling by the way
And wore the beauty of the Shalwa boy?
Perhaps he came an enemy from her past
Armed with a hidden force of ancient wrongs,
Himself unknowing, and seized her unknown.
Here dreadfully entangled love and hate
Meet us blind wanderers mid the perils of Time.
Our days are links of a disastrous chain,
Necessity avenges casual steps;
Old cruelties come back unrecognised,
The gods make use of our forgotten deeds.
Yet all in vain the bitter law was made.
Our own minds are the justicers of doom.
For nothing have we learned, but still repeat
Our stark misuse of self and others' souls.
There are dire alchemies of the human heart
And fallen from his ethereal element
Love darkens to the spirit of nether gods.
The dreadful angel, angry with his joys
Woundingly sweet he cannot yet forego,
Is pitiless to the soul his gaze disarmed,
He visits with his own pangs his quivering prey
Forcing us to cling enamoured to his grip
As if in love with our own agony.
This is one poignant misery in the world,
And grief has other lassoes for our life.
Our sympathies become our torturers.
Strength have I my own punishment to bear,
Knowing it just, but on this earth perplexed,
Smitten in the sorrow of scourged and helpless things,
Often it faints to meet other suffering eyes.
We are not as the gods who know not grief
And look impassive on a suffering world,
Calm they gaze down on the little human scene

And the short-lived passion crossing mortal hearts.
An ancient tale of woe can move us still,
We keep the ache of breasts that breathe no more,
We are shaken by the sight of human pain,
And share the miseries that others feel.
Ours not the passionless lids that cannot age.
Too hard for us is heaven's indifference:
Our own tragedies are not enough for us,
All pathos and all sufferings we make ours;
We have sorrow for a greatness passed away
And feel the touch of tears in mortal things.
Even a stranger's anguish rends my heart,
And this, O Narad, is my well-loved child.
Hide not from us our doom, if doom is ours.
This is the worst, an unknown face of Fate,
A terror ominous, mute, felt more than seen
Behind our seat by day, our couch by night,
A Fate lurking in the shadow of our hearts,
The anguish of the unseen that waits to strike.
To know is best, however hard to bear."
Then cried the sage piercing the mother's heart,
Forcing to steel the will of Savitri,
His words set free the spring of cosmic Fate.
The great Gods use the pain of human hearts
As a sharp axe to hew their cosmic road:
They squander lavishly men's blood and tears
For a moment's purpose in their fateful work.
This cosmic Nature's balance is not ours
Nor the mystic measure of her need and use.
A single word lets loose vast agencies;
A casual act determines the world's fate.
So now he set free destiny in that hour.
"The truth thou hast claimed; I give to thee the truth.
A marvel of the meeting earth and heavens
Is he whom Savitri has chosen mid men,
His figure is the front of Nature's march,

His single being excels the works of Time.
A sapphire cutting from the sleep of heaven,
Delightful is the soul of Satyavan,
A ray out of the rapturous Infinite,
A silence waking to a hymn of joy.
A divinity and kingliness gird his brow;
His eyes keep a memory from a world of bliss.
As brilliant as a lonely moon in heaven,
Gentle like the sweet bud that spring desires,
Pure like a stream that kisses silent banks,
He takes with bright surprise spirit and sense.
A living knot of golden Paradise,
A blue Immense he leans to the longing world,
Time's joy borrowed out of eternity,
A star of splendour or a rose of bliss.
In him soul and Nature, equal Presences,
Balance and fuse in a wide harmony.
The Happy in their bright ether have not hearts
More sweet and true than this of mortal make
That takes all joy as the world's native gift
And to all gives joy as the world's natural right.
His speech carries a light of inner truth,
And a large-eyed communion with the Power
In common things has made veilless his mind,
A seer in earth-shapes of garbless deity.
A tranquil breadth of sky windless and still
Watching the world like a mind of unplumbed thought,
A silent space musing and luminous
Uncovered by the morning to delight,
A green tangle of trees upon a happy hill
Made into a murmuring nest by southern winds,
These are his images and parallels,
His kin in beauty and in depth his peers.
A will to climb lifts a delight to live,
Heaven's height companion of earth-beauty's charm,
An aspiration to the immortals' air

Lain on the lap of mortal ecstasy.
His sweetness and his joy attract all hearts
To live with his own in a glad tenancy,
His strength is like a tower built to reach heaven,
A godhead quarried from the stones of life.
O loss, if death into its elements
Of which his gracious envelope was built,
Shatter this vase before it breathes its sweets,
As if earth could not keep too long from heaven
A treasure thus unique loaned by the gods,
A being so rare, of so divine a make!
In one brief year when this bright hour flies back
And perches careless on a branch of Time,
This sovereign glory ends heaven lent to earth,
This splendour vanishes from the mortal's sky:
Heaven's greatness came, but was too great to stay.
Twelve swift-winged months are given to him and her;
This day returning Satyavan must die."
A lightning bright and nude the sentence fell.
But the queen cried: "Vain then can be heaven's grace!
Heaven mocks us with the brilliance of its gifts,
For Death is a cupbearer of the wine
Of too brief joy held up to mortal lips
For a passionate moment by the careless gods.
But I reject the grace and the mockery.
Mounting thy car go forth, O Savitri,
And travel once more through the peopled lands.
Alas, in the green gladness of the woods
Thy heart has stooped to a misleading call.
Choose once again and leave this fated head,
Death is the gardener of this wonder-tree;
Love's sweetness sleeps in his pale marble hand.
Advancing in a honeyed line but closed,
A little joy would buy too bitter an end.
Plead not thy choice, for death has made it vain.
Thy youth and radiance were not born to lie

A casket void dropped on a careless soil;
A choice less rare may call a happier fate."
But Savitri answered from her violent heart, —
Her voice was calm, her face was fixed like steel:
"Once my heart chose and chooses not again.
The word I have spoken can never be erased,
It is written in the record book of God.
The truth once uttered, from the earth's air effaced,
By mind forgotten, sounds immortally
For ever in the memory of Time.
Once the dice fall thrown by the hand of Fate
In an eternal moment of the gods.
My heart has sealed its troth to Satyavan:
Its signature adverse Fate cannot efface,
Its seal not Fate nor Death nor Time dissolve.
Those who shall part who have grown one being within?
Death's grip can break our bodies, not our souls;
If death take him, I too know how to die.
Let Fate do with me what she will or can;
I am stronger than death and greater than my fate;
My love shall outlast the world, doom falls from me
Helpless against my immortality.
Fate's law may change, but not my spirit's will."
An adamant will, she cast her speech like bronze.
But in the queen's mind listening her words
Rang like the voice of a self-chosen Doom
Denying every issue of escape.
To her own despair answer the mother made;
As one she cried who in her heavy heart
Labours amid the sobbing of her hopes
To wake a note of help from sadder strings:
"O child, in the magnificence of thy soul
Dwelling on the border of a greater world
And dazzled by thy superhuman thoughts,
Thou lendst eternity to a mortal hope.
Here on this mutable and ignorant earth

Who is the lover and who is the friend?
All passes here, nothing remains the same.
None is for any on this transient globe.
He whom thou lovest now, a stranger came
And into a far strangeness shall depart:
His moment's part once done upon life's stage
Which for a time was given him from within,
To other scenes he moves and other players
And laughs and weeps mid faces new, unknown.
The body thou hast loved is cast away
Amidst the brute unchanging stuff of worlds
To indifferent mighty Nature and becomes
Crude matter for the joy of others' lives.
But for our souls, upon the wheel of God
For ever turning, they arrive and go,
Married and sundered in the magic round
Of the great Dancer of the boundless dance.
Our emotions are but high and dying notes
Of his wild music changed compellingly
By the passionate movements of a seeking Heart
In the inconstant links of hour with hour.
To call down heaven's distant answering song,
To cry to an unseized bliss is all we dare;
Once seized, we lose the heavenly music's sense;
Too near, the rhythmic cry has fled or failed;
All sweetnesses are baffling symbols here.
Love dies before the lover in our breast:
Our joys are perfumes in a brittle vase.
O then what wreck is this upon Time's sea
To spread life's sails to the hurricane desire
And call for pilot the unseeing heart!
O child, wilt thou proclaim, wilt thou then follow
Against the Law that is the eternal will
The autarchy of the rash Titan's mood
To whom his own fierce will is the one law
In a world where Truth is not, nor Light nor God?

Only the gods can speak what now thou speakst.
Thou who art human, think not like a god.
For man, below the god, above the brute,
Is given the calm reason as his guide;
He is not driven by an unthinking will
As are the actions of the bird and beast;
He is not moved by stark Necessity
Like the senseless motion of inconscient things.
The giant's and the Titan's furious march
Climbs to usurp the kingdom of the gods
Or skirts the demon magnitudes of Hell;
In the unreflecting passion of their hearts
They dash their lives against the eternal Law
And fall and break by their own violent mass:
The middle path is made for thinking man.
To choose his steps by reason's vigilant light,
To choose his path among the many paths
Is given him, for each his difficult goal
Hewn out of infinite possibility.
Leave not thy goal to follow a beautiful face.
Only when thou hast climbed above thy mind
And liv'st in the calm vastness of the One
Can love be eternal in the eternal Bliss
And love divine replace the human tie.
There is a shrouded law, an austere force:
It bids thee strengthen thy undying spirit;
It offers its severe benignancies
Of work and thought and measured grave delight
As steps to climb to God's far secret heights.
Then is our life a tranquil pilgrimage,
Each year a mile upon the heavenly Way,
Each dawn opens into a larger Light.
Thy acts are thy helpers, all events are signs,
Waking and sleep are opportunities
Given to thee by an immortal Power.
So canst thou raise thy pure unvanquished spirit,

Till spread to heaven in a wide vesper calm,
Indifferent and gentle as the sky,
It greatens slowly into timeless peace."
But Savitri replied with steadfast eyes:
"My will is part of the eternal Will,
My fate is what my spirit's strength can make,
My fate is what my spirit's strength can bear;
My strength is not the Titan's; it is God's.
I have discovered my glad reality
Beyond my body in another's being:
I have found the deep unchanging soul of love.
Then how shall I desire a lonely good,
Or slay, aspiring to white vacant peace,
The endless hope that made my soul spring forth
Out of its infinite solitude and sleep?
My spirit has glimpsed the glory for which it came,
The beating of one vast heart in the flame of things,
My eternity clasped by his eternity
And, tireless of the sweet abysms of Time,
Deep possibility always to love.
This, this is first, last joy and to its throb
The riches of a thousand fortunate years
Are poverty. Nothing to me are death and grief
Or ordinary lives and happy days.
And what to me are common souls of men
Or eyes and lips that are not Satyavan's?
I have no need to draw back from his arms
And the discovered paradise of his love
And journey into a still infinity.
Only now for my soul in Satyavan
I treasure the rich occasion of my birth:
In sunlight and a dream of emerald ways
I shall walk with him like gods in Paradise.
If for a year, that year is all my life.
And yet I know this is not all my fate
Only to live and love awhile and die.

For I know now why my spirit came on earth
And who I am and who he is I love.
I have looked at him from my immortal Self,
I have seen God smile at me in Satyavan;
I have seen the Eternal in a human face."
Then none could answer to her words. Silent
They sat and looked into the eyes of Fate.

End of Canto One

Canto Two

The Way of Fate and the Problem of Pain

A SILENCE sealed the irrevocable decree,
The word of Fate that fell from heavenly lips
Fixing a doom no power could ever reverse
Unless heaven's will itself could change its course.
Or so it seemed: yet from the silence rose
One voice that questioned changeless destiny,
A will that strove against the immutable Will.
A mother's heart had heard the fateful speech
That rang like a sanction to the call of death
And came like a chill close to life and hope.
Yet hope sank down like an extinguished fire.
She felt the leaden inevitable hand
Invade the secrecy of her guarded soul
And smite with sudden pain its still content
And the empire of her hard-won quietude.
Awhile she fell to the level of human mind,
A field of mortal grief and Nature's law;
She shared, she bore the common lot of men
And felt what common hearts endure in Time.
Voicing earth's question to the inscrutable power
The queen now turned to the still immobile seer:
Assailed by the discontent in Nature's depths,
Partner in the agony of dumb driven things
And all the misery, all the ignorant cry,
Passionate like sorrow questioning heaven she spoke.
Lending her speech to the surface soul on earth
She uttered the suffering in the world's dumb heart
And man's revolt against his ignorant fate.
"O seer, in the earth's strange twi-natured life
By what pitiless adverse Necessity
Or what cold freak of a Creator's will,

By what random accident or governed Chance
That shaped a rule out of fortuitous steps,
Made destiny from an hour's emotion, came
Into the unreadable mystery of Time
The direr mystery of grief and pain?
Is it thy God who made this cruel law?
Or some disastrous Power has marred his work
And he stands helpless to defend or save?
A fatal seed was sown in life's false start
When evil twinned with good on earthly soil.
Then first appeared the malady of mind,
Its pang of thought, its quest for the aim of life.
It twisted into forms of good and ill
The frank simplicity of the animal's acts;
It turned the straight path hewn by the body's gods,
Followed the zigzag of the uncertain course
Of life that wanders seeking for its aim
In the pale starlight falling from thought's skies,
Its guides the unsure idea, the wavering will.
Lost was the instinct's safe identity
With the arrow-point of being's inmost sight,
Marred the sure steps of Nature's simple walk
And truth and freedom in the growing soul.
Out of some ageless innocence and peace,
Privilege of souls not yet betrayed to birth,
Cast down to suffer on this hard dangerous earth
Our life was born in pain and with a cry.
Although earth-nature welcomes heaven's breath
Inspiring Matter with the will to live,
A thousand ills assail the mortal's hours
And wear away the natural joy of life;
Our bodies are an engine cunningly made,
But for all its parts as cunningly are planned,
Contrived ingeniously with demon skill,
Its apt inevitable heritage
Of mortal danger and peculiar pain,

Its payment of the tax of Time and Fate,
Its way to suffer and its way to die.
This is the ransom of our high estate,
The sign and stamp of our humanity.
A grisly company of maladies
Come, licensed lodgers, into man's bodily house,
Purveyors of death and torturers of life.
In the malignant hollows of the world,
In its subconscient cavern-passages
Ambushed they lie waiting their hour to leap,
Surrounding with danger the sieged city of life:
Admitted into the citadel of man's days
They mine his force and maim or suddenly kill.
Ourselves within us lethal forces nurse;
We make of our own enemies our guests:
Out of their holes like beasts they creep and gnaw
The chords of the divine musician's lyre
Till frayed and thin the music dies away
Or crashing snaps with a last tragic note.
All that we are is like a fort beset:
All that we strive to be alters like a dream
In the grey sleep of Matter's ignorance.
Mind suffers lamed by the world's disharmony
And the unloveliness of human things.
A treasure misspent or cheaply, fruitlessly sold
In the bazaar of a blind destiny,
A gift of priceless value from Time's gods
Lost or mislaid in an uncaring world,
Life is a marvel missed, an art gone wry;
A seeker in a dark and obscure place,
An ill-armed warrior facing dreadful odds,
An imperfect worker given a baffling task,
An ignorant judge of problems Ignorance made,
Its heavenward flights reach closed and keyless gates,
Its glorious outbursts peter out in mire.
On Nature's gifts to man a curse was laid:

All walks inarmed by its own opposites,
Error is the comrade of our mortal thought
And falsehood lurks in the deep bosom of truth,
Sin poisons with its vivid flowers of joy
Or leaves a red scar burnt across the soul;
Virtue is a grey bondage and a gaol.
At every step is laid for us a snare.
Alien to reason and the spirit's light,
Our fount of action from a darkness wells;
In ignorance and nescience are our roots.
A growing register of calamities
Is the past's account, the future's book of Fate:
The centuries pile man's follies and man's crimes
Upon the countless crowd of Nature's ills;
As if the world's stone load was not enough,
A crop of miseries obstinately is sown
By his own hand in the furrows of the gods,
The vast increasing tragic harvest reaped
From old misdeeds buried by oblivious Time.
He walks by his own choice into Hell's trap;
This mortal creature is his own worst foe.
His science is an artificer of doom;
He ransacks earth for means to harm his kind;
He slays his happiness and others' good.
Nothing has he learned from Time and its history;
Even as of old in the raw youth of Time,
When Earth ignorant ran on the highways of Fate,
Old forms of evil cling to the world's soul:
War making nought the sweet smiling calm of life,
Battle and rapine, ruin and massacre
Are still the fierce pastimes of man's warring tribes;
An idiot hour destroys what centuries made,
His wanton rage or frenzied hate lays low
The beauty and greatness by his genius wrought
And the mighty output of a nation's toil.
All he has achieved he drags to the precipice.

His grandeur he turns to an epic of doom and fall;
His littleness crawls content through squalor and mud,
He calls heaven's retribution on his head
And wallows in his self-made misery.
A part author of the cosmic tragedy,
His will conspires with death and time and fate.
His brief appearance on the enigmaed earth
Ever recurs but brings no high result
To this wanderer through the aeon-rings of God
That shut his life in their vast longevity.
His soul's wide search and ever returning hopes
Pursue the useless orbit of their course
In a vain repetition of lost toils
Across a track of soon forgotten lives.
All is an episode in a meaningless tale.
Why is it all and wherefore are we here?
If to some being of eternal bliss
It is our spirit's destiny to return
Or some still impersonal height of endless calm,
Since That we are and out of That we came,
Whence rose the strange and sterile interlude
Lasting in vain through interminable Time?
Who willed to form or feign a universe
In the cold and endless emptiness of Space?
Or if these beings must be and their brief lives,
What need had the soul of ignorance and tears?
Whence rose the call for sorrow and for pain?
Or all came helplessly without a cause?
What power forced the immortal spirit to birth?
The eternal witness once of eternity,
A deathless sojourner mid transient scenes,
He camps in life's half-lit obscurity
Amid the debris of his thoughts and dreams.
Or who persuaded it to fall from bliss
And forfeit its immortal privilege?
Who laid on it the ceaseless will to live

A wanderer in this beautiful, sorrowful world,
And bear its load of joy and grief and love?
Or if no being watches the works of Time,
What hard impersonal Necessity
Compels the vain toil of brief living things?
A great Illusion then has built the stars.
But where then is the soul's security,
Its poise in this circling of unreal suns?
Or else it is a wanderer from its home
Who strayed into a blind alley of Time and chance
And finds no issue from a meaningless world.
Or where begins and ends Illusion's reign?
Perhaps the soul we feel is only a dream,
Eternal self a fiction sensed in trance."

Then after a silence Narad made reply:
Tuning his lips to earthly sound he spoke,
And something now of the deep sense of fate
Weighted the fragile hints of mortal speech.
His forehead shone with vision solemnised,
Turned to a tablet of supernal thoughts
As if characters of an unwritten tongue
Had left in its breadth the inscriptions of the gods.
Bare in that light Time toiled, his unseen works
Detected; the broad-flung far-seeing schemes
Unfinished which his aeoned flight unrolls
Were mapped already in that world-wide look.
"Was then the sun a dream because there is night?
Hidden in the mortal's heart the Eternal lives:
He lives secret in the chamber of thy soul,
A Light shines there nor pain nor grief can cross.
A darkness stands between thyself and him,
Thou canst not hear or feel the marvellous Guest,
Thou canst not see the beatific sun.
O queen, thy thought is a light of the Ignorance,
Its brilliant curtain hides from thee God's face.

It illumes a world born from the Inconscience
But hides the Immortal's meaning in the world.
Thy mind's light hides from thee the Eternal's thought,
Thy heart's hopes hide from thee the Eternal's will,
Earth's joys shut from thee the Immortal's bliss.
Thence rose the need of a dark intruding god,
The world's dread teacher, the creator, pain.
Where Ignorance is, there suffering too must come;
Thy grief is a cry of darkness to the Light;
Pain was the first-born of the Inconscience
Which was thy body's dumb original base;
Already slept there pain's subconscient shape:
A shadow in a shadowy tenebrous womb,
Till life shall move, it waits to wake and be.
In one caul with joy came forth the dreadful Power.
In life's breast it was born hiding its twin;
But pain came first, then only joy could be.
Pain ploughed the first hard ground of the world-drowse.
By pain a spirit started from the clod,
By pain Life stirred in the subliminal deep.
Interned, submerged, hidden in Matter's trance
Awoke to itself the dreamer, sleeping Mind;
It made a visible realm out of its dreams,
It drew its shapes from the subconscient depths,
Then turned to look upon the world it had made.
By pain and joy, the bright and tenebrous twins,
The inanimate world perceived its sentient soul,
Else had the Inconscient never suffered change.
Pain is the hammer of the Gods to break
A dead resistance in the mortal's heart,
His slow inertia as of living stone.
If the heart were not forced to want and weep,
His soul would have lain down content, at ease,
And never thought to exceed the human start
And never learned to climb towards the Sun.
This earth is full of labour, packed with pain;

Throes of an endless birth coerce her still;
The centuries end, the ages vainly pass
And yet the Godhead in her is not born.
The ancient Mother faces all with joy,
Calls for the ardent pang, the grandiose thrill;
For with pain and labour all creation comes.
This earth is full of the anguish of the gods;
Ever they travail driven by Time's goad,
And strive to work out the eternal Will
And shape the life divine in mortal forms.
His will must be worked out in human breasts
Against the Evil that rises from the gulfs,
Against the world's Ignorance and its obstinate strength,
Against the stumblings of man's pervert will,
Against the deep folly of his human mind,
Against the blind reluctance of his heart.
The spirit is doomed to pain till man is free.
There is a clamour of battle, a tramp, a march:
A cry arises like a moaning sea,
A desperate laughter under the blows of death,
A doom of blood and sweat and toil and tears.
Men die that man may live and God be born.
An awful Silence watches tragic Time.
Pain is the hand of Nature sculpturing men
To greatness: an inspired labour chisels
With heavenly cruelty an unwilling mould.
Implacable in the passion of their will,
Lifting the hammers of titanic toil
The demiurges of the universe work;
They shape with giant strokes their own; their sons
Are marked with their enormous stamp of fire.
Although the shaping god's tremendous touch
Is torture unbearable to mortal nerves,
The fiery spirit grows in strength within
And feels a joy in every titan pang.
He who would save himself lives bare and calm;

He who would save the race must share its pain:
This he shall know who obeys that grandiose urge.
The Great who came to save this suffering world
And rescue out of Time's shadow and the Law,
Must pass beneath the yoke of grief and pain;
They are caught by the Wheel that they had hoped to break,
On their shoulders they must bear man's load of fate.
Heaven's riches they bring, their sufferings count the price
Or they pay the gift of knowledge with their lives.
The Son of God born as the Son of man
Has drunk the bitter cup, owned Godhead's debt,
The debt the Eternal owes to the fallen kind
His will has bound to death and struggling life
That yearns in vain for rest and endless peace.
Now is the debt paid, wiped off the original score.
The Eternal suffers in a human form,
He has signed salvation's testament with his blood:
He has opened the doors of his undying peace.
The Deity compensates the creature's claim,
The Creator bears the law of pain and death;
A retribution smites the incarnate God.
His love has paved the mortal's road to Heaven:
He has given his life and light to balance here
The dark account of mortal ignorance.
It is finished, the dread mysterious sacrifice,
Offered by God's martyred body for the world;
Gethsemane and Calvary are his lot,
He carries the cross on which man's soul is nailed;
His escort is the curses of the crowd;
Insult and jeer are his right's acknowledgment;
Two thieves slain with him mock his mighty death.
He has trod with bleeding brow the Saviour's way.
He who has found his identity with God
Pays with the body's death his soul's vast light.
His knowledge immortal triumphs by his death.
Hewn, quartered on the scaffold as he falls,

His crucified voice proclaims, 'I, I am God;'
'Yes, all is God,' peals back Heaven's deathless call.
The seed of Godhead sleeps in mortal hearts,
The flower of Godhead grows on the world-tree:
All shall discover God in self and things.
But when God's messenger comes to help the world
And lead the soul of earth to higher things,
He too must carry the yoke he came to unloose;
He too must bear the pang that he would heal:
Exempt and unafflicted by earth's fate,
How shall he cure the ills he never felt?
He covers the world's agony with his calm;
But though to the outward eye no sign appears
And peace is given to our torn human hearts,
The struggle is there and paid the unseen price;
The fire, the strife, the wrestle are within.
He carries the suffering world in his own breast;
Its sins weigh on his thoughts, its grief is his:
Earth's ancient load lies heavy on his soul;
Night and its powers beleaguer his tardy steps,
The Titan adversary's clutch he bears;
His march is a battle and a pilgrimage.
Life's evil smites, he is stricken with the world's pain:
A million wounds gape in his secret heart.
He journeys sleepless through an unending night;
Antagonist forces crowd across his path;
A siege, a combat is his inner life.
Even worse may be the cost, direr the pain:
His large identity and all-harbouring love
Shall bring the cosmic anguish into his depths,
The sorrow of all living things shall come
And knock at his doors and live within his house;
A dreadful cord of sympathy can tie
All suffering into his single grief and make
All agony in all the worlds his own.
He meets an ancient adversary Force,

He is lashed with the whips that tear the world's worn heart;
The weeping of the centuries visits his eyes:
He wears the blood-glued fiery Centaur shirt,
The poison of the world has stained his throat.
In the market-place of Matter's capital
Amidst the chafferings of the affair called life
He is tied to the stake of a perennial Fire;
He burns on an unseen original verge
That Matter may be turned to spirit stuff:
He is the victim in his own sacrifice.
The Immortal bound to earth's mortality
Appearing and perishing on the roads of Time
Creates God's moment by eternity's beats.
He dies that the world may be new-born and live.
Even if he escapes the fiercest fires,
Even if the world breaks not in, a drowning sea,
Only by hard sacrifice is high heaven earned:
He must face the fight, the pang who would conquer Hell.
A dark concealed hostility is lodged
In the human depths, in the hidden heart of Time
That claims the right to change and mar God's work.
A secret enmity ambushes the world's march;
It leaves a mark on thought and speech and act:
It stamps stain and defect on all things done;
Till it is slain peace is forbidden on earth.
There is no visible foe, but the unseen
Is round us, forces intangible besiege,
Touches from alien realms, thoughts not our own
Overtake us and compel the erring heart;
Our lives are caught in an ambiguous net.
An adversary Force was born of old:
Invader of the life of mortal man,
It hides from him the straight immortal path.
A power came in to veil the eternal Light,
A power opposed to the eternal will
Diverts the messages of the infallible Word,

Contorts the contours of the cosmic plan:
A whisper lures to evil the human heart,
It seals up wisdom's eyes, the soul's regard,
It is the origin of our suffering here,
It binds earth to calamity and pain.
This all must conquer who would bring down God's peace.
This hidden foe lodged in the human breast
Man must overcome or miss his higher fate.
This is the inner war without escape.

"Hard is the world-redeemer's heavy task;
The world itself becomes his adversary,
Those he would save are his antagonists:
This world is in love with its own ignorance,
Its darkness turns away from the saviour light,
It gives the cross in payment for the crown.
His work is a trickle of splendour in a long night;
He sees the long march of Time, the little won;
A few are saved, the rest strive on and fail:
A Sun has passed, on earth Night's shadow falls.
Yes, there are happy ways near to God's sun;
But few are they who tread the sunlit path;
Only the pure in soul can walk in light.
An exit is shown, a road of hard escape
From the sorrow and the darkness and the chain;
But how shall a few escaped release the world?
The human mass lingers beneath the yoke.
Escape, however high, redeems not life,
Life that is left behind on a fallen earth.
Escape cannot uplift the abandoned race
Or bring to it victory and the reign of God.
A greater power must come, a larger light.
Although Light grows on earth and Night recedes,
Yet till the evil is slain in its own home
And Light invades the world's inconscient base
And perished has the adversary Force,

He still must labour on, his work half done.
One yet may come armoured, invincible;
His will immobile meets the mobile hour;
The world's blows cannot bend that victor head;
Calm and sure are his steps in the growing Night;
The goal recedes, he hurries not his pace,
He turns not to high voices in the night;
He asks no aid from the inferior gods;
His eyes are fixed on his immutable aim.
Man turns aside or chooses easier paths;
He keeps to the one high and difficult road
That sole can climb to the Eternal's peaks;
The ineffable planes already have felt his tread;
He has made heaven and earth his instruments,
But the limits fall from him of earth and heaven;
Their law he transcends but uses as his means.
He has seized life's hands, he has mastered his own heart.
The feints of Nature mislead not his sight,
Inflexible his look towards Truth's far end;
Fate's deaf resistance cannot break his will.
In the dreadful passages, the fatal paths,
Invulnerable his soul, his heart unslain,
He lives through the opposition of earth's Powers
And Nature's ambushes and the world's attacks.
His spirit's stature transcending pain and bliss,
He fronts evil and good with calm and equal eyes.
He too must grapple with the riddling Sphinx
And plunge into her long obscurity.
He has broken into the Inconscient's depths
That veil themselves even from their own regard:
He has seen God's slumber shape these magic worlds.
He has watched the dumb God fashioning Matter's frame,
Dreaming the dreams of its unknowing sleep,
And watched the unconscious Force that built the stars.
He has learned the Inconscient's workings and its law,
Its incoherent thoughts and rigid acts,

Its hazard wastes of impulse and idea,
The chaos of its mechanic frequencies,
Its random calls, its whispers falsely true,
Misleaders of the hooded listening soul.
All things come to its ear but nothing abides;
All rose from the silence, all goes back to its hush.
Its somnolence founded the universe,
Its obscure waking makes the world seem vain.
Arisen from Nothingness and towards Nothingness turned,
Its dark and potent nescience was earth's start;
It is the waste stuff from which all was made;
Into its deeps creation can collapse.
Its opposition clogs the march of the soul,
It is the mother of our ignorance.
He must call light into its dark abysms,
Else never can Truth conquer Matter's sleep
And all earth look into the eyes of God.
All things obscure his knowledge must relume,
All things perverse his power must unknot:
He must pass to the other shore of falsehood's sea,
He must enter the world's dark to bring there light.
The heart of evil must be bared to his eyes,
He must learn its cosmic dark necessity,
Its right and its dire roots in Nature's soil.
He must know the thought that moves the demon act
And justifies the Titan's erring pride
And the falsehood lurking in earth's crooked dreams:
He must enter the eternity of Night
And know God's darkness as he knows his Sun.
For this he must go down into the pit,
For this he must invade the dolorous Vasts.
Imperishable and wise and infinite,
He still must travel Hell the world to save.
Into the eternal Light he shall emerge
On borders of the meeting of all worlds;
There on the verge of Nature's summit steps

The secret Law of each thing is fulfilled,
All contraries heal their long dissidence.
There meet and clasp the eternal opposites,
There pain becomes a violent fiery joy;
Evil turns back to its original good,
And sorrow lies upon the breasts of Bliss:
She has learned to weep glad tears of happiness;
Her gaze is charged with a wistful ecstasy.
Then shall be ended here the Law of Pain.
Earth shall be made a home of Heaven's light,
A seer heaven-born shall lodge in human breasts;
The superconscient beam shall touch men's eyes
And the truth-conscious world come down to earth
Invading Matter with the Spirit's ray,
Awaking its silence to immortal thoughts,
Awaking the dumb heart to the living Word.
This mortal life shall house Eternity's bliss,
The body's self taste immortality.
Then shall the world-redeemer's task be done.

"Till then must life carry its seed of death
And sorrow's plaint be heard in the slow Night.
O mortal, bear this great world's law of pain,
In thy hard passage through a suffering world
Lean for thy soul's support on Heaven's strength,
Turn towards high Truth, aspire to love and peace.
A little bliss is lent thee from above,
A touch divine upon thy human days.
Make of thy daily way a pilgrimage,
For through small joys and griefs thou mov'st towards God.
Haste not towards Godhead on a dangerous road,
Open not thy doorways to a nameless Power,
Climb not to Godhead by the Titan's road.
Against the Law he pits his single will,
Across its way he throws his pride of might.
Heavenward he clambers on a stair of storms

Aspiring to live near the deathless sun.
He strives with a giant strength to wrest by force
From life and Nature the immortals' right;
He takes by storm the world and fate and heaven.
He comes not to the high World-maker's seat,
He waits not for the outstretched hand of God
To raise him out of his mortality.
All he would make his own, leave nothing free,
Stretching his small self to cope with the infinite.
Obstructing the gods' open ways he makes
His own estate of the earth's air and light;
A monopolist of the world-energy,
He dominates the life of common men.
His pain and others' pain he makes his means:
On death and suffering he builds his throne.
In the hurry and clangour of his acts of might,
In a riot and excess of fame and shame,
By his magnitudes of hate and violence,
By the quaking of the world beneath his tread
He matches himself against the Eternal's calm
And feels in himself the greatness of a god:
Power is his image of celestial self.
The Titan's heart is a sea of fire and force;
He exults in the death of things and ruin and fall,
He feeds his strength with his own and others' pain;
In the world's pathos and passion he takes delight,
His pride, his might call for the struggle and pang.
He glories in the sufferings of the flesh
And covers the stigmata with the Stoic's name.
His eyes blinded and visionless stare at the sun,
The seeker's Sight receding from his heart
Can find no more the light of eternity;
He sees the beyond as an emptiness void of soul
And takes his night for a dark infinite.
His nature magnifies the unreal's blank
And sees in Nought the sole reality:

He would stamp his single figure on the world,
Obsess the world's rumours with his single name.
His moments centre the vast universe.
He sees his little self as very God.
His little 'I' has swallowed the whole world,
His ego has stretched into infinity.
His mind, a beat in original Nothingness,
Ciphers his thought on a slate of hourless Time.
He builds on a mighty vacancy of soul
A huge philosophy of Nothingness.
In him Nirvana lives and speaks and acts
Impossibly creating a universe.
An eternal zero is his formless self,
His spirit the void impersonal absolute.
Take not that stride, O growing soul of man;
Cast not thy self into that night of God.
The soul suffering is not eternity's key,
Or ransom by sorrow heaven's demand on life.
O mortal, bear, but ask not for the stroke,
Too soon will grief and anguish find thee out.
Too enormous is that venture for thy will;
Only in limits can man's strength be safe;
Yet is infinity thy spirit's goal;
Its bliss is there behind the world's face of tears.
A power is in thee that thou knowest not;
Thou art a vessel of the imprisoned spark.
It seeks relief from Time's envelopment,
And while thou shutst it in, the seal is pain:
Bliss is the Godhead's crown, eternal, free,
Unburdened by life's blind mystery of pain:
Pain is the signature of the Ignorance
Attesting the secret god denied by life:
Until life finds him pain can never end.
Calm is self's victory overcoming fate.
Bear; thou shalt find at last thy road to bliss.
Bliss is the secret stuff of all that lives,

Even pain and grief are garbs of world-delight,
It hides behind thy sorrow and thy cry.
Because thy strength is a part and not God's whole,
Because afflicted by the little self
Thy consciousness forgets to be divine
As it walks in the vague penumbra of the flesh
And cannot bear the world's tremendous touch,
Thou criest out and sayst that there is pain.
Indifference, pain and joy, a triple disguise,
Attire of the rapturous Dancer in the ways,
Withhold from thee the body of God's bliss.
Thy spirit's strength shall make thee one with God,
Thy agony shall change to ecstasy,
Indifference deepen into infinity's calm
And joy laugh nude on the peaks of the Absolute.

"O mortal who complainst of death and fate,
Accuse none of the harms thyself hast called;
This troubled world thou hast chosen for thy home,
Thou art thyself the author of thy pain.
Once in the immortal boundlessness of Self,
In a vast of Truth and Consciousness and Light
The soul looked out from its felicity.
It felt the Spirit's interminable bliss,
It knew itself deathless, timeless, spaceless, one,
It saw the Eternal, lived in the Infinite.
Then, curious of a shadow thrown by Truth,
It strained towards some otherness of self,
It was drawn to an unknown Face peering through night.
It sensed a negative infinity,
A void supernal whose immense excess
Imitating God and everlasting Time
Offered a ground for Nature's adverse birth
And Matter's rigid hard unconsciousness
Harbouring the brilliance of a transient soul
That lights up birth and death and ignorant life.

A Mind arose that stared at Nothingness
Till figures formed of what could never be;
It housed the contrary of all that is.
A Nought appeared as Being's huge sealed cause,
Its dumb support in a blank infinite,
In whose abysm spirit must disappear:
A darkened Nature lived and held the seed
Of Spirit hidden and feigning not to be.
Eternal Consciousness became a freak
Of an unsouled almighty Inconscient
And, breathed no more as spirit's native air,
Bliss was an incident of a mortal hour,
A stranger in the insentient universe.
As one drawn by the grandeur of the Void
The soul attracted leaned to the Abyss:
It longed for the adventure of Ignorance
And the marvel and surprise of the Unknown
And the endless possibility that lurked
In the womb of Chaos and in Nothing's gulf
Or looked from the unfathomed eyes of Chance.
It tired of its unchanging happiness,
It turned away from immortality:
It was drawn to hazard's call and danger's charm,
It yearned to the pathos of grief, the drama of pain,
Perdition's peril, the wounded bare escape,
The music of ruin and its glamour and crash,
The savour of pity and the gamble of love
And passion and the ambiguous face of Fate.
A world of hard endeavour and difficult toil,
And battle on extinction's perilous verge,
A clash of forces, a vast incertitude,
The joy of creation out of Nothingness,
Strange meetings on the roads of Ignorance
And the companionship of half-known souls
Or the solitary greatness and lonely force
Of a separate being conquering its world,

Called it from its too safe eternity.
A huge descent began, a giant fall:
For what the spirit sees, creates a truth
And what the soul imagines is made a world.
A Thought that leaped from the Timeless can become,
Indicator of cosmic consequence
And the itinerary of the gods,
A cyclic movement in eternal Time.
Thus came, born from a blind tremendous choice,
This great perplexed and discontented world,
This haunt of Ignorance, this home of Pain:
There are pitched desire's tents, grief's headquarters.
A vast disguise conceals the Eternal's bliss."

Then Aswapati answered to the seer:
"Is then the spirit ruled by an outward world?
O seer, is there no remedy within?
But what is Fate if not the spirit's will
After long time fulfilled by cosmic Force?
I deemed a mighty Power had come with her;
Is not that Power the high compeer of Fate?"
But Narad answered covering truth with truth:
"O Aswapati, random seem the ways
Along whose banks your footsteps stray or run
In casual hours or moments of the gods,
Yet your least stumblings are foreseen above.
Infallibly the curves of life are drawn
Following the stream of Time through the unknown;
They are led by a clue the calm immortals keep.
This blazoned hieroglyph of prophet morns
A meaning more sublime in symbols writes
Than sealed Thought wakes to, but of this high script
How shall my voice convince the mind of earth?
Heaven's wiser love rejects the mortal's prayer;
Unblinded by the breath of his desire,
Unclouded by the mists of fear and hope,

It bends above the strife of love with death;
It keeps for her her privilege of pain.
A greatness in thy daughter's soul resides
That can transform herself and all around
But must cross on stones of suffering to its goal.
Although designed like a nectar cup of heaven,
Of heavenly ether made she sought this air,
She too must share the human need of grief
And all her cause of joy transmute to pain.
The mind of mortal man is led by words,
His sight retires behind the walls of Thought
And looks out only through half-opened doors.
He cuts the boundless Truth into sky-strips
And every strip he takes for all the heavens.
He stares at infinite possibility
And gives to the plastic Vast the name of Chance;
He sees the long results of an all-wise Force
Planning a sequence of steps in endless Time
But in its links imagines a senseless chain
Or the dead hand of cold Necessity;
He answers not to the mystic Mother's heart,
Misses the ardent heavings of her breast
And feels cold rigid limbs of lifeless Law.
The will of the Timeless working out in Time
In the free absolute steps of cosmic Truth
He thinks a dead machine or unconscious Fate.
A Magician's formulas have made Matter's laws
And while they last, all things by them are bound;
But the spirit's consent is needed for each act
And Freedom walks in the same pace with Law.
All here can change if the Magician choose.
If human will could be made one with God's,
If human thought could echo the thoughts of God,
Man might be all-knowing and omnipotent;
But now he walks in Nature's doubtful ray.
Yet can the mind of man receive God's light,

The force of man can be driven by God's force,
Then is he a miracle doing miracles.
For only so can he be Nature's king.
It is decreed and Satyavan must die;
The hour is fixed, chosen the fatal stroke.
What else shall be is written in her soul
But till the hour reveals the fateful script,
The writing waits illegible and mute.
Fate is Truth working out in Ignorance.
O King, thy fate is a transaction done
At every hour between Nature and thy soul
With God for its foreseeing arbiter.
Fate is a balance drawn in Destiny's book.
Man can accept his fate, he can refuse.
Even if the One maintains the unseen decree
He writes thy refusal in thy credit page:
For doom is not a close, a mystic seal.
Arisen from the tragic crash of life,
Arisen from the body's torture and death,
The spirit rises mightier by defeat;
Its godlike wings grow wider with each fall.
Its splendid failures sum to victory.
O man, the events that meet thee on thy road,
Though they smite thy body and soul with joy and grief,
Are not thy fate, — they touch thee awhile and pass;
Even death can cut not short thy spirit's walk:
Thy goal, the road thou choosest are thy fate.
On the altar throwing thy thoughts, thy heart, thy works,
Thy fate is a long sacrifice to the gods
Till they have opened to thee thy secret self
And made thee one with the indwelling God.
O soul, intruder in Nature's ignorance,
Armed traveller to the unseen supernal heights,
Thy spirit's fate is a battle and ceaseless march
Against invisible opponent Powers,
A passage from Matter into timeless self.

Adventurer through blind unforeseeing Time,
A forced advance through a long line of lives,
It pushes its spearhead through the centuries.
Across the dust and mire of the earthly plain,
On many guarded lines and dangerous fronts,
In dire assaults, in wounded slow retreats,
Holding the ideal's ringed and battered fort
Or fighting against odds in lonely posts,
Or camped in night around the bivouac's fires
Awaiting the tardy trumpets of the dawn,
In hunger and in plenty and in pain,
Through peril and through triumph and through fall,
Through life's green lanes and over her desert sands,
Up the bald moor, along the sunlit ridge,
In serried columns with a straggling rear
Led by its nomad vanguard's signal fires,
Marches the army of the waylost god.
Then late the joy ineffable is felt,
Then he remembers his forgotten self;
He has refound the skies from which he fell.
At length his front's indomitable line
Forces the last passes of the Ignorance:
Advancing beyond Nature's last known bounds,
Reconnoitring the formidable unknown,
Beyond the landmarks of things visible,
It mounts through a miraculous upper air
Till climbing the mute summit of the world
He stands upon the splendour-peaks of God.
In vain thou mournst that Satyavan must die;
His death is a beginning of greater life,
Death is the spirit's opportunity.
A vast intention has brought two souls close
And love and death conspire towards one great end.
For out of danger and pain heaven-bliss shall come,
Time's unforeseen event, God's secret plan.
This world was not built with random bricks of Chance,

A blind god is not destiny's architect;
A conscious power has drawn the plan of life,
There is a meaning in each curve and line.
It is an architecture high and grand
By many named and nameless masons built
In which unseeing hands obey the Unseen,
And of its master-builders she is one.
"Queen, strive no more to change the secret will;
Time's accidents are steps in its vast scheme.
Bring not thy brief and helpless human tears
Across the fathomless moments of a heart
That knows its single will and God's as one:
It can embrace its hostile destiny;
It sits apart with grief and facing death,
Affronting adverse fate armed and alone.
In this enormous world standing apart
In the mightiness of her silent spirit's will,
In the passion of her soul of sacrifice
Her lonely strength facing the universe,
Affronting fate, asks not man's help nor god's:
Sometimes one life is charged with earth's destiny,
It cries not for succour from the time-bound powers.
Alone she is equal to her mighty task.
Intervene not in a strife too great for thee,
A struggle too deep for mortal thought to sound,
Its question to this Nature's rigid bounds
When the soul fronts nude of garbs the infinite,
Its too vast theme of a lonely mortal will
Pacing the silence of eternity.
As a star, uncompanioned, moves in heaven
Unastonished by the immensities of Space,
Travelling infinity by its own light,
The great are strongest when they stand alone.
A God-given might of being is their force,
A ray from self's solitude of light the guide;
The soul that can live alone with itself meets God;

Its lonely universe is their rendezvous.
A day may come when she must stand unhelped
On a dangerous brink of the world's doom and hers,
Carrying the world's future on her lonely breast,
Carrying the human hope in a heart left sole
To conquer or fail on a last desperate verge,
Alone with death and close to extinction's edge.
Her single greatness in that last dire scene
Must cross alone a perilous bridge in Time
And reach an apex of world-destiny
Where all is won or all is lost for man.
In that tremendous silence lone and lost
Of a deciding hour in the world's fate,
In her soul's climbing beyond mortal time
When she stands sole with Death or sole with God
Apart upon a silent desperate brink,
Alone with her self and death and destiny
As on some verge between Time and Timelessness
When being must end or life rebuild its base,
Alone she must conquer or alone must fall.
No human aid can reach her in that hour,
No armoured god stand shining at her side.
Cry not to heaven, for she alone can save.
For this the silent Force came missioned down;
In her the conscious Will took human shape:
She only can save herself and save the world.
O queen, stand back from that stupendous scene,
Come not between her and her hour of Fate.
Her hour must come and none can intervene:
Think not to turn her from her heaven-sent task,
Strive not to save her from her own high will.
Thou hast no place in that tremendous strife;
Thy love and longing are not arbiters there;
Leave the world's fate and her to God's sole guard.
Even if he seems to leave her to her lone strength,
Even though all falters and falls and sees an end

And the heart fails and only are death and night,
God-given her strength can battle against doom
Even on a brink where Death alone seems close
And no human strength can hinder or can help.
Think not to intercede with the hidden Will,
Intrude not twixt her spirit and its force
But leave her to her mighty self and Fate."

He spoke and ceased and left the earthly scene.
Away from the strife and suffering on our globe,
He turned towards his far-off blissful home.
A brilliant arrow pointing straight to heaven,
The luminous body of the ethereal seer
Assailed the purple glory of the noon
And disappeared like a receding star
Vanishing into the light of the Unseen.
But still a cry was heard in the infinite,
And still to the listening soul on mortal earth
A high and far imperishable voice
Chanted the anthem of eternal love.

END OF CANTO TWO
END OF BOOK SIX

BOOK SEVEN

The Book of Yoga

Canto One

The Joy of Union; the Ordeal of the Foreknowledge of Death and the Heart's Grief and Pain

FATE followed her foreseen immutable road.
Man's hopes and longings build the journeying wheels
That bear the body of his destiny
And lead his blind will towards an unknown goal.
His fate within him shapes his acts and rules;
Its face and form already are born in him,
Its parentage is in his secret soul:
Here Matter seems to mould the body's life
And the soul follows where its nature drives.
Nature and Fate compel his free-will's choice.
But greater spirits this balance can reverse
And make the soul the artist of its fate.
This is the mystic truth our ignorance hides:
Doom is a passage for our inborn force,
Our ordeal is the hidden spirit's choice,
Ananke is our being's own decree.
All was fulfilled the heart of Savitri
Flower-sweet and adamant, passionate and calm,
Had chosen and on her strength's unbending road
Forced to its issue the long cosmic curve.
Once more she sat behind loud hastening hooves;
A speed of armoured squadrons and a voice
Far-heard of chariots bore her from her home.
A couchant earth wakened in its dumb muse
Looked up at her from a vast indolence:
Hills wallowing in a bright haze, large lands
That lolled at ease beneath the summer heavens,
Region on region spacious in the sun,
Cities like chrysolites in the wide blaze
And yellow rivers pacing lion-maned

Led to the Shalwa marches' emerald line,
A happy front to iron vastnesses
And austere peaks and titan solitudes.
Once more was near the fair and fated place,
The borders gleaming with the groves' delight
Where first she met the face of Satyavan
And he saw like one waking into a dream
Some timeless beauty and reality,
The moon-gold sweetness of heaven's earth-born child.
The past receded and the future neared:
Far now behind lay Madra's spacious halls,
The white carved pillars, the cool dim alcoves,
The tinged mosaic of the crystal floors,
The towered pavilions, the wind-rippled pools
And gardens humming with the murmur of bees,
Forgotten soon or a pale memory
The fountain's plash in the white stone-bound pool,
The thoughtful noontide's brooding solemn trance,
The colonnade's dream grey in the quiet eve,
The slow moonrise gliding in front of Night.
Left far behind were now the faces known,
The happy silken babble on laughter's lips
And the close-clinging clasp of intimate hands
And adoration's light in cherished eyes
Offered to the one sovereign of their life.
Nature's primaeval loneliness was here:
Here only was the voice of bird and beast,—
The ascetic's exile in the dim-souled huge
Inhuman forest far from cheerful sound
Of man's blithe converse and his crowded days.
In a broad eve with one red eye of cloud,
Through a narrow opening, a green flowered cleft,
Out of the stare of sky and soil they came
Into a mighty home of emerald dusk.
There onward led by a faint brooding path
Which toiled through the shadow of enormous trunks

And under arches misers of sunshine,
They saw low thatched roofs of a hermitage
Huddled beneath a patch of azure hue
In a sunlit clearing that seemed the outbreak
Of a glad smile in the forest's monstrous heart,
A rude refuge of the thought and will of man
Watched by the crowding giants of the wood.
Arrived in that rough-hewn homestead they gave,
Questioning no more the strangeness of her fate,
Their pride and loved one to the great blind king,
A regal pillar of fallen mightiness
And the stately care-worn woman once a queen
Who now hoped nothing for herself from life,
But all things only hoped for her one child,
Calling on that single head from partial Fate
All joy of earth, all heaven's beatitude.
Adoring wisdom and beauty like a young god's,
She saw him loved by heaven as by herself,
She rejoiced in his brightness and believed in his fate
And knew not of the evil drawing near.
Lingering some days upon the forest verge
Like men who lengthen out departure's pain,
Unwilling to separate sorrowful clinging hands,
Unwilling to see for the last time a face,
Heavy with the sorrow of a coming day
And wondering at the carelessness of Fate
Who breaks with idle hands her supreme works,
They parted from her with pain-fraught burdened hearts
As forced by inescapable fate we part
From one whom we shall never see again;
Driven by the singularity of her fate,
Helpless against the choice of Savitri's heart
They left her to her rapture and her doom
In the tremendous forest's savage charge.
All put behind her that was once her life,
All welcomed that henceforth was his and hers,

She abode with Satyavan in the wild woods:
Priceless she deemed her joy so close to death;
Apart with love she lived for love alone.
As if self-poised above the march of days,
Her immobile spirit watched the haste of Time,
A statue of passion and invincible force,
An absolutism of sweet imperious will,
A tranquillity and a violence of the gods
Indomitable and immutable.

At first to her beneath the sapphire heavens
The sylvan solitude was a gorgeous dream,
An altar of the summer's splendour and fire,
A sky-topped flower-hung palace of the gods
And all its scenes a smile on rapture's lips
And all its voices bards of happiness.
There was a chanting in the casual wind,
There was a glory in the least sunbeam;
Night was a chrysoprase on velvet cloth,
A nestling darkness or a moonlit deep;
Day was a purple pageant and a hymn,
A wave of the laughter of light from morn to eve.
His absence was a dream of memory,
His presence was the empire of a god.
A fusing of the joys of earth and heaven,
A tremulous blaze of nuptial rapture passed,
A rushing of two spirits to be one,
A burning of two bodies in one flame.
Opened were gates of unforgettable bliss:
Two lives were locked within an earthly heaven
And fate and grief fled from that fiery hour.
But soon now failed the summer's ardent breath
And throngs of blue-black clouds crept through the sky
And rain fled sobbing over the dripping leaves
And storm became the forest's titan voice.
Then listening to the thunder's fatal crash

And the fugitive pattering footsteps of the showers
And the long unsatisfied panting of the wind
And sorrow muttering in the sound-vexed night,
The grief of all the world came near to her.
Night's darkness seemed her future's ominous face.
The shadow of her lover's doom arose
And fear laid hands upon her mortal heart.
The moments swift and ruthless raced; alarmed
Her thoughts, her mind remembered Narad's date.
A trembling moved accountant of her riches,
She reckoned the insufficient days between:
A dire expectancy knocked at her breast;
Dreadful to her were the footsteps of the hours:
Grief came, a passionate stranger to her gate:
Banished when in his arms, out of her sleep
It rose at morn to look into her face.
Vainly she fled into abysms of bliss
From her pursuing foresight of the end.
The more she plunged into love that anguish grew;
Her deepest grief from sweetest gulfs arose.
Remembrance was a poignant pang, she felt
Each day a golden leaf torn cruelly out
From her too slender book of love and joy.
Thus swaying in strong gusts of happiness
And swimming in foreboding's sombre waves
And feeding sorrow and terror with her heart, —
For now they sat among her bosom's guests
Or in her inner chamber paced apart, —
Her eyes stared blind into the future's night.
Out of her separate self she looked and saw,
Moving amid the unconscious faces loved,
In mind a stranger though in heart so near,
The ignorant smiling world go happily by
Upon its way towards an unknown doom
And wondered at the careless lives of men.
As if in different worlds they walked, though close,

They confident of the returning sun,
They wrapped in little hourly hopes and tasks, —
She in her dreadful knowledge was alone.
The rich and happy secrecy that once
Enshrined her as if in a silver bower
Apart in a bright nest of thoughts and dreams
Made room for tragic hours of solitude
And lonely grief that none could share or know,
A body seeing the end too soon of joy
And the fragile happiness of its mortal love.
Her quiet visage still and sweet and calm,
Her graceful daily acts were now a mask;
In vain she looked upon her depths to find
A ground of stillness and the spirit's peace.
Still veiled from her was the silent Being within
Who sees life's drama pass with unmoved eyes,
Supports the sorrow of the mind and heart
And bears in human breasts the world and fate.
A glimpse or flashes came, the Presence was hid.
Only her violent heart and passionate will
Were pushed in front to meet the immutable doom;
Defenceless, nude, bound to her human lot
They had no means to act, no way to save.
These she controlled, nothing was shown outside:
She was still to them the child they knew and loved;
The sorrowing woman they saw not within.
No change was in her beautiful motions seen:
A worshipped empress all once vied to serve,
She made herself the diligent serf of all,
Nor spared the labour of broom and jar and well,
Or close gentle tending or to heap the fire
Of altar and kitchen, no slight task allowed
To others that her woman's strength might do.
In all her acts a strange divinity shone:
Into a simplest movement she could bring
A oneness with earth's glowing robe of light,
A lifting up of common acts by love.

All-love was hers and its one heavenly cord
Bound all to all with her as golden tie.
But when her grief to the surface pressed too close,
These things, once gracious adjuncts of her joy,
Seemed meaningless to her, a gleaming shell,
Or were a round mechanical and void,
Her body's actions shared not by her will.
Always behind this strange divided life
Her spirit like a sea of living fire
Possessed her lover and to his body clung,
One locked embrace to guard its threatened mate.
At night she woke through the slow silent hours
Brooding on the treasure of his bosom and face,
Hung o'er the sleep-bound beauty of his brow
Or laid her burning cheek upon his feet.
Waking at morn her lips endlessly clung to his,
Unwilling ever to separate again
Or lose that honeyed drain of lingering joy,
Unwilling to loose his body from her breast,
The warm inadequate signs that love must use.
Intolerant of the poverty of Time
Her passion catching at the fugitive hours
Willed the expense of centuries in one day
Of prodigal love and the surf of ecstasy;
Or else she strove even in mortal time
To build a little room for timelessness
By the deep union of two human lives,
Her soul secluded shut into his soul.
After all was given she demanded still;
Even by his strong embrace unsatisfied,
She longed to cry, "O tender Satyavan,
O lover of my soul, give more, give more
Of love while yet thou canst, to her thou lov'st.
Imprint thyself for every nerve to keep
That thrills to thee the message of my heart.
For soon we part and who shall know how long
Before the great wheel in its monstrous round

Restore us to each other and our love?”
Too well she loved to speak a fateful word
And lay her burden on his happy head;
She pressed the outsurging grief back into her breast
To dwell within silent, unhelped, alone.
But Satyavan sometimes half understood,
Or felt at least with the uncertain answer
Of our thought-blinded hearts the unuttered need,
The unplumbed abyss of her deep passionate want.
All of his speeding days that he could spare
From labour in the forest hewing wood
And hunting food in the wild sylvan glades
And service to his father’s sightless life
He gave to her and helped to increase the hours
By the nearness of his presence and his clasp,
And lavish softness of heart-seeking words
And the close beating felt of heart on heart.
All was too little for her bottomless need.
If in his presence she forgot awhile,
Grief filled his absence with its aching touch;
She saw the desert of her coming days
Imaged in every solitary hour.
Although with a vain imaginary bliss
Of fiery union through death’s door of escape
She dreamed of her body robed in funeral flame,
She knew she must not clutch that happiness
To die with him and follow, seizing his robe
Across our other countries, travellers glad
Into the sweet or terrible Beyond.
For those sad parents still would need her here
To help the empty remnant of their day.
Often it seemed to her the ages’ pain
Had pressed their quintessence into her single woe,
Concentrating in her a tortured world.
Thus in the silent chamber of her soul
Cloistering her love to live with secret grief
She dwelt like a dumb priest with hidden gods

Unappeased by the wordless offering of her days,
Lifting to them her sorrow like frankincense,
Her life the altar, herself the sacrifice.
Yet ever they grew into each other more
Until it seemed no power could rend apart,
Since even the body's walls could not divide.
For when he wandered in the forest, oft
Her conscious spirit walked with him and knew
His actions as if in herself he moved;
He, less aware, thrilled with her from afar.
Always the stature of her passion grew;
Grief, fear became the food of mighty love.
Increased by its torment it filled the whole world;
It was all her life, became her whole earth and heaven.
Although life-born, an infant of the hours,
Immortal it walked unslayable as the gods:
Her spirit stretched measureless in strength divine,
An anvil for the blows of Fate and Time:
Or tired of sorrow's passionate luxury,
Grief's self became calm, dull-eyed, resolute,
Awaiting some issue of its fiery struggle,
Some deed in which it might for ever cease,
Victorious over itself and death and tears.
   The year now paused upon the brink of change.
No more the storms sailed with stupendous wings
And thunder strode in wrath across the world,
But still was heard a muttering in the sky
And rain dripped wearily through the mournful air
And grey slow-drifting clouds shut in the earth.
So her grief's heavy sky shut in her heart.
A still self hid behind but gave no light:
No voice came down from the forgotten heights;
Only in the privacy of its brooding pain
Her human heart spoke to the body's fate.

END OF CANTO ONE

Canto Two

The Parable of the Search for the Soul

As in the vigilance of the sleepless night
Through the slow heavy-footed silent hours,
Repressing in her bosom its load of grief,
She sat staring at the dumb tread of Time
And the approach of ever-nearing Fate,
A summons from her being's summit came,
A sound, a call that broke the seals of Night.
Above her brows where will and knowledge meet
A mighty Voice invaded mortal space.
It seemed to come from inaccessible heights
And yet was intimate with all the world
And knew the meaning of the steps of Time
And saw eternal destiny's changeless scene
Filling the far prospect of the cosmic gaze.
As the Voice touched, her body became a stark
And rigid golden statue of motionless trance,
A stone of God lit by an amethyst soul.
Around her body's stillness all grew still:
Her heart listened to its slow measured beats,
Her mind renouncing thought heard and was mute:
"Why camest thou to this dumb deathbound earth,
This ignorant life beneath indifferent skies
Tied like a sacrifice on the altar of Time,
O spirit, O immortal energy,
If 'twas to nurse grief in a helpless heart
Or with hard tearless eyes await thy doom?
Arise, O soul, and vanquish Time and Death."
But Savitri's heart replied in the dim night:
"My strength is taken from me and given to Death.
Why should I lift my hands to the shut heavens
Or struggle with mute inevitable Fate

Or hope in vain to uplift an ignorant race
Who hug their lot and mock the saviour Light
And see in Mind wisdom's sole tabernacle,
In its harsh peak and its inconscient base
A rock of safety and an anchor of sleep?
Is there a God whom any cry can move?
He sits in peace and leaves the mortal's strength
Impotent against his calm omnipotent Law
And Inconscience and the almighty hands of Death.
What need have I, what need has Satyavan
To avoid the black-meshed net, the dismal door,
Or call a mightier Light into life's closed room,
A greater Law into man's little world?
Why should I strive with earth's unyielding laws
Or stave off death's inevitable hour?
This surely is best to pactise with my fate
And follow close behind my lover's steps
And pass through night from twilight to the sun
Across the tenebrous river that divides
The adjoining parishes of earth and heaven.
Then could we lie inarmed breast upon breast,
Untroubled by thought, untroubled by our hearts,
Forgetting man and life and time and its hours,
Forgetting eternity's call, forgetting God."
The Voice replied: "Is this enough, O spirit?
And what shall thy soul say when it wakes and knows
The work was left undone for which it came?
Or is this all for thy being born on earth
Charged with a mandate from eternity,
A listener to the voices of the years,
A follower of the footprints of the gods,
To pass and leave unchanged the old dusty laws?
Shall there be no new tables, no new Word,
No greater light come down upon the earth
Delivering her from her unconsciousness,
Man's spirit from unalterable Fate?

Cam'st thou not down to open the doors of Fate,
The iron doors that seemed for ever closed,
And lead man to Truth's wide and golden road
That runs through finite things to eternity?
Is this then the report that I must make,
My head bowed with shame before the Eternal's seat, —
His power he kindled in thy body has failed,
His labourer returns, her task undone?"
Then Savitri's heart fell mute, it spoke no word.
But holding back her troubled rebel heart,
Abrupt, erect and strong, calm like a hill,
Surmounting the seas of mortal ignorance,
Its peak immutable above mind's air,
A Power within her answered the still Voice:
"I am thy portion here charged with thy work,
As thou myself seated for ever above,
Speak to my depths, O great and deathless Voice,
Command, for I am here to do thy will."
The Voice replied: "Remember why thou cam'st:
Find out thy soul, recover thy hid self,
In silence seek God's meaning in thy depths,
Then mortal nature change to the divine.
Open God's door, enter into his trance.
Cast Thought from thee, that nimble ape of Light:
In his tremendous hush stilling thy brain
His vast Truth wake within and know and see.
Cast from thee sense that veils thy spirit's sight:
In the enormous emptiness of thy mind
Thou shalt see the Eternal's body in the world,
Know him in every voice heard by thy soul,
In the world's contacts meet his single touch;
All things shall fold thee into his embrace.
Conquer thy heart's throbs, let thy heart beat in God:
Thy nature shall be the engine of his works,
Thy voice shall house the mightiness of his Word:
Then shalt thou harbour my force and conquer Death."

Then Savitri by her doomed husband sat,
Still rigid in her golden motionless pose,
A statue of the fire of the inner sun.
In the black night the wrath of storm swept by,
The thunder crashed above her, the rain hissed,
Its million footsteps pattered on the roof.
Impassive mid the movement and the cry,
Witness of the thoughts of mind, the moods of life,
She looked into herself and sought for her soul.

A dream disclosed to her the cosmic past,
The crypt-seed and the mystic origins,
The shadowy beginnings of world-fate:
A lamp of symbol lighting hidden truth
Imaged to her the world's significance.
In the indeterminate formlessness of Self
Creation took its first mysterious steps,
It made the body's shape a house of soul
And Matter learned to think and person grew;
She saw Space peopled with the seeds of life
And saw the human creature born in Time.
At first appeared a dim half-neutral tide
Of being emerging out of infinite Nought:
A consciousness looked at the inconscient Vast
And pleasure and pain stirred in the insensible Void.
All was the deed of a blind World-Energy:
Unconscious of her own exploits she worked,
Shaping a universe out of the Inane.
In fragmentary beings she grew aware:
A chaos of little sensibilities
Gathered round a small ego's pin-point head;
In it a sentient creature found its poise,
It moved and lived a breathing, thinking whole.
On a dim ocean of subconscient life
A formless surface consciousness awoke:
A stream of thoughts and feelings came and went,

A foam of memories hardened and became
A bright crust of habitual sense and thought,
A seat of living personality
And recurrent habits mimicked permanence.
Mind nascent laboured out a mutable form,
It built a mobile house on shifting sands,
A floating isle upon a bottomless sea.
A conscious being was by this labour made;
It looked around it on its difficult field
In the green wonderful and perilous earth;
It hoped in a brief body to survive,
Relying on Matter's false eternity.
It felt a godhead in its fragile house;
It saw blue heavens, dreamed immortality.
   A conscious soul in the Inconscient's world,
Hidden behind our thoughts and hopes and dreams,
An indifferent Master signing Nature's acts
Leaves the vicegerent mind a seeming king.
In his floating house upon the sea of Time
The regent sits at work and never rests:
He is a puppet of the dance of Time;
He is driven by the hours, the moment's call
Compels him with the thronging of life's need
And the babel of the voices of the world.
This mind no silence knows nor dreamless sleep,
In the incessant circling of its steps
Thoughts tread for ever through the listening brain;
It toils like a machine and cannot stop.
Into the body's many-storeyed rooms
Endless crowd down the dream-god's messages.
All is a hundred-toned murmur and babble and stir,
There is a tireless running to and fro,
A haste of movement and a ceaseless cry.
The hurried servant senses answer apace
To every knock upon the outer doors,
Bring in time's visitors, report each call,

Admit the thousand queries and the calls
And the messages of communicating minds
And the heavy business of unnumbered lives
And all the thousandfold commerce of the world.
Even in the tracts of sleep is scant repose;
He mocks life's steps in strange subconscient dreams,
He strays in a subtle realm of symbol scenes,
His night with thin-air visions and dim forms
He packs or peoples with slight drifting shapes
And only a moment spends in silent Self.
Adventuring into infinite mind-space
He unfolds his wings of thought in inner air,
Or travelling in imagination's car
Crosses the globe, journeys beneath the stars,
To subtle worlds takes his ethereal course,
Visits the Gods on Life's miraculous peaks,
Communicates with Heaven, tampers with Hell.
This is the little surface of man's life.
He is this and he is all the universe;
He scales the Unseen, his depths dare the Abyss;
A whole mysterious world is locked within.
Unknown to himself he lives a hidden king
Behind rich tapestries in great secret rooms;
An epicure of the spirit's unseen joys,
He lives on the sweet honey of solitude:
A nameless god in an unapproachable fane,
In the secret adytum of his inmost soul
He guards the being's covered mysteries
Beneath the threshold, behind shadowy gates
Or shut in vast cellars of inconscient sleep.
The immaculate Divine All-Wonderful
Casts into the argent purity of his soul
His splendour and his greatness and the light
Of self-creation in Time's infinity
As into a sublimely mirroring glass.
Man in the world's life works out the dreams of God.

But all is there, even God's opposites;
He is a little front of Nature's works,
A thinking outline of a cryptic Force.
All she reveals in him that is in her,
Her glories walk in him and her darknesses.
Man's house of life holds not the gods alone:
There are occult Shadows, there are tenebrous Powers,
Inhabitants of life's ominous nether rooms,
A shadowy world's stupendous denizens.
A careless guardian of his nature's powers,
Man harbours dangerous forces in his house.
The Titan and the Fury and the Djinn
Lie bound in the subconscient's cavern pit
And the Beast grovels in his antre den:
Dire mutterings rise and murmur in their drowse.
Insurgent sometimes raises its huge head
A monstrous mystery lurking in life's deeps,
The mystery of dark and fallen worlds,
The dread visages of the adversary Kings.
The dreadful powers held down within his depths
Become his masters or his ministers;
Enormous they invade his bodily house,
Can act in his acts, infest his thought and life.
Inferno surges into the human air
And touches all with a perverting breath.
Grey forces like a thin miasma creep,
Stealing through chinks in his closed mansion's doors,
Discolouring the walls of upper mind
In which he lives his fair and specious life,
And leave behind a stench of sin and death:
Not only rise in him perverse drifts of thought
And formidable formless influences,
But there come presences and awful shapes:
Tremendous forms and faces mount dim steps
And stare at times into his living-rooms,
Or called up for a moment's passionate work

Lay a dire custom's claim upon his heart:
Aroused from sleep, they can be bound no more.
Afflicting the daylight and alarming night,
Invading at will his outer tenement,
The stark gloom's grisly dire inhabitants
Mounting into God's light all light perturb.
All they have touched or seen they make their own,
In Nature's basement lodge, mind's passages fill,
Disrupt thought's links and musing sequences,
Break through the soul's stillness with a noise and cry
Or they call the inhabitants of the abyss,
Invite the instincts to forbidden joys,
A laughter wake of dread demoniac mirth
And with nether riot and revel shake life's floor.
Impotent to quell his terrible prisoners,
Appalled the householder helpless sits above,
Taken from him his house is his no more.
He is bound and forced, a victim of the play,
Or, allured, joys in the mad and mighty din.
His nature's dangerous forces have arisen
And hold at will a rebel's holiday.
Aroused from the darkness where they crouched in the depths,
Prisoned from the sight, they can be held no more;
His nature's impulses are now his lords.
Once quelled or wearing specious names and vests
Infernal elements, demon powers are there.
Man's lower nature hides these awful guests.
Their vast contagion grips sometimes man's world.
An awful insurgence overpowers man's soul.
In house and house the huge uprising grows:
Hell's companies are loosed to do their work,
Into the earth-ways they break out from all doors,
Invade with blood-lust and the will to slay
And fill with horror and carnage God's fair world.
Death and his hunters stalk a victim earth;
The terrible Angel smites at every door:

An awful laughter mocks at the world's pain
And massacre and torture grin at Heaven:
All is the prey of the destroying force;
Creation rocks and tremble top and base.
This evil Nature housed in human hearts,
A foreign inhabitant, a dangerous guest:
The soul that harbours it it can dislodge,
Expel the householder, possess the house.
An opposite potency contradicting God,
A momentary Evil's almightiness
Has straddled the straight path of Nature's acts.
It imitates the Godhead it denies,
Puts on his figure and assumes his face.
A Manichean creator and destroyer,
This can abolish man, annul his world.
But there is a guardian power, there are Hands that save,
Calm eyes divine regard the human scene.

All the world's possibilities in man
Are waiting as the tree waits in its seed:
His past lives in him; it drives his future's pace;
His present's acts fashion his coming fate.
The unborn gods hide in his house of Life.
The daemons of the unknown overshadow his mind
Casting their dreams into live moulds of thought,
The moulds in which his mind builds out its world.
His mind creates around him its universe.
All that has been renews in him its birth;
All that can be is figured in his soul.
Issuing in deeds it scores on the roads of the world,
Obscure to the interpreting reason's guess,
Lines of the secret purpose of the gods.
In strange directions runs the intricate plan;
Held back from human foresight is their end
And the far intention of some ordering Will
Or the order of life's arbitrary Chance

Finds out its settled poise and fated hour.
Our surface watched in vain by reason's gaze,
Invaded by the impromptus of the unseen,
Helpless records the accidents of Time,
The involuntary turns and leaps of life.
Only a little of us foresees its steps,
Only a little has will and purposed pace.
A vast subliminal is man's measureless part.
The dim subconscient is his cavern base.
Abolished vainly in the walks of Time
Our past lives still in our unconscious selves
And by the weight of its hidden influences
Is shaped our future's self-discovery.
Thus all is an inevitable chain
And yet a series seems of accidents.
The unremembering hours repeat the old acts,
Our dead past round our future's ankles clings
And drags back the new nature's glorious stride,
Or from its buried corpse old ghosts arise,
Old thoughts, old longings, dead passions live again,
Recur in sleep or move the waking man
To words that force the barrier of the lips,
To deeds that suddenly start and o'erleap
His head of reason and his guardian will.
An old self lurks in the new self we are;
Hardly we escape from what we once had been:
In the dim gleam of habit's passages,
In the subconscient's darkling corridors
All things are carried by the porter nerves
And nothing checked by subterranean mind,
Unstudied by the guardians of the doors
And passed by a blind instinctive memory,
The old gang dismissed, old cancelled passports serve.
Nothing is wholly dead that once had lived;
In dim tunnels of the world's being and in ours
The old rejected nature still survives;

The corpses of its slain thoughts raise their heads
And visit mind's nocturnal walks in sleep,
Its stifled impulses breathe and move and rise;
All keeps a phantom immortality.
Irresistible are Nature's sequences:
The seeds of sins renounced sprout from hid soil;
The evil cast from our hearts once more we face;
Our dead selves come to slay our living soul.
A portion of us lives in present Time,
A secret mass in dim inconscience gropes;
Out of the inconscient and subliminal
Arisen, we live in mind's uncertain light
And strive to know and master a dubious world
Whose purpose and meaning are hidden from our sight.
Above us dwells a superconscient God
Hidden in the mystery of his own light:
Around us is a vast of ignorance
Lit by the uncertain ray of human mind,
Below us sleeps the Inconscient dark and mute.
   But this is only Matter's first self-view,
A scale and series in the Ignorance.
This is not all we are or all our world.
Our greater self of knowledge waits for us,
A supreme light in the truth-conscious Vast:
It sees from summits beyond thinking mind,
It moves in a splendid air transcending life.
It shall descend and make earth's life divine.
Truth made the world, not a blind Nature-Force.
For here are not our large diviner heights;
Our summits in the superconscient's blaze
Are glorious with the very face of God:
There is our aspect of eternity,
There is the figure of the god we are,
His young unaging look on deathless things,
His joy in our escape from death and Time,
His immortality and light and bliss.

Our larger being sits behind cryptic walls:
There are greatnesses hidden in our unseen parts
That wait their hour to step into life's front:
We feel an aid from deep indwelling Gods;
One speaks within, Light comes to us from above.
Our soul from its mysterious chamber acts;
Its influence pressing on our heart and mind
Pushes them to exceed their mortal selves.
It seeks for Good and Beauty and for God;
We see beyond self's walls our limitless self,
We gaze through our world's glass at half-seen vasts,
We hunt for the Truth behind apparent things.
Our inner Mind dwells in a larger light,
Its brightness looks at us through hidden doors;
Our members luminous grow and Wisdom's face
Appears in the doorway of the mystic ward:
When she enters into our house of outward sense,
Then we look up and see, above, her sun.
A mighty life-self with its inner powers
Supports the dwarfish modicum we call life;
It can graft upon our crawl two puissant wings.
Our body's subtle self is throned within
In its viewless palace of veridical dreams
That are bright shadows of the thoughts of God.
In the prone obscure beginnings of the race
The human grew in the bowed apelike man.
He stood erect, a godlike form and force,
And a soul's thoughts looked out from earth-born eyes;
Man stood erect, he wore the thinker's brow:
He looked at heaven and saw his comrade stars;
A vision came of beauty and greater birth
Slowly emerging from the heart's chapel of light
And moved in a white lucent air of dreams.
He saw his being's unrealised vastnesses,
He aspired and housed the nascent demigod.
Out of the dim recesses of the self

The occult seeker into the open came:
He heard the far and touched the intangible,
He gazed into the future and the unseen;
He used the powers earth-instruments cannot use,
A pastime made of the impossible;
He caught up fragments of the Omniscient's thought,
He scattered formulas of omnipotence.
Thus man in his little house made of earth's dust
Grew towards an unseen heaven of thought and dream
Looking into the vast vistas of his mind
On a small globe dotting infinity.
At last climbing a long and narrow stair
He stood alone on the high roof of things
And saw the light of a spiritual sun.
Aspiring he transcends his earthly self;
He stands in the largeness of his soul new-born,
Redeemed from encirclement by mortal things
And moves in a pure free spiritual realm
As in the rare breath of a stratosphere;
A last end of far lines of divinity,
He mounts by a frail thread to his high source;
He reaches his fount of immortality,
He calls the Godhead into his mortal life.
All this the spirit concealed had done in her:
A portion of the mighty Mother came
Into her as into its own human part:
Amid the cosmic workings of the Gods
It marked her the centre of a wide-drawn scheme,
Dreamed in the passion of her far-seeing spirit
To mould humanity into God's own shape
And lead this great blind struggling world to light
Or a new world discover or create.
Earth must transform herself and equal Heaven
Or Heaven descend into earth's mortal state.
But for such vast spiritual change to be,
Out of the mystic cavern in man's heart

The heavenly Psyche must put off her veil
And step into common nature's crowded rooms
And stand uncovered in that nature's front
And rule its thoughts and fill the body and life.
Obedient to a high command she sat:
Time, life and death were passing incidents
Obstructing with their transient view her sight,
Her sight that must break through and liberate the god
Imprisoned in the visionless mortal man.
The inferior nature born into ignorance
Still took too large a place, it veiled her self
And must be pushed aside to find her soul.

END OF CANTO TWO

Canto Three

The Entry into the Inner Countries

At first out of the busy hum of mind
As if from a loud thronged market into a cave
By an inward moment's magic she had come.
A stark hushed emptiness became her self:
Her mind unvisited by the voice of thought
Stared at a void deep's dumb infinity.
Her heights receded, her depths behind her closed;
All fled away from her and left her blank.
But when she came back to her self of thought,
Once more she was a human thing on earth,
A lump of Matter, a house of closed sight,
A mind compelled to think out ignorance,
A life-force pressed into a camp of works
And the material world her limiting field.
Amazed like one unknowing she sought her way
Out of the tangle of man's ignorant past
That took the surface person for the soul.
Then a Voice spoke that dwelt on secret heights:
"For man thou seekst, not for thyself alone.
Only if God assumes the human mind
And puts on mortal ignorance for his cloak
And makes himself the Dwarf with triple stride,
Can he help man to grow into the God.
As man disguised the cosmic Greatness works
And finds the mystic inaccessible gate
And opens the Immortal's golden door.
Man, human, follows in God's human steps.
Accepting his darkness thou must bring to him light,
Accepting his sorrow thou must bring to him bliss.
In Matter's body find thy heaven-born soul."
Then Savitri surged out of her body's wall

And stood a little span outside herself
And looked into her subtle being's depths
And in its heart as in a lotus-bud
Divined her secret and mysterious soul.
At the dim portal of the inner life
That bars out from our depths the body's mind
And all that lives but by the body's breath,
She knocked and pressed against the ebony gate.
The living portal groaned with sullen hinge:
Heavily reluctant it complained inert
Against the tyranny of the spirit's touch.
A formidable voice cried from within:
"Back, creature of earth, lest tortured and torn thou die."
A dreadful murmur rose like a dim sea;
The Serpent of the threshold hissing rose,
A fatal guardian hood with monstrous coils,
The hounds of darkness growled with jaws agape,
And trolls and gnomes and goblins scowled and stared
And wild beast roarings thrilled the blood with fear
And menace muttered in a dangerous tongue.
Unshaken her will pressed on the rigid bars:
The gate swung wide with a protesting jar,
The opponent Powers withdrew their dreadful guard;
Her being entered into the inner worlds.
In a narrow passage, the subconscient's gate,
She breathed with difficulty and pain and strove
To find the inner self concealed in sense.
Into a dense of subtle Matter packed,
A cavity filled with a blind mass of power,
An opposition of misleading gleams,
A heavy barrier of unseeing sight,
She forced her way through body to the soul.
Across a perilous border line she passed
Where Life dips into the subconscient dusk
Or struggles from Matter into chaos of mind,
Aswarm with elemental entities

And fluttering shapes of vague half-bodied thought
And crude beginnings of incontinent force.
At first a difficult narrowness was there,
A press of uncertain powers and drifting wills;
For all was there but nothing in its place.
At times an opening came, a door was forced;
She crossed through spaces of a secret self
And trod in passages of inner Time.
At last she broke into a form of things,
A start of finiteness, a world of sense:
But all was still confused, nothing self-found.
Soul was not there but only cries of life.
A thronged and clamorous air environed her.
A horde of sounds defied significance,
A dissonant clash of cries and contrary calls;
A mob of visions broke across the sight,
A jostled sequence lacking sense and suite,
Feelings pushed through a packed and burdened heart,
Each forced its separate inconsequent way
But cared for nothing but its ego's drive.
A rally without key of common will,
Thought stared at thought and pulled at the taut brain
As if to pluck the reason from its seat
And cast its corpse into life's wayside drain;
So might forgotten lie in Nature's mud
Abandoned the slain sentinel of the soul.
So could life's power shake from it mind's rule,
Nature renounce the spirit's government
And the bare elemental energies
Make of the sense a glory of boundless joy,
A splendour of ecstatic anarchy,
A revel mighty and mad of utter bliss.
This was the sense's instinct void of soul
Or when the soul sleeps hidden void of power,
But now the vital godhead wakes within
And lifts the life with the Supernal's touch.

But how shall come the glory and the flame
If mind is cast away into the abyss?
For body without mind has not the light,
The rapture of spirit sense, the joy of life;
All then becomes subconscient, tenebrous,
Inconscience puts its seal on Nature's page
Or else a mad disorder whirls the brain
Posting along a ravaged nature's roads,
A chaos of disordered impulses
In which no light can come, no joy, no peace.
This state now threatened, this she pushed from her.
As if in a long endless tossing street
One driven mid a trampling hurrying crowd
Hour after hour she trod without release
Holding by her will the senseless meute at bay;
Out of the dreadful press she dragged her will
And fixed her thought upon the saviour Name;
Then all grew still and empty; she was free.
A large deliverance came, a vast calm space.
Awhile she moved through a blank tranquillity
Of naked Light from an invisible sun,
A void that was a bodiless happiness,
A blissful vacuum of nameless peace.
But now a mightier danger's front drew near:
The press of bodily mind, the Inconscient's brood
Of aimless thought and will had fallen from her.
Approaching loomed a giant head of Life
Ungoverned by mind or soul, subconscient, vast.
It tossed all power into a single drive,
It made its power a might of dangerous seas.
Into the stillness of her silent self,
Into the whiteness of its muse of Space
A spate, a torrent of the speed of Life
Broke like a wind-lashed driven mob of waves
Racing on a pale floor of summer sand;
It drowned its banks, a mountain of climbing waves.

Enormous was its vast and passionate voice.
It cried to her listening spirit as it ran,
Demanding God's submission to chainless Force.
A deaf force calling to a status dumb,
A thousand voices in a muted Vast,
It claimed the heart's support for its clutch at joy,
For its need to act the witness Soul's consent,
For its lust of power her neutral being's seal.
Into the wideness of her watching self
It brought a grandiose gust of the Breath of Life;
Its torrent carried the world's hopes and fears,
All life's, all Nature's dissatisfied hungry cry,
And the longing all eternity cannot fill.
It called to the mountain secrecies of the soul
And the miracle of the never-dying fire,
It spoke to some first inexpressible ecstasy
Hidden in the creative beat of Life;
Out of the nether unseen deeps it tore
Its lure and magic of disordered bliss,
Into earth-light poured its maze of tangled charm
And heady draught of Nature's primitive joy
And the fire and mystery of forbidden delight
Drunk from the world-libido's bottomless well,
And the honey-sweet poison-wine of lust and death,
But dreamed a vintage of glory of life's gods,
And felt as celestial rapture's golden sting.
The cycles of the infinity of desire
And the mystique that made an unrealised world
Wider than the known and closer than the unknown
In which hunt for ever the hounds of mind and life,
Tempted a deep dissatisfied urge within
To long for the unfulfilled and ever far
And make this life upon a limiting earth
A climb towards summits vanishing in the void,
A search for the glory of the impossible.
It dreamed of that which never has been known,

It grasped at that which never has been won,
It chased into an Elysian memory
The charms that flee from the heart's soon lost delight;
It dared the force that slays, the joys that hurt,
The imaged shape of unaccomplished things
And the summons to a Circean transmuting dance
And passion's tenancy of the courts of love
And the wild Beast's ramp and romp with Beauty and Life.
It brought its cry and surge of opposite powers,
Its moments of the touch of luminous planes,
Its flame-ascensions and sky-pitched vast attempts,
Its fiery towers of dream built on the winds,
Its sinkings towards the darkness and the abyss,
Its honey of tenderness, its sharp wine of hate,
Its changes of sun and cloud, of laughter and tears,
Its bottomless danger-pits and swallowing gulfs,
Its fear and joy and ecstasy and despair,
Its occult wizardries, its simple lines
And great communions and uplifting moves,
Its faith in heaven, its intercourse with hell.
These powers were not blunt with the dead weight of earth,
They gave ambrosia's taste and poison's sting.
There was an ardour in the gaze of Life
That saw heaven blue in the grey air of Night:
The impulses godward soared on passion's wings.
Mind's quick-paced thoughts floated from their high necks,
A glowing splendour as of an irised mane,
A parure of pure intuition's light;
Its flame-foot gallop they could imitate:
Mind's voices mimicked inspiration's stress,
Its ictus of infallibility,
Its speed and lightning heaven-leap of the Gods.
A trenchant blade that shore the nets of doubt,
Its sword of discernment seemed almost divine.
Yet all that knowledge was a borrowed sun's;
The forms that came were not heaven's native births:

An inner voice could speak the unreal's Word;
Its puissance dangerous and absolute
Could mingle poison with the wine of God.
On these high shining backs falsehood could ride;
Truth lay with delight in error's passionate arms
Gliding downstream in a blithe gilded barge:
She edged her ray with a magnificent lie.
Here in Life's nether realms all contraries meet;
Truth stares and does her works with bandaged eyes
And Ignorance is Wisdom's patron here:
Those galloping hooves in their enthusiast speed
Could bear to a dangerous intermediate zone
Where Death walks wearing a robe of deathless Life.
Or they enter the valley of the wandering Gleam
Whence, captives or victims of the specious Ray,
Souls trapped in that region never can escape.
Agents, not masters, they serve Life's desires
Toiling for ever in the snare of Time.
Their bodies born out of some Nihil's womb
Ensnare the spirit in the moment's dreams,
Then perish vomiting the immortal soul
Out of Matter's belly into the sink of Nought.
Yet some uncaught, unslain, can warily pass
Carrying Truth's image in the sheltered heart,
Pluck Knowledge out of error's screening grip,
Break paths through the blind walls of little self,
Then travel on to reach a greater life.
All this streamed past her and seemed to her vision's sight
As if around a high and voiceless isle
A clamour of waters from far unknown hills
Swallowed its narrow banks in crowding waves
And made a hungry world of white wild foam:
Hastening, a dragon with a million feet,
Its foam and cry a drunken giant's din,
Tossing a mane of Darkness into God's sky,
It ebbed receding into a distant roar.

Then smiled again a large and tranquil air:
Blue heaven, green earth, partners of Beauty's reign,
Lived as of old, companions in happiness;
And in the world's heart laughed the joy of life.
All now was still, the soil shone dry and pure.
Through it all she moved not, plunged not in the vain waves.
Out of the vastness of the silent self
Life's clamour fled; her spirit was mute and free.

Then journeying forward through the self's wide hush
She came into a brilliant ordered Space.
There Life dwelt parked in an armed tranquillity;
A chain was on her strong insurgent heart.
Tamed to the modesty of a measured pace,
She kept no more her vehement stride and rush;
She had lost the careless majesty of her muse
And the ample grandeur of her regal force;
Curbed were her mighty pomps, her splendid waste,
Sobered the revels of her bacchant play,
Cut down were her squanderings in desire's bazaar,
Coerced her despot will, her fancy's dance,
A cold stolidity bound the riot of sense.
A royalty without freedom was her lot;
The sovereign throned obeyed her ministers:
Her servants mind and sense governed her house:
Her spirit's bounds they cast in rigid lines
And guarding with a phalanx of armoured rules
The reason's balanced reign, kept order and peace.
Her will lived closed in adamant walls of law,
Coerced was her force by chains that feigned to adorn,
Imagination was prisoned in a fort,
Her wanton and licentious favourite;
Reality's poise and reason's symmetry
Were set in its place sentinelled by marshalled facts,
They gave to the soul for throne a bench of Law,
For kingdom a small world of rule and line:

The ages' wisdom, shrivelled to scholiast lines,
Shrank patterned into a copy-book device.
The Spirit's almighty freedom was not here:
A schoolman mind had captured life's large space,
But chose to live in bare and paltry rooms
Parked off from the too vast dangerous universe,
Fearing to lose its soul in the infinite.
Even the Idea's ample sweep was cut
Into a system, chained to fixed pillars of thought
Or rivetted to Matter's solid ground:
Or else the soul was lost in its own heights:
Obeying the Ideal's high-browed law
Thought based a throne on unsubstantial air
Disdaining earth's flat triviality:
It barred reality out to live in its dreams.
Or all stepped into a systemed universe:
Life's empire was a managed continent,
Its thoughts an army ranked and disciplined;
Uniformed they kept the logic of their fixed place
At the bidding of the trained centurion mind.
Or each stepped into its station like a star
Or marched through fixed and constellated heavens
Or kept its feudal rank among its peers
In the sky's unchanging cosmic hierarchy.
Or like a high-bred maiden with chaste eyes
Forbidden to walk unveiled the public ways,
She must in close secluded chambers move,
Her feeling in cloisters live or gardened paths.
Life was consigned to a safe level path,
It dared not tempt the great and difficult heights
Or climb to be neighbour to a lonely star
Or skirt the danger of the precipice
Or tempt the foam-curled breakers' perilous laugh,
Adventure's lyrist, danger's amateur,
Or into her chamber call some flaming god,
Or leave the world's bounds and where no limits are

Meet with the heart's passion the Adorable
Or set the world ablaze with the inner Fire.
A chastened epithet in the prose of life,
She must fill with colour just her sanctioned space,
Not break out of the cabin of the idea
Nor trespass into rhythms too high or vast.
Even when it soared into ideal air,
Thought's flight lost not itself in heaven's blue:
It drew upon the skies a patterned flower
Of disciplined beauty and harmonic light.
A temperate vigilant spirit governed life:
Its acts were tools of the considering thought,
Too cold to take fire and set the world ablaze,
Or the careful reason's diplomatic moves
Testing the means to a prefigured end,
Or at the highest pitch some calm Will's plan
Or a strategy of some High Command within
To conquer the secret treasures of the gods
Or win for a masked king some glorious world,
Not a reflex of the spontaneous self,
An index of the being and its moods,
A winging of conscious spirit, a sacrament
Of life's communion with the still Supreme
Or its pure movement on the Eternal's road.
Or else for the body of some high Idea
A house was built with too close-fitting bricks;
Action and thought cemented made a wall
Of small ideals limiting the soul.
Even meditation mused on a narrow seat;
And worship turned to an exclusive God,
To the Universal in a chapel prayed
Whose doors were shut against the universe;
Or kneeled to the bodiless Impersonal
A mind shut to the cry and fire of love:
A rational religion dried the heart.
It planned a smooth life's acts with ethics' rule

Or offered a cold and flameless sacrifice.
The sacred Book lay on its sanctified desk
Wrapped in interpretation's silken strings:
A credo sealed up its spiritual sense.

Here was a quiet country of fixed mind,
Here life no more was all nor passion's voice;
The cry of sense had sunk into a hush.
Soul was not there nor spirit but mind alone;
Mind claimed to be the spirit and the soul.
The spirit saw itself as form of mind,
Lost itself in the glory of the thought,
A light that made invisible the sun.
Into a firm and settled space she came
Where all was still and all things kept their place.
Each found what it had sought and knew its aim.
All had a final last stability.
There one stood forth who bore authority
On an important brow and held a rod;
Command was incarnate in his gesture and tone;
Tradition's petrified wisdom carved his speech,
His sentences savoured the oracle.
"Traveller or pilgrim of the inner world,
Fortunate art thou to reach our brilliant air
Flaming with thought's supreme finality.
O aspirant to the perfect way of life,
Here find it; rest from search and live at peace.
Ours is the home of cosmic certainty.
Here is the truth, God's harmony is here.
Register thy name in the book of the elite,
Admitted by the sanction of the few,
Adopt thy station of knowledge, thy post in mind,
Thy ticket of order draw in Life's bureau
And praise thy fate that made thee one of ours.
All here, docketed and tied, the mind can know,
All schemed by law that God permits to life.

This is the end and there is no beyond.
Here is the safety of the ultimate wall,
Here is the clarity of the sword of Light,
Here is the victory of a single Truth,
Here burns the diamond of flawless bliss.
A favourite of Heaven and Nature live."
But to the too satisfied and confident sage
Savitri replied casting into his world
Sight's deep release, the heart's questioning inner voice:
For here the heart spoke not, only clear daylight
Of intellect reigned here, limiting, cold, precise.
"Happy are they who in this chaos of things,
This coming and going of the feet of Time,
Can find the single Truth, the eternal Law:
Untouched they live by hope and doubt and fear.
Happy are men anchored on fixed belief
In this uncertain and ambiguous world,
Or who have planted in the heart's rich soil
One small grain of spiritual certitude.
Happiest who stand on faith as on a rock.
But I must pass leaving the ended search,
Truth's rounded outcome firm, immutable
And this harmonic building of world-fact,
This ordered knowledge of apparent things.
Here I can stay not, for I seek my soul."
None answered in that bright contented world,
Or only turned on their accustomed way
Astonished to hear questioning in that air
Or thoughts that could still turn to the Beyond.
But some murmured, passers-by from kindred spheres:
Each by his credo judged the thought she spoke.
"Who then is this who knows not that the soul
Is a least gland or a secretion's fault
Disquieting the sane government of the mind,
Disordering the function of the brain,
Or a yearning lodged in Nature's mortal house

Or dream whispered in man's cave of hollow thought
Who would prolong his brief unhappy term
Or cling to living in a sea of death?"
But others, "Nay, it is her spirit she seeks.
A splendid shadow of the name of God,
A formless lustre from the Ideal's realm,
The Spirit is the Holy Ghost of Mind;
But none has touched its limbs or seen its face.
Each soul is the great Father's crucified Son,
Mind is that soul's one parent, its conscious cause,
The ground on which trembles a brief passing light,
Mind, sole creator of the apparent world.
All that is here is part of our own self;
Our minds have made the world in which we live."
Another with mystic and unsatisfied eyes
Who loved his slain belief and mourned its death,
"Is there one left who seeks for a Beyond?
Can still the path be found, opened the gate?"

So she fared on across her silent self.
To a road she came thronged with an ardent crowd
Who sped brilliant, fire-footed, sunlight-eyed,
Pressing to reach the world's mysterious wall,
And pass through masked doorways into outer mind
Where the Light comes not nor the mystic voice,
Messengers from our subliminal greatnesses,
Guests from the cavern of the secret soul.
Into dim spiritual somnolence they break
Or shed wide wonder on our waking self,
Ideas that haunt us with their radiant tread,
Dreams that are hints of unborn Reality,
Strange goddesses with deep-pooled magical eyes,
Strong wind-haired gods carrying the harps of hope,
Great moon-hued visions gliding through gold air,
Aspiration's sun-dream head and star-carved limbs,
Emotions making common hearts sublime.

And Savitri mingling in that glorious crowd,
Yearning to the spiritual light they bore,
Longed once to hasten like them to save God's world;
But she reined back the high passion in her heart;
She knew that first she must discover her soul.
Only who save themselves can others save.
In contrary sense she faced life's riddling truth:
They carrying the light to suffering men
Hurried with eager feet to the outer world;
Her eyes were turned towards the eternal source.
Outstretching her hands to stay the throng she cried:
"O happy company of luminous gods,
Reveal, who know, the road that I must tread, —
For surely that bright quarter is your home, —
To find the birthplace of the occult Fire
And the deep mansion of my secret soul."
One answered pointing to a silence dim
On a remote extremity of sleep
In some far background of the inner world.
"O Savitri, from thy hidden soul we come.
We are the messengers, the occult gods
Who help men's drab and heavy ignorant lives
To wake to beauty and the wonder of things
Touching them with glory and divinity;
In evil we light the deathless flame of good
And hold the torch of knowledge on ignorant roads;
We are thy will and all men's will towards Light.
O human copy and disguise of God
Who seekst the deity thou keepest hid
And livest by the Truth thou hast not known,
Follow the world's winding highway to its source.
There in the silence few have ever reached,
Thou shalt see the Fire burning on the bare stone
And the deep cavern of thy secret soul."
Then Savitri following the great winding road
Came where it dwindled into a narrow path

Trod only by rare wounded pilgrim feet.
A few bright forms emerged from unknown depths
And looked at her with calm immortal eyes.
There was no sound to break the brooding hush;
One felt the silent nearness of the soul.

END OF CANTO THREE

Canto Four

The Triple Soul-Forces

HERE from a low and prone and listless ground
The passion of the first ascent began;
A moon-bright face in a sombre cloud of hair,
A Woman sat in a pale lustrous robe.
A rugged and ragged soil was her bare seat,
Beneath her feet a sharp and wounding stone.
A divine pity on the peaks of the world,
A spirit touched by the grief of all that lives,
She looked out far and saw from inner mind
This questionable world of outward things,
Of false appearances and plausible shapes,
This dubious cosmos stretched in the ignorant Void,
The pangs of earth, the toil and speed of the stars
And the difficult birth and dolorous end of life.
Accepting the universe as her body of woe,
The Mother of the seven sorrows bore
The seven stabs that pierced her bleeding heart:
The beauty of sadness lingered on her face,
Her eyes were dim with the ancient stain of tears.
Her heart was riven with the world's agony
And burdened with the sorrow and struggle in Time,
An anguished music trailed in her rapt voice.
Absorbed in a deep compassion's ecstasy,
Lifting the mild ray of her patient gaze,
In soft sweet training words slowly she spoke:
"O Savitri, I am thy secret soul.
To share the suffering of the world I came,
I draw my children's pangs into my breast.
I am the nurse of the dolour beneath the stars;
I am the soul of all who wailing writhe
Under the ruthless harrow of the Gods.

I am woman, nurse and slave and beaten beast;
I tend the hands that gave me cruel blows.
The hearts that spurned my love and zeal I serve;
I am the courted queen, the pampered doll,
I am the giver of the bowl of rice,
I am the worshipped Angel of the House.
I am in all that suffers and that cries.
Mine is the prayer that climbs in vain from earth,
I am traversed by my creatures' agonies,
I am the spirit in a world of pain.
The scream of tortured flesh and tortured hearts
Fall'n back on heart and flesh unheard by Heaven
Has rent with helpless grief and wrath my soul.
I have seen the peasant burning in his hut,
I have seen the slashed corpse of the slaughtered child,
Heard woman's cry ravished and stripped and haled
Amid the bayings of the hell-hound mob,
I have looked on, I had no power to save.
I have brought no arm of strength to aid or slay;
God gave me love, he gave me not his force.
I have shared the toil of the yoked animal drudge
Pushed by the goad, encouraged by the whip;
I have shared the fear-filled life of bird and beast,
Its long hunt for the day's precarious food,
Its covert slink and crouch and hungry prowl,
Its pain and terror seized by beak and claw.
I have shared the daily life of common men,
Its petty pleasures and its petty cares,
Its press of troubles and haggard horde of ills,
Earth's trail of sorrow hopeless of relief,
The unwanted tedious labour without joy,
And the burden of misery and the strokes of fate.
I have been pity, leaning over pain
And the tender smile that heals the wounded heart
And sympathy making life less hard to bear.
Man has felt near my unseen face and hands;

I have become the sufferer and his moan,
I have lain down with the mangled and the slain,
I have lived with the prisoner in his dungeon cell.
Heavy on my shoulders weighs the yoke of Time:
Nothing refusing of creation's load,
I have borne all and know I still must bear:
Perhaps when the world sinks into a last sleep,
I too may sleep in dumb eternal peace.
I have borne the calm indifference of Heaven,
Watched Nature's cruelty to suffering things
While God passed silent by nor turned to help.
Yet have I cried not out against his will,
Yet have I not accused his cosmic Law.
Only to change this great hard world of pain
A patient prayer has risen from my breast;
A pallid resignation lights my brow,
Within me a blind faith and mercy dwell;
I carry the fire that never can be quenched
And the compassion that supports the suns.
I am the hope that looks towards my God,
My God who never came to me till now;
His voice I hear that ever says 'I come':
I know that one day he shall come at last."
She ceased, and like an echo from below
Answering her pathos of divine complaint
A voice of wrath took up the dire refrain,
A growl of thunder or roar of angry beast,
The beast that crouching growls within man's depths,—
Voice of a tortured Titan once a God.
"I am the Man of Sorrows, I am he
Who is nailed on the wide cross of the universe;
To enjoy my agony God built the earth,
My passion he has made his drama's theme.
He has sent me naked into his bitter world
And beaten me with his rods of grief and pain
That I might cry and grovel at his feet

And offer him worship with my blood and tears.
I am Prometheus under the vulture's beak,
Man the discoverer of the undying fire,
In the flame he kindled burning like a moth;
I am the seeker who can never find,
I am the fighter who can never win,
I am the runner who never touched his goal:
Hell tortures me with the edges of my thought,
Heaven tortures me with the splendour of my dreams.
What profit have I of my animal birth;
What profit have I of my human soul?
I toil like the animal, like the animal die.
I am man the rebel, man the helpless serf;
Fate and my fellows cheat me of my wage.
I loosen with my blood my servitude's seal
And shake from my aching neck the oppressor's knees
Only to seat new tyrants on my back:
My teachers lesson me in slavery,
I am shown God's stamp and my own signature
Upon the sorry contract of my fate.
I have loved, but none has loved me since my birth;
My fruit of works is given to other hands.
All that is left me is my evil thoughts,
My sordid quarrel against God and man,
Envy of the riches that I cannot share,
Hate of a happiness that is not mine.
I know my fate will ever be the same,
It is my nature's work that cannot change:
I have loved for mine, not for the beloved's sake,
I have lived for myself and not for others' lives.
Each in himself is sole by Nature's law.
So God has made his harsh and dreadful world,
So has he built the petty heart of man.
Only by force and ruse can man survive:
For pity is a weakness in his breast,
His goodness is a laxity in the nerves,

His kindness an investment for return,
His altruism is ego's other face:
He serves the world that him the world may serve.
If once the Titan's strength could wake in me,
If Enceladus from Etna could arise,
I then would reign the master of the world
And like a god enjoy man's bliss and pain.
But God has taken from me the ancient Force.
There is a dull consent in my sluggish heart,
A fierce satisfaction with my special pangs
As if they made me taller than my kind;
Only by suffering can I excel.
I am the victim of titanic ills,
I am the doer of demoniac deeds;
I was made for evil, evil is my lot;
Evil I must be and by evil live;
Nought other can I do but be myself;
What Nature made me, that I must remain.
I suffer and toil and weep; I moan and hate."
And Savitri heard the voice, the echo heard
And turning to her being of pity spoke:
"Madonna of suffering, Mother of grief divine,
Thou art a portion of my soul put forth
To bear the unbearable sorrow of the world.
Because thou art, men yield not to their doom,
But ask for happiness and strive with fate;
Because thou art, the wretched still can hope.
But thine is the power to solace, not to save.
One day I will return, a bringer of strength,
And make thee drink from the Eternal's cup;
His streams of force shall triumph in thy limbs
And Wisdom's calm control thy passionate heart.
Thy love shall be the bond of humankind,
Compassion the bright key of Nature's acts:
Misery shall pass abolished from the earth;
The world shall be freed from the anger of the Beast,

From the cruelty of the Titan and his pain.
There shall be peace and joy for ever more."

On passed she in her spirit's upward route.
An ardent grandeur climbed mid ferns and rocks,
A quiet wind flattered the heart to warmth,
A finer perfume breathed from slender trees.
All beautiful grew, subtle and high and strange.
Here on a boulder carved like a huge throne
A Woman sat in gold and purple sheen,
Armed with the trident and the thunderbolt,
Her feet upon a couchant lion's back.
A formidable smile curved round her lips,
Heaven-fire laughed in the corners of her eyes;
Her body a mass of courage and heavenly strength,
She menaced the triumph of the nether gods.
A halo of lightnings flamed around her head
And sovereignty, a great cestus, zoned her robe
And majesty and victory sat with her
Guarding in the wide cosmic battlefield
Against the flat equality of Death
And the all-levelling insurgent Night
The hierarchy of the ordered Powers,
The high changeless values, the peaked eminences,
The privileged aristocracy of Truth,
And in the governing Ideal's sun
The triumvirate of wisdom, love and bliss
And the sole autocracy of the absolute Light.
August on her seat in the inner world of Mind,
The Mother of Might looked down on passing things,
Listened to the advancing tread of Time,
Saw the irresistible wheeling of the suns
And heard the thunder of the march of God.
Amid the swaying Forces in their strife
Sovereign was her word of luminous command,
Her speech like a war-cry rang or a pilgrim chant.

A charm restoring hope in failing hearts
Aspired the harmony of her puissant voice:
"O Savitri, I am thy secret soul.
I have come down into the human world
And the movement watched by an unsleeping Eye
And the dark contrariety of earth's fate
And the battle of the bright and sombre Powers.
I stand upon earth's paths of danger and grief
And help the unfortunate and save the doomed.
To the strong I bring the guerdon of their strength,
To the weak I bring the armour of my force;
To men who long I carry their coveted joy:
I am fortune justifying the great and wise
By the sanction of the plaudits of the crowd,
Then trampling them with the armed heel of fate.
My ear is leaned to the cry of the oppressed,
I topple down the thrones of tyrant kings:
A cry comes from proscribed and hunted lives
Appealing to me against a pitiless world,
A voice of the forsaken and desolate
And the lone prisoner in his dungeon cell.
Men hail in my coming the Almighty's force
Or praise with thankful tears his saviour Grace.
I smite the Titan who bestrides the world
And slay the ogre in his blood-stained den.
I am Durga, goddess of the proud and strong,
And Lakshmi, queen of the fair and fortunate;
I wear the face of Kali when I kill,
I trample the corpses of the demon hordes.
I am charged by God to do his mighty work,
Uncaring I serve his will who sent me forth,
Reckless of peril and earthly consequence.
I reason not of virtue and of sin
But do the deed he has put into my heart.
I fear not for the angry frown of Heaven,
I flinch not from the red assault of Hell;

I crush the opposition of the gods,
Tread down a million goblin obstacles.
I guide man to the path of the Divine
And guard him from the red Wolf and the Snake.
I set in his mortal hand my heavenly sword
And put on him the breastplate of the gods.
I break the ignorant pride of human mind
And lead the thought to the wideness of the Truth;
I rend man's narrow and successful life
And force his sorrowful eyes to gaze at the sun
That he may die to earth and live in his soul.
I know the goal, I know the secret route;
I have studied the map of the invisible worlds;
I am the battle's head, the journey's star.
But the great obstinate world resists my Word,
And the crookedness and evil in man's heart
Is stronger than Reason, profounder than the Pit,
And the malignancy of hostile Powers
Puts craftily back the clock of destiny
And mightier seems than the eternal Will.
The cosmic evil is too deep to unroot,
The cosmic suffering is too vast to heal.
A few I guide who pass me towards the Light;
A few I save, the mass falls back unsaved;
A few I help, the many strive and fail.
But my heart I have hardened and I do my work:
Slowly the light grows greater in the East,
Slowly the world progresses on God's road.
His seal is on my task, it cannot fail:
I shall hear the silver swing of heaven's gates
When God comes out to meet the soul of the world."
She spoke and from the lower human world
An answer, a warped echo met her speech;
The voice came through the spaces of the mind
Of the dwarf-Titan, the deformed chained god
Who strives to master his nature's rebel stuff

And make the universe his instrument.
The Ego of this great world of desire
Claimed earth and the wide heavens for the use
Of man, head of the life it shapes on earth,
Its representative and conscious soul,
And symbol of evolving light and force
And vessel of the godhead that must be.
A thinking animal, Nature's struggling lord,
Has made of her his nurse and tool and slave
And pays to her as wage and emolument
Inescapably by a deep law in things
His heart's grief and his body's death and pain:
His pains are her means to grow, to see and feel;
His death assists her immortality.
A tool and slave of his own slave and tool,
He praises his free will and his master mind
And is pushed by her upon her chosen paths;
Possessor he is possessed and, ruler, ruled,
Her conscious automaton, her desire's dupe.
His soul is her guest, a sovereign mute, inert,
His body her robot, his life her way to live,
His conscious mind her strong revolted serf.
The voice rose up and smote some inner sun.
"I am the heir of the forces of the earth,
Slowly I make good my right to my estate;
A growing godhead in her divinised mud,
I climb, a claimant to the throne of heaven.
The last-born of the earth I stand the first;
Her slow millenniums waited for my birth.
Although I live in Time besieged by Death,
Precarious owner of my body and soul
Housed on a little speck amid the stars,
For me and my use the universe was made.
Immortal spirit in the perishing clay,
I am God still unevolved in human form;
Even if he is not, he becomes in me.

The sun and moon are lights upon my path;
Air was invented for my lungs to breathe,
Conditioned as a wide and wall-less space
For my winged chariot's wheels to cleave a road,
The sea was made for me to swim and sail
And bear my golden commerce on its back:
It laughs cloven by my pleasure's gliding keel,
I laugh at its black stare of fate and death.
The earth is my floor, the sky my living's roof.
All was prepared through many a silent age,
God made experiments with animal shapes,
Then only when all was ready I was born.
I was born weak and small and ignorant,
A helpless creature in a difficult world
Travelling through my brief years with death at my side;
I have grown greater than Nature, wiser than God.
I have made real what she never dreamed,
I have seized her powers and harnessed for my work,
I have shaped her metals and new metals made;
I will make glass and raiment out of milk,
Make iron velvet, water unbreakable stone,
Like God in his astuce of artist skill,
Mould from one primal plasm protean forms,
In single Nature multitudinous lives,
All that imagination can conceive
In mind intangible, remould anew
In Matter's plastic solid and concrete.
No magic can surpass my magic's skill.
There is no miracle I shall not achieve.
What God imperfect left, I will complete,
Out of a tangled mind and half-made soul
His sin and error I will eliminate;
What he invented not, I shall invent:
He was the first creator, I am the last.
I have found the atoms from which he built the worlds:
The first tremendous cosmic energy

Missioned shall leap to slay my enemy kin,
Expunge a nation or abolish a race,
Death's silence leave where there was laughter and joy.
Or the fissured invisible shall spend God's force
To extend my comforts and expand my wealth,
To speed my car which now the lightnings drive
And turn the engines of my miracles.
I will take his means of sorcery from his hands
And do with them greater wonders than his best.
Yet through it all I have kept my balanced thought;
I have studied my being, I have examined the world,
I have grown a master of the arts of life.
I have tamed the wild beast, trained to be my friend;
He guards my house, looks up waiting my will.
I have taught my kind to serve and to obey.
I have used the mystery of the cosmic waves
To see far distance and to hear far words;
I have conquered Space and knitted close all earth.
Soon I shall know the secrets of the Mind;
I play with knowledge and with ignorance
And sin and virtue my inventions are
I can transcend or sovereignly use.
I shall know mystic truths, seize occult powers.
I shall slay my enemies with a look or thought,
I shall sense the unspoken feelings of all hearts
And see and hear the hidden thoughts of men.
When earth is mastered, I shall conquer heaven;
The gods shall be my aides or menial folk,
No wish I harbour unfulfilled shall die:
Omnipotence and omniscience shall be mine."
And Savitri heard the voice, the warped echo heard
And turning to her being of power she spoke:
"Madonna of might, Mother of works and force,
Thou art a portion of my soul put forth
To help mankind and help the travail of Time.
Because thou art in him, man hopes and dares;

Because thou art, men's souls can climb the heavens
And walk like gods in the presence of the Supreme.
But without wisdom power is like a wind,
It can breathe upon the heights and kiss the sky,
It cannot build the extreme eternal things.
Thou hast given men strength, wisdom thou couldst not give.
One day I will return, a bringer of light;
Then will I give to thee the mirror of God;
Thou shalt see self and world as by him they are seen
Reflected in the bright pool of thy soul.
Thy wisdom shall be vast as vast thy power.
Then hate shall dwell no more in human hearts,
And fear and weakness shall desert men's lives,
The cry of the ego shall be hushed within,
Its lion roar that claims the world as food,
All shall be might and bliss and happy force."

Ascending still her spirit's upward route
She came into a high and happy space,
A wide tower of vision whence all could be seen
And all was centred in a single view
As when by distance separate scenes grow one
And a harmony is made of hues at war.
The wind was still and fragrance packed the air.
There was a carol of birds and murmur of bees,
And all that is common and natural and sweet,
Yet intimately divine to heart and soul.
A nearness thrilled of the spirit to its source
And deepest things seemed obvious, close and true.
Here, living centre of that vision of peace,
A Woman sat in clear and crystal light:
Heaven had unveiled its lustre in her eyes,
Her feet were moonbeams, her face was a bright sun,
Her smile could persuade a dead lacerated heart
To live again and feel the hands of calm.
A low music heard became her floating voice:

"O Savitri, I am thy secret soul.
I have come down to the wounded desolate earth
To heal her pangs and lull her heart to rest
And lay her head upon the Mother's lap
That she may dream of God and know his peace
And draw the harmony of higher spheres
Into the rhythm of earth's rude troubled days.
I show to her the figures of bright gods
And bring strength and solace to her struggling life;
High things that now are only words and forms
I reveal to her in the body of their power.
I am peace that steals into man's war-worn breast,
Amid the reign of Hell his acts create
A hostel where Heaven's messengers can lodge;
I am charity with the kindly hands that bless,
I am silence mid the noisy tramp of life;
I am Knowledge poring on her cosmic map.
In the anomalies of the human heart
Where Good and Evil are close bedfellows
And Light is by Darkness dogged at every step,
Where his largest knowledge is an ignorance,
I am the Power that labours towards the best
And works for God and looks up towards the heights.
I make even sin and error stepping-stones
And all experience a long march towards Light.
Out of the Inconscient I build consciousness,
And lead through death to reach immortal Life.
Many are God's forms by which he grows in man;
They stamp his thoughts and deeds with divinity,
Uplift the stature of the human clay
Or slowly transmute it into heaven's gold.
He is the Good for which men fight and die,
He is the war of Right with Titan wrong;
He is Freedom rising deathless from her pyre;
He is Valour guarding still the desperate pass
Or lone and erect on the shattered barricade

Or a sentinel in the dangerous echoing Night.
He is the crown of the martyr burned in flame
And the glad resignation of the saint
And courage indifferent to the wounds of Time
And the hero's might wrestling with death and fate.
He is Wisdom incarnate on a glorious throne
And the calm autocracy of the sage's rule.
He is the high and solitary Thought
Aloof above the ignorant multitude:
He is the prophet's voice, the sight of the seer.
He is Beauty, nectar of the passionate soul,
He is the Truth by which the spirit lives.
He is the riches of the spiritual Vast
Poured out in healing streams on indigent Life;
He is Eternity lured from hour to hour,
He is infinity in a little space:
He is immortality in the arms of death.
These powers I am and at my call they come.
Thus slowly I lift man's soul nearer the Light.
But human mind clings to its ignorance
And to its littleness the human heart
And to its right to grief the earthly life.
Only when Eternity takes Time by the hand,
Only when infinity weds the finite's thought,
Can man be free from himself and live with God.
I bring meanwhile the gods upon the earth;
I bring back hope to the despairing heart;
I give peace to the humble and the great,
And shed my grace on the foolish and the wise.
I shall save earth, if earth consents to be saved.
Then Love shall at last unwounded tread earth's soil;
Man's mind shall admit the sovereignty of Truth
And body bear the immense descent of God."
She spoke and from the ignorant nether plane
A cry, a warped echo naked and shuddering came.
A voice of the sense-shackled human mind

Carried its proud complaint of godlike power
Hedged by the limits of a mortal's thoughts,
Bound in the chains of earthly ignorance.
Imprisoned in his body and his brain
The mortal cannot see God's mighty whole,
Or share in his vast and deep identity
Who stands unguessed within our ignorant hearts
And knows all things because he is one with all.
Man only sees the cosmic surfaces.
Then wondering what may lie hid from the sense
A little way he delves to depths below:
But soon he stops, he cannot reach life's core
Or commune with the throbbing heart of things.
He sees the naked body of the Truth
Though often baffled by her endless garbs,
But cannot look upon her soul within.
Then, furious for a knowledge absolute,
He tears all details out and stabs and digs:
Only the shape's contents he holds for use;
The spirit escapes or dies beneath his knife.
He sees as a blank stretch, a giant waste
The crowding riches of infinity.
The finite he has made his central field,
Its plan dissects, masters its processes,
That which moves all is hidden from his gaze,
His poring eyes miss the unseen behind.
He has the blind man's subtle unerring touch
Or the slow traveller's sight of distant scenes;
The soul's revealing contacts are not his.
Yet is he visited by intuitive light
And inspiration comes from the Unknown;
But only reason and sense he feels as sure,
They only are his trusted witnesses.
Thus is he baulked, his splendid effort vain;
His knowledge scans bright pebbles on the shore
Of the huge ocean of his ignorance.

Yet grandiose were the accents of that cry,
A cosmic pathos trembled in its tone.
"I am the mind of God's great ignorant world
Ascending to knowledge by the steps he made;
I am the all-discovering Thought of man.
I am a god fettered by Matter and sense,
An animal prisoned in a fence of thorns,
A beast of labour asking for his food,
A smith tied to his anvil and his forge.
Yet have I loosened the cord, enlarged my room.
I have mapped the heavens and analysed the stars,
Described their orbits through the grooves of Space,
Measured the miles that separate the suns,
Computed their longevity in Time.
I have delved into earth's bowels and torn out
The riches guarded by her dull brown soil.
I have classed the changes of her stony crust
And of her biography discovered the dates,
Rescued the pages of all Nature's plan.
The tree of evolution I have sketched,
Each branch and twig and leaf in its own place,
In the embryo tracked the history of forms,
And the genealogy framed of all that lives.
I have detected plasm and cell and gene,
The protozoa traced, man's ancestors,
The humble originals from whom he rose;
I know how he was born and how he dies:
Only what end he serves I know not yet
Or if there is aim at all or any end
Or push of rich creative purposeful joy
In the wide works of the terrestrial power.
I have caught her intricate processes, none is left:
Her huge machinery is in my hands;
I have seized the cosmic energies for my use.
I have pored on her infinitesimal elements
And her invisible atoms have unmasked:

All Matter is a book I have perused;
Only some pages now are left to read.
I have seen the ways of life, the paths of mind;
I have studied the methods of the ant and ape
And the behaviour learned of man and worm.
If God is at work, his secrets I have found.
But still the Cause of things is left in doubt,
Their truth flees from pursuit into a void;
When all has been explained nothing is known.
What chose the process, whence the Power sprang
I know not and perhaps shall never know.
A mystery is this mighty Nature's birth;
A mystery is the elusive stream of mind,
A mystery the protean freak of life.
What I have learned, Chance leaps to contradict;
What I have built is seized and torn by Fate.
I can foresee the acts of Matter's force,
But not the march of the destiny of man:
He is driven upon paths he did not choose,
He falls trampled underneath the rolling wheels.
My great philosophies are a reasoned guess;
The mystic heavens that claim the human soul
Are a charlatanism of the imagining brain:
All is a speculation or a dream.
In the end the world itself becomes a doubt:
The infinitesimal's jest mocks mass and shape,
A laugh peals from the infinite's finite mask.
Perhaps the world is an error of our sight,
A trick repeated in each flash of sense,
An unreal mind hallucinates the soul
With a stress-vision of false reality,
Or a dance of Maya veils the void Unborn.
Even if a greater consciousness I could reach,
What profit is it then for Thought to win
A Real which is for ever ineffable
Or hunt to its lair the bodiless Self or make

The Unknowable the target of the soul?
Nay, let me work within my mortal bounds,
Not live beyond life nor think beyond the mind;
Our smallness saves us from the Infinite.
In a frozen grandeur lone and desolate
Call me not to die the great eternal death,
Left naked of my own humanity
In the chill vast of the spirit's boundlessness.
Each creature by its nature's limits lives,
And how can one evade his native fate?
Human I am, human let me remain
Till in the Inconscient I fall dumb and sleep.
A high insanity, a chimaera is this,
To think that God lives hidden in the clay
And that eternal Truth can dwell in Time,
And call to her to save our self and world.
How can man grow immortal and divine
Transmuting the very stuff of which he is made?
This wizard gods may dream, not thinking men."
   And Savitri heard the voice, the warped answer heard
And turning to her being of light she spoke:
"Madonna of light, Mother of joy and peace,
Thou art a portion of my self put forth
To raise the spirit to its forgotten heights
And wake the soul by touches of the heavens.
Because thou art, the soul draws near to God;
Because thou art, love grows in spite of hate
And knowledge walks unslain in the pit of Night.
But not by showering heaven's golden rain
Upon the intellect's hard and rocky soil
Can the tree of Paradise flower on earthly ground
And the Bird of Paradise sit upon life's boughs
And the winds of Paradise visit mortal air.
Even if thou rain down intuition's rays,
The mind of man will think it earth's own gleam,
His spirit by spiritual ego sink,

Or his soul dream shut in sainthood's brilliant cell
Where only a bright shadow of God can come.
His hunger for the eternal thou must nurse
And fill his yearning heart with heaven's fire
And bring God down into his body and life.
One day I will return, His hand in mine,
And thou shalt see the face of the Absolute.
Then shall the holy marriage be achieved,
Then shall the divine family be born.
There shall be light and peace in all the worlds."

END OF CANTO FOUR

Canto Five

The Finding of the Soul

ONWARD she passed seeking the soul's mystic cave.
At first she stepped into a night of God.
The light was quenched that helps the labouring world,
The power that struggles and stumbles in our life;
This inefficient mind gave up its thoughts,
The striving heart its unavailing hopes.
All knowledge failed and the Idea's forms
And Wisdom screened in awe her lowly head
Feeling a Truth too great for thought or speech,
Formless, ineffable, for ever the same.
An innocent and holy Ignorance
Adored like one who worships formless God
The unseen Light she could not claim nor own.
In a simple purity of emptiness
Her mind knelt down before the unknowable.
All was abolished save her naked self
And the prostrate yearning of her surrendered heart:
There was no strength in her, no pride of force;
The lofty burning of desire had sunk
Ashamed, a vanity of separate self,
The hope of spiritual greatness fled,
Salvation she asked not nor a heavenly crown:
Humility seemed now too proud a state.
Her self was nothing, God alone was all,
Yet God she knew not but only knew he was.
A sacred darkness brooded now within,
The world was a deep darkness great and nude.
This void held more than all the teeming worlds,
This blank felt more than all that Time has borne,
This dark knew dumbly, immensely the Unknown.
But all was formless, voiceless, infinite.

As might a shadow walk in a shadowy scene,
A small nought passing through a mightier Nought,
A night of person in a bare outline
Crossing a fathomless impersonal Night,
Silent she moved, empty and absolute.
In endless Time her soul reached a wide end,
The spaceless Vast became her spirit's place.
At last a change approached, the emptiness broke;
A wave rippled within, the world had stirred;
Once more her inner self became her space.
There was felt a blissful nearness to the goal;
Heaven leaned low to kiss the sacred hill,
The air trembled with passion and delight.
A rose of splendour on a tree of dreams,
The face of Dawn out of mooned twilight grew.
Day came, priest of a sacrifice of joy
Into the worshipping silence of her world;
He carried immortal lustre as his robe,
Trailed heaven like a purple scarf and wore
As his vermilion caste-mark a red sun.
As if an old remembered dream come true,
She recognised in her prophetic mind
The imperishable lustre of that sky,
The tremulous sweetness of that happy air
And, covered from mind's view and life's approach,
The mystic cavern in the sacred hill
And knew the dwelling of her secret soul.
As if in some Elysian occult depth,
Truth's last retreat from thought's profaning touch,
As if in a rock-temple's solitude hid,
God's refuge from an ignorant worshipping world,
It lay withdrawn even from life's inner sense,
Receding from the entangled heart's desire.
A marvellous brooding twilight met the eyes
And a holy stillness held that voiceless space.
An awful dimness wrapped the great rock-doors

Carved in the massive stone of Matter's trance.
Two golden serpents round the lintel curled,
Enveloping it with their pure and dreadful strength,
Looked out with wisdom's deep and luminous eyes.
An eagle covered it with wide conquering wings:
Flames of self-lost immobile reverie,
Doves crowded the grey musing cornices
Like sculptured postures of white-bosomed peace.
Across the threshold's sleep she entered in
And found herself amid great figures of gods
Conscious in stone and living without breath,
Watching with fixed regard the soul of man,
Executive figures of the cosmic self,
World-symbols of immutable potency.
On the walls covered with significant shapes
Looked at her the life-scene of man and beast
And the high meaning of the life of gods,
The power and necessity of these numberless worlds,
And faces of beings and stretches of world-space
Spoke the succinct and inexhaustible
Hieratic message of the climbing planes.
In their immensitude signing infinity
They were the extension of the self of God
And housed, impassively receiving all,
His figures and his small and mighty acts
And his passion and his birth and life and death
And his return to immortality.
To the abiding and eternal is their climb,
To the pure existence everywhere the same,
To the sheer consciousness and the absolute force
And the unimaginable and formless bliss,
To the mirth in Time and the timeless mystery
Of the triune being who is all and one
And yet is no one but himself apart.
There was no step of breathing men, no sound,
Only the living nearness of the soul.

Yet all the worlds and God himself were there,
For every symbol was a reality
And brought the presence which had given it life.
All this she saw and inly felt and knew
Not by some thought of mind but by the self.
A light not born of sun or moon or fire,
A light that dwelt within and saw within
Shedding an intimate visibility
Made secrecy more revealing than the word:
Our sight and sense are a fallible gaze and touch
And only the spirit's vision is wholly true.
As thus she passed in that mysterious place
Through room and room, through door and rock-hewn door,
She felt herself made one with all she saw.
A sealed identity within her woke;
She knew herself the Beloved of the Supreme:
These Gods and Goddesses were he and she:
The Mother was she of Beauty and Delight,
The Word in Brahma's vast creating clasp,
The World-Puissance on almighty Shiva's lap, —
The Master and the Mother of all lives
Watching the worlds their twin regard had made,
And Krishna and Radha for ever entwined in bliss,
The Adorer and Adored self-lost and one.
In the last chamber on a golden seat
One sat whose shape no vision could define;
Only one felt the world's unattainable fount,
A Power of which she was a straying Force,
An invisible Beauty, goal of the world's desire,
A Sun of which all knowledge is a beam,
A Greatness without whom no life could be.
Thence all departed into silent self,
And all became formless and pure and bare.
Then through a tunnel dug in the last rock
She came out where there shone a deathless sun.
A house was there all made of flame and light

And crossing a wall of doorless living fire
There suddenly she met her secret soul.

A being stood immortal in transience,
Deathless dallying with momentary things,
In whose wide eyes of tranquil happiness
Which pity and sorrow could not abrogate
Infinity turned its gaze on finite shapes:
Observer of the silent steps of the hours,
Eternity upheld the minute's acts
And the passing scenes of the Everlasting's play.
In the mystery of its selecting will,
In the Divine Comedy a participant,
The Spirit's conscious representative,
God's delegate in our humanity,
Comrade of the universe, the Transcendent's ray,
She had come into the mortal body's room
To play at ball with Time and Circumstance.
A joy in the world her master movement here,
The passion of the game lighted her eyes:
A smile on her lips welcomed earth's bliss and grief,
A laugh was her return to pleasure and pain.
All things she saw as a masquerade of Truth
Disguised in the costumes of Ignorance,
Crossing the years to immortality;
All she could front with the strong spirit's peace.
But since she knows the toil of mind and life
As a mother feels and shares her children's lives,
She puts forth a small portion of herself,
A being no bigger than the thumb of man
Into a hidden region of the heart
To face the pang and to forget the bliss,
To share the suffering and endure earth's wounds
And labour mid the labour of the stars.
This in us laughs and weeps, suffers the stroke,
Exults in victory, struggles for the crown;

Identified with the mind and body and life,
It takes on itself their anguish and defeat,
Bleeds with Fate's whips and hangs upon the cross,
Yet is the unwounded and immortal self
Supporting the actor in the human scene.
Through this she sends us her glory and her powers,
Pushes to wisdom's heights, through misery's gulfs;
She gives us strength to do our daily task
And sympathy that partakes of others' grief
And the little strength we have to help our race,
We who must fill the role of the universe
Acting itself out in a slight human shape
And on our shoulders carry the struggling world.
This is in us the godhead small and marred;
In this human portion of divinity
She seats the greatness of the Soul in Time
To uplift from light to light, from power to power,
Till on a heavenly peak it stands, a king.
In body weak, in its heart an invincible might,
It climbs stumbling, held up by an unseen hand,
A toiling spirit in a mortal shape.
Here in this chamber of flame and light they met;
They looked upon each other, knew themselves,
The secret deity and its human part,
The calm immortal and the struggling soul.
Then with a magic transformation's speed
They rushed into each other and grew one.

Once more she was human upon earthly soil
In the muttering night amid the rain-swept woods
And the rude cottage where she sat in trance:
That subtle world withdrew deeply within
Behind the sun-veil of the inner sight.
But now the half-opened lotus bud of her heart
Had bloomed and stood disclosed to the earthly ray;
In an image shone revealed her secret soul.

There was no wall severing the soul and mind,
No mystic fence guarding from the claims of life.
In its deep lotus home her being sat
As if on concentration's marble seat,
Calling the mighty Mother of the worlds
To make this earthly tenement her house.
As in a flash from a supernal light,
A living image of the original Power,
A face, a form came down into her heart
And made of it its temple and pure abode.
But when its feet had touched the quivering bloom,
A mighty movement rocked the inner space
As if a world were shaken and found its soul:
Out of the Inconscient's soulless mindless night
A flaming Serpent rose released from sleep.
It rose billowing its coils and stood erect
And climbing mightily, stormily on its way
It touched her centres with its flaming mouth;
As if a fiery kiss had broken their sleep,
They bloomed and laughed surcharged with light and bliss.
Then at the crown it joined the Eternal's space.
In the flower of the head, in the flower of Matter's base,
In each divine stronghold and Nature-knot
It held together the mystic stream which joins
The viewless summits with the unseen depths,
The string of forts that make the frail defence
Safeguarding us against the enormous world,
Our lines of self-expression in its Vast.
An image sat of the original Power
Wearing the mighty Mother's form and face.
Armed, bearer of the weapon and the sign
Whose occult might no magic can imitate,
Manifold yet one she sat, a guardian force:
A saviour gesture stretched her lifted arm,
And symbol of some native cosmic strength,
A sacred beast lay prone below her feet,

A silent flame-eyed mass of living force.
All underwent a high celestial change:
Breaking the black Inconscient's blind mute wall,
Effacing the circles of the Ignorance,
Powers and divinities burst flaming forth;
Each part of the being trembling with delight
Lay overwhelmed with tides of happiness
And saw her hand in every circumstance
And felt her touch in every limb and cell.
In the country of the lotus of the head
Which thinking mind has made its busy space,
In the castle of the lotus twixt the brows
Whence it shoots the arrows of its sight and will,
In the passage of the lotus of the throat
Where speech must rise and the expressing mind
And the heart's impulse run towards word and act,
A glad uplift and a new working came.
The immortal's thoughts displaced our bounded view,
The immortal's thoughts earth's drab idea and sense;
All things now bore a deeper heavenlier sense.
A glad clear harmony marked their truth's outline,
Reset the balance and measures of the world.
Each shape showed its occult design, unveiled
God's meaning in it for which it was made
And the vivid splendour of his artist thought.
A channel of the mighty Mother's choice,
The immortal's will took into its calm control
Our blind or erring government of life;
A loose republic once of wants and needs,
Then bowed to the uncertain sovereign mind,
Life now obeyed to a diviner rule
And every act became an act of God.
In the kingdom of the lotus of the heart
Love chanting its pure hymeneal hymn
Made life and body mirrors of sacred joy
And all the emotions gave themselves to God.

In the navel lotus' broad imperial range
Its proud ambitions and its master lusts
Were tamed into instruments of a great calm sway
To do a work of God on earthly soil.
In the narrow nether centre's petty parts
Its childish game of daily dwarf desires
Was changed into a sweet and boisterous play,
A romp of little gods with life in Time.
In the deep place where once the Serpent slept,
There came a grip on Matter's giant powers
For large utilities in life's little space;
A firm ground was made for Heaven's descending might.
Behind all reigned her sovereign deathless soul:
Casting aside its veil of Ignorance,
Allied to gods and cosmic beings and powers
It built the harmony of its human state;
Surrendered into the great World-Mother's hands
Only she obeyed her sole supreme behest
In the enigma of the Inconscient's world.
A secret soul behind supporting all
Is master and witness of our ignorant life,
Admits the Person's look and Nature's role.
But once the hidden doors are flung apart
Then the veiled king steps out in Nature's front;
A Light comes down into the Ignorance,
Its heavy painful knot loosens its grasp:
The mind becomes a mastered instrument
And life a hue and figure of the soul.
All happily grows towards knowledge and towards bliss.
A divine Puissance then takes Nature's place
And pushes the movements of our body and mind;
Possessor of our passionate hopes and dreams,
The beloved despot of our thoughts and acts,
She streams into us with her unbound force,
Into mortal limbs the Immortal's rapture and power.
An inner law of beauty shapes our lives;

Our words become the natural speech of Truth,
Each thought is a ripple on a sea of Light.
Then sin and virtue leave the cosmic lists;
They struggle no more in our delivered hearts:
Our acts chime with God's simple natural good
Or serve the rule of a supernal Right.
All moods unlovely, evil and untrue
Forsake their stations in fierce disarray
And hide their shame in the subconscient's dusk.
Then lifts the mind a cry of victory:
"O soul, my soul, we have created Heaven,
Within we have found the kingdom here of God,
His fortress built in a loud ignorant world.
Our life is entrenched between two rivers of Light,
We have turned space into a gulf of peace
And made the body a Capitol of bliss.
What more, what more, if more must still be done?"
In the slow process of the evolving spirit,
In the brief stade between a death and birth
A first perfection's stage is reached at last;
Out of the wood and stone of our nature's stuff
A temple is shaped where the high gods could live.
Even if the struggling world is left outside
One man's perfection still can save the world.
There is won a new proximity to the skies,
A first betrothal of the Earth to Heaven,
A deep concordat between Truth and Life:
A camp of God is pitched in human time.

END OF CANTO FIVE

Canto Six

Nirvana and the Discovery of the All-Negating Absolute

A CALM slow sun looked down from tranquil heavens.
A routed sullen rearguard of retreat,
The last rains had fled murmuring across the woods
Or failed, a sibilant whisper mid the leaves,
And the great blue enchantment of the sky
Recovered the deep rapture of its smile.
Its mellow splendour unstressed by storm-licked heats
Found room for a luxury of warm mild days,
The night's gold treasure of autumnal moons
Came floating shipped through ripples of faery air.
And Savitri's life was glad, fulfilled like earth's;
She had found herself, she knew her being's aim.
Although her kingdom of marvellous change within
Remained unspoken in her secret breast,
All that lived round her felt its magic's charm:
The trees' rustling voices told it to the winds,
Flowers spoke in ardent hues an unknown joy,
The birds' carolling became a canticle,
The beasts forgot their strife and lived at ease.
Absorbed in wide communion with the Unseen
The mild ascetics of the wood received
A sudden greatening of their lonely muse.
This bright perfection of her inner state
Poured overflowing into her outward scene,
Made beautiful dull common natural things
And action wonderful and time divine.
Even the smallest meanest work became
A sweet or glad and glorious sacrament,
An offering to the self of the great world
Or a service to the One in each and all.

A light invaded all from her being's light;
Her heart-beats' dance communicated bliss:
Happiness grew happier, shared with her, by her touch
And grief some solace found when she drew near.
Above the cherished head of Satyavan
She saw not now Fate's dark and lethal orb;
A golden circle round a mystic sun
Disclosed to her new-born predicting sight
The cyclic rondure of a sovereign life.
In her visions and deep-etched veridical dreams,
In brief shiftings of the future's heavy screen,
He lay not by a dolorous decree
A victim in the dismal antre of death
Or borne to blissful regions far from her
Forgetting the sweetness of earth's warm delight,
Forgetting the passionate oneness of love's clasp,
Absolved in the self-rapt immortal's bliss.
Always he was with her, a living soul
That met her eyes with close enamoured eyes,
A living body near to her body's joy.
But now no longer in these great wild woods
In kinship with the days of bird and beast
And levelled to the bareness of earth's brown breast,
But mid the thinking high-built lives of men
In tapestried chambers and on crystal floors,
In armoured town or gardened pleasure-walks,
Even in distance closer than her thoughts,
Body to body near, soul near to soul,
Moving as if by a common breath and will
They were tied in the single circling of their days
Together by love's unseen atmosphere,
Inseparable like the earth and sky.
Thus for a while she trod the Golden Path;
This was the sun before abysmal Night.
   Once as she sat in deep felicitous muse,
Still quivering from her lover's strong embrace,

And made her joy a bridge twixt earth and heaven,
An abyss yawned suddenly beneath her heart.
A vast and nameless fear dragged at her nerves
As drags a wild beast its half-slaughtered prey;
It seemed to have no den from which it sprang:
It was not hers, but hid its unseen cause.
Then rushing came its vast and fearful Fount.
A formless Dread with shapeless endless wings
Filling the universe with its dangerous breath,
A denser darkness than the Night could bear,
Enveloped the heavens and possessed the earth.
A rolling surge of silent death, it came
Curving round the far edge of the quaking globe;
Effacing heaven with its enormous stride
It willed to expunge the choked and anguished air
And end the fable of the joy of life.
It seemed her very being to forbid,
Abolishing all by which her nature lived,
And laboured to blot out her body and soul,
A clutch of some half-seen Invisible,
An ocean of terror and of sovereign might,
A person and a black infinity.
It seemed to cry to her without thought or word
The message of its dark eternity
And the awful meaning of its silences:
Out of some sullen monstrous vast arisen,
Out of an abysmal deep of grief and fear
Imagined by some blind regardless self,
A consciousness of being without its joy,
Empty of thought, incapable of bliss,
That felt life blank and nowhere found a soul,
A voice to the dumb anguish of the heart
Conveyed a stark sense of unspoken words;
In her own depths she heard the unuttered thought
That made unreal the world and all life meant.
"Who art thou who claimst thy crown of separate birth,

The illusion of thy soul's reality
And personal godhead on an ignorant globe
In the animal body of imperfect man?
Hope not to be happy in a world of pain
And dream not, listening to the unspoken Word
And dazzled by the inexpressible Ray,
Transcending the mute Superconscient's realm,
To give a body to the Unknowable,
Or for a sanction to thy heart's delight
To burden with bliss the silent still Supreme
Profaning its bare and formless sanctity,
Or call into thy chamber the Divine
And sit with God tasting a human joy.
I have created all, all I devour;
I am Death and the dark terrible Mother of life,
I am Kali black and naked in the world,
I am Maya and the universe is my cheat.
I lay waste human happiness with my breath
And slay the will to live, the joy to be
That all may pass back into nothingness
And only abide the eternal and absolute.
For only the blank Eternal can be true.
All else is shadow and flash in Mind's bright glass,
Mind, hollow mirror in which Ignorance sees
A splendid figure of its own false self
And dreams it sees a glorious solid world.
O soul, inventor of man's thoughts and hopes,
Thyself the invention of the moments' stream,
Illusion's centre or subtle apex point,
At last know thyself, from vain existence cease."
A shadow of the negating Absolute,
The intolerant Darkness travelled surging past
And ebbed in her the formidable Voice.
It left behind her inner world laid waste:
A barren silence weighed upon her heart,
Her kingdom of delight was there no more;

Only her soul remained, its emptied stage,
Awaiting the unknown eternal Will.
Then from the heights a greater Voice came down,
The Word that touches the heart and finds the soul,
The voice of Light after the voice of Night:
The cry of the Abyss drew Heaven's reply,
A might of storm chased by the might of the Sun.
"O soul, bare not thy kingdom to the foe;
Consent to hide thy royalty of bliss
Lest Time and Fate find out its avenues
And beat with thunderous knock upon thy gates.
Hide whilst thou canst thy treasure of separate self
Behind the luminous rampart of thy depths
Till of a vaster empire it grows part.
But not for self alone the Self is won:
Content abide not with one conquered realm;
Adventure all to make the whole world thine,
To break into greater kingdoms turn thy force.
Fear not to be nothing that thou mayst be all;
Assent to the emptiness of the Supreme
That all in thee may reach its absolute.
Accept to be small and human on the earth,
Interrupting thy new-born divinity,
That man may find his utter self in God.
If for thy own sake only thou hast come,
An immortal spirit into the mortal's world,
To found thy luminous kingdom in God's dark,
In the Inconscient's realm one shining star,
One door in the Ignorance opened upon light,
Why hadst thou any need to come at all?
Thou hast come down into a struggling world
To aid a blind and suffering mortal race,
To open to Light the eyes that could not see,
To bring down bliss into the heart of grief,
To make thy life a bridge twixt earth and heaven;
If thou wouldst save the toiling universe,

The vast universal suffering feel as thine:
Thou must bear the sorrow that thou claimst to heal;
The day-bringer must walk in darkest night.
He who would save the world must share its pain.
If he knows not grief, how shall he find grief's cure?
If far he walks above mortality's head,
How shall the mortal reach that too high path?
If one of theirs they see scale heaven's peaks,
Men then can hope to learn that titan climb.
God must be born on earth and be as man
That man being human may grow even as God.
He who would save the world must be one with the world,
All suffering things contain in his heart's space
And bear the grief and joy of all that lives.
His soul must be wider than the universe
And feel eternity as its very stuff,
Rejecting the moment's personality
Know itself older than the birth of Time,
Creation an incident in its consciousness,
Arcturus and Belphegor grains of fire
Circling in a corner of its boundless self,
The world's destruction a small transient storm
In the calm infinity it has become.
If thou wouldst a little loosen the vast chain,
Draw back from the world that the Idea has made,
Thy mind's selection from the Infinite,
Thy senses' gloss on the Infinitesimal's dance,
Then shalt thou know how the great bondage came.
Banish all thought from thee and be God's void.
Then shalt thou uncover the Unknowable
And the Superconscient conscious grow on thy tops;
Infinity's vision through thy gaze shall pierce;
Thou shalt look into the eyes of the Unknown,
Find the hid Truth in things seen null and false,
Behind things known discover Mystery's rear.
Thou shalt be one with God's bare reality

And the miraculous world he has become
And the diviner miracle still to be
When Nature who is now unconscious God
Translucent grows to the Eternal's light,
Her seeing his sight, her walk his steps of power
And life is filled with a spiritual joy
And Matter is the Spirit's willing bride.
Consent to be nothing and none, dissolve Time's work,
Cast off thy mind, step back from form and name.
Annul thyself that only God may be."

Thus spoke the mighty and uplifting Voice,
And Savitri heard; she bowed her head and mused
Plunging her deep regard into herself
In her soul's privacy in the silent Night.
Aloof and standing back detached and calm,
A witness of the drama of herself,
A student of her own interior scene,
She watched the passion and the toil of life
And heard in the crowded thoroughfares of mind
The unceasing tread and passage of her thoughts.
All she allowed to rise that chose to stir;
Calling, compelling nought, forbidding nought,
She left all to the process formed in Time
And the free initiative of Nature's will.
Thus following the complex human play
She heard the prompter's voice behind the scenes,
Perceived the original libretto's set
And the organ theme of the composer Force.
All she beheld that surges from man's depths,
The animal instincts prowling mid life's trees,
The impulses that whisper to the heart
And passion's thunder-chase sweeping the nerves;
She saw the Powers that stare from the Abyss
And the wordless Light that liberates the soul.
But most her gaze pursued the birth of thought.

Affranchised from the look of surface mind
She paused not to survey the official case,
The issue of forms from the office of the brain,
Its factory of thought-sounds and soundless words
And voices stored within unheard by men,
Its mint and treasury of shining coin.
These were but counters in mind's symbol game,
A gramophone's discs, a reproduction's film,
A list of signs, a cipher and a code.
In our unseen subtle body thought is born
Or there it enters from the cosmic field.
Oft from her soul stepped out a naked thought
Luminous with mysteried lips and wonderful eyes;
Or from her heart emerged some burning face
And looked for life and love and passionate truth,
Aspired to heaven or embraced the world
Or led the fancy like a fleeting moon
Across the dull sky of man's common days,
Amidst the doubtful certitudes of earth's lore,
To the celestial beauty of faith gave form,
As if at flower-prints in a dingy room
Laughed in a golden vase one living rose.
A thaumaturgist sat in her heart's deep,
Compelled the forward stride, the upward look,
Till wonder leaped into the illumined breast
And life grew marvellous with transfiguring hope.
A seeing will pondered between the brows;
Thoughts, glistening Angels, stood behind the brain
In flashing armour, folding hands of prayer,
And poured heaven's rays into the earthly form.
Imaginations flamed up from her breast,
Unearthly beauty, touches of surpassing joy
And plans of miracle, dreams of delight:
Around her navel lotus clustering close
Her large sensations of the teeming worlds
Streamed their dumb movements of the unformed Idea;

Invading the small sensitive flower of the throat
They brought their mute unuttered resonances
To kindle the figures of a heavenly speech.
Below, desires formed their wordless wish,
And longings of physical sweetness and ecstasy
Translated into the accents of a cry
Their grasp on objects and their clasp on souls.
Her body's thoughts climbed from her conscious limbs
And carried their yearnings to its mystic crown
Where Nature's murmurs meet the Ineffable.
But for the mortal prisoned in outward mind
All must present their passports at its door;
Disguised they must don the official cap and mask
Or pass as manufactures of the brain,
Unknown their secret truth and hidden source.
Only to the inner mind they speak direct,
Put on a body and assume a voice,
Their passage seen, their message heard and known,
Their birthplace and their natal mark revealed,
And stand confessed to an immortal's sight,
Our nature's messengers to the witness soul.
Impenetrable, withheld from mortal sense,
The inner chambers of the spirit's house
Disclosed to her their happenings and their guests;
Eyes looked through crevices in the invisible wall
And through the secrecy of unseen doors
There came into mind's little frontal room
Thoughts that enlarged our limited human range,
Lifted the ideal's half-quenched or sinking torch
Or peered through the finite at the infinite.
A sight opened upon the invisible
And sensed the shapes that mortal eyes see not,
The sounds that mortal listening cannot hear,
The blissful sweetness of the intangible's touch;
The objects that to us are empty air,
Are there the stuff of daily experience

And the common pabulum of sense and thought.
The beings of the subtle realms appeared
And scenes concealed behind our earthly scene;
She saw the life of remote continents
And distance deafened not to voices far;
She felt the movements crossing unknown minds;
The past's events occurred before her eyes.
The great world's thoughts were part of her own thought,
The feelings dumb for ever and unshared,
The ideas that never found an utterance.
The dim subconscient's incoherent hints
Laid bare a meaning twisted, deep and strange,
The bizarre secret of their fumbling speech,
Their links with underlying reality.
The unseen grew visible and audible:
Thoughts leaped down from a superconscient field
Like eagles swooping from a viewless peak,
Thoughts gleamed up from the screened subliminal depths
Like golden fishes from a hidden sea.
This world is a vast unbroken totality,
A deep solidarity joins its contrary powers;
God's summits look back on the mute Abyss.
So man evolving to divinest heights
Colloques still with the animal and the Djinn;
The human godhead with star-gazer eyes
Lives still in one house with the primal beast.
The high meets the low, all is a single plan.
So she beheld the many births of thought,
If births can be of what eternal is;
For the Eternal's powers are like himself,
Timeless in the Timeless, in Time ever born.
This too she saw that all in outer mind
Is made, not born, a product perishable,
Forged in the body's factory by earth-force.
This mind is a dynamic small machine
Producing ceaselessly, till it wears out,

With raw material drawn from the outside world,
The patterns sketched out by an artist God.
Often our thoughts are finished cosmic wares
Admitted by a silent office gate
And passed through the subconscient's galleries,
Then issued in Time's mart as private make.
For now they bear the living person's stamp;
A trick, a special hue claims them his own.
All else is Nature's craft and this too hers.
Our tasks are given, we are but instruments;
Nothing is all our own that we create:
The Power that acts in us is not our force.
The genius too receives from some high fount
Concealed in a supernal secrecy
The work that gives him an immortal name.
The word, the form, the charm, the glory and grace
Are missioned sparks from a stupendous Fire;
A sample from the laboratory of God
Of which he holds the patent upon earth,
Comes to him wrapped in golden coverings;
He listens for Inspiration's postman knock
And takes delivery of the priceless gift
A little spoilt by the receiver mind
Or mixed with the manufacture of his brain;
When least defaced, then is it most divine.
Although his ego claims the world for its use,
Man is a dynamo for the cosmic work;
Nature does most in him, God the high rest:
Only his soul's acceptance is his own.
This independent, once a power supreme,
Self-born before the universe was made,
Accepting cosmos, binds himself Nature's serf
Till he becomes her freedman — or God's slave.
This is the appearance in our mortal front;
Our greater truth of being lies behind:
Our consciousness is cosmic and immense,

But only when we break through Matter's wall
In that spiritual vastness can we stand
Where we can live the masters of our world
And mind is only a means and body a tool.
For above the birth of body and of thought
Our spirit's truth lives in the naked self
And from that height, unbound, surveys the world.
Out of the mind she rose to escape its law
That it might sleep in some deep shadow of self
Or fall silent in the silence of the Unseen.
High she attained and stood from Nature free
And saw creation's life from far above,
Thence upon all she laid her sovereign will
To dedicate it to God's timeless calm:
Then all grew tranquil in her being's space,
Only sometimes small thoughts arose and fell
Like quiet waves upon a silent sea
Or ripples passing over a lonely pool
When a stray stone disturbs its dreaming rest.
Yet the mind's factory had ceased to work,
There was no sound of the dynamo's throb,
There came no call from the still fields of life.
Then even those stirrings rose in her no more;
Her mind now seemed like a vast empty room
Or like a peaceful landscape without sound.
This men call quietude and prize as peace.
But to her deeper sight all yet was there,
Effervescing like a chaos under a lid;
Feelings and thoughts cried out for word and act
But found no response in the silenced brain:
All was suppressed but nothing yet expunged;
At every moment might explosion come.
Then this too paused; the body seemed a stone.
All now was a wide mighty vacancy,
But still excluded from eternity's hush;
For still was far the repose of the Absolute

And the ocean silence of Infinity.
Even now some thoughts could cross her solitude;
These surged not from the depths or from within
Cast up from formlessness to seek a form,
Spoke not the body's need nor voiced life's call.
These seemed not born nor made in human Time:
Children of cosmic Nature from a far world,
Idea's shapes in complete armour of words
Posted like travellers in an alien space.
Out of some far expanse they seemed to come
As if carried on vast wings like large white sails,
And with easy access reached the inner ear
As though they used a natural privileged right
To the high royal entries of the soul.
As yet their path lay deep-concealed in light.
Then looking to know whence the intruders came
She saw a spiritual immensity
Pervading and encompassing the world-space
As ether our transparent tangible air,
And through it sailing tranquilly a thought.
As smoothly glides a ship nearing its port,
Ignorant of embargo and blockade,
Confident of entrance and the visa's seal,
It came to the silent city of the brain
Towards its accustomed and expectant quay,
But met a barring will, a blow of Force
And sank vanishing in the immensity.
After a long vacant pause another appeared
And others one by one suddenly emerged,
Mind's unexpected visitors from the Unseen
Like far-off sails upon a lonely sea.
But soon that commerce failed, none reached mind's coast.
Then all grew still, nothing moved any more:
Immobile, self-rapt, timeless, solitary
A silent spirit pervaded silent Space.

In that absolute stillness bare and formidable
There was glimpsed an all-negating Void Supreme
That claimed its mystic Nihil's sovereign right
To cancel Nature and deny the soul.
Even the nude sense of self grew pale and thin:
Impersonal, signless, featureless, void of forms
A blank pure consciousness had replaced the mind.
Her spirit seemed the substance of a name,
The world a pictured symbol drawn on self,
A dream of images, a dream of sounds
Built up the semblance of a universe
Or lent to spirit the appearance of a world.
This was self-seeing; in that intolerant hush
No notion and no concept could take shape,
There was no sense to frame the figure of things,
A sheer self-sight was there, no thought arose.
Emotion slept deep down in the still heart
Or lay buried in a cemetery of peace:
All feelings seemed quiescent, calm or dead,
As if the heart-strings rent could work no more
And joy and grief could never rise again.
The heart beat on with an unconscious rhythm
But no response came from it and no cry.
Vain was the provocation of events;
Nothing within answered an outside touch,
No nerve was stirred and no reaction rose.
Yet still her body saw and moved and spoke;
It understood without the aid of thought,
It said whatever needed to be said,
It did whatever needed to be done.
There was no person there behind the act,
No mind that chose or passed the fitting word:
All wrought like an unerring apt machine.
As if continuing old habitual turns,
And pushed by an old unexhausted force
The engine did the work for which it was made:

Her consciousness looked on and took no part;
All it upheld, in nothing had a share.
There was no strong initiator will;
An incoherence crossing a firm void
Slipped into an order of related chance.
A pure perception was the only power
That stood behind her action and her sight.
If that retired, all objects would be extinct,
Her private universe would cease to be,
The house she had built with bricks of thought and sense
In the beginning after the birth of Space.
This seeing was identical with the seen;
It knew without knowledge all that could be known,
It saw impartially the world go by,
But in the same supine unmoving glance
Saw too its abysmal unreality.
It watched the figure of the cosmic game,
But the thought and inner life in forms seemed dead,
Abolished by her own collapse of thought:
A hollow physical shell persisted still.
All seemed a brilliant shadow of itself,
A cosmic film of scenes and images:
The enduring mass and outline of the hills
Was a design sketched on a silent mind
And held to a tremulous false solidity
By constant beats of visionary sight.
The forest with its emerald multitudes
Clothed with its show of hues vague empty Space,
A painting's colours hiding a surface void
That flickered upon dissolution's edge;
The blue heavens, an illusion of the eyes,
Roofed in the mind's illusion of a world.
The men who walked beneath an unreal sky
Seemed mobile puppets out of cardboard cut
And pushed by unseen hands across the soil
Or moving pictures upon Fancy's film:

There was no soul within, no power of life.
The brain's vibrations that appear like thought,
The nerve's brief answer to each contact's knock,
The heart's quiverings felt as joy and grief and love
Were twitchings of the body, their seeming self,
That body forged from atoms and from gas
A manufactured lie of Maya's make,
Its life a dream seen by the sleeping Void.
The animals lone or trooping through the glades
Fled like a passing vision of beauty and grace
Imagined by some all-creating Eye.
Yet something was there behind the fading scene;
Wherever she turned, at whatsoever she looked,
It was perceived, yet hid from mind and sight.
The One only real shut itself from Space
And stood aloof from the idea of Time.
Its truth escaped from shape and line and hue.
All else grew unsubstantial, self-annulled,
This only everlasting seemed and true,
Yet nowhere dwelt, it was outside the hours.
This only could justify the labour of sight,
But sight could not define for it a form;
This only could appease the unsatisfied ear
But hearing listened in vain for a missing sound;
This answered not the sense, called not to Mind.
It met her as the uncaught inaudible Voice
That speaks for ever from the Unknowable.
It met her like an omnipresent point
Pure of dimensions, unfixed, invisible,
The single oneness of its multiplied beat
Accentuating its sole eternity.
It faced her as some vast Nought's immensity,
An endless No to all that seems to be,
An endless Yes to things ever unconceived
And all that is unimagined and unthought,
An eternal zero or untotalled Aught,

A spaceless and a placeless Infinite.
Yet eternity and infinity seemed but words
Vainly affixed by mind's incompetence
To its stupendous lone reality.
The world is but a spark-burst from its light,
All moments flashes from its Timelessness,
All objects glimmerings of the Bodiless
That disappear from Mind when That is seen.
It held, as if a shield before its face,
A consciousness that saw without a seer,
The Truth where knowledge is not nor knower nor known,
The Love enamoured of its own delight
In which the Lover is not nor the Beloved
Bringing their personal passion into the Vast,
The Force omnipotent in quietude,
The Bliss that none can ever hope to taste.
It cancelled the convincing cheat of self;
A truth in nothingness was its mighty clue.
If all existence could renounce to be
And Being take refuge in Non-being's arms
And Non-being could strike out its ciphered round,
Some lustre of that Reality might appear.
A formless liberation came on her.
Once sepulchred alive in brain and flesh
She had risen up from body, mind and life;
She was no more a Person in a world,
She had escaped into infinity.
What once had been herself had disappeared;
There was no frame of things, no figure of soul.
A refugee from the domain of sense,
Evading the necessity of thought,
Delivered from Knowledge and from Ignorance
And rescued from the true and the untrue,
She shared the Superconscient's high retreat
Beyond the self-born Word, the nude Idea,
The first bare solid ground of consciousness;

Beings were not there, existence had no place,
There was no temptation of the joy to be.
Unutterably effaced, no one and null,
A vanishing vestige like a violet trace,
A faint record merely of a self now past,
She was a point in the unknowable.
Only some last annulment now remained,
Annihilation's vague indefinable step:
A memory of being still was there
And kept her separate from nothingness:
She was in That but still became not That.
This shadow of herself so close to nought
Could be again self's point d'appui to live,
Return out of the Inconceivable
And be what some mysterious vast might choose.
Even as the Unknowable decreed,
She might be nought or new-become the All,
Or if the omnipotent Nihil took a shape
Emerge as someone and redeem the world.
Even, she might learn what the mystic cipher held,
This seeming exit or closed end of all
Could be a blind tenebrous passage screened from sight,
Her state the eclipsing shell of a darkened sun
On its secret way to the Ineffable.
Even now her splendid being might flame back
Out of the silence and the nullity,
A gleaming portion of the All-Wonderful,
A power of some all-affirming Absolute,
A shining mirror of the eternal Truth
To show to the One-in-all its manifest face,
To the souls of men their deep identity.
Or she might wake into God's quietude
Beyond the cosmic day and cosmic night
And rest appeased in his white eternity.
But this was now unreal or remote
Or covered in the mystic fathomless blank.

In infinite Nothingness was the ultimate sign
Or else the Real was the Unknowable.
A lonely Absolute negated all:
It effaced the ignorant world from its solitude
And drowned the soul in its everlasting peace.

END OF CANTO SIX

Canto Seven

The Discovery of the Cosmic Spirit and the Cosmic Consciousness

In the little hermitage in the forest's heart,
In the sunlight and the moonlight and the dark
The daily human life went plodding on
Even as before with its small unchanging works
And its spare outward body of routine
And happy quiet of ascetic peace.
The old beauty smiled of the terrestrial scene;
She too was her old gracious self to men.
The Ancient Mother clutched her child to her breast
Pressing her close in her environing arms,
As if earth ever the same could for ever keep
The living spirit and body in her clasp,
As if death were not there nor end nor change.
Accustomed only to read outward signs
None saw aught new in her, none divined her state;
They saw a person where was only God's vast,
A still being or a mighty nothingness.
To all she was the same perfect Savitri:
A greatness and a sweetness and a light
Poured out from her upon her little world.
Life showed to all the same familiar face,
Her acts followed the old unaltered round,
She spoke the words that she was wont to speak
And did the things that she had always done.
Her eyes looked out on earth's unchanging face,
Around her soul's muteness all moved as of old;
A vacant consciousness watched from within,
Empty of all but bare Reality.
There was no will behind the word and act,
No thought formed in her brain to guide the speech:

An impersonal emptiness walked and spoke in her,
Something perhaps unfelt, unseen, unknown
Guarded the body for its future work,
Or Nature moved in her old stream of force.
Perhaps she bore made conscious in her breast
The miraculous Nihil, origin of our souls
And source and sum of the vast world's events,
The womb and grave of thought, a cipher of God,
A zero circle of being's totality.
It used her speech and acted in her acts,
It was beauty in her limbs, life in her breath;
The original Mystery wore her human face.
Thus was she lost within to separate self;
Her mortal ego perished in God's night.
Only a body was left, the ego's shell
Afloat mid drift and foam of the world-sea,
A sea of dream watched by a motionless sense
In a figure of unreal reality.
An impersonal foresight could already see, —
In the unthinking knowledge of the spirit
Even now it seemed nigh done, inevitable, —
The individual die, the cosmos pass;
These gone, the transcendental grew a myth,
The Holy Ghost without the Father and Son,
Or, a substratum of what once had been,
Being that never willed to bear a world
Restored to its original loneliness,
Impassive, sole, silent, intangible.
Yet all was not extinct in this deep loss;
The being travelled not towards nothingness.
There was some high surpassing Secrecy,
And when she sat alone with Satyavan,
Her moveless mind with his that searched and strove,
In the hush of the profound and intimate night
She turned to the face of a veiled voiceless Truth
Hid in the dumb recesses of the heart

Or waiting beyond the last peak climbed by Thought, —
Unseen itself it sees the struggling world
And prompts our quest, but cares not to be found, —
Out of that distant Vast came a reply.
Something unknown, unreached, inscrutable
Sent down the messages of its bodiless Light,
Cast lightning flashes of a thought not ours
Crossing the immobile silence of her mind:
In its might of irresponsible sovereignty
It seized on speech to give those flamings shape,
Made beat the heart of wisdom in a word
And spoke immortal things through mortal lips.
Or, listening to the sages of the woods,
In question and in answer broke from her
High strange revealings impossible to men,
Something or someone secret and remote
Took hold of her body for his mystic use,
Her mouth was seized to channel ineffable truths,
Knowledge unthinkable found an utterance.
Astonished by a new enlightenment,
Invaded by a streak of the Absolute,
They marvelled at her, for she seemed to know
What they had only glimpsed at times afar.
These thoughts were formed not in her listening brain,
Her vacant heart was like a stringless harp;
Impassive the body claimed not its own voice,
But let the luminous greatness through it pass.
A dual Power at being's occult poles
Still acted, nameless and invisible:
Her divine emptiness was their instrument.
Inconscient Nature dealt with the world it had made,
And using still the body's instruments
Slipped through the conscious void she had become;
The superconscient Mystery through that Void
Missioned its word to touch the thoughts of men.
As yet this great impersonal speech was rare.

But now the unmoving wide spiritual space
In which her mind survived tranquil and bare,
Admitted a traveller from the cosmic breadths:
A thought came through draped as an outer voice.
It called not for the witness of the mind,
It spoke not to the hushed receiving heart;
It came direct to the pure perception's seat,
An only centre now of consciousness,
If centre could be where all seemed only space;
No more shut in by body's walls and gates
Her being, a circle without circumference,
Already now surpassed all cosmic bounds
And more and more spread into infinity.
This being was its own unbounded world,
A world without form or feature or circumstance;
It had no ground, no wall, no roof of thought,
Yet saw itself and looked on all around
In a silence motionless and illimitable.
There was no person there, no centred mind,
No seat of feeling on which beat events
Or objects wrought and shaped reaction's stress.
There was no motion in this inner world,
All was a still and even infinity.
In her the Unseen, the Unknown waited his hour.

But now she sat by sleeping Satyavan,
Awake within, and the enormous Night
Surrounded her with the Unknowable's vast.
A voice began to speak from her own heart
That was not hers, yet mastered thought and sense.
As it spoke all changed within her and without;
All was, all lived; she felt all being one;
The world of unreality ceased to be:
There was no more a universe built by mind,
Convicted as a structure or a sign;
A spirit, a being saw created things

And cast itself into unnumbered forms
And was what it saw and made; all now became
An evidence of one stupendous truth,
A Truth in which negation had no place,
A being and a living consciousness,
A stark and absolute Reality.
There the unreal could not find a place,
The sense of unreality was slain:
There all was conscious, made of the Infinite,
All had a substance of Eternity.
Yet this was the same Indecipherable;
It seemed to cast from it universe like a dream
Vanishing for ever into an original Void.
But this was no more some vague ubiquitous point
Or a cipher of vastness in unreal Nought.
It was the same but now no more seemed far
To the living clasp of her recovered soul.
It was her self, it was the self of all,
It was the reality of existing things,
It was the consciousness of all that lived
And felt and saw; it was Timelessness and Time,
It was the Bliss of formlessness and form.
It was all Love and the one Beloved's arms,
It was sight and thought in one all-seeing Mind,
It was joy of Being on the peaks of God.
She passed beyond Time into eternity,
Slipped out of space and became the Infinite;
Her being rose into unreachable heights
And found no end of its journey in the Self.
It plunged into the unfathomable deeps
And found no end to the silent mystery
That held all world within one lonely breast,
Yet harboured all creation's multitudes.
She was all vastness and one measureless point,
She was a height beyond heights, a depth beyond depths,
She lived in the everlasting and was all

That harbours death and bears the wheeling hours.
All contraries were true in one huge spirit
Surpassing measure, change and circumstance.
An individual, one with cosmic self
In the heart of the Transcendent's miracle
And the secret of World-personality
Was the creator and the lord of all.
Mind was a single innumerable look
Upon himself and all that he became.
Life was his drama and the Vast a stage,
The universe was his body, God its soul.
All was one single immense reality,
All its innumerable phenomenon.
   Her spirit saw the world as living God;
It saw the One and knew that all was He.
She knew him as the Absolute's self-space,
One with her self and ground of all things here
In which the world wanders seeking for the Truth
Guarded behind its face of ignorance:
She followed him through the march of endless Time.
All Nature's happenings were events in her,
The heart-beats of the cosmos were her own,
All beings thought and felt and moved in her;
She inhabited the vastness of the world,
Its distances were her nature's boundaries,
Its closenesses her own life's intimacies.
Her mind became familiar with its mind,
Its body was her body's larger frame
In which she lived and knew herself in it
One, multitudinous in its multitudes.
She was a single being, yet all things;
The world was her spirit's wide circumference,
The thoughts of others were her intimates,
Their feelings close to her universal heart,
Their bodies her many bodies kin to her;
She was no more herself but all the world.

Out of the infinitudes all came to her,
Into the infinitudes sentient she spread,
Infinity was her own natural home.
Nowhere she dwelt, her spirit was everywhere,
The distant constellations wheeled round her;
Earth saw her born, all worlds were her colonies,
The greater worlds of life and mind were hers;
All Nature reproduced her in its lines,
Its movements were large copies of her own.
She was the single self of all these selves,
She was in them and they were all in her.
This first was an immense identity
In which her own identity was lost:
What seemed herself was an image of the Whole.
She was a subconscient life of tree and flower,
The outbreak of the honied buds of spring;
She burned in the passion and splendour of the rose,
She was the red heart of the passion-flower,
The dream-white of the lotus in its pool.
Out of subconscient life she climbed to mind,
She was thought and the passion of the world's heart,
She was the godhead hid in the heart of man,
She was the climbing of his soul to God.
The cosmos flowered in her, she was its bed.
She was Time and the dreams of God in Time;
She was Space and the wideness of his days.
From this she rose where Time and Space were not;
The superconscient was her native air,
Infinity was her movement's natural space;
Eternity looked out from her on Time.

END OF CANTO SEVEN
END OF BOOK SEVEN

BOOK EIGHT

The Book of Death

Canto Three[1]

Death in the Forest

NOW it was here in this great golden dawn.
By her still sleeping husband lain she gazed
Into her past as one about to die
Looks back upon the sunlit fields of life
Where he too ran and sported with the rest,
Lifting his head above the huge dark stream
Into whose depths he must for ever plunge.
All she had been and done she lived again.
The whole year in a swift and eddying race
Of memories swept through her and fled away
Into the irrecoverable past.
Then silently she rose and, service done,
Bowed down to the great goddess simply carved
By Satyavan upon a forest stone.
What prayer she breathed her soul and Durga knew.
Perhaps she felt in the dim forest huge
The infinite Mother watching over her child,
Perhaps the shrouded Voice spoke some still word.
At last she came to the pale mother queen.
She spoke but with guarded lips and tranquil face
Lest some stray word or some betraying look
Should let pass into the mother's unknowing breast,
Slaying all happiness and need to live,
A dire foreknowledge of the grief to come.
Only the needed utterance passage found:
All else she pressed back into her anguished heart
And forced upon her speech an outward peace.

---

[1] The Book of Death was taken from Canto Three of an early version of *Savitri* which had only six cantos and an epilogue. It was slightly revised at a late stage and a number of new lines were added, but it was never fully worked into the final version of the poem. Its original designation, "Canto Three", has been retained as a reminder of this.

"One year that I have lived with Satyavan
Here on the emerald edge of the vast woods
In the iron ring of the enormous peaks
Under the blue rifts of the forest sky,
I have not gone into the silences
Of this great woodland that enringed my thoughts
With mystery, nor in its green miracles
Wandered, but this small clearing was my world.
Now has a strong desire seized all my heart
To go with Satyavan holding his hand
Into the life that he has loved and touch
Herbs he has trod and know the forest flowers
And hear at ease the birds and the scurrying life
That starts and ceases, rich far rustle of boughs
And all the mystic whispering of the woods.
Release me now and let my heart have rest."
She answered: "Do as thy wise mind desires,
O calm child-sovereign with the eyes that rule.
I hold thee for a strong goddess who has come
Pitying our barren days; so dost thou serve
Even as a slave might, yet art thou beyond
All that thou doest, all our minds conceive,
Like the strong sun that serves earth from above."
Then the doomed husband and the woman who knew
Went with linked hands into that solemn world
Where beauty and grandeur and unspoken dream,
Where Nature's mystic silence could be felt
Communing with the secrecy of God.
Beside her Satyavan walked full of joy
Because she moved with him through his green haunts:
He showed her all the forest's riches, flowers
Innumerable of every odour and hue
And soft thick clinging creepers red and green
And strange rich-plumaged birds, to every cry
That haunted sweetly distant boughs replied
With the shrill singer's name more sweetly called.

He spoke of all the things he loved: they were
His boyhood's comrades and his playfellows,
Coevals and companions of his life
Here in this world whose every mood he knew:
Their thoughts which to the common mind are blank,
He shared, to every wild emotion felt
An answer. Deeply she listened, but to hear
The voice that soon would cease from tender words
And treasure its sweet cadences beloved
For lonely memory when none by her walked
And the beloved voice could speak no more.
But little dwelt her mind upon their sense;
Of death, not life she thought or life's lone end.
Love in her bosom hurt with the jagged edges
Of anguish moaned at every step with pain
Crying, "Now, now perhaps his voice will cease
For ever." Even by some vague touch oppressed
Sometimes her eyes looked round as if their orbs
Might see the dim and dreadful god's approach.
But Satyavan had paused. He meant to finish
His labour here that happy, linked, uncaring
They two might wander free in the green deep
Primaeval mystery of the forest's heart.
A tree that raised its tranquil head to heaven
Luxuriating in verdure, summoning
The breeze with amorous wideness of its boughs,
He chose and with his steel assailed the arm
Brown, rough and strong hidden in its emerald dress.
Wordless but near she watched, no turn to lose
Of the bright face and body which she loved.
Her life was now in seconds, not in hours,
And every moment she economised
Like a pale merchant leaned above his store,
The miser of his poor remaining gold.
But Satyavan wielded a joyous axe.
He sang high snatches of a sage's chant

That pealed of conquered death and demons slain,
And sometimes paused to cry to her sweet speech
Of love and mockery tenderer than love:
She like a pantheress leaped upon his words
And carried them into her cavern heart.
But as he worked, his doom upon him came.
The violent and hungry hounds of pain
Travelled through his body biting as they passed
Silently, and all his suffering breath besieged
Strove to rend life's strong heart-cords and be free.
Then helped, as if a beast had left its prey,
A moment in a wave of rich relief
Reborn to strength and happy ease he stood
Rejoicing and resumed his confident toil
But with less seeing strokes. Now the great woodsman
Hewed at him and his labour ceased: lifting
His arm he flung away the poignant axe
Far from him like an instrument of pain.
She came to him in silent anguish and clasped,
And he cried to her, "Savitri, a pang
Cleaves through my head and breast as if the axe
Were piercing it and not the living branch.
Such agony rends me as the tree must feel
When it is sundered and must lose its life.
Awhile let me lay my head upon thy lap
And guard me with thy hands from evil fate:
Perhaps because thou touchest, death may pass."
Then Savitri sat under branches wide,
Cool, green against the sun, not the hurt tree
Which his keen axe had cloven, — that she shunned;
But leaned beneath a fortunate kingly trunk
She guarded him in her bosom and strove to soothe
His anguished brow and body with her hands.
All grief and fear were dead within her now
And a great calm had fallen. The wish to lessen
His suffering, the impulse that opposes pain

Were the one mortal feeling left. It passed:
Griefless and strong she waited like the gods.
But now his sweet familiar hue was changed
Into a tarnished greyness and his eyes
Dimmed over, forsaken of the clear light she loved.
Only the dull and physical mind was left,
Vacant of the bright spirit's luminous gaze.
But once before it faded wholly back,
He cried out in a clinging last despair,
"Savitri, Savitri, O Savitri,
Lean down, my soul, and kiss me while I die."
And even as her pallid lips pressed his,
His failed, losing last sweetness of response;
His cheek pressed down her golden arm. She sought
His mouth still with her living mouth, as if
She could persuade his soul back with her kiss;
Then grew aware they were no more alone.
Something had come there conscious, vast and dire.
Near her she felt a silent shade immense
Chilling the noon with darkness for its back.
An awful hush had fallen upon the place:
There was no cry of birds, no voice of beasts.
A terror and an anguish filled the world,
As if annihilation's mystery
Had taken a sensible form. A cosmic mind
Looked out on all from formidable eyes
Contemning all with its unbearable gaze
And with immortal lids and a vast brow
It saw in its immense destroying thought
All things and beings as a pitiful dream,
Rejecting with calm disdain Nature's delight,
The wordless meaning of its deep regard
Voicing the unreality of things
And life that would be for ever but never was
And its brief and vain recurrence without cease,
As if from a Silence without form or name

The Shadow of a remote uncaring god
Doomed to his Nought the illusory universe,
Cancelling its show of idea and act in Time
And its imitation of eternity.
She knew that visible Death was standing there
And Satyavan had passed from her embrace.

END OF BOOK EIGHT
END OF PART TWO

PART THREE

BOOKS IX – XII

BOOK NINE

The Book of Eternal Night

Canto One

Towards the Black Void

SO WAS she left alone in the huge wood,
Surrounded by a dim unthinking world,
Her husband's corpse on her forsaken breast.
In her vast silent spirit motionless
She measured not her loss with helpless thoughts,
Nor rent with tears the marble seals of pain:
She rose not yet to face the dreadful god.
Over the body she loved her soul leaned out
In a great stillness without stir or voice,
As if her mind had died with Satyavan.
But still the human heart in her beat on.
Aware still of his being near to hers,
Closely she clasped to her the mute lifeless form
As though to guard the oneness they had been
And keep the spirit still within its frame.
Then suddenly there came on her the change
Which in tremendous moments of our lives
Can overtake sometimes the human soul
And hold it up towards its luminous source.
The veil is torn, the thinker is no more:
Only the spirit sees and all is known.
Then a calm Power seated above our brows
Is seen, unshaken by our thoughts and deeds,
Its stillness bears the voices of the world:
Immobile, it moves Nature, looks on life.
It shapes immutably its far-seen ends;
Untouched and tranquil amid error and tears
And measureless above our striving wills,
Its gaze controls the turbulent whirl of things.
To mate with the Glory it sees, the spirit grows:
The voice of life is tuned to infinite sounds,

The moments on great wings of lightning come
And godlike thoughts surprise the mind of earth.
Into the soul's splendour and intensity
A crescent of miraculous birth is tossed,
Whose horn of mystery floats in a bright void.
As into a heaven of strength and silence thought
Is ravished, all this living mortal clay
Is seized and in a swift and fiery flood
Of touches shaped by a Harmonist unseen.
A new sight comes, new voices in us form
A body of the music of the Gods.
Immortal yearnings without name leap down,
Large quiverings of godhead seeking run
And weave upon a puissant field of calm
A high and lonely ecstasy of will.
This in a moment's depths was born in her.
Now to the limitless gaze disclosed that sees
Things barred from human thinking's earthly lids,
The Spirit who had hidden in Nature soared
Out of his luminous nest within the worlds:
Like a vast fire it climbed the skies of night.
Thus were the cords of self-oblivion torn:
Like one who looks up to far heights she saw,
Ancient and strong as on a windless summit
Above her where she had worked in her lone mind
Labouring apart in a sole tower of self,
The source of all which she had seemed or wrought,
A power projected into cosmic space,
A slow embodiment of the aeonic will,
A starry fragment of the eternal Truth,
The passionate instrument of an unmoved Power.
A Presence was there that filled the listening world;
A central All assumed her boundless life.
A sovereignty, a silence and a swiftness,
One brooded over abysses who was she.
As in a choric robe of unheard sounds

A Force descended trailing endless lights;
Linking Time's seconds to infinity,
Illimitably it girt the earth and her:
It sank into her soul and she was changed.
Then like a thought fulfilled by some great word
That mightiness assumed a symbol form:
Her being's spaces quivered with its touch,
It covered her as with immortal wings;
On its lips the curve of the unuttered Truth,
A halo of Wisdom's lightnings for its crown,
It entered the mystic lotus in her head,
A thousand-petalled home of power and light.
Immortal leader of her mortality,
Doer of her works and fountain of her words,
Invulnerable by Time, omnipotent,
It stood above her calm, immobile, mute.

All in her mated with that mighty hour,
As if the last remnant had been slain by Death
Of the humanity that once was hers.
Assuming a spiritual wide control,
Making life's sea a mirror of heaven's sky,
The young divinity in her earthly limbs
Filled with celestial strength her mortal part.
Over was the haunted pain, the rending fear:
Her grief had passed away, her mind was still,
Her heart beat quietly with a sovereign force.
There came a freedom from the heart-strings' clutch,
Now all her acts sprang from a godhead's calm.
Calmly she laid upon the forest soil
The dead who still reposed upon her breast
And bore to turn away from the dead form:
Sole now she rose to meet the dreadful god.
That mightier spirit turned its mastering gaze
On life and things, inheritor of a work
Left to it unfinished from her halting past,

When yet the mind, a passionate learner, toiled
And ill-shaped instruments were crudely moved.
Transcended now was the poor human rule;
A sovereign power was there, a godlike will.
A moment yet she lingered motionless
And looked down on the dead man at her feet;
Then like a tree recovering from a wind
She raised her noble head; fronting her gaze
Something stood there, unearthly, sombre, grand,
A limitless denial of all being
That wore the terror and wonder of a shape.
In its appalling eyes the tenebrous Form
Bore the deep pity of destroying gods;
A sorrowful irony curved the dreadful lips
That speak the word of doom. Eternal Night
In the dire beauty of an immortal face
Pitying arose, receiving all that lives
For ever into its fathomless heart, refuge
Of creatures from their anguish and world-pain.
His shape was nothingness made real, his limbs
Were monuments of transience and beneath
Brows of unwearying calm large godlike lids
Silent beheld the writhing serpent, life.
Unmoved their timeless wide unchanging gaze
Had seen the unprofitable cycles pass,
Survived the passing of unnumbered stars
And sheltered still the same immutable orbs.
The two opposed each other with their eyes,
Woman and universal god: around her,
Piling their void unbearable loneliness
Upon her mighty uncompanioned soul,
Many inhuman solitudes came close.
Vacant eternities forbidding hope
Laid upon her their huge and lifeless look,
And to her ears, silencing earthly sounds,
A sad and formidable voice arose

Which seemed the whole adverse world's. "Unclasp", it cried,
"Thy passionate influence and relax, O slave
Of Nature, changing tool of changeless Law,
Who vainly writh'st rebellion to my yoke,
Thy elemental grasp; weep and forget.
Entomb thy passion in its living grave.
Leave now the once-loved spirit's abandoned robe:
Pass lonely back to thy vain life on earth."
It ceased, she moved not, and it spoke again,
Lowering its mighty key to human chords, —
Yet a dread cry behind the uttered sounds,
Echoing all sadness and immortal scorn,
Moaned like a hunger of far wandering waves.
"Wilt thou for ever keep thy passionate hold,
Thyself a creature doomed like him to pass,
Denying his soul death's calm and silent rest?
Relax thy grasp; this body is earth's and thine,
His spirit now belongs to a greater power.
Woman, thy husband suffers." Savitri
Drew back her heart's force that clasped his body still
Where from her lap renounced on the smooth grass
Softly it lay, as often before in sleep
When from their couch she rose in the white dawn
Called by her daily tasks: now too, as if called,
She rose and stood gathered in lonely strength,
Like one who drops his mantle for a race
And waits the signal, motionlessly swift.
She knew not to what course: her spirit above
On the crypt-summit of her secret form
Like one left sentinel on a mountain crest,
A fiery-footed splendour puissant-winged,
Watched flaming-silent, with her voiceless soul
Like a still sail upon a windless sea.
White passionless it rode, an anchored might,
Waiting what far-ridged impulse should arise
Out of the eternal depths and cast its surge.

Then Death the king leaned boundless down, as leans
Night over tired lands, when evening pales
And fading gleams break down the horizon's walls,
Nor yet the dusk grows mystic with the moon.
The dim and awful godhead rose erect
From his brief stooping to his touch on earth,
And, like a dream that wakes out of a dream,
Forsaking the poor mould of that dead clay,
Another luminous Satyavan arose,
Starting upright from the recumbent earth
As if someone over viewless borders stepped
Emerging on the edge of unseen worlds.
In the earth's day the silent marvel stood
Between the mortal woman and the god.
Such seemed he as if one departed came
Wearing the light of a celestial shape
Splendidly alien to the mortal air.
The mind sought things long loved and fell back foiled
From unfamiliar hues, beheld yet longed,
By the sweet radiant form unsatisfied,
Incredulous of its too bright hints of heaven;
Too strange the brilliant phantasm to life's clasp
Desiring the warm creations of the earth
Reared in the ardour of material suns,
The senses seized in vain a glorious shade:
Only the spirit knew the spirit still,
And the heart divined the old loved heart, though changed.
Between two realms he stood, not wavering,
But fixed in quiet strong expectancy,
Like one who, sightless, listens for a command.
So were they immobile on that earthly field,
Powers not of earth, though one in human clay.
On either side of one two spirits strove;
Silence battled with silence, vast with vast.
But now the impulse of the Path was felt
Moving from the Silence that supports the stars

To touch the confines of the visible world.
Luminous he moved away; behind him Death
Went slowly with his noiseless tread, as seen
In dream-built fields a shadowy herdsman glides
Behind some wanderer from his voiceless herds,
And Savitri moved behind eternal Death,
Her mortal pace was equalled with the god's.
Wordless she travelled in her lover's steps,
Planting her human feet where his had trod,
Into the perilous silences beyond.

At first in a blind stress of woods she moved
With strange inhuman paces on the soil,
Journeying as if upon an unseen road.
Around her on the green and imaged earth
The flickering screen of forests ringed her steps;
Its thick luxurious obstacle of boughs
Besieged her body pressing dimly through
In a rich realm of whispers palpable,
And all the murmurous beauty of the leaves
Rippled around her like an emerald robe.
But more and more this grew an alien sound,
And her old intimate body seemed to her
A burden which her being remotely bore.
Herself lived far in some uplifted scene
Where to the trance-claimed vision of pursuit,
Sole presences in a high spaceless dream,
The luminous spirit glided stilly on
And the great shadow travelled vague behind.
Still with an amorous crowd of seeking hands
Softly entreated by their old desires
Her senses felt earth's close and gentle air
Cling round them and in troubled branches knew
Uncertain treadings of a faint-foot wind:
She bore dim fragrances, far callings touched;
The wild bird's voice and its winged rustle came

As if a sigh from some forgotten world.
Earth stood aloof, yet near: round her it wove
Its sweetness and its greenness and delight,
Its brilliance suave of well-loved vivid hues,
Sunlight arriving to its golden noon,
And the blue heavens and the caressing soil.
The ancient mother offered to her child
Her simple world of kind familiar things.
But now, as if the body's sensuous hold
Curbing the godhead of her infinite walk
Had freed those spirits to their grander road
Across some boundary's intangible bar,
The silent god grew mighty and remote
In other spaces, and the soul she loved
Lost its consenting nearness to her life.
Into a deep and unfamiliar air
Enormous, windless, without stir or sound
They seemed to enlarge away, drawn by some wide
Pale distance, from the warm control of earth
And her grown far: now, now they would escape.
Then flaming from her body's nest alarmed
Her violent spirit soared at Satyavan.
Out mid the plunge of heaven-surrounded rocks
So in a terror and a wrath divine
From her eyrie streams against the ascending death,
Indignant at its crouching point of steel,
A fierce she-eagle threatened in her brood,
Borne on a rush of puissance and a cry,
Outwinging like a mass of golden fire.
So on a spirit's flaming outrush borne
She crossed the borders of dividing sense;
Like pale discarded sheaths dropped dully down
Her mortal members fell back from her soul.
A moment of a secret body's sleep,
Her trance knew not of sun or earth or world;
Thought, time and death were absent from her grasp:

She knew not self, forgotten was Savitri.
All was the violent ocean of a will
Where lived captive to an immense caress,
Possessed in a supreme identity,
Her aim, joy, origin, Satyavan alone.
Her sovereign prisoned in her being's core,
He beat there like a rhythmic heart, — herself
But different still, one loved, enveloped, clasped,
A treasure saved from the collapse of space.
Around him nameless, infinite she surged,
Her spirit fulfilled in his spirit, rich with all Time,
As if Love's deathless moment had been found,
A pearl within eternity's white shell.
Then out of the engulfing sea of trance
Her mind rose drenched to light streaming with hues
Of vision and, awake once more to Time,
Returned to shape the lineaments of things
And live in borders of the seen and known.
Onward the three still moved in her soul-scene.
As if pacing through fragments of a dream,
She seemed to travel on, a visioned shape
Imagining other musers like herself,
By them imagined in their lonely sleep.
Ungrasped, unreal, yet familiar, old,
Like clefts of unsubstantial memory,
Scenes often traversed, never lived in, fled
Past her unheeding to forgotten goals.
In voiceless regions they were travellers
Alone in a new world where souls were not,
But only living moods: a strange hushed weird
Country was round them, strange far skies above,
A doubting space where dreaming objects lived
Within themselves their one unchanged idea.
Weird were the grasses, weird the treeless plains;
Weird ran the road which like fear hastening
Towards that of which it has most terror, passed

Phantasmal between pillared conscious rocks
Sombre and high, gates brooding, whose stone thoughts
Lost their huge sense beyond in giant night.
Enigma of the Inconscient's sculptural sleep,
Symbols of the approach to darkness old
And monuments of her titanic reign,
Opening to depths like dumb appalling jaws
That wait a traveller down a haunted path
Attracted to a mystery that slays,
They watched across her road, cruel and still;
Sentinels they stood of dumb Necessity,
Mute heads of vigilant and sullen gloom,
Carved muzzle of a dim enormous world.
Then, to that chill sere heavy line arrived
Where his feet touched the shadowy marches' brink,
Turning arrested luminous Satyavan
Looked back with his wonderful eyes at Savitri.
But Death pealed forth his vast abysmal cry:
"O mortal, turn back to thy transient kind;
Aspire not to accompany Death to his home,
As if thy breath could live where Time must die.
Think not thy mind-born passion strength from heaven
To uplift thy spirit from its earthly base
And, breaking out from the material cage,
To upbuoy thy feet of dream in groundless Nought
And bear thee through the pathless infinite.
Only in human limits man lives safe.
Trust not in the unreal Lords of Time,
Immortal deeming this image of thyself
Which they have built on a Dream's floating ground.
Let not the dreadful goddess move thy soul
To enlarge thy vehement trespass into worlds
Where it shall perish like a helpless thought.
Know the cold term-stones of thy hopes in life.
Armed vainly with the Ideal's borrowed might,
Dare not to outstep man's bound and measured force:

Ignorant and stumbling, in brief boundaries pent,
He crowns himself the world's mock suzerain,
Tormenting Nature with the works of Mind.
O sleeper, dreaming of divinity,
Wake trembling mid the indifferent silences
In which thy few weak chords of being die.
Impermanent creatures, sorrowful foam of Time,
Your transient loves bind not the eternal gods."
The dread voice ebbed in the consenting hush
Which seemed to close upon it, wide, intense,
A wordless sanction from the jaws of Night.
The Woman answered not. Her high nude soul,
Stripped of the girdle of mortality,
Against fixed destiny and the grooves of law
Stood up in its sheer will a primal force.
Still like a statue on its pedestal,
Lone in the silence and to vastness bared,
Against midnight's dumb abysses piled in front
A columned shaft of fire and light she rose.

END OF CANTO ONE

Canto Two

The Journey in Eternal Night and the Voice of the Darkness

AWHILE on the chill dreadful edge of Night
All stood as if a world were doomed to die
And waited on the eternal silence' brink.
Heaven leaned towards them like a cloudy brow
Of menace through the dim and voiceless hush.
As thoughts stand mute on a despairing verge
Where the last depths plunge into nothingness
And the last dreams must end, they paused; in their front
Were glooms like shadowy wings, behind them, pale,
The lifeless evening was a dead man's gaze.
Hungry beyond, the night desired her soul.
But still in its lone niche of templed strength
Motionless, her flame-bright spirit, mute, erect,
Burned like a torch-fire from a windowed room
Pointing against the darkness' sombre breast.
The Woman first affronted the Abyss
Daring to journey through the eternal Night.
Armoured with light she advanced her foot to plunge
Into the dread and hueless vacancy;
Immortal, unappalled, her spirit faced
The danger of the ruthless eyeless waste.
Against night's inky ground they stirred, moulding
Mysterious motion on her human tread,
A swimming action and a drifting march
Like figures moving before eyelids closed:
All as in dreams went slipping, gliding on.
The rock-gate's heavy walls were left behind;
As if through passages of receding time
Present and past into the Timeless lapsed;
Arrested upon dim adventure's brink,

The future ended drowned in nothingness.
Amid collapsing shapes they wound obscure;
The fading vestibules of a tenebrous world
Received them, where they seemed to move and yet
Be still, nowhere advancing yet to pass,
A dumb procession a dim picture bounds,
Not conscious forms threading a real scene.
A mystery of terror's boundlessness,
Gathering its hungry strength the huge pitiless void
Surrounded slowly with its soundless depths,
And monstrous, cavernous, a shapeless throat
Devoured her into its shadowy strangling mass,
The fierce spiritual agony of a dream.
A curtain of impenetrable dread,
The darkness hung around her cage of sense
As, when the trees have turned to blotted shades
And the last friendly glimmer fades away,
Around a bullock in the forest tied
By hunters closes in no empty night.
The thought that strives in the world was here unmade;
Its effort it renounced to live and know,
Convinced at last that it had never been;
It perished, all its dream of action done:
This clotted cypher was its dark result.
In the smothering stress of this stupendous Nought
Mind could not think, breath could not breathe, the soul
Could not remember or feel itself; it seemed
A hollow gulf of sterile emptiness,
A zero oblivious of the sum it closed,
An abnegation of the Maker's joy
Saved by no wide repose, no depth of peace.
On all that claims here to be Truth and God
And conscious self and the revealing Word
And the creative rapture of the Mind
And Love and Knowledge and heart's delight, there fell
The immense refusal of the eternal No.

As disappears a golden lamp in gloom
Borne into distance from the eyes' desire,
Into the shadows vanished Savitri.
There was no course, no path, no end or goal:
Visionless she moved amid insensible gulfs,
Or drove through some great black unknowing waste,
Or whirled in a dumb eddy of meeting winds
Assembled by the titan hands of Chance.
There was none with her in the dreadful Vast:
She saw no more the vague tremendous god,
Her eyes had lost their luminous Satyavan.
Yet not for this her spirit failed, but held
More deeply than the bounded senses can
Which grasp externally and find to lose,
Its object loved. So when on earth they lived
She had felt him straying through the glades, the glades
A scene in her, its clefts her being's vistas
Opening their secrets to his search and joy,
Because to jealous sweetness in her heart
Whatever happy space his cherished feet
Preferred, must be at once her soul embracing
His body, passioning dumbly to his tread.
But now a silent gulf between them came
And to abysmal loneliness she fell,
Even from herself cast out, from love remote.
Long hours, since long it seems when sluggish time
Is measured by the throbs of the soul's pain,
In an unreal darkness empty and drear
She travelled treading on the corpse of life,
Lost in a blindness of extinguished souls.
Solitary in the anguish of the void
She lived in spite of death, she conquered still;
In vain her puissant being was oppressed:
Her heavy long monotony of pain
Tardily of its fierce self-torture tired.
At first a faint inextinguishable gleam,

Pale but immortal, flickered in the gloom
As if a memory came to spirits dead,
A memory that wished to live again,
Dissolved from mind in Nature's natal sleep.
It wandered like a lost ray of the moon
Revealing to the night her soul of dread;
Serpentine in the gleam the darkness lolled,
Its black hoods jewelled with the mystic glow;
Its dull sleek folds shrank back and coiled and slid,
As though they felt all light a cruel pain
And suffered from the pale approach of hope.
Night felt assailed her heavy sombre reign;
The splendour of some bright eternity
Threatened with this faint beam of wandering Truth
Her empire of the everlasting Nought.
Implacable in her intolerant strength
And confident that she alone was true,
She strove to stifle the frail dangerous ray;
Aware of an all-negating immensity
She reared her giant head of Nothingness,
Her mouth of darkness swallowing all that is;
She saw in herself the tenebrous Absolute.
But still the light prevailed and still it grew,
And Savitri to her lost self awoke;
Her limbs refused the cold embrace of death,
Her heart-beats triumphed in the grasp of pain;
Her soul persisted claiming for its joy
The soul of the beloved now seen no more.
Before her in the stillness of the world
Once more she heard the treading of a god,
And out of the dumb darkness Satyavan,
Her husband, grew into a luminous shade.
Then a sound pealed through that dead monstrous realm:
Vast like the surge in a tired swimmer's ears,
Clamouring, a fatal iron-hearted roar,
Death missioned to the night his lethal call.

"This is my silent dark immensity,
This is the home of everlasting Night,
This is the secrecy of Nothingness
Entombing the vanity of life's desires.
Hast thou beheld thy source, O transient heart,
And known from what the dream thou art was made?
In this stark sincerity of nude emptiness
Hopest thou still always to last and love?"
The Woman answered not. Her spirit refused
The voice of Night that knew and Death that thought.
In her beginningless infinity
Through her soul's reaches unconfined she gazed;
She saw the undying fountains of her life,
She knew herself eternal without birth.
But still opposing her with endless night
Death, the dire god, inflicted on her eyes
The immortal calm of his tremendous gaze:
"Although thou hast survived the unborn void
Which never shall forgive, while Time endures,
The primal violence that fashioned thought,
Forcing the immobile vast to suffer and live,
This sorrowful victory only hast thou won
To live for a little without Satyavan.
What shall the ancient goddess give to thee
Who helps thy heart-beats? Only she prolongs
The nothing dreamed existence and delays
With the labour of living thy eternal sleep.
A fragile miracle of thinking clay,
Armed with illusions walks the child of Time.
To fill the void around he feels and dreads,
The void he came from and to which he goes,
He magnifies his self and names it God.
He calls the heavens to help his suffering hopes.
He sees above him with a longing heart
Bare spaces more unconscious than himself
That have not even his privilege of mind,

And empty of all but their unreal blue,
And peoples them with bright and merciful powers.
For the sea roars around him and earth quakes
Beneath his steps, and fire is at his doors,
And death prowls baying through the woods of life.
Moved by the Presences with which he yearns,
He offers in implacable shrines his soul
And clothes all with the beauty of his dreams.
The gods who watch the earth with sleepless eyes
And guide its giant stumblings through the void,
Have given to man the burden of his mind;
In his unwilling heart they have lit their fires
And sown in it incurable unrest.
His mind is a hunter upon tracks unknown;
Amusing Time with vain discovery,
He deepens with thought the mystery of his fate
And turns to song his laughter and his tears.
His mortality vexing with the immortal's dreams,
Troubling his transience with the infinite's breath,
They gave him hungers which no food can fill;
He is the cattle of the shepherd gods.
His body the tether with which he is tied,
They cast for fodder grief and hope and joy:
His pasture ground they have fenced with Ignorance.
Into his fragile undefended breast
They have breathed a courage that is met by death,
They have given a wisdom that is mocked by night,
They have traced a journey that foresees no goal.
Aimless man toils in an uncertain world,
Lulled by inconstant pauses of his pain,
Scourged like a beast by the infinite desire,
Bound to the chariot of the dreadful gods.
But if thou still canst hope and still wouldst love,
Return to thy body's shell, thy tie to earth,
And with thy heart's little remnants try to live.
Hope not to win back to thee Satyavan.

Yet since thy strength deserves no trivial crown,
Gifts I can give to soothe thy wounded life.
The pacts which transient beings make with fate,
And the wayside sweetness earth-bound hearts would pluck,
These if thy will accepts make freely thine.
Choose a life's hopes for thy deceiving prize."
As ceased the ruthless and tremendous Voice,
Unendingly there rose in Savitri,
Like moonlit ridges on a shuddering flood,
A stir of thoughts out of some silence born
Across the sea of her dumb fathomless heart.
At last she spoke; her voice was heard by Night:
"I bow not to thee, O huge mask of death,
Black lie of night to the cowed soul of man,
Unreal, inescapable end of things,
Thou grim jest played with the immortal spirit.
Conscious of immortality I walk.
A victor spirit conscious of my force,
Not as a suppliant to thy gates I came:
Unslain I have survived the clutch of Night.
My first strong grief moves not my seated mind;
My unwept tears have turned to pearls of strength:
I have transformed my ill-shaped brittle clay
Into the hardness of a statued soul.
Now in the wrestling of the splendid gods
My spirit shall be obstinate and strong
Against the vast refusal of the world.
I stoop not with the subject mob of minds
Who run to glean with eager satisfied hands
And pick from its mire mid many trampling feet
Its scornful small concessions to the weak.
Mine is the labour of the battling gods:
Imposing on the slow reluctant years
The flaming will that reigns beyond the stars,
They lay the law of Mind on Matter's works
And win the soul's wish from earth's inconscient Force.

First I demand whatever Satyavan,
My husband, waking in the forest's charm
Out of his long pure childhood's lonely dreams,
Desired and had not for his beautiful life.
Give, if thou must, or, if thou canst, refuse."
Death bowed his head in scornful cold assent,
The builder of this dreamlike earth for man
Who has mocked with vanity all gifts he gave.
Uplifting his disastrous voice he spoke:
"Indulgent to the dreams my touch shall break,
I yield to his blind father's longing heart
Kingdom and power and friends and greatness lost
And royal trappings for his peaceful age,
The pallid pomps of man's declining days,
The silvered decadent glories of life's fall.
To one who wiser grew by adverse Fate,
Goods I restore the deluded soul prefers
To impersonal nothingness's bare sublime.
The sensuous solace of the light I give
To eyes which could have found a larger realm,
A deeper vision in their fathomless night.
For that this man desired and asked in vain
While still he lived on earth and cherished hope.
Back from the grandeur of my perilous realms
Go, mortal, to thy small permitted sphere!
Hasten swift-footed, lest to slay thy life
The great laws thou hast violated, moved,
Open at last on thee their marble eyes."
But Savitri answered the disdainful Shade:
"World-spirit, I was thy equal spirit born.
My will too is a law, my strength a god.
I am immortal in my mortality.
I tremble not before the immobile gaze
Of the unchanging marble hierarchies
That look with the stone eyes of Law and Fate.
My soul can meet them with its living fire.

Out of thy shadow give me back again
Into earth's flowering spaces Satyavan
In the sweet transiency of human limbs
To do with him my spirit's burning will.
I will bear with him the ancient Mother's load,
I will follow with him earth's path that leads to God.
Else shall the eternal spaces open to me,
While round us strange horizons far recede,
Travelling together the immense unknown.
For I who have trod with him the tracts of Time,
Can meet behind his steps whatever night
Or unimaginable stupendous dawn
Breaks on our spirits in the untrod Beyond.
Wherever thou leadst his soul I shall pursue."
But to her claim opposed, implacable,
Insisting on the immutable Decree,
Insisting on the immitigable Law
And the insignificance of created things,
Out of the rolling wastes of night there came
Born from the enigma of the unknowable depths
A voice of majesty and appalling scorn.
As when the storm-haired Titan-striding sea
Throws on a swimmer its tremendous laugh
Remembering all the joy its waves have drowned,
So from the darkness of the sovereign night
Against the Woman's boundless heart arose
The almighty cry of universal Death.
"Hast thou god-wings or feet that tread my stars,
Frail creature with the courage that aspires,
Forgetting thy bounds of thought, thy mortal role?
Their orbs were coiled before thy soul was formed.
I, Death, created them out of my void;
All things I have built in them and I destroy.
I made the worlds my net, each joy a mesh.
A Hunger amorous of its suffering prey,
Life that devours, my image see in things.

Mortal, whose spirit is my wandering breath,
Whose transience was imagined by my smile,
Flee clutching thy poor gains to thy trembling breast
Pierced by my pangs Time shall not soon appease.
Blind slave of my deaf force whom I compel
To sin that I may punish, to desire
That I may scourge thee with despair and grief
And thou come bleeding to me at the last,
Thy nothingness recognised, my greatness known,
Turn nor attempt forbidden happy fields
Meant for the souls that can obey my law,
Lest in their sombre shrines thy tread awake
From their uneasy iron-hearted sleep
The Furies who avenge fulfilled desire.
Dread lest in skies where passion hoped to live,
The Unknown's lightnings start and, terrified,
Lone, sobbing, hunted by the hounds of heaven,
A wounded and forsaken soul thou flee
Through the long torture of the centuries,
Nor many lives exhaust the tireless Wrath
Hell cannot slake nor Heaven's mercy assuage.
I will take from thee the black eternal grip:
Clasping in thy heart thy fate's exiguous dole
Depart in peace, if peace for man is just."
But Savitri answered meeting scorn with scorn,
The mortal woman to the dreadful Lord:
"Who is this God imagined by thy night,
Contemptuously creating worlds disdained,
Who made for vanity the brilliant stars?
Not he who has reared his temple in my thoughts
And made his sacred floor my human heart.
My God is will and triumphs in his paths,
My God is love and sweetly suffers all.
To him I have offered hope for sacrifice
And gave my longings as a sacrament.
Who shall prohibit or hedge in his course,

The wonderful, the charioteer, the swift?
A traveller of the million roads of life,
His steps familiar with the lights of heaven
Tread without pain the sword-paved courts of hell;
There he descends to edge eternal joy.
Love's golden wings have power to fan thy void:
The eyes of love gaze starlike through death's night,
The feet of love tread naked hardest worlds.
He labours in the depths, exults on the heights;
He shall remake thy universe, O Death."
She spoke and for a while no voice replied,
While still they travelled through the trackless night
And still that gleam was like a pallid eye
Troubling the darkness with its doubtful gaze.
Then once more came a deep and perilous pause
In that unreal journey through blind Nought;
Once more a Thought, a Word in the void arose
And Death made answer to the human soul:
"What is thy hope? to what dost thou aspire?
This is thy body's sweetest lure of bliss,
Assailed by pain, a frail precarious form,
To please for a few years thy faltering sense
With honey of physical longings and the heart's fire
And, a vain oneness seeking, to embrace
The brilliant idol of a fugitive hour.
And thou, what art thou, soul, thou glorious dream
Of brief emotions made and glittering thoughts,
A thin dance of fireflies speeding through the night,
A sparkling ferment in life's sunlit mire?
Wilt thou claim immortality, O heart,
Crying against the eternal witnesses
That thou and he are endless powers and last?
Death only lasts and the inconscient Void.
I only am eternal and endure.
I am the shapeless formidable Vast,
I am the emptiness that men call Space,

I am a timeless Nothingness carrying all,
I am the Illimitable, the mute Alone.
I, Death, am He; there is no other God.
All from my depths are born, they live by death;
All to my depths return and are no more.
I have made a world by my inconscient Force.
My Force is Nature that creates and slays
The hearts that hope, the limbs that long to live.
I have made man her instrument and slave,
His body I made my banquet, his life my food.
Man has no other help but only Death;
He comes to me at his end for rest and peace.
I, Death, am the one refuge of thy soul.
The Gods to whom man prays can help not man;
They are my imaginations and my moods
Reflected in him by illusion's power.
That which thou seest as thy immortal self
Is a shadowy icon of my infinite,
Is Death in thee dreaming of eternity.
I am the Immobile in which all things move,
I am the nude Inane in which they cease:
I have no body and no tongue to speak,
I commune not with human eye and ear;
Only thy thought gave a figure to my void.
Because, O aspirant to divinity,
Thou calledst me to wrestle with thy soul,
I have assumed a face, a form, a voice.
But if there were a Being witnessing all,
How should he help thy passionate desire?
Aloof he watches sole and absolute,
Indifferent to thy cry in nameless calm.
His being is pure, unwounded, motionless, one.
One endless watches the inconscient scene
Where all things perish, as the foam the stars.
The One lives for ever. There no Satyavan
Changing was born and there no Savitri

Claims from brief life her bribe of joy. There love
Came never with his fretful eyes of tears,
Nor Time is there nor the vain vasts of Space.
It wears no living face, it has no name,
No gaze, no heart that throbs; it asks no second
To aid its being or to share its joys.
It is delight immortally alone.
If thou desirest immortality,
Be then alone sufficient to thy soul:
Live in thyself; forget the man thou lov'st.
My last grand death shall rescue thee from life;
Then shalt thou rise into thy unmoved source."
But Savitri replied to the dread Voice:
"O Death, who reasonest, I reason not,
Reason that scans and breaks, but cannot build
Or builds in vain because she doubts her work.
I am, I love, I see, I act, I will."
Death answered her, one deep surrounding cry:
"Know also. Knowing, thou shalt cease to love
And cease to will, delivered from thy heart.
So shalt thou rest for ever and be still,
Consenting to the impermanence of things."
But Savitri replied for man to Death:
"When I have loved for ever, I shall know.
Love in me knows the truth all changings mask.
I know that knowledge is a vast embrace:
I know that every being is myself,
In every heart is hidden the myriad One.
I know the calm Transcendent bears the world,
The veiled Inhabitant, the silent Lord:
I feel his secret act, his intimate fire;
I hear the murmur of the cosmic Voice.
I know my coming was a wave from God.
For all his suns were conscient in my birth,
And one who loves in us came veiled by death.
Then was man born among the monstrous stars

Dowered with a mind and heart to conquer thee."
In the eternity of his ruthless will
Sure of his empire and his armoured might,
Like one disdaining violent helpless words
From victim lips Death answered not again.
He stood in silence and in darkness wrapped,
A figure motionless, a shadow vague,
Girt with the terrors of his secret sword.
Half-seen in clouds appeared a sombre face;
Night's dusk tiara was his matted hair,
The ashes of the pyre his forehead's sign.
Once more a wanderer in the unending Night,
Blindly forbidden by dead vacant eyes,
She travelled through the dumb unhoping vasts.
Around her rolled the shuddering waste of gloom,
Its swallowing emptiness and joyless death
Resentful of her thought and life and love.
Through the long fading night by her compelled,
Gliding half-seen on their unearthly path,
Phantasmal in the dimness moved the three.

END OF CANTO TWO
END OF BOOK NINE

BOOK TEN

The Book of the Double Twilight

Canto One

The Dream Twilight of the Ideal

ALL STILL was darkness dread and desolate;
There was no change nor any hope of change.
In this black dream which was a house of Void,
A walk to Nowhere in a land of Nought,
Ever they drifted without aim or goal;
Gloom led to worse gloom, depth to an emptier depth,
In some positive Non-being's purposeless Vast
Through formless wastes dumb and unknowable.
An ineffectual beam of suffering light
Through the despairing darkness dogged their steps
Like the remembrance of a glory lost;
Even while it grew, it seemed unreal there,
Yet haunted Nihil's chill stupendous realm,
Unquenchable, perpetual, lonely, null,
A pallid ghost of some dead eternity.
It was as if she must pay now her debt,
Her vain presumption to exist and think,
To some brilliant Maya that conceived her soul.
This most she must absolve with endless pangs,
Her deep original sin, the will to be
And the sin last, greatest, the spiritual pride,
That, made of dust, equalled itself with heaven,
Its scorn of the worm writhing in the mud,
Condemned ephemeral, born from Nature's dream,
Refusal of the transient creature's role,
The claim to be a living fire of God,
The will to be immortal and divine.
In that tremendous darkness heavy and bare
She atoned for all since the first act whence sprang
The error of the consciousness of Time,
The rending of the Inconscient's seal of sleep,

The primal and unpardoned revolt that broke
The peace and silence of the Nothingness
Which was before a seeming universe
Appeared in a vanity of imagined Space
And life arose engendering grief and pain:
A great Negation was the Real's face
Prohibiting the vain process of Time:
And when there is no world, no creature more,
When Time's intrusion has been blotted out,
It shall last, unbodied, saved from thought, at peace.
Accursed in what had been her godhead source,
Condemned to live for ever empty of bliss,
Her immortality her chastisement,
Her spirit, guilty of being, wandered doomed,
Moving for ever through eternal Night.
But Maya is a veil of the Absolute;
A Truth occult has made this mighty world:
The Eternal's wisdom and self-knowledge act
In ignorant Mind and in the body's steps.
The Inconscient is the Superconscient's sleep.
An unintelligible Intelligence
Invents creation's paradox profound;
Spiritual thought is crammed in Matter's forms,
Unseen it throws out a dumb energy
And works a miracle by a machine.
All here is a mystery of contraries:
Darkness a magic of self-hidden Light,
Suffering some secret rapture's tragic mask
And death an instrument of perpetual life.
Although Death walks beside us on Life's road,
A dim bystander at the body's start
And a last judgment on man's futile works,
Other is the riddle of its ambiguous face:
Death is a stair, a door, a stumbling stride
The soul must take to cross from birth to birth,
A grey defeat pregnant with victory,

A whip to lash us towards our deathless state.
The inconscient world is the spirit's self-made room,
Eternal Night shadow of eternal Day.
Night is not our beginning nor our end;
She is the dark Mother in whose womb we have hid
Safe from too swift a waking to world-pain.
We came to her from a supernal Light,
By Light we live and to the Light we go.
Here in this seat of Darkness mute and lone,
In the heart of everlasting Nothingness
Light conquered now even by that feeble beam:
Its faint infiltration drilled the blind deaf mass;
Almost it changed into a glimmering sight
That housed the phantom of an aureate Sun
Whose orb pupilled the eye of Nothingness.
A golden fire came in and burned Night's heart;
Her dusky mindlessness began to dream;
The Inconscient conscious grew, Night felt and thought.
Assailed in the sovereign emptiness of its reign
The intolerant Darkness paled and drew apart
Till only a few black remnants stained that Ray.
But on a failing edge of dumb lost space
Still a great dragon body sullenly loomed;
Adversary of the slow struggling Dawn
Defending its ground of tortured mystery,
It trailed its coils through the dead martyred air
And curving fled down a grey slope of Time.

There is a morning twilight of the gods;
Miraculous from sleep their forms arise
And God's long nights are justified by dawn.
There breaks a passion and splendour of new birth
And hue-winged visions stray across the lids,
Heaven's chanting heralds waken dim-eyed Space.
The dreaming deities look beyond the seen
And fashion in their thoughts the ideal worlds

Sprung from a limitless moment of desire
That once had lodged in some abysmal heart.
Passed was the heaviness of the eyeless dark
And all the sorrow of the night was dead:
Surprised by a blind joy with groping hands
Like one who wakes to find his dreams were true,
Into a happy misty twilit world
Where all ran after light and joy and love
She slipped; there far-off raptures drew more close
And deep anticipations of delight,
For ever eager to be grasped and held,
Were never grasped, yet breathed strange ecstasy.
A pearl-winged indistinctness fleeting swam,
An air that dared not suffer too much light.
Vague fields were there, vague pastures gleamed, vague trees,
Vague scenes dim-hearted in a drifting haze;
Vague cattle white roamed glimmering through the mist;
Vague spirits wandered with a bodiless cry,
Vague melodies touched the soul and fled pursued
Into harmonious distances unseized;
Forms subtly elusive and half-luminous powers
Wishing no goal for their unearthly course
Strayed happily through vague ideal lands,
Or floated without footing or their walk
Left steps of reverie on sweet memory's ground;
Or they paced to the mighty measure of their thoughts
Led by a low far chanting of the gods.
A ripple of gleaming wings crossed the far sky;
Birds like pale-bosomed imaginations flew
With low disturbing voices of desire,
And half-heard lowings drew the listening ear,
As if the Sun-god's brilliant kine were there
Hidden in mist and passing towards the sun.
These fugitive beings, these elusive shapes
Were all that claimed the eye and met the soul,
The natural inhabitants of that world.

But nothing there was fixed or stayed for long;
No mortal feet could rest upon that soil,
No breath of life lingered embodied there.
In that fine chaos joy fled dancing past
And beauty evaded settled line and form
And hid its sense in mysteries of hue;
Yet gladness ever repeated the same notes
And gave the sense of an enduring world;
There was a strange consistency of shapes,
And the same thoughts were constant passers-by
And all renewed unendingly its charm
Alluring ever the expectant heart
Like music that one always waits to hear,
Like the recurrence of a haunting rhyme.
One touched incessantly things never seized,
A skirt of worlds invisibly divine.
As if a trail of disappearing stars
There showered upon the floating atmosphere
Colours and lights and evanescent gleams
That called to follow into a magic heaven,
And in each cry that fainted on the ear
There was the voice of an unrealised bliss.
An adoration reigned in the yearning heart,
A spirit of purity, an elusive presence
Of faery beauty and ungrasped delight
Whose momentary and escaping thrill,
However unsubstantial to our flesh,
And brief even in imperishableness,
Much sweeter seemed than any rapture known
Earth or all-conquering heaven can ever give.
Heaven ever young and earth too firm and old
Delay the heart by immobility:
Their raptures of creation last too long,
Their bold formations are too absolute;
Carved by an anguish of divine endeavour
They stand up sculptured on the eternal hills,

Or quarried from the living rocks of God
Win immortality by perfect form.
They are too intimate with eternal things:
Vessels of infinite significances,
They are too clear, too great, too meaningful;
No mist or shadow soothes the vanquished sight,
No soft penumbra of incertitude.
These only touched a golden hem of bliss,
The gleaming shoulder of some godlike hope,
The flying feet of exquisite desires.
On a slow trembling brink between night and day
They shone like visitants from the morning star,
Satisfied beginnings of perfection, first
Tremulous imaginings of a heavenly world:
They mingle in a passion of pursuit,
Thrilled with a spray of joy too slight to tire.
All in this world was shadowed forth, not limned,
Like faces leaping on a fan of fire
Or shapes of wonder in a tinted blur,
Like fugitive landscapes painting silver mists.
Here vision fled back from the sight alarmed,
And sound sought refuge from the ear's surprise,
And all experience was a hasty joy.
The joys here snatched were half-forbidden things,
Timorous soul-bridals delicately veiled
As when a goddess' bosom dimly moves
To first desire and her white soul transfigured,
A glimmering Eden crossed by faery gleams,
Trembles to expectation's fiery wand,
But nothing is familiar yet with bliss.
All things in this fair realm were heavenly strange
In a fleeting gladness of untired delight,
In an insistency of magic change.
Past vanishing hedges, hurrying hints of fields,
Mid swift escaping lanes that fled her feet
Journeying she wished no end: as one through clouds

Travels upon a mountain ridge and hears
Arising to him out of hidden depths
Sound of invisible streams, she walked besieged
By the illusion of a mystic space,
A charm of bodiless touches felt and heard
A sweetness as of voices high and dim
Calling like travellers upon seeking winds
Melodiously with an alluring cry.
As if a music old yet ever new,
Moving suggestions on her heart-strings dwelt,
Thoughts that no habitation found, yet clung
With passionate repetition to her mind,
Desires that hurt not, happy only to live
Always the same and always unfulfilled
Sang in the breast like a celestial lyre.
Thus all could last yet nothing ever be.
In this beauty as of mind made visible,
Dressed in its rays of wonder Satyavan
Before her seemed the centre of its charm,
Head of her loveliness of longing dreams
And captain of the fancies of her soul.
Even the dreadful majesty of Death's face
And its sombre sadness could not darken nor slay
The intangible lustre of those fleeting skies.
The sombre Shadow sullen, implacable
Made beauty and laughter more imperative;
Enhanced by his grey, joy grew more bright and dear;
His dark contrast edging ideal sight
Deepened unuttered meanings to the heart;
Pain grew a trembling undertone of bliss
And transience immortality's floating hem,
A moment's robe in which she looked more fair,
Its antithesis sharpening her divinity.
A comrade of the Ray and Mist and Flame,
By a moon-bright face a brilliant moment drawn,
Almost she seemed a thought mid floating thoughts,

Seen hardly by a visionary mind
Amid the white inward musings of the soul.
Half-vanquished by the dream-happiness around,
Awhile she moved on an enchantment's soil,
But still remained possessor of her soul.
Above, her spirit in its mighty trance
Saw all, but lived for its transcendent task,
Immutable like a fixed eternal star.

END OF CANTO ONE

Canto Two

The Gospel of Death and Vanity of the Ideal

THEN pealed the calm inexorable voice:
Abolishing hope, cancelling life's golden truths,
Fatal its accents smote the trembling air.
That lovely world swam thin and frail, most like
Some pearly evanescent farewell gleam
On the faint verge of dusk in moonless eves.
"Prisoner of Nature, many-visioned spirit,
Thought's creature in the ideal's realm enjoying
Thy unsubstantial immortality
The subtle marvellous mind of man has feigned,
This is the world from which thy yearnings came.
When it would build eternity from the dust,
Man's thought paints images illusion rounds;
Prophesying glories it shall never see,
It labours delicately among its dreams.
Behold this fleeing of light-tasselled shapes,
Aerial raiment of unbodied gods;
A rapture of things that never can be born,
Hope chants to hope a bright immortal choir;
Cloud satisfies cloud, phantom to longing phantom
Leans sweetly, sweetly is clasped or sweetly chased.
This is the stuff from which the ideal is formed:
Its builder is thought, its base the heart's desire,
But nothing real answers to their call.
The ideal dwells not in heaven, nor on the earth,
A bright delirium of man's ardour of hope
Drunk with the wine of its own fantasy.
It is a brilliant shadow's dreamy trail.
Thy vision's error builds the azure skies,
Thy vision's error drew the rainbow's arch;

Thy mortal longing made for thee a soul.
This angel in thy body thou callst love,
Who shapes his wings from thy emotion's hues,
In a ferment of thy body has been born
And with the body that housed it it must die.
It is a passion of thy yearning cells,
It is flesh that calls to flesh to serve its lust;
It is thy mind that seeks an answering mind
And dreams awhile that it has found its mate;
It is thy life that asks a human prop
To uphold its weakness lonely in the world
Or feeds its hunger on another's life.
A beast of prey that pauses in its prowl,
It crouches under a bush in splendid flower
To seize a heart and body for its food:
This beast thou dreamst immortal and a god.
O human mind, vainly thou torturest
An hour's delight to stretch through infinity's
Long void and fill its formless, passionless gulfs,
Persuading the insensible Abyss
To lend eternity to perishing things,
And trickst the fragile movements of thy heart
With thy spirit's feint of immortality.
All here emerges born from Nothingness;
Encircled it lasts by the emptiness of Space,
Awhile upheld by an unknowing Force,
Then crumbles back into its parent Nought:
Only the mute Alone can for ever be.
In the Alone there is no room for love.
In vain to clothe love's perishable mud
Thou hast woven on the Immortals' borrowed loom
The ideal's gorgeous and unfading robe.
The ideal never yet was real made.
Imprisoned in form that glory cannot live;
Into a body shut it breathes no more.
Intangible, remote, for ever pure,

A sovereign of its own brilliant void,
Unwillingly it descends to earthly air
To inhabit a white temple in man's heart:
In his heart it shines rejected by his life.
Immutable, bodiless, beautiful, grand and dumb,
Immobile on its shining throne it sits;
Dumb it receives his offering and his prayer.
It has no voice to answer to his call,
No feet that move, no hands to take his gifts:
Aerial statue of the nude Idea,
Virgin conception of a bodiless god,
Its light stirs man the thinker to create
An earthly semblance of diviner things.
Its hued reflection falls upon man's acts;
His institutions are its cenotaphs,
He signs his dead conventions with its name;
His virtues don the Ideal's skiey robe
And a nimbus of the outline of its face:
He hides their littleness with the divine Name.
Yet insufficient is the bright pretence
To screen their indigent and earthy make:
Earth only is there and not some heavenly source.
If heavens there are they are veiled in their own light,
If a Truth eternal somewhere reigns unknown,
It burns in a tremendous void of God;
For truth shines far from the falsehoods of the world;
How can the heavens come down to unhappy earth
Or the eternal lodge in drifting time?
How shall the Ideal tread earth's dolorous soil
Where life is only a labour and a hope,
A child of Matter and by Matter fed,
A fire flaming low in Nature's grate,
A wave that breaks upon a shore in Time,
A journey's toilsome trudge with death for goal?
The Avatars have lived and died in vain,
Vain was the sage's thought, the prophet's voice;

In vain is seen the shining upward Way.
Earth lies unchanged beneath the circling sun;
She loves her fall and no omnipotence
Her mortal imperfections can erase,
Force on man's crooked ignorance Heaven's straight line
Or colonise a world of death with gods.
O traveller in the chariot of the Sun,
High priestess in thy holy fancy's shrine
Who with a magic ritual in earth's house
Worshippest ideal and eternal love,
What is this love thy thought has deified,
This sacred legend and immortal myth?
It is a conscious yearning of thy flesh,
It is a glorious burning of thy nerves,
A rose of dream-splendour petalling thy mind,
A great red rapture and torture of thy heart.
A sudden transfiguration of thy days,
It passes and the world is as before.
A ravishing edge of sweetness and of pain,
A thrill in its yearning makes it seem divine,
A golden bridge across the roar of the years,
A cord tying thee to eternity.
And yet how brief and frail! how soon is spent
This treasure wasted by the gods on man,
This happy closeness as of soul to soul,
This honey of the body's companionship,
This heightened joy, this ecstasy in the veins,
This strange illumination of the sense!
If Satyavan had lived, love would have died;
But Satyavan is dead and love shall live
A little while in thy sad breast, until
His face and body fade on memory's wall
Where other bodies, other faces come.
When love breaks suddenly into the life
At first man steps into a world of the sun;
In his passion he feels his heavenly element:

But only a fine sunlit patch of earth
The marvellous aspect took of heaven's outburst;
The snake is there and the worm in the heart of the rose.
A word, a moment's act can slay the god;
Precarious is his immortality,
He has a thousand ways to suffer and die.
Love cannot live by heavenly food alone,
Only on sap of earth can it survive.
For thy passion was a sensual want refined,
A hunger of the body and the heart;
Thy want can tire and cease or turn elsewhere.
Or love may meet a dire and pitiless end
By bitter treason, or wrath with cruel wounds
Separate, or thy unsatisfied will to others
Depart when first love's joy lies stripped and slain:
A dull indifference replaces fire
Or an endearing habit imitates love:
An outward and uneasy union lasts
Or the routine of a life's compromise:
Where once the seed of oneness had been cast
Into a semblance of spiritual ground
By a divine adventure of heavenly powers
Two strive, constant associates without joy,
Two egos straining in a single leash,
Two minds divided by their jarring thoughts,
Two spirits disjoined, for ever separate.
Thus is the ideal falsified in man's world;
Trivial or sombre, disillusion comes,
Life's harsh reality stares at the soul:
Heaven's hour adjourned flees into bodiless Time.
Death saves thee from this and saves Satyavan:
He now is safe, delivered from himself;
He travels to silence and felicity.
Call him not back to the treacheries of earth
And the poor petty life of animal Man.
In my vast tranquil spaces let him sleep

In harmony with the mighty hush of death
Where love lies slumbering on the breast of peace.
And thou, go back alone to thy frail world:
Chastise thy heart with knowledge, unhood to see,
Thy nature raised into clear living heights,
The heaven-bird's view from unimagined peaks.
For when thou givest thy spirit to a dream
Soon hard necessity will smite thee awake:
Purest delight began and it must end.
Thou too shalt know, thy heart no anchor swinging,
Thy cradled soul moored in eternal seas.
Vain are the cycles of thy brilliant mind.
Renounce, forgetting joy and hope and tears,
Thy passionate nature in the bosom profound
Of a happy Nothingness and worldless Calm,
Delivered into my mysterious rest.
One with my fathomless Nihil all forget.
Forget thy fruitless spirit's waste of force,
Forget the weary circle of thy birth,
Forget the joy and the struggle and the pain,
The vague spiritual quest which first began
When worlds broke forth like clusters of fire-flowers,
And great burning thoughts voyaged through the sky of mind
And Time and its aeons crawled across the vasts
And souls emerged into mortality."
 But Savitri replied to the dark Power:
"A dangerous music now thou findst, O Death,
Melting thy speech into harmonious pain,
And flut'st alluringly to tired hopes
Thy falsehoods mingled with sad strains of truth.
But I forbid thy voice to slay my soul.
My love is not a hunger of the heart,
My love is not a craving of the flesh;
It came to me from God, to God returns.
Even in all that life and man have marred,
A whisper of divinity still is heard,

A breath is felt from the eternal spheres.
Allowed by Heaven and wonderful to man
A sweet fire-rhythm of passion chants to love.
There is a hope in its wild infinite cry;
It rings with callings from forgotten heights,
And when its strains are hushed to high-winged souls
In their empyrean, its burning breath
Survives beyond, the rapturous core of suns
That flame for ever pure in skies unseen,
A voice of the eternal Ecstasy.
One day I shall behold my great sweet world
Put off the dire disguises of the gods,
Unveil from terror and disrobe from sin.
Appeased we shall draw near our mother's face,
We shall cast our candid souls upon her lap;
Then shall we clasp the ecstasy we chase,
Then shall we shudder with the long-sought god,
Then shall we find Heaven's unexpected strain.
Not only is there hope for godheads pure;
The violent and darkened deities
Leaped down from the one breast in rage to find
What the white gods had missed: they too are safe;
A mother's eyes are on them and her arms
Stretched out in love desire her rebel sons.
One who came love and lover and beloved
Eternal, built himself a wondrous field
And wove the measures of a marvellous dance.
There in its circles and its magic turns
Attracted he arrives, repelled he flees.
In the wild devious promptings of his mind
He tastes the honey of tears and puts off joy
Repenting, and has laughter and has wrath,
And both are a broken music of the soul
Which seeks out reconciled its heavenly rhyme.
Ever he comes to us across the years
Bearing a new sweet face that is the old.

His bliss laughs to us or it calls concealed
Like a far-heard unseen entrancing flute
From moonlit branches in the throbbing woods,
Tempting our angry search and passionate pain.
Disguised the Lover seeks and draws our souls.
He named himself for me, grew Satyavan.
For we were man and woman from the first,
The twin souls born from one undying fire.
Did he not dawn on me in other stars?
How has he through the thickets of the world
Pursued me like a lion in the night
And come upon me suddenly in the ways
And seized me with his glorious golden leap!
Unsatisfied he yearned for me through time,
Sometimes with wrath and sometimes with sweet peace
Desiring me since first the world began.
He rose like a wild wave out of the floods
And dragged me helpless into seas of bliss.
Out of my curtained past his arms arrive;
They have touched me like the soft persuading wind,
They have plucked me like a glad and trembling flower,
And clasped me happily burned in ruthless flame.
I too have found him charmed in lovely forms
And run delighted to his distant voice
And pressed to him past many dreadful bars.
If there is a yet happier greater god,
Let him first wear the face of Satyavan
And let his soul be one with him I love;
So let him seek me that I may desire.
For only one heart beats within my breast
And one god sits there throned. Advance, O Death,
Beyond the phantom beauty of this world;
For of its citizens I am not one.
I cherish God the Fire, not God the Dream."
But Death once more inflicted on her heart
The majesty of his calm and dreadful voice:

"A bright hallucination are thy thoughts.
A prisoner haled by a spiritual cord,
Of thy own sensuous will the ardent slave,
Thou sendest eagle-poised to meet the sun
Words winged with the red splendour of thy heart.
But knowledge dwells not in the passionate heart;
The heart's words fall back unheard from Wisdom's throne.
Vain is thy longing to build heaven on earth.
Artificer of Ideal and Idea,
Mind, child of Matter in the womb of Life,
To higher levels persuades his parents' steps:
Inapt, they follow ill the daring guide.
But Mind, a glorious traveller in the sky,
Walks lamely on the earth with footsteps slow;
Hardly he can mould the life's rebellious stuff,
Hardly can he hold the galloping hooves of sense:
His thoughts look straight into the very heavens;
They draw their gold from a celestial mine,
His acts work painfully a common ore.
All thy high dreams were made by Matter's mind
To solace its dull work in Matter's jail,
Its only house where it alone seems true.
A solid image of reality
Carved out of being to prop the works of Time,
Matter on the firm earth sits strong and sure.
It is the first-born of created things,
It stands the last when mind and life are slain,
And if it ended all would cease to be.
All else is only its outcome or its phase:
Thy soul is a brief flower by the gardener Mind
Created in thy matter's terrain plot;
It perishes with the plant on which it grows,
For from earth's sap it draws its heavenly hue:
Thy thoughts are gleams that pass on Matter's verge,
Thy life a lapsing wave on Matter's sea.
A careful steward of Truth's limited means,

Treasuring her founded facts from the squandering Power,
It tethers mind to the tent-posts of sense,
To a leaden grey routine clamps Life's caprice
And ties all creatures with the cords of Law.
A vessel of transmuting alchemies,
A glue that sticks together mind and life,
If Matter fails, all crumbling cracks and falls.
All upon Matter stands as on a rock.
Yet this security and guarantor
Pressed for credentials an impostor proves:
A cheat of substance where no substance is,
An appearance and a symbol and a nought,
Its forms have no original right to birth:
Its aspect of a fixed stability
Is the cover of a captive motion's swirl,
An order of the steps of Energy's dance
Whose footmarks leave for ever the same signs,
A concrete face of unsubstantial Time,
A trickle dotting the emptiness of Space:
A stable-seeming movement without change,
Yet change arrives and the last change is death.
What seemed most real once, is Nihil's show.
Its figures are snares that trap and prison the sense;
The beginningless Void was its artificer:
Nothing is there but aspects limned by Chance
And seeming shapes of seeming Energy.
All by Death's mercy breathe and live awhile,
All think and act by the Inconscient's grace.
Addict of the roseate luxury of thy thoughts,
Turn not thy gaze within thyself to look
At visions in the gleaming crystal, Mind,
Close not thy lids to dream the forms of Gods.
At last to open thy eyes consent and see
The stuff of which thou and the world are made.
Inconscient in the dumb inconscient Void
Inexplicably a moving world sprang forth:

Awhile secure, happily insensible,
It could not rest content with its own truth.
For something on its nescient breast was born
Condemned to see and know, to feel and love,
It watched its acts, imagined a soul within;
It groped for truth and dreamed of Self and God.
When all unconscious was, then all was well.
I, Death, was king and kept my regal state,
Designing my unwilled, unerring plan,
Creating with a calm insentient heart.
In my sovereign power of unreality
Obliging nothingness to take a form,
Infallibly my blind unthinking force
Making by chance a fixity like fate's,
By whim the formulas of Necessity,
Founded on the hollow ground of the Inane
The sure bizarrerie of Nature's scheme.
I curved the vacant ether into Space;
A huge expanding and contracting Breath
Harboured the fires of the universe:
I struck out the supreme original spark
And spread its sparse ranked armies through the Inane,
Manufactured the stars from the occult radiances,
Marshalled the platoons of the invisible dance;
I formed earth's beauty out of atom and gas,
And built from chemic plasm the living man.
Then Thought came in and spoiled the harmonious world:
Matter began to hope and think and feel,
Tissue and nerve bore joy and agony.
The inconscient cosmos strove to learn its task;
An ignorant personal God was born in Mind
And to understand invented reason's law,
The impersonal Vast throbbed back to man's desire,
A trouble rocked the great world's blind still heart
And Nature lost her wide immortal calm.
Thus came this warped incomprehensible scene

Of souls emmeshed in life's delight and pain
And Matter's sleep and Mind's mortality,
Of beings in Nature's prison waiting death
And consciousness left in seeking ignorance
And evolution's slow arrested plan.
This is the world in which thou mov'st, astray
In the tangled pathways of the human mind,
In the issueless circling of thy human life,
Searching for thy soul and thinking God is here.
But where is room for soul or place for God
In the brute immensity of a machine?
A transient Breath thou takest for thy soul,
Born from a gas, a plasm, a sperm, a gene,
A magnified image of man's mind for God,
A shadow of thyself thrown upon Space.
Interposed between the upper and nether Void,
Thy consciousness reflects the world around
In the distorting mirror of Ignorance
Or upwards turns to catch imagined stars.
Or if a half-Truth is playing with the earth
Throwing its light on a dark shadowy ground,
It touches only and leaves a luminous smudge.
Immortality thou claimest for thy spirit,
But immortality for imperfect man,
A god who hurts himself at every step,
Would be a cycle of eternal pain.
Wisdom and love thou claimest as thy right;
But knowledge in this world is error's mate,
A brilliant procuress of Nescience,
And human love a posturer on earth-stage
Who imitates with verve a faery dance.
An extract pressed from hard experience,
Man's knowledge casked in the barrels of Memory
Has the harsh savour of a mortal draught:
A sweet secretion from the erotic glands
Flattering and torturing the burning nerves,

Love is a honey and poison in the breast
Drunk by it as the nectar of the gods.
Earth's human wisdom is no great-browed power,
And love no gleaming angel from the skies;
If they aspire beyond earth's dullard air,
Arriving sunwards with frail waxen wings,
How high could reach that forced unnatural flight?
But not on earth can divine wisdom reign
And not on earth can divine love be found;
Heaven-born, only in heaven can they live;
Or else there too perhaps they are shining dreams.
Nay, is not all thou art and doest a dream?
Thy mind and life are tricks of Matter's force.
If thy mind seems to thee a radiant sun,
If thy life runs a swift and glorious stream,
This is the illusion of thy mortal heart
Dazzled by a ray of happiness or light.
Impotent to live by their own right divine,
Convinced of their brilliant unreality,
When their supporting ground is cut away,
These children of Matter into Matter die.
Even Matter vanishes into Energy's vague
And Energy is a motion of old Nought.
How shall the Ideal's unsubstantial hues
Be painted stiff on earth's vermilion blur,
A dream within a dream come doubly true?
How shall the will-o'-the-wisp become a star?
The Ideal is a malady of thy mind,
A bright delirium of thy speech and thought,
A strange wine of beauty lifting thee to false sight.
A noble fiction of thy yearnings made,
Thy human imperfection it must share:
Its forms in Nature disappoint the heart,
And never shall it find its heavenly shape
And never can it be fulfilled in Time.
O soul misled by the splendour of thy thoughts,

O earthly creature with thy dream of heaven,
Obey, resigned and still, the earthly law.
Accept the brief light that falls upon thy days;
Take what thou canst of Life's permitted joy;
Submitting to the ordeal of fate's scourge
Suffer what thou must of toil and grief and care.
There shall approach silencing thy passionate heart
My long calm night of everlasting sleep:
There into the hush from which thou cam'st retire."

END OF CANTO TWO

Canto Three

The Debate of Love and Death

A SAD destroying cadence the voice sank;
It seemed to lead the advancing march of Life
Into some still original Inane.
But Savitri answered to almighty Death:
"O dark-browed sophist of the universe
Who veilst the Real with its own Idea,
Hiding with brute objects Nature's living face,
Masking eternity with thy dance of death,
Thou hast woven the ignorant mind into a screen
And made of Thought error's purveyor and scribe,
And a false witness of mind's servant sense.
An aesthete of the sorrow of the world,
Champion of a harsh and sad philosophy
Thou hast used words to shutter out the Light
And called in Truth to vindicate a lie.
A lying reality is falsehood's crown
And a perverted truth her richest gem.
O Death, thou speakest truth but truth that slays,
I answer to thee with the Truth that saves.
A traveller new-discovering himself,
One made of Matter's world his starting-point,
He made of Nothingness his living-room
And Night a process of the eternal light
And death a spur towards immortality.
God wrapped his head from sight in Matter's cowl,
His consciousness dived into inconscient depths,
All-Knowledge seemed a huge dark Nescience;
Infinity wore a boundless zero's form.
His abysms of bliss became insensible deeps,
Eternity a blank spiritual Vast.
Annulling an original nullity

The Timeless took its ground in emptiness
And drew the figure of a universe,
That the spirit might adventure into Time
And wrestle with adamant Necessity
And the soul pursue a cosmic pilgrimage.
A spirit moved in black immensities
And built a Thought in ancient Nothingness;
A soul was lit in God's tremendous Void,
A secret labouring glow of nascent fire.
In Nihil's gulf his mighty Puissance wrought;
She swung her formless motion into shapes,
Made Matter the body of the Bodiless.
Infant and dim the eternal Mights awoke.
In inert Matter breathed a slumbering Life,
In a subconscient Life Mind lay asleep;
In waking Life it stretched its giant limbs
To shake from it the torpor of its drowse;
A senseless substance quivered into sense,
The world's heart commenced to beat, its eyes to see,
In the crowded dumb vibrations of a brain
Thought fumbled in a ring to find itself,
Discovered speech and fed the new-born Word
That bridged with spans of light the world's ignorance.
In waking Mind, the Thinker built his house.
A reasoning animal willed and planned and sought;
He stood erect among his brute compeers,
He built life new, measured the universe,
Opposed his fate and wrestled with unseen Powers,
Conquered and used the laws that rule the world,
And hoped to ride the heavens and reach the stars,
A master of his huge environment.
Now through Mind's windows stares the demigod
Hidden behind the curtains of man's soul:
He has seen the Unknown, looked on Truth's veilless face;
A ray has touched him from the eternal sun;
Motionless, voiceless in foreseeing depths,

He stands awake in Supernature's light
And sees a glory of arisen wings
And sees the vast descending might of God.
"O Death, thou lookst on an unfinished world
Assailed by thee and of its road unsure,
Peopled by imperfect minds and ignorant lives,
And sayest God is not and all is vain.
How shall the child already be the man?
Because he is infant, shall he never grow?
Because he is ignorant, shall he never learn?
In a small fragile seed a great tree lurks,
In a tiny gene a thinking being is shut;
A little element in a little sperm,
It grows and is a conqueror and a sage.
Then wilt thou spew out, Death, God's mystic truth,
Deny the occult spiritual miracle?
Still wilt thou say there is no spirit, no God?
A mute material Nature wakes and sees;
She has invented speech, unveiled a will.
Something there waits beyond towards which she strives,
Something surrounds her into which she grows:
To uncover the spirit, to change back into God,
To exceed herself is her transcendent task.
In God concealed the world began to be,
Tardily it travels towards manifest God:
Our imperfection towards perfection toils,
The body is the chrysalis of a soul:
The infinite holds the finite in its arms,
Time travels towards revealed eternity.
A miracle structure of the eternal Mage,
Matter its mystery hides from its own eyes,
A scripture written out in cryptic signs,
An occult document of the All-Wonderful's art.
All here bears witness to his secret might,
In all we feel his presence and his power.
A blaze of his sovereign glory is the sun,

A glory is the gold and glimmering moon,
A glory is his dream of purple sky.
A march of his greatness are the wheeling stars.
His laughter of beauty breaks out in green trees,
His moments of beauty triumph in a flower;
The blue sea's chant, the rivulet's wandering voice
Are murmurs falling from the Eternal's harp.
This world is God fulfilled in outwardness.
His ways challenge our reason and our sense;
By blind brute movements of an ignorant Force,
By means we slight as small, obscure or base,
A greatness founded upon little things,
He has built a world in the unknowing Void.
His forms he has massed from infinitesimal dust;
His marvels are built from insignificant things.
If mind is crippled, life untaught and crude,
If brutal masks are there and evil acts,
They are incidents of his vast and varied plot,
His great and dangerous drama's needed steps;
He makes with these and all his passion-play,
A play and yet no play but the deep scheme
Of a transcendent Wisdom finding ways
To meet her Lord in the shadow and the Night:
Above her is the vigil of the stars;
Watched by a solitary Infinitude
She embodies in dumb Matter the Divine,
In symbol minds and lives the Absolute.
A miracle-monger her mechanical craft;
Matter's machine worked out the laws of thought,
Life's engines served the labour of a soul:
The Mighty Mother her creation wrought,
A huge caprice self-bound by iron laws,
And shut God into an enigmatic world:
She lulled the Omniscient into nescient sleep,
Omnipotence on Inertia's back she drove,
Trod perfectly with divine unconscious steps

The enormous circle of her wonder-works.
Immortality assured itself by death;
The Eternal's face was seen through drifts of Time.
His knowledge he disguised as Ignorance,
His Good he sowed in Evil's monstrous bed,
Made error a door by which Truth could enter in,
His plant of bliss watered with Sorrow's tears.
A thousand aspects point back to the One;
A dual Nature covered the Unique.
In this meeting of the Eternal's mingling masques,
This tangle-dance of passionate contraries
Locking like lovers in a forbidden embrace
The quarrel of their lost identity,
Through this wrestle and wrangle of the extremes of Power
Earth's million roads struggled towards deity.
All stumbled on behind a stumbling Guide,
Yet every stumble is a needed pace
On unknown routes to an unknowable goal.
All blundered and straggled towards the One Divine.
As if transmuted by a titan spell
The eternal Powers assumed a dubious face:
Idols of an oblique divinity,
They wore the heads of animal or troll,
Assumed ears of the faun, the satyr's hoof,
Or harboured the demoniac in their gaze:
A crooked maze they made of thinking mind,
They suffered a metamorphosis of the heart,
Admitting bacchant revellers from the Night
Into its sanctuary of delights,
As in a Dionysian masquerade.
On the highways, in the gardens of the world
They wallowed oblivious of their divine parts,
As drunkards of a dire Circean wine
Or a child who sprawls and sports in Nature's mire.
Even wisdom, hewer of the roads of God,
Is a partner in the deep disastrous game:

Lost is the pilgrim's wallet and the scrip,
She fails to read the map and watch the star.
A poor self-righteous virtue is her stock
And reason's pragmatic grope or abstract sight,
Or the technique of a brief hour's success
She teaches, an usher in utility's school.
On the ocean surface of vast Consciousness
Small thoughts in shoals are fished up into a net
But the great truths escape her narrow cast;
Guarded from vision by creation's depths,
Obscure they swim in blind enormous gulfs
Safe from the little sounding leads of mind,
Too far for the puny diver's shallow plunge.
Our mortal vision peers with ignorant eyes;
It has no gaze on the deep heart of things.
Our knowledge walks leaning on Error's staff,
A worshipper of false dogmas and false gods,
Or fanatic of a fierce intolerant creed
Or a seeker doubting every truth he finds,
A sceptic facing Light with adamant No
Or chilling the heart with dry ironic smile,
A cynic stamping out the god in man;
A darkness wallows in the paths of Time
Or lifts its giant head to blot the stars;
It makes a cloud of the interpreting mind
And intercepts the oracles of the Sun.
Yet Light is there; it stands at Nature's doors:
It holds a torch to lead the traveller in.
It waits to be kindled in our secret cells;
It is a star lighting an ignorant sea,
A lamp upon our poop piercing the night.
As knowledge grows Light flames up from within:
It is a shining warrior in the mind,
An eagle of dreams in the divining heart,
An armour in the fight, a bow of God.
Then larger dawns arrive and Wisdom's pomps

Cross through the being's dim half-lighted fields;
Philosophy climbs up Thought's cloud-bank peaks
And Science tears out Nature's occult powers,
Enormous djinns who serve a dwarf's small needs,
Exposes the sealed minutiae of her art
And conquers her by her own captive force.
On heights unreached by mind's most daring soar,
Upon a dangerous edge of failing Time
The soul draws back into its deathless Self;
Man's knowledge becomes God's supernal Ray.
There is the mystic realm whence leaps the power
Whose fire burns in the eyes of seer and sage;
A lightning flash of visionary sight,
It plays upon an inward verge of mind:
Thought silenced gazes into a brilliant Void.
A voice comes down from mystic unseen peaks:
A cry of splendour from a mouth of storm,
It is the voice that speaks to night's profound,
It is the thunder and the flaming call.
Above the planes that climb from nescient earth,
A hand is lifted towards the Invisible's realm,
Beyond the superconscient's blinding line
And plucks away the screens of the Unknown;
A spirit within looks into the Eternal's eyes.
It hears the Word to which our hearts were deaf,
It sees through the blaze in which our thoughts grew blind;
It drinks from the naked breasts of glorious Truth,
It learns the secrets of eternity.
Thus all was plunged into the riddling Night,
Thus all is raised to meet a dazzling Sun.
O Death, this is the mystery of thy reign.
In earth's anomalous and magic field
Carried in its aimless journey by the sun
Mid the forced marches of the great dumb stars,
A darkness occupied the fields of God,
And Matter's world was governed by thy shape.

Thy mask has covered the Eternal's face,
The Bliss that made the world has fallen asleep.
Abandoned in the Vast she slumbered on:
An evil transmutation overtook
Her members till she knew herself no more.
Only through her creative slumber flit
Frail memories of the joy and beauty meant
Under the sky's blue laugh mid green-scarfed trees
And happy squanderings of scents and hues,
In the field of the golden promenade of the sun
And the vigil of the dream-light of the stars,
Amid high meditating heads of hills,
On the bosom of voluptuous rain-kissed earth
And by the sapphire tumblings of the sea.
But now the primal innocence is lost
And Death and Ignorance govern the mortal world
And Nature's visage wears a greyer hue.
Earth still has kept her early charm and grace,
The grandeur and the beauty still are hers,
But veiled is the divine Inhabitant.
The souls of men have wandered from the Light
And the great Mother turns away her face.
The eyes of the creatrix Bliss are closed
And sorrow's touch has found her in her dreams.
As she turns and tosses on her bed of Void,
Because she cannot wake and find herself
And cannot build again her perfect shape,
Oblivious of her nature and her state,
Forgetting her instinct of felicity,
Forgetting to create a world of joy,
She weeps and makes her creatures' eyes to weep;
Testing with sorrow's edge her children's breasts,
She spends on life's vain waste of hope and toil
The poignant luxury of grief and tears.
In the nightmare change of her half-conscious dream,
Tortured herself and torturing by her touch,

She comes to our hearts and bodies and our lives
Wearing a hard and cruel mask of pain.
Our nature twisted by the abortive birth
Returns wry answers to life's questioning shocks,
An acrid relish finds in the world's pangs,
Drinks the sharp wine of grief's perversity.
A curse is laid on the pure joy of life:
Delight, God's sweetest sign and Beauty's twin,
Dreaded by aspiring saint and austere sage,
Is shunned, a dangerous and ambiguous cheat,
A specious trick of an infernal Power
It tempts the soul to its self-hurt and fall.
A puritan God made pleasure a poisonous fruit,
Or red drug in the market-place of Death,
And sin the child of Nature's ecstasy.
Yet every creature hunts for happiness,
Buys with harsh pangs or tears by violence
From the dull breast of the inanimate globe
Some fragment or some broken shard of bliss.
Even joy itself becomes a poisonous draught;
Its hunger is made a dreadful hook of Fate.
All means are held good to catch a single beam,
Eternity sacrificed for a moment's bliss:
Yet for joy and not for sorrow earth was made
And not as a dream in endless suffering Time.
Although God made the world for his delight,
An ignorant Power took charge and seemed his Will
And Death's deep falsity has mastered Life.
All grew a play of Chance simulating Fate.

"A secret air of pure felicity
Deep like a sapphire heaven our spirits breathe;
Our hearts and bodies feel its obscure call,
Our senses grope for it and touch and lose.
If this withdrew, the world would sink in the Void;
If this were not, nothing could move or live.

A hidden Bliss is at the root of things.
A mute Delight regards Time's countless works:
To house God's joy in things Space gave wide room,
To house God's joy in self our souls were born.
This universe an old enchantment guards;
Its objects are carved cups of World-Delight
Whose charmed wine is some deep soul's rapture-drink:
The All-Wonderful has packed heaven with his dreams,
He has made blank ancient Space his marvel-house;
He spilled his spirit into Matter's signs:
His fires of grandeur burn in the great sun,
He glides through heaven shimmering in the moon;
He is beauty carolling in the fields of sound;
He chants the stanzas of the odes of Wind;
He is silence watching in the stars at night;
He wakes at dawn and calls from every bough,
Lies stunned in the stone and dreams in flower and tree.
Even in this labour and dolour of Ignorance,
On the hard perilous ground of difficult earth,
In spite of death and evil circumstance
A will to live persists, a joy to be.
There is a joy in all that meets the sense,
A joy in all experience of the soul,
A joy in evil and a joy in good,
A joy in virtue and a joy in sin:
Indifferent to the threat of Karmic law,
Joy dares to grow upon forbidden soil,
Its sap runs through the plant and flowers of Pain:
It thrills with the drama of fate and tragic doom,
It tears its food from sorrow and ecstasy,
On danger and difficulty whets its strength;
It wallows with the reptile and the worm
And lifts its head, an equal of the stars;
It shares the faeries' dance, dines with the gnome:
It basks in the light and heat of many suns,
The sun of Beauty and the sun of Power

Flatter and foster it with golden beams;
It grows towards the Titan and the God.
On earth it lingers drinking its deep fill,
Through the symbol of her pleasure and her pain,
Of the grapes of Heaven and the flowers of the Abyss,
Of the flame-stabs and the torment-craft of Hell
And dim fragments of the glory of Paradise.
In the small paltry pleasures of man's life,
In his petty passions and joys it finds a taste,
A taste in tears and torture of broken hearts,
In the crown of gold and in the crown of thorns,
In life's nectar of sweetness and its bitter wine.
All being it explores for unknown bliss,
Sounds all experience for things new and strange.
Life brings into the earthly creature's days
A tongue of glory from a brighter sphere:
It deepens in his musings and his Art,
It leaps at the splendour of some perfect word,
It exults in his high resolves and noble deeds,
Wanders in his errors, dares the abyss's brink,
It climbs in his climbings, wallows in his fall.
Angel and demon brides his chamber share,
Possessors or competitors for life's heart.
To the enjoyer of the cosmic scene
His greatness and his littleness equal are,
His magnanimity and meanness hues
Cast on some neutral background of the gods:
The Artist's skill he admires who planned it all.
But not for ever endures this danger game:
Beyond the earth, but meant for delivered earth,
Wisdom and joy prepare their perfect crown;
Truth superhuman calls to thinking man.
At last the soul turns to eternal things,
In every shrine it cries for the clasp of God.
Then is there played the crowning Mystery,
Then is achieved the longed-for miracle.

Immortal Bliss her wide celestial eyes
Opens on the stars, she stirs her mighty limbs;
Time thrills to the sapphics of her amour-song
And Space fills with a white beatitude.
Then leaving to its grief the human heart,
Abandoning speech and the name-determined realms,
Through a gleaming far-seen sky of wordless thought,
Through naked thought-free heavens of absolute sight,
She climbs to the summits where the unborn Idea
Remembering the future that must be
Looks down upon the works of labouring Force,
Immutable above the world it made.
In the vast golden laughter of Truth's sun
Like a great heaven-bird on a motionless sea
Is poised her winged ardour of creative joy
On the still deep of the Eternal's peace.
This was the aim, this the supernal Law,
Nature's allotted task when beauty-drenched
In dim mist-waters of inconscient sleep,
Out of the Void this grand creation rose, —
For this the Spirit came into the Abyss
And charged with its power Matter's unknowing force,
In Night's bare session to cathedral Light,
In Death's realm repatriate immortality.
A mystic slow transfiguration works.
All our earth starts from mud and ends in sky,
And Love that was once an animal's desire,
Then a sweet madness in the rapturous heart,
An ardent comradeship in the happy mind,
Becomes a wide spiritual yearning's space.
A lonely soul passions for the Alone,
The heart that loved man thrills to the love of God,
A body is his chamber and his shrine.
Then is our being rescued from separateness;
All is itself, all is new-felt in God:
A Lover leaning from his cloister's door

Gathers the whole world into his single breast.
Then shall the business fail of Night and Death:
When unity is won, when strife is lost
And all is known and all is clasped by Love
Who would turn back to ignorance and pain?
"O Death, I have triumphed over thee within;
I quiver no more with the assault of grief;
A mighty calmness seated deep within
Has occupied my body and my sense:
It takes the world's grief and transmutes to strength,
It makes the world's joy one with the joy of God.
My love eternal sits throned on God's calm;
For Love must soar beyond the very heavens
And find its secret sense ineffable;
It must change its human ways to ways divine,
Yet keep its sovereignty of earthly bliss.
O Death, not for my heart's sweet poignancy
Nor for my happy body's bliss alone
I have claimed from thee the living Satyavan,
But for his work and mine, our sacred charge.
Our lives are God's messengers beneath the stars;
To dwell under death's shadow they have come
Tempting God's light to earth for the ignorant race,
His love to fill the hollow in men's hearts,
His bliss to heal the unhappiness of the world.
For I, the woman, am the force of God,
He the Eternal's delegate soul in man.
My will is greater than thy law, O Death;
My love is stronger than the bonds of Fate:
Our love is the heavenly seal of the Supreme.
I guard that seal against thy rending hands.
Love must not cease to live upon the earth;
For Love is the bright link twixt earth and heaven,
Love is the far Transcendent's angel here;
Love is man's lien on the Absolute."
But to the woman Death the god replied,

With the ironic laughter of his voice
Discouraging the labour of the stars:
"Even so men cheat the Truth with splendid thoughts.
Thus wilt thou hire the glorious charlatan, Mind,
To weave from his Ideal's gossamer air
A fine raiment for thy body's nude desires
And thy heart's clutching greedy passion clothe?
Daub not the web of life with magic hues:
Make rather thy thought a plain and faithful glass
Reflecting Matter and mortality,
And know thy soul a product of the flesh,
A made-up self in a constructed world.
Thy words are large murmurs in a mystic dream.
For how in the soiled heart of man could dwell
The immaculate grandeur of thy dream-built God,
Or who can see a face and form divine
In the naked two-legged worm thou callest man?
O human face, put off mind-painted masks:
The animal be, the worm that Nature meant;
Accept thy futile birth, thy narrow life.
For truth is bare like stone and hard like death;
Bare in the bareness, hard with truth's hardness live."
But Savitri replied to the dire God:
"Yes, I am human. Yet shall man by me,
Since in humanity waits his hour the God,
Trample thee down to reach the immortal heights,
Transcending grief and pain and fate and death.
Yes, my humanity is a mask of God:
He dwells in me, the mover of my acts,
Turning the great wheel of his cosmic work.
I am the living body of his light,
I am the thinking instrument of his power,
I incarnate Wisdom in an earthly breast,
I am his conquering and unslayable will.
The formless Spirit drew in me its shape;
In me are the Nameless and the secret Name."

Death from the incredulous Darkness sent its cry:
"O priestess in Imagination's house,
Persuade first Nature's fixed immutable laws
And make the impossible thy daily work.
How canst thou force to wed two eternal foes?
Irreconcilable in their embrace
They cancel the glory of their pure extremes:
An unhappy wedlock maims their stunted force.
How shall thy will make one the true and false?
Where Matter is all, there Spirit is a dream:
If all are the Spirit, Matter is a lie,
And who was the liar who forged the universe?
The Real with the unreal cannot mate.
He who would turn to God, must leave the world;
He who would live in the Spirit, must give up life;
He who has met the Self, renounces self.
The voyagers of the million routes of mind
Who have travelled through Existence to its end,
Sages exploring the world-ocean's vasts,
Have found extinction the sole harbour safe.
Two only are the doors of man's escape,
Death of his body Matter's gate to peace,
Death of his soul his last felicity.
In me all take refuge, for I, Death, am God."
But Savitri replied to mighty Death:
"My heart is wiser than the Reason's thoughts,
My heart is stronger than thy bonds, O Death.
It sees and feels the one Heart beat in all,
It feels the high Transcendent's sunlike hands,
It sees the cosmic Spirit at its work;
In the dim Night it lies alone with God.
My heart's strength can carry the grief of the universe
And never falter from its luminous track,
Its white tremendous orbit through God's peace.
It can drink up the sea of All-Delight
And never lose the white spiritual touch,

The calm that broods in the deep Infinite."
He said, "Art thou indeed so strong, O heart,
O soul, so free? And canst thou gather then
Bright pleasure from my wayside flowering boughs,
Yet falter not from thy hard journey's goal,
Meet the world's dangerous touch and never fall?
Show me thy strength and freedom from my laws."
But Savitri answered, "Surely I shall find
Among the green and whispering woods of Life
Close-bosomed pleasures, only mine since his,
Or mine for him, because our joys are one.
And if I linger, Time is ours and God's,
And if I fall, is not his hand near mine?
All is a single plan; each wayside act
Deepens the soul's response, brings nearer the goal."
Death the contemptuous Nihil answered her:
"So prove thy absolute force to the wise gods,
By choosing earthly joy! For self demand
And yet from self and its gross masks live free.
Then will I give thee all thy soul desires,
All the brief joys earth keeps for mortal hearts.
Only the one dearest wish that outweighs all,
Hard laws forbid and thy ironic fate.
My will once wrought remains unchanged through Time,
And Satyavan can never again be thine."
But Savitri replied to the vague Power:
"If the eyes of Darkness can look straight at Truth,
Look in my heart and, knowing what I am,
Give what thou wilt or what thou must, O Death.
Nothing I claim but Satyavan alone."
There was a hush as if of doubtful fates.
As one disdainful still who yields a point
Death bowed his sovereign head in cold assent:
"I give to thee, saved from death and poignant fate
Whatever once the living Satyavan
Desired in his heart for Savitri.

Bright noons I give thee and unwounded dawns,
Daughters of thy own shape in heart and mind,
Fair hero sons and sweetness undisturbed
Of union with thy husband dear and true.
And thou shalt harvest in thy joyful house
Felicity of thy surrounded eves.
Love shall bind by thee many gathered hearts.
The opposite sweetness in thy days shall meet
Of tender service to thy life's desired
And loving empire over all thy loved,
Two poles of bliss made one, O Savitri.
Return, O child, to thy forsaken earth."
But Savitri replied, "Thy gifts resist.
Earth cannot flower if lonely I return."
Then Death sent forth once more his angry cry,
As chides a lion his escaping prey:
"What knowst thou of earth's rich and changing life
Who thinkst that one man dead all joy must cease?
Hope not to be unhappy till the end:
For grief dies soon in the tired human heart;
Soon other guests the empty chambers fill.
A transient painting on a holiday's floor
Traced for a moment's beauty love was made.
Or if a voyager on the eternal trail,
Its objects fluent change in its embrace
Like waves to a swimmer upon infinite seas."
But Savitri replied to the vague god,
"Give me back Satyavan, my only lord.
Thy thoughts are vacant to my soul that feels
The deep eternal truth in transient things."
Death answered her, "Return and try thy soul!
Soon shalt thou find appeased that other men
On lavish earth have beauty, strength and truth,
And when thou hast half forgotten, one of these
Shall wind himself around thy heart that needs
Some human answering heart against thy breast;

For who, being mortal, can dwell glad alone?
Then Satyavan shall glide into the past,
A gentle memory pushed away from thee
By new love and thy children's tender hands,
Till thou shalt wonder if thou lov'dst at all.
Such is the life earth's travail has conceived,
A constant stream that never is the same."
But Savitri replied to mighty Death:
"O dark ironic critic of God's work,
Thou mockst the mind and body's faltering search
For what the heart holds in a prophet hour
And the immortal spirit shall make its own.
Mine is a heart that worshipped, though forsaken,
The image of the god its love adored;
I have burned in flame to travel in his steps.
Are we not they who bore vast solitude
Seated upon the hills alone with God?
Why dost thou vainly strive with me, O Death,
A mind delivered from all twilight thoughts,
To whom the secrets of the gods are plain?
For now at last I know beyond all doubt,
The great stars burn with my unceasing fire
And life and death are both its fuel made.
Life only was my blind attempt to love:
Earth saw my struggle, heaven my victory;
All shall be seized, transcended; there shall kiss
Casting their veils before the marriage fire
The eternal bridegroom and eternal bride.
The heavens accept our broken flights at last.
On our life's prow that breaks the waves of Time
No signal light of hope has gleamed in vain."
She spoke; the boundless members of the god
As if by secret ecstasy assailed,
Shuddered in silence as obscurely stir
Ocean's dim fields delivered to the moon.
Then lifted up as by a sudden wind

Around her in that vague and glimmering world
The twilight trembled like a bursting veil.
   Thus with armed speech the great opponents strove.
Around those spirits in the glittering mist
A deepening half-light fled with pearly wings
As if to reach some far ideal Morn.
Outlined her thoughts flew through the gleaming haze
Mingling bright-pinioned with its lights and veils
And all her words like dazzling jewels were caught
Into the glow of a mysterious world,
Or tricked in the rainbow shifting of its hues
Like echoes swam fainting into far sound.
All utterance, all mood must there become
An unenduring tissue sewn by mind
To make a gossamer robe of beautiful change.
Intent upon her silent will she walked
On the dim grass of vague unreal plains,
A floating veil of visions in her front,
A trailing robe of dreams behind her feet.
But now her spirit's flame of conscient force
Retiring from a sweetness without fruit
Called back her thoughts from speech to sit within
In a deep room in meditation's house.
For only there could dwell the soul's firm truth:
Imperishable, a tongue of sacrifice,
It flamed unquenched upon the central hearth
Where burns for the high houselord and his mate
The homestead's sentinel and witness fire
From which the altars of the gods are lit.
All still compelled went gliding on unchanged,
Still was the order of these worlds reversed:
The mortal led, the god and spirit obeyed
And she behind was leader of their march
And they in front were followers of her will.
Onward they journeyed through the drifting ways
Vaguely companioned by the glimmering mists.

But faster now all fled as if perturbed
Escaping from the clearness of her soul.
A heaven-bird upon jewelled wings of wind
Borne like a coloured and embosomed fire,
By spirits carried in a pearl-hued cave,
On through the enchanted dimness moved her soul.
Death walked in front of her and Satyavan,
In the dark front of Death, a failing star.
Above was the unseen balance of his fate.

End of Canto Three

Canto Four

The Dream Twilight of the Earthly Real

THERE came a slope that slowly downward sank;
It slipped towards a stumbling grey descent.
The dim-heart marvel of the ideal was lost;
Its crowding wonder of bright delicate dreams
And vague half-limned sublimities she had left:
Thought fell towards lower levels; hard and tense
It passioned for some crude reality.
The twilight floated still but changed its hues
And heavily swathed a less delightful dream;
It settled in tired masses on the air;
Its symbol colours tuned with duller reds
And almost seemed a lurid mist of day.
A straining taut and dire besieged her heart;
Heavy her sense grew with a dangerous load,
And sadder, greater sounds were in her ears,
And through stern breakings of the lambent glare
Her vision caught a hurry of driving plains
And cloudy mountains and wide tawny streams,
And cities climbed in minarets and towers
Towards an unavailing changeless sky:
Long quays and ghauts and harbours white with sails
Challenged her sight awhile and then were gone.
Amidst them travailed toiling multitudes
In ever shifting perishable groups,
A foiled cinema of lit shadowy shapes
Enveloped in the grey mantle of a dream.
Imagining meanings in life's heavy drift,
They trusted in the uncertain environment
And waited for death to change their spirit's scene.
A savage din of labour and a tramp
Of armoured life and the monotonous hum

Of thoughts and acts that ever were the same,
As if the dull reiterated drone
Of a great brute machine, beset her soul, —
A grey dissatisfied rumour like a ghost
Of the moaning of a loud unquiet sea.
A huge inhuman cyclopean voice,
A Babel-builders' song towering to heaven,
A throb of engines and the clang of tools
Brought the deep undertone of labour's pain.
As when pale lightnings tear a tortured sky,
High overhead a cloud-rimmed series flared
Chasing like smoke from a red funnel driven,
The forced creations of an ignorant Mind:
Drifting she saw like pictured fragments flee
Phantoms of human thought and baffled hopes,
The shapes of Nature and the arts of man,
Philosophies and disciplines and laws,
And the dead spirit of old societies,
Constructions of the Titan and the worm.
As if lost remnants of forgotten light,
Before her mind there fled with trailing wings
Dimmed revelations and delivering words,
Emptied of their mission and their strength to save,
The messages of the evangelist gods,
Voices of prophets, scripts of vanishing creeds.
Each in its hour eternal claimed went by:
Ideals, systems, sciences, poems, crafts
Tireless there perished and again recurred,
Sought restlessly by some creative Power;
But all were dreams crossing an empty vast.
Ascetic voices called of lonely seers
On mountain summits or by river banks
Or from the desolate heart of forest glades
Seeking heaven's rest or the spirit's worldless peace,
Or in bodies motionless like statues, fixed
In tranced cessations of their sleepless thought

Sat sleeping souls, and this too was a dream.
All things the past has made and slain were there,
Its lost forgotten forms that once had lived,
And all the present loves as new-revealed
And all the hopes the future brings had failed
Already, caught and spent in efforts vain,
Repeated fruitlessly age after age.
Unwearied all returned insisting still
Because of joy in the anguish of pursuit
And joy to labour and to win and lose
And joy to create and keep and joy to kill.
The rolling cycles passed and came again,
Brought the same toils and the same barren end,
Forms ever new and ever old, the long
Appalling revolutions of the world.

Once more arose the great destroying Voice:
Across the fruitless labour of the worlds
His huge denial's all-defeating might
Pursued the ignorant march of dolorous Time.
"Behold the figures of this symbol realm,
Its solid outlines of creative dream
Inspiring the great concrete tasks of earth.
In its motion-parable of human life
Here thou canst trace the outcome Nature gives
To the sin of being and the error in things
And the desire that compels to live
And man's incurable malady of hope.
In an immutable order's hierarchy
Where Nature changes not, man cannot change:
Ever he obeys her fixed mutation's law;
In a new version of her oft-told tale
In ever-wheeling cycles turns the race.
His mind is pent in circling boundaries:
For mind is man, beyond thought he cannot soar.
If he could leave his limits he would be safe:

He sees but cannot mount to his greater heavens;
Even winged, he sinks back to his native soil.
He is a captive in his net of mind
And beats soul-wings against the walls of life.
In vain his heart lifts up its yearning prayer,
Peopling with brilliant Gods the formless Void;
Then disappointed to the Void he turns
And in its happy nothingness asks release,
The calm Nirvana of his dream of self:
The Word in silence ends, in Nought the name.
Apart amid the mortal multitudes,
He calls the Godhead incommunicable
To be the lover of his lonely soul
Or casts his spirit into its void embrace.
Or he finds his copy in the impartial All;
He imparts to the Immobile his own will,
Attributes to the Eternal wrath and love
And to the Ineffable lends a thousand names.
Hope not to call God down into his life.
How shalt thou bring the Everlasting here?
There is no house for him in hurrying Time.
Vainly thou seekst in Matter's world an aim;
No aim is there, only a will to be.
All walk by Nature bound for ever the same.
Look on these forms that stay awhile and pass,
These lives that long and strive, then are no more,
These structures that have no abiding truth,
The saviour creeds that cannot save themselves,
But perish in the strangling hands of the years,
Discarded from man's thought, proved false by Time,
Philosophies that strip all problems bare
But nothing ever have solved since earth began,
And sciences omnipotent in vain
By which men learn of what the suns are made,
Transform all forms to serve their outward needs,
Ride through the sky and sail beneath the sea,

But learn not what they are or why they came;
These polities, architectures of man's brain,
That, bricked with evil and good, wall in man's spirit
And, fissured houses, palace at once and jail,
Rot while they reign and crumble before they crash;
These revolutions, demon or drunken god,
Convulsing the wounded body of mankind
Only to paint in new colours an old face;
These wars, carnage triumphant, ruin gone mad,
The work of centuries vanishing in an hour,
The blood of the vanquished and the victor's crown
Which men to be born must pay for with their pain,
The hero's face divine on satyr's limbs,
The demon's grandeur mixed with the demigod's,
The glory and the beasthood and the shame;
Why is it all, the labour and the din,
The transient joys, the timeless sea of tears,
The longing and the hoping and the cry,
The battle and the victory and the fall,
The aimless journey that can never pause,
The waking toil, the incoherent sleep,
Song, shouts and weeping, wisdom and idle words,
The laughter of men, the irony of the gods?
Where leads the march, whither the pilgrimage?
Who keeps the map of the route or planned each stage?
Or else self-moved the world walks its own way,
Or nothing is there but only a Mind that dreams:
The world is a myth that happened to come true,
A legend told to itself by conscious Mind,
Imaged and played on a feigned Matter's ground
On which it stands in an unsubstantial Vast.
Mind is the author, spectator, actor, stage:
Mind only is and what it thinks is seen.
If Mind is all, renounce the hope of bliss;
If Mind is all, renounce the hope of Truth.
For Mind can never touch the body of Truth

And Mind can never see the soul of God;
Only his shadow it grasps nor hears his laugh
As it turns from him to the vain seeming of things.
Mind is a tissue woven of light and shade
Where right and wrong have sewn their mingled parts;
Or Mind is Nature's marriage of convenance
Between truth and falsehood, between joy and pain:
This struggling pair no court can separate.
Each thought is a gold coin with bright alloy
And error and truth are its obverse and reverse:
This is the imperial mintage of the brain
And of this kind is all its currency.
Think not to plant on earth the living Truth
Or make of Matter's world the home of God;
Truth comes not there but only the thought of Truth,
God is not there but only the name of God.
If Self there is it is bodiless and unborn;
It is no one and it is possessed by none.
On what shalt thou then build thy happy world?
Cast off thy life and mind, then art thou Self,
An all-seeing omnipresence stark, alone.
If God there is he cares not for the world;
All things he sees with calm indifferent gaze,
He has doomed all hearts to sorrow and desire,
He has bound all life with his implacable laws;
He answers not the ignorant voice of prayer.
Eternal while the ages toil beneath,
Unmoved, untouched by aught that he has made,
He sees as minute details mid the stars
The animal's agony and the fate of man:
Immeasurably wise, he exceeds thy thought;
His solitary joy needs not thy love.
His truth in human thinking cannot dwell:
If thou desirest Truth, then still thy mind
For ever, slain by the dumb unseen Light.
Immortal bliss lives not in human air:

How shall the mighty Mother her calm delight
Keep fragrant in this narrow fragile vase,
Or lodge her sweet unbroken ecstasy
In hearts which earthly sorrow can assail
And bodies careless Death can slay at will?
Dream not to change the world that God has planned,
Strive not to alter his eternal law.
If heavens there are whose gates are shut to grief,
There seek the joy thou couldst not find on earth;
Or in the imperishable hemisphere
Where Light is native and Delight is king
And Spirit is the deathless ground of things,
Choose thy high station, child of Eternity.
If thou art Spirit and Nature is thy robe,
Cast off thy garb and be thy naked self
Immutable in its undying truth,
Alone for ever in the mute Alone.
Turn then to God, for him leave all behind;
Forgetting love, forgetting Satyavan,
Annul thyself in his immobile peace.
O soul, drown in his still beatitude.
For thou must die to thyself to reach God's height:
I, Death, am the gate of immortality."
But Savitri answered to the sophist God:
"Once more wilt thou call Light to blind Truth's eyes,
Make Knowledge a catch of the snare of Ignorance
And the Word a dart to slay my living soul?
Offer, O King, thy boons to tired spirits
And hearts that could not bear the wounds of Time,
Let those who were tied to body and to mind,
Tear off those bonds and flee into white calm
Crying for a refuge from the play of God.
Surely thy boons are great since thou art He!
But how shall I seek rest in endless peace
Who house the mighty Mother's violent force,
Her vision turned to read the enigmaed world,

Her will tempered in the blaze of Wisdom's sun
And the flaming silence of her heart of love?
The world is a spiritual paradox
Invented by a need in the Unseen,
A poor translation to the creature's sense
Of That which for ever exceeds idea and speech,
A symbol of what can never be symbolised,
A language mispronounced, misspelt, yet true.
Its powers have come from the eternal heights
And plunged into the inconscient dim Abyss
And risen from it to do their marvellous work.
The soul is a figure of the Unmanifest,
The mind labours to think the Unthinkable,
The life to call the Immortal into birth,
The body to enshrine the Illimitable.
The world is not cut off from Truth and God.
In vain thou hast dug the dark unbridgeable gulf,
In vain thou hast built the blind and doorless wall:
Man's soul crosses through thee to Paradise,
Heaven's sun forces its way through death and night;
Its light is seen upon our being's verge.
My mind is a torch lit from the eternal sun,
My life a breath drawn by the immortal Guest,
My mortal body is the Eternal's house.
Already the torch becomes the undying ray,
Already the life is the Immortal's force,
The house grows of the householder part and one.
How sayst thou Truth can never light the human mind
And Bliss can never invade the mortal's heart
Or God descend into the world he made?
If in the meaningless Void creation rose,
If from a bodiless Force Matter was born,
If Life could climb in the unconscious tree,
Its green delight break into emerald leaves
And its laughter of beauty blossom in the flower,
If sense could wake in tissue, nerve and cell

And Thought seize the grey matter of the brain,
And soul peep from its secrecy through the flesh,
How shall the nameless Light not leap on men,
And unknown powers emerge from Nature's sleep?
Even now hints of a luminous Truth like stars
Arise in the mind-mooned splendour of Ignorance;
Even now the deathless Lover's touch we feel:
If the chamber's door is even a little ajar,
What then can hinder God from stealing in
Or who forbid his kiss on the sleeping soul?
Already God is near, the Truth is close:
Because the dark atheist body knows him not,
Must the sage deny the Light, the seer his soul?
I am not bound by thought or sense or shape;
I live in the glory of the Infinite,
I am near to the Nameless and Unknowable,
The Ineffable is now my household mate.
But standing on Eternity's luminous brink
I have discovered that the world was He;
I have met Spirit with spirit, Self with self,
But I have loved too the body of my God.
I have pursued him in his earthly form.
A lonely freedom cannot satisfy
A heart that has grown one with every heart:
I am a deputy of the aspiring world,
My spirit's liberty I ask for all."

Then rang again a deeper cry of Death.
As if beneath its weight of sterile law
Oppressed by its own obstinate meaningless will,
Disdainful, weary and compassionate,
It kept no more its old intolerant sound,
But seemed like life's in her unnumbered paths
Toiling for ever and achieving nought
Because of birth and change, her mortal powers
By which she lasts, around the term-posts fixed

Turning of a wide circling aimless race
Whose course for ever speeds and is the same.
In its long play with Fate and Chance and Time
Assured of the game's vanity lost or won,
Crushed by its load of ignorance and doubt
Which knowledge seems to increase and growth to enlarge,
The earth-mind sinks and it despairs and looks
Old, weary and discouraged on its work.
Yet was all nothing then or vainly achieved?
Some great thing has been done, some light, some power
Delivered from the huge Inconscient's grasp:
It has emerged from night; it sees its dawns
Circling for ever though no dawn can stay.
This change was in the godhead's far-flung voice;
His form of dread was altered and admitted
Our transient effort at eternity,
Yet flung vast doubts of what might else have been
On grandiose hints of an impossible day.
The great voice surging cried to Savitri:
"Because thou knowst the wisdom that transcends
Both veil of forms and the contempt of forms,
Arise delivered by the seeing gods.
If free thou hadst kept thy mind from life's fierce stress,
Thou mightst have been like them omniscient, calm.
But the violent and passionate heart forbids.
It is the storm bird of an anarch Power
That would upheave the world and tear from it
The indecipherable scroll of Fate,
Death's rule and Law and the unknowable Will.
Hasteners to action, violators of God
Are these great spirits who have too much love,
And they who formed like thee, for both art thou,
Have come into the narrow bounds of life
With too large natures overleaping time.
Worshippers of force who know not her recoil,
Their giant wills compel the troubled years.

The wise are tranquil; silent the great hills
Rise ceaselessly towards their unreached sky,
Seated on their unchanging base, their heads
Dreamless in heaven's immutable domain.
On their aspiring tops, sublime and still,
Lifting half-way to heaven the climbing soul
The mighty mediators stand content
To watch the revolutions of the stars:
Motionlessly moving with the might of earth,
They see the ages pass and are the same.
The wise think with the cycles, they hear the tread
Of far-off things; patient, unmoved they keep
Their dangerous wisdom in their depths restrained,
Lest man's frail days into the unknown should sink
Dragged like a ship by bound leviathan
Into the abyss of his stupendous seas.
Lo, how all shakes when the gods tread too near!
All moves, is in peril, anguished, torn, upheaved.
The hurrying aeons would stumble on too swift
If strength from heaven surprised the imperfect earth
And veilless knowledge smote these unfit souls.
The deities have screened their dreadful power:
God hides his thought and, even, he seems to err.
Be still and tardy in the slow wise world.
Mighty art thou with the dread goddess filled,
To whom thou criedst at dawn in the dim woods.
Use not thy strength like the wild Titan souls!
Touch not the seated lines, the ancient laws,
Respect the calm of great established things."
But Savitri replied to the huge god:
"What is the calm thou vauntst, O Law, O Death?
Is it not the dull-visioned tread inert
Of monstrous energies chained in a stark round
Soulless and stone-eyed with mechanic dreams?
Vain the soul's hope if changeless Law is all:
Ever to the new and the unknown press on

The speeding aeons justifying God.
What were earth's ages if the grey restraint
Were never broken and glories sprang not forth
Bursting their obscure seed, while man's slow life
Leaped hurried into sudden splendid paths
By divine words and human gods revealed?
Impose not upon sentient minds and hearts
The dull fixity that binds inanimate things.
Well is the unconscious rule for the animal breeds
Content to live beneath the immutable yoke;
Man turns to a nobler walk, a master path.
I trample on thy law with living feet;
For to arise in freedom I was born.
If I am mighty let my force be unveiled
Equal companion of the dateless powers,
Or else let my frustrated soul sink down
Unworthy of Godhead in the original sleep.
I claim from Time my will's eternity,
God from his moments." Death replied to her,
"Why should the noble and immortal will
Stoop to the petty works of transient earth,
Freedom forgotten and the Eternal's path?
Or is this the high use of strength and thought,
To struggle with the bonds of death and time
And spend the labour that might earn the gods
And battle and bear agony of wounds
To grasp the trivial joys that earth can guard
In her small treasure-chest of passing things?
Child, hast thou trodden the gods beneath thy feet
Only to win poor shreds of earthly life
For him thou lov'st cancelling the grand release,
Keeping from early rapture of the heavens
His soul the lenient deities have called?
Are thy arms sweeter than the courts of God?"
She answered, "Straight I trample on the road
The strong hand hewed for me which planned our paths.

I run where his sweet dreadful voice commands
And I am driven by the reins of God.
Why drew he wide his scheme of mighty worlds
Or filled infinity with his passionate breath?
Or wherefore did he build my mortal form
And sow in me his bright and proud desires,
If not to achieve, to flower in me, to love,
Carving his human image richly shaped
In thoughts and largenesses and golden powers?
Far Heaven can wait our coming in its calm.
Easy the heavens were to build for God.
Earth was his difficult matter, earth the glory
Gave of the problem and the race and strife.
There are the ominous masks, the terrible powers;
There it is greatness to create the gods.
Is not the spirit immortal and absolved
Always, delivered from the grasp of Time?
Why came it down into the mortal's Space?
A charge he gave to his high spirit in man
And wrote a hidden decree on Nature's tops.
Freedom is this with ever seated soul,
Large in life's limits, strong in Matter's knots,
Building great stuff of action from the worlds
To make fine wisdom from coarse, scattered strands
And love and beauty out of war and night,
The wager wonderful, the game divine.
What liberty has the soul which feels not free
Unless stripped bare and cannot kiss the bonds
The Lover winds around his playmate's limbs,
Choosing his tyranny, crushed in his embrace?
To seize him better with her boundless heart
She accepts the limiting circle of his arms,
Bows full of bliss beneath his mastering hands
And laughs in his rich constraints, most bound, most free.
This is my answer to thy lures, O Death."

Immutable, Death's denial met her cry:
"However mighty, whatever thy secret name
Uttered in hidden conclaves of the gods,
Thy heart's ephemeral passion cannot break
The iron rampart of accomplished things
With which the great Gods fence their camp in Space.
Whoever thou art behind thy human mask,
Even if thou art the Mother of the worlds
And pegst thy claim upon the realms of Chance,
The cosmic Law is greater than thy will.
Even God himself obeys the Laws he made:
The Law abides and never can it change,
The Person is a bubble on Time's sea.
A forerunner of a greater Truth to come,
Thy soul creator of its freer Law,
Vaunting a Force behind on which it leans,
A Light above which none but thou hast seen,
Thou claimst the first fruits of Truth's victory.
But what is Truth and who can find her form
Amid the specious images of sense,
Amid the crowding guesses of the mind
And the dark ambiguities of a world
Peopled with the incertitudes of Thought?
For where is Truth and when was her footfall heard
Amid the endless clamour of Time's mart
And which is her voice amid the thousand cries
That cross the listening brain and cheat the soul?
Or is Truth aught but a high starry name
Or a vague and splendid word by which man's thought
Sanctions and consecrates his nature's choice,
The heart's wish donning knowledge as its robe,
The cherished idea elect among the elect,
Thought's favourite mid the children of half-light
Who high-voiced crowd the playgrounds of the mind
Or people its dormitories in infant sleep?
All things hang here between God's yes and no,

Two Powers real but to each other untrue,
Two consort stars in the mooned night of mind
That towards two opposite horizons gaze,
The white head and black tail of the mystic drake,
The swift and the lame foot, wing strong, wing broken
Sustaining the body of the uncertain world,
A great surreal dragon in the skies.
Too dangerously thy high proud truth must live
Entangled in Matter's mortal littleness.
All in this world is true, yet all is false:
Its thoughts into an eternal cipher run,
Its deeds swell to Time's rounded zero sum.
Thus man at once is animal and god,
A disparate enigma of God's make
Unable to free the Godhead's form within,
A being less than himself, yet something more,
The aspiring animal, the frustrate god
Yet neither beast nor deity but man,
But man tied to the kind earth's labour strives to exceed
Climbing the stairs of God to higher things.
Objects are seemings and none knows their truth,
Ideas are guesses of an ignorant god.
Truth has no home in earth's irrational breast:
Yet without reason life is a tangle of dreams,
But reason is poised above a dim abyss
And stands at last upon a plank of doubt.
Eternal truth lives not with mortal men.
Or if she dwells within thy mortal heart,
Show me the body of the living Truth
Or draw for me the outline of her face
That I too may obey and worship her.
Then will I give thee back thy Satyavan.
But here are only facts and steel-bound Law.
This truth I know that Satyavan is dead
And even thy sweetness cannot lure him back.
No magic Truth can bring the dead to life,

No power of earth cancel the thing once done,
No joy of the heart can last surviving death,
No bliss persuade the past to live again.
But Life alone can solace the mute Void
And fill with thought the emptiness of Time.
Leave then thy dead, O Savitri, and live."
The Woman answered to the mighty Shade,
And as she spoke, mortality disappeared;
Her Goddess self grew visible in her eyes,
Light came, a dream of heaven, into her face.
"O Death, thou too art God and yet not He,
But only his own black shadow on his path
As leaving the Night he takes the upward Way
And drags with him its clinging inconscient Force.
Of God unconscious thou art the dark head,
Of his Ignorance thou art the impenitent sign,
Of its vast tenebrous womb the natural child,
On his immortality the sinister bar.
All contraries are aspects of God's face.
The Many are the innumerable One,
The One carries the multitude in his breast;
He is the Impersonal, inscrutable, sole,
He is the one infinite Person seeing his world;
The Silence bears the Eternal's great dumb seal,
His light inspires the eternal Word;
He is the Immobile's deep and deathless hush,
Its white and signless blank negating calm,
Yet stands the creator Self, the almighty Lord
And watches his will done by the forms of Gods
And the desire that goads half-conscious man
And the reluctant and unseeing Night.
These wide divine extremes, these inverse powers
Are the right and left side of the body of God;
Existence balanced twixt two mighty arms
Confronts the mind with unsolved abysms of Thought.
Darkness below, a fathomless Light above,

In Light are joined, but sundered by severing Mind
Stand face to face, opposite, inseparable,
Two contraries needed for his great World-task,
Two poles whose currents wake the immense World-Force.
In the stupendous secrecy of his Self,
Above the world brooding with equal wings,
He is both in one, beginningless, without end:
Transcending both, he enters the Absolute.
His being is a mystery beyond mind,
His ways bewilder mortal ignorance;
The finite in its little sections parked,
Amazed, credits not God's audacity
Who dares to be the unimagined All
And see and act as might one Infinite.
Against human reason this is his offence,
Being known to be for ever unknowable,
To be all and yet transcend the mystic whole,
Absolute, to lodge in a relative world of Time,
Eternal and all-knowing, to suffer birth,
Omnipotent, to sport with Chance and Fate,
Spirit, yet to be Matter and the Void,
Illimitable, beyond form or name,
To dwell within a body, one and supreme
To be animal and human and divine:
A still deep sea, he laughs in rolling waves;
Universal, he is all, — transcendent, none.
To man's righteousness this is his cosmic crime,
Almighty beyond good and evil to dwell
Leaving the good to their fate in a wicked world
And evil to reign in this enormous scene.
All opposition seems and strife and chance,
An aimless labour with but scanty sense,
To eyes that see a part and miss the whole;
The surface men scan, the depths refuse their search:
A hybrid mystery challenges the view,
Or a discouraging sordid miracle.

Yet in the exact Inconscient's stark conceit,
In the casual error of the world's ignorance
A plan, a hidden Intelligence is glimpsed.
There is a purpose in each stumble and fall;
Nature's most careless lolling is a pose
Preparing some forward step, some deep result.
Ingenious notes plugged into a motived score,
These million discords dot the harmonious theme
Of the evolution's huge orchestral dance.
A Truth supreme has forced the world to be;
It has wrapped itself in Matter as in a shroud,
A shroud of Death, a shroud of Ignorance.
It compelled the suns to burn through silent Space,
Flame-signs of its uncomprehended Thought
In a wide brooding ether's formless muse:
It made of Knowledge a veiled and struggling light,
Of Being a substance nescient, dense and dumb,
Of Bliss the beauty of an insentient world.
In finite things the conscious Infinite dwells:
Involved it sleeps in Matter's helpless trance,
It rules the world from its sleeping senseless Void;
Dreaming it throws out mind and heart and soul
To labour crippled, bound, on the hard earth;
A broken whole it works through scattered points;
Its gleaming shards are Wisdom's diamond thoughts,
Its shadowy reflex our ignorance.
It starts from the mute mass in countless jets,
It fashions a being out of brain and nerve,
A sentient creature from its pleasures and pangs.
A pack of feelings obscure, a dot of sense
Survives awhile answering the shocks of life,
Then, crushed or its force spent, leaves the dead form,
Leaves the huge universe in which it lived
An insignificant unconsidered guest.
But the soul grows concealed within its house;
It gives to the body its strength and magnificence;

It follows aims in an ignorant aimless world,
It lends significance to earth's meaningless life.
A demigod animal, came thinking man;
He wallows in mud, yet heavenward soars in thought;
He plays and ponders, laughs and weeps and dreams,
Satisfies his little longings like the beast;
He pores upon life's book with student eyes.
Out of this tangle of intellect and sense,
Out of the narrow scope of finite thought
At last he wakes into spiritual mind;
A high liberty begins and luminous room:
He glimpses eternity, touches the infinite,
He meets the gods in great and sudden hours,
He feels the universe as his larger self,
Makes Space and Time his opportunity
To join the heights and depths of being in light,
In the heart's cave speaks secretly with God.
But these are touches and high moments lived;
Fragments of Truth supreme have lit his soul,
Reflections of the sun in waters still.
A few have dared the last supreme ascent
And break through borders of blinding light above,
And feel a breath around of mightier air,
Receive a vaster being's messages
And bathe in its immense intuitive Ray.
On summit Mind are radiant altitudes
Exposed to the lustre of Infinity,
Outskirts and dependencies of the house of Truth,
Upraised estates of Mind and measureless.
There man can visit but there he cannot live.
A cosmic Thought spreads out its vastitudes;
Its smallest parts are here philosophies
Challenging with their detailed immensity,
Each figuring an omniscient scheme of things.
But higher still can climb the ascending light;
There are vasts of vision and eternal suns,

Oceans of an immortal luminousness,
Flame-hills assaulting heaven with their peaks,
There dwelling all becomes a blaze of sight;
A burning head of vision leads the mind,
Thought trails behind it its long comet tail;
The heart glows, an illuminate and seer,
And sense is kindled into identity.
A highest flight climbs to a deepest view:
In a wide opening of its native sky
Intuition's lightnings range in a bright pack
Hunting all hidden truths out of their lairs,
Its fiery edge of seeing absolute
Cleaves into locked unknown retreats of self,
Rummages the sky-recesses of the brain,
Lights up the occult chambers of the heart;
Its spear-point ictus of discovery
Pressed on the cover of name, the screen of form,
Strips bare the secret soul of all that is.
Thought there has revelation's sun-bright eyes;
The Word, a mighty and inspiring Voice,
Enters Truth's inmost cabin of privacy
And tears away the veil from God and life.
Then stretches the boundless finite's last expanse,
The cosmic empire of the Overmind,
Time's buffer state bordering Eternity,
Too vast for the experience of man's soul:
All here gathers beneath one golden sky:
The Powers that build the cosmos station take
In its house of infinite possibility;
Each god from there builds his own nature's world;
Ideas are phalanxed like a group of suns,
Each marshalling his company of rays.
Thought crowds in masses seized by one regard;
All Time is one body, Space a single look:
There is the Godhead's universal gaze
And there the boundaries of immortal Mind:

The line that parts and joins the hemispheres
Closes in on the labour of the Gods
Fencing eternity from the toil of Time.
In her glorious kingdom of eternal light
All-ruler, ruled by none, the Truth supreme,
Omnipotent, omniscient and alone,
In a golden country keeps her measureless house;
In its corridor she hears the tread that comes
Out of the Unmanifest never to return
Till the Unknown is known and seen by men.
Above the stretch and blaze of cosmic Sight,
Above the silence of the wordless Thought,
Formless creator of immortal forms,
Nameless, investitured with the name divine,
Transcending Time's hours, transcending Timelessness,
The Mighty Mother sits in lucent calm
And holds the eternal Child upon her knees
Attending the day when he shall speak to Fate.
There is the image of our future's hope;
There is the sun for which all darkness waits,
There is the imperishable harmony;
The world's contradictions climb to her and are one:
There is the Truth of which the world's truths are shreds,
The Light of which the world's ignorance is the shade
Till Truth draws back the shade that it has cast,
The Love our hearts call down to heal all strife,
The Bliss for which the world's derelict sorrows yearn:
Thence comes the glory sometimes seen on earth,
The visits of Godhead to the human soul,
The Beauty and the dream on Nature's face.
There the perfection born from eternity
Calls to it the perfection born in Time,
The truth of God surprising human life,
The image of God overtaking finite shapes.
There in a world of everlasting Light,
In the realms of the immortal Supermind

Truth who hides here her head in mystery,
Her riddle deemed by reason impossible
In the stark structure of material form,
Unenigmaed lives, unmasked her face and there
Is Nature and the common law of things.
There in a body made of spirit stuff,
The hearth-stone of the everliving Fire,
Action translates the movements of the soul,
Thought steps infallible and absolute
And life is a continual worship's rite,
A sacrifice of rapture to the One.
A cosmic vision, a spiritual sense
Feels all the Infinite lodged in finite form
And seen through a quivering ecstasy of light
Discovers the bright face of the Bodiless,
In the truth of a moment, in the moment's soul
Can sip the honey-wine of Eternity.
A Spirit who is no one and innumerable,
The one mystic infinite Person of his world
Multiplies his myriad personality,
On all his bodies seals his divinity's stamp
And sits in each immortal and unique.
The Immobile stands behind each daily act,
A background of the movement and the scene,
Upholding creation on its might and calm
And change on the Immutable's deathless poise.
The Timeless looks out from the travelling hours;
The Ineffable puts on a robe of speech
Where all its words are woven like magic threads
Moving with beauty, inspiring with their gleam,
And every thought takes up its destined place
Recorded in the memory of the world.
The Truth supreme, vast and impersonal
Fits faultlessly the hour and circumstance,
Its substance a pure gold ever the same
But shaped into vessels for the spirit's use,

Its gold becomes the wine jar and the vase.
All there is a supreme epiphany:
The All-Wonderful makes a marvel of each event,
The All-Beautiful is a miracle in each shape;
The All-Blissful smites with rapture the heart's throbs,
A pure celestial joy is the use of sense.
Each being there is a member of the Self,
A portion of the million-thoughted All,
A claimant to the timeless Unity,
The many's sweetness, the joy of difference
Edged with the intimacy of the One.
   "But who can show to thee Truth's glorious face?
Our human words can only shadow her.
To thought she is an unthinkable rapture of light,
To speech a marvel inexpressible.
O Death, if thou couldst touch the Truth supreme
Thou wouldst grow suddenly wise and cease to be.
If our souls could see and love and clasp God's Truth,
Its infinite radiance would seize our hearts,
Our being in God's image be remade
And earthly life become the life divine."
Then Death the last time answered Savitri:
"If Truth supreme transcends her shadow here
Severed by Knowledge and the climbing vasts,
What bridge can cross the gulf that she has left
Between her and the dream-world she has made?
Or who could hope to bring her down to men
And persuade to tread the harsh globe with wounded feet
Leaving her unapproachable glory and bliss,
Wasting her splendour on pale earthly air?
Is thine that strength, O beauty of mortal limbs,
O soul who flutterest to escape my net?
Who then art thou hiding in human guise?
Thy voice carries the sound of infinity,
Knowledge is with thee, Truth speaks through thy words;
The light of things beyond shines in thy eyes.

But where is thy strength to conquer Time and Death?
Hast thou God's force to build heaven's values here?
For truth and knowledge are an idle gleam
If Knowledge brings not power to change the world,
If Might comes not to give to Truth her right.
A blind Force, not Truth has made this ignorant world,
A blind Force, not Truth orders the lives of men:
By Power, not Light, the great Gods rule the world;
Power is the arm of God, the seal of Fate.
O human claimant to immortality,
Reveal thy power, lay bare thy spirit's force,
Then will I give back to thee Satyavan.
Or if the Mighty Mother is with thee,
Show me her face that I may worship her;
Let deathless eyes look into the eyes of Death,
An imperishable Force touching brute things
Transform earth's death into immortal life.
Then can thy dead return to thee and live.
The prostrate earth perhaps shall lift her gaze
And feel near her the secret body of God
And love and joy overtake fleeing Time."

And Savitri looked on Death and answered not.
Almost it seemed as if in his symbol shape
The world's darkness had consented to Heaven-light
And God needed no more the Inconscient's screen.
A mighty transformation came on her.
A halo of the indwelling Deity,
The Immortal's lustre that had lit her face
And tented its radiance in her body's house,
Overflowing made the air a luminous sea.
In a flaming moment of apocalypse
The Incarnation thrust aside its veil.
A little figure in infinity
Yet stood and seemed the Eternal's very house,
As if the world's centre was her very soul

And all wide space was but its outer robe.
A curve of the calm hauteur of far heaven
Descending into earth's humility,
Her forehead's span vaulted the Omniscient's gaze,
Her eyes were two stars that watched the universe.
The Power that from her being's summit reigned,
The Presence chambered in lotus secrecy,
Came down and held the centre in her brow
Where the mind's Lord in his control-room sits;
There throned on concentration's native seat
He opens that third mysterious eye in man,
The Unseen's eye that looks at the unseen,
When Light with a golden ecstasy fills his brain
And the Eternal's wisdom drives his choice
And eternal Will seizes the mortal's will.
It stirred in the lotus of her throat of song,
And in her speech throbbed the immortal Word,
Her life sounded with the steps of the world-soul
Moving in harmony with the cosmic Thought.
As glides God's sun into the mystic cave
Where hides his light from the pursuing gods,
It glided into the lotus of her heart
And woke in it the Force that alters Fate.
It poured into her navel's lotus depth,
Lodged in the little life-nature's narrow home,
On the body's longings grew heaven-rapture's flower
And made desire a pure celestial flame,
Broke into the cave where coiled World-Energy sleeps
And smote the thousand-hooded serpent Force
That blazing towered and clasped the World-Self above,
Joined Matter's dumbness to the Spirit's hush
And filled earth's acts with the Spirit's silent power.
Thus changed she waited for the Word to speak.
Eternity looked into the eyes of Death
And Darkness saw God's living Reality.
Then a Voice was heard that seemed the stillness' self

Or the low calm utterance of infinity
When it speaks to the silence in the heart of sleep.
“I hail thee, almighty and victorious Death,
Thou grandiose Darkness of the Infinite.
O Void that makest room for all to be,
Hunger that gnawest at the universe
Consuming the cold remnants of the suns
And eatst the whole world with thy jaws of fire,
Waster of the energy that has made the stars,
Inconscience, carrier of the seeds of thought,
Nescience in which All-Knowledge sleeps entombed
And slowly emerges in its hollow breast
Wearing the mind’s mask of bright Ignorance.
Thou art my shadow and my instrument.
I have given thee thy awful shape of dread
And thy sharp sword of terror and grief and pain
To force the soul of man to struggle for light
On the brevity of his half-conscious days.
Thou art his spur to greatness in his works,
The whip to his yearning for eternal bliss,
His poignant need of immortality.
Live, Death, awhile, be still my instrument.
One day man too shall know thy fathomless heart
Of silence and the brooding peace of Night
And grave obedience to eternal Law
And the calm inflexible pity in thy gaze.
But now, O timeless Mightiness, stand aside
And leave the path of my incarnate Force.
Relieve the radiant God from thy black mask:
Release the soul of the world called Satyavan
Freed from thy clutch of pain and ignorance
That he may stand master of life and fate,
Man’s representative in the house of God,
The mate of Wisdom and the spouse of Light,
The eternal bridegroom of the eternal bride.”
She spoke; Death unconvinced resisted still,

Although he knew refusing still to know,
Although he saw refusing still to see.
Unshakable he stood claiming his right.
His spirit bowed; his will obeyed the law
Of its own nature binding even on Gods.
The Two opposed each other face to face.
His being like a huge fort of darkness towered;
Around it her light grew, an ocean's siege.
Awhile the Shade survived defying heaven:
Assailing in front, oppressing from above,
A concrete mass of conscious power, he bore
The tyranny of her divine desire.
A pressure of intolerable force
Weighed on his unbowed head and stubborn breast;
Light like a burning tongue licked up his thoughts,
Light was a luminous torture in his heart,
Light coursed, a splendid agony, through his nerves;
His darkness muttered perishing in her blaze.
Her mastering Word commanded every limb
And left no room for his enormous will
That seemed pushed out into some helpless space
And could no more re-enter but left him void.
He called to Night but she fell shuddering back,
He called to Hell but sullenly it retired:
He turned to the Inconscient for support,
From which he was born, his vast sustaining self;
It drew him back towards boundless vacancy
As if by himself to swallow up himself:
He called to his strength, but it refused his call.
His body was eaten by light, his spirit devoured.
At last he knew defeat inevitable
And left crumbling the shape that he had worn,
Abandoning hope to make man's soul his prey
And force to be mortal the immortal spirit.
Afar he fled shunning her dreaded touch
And refuge took in the retreating Night.

In the dream twilight of that symbol world
The dire universal Shadow disappeared
Vanishing into the Void from which it came.
As if deprived of its original cause,
The twilight realm passed fading from their souls,
And Satyavan and Savitri were alone.
But neither stirred: between those figures rose
A mute invisible and translucent wall.
In the long blank moment's pause nothing could move:
All waited on the unknown inscrutable Will.

END OF CANTO FOUR
END OF BOOK TEN

BOOK ELEVEN

The Book of Everlasting Day

Canto One

The Eternal Day: The Soul's Choice and the Supreme Consummation

A MARVELLOUS sun looked down from ecstasy's skies
On worlds of deathless bliss, perfection's home,
Magical unfoldings of the Eternal's smile
Capturing his secret heart-beats of delight.
God's everlasting day surrounded her,
Domains appeared of sempiternal light
Invading all Nature with the Absolute's joy.
Her body quivered with eternity's touch,
Her soul stood close to the founts of the infinite.
Infinity's finite fronts she lived in, new
For ever to an everliving sight.
Eternity multiplied its vast self-look
Translating its endless mightiness and joy
Into delight souls playing with Time could share
In grandeurs ever new-born from the unknown depths,
In powers that leaped immortal from unknown heights,
In passionate heart-beats of an undying love,
In scenes of a sweetness that can never fade.
Immortal to the rapturous heart and eyes,
In serene arches of translucent calm
From Wonder's dream-vasts cloudless skies slid down
An abyss of sapphire; sunlight visited eyes
Which suffered without pain the absolute ray
And saw immortal clarities of form.
Twilight and mist were exiles from that air,
Night was impossible to such radiant heavens.
Firm in the bosom of immensity
Spiritual breadths were seen, sublimely born
From a still beauty of creative joy;
Embodied thoughts to sweet dimensions held

To please some carelessness of divine peace,
Answered the deep demand of an infinite sense
And its need of forms to house its bodiless thrill.
A march of universal powers in Time,
The harmonic order of self's vastitudes
In cyclic symmetries and metric planes
Harboured a cosmic rapture's revelry,
An endless figuring of the spirit in things
Planned by the artist who has dreamed the worlds;
Of all the beauty and the marvel here,
Of all Time's intricate variety
Eternity was the substance and the source;
Not from a plastic mist of Matter made,
They offered the suggestion of their depths
And opened the great series of their powers.
Arisen beneath a triple mystic heaven
The seven immortal earths were seen, sublime:
Homes of the blest released from death and sleep
Where grief can never come nor any pang
Arriving from self-lost and seeking worlds
Alter Heaven-nature's changeless quietude
And mighty posture of eternal calm,
Its pose of ecstasy immutable.
Plains lay that seemed the expanse of God's wide sleep,
Thought's wings climbed up towards heaven's vast repose
Lost in blue deeps of immortality.
A changed earth-nature felt the breath of peace.
Air seemed an ocean of felicity
Or the couch of the unknown spiritual rest,
A vast quiescence swallowing up all sound
Into a voicelessness of utter bliss;
Even Matter brought a close spiritual touch,
All thrilled with the immanence of one divine.
The lowest of these earths was still a heaven
Translating into the splendour of things divine
The beauty and brightness of terrestrial scenes.

Eternal mountains ridge on gleaming ridge
Whose lines were graved as on a sapphire plate
And etched the borders of heaven's lustrous noon
Climbed like piled temple stairs and from their heads
Of topless meditation heard below
The approach of a blue pilgrim multitude
And listened to a great arriving voice
Of the wide travel hymn of timeless seas.
A chanting crowd from mountain bosoms slipped
Past branches fragrant with a sigh of flowers
Hurrying through sweetnesses with revel leaps;
The murmurous rivers of felicity
Divinely rippled honey-voiced desires,
Mingling their sister eddies of delight,
Then, widening to a pace of calm-lipped muse,
Down many-glimmered estuaries of dream
Went whispering into lakes of liquid peace.
On a brink held of senseless ecstasy
And guarding an eternal poise of thought
Sat sculptured souls dreaming by rivers of sound
In changeless attitudes of marble bliss.
Around her lived the children of God's day
In an unspeakable felicity,
A happiness never lost, the immortal's ease,
A glad eternity's blissful multitude.
Around, the deathless nations moved and spoke,
Souls of a luminous celestial joy,
Faces of stark beauty, limbs of the moulded Ray;
In cities cut like gems of conscious stone
And wonderful pastures and on gleaming coasts
Bright forms were seen, eternity's luminous tribes.
Above her rhythming godheads whirled the spheres,
Rapt mobile fixities here blindly sought
By the huge erring orbits of our stars.
Ecstatic voices smote at hearing's chords,
Each movement found a music all its own;

Songs thrilled of birds upon unfading boughs
The colours of whose plumage had been caught
From the rainbow of imagination's wings.
Immortal fragrance packed the quivering breeze.
In groves that seemed moved bosoms and trembling depths
The million children of the undying spring
Bloomed, pure unnumbered stars of hued delight
Nestling for shelter in their emerald sky:
Faery flower-masses looked with laughing eyes.
A dancing chaos, an iridescent sea
Eternised to Heaven's ever-wakeful sight
The crowding petal-glow of marvel's tints
Which float across the curtained lids of dream.
Immortal harmonies filled her listening ear;
A great spontaneous utterance of the heights
On Titan wings of rhythmic grandeur borne
Poured from some deep spiritual heart of sound,
Strains trembling with the secrets of the gods.
A spirit wandered happily in the wind,
A spirit brooded in the leaf and stone;
The voices of thought-conscious instruments
Along a living verge of silence strayed,
And from some deep, a wordless tongue of things
Unfathomed, inexpressible, chantings rose
Translating into a voice the Unknown.
A climber on the invisible stair of sound,
Music not with these few and striving steps
Aspired that wander upon transient strings,
But changed its ever new uncounted notes
In a passion of unforeseeing discovery,
And kept its old unforgotten ecstasies
A growing treasure in the mystic heart.
A consciousness that yearned through every cry
Of unexplored attraction and desire,
It found and searched again the unsatisfied deeps
Hunting as if in some deep secret heart

To find some lost or missed felicity.
In those far-lapsing symphonies she could hear,
Breaking through enchantments of the ravished sense,
The lyric voyage of a divine soul
Mid spume and laughter tempting with its prow
The charm of innocent Circean isles,
Adventures without danger beautiful
In lands where siren Wonder sings its lures
From rhythmic rocks in ever-foaming seas.
In the harmony of an original sight
Delivered from our limiting ray of thought,
And the reluctance of our blinded hearts
To embrace the Godhead in whatever guise,
She saw all Nature marvellous without fault.
Invaded by beauty's universal revel
Her being's fibre reached out vibrating
And claimed deep union with its outer selves,
And on the heart's chords made pure to seize all tones
Heaven's subtleties of touch unwearying forced
More vivid raptures than earth's life can bear.
What would be suffering here, was fiery bliss.
All here but passionate hint and mystic shade
Divined by the inner prophet who perceives
The spirit of delight in sensuous things,
Turned to more sweetness than can now be dreamed.
The mighty signs of which earth fears the stress,
Trembling because she cannot understand,
And must keep obscure in forms strange and sublime,
Were here the first lexicon of an infinite mind
Translating the language of eternal bliss.
Here rapture was a common incident;
The lovelinesses of whose captured thrill
Our human pleasure is a fallen thread,
Lay, symbol shapes, a careless ornament,
Sewn on the rich brocade of Godhead's dress.
Things fashioned were the imaged homes where mind

Arrived to fathom a deep physical joy;
The heart was a torch lit from infinity,
The limbs were trembling densities of soul.
These were the first domains, the outer courts
Immense but least in range and least in price,
The slightest ecstasies of the undying gods.
Higher her swing of vision swept and knew,
Admitted through large sapphire opening gates
Into the wideness of a light beyond,
These were but sumptuous decorated doors
To worlds nobler, more felicitously fair.
Endless aspired the climbing of those heavens;
Realm upon realm received her soaring view.
Then on what seemed one crown of the ascent
Where finite and the infinite are one,
Immune she beheld the strong immortals' seats
Who live for a celestial joy and rule,
The middle regions of the unfading Ray.
Great forms of deities sat in deathless tiers,
Eyes of an unborn gaze towards her leaned
Through a transparency of crystal fire.
In the beauty of bodies wrought from rapture's lines,
Shapes of entrancing sweetness spilling bliss,
Feet glimmering upon the sunstone courts of mind,
Heaven's cupbearers bore round the Eternal's wine.
A tangle of bright bodies, of moved souls
Tracing the close and intertwined delight,
The harmonious tread of lives for ever joined
In the passionate oneness of a mystic joy
As if sunbeams made living and divine,
The golden-bosomed Apsara goddesses,
In groves flooded from an argent disk of bliss
That floated through a luminous sapphire dream,
In a cloud of raiment lit with golden limbs
And gleaming footfalls treading faery swards,
Virgin motions of bacchant innocences

Who know their riot for a dance of God,
Whirled linked in moonlit revels of the heart.
Impeccable artists of unerring forms,
Magician builders of sound and rhythmic words,
Wind-haired Gandharvas chanted to the ear
The odes that shape the universal thought,
The lines that tear the veil from Deity's face,
The rhythms that bring the sounds of wisdom's sea.
Immortal figures and illumined brows,
Our great forefathers in those splendours moved;
Termless in power and satisfied of light,
They enjoyed the sense of all for which we strive.
High seers, moved poets saw the eternal thoughts
That, travellers from on high, arrive to us
Deformed by our search, tricked by costuming mind,
Like gods disfigured by the pangs of birth,
Seized the great words which now are frail sounds caught
By difficult rapture on a mortal tongue.
The strong who stumble and sin were calm proud gods.
There lightning-filled with glory and with flame,
Melting in waves of sympathy and sight,
Smitten like a lyre that throbs to others' bliss,
Drawn by the cords of ecstasies unknown,
Her human nature faint with heaven's delight,
She beheld the clasp to earth denied and bore
The imperishable eyes of veilless love.
More climbed above, level to level reached,
Beyond what tongue can utter or mind dream:
Worlds of an infinite reach crowned Nature's stir.
There was a greater tranquil sweetness there,
A subtler and profounder ether's field
And mightier scheme than heavenliest sense can give.
There breath carried a stream of seeing mind,
Form was a tenuous raiment of the soul:
Colour was a visible tone of ecstasy;
Shapes seen half immaterial by the gaze

And yet voluptuously palpable
Made sensible to touch the indwelling spirit.
The high perfected sense illumined lived
A happy vassal of the inner ray,
Each feeling was the Eternal's mighty child
And every thought was a sweet burning god.
Air was a luminous feeling, sound a voice,
Sunlight the soul's vision and moonlight its dream.
On a wide living base of wordless calm
All was a potent and a lucid joy.
Into those heights her spirit went floating up
Like an upsoaring bird who mounts unseen
Voicing to the ascent his throbbing heart
Of melody till a pause of closing wings
Comes quivering in his last contented cry
And he is silent with his soul discharged,
Delivered of his heart's burden of delight.
Experience mounted on joy's coloured breast
To inaccessible spheres in spiral flight.
There Time dwelt with eternity as one;
Immense felicity joined rapt repose.

As one drowned in a sea of splendour and bliss,
Mute in the maze of these surprising worlds,
Turning she saw their living knot and source,
Key to their charm and fount of their delight,
And knew him for the same who snares our lives
Captured in his terrifying pitiless net,
And makes the universe his prison camp
And makes in his immense and vacant vasts
The labour of the stars a circuit vain
And death the end of every human road
And grief and pain the wages of man's toil.
One whom her soul had faced as Death and Night
A sum of all sweetness gathered into his limbs
And blinded her heart to the beauty of the suns.

Transfigured was the formidable shape.
His darkness and his sad destroying might
Abolishing for ever and disclosing
The mystery of his high and violent deeds,
A secret splendour rose revealed to sight
Where once the vast embodied Void had stood.
Night the dim mask had grown a wonderful face.
The vague infinity was slain whose gloom
Had outlined from the terrible unknown
The obscure disastrous figure of a god,
Fled was the error that arms the hands of grief,
And lighted the ignorant gulf whose hollow deeps
Had given to nothingness a dreadful voice.
As when before the eye that wakes in sleep
Is opened the sombre binding of a book,
Illumined letterings are seen which kept
A golden blaze of thought inscribed within,
A marvellous form responded to her gaze
Whose sweetness justified life's blindest pain;
All Nature's struggle was its easy price,
The universe and its agony seemed worth while.
As if the choric calyx of a flower
Aerial, visible on music's waves,
A lotus of light-petalled ecstasy
Took shape out of the tremulous heart of things.
There was no more the torment under the stars,
The evil sheltered behind Nature's mask;
There was no more the dark pretence of hate,
The cruel rictus on Love's altered face.
Hate was the grip of a dreadful amour's strife;
A ruthless love intent only to possess
Has here replaced the sweet original god.
Forgetting the Will-to-love that gave it birth,
The passion to lock itself in and to unite,
It would swallow all into one lonely self,
Devouring the soul that it had made its own,

By suffering and annihilation's pain
Punishing the unwillingness to be one,
Angry with the refusals of the world,
Passionate to take but knowing not how to give.
Death's sombre cowl was cast from Nature's brow;
There lightened on her the godhead's lurking laugh.
All grace and glory and all divinity
Were here collected in a single form;
All worshipped eyes looked through his from one face;
He bore all godheads in his grandiose limbs.
An oceanic spirit dwelt within;
Intolerant and invincible in joy
A flood of freedom and transcendent bliss
Into immortal lines of beauty rose.
In him the fourfold Being bore its crown
That wears the mystery of a nameless Name,
The universe writing its tremendous sense
In the inexhaustible meaning of a word.
In him the architect of the visible world,
At once the art and artist of his works,
Spirit and seer and thinker of things seen,
Virat, who lights his camp-fires in the suns
And the star-entangled ether is his hold,
Expressed himself with Matter for his speech:
Objects are his letters, forces are his words,
Events are the crowded history of his life,
And sea and land are the pages for his tale.
Matter is his means and his spiritual sign;
He hangs the thought upon a lash's lift,
In the current of the blood makes flow the soul.
His is the dumb will of atom and of clod;
A Will that without sense or motive acts,
An Intelligence needing not to think or plan,
The world creates itself invincibly;
For its body is the body of the Lord
And in its heart stands Virat, King of Kings.

In him shadows his form the Golden Child
Who in the Sun-capped Vast cradles his birth:
Hiranyagarbha, author of thoughts and dreams,
Who sees the invisible and hears the sounds
That never visited a mortal ear,
Discoverer of unthought realities
Truer to Truth than all we have ever known,
He is the leader on the inner roads;
A seer, he has entered the forbidden realms;
A magician with the omnipotent wand of thought,
He builds the secret uncreated worlds.
Armed with the golden speech, the diamond eye,
His is the vision and the prophecy:
Imagist casting the formless into shape,
Traveller and hewer of the unseen paths,
He is the carrier of the hidden fire,
He is the voice of the Ineffable,
He is the invisible hunter of the light,
The Angel of mysterious ecstasies,
The conqueror of the kingdoms of the soul.
A third spirit stood behind, their hidden cause,
A mass of superconscience closed in light,
Creator of things in his all-knowing sleep.
All from his stillness came as grows a tree;
He is our seed and core, our head and base.
All light is but a flash from his closed eyes:
An all-wise Truth is mystic in his heart,
The omniscient Ray is shut behind his lids:
He is the Wisdom that comes not by thought,
His wordless silence brings the immortal word.
He sleeps in the atom and the burning star,
He sleeps in man and god and beast and stone:
Because he is there the Inconscient does its work,
Because he is there the world forgets to die.
He is the centre of the circle of God,
He the circumference of Nature's run.

His slumber is an Almightiness in things,
Awake, he is the Eternal and Supreme.
Above was the brooding bliss of the Infinite,
Its omniscient and omnipotent repose,
Its immobile silence absolute and alone.
All powers were woven in countless concords here.
The bliss that made the world in his body lived,
Love and delight were the head of the sweet form.
In the alluring meshes of their snare
Recaptured, the proud blissful members held
All joys outrunners of the panting heart
And fugitive from life's outstripped desire.
Whatever vision has escaped the eye,
Whatever happiness comes in dream and trance,
The nectar spilled by love with trembling hands,
The joy the cup of Nature cannot hold,
Had crowded to the beauty of his face,
Were waiting in the honey of his laugh.
Things hidden by the silence of the hours,
The ideas that find no voice on living lips,
The soul's pregnant meeting with infinity
Had come to birth in him and taken fire:
The secret whisper of the flower and star
Revealed its meaning in his fathomless look.
His lips curved eloquent like a rose of dawn;
His smile that played with the wonder of the mind
And stayed in the heart when it had left his mouth
Glimmered with the radiance of the morning star
Gemming the wide discovery of heaven.
His gaze was the regard of eternity;
The spirit of its sweet and calm intent
Was a wise home of gladness and divulged
The light of the ages in the mirth of the hours,
A sun of wisdom in a miracled grove.
In the orchestral largeness of his mind
All contrary seekings their close kinship knew,

Rich-hearted, wonderful to each other met
In the mutual marvelling of their myriad notes
And dwelt like brothers of one family
Who had found their common and mysterious home.
As from the harp of some ecstatic god
There springs a harmony of lyric bliss
Striving to leave no heavenly joy unsung,
Such was the life in that embodied Light.
He seemed the wideness of a boundless sky,
He seemed the passion of a sorrowless earth,
He seemed the burning of a world-wide sun.
Two looked upon each other, Soul saw Soul.

Then like an anthem from the heart's lucent cave
A voice soared up whose magic sound could turn
The poignant weeping of the earth to sobs
Of rapture and her cry to spirit song.
"O human image of the deathless word,
How hast thou seen beyond the topaz walls
The gleaming sisters of the divine gate,
Summoned the genii of their wakeful sleep,
And under revelation's arches forced
The carved thought-shrouded doors to swing apart,
Unlocked the avenues of spiritual sight
And taught the entries of a heavenlier state
To thy rapt soul that bore the golden key?
In thee the secret sight man's blindness missed
Has opened its view past Time, my chariot-course,
And death, my tunnel which I drive through life
To reach my unseen distances of bliss.
I am the hushed search of the jealous gods
Pursuing my wisdom's vast mysterious work
Seized in the thousand meeting ways of heaven.
I am the beauty of the unveiled ray
Drawing through the deep roads of the infinite night
The unconquerable pilgrim soul of earth

Beneath the flaring torches of the stars.
I am the inviolable Ecstasy;
They who have looked on me, shall grieve no more.
The eyes that live in night shall see my form.
On the pale shores of foaming steely straits
That flow beneath a grey tormented sky,
Two powers from one original ecstasy born
Pace near but parted in the life of man;
One leans to earth, the other yearns to the skies:
Heaven in its rapture dreams of perfect earth,
Earth in its sorrow dreams of perfect heaven.
The two longing to join, yet walk apart,
Idly divided by their vain conceits;
They are kept from their oneness by enchanted fears;
Sundered mysteriously by miles of thought,
They gaze across the silent gulfs of sleep.
Or side by side reclined upon my vasts
Like bride and bridegroom magically divorced
They wake to yearn, but never can they clasp
While thinly flickering hesitates uncrossed
Between the lovers on their nuptial couch
The shadowy eidolon of a sword.
But when the phantom flame-edge fails undone,
Then never more can space or time divide
The lover from the loved; Space shall draw back
Her great translucent curtain, Time shall be
The quivering of the spirit's endless bliss.
Attend that moment of celestial fate.
Meanwhile you two shall serve the dual law
Which only now the scouts of vision glimpse
Who pressing through the forest of their thoughts
Have found the narrow bridges of the gods.
Wait patient of the brittle bars of form
Making division your delightful means
Of happy oneness rapturously enhanced
By attraction in the throbbing air between.

Yet if thou wouldst abandon the vexed world,
Careless of the dark moan of things below,
Tread down the isthmus, overleap the flood,
Cancel thy contract with the labouring Force;
Renounce the tie that joins thee to earth-kind,
Cast off thy sympathy with mortal hearts.
Arise, vindicate thy spirit's conquered right:
Relinquishing thy charge of transient breath,
Under the cold gaze of the indifferent stars
Leaving thy borrowed body on the sod,
Ascend, O soul, into thy blissful home.
Here in the playground of the eternal Child
Or in domains the wise Immortals tread
Roam with thy comrade splendour under skies
Spiritual lit by an unsetting sun,
As godheads live who care not for the world
And share not in the toil of Nature's powers:
Absorbed in their self-ecstasy they dwell.
Cast off the ambiguous myth of earth's desire,
O immortal, to felicity arise."
   On Savitri listening in her tranquil heart
To the harmony of the ensnaring voice
A joy exceeding earth's and heaven's poured down,
The bliss of an unknown eternity,
A rapture from some waiting Infinite.
A smile came rippling out in her wide eyes,
Its confident felicity's messenger
As if the first beam of the morning sun
Rippled along two wakened lotus-pools.
"O besetter of man's soul with life and death
And the world's pleasure and pain and Day and Night,
Tempting his heart with the far lure of heaven,
Testing his strength with the close touch of hell,
I climb not to thy everlasting Day,
Even as I have shunned thy eternal Night.
To me who turn not from thy terrestrial Way,

Give back the other self my nature asks.
Thy spaces need him not to help their joy;
Earth needs his beautiful spirit made by thee
To fling delight down like a net of gold.
Earth is the chosen place of mightiest souls;
Earth is the heroic spirit's battlefield,
The forge where the Archmason shapes his works.
Thy servitudes on earth are greater, King,
Than all the glorious liberties of heaven.
The heavens were once to me my natural home,
I too have wandered in star-jewelled groves,
Paced sun-gold pastures and moon-silver swards
And heard the harping laughter of their streams
And lingered under branches dropping myrrh;
I too have revelled in the fields of light
Touched by the ethereal raiment of the winds,
Thy wonder-rounds of music I have trod,
Lived in the rhyme of bright unlabouring thoughts,
I have beat swift harmonies of rapture vast,
Danced in spontaneous measures of the soul
The great and easy dances of the gods.
O fragrant are the lanes thy children walk
And lovely is the memory of their feet
Amid the wonder-flowers of Paradise:
A heavier tread is mine, a mightier touch.
There where the gods and demons battle in night
Or wrestle on the borders of the Sun,
Taught by the sweetness and the pain of life
To bear the uneven strenuous beat that throbs
Against the edge of some divinest hope,
To dare the impossible with these pangs of search,
In me the spirit of immortal love
Stretches its arms out to embrace mankind.
Too far thy heavens for me from suffering men.
Imperfect is the joy not shared by all.
O to spread forth, O to encircle and seize

More hearts till love in us has filled thy world!
O life, the life beneath the wheeling stars!
For victory in the tournament with death,
For bending of the fierce and difficult bow,
For flashing of the splendid sword of God!
O thou who soundst the trumpet in the lists,
Part not the handle from the untried steel,
Take not the warrior with his blow unstruck.
Are there not still a million fights to wage?
O king-smith, clang on still thy toil begun,
Weld us to one in thy strong smithy of life.
Thy fine-curved jewelled hilt call Savitri,
Thy blade's exultant smile name Satyavan.
Fashion to beauty, point us through the world.
Break not the lyre before the song is found;
Are there not still unnumbered chants to weave?
O subtle-souled musician of the years,
Play out what thou hast fluted on my stops;
Arise from the strain their first wild plaint divined
And that discover which is yet unsung.
I know that I can lift man's soul to God,
I know that he can bring the Immortal down.
Our will labours permitted by thy will
And without thee an empty roar of storm,
A senseless whirlwind is the Titan's force
And without thee a snare the strength of gods.
Let not the inconscient gulf swallow man's race
That through earth's ignorance struggles towards thy Light.
O Thunderer with the lightnings of the soul,
Give not to darkness and to death thy sun,
Achieve thy wisdom's hidden firm decree
And the mandate of thy secret world-wide love."
Her words failed lost in thought's immensities
Which seized them at the limits of their cry
And hid their meaning in the distances
That stir to more than ever speech has won

From the Unthinkable, end of all our thought,
And the Ineffable from whom all words come.

Then with a smile august as noonday heavens
The godhead of the vision wonderful:
"How shall earth-nature and man's nature rise
To the celestial levels, yet earth abide?
Heaven and earth towards each other gaze
Across a gulf that few can cross, none touch,
Arriving through a vague ethereal mist
Out of which all things form that move in space,
The shore that all can see but never reach.
Heaven's light visits sometimes the mind of earth;
Its thoughts burn in her sky like lonely stars;
In her heart there move celestial seekings soft
And beautiful like fluttering wings of birds,
Visions of joy that she can never win
Traverse the fading mirror of her dreams.
Faint seeds of light and bliss bear sorrowful flowers,
Faint harmonies caught from a half-heard song
Fall swooning mid the wandering voices' jar,
Foam from the tossing luminous seas where dwells
The beautiful and far delight of gods,
Raptures unknown, a miracled happiness
Thrill her and pass half-shaped to mind and sense.
Above her little finite steps she feels,
Careless of knot or pause, worlds which weave out
A strange perfection beyond law and rule,
A universe of self-found felicity,
An inexpressible rhythm of timeless beats,
The many-movemented heart-beats of the One,
Magic of the boundless harmonies of self,
Order of the freedom of the infinite,
The wonder-plastics of the Absolute.
There is the All-Truth and there the timeless bliss.
But hers are fragments of a star-lost gleam,

Hers are but careless visits of the gods.
They are a Light that fails, a Word soon hushed
And nothing they mean can stay for long on earth.
There are high glimpses, not the lasting sight.
A few can climb to an unperishing sun,
Or live on the edges of the mystic moon
And channel to earth-mind the wizard ray.
The heroes and the demigods are few
To whom the close immortal voices speak
And to their acts the heavenly clan are near.
Few are the silences in which Truth is heard,
Unveiling the timeless utterance in her deeps;
Few are the splendid moments of the seers.
Heaven's call is rare, rarer the heart that heeds;
The doors of light are sealed to common mind
And earth's needs nail to earth the human mass,
Only in an uplifting hour of stress
Men answer to the touch of greater things:
Or, raised by some strong hand to breathe heaven-air,
They slide back to the mud from which they climbed;
In the mud of which they are made, whose law they know
They joy in safe return to a friendly base,
And, though something in them weeps for glory lost
And greatness murdered, they accept their fall.
To be the common man they think the best,
To live as others live is their delight.
For most are built on Nature's early plan
And owe small debt to a superior plane;
The human average is their level pitch,
A thinking animal's material range.
In the long ever-mounting hierarchy,
In the stark economy of cosmic life
Each creature to its appointed task and place
Is bound by his nature's form, his spirit's force.
If this were easily disturbed, it would break
The settled balance of created things;

The perpetual order of the universe
Would tremble, and a gap yawn in woven Fate.
If men were not and all were brilliant gods,
The mediating stair would then be lost
By which the spirit awake in Matter winds
Accepting the circuits of the middle Way,
By heavy toil and slow aeonic steps
Reaching the bright miraculous fringe of God,
Into the glory of the Oversoul.
My will, my call is there in men and things;
But the Inconscient lies at the world's grey back
And draws to its breast of Night and Death and Sleep.
Imprisoned in its dark and dumb abyss
A little consciousness it lets escape
But jealous of the growing light holds back
Close to the obscure edges of its cave
As if a fond ignorant mother kept her child
Tied to her apron strings of Nescience.
The Inconscient could not read without man's mind
The mystery of the world its sleep has made:
Man is its key to unlock a conscious door.
But still it holds him dangled in its grasp:
It draws its giant circle round his thoughts,
It shuts his heart to the supernal Light.
A high and dazzling limit shines above,
A black and blinding border rules below:
His mind is closed between two firmaments.
He seeks through words and images the Truth,
And, poring on surfaces and brute outsides
Or dipping cautious feet in shallow seas,
Even his Knowledge is an Ignorance.
He is barred out from his own inner depths;
He cannot look on the face of the Unknown.
How shall he see with the Omniscient's eyes,
How shall he will with the Omnipotent's force?
O too compassionate and eager Dawn,

Leave to the circling aeons' tardy pace
And to the working of the inconscient Will,
Leave to its imperfect light the earthly race:
All shall be done by the long act of Time.
Although the race is bound by its own kind,
The soul in man is greater than his fate:
Above the wash and surge of Time and Space,
Disengaging from the cosmic commonalty
By which all life is kin in grief and joy,
Delivered from the universal Law
The sunlike single and transcendent spirit
Can blaze its way through the mind's barrier wall
And burn alone in the eternal sky,
Inhabitant of a wide and endless calm.
O flame, withdraw into thy luminous self.
Or else return to thy original might
On a seer-summit above thought and world;
Partner of my unhoured eternity,
Be one with the infinity of my power:
For thou art the World-Mother and the Bride.
Out of the fruitless yearning of earth's life,
Out of her feeble unconvincing dream,
Recovering wings that cross infinity
Pass back into the Power from which thou cam'st.
To that thou canst uplift thy formless flight,
Thy heart can rise from its unsatisfied beats
And feel the immortal and spiritual joy
Of a soul that never lost felicity.
Lift up the fallen heart of love which flutters
Cast down desire's abyss into the gulfs.
For ever rescued out of Nature's shapes
Discover what the aimless cycles want,
There intertwined with all thy life has meant,
Here vainly sought in a terrestrial form.
Break into eternity thy mortal mould;
Melt, lightning, into thy invisible flame!

Clasp, Ocean, deep into thyself thy wave,
Happy for ever in the embosoming surge.
Grow one with the still passion of the depths.
Then shalt thou know the Lover and the Loved,
Leaving the limits dividing him and thee.
Receive him into boundless Savitri,
Lose thyself into infinite Satyavan.
O miracle, where thou beganst, there cease!"
   But Savitri answered to the radiant God:
"In vain thou temptst with solitary bliss
Two spirits saved out of a suffering world;
My soul and his indissolubly linked
In the one task for which our lives were born,
To raise the world to God in deathless Light,
To bring God down to the world on earth we came,
To change the earthly life to life divine.
I keep my will to save the world and man;
Even the charm of thy alluring voice,
O blissful Godhead, cannot seize and snare.
I sacrifice not earth to happier worlds.
Because there dwelt the Eternal's vast Idea
And his dynamic will in men and things,
So only could the enormous scene begin.
Whence came this profitless wilderness of stars,
This mighty barren wheeling of the suns?
Who made the soul of futile life in Time,
Planted a purpose and a hope in the heart,
Set Nature to a huge and meaningless task
Or planned her million-aeoned effort's waste?
What force condemned to birth and death and tears
These conscious creatures crawling on the globe?
If earth can look up to the light of heaven
And hear an answer to her lonely cry,
Not vain their meeting, nor heaven's touch a snare.
If thou and I are true, the world is true;
Although thou hide thyself behind thy works,

To be is not a senseless paradox;
Since God has made earth, earth must make in her God;
What hides within her breast she must reveal.
I claim thee for the world that thou hast made.
If man lives bound by his humanity,
If he is tied for ever to his pain,
Let a greater being then arise from man,
The superhuman with the Eternal mate
And the Immortal shine through earthly forms.
Else were creation vain and this great world
A nothing that in Time's moments seems to be.
But I have seen through the insentient mask;
I have felt a secret spirit stir in things
Carrying the body of the growing God:
It looks through veiling forms at veilless truth;
It pushes back the curtain of the gods;
It climbs towards its own eternity."
But the god answered to the woman's heart:
"O living power of the incarnate Word,
All that the Spirit has dreamed thou canst create:
Thou art the force by which I made the worlds,
Thou art my vision and my will and voice.
But knowledge too is thine, the world-plan thou knowest
And the tardy process of the pace of Time.
In the impetuous drive of thy heart of flame,
In thy passion to deliver man and earth,
Indignant at the impediments of Time
And the slow evolution's sluggard steps,
Lead not the spirit in an ignorant world
To dare too soon the adventure of the Light,
Pushing the bound and slumbering god in man
Awakened mid the ineffable silences
Into endless vistas of the unknown and unseen,
Across the last confines of the limiting Mind
And the Superconscient's perilous border line
Into the danger of the Infinite.

But if thou wilt not wait for Time and God,
Do then thy work and force thy will on Fate.
As I have taken from thee my load of night
And taken from thee my twilight's doubts and dreams,
So now I take my light of utter Day.
These are my symbol kingdoms but not here
Can the great choice be made that fixes fate
Or uttered the sanction of the Voice supreme.
Arise upon a ladder of greater worlds
To the infinity where no world can be.
But not in the wide air where a greater Life
Uplifts its mystery and its miracle,
And not on the luminous peaks of summit Mind,
Or in the hold where subtle Matter's spirit
Hides in its light of shimmering secrecies,
Can there be heard the Eternal's firm command
That joins the head of destiny to its base.
These only are the mediating links;
Not theirs is the originating sight
Nor the fulfilling act or last support
That bears perpetually the cosmic pile.
Two are the Powers that hold the ends of Time;
Spirit foresees, Matter unfolds its thought,
The dumb executor of God's decrees,
Omitting no iota and no dot,
Agent unquestioning, inconscient, stark,
Evolving inevitably a charged content,
Intention of his force in Time and Space,
In animate beings and inanimate things;
Immutably it fulfils its ordered task,
It cancels not a tittle of things done;
Unswerving from the oracular command
It alters not the steps of the Unseen.
If thou must indeed deliver man and earth
On the spiritual heights look down on life,
Discover the truth of God and man and world;

Then do thy task knowing and seeing all.
Ascend, O soul, into thy timeless self;
Choose destiny's curve and stamp thy will on Time."
He ended and upon the falling sound
A power went forth that shook the founded spheres
And loosed the stakes that hold the tents of form.
Absolved from vision's grip and the folds of thought,
Rapt from her sense like disappearing scenes
In the stupendous theatre of Space
The heaven-worlds vanished in spiritual light.
A movement was abroad, a cry, a word,
Beginningless in its vast discovery,
Momentless in its unthinkable return:
Choired in calm seas she heard the eternal Thought
Rhythming itself abroad unutterably
In spaceless orbits and on timeless roads.
In an ineffable world she lived fulfilled.
An energy of the triune Infinite,
In a measureless Reality she dwelt,
A rapture and a being and a force,
A linked and myriad-motioned plenitude,
A virgin unity, a luminous spouse,
Housing a multitudinous embrace
To marry all in God's immense delight,
Bearing the eternity of every spirit,
Bearing the burden of universal love,
A wonderful mother of unnumbered souls.
All things she knew, all things imagined or willed:
Her ear was opened to ideal sound,
Shape the convention bound no more her sight,
A thousand doors of oneness was her heart.
A crypt and sanctuary of brooding light
Appeared, the last recess of things beyond.
Then in its rounds the enormous fiat paused,
Silence gave back to the Unknowable
All it had given. Still was her listening thought.

The form of things had ceased within her soul.
Invisible that perfect godhead now.
Around her some tremendous spirit lived,
Mysterious flame around a melting pearl,
And in the phantom of abolished Space
There was a voice unheard by ears that cried:
"Choose, spirit, thy supreme choice not given again;
For now from my highest being looks at thee
The nameless formless peace where all things rest.
In a happy vast sublime cessation know, —
An immense extinction in eternity,
A point that disappears in the infinite, —
Felicity of the extinguished flame,
Last sinking of a wave in a boundless sea,
End of the trouble of thy wandering thoughts,
Close of the journeying of thy pilgrim soul.
Accept, O music, weariness of thy notes,
O stream, wide breaking of thy channel banks."
The moments fell into eternity.
But someone yearned within a bosom unknown
And silently the woman's heart replied:
"Thy peace, O Lord, a boon within to keep
Amid the roar and ruin of wild Time
For the magnificent soul of man on earth.
Thy calm, O Lord, that bears thy hands of joy."
Limitless like ocean round a lonely isle
A second time the eternal cry arose:
"Wide open are the ineffable gates in front.
My spirit leans down to break the knot of earth,
Amorous of oneness without thought or sign
To cast down wall and fence, to strip heaven bare,
See with the large eye of infinity,
Unweave the stars and into silence pass."
In an immense and world-destroying pause
She heard a million creatures cry to her.
Through the tremendous stillness of her thoughts

Immeasurably the woman's nature spoke:
"Thy oneness, Lord, in many approaching hearts,
My sweet infinity of thy numberless souls."
Mightily retreating like a sea in ebb
A third time swelled the great admonishing call:
"I spread abroad the refuge of my wings.
Out of its incommunicable deeps
My power looks forth of mightiest splendour, stilled
Into its majesty of sleep, withdrawn
Above the dreadful whirlings of the world."
A sob of things was answer to the voice,
And passionately the woman's heart replied:
"Thy energy, Lord, to seize on woman and man,
To take all things and creatures in their grief
And gather them into a mother's arms."
Solemn and distant like a seraph's lyre
A last great time the warning sound was heard:
"I open the wide eye of solitude
To uncover the voiceless rapture of my bliss,
Where in a pure and exquisite hush it lies
Motionless in its slumber of ecstasy,
Resting from the sweet madness of the dance
Out of whose beat the throb of hearts was born."
Breaking the Silence with appeal and cry
A hymn of adoration tireless climbed,
A music beat of winged uniting souls,
Then all the woman yearningly replied:
"Thy embrace which rends the living knot of pain,
Thy joy, O Lord, in which all creatures breathe,
Thy magic flowing waters of deep love,
Thy sweetness give to me for earth and men."

Then after silence a still blissful cry
Began, such as arose from the Infinite
When the first whisperings of a strange delight
Imagined in its deep the joy to seek,

The passion to discover and to touch,
The enamoured laugh which rhymed the chanting worlds:
"O beautiful body of the incarnate Word,
Thy thoughts are mine, I have spoken with thy voice.
My will is thine, what thou hast chosen I choose:
All thou hast asked I give to earth and men.
All shall be written out in destiny's book
By my trustee of thought and plan and act,
The executor of my will, eternal Time.
But since thou hast refused my maimless Calm
And turned from my termless peace in which is expunged
The visage of Space and the shape of Time is lost,
And from happy extinction of thy separate self
In my uncompanioned lone eternity, —
For not for thee the nameless worldless Nought,
Annihilation of thy living soul
And the end of thought and hope and life and love
In the blank measureless Unknowable, —
I lay my hands upon thy soul of flame,
I lay my hands upon thy heart of love,
I yoke thee to my power of work in Time.
Because thou hast obeyed my timeless will,
Because thou hast chosen to share earth's struggle and fate
And leaned in pity over earth-bound men
And turned aside to help and yearned to save,
I bind by thy heart's passion thy heart to mine
And lay my splendid yoke upon thy soul.
Now will I do in thee my marvellous works.
I will fasten thy nature with my cords of strength,
Subdue to my delight thy spirit's limbs
And make thee a vivid knot of all my bliss
And build in thee my proud and crystal home.
Thy days shall be my shafts of power and light,
Thy nights my starry mysteries of joy
And all my clouds lie tangled in thy hair
And all my springtides marry in thy mouth.

O Sun-Word, thou shalt raise the earth-soul to Light
And bring down God into the lives of men;
Earth shall be my work-chamber and my house,
My garden of life to plant a seed divine.
When all thy work in human time is done
The mind of earth shall be a home of light,
The life of earth a tree growing towards heaven,
The body of earth a tabernacle of God.
Awakened from the mortal's ignorance
Men shall be lit with the Eternal's ray
And the glory of my sun-lift in their thoughts
And feel in their hearts the sweetness of my love
And in their acts my Power's miraculous drive.
My will shall be the meaning of their days;
Living for me, by me, in me they shall live.
In the heart of my creation's mystery
I will enact the drama of thy soul,
Inscribe the long romance of Thee and Me.
I will pursue thee across the centuries;
Thou shalt be hunted through the world by love,
Naked of ignorance' protecting veil
And without covert from my radiant gods.
No shape shall screen thee from my divine desire,
Nowhere shalt thou escape my living eyes.
In the nudity of thy discovered self,
In a bare identity with all that is,
Disrobed of thy covering of humanity,
Divested of the dense veil of human thought,
Made one with every mind and body and heart,
Made one with all Nature and with Self and God,
Summing in thy single soul my mystic world
I will possess in thee my universe,
The universe find all I am in thee.
Thou shalt bear all things that all things may change,
Thou shalt fill all with my splendour and my bliss,
Thou shalt meet all with thy transmuting soul.

Assailed by my infinitudes above,
And quivering in immensities below,
Pursued by me through my mind's wall-less vast,
Oceanic with the surges of my life,
A swimmer lost between two leaping seas
By my outer pains and inner sweetnesses
Finding my joy in my opposite mysteries
Thou shalt respond to me from every nerve.
A vision shall compel thy coursing breath,
Thy heart shall drive thee on the wheel of works,
Thy mind shall urge thee through the flames of thought,
To meet me in the abyss and on the heights,
To feel me in the tempest and the calm,
And love me in the noble and the vile,
In beautiful things and terrible desire.
The pains of hell shall be to thee my kiss,
The flowers of heaven persuade thee with my touch.
My fiercest masks shall my attractions bring.
Music shall find thee in the voice of swords,
Beauty pursue thee through the core of flame.
Thou shalt know me in the rolling of the spheres
And cross me in the atoms of the whirl.
The wheeling forces of my universe
Shall cry to thee the summons of my name.
Delight shall drop down from my nectarous moon,
My fragrance seize thee in the jasmine's snare,
My eye shall look upon thee from the sun.
Mirror of Nature's secret spirit made,
Thou shalt reflect my hidden heart of joy,
Thou shalt drink down my sweetness unalloyed
In my pure lotus-cup of starry brim.
My dreadful hands laid on thy bosom shall force
Thy being bathed in fiercest longing's streams.
Thou shalt discover the one and quivering note,
And cry, the harp of all my melodies,
And roll, my foaming wave in seas of love.

Even my disasters' clutch shall be to thee
The ordeal of my rapture's contrary shape:
In pain's self shall smile on thee my secret face:
Thou shalt bear my ruthless beauty unabridged
Amid the world's intolerable wrongs,
Trampled by the violent misdeeds of Time
Cry out to the ecstasy of my rapture's touch.
All beings shall be to thy life my emissaries;
Drawn to me on the bosom of thy friend,
Compelled to meet me in thy enemy's eyes,
My creatures shall demand me from thy heart.
Thou shalt not shrink from any brother soul.
Thou shalt be attracted helplessly to all.
Men seeing thee shall feel my hands of joy,
In sorrow's pangs feel steps of the world's delight,
Their life experience its tumultuous shock
In the mutual craving of two opposites.
Hearts touched by thy love shall answer to my call,
Discover the ancient music of the spheres
In the revealing accents of thy voice
And nearer draw to me because thou art:
Enamoured of thy spirit's loveliness
They shall embrace my body in thy soul,
Hear in thy life the beauty of my laugh,
Know the thrilled bliss with which I made the worlds.
All that thou hast, shall be for others' bliss,
All that thou art, shall to my hands belong.
I will pour delight from thee as from a jar,
I will whirl thee as my chariot through the ways,
I will use thee as my sword and as my lyre,
I will play on thee my minstrelsies of thought.
And when thou art vibrant with all ecstasy,
And when thou liv'st one spirit with all things,
Then will I spare thee not my living fires,
But make thee a channel for my timeless force.
My hidden presence led thee unknowing on

From thy beginning in earth's voiceless bosom
Through life and pain and time and will and death,
Through outer shocks and inner silences
Along the mystic roads of Space and Time
To the experience which all Nature hides.
Who hunts and seizes me, my captive grows:
This shalt thou henceforth learn from thy heart-beats.
For ever love, O beautiful slave of God!
O lasso of my rapture's widening noose,
Become my cord of universal love.
The spirit ensnared by thee force to delight
Of creation's oneness sweet and fathomless,
Compelled to embrace my myriad unities
And all my endless forms and divine souls.
O Mind, grow full of the eternal peace;
O Word, cry out the immortal litany:
Built is the golden tower, the flame-child born.
   "Descend to life with him thy heart desires.
O Satyavan, O luminous Savitri,
I sent you forth of old beneath the stars,
A dual power of God in an ignorant world,
In a hedged creation shut from limitless self,
Bringing down God to the insentient globe,
Lifting earth-beings to immortality.
In the world of my knowledge and my ignorance
Where God is unseen and only is heard a Name
And knowledge is trapped in the boundaries of mind
And life is hauled in the drag-net of desire
And Matter hides the soul from its own sight,
You are my Force at work to uplift earth's fate,
My self that moves up the immense incline
Between the extremes of the spirit's night and day.
He is my soul that climbs from nescient Night
Through life and mind and supernature's Vast
To the supernal light of Timelessness
And my eternity hid in moving Time

And my boundlessness cut by the curve of Space.
It climbs to the greatness it has left behind
And to the beauty and joy from which it fell,
To the closeness and sweetness of all things divine,
To light without bounds and life illimitable,
Taste of the depths of the Ineffable's bliss,
Touch of the immortal and the infinite.
He is my soul that gropes out of the beast
To reach humanity's heights of lucent thought
And the vicinity of Truth's sublime.
He is the godhead growing in human lives
And in the body of earth-being's forms:
He is the soul of man climbing to God
In Nature's surge out of earth's ignorance.
O Savitri, thou art my spirit's Power,
The revealing voice of my immortal Word,
The face of Truth upon the roads of Time
Pointing to the souls of men the routes to God.
While the dim light from the veiled Spirit's peak
Falls upon Matter's stark inconscient sleep
As if a pale moonbeam on a dense glade,
And Mind in a half-light moves amid half-truths
And the human heart knows only human love
And life is a stumbling and imperfect force
And the body counts out its precarious days,
You shall be born into man's dubious hours
In forms that hide the soul's divinity
And show through veils of the earth's doubting air
My glory breaking as through clouds a sun,
Or burning like a rare and inward fire,
And with my nameless influence fill men's lives.
Yet shall they look up as to peaks of God
And feel God like a circumambient air
And rest on God as on a motionless base.
Yet shall there glow on mind like a horned moon
The Spirit's crescent splendour in pale skies

And light man's life upon his Godward road.
But more there is concealed in God's Beyond
That shall one day reveal its hidden face.
Now mind is all and its uncertain ray,
Mind is the leader of the body and life,
Mind the thought-driven chariot of the soul
Carrying the luminous wanderer in the night
To vistas of a far uncertain dawn,
To the end of the Spirit's fathomless desire,
To its dream of absolute truth and utter bliss.
There are greater destinies mind cannot surmise
Fixed on the summit of the evolving Path
The Traveller now treads in the Ignorance,
Unaware of his next step, not knowing his goal.
Mind is not all his tireless climb can reach,
There is a fire on the apex of the worlds,
There is a house of the Eternal's light,
There is an infinite truth, an absolute power.
The Spirit's mightiness shall cast off its mask;
Its greatness shall be felt shaping the world's course:
It shall be seen in its own veilless beams,
A star rising from the Inconscient's night,
A sun climbing to Supernature's peak.
Abandoning the dubious middle Way,
A few shall glimpse the miraculous Origin
And some shall feel in you the secret Force
And they shall turn to meet a nameless tread,
Adventurers into a mightier Day.
Ascending out of the limiting breadths of mind,
They shall discover the world's huge design
And step into the Truth, the Right, the Vast.
You shall reveal to them the hidden eternities,
The breath of infinitudes not yet revealed,
Some rapture of the bliss that made the world,
Some rush of the force of God's omnipotence,
Some beam of the omniscient Mystery.

But when the hour of the Divine draws near
The Mighty Mother shall take birth in Time
And God be born into the human clay
In forms made ready by your human lives.
Then shall the Truth supreme be given to men:
There is a being beyond the being of mind,
An Immeasurable cast into many forms,
A miracle of the multitudinous One,
There is a consciousness mind cannot touch,
Its speech cannot utter nor its thought reveal.
It has no home on earth, no centre in man,
Yet is the source of all things thought and done,
The fount of the creation and its works,
It is the origin of all truth here,
The sun-orb of mind's fragmentary rays,
Infinity's heaven that spills the rain of God,
The Immense that calls to man to expand the Spirit,
The wide Aim that justifies his narrow attempts,
A channel for the little he tastes of bliss.
Some shall be made the glory's receptacles
And vehicles of the Eternal's luminous power.
These are the high forerunners, the heads of Time,
The great deliverers of earth-bound mind,
The high transfigurers of human clay,
The first-born of a new supernal race.
The incarnate dual Power shall open God's door,
Eternal supermind touch earthly Time.
The superman shall wake in mortal man
And manifest the hidden demigod
Or grow into the God-Light and God-Force
Revealing the secret deity in the cave.
Then shall the earth be touched by the Supreme,
His bright unveiled Transcendence shall illumine
The mind and heart and force the life and act
To interpret his inexpressible mystery
In a heavenly alphabet of Divinity's signs.

His living cosmic spirit shall enring,
Annulling the decree of death and pain,
Erasing the formulas of the Ignorance,
With the deep meaning of beauty and life's hid sense,
The being ready for immortality,
His regard crossing infinity's mystic waves
Bring back to Nature her early joy to live,
The metred heart-beats of a lost delight,
The cry of a forgotten ecstasy,
The dance of the first world-creating Bliss.
The Immanent shall be the witness God
Watching on his many-petalled lotus-throne
His actionless being and his silent might
Ruling earth-nature by eternity's law,
A thinker waking the Inconscient's world,
An immobile centre of many infinitudes
In his thousand-pillared temple by Time's sea.
Then shall the embodied being live as one
Who is a thought, a will of the Divine,
A mask or robe of his divinity,
An instrument and partner of his Force,
A point or line drawn in the infinite,
A manifest of the Imperishable.
The supermind shall be his nature's fount,
The Eternal's truth shall mould his thoughts and acts,
The Eternal's truth shall be his light and guide.
All then shall change, a magic order come
Overtopping this mechanical universe.
A mightier race shall inhabit the mortal's world.
On Nature's luminous tops, on the Spirit's ground,
The superman shall reign as king of life,
Make earth almost the mate and peer of heaven,
And lead towards God and truth man's ignorant heart
And lift towards godhead his mortality.
A power released from circumscribing bounds,
Its height pushed up beyond death's hungry reach,

Life's tops shall flame with the Immortal's thoughts,
Light shall invade the darkness of its base.
Then in the process of evolving Time
All shall be drawn into a single plan,
A divine harmony shall be earth's law,
Beauty and joy remould her way to live:
Even the body shall remember God,
Nature shall draw back from mortality
And Spirit's fires shall guide the earth's blind force;
Knowledge shall bring into the aspirant Thought
A high proximity to Truth and God.
The supermind shall claim the world for Light
And thrill with love of God the enamoured heart
And place Light's crown on Nature's lifted head
And found Light's reign on her unshaking base.
A greater truth than earth's shall roof-in earth
And shed its sunlight on the roads of mind;
A power infallible shall lead the thought,
A seeing Puissance govern life and act,
In earthly hearts kindle the Immortal's fire.
A soul shall wake in the Inconscient's house;
The mind shall be God-vision's tabernacle,
The body intuition's instrument,
And life a channel for God's visible power.
All earth shall be the Spirit's manifest home,
Hidden no more by the body and the life,
Hidden no more by the mind's ignorance;
An unerring Hand shall shape event and act.
The Spirit's eyes shall look through Nature's eyes,
The Spirit's force shall occupy Nature's force.
This world shall be God's visible garden-house,
The earth shall be a field and camp of God,
Man shall forget consent to mortality
And his embodied frail impermanence.
This universe shall unseal its occult sense,
Creation's process change its antique front,

An ignorant evolution's hierarchy
Release the Wisdom chained below its base.
The Spirit shall be the master of his world
Lurking no more in form's obscurity
And Nature shall reverse her action's rule,
The outward world disclose the Truth it veils;
All things shall manifest the covert God,
All shall reveal the Spirit's light and might
And move to its destiny of felicity.
Even should a hostile force cling to its reign
And claim its right's perpetual sovereignty
And man refuse his high spiritual fate,
Yet shall the secret Truth in things prevail.
For in the march of all-fulfilling Time
The hour must come of the Transcendent's will:
All turns and winds towards his predestined ends
In Nature's fixed inevitable course
Decreed since the beginning of the worlds
In the deep essence of created things:
Even there shall come as a high crown of all
The end of Death, the death of Ignorance.
But first high Truth must set her feet on earth
And man aspire to the Eternal's light
And all his members feel the Spirit's touch
And all his life obey an inner Force.
This too shall be; for a new life shall come,
A body of the Superconscient's truth,
A native field of Supernature's mights:
It shall make earth's nescient ground Truth's colony,
Make even the Ignorance a transparent robe
Through which shall shine the brilliant limbs of Truth
And Truth shall be a sun on Nature's head
And Truth shall be the guide of Nature's steps
And Truth shall gaze out of her nether deeps.
When superman is born as Nature's king
His presence shall transfigure Matter's world:

He shall light up Truth's fire in Nature's night,
He shall lay upon the earth Truth's greater law;
Man too shall turn towards the Spirit's call.
Awake to his hidden possibility,
Awake to all that slept within his heart
And all that Nature meant when earth was formed
And the Spirit made this ignorant world his home,
He shall aspire to Truth and God and Bliss.
Interpreter of a diviner law
And instrument of a supreme design,
The higher kind shall lean to lift up man.
Man shall desire to climb to his own heights.
The truth above shall wake a nether truth,
Even the dumb earth become a sentient force.
The Spirit's tops and Nature's base shall draw
Near to the secret of their separate truth
And know each other as one deity.
The Spirit shall look out through Matter's gaze
And Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.
Then man and superman shall be at one
And all the earth become a single life.
Even the multitude shall hear the Voice
And turn to commune with the Spirit within
And strive to obey the high spiritual law:
This earth shall stir with impulses sublime,
Humanity awake to deepest self,
Nature the hidden godhead recognise.
Even the many shall some answer make
And bear the splendour of the Divine's rush
And his impetuous knock at unseen doors.
A heavenlier passion shall upheave men's lives,
Their mind shall share in the ineffable gleam,
Their heart shall feel the ecstasy and the fire.
Earth's bodies shall be conscious of a soul;
Mortality's bondslaves shall unloose their bonds,
Mere men into spiritual beings grow

And see awake the dumb divinity.
Intuitive beams shall touch the nature's peaks,
A revelation stir the nature's depths;
The Truth shall be the leader of their lives,
Truth shall dictate their thought and speech and act,
They shall feel themselves lifted nearer to the sky,
As if a little lower than the gods.
For knowledge shall pour down in radiant streams
And even darkened mind quiver with new life
And kindle and burn with the Ideal's fire
And turn to escape from mortal ignorance.
The frontiers of the Ignorance shall recede,
More and more souls shall enter into light,
Minds lit, inspired, the occult summoner hear
And lives blaze with a sudden inner flame
And hearts grow enamoured of divine delight
And human wills tune to the divine will,
These separate selves the Spirit's oneness feel,
These senses of heavenly sense grow capable,
The flesh and nerves of a strange ethereal joy
And mortal bodies of immortality.
A divine force shall flow through tissue and cell
And take the charge of breath and speech and act
And all the thoughts shall be a glow of suns
And every feeling a celestial thrill.
Often a lustrous inner dawn shall come
Lighting the chambers of the slumbering mind;
A sudden bliss shall run through every limb
And Nature with a mightier Presence fill.
Thus shall the earth open to divinity
And common natures feel the wide uplift,
Illumine common acts with the Spirit's ray
And meet the deity in common things.
Nature shall live to manifest secret God,
The Spirit shall take up the human play,
This earthly life become the life divine."

The measure of that subtle music ceased.
Down with a hurried swimming floating lapse
Through unseen worlds and bottomless spaces forced
Sank like a star the soul of Savitri.
Amidst a laughter of unearthly lyres
She heard around her nameless voices cry
Triumphing, an innumerable sound.
A choir of rushing winds to meet her came.
She bore the burden of infinity
And felt the stir of all ethereal space.
Pursuing her in her fall, implacably sweet,
A face was over her which seemed a youth's,
Symbol of all the beauty eyes see not,
Crowned as with peacock plumes of gorgeous hue
Framing a sapphire, whose heart-disturbing smile
Insatiably attracted to delight,
Voluptuous to the embraces of her soul.
Changed in its shape, yet rapturously the same,
It grew a woman's dark and beautiful
Like a mooned night with drifting star-gemmed clouds,
A shadowy glory and a stormy depth,
Turbulent in will and terrible in love.
Eyes in which Nature's blind ecstatic life
Sprang from some spirit's passionate content,
Missioned her to the whirling dance of earth.
Amidst the headlong rapture of her fall
Held like a bird in a child's satisfied hands,
In an enamoured grasp her spirit strove
Admitting no release till Time should end,
And, as the fruit of the mysterious joy,
She kept within her strong embosoming soul
Like a flower hidden in the heart of spring
The soul of Satyavan drawn down by her
Inextricably in that mighty lapse.
Invisible heavens in a thronging flight
Soared past her as she fell. Then all the blind

And near attraction of the earth compelled
Fearful rapidities of downward bliss.
Lost in the giddy proneness of that speed,
Whirled, sinking, overcome she disappeared,
Like a leaf spinning from the tree of heaven,
In broad unconsciousness as in a pool;
A hospitable softness drew her in
Into a wonder of miraculous depths,
Above her closed a darkness of great wings
And she was buried in a mother's breast.
Then from a timeless plane that watches Time,
A Spirit gazed out upon destiny,
In its endless moment saw the ages pass.
All still was in a silence of the gods.
The prophet moment covered limitless Space
And cast into the heart of hurrying Time
A diamond light of the Eternal's peace,
A crimson seed of God's felicity;
A glance from the gaze fell of undying Love.
A wonderful face looked out with deathless eyes;
A hand was seen drawing the golden bars
That guard the imperishable secrecies.
A key turned in a mystic lock of Time.
But where the silence of the gods had passed,
A greater harmony from the stillness born
Surprised with joy and sweetness yearning hearts,
An ecstasy and a laughter and a cry.
A power leaned down, a happiness found its home.
Over wide earth brooded the infinite bliss.

END OF CANTO ONE
END OF BOOK ELEVEN

BOOK TWELVE

Epilogue

Epilogue

The Return to Earth

OUT OF abysmal trance her spirit woke.
Lain on the earth-mother's calm inconscient breast
She saw the green-clad branches lean above
Guarding her sleep with their enchanted life,
And overhead a blue-winged ecstasy
Fluttered from bough to bough with high-pitched call.
Into the magic secrecy of the woods
Peering through an emerald lattice-window of leaves,
In indolent skies reclined, the thinning day
Turned to its slow fall into evening's peace.
She pressed the living body of Satyavan:
On her body's wordless joy to be and breathe
She bore the blissful burden of his head
Between her breasts' warm labour of delight,
The waking gladness of her members felt
The weight of heaven in his limbs, a touch
Summing the whole felicity of things,
And all her life was conscious of his life
And all her being rejoiced enfolding his.
The immense remoteness of her trance had passed;
Human she was once more, earth's Savitri,
Yet felt in her illimitable change.
A power dwelt in her soul too great for earth,
A bliss lived in her heart too large for heaven;
Light too intense for thought and love too boundless
For earth's emotions lit her skies of mind
And spread through her deep and happy seas of soul.
All that is sacred in the world drew near
To her divine passivity of mood.
A marvellous voice of silence breathed its thoughts.
All things in Time and Space she had taken for hers;

In her they moved, by her they lived and were,
The whole wide world clung to her for delight,
Created for her rapt embrace of love.
Now in her spaceless self released from bounds
Unnumbered years seemed moments long drawn out,
The brilliant time-flakes of eternity.
Outwingings of a bird from its bright home,
Her earthly morns were radiant flights of joy.
Boundless she was, a form of infinity.
Absorbed no longer by the moment's beat
Her spirit the unending future felt
And lived with all the unbeginning past.
Her life was a dawn's victorious opening,
The past and unborn days had joined their dreams,
Old vanished eves and far arriving noons
Hinted to her a vision of prescient hours.
Supine in musing bliss she lay awhile
Given to the wonder of a waking trance;
Half-risen then she sent her gaze around,
As if to recover old sweet trivial threads,
Old happy thoughts, small treasured memories,
And weave them into one immortal day.
Ever she held on the paradise of her breast
Her lover charmed into a fathomless sleep,
Lain like an infant spirit unaware
Lulled on the verge of two consenting worlds.
But soon she leaned down over her loved to call
His mind back to her with her travelling touch
On his closed eyelids; settled was her still look
Of strong delight, not yearning now, but large
With limitless joy or sovereign last content,
Pure, passionate with the passion of the gods.
Desire stirred not its wings; for all was made
An overarching of celestial rays
Like the absorbed control of sky on plain,
Heaven's leaning down to embrace from all sides earth,

A quiet rapture, a vast security.
Then sighing to her touch the soft-winged sleep
Rose hovering from his flowerlike lids and flew
Murmurous away. Awake, he found her eyes
Waiting for his, and felt her hands, and saw
The earth his home given back to him once more
And her made his again, his passion's all.
With his arms' encircling hold around her locked,
A living knot to make possession close,
He murmured with hesitating lips her name,
And vaguely recollecting wonder cried,
"Whence hast thou brought me captive back, love-chained,
To thee and sunlight's walls, O golden beam
And casket of all sweetness, Savitri,
Godhead and woman, moonlight of my soul?
For surely I have travelled in strange worlds
By thee companioned, a pursuing spirit,
Together we have disdained the gates of night.
I have turned away from the celestials' joy
And heaven's insufficient without thee.
Where now has passed that formidable Shape
Which rose against us, the Spirit of the Void,
Claiming the world for Death and Nothingness,
Denying God and soul? Or was all a dream
Or a vision seen in a spiritual sleep,
A symbol of the oppositions of Time
Or a mind-lit beacon of significance
In some stress of darkness lighting on the Way
Or guiding a swimmer through the straits of Death,
Or finding with the succour of its ray
In a gully mid the crowded streets of Chance
The soul that into the world-adventure came,
A scout and voyager from Eternity?"
But she replied, "Our parting was the dream;
We are together, we live, O Satyavan.
Look round thee and behold, glad and unchanged

Our home, this forest with its thousand cries
And the whisper of the wind among the leaves
And, through rifts in emerald scene, the evening sky,
God's canopy of blue sheltering our lives,
And the birds crying for heart's happiness,
Winged poets of our solitary reign,
Our friends on earth where we are king and queen.
Only our souls have left Death's night behind,
Changed by a mighty dream's reality,
Illumined by the light of symbol worlds
And the stupendous summit self of things,
And stood at Godhead's gates limitless, free."
   Then filled with the glory of their happiness
They rose and with safe clinging fingers locked
Hung on each other in a silent look.
But he with a new wonder in his heart
And a new flame of worship in his eyes:
"What high change is in thee, O Savitri? Bright
Ever thou wast, a goddess still and pure,
Yet dearer to me by thy sweet human parts
Earth gave thee making thee yet more divine.
My adoration mastered, my desire
Bent down to make its subject, my daring clasped,
Claiming by body and soul my life's estate,
Rapture's possession, love's sweet property,
A statue of silence in my templed spirit,
A yearning godhead and a golden bride.
But now thou seemst almost too high and great
For mortal worship; Time lies below thy feet
And the whole world seems only a part of thee,
Thy presence the hushed heaven I inhabit,
And thou lookst on me in the gaze of the stars,
Yet art the earthly keeper of my soul,
My life a whisper of thy dreaming thoughts,
My morns a gleaming of thy spirit's wings,
And day and night are of thy beauty part.

Hast thou not taken my heart to treasure it
In the secure environment of thy breast?
Awakened from the silence and the sleep,
I have consented for thy sake to be.
By thee I have greatened my mortal arc of life,
But now far heavens, unmapped infinitudes
Thou hast brought me, thy illimitable gift!
If to fill these thou lift thy sacred flight,
My human earth will still demand thy bliss.
Make still my life through thee a song of joy
And all my silence wide and deep with thee."
A heavenly queen consenting to his will,
She clasped his feet, by her enshrining hair
Enveloped in a velvet cloak of love,
And answered softly like a murmuring lute:
"All now is changed, yet all is still the same.
Lo, we have looked upon the face of God,
Our life has opened with divinity.
We have borne identity with the Supreme
And known his meaning in our mortal lives.
Our love has grown greater by that mighty touch
And learned its heavenly significance,
Yet nothing is lost of mortal love's delight.
Heaven's touch fulfils but cancels not our earth:
Our bodies need each other in the same last;
Still in our breasts repeat heavenly secret rhythm
Our human heart-beats passionately close.
Still am I she who came to thee mid the murmur
Of sunlit leaves upon this forest verge;
I am the Madran, I am Savitri.
All that I was before, I am to thee still,
Close comrade of thy thoughts and hopes and toils,
All happy contraries I would join for thee.
All sweet relations marry in our life;
I am thy kingdom even as thou art mine,
The sovereign and the slave of thy desire,

Thy prone possessor, sister of thy soul
And mother of thy wants; thou art my world,
The earth I need, the heaven my thoughts desire,
The world I inhabit and the god I adore.
Thy body is my body's counterpart
Whose every limb my answering limb desires,
Whose heart is key to all my heart-beats, — this
I am and thou to me, O Satyavan.
Our wedded walk through life begins anew,
No gladness lost, no depth of mortal joy.
Let us go through this new world that is the same,
For it is given back, but it is known,
A playing-ground and dwelling-house of God
Who hides himself in bird and beast and man
Sweetly to find himself again by love,
By oneness. His presence leads the rhythms of life
That seek for mutual joy in spite of pain.
We have each other found, O Satyavan,
In the great light of the discovered soul.
Let us go back, for eve is in the skies.
Now grief is dead and serene bliss remains
The heart of all our days for evermore.
Lo, all these beings in this wonderful world!
Let us give joy to all, for joy is ours.
For not for ourselves alone our spirits came
Out of the veil of the Unmanifest,
Out of the deep immense Unknowable
Upon the ignorant breast of dubious earth,
Into the ways of labouring, seeking men,
Two fires that burn towards that parent Sun,
Two rays that travel to the original Light.
To lead man's soul towards truth and God we are born,
To draw the chequered scheme of mortal life
Into some semblance of the Immortal's plan,
To shape it closer to an image of God,
A little nearer to the Idea divine."

She closed her arms about his breast and head
As if to keep him on her bosom worn
For ever through the journeying of the years.
So for a while they stood entwined, their kiss
And passion-tranced embrace a meeting-point
In their commingling spirits one for ever,
Two-souled, two-bodied for the joys of Time.
Then hand in hand they left that solemn place
Full now of mute unusual memories,
To the green distance of their sylvan home
Returning slowly through the forest's heart.
Round them the afternoon to evening changed;
Light slipped down to the brightly sleeping verge,
And the birds came back winging to their nests,
And day and night leaned to each other's arms.

Now the dusk shadowy trees stood close around
Like dreaming spirits and, delaying night,
The grey-eyed pensive evening heard their steps,
And from all points the cries and movements came
Of the four-footed wanderers of the night
Approaching. Then a human rumour rose
Long alien to their solitary days,
Invading the charmed wilderness of leaves
Once sacred to secluded loneliness
With violent breaking of its virgin sleep.
Through the screened dusk it deepened still and there neared
Floating of many voices and the sound
Of many feet, till on their sight broke in
As if a coloured wave upon the eye
The brilliant strenuous crowded days of man.
Topped by a flaring multitude of lights
A great resplendent company arrived.
Life in its ordered tumult wavering came
Bringing its stream of unknown faces, thronged
With gold-fringed headdresses, gold-broidered robes,

Glittering of ornaments, fluttering of hems,
Hundreds of hands parted the forest-boughs,
Hundreds of eyes searched the entangled glades.
Calm white-clad priests their grave-eyed sweetness brought,
Strong warriors in their glorious armour shone,
The proud-hooved steeds came trampling through the wood.
In front King Dyumatsena walked, no more
Blind, faltering-limbed, but his far-questing eyes
Restored to all their confidence in light
Took seeingly this imaged outer world;
Firmly he trod with monarch step the soil.
By him that queen and mother's anxious face
Came changed from its habitual burdened look
Which in its drooping strength of tired toil
Had borne the fallen life of those she loved.
Her patient paleness wore a pensive glow
Like evening's subdued gaze of gathered light
Departing, which foresees sunrise her child.
Sinking in quiet splendours of her sky,
She lives awhile to muse upon that hope,
The brilliance of her rich receding gleam
A thoughtful prophecy of lyric dawn.
Her eyes were first to find her children's forms.
But at the vision of the beautiful twain
The air awoke perturbed with scaling cries,
And the swift parents hurrying to their child,—
Their cause of life now who had given him breath,—
Possessed him with their arms. Then tenderly
Cried Dyumatsena chiding Satyavan:
"The fortunate gods have looked on me today,
A kingdom seeking came and heaven's rays.
But where wast thou? Thou hast tormented gladness
With fear's dull shadow, O my child, my life.
What danger kept thee for the darkening woods?
Or how could pleasure in her ways forget
That useless orbs without thee are my eyes

Which only for thy sake rejoice at light?
Not like thyself was this done, Savitri,
Who ledst not back thy husband to our arms,
Knowing with him beside me only is taste
In food and for his touch evening and morn
I live content with my remaining days."
But Satyavan replied with smiling lips,
"Lay all on her; she is the cause of all.
With her enchantments she has twined me round.
Behold, at noon leaving this house of clay
I wandered in far-off eternities,
Yet still, a captive in her golden hands,
I tread your little hillock called green earth
And in the moments of your transient sun
Live glad among the busy works of men."
Then all eyes turned their wondering looks where stood,
A deepening redder gold upon her cheeks,
With lowered lids the noble lovely child,
And one consenting thought moved every breast.
"What gleaming marvel of the earth or skies
Stands silently by human Satyavan
To mark a brilliance in the dusk of eve?
If this is she of whom the world has heard,
Wonder no more at any happy change.
Each easy miracle of felicity
Of her transmuting heart the alchemy is."
Then one spoke there who seemed a priest and sage:
"O woman soul, what light, what power revealed,
Working the rapid marvels of this day,
Opens for us by thee a happier age?"
Her lashes fluttering upwards gathered in
To a vision which had scanned immortal things,
Rejoicing, human forms for their delight.
They claimed for their deep childlike motherhood
The life of all these souls to be her life,
Then falling veiled the light. Low she replied,

"Awakened to the meaning of my heart
That to feel love and oneness is to live
And this the magic of our golden change,
Is all the truth I know or seek, O sage."
Wondering at her and her too luminous words
Westward they turned in the fast-gathering night.

From the entangling verges freed they came
Into a dimness of the sleeping earth
And travelled through her faint and slumbering plains.
Murmur and movement and the tread of men
Broke the night's solitude; the neigh of steeds
Rose from that indistinct and voiceful sea
Of life and all along its marchings swelled
The rhyme of hooves, the chariot's homeward voice.
Drawn by white manes upon a high-roofed car
In flare of the unsteady torches went
With linked hands Satyavan and Savitri,
Hearing a marriage march and nuptial hymn,
Where waited them the many-voiced human world.
Numberless the stars swam on their shadowy field
Describing in the gloom the ways of light.
Then while they skirted yet the southward verge,
Lost in the halo of her musing brows
Night, splendid with the moon dreaming in heaven
In silver peace, possessed her luminous reign.
She brooded through her stillness on a thought
Deep-guarded by her mystic folds of light,
And in her bosom nursed a greater dawn.

THE END

Note on the Text

Note on the Text

SAVITRI began as a narrative poem of moderate length based on a legend told in the Mahabharata. Sri Aurobindo considered the story to be originally "one of the many symbolic myths of the Vedic cycle". Bringing out its symbolism and charging it progressively with his own spiritual vision, he turned *Savitri* into the epic it is today.

By the time it was published, some passages had gone through dozens of drafts. Sri Aurobindo explained how he wrote the poem: "I used *Savitri* as a means of ascension. I began with it on a certain mental level, each time I could reach a higher level I rewrote from that level. . . . In fact *Savitri* has not been regarded by me as a poem to be written and finished, but as a field of experimentation to see how far poetry could be written from one's own yogic consciousness and how that could be made creative."

The following outline of the composition and publication of *Savitri* draws upon all existing manuscripts and other textual materials, supplemented by the author's letters on the poem. In brief, *Savitri* took shape through three major phases.

(1) Before 1920, Sri Aurobindo made a number of drafts of a narrative poem retelling in an original way the tale of Savitri and Satyavan. Its last version had a plan of eight books in two parts; the books were not divided into cantos. (2) In the 1930s, he set about converting this narrative poem into an epic. For a long time he concentrated on the description of Aswapati's Yoga prior to the birth of Savitri, creating by 1945 a new Part One with three books and many cantos. (3) In the last phase, besides revising Part One for publication, he reworked and enlarged most of the books written in the first period. He added a book on the Yoga of Savitri, making twelve books and forty-nine cantos in all and completing Parts Two and Three.

The Composition of *Savitri*

Sri Aurobindo read the Savitri-episode of the Mahabharata in Sanskrit while he was in Baroda. He expressed appreciation of its style in his "Notes on the Mahabharata", written around 1901. But a report that he worked on an English poem on the subject at this time is not supported by his own statements or any documents that survive. If there was a Baroda *Savitri*, which is doubtful, it was among the writings of which Sri Aurobindo wrote in 1933, "Most of all that has disappeared into the unknown in the whirlpools and turmoil of my political career." Even assuming that such a poem was written in Baroda, for all practical purposes *Savitri* as we know it was commenced in Pondicherry.

The opening of the first known version is dated "August 8th 9th / 1916". Further dates occur later on in the draft. From the death of Satyavan to the end of Savitri's debate with Death, the manuscript is marked every few pages with dates from a three-day period, 17-19 October. After this, the consecutive narration breaks off and the notebook contains only disconnected passages. Some of these are sketches for the conclusion of the poem. Most of them go back over what was already written. They represent the beginning of the long process of rewriting which was to continue until 1950.

This earliest surviving manuscript of *Savitri* shows every sign of being the first draft. It is one of the few versions that Sri Aurobindo dated. But even if precise dates cannot be assigned to them, the manuscripts of the poem can almost always be placed in a definite order after a careful comparison. This is because changes made when one draft was revised were usually incorporated in the next draft, which would then be further altered and most often expanded.

Initially the poem was short enough not to require division into books or cantos. Its sections were separated only by blank lines. But soon Sri Aurobindo was dividing it into "Book I", ending with the death of Satyavan, and "Book II", recounting Savitri's debate with and victory over Death. Next he adopted a scheme of six cantos and an epilogue. The canto titles were: Love, Fate, Death, Night, Twilight and Day.

After making a few drafts in cantos, he started substituting the word "book" for "canto". There were now six books with the same names as the former cantos. Meanwhile the larger division had reappeared as two parts, "Earth" and "Beyond". At first each part comprised three books, not counting the epilogue. But before long, the rapidly growing first book was broken up into two. The second book kept the name "Love"; the first was renamed "Quest".

A manuscript beginning with "Book I / Quest" has the title "Sâvithrî: A Tale and a Vision". (In early versions, "Sâvithrî" was the usual spelling of the heroine's name.) Sri Aurobindo referred to this stage in the poem's history in a letter of 1936: "*Savitri* was originally written many years ago before the Mother came [*i.e., before the Mother's final arrival in 1920*], as a narrative poem in two parts, Part I Earth and Part II Beyond . . . each of four books — or rather Part II consisted of three books and an epilogue."

This was the plan of *Savitri* at the end of the first phase of its composition. But the last manuscript actually completed was in six cantos and an epilogue. After "books" replaced the "cantos" and the number of books increased, some books were worked over several times. Others were hardly touched. There is a partial draft of "Book III / Death", for example; there is none from the stage when "Death" would have been the fourth book. After 1945 when Sri Aurobindo incorporated material from the early poem into what was by then a full-fledged epic, he sometimes went back to a manuscript of the six "cantos" as his starting-point.

Savitri was apparently put aside during most of the 1920s, a period when Sri Aurobindo did little writing. The first evidence of its resumption is found in a letter of 1931. Here he speaks of a radical change in the conception and scope of the poem. Already the subtitle, "A Legend and a Symbol", is present in his mind: "There is a previous draft, the result of the many retouchings of which somebody told you; but in that form it would not have been a '*magnum opus*' at all. Besides, it would have been a legend and not a symbol. I therefore started recasting the whole thing; only the best passages and lines of the old draft will remain, altered so as to fit into the new frame."

Throughout the thirties and early forties, it was primarily Book One that was affected by this recasting. At first this book was still called "Quest". It extended as far as Savitri's arrival at "The Destined Meeting-Place" (the eventual title of Book Five, Canto One). But in the early thirties, the brief description of the Yoga of King Aswapati near the beginning swelled to hundreds of lines. What was to become the second and longest book of the epic, "The Book of the Traveller of the Worlds", began to take shape.

In a letter of 1936, Sri Aurobindo mentioned a new first book, the "Book of Birth", carved out of the overgrown "Quest". Another letter of the same year reveals the internal structure of this book. It was "divided into sections and the larger sections into subsections". Up to this point, the books had been divided only into passages separated by spaces, as many cantos are now. As these sections increased in length, they were recognised as formal units and began to be named and numbered. Section marks (§) were usually put before and after the numbers.

The Book of Birth, whose last section related the birth and childhood of Savitri, was still disproportionately long and was constantly growing. Early in 1937, Sri Aurobindo expressed his intention of rearranging the opening books into a Book of Beginnings and a Book of Birth and Quest.

Progress on the poem was intermittent in the thirties due to Sri Aurobindo's heavy load of correspondence. From the end of 1938 to mid-1940, work on *Savitri* was suspended. But on 6 September 1942, a 110-page draft of the Book of Beginnings was completed. The fourth of its eight sections, "The Ascent through the Worlds", accounted for more than half the total length and had twelve subsections. In the next version, this section became Book Two with the title it now has. The last four sections were grouped into Book Three, "The Book of the Divine Mother".

The second phase in the composition of *Savitri* reached its culmination when the first three books were written out in two columns on large sheets. Many passages, including the whole of the first and third books and much of the second, went through two or more drafts in this form. The last complete manuscript is dated “May 7. 1944” at the end.

It was while revising this manuscript that Sri Aurobindo reintroduced the word “canto” which he had not used since an early stage, applying it to the former “sections” of the books. At this point the third section of Book One, “The Yoga of the King”, was turned into Cantos 3-5 with their present titles. The three opening books were for the first time identified as “Part One”.

The two-column manuscript is the last continuous version of Part One in Sri Aurobindo’s hand. But he went on reworking Book One and passages throughout Book Two. For this purpose he began using small note-pads whose sheets, containing new or rewritten matter, could be torn out and pinned to the principal manuscript at the appropriate places.

By the mid-1940s, Sri Aurobindo’s eyesight was failing and his handwriting was becoming less and less legible. He needed the help of a scribe in order to put Books 1-3 into a finished form, take up the long-neglected later books, and prepare *Savitri* for publication. This third phase of its composition saw periods of rapid and decisive progress. But it was to be interrupted the month before Sri Aurobindo’s passing, a little short of definitive completion.

Much had still to be done with the first part. Sri Aurobindo asked the scribe to read the last version to him. After dictating changes, insertions and transpositions, he had his assistant copy it into a large ledger. This copy was meticulously revised before being given to another disciple for typing. The typescript in its turn was read out to Sri Aurobindo and similarly revised. Heavily revised pages were often retyped. The same process was sometimes repeated, especially in the later cantos of Book Two, where three typed copies exist.

Savitri now began to appear in print, though not yet in its final form. The first and third books were brought out canto by canto from August 1946 to February 1948 in journals connected with the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. They were also published in fascicles identical to the journal instalments. The second book was issued in 1947 and 1948 in two large fascicles.

Differences between the typescripts and the printed texts show that proofs of the latter must have been revised in detail by Sri Aurobindo. Afterwards a copy of each fascicle was read to him. Even at this advanced stage, he made extensive alterations and added new lines and passages.

Meanwhile he had turned his attention to the later books. The plan of Parts Two and Three resembled that of the pre-1920 poem, whose books had been divided into "Earth" (Quest, Love, Fate, Death) and "Beyond" (Night, Twilight, Day, Epilogue). By 1945, however, most of these books had remained untouched for twenty-five years. Everything written under what Sri Aurobindo termed in 1934 "the old insufficient inspiration" would have to be thoroughly recast. Moreover, a new book had been conceived: The Book of Yoga. Destined to become one of the longest in the epic, six of its seven cantos were still to be drafted.

The material in the Book of Birth and Quest had for a long time been included in Book One. As a result it had gone through several drafts in the 1930s, while other books lay dormant. The last book to be set aside, it was also the first to be taken up again. One manuscript of it precedes the 1942 draft of the Book of Beginnings. The final version was evidently written within a year or so of this. Since much work had already been done on it, this book needed less modification than others. Yet especially in the first two cantos, Sri Aurobindo dictated substantial changes and additions when he revised the manuscript and typescript.

The Book of Love shared to some extent in the good fortune of the previous book during the thirties and early forties. But the last version in Sri Aurobindo's hand, in the notebook which starts with his final manuscript of Book Four, breaks off in the middle of the second canto. The continuation is in the scribe's hand. It was copied there probably two or three years later when the systematic revision of the later books had been undertaken.

The remainder of this notebook contains the scribe's copy of Books Six, Nine and Ten, reworked from the corresponding books in the old poem, expanded, divided into cantos and renamed "The Book of Fate", "The Book of Eternal Night" and "The Book of the Double Twilight". Once Sri Aurobindo had done enough with Books Four and Five for the time being, it appears that he took up these three books one after the other. After Book Six, he skipped to Book Nine, postponing extensive work on Books Seven and Eight. However, he may have revised slightly the versions of the original third book or canto, "Death", on which Book Seven, Canto One and the present Book of Death are based.

Drafts of "Fate", "Night" and "Twilight" had been written on one side of loose sheets of paper, like other cantos or books in several early versions of *Savitri*. This facilitated the complex process of revision which was now set in motion. When the space between lines and in the margins was filled up, the backs of the pages were available. In extreme cases, whole cantos were written on the reverse sides of the pages with little relation to what was on the front.

Sri Aurobindo drafted many passages in small note-pads of the type used for Part One. Lines for Books Five and Nine and large portions of Books Six and Ten were written in this way. Canto Two of Book Six was almost entirely new. The passages drafted for it were transferred by the scribe to another note-pad, with changes dictated by Sri Aurobindo at the time.

The metamorphosis which the Book of Fate underwent included the introduction of the Queen: some of Aswapati's later speeches in the old version were now given to her, and her long speech at the beginning of Canto Two was composed. Sri Aurobindo worked on this book in 1946 and brought it close to its final form. But he was to return to it at the end and add significantly to the second canto.

An early manuscript of "Night" was substantially revised and turned into the two cantos of Book Nine. But in this instance Sri Aurobindo seems to have found the pre-1920 version more adequate than usual. He left it intact to a greater extent than in the case of other books on which he bestowed his full attention in the 1940s. Only the Book of Death and the Epilogue stayed closer to their original shape, but he always intended to come back to these.

On the other hand, old drafts of "Twilight" formed merely a starting-point for the four cantos of Book Ten. The speeches of Savitri and Death were refashioned, rearranged in their order, and new ones inserted. As he proceeded from one canto to the next, Sri Aurobindo added longer and longer passages that were quite new. The first section of Canto One, the long speech of Death which ends Canto Two, all but the last few pages of Canto Three, and most of Canto Four — especially its second half, where Savitri finally triumphs over Death — owe little or nothing to any early version.

In a letter of 22 April 1947, Sri Aurobindo summarised the status of the various books of the second and third parts. Books Four, Five, Six, Nine and Ten had by then "been completed, in a general way, with a sufficient finality of the whole form but subject to final changes in detail". The other four books were far from even a provisional completion.

A "drastic recasting of the last two books" was felt to be needed and "only a part of the eleventh" had been subjected to that process. But a yet larger task lay ahead, the splitting up of the original Book of Death and the writing of the new cantos that would go into the Book of Yoga. In his letter of April 1947 Sri Aurobindo did not say what he planned to do next. But there are reasons to believe that, rather than going on directly from Book Ten to Book Eleven, he now retraced his steps to Book Seven.

The description of Savitri's Yoga, complementing that of Aswapati's Yoga in Part One, was drafted in a thick notebook whose first hundred pages are filled with drafts for Book Ten, Canto Four. By March 1947, even before finishing the tenth book, Sri Aurobindo had begun to use this notebook for preliminary work on Book Seven. The scribe was not asked to copy the semi-legible handwriting of the draft. Instead, Sri Aurobindo dictated to him the lines he had jotted down, often in a somewhat different form. The dictated version was extensively revised before a typed copy was made.

The Book of Yoga had four cantos at first. But the second, "The Parable of the Finding of the Soul", grew to an inordinate length. When the typescript was revised, it was broken up into Cantos 2-5, from "The Parable of the Search for the Soul" to "The Finding of the Soul". Revision of the typed copy was so elaborate in places (as elsewhere, especially in Book Six, Canto Two and in Book Eleven) that sometimes there was not enough room on the page. The scribe would then write on separate slips of paper, attaching as many as ten of these to a single page of the typescript.

Canto One of Book Seven has a different background. Early in the evolution of *Savitri*, the third canto of the poem (later, the third book) was called "Death". It described the year leading up to Satyavan's death as well as the fatal day itself. The latest version, with the heading "Book III", is incomplete and stops before the last day. Sri Aurobindo used this manuscript as far as it goes when he put Book Seven, Canto One into its present form.

The second half of an earlier "Canto III" had to be used as the manuscript for Book Eight. It was revised slightly near the beginning and a substantial passage was dictated at the end. Sri Aurobindo apparently intended to return to the Book of Death, but this was not to be.

On 20 July 1948 he was compelled to admit, "even *Savitri* has very much slowed down and I am only making the last revisions of the First Part already completed; the other two parts are just now in cold storage." When the later parts were taken up again, the most important task remaining was evidently to bring the almost untouched eleventh book up to the level of what preceded it. The old "Book VII / Day" on which it would be based was among the best-developed portions of the early poem. But after thirty years, Sri Aurobindo had more to say at the climax of *Savitri*.

There was also the Epilogue; but the contemplated revision of this must have seemed less essential to the total design.

Although a few pages of an early version were significantly retouched at some stage, the concluding two sections of the Epilogue stayed almost exactly as they were. Thus the closing pages of the epic, like most of Book Eight, remained as a sample of the style in which *Savitri* was originally written.

Near the end of his life, Sri Aurobindo's eyesight was so poor that he no longer wrote at all. He made no more drafts for *Savitri* and the work proceeded entirely by dictation. Virtually the whole revision of "The Book of Everlasting Day" was done in this purely oral manner and may be inferred to belong to this late period. There exist only a few pages of drafts for it in Sri Aurobindo's hand, found in note-pads he used around 1946. He was probably referring to these when he wrote in 1947 that he had already recast "part of the eleventh" book.

Book Eleven culminates in the longest continuous dictated passage in *Savitri*. The passage was written by the scribe in a separate note-pad and seems to have no antecedent in any previous draft. This is the section which begins on p. 702 with "Descend to life . . . ", and ends at the bottom of p. 710 with "This earthly life become the life divine." Regarding Sri Aurobindo's dictation in Book Eleven, the scribe reports that "line after line began to flow from his lips like a smooth and gentle stream and it was on the next day that a revision was done to get the link for further continuation."

By this time, cantos of Parts Two and Three were coming out in journal instalments and fascicles like those of Part One. Most of the cantos of Books Four, Five, Six and Nine were published in this way in 1949-50. Unlike the fascicles of the first part, they were not revised afterwards by Sri Aurobindo.

But in 1948, an extract from Book Six, Canto Two had already been printed in the *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual*. An offprint of this was read to Sri Aurobindo and the changes he dictated were incorporated in a retyped copy. The painstaking revision of this second typescript was reportedly the last work he did on *Savitri*. A short paragraph before the concluding description of Narad's departure was the final passage to receive detailed attention in November 1950, less than a month before

Sri Aurobindo's passing. The thirteen-line paragraph was expanded to the seventy-two lines beginning "Queen, strive no more to change the secret will. . . . "

Editions of *Savitri*

Sri Aurobindo revised the proofs of the first edition of Part One, making numerous final changes and adding more than a hundred new lines. In 1950, Part One of *Savitri* appeared in book form. Parts Two and Three could not be similarly revised. They came out in 1951 in a second volume, thus completing the first edition.

The second edition was issued in 1954 in one volume under the imprint of the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre. Some obvious errors in the text of the first edition were emended at this time. A few of these were evidently due to the mishearing of Sri Aurobindo's dictation.

In 1968, the first edition of Part One was reprinted with some new textual corrections. The third complete edition (1970) contained further emendations. Comprising Volumes 28 and 29 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, it was also brought out as a single volume in a reduced format. This was reprinted a number of times between 1973 and 1990. Several typographical and other errors were rectified in the 1976 impression.

The fourth, critically revised edition appeared in 1993 and is reproduced here. This edition was the outcome of a systematic comparison of the printed text of *Savitri* with the manuscripts. Each line was traced through all stages of copying, typing and printing in which errors could have occurred. Readings found to have come about through inaccurate transcription or misprinting were corrected. Accidentally omitted lines were restored to the text. This has resulted in a very slight increase in the length of the poem to its present 23,837 lines.

Letters on Himself and the Ashram

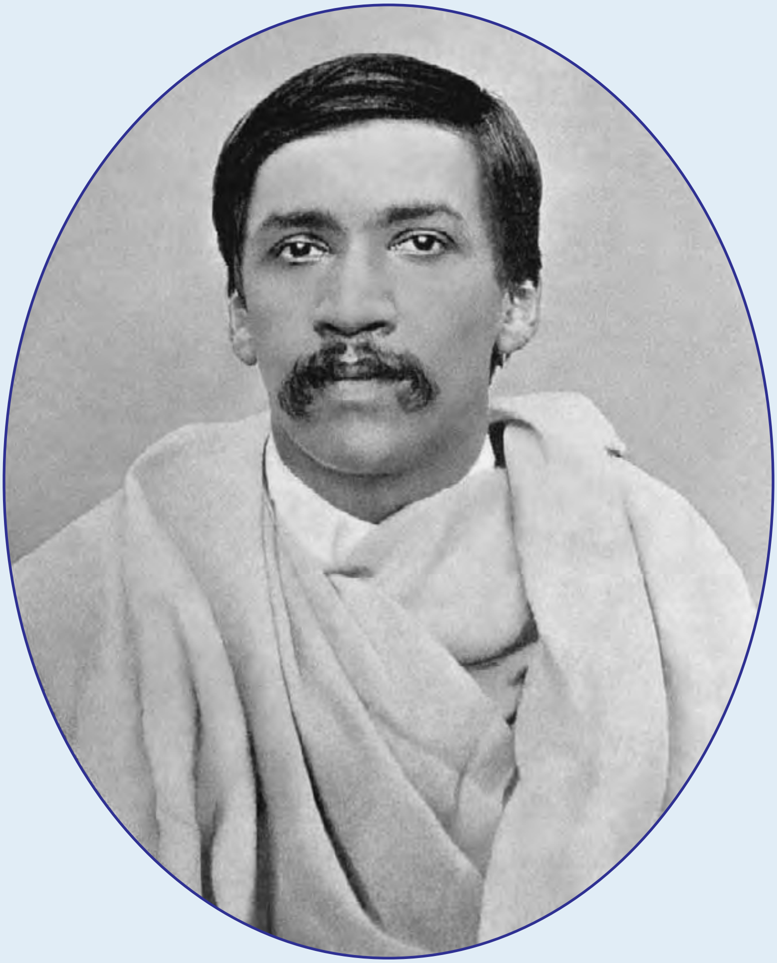

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 35
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2011
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Letters on Himself and the Ashram

Publisher's Note

This volume contains letters in which Sri Aurobindo referred to his life and works, his sadhana or practice of yoga, and the sadhana of members of his ashram. Many of the letters appeared earlier in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953) and *On Himself: Compiled from Notes and Letters* (1972). These previously published letters, along with many others, appear here under the new title *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*.

The letters included in the present volume have been selected from Sri Aurobindo's extensive correspondence with members of the Ashram and outside disciples between November 1926 and November 1950. Letters he wrote before November 1926 are published in *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest*, volume 36 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. That volume also contains remarks by Sri Aurobindo on his life and works that were written as corrections of statements made by biographers and others, public messages on world events, letters to public figures, and public statements on his ashram and path of yoga.

The letters on the sadhana of members of the Ashram selected for publication in Part Four of the present volume differ from those published in *Letters on Yoga*, volumes 28–31 of THE COMPLETE WORKS, in that they are framed historically by events and conditions in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram between 1926 and 1950. The dates and the questions of Sri Aurobindo's correspondents that accompany many of the letters in the present volume make the historical context clear. The letters included in *Letters on Yoga* were also written to Ashramites and outside disciples during the 1926–1950 period, but they deal with Sri Aurobindo's yoga in a more general way, and thus are less in need of the contextualisation provided by the questions and dates.

The letters in the present volume have been arranged by the editors in five parts, the last of which includes mantras and messages. The texts have been checked against all available handwritten, typed and printed versions.

CONTENTS

PART ONE
REMARKS ON HIS LIFE AND WORKS AND ON
HIS CONTEMPORARIES AND CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

Section One
Reminiscences and Remarks on Events in His Outer Life

His Life and Attempts to Write about It 5
His Name 8
Life in England, 1879–1893 9
Life in Baroda, 1893–1906 13
Political Career, 1906–1910 17
Outer Life in Pondicherry, 1910–1950 28

Section Two
General Remarks on His Life

Remarks on His Life in Pondicherry after 1926 35
His Temperament and Character 44
Heredity, Past Lives, Astrology 55

Section Three
Remarks on Himself as a Writer and on His Writings

On Himself as a Writer 63
Writing for Publication 67
On His Published Prose Writings 74
The Terminology of His Writings 141

Section Four
Remarks on Contemporaries and on Contemporary Problems

Remarks on Spiritual Figures in India 161
Remarks on European Writers on Occultism 183
Remarks on Public Figures in India 184
Remarks on Public Figures in Europe 203
Remarks on Indian Affairs, 1930–1946 205
Remarks on the World Situation, 1933–1949 209

PART TWO
HIS SADHANA OR PRACTICE OF YOGA

Section One
Sadhana before Coming to Pondicherry in 1910

Ordinary Life and Yoga 227
Early Experiences 231
The Realisation of January 1908 239
Experiences in Alipur Jail, 1908–1909 263

Section Two
Sadhana in Pondicherry, 1910–1950

The Early Years in Pondicherry, 1910–1926 269
The Realisation of 24 November 1926 270
The Sadhana of 1927–1929 273
General Remarks on the Sadhana of the 1930s 277
The Supramental Yoga and Other Spiritual Paths 298
Remarks on the Current State of the Sadhana, 1931–1947 319

Section Three
Some Aspects of the Sadhana in Pondicherry

Inner Vicissitudes and Difficulties 371
Unusual Experiences and States of Consciousness 383

PART THREE
THE LEADER AND THE GUIDE

Section One
The Guru and the Avatar

The Guru 395
The Question of Avatarhood 399

Section Two
Help and Guidance

Help from the Guide 437
Guidance through Correspondence 450

Sri Aurobindo's Force 479
Therapeutic Force and Healing 497
Lights, Visions, Dreams 515
Darshan 520
Contact with People Outside the Ashram 526

PART FOUR
THE PRACTICE OF YOGA IN THE ASHRAM AND OUTSIDE

Section One
The Practice of Yoga in the Ashram, 1926–1950

Entering Sri Aurobindo's Path 539
Admission, Staying, Departure 559
The Ashram and Its Atmosphere 630
Sadhana in the Ashram 634
Discipline in the Ashram 672
Rules in the Life of the Ashram 676
The Ashram and Religion 696
Human Relations and the Ashram 705
Work in the Ashram 742
Life and Death in the Ashram 759
Miscellaneous Matters 794

Section Two
The Practice of Yoga in the Ashram and the Outside World

The Ashram and the Outside World 811
Yoga Centres and Movements 814

PART FIVE
MANTRAS AND MESSAGES

Section One
Mantras

On Mantras 825
Mantras Written by Sri Aurobindo 829

CONTENTS

Section Two
Messages

Messages Written for Special Occasions 837

NOTE ON THE TEXTS 847

Letters on Himself and the Ashram

Selected Letters on His Outer and Inner Life,

His Path of Yoga and the Practice of Yoga in His Ashram

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry, c. 1915–1918

Part One

Remarks on His Life and Works and on His Contemporaries and Contemporary Events

Section One

Reminiscences and Remarks on Events in His Outer Life

His Life and Attempts to Write about It

Knowing about Things in His Past

> For a long time I have wanted to hear something about the early days in Pondicherry from those who lived with you then. This morning I approached *X* and asked him. He agreed to tell me and a few friends some stories and anecdotes. Do you think it undesirable or objectionable in any way?

I do not know whether it is of much utility. Besides, it would be only myself who could speak of things in my past, giving them their true form and significance. But as you have arranged it, it can be done.
11 August 1933

On Writing His Biography

This [*a proposed book in Telugu*] is not a publication for which the Asram is responsible. If the outer facts of the life are corrected there is no harm, but nothing should be said about the inner things of the life here. It is not necessary to give the book so much importance or try to make it an authoritative biography.
14 May 1933

*

> [B. R. DHURANDHAR TO A. B. PURANI:] My friend and colleague Mr. P. B. Kulkarni is the author of several books in Marathi, including a life of C. R. Das. He is now writing a biography of Sri Aurobindo Ghose. He has been collecting material for many years and has already written around 200 pages. As he wants the biography to be authentic he is trying to approach persons who have come into contact with Sri AG. Please be kind enough to extend your cooperation to him.

I am not interested in my own biography. Who is this Dhurandhar or this Kulkarni?

> Is there any reply to be sent to this letter?

I don't think a reply is necessary. If I am to be murdered in cold print, it had better be done without my disciples becoming abettors of the crime. 24 June 1933

*

This idea of a "Life" going into details and personalities is itself an error. I wrote the brief life given to Dilip as containing all that I wanted to be said about me for the present.[1] The general public can know about my philosophy and Yoga and general character of my work, it has no claim to know anything about the personal side of my life or of that of the Asram either.

30 October 1935

*

First of all what matters in a spiritual man's life is not what he did or what he was outside to the view of the men of his time (that is what historicity or biography comes to, does it not?) but what he was and did within; it is only that that gives any value to his outer life at all. It is the inner life that gives to the outer any power it may have, and the inner life of a spiritual man is something vast and full and, at least in the great figures, so crowded and teeming with significant things that no biographer or historian could ever hope to seize it all or tell it.

9 February 1936

*

> Here is a tempting offer. A publisher writes to me: "We are beginning a series of biographies. . . . We propose that you take up Sri Aurobindo's biography. We shall give you very good terms, as you are well qualified for the task." If I decline

---

[1] *The "brief life" referred to here is "Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch", reproduced on pages 5–10 of* Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest, *volume 36 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. *See also Sri Aurobindo's letters to Dilip Kumar Roy about the "Life Sketch" and about biography in general on pages 11–13 of the same volume. — Ed.*

> I am sure they will just get it done by someone else. What do you say?

There is no one who can write my biography nor is this the time to do it, supposing it has to be done at all. If the outward facts of the life are meant, anybody can do that and it has no importance — the best thing is to have some outsider to do that mess, if mess there must be.

Comments on the Work of a Biographer

Girija's writings are of no importance.[2] I don't think there is anything on which we can call upon them to stop his articles. He will claim the right to personal judgment and interpretation of facts, as regards the mask of spirituality over the secret society and the "ruthless murders" and there is nothing else on which objection can be based. Let him go his way unnoticed.

---

[2] *Girijashankar Raychaudhuri was the author of a Bengali study of Sri Aurobindo's early life. See* Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest, *pp. 88 and 562. — Ed.*

His Name

“Aurobindo”

But look at the irony of human decisions and human hopes. My father who wanted all his sons to be great men — and succeeded in a small way with three of them — in a sudden inspiration gave me the name Aurobindo, till then not borne by anyone in India or the wide world, that I might stand out unique among the great by the unique glory of my name. And now look at the swarm of Aurobindos with their mighty deeds in England, Germany and elsewhere! Don’t tell me it is my fault because of my indiscretion in becoming famous. When I went to the National College in the Swadeshi days which was my first public step towards the ignominies of fame, there was already an Aurobindo Prakash waiting for me there with the sardonic comment of the gods printed on his learned forehead. Aurobindo Prakash, indeed!

“AG”

I do not use the initials AG — they have been discarded long ago.

14 September 1933

Life in England, 1879–1893

An Early Memory

I am not at all concerned about Nicodemus and what seems to me his stupid and ignorant question; he brings a fantastic physical notion across Christ's teaching and I am afraid I must hold him partially responsible for Freud's sexual meanderings and his craze for going back into his mother's womb. I don't myself remember any blissful sojourn in that locality in my case and I don't believe in it and I am quite sure I never felt any passion for returning there. The great Sigismund must have had it, I suppose, and remembered that blissful period and felt a longing for beatific return and I suppose others must have had it unless its acceptance is only a result of a general acceptance of the papal infallibility of Sigismund in psycho-analytical matters, about which few people have any direct reliable knowledge or can form a truly independent conviction based on truly independent evidence. I believe the practical methods and evidence for the success of psycho-analysis are made up mostly of suggestion and auto-suggestion; for suggestion and auto-suggestion can do almost anything and can make you believe in anything and everything. Many of these suggestions seem to me quite artificial and their forced connection with sex to be quite groundless. For instance, there is the suggestion of the dream of being stabbed with a knife, which they say is a rendering by the subliminal of an actual sex-probe, and of that you can obviously persuade a patient who is under your influence. I myself had when a boy of 8 or 9 a vivid dream which I never forgot of myself alone in my bed — I used to be sent to bed much earlier than my brothers — and lay there in a sort of constant terror of the darkness and phantoms and burglars till my brothers came up [*incomplete*]

Exposure to Christianity

[*Lines from a poem submitted to Sri Aurobindo:*]

> Soul of poet, thine be quiet
> Of the Virgin's prayerful countenance . . .

[*Underlining "prayerful countenance":*] Lord God! you bring me back to my childhood's agonies in an English Nonconformist chapel.
11 September 1933

Education in England

> This afternoon I was doing japa as usual and dropped off to sleep. Then I saw a curious dream. . . . I sang and the song was on Shiva, and was so ecstatic that you got up and blessed me, joining in the hymn. . . . Tell me, however, do you ever sing — I don't mean music of the spheres but our mortal songs with musical intervals as we understand, as for instance Mother does?

No — I don't sing on the physical plane. My education in England was badly neglected — though people say to the contrary. I filled in most of the *lacunae* afterwards, but some remained of which the musical gap is one. But that is no reason why I should not sing on the supraphysical plane where you met me. There is no exact correspondence between the formation here and the formations there. On the contrary on these inner planes the subliminal as they call it in Europe — that is to say, our inner selves — is full of powers which have not emerged — yet at least — in the physical consciousness. And especially as I was full of Shiva in your experience there is no reason why I should not have sung for I suppose Shiva sings as well as dances?
31 August 1933

I.C.S. Examination

> Do you think your I.C.S. examination answer papers of 1892 have been preserved by the authorities? I was thinking of

> getting them if possible, in order to preserve them as a relic with us. Perhaps they do not give them out or they might have disposed of them.

Not likely that they keep such things. 1 May 1936

A Cambridge Anecdote

> While we all agree that we all lie, *X* thinks she is incapable of lying.

Lies? Well, a Punjabi student at Cambridge once took our breath away by the frankness and comprehensive profundity of his affirmation: "Liars! But we are all liars!" It appeared that he had intended to say "lawyers", but his pronunciation gave his remark a deep force of philosophic observation and generalisation which he had not intended! But it seems to me the last word on human nature. Only the lying is sometimes intentional, sometimes vaguely half-intentional, sometimes quite unintentional, momentary and unconscious. So there you are!

Learning Languages

> It seems most people read more than they assimilate. They read lots of French stories, novels and dramas very rapidly and as a result they hardly assimilate the idioms, phrases, grammatical peculiarities, etc. I find it surprising that *X* and *Y* commit elementary errors when they speak. I think one ought to read a book three to four times.

I suppose most learn only to be able to read French books, not to know the language well. *X* writes and reads fluently but he does not know the grammar — he has only just begun to learn it. *Y* does not know French so well — he has learned mostly by typing a lot of things in French. It is not many who know French accurately and idiomatically. *Z* was the best in that respect. I don't think many people would consent to make a principle of reading each book 3 or 4 times in the way you advocate, for very few have the scholarly mind — but two or three books should be so read — I learnt Sanskrit by reading the Naladamayanti episode in the Mahabharat like that with minute care several times. 25 March 1937

First Reading of the Upanishads

> Is it true that the deep significance of mantras like "OM Shanti Shanti Shanti" and of words like "paix" in the Mother's *Prayers* is lost because of too much familiarity?

Yes, it must be the familiarity — for I remember when I first read the OM Shanti Shanti Shanti of the Upanishads it had a powerful effect on me. In French it depends on the form or the way in which it is put. 14 February 1936

The European Temperament

> How is it that most Europeans manage to remain cheerful, while in India there is so much gloom and moroseness in family life, and cunning, strategy and selfishness in social life? Half of the cheerfulness in Europeans, I suspect, comes not so much from intrinsic joy or humour as from the discipline of having good manners.

It is largely the latter — to show one's bad moods in society is considered bad form and indicating want of self-control; so people in Europe usually keep their worse side for their own house and family and don't show it outside. Some do but are considered as either neurasthenic or as having a "sale caractère". But apart from that Europeans have, I think, more vitality than Indians and are more elastic and resilient and less nervously sensitive. There are plenty of exceptions, of course, but generally, I think, that is true. In family life it is more of the rajasic ego than gloom and moroseness that creates trouble. Gloom and moroseness generally meet with ridicule as a "Byronic" or tragic affectation, so it is very soon discouraged. Cunning, strategy and selfishness in social life is considered in France at least to be more a characteristic of peasant life — in the middle class it is supposed to be the sign of the "arriviste". 6 January 1937

Life in Baroda, 1893–1906

The Swaying Sensation

> I was standing on a scaffolding which was swinging to and fro. At one point I saw the walls nearby swinging like a pendulum. I understood the reason, but the sight of swinging walls was so vivid that I put my hand on the wall nearby to convince myself that it was not moving — yet the "eye-mind" refused to accept the evidence of the "touch-mind"!

But what was it due to? The sense of swinging of the scaffolding communicating itself to the walls as it were in the impression upon some brain centre? After travelling long in a boat I had once or twice the swaying sense of it after coming off it, as if the land about me was tossing like the boat — of course a subtle physical impression, but vivid enough. 4 April 1935

Maharashtrian Cooking

> I was just invited by the Dewas Maharaja for tea. I hope he will give me good cakes!

I hope it did not turn out like my first taste of Mahratti cookery — when for some reason my dinner was *non est* and somebody sent to my neighbour, a Mahratta professor, for food. I took one mouthful and only one. Oh God! sudden hell-fire in the mouth could not have been more surprising. Enough to burn down the whole of London in one wild agonising swoop of flame!

15 September 1936

An Attack of Smallpox

> A book says one attack of smallpox generally protects for life; but second attacks are not uncommon.

Well, there are people who say that smallpox attacks immunise for only a few years.

But if it is as you say, then there are others, I suppose. There is *X* among the servants for instance who nearly died of smallpox. I myself had a slight attack in Baroda soon after I came from England — so you needn't try to come up and vaccinate me.
13 April 1937

The Power of Prayer

As for prayer, no hard and fast rule can be laid down. Some prayers are answered, all are not. An example? The eldest daughter of my Mesho, K. K. Mitra, editor of *Sanjibani*, not by any means a romantic, occult, supraphysical or even imaginative person, was abandoned by the doctors after using every resource, all medicines stopped as useless. The father said "There is only God now, let us pray." He did, and from that moment the girl began to recover, typhoid fever and all its symptoms fled, death also. I know any number of cases like that. Well? You may ask why should not then all prayers be answered? But why should they be? It is not a machinery — put a prayer in the slot and get your asking. Besides, considering all the contradictory things mankind is praying for at the same moment, God would be in a rather awkward hole, if he had to grant all of them — it wouldn't do.
7 October 1936

The Charm of Kashmir

Quite agree with your estimate of Kashmir. The charm of its mountains and rivers and the ideal life dawdling along in the midst of a supreme beauty in the slowly moving leisure of a houseboat — that was a kind of earthly Paradise — also writing poetry on the banks of the Jhelum where it rushes down Kashmir towards the plains. Unfortunately there was the over-industrious Gaekwar to cut short the Paradise! His idea of Paradise was going through administrative papers and making myself and others write speeches for which he got all the credit. But after all, according to the nature, to each one his Eden.

7 November 1938

The Age of Swami Brahmananda

> Captain Guha, an Assistant Surgeon, asked me whether there was any proof that Swami Brahmananda of Chandod lived for 400 years. Could you possibly enlighten me?

There is no incontrovertible proof. 400 years is an exaggeration. It is known however that he lived on the banks of the Narmada for 80 years and when he arrived there, he was already in appearance at the age when maturity turns towards over-ripeness. He was when I met him just before his death a man of magnificent physique showing no signs of old age except white beard and hair, extremely tall, robust, able to walk any number of miles a day and tiring out his younger disciples, walking too so swiftly that they tended to fall behind, a great head and magnificent face that seemed to belong to men of more ancient times. He never spoke of his age or of his past either except for an occasional almost accidental utterance. One of these was spoken to a disciple of his well known to me, a Baroda Sardar, Mazumdar (it was on the top storey of his house by the way that I sat with Lele in Jan. 1908 and had a decisive experience of liberation and Nirvana). Mazumdar learned that he was suffering from a bad tooth and brought him a bottle of Floriline, a toothwash then much in vogue. The Yogi refused saying, "I never use medicines. My one medicine is Narmada water. As for this tooth I have suffered from it since the days of Bhao Girdi." Bhao Girdi was the Maratha general Sadashiv Rao Bhao who disappeared in the battle of Panipat and his body was never found. Many formed the conclusion that Brahmananda was himself Bhao Girdi, but this was an imagination. Nobody who knew Brahmananda would doubt any statement of his — he was a man of perfect simplicity and truthfulness and did not seek fame or to impose himself. When he died he was still in full strength and his death came not by decay but by the accident of blood poisoning through a rusty nail that entered into his foot as he walked on the sands of the Narmada. I had spoken to the Mother about him, that was why she mentioned him in her *Conversations* which were not meant for the public — otherwise she might not have said anything as the longevity of Brahmananda to more than 200 years depends only on his own casual word and is a matter of faith in his word. There is no "legal" proof of it. I may say that three at least of his disciples to my knowledge kept an extraordinary aspect and energy of youth even to a comparatively late or quite advanced age — but this perhaps may be not uncommon among those who practise both Raja and Hatha Yoga together. 1 February 1936

Learning Gujarati

I learned Gujarati not for the literature but because it was the language of Baroda where I had to live for 13 years. I have now picked it up again because there are so many Gujarati sadhaks who do not know English — just as I am picking up Hindi now.
25 December 1935

Political Career, 1906–1910

Mother India

> When you wrote that you looked upon India not as an inert, dead mass of matter, but as the very Mother, the living Mother, I believe that you *saw* that Truth.

My dear sir, I am not a materialist. If I had seen India as only a geographical area with a number of more or less interesting or uninteresting people in it, I would hardly have gone out of my way to do all that for the said area.

> Is there something in what you wrote? Or was it just poetic or patriotic sentiment?

Merely a poetic or patriotic sentiment — just as in yourself only your flesh, skin, bones and other things of which the senses give their evidence are real, but what you call your mind and soul do not really exist being merely psychological impressions created by the food you eat and the activity of the glands. Poetry and patriotism have of course the same origin and the things they speak of are quite unreal. Amen. 11 February 1936

Two Wings of the Independence Movement

> It is common today to read and hear the statements of influential Indian leaders condemning the revolutionary efforts of their compatriots in by-gone years. Yet I think that there is little doubt but that the Bengali "revolution", to name one phase of the larger movement, was of paramount importance in the understanding and realisation of the goals for which the nationalism of the 20th century was heading.

Sri Aurobindo has received your letter.[1] He says there were two wings to the Independence Movement. First, there was the external political and constitutional movement. And secondly there was the revolutionary movement which meant a preparation for an armed revolt. He considered both the movements necessary and had his share in preparing both. 19 April 1949

---

[1] *Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the correspondent. — Ed.*

The Swadeshi Movement (1905 – 1910) and Later Developments

> When I read the speeches you delivered before 1910, it seems to me as if Gandhi had almost copied everything from that — Swaraj, Samiti, Non-cooperation, and so on. If not outwardly he must have received these things from you in an occult way.

The whole of Gandhi's affair is simply our passive resistance movement given an ethical instead of a political form, applied with a rigid thoroughness which human nature except in a minority cannot bear for long and given too a twist which seems to me to make it harmful to the sane balance and many-sided plasticity necessary for national life. What with Gandhi, Hitler and the rest (very different people but all furiously one-sided and one-ideaed) a large part of humanity seems to have gone off its balance in these times. 21 September 1934

*

> Did you enjoy the article "Fifty Years of Growth" by K. R. Kripalani in the *Visva-Bharati*?[2] Fifty years of growth refers by the way to the Congress. About the Swadeshi period he writes: "A long time was to elapse before we were to appreciate the infinite possibilities of the muddy waters at hand. In the meantime something startlingly romantic happened. . . .
>
> "The fountain [of undefiled water] was cut by the fiery shafts of Tilak, Vivekananda, and Aurobindo, among others. They gave to Indian Nationalism its fiery basis in India's ancient cultural glory and its modern mission. . . . It is always more beautiful and more inspiring to contemplate the Idea

---

[2] *K. R. Kripalani, "Fifty Years of Growth",* The Visva-Bharati Quarterly, *vol. I, part IV, New Series (February – April 1936), pp. 53 – 60.*

> and be drunk with it than to face the actual facts and touch the running sores. . . .
>
> "But this spirit, fiery and beautiful as it was, was fraught with grave dangers. The glory that it invoked and the passion that it aroused were so intensely Hindu that Muslims were automatically left out. Not that they were deliberately excluded. . . . However that may be, it seems now not unlikely that had the influence of Tilak and Aurobindo lasted in its original intensity, we might have had two Indias today — a Hindu-istan and a Pak-istan, both overlaying and undermining each other. . . .
>
> "However that be, the fact remains that the conditions of our country being what they were, the beneficial effects of Tilak's and of Aurobindo's political personalities were soon exhausted, and might, if prolonged, have proved dangerous, if Gandhiji had not come on the scene. . . ."

Subject, politics, — taboo. Writer Kripalani a "romantic" and "idealistic" visionary without hold on realities, living only in academic ideas — so not worth commenting. All the present Congress lot seem to be men who live in ideas only, mostly secondhand, borrowed from Europe (Socialism, Communism etc.), borrowed from Gandhi, borrowed from tradition or borrowed from anywhere; Kripalani looks down on the old Moderates for being in a different way exactly what he himself is — only they were classics and not romantics. So what is the use of reading their "histories"? However quite privately and within brackets[3] I will enlighten you on one or two points.

(1) The Swadeshi movement was idealist on one side (no great movement can go without an ideal), but it was perfectly practical in its aims and methods. We were quite aware of the poverty of India and its fallen condition, but we did not try to cure the poverty by Khaddar and Hindi prachar. We advocated the creation of an industrial India and made the movement a Swadeshi movement in order to give that new birth a field and favourable conditions — cottage industries were not omitted in

---

[3] *Sri Aurobindo put brackets at the beginning and end of this reply to indicate that it was not to be circulated in the Ashram at that time. — Ed.*

our view, but there were no fads. The Swadeshi movement created the following very practical effects:

(a) It destroyed the Moderate reformist politics and spread the revolutionary mentality (as Jawaharlal now calls it) and the ideal of independence.

(b) It laid the foundations of an industrial India (not of course wholly industrial, that was not our intention) which is however slowly growing today.

(c) It brought in the commercial classes and the whole educated middle class into the political field — and not the middle class only, while Moderatism had touched only a small fringe.

(d) It had not time to bring in the peasantry, but it had begun the work and Gandhi only carried it farther on by his flashy and unsound but exciting methods.

(e) It laid down a method of agitation which Gandhi took up and continued with three or four startling additions, Khaddar, Hindiism, Satyagraha = getting beaten with joy, Khilafat, Harijan etc. All these had an advertisement value, a power of poking up things which was certainly livelier than anything we put into it. Whether the effects of these things have been good is a more doubtful question.

(2) As a matter of fact the final effects of Gandhi's movement have been

(a) A tremendous fissure between the Hindus and Mahomedans which is going to be kept permanent by communal representation.

(b) A widening fissure between caste Hindus and Harijans, to be made permanent in the same way.

(c) A great confusion in Indian politics which leaves it a huge mass of division, warring tendencies, no clear guide or compass anywhere.

(d) A new constitution which puts the conservative class in power to serve as a means of maintaining British domination or at least as an intolerable brake on progress — also divides India into five or six Indias, Hindu, Moslem, Pariah, Christian, Sikh etc.

(e) A big fiasco[4] of the Non-Cooperation movement which is throwing politics back on one side to reformism, on the other to a blatant and insincere Socialism.

That, I think, is the sum and substance of the matter.

As for the Hindu-Moslem affair, I saw no reason why the greatness of India's past or her spirituality should be thrown into the waste-paper basket in order to conciliate the Moslems who would not at all be conciliated by such a stupidity. What has created the Hindu-Moslem split was not Swadeshi, but the acceptance of the communal principle by the Congress, (here Tilak made his great blunder), and the farther attempt by the Khilafat movement to conciliate them and bring them in on wrong lines. The recognition of that communal principle at Lucknow made them permanently a separate *political* entity in India which ought never to have happened; the Khilafat affair made that separate political entity an organised separate political power. It was not Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education, Swaraj (our platform) which made this tremendous division, how could it? Tilak whom the Kripalani man blames along with me for it, is responsible not by that, but by his support of the Lucknow affair — for the rest, Gandhi did it with the help of his Ali brothers.

There you are. On a tabooed subject — it is, I think, enough. Not at all for circulation you understand and quite confidential.

14 April 1936

Living Dangerously

There is a coward in every human being — precisely the part in him which insists on "safety" — for that is certainly not a brave attitude. I admit however that I would like safety myself if I could have it — perhaps that is why I have always managed instead to live dangerously and follow the dangerous paths dragging so many poor *X*'s in my train. 5 January 1935

---

[4] I am referring to my prophecy made at the beginning of the Non-Cooperation movement, "It will end in a great confusion or in a great fiasco." I was not a correct prophet, as I have pointed out before. It should have run, "It will end in a great confusion *and* a great fiasco." But after all I was not speaking from the supramental which alone can be infallible.

*

> You wrote the other day that you have lived dangerously. All that we know is that you were a little hard up in England and had just a little here in Pondicherry at the beginning. In Baroda we know that you had a very handsome pay and in Calcutta you were quite well off. Of course, that can be said about Mother, but we know nothing about you.

I was so astonished by this succinct, complete and impeccably accurate biography of myself that I let myself go in answer! But I afterwards thought that it was no use living more dangerously than I am obliged to, so I rubbed all out. My only answer now is !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I thank you for the safe, rich, comfortable and unadventurous career you have given me. I note also that the only danger man can run in this world is that of the lack of money. Karl Marx himself could not have made a more economic world of it! But I wonder whether that was what Nietzsche meant by living dangerously? 15 January 1935

*

> I was grieved to see that you rubbed off what you wrote. We want to know so much of your life, of which we know so little!

Why the devil should you know anything about it?

> Of course I didn't mean that lack of money is the only danger one can be in. Nevertheless, is it not true that poverty is one of the greatest dangers as well as incentives? Lives of great men show that.

You are writing like Samuel Smiles. Poverty has never had any terrors for me nor is it an incentive. You seem to forget that I left my very safe and "handsome" Baroda position without any need to it, and that I gave up also the Rs. 150 of the National College Principalship, leaving myself with nothing to live on. I could not have done that if money had been an incentive.

> I know that the idea has obvious fallacies, but isn't it broadly true?

Not in the least.

> But what is the use of telling me what Nietzsche meant by living dangerously, and how am I to know that you mean the same?

Certainly not the commercial test. I was quoting Nietzsche — so the mention of him is perfectly apposite.

> Kindly let us know by your example what you mean by living dangerously.

I won't. It is altogether unnecessary besides. If you don't realise that starting and carrying on for ten years and more a revolutionary movement for independence without means and in a country wholly unprepared for it meant living dangerously, no amount of puncturing of your skull with words will give you that simple perception. And as to the Yoga, you yourself were perorating at the top of your voice about its awful, horrible, pathetic and tragic dangers. So — 16 January 1935

*

> I beg to submit my apologies. I committed this folly because of ignorance of facts. Believe me, I did not know that you were the brain behind the revolutionary movement and its real leader till I read the other day what Barinbabu has written about you. I only knew that you were an extremist Congress leader, for which the Government was shadowing and suspecting you. Now that it is confirmed by you, I know what is meant by the phrase "living dangerously".

Wait a sec. I have admitted nothing about "Barinbabu" — only to having inspired and started and maintained while I was in the field a movement for independence. That used at least to be a matter of public knowledge. I do not commit myself to more than that. My dear fellow, I was acquitted of sedition twice and of conspiracy to wage war against the British Raj once and each time by an impeccably British magistrate, judges or judge. Does not that prove conclusively my entire harmlessness and that I was a true Ahimsuk? 17 January 1935

Politics and Truth-Speaking

> Would it not sometimes be dangerous to speak truth, e.g., in politics, war, revolution? The truth-speaking moralist who would always insist on not concealing anything may bring disaster by revealing the plans and movements of one side to the opposite side.

Politics, war, revolution are things of stratagem and ambush — one cannot expect the truth there. From what I have heard Gandhi himself has played tricks and dodges there. Das told me it was impossible to lead men in politics or get one's objects without telling falsehoods by the yard and he was often feeling utterly disgusted with himself and his work, but supposed he would have to go through with it to the end.

There is no necessity to reveal one's plans and movements to those who have no business to know it, who are incapable of understanding or who would act as enemies or spoil all as a result of their knowledge. Secrecy is perfectly admissible and usual in spiritual matters except in special relations like that of the shishya to the guru. We do not let people outside know what is going on in the Asram but we do not tell any lies about it either. Most Yogis say nothing about their spiritual experiences to others or not until long afterwards and secrecy was a general rule among the ancient Mystics. No moral or spiritual law commands us to make ourselves naked to the world or open up our hearts and minds for public inspection. Gandhi talked about secrecy being a sin but that is one of his many extravagances.

17 May 1936

Some Political Associates

I knew very well Sister Nivedita (she was for many years a friend and a comrade in the political field) and met Sister Christine, — the two closest European disciples of Vivekananda. Both were Westerners to the core and had nothing at all of the Hindu outlook; although Sister Nivedita, an Irishwoman, had the power of penetrating by an intense sympathy into the ways of life of the people around her, her own nature remained non-Oriental to the end. Yet she found no difficulty in arriving at realisation on the lines of Vedanta.

*

I knew Satish Mukherji when he was organising the Bengal National College (1905–7), but afterwards I had no contact with him any longer. Even at that time we were not intimate and I knew nothing about his spiritual life or attainments — except that he was a disciple of Bijoy Goswami — as were also other political coworkers and leaders, like Bipin Pal and Manoranjan Guha. I knew Satish Mukherji only as a very able and active organiser in the field of education — a mission prophetically assigned to him, I was told, by his guru, — nothing more.

3 December 1932

*

> Charu Dutt, I.C.S., wrote a review of Jawaharlal's *Autobiography* in the *Visva-Bharati* review last month. Did you know him well of yore? Political?

Charu Dutt? Yes, saw very little of him, for physically our way lay far apart, but that little was very intimate, one of the kind of men whom I used to appreciate most and felt as if they had been my friends and comrades and fellow-warriors in the battle of the ages and could be so for ages more. But curiously enough my physical contact with men of his type — there were two or three others — was always brief. Because I had something else to do this time, I suppose. 28 September 1936

The Surat Congress (1907)

> I happened to read an article in which the author mentions the Surat Congress, but strangely enough he does not even mention your name whereas Tilak, Lal, Pal take the prominent place. It is impossible he could not have known the part you played. In a Gujarati novel, K. M. Munshi has brought you in and indicated you were the central figure, putting certain things in movement and keeping behind the veil. *X* also says that Tilak used to consult you. How is it these things are forgotten by these Gandhiites?

Probably they know nothing about it, as these things happened behind the veil. History very seldom records the things that were decisive but took place behind the veil; it records the show in front of the curtain. Very few people know that it was I (without consulting Tilak) who gave the order that led to the breaking of the Congress and was responsible for the refusal to join the new-fangled Moderate Convention which were the two decisive happenings at Surat. Even my action in giving the movement in Bengal its militant turn or founding the revolutionary movement is very little known. 22 March 1936

Leaving Politics

I may also say that I did not leave politics because I felt I could do nothing more there; such an idea was very far from me. I came away because I did not want anything to interfere with my Yoga and because I got a very distinct adesh in the matter. I have cut connection entirely with politics, but before I did so I knew from within that the work I had begun there was destined to be carried forward, on lines I had foreseen, by others, and that the ultimate triumph of the movement I had initiated was sure without my personal action or presence. There was not the least motive of despair or sense of futility behind my withdrawal. For the rest, I have never known any will of mine for any major event in the conduct of the world affairs to fail in the end, although it may take a long time for the world-forces to fulfil it. As for the possibility of failure in my spiritual work, I shall deal with that another time. Difficulties there are, but I see no cause for pessimism or for the certification of failure. October 1932

Inability to Participate in Politics

> There was a report in the *Hindu* that a deputation was coming from London to Pondicherry to ask you to take the helm of politics as a successor to Gandhi. The report says that you know 35 languages and have written 500 books.

I have read the wonderful screed from London. Truly I am more marvellous than I thought, 35 languages and 500 books! As to the seven pilgrims, they must be men of the Gita's type, *niṣkāma-karmīs*, to be prepared to come all these thousands of miles for nothing. 2 September 1934

*

Sri Aurobindo says that it is impossible for him to take up political action and enter the political field which would involve a sacrifice of his spiritual work.[5]

His spiritual help is given to the country and individually to all those who aspire for it. He is ready to continue this help and even to increase it if it is necessary. But he is convinced that written messages alone are not sufficient to have a permanent effect or even a sufficiently wide effect.

Among the members of the Ashram he sees nobody whom he can send to represent him effectively.

---

[5] *This reply was written by the Mother at Sri Aurobindo's dictation or under his instructions. — Ed.*

Outer Life in Pondicherry 1910 – 1950

Meeting Paul Richard

> I would like to know the mystery behind M. Paul Richard's meeting with Sri Aurobindo. I have heard that when he started for Pondicherry you [*i.e. the Mother*] gave him some signs or some questions to be solved by an Indian Yogi. And they were solved by Sri Aurobindo.

I don't think there was any mystery. He came for political purposes and enquired of Naidu or perhaps from Shankar Chettiar in whose house I was living whether there was any Indian Guru here and my name was mentioned and they brought him to see me. He showed me some signs employed in Indian, Egyptian and other occultisms, some of which I had seen — they happened to be, he said, the Indian ones. That was all. 26 June 1936

Fasting

I have myself fasted first 10 days and then 23 days just to see what it was like and how far one could live without food, and certain things like that. I found that it was no good. To take with equanimity whatever comes (or does not come) seemed to me more the thing than any violent exercises like that.

4 May 1935

Start of the *Arya*

> It is said that the *Arya* began on the day the world war broke out or just before it. Has this not some significance? Was it not a kind of parallel movement?

The *Arya* was decided on on the 1st June and it was agreed that it would start on the 15th August. The war intervened on the 4th. "Parallelism" of dates if you like, but it was not very close and certainly nothing came down at that time.

9 September 1935

Walking and Standing

> *X* is experiencing pain in her heel. There is no bone or joint tenderness, just tenderness in the pad of fat in the heel.

It may be "policeman's disease" as the French call it, "maladie de sergent de ville"; I have forgotten the technical name for it, but it is supposed to come from too much standing. I had it myself for something like a year because of walking or standing all day — that was when I used to meditate while walking. The Fr. medical dictionary says there is no remedy but rest. I myself got rid of it by application of force without any rest or any other remedy. But *X* is not a policeman and she does not walk while she meditates — so how did she get it? 29 May 1935

The Mother's Taking Charge of the Ashram

> On what date in 1926 did Mother take up the work of the sadhana?

Mother does not at all remember the exact date. It may have been a few days after 15th August. She took up the work completely when I retired. 17 May 1936

Bushy and the Meditation House

> Today I felt like writing a story. I cast it in the form of an autobiography of Bushy the great cat. In the opening statement she claims to be one of the greatest personalities in the world.

Bushy was the cat who introduced us to this house (Meditation) running before us and showing us all the rooms. That ought to find a place in her autobiography. 12 October 1934

Relations with the Government of French India, 1934–1935

But how is it that people can have such an idea?[1] There is no fund and there has never been a fund. All money has been given to myself or to the Mother. If there were a fund I suppose there would be trustees and a secretary and a treasurer and all the rest of it! The houses are ours, the money ours and it is to us in our houses that people come for learning the methods of Yoga. There is no association or public institution and nothing belonging to an association or institution. 16 February 1934

*

I have not wantonly stopped the books or free letter-writing nor have I become impatient with you or anyone. I am faced with a wanton and brutal attack on my life-work from outside and I need all my time and energy to meet it and do what is necessary to repel it during these days. I hope that I can count not only on the indulgence but on the support of those who have followed me and loved me, while I am thus occupied, much against my will.

I do hope you will not misunderstand me. I have not altered to you in the least and if I wrote laconically it was because I had no time to do otherwise.

My prohibition of long letters was of a general character and I had to issue it so that the stoppage of the books might not result in a flood of long letters which would leave me no time for making the concentration and taking the steps I have to take. I have said that you can send your poems and write too when you feel any urgent need — I had no feeling to the contrary at all. 17 February 1934

*

---

[1] *Shortly before writing this letter, Sri Aurobindo learned that the Government of French India planned to launch an inquiry into the status of the Ashram. It appears that this move was provoked by reports that the Ashram was a formal "institution" that had a "common fund". Had this been the case, it ought to have been registered with the government as a legal entity. — Ed.*

I do not know that your going later to Bombay is at all necessary — since it is decided, it may be better to get it over quickly. It is too early to say whether the menace to the Asram is conquered or still hangs over it. 19 February 1934

*

Of course, one must use these external means and there one must be careful so as to have as many factors as possible on one's side and give as little handle as possible to adverse forces. But no outward action can be for us sure of success unless behind it is the growing Yogic vision and Yogic power. We have had ourselves serious difficulties from the outside, petitions made against us to the Minister of Colonies in Paris and a report demanded from the Governor here which if acted on would have put the Asram in serious jeopardy. We used outward means of a very slight and simple character, i.e. getting the Mother's brother (Governor in French Equatorial Africa) to intervene with the Ministry (and also an eminent writer in France, a disciple), but for the most part I used a strong inner Force to determine the action of the Colonial Office, to get a favourable report from the Governor here, to turn the minds of some who were against us here and to nullify the enmity of others. In all these respects I succeeded and our position here is much stronger than before; especially a new and favourable Governor has come. Nevertheless we have to remain vigilant that the situation may not be again threatened. Also one disadvantage has resulted, that we have been asked not to buy or rent more houses, but to build instead. This is difficult without land near here and much money; so we are for the moment unable to expand. In certain respects however this is not a disadvantage, as I have been long wishing to put off farther expansion and consolidate the inward life of the Asram in a more completely spiritual sense. I give this as an example of how things have to be dealt with from the Yogic point of view. 20 March 1935

*

> *X* has passed along these two pieces of news about the Asram: (1) During his tour Mahatma Gandhi went to Pondicherry and with a view to meet Sri Aurobindo wrote a letter to him. In reply Sri Aurobindo wrote a letter to the Mahatma, which the local authorities withheld. It was after this that Sri Aurobindo published his statements about the Asram and his teaching.[2] (2) The French authorities at Pondicherry have enacted a law, the effect of which was to prevent the Mother from purchasing any more houses in the town for the purposes of the Asram.

You can write about the stories of the Asram that they are not true. The publication had no connection with Gandhi's visit to Pondicherry. No "law" has been passed by the French Government, nor could be. The relations of the Asram with the French Government are very friendly. But there was a housing crisis in Pondicherry and some complaints from the officials that they could not get houses to live in because the Asram had occupied so much of the better part of the town, so it was suggested to us that we might build houses in future rather than buy them.

1 July 1935

---

[2] *The "statements" referred to here were first published in a newspaper on 20 February 1934 and later brought out in pamphlets and as a booklet. See* Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest, *volume 36 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 530–31 and 547–50. For Gandhi's visit to Pondicherry see pp. 442–44 of the same volume. — Ed.*

Section Two

General Remarks on His Life

Remarks on His Life in Pondicherry after 1926

On His Retirement

> What harm would there be if you would talk for a few minutes to each sadhak at least once a year?

There would be no gain from it and my retirement is necessary for the inner work. 25 May 1933

*

> When will you come out of your retirement?

That is a thing of which nothing can be said at present. My retirement had a purpose and that purpose must first be fulfilled.
25 August 1933

*

The psychic is not responsible for my aloofness or retirement — it is the mass of opposition that I have to face which is responsible for that. It is only when I have overcome by the aid of the psychic and (excuse me!) your other *bête noire*, the supermind, that the retirement can cease. 21 January 1935

*

> Sardar Vallabhbhai asked *X* when you would come out and guide people. *X* replied that that was not to be expected. I rather suspect that Vallabhbhai spoke sarcastically and *X* failed to catch it.

Perhaps not. Vallabhbhai is not likely to understand more than others that a spiritual life can be led by me without a view to a comeback hereafter for the greatest good of the greatest India (or world). Tagore expected the latter and is much disappointed that I have not done it. 9 March 1935

*

> Will you come out of your retirement after the supramental descent?

That will be decided after the descent. 23 September 1935

*

> [SWAMI SAMBUDDHANANDA:] In connection with the celebration of the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, a Parliament of Religions will be held in Calcutta from the 1st to 7th March, 1937. It is the unanimous and seriously considered view of the organisers that nobody in India today is in a more appropriate position than you are to direct the proceedings of the International Assembly. We shall be highly obliged if you would kindly consent to preside over the session of the Parliament.

Write to him on my behalf that I regret I am unable to accept his invitation as I have adopted a rule of life which prevents me from appearing in public or taking any personal part in public activities. This rule is still valid for me and I am unable to depart from it.

Or perhaps you [*Sri Aurobindo's secretary*] can type the answer as from me and I will sign it. 17 October 1936

On His Modified Retirement after 1938

By the way, no one sees me daily and talks with me except the Mother and those who have been in attendance on me since the accident. Anything to the contrary you may have heard is incorrect. 31 March 1942

*

My retirement is nothing new, even the cessation of contact by correspondence is nothing new, — it has been there now for a long time. I had to establish the rule not out of personal preference or likes or dislikes, but because I found that the correspondence occupied the greater part of my time and my energies and there was a danger of my real work remaining neglected and undone if I did not change my course and devote myself to it, while the actual results of this outer activity were very small — it cannot be said that it resulted in the Asram making a great spiritual progress. Now in these times of world-crisis when I have had to be on guard and concentrated all the time to prevent irremediable catastrophes and have still to be so and when, besides, the major movement of the inner spiritual work needs an equal concentration and persistence, it is not possible for me to abandon my rule. (Moreover, even for the individual sadhak it is in his interest that this major spiritual work should be done, for its success would create conditions under which his difficulties could be much more easily overcome.) All the same I have broken my rule, and broken it for you alone; I do not see how that can be interpreted as a want of love and a hard granite indifference. 29 May 1942

*

It is not possible to accept his suggestion about joining with those who are in personal attendance upon me. They were not admitted as a help to their sadhana but for practical reasons. In fact here also there is some misconception. Continual personal contact does not necessarily bring out the action of the Force. Hriday had that personal contact with Ramakrishna and the opportunity of personal service to him, but he received nothing except on one occasion and then he could not contain the Force and the realisation which the Master put into him. The feeling of losing himself which *X* had was on the special occasions of the Darshan and the pranam to the Mother. That he had this response shows that he can answer to the Force, that he has the receptivity, as we say, and that is a great thing; all do not have it and those who have it are not always conscious of its cause but only of its result. But he should reason less and rather try to keep himself open as he was in those moments. The Force is not a matter for reasoning or theory but of experience. If I have written about the Force, it is because both the Mother and myself have had many thousand experiences in which it acted and produced results of every kind. This idea of the Force has nothing to do with theory or reasoning but is felt constantly by every Yogin; it is part of his yogic consciousness and his constant spiritual activity. 18 May 1945

Demands on His Time

It is quite impossible for me to do any literary work (original or revision) just now, if that is what he wants. July 1930

*

As to the book, I am afraid I have no time for such things. The twenty-four hours are already too short for what I have to do.
3 September 1930

*

Sri Aurobindo regrets his inability to accept the position offered to him in connection with the Indian Research Institute, with the objects of which he has every sympathy, as he would be unable to discharge the obligations however light attached to the position. All his time and energies are occupied by his own work and he has made it a rule to abstain from all other activities in order to give to this his undivided attention. 11 July 1933

*

I hope that will be *éclaircissement* enough for you — for I have no time for more — certainly none for writing sonnets — my energy is too occupied in very urgent and pressing things (quite apart from correspondence) to "dally with the rhythmic line".
2 August 1934

*

> Won't you please look at my essay tomorrow and give me your impression of it, pointing out, of course, whatever awkwardness of style that might draw your attention?

Let the floods pass! let the floods pass! I have four eight-twelve-sixteen-page letters still unanswered, one in Bengali closely written, one in Gujarati (decently large letters), one in Hindi (close-packed) and one in English. How the belettered devil am I to deal with essays under such polypageous circumstances?

23 February 1935

*

> My only free time is between 9.30 and 10.30 or 11 at night. What can one write in an hour or an hour and a half?

Good Lord! what can one write in 1 or $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour? If I could only get that time for immortal productions every day! Why in another three years *Savitri* and *Ilion* and I don't know how much more would be all written, finished, resplendently complete.

6 December 1935

*

> Sri Krishna must have had more leisure than you have. In those days the art of writing had not developed so much and so he had not to reply to questions, though sometimes he had sudden calls as when Durvasa came with a host of thousands of disciples asking for food when there was not a morsel. Perhaps he had to perform more miracles than you have to, though I should not forget that constant calls must be coming to you also for help in illnesses and many others in many ways. Moreover, Sri Krishna never actually became the Guru of a number of people.

Well, he may have been rather wise in that and fortunate in the infrequency of correspondence in those days — but that did not save him. There is a poignant chapter in the Mahabharat describing his miseries and bothers with his people in Dwarka which is very illuminating. Unfortunately I have forgotten where it is. The calls don't matter much, for putting the Force is a subjective thing which does not take time, except in cases when it is a daily or frequently recurring difficulty. As for Durvasa if he turned up, it would be met by an order to *X* "Go and manage" or else an intimation to Durvasa not to be unreasonable. 4 September 1936

*

> What about my planning to read Meredith, Hardy, Shelley, Keats and the Continental and Russian writers?

Lord, Sir, I wish I had time to follow out a programme as massive as yours. I have none even to dilate upon yours.

22 September 1936

Reading in Pondicherry

> I said to a visitor, "Sri Aurobindo has not read a single book in the last twenty years yet there is no knowledge in the world that is unknown to him."

That is a rather excessive statement. I have learned my own philosophy from Adhar Das, for instance, and read something about Sunlight Treatment for the eyes, etc. etc.

17 January 1935

*

I have not Boccaccio's tales. I am afraid my library is mainly composed of my own and the sadhaks' works and books presented to me by people as a personal offering which I can't therefore send to the library — and some stray volumes, dictionaries etc. — that is all.

16 February 1935

Passing Away of Customary Illnesses

I may say that I see no reason for alarm or apprehension about my eyesight; it has happened before and I was able to recover, even getting a better reading eyesight than before. These things are for me a question of the working of the Yogic force. Many customary illnesses have passed away from me permanently after an intimation that they would occur no more. In my last days in Calcutta that happened with regard to colds in the head, and when I was in the rue des Missions Étrangères with regard to fever. I had no cold or fever after that. So also with regard to things like the bad cough I had for many years; it was intimated some time ago that these things would fade out, and it has been so happening — only vestiges remain. So it will happen with what ailments remain, I expect. 25 February 1945

Correspondence and Literary Work, 1948 – 1949

As for my going far away, your feeling is based on my slackness in giving answers to your letters but this slackness had no such cause. My love and affection have remained always the same and it is regrettable if by my slackness in answering your letters I have produced the impression that I was moving farther and farther away from you. I think your recent letters have been mostly about persons recommended for Darshan or applying for it or about accommodation, things which have to be settled by the Mother, and these were naturally most conveniently conveyed to you through *X*'s oral answer. I suppose I must have unduly extended that method of answer to other matters. I must admit that for many reasons the impulse of letter writing and literary productivity generally have dwindled in me almost to zero and that must have been the real cause of my slackness. The first reason is my inability to write with my own hand, owing to the failure of the sight and other temporary reasons; the sight is improving but the improvement is not so rapid as to make reading and writing likely in the immediate future. Even *Savitri* is going slow, confined mainly to revision of what has already been written, and I am as yet unable to take up the completion of Parts II and III which are not yet finally revised and for which a considerable amount of new matter has to be written. It is no use going into all the thousand and one reasons for this state of things, for that would explain and not justify the slackness. I know very well how much you depend on my writing in answer to your letters as the one physical contact left which helps you and I shall try in future to meet the need by writing as often as possible. 10 July 1948

*

As to my silence, this does not arise from any change of feeling towards you or any coldness or indifference. I have not concealed from you the difficulty I feel now that I cannot write my own letters or, generally, do my own writing but I do not think I have neglected anything you have asked for when you have written. There is the question of the interview which you want to publish, but this I have to consider carefully as to what parts can be published as soon as I have been able to go through it. At the moment I have been very much under pressure of work for the Press which needed immediate attention and could not be postponed, mostly correction of manuscripts and proofs; but I hope to make an arrangement which will rid me of most of this tedious and uninteresting work so that I can turn my time to better purposes. I am conscious all the same that my remissness in writing has been excessive and that you have just cause for your complaint; but I hope to remedy this remissness in future as it is not at all due to any indifference but to a visitation of indolence of the creative will which has extended even to the completion of the unfinished parts of *Savitri*. I hope soon to get rid of this inability, complete *Savitri* and satisfy your just demand for more alertness in my correspondence with you.

4 March 1949

*

You also seem to have misunderstood something I said to X about pressure and difficulties as indicating some unwillingness on my part to write to you; nothing was farther from my mind, I said that only to explain my remissness in writing to you before. I was not referring to the pressure caused by the necessity of hastening the publication of my yet unpublished books or those that need to be republished — there is much work of that kind pressing to be done and much else not pressing but still needing to be done while there is still time, such as *The Future Poetry* or other works like the first part of *Savitri* which has to be revised for early publication in book-form. All that could have nothing to do with it — I was referring only to personal difficulties of my own and the difficulties concerning the Ashram which I had to face and which owing to their gravity and even danger had too much preoccupied my mind. That I have mentioned as an explanation of my earlier remissness and not as an excuse, — there could be no valid excuse. Certainly, that had nothing to do with your present trouble and the letter, — the present one, — which I had sent word through *X* that I was starting to write yesterday.

7 December 1949

His Temperament and Character

The Battle of Life

But what strange ideas again — that I was born with a supramental temperament and had never any brain or mind or any acquaintance with human mentality — and that I know nothing of hard realities. Good God! my whole life has been a struggle with hard realities, from hardship and semi-starvation in England through the fierce difficulties and perils of revolutionary leadership and organisation and activity in India to the far greater difficulties continually cropping up here in Pondicherry, internal and external. My life has been a battle from its early years and is still a battle, — the fact that I wage it now from a room upstairs and by spiritual means as well as others that are external makes no difference to its character. But of course as we have not been shouting about these things, it is natural, I suppose, for the sadhaks to think I am living in an august, glamorous, lotus-eating dreamland where no hard facts of life or nature present themselves. But what an illusion, all the same!

November 1935

Change of Nature

It is perfectly possible to change one's nature. I have proved that in my own case, for I have made myself exactly the opposite in character to what I was when I started life. I have seen it done in many and I have helped myself to do it in many. But certain conditions are needed. At present in this Asram there is an obstinate resistance to the change of nature — not so much in the inner being, for there are a good number who accept change there, but in the outer man which repeats its customary movements like a machine and refuses to budge out of its groove. *X*'s case does not matter — his vital has always wanted to be itself and follow its own way and his mental will cannot prevail over it. The difficulty is far more general than that.

That however would not matter — it would be only a question of a little more or less time, if the divine action were admitted whole-heartedly by the sadhaks. But the conditions laid down by them and the conditions laid down from above seem radically to differ. From above the urge is to lift everything above the human level, the demand of the sadhaks (not all, but so many) is to keep everything on the human level. But the human level means ignorance, disharmony, strife, suffering, death, disease — constant failure. I cannot see what solution there can be for such a contradiction — unless it be Nirvana. But transformation is hardly more difficult than Nirvana.

17 October 1934

*

> People of sattwic temperament in the ordinary life behave practically in the same manner as sadhaks who realise spiritual peace as a result of Yoga. Can it be said that in sattwic people the peace descends but in a hidden manner? Or is it due to their past lives?

Of course they have gained their power to live in the mind by a past evolution. But the spiritual peace is something other and infinitely more than the mental peace and its results are different, not merely clear thinking or some control or balance or a sattwic state. But its greater results can only be fully and permanently manifest when it lasts long enough in the system or when one feels spread out in it above the head and on every side stretching towards infinity as well as penetrated by it down to the very cells. Then it carries with it the deep and vast and solid tranquillity that nothing can shake — even if on the surface there is storm and battle. I was myself of the sattwic type you describe in my youth, but when the peace from above came down, that was quite different. *Sattvaguṇa* disappeared into *nirguṇa* and negative *nirguṇa* into positive *traiguṇyātīta*. 23 July 1935

Keeping Silence

I suppose I am silent, first, because I have no "free-will" and, secondly, because I have no Time.

Less metaphysically and more Yogically, there are periods when silence becomes imperative, because to throw oneself outward delays the "work that has to be done".

I suppose someday I will write about Free Will, but for the moment there is no effective will, free or otherwise, to do it.

7 April 1931

Peace and Ananda

My own experience is *not* limited to a radiant peace; I know very well what ecstasy and Ananda are from the Brahmananda down to the *śārīra ānanda*, and can experience them at any time. But of these things I prefer to speak only when my work is done — for it is in a transformed consciousness here and not only above where the Ananda always exists that I seek their base of permanence.

4 August 1934

The Burden of Love

It is only divine love which can bear the burden I have to bear, that all have to bear who have sacrificed everything else to the one aim of uplifting earth out of its darkness towards the Divine. The Gallio-like "Je m'en fiche"-ism (I do not care) would not carry me one step; it would certainly not be divine. It is quite another thing that enables me to walk unweeping and unlamenting towards the goal.

April 1934

Solid Strength

> If silence does not contain the fire within, will it not be the silence of a dead man? What can one accomplish without fire, zeal, enthusiasm?

Zeal and enthusiasm are all right and very necessary but the spiritual condition combines calm with intensity. Psychic fire is different — what you are speaking of here is the rajasic vital fire of self-assertion, aggressive self-defence, exerting lawful rights etc.

> Fire is the active expression of solid strength. But I feel that this fire is more necessary than solid strength in dynamic work.

I speak from my own experience. I have solid strength, but I have not much of the fire that blazes out against anybody who does not give me lawful rights. Yet I do not find myself weak or a dead man. I have always made it a rule not to be restless in any way, to throw away restlessness — yet I have been able to use my solid strength whenever necessary. You speak as if rajasic force and vehemence were the only strength and all else is deadness and weakness. It is not so — the calm spiritual strength is a hundred times stronger; it does not blaze up and sink again — but is steady and unshakable and perpetually dynamic.

21 November 1933

Rudra Power

I have dropped using the Rudra power — its effects used to be too catastrophic and now from a long disuse the inclination to use it has become rusty. Not that I am a convert to Satyagraha and Ahimsa, — but Himsa too has its inconvenience. So the fires sleep.

26 June 1936

Neither Rejection nor Attachment

I have no special liking for the ideal of Shiva, though something of the Shiva temperament must necessarily be present. I have never had any turn for rejection of the money power nor any attachment to it; one has to rise above these things as your Guru did but it is precisely when one has risen above that one can more easily command them. 15 January 1936

*

It depends on what is meant by asceticism. I have no desires but I don't lead outwardly an ascetic life, only a secluded one. According to the Gita, *tyāga*, the inner freedom from desire and attachment, is the true asceticism. 9 July 1937

Not Grim and Stern

> The Overmind seems so distant from us, and your Himalayan austerity and grandeur take my breath away, making my heart palpitate!

O rubbish! I am austere and grand, grim and stern! every blasted thing that I never was! I groan in an unAurobindian despair when I hear such things. What has happened to the common sense of all of you people? In order to reach the Overmind it is not at all necessary to take leave of this simple but useful quality. Common sense by the way is not logic (which is the least commonsense-like thing in the world), it is simply looking at things as they are without inflation or deflation — not imagining wild imaginations — or for that matter despairing "I know not why" despairs. 23 February 1935

*

The mistake was an old obstinate suggestion returning so as to bring about the old reactions which have to be got over. It is your old error of the greatness and "grimness" of God, Supramental etc. which was used to bring back the wrong ideas and the gloom. All this talk about grimness and sternness is sheer rot — you will excuse me for the expression, but there is no other that is adequate. The only truth about it is that I am not demonstrative or expansive in public — but I never was. Nevinson seeing me presiding at the Surat Nationalist Conference — which was not a joke and others were as serious as myself — spoke of me as that most politically dangerous of men — "the man who never smiles" which made people who knew me smile very much. You seem to have somewhere in you a Nevinson impression of me. Or perhaps you agree with *X* who wrote demanding of me why I smiled only with the lips and complained that it was not a satisfactory smile like the Mother's. All the same, whatever I may have said to *Y* or *Y* may have said to you, I have always given a large place to mirth and laughter and my letters in that style are only the natural outflow of my personality. I have never been "grim" in my life — that is the Stalin-Mussolini style, it is not mine; the only trait I share with the "grim" people is obstinacy in following out my aim in life, but I do it quietly and simply and have always done. Don't set up some gloomy imaginations and take them for the real Aurobindo.

By the way, if you get such imaginations like the Nrisinha Hiranyakashipu one, I shall begin to think that the Overmind has got hold of you also. I don't know the gentleman (Nrisinha) personally, but only by hearsay; if he was there I certainly did not recognise him. I always thought of him as a symbol — or perhaps a divinised Neanderthal man who sent for Hiranyakashipu (whoever H. was) and cut him open in the true Neanderthal way! For myself I was sitting there very quiet and as pacific as anybody at Geneva itself — more so in fact and receiving the stream of people with much inner amiability and, outwardly, a frequent "lip-smile" — so where the deuce was room for Nrisinha there? Besides it seems to me that I have long overpassed the man-beast stage of evolution — perhaps I flatter myself? — so again why Nrisinha. At the most there may have been some Power behind me guarding against the stream of "grim" difficulties — really grim these — which had been cropping up down to the Darshan eve. If so, it was not part of myself nor was I identified with it. So exit Nrisinha. February 1935

*

I do not know that I can say anything in defence of my unlovable marbleness — which is also unintentional, for I feel nothing like marble within me. But obviously I can lay no claims to the expansive charm and grace and lovability of a Gandhi or Tagore. For one thing I have never been able to establish a cheerful hail-fellow contact with the multitude, even when I was a public leader; I have been always reserved and silent except with the few with whom I was intimate or whom I could meet in private. But my reference to Nevinson and the Conference was only casual; I did not mean that I regard the Darshan as I would a political meeting or a public function. But all the same it is not in the nature of a private interview; I feel it is an occasion on which I am less a social person than a receptacle of a certain Power receiving those who come to me. I receive the sadhaks (not *X* or others) with a smile however unsatisfactory or invisible to you — but I suppose it becomes naturally a smile of the silence rather than a radiant substitute for cordial and bubbling laughter. *Que voulez-vous?* I am not Gandhi or Tagore.

All that I really wanted to say was that the inwardness and silence which you feel at the time of Darshan and dislike is not anything grim, stern, ferocious (Nrisinha) or even marble. It is absurd to describe it as such when there is nothing in me that has any correspondence with these epithets. What is there is a great quietude, wideness, light and universal or all-containing oneness. To speak of these things as if they were grim, stern, fierce and repellent or stiff and hard is to present not the fact of my nature but a caricature. I never heard before that peace was something grim, wideness repellent, light stern or fierce or oneness hard and stiff like marble. People have come from outside and felt these things, but they have felt not repelled but attracted. Even those who went out giddy with the onrush of light or fainted like *Y*, had no other wish but to come back and they did not fly away in terror. Even casual visitors have sometimes felt a great peace and quiet in the atmosphere and wished that they could stay here. So even if the sadhaks feel only a terrifying grimness, I am entitled to suppose that my awareness of myself is not an isolated illusion of mine and to question whether grimness is my real character and a hard and cold greatness my fundamental nature.

I suppose people get a sense of calm and immobility from my appearance. But what is there terrifying in that? Up till now it used to be supposed that this was the usual Yogic poise and that it could soothe and tranquillise. Am I to understand that I have turned it into something fierce and Asuric which terrifies and is fierce, grim and repellent? I find it rather difficult to believe. Or is it that I live too much within and have too much that is unknown and incomprehensible? I have always lived within, and what else could be expected of me? There is something to be manifested and it is only within that it can be found — there is a world struggling to be born and it is only from within that one can find and release it. 24 February 1935

*

All this insistence on grandeur and majesty makes me remember Shakespeare's remarks — the greatness that is thrust on one. I am unaware, as of grimness, so of any stiff majesty or pompous grandeur — the state of peace, wideness, universality I feel is perfectly easy, simple, natural, *dégagé*, more like a robe of ease than any imperial purple. Between *X*'s palpitating testimony to my grandeur and your melancholy testimony to my majesty — it appears I sit like the Himalayas and am as remote as the stratosphere — I begin to wonder whether it is so and how the devil I manage to do the trick. Unconscious hypnotism? No, for I begin to feel not like the juggler but like the little boy who has to climb his rope and perch there in a perilous and uncomfortable elevation — and it seems to be rather a self-hypnotism by the spectators of the show. All the same it was a relief to find someone writing of a beautiful and "loving" darshan and others who describe it in a similar tone. From which I conclude that the quality of the object lies in the eye of the seer — নানা মুনির নানা মত. 1935

Sense of Humour

The Divine may be difficult, but his difficulties can be overcome if one keeps at Him. Even my smilelessness was overcome which Nevinson had remarked with horror more than twenty years before — "the most dangerous man in India", Aurobindo Ghose "the man who never smiles". He ought to have added, "but who always jokes"; but he did not know that, as I was very solemn with him, or perhaps I had not developed sufficiently on that side then. Anyhow if you could overcome that, you are bound to overcome all the other difficulties also. 11 February 1937

*

> [*From a report of a meeting with Sri Aurobindo:*] "He laughed till his body shook; it was rollicking. . . ."

This won't do. It is a too exhilarating over-description. It calls up to my mind a Falstaff or a Chesterton; it does not fit in my style of hilarity. It is long since my laughter has been continuous and uncontrolled like that. For that to be true I shall have to wait till the Year 1, S.D. (Supramental Descent). And "rollicking"? The epithet would have applied to my grandfather but not to his less explosive grandson. 1945

Rising above Depression

> I am still not able to maintain the right attitude in my own sadhana and yet I try to pose as an adviser and instructor.

Well, one can give good advice even when one does not follow it oneself — there is the old adage "Do what I preach and not what I practise." More seriously, there are different personalities in oneself and the one that is eager to advise and help may be quite sincere. I remember in days long past when I still had personal struggles and difficulties, people came to me from outside for advice etc. when I was in black depression and could not see my way out of a sense of hopelessness and failure, yet nothing of that came out and I spoke with an assured conviction. Was that insincerity? I think not, the one who spoke in me was quite sure of what he spoke. The turning of all oneself to the Divine is not an easy matter and one must not be discouraged if it takes time and other movements still intervene. One must note, rectify and go on अनिर्विण्णेन चेतसा. 24 February 1935

*

> We hear that you also had to undergo a lot of suffering and despair — to the extent of wanting to commit suicide!

What nonsense! Suicide! Who the devil told you that? Even if I knew that all was going to collapse tomorrow, I would not think of suicide, but go on to do what I still could for the future.

21 June 1935

Attitude towards Work

It is not a question of liking but of capacity — though usually (not always) liking goes with the capacity. But capacity can be developed and liking can be developed or rather the *rasa* you speak of. One cannot be said to be in the full Yogic condition — for the purposes of this Yoga — if one cannot take up with willingness any work given to one as an offering to the Divine. At one time I was absolutely unfit for any physical work and cared only for the mental, but I trained myself in doing physical things with care and perfection so as to overcome this glaring defect in my being and make the bodily instrument apt and conscious. It was the same with some others here. A nature not trained to accept external work and activity becomes mentally top-heavy — physically inert and obscure. It is only if one is disabled or too physically weak that physical work can be put aside altogether. I am speaking of course from the point of view of the ideal — the rest depends upon the nature.

As for the deity presiding over control of servants, godown work as well as over poetry or painting, it is always the same — the Shakti, the Mother.

11 December 1934

*

> I have such a push to write poetry, stories, all kinds of things, in Bengali!

Ambitions of that kind are too vague to succeed. You have to limit your fields and concentrate in order to succeed in them. I don't make any attempt to be a scientist or painter or general. I have certain things to do and have done them, so long as the

Divine wanted; others have opened in me from above or within by Yoga. I have done as much of them as the Divine wanted.

19 September 1936

Genius for Lolling

> I intend to loll for a day or two after weeks of protracted hard work. How best to loll is a problem. By the way please note I am taking a regular sea-bath. It is doing me a lot of good.

All right about the sea-baths. As for lolling there is no how about it, — one just lolls, — if one has the genius for it. I have, though opportunities are now lacking for showing my genius. But it can't be taught, nor any process invented — it is just a gift of Nature.

25 April 1936

Heredity, Past Lives, Astrology

Heredity and Past Lives

It is true that we bring most of ourselves from past lives. Heredity only affects the external being and all the effects of heredity are not accepted, only those that are in consonance with what we are to be or not preventive of it at least. I may be the son of my father or mother in certain respects, but most of me is as foreign to them as if I had been born in New York or Paraguay.

3 June 1935

Speculations about His Past Lives

> It is reported that you were Kalidasa and Shakespeare. I suppose it is true, at least regarding Kalidasa — isn't it?

As to the report, who is the reporter? and in what "Reincarnation Review" have these items been reported? 31 March 1932

*

> We have various guesses about your previous lives. The other day I happened to ask *X* whether you were Shakespeare. He was diffident. My own belief is that you have somehow amalgamated all that was precious in those that manifested as Homer, Shakespeare, Valmiki, Dante, Virgil and Milton: if not all, at least the biggest of the lot. Kindly let us know the truth. Among your other and non-poetic incarnations, some surmise Alexander and Julius Caesar.

Good Heavens, all that! You have forgotten that Mrs. Besant claims Julius Caesar. I don't want to be prosecuted by her for misappropriation of personality. Alexander was too much of a torrent for me; I disclaim Milton and Virgil, am unconscious of Dante and Valmiki, diffident like *X* about the Bard (and moneylender?) of Avon. If, however, you can bring sufficiently cogent evidence, I am ready to take upon my back the offences of all the famous people in the world or any of them; but you must prove your case.

Seriously, these historical identifications are a perilous game and open a hundred doors to the play of imagination. Some may, in the nature of things must be true; but once people begin, they don't know where to stop. What is important is the lines, rather than the lives, the incarnation of Forces that explain what one now is — and, as for particular lives or rather personalities, those alone matter which are very definite in one and have powerfully contributed to what one is developing now. But it is not always possible to put a name upon these; for not one hundred-thousandth part of what has been has still a name preserved by human Time. 1 April 1932

*

> On both occasions when Paul Brunton saw you, he had the impression of you as a Chinese sage. In the early days of my stay here, you struck me as a king of Hungarian gypsies! And when I say Hungarian, I mean the Magyar element which I suppose has mid-Asiatic characteristics. Do these ideas point to some occult truth or some outstanding fact of previous birth?

Confucius? Lao-Tse? Mencius? Hang-whang-pu? (Don't know who the last was, but his name sounds nice.) Can't remember anything about it. As for the Hungarian gypsy, I suppose we must have been everything at one time or another, on this earth in some other cycle. But I am not aware of any particularly Magyar or Chinese element in me. However, when I came here, I was told I looked just like a Tamil sannyasi and some Christians said I was just like Christ. So it may be.

More seriously, Brunton seems to have thought I was Lao-Tse. Maybe, I can't say it is impossible. 7 December 1936

*

> The Mother or you are said to have declared that a divine descent was attempted during the Renaissance, with Leonardo

> da Vinci as its centre — a very credible report since we believe you were Leonardo and the Mother Mona Lisa. I shall be much interested to know something about the inner side of this phenomenon. Was Leonardo aware of a semi-avatarhood or a pressure of spiritual planes?

Never heard before of my declaring or anybody declaring such a thing. What Leonardo da Vinci held in himself was all the new age of Europe on its many sides. But there was no question of Avatarhood or consciousness of a descent or pressure of spiritual planes. Mysticism was no part of what he had to manifest.

15 July 1937

His Horoscope

> This year is said to be your brightest year according to the horoscope, Sir.

Horoscope by whom? According to a famous Calcutta astrologer (I have forgotten his name) my biggest time comes much later, though the immediately ensuing period is also remarkable. Like doctors, astrologers differ. 3 January 1936

*

> *X* told me that today [*4 April*] is the birthday of Pondicherry because you came here on this date. If one can place oneself in the year 2036 A.D. he may find that 4th April is celebrated as the birthday of the Earth's spiritual life. Perhaps the horoscope of the Earth may show this more accurately; but is there a horoscope of the Earth as there are horoscopes of some villages?

Pondicherry was born long ago — but if *X* means the rebirth, it may be, for it was absolutely dead when I came. I don't know that there is a horoscope of the Earth. There was nobody present to note the year, day, hour, minute when she came into existence. But some astrologer could take the position of the stars at the moment when I got out of the boat and build up the terrestrial consequences upon that perhaps! Unfortunately he would probably get everything wrong, like the astrologer who predicted that I would leave Pondicherry in March 1936 and wander about India till 1948 and then disappear while bathing in a river among my disciples. I believe he predicted it on the strength of the Bhrigu Samhita — the old dodge; but I am not sure. Long ago I had a splendiferous Mussolinic-Napoleonic prediction of my future made to me on the strength of the same old mythological Bhrigu. 4 April 1936

*

Astrologers tell all sorts of things that don't come true. According to one I was to have died last year, according to another I was to have gone out from Pondicherry in March or May last year and wandered about India with my disciples till I disappeared in a river (on a ferry). Even if the prediction were a correct one according to the horoscope it need not fulfil itself, because by entering the spiritual life one opens to a new force which can change one's destiny. 22 August 1937

*

It is no doubt possible to draw the illnesses of others upon oneself and even to do it deliberately, the instance of the Greek king Antigonus and his son Dimitrius is a famous historical case in point: Yogis also do this sometimes; or else adverse forces may throw illnesses upon the Yogi, using those round him as a door or a passage or the ill wishes of people as an instrumental force. But all these are special circumstances connected, no doubt, with his practice of Yoga; but they do not establish the general proposition as an absolute rule. A tendency such as *X*'s to desire or welcome or accept death as a release could have a force because of her advanced spiritual consciousness which it would not have in ordinary people. On the other side there can be an opposite use and result of the Yogic consciousness: illness can be repelled from one's own body or cured, even chronic or deep-seated illnesses and long-established constitutional defects remedied or expelled and even a predestined death delayed for a long period. Narayan Jyotishi, a Calcutta astrologer, who predicted, not knowing then who I was, in the days before my name was politically known, my struggle with Mlechchha enemies and afterwards the three cases against me and my three acquittals, predicted also that though death was prefixed for me in my horoscope at the age of 63, I would prolong my life by Yogic power for a very long period and arrive at a full old age. In fact I have got rid by Yogic pressure of a number of chronic maladies that had got settled in my body, reduced others to a vanishing minimum, brought about steadily progressing diminution of two that remained and on the last produced a considerable effect. But none of these instances either on the favourable or unfavourable side can be made into a rule; there is no validity in the tendency of human reason to transform the relativity of these things into an absolute.

8 December 1949

Knowledge of Astrology

I can't say anything about the horoscope, as I have forgotten the little astrology I knew. 14 September 1936

Section Three

Remarks on Himself as a Writer and on His Writings

On Himself as a Writer

Yoga and Intellectual Development

> Can it be that in course of the sadhana, one may have certain intellectual or other training by the direct power of yoga? How did your own wide development come?

It came not by "training", but by the spontaneous opening and widening and perfecting of the consciousness in the sadhana.

4 November 1936

Yoga and Literary Expression

> Suppose you had not studied English literature; would it be still possible for you to say something about it by Yogic experience?

Only by cultivating a special siddhi, which would be much too bothersome to go after. But I suppose if I had got the Yogic knowledge (in your hypothetical case) it should be quite easy to add the outer one. 29 December 1934

*

> When one hears that you had to plod through a lot, one wonders whether the story of Valmiki's sudden opening of poetic faculties is true — whether such a miracle is really possible.

Plod about what? For some things I had to plod — other things came in a moment or in two or three days like Nirvana or the power to appreciate painting. The "latent" philosopher failed to come out at the first shot (when I was in Calcutta) — after some years of incubation (?) it burst out like a volcano as soon as I started writing the *Arya*. There is no damned single rule for these things. Valmiki's poetic faculty might open suddenly like a champagne bottle, but it does not follow that everybody's will do like that. 1 April 1935

Avoidance of Certain Subjects

If I write about these questions from the Yogic point of view, even though on a logical basis, there is bound to be much that is in conflict with your own settled and perhaps cherished opinions, e.g. about "miracles", persons, the limits of judgment by sense data etc. I have avoided as much as possible writing about these subjects because I would have to propound things that cannot be understood except by reference to other data than those of the physical senses or of reason founded on these alone. I might have to speak of laws and forces not recognised by physical reason or science. In my public writings and my writings to sadhaks I have not dwelt on these because they go out of the range of ordinary knowledge and the understanding founded on it. These things are known to some, but they do not usually speak about it, while the public view of such of them as are known is either credulous or incredulous, but in both cases without experience or knowledge. So if the views founded on them are likely to upset, shock or bewilder, the better way is silence. December 1935

On His Philosophy in General

I do not mind if you find inconsistencies in my statements. What people call consistency is usually a rigid or narrow-minded inability to see more than one side of the truth or more than their own narrow personal view or experience of things. Truth has many aspects and unless you look on all with a calm and equal eye, you will never have the real or the integral knowledge.

22 December 1934

*

> One Kishorlal G. Mashriwala has written a book in which he says that your "language" has been responsible for creating confusion, etc. *X* seems to have written to him about this and

> got a reply that Kishorlal has not been satisfied with your philosophy nor with any of your disciples whom he has seen, but that he may change his views if he gets a quarter of an hour's talk with you.

Well, there seems evidently to be a confusion in his ideas about my philosophy, — though what has been responsible for creating it? — well, it is perhaps the goodness of his thinking! I fear the pleasure and honour of having a quarter of an hour's talk with the Yogi Kishorlal is too high a thing for me to wish to attain to it in this life. I must try to obtain *puṇya* first and strive to be born again in order to deserve it. 13 April 1935

*

> I am thinking of writing a book on your teachings in a systematic Western form in three main sections: (1) Metaphysics, (2) Psychology, (3) Ethics. But to make it presentable in the academic fashion would require a large reading of some past and present Western philosophers and psychologists. And where is the time for it?

I am afraid it would be a rather too colossal affair. But why ethics? I don't think that there is any ethics; because ethics depends upon fixed principles and rules of conduct, whereas here any such thing can only be for sadhana purposes as conditions for getting the spiritual or higher consciousness and afterwards everything is freely determined by that consciousness and its movements and dictates. 26 July 1936

*

> You wrote to *X* that though people call you a philosopher you have never learnt philosophy.[1] Well, what you have written in the *Arya* is so philosophical that the greatest philosopher of the world can never expect to write it. I don't mean here the bringing down of the new Truth, but the power of expression, the art of reasoning and arguing with intellect and logic.

---

[1] *See the letter of 31 August 1934 on page 70. — Ed.*

There is very little argument in my philosophy — the elaborate metaphysical reasoning full of abstract words with which the metaphysician tries to establish his conclusions is not there. What is there is a harmonising of the different parts of a many-sided knowledge so that all unites logically together. But it is not by force of logical argument that it is done, but by a clear vision of the relations and sequences of the knowledge.

4 November 1936

Writing for Publication

Unwillingness to Write for Newspapers and Magazines

If I allow the *Orient* to publish something yet unpublished by me, I lose my defence against demands from outside which is that I have ceased to contribute to magazines, newspapers *et hoc genus omne* and have made it indeed a rule not to do so. Therefore —

*

I am afraid *X* is asking from me a thing psychologically impossible. You know that I have forbidden myself to write anything for publication for some time past and some time to come — I am self-debarred from press, platform and public. Even if it were otherwise, it would be impossible under present circumstances to write at a week's notice. You will present him my excuses in your best and most tactful manner. 27 August 1931

*

The answer to Woolf was written long ago at the time Woolf's article appeared in the *New Statesman and Nation* — a London weekly. It was *X* who drew my notice to it and asked for an answer. *Y* this time wanted something of mine for the *Onward* August 15th number and chose this one.

24 August 1934

*

I have not begun writing in the papers — what is being published in the magazines is excerpts from the unpublished things in the *Arya* or translations such as *X* is making. So I cannot give anything.

As for past writings, I never take the initiative for publication in papers. *Y*, *X* or *Z* sometimes ask for leave to publish this or that somewhere where it is asked for and I consent — that is all. circa 1936

*

The initiative is always *X* and I do not send anything myself or intervene in his action, but he takes the sanction from me.

All that you need to write to Delhi is that Sri Aurobindo is not writing articles for the papers; the things that appear from time to time are old writings of his not yet published in book form and sent to the papers at their request with his sanction. He is not writing any new things nowadays, as his time is entirely occupied with his work. This is simply to prevent demands on me for new contributions which I cannot satisfy. 2 July 1936

*

As to the Foreword, I had made a strict rule not to publish anything of the kind or anything except the books from the *Arya* and letters, so as to avoid any call on me from anyone. I don't know if I can break this rule now. In any case I shall have to read and consider, and I have now no time for anything but the correspondence and the work of concentration that is necessary — the pressure is too great for reading anything. So they should not depend on me for this Foreword. 28 September 1936

*

X must not expect the rather portentous article or essay he demands from me. You know I have made it a rule not to make any public pronouncement; the Cripps affair was an exception that remains solitary; for the other things on the war were private letters, not written for publication. I do not propose to change the rule in order to set forth a programme for the Supermind energy to act on if and when it comes down now or fifteen years after.[1] Great Powers do not publish beforehand, least of all in a journalistic compilation, their war-plans or even their peace-plans; the Supermind is the greatest of all Powers and we can leave it to its own secrecy until the moment of its action.

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo was asked to write an article about what the world would be like fifteen years after the supramental descent. — Ed.*

14 January 1945

*

> What has happened to my letter of request for a Message to grace the Special Number of *Mother India* of August 15? I have heard nothing from you.

I have been trying to get you informed without success about the impossibility of your getting your expected Message from me for the 15th August. I had and have no intention of writing a Message for my birthday this year. It is psychologically impossible for me to manufacture one to command; an inspiration would have to come and it is highly improbable that any will come in this short space of time; I myself have no impulse towards it. But how is it that you have clean forgotten my rule of not writing any article for an outside paper, magazine or journal — I mean other than those conducted from the Asram and by the Asram — and even for these I write nothing new except for the *Bulletin* at the Mother's request, — also my reasons for this fixed rule? If I started doing that kind of thing, my freedom would be gone; I would have to write at everybody's command, not only articles but blessings, replies on public questions and all the rest of that kind of conventional rubbish. I would be like any ordinary politician publishing my views on all and sundry matters, discoursing on all sorts of subjects, a public man at the disposal of the public. That would make myself, my blessings, my views and my Messages exceedingly cheap; in fact, I would be no longer Sri Aurobindo. Already *Hindusthan Standard*, the *Madras Mail* and I know not what other journals and societies are demanding at the pistol's point special messages for the 15th for themselves and I am supposed to stand and deliver. I won't. I regret that I must disappoint you, but self-preservation is a first law of Nature.

3 August 1949

Writing Philosophy

Look here! Do these people expect me to turn myself again into a machine for producing articles? The times of the *Bande Mataram* and *Arya* are over, thank God! I have now only the Asram correspondence and that is "overwhelming" enough in all conscience without starting philosophy for standard books and the rest of it.

And philosophy! Let me tell you in confidence that I never, never, never was a philosopher — although I have written philosophy which is another story altogether. I knew precious little about philosophy before I did the Yoga and came to Pondicherry — I was a poet and a politician, not a philosopher! How I managed to do it? First, because Richard proposed to me to cooperate in a philosophical review — and as my theory was that a Yogi ought to be able to turn his hand to anything, I could not very well refuse: and then he had to go to the War and left me in the lurch with 64 pages a month of philosophy all to write by my lonely self. Secondly, I had only to write down in the terms of the intellect all that I had observed and come to know in practising Yoga daily and the philosophy was there, automatically. But that is not being a philosopher!

I don't know how to excuse myself to Radhakrishnan — for I can't say all that to him.[2] Perhaps you can find a formula for me? Perhaps — "so occupied not a moment for any other work; can't undertake because I might not be able to carry out my promise". What do you say? 31 August 1934

*

> Anilbaran says that he can compile something out of *The Life Divine* for Radhakrishnan. Can he do it?

No, I think not. 10 September 1934

*

---

[2] *Sri Aurobindo's letter to Dr. Radhakrishnan, turning down his request to contribute an article to a book Radhakrishnan was editing, is published in* Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest, *volume 36 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 444–45. — Ed.*

As to Radhakrishnan, I don't care whether he is right or wrong in his eagerness to get the blessed contribution from me. But the first fact is that it is quite impossible for me to write philosophy to order. If something comes to me of itself, I can write, if I have time. But I have not time. I had some thought of writing to Adhar Das pointing out that he was mistaken in his criticism of my ideas about consciousness and intuition and developing briefly what were my real views about these things. But I have never been able to do it — I might as well think of putting the moon under my arm, Hanuman-like, — though in his case it was the sun — and going for a walk! The moon is not available and the walk is not possible. It would be the same if I promised anything to Radhakrishnan — it would not get done, and that would be much worse than a refusal.

And the second fact is that I do not care a button about my having my name in any blessed place. I was never ardent about fame even in my political days; I preferred to remain behind the curtain, push people without their knowing it and get things done. It was the confounded British Government that spoiled my game by prosecuting me and forcing me to be publicly known and a "leader". Then again I don't believe in advertisement except for books etc., and in propaganda except for politics and patent medicines. But for serious work it is a poison. It means either a stunt or a boom — and stunts and booms exhaust the thing they carry on their crest and leave it lifeless and broken high and dry on the shores of nowhere — or it means a movement. A movement in the case of a work like mine means the founding of a school or a sect or some other damned nonsense. It means that hundreds or thousands of useless people join in and corrupt the work or reduce it to a pompous farce from which the Truth that was coming down recedes into secrecy and silence. It is what has happened to the "religions" and is the reason of their failure. If I tolerate a little writing about myself, it is only to have a sufficient counterweight in that amorphous chaos, the public mind, to balance the hostility that is always aroused by the presence of a new dynamic Truth in this world of ignorance. But the utility ends there and too much advertisement would defeat that object. I am perfectly "rational", I assure you, in my methods and I do not proceed merely on any personal dislike of fame. If and so far as publicity serves the Truth, I am quite ready to tolerate it; but I do not find publicity for its own sake desirable.

This "Contemporary Philosophy", British or Indian, looks to me very much like bookmaking and, though the "vulgarisation" of knowledge — to use the French term — by bookmaking may have its use, I prefer to do solid work and leave that to others. You may say that I can write a solid thing in philosophy and let it be bookmade. But even the solid tends to look shoddy in such surroundings. And besides my solid work at present is not philosophy but something less wordy and more to the point. If that work gets done, then it will propagate itself so far as propagation is necessary — if it were not to get done, propagation would be useless.

These are my reasons. However let us wait till the book is there and see what kind of stuff it is. 2 October 1934

Philosophical Theft

> Radhakrishnan, in his lecture published in the *Hindu*,[3] has stolen not only most of your ideas but has actually lifted several sentences *en masse*. I wonder how such piracy in philosophical literature passes unchastised. I am thinking either of writing to him deploring the theft or informing the *Hindu*.

I don't think it is worth while doing anything. The thefts are obvious, but if he wants to add some peacock plumes to his dun colours! 24 July 1936

*

> Professor Mahendranath Sircar and others would like to write to Radhakrishnan, asking him why he used passages from your works without acknowledgement.

---

[3] *"World Fellowship through Faith . . . Sir S. Radhakrishnan's Address",* The Hindu, *20 July 1936.*

No. I have said no public notice should be taken of the matter. I consider it inadvisable, so the letters should not be sent.

*

From the Yogic point of view one ought to be indifferent and without sense of ownership or desire of fame or praise. But for that one must have arrived at the Yogic poise — such a detachment is not possible without it. I do not mind Radhakrishnan's lifting whole sentences and paragraphs from my writings at the World Conference as his own and getting credit for a new and quite original point of view.

But if I were eager to figure before the world as a philosopher, I would resent it. But even if one does not mind, one can see the impropriety of the action or take measures against its repetition, if one thinks it worth while. 5 August 1936

The Sale of His Books

The question of the royalty can be deferred till *X* has seen the translation. If it is not approved, the question of royalty does not arise. You can tell him that the Asram is not supported by public subscriptions but by what is given by disciples and private sympathisers. Therefore Sri Aurobindo's publications cannot be given free, they are sold and the proceeds counted among the available resources just as is the case with the publications of the Ramakrishna Mission. 19 September 1936

On His Published Prose Writings

Publication Plans, 1927

There is no intention of withdrawing support. The small book *The Mother* was given to Rameshwar because it was necessary to bring it out without delay and the A.P.H. [*Arya Publishing House*] was already occupied with the *Essays on the Gita* which it had not been able to bring to completion.

It was hoped that Rameshwar's joining the A.P.H. would unite all interests, but since you have not been able to agree together, it will be necessary to give him something from time to time as the long-standing connection with him cannot be broken — there being no reason for giving him up any more than for giving up A.P.H. This will not stand in the way of my giving my principal books to A.P.H. — provided always that the A.P.H. can keep its side of the arrangement by publishing them properly and without inordinate delay.

I can understand that there have been financial and other difficulties in putting A.P.H. on a sound footing and I have not insisted either on publication or money or anything else. At the same time I am bound to say that the methods of work seem to be loose and haphazard, e.g. the enormous time taken to publish the Second Series [*of* Essays on the Gita], the endless delay in sending me my copies of the First Series, the absence of all information regarding the condition of the concern or of any regular accounts of my dues from the House etc. I hope that things will be better in the future.

It is not necessary or possible to publish all my books together; hardly any of them can go out without revision and as I have very little time for this kind of work revision will take time.

For Sri Aurobindo's remarks on his poetic works, see Letters on Poetry and Art, *volume 27 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 219–363. — Ed.*

The Ideal of Human Unity. I was revising, but as there seemed to be no progress with the *Gita* and I had other work to do, I dropped it. I will now complete the revision and I expect it will not take more than another two months.

The Defence of Indian Culture. Not finished. I will look through it and revise and add two or three chapters to finish. The time taken will depend on the amount of revision necessary — probably not very extensive alterations are needed.

The Katha Upanishad. This also needs revision before it can be published; but it is not likely to take very long.

The Kena Upanishad. My present intention is not to publish it as it stands. This must be postponed for the present.

═

It would be no use coming to see me, as I am seeing nobody, not even those who are living here. Nor is there any necessity for the journey, as I have not any present intention of altering the existing arrangement. 30 November 1927

Political Writings

> I am an Indian student working for the Ph.D. degree at Harvard University. For my thesis subject I have selected "Contemporary Political Thought in India". You of course will be one of the authors I will be considering. Unfortunately your books are not available here. Please send me a list of books related to my subject, and the address of your publisher.

Refer him to A.P.H. Tell him that my political writings appeared in the daily *Bande Mataram* and the weekly *Karmayogin* and have for the most part not been separately published. You can mention however *The Ideal of the Karmayogin*, *The Renaissance in India*, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, *War and Self-Determination* as books that may be useful for his subject, as the two former are partly concerned with or touch upon Indian politics, and the two latter are written upon international questions. I do not remember any others; if there are any, they may be included in the list. Ask A.P.H. to send him a complete list of my published works. 11 April 1928

Speeches

Now that they have written, I remember that in fact the *Speeches* were transferred from the Prabartak to A.P.H. But then how is it that Rameshwar asked for it? I gave permission under the impression that it must be in his share of the already published books. You had better write to him about it. After receiving his answer I will decide. 6 May 1929

*

I find it impossible to decide about the *Speeches*; the whole matter has got twisted up in a very undesirable way. It would be better if they settle it themselves amicably; otherwise I shall have to promise it to whoever can bring it out soonest or in the best style or put it up to auction or toss heads or tails. This whole matter of the publications being split up between half a dozen Arya Aurobindo houses is reaching the point of a *reductio ad absurdum* if not *ad impossible*. But nothing however absurd seems impossible here. 10 July 1931

*

> Regarding *Speeches of Sri Aurobindo* — there has been a great demand for it in the market. If you kindly allow us to omit those speeches which may come under the Press Act, we could print the book. Please let us know your decision.

But who will decide what may come under the Press Act? It is a legal point and the law of sedition is exceedingly elastic.

September 1935

The Ideal of the Karmayogin

> Have you seen my review of *The Ideal of the Karmayogin*?

Yes, I have seen it, but I don't think it can be published in its present form as it prolongs the political Aurobindo of that time into the Sri Aurobindo of the present time. You even assert that I have "thoroughly" revised the book and these articles are an index of my latest views on the burning problems of the day and there has been no change in my views in 27 years (which would surely be proof of a rather unprogressive mind). How do you get all that? My spiritual consciousness and knowledge at that time was as nothing to what it is now — how would the change leave my view of politics and life unmodified altogether? There has been no such thorough revision; I have left the book as it was, because it would be useless to modify what was written so long ago — the same as with *Yoga and Its Objects*. Anyway the review would almost amount to a proclamation of my present political views — while on the contrary I have been careful to pronounce nothing — no views whatever on political questions for the last I don't know how many years. 21 April 1937

*

> In the new edition of *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* there is this announcement: —
>
> Fourth Edition — January, 1937
> (Thoroughly Revised by the Author)
>
> Radhakanta is repeating the above formula in all your old books which are really reprints. May I ask him not to do it?

Evidently it is an untrue statement and cannot be allowed to continue as it creates a false impression. But I think it will be necessary for me to write myself — otherwise he may not listen. Or you may write that I have asked you to inform him that I want this to be discontinued in future editions as it creates a wrong impression — since in fact these are reprints and I have not revised or rewritten any part of them. 23 April 1937

A System of National Education

I readily give the permission you request to embody my *System of National Education* as a chapter in the book projected by your Institute.[1] I have no time to go again through it, but I am asking my publishers, the Arya Publishing House of Calcutta, to send you a copy of the corrected and authorised edition. The Madras edition is unauthorised and full of gross errors. The book is only a series of preliminary essays never worked out or completed, but I shall be glad if, even as it is, you think it can be of some use.

---

[1] *This letter was drafted by one of Sri Aurobindo's secretaries and extensively revised by Sri Aurobindo. He wrote the last sentence in his own hand. — Ed.*

Yogic Sadhan

The Yogi from the North (Uttara Yogi)[2] was my own name given to me because of a prediction made long ago by a famous Tamil Yogi, that thirty years later (agreeing with the time of my arrival) a Yogi from the North would come as a fugitive to the South and practise there an integral Yoga (Poorna Yoga), and this would be one sign of the approaching liberty of India. He gave three utterances as the mark by which this Yogi could be recognised and all these were found in the letters to my wife.

As for *Yogic Sadhan* it was not I exactly who wrote it, though it is true that I am not a Mayavadin.

*

> Your name was not printed on the first two editions of *Yogic Sadhan*. But the third edition (brought out by A.P.H.) has your name on it.

No need of name. The publication of the name in the third edition of *Yogic Sadhan* was unauthorised and is in fact a falsehood. 6 June 1931

*

As to *Yogic Sadhan*, it is *not my* composition nor its contents the essence of my Yoga, whatever the publishers may persist in saying in their lying blurb in spite of my protests. 4 May 1934

*

The *Yogic Sadhan* has its use, but it is not one of the main or

---

[2] *On the title page of the book* Yogic Sadhan *(first published in 1911) the editor is given as "The Uttara Yogi". — Ed.*

most important books published among mine, nor is it my own writing.
6 December 1935

Passages from *Yogic Sadhan*

> It is said in *Yogic Sadhan*: "The Will when it begins to act, will be hampered by the Swabhava; therefore until you are able to act on the Swabhava, you will not, should not bring your Will to bear upon life."[3] I don't understand what this means.

I don't remember the passage. Possibly it means that till you can act on the real nature in you and use the true will and consciousness, you should go on trying for that, and not try to shape life with an imperfect will and imperfect instrument.
18 September 1933

*

> In *Yogic Sadhan*, Sri Aurobindo has said: "You have so many milestones to pass; but you may pass them walking, in a carriage, in a railway train, but pass them you must" [*p. 1378*]. What are the main milestones on the Shakti *marga*?

Answer as under.[4]

The *Yogic Sadhan* is not Sri Aurobindo's writing — only communicated to him. The statement of the publishers that it contains the essence of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga is an error propagated by them against his own protest. He cannot therefore say what particular milestones were meant. It is true as a general rule, but can be partly cancelled by a concentrated movement.

> I suppose there are different milestones on different paths?

Necessarily.

> Again, while discussing the law of resistance, Sri Aurobindo says: "They [*old rules, habits or tendencies*] are supported by

---

[3] Yogic Sadhan*, in* Record of Yoga*, volume 11 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO*, p. 1375.*

[4] *Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the correspondent. — Ed.*

> an army of forces or spiritual beings who surround you and live upon your experiences and enjoyments" [*p. 1377*]. What are these "spiritual beings"?

They are powers, forces or beings of the mental, vital or subtle physical worlds. There are some that simply want to utilise, there are others that want to possess, oppose or destroy and are known by us as "the hostile forces". 14 April 1936

*

> What does the author of *Yogic Sadhan* mean by saying "when the man himself becomes God" [*p. 1378*]?

He means "when he becomes identified with the Divine", or "when he feels himself to be only a portion of the Divine and thinks and acts as such." 24 September 1933

*

> "It [*the Manas*] catches thoughts on their way from the Buddhi to the Chitta, but in catching them it turns them into the stuff of sensations . . ." [*p. 1383*]. Has Manas any right to catch these thoughts? If so, what is the way to stop it so that it does not turn them into stuff of sensations?

The terms Manas etc. belong to the ordinary psychology applied to the surface consciousness. In our Yoga we adopt a different classification based on the Yoga experience. What answers to this movement of the Manas there would be two separate things — a part of the physical mind communicating with the physical vital. It receives from the physical senses and transmits to the Buddhi — i.e. to some part or other of the Thought-Mind; it receives back from the Buddhi and transmits idea and will to the organs of sensation and action. All that is indispensable in the ordinary action of the consciousness. But in the ordinary consciousness everything gets mixed up together and there is no clear order or rule. In the Yoga one becomes aware of the different parts and their proper action, and puts each in its place and to its proper action under the control of the higher consciousness or else under the control of the Divine Power.

Afterwards all gets surcharged with the spiritual consciousness and there is an automatic right perception and right action of the different parts because they are controlled entirely from above and do not falsify or resist or confuse its dictates.

13 September 1933

*

> What is "the conceptual activity of the Manas" [*p. 1385*] and how can one still it?

The real conceptual activity belongs rather to the Buddhi — that of the Manas is simply a rendering of perceptions and impressions into thought-forms. There is no necessity of specially stilling this function — it comes best with a general stillness of the mind.

12 September 1933

*

> It is written in *Yogic Sadhan*: "Adharma is often necessary as a passage or preparation for passing from an undeveloped to a developed, a lower to a higher Dharma" [*p. 1387*]. How is this?

I don't remember the context; but I suppose he means that when one has to escape from the lower Dharma, one has often to break it so as to arrive at a larger one. E.g. social duties, paying debts, looking after family, helping to serve your country, etc. etc. The man who turns to the spiritual life, has to leave all that behind him often and he is reproached by lots of people for his Adharma. But if he does not do this Adharma, he is bound for ever to the lower life — for there is always some duty there to be done — and cannot take up the spiritual dharma or can do it only when he is old and his faculties impaired. That is a point in instance.

14 September 1933

*

> "I come next to Prana, the nervous or vital element in man which is centralised below the Manas and Chitta in the subtle body and connected with the navel in the Sthula Deha" [*p. 1388*]. What is that subtle body? Also, I don't understand

the phrase "connected with the navel in the Sthula Deha".

How is it you do not know these elementary things? Man has not a gross (*sthūla*) visible body only, but a subtle body (*sūkṣma deha*) in which he goes out of the *sthūla deha* at his death.

The navel is the vital center in the physical body — but the native seat of the vital is in the vital sheath of the subtle body, which sheath it pervades, but for action through the gross body its action is centred at the navel and below it.

16 September 1933

The Yoga and Its Objects, Yogic Sadhan and *The Synthesis of Yoga*

Sri Aurobindo is the author of *Yoga and Its Object.*[5] It must be by an error of the printers that his name has been omitted.

But the book represents an early stage of Sri Aurobindo's sadhana and only a part of it is applicable to the Yoga as it has at present taken form after a lapse of more than twenty years.

The *Yogic Sadhan* is not Sri Aurobindo's own writing, but was published with a note by him, — that is all. The statement made to the contrary by the publishers was an error which they have been asked to correct. There is no necessity of following the methods suggested in that book unless one finds them suggestive or helpful as a preliminary orientation of the consciousness — e.g. in the upbuilding of an inner Will etc.

A book giving some hints about the Yoga compiled from letters to the sadhaks is about to be published,[6] but it cannot be said to be complete. There is no complete book on the subject; for even *The Synthesis of Yoga*, published in the *Arya* but not yet republished in book form, gives only the theory of different components of the Yoga (Knowledge, Works, Devotion) and remains besides unfinished; it does not cover the more recent developments of the Yoga.

28 October 1934

---

[5] *When first published in 1921,* The Yoga and Its Objects *was entitled* The Yoga and Its Object. — *Ed.*

[6] *The reference is to* Lights on Yoga, *first published in February 1935.* — *Ed.*

The Yoga and Its Objects

> A friend says there are no books in Gujarati that he can give to people who want to know about Sri Aurobindo's yoga. So he suggested I translate *The Yoga and Its Object.*

The Yoga and Its Object is not at all suitable for the purpose as it was written very long ago and expresses things that belong to the early stages of my sadhana, not the fullness of the integral and supramental sadhana. 16 August 1934

Passages from *The Yoga and Its Objects*

> "To those who demand from him, God gives what they demand. . . ."[7] Is this true?

It is not meant that He gives always whatever anyone demands — but that what they demand is all He gives — they cannot get anything else. 9 January 1934

*

> "For behind the Sad Atman is the silence of the Asat which the Buddhist Nihilists realised as the *śūnyam* and beyond that silence is the Paratpara Purusha (*puruṣo vareṇya ādityavarṇas tamasaḥ parastāt*)" [*p. 76*].

The passage in *Yoga and Its Objects* is written from the point of view of the spiritualised Mind approaching the supreme Truth directly, without passing through the Supermind or disappearing into it. The Mind spiritualises itself by shedding all its own activities and formations and reducing everything to a pure Existence, Sad Atman, from which all things and activities proceed and which supports everything. When it wants to go still beyond, it negates yet farther and arrives at an Asat, which is the negation of all this existence and yet Something inconceivable to mind, speech or defining experience. It is the silent Unknowable, the Turiya or featureless and relationless Absolute of the monistic

---

[7] *Sri Aurobindo,* The Yoga and Its Objects, *in* Essays in Philosophy and Yoga, *volume 13 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 74.*

Vedantins, the Sunyam of the nihilistic Buddhists, the Tao or omnipresent and transcendent Nihil of the Chinese, the indefinable and ineffable Permanent of the Mahayana. Many Christian mystics also speak of the necessity of a complete ignorance in order to get the supreme experience and speak too of the Divine Darkness — they mean the shedding of all mental knowledge, making a blank of the mind and engulfing it in the Unmanifest, — the *param avyaktam*. All this is the mind's way of approaching the Supreme — for beyond the *avyakta*, *tamasaḥ parastāt*, is the Supreme, the Purushottama of the Gita, the Para Purusha of the Upanishads. It is *āditya-varṇa* in contrast to the darkness of the Unmanifest; it is a metaphor, but not a mere metaphor, for it is a symbol also, a symbol visually seen by the *sūkṣma dṛṣṭi*, the subtle vision, and not merely a symbol, but, as one might say, a fact of spiritual experience. The sun in the Yoga is the symbol of the supermind and the supermind is the first power of the Supreme which one meets across the border where the experience of spiritualised mind ceases and the unmodified divine Consciousness begins the domain of the supreme nature, *parā prakṛti*. It is that Light of which the Vedic mystics got a glimpse and it is the opposite of the intervening darkness of the Christian mystics — for the supermind is all light and no darkness. To the mind the Supreme is *avyaktāt param avyaktam*, but if we follow the line leading to the supermind, it is an increasing affirmation rather than an increasing negation through which we move.

Light is always seen in Yoga with the inner eye and even with the outer eye, but there are many lights; all are not and all do not come from the *paraṁ jyotiḥ*. 18 August 1932

*

> "Matter itself, you will one day realise, is not material, it is not substance but form of consciousness, *guṇa*, the result of quality of being perceived by sense-knowledge" [*p.* 77].

There is no need to put "the" before "quality" — in English that would alter the sense. Matter is not regarded in this passage as a quality of being perceived by sense; I don't think that would have any meaning. It is regarded as a result of a certain power and action of consciousness which presents forms of itself to sense perception and it is this quality of sense-perceivedness, so to speak, that gives them the appearance of Matter, i.e. of a certain kind of substantiality inherent in themselves — but in fact they are not self-existent substantial objects but forms of consciousness. The point is that there is no such thing as the self-existent Matter posited by nineteenth-century Science.

"chitta" and "chetas"

Chitta is ordinarily used for the mental consciousness in general, thought, feeling, etc. taken together with a stress now on one side or another, sometimes on the feelings as in *citta-pramāthī*, sometimes on the thought-mind — that is why I translated it [*on p. 75*] "heart and mind" in its wider sense. Chetas can be used in the same way, but it has a different shade of sense, properly speaking, and can include also the movements of the soul, covering the whole consciousness even; [*on p. 82*] I take it in its most general sense. The translation is not meant to be literal but to render the thought in the line in its fullness. *Adhyātmacetasā* practically amounts to what in English we would describe as a spiritual consciousness.

"throw our arms around" [*p. 78*]

It is a figure meaning to comprehend in our consciousness with love and Ananda.

"the nature" [*p. 81, lines 29, 31, 33*]

Nature here means the parts of Prakriti in the human being: as it is the condition of the Prakriti that changes with shifting of the gunas and it is this condition of the Prakriti that will become illumined by the transformation of *sattva* into *jyotiḥ*.

"*lokasaṅgrahārthāya*" [*p. 85*] — Does this mean the present order?

No. It is in a more general sense the maintenance of the world order which may be a developing, not necessarily a stationary one, an order spiritual, moral etc. and not merely a social order.

> "Maya means nothing more than the freedom of Brahman from the circumstances through which he expresses himself" [*p. 89*].

The sentence is rather loose in expression. It does not mean that Maya is Brahman's freedom, but "the doctrine of Maya simply comes to this that Brahman is free from the circumstances through which he expresses himself." This limited play is not He, for He is illimitable; it is only a conditioned (partial) manifestation, but He is not bound by the conditions (circumstances) as the play is bound. The world is a figure of something of Himself which he has put forth into it, but He is more than that figure. The world is not unreal or illusory, but our present seeing or consciousness of it is ignorant, and therefore the world *as seen by us* can be described as an illusion. So far the Maya idea is true. But if we see the world as it really is, a partial and developing manifestation of Brahman, then it can no longer be described as an illusion, but rather as a Lila. He is still more than his Lila, but He is in it and it is in Him; it is not an illusion. 16 October 1931

The *Arya*

The *Arya*[8] is a work of spiritual philosophy founded on personal realisation; it is obviously not meant for minds that do not think out spiritual things in all their aspects.

*

For understanding *Arya* one must have a sufficiently trained and developed intellect or else a basis of experience along with a capacity of mentalising experience. *X* as yet has neither. It is sufficient if he can get accustomed to forming general ideas and thinking coherently about them. 22 September 1933

---

[8] *The monthly journal (1914–1921) in which* The Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga *and many other works by Sri Aurobindo first appeared. Before these works were published as separate books, they were referred to collectively as "the Arya". — Ed.*

*

> What is meant by: 1. the psychic nature, 2. spiritual nature, 3. supramental nature, 4. divine nature?

To answer these questions it would be necessary to write a volume. I have written some letters about the psychic being and the self — you can get hold of those and read them.

Supramental nature can only be understood if one understands what supermind is and that is not altogether possible for mind so long as it does not open into the higher planes. So far as a mental account can be given, I have done it in the *Arya*.

Divine Nature is the nature of the divine Consciousness, Truth, Peace, Light, Purity, Knowledge, Power, Ananda on whichever plane it manifests. Supermind is one plane of the Divine Nature. The Divine is Sachchidananda.

18 October 1938

*

I do not find it easy to answer the few brief and casual sentences in Angus' letter, — precisely because they are so brief and casual.[9] Not knowing him or the turns of his mind, I do not exactly seize what is behind this passage in his letter. It would be easier to reply if I had some notion of the kind of thought or experience on which he takes his stand when he dismisses so cavalierly the statement of spiritual truth put forward in the *Arya*. As it is, I am obliged to answer to what *may* be behind his sentences and, as there is much that possibly stands behind them, the reply becomes long and elaborate and is in danger of seeming long and discursive. I could of course answer easily myself by a few brief and trenchant sentences of the same calibre, but in that kind of discussion there is no profit.

---

[9] *The paragraphs that follow are from a letter-draft that was not revised or sent in this form to the correspondent. — Ed.*

Let me say that he makes an initial mistake — quite natural for him, since he has not read the *Arya*, — when he describes the extract sent to him as a "theological fragment". I must insist that there is no theology in the *Arya*. Nothing there is written to support or to develop any kind of religious belief or dogma or to confirm or enunciate the credo of any old or new religion. No less does he miss the mark when he describes as a scholastic distinction the substance of the passage. The teaching there is not taken from books, nor, although put in philosophic language, is it based upon abstract thought or any formal logic. It expresses a fundamental spiritual experience, dynamic for the growth of the being, confirmed and enlarged and filled with detail by almost thirty years of continuous sadhana, and, as such, it cannot be seriously challenged or invalidated by mere intellectual question or reasoning, but, if at all, then only by a greater and wider spiritual experience. Moreover, it coincides (not in expression, it may be, but in substance) with the experience of hundreds of spiritual seekers in many paths and in all parts of the world since the days of the Upanishads — and of Plotinus and the Gnostics and Sufis — to the present time. It is hardly admissible then to put it aside as the thought of a tyro or beginner in spiritual knowledge making his first clumsy potshots at a solution of the crossword enigma of the universe. That description seems to show that he has missed the point of the passage altogether and that also makes it difficult to reply; for where there is no meeting point of minds, discussion is likely to be sterile.

I was a little surprised at first by this entire lack of understanding, shown still more in his cavil at the two Divines — for I had somehow got the impression that Angus was a Christian and the recognition of "two Divines" — the Divine Transcendent and the Divine Immanent — is, I have read, perfectly familiar to Christian ideas and to Christian experience. The words themselves in fact — transcendent and cosmic — are taken from the West. I do not know that there is anything exactly corresponding to them in the language of Indian spiritual thinking, although the experiences on which the distinction rests are quite familiar. On another side, Christianity insists not only on a double but a triple

Divine. It even strikes me that this triple Godhead or Trinity is not very far off at bottom from my trinity of the individual, cosmic and transcendent Divine — as far at least as one can judge who has not himself followed the Christian discipline. Christ whether as the human Incarnation or the Christos in men or the Godhead proceeding from the Father, seems to me to be quite my individual Divine. The Father has very much the appearance of the One who overstands and is immanent in the cosmos. And although this is more obscure, yet if one can be guided by the indications in the Scripture, the Holy Ghost looks very much like a rather mysterious and inexpressible Transcendence and its descent very much like what I would call the descent of Light, Purity, Peace — that passeth all understanding — or Power of the supramental Spirit. In any case these Christian and Western ideas show surely that my affirmation of a double or a triple Divine is not anything new and ought not to be found startling or upsetting and I do not see why it should be treated as (in itself) obscure and unintelligible.

Again, are these or similar distinctions very positively made in the Christian, Sufi or other teachings mere theoretical abstractions, scholastic distinctions, theological cobwebs, or metaphysical puzzles? I had always supposed that they corresponded to very living, very dynamic, almost — for the paths to which they relate — indispensable experiences. No doubt, for those who follow other ways or no way at all or for those who have not yet had the illuminating and vivifying experience, they may seem at first a little difficult or unseizable. But that is true of most spiritual truth — and not of spiritual truth alone. There are many very highly intelligent and cultured people to whom a scientific explanation of even so patent and common a fact as electricity and electric light (this is a reminiscence of an article by Y. Y. in the *New Statesman and Nation*) seems equally difficult to seize by the mind or to fix either in the memory or the intelligence. And yet the distinction between positive and negative electricity, both necessary for the existence of the light, — like that of the passive and active Brahman (another scholastic distinction?) both necessary for the existence of the universe, — cannot be dismissed for that reason as something academic or scholastic, but is a very pertinent statement of things quite dynamic and real. No doubt the unscientific man does not and perhaps need not trouble about these things and can be content to enjoy the electric light (when he is allowed to do so by the grace of the Pondicherry Municipality), without enquiring into the play of the forces behind it: but for the seeker after scientific truth or for the practical electrician it is a different matter. Now these distinctions in the spiritual field are a parallel case; they seem theoretical or abstract only so long as experience has not made them concrete, but once experienced they become living stuff of the consciousness and, after a certain stage, even the basis of action and growth in the spiritual life.

Here I am driven to a rather lengthy digression from the main theme — for I am met by Angus' rather baffling appeal to Whitham's History of Science. What has Whitham or Science to do with spiritual truth or spiritual experience? I can only suppose that he condemns all intrusion of anything like metaphysical thought into the spiritual field — a position excessive but not altogether untenable — and even perhaps proposes to bring the scientific method and the scientific mentality into spiritual experience as the sole true way of arriving at or judging the truth of things. I should like to make my view clear as to that point, because here much confusion has been created about it, and more is possible. And the first thing I would say is that if metaphysics has no right to intervene in spiritual experience, neither has Science. There are here three different domains of knowledge and experience each with its own instrumentation, its own way of approach and seeing, suited for its own task, but not to be imposed or substituted in these other fields of knowledge, — at least unless and until they meet by some kind of supreme reconciling transmutation in something that is at the source of all knowledge. For knowledge may be essentially one, but like the one Divine, it manifests differently in different fields of its play and to abolish their distinctions is not the way to arrive at true understanding of experience.

Science deals effectively with phenomenon and process and the apparent play of forces which determine the process. It cannot deal even intellectually in any adequate way with ultimate truths, that is the province of the higher, less external mind — represented up till now by metaphysics, though metaphysics is not its only possible power. If Science tries to fix metaphysical truth by forcing on this domain its own generalisations in the physical field, as people have been doing for almost the last century, it makes a mess of thought by illegitimately extended conclusions and has in the end to retire from this usurpation as it is now beginning to retire. Its discoveries may be used by philosophy, but on the grounds proper to philosophy and not on the grounds proper to Science. The philosopher must judge the scientific conceptions of relativity or discontinuity or space-time, for instance, by his own processes and standards of evidence. So too, Science has no instrumentation or process of knowledge which can enable it to discover spiritual truth or to judge or determine the results of spiritual experience. There is a field of knowledge of process in the spiritual and the occult domain, in the discovery of a world of inner forces and their way of action and even of their objective dynamisation in the mind and life and the functioning of the body. But the mathematical exactitudes and rigid formulas of physical Science do not apply here and the mentality created by them would hamper spiritual experience.

The Life Divine

There is possible a realistic as well as an illusionist Adwaita. The philosophy of *The Life Divine* is such a realistic Adwaita. The world is a manifestation of the Real and therefore is itself real. The reality is the infinite and eternal Divine, infinite and eternal Being, Consciousness-Force and Bliss. This Divine by his power has created the world or rather manifested it in his own infinite Being. But here in the material world or at its basis he has hidden himself in what seem to be his opposites, Non-Being, Inconscience and Insentience. This is what we nowadays call the Inconscient which seems to have created the material universe by its inconscient Energy; but this is only an appearance, for we find in the end that all the dispositions of the world can only have been arranged by the working of a supreme secret intelligence. The Being which is hidden in what seems to be an inconscient void emerges in the world first in Matter, then in Life, then in Mind and finally as the Spirit. The apparently inconscient Energy which creates is in fact the Consciousness-Force of the Divine and its aspect of consciousness, secret in Matter, begins to emerge in Life, finds something more of itself in Mind and finds its true self in a spiritual consciousness and finally a supramental consciousness through which we become aware of the Reality, enter into it and unite ourselves with it. This is what we call evolution which is an evolution of consciousness and an evolution of the Spirit in things and only outwardly an evolution of species. Thus also, the delight of existence emerges from the original insentience first in the contrary forms of pleasure and pain and then has to find itself in the bliss of the Spirit or as it is called in the Upanishads, the bliss of the Brahman. That is the central idea in the explanation of the universe put forward in *The Life Divine*.

A Passage from *The Life Divine*

> "This opens the way for other explanations which make Consciousness the creator of this world out of an apparent original Inconscience. . . . All these things we see around us are then the thoughts of an extra-cosmic Divinity, a Being with an omnipotent and omniscient Mind and Will. . . ."[10]

The phrase "extra-cosmic Divinity" is used here in *The Life Divine* because in that stage of the reasoning nothing more emerged as positively established. In fact Sri Aurobindo regards the Divinity, the Reality behind and in the universe as at once supracosmic or transcendent of cosmos and immanent in it, and all, constituting the universe by its being, consciousness and force and by that too bringing out from the Inconscient the evolution and developing its stages inevitably according to a truth in things which is its element of Necessity and the possibilities of the Consciousness and Force (seen by the human mind as Chance) through which the truth works itself out.

---

[10] *Sri Aurobindo,* The Life Divine, *volume 21 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 316.*

The Synthesis of Yoga

The Synthesis of Yoga is being revised and largely rewritten for publication; so I don't think it is possible to send out copies of it like this. For the time the revision has been stopped, because I have not a moment free, but I hope to resume it shortly; the publishers are in fact pressing for the book. It was why I wrote to *X* that it could not be sent outside. December 1932

*

> *X* would like to see the six revised chapters of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, as he has translated the unrevised ones. May I send him a copy?

These six chapters cannot be translated and published separately or along with the other unrevised chapters. It can only be done when the revision of the whole book is complete.

3 September 1936

*

> What about the publication of the *Synthesis*? They are all asking me about it. So many are eager that it should see the light, fed up as we all are with the analysis of the universe through science of mind and ignorance of life, what?

I hope you are not referring to the whole colossal mass of the *Synthesis*, — though that too *may* be ready for publication before the next world war (?) or after the beginning of the Satya Yuga (new World Order?). If you mean the Yoga of Works, I am writing or trying to write four or five additional chapters for it. I hope they will be ready in a reasonable time, — but my daily time is short and chapters are long. In the absence of exact prophetic power, that is all I can say. 2 March 1944

Passages from *The Synthesis of Yoga*

> "Often, we see this desire of personal salvation overcome by another attraction which also belongs to the higher turn of our nature and which indicates the essential character of the action the liberated soul must pursue. . . . It is that which inspires a remarkable passage in a letter of Swami Vivekananda. 'I have lost all wish for my salvation,' wrote the great Vedantin, 'may I be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum-total of all souls, — and above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species is the special object of my worship. He who is the high and low, the saint and the sinner, the god and the worm, Him worship, the visible, the knowable, the real, the omnipresent; break all other idols. In whom there is neither past life nor future birth, nor death nor going nor coming, in whom we always have been and always will be one, Him worship; break all other idols.'
>
> "The last two sentences contain indeed the whole gist of the matter. . . ."[11]

As to the extract about Vivekananda, the point I make there does not seem to me humanitarian. You will see that I emphasise there the last sentences of the passage quoted from Vivekananda, not the words about God the poor and sinner and criminal. The point is about the Divine in the World, the All, *sarva-bhūtāni* of the Gita. That is not merely humanity, still less only the poor or the wicked; surely even the rich or the good are part of the All and those also who are neither good nor bad nor rich nor poor. Nor is there any question (I mean in my own remarks) of philanthropic service; so neither *daridra* nor *sevā* is the point. I had formerly not the humanitarian but the humanity view — and something of it may have stuck to my expressions in the *Arya*. But I had already altered my viewpoint from the "Our Yoga for the sake of humanity" to "Our Yoga for the sake of the Divine". The Divine includes not only the supracosmic but

---

[11] *Sri Aurobindo,* The Synthesis of Yoga, *volume 23 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 269–70.*

the cosmic and the individual — not only Nirvana or the Beyond but Life and the All. It is that I stress everywhere. But I shall keep the extracts for a day or two and see what there is, if anything, that smacks too much of a too narrow humanistic standpoint. I stop here for today.
29 December 1934

*

> "This concentration proceeds by the Idea . . . ; for it is through the Idea that the mental being rises beyond all expression to that which is expressed, to that of which the Idea itself is only the instrument. By concentration upon the Idea the mental existence which at present we are breaks open the barrier of our mentality and arrives at the state of consciousness, the state of being, the state of power of conscious-being and bliss of conscious-being to which the Idea corresponds and of which it is the symbol, movement and rhythm" [*p. 321*].

I have not the original chapter before me just now; but from the sentences quoted it seems to be the essential mental Idea. As for instance in the method of Vedantic knowledge one concentrates on the idea of Brahman omnipresent — one looks at a tree or other surrounding objects with the idea that Brahman is there and the tree or object is only a form. After a time if the concentration is of the right kind, one begins to become aware of a presence, an existence, the physical tree form becomes a shell and that presence or existence is felt to be the only reality. The idea then drops, it is a direct vision of the thing that takes its place — there is no longer any necessity of concentrating on the idea, one sees with a deeper consciousness, स पश्यति. It should be noted that this concentration on the idea is not mere thinking, मननम् — it is an inner dwelling on the essence of the Idea.
27 August 1933

*

> " . . . we must not only cut asunder the snare of the mind and the senses, but flee also beyond the snare of the thinker, the snare of the theologian and the church-builder, the meshes of the Word and the bondage of the Idea" [*p. 330*]. Would you explain this to me?

It would take too long. You can get it explained to you by someone, it is not difficult. The central idea is that the Divine Truth is greater than any religion or creed or scripture or idea or philosophy — so you must not tie yourself to any of these things. 18 September 1933

*

> "Therefore the psychic life-energy presents itself to our experience as a sort of desire-mind, which we have to conquer if we mean to get back to the true self" [*p. 350*].

It means the life-energy which comes from within and is in consonance with the psychic being — it is the energy of the true vital being, but in the ordinary ignorant vital it is deformed into desire. You have to quiet and purify the vital and let the true vital emerge. Or you have to bring the psychic in front, and the psychic will purify and psychicise the vital and then you will have the true vital energy. 11 September 1933

The Synthesis of Yoga, The Mother and *Lights on Yoga*

> Does the method of sadhana as given in *The Synthesis of Yoga* apply now in our practice? What one finds when one reads the *Synthesis* seems to differ a great deal from what one finds in *The Mother* and *Lights on Yoga*.

The Synthesis of Yoga was not meant to give a method for all to follow. Each side of the Yoga was dealt with separately with all its possibilities, and an indication as to how they meet so that one starting from knowledge could realise karma and bhakti also and so with each path. It was intended when the Self-Perfection[12] was finished, to suggest a way in which all could be combined, but this was never written. *The Mother* and the *Lights* were not intended to be a systematic treatment of the sadhana as a whole; they only touch on various elements in it. 18 May 1936

---

[12] *"The Yoga of Self-Perfection", Part IV of* The Synthesis of Yoga. — *Ed.*

A Passage from "Rebirth and Karma"

> In "Rebirth and Karma",[13] I find the following: "We have in fact an immutable Self, a real Person, lord of this ever-changing personality which, again, assumes ever-changing bodies, but the real Self knows itself always as above the mutation, watches and enjoys it, but is not involved in it. Through what does it enjoy the changes and feel them to be its own, even while knowing itself to be unaffected by them? . . . This more essential form is or seems to be in man the mental being or mental person which the Upanishads speak of as the mental leader of the life and body, *manomayaḥ prāṇa-śarīra-netā*."[14] Would not the mental being be part of the human personality — the mental, nervous and physical composite?

The mental being spoken of by the Upanishad is not part of the mental nervous physical composite — it is the *manomayaḥ puruṣaḥ prāṇa-śarīra-netā*, the mental being leader of the life and body. It could not be so described if it were part of the composite. Nor can the composite or part of it be the Purusha, — for the composite is composed of Prakriti. It is described as *manomaya* by the Upanishad because the psychic being is behind the veil and man being the mental being in the life and body lives in his mind and not in his psychic, so to him the *manomaya puruṣa* is the leader of the life and body, — of the psychic behind supporting the whole he is not aware or dimly aware in his best moments. The psychic is represented in man by the Prime Minister, the *manomaya*, itself being a mild constitutional king; it is the *manomaya* to whom Prakriti refers for assent to her actions. But still the statement of the Upanishad gives only the apparent truth of the matter, valid for man and the human stage only — for in the animal it would be rather the *prāṇamaya puruṣa* that is the *netā*, leader of mind and body. It is one reason why I have not yet allowed the publication of "Rebirth and Karma" because this had to be corrected and the deeper truth put in its place. I had intended to do it later on, but had not time to finish the remaining articles. 24 December 1935

---

[13] *The sixteen essays published since 1952 as* The Problem of Rebirth *originally appeared in the monthly review* Arya *between 1915 and 1921. The first twelve, which were published in 1915 and 1919, were sometimes referred to as "Rebirth and Karma". This informal title was used later as the subtitle of Section I of* The Problem of Rebirth. *(In the United States, it also was used as the title of the entire book.)* The Problem of Rebirth *is reproduced in* Essays in Philosophy and Yoga*, volume 13 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO*, pp. 255–434. — Ed.*

[14] *Sri Aurobindo,* Essays in Philosophy and Yoga*, p. 275.*

"The Lines of Karma"

> Regarding "The Lines of Karma",[15] we beg to draw your attention to the matter and ask what should be done to publish it. If you kindly manage to write the first part of the book, then we can bring it out.

The book is unfinished — that is the main obstacle to its publication. However I will look at the copy Nolini has sent up and see. 5 September 1935

The Ideal of Human Unity

With regard to *The Ideal of Human Unity*, the book has to be revised before it is ready for reprinting. Sri Aurobindo will take up the work when he is able to make some time for it.[16]

19 April 1949

Translations of Vedic Hymns

> Last year I got from *X* some translations of the Rig-Vedic hymns done by the Master after his retirement. I have just retyped them for myself and *Y* wanted my old copy.

These translations are provisional, not final — so I should not like them to be freely copied and seen by all; but I have no objection to your keeping a copy. 3 December 1936

---

[15] *A group of four essays that originally appeared in the* Arya *in 1920 and 1921. They now comprise Section II of* The Problem of Rebirth. *Here the reference may be to a proposed book including all of Sri Aurobindo's essays on rebirth and karma, which eventually came out as* The Problem of Rebirth. — *Ed.*

[16] *Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the enquirer. — Ed.*

Glossary of Vedic Words

I see that this is a glossary of Vedic words with their current meanings. I have no objection to that. But I do not want any publication of Vedic interpretations or significances founded upon my translations, so long as my work on the Veda is incomplete and has not taken its final form. 5 March 1929

Essays on the Gita

> My brother is thinking of starting a bookselling and publishing business and has asked for one or two books of Sri Aurobindo for publication. May I prepare for him an edition of the Gita with only the text and Sri Aurobindo's translation compiled from the *Essays on the Gita*?

The casual renderings in the *Essays* cannot be published as my translation, — they were not intended for the purpose.

20 January 1932

*

> Before coming here, I found some justification for my anger from your *Essays on the Gita* — though I must say that the tendency to violence was already there. Will there be any place for some sort of violence in the new creation?

The *Essays on the Gita* explain the ordinary karmayoga as developed in the Gita, in which the work done is the ordinary work of human life with only an inward change. There too the violence to be used is not a personal violence done from egoistic motives, but part of the ordered system of social life. Nothing can spiritually justify individual violence done in anger or passion or from any vital motive. In our yoga our object is to rise higher than the ordinary life of man and in it violence has to be left aside altogether. 12 August 1933

*

> I have compiled a translation of most of the slokas of the Gita, using your interpretation of them in the *Essays on the Gita*. I request you to give me permission to publish the book as it

> will help the public to understand the Gita from your point of view.

The permission cannot be given — the translations in the *Essays* are more explanatory than textually precise or cast in a literary style — I do not want that to go out as my translation of the Gita. 1 August 1934

*

> I read your *Essays on the Gita* twice or thrice before. But when I started reading it again, I found that there were many ideas in it which I had missed before. I think if I read it over and over again I would find newer and newer ideas each time.

That is a common experience — most books with any profundity of knowledge in them have that effect. Almost all spiritual problems have been briefly but deeply dealt with in the Gita and I have tried to bring out all that fully in the *Essays*.
1 November 1936

*

The *Essays on the Gita* is the most important of the published books.[17] If it is to be translated in Telugu it should be assured that it is an accurate translation in good style. A translation from a translation does not usually secure that object.

Passages from *Essays on the Gita*

> "But the Gita insists that the nature of the action does matter. . . ."[18] This perplexes me. Sri Aurobindo wrote to me in reply to my question about office work: "The nature of the work does not matter."

That is quite a different question from the choice referred to in the passage of the *Essays*.

---

[17] *At the time this letter was written,* Essays on the Gita *was the only full-length work by Sri Aurobindo that was available in the form of a book. — Ed.*

[18] *Sri Aurobindo,* Essays on the Gita, *volume 19 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 131.*

What is written must be read and interpreted according to the context. In the Gita, the question is between two kinds of action — the quietistic life of the Sannyasin with the minimum of action and the dynamic life offered in all its actions whatever they be as a sacrifice to the Divine. It might be said that Arjuna might do either, it does not matter — but the Gita thinks it does matter: that Arjuna being called to a life of dynamic action must follow that and not the quietistic life. 3 December 1934

*

> In *Essays on the Gita* Sri Aurobindo renders the term "Kshara Purusha" as "the universal Soul" [*p. 436*]. How can the "Kshara" be the universal Soul, if the one is mutable and the other immutable?

This is not my interpretation, it is what the Gita itself plainly says. It explains Kshara as "all existences" and since Purusha is the being which observes and experiences all the movements of Nature, (which is what is meant here by soul) it cannot be anything else than the universal Soul identifying itself with all existences in Nature.

> Kindly indicate the relation of the universal Soul to the Divine.

The word क्षर [*kṣara*] means really mobile as opposed to the immobile immutable Akshara. The Kshara Purusha is that which follows the movement of the universe and seems to move and change, because it identifies itself while the Akshara is not identified and stands apart. The Upanishad makes the same distinction of the two Souls and Prakriti.

> I used to take *kṣetra* and *kṣara puruṣa* to mean the lower nature.

Nature is Prakriti — Purusha cannot be Prakriti. Neither can Purusha be *kṣetra*, the field, because Purusha by its very definition is that which is behind Prakriti and its field and observes it — it is the Being not the nature. 28 November 1934

The Future Poetry

I will write later about the University idea. But it is not possible, I think, to give *The Future Poetry* as a whole. If it is to be published, it should be in England and the time is not ready for that. 26 January 1932

*

There is a review of the *Oxford Book of Seventeenth Century Verse* in the *New Statesman*. It might be noted as worth getting when you have the money — unless you have already something of the kind. Have you Donne and Blake in the Library? — not that I want them just now, but I shall some day when I revise *The Future Poetry*. January 1934

The Mother

> I sent you a review of *The Mother* a few days ago. Have you seen it?

Yes. I think it will give the reader the impression that *The Mother* is a philosophical or practical exposition of Yoga — while its atmosphere is really not that at all. 1 March 1937

The Mother as a Mantra

> Some mornings I recite *The Mother* silently with an aspiration to know what it contains. But sometimes it seems to me that this is intellectual and so not part of our discipline. Should I continue with this recitation?

Yes, if you find that it helps you.

> I also recite the Gita with the view to understanding it but along the lines of *Essays on the Gita*. Is this a good idea?

Yes. It does not matter whether it is mental, if it helps you. These things often help the mind to get into the psychic attitude.
25 June 1933

A Note on the Terminology of *The Mother*

(1) Falsehood and Ignorance

Ignorance means Avidya, the separative consciousness and the egoistic mind and life that flows from it and all that is natural to the separative consciousness and the egoistic mind and life. This Ignorance is the result of a movement by which the cosmic Intelligence separated itself from the light of Supermind (the divine Gnosis) and lost the Truth, — truth of being, truth of divine consciousness, truth of force and action, truth of Ananda. As a result instead of a world of integral truth and divine harmony created in the light of the divine Gnosis, we have a world founded on the part truths of an inferior cosmic Intelligence in which all is half truth, half error. It is this that some of the ancient thinkers like Shankara, not perceiving the greater Truth-Force behind, stigmatised as Maya and thought to be the highest creative power of the Divine. All in the consciousness of this creation is either limited or else perverted by separation from the integral Light; even the Truth it perceives is only a half knowledge. Therefore it is called the Ignorance.

Falsehood, on the other hand, is not this Avidya, but an extreme result of it. It is created by an Asuric power which intervenes in this creation and is not only separated from the Truth and therefore limited in knowledge and open to error, but in revolt against the Truth or in the habit of seizing the Truth only to pervert it. This Power, the dark Asuric Shakti or Rakshasic Maya, puts forward its own perverted consciousness as true knowledge and its wilful distortions or reversals of the Truth as the verity of things. It is the powers and personalities of this perverted and perverting consciousness that we call hostile beings, hostile forces. Whenever these perversions created by them out of the stuff of the Ignorance are put forward as the truth of things, that is the Falsehood, in the Yogic sense, *mithyā*, *moha*.

(2) Powers and Appearances

These are the forces and beings that are interested in maintaining the falsehoods they have created in the world of the Ignorance and in putting them forward as the Truth which men must follow. In India they are termed Asuras, Rakshasas, Pisachas (beings respectively of the mentalised vital, middle vital and lower vital planes) who are in opposition to the Gods, the Powers of Light. These too are Powers, for they too have their cosmic field in which they exercise their function and authority and some of them were once divine Powers (the former gods, *pūrve devāḥ*, as they are called somewhere in the Mahabharata) who have fallen towards the Darkness by revolt against the divine Will behind the cosmos. The word "Appearances" refers to the forms they take in order to rule the world, forms often false and always incarnating falsehood, sometimes pseudo-divine.

(3) Powers and Personalities

The use of the word Power has already been explained — it can be applied to whatever or whoever exercises a conscious power in the cosmic field and has authority over the world movement or some part of it or some movement in it. But the Four of whom you speak are also Shaktis, manifestations of different powers of the supreme Consciousness and Force, the Divine Mother, by which she rules or acts in the universe. And they are at the same time divine Personalities; for each is a being who manifests different qualities and personal consciousness-forms of her Godhead. All the greater Gods are in this way personalities of the Divine — one Consciousness playing in many personalities, *ekaṁ sat bahudhā*. Even in the human being there are many personalities and not only one, as used formerly to be imagined; for all consciousness can be at once one and multiple. "Powers and Personalities" simply describe different aspects of the same being; a Power is not necessarily impersonal and certainly it is not *avyaktam*, as you suggest, — on the contrary it is a manifestation acting in the worlds of the divine manifestation.

(4) Emanations

Emanations correspond to your description of the Matrikas of whom you speak in your letter. An emanation of the Mother is something of her consciousness and power put forth from her, which so long as it is in play is held in close connection with her and, when its play is no longer required, is withdrawn back into its source, but can always be put out and brought into play once more. But also the detaining thread of connection can be severed or loosened and that which came forth as an emanation can proceed on its way as an independent divine being with its own play in the world. All the Gods can put forth such emanations from their being, identical with them in essence of consciousness and power though not commensurate. In a certain sense the universe itself can be said to be an emanation from the Supreme. In the consciousness of the sadhaka an emanation of the Mother will ordinarily wear the appearance, form and characteristics with which he is familiar.

In a sense the four Powers of the Mother may be called, because of their origin, her Emanations, just as the Gods may be called Emanations of the Divine, but they have a more permanent and fixed character; they are at once independent beings allowed their play by the Adyā Shakti and yet portions of the Mother, the Mahashakti, and she can always either manifest through them as separate beings or draw them together as her own various Personalities and hold them in herself, sometimes drawn back, sometimes at play, according to her will. In the supramental plane they are always in her and do not act independently but as intimate portions of the original Mahashakti and in close union and harmony with each other.

(5) Gods

These four Powers are the Mother's cosmic godheads, permanent in the world-play; they stand among the greater cosmic Godheads to whom allusion is made when it is said the Mother as the Mahashakti of this triple world "stands there (in the

Overmind plane) above the Gods".[19] The Gods, as has been already said, are in origin and essence permanent Emanations of the Divine put forth from the Supreme by the Transcendent Mother, the Adyā Shakti; in their cosmic action they are Powers and Personalities of the Divine each with his independent cosmic standing, function and work in the universe. They are not impersonal entities but cosmic Personalities, although they can and do ordinarily veil themselves behind the movement of impersonal forces. But while in the Overmind and the triple world they appear as independent beings, they return in the Supermind into the One and stand there united in a single harmonious action as multiple personalities of the one Person, the divine Purushottama.

(6) Presence

It is intended by the word Presence to indicate the sense and perception of the Divine as a Being, felt as present in one's existence and consciousness or in relation with it, without the necessity of any farther qualification or description. Thus of the "ineffable Presence"[20] it can only be said that it is there and nothing more can or need be said about it, although at the same time one knows that all is there, personality and impersonality, Power and Light and Ananda and everything else, and that all these flow from that indescribable Presence. The word may be used sometimes in a less absolute sense, but that is always the fundamental significance, — the essential perception of the essential presence supporting everything else.

(7) The Transcendent Mother

This is what is termed the Adyā Shakti; she is the supreme

---

[19] *"Determining all that shall be in this universe and in the terrestrial evolution by what she sees and feels and pours from her, she stands there above the Gods and all her Powers and Personalities are put out in front of her for the action. . . ." — Sri Aurobindo,* The Mother *(Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1999), p. 34.*

[20] *"Alone, she harbours the absolute Power and the ineffable Presence. . . ." — Sri Aurobindo,* The Mother, *p. 29.*

Consciousness and Power above the universe and it is by her that all the Gods are manifested, and even the supramental Ishwara comes into manifestation through her — the supramental Purushottama of whom the Gods are Powers and Personalities.

Passages from *The Mother*

> What I want to know is — when does God take full charge of our sadhana?
>
> The sadhana described in the *Arya* in the beginning was based on the conviction that God was the sadhak. In subsequent years, individual effort was permitted in *Arya*, something like cooperation between the individual and God.

This is an error. There is no such variation in the beginning of the *Arya* and in subsequent years.

> In the message of February,[21] the operator is God and the individual becomes the operated. The individual effort consists in fasting etc. before and during the operation.

What is all this about operations and fasting? Certainly, I cannot have written anything of the kind.

> What are the signs of the coming of the Divine Grace? Does the Divine Grace take full charge of the sadhana as soon as the sadhak gives the charge? If not, when will it take full charge?

If he gives full charge truly and really, with an absolute sincerity of total surrender and does not come in the way of the divine Grace. How many can do that? It cannot be done by a word or by taking up a mental posture.

Calling on God to do everything and save one all the trouble and struggle is a self-deception and does not lead to freedom and perfection.[22]

30 May 1927

*

---

[21] *Chapter One of* The Mother *was first issued as a "message" on 21 February 1927. — Ed.*

[22] *Sri Aurobindo incorporated this sentence into Chapter Two of* The Mother, *which he wrote on the back of this letter. — Ed.*

> Does our spiritual destiny mean the fulfilment of "the aim of our endeavour", which you mentioned at the beginning of *The Mother*?[23]

Yes. It means to find your true self, the Divine, and become in the Nature a conscious and illumined part of the Divine in manifestation. 14 November 1933

*

> " . . . it is only the very highest supramental Force descending from above and opening from below that can victoriously handle the physical Nature and annihilate its difficulties . . ." [*p. 2*].

"Opening from below" means this — that the supramental force descending awakes a response from below in the earth consciousness so that it is possible for a supramental activity to be formed in the material itself. All is involved as potentiality in the earth consciousness — life, mind, supermind — but it is only when Life Force descended from the life plane into the material that active and conscious organised life was possible — so it was only when mind descended that the latent mind in Matter awoke and could be organised. The supramental descent must create the same kind of opening from below so that a supramental consciousness can be organised in the material. 20 April 1933

*

> " . . . it is only the very highest supramental Force . . . that can victoriously handle the physical Nature . . ." [*p. 2*]. Is this idea to be found anywhere in the Upanishads or Vedas? What is there in this Force which can deal with Matter, and why cannot other forces do it — for example the occult vital forces that are used to produce *kāya siddhi* in Hathayoga?

The physical Nature does not mean the body alone but the phrase includes the transformation of the whole physical mind, vital, material nature — not by imposing siddhis on them, but by creating a new physical nature which is to be the habitation of the supramental being in a new evolution. I am not aware that this has been done by any Hathayogic or other process. Mental or vital occult power can only bring siddhis of the higher plane into the individual life — like the Sannyasi who could take any poison without harm, but he died of a poison after all when he forgot to observe the conditions of the siddhi. The working of the supramental power envisaged is not an influence on the physical giving it abnormal faculties, but an entrance and permeation changing it wholly into a supramentalised physical. I did not learn the idea from Veda or Upanishad, and I do not know if there is anything of the kind there. What I received about the Supermind was a direct, not a derived knowledge given to me; it was only afterwards that I found certain confirmatory revelations in the Upanishad and Veda. 11 September 1936

---

[23] *Sri Aurobindo,* The Mother*, p. 1.*

*

> "Detect first what is false or obscure in you . . . then alone can you rightly call for the divine Power to transform you" [*pp. 4–5*]. Does "rightly" mean "it is the right way of calling" or does it mean "then only you have the 'right' to call"?

It means "in the right way".

> "If behind your devotion and surrender you make a cover for your desires, egoistic demands . . ." [*p. 3*]. Does this mean "you use devotion and surrender as a *means* of fulfilling your desires and demands"?

Yes, practically it means that. I put it in that way so as to avoid suggesting that the devotion is altogether insincere and meant *only* as a cover. 12 December 1934

*

> No sadhak can rely entirely on the Divine in the beginning. He goes by his own effort. Even as he makes his own effort, many subtle beings, the power of the Divine, etc. must be helping the sadhak. Is not this kind of tapasya and self-dependence a form of the Divine Power's help?

It has been clearly stated in *The Mother* that personal effort is necessary so long as the transference to the Divine Power cannot be complete [*p. 8*]. It is the fact that all power is the Divine's and therefore self-effort is also a use of the Divine Power conceded by the Divine, but there is a great practical difference between the delegated use and the direct Divine Action.

*

> In the book *The Mother* Sri Aurobindo says, "The personal effort required is a triple labour of aspiration, rejection and surrender." And "rejection of the movements of the lower nature — rejection of the mind's ideas, opinions, preferences, habits, constructions, so that the true knowledge may find free room in a silent mind, — rejection of the vital nature's desires . . .", etc. [*p. 9*]. How can I apply this in my working life?

This has to be done in life itself — whether the life is in an Asram or outside, the rule and method is the same. It is an internal change for which one must become conscious of the lower nature as well as of the psychic and spiritual workings. Meditation is usually necessary for that but so also is life, for it is only life that tests the genuineness of the change. 7 April 1938

*

> " . . . surrender of oneself and all one is and has and every plane of the consciousness and every movement to the Divine and the Shakti" [*p. 10*]. Can I take this to mean surrender of the outward life to the Universal Nature through reason and will (i.e. a rational adaptation of the material life to the ways of Nature) and surrender of the inward life to the Divine through faith?

No. Universal Nature is a mass of forces, mental, vital and physical. The Divine is above with its supreme Shakti — and within behind Nature. 25 December 1934

*

> In *The Mother*, you have said: "Ask for nothing but the divine, spiritual and supramental Truth" [*p. 13*]. Should one have

> such a high aspiration? The general impression in the Ashram is that it would be laughable to try.

There is nothing laughable in aspiring for the supramental Truth so long as one understands that it is not possible to have it at once and one must go through a long preparation and development. What is laughable is to think you have it when you are floundering about it in mental and vital half-truths or delusions — that is what some have done and it is probably these bad examples that have created the impression of which you speak.

2 June 1933

*

> In *The Mother* you write that the Mother is the consciousness and force of the Ishwara [*p. 28*]. But my experience here is that Ishwara is the consciousness and force of the Supreme Mother. Could you please make it clear to me?

The Mother is the consciousness and force of the Divine — or, it may be said, she is the Divine in its consciousness-force. The Ishwara as Lord of the Cosmos does come out of the Mother who takes her place beside him as the cosmic Shakti — the cosmic Ishwara is one aspect of the Divine. The experience therefore is correct so far as it goes. 16 November 1934

*

> In *The Mother* you write: "There are three ways of being of the Mother of which you can become aware when you enter into touch of oneness with the Conscious Force that upholds us and the universe" [*p. 28*]. Is it the Cosmic Spirit that is meant or the Overmind?

It is the Divine Shakti — who acts on all the planes and has all the aspects. 16 June 1933

*

> I am or was under the impression that Mother is the Cosmic and Supracosmic Mahashakti.

I don't quite understand the question. I have explained it in *The*

Mother [*pp. 28–29*] that there are three aspects, transcendent, universal and individual of the Mother. 31 May 1933

*

> "At the summit of this manifestation of which we are a part there are worlds of infinite existence, consciousness, force and bliss over which the Mother stands as the unveiled eternal Power" [*p. 32*]. Are we to understand that the Transcendent Mother stands above the Ananda plane? There would then be four steps of the Divine Shakti:
>
> (1) The Transcendent Mahashakti who stands above the Ananda plane and who bears the supreme Divine in her eternal consciousness.
>
> (2) The Mahashakti immanent in the worlds of Sat-Chit-Ananda, where all beings move in an ineffable completeness.
>
> (3) The Supramental Mahashakti immanent in the worlds of Supermind.
>
> (4) The Cosmic Mahashakti immanent in the lower hemisphere.

Yes; that is all right. One speaks often however of all above the lower hemisphere as part of the transcendence. This is because the Supermind and Ananda are not manifested in *our* universe at present, but are planes above it. For us the higher hemisphere is पर [*para*], the Supreme Transcendence is परात्पर [*parātpara*]. The Sanskrit terms are here clearer than the English.
27 January 1932

*

> In *The Mother* you write that the Mother as the Cosmic Mahashakti "stands there above the Gods and all her Powers and Personalities are put out in front of her for the action and she sends down emanations of them into these lower worlds to intervene, to govern, to battle and conquer, to lead and turn their cycles, to direct the total and the individual lines of their forces" [*pp. 34–35*]. Does this imply that the World War or the Bolshevik Revolution or the Satyagraha movement were in some manner arranged by the Mother?

They are incidents in the cosmic plan and so arranged by the cosmic Mahashakti and worked out by men under the impulse of the forces of Nature. 1 June 1933

*

> You write in *The Mother* that there are Vibhutis of the powers and personalities of the Ishwara and Vibhutis of the Mother, but that in both cases it is the action of the Grace of the Mother that alone can effect a transformation of the Vibhuti [*p. 35*]. I would like to know the difference. Take for example, Christ, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, Confucius, Zarathustra, Buddha, Shankara, Mohammed, Alexander, Napoleon — among these well-known figures which are Vibhutis of the Mother and which are Vibhutis of the Ishwara? And what about the Mother's action in Avataras like Rama and Krishna?

The Mother's Vibhutis would normally be feminine personalities most of whom would be dominated by one of the four personalities of the Mother. The others you mention would be personalities and powers of the Ishwara, but in them also, as in all, the Mother's force would act. I do not quite catch the question about the transformation of the Vibhutis. All creation and transformation is the work of the Mother.

29 October 1935

*

> Since all creation is her work, can it be taken that it is the personalities of the Mother who, behind the veil, prepare the conditions for the descent of the Avatar or Vibhutis?

If you mean the divine personalities of the Mother — the answer is yes. It may even be said that each Vibhuti draws his energies from the Four, from one of them predominantly in most cases, as Napoleon from Mahakali, Rama from Mahalakshmi, Augustus Caesar from Mahasaraswati. 31 October 1935

*

> "Four great Aspects of the Mother, four of her leading Powers and Personalities have stood in front in her guidance of this Universe and in her dealings with the terrestrial play" [*p. 37*].

> What are you speaking of here?

Of the Mother in her universal workings. 13 July 1933

*

> "Wisdom, Strength, Harmony, Perfection are their several attributes and it is these powers that they bring with them into the world, manifest in a human disguise in their Vibhutis and shall found in the divine degree of their ascension in those who can open their earthly nature to the direct and living influence of the Mother" [*pp. 38–39*].

I am afraid it [*a translation of the above passage*] is still wrong. Let me try to explain otherwise. It means "they bring the powers into the world (in their ordinary and in man their human degree), manifest them (in a half-divine degree but) in a human disguise in their Vibhutis and shall (hereafter), in those who can open to the direct influence of the Mother, raise them (the powers) to their highest divine degree and establish them in that degree." Please don't translate my explanation, for that will make it very awkward; I only want the true sense of the sentence expressed in the translation as briefly and elegantly as possible. You might send me up what you propose to put for approval and only after approval put in the proof so that there may not be too many erasures.

*

> What is meant by "height" in the phrase "not wideness but height" [*p. 42*]?

It is very much as we speak of high ideas, high feelings, high aspirations. In that sense Mahakali's movement is a high, swift action, very effective at the point touched, but not wide, patient, comprehensive like Maheshwari's. 11 August 1933

*

> This morning, when I said that I thought that the Mother was putting pressure on me, you wrote that the word "pressure" was "entirely wrong". If that is so, what is the sense

> of the word "pressure" in this passage from *The Mother*: "[Maheshwari] puts on them the required pressure" [*p. 41*]? You wrote also, in regard to Mahakali, of "the vehemence of her pressure" [*p. 44*].

I was speaking of your case only — it was not my intention to say that the Mother never uses pressure. But pressure also can be of various kinds. There is the pressure of the Force when it is entering the mind or vital or body — a pressure to go faster, a pressure to build or form, a pressure to break and many more. In your case if there is any pressure it is that of help or support or removal of an attack, but it does not seem to me that that can properly be called pressure.

> In the same book you say of Mahakali, "her hands are outstretched to strike and to succour" [*p. 44*]. What do you mean here by "strike"?

It expresses her general action in the world. She strikes at the Asuras, she strikes also at everything that has to be got rid of or destroyed, at the obstacles to the sadhana etc. I may say that the Mother never uses the Mahakali power in your case nor the Mahakali pressure. 5 June 1936

*

> About the Mother's Mahakali aspect it is said in *The Mother*: "When she is allowed to intervene in her strength, then in one moment are broken like things without consistence the obstacles that immobilise or the enemies that assail the seeker" [*p. 44*]. How is this intervention of the Mahakali force felt?

It is felt as if something swift, sudden, decisive and imperative. When it intervenes, it has a kind of divine or supramental sanction behind it and is like a fiat against which there is no appeal. What is done cannot be reversed or undone. The adverse forces may try, may even touch or invade, but they retire baffled and it is seen as soon as they withdraw that the past ground has remained intact — it is felt even in the attack. Also the difficulties that were strong before touched by this fiat lose their power, their verisimilitude destroyed or are weak shadows that come only to flicker and fade away. I say "allowed", because this supreme action of Mahakali is comparatively rare, the action of the other Powers or a partial action of Mahakali is more common.

24 August 1933

*

> In the book *The Mother* what is the sense of "false adaptation" [*p. 53*] — is it something like a mason doing a coolie's work?

Well, yes — it means misapplication of any kind and fitting things in where they do not really fit — whether with regard to ideas, activities, or anything else.

> "Only when the Four have founded their harmony and freedom of movement in the transformed mind and life and body . . ." [*p. 56*]. Here does "transformed" mean the full transformation?

At any rate a sufficient *foundation* of the harmony in a sufficiently transformed Nature for still greater things to come in without perturbation of the Nature. 29 March 1933

*

> "There are among them Presences indispensable for the supramental realisation, — most of all one who is her Personality of that mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Ananda which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Ananda that alone can heal the gulf between the highest heights of the supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from its secrecies the work of all the other Powers of the universe" [*pp. 55–56*]. Is not the Personality referred to in this passage the Radha-Power, which is spoken of as Premamayi Radha, Mahaprana Shakti and Hladini Shakti?

Yes — but the images of the Radha-Krishna *līlā* are taken from the vital world and therefore it is only a minor manifestation of the Radha Shakti that is there depicted. That is why she is called Mahaprana Shakti and Hladini Shakti. What is referred to is not this minor form, but the full Power of Love and Ananda above. 7 February 1934

The Riddle of This World

In reference to what Prof. Sorley has written on *The Riddle of This World*, the book of course was not meant as a full or direct statement of my thought and, as it was written to sadhaks mostly, many things were taken for granted there. Most of the major ideas — e.g. Overmind — were left without elucidation. To make the ideas implied clear to the intellect, they must be put with precision in an intellectual form — so far as that is possible with supra-intellectual things. What is written in the book can be clear to those who have gone far enough in experience, but for most it can only be suggestive. 10 April 1934

*

> All that was bowed and rapt lifting clasped hands out of pain and night,
> How hast thou filled with murmuring ecstasy, made proud and bright!
> Thou hast chosen the grateful earth for thy own in her hour of anguish and strife,
> Surprised by thy rapid feet of joy, O Beloved of the Master of Life.[24]

Your answer is not only fine poetry but it is a true explanation of the descent of the soul into the Ignorance. It is the adventure into the Night (the introduction of the Light, Joy, Immortality) to see whether they cannot be established there — so that there may be a new experience of the Divine and joy of the Divine through separation and union (or reunion) on a new basis. It is what I have hinted at in *The Riddle of This World*.

---

[24] *From "Lakshmi", a Bengali poem by Dilip Kumar Roy, as translated by Sri Aurobindo. See* Translations, *volume 5 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 561. — Ed.*

Passages from *The Riddle of This World*

> In the *Riddle* you speak of a conversion inwards and a series of conversions upwards.[25] Does the upward conversion begin only after the inward conversion, i.e. the psychicisation of the lower nature, is complete?

Not necessarily.

> Or do both kinds of work go on simultaneously?

It differs with different people, but the upward conversions cannot go very far or cannot be secure if the lower nature is not psychicised — for there is then always the possibility of a big or even a decisive fall if there is something seriously unpsychic in the lower nature. 29 March 1935

*

> What precisely is meant by the "intermediate zone" [*pp. 35–45*]? Has everyone to pass through it to reach the truth?

The intermediate zone means simply a confused condition or passage in which one is getting out of the personal consciousness and opening into the cosmic (cosmic Mind, cosmic vital, cosmic physical, something perhaps of the cosmic higher Mind) without having yet transcended the human mind levels. One is not in possession of or direct contact with the divine Truth *on its own levels*, but one can receive something from them, even from the Overmind, indirectly. Only, as one is still immersed in the cosmic Ignorance, all that comes from above can be mixed, perverted, taken hold of for their purposes by lower, even by hostile Powers.

It is not necessary for everyone to struggle through the intermediate zone. If one has purified oneself, if there is no abnormal vanity, egoism, ambition or other strong misleading element, or if one is vigilant and on one's guard, or if the psychic is in front, one can either pass rapidly and directly or with a minimum of trouble into the higher zones of consciousness where one is in direct contact with the Divine Truth.

---

[25] *Sri Aurobindo,* The Riddle of This World *(Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1973), p. 5.*

On the other hand the passage through the higher zones — higher Mind, illumined Mind, Intuition, Overmind, is obligatory — they are the true Intermediaries between the present consciousness and the Supermind. 28 December 1933

*

> About the intermediate zone, you wrote [*in the preceding letter*]: "One is not in possession of or direct contact with the divine Truth *on its own levels*." Are the planes of Higher Mind or Intuition in direct contact with the truth?

Yes — because it is there that one opens to the cosmic Truth (as opposed to the cosmic Ignorance) — the cosmic Divine etc. It is not the full power of the Truth — that one reaches only in the Supermind where one is in direct communion with the Transcendent Reality; but it is still manifested Truth and not manifested Ignorance. This, of course, is when one can rise to those levels and stay there for a time at least or when the mind etc. are already so much changed that they can receive without perverting or distorting or misusing and diminishing too much. It is not so difficult once that is done to receive the Truth in consciousness — what is more difficult is to make it dynamic in its purity for life. 29 December 1933

*

> You write in *The Riddle of This World*: "Very readily they come to think that they are in the full cosmic consciousness when it is only some front or small part of it or some larger Mind, Life-Power or subtle physical ranges with which they have entered into dynamic connection" [*p. 37*]. What is meant here by "larger Mind"?

It means simply larger than the limited personal mind. It is a play of some combination of cosmic Mind-Forces but not the full cosmic Consciousness, not even the Cosmic Mind. It belongs usually to the Ignorance. 30 March 1934

*

About polytheism, I certainly accept the truth of the many forms and personalities of the One which since the Vedic times has been the spiritual essence of Indian polytheism — a secondary aspect in the seeking for the one and only Divine. But the passage referred to by Professor Sorley (page 56 [*of the first edition*])[26] is concerned with something else — the little godlings and Titans spoken of there are supraphysical beings of other planes. It is not meant to be suggested that they are real Godheads and entitled to worship — on the contrary it is indicated that to accept their influence is to move towards error and confusion or a deviation from the true spiritual way. No doubt they have some power to create, they are makers of forms in their own way and in their limited domain, but so are men too creators of outward and inward things in their own domain and limits — and even man's creative powers can have a repercussion on the supraphysical levels.
10 April 1934

*

> I have always believed that there was an existence after death akin to our existence in this world minus the physical body.

The soul goes out in a subtle body.

> On the strength of certain phenomena that did not appear to me to be capable of being summarily dismissed, I further believed that after a period of confusion immediately following death, the recollections of the life just preceding returned, and persisted till rebirth.

Only for a time, not till rebirth — otherwise the stamp could be so strong that remembrance of past births even after taking a new body would be the rule rather than the exception.

> I was also disposed to believe that in cases of pure and unalloyed attachment the relationships of one birth persisted in successive births, the number depending on the strength of attachment.

---

[26] "*. . . for these intermediate planes are full of little Gods or strong Daityas. . . .*" The Riddle of This World *(1973), p. 38.*

This is possible, but not a law — as a rule the same relationship would not be constantly repeated — the same people often meet again and again on earth in different lives, but the relations are different. The purpose of rebirth would not be served if the same personality with the same relations and experiences were incessantly repeated.

> All these beliefs were shattered to pieces when someone drew my attention to certain statements of yours in the book *The Riddle of This World* [*pp. 53–54, 58–60*], in which I understood you to say that in the case of forms of life lower than man there is a complete annihilation of the ego on death.

That is not the case.

> I further understood you to say that in the case of man, the ego persisted in a static condition of complete rest and carried with it (except in a very few exceptional cases) only the essence of the experiences and the inclinations gathered and acquired in the life just preceding.

This is said not of the ego, but of the psychic being after it has shed its vital and other sheaths and is resting in the psychic world. Before that it passes through vital and other worlds on its way to the psychic plane.

> I would like to know whether it is possible to come into direct touch with those who have departed from this world.

Yes, so long as they are near enough to the earth (it is usually supposed by those who have occult experience that it is for three years only) or if they are earth-bound or if they are of those who do not proceed to the psychic plane but linger near the earth and are soon reborn.

Universal statements cannot be easily made about these things — there is a general line, but individual cases vary to an almost indefinite extent.

[*Note by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary:*] You will tell him that

I do not carry on correspondence usually with people outside, but as his questions were from the book, I have asked you to give him my answers to his questions. 28 February 1938

*

> "It is not to be denied, no spiritual experience will deny that this is an unideal and unsatisfactory world, strongly marked with the stamp of inadequacy, suffering, evil" [*p. 61*].

That is when you look at what the world ought to be and lay stress on what it should be. The idealist's question is why should there be pain at all, even if it is outweighed by the fundamental pleasure of existence. The real crux is why should inadequacy, limit and suffering come across this natural pleasure of life. It does not mean that life is essentially miserable in its very nature.
23 July 1935

*

> Weber writes of Spinoza's conception of God: "God is not the cause of the world in the proper and usual sense of the term, a cause acting from without and creating it once for all, but the permanent substratum of things, the innermost substance of the universe."[27] Does this not find a parallel in the following lines from *The Riddle of This World*: "For it is not . . . a supracosmic, arbitrary, personal Deity himself altogether uninvolved in the fall who has imposed evil and suffering on creatures made capriciously by his fiat" [*pp. 65–66*]. I wonder why Spinoza did not arrive at a convincing explanation of the problem of evil and misery.

The European type of monism is usually pantheistic and weaves the universe and the Divine so intimately together that they can hardly be separated. But what explanation of the evil and misery can there be there? The Indian view is that the Divine is the inmost substance of the Universe, but he is also outside it, transcendent; good and evil, happiness and misery are only phenomena of cosmic experience due to a division and diminution of consciousness in the manifestation, but are not part of the essence or of the undivided whole-consciousness either of the Divine or of our own spiritual being. 6 October 1935

---

[27] *Alfred Weber,* History of Philosophy *(London:Longmans, Green, 1904), pp. 328–29.*

Passages from *Lights on Yoga*

> You write in a letter: "One must not enter on this path, far vaster and more arduous than most ways of Yoga, unless one is sure of the psychic call and of one's readiness to go through to the end."[28]

It is simply an indication to those who wish to enter on to this Path that they must have a call (not take it up as they would take any way for spiritual experience) and must be prepared for great difficulties to surmount.

> Can it be said that you have seen in all those who are permanent members of the Asram this readiness to go through to the end?

The readiness to go through to the end is a thing dependent on the will of the sadhak. That will may be there in the beginning and flag afterwards. All who are here did not come as permanent members and some were never told that they were made permanent but they have stuck on and Mother has not sent them away.

> What is the exact significance of "to the end"?

Until the siddhi — but it means essentially here to go through in spite of the difficulties. 20 October 1934

*

> "The difference or contrast between the Personal and Impersonal is a truth of the Overmind — there is no separate truth

---

[28] *Sri Aurobindo,* Lights on Yoga *(Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1981), pp. 2–3.* Lights on Yoga *is made up of letters by Sri Aurobindo, who revised the letters for publication in the book, which was brought out in 1935. The writer of this question of October 1934 cited the original version of the letter, which Sri Aurobindo wrote on 6 April 1928 (see page 540 of the present volume). — Ed.*

> of them in the Supermind, they are inseparably one" [*p. 5*]. If this refers to the Personal and Impersonal Divine, the question of the difference can hardly arise, because the Personal Divine (i.e. the Avatar) is not always there. It is only very rarely that the Divine becomes the Avatar to come on earth.

I do not understand. The Personal Divine does not mean the Avatar. What I said was that the scission between the two aspects of the Divine is a creation of the Overmind which takes various aspects of the Divine and separates them into separate entities. Thus it divides Sat, Chit and Ananda, so that they become three separate aspects different from each other. In fact in the Reality there is no separateness, the three aspects are so fused into each other, so inseparably one that they are a single undivided reality. It is the same with the Personal and Impersonal, the Saguna and Nirguna, the Silent and the Active Brahman. In the Reality they are not contrasted and incompatible aspects; what we call Personality and what we call Impersonality are inseparably fused together in a single Truth. In fact "fused together" even is a wrong phrase, because there they were never separated so that they have to be fused. All the quarrels about either the Impersonal being the only true truth or the Personal being the only highest truth are mind-created quarrels derivative from this dividing aspect of the Overmind. The Overmind does not deny any of the aspects as the Mind does, it admits them all as aspects of the One Truth, but by separating them it originates the quarrel in the more ignorant and more limited and divided Mind, because the Mind cannot see how two opposite things can exist together in one Truth, how the Divine can be *nirguṇo guṇī*; — having no experience of what is behind the two words it takes each in an absolute sense. The Impersonal is Existence, Consciousness, Bliss, not a Person, but a state. The Person is the Existent, the Conscious, the Blissful; consciousness, existence, bliss taken as separate things are only states of his being. But in fact the two (personal being and eternal state) are inseparable and are one reality. 13 October 1935

*

> You write in *Lights on Yoga*: "It is a mistake to dwell on the lower nature and its obstacles, which is the negative side of the Sadhana. . . . The positive side of experience of the descent is the more important thing" [*cf. p. 5*]. But there may be obstacles that themselves prevent the experience of descent. If that is the case, I suppose one would have to deal with them in order to clear the road.

The statement is a general one and like all general statements subject to qualification according to circumstances. What I meant was to discourage what some do which is to be always dwelling on their difficulties and shortcomings only, for that makes them turn for ever like squirrels in a cage always in the same circle of difficulties without the least breaking of light through the clouds. The sentence would be more accurate or generally applicable if it were written "dwell too much" or "dwell solely".[29] Naturally, without rejection nothing can be done. And in hard periods or moments concentration on the difficulties is inevitable. Also in the early stages one has often to do a great amount of clearance work so that the road can be followed at all. 29 April 1935

*

> "The taking away of the Force of destruction implies a creation that will not be destroyed but last and develop always" [*pp. 7–8*]. Does this mean that in the Truth-Creation the force of destruction will be taken away and only the forces of creation and preservation remain? Does it mean that nobody will die — not even plants and animals?

That might be true if the whole world were to be supramentalised and that supramentalisation meant inability to change or put off a form, but it is not so. 16 October 1935

*

> You write in *Lights on Yoga* that the subconscient "receives obscurely the impressions of all things and stores them up in

---

[29] *Sri Aurobindo in fact wrote "dwell too much" in the passage in* Lights on Yoga. *The correspondent omitted "too much" when he transcribed the passage. — Ed.*

> itself" [*p. 11*]. Where then are stored all the words, images and thoughts that we say come out of memory? What is the difference between storing in memory and this subconscient storing?

The clear memory of words, images and thoughts is an action of the conscious mind, not the unconscious. Of course the memory goes behind, so to speak, in the back part of the mind, but it can be brought out. Also the memory can be lost or defaced, so that one remembers wrongly or forgets altogether, but that is still an imperfect action of the conscious mind, not an action of the subconscious. What the subconscious keeps is a mass of impressions, not of clear or exact images and these can come up as in dreams in an incoherent jumble distorted altogether or else in the waking state as a mechanical recurrence or repetition of the same suggestions, impulses (subconscient vital) or sensations. There is a recognisable difference between the two functionings. 26 October 1935

*

> "The true vital being . . . is wide, vast, calm, strong, without limitations, firm and immovable, capable of all power, all knowledge, all Ananda" [*p. 13*]. Does this imply that the true vital belongs to the cosmic or supracosmic consciousness? If not, how can it have such qualities?

The true being mental, vital or subtle physical has always the greater qualities of its plane — it is the Purusha and like the psychic, though in another way, the projection of the Divine, therefore in connection with the Higher Consciousness and reflects something of it, though it is not altogether that — it is also in tune with the cosmic Truth.

> In the change of the vital nature, is the external surface vital to be entirely effaced and replaced by the true vital or is it to be kept and changed into the nature of the true vital? In either case, what is the need of an external vital at all if the true vital is already there?

The true vital is in the inner consciousness, the external is that which is instrumental for the present play of Prakriti in the surface personality. When the change comes, the true vital rejects what is out of tune with its own truth from the external and makes it a true instrument for its expression, a means of expression of its inner will, not a thing of responses to the suggestions of the lower Nature. The strong distinction between the two practically disappears. 19 October 1935

*

> If the true vital is "capable of all power, all knowledge, all Ananda" [*p. 13*], it would seem to be the equal of the supramental vital itself or the vital of the Ishwara. How is it possible for an individual to have such a vital?

It is capable of receiving the movements of the higher consciousness, and afterwards it can be capable of receiving the still greater supramental power and Ananda. If it is not, then the descent of the higher consciousness would be impossible and supramentalisation would be impossible. It is not meant that it possesses these things itself in its own right and that as soon as one is aware of the true vital, one gets all these things as inherent in the true vital. 20 October 1935

*

> "This central being has two forms — above, it is Jivatman, . . . below, it is the psychic being . . ." [*p. 15*]. Is it meant that the Jivatman and the psychic being are different *forms* of the central being? If they are *forms* of the central being, how can they be *beings*?

"Forms" is not used in a physical sense here. The central being is the being in its original self, the psychic being is the same in the becoming.

> Again, when one rises from the psychic being below to the Jivatman above, does the psychic being cease to be? And when one rises above the Jivatman does the central being become formless?

The evolution or becoming continues, so the psychic also continues, just as the rest of the nature continues, only spiritualised and felt as one being in all planes. It is not a question of formed or formless. As I have said "forms" is not used here in its outward but its inward or metaphysical sense. 11 October 1935

*

> "The Jivatman . . . knows itself as one centre of the multiple Divine, not as the Parameshwara. It is important to remember the distinction; for, otherwise, if there is the least vital egoism, one may begin to think of oneself as an Avatar or lose balance like Hridaya with Ramakrishna" [*pp. 15–16*]. Can the Jivatman status be realised before vital egoism is abolished?

One can get the knowledge or perception in the higher mind "I am That" while the vital is still untransformed, — then the vital ego can take it up and give it a wrong application.

> How can one go so far as to think of oneself as an Avatar? Is it because, if there is union with the Divine, the sense of all-powerfulness that it brings is reflected on the vital ego as something grandiose?

Yes. It is when one feels that one is the Divine, *So aham* but not in the impersonal way to which all is the one Brahman, the One Self, but in the personal way "I am God, the Parameshwara". It is as in the Puranic story in which the knowledge was given both to Indra and Virochana and the God understood but the Asura concluded that he the ego was the Divine and therefore went about trying to impose his ego on the universe. 26 November 1935

*

> "The ego . . . does not cease with the body" [*pp. 16–17*]. Does this mean that it is carried by the psychic as a separate principle after death, just as the psychic sometimes carries with it a highly developed mental or vital being, or does it mean that it is taken up in the psychic as a seed-*saṁskāra* or that it exists side by side with the psychic in the after-death state?

It is only meant that the separative ego is not a creation of birth in the physical body; the mental and the vital have it also. So long as the mental and vital are subject to ignorance, the ego will last also. When the psychic being goes into rest it naturally takes it with the essence of its past experience and in coming back it takes up a mental, vital and physical existence which has the mark of the ego and the ignorance. 29 October 1935

*

> "Moreover, the multiple Divine is an eternal reality antecedent to the creation here" [*p. 17*]. Does this mean that souls existed eternally separate from the Brahman? In other words are Jiva and Brahman eternally separate?

The Brahman is not a mathematical One with the Many as an illusion — he is an infinite One with an infinite multiplicity implied in the Oneness. This is not Dwaitavada — for in Dwaitavada the many are quite different from the One. In the Sankhya Prakriti is one but the Purushas are many, so it is not Sankhya, nor I suppose Jainism, unless Jainism is quite different from what it is usually represented to be.

> Does "antecedent to the creation" mean creation as it took place from Supermind downward or does it simply mean the material creation?

The material creation or the creation of the universe generally.

> If the multiple Divine is to be taken as an eternal reality, does this not come down to something like Jainism and Sankhya, in which several Purushas exist eternally? This would be a pure Dwaitavada.

It is on the contrary a complete Adwaitavada, more complete than Shankara's who splits Brahman into two incompatible principles — the Brahman and a universe of Maya which is not Brahman and yet somehow exists. In this view which is that of the Gita and some other Vedantic schools the Para Shakti and the Many are also Brahman. Unity and Multiplicity are aspects of the Brahman, just as are Personality and Impersonality, Nirguna and Saguna. 18 March 1936

*

> " . . . if the mental is strongly developed, then the mental being can remain [when the body is dissolved]; so also can the vital, provided they are organised by and centred around the true psychic being; they share the immortality of the psychic" [*p. 18*]. Does this mean that the vital of strong persons like Napoleon is carried forward in the future lives? But how can it be said that their vital was centred around the psychic being? It is only about the Bhaktas and the Jnanis that we can say that their vital was centred around the psychic.

If one has had a strong spiritual development, that makes it easier to retain the developed mental or vital after death. But it is not absolutely necessary that the person should have been a Bhakta or a Jnani. One like Shelley or like Plato for instance could be said to have a developed mental being centred round the psychic — of the vital the same can hardly be said. Napoleon had a strong vital but not one organised round the psychic being.

12 October 1935

*

> "It is really for the vital part of the being that Shraddha and rites are done — to help the being to get rid of the vital vibrations which still attach it to the earth or to the vital worlds, so that it may pass quickly to its rest in the psychic peace" [*p. 18*]. Does this mean that the Shraddha ceremony performed at present by the Brahmins is correct? Does feeding the caste and the Brahmins fulfil the purpose?

I only said what was originally *meant* by the ceremonies — the rites. I was not referring to the feeding of the caste or the Brahmins which is not a rite or ceremony. Whether the Shraddha as performed is actually effective is another matter — for those who perform it have not either the knowledge or the occult power. 11 April 1935

Bases of Yoga

> I have been reading your *Bases of Yoga* — a most staggering book: the Himalayan conditions for success you impose — well, shall the likes of us ever fulfil a hundredth part of such countless conditions?

Conditions for success? But these are not conditions for doing the sadhana, but the basic conditions for the integral siddhi — they are, as it might be said, basic siddhis, realised foundations on which the total and permanent siddhi can be created — or one may say they are the constituents of the Yogic as opposed to the ordinary consciousness. When one has arrived fully at this Yogic consciousness, one can be called a Yogi, till then one is a sadhak. So much as all that is not demanded immediately from a sadhak. From the sadhak all that is asked is "a sincerity in the aspiration and a patient will to arrive . . . in spite of all obstacles, then the opening in one form or another is sure to come."[30] "All sincere aspiration has its effect; if you are sincere you will grow into the divine life" [*p. 26*]. Again "One cannot become altogether this at once, but if one aspires at all times and calls in the aid of the Divine Shakti with a true heart and a straightforward will, one grows more and more into the true consciousness" [*cf. p. 27*]. It is of course said that the success will come sooner or later, — it is for that reason that patience is indispensable. But these are not Himalayan conditions — it is not putting an impossible price on what is asked for. As for the difficulty, as it has also been said in the book, when one once enters into the true (Yogic) consciousness, "then you see that everything can be done, even if at present only a slight beginning has been made; but a beginning is enough, once the Force, the Power are there" [*pp. 33–34*]. It is not really on the capacity of the outer nature that success depends, (for the outer nature all self-exceeding seems impossibly difficult), but on the inner being and to the inner being all is possible. One has only to get into contact with the inner being and change the outer view and consciousness from the inner — that is the work of the sadhana and it is sure to come with sincerity, aspiration, and patience. All that is not excessively stern or exacting.

---

[30] *Sri Aurobindo,* Bases of Yoga *(Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1981), p. 24.*

As a description of the constituents of the Yogic consciousness, the bases of realisation, I don't think the book can be called staggering or its suggestions Himalayan — for in fact they have already been stated by the Gita and other books on Yoga and, after all, thousands of people have realised them in part at least or in the inner being — though not so well in the outer. But to realise the inner being is quite enough for a foundation — for many it is quite enough even as a last state, for those who do not seek the transformation of the outer nature. Here too, even if one puts the whole ideal, it is not alleged that it must be all done at once or as a first condition for the greater endeavour.

26 June 1936

*

You feel depressed on reading the *Bases of Yoga*, because your mind becomes active at the wrong end; from the point of view of your obsession about inability, hopelessness, past failure enforcing future failure. The right way to read these things is not to be mentally active, but receive with a quiet mind leaving the knowledge given to go in and bear its fruit hereafter at the proper time, not ask how one can practise it now or try to apply it to immediate circumstances in which it may not fit. I have told you already that these things are the basic siddhis which constitute the Yogic consciousness — they are things towards which one has to move but cannot be established now and offhand. What has to be done now is for each the thing necessary for him at present. I have indicated what is necessary at present for you, the growth of the psychic being which had begun and the power of contact and communication which it will bring with the inner consciousness and through it with the Divine Power or Presence. But for that to grow the mind must keep more quiet, not insisting, not desponding at every moment, but steadily aspiring and letting the things of which these were indications grow from within.

28 June 1936

Passages from *Bases of Yoga*

I do not remember the context of the sentence quoted,[31] without which it is not possible to say what was meant by its not being the first aim of the Yoga. That may mean it is not the one to be pursued at the beginning, for first there should be the union in the heart of the personal being with the Divine. Or it may mean that it does not take priority or importance over all others. For both personality and impersonality have their claims and join together in the final realisation of what transcends and unites them both in one.

What has to disappear is the personal separative ego — the dualities of course also. The quickest though not the final way to extinguish ego is to make it disappear in impersonality. When all is one, universal or infinite then there is no place for the sense of ego — the dualities also begin to disappear. But the difficulty is that usually this realisation is confined to the mind or the above-mind while in the vital the stamp of ego remains and is felt in the life and its actions and reactions. Even if full impersonality comes in the vital and physical also, there remains the impossibility, all being impersonal, of having any relation with the Divine. What has therefore to be done is to lose the small personality in impersonality, but also by that loss to discover the true personality which is a portion of the Divine. This person is not separative and limited but is a universal individual, has the sense of uniting with all, but also the power of love and worship for the Divine. That is why I say that to merge the personal consciousness is not the first (or the whole) aim of the Yoga.

November 1935

*

> In *Bases of Yoga* one reads, "It is with the Mother who is always with you and in you that you converse" [*p. 56*]. Could you kindly explain to me how one converses with the Mother?

---

[31] *"Also to merge the personal consciousness is not the first aim of the Yoga. . . ."* Bases of Yoga, *p. 1.*

One hears the voice or the thought speaking inwardly and one answers inwardly. Only it is not always safe for the sadhak if there is any insincerity of ego, desire, vanity, ambition in him — for then he may construct a voice or thought in his mind and ascribe it to the Mother and it will say to him pleasing and flattering things which mislead him. Or he may mistake some other Voice for the Mother's. 2 July 1936

*

> You write in *Bases of Yoga*, "All the ordinary vital movements . . . are waves from the general Nature, Prakriti," and "The desires come from outside . . ." [*p. 61*]. If desires are only waves from outside (Prakriti), what then is the vital itself? Is not desire its main constituent?

There can be a vital without desire. When desire disappears from the being, the vital does not disappear with it.

> Is not the vital itself part of the same Prakriti?

By Prakriti is meant universal Prakriti. Universal Prakriti entering into the vital being creates desires which appear by its habitual response as an individual nature; but if the habitual desires she throws in are rejected and exiled, the being remains but the old individual prakriti of vital desire is no longer there — a new nature is formed responding to the Truth above and not to the lower Nature.

> What determines the *first* response to these waves? One may suppose that the habit of response is carried over from life to life. But what determined the response when we were animals in some distant past?

Universal Prakriti determined it and the soul or Purusha accepted it. In the acceptance lies the responsibility. The Purusha is that which sanctions or refuses. The vital being responds to the ordinary life waves in the animal; man responds to them but has the power of mental control. He has also, as the mental Purusha is awake in him, the power to choose whether he shall have desire or train his being to surmount it. Finally, there is the possibility of bringing down a higher nature which will not be subject to desire but act on another vital principle. December 1936

*

> You write in *Bases of Yoga*, "The whole principle of this Yoga is to give oneself entirely to the Divine alone . . . and to bring down into ourselves . . . all the transcendent light . . . and Ananda of the supramental Divine. . . ." And then, "It is only after becoming one with the supramental Divine . . ." and also, "It is only the bringing down of the supramental Light, Power and Bliss . . ." [*pp. 70–72*]. These passages indicate that it is possible for the Jiva to rise up into and bring down the supramental consciousness. But in the *Arya* you define the supermind as the truth-will of Sachchidananda. How could any human being except one who has come for the divine manifestation reach or bring down the supermind? This is something for the Divine alone.

It is the very principle of this Yoga that only by the supramentalisation of the consciousness which means rising above mind to supermind and the descent of the supermind into the nature can the final transformation be made. So if nobody can rise above mind to supermind or obtain the descent of the supermind, then logically this Yoga becomes impossible. Every being is in essence one with the Divine and in his individual being a portion of the Divine, so there is no insuperable bar to his becoming supramental. It is no doubt impossible for the human nature being mental in its basis to overcome the Ignorance and rise to or obtain the descent of the Supermind by its own unaided effort, but by surrender to the Divine it can be done. One brings it down into the earth Nature through his own consciousness and so opens the way for the others, but the change has to be repeated in each consciousness to become individually effective. 29 July 1936

*

> "In this Yoga . . . there can be no place for vital relations or interchanges with others. . . . Still worse would it be if this interchange took the form of a sexual relation . . ." [*p. 70*].

> The first of these sentences seems to refer to relations between men and men or women and women. But didn't you once say that ordinary interchanges between people are almost unavoidable? Moreover, almost everyone here [*in the Ashram*] has friends. Do friendships fall in the category of "vital relations"?

I suppose I must have been referring to the interchanges which are the result of vital relations. The involuntary vital or other involuntary interchange which takes place by the mere fact of meeting, talking or being together are those which are practically unavoidable. That is to say, they are avoidable only when one has become entirely conscious and is able to put a wall of Force around oneself which nothing can penetrate except the things which one wills to accept. But the reference in the passage cannot be to these, but to the interchange due to vital attachments, passions, vital love or hate etc.

Friendships can be vital relations if there is strong attachment or desire but the friendship which is the nature of comradeship or mental affinity or of a psychic character need not be a vital relation. 4 January 1937

*

> In *Bases of Yoga*, it is said about the sex-movements that they "throw into the atmosphere forces that would block the supramental descent, bringing instead the descent of adverse vital powers" [*p. 71*]. Is it meant that any kind of sex-movement in the Ashram atmosphere would block the supramental descent? If it were so, the descent would hardly be possible because new sadhaks or temporary visitors may indulge in sex-movements and throw these forces in the atmosphere.

That is not what is said in that passage. What is spoken of is the taking of sex indulgence as a part of the aim and method of the sadhana. It is said that if that were done, the sadhana would bring down vital Forces of a type adverse to the supramental change which would serve to block (stand in the way of) the supramental descent. 1 August 1936

*

> You write in *Bases of Yoga*, in regard to "the waves that recur from the general Nature", that "they return on him [the individual], often with an increased force . . . when they find their influence rejected. But they cannot last long once the environmental consciousness is cleared — unless the 'Hostiles' take a hand" [*p. 90*]. Two questions arise: (1) Whether the Hostiles are something quite different from the waves of Nature? (2) Whether, during the process you describe (the "return" of the forces and so forth), it was not the Hostiles attacking all the time.

There are some who are never touched by the hostile forces.

The normal resistance of the lower Nature in human beings and the action of the Hostiles are two quite different things. The former is natural and occurs in everybody; the latter is an intervention from the non-human world. But this intervention can come in two forms. (1) They use and press on the lower Nature forces making them resist where they would otherwise be quiescent, making the resistance strong or violent where it would be otherwise slight or moderate, exaggerating its violence when it is violent. There is besides a malignant cleverness, a conscious plan and combination when the Hostiles act on these forces which is not evident in the normal resistance of the forces. (2) They sometimes invade with their own forces. When this happens there is often a temporary possession or at least an irresistible influence which makes the thoughts, feelings, actions of the person abnormal — a black clouding of the brain, a whirl in the vital, all acts as if the person could not help himself and were driven by an overmastering force. On the other hand instead of a possession there may be only a strong Influence; there the symptoms are less marked, but it is easy for anyone acquainted with the ways of these forces to see what has happened. Finally it may be only an attack, not possession or influence; the person then is separate, is not overcome, resists. 24 August 1936

The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth

Before coming to the main point I may as well clear out one matter not unconnected with it, my articles or messages, as they have been called, in the *Bulletin*;[32] for their appearance there and their contents seem to have caused some trouble, perplexity or misunderstanding in your mind and especially my speculations about the divine body. I wrote the first of these articles to explain about how or why sport came to be included in the programme of the Ashram activities and I think I made it clear, as I went on, that sport was not sadhana, that it belonged to what I called the lower end of things, but that it might be used not merely for amusement or recreation or the maintenance of health, but for a greater efficiency of the body and for the development of certain qualities and capacities, not of the body only but of morale and discipline and the stimulation of mental energies: but I pointed out also that these could be and were developed by other means and that there were limitations to this utility. In fact, it is only by sadhana that one could go beyond the limits natural to the lower-end means. I think there was little room for misunderstanding here but the Mother had asked me to write on other subjects not connected in any way with sport and had suggested some subjects such as the possibilities of the evolution of a divine body; so I wrote on that subject and went on to speak of the Supermind and Truth-Consciousness which had obviously not even the remotest connection with sport. The object was to bring in something higher and more interesting than a mere record of gymnasium events but which might appeal to some of the readers or even to wider circles. In speaking of the divine body I entered into some far-off speculations about what might become possible in the future evolution of it by means of a spiritual force, but obviously the possibilities could not be anything near or immediate and I said clearly enough that we shall have to begin at the beginning and not attempt anything out of the way. Perhaps I should have insisted more on present limitations but that I should now make clear. For the immediate object of my endeavours is to establish spiritual life on earth and for that the first necessity must always be to realise the Divine; only then can life be spiritualised or what I have called the Life Divine be made possible. The creation of something that could be called a divine body could be only an ulterior aim undertaken as part of this transformation; as obviously the development of such a divine body as was envisioned in these speculations could only come into view as the result of a distant evolution and need not alarm or distract anyone. It might even be regarded as a phantasy of some remotely possible future which might one day happen to come true. 7 December 1949

---

[32] *The eight essays making up* The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth *were first published in the* Bulletin of Physical Education *in 1949 and 1950. — Ed.*

Publication Plans, 1949

There can be no objection to the immediate or early publication [*in the United States*] of (1) *The Life Divine* (2) the *Essays on the Gita* (3) *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Yoga of Works) (4) *Superman* (and other essays) (5) *The Hero and the Nymph* (with essay on Kalidasa). As regards the *Collected Poems* numerous corrections have to be made in *Perseus* and the essay on classical metres, but as these are mainly misprints there is no objection to their being made on the proofs when these are sent to us.

As to *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *The Psychology of Social Development* they have to be altered by the introduction of new chapters and rewriting of passages and in the *Ideal* changes have to be made all through the book in order to bring it up to date, so it is quite impossible to make these alterations on the proofs. I propose however to revise these two books as soon as possible; they will receive my first attention.

The Defence of Indian Culture is an unfinished book and also I had intended to alter much of it and to omit all but brief references to William Archer's criticisms. That was why its publication has been so long delayed. Even if it is reprinted as it is, considerable alterations will have to be made and there must be some completion and an end to the book which does not at present exist.

The Future Poetry also cannot be published as it is, for there must be a considerable rearrangement of its matter since publication from month to month left its plan straggling and ill-arranged and also one or two chapters will have to be omitted or replaced by other new ones. I do not wish it to be published in its present imperfect form.

The publication of *The Secret of the Veda* as it is does not enter into my intention. It was published in a great hurry and at a time when I had not studied the Rig Veda as a whole as well as I have since done. Whole chapters will have to be rewritten or written otherwise and a considerable labour gone through; moreover, it was never finished and considerable additions in order to make it complete are indispensable. 30 June 1949

The Terminology of His Writings

Spiritual and Supramental

> Krishnaprem has always complained (and quite naturally) that it was difficult to get the right meaning of the "technical terms" used by you. . . . Of course a full expounding of the difference between Spiritualisation and Supramentalisation would fatten into a volume, but is it not possible just to indicate why the one is called partial transformation and the other complete transformation? Also in what way the supramental consciousness-force is not identical with the spiritual.

If spiritual and supramental were the same thing, then all the sages and devotees and Yogis and sadhaks throughout the ages would have been supramental beings and all I have written about the supermind would be so much superfluous rubbish. Anybody who had spiritual experiences would then be a supramental being; the Asram would be chock-full of supramental beings and every other Asram in India also. As for writing about these things, I do not see the utility. I have already two philosophical essays to write and I do not find them writing themselves. If I start explaining the supramental, it would mean a book of 200 pages at least and even then you would be no wiser than before — as everything I wrote would probably be misinterpreted in the terms of mental cognition. The supramental has to be realised, not explained; I therefore prefer to leave it to explain or not explain itself when it is there and not waste my time in explaining mentally the supramental. As to technical terms, I have explained many times over in a way sufficient for those who practise this Yoga. If I have to explain philosophically to others, I must write a few more volumes of the *Arya*. I have no time just now.

I may say that spiritual experiences can fix themselves in the inner consciousness and alter it, transform it, if you like, one can realise the Divine everywhere, the Self, the universal Shakti doing all things, one can feel merged in the Cosmic Self or full of ecstatic bhakti or Ananda, but that need not transform the instrumental being. One can go on thinking with the intellect, willing with the mental will, feeling joy and sorrow on the vital surface, undergoing physical afflictions etc. just as before. The change only will be that the inner self will watch all that without getting disturbed or bewildered, taking it as a part of nature. That is not the transformation I envisage. 12 October 1935

*

> People seem to misunderstand certain words used by Dr. Sircar in his lectures: "supermind" or "supramental", "psychic", "ascent and descent" etc. I think such terms should be defined precisely when used.

The words supermind and supramental were first used by me, but since then people have taken up and are using the word supramental for anything above mind. Psychic is ordinarily used in the sense of anything relating to the inner movements of the consciousness or anything phenomenal in the psychology; in this case I have made a special use of it, relating it to the Greek word psyche meaning soul; but ordinarily people make no distinction between the soul and the mental-vital consciousness; for them it is all the same. The ascent of the Kundalini — not its descent, so far as I know — is a recognised phenomenon, there is one that corresponds in our Yoga, the feeling of the consciousness ascending from the vital or physical to meet the higher consciousness. This is not necessarily through the chakras but is often felt in the whole body. Similarly the descent of the higher consciousness is not felt necessarily or usually through the chakras but as occupying the whole head, neck, chest, abdomen, body. 18 June 1937

Supermind

Others besides *X* have assumed that they had the Supermind because something opened in them which was "super" to the ordinary human mind. It is a common mistake. Even the word supermind (which I invented) has been taken up by several people (writers in the *Prabuddha Bharata* and elsewhere) and applied generally to the spiritual consciousness. I see no reason to doubt that *X* saw things in vision (hundreds of people do) or had experiences. 7 July 1936

Supermind and Overmind

> Is it true that when you write "must", it is from the Supermind, and when you write "maybe" or "if", it is from the Overmind?

No — I can't say that. The Overmind has its certitudes also, though of a less absolute kind than the supramental.
19 March 1933

*

> What is the connection between Overmind and Supermind?

That would need some chapters to explain. It is not important to know it before you have got some experience of the planes above mind. 23 June 1933

*

What you call supramental overmind[1] is still overmind — not a part of the true Supermind. One cannot get into the true Supermind (except in some kind of trance or Samadhi) unless one has first objectivised the overmind Truth in life, speech, action, external knowledge and not only experienced it in meditation and inner experience. 25 February 1934

*

> I sent up an article on your Yoga some time ago. You returned it without comment. I do not know whether you have gone through it and approve of its publication or not.

There are some errors about the Supermind and Overmind, — the two getting rather mixed up as they always do (I had much difficulty in separating them myself); I have tried to clear that up but it is difficult to put in language that the mind can grasp. I hope you will manage to unravel the writing which has become microscopically illegible owing to lack of space for the corrections.

---

[1] This expression is a misnomer since overmind cannot be supramental: it can at most receive some light and truth from the higher source.

Supermind by the way is synthetic only in the lowest spaces of itself where it has to prepare the principles of Overmind — synthesis is necessary only where analysis has taken place; one has dissected everything, put in pieces (analysis) so one has to piece together. But Supermind is unitarian, has never divided up, so it does not need to add and piece together the parts and fragments. It has always held the conscious Many together as the conscious One. 26 October 1938

Overmind

> In the whole of *The Synthesis of Yoga* [*as originally published in the* Arya] there is nowhere any mention of Overmind. If there is anything in that book similar to what you now call Overmind, it would be in the last seven chapters.

At the time when these chapters were written, the name "overmind" had not been found, so there is no mention of it. What is described in these chapters is the action of the supermind when it descends into the overmind plane and takes up the overmind workings and transforms them.[2] It was intended in later chapters to show how difficult even this was and how many levels there were between human mind and supermind and how even supermind, descending, could get mixed with the lower action and turned into something that was less than the true Truth. But these later chapters were not written.

> The lack of a clear distinction between overmind and supermind is causing me some confusion, as you have said that some of my experiences belonged to the overmind.

---

[2] The highest Supermind or Divine Gnosis existent in itself is something that lies beyond still and quite above.

Not exactly that. They result from the overmind pressure on the intervening mental and lower planes, trying to pour into them the overmind movements. The process is very intricate, has many stages, is not of a simple, single, definite character.

13 April 1932

*

> Is Overmind the same as what you call "supramental reason" in the *Arya*?

No, — although there is a supramentalised overmind which is not very different from it, but overmind has always something relative in its knowledge. 18 March 1933

*

> In the *Arya* there is no mention of the Overmind. You have mentioned the supramental or Divine Reason in the gradations of the Supermind, but from its description it is quite different from the Overmind. Why was the Overmind not mentioned and clearly distinguished from the Supermind in the *Arya*?

The distinction has not been made in the *Arya* because at that time what I now call the Overmind was supposed to be an inferior plane of the Supermind. But that was because I was seeing them from the Mind. The true defect of Overmind, the limitation in it which gave rise to a world of Ignorance is seen fully only when one looks at it from the physical consciousness, from the result (Ignorance in Matter) to the cause (Overmind division of the Truth). In its own plane Overmind seems to be only a divided, many-sided play of the Truth, so can easily be taken by the Mind as a supramental province. Mind also when flooded by the Overmind lights feels itself living in a surprising revelation of divine Truth. The difficulty comes when we deal with the vital and still more with the physical. Then it becomes imperative to face the difficulty and to make a sharp distinction between Overmind and Supermind — for it then becomes evident that the Overmind Power (in spite of its lights and splendours) is not sufficient to overcome the Ignorance because it is itself under the law of Division out of which came the Ignorance. One has to pass beyond and supramentalise Overmind so that mind and all the rest may undergo the final change. 20 November 1933

*

> Judging from your description of Overmind [*in the preceding letter*], it would seem that what the Vedantins (especially of the Mayavada School) call *kāraṇa* is Overmind, *īśvara* is the cosmic spirit in Overmind, and *prājña* is individualised being in the Overmind. Supermind would be in *turīya* and *mahākāraṇa*, about which they had only a few glimpses. In *kāraṇa* and *īśvara*, they must have found something wanting of the Highest Truth.

That is evidently what they meant. But they had no clear perception of these things because they lived at the highest in the spiritualised higher mind, and for the rest could only receive things from even the Overmind — they could not enter it except by deep samadhi (सुषुप्ति). Prajna and Ishwara were for them Lord of the *suṣupti*. 20 November 1933

*

> Is it possible for another being to take birth in a human being's কারণ দেহ [*kāraṇa deha*] and see everything from that standpoint?

The কারণ দেহ may be simply a form answering to the higher consciousness (overmental, intuitive etc.) and I suppose a being could be there working in that consciousness and body. It is not likely to be the supramental being and supramental body — for in that case the whole consciousness, thought, action subjective and objective would begin to be faultlessly true and irresistibly effective. Nobody has reached that stage yet, even the overmind is, for all but the Mother and myself, either unrealised or only an influence mostly subjective. 24 March 1934

*

> In my translation I have been obliged to find or make a word for "Overmind". I want to know if Hiranyagarbha can be used

> with a change from its old connotation? It is not *prajñā* as far as I can make out. Have you any other word more suitable to convey the idea of the Overmind?

Hiranyagarbha is not the Overmind, but the subtle subjective Consciousness which includes much more than the Overmind. *Prajñā* certainly won't do — *prajñā* belongs to the Mind; you are probably thinking of the *prājña* प्राज्ञ (*cidghana*) *caitanya*, but that is a different thing from *prajñā* प्रज्ञा. Perhaps Overmind can be described as आद्य हिरण्यगर्भ चैतन्य (as opposed to the rest of the सूक्ष्म from the intuitive mind to the bottom), but that is a very long phrase. It is really, however, a different classification and other words ought to be found for it. परा मनीषा, आद्या मनीषा, दैवी मनीषा, any of these might do, if no single word can be found or invented.

Overmind and Intuition

> Is Overmind to the Cosmic Spirit as Intuition is to the individual Self?

The Cosmic Spirit uses all powers, but Overmind power is the highest it normally uses in the present scheme of things here. In that sense as intuition is normally the highest power used by the individual being in the body, what you say may be considered as correct. 2 June 1933

Intuition

> In a recent letter to me you wrote: "But the Intuition sees in flashes and combines through a constant play of light — through revelations, inspirations, intuitions, swift discriminations." Since all these terms connect up with "Intuition", perhaps "intuitions" is unnecessary.

"Intuition" is the word for the general power proper to that plane, but it works through a fourfold process expressed in the four words connected together here. If you like you can substitute "intuitive intimations" for the third. 17 October 1936

*

> Your intuition says everything to you? Have you nothing to think whether right or wrong? Alas! How then can the shishya follow the Guru?

Good heavens! after a life of sadhana you expect me still to "think" and what is worse think what is right or wrong. I don't think, even; I see or I don't see. The difference between intuition and thought is very much like that between seeing a thing and badgering one's brains to find out what the thing can possibly be like. Intuition is truth-sight. The thing seen may not be the truth? Well, in that case it will at least be one of its hundred tails or at least a hair from one of the tails. The very first step in the supramental change is to transform all operations of consciousness from the ordinary mental to the intuitive, only then is there any hope of proceeding farther, — not to, but towards the supramental. I must surely have done this long ago, otherwise how could I be catching the tail of the supramental whale? 7 May 1938

Jivatman, Spark-Soul and Psychic Being

The Jivatman, spark-soul and psychic being are three different forms of the same reality and they must not be mixed up together as that confuses the clearness of the inner experience.

The Jivatman or spirit, as it is usually called in English, is self-existent above the manifested or instrumental being — it is superior to birth and death, always the same, the individual Self or *ātman*. It is the eternal true being of the individual.

The soul is a spark of the Divine which is not seated above the manifested being, but comes down into the manifestation to support its evolution in the material world. It is at first an undifferentiated power of the divine consciousness, containing all possibilities, but at first unevolved possibilities, which have not yet taken form, but to which it is the function of evolution to give form. This spark is there in all living beings, from the lowest to the highest.

The psychic being is formed by the soul in its evolution. It supports the mind, vital, body, grows by their experiences, carries the nature from life to life. It is the psychic or *caitya* *puruṣa*. At first it is veiled by mind, vital and body, but, as it grows, it becomes capable of coming forward and dominating the mind, life and body; in the ordinary man it depends on them for expression and is not able to take them up and freely use them. The life of the being is animal or human and not divine. When the psychic being can by sadhana become dominant and freely use its instruments, then the impulse towards the Divine becomes complete and the transformation of mind, vital and body, not merely their liberation becomes possible.

The Self or Atman being free and superior to birth and death, the experience of the Jivatman and its unity with the supreme or universal Self brings the sense of liberation; but for the transformation of the life and nature the awakening of the psychic being is indispensable.

The psychic being realises its oneness with the true being, the Jivatman, but it does not change into it.

The *bindu* seen [*in vision by the correspondent*] above may be a symbolic way of seeing the Jivatman, the portion of the Divine; the aspiration there would naturally be for the opening of the higher consciousness so that the being may dwell there and not in the ignorance. The Jivatman is already one with the Divine in reality, but it may want the rest of the consciousness to realise it.

The aspiration of the psychic being is for the opening of the whole lower nature, mind, vital, body to the Divine, for the love and union with the Divine, for its presence and power within the heart, for the transformation of the mind, life and body by the descent of the higher consciousness into this instrumental being and nature.

Both aspirations are necessary for the fullness of this Yoga. When the psychic imposes its aspiration on the mind, vital and body, then they too aspire and this is what was felt as the aspiration from the level of the lower being. The aspiration felt above is that of the Jivatman for the higher consciousness with its realisation of the One to manifest. Therefore both aspirations help each other. The seeking of the lower being is necessarily at first intermittent and oppressed by the ordinary consciousness. It has by sadhana to become clear, constant, strong and enduring.

The sense of peace, purity and calm is brought about by the union of the lower with the higher consciousness. It cannot be permanent at first, but it can become so by increased frequency and endurance of the calm and peace and finally by the full descent of the eternal peace and calm and silence of the higher consciousness into the lower nature. 5 May 1935

*

> I read a [*copy of the preceding*] letter on Jivatman, spark-soul and psychic being. I would like to ask some questions. Is Jivatman of (or in) one person different from that of another?

It is one, yet different. The Gita puts it that the Jiva is an अंशः सनातनः [*aṁśaḥ sanātanaḥ*] of the One. It can also be spoken of as one among many centres of the Universal Being and Consciousness.

> If different, is it a qualitative or a quantitative difference?

Essentially one Jiva has the same nature as all — but in manifestation each puts forth its own line of Swabhava.

> Is not what you term "Jivatman" the same as what they call *kūṭastha*?

No. Kutastha is the अक्षर पुरुष [*akṣara puruṣa*] — it is not the Jivatman.

> What is the plane on which the Jivatman stands?

It is on the spiritual plane always that is above the mind, but there it is not fixed to any level.

> Is there anything like union of one's psychic being with another's?

No. Affinity, harmony, sympathy, but not union. Union is with the Divine. 3 October 1936

Psychic and Spiritual

Ordinarily, all the more inward and all the abnormal psychological experiences are called psychic. I use the word psychic for the soul as distinguished from the mind and vital. All movements and experiences of the soul would in that sense be called psychic, those which rise from or directly touch the psychic being; where mind and vital predominate, the experience would be called psychological (surface or occult). "Spiritual" has nothing to do with the Absolute, except that the experience of the Absolute is spiritual. All contacts with self, the higher consciousness, the Divine above are spiritual. There are others that could not be so sharply classified and set off against each other.

The spiritual realisation is of primary importance and indispensable. I would consider it best to have the spiritual and psychic development first and have it with the same fullness before entering the occult regions. Those who enter the latter first may find their spiritual realisation much delayed — others fall into the mazy traps of the occult and do not come out in this life. Some no doubt can carry on both together, the occult and the spiritual, and make them help each other; but the process I suggest is the safer.

The governing factors for us must be the spirit and the psychic being united with the Divine — the occult laws and phenomena have to be known but only as an instrumentation, not as the governing principles. The occult is a vast field and complicated and not without its dangers. It need not be abandoned but it should not be given the first place.

Psychic Being

> I have translated the words "psychic being" as *jīva* but I was doubtful whether *jīva* conveys the idea of the psychic being.

How can *jīva* = psychic being? Ask *X* for the proper word — if there is any.
15 June 1931

*

> Can *antarātmā* or *hṛt-puruṣa* do for " psychic being"? Or your own term *caitya puruṣa*?

Antarātmā is the inner being — it is a larger term than the psychic being. *Hṛt-puruṣa* or *caitya puruṣa* would do. June 1931

*

> As directed, "psychic being" has been translated as *caitya puruṣa*. Does this mean the *puruṣa* in the *citta*? Is *jīva* the combined and the fundamental being of all the beings — the vital, the psychic and others?

चैत्य पुरुष [*caitya puruṣa*] means rather the पुरुष [*puruṣa*] in the चित् [*cit*], the fundamental (inner) consciousness.

जीव [*jīva*] is the fundamental, or as we call it, the central being. But the fundamental being is not *combined* of the mental, vital, psychic etc., these are only expressions of the Jivatman; the Jivatman itself is self-existent in the Divine; *essential* in its being, it cannot be regarded as a combination of things. 1 July 1931

The Psychic

> How is it that in the *Arya* you never laid any special stress on the psychic centre and considered the centre above the head the most important in your Yoga? Is it because you wrote under different conditions and circumstances? But what exactly made you shift your emphasis?

You might just as well ask me why in my pre-*Arya* writings I laid stress on other things than the centre above the head or in the post-*Arya* on the distinction between overmind and supermind. The stress on the psychic increased because it was found that without it no true transformation is possible. 5 July 1937

Transformation

> If you find time to answer my letter, do at least remember my chief questions: (1) whether in Vaishnavism and Ramakrishnaism there wasn't partial transformation at least, and (2) does

> not any light of realisation, if it is to be lasting, presuppose some transformation of the *ādhāra* in order that the descent may not be fugitive?

Under your pressure (not supramental) I have splashed about a little on the surface of the subject — the result is imperfect and illegible. (I am sending it down to Nolini to wrestle with it.) Your fault! How on earth do you expect me to go deep on the point or do anything else but scribble when I have no time at all, at all, at all.

I am not sure what you mean by the Vaishnava transformation or Ramakrishna's, so I can't say anything about that. I can only say that by transformation I do not mean some change of the nature — I do not mean for instance sainthood or ethical perfection or Yogic siddhis (like the Tantrik's). I use transformation in a special sense, a change of consciousness radical and complete and of a certain specific kind which is so conceived as to bring about a strong and assured step forward in the spiritual evolution of the consciousness such as and greater than what took place when a mentalised being first appeared in a vital and material animal world. If anything short of that takes place or at least if a real beginning is not made on that basis, a fundamental progress towards it, then my object is not accomplished. A partial realisation does not meet the demand I make on life and Yoga.

Light of realisation is not the same thing as Descent. I do not think realisation by itself, necessarily transforms anything; it may bring only an opening or heightening or widening of the consciousness so as to realise something in the Purusha part without any radical change in the parts of Prakriti. One may have some light of realisation at the spiritual summit of the consciousness but the parts below remain what they were. I have seen any number of instances of that. There must be a descent of the light not merely into the mind or part of it but into all the being down to the physical and below before a real transformation can take place. A light in the mind may spiritualise or otherwise change the mind or part of it in one way or another, but it need not change the vital nature, a light in the vital may purify and enlarge the vital movements or else silence and immobilise the vital being, but leave the body and the physical consciousness as it was, or even leave it inert or shake its balance. And the descent of Light is not enough, it must be the descent of the whole higher consciousness, its Peace, Power, Knowledge, Love, Ananda. Moreover, the descent may be enough to liberate, but not to perfect, or enough to make a great change in the inner being, while the outer remains an imperfect instrument, clumsy, sick or unexpressive. Finally, the transformation effected by the sadhana cannot be complete unless it is a supramentalisation of the being. Psychicisation is not enough, it is only a beginning; spiritualisation and the descent of the higher consciousness is not enough, it is only a middle term; the ultimate achievement needs the action of the supramental consciousness and Force. Something less than that may very well be considered enough by the individual, but it is not enough for the earth consciousness to take the definitive stride forward it must take at one time or another.

I have never said that my Yoga was something brand new in all its elements. I have called it the integral Yoga and that means that it takes up the essence and many procedures of the old Yogas — its newness is in its aim, standpoint and the totality of its method. In the earlier stages which is all I deal with in books like the *Riddle* or the *Lights* or in the new book to be published [*Bases of Yoga*] there is nothing in it that distinguishes it from the old Yogas except the aim underlying its comprehensiveness, the spirit in its movements and the ultimate significance it keeps before it — also the scheme of its psychology and its working: but as that was not and could not be developed systematically or schematically in these letters, it has not been grasped by those who are not already acquainted with it by mental familiarity or some amount of practice. The later stages of the Yoga which go into little known untrodden regions, I have not made public and I do not at present intend to do so.

I know very well also that there have been seemingly allied ideals and anticipations — the perfectibility of the race, certain Tantric sadhanas, the effort after a complete physical Siddhi by certain schools of Yoga, etc. etc. I have alluded to these things myself and have put forth the view that the spiritual past of the race has been a preparation of Nature not merely for attaining to the Divine beyond the world, but also for the very step forward which the evolution of the earth-consciousness has now to make. I do not therefore care in the least, — even though these things were far from identical with mine, — whether this Yoga and its aim and method are accepted as new or not, that is in itself a trifling matter. That it should be recognised as true in itself and make itself true by achievement is the one thing important; it does not matter if it is called new or a repetition or revival of the old which was forgotten. I laid emphasis on it as new in a letter to certain sadhaks so as to explain to them that a repetition of the old Yogas was not enough in my eyes, that I was putting forward a thing to be achieved that has not yet been achieved, not yet clearly visualised, even though it is the natural but still secret destined outcome of all the past spiritual endeavour.

It is new as compared with the old Yogas

(1) Because it aims not at a departure out of world and life into a Heaven or a Nirvana, but at a change of life and existence, not as something subordinate or incidental, but as a distinct and central object. If there is a descent in other Yogas, yet it is only an incident on the way or resulting from the ascent — the ascent is the real thing. Here the ascent is the first step, but it is a means for the descent. It is the descent of the new consciousness attained by the ascent that is the stamp and seal of the sadhana. Even Tantra and Vaishnavism end in the release from life; here the object is the fulfilment of life.

(2) Because the object sought after is not an individual achievement of divine realisation for the sake of the individual, but something to be gained for the earth consciousness here, a cosmic not a supra-cosmic achievement. The thing to be gained also is the bringing in of a Power of consciousness (the supramental) not yet active directly in earth-nature, even in the spiritual life, but yet to be organised and made directly active.

(3) Because a method has been preconised for achieving this purpose which is as total and integral as the aim set before it, viz., the total and integral change of the consciousness and nature, taking up old methods but only as a part action and present aid

to others that are distinctive. I have not found this method as a whole or anything like it proposed or realised in the old Yogas. If I had I should not have wasted my time in hewing out paths and in thirty years of search and inner creation when I could have hastened home safely to my goal in an easy canter over paths already blazed out, laid down, perfectly mapped, macadamised, made secure and public. 5 October 1935

Brahma — Brahman — Brahmin

> Please favour me with the correct transliteration of the words ब्रह्म and ब्राह्मण in the English language. In the *Essays on the Gita*, they are spelt alike, viz. Brahman. What is the necessity of an "n" when transliterating ब्रह्म?

In English, Brahma = the Creator, one of the Trinity.

Brahman is the Eternal and Infinite. In English very often the stem is taken as the form of the name in transliterating and not the nominative form e.g. Pururavas, not Pururavā. So Vivekananda writes "Sannyasin bold" instead of Sannyasi.

1 February 1933

*

> You have given me the spellings of ब्रह्म (the Eternal) and ब्रह्मा (the Creator). Kindly write to me the correct spelling of ब्राह्मण (a caste) also.

I spoke of Brahma the Creator in order to explain why the *n* was necessary in transliterating ब्रह्म the Eternal.

As for the other word the correct English is Brahmin, but it is often transliterated Brahmana or Brahman in order to be nearer the Sanskrit. Usually, I write Brahmin but in the Press it gets altered into Brahman. 2 February 1933

Dynamis

Dynamis is a Greek word, not current, so far as I know, in English; but the verb *dunamai*, I can, am able, from which it derives, has given a number of words to the English language including dynamise, dynamics, dynamic, dynamical, dyne (a unit of force), so that the word can be at once understood by all English readers. It means power, especially energetic power for energetic action. It is equivalent to the Sanskrit word, Shakti. Philosophically it can stand as the opposite word to status, Divine Status, Divine Dynamis.

Ineffugable

> "Infinity imposes itself upon the appearances of the finite by its ineffugable self-existence."[3]
>
> [*Note by a correspondent*:] "*Ineffugable* is a new word, like *dynamis*, introduced into the English language by Sri Aurobindo. It means inescapable, inevitable, not to be avoided. A similar word was used by Blount in 1656 with slight change of form — ineffugible. Etymologically it is an adaptation of the Latin *ineffugibilis*, from *effugere*, to flee from, avoid. (*Vide, Oxford English Dictionary.*)"

Ineffugible is the correct formation, but it has not force or power of suggestive sound in it. The *a* in ineffugable has been brought in by illegitimate analogy from words like "fugacious", Latin *fugare*, because it sounds better and is forcible.

1 October 1943

Sublate

> "It claims to stand behind and supersede, to sublate and to eliminate every other knowledge. . . ."[4]

"Sublate" means originally to remove: it implies denial and removal (throwing off) of something posited. What appeared to be true, can be sublated by a greater truth contradicting it. The experience of the world can be sublated by the experience of Self, it is denied and removed; so the experience of the Self can be sublated by the experience of Sunya; it is denied and removed.

---

[3] *Sri Aurobindo,* The Life Divine, *volume 21 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 81.*

[4] *Sri Aurobindo,* The Life Divine, *p. 487.*

> [*Note by a correspondent*:] "Hegelian philos. (rendering G. *aufheben*, used by Hegel as having the opposite meanings of 'destroy' and 'preserve'). See quotation: 'Nothing passes over into Being, but Being equally sublates itself, is a passing over into Nothing, Ceasing-to-be. They sublate not themselves mutually, not the one the other externally; but each sublates itself in itself, and is in its own self the contrary of itself.' (*Vide, Oxford English Dictionary*.)"

Hegel could not have used the word "sublate" as he wrote in German.[5] I do not know what word he used which is here translated by sublate, but certainly it does not mean both destroy and preserve, nor in fact does it mean either. Being passes over into Non-being, so it sublates itself, changes and eliminates itself as it were from the view, becomes Non-being instead of being; but so also does Non-being, what was Non-being passes over into being; where there was nothing, there is being; nothing has eliminated itself from the view. This, says Hegel, is not a mutual destruction by two contraries each of which was outside the other. Being inside itself becomes nothing or Non-Being; Non-Being or Nothing equally inside itself passes into being. They do not really sublate or drive out each other, but each sublates itself into the other. In other words it is the same Reality that presents itself now as one and now as the other. 31 July 1944

Global

"To contact" is a phrase that has established itself and it is futile to try to keep America at arm's length any longer; "global" also has established itself and it is too useful and indeed indispensable to reject; there is no other word that can express exactly the same shade of meaning. I heard it first from Arjava who described the language of *Arya* as expressing a global thinking and I at once caught it up as the right and only word for certain things, for instance, the thinking in masses which is a frequent characteristic of the Overmind. 2 April 1947

---

[5] *Aufheben*, if that is the German word, must mean the same as the Latin word *subtollere* p.p. *sublatus*, to heave up and off, or throw, from which "sublate" is taken.

Section Four

Remarks on Contemporaries and on Contemporary Problems

Remarks on Spiritual Figures in India

Ramakrishna Paramhansa

I would have been surprised to hear that I regard (in agreement with an advanced sadhak) Ramakrishna as a spiritual pigmy, if I had not become past astonishment in these matters. I have said, it seems, so many things that were never in my mind and done too not a few that I have never dreamed of doing! I shall not be surprised or perturbed if one day I am reported to have declared, on the authority of advanced or even unadvanced sadhaks, that Buddha was a *poseur* or Shakespeare an overrated poetaster or Newton a third-rate college Don without any genius. In this world all is possible. Is it necessary for me to say that I have never thought and cannot have said anything of the kind, since I have at least some faint sense of spiritual values? The passage you have quoted is my considered estimate of Ramakrishna.[1]

3 February 1932

*

> I have heard that if one learns logic or philosophy it can be a great help in the yoga, because it makes the mind wider to spiritual experiences so that once the mind gets beyond the intellect and reaches the intuitive, it is able to bring down or express knowledge which an unintellectual mind could not do.

An unintellectual mind cannot bring down the Knowledge? What then about Ramakrishna? Do you mean to say that the majority of the sadhaks here who have not learned logic and are ignorant of philosophy will never get Knowledge?

---

[1] *"And in a recent unique example, in the life of Ramakrishna Paramhansa, we see a colossal spiritual capacity first driving straight to the divine realisation, taking, as it were, the kingdom of heaven by violence, and then seizing upon one Yogic method after another and extracting the substance out of it with an incredible rapidity, always to return to the heart of the whole matter, the realisation and possession of God by the power of love, by the extension of inborn spirituality into various experience and by the spontaneous play of an intuitive knowledge." — Sri Aurobindo,* The Synthesis of Yoga, *volume 23 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 41.*

4 November 1936

*

> "An unintellectual mind cannot bring down the Knowledge?" Certainly it can. But don't you think there is a world of difference between the expression of an intellectual mind and an unintellectual one?

Expression is another matter, but Ramakrishana was an uneducated, nonintellectual man, yet his expression of knowledge was so perfect that the biggest intellects bowed down before it.

5 November 1936

*

> What a difference there is between Ramakrishna's expressions of knowledge and those of a perfectly developed intellect like yourself!

His expressions are unsurpassable in their quality. Don't talk nonsense. Moreover I never developed my intellect and I made zero marks in Logic.

> Who preached Ramakrishna's gospel to the world? Vivekananda, a highly developed mind.

And who taught Vivekananda the Truth? Not a logician or highly developed intellect certainly? 13 November 1936

*

> I have heard different things about Ramakrishna from different people. Some say he was an Avatar and some that he was not. Do you think he was an Avatar as he said in his autobiography?

He never wrote an autobiography. What he said was in conversation with his disciples and others. He was certainly quite as much an Avatar as Christ or Chaitanya. 13 November 1936

*

Ramakrishna himself never thought of transformation or tried for it. All he wanted was bhakti for the Mother and along with that he received whatever knowledge she gave him and did whatever she made him do. He was intuitive and psychic from the beginning and only became more and more so as he went on. There was no need in him for the transformation which we seek; for although he spoke of the divine man (Ishwarakoti) coming down the stairs as well as ascending, he had not the idea of a new consciousness and a new race and the divine manifestation in the earth-nature.

Swami Vivekananda

I do not remember what I said about Vivekananda.[2] If I said he was a great Vedantist, it is quite true. It does not follow that all he said or did must be accepted as the highest truth or the best. His ideal of *sevā* was a need of his nature and must have helped him — it does not follow that it must be accepted as a universal spiritual necessity or ideal. Whether in declaring it he was the mouthpiece of Ramakrishna or not, I cannot pronounce. It seems certain that Ramakrishna expected him to be a great power for changing the world-mind in a spiritual direction and it may be assumed that the mission came to the disciple from the Master. The details of his action are another matter. As for proceeding like a blind man, that is a feeling that easily comes when a Power greater than one's own mind is pushing one to a large action; for the mind does not realise intellectually all that it is being pushed to do and may have its moments of doubt or wonderment about it and yet it is obliged to go on. Vedantic (Adwaita) realisation is the realisation of the silent static or absolute Brahman — one may have that and yet not have the same indubitable clearness as to the significance of one's action — for over action for the Adwaitin lies the shadow of Maya. 24 December 1934

*

---

[2] *Sri Aurobindo is referring here to the passage from* The Synthesis of Yoga *that is reproduced on page 94 of the present volume. — Ed.*

> I am thinking of reading Vivekananda. What he has said in his lectures — is it all truth, something directly inspired?

I cannot say that it is all truth — he had his own opinions about certain things (like everybody else) which can be questioned. But most of what he said was of great value.

> I wish to read some good books on yoga or philosophy. Will you please give me some names?

I am not sure what books would interest you and I am myself so far away from books that it is difficult to remember names. If you have not read V's things you can read them or any books that would give you an idea of Vedanta schools and Sankhya. There is Mahendra Sircar's *Eastern Lights*. It is Indian philosophy you want, I suppose? 25 September 1935

*

> I hear that there is a file of unpublished letters by Vivekananda, in one of which he says: "The time has now come to follow Aurobindo Ghose." Because of this it seems the Ramakrishna Mission keeps always an interested eye on what is going on in Pondy. Do you know anything of that reference by Vivekananda and in what connection it was made?

Where on earth is this extraordinary file? How could Vivekananda know anything about me? Trikaldrishti? 5 July 1937

*

> God knows where that extraordinary file of Vivekananda's letters is. I got news of it from *X* who heard about it from a man of the Ramakrishna Mission who came here.

What I want to know is when did Vivekananda write that or what led him to take notice of me. I no longer remember when he left his body, but my impression is that it was when I was a blissfully obscure Professor of Baroda College and neither in politics nor Yoga had put on the tedious burden of fame. Why then should Vivekananda say anything about me at all, much

less a thing like that — unless it was as the trikaldarshi Yogi that he spoke?
7 July 1937

Swami Ramatirtha

> From the standpoint of sadhana Vivekananda has never attracted me — he was more of a missionary. As far as I have studied Ramatirtha, he seems to have been on a higher level.

That can be judged from the personal experience only — not from the books which are too highly mentalised to give any indication of the full achievement in the lower part of the nature.
2 December 1933

*

> Ramatirtha used to say that all beings were himself in different forms and to address others as "myself in the form of . . .". This sounds a little fantastic!

It is fantastic.

> Can this not be called an example of the transformed mind and vital, for he seems to have been engrossed in the Self in the waking life as well as in meditation.

I think Ramatirtha's realisations were more mental than anything else. He had opening of the higher mind and a realisation there of the cosmic Self, but I find no evidence of a transformed mind and vital; that transformation is not a result of or object of the Yoga of Knowledge. The realisation of the Yoga of Knowledge is when one feels that one lives in the wideness of something silent, featureless and universal (called the Self) and all else is seen as only forms and names; the Self is real, nothing else. The realisation of "*my* self in other forms" is a part of this or a step towards it, but in the full realisation the "my" should drop so that there is only *the* one Self or rather only the Brahman. For the Self is merely a subjective aspect of the Brahman, just as the Ishwara is its objective aspect. That is the Vedantic "Knowledge". Its result is peace, silence, liberation. As for the active Prakriti, (mind, vital, body), the Yoga of Knowledge does not make it its aim to transform them — that would be no use as the idea is that if the liberation has come, it will all drop off at death. The only change wanted is to get rid of the idea of ego and realise as true only the supreme Self, the Brahman. 25 June 1934

Ramana Maharshi

I did not ask *X* to prevent you from going to Ramana Maharshi and I never had the least thought or intention of requesting him to intervene at all. He tells me that it is true he told you Sri Aurobindo had approved of his speaking to you about the right attitude etc. and he had inferred that from a phrase in my answer to a letter of his. But that inference was a mistake — the phrase did not carry that meaning, nor was there in the context any reference to Ramana Maharshi. He adds, "But I did *not* say I was authorised by Sri Aurobindo to try to detain him here."

There was absolutely no reason why I should want to prevent you from going to the Maharshi. I have always encouraged people to go even in long past years when the Maharshi was unknown except to a few and I even sent several there who wanted to come here. Even if anyone wished to leave me and go to him, I would be the last person to interfere. Everyone has the right to choose his own Guru or, if he is dissatisfied or has lost his faith, to go elsewhere.

The Mother in her letter to you made it very clear that she approved of your visit and she even said it was the first thing to do. There can be no doubt therefore of her approval. Mine is contained in hers. 2 September 1935

*

> Ramana Maharshi seems to agree to some extent with your views. He seems to believe in Grace and takes the position that the Real Self is in the heart, something akin to the psychic being. That means he is less of a Shankara Adwaitin.

According to Brunton's description of the sadhana he (Brunton) practised under the Maharshi's instructions, it is the Overself one has to seek within, but he describes the Overself in a way that is at once the Psychic Being, the Atman and the Ishwara. So it is a little difficult to know what is the exact reading.

25 January 1936

*

> I quote the following remarks of Ramana Maharshi as recorded by Paul Brunton: "All human beings are ever wanting happiness, untainted with sorrow. They want to grasp a happiness which will not come to an end. The instinct is a true one."[3]

All? It is far too sweeping a generalisation. If he had said that is one very strong strain in human nature it could be accepted. But mark that it is in human physical consciousness only. The human vital tends rather to reject a happiness untainted by sorrow and to find it a monotonous, boring condition. Even if it accepts it, after a time it kicks over the traces and goes to some new painful or risky adventure.

> "Man's real nature *is* happiness. Happiness is inborn in the true self. His search for happiness is an unconscious search for his true self. The true self is imperishable; therefore, when a man finds it, he finds a happiness which does not come to an end" [*pp. 157–58*].

The true Self is quite a different proposition. But what it has is not happiness but something more.

> "Even they [the wicked and the criminal] sin because they are trying to find the self's happiness in every sin which they commit. This striving is instinctive in man, but they do not know that they are really seeking their true selves, and so they try these wicked ways first as a means to happiness" [*p. 158*].

Who is this "they"? I fear it is a very summary and misleading criminal psychology. To say that a Paris crook or apache steals, swindles, murders for the happiness of stealing, swindling, murdering is a little startling. He does it for quite other reasons. He does it as his métier just as you do your doctor's work. Do you really do your doctor's work because of the happiness you find in it?

---

[3] *Paul Brunton,* A Search in Secret India *(London: Rider & Company, [1934] 1943), p. 157.*

> People will not seek a sorrowless, untainted, everlasting happiness, even if shown the way — because they will consider it beyond their power to attain, or so it seems to me.

It is also with many because they prefer the joy mixed with sorrow, মানুষের হাসিকান্না, and consider your everlasting happiness an everlasting bore.

> About the criminals, I don't obviously include those types who are born with a criminal instinct: idiots and imbeciles.

Why not? If your generalisation is good for all, it must be good for them also.

> Ramana Maharshi also says that if you "meditate for an hour or two every day, you can then carry on with your duties. If you meditate in the right manner . . ."

A very important qualification.

> "then the current of mind induced will continue to flow even in the midst of your work. It is as though there were two ways of expressing the same idea; the same line which you take in meditation will be expressed in your activities." The result will be a gradual change of attitude towards people, events and objects. "Your actions will tend to follow your meditations of their own accord" [*p. 156*].

If the meditation brings poise, peace, a concentrated condition or even a pressure or influence, that *can* go on in the work, provided one does not throw it away by a relaxed or dispersed state of consciousness. That was why the Mother wanted people not only to be concentrated at pranam or meditation but to remain silent and absorb or assimilate afterwards and also to avoid things that relax or disperse or dissipate too much — precisely for this reason that so the effects of what she put on them might continue and the change of attitude the Maharshi speaks of will take place. But I am afraid most of the sadhaks have never understood or practised anything of the kind — they could not appreciate or understand her directions.

> Of course, he adds that setting apart time for meditation is for spiritual novices. You too wrote to me to meditate at least half an hour a day, if only to bring a greater concentration in the work.

It does bring the effects of meditation into work if one gives it a chance.

> You know that meditations are not always successful.

You forget that with numbers of people they are successful.

> Even if they were, how does this affect the whole day's work?

It doesn't, if one does not take care that it should do so — if one takes care, it can.

> Is it something like charging a battery which goes on inducing an automatic current?

It is not exactly automatic. It can be easily spoilt or left to sink into the subconscient or otherwise wasted. But with simple and steady practice and persistence it has the effect the Maharshi speaks of — he assumes, I suppose, such a practice. I am afraid your meditation is hardly simple or steady — too much *kasrat* and fighting with yourself.

> Ramana Maharshi seems a real Maharshi.

He is more of a Yogi than a Rishi, it seems to me. The happiness theory does not impress me, — it is as old as the mountains but not so solid. But he knows a lot about Yoga. 9 February 1936

*

> Ramana Maharshi has seen the truth. Can he not be called a Rishi?

He has experienced certain eternal truths by process of Yoga — I don't think it is by Rishilike intuition or illumination, nor has he the mantra. 10 February 1936

*

> I recently have read of some of Ramana Maharshi's disciples, who have the power of vision to a greater degree than *X*. But it seems that the beings they see do not come and help them in their difficulties. Usually these beings show them certain things which strengthen their faith; but their difficulties remain. It is they or their guru who have to solve them.

It is quite usual at a certain stage of the sadhana for people who have the faculty to see or hear the Devata of their worship and to receive constant directions from him or her with regard either to action or to sadhana. Defects and difficulties may remain, but that does not prevent the direct guidance from being a fact. The necessity of a Guru in such cases is to see that it is the right experience, the right voice or vision — for it is possible for a false guidance to come as it did with *Y* and *Z*.

> Moreover, Maharshi dissuaded his disciples from cultivating this power of vision, since it had nothing to do with the realisation of the self.

Maharshi is very much of a Vedantist. He does not believe in what we believe or in the descent etc. At the same time he himself has had experiences in which the Mother interfered in a visible, even material form and prevented him from doing what he intended to do. 7 July 1936

*

> It is evident that my ideas about visions and views on occult things were poor and ignorant from the very beginning. They

> became all the more ignorant when I read that the Maharshi, whom you have called a great man and one who "lives always in the light" and therefore in the truth consciousness, discouraged his disciples from using their occult gifts.

Because he is a great man does it follow that everything he thinks or says is right? or because he lives in the light, does it follow that his light is absolute and complete? The "Truth-Consciousness" is a phrase I use for the supermind. Maharshi is not in the supermind. He may be and is in a true Consciousness, but that is a different matter.

> They were not misusing their gifts, rather they were making spiritual progress through them.

He discouraged his disciples because his aim was the realisation of the inner Self and intuition — in other words the fullness of the spiritual Mind — visions and voices belong to the inner occult sense, therefore he did not want them to lay stress on it. I also discourage some from having any dealing with visions and voices because I see that they are being misled or in danger of being misled by false visions and false voices. That does not mean that visions and voices have no value. 9 July 1936

*

> If the true being behind the usual emotional heart is the psychic, how is it that Ramana Maharshi says, and all the Upanishads too say, that in the core of the heart is the Self, the Atman? Maharshi says the place of the Self is not in the centre of the chest but two fingers to the right — whereas the psychic is located in the middle.

The Upanishads do not say that about the Atman — what they say about the Atman is that it is in all and all is in it, it is everywhere and all this universe is the Atman. What they speak of as situated in the deeper inner heart is the Purusha in the heart or Antaratman.[4] This is in fact what we call the psychic being, *caitya puruṣa*.

---

[4] *aṅguṣṭhamātraḥ puruṣo antarātmā.*

The heart spoken of by the Upanishads corresponds with the physical cardiac centre; it is the *hṛtpadma* of the Tantriks. As a subtle centre, *cakra*, it is supposed to have its apex on the spine and to broaden out in front. Exactly where in this area one or another feels it does not matter much; to feel it there and be guided by it is the main thing. I cannot say what the Maharshi has realised — but what Brunton describes in his book as the Self is certainly this Purusha Antaratma but concerned more with *mukti* and a liberated action than with transformation of the nature. What the psychic realisation does bring is a psychic change of the nature purifying it and turning it altogether towards the Divine. After that or along with it comes the realisation of the cosmic Self. It is these two things that the old Yogas encompassed and through them they passed to Moksha, Nirvana or the departure into some kind of celestial transcendence. The Yoga practised here includes both liberation and transcendence, but it takes liberation or even a certain Nirvana, if that comes, as a first step and not as the last step of its siddhi. Whatever exit to or towards the Transcendent it achieves is an ascent accompanied by a descent of the power, light, consciousness that has been achieved and it is by such descents that is to be achieved the spiritual and supramental transformation here. This possibility does not seem to be admitted in the Maharshi's thought, — he considers the Descent as superfluous and logically impossible. "The Divine is here, from where will He descend?" is his argument. But the Divine is everywhere, he is above as well as within, he has many habitats, many strings to his bow of Power, there are many levels of his dynamic Consciousness and each has its own light and force. He is not confined to his position in the heart or to the single cord of the psycho-spiritual realisation. He has also his supramental station above the heart-centre and mind-centres and can descend from there if He wants to do so. 3 March 1937

*

> I am giving below the best brief account by Paul Brunton of the Maharshi's technique of discovering what Brunton calls the Overself. It occurs in the book named *A Message from*

> *Arunachala*:
>
> "When the mind is deeply engaged in a train of thought, it tends to become unconscious of external surroundings as concentration deepens. When this condition is carried to a profound extent, then the mind becomes one-pointed. If, at this degree, the subject of the meditation could be somehow dropped, the ensuing vacuum would swiftly cause the hidden world of man's soul to arise and fill it. In that apparent emptiness he would become aware of a new visitant, his Overself. Such is the essential principle behind this process of self-knowing. . . .
>
> "It [*the Maharshi's method*] consists in taking as the subject of meditation the inquiry, '*Who Am I*?' The mind must centre itself upon this single question, pressing deeply inward in the effort to discover the elusive inhabitant of the body. If the concentration is complete and the persistence undiminished; if the inquiry is conducted in the correct manner; if the person is really sincere; then an extraordinary thing will happen. The mental current of self-questioning, the attempt to ferret out what one really is, the watching of one's thoughts in the earlier part of the process, ultimately pins all thinking down to the single thought of personal existence. 'I' is the first thought sprayed up by the spring of life's being, but it is also the last. As this final thought is held in the focus of attention and questioned in a particular way, it suddenly disappears and the Overself takes its place, overwhelming both questioner and question in its divine stillness."[5]
>
> What do you think, from this, the Overself of the Maharshi is? Is it the Antaratman leading to or widening into the Cosmic Self or is it the silent Self of the Jnanis, the traditional Atman, realised directly?

[*Sri Aurobindo did not immediately answer this question, posed on 4 March 1937. The correspondent sent two reminders, to which Sri Aurobindo answered as follows on 6 and 7 March:*]

I had started answering your questions but it took on too long a development and I could not finish it — I don't suppose I shall find time.

---

[5] *Paul Brunton,* A Message from Arunachala (*London: Rider & Co., n.d. [1936]*), *pp. 205–7.*

In the first place I do not want to go farther into the question of the Maharshi's realisation which does not really concern us. As I have said comparisons are of no use; each path has its own aim and direction and method and the truth of one does not invalidate the truth of the other. The Divine (or if you like, the Self) has many aspects and can be realised in many ways — to dwell upon those differences is irrelevant and without use.

Transformation is a word that I have brought in myself (like supermind) to express certain spiritual concepts and spiritual facts of the integral Yoga. People are now taking them up and using them in senses which have nothing to do with the significance which I put into them. Purification of the nature by the "influence" of the Spirit is not what I mean by transformation; purification is only part of a psychic change or a psycho-spiritual change — the word besides has many senses and is very often given a moral or ethical meaning which is foreign to my purpose. What I mean by the spiritual transformation is something dynamic (not merely liberation of the self, or realisation of the One which can very well be attained without any descent). It is a putting on of the spiritual consciousness dynamic as well as static in every part of the being down to the subconscient. That cannot be done by the influence of the Self leaving the consciousness fundamentally as it is with only purification, enlightenment of the mind and heart and quiescence of the vital. It means a bringing down of a Divine Consciousness static and dynamic into all these parts and the entire replacement of the present consciousness by that. This we find unveiled and unmixed above mind, life and body and not in mind, life and body. It is a matter of the undeniable experience of many that this can descend and it is my experience that nothing short of its *full* descent can thoroughly remove the veil and mixture and effect the full spiritual transformation. No metaphysical or logical reasoning in the void as to what the Atman "must" do or can do or needs or needs not to do is relevant here or of any value. I may add that transformation is not the central object of other paths as it is of this Yoga — only so much purification and change is demanded by them as will lead to liberation and the beyond-life. The influence of the Atman can no doubt do that — a full descent of a new Consciousness into the whole nature from top to bottom to transform life here is not needed at all for the spiritual escape from life. 6 March 1937

*

Sundays are no better than other days. A number of people always choose it for long letters demanding replies. But apart from that to write what you demand of me would mean a volume, not a letter — especially as these are matters of which people know a great deal less than nothing and would either understand nothing or misunderstand everything. Some day I suppose I shall write something, but the supramental won't bear talking of now. Something about the spiritual transformation might be possible and I may finish the letter on that point[6] — if I find leisure, but that is doubtful. 7 March 1937

*

The methods described in the account are the well-established methods of Jnanayoga[7] — (1) one-pointed concentration followed by thought-suspension, (2) the method of distinguishing or finding out the true self by separating it from mind, life, body (this I have seen described by him more at length in another book) and coming to the pure I behind; this also can disappear into the Impersonal Self. The usual result is a merging in the Atman or Brahman — which is what one would suppose is meant by the Overself, for it is that which is the real Overself. This Brahman or Atman is everywhere, all is in it, it is in all, but it is in all not as an individual being in each but is the same in all — as the Ether is in all. When the merging into the Overself is complete, there is no ego, or distinguishable I, or any formed separative person or personality. All is *ekākāra* — an indivisible and indistinguishable Oneness either free from all formation or carrying all formations in it without being affected — for one can realise it in either way. There is a realisation in which all beings are moving in the one Self and this Self is there stable in all beings; there is another more complete and thoroughgoing in which not only is it so but all are vividly realised as the Self, the Brahman, the Divine. In the former, it is possible to dismiss all beings as creations of Maya, leaving the one Self alone as true — in the other it is easier to regard them as real manifestations of the Self, not as illusions. But one can also regard all beings as souls, independent realities in an eternal Nature dependent upon the One Divine. These are the characteristic realisations of the Overself familiar to the Vedanta. But on the other hand you say that this Overself is realised by the Maharshi as lodged in the heart-centre, and it is described by Brunton as something concealed which when it manifests appears as the real Thinker, source of all action, but now guiding thought and action in the Truth. Now the first description applies to the Purusha in the heart, described by the Gita as the Ishwara situated in the heart and by the Upanishads as the Purusha Antaratma; the second could apply also to the mental Purusha, *manomayaḥ prāṇaśarīra netā* of the Upanishads, the mental Being or Purusha who leads the life and the body. So your question is one which on the data I cannot easily answer. His Overself may be a combination of all these experiences, without any clear distinction being made or thought necessary between the various aspects. There are a thousand ways of approaching and realising the Divine and each way has its own experiences which have their own truth and stand really on a basis, one in essence but complex in aspects, common to all, but not expressed in the same way by all. There is not much use in discussing these variations; the important thing is to follow one's own way well and thoroughly. In this Yoga, one can realise the Psychic Being as a portion of the Divine seated in the heart with the Divine supporting it there — this psychic being takes charge of the sadhana and turns the whole being to the Truth and the Divine, with results in the mind, the vital, the physical consciousness which I need not go into here, — that is a first transformation. We realise it next as the one Self, Brahman, Divine, first *above* the body, life, mind and not only within the heart supporting them — above and free and unattached as the static Self but also extended in wideness through the world as the silent Self in all and dynamic too as the active cosmic Divine Being and Power, Ishwara-Shakti, containing the world and pervading it as well as transcending it, manifesting all cosmic aspects. But, what is most important for us, is that it manifests as a transcending Light, Knowledge, Power, Purity, Peace, Ananda of which we become aware above and which descends into the being and progressively replaces the ordinary consciousness by its own movements — that is the second transformation. We realise also the consciousness itself as moving upward, ascending through many planes physical, vital, mental, overmental to the supramental and Ananda planes. This is nothing new; it is stated in the Taittiriya Upanishad that there are five Purushas, the physical, the vital, the mental, the Truth Purusha (supramental) and the Bliss Purusha; it says that one has to draw the physical self up into the vital, the vital into the mental, the mental into the Truth Self, the Truth Self into the Bliss Self and so attain perfection. But in this Yoga we become aware not only of this taking up but of a pouring down of the powers of the higher Self, so that there comes in the possibility of a descent of the Supramental Self and nature to dominate and change our present nature and turn it from nature of Ignorance into nature of Truth-Knowledge (and through the supramental into nature of Ananda) — this is the third or supramental transformation. It does not always go in this order, for with many the spiritual descent begins first in an imperfect way before the psychic is in front and in charge, but the psychic development has to be attained before a perfect and unhampered spiritual descent can take place, and the last or supramental change is impossible so long as the two first have not become full and complete. That's the whole matter, put as briefly as possible. March 1934

---

[6] *The "letter" referred to here is presumably the one on pages 173–75, which Sri Aurobindo wrote below the date 6 March 1937. He apparently had not finished writing it when he wrote this note dated (Sunday) 7 March 1937. — Ed.*

[7] *This is Sri Aurobindo's reply to the correspondent's question of 4 March 1937 (see pp. 172–73), containing Paul Brunton's account of Ramana Maharshi's methods. — Ed.*

*

> I wish I had learned logic. One needs to know it before entering into a discussion with you. In a recent letter you say, as if logically: "If I think that the human plane is like the plane or planes of infinite Light, Power, Ananda, infallible Will Force, then I must be either a stark lunatic or a gibbering imbecile or a fool. . . ." Surely no one ever thought of you in these terms!

No need of logic to see that — a little common sense is sufficient. If anyone, no matter who he be, thinks that this world of ignorance, limitation and suffering is a plane of eternal and infinite Light, Power and Ananda, infallible Will and Power, what can he be but a self-deceiving fool or lunatic? And where then would be the need of bringing down the said Light, Power etc. from the higher planes, if it was already gambolling about all over this blessed earth and its absurd troop of human-animal beings? But perhaps you are of the opinion of Ramana Maharshi, "The Divine is here, how can he descend from anywhere?" The Divine may be here, but if he has covered here his Light with darkness of Ignorance and his Ananda with suffering, that, I should think, makes a big difference to the plane and, even if one enters into that sealed Light etc., it makes a difference to the Consciousness but very little to the Energy at work in this plane which remains of a dark or mixed character. 3 May 1937

Swami Ramdas

> In the April number of *The Vision*, Ramdas concludes his editorial letter with the words, "When all are kind to us, we realise God's own kindness, because God dwells in all — God is verily all."[8] But what cogent objection is there to continuing: "When all are cruel or indifferent to us, we realise God's own cruelty or indifference, because etc."? The stock answer is to acknowledge human incapacity to fathom an inscrutable Providence; but then why profess to do so in the case of kindness or similar circumstances of happiness (beauty, health, powers and capacities of different kinds)? It seems to

---

[8] The Vision, *vol. 1 (April 1934), p. 146.*

> be loading the dice — to be placing in the mouth of Providence some such words as "Heads I win, tails you lose".
>
> Earlier in the letter there is this sentence: "God is the one power who provides for and guides all the works of the Ashram [*i.e. Anandashram*] as He does also all the affairs of the world." This put me in mind of a missionary who, trying hard to be liberal and fair-minded about Taoism in China, acknowledged defeat when confronted with the spectacle of Taoist priests conducting a religious ceremony in a brothel for the success of the business. Would it be possible for you to indicate which of your writings would clear up my perplexity?

I have not read Ramdas's writings nor am I at all acquainted with his personality or what may be the level of his experience. The words you quote from him could be expressions either of a simple faith or of a pantheistic experience; evidently if they are used or intended to establish the thesis that the Divine is everywhere and is all and therefore all is good, being Divine, they are very insufficient for that purpose. But as an experience, it is a very common thing to have this feeling or realisation in the Vedantic sadhana — in fact without it there would be no Vedantic sadhana. I have had it myself on various levels of consciousness and in numerous forms and I have met scores of people who have had it very genuinely — not as an intellectual theory or perception, but as a spiritual reality which was too concrete for them to deny whatever paradoxes it may entail for the ordinary intelligence.

Of course it does not mean that all here is good or that in the estimation of values a brothel is as good as an Asram, but it does mean that all are part of one manifestation and that in the inner heart of the harlot as in the inner heart of the sage or saint there is the Divine. Again his experience is that there is one Force working in the world both in its good and in its evil — one Cosmic Force; it works both in the success (or failure) of the Asram and in the success (or failure) of the brothel. Things are done in this world by the use of the force, although the use made is according to the nature of the user, one uses it for the works of light, another for the works of

Darkness, yet another for a mixture. I don't think any Vedantin (except perhaps some modernised ones) would maintain that all is good here — the orthodox Vedantic idea is that all is here an inextricable mixture of good and evil, a play of the Ignorance and therefore a play of the dualities. The Christian missionaries, I suppose, hold that all that God does is morally good, so they are shocked by the Taoist priests aiding the work of the brothel by their rites. But do not the Christian priests invoke the aid of God for the destruction of men in battle and did not some of them sing Te Deums over a victory won by the massacre of men and the starvation of women and children? The Taoist who believes only in the Impersonal Tao is more consistent and the Vedantin who believes that the Supreme is beyond good and evil, but that the Cosmic Force the Supreme has put out here works through the dualities, therefore through both good and evil, joy and suffering, has a thesis which at least accounts for the double fact of the experience of the Supreme which is All Light, All Bliss and All Beauty and a world of mixed light and darkness, joy and suffering, what is fair and what is ugly. He says that the dualities come by a separative Ignorance and so long as you accept this separative Ignorance, you cannot get rid of that, but it is possible to draw back from it in experience and to have the realisation of the Divine in all and the Divine everywhere and then you begin to realise the Light, Bliss and Beauty behind all and this is the one thing to do. Also you begin to realise the one Force and you can use it or let it use you for the growth of the Light in you and others — no longer for the satisfaction of the ego and for the works of the ignorance and darkness.

As to the dilemma about the cruelty of things, I do not know what answer Ramdas would give. One answer might be that the Divine within is felt through the psychic being and the nature of the psychic being is that of the divine light, harmony, love, but it is covered by the mental and separative vital ego from which strife, hate, cruelty naturally come. It is therefore natural to feel in the kindness the touch of the Divine, while the cruelty is felt as a disguise or perversion in Nature, although that would not prevent the man who has the realisation from feeling and meeting the Divine behind the disguise. I have known even instances in which the perception of the Divine in all accompanied by an intense experience of universal love or a wide experience of an inner harmony had an extraordinary effect in making all around kind and helpful, even the most coarse and hard and cruel. Perhaps it is some such experience which is at the base of Ramdas's statement about the kindness. As for the Divine working, the experience of the Vedantic realisation is that behind the confused mixture of good and evil something is working that he realises as the Divine and in his own life he can look back and see what each step, happy or unhappy, meant for his progress and how it led towards the growth of his spirit. Naturally this comes fully as the realisation progresses; before that he had to walk by faith and may have often felt his faith fail and yielded to grief, doubt and despair for a time.

As for my writings, I don't know if there is any that would clear up the difficulty. You would find mostly the statement of the Vedantic experience, for it is that through which I passed and, though now I have passed to something beyond, it seems to me the most thorough-going and radical preparation for whatever is Beyond, though I do not say that it is indispensable to pass through it. But whatever the solution, it seems to me that the Vedantin is right in insisting that one must, to arrive at it, admit the two facts, the prevalence of evil and suffering here and the experience of that which is free from these things — and it is only by the progressive experience that one can get a solution — whether through reconciliation, a conquering descent or an escape. If we start from the basis taken as an axiom that the prevalence of suffering and evil in the present and in the hard, outward fact of things, disproves of itself all that has been experienced by sages and mystics of the other side, the realisable Divine, then no solution seems possible. 15 April 1934

J. Krishnamurti

At one time I tried to come into imaginative contact with J. Krishnamurti. I imagined as follows: He has acquired a quiet

> mind and a semi-quiet vital and has glimpses through them of the Self. He receives some things intuitively in his mind. But he goes no further than that. He has neither the knowledge nor the power nor bliss of the higher planes.

What he speaks is all purely mental — if he has any glimpses of realisation, they are in the mind only. 4 September 1933

*

I don't think there is much either in this man himself or in his teachings. It does not seem to me that he is a yogi in the true sense of the word but rather a man with some intellectual ability who is posing as a spiritual teacher. His photograph gives an impression of much pretension and vanity and an impression also of much falsity in the character. As for what he teaches, it does not hang together. If all books are worthless, why did he write a book and one of this kind telling people what they should do, what they should not do and if all teachers are unhelpful, why does he take the posture of a teacher since according to his own statement that cannot be helpful to anybody? Krishnamurti was, before he broke away on his own, certainly the disciple of two Gurus, Leadbeater and Annie Besant: if he has denounced Mrs. Besant, Krishnaprem is quite entitled to denounce him as a *gurudrohī*. 9 December 1949

Remarks on European Writers on Occultism

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

> On reading *La Vie de Mme Blavatsky*, I had the impression that there is nothing but vital occultism in her. Her life and work are concerned mostly with the supraphysical worlds and spirits and miraculous powers and Mahatmas.

You are quite right. She was an occultist, not a spiritual personality. What spiritual teachings she gave, seemed to be based on *intellectual* knowledge, not on realisation. Her attitude was Tibetan Buddhistic. She did not believe in God, but in Nirvana, miraculous powers and the Mahatmas. 31 March 1936

Alexandra David-Neel

> Recently someone gave me a book called *With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet* by Madame Alexandra David-Neel. I am sending you a photograph of her. I was impressed by the hardships she endured and by her study of Tibetan mystics. But I don't know whether what she writes is authentic.

This is a photograph of Madame David-Neel taken long ago when she was much younger. Her story about her travels is perfectly authentic. She came here once to Pondicherry and saw me on her way to the North — that was before the Mother came here. Mother knew her very well in Paris. Even before she went to Tibet she was a Buddhist and deeply versed in Buddhism. As to the authenticity of all in this book (magic, mysticism) Mother cannot say as she has not read it. But she is not a woman with any imagination or invention and has a rather hard positive mind, — if there are any "travellers' tales" she is more likely to have heard them than invented them.

Remarks on Public Figures in India

Sayajirao Gaekwar

> I find it strange that they have made the Gaekwar the President of the World Conference of Faiths. Is he a Hindu?

When I knew him the Gaekwar was a free-thinker without any religion; I don't know if he has altered his views since. Formally, he is of course a Hindu. 7 July 1936

*

> I read the Gaekwar's speech at the World Conference of Faiths. It is full of commonplace ideas about brotherhood, fellowship and goodwill. These ideas seem to have become mere catchwords and it is doubtful if they can be of any help in solving the problems of modern life.

One can't expect anything more than catchwords and the most common ones from the Gaekwar on such subjects and occasions — in fact the whole affair of this Conference is likely to be little else. There are people who have a faith in words and think that with them they can sweep back the realities of life and embody effectively the realities of spirit. 9 July 1936

Mahatma Gandhi

As for Gandhi, why should you suppose that I am so tender for the faith of the Mahatma? I do not call it faith at all, but a rigid mental belief, and what he terms soul-force is only a strong vital will which has taken a religious turn. That, of course, can be a tremendous force for action, but unfortunately Gandhi spoils it by his ambition to be a man of reason, while in fact he has no reason in him at all, never was reasonable at any moment in his life and, I suppose, never will be. What he has in its place is a remarkable type of unintentionally sophistic logic. Well, what this reason, this amazingly, precisely unreliable logic brings about is that nobody is ever sure and, I don't think, he is himself really sure what he will do next. He has not only two minds, but three or four minds, and all depends on which will turn up topmost at a particular moment and how it will combine with the others. There would be no harm in that, on the contrary there might be an advantage if there were a central Light somewhere choosing for him and shaping the decision to the need of the action. He thinks there is and calls it God — but it has always seemed to me that it is his own mind that decides and most of the time decides wrongly. Anyhow I cannot imagine Lenin or Mustapha Kemal not knowing their own minds or acting in this way — even their strategic retreats were steps towards an end clearly conceived and executed. But whatever it be, it is all mind-action and vital-force in Gandhi. So why should he be taken as an example of the defeat of the Divine or of a spiritual Power? I quite allow that there has been something behind Gandhi greater than himself and you can call it the Divine or a Cosmic Force which has used him, but then there is that behind everybody who is used as an instrument for world ends, — behind Kemal and Lenin also, — so that is not germane to the matter. 29 July 1932

*

> This second fast of Mahatma Gandhi of three weeks has disquieted me a little. There seems to be no way out, for Gandhi asserts that he can break his irrevocable fast only if he is persuaded that the inner voice which enjoins the fast on him is the voice not of God but of the Devil. I wonder whose voice it is though? Can it be anything but disastrous augury?

I don't think it was the voice of God that raged and thundered till Gandhi decided to starve himself on to the danger line — it looks as if it were the other fellow. One can only hope that he will scrape through somehow and that the doctors are wrong as they most often are when they opine in the plural; but the last experiment was not encouraging. And as this time there seems to be no reason whatever for this inspired procedure and no practical or practicable object set before it, there is no tangible means either of bringing it to a timely close. What an extraordinary ignorance of spiritual things to take any "inner" shout for the command of the Supreme! 5 May 1933

*

> Yesterday I thought how nice it would be if Gandhiji came here for the truth which he is seeking. At times he hears some "voice" he says.

I don't think he would accept the Truth that is here. His mind is too rigid for it. 22 July 1933

*

> The letter to Govindbhai from Gandhiji has created a stir in the atmosphere and people are busy speculating.[1] Some think it would be an event useful to the world if he could see you. I wonder if even half an hour's interview would help our inner work or its outward manifestation. Perhaps people are excited about the possibility that the Truth that is here and is accepted by us will be accepted by a person who is called the world's greatest man.

Gandhi has his own work, his own ideal and dharma — how can he open himself to receive anything from here?

28 December 1933

*

> I heard that Gandhi has written a letter expressing his desire to have an interview with Sri Aurobindo.

I don't see how I can see him — the time has not come when I can depart from my rule.[2] 29 December 1933

---

[1] *In December 1933, Mahatma Gandhi wrote to Govindbhai Patel, a disciple of Sri Aurobindo then living in the Ashram, asking whether it would be possible for him to meet Sri Aurobindo. Govindbhai communicated Gandhi's request to Sri Aurobindo. On 2 January 1934, Gandhi wrote directly to Sri Aurobindo asking for a face-to-face meeting. Extracts from Govindbhai's and Gandhi's letters, and Sri Aurobindo's complete replies, are published in* Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest, *volume 36 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 442–44. — Ed.*

*

> I was glad when *X* informed me that Gandhi is not coming here. I had an impression that his coming just before our occasion [*the darshan of 21 February*] would create a disturbance in the atmosphere.

It would have meant a very serious and quite unprofitable and unnecessary disturbance. 4 February 1934

*

> It seems some people from the town went to see Gandhi and asked him why he had cancelled his visit to the Asram. Gandhi is supposed to have said that it was because Sri Aurobindo was not willing to see him, after which he showed a copy of the notice which was put on our notice board — the one prohibiting members of the Asram from attending Gandhi's arrival procession, etc.[3] I don't believe Gandhi actually had a copy of the notice but some people in town must have known of it.

That is all nonsense. Gandhi's decision not to come here was made before the notice was put on the board. My decision to issue the notice and his decision not to come may have coincided — but how could he know it except by telepathy?

> In one of his letters to Govindbhai, Gandhi said that he would be much disappointed if he did not see Sri Aurobindo. If that was the case, I wonder why he couldn't wait till the 21st to have Darshan.

I suppose the disappointment was nothing more than a phrase — meaning, I would so much have liked to see what kind of a person you are. If I have read his last letter to Govindbhai aright, his request was dictated by curiosity rather than anything else.

---

[2] *After November 1926, Sri Aurobindo made it a rule not to meet with anyone, not even his disciples. — Ed.*

[3] *See Notice of 3 February 1934, in* Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest, *p. 536. — Ed.*

If anybody expected him to come here seeking for Truth, it was absurd — he has his own fixed way of seeing things and is not likely to change it. 9 February 1934

*

> Yesterday Gandhi asked permission to see the Mother. I heard that Mother asked Govindbhai to meet him and explain her inability to see him.

Gandhi wrote to Govindbhai and from his letter it seemed as if he were still expecting to see the Mother and the Asram or at least expecting an answer. In view of this persistence we sent Govindbhai to explain to him that it was impossible for the Mother to receive his visit. 23 February 1934

*

> It is curious that mosquitoes do not bite me. Perhaps they do not like my blood or they do not bite me because I don't kill them. Here is an example of the efficacy of the truth of Ahimsa. But if this is true, why with all the Ahimsa Gandhi practises has the government not given up their enmity towards him? Of course, the meaning of Ahimsa can be extended to All-love, and, as it says in one Upanishad, everything that is not compatible with the Higher Self is Himsa.

Mosquitoes do have strong preferences (and dislikes) in the matter of blood. One person is sleeping in a room, no mosquitoes — another enters, immediately there is a cloud of mosquitoes. Also as between two persons in a room, they will swarm round one and leave the other.

I don't think the Ahimsa principle works like that with Governments — after all Gandhi is trying to do to them or their interests immense harm and you can't expect his mere non-violence to make them love him for that or leave him alone. On the other hand Ahimsa does work (though not invariably) with animals — if you don't kill them, they don't as a rule go out of their way to kill you — unless they are frightened or mad or otherwise abnormal or unless it is their rule to kill. I don't know what effect it can have on mosquitoes.

All-love is a different matter — it has sometimes a powerful effect, very powerful, in conciliating automatically men, animals, Nature itself. The only beings who do not respond are the Asuras and Rakshasas. 11 March 1934

*

> Someone was speaking to me about Gandhi's seven-day fast. I said: "Is it to create an earthquake for the sake of the Harijans? At least his own earth (body) will quake."

It seems to be very foolish, these fasts — as if they could alter anything at all. A fast can at most affect one's own condition, but how can it "atone" for the doings of others or change their nature? 12 July 1934

*

> In a recent statement, Gandhi criticises the attitude taken by Dr. Ambedkar and his followers at the Bombay Presidency Depressed Classes Conference. They passed a resolution recommending the "complete severance of the Depressed Classes from the Hindu fold and their embracing any other religion which guaranteed them equal status and treatment". About this Gandhi says: "But religion is not like a house or a cloak, which can be changed at will. It is more an integral part of one's self than of one's body. Religion is the tie that binds one to one's Creator and whilst the body perishes, as it has to, religion persists even after death."[4] Is there any truth in what Gandhi says? Why should a particular religion persist after death? Why should one be bound to one form of religion if one feels the necessity of a different approach to Truth?

If it is meant by the statement that the form of religion is something permanent and unchangeable, then that cannot be accepted. But if religion here means one's way of communion with the Divine, then it is true that that is something belonging to the inner being and cannot be changed like a house or a cloak for the sake of some personal, social or worldly convenience. If a change is to be made, it can only be for an inner spiritual reason, because of some development from within. No one can be bound to any form of religion or any particular creed or system, but if he changes the one he has accepted for another, for external reasons, that means he has inwardly no religion at all and both his old and his new religion are only an empty formula. At bottom that is, I suppose, what the statement drives at. Preference for a different approach to the Truth or the desire of inner spiritual self-expression are not the motives of the recommendation of change to which objection is made by the Mahatma here; the object proposed is an enhancement of social status and consideration which is no more a spiritual motive than conversion for the sake of money or marriage. If a man has no religion in himself, he can change his credal profession for any motive; if he has, he cannot; he can only change it in response to an inner spiritual need. If a man has a bhakti for the Divine in the form of Krishna, he can't very well say "I will swap Krishna for Christ so that I may become socially respectable."

---

[4] *M. K. Gandhi, "Statement to the Press" (15 October 1935), in* The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 62 (New Delhi: The Publications Division, 1975), p. 37.*

19 October 1935

*

> Gandhi says the following in a recent article: "I hold that complete realization is impossible in this embodied life. Nor is it necessary. A living immovable faith is all that is required for reaching the full spiritual height attainable by human beings."[5] Your opinion on the matter?

I do not know what Mahatma Gandhi means by complete realisation. If he means a realisation with nothing more to realise, no farther development possible, then I agree — I have myself spoken of farther divine progression, an infinite development. But the question is not that; the question is whether the Ignorance can be transcended, whether a complete essential realisation turning the consciousness from darkness to light, from an instrument of the Ignorance seeking for Knowledge into an instrument or rather a manifestation of Knowledge proceeding to greater Knowledge, Light enlarging, heightening into greater Light, is or is not possible. My view is that this conversion is not only possible, but inevitable in the spiritual evolution of the being here. The embodiment of life has nothing to do with it. This embodiment is not of life, but of consciousness and its energy, of which life is only one phase or force. As life has developed mind, and the embodiment has modified itself to suit this development (mind is precisely the main instrument of ignorance seeking for knowledge), so mind can develop supermind which is in its nature knowledge not seeking for itself, but manifesting itself by its own automatic power, and the embodiment can again modify itself or be modified from above so as to suit this development. Faith is a necessary means for arriving at realisation because we are ignorant and do not yet know that which we are seeking to realise; faith is indeed knowledge giving the ignorance an intimation of itself previous to its own manifestation, it is the gleam sent before by the yet unrisen Sun. When the Sun shall rise there will be no longer any need of the gleam. The supramental knowledge supports itself, it does not need to be supported by faith; it lives by its own certitude. You may say that farther progression, farther development will need faith. No, for the farther development will proceed on a basis of knowledge, not of Ignorance. We shall walk in the light of knowledge towards its own wider vistas of self-fulfilment. 7 July 1936

---

[5] *M. K. Gandhi, "Where Is the Living God?" (13 June 1936), in* The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 63 (New Delhi: The Publications Division, 1976), p. 58.*

*

I would prefer to avoid all public controversy especially if it touches in the least on politics. Gandhi's theories are like other mental theories built on a basis of one-sided reasoning and claiming for a limited truth (that of non-violence and of passive resistance) a universality which it cannot have. Such theories will always exist so long as the mind is the main instrument of human truth seeking. To spend energy trying to destroy such theories is of little use; if destroyed they are replaced by others equally limited and partial.

As for imperialism, that is no new thing — it is as old as the human vital; there was never a time in known human history when it was not in existence. To get rid of it means to change human nature or at least to curb it by a superior power. Our work is not to fight these things but to bring down a higher nature and a Truth-creation which will make spiritual Light and Power the chief force in terrestrial existence. 10 October 1936

*

> Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have said: "To be born as a 'Bhangi' was the result of great *puṇya* in previous birth. He [*Gandhi*] did not know what qualifications determined the birth of one man as Bhangi and another as Brahmin, but from the point of view of benefit to society the one was no whit lower than the other."[6] This seems like nonsense to me. How can he say that through *puṇya* (righteous acts) in previous births people go to a life in the lowest order of human society?

The view taken by the Mahatma in these matters is Christian rather than Hindu — for the Christian self-abasement, humility, the acceptance of a low status to serve humanity or the Divine are things which are highly spiritual and the noblest privilege of the soul. This view does not admit any hierarchy of castes; the Mahatma accepts castes but on the basis that all are equal before the Divine, a bhangi doing his dharma is as good as the Brahmin doing his, there is division of function but no hierarchy of functions. That is one view of things and the hierarchic view is another, both having a standpoint and logic of their own which the mind takes as wholly valid but which only corresponds to a part of the reality. All kinds of work are equal before the Divine and all men have the same Brahman within them, is one truth, but that development is not equal in all is another. The idea that it needs special *puṇya* to be born as a bhangi is of course one of those forceful exaggerations of an idea which are common with the Mahatma and impress greatly the mind of his hearers. The idea behind is that his function is an indispensable service to the society, quite as much as the Brahmin's, but that being disagreeable it would need a special moral heroism to choose it voluntarily and he thinks as if the soul freely chose it as such a heroic service and as a reward of righteous acts — that is hardly likely. The service of the scavenger is indispensable under certain conditions of society, it is one of those primary necessities without which society can hardly exist and the cultural development of which the Brahmin life is part could not have taken place. But obviously the cultural development is more valuable than the service of the physical needs for the progress of humanity as opposed to its first static condition and that development can even lead to the minimising and perhaps the eventual disappearance by scientific inventions of the need for the functions of the scavenger. But that I suppose the Mahatma would not approve of as it is machinery and a departure from the simple life. In any case it is not true that the bhangi life is superior to the Brahmin life and the reward of especial righteousness. On the other hand the traditional conception that a man is superior to others because he is born a Brahmin is not rational or justifiable. A spiritual or cultured man of Pariah birth is superior in the divine values to an unspiritual and worldly-minded or a crude and uncultured Brahmin. Birth counts, but the basic value is in the man himself, the soul behind and the degree to which it manifests itself in his nature. 23 December 1936

---

[6] *M. K. Gandhi, "Address to Congress Volunteers" (21 December 1936). Reported in the* Hindu *and other newspapers, and reproduced in* The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, *vol. 64 (New Delhi: The Publications Division, 1976), pp. 162–63.*

Jawaharlal Nehru

> I have just finished Jawaharlal's autobiography. I send you some citations which moved me deeply. I caught myself today praying for him that he may have peace. How I wish he could do yoga for a year at least, if only to realise the divine harmony within him — even in this age when times are so grievously "out of joint".

I have not read Jawaharlal's book and know nothing of his life except what is public; now of course I have no time for reading.

But he bears on himself the stamp of a very fine character, a nature of the highest sattwic kind, full of rectitude and a high sense of honour: a man of the finest Brahmin type with what is best in European education added — that is the impression he gives. I must say that Mother was struck by his photograph when she first saw it in the papers, singling it out from the mass of ordinary *eminent* people.

But peace? Peace is never easy to get in the life of the world and never constant, unless one lives deep within and bears the external activities as only a surface front of our being. And the work he has to do is the least peaceful of all. If Buddha had to lead the Indian National Congress, well! For the spiritual life there is perhaps no immediate possibility: his mind stands in between, for it has seized strongly the Socialist dream of social perfection by *outward* change as the thing to be striven for and has made that into a sort of religion. The best possible on earth has been made by his mind its credo: the something beyond he does not believe in, the something more here would seem to him a dream without basis, I suppose. But pray for him, of course. He is a man with a strong psychic element and in this life or another that must go beyond the mind to find its source.

13 September 1936

Subhas Chandra Bose

I have read your correspondence with Subhas Bose.[7] Your main point is of course quite the right thing to answer; all this insistence upon action is absurd if one has not the light by which to act. Yoga must include life and not exclude it does not mean that we are bound to accept life as it is with all its stumbling ignorance and misery and the obscure confusion of human will and reason and impulse and instinct which it expresses. The advocates of action think that by human intellect and energy making an always new rush everything can be put right; the present state of the world after a development of the intellect and a stupendous output of energy for which there is no historical parallel is a signal proof of the illusion under which they labour. Yoga takes the stand that it is only by a change of consciousness that the true basis of life can be discovered; from within outward is indeed the rule. But within does not mean some quarter inch behind the surface. One must go deep and find the soul, the self, the Divine Reality within us and only then can life become a true expression of what we can be instead of a blind and always repeated confused blur of the inadequate and imperfect thing we were. The choice is between remaining in the old jumble and groping about in the hope of stumbling on some discovery or standing back and seeking the Light within till we discover and can build the godhead within and without us. 16 June 1932

---

[7] *All the letters in this group except the one dated 2 July 1938 were written to Dilip Kumar Roy, who was a close friend of Subhas Chandra Bose. — Ed.*

*

> I want to send Chapter 1 of "The Yoga of Divine Works" to Subhas. It will, I am sure, be just the aliment for his soul and may work a sort of miracle as it did in me. So unless you have a particular reason, could you see your way to allowing me to send him this chapter by tomorrow's post?

I am not sure that Subhas is prepared to receive any effect from it — it is only because your inner preparation had proceeded to a point at which you could feel something of what was behind the words that it had an effect upon you. All the same — you can send it, if you like. 26 December 1932

*

> I received this post-card from Subhas in the last mail. He had written it before starting for Calcutta by aeroplane. Now he is practically a prisoner — a home-internee really — at his residence. I wonder what work he will be doing now. . . . He used once to meditate and see light and had a real bhakti — had even turned a sannyasi once. And now he says that seeking the Divine is useless inactive work!

I had never a very great confidence in Subhas's yoga-turn getting the better of his activism — he has two strong ties that prevent it, ambition and need to act and lead in the vital and in the mind a mental idealism — these two things are the great fosterers of illusion. The spiritual path needs a certain amount of realism — one has to see the real value of the things that are — which is very little, except as steps in evolution. Then one can either follow the spiritual static path of rest and release or the spiritual dynamic path of a greater truth to be brought down into life. But otherwise — 12 December 1934

*

> I wrote a letter to Subhas this morning in reply to his exhorting me to come away, assuring me that all my friends want me back and that nobody is cross with me etc. etc. I wrote that I must be faithful to the call of my soul and to my Guru whom I do believe to be the Divine incarnate. Perhaps he will smile the well-known "the old old story" smile of our up-to-date rationalism.

Well, his also is the old old story repeated without any satisfactory result or liberating end. 20 August 1935

*

> Here is Subhas the despairer: "It is no use trying to argue with you. You are quite blind. Reason is but the slave of your faith. When I think how a person of your calibre can surrender his reasoning in this way, I feel like despairing of my country. Everywhere we find the same thing. You regard Sri Aurobindo as God Incarnate. So many regard Mahatma Gandhi in the same light. My own mother — whose sincerity I cannot doubt — has a guru whom she regards as God incarnate." — *Extract from a letter of Subhas Chandra Bose to Dilip Kumar Roy, dated Vienna, 23 December 1935.*

As for the desperate Subhas, why the deuce does he want everybody to agree with him and follow his line of conduct or belief? That is the never realised dream of the politician; we, incarnate Gods, Gurus, spiritual men, are more modest in our hopes and are satisfied with a handful or, if you like, an Asramful of disciples, and even we don't ask for that, — they come, they come.

So are we not nearer to reason and wisdom than the political leaders? Unless of course we make the mistake of founding a universal religion, but that is not our case. Moreover, Subhas upbraids you for losing your reason in blind faith, but what is his view of things except a reasoned faith; you believe according to your faith, which is quite natural, he believes according to his opinion, which is natural also but no better so far as the likelihood of getting at the true truth of things is in question. His opinion is according to his reason? So is the opinion of his political opponents according to their reason, yet they affirm the very opposite idea to his. How is reason going to show which is right? The opposite parties can argue till they are blue in the face, they won't be anywhere nearer a decision. In the end he prevails whom the greater force or whom the trend of things favours. But who can look at the world and say that the trend of things is always (or ever) according to right reason — whatever this thing called right reason may be? As a matter of fact there is no universal infallible reason which can decide and be the umpire between conflicting opinions, there is only my reason, your reason, x's, y's, z's reason multiplied up to the discordant innumerable. Each reasons according to his view of things, his opinion, that is, his mental constitution and mental preference. So what's the use of running down faith which after all gives something to hold on to amidst the contradictions of an enigmatic universe? If one can get at a knowledge that knows, it is another matter; but so long as we have only an ignorance that argues, well, there is a place still left for faith — even, faith may be a glint from the knowledge that knows, however far off, and meanwhile there is not the slightest doubt that it helps to get things done. There's a bit of reasoning for you! just like all other reasoning too, convincing to the convinced, but not to the unconvincible, i.e., who don't agree with the ground upon which the reasoning dances. Logic after all is only a measured dance of the mind, nothing else.

*

> The day before yesterday I was telling someone how Bertrand Russell, in his *In Praise of Idleness*, predicted with almost irrefutable logic the coming collapse of war-mad Europe seized with lunacy born of horror on the one hand and greed on the other. Just listen: "We are all more aware of our fellow-citizens than we used to be, more anxious, if we are virtuous, to do them good," — like Dr. Stanley Jones, what? — "and in any case to make them do us good. We do not like to think of anyone lazily enjoying life, however refined may be the quality of his enjoyment. We feel that everybody ought to be doing something to help on the great cause (whatever it may be), the more so as so many bad men are working against it and ought to be stopped. We have not leisure of mind, therefore, to acquire any knowledge except such as will help us in the fight for whatever it may happen to be that we think important."[8] What would the rational Subhas, himself a worshipper of Russell's keen logic, say to this cynicism?

Poor Subhas! But he is a politician and the rationality of politicians has perforce to move within limits; if they were to allow themselves to be as clear-minded as that, their occupation would be gone. It is not everybody who can be as cynical as Birkenhead or as philosophical as C. R. Das and go on with political reason or political humbug in spite of knowing what it all came to — from *arrivisme* in the one and from patriotism in the other case.

> In another essay, Russell writes: "When the indemnities were imposed, the Allies regarded themselves as consumers: they considered that it would be pleasant to have the Germans work for them as temporary slaves, and to be able themselves to consume, without labour, what the Germans had produced. Then, after the Treaty of Versailles had been concluded, they suddenly remembered that they were also producers, and that the influx of German goods which they had been demanding would ruin their industries. . . . The plain fact is that the governing classes of the world are too ignorant and stupid to be able to think through such a problem, and too conceited

---

[8] *Bertrand Russell,* In Praise of Idleness and Other Essays *(London: George Allen & Unwin, 1935), pp. 35–36.*

> to ask advice of those who might help them" [*pp.* 66–67]. Well, what would Subhas as a ruling patriot say to this? How support his reason? All these meeting-makers are reasonable people, aren't they?

Yes, but human reason is a very convenient and accommodating instrument and works only in the circle set for it by interest, partiality and prejudice. The politicians reason wrongly or insincerely and have power to enforce the results of their reasoning, so make a mess of the world's affairs, — the intellectuals reason and see what their minds show them, which is far from being always the truth, for it is generally decided by intellectual preference and the mind's inborn or education-inculcated angle of vision, — but even when they see it, they have no power to enforce it. So between blind power and seeing impotence the world moves, achieving destiny through a mental muddle.

> To conclude, Russell writes in the same essay: "When a nation, instead of an individual, is seized with lunacy, it is thought to be displaying remarkable industrial wisdom" [*p.* 67]. *Qu'en dites-vous*?

Seized with lunacy? But that implies the nation is ordinarily led by reason? Is it so? Or even by common sense? Masses of men act upon their vital push, not according to reason — individuals too mostly, though they frequently call in their reason as a lawyer to plead the vital's case. 30 January 1936

*

> Sarojini Naidu's daughter Padmaja told me today that when Subhas issued his manifesto from Europe to the effect that he and Jawaharlal were great friends and at one on every point, he actually had been scheming from Europe to bring J. down in the public eye. I could not believe this, I told her point blank. She averred it was absolutely true. I am very pained to hear it. For though I feel there is not a little exaggeration in this business, I fear there may be substance of truth somewhere in this dirty story.

I would certainly not hang anybody on the testimony of Padmaja: she has too much of a delight in scandal-mongering of the worst kind; but I suppose she would not cite Jawaharlal as a witness if there were nothing in it. The question is: how much exaggeration? I am afraid it is not at all impossible that Subhas should say one thing to Jawaharlal and quite another to somebody else. Politics is like that, a dirty and corrupting business full of "policy", "strategy", "tactics", "diplomacy": in other words, lying, tricking, manoeuvring of all kinds. A few escape the corruption but most don't. It has after all always been a trade or art of Kautilya from the beginning, and to touch it and not be corrupted is far from easy. For it is a field in which people fix their eyes on the thing to be achieved and soon become careless about the character of the means, while ambition, ego and self-interest come pouring in to aid the process. Human nature is prone enough to crookedness as it is, but here the ordinary restraints put upon it fail to be at all effective. That however is general: in a particular case one can't pronounce without knowing the circumstances more at first hand or before having seen the documents cited. 20 October 1936

*

> For Subhas Bose, country is the one thing that matters and nothing else.

Excuse me — country is not the only thing for Subhas Bose — there is also Subhas Bose and he looms very large. You have illusions about these political heroes — I have seen them close and have none. 2 July 1938

*

I am not responsible for anything that may have been said by any sadhak in the Asram. I have not said that Subhas was my enemy and that anybody sympathising with him ought to leave the Asram. If this statement was made, it certainly did not have my authority. There is absolutely no reason why you should say anything contrary to your feelings or to what you believe to be the truth, or feel that in not doing so you were going contrary to what was expected of you and think of leaving the Asram. The question you put me as to what you should do, does not really arise, for I would never make any such demand on anybody. I hope that will clear your mind and restore your peace.

30 March 1942

*

In all this imbroglio about the book on Subhas[9] one thing is positive that I never gave any such order and it ought to have been evident to everybody that I could not have done it since I permitted the publication of your book and the prohibition of it would have been too outrageous a self-contradiction to be even thinkable. . . .

Behind all that is an old story which may account for everything. You will remember that both the Mother and I were very angry against Subhas for having brought the Japanese into India and reproached him with it as a treason and crime against the Motherland. For if they had got in, it would have been almost impossible to get them out. The Mother knows the Japanese nation well and was positive about that. Okawa, the leader of the Black Dragon (the one who shammed mad and got off at the Tokyo trial) told her that if India revolted against the British, Japan would send her Navy to help, but he said that he would not like the Japanese to land because if they once got hold of Indian soil they would never leave it, and it was true enough. If the Japanese had overrun India, and they would have done it if a powerful Divine intervention had not prevented it and turned the tables on them, they would have joined the Germans in Mesopotamia and the Caucasus and nothing could have saved Europe and Asia from being overrun. This would have meant the destruction of our work and a horrible fate for this country and for the world. You can understand therefore the bitterness of our feelings at that time against Subhas and his association with the Axis and the disaster to his country for which he would have been responsible. Incidentally, instead of being liberated in 1948, India would have had to spend a century or several centuries in a renewed servitude. When therefore the Mother heard that you were writing a book eulogising Subhas, she disapproved strongly of any such thing issuing out of the Ashram and she wanted that you should be asked not to publish it. . . .

---

[9] The Subhash I Knew, *by Dilip Kumar Roy (Bombay, Nalanda Publications, 1946).*

. . . Subsequently she met one of the chief lieutenants of Subhas, a man from Hyderabad who had been his secretary and companion in the submarine by which he came from Germany to Japan, and he recounted his daily talks in the submarine and strongly defended his action. From what he said it was evident although we still regarded Subhas's action as a reckless and dangerous folly, that the aspect of a crime against the country disappeared from it. Since then Mother modified her attitude towards Subhas; moreover, the war was receding into the past and there was no longer any room for the poignancy of the feeling it had raised and it was better that all that should be forgotten. But although almost a year had passed, the impressions made at that time have remained in the minds of many and account for the attitude of *X* and *Y* to your book and must also be the psychological source of *X*'s misunderstanding about the supposed order.

We regret that a blow should have fallen on you and the pain accompanying it when no blow was really given or intended. Anyhow, the matter has been rectified; the library has been informed that there has been a misunderstanding, no prohibition was actually made and the book must be issued to sadhaks.

5 April 1947

Remarks on Public Figures in Europe

Kaiser Wilhelm II

> The Kaiser gave up at the last moment when he could have assumed a dictatorship. Napoleon did the same after Waterloo.

In Napoleon's case they say it was the result of his disease, he was no longer quite his old self. The Kaiser was a man without any real strong stuff in him to face adversity. In the German case they simply lost hope after the American intervention and the failure of the submarine campaign — there was no way out any longer and they felt exhausted by a hopeless struggle. But the end was inevitable. After the turning back at Compiègne all the balance of forces had passed to the other side. 26 October 1934

The Kaiser, Hitler and His Lieutenants

Hitler and his chief lieutenants Goering and Goebbels are certainly vital beings or possessed by vital beings, so you can't expect common sense from them. The Kaiser, though ill-balanced, was a much more human person; these people are hardly human at all. The nineteenth century in Europe was a preeminently human era — now the vital world seems to be descending there.

18 September 1936

Stalin, Lenin and Trotsky

> From what I read about Stalin's life, it seems that it was he who saved Bolshevism (even when Lenin was there) and turned several catastrophes into successes either by military operations or tactics. If Lenin was the mind of the Bolshevist Revolution, Stalin was its vital — a very solid, steadfast and intuitive vital.

But where did you read that? It must be someone who since Stalin became powerful has exaggerated his share in the work. When Lenin lived he alone was all-powerful and dictated the whole policy changing it whenever that was needed. As for military operations, the man who saved Bolshevism in history was Trotsky who organised the Red Army, created it out of nothing and directed its operations. Stalin was not so much the vital as the physical mind working out details; after Lenin's death he took charge and arranged everything by this faculty.

25 January 1937

Edward Windsor

> Edward VIII is becoming a plain-clothes sentinel now (once more) of his realm instead of being quondam august keeper! Most are lost in a ferment.

But I don't understand. Why should there be a ferment about this affair among the "most"? What is Edward Windsor to them or they to Edward Windsor? He has very sensibly kicked over the traces and chucked the unpleasant work of being a King who can do nothing except nod his head like a marionette to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet and preferred to have his own life as a man and not a pseudo-king. Quite natural. What is said is that he was too democratic and socialistic for the British Parliamentarians, wanted to create a free and united Ireland, give full Dominion autonomy without reserve to India, do something for the workers etc. and generally made himself a vigorous nuisance to Baldwin and Co. Hence they took the first opportunity to put him in the dilemma "Be a puppet or go." It is very probable. Anyhow it seems that the new George will suit them very well. So all is for the best in the best possible of all possible Baldwinian worlds and there is nothing to be in a ferment over.

12 December 1936

Remarks on Indian Affairs
1930–1946

The Civil Disobedience Movement

> I have received a letter from my father. He says he read Pandit Sunderlal's speech published in a newspaper, in which he has reportedly stated that you have asked your disciples to join the Civil Disobedience Movement.

You can write to your father that Sri Aurobindo has given no such orders to his disciples. The statement of Sunderlal has no foundation.

4 May 1930

Indian Independence and the Muslims

> The Hindu mentality in politics is such that they would a thousand times prefer British rule to any Mahomedan influence, even if it be only a little.

That was never the view of the Nationalists, even those who were ardent Hindus who would prefer Moslem to British rule.

> Even if Swaraj itself were postponed for a long time, it would be less of a shock to anybody in the Ashram than if Mahomedans got a little right.

The Asram is not concerned with politics; but I cannot believe without proof that this is the state of their mentality.

17 November 1932

Dominion Status

> The Mother has said that only a minor portion of the government will remain in British hands.

That seems to be a description of "Dominion Status". In the Dominions the British Government have only a nominal power, not any real sovereignty.

It is not the time to speak of these things — for we have kept politics out of our scope. What we have to do is not to trouble ourselves about it but to get the spiritual realisation. The rest will work itself out according to the Divine Decree.

26 January 1935

India and the Expected World War

> If England is involved in the war, she will naturally call on India for men and money. And to obtain it, she will have to hold out the bait of freedom. But India won't commit the same foolish mistake she was led to commit during the last war.

What India? The Legislative Assembly? You think it has force enough to exact freedom as a price of some military help? Must have changed much if they can do that. 5 October 1935

Prospects for India after Independence

> In the *Times*, there are some predictions by Mme Laila saying that India's civilisation, philosophy, culture etc. will spread in the world very slowly but at last it will be recognised as the best culture. She has however also predicted that India will always remain under Britain. Perhaps it is not advisable for India to get freedom soon, because even before getting it there is so much competition for power.

The spread of India's spirit is obviously the essential. As for freedom it is necessary and certainly no empire is everlasting — but I expect the first days of freedom will be rather trying. Perhaps a Mussolini will have to rise to get rid of the corruption and mutual quarrelling and disorder. 18 April 1935

*

> You know it is the confounded Raj that has fomented this communal incident [*in Bengal, as described in a newspaper report that the correspondent summarised for Sri Aurobindo*].

It looks as if it were going to be like that everywhere. In Europe also.

> In your scheme of things do you definitely see a free India? You have stated that for the spreading of spirituality in the world India must be free. I suppose you must be working for it! You are the only one who can do something really effective by the use of your spiritual Force.

That is all settled. It is a question of working out only. The question is what is India going to do with her independence? The above kind of affair? Bolshevism? Goonda-raj? Things look ominous. 16 September 1935

*

> Please don't go on thinking like others about what India is going to do with her independence. Give her that first and let her decide her fate however she likes.

You are a most irrational creature. I have been trying to logicise and intellectualise you but it seems in vain. Have I not told you that the independence is all arranged for and will evolve itself all right? Then what's the use of my bothering about that any longer? It's what she will do with her independence that is not arranged for — and so it is that about which I have to bother.

18 September 1935

*

> Can't you say something a little more definite about independence than that it "will evolve itself"? Such a phrase can stretch itself out to the end of the cosmos. When the yogi Baroda Babu was asked about this, he replied "Independence? Not within 50 years!" We live in time and space and would like to hear something in terms of time.

I am not a prophet like Baroda Babu. All I can say is that the coming of independence is now sure (as anyone with any political sense at all can see). As you do not accept my "play of forces", I can say no more than that — for that is all that can be said by the "human time-sense". 20 September 1935

The Communal Problem

As regards Bengal, things are certainly very bad; the conditions of the Hindus there are terrible and they may even get worse in spite of the interim *mariage de convenance* at Delhi. But we must not let our reaction to it become excessive or suggest despair. There must be at least 20 million Hindus in Bengal and they are not going to be exterminated, — even Hitler with his scientific methods of massacre could not exterminate the Jews who are still showing themselves very much alive and, as for Hindu culture, it is not such a weak and fluffy thing as to be easily stamped out; it has lasted through something like 5 millenniums at least and is going to carry on much longer and has accumulated quite enough power to survive. What is happening did not come to me as a surprise. I foresaw it when I was in Bengal and warned people that it was probable and almost inevitable and that they should be prepared for it. At that time no one attached any value to what I said although some afterwards remembered and admitted, when the trouble first began, that I have been right; only C. R. Das had grave apprehensions and he even told me when he came to Pondicherry that he would not like the British to go out until this dangerous problem had been settled. But I have not been discouraged by what is happening, because I know and have experienced hundreds of times that beyond the blackest darkness there lies for one who is a divine instrument the light of God's victory. I have never had a strong and persistent will for anything to happen in the world — I am not speaking of personal things — which did not eventually happen even after delay, defeat or even disaster. There was a time when Hitler was victorious everywhere and it seemed certain that a black yoke of the Asura would be imposed on the whole world; but where is Hitler now and where is his rule? Berlin and Nuremberg have marked the end of that dreadful chapter in human history. Other blacknesses threaten to overshadow or even engulf mankind, but they too will end as that nightmare has ended. I cannot write fully in this letter of all things which justify my confidence — some day perhaps I shall be able to do it. 19 October 1946

Remarks on the World Situation 1933–1949

Intellectual Idealists, World Events and the New Creation

> I cannot persuade myself that all the things that are happening — including the triumph of the British policy and deterioration of Gandhi's intellect — are meant for the best. . . . Bengal is now benighted and there is no sign of light anywhere. Tagore too has just written an article of despair in which he forebodes gloomily an end of the world, *pralaya-kalpānta*, as perhaps the quickest and most satisfactory solution to the mess we are in. Add to this my own lack of devotion and faith. . . . I do sometimes even feel that in the end you will give up this wicked world and wish with Tagore for the *pralaya* and retire into extracosmic samadhi.

I have no intention of doing so — even if all smashed; I would look beyond the smash to the new creation. As for what is happening in the world, it does not upset me because I knew all along that things would happen in that fashion. I never had any illusions about Gandhi's satyagraha — it has only fulfilled my prediction that it would end in a great confusion or a great fiasco and my only mistake was that I put an "or" where there should have been an "and" — and as for the hopes of the intellectual idealists I have not shared them, so I am not disappointed.

10 August 1933

Gandhi, Tagore and the New Creation

> A friend writes: "Tagore and the Tagorians have by now all but given up Sri Aurobindo for lost — as one irreclaimable. . . . They no longer have the faith they once had that Sri Aurobindo was going to inaugurate a new era of creation in the world of fact." I feel that Tagore has come to this conclusion after reading your *Riddle of This World*, which must have appeared to him more of a riddle than an explanation. For formerly he

> wrote enthusiastically to me about you as a *creator*. I suspect also that Romain Rolland's retraction has something to do with Tagore's retraction. But I expect sooner or later he will write somewhere about your becoming a thorough introvert. There of course the whole Bengal intelligentsia (such as it is) will agree with him. Are you staggered at such a lugubrious prospect?

I cannot find any symptom of a stagger in me, not even of a shake or a quake or a quiver — all seems quite calm and erect, as far as I can make out. And I don't find the prospect lugubrious at all — the less people expect of you and bother you with their false ideas and demands, the more chance one has to get something real done. It is queer these intellectuals go on talking of creation while all they stand for is collapsing into the *Néant* without their being able to raise a finger to save it. What the devil are they going to create and from what material? and of what use if a Hitler with his cudgel or a Mussolini with his castor oil can come and wash it out or beat it into dust in a moment? 23 March 1934

The World Situation before World War II

> I was discussing the Ethiopian problem with some friends. One suggested it would result in a world war. He thought such a war would clear the way for the supramental and supposes that Mussolini would help precipitate the war. Perhaps after the war everybody will be so tired out that they will begin to read the *Arya* or else go to the Wardha Ashram to get peace.

I don't think! They will only gasp and talk peace for a bit and then get ready for another war. I don't see why the supramental should need a general carnage for its appearance — if it were so it should surely have appeared in 1919. But perhaps that was sufficient only for the overmind to look in and it needed Mussolini and a general extermination by all sorts of poison gases to persuade the supramental to follow suit? For the poison gases by aeroplane were not ready to make their "descent" in the last war. 8 September 1935

*

The adage "Honesty is the best policy" was invented in a semi-barbarous age when mankind had not made so much progress as now, an age which no longer exists — except perhaps in the wilds of Abyssinia, and now Mussolini is out to finish with it and bring in the blessings of civilisation even there. Nowadays the saying is notoriously out of date; it only means that with honesty you have less chances of going to jail — provided you are lucky and also provided you have not met Mahatma Gandhi. But Rockefellers and the rest of the commercial aristocracy were not born for jail but for palaces with marble water closets and the immortality of Rockefeller institutes and honour in the land of the gangsters and the free. All this is not meant to tempt you out of the paths of virtue. 7 November 1935

*

You write as if what is going on in Europe were a war between the powers of Light and the powers of Darkness — but this is no more so than during the Great War. It is a fight between two kinds of Ignorance.[1] Our aim is to bring down a higher Truth, but that Truth must be able to live by its own strength and not depend upon the victory of one or other of the forces of the Ignorance. That is the reason why we are not to mix in political or social controversies and struggles; it would simply keep down our endeavour to a lower level and prevent the Truth from descending which is none of these things but has a quite different law and basis. You speak of Brahmatej being overpowered by Kshatratej, but where is that happening? None of the warring parties incarnates either. 17 February 1937

On World War II

You have said that you have begun to doubt whether it was the Mother's war and ask me to make you feel again that it is. I affirm again to you most strongly that this is the Mother's war. You should not think of it as a fight for certain nations against others or even for India; it is a struggle for an ideal that has to establish itself on earth in the life of humanity, for a Truth that has yet to realise itself fully and against a darkness and falsehood that are trying to overwhelm the earth and mankind in the immediate future. It is the forces behind the battle that have to be seen and not this or that superficial circumstance. It is no use concentrating on the defects or mistakes of nations; all have defects and commit serious mistakes; but what matters is on what side they have ranged themselves in the struggle. It is a struggle for the liberty of mankind to develop, for conditions in which men have freedom and room to think and act according to the light in them and grow in the Truth, grow in the Spirit. There cannot be the slightest doubt that if one side wins, there will be an end of all such freedom and hope of light and truth and the work that has to be done will be subjected to conditions which would make it humanly impossible; there would be a reign of falsehood and darkness, a cruel oppression and degradation for most of the human race such as people in this country do not dream of and cannot yet at all realise. If the other side that has declared itself for the free future of humanity triumphs, this terrible danger will have been averted and conditions will have been created in which there will be a chance for the Ideal to grow, for the Divine Work to be done, for the spiritual Truth for which we stand to establish itself on the earth. Those who fight for this cause are fighting for the Divine and against the threatened reign of the Asura.[2] 29 July 1942

---

[1] *The reference is to the Nationalist and Republican forces, and their Fascist and Communist backers, during the Spanish Civil War. — Ed.*

*

> I just received a long letter from Krishnaprem. He evidently wants to qualify his statement about violence. For myself I have no doubt as *you* who *know* have said so. Only one point gave rise to doubts in me, in regard to what Nolini wrote in his

---

[2] *This letter and the one that follows were later revised and issued as messages, first to the members of the Ashram, then to the general public. They are published, as revised, in* Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest, *volume 36 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 463–68. In the present volume they are published as originally written. — Ed.*

> masterly analysis of the values at stake, comparing this war to Kurukshetra.[3] This is exactly what troubles Krishnaprem. How can the Allied Powers be compared to the Pandavas? I never doubted the wisdom of all efforts being directed against Hitler, but is it not unwise to compare him to Duryodhana and the Allied Powers to the Pandavas? I have received of late from correspondents and friends objections to that effect — that the Allies can hardly be dubbed "modern Pandavas". The Pandavas were protagonists of virtue and unselfishness, which can hardly be said of the Allies who are all selfish (more or less) and exploiters of weaker races and imperialistic.[4]

What I have said is not that the Allies have never done wrong things, but that they stand on the side of the evolutionary forces. I have not said that at random, but on what to me are clear grounds of fact. What you speak of is the dark side. All nations and governments have shown that side in their dealings with each other, — at least all who had the strength or got the chance. I hope you are not expecting me to believe that there are or have been virtuous Governments and unselfish and sinless peoples? It is only individuals and not too many of them who can be described in that style. But there is the other side also. Your correspondents are condemning the Allies on grounds that people in the past would have stared at, on the basis of modern ideals of international conduct; but looked at like that, all big nations and many small ones have black records. But who created these ideals or did most to create them (liberty, democracy, equality, international justice and the rest)? Well, America, France, England — the present Allied nations. They have all been imperialistic and still bear the burden of their past, but they have also deliberately spread these ideals and introduced self-governing bodies and parliamentary institutions where they did not exist; and whatever the relative worth of these things, they have been a stage, even if a still imperfect stage, in a forward evolution. (What of the others? What about the Axis' new order? Hitler swears it is a crime to educate the coloured peoples, they must be kept as serfs and labourers.) England has helped certain nations to be free without seeking any personal gain; she has conceded independence to Egypt and Eire after a struggle, to Iraq without a struggle. On the whole she has been for some time moving away steadily from Imperialism towards a principle of free association and cooperation; the British Commonwealth of England and the Dominions is something unique and unprecedented, a beginning of new things in that direction. She is turning in spirit in the direction of a world-union of some kind after the war; her new generation no longer believes in an "imperial mission"; she has offered India Dominion Independence (even, if she prefers it, she can choose or pass on to isolated independence) after the war, on the base of an agreed free constitution to be chosen by Indians themselves; though this, it has been feared, leaves a loophole for reactionary delay, it is in itself extremely reasonable and it is the Indians themselves with their inveterate habit of disunion who will be responsible if they are imbecile enough to reject the opportunity. All that is what I call evolution in the right direction — however slow and imperfect and hesitating. As for America she has forsworn her past imperialistic policies in regard to Central and South America, in Cuba, the Philippines, — everywhere apart from some islands in the Pacific which would go plop into other hands, if she withdrew from them. It is perhaps possible, some suggest, that she may be tempted towards a sort of financial imperialism, the rule of the Almighty American Dollar, by her new sense of international power, or led into other mistakes, but if so we may fairly assume from her other strong tendencies that she will soon withdraw from it. The greater danger is that she may retire again into a selfish isolationism after the war and so destroy or delay the chance of a possible beginning that may lead eventually to some beginning of a free world-union. But still there again is the evolutionary force. Is there a similar trend on the part of the Axis? The answer is plain enough both from their own declarations and their behaviour. Avowedly and openly, Nazi Germany today stands for the reversal of this evolutionary tendency, for the destruction of the new international outlook, the new Dharma, for a reversion not only to the past, but to a far-back primitive and barbaric ideal. She fully intended to reimpose it on the whole earth, but would have done so if she had had, as for a time she seemed to have, the strength to conquer. There can be no doubt or hesitation here; if we are for the evolutionary future of mankind, we must recognise that it is only the victory of the Allies that can save it. At the very least, they are at the moment the instruments of the evolutionary Forces to save mankind's future, and these declarations of their own show that they are conscious of it. Other elements and motives there are, but the main issue is here. One has to look at things on all sides, to see them steadily and whole. Once more, it is the forces working behind that I have to look at, I don't want to go blind among surface details. The future has first to be safeguarded; only then can present problems and contradictions have a chance to be solved and eliminated.

---

[3] *The reference is to the essay "Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre" written in Bengali by Nolini Kanta Gupta and published along with other material in a pamphlet entitled* Sri Aurobindo o Bartaman Yuddha *("Sri Aurobindo and the Present War") in Bengali year 1349 (1942–43). The title "Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre" is taken from the Bhagavad Gita and evokes the Kurukshetra war. At the end of the essay, the writer mentions Duryodhana and his ninety-nine brothers, who were on one side in that war, and the five Pandava brothers and Sri Krishna, who were on the other side. — Ed.*

[4] *Here Sri Aurobindo wrote between two lines of the correspondent's letter:* "Good Heavens, but so were the Pandavas, even if less than more! They were human beings, not ascetics or angels." — *Ed.*

> Krishnaprem too has become doubtful about the Allies being compared to the Pandavas. Would you kindly throw some light on the question?

For us the question put by you does not arise. The Mother made it plain in a letter which has been made public that we did not consider the war as a fight between nations or governments (still less between good people and bad people) but between two forces, the Divine and the Asuric. What we have to see is on which side men and nations put themselves; if they put themselves on the right side, they at once make themselves instruments of the Divine purpose in spite of all defects, errors, wrong movements and actions (past or present or possible backslidings in the future) which are common to human nature and to all human collectivities. The victory of one side (the Allies) would keep the path open for the evolutionary forces; the victory of the other side would drag back humanity, degrade it horribly and might lead even, at the worst, to its failure as a race, as others in the past evolution failed and perished. That is the whole question and all other considerations are either irrelevant or of a minor importance. The Allies at least stand for human values, though they may often have acted against their own best ideals (human beings always do that); Hitler stands for diabolical values or for human values exaggerated in the wrong way until they become diabolical (e.g. the "virtues" of the *Herrenvolk*, the master race). That does not make the English or Americans nations of spotless angels nor the Germans a wicked and sinful race, but as an indicator it has a decisive importance.

Nolini, I should suppose, gave the Kurukshetra example not as an exact parallel but as a traditional instance of a War between two world-forces in which the side favoured by the Divine triumphed, because its leaders made themselves his instruments. I don't suppose he envisaged it as a battle between virtue and wickedness or between good and evil men or intended to equate the British with the Pandavas, nations with individuals or even individuals with individuals, — shall we say, Stafford Cripps with Yudhisthir, Churchill with Bhima and General Montgomery with Arjuna! After all, were even the Pandavas virtuous without defect, calm and holy and quite unselfish and without passions? There are many incidents in the Mahabharat which seem to show to the contrary that they had their defects and failings. And in the Pandava army and its leaders there must have been many who were not angels or paragons of virtue, while there were plenty of good men and true on Duryodhana's side. Unselfishness? But were not the Pandavas fighting to establish their own claims and interests — just and right, no doubt, but still personal claims and self-interest? Theirs was a righteous battle, *dharmya yuddha*, but it was for right and justice in their own case. The Allies have as good or even a better case and reason to call theirs a righteous quarrel, for they are fighting not only for themselves, for their freedom and very existence, but for the existence, freedom, maintenance of natural rights of other nations, Poles, Czechs, Norwegians, Belgians, Dutch, French, Greece, Yugoslavia and a vast number of others not yet directly threatened; they too claim to be fighting for a Dharma, for civilised values, for the preservation of great ideals and in view of what Hitler represents and openly professes and what he wishes to destroy, their claim has strong foundations. And if imperialism is under all circumstances a wickedness, then the Pandavas are tainted with that brush, for they used their victory to establish their empire continued after them by Parikshit and Janamejaya. Could not modern humanism and pacifism make it a reproach against the Pandavas that these virtuous men (including Krishna) brought about a huge slaughter (alas for Ahimsa!) that they might establish their sole imperial rule over all the numerous free and independent peoples of India? Such a criticism would be grotesquely out of place, but it would be a natural result of weighing ancient happenings in the scales of modern ideals. As a matter of fact, such an empire was a step in the right direction then, just as a world-union of free peoples would be a step in the right direction now, — and in both cases the right consequences of a terrific slaughter.

Who are the people who have such a tenderness for Hitler and object to his being compared to Duryodhana? I hope they are not among those — spiritual people among them, I am told, — who believe — or perhaps once believed? — Hitler to be the new Avatar and his religion (God help us!) to be the true religion which we must all help to establish throughout the wide world or among those who regard Hitler as a great and good man, a saint, an ascetic and all that is noble and godlike. I don't see why Hitler should not be compared to Duryodhana, except that Duryodhana, if alive, might complain indignantly that the comparison was a monstrous and scandalous injustice to him and that he never did anything like what Hitler has done. By the way, what about Krishna's *jitvā śatrūn bhuṅkṣva rājyaṁ samṛddham*? An unholy and unethical bribe? Or what on earth did he mean by it? But battle and conquest and imperial rule were then a *dharma* and consecrated by a special form of sacrifice. We should remember that conquest and rule over subject peoples were not regarded as wrong either in ancient or medieval times and even quite recently but as something great and glorious; men did not see any special wickedness in conquerors or conquering nations. Just government of subject peoples was envisaged, but nothing more — exploitation was not excluded. No doubt, many nations in the past were jealous of their own independence and some like the Greeks and later the English had the ideal of freedom, more especially of individual liberty. But the passion for individual liberty went along in ancient times with the institution of slavery which no Greek democrat ever thought to be wrong; no Greek state or people thought it an injustice to take away the freedom of other Greek states, still less of foreign peoples, or deemed it immoral to rule over subject races. The same inconsistency has held sway over human ideas until recent times and still holds sway over international practice even now. The modern ideas on the subject, the right of all to liberty both individuals and nations, the immorality of conquest and empire, or, short of such absolutist ideas, such compromises as the British idea of training subject races for democratic freedom, are new values, an evolutionary movement, a new Dharma which has only begun slowly and initially to influence practice, — an infant Dharma that would be throttled for good if Hitler succeeded in his "Avataric" mission and established his new "religion" over all the earth. Subject nations naturally accept the new Dharma and severely criticise the old imperialisms; it is to be hoped that they will practise what they now preach when they themselves become strong and rich and powerful. But the best will be if a new world-order evolves which will make the old things impossible, — a difficult task, but not, with God's grace, absolutely impracticable.

The Divine takes men as they are and uses them as his instruments even if they are not flawless in character, without stain or sin or fault, exemplary in virtue, or angelic, holy and pure. If they are of good will, if, to use the Biblical phrase, they are on the Lord's side, that is enough for the work to be done.

Even if I knew that the Allies (I am speaking of the "big" nations, America, Britain, China) would misuse their victory or bungle the peace or partially at least spoil the opportunities opened to the human world by that victory, I would still put my force behind them. At any rate, things could not be one hundredth part as bad as they would be under Hitler. The ways of the Lord would still be open — to keep them open is what matters. Let us stick to the real issue and leave for a later time all side-issues and minor issues or hypothetical problems that would cloud the one all-important and tragic issue before us.

P.S. This is an answer to what is implied in your letter and, I suppose, in those of your correspondents, not to anything in K's letter. His observations are all right, but circumstances alter cases. Ours is a sadhana which involves not only devotion or union with the Divine or a perception of him in all things and beings, but also action as workers and instruments and a work to be done in the world, a spiritual force to be brought on the world, under difficult conditions; then one has to see one's way and do what is commanded and support what has to be supported, even if it means war and strife carried on whether through chariots and bows and arrows or tanks and cars and American bombs and aeroplanes, in either case a *ghoraṁ karma*: the means and times and persons differ, but it does not seem to me that Nolini is wrong in seeing in it the same problem as in Kurukshetra. As for war, violence, the use of force to maintain freedom for the world, for the highest values of human civilisation, for the salvation of humanity from a terrible fate, etc., the old command rings out once again after many ages for those who must fight or support this battle for the right, *mayaivaite nihatāḥ pūrvam eva nimittamātraṁ bhava savyasācin.* 2 September 1943

The War and Sri Aurobindo's Work

> The other day *X* said that Hitler had so arranged things that the Allies will not be able to make any headway in Italy. Also that in Russia he has shortened his front so that the Russians will not move any further.

Well, they seem to be making some headway in spite of Hitler's arrangement. I seem to remember Hitler made arrangements for taking Stalingrad; the result was that he has been kicked out almost entirely from old Russia.

> Also he said that Japan was going to crush China in three months.

It doesn't look like it; but perhaps they have confidential information?

> Then the day before yesterday I heard about *Y*'s remark about the Allied paratroops having been wiped out. *X* categorically declared that *Y* had said no such thing. I wondered about this, made inquiries and was told that he had said something. Did he? What?

People say that he did — on the authority of the man to whom he said it. Does *Y* deny his saying it?

> Write to me if you find a little time whether I am right in feeling that speculating intellectually about Allied reverses is not a right movement as it may easily lead us, unawares, into sympathy with the hostile hordes who are against your work.

All these things are silly utterances in which the wishes of the mind are presented as truth and fact. That is a common habit in this very imperfect humanity and ordinarily it would be of no importance, except that such inventions and falsehoods are most improper in the mouth of a sadhaka and the habit must be a great obstacle to any progress. But here the wish behind, whether they are conscious of it or not, is that the Asura shall prevail against the Divine. That means a most dangerous giving of oneself to the Falsehood that is seeking to prolong its hold on the world and establish definitely the reign of Evil over the whole world. That is what the victory of Hitler would have meant — it would have meant also the destruction of my work. You are quite right therefore in resenting this kind of attitude (also there is the fact that it establishes a centre of support for the Falsehood and Evil in the Asram). The propagation of this Falsehood, false ideas, false feelings, false actions and persuading people that they are right is the chief instrument of the Asura and its prevalence and success a sign of the growth of darkness on the earth. Fortunately the intensity of the peril is over, however long the struggle may still last. Other perils and manoeuvres of the Asura may follow afterwards; so it is good to discourage firmly the tendency so that it may not do harm hereafter. 10 June 1944

The Situation after the War

All that [*answers to various questions*] is however another matter than the question about the present human civilisation. It is not this which has to be saved; it is the world that has to be saved, and that will surely be done, though it may not be so easily or so soon as some wish or imagine or in the way that they imagine. The present civilisation must surely change, but whether by a destruction or a new construction on the basis of a greater truth, is the issue. The Mother has left the question hanging and I can only do the same. After all, the wise man, unless he is a prophet or the Director of the Madras Astrological Bureau, must often be content to take the Asquithian position. Neither optimism nor pessimism is the truth, they are only modes of the mind or moods of the temperament. Let us then, without either excessive optimism or excessive pessimism, "wait and see".

2 September 1945

*

This is no time for patting the Germans on the back or embracing and consoling them. If they are allowed to get on their legs again without trouble or without making an atonement for the horror of darkness and suffering they have inflicted on the world, they will rise only to repeat their performance, — unless somebody else forestalls them. The only help we can give to Germany now is silence. 19 March 1946

*

I know that this is a time of trouble for you and everybody. It is so for the whole world; confusion, trouble, disorder and upset everywhere is the general state of things. The better things that are to come are preparing or growing under a veil and the worse are prominent everywhere. The one thing is to hold on and to hold out till the hour of light has come. 2 June 1946

Capitalism and Socialism

Sri Aurobindo is in no way bound by the present world's institutions or current ideas whether in the political, social or economic field; it is not necessary for him either to approve or disapprove of them.[5] He does not regard either capitalism or orthodox socialism as the right solution for the world's future; nor can he admit that the admission of private enterprise by itself makes the society capitalistic, a socialistic economy can very well admit some amount of controlled or subordinated private enterprise as an aid to its own working or a partial convenience without ceasing to be socialistic. Sri Aurobindo has his own view as to how far Congress economy is intended to be truly socialistic or whether that is only a cover, but he does not care to express his view on that point at present. 15 April 1949

---

[5] *Sri Aurobindo dictated this note to his secretary, who replied to the correspondent. — Ed.*

Part Two

His Sadhana or Practice of Yoga

Section One

Sadhana before Coming to Pondicherry in 1910

Ordinary Life and Yoga

Faith and Knowledge

> Is it true that only those who have obtained a clear knowledge of their spiritual possibility through a definite glimpse, received by the Grace of the Divine, are able to stick to the path till the end?

At least I had no such glimpse before I started Yoga. I can't say about others — perhaps some had — but the glimpse could only bring faith, it could not possibly bring knowledge; knowledge comes by Yoga, not before it.

> Those who had no such glimpse may get some experience but will not be able to stick to their sadhana.

I repeat that all one needs to know is whether the soul in one has been moved to the Yoga or not. 5 May 1933

Education, Belief and Yoga

I suppose I have had myself an even more completely European education than you and I have had too my period of agnostic denial, but from the moment I looked at these things I could never take the attitude of doubt and disbelief which was for so long fashionable in Europe. Abnormal, otherwise supraphysical experiences and powers, occult or Yogic, have always seemed to me something perfectly natural and credible. Consciousness in its very nature could not be limited by the ordinary physical human-animal consciousness; it must have other ranges. Yogic or occult powers are no more supernatural or incredible than is supernatural or incredible the power to write a great poem or compose great music. Few people can do it, as things are, — not even one in a million; for poetry and music come from the inner being and to write or to compose true and great things one has to have the passage clear between the outer mind and something in the inner being. That is why you got the poetic power as soon as you began Yoga — Yoga-force made the passage clear. It is the same with Yogic consciousness and its powers; the thing is to get the passage clear, — for they are already there within you. Of course the first thing is to believe, aspire and, with the true urge within, make the endeavour. 2 September 1931

Ordinary Consciousness and Awakening

> Somebody writing a biography of Confucius in Bengali says: "Why do the Dharmagurus marry, we can't understand. Buddha did and his wife's tale is heart-rending [হৃদয়-বিদারক]."

Why? What is there বিদারক in it?

> He goes on: "Aurobindo Ghose, not a Dharmaguru, though he may be called Dharma-mad [ধর্মপাগল]" — how do you feel about that, Sir? — "has done it too."

Well, it is better to be ধর্মপাগল than to be a sententious ass and pronounce on what one does not understand.

> "We don't understand why they marry and why this change comes soon after marriage."

Perfectly natural — they marry before the change — then the change comes and the marriage belongs to the past self, not to the new one.

> "The wives of Buddha and Ramakrishna felt proud when they were deserted."

Then what's the harm?

> "If married life is an obstacle to spirituality, then they might as well not marry."

No doubt. But then when they marry, there is not an omniscient ass like this biographer to tell them that they were going to be ধর্মগুরু or ধর্মপাগল or in any way concerned with any other ধর্ম than the biographer's.

> So, according to the biographer, all of you, except Christ, showed a lack of wisdom by marrying.

Well, if a biographer of Confucius can be such an unmitigated ass, Confucius may be allowed to be unwise once or twice, I suppose.

> I touch upon a delicate subject, but it is a puzzle.

Why delicate? and why a puzzle? Do you think that Buddha or Confucius or myself were born with a prevision that they or I would take to the spiritual life? So long as one is in the ordinary consciousness, one lives the ordinary life — when the awakening and the new consciousness come, one leaves it — nothing puzzling in that. 27 April 1936

Meditation as a Means

What do you call meditation? Shutting the eyes and concentrating? It is only one method for calling down the true consciousness. To join with the true consciousness or feel its descent is the only thing important and if it comes without the orthodox method, as it always did with me, so much the better. Meditation is only a means or device, the true movement is when even walking, working or speaking one is still in sadhana.

10 June 1933

Meditation and Purification

> In an article Krishnaprem says that meditation can't be fruitful for those who have not achieved a high degree of inner development and purification.

I do not know what Krishnaprem said or in which article, I do not have it with me. But if the statement is that nobody can have a successful meditation or realise anything till he is pure and perfect, I fail to follow it; it contradicts my own experience. I have always had realisation by meditation first and the purification started afterwards as a result. I have seen many get important, even fundamental realisations by meditation who could not be said to have a great inner development. Are all Yogis who have meditated to effect and had great realisations in their inner consciousness perfect in their nature? It does not look like it to me. I am unable to believe in absolute generalisations in this field, because the development of spiritual consciousness is an exceedingly vast and complex affair in which all sorts of things can happen and one might almost say that for each man it is different according to his nature and that the one thing that is essential is the inner call and aspiration and the perseverance to follow always after it no matter how long it takes or what are the difficulties or impediments — because nothing else will satisfy the soul within us. 17 May 1936

Early Experiences

An Experience in England

> Someone told me that it is written somewhere that you had a realisation in 1890 when you were 18. Is this true?

A realisation in 1890? It does not seem possible. There was something, though I was not doing Yoga and knew nothing about it in the year of my departure from England; I don't remember which it was but probably 1892–3 which would make 20 years, not 18. I don't remember anything special in 1890. Where did he see this written? 22 August 1936

First Experience of the Self

For, as to this "Grace", we describe it in that way because we feel in the infinite Spirit or Self of existence a Presence or a Being, a Consciousness that determines — that is what we speak of as the Divine, — not a separate Person, but the one Being of whom our individual self is a portion or a vessel. But it is not necessary for everybody to regard it in that way. Supposing it is the impersonal Self of all only, yet the Upanishad says of the Self and its realisation, "This understanding is not to be gained by reasoning nor by tapasya nor by much learning, but whom this Self chooses, to him it reveals its own body." Well, that is the same thing as what we call the Divine Grace, — it is an action from above or from within independent of mental causes which decides its own movement. We can call it the Divine Grace; we can call it the Self within choosing its own hour and way to manifest to the mental instrument on the surface; we can call it the flowering of the inner being or inner nature into self-realisation and self-knowledge. As something in us approaches it or as it presents itself to us, so the mind sees it. But in reality, it is the same thing and the same process of the being in the Nature.

I could illustrate my meaning more concretely from my own first experience of the Self, long before I knew even what Yoga was or that there was such a thing, at a time when I had no religious feeling, no wish for spiritual knowledge, no aspiration beyond the mind, only a contented agnosticism and the impulse towards poetry and politics. But it would be too long a story, so I do not tell it here. 29 October 1935

*

> I have seen your letter to X [*the letter of 29 October 1935 published immediately above*]. When I finished reading it, I let out a sigh and exclaimed "How cruel!" — after raising our hopes you mercilessly cut them off because the letter would be too long! Nothing is too long for us, especially such personal examples which are more valuable for the likes of us than any promises and possibilities.

Good Lord! I never said it was too long for you to read, I meant it was too long for me to write now. And I can't write such things by themselves as an autobiographical essay — it is only if they turn up in the course of something that I can do so. Last night I had no blessed time to illustrate. I thought of writing it because it seemed very appropriate, but when I couldn't, I just mentioned it in order to hint that what I had written was not mere theory, but provable by solid experience. No fell intention to tantalise. 30 October 1935

*

> But it is unthinkable and almost unbelievable to have any experience of the Self in the circumstances you have described [*in the letter of 29 October 1935*].

I can't help that. It happened. The mind's canons of the rational and the possible do not govern spiritual life and experience.

> But can you not tell us what the experience was like? Was it by any chance like the one you speak of in your Uttarpara

> Speech — Vasudeva everywhere?

Great Jumble-Mumble! What has Vasudeva to do with it? Vasudeva is a name of Krishna, and in the Uttarpara Speech I was speaking of Krishna, if you please.

> But how can that be? Didn't you begin Yoga later on in Gujarat?

Yes. But this began in London, sprouted the moment I set foot on Apollo Bunder, touching Indian soil, flowered one day in the first year of my stay in Baroda, at the moment when there threatened to be an accident to my carriage. Precise enough?

> By the Self, I suppose, you mean the individual Self!

Good Lord, no. I mean the Self, sir, the Self, the Adwaita, Vedantic, Shankara self. Atman, Atman! A thing I knew nothing about, never bargained for, didn't understand either. 31 October 1935

This-Worldliness and Other-Worldliness

One thing I feel I must say in connection with your remark about the soul of India and *X*'s observation about "this stress on this-worldliness to the exclusion of other-worldliness". I do not quite understand in what connection his remark was made or what he meant by this-worldliness, but I feel it necessary to state my own position in the matter. My own life and my Yoga have always been, since my coming to India, both this-worldly and other-worldly without any exclusiveness on either side. All human interests are, I suppose, this-worldly and most of them have entered into my mental field and some, like politics, into my life, but at the same time, since I set foot on Indian soil on the Apollo Bunder in Bombay, I began to have spiritual experiences, but these were not divorced from this world but had an inner and intimate bearing on it, such as a feeling of the Infinite pervading material space and the Immanent inhabiting material objects and bodies. At the same time I found myself entering supraphysical worlds and planes with influences and an effect from them upon the material plane, so I could make no sharp divorce or irreconcilable opposition between what I have called the two ends of existence and all that lies between them. For me all is the Brahman and I find the Divine everywhere. Everyone has the right to throw away this-worldliness and choose other-worldliness only and if he finds peace by that choice he is greatly blessed. I, personally, have not found it necessary to do this in order to have peace. In my Yoga also I found myself moved to include both worlds in my purview, the spiritual and the material, and to try to establish the divine Consciousness and the divine Power in men's hearts and in earthly life, not for personal salvation only but for a life divine here. This seems to me as spiritual an aim as any and the fact of this life taking up earthly pursuits and earthly things into its scope cannot, I believe, tarnish its spirituality or alter its Indian character. This at least has always been my view and experience of the reality and nature of the world and things and the Divine: it seemed to me as nearly as possible the integral truth about them and I have therefore spoken of the pursuit of it as the integral Yoga. Everyone is, of course, free to reject and disbelieve in this kind of integrality or to believe in the spiritual necessity of an entire other-worldliness excluding any kind of this-worldliness altogether, but that would make the exercise of my Yoga impossible. My Yoga can include indeed a full experience of the other worlds, the plane of the supreme Spirit and the other planes in between and their possible effects upon our life and material world; but it will be quite possible to insist only on the realisation of the supreme Being or Ishwara even in one aspect, Shiva, Krishna as Lord of the world and Master of ourselves and our works or else the universal Sachchidananda, and attain to the essential results of this Yoga and afterwards to proceed from them to the integral results if one accepted the ideal of the divine life and this material world conquered by the Spirit. It is this view and experience of things and of the truth of existence that enabled me to write *The Life Divine* and *Savitri*. The realisation of the Supreme, the Ishwara, is certainly the essential thing; but to approach him with love and devotion and bhakti, to serve him with one's works and to know him, not necessarily by the intellectual cognition, but in a spiritual experience, is also essential in the path of the integral Yoga. 28 April 1949

An Experience in Kashmir

Kashmir is a magnificent place, its rivers unforgettable and on one of its mountains with a shrine of Shankaracharya on it I got my second realisation of the Infinite (long before I started Yoga). June 1934

Signs of Yogic Opening

Your bells etc. mentioned by you as recent experiences were already enumerated as long ago as the time of the Upanishads as signs accompanying the opening to the larger consciousness, *brahmaṇyabhivyaktikarāṇi yoge*. If I remember right your sparks come in the same list. The fact has been recorded again and again in yogic literature. I had the same experience hundreds of times in the earlier part of my sadhana. So you see you are in very honourable company in this matter and need not trouble yourself about the objections of physical science.

13 March 1931

*

I remember, when I first began to see inwardly (and outwardly also with the open eye), a scientific friend of mine began to talk of after-images — "these are only after-images!" I asked him whether after-images remained before the eye for two minutes at a time — he said, "no", to his knowledge only for a few seconds; I also asked him whether one could get after-images of things not around one or even not existing upon this earth since they had other shapes, another character, other hues, contours and a very different dynamism, life-movements and values — he could not reply in the affirmative. That is how these so-called scientific explanations break down as soon as you pull them out of their cloudland of mental theory and face them with the actual phenomena they pretend to decipher. 19 February 1932

*

It is only at the beginning that concentration is necessary to see these colours, afterwards it comes of itself. There was a long time when I used to see colours spontaneously or wherever I cast my eyes, just as you do now, and at every time of concentrated meditation they used to fill the room. Many, indeed, begin to see them spontaneously without any concentration at all, first with closed eyes, afterwards with the eyes open. Seeing them with the eyes closed happens often enough to people who have never practised or even heard of Yoga; but in such cases it proves that there is some kind of occult vision there very near to the surface. 25 February 1932

*

> If seeing the Divine depended on the developed occult faculty, how do you explain people's seeing Ram, Krishna, Shiva, etc. in you at Darshan? — I mean by people who have apparently no such faculty. We've heard about Krishna presenting himself before small boys, taking them to school, etc. — fables?

With many people the faculty of this kind of occult vision is the first to develop when they begin sadhana. With others it is there naturally or comes on occasions without any practice of Yoga. But with people who live mainly in the intellect (a few excepted) this faculty is not usually there by nature and most have much difficulty in developing it. It was so even with me.

> What I understand of the matter is that if you intend that somebody should see the Divine in you — be it a blind man — he is able to see. No faculty is required.

It would be something of a miracle to see things without the faculty of seeing. We don't deal much in miracles of that kind.

30 July 1935

Practice of Pranayama

> You yourself had to concentrate for 4 or 5 hours a day for so many years, after which everything flowed in a river . . .

By the way what is this story about my four or five hours' concentration a day for several years before anything came down? Such a thing never happened, if by concentration you mean laborious meditation. What I did was four or five hours a day pranayam — which is quite another matter. And what flow do you speak of? The flow of poetry came down while I was doing pranayam, not some years afterwards. If it is the flow of experiences, that did come after some years, but after I had stopped the pranayam for a long time and was doing nothing and did not know what to do or where to turn once all my efforts had failed. And it came as a result not of years of pranayam or concentration, but in a ridiculously easy way, by the grace either of a temporary guru (but it wasn't that, for he was himself bewildered by it) or by the grace of the eternal Brahman and afterwards by the grace of Mahakali and Krishna. So don't try to turn me into an argument against the Divine; that attempt will be perfectly ineffective. 20 January 1936

*

> You have often inveighed against my using you as an argument against the Divine. But what is the history of your sadhana in your own words — a Herculean practice of Pranayam, concentration and what not and then after years and years of waiting the Grace of Brahman.

What a wooden head! What is the use of saying things if you deliberately misinterpret what I write? I said clearly that the pranayam brought me nothing of any kind of spiritual realisation. I had stopped it long before. The Brahman experience came when I was groping for some way, doing no sadhana at all, making no effort because I didn't know what effort to make, all having failed. Then in three days I got an experience which most Yogis get only at the end of a long Yoga, got it without wanting or trying for it, got it to the surprise of Lele who was trying to get me something quite different. But I don't suppose you are able to understand — so I say no more. I can only look mournfully at your ununderstanding pate. 24 January 1936

Beginning of the Practice of Yoga

> I wonder if any interesting incident took place in the Mother's or Sri Aurobindo's Yoga or life in the year 1905.

I think it was the year in which I began my Yoga — that is, the practice of Yoga — for I had had experiences before without knowing what they were. 17 January 1934

*

> How did your intellect become so powerful even before you started Yoga?

It was not any such thing before I started the Yoga. I started the Yoga in 1904 and all my work except some poetry was done afterwards. Moreover my intelligence was inborn and so far as it grew before the Yoga it was not by training but by a wide haphazard activity developing ideas from all things read, seen or experienced. That is not training, it is natural growth.

13 November 1936

The Realisation of January 1908

General Remarks

It is not that there is anything peculiar to you in these difficulties; every sadhaka entering this Way has to get over similar impediments. It took me four years of inner striving to find a real Way, even though the Divine help was with me all the time, and even then it seemed to come by an accident; and it took me ten more years of intense Yoga under a supreme inner guidance to find *the* Way — and that was because I had my past and the world's Past to assimilate and overpass before I could find and found the future. 5 May 1932

*

I think you have made too much play with my phrase "an accident" [*in the preceding letter*], ignoring the important qualification, "it *seemed* to come by an accident". After four years of *prāṇāyāma* and other practices on my own, with no other result than an increased health and energy, some psycho-physical phenomena, a great outflow of poetic creation, a limited power of subtle sight (luminous patterns and figures etc.) mostly with the waking eye, I had a complete arrest and was at a loss. At this juncture I was induced to meet a man without fame whom I did not know, a bhakta with a limited mind but some experience and evocative power. We sat together and I followed with an absolute fidelity what he instructed me to do, not myself in the least understanding where he was leading me or where I was myself going. The first result was a series of tremendously powerful experiences and radical changes of consciousness which he never intended — for they were Adwaitic and Vedantic and he was against Adwaita Vedanta — and which were quite contrary to my own ideas, for they made me see with a stupendous intensity the world as a cinematographic play of vacant forms in the impersonal universality of the Absolute Brahman. The final upshot was that he was made by a Voice within him to hand me over to the Divine within me enjoining an absolute surrender to its will, a principle or rather a seed-force to which I kept unswervingly and increasingly till it led me through all the mazes of an incalculable Yogic development bound by no single rule or system or dogma or Shastra to where and what I am now and towards what shall be hereafter. Yet he understood so little what he was doing that when he met me a month or two later, he was alarmed, tried to undo what he had done and told me that it was not the Divine but the Devil that had got hold of me. Does not all that justify my phrase "it seemed to come by an accident"? But my meaning is that the ways of the Divine are not like that of the human mind or according to our patterns and it is impossible to judge them or to lay down for Him what He shall or shall not do, for the Divine knows better than we do. If we admit the Divine at all, both true reason and bhakti seem to me to be at one in demanding implicit faith and surrender. I do not see how without them there can be *avyabhicāriṇī bhakti* (one-pointed adoration). 7 May 1932

*

I am rather astonished at your finding Wordsworth's realisation, however mental and incomplete, to be abstract and vague or dictated by emotional effervescence. Wordsworth was hardly an emotional or effervescent character. As for an abstract realisation, it sounds like a round square; I have never had one myself and find it difficult to believe in it. But certainly a realisation in its beginning can be vague and nebulous or it can be less or more vivid. Still, Wordsworth's did not make that impression on me and to him it certainly came as something positive, powerful and determinative. He stayed there and went no farther, did not get to the source, because more was hardly possible in his time and surroundings, at least to a man of his mainly moral and intellectual temper.

In a more deep and spiritual sense a concrete realisation is that which makes the thing realised more real, dynamic, intimately present to the consciousness than any physical thing can be. Such a realisation of the personal Divine or of the impersonal Brahman or of the Self does not usually come at the beginning of a sadhana or in the first years or for many years. It comes so to a very few; mine came fifteen years after my first pre-Yogic experience in London and in the fifth year after I started Yoga. That I consider extraordinarily quick, an express train speed almost — though there may no doubt have been several quicker achievements. But to expect and demand it so soon and get fed up because it does not come and declare Yoga impossible except for two or three in the ages would betoken in the eyes of any experienced Yogi or sadhaka a rather rash and abnormal impatience. Most would say that a slow development is the best one can hope for in the first years and only when the nature is ready and fully concentrated towards the Divine can the definitive experience come. To some rapid preparatory experiences can come at a comparatively early stage, but even they cannot escape the labour of the consciousness which will make these experiences culminate in the realisation that is enduring and complete. It is not a question of my liking or disliking your demand or attitude. It is a matter of fact and truth and experience, not of liking or disliking, two things which do not usually sway me. It is the fact that people who are grateful and cheerful and ready to go step by step, even by slow steps, if need be, do actually march faster and more surely than those who are impatient and in haste and at each step despair or murmur. It is what I have always seen — there may be instances to the contrary and I have no objection to your being one, — none at all. I only say that if you could maintain "hope and fervour and faith", there would be a much bigger chance — that is all.

This is just a personal explanation — a long explanation but which seemed to be called for by your enhancement of my glory — and is dictated by a hope that after all in the long run an accumulation of explanations may persuade you to prefer the sunny path to the grey one. My faith again perhaps? But, sunny path or grey one, the one thing wanted is that you should push through and arrive. June 1934

Meeting with Vishnu Bhaskar Lele

It is not the human defects of the Guru that can stand in the way when there is the psychic opening, confidence and surrender. The Guru is the channel or the representative or the manifestation of the Divine, according to the measure of his personality or his attainment; but whatever he is, it is to the Divine that one opens in opening to him, and if something is determined by the power of the channel, more is determined by the inherent and intrinsic attitude of the receiving consciousness, an element that comes out in the surface mind as simple trust or direct unconditional self-giving, and once that is there, the essential things can be gained even from one who seems to others than the disciple an inferior spiritual source and the rest will grow up in the sadhak of itself by the grace of the Divine, even if the human being in the Guru cannot give it. It is this that Krishnaprem appears to have done perhaps from the first; but in most nowadays this attitude seems to come with difficulty, after much hesitation and delay and trouble. In my own case I owe the first decisive turn of my inner life to one who was infinitely inferior to me in intellect, education and capacity and by no means spiritually perfect or supreme; but, having seen a Power behind him and decided to turn there for help, I gave myself entirely into his hands and followed with an automatic passivity the guidance. He himself was astonished and said to others that he had never met anyone before who could surrender himself so absolutely and without reserve or question to the guidance of the helper. The result was a series of transmuting experiences of such a radical character that he was unable to follow and had to tell me to give myself up in future to the Guide within with the same completeness of surrender as I had shown to the human channel. I give this example to show how these things work; it is not in the calculated way the human reason wants to lay down, but by a more mysterious and greater law. 23 March 1932

*

To reject doubts means control of one's thoughts — very certainly so. But the control of one's thoughts is as necessary as the control of one's vital desires and passions or the control of the movements of one's body — for the Yoga, and not for the Yoga only. One cannot be a fully developed mental being even, if one has not control of the thoughts, is not their observer, judge, master, — the mental Purusha, *manomaya puruṣa*, *sākṣī*, *anumantā*, *īśvara*. It is no more proper for the mental being to be the tennis ball of unruly and uncontrollable thoughts than to be a rudderless ship in the storm of the desires and passions or a slave of either the inertia or the impulses of the body. I know it is more difficult because man being primarily a creature of mental Prakriti identifies himself with the movements of his mind and cannot at once dissociate himself and stand free from the swirl and eddies of the mind whirlpool. It is comparatively easy for him to put a control on his body, at least a certain part of its movements: it is less easy but still very possible after a struggle to put a mental control on his vital impulsions and desires; but to sit, like the Tantrik Yogi on the river, above the whirlpool of his thoughts is less facile. Nevertheless it can be done; all developed mental men, those who get beyond the average, have in one way or other or at least at certain times and for certain purposes to separate the two parts of the mind, the active part which is a factory of thoughts and the quiet masterful part which is at once a Witness and a Will, observing them, judging, rejecting, eliminating, accepting, ordering corrections and changes, the Master in the House of Mind, capable of self-empire, *svārājya*.

The Yogi goes still farther; he is not only a master there, but even while in mind in a way, he gets out of it, as it were, and stands above or quite back from it and free. For him the image of the factory of thoughts is no longer quite valid; for he sees that thoughts come from outside, from the universal Mind or universal Nature, sometimes formed and distinct, sometimes unformed and then they are given shape somewhere in us. The principal business of our mind is either a response of acceptance or refusal to these thought-waves (as also vital waves, subtle physical energy waves) or this giving a personal-mental form to thought-stuff (or vital movements) from the environing Nature-Force. It was my great debt to Lele that he showed me this. "Sit in meditation," he said, "but do not think, look only at your mind; you will see thoughts *coming into it*; before they can enter throw them away from you till your mind is capable of entire silence." I had never heard before of thoughts coming visibly into the mind from outside, but I did not think of either questioning the truth or the possibility, I simply sat down and did it. In a moment my mind became silent as a windless air on a high mountain summit and then I saw a thought and then another thought coming in a concrete way from outside; I flung them away before they could enter and take hold of the brain and in three days I was free. From that moment, in principle, the mental being in me became a free Intelligence, a universal Mind, not limited to the narrow circle of personal thought or a labourer in a thought-factory, but a receiver of knowledge from all the hundred realms of being and free too to choose what it willed in this vast sight-empire and thought-empire.

I mention this only to emphasise that the possibilities of the mental being are not limited and that it can be the free Witness and Master in its own house. It is not to say that everybody can do it in the way I did and with the same rapidity of the decisive movement (for of course the later fullest development of this new untrammelled mental Power took time, many years); but a progressive freedom and mastery over one's mind is perfectly within the possibilities of anyone who has the faith and will to undertake it. 5 August 1932

*

Literature and art are or can be first introductions to the inner being — the inner mind and vital; for it is from there that they come. And if one writes poems of bhakti, poems of divine seeking etc., or creates music of that kind, it means that there is a bhakta or seeker inside who is supporting himself by that self-expression. There is also the point of view behind Lele's answer to me when I told him that I wanted to do Yoga but for work, for action, not for Sannyasa and Nirvana, — but after years of spiritual effort I had failed to find the way and it was for that I had asked to meet him. His first answer was, "It should be easy for you as you are a poet." 18 November 1936

*

> I don't understand why Lele told you that because you are a poet, sadhana will be easy for you through poetry, or why you quote it either. Poetry is itself such a hard job and sadhana through poetry — well, the less said the better! Or perhaps he saw within your soul the Sri Aurobindo of future Supramental glory?

Because I told him I wanted to do Yoga in order to get a new inner Yogic consciousness for life and action, not for leaving life. So he said that. A poet writes from an inner source, not from the external mind, he is moved by inspiration to write, i.e. he writes what a greater Power writes through him. So the Yogi Karmachari has to act from an inner source, to derive his thoughts and movements from that, to be inspired and impelled by a greater Power which acts through him. He never said that sadhana will be easy for me through poetry. Where is the "through poetry" phrase? Poetry can be done as a part of sadhana and help the sadhana — but sadhana "through" poetry is a quite different matter. 23 May 1938

Mental Silence

To get rid of the random thoughts of the surface physical mind is not easy. It is sometimes done by a sudden miracle as in my own case, but that is rare. Some get it done by a slow process of concentration, but that may take a very long time. It is easier to have a quiet mind with things that come in passing on the surface, as people pass in the street, and one is free to attend to them or not — that is to say, there develops a sort of double mind, one inner silent and concentrated when it pleases to be so, a quiet witness when it chooses to see thoughts and things, — the other meant for surface dynamism. It is probable in your case that this will come as soon as these descents of peace, intensity or Ananda get strong enough to occupy the whole system.

16 November 1932

*

I find nothing either to add or to object to in Prof. Sorley's comment on the still, bright and clear mind; it adequately indicates the process by which the mind makes itself ready for the reflection of the higher Truth in its undisturbed surface or substance. But one thing perhaps needs to be kept in view — that this pure stillness of the mind is indeed always the required condition, the desideratum, but for bringing it about there are more ways than one. It is not, for instance, only by an effort of the mind itself to get clear of all intrusive emotion or passion, to quiet its own characteristic vibrations, to resist the obscuring fumes of a physical inertia which brings about a sleep or a torpor of the mind instead of its wakeful silence, that the thing can be done. This is indeed an ordinary process of the Yogic path of knowledge; but the same end can be brought about or automatically happen by other processes — for instance, by the descent from above of a great spiritual stillness imposing silence on the mind and heart, on the life stimuli, on the physical reflexes. A sudden descent of this kind or a series of descents accumulative in force and efficacy is a well-known phenomenon of spiritual experience. Or again one may start a mental process of one kind or another for the purpose which would normally mean a long labour and yet may pull down or be seized midway, or even at the outset, by an overmind influx, a rapid intervention or manifestation of the higher Silence, with an effect sudden, instantaneous, out of all proportion to the means used at the beginning. One commences with a method, but the work is taken up by a Grace from above, by a response from That to which one aspires or by an irruption of the infinitudes of the Spirit. It was in this last way that I myself came by the mind's absolute silence, unimaginable to me before I had the actual experience.

circa 1934

Nirvana and the Brahman

I have never said that things (in life) are harmonious now — on the contrary, with the human consciousness as it is harmony is impossible. It is always what I have told you, that the human consciousness is defective and simply impossible — and that is why I strive for a higher consciousness to come and set right the disturbed balance. I am glad you are getting converted to silence, and even Nirvana is not without its uses — in my case it was the first positive spiritual experience and it made possible all the rest of the sadhana; but as to the positive way to get these things, I don't know if your mind is quite ready to proceed with it. There are in fact several ways. My own way was by rejection of thought. "Sit down," I was told, "look and you will see that your thoughts come into you from outside. Before they enter, fling them back." I sat down and looked and saw to my astonishment that it was so; I saw and felt concretely the thought approaching as if to enter through or above the head and was able to push it back concretely before it came inside.

In three days — really in one — my mind became full of an eternal silence — it is still there. But that I don't know how many people can do. One (not a disciple — I had no disciples in those days) asked me how to do Yoga. I said: "Make your mind quiet first." He did and his mind became quite silent and empty. Then he rushed to me saying: "My brain is empty of thoughts, I cannot think. I am becoming an idiot." He did not pause to look and see where these thoughts he uttered were coming from! Nor did he realise that one who is already an idiot cannot become one. Anyhow I was not patient in those days and I dropped him and let him lose his miraculously achieved silence.

The usual way, the easiest if one can manage it at all, is to *call down* the silence from above you into the brain, mind and body.

*

About Nirvana:

When I wrote in the *Arya*, I was setting forth an overmind view of things to the mind and putting it in mental terms, that was why I had sometimes to use logic. For in such a work — mediating between the intellect and the supra-intellectual — logic has a place, though it cannot have the chief place it occupies in purely mental philosophies. The Mayavadin himself labours to establish his point of view or his experience by a rigorous logical reasoning. Only, when it comes to an explanation of Maya he, like the scientist dealing with Nature, can do no more than arrange and organise his ideas of the process of this universal mystification; he cannot explain how or why his illusionary mystifying Maya came into existence. He can only say, "Well, but it is there."

Of course, it is there. But the question is, first, "What is it? is it really an illusionary Power and nothing else, or is the Mayavadin's idea of it a mistaken first view, a mental imperfect reading, even perhaps itself an illusion?" And next, "Is illusion the sole or the highest Power which the Divine Consciousness or Superconsciousness possesses?" The Absolute is an absolute Truth free from Maya, otherwise liberation would not be possible. Has then the supreme and absolute Truth no other active Power than a power of falsehood and with it, no doubt, for the two go together, a power of dissolving or disowning the falsehood, — which is yet there for ever? I suggested that this sounded a little queer. But queer or not, if it is so, it is so — for as you point out, the Ineffable cannot be subjected to the laws of logic.

But who is to decide whether it is so? You will say, those who get there. But get where? To the Perfect and the Highest, *pūrṇaṁ param*. Is the Mayavadin's featureless Brahman that Perfect, that Complete — is it the very Highest? Is there not or can there not be a higher than that highest, *parātparam*? That is not a question of logic, it is a question of spiritual fact, of a supreme and complete experience. The solution of the matter must rest not upon logic, but upon a growing, ever heightening, widening spiritual experience — an experience which must of course include or have passed through that of Nirvana and Maya, otherwise it would not be complete and would have no decisive value.

Now to reach Nirvana was the first radical result of my own Yoga. It threw me suddenly into a condition above and without thought, unstained by any mental or vital movement; there was no ego, no real world — only when one looked through the immobile senses, something perceived or bore upon its sheer silence a world of empty forms, materialised shadows without true substance. There was no One or many even, only just absolutely That, featureless, relationless, sheer, indescribable, unthinkable, absolute, yet supremely real and solely real. This was no mental realisation nor something glimpsed somewhere above, — no abstraction — it was positive, the only positive reality — although not a spatial physical world, pervading, occupying or rather flooding and drowning this semblance of a physical world, leaving no room or space for any reality but itself, allowing nothing else to seem at all actual, positive or substantial. I cannot say there was anything exhilarating or rapturous in the experience, as it then came to me, — the ineffable Ananda I had years afterwards, — but what it brought was an inexpressible Peace, a stupendous silence, an infinity of release and freedom. I lived in that Nirvana day and night before it began to admit other things into itself or modify itself at all, and the inner heart of experience, a constant memory of it and its power to return remained until in the end it began to disappear into a greater Superconsciousness from above. But meanwhile realisation added itself to realisation and fused itself with this original experience. At an early stage the aspect of an illusionary world gave place to one in which illusion[1] is only a small surface phenomenon with an immense Divine Reality behind it and a supreme Divine Reality above it and an intense Divine Reality in the heart of everything that had seemed at first only a cinematic shape or shadow. And this was no reimprisonment in the senses, no diminution or fall from supreme experience, it came rather as a constant heightening and widening of the Truth; it was the spirit that saw objects, not the senses, and the Peace, the Silence, the freedom in Infinity remained always with the world or all worlds only as a continuous incident in the timeless eternity of the Divine.

---

[1] In fact it is not an illusion in the sense of an imposition of something baseless and unreal on the consciousness, but a misinterpretation by the conscious mind and sense and a falsifying misuse of manifested existence.

Now that is the whole trouble in my approach to Mayavada. Nirvana in my liberated consciousness turned out to be the beginning of my realisation, a first step towards the complete thing, not the sole true attainment possible or even a culminating finale. It came unasked, unsought for, though quite welcome. I had no least idea about it before, no aspiration towards it, in fact my aspiration was towards just the opposite, spiritual power to help the world and do my work in it, yet it came — without even a "May I come in" or a "By your leave". It just happened and settled in as if for all eternity or as if it had been really there always. And then it slowly grew into something not less but greater than its first self! How then could I accept Mayavada or persuade myself to pit against the Truth imposed on me from above the logic of Shankara?

But I do not insist on everybody passing through my experience or following the Truth that is its consequence. I have no objection to anybody accepting Mayavada as his soul's truth or his mind's truth or their way out of the cosmic difficulty. I object to it only if somebody tries to push it down my throat or the world's throat as the sole possible, satisfying and all-comprehensive explanation of things. For it is not that at all. There are many other possible explanations; it is not at all satisfactory, for in the end it explains nothing; and it is — and must be unless it departs from its own logic — all-exclusive, not in the least all-comprehensive. But that does not matter. A theory may be wrong or at least one-sided and imperfect and yet extremely practical and useful. That has been amply shown by the history of science. In fact a theory whether philosophical or scientific is nothing else than a support for the mind, a practical device to help it to deal with its object, a staff to uphold it and make it walk more confidently and get along on its difficult journey. The very exclusiveness and one-sidedness of the Mayavada make it a strong staff or a forceful stimulus for a spiritual endeavour which means to be one-sided, radical and exclusive. It supports the effort of the Mind to get away from itself and from Life by a short cut into superconscience. Or rather it is the Purusha in Mind that wants to get away from the limitations of Mind and Life into the superconscient Infinite. Theoretically, the most radical way for that is for the mind to deny all its perceptions and all the preoccupations of the vital and see and treat them as illusions. Practically, when the mind draws back from itself, it enters easily into a relationless peace in which nothing matters — for in its absoluteness there are no mental or vital values — and from which the mind can rapidly move towards that great short cut to the Superconscient, mindless trance, *suṣupti*. In proportion to the thoroughness of that movement all the perceptions it had once accepted become unreal to it — illusion, Maya. It is on its road towards immergence.

Mayavada, therefore, with its sole stress on Nirvana, quite apart from its defects as a mental theory of things, serves a great spiritual end and, as a path, can lead very high and far. Even, if the Mind were the last word and there were nothing beyond it except the pure Spirit, I would not be averse to accepting it as the only way out. For what the mind with its perceptions and the vital with its desires have made of life in this world, is a very bad mess, and if there were nothing better to be hoped for, the shortest cut to an exit would be the best. But my experience is that there is something beyond Mind; Mind is not the last word here of the Spirit. Mind is an ignorance-consciousness and its perceptions cannot be anything else than either false, mixed or imperfect — even when "true", a partial reflection of the Truth and not the very body of Truth herself. But there is a Truth-Consciousness, not static only and self-introspective, but also dynamic and creative, and I prefer to get at that and see what it says about things and can do rather than take the short cut away from things offered as its own end by the Ignorance.

*

I do not think . . . that the statement of supra-intellectual things necessarily involves a making of distinctions in the terms of the intellect. For, fundamentally, it is not an expression of ideas arrived at by speculative thinking. One has to arrive at spiritual knowledge through experience and a consciousness of things which arises directly out of that experience or else underlies or is involved in it. This kind of knowledge, then, is fundamentally a consciousness and not a thought or formulated idea. For instance, my first major experience — radical and overwhelming, though not, as it turned out, final and exhaustive — came after and by the exclusion and silencing of all thought — there was, first, what might be called a spiritually substantial or concrete consciousness of stillness and silence, then the awareness of some sole and supreme Reality in whose presence things existed only as forms but forms not at all substantial or real or concrete; but this was all apparent to a spiritual perception and essential and impersonal sense and there was not the least concept or idea of reality or unreality or any other notion, for all concept or idea was hushed or rather entirely absent in the absolute stillness. These things were known directly through the pure consciousness and not through the mind, so there was no need of concepts or words or names. At the same time this fundamental character of spiritual experience is not absolutely limitative; it can do without thought, but it can do with thought also. Of course, the first idea of the mind would be that the resort to thought brings one back at once to the domain of the intellect — and at first and for a long time it may be so; but it is not my experience that this is unavoidable. It happens so when one tries to make an intellectual statement of what one has experienced; but there is another kind of thought that springs out as if it were a body or form of the experience or of the consciousness involved in it — or of a part of that consciousness — and this does not seem to me to be intellectual in its character. It has another light, another power in it, a sense within the sense. It is very clearly so with those thoughts that come without the need of words to embody them, thoughts that are of the nature of a direct seeing in the consciousness, even a kind of intimate sense or contact formulating itself into a precise expression of its awareness (I hope this is not too mystic or unintelligible); but it might be said that directly the thoughts turn into words they belong to the kingdom of intellect — for words are a coinage of the intellect. But is it so really or inevitably? It has always seemed to me that words came originally from somewhere else than the thinking mind, although the thinking mind secured hold of them, turned them to its use and coined them freely for its purposes. But even otherwise, is it not possible to use words for the expression of something that is not intellectual? Housman contends that poetry is perfectly poetical only when it is non-intellectual, when it is nonsense. That is too paradoxical, but I suppose what he means is that if it is put to the strict test of the intellect, it appears extravagant because it conveys something that expresses and is real to some other kind of seeing than that which intellectual thought brings to us. Is it not possible that words may spring from, that language may be used to express — at least up to a certain point and in a certain way — the supra-intellectual consciousness which is the essential power of spiritual experience? This however is by the way — when one tries to explain spiritual experience to the intellect itself, then it is a different matter. 14 January 1934

*

You ask me whether you have to give up your predilection for testing before accepting and to accept everything in Yoga *a priori* — and by testing you mean testing by the ordinary reason. The only answer I can give to that is that the experiences of Yoga belong to an inner domain and go according to a law of their own, have their own method of perception, criteria and all the rest of it which are neither those of the domain of the physical senses nor of the domain of rational or scientific enquiry. Just as scientific enquiry passes beyond that of the physical senses and enters the domain of the infinite and the infinitesimal about which the senses can say nothing and test nothing — for one cannot see or touch an electron or know by the evidence of the sense-mind whether it exists or not or decide by that evidence whether the earth really turns round the sun and not rather the sun round the earth as our senses and all our physical experience daily tell us — so the spiritual search passes beyond the domain of scientific or rational enquiry and it is impossible by the aid of the ordinary positive reason to test the data of spiritual experience and decide whether those things exist or not or what is their law and nature. As in science, so here you have to accumulate experience on experience following faithfully the methods laid down by the Guru or by the systems of the past, you have to develop an intuitive discrimination which compares the experiences, see what they mean, how far and in what field each is valid, what is the place of each in the whole, how it can be reconciled or related with others that at first sight seem to contradict it, etc. etc. until you can move with a secure knowledge in the vast field of spiritual phenomena. That is the only way to test spiritual experience. I have myself tried the other method and found it absolutely incapable and inapplicable. On the other hand if you are not prepared to go through all that yourself — as few can do except those of extraordinary spiritual stature — you have to accept the leading of a Master, as in science you accept a teacher instead of going through the whole field of science and its experimentation all by yourself — at least until you have accumulated sufficient experience and knowledge. If that is accepting things *a priori*, well, you have to accept *a priori*. For I am unable to see by what valid tests you propose to make the ordinary reason the judge of what is beyond it.

You quote the sayings of Vivekananda and Kobiraj Gopinath. Is this Kaviraj the disciple of the Jewel Sannyasi or is he another? In any case, I would like to know before assigning a value to these utterances what they actually did for the testing of their spiritual perceptions and experiences. How did Vivekananda test the value of his spiritual experiences — some of them not more credible to the ordinary mind than the translation through the air of Bijoy Goswami's wife to Lake Manas or of Bijoy Goswami himself by a similar method to Benares? I know nothing of Kobiraj Gopinath, but what were his tests and how did he apply them? What were his methods? his criteria? It seems to me that no ordinary mind could accept the apparition of Buddha out of a wall or the half hour's talk with Hayagriva as valid facts by any kind of testing. It would either have to accept them *a priori* or on the sole evidence of Vivekananda which comes to the same thing or to reject them *a priori* as hallucinations or mere mental images accompanied in one case by an auditive hallucination. I fail to see how it could "test" them. Or how was I to test by the ordinary mind my experience of Nirvana? To what conclusion could I come about it by the aid of the ordinary positive reason? How could I test its validity? I am at a loss to imagine. I did the only thing I could, — to accept it as a strong and valid truth of experience, let it have its full play and produce its full experiential consequences until I had sufficient Yogic knowledge to put it in its place. Finally, how without inner knowledge or experience can you or anyone else test the inner knowledge and experience of others?

8 November 1934

*

One may be aware of the silent static self without relation to the play of the cosmos. Again, one may be aware of the universal static self omnipresent in everything without being supra-sensuously awake to the movement of the dynamic *viśva-prakṛti*. The first realisation of the Self or Brahman is often a realisation of something that separates itself from all form, name, action, movement, exists in itself only, regarding the cosmos as only a mass of cinematographic shapes unsubstantial and empty of reality. That was my own first complete realisation of the Nirvana in the Self. That does not mean a wall between Self and Brahman, but a scission between the essential self-existence and the manifested world. 9 March 1936

*

> Don't you think your realisation of the Self helped you in your crucial moments of struggle, kept up your faith and love?

That has nothing to do with love. Realisation of Self and love of the personal Divine are two different movements.

My struggle has never been about the Self. All that is perfectly irrelevant to the question which concerns the Bhakta's love for the Divine.

> The sweet memory of that experience of the Self must have sustained you.

There was nothing sugary about it at all. And I had no need to have any memory of it, because it was with me for months and years and is there now though in fusion with other realisations.

> We poor people in dark times which pay us frequent visits, fall back on our petty capital of Ananda, even on some of your jokes, to fortify ourselves. If such things can bring back a momentary wave of love and devotion, restored faith, how much would decisive experience not do?

My point is that there have been hundreds of Bhaktas who have the love and seeking without any concrete experience, with only a mental conception or emotional belief in the Divine to support them. The whole point is that it is untrue to say that one must have a decisive or concrete experience before one can have love for the Divine. It is contrary to the facts and the quite ordinary facts of the spiritual experience. 17 March 1936

*

I quite agree with you in not relishing the idea of another attack of this nature. I am myself, I suppose, more a hero by necessity than by choice — I do not love storms and battles — at least on the subtle plane. The sunlit way may be an illusion, though I do not think it is — for I have seen people treading it for years; but a way with only natural or even only moderate fits of rough weather, a way without typhoons surely is possible — there are so many examples. दुर्गं पथस्तत् may be generally true and certainly the path of laya or nirvana is difficult in the extreme to most (although in my case I walked into nirvana without intending it or rather nirvana walked casually into me not so far from the beginning of my Yogic career without asking my leave). But the path *need* not be cut by periodical violent storms, though that it *is* so for a great many is an obvious fact. But even for these, if they stick to it, I find that after a certain point the storms diminish in force, frequency, duration. That is why I insisted so much on your sticking — for if you stick, the turning-point is bound to come. I have seen some astonishing instances here recently of this typhonic periodicity beginning to fade out after years and years of violent recurrence. 22 January 1937

*

No aspiration, no nothing — says your teaching.

Never taught anything of the kind. I got the blessed Nirvana without even wanting it. Aspiration is first or usual means, that is all. 13 April 1937

*

I myself had my experience of Nirvana and silence in the Brahman, etc. long before there was any knowledge of the overhead spiritual planes; it came first simply by an absolute stillness and blotting out as it were of all mental, emotional and other inner activities — the body continued indeed to see, walk, speak and do its other business but as an empty automatic machine and nothing more. I did not become aware of any pure "I" — nor even of any self, impersonal or other, — there was only an awareness of That as the sole Reality, all else being quite unsubstantial, void, non-real. As to what realised that Reality, it was a nameless consciousness which was not other than That;[2] one could perhaps say this, though hardly even so much as this, since there was no mental concept of it, but no more. Neither was I aware of any lower soul or outer self called by such and such a personal name that was performing this feat of arriving at the consciousness of Nirvana. Well then, what becomes of your pure "I" and lower "I" in all that? Consciousness (not this or that part of consciousness or an "I" of any kind) suddenly emptied itself of all inner contents and remained aware only of unreal surroundings and of Something real but ineffable. You may say that there must have been a consciousness aware of some perceiving existence, if not of a pure "I", but, if so, it was something for which these names seem inadequate.

---

[2] Mark that I did not think these things, there were no thoughts or concepts nor did they present themselves like that to any Me; it simply just was so or was self-apparently so.

22 July 1937

*

Sri Aurobindo has no remarks to make on Huxley's comments with which he is in entire agreement. But in the phrase "to its heights we can always reach" very obviously "we" does not refer to humanity in general but to those who have a sufficiently developed inner spiritual life.[3] It is probable that Sri Aurobindo was thinking of his own experience. After three years of spiritual effort with only minor results he was shown by a Yogi the way to silence his mind. This he succeeded in doing entirely in two or three days by following the method shown. There was an entire silence of thought and feeling and all the ordinary movements of consciousness except the perception and recognition of things around without any accompanying concept or other reaction. The sense of ego disappeared and the movements of the ordinary life as well as speech and action were carried on by some habitual activity of Prakriti alone which was not felt as belonging to oneself. But the perception which remained saw all things as utterly unreal; this sense of unreality was overwhelming and universal. Only some undefinable Reality was perceived as true which was beyond space and time and unconnected with any cosmic activity but yet was met wherever one turned. This condition remained unimpaired for several months and even when the sense of unreality disappeared and there was a return to participation in the world-consciousness, the inner peace and freedom which resulted from this realisation remained permanently behind all surface movements and the essence of the realisation itself was not lost. At the same time an experience intervened; something else than himself took up his dynamic activity and spoke and acted through him but without any personal thought or initiative. What this was remained unknown until Sri Aurobindo came to realise the dynamic side of the Brahman, the Ishwara and felt himself moved by that in all his Sadhana and action. These realisations and others which followed upon them, such as that of the Self in all and all in the Self and all as the Self, the Divine in all and all in the Divine, are the heights to which Sri Aurobindo refers and to which he says we can always rise; for they presented to him no long or obstinate difficulty. The only real difficulty which took decades of spiritual effort to carry out towards completeness was to apply the spiritual knowledge utterly to the world and to the surface psychological and outer life and to effect its transformation both on the higher levels of Nature and on the ordinary mental, vital and physical levels down to the subconscience and the basic Inconscience and up to the supreme Truth-consciousness or Supermind in which alone the dynamic transformation could be entirely integral and absolute.

---

[3] *In his book* The Perennial Philosophy *(London: Chatto and Windus, 1946, p. 74), Aldous Huxley quoted and commented on the following passage from Sri Aurobindo's* Life Divine, *pp. 13–14:* "The touch of Earth is always reinvigorating to the son of Earth, even when he seeks a supraphysical Knowledge. It may even be said that the supraphysical can only be really mastered in its fullness — to its heights we can always reach — when we keep our feet firmly on the physical. 'Earth is His footing,' says the Upanishad whenever it images the Self that manifests in the universe." — *Ed.*

4 November 1946

Silence, Thought and Action

> While at the top of the staircase, after leaving my letter for you, I felt an intense force of thought coming in. I felt it in the head — but as if it was an open space.

That is a liberation, if completed. Since 1908 when I got the silence, I never think with my head or brain — it is always in the wideness generally above the head that the thoughts occur.

17 October 1933

*

> Is what I feel really yogic emptiness or has my mind misunderstood it? It has lasted for a long time. In other people, I believe, it only lasts for a day or two.

When I got the emptiness, it lasted for years. Whatever else came, came in the emptiness and I could at any time withdraw from the activity into the pure silent peace. 21 September 1934

*

> You write: "When I got the emptiness, it lasted for years. Whatever else came, came in the emptiness. . . ." In my case, I do not see anything coming in. It remains always the same, or grows. But of course it may be preparing the nature for a higher descent.

I had the sheer emptiness with nothing in it for many months together. It is not emptiness really — for there is no such thing as emptiness — but the pure experience of the Self. Your mind accustomed to all sorts of movements looks at it in a negative way, that is all. 22 September 1934

*

> I found it difficult to read, because the higher consciousness was trying to come down and I felt much pressure on the head.

It ought to be possible to read with the inner consciousness looking on and, as it were, seeing the act of reading. In the condition of absolute inner silence I was making speeches and conducting a newspaper, but all that got itself done without any thought entering my mind or the silence being in the least disturbed or diminished. 27 October 1934

*

> Sometimes I feel a sort of void, as if I was just an immobile statue. My mind, life and body are emptied of energy. As a result I find it almost impossible to work.

What you describe is not at all a drawing away of life-energy; it is simply the effect of voidness and stillness caused in the lower parts by the consciousness being located above. It is quite consistent with action, only one must get accustomed to the idea of the possibility of action under these conditions. In a greater state of emptiness I carried on a daily newspaper and made a dozen speeches in the course of three or four days — but I did not manage that in any way; it happened. The Force made the body do the work without any inner activity.

> I am not able to distinguish this voidness caused by the drawing of life-energy and that produced by a spiritual emptiness.

The drawing of the life-energy leaves the body lifeless, helpless, empty and impotent, but it is attended by no experience except a great suffering and unease sometimes. 13 May 1936

*

> You had the emptiness for several years together. But yours seemed to be of a different kind than mine. For you could use it as a wall against anything undesirable.

I never used it as a wall against anything. You seem to know more about my sadhana than I do. 4 June 1936

*

I believe I have as many hours of hard external work to do as almost anyone in the Asram and I am not aware that I have any leisure or spend even the very short time I have for concentration in a blissful quietism communing with the silent Brahman. Even my concentration is of the nature of action and it is not an airy quietistic contemplation as your informants seem to imagine.

I may add that I have not spent my life shouting down the quietistic ideal and sadhana without knowing why they followed it. All the experiences that the quietistic sadhana can give, I have had, the realisation of the featureless Parabrahman, Maya, Sunya, the illusoriness of the world, the Akshara Purusha. I know also perfectly well why they turned away from the world and have gone through all the million difficulties which they did not care to face. None of the difficulties of which you enumerate one or two are strange to me — only I did not put the blame of them on anybody or on the Yoga and I overcame them.

Anybody can do the quietistic Yoga, who wants to do it. But if anyone imagines that they [*the quietistic yogas*] are easy and that these difficulties do not occur there or that the sadhakas of these paths are all of them perfected saints free from the human passions and defects which you see here among the sadhakas, he is labouring under a great delusion. No path of Yoga is easy and to imagine that by leaving the world and plunging inside oneself one automatically shuffles off the vital and external nature is an illusion. If I ask you to develop equanimity and egolessness by work done with opening to the Divine, it is because it is so that I did it and it is so that it can best be done and not by retiring into oneself and shutting oneself away from all that can disturb equanimity and excite the ego. As for concentration and perfection of the being and the finding of the inner self, I did as much of it walking in the streets of Calcutta to my work or in dealing with men during my work as alone and in solitude.[4]

---

[4] *This incomplete letter-draft was not sent in this form to the intended recipient. It was written sometime in the mid-1930s. — Ed.*

Experiences in Alipur Jail
1908 – 1909

Pain and Ananda

As for divine rapture, a knock on head or foot or elsewhere *can* be received with the physical Ananda of pain or pain + Ananda or pure physical Ananda — for I have often, quite involuntarily, made the experiment myself and passed with honours. It began, by the way, as far back as in Alipur jail when I got bitten in my cell by some very red and ferocious looking warrior ants and found to my surprise that pain and pleasure are conventions of our senses. But I do not expect that unusual reaction from others. And I suppose there are limits, e.g. the case of a picketer in Madras or Dr. Noel Paton. In any case, this way of having rapture is better off the list and the Lilliputian doorway [*against which the correspondent bumped himself*] was not a happy contrivance.
13 February 1932

The Principle of Levitation

> You told me [*in a private interview*]: "I haven't had the experience of levitation itself but an experience I had could not have been true if there was no levitation." Could you kindly tell me what the experience was if, that is, it is tellable. I remember *X* once told me that it was at Alipur you found your body in equilibrium in a lifted angle. Is that it?

There were other things but not at present tellable! You can put it like this. "I take levitation as an acceptable idea, because I have had myself experience of the natural energies which if developed would bring it about and also physical experiences which would not have been possible if the principle of levitation were untrue."
11 March 1943

Opening to Painting

> I can quite understand that the inner knowledge comes with the growth and heightening of consciousness. But what about the outer knowledge — what we ordinarily call knowledge?

The capacity for it can come with the inner knowledge. E.g. I understood nothing about painting before I did Yoga. A moment's illumination in Alipur jail opened my vision and since then I have understood with the intuitive perception and vision. I do not know the technique of course but I can catch it at once if anybody with knowledge speaks of it. That would have been impossible to me before. 29 December 1934

*

Don't be desperate about your incapacity as a connoisseur of painting. I was worse in this respect, knew something about sculpture, but blind to painting. Suddenly one day in the Alipur jail, while meditating saw some "pictures" on the wall of the cell and lo and behold, the artistic eye in me opened and I knew all about painting except of course the more material side of the technique. I don't always know how to express though, because I lack the knowledge of the proper expressions, but that does not stand in the way of a keen and understanding appreciation. So, there you are. All things are possible. 25 July 1936

Contact with Vivekananda

> I was wondering if you had seen or met Vivekananda somewhere.

No, not in the body. My contact with him was in the jail when he was speaking with me for about 15 days, giving me the first insight into the Intuition plane (not the intuitive mind which is mental and not supramental) as the first opening to Supermind.
21 October 1934

*

> If it is not indiscreet would you ask Sri Aurobindo if it is true that in 1909 — in Alipore jail — seven years after his death — Swami Vivekananda came to him, not in vision, but in actual fact, to ask him to continue the work, that he had not yet finished?

Sri Aurobindo says that Vivekananda came to him not in a visible form but as a presence which was with him for a fortnight during which V. spoke certain things about the processes of the higher Truth-Consciousness.[1]

21 December 1938

---

[1] *This reply was written by the Mother at Sri Aurobindo's dictation or under his instructions. — Ed.*

Section Two

Sadhana in Pondicherry
1910 – 1950

The Early Years in Pondicherry
1910–1926

Sitting on the Path?

It is not clear what your Guru meant by my sitting on the path; that could have been true of the period between 1915 and 1920 when I was writing the *Arya*, but the sadhana and the work were waiting for the Mother's coming. In 1923 or 1924 I could not be described as sitting on the path, so far as the sadhana was concerned, but it may perhaps be only a metaphor or symbol for the outward form of the work not yet being ready. The statement about my having gone too high to redescend for work in the world was made in almost the identical terms by another Yogi also; it referred to my condition at the time and cannot be taken as anything more. 16 September 1935

Seeking the Way

> *X* seems to have told *Y* that the old sadhaks, who were here before the Mother took up the work in 1926, had many experiences of Cosmic Consciousness, etc., meaning to convey that their sadhana was much better and more serious than what people are doing now.

Before the Mother came all were living in the mind with only some mental realisations and experiences. The vital and everything else were unregenerated and the psychic behind the veil. I am not aware that anyone of them at that time entered the cosmic consciousness. At that time I was still seeking my way for the transformation and the passage to the supramental (all the part of the Yoga that goes beyond the ordinary Vedanta) and acted very much on a principle of *laissez faire* with the few sadhaks who were there. *X* is one of those who have never ceased regretting that *laissez faire* — he regrets the vital liberty and absence of discipline they then had. 27 July 1934

The Realisation of 24 November 1926

Descent of the Overmind

> Ever since I came here this time I have been experiencing a very intense atmosphere, a very strong pressure, similar in intensity and depth to what I felt in 1926 (months of October to December). It appears to me that the Supermind is about to descend a second time. Is this an entirely wrong feeling on my part or there is some truth in it, if not the full truth?

There is some truth in it — but the descent in 1926 was rather of the Overmind, not of the Supermind proper. 21 August 1935

The Significance of the 24th November

> Today I shall request you to "stand and deliver" on a different subject. What is exactly the significance of the 24th of November? Different people have different ideas about it. Some say that the Avatar of the Supramental plane descended in you.

Rubbish! whose imagination was that?

> Others say that you were through and through overmentalised.

Well, it is not quite the truth, but nearer to the mark.

> I myself understood that on that day you achieved the Supermind.

There was never any mention of that from our side.

> If you did not achieve the Supermind at that time, how is it possible for you to talk about it or know anything about it?

Well, I'm hanged. You can't know anything about a thing before you have "achieved" it?

Because I have seen it and am in contact with it, O logical baby that you are! But achieving it is another business.

> But didn't you say that some things were getting supramentalised in parts?

Getting supramentalised is one thing and the achieved supramental is another.

> You have unnerved a lot of people by that statement that you haven't achieved the supermind.

Good Lord! And what do these people think I meant when I was saying persistently that I was trying to get the supermind down into the material? If I had achieved it on Nov. 24. 1926, it would have been there already for the last nine years, isn't it?

> *X* seems to have declared on that day that you had conquered sleep, food, disease and death. On what authority did she proclaim it then?

I am not aware of this gorgeous proclamation. What was said was that the Divine (Krishna or the Divine Presence or whatever you like) had come down into the material. It was also proclaimed that I was retiring — obviously to work things out. If all that was achieved on the 24th [November] 1926, what on earth remained to work out, and if the Supramental was there, for what blazing purpose did I need to retire? Besides are these things achieved in a single day? If *X* said anything like that she must have been in a prophetic mood and seen the future in the present!

I have stood, but I have not delivered. I had time for standing a moment, but none for a delivery — however pregnant my mind or my overmind may be. But really what a logic! One must become thoroughly supramental first (achieve supermind) and then only one can begin to know something about supermind?

Well! However if I have time one day, I will deliver — for evidently with such ideas about, an *éclaircissement* is highly advisable. 29 August 1935

*

> What exactly is the significance of the 24th November? Overmental, supramental realisation or what? You say it was something like the descent of Krishna in the material. Some say the descent was in you but you are not matter, are you? Not very clear.

Why not? Why can't I be matter? or represent it at least? At least you will admit that I have got some matter in me and you will hardly deny that the matter in me is connected or even continuous (in spite of the quantum theory) with matter in general? Well, if Krishna or the Overmind or something equivalent descended into my matter with an inevitable extension into connected general Matter, what is the lack of clarity in the statement of a descent into the material? 15 September 1935

*

> Some say November 24th is a day of victory. By that some mean that the Supermind (supramental consciousness) descended into the physical consciousness of Sri Aurobindo. Others say it was the coming down of Krishna into the physical consciousness. If it was the descent of Krishna, does that mean the descent of the supramental light?

Krishna is not the supramental light. The descent of Krishna would mean the descent of the Overmind Godhead preparing, though not itself actually bringing, the descent of Supermind and Ananda. Krishna is the Anandamaya, he supports the evolution through the Overmind leading it towards his Ananda.

> I believe that on the 24th November Sri Aurobindo realised that the Mother is the Divine Consciousness and the Force.

No. I knew that long before. 2 November 1935

*

> I knew that Krishna is not the Supermind. But because some say it was the descent of the supramental light and some say it was the descent of Krishna, I asked you to make it clear to me. What I wanted to know was whether the 24th November was the descent of the supramental light or of Krishna's light. Why are we observing the 24th as a special day?

It was the descent of Krishna into the physical.

*

> I do not know the significance of the 24th November 1926; some say it is the immortality day while others say it was the descent of Krishna's personality.

It has nothing to do with immortality. It is the descent of Krishna.
13 November 1935

*

> [*A disciple of Sri Aurobindo's wrote an article on the significance of the realisation of 24 November 1926, in which he quoted the following passage from* The Life Divine:]
>
>> In order that the involved principles of Overmind and Supermind should emerge from their veiled secrecy, the being and powers of the superconscience must descend into us and uplift us and formulate themselves in our being and powers; this descent is a *sine qua non* of the transition and transformation.[1]
>
> [*The disciple concluded:*] This is referred to in the Vedas as the birth of the gods in men, *devānāṁ janimāni*; Sri Aurobindo regards it as indispensable for supramental realisation on earth. It was this that occurred on the 24th November, 1926, and it is only then that Sri Aurobindo started his Ashram, being sure that with the cooperation of the gods the supermind can descend upon earth.

What happened on the 24th November prepared the possibility of this descent and on that day he retired into seclusion and entered into deep and powerful meditation. 20 November 1950

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo,* The Life Divine, *volume 22 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 955–56.*

The Sadhana of 1927 – 1929

Sadhana on the Physical Level

> Last night during my meditation I saw a cat — probably one of the Mother's cats, the one which sleeps on the staircase — come and enter the room where I was meditating. But I at once opened my eyes. Would you very kindly let me know the meaning of this cat and why I opened my eyes.

If it is the cat Bushy, she has some strange connection with the siddhi in the physical consciousness. It was she who ushered us into our present house running before us into each room. The change to this house marked the change from the sadhana on the vital to the sadhana on the physical level.[1] 7 July 1936

Bringing Down the Powers of Transformation

> Once *X* said about *Y* that the Mother had said that she was a "Vedic Goddess" — that is, Saraswati or another.

I never heard of this Vedic Goddess affair before. There was a time when the Mother was trying to bring down certain powers in the sadhaks here, but there was never any question of the Saraswati power in *Y*. 6 October 1934

*

> Come down, Sir, — for heaven's sake give us something and make life more substantial and concrete. I am really beginning to doubt that things like divine Love, Knowledge, etc. can be brought down in me.

In the old days long before you came[2] plenty of things were brought down — including the love. Hardly one could bear it and even then only in a small measure. Is it any better now, I wonder? It does not look like it. That is why I want the supermind first, — and especially the peace, the balance in an intensity unshakable. There are several who have been trying to push on with the intensities, but — . Well, let us hope for the best. For God's sake, peace, balance, an unshakable supramental poise and sanity first. Ecstasies and intensities of other kinds can come afterwards. 8 April 1935

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo and the Mother moved into 28 rue François Martin, the "Meditation House", on 7 February 1927. — Ed.*

[2] *The recipient of this letter first visited the Ashram in 1930 and came to stay in 1933. — Ed.*

The Creation Postponed

I have answered the actual points in your letter separately, on the letter itself. But there is besides one thing that you must understand clearly. Things are no longer what they were before, when you were last here.[3] At that time the Mother was bringing down a rapid (collective as well as individual) transformation and creation into the mental, vital and physical planes from above, by the power of a supramental Light and Force acting through the higher illumined mind and the psychic being. For that purpose she was calling down beings of a higher plane (like the one of which you speak) as an indispensable aid in that process. All went on well enough so long as the work was on the mental, psychic and higher vital levels. But as soon as it began in the lower vital, it appeared at once that the lower vital and physical nature of human beings (at least of those here) was too small, obscure and full of rebellious impurities to admit of so great a working. One after another failed in the test and you were among the first to fall. The creation had to be postponed, the process changed, and, instead of doing all from above, it became necessary to come down into the lower vital and material nature for a long, slow, patient and difficult work of opening and change.[4]

This is the sadhana that has been going on here. Are you prepared for this opening and change which needs an absolute sincerity and a work in which there is no room for pretence, self-deception or a half-hearted will? You are very evidently deep down in your lower vital and material self, "cooped up" there; but you seem to have been fairly content and self-satisfied in this dark and unswept lodging. Talk of surrender or a mere idea or tepid wish for integral consecration will not do; there must be the push for a radical and total change.

---

[3] *The recipient of this letter lived in the Ashram between October 1926 and March 1927, before going away for two and a half years. — Ed.*

[4] *Compare the letter of 18 October 1934 on pages 330–32. — Ed.*

It is not by taking a mere mental attitude that this can be done or even by any number of inner experiences which leave the outer man as he was. It is this outer man who has to open, to surrender and to change. His every least movement, habit, action has to be surrendered, seen, held up and exposed to the divine Light, offered to the divine Force for its old forms and motives to be destroyed and the divine Truth and the action of the transforming consciousness of the Divine Mother to take their place.

If you want to make any progress while you are here, you will first have to realise how much time you have lost and how far you are from this. Afterwards, you will have to see whether you can light a fire of aspiration strong enough to burn up all that is unclean and obscure in you. Then only can you speak of the transformation of your lower vital nature.

29 September 1929

General Remarks on the Sadhana of the 1930s

"A Far Greater Truth"

> In a letter dated November 1928, you speak of "a far greater Truth than any yet realised on the earth". Does this mean that the realisation of the Divine which this world is witnessing at present in the person of Sri Aurobindo eclipses the Light of all the previous Divine Descents of which humanity is aware? Or, is it to be construed as meaning that Sri Aurobindo does not call himself the Avatar but the Divine, having realised the Divine on earth?

"A far greater Truth" has nothing to do with Avatarhood or anything of the kind. I meant by it the descent of the supramental Consciousness upon earth; all truths below the supramental (even that of the highest spiritual on the mental plane, which is the highest that has yet manifested) are either partial or relative or otherwise deficient and unable to transform the earthly life, they can only at most modify and influence it. The supermind is the last Truth-consciousness of which the ancient seers spoke; there have been glimpses of it till now, sometimes an indirect influence or pressure, but it has not been brought down into the consciousness of the earth and fixed there. To bring it down is the aim of our Yoga. 25 April 1930

*

> In spite of his very deep respect for Sri Aurobindo, *X* holds the view that the earth did previously attain to the Supramental Consciousness. We reject any such suggestion.

Write to them that it is better not to enter into sterile intellectual discussions. The intellectual mind cannot even realise what the supermind is; what use, then, can there be in allowing it to discuss what it does not know? It is not by reasoning, but by constant experience, growth of consciousness and widening into the Light that one can reach those higher levels of consciousness above the intellect from which one can begin to look up to the Divine Gnosis. These levels are not yet the supermind, but they can receive something of its knowledge.

As to *X*'s statement I do not catch what he means by *previously*, unless he means that the Vedic Rishis attained to the supermind for the Earth. But that is precisely what they failed to do or perhaps did not even attempt. They tried to rise individually to the supramental plane, but they did not bring it down and make it a permanent part of the earth consciousness. Even there are verses of the Upanishad in which it is hinted that it is impossible to pass through the gates of the Sun (the symbol of Supermind) and yet retain an earthly body. It was because of this failure that the spiritual effort of India culminated in Mayavada. Our Yoga is a double movement of ascent and descent; one rises to higher and higher levels of consciousness, but at the same time one brings down their power not only into mind and life, but in the end even into the body. And the highest of these levels, the one at which it aims is the supermind. Only when that can be brought down is a divine transformation possible in the earth consciousness. 5 May 1930

Sadhana for the Earth Consciousness

> Does not the "earth consciousness" include all humanity? And also animals, the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, etc.? Will the higher consciousness be established only in a few people?

Yes, all that is the earth consciousness — mineral = matter, vegetable = the vital-physical creation, animal = the vital creation, man = the mental creation. Into the earth consciousness so limited to mind, vital, matter has to come the supramental creation. Necessarily *at first* it cannot be in a great number — but even if it is only in a few at first, that does not mean that it will have no effect on the rest or will not change the whole balance of the earth-nature. 3 May 1933

*

> What is the earth consciousness? Is it Cosmic Matter? Or only this globe?

The consciousness of this Earth alone. There is a separate global consciousness of the earth (as of other worlds) which evolves with the evolution of life on the planet. 29 July 1933

*

> Is the establishment of the supramental activity in the earth consciousness a separate process from its establishment in individuals?

It is first through the individual that it becomes part of the earth consciousness and afterwards it spreads from the first centres and takes up more and more of the global consciousness till it becomes an established force there. 29 July 1933

*

> The spiritual work of Krishna, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and others achieved nothing permanent.

Whose work? So far as bringing in spiritual forces goes, I suppose their work was fairly successful.

I am not aware that Ramakrishna or any other of those you speak of wanted to change the earth consciousness — they were concerned to raise people out of it, not to bring down anything into it, except spiritual force for personal salvation.

> Are we to expect the same results for us — unsteadiness, fall and fiasco?

It does not matter very much what you expect. It depends on whether the greater consciousness can be brought down and fixed here (as mind fixed itself in the vital life of earth) or not.

4 January 1934

*

> It seems to me that the purpose of the supramental yoga is to dissipate ignorance from the entire cosmos and remove the

> darkness of earthly nature, in order to make the divine life possible.

Not from the entire cosmos — from the earth consciousness, — because the earth is the place of evolution.

> Through the descent and manifestation of the supermind, a new race will be born — a new creation. But what exactly will this new creation be?

The supramental being on earth, as man is the mental being, the animal the vital etc. 8 May 1934

*

> When I hear people talking about the supramental descent it makes me somewhat sceptical. They expect that when the descent happens everything will soon be spiritualised and even in the most outward political life all that is now wrong will immediately be set right. Such expectations create a great curiosity and flutter.

All that is absurd. The descent of the supramental means only that the Power will be there in the earth consciousness as a living force just as the thinking mental and the higher mental are already there. But an animal cannot take advantage of the presence of the thinking mental Power or an undeveloped man of the presence of the higher mental Power — so too everybody will not be able to take advantage of the presence of the supramental Power. I have also often enough said that it will be at first for the few, not for the whole earth, — only there will be a growing influence of it on the earth life. 15 December 1934

*

> Do you seriously want me to swallow this mountainous absurdity that any man can be made a Krishna or a Sri Aurobindo, any woman a Mother, any *X* a Tyagaraj, any *Y* a Tansen, any *Z* a Shakespeare, any *A* a Raphael, any *B* a Vyasa or a Valmiki? . . .

I have never said any or all of these things. These egoistic terms are not those in which I think any more than these egoistic ambitions are those in which my vital moves. It is a higher Truth I seek, whether it makes men greater or not is not the question but whether it will give them truth and peace and light to live in and make life something better than a struggle with ignorance and falsehood and pain and strife. Then even if they are less great than the men of the past, my object will have been achieved. For me mental conceptions cannot be the end of all things. I know that the supermind is a truth.

> You really want me to swallow this even if I suffocate? Your logical proposition is "Everything is possible", but this makes all human experience look so hopeless, so childish and so frightening. It is difficult to believe that any amount of the divine force will turn a *C* into a Sri Aurobindo or a *D* into a Sri Mira. I am not joking. I mean it.

You do not seem to have followed the sense of my reasoning very well — perhaps because I clothe my arguments with *E* in a tone of humour.[1] You have taken my humorous comment about Muthu with a portentous seriousness — if you really are not joking: but I suppose you are in spite of your disclaimer.

It is not for personal greatness that I am seeking to bring down the supermind. I care nothing for greatness or littleness in the human sense. I am seeking to bring some principle of inner Truth, Light, Harmony, Peace into the earth consciousness — I see it above and know what it is — I feel it overgleaming my consciousness from above and I am seeking to make it possible for it to take up the whole being into its own native power, instead of the nature of man continuing to remain in half-light, half-darkness. I believe the descent of this Truth opening the way to a development of divine consciousness here to be the final sense of the earth-evolution. If greater men than myself have not had this vision and this ideal before them, that is no reason why I should not follow my Truth-sense and Truth-vision. If human reason regards me as a fool for trying to do what Krishna did not try, I do not in the least care. There is no question of *C* or *D* or anybody else in that. It is a question between the Divine and myself — whether it is the Divine Will or not, whether I am sent to bring that down or open the way for its descent or at least make it more possible or not. Let all men jeer at me if they will or all Hell fall upon me if it will for my presumption, — I go on till I conquer or perish. This is the spirit in which I seek the supermind, no hunting for greatness for myself or others. (This is not to be circulated.) 10 February 1935

---

[1] *See the letters of 9 and 10 February 1935 on pages 402 – 10. — Ed.*

*

> Your "superman" reminds me of an interesting debate we had. Some people ridicule us for our aspiration after supermanhood. They say it is not a sober aspiration. We don't even have the divine realisation, and we want the supramental! I replied that it is Sri Aurobindo who wants the supermind for us.

By divine realisation is meant the spiritual realisation — the realisation of Self, Bhagavan or Brahman on the mental-spiritual or else the overmental plane. That is a thing (at any rate the mental-spiritual) which thousands have done. So it is obviously easier to do than the supramental. Also nobody can have the supramental realisation who has not had the spiritual. So far your opponent is right.

> They say that one must see what one is aspiring for. When our movements and consciousness are as externalised as they are, what is the point of aspiring for the Supermind? But I don't see why I shouldn't aspire for the highest, in spite of my weaknesses. We rely on the Divine Grace. It is the central sincerity that is needed.

It is true that neither can be got in any effective way unless the whole being is turned towards it — unless there is a real and very serious spirit and dynamic reality of sadhana. So far you are right and the opponent also is right.

It is true that I want the supramental not for myself but for the earth and souls born on the earth, and certainly therefore I cannot object if anybody wants the supramental. But there are the conditions. He must want the Divine Will first and the soul's surrender and the spiritual realisation (through works, bhakti, knowledge, self-perfection) on the way. So there everybody is right.

> Any flaws in my argument?

The central sincerity is the first thing and sufficient for an aspiration to be entertained, — a total sincerity is needed for the aspiration to be fulfilled. Amen! 15 April 1935

*

> If it is reasonable for those who follow other gurus to expect divine realisation — that is, union with the spiritual consciousness — is it not reasonable for us here to expect something beyond that — assuming you intend to give it and we truly follow your lead? The answer to this depends, I believe, on whether it is your intention to give the supramental for others after achieving it yourself.

I have no intention of achieving the supramental for myself only — I am not doing anything for myself, as I have no personal need of anything, neither of salvation (Moksha) nor supramentalisation. If I am seeking after supramentalisation, it is because it is a thing that has to be done for the earth consciousness and if it is not done in myself, it cannot be done in others. My supramentalisation is only a key for opening the gates of the supramental to the earth consciousness; done for its own sake, it would be perfectly futile. But it does not follow either that if or when I become supramental, everybody will become supramental. Others can so become who are ready for it, when they are ready for it — though of course the achievement in myself will be to them a great help towards it. It is therefore quite legitimate to have the aspiration for it — provided (1) one does not make too personal or egoistic an affair of it turning it into a Nietzschean or other ambition to be a superman, (2) one is ready to undergo the conditions and stages needed for the achievement, (3) one is sincere and regards it as part of the seeking for the Divine and a consequent culmination of the divine Will in one and insists on no more than the fulfilment of that Will whatever it may be, psychisation, spiritualisation or supramentalisation. It should be regarded as the fulfilment of God's working in the world, not as a personal chance or achievement. 20 April 1935

*

> I have been pondering over your letter [*pp. 346–47*]. I trust I have grown wiser, not less so as a result of the irony in your letter in regard to us mental beings. But you have expressed yourself, willy-nilly, in the language which the mental has invented after all. So you are in no less of a fix than I.

Why should I be in a fix for that? I use the language of the mind because there is no other which human beings can understand, — even though most of them understand it badly. If I were to use a supramental language like Joyce, you would not even have the illusion of understanding it; so, not being an Irishman, I don't make the attempt. But of course anyone who wants to change earth-nature must first accept it in order to change it. To quote from an unpublished poem of my own:

He who would bring the heavens here
Must descend himself into clay
And the burden of earthly nature bear
And tread the dolorous way.[2]

23 August 1935

*

> Would you say something in brief about how the Supermind works on the earth consciousness in order to transform it?

No. I have never written on that except in *Arya* and do not propose to start now. It would be mere words to the mind which would be likely to make its own wrong constructions about it.

---

[2] *Lines from "A God's Labour", in* Collected Poems, *volume 2 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 534. — Ed.*

The sadhak should first get the higher consciousness down and know something by experience of the higher planes before trying to know what is the Supermind. 10 January 1936

*

> Somewhere you said that it would be sufficient for most sadhaks to become psychicised. This would mean that only a very few will be able to reach the Intuition and fewer still the Overmind. If this is so, who will be able to reach the Supermind and how will it be established in the earth consciousness?

Well, what I meant is that taking in view their present nature the psychisation would be a big change that is quite enough for them to concentrate on. To aim at the Intuition plane or Overmind now would be useless. But the result of psychisation of the whole nature is not small; it can bring about or embrace most of what have been celebrated as the great spiritual realisations. Only these are got by a sort of reflection in the human consciousness (mind, life, body), not by a *permanent* ascension of the consciousness to the highest planes or a *permanent* descent from above. There are upgoings and downflowings from there only. If that much is gained one may think of the rest afterwards. On the other hand there are others in whom there is the clear possibility of rising above after a sufficient psychisation (when completed) of the being and then these two things go on together — psychisation and spiritualisation of the being, the latter process opening up the highest planes entirely. 29 September 1936

*

> If the preparatory work for the supramental descent into the earth consciousness goes on so slowly, will it not be years before the earth consciousness is wholly transformed?

There is no proposal to transform the whole earth consciousness — it is simply to introduce the supramental principle there which will transform those who can receive and embody it.

16 December 1936

Descent and the Supramental Yoga

> Was there not anything like descents of peace in Ramakrishna or Chaitanya? It seems like they had intense realisations and visions and depths of Samadhi, but we do not read of their having descents of peace. Perhaps their realisations brought with them the peace and Light during Samadhi or intense emotional moments, so that it was not particularly noted — and for supporting and stabilising all that, there must have been a basis of calm and peace.

It happens that people may get the descent without noticing that it is a descent because they feel the result only. The ordinary Yoga does not go beyond the spiritual mind — people feel at the top of the head the joining with the Brahman, but they are not aware of a consciousness above the head. In the same way in the ordinary Yoga one feels the ascent of the awakened inner consciousness (Kundalini) to the *brahmarandhra* where the Prakriti joins the Brahman-consciousness, but they do not feel the descent. Some may have had these things, but I don't know that they understood their nature, principle or place in a complete sadhana. At least I never heard of these things from others before I found them out in my own experience. The reason is that the old Yogins when they went above the spiritual mind passed into samadhi, which means that they did not attempt to be conscious in these higher planes — their aim being to pass away into the Superconscient and not to bring the Superconscient into the waking consciousness, which is that of my Yoga.

26 July 1935

*

> We do not find the process of descent elsewhere — not in Patanjali or Sankhya or Hathayoga, not even in the Upanishads that I have read. In the Tantras there is the rising of the Kundalini but not the descent of peace or force. Why then do people not recognise the newness of your Yoga?

They will perhaps say that there are "equivalents" in the old things or if the descent is not spoken of as descent it still happens in the old Yogas. 21 March 1936

*

> In other Yogas does the silence *descend* or is it rather the mind that goes into the silence? It does not seem that there is anything like a process of descent in Rajayoga or Vedantic Jnanayoga. Moreover, in Rajayoga there is nowhere any mention of silence in the waking consciousness — always it is a question of going into Samadhi. In Jnanayoga, however, it does seem as though the waking state becomes illumined and full of peace and *brahmānanda*.

I never heard of silence descending in other Yogas — the mind goes into silence. Since however I have been writing of ascent and descent, I have been told from several quarters that there is nothing new in this Yoga — so I am wondering whether people were not getting ascents and descents without knowing it! or at least without noticing the process. It is like the rising above the head and taking the station there — which I and others have experienced in this Yoga. When I spoke of it first, people stared and thought I was talking nonsense. Wideness must have been felt in the old Yogas because otherwise one could not feel the universe in oneself or be free from the body consciousness or unite with the Anantam Brahman. But generally as in Tantrik Yoga one spoke of the consciousness rising to the Brahmarandhra, top of the head, as the summit. Rajayoga of course lays stress on Samadhi as the means of the highest experience. But obviously if one has not the Brahmi sthiti in the waking state, there is no completeness in the realisation. The Gita distinctly speaks of being *samāhita* (which is equivalent to being in samadhi) and the Brahmi sthiti as a waking state in which one lives and does all actions. 9 June 1936

*

> Such a concrete process of ascent and descent could not have escaped notice if other Yogis had it. They do mention a rising of Kundalini to the Brahmarandhra. Why then do they not mention a coming down of, say, a current of *brahmānanda*

> or of light from the Brahmarandhra into the Kundalini to the Muladhara? If we suppose they did not mention it because it was a secret, then how could they mention the rising up of the Kundalini? If there is nothing new in this Yoga, those who believe so should quote something which is similar to descent — either in Patanjali or the *Hathayoga Pradipika* or in the *Panchadashi* and other Vedantic books wherein experiences are mentioned.

So I have always thought. I explain this absence of the descent experiences myself by the old Yogas having been mainly confined to the psycho-spiritual-occult range of experience — in which the higher experiences come into the still mind or the concentrated heart by a sort of filtration or reflection — the field of this experience being from the Brahmarandhra downward. People went above this only in samadhi or in a condition of static mukti without any dynamic descent. All that was dynamic took place in the region of the spiritualised mental and vital-physical consciousness. In this Yoga the consciousness (after the lower field has been prepared by a certain amount of psycho-spiritual-occult experience) is drawn upwards above the Brahmarandhra to ranges above belonging to the spiritual consciousness proper and instead of merely receiving from there has to live there and from there change the lower consciousness altogether. For there is a dynamism proper to the spiritual consciousness whose nature is Light, Power, Ananda, Peace, Knowledge, infinite Wideness and that must be possessed and descend into the whole being. Otherwise one can get mukti but not perfection or transformation (except a relative psycho-spiritual change). But if I say that, there will be a general howl against the unpardonable presumption of claiming to have a knowledge not possessed by the ancient saints and sages and pretending to transcend them. In that connection I may say that in the Upanishads (notably the Taittiriya) there are some indications of these higher planes and their nature and the possibility of gathering up the whole consciousness and rising into them. But this was forgotten afterwards and people spoke only of the buddhi as the highest thing with the Purusha or Self just above, but there was no clear idea of these higher planes.

Ergo, ascent possibly to unknown and ineffable heavenly regions in samadhi, but no descent possible — therefore no resource, no possibility of transformation here, only escape from life and mukti in Goloka, Brahmaloka, Shivaloka or the Absolute.

11 June 1936

*

> What good is the dynamic descent if it needs years and years merely to touch the heart centre? What exactly is this descent?

It is a thing which is new and has to be worked out by this Yoga. 12 June 1936

The Supramental Yoga and Humanity

I can say little about the method he [*Krishnaprem*] speaks of for getting rid of dead concepts. Each mind has its own way of moving. My own has been a sort of readjustment or rectification of positions and I should rather call it discrimination accompanied by a rearrangement of intuitions. At one time I had given much too big a place to "humanity" in my scheme of things with a number of ideas attached to that exaggeration which needed to be put right. But the change did not come by doubt about what I had conceived before, but by a new light on things in which "humanity" automatically stepped down and got into its right place and all the rest rearranged itself in consequence. But all that is probably because I am constitutionally lazy (in spite of my present feats of correspondence) and prefer the easiest and most automatic method possible. I have a suspicion however that Krishnaprem's method is essentially the same as mine, only he does it in a more diligent and conscientious spirit. For his remark about the concepts as flags and not the means of advance seems to indicate that. 26 October 1934

*

I certainly hope to bring down an effective power of the Truth which will replace eventually the Falsehood that has governed the minds and hearts of men for so long. The liberation of a few individuals is a thing that is always possible and has always been done — but, to my seeing, it cannot be the sole aim of existence. Whatever the struggles and sufferings and blunders of humanity, there is still in it an urge towards the Light, an impulse towards a greater Truth not only of the soul but the life. If it has not been done yet, it is surely because those who reached the Light and the greater Truth, rested there and saw in it more a means of escape for the soul than a means of transformation for the life. The liberation of the spirit is necessary, nothing can be done without it — but the transformation is also possible. 26 January 1935

*

> I am disgusted with the world and would have preferred to go away from it to some subtler existence had it not been for your programme of changing the world and bringing some better things into it. But does the world want to change and buy your wares at the heavy cost of giving up all it is and has and does?

It wants and it does not want something that it has not got. All that the supramental could give, the inner mind of the world would like to have, but its outer mind, its vital and physical do not like to pay the price. But after all I am not trying to change the world all at once but only to bring down centrally something into it it has not yet, a new consciousness and power.

31 July 1935

*

> It seems that wherever one turns one sees the same humanity — with all its ignorance and incapacity.

Of course. That's what I have been telling you all along. It is not without reason that I am eager to see something better in this well-meaning but woe-begone planet. 3 August 1935

*

But you are surely mistaken in thinking that I said that we work spiritually for the relief of the poor. I have never done that. My work is not to intervene in social matters within the frame of the present humanity but to bring down a higher spiritual light and power of a higher character which will make a radical change in the earth consciousness. 22 December 1936

Physical Transformation

> You have written that particular creations each have a beginning and an end. Will there be an end to this creation even after you manifest the Divine in the physical?

That is not a question of any importance, since the earth has millions of years of life before it and, if the Divine creation begins, it will develop at that time and itself decide the question.

> Will anyone leave his body even after manifesting the Divine in his physical body?

It will depend upon the person whether he wants to leave it or not. 19 November 1933

*

> You have said that the Overmind is not sufficient to deal with the physical.[3] Does this mean that the physical is not liberated or spiritualised even by the Overmind?

There is an inner liberation and a strong spiritualisation of the mind and vital and a partial effect on the physical especially the physical mind, but mostly subjective. A mixture of the Ignorance, or at the very least a limitation of the active Knowledge, power, Ananda etc. remains always. At the same time if one withdraws from the outward physical consciousness, one can feel always the wide spiritual liberation, peace, living in the silent Divine. 29 November 1933

*

> Some say that Sri Aurobindo brought down the Supermind

---

[3] *See the letter of 20 November 1933 on pages 145–46. — Ed.*

> even into his physical cells and is only preparing others to manifest it in them.
>
> Some say it is not yet manifested in his physical cells but he is bringing it down and only after he gets it fully will he give it to others.
>
> Some say that since 1927 he has been describing how his body has been changing after the Supramental Light began to come down, and so we have to think that the Supermind is not yet manifested fully in his body.
>
> Some say Sri Aurobindo normally lives in the Overmind and whenever he wants he will go into the Supermind. . . .

These are questions and statements which people idly make as a matter of talk. They do not even know what it means or what is the difference between Supermind and Overmind. It is better therefore to leave all such questionings alone at present.

circa 1935

*

> Have you written anywhere what would be the nature of the physical transformation?

I have not, I carefully avoided that ticklish subject.

> What would it be like? Change of pigment? Mongolian features into Aryo-Grecian? Bald head into luxuriant growth? Old men into gods of eternal youth?

Why not seven tails with an eighth on the head — everybody different colours, blue, magenta, indigo, green, scarlet, etc.; hair luxuriant but vermilion and flying erect skywards; other details to match? Amen.

15 September 1935

*

> I have been thinking about the physiological chemistry of transformation. It seems to me that there are two possibilities. (1) The chemical composition of the body would remain the same, but the chemicals would become more Peace-active, Light-active, Force-active (radio-active, as they say). (2) The

> chemical composition of the blood, glands, secretions, nervous materials would undergo a radical change, leading to a complete, if gradual, transformation into a supramental body.

It has been the idea of many who have speculated on the subject that the body of the future race will be a luminous body (*corps glorieux*) and that might mean radio-active. But also it has to be considered (1) that a supramental body must necessarily be one in which the consciousness determines even the physical action and reaction to the most material and these therefore are not wholly dependent on material conditions or laws as now known, (2) that the subtle process will be more powerful than the gross, so that a subtle action of Agni will be able to do the action which would now need a physical change such as increased temperature. 18 November 1935

*

> I agree that the action would not be "wholly dependent on material conditions or laws as now known", but that it will necessarily change material conditions or laws. If this necessity was not there, it could act under present conditions and laws — but it doesn't.

But how is it going to change material conditions and laws without acting on the body as it is?

> Will the "subtle action of Agni" take place in our present bodies?

The subtle action of Agni is part of the workings of the Yoga-shakti even now; only its action is at present for perfecting and transformatory.

> Certainly it is understood that "the subtle process will be more powerful than the gross", but will not the subtle process change the present character of the gross process?

If the consciousness cannot determine the physical action and reaction in the present body, if it needs a different basis, then that means this different basis must be prepared by different means. By what means? Physical? The old Yogis tried to do it by physical tapasya; others by seeking the elixir of life etc. According to this Yoga, the action of the higher Force and consciousness which includes the subtle action of Agni has to open and prepare the body and make it more responsive to Consciousness-Force instead of being rigid in its present habits (called laws). But a different basis can only be created by the supramental action itself. What else but the supermind can determine its own basis?

20 November 1935

*

> Either I have not been clear or you have missed my point. What I meant is this: how is it possible for the Supramental to act in the body with its present chemical and physiological processes? A new composition and a new activity of various organs will be the proper basis for a Supramental action — if at all there is to be one.

What I did not understand is why the Supramental Force should not act at all on the present basis of the body. That it cannot act fully without changing many things is obvious.

> You are evading the question of the physiological and chemical side of the thing when you say, "What else but the supermind can determine its own basis?" The real question is whether this "own basis" will have a different character, chemical composition, physiochemical activity, etc. Do you mean to say that the Supermind can work in ordinary bodies of ordinary people?

I did not intend to evade anything, except that in so far as I do not yet know what will be the chemical constitution of the changed body, I could not answer anything to that. That was why I said it needed investigation.

I was simply putting my idea on the matter which has always been that it is the supramental which will create its own physical basis. If you mean that the supramental cannot *fulfil itself* in the present body with its present processes that is true. The processes will obviously have to be altered. How far the constitution of the body will be changed and in what direction is another question. As I said it may become as you suggest radio-active: Théon (Mother's teacher in occultism) spoke of it as luminous, *le corps glorieux*. But all that does not make it impossible for the supramental to act in the present body for change. It is what I am looking forward to at present.

Of course a certain preliminary transformation is necessary, just as the psychic and spiritual transformation precedes the supramental. But this is a change of the physical consciousness down to the submerged consciousness of the cells so that they may respond to higher forces and admit them and to a certain extent a change or at least a greater plasticity in the processes. The rules of food etc. are meant to help that by minimising obstacles. How far this involves a change of the chemical constitution of the body I cannot say. It seems to me still that whatever preparatory changes there may be, it is only the action of the supramental Force that can confirm and complete them.

21 November 1935

The Conquest of Death

> In one of your talks in the early days you seem to have acclaimed yourself as immortal except under three conditions — accident, poison or *icchā mṛtyu*.

It must have been a joke taken as a self-acclamation. Or perhaps what I said was that I have the power to overcome illness, but accident and poison and the I.M. still remain as possible means of death. Of course, the Mother and myself have hundreds of times thrown back the forces of illness and death by a slight concentration of force or even a use of will merely.

> Another conviction which all of us share is that you could never have any illness; but your eye problem, due to whatever cause, has shattered it.

It is long since I have had anything but slight fragments of illness — (e.g. sneezes, occasional twitches of rheumatism or neuralgia:

but the last is mostly now outside the body and does not penetrate) — with the exception of the eye and the throat (only one kind of cough though, the others can't come) which are still vulnerable points. Ah yes, there is also prickly-heat; but that has diminished to almost nothing these last years. There is sometimes an attempt at headache, but it remains above the head, tries to get in and then recedes. Giddiness also the same. I don't just now remember anything else. Those are the facts about "having no illness". As for the conclusion, well, you can make a medical one or a Yogic one according to your state of knowledge. 26 March 1935

*

> From whatever you have said in joke or in earnest, it logically follows that you are immortal. Because if you say that the Supramental can alone conquer death, one who has become that is evidently and consequently immortal. So if one is immortal or has conquered death, no poison or accident can affect him.

Your syllogism is:

> "One who becomes supramental, can conquer death.
> Sri Aurobindo has become supramental.
> Sri Aurobindo has conquered death."

1st premiss right; second premiss premature; conclusion at least premature and in any case excessive, for "can conquer" is turned into "has conquered" = is immortal. It is not easy, my dear doctor, to be a logician; the human reasoning animal is always making slight inaccuracies like that in his syllogisms which vitiate the whole reasoning. This might be correct:

> "One who becomes wholly supramental conquers death.
> Sri Aurobindo is becoming supramental.
> Sri Aurobindo is conquering death."

But between "is conquering" and "has conquered" is a big difference. It is all the difference between present and future, logical possibility and logical certitude.

> I hope I haven't made a rigid mental conclusion.

The premiss is false. I have never said that I am supramental — I have always said that I have achieved the overmind and am bringing down the supramental. That is a process and until the process is complete it cannot be said that "I am supramental". Of course when I say "I" — I mean the instrument — not the Consciousness above or the Person behind which contain all things in them. 27 March 1935

*

> My logic again: Sri Aurobindo is bound to become wholly supramental and is being supramentalised in parts. If that is true — and it is — well, he can't die till he is supramental — and once he is so, he is immortal.

It looks very much like a non sequitur. The first part and the last are all right — but the link is fragile. How do you know I won't take a fancy to die in between as a joke? 30 March 1935

*

> By the way, none of those perverse "fancies" please. If at all you think of going, let us know beforehand, so that we may disappear before you!

Where would be the fun if I told you beforehand? However, I have no bad intentions for the moment. 31 March 1935

The Supramental Yoga and Other Spiritual Paths

Indian Systems and the Cabbala

I do not think exact correlations can always be traced between one system of spiritual and occult knowledge and another. All deal with the same material, but there are differences of standpoint, differences of view-range, a divergence in the mental idea of what is seen and experienced, disparate pragmatic purposes and therefore a difference in the paths surveyed, cut out or followed; the systems vary, each constructs its own schema and technique. I have looked at the diagrams you sent me; I do not know whether I have grasped them rightly and many of the details are not clear to me. I suppose however that the three supernals are at the top, that the two below them (led to by Justice and Prudence from the psychic centre) are mind-planes or mind-centres, that Tiphareth in the middle is the psychic, the three between it and the earth are vital planes. In the absence of precise information I cannot carry the correlation farther.

Now as to the three Supernals. I do not quite understand L.O.E.'s sentence about them — for she speaks of two only, the real and higher man and the separated man. Should I understand that these are the two on either side and that at the top is the Divine? If not, which are they and what is the third? In the ancient Indian system there is only one triune supernal, Sachchidananda. Or if you speak of the upper hemisphere as the supernal, there are three, Sat plane, Chit plane and Ananda plane. The Supermind could be added as a fourth, as it draws upon the other three and belongs to the upper hemisphere. The Indian systems did not distinguish between the Overmind and the Supermind, which is the reason why they got confused about Maya (Overmind-Force), took it for the supreme creative power and lost the secret of the transformation — although the Vaishnava and Tantra Yogas groped to find it again and were sometimes on the verge of success. For the rest, this, I think, has been the stumbling-block of all attempts at the discovery of the dynamic divine Truth; I know of none that has not imagined, as soon as it felt the Overmind lustres descending, that this was the true illumination, the gnosis — with the result that they either stopped short there and could get no farther, or else concluded that this too was only Maya or Lila and that the one thing to do was to get beyond it into the Supreme.

Again, what may be meant is rather the three fundamentals of the present manifestation. In the Indian system, these are Ishwara, Shakti and Jiva, or else Sachchidananda, Maya and Jiva. But in our system which seeks to go beyond the present manifestation, these could very well be taken for granted and, looked at from the point of view of the planes of consciousness, the three highest — Ananda (with Sat and Chit resting upon it), Supermind and Overmind might be called the three Supernals. My difficulty in correlating them with the three Cabbalistic supernals is twofold. First, white may very well be the symbolic hue of Sachchidananda, but black and grey have no suitability for the two others; the symbol hue of Supermind is gold, and Overmind, which is in contact with Supermind, has an iridescent brilliance which is anything but grey. Unless we are to understand it like the Christian mystics of the negative path (see the Christa Seva Sangha journal) to whom the Divine is a supreme Darkness and the plane of consciousness through which he is reached a supreme Ignorance! Then again, here the Supermind and Overmind would be parallel worlds (?), but in fact these two are one above, one below the other, and you have to pass through and beyond Overmind, if you would reach Supermind, while still above and beyond Supermind are the worlds of Sachchidananda.

Tiphareth is certainly the psychic, not the emotional only. It is central, (in our system the psychic stands behind the others, supporting them from behind the heart-centre); it is also in direct connection with all except the earth-centre (in ours it is not quite so, but still in the earth consciousness the psychic is so covered with the darkened vital that to get to it from the outer physical consciousness you have usually to make your way through the covering vital). All this makes it pretty clear that Tiphareth is either the psychic or else the psychic + the emotional plane or centre.

You speak of the flaming sword and the gulf below the Overmind. But is there a gulf — or any other gulf than human unconsciousness? In all the series of the planes or grades of consciousness there is nowhere any real gulf, always there are connecting gradations and one can ascend from step to step. Between the Overmind and the human mind there are a number of more and more luminous gradations; but, as these are superconscient to human mind (except one or two of the lowest of which it gets some direct touches) it is apt to regard them as a superior Inconscience. So one of the Upanishads speaks of the Ishwara consciousness as *suṣupta*, deep Sleep, because it is only in Samadhi that man usually enters into it, so long as he does not try to turn his waking consciousness into a higher state.

Finally, I may observe that the Cabbala system seems to look at and describe the whole from a certain spiritual-mental or spiritual-psychic view from below the supernals. This is quite natural so long as we live in the human centres. There are two systems, one concentric with the psychic at the centre; another vertical, an ascension and descent, like a flight of steps, a series of superimposed planes with the Supermind + Overmind as the crucial nodus of the transition beyond the human into the Divine. In our system there are not multiple paths of interconnection, or rather there are, but these are a subsidiary and not the central knowledge. For us there is one way, one path; first, a conversion inwards, a going within to find the inmost psychic being and bring it out to the front, disclosing at the same time the inner mind, inner vital, inner physical parts of the nature; next, an ascension, a series of conversions upwards and a turning down to convert the lower parts. When one has made the inward conversion, one psychicises the whole lower nature so as to make it ready for the divine change. Going upwards, one passes beyond the human mind and at each stage of the ascent there is a conversion into a new consciousness and an infusion of this new consciousness into the whole of the nature.

Thus rising beyond intellect through illuminated higher mind to the intuitive consciousness, we begin to look at everything not from the intellect range or through intellect as an instrument, but from a greater intuitive height and through an intuitivised will, feeling, emotion, sensation and physical contact. So, proceeding from intuition to a greater overmind height, there is a new conversion and we look at and experience everything from the overmind consciousness and through a mind, heart, vital and body surcharged with the overmind thought, sight, will, feeling, sensation, play of force and contact. And the last conversion is the supramental, for once there, once the nature is supramentalised, we are beyond the Ignorance and conversion of consciousness is no longer needed, though a farther divine progression is still possible. 15 April 1931

The Path of the Vedic Rishis

> In an article written by a Swami on your book *The Riddle of This World*, he remarks that you have the boldness to say that you have done what the Vedic Rishis could not do.

It is not I only who have done what the Vedic Rishis did not do. Chaitanya and others developed an intensity of Bhakti which is absent in the Veda and many other instances can be given. Why should the past be the limit of spiritual experience?

19 December 1934

*

> Is it a fact that some ancient sages and Rishis have taken birth here in order to help your work?

If so, it is not a fact of much importance. 27 October 1935

Vedanta and Other Paths of Self-Realisation

> The following doubt came to me: "Is not the realisation of the Self sufficient? Hearing about your yoga, a Vedantin who sought the Self might say that it was only because you had

> not reached the highest that you wanted to do something on earth by means of the divine power, but that this aim had to be rejected before one could reach the highest."

These doubts come from the mind — for which action is inferior to thought and thought itself something that comes out from the Silence. It cannot understand the supramental view of things in which there is no division or opposition between the Supreme Existence and the supreme Power that sees, thinks, acts and creates. 7 December 1933

*

> I was reading in Paul Brunton's *A Search in Secret India* about certain yogis that he met. I don't find anything new in them. They just repeat the old yogas, and the old yogas stopped short at self-realisation, which is not a very difficult stage.

Wonderful! The realisation of the Self which includes the liberation from ego, the consciousness of the One in all, the established and consummated transcendence out of the universal Ignorance, the fixity of the consciousness in the union with the Highest, the Infinite and Eternal is not anything worth doing or recommending to anybody — is "not a very difficult stage"!

Nothing new? Why should there be anything new? The object of spiritual seeking is to find out what is eternally true, not what is new in Time.

From where did you get this singular attitude towards the old Yogas and Yogis? Is the wisdom of the Vedanta and Tantra a small and trifling thing? Have then the sadhaks of this Asram attained to self-realisation and are they liberated Jivan-muktas free from ego and ignorance? If not, why then do you say "it is not a very difficult stage" "their goal is not high" "Is it such a long process?"

I have said that this Yoga was "new" because it aims at a change in this world and not only beyond it and at a supramental realisation. But how does that justify a superior contempt for the spiritual realisation which is as much the aim of this Yoga as of any other?

> What I fail to comprehend is how they spend their whole lives in the pursuit of self-realisation. Is it such a long process?

It is not a long process? The whole life and several lives more are often not enough to achieve it. Ramakrishna's guru took 30 years to arrive and even then he was not satisfied that he had realised it.

> I also read that some yogis like "the sage who never speaks" remain in samadhi day and night, coming out of it only occasionally for food. What do they do in such a long samadhi, since their goal is not so high?

Do? why should he want to do anything if he was in the eternal peace or Ananda or union with the Divine? If a man is spiritual and has gone beyond the vital and mind, he does not need to be always "doing" something. The self or spirit has the joy of its own existence. It is free to do nothing and free to do everything — but not because it is bound to action and unable to exist without it.

> Still harder is it to understand how a self-realised yogi can help others. For self-realisation does not grant such powers.

Do you think that self-realisation is a tamasic state — a complete incapacity and inertia? 13 April 1936

*

> Do you think then that Yogis can attain a full self-realisation without the help of the supramental planes?

Certainly they can realise the self. It is not at all necessary to go to the supramental planes for that.

> I see now that I had some fundamentally wrong ideas about the old Yogas and Yogins. They were actually not my own but borrowed from some sadhaks. Still I am not quite clear about the old Yogas.

I have heard that people from outside often find the sadhaks here full of an insufferable pride and arrogance, looking on all others outside as far below them! If it is so, it is a most foolish and comically ridiculous attitude.

As for the depreciation of all the old Yogas as something quite easy, unimportant and worthless, and the consequent depreciation of Buddha and Yajnavalkya and other great spiritual figures of the past, is it not evidently absurd on the face of it?

> When I asked, "What do they do?", I did not mean physical or mental action. Rather I wanted to know if by merely remaining in a samadhi of eternal Peace and Ananda, it is possible to liberate oneself completely from the ego. Would that bring about other necessary changes like purification and transformation?

Without purification it is not possible to live always in the Brahman consciousness. While living in that Brahman consciousness one is free from the sense of a separative ego. As for the transformation of the nature, that is not their object.

> My question was this: How can one bring down the higher force and apply it to one's nature if one remains in the impersonal Peace or Ananda?

All that is not necessary for those who seek only liberation.

14 April 1936

*

> When you write, "Certainly they can realise the self. It is not at all necessary to go to the supramental planes for that" [*p. 303*], I suppose what you mean is that in such cases it is the mind that realises the self; it is not an integral realisation. But when the mind alone realises the self, the vital and physical will constantly disturb it. A separation will become necessary. But can they be separated without the help of the supramental planes?

There are many planes above man's mind — the supramental is not the only one, and on all of them the self can be realised, — for they are all spiritual planes.

Mind, vital and physical are inextricably mixed together only in the surface consciousness — the inner mind, inner vital, inner physical are separate from each other. Those who seek the self by the old Yogas separate themselves from mind, life and body and realise the self apart from these things. It is perfectly easy to separate mind, vital and physical from each other without the need of supermind. It is done by the ordinary Yogas.

The difference between this and the old Yogas is not that they are incompetent and cannot do these things — they can do them perfectly well — but that they proceed from realisation of self to Nirvana or some Heaven and abandon life, while this does not abandon life. The supramental is necessary for the transformation of terrestrial life and being, not for reaching the self. One must realise self first — only afterwards can one realise the supermind.

> If any Yogi can bring about this separation without the supramental, that is really something. For here we are helped by the supramental planes, sometimes there is even a direct action, but still we find it difficult to detach our mind from the life and body.

Who here has a direct action from the Supermind? It is the first news I have of it. Even indirect action from the supramental is rare. Whatever comes to most comes from the intermediate planes. 16 April 1936

*

> With your help I have been able to make this progress: whatever my state, I can rise into the higher consciousness and, so long as I am inactive, remain there undisturbed by revolt, resistance, impulses or desire.

The men who live in the Self are always there at all times. Nothing in the outer nature can affect that.

> You write, “Those who seek the self by the old Yogas separate themselves from mind, life and body and realise the self

> apart from these things." How do they manage to separate themselves from mind, life and body so easily? Will not these things interfere with their realisation? In allowing them to do this, will not the mind, vital and physical have to withdraw from their ordinary movements of tamas, rajas and sattwa?

Of course they will — it can only be prevented by the lower movements if you assent to the lower movements; one who refuses to accept them as his real being, can always withdraw from them to the self. The movements of Nature become for them an outer thing not belonging to their true being and having no power to pull them down from it.

> Is there any difference between our way of seeking the self and that of the old Yogas?

Only that they often sought it by one line alone, the line varying in different Yogas, while in ours it may come in several ways.

> I suppose that one who wants to realise the self can only do it by separating himself from mind, life and body.

Naturally.

> You write, "It is perfectly easy to separate mind, vital and physical from each other without the need of supermind" [*p. 305*]. But you should have seen that by "supramental planes" I did not mean supermind, but any of the spiritual planes above the mind. Is there no need of the higher spiritual planes for separating the mind, vital and physical from one another?

Spiritual and supramental are not the same thing. The spiritual planes from higher mind to Overmind are accessible to the old sadhanas so there is no difficulty about that. If they were not accessible there would have been no Yoga at all and no Yogis in the past in India. 17 April 1936

*

It is not always discreet to speak of all these things to the visitors who come here from abroad. *X* is a man with a trained intellect; he must be left to see for himself and judge. He has a great respect for the Ramakrishna Mission as the creation of Vivekananda and the continuer of the work of Ramakrishna and for Europeans like him these metaphysical differences of opinion — for so he would regard them — are of no importance, — it is the opportunity for a spiritual approach to the Divine Reality that they are looking for and all that opens the way commands their respect. So, to lay emphasis on a difference with regard to the doctrine or the exact course of the Path followed might in his idea be a sign of a sectarian spirit. All ways lead to the Divine; the importance for us of not subscribing to the Shankara idea is that we need freedom to move towards the dynamic realisation of the Divine in the world and the idea of the Great Illusion bars the road to that. But for them the important thing is to reach the Divine. It was therefore not at all useful to point the difference before him at this time. 18 January 1937

Traditional Paths of Yoga

> How is it that Patanjali has given such an unusual definition of Yoga: *yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ* [*Yoga Sutra* 1.2]? Was "divine union" not the aim of Yoga in those days?

Divine union, yes — but for the ascetic schools it was union with the featureless Brahman, the Unknowable beyond existence or, if with the Ishwara, still it was the Ishwara in a supracosmic consciousness. From that point of view Patanjali's aphorism is sound enough. When he says Yoga, he means the process of Yoga, the object which has to be kept in view in the process — for by the cessation of *cittavṛtti* one gets into *samādhi* and *samādhi* is the only way of uniting solely and completely with the Brahman beyond existence. 3 May 1933

*

> There is a Sutra in Patanjali, *prātibhādvā sarvam* [*Yoga Sutra* 3.34], on which Vivekananda comments: "Everything comes to him [to a man with Pratibha] naturally without making

> Samyama."[1] Is it that he brings the highest knowledge down into the outer consciousness rather than being compelled to go into Samadhi? But in that case he is probably aware of the supermind.

It has nothing to do with the supermind, for nobody can be aware of the supermind without opening the higher reaches in him first — the supermind is superconscient to the human consciousness. The man in question is in touch with the higher consciousness, so he has not to put any kind of inner pressure on himself to oblige the mind and other parts to admit the higher state or movements — it needs only a turning of himself upward or a slight movement of opening to set the higher consciousness in motion and get results. This statement is of course true only up to a certain point and within limits. If the same man wanted to reach the supermind or transform his body it would not be possible for that to come to him naturally. 4 June 1933

*

> In the Sutra *bhuvanajñānaṁ sūrye saṁyamāt* [*Yoga Sutra* 3.27], where does the knowledge of the worlds by Samyama come from, and what has Surya to do with it?

Surya is the symbol of the Divine Light, the Divine Truth, ultimately of the Supermind. Samyama is a process of pressure on the consciousness by which the secret Truth, the involved intuition is released — so by a constant pressure on the consciousness by which the Divine Truth is liberated the Knowledge of the worlds can come. 4 June 1933

*

> I suppose if some yogis outside the Asram heard about the Supermind and the higher realms they would think that they had passed these worlds or left them behind as a side-issue. They might regard the idea of a divine manifestation as a desire for Karma. Do you think there are any who have

---

[1] *Swami Vivekananda,* Raja-Yoga*, in* The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, *vol. 1 (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), p. 280.*

> enough plasticity to be prepared, at least theoretically, to accept Supermind and the possibility of its manifestation on earth?

I doubt if there are many — they would give the answers you suggest. As for Overmind and Intuition, there are some who are in contact with these planes, I suppose. Those who live in them must be very rare. 20 March 1934

*

> There appears to be so much self-concentration in the people of the world that hardly a few would think of doing this yoga. Perhaps a larger number would go (and are going) for the old Hathayoga and Rajayoga, which may bring some small immediately satisfying result. Even of those who are sincere truth-seekers, not many would be able to see the truth of our yoga of transformation.

I suppose they are not intended to take it up — only an opening can be given for those who want to rise into a somewhat higher consciousness than they have now. 5 April 1934

Buddhism and Other Religions

> I find it difficult to emerge from the peace I found in meditation. How difficult it must be to come out of the peace of Nirvana or Samadhi! I think that is why Yoga could not be made dynamic up till now.

It is only because they make the peace an end, not, as we aim at doing, a basis for the divine consciousness and all its dynamisms.
25 May 1933

*

> It seems to me that there would hardly be any difference between the consciousness of peace, light, bliss and wideness in Nirvana and in the transformed supramental status, except perhaps in detail.

There is a great difference in consciousness, because Nirvana means absorption into a static Brahman on the level of spiritual mind — the other would mean identification with the integral Divine in the much higher Truth of Supermind.

> It seems to me that the number of people in the world accepting our Yoga of transformation would not be as large as those who accepted Buddhism, Vedanta or Christianity.

Nothing depends on the numbers. The numbers of Buddhism and Christianity were so great because the majority professed it as a creed without its making the least difference to their external life. If the new consciousness were satisfied with that, it could also and much more easily command homage and acceptance by the whole earth. It is because it is a greater consciousness, the Truth-consciousness, that it will insist on a real change.

> Since the spread of the Yoga throughout the world will proceed slowly, its creations in art, literature, architecture, etc., may be inferior to those of Buddhist, Christian and Muslim creators.

Your argument assumes that the greater consciousness will be in its creations inferior to the inferior consciousness.

> Ordinary people may obtain more immediate results from the traditional systems than from our Yoga. Many may feel they have benefited from the "miracles" these systems offer. In our Yoga they would find the way closed for that. Naturally they would shrink from it.

It would on the contrary be impossible for them not to feel that a greater Light and Power had come on the earth.

> Thus on the whole there would seem to be scope for very few people in our Yoga, and the world would hardly interest itself in it.

How do you know that it will have no effect on the ordinary people? It will inevitably increase their possibilities and even though all cannot rise to the highest, that will mean a great change for the earth. 29 April 1934

Tibetan Yoga

> The other day I read the book *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines* by W. Y. Evans-Wentz. . . . The following is an interesting statement of his — not a text, but probably his own understanding of the Mahayana: "So long as there is one being, even the lowliest, immersed in suffering and sorrow, or in Ignorance, there remains one note of disharmony which cannot but affect all beings, since all beings are the One; and until all are Liberated there cannot possibly be true Bliss for any."[2] The ideal is excellent, but I find it hard to swallow the whole of this altruism. It looks like an exaggeration to me because (1) it would not be possible to eliminate suffering from, say, animals or men who have just begun their human evolution and (2) true bliss cannot depend on the suffering or liberation of others. . . .

Your objections are sound. It is the usual overstatement by which the human mind tries to give an added and superlative force and value to its ideas and tenets, but only succeeds in making them vulnerable.

What the compassionate Bodhisattwa ought to do is to become a superscientist and find some way of releasing atoms in such style that the whole earth would be blown to smithereens — this would release all beings on it from their sufferings. But unfortunately the force of karma would, I suppose, create a new earth and bring them all back there to suffer. So no release that way either. Still it would give a respite during which he might go to Nirvana and come back again when needed to repeat his compassionate action.

> "Until all are Liberated" implies that not a worm will remain unliberated and then only will there be bliss. A grave difficulty presents itself here — or rather a new idea never conceived of by all the Upanishads — liberation for animals before they reach a human incarnation. Would that liberation be the same

---

[2] *W. Y. Evans-Wentz, ed.,* Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, or Seven Books of Wisdom of the Great Path, according to the Late Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering *(London: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 11.*

> as for humans or have a different set of codes? Will they get liberation gratis by a free distribution from the Bodhisattwa?
>
> Next, "since all beings are the One". Is there any "the One" in Buddhism? Do they admit any such thing? The author seems to have got his information from authoritative sources and texts, but he does not make it clear whether this "One" is to be understood in the sense of a Cosmic Divine or a Supracosmic.

Of course the animal difficulty is insuperable, because animals must enter the human stage first before liberation — unless of course either animals become humanised and begin talking and thinking in philosophical terms (perhaps it will not be necessary for them to write poetry and paint pictures or make music), or else animals disappear altogether being no longer necessary to the evolution.

About the One there are different versions. I just read somewhere that the Buddhist One is a Superbuddha from whom all Buddhas come — but it seemed to me a rehash of Buddhism in Vedantic terms born of a modern mind. The Permanent of Buddhism has always been supposed to be Supracosmic and Ineffable — that is why Buddha never tried to explain what it was; for, logically, how can one talk about the Ineffable? It has really nothing to do with the Cosmos which is a thing of sanskaras and Karma.

*

> Evans-Wentz writes: "According to the Buddha, the belief that the soul (Skt. *ātmā*), as an eternally individualized, unchanging, and indissoluble spiritual essence, is immortal, even though its preexistence logically be admitted, mentally fetters man and keeps him enslaved to the incessant round of births and deaths. Not until man transcends this belief, in virtue of Right Knowledge, can there come Liberation" [*p. 4*]. If belief in the soul fetters man, what about the idea that the world is full of misery and that *karma bandhana* keeps man bound to the idea of misery and pain?

According to both Buddha and Shankara liberation means *laya* of the individual in some transcendent Permanence that is not individualised — so logically a belief in the individual soul must prevent liberation while the sense of misery in the world leads to the attempt to escape.

> This implies that those who believed in "Soul" never achieved liberation. Was there no liberation before Buddha?

Buddha said he was repeating an ancient knowledge that had existed before him and restoring its true form, so he evades this objection.

*

> At the same time, despite Buddha's idea that belief in soul fetters man, Buddhists are in some way compelled to believe something like it. Evans-Wentz writes: "But the impersonal consciousness-principle is not to be in any way identified with the personality represented by a name, a bodily form, or a *sangsāric* mind; these are but its illusory creations. It is in itself non-*sangsāric*, being uncreated, unborn, unshaped, beyond human concept or definition; and, therefore, transcending time and space, which have only relative and not absolute existence, it is beginningless and endless" [*p.* 5]. Whether by pressure of arguments against the non-acceptance of soul, or through modernisation, they have to accept some such principle. The last sentence quoted above hardly differs from the description of "soul".

There is no difference between such a description and what is meant by soul, except that it is called "impersonal" — but evidently here impersonal is used as opposed to the thing dependent on name, body and form, which is called personality. Europeans especially, but also people without philosophic ideas would easily mistake this outward personality for the soul and then they would deny the name of soul to the unborn and endless entity. Do they then consider it as spirit or self — *ātman*? But the difficulty is that the old Buddhists rejected the conception of *ātman* also. So we are left entirely at sea. The Nihilistic Buddhistic teaching is plain and comprehensible that there is no soul, only a bundle of Sanskaras continuing or a stream of them renewing themselves without dissolution (Nirvana). But this Mahayanist affair seems a sort of loose and covert compromise with Vedanta.

*

> Evans-Wentz writes: "There is . . . according to Mahāyānic Buddhism . . . unending evolutionary progression; so that *Nirvāṇa* is to be regarded as a Spiritual Rest-House on the Highway through Eternity" [*p. 149*]. And also: "Man, then no longer man, will . . . help to fulfil the Law of the Higher Evolution, of which *Nirvāṇa* is but the beginning" [*p. 12*]. The above indicate that Nirvana is not the final aim — but whether this is a compromise with Vedanta or with modern ideas is very doubtful. There is almost a contradiction with the following:
>
> "When the Ignorance which was to be overcome hath been dispersed, the effort to overcome it ceaseth, and the Path cometh to an end and the Journey is completed.
>
> "The Journeying having ceased, there is no place beyond the ending of the Path to explore; and one obtaineth the Supreme Boon of the Great Symbol, the Unabiding State of *Nirvāṇa*."[3]

The two statements [*i.e. the two sentences from Evans-Wentz's commentary and the two paragraphs from the Tibetan text*] are not only almost but absolutely contradictory. Nirvana cannot be at once the ending of the Path with nothing beyond to explore and yet only a rest house or rather the beginning of the Higher Path with everything still to explore. I think that different views of different Buddhist minds or schools must have been jumbled together without reconciliation. The reconciliation would be that it is the end of the lower Path through the lower Nature and the beginning of the Higher Evolution. In that case it would accord exactly with the teaching of our Yoga.

*

> It would seem that such a reconciliation would be impossible unless someone had overpassed Nirvana or seen something of

---

[3] *These two paragraphs are from "The Epitome of the Great Symbol" as translated by Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup and Evans-Wentz and published in* Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, *p. 149. — Ed.*

> the Higher Evolution or Higher Nature. Perhaps the author had some sort of insight, otherwise he could not state that Nirvana is a spiritual rest-house and that there is a Higher Evolution. For he writes: "The Great Ones and the *Bodhisattvas* . . . renounce their right to pass on to a still Higher Evolution and remain within the Cosmos for the good of all sentient beings. It is these *Bodhic* Forces, thus active in the Cosmos, which . . . lead mankind, step by step, towards a perfected social order on Earth" [*p. 149*]. This indicates that they come down or back from Nirvana to lead mankind up to Nirvana. Perhaps it would have been better if they had seen something of the Higher Evolution and then come back to perfect society on earth.

The phrase "to pass on" shows that what is meant by them is an evolution not on earth but somewhere beyond, God knows where. In that case Nirvana would be a place or world on the way to other worlds and the soul evolves from one world to another — e.g. from earth to Nirvana and from Nirvana to some Beyond-Nirvana. This is an entirely European idea and it is most unlikely that it was held by the Buddhists. The Indian idea was that the evolution is here and even the Gods if they want to go beyond their Godhead and get liberation have to come down on earth for the purpose. It is the Western spiritualists and others who think that the birth on earth is a stage of progress from some place inferior to earth and after once being born on earth one does not return but goes to some other world and remains there till one can progress to some other better world and so on and on and on and up and up and up as Ramsay MacDonald would say. Again, this "perfected social order on Earth" is certainly not a Buddhist idea, the Buddhas never dreamed of it — their preoccupation was with helping men towards Nirvana, not towards a perfected order here. All that is a sheer contradiction of Buddhism and smells Europe from 3 miles off.

*

> Evans-Wentz writes: "Thus the Doctrine of the *Shūnyatā*, underlying the whole of the *Prajñā-Pāramitā*, posits . . . an Absolute as inherent in phenomena; for the Absolute is the

> source and support of phenomena; and, in the last analysis of things, by the *Bodhi*-illuminated mind, freed of Ignorance, duality vanishes, and there remains but the One in All, the All in One. . . . This supreme doctrine of Emancipation may be summarized by saying that all things are eternally immersed in *Nirvāṇa* . . ." [*p. 351*]. But how does the doctrine of Shunyata posit an Absolute as the source and support of phenomena and how does it allow a "One in All" or "All in One"?
>
> The phrase "source and support of phenomena" sounds like your Overmind, which is the support of the Cosmos. Perhaps someone had some such perception while experiencing the silence leading to Nirvana.

How is this Absolute different from the Absolute of the Vedanta? or this emancipation different from the Vedantic mukti? If it were so, there would never have been all this quarrel between Buddhism and the Vedantic schools. It must be a new-fangled version of Buddhism or else it was a later development in which Buddhism reduced itself back to Adwaita.

> The phrase "all things are eternally immersed in *Nirvāṇa*" seems to me at once bold and beautiful and gives an idea of the Silence. From this it is clearer that the realisation of Nirvana, if put in your terminology, is just the realisation of the Silence behind the Cosmos — from which Overmind would be two or three steps. But by "renouncing their right to pass on to a still Higher Evolution" they have managed to miss Overmind for two or three thousand years.

Yes. But is this Higher Evolution really a Buddhistic idea or only a European version of what Nirvana might be?

*

> "Think not of the past. Think not of the future. Think not that thou art actually engaged in meditation. Regard not the Void as being Nothingness.
>
> "At this stage do not attempt to analyse any of the impressions felt by the five senses, saying, 'It is; it is not.' But at least for a little while observe unbroken meditation, keeping the body as calm as that of a sleeping babe, and the mind in

> its natural state [i.e. free of all thought-processes].” . . .
>
> “Whatever thoughts, or concepts, or obscuring [or disturbing] passions arise are neither to be abandoned nor allowed to control one; they are to be allowed to arise without one’s trying to direct [or shape] them. If one do no more than merely to recognize them as soon as they arise, and persist in so doing, they will come to be realized [or to dawn] in their true [or void] form through not being abandoned.”[4]
>
> “The Clear Light . . . symbolizes the unconditioned pure *Nirvāṇic* Consciousness, the transcendent, Supramundane Consciousness of a Fully Awakened One. It is a Mystic Radiance of the *Dharma-Kāya*, of the *Nirvāṇic* Consciousness free of all *sangsāric* or conditioned obscuration. It cannot be described; It can only be known; and to know It is to know the Thatness of all things. As being colourless, or without qualities, It is the Clear Light; as being without limitations, It is All-Pervading Intelligence; as being unknowable in terms of *sangsāric* consciousness, and without form, It is the Formless Void.”[5]

The extracts you have sent are very interesting and quite sound — the processes recommended can, if one can carry them out, help greatly in the quieting of the mind.

The Tibetan Nirvana as described in the last extract is very much like the Tao of Laotse. It is more and more said now that that is the real teaching of Buddha and of Buddhism.

*

> People here became very enthusiastic about that book by Evans-Wentz. But I think their reading of it may be a bit uncritical. They found many things in it that are similar to our

---

[4] *These are the first and second to last of fourteen extracts from “The Epitome of the Great Symbol” as translated by Dawa-Samdup and Evans-Wentz and published in* Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, *pp. 119–39, which were typed and sent to Sri Aurobindo by a correspondent. — Ed.*

[5] *This is the third of three extracts from Evans-Wentz’s commentary on texts published in* Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines *(p. 166). These were typed immediately after the extracts mentioned in footnote 4 and sent along with them to Sri Aurobindo. The correspondent did not mention that the first set of extracts were from the translation and the second set from the commentary. — Ed.*

> yoga, but they may be missing whatever defects or misrepresentations the book may contain.

Somebody sent me some extracts about ways of meditation which were good. There are elements in most Yogas which enter into this one, so it is not surprising if there is something in Buddhism also. But such notions as a Higher Evolution beyond Nirvana seem to me not genuinely Buddhistic, unless of course there is some offshoot of Buddhism which developed something so interpreted by the author. I never heard of it as part of Buddha's teachings — he always spoke of Nirvana as the goal and refused to discuss metaphysically what it might be.

12 July 1936

Theosophy

> I am reading *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, a Theosophical book. It seems like the principles are quite reasonable. Only there is too much of Buddhism, which they seem to want to make into a world cult.

It is a movement that has taken from each previous movement European or Asiatic some of its knowledge and mixed it with much error and imagination of a rather vital character. It is that mixture and the mental character of its knowledge that prevent it from being a sound thing. Many start with it, but have to leave it if they want to get to real spiritual life and knowledge.

4 November 1933

Remarks on the Current State of the Sadhana, 1931–1947

1931

I am surprised at Tagore's remark[1] about the *two years*; he must have greatly misunderstood or misheard me. I did tell him that I would expand only after making a perfect (inner) foundation here, but I gave no date. I did give that date of two years long before in my letter to Barin,[2] but I had then a less ample view of the work to be done than I have now — and I am now more cautious about assigning dates than I was once. To fix a precise time is impossible except in the two regions of certitude — the pure material which is the field of mathematical certitudes and the supramental which is the field of divine certitudes. In the planes in between where life has its word to say and things have to evolve under shock and stress, Time and Energy are too much in a flux and apt to kick against the rigour of a prefixed date or programme.
16 August 1931

1932

You will say, "But at present the Mother has drawn back and it is the supramental that is to blame, because it is in order to bring down the supramental into matter that she retires." The supramental is not to blame; the supramental could very well have come down into matter under former conditions, if the means created by the Mother for the physical and vital contact had not been vitiated by the wrong attitude, the wrong reactions in the Asram atmosphere. It was not the direct supramental Force that was acting, but an intermediate and preparatory force that carried in it a modified Light derived from the supramental; but this would have been sufficient for the work of opening the way for the highest action, if it had not been for the irruption of these wrong forces on the yet unconquered lower (physical) vital and material plane. The interference was creating adverse possibilities which could not be allowed to continue. The Mother would not have retired otherwise; and even as it is it is not meant as an abandonment of the field but is only (to borrow a now current phrase from a more external enterprise) a temporary strategic retirement, *reculer pour mieux sauter.* The supramental is therefore not responsible; on the contrary, it is the descent of the supramental that would end all the difficulty. 12 January 1932

---

[1] *Rabindranath Tagore remarked to someone in 1931 that Sri Aurobindo told him in 1928 that he would "expand" after two years. — Ed.*

[2] *In a letter written in Bengali to his brother Barindra Kumar Ghose in 1920, Sri Aurobindo said that it might take him "another two years" to complete his sadhana. — Ed.*

*

Our object is the supramental realisation and we have to do whatever is necessary for that or towards that under the conditions of each stage. At present the necessity is to prepare the physical consciousness; for that a complete equality and peace and a complete dedication free from personal demand or desire in the physical and the lower vital parts is the thing to be established. Other things can come in their proper time. What is the real need now is not insistence on physical nearness, which is one of those other things, but the psychic opening in the physical consciousness and the constant presence and guidance there.

16 February 1932

*

> If the attainment of supermind does not take us to the last stage of perfection in the objective side of life, if even after its attainment we have to satisfy ourselves with a little more clarity with possibilities and probabilities (as you yourself have said), how can it be called the last and the perfect truth?

I have never said that I wrote from the supermind, so the question does not arise.

You seem to be very much in a hurry to get at the supermind. I have said that it cannot be done like that, a patient preparation of the nature is needed and I am concerned with that now.

> If divinisation of life keeps us in the same condition of death, disease and physical incapacity, how can it be called divinisation at all?

What do you mean by divinisation of life? Death and disease can only disappear by divinisation of the *body* — and that is not yet here.
2 March 1932

*

> I am not very impatient about the supermind, but the patient preparation of the nature that you want will go on even if other sides are developing.

I don't know what you mean by developing sides. I am concerned with preparing the nature for the supramental possibility — however long that may take — and I have no time or energy to waste on side issues. That preparation is the only thing I can recommend to you; all the "sides" necessary will come with it.

> I know that the supermind is not near and I know that I am impatient — but not especially for supermind.

My answer stands. I have repeatedly said recently that we are trying against great difficulties to bring down the supramental into the physical plane. If the supramental were already there, the body divinised, matter transformed, there would be no difficulty and no need of the endeavour.

I would recall to you what I said in my letter to *X*[3] that it was not the direct supramental Force which was working up till now but a preparatory Force that carried in it a modified Light derived from the supramental. The direct Force can begin working only when the mind, vital and physical are sufficiently ready.
3 March 1932

*

---

[3] *See the letter of 12 January 1932 on pages 319–20. — Ed.*

I must remind you that I have been an intellectual myself and no stranger to doubts — both the Mother and myself have had one side of the mind as positive and as insistent on practical results and more so than any Russell can be. We could never have been contented with the shining ideas and phrases which a Rolland or another takes for gold coin of Truth. We know well what is the difference between a subjective experience and a dynamic outward-going and realising Force. So although we have faith — and who ever did anything great in the world without having faith in his mission or the Truth at work behind him? — we do not found ourselves on faith alone but on a great ground of knowledge which we have been developing and testing all our lives. I think I can say that I have been testing day and night for years upon years more scrupulously than any scientist his theory or his method on the physical plane. That is why I am not alarmed by the aspect of the world around me or disconcerted by the often successful fury of the adverse Forces who increase in their rage as the Light comes nearer and nearer down to the field of earth and Matter.

If I believe in the probability and not only the possibility, if I feel practically certain of the supramental descent — I do not fix a date, — it is because I have my grounds for the belief, not merely a faith in the air. I *know* that the supramental descent is inevitable — l have faith in view of my experience that the time can be and should be now and not in a later age.

But even if I knew it to be for a later time, I would not swerve from my path or be discouraged or flag in my labour. Formerly I might have been, but not now after all the path I have traversed. When one is sure of the Truth, or even when one believes the thing one pursues to be the only possible solution, one does not stipulate for an immediate success, one travels towards the Light taking as well worth facing every risk of the adventure. Still, like you, it is now in this life that I insist on it and not in another or in the hereafter. 30 August 1932

*

> I pray for the quiet strength, faith and wisdom I need to help me pass over this exceedingly difficult period of worries and unquietness and the feeling of physical unwellness and other unpleasantnesses.

But those are the ideas and feelings that always rise up in you when the adverse force presses on you and you give ear or even partly listen to its suggestions. You yourself have given the answer to it — the solutions suggested by these forces are not solutions at all. No doubt, the period is very difficult, not only for you but for everybody, — but the struggle in the material plane was bound to be difficult and prolonged, it is the cause of the whole problem, the critical stage of the whole action, because the victory there would decide everything for good and all. 24 November 1932

*

> Is it possible for you to give us an idea when the supramental descent will come to pass? Will it be within a decade? And will the result of the completion of your yoga be, as I once asked Mother also, a power to transform us in spite of ourselves? Even at present your power does nothing else, but you leave us still the possibility to resist.

I suppose the (vital's) will to resist will disappear: I don't know about the date — dates are things that one ought not to fix too rigidly; but I certainly hope we won't have to wait for a decade! Let us be more sanguine and put the beginning of the decade and not its end as the era of the Descent. It is more likely then to make haste. December 1932

1933

As for faith, you write as if I had never had a doubt or any difficulty. I have had worse than any human mind can think of. It is not because I have ignored difficulties, but because I have seen them more clearly, experienced them on a larger scale than anyone living now or before me that, having faced and measured them, I am sure of the results of my work. Even if I still saw the chance that it might come to nothing (which is impossible), I should go on unperturbed, because I would still have done to the best of my power the work that I had to do and what is so done always counts in the economy of the universe. But why should I feel that all this may come to nothing when I see each step and where it is leading and every week and day — once it was every year and month and hereafter it will be every day and hour — brings me so much nearer to my goal? In the way that one treads with the greater Light above, even every difficulty gives its help and has its value and the Night itself carries in it the burden of the light that has to be.

As for your own case, it comes to this that experiences come and stop, there are constant ups and downs, in times of recoil and depression no advance at all seems to have been made, there is as yet no certitude. So it was with me also, so it is with everyone, not with you alone. The way to the heights is always like that up to a certain point, but the ups and downs, the difficulties and obstacles are no proof that it is a chimera to aspire to the summits. 5 January 1933

*

I am afraid I cannot endorse your reading of the situation, at least so far as the Mother and myself and the prospects of the work are concerned. I can agree only that we have had a heavy time of it recently and that there has been a strong attack on the plane of the physical and material — but that (heavy attacks) is a thing we have been accustomed to for the last 20 years and it has never prevented us from making any necessary advance. I have never had any illusions about the path being comfortable and easy — I knew all along that the work could only be done if all the essential difficulties rose and were faced — so their rising cannot tire or dishearten me — whatever obstinacy there may be in the difficulties whether our own or in the sadhaks or in Nature. . . .

No, I am not tired or on the point of giving up. I have made inwardly steps in front in the last two or three months which had seemed impossible because of the obstinate resistance for years together and it is not an experience which pushes me to despair and give up. If there is much resistance on one side, there have been large gains on the other — all has not been a picture of sterile darkness. You yourself are kept back only by the demon of doubt which bangs on you each door as you are opening it — you have only to set about resolutely slaying the Rakshasa and the doors will open to you as they have done to many others who were held up by their own mind or vital nature.

12 January 1933

*

When shall the victory of Supermind manifest on Earth?

One can only say that it advances, but to fix — or at least to proclaim — a time is not permitted — for which there are many good occult reasons. 23 March 1933

*

What are the conditions for the descent of the Higher Consciousness in the Asram atmosphere? Or is it already there? Is it good to call it down for all?

The Higher Consciousness is there already — it depends on the sadhak how much (or little) he receives of it and in what way. The supramental consciousness is not yet down in the material, but it is no use calling that for all, — hardly anyone could receive it at present. But up to just below that all is there. It is a question of receiving, not of calling down, for that each has to open — by whatever degrees — and call it into himself. 30 June 1933

*

Is it mostly the Mahasaraswati aspect of the Mother that works in our sadhana here?

At present since the sadhana came down to the physical consciousness — or rather it is a combination of Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati forces. 25 August 1933

*

> You wrote to me yesterday, "Now there is a sufficient descent of Light and Power."[4] Does this show that the psychisation of the sadhaks is advancing?

Yes, there has been some progress in that respect and all progress in the psychic or spiritual consciousness of the sadhaks makes the descent more easy. But the main cause is that the Overmind principle which is the immediate secret support of the present earth-nature with all its limitations is more and more undergoing the pressure of the Supramental and letting through a greater Light and Power. For so long as the Overmind intervenes (the principle of the Overmind being a play of forces, each trying to realise itself as the Truth) the law of struggle remains and with it the opportunity for the adverse Forces. 10 November 1933

*

> You say [*in the preceding letter*] that the Overmind, as a result of a pressure of the Supramental, is "letting through a greater Light and Power." Does this mean that a greater spiritual movement is going on at present in various places on earth where the people are receiving the new Light and Power?

No. It is only here that it can act for the present — in the forces outside, there is no preparation to receive it. 10 November 1933

*

No, the supramental has not descended into the body or into matter — it is only at the point where such a descent has become not only possible but inevitable — I am speaking of course of my own experience. But as my own experience is the centre and condition of the rest, that is sufficient for the promise.

I am not able to answer your letter just now for it is full of bristling questions, but I shall do it today — in the course of the day. Only my difficulty is that you all seem to expect some kind of miraculous faery-tale change and do not realise that it is a rapid and concentrated evolution which is the aim of my sadhana and that there must be a process for it, a working of the higher on the lower and a dealing with all the necessary materials — not a sudden fiat of the Creator by which everything is done on a given date. It is a suprarational but not an irrational process. What is to be done, will happen — perhaps with a rush even — but in a workmanlike way and not according to fancy.

---

[4] *See the letter of 9 November 1933 on page 640. — Ed.*

However I will try to explain all that as far as possible — in principle only of course — as far as it can be explained to the physical mind which has not yet any notion of what the supramental is. For the rest, I will try to meet the points you make. 14 November 1933

*

As the moment of the possibility of the supramental Descent grows nearer, these forces have become more eager to keep hold on the Asram atmosphere and break the sadhana of anyone they can touch. Their main aim is to get as many as possible to leave the Asram so that they may not share in the descent and so that the descent itself may be delayed and disturbed by a constant tempest in the atmosphere. That is why I put the notice[5] suggesting that the sadhaks should not admit these forces and need not. To be on guard and admit no violent and irrational movements, to be calm and insistent in faith and self-opening to us is all that is needed. 15 November 1933

1934

> Is there any occult significance of yesterday's date — the succession 1-2-34? The next date in this series will come in 11 years: 2-3-45.

1.2.34. It is supposed to be always a year of manifestation. 2.3.45 is the year of power — when the thing manifested gets full force. 4.5.67 is the year of complete realisation.

2 February 1934

*

---

[5] *The letter of 8 November 1933 on page 639 was posted on the Ashram notice board. — Ed.*

It is true that there is an increasingly powerful descent of the Higher Force. Many now see the lights and colours around the Mother and her subtle luminous forms — it means that their vision is opening to supraphysical realities, it is not a phantasy. The colours or lights you see are forces from various planes and each colour indicates a special force.

The supramental Force is descending, but it has not yet taken possession of the body or of matter — there is still much resistance to that. It is a supramentalised Overmind Force that has already touched and this may at any time change into or give place to the Supramental in its own native power. 14 September 1934

*

> I dreamed that I was at the Pranam ceremony this morning and at the time of making the usual obeisance to the Mother I offered her some flowers which she took in her hands. At that time she broke her customary silence and spoke to me some words of advice and encouragement, the purport of which was that I should stay here until a certain event which was to come after a few days (she mentioned the event but I do not remember what it was), about when I might return home and that even though I would not be living in the Asram, the progress of my sadhana would be assured.

There is indeed something preparing to descend and the dream was probably a suggestion to you to stay so as to receive its touch after which your sadhana could proceed at home without difficulty, as there would be Something else within you doing the sadhana with your constant assent as the one necessity. The only difficulty in the way of health is a certain obscurity in the body consciousness itself which makes it consent readily to habitual touches of the force that makes for illness; otherwise if the body consciousness as well as the mind and vital were open any illness that came would immediately be dissipated. Keep a quiet and steady will for the opening of the consciousness and the union and do not allow depression or any idea of frustration. Keep also a concentrated call in the heart. With those two things the result is sure. 18 September 1934

*

> *X* told me that this is the year of the manifestation of the Purushottama, Sri Aurobindo.[6] Also that the Supramental Force is just now coming down. I feel my previous dream of darshan of Sri Aurobindo in a motor car and another dream of Sri Aurobindo signify this manifestation and the coming down of the Force before long. Am I right?

The motor car by itself only means a rapid progress. It is true that the Supramental Force is preparing its descent.

20 September 1934

*

> *X* speaks in very definite terms about this descent that has already come so close. He says it will bring about the final change. Is what he says true? If so, why am I still ignorant of it?

It would not necessarily be known by everybody beforehand. Besides even if the descent were here one would have to be ready before one could get the final change. 14 October 1934

*

> It feels as if the Pure Existence is descending into the being. I can feel it manifesting — but then something asks how this can be possible, for the vital and the physical are not yet filled with it.

The Pure Existence is not something abstract but substantial and concrete. Moreover it is descending into the body, so it is quite natural to feel it materially. 16 October 1934

*

I do not know who was *X*'s informant, but certainly the Mother never said to anybody that the Supermind was to descend on the 24th November. Dates cannot be fixed like that. The descent of the supermind is a long process or at least a process with a long preparation and one can only say that the work is going on sometimes with a strong pressure for completion, sometimes retarded by the things that rise from below and have to be dealt with before farther progress can be made. The process is a (spiritual) evolutionary process concentrated into a brief period — it could be done otherwise (by what men would regard as a miraculous intervention) only if the human mind were more flexible and less attached to its ignorance than it is. As we envisage it, it must manifest in a few first and then spread, but it is not likely to sweep over the earth in a moment. It is not advisable to discuss too much what it will do and how it will do it, because these are things the Supermind itself will fix, acting out of that Divine Truth in it, and the mind must not try to fix for it grooves in which it will run. Naturally, the release from subconscient ignorance and from disease, duration of life at will, and a change in the functioning of the body must be among the ultimate results of a supramental change; but the details of these things must be left for the supramental Energy to work out according to the truth of its own nature. 18 October 1934

---

[6] *The person referred to here as* X *was the recipient of the letter of 2 February 1934, published on page 327. — Ed*

*

When I wrote in my letter about the supermind and the obstinate resistance,[7] I spoke of course of something I had already spoken of before. I did not mean that the resistance was of an unexpected character or had altered anything essential. But in its nature the descent is not something arbitrary and miraculous, but a rapid evolutionary process compressed into a few years which proceeds by taking up the present nature into its Light and pouring its Truth into the inferior planes. That cannot be done in the whole world at a time, but is done like all such processes first through selected Adharas and then on a wider scale. We have to do it through ourselves first and through the circle of sadhakas gathered around us in the terrestrial consciousness as typified here. If a few open, that is sufficient for the process to be possible. On the other hand if there is a general misunderstanding and resistance (not in all, but in many), that makes it difficult and the process more laborious, but it does not make it impossible. I was not suggesting that it has become impossible, but that if the circumstances are made unfavourable by our being unable to concentrate enough on this thing of capital importance and having too much work to do of an irrelevant kind, the descent was likely to take longer than it would do otherwise. Certainly, when the supramental does touch earth with a sufficient force to dig itself in into the earth consciousness, there will be no more chance of any success or survival for the Asuric Maya.

---

[7] *See the letter of 17 October 1934 on pages 44–45. — Ed.*

The rest that I spoke of about the human and the divine had to do with the intermediate period between before it is down. What I meant was that if the Mother were able to bring out the Divine Personalities and Powers into her body and physical being, as she was doing for several months without break some years ago, the brightest period in the history of the Asram, things would be much more easy and all these dangerous attacks that now take place would be dealt with rapidly and would in fact be impossible. In those days when the Mother was either receiving the sadhaks for meditation or otherwise working and concentrating all night and day without sleep and very irregular food, there was no ill-health and no fatigue in her and things were proceeding with a lightning swiftness. The power used was not that of the Supermind, but of the Overmind, but it was sufficient for what was being done. Afterwards because the lower vital and the physical of the sadhaks could not follow, the Mother had to push the Divine Personalities and Powers through which she was doing the action behind a veil and come down into the physical human level and act according to its conditions and that meant difficulty, struggle, illness, ignorance and inertia. All has been for long slow, difficult, almost sterile in appearance. Nevertheless our work was going on behind that appearance and now it is again becoming possible to go forward. But for the advance to be anything like general or swift in its process, the attitude of the sadhaks, not of a few only, must change. They must cling less to the conditions and feelings of the external physical consciousness and open themselves to the true consciousness of the Yogin and sadhaka. If they did that, the inner eye would open and they would not be bewildered or alarmed if the Mother again manifested externally something of the Divine Personalities and Powers as she did before. They would not be asking her to be always on their level, but would be glad to be drawn swiftly or gradually up towards hers. The difficulties would be ten times less and a larger easier securer movement possible.

This was what I meant and I suppose I manifested some impatience at the slowness of so many to realise what is after all a logical conclusion from the very principle of our Yoga which is that of a transformation, all that is disharmonious in human nature being enlightened out of existence, all that makes for harmony being changed into its divine equivalent, purer, greater, nobler, more beautiful and much being added which has been lacking to the human evolution. I meant that things could move more swiftly towards this if the sadhaks had a less ignorant attitude, but if they could not yet reach that, we had of course to go on anyhow until the supramental descent came down to the material level.

Finally, you must get rid of this gratuitous tendency to despair. The difficulty for you has been created by the indulgence given to this formation I speak of; that finally dismissed, the difficulty would disappear. Progress might be slow at first, but progress would come; it would quicken afterwards and, with the supramental force here, there would be for you as for others the full speed and certitude. 18 October 1934

*

> I was reading a book about the Great War, which I found interesting. I hope you don't mind if I read such books. Do not punish me for that. I mean, there seems to be a counterpart of punishment in the supramental, a withdrawing of its protection or help which results in attacks, depressions, illnesses, etc.

But it is not the supramental that is acting at present — the supramental won't act until it is rooted and established in Matter. If it were the supramental, you would not be having these difficulties. It is at most the cosmic Overmind that is able to act now, but even there there is no idea of punishment; it is a play of forces and when the force of the physical consciousness becomes too prominent it acts according to its dharma and the other forces are covered over for the time. Our own force acts in this play of forces to help the sadhak through till he gets himself into the silence within and the cosmic consciousness as a whole with the Higher Force action to regulate and harmonise the progress — after which it is plainer sailing. There can be no question of our withdrawing protection and help. As for your reading these books, we have no objection at all, so long as you feel the need of it. When the inner life becomes more active again, you can either drop them again or make all mental activity a part of the sadhana according to your condition and inner impulse at the time. 25 October 1934

*

I have felt bound to explain so much [*about the behaviour of certain sadhaks*] though I would have preferred not to write about these things. I do hope you will throw all that behind you. I feel a great longing that the sadhaks should be free of all that. For so long as the present state of things continues with fires of this kind raging all around and the atmosphere in a turmoil, the work I am trying to do, certainly not for my own sake or for any personal reason, will always remain under the stroke of jeopardy and I do not know how the descent I am labouring for is to fulfil itself. In fact, the Mother and I have to give nine-tenths of our energy to smoothing down things, to keeping the sadhaks tolerably contented etc. etc. etc. One-tenth and in the Mother's case not even that can alone go to the real work; it is not enough. It is not surprising either that you should feel it difficult to get on in all this. But then why not push these things away from you and keep a clear field in you for the Divine? That, if everybody, or even a sufficient number could do it, would be the greatest help I could receive. 26 October 1934

*

I have already spoken about the bad condition of the world; the usual idea of the occultists about it is that the worse they are, the more is probable the coming of an intervention or a new revelation from above. The ordinary mind cannot know — it has either to believe or disbelieve or wait and see.

As to whether the Divine seriously means something to happen, I believe it is intended. I know with absolute certitude that the supramental is a truth and that its advent is in the very nature of things inevitable. The question is as to the when and the how. That also is decided and predestined from somewhere above; but it is here being fought out amid a rather grim clash of conflicting forces. For in the terrestrial world the predetermined result is hidden and what we see is a whirl of possibilities and forces attempting to achieve something with the destiny of it all concealed from human eyes. This is however certain that a number of souls have been sent to see that it shall be now. That is the situation. My faith and will are for the now. I am speaking of course on the level of the human intelligence — mystically-rationally, as one might put it. To say more would be going beyond that line. You don't want me to start prophesying, I suppose? As a rationalist, you can't. 25 December 1934

*

> What did you imply when you wrote to me that I was in the physical consciousness? Did you mean that I am living like an animal or vegetating like a plant and did you suggest that I should come out of the physical consciousness and live on the mental level?

I am myself living in the physical consciousness and have been for several years. At first it was a plunge into the physical — into all its obscurity and inertia, afterwards it was a station in the physical open to a higher and higher consciousness and slowly having fought out in it the struggle of transformation of the physical consciousness with a view to prepare it for the supramental change.

It is possible to go back to the mental level where one receives all the mental realisations readily enough if the mind is

open and bright. But it is not the course that the sadhana usually follows.
29 December 1934

*

> When the sadhana is going on in the physical plane, is it necessary for all the sadhaks to come down into the physical consciousness, or only those who have much inertia and impurity in them, as in my case?

It is a little difficult to say whether all have to come down totally into the physical. The Mother and I had to do it because the work could not be otherwise done. We had tried to do it from above through the mind and higher vital, but it could not be because the sadhaks were not ready to follow — their lower vital and physical refused to share in what was coming down or else misused it and became full of exaggerated and violent reactions. Since then the sadhana as a whole has come down along with us into the physical consciousness. Many have followed — some unluckily without sufficient preparation in the mind and vital, some holding on to the vital and mind and living still between the three, some totally but with a prepared mind and vital. The total descent into the physical is a very troublesome affair — it means a long and trying period of difficulty, for the physical is normally obscure, inert, impervious to the Light. It is a thing of habits, very largely a slave of the subconscient and its mechanical reactions. It is less open to violent attacks than the vital except in the way of illness and some other movements, but it is dull and dreary to have these — until the Light, the Peace, the Power, the Joy can come down from above and fix themselves. We would have preferred to do all the hard work ourselves there and called others down only when an easier movement was established, but it did not prove possible.

I don't think it has anything to do with impurity. Only you came down a little too soon. At the moment it happened, the peace and silence of the Atman and the movement upward to realisation of the Self above the head in the higher consciousness were about to establish themselves. If that had been done first, it would have been less difficult. It means a great struggle against the inertia to get these things done — but you have only to persevere and done they will surely be. Then things will be much more easy for you. 31 December 1934

1935

After November the push for descent stopped and the resistance of material Nature arose — that is always a sign of something that has still to be conquered before the descent can be complete. In the silence the necessary preparation is being done. No doubt, I expect something to be done by the 21st, but I say nothing because I do not want to raise the buzz again — it is not good for the realisation that there should be any buzz about it.

2 February 1935

*

> I hear you are having a tough fight with the forces.

Very beastly — these forces. One can't advance a single step without their throwing their shells and stink-bombs. However like General Joffre, I advance. "Nous progressâmes."

1 March 1935

*

> This [February] darshan day was not so marvellous as November and I thought that during the interval I had not made much progress.

The period since November has been a general period of difficulty and the resistance of the physical Nature to the change demanded of it. That is the reason why there was not the same movement as before November in you, — it is not due to any cause personal to you. 11 March 1935

*

> Why so many illnesses all of a sudden? Is the supramental too near?

No, it is the material which has become too uppish.

> People are saying that the supramental has come down into the physical, evidenced by greater peace and calm.

Into whose physical? I shall be very glad to know — for I myself have not got so far, otherwise I would not have a queasy eye. But if you know anybody who has got it (the Supramental in the physical, not the eye) tell me like a shot. I will acclaim him "Grand First Supramental" at once. 17 March 1935

*

> It seems to take a lot more effort to free myself from sexual and other problems now than ever before. Even in the very beginning it was easier for me.

The greater difficulty is because the sadhana is now taking place directly on the physical plane, where the force of a habit or habitual movement once formed is very great. When the sadhana is taking place on the mental or vital plane, it is more easy to control or change, because the mind and vital are more plastic than the physical. But on the other hand if something is definitely gained on the physical plane, there is a more lasting and complete fulfilment than when it is on the mental or vital alone. 19 March 1935

*

> What does supramentalisation mean exactly? We know by your own statements that you have achieved that. Is it then supramentalisation in parts? You want transformation of everything — mental to physical?

Achieved what? What statement? What are these wild assertions? I spoke of an overmind Force which is getting supramentalised in parts.

> Does it mean that some parts of your being are supramental but that the physical is not yet supramentalised?

Overmind in process of supramentalisation, not supramental.

How can it be possible — realisation in parts — in your case?

Why not? Always the idea that there must be an instantaneous absolute miracle or else nothing! What about process in things? You are ignorant of all that is between supreme Spirit and matter, it seems. You know nothing of the occult processes of mind, life and all the rest — so you can think only of miraculous divinity or else law of matter as known to Science. But for supramental Spirit to work itself out in matter it must go through a process of transforming the immediate mental, vital and other connections, must it not — so why should not the process be in parts? Immortality also can come by parts. First the mental being becomes immortal (not shed and dissolved after death), then the vital, while the physical comes only last. That is a possible evolution, recognised by occult science. 27 March 1935

*

Above all, you have the direct Intuition to fall back upon.

I haven't — not just now at any rate. I am too busy handling the confounded difficulties of Matter. The material is subconscious and I would have to be subconscious myself to get its true intuition. I prefer to wait for the supramental. 4 April 1935

*

> The way you are hammering the supramental on us in everything, every problem, every difficulty, as the solution to all riddles, panacea for all ills, one almost thinks that its descent will make all of us "big people" overnight.

My insistence on the supramental is of course apo-diaskeptic. Don't search for the word in the dictionary. I am simply imitating the doctors who when they are in a hole protect themselves with impossible Greek. Peace, supramental if possible, but peace anyhow — a peace which will become supramental if it has a chance. The atmosphere is most confoundedly disturbed, that is why I am ingeminating "peace, peace, peace!" like a summer dove or an intellectual under the rule of Hitler. Of course, I am not asking you to become supramental offhand. That is my business, and I will do it if you fellows give me a chance, which you are not doing just now (you is not personal, but collective and indefinite) and will do less if you go blummering into buzzific intensities. (Please *don't* consult the dictionary, but look into the writings of Joyce and others.) 9 April 1935

*

> It is you who will bring down the Supramental but my question was whether that descent is quite independent of the conditions of the sadhaks; whether our impurities, turmoil, crowings for "buzzific intensities", our social talks, social dinners now and then are going to stand in the way or whether it will come anyhow.

I presume it will come anyhow, but it is badly delayed because, if I am all the time occupied with dramas, hysterics, tragi-comic correspondence (quarrels, chronicles, lamentations), how can I have time for this — the only real work, the one thing needful? It is not one or two, but twenty dramas that are going on.
11 April 1935

*

> People say that it will be one century, if not more, before the supramental descends!

One day, one week, one month, one year, one decade, one century, one millennium, one light year — all is possible. Then why do people choose one century? 12 April 1935

*

> It seems something very striking and luminous has happened today. Have you achieved some great victory? How many millions of hostile forces have you crushed? At evening meditation the Mother had an appearance sparkling like gold beams. On other days she looks tired, tired of the job, and would like to give it up saying, "Oh, you sadhaks, you are all hopeless!"

It would be very natural if Mother felt like that! Never has there been such an uprush of mud and brimstone as during the past few months. However the Caravan goes on and today there was some promise of better things. 19 April 1935

*

> I was surprised to hear that such a bad time was hanging over our head. But surely it means that the greater the light descending, the greater the velocity, the greater the resistance — law of physics, isn't it?

In a certain sense it is true, but it was not inevitable — if the sadhaks had been a less neurotic company, it could have been done quietly. As it is there is the Revolt of the Subconscient.

> In one letter you wrote that you were able to push on; in another that the hostile forces were out of date [*p. 639*]. That was a year ago. When we read this we thought that it would be merry Christmas henceforth. But now I again feel a bit despondent because you speak of the confounded atmosphere, "the uprush of mud" and the attacks.

When I said "out of date", I did not mean that they are not going on, but they ought not to be going on — they were only kept up by the sadhaks opening themselves to them and so retaining them in the atmosphere. I thought that was clear from what I said — but the sadhaks seem always to put a comfortable interpretation even on uncomfortable statements.

> I have heard that even *X* had a terrible attack recently. He almost left the Asram! *Y* wanted to commit suicide, and *Z* is in revolt!

There are only 2 or 3 in the Asram to whom this word "even" would apply. I won't mention their names less the devil should be tempted to try with them also. A solid mind, a solid nervous system and a steady psychic flame seem to be the only safeguard against "terrible attacks".

> And all this despite your continuous day and night fight!

If such things did not happen, there would be no need of a fight day and night. You put the thing in an inverse order. (I take no responsibility for the statements you make, of course. They stand on the credit of the reporters.)

> Since the descent of the Supermind will quicken up all the processes, why not take an axe of retrenchment . . .

How? I am not Hitler.

> and cut off all impeding elements ruthlessly so that among a very few chosen disciples, the whole work may go on most concentratedly and rapidly? When the miracle is achieved, all of us will flock back and achieve everything as by a miracle!

Things cannot be done like that. You might just as well ask the Mother and myself to isolate ourselves in the Himalayas, get down the supramental, then toss everybody up in a blanket into the Supreme. Very neat but it is not practical. 20 April 1935

*

> Since yesterday evening there has been a strong uprising of the subconscient inertia.

The subconscient difficulty is *the* difficulty now — because the whole struggle in the general sadhana is now there. It is in the subconscient, no longer in the vital or conscious physical that the resistance is all massed together. 30 April 1935

*

> Between last November and February I suffered a good deal on account of my emotional and vital defect. Now the chief difficulty is in the gross physical — weakness, pain, lethargy and sicknesses.

The main difficulty in the general sadhana also is now in the physical. From November last there has been much struggle and obstruction on the most physical plane — the material consciousness. 7 May 1935

*

> It seems another victory has been won by you? Some people saw a red-crimson light around the Mother a few days back. What does it signify?

??? Great Heavens! which? who? But there is nothing new in that. It was coming down before Nov. 24, but afterwards all the damned mud arose and it stopped. But there are two red-crimson lights. One is supramental Divine Love. The other is the supramental physical Force. 14 May 1935

*

> It seems to me that my sadhana has come to a standstill. Is it because of the physical *tamas*?

It is probable that you have come in contact with a new layer of the physical consciousness which is more material than the rest, perhaps with the subconscient itself (it is with the subconscient that the sadhana is now concerned in the Asram itself). The first result is the purely negative or stand-still condition you describe. You have to call down the Force and the Light here, so that this too may become a part of the Divine Consciousness. If it is the subconscient, then you must be on your guard against all negative feelings such as the sense that all is gone, or the uselessness of life or the frustration or uselessness of sadhana, helplessness, incapacity etc. These things come naturally to one who does not understand. But they are false appearances. Remaining quiet and keeping the faith that there is the Divine Guidance behind, one has to do what is needed till the phase is over. 27 May 1935

*

> We hear you are tremendously busy; hot speculations are in the air about near descents.

No, thank you, sir! I have had enough of them — the only result of the last descent was an upsurging of subconscient mud.

> In the upshot many crashes and shipwrecks are apprehended.

What an appetite for crashes!

> Please tell us something so that we may prepare ourselves in time to bear the pressure of the descent.

No pressure! I am simply busy trying to get out of the mud — in other words to see if the damned subconscient can be persuaded to subside into something less dangerous, less complexful and more manageable. 27 May 1935

*

> A number of people have left recently. Is it "sifting", or is it the "pressure"? But does the pressure work to oust people, or is it a corresponding pressure from other forces which makes them go?

The "Pressure" from above does not work to send people away — it is the pressure of the wrong forces. As for sifting, that is an idea which is very widespread; — but what is meant by sifting? Were the people who have gone out the most unfit for Yoga and are those who remain the ones fit for Yoga — is that the idea? I don't think anybody could make the facts work out to mean that. Then what is the idea? It is true that this has been a very difficult time, but that is only because the sadhana has proceeded by a descent into a lower and lower plane where the forces of Darkness are more and more at home, and it is now in the subconscient where lies the root of all the difficulties. But on the other hand the Power descending also is greater. If many people have gone and many are having great difficulties, also many have opened to experience and progress who were stagnant for years together. There is a loss account but a gain account also. 8 June 1935

*

> They say that you are now handling the lower vital and so the general trouble. True?

Subconscient vital physical — the lower vital is irrational, but not so utterly "without reason" as that. 8 July 1935

*

> Some time back you wrote to me: "Never has there been such an uprush of mud and brimstone as during the past few months. However the Caravan goes on and today there was some promise of better things."[8] What about the uprush of mud? Has it settled down, and are people now floating in the flood of the Supramental?

It is still there, but personally I have become superior to it and am travelling forward like a flash of lightning, that is to say, zigzag, but fairly fast. Now I have got the hang of the whole hanged thing — like a very Einstein I have got the mathematical formula of the whole affair (unintelligible as in his case to anybody but myself) and am working it out figure by figure.

As for people, no! they are not floating in the supramental — some are floating in the higher mind, others rushing up into it and flopping down into the subconscient alternately, some swinging from heaven into hell and back into heaven, again back into hell ad infinitum, some are sticking fast contentedly or discontentedly in the mud, some are sitting in the mud and dreaming dreams and seeing visions, some have their legs in the mud and their head in the heavens, etc. etc., an infinity of combinations, while many are simply nowhere. But console yourself — these things, it seems, are inevitable in the process of great transformations. 16 August 1935

*

> You say, "I have become superior to it and am travelling forward . . . fast," but you have been always superior and always travelling fast all your life.

[*Underlining "always superior and always travelling fast":*] Rubbish!

> How is it going to affect us?

If my being able to solve the problem of the subconscient in the sadhana is of no importance, then of course it won't affect anybody. Otherwise it may.

---

[8] *See the letter of 19 April 1935 on pages 339–40. — Ed.*

> From the condition of the people you enumerate, there is not much hope left nor does it show that your travelling fast has speeded them up.

That is of no importance at present. To get the closed doors open is just now the thing to be done and I am doing it. Speeding people through them can come in its own time when the doors and the people are ready.

> What is the mathematical formula that you have all of a sudden found out? Let us have it in a tangible form, if possible.

I told you it was unintelligible to anybody but myself, so how the deuce do you expect me to give it to you in a tangible form?

17 August 1935

*

> I beg to be pardoned for one thing. Today I mentioned to somebody what you said about yourself that you are travelling fast. Has it been a great mistake to let it out? Is it absolutely private?

No — only you must not tell it to too many people. It is only because I don't want speculation or gossip about such things as that spoils the atmosphere. 20 August 1935

*

> The darshan atmosphere and its influence seem to be waning away so soon! Old friends or foes are stepping in.

There is always an adverse movement after the darshan, the *revanche* of the lower forces. I had a stoppage myself, but I am off again riding on the back of my Einsteinian formula.

23 August 1935

*

> Do tell me please if you are getting anything solid from this nebulous supramental. *X*[9] tells me you have scaled and winged

---

[9] *The recipient of the letters of July and August 1935 on pages 343–45. — Ed.*

> like lightning on its pinions. Have you really? Was it something like motion on a sort of marvellous Calm which seems *like* motion through some supramental jugglery of consciousness? Some enlightenment on this bewildering problem would be highly edifying even to the mentals and humans, you may be sure. Also, *Y* has to be gagged somehow. He talks of nothing but the supramental. And what am I to answer?

You have created your own "bewildering problem" by supplying your own data! There is nothing nebulous about the supramental, its action depends on the utmost precision possible. As for solidity, since I have got many solid things from much lower forces, I do not see why the highest ones should only give nebulosities. But that seems the human mind's position, only what is earthy is solid, what is high is misty and unreal — the worm is a reality, but the eagle is a vapour!

However, I have not told *X* that I am scaling and winging — on the contrary I am dealing with very hard practical facts. I only told him I had got the formula of solution for the difficulty that had been holding me up since last November and I am working it out.

To return to the supramental — the supramental is simply the direct self-existent Truth-Consciousness and the direct self-effective Truth-Power. There can therefore be no question of jugglery about it. What is not true is not supramental. As for calm and silence, there is no need of the supramental to get that. One can get it even on the level of Higher Mind which is the next above the human intelligence. I got these things in 1908, twenty-seven years ago and I can assure you they were solid enough and marvellous enough without any need of supramentality to make it more so! Again, a calm that "seems like motion" is a phenomenon of which I know nothing. A calm or silence which can support or produce action — that I know and that is what I have had — the proof is that out of an absolute silence of the mind I edited the *Bande Mataram* for four months and wrote $6\frac{1}{2}$ volumes of the *Arya*, not to speak of all the letters and messages etc. etc. I have written since. If you say that writing is not an action or motion but only something that seems like it, a jugglery of the consciousness, — well, still out of that calm and silence I conducted a pretty strenuous political activity and have also taken my share in keeping up an Asram which has at least an appearance to the physical senses of being solid and material! If you deny that these things are material or solid (which of course metaphysically you can), then you land yourself plump into Shankara's illusionism, and there I will leave you.

You will say however that it is not the Supramental but at most the Overmind that helped me to these non-nebulous motions. But the Supermind is by definition a greater dynamic activity than mind or Overmind. I have said that what is not true is not supramental; I will add that what is ineffective is not supramental. And finally I will conclude by saying that I have not told *X* that I have taken possession of the supramental — I only admit to be very near to it or at least to its tail. But "very near" is — well, after all a relative phrase like all human phrases.

I don't know how you are to "gag" *Y*. You might perhaps try my two formulas, but it is doubtful. Or perhaps you might tell him that the supramental is silence — only, it would be untrue! So I leave you in your fix — there is no other go. At least until I have firm physical hold of the tail of the supramental and can come and tell the mentals and humans — no doubt in language which will be unintelligible to them, for they have totally misunderstood even the little I have already written about it.

23 August 1935

*

> Are there many sadhaks here who are under the same spell of inertia as I?

Yes — it is a natural result of the consciousness's descent into the physical and the struggle with the subconscient resistance. Only its form varies with different people. 4 September 1935

*

> How curious it is that something prevents my ascension. For everything in the lower nature can best be dealt with from above. So why does it hinder my ascent?

It happened in the same way with myself. I had to come down into the physical to deal with it instead of keeping the station always above. Of course if you can keep the station above so much the better, but as almost everybody is down in the physical, it is a little difficult perhaps. 5 September 1935

*

> A suggestion has come to me that you are working directly with the supramental power. That is why the resistance is so stormy and the attacks so violent. Is this true?

I suppose so. Only that must not be accepted as a reason for passive acquiescence. 7 September 1935

*

> When will our difficulties be over?

That cannot be said. The difficulties are not likely to cease until the material resistance has been entirely conquered in principle. 11 September 1935

*

> *X* has made the following remark: "The present preparation is going on to bring down the Supermind into the physical of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo." Is it correct?

[*Sri Aurobindo bracketed "The present preparation is going on to bring down the Supermind into the physical", and wrote:*] Not quite correct in all points. The things to be brought down were in us no doubt — but not all outwardly manifested, from the beginning. Of course *X*'s statement is altogether true only as far as the bracket goes. 14 September 1935

*

> When you wrote "as far as the bracket goes", did you not notice that you cut off the last part of *X*'s statement?

Yes, of course. What is being done is meant to prepare the manifestation of the supermind in the earth consciousness down to Matter itself, so it can't be for the physical of myself or the Mother alone.

> Most of us know that the Supermind will be brought down into "the physical". But what *X* means is that the present preparation is going on to bring down the Supermind not into our physical but into yours and the Mother's.

If it comes down into our physical it would mean that it has come down into matter and so there is no reason why it should not manifest in the sadhaks.

> *X* says further: "The Supermind will not descend into any of the sadhaks. I have read in the *Arya* about the nature of the Supermind. It is so great that no human being can bear it in itself."

I do not know to what passage of the *Arya* the reference is. It is certain that the Supermind is far above the human mind and cannot be grasped by the human mind. That is the reason why this Yoga has to be undertaken — so as to make man grow out of the human mind and prepare him for supermind.

> For myself all I have to say is that if you were not already supramentalised you would never have called yourself a superman.

I don't know that I have "called" myself a superman. But certainly I have risen above the ordinary human mind, otherwise I would not think of trying to bring down the supermind into the physical.

> I refuse to accept what you wrote yesterday: "The things to be brought down were in us no doubt" [*p. 348*]. Those things were not only *in you* but were created *by you*. If you put it like that it can only be because of the conditions of the earth-nature. From the point of view of the supramental truth, you are the creator of the supramental plane.

That is another matter. The supermind plane is a plane above, its nature is not yet manifested in the material world, which has manifested matter, life and mind, and something of what is between mind and supermind, but not supermind itself.

15 September 1935

*

> I don't think X was referring to any particular passage of the *Arya*. But he has the impression that you have said that the supermind is so far above the human mind that the mind cannot grasp it. So he says that it is impossible for the supermind to come down into a human being. Have you spoken to him about this?

No. It was the old idea that human consciousness can reach and merge in the Sun (Supermind) — by Samadhi, I suppose — but cannot redescend from there. 15 September 1935

*

> You wrote a few days ago: "The difficulties are not likely to cease until they are conquered in principle" [*cf. p. 348*].[10]

I do not remember having written "in principle" or if so, there must have been other words also.

> A week earlier you wrote: "as almost everybody is down in the physical, it is a little difficult perhaps" [*p. 348*]. But I was under the impression that some, like X, Y and Z, are always on the intuitive plane.

I am not aware that they or anybody lives constantly on the intuitive plane. All are at grips with the difficulties of the physical consciousness at present — though of course to one like Y the suggestion of revolt cannot come — at least it has never done so up to now. 16 September 1935

*

> What you wrote [*on 11 September*] was: "The difficulties

---

[10] *Quoting from memory, the correspondent omitted several words from Sri Aurobindo's reply of 11 September 1935. — Ed.*

> are not likely to cease until the material resistance has been entirely conquered in principle."

I see, but that was about another matter altogether. I meant that the difficulties in the physical (generally speaking, not in a particular case) could not be entirely absent so long as the material resistance to the supramental descent had not been overcome in principle. In principle means in essence, not in every detail of the coming development. 17 September 1935

*

> It seems to me that a direct Supermind Force is working, and that the lower nature is trying to accommodate itself to it.

Direct Supermind Force is not possible at this stage. It is only when the whole being down to the physical has accepted and assimilated the higher consciousness that it can come.

> I understand that the transformation of the lower nature is not possible without the Supramental Force coming down and preparing the vessel for the complete perfection.

Complete perfection is another matter. What must first be done is the fullness of the higher consciousness between the mind and supermind. 17 September 1935

*

> When I wrote recently about a "direct Supermind Force", I was thinking about something you wrote a week or two ago. When I asked whether the direct Supermind Force was acting in the Asram, you replied, if I remember correctly, "I suppose so, but it should not be an excuse for a passive acquiescence."[11] Also, when I began to feel a powerful, fiery keen force, I took it to be the Supermind.

Acting in the Asram means only acting in the earth consciousness to prepare its own possibility. The forces above the human mind, especially Overmind, Intuition, Illumined Mind can be very intense and fiery. They have divine powers in them.[12]

---

[11] *See the question and answer of 7 September 1935 on page 348. Quoting from memory, the correspondent made small but significant errors in his question and in Sri Aurobindo's answer. — Ed.*

18 September 1935

*

> You wrote that you are "trying to get the supermind down into the material".[13] We understand from this that the ascent has been done but the descent remains. It is something like our going up to you at Darshan and getting all the bliss, joy, Ananda, and then trying to bring these things down and not lose them as soon as one leaves your room. Also, you say in another letter that you have seen the supermind and are in contact with it without achieving it, while in your letter to *X*[14] you write that you are very near the tail of the supermind. Sounds funny, no? Contact and no contact.

But supposing I reached supermind in that way, then under such conditions would it be probable that I should come down again at the risk of losing it? Do you realise that I went upstairs and have not come down again? So it was better to be in contact with it until I had made the path clear between S and M. As for the tail, can't you approach the tail of an animal without achieving the animal? I am in the physical, in matter — there is no doubt of it. If I throw a rope up from Matter, noose or lasso the Supermind and pull it down, the first part of Mr. S that will come near me is his tail dangling down as he descends, and that I can seize first and pull down the rest of him by tail-twists. As for being in contact with it, well I can be in contact with you by correspondence without actually touching you or taking hold even of your tail, can't I? So there is nothing funny about it — perfectly rational, coherent and clear.

15 September 1935

*

> You know we are hanging our hopes and aspirations on the invisible tail of the supramental. But do tell us how this

---

[12] *The preceding replies of 4 – 18 September were written to one correspondent. Those of 15 and 18 September that follow were written to another. — Ed.*

[13] *See the letter of 29 August 1935 on pages 270 – 72. — Ed.*

[14] *See the letter of 23 August 1935 on pages 345 – 47. — Ed.*

> omnipotent Mr. S will make us great sadhaks overnight. Is he going to burn up all our impurities by his blazing flame as Hanuman did Lanka or what?

If you expect to become supramental overnight, you are confoundedly mistaken. The tail will keep the H.F. [*hostile forces*] at a respectful distance and flap at you until you consent to do things in a reasonable time instead of taking 200 centuries over each step as you seem to want to do just now. More than that I refuse to say. What is a reasonable time in the supramental view of things I leave you to discover.

> Your Overmental Force seems to have utterly failed in cases of idiots like us. Where then is the chance of this Mr. S which is only one step higher?

Overmind is obliged to respect the freedom of the individual — including his freedom to be perverse, stupid, recalcitrant and slow.

Supermind is not merely a step higher than Overmind — it is beyond the line, that is a different consciousness and power beyond the mental limit. 18 September 1935

*

> Someone has told me that at present the Mother and you have started to send us down into the depth of the lower nature (for the purpose of transformation). Is it a fact?

We are sending nobody nowhere. The sadhana itself has come down into the depth of the physical and subconscient to make them open to what has to come down from above. That is all.

> Is it true that the nearer the supramental descent, the greater the difficulties of those in whom it is to come down?

It is true, unless they are so surrendered to the Mother, so psychic, plastic, free from ego that the difficulties are spared to them. 4 October 1935

*

> Why not write something about the Supermind which these people find so difficult to understand?

What's the use? How much would anybody understand? Besides the present business is to bring down and establish the Supermind, not to explain it. If it establishes itself, it will explain itself — if it doesn't, there is no use in explaining it.

I have said some things about it in past writings, but without success in enlightening anybody. So why repeat the endeavour?

9 October 1935

*

> To *X*'s comment about "near descents", you replied: "No, thank you, sir! I have had enough of them — the only result of the last descent was an upsurging of subconscient mud."[15] Are our present difficulties, attacks, etc. the result of the descent?

Not of the descent, but of the resistance to it.

> What descent did you mean? The descent of what?

The general descent of the Supermind into Matter was the subject on which I was writing.

6 November 1935

*

> Yesterday you said that the Supermind descent into Matter is what is being attempted. If that is so, has the Supermind already conquered the mental plane, the vital plane and the subtle physical plane?

There can be no conquest of the other planes by the supermind, but only an influence, so long as the physical is not ready. Besides the Supermind did not attempt — it is we who are attempting.

> Unless the mind and the vital are perfectly prepared how is it possible to bring the Supermind down into the physical or into Matter itself?

---

[15] *See the letter of 27 May 1935 on pages 342–43. — Ed.*

And how is it possible to perfect the mind and vital unless the physical is prepared — for there is such a thing as the mental and vital physical and mind and vital cannot be said to be perfectly prepared until these are ready. 7 November 1935

*

> If the progress of the transformation of the body is so slow that it cannot keep pace with that of the higher parts, it seems that at any given time it would always be behind the higher parts. For example, when the higher parts are overmentalised the body would be just beginning to be intuitivised. In the same way, when the higher parts are supramentalised, the physical consciousness would be just beginning to receive the overmental influence. The body would always be behind unless one stopped at each stage in order to deal with the body at that level, and proceeded only when that work was finished.

That is hardly possible. The body consciousness is there and cannot be ignored, so that one can neither transform the higher parts completely leaving the body for later dealing nor make each stage complete in all its parts before going to the next. I tried that method but it never worked. A predominant overmentalisation of mind and vital is the first step, for instance, when overmentalising, but the body consciousness retains all the lower movements unovermentalised and until these can be pulled up to the overmental standard, there is no overmental perfection, always the body consciousness brings in flaws and limitations. To perfect the overmind one has to call in the supramental force and it is only when the overmind has been partially supramentalised that the body begins to be more and more overmental. I do not see any way of avoiding this process, though it is what makes the thing so long. 18 November 1935

*

> Well sir, what about your brand new formula?[16] How has it worked out? Are you still stuck up in the middle? Judging

---

[16] *See the letter of 16 August 1935 on page 344. — Ed.*

> from my own experience this Darshan [*24 November 1935*], it is hard to say.

My formula is working out rapidly, but it has nothing to do with any Darshan descent. It is my private and particular descent, if you like, and that's enough for me at present. The tail of the supermind is descending, descending, descending. It is only the tail at present, but where the tail can pass, the rest will follow.

> After so much expectation everything seemed so quiet. Already it seems as if the Darshan passed away long ago!

Quiet was all I wanted — there were so many alarums and excursions. Just before that it looked as if the 24th would be a day of mud, whirlpools and tempests (in certain quarters of course). However all quieted down by magic — and everything was peaceful, peaceful.

> I hope others felt the Force, the Descent. Some say there was a descent; others say no.

How do they know either of them? Personal experience? Then it was a personal descent or a personal non-descent. No General de Bono yet.

> Some say there was so much resistance that Sri Aurobindo could not do much in spite of himself.

Didn't try, sir, so that's bosh. The attempt to bring a great general descent having only produced a great ascent of subconscient mud, I had given up that as I already told you. At present I am only busy with transformation of overmind (down to the subconscient) into supermind; when that is over, I shall see if I can beat everyone with the tail of the supermind or not. At present I am only trying to prevent people from making hysterical subconscient asses of themselves, so that I may not be too much disturbed in my operations — not yet with too much success.
25 November 1935

*

> We are very happy — I believe it is due to the joy and harmony you have brought down in the atmosphere. Are the Mitra and Bhaga powers preparing to come down?

Well, it is what I am trying to bring down into the Asram atmosphere, for it is the condition for anything effective being collectively done. 25 November 1935

*

The descent of the Silence is not usually associated with sadness, though it does bring a feeling of calm detachment, unconcern and wide emptiness, but in this emptiness there is a sense of ease, freedom, peace. The absorption as if something were drawing deep from within is evidently the pull of the inmost being, the psychic. There is a psychic sadness often when this inmost soul opens and feels how far the nature and the world are from what they should be, but this is a sweet and quiet sorrow, not distressing. It must be something in the mind and vital which is not yet awake to what has happened within you and gives this colour of dissatisfied and distressed seeking.

You have certainly made a great progress since you came and there is no reason to fear any setback of the sadhana.

I don't think you need attach any value to what *X* professes to think about the supramental. The descent of the supramental is an inevitable necessity in the logic of things and is therefore sure. It is because people do not understand what the supermind is or realise the significance of the emergence of consciousness in a world of "inconscient" Matter that they are unable to realise this inevitability. I suppose a matter-of-fact observer if there had been one at the time of the unrelieved reign of inanimate Matter in the earth's beginning would have criticised any promise of the emergence of life in a world of dead earth and rock and mineral as an absurdity and a chimaera; so too afterwards he would have repeated his mistake and regarded the emergence of thought and reason in an animal world as an absurdity and a chimaera. It is the same now with the appearance of supermind in the stumbling mentality of this world of human consciousness and its reasoning ignorance. I do not know that the descent depends on the readiness of the sadhaks of this Asram. It is likely that these things are determined from above rather than from below. That the descent is preparing and progressing is a fact; it is that which you feel and are justified in feeling. 1 December 1935

1936

A certain inertia, tendency to sleep, indolence, unwillingness or inability to be strong for work or spiritual effort for long at a time, is in the nature of the human physical consciousness. When one goes down into the physical for its change (that has been the general condition here for a long time), this tends to increase. Even sometimes when the pressure of the sadhana in the physical increases or when one has to go much inside, this temporarily increases — the body either needing more rest or turning the inward movement into a tendency to sleep or be at rest. You need not, however, be anxious about that. After a time this rights itself; the physical consciousness gets the true peace and calm in the cells and feels at rest even in full work or in the most concentrated condition and this tendency of inertia goes out of the nature. 9 January 1936

*

> Is there any direct Supramental action upon the earth consciousness? Is that the reason why the resistance has increased? The earth consciousness seems to be too inert and obstinate. I gather that you started bringing down the Supramental into it in 1923.

Why not 1623? or since the beginning of the evolution?

7 February 1936

*

> I gave 1923 as the year for the bringing down of the Supermind because I read that in 1923 you said that you were bringing it down. How can we presume that you started bringing it down much earlier unless we definitely know you have yourself spoken to this effect?

But who said that I started in 1923? The aim of bringing down the supramental was there long before. The effort to bring it down into the physical is on the contrary quite recent, during the last few years only. 8 February 1936

*

> *X* wrote to you that he saw the Supermind descending into the earth consciousness. You wrote to him in reply that his vision and feeling were justifiable. But before the Supermind descends into the earth consciousness, do not the planes between mind and Overmind have to descend first?

They descended long ago. It does not mean that they are available to everybody or developed anywhere in their full power — only that they can be counted among the things to which one can reach by tapasya. For Supermind, it may be descending, but it may take long before it is available to the race. 7 April 1936

*

> A friend wants to know many things:
> (1) Descent of the Supra M. Tail — on the slightest news of which he will give a gorilla jump to Pondy to set his nerves right! Is the Tail in view?

Of course. Coming down as fast as you fellows will allow.

> (2) He wants your remarks on him which will prove "precious".

Tell him I have grown chary of remarks. Remarks frighten the Sm. T. 17 May 1936

*

I shall see what can be done [*about a promised piece of writing*]. For some time however it has been difficult for me to put myself to any sustained intellectual work, because I am strongly taken up by a push to finish inwardly in myself what remained to be done in the way of transformation of the consciousness and, though this part of it is terribly difficult and arduous, I was making so unexpected a progress that the consciousness was unwilling to turn away from it to anything else. So much hangs on this, the decisive victory, the power to remove the difficulties of others as well as my own (those that are still there, physical and other) that I was pushing for it like Mussolini for Addis Ababa before the rains. However, any night when there is a lull, I will see. 19 May 1936

*

No, it is not with the Empyrean that I am busy, I wish it were. It is rather with the opposite end of things — in the Abyss that I have to plunge to build a bridge between the two. But that too is necessary for my work and one has to face it. 29 May 1936

*

> Is it true that a greater and vaster Force descended this Darshan [*15 August 1936*]?

It is not a question of descent. We are nurturing the Force and it grows necessarily stronger and has more effect.

21 August 1936

*

The last Darshan was good on the whole. I am not now trying to bring anything sensational down on these days, but I am watching the progress in the action of the Force and Consciousness that are already there, the infiltration of a greater Light and Power from above, and there was a very satisfactory crossing of a difficult border which promises well for the near future. A thing has been done which had long failed to accomplish itself and which is of great importance. I don't explain now, because it forms part of an arranged whole which is explicable only when it is complete. But it gives a sort of strong practical assurance that the thing will be done. 26 August 1936

*

All in the Asram are not suffering from the sense of dullness and want of interest, but many are because the Force that is descending is discouraging the old movements of the physical and vital mind which they call life and they are not accustomed to accept the renunciation of these things, or to admit the peace or joy of silence. 9 September 1936

*

> We hear your Supermind is very near — not 50 years, we hope! Time to push us up a little, Sir, so that we may give you a proper reception, what?

That's what the Force seems to be trying to do.

> Don't forget to make us feel at least the Descent. 30 years' sadhana,[17] by Jove!

30 years too little or too many? What would have satisfied your rational mind — 3 years? 3 months? 3 weeks? Considering that by ordinary evolution it could not have been done even at Nature's express speed in less than 3000 years, and would ordinarily have taken anything from 30,000 to 300,000, the transit of 30 years is perhaps not too slow. 10 September 1936

*

> In the evening meditation I saw a white cock in the physical and heard it crowing. I felt it as an indication of the dawn of the Supramental Descent. Was this a right feeling? What does the symbol indicate?

That is of course a symbol of triumph. It is true that a Force came down full of an intense white light which the Mother had never known to come down before and it seemed to have a supramental authority. Your feeling therefore was probably right. 10 September 1936

*

> Yesterday after dusk, I felt as if some welcome revolution

---

[17] *See the letter of 4 April 1935 on page 374. — Ed.*

> had taken place in the Divine order of things. I attended the meditation and felt the whole place filled with calm and silence. . . . Then descended a *virāṭ mahāpuruṣa*, Himalayan in proportions, in the form of Sri Aurobindo, who, as if finding the earth incapable of bearing his weight, stood behind the Mother and placed his hands on her shoulders. The whole world was surcharged with silence and Ananda. The sight is beyond my powers to describe. An immeasurable force rushed into me, wave upon wave. . . . Was my experience true?

The experience you had was a true one, for something came down at that meditation which had not come down before and your experience was a translation of this descent in your consciousness. That you should have become aware of it in this way shows that your stay here has been very profitable to you and prepared your consciousness for the true realisation. The capacity for it is now there in you. Your future sadhana should be a development from the experience to the realisation.

11 September 1936

*

> I hear that you are now trying more for transformation of nature than for experience.

Because without transformation of nature, the blessed experience is something like a gold crown on a pig's head — won't do. Picturesque perhaps, but — 16 September 1936

*

The awakening in the subconscient is now the great and urgent necessity and it is that for which I am pressing most.

24 September 1936

*

> If the pressure here has an effect on the outside world in some way, have incidents here any connections with outside happenings? For example, I noted that on the day *X* and *Y* went from here the Italians finally conquered Abyssinia. There is a story about an occultist in Ahmedabad (in the 16th century

> or so) in which it is related that he was making and unmaking mats and accordingly the wall around the city which had been built during the day fell down during the night — at the time when he was taking away the chips of the mat.

The story of the occultist contains a truth, and it would be a mistake to suppose that there is no connection between the pressure here and outside happenings. But I don't know about particular coincidences. The departure of *X* and *Z* does not seem easily relatable to the event in Abyssinia. 10 October 1936

*

> I have just received your telegram communicating your disapproval of my proposed visit in November. Is it due to any wrong attitude on my part that you have not sanctioned the visit?

It is due to the fact that there have been for some time much struggle and tense conditions in the forces working in the Asram and your stay here would not be profitable to you at the moment.
3 November 1936

1937

> One misgiving is pressing heavily on my soul. I sense and feel that the tone of your letters has suddenly become very grave — the owl-like severity with which you had once threatened me. I don't know what I have done to deserve such a punishment. Or is it because you are getting supramentalised day by day that you are withdrawing yourself so? There must be a reason if my "sense feel" is correct. Well, if you want to press me between two planks and pulverize me . . .

I think your sense feel has been indulging in vain imaginations, perhaps with the idea of increasing your concrete imaginative faculty and fitting you for understanding the unintelligible. Anyhow disburden your soul of the weight. I am not owled yet, and my supramentalisation is going on too slowly to justify such apprehensions. Neither am I withdrawing, rather fitting myself for a new rush in the near or far future. So cheer up and send the

Man of Sorrows with his planks to the devil. 8 January 1937

*

> What have you kept in store for us, Sir? Will the sadhaks tumble in this way one by one as your Supramental comes nearer and nearer? Then with whom will you enjoy your Supramental? Night and day you are soaring and soaring.

Romantic one! I am not soaring and soaring — I am digging and digging. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard" sort of affair.

11 March 1937

*

> Do you see the great Tail yet?

Tail is there — but no use without the head. 16 March 1937

1938

> Since we have to lead a life in a concentrated atmosphere, all the ugly things become at once prominent, and add to it the action of the Force on the subconscient for purging of all dross.

No doubt. Also in this atmosphere pretences and social lies are difficult to maintain. But if things become prominent, it is that people may see and reject them. If instead they cling to them as their most cherished possessions, what is the use? How is the purging to be done with such an attitude? 3 April 1938

*

You need not be afraid of losing anything great by postponing your return to Pondicherry. A general descent of the kind you speak of is not in view at the moment and even if it comes, it can very easily catch you up into itself whenever you come if you are in the right openness; and if you are not, then even its descending would not be of so urgent an importance, since it would take you some time to become aware of it or receive it. So there is no reason why you should not in this matter cleave to common sense and the sage advice of the doctors.

1 August 1938

*

> By the way, you had better hurry up with your Supermind descent, Sir. Otherwise Hitler, Mussolini & Co. will gunfire it like — !

What has Supermind to do with Hitler or Hitler with Supermind? Do you expect the Supermind to aviate to Berchtesgaden? How the devil can they gunfire S; their aeroplanes can't even reach Pondicherry, much less the Supermind. The descent of S depends on S, not on Hitler or no Hitler. 16 September 1938

1944

There is another cause of the general inability to change which at present afflicts the sadhak. It is because the sadhana, as a general fact, has now and for a long time past come down to the Inconscient; the pressure, the call is to change in that part of the nature which depends directly on the Inconscient, the fixed habits, the automatic movements, the mechanical repetitions of the nature, the involuntary reactions to life, all that seems to belong to the fixed character of a man. This has to be done if there is to be any chance of a total spiritual change. The Force (generally and not individually) is working to make that possible, its pressure is for that, — for, on the other levels, the change has already been made possible (not, mind you, assured to everybody). But to open the Inconscient to light is a herculean task; change on the other levels is much easier. As yet this work has only begun and it is not surprising that there seems to be no change in things or people. It will come in time, but not in a hurry.

As for experiences, they are all right but the trouble is that they do not seem to change the nature, they only enrich the consciousness — even the realisation, on the mind level, of the Brahman seems to leave the nature almost where it was, except for a few. That is why we insist on the psychic transformation as the first necessity — for that does change the nature — and its chief instrument is bhakti, surrender, etc. 27 April 1944

*

I have explained to you why so many people (not by any means all) are in this gloomy condition, dull and despondent. It is the tamas, the inertia of the Inconscient, that has got hold of them. But also it is the small physical vital which takes only an interest in the small and trivial things of the ordinary daily and social life and nothing else. When formerly the sadhana was going on on higher levels (mind, higher vital etc.), there was plenty of vigour and verve and interest in the details of the Asram work and life as well as in an inner life; the physical vital was carried in the stream. But for many this has dropped; they live in the unsatisfied vital physical and find everything desperately dull, gloomy and without interest or issue. In their inner life the tamas from the Inconscient has created a block or a bottleneck and they do not find any way out. If one can keep the right condition and attitude, a strong interest in work or a strong interest in sadhana, then this becomes quiescent. That is the malady. Its remedy is to keep the right condition and to bring gradually or, if one can, swiftly the light of the higher aspiration into this part of the being also, so that whatever the conditions of the environment, it may keep also the right poise. Then the sunlit path should be less impossible. 16 June 1944

1945

I have no intention, I can assure you, of cutting off connection in the future. What restrictions there have been, were due to unavoidable causes. My retirement itself was indispensable; otherwise I would not now be where I am, that is, personally near the goal. When the goal is reached, things will be different. But as far as you are concerned, I have given to you what I have not given to others; what you have quoted about my connection with you is perfectly true; if it were false, why should I have persistently pressed you to remain with me always? Inwardly, I have been constant in my desire and my effort to help you, not only from time to time, but daily and always. If you had an unprecedented peace for so long a time, it was due to my persistent inner pressure; I refuse to give up all the credit to my double, Krishna. 14 August 1945

1947

The extreme acuteness of your difficulties is due to the yoga having come down against the bedrock of Inconscience which is the fundamental basis of all resistance in the individual and in the world to the victory of the Spirit and the Divine Work that is leading toward that victory. The difficulties themselves are general in the Ashram as well as in the outside world. Doubt, discouragement, diminution or loss of faith, waning of the vital enthusiasm for the ideal, perplexity and a baffling of the hope for the future are the common features of the difficulty. In the world outside there are much worse symptoms such as the general increase of cynicism, a refusal to believe in anything at all, a decrease of honesty, an immense corruption, a preoccupation with food, money, comfort, pleasure to the exclusion of higher things and a general expectation of worse and worse things awaiting the world. All that, however acute, is a temporary phenomenon for which those who know anything about the workings of the world-energy and the workings of the Spirit were prepared. I myself foresaw that this worst would come, the darkness of night before the dawn; therefore I am not discouraged. I know what is preparing behind the darkness and can see and feel the first signs of its coming. Those who seek for the Divine have to stand firm and persist in their seeking; after a time, the darkness will fade and begin to disappear and the Light will come.

9 April 1947

*

If I had been standing on the Supermind level and acting on the world by the instrumentation of Supermind, that world would have changed or would be changing much more rapidly and in a different fashion from what is happening now. My present effort is not to stand up on a high and distant Supermind level and change the world from there, but to bring something of it down here and to stand on that and act by that, but at the present stage the progressive supramentalisation of the Overmind is the first immediate preoccupation and a second is the lightening of the heavy resistance of the Inconscient and the support it gives to human ignorance which is always the main obstacle in any attempt to change the world or even to change oneself. I have always said that the spiritual force I have been putting on human affairs such as the War is not the supramental but the overmind force, and that when it acts in the material world it is so inextricably mixed up in the tangle of the lower world forces that its results, however strong or however adequate for the immediate object, must necessarily be partial. That is why I am getting a birthday present of a free India on August 15, but complicated by its being presented in two packets as two free Indias: this is a generosity I could have done without, one free India would have been enough for me if offered as an unbroken whole. 7 July 1947

Section Three

Some Aspects of the Sadhana in Pondicherry

Inner Vicissitudes and Difficulties

Undeterred by Difficulty

I suppose all spiritual or inner experiences can be denounced as merely subjective and delusive. But to the spiritual seeker even the smallest inner experience is a thing of value. I stand for the Truth I hold in me and I would still stand for it even if it had no chance whatever of outward fulfilment in this life. I should go on with it even if all here abandoned and repudiated me and denounced it to the world as a delusion and a folly. I have never disguised from myself the difficulties of what I have undertaken, it is not difficulties or the threat of failure that can deter me.

7 April 1935

Oscillating or Up and Down Movement

> My inner condition is not quite a vacancy, but rather a sort of stillness, with some mechanical movement of thought.

That is to say, the Power is still working on the physical consciousness (the mechanical mind and the subconscient) to bring stillness there. Sometimes the stillness comes but not complete, sometimes the mechanical mind reasserts itself. This oscillation usually takes place in a movement of the kind. Even if there is a sudden or rapid transforming shock or downrush, there has to be some working out of this kind afterwards — that at least has always been my experience. For most, however, there comes, first, this slow preparatory process. 29 August 1934

*

> The "failure" I speak of is a failure to respond in the right way when there is a particular pressure. This is a clear sign of unfitness. The very first thing you wrote about me was that I was not prepared or ready for the sadhana.

I do not at all agree about the unfitness. When you came here first you were too raw still, but since then you have developed much and, whatever difficulties may remain, it cannot be said that the ground is not there! I do not quite understand what you mean by the pressure, but if you mean the pressure of the universal forces, sex, anger etc., it is always under that pressure that the recurrences occur. There is nothing new or peculiar in that which would justify a conclusion of individual unfitness. These things have also often a periodicity in them which helps them to recur and the up and down movement is characteristic of the course followed by the nature in the sadhana which I myself felt for many years together. It is only after one reaches a certain height that one gets rid of it or rather it changes into an oscillation the reason and utility of which one can understand. Until that happens one has to go on and the one thing one must avoid is this feeling of despondency and self-distrust. If one perseveres, the final success is sure. 24 October 1934

*

I hope that you will soon acquire the faith and patience for which you aspire and that the oscillations cease. For me the path of Yoga has always been a battle as well as a journey, a thing of ups and downs, of light followed by darkness followed by a greater light — but nobody is better pleased than myself when a disciple can arrive out of all that to the smooth and clear path which the human physical mind quite rightly yearns for. 24 December 1935

Stoppage of Sadhana

The worst thing for sadhana is to get into a morbid condition, always thinking of “lower forces, attacks etc.” If the sadhana has stopped for a time, then let it stop, remain quiet, do ordinary things, rest when rest is needed — wait till the physical consciousness is ready. My own sadhana when it was far more advanced than yours used to stop for half a year together. I did not make a fuss about it, but remained quiet till the empty or dull period was over. 8 March 1935

*

> The inertia, physical weakness, endless subconscient recurrences have covered up my sadhana again and made such a confusion that I don't know how to pull myself out of it.

By calling down the Descent, since the Ascent is impossible. At least that is how I dealt with the situation in my own case.

5 October 1935

*

> I think the sadhana by itself does not refuse to go farther. It is some part of our being that determines the action of the sadhana.

If so then there is no need of any other force than the sadhak's own. My own experience is different, that the sadhana very often does refuse to go on except under certain conditions or until those conditions are realised. But yours may be different.

16 November 1935

*

> No joy, no energy. Don't like to read or write — as if a dead man were walking about. Do you understand the position? Any personal experience?

I quite understand; often had it myself devastatingly. That's why I always advise people who have it to cheer up and buck up.

> Since one has to pass the time somehow, what is one to do? To bear the Cross gloomily, hoping for a resurrection?

To cheer up, buck up and the rest if you can, saying "Rome was not built in a day" — if you can't, gloom it through till the sun rises and the little birds chirp and all is well.

Looks however as if you were going through a training in vairagya. Don't much care for vairagya myself — always avoided the beastly thing, but had to go through it partly, till I hit on samata as a better trick. But samata is difficult, vairagya is easy, only damnably gloomy and uncomfortable. 3 June 1936

*

> Suddenly to drop without doing anything wrong — why such a setback?

Everybody drops. I have dropped myself thousands of times during the sadhana. What roseleaf-princess sadhaks you all are!
2 April 1937

No Resorting to Miracles

> How can one train oneself to have a direct intuition?

It can be done, — but I should have to write an essay on the Intuition to make any explanation intelligible.

> I thought whatever is necessary will grow of itself through growth of consciousness or something else. Must one train oneself for things one after another? Why should they not open up like your painting vision?[1]

It can or it may not. Why did not everything open up in me like the painting vision and some other things? All did not. As I told you I had to plod in many things. Otherwise the affair would not have taken so many years (30). In this Yoga one can't always take a short cut in everything. I had to work on each problem and on each conscious plane to solve or to transform and in each I had to take the blessed conditions as they were and do honest work without resorting to miracles. Of course if the consciousness grows all of itself, it is all right, things will come with the growth, but not even then pell-mell in an easy gallop. 4 April 1935

*

> You had Nirvana in three days. Still you say there was no spirituality in you!

---

[1] *See the letter of 29 December 1934 on page 264. — Ed.*

None, before I took up Yoga.

> You said [*in the preceding letter*] that nothing comes at an "easy gallop", that one has to plod on and develop faculties.

No, I did not say nothing comes in an easy gallop. Some things do. But one can't count on that as a rule. 5 April 1935

The Censor

I don't find it a noble voice at all, it is the voice of the usual defeatist suggester using any and every reasoning to instil weakness, flight and self-destruction. There is no strong reasoning, either, it is the usual round of sophistries always the same and repeated to every sadhak in turn. "Give up, give up, give up! run, run, run! die, die, say die, say die." That is always the substance of it, the rest is only skin and shell to give it a good presentation. I don't reason with the creature; you may reason like Socrates and be as convincing as the Buddha, but after a little it will soon come back and sing the same song over again. It pretends to reason, but doesn't care a damn for either truth or reason — I know too well the ways of the fellow — I have paid heavily to know. In my own sadhana I have heard his chant of death a million times and several hundreds of times from this or that sadhak. So I simply refuse to listen to him and I advise you to do the same. February 1935

*

There is no reason to think that the movement of strength and purity was a make-believe. No, it was a real thing. But with these strong forward movements the vital enthusiasm often comes in with a triumphant "Now it is finished", which is not quite justified, for "Now it will soon be finished" would be nearer to it. It is at these moments that the thrice-damned Censor comes in with a jog, raises up a still shaky bit of the nature and produces a result that is out of all proportion to the size of the little bit, just to show that it is not finished. I have had any number of times that experience myself. All this comes from the complexity and slowness of our evolutionary nature which Yoga quickens but not as a whole at a stroke. But in fact, as I said, these crises are out of all proportion to their cause in the nature. One must therefore not be discouraged, but see the exaggeration in the adversary's successful negation as well as the exaggeration in our own idea of a complete and definitive victory already there.

24 August 1936

Depression and Despair

Fits of despair and darkness are a tradition in the path of sadhana — in all Yogas oriental and occidental they seem to have been the rule. I know all about them myself — but my experience has led me to the perception that they are an unnecessary tradition and could be dispensed with if one chose. That is why whenever they come in you or others I try to lift up before them the gospel of faith. If still they come, one has only to get through them as soon as possible and get back into the sun. 9 April 1930

Exacerbation of Vital Movements

The exacerbation of certain vital movements is a perfectly well-known phenomenon in Yoga and does not mean that one has degenerated, but only that one has come to close grips instead of to a pleasant nodding acquaintance with the basic instincts of the earthly vital nature. I have had myself the experience of this rising to a height, during a certain stage of the spiritual development, of things that before hardly existed and seemed quite absent in the pre-Yogic life. These things rise up like that because they are fighting for their existence — they are not really personal to you and the vehemence of their attack is not due to any "badness" in the personal nature. I dare say seven sadhaks out of ten have a similar experience. Afterwards when they cannot effect their object, which is to drive the sadhak out of his sadhana, the whole thing sinks and there is no longer any vehement trouble. I repeat that the only serious thing about it is the depression created in you and the idea of inability in the yoga that they take care to impress on the brain when they are at their work. If you can get rid of that, the violence of the vital attacks is only the phenomenon of a stage and does not in the end matter. 24 June 1932

*

> God knows when I shall be above all this vital desire, sex, etc. I heave a sigh thinking of such retrogression.

There is nothing peculiar about retrogression. I was also noted in my earlier time before Yoga for the rareness of anger. At a certain period of the Yoga it rose in me like a volcano, and I had to take a long time eliminating it. As for sex — well. You are always thinking that the things that are happening to you are unique and nobody else ever had such trials or downfalls or misery before. 13 November 1936

*

> You surprise me very much by this volcanic anger of yours. People say that they never heard a single harsh, rude, angry word from your mouth here in Pondicherry. But how is it that this "volcano" flared up in Yoga when you were noted for its rareness in pre-Yoga? Subconscient surge?

I was speaking of a past phase. I don't know about subconscient, must have come from universal Nature. 14 November 1936

*

> I heard an interesting thing, that you gave *X* a big shout! Ah, I wish I had heard it! But I thought you had lost your capacity to shout?

The supramental (even its tail) does not take away any capacity, but rather sublimates all and gives those that were not there. So I gave a sublimated supramental shout. I freely admit that (apart from the public platform) I have shouted only four or five times in my life. 23 July 1938

Overcoming Adverse Movements

I cannot believe that the soul in you can be broken to pieces and, so long as that is there, it is always possible to recover. It must be something in the surface consciousness that is feeling like that. But from that it is perfectly possible to arise, even though it may seem difficult or impossible at the time. Nor can I see why there should be this devastating sense of humiliation because of an adverse movement that some of the greatest Yogis have passed through, not to speak of myself in my earlier days or some of the most forceful sadhaks here. One gets caught unawares and thrown down and feels broken — but after a time the shock passes and one gets up and pursues the Way — till one reaches the "straight and thornless path where there is no more wall or obstacle". 15 September 1934

The Descent into the Physical

What you are experiencing is the condition which comes when the whole consciousness has come down into the physical — with the object of bringing down the higher consciousness into the external nature. At first there seems to be the external nature only with a tendency to more peace and quiet than before, but no new positive experience. The first thing the physical consciousness is worked on to acquire is quiet, peace and equanimity as a basis for other things — but what comes is a tendency to neutral quiet which looks like inertia with occasional peace and silence. What is necessary is to bring down peace and silence and a strong equanimity within into the external nature and the very cells of the body. But the difficulty is that the physical nature has little tendency to aspiration, its habit is to wait for the higher forces to do their work and remain passive. I think it is this difficulty that you are feeling. I felt it myself very often and for long periods at that stage of the sadhana. A steady development of the habit of a very quiet but persistent tapasya in the form of a quiet concentration of will to progress could be very helpful at this stage. 1 July 1934

*

> Was there in me a continuous real sadhana in 1933? Was it not rather only a mental experience without any real solidity in it? Otherwise why should such a fall have come during these two years?

There was certainly a real sadhana then and a very persistent preparation on the mental and vital planes. If there had not been, the descents of peace would not have begun. The fall came because when you descended into the physical consciousness to complete the preparation there, you became too passive, not continuing your will of tapasya, with the result that this sex force took advantage of the inertia of the physical consciousness to assert itself fully. That kind of passivity to the forces comes upon many when there is the descent into the physical; one then feels different forces playing in the consciousness without having the same power of reaction as one had in the mind and the vital — sometimes peace etc. from above, sometimes disturbing forces. I had to pass through the same stage myself and it took me 2 years at least to get out of it. To develop in the physical itself a constant will for the drawing down of the higher consciousness — especially the Peace and Force from above, is the best way out of it. 8 July 1935

Transforming *Tamas* into *Śama*

> Either because the silence deepened or because the dullness increased, I felt a little sleepy after work. After waking I found my thoughts were moving about very slowly in a dull way. During meditation the mental lethargy passed away, but something of it remained in the body.

It is sometimes a little difficult to say whether it is silence or the physical's translation of the silence into a kind of inertia. I have experienced that very often in the rather difficult task of turning the *tamas* into *śama*, physical *tamas* into spiritual rest and peace which is its divine counterpart. 11 March 1934

Dizziness or Giddiness

> I still feel dizzy sometimes, but I would like to do some work in the evenings.

You can try. I used to feel dizziness at one time for months together, but it never prevented me from walking or doing my work — but for that you must have a consciousness which observes the dizziness and is not lost in it.

*

Giddiness can come from many causes. I used to walk about for hours with my head going round or going up in a most exhilarating way. It gave me a perverse Ananda but did not inconvenience me otherwise. 17 March 1935

Persistence of Dreams from the Subconscient

> For the last few days I am having frequent dreams of eating. Does it indicate greed for food or a need in the body, or is it a sign of coming illness as they believe in the villages?

I don't think so — it is probably old impressions from the subconscient material (not vital — therefore a memory rather than a desire) rising up in sleep. I remember a time when I was always seeing dishes of food even though I did not care a hang about food at the time. 2 April 1934

*

> I do not find any change in the character of my dreams as yet — I get the usual kind of dreams about home life, eating, meeting strange people, moving about, etc. Why has there been no change in this respect in spite of my three years of sadhana here?

Dreams of this kind can last for years and years after the waking consciousness has ceased to interest itself in things of that kind. The subconscient is exceedingly obstinate in the keeping of its old impressions. I find myself even recently having a dream of revolutionary activities or another in which the Maharaja of Baroda butted in, people and things I have not even thought of passingly for the last twenty years almost. I suppose it is because the very business of the subconscient in the human psychology is to keep all the past inside it and, being without conscious mentality, it clings to its office until the light has fully come down into it, illumining even its corners and crevices.

17 December 1934

*

> Even though I have stopped corresponding with my relatives, I still get useless memories of them. Others who do correspond with their relatives don't seem to get disturbed by it. How solid these people seem to be.

I suppose it acts differently with different natures. Some benefit greatly by not writing; after a time they lose all contact with the old life. There are others who go on thinking and dreaming of relatives, old places and scenes, old faces etc. etc.; others dream of these things half the night although in the daytime they never think of them. I myself found myself sometimes (not so long ago) dreaming of the Gaekwar and even now sometimes Barin turns up in a most unexpected way. The impressions of the subconscient fade out very slowly. But all the same I think not renewing them does help. I am not so sure about the solidity of the persons you speak of — I know that in some cases it keeps up old attachments and prevents the physical consciousness from being free as it would have been otherwise. 14 June 1935

Sadhana and the Subconscient

> I concentrate so much on reading French that no room is left for sadhana-thinking, with the result that as soon as I come out of that concentration anything can enter in my mind. Should I continue to read during work time or not?

The Mother says she has no objection to your reading French during the work time.

I should say however that if you could divide your attention between the reading and sadhana-thought and concentration more, it might be better from the point of view you mention. I mean that there should be sufficient concentration to create in your mind a sadhana atmosphere which you can bring up to the surface as soon as you leave reading or whenever it is needed to set right an invading movement. Otherwise the subconscient forces have free play and gain power. Besides the condition becomes subconscient, i.e. inert and like a drift. At least that is what I have seen recently in my dealings with my own subconscient, so I pass on the hint to you. 27 May 1935

Unusual Experiences and States of Consciousness

Visions of Unknown People

Yes, of course, I remember about Baroda Babu — I can't say I remember him because I never saw him, at least in the flesh. What he probably means by the Supramental is the Above Mind — what I now call Illumined Mind – Intuition – Overmind. I used to make that confusion myself at the beginning.

There is not enough to go upon to say whether he really sees the Mother or an image of her is reflected in his own mind. But there is nothing extraordinary, much less impossible in seeing a person whom one has never seen — you are thinking as if the inner mind and sense, the inner vision were limited by the outer mind and sense, the outer vision, or were a mere reflection of that. There would be not much use in an inner mind and sense and vision if they were only that and nothing more. This faculty is one of the elementary powers of the inner sense and inner seeing and not only Yogins have it, but ordinary clairvoyants, crystal-gazers etc. The latter can see people they never knew, saw or heard of before, doing certain precise things in certain very precise surroundings, and every detail of the vision is confirmed afterwards by the persons seen — there are many striking and indubitable cases of that kind. The Mother is always seeing people whom she does not know; some afterwards come here or their photographs come here. I myself have these visions, only I don't usually try to remember or verify them. But there were two curious instances which were among the first of their kind and which therefore I remember. Once I was trying to see a recently elected deputy here and saw someone quite different from him, someone who afterwards came here as Governor. I ought never to have met him in the ordinary course, but a curious mistake happened and as a result I went and saw him in his bureau and at once recognised him. The other was a certain V. Ramaswamy whom I had to meet, but I saw him not as he was when he actually came, but as he became after a year's residence in my house. He became the very image of that vision, a face close-cropped, rough, rude, energetic, the very opposite of the dreamy smooth-faced enthusiastic Vaishnava who came to me. So that was the vision of a man I had never seen, but as he was to be in the future — a prophetic vision. 24 October 1934

The Stone-Throwing Incident

These stone-throwing or stone-producing incidents and similar extraordinary occurrences which go outside the ordinary course of physical Nature happen frequently in India and are not unknown elsewhere; they are akin to what are called poltergeist phenomena in Europe. Scientists don't say or think anything of such supernormal happenings except to pooh-pooh them or to prove that they are simply the tricks of children simulating supernatural manifestations. It was only three or four stones that fell inside a room, the others were thrown from outside and in the last period banged day after day against the closed door of Bijoy Nag who was sheltering inside the servant boy who became the centre of the phenomena. As the boy got wounded by two of the last stones, we sent him away to another house with the idea that then the phenomena would cease and it so happened. As a rule these things need certain conditions to happen — e.g. a house which becomes the field of the action of these supernormal forces and a person (usually psychologically ill-developed) who is very often their victim as well as their centre. If the person is removed elsewhere, the phenomena often stop but sometimes his aura is so strong for these things that the house aura is not needed — they continue wherever he or she goes. As for the other necessary factor it is supposed to be elemental beings who are the agents. Sometimes they act on their own account, sometimes they are controlled and used by a person with occult powers. It was supposed here that some magic must have been used — such magic is common in the Tamil country and indeed in all South India. The stones were material enough, a huge heap of them were collected and remained at the staircase bottom for two or three days, so they were not thoughts taking a brick form. It was evidently a case of materialisation probably preceded by a previous dematerialisation and "transport" — the bricks became first visible in their flight at a few feet from the place where they fell.

Scientific laws only give a schematic account of material processes of Nature — as a valid scheme they can be used for reproducing or extending at will a material process, but obviously they cannot give an account of the thing itself. Water for instance is not merely so much oxygen and hydrogen put together — the combination is simply a process or device for enabling the materialisation of a new thing called water; what that new thing really is is quite another matter. In fact there are different planes of substance, gross, subtle and more subtle going back to what is called causal (*kāraṇa*) substance. What is more gross can be reduced to the subtle state and the subtle brought into the gross state; that accounts for dematerialisation and materialisation and rematerialisation. These are occult processes and are vulgarly regarded as magic. Ordinarily the magician knows nothing of the why and wherefore of what he is doing, he has simply learned the formula or process or else controls elemental beings of the subtler states (planes or worlds) who do the thing for him. The Tibetans indulge widely in occult processes; if you see the books of Madame David-Neel who has lived in Tibet you will get an idea of their expertness in these things. But also the Tibetan Lamas know something of the laws of occult (mental and vital) energy and how it can be made to act on physical things. That is something which goes beyond mere magic. The direct power of mind-force or life-force upon matter can be extended to an almost illimitable degree — but that has nothing to do with the stone-throwing affair which is of a lower and more external order. In your (2) and (3) different operations seem to be confused together, (1) the creation of mere (subtle) images which the one who sees may mistake for real things, (2) the temporary materialisation of subtle substance into forms capable of cognition not only by the sight but by material touch or other sense, (3) the handling of material objects by mind-energy or vital force, e.g. making a pencil move and write on paper. All these things are possible and have been done. It must be remembered that Energy is fundamentally one in all the planes, only taking more and more dense forms, so there is nothing *a priori* impossible in mind-energy or life-energy acting directly on material energy and substance; if they do they can make a material object do things or rather can do things with a material object which would be to that object in its ordinary poise or "law" unhabitual and therefore apparently impossible.

I do not see how cosmic rays can explain the origination of matter; it is like Sir Oliver Lodge's explanation of life on earth that it comes from another planet; it only pushes the problem one step farther back — for how do the cosmic rays come into existence? But it is a fact that Agni is the basis of forms as the Sankhya pointed out long ago, i.e. the fiery principle in its three powers radiant, electric and gaseous (the Vedic trinity of Agni) is the agent in producing liquid and solid forms of what is called matter.

Obviously a layman can't do these things, unless he has a native "psychic" (that is, occult) faculty and even then he will have to learn the law of the thing before he can use it at will. It is always possible to use spiritual force or mind-power or will-power or a certain kind of vital energy to produce effects in men, things and happenings; but knowledge and much practice is needed before this possibility ceases to be occasional and haphazard and can be used quite consciously, at will or to perfection. Even then to have "a control over the whole material world" is too big a proposition; a local and partial control is more possible or, more widely, certain kinds of control over matter. 24 October 1938

*

> About the occult phenomenon of the house and the stones etc. What was it?

I gave this as one instance of actual occult experience and action in accordance with occult law and practice, showing that these things are not imaginations or delusions or humbug, but can be true phenomena. The stone-throwing began unobtrusively with a few stones thrown at the Guest House kitchen — apparently from the terrace opposite, but there was no one there. The phenomenon began before the fall of dusk and continued at first for half an hour, but daily it increased in frequency, violence and the size of the stones and the duration of the attack till it lasted for several hours until it towards the end became in the hour or half hour before midnight a regular bombardment. It was no longer at the kitchen only, but thrown too in other places, e.g. the outer verandah. At first we took it for a human-made affair and sent for the police, but the investigation lasted only for a very short time; when one of the constables in the verandah got a stone whizzing unaccountably between his legs, the police abandoned the case in a panic. We made our own investigations, but the places whence the stones seemed to be or might be coming were void of human stone-throwers. Finally, as if to put us kindly out of doubt, the stones began falling in closed rooms; one huge one (I saw it immediately after it fell) reposed flat and comfortable on a cane table as if that was its proper place. To wind up, they became murderous. The stones had hitherto been harmless in result except for a daily battering of Bijoy's door which (in the last days) I had watched for half an hour the night before the end. They appeared in mid-air a few feet above the ground, not coming from a distance but suddenly manifesting, and from the direction from which they flew, should have been thrown close in from the compound of the Guest House or the verandah itself, but the whole place was in a clear light and I saw that there was no human being there and could not have been. At last the semi-idiot boy-servant who seemed to be the centre of the attack and was sheltered in Bijoy's room under Bijoy's protection began to be severely hit and was bleeding from a wound by stones thrown from inside the closed room. I went in at Bijoy's call and saw the last stone fall on the boy; Bijoy and he were sitting side by side and the stone was thrown at them from in front, but there was no one visible to throw it — the two were alone in the room. So unless it was Wells's invisible man — ! We had been only watching or sometimes scouting around till then, but this was a little too much, it was becoming dangerous, and something had to be done. The Mother from her knowledge of the process of these things decided that the process here must depend on a nexus between the boy-servant and the house and if the nexus were broken, the servant and the house separated, the stone-throwing would cease. We sent him away to Hrishikesh's place and immediately the whole phenomenon ceased; not a single stone was thrown after that, peace reigned. That shows that these occult phenomena are real, have a law or process, as definite as that of any scientific operation and a knowledge of these processes can not only bring them about but put an end to or annul or dissolve them. 6 February 1943

Unconsciousness of the Body

> When the consciousness merges in the Self very little sense of my body remains. I do not know what it does or holds or even where it lies.

That is usual. I was in that way unconscious of the body for many years. 15 October 1934

Thinking Outside the Body

> Owing to much reading I feel a strain and dryness in the head and find it difficult to sleep. But while reading and remembering I feel as if the process goes on somewhere in the chest, not in the head, and yet the strain is felt in the head. Why is this so?

The chest action is rather curious, because it is the vital mind that is there and the Romans always spoke of the mind as if it were in the heart. But memory and reading would rather be in the physical mind. But anyhow the brain is a conveying instrument for all these activities and can feel the strain if there is any. The best relief for the brain is when the thinking takes place outside the body and above the head (or in space or at other levels but still outside the body). At any rate it was so in my case; for as soon as that happened there was an immense relief; I have felt body strain since then but never any kind of brain-fatigue. I have heard the same thing from others. 19 December 1934

Part Three

The Leader and the Guide

Section One

The Guru and the Avatar

The Guru

The Guru and the Divine

It is not usual to use the word Guru in the supramental yoga, here everything comes from the Divine himself. But if anybody wants it he can use it for the time being. November 1929

*

The relation of Guru and disciple is only one of many relations which one can have with the Divine, and in this Yoga which aims at a supramental realisation, it is not usual to give it this name; rather, the Divine is regarded as the Source, the living Sun of Light and Knowledge and Consciousness and spiritual realisation and all that one receives is felt as coming from there and the whole being remoulded by the Divine Hand. This is a greater and more intimate relation than that of the human Guru and disciple, which is more of a limited mental ideal. Nevertheless, if the mind still needs the more familiar mental conception, it can be kept so long as it is needed; only do not let the soul be bound by it and do not let it limit the inflow of other relations with the Divine and larger forms of experience.

12 December 1929

*

> Those who consciously carry in them ideas about becoming equal in status with the Divine or with their guru may be detained long, if not in the larger planes, at least in the Overmind, so long as the ego is there.

They cannot get beyond unless they lose it. Even in these planes it prevents them from getting the full consciousness and knowledge. For in the Overmind cosmic consciousness too ego is absent, though the true Person may be there. 27 April 1935

Surrender to the Guru

> Surrender to the Divine and surrender to the Guru are said to be two different things. Is it really so?

No. In surrendering to the Guru, it is to the Divine in him that one surrenders — if it were only to a human entity it would be ineffective. But it is the consciousness of the Divine Presence that makes the Guru a real Guru, so that even if the disciple surrenders to him thinking of the human being to whom he surrenders, that Presence would still make it effective.

> Does surrender to the formless Divine leave the being subject to the gunas and ego to a certain extent?

Yes — because only the static part would be free in formlessness, the active Nature would be still in the play of the gunas. Many think they are free from the ego because they get the sense of the formless Existence, they do not see that the egoistic element remains in their action just as before.

> Is not surrender to the Divine in form — as the Guru — higher than the surrender to the formless Divine?

It is more dynamic.

> What makes the surrender to the Guru so grand and glorious as to be called the surrender beyond all surrenders?

Because through it you surrender not only to the impersonal but to the personal, not only to the Divine in yourself but to the Divine outside you; you get a chance for the surpassing of ego not only by retreat into the Self where ego does not exist, but in the personal nature where it is the ruler. It is the sign of the will to complete surrender to the total Divine, *samagraṁ mām*, *mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam*. Of course it must be a genuine spiritual surrender for all this to be true.

> If absolute surrender to the Guru leaves one helpless like a puppet in the hands of forces — what good is it? I think what is harmful is to surrender only to the Divine in the Guru and not to the Divine in one's Self. It is this one-sided surrender which is harmful.

What is harmful is to surrender to something in yourself which flatters your ego and which you call the Divine. It is that which makes you a puppet in the hands of Forces. 20 November 1933

Need of the Guru's Help

> An old man of sixty began practising Yoga by reading your books. Eventually he developed signs of insanity. His son describes his condition and asks for advice. I am sending his letter.

As for the letter, I suppose you will have to tell the writer that his father committed a mistake when he took up Yoga without a Guru — for the mental idea about a Guru cannot take the place of the actual living influence. This Yoga especially, as I have written in my books, needs the help of the Guru and cannot be done without it. The condition into which his father got was a breakdown, not a state of siddhi. He passed out of the normal mental consciousness into a contact with some intermediate zone of consciousness (not the spiritual) where one can be subjected to all sorts of voices, suggestions, ideas, so-called aspirations which are not genuine. I have warned against the dangers of this intermediate zone in one of my books. The sadhak can avoid entering into this zone — if he enters, he has to look with indifference on all these things and observe them without lending any credence, by so doing he can safely pass into the true spiritual light. If he takes them all as true or real without discrimination, he is likely to land himself in a great mental confusion and, if there is in addition a lesion or weakness of the brain — the latter is quite possible in one who has been subject to apoplexy — it may have serious consequences and even lead to a disturbance of the reason. If there is ambition, or other motive of the kind mixed up in the spiritual seeking, it may lead to a fall in the Yoga and the growth of an exaggerated egoism or megalomania — of this there are several symptoms in the utterances of his father during the crisis. In fact one cannot or ought not to plunge into the experiences of this sadhana without a fairly long period of preparation and purification (unless one has already a great spiritual strength and elevation). Sri Aurobindo himself does not care to accept many into his path and rejects many more than he accepts. It would be well if he can get his father to pursue the sadhana no farther — for what he is doing is not really Sri Aurobindo's Yoga but something he has constructed in his own mind and once there has been an upset of this kind the wisest course is discontinuance. 21 April 1937

A Reluctant Guru

> I have prayed a lot today. Some comfort to dwell on that, though Krishnaprem advocates the Upanishadic attitude — "Awake! Arise!" — and not to trust too much to Divine Grace.

Krishnaprem's objection to Grace would be valid if the religionists mattered, but in spiritual things they don't. Their action naturally is to make a formula and dry shell of everything, not Grace alone. Even "Awake, Arise" leads to the swelled head or the formula — can't be avoided when Mr. Everyman deals with things divine. I had the same kind of violent objection to Gurugiri, but you see I was obliged by the irony of things or rather by the inexorable truth behind them to become a Guru and preach the Guruvada. Such is Fate. 16 January 1936

The Question of Avatarhood

The Guru and the Avatar

About the question of the Avatar, I do not think it is useful to press in the matter. It has become very much the tendency, especially in Bengal, to regard the Guru as the Avatar. To every disciple the Guru is the Divine, but in a special sense — for the Guru is supposed to live in the divine consciousness, to have attained union and when he gives to the disciple, it is the Divine that gives and what he gives is the consciousness of the Divine who is within the Guru. But that and Avatarhood are two different things. It is mostly in East Bengal recently that those have come who were acclaimed as Avatars; those who came had each of them the idea of a work to be done for the world and the sense of a Divine Power working through them, which shows that there was a pressure for manifestation there and something came in each case, for something of the Divine Power always comes when it is called, but it does not look as if there was anywhere the complete descent. It is this that may have created the idea that the Avatar was born there. It has always been said of the Advent that is to come now that there would be many in whom it would seem that it had come, but the real Avatar would work behind a veil until the destined hour came.

I do not gather from what is quoted as said by your Guru that he claimed to be the Avatar. It seems to me that he claimed to be a Power preparing the way for the work of the Divine Mother and even to indicate that all that he meant would be manifested not only by his own followers but by other groups (সম্প্রদায়), consisting evidently of those who had not had him for Guru but had some other Head and Teacher. This is also confirmed by the saying that some other one than his disciples might be the means of his প্রকাশ — that is to say, would be the means of carrying on his work and aiding the manifestation of the Mother. If this meant proclaiming him as the Avatar, I do not see how it can agree with the other saying that after his leaving his body the Avatar would come to the Asram he had created.

I do not quite know what is meant by *ayoni-sambhava*. An incarnation is always through a human mother, though there have been one or two cases in which a virgin birth has been proclaimed (Christ, Buddha). The only other meaning — unless we suppose an unprecedented miracle — might be a descent such as sometimes happens, the Godhead manifesting in somebody who at birth was a Vibhuti, not at once the full incarnation. But in the absence of a clear statement from your Guru himself, these are only speculations.

I have written this much as an answer to your question, but I doubt whether it is necessary or advisable to write anything of it to your friends. They have their own feeling about the matter; it seems to me better not to challenge or disturb it.

25 August 1935

*

> Elsewhere people try to find out various qualities in their Guru to prove him an Avatar; here some try to find out reasons to disprove even the possibility.

It is a modern Asram, that's why! 14 November 1935

The Avatar and Human Ideas of Space

> How can the Divine, who is the All or Omnipresent, containing the Infinite, incarnate in the small space of a human body? I believe it is because this seems impossible to the mind that the Arya Samajists do not accept the possibility of incarnation.

The objection is founded on human three-dimensional ideas of Space and division in spaces, which are again founded upon the limited nature of the human senses. To some beings space is one-dimensional, to others two-dimensional, to others three-dimensional — but there are other dimensions also. It is well recognised in metaphysics that the Infinite can be in a point and not only in extension of space — just as there is an eternity of extension in Time but also an Eternity which is independent of Time so that it can be felt in the moment — one has not to think of millions and millions of years in order to realise it. So too the rigid distinction of One against Many, a One that cannot be many or of an All that is made up by addition and not self-existent are crude mental notions of the outer finite mind that cannot be applied to the Infinite. If the All were of this material and unspiritual character, tied down to a primary arithmetic and geometry, the realisation of the universe in oneself, of the all in each and each in all, of the universe in the Bindu would be impossible. Your Arya Samajists are evidently innocent of the elements of metaphysical thinking or they would not make such objections. 1 April 1936

*

> When the Divine descends here as an incarnation, does not that very act mould his infinity into a limited finite? How then does he still continue to rule over the universe?

Do you imagine that the Divine is at any time not everywhere in the universe or beyond it? or that he is living at one point in space and governing the rest from it, as Mussolini governs the Italian Empire from Rome? 11 May 1937

The Avatar and the Vibhuti

> Is it true that the Avatar is the full manifestation of the Divine Vibhuti?

If you consider it from the earth's point of view. But it may be truer to say that the Avatar holds himself back and manifests as a Vibhuti in many lives till the time comes for his manifesting as the Avatar. 27 September 1933

The Avatar and Human Birth

> Does an Avatar create a new mind, life and body from the cosmos for himself, or take hold of some liberated human being and use his outer personality for his manifestation?

That would be a possession, not an Avatar. An Avatar is supposed to be from birth. Each soul at its birth takes from the cosmic mind, life and matter to shape a new external personality for himself. What prevents the Divine from doing the same? What is continued from birth to birth is the inner being.

18 December 1935

The Avatar and the Earth Consciousness

> We are a little puzzled when you give your own example to prove your arguments and defend your views, because that really proves nothing. I need not explain why: what Avatars can achieve is not possible for ordinary mortals like us. So if you had a sudden "opening" to the appreciation of painting, or if you freed your mind from all thoughts in three days, or transformed your nature, it is a very poor consolation for us. Then again, when you state that you developed something that was not originally there in your nature, can it not be said that it was already there in your *divya aṁśa*?

I do not know what the devil you mean. My sadhana is not a freak or a monstrosity or a miracle done outside the laws of Nature and the conditions of life and consciousness on earth. If I could do these things or if they could happen in my Yoga, it means that they can be done and that therefore these developments and transformations are possible in the terrestrial consciousness.

> There are many who admit that faculties which are latent can be developed, but they maintain that things which are not there in latency cannot be made manifest. My belief is that even that could be done. Still, I don't think that I could be turned into, say, an artist or a musician!

How do you know that you can't?

> As for your statement, "All is possible" — e.g. "an ass may be changed into an elephant, but it is not done"[1] — people say it is a pointless statement.

---

[1] *See the letter of 7 February 1935 on page 488. — Ed.*

[*Underlining "but it is not done":*] You had said it can't be done or somebody had said it.

> About your changing "cowards into heroes" [*p. 488*], they put forward the same latency theory.

How do they prove their theory — when they don't know what is or what is not latent? In such conditions the theory can neither be proved nor refuted. To say "O, it was latent" when a thing apparently impossible is done, is a mere *post factum* explanation which amounts to an evasion of the difficulty.

> They state very strongly that a paid Ashram worker, like Muthu, for example, cannot be changed into a Ramakrishna . . .

Well, Ramakrishna himself was an ignorant, unlettered rustic according to the story.

> or into a Yogi for that matter, even by the Divine.

If he were, they would say "O, it was latent in him."

> One can't say categorically and absolutely that the Divine is omnipotent, because there are different planes from which he works. It is when he acts from the supramental level that his Power is omnipotent.

If the Divine were not in essence omnipotent, he could not be omnipotent anywhere — whether in the supramental or anywhere else. Because he chooses to limit or determine his action by conditions, it does not make him less omnipotent. His self-limitation is itself an act of omnipotence.

> The fact that X was not changed by the mental-spiritual force put on him proves that.

It does not prove it for a moment. It simply proves that the omnipotent unconditioned supramental force was not put out there — any more than it was when Christ was put on the cross or when after healing thousands he failed to heal in a certain district (I forget the name) because people had no faith (faith being one of the conditions imposed on his work) or when Krishna after fighting eighteen battles with Jarasandha failed to prevail against him and had to run away from Mathura.

Why the immortal Hell should the Divine be tied down to succeed in all his operations? What if failure suits him better and serves better the ultimate purpose? What if the gentleman in question had to be given his chance as Duryodhan was given his chance when Krishna went to him as ambassador in a last effort to avoid the massacre of Kurukshetra? What rigid primitive notions are these about the Divine! And what about my explanation of how the Divine acts through the Avatar?[2] It seems all to have gone into water.

By the way about the ass becoming an elephant — what I meant to say was that the only reason why it can't be done is because there is no recognizable process for it. But if a process can be discovered whether by a scientist (let us say transformation or redistribution of the said ass's atoms or molecules — or what not) or by an occultist or by a Yogi, then there is no reason why it should not be done. In other words certain conditions have been established for the game and so long as those conditions remain unchanged certain things are not done — so we say they are impossible, can't be done. If the conditions are changed, then the same things are done or at least become licit — allowable, legal, according to the so-called laws of Nature, — and then we say they can be done. The Divine also acts according to the conditions of the game. He may change them, but he has to change them first, not proceed while maintaining the conditions to act by a series of miracles. 9 February 1935

*

> You say that since "these things" have been possible in you, they are possible in the terrestrial consciousness [*p. 402*]. Quite true; but have they been done?

---

[2] *The "explanation" Sri Aurobindo refers to here is probably the one presented in* Essays on the Gita*, First Series, Chapters XV to XVII. — Ed.*

The question was not whether it had been done but whether it could be done.

> Has any sweeper or street-beggar been changed into a Buddha or a Chaitanya?

The street-beggar is a side issue. The question was whether new faculties not at all manifested in the personality up to now in this life could appear, even suddenly appear, by force of Yoga. I say they can and I gave my own case as proof.[3] I could have given others also. The question involved is also this — is a man bound to the character and qualities he has come with into this life — can he not become a new man by Yoga? That also I have proved in my sadhana, it can be done. When you say that I could do this only in my case because I am an Avatar (!) and it is impossible in any other case, you reduce my sadhana to an absurdity and Avatarhood also to an absurdity. For my Yoga is done not for myself who need nothing and do not need salvation or anything else, but precisely for the earth consciousness, to open a way to the earth consciousness to change. Has the Divine need to come down to prove that he can do this or that or has he any personal need of doing it? Your argument proves that I am not an Avatar but only a big human person. It may well be so as a matter of fact, but you start your argument from the other basis. Besides, even if I am only a big human person, what I achieve shows that that achievement is possible for humanity. Whether any street-beggar can do it or has done it, is a side issue. It is sufficient if others who have not the economic misfortune of being street-beggars can do it.

> We see in the whole history of humanity only one Christ, one Buddha, one Krishna, one Sri Aurobindo and one Mother. Has there been any breaking of this rule? Since it has not been done, it can't be done.

What a wonderful argument! Since it has not been done, it cannot be done! At that rate the whole history of the earth must have stopped long before the protoplasm. When it was a mass of gases, no life had been born, ergo life could not be born — when only life was there, mind was not born, so mind could not be born. Since mind is there but nothing beyond, as there is no supermind manifested in anybody, so supermind can never be born. Sobhanallah! Glory, glory, glory to the human reason!! Luckily the Divine or the Cosmic Spirit or Nature or whoever is there cares a damn for the human reason. He or she or it does what he or she or it has to do, whether it can or cannot be done.

---

[3] *See the letter of 7 February 1935 on page 488. — Ed.*

> Can a Muthu or a sadhak ever be a Sri Aurobindo, even if he is supramentalised?

What need has he to be a Sri Aurobindo? He can be a supramentalised Muthu!

> If anybody comes and says "Why not?" I would answer, "You had better rub some Madhyam Narayan oil[4] on your head."

I have no objection to that. Plenty of the middle Narayan is needed in this Asram. This part of your argument is perfectly correct — but it is also perfectly irrelevant.

> You are looked on by us here, and by many outside, as a full manifestation of the Divine. The sadhaks here at best are misty sparks of the Divine.

The psychic being is more than a spark at this stage of its evolution. It is a flame. Even if the flame is covered by mist or smoke, the mist or smoke can be dissipated. To do that and to open to the higher consciousness is what is wanted, not to become a Sri Aurobindo or equal to the Mother.

> So to say that parts can be equal to the whole is geometrically and logically impossible.

---

[4] *An Ayurvedic oil used in the treatment of insanity. The literal meaning of* madhyam *is "middle". — Ed.*

But if we are the Divine, what is the harm of evolving into a portion of the Divine, living in the divine Consciousness even if in a lesser degree? No middle Narayan will then be needed for anybody's head.

> Once when *X* had said she wanted to be like the Mother you thundered saying, "How can it be? That is an ambition!" Do you say now it's possible?

Certainly not, it is not intended and I never said that she could as a practical matter.

> All this is really too much for me. Please give a more direct answer — is it possible or not? Can a Muthu be changed into a being as great as an Avatar? If he can be, I have nothing further to say; if not, there is a limit to the omnipotence of the Divine.

Not at all. You are always making the same elementary baby stumble. It is not because the Divine cannot manifest his greatness anywhere, but because it is not in the conditions of the game, because he has chosen to manifest his centrality in a particular line that it is practically impossible.

> Next point: it is hoped that the sadhaks will be supramentalised. Since it is a state surpassing the Overmind, am I to deduce that the sadhaks would be greater than Krishna, who was the Avatar of the Overmind level? Logically it follows, but looking at others and at myself, I wonder if such a theory will be practically realised.

What is all this obsession of greater or less? In our Yoga we do not strive after greatness.

> Past history does not seem to prove it. In Krishna's time no disciple of his was a greater spiritual figure than the preceding Avatar Rama, even though Krishna was an Avatar of a higher plane.

It is not a question of Sri Krishna's disciples, but of the earth consciousness — Rama was a mental man, there is no touch of the overmind consciousness (direct) in anything he said or did, but what he did was done with the greatness of the Avatar. But there have since been men who did live in touch with the planes above mind — higher mind, illumined mind, Intuition. There is no question of asking whether they were "greater" than Rama; they might have been less "great", but they were able to live from a new plane of consciousness. And Krishna's opening the overmind certainly made it possible for the attempt at bringing Supermind to the earth to be made.

> I would not mind your fury in revenge if only you would crush me with a convincing assault. I hoped to close the chapter on "Divine Omnipotence" with this last letter, but you keep me hoping with that promise of yours to write at length some day.

"Peace, peace, O fiery furious spirit! calm thyself and be at rest." Your fury or furiousness is wasted because your point is perfectly irrelevant to the central question on which all this breath (or rather ink) is being spent. Muthu and the sadhaks who want to equal or distance or replace the Mother and myself and so need very badly Middle Narayan oil — there have been several — have appeared only as meaningless foam and froth on the excited crest of the dispute. I fear you have not grasped the internalities and modalities and causalities of my high and subtle reasoning. It is not surprising as you are down down in the troughs of the rigidly logically illogical human reason while I am floating on the heights amid the infinite plasticities of the overmind and the lightninglike subtleties and swiftnesses of the intuition. There! what do you think of that? However!!

More seriously, I have not stated that any Muthu has equalled Ramakrishna and I quite admit that Muthu here *in ipsa persona* has no chance of performing that feat. I have not said that anyone here can be Sri Aurobindo or the Mother — I have explained what I meant when I objected to your explaining away my sadhana as a perfectly useless piece of Avatarian fireworks. So in my comment on the Muthu logic, I simply pointed out that it was bad logic — that someone quite ignorant and low in the social scale can manifest a great spirituality and even a great spiritual knowledge. I hope you are not bourgeois enough to deny that or to contend that the Divine or the spiritual can only manifest in somebody who has some money in his pockets or some University education in his pate? For the rest as I myself have been pointing out all the time there is a difference between essential truth and conditional truth, *paramārtha* and *vyāvahārika*, the latter being relative and conditional and mutable. In mathematics one works out problems in infinite and in unreal numbers which exist nowhere on earth and yet are extremely important and can help scientific reasoning and scientific discovery and achievement. The question of a Muthu becoming a Ramakrishna, i.e. a great spiritual man may look to you like being an exercise in unreal numbers or magnitudes because it exceeds the actual observable facts in the case of *this* Muthu who very evidently is not going to be a great spiritual man — but we were arguing the matter of essential principle. I was pointing out that in the essentiality all things are possible — so you ought not to say the Divine *can* not do this or that. But at the same time I was pointing out too that the Divine is not bound to show his omnipotence without rhyme or reason when he is working by his own will under conditions. For by arguing that the Divine cannot, that he is impotent, that he cannot do what has never yet been done etc., you deny the possibility of changing conditions, of evolution, of the realisation of the unrealised, of the action of the Divine Power, of Divine Grace, and reduce all to a matter of rigid and unalterable *status quo*, which is an insolent defiance to both fact and reason (!) and suprareason. See now?

About myself and the Mother, — there are people who say, "If the supramental is to come down, it can come down in everyone, why then in them first? Why should we not get it before they do? Why through them, not direct?" It sounds very rational, very logical, very arguable. The difficulty is that this reasoning ignores the conditions, foolishly assumes that one can get the supramental down into oneself without having the least knowledge of what the supramental is and so supposes an upside-down miracle — everybody who tries it is bound to land himself in a most horrible cropper — as all have done hitherto who tried it. It is like thinking one need not follow the Guide, but can reach up to the top of the mountain from the narrow path one is following on the edge of a precipice by simply leaping into the air. The result is inevitable.

About greater and less, one point. Is Captain John Higgins of S.S. Mauretania a greater man than Christopher Columbus because he can reach America without trouble in a few days? Is a university graduate in philosophy greater than Plato because he can reason about problems and systems which had never even occurred to Plato? No, only humanity has acquired greater scientific power which any good navigator can use or a wider intellectual knowledge which anyone with a philosophic training can use. You will say greater scientific power and wider knowledge is not a change of consciousness. Very well, but there are Rama and Ramakrishna. Rama spoke always from the thinking intelligence, the common property of developed men; Ramakrishna spoke constantly from a swift and luminous spiritual intuition. Can you tell me which is the greater? the Avatar recognised by all India? or the saint and Yogi recognised as an Avatar only by his disciples and some others who follow them?
10 February 1935

*

I did not mean that anyone here could replace or equal myself and the Mother, much less the persons you name — or the actual Muthu equal the actual Ramakrishna. But certainly it is possible for X and Y and Z (I won't repeat the names) to change, to throw off their present perversities or limitations and come nearer to us than they are now — if they have the sincere will and make the endeavour. I have explained my meaning to *X*[5] — so I do not repeat it here. Of course in my writing to X, there is a certain note of persiflage and humorous insistence of which you must take account if you want to get the exact measure of my reasoning and its significance. 10 February 1935

---

[5] *The disciple to whom the letters of 9 and 10 February 1935 on pages 402–10 were written. — Ed.*

*

> I would like to know something about my "bad logic" [*p. 408*] before I write anything further to you.

Helps to finding out your bad logic. I give instances expressed or implied in your reasonings.

Bad logic No 1. Because things have not been, therefore they can never be.

" " " 2. Because Sri Aurobindo is an Avatar, his sadhana can have no meaning for humanity.

" " " 3. What happens in Sri Aurobindo's sadhana cannot happen in anybody else's sadhana (i.e. neither descent, nor realisation, nor transformation, nor any intuitions, nor budding of new powers or faculties) — because Sri Aurobindo is an Avatar and the sadhaks are not.

" " " 4. A street-beggar cannot have any spirituality or at least not so much as, let us say, a University graduate — because, well, one does not know why the hell not.

" " " 5. (and last because of want of space) Because I [*the recipient*] am a doctor, I can't see a joke when it is there.
11 February 1935

*

> About your personal example. You speak of the evolution theory to prove that "it can be done", though the domain I touched upon was only the spiritual. If the scientists say that man has not been able to create living things up to now, and therefore he will not be able to do so in the future — that it "can't be done", what will be your answer?

I have brought in the evolution theory or rather fact of evolution, to disprove your argument that because a thing has not been done, it is thereby proved that it could not be done. I don't understand your argument. If a scientist says that, he is using bad logic. I have never said it can't be done. I dare say some day in the right conditions the creation of life will become possible.

> And if similarly I say that a Tom, Dick or Harry cannot be a Ram, Krishna or Sri Aurobindo, what reply will you give? My point is that Avatars are born not made.

They may not be Ram or Krishna or Sri Aurobindo, but they may become a spiritualised super-Tom, super-Dick or super-Harry. I have answered about the Avatar.

> I have never said that you are only a big human person. On the contrary, you are not, and hence nobody can be like you. Nevertheless, I don't quite follow what you mean when you state that whatever you achieve is possible for humanity to achieve, your attainments opening the way for others to follow.

It is singular that you cannot understand such a simple thing. I had no urge towards spirituality in me, I developed spirituality. I was incapable of understanding metaphysics, I developed into a philosopher. I had no eye for painting — I developed it by Yoga. I transformed my nature from what it was to what it was not. I did it by a special manner, not by a miracle and I did it to show what could be done and how it could be done. I did not do it out of any personal necessity of my own or by a miracle without any process. I say that if it is not so, then my Yoga is useless and my life was a mistake — a mere absurd freak of Nature without meaning or consequence. You all seem to think it a great compliment to me to say that what I have done has no validity for anybody except myself — it is the most damaging criticism on my work that could be made.

> If a man has transformed his nature, he couldn't have done it all by himself, as you have done.

I also did not do it all by myself, if you mean by myself the Aurobindo that was. He did it by the help of Krishna and the Divine Shakti. I had help from human sources also.

> I should say that Avatars are like well-fitted, well-equipped Rolls-Royce machines.

All sufficient to themselves — perfect and complete from the beginning, hey? Just roll, royce and ripple!

> They do have plenty of difficulties on their journey, but just because they are like Rolls-Royces they can surmount them — whilst the rest of humanity are either like loose and disjointed machines or else wagons to be dragged along by Avatars and great spiritual personages.

Great Scott! What a penal servitude for the great personages and the Avatars! And where are they leading them? All that rubbish into Paradise? How is that any more possible than creating a capacity where there was none? If the disjointed machines cannot be jointed, isn't it more economical to leave them where they are, in the lumber-shed?

I don't know about Avatars. Practically what I know is that I had not all the powers necessary when I started, I had to develop them by yoga, at least many of them which were not in existence in me when I began, and those which were I had to train to a higher degree. My own idea of the matter is that the Avatar's life and action are not miracles and if they were, his existence would be perfectly useless, a mere superfluous freak of Nature. He accepts the terrestrial conditions, he uses means, he shows the way to humanity as well as helps it. Otherwise what is the use of him and why is he here?

I was not always in the overmind, if you please. I had to climb there from the mental and vital level.

> Really, Sir, you have put into my mouth what I never mentioned or even intended to.

You may not have mentioned it but it was implied in your logic without your knowing that it was implied. Logic has its own consequences which are not apparent to the logiciser. It is like a move in chess by which you intend to overcome the opponent but it leads, logically, to consequences which you didn't intend and ends in your own checkmate. You can't invalidate the consequences by saying that you didn't intend them.

Let me remind you of what I wrote about the Avatar. There are two sides of the phenomenon of Avatarhood, the Divine Consciousness behind and the instrumental personality. The Divine Consciousness is omnipotent but it has put forth the instrumental personality in Nature, under the conditions of Nature, and it uses it according to the rules of the game — though also sometimes to change the rules of the game. If Avatarhood is only a flashing miracle, then I have no use for it. If it is a coherent part of the arrangement of the omnipotent Divine in Nature, then I can understand and accept it.

As for the Muthu affair, that was only a joke as ought to have been clear to you at once. Nobody has any intention of making Muthu a saint or an Avatar. But that is only because the Divine is not going to play the fool, not because he is impotent. Muthu's only business in life is to prepare himself for something better hereafter and exhaust some of his lowest tendencies in the meantime. That is not the question — the question is whether as a general rule rigid and unalterable man is bound down to his outward nature as it appears to be built at the moment and the Divine cannot or will not under any circumstances change it or develop something new in it, something not yet "evident", not yet manifested, or is there a chance for human beings becoming more like the Divine, *sādṛśyamukti*, *sādharmyam āgatāḥ*? If not, there is no use in anybody doing this Yoga; let the Krishnas and Ramakrishnas rocket about gloriously and uselessly in the empty Inane and the rest wriggle about for ever in the clutch of the eternal Devil. For that is the logical conclusion of the whole matter. 13 February 1935

*

> I am afraid you are making me admit something I never wrote, neither implied nor intended in what I wrote. However, I shall consult your *Essays on the Gita* to see what your Avatar says about the Avatar.

Can you not understand that it was the natural logical result of the statements made on either side about the unbridgeable distance between the Man Divine and the human being moving in the darkness towards the Divine? If you admit the utility of my sadhana, the controversy ceases. But so long as you declare that what I have done in my sadhana has no connection with what can be done, I shall go on beating you. (What the Avatar says in the *Essays* is only an explanation of the Gita; it is not a full statement of the issue. But still if you read three or four chapters there, you will get some idea of the general principles.) For the rest I propose that all discussion be postponed till after the 21st (not immediately after). This will give time for you to clear your ideas and for me to pursue my "Avataric" sadhana (not for myself, but for this confounded and too confounded earth race). 14 February 1935

*

> You say, if I understand you right, that since the inner being is open to the universal, anything can manifest through it even if it is not there latent; you further add that it is impossible to say what will or will not manifest once the universal acts upon it. But is this impossible for Yogis also? For example, can't you say whether a man has a capacity for Yoga or for something else? Do you simply gamble when you accept someone?

I have never said anything about how I choose people. I was answering the argument that what has not been or is not in manifestation, cannot be. That was very clearly put in the discussion — that the Divine cannot manifest what is not yet there — even He is impotent to do that. He can only manifest what is either already manifest or else latent in the field (person) he is working on. I say no — he can bring in new things. He can bring it in from the universal or he can bring it down from the transcendent. For in the Divine cosmic and transcendent all things are. Whether He will do so or not in a particular case is quite another matter. My argument was directed towards dissipating this "can't, can't" with which people try to stop all possibility of progress. 15 February 1935

The Avatar and Terrestrial Conditions

> I am sending with this note a typewritten MS on the Avatar. Please write an exhaustive reply, but in ink.

On the back the rational and logical result of your arguments. I shall write certain irrational answers on your MS — in ink.[6]

You have won all along the line. Who could resist such a lava-torrent of logic? Slightly mixed, but still! You have convinced me (1st) that there never was nor could be an Avatar, (2) that all the so-called Avatars were chimerical fools and failures, (3) that there is no Divinity or divine element in man, (4) that I have never had any true difficulties or struggles, and that if I had any, it was all my fun (as K. S. said of my new metres that they were only Mr. Ghose's fun), (5) that if ever there was or will be a real Avatar, I am not he — but that I knew before, (6) that all I have done or the Mother has done is a mere sham — sufferings, struggles, conquests, defeats, the Way found, the Way followed, the call to others to follow, everything — it was all make-believe since I was the Divine and nothing could touch me and none follow me. That is truly a discovery, a downright knock-out which leaves me convinced, convicted, amazed, gasping. I won't go on, there is no space; but there are a score of other luminous convictions that your logic has forced on me. But what to do next? You have put me in a terrible fix and I see no way out of it. For if the Way, the Yoga is merely sham, fun and chimera — then? 6 March 1935

*

> When did I say that you are not an Avatar? On the contrary I wrote to you that you are an Avatar.

---

[6] *Sri Aurobindo wrote these two sentences on the front side of a small sheet of paper sent by the correspondent, above the correspondent's comments. On the back of the same sheet Sri Aurobindo wrote the paragraph that follows. This paragraph is a brief reply to questions posed by the correspondent in his "typewritten MS". Sri Aurobindo returned the small sheet containing his paragraph-long reply to the correspondent on 6 March 1935. This became the basis of the questions and answers of 7 March that are reproduced on pages 416–19. Sri Aurobindo also wrote long and detailed replies to the questions on the "typewritten MS"; they are reproduced on pages 420–29. — Ed.*

You don't say, but if your theory or description of the Avatar is right, I am not one. I am proceeding on the necessary consequences of your logic.

> I did say that the difficulties and struggles of the Avatar are all shams, put on, so to say.

If they are shams, they have no value for others or for any true effect. If they have no value for others or for any true effect, they are perfectly irrational and unreal and meaningless. The Divine does not need to suffer or struggle for himself; if he takes on these things it is in order to bear the world-burden and help the world and men; and if these sufferings and struggles are to be of any help, they must be real. A sham or falsehood cannot help. They must be as real as the struggles and sufferings of men themselves — the Divine bears them and at the same time shows the way out of them. Otherwise his assumption of human nature has no meaning and no utility and no value. It is strange that you cannot understand or refuse to admit so simple and crucial a point. What is the use of admitting Avatarhood if you take all the meaning out of it?

> I never said that there could be no Avatars nor that they are failures.

Good Lord! You said most emphatically that they were all failures and that is why the Divine had to come back again and again — to "atone for his failures".

If your argument is that the life, actions, struggles of the Avatar (e.g. Rama's, Krishna's) are unreal because the Divine is there and knows it is all a Maya, in man also there is a self, a spirit that is immortal, untouched, divine, you can say that man's sufferings and ignorance are only put on, shams, unreal. But if man feels them as real and if the Avatar feels his work and difficulties to be serious and real?

> I don't think I said that there is no divinity in man. In the quotation I gave from the Gita it is said that man is made out

> of the divine substance but has a thick coating on him.

If the existence of the Divinity is of no practical effect, what is the use of a theoretical admission? The manifestation of the Divinity in the Avatar is of help to man because it helps him to discover his own divinity, find the way to realise it. If the difference is so great that the humanity by its very nature prevents all possibility of following the way opened by the Avatar, it merely means that there is no divinity in man that can respond to the divinity in the Avatar.

You make a flourish of reasonings and do not see the consequence of your reasonings. It is no use saying "I believe this or that" and then reasoning in a way which leads logically to the very negation of what you believe.

> I admitted that Avatars have many difficulties, but because they know, as Mother did, that they are Avatars, because the "real substance" shines through the alloy in all that they do, they have a fixed faith and conviction that they will never fail.

You think then that in me (I do not bring in the Mother) there was never any doubt or despair, no attacks of that kind. I have borne every attack which human beings have borne, otherwise I would be unable to assure anybody "This too can be conquered." At least I would have no right to say so. Your psychology is terribly rigid. I repeat, the Divine when he takes on the burden of terrestrial nature, takes it fully, sincerely and without any conjuring tricks or pretence. If he has something behind him which emerges always out of the coverings, it is the same thing in essence, even if greater in degree, that there is behind others — and it is to awaken that that he is there.

The psychic being does the same for all who are intended for the spiritual way — men need not be extraordinary beings to follow Yoga. That is the mistake you are making — to harp on greatness as if only the great can be spiritual.

> Regarding the divinity in man — what is the use of this divinity if it is coated layer after layer with Maya? How many can

> really become conscious of it?

Exactly! Why admit any divinity then at all, if their humanity is an insuperable bar to any following in the Way pointed out by the Avatar? That was your contention that humanity and divinity are irreconcilable opposite things, that it is no use the Avatar asking others (except Arjuna) to follow in his Path — they, being human, cannot do it.

> You had defeats, struggles, but had at the same time the spirit of absolute surrender, faith which we find shining through Mother's prayers as well. Did you not leave your great work for the country at one word of Krishna?

Lots of people leave things at the word of a human being like Gandhi, they do not need the word of Krishna.

> Does the average man have this faith, etc.? If he has not, but has instead struggles, sufferings etc., picture what his condition would be!

If *absolute* surrender, faith etc. from the beginning were essential for Yoga then nobody could do it. I myself could not have done it if such a condition had been demanded of me.

> This is only to refute the points you found implied or explicit in my letters.

Let me make it clear that in all I wrote I was not writing to prove that I am an Avatar! You are busy in your reasonings with the personal question, I am busy in mine with the general one. I am seeking to manifest something of the Divine that I am conscious of and feel — I care a damn whether that constitutes me an Avatar or something else. That is not a question which concerns me. By manifestation of course I mean the bringing out and spreading of that Consciousness so that others also may feel and enter into it and live in it. 7 March 1935

*

> I am eagerly waiting to see what you say in reply to *X*'s questions of tonight.[7] Often I have wondered why you made your cases equal to ours. Did you ever suffer from desires, passions, ignorance, attachment etc. as we do?

We have had sufferings and struggles to which yours are mere child's play, — I have not made our cases equal to yours. I have said that the Avatar is one who comes to open the Way for humanity to a higher consciousness — if nobody can follow the Way, then either our conception of the thing, which is that of Christ and Krishna and Buddha also, is all wrong or the whole life and action of the Avatar is quite futile. *X* seems to say that there is no Way and no possibility of following, that the struggles and sufferings of the Avatar are unreal and all humbug, — there is no possibility of struggle for one who represents the Divine. Such an idea makes nonsense of the whole idea of Avatarhood — there is no reason in it, no necessity for it, no meaning in it. The Divine being all-powerful can lift people up without bothering to come down on earth. It is only if it is part of the world-arrangement that he should take upon himself the burden of humanity and open the Way that Avatarhood has any meaning.

7 March 1935

Following the Leader and Guide

> At last I reopen the controversy.[8] I have read your *Essays on the Gita*, *Synthesis of Yoga*, letters on Rama, and though I am wiser, my original and fundamental difficulty remains as unsolved as ever. What is so simple to you, as everything is, appears mighty complex and abstruse to my dense intellect. So no alternative but to submit to a fresh beating. . . .
>
> What your view comes to, put in a syllogism, is this: Since I have done it and I am an Avatar, so every other blessed creature can do it.

---

[7] *The reference is to the series of questions in the letter of 7 March 1935 on pages 416–19. — Ed.*

[8] *This is the beginning of the correspondent's "typewritten MS", which he submitted to Sri Aurobindo on 6 March 1935. Sri Aurobindo wrote detailed answers to the questions on the manuscript but never returned it. It was discovered among his papers after his passing. — Ed.*

This is idiotic. I have said "Follow my path, the way I have discovered for you through my own efforts and example. Transform your nature from the animal to the spiritual, grow into a higher divine consciousness. All this you can do by your own aspiration and by the force of the Divine Shakti." That, if you please, is not the utterance of a madman or an imbecile. I have said, "I have opened the Way; now you with the Divine help can follow it." I have not said "Find the way for yourself as I did."

> In the *Essays on the Gita* you say man "is ignorant because there is upon the eyes of his soul and all its organs the seal of . . . Nature, Prakriti, Maya . . . ; she has minted him like a coin out of the precious metal of the divine substance, but overlaid with a strong coating of the alloy of her phenomenal qualities, stamped with her own stamp and mark of animal humanity, and although the secret sign of the Godhead is there, it is at first indistinguishable. . . ."[9]

Does it follow that the coating cannot be dissolved nor the mark effaced? Then stamp the stamp of the chimaera on all efforts at spirituality and catalogue as asses and fools all who have attempted to rise beyond the human animal — all who have tried to follow the path of the Christ, the Buddha; stigmatise as folly Vedanta, Tantra, Yoga, the way of the Jinas, Christ himself and Buddha, Pythagoras, Plato, and any other pathfinder and seeker.

> On the other hand you write that in "the Avatar, the divinely-born Man, the real substance shines through the coating; the mark of the seal is there only for form, the vision is that of the secret Godhead, the power of the life is that of the secret Godhead, and it breaks through the seals of the assumed human nature . . ." [*Essays on the Gita*, pp. 158–59].

Does it follow that the breaking through had not to be done or was a mere trifling impediment? The power of the form can be exceedingly great as every thinker and observer of life can tell you.

---

[9] Essays on the Gita, *volume 19 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 158.*

> After this you say that the object of the Avatar's descent is "precisely to show that the human birth with all its limitations can be made such a means and instrument of the divine birth and divine works. . . . Even human sorrow and physical suffering he must assume and use so as to show . . . how that suffering may be a means of redemption . . ." [*Essays*, pp. 164–65]. Well, Sir, it will have no go with me, my heart won't leap up at such a divine possibility, such a dream of Paradise!

Your heart not leaping up does not make my statement a falsehood, a non sequitur or a chimaera.

> My fellow-brothers may venture to reach there through such a thin hanging bridge but if they do, I am afraid, it will be into a fool's Paradise.

The fool being myself, eh? For it is my Paradise and it is I who call them to it.

> The difficulties you face, the dangers you overcome, the struggles you embrace would seem to be mere shams.

[*Underlining "mere shams":*] Truly then what a humbug and charlatan I have been, making much of sham struggles and dangers — or, in the alternative, since I took them for realities, what a self-blinded imbecile!

> Mother knew she was an Avatar at a very early age.

At what age? But I shall say nothing about the Mother — I cannot bring her into such arguments, only myself.

> She was thus able to follow the path of travails through volcanoes and earthquakes. But if she says to me, "You can also do it," I will cry out, "Forbear, Mother, forbear."

Nobody asks you to go through volcanoes and earthquakes or to proceed unhelped. You are simply asked to follow the Leader and Guide with the Divine help and with courage, in the face of whatever difficulties come.

> If I knew I were an Avatar (pardon my bold hypothesis) do you think I would cry or wail for fear of any amount of crashes and collisions or would it matter if I began with a nature with not a grain of spirituality in me? I would jump from peak to peak in somersaults, go down the abysses, rise up the steeps without fear of mortal consequences since I would know that I was the Divine.

Would you? I wish you had been in my place then! You would have been a hundred times more fit than myself, if you could really have done that. And how easily things would have been done! While I did them and am still doing them with enormous difficulty because I lead and have to make the path so that others may follow with less difficulty.

> There could be no death or failure for me.

The Divine in the body is not subject to death or failure? Yet all those claimed to be Avatars have died — some by violence, some by cancer, some of indigestion etc. etc. You yourself say that they were all failures. How do you reconcile these self-contradictory arguments?

> You say, "A physical and mental body is prepared fit for the divine incarnation by a pure or great heredity and the descending Godhead takes possession of it" [*Essays*, p. 166].

Like my heredity? It was "pure"? But of course I am not a divine incarnation. Only why put all that upon one whom it does not fit?

> To his beloved children created in his own image he says with gusto, I send you through this hell of a cycle of rebirths. Don't lose heart, poor boys, if you groan under the weight of your sins and those of your ancestors to boot. I will come down

> and take hold of a pure heredity with no coating around me and say unto you — come and follow my example.

Who gave this message? It is your own invention. The Divine does not come down in that way. It is a silly imagination of yours that you are trying to foist on the truth of things. The Divine also comes down into the cycle of rebirths, makes the great holocaust, endures shame and obloquy, torture and crucifixion, the burden of human nature, sex and passion and sorrow and suffering, manifests many births before he reveals the Avatar. And when he does reveal it? Well, read the lives of the Avatars and try to understand and see.

Nobody ever said there was no coating — that is your invention.

> Not a very inspiring message, Sir!

No, of course not — but it is yours, not any Avatar's.

> Jatakas tell us that in every life small or great, Buddha's frontal consciousness was always above the level of others.

Jatakas are legends.

> Ramakrishna and Chaitanya began yoga in their cradle, it seems.

Did they? I know nothing about it; but if they told you that! Anyhow one died by drowning and the other of a cancer.

> I don't know if Avatars ever play the part of the rogue or the eternal sinner in any life.

[*Underlining "rogue or the eternal sinner"*:] Krishna was a rogue and a sinner even in his Avatar life, if tales are true! Don't you think so?

> Now about your absence of urge towards spirituality. Even though that sounds like a story, pray tell us how you could

> free your mind from all thoughts in 7 days or be established in Brahmic consciousness in a few days.

3 if you please. You are terribly inaccurate in your statements. It was simply through the Divine Grace, because it had been done by thousands before me throughout the centuries and millenniums, and the Divine did not want me to waste time over that; other things in the Yoga were not so damned easy!

> And even apart from spirituality, what of your waiting for the gallows for your country's sake with perfect equanimity?

[*Underlining "perfect equanimity"*:] Who told you that? I was perfectly sure of release. But even so plenty of ordinary men did it before me.

> What of your profoundly bold assertion that you would free the country by a Force that was under your feet?

Never said that, surely. Under my feet?

> What of your brilliant career? If one has the essential principle, what does it matter if one has no urge towards spirituality?

My career was much less brilliant than many others'. They ought to have progressed then farther in Yoga than myself, e.g. Mussolini, Lenin, Tilak, Brajendranath Seal, the admirable Crichton, Gandhi, Tagore, Roosevelt, Lloyd George etc. etc. All Avatars or all full of the essential principle!

> The inner consciousness is there.

All that does not apply to me alone. There are hundreds of others. The inner consciousness is not so rare a phenomenon as all that.

> There are some people, I hear, who are to all external appearance debauchees or moral insolvents but whose psychic is much developed or "can be touched".

That gives away the whole case. For mark that I have never asked the whole human race to follow me to the supramental — that is your invention, not mine.

> Still you go on saying that what you have done is possible for me and not for Arjunas only to whom alone Krishna seems to have addressed the Gita.

What a waste of words and energy! Yet Krishna said "even Chandalas can follow my way."

> I prophesy that your message will reverberate in the rarefied atmosphere evoking a loud rebellious echo from human hearts.

I admit that you have successfully proved that I am an imbecile.

> But if you say, "I come to raise you bodily by my divine Omnipotence, not by my example," I shake hands. If you insist that I follow your example, it would be as well to insist on my leaving you bag and baggage at once.

All this is a purely personal argument concerning yourself. Up to now you were making general assertions — so was I. I was concerned with the possibility of people following the Path I had opened, as Christ, Krishna, Buddha, Chaitanya etc. opened theirs. You were declaring that no human being could follow and that my life was perfectly useless as an example — like the lives of the Avatars. Path, life, example all useless — even Power useless because all have been failures. These are general questions. Whether X or Y is able or willing to follow the path or depends on divine Omnipotence only is a personal question. Even if X or Y does so, he has no right to pass a general decree of impossibility against others.

> There are some who claim that they are here and remain here by their soul's call. But I am not one of those fortunate ones. Where they hear the soul's call, I hear the calls of a thousand devils and if it were not for your love — well, no, — for your Power (which I firmly believe in), I would end up myself by

> being one of those devils. I hope you will believe that this is not a conceited statement.

It is very conceited. To be a devil needs a considerable personal capacity or else a great openness to the Beyond. If you had said, I can only be an ordinary human being, that might be modest.

> We don't mean to give you a compliment when we say these things.

Of course not. It is the reverse of complimentary, since you prove me to be an ignorant and mistaken fellow of an Avatar, who merely wastes his time doing things which are of no earthly use to any human being — except perhaps Arjuna who is not here.

> No, we say that the Sun is a thing apart, not to be measured by any human standards.

The Sun's rays are of use to somebody — you say all my acts and life and laborious opening of the Way I thought I had made for spiritual realisation, are of no use to anybody — since nobody is strong enough to follow the path, only the Avatar can do it. Poor lonely ineffective fellow of an Avatar!

> We respect him, adore him, lay ourselves bare to his Light, but we do not follow him.

Who is this we? Editorial "we"?

Let me point out one or two facts, in a perfectly serious spirit.

(1) It has always been supposed by spiritual people that divine perfection, similitude to the Divine, *sādṛśya*, *sādharmya*, is part of the Mukti. Christ said "Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect" — the very Divine himself, mind you, not a mere Avatar or luminous projection from him. His followers strive to be Christlike. Thomas à Kempis, meditating and striving, wrote a book on the Imitation of Christ. Francis of Assisi and many

others arrived at Christlikeness. [Krishna in] the Gita insists on *sādharmya*, gives himself as an example, and tells Arjuna that many before him from ancient times reached to it. Buddha in teaching *karuṇā*, the eightfold path, the rejection of sanskaras, gave it as an ideal to all true followers of his path, thus placing before them not only his own path but his own example. All this is trash and humbug? Christ and Buddha were fools? Myself even a bigger fool? It is not a question of greatness — it is a question of acquiring a certain consciousness to which the way is laid open. It is not a question of acquiring cosmic omniscience and omnipotence, but of reaching the essential divine consciousness with all its *spiritual* consequences, peace, light, equality, strength, Ananda etc. etc. If you say that that cannot be done, you deny all possibility of spiritual perfection, transformation or any true Yoga. All that anyone can do is to be helpless and wait for the divine Omnipotence to do something or other. The whole spiritual past of man becomes a fantastic insanity, with the Avatars as the chief lunatics. That is the materialist point of view, but I am unable to envisage it as a basis for sadhana. That example is not all, is true; I have not said it is; there is Influence, there is spiritual help — but the truth of the Way and the Example cannot be belittled in this scornful fashion.

(2) You make nothing of the Divine in man. If there is no divinity in man, then there is no possibility of Avatarhood; also spirituality can just as well pass away into silence — it has no foundation here. If the divinity is there in man, it can break through its coatings. You admit that it can do it in debauchees and moral insolvents — that it can manifest in ignorant and uncultured men and women is a proved fact; the Gita itself declares that all *kinds* of men and women can follow its path. Whether X or Y does or does not do so does not depend then on these things and it is no use trying to bar the path to people because of either their ignorance or their immorality. To do so is to betray a bottomless ignorance of spiritual things. As to the possibility of awakening the psychic being, on what intellectual grounds or by what fixed ethical or rational rules are you going to fix that and declare "No entry here for you"? You cannot

generalise in the way you try to do by an intellectual reasoning. The mystery of the Spirit is too great for such a puny endeavour.

after 6 March 1935

Fallibility of Avatars

> How is it that later Avatars often find fault with the actions and movements of their predecessors?

Who finds fault with whom? I have not found fault with any Avatar. To discern what they expressed and what they did not express, is not to find fault.

> Avatars are supposed to be infallible, they are supposed to have Knowledge directly from Above!

What is infallible? I invite your attention again to Rama and the Golden Deer. The Avatar need have no theoretical "Knowledge" from above — he acts and thinks whatever the Divine within him intends that he should act and think for the work. Was everything that Ramakrishna said or thought infallible?

22 April 1935

The Avatar and Humanity

> Every Avatar descended to relieve the world from falsehood, darkness, vice, etc. Also, everyone preached against them.

I am not concerned with what the Avatars did or are supposed to have done (though in that case Krishna seems to have done some very queer and undivine things). My business is with rising above the human consciousness and not with fulfilling limited human ideals; and I look at things from that standpoint. 20 April 1936

*

> Avatars, unlike Vibhutis, do not need to satisfy their vital.

Why should they not?

> For the Avatar's vital has no cravings and desires as our vital has. He is above them. And if he seems to be satisfying them, it is only to acquire experience and knowledge of the vital world.

All that is wrong. The Avatar takes upon himself the nature of humanity in his instrumental parts, though the consciousness acting behind is divine.

> When the Divine descends here (as the Avatar), he has to veil himself and deal with the world and its movements like an ordinary man of the cosmic product.

Exactly.

> But behind he is perfectly conscious of what happens. The universal forces cannot make him their tool as they make us.

That does not prevent the Avatar from acting as men act and using the movements of Nature for his life and work.

23 July 1936

*

> Avatars can of course be married and satisfy their vital movements. But do they really indulge them as ordinary people? Don't they even before they begin the practice of Yoga, remain conscious of their union with the Divine above even while satisfying their outer being?

There is not necessarily any union above before the practice of Yoga. There is a connection of the consciousness with the veiled Divinity and an action out of that, but this is not dependent on the practice of Yoga. 25 July 1936

The Purpose of Past Avatars

> What could be the Divine's purpose in leaving Arjuna in such a helpless condition after his withdrawal from the world?

It is said that it was done to break Arjuna's pride so that he might see his strength was not his, but the Divine's alone.

> Throughout the history of human evolution we see that the Avatar brings light into the world. But when he retires, very little of this light remains. There is no substantial change. Does the Divine will it to be so?

You have only to consider what the state of humanity would have been if Krishna and others had not come. They would have been still near to the beast with no openings on the heights of the spirit. 20 October 1933

Recognition of Past Avatars

> Were the Avatars — the ten that have already come — known as Avatars in their own times?

Only to a few, according to the accounts. 14 November 1935

Sri Krishna and Sri Aurobindo

I thought I had already told you that your turn towards Krishna was not an obstacle. In any case I affirm that positively in answer to your question. If we consider the large and indeed predominant part he played in my own sadhana, it would be strange if the part he has in your sadhana could be considered objectionable. Sectarianism is a matter of dogma, ritual etc., not of spiritual experience; the concentration on Krishna is a self-offering to the *iṣṭa-deva*. If you reach Krishna you reach the Divine; if you can give yourself to him, you give yourself to me. Your inability to identify may be because you are laying too much stress on the physical aspects, consciously or unconsciously. 18 June 1943

*

You can't expect me to argue about my own spiritual greatness in comparison with Krishna's. The question itself would be relevant only if there were two sectarian religions in opposition, Aurobindoism and Vaishnavism, each insisting on its own God's greatness. That is not the case. And then what Krishna must I challenge, — the Krishna of the Gita who is the transcendent

Godhead, Paramatma, Parabrahma, Purushottama, the cosmic Deity, master of the universe, Vasudeva who is all, the immanent in the heart of all creatures, or the Godhead who was incarnate at Brindavan and Dwarka and Kurukshetra and who was the guide of my Yoga and with whom I realised identity? All that is not to me something philosophical or mental but a matter of daily and hourly realisation and intimate to the stuff of my consciousness. Then from what position can I adjudicate this dispute? *X* thinks I am superior in greatness, you think there can be nothing greater than Krishna; each is entitled to have his own view or feeling, whether it is itself right or not. It can be left there; it can be no reason for your leaving the Asram.

25 February 1945

Recognising Divinity

> After reading your answers, one part of me tries to justify itself and attribute to you the ordinary humanity.

Of course. Whatever does not say ditto to the human mind cannot be divine. That is the usual maxim of judgment. "The Divine must do what I want and think as I think, judge as I judge and support my ideas, interests or feelings against others, otherwise how can he be Divine? For whatever I think, feel or want must be the TRUTH." At least that seems to be the attitude of most sadhaks in the Asram.

*

> Shall man know of your divinity only after the supermind has descended?[10]

There is no necessity of the supermind for that. It is the inner consciousness that has to recognise — it is impossible for the outer mind to know it by its own reasonings.

---

[10] *It is not clear from the context whether the correspondent's "your" refers to Sri Aurobindo or the Mother or both. The same is true of "you" in the next letter. — Ed.*

The Divine Incarnate?

> I have a strong faith that you are the Divine Incarnate in *bhāgavatī tanu*. Am I right?

Follow your faith — it is not likely to mislead you.

12 August 1935

Reticence about the Question of Divinity

One thing. There is coming here in a day or two (perhaps tomorrow) a lady from Switzerland named Madame *X* who is a friend or acquaintance of *Y*'s mother; she will put up in Boudie House, perhaps for a month, perhaps for a shorter or longer time. We know nothing of her and it is not yet sure whether her profession of seeking the spiritual Truth is really deep or genuine. Therefore till we are fixed about her, Mother wishes that she should not be taken in intimately into the Asram life or told anything about inner matters of the Asram or spoken to about questions such as the divinity of the Mother or myself (for her we are simply spiritual Teachers) or shown freely messages or letters. A certain reserve is necessary until she has been thoroughly tested. I write this in view of the possibility of your and other sadhaks meeting her and an acquaintance forming, so as to put you on your guard. It is not a case like *Z* or even the *A*'s. 9 December 1936

*

Do you really think it necessary or advisable to publish an exegesis of this kind?[11] The last paragraphs are about things that concern only disciples or even only sadhaks of the Asram, it is not desirable to discuss them and publish to outsiders or the general public. What you write about my books would be considered as extravagant by most readers. Also we do not usually encourage sadhaks of the Asram to write about us as divine, though one or another may have done it — there is a certain reticence in this matter which is desirable in writing for the general public.

---

[11] *This is Sri Aurobindo's comment on an article that was submitted to him for approval. — Ed.*

Section Two

Help and Guidance

Help from the Guide

Satsanga

> It is a traditional belief that satsanga has great effect — the nearness or the personal contact of a spiritual person is supposed to produce great benefit to those who are in his company. How is it then that your earliest companions here did not derive any benefit from your company?

I don't know that the theory of satsanga can be taken so rigorously as that. Company always has an effect, but it may be less or more or even for the most part nullified by things in the person's own consciousness or nature or by other atmospheres. *X* and the others were greatly influenced by company with me in the old days but it was more in the direction of mental and vital development than spiritually, for at that time I was doing my own sadhana and not putting out any spiritual influence on others — only if anybody asked me, I told him what to do, the result of his effort was his own affair. 17 August 1936

Giving Mental Silence

> I wrote something on the subject of peace, which I showed to *X*. He said there were many errors in it, particularly where I wrote about philosophers and the silence.

There was no error. Ordinary human minds, Europeans especially, are accustomed to regard thought as indispensable and as the highest thing — so they are alarmed at silence. V. V. S. Aiyar when he was here asked for Yoga. I told him how to make his mind silent and it became silent. He immediately got frightened and said "I am becoming a fool, I can't think", — so I took what I had given away from him. That is how the average mind regards silence. 11 December 1935

Non-Intervention

Certainly, it is your full right to believe that I am not infallible. But I must also say that when you are convinced that you know the truth of things and can judge better than myself and are more eager for right and justice, that creates an attitude which makes it difficult for me to help you or for you to receive my help. If you have no reliance on me as guide but rather on your own enlightened consciousness, then surely it is the dictates of your enlightened consciousness that you should follow. As long as there is this, I am drawn back from intervening in any personal way in your life or sadhana. I hope that by following your inner light or by whatever guidance you will attain the realisation you desire. circa 1928

*

I do not believe in human judgments because I have always found them fallible — also perhaps because I have myself been so blackened by human judgments that I do not care to be guided by them with regard to others. All this however I write to explain my own point of view; I am not insisting on it as a law for others. I have never been in the habit of insisting that everybody must think as I do — any more than I insist on everybody following me and my yoga. December 1934

*

> You hardly take the initiative and ask people to do this or not to do that. It is your principle to give them a long rope either to hang themselves or have a taste of the bitter cup.

I am to put everybody into leading strings and walk about with them — or should it be the rope in their nose? Supermen cannot be made like that — the long rope is needed. 5 January 1935

*

> Why do you never write to me about my problems — unless I specifically ask?

I never do that to anybody unless he gives me the occasion. A sadhak must become conscious and lay himself before the light, see and reject and change. It is not the right method for us to interfere and lecture and point out this and point out that. That is the schoolmaster method — it does not work in the spiritual change. 10 May 1936

The Nature of His Help

I do not know what kind of help you want from me. There are two kinds of help in the spiritual field; the invisible help (which you can get for yourself if you know how to do it) and that which a spiritual guide gives to his disciples. The latter I give only to those whom I have accepted for my own path of Yoga. 15 November 1928

*

The doubt about the possibility of help is hardly a rational one, since all the evidence of life and of spiritual experience in the past and of the special experience of those, numerous enough, who have received help from the Mother and myself, is against the idea that no internal or spiritual help from one to another or from a Guru to his disciples or from myself to my disciples is possible. It is therefore not really a doubt arising from the reason but one that comes from the vital and physical mind that is troubling you. The physical mind doubts all that it has not itself experienced and even it doubts what it has itself experienced if that experience is no longer there or immediately palpable to it — the vital brings in the suggestions of despondency and despair to reinforce the doubt and prevent clear seeing. It is therefore a difficulty that cannot be effectively combated by the logical reason alone, but best by the clear perception that it is a self-created difficulty — a self-formed sanskara or mental formation which has become habitual and has to be broken up so that you may have a free mind and vital, free for experience.

As for the help, you expect a divine intervention to destroy the doubt, and the divine intervention is possible, but it comes usually only when the being is ready. You have indulged to a great extreme this habit of the recurrence of doubt, this mental formation or sanskara, and so the adverse force finds it easy to throw it upon you, to bring back the suggestion. You must have a steady working will to repel it whenever it comes and to refuse the tyranny of the sanskara of doubt — to annul the force of its recurrence. I think you have hardly done that in the past, you have rather supported the doubts when they came. So for some time at least you must do some hard work in the opposite direction. The help (I am not speaking of a divine intervention from above but of my help and the Mother's) will be there. It can be effective in spite of your physical mind, but it will be more effective if this steady working will of which I speak is there as its instrument. There are always two elements in spiritual success — one's own steady will and endeavour and the Power that in one way or another helps and gives the result of the endeavour.

I will do what is necessary to give the help you must receive. To say you cannot would not be true, for you have received times without number and it has helped you to recover.

26 January 1934

*

I am not aware of refusing help; but to receive the help is also necessary. When you are in this condition, you seem at once to shut yourself up against those from whom you seek help by a spirit of bitterness and anger. That is not an attitude which makes it easy to receive or be conscious and it is not easy either for the help to be effective. All I can do is to send you the Force that if received would help you to change your condition; it is what I have always done. But it cannot act effectively — or at least not at once — if the doors are shut against it.

23 May 1936

*

> But is it really impossible to give *X* some experience of peace, silence or meditation? That would mean that the Divine is not omnipotent.

My dear sir, what has the omnipotence of the Divine to do with it? In this world there are conditions for everything — if a man refuses to fulfil the conditions for Yoga, what is the use of appealing to the Divine's omnipotence? He does not believe that the Divine is here. He regards us as Gurus. Yes, but he begins by disputing all my way of Yoga. He does not understand and does not care to understand my processes. He has ideas of his own, does not want peace or equality or surrender or anything else, wants only Krishna and bhakti. He has read things in Ramakrishna and elsewhere as to how to do it, insists on following that. Rejects all suggestions I can make as unpracticable. Erects a sadhana of violent meditation, japa, prayer — for these are the traditional things, has no idea that there are conditions without which they cannot be effective. Meditates, japs, prays himself into pits of dullness and disappears. Also tries in spite of my objections a wrestling tapasya which puts his vital into revolt. Then by a stroke of good luck I succeed unexpectedly in making a sort of psychic opening. Decides to try surrender, purification of the heart, rejection of ego, true humility etc. — tries a little of it and is really progressing. After two months finds that Krishna is not appearing — gets disgusted and drops the beastly thing. And after all that he is always telling me "What an impotent Guru you are! You are evidently able to do nothing for me." Evidently! That's *X*. 28 May 1936

Special Relation with Disciples: Two Examples

(1)

But after all, without putting forth eighteen visible arms (perhaps, since it is a symbol, by putting them forth internally) I hope to become one day so divine even in the body consciousness that I shall be able to satisfy everybody! But you can't hurry a transformation like that. I must ask for time.

Why do you always insist on cherishing the idea that I refuse all human love? I have surely written to you to the contrary. I don't reject it, neither human nor vital love. But I want that behind the vital there shall be the constant support of the psychic *human* love (not all at once the divine), because that alone can prevent the movements which make you restless, obscured and miserable. In asking this I am surely not asking anything excessive or beyond your power. circa 1931

*

I meant that even before I met you for the first time, I knew of you and felt at once the contact of one with whom I had that relation which declares itself constantly through many lives and followed your career (all that I could hear about it) with a close sympathy and interest. It is a feeling which is never mistaken and gives the impression of one not only close to one but part of one's existence. The Mother had not heard of you before you came here for the first time, but even on that occasion on seeing you — though without any actual meeting — she had a sympathetic contact. The relation that is so indicated always turns out to be that of those who have been together in the past and were predestined to join again (though the past circumstances may not be known) drawn together by old ties. It was the same inward recognition in you (apart even from the deepest spiritual connection) that brought you. If the outer consciousness does not yet fully realise, it is the crust always created by a new physical birth that prevents it. But the soul knows all the while.

Your poem is very beautiful.

I am aware of the terribly trying period that is upon you as upon us just now, but you must try to stand firmly until we may come through into the sunshine hereafter. 27 February 1935

*

I have not time to write a long letter. I can write only this. You are not to leave Pondicherry by this morning's train or at all. You have to come and see the Mother at 9.30 and speak to her heart to heart. Both the Mother and myself have lavished much love and care on you and you are certainly not going to make a return like this — it is impossible. Do not believe all you hear or allow yourself to be driven off your balance by falsehoods of the kind that have been retailed to you. You do not belong to yourself and have not the right to do what you propose to do: you belong to the Divine and to myself and the Mother. I have cherished you like a friend and a son and have poured on you my force to develop your powers — until the time should come for you to make an equal development in the Yoga. We claim the right to keep you as our own here with us. Throw away this despair — rise above the provocations of others — turn back to the Mother. 16 May 1937

(2)

> I want to love and love completely and lose myself in love. If one can think of losing oneself for mortal love, why not for the love of the Divine?

Well, why not? But it must be done in the divine way, not in the mortal. Otherwise —

> Let me then say definitely that I love you and you love me a little and let us meet somewhere in this matter. You may remark, "This man has gone mad, otherwise why all these asthmatic gaspings?" Yes, I am mad, Sir, and impatient too.

Ummm! don't you think there are enough people in that condition already here without the Asram doctor adding himself to the collection?

> Who can be and remain otherwise unless and until one is divine oneself?

Unfortunately, experience seems to show that one must be divine oneself before one can bear the pressure of divine love.

8 April 1935

*

> The Divine loves all equally but there seem to be some who are dearer to Him. You seem to say some such thing in *Essays on the Gita* — that Arjuna was dearer to Krishna because he

> came nearer to the Divine and those who do that will always be dearer to Him.

I don't say; it is the Gita that says it — or rather there are two separate slokas; one says that the Divine makes no difference, the other says that Arjuna is specially dear to him.

> It seems to me that if *X* and myself, for example, were to transgress some vital rules of the Asram, I would get a thunderbolt from you while he would get nothing. In my saner moments I have tried to look at it more rationally.

That does not stand. Sometimes you might get nothing except perhaps an invisible stare; sometimes I might say "Now look here, *Y*, don't make an immortal ass of yourself — *that* is not the transformation wanted." Still another time I might shout "Now! now! What the hell! what the blazes!" So it would depend on the occasion, not only on the person.

> There are many instances to show that some persons are dearer to the Divine than others. Besides Krishna and Arjuna, we have the instance of Buddha and Ananda.

There is also St. John, the beloved disciple.

> Then again, Vivekananda was dearer to Ramakrishna than other disciples. Chaitanya showered his grace on Madhai and Jagai, but were they closer to him than Nitai?

But he had love for them (তাই বলে কি প্রেম দিব না?).

> Some say that because through one person, chances of manifestation are greater, or because he is more open, or is a Vibhuti, he will be nearer to the Divine. That, I think, can be swept aside since degrees of manifestation can never be a criterion. What is it that determines this? I really don't know.

Of course you don't — nor does anybody. Is love a creation of the reason? or dealt out by this or that scale? Or does the Divine calculate "This fellow has so much of this or that quality. I will give him just so much more love than to that other"?

> This question is not only of theoretical interest to us, but also of practical importance, since in our stumblings and gropings the Divine here may have a soft corner for some, and not perhaps for others to the same extent.

All that is rather beside the point. There is a universal divine love that is given equally to all — but also there is *a special relation* with each man — it is not a question of more or less, though it may appear so. But even that less or more cannot be judged by human standards. The man who gets a blow may, if he has a certain relation, feel it as a divine caress; he may even say, erecting his own standard, "She loves me more than others, because to others she would not give that blow, to me she felt she could give it," and it would be quite as good a standard as the kind treatment one — as standards go. But no standards apply. For in each case it is according to the relation. The cause of the relation? It differs in each case. Cast your plummet into the deep and perhaps you shall find it — or perhaps you will hit something that has nothing at all to do with it. 9 June 1935

No Partiality

> The worst suggestion of the hostile forces is that you are partial in your dealings. When this is accepted a wall comes between you and the sadhak and there is a revolt and then there may be an end of the sadhana!

Yes, that is their aim — for it is their one short cut to success, to separate the sadhak from his soul. 3 May 1935

Sri Aurobindo's Compassion

> Why is the flower symbolising your compassion so delicate and why does it wither away so soon?

No, the compassion does not wither with its symbol — flowers are the moment's representations of things that are in themselves eternal. 9 August 1936

Outward and Inward Guidance

The outward touch is helpful; but the inward is still more helpful when one is accustomed to receive it with a certain concreteness — and the outward touch is not always fully possible, while the inward can be there all the time.

*

The outer guidance is meant only as an aid to the inner working, especially for the correction of any erroneous movement and sometimes in order to point out the right road. It is not meant except at a very early stage to satisfy mental questionings or to stimulate a mental activity. 26 March 1935

*

> Once I asked you to give some advice as regards the treatment of a patient. You replied: "I have no medico in me, not even a latent medico."[1]

Of course not. If it were there, I would develop it and run the Dispensary myself. What would be the need of *X* or *Y* or *Z*?

> The other day, in regard to that baby, you wrote that Mother has no intuition for infants.

No intuition for stuffing infants with heterogeneous medicines.

> Well then, if you have no latent medico and Mother has no intuition for infants, can you tell me how by the force of devotion, faith, surrender, etc., is one going to get guidance from you?

What logic! Because Mother and myself are not engineers, therefore *A* can't develop the right intuition in engineering? or because neither I nor Mother are experts in Gujarati prosody, therefore *B* can't develop the inspiration for his poems?

---

[1] *See the letter of 1 April 1935 on page 505. — Ed.*

> If the divine can't guide me externally, which is much easier, how can he guide me internally?

Oh Lord! what a question! To guide internally is a million times easier than to guide externally. Let us suppose I want General Miaja to beat Franco's fellows back at Guadalajara (please pronounce properly), I put the right force on him and he wakes up and, with his military knowledge and capacity, does the right thing and it's done. But if I, having no latent or patent military genius or knowledge in me, write to him saying "do this, do that", he won't do it and I would not be able to do it either. It is operations of two quite different spheres of consciousness. You absolutely refuse to make the necessary distinction between the two fields and their processes and then you jumble the two together and call it logic.

> If the medico can be revealed from within, why could it not be revealed from without and tell me what to do?

Damn it, man! Intuition and revelation are inner things — they don't belong to the outer mind.

> If you or Mother can't guide me concretely, how will the guidance come later on, I wonder?

Do you imagine that I tell you inwardly or outwardly what expressions to use in your Bengali poems when you are writing? Still you write from an inspiration which I have set going.

6 April 1937

Help through Writing and through Other Means

I must point out to you that the value of your staying here does not depend on my writing to you or not, but on whether you have the true inner relation with us, whether you are able to receive anything from us and whether you can profit spiritually by what you receive. All that depends in the last resort on you.

12 September 1932

*

My touch is always there; but you must learn to feel it not only with the outward contact as a medium — a touch of the pen — but in its direct action on the mind and heart and vital and body. There would then be very much less difficulty — or no difficulty at all.

27 March 1933

*

Letters and answering of letters are not indispensable for the sadhana; the sadhak's reception of silent help is much more important; the written word is only a minor means, and to expect answers because others have them is quite a wrong idea. The only necessity in this sadhana is to open yourself to the Divine Force; if one is open the necessary understanding or knowledge will come of itself through spiritual experience.

23 May 1933

*

> Sometimes I think it would be better not to ask you questions about my difficulties, but simply to state them. But I find that if I can't put things in the form of questions, I hardly write anything.

Out of one thousand mental questions and answers there are only one or two here and there that are really of any dynamic assistance — while a single inner response or a little growth of consciousness will do what those thousand questions and answers could not do. The Yoga does not proceed by *upadeśa* but by inner influence. To state your condition, experiences etc. and open to the help is far more important than question-asking — especially the questions about why and how which your physical mind so persistently puts.

> I have realised that if we surrender ourselves to you once and open inwardly, you pour into us as much knowledge as we can hold.

What I write usually helps only the mind and that too very little, for people do not really understand what I write — they put their own constructions on it. The inner help is quite different and there can be no comparison with it, for it recreates the substance of the consciousness, not the mind only. 4 June 1936

*

> You said, "What I write usually helps only the mind and that too very little, for people do not really understand what I write." Is this because you are writing from too high a plane for us to understand?

It is because the mind by itself cannot understand things that are beyond it. It constructs its own idea out of something that it catches or thinks it has caught and puts that down as the whole meaning of what has been written. Each mind puts its own ideas in place of the Truth. 6 June 1936

*

> For some time I have not written to you, but whether you think of this child or not, every minute I think of you.

No, I don't forget you if you don't write. I think of you and concentrate for you every day.

Guidance through Correspondence

Utility of Correspondence

It would be a great mistake for you to stop writing in the book;[1] it is a means of direct and concrete contact with me and the help I can give you — apart from that which I always send you at all times. It is an adverse suggestion and influence which wants you to stop writing, because it wishes to cut the connection established through the book so that you might find it more difficult to feel my help coming to you.

It is absurd to break off because you are for the time being unsuccessful in keeping up an uninterrupted progress; the interruptions come, they have to be passed through and then the progress begins again. The difficulties will be got rid of, but they cannot be got rid of in a moment.

Keep the book and write in it whenever you can.

12 March 1932

*

There is no reason why you should stop writing letters — it is only one kind of letter that is in question and that is not a very good means of contact; you yourself felt the reaction was not favourable. I asked you to write because your need of unburdening the perilous matter in you was very great at the time and, although it did not relieve you at once, it kept me exactly informed of the turns of the fight and helped me to put a certain pressure on the attacking forces at a critical moment. But I do not believe any of these necessities now exists. It is rather a discouragement from within yourself of the source of these movements that is now the need; putting them into words would rather, as I have said, give them more body and substance.

---

[1] *The notebook in which the correspondent recorded her activities and experiences and asked questions, which she submitted periodically to Sri Aurobindo. — Ed.*

It is an undoubted fact proved by hundreds of instances that for many the exact statement of their difficulties to us is the best and often, though not always, an immediate, even an instantaneous means of release. This has often been seen by sadhaks not only here, but far away, and not only for inner difficulties, but for illness and outer pressure of unfavourable circumstances. But for that a certain attitude is necessary — either a strong faith in the mind and vital or a habit of reception and response in the inner being. Where this habit has been established, I have seen it to be almost unfailingly effective, even when the faith was uncertain or the outer expression in the mind vague, ignorant or in its form mistaken or inaccurate. Moreover, this method succeeds most when the writer can write as a witness of his own movements and state them with an exact and almost impartial precision as a phenomenon of his nature or the movement of a force affecting him from which he seeks release. On the other hand if in writing his vital gets seized by the thing he is writing of, and takes up the pen for him, — expressing and often supporting doubt, revolt, depression, despair, it becomes a very different matter. Even here sometimes the expression acts as a purge; but also the statement of the condition may lend energy to the attack at least for the moment and may seem to enhance and prolong it, exhausting it by its own violence perhaps for the time and so bringing in the end a relief, but at a heavy cost of upheaval and turmoil — and at the risk of the recurring decimal movement, because the release has come by temporary exhaustion of the attacking force, not by rejection and purification through the intervention of the Divine Force with the unquestioning assent and support of the sadhak. There has been a confused fight, an intervention in a hurly-burly, not a clear alignment of forces — and the intervention of the helping force is not felt in the confusion and the whirl. This is what used to happen in your crises; the vital in you was deeply affected and began supporting and expressing the reasonings of the attacking force — in place of a clear observation and expression of the difficulty by the vigilant mind laying the state of things in the light for the higher Light and Force to act upon it, there was a vehement statement of the case for the Opposition.

Many sadhaks (even "advanced") had made a habit of this kind of expression of their difficulties and some still do it; they cannot even yet understand that it is not the way. At one time it was a sort of gospel in the Asram that this was the thing to be done, — I don't know on what ground, for it was never part of my teaching about the Yoga, — but experience has shown that it does not work; it lands one in the recurring decimal notation, an unending round of struggle. It is quite different from the movement of self-opening that succeeds, (here too not in a moment, but still sensibly and progressively) and of which those are thinking who insist on everything being opened to the Guru so that the help may be more effectively there. 17 December 1932

*

About the correspondence, I would be indeed a brainless fool if I made it the central aim of my life to con an absurd mountain of letters and leave all higher aims aside! If I have given importance to the correspondence, it is because it was an effective instrument towards my central purpose — there are a large number of sadhaks whom it has helped to awake from lethargy and begin to tread the way of spiritual experience, others whom it has carried from a small round of experience to a flood of realisations, some who have been absolutely hopeless for years who have undergone a conversion and entered from darkness into an opening of light. Others no doubt have not profited or profited only a little. Also there were some who wrote at random and wasted our time. But I think we can say that for the majority of those who wrote, there has been a real progress. No doubt also it was not the correspondence in itself but the Force that was increasing in its pressure on the physical nature which was able to do all this, but a canalisation was needed, and this served the purpose. There were many for whom it was not necessary, others for whom it was not suitable. If it had been a mere intellectual asking of questions it would have been useless, but the substantial part was about sadhana and experience and it was that that proved to be of great use.

But as time went on the correspondence began to grow too much and reached impossible proportions — yet it was difficult to stop the flood or to make distinctions which would not have been understood — so we have to seek a way out and as yet have only found palliatives. The easy way would be if those who have opened would now rely mainly on the inner communication with only a necessary word now and then — some have begun to do so. I suppose in the end we shall be able to reduce the thing to manageable proportions. 12 January 1933

*

> Sometimes I feel I should not write about my experiences, etc. to you because you know everything. But at times something in me insists on writing. What should I do? Does writing in detail about everything help? In what way?

You need not write every day but from time to time — first, that there may be a direct control on your experiences and, secondly, a more precise help from us not only in general but in particulars.
31 March 1933

*

> For some time I have been thinking about ceasing to write to you. Today I was overcome by vital problems. Finally at 4.30 I sent the letter I had written earlier. Why should the idea of not writing or not sending the letter cause so much difficulty?

It is because the idea came from a wrong source and was an attempt of the wrong forces to enter and disturb. It was not so much the idea in itself, but the idea as an expression of dissatisfaction and impatience. Immediately the hostiles took hold of it as a line of entry for all the old movements once associated with this kind of dissatisfaction and impatience. Moreover these letters of yours and my answers have been a strong means of canalising our help and making it habitually available to you and effective — not by the words themselves alone but by the forces behind them. 17 April 1933

*

> Is it not true that the letters we receive from you are full of power?

Yes, power is put into them. 8 June 1933

*

> Before reading your answers to my letters I feel as if I would never be able to read or understand them. What is this activity in me?

A useless activity of the vital mind. You should keep it quiet and receive with a silent mind waiting for light. In the silent mind one can receive an answer even if I write nothing. 9 June 1933

*

> I have the idea that since we can communicate everything to you by prayer, why do we need to write? Is there any fallacy in my reasoning?

It is always well to write what goes on in you — but it need not be done every day. The essential is to keep nothing concealed.
4 August 1933

*

> I have now made it a rule to write to you every evening. I will not, however, expect any replies — I will be quite satisfied with the writing, because I have experienced that the writing itself is sufficient to dissolve 95 percent of the struggle or the difficulty.

This I quite approve. You should certainly do so and stick to the rule. I shall answer at least once a day, twice whenever I find it necessary or an answer occurs to me. 8 September 1933

*

> Someone told me that those who write to you do not or are not able to receive more help than they would otherwise get, and that therefore there is not much use in writing. Do not such ideas hamper your work?

Of course they do. It is a useless activity of the mind always trying to pass judgment on things because it does not understand them. If the sadhaks' writing to me about their sadhana were useless would I spend half the day and more in reading and answering, putting aside much other work? — if it were useless I would ask them to stop, not encourage them to write.

12 September 1933

*

> It seems as if those who are not writing to you daily are not worse off for it. What is this due to?

Either they have not that same push for the sadhana or they feel less need to lay open their difficulties because they have some line of positive experience which they confidently follow.

24 September 1933

*

> Even for those who confidently follow a line of positive experience, and do not write to you often, is there not the danger of wrong suggestions and constructions coming to them and also of an absence of variety or integrality of experience?

Yes, there are both these dangers. Those even who are not visited by serious difficulties, are exposed to the latter danger of remaining always on the same plane of experience. But again many do not write because they are not yet prepared for the pressure on them to progress rapidly which that would mean.

25 September 1933

*

> I keep writing one and the same thing. Why? Because some part of me pushes me to do so. What is this part?

It may be the inner mental, it may be the psychic.

28 November 1933

*

Writing is needed by some, it is not needed or only a little by others. On the whole those who write get a more steady incentive to progress than if they did not write — some could hardly go on without this tangible support. It seems to me that writing is very necessary for you still. 31 January 1934

*

Is the asking of questions a help to Yoga?

Questions are meant for getting light on the things that are going on in one. It is the statement of what is going on that helps to surrender. 3 April 1934

*

No letter in the evening also, nor did Mother see you at the meditation. Whatever depression or other disturbing attack may come, do not absent yourself from pranam or evening meditation or stop writing. All attacks can be met and overcome, but it is by taking our help close and tangible that they can go quickly. I hope that you will not fail to write tomorrow (Sunday) and let us know all. 5 May 1934

*

What is your purpose in encouraging the sadhaks to write to you? Why did you create this channel?

It was created in order that they may have some direct connection and help. It depends on how they use their opportunity.

12 May 1934

*

If I have to answer fully all the points in your long letter, I fear it will take me until Doomsday — though that, according to some calculations, is not far off. I will try to do it in a comparatively brief and unsatisfactory way, I have indeed written a good deal already. But as it may take me time to finish, I send an interim note.

I do not know why you should be suddenly bewildered by what I wrote — it is nothing new and we have been saying it since a whole eternity. I wrote this short answer in reference to a question which supposed that certain "perfections" must be demanded of the Divine Manifestation which seemed to me quite irrelevant to the reality. I put forward two propositions which appear to me indisputable unless we are to revise all spiritual knowledge in favour of modern European ideas about things.

First, the Divine Manifestation even when it manifests in mental and human ways has behind it a consciousness greater than the mind and not bound by the petty mental and moral conventions of this very ignorant human race — so that to impose these standards on the Divine is to try to do what is irrational and impossible. Secondly, this Divine Consciousness behind the apparent personality is concerned with only two things in a fundamental way — the Truth above and here below the Lila and the purpose of the incarnation or manifestation and it does what is necessary for that in the way its greater than human consciousness sees to be the necessary and intended way. I shall try if I can develop that when I write about it — perhaps I shall take your remarks about Rama and Krishna as the starting-point — but that I shall see hereafter.

But I do not understand how all that can prevent me from answering mental questions. On my own showing, if it is necessary for the divine purpose, it has to be done. Ramakrishna himself whom you quote for the futility of asking questions answered thousands of questions, I believe. But the answers must be such as Ramakrishna gave and such as I try to give, answers from a higher spiritual experience, from a deeper source of knowledge and not lucubrations of the logical intellect trying to coordinate its ignorance; still less can they be a placing of the Divine or the Divine Truth before the judgment of the intellect to be condemned or acquitted by that authority — for the authority here has no sufficient jurisdiction or competence. This also I shall try to explain — it is what I have started to do in a longer letter. 20 May 1934

*

Someone asked me if it would be possible to have direct communication with you and dispense with writing letters to get your guidance. I replied that it would not be possible unless

> one had developed the power of telepathy and was able to receive your replies inwardly. But even then there would be the possibility of obscuration and distortion in reception, unless there was a complete psychisation of the consciousness. Even with complete psychisation it would not be possible to know all from within, for example about the experiences of higher stages like Overmind and Supermind, because the psychic has no instrumentality to know about them. Communication through letters would, therefore, still be necessary. But if a person had a perfect *rapport* with the Mother, he might be able to dispense with the need of communicating through letters. But would even a person who had realised the Overmind have such a perfect *rapport*?

I think it would need the Supermind itself to establish such a complete *rapport*. The psychic can do much in that direction but on condition it has a complete control. Overmind and Intuition could do it on their own plane, but here they have to descend into the physical consciousness and that interferes with its immense obscurity in addition to the distortions of mind and vital.

27 May 1934

*

> I am sorry I could not write to you all these days. The fact is that something prevented me from approaching you. I have not been able to make out what it was. Will you kindly enlighten me?

It may be some indolence in the physical consciousness. It is always best to write at least thrice a week, even if there is nothing very special to say, so as to maintain the physical as well as the inner contact. 19 June 1934

*

> Everyone thinks that as soon as you read our letters we get the necessary help. In my own case I get relief only after Mother's touch at Pranam. Prayers are not heard then?

It depends on how far the inner being is awake — otherwise one needs a physical *avalambana*. There are some people who get the relief only after we read a letter, others get it immediately they write or before it has reached us or after it has reached but before we have read. Others get it simply by referring the whole matter to us mentally. Idiosyncracies! 20 March 1935

*

I cannot undertake to be telling you all the time all that is not perfectly Yogic in the details of your action from morning to night. These are things to see to yourself. It is the movements of your sadhana that you place before me and it is these that I have to see whether they are the right thing or not. 7 May 1936

*

> When I wrote that while reading your answers I experienced something coming out of my heart, you replied, "It depends on the nature of the movement. Something from the psychic?" I think it was something from the psychic. But how did it get connected with my reading your answers?

The psychic can be connected with anything that gives room for love or bhakti.

> When I was reading these answers with love and joy, I felt some sort of psychic opening which was the most important part of my reaction. Could you explain this?

You have explained it yourself — it is the psychic contact with what is in or behind the answers — what comes out into them from myself. 26 June 1936

*

No need to cut down your letters — I am a quick reader (at least of English, provided the handwriting is not on my own model) — it is only writing that takes time. So you must not mind short or at least comparatively short answers. It is quite the best to let the pen run and say everything. 26 June 1936

*

I do not understand your point about raising up a new race by writing trivial letters. Of course not — nor by writing important letters either; even if I were to spend my time writing fine poems it would not build up a new race. Each activity is important in its own place — an electron or a molecule or a grain may be small things in themselves, but in their place they are indispensable to the building up of a world, — it cannot be made up only of mountains and sunsets and streamings of the aurora borealis — though these have their place there. All depends on the force behind these things and the purpose in their action — and that is known to the Cosmic Spirit which is at work, — and it works, I may add, not by the mind or according to human standards but by a greater consciousness which, starting from an electron, can build up a world and, using "a tangle of ganglia", can make them the base here for the works of the Mind and Spirit in Matter, produce a Ramakrishna, or a Napoleon, or a Shakespeare. Is the life of a great poet, either, made up only of magnificent and important things? How many "trivial" things had to be dealt with and done before there could be produced a *King Lear* or a *Hamlet*! Again, according to your own reasoning, would not people be justified in mocking at your pother — so they would call it, I do not — about metre and scansion and how many ways a syllable can be read? Why, they might say, is X [*the recipient of this letter*] wasting his time in trivial prosaic things like this when he might have been spending it in producing a beautiful lyric or fine music? But the worker knows and respects the material with which he must work and he knows why he is busy with "trifles" and small details and what is their place in the fullness of his labour. December 1936

*

> You say certain things that human nature does not find so easy or natural.

If I said only things that human nature finds easy and natural, that would certainly be very comfortable for the disciples, but there would be no room for any spiritual aim or endeavour.

Spiritual aims and methods are not easy or natural (e.g. as quarrelling, sex-indulgence, greed, indolence, acquiescence in all imperfections are easy and natural) and if people become disciples, they are supposed to follow spiritual aims and endeavours, however hard and above ordinary nature, and not the things that are easy and natural. 3 May 1937

*

> Why do you lay so much stress on our writing everything to you? Can't we pray to you and ask for help? Isn't it as good as writing?

Not writing means trying to conceal. That is a suggestion of the vital. 2 August 1937

*

The Mother is positively opposed to your suspending all correspondence with me, she thinks it is very dangerous at this stage and juncture of your sadhana. I am not, myself also, at ease about it. You have entered into a phase and adopted a method which may be very effective, — solitude, direct pressure for immediate realisation etc. but which can involve also serious risks. We consider it necessary at this time that you should keep me informed of what is going on in you and what you are doing. A general support and protection may not be sufficient at such a time or in such a passage. It is not indispensable to write every day, but some report of these things is necessary so that I may intervene at once if that is needed or give an immediate help or an indication or direction when that is advisable. Since you have turned to me as your guru, and that quite apart from the question of identity with the Divine, and since you acknowledge your inability to go to the end unaided — very few have been able to do that, — it would be illogical and perilous to attempt to take the kingdom of heaven by violence alone and in the dark. I am always after you with my force, even though you don't feel it, but that may not be sufficient at this time.

Suitable Subjects for Correspondence

> Is it possible for you to give a private reply to questions on political matters?

It depends on the circumstances. I have for a long time past eschewed politics entirely and I could not answer questions of a political character. Apart from that I avoid usually racial and religious questions, especially if they are controversial, confining myself to things of a spiritual or cultural character (literature, art etc.). There too I write almost entirely to disciples or seekers of the Yoga. 1 February 1936

Useful and Useless Letters

> What is meant by vital nature?

These are questions that anybody in the Asram could answer. This and questions such as "what is meant by faithfulness". It is much better if you get these things explained to you by someone in Gujarati so that you can understand and be able to apply your own understanding whenever needed. If I have to answer philosophically, it would take ten pages for each question and you would understand nothing. Otherwise I have to answer offhand and such an answer also will be of no use to you. You can ask practical questions about your own experiences and I will try to answer. 19 June 1933

*

> Would it be all right if I asked questions pertaining to the *Arya*?

It is not possible for me to write answers to such questions as they would have to be very long — the *Arya* was written so that people might get the answers there. I can't write them all over again. 31 January 1934

*

It is better to write what is in one's mind. Some people simply write about their experiences (dreams, visions, descents of force), but nothing precise about the movements of their mind and vital with the result that these remain pretty much as they were and there is no harmony between the inner and the outer being and as a result the inner also does not get its full or proper development.

17 June 1934

*

> I feel no interest in sadhana or even in the outer work. Whatever help or protection you send stops before it can enter me. What is the reason for all that?

The reason is quite clear from what you write in the next para. There is something in the consciousness that wanted the letters and answers not simply for help in sadhana but as a personal satisfaction with egoistic elements in it — pride, jealousy of others (*X, Y*), desire to be equal with them, demand for special consideration etc. Also it wanted nice, pleasing and elaborate answers. All that is the usual wrong attitude of the vital which is the stumbling-block for so many sadhaks and prevents true psychic love from developing, replacing it by the vital kind full of demand, ego, jealousy, revolt etc. — and it has been the ruin of some. All that you had thrown out of the higher parts, and quieted it elsewhere, but it remained sticking somewhere and when correspondence was suspended, the hostile forces took advantage of the fact that you were not allowed to write every day as before to raise up these feelings and you did not repel them with sufficient force to put an end to the attack. Hence they continue.

25 February 1935

*

> I find great difficulty in understanding what is the difference between the inner mind and the vital, physical and outer minds. Also I want to know what is the physical consciousness and what are the different places of these things. If these things have forms but are not material, how am I to get the idea of them?

An answer would mean writing several essays for which I have no time.

You [*Sri Aurobindo's secretary*] can tell him that it would be a waste of time to think of these things now — it is only when experience comes that it would be possible to distinguish the different parts.

Quietness and calm cannot come all at once — always at the beginning thoughts come and the mind interferes with its activity. One has to persevere, to detach oneself from the mental activity till one feels oneself as separate from it. 29 July 1936

*

You can write whatever is in your mind — but these are outward things and you should not allow outward things to interfere with your inner opening.

Not Always Possible to Answer

I answer letters whenever I consider it necessary; I cannot bind myself to answer every letter I receive. If I did, I would have to be writing all the 24 hours without time for rest or meals or anything else! 28 April 1932

*

You can write whenever you like. But I told you at the beginning I cannot answer all letters — if I did that I would have to work all the 24 hours at nothing else. 15 April 1933

*

> Many times questions come to the mind like: "What is the Divine?" Is it not better to write them to you?

Provided you do not expect me to answer always. People write to me not for getting mental information or answering questions but to lay before me their experiences and difficulties and get my help. When it is necessary, I answer questions, but I cannot be doing it all the time. 26 June 1933

*

Continue to write letters giving your experiences and your condition from time to time. Do not however expect an answer always. When it is needed, I will answer. 22 August 1933

*

If an answer is very necessary, I give it even if there is no time. If there is time, I give an answer often even if it is not indispensable. 19 October 1933

*

I told you at the beginning that I will not be able to answer everything you write. You are quite mistaken in thinking that I answer everything other people write in their books. Out of the fifty or more books I get and the sixty or more letters I pass over more than half without any answer and even so it takes me 11 hours to deal with all that correspondence. The other sadhaks do not stop writing on that account — they know that it brings help to them to write. 22 November 1933

*

> For the past six years I have not sent you any communications. I would now like to do so once or twice a week: sadhana, experiences, etc.

It is just the time when I am trying to diminish letters and books, so that the Mother has some time to rest at night and myself some time to do the real work instead of passing day and night in sending and answering correspondence. This is not the time to add fresh correspondence.

Moreover it is not worthwhile sending experiences merely to ask whether they are true. The truth has to be found out by their effect in liberating the consciousness and changing the nature, ridding you of ego etc. Observe that in yourself and it will be sufficient. 5 December 1935

*

When what you write is correct, I say nothing — when it is your physical mind that brings in wrong ideas, I correct.

10 May 1936

*

> Sir, you say you keep no files, throw none of my regal documents into the waste paper basket; where then is the last dream-hewn epistle flown?

You do not make the necessary distinctions. I said I don't have any file of your immortal poems, I said nothing about your more mortal epistles. 18 June 1938

*

> How is it, Lord, that even the mortal epistles have joyously returned without one blemish? I take it that there was nothing in them to comment upon?

Yes? I was under the impression that I had decorated them with my indecipherable lotus handwriting. 20 June 1938

Time and Correspondence

You do not realise that I have to spend 12 hours over the ordinary correspondence, numerous reports, etc. I work 3 hours in the afternoon and the whole night up to 6 in the morning over this. So if I get a long letter with many questions I may not be able to answer it all at once. To get into such a disturbance over it and want to throw off the Yoga is quite unreasonable.

17 June 1933

*

It is true that the flow of notebooks and letters is becoming so heavy that time is insufficient to deal with them. Mother favoured the movement, but it is becoming excessive in proportions. The best thing would be for you to write *briefly* each thing you have to say — then you can write every day — otherwise it is better to write from time to time, say twice a week. But the first way would be best; if things are briefly and clearly said, then there will be time. 25 June 1933

*

The books and letters are not going to be discontinued — but I shall have to take one day off in the week (Sunday). The volume of the correspondence is becoming enormous and it takes me all the night and a good part of the day — apart from the work done separately by the Mother who has also to work the greater part of the night in addition to her day's work. It is this that makes the pranam later and later, for we do not finish till 7.30 or after. Also much work falls in arrears and piles up and many things that have their importance have had to be discontinued. Some relief is necessary. If all the sadhaks were more discreet, it would be better. But this does not apply to you, for you keep always within the limits. 19 December 1933

*

I have no time for anything just now — I have become a correspondence-reading and answering machine. I hope to make up when things are a little easier. 19 August 1934

*

Absolutely no time tonight. I have been dealing with correspondence since 9.30 p.m. (to say nothing of the afternoon) and am likely to have to go on till 7.00 a.m. or longer. 5 January 1935

*

> Someone told me that *X* is translating Saratchandra's novel into English, half of which is corrected by you. It amounts to this: that *X* is making you translate somebody's novel instead of himself translating *Arya*, which would be more reasonable. What ordeals for you to pass through! Perhaps the person who remarked in a London paper that you had written five hundred books was not quite wrong; by this time your letters to sadhaks would make three or four books for each of them and if to these are added your poems, translations and other writings the total would not be less than five hundred.

The idea of *X* translating *Arya* makes the hair stand on end! It would be much easier for me to write 500 books. Perhaps I have done so — if all I have scribbled is to be taken into account against me. But as most of it will not see the light of day — at least of public day, I may still escape establishing the record in book-production. 3 February 1935

*

> About my essay, you could read the first two pages one day, another pair of pages the next, and so on — if you believe that reading it at a stretch would interfere with your daily work.

I have had to suppress all extra work for the last 2 or 3 days and there is a mountain of arrears awaiting me. If my eye is all right tomorrow, I shall see if anything can be done, but it is not very likely. 9 March 1935

*

> I am surprised and sad to hear that you can still be affected by these physical ailments!

What *I* am surprised at is that I have any eye left at all after the last two or three years of half-day and all night work. The difficulty for resting is that the sadhaks have begun pouring paper again without waiting for the withdrawal of the notice — not all of course, but many. And there is a stack of outside correspondence still unanswered! I am persuading my eye, but it is still red and sulky and reproachful. Revolted, what? Thinks too much is imposed on it and no attention paid to its needs, desires, preferences etc. Will have to reason with it for a day or two longer.

> How I wish, as a medical man, I mean, I could enforce absolute rest to the eyes and issue a bulletin.

[*Underlining "absolute rest":*] It does not exist in this world — not even in the Himalayas — except of course for the inner being which can always be in absolute rest. 9 March 1935

*

I have today fifty letters each 2000 pages long — of course this is not a mathematically accurate statement, but it expresses the impression they make on me — so excuse brevity in my answer to your length. 20 July 1935

*

> I couldn't finish copying the poem I want to send to you. Perhaps I will send it tomorrow morning. Since you "sleep" up to 12 a.m., I hear, you will in any case see it after 3 p.m.

It depends on the time I go to sleep. If it is at 9 or 10 a.m. I may sleep beyond 12. As for poetry, I see it only at night. There is no time in the afternoon except for the letters. 31 August 1935

*

> No time, no time! It is going to be an eternal problem with you, it seems! After the reduction of correspondence — cutting of the evening mail — it leaves you absolutely free for other things. I suppose you are working at your *Savitri*.

Where is the reduction of correspondence? I have to be occupied with correspondence from 8.0 to 12 p.m. (minus one hour), again after bath and meal from 2.30 to 7 a.m. All that apart from afternoon work. And still much is left undone. And you think I can write *Savitri*? You evidently believe in miracles!
23 January 1936

*

> Do you really mean that till 7 a.m. your pen goes on at an aeroplanic speed? Then it must be due more to outside correspondence. I don't see many books or envelopes now on the staircase. Is the supramental freedom from these things not in view?

Your not seeing unfortunately does not dematerialise them. Books are mainly for the Mother and there is sometimes a mountain, but letters galore. On some days only there is a lull and then I can do something. 24 January 1936

*

> What has happened to my typescript?[2] Hibernating?

My dear sir, if you saw me nowadays with my nose to paper from afternoon to morning, deciphering, deciphering, writing, writing, writing, even the rocky heart of a disciple would be touched and you would not talk about typescripts and hibernation. I have given up (for the present at least) the attempt to minimise the cataract of correspondence; I accept my fate like Ramana Maharshi with the plague of Prasads and admirers, but at least don't add anguish to annihilation by talking about typescripts! 11 March 1936

*

> But concentration on "real work"? Good Lord, you do that from 9 or 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. God alone knows what you do then.

What is this transcendental rubbish?

> Perhaps you send Force to Germany, Abyssinia, etc., or make a leap to the Supramental?

That is not my real work. Who except the devil is going to give force to Germany? Do you think I am in league with Hitler and his howling tribe of Nazis?

> We speculate and speculate. Next you concentrate from 6 p.m. to 11 or 12. Still not enough?

Who gave you this wonderful programme? Invented it all by your ingenious self? From 4 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. afternoon correspondence, meal, newspapers. Evening correspondence from 7 or 7.30 to 9. From 9 to 10 p.m. concentration. 10 to 12 correspondence, 12 to 2.30 bath, meal, rest. 2.30 to 5 or 6 a.m. correspondence unless I am lucky. Where is the sufficient time for concentration? 4 April 1936

*

---

[2] *See page 416, footnote 6 and page 420, footnote 8. — Ed.*

I fear my answers are scrappy as well as illegible, but this has been also a fell day (one letter 36 pages vernacular, 2 others each 8 pages of foolscap, others less in size (4, 2, 1 etc.) but ample in number — and this is no-correspondence period!) I have had to race against the old man Time. 19 August 1936

*

> I request you to clarify certain points in your letter if you have the time tonight. If not, I shall have to disturb your Sunday slumber.

Excuse me. I don't sleep on Sundays; I climb mountains of outside letters which have accumulated for want of weekday time.
30 August 1936

*

> God knows what you are busy with now, with the correspondence also reduced.

Who says it is reduced? For a few days, it was — now it has increased to half again its former size and every morning I have to race to get it done in time — and don't get it done in time. Thousand things are accumulating; inner work delayed.
17 September 1936

*

> I had to be careful to view this case from all aspects. A considerable drain on the mind might affect the cerebro-spinal system, besides affecting the secretions in consequence. And if one heats up the brain-box in order to reach the Creators or connect up with them, a certain amount of steam has to be let off.

Good Lord! then we shall all "have to be very careful". Myself for instance am putting a terrible drain on the mind by answering tons of correspondence which can't be good for my spine or for the other things either. But it gives me a great idea — why shouldn't I take a medical stop-work from you and declare a six months' holiday? But I am afraid, if I did, I would misuse it in writing poetry myself, not to speak of trying to connect up with the supramental creators for the benefit of an unprepared humanity. So it is no use. 21 October 1936

*

Got your typescript, but so much overwhelmed by correspondence that no time to answer at any length — so kept. This only to remove any apprehension of disappearance on the stairs. Excuse semi-telegraphic style; when Time presses, verbs and pronouns disappear. 4 April 1937

*

> Have you stopped the correspondence because of your eye-trouble or for concentration? You will understand that I don't write for the sake of writing, but for a support from you. Please give me a line in reply, after which I won't bother you any more.

Apart from the eye-question, I have stopped because there are certain things I have positively to get done before I can take up any regular correspondence work again. If I start now, I shall probably have to stop again soon for a long long time. Better get things finished now — that's the idea. You must hold on somehow for the present. 23 November 1937

*

It is time to put up a notice stopping the sending in of correspondence up to the end of August. The Mother must be free during this time at least and, for myself, there is no least chance of a book for the A.P.H. [*Arya Publishing House*] if some measure of that kind is not taken. 29 July 1938

The Importance of Brevity

You have done well to write more briefly. When you wrote ten times over the same thing, it wasted your time in writing and mine in reading. I had to glance through hastily and try to catch the meaning. Now I can read carefully and see clearly what you mean — it has much more force like that.

*

In future when you have long letters to write, you should write not in pencil but in ink — as I find it difficult to read 10 or 12 pages so closely written in pencil in Gujarati; it has taken me 2 or 3 days to manage to read your letter. If it is only a short letter, then you can write in pencil, though ink is always the best. Also, you should write in separate letters about sadhana and about other ordinary matters to which you want an immediate answer — such as this question about *X* and your studies. You can read with *X* since he is willing. 11 December 1932

*

I don't mind your correspondence. It is a relief. But when people write four letters a day in small hand closely running to some 10 pages without a gap anywhere and one gets 20 letters in the afternoon and forty at night (of course not all like that, but still!) it becomes a little too too. 5 February 1935

Answers Not Meant Equally for All

I should like to say, in passing, that it is not always safe to apply practically to oneself what has been written for another. Each sadhak is a case by himself and one cannot always or often take a mental rule and apply it rigidly to all who are practising the Yoga. What I wrote to *X* was meant for *X* and fits his case; but supposing a sadhak with a different (coarse) vital nature unlike *X*'s were in question, I might say to him something that might seem the very opposite, "Sit tight on your lower vital propensities, throw out your greed for food, — it is standing as a serious obstacle in your way: it would be better for you to be ascetic in your habits than vulgarly animal in this part as you are now." To one who is not taking enough food or sleep and rest in the eagerness of his spirit, I might say "Eat more, sleep more, rest more; do not overstrain yourself or bring an ascetic spirit into your tapasya." To another with the opposite excess I might speak a contrary language. Each sadhak has a nature or turn of nature of his own and the movement of the Yoga of two sadhaks, even when there are some resemblances between them, is seldom exactly the same.

Again in applying some truth that is laid down it is necessary to give it its precise meaning. It is quite true that "in our path the attitude is not one of forceful suppression, *nigraha*"; it is not coercion according to a mental rule or principle on an unpersuaded vital being. But that does not mean either that the vital has to go its own way and do according to its fancy. It is not coercion that is the way, but an inner change, in which the lower vital is led, enlightened and transformed by a higher consciousness which is detached from the objects of vital desire. But in order to let this grow an attitude has to be taken in which a decreasing importance has to be attached to the satisfaction of the claims of the lower vital, a certain mastery, *saṁyama*, being above any clamour of these things, limiting such things as food to their proper place. The lower vital has its place, it is not to be crushed or killed, but it has to be changed, "caught hold of by both ends", at the upper end a mastery and control, at the lower end a right use. The main thing is to get rid of attachment and desire; it is then that an entirely right use becomes possible. By what actual steps, in what order, through what processus this mastery of the lower vital shall come depends on the nature, the stress of development, the actual movement of the Yoga.

It is not the eating or the not eating of *mohan bhoga* that is the important point — (actually when I gave X what you call his permit, I was thinking of X and not of anybody else). What is important is how that or any of these food matters affects you, what is your inner condition and how any such indulgence, cooking or eating, stands or does not stand in the way of its progress and change, what is best for you as a Yogic discipline. One rule for you I can lay down, "Do not do, say or think anything which you would want to conceal from the Mother." And that answers the objections that rose within you — from your vital, is it not? — against bringing "these petty things" to the Mother's notice. Why should you think that the Mother would be bothered by these things or regard them as petty? If *all* the life is to be Yoga, what is there that can be called petty or of no importance? Even if the Mother does not answer, to have brought any matter of your action and self-development before her in the right spirit means to have put it under her protection, in the light of the Truth, under the rays of the Power that is working for the transformation — for immediately those rays begin to play and to act on the thing brought to her notice. Anything within that advises you not to do it when the spirit in you moves you to do it, may very well be a device of the vital to avoid the ray of the Light and the working of the Force. It may also be observed that if you open yourself to the Mother by putting the movements of any part of you under her observation, that of itself creates a relation, a personal closeness with her other than that which her general, silent or not directly invited action maintains with all the sadhaks.

All this, of course, if you feel ready for this openness, if the spirit moves you to lay what is in you bare before her. For it is then that it is fruitful — when it comes from within and is spontaneous and true. 18 May 1932

*

It is not a fact that all I write is meant equally for everybody. That assumes that everybody is alike and there is no difference between sadhak and sadhak. If it were so everybody would advance alike and have the same experiences and take the same time to progress by the same steps and stages. It is not so at all. In this case the general rules were laid down for one who had made no progress — but everything depends on how the Yoga comes to each person. 26 July 1934

Showing Letters to Others

> Occasionally I show a letter from you to some sympathetic friend. Perhaps there may be a little egoistic sense of display, so I want your order on this.

It is better not to show. Apart from the possibility of display it dissipates the force of the thing and brings in other currents from outside. 13 February 1933

*

It is always a mistake to let another know what we have written privately to you on personal things, for it is likely, as you see, for it to be misinterpreted. It is because we have had so much experience of that that we prefer that personal things should be kept private. Formerly we used to allow people to show if they wanted to, but we found that even the simplest and clearest things were liable to mental constructions and misconceptions, so we have become more prudent. But of course what you quote from what I said was in itself quite harmless. 9 November 1935

Circulation of Letters

It does not at all concern the sadhaks to know to whom the messages are addressed,[3] and it is inadmissible to base upon them reflections against the character of the addressee or to assume that he has gone wrong in his sadhana. I write often to confirm and encourage and not only to correct or reprove. In fact, I do not quite know why these communications should be called "messages"; for they are answers to questions or to letters, and only so much is circulated as is considered apposite or of general interest or use from the point of view of sadhana.

Obviously, curiosity and gossip and wrong imaginations cannot be "helpful to sadhana". The messages are not meant as food for gossip, but to give the sadhaks indications that can be of use to them in their sadhana. If they misuse them in this way, it is their own loss. 8 March 1932

*

> I would like to have your permission to give the typed copy of your messages that I got from *X* to a binder in the town.

---

[3] *Before Sri Aurobindo's letters began to be published, typed copies of some of them were circulated among members of the Ashram. These were sometimes referred to as "messages". — Ed.*

As for the typed copy, I must defer sanction till I have gone through a copy of the same which is with me. I may say at once, however, that such copies ought first to be verified by comparison with the original in Nolini's possession, for I find that the one with me is full of gross errors. 19 September 1932

*

> We are asked to take our files of "Communications of Sri Aurobindo" to the library for revision. Should we also take letters that are personal?

You are not asked to take any letters written to you.

It is the collections that were asked for of messages etc. — as it is found that things unauthorised, inaccurate, not mine are often included and afterwards they get copied and end by being circulated even outside the Asram. Also things that are quite private or are not intended to circulate leak out in this way, since some people are unscrupulous in copying (like X who took things he was asked not to take). A control and sifting is necessary therefore, so that we may know what there is in these collections. 9 March 1933

*

> [*Sri Aurobindo's secretary*:] Many have the "Bhowanipore File" — letters written to people connected with the Bhowanipore circle.[4] Is it to be withdrawn? There are also collections of letters before 1925 — genuine, but with names and other things of a personal character — though containing useful instructions on Yoga. It would be safe, I think, to withdraw them — one cannot guarantee the correctness of the copies.

It is not necessary to withdraw anything. But those who want to keep these things must keep for themselves and not lend to visitors or newcomers — except by special permission for the messages not exportable. There will be three categories:

---

[4] *See* Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest, *volume 36 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 332–81.*

(1) Letters prior to 1927 and personal letters (not circulated as messages) of any date.

(2) Messages authorised for circulation here or outside. (These can be freely shown to all newcomers or visitors with a proviso that permission must be given for copying or possession of copies to outsiders interested in this Yoga. Copies cannot be given to outsiders not interested in this Yoga.)

(3) Messages not authorised for circulation outside. (These can be shown or lent to all resident sadhaks but to visitors only with permission. Copies cannot be issued to outsiders.)

Therefore all who want to have permission to lend their copies must keep separate files for these categories.

11 March 1933

*

> Can "messages authorised for circulation here or outside"[5] be shown to people living outside the Asram?

Only disciples — those practising Yoga. 10 August 1933

*

> A visitor writes on behalf of a professor living outside, who requests permission to see a copy of the messages that outsiders are allowed to see. The professor is known to *X*.

I do not quite understand — we do not supply copies of messages. If people want to take copies of the messages that are allowed to be sent outside, they ask for permission. Is it that *X* has to take the copy for which we gave permission? If so, you might speak to him about it. 27 August 1935

---

[5] *See the preceding letter, point (2). — Ed.*

Sri Aurobindo's Force

Concreteness of the Force

The invisible Force producing tangible results both inward and outward is the whole meaning of the Yogic consciousness. Your question about Yoga bringing merely a feeling of Power without any result was really very strange. Who would be satisfied with such a meaningless hallucination and call it Power? If we had not had thousands of experiences showing that the Power within could alter the mind, develop its powers, add new ones, bring in new ranges of knowledge, master the vital movements, change the character, influence men and things, control the conditions and functionings of the body, work as a concrete dynamic Force on other forces, modify events etc. etc., we would not speak of it as we do. Moreover, it is not only in its results but in its movements that the Force is tangible and concrete. When I speak of feeling Force or Power, I do not mean simply having a vague sense of it, but feeling it concretely and consequently being able to direct it, manipulate it, watch its movement, be conscious of its mass and intensity and in the same way of that of other perhaps opposing forces; all these things are possible and usual by the development of Yoga.

It is not, unless it is supramental Force, a Power that acts without conditions and limits. The conditions and limits under which Yoga or sadhana has to be worked out are not arbitrary or capricious; they arise from the nature of things. These including the will, receptivity, assent, self-opening and surrender of the sadhak have to be respected by the Yoga-force — unless it receives a sanction from the Supreme to override everything and get something done — but that sanction is sparingly given. It is only if the supramental Power came fully down, not merely sent its influences through the Overmind, that things could be very radically altered in this respect — and that is why my main effort is directed towards that object — for then the sanction would not be rare! For the Law of the Truth would be at work not constantly balanced by the law of the Ignorance.

Still the Yoga-force is always tangible and concrete in the way I have described and has tangible results. But it is invisible — not like a blow given or the rush of a motor car knocking somebody down which the physical senses can at once perceive. How is the mere physical mind to know that it is there and working? By its results? but how can it know that the results were that of the Yoga-force and not of something else? One of two things it must do. Either it must allow the consciousness to go inside, to become aware of inner things, to believe in and experience the invisible and the supraphysical, and then by experience, by the opening of new capacities it becomes conscious of these forces and can see, follow and use their workings just as the scientist uses the unseen forces of Nature. Or one must have faith and watch and open oneself and then it will begin to see how things happen; it will notice that when the Force was called in, there began after a time to be a result, — then repetitions, more repetitions, more clear and tangible results, increasing frequency, increasing consistency of results, a feeling and awareness of the Force at work — until the experience becomes daily, regular, normal, complete. These are the two main methods, one internal, working from in outward, the other external, working from outside and calling the inner Force out till it penetrates and is sensible in the exterior consciousness. But neither can be done if one insists always on the extrovert attitude, the external concrete only and refuses to join to it the internal concrete — or if the physical Mind at every step raises a dance of doubts which refuses to allow the nascent experience to develop. Even the scientist carrying out a new experiment would never succeed if he allowed his mind to behave in that way.

When the Mother said it was just a trick of reversing the consciousness, she meant that — that instead of allowing always the external mind to interfere and assert its own ordinary customary point of view, it should turn itself round, admit that things may work from in outwards, and keep itself sufficiently quiet to see that developing and being done. For then an inner mind shows itself which is capable of following and being the instrument of the invisible Forces.

It is not that you are incapable of it, for it was several times on the point of being done. But your external mind has interfered always, questioning, doubting, asking for something more external, not waiting for the movement to continue, for the inward to externalise itself and make itself concrete. That is why I object to this worship of Doubt. It is not that I used not to have doubts myself more formidable than any you have ever thought of — but I did not allow them to interfere with the development of my experience. I let it continue until it had sufficient body for me to know what it was and what it could bring me. 2 August 1932

*

> Highly delighted (unyogically though) to learn you had put so much force for the sale of my gramophone records! But highly intrigued too. What is this force? A sweet blessing that all should be smooth in this rough world? Or is it a conscious way of directing a control, as one controls the organisation of a music choir? I mean does this force mean concrete business, as the scheming of a schemer does? I ask this naïve question since your force always puzzles me.

Well, I made the mistake of "thinking aloud with my pen" when I wrote that unfortunate sentence about the force I had put for the success of the gramophone records. As my whole action consists of the use of force or forces — except of course my writing answers to correspondence which is concrete; but even that I am made to do by and with a force, otherwise I can assure you I would not and could not do it — I sometimes am imprudent enough to make this mistake. It is foolish to do so because a spiritual force or any other is obviously something invisible and its action is invisible, so how can anyone believe in it? Only the results are seen and how is one to know that the results are the result of the Force? It is not concrete.

But I am myself rather puzzled by your instances of the concrete. How are the schemes of a schemer concrete? Something happens and you tell me it was the result of a schemer's scheme. But the schemer's scheme was a product of his consciousness and not at all concrete; it was in his mind and another fellow's mind is not concrete to me unless I am a Yogi or a thought-reader. I can only infer from some things he said or did that he had a scheme, things which I have not myself seen or heard and which are therefore not to me concrete. So how can I accept or believe in the scheme of the schemer? And even if I saw or heard, I am not bound to believe that it was a scheme or that which happened was the result of a scheme. He may have acted on a chain of impulses and what happened may have been the result of something quite different or itself purely accidental. Again how do you control the music choir? By words and signs etc., which are of course concrete? But what made you use those words and signs and why did they produce a control? and why did the other fellows do what you told them? what made them do that? It was something in your and their consciousness, I suppose; but that is not concrete. Again, scientists talk about electricity which is, it seems, an energy, a force in action and it seems that everything has been done by this energy, my own physical being is constituted by it and it is at the base of all my mental and life energies. But that is not concrete to me. I never felt my being constituted by electricity, I cannot feel it working out my thoughts and life-processes — so how can I believe in it or accept it? The force I use is not a sweet blessing — a blessing (silent) certainly is not concrete, like a stone or a kick or other things seizable by the senses; it is not even a mere will saying within me "let it be so" — that also is not concrete. It is a force of consciousness directed towards or on persons and things and happenings — but obviously a force of consciousness is not seizable by the physical senses, so not concrete. I may feel it and the person acted on may feel it or may not feel it, but as the feeling is internal and not external and perceivable by others, it cannot be called concrete and nobody is bound to accept or believe in it. For instance, if I cure someone (without medicines) of a fever and send him fresh and full of strength to his work, all in the course of a single night, still why should any third person believe or accept that it was my force that did it? It may have been Nature or his imagination that made him cure (three cheers for those concrete things, imagination and Nature!) — or the whole thing happened of itself. So, you see the case is hopeless, it can't be proved at all — at all. 6 December 1935

*

> Is the force you "put on me" concrete?

Concrete? what do you mean by "concrete"? It has its own concreteness; it can take a form (like a stream for instance) of which one is aware and can send it quite concretely in whatever "direction" or on whatever object one chooses.

> In one of your letters to me you wrote: "A Yoga consciousness or spiritual consciousness which has no power or force in it, may not be dead or unreal but it is evidently something inert and without effect or consequence. Equally a man who sets out to be a Yogi or Guru and has no spiritual consciousness or no power in his spiritual consciousness — a Yoga force or spiritual force — is making a false claim and is either a charlatan or a self-deluded imbecile; still more is he so if having no spiritual force he claims to have made a path others can follow. If Yoga is a reality, if spirituality is anything better than a delusion, there must be such a thing as Yoga force or spiritual force."

That is a general statement about the inherent power of spirituality. What I was speaking of was a willed use of subtle force (it may be spiritual or mental or vital) to secure a particular result at some point in the world. Just as there are waves of unseen physical forces (cosmic waves etc.) or currents of electricity, so there are mind waves, thought currents, waves of emotion, e.g. anger, sorrow etc. which go out and affect others without their knowing whence they come or that they come at all — they only feel the result. One who has the occult or inner senses awake can feel them coming and invading him; influences good or bad can propagate themselves in that way; that can happen without intention, automatically, but also a deliberate use can be made of them. There can also be a purposeful generation of force, spiritual or other. There can be too the use of the effective will or idea, which is not concrete in that sense, but is all the same effective.

6 February 1943

No Miraculous Force

> I tried to convince *X* that it was your force that cured *Y*. But *X* said, "What about instances in which the Divine Force has failed? Why does it succeed in some cases and not in others?"

The mistake is to think that it must be either a miraculous force or else none. There is no miraculous force and I do not deal in miracles. The word Divine here is out of place, if it is taken as an always omnipotently acting Power. Yogic Force is then better; it simply means a higher Consciousness using its power, a spiritual and supraphysical force acting on the physical world directly. One has to train the instrument to be a channel of this force; it works also according to a certain law and under certain conditions. The Divine does not work arbitrarily or as a thaumaturge; He acts upon the world along the lines that have been fixed by the nature and purpose of the world we live in — by an increasing action of the thing that has to manifest, not by a sudden change or disregard of all the conditions of the work to be done. If it were not so, there would be no need of Yoga or time or human action or instruments or of a Master and disciples or of a Descent or anything else. It could simply be a matter for the तथास्तु [*tathāstu*] and nothing more. But that would be irrational if you like and worse than irrational, — childish. This does not mean that interventions, things apparently miraculous, do not happen — they do. But all cannot be like that.

> I told *X*, "I don't see how you can deny the reality of this Force. Were you able to work with such vigour before you came here?" He said, "Yes, I could work a lot, so much so that people were astounded. Was that Sri Aurobindo's Force?"

What is Sri Aurobindo's force? It is not a personal property of this body or mind. It is a higher Force used by me or acting through me.

> "And Tagore, Lenin and other greats. Is the Divine Force working in them too?"

Of course it is a Divine Force, for there is only one force acting in the world, but it acts according to the nature of the instrument. Yogic Force is different from others because it is a special power of the spiritual consciousness.

> I continued, "It may not be Sri Aurobindo's Force, but how can I exclude the possibility of a Divine Force behind? Because one is an atheist, it doesn't mean the Divine is undivine against him!"

There was an obvious intervention in the case he speaks of — but the agent or process could only be determined if one knew all the circumstances. Such interventions are frequent; e.g. my uncle's daughter was at her last gasp, the doctors had gone away telling him there was no more to be done. He simply sat down to pray — as soon as he had finished, the death symptoms were suspended, the girl recovered without farther treatment (it was a case of typhoid fever). Several cases of that kind have come within my personal observation.

> *X* concluded, "Oh, if you say everything is being done at the divine impulsion, I have nothing to say. But you can't say that I am working because Sri Aurobindo is constantly at my back!" What can I say against this?

I am not very particular about that. It is a personal question and depends on *X*'s feeling. I certainly put force on him for the development and success of his poetry — about the rest I don't want to say anything.

I have marginalised on the Force[1] — to write more completely would need more time than I have tonight. Of course, if it depended on a few cases of illness, it would be a thing of no certitude or importance. If the "Force" were a mere freak or miracle, it would be equally trivial and unimportant, even if well-attested. It is only of importance if it is part of the consciousness and the life used at all times, not only for illness but for whatever one has to do. It manifests in various ways — as a strength of the consciousness evenly supporting the life and action, as a power put forth for this or that object of the outward life, as a special Force from above drawn down to raise and increase the scope of the Consciousness and its height and transform it not by a miraculous, but by a serious, steady, organised action following certain definite lines. Its effectiveness as well as its action is determined first by its own height and intensity or that of the plane from which it comes (it may be from any plane ranging from the Higher Mind upward to the Overmind), partly by the condition of the objects or the field in which it acts, partly by the movement which it has to effect, general or particular. It is neither a magician's wand nor a child's bauble, but something one has to observe, understand, develop, master before one can use it aright or else — for few can use it except in a limited manner — be its instrument. This is only a preface.

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo wrote the above answers in the margins of the correspondent's notebook. — Ed.*

6 February 1935

*

> Our idea was that the Divine is always omnipotent, independent of all conditions and not limited by the particular plane from which he acts. But you give so many clauses under which the Force can operate successfully! X then seems to be right when he says that if one has not got a particular possibility in him the Divine cannot make him develop in that direction. Pushing this a little farther, I would say that one must have a talent or capacity as a nucleus in him for the spiritual development he is going to have later. One must have it, the Divine cannot make anything out of शून्यम् [*śūnyam*].

What is शून्यम्? It is out of the silence that all things originated. All is contained in what you call Shunyam.

> But then how is it that you wasted so much Force on *Y* to no avail? Is it that you did not use the supramental Force, which alone can work irresistibly without the necessity of adapting itself to existing conditions?

Certainly, supramental Force was not the force used in that case, it was mental-spiritual. In such cases the object of the Force has always the right to say No. I put the force on him because he said he wanted to change, but his vital refused — as it had the right to do. If nothing in him had asked for the change, I would not have tried it, but simply put another force on him for another purpose.

> You make a distinction between the Yogic Force and the Divine Force; but is not the former an outcome of the latter?

Of course, but all force is the Divine Force. It is only the egoism of the individual which takes it as his own. He uses it, but it is not his.

> By the way, *Z* did not question the reality of your Force for his poetry or other literary activities, but he said he could not admit that all his activities were permeated by your Force, because he used to work with great vigour and energy even before he came here.

Of course not — all the activities cannot be that. It is only in the Yoga realisation that one feels all one's activities to be from the one source — something from above or the Yogashakti or the Guru Shakti or the Cosmic Force or whatever it may be (all names for the same thing in different formations) driving the whole consciousness and being.

> Success in life outside is dependent on different things, on one's own energy and the environmental stimulus.

What is one's own energy after all? You mean Nature's energy in you? It may, in new conditions, remain extant in some things, develop in others, fail or change in others. One can't make a rule.

> Looking at myself, I wonder how a vitalistic man like me can pass his days in cellular imprisonment without any suffocation!

That kind of change happens.

> One may say that a tamasic, indolent man can't be activated by the Divine to that extent.

Of course he can.

> Am I really wrong?

No, but there are many sides or aspects to a question.

> After the "preface" [*p. 486*] is any chapter likely to follow?

Perhaps in some weeks or some months or some centuries the chapter may follow! But I used the word preface to characterise the nature of what I had written, not in a prophetic sense.

There are two things — Yoga-Force in its original totality which is that of the Divine spiritual force, always potentially all-powerful, and Yoga-Force doing its work under the conditions of the evolutionary world here.

It is not a question of "can" or "cannot" at all. All is possible, but all is not licit — except by a recognisable process; the Divine Power itself imposes on its action limits, processes, obstacles, vicissitudes. It is possible that an ass may be changed into an elephant, but it is not done, at least physically, because of the lack of a process. Psychologically such changes do take place. I have myself in my time changed cowards into heroes and that can be done even without Yogashakti, merely by an inner force. How can you say what is latent in man or what is incurably absent? I have developed many things by Yoga, often even without any will or effort to do so, which were not in my original nature, I may even say that I have transformed my whole nature and it is in many respects the opposite of what I began with. There can be no question about the power to change, to develop, to awaken faculties that were not there before; this power exists already, but it can be raised to an acme by being lifted to the spiritual plane.

The force put on the gentleman you speak of at least made it necessary for him to change if he remained here. He had no will in the vital to change and so did not remain here but went to his fate.

The rest is for the indefinable future. One day I shall certainly try to explain methodically and by examples what the spiritual force is; how it has worked on the earth-plane, how it acts and under what conditions — conditions not rigidly fixed, but plastic and mutable. 7 February 1935

Receptivity to the Force

> In one of your letters you have written about being "sufficiently open" to receive the Force. What did you mean by this?

I mean simply a certain receptivity in the consciousness — mind, vital, physical, whichever is needed. The Mother or myself send a force. If there is no openness, the force may be thrown back or return (unless we put a great force which it is not always advisable to do) as from an obstruction or resistance: if there is some openness, the result may be partial or slow; if there is the full openness or receptivity, then the result may be immediate. Of course there are things that cannot be removed all at once, being an old part of the nature, but with receptivity these also can be more effectively and rapidly dealt with. Some people are so open that even by writing they get free before the book or letter reaches us. 8 June 1933

*

> You said, in regard to that Spanish General, "I put the right force on him and he wakes up and, with his military knowledge and capacity, does the right thing" [*p. 447*]. Exactly, if he has these things, he can receive your *right* force.

It does not follow. Another man may have the knowledge but receive nothing. If he receives, his knowledge and capacity help the Force to work out the details.

> It seems that though you have no patent or latent military capacity . . .

Not in this life.

> your Force has, and it wakes up in the man the right judgments etc. This is all a mystery beyond my ken.

May I ask why? Your idea is that either I must inspire him specifically in every detail, making a mere automaton of him, or, if I don't do that, I can do nothing with him? What is this stupid mechanical notion of things?

> The Force having military knowledge, poetic power, healing virtues, etc., the embodiment of the Force also must have the latent general, poet, medico, etc. — sounds strange to me otherwise.

Because you have the damnably false idea that nothing can be done in the world except by mental means — that Force must necessarily be a mental Force and can't be anything else.

> The strangest thing of all is that if the Divine wills, why can't an effective drug in a case be revealed to him, medico or no medico?

Why the devil should He will like that in all cases? . . .

As to Force let me point out a few elementary notions which you ignore.

(1) The Force is a divine Force, so obviously it can apply itself in any direction; it can inspire the poet, set in motion the soldier, doctor, scientist, everybody.

(2) The Force is not a mental Force — it is not bound to go out from the Communicator with every detail mentally arranged, precise in its place, and communicate it mentally to the Recipient. It can go out as a global Force containing in itself the

thing to be done, but working out the details in the Recipient and the action as the action progresses. It is not necessary for the Communicant to accompany mentally the Force, plant himself mentally in the mind of the Recipient and work out mentally there the details. He can send the Force or put on the Force, leave it to do its work and attend himself to other matters. In the world most things are worked out by such a global Force containing the results in itself, but involved, concealed and working them out in a subsequent operation. The seed contains the whole potentiality of the tree, the gene contains the potentiality of the living form that it initiates, etc. etc., but if you examine the seed and gene ad infinitum, still you will not find there either the tree or the living being. All the same the Force has put all these potentialities there in a certain evolution which works itself out automatically.

(3) In the case of a man acting as an instrument of the Force the action is more complicated, because consciously or unconsciously the man must receive, also he must be able to work out what the Force puts through him. He is a living complex instrument, not a simple machine. So if he has responsiveness, capacity, etc. he can work out the Force perfectly, if not he does it imperfectly or frustrates it. That is why we speak of and insist on the perfectioning of the instrument. Otherwise there would be no need of sadhana or anything else — any fellow would do for any blessed work and one would simply have to ram things into him and see them coming out in action.

(4) The Communicant need not be an all-round many-sided Encyclopaedia in order to communicate the Force for various purposes. If we want to help a lawyer to succeed in a case, we need not be perfect lawyers ourselves knowing all law, Roman, English or Indian and supply him all his arguments, questions, etc., doing consciously and mentally through him his whole examinations, cross-examinations and pleading. Such a process would be absurdly cumbrous, incompetent and wasteful. The prearrangement of the eventual result and the capacity for making him work his instruments in the right way and for arranging events also so as to aid towards the result are put into the Force

when it goes to him, they are therefore inherent in its action and the rest is a question of his own receptivity, experience etc. Naturally the best instrument even is imperfect (unless he is a perfected Adhar) and mistakes may be committed, other suggestions accepted etc. etc., but if the instrument is sufficiently open, the Force can set the thing to rights and the result still comes. In some or many cases the Force has to be renewed from time to time or supported by fresh Force. In some directions particular details have to be consciously attended to by the Communicant. All that depends on circumstances too multitudinous and variable to be reduced to rule. There are general lines, in these matters, but no rules, the working of a non-mental Force has necessarily to be plastic, not rigid and tied to formulas. If you want to reduce things to patterns and formulas, you will necessarily fail to understand the workings of a spiritual (non-mental) Force.

(5) All that I say here refers to spiritual Force. I am not speaking of the Supramental.

(6) Also please note that this is all about the working of Force on or through people: it has nothing to do with intuition which is quite another matter. Also it does not preclude always and altogether a plenary and detailed inspiration from a Communicant to a recipient — such things happen, but it is not necessary to proceed in that way, nor below the Supermind or supramentalised Overmind can it be the ordinary process.

10 April 1937

*

> You said, in regard to the Spanish General, “Let us suppose . . . I put the right force on him” [*p. 447*]. Why did you say “right”? Is there also a wrong Force?

Don’t remember what exactly I wrote — so can’t say very well. But of course there can be a wrong Force. There are Asuric Forces, rajasic Forces, all sorts of Forces. Apart from that one can use a mental or vital Force which may not be the right thing. Or one may use the Force in such a way that it does not succeed or does not hit the General on the head or is not commensurate with the opposing Forces — (opposing Forces need not be

Asuric, they may be quite gentlemanly Forces thinking they are in the right. Or two Divine Forces might knock at each other for the fun of the thing. Infinite possibilities, sir, in the play of the Forces.)

> What I want to know is whether the Force applied or directed is always the right Force. Can there be any mistake in the Force, either in its application or in any other way, resulting in its failure to get the desired result?

What is a mistake? Eventually the Force used is always the Force that was destined to be used. If it succeeds, it does its work in the whole and if it fails, it has also done its work in the whole. ন তত্র শোচতে বুধঃ।

> My main point is the intuition. The Force has evidently a close connection with the intuition or any other faculties which are awakened by the action of the Force.

In what way? A Force may be applied without any intuition — an intuition can come without any close connection with a Force, except the force of intuition itself which is another matter. Moreover a Force may be applied from a higher plane than that of any Intuition. 17 April 1937

Response of the Divine

> You can send your Force to whomever you like — Lenin, Kemal, Gandhi, but how people calling Shiva or Krishna for their Ishta Devata get responses from you, I don't understand.

Again who is Shiva? and who is Krishna? and what is an Ishta Devata? There is only one Divine, not a thousand Divines.

> It would mean that wherever a sincere heart is aspiring for the Divine, his aspiration reaches your ears.

Why my ears? Ears are not necessary for the purpose. You might just as well say, reaches me by the post.

> And you send your responses, because you want to manifest the Divine Rule on earth.

That has nothing to do with it. Besides it is not the Divine Rule on earth that I am after, but the supramental rule. This however has nothing to do with any supramental or Divine Rule on earth. It is only a general question of the response of the Divine and to the Divine. 5 February 1936

Power to Help

I do not ask you to believe that the Divine Grace comes to all or that all can succeed in the sadhana or that I personally have succeeded or will succeed in the case of all who come to me. I have asked you if you cannot develop the faith that the Divine is — you seemed often to doubt it, — that the Divine Grace is and has manifested both elsewhere and here, that the sadhana by which so many profit is not a falsehood or a chimaera and that I have helped many and am not utterly powerless — otherwise how could so many progress under our influence? If this is first established, then the doubt and denial, the refusal of faith boils itself down to a refusal of faith in your own spiritual destiny and that of *X* and some others — does it not? I have never told you that the power that works here is absolute at present; I have on the contrary told you that I am trying to make it absolute and it is for that that I want the Supermind to intervene. But to say that because it is not absolute therefore it does not exist, seems to me a logical inconsequence.

There remains your personal case and you may very well tell me "What does it matter to me if these things are true when they are not true to me, true in my own experience?" But it does make a difference that they are true in themselves. For if your personal want of experience is held as proving that it is all moonshine, then all is finished — there is no hope for you or me or anybody. If on the other hand these things are true but not yet realised by you, then there is hope, a possibility at least. From the point of view of reason you may be right in thinking that because you have not realised yet, you can never realise — though it does not seem to me an inevitable conclusion. From the same point of view I also may be right in concluding from my experience and that of other Yogis that there is no such inevitability and that with the persistent aspiration in you and the vairagya we have the conditions for a realisation that must come — sooner, for there are sudden liberations, or later. 28 August 1934

Variations in the Action of the Force

> Do you think if you put the Force at an exact time, say 9 p.m., it would have a greater chance of immediate success?

One can't make a rule like that. There is nothing more variable than the way the Force acts. 11 July 1936

The Force and Will

> I feel a great Force above my head. But it is not coming down. Do you want me to draw it down by my will-force?

The Force must come down, though probably it will do so by stages. The will has to invite it if not draw it. Also the Force has to be used, that is, something of it directed by the will against the obstacles. This training of the will to act in the Yogic way is very important as a stage in the sadhana. 28 July 1935

Sri Aurobindo's Force and World Events

> Somebody told *X* that Sri Aurobindo brought about the Russian revolution through Lenin. *X* told *Y* that people here were over-credulous to believe such things. *Y* insisted that such things were possible, but *X* seems to be unable to understand the working of occult forces. As far as I can see, if it is possible to cure dangerous diseases of the body by Yogic power, why should it not be possible to act on the mind of another person and pour into him immense vital force which can bring about such results as the Russian revolution?

The statement made to *X* was not quite correct; it is putting things in too physical a form. A spiritual and occult working supplies forces and can watch over the members of the execution of a world event; but to put it like that makes the actual workers too much of automata which they are not. 25 January 1937

*

Certainly, my force is not limited to the Asram and its conditions. As you know it is being largely used for helping the right development of the war and of change in the human world. It is also used for individual purposes outside the scope of the Asram and the practice of Yoga; but that, of course, is silently done and mainly by a spiritual action. The Asram however remains at the centre of the work and without the practice of Yoga the work would not exist and could not have any meaning or fruition. But in the Yoga itself there are different ways of proceeding for different natures, even though the general path is the same, surrender to the Divine and change of nature. But surrender to the Divine in the completest sense cannot be achieved in a short time, nor can the change of the nature. On the whole, one has to go as quickly as one can and as slowly as is necessary — which seems contradictory but is not. 13 March 1944

Therapeutic Force and Healing

Spiritual Force and the Body

It is a pity that *X* could not write all this time. Formerly when she wrote often she used to get better after writing. It is also a pity that she has been told by the doctors that she is not going to live; even if it is true, such a thing should not be told unless in case of necessity (which does not exist in her case), for it takes away much of the power of resistance and diminishes what chances of cure and survival there were. *X*'s physical destiny has always been against her but this is a thing that *can* be cancelled if one can have sufficient faith and inner strength and openness and receive the spiritual force.[1] 27 June 1935

*

Perhaps I might say a word about Ramakrishna's attitude with regard to the body. He seems always to have regarded it as a misuse of spiritual force to utilise it for preserving the body or curing its ailments or taking care for it. Other Yogis — I do not speak of those who think it justifiable to develop Yogic siddhis, but of those who think that that should be avoided — have not had this complete disregard of the body: they have taken care to maintain it in good health and condition as an instrument or a physical basis for their development in Yoga. I have always been in agreement with this view: moreover, I have never had any hesitation in the use of a spiritual force for all legitimate purposes including the maintenance of health and physical life in myself and in others — that is indeed why the Mother has given flowers, not only as a blessing but as a help in illness. I put a value on the body first as an instrument, *dharmasādhana*, or, more fully, as a centre of manifested personality in action, a basis of spiritual life and activity as of all life and activity upon the earth, but also because for me the body as well as the mind and life is a part of the divine whole, a form of the Spirit and therefore not to be disregarded or despised as something incurably gross and incapable of spiritual realisation or of spiritual use. Matter itself is secretly a form of the Spirit and has to reveal itself as that, can be made to wake to consciousness and evolve and realise the Spirit, the Divine within it. In my view the body as well as the mind and life has to be spiritualised or, one may say, divinised so as to be a fit instrument and receptacle for the realisation and manifestation of the Divine. It has its part in the divine Lila, even, according to the Vaishnava sadhana, in the joy and beauty of Divine Love. That does not mean that the body has to be valued for its own separate sake or that the creation of a divine body in a future evolution of the whole being has to be contemplated as an end and not a means — that would be a serious error which would not be admissible. In any case, my speculations about an extreme form of divinisation are something in a far distance and are no part of the preoccupations of the spiritual life in the near future. 7 December 1949

---

[1] *The woman referred to here as X lived until 1993. — Ed.*

Grace and Therapeutic Force

> The Divine Grace has certainly done something. I [*the Ashram doctor*] acted according to your advice, and *X* felt better the whole day.

It was not the Divine Grace but the Divine Force. If it had been the Grace, it would simply have said तथास्तु [*tathāstu*] and the thing would be done. As it is, last night I had to work a damned lot for this result — I only hope it will last and complete itself.

30 January 1935

*

> But may I ask you why you are wasting such a lot of Force when a word could do the job? Why not cut short our labour and the patients' discomfort by saying तथास्तु? Is it as easily done as it is said? If working "a damned lot" reduces the temperature only by one degree and that too for 12 hours or less, what am I to think?

I did not expect you to take my तथास्तु with such grim seriousness. Speaking semi-seriously, I am not here to do miracles to order, but to try to get in a new consciousness somewhere in the world — which is itself however to attempt a miracle. If physical miracles happen to tumble in in the process, well and good, but you can't present your medical pistol in my face and call on me to stand and deliver. As for the Force, application of my force, short of the supramental, means always a struggle of forces and the success depends on (1) the strength and persistency of the force put out, (2) the receptivity of the subject, (3) the sanction of the Unmentionable — I beg your pardon, I meant the Unnameable, Ineffable, Unknowable. *X*'s physical consciousness is rather obstinate, as you have noticed, and therefore not too receptive. It may feel the Mother inside it, but to obey her will or force is less habitual for it. 31 January 1935

*

> I still can't understand why you should bother to follow us doctors. The Divine can very easily act from the supramental consciousness directly; you don't really need a diagnosis given by ordinary men!

If things were like that, why the deuce should we have Doctors or a dispensary at all? And what would have been the use of your 20,000?[2] We don't propose to do the whole business of the inside and outside off our own bat. You are as necessary for this as *X* for the building or others for their work.

> Another thing — why should a mental formation obstruct the supramental?

Who told you we are acting from supramental consciousness? We are not and cannot until the confounded quarrel with Matter is settled. 1 February 1935

*

---

[2] *The amount (in rupees) paid by the correspondent for his medical education. — Ed.*

> What is this "confounded quarrel with Matter" you mention? Does this refer to the lower vital and physical movements of the sadhaks?

I am not speaking of the sadhaks, but the resistance of the Earth nature itself in its material parts. But these are things you people cannot understand unless you have less childlike notions about things.

> I am still wondering why there should be doctors and a dispensary at all! Isn't it a paradox — the Divine sending his disciples to the human physician?

Rubbish! This is a world of the play of forces, sir, and the Doctor is a force. So why should not the Divine use him? Have you realised that if the Divine did everything, there would be no world, only a show of marionettes? 2 February 1935

The Force Works under Conditions

> Can't you send me some force? I am willing to try to believe or *à la X* remain passive — but I am not so foolish and irrational not to avail myself of any kindly force because of my mental reservations.

As for the Force, I shall write some other time. I have told you that it is not always efficacious, but works under conditions like all forces; it is only the supramental Force that works absolutely, because it creates its own conditions. But the Force I am using is a Force that has to work under the present world conditions. It is not the less a Force for that. I have cured myself of all illnesses except three by it and those too when they come I have kept in check; the fact that I have not succeeded yet in eliminating the fact or probability of those three does not cancel the fact of my success with the others. As for the Mother, she used formerly to cure everything at once by the same Power — now she has no time to think about her body or to concentrate on it. Even so when she makes a certain inner concentration she can see, read etc. perfectly well without glasses, but she has no time to work out the possibility which that shows. The prevalence of illness just now is a fact; it is part of the struggle that is going on in the domain of Matter. But even so there are plenty of people in the Asram who get rid of their ills by reliance on the Mother. If all cannot do it, what does that prove or disprove? It only proves that the Power does not work absolutely, miraculously, impossibly, but it works by certain given means and under conditions. I have always said that, so what is there in that that is new or that annihilates the truth of the Yoga? 6 February 1935

*

I shall see also whether I can explain what I mean by Force (the one which I refer to being neither supramental nor omnipotent nor guaranteed to work like Beecham's pills in every case) and how it acts and in what conditions. I have tried it in hundreds of cases besides *X*'s (on my own body first and always) and I have no doubt of its reality or efficacy under these conditions. However, of that on some later date. February 1935

*

A successful cure of *X*'s mother would be certainly a considerable achievement, and though difficult owing to the tenacity and malignance and extreme intractability of the disease, it is not impossible. What you say is true, the Force was acting before, but it acted with immediate rapidity and completeness only with those who had sufficient faith and receptivity (mainly sadhaks) or in other good conditions.

These cases seem to indicate a new power of the Force and a new technique. Your idea that it may spread and happen elsewhere is not without foundation; for, when once something is there in the earth-atmosphere that was not there before, it begins to work on many sides in an unforeseen way. Thus since the Yoga has been in action, its particular opening movements have come to a number of people who were at a distance and not connected with us and who understood nothing of what was happening to them. These things are to be expected for Nature is still in evolution and new Lights and Powers have to be brought down in her and made part of the conscious earth-existence.

29 January 1936

*

There has been no negligence on our part in putting the force for *X*'s change — the Mother has been doing that daily; nor is the trouble she has contracted one for which we are in any way responsible — it is not imposed as an ordeal or anything else. If there is so obstinate a persistence of her attachment and the demands it makes, it is because there is in her own vital a resistance to the Force that would remove it. If there were the complete consent in the being for giving it up (not only mental wish or prayer, however strong), it could not possibly last — at any rate in this form, — only at most for a time in fragments of the old habit. There is in her vital a certain violence of temperament — I do not mean merely a tendency to violence of speech or act, but an exaggerated intensity in the feelings and vital reactions, and this is the source of the trouble. For it is this that when asked to give up the claim and attachment, has reacted vehemently calling in an outside Force to support its resistance. When this rises, her mind also begins to justify the claim and demand, her vital feels very hurt and angry with the Mother because she does not support it. All that is proof of a very familiar kind of resistance which refuses to yield to the mind's will or the soul's aspiration. It is like that in *X*; it is so in many others here.

The Divine Force does not act now in an omnipotent ease regardless of conditions — it might do that if it were the pure supramental Force in its native action; but that is not yet. Here conditions have been created and it acts under those conditions. You speak of the Force acting in the case of the illnesses you have treated. No doubt, but here too it is under conditions — only, favourable conditions. For you believe and are conscious of the Force, your whole will is to cure, the patient's will is to get well — the more he assents to the treatment, the more quickly the Force acts — the one obstacle is the force of the illness itself and the patient's habitual subjection to it. But with everything else against it, that does not succeed in remaining. It is quite otherwise in these things where the consent of the being is far from being complete, where the mind often consents to and justifies the illness when it comes, even takes strongly sides with it, where the vital is there with its revolt and clamour and tempest. It is only if the sadhak's resolution is firm and one-minded, not to assent to the attack when it comes, to refuse all mental justification of it, to detach himself from the vital movement in the very time of its action that the liberation can be done with the clarity and ease which you desire.

Otherwise, the only thing to be done is to keep up the pressure of the force quiet and strong and persistent until it gets into the vital itself and makes it reject its own movement. For that you must help by getting rid of the violence and impatience in your own nature and being yourself patient, firm and persistent. You are here to change your nature and the difficulty is no reason for throwing up the spiritual endeavour. All this talk of going away cannot help — it would be of no advantage to yourself or to *X* in any way — any more than her talk of going has any sense or is in any way reasonable. Keep firmly to your object, develop that calm and force in the vital as well as the mind which are the basis of the spiritual life. That will help more in getting *X*'s morbid rushes of excitement to subside and the control to come in her also. 9 August 1936

*

No need to give up your faith, for it is faith that gets things done and even makes the impossible possible. But it has to be kept when even there is no immediate result. In the physical care of a patient also there are adverse periods when the resistance is great and obstinate and there seems to be more swinging back than going forwards or a persistent recurrence of the trouble. Faith persisting and the call bring down after a time sufficient Force to overcome the obstacle. 11 August 1936

The Force Acts on a Complex Nexus of Forces

I have not yet written about the Force because it is too complex to be adequately stated in a short space and I had no time these days for anything long. Anyhow, the clue is that the Force does not act in a void and in an absolute way, like a writing on a blank paper or in the air, the "Let there be light and there was light" formula. It comes as a Force intervening and acting on a very complex nexus of forces that were in action and displacing their disposition and interrelated movement and natural result by a new disposition, movement and result. It meets in so doing a certain opposition, very often a strong opposition from many of the forces already in possession and operation. To overcome it three factors are needed, the power of the Force itself, i.e. its own sheer pressure and direct action on the field of action (here the man, his condition, his body), the instrument (yourself) and the instrumentation (treatment, medicine). I have often used the Force alone without any human instrument or outer means, but here all depends on the recipient and his receptivity — unless as in the case of many healers there are unseen beings or powers that assist. If there is an instrument in direct touch with the patient, whether the doctor or one who can canalise the force, then the action is immensely assisted, — how much depends on the instrument, his faith, his energy, his conveying power. Where there is a violent opposition, this is frequently not enough or at least not enough for a rapid or total effect, the instrumentation (treatment or medicine) is needed. It is especially where the resistance of the body or the forces acting on the body-consciousness is strong that the medicine comes in as an aid. But if the doctor is non-psychic or the medicine the wrong one or the treatment unplastic, then they become an added resistance which the Force has to overcome. This is a very summary and inadequate statement, but it gives the main points, I believe.

P.S. I forgot to say that the surroundings, especially the people around the patient, the atmosphere, the suggestions it carries or they give to him, are often of a considerable importance.

24 January 1936

Therapeutic Force and Medical Diagnosis

> I was under the impression that it is quite possible for the intuition to know the exact condition of a patient without going through any mental processes like deduction from evidence and so arrive at a diagnosis like a shot.

It can if you can train it to act in that field and if you can make it the real Intuition which sees the things without ranging among potentialities.

> But I find that it is not so. In several recent cases you have insisted on knowing this or that about the patient's condition. But what is the need of your knowing these things? Is not Yogic vision more powerful and accurate than our external optical capacities?

As for me, I have no medico in me, not even a latent medico. If I had, I would not need an external one but diagnose, prescribe and cure all by my solitary self. My role in a medical case is to use the force either with or without medicines. There are three ways of doing that — one by putting the Force without knowing or caring what the illness is or following the symptoms — that however needs either the mental collaboration or quiescence of the victim. The second is symptomatic, to follow the symptoms and act on them even if one is not sure of the disease. There an accurate report is very useful. The third needs a diagnosis — that is usually where the anti-forces are very strong and conscious or where the patient himself answers strongly to the suggestions of the illness and unwittingly resists the action of the Force. This last is usually indicated by the fact that the thing gets cured and comes back again or improves and swings back again to worse. It is especially the great difficulty in cases of insanity and the like. Also in things where the nerves have a say — but in ordinary illnesses too. 1 April 1935

*

> In the case of an illness, how do you decide whether it is the recrudescence of an old illness or the action of a dark force or

> even some experience? From the description supplied to you by the doctor?

Yes, certainly — just as you go by the symptoms of a case as seen by you and as related by the patient.

> I thought that it is not possible to have spiritual experiences, especially major ones, without your previously having knowledge about it.

Previously? My God, we would have to spend all our time prevising the sadhaks' experiences. Do you think Mother has nothing else to do? As for myself, I never previse anything, I only vise and revise. All that Mother prevised was that there was something not right in X, some part of him at odds with his aspiration. That might lead to trouble. That is why, *entre nous*, I want him to find out what part of him didn't want the descent. 19 October 1936

Therapeutic Force and Medicines

We do not believe in taking too many medicines. One or two effective ones and the Force are better than disturbing the system by 101. 13 August 1934

*

> 1) How can the use of medicines be consistent with faith?
> 2) When are medicines really necessary?
> 3) What is excessive use of medicines and what is sparing use?

The use of medicines is permissible, if it is necessitated by an insufficient responsiveness in the body or if the faith itself is of a mixed and insufficient character — i.e. if the mind or vital as well as the body feel uneasy in the presence of illness. It is consistent with faith when it is used only as a physical support to the action of the Force, not as a substitute.

To dose oneself with many medicines or to use strong medicines in ordinary cases or to use them when an opening to the Force or an exercise of the inner Will is sufficient, is excessive. For a system not accustomed to curing itself the use of mild medicines in just sufficient quantity can be quite effective and that is all that is needed. 19 April 1935

*

> The enclosed report shows how, without any [*homeopathic*] medicaments, a call to the Mother by me last night was sufficient to relieve what medicaments could hardly have been expected to do overnight. Hence it is better to make a note of the far-reaching possibilities of the action of the Force.

It so happens very often, but there is still an element of uncertainty in the relation of the amount of force put out and the reaction of the patient that allows a considerable *flottement* in the results as the French puts it. 17 April 1936

*

> In homeopathic treatment there is a slight primary aggravation if the drug is correctly chosen. Does some such primary aggravation happen when you use your Force to heal?

Not necessarily, but if there is a strong force of resistance behind the illness or if there is something hiding there it may come out under the pressure. This is not however the invariable rule. Often the result of the force is immediate and without reactions or there is an oscillation, but no aggravation or increase. 30 May 1936

*

> The patient is feeling miles better on the whole. Have you been FORCE-ing at last?

I have of course been forcing furiously for the last 3 days. But is it not the medicine that deserves the credit? 28 September 1938

*

> It is only through your Divine help and the Mother's blessings that it is possible to diagnose correctly and give the right treatment. Kindly therefore press the action of the Force home without considering for a moment that the happy change in the patient is owing to medicinal action.

I see. The previous unreceptivity had led me to think that it was the medicine which made the difference. I will go on with the pressure of the Force. But it needs an unwavering, strong pressure to produce appreciable results in this respect and it is not easy to keep it up. If I had nothing else to do, it would be easy, but my day is full with all kinds of things. However I will try to keep up the continuity — don't want this fellow to peter out on our hands. 29 September 1938

*

> Should I ever run into a malaria case, I will give you a loud shout and rest assured that I will come out scot free. I intend to scrap all malaria medicines.

Mm! Cromwell said "Trust in God and keep your powder dry!"
10 November 1938

Therapeutic Force and Homeopathy

> I felt some improvement in the leg but the pain has not gone completely. Generally the medicines of X [*a homeopath*] are effective, but not in my case. Why is it so? I have heard that he is a wonderful medium. You have worked through him in the case of outside people, why not in me? Does that mean that they were more open to your force than I was? Kindly explain.

X is a remarkable medium, but he is more successful with people outside than with the sadhaks — (not that he has not succeeded with many of them also). For this there are two reasons. People outside are impressed by his apparently miraculous cure and believe implicitly and follow his treatment — the sadhaks question and dispute it; this mental opposition has a reaction upon the result of the treatment (e.g. *X* told me there had been a great improvement in *Y*'s illness, *Y* denied that there had been any visible or undoubted improvement, yet today Dr. *Z* told the Mother that he was amazed by the improvement, he had not thought such a thing possible, but now he knew because he had seen it.) The other reason is that sadhaks ought not to need an intermediary between themselves and the Mother — their bodies as well as their minds ought by this time to have become sufficiently receptive for that — outside people do need a medium, for they cannot be expected to have the same receptivity.

*

> Today's case has again convinced me that *X* doesn't know much about physiology, pathology, dieting, diagnosis, etc. You may say, "Homeopaths are concerned with symptoms." But I shall be the last to believe that he cured this man by relying on symptoms alone.

Because you are tied in your own system and do not understand that Nature is not so rigid as your mental ideas.

> All big homeopaths, I have heard, were originally allopaths who knew anatomy, physiology, pathology etc. *X* is unique and his cures also unique. I am puzzled about the real mystery behind.

Is it not the very principle of homeopathy that it cures the disease by curing the symptoms? I have always heard so. Do you deny that homeopaths acting on their own system, not on yours, have cured illnesses? If they have, is it not more logical to suppose that there is something in their system than to proclaim the sacrosanct infallibility of the sole allopathic system and its principle? For that matter I myself cure more often by attacking the symptoms than by any other way, because medical diagnosis is uncertain and fallible while the symptoms are there for everybody to see. Of course if a correct indisputable diagnosis is there, so much the better — the view can be more complete, the action easier, the result more sure. But even without infallible diagnosis one can act and get a cure. 23 December 1935

*

> There were evidently three factors at work in this case: Mother's Force, the mediumship of *X*, which was constituted of faith, confidence, vital power, intuition, etc., and his drug treatment. Now what I am puzzled about is the exact contribution of *X*'s medicines in this case.

Exact? How can one measure exactly where vital and mental and spiritual factors come in? In dealing with a star and atom you may (though it appears you can't with an electron), but not with a man and his living mind, soul and body.

24 December 1935

*

> A symptomatic treatment can't be applied in cases where the same symptom is produced by two or three different diseases.

Why can't it? There is a possibility that you can strike at the cause, whatever it be, through the symptoms and you can kill the root through the stalk and leaves and not start by searching for the roots and digging them out. That at any rate is what I do.

24 December 1935

*

> I wonder whether our mode of looking at things is altogether wrong. If there really are such drugs in homeopathy that can give results in cases where we [*allopaths*] have almost none, it would be worthwhile trying to study it and combine both systems.

Certainly there are — the universe is not shut up in the four walls of allopathic medicine. There are plenty of cases of illnesses being cured by other systems (not homeopathy alone) when they had defied the allopaths. My experience is not wide but I have come across a good number of such cases.

24 December 1935

*

> *X* gives a high-blood-pressure patient on the verge of heart-failure "moderate" licence in eating, drinking etc. He calls it "leaving to Nature"!

Well, I have followed that system with myself and others and gone on the basis that Nature is very largely what you make of her — or can make of her.

28 December 1935

*

> I believe that an allopath would have been as successful as *X* if he had the backing of your Force.

The Force needs an instrument and an instrumentation also sometimes. The instrument was *X*, the instrumentation partly at least his drugs. I don't believe in the story of the inefficiency of homeopathic drugs only because they are homeopathic. Also, I don't believe that *X* knows nothing about them and can't properly apply them. I have noted almost constantly that they have a surprising effect, sometimes instantaneous, sometimes rapid, and this not on *X*'s evidence alone, but in the statement of his patients and the visible results. Not being an allopathic doctor, I can't ignore a fact like that.

> Some symptoms like headache, vomiting etc. may be caused by many diseases, such as brain-tumour, syphilis, high blood-pressure, etc. If you tell me that a homeopathic medicine for headache, vomiting etc. will be a panacea for all these diseases, it will be difficult for me to accept it.

Tumour, syphilis etc. are specialities, but what I have found in my psycho-physical experience is that most disorders of the body are connected, though they go by families, — but there is also connection between the families. If one can strike at their psycho-physical root, one can cure even without knowing the pathological whole of the matter and working through the symptoms as a possibility. Some medicines invented by demi-mystics have the power. What I am now considering is whether homeopathy has any psycho-physical basis. Was the founder a demi-mystic? I don't understand otherwise certain peculiarities of the way *X*'s medicines act.

> Allopaths after all are not yogis and have no third eyes! Still I should say that mistaken diagnoses of appendicitis, for example, are very rare.

Good heavens! It happened in scores and scores of cases when there was the appendicitis mania among doctors in France — and they have other manias also.

> Why ignore the wonderful things due to thousands of right diagnoses and let sporadic cases of error loom large in your eyes?

Sporadic cases! I have heard of any number of them, they are as plentiful as blackberries in Europe. And as for difference of diagnosis it is almost the rule except when doctors consult together and give concessions to each other. Don't try to throw allopathic dust in my eyes, sir! I have lived a fairly long time and seen something of the world before my retirement and much more after it. 28 December 1935

*

> Is there not some occult healing power in homeopathic medicine which effects miraculous cures? Or is it the doctor who has it?

I suppose it is as much the man and the force working through him as the medicine that makes the difference. I doubt if the medicine by itself could do so much. 11 January 1936

*

The Mother and I have no preference for allopathy; the Mother thinks doctors very usually make things worse instead of better, spoiling Nature's resistance to illness by excessive and ill-directed use of their medicines. We have been able to work through *X*'s homeopathy far better than through anything else — though it is likely that the Force working through homeopaths who were not conscious instruments might not have succeeded better than with the allopaths. September 1936

*

> I am taking *X*'s medicine, but there is no marked result as yet in regard to the nervous weakness. The only effect is in the relief of pain. Pray free me from this nervous trouble.

How then was *X* left for days under the impression that there was nothing the matter in this respect? If you want his treatment to succeed you must inform him from day to day accurately, without suppression or exaggeration of all the symptoms happening. This treatment is a system which deals with the symptoms as they come from day to day and shapes itself accordingly. In every case in which *X* succeeded "markedly" daily reports of the utmost fullness were given. Apart from that, in a case like yours of long duration immediate miraculous results cannot be expected. I told you that you must stick patiently to the treatment for a long time, if you wanted a radical cure.

13 September 1936

*

> I must say that *X*'s theories about disease are absurd, however successful he may be as a homeopath-physician.

You may say what you like about the homeopathic theories, but I have seen *X* work them out detail by detail in cases where he had free and unhampered action and the confidence of the patients and their strict obedience and have seen the results correspond to his statements and his predictions based on them fulfilled not only to the very letter but according to the exact times fixed, not according to *X*'s reports but according to the daily long detailed and precise reports of the allopathic doctor in attendance. After that I refuse to believe, even if all the allopaths in the world shout it in unison, that homeopathic theory or *X*'s interpretation and application of it are mere rubbish and nonsense. As to mistakes all doctors make mistakes and very bad ones and kill as well as cure — my grandfather and one of my cousins were patently killed by one of the biggest doctors in Bengal. One theory is as good as another and as bad according to the application made of it in any particular case. But it is something else behind that decides the issue.

> Just hear what grave errors he has committed. He said to me that he used his drug to bring about the profuse menstruation in *Y*'s case. Then he asked me whether this profuse flow should be stopped. Yes, I said, it must be stopped.

To bring out the latent illness and counteract it is a recognised principle in homeopathy and is a principle in Nature itself. He misapplied it here because he was in ignorance of the full facts about the menstrual trouble. 3 October 1936

*

> Why didn't your Force prove decisive in this case? About the Supermind and its failure over hostile forces, I give you a chance to bombard me or else I will!

What has the Supermind to do here? Who told you that I was using the supramental Force? I have said all along that it was not the supramental Force that was acting. If you want the supramental Force, you had better go to Jogesh Mama of Chittagong. I hear from Chittagong that the supramental Force is descending in him.

I have put down a few comments to throw cold water on all this blazing hot allopathism. But all these furious disputes seem to me now of little use. I have seen the working of both systems and of others and I cannot believe in the sole truth of any. The ones damnable in the orthodox view, entirely contradicting it, have their own truth and succeed — also both the orthodox and heterodox fail. A theory is only a constructed idea-script which represents an imperfect human observation of a line of processes that Nature follows or can follow; another theory is a different idea-script of other processes that also she follows or can follow. Allopathy, homeopathy, naturopathy, osteopathy, Kaviraji, hakimi have all caught hold of Nature and subjected her to certain processes; each has its successes and failures. Let each do its own work in its own way. I do not see any need for fights and recriminations. For me all are only outward means and what really works are unseen forces behind; as they act, the outer means succeed or fail — if one can make the process a right channel for the right force, then the process gets its full utility — that is all. 3 October 1936

Lights, Visions, Dreams

Sri Aurobindo's Light

If it is pale blue, it may be my colour. Pale lavender blue, pale blue but very brilliant in its own shade. 6 August 1932

*

> Nowadays I see Sri Aurobindo's light for most of the time but in different forms — sometimes like a big star, sometimes like a moon, sometimes like a flash of light. Why do I not see it in the same form?

It varies according to the circumstances. Why should it be always the same? 21 April 1933

*

> Two days back in a dream I saw Sri Aurobindo coming towards me. His body and dress were blue. Why did I see him in this colour and not any other?

It is the basic light Sri Aurobindo manifests. 23 June 1933

*

Sri Aurobindo's light is not a light of the illumined mind — it is the divine Illumination which may act on any plane.

7 September 1933

*

> Someone was giving an explanation of the legend of the churning of the ocean. He said that blue is the colour of poison, which is why Shiva is called Nilakantha, while whitish blue is the colour of Sri Krishna and therefore of you.

The different blues mean different forces (the real blue has nothing to do with poison). The whitish blue is specially called my

light — but it does not mean that that alone can come from me.
22 November 1933

*

There are many blues and it is difficult to say which these are. Usually deeper blue is higher Mind, a paler blue Illumined Mind — whitish blue Sri Krishna's light (also called Sri Aurobindo's light).
March 1934

*

It depends on the shade of the blue. Ordinary pale blue is usually the light of the illumined Mind or something of the Intuition. Whitish blue is Sri Aurobindo's light or Krishna's light.
6 February 1935

Receiving Sri Aurobindo's Light

How can I receive Sri Aurobindo's light in the mind?

It can always come if you aspire patiently. But the basic condition, if you want that Light, is to get rid of all other mental influences.
29 May 1932

*

> What is the meaning of "to get rid of all other mental influences"? Is it this that I had better not read any other books except Sri Aurobindo's or not try to learn anything by hearing or admiring others?

It is not a question of reading books or learning facts. When a woman loves or admires, her mind is instinctively moulded by the one she loves or admires, and this influence can last after the feeling itself has gone or appears to be gone. This does not refer to *X*'s influence merely. It is a general rule given to keep yourself from any other admiration or influence.
30 May 1932

Light in a Photograph

As one approaches your photograph in the Reception Room,

> there is a feeling that it is an emanation of yours. There seems to be a special light in it.

The Sadhaks may themselves bring this light by approaching me through the photo. 24 August 1934

Meditation with a Photograph

When the meditation is done with the photo, it is better done with open eyes.

Seeing Sri Aurobindo in Vision

> I looked at your photograph in the Reception Room after meditation and clearly saw the portrait move its shoulders and as if breathing.

There was a movement in the vital plane and you opened to an inner vision of it. 22 March 1933

*

> As I was sitting in prayer, I saw Sri Aurobindo in a vision coming down the staircase till he came just near to the floor. What does this mean?

It indicates perhaps the bringing of the Divine Consciousness down from level to level till it is now nearer the material.
23 September 1933

*

> Today while meditating I saw in a vision that in Sri Aurobindo's light Nataraja Shiva was manifesting with many hands. What does this signify?

It is the sign of the manifestation.

> Then I saw that in the sky Sri Aurobindo's light and red light were manifesting in the form of a globe. Does this signify the manifestation of Sri Aurobindo's divine light on the physical plane?

Yes.

> Then I saw that Sri Aurobindo's light was manifesting on a sea along with another light of pale blue colour. Does this mean that in the vastness of consciousness Sri Aurobindo's divine light is manifesting through the Intuitive Mind consciousness?

Yes.

15 October 1933

*

> I saw Sri Aurobindo last night in a vision seated on a chair and writing something. Behind his head there was a circular green light. What does this mean?

The green light is that of a dynamic vital energy (of work). As I was writing — at work — it is natural that that light should be behind my head.

5 November 1933

*

> I have started concentrating in the heart now. Last Sunday while I was meditating I had the vision of your face floating before me for about an hour or so, accompanied by a deep joy. I was fully conscious, but the body became as if dead, all movements stopped, and what a rapture it gave me.

That was very good!

> Has anything opened up in me, really? Or is it only a momentary phase of a descent like Peace or Ananda? But I feel as if you have given me a lift forward — the fulfilling of the Mother's promise — "I am coming". Am I right?

It looks like it. At any rate there is evidently an opening in the heart-centre or you would not have had the change or the vision with the stilling of the physical consciousness in the body.

30 October 1934

*

> Last night I had a dream that you had come out of your seclusion for once; you were tall, quite young, but very dark. I began to wonder if this was Sri Aurobindo of former years!

No. It is not likely. It is probably some subtle physical form — the one corresponding to the Shiva element in me. I have seen myself like that sometimes and it was always the Shiva formation. 11 December 1934

Help in Dreams

> *X* had a dream of you as shown in the photograph giving him instructions in his engineering work. Two features: (1) Sri Aurobindo has come out of retirement; (2) he has come out as an engineer!

I suppose, the present Sri Aurobindo having left all engineering work to the Mother, the previous Sri Aurobindo had to come to do it in this case. Anyhow what has it to do with coming out? Any number of people meet me in dreams and get instructions or intimations about this or that. It is an activity of the vital plane where I am not in strict retirement — it has nothing to do with any future physical happening. 25 August 1936

*

> Do you mean to say that people getting instructions from you in dreams is as real, effective and correct as if you had written them on paper?

Yes, if the record is correct. 26 August 1936

Darshan

Admission to Darshan

Write that usually Sri Aurobindo sees on these days only his disciples, whether those residing in the Asram or those who come to him from outside, and a few others who are either connected in some way with the Asram, its work or its members or else are given permission for special reasons. Permission is not given to all who would like to come, as that would mean an impossible number and it would besides entirely break the principle of Sri Aurobindo's retirement.[1] 5 February 1930

*

You can write to him that he can have permission for himself and his wife — but for the children it depends on their age, whether they are young children under ten or not — young children are not allowed for darshan. 17 July 1935

*

Nobody should ever be *asked* to come for Darshan or Pranam or meditation. If somebody spontaneously asks, it is another matter. Here too as a rule, there should be no eagerness that they should come. Encouragement should be given only in those cases where there is a good or special reason for it. The number of people coming especially in the August darshan, when the Pondicherry people also come, is already very large and we are kept for 7 or 8 hours at a stretch receiving them, so it is not advisable to go on increasing the numbers under the present circumstances. If a man is especially deserving or likely to be a helper or sympathiser of the Asram or there is any other reason for encouraging him, then of course this general rule does not apply. 27 July 1937

---

[1] *This and many other letters in this and the next chapters were written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the correspondent. — Ed.*

*

> I have heard about you and read your books and feel impelled to ask for your help. In case you think your darshan will help better, I most humbly request you to grant me one at your convenience.

Tell him it is not necessary. Transformation comes only by inner sadhana and development. A darshan can at best only give some strong experience.

> Several times when my mind has become blank I have experienced light descending from higher planes — probably supramental.

But he has the root experience already in the descent of the Light in the state of blankness. The Light is the Divine Light from the plane of spiritual consciousness above. The supramental comes only at the end of a long sadhana. 1 February 1938

*

But who is he? New persons are, as far as possible, refused for November — unknown persons not recommended by someone known are usually not permitted at all. 26 October 1938

*

The most we can concede is that she may be brought for Darshan in the way proposed, but she must simply take the blessing and pass, there must be no lingering. It is a mistake to bring sick people or the insane to the Darshan for cure — the Darshan is not meant for that. If anything is to be done or can be done for them, it can be done at a distance. The Force that acts at the time of Darshan is of another kind and one deranged or feeble in mind cannot receive or cannot assimilate it — it may produce a contrary effect owing to this incapacity if received at all. If the force is withheld, the Darshan is useless, if received by such people it is unsafe. It is similar reasons which dictate the rule forbidding children of tender years to be brought to the Darshan.

Making Pranam during Darshan

There is no obligation on European visitors to make the pranam [*during darshan*] — very few have done so, none perhaps. Even from those who have stayed here, it was not asked — they were left free to abstain unless they asked for it — e.g. *X*, *Y*, *Z* and *A*. *B* must not get the impression that we exact it from anybody. I do not know whether a mere "look" at us will help him — it is only in some cases that that happens, and these usually when there was a previous disposition or habit of response to supraphysical Light or Power as in the case of *C*. These days have been arranged with a view first to their main object, viz. for myself to give the darshan and blessing to the disciples, and the form of it is designed for that — visitors first came in as a superfluity, though now except in November they are more than half the crowd. But as they are mostly Indians accustomed to this form of the spiritual contact and aware of its meaning, it does not usually matter. It is only when a European comes that this difficulty arises — but it need not be any as he is not asked to make the pranam.

As for the rest, there is nothing much to say. The distance between the man and the Power manifesting through him is not an idea that can trouble the eastern mind, to which the gulf does not exist, but it is natural to the modern intelligence.

20 November 1933

*

> Is it possible for darshan to do pranam on behalf of *X*, *Y*, my mother, etc.?

It is not possible to make separate pranams. There are nearly 700 people this time, and if all is not rapidly done we shall have to be there till the afternoon 2.30 or 3. Even one minute for each means 6 hours for the first 350. 11 August 1934

Right Attitude towards August Darshan

> Someone told me that only ten days were left for the August 15th Darshan. I replied that every day should be considered as the 15th.

That is the right attitude. Every day should be regarded as a day when a descent may take place or a contact established with the higher consciousness. Then the 15th itself would be more successful. 4 August 1934

*

As to the 15th August, well, don't lay too much stress on it which is after all more a general than a personal occasion — for the individual any day in the year may be the 15th — that is, *the* birthday or a birthday of something in the inner being. It is with that feeling that one should do the sadhana.

13 September 1935

Remarks on Darshan

> It would be very good if you could come out to give Darshan once a month instead of only three times a year.

If I went out once a month, the effect of my going out would be diminished by one third. 2 March 1933

*

> When I came for your Darshan, it seemed as if it was Shiva himself I was seeing. I felt Ananda too. The consciousness of these things remained for two or three days, and then as if evaporated.

There is no reason to be discouraged by what you call the evaporation of the consciousness that you got on the darshan day. It has not evaporated but drawn back from the surface. That usually happens, when there is not the higher consciousness or some experience. What you have to learn is not to allow depression, but remain quiet allowing time for the assimilation

and ready for fresh experience or growth *whenever* it comes.
4 December 1934

*

It was certainly the best Darshan of all yet passed today, though those to come will surely exceed it. I was struck by the rapidity with which your consciousness has grown since last time, much more solid and insistent and with a power to overcome all mixture. One can surely now have the confidence, not prophetic merely or founded only on the spiritual necessity in you but also on what has been accomplished, that what is not of a piece with this growing consciousness will change or disappear! *X*'s feeling about the darshan was quite true. 21 February 1935

Difficulties at the Time of Darshan

> I have heard that at the time of Darshan all our hidden subconscious desires and attachments are thrown up.

There is no such inevitable rule. It is true that attacks are frequent at that time, but one need not admit them. 6 July 1934

*

> During this Darshan, instead of Ananda, Force or Light I felt a great dryness.

It depends upon your condition whether the Ananda or Force or Light descends or whether the resistance rises. It is the resistance of the ordinary physical consciousness ignorant and obscure that seems to have risen in you. The period of the 15th is a period of great descents but also of great resistances. This 15th was not an exception. 17 August 1934

*

I do not think that the difficulty you are feeling has anything to do with your receiving what your husband sends you. It very often happens that when the Darshan day is approaching the adverse Forces gather themselves for an attack individually or generally in order to prevent what has to be individually received from being received and what has to be generally brought down from being brought down. Also very often there is a strong attack after the darshan day because they want to undo what has been done or else to stop it from going farther. But as far as the individual is concerned, there is no need of undergoing this attack; if one is conscious of its nature, one can react and throw it away. Or if it still presses one can keep one's will and faith firm and come out of the temporary obstacle with a greater opening and a new progress. The Mother's force and mine will be with you always.

Contact with People Outside the Ashram

Correspondence with Outsiders

You can tell him about the arrangements for correspondence. We do not write ourselves. He can always write to the Mother or to myself (we have received his letters); but answers, if any, are given on our instructions to Nolini who has the general charge of the correspondence or in certain cases by someone else specially deputed for the purpose. 21 August 1931

Does Not Give Advice on Mundane Matters

Since he has sent a stamped envelope, you can write to him (in Bengali) that it is no use putting these matters before Sri Aurobindo, as he makes it a rule not to advise people in their mundane affairs and confines himself only to what is proper to the spiritual life and for the rest to his own path of Yoga.

*

> I hope you will help me and send your reply to the following queries:
>
> (1) How long will the business partnership last with my partner?
>
> (2) Will I be able to recover my money from him in September?
>
> (3) What kind of business am I likely to do in future?
>
> (4) When will I have children and how many in all?

Write to him that these are not questions that ought to be put to me. It is to another class of persons that he should go for the answer. 28 July 1928

*

Reply to him (at *X*'s address) that we cannot tell him what job he should do — it depends on his opportunities, tastes and capacities. All that we can tell him about is his sadhana. If he progresses in his sadhana, opens his consciousness, can feel a higher and wider consciousness and the Divine Presence or Power at work, he will then be able to get our inner guidance for his life. 27 February 1933

*

> Can you induce my Gurudev Sri Aurobindo to think kindly of me, even though the terrible situation I am placed in is of my own folly and creation? I do not know if I am doing the right thing by writing this letter. But with full love and confidence in you I hope to be kindly excused.

Nolini, you can answer him as he has sent a stamp.

Sri Aurobindo does not usually extend any personal help or direction to any but accepted disciples who are practising a serious Yoga. Worldly life is a field of Karma (a field of growth) in which the soul progresses through the play of energies inner and outer, personal and universal producing a complexity of results until it is ready for the spiritual change. Once one practises this Yoga, the life becomes a part of the sadhana. Even so Sri Aurobindo seldom gives directions or advice in specific matters; only the Mother's Force is there to help and if the sadhak is open and sincere, he can receive and become aware of help and guidance. For discipleship a certain readiness is necessary. To be able to bear adverse fortune with a calm equanimity and inner strength (not a tamasic inert acceptance) would be a very strong qualification for it. 19 March 1936

*

Sri Aurobindo has asked me to reply on his behalf to your letter. I informed him at the time of all that your wife told me of your difficulties.

Sri Aurobindo does not as a rule give any advice in secular affairs, but only spiritual advice and spiritual support and blessings. In this matter the trouble seems to be the result of an education or influences, common enough at the present time, which turn the mind away from all living faith in the old beliefs and standards of life and from any openness to the Truth that was embodied in them. It does not seem likely that a return to them can be brought about easily now. If the mind affected could come to receive that Truth in a new light, that might be the remedy.

For you and your work Sri Aurobindo sends his blessings. Where there is sincerity of heart and selflessness in purpose and an openness to the help from above, difficulties however great can be overcome or turned in course of time. December 1939

Does Not Give Instructions in Yoga to Outsiders

> *X* has sent a letter to you, which I enclose. He would like some *upadeśa* from you.

I do not usually give *upadeśa* like that. I believe he complains of an inability to concentrate his mind or feel bhakti, but that is not due to past karma and cannot be got rid of by any *prāyaścitta* — it is the inherent disability of the human mind that goes outward and not inward.

*

Sri Aurobindo does not usually give instructions of this kind. It is only those who have been accepted into his own path of Yoga to whom he gives spiritual guidance. Suggest to him that as he is a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna, he would find his natural guides in the Ramakrishna Mission. 4 February 1931

*

You can write to him that Sri Aurobindo does not intervene by giving instructions in the Yoga of anybody except his own disciples. His own way of Yoga being of a separate kind and not meant for all to follow. 26 November 1932

*

I am instructed by Sri Aurobindo to reply that he does not give advice or instructions to anybody except his own disciples (already accepted by him), those whom he finds fitted and ready to prepare themselves for his path. This path has neither the same aim nor the same method as the ordinary Yoga, it aims at a realisation of which their results are only component parts; it may be said to begin its capital experiences where these end and its object is one that they would consider impossible. Much of it is virgin ground in which the paths have yet to be cut and built. The obstacles and difficulties in the way of success are formidable and demand either a strength and patience or a faith and unquestioning reliance on the Guru who is the pathfinder and leader. Or otherwise they have to have so strong and clear a call that no difficulties matter, or else to be in some way predestined to follow this path and no other, to cleave to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother as Guru and to no other. Your preparation seems to be mainly intellectual and for this Yoga the intellect is not sufficient; relied upon as the chief guide it may become instead a barrier. This Yoga depends upon a supra-intellectual knowledge which can come only from the soul or psychic being within and the secret spirit above. Moreover attachment to ideas, people, things are hampering obstacles in this Yoga. You could perhaps understand for yourself that there may be many obstacles in the way of your accepting this Yoga. All the same, if you still wish and are able to come for Darshan next August, you may do so. But for the moment for the reasons pointed out Sri Aurobindo is not able at present to give you any instruction or suggest a discipline. 17 October 1934

*

> Is it not possible that you tell me about my weaknesses, defects and deficiencies so that I may try to remove them?

It is not a question of defects and weaknesses. You have to grow spiritually from within till it is certain that your call is to this Path. Till then it is not possible for me to give you any definite verbal guidance. What comes to you must come from within yourself at present. 11 April 1935

*

You had better write to her saying that Sri Aurobindo does not usually give instructions to anyone but those who follow his path of Yoga which is a difficult path and not possible for everybody. Nor is it by oral instructions that he helps his disciples as he speaks with none nowadays and lives entirely retired. There would therefore be no utility in coming here.

It would be difficult for anyone suffering from nervous debility to follow Yogic processes; the recovery of health would be a necessary preliminary. It would be especially dangerous in Sri Aurobindo's path of Yoga. 1 May 1935

*

> [*Letter from an outsider to one of Sri Aurobindo's disciples:*] Can you enlighten me as to the reason for Sri Aurobindo's silence?

Just as I see no one, so I answer usually no letters except those of the disciples and many of these even are not answered by myself personally if they are outside the Asram.

> Will you also advise me how I can obtain his *kṛpā*?

My spiritual work is limited to a very small field and a particular purpose. Outside that field I never intervene whether for spiritual instructions or worldly matters. This limitation is absolutely necessary otherwise I could not do the work I have to do. All depends on whether the man who comes to me is meant for the spiritual path and its work — if not, then all I can do is to give him the *kalyāṇecchā* which one can always give. The rest depends upon himself or his karma. I shall ask Nolini for *X*'s letters and see. But at present I can say nothing.

25 January 1936

Does Not Grant Interviews or Personal Darshans

You had better write to him that an interview is impossible, that I see and speak with none, not even my disciples, — except on three days of the year when they and a few others specially permitted come and make pranam and receive a silent blessing, for even then I do not speak. 28 January 1930

*

Write that the paragraph in the *Jyoti* is a sheer invention. I have said nothing about the present movement to either disciple or visitor. I could not have done so, because since it began, I have seen and spoken to no one. My rule of giving no interview to anyone, of speaking with none, even on the three days when I come out, remains unchanged. 25 April 1930

*

> A Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University wrote some time back asking if it was possible to meet Sri Aurobindo during a proposed visit to South India. I let him know that he may write to Sri Aurobindo and if he was lucky he may find it possible to see Sri Aurobindo. He has written again. What reply shall I give him?

In such cases you should not write anything without consulting me. What he wants is evidently to talk with me and that is impossible. You will have to write to him now regretting that it is not at all likely that I shall come out of my retirement just now. 13 January 1932

*

If the Baba Maharaj asks for an answer, you will tell him that it is impossible for me to satisfy his requests. I am in entire retirement, seeing no one, not even my disciples, so I cannot see him. As for the Asram, it is a strict rule that none but disciples can reside in it; the whole life of the Asram is besides governed by a system elaborated in all details and it is only the disciples trained to this life who can conform to it. 16 September 1932

*

I am afraid I don't see how I can see William Arthur Moore — how can I extend to him so extraordinary a privilege (since I see nobody) which I would not have conceded to Sarat Chatterji?

You say Barin certifies him as a bhakta — but Barin's language is apt to be vivid and exaggerated; he probably means only an admirer. I think he must be answered that certainly he would have been allowed a meeting with me if I had been coming out but the entire seclusion has been taken as a rule for Sri Aurobindo's sadhana and it may not be subjected to exception so long as the rule is in force. If he is really a bhakta, that will give him a ray of distant hope and if he isn't, the impression made does not very much matter. Barin surely exaggerates the power of the publicist — after all he is only the editor of the *Statesman* — but even otherwise that is not the main consideration. By the way why have you transmogrified Moore into Jones? — there was a Jones there but he has departed and yielded the place to Moore. 17 August 1933

*

> I pray for Sri Aurobindo's Darshan once more before I leave. I know that it is against the rule but I hope you won't mind relaxing it for the sake of a bhakta.

I am afraid it is impossible. No separate personal Darshan can be given at this stage — it is not a rule, it is a necessity for the work that Sri Aurobindo is doing. 17 August 1934

*

The Maharani's request was placed by the Mother before Sri Aurobindo. But it has been his strict rule for many years past to see no one except on the three darshan days in the year and no exception has been made up till now. If an exception were made now, it would be difficult for him to maintain the rule in future. There is no possibility of keeping the matter secret and publicity would be undesirable for the Maharani and also Sri Aurobindo, as it would give rise to many requests for a special darshan or interview from others. It is therefore better that the Maharani should not maintain her request. But if on her way back she wishes to visit the Mother, the Mother will be glad to see her. 31 January 1938

*

There seems to be some misunderstanding about Mr. C. R. Reddy's visit to the Ashram. He was sent to Pondicherry by the Chancellor of the Andhra University to present the medal of the humanities prize given by the University and accepted by Sri Aurobindo. The Chancellor was to have come himself, but as it turned out that he was unable to do so the Vice-Chancellor came as his representative. Sri Aurobindo when he accepted had expressed his inability to leave Pondicherry in order to receive the medal but had consented to this official visit for the purpose. There was therefore no question of Mr. Reddy coming for a personal visit. The last visit of that kind Sri Aurobindo received was from Tagore very long ago. The only exception made to his rule of seclusion has been for the giving of instructions and receiving the report of a disciple entrusted with some work or some mission. It is difficult or even impossible for Sri Aurobindo to relax his rule any farther, still less to make any departure that would have the result of opening the doors widely or altogether. He might make some relaxation if a compelling occasion arose or if he felt it necessary because of some public emergency or some need of his work or the necessity of an exceptional case. But at the moment he still feels it essential to maintain his rule for some time at least and not less strictly than before. 10 January 1949

Part Four

The Practice of Yoga in the Ashram and Outside

Section One

The Practice of Yoga in the Ashram
1926–1950

Entering Sri Aurobindo's Path

Acceptance as a Disciple, 1926 – 1949

His aspiration may be satisfied if he makes himself fit. Let him continue to read the *Arya* and practise daily meditation. In the meditation he should concentrate first in an aspiration that the central truths of which he reads should be made real to him in conscious experience and his mind opened to the calm, wideness, strength, peace, light and Ananda of the spiritual consciousness. Let him write to you from time to time what experiences he gets or what are the difficulties that rise and prevent the experience.[1]

30 November 1926

*

Sri Aurobindo is retired and sees no one.

If you have not had even a glimpse of the Truth from any spiritual man, the fault is likely to be yours. Either you have not made it your chief concern to know and realise, putting all things else in the background or holding them to be of no account, or else you have been seeking with your mind, through the thought, and not with your inner being, your soul and spirit.

No suggestions of any practice can be given you unless you write more fully and state how you have tried hitherto, by what kind of practice etc. 19 July 1927

*

All is possible if there is a true faith, a complete consecration, a sincere and pure aspiration and a persistent endeavour.

---

[1] *This letter and many other letters in this section were written by Sri Aurobindo to one of his secretaries. The secretary would reply to the correspondent over his own signature, quoting Sri Aurobindo's exact words or else paraphrasing or translating them. — Ed.*

There is no one path for all. The nature of the aspiration expressed seems to indicate Bhakti as the proper path. That also is the quickest way, though none is easy.

Sri A. cannot undertake to point the way to any except those who follow his own path and are capable of it. The right thing for a seeker is to find the Guru destined for him. Usually one who has been in search for twelve years finds the way and the leader of the way long before the end of that period. Probably a more whole-hearted and concentrated seeking is needed.

4 August 1927

*

Answer that I am ready to help him in his aspiration. But first he should give some fuller information about himself. He will also have to take some time to see whether he is really called to this way or to another. And before he is finally accepted, it will have to be tested whether he is really capable and ready to give himself entirely to this aspiration. This Yoga implies not only the realisation of God, but an entire consecration and change of the inner and outer life till it is fit to manifest a divine consciousness and become part of a divine work. This means an inner discipline far more exacting and difficult than the ethical and physical austerities which are the rule at the Satyagraha Asrama. He must not therefore enter on this path, far vaster and more arduous than most ways of Yoga, unless he is sure of the psychic call and of his readiness to go through to the end.

6 April 1928

*

> Some time back, I had written to you to request whether you could take me for training in the yogic lines. I have not yet the favour of your reply. As already said in my last letter I need not write anything concerning me to the people of your type, as you can know all you want through your own powers. I should be much grateful for your early favourable reply.

I do not use powers of this kind or in this way. If he wants a Yoga of miraculous siddhis he must go elsewhere.

The object of Yoga is a change of consciousness, and opening into spiritual knowledge and experience and union with the Divine. If any powers come along with this change, they are not to be used in a trivial manner. 9 June 1928

*

Write to your friend that we do not ask for any financial help from your father and therefore you are not called upon to answer the questions in his letter. It is not everyone who has the *adhikāra* to help in the work of the Asrama. Those only can do so who have faith in it or sympathy or at least confidence in Sri Aurobindo.

As for the house, it was simply said that your wife would be allowed to come, if she wished to enter this path or prepare herself for it; but only when a house could be bought which could be set apart for women disciples. Sri Aurobindo is not anxious to increase the number of his disciples and only those are accepted usually who have the call and capacity for Yoga and are ready to satisfy the conditions. The permission was given for your wife at your request as a special favour and stands only if she wants to come and is prepared to live here under the conditions of life in the Asrama. 14 October 1928

*

Your letter this time is sufficiently explicit regarding your state of mind and your object in practising Yoga. You have apparently a call and may be fit for Yoga; but there are different paths and each has a different aim and end before it. It is common to all the paths to conquer the desires, to put aside the ordinary relations of life, and to try to pass from uncertainty to everlasting certitude. One may also try to conquer dream and sleep, thirst and hunger etc. But it is no part of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga to have nothing to do with the world or with life or to kill the senses or entirely inhibit their action. It is the object of his Yoga to transform life by bringing down into it the Light, Power and Bliss of the divine Truth and its dynamic certitudes. This Yoga is not a Yoga of world-shunning asceticism, but of divine Life.

Your object on the other hand can only be gained by entering into Samadhi and ceasing in it from all connection with world-existence. You cannot get help in this path from Sri Aurobindo; you must go to someone else in order to find a Guru.

1 January 1929

*

He can have darshan (only) if he comes for one of the three days. His request for advice etc. is too vague. I do not give advice or instructions in this general way. The whole question is whether he has the call or the capacity for the Yoga. That can only be seen when he comes here. He has to see first if the wish to offer himself is real, deep and persistent, — if the message has captured his heart or only touched his mind. All else afterwards.

8 September 1929

*

No one is initiated in this Yoga in any formal way. Those are accepted by the Mother who are found to be called or chosen from within for this path or for Sri Aurobindo's work. That acceptance is sufficient. Those are considered as called or chosen who can open and be receptive to the Power that goes from her here and can feel its working. If by doing what he is doing now, he can in time thus open and receive and feel the Power that will be a sign that he is meant for this way of Yoga. Nothing else is needed; prayer and aspiration are sufficient, if there is sincerity and a true call within. 23 February 1930

*

Answer to *X* that at present his mind seems to be under too many conflicting influences for him to take up Yoga with a single mind, much more for him to give up everything and come here, even if he were accepted. If he came, he would be pulled backwards by these influences. A divided nature is the worst possible condition for this path. Moreover he has a wife and a very young child, and he would have to give them up and practically renounce all connection with family life. As for politics, if he still feels the political call, he certainly cannot come here. It is better if he exhausts these desires of the ordinary nature, before he takes up the spiritual life. If at any time he feels them fallen away from him and only the spiritual attraction left, he can then take up the spiritual life, though it would still remain to be decided which path was the right one for him. Sri Aurobindo's path of Yoga is a very difficult one and there are others that are much easier to follow and might suit his nature better. But whichever path it is, Yoga asks for a one-centred endeavour, and until that can be given, a preparation like that which he is spontaneously undergoing is all that is possible. 20 May 1930

*

You had better send a copy of this letter to *X* and ask him to be careful in future with those whom he takes for the sadhana. Everybody must be made to understand clearly that this is not a sadhana of emotional and egoistic *bhakti*, but of surrender. One who makes demands and threatens to commit suicide if his demands are not complied with, is not meant for this Yoga. Also they must understand that they must not consider that they have a right to be called here at their own demand either for darshan or for permanent residence. Farther, it is not the habit of Sri Aurobindo or the Mother to answer every letter written to them; they do not answer unless there is a special reason for reply. Sadhaks who write about their sadhana will get the help they need if they take the right attitude and can receive it. But no written answer can be demanded for any letter.

You may write also to the boy himself to the following effect.

(1) If he cannot take the right attitude, he had better leave this Yoga and take to the ordinary life or follow some other path like Gandhi's.

(2) *Satyāgraha* and *prāyopaveśana* are no parts of this Yoga — they are parts of Gandhi's teaching and practice, but anyone who tries to bring them in here will be considered unfit to be Sri Aurobindo's disciple. If he writes again in this strain, no farther notice will be taken of him and he will be left to his own ways.

(3) It is not the habit of the Mother to answer letters written

to her; all letters are written by you under my instructions or at the Mother's order. But no disciple has the right to demand an answer to his letter. If he writes about his sadhana, he will receive *silent* help, provided he has the capacity to receive it and the right attitude. In future he must expect no direct answer to his letters; if anything has to be said, you will write through *X*.

(4) He must not expect to be called to Pondicherry. Only those are allowed who are ready for sadhana in the Asram or who are called for work for which they have a special capacity or training. For darshan, permission is given only when the Mother chooses; demands made in the spirit of his letter are always refused.

(5) This Yoga is not a Yoga of emotional egoistic vital bhakti full of demands and desires. There is no room in it for *ābdār* of any kind. It is only for those who surrender to the Divine and obey implicitly the directions given to them by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. 2 August 1930

*

You may get his photograph — it may help to see what kind of nature he has. But there is no need to go out of the way to *persuade* him; from his letter he does not seem altogether ready for the spiritual life. His idea of life seems to be rather moral and philanthropic than spiritual at present; and behind it is the attachment to the family life. If the impulse to seek the Divine of which he speaks is more than a mental turn suggested by a vague emotion, if it has really anything psychic in it, it will come out at its own time; there is no need to stimulate, and a premature stimulation may push him towards something for which he is not yet fit. 12 January 1931

*

Am I fit for Sri Aurobindo's Yoga? Will he take me up?

If by my Yoga you mean the integral Yoga leading towards the supramental realisation, you have not at present the capacity for it. All you can do at present is some preparation for it by Bhakti and self-dedication through Karma; if into this preparation you put a strong sincerity and a settled psychic aspiration, then one day you will be ready for more. 23 February 1931

*

The letter is an extremely intelligent one and shows considerable justness of mind and discriminating observation both as to the nature of the sadhana and its obstacles and the movements in him. You had better correspond with him and encourage him.

Tell him that his observations are all very correct and there is little to add to them. If he perseveres with sincerity and the same discriminating correctness of vision he is sure to progress. The sadhana is a difficult one and time should not be grudged; it is only in the last stages that a very great and constant rapidity of progress can be confidently expected. As for Shakti, the descent of Shakti before the vital is pure and surrendered, has its dangers. It is better for him to pray for purification, knowledge, intensity of the heart's aspiration and as much working of the Power as he can bear and assimilate. 18 May 1931

*

As to the girl, *X*, it hardly seems possible to say anything definite from her experiences — they are in the vital plane; it is only if the experience is in the psychic that it has a decisive value as indicating the call to Yoga.

The vision of the boy purports to be a call from Srikrishna, but these vital visions are not always what they seem to be. The vision about Kali and the dark forces and the fainting indicates on the contrary very serious difficulties, danger from the Asuric forces and an insufficient strength in the Adhar. On the other hand the vision of Kali with the dagger followed by that of the boy *might* mean that the Divine Shakti will destroy the difficulties and make the way clear for the service of Krishna.

Nothing however can be definitely said from this kind of experience. If her call to Yoga is real, it will declare itself irresistibly hereafter; it will then be seen to what path she is called, for as yet there is no clear and indubitable indication of a call to *this* Yoga. 7 November 1931

*

You ask about your friend, *X*. It is very evident from his own letter that he is not ready for the spiritual life or fit for Yoga. If he were to attempt it in his present condition, he would only be wasting time and energy (which could be turned to other purposes) in a futile endeavour. The spiritual life is only for those who have a single-minded or else a dominant turn towards it sufficient to carry them through all its struggles and difficulties. An awakening of the soul (not a turn of the mind only) is the one sure sign of a call to the Yoga. 26 December 1931

*

> At times I feel a kind of peculiar fear as if I am going to lose my brain (especially at night when I go to bed).

You can reply to him that if he has fears of this kind, it would be better not to try the sadhana. It is a difficult Yoga and faith, a steady and quiet will, courage and strength are necessary if one is to follow it. 21 March 1932

*

Tell him he can meditate and put himself into spiritual relation with us and if anything opens in him he can write.

25 March 1932

*

X is certainly capable of doing Yoga, he has a good adhar,— but whether he will be able to do this Yoga, is not quite certain as it is a very difficult path and would need more vital energy and single-minded concentration than he might be prepared at present to give for the purpose. 16 August 1932

*

The experiences you have had are very clear evidence that you have the capacity for Yoga. The first decisive experiences in this Yoga are a calm and peace that is felt, first somewhere in the being and in the end in all the being, and the descent of Power and Force into the body which will take up the whole adhar and work in it to transform mind, life and body into the instrumentation of the Divine Consciousness. The two experiences of which you wrote in your letter are the beginning of this calm and the descent of this Force. Much has to be done before they can be established or persistently effective, but that they should come at this stage is a clear proof of capacity to receive. It must be remembered however that this Yoga is not easy and cannot be done without the rising of many obstacles and much lapse of time — so if you take it up it must be with a firm resolve to carry it through to the end with a whole-hearted sincerity, faith, patience and courage.

The vision of flowers is a symbol usually of psychic qualities or movements whether in potentiality or promise or in actual state of development. The swaying is due probably to the body not being habituated to receive the Force — it should cease as soon as the body is accustomed. 2 May 1933

*

> I am interested in spirituality. My desire is to live in direct touch with the Asram.

You can give him some kind of answer — for his stamp. Spirituality is a vague term, — there are many ways of approaching the spiritual consciousness and the Guru's choice of a disciple depends on whether his mind or his nature and inner capacity call him to the particular path or not etc. 7 January 1935

*

We have read your letter and the Mother is willing to accept *X* as she has already accepted you. It is understood that he will do all he can to merit the acceptance.

You can tell him that reading and study, though they can be useful for preparing the mind, are not in themselves the best means of entering the Yoga. It is self-dedication from within oneself that is the means. Nor is it entrance into the atmosphere of the Asram that is needed, for there are many things in the atmosphere of the Asram, not all of them desirable. It is with the consciousness of the Mother that he must unite and there too a sincere self-consecration in mind and heart and will is the means for it. The work given by the Mother is always meant as a field for that self-consecration; it has to be done as an offering to her so that through the self-offering one may come to feel her Force acting and her presence.

P.S. The Mother will give the interview asked for, but it will not be possible immediately as just now her days are too crowded — you will have to wait some days for it. 27 February 1935

*

What you say about those whom we receive — that if one part in them sincerely desires the Divine, we give them their chance — is quite true. If we demanded more at the beginning, exceedingly few would be able even to commence their journey towards the Divine. 24 April 1935

*

You can tell him that no one is accepted as a disciple unless the Mother has seen him and it appears that there is some possibility in him of an opening not merely for Yoga but for the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. At present however Sri Aurobindo does not wish to accept more disciples unless the circumstances are exceptional. He can however, if he likes, come for darshan in August.

(I suppose he knows of my retirement and not speaking with people.) 9 May 1935

*

All Yoga is difficult, because the aim in every Yoga is to reach the Divine, to turn entirely towards the Divine and that means to turn away from the ordinary movements of the nature to something beyond it. But when one aspires with sincerity the strength is given that ends by surmounting the difficulties and reaching the goal.

The Mother was speaking of sadhaks who had entered into the life and atmosphere of the Asram and felt the touch on the psychic of what is here. It does not apply to those who have come here from the outside world but still belong to the outside. All the ties of *X*'s nature were still with the outside life; her vital was quite unadapted to the Asram life and recoiled from the idea of living it always. She gave her psychic no time to make that connection and absorb that influence which would have fixed in it the feeling of this as its true home. People can come here like that and stay for a time and go without any difficulty as many have done. The feeling of difficulty or uneasiness in going is on the other hand a sign that the soul has taken root here and finds it painful to uproot itself. There are some who are like that and have had to go but do not feel at ease and are always thinking of how to come back as soon as possible.

To help others without egoism or attachment or leaving the spiritual surroundings and spiritual life is one thing, to be pulled away by personal attachment or the need of helping others to the outside life is different. 18 May 1935

*

> *X*, who was a residential disciple of yours at Pondicherry but came here some months back, is a neighbour and a friend of mine. Under his instruction, I have been practising sadhana for a few months. I concentrate in the heart. Concentrating at this place for some time, I feel a descent first and then an ascent of a force within me. At first this was very irregular. Now I am having this descent and ascent regularly. I feel a power descending within me, then after one or two or sometimes three minutes, I feel it ascending and going above the head and the same upward and downward movements go on in cyclic order. I do not practise more than one hour daily. When the descent and ascent go on, the concentration at a certain place does not become necessary or rather my personal attempt of concentration stops or hampers the movements. In such a state, I keep myself vacant and watch the movements listlessly and keep off the passing thoughts that sometimes come. I feel calmness, quietude and vastness within me.

Accepted as disciple. As long as the calmness, quietude and vastness lasts, a special concentration need not be continued.

The special concentration is intended to bring the experience — during the experience the attitude of witness should be kept with rejection of anything that might disturb the experience. Listlessness however is not the proper poise of the witness but rather a still quietude. 1 November 1935

*

> Wire me if I am accepted or not.

What the deuce does he mean by asking a wire? One does not take disciples by a wire. And how that face [*in the man's photograph*] is going to do Yoga, I don't know. I suppose it is through *X* that he comes. Has the latter written anything about him?
circa 1935

*

> I am sending the photograph of *X*. Please see him, for he has come with much faith and *bhakti* for the Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

Mother does not want to see him; he has come without permission and, if we start seeing all the people who come like that, there will be no value in the rule. If he had a true Yogic capacity, it would be different, but we see no trace of it. Tell him he needs another kind of guidance — he would not be able to stand this Yoga. 3 July 1936

*

> *X* is planning to go back to his home. But he would like your instructions and guidance from here.

It is not possible for me to give him help and guidance — for that would mean an Influence put on him and in his present stage of development he has not the necessary strength and balance to receive it and bear it. I have said he cannot do this Yoga. He needs something else that he can assimilate. 4 July 1936

*

You can write to him in Bengali and tell him that Sri Aurobindo has seen the letters and says that the vision is interesting as showing that his inner being which came up in the dream is capable of receiving the Light which descends from above through the head into the other centres of the being. It is too early to say more. But he can continue with his aspiration and endeavour and report what experiences he has.

You can also tell him that there are two stages in the Yoga, one of preparation and one of the actual intensive sadhana. It is the first that he can undertake. In this stage aspiration in the heart with prayer, bhakti, meditation, a will to offer the life to the Divine are the important things. Purification of the nature is the first aim to be achieved. There should be no over-eagerness for experiences but such as come should be observed and, if helpful to the right attitude and true development, accepted. All that flatters the ego or feeds it should be rejected. There should be no impatience if the progress is slow or difficulties many — all should be done in a calm patience — and full reliance on the Divine Mother. This period tests the capacity of the sadhak and the sincerity of his aspiration towards the Divine.

12 November 1936

*

> A correspondent has asked whether it is possible to receive spiritual initiation from you. He has heard from somebody that if one has earnestness to be your disciple, you appear in your mental body and give the initiation.

There is no formal initiation; acceptance is sufficient, but I do not usually accept unless I have seen or the Mother has seen the person or unless there is a clear sign that he is meant for this Yoga. Sometimes those who desire to be disciples have seen me in dream or vision before acceptance. 20 May 1937

*

You can write to him that when someone has a sincere and strong call for the sadhana Sri Aurobindo does not refuse to accept him. But it may be that he has first to prepare himself before he can face the full difficulties of the Path. As for leaving all it would be premature to do so before one is sufficiently advanced on the way to make such a step spiritually profitable; too early done, it often creates more difficulties than it removes. 31 May 1937

*

> Sometimes people whose aspiration is doubtful or whose acceptance is not known to me, come and claim to join my meditations here as a matter of right.

The word "accepted" in these conditions has no great importance. If people want to join the Asram, then acceptance or non-acceptance has a meaning. But outside there are any number of sadhaks practising Yoga who have started without asking even for acceptance on their own motion. I do not interfere unless it is a question of something quite opposed to the Yoga in them, something neurasthenic, ill-balanced or hostile. It is quite impossible to stop the flood in most cases — even if refused, people say, "You alone are my guru" and go on doing sadhana.
18 July 1937

*

I don't very much care to accept unknown people unless they turn out to be of the right stuff. His visions were interesting[2] but what I wanted was for him to prepare himself and see whether anything developed in him. If there is nothing in his letters about experiences or spiritual developments, he has not satisfied the test. You will in that case write to him that his acceptance depends upon his development and showing that he is really called to this sadhana. 8 March 1938

*

I have received the photo and his letter and I should not advise him to undertake the Yoga — at least not now. In spite of his mental capacity which is considerable there is a weakness of the vital force in him which would stand very much in his way.

---

[2] *See the letter of 12 November 1936 on page 551. — Ed.*

Moreover to overcome the difficulties of Yoga, there must be a definite call and he himself says that he has not got that. It is better for him to increase his vital force and will by some life-action steadily undertaken and followed out — that is the one thing he needs before he can go farther. 6 June 1938

*

> Two days ago my friend *X* wrote to the Mother imploring her to take him in hand. Can I answer him in the affirmative?

Well, at present it is better not to write anything too positive. Nowadays especially, the Mother takes people in such circumstances on probation, she does not give them large immediate assurances, but waits to see how they open. If he justifies his aspiration, all will be well. 26 February 1943

*

As for the Zamindar he seems to expect some *dīkṣā* of the traditional kind from me, but this I do not give. He will have to be told that I do not and that my method is different. It may be a little difficult to explain to him or for him to understand what it is. Perhaps he may be told that those who come to have the Yoga are not accepted at once and there is sometimes a long period of trial before they are. We can see how he takes it and decide afterwards if he persists in his desire to come here. 11 July 1949

A Special Path

This Yoga is a special way to a high and difficult spiritual achievement. It is given only when there is sufficient evidence of capacity or an irresistible call. Inner peace is not its object; that is only one of the elementary conditions for it.

29 July 1927

*

Ask him to let me know more about himself.

What is the nature or object of Yoga which he says is the aim of his life? Has he practised at all before?

What makes him turn to me? Does he know anything about my way of Yoga and its aims?

I accept only those who are found capable of the Yoga practised here and who are either naturally drawn to this way or who are prepared to put themselves with entire confidence and without any reserves under the guidance they will get here.

I shall reply more definitely to his request after I have received his answer. 12 July 1928

*

Answer to him that my way of Yoga is a special path and extremely difficult and I do not readily accept disciples — unless there is something to indicate that they have a special call.

16 December 1928

*

Write to him that compliance with his request to see me is impossible. I do not *see* anyone — I do not speak with anybody or give oral instructions in Yoga. As for the rest, this is a special path of Yoga and only those are accepted who have a special call to it, not merely a general desire for the spiritual life. It is not a life of Sannyasa or a Yoga that can be done by Japa etc. but something much more difficult, so difficult that even those who have a call do not find it easy to go through to the end, and for those who have not the call, it would be impossible. If he likes, however, he can go on practising his Japa with an aspiration towards this path and if he gets any experiences by which a call to it becomes evident, then I can reconsider his case. 13 February 1930

*

> May I ask if you have published anything (in English) on the Tantra?
>
> For at least ten years I have been getting symbols and instructions in the sleep-state, but only within about one year have I been able to see at all (with the Inner Eye) while awake. . . . But I long to develop a little faster in the waking state. Can you suggest any way?
>
> If you can put any literature in my way along these lines

> or give me any hints as to higher development than that which
> I have, I will be greatly under obligation to you.

1. Sri Aurobindo has written no book in English upon the Tantra.
2. Mention *The Mother* and give her the address of the publishers.
3. For the rest, say that Sri Aurobindo does not usually care to intervene in the sadhana of others even by such hints and suggestions as she asks for, because such intervention might unprofitably disturb their own line of development or basis of experience. His own way is of a special kind with a well-defined purpose and he has made it a rule — for very strong reasons — not to touch spiritually anyone who has not entered this particular way. February 1931

*

He has himself said that he could not follow any path consistently owing to doubts and difficulties. Sri Aurobindo's path is long and difficult and it is not possible to follow it unless there is a strong call and a power to go through to the end. He cannot be admitted until it is clear that he has both. 3 May 1932

*

Sri Aurobindo's way of Yoga is of a special character — it is neither sannyasa nor does it accept the ordinary way of human life. Its first stages can be practised anywhere. But unless there is a personal call to this particular way, there is no use in anybody taking to it. For it is a difficult path and there is little chance of success unless the aspiration is clear and fixed and the demand of the soul sincere and unbreakable. Sri Aurobindo does not admit anyone to this Yoga unless he has some ground to decide that there is in him this special call and that he has an evident capacity for this way — usually it is only after seeing personally at the time of one of the three darshans he gives to disciples and others that he decides whether or not to admit. On the strength of correspondence only he very seldom makes any decision of this kind. 1 May 1933

*

> You have written [*in the preceding letter*] that Sri Aurobindo's way of yoga is of a special character and unless there is a personal call to that special yoga, there is no use taking to it. First of all my idea of yoga is very hazy and confused and I do not know anything about Sri Aurobindo's system of yoga. Does it put too much stress on pranayama? . . . Does it follow Anahata Nad and Jyoti?

You can tell him that it has nothing to do with the things he speaks of. It is a Yoga whose aim is to bring down a supramental consciousness and its Light, Power, Peace, Knowledge and Ananda for the transformation of the mind, life and body consciousness into an instrument of the Divine Consciousness. It does not follow any of the old ways though it takes something from all of them — but it is in essence the finding of a new way and is therefore extremely difficult and under certain conditions may be dangerous, — so it is not likely to be what he wants. You can give him the dates and explain that there is only darshan and Sri Aurobindo does not converse with those he sees.

17 May 1933

*

The difficulty is that she seems to have only vairagya for worldly life without any knowledge or special call for this Yoga and this Yoga and the life here are quite different things from ordinary Yoga and ordinary Asrams. It is not a life of meditative retirement as elsewhere. Moreover it would be impossible for us to decide anything without seeing her and knowing at close hand what she is like. We are not just now for taking more inmates into the Asram except in a very few cases. May 1936

*

> I have been doing asanas for the last year and a half, but do not seem to have derived any benefit from this, nor do I see light while doing pranayama. I have been a devotee of Sri Dattatreya and have been given a mantra by a sannyasi whom I regard as my guru. Recently I have read your book *The Mother* and feel that the Mother and Dattatreya are not

> different but one. Still, I do not see the light that, it is said, comes to those who practise asanas and pranayama.
>
> Please give me some instruction in asanas and pranayama.

Tell him that this is a different way of Yoga and it does not include Asanas and Pranayam. The seeing of light depends on a certain opening of the inner consciousness — it can come by pranayam or without pranayam. If he does not see, there must be some obstacle not yet removed in himself. But whatever difficulties he has, he should seek their solution from his guru.

25 June 1936

*

Reply that the Mother is not able to write letters herself, and you are writing on her behalf. What is given by the Mother is not a development of supernatural force, but if someone is accepted to take up this path of Yoga he is led towards a deeper and higher consciousness in which he can attain union with the Divine Mother. This however is a path long and full of difficulties — Sri Aurobindo and the Mother do not admit anyone to it unless they are sure of his call and his capacity to follow it and the person himself is sure of his will to follow it until the goal is reached. You can also inform him that Sri Aurobindo is retired and sees no one, he only comes out to give a silent blessing to his disciples and some others specially admitted for Darshan three times a year. If he comes in December, it will not be possible to see Sri Aurobindo, but he can see the Mother. 6 March 1937

*

> The writer of this letter wants to know if he is fit to be a disciple or if he has yet to prepare himself.

This is a difficult yoga and very few are "fit" — one has to prepare oneself for a long time in order to become fit.

11 May 1938

*

Inform him that

(1) No one is admitted into the Asram, unless and until he is accepted as a disciple of Sri Aurobindo.

(2) Sri Aurobindo sees no one, not even his own disciples, except on three days of the year and he speaks with none.

(3) Sri Aurobindo's path is a special one to which few are admitted. He seems to want Rajayoga (*cittavṛttinirodha*) or something similar, but that is not the way followed here. He should seek a guru who can give him what he wants.

*

> I had the good fortune of securing a real guide in the spiritual path, who initiated me into Rajayoga. But I have lost the chance of further guidance. I would now like to be guided by you.

Reply that Sri Aurobindo gives help or guidance only to those who follow his own special path of Yoga, but this is a path which would not be suited to his case.

> Will you kindly lead me and help me in my attainment of what I desire? I take refuge in you as your own disciple.

Reply to him that this Yoga is a long and difficult one and needs a perseverance and a steadiness which according to his own letter he does not seem to possess. If he found the path being shown to him by his "guidance" too hard for his zeal, this will be still more difficult for him either to understand or to follow to the end. This is not a Yoga one can start today and leave tomorrow. It is only if there is a sign of a real call to it that Sri Aurobindo would be willing to take anyone into this path.

Admission, Staying, Departure

"Acceptance" and "Admission"

Reply that residence in the Asrama is only allowed to sadhakas who have been accepted into Sri Aurobindo's path of Yoga, and not to all of them. This path is a special way of Yoga, difficult and different from others; only those are accepted who have a special call to it. 8 February 1930

*

> Many thanks for [*a transcript of the preceding letter*]. Permit me to ask as to the qualifications of persons who can be accepted and admitted into the holy ashram as sadhaks.

There are no specific qualifications except the call to lead a divine life embodying a higher spiritual and supramental Truth (not Sannyasa), the spirit which is prepared to sacrifice all for that one end accepting even the hardest conditions, ordeals and tests, and the recognition of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. It is the Mother herself who decides after seeing the aspirant and the nature of the call within him. You may point out to him that the seeking in him seems from his letter to be of a vague kind; he seems to seek any path and any Guru he can find. There is nothing definite that would indicate a call to this way of Yoga.

22 February 1930

*

X may write explaining that the Asram is not a public institution with rules etc. which anyone satisfying the rules can enter. Only those are admitted who are already Sri Aurobindo's disciples and who are considered ready for the Asram life. 1 April 1930

*

Answer that admission to the Asram is very strictly limited and only those who have already been accepted as Sri Aurobindo's disciples are admitted there. This acceptance is not easy, as Sri Aurobindo's path of Yoga is different from others and only those who are specially called to it in preference to other paths and who show some sign of the call or are believed to be initially capable can become disciples.

The answer must be in Hindi. 30 April 1930

*

No one can be received into the life of the Asram unless he has first been accepted as a disciple — there are no "students" of Yoga — and no one is accepted as a disciple until he has been first seen and it is known whether he has the call to this Yoga and the capacity for it. If he likes to come to Pondicherry, he may; the Mother will see whether he is fit. But permission to stay in the Asram cannot be given now. All the rest can be seen afterwards. 22 August 1930

*

> I am quite tired of this selfish and frail world and therefore I wish to stay in your Ashram for the good of my soul. I have heard much about you and I fully trust you will very kindly help me as your younger brother to be free from such a selfish and frail world.

Give him the usual answer that stay in the Asram is allowed to some only of those who are already accepted as Sri Aurobindo's disciples and that owing to the difficulty of the path, only some who have a call or a capacity are accepted as disciples.

It is not possible for him to join the Asram; Sri Aurobindo does not admit anyone who is not personally known and already his disciple; even among his disciples he admits only those whom he considers to be ready or called to the life of the Asram. Moreover the Asram is now full and there is hardly any room for new members.

All are not equally capable of practising Yoga and in Yoga itself some paths are more difficult than others. There are some who have a special call to a path; others have no call; though they may feel drawn to Yoga, it is to other disciplines that they must go. This path is especially difficult and even some of those admitted to it find great difficulty in following it. Therefore Sri Aurobindo is not willing to admit any new disciples unless he has reason to think that they have a special call for it or a special capacity. 11 June 1932

*

Those who follow the Yoga here are accepted by the Mother — for "accepted" means "admitted into the Yoga, accepted as disciples". But the progress in the Yoga and the *siddhi* in the Yoga depend on the degree to which there is the opening.

24 June 1933

*

One cannot enter the Asram like that. One must first be admitted to the Yoga and show that there are the experiences which indicate that one is really called to this path. Even afterwards it rests on the decision of Sri Aurobindo whether the sadhak is to be admitted to the Asram or practise his sadhana outside.

8 January 1934

*

You will tell him that admission to the Asram is only allowed to those who are already accepted as Sri Aurobindo's disciples. There are no arrangements for visitors residing in the Asram; those who come for darshan make their own arrangements outside. Sri Aurobindo does not readily accept disciples as his is a special path of Yoga and very difficult for most. For what he wants, another Guru with an easier way of Yoga would probably be more helpful. 31 December 1935

*

You can tell them that it is not possible. Admissions to the Asram have been stopped owing to want of accommodation. Moreover, it is only those who are already Sri Aurobindo's disciples and practising his special way of Yoga who are admitted as members of the Asram. 19 April 1935

*

Write to him that only those who are already Sri Aurobindo's disciples and have practised his Yoga can be admitted. Moreover at present admissions are rarely made as there is no longer any sufficient accommodation in the Asram.

(This should now be the answer to all these candidates from nowhere and everywhere — i.e. if they persist, otherwise they can be left without answer.) 15 May 1935

Admission to the Ashram, 1927 – 1943

It is best for him to put away all family and worldly cares if he wishes to succeed in the sadhana.

As for staying here, things have changed since he was here. I no longer take direct charge of people's sadhana; all is in the hands of Sri Mira Devi and the force acting here is much more direct, powerful and insistent than it was then. It needs a certain strength and a strong receptivity to bear and answer to it, especially a great sincerity in all the being and a preparation is sometimes necessary before it can do its work.

The best would be perhaps for him to have an experimental stay for some time. 23 March 1927

*

People are not accepted in the Asram or in the Yoga unless it is seen that they have the call and the capacity. A mere formal request is not sufficient for the purpose.

Sri Aurobindo is not at present seeing anyone, not even his own disciples.

If he likes, he can enter into a preliminary correspondence and explain his case, what he is seeking and why and the nature of his past efforts. 3 June 1927

*

Everybody is not admitted here, only those who are fit and who have a true call to Sri Aurobindo's Yoga. The desire for a "calm and peaceful" or Asramic life is not a sufficient passport for this admission. 22 July 1927

*

There is no question about grihastha and Sannyasin here, because the distinction does not exist for us. There is no place for the Sannyasin of the ordinary type at least, because we do not turn our backs on life; neither are we grihasthas, because we do leave behind us the ordinary human life and its institutions and motives.

=

The difficulty in *X*'s case is of two kinds. First, his mind seems to cling to traditional ideas and ways of action, while here they are thrown aside altogether. It is impossible without an entirely free intelligence (or, in its place, a strong psychic faith and ardour) to follow the movement here. I doubt whether *X* would be able to appreciate, much less to assent to it and follow it.

(2) *X* seems to lay entire stress on the reasoning intellect and to have fixed himself in that movement. Here the endeavour is of a supramental and therefore suprarational character. It has to be carried out through a silent mind, an active psychic being, a descent of the supramental Light and Power and Vastness and Ananda transforming all the instruments. An attachment to the way of the intellect, a bondage to the rational mind would be an insuperable obstacle. The supramental can be reached through the active mind only if the latter is large, free, subtle, plastic, ready at every moment to renounce its own way and to admit enlightenment and contradiction of all its cherished conclusions and habitual movements by a higher Light. Not one intellect in a thousand is of that kind. And even then it would not be enough without the heart's opening and the support of the psychic brought to the surface.

It would be useless for *X* to come here and find himself at a loss in an atmosphere foreign to his temperament. There is no sign that he is *psychically* ready for such a transplantation. A certain agreement of the philosophic idea is quite insufficient.

Only two kinds of people can stay here with any true profit;

(1) Those who are ready to absorb the spiritual atmosphere and change.

(2) Those who, if not yet ready, can still surrender to the influence and prepare slowly till they are ready.

═

It may be that *X* cannot advance precisely because of this interference of the intellect in the ways of the Spirit. The reasoning mind can never give itself confidently to the greater Influence, not even to God or Guru; it is capable of turning unprofitably around itself for ever. July 1927

*

He cannot come here to join the Asram. If he finds that he is under a pressure too much for his body, it is better to relax and take to healthy physical habits which will restore strength. Yoga is only for those who have brains and bodies strong enough to bear the pressure. 6 August 1927

*

> Is it possible under your guardianship (or elsewhere and in that case where?) to live a longer life than usual in India, and similarly to transplant self with body to other planets or other distant parts on the earth? I believe you have achieved all these powers. I do not mean transplanting the soul alone which could naturally be achieved after death.
>
> Will you very kindly admit one who has some practice in yoga and is prepared to abide strictly by the injunctions to a student in yoga?

Only those who take up this way of Yoga are admitted, if otherwise fit or ready, to this Asrama. The miraculous powers he mentions are not among the objects of this Yoga.

19 August 1927

*

He will have to wait. Admission here does not go by each one's own desire or idea of his readiness; there is an inner source of decision which has nothing to do with any of the reasons given by the mind. But also from a more external point of view we have neither means nor accommodation to entertain all who would otherwise come and there are some who are not called and are yet more ready than *X*.

He must make his sadhana deeper, less mental, more psychic, by a stronger aspiration and more devout surrender, before he can hope to come. Let him learn too to face the difficulties of life and keep his inner consciousness amongst them. It is not always the best thing for everybody to have the external circumstances made easy and favourable for the sadhana.

6 September 1927

*

The best thing will be for him to come here for a few days; the Mother will see him and decide what is best to be done after seeing his capacity etc., whether he is to remain here for a time or practise there.

Inform him that there is no fixed rule for everybody here. Fruits except bananas are not easily available in Pondicherry. For expenses (ordinary diet etc.) Rs. 20 a month can be reckoned as a fair amount; but he can meet his own expenses if he likes, taking his own diet etc.

Also inform him that I do not see anybody now or personally give initiation, but that will make no difference. He must have understood from Jotin's article[1] that all the work is in the hands of the Mother.

He should not come till a little time after February 21st.

circa February 1928

*

X of Burdwan writes that he intends to come here and I will have to support him, because he has nowhere else to go and because he has the need of an intensive sadhana. Write to him not to come. Only those are allowed to live here who are accepted by myself and the Mother. People cannot merely come because they want or need or think that I ought to receive and maintain them or on the mere ground that they are sadhaks. As for himself, he has not as yet even the first conditions, a psychic opening or an attitude of self-surrender. He is only in the first mental stage of initial realisations. In any case no claim is allowed in these matters. 13 April 1928

---

[1] *"Sri Aurobindo's Ashram: Daily Life of Disciples", by Jatindranath Sen Gupta, published in the* Hindu *(Madras) on 6 May 1927. See the Note on the Texts to* Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest, *volume 36 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *p. 608.*

*

This path of Yoga is very special and a very difficult one. *Yogic Sadhan* does not give a sufficient idea of it. It requires not only capacity for sadhana, but a psychic call of a very definite kind — a mental adhesion is not sufficient. Before I can assent to his coming here, I must be sure of his having this call. Why should he not continue his practice at Rishikesh and see what develops in him and what is his real way? 8 September 1928

*

It will be better for him to write again stating

(1) What Yoga he has practised during these 15 years, or, especially, during the last two years.

(2) With what results.

(3) His age, circumstances etc.

There are no external rules for admission to the Asrama. The conditions are internal, the call to the way and spiritual purpose of this Yoga, an entire and one-minded readiness for surrender and the giving up of all else for the one Truth, acceptance by myself and the Mother. Those who practise, are not always admitted at once to the Asrama. 11 September 1928

*

The obstacles to his coming here are of two kinds.

(1) There is nothing as yet in his experiences, at least as he has recorded them, which would indicate a real call, necessity or readiness for his stay here.

(2) If he comes here, unready, the pressure of the forces at the centre is likely to be injurious rather than beneficial to his sadhana. The illness from which he has suffered, may return or regain force; the peace he is gaining may be disturbed etc. He is mistaken in thinking that to stay here will necessarily make his sadhana easier; it may make it more difficult, especially if, as is likely, the demand and pressure of the Force that is acting here is too great for him and he is unable to receive it or to answer.

I do not wish to increase the number of people in the Asrama excessively under the present conditions and I allow only those to remain with regard to whom the indication from above is perfectly clear and unmistakable. 11 September 1928

*

Write to *X* that I am not pleased with the tone of his letter. Demands of this kind, talk of suicide etc., claim to come here on the ground of poverty are all entirely out of place in one who aspires to practise this sadhana. Those who cannot face the difficulties of life in the right spirit, will not be able either to face in the right way the difficulties of sadhana. To stay here is a privilege accorded by the Mother to some who are fit or are called to do some work for her here. It is not conceded to anybody because he is poor and has no other resource or for any other irrelevant reason. And no one has a right to demand or clamour for it. If he wants to practise this Yoga, he must do it with a quiet spirit, demanding nothing but the calm, peace and light and strength of the divine consciousness and the presence of the Divine. And he must face all that comes to him in life, in a spirit of quiet faith and equality and endurance. circa 1928

*

It is very evident from his letter that in his mind he is not at all ready. If he has this wandering and experimental spirit, let him satisfy it first in the other places he thinks of visiting or the other experiments he wants to make. Here only those should come who feel a definite call and are sure that here lies their spiritual destiny and nowhere else. 16 January 1929

*

He says he wants to come here for his sadhana, but for what sadhana? The Yoga here is of a special kind and everybody is not called to it or fit for it. He himself seems to have been living very much in the mind and in external things. He is leaving the Asram there because he has fundamental differences (it is to be presumed, differences of idea and mental outlook) with the workers. How is it sure that there will be agreement here? In any case, it is the capacity for a special kind of inner life or the inner call to it that can alone be a reason for admittance to the Asram here. This is what you must explain to him. I do not know what sadhana he has been doing or what experiences he may have, if any. But when he came here, he did not seem to be at all ready. A mental decision to give up one kind of life or activity and take up another, is not sufficient for the purpose. 7 June 1929

*

What you should write to him is that it is not so easy to get permission to come here. Many desire it, but only a few are admitted. The desire is not enough, it has to be seen whether the applicant is fit.

As for the letter itself, he only says that he wants to serve a "good man" and that he is ready to do any work you (*X*) tell him to do. I do not see in that any sufficient call or reason for his coming here. 21 June 1929

*

I do not consider it advisable that he should abruptly give up his service and come here for good. When he came, he had a difficulty in bearing the pressure of the atmosphere up to the end. It will be better if for the present he comes at intervals,— we can see how he progresses and, if after a time, the difficulty is finally and definitely eliminated, then a decision can be taken.
1 August 1929

*

Write that permission is given for his coming but there are at present nearly 90 people here and, even when the temporary ones have gone, something like 80 are likely to be here, for already the permanent number is over 75. In these circumstances it is extremely difficult to find room for new people, even for one. But still this may be arranged; in a few days we shall be able to see what is possible.

But if he wants to bring the child, it is another matter. Our experience is that most children cannot bear the pressure of the atmosphere, and after two or three experiences of this kind it has been made a rule not to admit young children to reside in the Asram. If he comes with the child, he must make his own arrangements for a separate lodging.

After receiving this letter he should let us know what are his definite plans and when he proposes to come.

circa August 1929

*

Answer that there are many paths of Yoga, — Sri Aurobindo's is one which is very difficult and exacting and he does not care to accept anyone into it unless he is satisfied that he has a special call and is capable of following the path. No one is admitted to the Asram as a member in the indefinite and conditional way he suggests. It is no use taking up Yoga without knowing what it is. If he wants to read books on the subject, he can read the *Essays on the Gita* and *The Mother*. They will not give him a complete idea of this path and its conditions and objects, but they should at least give him some notion of what Yoga is and of the spirit of this Yoga.

11 December 1929

*

It is not advisable for her to come now; she is not yet spiritually strong enough or sufficiently undivided to be able to support the pressure of the Yoga here. Nor is there at present room in the Asram. Also, she is mistaken in thinking that she has something to get directly from me other than what she has got or can get from the Mother. The only thing she can do now is to prepare herself, going on with what she has received and trying to assimilate it and bring it to her surface consciousness;

especially, she has to cultivate calm, balance, simple sincerity and a *quiet* and firm aspiration. 25 December 1929

*

You can write to *X* answering his questions.

There are three kinds of arrangements

(1) Those who live outside, rent their own house and see to their own arrangements.

(2) A room is sometimes given in the Asram to those who come for sadhana, as well as food etc.; but they pay a monthly sum so long as they stay.

(3) Those who are accepted as permanent resident members of the Asram and give all they have as property or income; these have nothing to pay.

If he comes, it is probably the first that would suit him best, at least at the beginning.

You can write this on your account and need not give it as coming from me. I have not yet decided anything about him.

circa 1929

*

> I request, if you feel that I may be permitted to do so, to be kindly allowed to pay my pranams to both of you on the November festival of Sri Aravinda's darshan.

Write to him that he has permission for November 24th; but there is no room in the Asram; he must make his own arrangements.

Enter in the applicant's book.[2] 9 October 1929

*

> I had the fortune of having Sri Aurobindo's Darshan and staying in the Asram for twelve days. I feel that I am greatly benefited. Yet I feel unless I can stay there for a long enough period I cannot know if I can aspire to get fixed in the path of

---

[2] *This letter and the next three letters were written to a single sadhak in 1929 and 1930. The sadhak was admitted to the Ashram in September 1930. — Ed.*

> Yoga. I request therefore that you will be so kind as to let me remain in the Asram for at least six months commencing from 1st January 1930 or thereabouts. If I can be found by the end of that time to be a fit one I hope to stay in the Asram for ever if you would kindly take me in.

An "experiment" of this kind is not made in the Asram. Those who are as yet uncertain about their capacity or their call, are sometimes allowed to live here outside the Asram (at their own expense), but in connection with it for a time. It is only when they have accepted the spiritual life and are accepted that they can be admitted in the Asram as its members and workers or allowed to stay there for a long time on the same footing as the members. 10 December 1929

*

> I want to dedicate myself and my life to yoga under the guidance of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo.
>
> I request you to kindly accept me as one of your disciples and members of the Asram.

He is not ready for life in the Asram. He must be able first, staying where he is, to open himself to the divine Power and make sufficient inner progress. It is not enough to want to dedicate himself; there must be some clear indication that he is capable of entering into the path and following it. 17 December 1929

*

> I entirely surrender myself and depend upon your divine Grace. If in your pleasure you direct that I should remain in the Asram, I feel the spiritual path will lose many of its difficulties for me. If on the other hand you should direct that I should go back to Nellore may I request at least that you will graciously accord me darshan tomorrow.

If he likes to spend some days more here, he can do so; but the time has not come for him to remain here permanently. He must wait for that for some time longer. 22 February 1930

*

As for coming here he will have to wait. Has he any clear idea of what this Yoga and sadhana mean? It is a one-pointed direction and concentration of all the being on an aim which most people would regard as remote from all current human aims and impossible. He would have to turn his back on all the old interests and pursuits and the sympathy and support of those now around him and undertake a most difficult effort and discipline which his vital being might find painful and distasteful to it. It is better if he considers long before asking for this Yoga and make sure that he has really an irresistible call. 1 January 1930

*

He can come in June. But I think, if I remember right, I had written that he should first come for some time and we would see from the results whether he should stay here permanently or not. To do the sadhana permanently in the Asram is not always the best thing for everybody; it depends on the capacity and also on the stage which has been reached in the sadhana. For some the Force here would be too strong for a permanent stay; they get more advantage by staying for some time, receiving what they can and then going elsewhere to assimilate it; they are not ready for a continuous pressure.

I presume he will live separately, making his own arrangements? To live in the Asram and take the food etc. would, I imagine, be a rather abrupt and trying change at his age.

10 May 1930

*

In each case there is a difference, for some are called upon to enter the Asram life at once, others have to practise the Yoga while they are still in the world. No general rule can be made covering all cases. Each should do what he is called upon to do without troubling himself with suggestions of this kind. If any one has to enter the Asram life either early or at a later stage, the call will come to him at the proper time. Meanwhile he should pursue the sadhana quietly keeping himself in close inner contact with the Force that comes from here. 3 July 1930

*

Write to him that it will be better for him to wait until he has from within himself the true and complete turn to a spiritual life. It is not in his mind only but in his vital nature that there are obstacles to a complete consecration. To come here might give him a stimulus, but it is not sure that it will be anything more than a partial stimulus which he could easily mistake for a total call. Often people receive such a stimulus, the psychic being opens, but the rest of the nature is only silenced for a time and does not sincerely concur, so that afterwards resistances arise and the sadhak falls away from the path, — which it is very injurious spiritually and otherwise to abandon once it has been begun. 5 July 1930

*

Reply that it will be better for his Yoga if he goes on for some time as he is — to practise it at the Asram might easily interrupt the present movement which is the right one for him and precipitate another for which he is not ready.

At present his experience is that of the mental being and mental nature opening to the Light and to some touch of a higher Ananda, with a basis of calm — the indispensable basis. This movement should continue till the heart and the vital being and vital nature also open. It is not necessary for him to make a special effort for these things. If he keeps concentrated and open and maintains his faith and the remembrance of the Mother, they will come of themselves in the proper time.

Meanwhile, he can keep himself in some kind of physical touch by writing from time to time giving succinctly his experiences and the progress of his Yoga. When a sufficient basis has been acquired, the question of his coming to the Asram can be reconsidered. 6 July 1930

*

> What comes to my mind is to live in the Ashram where only it is possible for me to give myself up for the service of the Divine. May I have your permission for this?

No. It is elsewhere that you must prepare yourself, not here. You have not been asked to give yourself up to the service of the Divine in any outward or physical sense, but to prepare yourself inwardly by taking all life and all work wherever you are as a sacrifice, an offering to the Divine. That, if you are sincere in your seeking, you can do anywhere. 27 February 1931

*

It is possible to give *X* a room, the Mother says, in one of the houses. But he speaks of residing here permanently — in Pondicherry. To that there can be no objection; but as far as the life in the Asram is concerned, I think it should be regarded as a trial at first — to be rendered permanent if all is found right afterwards. He should be informed that there are two kinds of residents in the Asram, permanent members who give all they have or can dispose of and the Asram undertakes in return all their expenses etc. and those who come for a time to practise Yoga. The latter pay their expenses of boarding and lodging and certain contingents, but, as the Asram is in a town mostly in rented houses, these by themselves are sufficiently heavy.

17 May 1931

*

It is certainly quite true that the psychic contact can exist at a distance and that the Divine is not limited by place, but is everywhere. It is not necessary *for everybody* to be at Pondicherry or physically near the Mother in order to lead the spiritual life or to practise this Yoga, especially in its earlier stages. But that is only one side of the truth; there is another. Otherwise the logical conclusion might be that there was no necessity for the Mother to be here at all or for the existence of the Asram or for anyone to come here.

The psychic being is there in all, but in very few is it well developed, well built up in the consciousness or prominent in the front; in most it is veiled, often ineffective or only an influence, not conscious enough or strong enough to support the spiritual life. It is for this reason that it is necessary for those drawn towards this Truth to come here in order that they may receive the touch which will bring about or prepare the wakening of the psychic being — that is for them the beginning of the effective psychic contact. It is also for this reason that a stay here is needed for many — if they are ready — in order that under the direct influence and nearness they may have this development or building up of the psychic being in the consciousness or its coming to the front. When the touch has been given or the development effected, so far as the sadhak is at the moment capable of it, he returns to the outside world and under the protection and guidance even at a distance is able to keep the contact and go on with his spiritual life. But the influences of the outside world are not favourable to the psychic contact and the psychic development and, if the sadhak is not sufficiently careful or concentrated, the psychic contact may easily be lost after a time or get covered over and the development may become retarded, stationary or even diminished by adverse influences or movements. It is therefore that the necessity exists and is often felt of a return to the place of the central influence in order to fortify or recover the contact or to restore or give a fresh forward impulse to the development. The aspiration for such nearness from time to time is not a vital desire; it becomes a vital desire only when it is egoistically insistent or mixed with a vital motive, — but not if it is an aspiration of the psychic being calm, deep and without clamour in it or perturbing insistence.

This is for those who are not called upon or are not *yet* called upon to live in the Asram under the direct pressure of the central Force and Presence. Those who must so live are those called from the beginning or who have become ready or who are for some reason or another given a chance to form part of the work or creation which is being prepared by the Yoga. For them the stay here in the atmosphere, the nearness are indispensable; to depart would be for them a renunciation of the opportunity given them, a turning of the back upon the spiritual destiny. Their difficulties are often in appearance greater than the struggle of those who remain outside because the demand and the pressure are greater; but so also is their opportunity greater and the power and influence for development poured upon them and that too which they can spiritually become and will become if they are faithful to the choice and the call.

7 October 1931

*

Reply that it is impossible to have *X* or anybody else here now (for staying) even if they were ready — for owing to damage to rented houses we are compelled to vacate them and have no longer sufficient room even for the sadhaks who are here, much less for new members. Moreover there are already a hundred here and we cannot take more (except for exceptional cases) till the funds of the Asram increase.

Moreover, it is not good for anybody to come here prematurely — even for Darshan. If they are not ready, the pressure of the Power here may disturb them, a resistance or obstacles in the nature may rise as in the case of *Y*.

As for the February darshan we do not yet know how we are going to accommodate even those who have already permission to come. It is probable that *X* will have to wait for the Darshan for some time longer.

1 January 1932

*

There is no possibility of admitting in such cases now. There are already nearly 100 people and it is impossible freely to increase the Asram by renting new houses or undergoing farther expenses at present. Therefore only in exceptional cases can new people, not already known as disciples, be accepted. If she wants to prepare herself for Yoga, she can try to practise where she is for the present.

11 February 1932

*

In the Asram there is very little room nowadays and what is there must be kept for disciples — for those who have been accepted and come for the practice of the Yoga and to profit by quiet meditation in the Asram atmosphere.

All that we can offer him is, if he comes to Pondicherry, that he can see the Asram and meet people who will speak to him of the "philosophy" and the Yoga. At first more cannot be done.

This is not an Asram like others. It has a special life of its own and only those can live it who have entered into the spirit of the Yoga and are ready to assimilate its atmosphere.

As to your question about his sincerity, it is quite evident that his interest is mental only — it may be mentally sincere, but that does not carry one very far. If we were to admit everyone who is like that, we should soon have a thousand people here and there would be no Yoga and no spiritual life left. This, however, is for your information only; you need not hint anything of the kind to him in your letter! 24 February 1932

*

> Oh Father! *I want a heart that can respond to all my moods, that can understand me, that can do me justice, that can love me intensely and exclusively*. Love, and love alone, is the chief note of my heart. But the inner voice says it is not love I crave for. It is Maya. . . . If you think it is time for me, will you allow me to come there for sadhana?

Reply to him that what he describes (in the sentence on the first page of this letter [*in italics above*], which you can quote) is a vital demand of the ego for emotional self-satisfaction; it *is* Maya. It is not true love, for true love seeks for union and self-giving and that is the love one must bring to the Divine. This vital (so-called) love brings only suffering and disappointment; it does not bring happiness; it never gets satisfied and, even if it is granted something that it asks for, it is never satisfied with it.

It is perfectly possible to get rid of this Maya of the vital demand, if one wishes to do it, — but the will to do it must be sincere. If he is sincere in his will, he will certainly get help and protection.

It is no use his coming to the Asram for sadhana; for so long as he has this vital demand, it will *not* be easier but rather more difficult to go on with his sadhana here. Here this vital basis for the Yoga is discouraged, there is a pressure against it and he would probably find the struggle in him made still more acute.

He must first get his basis changed from the vital to the psychic centre.
20 March 1932

*

Sri Aurobindo does not think that your coming here is advisable at the present stage of your sadhana. If you have this feeling that a Divine Guidance is there behind the circumstances of your life and especially if you feel this calmness, strength and light of which you speak, it means a great progress — for this is the real beginning of the spiritual and yogic consciousness and it shows that the foundation of the true being and the true consciousness is being laid in you. The psychic centre is that turned in all things towards the Divine, while the vital is that preoccupied with the desires and sufferings and enjoyments of the ego. If you continue with all sincerity under this sense of guidance and with this foundation growing in you, the psychic centre is likely to open of itself. It is when it opens and the present vital turmoil has sunk that it will be useful for you to come to Pondicherry for darshan.
29 July 1932

*

You can write to him (whoever he may be) that Sri Aurobindo is living absolutely retired, seeing no one and not corresponding with anyone outside. It is not possible therefore to get from him an opinion about the books.

In the Asram there is no accommodation for guests — it is only the disciples who live there under the rules of the Asram.
circa 1932

*

You can write to him that it is not possible to admit him into the Asram at once nor perhaps at any early date. He is too young and has not developed the necessary experience either of himself or of life or of Yoga. He should try to develop himself outside — develop in his inner spiritual urge and in spiritual experience and in strength and capacity. If he comes here in an unripe state, he is likely to meet not less but more serious difficulties than he has there. He must develop in himself the strength that can meet them and a will strong enough to go through all possible opposition and ordeals without wavering or weakness. If these two conditions are satisfied, he may then be fit for a more intensive sadhana and for the Asram life. All depends on himself and his sincerity of aspiration and endeavour. 4 May 1933

*

Yes, you can leave everything and come to the Asram; but we suggest that, if it is at all possible for you to take a prolonged leave, say for six months, you should do that first. The reason is that there is sure to be a strong pressure on you (spoken or unspoken), especially from your father's side to return, so it is surest to test yourself first and see that there is no response in yourself, otherwise you might be subjected to a severer internal struggle if you come permanently at once. If all is well then the six months can become a permanent stay. But if leave is not possible, then you can give up all and come. 20 October 1933

*

If what she wants is to come here permanently, it is quite out of the question at this time. In future it is only those who make progress in sadhana and show that they have the necessary fitness to come here, who will be allowed. 18 November 1933

*

The question about the failures does not arise. I am not aware that anybody has come here who was a failure in life. Many have been very active and successful, each in his own line. What brings men to the Yoga has nothing to do with success or failure, it is the impulse of the psychic being to rise to something truer and higher than the ordinary life. 6 February 1934

*

This is not the time when we can go on increasing the number of members of the Asram — as you can well understand. We have no accommodation, the numbers are already unwieldy —

and there is the other reason.[3] He must either wait perhaps for a very long time — he is exceedingly young — or find a place elsewhere. 17 February 1934

*

It is not possible to receive *X* here. In the first place we are obliged to stop or very strictly limit new admissions for some time to come. In the second place, *X*'s struggle would be no less severe but more so here than over there, as the pressure is greater and the inner demand also. His difficulty is the usual difficulty in the vital and it can always arise at his age when the vital has to choose between the satisfaction of its normal movement and the single-minded pursuit of sadhana not for its own sake but for the sake of the Divine alone. 19 February 1934

*

Permanent admission is no longer given except in exceptional cases as the number is already large and accommodation is likely to be more and more difficult to provide.

All that can be permitted is to come for darshan in August — the rest is premature. 28 February 1934

*

> In some minds there is, I think, the idea that the Divine is "in need" of instruments for the work of manifestation. With this idea are associated some very curious ideas. I suppose the Divine may be in need of us in his own supramental way, but that cannot mean that we have not to make any effort.

What you say is right. This attitude that the Divine has need of the sadhak and not the sadhak of the Divine, is utterly wrong and absurd. When people are accepted here, they are given a chance of a great Divine Grace, of being instruments in a great work. To suppose that the Divine *cannot* do his work without the help of this or that person is surely most arrogant and illogical. They ought to remember the Gita's ऋतेऽपि त्वां, "even without thee" the work can be done, and its निमित्तमात्रं भव. 11 April 1934

---

[3] *In February 1934, the Government of French India initiated an inquiry into the organisation and finances of the Ashram, as a result of which it requested Sri Aurobindo and the Mother not to buy or rent more houses. See pages 30–32. — Ed.*

*

> I have recently gone through a volume called *Practice of Yoga* by Sivananda Saraswati of Rishikesh and learnt therefrom that about sixty students are practising yoga in the Ashram of your holiness. While writing a few words on the Ashram, the Swamiji says that "Those who really want to join the Ashram may communicate to Shree Arabindoo directly."[4] It is really a very great fortune for a man who practises yoga under the guidance of such a great realised soul as your holiness.

The number of sadhaks is over 150 and it is impossible to make farther admissions except in the most sparing way, as the means of the Asram are not unlimited. Moreover Sri Aurobindo's Yoga is of a special and difficult kind and he admits only those who seem to him to have a special call to the life here. 9 May 1934

*

I send you back your friend's letters. As regards the question about his *śiṣyā*, I do not usually give directions in such matters — one has to follow the course that seems best relying on the Divine Will both for the choice and the consequence. It seems fairly clear that the course already suggested is the wiser one.

As for his coming here, he must first prepare himself. For the time being we are not making new admissions to the Asram except in certain cases, mostly where a promise had been previously given. He could come for darshan if he wishes in August and return back, — but the more important thing is that he should establish a conscious inner connection and attain to the calm and peace of mind which is always the best preparation and foundation of this Yoga. 24 June 1934

*

There is no possibility of that just now. The Asram is crowded

---

[4] *Swami Sivananda,* Practice of Yoga *(Madras: Ganesh & Co., 1929), p. 211.*

and we cannot admit new resident members for some time to come — except those who have already a claim or right to come.
10 July 1934

*

Impossible. We do not accept people for a long fixed period like that. Either they come as permanent sadhaks or, if they are disciples, on a short visit as at the darshan times. But at present we have suspended permanent admissions. 7 August 1934

*

He wants to stay — but for how long and where? The conditions are such now that we have been obliged to refuse all requests for permanent admission and even those for residence in the Asram. Otherwise we shall have no accommodation at all for those who are to come or for the habitual visitors at the darshan times. 28 August 1934

*

The Mother accepts in principle your coming here as a permanent member of the Asram. She would like you indeed to consider yourself, from now on as a member, — as *X* is though living for most of the year in Madras, — not an outside disciple.

The question remains about the time of your coming here not to return. Here the Mother is inclined to think that it would be more satisfactory to settle the affairs of the estate definitely, and then permanently come. There would in that case be some delay, but it would have this advantage of leaving little chance of a call or pull from over there to create any vibrations in the sadhana. The second date proposed by you would then have to be adopted.

Next, the children. Most of them are too young to have an intelligent will of their own in such matters as yet and in a matter like sadhana there should be no pressure or influencing of any kind. The delay will give some of them time to grow into a possibility of a clear and willed choice. Under this arrangement the matter of their coming over here can be decided then, when things are ready. Meanwhile their photographs can be sent and perhaps the older of them can come at some darshan time so that the Mother can see them.

I think these are the main points in your letter. As for other details it is for you to arrange. You have given us a clear idea of the situation and the possibilities and we will help you with the Force we can give you to support your measures.

29 September 1934

*

You must reply to him that at present the situation is such that we have not sufficient accommodation and no likelihood of extension in the near future — so we are unable to make new admissions. There is room only for some who have already received a promise of admission when they are free to come.

17 October 1934

*

I have made no final decision about your request. But it does not seem to me advisable, as yet at least, for you to remain here longer than the two months you had settled on when you came. This Yoga is a long and difficult one and one has to travel far before there can be any question of a supramental illumination or transformation. It means besides a constant breaking up of past formations and realisations which would not be easy for you, as you have advanced fairly far on another line of sadhana with its own lights and inspiring sources. My advice to you would be to go on in the direction you had already been following and see where it leads you. If any light from my writings is of use to you, you can take it or if any help from me is necessary you will get it from within. But if in the end it is destined that you should enter this path of Yoga, you will get the necessary realisations which will make that possible. At present it seems to me premature for you to enter this way or to stay here for any great length of time.

10 March 1935

*

I am afraid it is not possible for him to join the Asram. It is open only for those who have practised or wish to practise a particular path of Yoga of a very difficult type. As a rule only those who are Sri Aurobindo's disciples are accepted and new admissions are almost stopped because there is no longer sufficient accommodation. Moreover he could not get here what he asks — it is a Yoga full of difficulties and even dangers and joining the Asram does not ensure a smooth path — that only happens to one or two who have a spiritual strength and mental and vital temperament that is very rare. 26 May 1935

*

There is no chance of her living in the Asram. She is too young and has seen nothing of life. 9 July 1935

*

There should be no desire or anxiety in your mind to get these people or others to come here. These things ought to be decided on one side by their call and fitness and on the other by the will of the Mother. 28 June 1936

*

"Dedication of life" is quite possible for some without their staying here. It is a question of inward attitude and of the total consecration of the being to the Divine. 28 June 1936

*

> Here is a man of fifty intending *vānaprastha*, who thinks our Asram will just be the place for him. He says he has prepared himself for Asram life; his only fault being taking a little opium for the sake of health. He can bring with him Rs. 150 in cash.

Declined with thanks. Opium not allowed here. Also this is not a Vanaprastha Asram. 17 July 1936

*

What he asks for (to stay here immediately as a resident sadhak) is not possible. There are only two conditions under which such a permission can be given — 1st if after seeing personally the Mother was satisfied that the applicant would be able to do the sadhana here or could be given a chance to prepare himself here by work or otherwise — or, if after practising Yoga outside it was seen that he had come to a point at which he could be admitted to the Asram. 1 August 1936

*

Inform him that Sri Aurobindo is not at present admitting any more resident sadhaks in his Asram, as the number is already too large. 4 December 1936

*

I have read and considered your letter and have decided to give you the opportunity you ask for — you can reside in the Asram for two or three months to begin with and find out whether this is really the place and the path you were seeking and we also can by a closer observation of your spiritual possibilities discern how best we can help you and whether this Yoga is the best for you.

This trial is necessary for many reasons, but especially because it is a difficult Yoga to follow and not many can really meet the demands it makes on the nature. You have written that you saw in me one who achieved through the perfection of the intellect, its spiritualisation and divinisation; but in fact I arrived through the complete silence of the mind and whatever spiritualisation and divinisation it attained was through the descent of a higher supra-intellectual knowledge into that silence. The book, *Essays on the Gita*, itself was written in that silence of the mind, without intellectual effort and by a free activity of this knowledge from above. This is important because the principle of this Yoga is not perfection of the human nature as it is but a psychic and spiritual transformation of all the parts of the being through the action of an inner consciousness and then of a higher consciousness which works on them, throws out the old movements or changes them into the image of its own and so transmutes lower into higher nature. It is not so much the perfection of the intellect as a transcendence of it, a transformation of the mind, the substitution of a larger greater principle of knowledge — and so with all the rest of the being.

This is a slow and difficult process; the road is long and it is hard to establish even the necessary basis. The old existing nature resists and obstructs and difficulties rise one after another and repeatedly till they are overcome. It is therefore necessary to be sure that this is the path to which one is called before one finally decides to tread it.

If you wish, we are ready to give you the trial you ask for. On receiving your answer the Mother will make the necessary arrangements for your residence in the Asram. 26 March 1937

*

Usually we do not give consent to anybody staying in the Asram until we have seen him at one of the Darshans. If he wishes to come for the August darshan he may do so. 12 May 1937

*

> *X* has requested me to bring to your notice his sincere prayer for permission to come here before August and stay as a resident sadhak.

We do not think it would be advisable at this stage. By coming to the Asram difficulties do not cease — they have to be faced and overcome wherever you are. For certain natures residence in the Asram from the beginning is helpful — others have to prepare themselves outside. 8 June 1937

*

As for *X* he can remain in Calcutta. I do not consider it likely that we shall permit him to be a permanent resident of the Asram unless he is or becomes very different from what his letter indicates. At some future date it may be possible for him to have darshan. Why should everybody want to be in the Asram? There are many practising sadhana outside. The number in the Asram must necessarily be limited. I have no objection to his preparing himself for this Yoga, if he feels the call to do so, there are many who are doing that. 2 August 1937

*

Sri Aurobindo says you are mistaken in thinking that by merely being at Pondicherry one can keep the psychic being in front. Difficulties arise here as outside. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother would not advise you to throw up your practice and come here now, especially as this is a very difficult time for everybody even in the Asram itself. 26 April 1938

*

> I want to live in the Ashram and be a regular inmate of it; so you will kindly advise me in this matter. Eagerly awaiting your reply.

What the deuce! Is the Asram a caravanserai that everybody who "wants" to live in it can come there? Who is this Ahmedabad monsieur? As these people are sending stamps and envelopes, I suppose they have to be answered. 9 October 1938

*

> Here is a village girl, a young widow, who has heard your call in a dream and is eager to come here.

Too young — such dreams are not conclusive and there is too much of the vital tone in her remark; you need say nothing about that however. 14 October 1938

*

> *X* has come here. If I happen to see him, what should be my attitude? If I speak to him should I advise him to stay here or go away?

X has come here not only without permission but in spite of repeated prohibitions. He cannot be received in the Asram or encouraged to stay at Pondi. It is not good for him; his mental illness would increase and it would be the cause of endless trouble for himself and others. To live a normal life with work and study and without intensive sadhana or seclusion is his only chance of keeping normal.

You must tell him, if you see him, to go away and if he can be persuaded to return to the Gurukul and live a normal life, that would be the best for him. 23 October 1938

*

X is there [*outside Pondicherry*] because he has not yet made up his mind about his future and Mother wants him to see fully both possibilities before him — the ordinary life and the Asram life — and choose his way. He cannot go on always oscillating between the one and the other. If he comes back to the Asram, it should be with the firm determination to stick to the Asram life. If he cannot be steady to that then he must choose the outer life and face its problems and find his way there. In that case he cannot be always dependent on you [*his father*], but must train himself to live his own life on his own basis. He has parts, special gifts, a fine intelligence, but no full training and no steadiness in one line. He must acquire that or he will not be able to stand in the outer life. It is during this time that he must make up his mind one way or the other. 8 November 1938

*

I have already told you that *X*[5] has not the capacity for disciplined study sustained for a long time. What is the use of forcing him any farther and trying to make him do what he will not because he cannot do? It will be a sheer waste of time and energy.

I cannot sanction his coming here to stay, for under present conditions his vital being will not remain steady here and it will take him away again. The one thing to do is what he himself wants to do, to take a job requiring intelligence and energy rather than book-learning and maintain himself; there must be plenty of jobs of that kind and it ought not to be difficult for him to get one when men are so much needed. Once he has shown to himself and others that he is not helpless in the world, then the vital conditions will be much better for his taking up the Asram life if he wants to do it. This is the one thing to be done and at present there is no other way that is worth taking.

---

[5] *The same person as in the preceding letter. — Ed.*

*

Why does he want to come to Pondicherry for solitude and peace? The Asram itself is not a place of solitude and peace, much less the town. In any case, one has to get peace *in oneself* much more than from one's surroundings. 21 June 1943

The Purpose of the Ashram

> The liberated person finds everything going on according to the will of the Supreme. What then is the purpose of the Ashram and the necessity of our individual sadhana for a divine creation on earth? Is it only an experiment for the individual's own development?

I don't catch the point. The Divine does not act in the void, but through instruments, embodiments or channels. If a creation is intended, those will have to be prepared who can be part of the creation and at the same time the means of developing it, I suppose. 25 July 1932

*

> I don't know where to draw the line between the egoistic will and the divine Will. Can there really be anything like the will of the instrument in the practical field? As the physical mind would put it: Since only the Divine's Will is done, what is the need of your creating instruments for the divine creation?

As long as there is egoism, the egoistic will is there. And so long as there is Ignorance, there will be a will of the instrument in the practical field. If the ignorant egoistic will is to be considered as a manifestation of the Divine Will, then there is no utility in Yoga — in that case the Yogi and the ordinary man stand on the same footing, they are both the Divine and their will is the Divine Will.

The Divine can create his own instruments in an institution as well as outside it. Whether He does it in an institution or not, depends on what He intends to do. If His purpose is to manifest something through a collectivity and not only through scattered and separate individuals, there is nothing to prevent Him from creating an institution for the purpose. 26 July 1932

*

This is not an Asram like others — the members are not Sannyasis; it is not *mokṣa* that is the sole aim of the Yoga here. What is being done here is a preparation for a work — a work which will be founded on Yogic consciousness and Yoga-Shakti, and can have no other foundation. Meanwhile every member here is expected to do some work in the Asram as part of his spiritual preparation. 16 August 1932

*

> Your effort of so many years does not seem to have produced any effect on people in the world outside. They have not changed in the least in their aims. On the contrary they seem to be becoming more and more critical instead of appreciative of your aim and purpose.

We cannot make that a test at present. The Force is not working directly on the outside world at present — first something has to be prepared here — when the Asram is really a manifestation of the "aim and purpose", then there will be less difficulty with the outer world.

> Even in the Ashram there are extremely few who have reached or tried to reach even up to the Nirvana level.[6] Even to reach Nirvana one has to give up desire, duality and ego and establish a certain amount of equanimity and peace. Could it be said that a sufficient number of Sadhaks in the Ashram have succeeded in doing so? At least everybody must be making some effort to do this. Why then are they not successful? Is it that after some time they forget the aim and live here as in ordinary life?

---

[6] *The correspondent alludes here to an exchange of 29 April 1934 that is published on pages 309 – 10. — Ed.*

I suppose if the Nirvana aim had been put before them, more would have been fit for it, for the Nirvana aim is easier than the one we have put before us — and they would not have found it so difficult to reach the standard. The sadhaks here are of all kinds and in all stages. But the real difficulty even for those who have progressed is with the external man. Even among those who follow the old ideal, the external man of the sadhak remains almost the same even after they have attained to something. The inner being gets free, the outer follows still its fixed nature. Our Yoga can succeed only if the external man too changes, but that is the most difficult of all things. It is only by a change of the physical nature that it can be done, by a descent of the highest light into this lowest part of Nature. It is here that the struggle is going on. The internal being of most of the sadhaks here, however imperfect still, is still different from that of the ordinary man, but the external still clings to its old ways, manners, habits. Many do not seem even to have awakened to the necessity of a change. It is when this is realised and done, that the Yoga will produce its full results in the Asram itself, and not before.

30 April 1934

*

> It will not be possible for me to return to Gujarat. I was ill-treated in my father-in-law's house. I stayed with my parents for a few months but I can't go back there permanently. I had permission for Darshan so I came here. Now let the Mother do what she thinks is right for me.

The Asram is not a place where people can come merely because they are unhappy in their homes. At that rate we should have to keep thousands of people. The Asram is for those who want to practise Sri Aurobindo's Yoga. 13 July 1934

*

You can answer to your brother that Yoga life and the ordinary life cannot be the same thing — otherwise there would be no use in doing Yoga, if one lives just as others in the same way and with the same motives. The object of the Asram life is to prepare a new way of living based on a spiritual consciousness — it is the preparation of a new foundation of life in which all works have to be done not for the self but for the Divine.

31 December 1934

*

Humanitarian work of this kind is outside the scope of the Asram; it is not as in Ramakrishna mission. We avoid public work and activities and confine ourselves to the sole spiritual work of the Asram itself. To do otherwise would be to disperse energy on the ordinary levels instead of concentrating it on the building up of a personal and collective spiritual consciousness and life.

27 October 1938

*

It is not absolutely necessary to abandon the ordinary life in order to seek after the Light or to practise Yoga. This is usually done by those who want to make a clean cut, to live a purely religious or exclusively inner and spiritual life, to renounce the world entirely and to depart from the cosmic existence by cessation of the human birth and a passing away into some higher state or into the transcendental Reality. Otherwise it is only necessary when the pressure of the inner urge becomes so great that the pursuit of the ordinary life is no longer compatible with the pursuit of the dominant spiritual objective. Till then what is necessary is a power to practise an inner isolation, to be able to retire within oneself and concentrate at any time on the necessary spiritual purpose. There must also be a power to deal with the ordinary outer life from a new inner attitude and one can then make the happenings of that life itself a means for the inner change of nature and the growth in spiritual experience. This was what was recommended to *X* when she first wanted to join the Ashram; she had already acquired the habit of inward concentration and it was suggested to her to proceed farther in this way, opening herself towards the spiritual and psychic aid she could get from here, until she had made farther progress; later on we acceded to her request to join the Ashram. The Ashram itself has been created with another object than that ordinarily common to such institutions, not for the renunciation of the world but as a centre and a field of practice for the evolution of another kind and form of life which would in the final end be moved by a higher spiritual consciousness and embody a greater life of the spirit. There is no general rule as to the stage at which one may leave the ordinary life and enter here; in each case it depends on the personal need and impulsion and the possibility or the advisability for one to take the step, the decision resting with the Mother. 24 April 1947

Not a School or Teaching Institution

This is not an "institution" for practical teaching of Yoga. Only those who follow Sri Aurobindo's path of Yoga and have been recognised as fit to bear the direct influence are allowed to come and stay here. 30 May 1927

*

> I am an irregular student of your *Arya* philosophy. Nowadays I keenly feel the necessity of meditation and concentration; for, I fear, without it the ego sense is likely to haunt me still, however much I may talk of self-surrender and spirituality.
>
> I hope you will be kind enough to send me a copy of the instructions you might have given to the yogic pupils staying with you, to enable them to learn and practise meditation.
>
> If copying the notes would be a tedious task, I pray someone should be asked to send me his notebook, which I would copy out and return safely without any unnecessary delay.

Yoga is not taught as in a school. There are no set formal instructions or notebooks; therefore his request cannot be complied with.

Suggest to him the separation of Purusha and Prakriti, introspection, rejection of ego and desire wherever he sees it. Also to open to the Divine Shakti. 22 June 1927

*

> I was discouraged to learn that you have not yet come out. I would like to come to Pondicherry on the 15th August and remain for about three months. I try to follow the instructions given me, and have been able to calm my mind and improve my nature to some extent.

I am still not coming out; no "instructions" are given for the Sadhana. All depends now on the sadhaka being able to open silently to the influence and allowing that to work while rejecting all lower influences and lower movements. I do not know if he is quite ready for that as yet. If he can once open himself to the Divine Shakti and feel the Power and get accustomed to its working, it would then be different and he would profit by his stay. Otherwise he may find the conditions too difficult for him here. 20 July 1928

*

Answer that the Asram is not meant for "study" of Yoga but for spiritual life. It has no teaching and no courses. Only those come who are accepted for this particular path of Yoga, which is more difficult than any other. The Asram has nothing to do with politics; but it is watched on account of Sri Aurobindo's past political activities of 20 years ago. 1 December 1929

*

The Asram here is not precisely a place for "spiritual training" but for growing into a divine consciousness and divine life. Those who come here must have grown already so far that they are ready to give up all past mental ideas, fixed life-habits or life-tendencies and even the very mould of their physical consciousness and open only to the light of a greater Truth which, by their complete surrender to it, will transform the whole nature. This is very difficult, and it has been found by experience that those who come here unprepared break down after a time and can go no farther, because they cannot consent to get free from their past selves. They find the atmosphere too hard for them to breathe and the pressure of the Truth too exacting. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are therefore unwilling to call anyone here, especially from so great a distance, transplanted from such different surroundings unless they have first assured themselves that the one concerned is ready for the change and truly called to this way of Sadhana. 26 February 1930

*

There is no study of philosophy here; there is only a silent practice of Yoga. But this Yoga is too difficult for everyone to be admitted to it; one must have a special call or a certain capacity (not intellectual, but psychic or spiritual) before he is accepted. And even then all who are accepted as disciples are not allowed to stay in the Asram. The life of the Asram is of a special kind and it is only rarely that those are admitted who have not become permanent members; a few come and stay for short periods, but these are already accepted disciples of Sri Aurobindo.

11 April 1930

*

> I wish to get all the information about the sadhak-Asrama in regard to the following matters:
> 1. The method of instruction.

No "instruction" given. It is an Asram for spiritual life and the only method is to open to the divine influence and live and work for the Divine.

> 2. The students living there.

There are no students, only disciples who give their lives and all they have to the Asram and its spiritual aim and in return are maintained by the Asram.

> 3. The terms of joining the Asrama.

Only those who are already disciples can join and among them only those who are chosen by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

> 4. Is the person free to communicate with friends and relatives?

If he wants, but the less he does so, the better for his Yoga.

> 5. Is the Asrama free from politics?

Entirely.

> 6. What language is spoken prominently in the Asrama?

English, French, Bengali, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu and Hindi — the sadhaks being of these nationalities.

> 7. Is the whole teaching based perfectly upon Hinduism?

No sectarian religion is the basis; orthodox Hinduism and its caste rules are not followed; but the spiritual Truth recognised here is in consonance with the Vedas, Upanishads and Gita while not limited by any Scripture. 5 September 1930

*

> Your Ashram purposes to be as I believe a training school for the synthetic process of realisation. Knowing it to be a place of peace and prayer I have come as a pilgrim seeking entrance into your Ashram.

Reply to him that he has been misinformed about the Asram; it is not a training school for the synthetic process of realisation. It is simply that a number of disciples of Sri Aurobindo are living here in order to practise Yoga — only those are allowed who have accepted this path which is not identical with any other discipline but a thing apart and are permitted by Sri Aurobindo to stay here. Sri Aurobindo himself does not see or speak with anyone. 22 December 1932

*

You can write to him that the Asram is not an institution and no pupils are taken and no teaching given. Some of those who are already following Sri Aurobindo's Yoga are admitted to live here and practise the Yoga under the influence of the immediate presence of Sri Aurobindo. No others are admitted.

Sri Aurobindo does not usually accept new disciples unless they have been seen and he is sure that they are called to this particular way of Yoga and have some capacity for it.

21 July 1933

*

If he cannot receive help from a distance how does he expect to carry on the Yoga here? This is a Yoga which does not depend upon verbal instructions or anything outward but on the power to open themselves and receive the force and influence even in a complete silence. Those who do not receive it at a distance cannot receive it here also. Also without establishing in oneself calm, sincerity, peace, patience and perseverance this Yoga cannot be done, for many difficulties have to be faced and it takes years and years to overcome them definitely and altogether.

25 June 1934

*

> Barin-da has just written me a letter. He has started a Yoga school. Fancy that!!

But what an idea, good heavens! A Yoga school — a class, a blackboard (with the gods on it?); interesting cases! a spiritual clinic, what? What has happened to Barin's wits and especially to his sense of humour? Too much *Statesman*? marriage? writing for a living? age? 5 December 1934

*

You can write and tell her this is not a school and there are no students or correspondence system. It is an Asram or residence for those of the disciples of Sri Aurobindo whom he selects and the Yoga done here is conducted not by verbal instruction but by special methods mostly of a silent influence, concentration and self-discipline. It is only for those who accept the aims and demands of this special path of Yoga. 29 April 1937

*

You can answer that the Asram is only a residence for a number of Sri Aurobindo's disciples to stay and practise Yoga. As the number has become very large, it was necessary to organise it as an Asram, but it still retains its original character. Outsiders are not usually allowed to reside, for there is no provision for that. There are no religious discourses nor any set course of instruction. All is done by meditation, work for the Divine and self-opening to receive knowledge and experience from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. 27 May 1937

*

Write to him that pupils are not taken into the Asram, for there is no teaching or instruction. The Asram is a place where some of the disciples of Sri Aurobindo are allowed to live and practise Yoga or prepare themselves for it by work and service if they are not yet ready for the deeper inner practice. As a rule disciples are not allowed to live in the Asram unless they have been specially chosen and usually after some practice of the Yoga outside.

Sri Aurobindo does not receive anyone in a private interview or speak to anyone. The work of the Asram is carried on by the Mother, Sri Mira Devi. Only 3 times in a year Sri Aurobindo gives a silent blessing to his disciples in the Asram and those from outside and a restricted number of visitors from outside. The disciples admitted into the Asram are expected to know enough of the Yoga (through Sri Aurobindo's writings or otherwise) to practise it or prepare themselves for the practice — the principal requirement for progress in the Yoga is that they should be able to open their consciousness mentally, psychically and spiritually to the silent help and force which is given them from within; they must also follow implicitly the directions for work, action, life or their sadhana given them by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

In these conditions it may not be worth while for him to come here unless he has acquainted himself more intimately with the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and found that it is the path his nature accepts and can follow. The *Yogic Sadhan* does not give any real idea of the nature of this Yoga; he would have to read other works of a completer and deeper character. Most even after accepting follow out the practice of the Yoga to a certain extent and communicate their experiences before thinking of coming here for a closer contact.

If however he is in any case coming to India to find his path and a Guru, he could pass through Pondicherry and see the Asram and establish a contact after which it can be known whether he can take up the Yoga. 7 July 1938

*

Write that this Asram is not intended for religious teaching, but for the practice of Yoga; its object, like that of all Yoga, is the attainment of a higher consciousness and the spiritual life. But Sri Aurobindo's Yoga is a special path with its own special objects in addition to this common aim of all Yoga. Only those are admitted who have a call to this special path which is a very difficult one, are recognised as having some capacity for it and are willing to give up everything else and follow without reservations the guidance of Sri Aurobindo. There is no separate asram for ladies; the Asram is composed of several houses and accommodation is given according to convenience.

Representation of People in the Ashram

> My mind is so full of thoughts about the possibilities of new creation that whenever I see a sadhak I think of him as an aspect of the beauty of the new creation.

That is what he should be. 21 April 1934

*

> What disciples we are of what a Master!

As to the disciples, I agree!

> I wish you had chosen or called some better stuff — perhaps somebody like Krishnaprem.

Yes, but would the better stuff, supposing it to exist, be typical of humanity? To deal with a few exceptional types would hardly solve the problem. And would they consent to follow my path — that is another question. And if they were put to the test, would not the common humanity suddenly reveal itself — that is still another question. 3 August 1935

*

> In the Ashram one finds that people with forceful personalities and great capacities like *X* or *Y* are not able to put their energies to good use. Others, like *Z* and *A*, who have no great capacities, are able to apply their energies better. No doubt the Divine could give great capacities to *Z* and *A*, but could they ever become great writers or artists like *X*, *Y* or *B*?

There is no necessity for everybody to become artists or writers or do work of a public character. *Z* and *A* have their own capacities and it is sufficient for the present if they train themselves to make them fit for the Mother's work. Others have great capacities which they are content to use in the small and obscure work of the Asram without figuring before the public in something big. What is important now is to get the true consciousness from above, get rid of the ego (which nobody has yet done) and learn to be an instrument of the Divine Force. After that the manifestation can take place, not before. 24 October 1935

*

It is necessary or rather inevitable that in an Asram which is a "laboratory", as Adhar Das puts it,[7] for a spiritual and supramental Yoga, humanity should be variously represented. For the problem of transformation has to deal with all sorts of elements favourable and unfavourable. The same man indeed carries in him a mixture of these two things. If only sattwic and cultured men came for the Yoga, men without very much of the vital difficulty in them, then because the difficulty of the vital element in terrestrial nature has not been faced and overcome, it might well be that the endeavour would fail. There might conceivably be under certain circumstances an overmental layer superimposed on the mental, vital and physical and influencing them, but hardly anything supramental or a sovereign transmutation of the human being. Those in the Asram come from all quarters and are of all kinds; it cannot be otherwise.

---

[7] *A. C. Das, review of* Lights on Yoga. The Calcutta Review *47 (October 1935), pp. 101–2.*

In the course of the Yoga, collectively — though not for each one necessarily — as each plane is dealt with, all its difficulties arise. That will explain much in the Asram that people do not expect there. When the preliminary work is over in the "laboratory", things must change.

Also much stress has not been laid on human fellowship of the ordinary kind between the inmates, (though good feeling, consideration and courtesy should always be there), because that is not the aim; it is a unity in a new consciousness that is the aim and the first thing is for each to do his sadhana, to arrive at that new consciousness and realise oneness there.

Whatever faults are there in the sadhaks must be removed by the Light from above — a sattwic rule can only change natures predisposed to a sattwic rule. 31 October 1935

*

Your description of the psychological state of the Asramites is vivid and convincing and very true. It is that which we are up against. It is the average physical consciousness of humanity concentrated in the Asram and the one consolation is that if the Force can transform *that*, then it can transform anything. If everybody were as accurately conscious of the nature of the thing as you show yourself in this letter, the transformation would be perhaps more quickly possible. 11 February 1936

Profiting from One's Stay in the Ashram

He can come, if he understands the conditions under which alone he can profit by staying here. Henceforth a stay here can only be profitable (1) for those who are ready for an intensive sadhana turning their back on all attachments belonging to the ordinary human life, (2) for those who, though not ready, yet

recognise fully the aim and open themselves so as to prepare for it, (3) those who, even if not capable as yet of an inner intensive sadhana, can yet dedicate themselves entirely in the way of service.
4 August 1927

*

You can write to him that at present his coming here is hardly possible or advisable. There are now nearly 80 members in the Asram and all the accommodation available is taken up or else marked out already for others who are coming. Moreover if he has not been able to make the vital surrender, he would not be able to profit by coming here; for the conditions of the sadhana here are no longer what they were before and this vital surrender is precisely the first condition of any benefit from our help or any true farther progress.

As for his sadhana, if he can persist in the attitude he has taken and be entirely sincere in it, then the difficulty he is experiencing is bound to disappear. Necessarily, the resistance in the vital being and the body, based on all their past habits, cannot be overcome in a day. In his case, it is probable that the mental has reached the point where the surrender can be made, but the vital *puruṣa* still refuses. If he can become conscious in his sadhana not only of the resistance on the surface but of the vital being behind in its entirety, separately from the mind, and see all its deeper movements and offer them in the whole and detail to the Mother for transformation, then the work of transformation can be done. It is for more and more consciousness and more and more strength for consecration that he must ask.
1 December 1929

*

You can write to him that, if he is in the grip of adverse forces, it is not a condition in which to come to the Asram. Only those are called here and allowed to stay who are ready to profit by the Asram atmosphere. What he can do, if he likes, is to come for the 15th August for darshan — after seeing him, then we can say something more definite. 8 April 1932

*

It is no use people staying here unless they have, first, the capacity and, secondly, the pull and the will for Yoga. 16 August 1933

*

No, it is not enough to be in the Asram — one has to open to the Mother and put away the mud which one was playing with in the world. 25 September 1934

*

> But what is the meaning of the dull life we lead here? No scope for any skills, no use for knowledge. My five years of medical study all lost. Some at least have the satisfaction of using their capacities — *X* his training as an engineer, *Y* his medical knowledge. But for most of us, it seems like you have put square pegs in round holes.

Obviously the life here is not that of a place where the mind and vital can hope to be satisfied and fulfilled or lead a lively life. It is only if one can live within that it becomes satisfactory. *Y* himself if he were outside, would be dealing not with two or three selected patients but with many — he speaks of hundreds in the past — and would be living a much fuller vital life. But for one who has the assured inner life, there is no dullness. Realisation within must be the first object; work for the Divine on the basis of the true inner self and a new consciousness, not on the basis of the old, is the result that can follow. Till then work and life can be only a means of sadhana, not a "self-fulfilment" or a brilliant and interesting vital life on the old basis. 15 April 1936

*

Everybody has to deal with the lower nature. No Yoga can be done without overcoming it, neither this Yoga nor any other. A Yogic life means a life in which one tries to follow the law of Yoga, the aim of Yoga in all details of life. Here people do not do that, they live like ordinary people, quarrelling, gossiping, indulging their desires, thinking of Yoga only in their spare moments. 13 February 1936

Departure from the Ashram

X is quite happy here and she is progressing very well in her sadhana. If she goes away from here, the progress will be stopped and much of what she has gained may be lost. An intensive and concentrated sadhana once begun has to be persistently continued in the right atmosphere. If it is kept up only for a short time and then dropped for another kind of life in which the concentration is diffused and weakened, there is no likelihood of fruition. For this reason we would disapprove of her departure. 9 January 1928

*

I have had no time to answer *X*'s letter tonight. I will write in the course of tomorrow, afternoon or evening. He may at least ask the gentleman inside who is so furiously hurrying him away, to wait for one day.

It looks as if the hopes I had for him were either unjustified or premature — he is either too young or too raw and unfit. In that case there will be nothing to do but to let him return to the ordinary life and ordinary atmosphere. But he must understand, if he goes, that it is his own choice and must not blame either myself or the Mother. c. August 1929

*

I certainly cannot sanction your departure on so wrong and trivial a ground. You must be aware, as you admitted at first, that you are yourself to blame. When the Mother after a long and exhausting morning's work still gave you time, it was very wrong of you to reward her by speech of an insulting character. And it was wrong of you to resent her kind letter and her reference to the adverse force which you yourself have called the "devil" and from which you have prayed insistently to be delivered. I shall add that if you allow yourself to be ruled in this way by self-will and an abnormal sensitiveness, you will always create trouble for yourself, no matter where you go.

I could only sanction your departure if I came to the conclusion that you are still too young and raw and ill-balanced to bear the pressure for change which is inevitable in the atmosphere of the Asram. But before this attack, you were progressing very well with a rapid growth in consciousness and character. It ought not to be difficult for you to get over this attack and settle down to a self-development of your undoubted possibilities on the right line. It would be a pity if you threw away the chance by obstinate persistence in the result of a moment's pique.

I prefer not to give any decision till after the 15th. You will do well to wait till then and see if your present feelings do not change. 4 August 1929

*

When these moods come upon you, why do you run away from the Mother and avoid her? Why do you not come to her, tell her frankly what you feel and what is in your mind and let her take the trouble from you?

The reasons you give for wishing to leave us are no good reasons at all. If you want to see the richness and greatness of God, you will, if you wait, see more of it with us than you ever can outside. And if you want to see the Himalayas, it will be much better for you to see them hereafter with your Mother beside you.

You are quite mistaken when you say that if you will go, there will be no Devil left in the Asram. The Devil is not here because of you; he is here because he wants to give trouble to the Mother and spoil her work. And what he chiefly wants is to drive her children away from her, and especially those who like you are nearest to her. If you go, he will remain; and not only he will remain, but he will feel that he has won a great victory and will set himself with a double vigour to attack her through others.

You talk of not giving trouble to the Mother and to me; but do you not realise that nothing can be worse trouble to us than your going away? The moods of revolt that come upon you are clouds that pass; but to see you leave us in this way and feel our love rejected and your place near us empty would be indeed a real trouble to us and we would feel it more deeply than anything else you could do.

You know that it is not true that your sole desire is to go away. It is only so when you are in these moods. And you know that these are moods that pass, and if you allow the Mother to take them away, they go at once. The trouble is that when they come, you take them too much to heart and you begin to think that there is nothing else to do but go away. I assure you that that is no solution and that we would much rather have you with us even with these moods than be separated from you; compared with our love for you, the trouble they give us is mere dust in the balance.

Read this letter, talk with the Mother and act according to your true self; never mind the rest. 7 March 1930

*

It is certainly the force hostile to the Yoga and the divine realisation upon earth that is acting upon you at the present moment. It is the force (one force and not many) which is here in the Asram and has been going about from one to another. With some as with *X, Y* and *Z* it has succeeded; others have cast it from them and have been able to liberate the light of their soul, open in that light to the nearness and constant presence of the Mother, feel her working in them and move forward in a constant spiritual progress. Some are still struggling, but in spite of the bitterness of the struggle have been able to keep faithfully to the divine call that brought them here.

That it is the same hostile force would be shown, even if its presence were not for us visible and palpable, by the fact that the suggestions it makes to the minds of its victims are always the same. Its one master sign is always this impulse to get away from the Asram, away from myself and the Mother, out of this atmosphere, and *at once*. For the force does not want to give time for reflection, for resistance, for the saving Power to be felt and act. Its other signs are doubt, tamasic depression, an exaggerated sense of impurity and unfitness, the idea that the Mother is remote, does not care for one, is not giving what she ought to give, is not divine, with other similar suggestions accompanied by an inability to feel her presence or her help, a feeling that the Yoga is not possible or is not going to be done in this life, the desire to go away and do something in the ordinary world — the thing itself suggested varying according to the personal mind. If it were not this one invariable hostile force acting, there would not be this exact similarity in all the cases. In each case it is the same obscurities thrown on the intelligence, the same subconscious movements of the vital brought to the surface, the same irrational impulses pushing to the same action, — departure, renunciation of the soul's truth, refusal of the Divine Love and the Divine Call.

It is the vital crisis, the test, the ordeal for you as for others — a test and ordeal which we would willingly spare to those who are with us but which they call on themselves by persistence in some wrong line of movement or some falsification of the inner attitude. If you reject entirely the falsehood that this force casts upon the sadhak, if you remain faithful to the Light that called you here, you conquer and, even if serious difficulties still remain, the final victory is sure and the divine triumph of the soul over the Ignorance and the darkness. 30 March 1930

*

The Mother has told me what you said to her. In other circumstances I would have asked you to stay on in the confidence that, however sharp the struggle might be, the inner being in you aided by the Divine Force would prevail over the other and foreign influence. But in the condition of mind described by you some relief and rest from the inner struggle seems to be necessary for you. An absence from Pondicherry and change of atmosphere may be the best way to give it.

I do not, however, care to take the responsibility of sending you to Hyderabad, as that might turn out not at all the best, but the worst thing for you. Even if there were nothing else to do, it would not be possible to send you all that way alone; arrangements would have to be made. We would prefer instead to see whether another means cannot be arranged, such as staying in a quiet place in the hills where you could have a healthy change of air for a time and other surroundings and recover your vital strength and nervous balance. We are making enquiries and in a few days hope to be able to let you know what can be done.

I write this much today in answer to your request for an immediate decision; but I have something to say with regard to your spiritual life and its difficulties which I have not had time to finish. I will finish it tomorrow and send it to you. 3 June 1930

*

You ought to be able to see, after receiving today's telegram, that the cause of the unrest is in yourself and not in the outward circumstances. It is your vital attachment to family ties and the ordinary social ideas and feelings that has risen in you and creates the difficulty. If you want to practise Yoga, you must be able to live in the world, so long as you are there, with a mind set upon the Divine and not bound by the environment. One who does this, can help those around him a hundred times more than one who is bound and attached to the world.

It is not possible for the Mother to tell you to remain, if you are yourself in your mind and vital eager to go. It is from within yourself that there must come the clear will on one side or the other. 24 February 1932

*

The crisis you are passing through might be due to your not being ready for an intensive practice of Yoga. On the other hand, a crisis of this kind often happens in the ordinary course of the sadhana. As long as the sadhana is only in the mind, things go on well enough, but as soon as the vital or the physical begin to be worked upon directly, all the resistance, inability, obscurity in the adhar rises up and there may be a prolonged period or recurrent periods of darkness.

I would suggest to wait a little longer — say, till the 24th

November. If by that time there is no return of the favourable course of the sadhana or if meanwhile you find the resistance too great, you may for a time discontinue.

In any case, the habit you speak of ought to be given up at once and altogether. You must be aware how injurious it is to the mind, the nervous system and the body, and it can of itself create the most serious obstacles in the way of any sadhana.

5 October 1932

*

In the outside world people live in quite a different consciousness and the sadhak if he goes there in the middle of his sadhana is bound either to fall back into it or to get so much mixed with it that he either falls out of his path or struggles through great difficulties. Either the work within is, outside, not done at all or what would here take 2 or 3 years would there be not done in thirty. 11 November 1932

*

How can the people in this Asram judge whether a man has progressed in Yoga or not? They judge from outward appearances — if a sadhak secludes himself, sits much in meditation, gets voices and experiences, etc. etc. they think he is a great sadhak! *X* was always a very poor Adhar. He had a few experiences of an elementary kind — confused and uncertain, but at every step he was getting into trouble and going off on a side path and we had to pull him up. At last he began to get voices and inspirations which he declared to be ours — I wrote to him many letters of serious warning and explanation but he refused to listen, was too much attached to his false voices and inspirations and, to avoid rebuke and correction, ceased to write or inform us. So he went wholly wrong and finally became hostile. You can tell this by my authority to anybody who is puzzled like yourself about this matter. 11 March 1933

*

If your staying here is to end in "death and scandal", obviously I cannot tell you not to go. But I have not forsaken you; it is you who prefer to turn away from the Yoga. I will not "send" you away. If you go, it will be because you do not want to stay here or feel that you cannot and that you will be at peace elsewhere. You can take my blessings with you if or when you go — but I do not know why they should be of more use to you than my help and guidance in the Yoga. 11 March 1933

*

> I know well that the ordinary life is not for me. Why then do I get thoughts of going? What part of me wishes it?

Is it a part of yourself at all that has the idea? It may be that it is only because others are thinking it or wanting you to come and some portion of you still in contact with them gets the impression. Such touches can easily be felt as if they were your own ideas, emotions or desires, but they may not be so.

7 April 1933

*

> I hear that many people, at one time or another, have been on the point of going away from here due to pressure of Yoga.

It is not due to the pressure of Yoga, but to the pressure of something in them that negates the Yoga. If one follows one's psychic being and higher mental call, no amount of pressure of Yoga can produce such results. People talk as if the Yoga had some maleficent force in it which produces these results. It is on the contrary the resistance to Yoga that does it. 11 May 1933

*

> It feels as though some hostile force is trying to pull me back. But I have no desire to return to my old family life.

It usually happens like that — when one comes out of the world, the forces that govern the world do all they can to pull you back into their own unquiet movement. 4 October 1933

*

I don't know why. It is perfectly irrational. People have been going as well as coming since the Asram began. Perhaps it arises from the ignorant idea that the people who go like *X* and *Y* are true bhaktas and sadhaks — while the fact is that *X* never made much progress even elementary and *Y* has been in a state of vital revolt sometimes against the Mother, sometimes against myself, battling against both, for the last six or seven years. People go away because they are too proud and arrogant to accept the control of the Guru or of the Truth or of the Divine. *Y* had decided that the Truth was in him alone and there was no Truth in myself or in the Mother. 10 October 1933

*

> What would be the best way of rejecting the thought of going away? Every few days or so I have to deal with this "challenge".

The reason why it recurs so much is that it is not so much a personal reaction as a force that whenever it gets the door of the consciousness open, is consciously pressing the idea of departure with all sorts of reasons to support it. There are a certain number in the Asram who have it with the same recurrence — while there are others who used to have it but from whose consciousness it is now after a long series of attacks excluded or fading out. Obviously to give the movement any kind of scope would be no conquest. One day it will give up coming of itself, as it has done with others, when the external vital nature has got as convinced as the inner being of the imperativeness of its spiritual destiny.

23 October 1933

*

I do not understand the meaning of the complaint in your letter. I am not aware that there was any maltreatment of you by us or any lack of true love and care. In your spiritual life I have striven to give you all the possible help and support and guidance, more so than to most others because I felt that you had much need of it. I do not see any reason why you should go on the goad of a difficulty which always occurs in sadhana or under the driving of a suggestion or impulse; if it were a mature and deliberate decision taken after full reflection, one could understand it. In any case, this Asram is here as your spiritual home so long as you choose to avail yourself of it and our help and consistent support in your difficulties are at your disposal so long as you need and desire them for the attainment of the goal of your spiritual endeavour. 5 November 1933

*

> For the last few days, I have felt quite foreign here. I do not like going to work or doing anything else. If there is any reason for my being here, I don't know what it is.

Why do you allow these suggestions to get hold of your mind? You have made great progress here which you could not have made over there — and as for usefulness, there are few whose work can be relied on as yours can. Dry moments come to all — that is not a reason for doubting one's call to the Yoga. Shake off these false suggestions — they must surely be the result of the old atmosphere coming in in such a mass — and regain the peace and stillness that you were having before. 18 August 1934

*

I have given you the permission to go only on your insistence that the pull from there is too strong for you to resist. It is not because we think that it is the right or the best thing for you — on the contrary we do not like the idea of your going at all. I have told you that to stay and fight out any inner difficulty here is always the true course. If there is any misconception about that, you should reconsider your decision. 27 August 1934

*

I have written to *X*[8] to set right any misunderstanding — if there is really a misunderstanding — about our consent to her going. That consent I consider as forced from me by her own insistence that she could not stay — the pull was too great — she must go.

---

[8] *The recipient of the preceding letter. — Ed.*

I reminded her of what I told her before that the only true way was to stay and fight out the difficulty — the only justification for going would be if her call was more to the family life than to the spiritual life. I have told her that we keep to that and the Mother and I do not like her going — and asked her to reconsider her decision. For it is hers not mine. You know that I dislike any one who has a psychic call going away from here, because it is throwing away their spiritual destiny or at least postponing it. For I don't suppose *X*, if she persists in going, will remain always under the illusion of the family bonds — but the risk is there and the postponement is there. Mother has called her tomorrow morning and we will see what she decides. 28 August 1934

*

The Mother was not distant and had no reason for being so — that cannot be put forward as a reason for going away. It is the feeling of the vital-physical that has been stopped in its activities and is not yet able to receive the touch of the higher consciousness or keep it that makes you feel like that. I don't know that you would get so much interest or satisfaction from the life outside that it would be worth while to give up and go. To persist is better. 10 January 1935

*

The inability to go can come from the psychic which refuses, when it comes to the point, to allow the other parts to budge, or it can come from the vital which has no longer any pull towards the ordinary life and knows that it will never be satisfied there. It is usually the higher parts of the vital that act like that. What still is capable of turning outwards is probably the physical vital in which the old tendencies have not been extinguished.

19 May 1935

*

I certainly do not wish to "put you in the wrong box", nor have I an idea or any desire to keep you here against your own inclination or choice. Going or staying is a matter entirely for your own decision. If you can stay here with spiritual profit to yourself, we shall be very glad; but if you find that there is nothing to be gained by staying or that you cannot receive anything or that your will is decidedly for the ordinary life, I certainly would not like to put any undue pressure on you to stay against your own real interest or will. You must consider yourself entirely free to shape your own course in life by your own independent choice. 24 May 1935

*

> Where will I begin again? There certainly is something fundamentally wrong — otherwise why these impulses to depart? Everything is confused. I can't see my way, and have lost all capacity to analyse or synthesise. In addition [*in the preceding letter*] you are practically giving me a *carte blanche* to depart!

I am not telling you to go, but if I tell you the opposite it will only strengthen the suggestion that is being put on you — viz. that you are being kept here contrary to your own nature's choice and your mind's judgment for something that you cannot do and no longer want to do, a spiritual life that you cannot live and don't want to live. You think it is something in yourself that says that, but in reality it is not so. Only as you cannot see that at present, I have no choice but to leave everything to your own decision so that the sense of being outrageously compelled to stay may have no ground for growing in you.

You have mentioned *X*'s case more than once as analogous, but his was quite opposite. He considered himself as the holder of the supramental Truth whom all ought to approach for the Truth, but that this was an Asram peopled by Asuras who refused to recognise him and all these Asuras were supported against him at every step by the Mother and me. He gave me the ultimatum that in this we must support him against the others and give him his proper position or else give him freedom to leave the Asram with which he had no longer any affinity, an impossible place for such a one as he, so that he might give the Truth to others elsewhere. No point of contact at all there with you except the Force driving him away.

What is happening just now is that there is a great uprush of the subconscient in which are the seeds or the strong remnants of the habitual difficulties of the nature. But its character is a confusion and obscurity without order or clear mental or other arrangement — it is a confused depression, discouragement, inability to progress — a feeling of what are we doing? why are we here? how can we go on? will anything ever be attained? and along with it old difficulties recurring in a confused and random but often violent and distressing fashion.

You cannot "begin" again; it would be too difficult a thing in this confusion. You have to get back to the point at which you deviated. If you can get back to the Peace that was coming and with it aspire to the freedom and wideness of the Purusha consciousness forming a *point d'appui* of detachment and separation from all this confusion of the subconscient Prakriti, then you will have a firm ground to stand upon and proceed. But for that you must make your choice firmly and refuse to be upset at every moment and diverted from it. 25 May 1935

*

> Sometimes people who are in difficulty ask your permission to leave the Ashram, and you and the Mother grant it. But if things turn out badly they say, "Why did I fall even after taking their permission to go?" I think that too much should not be made of such "permissions", which are often just concessions to their weaknesses.

It is well understood that the permission given does not exclude the possibility of the experiment ending badly. But the experiment becomes necessary if the pull of the ego or outer being and that of the soul have become too acute for solution otherwise or if the outer being insists on having its experience.

20 June 1935

*

> Do you mean [*in the preceding letter*] that when we feel a strong push to leave, it would be best to make the experiment?

It is especially when the outer being rejects the Truth and insists on living its own life and refuses the rule of the spiritual life that the experiment becomes inevitable. I have never said that it is recommendable.

> Sometimes that part is so violent that we feel we can't deal with it.

In some it is too strong; they have to go and see for themselves. That does not mean that everyone has to go whenever he feels a difficulty. These are exceptional cases. 24 June 1935

*

> Last evening I saw *X* off at the station. He looked very black in the face and gloomy too. I felt for the poor fellow who has lost his all through his own waywardness. I felt a little sad as I came back. The question recurred to me again and again: did Sri Krishna truly mean it concretely or did he merely poeticise when he said *na hi kalyāṇa-kṛt kaścid durgatiṁ tāta gacchati*?

You have forgotten the context. Arjuna asks what of a Yogi who fails in this life because of his errors — does he fall from both the ordinary life and the spiritual and perish like a broken cloud? Krishna says no. All who follow the Good get the reward of their effort and do not perish — they get it first in the life beyond and afterwards in the next birth in which the Yogi who fails now may even resume his effort under the best conditions and arrive at Siddhi. Krishna never said that nobody ever in this life fails who attempts the Yoga. 20 September 1935

*

> I feel a push to leave the Ashram often just before other people actually do leave. A day or two before *X*'s departure on the 19th, I felt the same way. Do all people get such feelings?

There is a Force that is always seeking to push people away; formerly more than half the sadhaks were getting from time to time the suggestion to go. This has diminished now in its general power, but the Force is still there and presses very heavily on some. When it gets anyone to go, then the power of the suggestion revives through that person and spreads to others. Those who are specially sensitive receive it most. 22 September 1935

*

> If I am not doing anything useful here, why should I not try the world where also there is so much love and joy and the Divine?

Do you think so? Those who have gone do not find the world like that — they feel miserable and harassed on every side. So it has been with all who left here. 28 September 1935

*

It is difficult for the Mother to decide for you. If you had been settled in Yoga as a resident sadhak of the Asram recognised as such by your family and everybody, then the rule of not allowing any tie of the world to draw you away would have stood with force against all such calls. But now it is different and you have to see for yourself what you feel called upon to do. For the Mother to decide would not be a solution from the spiritual point of view and it is better if the decision rises out of yourself — then only is it likely to be *for you* the true one. 21 November 1935

*

What takes people away mostly is not the smaller failings like family attachment etc., but either ambition and great vanity or sexual desire or else some extreme form of vital ego which wants its own way and not the Divine's. It is from the first two causes that the departures from the Asram have mostly taken place and *X* and *Y*'s case is no exception to the rule. 1935

*

You can have permission to go. But one knows when one goes, one does not know whether or when one will come back. But if you really want to go, we cannot refuse permission.

26 March 1936

*

If you wish to go, Mother gives the permission. But we cannot assure you that you will be able to come back or that it will not injure your sadhana. These things depend on yourself and on circumstances. 26 March 1936

*

X has been here on probation for three years now. If we are sending her home, it is not as a punishment for any offence or out of anger or any similar reason, but it is because that is the best thing for her also. It is after long observation of her that this step has been taken and it is not a sudden decision on our part but has been maturing for some time. We have not rejected her, — it is with our blessings that she will go and if she keeps the right attitude our protection will be with her there. This has all been now explained to her and I believe she is not *affolée* any longer. 3 May 1936

*

It is a little difficult for me to answer your letter in view of what you have written there. I have certainly persuaded you to remain here because I did not think that going away was the right solution, nor do I think so now. But from what you wrote last time after this came on you, I understood that you did not really want to go and were glad that I had persuaded you, that in fact you would have suffered greatly if I had given my consent. Here you write very differently and in such a way that if I am to take what you say in its full sense I would have to reply at once "Yes, go, since there is no other alternative." Let me say that persuasion is not force. Last time I don't think I even used persuasion; I simply gave my opinion against your proposal. My opinion remains the same, but that is not binding on you. I have also never thought of cutting you off if you go to Cape Comorin for a time or to Calcutta. Everyone here is free to follow his own decision in these matters. But when I am asked for a full consent, I take it as an invitation to give my own view on what is proposed and I give it. There is no question there of detaining or refusing a bitter need and therefore there can be no reason for your being driven to the extremes of which you speak in your letter.

As for the way out of the impasse, I know only of the quieting of the mind which makes meditation effective, purification of the heart which brings the divine touch and in time the divine presence, humility before the Divine which liberates from egoism and the pride of the mind and of the vital, the pride that imposes its own reasonings on the ways of the spirit and the pride that refuses or is unable to surrender, sustained persistence in the call within and reliance on the Grace above. These things come by the inner discipline which you had begun to practise some time ago, but did not continue. Meditation, japa, prayer or aspiration from the heart can all succeed, if they are attended by these or even some of these things. But I do not know that you can be promised what you always make the condition of any inner endeavour, an immediate or almost immediate realisation or beginning of concrete realisation. I fully believe on the other hand that one who has the call in him cannot fail to arrive, if he follows patiently the way towards the Divine.

Frankly this is my view of the matter. I have never seen that anyone by changing place arrived at spiritual realisation — it always comes by a change of mind and heart. I put before you what I can see. The rest is for you to consider. 29 May 1936

*

I have surely never said that you should not want the Divine Response. One does Yoga for that. What I have said is that you should not expect or insist on it at once or within an early time. It can come early or it can come late, but come it will if one is faithful in one's call — for one has not only to be sincere but to be faithful through all. If I deprecate insistence, it is because I have always found it creates difficulties and delays — owing to a strain and restlessness which is created — in the nature and despondencies and revolts of the vital when the insistence is not satisfied. The Divine knows best and one has to have trust in His wisdom and attune oneself with His will. Length of time is no proof of an ultimate incapacity to arrive — it is only a sign that there is something in oneself which has to be overcome and, if there is the will to reach the Divine, it can be overcome.

Suicide solves nothing — it only brings one back to life with the same difficulties to be faced in worse conditions. If one wishes to escape from life altogether, it can only be by the way of complete inner renunciation and merging oneself in the Silence of the Absolute or by a bhakti that becomes absolute or by a karmayoga that gives up one's own will and desires to the will of the Divine.

I have said also that the Grace *can* at any moment act suddenly, but over that one has no control, because it comes by an incalculable Will which sees things that the mind cannot see. It is precisely the reason why one should never despair, — that and also because no sincere aspiration to the Divine can fail in the end.

Mother does not remember having said to *X* what you report — it may have been something in another sense which *X* understood in that way. For it cannot be said that you have never received Force from us, you have received it to any extent; it can only be said that you were not conscious of it, but that happens with many. Certainly none of the sadhaks receives and uses all the Force the Mother sends, but that is a general fact and not peculiar to you.

I hope you will not carry out your idea of going suddenly away — if you have to go for a time, it should be with our knowledge and our protection around you. I hope it will not be necessary at all, but certainly it should not be in that way. Whatever else you doubt, you should not doubt that our love and affection will be always with you. But I still hope that you will be able to overcome this despair and this impulse of flight and develop the quiet force of intense will which brings the Light that is sure to come. May 1936

*

> I have analysed and analysed myself, and have found that I have no real urge for the Divine. It seems more the unfavourable external circumstances that have brought me here. Had I been happy and in plenty there, would I have chosen

> the path? . . . Where is the sincerity in me? . . . So wouldn't it be better for you to let me go instead of wasting so much of your time and labour on me?

Your analysis and reasonings are those of Grand-mère Depression which sees only what she allows to come to the surface for her purposes. There are other things that Madame suppresses because they don't suit her. It does not greatly matter what brought you here — the important thing is to go on till the psychic truth behind all that becomes manifest. The inertia of your physical nature is only a thick crust on the surface which gives way slowly, but under the pressure it will give way. If you had some big object in the ordinary life and nothing to hope for here it might be different, but as things are it would be foolish to walk off under the instigation of this old Mother Gloom-Gloom. Stick on and you will get the soul's reward hereafter. 14 June 1936

*

There is no reason to be so much cut down or despair of your progress. Evidently you have had a surging up of the old movements, but that can always happen so long as there is not an entire change of the old nature both in the conscious and subconscient parts. Something came up that made you get out of poise and stray into a past round of feelings. The one thing to do is to quiet yourself and get back into the true consciousness and poise. . . . Always keep within and do things without involving yourself in them, then nothing will happen or, if it does, no serious reaction will come.

The idea of leaving for any reason is of course absurd and out of the question. Eight years is a very short time for transformation. Most people spend as much as that or more to get conscious of their defects and acquire the serious will to change — and after that it takes a long time to get the will turned into full and final accomplishment. Each time one stumbles, one has to get back onto the right footing and go on with fresh resolution; by doing that the full change comes. 17 August 1936

*

You must not deceive yourself into thinking that the ordinary life will prepare you for the Asram life. So we cannot tell you how to prepare yourself. It is better to choose frankly between the two. If you go away, you would find the same difficulties if you came back. It is knowing that that you must decide.

21 August 1936

*

Since the attacks of fear do not cease, it is best that you should go and rest for the time being from the sadhana — for these two cannot go together. In order to be quite sure, it would be advisable to see in Calcutta whether there is not some physical cause also such as blood pressure. It is not possible for the Mother to see you before you go as you have to go tonight. For the rest, we can decide only after seeing how you go on over there. If you keep your trust in the Divine and clear yourself of all that conflicts with it, there is no reason to fear that the Divine will abandon you. For the present what is necessary is to shake off this disturbance and get out of the condition of fear and nervous disturbance altogether. 21 October 1936

*

As you say that you are determined to go, I can only answer by reaffirming our disapproval of the step you propose to take and the rejection — from a blind vital feeling — of the true path and the spiritual life. It is not true that you could not appreciate our help and solicitude or that you were unable to follow the sadhana, you are only shutting the doors of your mind and vital to the help and laying stress on a temporary block which would have disappeared if you had dissociated yourself from it. I can only express the hope that the true being in you will awake in time and draw you back from this course, restoring the inner contact with us and the unity with the higher Self, a glimpse of which had come to you for a moment. 31 January 1937

*

Neither the Mother nor I have asked you to go nor approved of your going. As I could not give any assent to it and the reasons put forward by you precluded my asking you to stay, I had to be silent. Mother could not withhold from you the money you asked for because you claimed it as your own and her withholding it would have looked like an undue interference with your personal liberty and your formed decision. I must now say however that if you go, it will be your own decision and not in any way ours. If you change your decision and resolve to face out your difficulty here until it is solved, we shall be very glad of it.

There is no such impossibility of your victory over the harder parts of your nature as you imagine. There is only needed the perseverance to go on till this resistance breaks down and the psychic which is not absent nor unmanifest is able to dominate the others. That has to be done whether you stay here or not and to go is likely only to increase the difficulty and imperil the final result — it cannot help you. It is here that the struggle however acute has, because of the immediate presence of the Mother, the best chance and certitude of a solution and successful ending.

5 March 1937

*

No one in fact is kept here when his will or decision is to go — although the principle of the spiritual life is against any return to the old one even for a time especially if the deeper urge is there and striving towards a firm foundation of the new consciousness — for the return to the ordinary atmosphere and surroundings and motives disturbs the work and throws back the progress.

10 March 1937

*

> Does your allowing people to go out from here mean that now there is no harm in their doing so?

No, it does not; it simply means that we can't always be holding back people whose vital says "I want to go, I want to go" and they side with the vital. They are allowed to go and take their risk.

18 March 1937

*

> Each time somebody leaves the Asram, I feel a kick, a shock, a heartquake.

May I ask why? People have been leaving the Asram since it began, not only now. Say 30 or 40 people have gone, 130 or 140 others have come. The big Maharathas, *X*, *Y*, *Z* departed from this too damnable Asram where great men are not allowed to do as they like. The damnable Asram survives and grows. A and B and C fail in their Yoga — but the Yoga proceeds on its way, advances, develops. Why then kick, shock and heartquake?

> You said long ago that the Supramental won't tolerate any nonsense of freedom of movement or wrong movement. Is this the kick he is imparting from high up? . . . In these two months he has struck a tall tower like *A* and a fat buoy like *B*; how many of these!

And what then?

> I hold the view that the Supramental is descending concentratedly, though I don't feel it,

Not so strongly or concentratedly as it ought, but better than before.

> . . . and that those who resist, who are between two fires, have either to quit or to submit.

Even if it were so, that is their own business. The Divine is driving nobody out except in rare cases where their staying would be a calamity to the Asram (for instance it could decide one day to drive *C* out); if they cannot bear the pressure and rush away, listening to the "Go away, go away" push and suggestion of the Hostiles can it be said then that it was the Divine who drove them away and the push and suggestion of the Hostile is that of the Divine? A singular logic! The "Go, go" push and suggestion have been successfully there ever since the Asram started and even before when there was no Asram. How does that square with your theory that it is due to the concentrated descent of the Force? 21 April 1937

*

What you say about yourself — the jealousy etc. — is already known; you have yourself written it all before to the Mother. In spite of that we did not consider you unfit for the Yoga. Every sadhak has by nature certain characteristics which are a great obstacle in the way of the sadhana; these remain with obstinacy and can only be overcome after a very long time by an action of the Divine from within. Your mistake is — not to have these defects, others have defects of anger, jealousy, envy etc. very strongly and not only have them within but show them very openly, — but to accept it as a reason for despair and the wish to go away from here. There is absolutely no meaning in going away, for nothing would be gained by it. One does not escape from what is within oneself by changing place; it follows and reproduces itself under other circumstances and among other surroundings. To go away and die does not solve anything either; for one's being and nature do not end with death, they continue. The only way to get rid of them is to throw them out and the only place where you can get rid of them is here. Here, if you remain, a time is sure to come when these things will go out of you. The suffering it causes cannot cease by going out — it can only cease by the *inner* cause being removed or else by your drawing back from them and realising your true self which even if they rose would not be troubled by them and could refuse to regard them as part of itself — this liberation too can only come here by sadhana. 24 May 1937

*

What you have written is quite correct. To say that the Divine is defeated when a sadhak goes away is an absurdity. If the sadhak allows his lower nature to get the better of him, it is his defeat, not the Divine's. The sadhak comes here not because the Divine has need of him, but because he has need of the Divine. If he carries out the conditions of the spiritual life and gives himself to the Mother's leading, he will attain his goal but if he wants to lay down his own conditions and impose his own ideas and his own desires on the Divine, then all the difficulty comes. This is what happened to *X* and *Y* and several others. Because the Divine does not yield to them they go away; but how is that a defeat for the Divine? 27 May 1937

*

You speak as if the majority of the sadhaks who came here had gone! As a matter of fact it is only a small minority. Some went owing to a revolt of pride and ambition thinking that they had a great work to do or that they were already the equals or superiors of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo — some because they were unable to resist their sexual desires, others because they preferred to take their own way instead of following the directions of the Guru and went off the track. These things always happen to a number of those who start on the way, whatever the path they follow. It is no proof of the special difficulty of this Yoga. If one yields to ambition, sexual passion or self-sufficiency, a fall is always possible. There is also the possibility of being driven off the track by doubt or attraction to the old life — family, friends etc. The only one of these things that can act in your case is this doubt of your own capacity.

As I have told you, the capacity for having inner experience — and that is the one thing all sadhaks must have or develop — this you have, for it showed itself clearly. The rest does not depend on personal capacity, but on reliance and opening to the Mother's force. It was because you had that that you were progressing for some time very well. It got covered over by the physical consciousness which understands only external things and understands even those wrongly and obscurely. If that consciousness opens, there is no reason to suppose that you will not be able to go through. 12 July 1937

*

> By no means at my command can I make my mind even reasonably silent. It has again started bringing in doubts and misgivings and disquiet. One of them is that perhaps I am

> on the wrong path; this is not the goal that my nature wants. Perhaps it is some ambition that has attracted me to this path. I write this to you because I cannot deal with it effectively. Temperamentally the rest of my instruments seem more amenable to influences representing other paths and other goals. Am I really on the right path, have I really the call to it?

It is the right path for your inner nature and there there is the call. The resistance is from the outer, especially the mind, but that is due to a dissatisfied restlessness which is part of the outer mental nature (the reasons given are only supports which it builds for its restlessness) and that would have interfered wherever you might have been and on whatever path. To conquer this outer nature is the only way and that can be best done here, since the change of the outer being is here a part of the sadhana and you will receive the necessary help. 17 July 1937

*

> Don't be with me as with *X*. You couldn't keep him here; forces took him away. Doubts!

I repeat that he took himself away. No Force can take a man away, who really wants not to go and really wants the spiritual life. *X* wanted the "Divine Response" only, not spiritual life — his doubts all rose from that. 2 August 1937

*

Yes, you can do as you propose. So long as you have the attachment to the family, it is not possible to do any good sadhana here. Yoga and attachment do not go together. As long as you have it, the best you can do is to go on with the ordinary life, develop Bhakti and try to prepare yourself for a true and complete sadhana hereafter. circa 1937

*

> It doesn't seem to me that it will be impossible for me to return after I have exhausted my vital attachments. I feel I am destined for the spiritual life and will take the final plunge very soon.

When there is so sharp a difference between the inner and the outer being, it is always the sadhak who has to make his choice. As for coming back, many who have gone out have come back, others have not — for in going out there is always the danger of entering into a current of forces that make return impossible. Whatever decision you make should be clear and deliberate — otherwise, you may go out and as soon as you are there want to come back and after coming here again want to go; that would be inadmissible. 16 May 1938

*

I have already answered more than once to what you have written in your last two letters and I can only give the same answer as before.

You write as if our only reason for not consenting to your going away or for not sending you away was that you had nowhere to go. But that is not so. It is because we do not approve of the idea of your going; it is a wrong step altogether without any sense or reason in it.

The difficulties in your nature are not peculiar to you alone among the sadhaks here and their persistence is no sign that you cannot do Yoga. The few years you have been here is too short a time to expect a transformation of the character. Nobody can expect a transformation in so short a time.

It is not a fact that you are incapable of doing Yoga. Anyone who can open his consciousness and have inner experiences is capable of Yoga and that did happen in you. The closing of this openness by a descent into the physical consciousness is something that has happened to most in this Asram and it usually takes a long time to come out of the closing. There is therefore no reason for concluding that this shows incapacity for Yoga and therefore there is no use in staying here.

The only reasonable thing for you to do is to get rid of this wrong idea and remain quietly here where alone the true consciousness and the true life can come to you. 7 July 1938

*

These ideas are only suggestions that always come up when you allow this sadness to grow in you; instead of indulging them, they should be immediately thrown from you. There is no "why" to your feeling of our far-away-ness and indifference, for these do not exist, and the feeling comes up automatically without any true reason along with this wave of the wrong kind of consciousness. Whenever this comes up, you should be at once sure that it is a wrong turn and stop it and reject all its characteristic suggestions. It is when you have been able to do so for a long time that you have made great progress and developed a right consciousness and right ideas and the true psychic attitude. You are not hampering our work nor standing in the way of others coming here; in cleaving to the sadhana in spite of all difficulties you are not deceiving yourself but, on the contrary, doing the right thing and you are certainly not deceiving the Divine, who knows very well both your aspiration and your difficulties. So there is not a shred of a reason for your going away. If you "sincerely want to do Yoga", and there can be no doubt about that, that is quite a sufficient reason for your being here. It does not matter about not having as yet any occult experiences, like the rising of the Kundalini etc.; these come to some early, to some late; and there are besides different lines of such experiences for different natures. You should not hanker after these or get disappointed and despondent because they do not yet come. These things can be left to come of themselves when the consciousness is ready. What you have to aspire to is bhakti, purification of the nature, right psychic consciousness and surrender. Aspire for bhakti and it will grow in you. It is already there within and it is that which expresses itself in your poetry and music and the feelings that rise up as in the temple of the Mother at the Cape. As the bhakti and aspiration in the nature grow, the right psychic consciousness will also increase and lead to the full surrender. But keep steady and don't indulge these ideas of incapacity and frustration and going away; they are stuff of tamas and good only to be flung aside.

19 October 1942

The Ashram and Its Atmosphere

The Ashram Precincts

> *X* told me that *Y* has said that there is a very strong circle of Mother's protection around the main Ashram house, and a less strong one in the other houses.

It is not the house, it is the inner nearness that matters.

What is true is that there is a strong force going out from here and it is naturally strongest at the centre. But how it affects there, depends on how one receives it. If it is received with simple trust, faith, openness, confidence, then it works as a complete protection. But it can so work too at a distance.

16 January 1933

*

> Mother said once that all the houses were sanctified by her presence and there were no houses more favoured than others. This appeals to me. For if it was otherwise I would of course try to get into a room within the Asram precincts, as people often say that there the atmosphere is ever so much better.

The atmosphere of the houses as houses is pretty much the same in all the Asram. But people make their own atmosphere as well; a number of people living together may create one that is agreeable to this person and disagreeable to another. A single man also may leave a vital atmosphere in a house which is felt by others who follow him or, even if they do not feel it, they may be influenced by it for a time — that I have observed often enough. The surroundings also have sometimes an effect. But all that is very secondary — one ought to create one's own atmosphere (of course of the right kind) and keep it, then other vibrations will fall away from it.

What are the Asram precincts? Every house in which the sadhaks of the Asram live is in the Asram precincts. People have a queer way of talking of the houses in this compound as the Asram — it has no meaning. Or do they think the Mother's influence or mine is shut up in a compound? 12 January 1935

The Atmosphere of the Ashram

> When I sit on the staircase to your room, I feel something very special there. But now I find that wrong things are coming in when I sit there. I hope I am not disturbing the atmosphere.

The force is there in the atmosphere, but you must receive it in the right way — in the spirit of self-giving, openness, confidence. All the rest depends on that. 16 January 1933

*

> I was surprised to learn that *X* and *Y* are staying in the town. How, after being in the Ashram for two years, can they bear the outside atmosphere? *Z*, who just returned from a visit home, tells me he could not endure the atmosphere over there.

It is certainly strange. Most people after the atmosphere here cannot tolerate the ordinary atmosphere. If they go outside, they are restless until they return. Even *A*'s aunt who was here only for a few months writes in the same way. But probably when people get into the control of a falsehood as *X* and *Y* did, they are projected into the unregenerated vital nature and no longer feel the difference of the atmosphere. 30 May 1933

*

It is easier to feel the presence in the atmosphere of the Asram than outside it. But that is only an initial difficulty which one can overcome by a steadiness in the call and a constant opening of oneself to the influence. 16 August 1934

*

> I have translated the first four pieces of Maurice Magre's "*L'Ashram de Pondichéry*"[1] into Gujarati. There are some exaggerations in his perceptions: "*les hommes les plus sages de la terre*" and "*Ce sont des Parfaits entre les hommes*". This is too much to say about us sadhaks. I find it almost impossible to put such sentiments in Gujarati, as people there would find them overblown.

Magre like many others got an immediate strong impression of the atmosphere of the Asram — most feel it as an atmosphere of calm and peace, something quite apart from that of the ordinary world. He thought it was the atmosphere of the people. Besides, of the few who saw him, he saw only the best. Also many here if not most have something in their appearance different from people outside, something a little luminous, which a man of sensitive perceptions like Magre could feel. The other side becomes apparent only if one stays long and mixes in the ordinary life of the Asram or hears the gossip of the Sadhaks. People from this country, Gujaratis or others, more easily see or feel this side and do not feel the rest because they enter at once into relation with the exterior life of the Asram. 4 February 1937

*

There are two atmospheres in the Asram, ours and that of the sadhaks. When people with a little perceptiveness come from outside, they are struck by the deep calm and peace in the atmosphere and it is only when they mix much with the sadhaks that this perception and influence fade away. The other atmosphere of dullness or unrest is created by the sadhaks themselves — if they were opened to the Mother as they should be, they would live in the calm and peace and not in unrest or dullness.

15 March 1937

---

[1] *Maurice Magre,* À la poursuite de la sagesse *(Paris: Fasquelle, 1936), pp. 99–104.*

The Ashram's Physical Expansion

Is having more houses a sign of progress?

It is a sign of physical expansion. The progress depends upon what is behind; if the inner progress is not there, the physical expansion is of no great use. 7 July 1933

*

If the Asram expands very much and there are no houses available in Pondicherry, naturally the extension will be somewhere in the villages nearby?

There was some idea of that years ago, but circumstances took another turn and it did not materialise. 14 April 1935

Sadhana in the Ashram

Communal Sadhana

In respect to Yoga, what is the meaning of communal sadhana?

There is no communal sadhana. It is the individuals who do the sadhana and that creates a collective atmosphere with a character and movements of its own.

In the commune can sadhaks help each other in their sadhana?

What commune? There is no commune here, there is only a group of people who are supposed to follow the same sadhana.

In what way?

Anyone can help another if he has the capacity. It has nothing to do with a "commune".

Not living in a commune, is it possible to reach the highest Truth?

The highest Truth is there for anyone who can reach it.

16 May 1933

Personal Difficulties and Progress in Yoga

You have now taken the right attitude, and if you keep it all will go better. It is to the divine Mother that you have come for Yoga, not for the old kind of life. You should also regard this as an Asram, not an ordinary Sansar, and in your dealings with others here strive to conquer anger, self-assertion and pride, whatever may be their attitude or behaviour towards you; for so long as you keep these moods, you will find it difficult to make progress in the Yoga. 8 July 1932

*

> If the difficulties in my nature still persist after so many years of sadhana, how can I be certain of success? How can I think that I am fit for the Yoga?

The vital difficulties persist so long as one indulges in any way the lower nature — even after one has ceased indulging, they persist so long as there is anything in the lower consciousness which desires or regrets them or is still responsive to their touch when they return either as waves from the universal Prakriti or an attack by the hostile forces. If length of time in mastering the vital or transforming it were a proof of unfitness, then nobody in this Asram — or outside it — would be fit for the Yoga.

> Until success actually comes, there is always the chance that it will *not* come at all.

The mind can argue like that about anything not yet actually realised and established beyond dispute and without flaw. But what one has to lean on in Yoga is not the reasonings of the physical mind, but faith in the soul and the secret certitude of the Spirit.

> I want to have the Yogic consciousness at all times and never lose it. This constant moving between light and darkness, peace and struggle cannot be a proof of progress. In what way am I incorrect?

Absolutely incorrect. The progress of the sadhana is for most even such an alternation because it is precisely a struggle between the powers of Light and Darkness, those who want the divine transformation and those who want the continuance of the old ignorant Nature. At each step something has to be conquered from the hold of the Ignorance, something brought down from the Light above. When the whole nature is opened and the peace and equality are brought down into the vital and physical and settled there, then there is no inner disturbance, but the struggle continues until there is the beginning of the supramental transformation. 20 July 1933

*

> How is it that many sadhaks who had a strong spiritual tendency before coming to the Asram have got stuck in vital difficulties after many years of sadhana?

It is because outside before people come here, they are quite satisfied with their inner spiritual experiences and there is no idea of changing or attempt to change the vital. The moment this idea is imposed on the vital or the attempt begins all the vital difficulties begin. That is one reason, but by itself it would not have mattered so much, the difficulties would have appeared but they could have been conquered without so much trouble. But here owing to the wrong attitude of many sadhaks, their indulgence of the vital opposition and revolt, an atmosphere of extreme vital difficulty has been created and when one comes to stay here all that atmosphere throws itself upon him and it is only by a great and prolonged struggle that he can get back to the spiritual simplicity and straightforward aspiration or the psychic poise. 18 July 1934

*

I do not see why your having difficulties or the external consciousness denying the inner truth should prevent you from calling our help. At that rate hardly anybody could call for help. Almost everybody in the Asram except a few have this difficulty of the external consciousness denying or standing in the way of the inner experience and trying to cling to its old ways, ideas, habits and desires. This division in human nature is a universal fact and one should not make too much of it. Once the Peace and Power are there, it is best to trust to that to remove in time the opposition and enlighten and occupy the external nature. 19 July 1934

*

> You have often spoken of the Man of Sorrows in connection

> with me. But I was a cheerful fellow at school and college. So I am afraid he is a contribution, partly at least, of your Yoga.

Not of my Yoga, but of the blasted atmosphere that has been created here by the theory that revolt, doubt and resultant sorrow and struggle and all that rot are the best way to progress. The Asram has never been able to get out of it, but only some people have escaped. The others have opened themselves to the confounded Man of Sorrows and got the natural consequence. But why the devil did you do it? The Man of Sorrows is a fellow who is always making a row in himself and covering himself with sevenfold overcoats of tragedy and gloom and he would not feel his existence justified if he couldn't be colossally miserable — when he gets on people's backs he puts the same thing on them. Yoga on the other hand tells you even if you have all sorts of unpleasantnesses to live in the inner sunlight, your own or God's. At least most Yogas do except the Vaishnava — but the Yoga here is not a Vaishnava Yoga. 19 June 1935

*

> All I want to know is whether the whole of my being wants God or not. I am always saying, "I have come here to attain God." But perhaps this is just self-deception.

I have already answered your question. You came because your soul was moved to seek the Divine. That some part of your vital has strong attachments to the people you left behind, is a fact, but it does not make your soul's seeking unreal. If the presence and persistence of vital difficulties were to prove that a sadhak is "unfit" and has no chance, then only one or two in the Asram — and perhaps not even they — would survive the test. The feeling of dryness and not being "able to aspire" is also no proof. Every sadhak gets periods and even long periods of such emptiness. I could point to some who are considered among the most "advanced" sadhaks and yet are not free yet altogether from the family instinct. It is therefore quite unreasonable to be upset because these reactions still linger in you. These reactions come and go, but the need of the soul is permanent, even when covered up and silent, and will always stay and reemerge. 24 June 1935

*

> A vast abyss has opened its jaws to swallow *X* for ever. I tell you, Sir, it will be a pathetic failure on the part of the Divine.

Rubbish! It will be a failure on the part of *X*. I don't profess to transform men against their will. 1 September 1935

*

> If I want to hang myself, would you say, "I can't help him against his will"?

If that were your will and not merely an impulse of the vital being, nobody could stop you. 2 September 1935

*

All who come here did not come with a conscious seeking for the Divine. It is without the mind knowing it the soul within that brought them here. In your case it was that and the relation your soul had with the Mother. Once here the force of the Divine works upon the human nature till a way is opened for the soul within to come out from the veil. The conscious seeking for the Divine does not by itself prevent the struggle with the ignorance of the nature; it is only self-giving to the Mother that can do that. 7 November 1935

*

> Why is the sex-force working so vehemently now? Does it mean that the supramental also is vehemently descending? Or at least some Divine Force, giving a last kick at the sex-force?

The Divine Force has nothing to do with it. It is the sex and other lower forces that are attacking in order to make it impossible for the Divine Force to do its work or the Supramental to descend. They hope to prevent it altogether or, if by some miracle it still descends, to limit its extension and prevent anything more than an individual achievement. 6 August 1937

The Supramental Evolution, the Ashram and the Hostile Forces

> With Sri Aurobindo and the Mother so close to us here, how is it that we continue to fall into darkness and sorrow — even into struggles with the hostile forces?

You are right. The hostile forces, their attacks, their suggestions ought now to be superannuated, out of date, out of place here in this sadhana. If somebody would realise that and fulfil it in his sadhana, the others might perhaps get strength to follow. At present these things are still here because the sadhaks open themselves to them, out of habit, out of desire, out of attraction for the drama of the vital, out of fear, out of passive response and unresisting inertia. But there is no real necessity for them any longer or true justification for their presence here, — the outer world is a different matter. The sadhana could very well go on and should go on as an unfolding, a natural falling away of defects and difficulties, a coming of greater and greater light and power and peace and transformation. 8 November 1933

*

> Many people are experiencing acute difficulties. Is this the result of an inrush of forces or a pressure in the atmosphere?

It is not the pressure from above that creates difficulties. There is a strong resistance to change in the lower planes and certain Forces take advantage of it to throw in vortices of disturbance and try to upset as many people as possible. The only action of the Pressure from above on these is to push them out from the atmosphere of the person touched or from the atmosphere generally. After a time they are pushed out of the atmosphere of the person and can no longer work on him except from a distance with very slight effect. When that can be done generally — so as to push them to a distance from the atmosphere of the Asram, then all this trouble will cease. 9 November 1933

*

> You wrote, in the letter that was placed on the notice board,[1] that there is not "any longer" a justification for the hostile forces here. That suggests that there has been some change in the atmosphere, which makes possible their elimination. But can they really be eliminated?

I wrote because now there is a sufficient descent of Light and Power, for one not to be subject to the ordeals and tests which the Hostile Powers are permitted to put when one has only the mental, or ordinary spiritual forces on the plane of mind, to support one's progress. If you look closely, you will see that when these Forces work now it is in a perfectly irrational, instinctive way, repeating always the same movements without any intellectual or higher vital power behind them. Theirs is now an irrational mechanical method which obscures more in the lowest physical and subconscient than anything else. That means that their true justification for being there is gone. 9 November 1933

*

> I have something to ask about your letter [*of 8 November 1933*] about the hostile forces. You write that they are "out of place here in this sadhana". But you go on to say that attacks continue because "the sadhaks open themselves to them, out of habit, . . . out of passive response and unresisting inertia". Please explain all this more clearly. Do you mean that the forces that were obstructing the sadhaks have been destroyed?

There is no question of destruction. There is only the question of their exclusion from the Asram. The things enumerated are not causes of the attacks, but they are the occasion, the weakness in the sadhaks that allows them when they could very well be dismissed. The hostile forces are there in the world to maintain the Ignorance — they were there in the sadhana because they had the right to test the sincerity of the sadhaks and their power and will to cleave to the Divine and overcome all difficulties. But this is only so long as the higher Light has not descended into the physical — now it is descending, it is sufficiently there for anyone to receive it more and more fully, so that the way becomes smooth and open, a progressive development and not a struggle. 10 November 1933

---

[1] *The letter of 8 November 1933 on page 639. — Ed.*

*

> Since I wrote to you last, the hostile force has been trying to prove that it still has a place in this world.

Even if it had a place in the world where men do not seek the Divine, it has no right of place in the Asram.

14 November 1933

*

> It seems to me that the evolution out of matter could have taken place without the hostile forces. It could have happened quickly, by the descent of the Supramental and other lights, powers and joy of the Transcendent.

Anything could have happened — but if the Supramental was to descend immediately, there was no need of matter or evolution — the only reasonable thing would have been to create a supramental world at once without any slow evolution of matter, of life in matter, of mind in living matter or of the spiritual or supramental in spiritualised life in the material body.

> Without the hostile forces and the self-contradictory consciousness of an exclusive division, *avidyā*, the manifestation would have been self-luminous and perfect and there would have been no need of an evolution from imperfection to perfection.

Obviously — but this world was created for evolution and not for an immediately luminous manifestation such as already exists on some other planes.

> Whoever gave the hostile forces the power of *avidyā* to enter into and interfere with the earth-evolution has allowed tremendous pain and suffering to grow in the earth-consciousness.

Avidya did not interfere with the earth evolution, it existed before the earth life was evolved in the form of Inconscience. The meaning of evolution is the evolving or slow manifestation of life, mind and conscious supermind out of matter with its original Inconscience. Avidya is one thing and the intervention of the hostile forces is another.

> Even if the hostile forces go back to their own region, they will certainly wage war against the transformed divine world. The only way for God to save us from this would be for him to put some pressure on them for self-transformation.

It is supposed that the supramental Light and Force is to descend — if the descent is so complete that these forces are driven back to their own world, it is not likely that any efforts on their part would have any success. It is the darkness or the insufficient Light that gave them their chance to intervene. If there is the victory of the true light, they cannot any longer.

> The Mother has said that the hostile forces are necessary in the life of the Asrama for testing the sincerity of the sadhakas.

The work of this Yoga and therefore the principle of the Asram life is to take the world as it is and deal with it by a transformation of which the supramental descent is not the first but the final process. The presence of the hostile forces is a part of the world as it is and not to deal with them at all or to act as if they were not there would have been to leave the problem unsolved and the work undone. The sadhaks of the Asram are not spotless Saints or perfect born Yogis but men who carry in them their human nature and typify each in his own way what is in the world and what has to be changed. The influence of the hostile Forces was on them as on all human beings in a less or greater degree, and so long as they open themselves to that influence, it works on them as on the world, — it is only by a perfect sincerity and by a perfect opening to the Light that it can disappear. In that sense the presence of these forces is a test and the world that has to be changed being what it is and their nature being what it is, it could not be otherwise.

> I believe that each divine being has a hostile being associated with it for some unknown purpose in the Asrama.

It is not only in the Asram but everywhere that it is like that. It is a well-known principle of all occult knowledge that there are these two elements overstanding each seeker of the Truth.

> The Mother once said that she never upheld the hostile forces, nor was she their Mother.

The hostile forces are upheld not by the Mother but by something in the sadhaks themselves which opens the doors to them by concentrated egoism, mental arrogance, vital revolt and many other things, e.g. lying, sex etc.

> I remember how I was suddenly betrayed into the hands of the hostile forces when I came to the Budhi house. When I asked to be moved to a house near the Asrama, you ordered me to remain here.

The hostile forces were not in the Budhi house any more than in any other and being in a house near the Asram does not save anybody from their attacks — as is shown by the case of several who lived in houses near the Asram. Even to be in the central building does not necessarily save anybody from attacks. It depends on oneself, not on purely external things.

> You have said that the hostile forces are no more necessary here in the Asrama. Will you let me know when they are going to be put out of the Asrama life altogether?

They are no more necessary if the sadhaks open to the Light that is descending — that was what I said — but if they do not open and go on exposing themselves, there will still be a possibility of their presence for some time to come.

> Please give me the highest solutions and not temporary truths of a passing evolution.

The highest solutions cannot be brought in like that, as if one were acting in a clear field. If the "temporary" truths of the evolution could be got rid of so easily, there would have been no need of preparation or of a trying and difficult sadhana. It was necessary to deal with what had come into existence in the evolution so that the supramental descent might become possible.
9 December 1933

*

> What I meant in my first question [*p. 641*] was that, as far as I can see, evolution is not necessary for the divine manifestation.

There is no question about the possibility of a non-evolutionary manifestation — but that is quite irrelevant, for this *is* an evolutionary manifestation and it was evidently intended to be so from the beginning.

> But on account of the interference of an exclusive *avidyā*, the manifestation has been perverted into what it now is.

What do you mean by an interference? The exclusive Avidya, that is the Inconscience of Matter, was the starting point, not something that came in after life had begun.

> If there had been a gradual descent of the supramental light in the beginning, the true life, mind and higher planes might have been released and organised.

A gradual descent of the Supramental Light into what? Matter being the starting point, life and mind had to evolve first — to begin with a supramental descent would have reversed the order of the creation.

> Thus the hostile forces and the perversion that they bring might have been dispensed with.

All that depends on the original statement that it might have been otherwise — if a rapid supramental creation had been intended and not an evolution. As this is in its nature an evolutionary world, there is no practical use in pressing that possibility.

> My point is that the hostile forces could have been dispensed with, and that they still can be dispensed with, at present.

As for what can be done at the present time, that is just what is being fought out. But there are two parties to the issue, the higher consciousness and the earth consciousness, the latter largely represented by the sadhaks here. If the earth consciousness is ready an easy descent is quite possible, but if it resists, then there is in the nature of things difficulty and struggle and the Asuric forces have their chance. 25 December 1933

*

> It may be that a God-man was created first. But by "interference" he degenerated into the present man in his surface mental and vital consciousness. And this same spirit of a self-contradictory hostile nature created in his surface consciousness the *exclusive* Avidya (*vide* Bible, Book of Genesis).

I am not aware of it — not on this earth at any rate. If he was a God-man, why did he allow the interference and degeneration in himself? The Bible to which you refer supposes Adam to have been innocent but ignorant in the beginning.

> In 1926 you said that this creation was not intended to be as it is, but that a self-contradictory spirit interfered at a certain stage and perverted it.

My statement does not bear the meaning you give it.

> Supposing that this physical body has evolved on this planet in the way understood by Darwin . . .

It has nothing to do with Darwin.

> yet it seems from inner knowledge that it was essentially an action of the Supermind below, the Supermind above and the psychic being, and all the struggle and difficulty and delay that we see was caused by adverse forces of a consciousness of a self-contradictory nature.

I have no inner knowledge to that effect — that it was intended to be worked out by these three forces alone.

> The whole thing looks like an intended perfect manifestation perverted in its surface mental and vital consciousness by the power of a self-contradictory hostile nature that was a possibility of God's being.

If it started from the Inconscience, it could not be a perfect manifestation from the beginning.

> You say [*p. 641*] that in a supramental manifestation matter would not have been necessary. I suppose you meant that the darkness of matter was not necessary.

It would have been not matter but supramental substance.

> You say that permission was given to the hostile forces to pervert the creation by a sort of beautiful Asuric stress.

What is this word beautiful? I never used it and it is an absurd epithet.

> Also it seems that in this Asrama the hostile forces were allowed to move and play with the idea of testing the sadhaks.

Not at all — it is a law that grew up in the world, as I have said clearly, it seems to me, and as this Asram is part of the world, it worked here also.

> At least the dangers of the hostile forces were not pointed out as clearly as they should have been.

That is false.

> I for my part am not prepared to bear any part of the burden of transformation of the hostile forces.

So much the better. I am not asking anybody to transform the Asuras — I am only asking them to reject them.

> I spoke of having seen and heard someone who showed me how he had organised, in the being of every sadhak here, a "dark being" veiling his "divine being".

I do not know what you mean by this someone. The existence of a double being is a preexistent fact, it has not been organised by anyone here.

> I am not aware that the condition of anyone in the Asrama was or is as difficult as mine since I have come to this house.

That is your ignorance. There were many others.

> By my observation I have found it was not so.

Your observation is incorrect.

> And it is my conviction that the sort of attack I have undergone cannot last when a man is with others and is busy with collective work.

I do not accept your idea of the origin of the attacks on you as correct.

> I am neither for delay nor for incurring more danger for the sake of the dogma that we have to accept everything that is in the creation . . .

It is a practical fact, not a dogma — we have to proceed from what it is, not from what we would like it to have been.

> and in the way chalked out by another.

Who is this other?

> My greatest urge is to go up and see the truth in its own home.

There is no objection to that, but it is not so easily done — at least to my experience. Those who have tried it in a rush have not had very good results.

> This I can best do by your grace, and by your answering my questions.

I don't see how my answers can do that — since you stick to your own view of the matter.

> You once said that the ascension to the supermind and individual transformation must precede the manifestation of the Sangha. But why did you allow the Sangha to manifest before this condition was fulfilled?

Which Sangha? I have never called this Asram the Sangha. The Asram is a field of growth, not a manifestation of perfection.

> Is there no possibility of an individual rising up to the Supramental separately, and then turning down towards manifestation with a fuller light, knowledge, power and joy, individually?

There is no possibility of shooting up suddenly to the Supermind — one has to go step by step — though it may be done more or less quickly — but not with any railway-train speed. Nor is it possible for the supramental to descend without a preparation of the lower parts.

> Have you still the idea of transforming the hostile forces? If so, how?

I do not know what you mean by the transformation of the hostile forces. It is the lower nature that has to be transformed into the higher nature. The object of the Yoga is the transformation of terrestrial beings, not of the Asuras.

> Is it not possible again to begin the sadhana of ascension to the higher mind and supermind and work out the transformation below *just as you did for yourself*, keeping this outward and inward Sangha formation, if possible, though curtailing the outward work to a minimum or for the greater need and purpose of the Truth giving it up temporarily?

That is an ignorant and incorrect statement of our sadhana.

> Since the Chandernagore [*i.e. the Prabartak Sangha*] experience, it has always seemed to me that the best way of sadhana would be to rise to the *vijñāna* individually, to transform oneself personally, and then, when all was perfect to create or allow the Sangha to descend.

I do not know what you mean by a Sangha descending — it is the Supermind that has to descend.

This transformation cannot be done individually in a solitary way only — if it were possible we would not have undertaken the burden of maintaining this Asram.

It appears from all you have written that you do not accept my knowledge but have ideas and principles of sadhana of your own. My knowledge and action are based on the actual facts of the universe and the relation of the higher Truth with these as I have found them. If you have a knowledge superior to mine and a greater way of action, there is no necessity for these questions.

4 January 1934

*

> The forces compelled Adam — who does not seem to have possessed a great knowledge about the wiles of the hostile forces — to fall.

It means that he was ignorant and not merely innocent.

> From your statement it is obvious that at a certain stage of the manifestation the hostile forces interfered but that up to that stage the manifestation was perfect.

Not at all. If it had been perfect, there would have been no need of evolution.

> This supports the idea that a perfect manifestation was intended from the very beginning.

An unperverted manifestation is not necessarily a perfect manifestation — it may be unperverted but still imperfect.

> You have not taken exception to my statement that the *exclusive* Avidya is not present in the inner vital and mental.

It depends on what you mean by Avidya. They are not inconscient like Matter, but until the higher knowledge comes, they are in the Ignorance.

> I do not understand what you mean by "It has nothing to do with Darwin."

The evolution I speak of is not the evolution of the Darwinian theory.

> I understand that the interference of the Avidya or the hostile forces were the causes of man's degeneration and delay in his evolution and that they were not helping forces as such, even indirectly.

They did not intend to be helping forces, but they have been obliged to help in certain ways.

> Psychic innocence is a great perfection by itself.

What is psychic innocence after all?

> You have not taken exception to my statement about Vidya and Avidya.

These are terms which one can use in different senses. There is no Avidya in the highest planes, if by Avidya you mean Ignorance.

> You have not taken exception to my statement about the great pain created in the universe by the interference of the hostile forces in the life of man.

I have not accepted it.

Once pain is in the world and a main part of its working it cannot be got rid of arbitrarily by ignoring it or by a simple surgical operation of cutting out its source. It is the mind with its summary conclusions that thinks the complex knot of things can be dealt with by a simple cut — in fact it is not so.

> The Mother has spoken many times of hostile forces that came here after the descent for transformation. In fact, she had transformed one hostile being who was present in the Asrama.

A transformed hostile being or one who wants to be transformed is no longer hostile. It is simply a power of the vital world which places itself at the service of the Divine. Hostility consists in opposing the Divine Light and fighting against the transformation of the earth consciousness.

But in any case the Mother never spoke of such transformation as the object of the sadhana or the Asrama.

> You have not said anything about several of my questions and statements.

There are many things you have written about which I have not said anything but which I do not endorse. It is impossible for me with my limited time to answer such a long series of questions in detail.

> After the descent, the Mother spoke of the Asrama as the spiritual cell (the word is mine) and Sangha.

The Mother was not in the habit of using the word sangha, I think.

9 January 1934

*

> A natural unfolding of the consciousness in manifestation from an involved state is quite a beautiful phenomenon.

No doubt — but when the evolution had to express the possibilities of an emergence from the Inconscience, it was not easy to materialise a flawless unfolding — since out of Inconscience came Ignorance and Ignorance is easily a field of deviation and error.

> Probably you spoke of a psychological evolution whereas Darwin spoke of the evolution of the physical species.

Quite so. Many centuries before Darwin Puranic and Tantric writers spoke very explicitly of an evolution of the soul's birth through the vegetable and animal to man.

> Psychic innocence is psychic existence in the eight planes of consciousness, manifestly.

Innocence has two meanings — sinlessness and ignorance. The psychic innocence is not an ignorant condition.

> An ordinary vital being or a hostile vital being driven into the Asrama atmosphere by some presence from above or otherwise may at any time open to its own world and source in its darker aspects and then become the cause of much disturbance in the sadhana.

That does not apply to a converted Asura. The others are not driven — wherever sadhana is going on, they come to disturb it — a fact known to the Yogis and Rishis from early times.

> Forced opening by a vital or a hostile force means a forced opening and entering of the same force in our mental, vital, physical body.

If you mean an invasion of the consciousness by a hostile force, that happens — but it cannot succeed unless something in the sadhaka either welcomes the invasion or is somehow attracted or won over or somehow responds. As for the ordinary attack not amounting to an opening, that nobody escapes.

> In your reply of 4 January, you wrote: "That is an ignorant and incorrect statement of our sadhana" [*p. 649*]. Could you please clarify this?

I said that was an incorrect statement of my sadhana. I did not start by ascension to the supermind — I fought out the difficulties of the mind and vital first in such a way as to make it possible for not only the higher mind but the intuition and overmind to descend. The supermind comes last of all. 16 January 1934

*

> Inconscience is the involved state of the Sachchidananda. It is all-knowing, only the knowledge is involved. In Inconscience there need not be an exclusive *avidyā*, neither is it necessary for involving the Supraconsciousness.

In that case there is no exclusive Avidya anywhere — for wherever there is Ignorance, there is also the all-knowledge involved in it.

> The condition of innocence realised by Christian saints and mystics was a psychic state of perfect self-surrender to and oneness with God on every plane of consciousness. But that perfection is not a state of Ignorance. Achieved in its fullness, it is *as good as* a state of supramental perfection — the difference being only in the basis, movement and *aiśvarya*.

Not at all. If it were then there would be no use of seeking for the descent of the supermind. A condition which one cannot retain by the inherent light and power of the Knowledge Will in it is not the supermind as I know it.

> Sri Krishna when asked by Arjuna after the destruction of the Yadavas to repeat the sacred lore of the Gita, replied that the teaching of the Gita came into him once but that it was no more and he could not repeat it. Can one who has attained to the supermind fall?

Srikrishna did not say that he was in the supermind when he spoke the Gita to Arjuna — he was in Yoga, but one can be in

Yoga without being in the Supermind. So this is not a point in instance.

> The only way to avoid the "fall" is to preserve oneself by a supreme knowledge and strength that refuses submission even to God if some part of His being should draw one down the path of darkness; and to correct this world-movement at its very source.

I am not aware of any state of supreme knowledge in which the separative ego or the individual becomes greater in knowledge and will than the Divine or can by his own separate power overcome the Divine Will and correct the world movement.

In the supermind there is not this division of one part of the being of God willing something and some other part fighting against it. There all is viewed from an integral vision and founded on a harmony in the being — how this works out cannot be fixed by the mind, which lives and acts in division. If there is no such integral supermind, then I have nothing to do here and will leave it to greater Minds to solve the problem in their own way.

> When did the hostile forces begin their work of perversion — at the time of mental, vital or physical manifestation?

As soon as Life was to appear, they intervened in it.

> A converted Asura, i.e. one who has consented to be God's ally and undergo transformation, may easily change colour and become hostile. In fact, the Mother writes in her *Prayers* of some Asuras who promised to be God's servants, but did not keep their promise as they wanted to lord it over others.[2]

The Mother was not speaking of any Asuras called into the Asram and imposed on some human being there who was to bear the burden of his transformation. She was speaking of certain

---

[2] *The Mother,* Prayers and Meditations *(Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2003), p. 223.*

Lords of the Vital who had taken birth in earthly bodies and tried to prepare the Divine Descent, but each imagining that he alone was the chosen instrument of the Force, spoiled the work they could have done. It was outside the Asram that this originally happened — only the Mother found the same mentality still persisting and interfering with the manifestation of the Force. But it had no reference to the converted Asura who tried to come here in his subtle Form of whom I spoke — that was many years afterwards — and he did not change colour or become hostile. Any other case of Asuric intervention was due to an affinity in the sadhak himself or a call from him — as in the case of *X* who was always calling Asuras into himself to convert them and although discouraged by us persisted thinking that he had himself a truer knowledge than we of what was wanted for the work. But again I have not known of any Asura who had accepted submission to the Divine becoming hostile. It is men who are under the influence of truly hostile beings who become like that.

> The hostile beings generally attack, then make some way in, lay siege and create conditions for invasion and ultimately lead or compel the human being to fall.

I am quite aware of the way in which the unconverted hostile beings, who have a hostile intention, get inside — there have been plenty of cases like that, and their method besides has been known by occultists and Yogins all through the ages. As for attacks, they can attack anybody. Christ and Buddha too had to bear the assaults of the Asura. But invasion in a man is only possible if there is something in him that gives a response and opens the gate.

> What I would like to know is whether all this can be done individually.

I do not seize the significance of the question. It has to be done in each individual — otherwise it cannot be done in the collective at all. But there can be a general descent of the Force by which each can profit to have it done in him if he is ready or when he is ready. 25 January 1934

*

> Summing up, I understand you to say:
> (1) That the hostile forces were permitted by God to pervert this creation at the time of the evolution of the human type.

No, I said "when life began to appear", that is before the human evolution.

> (2) That when the supermind comes down and manifests itself in the transformed earth consciousness they will go away or be driven out as there would be no need of their presence in this creation or Asrama,

No possibility either, if the supermind is once dominant.

> (3) for here they serve some purpose (which I have not quite understood).

The purpose they serve *in the world* is to give a full chance to the possibilities of the Inconscience and Ignorance — for this world was meant to be a working out of these possibilities with the supramental harmonisation as its eventual outcome. The life, the work developing here in the Asram has to deal with the world problem and had therefore to meet, it could not avoid, the conflict with the working of the hostile Powers in the human being.

> (4) That you did not allow any hostile being in the Asrama, except one converted Asura, and that no Asura owing allegiance to you had turned hostile.

We did not call any. The converted one too came but did not remain, so he too does not count.

> (5) Outside the Asrama some Lords of the vital world took birth on this earth, saying that they would serve God, but in

> fact lorded it over others. But these were not Asuric forces though they were so called in the book.[3]

I said nothing about their not being Asuras. I said those to whom the Mother referred were not Asuras who had manifested in the Asram, but outside the Asram and before it was formed — as human beings who wanted to help and prepare the Divine Advent but spoiled their work, not by hostility, but by egoism — just as human beings with an Asuric temperament often do.

> (6) The transformation of hostile beings is no part of the Yogin's work — though Mother transformed one. No such thing had been done in the Asrama or will be done.

The Mother's transforming one Asura was an incident, not an object of the Yoga.

I have not said either that it will not be done. If the Divine demands it, it will be done; if not, it won't be; but in any case it is not an object of the Yoga.

> (7) That the Supermind can be attained individually though a force may descend by which men can profit according to the self-preparation — though you once said that it could not be done individually.

You have missed altogether the qualifying words which I put with great care and prominent emphasis — if you don't read carefully, you will necessarily misunderstand what I write. I said "*This transformation* cannot be done individually *in a solitary way only*" [*p. 649*]. No individual solitary transformation apart from the work for the earth (which means more than any individual transformation) would be either possible or useful. (Also no individual human being can by his own power alone work out the transformation, nor is it the object of the Yoga to create an individual superman here and there.) The object of the Yoga is to bring down the supramental consciousness on earth, to fix it there, to create a new race with the principle of the supramental consciousness governing the inner and outer individual and collective life. Therefore the existence of the Asram, whatever difficulties it created for ourselves or for the individual, was inevitable. The method was the preparation of the earth consciousness in the human being as represented by the members of the Asram and others (with also a certain working in the general earth consciousness) so as to make the descent of the supramental Force possible. That Force accepted by individual after individual according to their preparation would establish the supramental consciousness in the physical world and so create a nucleus for its own expansion.

---

[3] *The "book" referred to here is apparently the Mother's* Prayers and Meditations. *See footnote 2 on page 654. — Ed.*

> (8) This world was originally intended to be an evolution out of ignorance in matter to knowledge through struggle and duality. Thus there was no original divine creation in the image of Heaven, or an original Satya Yuga.

It is quite possible that there have been periods of harmony on different levels, not supramental, which were afterwards disturbed — but those could only be a stage or resting place in a world of spiritual evolution out of the Ignorance.

> (9) That a perfect manifestation is quite possible without need of evolution. But you have not said anything about whether an unfolding of the Inconscience (involved Sat-Chit-Ananda) without ignorance is possible.

I don't see how there can be, given the starting point of the Inconscience. An unfolding of anything involved must necessarily be an evolution.

> (10) As for Krishna, he was God, who is everything consciously not excluding the Vijnana (the Supermind).

I have said nothing about that. 31 January 1934

*

> In a letter of November 1933 [*p. 639*], you wrote that the intervention of the hostile forces was no longer necessary. But it seems that they have come full force this year and driven several people away. That suggests that the hostile forces will remain for ever — or at least until the final transformation.

When I said "no more necessary", I did not mean that their action could not go on — I think I expressly said that if the sadhaks persisted in opening themselves to it, it would continue. There is a difference between the action of the hostile powers and the ordinary action of the lower nature. The latter of course goes on until it is changed but there is no necessity for it to take the form of hostile attacks and upsettings; it can be treated as a machinery that has to be set right and with the aid of the higher Light and Power can be set right. There are several who were once taken by hostile attacks who have now reached the point where they can follow this method, others are approaching it — some of course have always followed and never were attacked, at least in their mind and vital. But there are still many who are very far from it and so the action of the Hostiles continues. 14 October 1935

*

There can be no question that it is a most desirable thing that the hostile forces should be destroyed or ejected from the Asram atmosphere and from all hold on the lower vital and physical of the sadhaks — the sooner the better. For the moment they are still able to resist and to keep up the disharmony in this part of Nature. It is only when they do so no more that the capital difficulty in the general sadhana will be over. 9 May 1936

Retirement and Progress in Yoga

> Would not rejection of the problems of the lower vital be better done in retirement?

It is very doubtful. Our experience is that, generally, it does not succeed very well. Sometimes there is a great improvement so long as the person remains sequestered but it does not stand the test of again coming out into contact with others. Sometimes it has led to an exalted inner activity, occasionally sound but often too unsound, the sadhak in retirement losing in the latter case the power of discrimination between subjective formations and valid truths of fact (*X* and others). In other cases the result has been a complete failure (*Y*, *Z*). As a general rule we consider it safer at the very least to combine some activity of outer life with retirement if any is made. 2 December 1933

*

Mother does not at all approve of the idea of complete retirement. It does not bring the control, only an illusion of a control because the untoward causes are removed for a time. It is a control established while in contact with the outward things that is alone genuine. You must establish that from within by a fixed resolution and practice. Too much mixing and too much talk should be avoided, but a complete retirement is not the thing. It has not had the required result with anyone so far.
27 November 1936

Lack of Intensity in Sadhana

> I have been thinking again about the general sadhana in the Ashram, how the intenser attitude of sincerity in all would bring an earlier victory. Does such thinking about others bring any difficulty in one's sadhana? Is it better to stick to one's own sadhana?

No — it is very good — there are few who have that in any intensity — if there were more, it might hasten things. 27 June 1933

*

> How is it that there is so little intensity of devotion here? Is it because there is more insistence on controlling emotions or because of constant Sadhana and the integral movement?

It is true that devotion here is very insufficient — but these cannot be the reasons, for psychic emotion is not discouraged by us and the integral Sadhana is not integral without bhakti. And yet it is a fact that those who come here full of bhakti lose much of it after a time — with a few exceptions. I think it is because of the prevalence of a too positive mind and the habit of criticising everything from a quite external point of view which is rife in the atmosphere. 5 August 1933

*

> We have very little devotion and obedience compared to the disciples of Shankara and Buddha or the followers of old yogic disciplines, even though a greater discipline is needed because our aim is higher. This is perhaps due to the fact that you do not impose any discipline. Or perhaps there is a fundamental defect in our aspiration because of the western education many have had. I wonder if Shankara or Buddha or Mahavir would have allowed many of the things we do here.

They would not. All the causes you mention operate — perhaps the westernised atmosphere (even more than the education) of the present times is the strongest, but also the nature of the work to be done. 3 April 1934

*

> I feel that many have become "soft" after they come here. Is there something in the Yoga itself that makes them soft?

Nothing in the sadhana. It is because their desires had only been limited by poverty and, as soon as the poverty is removed, the desires come surging up. As for the self-imposed renunciation of desire which is of primary importance in this Yoga, only a few ever think of it. 13 June 1934

*

> If the Force cannot bring definite and lasting fruit without our individual endeavour, don't you think at least half the sadhaks here will remain in the mud for long if not for ever? Half of them don't seem to want to make any steady personal effort. They depend on the action of your Force alone.

That is why the Asram is what it is. Only those who are taking the Yoga seriously are making any progress. 17 November 1936

*

> How is it that people here become more soft than in ordinary life and a little hardship or discomfort becomes unbearable? Is it because they live a life of ease here doing no physical work?

What you have noticed is quite correct. It comes from a wrong movement which takes the rejection of asceticism as if it were a sanction for the indulgence of the body in whatever comfort it can get. The right principle is that one should be free from attachment and be able to do without things but also able to have them and use them without being bound or affected. Very few have taken it in that way — the vital has chosen to turn a deaf ear to anything said in that direction and to take as a right the comforts and conveniences given. What you have noted is one of the consequences. December 1936

Egoism among Sadhaks

> I have heard that some people here have gigantic egos, like *X* and *Y*, while some have fat egos, like *Z*. What sort of ego do I have?

Your ego is small and not gigantic — not tall and vehement and aggressive like *Y*'s, but squat and inertly obstinate — not fat, completely, nor thin, but short and roundish and grey in colour.

3 November 1935

*

> I looked up "squat" in the dictionary but could not guess which definition applied to my ego.

Squat = short in stature but broad and substantial, so difficult to get rid of.

> You write: "not fat, completely, nor thin, but short and roundish and grey in colour." What do all these symbols stand for?

Not tall and preeminent or flourishingly settled in self-fullness — roundish = plenty of it all the same

Grey = tamasic in tendency, therefore not aggressive, but obstinate in persistence. But these are not symbols, they are the temperamental figure of the ego. 5 November 1935

*

> Nowadays I find ego in every little act or feeling. Formerly I saw it only when I acted with desire or pride.

Perhaps because then you were looking for ego only in the form which people specially call egoism, i.e. pride, vanity, selfishness, insistence on vital satisfactions. But ego is of all kinds — and you are only just now finding it out.

> Half my being is trying hard to reject the sense of ego, while the ego itself colours all my actions. This contradiction creates an inner pain. Will the ego never be dissolved completely?

There is nothing to be troubled about. You ought rather to congratulate yourself that you have become conscious. Very few people in this Asram are. They are all ego-centric and they do not realise their ego-centricity. Even in their sadhana the I is always there, — *my* sadhana, *my* progress, *my* everything. The remedy is to think constantly of the Divine, not of oneself, to work, act, do sadhana for the Divine, — not to consider how this or that affects *me* personally, not claim anything, but to refer all to the Divine. It will take time to do that sincerely and thoroughly, but it is the proper way. 31 March 1936

*

> Many here seem to be proud of their surrender — even though they know that surrender and ego do not go together.

But who has got rid of ego in this Asram? To get rid of ego is as difficult as to make a complete surrender. 10 August 1936

Conversion, Realisation and Transformation

> Today the Mother spoke to me of "conversion of consciousness" as distinct from "transformation of physical nature".

> Pointing to me she said, as for "the conversion of consciousness, it is there". Did she mean, by implication, that all those who have gathered round Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have this "conversion of consciousness" — perhaps in varying degrees?

No. Those who come here have an aspiration and a possibility; something in their psychic being pushes and if they follow it, they will arrive; but that is not conversion. Conversion is a definite turning of the being away from lower things towards the Divine.

> Can it be further explained in terms of the psychic being and its relation to the instrumental (nature) being?

It is certainly the psychic being turning the nature definitively Godwards, but the transformation has still to be worked out in the nature.

> Or can it be said that whoever has some aspiration for the Light or Truth or God vaguely, has some sort of conversion of consciousness, for the reason that he has come to the Ashram and lives here?

No. Aspiration can lead hereafter to conversion; but aspiration is not conversion.

Mother spoke of three different things: conversion, the turning of the soul decisively towards the Divine, — inner realisation of the Divine, — transformation of the nature. The first two can happen swiftly and suddenly and once for all, the third always takes time and cannot be done at one stroke, in a moment. One may become aware of a rapid change in this or that detail of the transformation, but even this is a rapid result of a long working.

3 September 1937

Ashram Sadhaks and the Supramental Realisation

> One day, while I was thinking that I would have to fulfil certain conditions before I could be saved from Ignorance, a strong feeling came to me from you that I need not fulfil any

> condition, but that you would save me by a special Grace. Was there any truth to what I felt?

I certainly gave you no such message or promise as you describe. You may have picked up something that was in my atmosphere, but, once again, your mental transcription of it was wrong — and turned it into something quite different from the truth. It may or may not be, although no promise of the kind can be made at the present moment, that you or other sadhakas here or all will be brought through in the end by the divine grace in spite of the very serious difficulties created by your and their external being and the obstinate obscurities and resistance in its crooked human nature. But in any case, to say that "you need not fulfil any condition" is a flagrant error. It is the old mischievous suggestion of an inert passivity to all influences as the true surrender and, if accepted, would legitimate every wrong movement of the nature. First, certain conditions have to be fulfilled; afterwards, there will be room for the divine grace to act. 18 October 1928

*

> I have heard that sadhaks here will have perfect control over decay and death. I have some doubts about this. Could you say something about it?

It depends on the Supramental and on the Divine's will in the sadhak. All that can be said is that to conquer disease and death is part of the total physical perfection. But as to other matters nothing can be said as yet. 13 September 1933

*

> You wrote to X, "It is the first step and perhaps for some it may be sufficient, for we are not asking everybody to become supramental." Do you mean everybody in this Asram?

Yes. Only it does not mean that anybody here is debarred from the supramental consciousness or the physical transformation — if he wants it. It is not a question of possibility, but of the need and aspiration in the nature. 21 September 1934

Realisations by Sadhaks

> I have all but made up my mind to give up the sadhana. I find it very humiliating to be reminded every month that I am far from the cosmic consciousness. In the midst of all my troubles, I have lost faith. Do you think it is of any use to keep me here?

When you have got out of this attack, you will yourself recognise the emptiness of such a question. You have the Yogic capacity in you as your experiences show and it is not by going away from here that you will develop it.

I do not understand why it should be insulting to speak always of the cosmic consciousness and the necessity of its settling down. I mean by it the living in the sense of the cosmic Self and the experience of the cosmic forces. A certain number here have contact with that, very few have it as a constant realisation, none have it perfected and fixed in all their being. As for going above it there are grades in the cosmic consciousness and one can go above the cosmic mental and rise as far as the overmind. But that also is still the cosmic consciousness. 15 September 1934

*

> I sometimes wonder whether anyone here is attaining anything at all? Has anyone realised the Divine? Please don't ask me what I mean by the Divine.

Why shouldn't I ask? If you mean the Vedantic realisation, several have had it. Bhakti realisation also. If I were to publish the letters on sadhana experiences that have come to me, people would marvel and think that the Asram was packed full of great Yogis! Those who know something about Yoga would not mind about the dark periods, eclipses, hostile attacks, despairings, falls, for they know that these things happen to Yogis. Even the failures would have become Gurus, if I had allowed it, with circles of Shishyas! *X* did become one. *Y* of course. But all that does not count here, because what is a full realisation outside, is here only a faint beginning of siddhi. Here the test is transformation of the nature, psychic, spiritual, finally supramental. That and nothing else is what makes it so difficult. 20 May 1936

*

> Is it only for physical transformation that staying here is necessary? Otherwise sincere sadhana can be done elsewhere as well as here.

I don't suppose the later stages of the transformation including the physical would be possible elsewhere. In fact in those outside none of the three transformations seems to have begun. They are all preparing. Here there are at least a few who have started one or two of them. Only that does not show outside. The physical or external alone shows outside. 11 April 1937

*

> People here — the Toms, Dicks and Harrys, who would be nowhere beside *X* in the outside world and who would simply have rotted in the gutter if they hadn't found shelter here — even such people criticise him.

The quality of the sadhaks is so low? I should say there is a considerable amount of ability and capacity in the Asram. Only the standard demanded is higher than outside even in spiritual matters. There are half a dozen people here perhaps who live in the Brahman consciousness — outside they would make a big noise and be considered as great Yogis — here their condition is not known and in the Yoga it is regarded not as siddhi but only as a beginning. 12 July 1937

*

> What the deuce is "Brahman consciousness"? The same as cosmic consciousness? Does one come to that after your psychic and spiritual transformation?
>
> Is it something like seeing Brahman in everybody and everywhere or what? It is not spiritual realisation, I suppose, I mean realisation of Self? You see I am a nincompoop in this business. Please perorate a little.

Eternal Jehovah! you don't even know what Brahman is! You will next be asking me what Yoga is or what life is or what body is or what mind is or what sadhana is! No, sir, I am not proposing to teach an infant class the A-B-C of the elementary conceptions which are the basis of Yoga. There is *X* too who doesn't know what consciousness is, even!

Brahman, sir, is the name given by Indian philosophy since the beginning of time to the one Reality eternal and infinite which is the Self, the Divine, the All, the more than All, which would remain even if you and everybody and everything else in existence or imagining itself to be in existence vanished into blazes — even if this whole universe disappeared, Brahman would be safely there and nothing whatever lost. In fact, sir, you are Brahman and you are only pretending to be *Y*; when *Z* is translating *X*'s poetry into Bengali, it is really Brahman translating Brahman's Brahman into Brahman. When *X* asks me what consciousness is, it is really Brahman asking Brahman what Brahman is! There, sir, I hope you are satisfied now.

To be less drastic and refrain from making your head reel till it goes off your shoulders, I may say that a realisation of the Self is the beginning of Brahman realisation; — the Brahman consciousness — the Self in all and all in the Self etc. It is the basis of the spiritual realisation and therefore of the spiritual transformation; but one has to see it in all sorts of aspects and applications first and that I refuse to go into. If you want to know you have to read the *Arya*.

> Is living in that consciousness an ideal condition for receiving the supramental descent?

It is a necessary condition.

> I ask because I heard that no one here was prepared for this supramental descent.

Of course not, this realisation of the Self as all and the Divine as all is only the first step.

> Is that the height of realisation achieved here so far among sadhaks? What is the next step?

The next step is to get into contact with the higher planes above spiritual mind — for as soon as one gets into the spiritual Mind or Higher Mind, this realisation is possible.

> Now the big question is: Is the realisation of the Self a state of perpetual peace, joy and bliss?

If it is thoroughly established, it is one of *internal* peace, freedom, wideness, in the inner being.

> Is it a state surpassing all struggles, dualities and depressions?

All these things you mention become incidents in the external being, on the surface — but the inner being remains untouched by them.

> Are all troubles of the lower nature conquered finally — especially sex?

No, sir. But the inner being is not touched.

> Or is it that sex-desire rises up in the Yogis, but leaves them untouched, unscathed? No attraction for them? It must be so, otherwise how can they be called *siddhas*? No danger of a fall from the spiritual state?

It may be covered up in a way — so long as it is not established in all parts of the being. The old Yogis did not consider that necessary, because they wanted to walk off, not to change the being.

> Why do you call it a beginning only? What more do you want to do except perhaps physical transformation?

I want to effect the transformation of the whole nature (not only of the physical) — that's why.

> And lastly can you whisper to me the names of those lucky fellows, those "half a dozen people" [*p. 667*], so that I can have a practical knowledge of what that blessed thing — "the Brahman consciousness" — is like?

NO, SIR.

How can you have a practical knowledge of it by knowing who has it? You might just as well expect to have a practical knowledge of high mathematics by knowing that Einstein is a great mathematician. Queer ideas you have!

> Are they *A*? *B*? *C*? *D*? *E*? *F*? — but he can't be for he is a Brahma himself, so keeps himself secluded like Him, no?

??????? 18 July 1937

"Advanced Sadhaks"

X is an advanced sadhak? This word "advanced" has no sense, it merely feeds the egoism of those who apply it to themselves.

*

The Mother never speaks of advanced sadhaks — it is the sadhaks themselves who have invented the phrase. Whenever they used it in their letters to me, I have thrown ridicule on the phrase and said I have no knowledge of there being two classes in the Asram, one of advanced sadhaks and the other of non-advanced sadhaks. So the question about *X* does not arise. If a sadhak, whoever he may be, speaks or acts out of anger, rajasic violence or any other unYogic impulse, his speech or action is contrary to the spirit of the sadhana.

*

Yes, you should learn not to be perturbed by talk of this kind from whomsoever it proceeds; I think I have already tried to put you on your guard against listening to "advanced sadhaks" or taking these pronouncements of theirs as authoritative statements of the aims and conditions of the Yoga. Why this claim to be an advanced sadhak and what is the sense of it? it resolves itself into an egoistic assertion of superiority over others which is not justified so long as there *is* the egoism and the need of assertion — accompanied, as it always is, by a weakness and turbid imperfection which belie the claim of living in a superior consciousness to the "unadvanced" sadhaks. It is time these crudities disappeared from the Asram atmosphere. 3 February 1932

*

> Wouldn't it be best if people did not think of themselves as being more advanced than others? It is enough to know that we are on the right path.

Yes, the talk about advanced sadhaks is a thing I have always discouraged — but people go on because that appeals to the vital ego. 13 May 1935

*

> I understand your protesting against "great" or "big" sadhaks, but why against "advanced" sadhaks? Is it not a fact that some are more advanced than others? If we speak of *X* as an advanced sadhak, we don't mean anything else.

Advanced indeed! Pshaw! Because one is 3 inches ahead of another, you must make classes of advanced and non-advanced? Advanced has the same puffing egoistic resonance as "great" or "big". It leads to all sorts of stupidities — rajasic self-appreciating egoism in some, tamasic self-depreciating egoism in others, round-eyed wonderings why X, an advanced sadhak, one 3 inches ahead of Y, should stumble, tumble or fumble while Y, 3 inches behind X, still plods heavily and steadily on, etc. etc. Why, sir, the very idea in X that he is an advanced sadhak (like the Pharisee, "I thank thee, O Lord, that I am not as other unadvanced disciples",) would be enough to make him fumble, stumble and tumble. So no more of that, sir, no more of that. 25 September 1935

Discipline in the Ashram

Discipline Defined

What is discipline?

To act according to a standard of Truth or a rule or law of action (dharma) or in obedience to a superior authority or to the highest principles discovered by the reason and intelligent will and not according to one's own fancy, vital impulses and desires. In Yoga obedience to the Guru or to the Divine and the law of the Truth as declared by the Guru is the foundation of discipline. 12 June 1933

*

What is discipline and how does it apply here, in our Yoga?

It is not the discipline of Yoga, but the discipline of an organisation, the exterior material discipline one has to accept if one is to be part of an organisation. 9 July 1933

*

What is discipline?

To live and act under control or according to a standard of what is right — not to allow the vital or the physical to do whatever they like and not to let the mind run about according to its fancy without truth or order. Also to obey those who ought to be obeyed. July 1933

Need of Self-Discipline

In the outside world there is a mental and social control and also the absorption in other things. Here you are left alone with your own consciousness and have to replace the mental and outward control by an inner self-control of the spirit. 1 December 1933

*

If there was a perception of the difficulties in the adhar, it ought to have moved you to a more strenuous effort, a deeper call on the help and Grace. To indulge in a bout of gross material self-indulgence was a quite imbecile solution. It is true that the Grace is there for all who aspire and, however one may stumble, if there is a sincere repentance and a will to atone, there need be no cause for despair.

But I must remind you that that is only the individual aspect. There is here an Asram, a group of seekers of the Divine Truth with a collective existence and aim; a work is being done for the Divine against great difficulties and in the midst of a hostile and censorious world which is only too glad of any pretext for assailing it and, if possible, injuring its fair fame and success. A conduct like this deals a wound to the work and the collective effort towards a higher life. Your proposed escape from your own fall by suicide would not have been a solution and would only do a still greater injury to the divine Work which is, as much as individual realisation, our spiritual endeavour.

I trust that you are sincere in saying that these things are finished for ever. If you had not confessed, the Mother would have been obliged to deal severely with you; but as you have confessed, this lapse may be considered as annulled, provided it is never repeated. A greater frankness and sincerity in laying yourself open to the Mother will help you avoid such aberrations in future.

There is no reason why you should not succeed in your sadhana if, having seen the defects of your lower nature, you take a firm resolve in future and keep it to be more strict with yourself, more trustful in the Divine Grace, more sincerely open to the Mother. 10 September 1933

*

> Some [*personal*] rules I have been following — not reading newspapers, not eating outside, and so forth — now seem like mental dogmas.

Rules like these are intended to help the vital and physical to come under the discipline of sadhana and not get dispersed in fancies, impulses, self-indulgences; but they must be done simply, not with any sense of superiority or ascetic pride, but as a mere matter of course. It is true also that they can be made the occasion of a too great mental rigidity — as if they were things of supreme importance *in themselves* and not only a means. Put in their right place and done in the right spirit, they can be very helpful for their purpose. 8 May 1934

*

I have read your letter. What you write is true; *X* has said these things in order to help you and put you in the right way. A certain inner and outer discipline is necessary in order that one may grow into the spirit of the Yoga and the natural impulses of the vital cannot be a guide to action there. One has to perceive what one should or should not do and impose this discipline on oneself; for that *X*'s advice and guidance can be of great help to you. 20 October 1936

Importance of Obedience

> In regard to obedience, *X* told *Y*, in a depreciatory way, that it was not that important, that asking for permission to do things was not necessarily surrender, but often was hypocritical.
>
> It seems to me that one obeys rules because if one was to do the opposite, one would go out of your protection.

It is precisely that — one immediately goes out of the protection.

> As far as I can see, right action and right movement (after asking you what is right) are rather the first bases of sadhana.

Yes, quite right.

Please cast some light on this, so that I can explain it to *Y*.

It is a deficiency of psychic perception and spiritual discrimination that makes people speak like that and ignore the importance of obedience. It is the mind wanting to follow its own way of thinking and the vital seeking freedom for its desires which argue in this manner. If you do not follow the rules laid down by the spiritual guide or obey one who is leading you to the Divine, then what or whom are you to follow? Only the ideas of the individual mind and the desires of the vital: but these things never lead to siddhi in Yoga. The rules are laid down in order to guard against certain influences and their dangers and to keep a right atmosphere in the Asram favourable to spiritual development; the obedience is necessary so as to get away from one's own mind and vital and learn to follow the Truth.

8 June 1933

*

All your comments seem to rise from the fact that you object to discipline, rule and order. That seems to be the general mind of the Asram. Each must be allowed to follow his own inclination, convenience or "common sense". Those who insist on stemming the chaos of vital indiscipline and disorder are martinets like *X* or capricious and tyrannical like the Mother. October 1933

*

What most want is that things should be done according to their desire without check or reference. The talk of perfection is humbug. Perfection does not consist in everybody being a law to himself. Perfection comes by renunciation of desires and surrender to a higher Will. 5 August 1934

Rules in the Life of the Ashram

No Fixed Rules

The Asram, not being a public institution, has no prospectus or fixed set of rules. It is directed by the Mother according to what she sees to be necessary for each individual and for the work as a whole.
19 March 1930

*

> I request you to furnish me with the rules and regulations necessary for becoming a member of the Ashram.

Tell him that there are no public rules and regulations for the Asram, as it is not a public institution.[1] Only some of Sri Aurobindo's disciples who are considered ready or called to the Asram life are admitted. At present however no admissions are being made, as the accommodation capacity of the Asram is exhausted and there is no possibility just now of expanding it.
25 December 1934

*

What seems to me of more importance is to try to explain how things are worked out here. Indeed very few are the people who understand it and still fewer those who realise it.

There has never been, at any time, a mental plan, a fixed programme or an organisation decided beforehand. The whole thing has taken birth, grown and developed as a living being by a movement of consciousness (Chit-tapas) constantly maintained, increased and fortified. As the Conscious Force descends in matter and radiates, it seeks for fit instruments to express and manifest it. It goes without saying that the more the instrument is open, receptive and plastic, the better are the results. The two obstacles that stand in the way of a smooth and harmonious working in and through the sadhaks are:

---

[1] *Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the correspondent. — Ed.*

(1) the preconceived ideas and mental constructions which block the way to the influence and the working of the conscious force;

(2) the preferences and impulses of the vital which distort and falsify the expression.

Both these things are the natural output of the ego. Without the interference of these two elements my physical intervention would not be necessary.

You are quite right when you do not believe in "Mother likes", "Mother dislikes": it is quite a childish interpretation.

There is a clear precise perception of the Force and the Consciousness at work, and whenever this Force gets distorted or the Consciousness is obscured in its action, I have to interfere and rectify the movement. In most cases things are mixed up and there again I have to intervene to separate the distorted transcription from the pure one.

Otherwise a great freedom of action is left to all, because the Conscious Force can express itself in innumerable ways and for the perfection and integrality of the manifestation no ways are to be *a priori* excluded; a trial is very often given before the selection is made. 22 August 1939

The Ashram's Rules and Regulations

> I would like to know precisely which people I should ask to read the Rules and Regulations of the Asram[2] and sign for them?

The members of the Asram. For the others you can submit the names — long resident visitors in the Asram itself would usually have to see the rules e.g. X. 12 April 1933

---

[2] *The reference is to a typed set of "Rules and Regulations of the Asram", issued in 1933 but incorporating several rules written earlier. — Ed.*

General Rules and Individual Natures

It is a little difficult from the wider spiritual outlook to answer your question in the way you want and every mental being wants, with a trenchant "Thou shalt" or "Thou shalt not", especially when the "thou" is meant to cover "all". For while there is an identity of essential aim, while there are general broad lines of endeavour, yet there is not in detail one common set of rules in inner things that can apply to all seekers. You ask "Is such and such a thing harmful?" But what is harmful to one may be helpful to another, — what is helpful at a certain stage may cease to be helpful at another, — what is harmful under certain conditions is helpful under other conditions, — what is done in a certain spirit may be disastrous, the same thing done in a quite different spirit would be innocuous or even beneficial. I asked the Mother indeed what she would say to your question about pleasures and social expansiveness (put as a general question) and she answered, "Impossible to say like that; it depends on the spirit in which it is done." So there are so many things: the spirit, the circumstances, the person, the need and cast of the nature, the stage. That is why it is said so often that the Guru must deal with each disciple according to his separate nature and accordingly guide his sadhana; even if it is the same line of sadhana for all, yet at every point for each it differs. That also is the reason why we say the Divine's way cannot be understood by the mind, — because the mind acts according to hard and fast rules and standards, while the spirit sees the truth of all and the truth of each and acts variously according to its own comprehensive and complex vision. That also is why we say that no one can understand by his personal mental judgment the Mother's actions and reasons for action; it can only be understood by entering into the larger consciousness from which she sees things and acts upon them. That is baffling to the mind because it loses its small measures, but it is the truth of the matter.

To come down to hard facts and it may make the dictum a little more comprehensible. You speak of retirement and you say that if it is good why not impose it — you couple together *X*, *Y*, *Z*, *A*, *B*, *C*! Well, take that last name, *C*, and add to it *D* for he also "retired" and went headlong for an intense and solitary sadhana. *X* and *Y* profited by their seclusion, what happened to *C* and *D*? We forbade *D* to retire, — he was always wanting to give up work, withdraw from all intercourse and spend all his time in meditation; but he did it as much as he could — result, collapse. *C* never asked permission and I cannot say what his retirement was like, but I hear he boasted that by his intense sadhana he had conquered sex not only for himself but all the sadhaks! He had to leave the Asram owing to his unconquerable attachment to his wife and child and he is there living the family life and has produced another child — what a success for retirement. Where the retirement is helpful and fits the mind or the nature, we approve it, but in the face of these results how can you expect us to follow what the mind calls a consistent course and impose it as the right thing on everybody? You have spoken of your singing. You know well that we approve of it and I have constantly stressed its necessity for you as well as that of your poetry. But the Mother absolutely forbade *E*'s singing? To music for some again she is indifferent or discourages it, for others she approves as for *F*, *G* and others. For some time she encouraged the concerts, afterwards she stopped them. You drew from the prohibition to *E* and the stopping of the concerts that Mother did not like music or did not like Indian music or considered music bad for sadhana and all sorts of strange mental reasons like that. Mother prohibited *E* because while music was good for you, it was spiritually poison to *E* — the moment he began to think of it and of audiences, all the vulgarity and unspirituality in his nature rose to the surface. You can see what he is doing with it now! So again with the concerts — though in a different way — she stopped them because she had seen that wrong forces were coming into their atmosphere which had nothing to do with the music in itself; her motives were not mental. It was for similar reasons that she drew back from big public displays like Udayshankar's. On the other hand she favoured and herself planned the exhibition of paintings at the Town Hall. She was not eager for you to have your big audiences for your singing because she found the atmosphere full of mixed forces and found too you had afterwards usually a depression; but she has always approved of your music in itself done privately or before a small audience. If you consider then, you will see that here there is no mental rule, but in each case the guidance is determined by spiritual reasons which are of a flexible character and look only at what in each case are the spiritual conditions, results, possibilities. There is no other consideration, no rule. Music, painting, poetry and many other activities which are of the mind and vital can be used as part of spiritual development or of the work and for a spiritual purpose — "it depends on the spirit in which they are done."

That being established, that these things depend on the spirit, the nature of the person, its needs, the conditions and circumstances, I will come to your special question about pleasure and especially the pleasure in society of an expansive vital nature.

P.S. Of course there is a category of things that have to be eschewed altogether and of things that have to be followed by all, but I am speaking of the large number that do not fall into the two categories. 24 October 1936

*

No, there is no obligation of gloom, harshness, austerity or lonely grandeur in this Yoga. If I am living in my room, it is not out of a passion for solitude, and it would be ridiculous to put forward this purely external circumstance — or *X*'s withdrawnness which is a personal necessity of his sadhana — as if it were the obligatory sign of a high advance in the Yoga or solitude the aim; these are simply incidents which none is called on to imitate. So you need not be anxious; solitude is not demanded of you, for an ascetic dryness of isolated loneliness cannot be your spiritual destiny since it is not consonant with your swabhava which is made for joy, largeness, expansion, a comprehensive movement of the life-force. And, as for stern gravity and the majesty of a speechless and smileless face, your transformation into that would be terrifying to think of! I may remind you that the Mother and myself always recommended to you a sunlit and cheerful progress as the best; if we were inclined to complain of anything in you — which we are not, knowing that one does not choose one's difficulties, — it would not be that you have too much gaiety but that you are not always as gay and cheerful as we would like you to be! The storm, cloud, difficulty, suffering come, but they are no part of the Yogic idea; they belong to the Nature that is now, not to the divine Nature that is to be.

Disregarding the Rules of the Ashram

> Is it a fact that some sadhaks enjoy the special privilege of having obtained either your or the Mother's sanction for eating meat or fish whenever they like?

No such sanction or privilege has been obtained by anybody from the Mother.

> If so, can they cook these things in their residential quarters?

Certainly not, that is strictly forbidden.

> Or does the permission apply only to their going out in town to eat these things?

When they do it outside in the town, they are taking a liberty — no liberty has been granted to them.

> If no such sanction has ever been given, then how far are the principles of the Asram violated if a local well-wisher or a visitor to the Asram invites us to such feasts? Do they do the right thing by inviting us?

No, they don't do the right thing — if they know of the rule of the Asram.

> Those sadhaks who wilfully indulge this vital desire, how do they stand in your estimation? Are they to be classed as especially progressed souls for whom no such bondage to rules and regulations apply?

Not in the least — any such claim is obvious bunkum.

> When such sadhaks lead others to believe that they are above the Asram rules, does it not do harm to their own Buddhahood? Then what is the right attitude to take up?

That raises the general question of disregard of the rules of the Asram or of the standards of action in Yoga. As such disregard is widespread and common among the sadhaks, if dealt with radically, it could entail a Pride's purge or Communist purification which would leave in the Asram only a greatly reduced number of inmates. Certain things cannot be tolerated especially if done in the Asram. Apart from that we have been waiting for something to develop inwardly in individual sadhaks which will bring about a change. If it doesn't — well, I suppose a time will come or is coming *when everybody will have to choose*.

I am not aware that there are any Buddhas in the Asram.

The right attitude is to keep strictly oneself to the truth and to affirm it quietly whenever it is necessary to do so.

> Would turning down such invitations amount to a breach of etiquette or hurting the feelings of the person inviting?

That too is rubbish. Etiquette cannot take precedence over a rule of life proper to the Asram or the Yoga. 10 November 1938

No Politics in the Ashram

It is supposed that all who come here come for the spiritual life and aspire to realise the Divine Truth, leaving all else behind them. If you have come here for the spiritual life, you have nothing to do with what others may be doing in the political field which you have left behind you. It is no part of your dharma.

*

The rule for permanent residents of the Asram is that they must abstain from political activities altogether. Although this rule is not rigidly imposed on disciples at a distance, yet it is expected that they should not do anything which would compromise the Asram, and, as a matter of fact, no disciple of Sri Aurobindo is at present participating in political agitation.

It is also the rule for permanent members of the Asram that they should put their property at the disposal of the Mother, and they do not spend anything of it for other purposes except with the sanction previously given by her. But as you are not a permanent member, this rule does not apply to you, and the Mother cannot undertake to direct you as to the persons and the purposes to which you should give or refuse financial assistance. As a rule we never interfere in the personal lives or affairs of others than whole-time sadhaks who have given up everything else for the spiritual life.

I would suggest that the difficulty about giving shelter to Congressmen arises only when there is an arrival of a batch of Salt Law Satyagrahis sent to break the Law. If such a batch arrives at your place and you give them shelter, then, as the law is now being administered, you run the risk of going to jail. It seems to me that, not being yourself a Satyagrahi, you are not bound to give this help or run this risk. Nothing prevents you from receiving a friend who is a Congressman under other circumstances.

The questions you put about financial help to Khaddar and Prohibition and to the National school, must be decided by yourself, I think. I will only ask you to note what I have written in the first paragraph of the letter. 24 May 1930

*

Is there no likelihood of any political work being done by us?

Not any! What is called politics is too rajasic, mixed and muddied with all sorts of egoistic motives. Our way is the pressure of the spirit upon the earth consciousness to change.

25 July 1933

*

What will be the use of a transformed vital in a new manifestation if there is nothing active like politics?

But surely politics is not the only activity possible for the vital — there are hundreds of others. Whenever there is something to be produced, created, organised, achieved, conquered, it is the vital that is indispensable.
26 July 1933

*

> Is politics necessary for some people here? We would seem to have sufficient difficulties in sadhana without adding that. Why do people take mental interest in something not likely to help the divine manifestation unless it is given as a work to some?

No, it is not given as a work to anybody. People go on with that because it is a mental interest or habit they do not like giving up, it is like the vital habit of tea-drinking or anything else of the kind. Politics is not only not given as a work but the discussion of politics is discouraged as much as possible.
30 November 1933

*

A member of the Asram cannot belong to a political body or do political work. He is also not supposed to do any social propaganda. Educational work like the Gurukula is different; it can be done with the Mother's permission.
circa September 1938

*

I don't understand how *X* and others who are there are continuing to make proposals like these when I have clearly forbidden any publicity of the kind. You must make it perfectly and finally clear to them that the Asram is a non-political institution as well as non-sectarian and that therefore there can be no public commitment by its members and they cannot take any official position in institutions like this nor can their names be signed to any document involving a breach of this principle. Their proposals therefore cannot be accepted by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Whatever sympathy, support and guidance they receive from you or from anybody here must be personal and given behind the scenes. Sri Aurobindo has sometimes made public utterances or taken publicly a political position, but that was on his own personal account and his action did not involve the Asram. His name also must not be published in this connection. They must be satisfied with the knowledge that his sympathy is entirely with your objects and that his spiritual force will be behind your work, but this must not be made public.

14 April 1947

Avoidance of Speech and Writing about Ashram Life

I do not know why you said all you did to Miss Maitland about the British police. We do not care in the least about the matter, and we have no intention of making any move to get rid of them.

Farther, you must try to remember that this Asram is not concerned with politics and the members are expected not to talk politics with people from outside like Miss Maitland. She came here from an interest in Yoga and is not in the least interested in politics. If you begin to talk to her about the freedom of India and the misdeeds of the British Government, she will inevitably think in the end that the Consul was right and the Asram is full of revolutionaries under the garb of Yoga. It is surprising that the members of this Asram seem always unable to use discretion in their speech or measure its consequences or understand how easily false impressions are created.

Finally, those who see Miss Maitland are expected not to quarrel or dispute with her about her views or mental impressions about India. She is returning soon to England and they can surely have patience for this short time and maintain harmony and good feeling in their relations with her. 1929

*

> I am sending herewith a letter from a friend. Can I let him know some details about the Ashram?

It is an express rule of the Asram not to give inner information of the Asram life to people outside. If the correspondent is a seeker after Yoga (which does not seem to be the case here) he can be told general things about the Yoga (not anything personal to the sadhaks or to Sri Aurobindo or the Mother).

19 November 1931

*

It is not very advisable to discuss either myself or the Asram or spiritual things with hostile minds or unbelievers. These discussions usually bring on the sadhak a stress of the opposing atmosphere and cannot be helpful to his progress. Reserve is the best attitude; one need not be concerned to dispel their bad will or their ignorance. 13 September 1932

*

Your mistake was to say something which implied a reflection on a fellow-sadhak to a visitor. That should not be done when it is unnecessary, especially if the Mother's name is brought in. If some sadhak of the Asram says things to a visitor against us or the Asram or the Yoga, for instance, and the visitor comes to you with a report of it, it is necessary to set right the wrong impression made or any perplexity he may feel, or other reasons may arise. But here there was no necessity. Your explanation of *X*'s goings out from the Asram was in fact not correct, for he had wired refusal to go and had no wish to go and it was not out of a desire to attend a relative's marriage that he went; but even if it had been correct, the statement should not have been made. The internal affairs of the Asram and the sadhaks should not be spoken of — unless it cannot be avoided — to visitors or persons from outside.

There is no reason why you should stop receiving visits; you have the Mother's approval and it is helpful. But we would wish you to avoid anything which might be interpreted as reflections or personal judgments on other sadhaks or anything which can be interpreted as that; you see for yourself what reactions and bad currents any indiscretion of that kind can create.

Guidelines for Writing about the Ashram

It is not necessary to answer everything that appears in the newspapers. Nor is it advisable to take the outside public into confidence as to what is or is not going on in the Asram. It is only in exceptional cases that an answer is called for.

*

Here is an article by *X* (with some necessary corrections).

I have glanced over your monster. He will have to be beheaded and his tail cut off. Beheaded because Mother has put a prohibition on publication of her name and what she has written. The *Conversations* are for private circulation, the *Prayers* only for disciples and those who are actively interested in spiritual experience. This rule has been hammered into *Y* and others; you also must fix it in your cerebellum for the future. The tail will have to be docked for a reason regarding myself. Your reason for including it shows a harrowing incomprehension of the purpose of these things. The object of such special issues[3] is not to exhibit me to the public and show them all sides of me, i.e. to make me go through all my possible performances on a public stage. The object is to make the reading public better acquainted with the nature of this Yoga and the principle of what is being done in the Asram. The private matters of the Asram itself are *not* for the public — at most only so much as the public can see. *A fortiori* anything personal and private about me is also taboo. I come in only so far as it is necessary for the public to know my thought and what I stand for. You will notice that my life itself is so written as to give only the grey precise surface facts, nothing more. All propensity to make me figure in the big Barnum circus of journalistic "features" along with or in competition with Joe Louis the prize-fighter, Douglas Fairbanks, H. G. Wells, King George and Queen Mary, Haile Selassie, Hobbs, Hitler, Jack the Ripper (or any modern substitute of his) and Mussolini should be strictly banished from the mentality for evermore and the day after. 24 September 1935

---

[3] *Special issues of daily or weekly periodicals dealing with Sri Aurobindo and his work. — Ed.*

*

> I cannot understand how some people here think that a few articles in magazines help the Mother's work. Do such articles help to remove the hostile impressions in people's minds which hamper the work or do they create interest among rich people and induce them to offer some money to help?

Up to now it has not. It has only brought useless letters and people wanting to "join" the Asram to "study" here. There is no specific utility in the publications, but only a sort of counteraction to false ideas and rumours about the Asram and a vague general effect on the public mind. I allow it not because it has any central value for the work, but there is in the play of forces a tendency towards pressure for a more favourable attitude towards the Asram in Pondicherry and elsewhere and some measure of respect in Europe also and this is helpful to a certain extent. Especially it relieves me from the necessity of putting out forces constantly to combat the possibility of hostile attacks from outside threatening the security of the work. The result is therefore rather defensive up till now than something positive — but I cannot say it is of no use at all.

8 October 1935

*

I shall see your article and decide. I fear the first part of it is not admissible. The Mother always insists on great reserve in writing publicly about the Asram, especially if it is done by inmates or sadhaks. 25 November 1935

*

> Asked by the *Indian Review*, I sent them an article entitled "Socialism and the Indian Ideal". They are asking for permission to print it in their review as well as in booklet form. Can the permission be given?

I think I had better make it clear once for all that I do not approve of the publication of articles on controversial political subjects by members of the Asram. It involves the Asram and can prejudice the work of the Mother by raising quite uselessly unnecessary opposition and prejudice of which there is already more than enough. From a deeper point of view it pulls down the work to a lower region of mental and vital forces and the methods current on that lower plane. The work we have to do does *not* belong to that plane and cannot be done by current methods. It can only be done by rising to a higher spiritual plane and working silently from there on the forces in action so as to prepare a favourable field for the growth of the true consciousness and the true life-action. So long as that is not done, to engage in any activity which means opposition and struggle on the lower plane or to resort to its methods can only put it at a disadvantage and imperil its future. It is from the higher levels that things have to be worked out before the lower can be ready.

Your article is not at all conclusive except to people who are already disposed to be of the same way of thinking. It has besides the appearance of preaching a sort of spiritualised individualism and capitalism, but that is no more the object of our work than the "spiritual communism" which Motilal put into it. To allow that to pass as the economic gospel of this Yoga would not do at all. In the Gita I only explain the spiritual sense of the *cāturvarṇya*; I do not put that forward as my own economic or social teaching. Our aim is to rise to a higher spiritual consciousness and to create from there — to drag in mental forms from the present or past society could only spoil or hamper the purity and freedom of the future spiritual working.

29 September 1938

*

> It is because I thought I might serve you through such an article — a personal article I mean, the only type I feel free in — that I accepted the invitation to contribute something to *Asia*.

Well, what I am considering is just this, whether it would not be wiser, as far as concerns England or America, to start impersonally with the philosophical side and the side of the Yoga, and leave the person a little behind the scene for the present, until people there are ready as individuals for the personal touch; that is the course we have been following up to now. In India it is different, for here there is another kind of general mentality and there is the tradition of the Guru and the Shishya. May 1943

No Propaganda or Proselytism

It is a rule of the Asram that resident sadhaks shall not engage in any kind of public or propagandist activity political, social or religious; it is only our special permission which could dispense any member of the Asram from conformity to this rule. The Asram exists solely for Yoga and for a purely spiritual purpose; it is not a political or social or religious institution and it abstains from all these activities, this abstention is necessary for its existence. If any member engages in them, it involves the Asram itself and gives it the appearance of entering into activities which are not proper to it, and if any such impression of that kind is created, it may have serious consequences.

It appears that you have been engaging without our permission or authorisation in public activities of various kinds for some time past. This must cease. If you intend to carry them on any farther, you must leave the Asram and go outside; you cannot be allowed to continue them from the Asram and as a member.

*

You must not write to all these people encouraging them in the idea of coming here. It is only selected people who can come here. If anybody is encouraged, there would before long be 10,000 instead of 120 — and it would no longer be an Asram.
14 April 1933

*

There is no necessity for a society for the translation of the books. I have given my books outside always so that the Asram should not be entangled in these things and there should be no appearance of a propaganda inspired by me. 14 May 1933

*

> How far does the arrival of well-known people justify the flutter it causes? Is it a sign that the Truth is spreading?

No, not at all. Well-known or unknown has absolutely no importance from the spiritual point of view. It is simply the propagandist spirit; they think and say "O if Kalelkar comes, the whole of Gujarat will be ours" — as if we were a party or a church or religion seeking adherents or proselytes. One man who earnestly pursues the Yoga is of more value than a thousand well-known men. 16 January 1934

*

> I think there is nothing solid about all these magazine articles — a temporary value.

There is no value at all in these things — people read and forget. As for propaganda I have seen that it is perfectly useless for us — if there is any effect, it is a very trifling and paltry effect not worth the trouble. If the Truth has to spread itself, it will do it of its own motion; these things are unnecessary.

5 September 1934

*

It may be said generally that to be overanxious to pull people, especially very young people, into the sadhana is not wise. The sadhak who comes to this Yoga must have a real call, and even with the real call the way is often difficult enough. But when one pulls people in in a spirit of enthusiastic propagandism, the danger is of lighting an imitative and unreal fire, not the true Agni, or else a short-lived fire which cannot last and is submerged by the uprush of the vital waves. This is especially so with young people who are plastic and easily caught hold of by ideas and communicated feelings not their own — afterwards the vital rises with its unsatisfied demands and they are swung between two contrary forces or rapidly yield to the strong pull of the ordinary life and action and satisfaction of desire which is the natural bent of adolescence. Or else the unfit *ādhāra* tends to suffer under the stress of a call for which it was not ready, or at least not yet ready. When one has the real thing in oneself, one goes through and finally takes the full way of sadhana, but it is only a minority that does so. It is better to receive only people who come of themselves and of these only those in whom the call is genuinely their own and persistent. 6 May 1935

*

It is true that there is in most people here this running after those who come from outside especially if they are well-known or distinguished. It is a common weakness of human nature and, like other weaknesses of human nature, the sadhaks seem not inclined to get rid of it. It is because they do not live sufficiently within, so the vital gets excited or attracted when something important or somebody important (or considered so) comes in from outside. 29 November 1935

*

No, *X* should not write to his friends to come here. That would not only be propaganda which we must avoid but done like that it would create a conflict and turmoil — and conflict and turmoil are the wrong atmosphere for the Truth to grow in. It has been the great mistake of schools and religions to fight for the possession of men's minds — that we must not do. We can protect ourselves by spiritual means from attacks from outside, but not enter into mental or outward conflict with others. If his friends are meant to come here, it must happen otherwise.
30 March 1936

*

What Tagore or others think or say does not matter very much after all as we do not depend on them for our work but on the Divine Will only. So many have said and thought all sorts of things (people outside) about and against us, that has never affected either us or our work in the least; it is of a very minor importance. 7 March 1937

*

> I am sure you have read the eulogies showered upon Duraiswami on his retirement and enjoyed them immensely, at the same time feeling proud of him and saying, "Ha, ha, here is the fruit of my Force!" It is indeed a great pleasure to see the prestige of the Asram elevated by at least one man, though I suppose you don't give a damn about prestige.

Queer idea all you fellows seem to have of the "prestige" of the Asram. The prestige of an institution claiming to be a centre of spirituality lies in its spirituality, not in newspaper columns or famous people. Is it because of this mundane view of life and of the Asram held by the sadhaks that this Asram is not yet the centre of spirituality it set out to be?

> I want to see how far Duraiswami's character has been changed and moulded by the Force.

Lord, man, it's not for changing or moulding character that this Asram exists. It is for moulding spirituality and transforming the *consciousness*. You may say it doesn't seem to be successful enough on that line, but that is its object.

> I suspect, however, that you are closing in your Supramental net and bringing in all the outside fish!

Good Lord, no! I should be very much embarrassed if all the outside fish insisted on coming inside.

> What about *X*? When do you propose to catch him? . . . It would be a great enrichment of your Fishery. We are all watching with interest and eagerness that big operation of yours. But I don't think you will succeed till your Supramental comes to the field in full-fledged colours, what?

What big operation? There is no operation; I am not trying to hale in *X* as a big fish. I am not trying to catch him or bring him in. If he comes into the true spiritual life it will be a big thing for him, no doubt, but to the work it means only a ripple more or less in the atmosphere. Kindly consider how many people big in their own eyes have come and gone (*Y*, *Z*, *A* to speak of no others) and has the work stopped by their departure or the Asram ceased to grow? Do you really think that the success or failure of the work we have undertaken depends on the presence or absence of *X*? or on my hauling him in or letting him go? It is of importance only for the soul of *X* — nothing else.

Your image of the Fishery is quite out of place; I fish for no one; people are not hauled or called here, they come of themselves by the psychic instinct. Especially, I don't fish for big and famous and successful men. Such fellows may be mentally or vitally big, but they are usually quite contented with that kind of bigness and do not want spiritual things, or, if they do, their bigness stands in their way rather than helps them. The fishing for them is *X*'s idea — he wanted to catch hold of Subhas Bose, Sarat Chatterji, now Lila Desai etc. etc., but they would have been exceedingly troublesome sadhaks, if they ever really dreamed of anything of the kind. All these are ordinary ignorant ideas; the Spirit cares not a damn for fame, success or bigness in those who come to it. People have a strange idea that Mother and myself are eager to get people as disciples and if anyone goes away, especially a "big" balloon with all its gas in it, it is a great blow, — a terrible defeat, — a dreadful catastrophe and cataclysm for us. Many even think that their being here is a great favour done to us for which we are not sufficiently grateful. All that is rubbish. 30 June 1938

*

> Is it not natural for us to feel proud of the praises bestowed on Duraiswami or feel a little "embarrassed" when things are said against *X*?

If the praise and blame of ignorant people is to be our standard, then we may say good-bye to the spiritual consciousness. If the

Mother and I had cared for praise or blame, we would have been crushed long ago. It is only recently that the Asram has got "prestige" — before it was the target for an almost universal criticism, not to speak of the filthiest attacks. 2 July 1938

The Ashram and Religion

A Way, Not a Religion

I have no time to read books usually. I seldom had and none at all now. I have had no inspirations from the sadhana of Bejoy Goswami, though a good deal at one time from Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. My remarks simply meant that I regard the spiritual history of mankind and especially of India as a constant development of a divine purpose, not a book that is closed, the lines of which have to be constantly repeated. Even the Upanishads and the Gita were not final though everything may be there in seed. In this development the recent spiritual history of India is a very important stage and the names I mentioned had a special prominence in my thought at the time — they seemed to me to indicate the lines from which the future spiritual development had most directly to proceed, not staying but passing on. I do not know that I would put my meaning exactly in the language you suggest. I may say that it is far from my purpose to propagate any religion new or old for humanity in the future. A way to be opened that is still blocked, not a religion to be founded, is my conception of the matter. 18 August 1935

Islam, Hinduism, and the Integral Yoga

> I want to do something to work for Islamic ideals here. I have a strong desire to do this, but somehow it cuts me off very much from the Ashram atmosphere and sadhana.

As to what you say about Islamic ideals, you should remember that whatever is necessary to keep from the past as materials for the future, will *of itself* and *automatically* be taken into the new creation when things are ready and the full Light and Power at work. It is not necessary for anybody to represent or stand for Islamic ideals or for Hindu or Christian ideals; if anybody here thinks he must stand for one or other of these things, he is making a mistake and is likely to create unnecessary narrowness, clash and opposition. There is no opposition or clash between them in spiritual experience; it is only the external human mind that mistakenly puts them against each other. What we are here to make is a new creation in which there is a larger reconciling Truth than anything that went before in the past; but what will reconcile and create anew is the Power, the Light, the Knowledge that comes from above. The important thing therefore is to prepare yourself for that Power, Light and Knowledge; it is only when that descends that all will be done rightly. Nothing can be done rightly by the individual working without the Light and the Knowledge. 14 January 1932

*

> I want to ask if there is any likelihood of a fight between the Hindus and Mahomedans in India, and if the forces are nearly equal on both sides or one side is superior to the other.

It is to be hoped that in time the present mentality will pass away and both communities learn to live as children of the same Mother. If they fight, neither are likely to gain but both to lose, even perhaps giving an opening to a third party as has happened before in their history.

> I also want to ask if Mahomedanism will retain its present form and terms in the future. At present its only strength and faith is in the most orthodox section, which does not and cannot change even a bit; for the least change would mean the end of its formation, and in that it has sufficient force and faith. What happens under such circumstances? Can it have a place in the supramental creation?

There is no place for rigid orthodoxy, whether Hindu, Mahomedan or Christian in the future. Those who cling to it, lose hold on life and go under — as has been shown by the fate of the Hindus in India and of the orthodox Mahomedan countries all over the world. It is only where there has been an opening to new light and inevitable change that strength is returning as in Turkey and Persia. In the supramental creation fundamental truth will always find a place; but orthodoxy means a clinging to narrow limitations, and limitations of that kind cannot exist in the supramental creation. All that is permanently true will be taken up into the creation of the future. 23 February 1932

*

> I wish that Muslims might come here from outside and keep a more constant contact. It would create a nice atmosphere here. After all, it seems improbable that all the twelve crores of Mahomedans should be left quite out of contact with the Yoga.

These things that rise in you are certainly desires of the physical vital or else ideas of the physical mind giving a mental shape to desires. The sadhak has to see them when they rise and note them for what they are, but not allow them to move him to action.

If one is meant to be an intermediary between the Yogic Truth that is descending here and some part of the outside world, e.g. the Mahomedan world, it is necessary first that he should get a calm and complete balance, a full foundation in the higher consciousness and the permanent Light in his being, — otherwise he will not be able to do his work. If he tries before he is ready, he will fail — therefore let there be nothing done that is premature. 16 November 1932

*

> You write: “If one is meant to be an intermediary between the Yogic Truth and . . . the Mahomedan world”. I wish to ask if the Mahomedan world is such a separate thing here. For this phrase cannot be put thus: “between the Yogic Truth and the Hindu world”.

Of course it can — the orthodox Hindu world is quite separate, all the outside world is separate, until the Light that is growing here makes the connection.

> I thought the attitude towards Mahomedans lay in the minds of the people here because of a subconscious influence and I took this to be an ignorance that can be overlooked for the time being. But if Sri Aurobindo also writes like this, I wish to know if the Mahomedan world is a separate block to be dealt with as one deals with strangers, foreigners, almost enemies.
>
> I wish also to ask this: The Mother has often issued notices saying, "When a man comes here, he ceases to be a Hindu or a Mahomedan etc." Though there is sufficient pressure on the Mahomedans to cease to be Mahomedan, does anybody cease to be a Hindu? Is the idea even believed by any Hindu sadhak? So certain is everybody of its not being true that there is hardly any hope of such a thought ever entering the mind. Under these circumstances, God alone knows if it is right or sensible for me to live on and see the ruin without doing anything to bring in the Mahomedan influence here. When I surrendered, I had not ceased to be a Mahomedan as happened afterwards.

If there is anybody in this Asram who is a Hindu sectarian hating Mahomedans and not opening to the Light in which all can overcome their limitations and in which all can be fulfilled (each religion or way of approaching the Divine contributing its own element of the truth, but all fused together and surpassed), then that Hindu sectarian is not a completely surrendered disciple of Sri Aurobindo. By his narrowness and hatred of others he is bringing an element of falsehood into the work that is being done here.

When I spoke of the outside world, I meant all outside, including the Hindus and Christians and everyone else, all who have not yet accepted the greater Light that is coming. If this Asram were here only to serve Hinduism I would not be in it and the Mother who was never a Hindu would not be in it.

What is being done here is the preparation of a Truth which includes all other Truth but is limited to no single religion or creed, and this preparation has to be done apart and in silence until things are ready. It is in that sense that I speak of the rest of the world and all its component parts as being the outside world — not that there was nothing to be done or no connection to be made; but these things are to be done in their own proper time.

Do you tell me that all the people here show the spirit you speak of against the Mahomedans or are you generalising from particular cases? If it is as you say, I am quite ready to intervene to put a stop to it. For such a spirit would be entirely opposed to the Truth I am here to manifest.

> When I came here in the beginning, *X* told me that Sri Aurobindo said: "Mahomedanism was all right for the people of Arabia and those countries. I don't see why it should have come to India." Had Mahomedanism no message for India? Is this a teaching of the Ashram?

No, certainly not; it is a sheer misinterpretation of my views. I have written clearly that the coming of so many religions to India was part of her spiritual destiny and a great advantage for the work to be done.

17 November 1932

*

> If the sadhaks here remain Hindus, which in the end turns out to be their very aim and zest, what an utter fool I would be to allow myself to be changed and trust myself to be worked upon thus.
>
> Again, when Sri Aurobindo writes about what he is going to manifest here, I wonder why such a great thing is partial. Why should that creation be formed in such a way as to exclude Mahomedans from it and put on them an all-round pressure which is experienced by nobody else. To give up one's past and forget it or to try not to think about it is one thing; to go through the humiliation of taking up the way of others is most difficult, almost shameful, and I have lost faith in it.

It is news to me that I have excluded Mahomedans from the Yoga. I have not done it any more than I have excluded Europeans or Christians. As for giving up one's past, if that means giving up the outer forms of the old religions, it is done as much by the Hindus here as by the Mahomedans. Every Hindu here — even those who were once orthodox Brahmins and have grown old in it, — give up all observance of caste, take food from Pariahs and are served by them, associate and eat with

Mahomedans, Christians, Europeans, cease to practise temple worship or Sandhya (daily prayer and mantras), accept a non-Hindu from Europe as their spiritual director. These are things people who have Hinduism as their aim and object would not do — they do it because they are obliged here to look to a higher ideal in which these things have no value. What is kept of Hinduism is Vedanta and Yoga, in which Hinduism is one with Sufism of Islam and with the Christian mystics. But even here it is not Vedanta and Yoga in their traditional limits (their past), but widened and rid of many ideas that are peculiar to the Hindus. If I have used Sanskrit terms and figures, it is because I know them and do not know Persian and Arabic. I have not the slightest objection to anyone here drawing inspiration from Islamic sources if they agree with the Truth as Sufism agrees with it. On the other hand I have not the slightest objection to Hinduism being broken to pieces and disappearing from the face of the earth, if that is the Divine Will. I have no attachment to past forms; what is Truth will always remain; the Truth alone matters. 17 November 1932

*

> Does the supramental victory mean the victory of the Hindu religion and culture over others? Will the supramental consciousness come into the body of a man whether or not he subordinates himself to Hinduism?

The Asram has nothing to do with Hindu religion or culture or any religion or nationality. The Truth of the Divine which is the spiritual reality behind all religions and the descent of the supramental which is not known to any religion are the sole things which will be the foundation of the work of the future.

The Hindu Religion and Its Social Structure

> My friend Dhurjati writes: "I want to know the essential feature of Hinduism. Hinduism is inside me, but please bring it up on my conscious plane. The first step of my realisation must always be conceptual and propositional."

I am rather at a loss from which side to tackle the affair. Conceptually and propositionally is it possible to give Dhurjati something about the essential feature of Hinduism which he does not know already? I can say what to my view is the truth behind Hinduism, a truth contained in the very nature (not superficially seen of course) of human existence, something which is not the monopoly of Hinduism but of which Hindu spirituality was the richest expression. Perhaps I can try to bring out something on that line. I will see. 19 May 1936

*

> I send you Jawaharlal's *Autobiography*. I want to have your opinion on his reading of the Hindu religion. I agree with the bulk of his condemnation of religion. But it seems to me he is a little hazy in his ideas, expecting from it just what is beyond its *portée*. But of course I don't wonder, for religion is a most mysterious term, like our famous *kalpataru* of Indra's garden which promises to its worshippers any fruit they covet.

I fear that to accede to your request for a page and a half on the mystic soul of India is physically impossible now and psychologically a little difficult. I have once more the full flood of correspondence, in spite of the rules of time which have proved an insufficient dam. Each night is a race to get things done in time which I generally lose and that means an increasing mass of arrears which have to be dealt with whenever I get some exceptional leisure. On Sunday a mass of outside letters waiting for disposal because I have no time on other days and not enough on Sunday either. In these circumstances to produce a page on such a subject would be a feat of acrobacy not easily performable.

As for the subject, well in the days of the *Karmayogin* or of the *Defence of Indian Culture* I could have served you freely. Now I feel as if I have said all I could say on these things — they have gone back into the far recess of my mind and to pull them out for expression is not easy. That is a second obstacle.

I do not take the same view of the Hindu religion as Jawaharlal. Religion is always imperfect because it is a mixture of man's spirituality with the errors that come in trying to sublimate ignorantly his lower nature. Hindu religion appears to me as a cathedral temple half in ruins, noble in the mass, often fantastic in detail, but always fantastic with a significance — crumbled and overgrown in many places, but a cathedral temple in which service is still done to the Unseen and its real presence can be felt by those who enter with the right spirit. The outer social structure which it built for its approach is another matter.

19 September 1936

Social Rules, Caste and the Ashram

You must not get upset like this over these things. After all when one comes to an Asram to do Yoga, one leaves social rules, caste, ceremonial purity etc. behind one. Also one tries to practise সমতা [*samatā*] to all people and all things, because the Divine is everywhere. Why not take that attitude instead of the old one?

No Public Worship

It seems that even when visitors are there, people come into the Reception Room and prostrate before the photograph. I thought the rule had been made that when visitors were there, no one was to go? This rule must be strictly enforced — inform the gatekeepers and let everybody know that if these things continue, the Reception Room will have to be closed and opened only when visitors come.

23 December 1933

*

The reception hall is for visitors. It is only when there are no visitors that Sadhaks can go there — for a short meditation if they want. It should not be made a place of public worship.

27 December 1933

Inward Worship and Outer Forms

The Mother's prohibition is only against sadhaks being there and prostrating when visitors are in the Reception Room. This room was originally meant for the reception of people from outside and the photo was put there to be shown to visitors who could not see me. The permission was at first given to one sadhak or another to sit and meditate there and afterwards it has become a common practice to go and make pranam, but it was understood that the sadhaks should not be there when there were visits. This rule has not been observed and people have used it as a place of public worship. It was this that was disapproved of by the Mother.

There is no restriction in this Yoga to inward worship and meditation only. As it is a Yoga for the whole being, not for the inner being only, no such restriction could be intended. Old forms of the different religions may fall away, but absence of all forms is not a rule of the sadhana. c. January 1934

*

> You have written [*in the preceding letter*] that the "old forms . . . may fall away"; but I think it would be proper if they fell away only after a true consciousness was established.

That is what I meant.

> It would seem to me that there would be no impropriety if forms like Pranam, Dhup, Dip or Naivedya are continued even after a true inner consciousness is established.

I was thinking not of Pranam etc. which have a living value, but of old forms which persist although they have no longer any value — e.g. Sraddha for the dead. Also here forms which have no relation to this Yoga — for instance Christians who cling to the Christian forms or Mahomedans to the Namaz or Hindus to the Sandhyavandana in the old way might soon find them either falling off or else an obstacle to the free development of their sadhana. 3 January 1934

Human Relations and the Ashram

Right Relations between Sadhaks

The sadhaks of this Asram are not perfect — they have plenty of weaknesses and wrong movements. It is blindness not to be able to see that; only it should not lead to a criticising or condemnatory attitude on persons — it should be regarded as the play of forces which have to be overcome. 1933

*

To be turned wholly to the Mother and have nothing but friendly relations with the sadhaks, the same for all, is a counsel of perfection; but not many can carry it out, hardly one here and there. Yet to have that tendency is to have the real turn towards the one-pointedness of sadhana; but people take time to arrive at it. 12 July 1935

*

The Mother has not laid stress on human fellowship of the ordinary kind between the inmates (though good feeling, consideration and courtesy should always be there), because that is not the aim; it is a unity in a new consciousness that is the aim, and the first thing is for each to do his sadhana to arrive at that new consciousness and realise oneness there. 31 October 1935

*

I don't think it is much use writing about personal relations in the true spiritual life (which does not yet exist here). None would understand it except as a form of words. Only three points —

(1) Its very base would have to be spiritual and psychic and *not* vital. The vital would be there but as an instrument only.

(2) It would be a relation flowing from the higher Truth, not continued from the lower Ignorance.

(3) It would not be impersonal in the sense of being colourless, but whatever colours were there would not be the egoistic and muddy colours of the present relations. 24 June 1936

*

What you say is right. Those one lives with have always some ways and manners that do not agree with one's own and may grate on the mind. To observe quietly and not resent is part of the discipline of life, — not to be moved or affected at all but to see with equanimity the play of one Nature in all is the discipline of sadhana.

Helping Other Sadhaks

The best way to help *X* is to assist her by your own example and atmosphere to get the right attitude. Instead of the sense that she is very ill, she should be encouraged to have a bright and confident feeling, open to receive strength and health from us, contributing by her own faith to a speedy recovery. These ideas that they do not see the Mother, are outside the atmosphere, at a distance, are just the wrong notions and most likely to come in the way and block your sisters' receptivity; it is surprising that you should accept or echo them and not react against them at once. They are here in the Asram (a little nearer or farther makes no difference), in the Mother's presence and atmosphere, meeting her every day at the Pranam where everyone who is open can receive as much of her touch and her help as they can hold, — that is what they should feel and make the most of their opportunity and not waste it by a negative attitude.

For yourself, what you must have with other sadhaks (including your sisters) is a harmonious relation free from any mere vital attachment (indifference is not asked from you) and free from any indulgence in wrong vital movements of the opposite kind (such as dislike, jealousy or ill-will). It is through the psychic consciousness that you have found it possible to be in a true constant relation with the Mother and your aim is to make that the basis of all your life, action and feelings; all in you, all you feel, say and do should be consistent with that basis. If all proceeds from that psychic union of your consciousness with the Mother's, dedicating everything to her, then you will develop the right relations with others. 10 February 1932

*

> Can one person really help another? Sometimes it seems as if help is given, but in the end it looks to be rather vague.

It is a relative and partial help, of course, but it is sometimes useful. A radical help can only come from within through the action of the Divine Force and the assent of the being. It must be said of course that it is not everyone that thinks he is helping who is really doing it; also if the help is accompanied with the exercising of an "influence", that influence may be of a mixed character and harm as well as help if the instrument is not pure.
2 November 1935

*

A fully developed sadhak can be an instrument of the Mother for helping others, but a fully developed sadhak means one who is free from ego and he would never claim the work as his own. In this Asram all helping has recoiled on the helper by either making him egoistic or by his getting affected with the very things one is helping the other to get rid of. 9 June 1936

*

It is indeed not possible for one human being to do another's sadhana for him, that each must do himself. The help that can be given is to lead or impel him by influence, example, speech, encouragement towards the point where he can directly open to the Divine, also to impart to him strength, comfort, right suggestion in his moments of difficulty and weakness. You had very serious difficulties at the time and therefore we entrusted *X* with this work and he did all he could to carry it out and in fact his help was effective. For he stood successfully against the forces that tried to carry you away from here and brought you through to the point at which you could feel the direct inner contact. This was what we meant by bringing you to the Mother. If in doing it human weakness brought in a personal attachment between you which had its vital element, it was without his or your intending it. Now you are free from this element and wish to be entirely turned within to the Mother alone, and that is quite right. For *X* who behind an exterior of curt speech and strong dominating will has a heart of strong feelings and warm emotions, it may take a little more time to be entirely free of this element. We shall try to liberate him from what is left of it as soon as possible. Meanwhile what you have to do is to be his comrade in work, but reserve yourself within entirely for the Mother. If you keep to this attitude, as you have resolved, then it is bound to have its effect and he must before long come himself entirely to the same attitude.

What you say of sadhana is true. Sadhana is necessary and the Divine Force cannot do things in the void but must lead each one according to his nature to the point at which he can feel the Mother working within and doing all for him. Till then the sadhak's aspiration, self-consecration, assent and support to the Mother's workings, his rejection of all that comes in the way is very necessary — indispensable. 25 September 1936

*

It is not really surprising that people should be able to draw help from you and feel themselves helped and this can happen even though you yourself may not consciously have the idea or the feeling of extending any help to them. You have a very strong vital with a great communicative and creative power which is not shut up in itself but expansive and naturally flows out on those around it. Even ordinarily in the world people easily turn to such a strong and expansive vital and draw upon it for strength and assistance. In your case this is enhanced by your psychic being having the habit of using your vital force for communication to the outside world as it has been habitually doing in your creative activities, poetry and other forms of writing or speech, song and music: apart from artistic qualities and appeal these have an appeal and influence which comes from that inner power which has breathed itself into them and formed their substance. It has again been greatly increased by the practice of Yoga and the feeling of bhakti which comes out of you when you write your songs and sing them. In your work for us you have the knowledge that our force stands behind you; it is always there and can increase your power to help others, not only when you are doing the work but at other times or whenever they turn towards you with the idea or faith that the help they need can come from you. 11 July 1949

Inadvisability of Forming Special Relations

Write to him that these things are the creations of the mind and have no value. If the girl has a true call to Yoga, she can herself follow it; but it creates no special connection between her and him any more than with any sadhaka. To indulge imaginations of this kind will be dangerous for his sadhana. 7 January 1929

*

All that you have written in this letter is quite correct. It is useless to go through the old kind of reconciliation with *X* — it will only bring back the same futile circle — for he will act in the same way always (until he changes spiritually in the vital and that means a turning away from all vital relations) and you would be flung back into the same reactions. To cut away is the only thing — the best for him, the best for you. As for the feelings excited in him — more hurt self-esteem than anything else — they will fade out of themselves. The first necessity of both is to free yourselves from the old relations and that cannot, it is very clear, be done by going back to any remnant of the old interchange.

For the rest keep to your resolution. Do not discuss him with anybody, do not interest yourself in what he does or does not do; let it be his own concern and the Divine's, not yours. Expect nothing personally from him — you may be sure that your expectations will only be disappointed. His nature is not yours and his mental view of what should or should not be done is quite different — incompatible with yours. By retaining anything of the old feeling you will only invite pain and farther disillusionment — you gain nothing and pay a heavy price for that nothing. It is only by becoming one-minded in the sadhana that you can escape from this painful circle.

I hope that you will recover tomorrow the capacity for food and shake off the remnants of the physical depression which have been left behind by the attack. Let the physical consciousness as well as the rest of the nature turn wholly to the Light and the Divine and seek only the one true source of happiness and Ananda. 31 March 1933

*

There is no sin in attachment. All human beings are full of attachments. But if one wants to do Yoga and reach the Divine, one must give up all earthly attachments. It is not easy to do so, even for a sadhak, but it must be attempted sincerely and, if it is sincerely attempted, then it can be done.

Attachment means that you desire or need or depend on a thing or a person so much that you cannot do without it or him, and are always trying to keep the thing or be with the person or somehow in touch with him. *X* says you are attached to him and that it is proved by your always seeking to find an excuse for your being with him; you want to learn from him and not from another, to read our answers with him and not with any other, to do the dispensary work and so be near him every day. He says also you told him if he did not satisfy you in these matters, you would go away to Gujarat or do worse, because you could not bear his disappointing you always. He thinks this proves that you came here for him and not for Yoga. If you want to show him that it is not so, the only way is not to insist on these things that bring you near to him and not say anything that he can understand in this sense.

You have come here for Yoga and not for *X* — you depend on the Mother and myself alone and not on *X*. We are quite ready to accept that, for that is what should be. But then you have no need to be upset by what *X* may say to you or how he may act with you or by his refusal to accede to your requests.

You can freely and calmly stand away from him and turn to the Divine alone. 17 July 1933

*

The whole difficulty comes from the fact that you and *X* had a special relation to each other which was of the character of a mutual vital demand and dependence on each other and what is called in Yoga an attachment. (There is no question here of a sexual physical relation but of a vital attachment.) This was coming in the way of your making any progress in Yoga and it was coming in the way of *X* also. When *X* realised this and wanted to reduce the connection between you to a minimum, you were unwilling, you wanted to do all sorts of things that would keep you near him and keep him busy with you. *X* himself was not free from attachment and therefore in reacting against your pressure and his own remains of weakness, he became rude and violent — that was what he meant by cutting the connection altogether. But he is not yet free and that is why he still reacts violently whenever there is any talk of your going to him as he has done in his last letter. On your side you also are not free — if you were, it would not happen that every time there is any question of *X* you immediately lose the good condition you were getting and all the old thoughts occupy your mind and you fall back into the weeping and not eating etc. etc. It is the reason why the Mother does not care for you and *X* to meet so long as these old reactions are there either in him or in you. That is the plain fact of the matter. What other people think or say about it, is of no importance. What matters is the sadhana and besides it nothing else matters. Show that you are free, that what *X* does or does not do does not disturb or occupy your mind in the least and get into the true way of the sadhana as you were preparing to do — then it will be easier for us to deal with *X* and his defects and difficulties. This Asram is not intended to be a society like that of the outside world, and when *Y* or *Z* or anyone else talk and advise you from that standpoint, they are speaking things which have nothing to do with the work we are trying to do here — and if you listen to such advice, you will only get out of the right way of looking at it. You will get into the right way only when you cease to think of these things and look at things from the point of view of sadhana only.

*

> Every sadhika has one or another special sadhika-friend but I find none like-minded enough. Why am I such an independent-minded loner?

It is not necessary to have special friendships, — to be in good relations is enough. For the rest, to be turned entirely to us is the best condition for spiritual progress.

Relations between Men and Women in the Ashram

> How is it that when I am talking to a sadhika I don't feel anything but afterwards the memory or image brings the sex-sense? Why should a sadhak not be able to speak to a sadhika as he would to anybody else?

In an Asram or other religious institution men and women are not usually allowed to live together. Where they do, as among the Vaishnavas, these difficulties invariably arise. The difficulty lies in the enormous place given to sex in the lower Nature. But there is no reason if one fixes oneself firmly in the spiritual consciousness why one should not speak and act between men and women without the least reference to sex. 2 December 1933

*

> Can we not justify Buddha, Ramakrishna and others who advocated isolation from women? After all, is it not essentially the same principle here, because if vital relations are debarred, nothing remains except a simple exchange of words?

What about the true (not the pretended) psychic and spiritual — forgetting sex? The relation has to be limited as it is because sex immediately trots into the front. You are invited to live above the vital and deeper than the vital — then only you can use the vital aright. Buddha was for Nirvana and what is the use of having relations with anybody if you are bound for Nirvana? Ramakrishna insisted on isolation during the period when a man is spiritually raw — he did not object to it when he became ripe and no longer a slave of sex. 26 January 1935

*

Do not receive X *in your own room*. That may disturb the atmosphere of the Asram. What was meant when we said you need not avoid her or cut all relations was that if you meet in the ordinary way in the Asram, you need not avoid speaking to her if occasion demands it or if she speaks to you avoid replying etc. Any relations kept should be natural, but not *intimate*.

17 April 1943

Sexual Relations and the Ashram

In view of your last letter and of the disturbances in you which you hint there, we consider and you must yourself realise that it is better for you to return to your family life and not to stay here too long. The conquest of sexual desire can only be done if one is truly ready and has the spiritual call and is prepared, however difficult it may be, to give up for it everything else. There is no place for the sexual impulse and its desires in spiritual life and any sadhaka indulging it, either physically or vitally, is going against the law of the Asram life and injuring gravely his or her sadhana. The sexual desire must be either satisfied in the ordinary family life or it must be thrown aside. But you are not now able to conquer it. To remain here with the unsatisfied desire will only confuse your mind, bring wrong ideas, create a struggle in you and injure the basis of such sadhana as you can do. Make up your mind therefore to return to your family and do what you can there. It is always better to do what you can than to attempt prematurely something for which you are not ready. 16 April 1932

*

Your daughter X[1] has now been here for a fairly long time and we think it due to you to let you know what we consider best for her. It appears from our observation of her that she is not at all ready for Asram life or for intensive sadhana; she has too much of the ordinary movements and the instinct of sexual desire is too strong in her and unsatisfied and this indicates the need of the social and family life, not a life of Yoga. The family life accompanied with whatever religious worship or practice of bhakti she can manage is her proper field at present. For one with these unsatisfied instincts to live in the Asram would on one side be bad for her, — it would raise up a vital struggle and a confusion of ideas adverse to spiritual progress — for she has not yet the necessary inner force or intensity of the spiritual call that would help her to overcome. On the other side it would be likely to create movements that would be disturbing to the Asram atmosphere. It is better for her therefore to return home and do what she can there. I trust our decision will not in any way disturb or disappoint you; for it was not, I think, your intention in bringing her here that she should remain for a long time. It is in her own interest that she should not be pushed towards an effort that is premature. 16 April 1932

*

> The whole of yesterday I felt a dark power hanging over me. When I asked the Mother if it was the same universal dark power that, through woman, binds the soul to the earth, she replied, "Why woman? Through *man* as well!" Yes, man as well — but is there not something which makes woman a more convenient, capacious and dangerous tool in its hand?

That is what man thinks; it is his experience. Woman's experience is that man is the dangerous animal and instrument of all her sufferings and downfalls.

It is not man or woman; it is the Sex-Force which is the dangerous tool in the hands of the Ignorance. 17 September 1932

*

---

[1] *The recipient of the preceding letter. — Ed.*

Why do you believe everything that people tell you? What I told *X* was that he had *once* progressed greatly, he had afterwards allowed himself to yield to the bad habits that rose from his lower nature and fallen from the psychic contact and that until he got rid of these things which were the cause of all his sufferings he would not progress or recover his contact with the Mother. We never told him that he was making progress now or that his coarse indulgence was a sign of (no doubt, miraculous, godlike and amazing) progress. God in Heaven, what things people put in my mouth and the Mother's! 25 November 1933

*

> While looking at pictures of women in magazines, I sometimes feel sexual sensations. Do you want me to avoid looking or to overcome this influence?

You had better get rid of the influence. It won't do not to be able to look at a woman or a picture of a woman without getting sexual sensations — you must get rid of that. 4 December 1933

*

I am afraid *X* is not so forward in sadhana as you think. I suppose I had better tell you plainly that she is full of the sex difficulty — it is *her special difficulty* and it is so much in her nature that with all her struggles she is unable to escape from it. I am afraid she is throwing it upon you. Of course it is her imagination that yields to it; she would never consent to the act.

As for *Y* it is different. She has no sex desires, but before she opened to the Yoga, there was a certain kind of vital passivity in her to men and this kind of passivity is very attractive to the masculine sex instinct. As the movements in you are not mental but in sensation, it is possible that your subconscient vital has somehow felt this in her subconscient temperament and got the attraction. These movements are not vitally willed or mental — they belong to that shadowy region of submerged vital physical instinct which the psychoanalysts try to deal with in their jargon of complexes etc. 30 September 1934

*

> I consider the sex-movement to be something outside me, and leave it to the Mother for transformation.

Yes — so long as it does not come inside, that can be done.

26 October 1934

*

> Yesterday you wrote about the sex-movement, "so long as it does not come inside, that can be done." I don't know what you mean by "come inside".

Coming inside means taking hold of you so that there is a push for satisfaction. Pressure from outside however strongly felt is not coming inside. 27 October 1934

*

> Why is it that in the past so much stress was laid on food, external cleanliness, asceticism, etc. and so little on brahmacharya or conservation of energies or inner development? And why all the prejudice of caste in the matter of food? Is there any truth in the popular belief that a man is not considered spiritual unless he is a vegetarian, cooks his own food, etc.?

The value of brahmacharya was fully understood in past times for Yogis; carefulness about food and cleanliness is also necessary as a minor matter for the body. The rest appertains to the social system (e.g. caste etc.) and does not concern spiritual living. The Sannyasi is not supposed to be bound by caste. Some may be unable to shake off these things — the grihastha Yogi may continue them because they are part of the social life in which he is.

> I suppose the idea of inner detachment with regard to food and other vital enjoyments is not much understood in other beliefs.

The idea of inner detachment is perfectly well known to the Yogis as the Janaka ideal — but it is considered too difficult to practise for most men and therefore likely to be practised only in profession, not in fact.

> And what is the reason for the popular opposition to materialism?

Materialism is of course incompatible with the spiritual aim. The spiritual control of matter is a different thing, it has nothing to do with materialism.

> I would like to know if in the higher spiritual or Divine Life the sexual or vital play is to be altogether banned.

If you expect to indulge it in the Divine Life, you will never get rid of it — it will remain clinging under that excuse.

> If there is to be no sex in the Divine Life, how is the human race to continue?

Why concern yourself with the continuity of the race? There will be plenty of people to continue it. If the supermind has to intervene in the continuity, it will surely do it in its own way, but what that way will be will be found out if and when there is a necessity.

> What did Sri Ramakrishna mean by banning *kāminī* and *kāñcan* for a spiritual man?

He stressed the danger of sex and greed of money for the spiritual life and insisted on a total abstinence, at any rate in the whole period of sadhana and I suppose he considered that impossible without keeping aloof from the things that most aroused these passions. Some of his disciples say however that he said কাম কাঞ্চন [*kām kāñcan*], not কামিনী কাঞ্চন [*kāminī kāñcan*]. Anyhow he probably imposed it for the raw period of the sadhana — once siddha, when the contact with women could no longer rouse the sex-impulse, he would not have considered it so imperative for all. But he himself could not touch money.

> What are the correct ideas with regard to *gārhasthya* life?

Gārhasthya life, meaning marriage and rearing of a family, is a social institution based on ego. It can only be a stage in the evolution of a spiritual man. 13 November 1934

*

> Is there a region of Apsaras in the intermediate zone? Perhaps you discourage me from retiring because you feel I might go there and try to get in touch with them. But probably such a contact is not as dangerous as ambition, pride, egoism etc.

There may very well be, — though I don't know that anyone here came into contact with Apsaras; it is generally less attractive females from the vital world who are after them, usually in the shape of sadhikas, relatives etc. The sadhaks here don't seem to be so aesthetic as the ancient Rishis. It would be pretty dangerous, however, if they did contact it. Sex (occult) stands on a fair level of equality with ambition etc. from the point of view of danger, only its action is usually less ostensible i.e. the Hostiles don't put it forward so openly as a thing to be followed after in the spiritual life. They did that more in the beginning, e.g. *X* and others. 28 February 1935

*

> Touching is quite common in ordinary civilised society. It may not be pure, but it is so common that there is little reaction. Perhaps there are some who do not feel the sex sensation at all when they touch in public. But when it is done in secret, I suppose the reaction is almost always there. As for myself, I'm sure I would feel the effect later, even if the touching was done in public.

In ordinary society people touch each other more or less freely according to the manners of the society. That is quite a different matter because there the sex impulse is allowed within certain more or less wide or narrow limits and even the secret indulgence is common, although people try to avoid discovery. In Bengal when there is purdah, touching between men and women is confined to the family, in Europe there is not much restriction so long as there is no excessive familiarity or indecency; but in Europe sex is now practically free. Here all sex indulgence inner or outer is considered undesirable as an obstacle to the sadhana — as it very evidently is. For that reason any excessive familiarity of touch between men and women has to be avoided, anything also in the nature of caressing, as it creates or tends to create sex tendency or even the strong sex impulse. Casual touching has to be avoided also if it actually creates the sex impulse. These are commonsense rules if the premiss is granted that sex has not to have any indulgence. 1 July 1935

*

> Before, when I had ordinary contact with women, I did not feel the sex-pull so much, nor did I have the sense that it was always behind. Now it shows itself so vividly: contact, imagination, sensation. I am in despair, and feel I should give up my efforts and go away.

Sex is your main difficulty — it is in fact the only very serious one and it is so because it is always behind and you have sometimes pushed it back, but never cut with it entirely. It is the physical vital that is weak and when the thing comes, becomes pliant to it in spite of the mental will's resistance. But even so; if the mental will made itself real and strong, these crises would be met and overcome, or at least pass without leading to indulgence in one form or another. The other possibility is the settled descent of the higher consciousness into the physical being. It is in these two ways that liberation from sex is possible. 5 April 1936

*

> You write [*in the preceding letter*], "you have . . . never cut with it entirely." In what sense? Every time I have tried to cut off all contact with people, I have been overcome with imaginations. How does one cut off imaginations? Perhaps you will say that other people have conquered sex without seclusion or higher experience or much work. If so, I would like to know about them. Probably they were naturally sattwic.

There are people outside the Asram even who have got free from the sex without seclusion — even sleeping in the same bed with the wife. I know one at least who did it without any higher experience. The work of these people is ordinary service or professional work, but that did not prevent their having the sex struggle nor did it help them to get rid of it. The thing came after a prolonged struggle because they were determined to be rid of it and at a certain stage they got a touch which made the determination absolutely effective. Possibly they were sattwic, but that did not prevent their having strong sex impulses and a hard and prolonged struggle.

I meant by cutting off a determined rejection of the inward as well as the outward movement whenever it comes. Something in the nature accepts and lets itself go helplessly and something in the mind allows it to do so. The mind does not seem to believe in its power to say No definitely to inward movements as it would to an outer contact — and yet the Purusha is there and can put its definite No, maintaining it till the Prakriti has to submit — or else till the confirming touch from above makes its determination perfectly effective. 5 April 1936

*

Your diagnosis of the origin of the trouble in *X* agrees with what we have seen of it. But here a question arises. You say that one thing that has contributed is a suppressed sexuality which could not find satisfaction. Now it is obviously impossible for him to have that in the Asram — for the rule of life is against it and it is impossible to give any even limited expression to it without at once hurting the sadhana while at the same time it does not satisfy because of the restriction and wrong conditions of mind which attend it. It is only by going outside that it can be done. In *X* there is the constant push to go away and this along with a vital restlessness is likely to be the cause. The question then is whether it is necessary for the cure of his neurasthenia that he should satisfy it and therefore leave the Asram so that he may be free to follow his vital impulse? 18 April 1936

*

Europe and America are full of free sex indulgence — they do not nowadays consider it a thing to be avoided but rather welcomed.

But this is an Asram and people are supposed to be doing a sadhana in which sex has to be surmounted. In the Asram there are many who mix freely with all the sadhikas — they are certainly not free from sex. Avoiding also is not a panacea; one can avoid and have sex imaginations and desires. But it is absurd to say that avoiding is the cause of sex imaginations and impulses or that mixing is a panacea for it. 13 April 1937

*

To get rid of the vital difficulties one very necessary thing is to keep yourself fully open to us. It was because you did that, that it was possible to throw out the sex obsession. If anything rises from the vital, keep yourself detached and observe it and reject; on no account allow yourself to be caught and swept away by it. 21 June 1938

*

About sex and Yoga — my teaching has been clearly written in the *Bases of Yoga* and everyone knows how strongly the Mother has discountenanced these things and considers purity from them a first requisite for success in the path of sadhana. But there are very queer things that have for long been inculcated in the Asram to newcomers and to visitors — e.g. that truthfulness is a superstition and the more you lie the better sadhak you are. That was the first thing taught to a sadhak who first came here many years ago and it is only recently that he has discovered it was not my view or the Mother's. It is not surprising that our work and the Yoga should make such slow progress when such perversities fill the atmosphere. Whatever can be done to clear them out will be so much help to the work of the Mother.

13 November 1938

*

> Is it true that there is the spiritual relation of husband and wife between sadhaka and sadhika?

Are you all becoming cracked in the head? How is it that after all this time such a question can be put? Have you not read my letters and messages on the subject of sex? You have not gone through the *Bases of Yoga* where the subject of sex is treated through many pages and it is clearly insisted on that all sex impulse and sex relation must go. If any sadhak and sadhika want to establish this relation, they should immediately pack up their things and go — for it is forbidden here.

> If there exists between a man and a woman the high spiritual relation of husband and wife, purusha and shakti, and the woman demands consummation, is the man bound to satisfy her?

You have not read the rule that conjugal relations are forbidden here? You do not know that *X* and *Y* and *Z* and *A* had to leave because they followed this way? Under no pretence or cloak whatever is sex to be indulged by anyone practising this sadhana. circa 1936–1938

*

There is with regard to sex no change whatever. Babies may be allowed in the Asram but the manufacture of babies there is an industry which has no sanction. Married people (that is not new) or families may be living here, but on the old condition of the complete cessation of marital activities. The ban on sex here stands, unchanged by an iota. 2 January 1945

Tantric Theories and the Ashram

> Something in me has been persistently giving the suggestion that sex is not to be given up altogether and that some refined movement of sex may be an aid to the sadhana. This suggestion was supported by some vague ideas I have about Tantric methods.

Any suggestion about Tantric practices must certainly be a trick of the vital. The sex impulsions can be got rid of without them. They persist only because something still wants to reserve a place for them. So the best answer to the question about the sadhana

(What is the place of sex in our sadhana?) is "No place". One must give up the sex-satisfaction and be satisfied with the Divine Love and Ananda.

*

> Sometimes I get the idea that I should talk and laugh and mix with women and touch them and yet remain free. This alone could be called true conquest.

The idea you speak of is the Tantric idea and very dangerous. It must be so in the end, but it is difficult to do that until one is strong enough in the settled spiritual consciousness. The avoidance is sometimes the only way until the higher consciousness is settled in the vital and vital-physical. 22 October 1934

*

> Someone said that if a yogi has his Shakti and if the Shakti demands physical contact the yogi has to fulfil it. Is that correct?

If the sadhak is a left-hand Tantrik or a Vaishnava of the Bengal school, then his theories may have some validity but they have none in this Asram.

> Someone else also said that a special, though not sexual, relation can exist between sadhaka and sadhika.

The only relation permissible here is the same as between a sadhak and sadhak or between a sadhika and sadhika — a friendly relation as between followers of the same path of Yoga and children of the Mother. 5 September 1936

*

> The subtle sex centre awoke after some years of Pranava sadhana. Afterwards I understood what the Tantras meant by the relation between sadhaka and sadhika. The reality behind it is the duality of united Shiva-Shakti. Man's ordinary life is the wrong way of giving it expression. I am now able to transform this perception into Delight. Is this experience true?

This is not accepted in Sri Aurobindo's Yoga.[2] Any such "sublimated" sex relation becomes a subtle but powerful bar to the full realisation and transformation and can derail the sadhana. There is an Ananda behind all things, otherwise they would not exist; but it does not follow that all things must be accepted in their delight-form as a part of the higher life.

The Question of Marriage

I have not your letter with me as I write but there were two questions which you put to us, as far as I can remember.

The first was about a complementary soul and marriage. The answer is easy to give; the way of the spiritual life lies for you in one direction and marriage lies in quite another and opposite. All talk about a complementary soul is a camouflage with which the mind tries to cover the sentimental, sensational and physical wants of the lower vital nature. It is that vital nature in you which puts the question and would like an answer reconciling its desires and demands with the call of the true soul in you. But it must not expect a sanction for any such incongruous reconciliation from here. The way of the supramental Yoga is clear; it lies not through any concession to these things, — not, in your case, through the satisfaction, under a spiritual cover if possible, of its craving for the comforts and gratifications of a domestic and conjugal life and the enjoyment of the ordinary emotional desires and physical passions, but through the purification and transformation of the forces which these movements pervert and misuse. Not these human and animal demands, but the divine Ananda which is above and beyond them and which the indulgence of these degraded forms would prevent from descending, is the great thing that the aspiration of the vital being must demand in the sadhaka.

The other question was about your difficulty in getting rid of the aboriginal in your nature. That difficulty will remain so long as you try to change your vital nature by the sole power of your mind and mental will, calling in at most an indefinite and impersonal divine Power to aid you. It is an old difficulty which has never been truly solved because it has never been met in the true way. In the former ways of Yoga it did not supremely matter because the aim was withdrawal from life. Either the vital was kept down by a mental and moral compulsion, or it was stilled and kept lying in a kind of sleep and quiescence, or it was allowed to run and exhaust itself if it could while its possessor professed to be untouched and unconcerned by it. When none of these solutions could be attained, the sadhaka simply led a double inner life, divided between his spiritual experiences and his vital weaknesses to the end. If you want a true mastery and transformation of the vital movements, it can be done only on condition you allow your psychic being, the soul in you, to awake fully, to establish its rule and open to the permanent touch of the divine Shakti and impose its way of devout aspiration and complete surrender on the mind and heart and vital nature. There is no other way and it is no use hankering after a more comfortable path. *Nānyaḥ panthā vidyate ayanāya.* 4 October 1927

---

[2] *Written by Sri Aurobindo to one of his secretaries, who replied to the correspondent. — Ed.*

*

> I could not quite follow what the Mother said the other day about keeping a mate. What is the difference between keeping a mate and marrying?

The Mother said "maid", not "mate". You spoke of having wished to marry again because you needed someone to nurse you when ill, etc. etc. These are good reasons for keeping a servant, not for marrying. 30 September 1929

*

If she has the true call to the Yoga and not only an impulse due to the influence of others, the necessary conditions will be created. Even if the circumstances seem adverse, it will be only a test or ordeal and she will come through in the end. On the other hand, if she is not yet truly called or if her nature is not yet ripe, the marriage may take place and she may have to go through the ordinary life before she can return to the spiritual. There was never any suggestion from here that the girl should come to Pondicherry; how is it that it has been raised over there?

25 April 1930

*

No member of the Asram can while he is a member contract a marriage whether it is spiritual or sexual or bring in a woman to be his life-companion or establish such a relation with anyone outside. This is no part of the Asram life. He can do it outside by leaving the Asram, for then he is no longer a member and can order his life as he pleases; he is then responsible to himself alone for his action and its spiritual or other consequences concern only himself and that other person.

In the cases you cite there is no tie of spiritual marriage between the persons concerned: the sexual connection has been renounced, but no new inner tie has been formed — there is therefore no similarity with the action you propose. As special cases they are allowed to live in the same house for certain outward conveniences, but it is clearly understood that the old dependence of husband and wife on each other has to cease; they have to accustom themselves to be only sadhaks having no inner dependence on each other, but separately depending on the Mother alone, receiving spiritual help from her alone, offering to her alone the obedience of the disciple to the Master.

For your case to assimilate to theirs you would have to marry legally and socially with the consent of the father, live for twenty years or more together outside and then come for admission to the Asram with the resolution to develop an inner life independent from each other and turned to the Divine alone. What you propose as described in your letter is something quite different — it might stand in a Vaishnava sadhana or in some form of Karma Yoga, but it has no place here. An old relation is one thing, — its root being cut, time may be given in special cases at the Mother's discretion to get free from some of its outer results and habits which are not of the first importance; to bring in a new marriage relation with the full intention of giving it free play and making it a part of the sadhana is a very different thing.

I do not know what you mean by "true sadhana". Each path of sadhana has its own way and procedure which may be quite different from that of other paths. For this path the Mother and I can alone determine what is necessary or not necessary, what is admissible or not admissible. If one has some other way of life which he finds necessary and considers part of the true sadhana, he is free to practise it elsewhere, but he has no claim to do it here and make it a part of this sadhana or of the life of the Asram if it is not sanctioned and approved by the Mother and myself. 13 May 1937

*

There is only one answer to *X*'s question — marriage and Yoga are two different movements going opposite ways; if he follows one, he will be moving away from the other. So if he marries, either of two things will happen — he will sink into the ordinary life and go far away from us in spirit or he will find married life unsatisfactory, renounce his wife and return to the path that leads towards the Divine. Marriage with the first result would be only a stupidity; marriage for the second result would be an irrational inconsequence. So in either way —

Marriage, Service and Yoga

A letter from you dated July 25th of this year duly reached Sri Aurobindo, but at the time he was not in a position to give any definite answer. Latterly, he has read your letter again and instructs me to write the following reply.[3]

First, as regards your question about your married life. The sound principle in these matters is that so long as you feel the sense of duty, it is better to follow it out until you are liberated; you must not carry a scruple or a remorse or any kind of backward pull or attraction into the spiritual life. Equally, if you have any strong attraction towards the usual human active life, towards earning, bright prospects, the use of your capacities for the ordinary motives or on the ordinary plane of human consciousness, you ought not to leave everything behind you for what may after all be only a mental attraction towards spiritual ideals and Yoga. The spiritual consciousness and spiritual life are exceedingly difficult to attain; it needs a deep and strong call and the turning of all the energies towards the one object to arrive at any kind of full success (siddhi). Even those who have cut off all other ties, find it difficult not to live in a double consciousness, one inward and turned towards the spiritual change and the other which is still chained to the ordinary movements and pulls them down from their spiritual experience into the persistent and unchanged course of the lower nature. If you have not the entire and undivided call, it is better not to take the plunge, unless you are prepared for very bitter inner struggles, great difficulties and relapses and a hampered and doubtful progress. It is better in that case to prepare yourself by meditation and concentration while still living in the family and the usual human life, until the spiritual attraction is strong enough to overshadow and destroy all others.

---

[3] *Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter by hand and gave it to his secretary to be copied and sent to the correspondent. — Ed.*

Next, you speak of leading a higher life in order to fit yourself for service to others. But leading a higher life is a vague mental phrase and the object of Yoga is not service to others. The object of Yoga is to enter into an entirely new consciousness in which you live no longer in the mind and the ego but in the divine consciousness and grow into the true inmost truth of your being above mind and life and body. The aim in most ways of Yoga is to draw back altogether from life into this greater existence. In Sri Aurobindo's Yoga, the aim is to transform mind, life and body into an expression of this divine Truth and to make the outward as well as the inward life embody it — a much more difficult endeavour. To act out of this greater consciousness becomes the only rule of life, abandoning all other dharmas. Not to serve either one's own ego or others, but to serve the Divine Shakti and be the instrument of her works is the law of this life.

Your other question, — about the Asrama, arises only when you have found your call and your true way, — if that leads you here. In all cases Sri Aurobindo prefers to be assured of the call and the capacity before he admits anyone to his Asrama. The first of these two questions however, you have to decide mostly for yourself; the second can be settled only if, supposing you decide in this sense, you are called here and personally tested with a view for the Yoga. circa 1927

Family Life and the Ashram

I hope you have not given any reason to your relatives to understand that it is by my *orders* that you do not correspond with them or return to family life! You have remained here and taken to the spiritual life by your own choice and it was at your prayer that your temporary stay was changed into a permanent one. When you make a choice, you must have the courage to take your stand upon it on your own responsibility before your family and the world. Otherwise each one here is at liberty to remain on the path or leave it as he chooses. I think you had better make that clearly understood by your people. 14 February 1930

*

> The accompanying letter is from my wife. Till now I have been guilty of writing to her without trying to know your opinion. I was keeping up the communication partly in order not to shock or pain her too much and partly with a desire to see that she might also take up the spiritual path some day. What attitude should I keep with respect to her?

I return the letter, but I leave the necessity of reply or otherwise to your own discretion. To keep any attachment is obviously inconsistent with the Yogic attitude, as also any *desire* of the kind you express; if she is to enter the spiritual life some day it should be as her own independent destiny and her being your wife is not relevant to it. Detachment is the main thing; if you have that, to write or not to write is a secondary matter.

12 June 1932

*

Write to her that permission cannot be given this time. You will also explain to her that she cannot come here (permanently) merely because she is the wife of a sadhak staying here. All relations of that kind are to cease when one becomes a member of the Asram. It is only if one makes progress in the sadhana and is considered fit for stay in the Asram that permission can be given. 18 January 1933

*

Neither the Mother nor Sri Aurobindo are in the habit of holding any correspondence except with the sadhaks and on matters proper to the sadhana. Sri Aurobindo sees no one except at the three Darshans and speaks with no one. The Mother except at the Darshan times sees only the sadhaks and receives them only or else, but rarely, people who come with a desire for sadhana.

As regards X

X chose the Asram life because after several attempts he found that trying to do the sadhana at home was a failure and he only multiplied ties and obstacles while here he progressed swiftly and was able to live the spiritual life. It is impossible for us to order him to go back permanently or temporarily or to live here in circumstances and conditions which he feels disturbing to his sadhana so long as he himself does not wish it or decide from his own inner determination to go. The sadhana here is not a mere matter of pranam or darshan; it is a life that has to be lived so that one may always be conscious in the Divine.

As regards X's family

As for his wife and children they could only have lived here in a separate house and had the expenses met by the family, but this is no longer possible. The difficulty of doing anything more arises from the rules and the nature of the Asram life.

(1) It is a strict rule that husband and wife living in the Asram cannot keep up the old conjugal relations and conjugal life. They either live separately or, if together, which is sometimes but not often allowed, as sadhak and sadhika only, each turned wholly to the Divine.

(2) Children of a tender age, under 10, are not allowed to live in the Asram, they are even not allowed as a rule to enter the Asram precincts. Even in houses not belonging to the Asram but still in some way connected with it (like the private house of *Y* where *Z* is temporarily staying) they are allowed only in very exceptional cases when we are sure that they can accommodate themselves to the Asram life and atmosphere.

(3) Children of low age are not admitted first because there is no proper arrangement for them — either for their food or their upbringing or their education or medical treatment. All is arranged with an eye to the life of grown-up sadhaks with limited requirements and no special provision can be made for anyone. The Asram is not in a position to undertake the responsibility for the maintenance or upbringing of children.

(4) Children are not admitted for another reason, because it was found when exceptions were made that they could not keep their health here and, after one death occurred, the prohibition was made absolute. They are too young and delicate to bear the atmosphere which is full of a tension of strong forces and, in most cases, their consciousness is too undeveloped for them to receive and profit easily by the supporting and protecting force received here from the Mother by the sadhaks. Faith and responsiveness are needed and such things cannot be expected from little children unless they have a very exceptional mind and character.

The ill-health of the children and the dangerous illness of the second among them seem to be a clear warning that these children cannot prosper here.

The Mother consented with much reluctance to *Z* and her children remaining in a separate house but it was under conditions that have not been fulfilled. It was never contemplated that *X* would live with them or earn his living. That is impossible unless he ceased to be a member of the Asram and this he does not wish to do. The family were very kindly allowed by Mr. *Y* to put up in his house, but this was supposed to be only for a short time. If they were to stay here, the Mother does not know where to put them or how to keep them. Even if this difficulty were solved in some way, they would be living in conditions quite unsuitable which they would probably not be able to bear.

If *Z* were alone, it would be possible to put her up, but with the children we do not see any way. If she will be persuaded to return until at least they have the proper age, that would be the most advisable course. To separate from them and live here as the other sadhakas of the Asram would be the other alternative, but that, we understand, she is quite unwilling to do.

It is not possible for the Asram to modify its rules and character and way of life so as to suit the ideas and ways of living and demands and needs of the ordinary life. The Asram has its own reason of existence which is the spiritual life alone and it could not do that without losing its object and true character.

These considerations are placed before you so that you may know the position and keep them in view in advising *Z*. For she does not seem to understand them and it is this that has created difficulties with *X*; he feels that he is being pressed to abandon the spiritual life and that is why he is not at ease in going there.

21 December 1934

*

As for your friend, it is not possible to say that she can come here; for that depends on many things which are not clearly present here. First, one must enter this Path or it must be seen that one is called to it; afterwards there is the question whether one is meant for the Asram life here. The question about the family duties can be answered in this way — the family duties exist so long as one is in the ordinary consciousness of the grihastha; if the call to a spiritual life comes, whether one keeps to them or not depends partly upon the way of Yoga one follows, partly on one's own spiritual necessity. There are many who pursue inwardly the spiritual life and keep the family duties, not as social duties but as a field for the practice of karmayoga, others abandon everything to follow the spiritual call alone and they are justified if that is necessary for the Yoga they practise or if that is the imperative demand of the soul within them.

Correspondence with Relatives

> I feel that some idea-vibrations of that letter from home are active still in my memory.

That is the reason why it is better to drop these things. People who go on corresponding with their people do not feel it as you do, but nevertheless it is a fact that they maintain and enforce vibrations which keep the old forces active in the vital and maintain their impressions in the subconscient.

22 September 1934

*

> Getting letters from relatives often opens the door to problems. Even if the people remain neutral and don't actually create difficulties, where is the common point of interest? We write to them about yoga and so forth, but I wonder whether any of that makes any difference to them.

That is why we are not in favour of correspondence with relatives etc. outside. There is no point of contact unless one comes out or down to their own level which is obviously undesirable from the point of view of Yoga. I don't think much inspiration can go through letters because their consciousness is not at all prepared. Words can at most touch only the surface of their minds; what is important is something behind the words, but to that they are not open. If there is already an interest in spiritual things, that is different. Even then it is often better to let people follow their own groove than pull them into this path.

17 April 1935

Women in the Ashram

> I have heard from my mother that she is determined to go to you very soon without seeing to our many grievances. Now we are encumbered with many difficulties which we are unable to deal with without our mother. Please ask the Mother to tell her to return to us. We will let her go back to the Ashram within a year.

The Mother cannot give the advice you call on her to give to *X*. It is your mother's free choice alone and sense of inner need that should guide her. No one has a right to interfere with her spiritual progress or pull her back in order to satisfy their own selfish demands. Her children are not infants needing the care of a mother and ought to be able to face by themselves the difficulties of life — it is rather now their duty to put her need first and not theirs; for at her age, it is she and not themselves who should be their first consideration in their dealings with her. She has need of rest to restore her broken health and an atmosphere of peace for her soul's progress.

*

I do not think it at all necessary for you to stay any longer with your son. He is now becoming old enough to trace his own path in life — the more he is independent, the better. You certainly did no wrong in coming here at this time; the opinion of society about it has no true basis whatever.

As for the attitude taken by your husband, it should rather be a help to you to make your choice decisively and once for all. You can write to him that since he presses, you will not delay long to make your decision and you will speak to him about it when you return — unless you feel it will put you more at ease to write now a definite answer. 14 March 1933

*

The need of solitude, of going inward, of getting out of the ordinary atmosphere of human life is one of the most natural movements of spiritual life. One who cannot appreciate that movement, knows nothing about spirituality or Yoga. Your husband's letters are like the reasonings of the scientists and men of the world who know nothing about Yoga or spiritual experience; they only pass mental opinions and judgments on it from outside. It is not even worth while replying to such things — they are so far from the realities of the spirit.

Keep over there your separateness and for all that surrounds you there remain inwardly aloof and untouched — dealing with it as something external to you which you will soon leave.

31 March 1933

*

I return your husband's letters. I do not think we can build much on his desire to know about Yoga. He wishes for reasons of a mixed nature to dissuade you from leaving the domestic life and that is the main thing behind both the criticising and the conciliatory elements in his letters. Your own position is clear and it is what I suppose you have expressed already — you are sure of your own feeling and purpose and confidence in my leading, but you see no good in subjecting it to intellectual discussion. Yoga and spirituality rest on the soul's intuition and the need of the inner nature, not on the reasoning of the surface intelligence.

circa 1933

*

Women are not naturally weaker than men, but in society they have not been trained and educated like men to have a strong will and control over themselves, so when these things [*vital problems*] come on them, they do not understand or react so easily against them. But there are men as helpless in these struggles who are subject to the same reactions. Once one is open to the Divine, women are no less able than men to become strong with the Divine Force and luminous and wise with the Divine Light and Knowledge.

27 October 1935

*

The tendency you speak of, to leave the family and social life for the spiritual life, has been traditional in India for the last 2000 years and more — chiefly among men, it touches only a very small number of women. It must be remembered that Indian social life has subordinated almost entirely the individual to the family. Men and women do not marry according to their free will; their marriages are mostly arranged for them while they are still children. Not only so, but the mould of society has been long of an almost iron fixity putting each individual in his place and expecting him to conform to it. You speak of issues and a courageous solution, but in this life there are no problems and issues and no call for a solution — a courageous solution is only possible where there is freedom of the personal will; but where the only solution (if one remains in this life) is submission to the family will, there can be nothing of that kind. It is a secure life and can be happy if one accommodates oneself to it and has no unusual aspirations beyond it or is fortunate in one's environment; but it has no remedy for or escape from incompatibilities or any kind of individual frustration; it leaves little room for initiative or free movement or any individualism. The only outlet for the individual is his inner spiritual or religious life and the recognised escape is the abandonment of the *saṁsāra*, the family life, by some kind of Sannyasa. The Sannyasi, the Vaishnava Vairagi or the Brahmachari are free; they are dead to the family and can live according to the dictates of the inner spirit. Only if they enter into an order or asram, they have to abide by the rules of the order, but that is their own choice, not a responsibility which has been laid on them without their choice. Society recognised this door of escape from itself; religion sanctioned the idea that distaste for the social or worldly life was a legitimate ground for taking up that of the recluse or religious wanderer. But this was mainly for men; women, except in old times among the Buddhists who had their convents and in later times among the Vaishnavas, had little chance of such an escape unless a very strong spiritual impulse drove them which would take no denial. As for the wife and children left behind by the Sannyasi, there was little difficulty, for the joint family was there to take up or rather to continue their maintenance.

At present what has happened is that the old framework remains, but modern ideas have brought a condition of inadaptation, of unrest, the old family system is breaking up and women are seeking in more numbers the same freedom of escape as men have always had in the past. That would account for the cases you have come across — but I don't think the number of such cases can be as yet at all considerable, it is quite a new phenomenon; the admission of women to Asrams is itself a novelty.

The extreme unhappiness of a mental and vital growth which does not fit in with the surroundings, of marriages imposed that are unsuitable and where there is no meeting-point between husband and wife, of an environment hostile and intolerant of one's inner life and on the other hand the innate tendency of the Indian mind to seek a refuge in the spiritual or religious escape will sufficiently account for the new development. If society wants to prevent it, it must itself change. As to individuals, each case must be judged on its own merits; there is too much complexity in the problem and too much variation of nature, position, motives for a general rule.

I have spoken of the social problem in general terms only. In the conduct of the Asram, we have had many applications obviously dictated by an unwillingness to face the difficulties and responsibilities of life — naturally ignored or refused by us, but these have been mostly from men; there have been recently only one or two cases of women. Otherwise women have not applied usually on the ground of an unhappy marriage or difficult environment. Most often married sadhikas have followed or accompanied their husbands on the ground of having already begun to practise Yoga; others have come after fulfilling sufficiently the responsibilities of married life; in two or three cases there has been a separation from the husband but that was long before their coming here. In some cases there have been no children, in others the children have been left with the family. These cases do not really fall in the category of those you mention. Some of the sadhaks have left wife and family behind, but I do not think in any case the difficulties of life were the motive of their departure. It was rather the idea that they had felt the call and must leave all to follow it. 27 June 1937

Children in the Ashram

In answer to your question about *X* and her children, I may say that it is best for the children to return, as they are too young and undeveloped to remain here for a very long time. For *X* herself, what she needs for the sadhana is to learn to live more inwardly, and we think it is better for her to return home with her children at present. If over there she goes inward, feels her relation with us and the need of the inner life becomes imperative, then no obstacles will be able to prevent her coming here again. The difficulty you have spoken of in the way of her returning is precisely one of those outer considerations which are not of the first importance. When the thing has to be done, there will always be a way to do it. In so deciding, we are looking entirely at what we consider best for her spiritual future. 16 August 1932

*

As to the children you must remember what the Mother told you that they are yet too young for the Power to act directly upon them, it must be through you. That is the reason why you must always remain quiet and open so that the Mother may work through you, not for you only, but for them also.

22 August 1932

*

You will reply to him that for himself and *X* and *Y* permission can always be given whenever they want to come — but the children are too young. It is a rule of the Asram departed from only in rare cases, where there is something exceptional, that they cannot be admitted inside the Asram before they are 10 years old — for before that they are too young to bear or assimilate the forces of the atmosphere — at least under present conditions. When people on *their own responsibility* bring children and stay in a house outside the Asram then the Mother allows it, but she takes no responsibility for them and they are not allowed to come for Darshan or Pranam or even inside the Asram. 25 January 1934

*

If he comes alone we can accommodate him in the Asram but with his wife and children it will not be possible. The Mother also does not think it advisable to bring very young children here — usually the pressure of the forces in the Asram is too strong for them and there is a danger of their being ill. It is only after the age of 10 that they are allowed (except in very exceptional cases) to enter the Asram at all. 24 March 1934

*

The child cannot be brought to the Darshan. Children below 10 years of age are not allowed at the Darshan or in the Asram — very rare exceptions are made but not for anyone below 5. So permission can only be given for the adult members. You might write explaining this to your nephew. 2 August 1934

*

It is usually unsafe for children to undergo spiritual pressure when their minds are not yet ripe — it often overstimulates certain centres before the Adhar is ripe and there is often a disturbance or lesion somewhere as the result.

26 December 1934

*

> *X*, who is sixteen or seventeen, can explain the Mother's *Conversations* and *Prayers* but is ignorant of even elementary mathematics and other subjects which every normal person ought to know. Perhaps Ramakrishna would not consider it to be ignorance so long as the person is turned towards the Divine?

But it is an unnecessary ignorance not to know elementary mathematics. To be able to explain *Conversations* and *Prayers* is very good, but I don't see why it should exclude the other. If one has a realisation like Ramakrishna, that is another matter altogether. These people who came too young to the Asram like *X* and *Y* refused because they are not forced as children are at home and in school to learn anything at all except what it pleases them to learn. I consider the result deplorable, the more so because they have a more than ordinary personality and intelligence and ought to learn more, not less than other children.

5 June 1935

*

I do not think we can accept your friend's proposal; the conditions would have to be very different before his object could be fulfilled by sending his son here. We are not satisfied with the effect of the Asram life on children. They do not get the society of other children which they need, they associate with their elders and contract the habits of older people which is not to their benefit. Also they are exposed to ideas and influences which are beyond their age and grow old in mind too quickly, while at the same time they do not get the discipline, education, preliminary formation of the lower nature which is necessary in the early period of life. The life of the Asram has not been formed with a view to these things. If there had been a number of children with regular arrangements for their education it might have been different, but, as it is, we do not wish to admit children except in some exceptional case. 4 March 1936

Relations with People outside the Ashram

To give oneself to an outsider is to go out from the atmosphere of sadhana and give oneself to the outer world forces.

One can have a psychic feeling of love for someone, a universal love for all creatures, but one has to give oneself only to the Divine. 24 May 1934

*

> Do you believe that people here are more sensitive than people outside? Some people think that the Asram is a "rotten" place with jealousy and hatred rampant among the sadhaks.

Outside there are just the same things. The Asram is an epitome of the human nature that has to be changed — but outside people put as much as possible a mask of social manners and other pretences over the rottenness — what Christ called in the case of the Pharisees the "whited sepulchre". Moreover there one can pick and choose the people one will associate with while in the narrow limits of the Asram it is not so possible — contacts are inevitable. Wherever humans are obliged to associate closely, what I saw described the other day as "the astonishing meannesses and caddishnesses inherent in human nature" come quickly out. I have seen that in Asrams, in political work, in social attempts at united living, everywhere in fact where it gets a chance. But when one tries to do Yoga, one cannot fail to see that in oneself and not only, as most people do, see it in others, and once seen, then? Is it to be got rid of or to be kept? Most people here seem to want to keep it. Or they say it is too strong for them, they can't help it! 3 April 1938

Work in the Ashram

Work and Sadhana

> I have read in *The Synthesis of Yoga* and the Mother's *Conversations* that every act and movement, thought and word should be an offering. Even if this is a strictly mental effort without the heart's devotion, as it may be at first, it is sure to lead to devotion, provided the effort is sincere. This discipline is quite possible in acts of a more or less mechanical nature like walking or eating, but where the work involves mental concentration, as in reading or writing, it seems well-nigh impossible. If the consciousness has to be busy with the remembrance, the attention will get divided and the work will not be properly done.

It is because people live in the surface mind and are identified with it. When one lives more inwardly, it is only the surface consciousness that is occupied and one stands behind it in another which is silent and self-offered. 4 May 1933

*

> Does this consciousness [*mentioned in the preceding letter*] come only by aspiration or can one have it by following a mental discipline?

One starts by a mental effort — afterwards it is an inner consciousness that is formed which need not be always *thinking* of the Mother because it is always conscious of her. 31 May 1933

*

We cannot approve of your idea — there are already enough intellectuals in the Asram and the room-keeping intellectual is not a type whose undue propagation we are disposed to encourage. Outside work is just what is necessary to keep the equilibrium of the nature and you certainly need it for that purpose. Also your presence in the D.R. [*Dining Room*] is indispensable. For the rest instead of getting vexed with *X* or *Y* you should seek the cause of these things in yourself — that is always the true rule for a sadhak. You are sometimes at your best and then things go on very well; but sometimes you are not at all at your best and then these misunderstandings arise. The remedy therefore is to be at your best always — not to be in your room always, but to be in your best and therefore your true self always. 15 May 1934

*

> I have often felt that *dhyāna* was a better way than *karma*, poetry etc. to reach the Divine — a shorter cut I mean. Am I right?

Meditation is one means of the approach to the Divine and a great way, but it cannot be called a short cut — for most it is a long and difficult though very high ascent. It can by no means be short unless it brings a descent and even then it is only a foundation that is quickly laid — afterwards meditation has to build laboriously a big superstructure on that foundation. It is very indispensable, but there is nothing of the short cut about it.

Karma is a much simpler road — provided one's mind is not fixed on the karma to the exclusion of the Divine. The aim must be the Divine and the work can only be a means. The use of poetry etc. is to keep one in contact with one's inner being and that helps to prepare for the direct contact with the inmost, but one must not stop with that, one must go on to the real thing. If one thinks of being a "literary man", a poet, a painter as things worth while for their own sake, then it is no longer the Yogic spirit. That is why I have sometimes to say that our business is to be Yogis, not merely poets, painters etc.

Love, bhakti, surrender, the psychic opening are the only short cut to the Divine — or can be; for if the love and bhakti are too vital, then there is likely to be a seesaw between ecstatic expectation and *viraha*, *abhimāna*, despair, which will make it not a short cut but a long one, a zigzag, not a straight flight, a whirling round one's own ego instead of a running towards the Divine. 10 December 1934

*

> If I remember right, you wrote to me that work is only a means for the preparation of the spiritual life; otherwise it has no spiritual value.

[*Sri Aurobindo underlined "only", put a question mark above it, and wrote:*] Lord God! when did I make this stupendous statement which destroys at one fell swoop the two volumes of the *Essays on the Gita* and all the seven volumes of the *Arya*? Work by itself is only a preparation, so is meditation by itself, but work done in the increasing Yogic consciousness is a means of realisation as much as meditation is.

> In your letter to X[1] you say that work helps to prepare for the direct contact with the inmost. In another letter you say that work prepares for the right consciousness to develop — which means the same thing.

I have not said, I hope, that work *only* prepares. Meditation also prepares for the direct contact. If we are to do work only as a preparation and then become motionless meditative ascetics, then all my spiritual teaching is false and there is no use for supramental realisation or anything else that has not been done in the past.

> My own impression is that work is an excellent means as a preparation, but the major experiences and realisations are not likely to come in during work. My little experience corroborates me, because whatever drops of Ananda descended on me, were mostly during meditation. Only once did I have two minutes of Ananda during work.

I see. When the time for preparation is over, one will sit immobile for ever after and never do any work — for, as you say, work and realisation cannot go together. Hurrah for the Himalayas!

Well, but why not then the old Yoga? If work is so contrary to realisation! That is Shankara's teaching.

---

[1] *The letter of 10 December 1934 on page 743. — Ed.*

> The main difference between the two is that in work the attention is bound to be diverted. While working with the hand, utter the name of Hari with the mouth — this attitude is quite possible, but only as a preparation. It is not enough to take us to the goal, which meditation alone can do; because there the whole being is absorbed in engrossing meditation on the Beloved.

In that case I am entirely wrong in preaching a dynamic Yoga — Let us go back to the cave and the forest.

> You have said that 9/10 of your time is spent in doing correspondence, works etc., whereas only 1/10 is devoted to concentration.[2] One naturally asks, why should it not be possible for you to do concentration and work at the same time?

For me, correspondence alone. I have no time left for other "works etc".

Concentration and meditation are not the same thing. One can be concentrated in work or bhakti as well as in meditation. For God's sake be careful about your vocabulary, or else you will tumble into many errors and loosenesses of thinking.

If I devoted 9/10 of my time to concentration and none to work — the result would be equally unsatisfactory. My concentration is for a particular work — it is not for meditation divorced from life. When I concentrate I work upon others, upon the world, upon the play of forces. What I say is that to spend all the time reading and writing letters is not sufficient for the purpose. I am not asking to become a meditative Sannyasi.

> Did you not retire for five or six years for an exclusive and intensive meditation?

I am not aware that I did so. But my biographers probably know more about it than I do.

---

[2] *See the letter of 26 October 1934 on page 333. — Ed.*

> If the Supramental Divine himself differentiates between work and concentration . . .

Between concentration on correspondence alone and the full many-sided work — *not* between work and concentration.

> and finds it difficult to radiate his Force among the few sadhaks contemporaneously with his work of correspondence etc., what about undivines and inframentals like us?

[*Underlining "contemporaneously with his work of correspondence":*] It does not mean that I lose the higher consciousness while doing the work of correspondence. If I did that, I would not only not be supramental, but would be very far even from the full Yogic consciousness.

Say "by correspondence alone". If I have to help somebody to repel an attack, I can't do it by only writing a note, I have to send him some Force or else concentrate and do the work for him. Also I can't bring down the Supramental by merely writing neatly to people about it. I am not asking for leisure to meditate at ease in a blissful indolence. I said distinctly I wanted it for concentration on other more important work than correspondence.

> These are some of the doubts some of us are afflicted with.

The ignorance underlying this attitude is in the assumption that one must necessarily do only work or only meditation. Either work is the means or meditation is the means, but both cannot be! I have never said, so far as I know, that meditation should not be done. To set up an open competition or a closed one between works and meditation is a trick of the dividing mind and belongs to the old Yoga. Please remember that I have been declaring all along an integral Yoga in which knowledge, Bhakti, works — light of consciousness, Ananda and love, will and power in works — meditation, adoration, service of the Divine have all their place. Have I written seven volumes of the *Arya* all in vain? Meditation is not greater than Yoga of works nor works greater than Yoga by knowledge — both are equal.

Another thing — it is a mistake to argue from one's own very limited experience, ignoring that of others, and build on it large generalisations about Yoga. This is what many do, but the method has obvious demerits. You have no experience of major realisations through work, and you conclude that such realisations are impossible. But what of the many who have had them — elsewhere and here too in the Asram? That has no value? You kindly hint to me that I have failed to get anything by works? How do you know? I have not written the history of my sadhana — if I had, you would have seen that if I had not made action and work one of my chief means of realisation — well, there would have been no sadhana and no realisation except that, perhaps, of Nirvana.

I shall perhaps add something hereafter as to what works can do, but no time tonight.

Do not conclude however that I am exalting works as the sole means of realisation. I am only giving it its due place.

You will excuse the vein of irony or satire in all this — but really when I am told that my own case disproves my whole spiritual philosophy and accumulated knowledge and experience, a little liveliness in answer is permissible. 16 December 1934

*

> A sense was coming down from above that I belong to the Above, but have come down upon earth for a mission to work out — deputed here as an instrument of the Above for the works of the Above.

The work is the work of the Divine and it is best to regard oneself as an instrument. The word mission is apt to accentuate the sense of ego and should be avoided. 5 January 1935

*

> The higher consciousness keeps contact with me only through my passive self. If I do more work, it disturbs the higher working. I don't know what the cause of this is.

There is no special cause for it. It is always so with everybody unless one feels the Mother's Force working through one in the action.

> I find it hard to work while remaining in the Yogic consciousness. My inner state is too passive.

It is possible to work through the passive state even, provided one feels that one is not doing the work but it is being done through one.

> You suggested another way — to keep the psychic in front. But I don't know how to bring the psychic forward.

It comes forward of itself either through constant love and aspiration or when the mind and vital have been made ready by the descent from above and the working of the Force.

13 March 1935

*

> There are some sadhaks here who think that everyone should do Karmayoga only, without doing any meditation at all.

There are some who cannot meditate and progress through work only. Each has his own nature. But to extend one method to all is always an error. 16 May 1935

*

> Why do people complain that they are not able to keep up the sadhana during work?

It is a question of doing work in the right attitude — as a means of sadhana. Most take the work as work only. 3 July 1936

*

> Is it not a fact that most of the true Yogas demand passivity of the mind as the first important basis? Does your Yoga differ from them in this at least? If not, what is the purpose of allowing the sadhaks to keep their minds constantly active in learning languages? Or has it created for them such a climate

> that they can keep their minds calm and quiet somehow behind and in spite of this mental activity?

One can go on without anything except a little rice daily and some water — without clothes even or a house to shelter. Is that what you call true Yoga and that should be followed in the Asram? But then there is no need of an Asram. A cave somewhere for each will do.

Why do you use a fountain pen? You can very well go on with an ordinary one. Why do you take these *cahiers* from the stores? Cheap paper would do. Why do you write? The mind should be passive.

If by passivity of the mind you mean laziness and inability to use it, then what Yoga makes that its basis? The mind has to be quieted and transformed, not made indolent and useless. Is there any old Yoga that makes it a rule not to allow those who practise it to study Sanskrit or philosophy? Does that prevent the Yogis from attaining mental quietude? Do you think that the Mother and myself never read anything and have to sit all day inactive in order to make our minds quiet? Are you not aware that the principle of this Yoga is to arrive at an inner silence in which all activities can take place without disturbing the inner silence? 24 March 1937

*

For the sadhana, it is not true that some are here only because they give money and others because they are workers only. What is true is that there are many who can prepare themselves only by work, their consciousness not being yet ready for meditation of the more intense kind. But even for those who can do intense meditation from the beginning, sadhana by work is also necessary in this Yoga. One cannot arrive at its goal by meditation alone. As for your own capacity, it was evident when for a fairly long period an active sadhana was proceeding within you. Everybody's capacity however is limited — little can be done by one's own strength alone. It is reliance on the Divine Force, the Mother's Force and Light and openness to it that is the real capacity. This you had for a time, but as with many others it got clouded over by the coming up of the physical nature in its full force. This clouding happens to almost everybody at that stage, but it need not be lasting. If the physical consciousness resolves to open itself, then nothing more is needed for progress in the sadhana. 10 July 1937

*

There is one thing everybody should remember that everything should be done from the point of view of Yoga, of sadhana, of growing into a divine life in the Mother's consciousness. To insist upon one's own mind and its ideas, to allow oneself to be governed by one's own vital feelings and reactions should not be the rule of life here. One has to stand back from these, to be detached, to get in their place the true knowledge from above, the true feelings from the psychic within. This cannot be done if the mind and vital do not surrender, if they do not renounce their attachment to their own ignorance which they call truth, right, justice. All the trouble rises from that; if that were overcome, the true basis of life, of work, of harmony of all in the union with the Divine would more and more replace the trouble and difficulty of the present.

Some Aspects of Work in the Ashram

The work here is not intended for showing one's capacity or having a position or as a means of physical nearness to the Mother, but as a field and an opportunity for the Karmayoga part of the integral Yoga — for learning to work in the true Yogic way — dedication through service, practical selflessness, obedience, scrupulousness, discipline, setting the Divine and the Divine's work first and oneself last, harmony, patience, forbearance etc. When the workers learn these things and cease to be egocentric, as most of you now are, then will come the time for work in which capacity can really be shown — although even then the showing of capacity will be an incident and can never be the main consideration or the object of divine work. 28 August 1931

*

> When I was working in the Satyagraha movement, I worked with a zeal and energy I don't seem to have here. Is it because there is no fighting programme except against one's own self? How can I recover my interest and vigour in work?

The Satyagraha was one of those movements in which the vital part of the nature gets easily enthusiastic and interested — it meant a fight on the vital level (its only difference from other revolutionary activities being its "non-violent" character), with universal support and applause and approval, a nationwide excitement behind you, the sense of heroism and possible martyrdom, a "moral" ideal giving a farther support of strong self-approbation and the sense of righteousness. Here there is nothing that ministers to the human vital nature; the work is small, silent, shut off from the outside world and its circumstances, of value only as a field for spiritual self-culture. If one is governed by the sole spiritual motive and has the spiritual consciousness, one can take joy and interest in this work. Or if, in spite of his human shortcomings, the worker is mainly bent on spiritual progress and self-perfection, then also he can take interest in the work and both feel its utility for the discovery and purification of his egoistic mental and vital and physical nature and take joy in it as a service of the Divine. 11 August 1932

*

Recover yourself now and proceed on your way with a deeper and truer aim in you. Your efforts at sadhana up till now have been too exclusively on the vital plane; aspire for a full opening of the psychic, clear your movements of all ego and strive to make yourself open and aspire only to be a receptacle of the true consciousness and an instrument of the Divine.

As for outward things, what has been lacking in you has been discipline, order, self-consecration in your work. You have acted according to your impulse and fancy and been unable to do any work steadily and with devotion in the work. The Mother gave you library work to do and it has not been scrupulously done. She asks you for the sake of your own self-discipline to do that little carefully and scrupulously in the future. For the rest you can go on with your music and your sadhana; but let all be done in a deeper spirit and as an offering to the Divine.

11 May 1933

*

There is no reason why one should not offer to work if there is work to do. Often there is work to be done and no one offers, so it is not done. Most of the Asram work is done by a few people, while others do a little only or only what they please.

31 May 1933

*

Each man has his defects — you and all others. So you should not allow that to destroy the harmony that should reign among workers. Remember that patience and equanimity and good feeling for all are the first needs of the sadhak. 12 November 1933

*

The Mother's withdrawal of you from the work had nothing to do with any relation between you and *X* or any other sadhika. What you have to do is to utilise it for becoming quiet within, silencing the vital movement and getting into the true attitude.

What you write shows that you had a wrong idea of the work. The work in the Asram was not meant as a service to humanity or to a section of it called the sadhaks of the Asram. It was not meant either as an opportunity for a joyful social life and a flow of sentiments and attachments between the sadhaks and an expression of the vital movements, a free vital interchange whether with some or with all. The work was meant as a service to the Divine and as a field for the inner opening to the Divine, surrender to the Divine alone, rejection of ego and all the ordinary vital movements and the training in a psychic elevation, selflessness, obedience, renunciation of all mental, vital or other self-assertion of the limited personality. Self-affirmation is not the aim, development of the personal self is not the aim, the formation of a collective vital ego is also not the aim. The merging of the little ego in union with the Divine, purification, surrender, the substitution of the Divine guidance for one's own ignorant self-guidance based on one's personal ideas and personal feelings is the aim of Karma Yoga, the surrender of one's own will to the Divine Will.

If one feels human beings to be near and the Divine to be far and seeks the Divine through service of and love of human beings and not the direct service and love of the Divine, then one is following a wrong principle — for that is the principle of the mental, vital and moral, not the spiritual life. November 1933

*

All work is equal — those who write or embroider are in no way superior to those who cook or prepare the grains. To speak otherwise is ignorance. 7 December 1933

*

Active participation in an outside work is sometimes useful to a sadhak in the early stages of his sadhana so that he may learn equanimity; but the utility of it for a sadhak of the Asrama is not very clear. Personal or family work is not part of the divine Work unless as in *X*'s case it is dedicated to the Divine — for he gives all its profits here. But in your case it is family property and that is not possible. We are therefore rather doubtful as to how this would fit in at the present stage of your sadhana.

25 April 1935

*

Work here and work done in the world are of course not the same thing. The work there is not in any way a divine work in special — it is ordinary work in the world. But still one must take it as a training and do it in the spirit of karmayoga — what matters there is not the nature of the work in itself but the spirit in which it is done. It must be in the spirit of the Gita, without desire, with detachment, without repulsion, but doing it as perfectly as possible, not for the sake of the family or promotion or to please the superiors, but simply because it is the thing that has been given in the hand to do. It is a field of inner training, nothing more. One has to learn in it three things, equality, desirelessness, dedication. It is not the work as a thing for its own sake, but one's doing of it and one's way of doing it that one has to dedicate to the Divine. Done in that spirit it does not matter what the work is. If one trains oneself spiritually like that, then one will be ready to do in the true way whatever special work directly for the Divine (such as the Asram work) one may any day be given to do. 21 September 1935

*

What is necessary is not to be troubled or upset by small things, to work pleasantly and quietly with the others, then they also will do the same and there will be no friction.

The Place of Rules in Work

> We are supposed to take our tooth-sticks between 6 and 7 p.m. Yesterday I forgot to go. At 7.15 I remembered, but it was too late. I mentioned this to X. He told me to go anyway, since others go after 7. I told him I would obey the rule regardless.

It is a good discipline like that. Rules are made for the proper harmony and convenience of the work. If you disregard them you promote disorder, inefficiency and looseness of work and at the same time you yourself become or remain loose, negligent, undisciplined and imperfect. 25 June 1933

*

Rules are indispensable for the orderly management of work; for without order and arrangement nothing can be properly done, all becomes clash, confusion and disorder.

It is the rule that as far as possible supervisors should foresee their needs and ask for the morning's needs the evening before and for the afternoon's needs in the morning. In special cases where the article is needed at a particular hour, that should be stated in the chit. Where such previous notice is not given, the office will send the articles asked for as soon as possible — i.e., in view of the other work to be done.

In this case the work had been fixed beforehand so it was possible to send previous notice. Under the circumstances, although you could ask them to let you have your needs early in spite of absence of previous notice, you could not go and claim that as a right or threaten to report them for negligence to the Mother.

In all such dealings with others, you should see not only your own side of the question but the other side also. There should be no anger, vehement reproach or menace, for these things only raise anger and retort on the other side. I write this because you are trying to rise above yourself and dominate your vital and when one wants to do that, one cannot be too strict with oneself in these things. It is best even to be severe to one's own mistakes and charitable to the mistakes of others. 23 June 1935

*

A rule that can be varied by everyone at his pleasure is no rule. In all countries in which organised work is successfully done, (India is not one of them), rules exist and nobody thinks of breaking them, for it is realised that work (or life either) without discipline would soon become a confusion and an anarchic failure. In the great days of India everything was put under rule, even art and poetry, even Yoga. Here in fact rules are much less rigid than in any European organisation. Personal discretion can even in a frame of rules have plenty of play — but discretion must be discreetly used, otherwise it becomes something arbitrary or chaotic. 1 October 1936

Organisation and Discipline in Work

> I hear you do not like the gate-keepers to do any writing, reading etc. when on duty. Is it true? Up till now I have been writing during that time.

It was because people were neglecting their duty in the absorption of reading and writing, allowing undesirable people to enter etc. If that does not happen, one can read or write — only when one is on duty, the duty comes first. 12 May 1933

*

> In regard to my work at the office, I have the feeling that my position is neither one of working under another nor of working on my own. Is this the way it should be?

It is not necessary to work under anybody — it is a work of collaboration in which each is free to organise his work as he thinks best for the work. You can see how best to organise yours.

31 May 1934

*

The Mother has her own reasons for her decisions; she has to look at the work as a whole without regard to one department or branch alone and with a view to the necessities of the work and the management. The objection to buying much of this size was hers and not *X*'s. Whatever work is done here, one has always to learn to subordinate or put aside one's own ideas and preferences about things concerning it and do for the best under the conditions and decisions laid down by her. This is one of the main difficulties throughout the Asram, as each worker wants to do according to his own ideas, on his own lines according to what he thinks to be the right or convenient thing and expects that to be sanctioned. It is one of the principal reasons of difficulty, clash or disorder in the work, creating conflict between the workers themselves, conflict between the workers and the heads of departments, conflict between the ideas of the sadhaks and the will of the Mother. Harmony can only exist if all accept the will of the Mother without grudge or personal reaction.

Independent work does not exist in the Asram. All is organised and interrelated; neither the heads of departments nor the workers are independent. To learn subordination and cooperation is necessary for all collective work; without it there will be chaos.

As for the Yoga aspect of these personal clashes, dislikes etc. and of the work itself, I have written about that before.

10 March 1936

*

> When people set a date by which a work must be completed, the usual result is that there is a huge haste, followed by a period in which people don't know what to do. Is it really necessary to fix dates? I wonder sometimes if doing so does not create a sort of occult resistance.

It is necessary to fix dates for the organisation of the work, but there must be a certain plasticity so that if necessary the time may be extended. As to particular cases it is a matter of judgment how much time is to be given. It is the system of the schedule, but whether the work can be done "according to schedule", as they say, has to be seen in practice. The occult resistance is a fact but it applies more to psychological than to physical things.

18 October 1936

Dealing with Paid Workers

> In dealing with paid workmen, I sometimes behave in a very familiar way, sometimes in a neutral way and sometimes I get angry. How should I behave with them?

None of these ways is the right one; the first weakens the authority, the second is not dynamic, the last is obviously not helpful. In all work the nearer one gets to an entire equanimity (which does not mean indifference) in the mind and the vital feeling, the better. A calm detached attitude, with a fundamental sympathy in it but not of the sentimental kind, a clear unbiased eye observing their character and reactions, and a quiet and firm authority without harshness, capable both of kindness and of quiet severity, where severity is needed, would be the best attitude. 22 August 1932

*

To be angry and speak harshly to the workmen injures both the work and the sadhana. 10 February 1933

*

> It seems to me that sadhaks could take up some of the work now being given to paid workers, electrical work for instance. I am ready to do this kind of work.

I suppose it will have to come to that in the end — for the conditions and cost of having workmen and even servants is likely to become prohibitive if the new laws are made operative in the [*French*] colonies. But for the moment it is not practicable. The majority of the sadhaks have not the mentality that would be needed for this kind of work — workman's work — nor the necessary capacity of working together. A few zealous and enthusiastic sadhaks would not be able to meet the necessity.

30 June 1936

Life and Death in the Ashram

Self-Control, Not Asceticism

> What should be the true necessities of a sadhak? Should he buy things from outside? With what idea is pocket money given to us?

The idea, when the arrangement was made, was simply to see how and in what spirit the sadhaks dealt with money when they had any at their disposal.

The *necessities* of a sadhak should be as few as possible; for there are only a very few things that are real necessities in life. The rest are either utilities or things decorative to life or luxuries. These a Yogi has a right to possess or enjoy only on one of two conditions —

(1) if he uses them during his sadhana solely to train himself in possessing things without attachment or desire and learn to use them rightly, in harmony with the Divine Will, with a proper handling, a just organisation, arrangement and measure — or,

(2) if he has already attained a true freedom from desire and attachment and is not in the least moved or affected in any way by loss or withholding or deprival. If he has any greed, desire, demand, claim for possession or enjoyment, any anxiety, grief, anger or vexation when denied or deprived, he is not free in spirit and his use of the things he possesses is contrary to the spirit of sadhana. Even if he is free in spirit, he will not be fit for possession if he has not learned to use things not for himself, but for the Divine Will, as an instrument, with the right knowledge and action in the use for the proper equipment of a life lived not for oneself but for and in the Divine. 7 March 1932

*

> I find it difficult to distinguish between true need and what might be called luxury. A part of me wants to have nice and

> decent things and to take pleasure in them. Another side tells me so many things are not needed. I would like to return to the ascetic life I followed before coming here.

You must be prepared to live in either condition, attached neither to luxury nor to asceticism. It is good to be able to live with very few things, but you must also be able to live with nice and decent things and make right use of them. Never mind your true need, live with whatever the Mother has given you. 6 April 1932

*

> An aspiration towards detachment has come upon me and the will to avoid luxury or desire or habit of any kind.

If that can be done (in a positive, not merely a negative way), then it would be an immense step forward. 18 November 1933

*

> You have written [*in the preceding letter*] of detachment "in a positive, not merely a negative way". Please explain this.

By negative I mean merely repressing the desires and wrong movements and egoism, by positive I mean the bringing down of light and peace and purity in those parts from above. I do not mean that these movements are not to be rejected — but all the energy should not be directed solely to rejection. It must also be directed to the positive replacement of them by the higher consciousness. The more this consciousness comes, the easier also will the rejection be. 19 November 1933

*

> Your condemnation of asceticism is often taken by the vital as giving sanction to the continuation of desire and its fulfilment — so at least I have noticed in some here.

That is a mistake many have made because the vital wanted to make it. Whether ascetic or non-ascetic, the Yogi, the sadhak must become free from vital desire and spiritually master of the movements of his nature — and for that he must be free from ego and desire and duality. I have always made that quite clear — that indulgence of desire is no more part of this Yoga than it is of Sannyasa. One must be able to use and handle physical things and physical life, but from the spiritual consciousness, not from the level of the vital ego. 27 November 1935

*

It is surprising that you should miss, that so many here should miss the point that to be so much troubled about a trifling want or inconvenience is quite contrary to the spirit of Yoga. To be untroubled and unmoved by such things is an elementary step in Yogic self-discipline. Transcendence is a far bigger matter; but this should be possible by self-control, for that there is no need of transcendence. In the life here extreme asceticism in the sense of doing without everything but the barest needs is not enforced; but it is all the more necessary to be free within, to surmount desire and attachment, to be able to do without things in the sense of not hankering after things when they are not there, not being attached to them when they are there, not insisting on one's own demands, desires, wants, comforts, conveniences, being satisfied with what one is given. Sannyasa is not enforced, but the inner *tyāga* of non-desire, non-demand, non-attachment is indispensable. A thing like this, an inconvenience that is not remedied when one asks, should be welcomed as a test for this inner *tyāga*; all things of the kind should be welcome as such opportunities to the seeker after the inner perfection.

I don't know that wearing the Sannyasi dress would help for one can wear the dress and yet be full of desires. But I have no objection if it helps you as a symbol or a reminder. 7 March 1937

No Demands

A sadhak should not have demands and ask for things for his personal use from people outside, but if they of their own accord and without any request or suggestion send them to him, he can receive them. The most important point is that he shall not indulge any spirit of greed or desire under any excuse or colour and should be unaffected in his vital being by the presence or absence of these things that satisfy desire. 5 March 1931

*

All that is simply the unreasoning repetition of the old blindness. There can be no understanding if your mind insists on something that is radically untrue. This ignorant attitude assumes that you are here to be first, to be equal to any other in the Asram in the eyes of others, to enjoy position and privileges, to grab whatever you can for yourself, to have pleasure and enjoyment, to get everything that anybody else may have. All that is utterly false for the spiritual life. These are the aims that selfish, worldly and ambitious men seek in the ordinary life. The spiritual life has nothing to do with these things. One is here only for two things, to realise the Divine and to transform the consciousness and nature into the higher consciousness and nature. That is what the Power that works on you intends and nothing else. The influence upon you which struggles against it has to disappear and no more be a part of your nature. 8 June 1934

*

> I was told that when we have surrendered completely to God, God will take care of all our true needs.

He may give all that is truly needed — but people usually interpret this idea in the sense that He gives all that they think or feel that they need. He may do that — but also He may not.

> It is said that He supplies all our psychic needs.

In the end, yes; but here too people expect Him to supply them instantly, which does not always happen. 30 January 1936

*

It is true that the sadhaks have turned the idea of a divine life into an excuse for an unbridled spirit of demand and desire and this is increasing to a perilous extent. The whole world is in a financial and economic crisis; money difficult to get, prices rising fantastically, people everywhere cutting down their standard of life and their expenses: here in the Asram the standard of life is rising and the expenditure on comforts increasing continually. At this rate it will not be long before a halt will have to come and circumstances will force a reversion to a more abstemious way of life.

But the remedy is not asceticism; it is self-control, the elimination of desire and demand, the spirit which is easily satisfied with what it gets, makes the most of it, is careful of physical things and not subject to craving. The ideal of the Yoga is not asceticism, but to do with things or without things in the same spirit of equality and non-attachment — only in that spirit can one make a true and spiritual use of physical things and material life. 5 July 1937

*

You must get a change of consciousness which makes these external things of no importance to you. A change of room will not bring it, on the contrary your stay in this room is the very opportunity that is given you for the inner change.

*

> I have the idea of giving up the cot I was offered because I could not get a cot to my taste. Should I keep whatever comes, or should I do without?

Why keep up these vital desires, "a cot to my taste" etc.? I have always lain on any cot given to me, not asking whether it is to my "taste" or not. It seems to me the proper attitude for a sadhak.

Care of Material Things

Wanton waste, careless spoiling of physical things in an incredibly short time, loose disorder, misuse of service and materials due either to vital grasping or to tamasic inertia are baneful to prosperity and tend to drive away or discourage the Wealth-Power. These things have long been rampant in the society and, if that continues, an increase in our means might well mean a proportionate increase in the wastage and disorder and neutralise the material advantage. This must be remedied if there is to be any sound progress.

Asceticism for its own sake is not the ideal of this Yoga, but self-control in the vital and right order in the material are a very important part of it — and even an ascetic discipline is better for our purpose than a loose absence of true control. Mastery of the material does not mean having plenty and profusely throwing it out or spoiling it as fast as it comes or faster. Mastery implies in it the right and careful utilisation of things and also a self-control in their use. 5 January 1932

*

I may say, generally, that in the present condition of things it is becoming increasingly necessary to do the best we can with what we have and make things last as long as possible. There are many kinds of things hitherto provided, for instance, which it will be impossible to renew once the present stock is over. The difficulty is that most people in the Asram have no training in handling physical things (except the simplest, hardest and roughest), no propensity to take care of them, to give them their full use and time of survival. This is partly due to ignorance and inexperience, but partly also to carelessness, rough, violent and unseeing handling, indifference; there is also in many a feeling that it does not matter if things are quickly spoilt, they will be replaced; one worker was even heard to say to another, "why do you care? it is not your money." To take one instance only. Taps in Europe will last for many years — here in a few months, sometimes in a few weeks they are spoilt and call for repairs or replacement. People ask for new provisions before the old are exhausted or even near exhaustion, not because they need them, but because they have a right (?) to a new supply; some have even been known to throw away what remains with them in order to have a new stock. And so on, ad infinitum. All this is tamas and the end of tamas is disintegration, dispersal of forces, failure of material. And in the end, as this is a collective affair, the consequences come upon everybody, the careful and the careless together. Our ideal was a large, not a restricted life, but well-organised, free from waste and tamas and disorder. Now there has to be a tightness, a period of retrenchment till people learn and things get better. 17 January 1932

*

If things are constantly broken, *X* is perfectly right in enforcing economy. Very few of the sadhaks have any sense of responsibility in this respect; most seem to think that they are entitled to waste, destroy, spoil, use freely as if the Mother's sole business was to supply their wants and the Asram had unlimited resources. But it is not possible for the Asram to develop its wealth so long as the sadhaks and workers are selfish, careless, undisciplined and irresponsible. Lakshmi does not continue to pour her gifts under such conditions. 30 January 1933

*

Each supervisor is responsible for the maintenance intact and in good condition of the machinery, tools and apparatus in his charge. No one other than those in charge or using them for the work should touch or handle. 1940s

Consciousness in the Body

> Sometimes during work, while issuing materials or counting money, the required amount comes up in the hand at the first attempt. This happens more frequently when the mind is quiet and at ease. Till now I thought it may be merely an accident. Is there anything in this?

The correct counting is not an accident; there is a sort of intuitive consciousness that comes in the body and makes it know the right thing or do the right thing. This growing of consciousness in the body is one of the most important results of Yoga turned to action and is especially important in this Yoga. 8 August 1932

Fund-Raising

> How can I make myself fit for the Mother's divine work? Should I actively pull her power or open myself passively and wait for it to descend and work in and through me? What are the conditions that I must fulfil to allow the materialisation of this money power? If I have the capacity, as you had told me the last time, what shall I do to fulfil the capacity?

It is something in the inner being that has the power of which the Mother spoke, not the external human part. I think you are seeking the power in the external being, but that can only raise up difficulties. Awaken the psychic in you, let the inner being come out and replace the ego, then the latent power also will become effective. You can then do the work and the service to which you aspire. 23 February 1931

*

> If you say "you are unfit for the [*fund-raising*] work that you propose", that will suffice to break the existing deadlock.

It is not a question of fitness or unfitness, primarily, — there are many other considerations, e.g. the practicability of any such large collection under the present not very favourable circumstances, the conditions of your proposed attempt etc.

But if you are not sure of yourself (as to the persistence of your intention in the future), how can you be sure that it is your mission or a true inspiration and not the imagination or the strong impulse of a moment? In another letter you had said you could wait for years.

Anyhow, I cannot give a decision on so important a matter unless I see the way more clear than I see it now.

26 June 1931

*

I wrote to you before [*in the preceding letter*] that I did not see my way clear in this matter. My main reason, or one of my main reasons, was that the time and present conditions are adverse to success. All the information I have received since entirely confirms it; most have suffered by the long prevailing depression and few are either in a mood or a position to give largely. In these circumstances the idea of a mission to collect lakhs of money must be abandoned or at least postponed to better times.

There were other difficulties I saw, but these need not be discussed at present, since the mission itself is barred by the lack of all reasonable chance of success.

About work here and what has been said by you on that subject, I shall write in another letter. 26 August 1931

*

> I should like to know (1) whether I can stay here even if no financial help comes forth.

Yes; since you are working for the Asram.

> (2) whether it would be desirable to open up fresh correspondence with friends who may perhaps send something.

If you can get some help from your friends, it would be much better. You can understand that with 100 members almost, most of whom can contribute nothing to the expenses, the Asram needs all the help it can get for their and its maintenance.

14 December 1931

*

> *X* wants to approach rich people for money, but does not know how to do it. He says that if people are approached directly, there may not be any response. His plan is to somehow make them take interest in our work so that they may themselves offer money without any asking. He asked me to take your advice in this matter.

If it is done in that way, *X* will have to wait for a result for years together. Even if they are interested, even if they are practising Yoga, people don't think of giving money unless they are asked, except a few who have a generous vital nature. It is all right to interest people in the work and the Yoga — but of itself that will be rarely sufficient, they must know that money is needed and the idea of giving must be put into them. 13 March 1933

*

> I have an earnest desire to be of some help to the Ashram but I don't know how. I know several rich people in Calcutta but I fail to make them respond generously to my request for donating to the Ashram. Please enable me to influence these people.

There are many men who are very pious, but they will give only to traditional institutions, temples, dharamshalas etc. Unless they are convinced, interested or somehow touched, they may not be so ready to give to the Asram. But the attempt can always be made. 13 March 1933

*

The vital forces who hold the money power do not want to give or yield anything except for vital purposes, it is only under compulsion that they give for divine work. 15 May 1933

*

> I am rather anxious to know the average monthly expenses of the Asram.

Over Rs. 6000 a month — including the building expenses and all other current expenditure. Of course buying of houses and such other non-current expenditure is not included. Each member of the Asram costs Rs. 50 a month, visitors about Rs. 40 (rent, electricity, food, servants etc. all included). 31 July 1933

*

> May I possibly know more about the financial condition of the Asram?

I think there is nothing more of importance, except that we need money for expansion and do not get it. 1 August 1933

*

The expenses of each sadhak are reckoned as Rs. 50 a month — but it is not much use asking for that. The real need of money here is of a bigger kind — for development of institutions in the Asram, a place for art, for music, a school for children, a place for science etc. Even the maintenance of the Asram needs larger sums, e.g. for houses to be bought instead of renting them at a heavy recurring expense.

Business

As usual you seem to have received some very fantastic and sensational reports about what you call the mill business. There was no "mill" in question, only *X*'s small foundry and *Y*'s equally small oil factory. *X* was in difficulties about her affair and came to the Mother for advice and offered to sell; the Mother was prepared to buy on reasonable or even on generous terms on certain conditions and use it, not on capitalistic lines or for any profit, but for certain work necessary to the Ashram, just as she uses the Atelier or the Bakery or the Building Department. The Ashram badly needs a foundry and the idea was to use *Y*'s machinery for making the soap necessary for the Ashram. The Mother told *X* that she was sending for *Z* and if he consented to run these two affairs, she might buy but not otherwise as the Mother herself had no time to look after these things. *Z* came but found the whole thing too small and not sufficient for the purpose or for some larger work he wanted to do; so *X* had to be told that nothing could be done. That is the whole affair. Where do you find anything here of capitalism and huge profits and slums and all the rest?

I may say however that I do not regard business as something evil or tainted, any more than it was so regarded in ancient spiritual India. If I did, I would not be able to receive money from *A* or from those of our disciples who in Bombay trade with East Africa; nor could we then encourage them to go on with their work but would have to tell them to throw it up and attend to their spiritual progress alone. How are we to reconcile *A*'s seeking after spiritual light and his mill? Ought I not to tell him to leave his mill to itself and to the devil and go into some Ashram to meditate? Even if I myself had

had the command to do business as I had the command to do politics I would have done it without the least spiritual or moral compunction. All depends on the spirit in which a thing is done, the principle on which it is built and use to which it is turned. I have done politics and the most violent kind of revolutionary politics, *ghoraṁ karma*, and I have supported war and sent men to it, even though politics is not always or often a very clean occupation nor can war be called a spiritual line of action. But Krishna calls upon Arjuna to carry on war of the most terrible kind and by his example encourage men to do every kind of human work, *sarvakarmāṇi*. Do you contend that Krishna was an unspiritual man and that his advice to Arjuna was mistaken or wrong in principle? Krishna goes farther and declares that a man by doing in the right way and in the right spirit the work dictated to him by his fundamental nature, temperament and capacity and according to his and its dharma can move towards the Divine. He validates the function and dharma of the Vaishya as well as of the Brahmin and Kshatriya. It is in his view quite possible for a man to do business and make money and earn profits and yet be a spiritual man, practise Yoga, have an inner life. The Gita is constantly justifying works as a means of spiritual salvation and enjoining a Yoga of works as well as of Bhakti and Knowledge. Krishna, however, superimposes a higher law also that work must be done without desire, without attachment to any fruit or reward, without any egoistic attitude or motive, as an offering or sacrifice to the Divine. This is the traditional Indian attitude towards these things, that all work can be done if it is done according to the dharma and, if it is rightly done, it does not prevent the approach to the Divine or the access to spiritual knowledge and the spiritual life.

There is of course also the ascetic ideal which is necessary for many and has its place in the spiritual order. I would myself say that no man can be spiritually complete if he cannot live ascetically or follow a life as bare as the barest anchorite's. Obviously, greed for wealth and money-making has to be absent from his nature as much as greed for food or any other greed and all attachment to these things must be renounced from his consciousness. But I do not regard the ascetic way of living as indispensable to spiritual perfection or as identical with it. There is the way of spiritual self-mastery and the way of spiritual self-giving and surrender to the Divine, abandoning ego and desire even in the midst of action or of any kind of work or all kinds of work demanded from us by the Divine. If it were not so, there would not have been great spiritual men like Janaka or Vidura in India and even there would have been no Krishna or else Krishna would have been not the Lord of Brindavan and Mathura and Dwarka or a prince and warrior or the charioteer of Kurukshetra, but only one more great anchorite. The Indian scriptures and Indian tradition, in the Mahabharata and elsewhere, make room both for the spirituality of the renunciation of life and for the spiritual life of action. One cannot say that one only is the Indian tradition and that the acceptance of life and works of all kinds, *sarvakarmāṇi*, is un-Indian, European or Western and unspiritual.

Food

The food given from the Dining Room has the Mother's force behind it. It contains everything that is necessary to keep you in good health to do the sadhana. Keep that attitude and eat. Everything will go well.[1]

circa 1927

*

It is certainly not very Yogic to be so much harassed by the importunity of the palate. I notice that these petty desires, which plenty of people who are not Yogis at all nor aspirants for Yoga know how to put in their proper place, seem to take an inordinate importance in the consciousness of the sadhaks here — not all, certainly, but many. In this as in many other matters they do not seem to realise that, if you want to do Yoga, you must take more and more in all matters, small or great, the Yogic attitude. In our path that attitude is not one of forceful suppression, but of detachment and equality with regard to the objects of desire. Forceful suppression[2] stands on the same level as free indulgence; in both cases, the desire remains; in the one it is fed by indulgence, in the other it lies latent and exasperated by suppression. It is only when one stands back, separates oneself from the lower vital, refusing to regard its desires and clamours as one's own, and cultivates an entire equality and equanimity in the consciousness with respect to them that the lower vital itself becomes gradually purified and itself also calm and equal. Each wave of desire as it comes must be observed, as quietly and with as much unmoved detachment as you would observe something going on outside you, and must be allowed to pass, rejected from the consciousness, and the true movement, the true consciousness steadily put in its place.

---

[1] *This message has hung in the dining room of the Ashram for many years. — Ed.*

But for that these things of eating and drinking must be put in their right place, which is a very small one. You say that many have left the Asram because they did not like the food. I do not know who are the many; certainly, those who came here for serious sadhana and left, went for much more grave reasons than that. But if any did go because of an offended palate, then certainly they were quite unfit for Yoga and this was not the place for them. For it means that a mutton chop or a tasty plate of fish was more important for them than the seeking of the Divine! It is not possible to do Yoga if values are so topsy-turvy in the consciousness. Apart from such extravagance, these things which ought to be only among the most minor values even in the human life, are promoted by many here to a rank they ought not to have.

At the same time it is better, if it is possible, to have well-cooked rather than badly-cooked food. The idea that the Mother wants tasteless food to be served because tasty food is bad for Yoga, is one of the many absurdities that seem so profusely current among the sadhaks in this Asram about her ways and motives. The Mother is obliged to arrange for neutral (plain and simple), not *tasteless* food, for the reason that any other course has been proved to be impracticable. There are ninety people here, from different countries and provinces whose tastes are as the poles asunder. What is tasty food to the Gujarati is abomination to the Bengali and *vice versa*. The European cannot stand an avalanche of tamarind or chillies; the Andhra accustomed to a fiery diet would find French dishes tasteless. Experiments have been tried before you came, but they were disastrous in their results; a few enjoyed, the majority starved, and bad stomachs began to be the rule. On the other hand, neutral food can be eaten by all and does not injure the health, — that at least is what we have found, — even if it does not give any ecstasy to the palate.

---

[2] Fasting comes under the head; it is of no use for this purpose. Abandon that idea altogether.

Only, the food, if neutral, should not be tasteless. A certain amount of fluctuation is inevitable; no one can cook daily for 80 or 90 people and yet do always well. But if it is too much, a remedy is to be desired and the Mother is willing to consider any practicable and effective suggestion. If any practicable suggestion is made, it will be considered, — keeping always in view the difficulty I have pointed out of the ninety people and the three continents and half a dozen provinces that are represented here, apart from individual idiosyncracies and fancies, which, of course, it is absolutely impossible even to try to satisfy unless we want to land ourselves in chaos.

But what if people were to remember that they were here for Yoga, make that the salt and savour of their existence and acquire *samatā* of the palate! My experience is that if they did that, all the trouble would disappear and even the kitchen difficulties and the defects of the cooking would vanish. 28 August 1930

*

The Mother and I do not take meat or fish and it is not allowed to the members of the Asram. We cannot give the sanction you ask for. You should rise superior to passing ideas and desires; to allow them to take hold of the mind and push towards action is not good for your sadhana. 15 November 1932

*

I was invited by friends to go to a restaurant and accepted. Later I learned that you were opposed to the idea. What should

> we — those of us who live outside the Ashram — do?

The Mother has made an arrangement with a view to all the occult forces and the best possible conditions for the protection of the sadhaks from certain forces of death and disease etc. It cannot work perfectly because the sadhaks themselves have not the right attitude towards food and kindred vital-physical things. But still there is a protection. If however the sadhaks go outside her formation, it must be on their own responsibility — the Mother does not and cannot sanction it. But this arrangement is for the Asram and not for those who are outside. 14 July 1933

*

Vegetarian food is a rule for the Asram, it is not incumbent on anyone outside. 30 October 1933

*

> I was speaking to X about the dining hall, past and present. The rule *upabhogena na śāmyati* seems to be more solid looking at our experience here.

Much more solid. But people here do not seem to realise that desire consciousness and Yoga consciousness are two different things. They seem to want to make a happy amalgamation of the two. 1 June 1934

*

Mother meant that wrong food and the poisons created by wrong assimilation were a great obstacle to the prolongation of life. 14 January 1935

*

If animal food (e.g. eggs or soup) is absolutely for health in convalescence, it can be taken. But it is *saṁskāra* to suppose that vegetarian food makes people weak — if the food is nourishing and of the right kind, one can be as strong on vegetable food as on meat. 30 January 1935

*

> If my physician asks me to take a diet of rice, meat, fish, eggs etc. (as I used to eat these before) and to cut off or dress my hair etc., should I follow his instructions?

You [*Sri Aurobindo's secretary*] can tell him that to live on fruits and milk, not to shave, not to take rice etc. is absolutely unnecessary for the sadhana. It does not depend on these things. In the Asram we take only milk and vegetarian diet, — but that rule is not imposed on those outside, it is left to their choice. If it is thought necessary for his health to take fish, meat or eggs he can do it.

Sadhana also does not depend on the dressing of hair or non-dressing. Sadhana in this Yoga at least is a matter of the inner consciousness mainly. One has to get over greed of food but not abandon food, to get over tamas and inertia, but not abandon all rest and sleep. To injure the body by excessive physical tapasya is forbidden in this Yoga. 29 October 1935

*

It is not you but I who look on the Asram as a failure [*in regard to food*]. I was speaking not of you in person, but of the general spirit of the sadhaks with regard to food which is as unYogic as possible. In regard not only to food, but to personal comforts it differs in no way from that of ordinary men; it is an attitude of demand, claim and desire and of anger, vexation, grudging, complaint if they do not get their desire. They justify their position by saying that this is not an ascetic Yoga. But neither is it a Yoga of the satisfaction of desire. In this Yoga quite as much as any other, one must be free from servitude to the mind, the vital and the body. It is to be done by the growth of an inner consciousness free from demand and desire, not by the principle of an outer suppression of the objects of desire. It is to be done by having a perfect equality with regard to food as to other things. But this very few seem to recognise. 17 March 1936

*

I am afraid you have spoiled your stomach and made it nervous by irregular eating. The food of the Asram is quite plain and healthy and unless one eats too much it ought not to give indigestion.

Exercise and Sports

Does exercise help to overcome inertia or physical tamas?

It is quite true that physical exercise is very necessary to keep off the tamas. I am glad you have begun it and I trust you will keep it up.

What should I do when I descend into physical tamas or when there is an attack of inertia?

Physical tamas in its roots can be removed only by the descent and the transformation, but physical exercise and regular activity of the body can always prevent a tamasic condition from prevailing in the body. 28 May 1934

*

I suppose walking is one of the best forms of exercise. Can I take it up with profit? Kindly let me know how many miles a day and with what speed I should do it.

Yes, certainly, it is very good. The amount and speed depend on your capacity and time. A brisk long walk is always very healthful. 23 October 1934

*

Certainly, Mother does not want only sportsmen in the Ashram: that would make it not an Ashram but a playground. The sports and physical exercises are primarily for the children of the school and they also do not play only but have to attend to their studies: incidentally, they have improved immensely in health and in discipline and conduct as one very valuable result. Secondarily, the younger sadhaks are allowed, not enjoined or even recommended, to join in these sports, but certainly they are not supposed to be sportsmen only: they have other and more important things to do. To be a sportsman must necessarily be a voluntary choice and depends on one having the taste and inclination. There are plenty of people around the Mother herself, *X* for instance, who would never dream of frequenting the playground or engaging in sports and the Mother also would never think of asking them to do it. So equally she could not think of being displeased with you for shunning these delights. Some, of course, might ask why any sports at all in an Ashram which ought to be concerned only with meditation and inner experiences and the escape from life into the Brahman; but that applies only to the ordinary kind of Ashram to which we have got accustomed and this is not that orthodox kind of Ashram. It includes life in Yoga, and once we admit life, we can include anything that we find useful for life's ultimate and immediate purpose and not inconsistent with the works of the Spirit. After all, the orthodox Ashram came into being only after Brahman began to shun all connection with the world and the shadow of Buddhism stalked over all the land and Ashrams turned into monasteries. The old Ashrams were not entirely like that; the boys and young men who were brought up in them were trained in many things belonging to life; the son of Pururavas and Urvasie practised archery in the Ashram of a Rishi and became an expert bowman, and Karna became disciple of a great sage in order to acquire from him the use of powerful weapons. So there is no *a priori* ground why sports should be excluded from the life of an Ashram like ours where we are trying to equate life with the Spirit. Even table-tennis or football need not be rigorously excluded. But, putting all persiflage aside, my point is that to play or not to play is a matter of choice and inclination, and it would be absurd for Mother to be displeased with you any more than with *X* for not caring to be a sportsman. So you need not have any apprehension on this score; that the Mother should be displeased with you for that is quite impossible. So the idea that the Mother wanted to punish you for anything done or not done or that she wished to draw far away from you or to be cold and distant was a misinterpretation without any real foundation since you have given no ground for it and there was nothing farther from her mind. She has herself explained that it was just the contrary that has been in her mind for some time past and it was an increasing kindness that was her feeling and intention. The only change she could expect from you was to grow in your psychic and spiritual endeavour and inner progress and in this you have not failed, quite the contrary. Apart from that, the notion that she could be displeased because you did not change according to this or that pattern and that we could ever dream of sending you away on any such account is a wild idea; it would be most arbitrary and unreasonable. 10 July 1948

*

As to your idea about the sports, your idea that the Mother looks on you coldly because you are not capable of taking delight in sports, that is entirely without foundation. I must have told you already more than once that the Mother does not want anybody to take up the sports if he has no inclination or natural bent for them; to join or not to join must be quite voluntary and those who do not join are not cold-shouldered or looked down upon by her for that reason. It would be absurd for her to take that attitude: there are those who do her faithful service which she deeply appreciates and whom she regards with affection and confidence but who never go to the playground either because they have no turn for it or no time, — can you imagine that for that reason she will turn away from them and regard them with coldness? The Mother could never intend that sports should be the sole or the chief preoccupation of the inmates of the Ashram; even the children of the school for whose physical development these sports and athletic exercises are important and for whom they were originally instituted, have other things to do, their work, their studies and other occupations and amusements in which they are as interested as in these athletics. The idea that you should "throw up the sponge" because you do not succeed in sports or like them, is surely an extravagant imagination: there are other things more important, there are Yoga, spiritual progress, bhakti, devotion, service. . . .

I do not understand what you mean by my giving time to sport; I am not giving any time to it except that I have written at the Mother's request an article for the first number of the *Bulletin* and another for the forthcoming number.[3] It is the Mother who is doing all the rest of the work for the organisation of the sports and the *Bulletin* and that she must do, obviously, till it is sufficiently organised to go on of itself with only a general supervision from above and her actual presence once in the day. I put out my force to support her as in all the other work of the Ashram, but otherwise I am not giving any time for the sports.

4 March 1949

*

As for the rest, I think I need only repeat emphatically that there is no need for anyone to take up sports as indispensable for Yoga or for enjoying the Mother's affection and kindness. Yoga is its own object and has its own means and conditions; sport is something quite different as the Mother herself indicated to you through *X* when she said that the concentration practised on the playground was not meditation and was used for efficacy in the movements of the body and not for any purpose of Yoga.

14 March 1949

*

Much less than half the Ashram, the majority of them boys and girls and children, have taken up sports; the rest have not been pressed to do so and there is no earthly reason why any pressure should be put upon you. The Mother has never intended to put any such pressure on you and if anybody has said that, there is no foundation whatever for what they have told you.

It is also not a fact that either the Mother or I are turning away from Yoga and intend to interest ourselves only in sport; we have no intention whatever of altering the fundamental character of the Ashram and replacing it by a sportive association. If we did that it would be a most idiotic act and if anybody should have told you anything like that, he must be off his head or in a temporary crisis of delirious enthusiasm for a very upside-down idea. The Mother told you very clearly once through *X* that what was being done in the playground was not meditation or a concentration for Yoga but only an ordinary concentration for the physical exercises alone. If she is busy with the organisation of these things — and it is not true that she is busy with that alone — it is in order to get finished with that as soon as possible after which it will go on of itself without her being at all engrossed or specially occupied by it, as is the case with other works of the Ashram. As for myself, it is surely absurd to think that I am neglecting meditation and Yoga and interested only in running, jumping and marching! There seem to have been strange misunderstandings about my second message in the *Bulletin*. In the first, I wrote about sports and their utility just as I have written on politics or social development or any other matter. In the second, I took up the question incidentally because people were expressing ignorance as to why the Ashram should concern itself with sports at all. I explained why it had been done and dealt with the more general question of how this and other human activities could be part of a search for a total perfection of all parts of the being including the body and more especially what would be the nature of the perfection of the body. I indicated clearly that only by Yoga could there come a supreme and total perfection of all the instruments of the Spirit and the ascent of the whole being to the highest level and a divine life on earth and the assumption of a divine body. I made it clear that by human and physical means such as sports only a limited and precarious human perfection could come. In all this there is nothing to justify the idea that sport could be a means for jumping into the Supermind or that the Supermind was going to descend into the playground and nowhere else and only those who are there will receive it; that would be a bad look-out for me as I would have no chance!

---

[3] *See "Message" and "Perfection of the Body" in* Essays in Philosophy and Yoga, *volume 13 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 517–35. — Ed.*

I write all this in the hope of clearing away all the strange misconceptions with which the air seems to have become thick and by some of which you may have been affected.

27 April 1949

*

I continue my letter.

I hope I have been able to persuade you that all these ideas about sport and the Yoga are misconceptions and that those who suggest them are wholly mistaken; certainly, we are not putting Yoga away or in the background and turning to sport as a substitute, such an idea is absurdly impossible. I hope also that you will accept from me and the Mother our firm asseveration that our love and affection for you are undiminished and that there has been no coldness on the Mother's part and no least diminution in my constant inner relation with you.

In view of what I have written, you ought to be able to see that your idea of our insistence on you to take up sport or to like it and accept it in any way has no foundation; you can be as averse to it as you choose, we do not mind that. I myself have never been a sportsman or, apart from a spectator's interest in cricket in England or a non-player member of the Baroda cricket club, taken up any physical games or athletics except some exercises learnt from Madrasi wrestlers in Baroda such as *daṇḍ-baiṭhak*, and those I took up only to put some strength and vigour into a frail and weak though not unhealthy body, but I never attached any other importance or significance to these things and dropped the exercises when I thought they were no longer necessary. Certainly, neither the abstinence from athletics and physical games nor the taking up of those physical exercises have for me any relevance to Yoga. Neither your aversion to sport nor the liking of others for it makes either you or them more fit or more unfit for sadhana. So there is absolutely no reason why we should insist on your taking it up or why you should trouble your mind with the supposition that we want you to do it. You are surely quite free, as everybody is quite free, to take your own way in such matters. 28 April 1949

*

I then come to the main point, namely that the intention attributed to the Mother of concentrating permanently on sports and withdrawing from other things pertinent to sadhana and our spiritual endeavour is a legend and a myth and has no truth in it. Except for the time given to her own physical exercise and, ordinarily, two hours or sometimes three in the evening on the playground, the Mother's whole day from early morning and a large part of the night also has always been devoted to her other occupations connected with her work and with the sadhana — not her own but that of the sadhaks, pranam, blessings, meditation and receiving the sadhaks on the staircase or elsewhere, sometimes for two hours at a time, and listening to what they have to say, questions about the sadhana, reports of their work or other matters, complaints, disputes, quarrels, all kinds of conferences about this or that to be decided or done, there is no end to the list: for the rest she had to attend to their letters, to reports about the material work of the Ashram and all its many departments, decisions on a hundred matters, correspondence and all sorts of things connected with contacts with the outside world including often serious troubles and difficulties and the settlement of matters of great importance. All this has certainly nothing to do with sports and she had little occasion to think of it at all apart from the short time in the evening. There was here no ground for the idea that she was neglecting the sadhaks or the sadhana or thinking of turning her mind solely or predominantly to sport and still less for imputing the same preoccupation to me. Only during the period before the first and second December this year the Mother had to give a great deal of time and concentration to the preparation of the events of those two days because she had decided on a big cultural programme, her own play "Vers l'Avenir", dances, recitation from *Savitri* and from the *Prayers and Meditations* for the 1st December and also a big and ambitious programme for the 2nd of sportive items and events. This meant a good deal more time for these purposes but not any interruption of her other occupations except for one or two of them just at the end of this period. There was surely no sufficient ground here either for drawing the conclusion that this was to be for the future a normal feature of her action or a permanent change in it or in the life of the Ashram ending in a complete withdrawal from spiritual life and an apotheosis of the deity of Sport. Those who voiced this idea or declared that sport would henceforth be obligatory on all were indulging in fantasies that have no claim to credibility. As a matter of fact the period of tension is over and after the second December things have returned to normal or even to subnormal in the activities of the playground and as for the future you may recall the proverb that "once is not for ever".

But there seems to be still a survival of the groundless idea that sportsmanship is obligatory henceforth on every sadhak and without it there is no chance of having the Mother's attention or favour. It is therefore necessary for me to repeat with the utmost emphasis the statement I made long ago when this fable became current for a time along, I think, with the rumour that the Supermind was to descend on the playground and the people who happen to be there at the time and nowhere else and on nobody else — which would have meant that I for one would never have it!! I must repeat what I said then, that the Mother has never imposed or has any idea of imposing any such obligation and had no reason for doing so. The Mother does not want you or anybody else to take to sports if there is no inclination or turn towards it. There are any number of people who enjoy her highest favour, among them some of her best and most valued workers, some most near to her and cherished by her who do not even set foot on the playground. Nobody then could possibly lose her favour or her affection by refusing to take up sport or by a dislike of sport or a strong disinclination towards it: these things are a matter of idiosyncrasy and nothing else. The idea, whether advanced or not by someone claiming to have authority to voice the Mother's intentions, that sport is now the most important thing with her and obligatory for sadhana is absurd in the extreme. Again, how could you ever imagine that the Mother or myself would turn you away or ask you to leave us for any reason, least of all for such a fantastic one as this? All this is indeed a maze of fantasies and you should drive them from your mind altogether. Your place in our hearts is permanent and your place near us must be that also; you should not allow anything to cloud that truth in your mind or lend credence to anything or anyone telling you otherwise.

7 December 1949

*

The realisation of the Divine is the one thing needful and the rest is desirable only in so far as it helps or leads towards that or when it is realised, extends and manifests the realisation. Manifestation and organisation of the whole life for the divine work, — first, the sadhana personal and collective necessary for the realisation and a common life of God-realised men, secondly, for help to the world to move towards that, and to live in the Light — is the whole meaning and purpose of my Yoga. But the realisation is the first need and it is that round which all the rest moves, for apart from it all the rest would have no meaning. Neither the Mother nor myself ever dreamed or could dream of putting anything else in its place or neglecting it for anything else. Most of the Mother's day is in fact given to helping the sadhaks in one way or another towards that end, most of the rest is occupied with work for the Ashram which cannot be neglected or allowed to collapse, for this too is work for the Divine. As for the gymnasium, the playground and the rest of it, the Mother has made it plain from the beginning what place she assigned to these things; she has never done anything so imbecile as to replace essential things by these accessories. 4 April 1950

Medical Treatment

The Mother's advice to *X* was given more for his period of stay in the Asram than as an absolute rule for the future. If a sadhak can call down the force to cure him without need of medical treatment, that is always the best, but it is not always possible, so long as the whole consciousness mental, vital, physical down to the most subconscient is not opened and awake. There is no harm in a Doctor who is a sadhak carrying on his profession and using his medical knowledge; but he should do it in reliance on the Divine Grace and the Divine Will; if he can get true inspirations to aid his science, so much the better. No doctor can cure all cases; he has to do his best with the best result he can. 18 October 1932

*

I am afraid wherever you go there will be difficulties with your state of health — and nerves. There can be no proper provision for chronic illness in an asram. 9 May 1933

*

> *X* had some trouble with his ear for some months; it went away only after a short "action" upon it. I do not believe in this action theory — at least here in the Ashram. I believe that if one compiled statistics of those who took an active approach and those who believed in *laissez faire*, there would be less disease and mortality in the latter group.

It depends on the person and the circumstances. "Action" of *X*'s kind can be taken — only it often means a struggle with the contrary forces; if the action is sufficient, it is all right, otherwise it takes time and trouble. What you say is also true. Not to be conscious about the body, not to be always thinking of it, just to say to one's illness "Nonsense" and go about one's business is often very effective. When we first had the Asram there was no Doctor, no dispensary, no medicines, people hardly got ill and, if any did, he simply got well again. If at any time somebody got dysentery, he just swallowed a lot of rice and whey and got well again. If he had fever he lay in bed a day or two and got up again. There was no serious illness and no lasting illness. Now with doctors and dispensaries and cupboards full of medicines illnesses gambol about like tigers in a jungle. But in those days people had a faith in the mind and even one might say in the body, "What is illness going to do to me here" and that attitude imposed its own result. यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः 6 February 1935

*

> I [*a non-practising doctor*] have been going through some medical books. After all these years I find it rather interesting — at least in terms of solid intellectual jugglery.

Very interesting no doubt — and under present circumstances inevitable. The disadvantage is that it creates an illness atmosphere. When we had no dispensary and no doctors (at least no practising doctors) we had no illnesses or only slight ones which walked off at once because they were not hospitably attended to when they came! 23 March 1935

*

X [*a doctor*] has as yet written nothing; he is waiting, I suppose, for the urine examination he wants to make. We can say nothing until he writes. We do not ourselves like anybody being under medical treatment except when it is necessary in moments of emergency. It seems to me if you get back your sleep and are able to get quiet in the nerves, the rest would set themselves right by the descent of peace and strength in the body. 5 April 1935

*

We cannot afford to turn the Asram into an institute for the care of chronic invalids. As it is I do not think there is any Asram in India where people could get the standard of life, conveniences and comforts they get here. Elsewhere *X* would be expected to lead an ascetic life, whether sick or well, and medical care and nursing would be conspicuous by their absence. However we are accustomed to people abusing us for what we do for them and accusing us for what we do not and cannot do.

29 November 1935

*

> When illness and attacks come to the body, does that mean that the work of purification in the mind and vital is finished and that the body is being worked on?

I don't know whether it can be put like that. Illnesses and attacks on the body can come during the period of the vital purification. But it is true that when the mind and vital have progressed and the main action of the sadhana is in the physical, then attacks fall more on the body. In the early days of the Asram when the working was on the mind, nobody got ill except for slight touches that cured without medicine; as the working came lower down, illness increased while now that the working is in the physical and subconscient, illness is almost constant in the Asram and sometimes of a serious or violent kind. 1 May 1936

*

> If increase in the number of inmates stands in the way, if doctors and medicines shake the faith, well, it is very easy to solve both the problems, isn't it?

Increase of numbers brought in all sorts of influences that were not there in the smaller circle before. Doctors did not matter so long as faith was the main thing and a little treatment the help. But when faith went, illness increased and the doctor became not merely useful but indispensable. There was also the third cause, the descent into the physical consciousness with all its doubt, obscurity and resistance. To eliminate all that is no longer possible.

> We have also an impression, considering the sudden wave of diseases, that it is due to some Force descending, so that wherever there is resistance there will be a rushing up.

What Force?

> Since the action is to go on in the subconscient physical at present with the Supramental descending, all sorts of physical troubles will be rampant now.

Rubbish! You repeat always this imbecile absurdity that the Supramental is descending into the sadhaks — as *X* thought it had descended into him! The sadhaks are miles away from the Supramental. What I spoke of was not the descent of the Supramental into the sadhaks but into the earth consciousness. If the Supramental had descended into the sadhaks, there would not be all sorts of troubles, but all sorts of helps and progresses.
9 October 1936

*

> I dreamt that the Mother was building a very big hospital. Dream of a millennium in advance?

It would be more of a millennium if there were no need of a hospital at all and the doctors turned their injective prodding instruments into fountain-pens — provided of course they didn't make a misuse of the pens also. 19 July 1937

*

> Why furious about injective instruments, sir? They are supposed to be very effective.

That doesn't make an increase of hospitals, illnesses and injections the ideal of a millennium.

> But why the deuce are those instruments to be replaced by fountain-pens?

I was simply adapting the saying of Isaiah the prophet, "the swords will be turned into ploughshares", but the doctor's instrument is not big enough for a ploughshare, so I substituted fountain-pens. 20 July 1937

Death

> I firmly believed that death was impossible here. Since the death of S[4] shows that it is possible, it means that hostile forces have become victorious.

There have been three deaths since the Asram began — one, of a child in a house that was not then part of the Asram and the other of a visitor. This is the first death in the Asram itself.

> You have said, I hear, that you have conquered Death, not only personally but for others as well.

I am unaware of having made any such statement. To whom did I make it? I have not said even that personally I have conquered it. All these are the usual Asram legends.

---

[4] *In this group of letters, "S" stands for a sadhak who died on 25 March 1935. — Ed.*

The conquest of Death would mean the conquest of illness and of the psychological and functional necessity of Death of the body — that is one of the ideals of the Yoga, but it can be accomplished only if and when the supramental has driven its roots into Matter. All that has been acting here up to now is an Overmind force which is getting gradually supramentalised in parts — the utmost that it can do in this respect is to keep death at a distance and that is what has been done. The absence of death in the Asram for so many years has been due to that. But it is not impossible — especially when death is accepted. In S's case there was a 5 percent chance of his survival on certain conditions, but he himself knew the difficulty in his case and had prepared himself for his departure from the body. 25 March 1935

*

> Though you may say that death is possible because illness hasn't been conquered, I take it as a principle. *X* and myself firmly believe that those whom you have accepted are absolutely immune to death.

[*Underlining "accepted":*] Too comfortable a doctrine. It brings in a very tamasic syllogism. "I am accepted by Sri Aurobindo. I am sure of supramentality and immune from death. Therefore I need not do a damned thing. Supramentality will of itself grow in me and I am already immortal, so I have all time and eternity before me for it to happen — of itself." Like that, does it sound true? 27 March 1935

*

> How is one to look at the death of D? Is it a defeat of the healing force or the absence of receptivity on her side?

It is a defeat of the healing force due to absence of receptivity in the body to the healing force.

> I have heard that she had said she would not and could not give up her attachment to *X*. Perhaps her receptivity to Mother's

> force was very little because of this attachment. But whether that should be so little as to lead to the dissolution of the physical is a question.

Perhaps the attachment to *X* was only one side of the same thing that stood in the way of her receiving.

> Four or five days ago I felt so strongly that she was to die that I found it difficult to find arguments against it.

Yes, the chances were all along adverse and at the end it was a fight against the inevitable.

> Today I had a peculiar feeling — that nothing dies and that there is nothing like death; that death is an illusion. "She is" — that's the only fact.

Of course, that is the real fact — death is only a shedding of the body, not a cessation of the personal existence. A man is not dead because he goes into another country and changes his clothes to suit that climate. 4 October 1936

*

What you said about the immunity from death was quite correct. Immunity from death by anything but one's own will to leave the body, immunity from illness are things that can be achieved only by a complete change of consciousness which each man has to develop in himself, — there can be no automatic immunity without that achievement. What had been established was a general protection and a defence against the entry of death while the sadhana was going on — but this could not be absolute. There had been since I came here in 1910 and since people began to gather afterwards, only two deaths on the outskirts of the Asram — one in *X*'s family (a baby) when they had not yet become resident sadhaks and one of *Y*'s mother who had come for a visit. But this comparative immunity was broken recently by S's death and now by D's. Formerly when there were only thirty or forty sadhaks and there was a universal faith, then without medicines or doctors the Asram was free from illness except for passing colic etc. cured in a day or merely brief fevers. If one had fever, one simply lay down for a day or two and got up well. Now, since the numbers increased and the struggle with old Nature is on the material plane, illness has increased in frequency and violence. But if there were the same solid mass of living faith, the old relative immunity might still return. But absolute immunity can be only by sadhana. 5 October 1936

*

> I have seen your letters to *X* and *Y*. Comparing the latter[5] to the one you wrote to me after the death of S,[6] I find a lot of difference. Your views have changed immensely. In your letter to me there was a very optimistic, almost a certain tone regarding the conquest of death. Now you say that death is possible because of the lack of "a solid mass of living faith".

In what does this change of views consist? Did I say that nobody could die in the Asram? If so, I must have been intoxicated or passing through a temporary aberration.

As for the conquest of death, it is only one of the sequelae of supramentalisation — and I am not aware that I have forsworn my views about the supramental descent. But I never said or thought that the supramental descent would automatically make everybody immortal. The supramental descent can only make the best conditions for anybody who can open to it then or thereafter attaining to the supramental consciousness and its consequences. But it would not dispense with the necessity of sadhana. If it did, the logical consequence would be that the whole earth, men, dogs and worms, would suddenly wake up to find themselves supramental. There would be no need of an Asram or of Yoga.

But my letters to *X* and *Y* had nothing to do with the conquest of death — they had to do with the conditions of the sadhana in the Asram. Surely I never wrote that death and illness could not happen in the Asram which was the point *Y* was refuting and on which I confirmed him.

---

[5] *The letter of 5 October 1936 on pages 790–91. — Ed.*

[6] *The letter of 25 March 1935 on pages 788–89. — Ed.*

> A "solid mass of living faith" [*p. 791*]! Surely that is a very Himalayan condition you impose. Do you expect old tottering *Z* to have that solid mass in his liquid body?

Z was not old and tottering when he came and if he had kept the living faith he would not have been tottering now.

> Or do you hope that by his sadhana he will have the conquest?

That depends on whether he is still alive and not quite liquefied and able to open physically when the conditions change.

> Your letter to *Y* has struck terror into many hearts, I am afraid, and henceforth we shall look upon death as quite a possibility, though not as common as it is outside.

The terror was there before. It came with the death of D and the madness of *A* and not as the result of my letter. It was rushing at the Mother from most of the sadhaks at Pranam every day.

> The physical condition of many sadhaks and sadhikas is not cheering in the least —

Far from it.

> You know best about the condition of their sadhana.

Very shaky, many of them.

> However, it is my impression that you have changed your front.

It is not mine.

> Formerly I thought you said — faith or no faith, sadhana or no sadhana, you were conquering death, disease, i.e. everything depended on your success; now it seems a lot depends on us poor folks, in this vital matter.

[*Underlining "this vital matter":*] Why vital? What is vital is the supramental change of consciousness — conquest of death is something minor and, as I have always said, the last physical result of it, not the first result of all or the most important — a thing to be added to complete the whole, not the one thing needed and essential. To put it first is to reverse all spiritual values — it would mean that the seeker was actuated not by any high spiritual aim but by a vital clinging to life or a selfish and timid seeking for the security of the body — such a spirit could not bring the supramental change.

Certainly, everything depends on my success. The only thing that could prevent it, so far as I can see, would be my own death or the Mother's. But did you imagine that that [*my success*] would mean the cessation of death on this planet, and that sadhana would cease to be necessary for anybody?

9 October 1936

*

> What is the difference between a death in the Ashram and a death outside? Does one get more benefit in the form of development of the mental, vital etc. on their own planes so that one may get a better new birth?

I am not aware of any "development" of the mental etc. in their planes; the development takes place on earth. The mental and other planes are not evolutionary.

The one who dies here is assisted in his passage to the psychic world and helped in his future evolution towards the Divine.

14 December 1936

Miscellaneous Matters

This is a small selection from the many hundreds of letters that Sri Aurobindo wrote to his disciples on various matters relating to their outward lives.

Household Questions

What is the "divine life" and what are "petty things"? The divine life is not something lived on romantic heights with no reference to earth and its movements. The Yogic or spiritual attitude has to be applied to the small outward details of life as well as to inner experiences or high ideals on a large scale. You ought to know by this time that the Mother attaches a great importance to the true spirit in the organisation of the material life. It is more often in relation to these petty things that the genuineness of one's spiritual change is tested — so there is little point in talking of petty things or material or outward things as if they were not worth notice and no inner change with regard to them needed.

There is no objection to the tiffin carrier being washed by a servant. The objection was to the servants being tipped by sadhaks so that they neglect or do not wish to do things for those who do not or cannot tip them. Visitors residing at the Asram for a few days may do so without objection, for these there is extra work; but the servants must not be encouraged in the idea that they can exact tips from resident sadhaks — they have their pay and that should be sufficient.

As for tiffin baskets, if too many have to be carried, it becomes inconvenient for the Departments concerned — the Dining Room arrangements are framed to minimise the inconvenience and make service possible. A minimum number of exceptions can be made, but if everybody who asks is allowed, there will be chaos.

*

The door is coming off because the sill has been removed, for it was only the sill that upheld it. *X*'s dealings with the door *qua* door were scientifically impeccable — the only thing he forgot was that one of the uses of a door is that people (of various sizes) should pass through it. If you regard the door from the Russellian point of view as an external thing in which you must take pleasure for its own sake, then you will see that it was quite all right; it is only when you bring in irrelevant subjective considerations like people's demands on a door and the pain of stunned heads that objections can be made. However, in spite of philosophy, the Mother will speak to *X* in the morning and get him to do what has (practically, not philosophically) to be done. 1932

*

You had promised that the bullocks would not be beaten, but we have been told by more than one eye-witness that they have been beaten by yourself and the servants, and badly beaten too. We strongly disapprove, we are entirely against this kind of maltreatment. It is not by beating, but by patience and a persistent will without getting into a nervous irritation that work can be taught to animals. They are far more intelligent than you believe.
25 April 1932

*

You had better put up a notice on the slate that whoever has walked off in *X*'s wooden sandals is asked to rectify the mistake by returning them to her. 31 October 1932

*

X complains of an invasion of his solignumed cot, flytoxed chair and almirah, books, chaddar etc. by bugs. He also fears that the conquering army, if not checked, will proceed to annex other rooms also. As bugs in a solignumed cot are a violation of the law of Nature, Mother proposes to send a Committee of Enquiry composed of *Y* (who is both scientifically and officially interested in the solignum-bug problem), yourself and *Z* for investigations.

You have full authority to interview the bugs and demand an explanation of their conduct. *Y* and yourself are officially informed; you can demi-officially inform *Z*. 15 December 1932

*

The only thing that removes the bugs is a careful flytoxing and cleaning of the bed or furniture where they are. It is usually *X* who is entrusted with that work as he is practised in it and has freed many rooms. If you like, I can ask him to do it.

5 January 1933

*

> According to your order, the wire for the table-lamp was to be 12 feet long. As it is too short to reach the corner where I have kept my seat for drawing, will you kindly sanction 5 feet more?

The 12 feet are the usual allowance and they were the end of a roll — if you want the 5 feet more, you will have to wait till a new stock comes. 29 January 1934

*

> People are wondering why the Meditation House leaks so much. It is not like that anywhere else in Pondicherry, and I do not know if it is so elsewhere. Even *X* seems to be quite tired of *Y*'s fad of using tectine, and his persistence in using it in spite of repeated failures. People even say that there is some crack in *Y*'s brain which prevents him from dealing with the point correctly. The thing is so glaringly offensive to everyone — apart from your terrible patience.

Pondicherry houses do not leak! Well, that is news. Every house I have lived in leaked. The Govt. House leaks; the Govt. offices leak and our former Mahomedan landlord told me in the Govt. Secretariat they had to run about carrying tables and chairs to any place in the rooms which happened not to be wet. *Z*'s roof made only a year ago leaks. Vigie House leaks and when *A* went to him Vigie showed him his own house leaking from many places and said "Every house here leaks! what do you expect?"

It was because of this character of Pondicherry houses that the Mother tried tectine and the first supply was very successful. The Meditation House roof made by *B* used to leak like a sieve till the tectine was put on, and for years we were dry. Only when new beams had to be put the tectine got displaced and there were cracks over the walls, then there was some leakage, but that was put right and the old tectine up till now has protected us. Unfortunately afterwards a bad supply of almost liquid tectine was sent which could not endure so well and it was this which was used on the NS [*New Secretariat*] which is leaking because of cracks in the cement, the usual malady of these terrace roofs. People ought to know the facts before making comments, as if it were only our tectined roofs that crack in Pondicherry — and so there must be something wrong with the Asram engineer's brain. It is rather surprising that *X* should speak like that, for he knows that it was Mother's personal order that the remnants of the old tectine should be used this time as there was an emergency. After all the tectine fad, if it is one, was not *Y*'s; it was the Mother who introduced the tectine as a trial (and, as I say, it was quite successful at first) along with other new things like solignum, Silexore. Some of them succeeded, some failed because of climatic conditions and the inexperience of the masons and painters; the tectine succeeded, then failed because in answer to a complaint that too much had to be used, the firm sent us a bad supply. In all this where is the fad and where is the fault of *Y* and where is the "terrible patience"? 20 October 1935

*

What *X* wrote was correct. There is no more hair-oil and in special cases Mother gave from her own stock; but then everybody began to ask, so it had to stop. If you need, you must ask Mother direct and she will give it, because it can no longer be given from the stores — for it can be given only in special cases where there is a good reason as in yours.

As for the soap, you must not use the bath-soap for hair, for it is very bad for the hair. Mother can give you Golden Grape or more oil or hair lotion for that purpose. She is giving a chit for the Golden Grape; you must use it only for the hair.

1 February 1936

*

An electric stove has been ordered from Madras, but the price will not be anything like 50 Rs. I don't know whether you will have with it all the seraphic peace you expect — for in all electric matters there is the Pondicherry municipality to take into account, — untimely cessations of current, insufficient current, variable current — something for all tastes but for nobody's convenience.

24 May 1936

*

The Light went out, the Light went out — and being not fortunate enough to be in line with the Government house, ours remained out. I had no time nor courage to go through a long pencilled poem with my insufficient substitute — so all had to be shoved over to tomorrow. Man proposes, but the Pondicherry Municipality disposes. But there will be Grace tomorrow — P. M. volente.

9 August 1936

*

> Some people here are very glad to know that I was preparing the roof of the house by adopting the old method used by our forefathers for generations. In this case old may be good but to some people all old is gold. Perhaps they would be happy if the new European systems of medicine like homeopathy and naturopathy are rejected and the old Ayurveda only allowed. But I wonder why they cannot see how superior reinforced concrete buildings etc. are to those made by old methods — and for earthquakes, would the Ayurvedic buildings stand the shocks?

Well, if it is done really according to old methods, an Ayurvedic building can stand many earthquakes. I remember at the time of the Bengal earthquake all the new buildings in the place where the Provincial Conference was held went down but an old house of the Raja of the place was the sole thing that survived unmoved and unshaken. Also when the Guest House roof was being repaired, (it was an old building) the mason (one of the most skilful we have met) said that this roof had been built in a way that astonished him, it was so solid and strong, no houses now were being built like that. So perhaps it is not Ayurveda, but the degenerate ways of the descendants of Charaka that is responsible for the poor and bad building we see around us. I have also seen a remark by an English architect in Madras that it was surprising to see how old ramshackle buildings survived and stood all shocks while others built in the most scientific modern way "sat down" unexpectedly. The really old things whether in India or Europe were always solid; shoddy I think began in between — before the discovery of concrete. We have to leave the old things but progress to equally or more solid new things. 29 March 1937

*

> Have the stores got any insecticide? Five of the eighteen rose plants I received last week have been demolished by white ants.

You hope to destroy white ants with a harmless insecticide? Optimist! The only defences yet found against them are kerosene (temporary) and solignum (less temporary) on things they have to cross, but here it is impossible as it can't be put on plants. Tell you what to do. Dig six feet down in the right place (which may be anywhere), find the queen of the white ants and carefully strangle her; then your roses will be safe for a season.

> If an insecticide is not available, would it be possible for the bakery people to save me a bucket of soot?

Soot? The white ants will be afraid of becoming black and stay away? 15 September 1938

*

> *X* and I receive one blade between us every two months. As it does not last us for two months, would it be possible to have one blade each every month?

Do you send the blade for sharpening to the Atelier? If not, it will soon get blunt and useless. If it is sharpened, it can last for months. 26 September 1938

*

We shall get the dhotis in January, I hope.

But what is to be done in the meanwhile till January? We shall have to dress the sadhaks in saris or they will have to resort to a state of Nature and Adamic innocence!

The Behaviour of Ashramites

You can take your meal in the verandah as indicated by *X*. I must point out to you that *X* is in charge of the Cycle Office and the cycles and, if he objected — quite rightly — to your taking your meal in the room and dirtying it, you ought to have paid some attention to his objection instead of treating it with contempt and defiance. Whoever is put in charge of a Dept. is responsible to the Mother for the proper working of that Department and those who are assisting him must help him to keep everything in order and not act according to their own whims and fancies. If there is anything which seems to them not right in his arrangements, they can bring it to his notice or to the Mother's notice, but not indulge in irresponsible indiscipline. Your behaviour does not justify *X*'s losing his temper, but neither were you justified in pushing him against the wall. This kind of scene ought not to happen in the Asram. It is besides not only with *X* you have clashed but with a good many others in the Asram, and it is no use telling me that it was always the other man who misbehaved and that you were an angel of calm and patience and good behaviour. Quarrelsomeness and self-assertion and indiscipline go ill with a claim of Yogic calmness. 10 August 1932

*

It appears that there are complaints against you from all sides that you are quarrelling with the servants, upsetting the work, putting others to inconvenience in order to put your own convenience and arrange things according to your own fancy. This kind of selfishness and quarrelsomeness will not do. You have to consider the convenience of others before yours — especially as you have been given the management of the house. A manager has to consider the convenience of others first and his own last.

5 March 1933

*

I must say what I have often written to people, that it is impossible for us to take sides in a clash between sadhaks or assume the role of judge and arbiter or of defender of one party against another. Formerly the Mother used to try to intervene or to reconcile, but we found that this only kept discord alive and fed the ego of the sadhaks. In most cases we pass over all quarrels and clashes in silence and almost all sadhaks have ceased to write about their conflicts because they get no answer. I have written to *X* once or twice, avoiding any discussion of the merits of a dispute, only to influence him to regard things from a general and impersonal standpoint so as to prepare him to give up that of the person and ego. I passed no personal opinion or judgment for or against this or that person. You must not expect me to take any other attitude. This is a place meant for Yoga and sadhana; personal relations of the vital kind with their attractions and repulsions, quarrels and explanations and reconciliations belong to the ordinary life and nature.

All these clashes which arise whenever you mix with *X* come from his weakness and yours. I have not imposed on you any rule of not meeting with him; but I have advised you not to give any field for the weakness which you yourself have admitted and which is evidently there in you. Both you and *X* are to me disciples and I have to deal with each in the way best for him or her. I have not pressed on your weaknesses and defects, I have given you time to find them out yourself and overcome them, for that is the best way. I have pointed out his to *X* when he was ready to recognise them. It is a pity that you should clash whenever you meet together a little, but you know yourself why it is so. So long as any vital weakness remains it cannot be otherwise. Certainly it cannot be remedied by "submitting to his demands and his ego". 16 November 1935

*

It is perfectly true that the egoistic sense of possession and the habit of falsehood are too common among the sadhaks. You should train yourself however to look at these things in those around you, even when they touch you close, without being disturbed or unquiet. What you must arrive at (of course it cannot be done at once but takes time) is a complete equanimity which sees things and people as they are but is not shaken, angered or grieved by them. We ourselves know what an obstacle all this egoism and falsehood are to our work, but are not impatient because we know also that they are part of human nature and have so much hold that it is difficult for the sadhak to get rid of them even when his mind really wishes to do so. They are with many sadhaks habits stronger than their will. When there is not a strong will to get rid of them or when the sadhak is not fully conscious, then it is all the more difficult. It is only a strong and always increasing awakening of the whole consciousness which can avail and it is that which we try to bring in all without yielding to impatience because of the slowness with which it comes or the imperfect effort of the sadhaks to overcome these defects of their nature. 28 November 1935

*

> No harmony can be brought about merely by apologising for one's errors. Unless we change radically and meet each other in the light of the Mother, no harmony is possible.

Quite right. Aggressiveness and bristles on both sides are not likely to go without a luminous modification in the nature.

1 July 1936

*

I would like to add two questions:

1. Why do people in the Asram (budding supermen) get

furious against anything merely because it is new and unfamiliar? That is common and natural in animals; but human beings ought to have more open minds.

2. Why are they so ready to pass positive judgments on things about which they have insufficient knowledge? It would be better if they could accustom themselves to wait and learn.

Avoiding Gossip

> Is it not true that to look always at others' faults and criticise them is harmful and an obstacle to one's progress?

Yes, all that is true. The lower vital takes a mean and petty pleasure in picking out the faults of others and thereby one hampers both one's own progress and that of the subject of the criticism. 6 July 1933

*

> Is gossiping and making fun of others a hindrance to one's progress in sadhana?

It can be and very often is. A gossiping spirit is always an obstacle. 10 May 1933

*

Your attitude to the gossip is quite the right one. A great part of what is talked in the Asram about others is untrue, a great part is distorted or exaggerated and what remains are things that can be left to the Mother and need not be made the subject of small talk among the sadhaks. 16 September 1936

*

The difficulty you experience exists because speech is a function which in the past has worked much more as an expression of the vital in man than of the mental will. Speech breaks out as the expression of the vital and its habits without caring to wait for the control of the mind; the tongue has been spoken of as the unruly member. In your case the difficulty has been increased by the habit of talk about others, — gossip, to which your vital was very partial, so much that it cannot even yet give up the pleasure in it. It is therefore this tendency that must cease in the vital itself. Not to be under the control of the impulse to speech, to be able to do without it as a necessity and to speak only when one sees that it is right to do so and only what one sees to be right to say, is a very necessary part of Yogic self-control.

It is only by perseverance and vigilance and a strong resolution that this can be done, but if the resolution is there, it can be done in a short time by the aid of the Force behind.

6 December 1936

Minor Medical Questions

If she is accustomed to enema she can have from the dispensary. But that or laxatives can relieve for the moment but not really cure. It is perhaps the best remedy to drink a big glass of cold water as soon as she wakes in the morning and to do special exercises to strengthen the muscles of the abdomen.

2 February 1933

*

> One of my teeth came out. Two others are moving, and I am afraid they will share the same fate. Is it possible to do something to save them?

It depends on the cause. If it is the gums that are responsible, then by an action upon the gums, the teeth can be tightened again. You can use either a gargle of potassium chlorate and salt (2 *grains* of the former and one teaspoonful of salt in a medium-sized tumbler of water) or, still better, a gargle of hydrogen peroxide (one-fifth of a glass in a glass of water). The best and surest hydrogen peroxide is German sold in bottles marked Merckozone.

31 December 1934

*

Bug bites are not usually red — red swellings usually come from some small flying insects which come into the rooms here and have a rather poisonous bite. 27 January 1934

*

These bites are like that. I have often had them — they last sometimes for eight days. 30 January 1934

*

If you cannot get rid of the sciatica by inner means, the medical remedy (not for curing it, but for keeping free as long as possible) is not to fatigue yourself. It comes for periods which may last 8 weeks, then suddenly goes. If you remain quiet physically and are not too active, it may not come for a long time. But that of course means an inactive life, physically incapable. It is what I meant by eternising the sciatica — and the inertia also.

26 July 1935

*

I suppose the small pimples are what is called the prickly heat; it is rather troublesome, but of no importance. I am putting force so that the pains in the head may go.

As for the biscuits, the Mother wants you to go on taking them in spite of the absence of hunger because you are eating very little — too little. Especially now you are doing more work. It is not good to let disinclination to eat grow in the body, for that weakens the nervous system and when the nervous system is weak, illnesses come in more easily into the body; if it is strong enough, it throws them off. There must be no idea that to eat little is proper for sadhana; that is a superstition. For the body is a needed base for the working of the Force and the stronger it is the better. 20 May 1936

Cooking

A half-boiled egg means simply an egg boiled in water in the shell but for only a very short time — not for a longer time like the hard boiled egg — so that the yolk may remain liquid. It is the simplest thing in the world to do. What you speak of is something different which is much more difficult.

*

> Mother, how to make vegetable with juice from cabbage, potatoes, and red *kolu*?

[*Answer in Sri Aurobindo's hand:*] Prepare a sauce with saffron and the little black grains (which are put in sweets) and coriander and a little (not too much) pepper. There must be a good amount of cocose, a little dal flour. Make the flour brown in the cocose, then add water slowly stirring all the time and put the spices. This should be done in a separate pan and poured on the vegetables. 1 April 1933

*

> How to make potatoes and brinjals with sauce?

If you can get 2 or 3 *piments doux*, you can do as for the onion sauce,[1] then cut the *piments doux* in very small pieces and cook them inside the sauce. It will give a good taste.

Add this sauce so made to the vegetable.

> Mother, how to make onion sauce?

Cut the onions very small, fry in cocogem or oil till they get brown; take the water in which the vegetables are cooked, dissolve in that water some flour and pour slowly in the fried onions, stirring all the time. Cook for about 15 minutes, then add to the vegetables. If there are tomatoes, you can add some cut in small pieces. 9 April 1933

Visiting the Ashram

> I am grateful for being granted permission to attend the Darshan though my application reached you too late. I propose

---

[1] But here the flour must be thicker, less watery; the onions must be cut and prepared in the same way. *No saffron.*

> to stay here, for the present, for four days. I request you to grant permission to attend Pranam and Soup. I also request you to allow food free, because as a sannyasi, I am unable to pay for it.

You should make the following points clear to the Swami.

1. His request for food free from the Asram is contrary to the rule of the Asram. Food is given free, as a rule, only to members.

2. Only those are allowed to attend Pranam and Soup (save on exceptional occasions) who have entered Sri Aurobindo's path of Yoga and are accepted as his disciples.

3. The Mother does not give interviews for giving instructions and hints regarding sadhana. Especially, sadhana is given only to those who have a special call to Sri Aurobindo's Yoga; she never interferes with others (even by way of giving help) who are following a different path.

This is what would have been explained to him already if there had been time for writing a letter before he came. As he came all that way, darshan was given to him; but this does not mean that his other requests can be granted. 21 February 1930

*

He seems to be expecting to put up at the Asram? You will have to find a room for him at a hotel.

Reply to him that he can come to Pranam daily. I suppose the meals can be arranged somehow; you will ask Dyuman. He will have to pay as. 8 [*half a rupee*] a day. 5 November 1932

*

> Tomorrow Mr. *X* is leaving Pondicherry. Is there any objection to my bringing him to my room for a while? Even his servants have been here — only him I have kept out.

If people from outside are allowed to come in like that, very soon half Pondicherry will be invading the Asram and it will not be an Asram, but a public place — that is why the rule is there. Even for servants from outside, the rule is against their coming inside and upstairs in the Asram houses. 1933

*

You have permission for darshan in February, but we do not think it would be advisable for you to come so early as the first week in January. You know that after some stay here you become restless and cannot remain longer. Last time it was better because you were in a good internal condition, but even so the pull came to go. Now that you have yielded again in the matter of sex and drink, the restlessness is likely to come more early this time. The best course would be to come a little before the February darshan and stay as long as you can after it.

31 December 1935

*

He can come for darshan on August 15th, but accommodation in the Asram is very doubtful as there is very little and old habitual visitors and disciples have first claim. As for staying after the darshan that we do not usually decide till we have seen the person. The charge for board and lodging is 1 Re. a day or 30 Rs. a month — 10 as. is the charge for boarding only, as many stay outside but take their food in the Asram. If he lives outside then the question of sanction does not arise (for the one month's stay); only if he wants to live in the Asram. As to personal instructions, he knows I suppose that I see nobody — Mother also is unable to see people freely — the personal element comes in not so much through verbal instruction as through a spiritual influence and reception between the Guru and disciple.

24 March 1937

Section Two

The Practice of Yoga in the Ashram and the Outside World

The Ashram and the Outside World

Pressure of the Environment

> Is it possible that thoughts and suggestions come to sadhaks from people in the town who think about us in a critical or hostile way?

It is not only likely but certain that it happens. The pressure of the environment is always there and it becomes more effective for suggestion if there are any in the Asram itself who are accustomed to mix and receive freely the impacts of the people there. 20 May 1933

*

> Some boys in the neighbourhood have become a systematic nuisance — jeering and throwing things — and something decisive needs to be done. I know you do not like violence, but how else can one deal with this sort of thing?

It is in the nature of things that the ignorance and smallness of these low minds should push them to these petty manifestations of malevolence and ill-will. The best thing is to remain unmoved. As for violence that is out of the question. No doubt you do not mind about yourself — but you represent the Asram and we must not give a handle to those in power — many of whom are not now favourable to us — to get a handle to do anything against the Asram. That is the primary consideration at the present moment and under the present conditions — which will not always remain as they are now. 21 December 1933

Contact with the Outer World

The protection and help will be there as they were here. You have only to keep yourself open to them and live inwardly seeking to become more and more conscious so that you may feel the Divine Presence and Power.

As to the Bombay atmosphere, keep inwardly separate from it, even while mixing with others. See it as a thing outside and not belonging to the inner world in which you yourself live. If you can achieve this inward separateness, it will not be able to cloud you, whatever its daily pressure. 18 May 1930

*

It is not good that X [*a visitor*] should spend so much time with you. The Yogic atmosphere is not easy to keep when one is in constant contact with people who are living in another consciousness — it is only when one has got a complete foundation in the outer as well as the inner consciousness that one can do it completely in all surroundings. That is why the Mother has always insisted on keeping the Asram and the sadhaks as much as possible out of contact with the outer world. 9 August 1933

*

> In *The Synthesis of Yoga* you write of the love of the Divine in all beings and the constant perception and acceptance of its workings in all things. If this is one of the ways of realising the Divine, why do we have to restrict our contact with people?

That is all right in the ordinary karmayoga which aims at union with the cosmic Spirit and stops short at the Overmind — but here a special work has to be done and a new realisation achieved for the earth and not for ourselves alone. It is necessary to stand apart from the rest of the world so as to separate ourselves from the ordinary consciousness in order to bring down a new one.

It is not that love for all is not part of the sadhana, but it has not to translate itself at once into a mixing with all — it can only express itself in a general and when need be dynamic universal goodwill, but for the rest it must find vent in this labour of bringing down the higher consciousness with all its effect for the earth. As for accepting the working of the Divine in all things that is necessary here too in the sense of seeing it even behind our struggles and difficulties, but not accepting the nature of man and the world as it is — our aim is to move towards a more divine working which will replace what now is by a greater and happier manifestation. That too is a labour of divine Love. 22 October 1933

*

> It seems as if we avoid the world much more than the Mayavadin sannyasis. Some of them start hospitals and schools and do famine relief; some even joined the Satyagraha Movement. Similarly it may be that one would find more true ahimsaks among fighters and warriors than among those who shout "non-violence".

Very probably. You are right about the Mayavadins (I mean the present-day ones) and ourselves. The former Mayavadins were often more consistent, except that they wrote books and preached and disputed and founded institutions which seems a waste of energy if all is Maya. All the energy ought to have gone to getting out of Maya. As for our own position it is that ordinary life is Maya in this sense, not that it is an illusion, for it exists and is very real, but that it is an Ignorance, a thing founded on what is from the spiritual point of view a falsehood. So it is logical to avoid it or rather we are obliged to have some touch with it but we minimise that as much as possible except in so far as it is useful for our purpose. We have to turn life from falsehood into spiritual truth, from a life of ignorance into a life of spiritual knowledge. But until we have succeeded in doing that for ourselves, it is better to keep apart from the life of Ignorance of the world — otherwise our little slowly growing light is likely to be submerged in the seas of darkness all around it. Even as it is, the endeavour is difficult enough — it would be tenfold more difficult if there were no isolation. 20 June 1935

Work Outside and as Part of Sadhana

In work done outside, the ego remains often concealed and satisfies itself without being detected — but when there is the pressure of sadhana, it is obliged to show itself: then what has to be done is to reject it and free oneself and make the object of the work the Divine alone.

Yoga Centres and Movements

Centres

> We have the idea of concentrating our activities and joining ourselves more closely to the Pondicherry Ashram by starting a lodge someplace in Gujarat where we can meet at least once a month.

No "Lodge" or formal society; these methods are not suitable for this sadhana. If they like to meet or meditate together of their own accord and without starting any fixed association or propaganda, that is another matter.

*

You might write to Rangpur (to *X* or *Y* — the one who wrote about the friction with *Z*, I don't remember which it was) that it is not at all clear from his letter or *A*'s why this friction should at all have taken place. Each has the right to go on his own way according to his lights and there should be no sectarian spirit. This does not mean that one should allow several different influences at the same time; for that only brings confusion. Those who take this Yoga must follow only the path which leads to the supramental realisation and accept no other influence than that of myself and the Mother, otherwise they will not go in a straight line to the goal but are likely to be confused or divided, to wander into circuits or bypaths and lose the guidance. But they need not try to oppose the convictions of others, who are not following this way but another. Religions quarrel and collide with each other, but we are not creating a religion, we are following a path of spiritual realisation, into which those only need come who are drawn to it and have the call. 4 January 1932

*

Write to *X* that it was his own mistake. He must not mix up the things of Yoga with activities that have nothing to do with Yoga. What have the coming in front of the psychic being and the supramental to do with the founding of a school Samiti, a magazine and the rest of it? These are ordinary outward activities. The psychic being and the supramental are matters of a profound and difficult Yoga. These terms ought not to be cheapened by being tacked on to these small superficial things.

No doubt all activities can be carried on with a spiritual consciousness, but it is the Yogi alone who can do that. To invite people who have no spirituality in them and are no Yogis to get the psychic being in front and aspire to the supramental has no meaning whatever and is merely a mental propaganda which is unrealisable and hopelessly out of place.

16 May 1933

*

> Should not the Sadhanbari be regarded as the seed-type of an Asram in the making? The question arises from the fact that there is a tendency in almost all here at the Sadhanbari — and in others in Chittagong at large — to think that it (the Sadhanbari) is merely a resting-place — a temporary foothold — and that the sooner one leaves for the Yogasram at Pondicherry the better. What really is the immediate and ultimate use of mofussil centres?

It is quite a mistake to suppose that everybody has eventually to come and join the Pondicherry Asram. That is not the Mother's intention, nor is it physically possible. The work to be done is not supposed to be confined to Pondicherry.

> On the other hand cannot this tangential turn of thought prove to be an index of aspiration to live physically near the Mother, which under certain conditions is productive of great results — results which cannot be achieved anywhere else?

Where that is necessary, it will be done — but it does not follow that everybody has to come and stay here permanently.

> How can sadhaks profit psychically when they live spiritually in close contact with each other?

It depends on themselves. If they grow psychically and spiritually and live within and above, instead of in the mind and vital and body, then there can be a psychic and spiritual solidarity created useful for the divine work. At present that does not exist, except in future potentiality. 18 April 1935

*

> For some time there have been a lot of clashes here in our centre. [*Details given.*] The other day *X* called me aside and told me that if people had no confidence in him, he would rather not associate with us, but remain alone. Most people here are against *X*, who is filled with self-praise, and always criticises the Sadhanbari.

There is absolutely no hope of mutual harmony and confidence in Chittagong and it is idle to talk of it when the hearts of the sadhaks are full of all kinds of egoism, mutual dislike, jealousy, rivalry, suspicion, fault-finding and all sorts of uncleanness. It is only through the psychic and in a psychic atmosphere that harmony can come; a sadhana based entirely on the vital ego cannot create it. *X* is right in drawing back and keeping to himself. When things have gone so far that the sadhaks of the Sadhanbari are forming visions of him as a dangerous devil, it is absurd to want to go on as if there were nothing.

> Some people here feel that *X* has been bringing impurity of thought and action into our centre. I give you some examples. . . .

All these are simply self-created vital formations due to the atmosphere of suspicion and dislike which *Y*'s campaign has created around *X*. In such an atmosphere it is not truth that manifests but the feelings of the vital that take form in shapes and images.

> You may recall that you refused to let *Z* stay with *X*, as you thought it might not be good for *Z*'s sadhana.

I can say nothing and am not willing to say anything in these matters. I discouraged *X* from allowing *Z* to stay with him because I did not think the results will be good in view of what had happened at Rangpur — that was the reason why *X* refused to lodge him without an express order from here. But, seeing the results of my intervention, I refuse to intervene in any other matter. The Chittagong sadhaks must themselves settle their own affairs. 30 October 1936

Association Not a Necessity

> I am feeling the want of association with co-sadhaks here. I am trying to adapt myself to the new place but I do miss my friends, especially as I can't discuss spiritual matters with anyone here.

You must be able to stand alone with only the force of the Mother supporting you. The association should not be a necessity, but only instrumental for action. 8 September 1934

Group Meditations

(1) It is not advisable to sit with others; for if any force is brought down, it may very easily be a mixed force. The difficulties in his nature may be prematurely raised and he may add to them the difficulties of those with whom he sits.

(2) Indications given by letter may not be rightly grasped or rightly practised; even if mentally understood, they may not be very helpful. The important thing is to open to the Influence. That indeed was the reason why in the old systems personal initiation by the Guru was considered indispensable. The best thing will be for him to come here for a short time, say in November (the 24th) and receive the direct touch and influence.

(3) Meanwhile he can try to prepare himself by personal meditation if he likes. The method is to quiet the mind and,

in order to do so, to concentrate on an aspiration for faith in the Divine Power, peace and calm in the mind, single-minded sincerity in the heart, and a conscious opening to the Light and Truth and Power. 14 September 1928

*

> An acquaintance has written a letter asking for the Mother's permission to join our group meditation here.

Is he practising Yoga — does he do meditation by himself? It would as a rule be better if people tried by themselves first and joined the collective meditation only when they had begun to have experiences or some kind of opening.

This is not an absolute rule, however. If the other sadhaks find no inconvenience, he may come as a trial and see if it helps him, and if the others find it does not disturb the harmony of the atmosphere or bring in any inertia, he can continue.

3 February 1932

*

You [*Sri Aurobindo's secretary*] can write conveying the permission to meditate with *X* and the others. You can also write briefly to her explaining the principle of this Yoga (its practice) which is to open oneself to the Divine Power which is always secretly there above, aspire and call down its peace, calm, purity, wideness into one's own consciousness and its working which will change the nature and fill it with a higher light and Ananda. One's own part is to so aspire and open oneself and to reject all that belongs to ego, desire and the lower nature.

21 December 1932

Group Movements

The Mother does not think that a group movement of that kind could be effective for the purpose or produce any serious impression on the welter of strong blind forces that are now at work in the world. It can only be a mental ripple on the surface like so many other mental idealistic efforts of the day. All these suffer from the fundamental defect that they work within the existing plan of things with no superior force that can dominate their disharmonies or oblige them to transform themselves by any irresistible compulsion of Light from above. Even if the meditation of these groups became less mental, that defect would not disappear. Individuals among them might rise to the spiritual heights just above mind, others might be helped to rise nearer towards them; but nothing fundamental would change in the world as a whole.

The Mother does not think any intervention or farther organisation of these groups would be helpful. Publicity of the kind suggested would be disastrous, — it would be sure to lead to vulgarisation and corruption, what purity or virtue there is in the movement would disappear. It is better to let it go on in silence with the momentum you gave to it and observe where that leads it. If there are any elements of utility in it for future work, those will be taken up when the time comes; if not, it must be left to fade away of itself. But it should be in the quiet and silence you first assigned to it — not as a public movement, for then it would soon cease to be at all pure and genuine.

28 November 1936

Part Five

Mantras and Messages

Section One

Mantras

On Mantras

Mantras in the Integral Yoga

The idea of your friend that it is necessary to receive a mantra from here and for that he must come is altogether wrong. There is no mantra given in this Yoga. It is the opening of the consciousness to the Mother from within that is the true initiation and that can only come by aspiration and rejection of restlessness in the mind and vital. To come here is not the way to get it. Many come and get nothing or get their difficulties raised or even fall away from the Yoga. It is no use coming before one is ready, and he does not seem to be ready. Strong desire is not a proof of readiness. When he is inwardly ready, then there will be no difficulty about his coming.

*

As a rule the only mantra used in this sadhana is that of the Mother or of my name and the Mother. The concentration in the heart and the concentration in the head can both be used — each has its own result. The first opens up the psychic being and brings bhakti, love and union with the Mother, her presence within the heart and the action of her Force in the nature. The other opens the mind to self-realisation, to the consciousness of what is above mind, to the ascent of the consciousness out of the body and the descent of the higher consciousness into the body.

13 October 1934

*

OM is the mantra, the expressive sound-symbol of the Brahman Consciousness in its four domains from the Turiya to the external or material plane. The function of a mantra is to create vibrations in the inner consciousness that will prepare it for the realisation of what the mantra symbolises and is supposed indeed to carry within itself. The mantra OM should therefore lead towards the opening of the consciousness to the sight and feeling of the One Consciousness in all material things, in the inner being and in the supraphysical worlds, in the causal plane above now superconscient to us and, finally, the supreme liberated transcendence above all cosmic existence. The last is usually the main preoccupation with those who use the mantra.

In this Yoga there is no fixed mantra, no stress is laid on mantras, although sadhaks can use one if they find it helpful or so long as they find it helpful. The stress is rather on an aspiration in the consciousness and a concentration of the mind, heart, will, all the being. If a mantra is found helpful for that, one uses it. OM if rightly used (not mechanically) might very well help the opening upwards and outwards (cosmic consciousness) as well as the descent. 16 October 1935

*

> I humbly request Sri Aurobindo and you to send me some *mūla-mantra* which I can repeat in meditation and concentration and as *nāma-smaraṇa*. Coming from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, it will have a potency to lead me quickly on the path.

We do not usually give any mantra. Those who repeat something in meditation call on the Mother. 27 June 1936

*

> Is there any difference between the Force that helps when I call the Mother in sleep and the Force that comes when I repeat "Sri Aurobindo – Mira"?

There is not necessarily any difference of Force. Usually the Mother's name has the full power in it; but in certain states of consciousness the double Name may have a special effect.
29 August 1936

*

> I find no harm if I repeat the name of Sri Krishna, whose very

> being has taken the form of our Lord Sri Aurobindo and his Parashakti, the Mother.

There is no harm in that; it is not incompatible or inconsistent with this Yoga.

Traditional Mantra Japa

> In the Upanishads (Mandukya chiefly) the upasana of ॐ (OM) is recommended. It is said in the Pranava Upasana that the *praṇava deha* — or the *mantra deha* of *Praṇava deva* — comes successively into the *sthūla*, *sūkṣma* and *kāraṇa deha* of the sadhaka. It projects itself into the sadhaka first, then it engulfs him. It creates a divine rhythm and harmony and at last becomes one with every particle of his triple body (*sthūla*, *sūkṣma*, *kāraṇa*). Does this process include the transformation of the physical consciousness which Sri Aurobindo's yoga aspires to achieve? Or if it is different, in what way does it differ?

I do not believe a mantra can change the physical consciousness. What it does, if it is effective, is to open the consciousness and to bring into it the power of that which the Mantra represents.

*

> It is said that Mantra Japa leads to a certain mechanisation of the sadhana, as the sadhaka becomes dependent on Nature to the extent that he has to awaken the Mantra in order to touch and identify himself with the Divinity. Is this charge against Japa true?

It depends on the way in which the japa is done.

If rightly done, the mantra is a means of opening to the light and knowledge etc. from above and it ceases as soon as that is done.

*

It is very good news that you got rid of the attack and it was the japa that helped you to do it. This and past experience also shows that if you can overcome the old association of the japa with sterility and sorrow, it can do its natural function of creating the right consciousness — for that is what the japa is intended to do. It first changes the vibrations of the consciousness, brings into it the right state and the right responses and then brings in the power or the presence of the Deity. Several times before you wrote to me that by doing japa you got rid of the old impulse and recovered calm and the right turn of the consciousness and now it has helped you to get rid of the invasion of sorrow and despondency. Let us hope that this last will also soon lose its strength like the impulse and calm and serenity begin to establish itself in the whole nature. 8 October 1936

Use of a Mantra in Special Circumstances

This is not a case of ordinary madness, but, as your brother himself feels, an attack of evil forces. When the light descended into him, there was something in his brain that was not prepared or able to bear the descent and this gave the opportunity for the attack and the overthrow of the equilibrium.

It may be possible to set matters right without any personal contact. He should repeat as a *mantram* the words contained in the enclosed paper (which he should not reveal to others) after concentrating on the sign above it. He should repeat three times a day (the three Sandhyas), twelve times in all, and also whenever attacked.

Information should be sent from time to time about his condition.

Mantras Written by Sri Aurobindo

Sanskrit Mantras

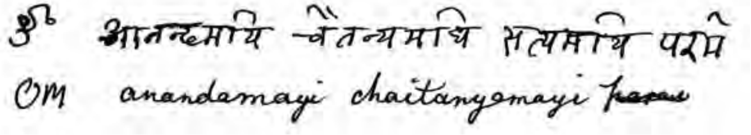

ॐ आनन्दमयि चैतन्यमयि सत्यमयि परमे
OM anandamayi chaitanyamayi ~~param~~

ॐ आनन्दमयि चैतन्यमयि सत्यमयि परमे

OM anandamayi chaitanyamayi [satyamayi parame][1]

circa 1927

*

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo wrote this mantra around 1927 as one of several miscellaneous notations connected with* Record of Yoga. *See* Record of Yoga, *volume 11 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *page 1352. Note that he did not complete the transliteration in Latin script. The text was first published as a message in November 1955. Still later the Mother completed the transliteration in her own hand; see the facsimile below. — Ed.*

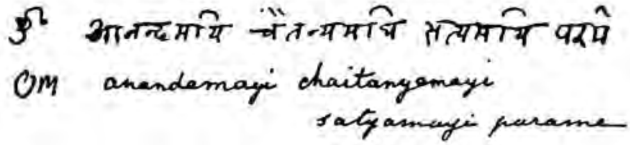

ॐ आनन्दमयि चैतन्यमयि सत्यमयि परमे
OM anandamayi chaitanyamayi
satyamayi parame

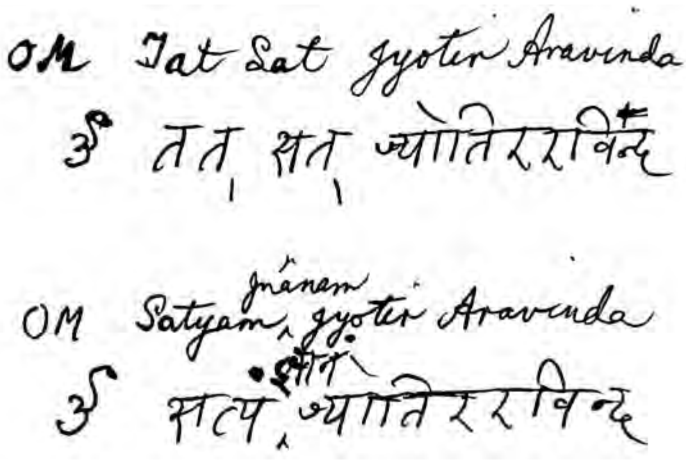

OM Tat Sat Jyotir Aravinda
ॐ तत् सत् ज्योतिररविन्द

OM Satyam jnânam jyotir Aravinda
ॐ सत्यं ज्ञानं ज्योतिररविन्द

OM Tat Sat Jyotir Aravinda

ॐ तत् सत् ज्योतिररविन्द

OM Satyam Jnânam Jyotir Aravinda

ॐ सत्यं ज्ञानं ज्योतिररविन्द

circa 1927

*

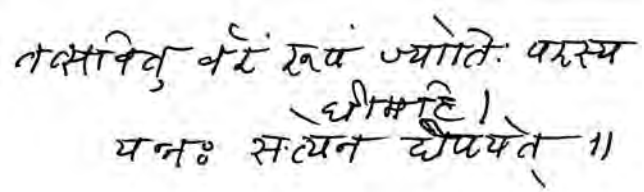
तत्सवितुर्वरं रूपं ज्योतिः परस्य
धीमहि।
यन्नः सत्येन दीपयेत् ॥

तत्सवितुर्वरं रूपं ज्योतिः परस्य धीमहि।
यन्नः सत्येन दीपयेत्॥

Let us meditate on the most auspicious (best) form of Savitri, on the Light of the Supreme which shall illumine us with the Truth. 19 March 1933

*

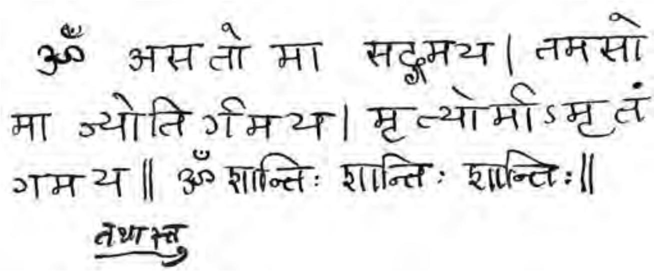
ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय। तमसो
मा ज्योतिर्गमय। मृत्योर्माऽमृतं
गमय॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः॥
तथास्तु

ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय।
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय।
मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः॥[2]

तथास्तु

21 August 1933

---

[2] *One of Sri Aurobindo's disciples wrote this quotation from the* Brihadaranyaka Upanishad *(I.3.28) in his notebook. Below it Sri Aurobindo wrote* तथास्तु *(tathāstu): "So be it!" — Ed.*

English Mantras

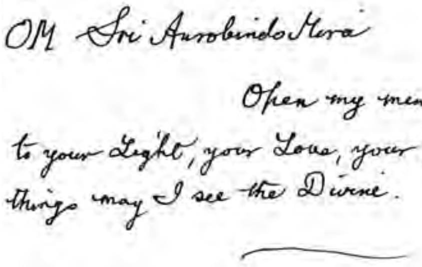

OM Sri Aurobindo Mira
Open my mind, my heart, my life
to your Light, your Love, your Power. In all
things may I see the Divine.

> In 1935 I asked for a mantra and you suggested that I could take any combination of your name with the Mother's and make of it a mantra. Accordingly I submitted the combination "OM Sri Mira Sri Arvindaya Namah" for your sanction, and you gave it. I have tried this combination for some time now, but I feel like asking for another combination of your names with some aspiration or prayer joined to them so that it might become a sort of constant aspiration or prayer in course of time, or at least so that it will demand some concentration and not become something mechanical. Besides, I feel that if you would kindly make a combination for me I shall have more faith in it.

I have written for you a brief prayer with the names in the form of a mantra. I hope it will help you to overcome your difficulty and get an inner foundation.

OM Sri Aurobindo Mira
Open my mind, my heart, my life
to your Light, your Love, your Power. In all
things may I see the Divine.

16 July 1938

*

> I feel very grateful for the mantra and the prayer. Especially the last line of the prayer — "In all things may I see the Divine" — has made me very glad since it expresses my very own deepest aspiration to which I have been partial for many years. Have I to consider the names and the prayer as one mantra?

Yes.

18 July 1938

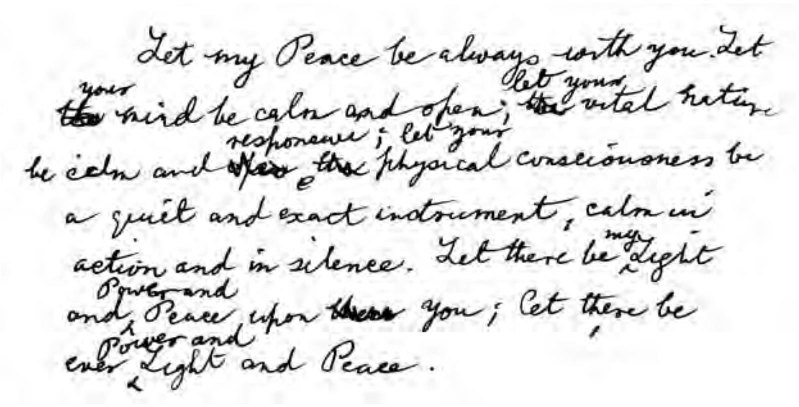

Let my Peace be always with you. Let
~~the~~ your mind be calm and open; ~~the~~ let your vital nature
be calm and ~~open~~ responsive; let your ~~the~~ physical consciousness be
a quiet and exact instrument, calm in
action and in silence. Let there be my Light
and Power and Peace upon ~~them~~ you; let there be
ever Power and Light and Peace.

Let my Peace be always with you. Let your mind be calm and open; let your vital nature be calm and responsive; let your physical consciousness be a quiet and exact instrument, calm in action and in silence. Let there be my Light and Power and Peace upon you; let there be ever Power and Light and Peace.

*

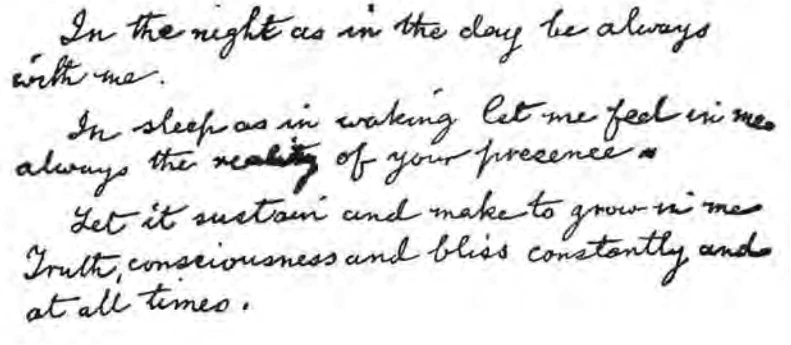

In the night as in the day be always
with me.
In sleep as in waking let me feel in me
always the reality of your presence.
Let it sustain and make to grow in me
Truth, consciousness and bliss constantly and
at all times.

In the night as in the day be always with me.

In sleep as in waking let me feel in me always the reality of your presence.

Let it sustain and make to grow in me Truth, consciousness and bliss constantly and at all times.

Section Two

Messages

Messages Written for Special Occasions

Darshan Messages

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. 15 August 1929

*

It is not by your mind that you can hope to understand the Divine and its action, but by the growth of the true and divine consciousness within you. If the Divine were to unveil and reveal itself in all its glory, the mind might feel a Presence, but it would not understand its action or its nature. It is in the measure of your own realisation and by the birth and growth of that greater consciousness in yourself that you will see the Divine and understand its action even behind its terrestrial disguises.

24 November 1929

*

To bring the Divine Love and Beauty and Ananda into the world is, indeed, the whole crown and essence of our Yoga. But it has always seemed to me impossible unless there comes as its support and foundation and guard the Divine Truth — what I call the Supramental — and its Divine Power.[1]

15 August 1931

---

[1] *These two sentences are the opening of a letter written by Sri Aurobindo on 13 August 1931. Typed copies, individually signed by Sri Aurobindo, were distributed as "darshan messages" on 15 August 1931. — Ed.*

Birthday Messages for Disciples

For Duraiswami

Let the new birth become manifest in your heart and radiate in calm and joy and take up all the parts of your being, mind and vision and will and feeling and life and body. Let each date in your life be a date of its growth and greater completeness till all in you is the child of the Mother. Let the Light and Power and Presence envelop you and protect and cherish and foster, till all in your inner and outer existence is one movement and an expression of its peace and strength and Ananda.

23 January 1929

For Kantilal

Live always as if you were under the very eye of the Supreme and of the Divine Mother. Do nothing, try to think and feel nothing that would be unworthy of the Divine Presence. 16 April 1930

For K. Krishna Rao

Go below the surface of the consciousness deep within, for there you will find the soul's profound quietude, luminous silence, freedom and spiritual wideness, there the direct touch and presence of the Divine. 13 October 1938

For Madanlal

My blessings.

Efface the stamp of ego from the heart and let the love of the Mother take its place. Cast from the mind all insistence on your personal ideas and judgments, then you will have the wisdom to understand her. Let there be no obsession of self-will, ego-drive in the act, love of personal authority, attachment to personal preference, then the Mother's force will be able to act clearly in you and you will get the inexhaustible energy for which you ask and your service will be perfect. 27 November 1940

For Satyendra

A veil behind the heart, a lid over the mind divide us from the Divine. Love and devotion rend the veil, in the quietude of the mind the lid thins and vanishes. 9 September 1936

*

May the inner Sun tranquillise and illumine the mind and awaken fully the heart and guide it. 9 September 1937

*

In a quietude of the mind open to the presence of the Divine in your heart and everywhere; in a still mind and heart the Divine is seen like the sun in still water. 9 September 1938

*

Rise into the higher consciousness, let its light control and transform the nature. 9 September 1939

*

By the heart's self-giving the Presence and the Influence will be there even in the inconscience and prepare the nature for the true light and consciousness through the whole range of the being.
9 September 1940

*

Put stress always on the aspiration within; let that get depth and steadiness in the heart; the outer obstacles of mind and the vital will recede of themselves with the growth of the heart's love and aspiration. 9 September 1941

*

Keep the mind and heart open and turned inward and upward so that when the touch comes from within or the flow from above, you may be ready to receive it. 9 September 1942

*

To persevere in turning towards the Light is what is most demanded. The Light is nearer to us than we think and at any time its hour may come. 9 September 1943

*

To keep the soul ready for the Divine Grace so that it may be ready to receive it when it comes. 9 September 1944

*

A persistent will for the work to be done in us and in the world is what is most needed; there is a sure spiritual result, the growth of the consciousness and the soul's readiness for the touch of the Divine Light and Power. 9 September 1945

*

When the Light enters into the Inconscience which hedges in all our being and prevents or limits the manifestation of the true consciousness in us, when it inhibits the habits and recurrences and constant repetition of the same stimuli which besiege us and rise from the subconscient, then only can the nature be wholly free and respond only to the Truth from above.

9 September 1946

*

Clarity of knowledge and inner self-vision, subjugation of the ego, love, scrupulousness in selfless and dedicated works, are the four wheels of the chariot of Yoga. One who has them will progress safely on the path. 9 September 1947

For Kamala

In faith and confidence and joy on the quiet and sunlit path towards the home of Light and Ananda. 11 February 1936

*

My blessings on Kamala for the year of her life that begins today.

11 February 1938

*

My blessings on your birthday. May you grow in spirit with this new year of life. 11 February 1941

*

My blessings for the day and the year. Grow in faith, grow in light, grow in consciousness. 11 February 1942

*

My blessings for your birthday. May this year be a step forward in consciousness and towards union with the Divine.

11 February 1943

*

My blessings for the year. May it bring to you growth in consciousness towards the Divine. 11 February 1944

*

My blessings on your birthday. May this be a year of more and more progress both in your inner and your outer being.

11 February 1945

*

Fidelity, devotion, self-giving, selfless work and service, constant aspiration are the simplest and most effective means by which the soul can be made ready and fit to be in the abiding presence of the Divine. 11 February 1946

*

To light always and keep alight the psychic fire within, the fire of aspiration, devotion and self-giving — not to stifle it with the damp smouldering logs of vital desire and egoistic reactions. If that becomes permanent and continuous, then it will be easy to bring down the spiritual transformation. 11 February 1947

*

Devotion to the Divine, fidelity to his work and obedience to his will are the first supports of the Yoga. On these pillars all the rest can be supported. 11 February 1948

For Champaklal

Tranquillise and widen your consciousness; go deeper into your soul. 2 February 1940

*

A clarified consciousness with strength to reject all inconscience and receive all that comes from the Light, this should be the aim before you. 2 February 1941

*

Aspire always to grow more and more conscious so that all the small obstacles shall disappear from the physical consciousness and the obscurer parts of the vital nature. 2 February 1942

*

Keep yourself ready by faith and self-opening to receive the Light when it comes. 2 February 1943

*

Let the mind be quiet and receive the Light; let the vital be quiet and receive the Force that delivers. 2 February 1944

*

Let the year that is beginning mark a definitive stage in the growth of your psychic being and its power over your nature and your life. 2 February 1945

*

Continue to open yourself and the psychic consciousness will grow in you and the Light refine and illumine whatever is left of the shadows in the mind and vital being. 2 February 1946

*

An increasing advance on the road to the entire psychic change is what is most important in the sadhana, for that is the straight road to the spiritual transformation. Devotion, harmony and scrupulousness in work, a growing inner perception and consciousness, more and more fading of the more vehement movements of the vital ego are among the more prominent landmarks on the road. 2 February 1947

*

Matter, blind to the Light, deaf to the call, the material consciousness and material life are the last and most obstinate refuge of the Inconscient and its resistance. There, the nearer the light, the higher it raises its wall of resistance. When that is overcome, the decisive transformation can have an open way.

2 February 1948

Prayers for a Sadhak

Deliver me from anger, ingratitude and foolish pride. Make me calm, humble and gentle. Let me feel your divine control in my work and in all my action. 5 November 1938

*

I pray to be purified from self-will and self-assertion so that I may become docile and obedient to the Mother and a fit instrument for her work, surrendered and guided by her Grace in all I do.

5 November 1942

*

May I henceforth with a firm determination cast away from me my faults and defects and may I do it with energy and perseverance till I succeed entirely. May I get rid of all arrogance, quarrelsomeness, self-esteem and vanity, disobedience and revolt against the Mother, hatred and rancour against others, violence of speech and conduct, falsehood, self-assertion and demand, discontent and grumbling. May I be friendly to all and without malice against anyone. May I become a true child of the Mother.

5 November 1943

Miscellaneous Messages

It is the lesson of life that always in this world everything fails a man — only the Divine does not fail him, if he turns entirely to the Divine. It is not because there is something bad in you that blows fall on you — blows fall on all human beings because they are full of desire for things that cannot last and they lose them or, even if they get, it brings disappointment and cannot satisfy them. To turn to the Divine is the only truth in life.

21 April 1933

*

You must make grow in you the peace that is born of the certitude of victory. 14 June 1933

*

Keep firm faith in the victory of the Light and face with calm equanimity the resistances of Matter and human personality to their own transformation. 21 December 1933

*

Our blessings are with you always. Persevere and have full confidence. 16 October 1934

*

> I am about to complete one year of my stay here. The past year has been one of hard and painful struggle for me. I have not done much during the year but hope to do better in the next. And although my heart seems to have become a stranger to all higher and finer emotions I promise you this: that I shall endeavour with all the strength I can command to obey you.

Blessings for the new year. May all struggle cease and a quiet ascent begin. 11 February 1936

*

The time for your turning to the spiritual life depends upon your own aspiration. A sincere aspiration brings always its response, and if there is continuity in the will, the result cannot fail.

*

So the Light grows always. As for the shadow it is only a shadow and will disappear in the growing Light.

*

It is not a hope but a certitude that the complete transformation of the nature will take place.

*

Keep faith quietude openness to divine power. Ashirvada.

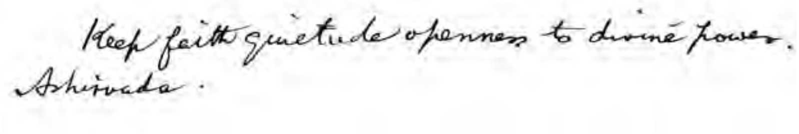

Keep faith quietude openness to divine power.
Ashirvada.

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

LETTERS ON HIMSELF AND THE ASHRAM consists of letters written by Sri Aurobindo between 1926 and 1950 in which he referred to his life and works, his sadhana or practice of yoga, and the sadhana of members of his ashram. The letters have been selected and arranged by the editors in four parts dealing with four broad subject areas: (1) Sri Aurobindo's outer life, his writings, his contemporaries, and contemporary events; (2) his inner life before and after his arrival in Pondicherry; (3) his role as a spiritual leader and guide; and (4) his ashram and the sadhana practised there. A fifth part contains mantras and messages that Sri Aurobindo wrote for the benefit of his disciples.

The title chosen for this volume might seem to suggest that Sri Aurobindo deliberately set out to write a large number of letters about his life. In fact, he rarely wrote about himself on his own initiative. He wrote many of the letters in the present volume in answer to questions about himself. He also occasionally referred to himself in passing to illustrate a point under discussion. He explained such references in a letter of 30 October 1935: "I can't write such things by themselves as an autobiographical essay — it is only if they turn up in the course of something that I can do so" (page 232).

The letters included in this volume have been selected from the large body of letters that Sri Aurobindo wrote to his disciples and others between November 1926, when his ashram was founded, and November 1950, shortly before his passing. Letters from this corpus appear in seven volumes of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO: *Letters on Poetry and Art* (Volume 27), *Letters on Yoga* (Volumes 28–31), *The Mother with Letters on the Mother* (Volume 32), and the present volume. The titles of these four works specify the nature of the letters included in each, but there is some overlap. For example, Part Four of the present volume contains many letters on yoga. These differ from those published in *Letters on Yoga* in that the ones published here are framed historically by events and conditions in the Sri Aurobindo

Ashram between November 1926 and November 1950. The questions provided along with some of the letters in this volume refer to some of these events and conditions.

Many of the letters in the present volume appeared earlier in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953) and *On Himself: Compiled from Notes and Letters* (1972). Those books contained, along with letters from the 1926–1950 period, historical and biographical material such as Sri Aurobindo's corrections of statements made by biographers, public messages, and letters from the years before 1927 to family members, colleagues, and others. These documents and early letters are now published in *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest*, Volume 36 of THE COMPLETE WORKS.

The Writing of the Letters

Sri Aurobindo wrote most of the letters included in this volume to members of his ashram, the rest to correspondents living outside. For the history, purpose and nature of the correspondence, see pages 450 to 478.

Ashram members wrote to Sri Aurobindo in notebooks or on loose sheets of paper that were sent to him via an internal "post" once or twice a day. Letters from outside that Sri Aurobindo's secretary thought he might like to see were sent at the same time. Correspondents wrote in English if they were able to. A good number, however, wrote in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, or French, all of which Sri Aurobindo read fluently, or in other languages that were translated into English for him. Most letters were addressed to the Mother, even though most correspondents assumed that Sri Aurobindo would reply to them.

Sri Aurobindo generally replied on the sheets of paper (bound or loose) on which the correspondents wrote their comments or questions, writing below them or in the margin or between the lines. Sometimes, however, he wrote his answer on a separate, small sheet of "bloc-note" paper. In some cases he had his secretary prepare a typed copy of his letter, which he revised before it was sent. In other cases, particularly when the correspondent was living outside the Ashram, he addressed his reply not to the correspondent but to his secretary, who quoted, paraphrased or translated Sri Aurobindo's reply and signed the letter himself. In such indirect replies, Sri Aurobindo often referred to himself in the third person.

While going through Sri Aurobindo's replies, the reader should keep in mind that each one was written to a specific person at a specific time, in specific circumstances and for a specific purpose. Each subject taken up was one that arose in regard to a particular correspondent's inner or outer needs, or in answer to a particular correspondent's questions. Sri Aurobindo varied the style and tone of his replies in accordance with his own relationship (or, in the case of people writing from outside, lack of relationship) with each correspondent. With those he was close to, he sometimes employed humour, irony or even sarcasm.

Although the letters were written to specific recipients, they contain much of general interest. This justifies their inclusion in a volume destined for the general public. But it is important for the reader to bear in mind some remarks that Sri Aurobindo made during the 1930s about the proper use of his letters:

> I should like to say, in passing, that it is not always safe to apply practically to oneself what has been written for another. Each sadhak is a case by himself and one cannot always or often take a mental rule and apply it rigidly to all who are practising the Yoga. (Page 473)
>
> It is not a fact that all I write is meant equally for everybody. That assumes that everybody is alike and there is no difference between sadhak and sadhak. If it were so everybody would advance alike and have the same experiences and take the same time to progress by the same steps and stages. It is not so at all. (Page 475)

Sri Aurobindo wrote all the letters included in this volume between November 1926 and November 1950, the great majority between 1931 and 1937. He sometimes dated his answers, but most of the dates given at the end of the letters in this volume are those of the letters or notebook entries to which he was replying.

The Typing and Revision of the Letters

Most of the shorter items in this volume, and many of the longer ones, were not typed or revised during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime, and are reproduced here directly from his handwritten manuscripts. But a good number of the letters were, as mentioned above, typed for Sri Aurobindo and revised by him before sending. Other letters were typed by the recipients for their own personal use or for circulation within the Ashram. Circulation was at first restricted to members of the Ashram and others whom Sri Aurobindo had accepted as disciples (see pages 476–78). When letters were circulated, personal references were removed. Persons referred to were indicated by initials, or the letters *X*, *Y*, etc.[1] Copies of these typed letters were kept by Sri Aurobindo's secretaries and sometimes presented to him for revision. The typed copies were sometimes filled with "gross errors" (page 476). Sri Aurobindo corrected many of these errors while revising.

The typed copies sometimes also contained intentional textual alterations. Recipients of letters sometimes omitted passages that seemed to them to be of no general interest. In a few cases, recipients added words or phrases that they believed made Sri Aurobindo's intentions clearer. Some such alterations remained intact when the letters were revised.

Sri Aurobindo's revision amounted sometimes to a complete rewriting of the letter, sometimes to making minor changes here and there. He generally removed personal references if this had not already been done by the typist. He also, when necessary, rewrote the openings or other parts of the answers in order to free them from dependence on the correspondent's question. As a result, some letters now read more like brief essays than personal communications.

The Publication of the Letters

Around 1933, Sri Aurobindo's secretary began to compile selections of letters to be published in small books. A total of four such volumes came out during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime: *The Riddle of This World*

---

[1] This practice continues in the present volume. See pages 857–58 for details.

(1933), *Lights on Yoga* (1935), *Bases of Yoga* (1936), and *More Lights on Yoga* (1948). Sri Aurobindo revised the typescripts and proofs of most of these books before publication. During this revision, he continued the process of removing personal references. A letter he wrote in August 1937 alludes to this approach to the revision:

> I had no idea of the book being published as a collection of personal letters — if that were done, they would have to be published whole as such without a word of alteration. I understood the book was meant like the others [*i.e., like* Bases of Yoga, *etc.*] where only what was helpful for an understanding of things Yogic was kept with necessary alterations and modifications. . . . With that idea I have been not only omitting but recasting and adding freely. Otherwise as a book it would be too scrappy and random for public interest. In the other books things too personal were omitted — it seems to me the same rule must hold here — except very sparingly where unavoidable.

By the mid-1940s, a significant body of letters had been collected, typed and revised, and plans were made for the publication of a multi-volume collection of Sri Aurobindo's letters. At that time, typed or printed copies of letters, some revised, some not, were presented to Sri Aurobindo for approval or further revision. The resulting material was compiled by an editor in four volumes, which were published as *Letters of Sri Aurobindo* in 1947 (Series One), 1949 (Series Two and Three) and 1951 (Series Four). Most of the letters in Series One, Two and Four were later included in *On Yoga II* (1958) and *Letters on Yoga* (1970). Most of the letters in Series Three were later included in *Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art* (1972).

During the early 1950s, the principal editor of Sri Aurobindo's letters conceived and organised two volumes containing Sri Aurobindo's letters on the Mother and on himself. The first of these, *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother*, was published in 1951. The second, *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, was published two years later. The editor arranged the contents of *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* in three parts: (1) Sri Aurobindo on Himself: Notes and Letters on His Life; (2) Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother;

and (3) Sri Aurobindo on the Mother. The material comprising Parts Two and Three is published in volume 32 of THE COMPLETE WORKS, *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*. This material is discussed in the Note on the Texts of that volume.

The editor of *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* subdivided Part One into seven sections: (I) Life before Pondicherry; (II) Beginnings of Yoga; (III) His Path and Other Paths; (IV) Sadhana for the Earth-Consciousness; (V) The Master and the Guide; (VI) The Poet and the Critic; (VII) Reminiscences and Observations. More than half of Section I consisted of corrections of statements made in biographies and in newspaper articles, the rest of letters in which Sri Aurobindo spoke of his early life in passing or in answer to questions. Sections II–V consisted of letters or extracts of letters in which Sri Aurobindo spoke of his own practice of yoga, the path of yoga that he developed for others, and his work as a spiritual guide. Section VI consisted of letters on poetry. (In THE COMPLETE WORKS these and similar letters on poetry, literature and art are included in volume 27, *Letters on Poetry and Art*, and are discussed in the Note on the Texts of that volume.) Section VII consisted of miscellaneous letters in which Sri Aurobindo spoke of happenings in his past and made observations on various subjects.

The letters in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* were published along with edited versions of the correspondents' questions if these were available and the editor thought that they would help readers understand Sri Aurobindo's replies. The letters were preceded by editorial headings and followed by their dates, if known. The editor restored some personal references that Sri Aurobindo had omitted from collections of letters published during his lifetime, because the very purpose of the book was to present aspects of Sri Aurobindo's life.

In 1972, Parts One and Two of *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, both considerably enlarged, were published as *On Himself*.

The Scope and Contents of *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*

Between the publication of *On Himself* in 1972 and the launch of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO in 1995, a good deal of material of a biographical and historical nature came to light. This necessitated the creation of two different volumes: *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* and *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest*.[2] The editors placed material in one or the other volume according to the following scheme: *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* contains letters written between November 1926 and November 1950 that deal with any of the four subject areas listed in the first paragraph of this Note. *Autobiographical Notes* consists of various sorts of documentary material, including life sketches and corrections of statements made by biographers and others; letters written by Sri Aurobindo to family members, professional and political associates, newspaper editors, early disciples, and others before the founding of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1926; some letters written after 1926 that form parts of series that began before 1926; letters to or for the attention of public figures, regardless of date; late letters on political questions, most of which were released for publication as messages; and public messages on current events or about Sri Aurobindo's ashram and method of yoga.

Letters on Himself and the Ashram includes most of the contents of Sections II, III, IV, V and VII of Part One of *On Himself*, as well as items in Section I that originated as letters and not as corrections. It also contains a fairly large number of letters that had earlier been included in *Letters on Yoga*, a few letters that had earlier been included in *Letters on the Mother*, and many items newly selected by the editors from the corpus of Sri Aurobindo's 1926–1950 letters.

In deciding whether a given letter (whether previously published or not) should go into *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* rather than *Letters on Yoga*, the editors considered whether the letter ought to be framed historically or not. They placed in *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* any letter the subject of which fell into one of the four subject areas listed in the first paragraph of this Note. In addition, they placed in this volume some letters that could not properly be understood without reference to the correspondents' questions. Many letters that appeared in the 1970 edition of *Letters on Yoga* without questions, including almost all the letters making up Part Two, Section IX of that book ("Sadhana in the Ashram and Outside"), have been shifted to Part Four of *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*. The questions of the correspondents have been provided for many such letters.

---

[2] Part One of *On Himself* (1972) comprised 439 text pages. *Autobiographical Notes* and *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* comprise together 1398 (553 + 845) text pages. The new volumes thus contain over three times as much material as the older one.

When all the above is taken into consideration, it becomes clear that the present volume is a compilation and does not represent an organic division of Sri Aurobindo's letters. It is however a lineal descendant of *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, first published more than fifty years ago. It brings together in a single volume letters from the 1926–1950 corpus in which Sri Aurobindo referred directly or indirectly to his inner and outer life, his works, his contemporaries, and his ashram. These letters, together with the documents published in *Autobiographical Notes*, constitute nearly all the surviving biographical and historical source materials that Sri Aurobindo wrote.

The Selection, Arrangement and Editing of the Letters

What has been called the 1926–1950 corpus of Sri Aurobindo's correspondence consists of tens of thousands of replies that he wrote to hundreds of correspondents. Most of the replies, however, went to a few dozen disciples, almost all of them resident members of his ashram. A smaller number of disciples, no more than a dozen, received more than half of the entire body of published letters. In compiling the volumes of Sri Aurobindo's correspondence published in THE COMPLETE WORKS, the editors have gone through all known manuscripts, typed or photographic copies of manuscripts, and printed texts. From these sources they have selected those letters that seemed suitable for publication. This selection includes most letters consisting of more than a few words that deal with topics of general interest. The editorial staff produced electronic texts of all selected letters and checked them against all handwritten, typed and printed versions.

The selection and arrangement of the material in the book is the work of the editors. Whenever possible they retained the divisions and categories found in *On Himself*; however, the great increase in the number of items in the present volume obliged the editors to add new parts, sections, chapters and groups. In a note of February 1936, Sri Aurobindo wrote that the placing of letters in group categories was possible in the case of "letters about sadhana", which could "very easily fall under different heads".

Letters on Himself and the Ashram consists of almost 1500 separate items, an "item" being defined as what is published between one heading or asterisk and another heading or asterisk. Many items correspond exactly to individual letters; a good number, however, consist of portions of single letters, or two or more letters or portions of letters that were joined together by earlier editors or typists and revised in this form by Sri Aurobindo. The editors of the present volume have sometimes reunited portions of letters that had been separated by previous editors. In some cases, however, they considered the separation justifiable and have retained it.

Whenever possible, letters by Sri Aurobindo are reproduced to their full extent. In some cases, however, the editors, following a pattern set by the editors of previous books, omitted portions of Sri Aurobindo's letters that are of no general interest. A number of Sri Aurobindo's letters begin with personal comments unrelated to the more substantial remarks that follow. The editors have left out many such personal openings. Sri Aurobindo often marked the transition from one part of a letter to another with a phrase such as "As to . . .". Many such phrases now stand at the beginning of abbreviated letters.

In some cases the editors have published texts of a given letter in more than one volume of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. Much of this doubling of letters occurs between *Letters on Yoga* and *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*. In many cases, the editors have placed Sri Aurobindo's revised version of a letter in *Letters on Yoga* and retained the original handwritten version, along with the recipient's question, in *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*.

As in previous collections of Sri Aurobindo's letters, names of members of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and of disciples living outside the Ashram have been replaced by the letters *X*, *Y*, *Z*, etc. In any given letter, *X* stands for the first name replaced, *Y* for the second, *Z* for the third, *A* for the fourth, and so on. An *X* in a given letter has no necessary relation to an *X* in another letter. Names of Ashram members who were referred to by Sri Aurobindo not as sadhaks but as holders of a certain position — notably Nolini Kanta Gupta in his position as Sri Aurobindo's secretary — are given in full, as are names of people who played a role in the history of the period.

The editors have included the questions to which Sri Aurobindo replied, or the portions of the correspondents' letters on which he commented, whenever these are available and helpful for understanding his replies or comments. As a rule, only as much of a correspondent's letter has been given as is needed in order to understand the response. In some cases the questions have been lightly revised for the sake of clarity. Mistakes of grammar, spelling and punctuation due to some correspondents' imperfect grasp of English have been corrected. Questions written in languages other than English have been translated. When the question is not available, only Sri Aurobindo's reply is printed.

Readers should note that Sri Aurobindo almost always spelled the word "Asram" without an "h", though some of his correspondents wrote "Ashram". Both spellings have been reproduced here following the manuscripts. By the late 1940s, when "Ashram" had become the standard spelling in the Ashram's publications, Sri Aurobindo was no longer writing letters himself but dictating them to a disciple, who tended to write "Ashram". This spelling thus occurs in letters of the last period, as well as in headings and other editorial matter throughout the book.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES
and Other Writings of Historical Interest

Sri Aurobindo

VOLUME 36
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO
© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2006
Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

Autobiographical Notes

and Other Writings of Historical Interest

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry, August 1911

Publisher's Note

This volume consists of (1) notes in which Sri Aurobindo corrected statements made by biographers and other writers about his life and (2) various sorts of material written by him that are of historical importance. The historical material includes personal letters written before 1927 (as well as a few written after that date), public statements and letters on national and world events, and public statements about his ashram and system of yoga. Many of these writings appeared earlier in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953) and *On Himself: Compiled from Notes and Letters* (1972). These previously published writings, along with many others, appear here under the new title *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest.*

Sri Aurobindo alluded to his life and works not only in the notes included in this volume but also in some of the letters he wrote to disciples between 1927 and 1950. Such letters have been included in *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, volume 35 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

The autobiographical notes, letters and other writings included in the present volume have been arranged by the editors in four parts. The texts of the constituent materials have been checked against all relevant manuscripts and printed texts.

The Note on the Texts at the end contains information on the people and historical events referred to in the texts.

On account of the documentary nature of the items making up this book, they have been transcribed verbatim, or as close to verbatim as possible. Problems of transcription are discussed on the next page.

Guide to Editorial Notation

Some of the contents of this book were transcribed from unrevised manuscripts or from handwritten or typed copies of lost originals. The texts published here are as far as possible verbatim transcripts of these materials. Problems encountered in reproducing them are indicated by means of the notation shown below.

Notation	**Textual Problem**
[.....]	Word(s) lost through damage to the manuscript.
[ ][1]	Superfluous word(s), often duplicating what immediately precedes; a footnote shows the word(s) as they occur in the manuscript.
[?]	Word(s) omitted by the author that could not be supplied by the editors.
[word]	Word(s) omitted by the author or lost through damage to the manuscript that are required by grammar or sense, and that could be supplied by the editors.
[?word]	Doubtful reading.
[word][1]	Emendation required by grammar or sense or correcting a factual slip; a footnote gives the manuscript reading. Documentary justifications for corrections of factual slips are given on pages 564–69.
wor[d]	Letter(s) supplied by the editors.
[*note*]	Textual situation requiring brief explanation. Longer explanations are provided in editorial footnotes, which are printed in italics followed by "— *Ed.*" (All footnotes printed in roman type were written by Sri Aurobindo.)

CONTENTS

PART ONE
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Section One
Life Sketches and Other Autobiographical Notes

Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch

Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch 5
Appendix: Letters on "Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch" 11

Incomplete Life Sketches

Incomplete Life Sketch in Outline Form, c. 1922 14
Fragmentary Life Sketch, c. 1928 15

Other Autobiographical Notes

A Day in Srinagar 16
Information Supplied to the *King's College Register* 19

Section Two
Corrections of Statements Made in Biographies and Other Publications

Early Life in India and England, 1872–1893

Language Learning 25
At Manchester 26
School Studies 26
In London 27
Early Poetry 29
At Cambridge 29
The Riding Examination 30
Political Interests and Activities 31
The Meeting with the Maharaja of Baroda 33
Departure from England 34

Life in Baroda, 1893–1906

Service in Baroda State 37

Language Study at Baroda 43
Poetry Writing at Baroda 44
Meetings with His Grandfather at Deoghar 45

Political Life, 1893 – 1910

A General Note on Sri Aurobindo's Political Life 47
The *Indu Prakash* Articles 67
Beginnings of the Revolutionary Movement 69
Attitude towards Violent Revolution 71
General Note (referring especially to the Alipur Case and Sri Aurobindo's politics) 72
Sister Nivedita 73
Bhawani Mandir 74
The Indian National Congress: Moderates and Extremists 75
The Barisal Conference and the Start of the *Yugantar* 76
Principal of the Bengal National College 78
Start of the *Bande Mataram* 78
The Policy of the *Bande Mataram* 80
The *Bande Mataram* Sedition Case 81
The Surat Congress 82
The Alipore Bomb Case 84
The Open Letters of July and December 1909 86
The *Karmayogin* Case 87

The Departure from Calcutta, 1910

To Charu Chandra Dutt 88
To the Editor, *Sunday Times* 90
On an Article by Ramchandra Majumdar 92
To Pavitra (Philippe Barbier Saint Hilaire) 97

Life in Pondicherry, 1910 – 1950

Meeting with the Mother 102
The *Arya* 102
The Development of the Ashram 102
Support for the Allies 103
Muslims and the 1947 Partition of Bengal 104

Early Spiritual Development

First Turn towards Spiritual Seeking 106
Beginnings of Yoga at Baroda 106
Meeting with Vishnu Bhaskar Lele 109
Sadhana 1908–1909 110

Philosophy and Writings

Sources of His Philosophy 112
Perseus the Deliverer 113
Essays on the Gita 114
The Future Poetry 114
The Mother 115
Some Philosophical Topics 115

Appendix: Notes of Uncertain Origin 116

PART TWO
LETTERS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST

Section One
Letters on Personal, Practical and Political Matters, 1890–1926

Family Letters, 1890–1919

Extract from a Letter to His Father 121
To His Grandfather 122
To His Sister 123
Extract from a Letter to His Brother 125
To His Uncle 138
To His Wife 145
To His Father-in-Law 147

Letters Written as a Probationer in the Indian Civil Service, 1892

To Lord Kimberley 149

Letters Written While Employed in the Princely State of Baroda, 1895–1906

To the Sar Suba, Baroda State 152
To Bhuban Babu 153
To an Officer of the Baroda State 153
Draft of a Reply to the Resident on the Curzon Circular 154
To the Dewan, on the Government's Reply to the Letter on the Curzon Circular 158
To the Naib Dewan, on the Infant Marriage Bill 159
A Letter of Condolence 160
To R. C. Dutt 161
To the Principal, Baroda College 162
To the Dewan, on Rejoining the College 163
To the Maharaja 164
A Letter of Recommendation 165

Letters and Telegrams to Political and Professional Associates, 1906–1926

To Bipin Chandra Pal 166
A Letter of Acknowledgement 166
To Hemendra Prasad Ghose 167
To Aswinicoomar Banerji 167
To Dr. S. K. Mullick 168
Telegrams about a Planned Political Reception 168
Extract from a Letter to Parthasarathi Aiyangar 170
Note on a Forged Document 171
To Anandrao 172
To Motilal Roy 175
Draft of a Letter to Saurin Bose 251
To K. R. Appadurai 252
Fragmentary Draft Letter 253
To a Would-be Contributor to the *Arya* 254
To Joseph Baptista 254
To Balkrishna Shivaram Moonje 257
To Chittaranjan Das 260

To Shyamsundar Chakravarty 262

Open Letters Published in Newspapers, 1909–1925

To the Editor of the *Bengalee* 263
To the Editor of the *Hindu* 264
To the Editor of the *New India* 270
To the Editor of the *Hindustan* 274
To the Editor of the *Independent* 275
To the Editor of the *Standard Bearer* 278
To the Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle* 279

Section Two
Early Letters on Yoga and the Spiritual Life, 1911–1928

Extracts from Letters to the Mother and Paul Richard, 1911–c. 1922

To Paul Richard 283
To the Mother and Paul Richard 285
Draft of a Letter 291

To People in India, 1914–1926

To N. K. Gogte 293
Draft of a Letter to Nolini Kanta Gupta 295
To A. B. Purani 296
To V. Chandrasekharam 298
Extract from a Letter to K. N. Dixit 301
To Ramchandran 302
To and about V. Tirupati 306
To Daulatram Sharma 328

To Barindra Kumar Ghose and Others, 1922–1928

To Barindra Kumar Ghose 332
To Hrishikesh Kanjilal 368
To Krishnashashi 370
To Rajani Palit 373
Draft Letters to and about Kumud Bandhu Bagchi 378

To People in America, 1926–1927

To Mr. and Mrs. Sharman 382

To the Advance Distributing Company 383
Draft of a Letter to C. E. Lefebvre 388
To and about Anna Bogenholm Sloane 389

Draft Letters, 1926 – 1928

To an Unknown Person 397
To and about Marie Potel 397

Section Three
Other Letters of Historical Interest on Yoga and Practical Life, 1921 – 1938

On Yoga and Fund-raising for the Ashram, 1921 – 1938

To and about Durgadas Shett 407
To and about Punamchand M. Shah 428

To and about Public Figures, 1930 – 1937

Draft of a Letter to Maharani Chimnabai II 440
On a Proposed Visit by Mahatma Gandhi 442
To Dr. S. Radhakrishnan 444
To and about Morarji Desai 445
On a Proposed Visit by Jawaharlal Nehru 447
To Birendra Kishore Roy Chowdhury 448

PART THREE
PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS ON INDIAN AND WORLD EVENTS, 1940 – 1950

Section One
Public Statements, Messages, Letters and Telegrams on Indian and World Events, 1940 – 1950

On the Second World War, 1940 – 1943

Contributions to Allied War Funds 453
Notes about the War Fund Contributions 453
On the War: An Unreleased Statement 455
India and the War 462
On the War: Private Letters That Were Made Public 463

On Indian Independence, 1942 – 1947

On the Cripps Proposal 469
On the Wavell Plan 471
On the Cabinet Mission Proposals 472
The Fifteenth of August 1947 474

On the Integration of the French Settlements in India, 1947 – 1950

The Future Union (A Programme) 481
On the Disturbances of 15 August 1947 in Pondicherry 491
Letters to Surendra Mohan Ghosh 492
Note on a *Projet de loi* 495

Messages on Indian and World Events, 1948 – 1950

On the Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi 497
On the World Situation (July 1948) 498
On Linguistic Provinces (Message to Andhra University) 498
Letters Related to the Andhra University Award 504
The Present Darkness (April 1950) 506
On the Korean Conflict 507

Section Two
Private Letters to Public Figures and to the Editor of *Mother India*, 1948 – 1950

Private Letters to Public Figures, 1948 – 1950

To Surendra Mohan Ghosh 511
To Kailas Nath Katju 511
To K. M. Munshi 512

Notes and Letters to the Editor of *Mother India* on Indian and World Events, 1949 – 1950

On Pakistan 514
On the Commonwealth and Secularism 514
On the Unity Party 514
On French India and on Pakistan 515

On Cardinal Wyszynski, Catholicism and Communism 516
On the Kashmir Problem 517
On "New Year Thoughts" 520
Rishis as Leaders 520
On Military Action 521
The Nehru-Liaquat Pact and After 522
On the Communist Movement 523

PART FOUR
PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND NOTICES CONCERNING SRI AUROBINDO'S ASHRAM AND YOGA, 1927–1949

Section One
Public Statements and Notices concerning the Ashram, 1927–1937

Public Statements about the Ashram, 1927 and 1934

On the Ashram's Finances (1927) 529
On the Ashram (1934) 530

Notices for Members of the Ashram, 1928–1937

Notices of May 1928 532
Notices of 1929–1937 534

Section Two
Public Statements about Sri Aurobindo's Path of Yoga, 1934 and 1949

Sri Aurobindo's Teaching 547
A Message to America 551

NOTE ON THE TEXTS 557

Part One

Autobiographical Notes

Section One

Life Sketches and Other Autobiographical Notes

Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch

Sri Aurobindo was born in Calcutta on August 15, 1872. In 1879, at the age of seven, he was taken with his two elder brothers to England for education and lived there for fourteen years. Brought up at first in an English family at Manchester, he joined St. Paul's School in London in [1884][1] and in 1890 went from it with a senior classical scholarship to King's College, Cambridge, where he studied for two years. In 1890 he passed also the open competition for the Indian Civil Service, but at the end of two years of probation failed to present himself at the riding examination and was disqualified for the Service. At this time the Gaekwar of Baroda was in London. Aurobindo saw him, obtained an appointment in the Baroda Service and left England in [January],[2] 1893.

Sri Aurobindo passed thirteen years, from 1893 to 1906, in the Baroda Service, first in the Revenue Department and in secretariat work for the Maharaja, afterwards as Professor of English and, finally, Vice-Principal in the Baroda College. These were years of self-culture, of literary activity — for much of the poetry afterwards published from Pondicherry was written at this time — and of preparation for his future work. In England he had received, according to his father's express instructions, an entirely occidental education without any contact with the culture of India and the East.[3] At Baroda he made up the deficiency, learned Sanskrit and several modern Indian languages, assimilated the spirit of Indian civilisation and its forms past and present. A great part of the last years of this period was spent on leave in silent political activity, for he was debarred from public action by his position at Baroda. The outbreak of the agitation against the partition of Bengal in 1905 gave him the opportunity to give up the Baroda Service and join openly in the political movement. He left Baroda in 1906 and went to Calcutta as Principal of the newly-founded Bengal National College.

---

[1] *MS* 1885. *See Table 1, page 565. — Ed.*

[2] *MS* February. *See Table 1, page 565. — Ed.*

[3] It may be observed that Sri Aurobindo's education in England gave him a wide introduction to the culture of ancient, of mediaeval and of modern Europe. He was a brilliant scholar in Greek and Latin. He had learned French from his childhood in Manchester and studied for himself German and Italian sufficiently to read Goethe and Dante in the original tongues. (He passed the Tripos in Cambridge in the first division

The political action of Sri Aurobindo covered eight years, from 1902 to 1910. During the first half of this period he worked behind the scenes, preparing with other co-workers the beginnings of the Swadeshi (Indian Sinn Fein) movement, till the agitation in Bengal furnished an opening for the public initiation of a more forward and direct political action than the moderate reformism which had till then been the creed of the Indian National Congress. In 1906 Sri Aurobindo came to Bengal with this purpose and joined the New Party, an advanced section small in numbers and not yet strong in influence, which had been recently formed in the Congress. The political theory of this party was a rather vague gospel of Non-cooperation; in action it had not yet gone farther than some ineffective clashes with the Moderate leaders at the annual Congress assembly behind the veil of secrecy of the "Subjects Committee". Sri Aurobindo persuaded its chiefs in Bengal to come forward publicly as an All-India party with a definite and challenging programme, putting forward Tilak, the popular Maratha leader at its head, and to attack the then dominant Moderate (Reformist or Liberal) oligarchy of veteran politicians and capture from them the Congress and the country. This was the origin of the historic struggle between the Moderates and the Nationalists (called by their opponents Extremists) which in two years changed altogether the face of Indian politics.

The new-born Nationalist party put forward Swaraj (independence) as its goal as against the far-off Moderate hope of

---

and obtained record marks in Greek and Latin in the examination for the Indian Civil Service.) [*Sri Aurobindo's note; see pages 12–13.*]

colonial self-government to be realised at a distant date of a century or two by a slow progress of reform; it proposed as its means of execution a programme which resembled in spirit, though not in its details, the policy of Sinn Fein developed some years later and carried to a successful issue in Ireland. The principle of this new policy was self-help; it aimed on one side at an effective organisation of the forces of the nation and on the other professed a complete non-cooperation with the Government. Boycott of British and foreign goods and the fostering of Swadeshi industries to replace them, boycott of British law courts and the foundation of a system of Arbitration courts in their stead, boycott of Government universities and colleges and the creation of a network of National colleges and schools, the formation of societies of young men which would do the work of police and defence and, wherever necessary, a policy of passive resistance were among the immediate items of the programme. Sri Aurobindo hoped to capture the Congress and make it the directing centre of an organised national action, an informal State within the State, which would carry on the struggle for freedom till it was won. He persuaded the party to take up and finance as its recognised organ the newly-founded daily paper, *Bande Mataram*, of which he was at the time acting editor. The *Bande Mataram*, whose policy from the beginning of 1907 till its abrupt winding up in 1908 when Aurobindo was in prison was wholly directed by him, circulated almost immediately all over India. During its brief but momentous existence it changed the political thought of India which has ever since preserved fundamentally, even amidst its later developments, the stamp then imparted to it. But the struggle initiated on these lines, though vehement and eventful and full of importance for the future, did not last long at the time; for the country was still unripe for so bold a programme.

Sri Aurobindo was prosecuted for sedition in 1907 and acquitted. Up till now an organiser and writer, he was obliged by this event and by the imprisonment or disappearance of other leaders to come forward as the acknowledged head of the party in Bengal and to appear on the platform for the first time as a speaker. He presided over the Nationalist Conference at Surat in 1907 where in the forceful clash of two equal parties the Congress was broken to pieces. In May, 1908, he was arrested in the Alipur Conspiracy Case as implicated in the doings of the revolutionary group led by his brother Barindra; but no evidence of any value could be established against him and in this case too he was acquitted. After a detention of one year as undertrial prisoner in the Alipur Jail, he came out in May, 1909, to find the party organisation broken, its leaders scattered by imprisonment, deportation or self-imposed exile and the party itself still existent but dumb and dispirited and incapable of any strenuous action. For almost a year he strove single-handed as the sole remaining leader of the Nationalists in India to revive the movement. He published at this time to aid his effort a weekly English paper, the *Karmayogin*, and a Bengali weekly, the *Dharma*. But at last he was compelled to recognise that the nation was not yet sufficiently trained to carry out his policy and programme. For a time he thought that the necessary training must first be given through a less advanced Home Rule movement or an agitation of passive resistance of the kind created by Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa. But he saw that the hour of these movements had not come and that he himself was not their destined leader. Moreover, since his twelve months' detention in the Alipur Jail, which had been spent entirely in the practice of Yoga, his inner spiritual life was pressing upon him for an exclusive concentration. He resolved therefore to withdraw from the political field, at least for a time.

In February, 1910, he withdrew to a secret retirement at Chandernagore and in the beginning of April sailed for Pondicherry in French India. A third prosecution was launched against him at this moment for a signed article in the *Karmayogin*; in his absence it was pressed against the printer of the paper who was convicted, but the conviction was quashed on appeal in the High Court of Calcutta. For the third time a prosecution against him had failed. Sri Aurobindo had left Bengal with some intention of returning to the political field under more favourable circumstances; but very soon the magnitude of the spiritual work he had taken up appeared to him and he saw that it would need the exclusive concentration of all his energies. Eventually he cut off connection with politics, refused repeatedly to accept the Presidentship of the National Congress and went into a complete retirement. During all his stay at Pondicherry from 1910 to the present moment[4] he has remained more and more exclusively devoted to his spiritual work and his sâdhanâ.

In 1914 after four years of silent Yoga he began the publication of a philosophical monthly, the *Arya*. Most of his more important works, those published since in book form, the Isha Upanishad, the Essays on the Gita, and others not yet published, the Life Divine, the Synthesis of Yoga,[5] appeared serially in the *Arya*. These works embodied much of the inner knowledge that had come to him in his practice of Yoga. Others were concerned with the spirit and significance of Indian civilisation and culture, the true meaning of the Vedas, the progress of human society, the nature and evolution of poetry, the possibility of the unification of the human race. At this time also he began to publish his poems, both those written in England and at Baroda and those, fewer in number, added during his period of political activity and in the first years of his residence at Pondicherry. The *Arya* ceased publication in 1921 after six years and a half of uninterrupted appearance.

Sri Aurobindo lived at first in retirement at Pondicherry with four or five disciples. Afterwards more and yet more began to come to him to follow his spiritual path and the number became so large that a community of sâdhaks had to be formed for the maintenance and collective guidance of those who had left everything behind for the sake of a higher life. This was the foundation of the Sri Aurobindo Asram which has less been created than grown around him as its centre.

Sri Aurobindo began his practice of Yoga in 1905. At first gathering into it the essential elements of spiritual experience that are gained by the paths of divine communion and spiritual realisation followed till now in India, he passed on in search of a more complete experience uniting and harmonising the two ends of existence, Spirit and Matter. Most ways of Yoga are paths to the Beyond leading to the Spirit and, in the end, away from life; Sri Aurobindo's rises to the Spirit to redescend with its gains bringing the light and power and bliss of the Spirit into life to transform it. Man's present existence in the material world is in this view or vision of things a life in the Ignorance with the Inconscient at its base, but even in its darkness and nescience there are involved the presence and possibilities of the Divine. The created world is not a mistake or a vanity and illusion to be cast aside by the soul returning to heaven or Nirvâna, but the scene of a spiritual evolution by which out of this material Inconscience is to be manifested progressively the Divine Consciousness in things. Mind is the highest term yet reached in the evolution, but it is not the highest of which it is capable. There is above it a Supermind or eternal Truth-consciousness which is in its nature the self-aware and self-determining light and power of a Divine Knowledge. Mind is an ignorance seeking after Truth, but this is a self-existent Knowledge harmoniously manifesting the play of its forms and forces. It is only by the descent of this supermind that the perfection dreamed of by all that is highest in humanity can come. It is possible by opening to a greater divine consciousness to rise to this power of light and bliss, discover one's true self, remain in constant union with the Divine and bring down the supramental Force for the transformation of mind and life and body. To realise this possibility has been the dynamic aim of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga.

---

[4] *This "Life Sketch" was written in 1930 and published in 1937. Sri Aurobindo's retirement lasted until his passing in December 1950. — Ed.*

[5] *These two works, and many others, have since been published in book form. — Ed.*

APPENDIX

Letters on "Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch"

[1]

> I understand from Ratikanto Nag that you have very nearly finished reading through my manuscript.

I have read through most of the MS. — but the narrative portion of the account of my life is full of inaccuracies of fact. I hope to write about this shortly. 1928

[2]

I do not know where you got the facts in your account of my life; but after starting to correct it I had to give up the attempt in despair. It is chock-full of errors and inaccuracies: this cannot be published. As for the account of my spiritual experience, I mean of the Bombay affair, somebody must have inflicted on you a humorous caricature of it. This too cannot go. The best will be to omit all account or narrative and say — at not too much length, I would suggest — what you think it necessary to say about me. 16 March 1930

[3]

I see that you have persisted in giving a biography — is it really necessary or useful? The attempt is bound to be a failure, because neither you nor anyone else knows anything at all of my life; it has not been on the surface for man to see.

You have given a sort of account of my political action, but the impression it makes on me and would make, I believe, on your public is that of a fiery idealist rushing furiously at an impossible aim (knocking his head against a stone wall, which is not a very sensible proceeding) without any grasp on realities and without any intelligible political method or plan of action. The practical peoples of the West could hardly be well impressed by such a picture and it would make them suspect that, probably, my yoga was a thing of the same type! 25 March 1930

[4]

No, certainly not.[1] If you gave my name, it would be as if I were advertising myself in your book. I did not care to have anything of the kind written, as I told you, because I do not think these things are of any importance. I merely wrote, in the end, a brief summary of the most outward facts, nothing inward or personal, because I have seen that many legends and distortions are afloat, and this will at least put things in the straight line. If you like, you can mention that it is a brief statement of the principal facts of Sri Aurobindo's public life from an authoritative source.

Necessarily I have mentioned only salient facts, leaving out all mere details. As for an *estimate* of myself I have given none. In my view, a man's value does not depend on what he learns or his position or fame or what he does, but on what he is and inwardly becomes, and of that I have said nothing. I do not want to alter what I have written. If you like you can put a note of your own to the "occidental education" stating that it included Greek and Latin and two or three modern languages, but I do not myself see the necessity of it or the importance. June 1930

[5]

I would prefer another form more in keeping with the tone of the text, — eg

"It may be observed that Sri Aurobindo's education in England gave him a wide introduction to the culture of ancient, of mediaeval and of modern Europe. He was a brilliant scholar in Greek and Latin, | passed the Tripos in Cambridge in the first division, obtained record marks in Greek and Latin in the examination for the Indian Civil Service |. He had learned French from his childhood in Manchester and studied for himself Italian and German sufficiently to read Dante and Goethe in the original tongue."[2]

---

[1] *The question was whether the correspondent could publish the "Life Sketch" over Sri Aurobindo's signature. — Ed.*

I have left the detail about the Tripos and the record marks, though I do not find these trifles in place here; the note would read much better with the omission of the part between the vertical lines.

(But what is Beachcroft doing here? He butts in in such a vast and spreading parenthesis that he seems to be one of "these ancient languages" and in him too, perhaps, I got record marks! Besides, any ingenious reader would deduce from his presence in your note that he acquitted me out of fellow-feeling over the two "examinations" and out of university camaraderie,— which was far from being the case. I met him only in the I.C.S classes and at the I.C.S examinations and we never exchanged two words together. If any extralegal consideration came in subconsciously in the acquittal, it must have been his admiration for my prose style to which he gave fervent expression in his judgment. Don't drag him in like this — let him rest in peace in his grave.) 27 June 1930

---

[2] *The passage within inverted commas is Sri Aurobindo's correction of a note that had been submitted to him by the correspondent. The final version of the note appears as footnote 3 on pages 5 – 6. — Ed.*

Incomplete Life Sketches

Incomplete Life Sketch in Outline Form, c. 1922

Born 1872.
Sent to England for education 1879.
Studied at St Paul's School, London, and King's College, Cambridge.
Returned to India. February, 1893.
Life of preparation at Baroda 1893–1906
Political life — 1902–1910

[The "Swadeshi" movement prepared from 1902–5 and started definitely by Sri Aurobindo, Tilak, Lajpatrai and others in 1905. A movement for Indian independence, by non-cooperation and passive resistance and the organisation (under a national Council or Executive, but this did not materialise,) of arbitration, national education, economic independence, (especially handloom industry including the spinning-wheel, but also the opening of mills, factories and Swadeshi business concerns under Indian management and with Indian capital,) boycott of British goods, British law-courts, and all Government institutions, offices, honours etc. Mahatma Gandhi's non-cooperation movement was a repetition of the "Swadeshi", but with an exclusive emphasis on the spinning-wheel and the transformation of passive resistance, ("Satyagraha") from a political means into a moral and religious dogma of soul-force and conquest by suffering. The running of the daily paper, "Bande Mataram", was only one of Sri Aurobindo's political activities.][1]

Imprisonment —

Thrice prosecuted; first for sedition and acquitted

then in 1908 along with his brother Barindra, (one of the chief leaders of the revolutionary movement) on a charge of conspiracy to wage war against the established Government. Acquitted after a year's detention as an under-trial prisoner, mostly in a solitary cell

---

[1] *The square brackets are Sri Aurobindo's. — Ed.*

last; in his absence in 1910, for sedition. This case also failed on appeal.

=

After 1909 carried on the political (Swadeshi) movement alone (the other leaders being in prison or in exile) for one year. Afterwards on receiving an inner intimation left politics for spiritual lifework. The intimation was that the Swadeshi movement must now end and would be followed later on by a Home Rule movement and a Non-cooperation movement of the Gandhi type, under other leaders.

Came to Pondicherry 1910.
Started the "Arya". 1914

Fragmentary Life Sketch, c. 1928

Aurobindo was born on August 15th, 1872, in Calcutta. His father, a man of great ability and strong personality, had been among the first to go to England for his education. He returned entirely Anglicised in habits, ideas and ideal, — so strongly that Aurobindo as a child spoke English and Hindustani only and learned his mother tongue only after his return from England. He was determined that his children should receive an entirely European upbringing. While in India they were sent for the beginning of their education to an Irish nuns' school in Darjeeling and in 1879 he took his three sons to England and placed them with an English clergyman and his wife with strict instructions that they should not be allowed to make the acquaintance of any Indian or undergo any Indian influence. These instructions were carried out to the letter and Aurobindo grew up in entire ignorance of India, her people, her religion and her culture.

Other Autobiographical Notes

A Day in Srinagar

Cashmere. Srinagar.

Saturday. [30 May 1903]

In the morning Sardesai dropped in and we went together to Dhond, where I arranged with Rajaram to mess with him; the dinner consisted of the usual Brahminic course, dal & rice, two chupatties with potatoes & greens and amthi, — the whole to be seasoned liberally by a great square of clarified butter at one side of the tray. Fortunately the dishes were not very pungent and, with this allowance, I have made myself sufficiently adaptable to be a Brahmin with the Brahmins

*

Dinner in the morning from Rajaram, who put me au courant with zenana politics. Not having his son to quarrel with, H.H has filled up the gap with his wife; they have been at it hammer & tongs since the Maharani joined him at Murree, chiefly, it seems, about dhobies & other such highly unroyal topics. To spite his wife H.H has raised the subject of Tarabai Ghadge's carriage allowance, which she has been taking very placidly without keeping any carriage; for neglect in suffering this "payment without consideration", Mohite, Raoji Sirgavkar & the Chitnis are each to be fined 105 Rs. Note that Mohite alone is to blame, having signed the usual declaration that he had assured himself the recipient had her own conveyance; but this sort of thing is becoming too common to be wondered at. Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur officials. The order adds that if any of the stricken has objections to make, he may make them and, if found satisfactory, the fine will be withdrawn. This is perilously like hanging a man first and trying him afterwards

— or to put it accurately, I throw my shoe in your face and then permit you to prove that the salutation was causeless, in which case I shall be graciously pleased to put my shoe on my foot again. Another characteristic order is that degrading Savant back from Naib Khangi Karbhariship to Chitnishood & ordering Mohite to make a tippan as to whether his allowance should be continued or not. "His Highness thinks it should not, but still the K.K. should make a tippan about it." Again if translated this might run, "I sentence the criminal in the dock to six months' hard labour and the jury may now consider whether he should have been sentenced or not." The latest trouble is about "unnecessary tongas" from Murree to Srinagar; yet the Maharaja was assured that if he insisted upon starting at once, there was no other course open, and at the time he promised to sanction any expense entailed. Now that he has had his own convenience satisfied, he chooses not to remember that he ever promised anything of the sort, so that he may have the pitiful satisfaction of venting his illtemper on innocent people. He has also ordered that no one shall receive special bhutta at a hill-station, unless the matter is brought to his notice and he is personally satisfied that prices are higher than in Baroda. Where will all this shopkeeping unprinceliness & petty-fogging injustice end?

Ashudada sent Visvas' son Hemchandra with a note to me; the lad is a young Hercules five foot ten in height & monstrous in muscle with a roaring voice and continual outbursts of boisterous laughter over anything in the shape of a joke good or bad — a fine specimen of the outlander Bengali. His companion, a Kaviraj, rejoices in the name of Satyendranath Banerji Kobirunjun and is something of an ass & much of a coward, but not a bad fellow withal. We adjourned in a body, Sardesai, Ambegavkar, Dr. Balabhai, myself & the two Bengalis to the Maharaja's green-cushioned boat & set out on the broad bosom of Lake Dal and through the lock & a canal into the Jhelum. The boatman swore that we should get drowned if we shot the lock, but Hem Babu though he admitted there might be a little danger, insisted on having it done. In the result we only shipped a little water which sought the left leg of my trousers as naturally as a bird seeks its nest, but the Kaviraj was in a terrible fright & clamoured protestation till we were right in the swirl of the waters. The water was lined with houseboats of the ogre-monkeys in some of which there were marvellous specimens of Cashmeri beauty. After a visit to Ashu & then to the hospital, — where I found I turned the scale at 113, my old weight, and reached the height of 5 ft 5 in my shoes — we adjourned through the rain to Hem Babu's house. There we [met][1] his father, the genial & hearty Reception Officer, tall & robust in build, with a fine largely cut jovial face and a venerable beard, and several other Bengalis — let me see if I can remember their names, Chunilal Ray of the Foreign Office, with a face of pure Indo-Afghan type looking more the Punjabi or Cashmeri than a Babu, Gurucharan Dhar, a pleader, Bhabani Babu of the Commissariat, another of the Commissariat, and a certain Lolit Babu, of I know not where. No, I shall never be any good at remembering names. The tea was execrable but the cigarettes & the company were good.

Afterwards the carriage took us through the streets of the town & then, the coachman being unable or unwilling to find his way out, back the same way. The streets are very narrow and the houses poor & rickety, though occasionally picturesque, being built impartially of bricks, stones or other material imposed & intersticed irregularly & without cement, cobbled in fact rather than built. The windows are usually plastered with paper — for the sake of privacy, I suppose, — but it must make the rooms very dingy & gloomy. The roofs are often grown over with a garden of grasses & wildflowers, making a very pretty effect. The Maharaja's palace by the river in the true quaint Hindu way of building was the one building which struck me in Srinagar, — how much superior to the pretentious monstrosities of architecture at Luxmivilas Palace! This drive has finally completed and confirmed my observations of Cashmeri beauty. The men in the country parts are more commonly handsome than the town people & the Hindus than the Mohamedans.

---

[1] *MS* might

Information Supplied to the *King's College Register*

[1]

[*Answers (on right) to questions in a form received in 1903*]

KING'S COLLEGE REGISTER

PARTICULARS DESIRED.	INFORMATION.
Name.	Ghose
Christian name or names.	Aravind. Acroyd.
Any additional title (e.g. The Reverend) if any.	None
Name and address of Father living or deceased.	D^{r} Krishnadhan Ghose. Civil Surgeon deceased
Name of School or where educated before University.	St Paul's School
School Honours. (a) In Athletics (b) In Learning	
University and College athletic distinctions with dates.	None.
University and College prizes and scholarships with dates.	Senior Classical Scholarship 1884 College Prizes for Greek Iambics and Latin Hexameters. 1890 (?)
Cambridge University triposes and degrees, and dates thereof.	Classical Tripos 1892. First Class Third Division
Other degrees and dates thereof.	None
College fellowship and offices (if any) with dates.	None

Short particulars of career from date of first degree to present time with business, profession, particulars of publications, political and other honours. etc.	Entered H.H. the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda's service Feb [1893].[2] For the greater part of the time on special duty. Lecturer in French for three years and Assistant Professor of English for two years in the Baroda College
Date of marriage (if any) and maiden name of Wife.	[April][3] 1901. Mrinalini Bose.
Present occupation (if any).	H.H the Maharaja Gaekwar's Service, at present Secretary (acting).
Present permanent address.	Racecourse Road. Baroda
Clubs.	Baroda Officer's Club. Baroda Gymkhana

Signed Aravind. A. Ghose
Date 16th Sept. 1903.
Srinagar. Cashmere.

---

[2] *MS* 1903. *See Table 1, page 565. — Ed.*
[3] *MS* June. *See Table 1, page 565. — Ed.*

[2]

[*Corrections made in 1928 to the printed entry of 1903*]

KING'S COLLEGE REGISTER.

Old Entry

Ghose, Aravinda Acroyd: son of Dr. Krishnadhan Ghose, late
of Khulna, Bengal, India.
School, St Paul's.
Admitted 11 Oct. 1890; Scholar; Prizeman; 1st
Class Classical Tripos, Part I., 1892;
in H.H. the Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda's service
*~~since Feb. 1903; now acting secretary.~~
Married, June 1901, Mrinalini Bose.
~~*Address*: Racecourse Road, Baroda.~~

Corrections of above Entry.

*from Feb 1893 to 1905; Professor of English and Vice-Principal, Baroda College.

Additional Information up to Date.

Principal, National College, Calcutta, from 1906 to 1908. Editor philosophical monthly, Arya; (1914–1921).

Present Permanent Postal Address and designation (e.g. *The Rev.*)

Sri Aurobindo Ghose
28 Rue François Martin
Pondicherry

Signature Aurobindo Ghose.
Date August 31. 1928.

Section Two

Corrections of Statements Made in Biographies and Other Publications

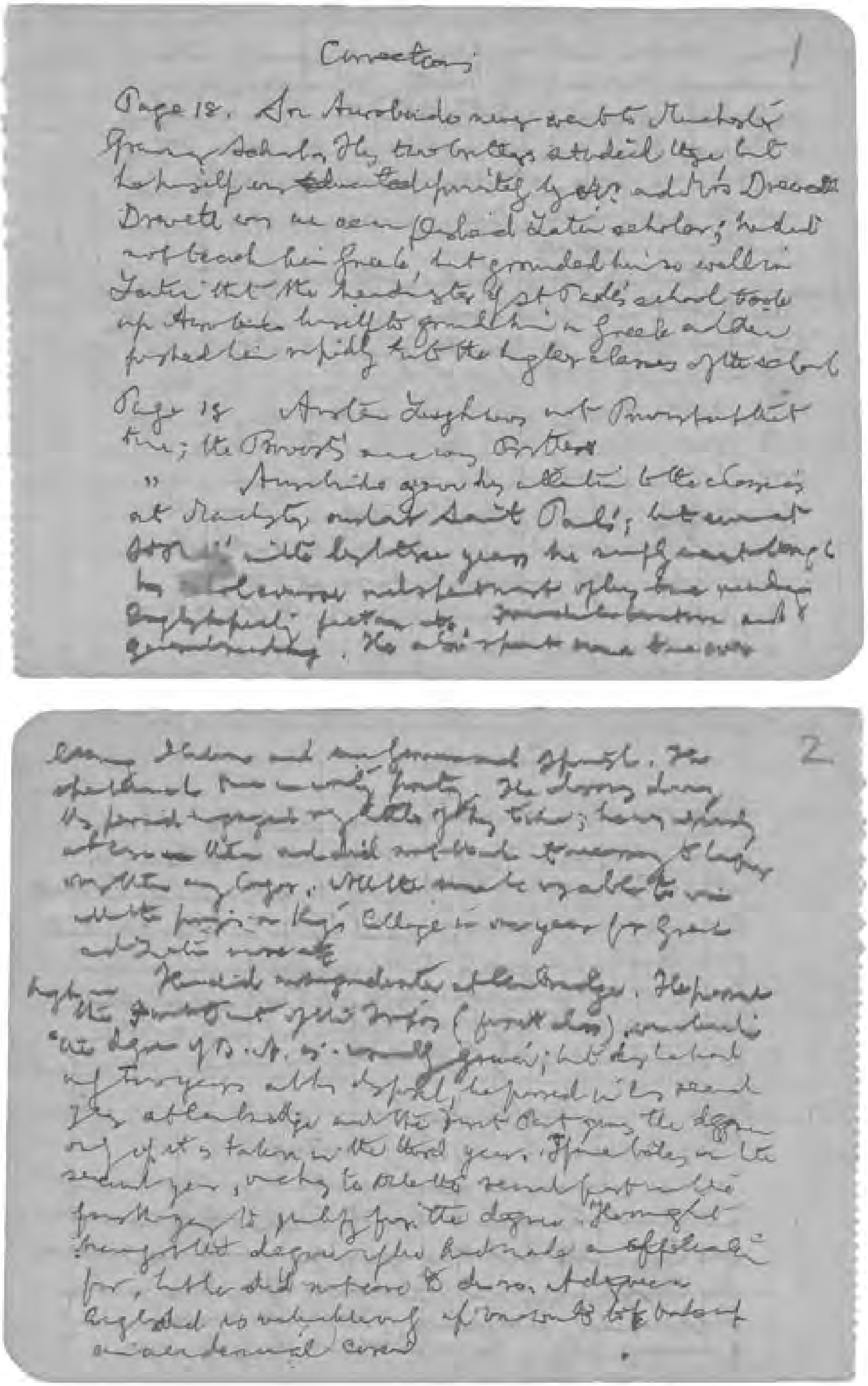

Corrections 1

Page 18. Sri Aurobindo never went to Manchester Grammar School. His two brothers attended it but he himself was educated privately by Mr. and Mrs. Drewett. Drewett was an old Oxford man and a Latin scholar; he did not teach him Greek, but grounded him so well in Latin that the headmaster of St Paul's school took up Aurobindo himself to ground him in Greek and then pushed him rapidly into the higher classes of the school.

Page 18 Austen Leigh was not Provost at that time; the Provost's name was Prothero

" Aurobindo gave his attention to the classics at Manchester and at Saint Paul's; but even at [illegible] in the last three years he simply went through his course by his already acquired knowledge and spent most of his time in general reading, English poetry, fiction etc., French literature and [illegible] general reading. He also spent some time over

learning Italian and some German and a little Spanish. He spent much time in writing poetry. The school studies during the period engaged very little of his time; he was already at ease in them and did not think it necessary to labour over them any longer. All the same he was able to win all the prizes in King's College in one year for Greek and Latin verse etc. 2

He did not graduate at Cambridge. He passed high in the first part of the Tripos (first class) on which the degree of B.A. is usually given; but as he had only two years at his disposal, he passed it in his second year at Cambridge and the first part gives the degree only if it is taken in the third year. If one takes it in the second year, one has to take the second part in the fourth year to qualify for the degree. He might have got the degree if he had made an application for, but he did not care to do so. A degree in England had no value except if one wants to take up an academical career

Sri Aurobindo's corrections of statements in a proposed biography

Early Life in India and England
1872–1893

Language Learning

> He may have known a smattering of Bengali till he was five years of age. Thereafter till twenty-one he spoke only English.

In my father's house only English and Hindustani were spoken. I knew no Bengali.

*

> Quite early he was sent to St. Paul's School at Darjeeling, and then, when he showed unusual promise, to King's College, Cambridge. . . .
>
> . . . His chosen medium of expression is English.

Another error is worth correcting. The reviewer seems to assume that Sri Aurobindo was sent straight from India to King's College, Cambridge, and that he had [to] learn English as a foreign language. This is not the fact; Sri Aurobindo in his father's house already spoke only English and Hindustani, he thought in English from his childhood and did not even know his native language, Bengali. At the age of seven he was taken to England and remained there consecutively for fourteen years, speaking English and thinking in English and no other tongue. He was educated in French and Latin and other subjects under private tuition in Manchester from seven to eleven and studied afterwards in St Paul's School London for about seven years. From there he went to King's College. He had never to study English at all as a subject; though it was not his native language, it had become by force of circumstances from the very first his natural language.

At Manchester

> He was sensitive to beauty in man and nature. . . . He watched with pain the thousand and one instances of man's cruelty to man.

The feeling was more abhorrence than pain; from early childhood there was a strong hatred and disgust for all kinds of cruelty and oppression, but the term pain would not accurately describe the reaction.

*

There was no positive religious or spiritual element in the education received in England. The only personal contact with Christianity (that of Nonconformist England) was of a nature to repel rather than attract. The education received was mainly classical and had a purely intellectual and aesthetic influence; it did not stimulate any interest in spiritual life. My attention was not drawn to the spirituality of Europe of the Middle Ages; my knowledge of it was of a general character and I never underwent its influence.

School Studies

> Between 1880 and 1884 Sri Aurobindo attended the grammar school at Manchester.

I never went to the Manchester Grammar school, never even stepped inside it. It was my two brothers who studied there. I was taught privately by the Drewetts. Mr. Drewett who was a scholar in Latin (he had been a Senior Classic at Oxford)[1] taught me that language (but not Greek, which I began at Saint Paul's, London), and English History etc.; Mrs. Drewett taught me French, Geography and Arithmetic. No Science; it was not in fashion at that time.

*

---

[1] *See Table 2, page 567. — Ed.*

> Aurobindo studied in the Manchester Grammar School for a period of about five years. . . . The Head Master of St. Paul's from the first entertained a very high opinion of Aurobindo's character and attainments.

[*First sentence altered to:*] Aurobindo studied at home, learning Latin, French and other subjects from Mr and Mrs Drewett.

Sri Aurobindo never went to Manchester Grammar School, it was his two brothers who went there. He himself studied privately with Mr and Mrs Drewett. Mr Drewett was a very fine classical scholar and taught him Latin and grounded him so firmly that the Head Master of St. Paul's after teaching him personally the elements of Greek which he had not yet begun to learn, put him at once from the lower into the higher school. There was no admiration expressed about his character.

[*Another version:*] Sri Aurobindo never went to Manchester Grammar School. His two brothers studied there, but he himself was educated privately by Mr and Mrs Drewett. Drewett was an accomplished Latin scholar; he did not teach him Greek, but grounded him so well in Latin that the headmaster of St. Paul's school took up Aurobindo himself to ground him in Greek and then pushed him rapidly into the higher classes of the school.

*

> [At St. Paul's Aurobindo made the discovery of Homer.]

The Head Master only taught him the elements of Greek grammar and then pushed him up into the Upper School.

In London

> [He was sent to boarding school in London.]

St. Paul's was a day school. The three brothers lived in London for some time with the mother of Mr. Drewett but she left them after a quarrel between her and Manmohan about religion. The old Mrs. Drewett was fervently Evangelical and she said she would not live with an atheist as the house might fall down on her. Afterwards Benoybhusan and Aurobindo occupied a room in the South Kensington Liberal Club where Mr. J. S. Cotton, brother of Sir Henry Cotton, for some time Lieutenant Governor of Bengal,[2] was the secretary and Benoy assisted him in his work. Manmohan went into lodgings. This was the time of the greatest suffering and poverty. Subsequently Aurobindo also went separately into lodgings until he took up residence at Cambridge.

*

> Aurobindo now turned the full fury of his attention to classical studies . . .

Aurobindo gave his attention to the classics at Manchester and at Saint Paul's; but even at S^{t} Paul's in the last three years he simply went through his school course and spent most of his spare time in general reading, especially English poetry, literature and fiction, French literature and the history of ancient, mediaeval and modern Europe. He spent some time also over learning Italian, some German and a little Spanish. He spent much time too in writing poetry. The school studies during this period engaged very little of his time; he was already at ease in them and did not think it necessary to labour over them any longer. All the same he was able to win all the prizes in King's College in one year for Greek and Latin verse etc.

> Young Aurobindo had thus achieved rare academic distinctions at a very early age. He had mastered Greek and Latin and English, and he had also acquired sufficient familiarity with continental languages like German, French and Italian. . . .

[*Altered to:*] He had mastered Greek and Latin, English and French, and he had also acquired some familiarity with continental languages like German and Italian.

---

[2] *See Table 2, page 567. — Ed.*

Early Poetry

> No doubt the derivative element is prominent in much of his early verse. Not only are names and lineaments and allusions foreign in their garb, but the literary echoes are many and drawn from varied sources.

Foreign to what? He knew nothing about India or her culture etc. What these poems express is the education and imaginations and ideas and feelings created by a purely European culture and surroundings — it could not be otherwise. In the same way the poems on Indian subjects and surroundings in the same book express the first reactions to India and Indian culture after the return home and a first acquaintance with these things.

*

> Like Macaulay's *A Jacobite's Epitaph*, [Aurobindo's] *Hic Jacet* also achieves its severe beauty through sheer economy of words; Aurobindo's theme, the very rhythm and language of the poem, all hark back to Macaulay; . . .

If so, it must have been an unconscious influence; for after early childhood Macaulay's verse (The Lays) ceased to appeal. The "Jacobite's Epitaph" was perhaps not even read twice; it made no impression.

At Cambridge

> It is said that the Provost of King's College, Mr. Austen Leigh, quickly recognized Aurobindo's unusual talent and rich integrity.

[*Altered to:*] Aurobindo's unusual talents early attracted the admiration of Oscar Browning, then a well-known figure at Cambridge.

Austen Leigh was not the name of the Provost; his name was Prothero.[3] It was not he but Oscar Browning, a scholar and writer of some contemporary fame, who expressed admiration for Sri Aurobindo's scholarship, — there was nothing about integrity. He expressed the opinion that his papers, for the Scholarship examination, were the best he had ever seen and quite remarkable.

---

[3] *See Table 2, page 567. — Ed.*

*

> Aurobindo now turned the full fury of his attention to classical studies and in the fullness of time, graduated from King's College in 1892, with a First Class in Classical Tripos.

Sri Aurobindo did not graduate; he took and passed the Tripos in his second year; to graduate one had to take the Tripos in the third year or else pass a second part of the Tripos in the fourth year. Sri Aurobindo was not engrossed in classical studies; he was more busy reading general literature and writing poetry.

[*Another version:*] He did not graduate at Cambridge. He passed high in the First Part of the Tripos (first class); it is on passing this First Part that the degree of B.A. is usually given; but as he had only two years at his disposal, he had to pass it in his second year at Cambridge, and the First Part gives the degree only if it is taken in the third year. If one takes it in the second year, one has to appear for the second part of the Tripos in the fourth year to qualify for the degree. He might have got the degree if he had made an application for it, but he did not care to do so. A degree in England is valuable only if one wants to take up an academical career.

The Riding Examination

> At the end of the period of probation, however, he did not appear for the departmental Riding examination and he was consequently disqualified for the Civil Service. Aurobindo was now able to turn the full fury of his attention to Classical studies.

These studies were already finished at that time.

*

> After a couple of years of intense study, he graduated from King's College in 1892, with a First Class in Classical Tripos.

This happened earlier, not after the Civil Service failure.

> At the end of the period of probation, however, he did not choose to appear for the departmental Riding examination; a something within him had detained him in his room. . . .

[*The last phrase altered to:*] prevented his arriving in time.

Nothing detained him in his room. He felt no call for the I.C.S. and was seeking some way to escape from that bondage. By certain manoeuvres he managed to get himself disqualified for riding without himself rejecting the Service, which his family would not have allowed him to do.

*

> [According to Aurobindo's sister Sarojini, Aurobindo was playing cards at his London residence when he was to have gone to appear for the writing examination.]

Sarojini's memory is evidently mistaken. I was wandering in the streets of London to pass away time and not playing cards. At last when I went to the grounds I was too late. I came back home and told my elder brother, Benoybhusan, that I was chucked. He with a philosophic attitude proposed playing cards and so we [sat][4] down playing cards. [Manmohan][5] came [later][6] and on hearing about my being chucked began to shout at our playing cards when such a calamity had befallen [us].

Political Interests and Activities

> [In England at an early age, Aurobindo took a firm decision to liberate his own nation.]

Not quite that; at this age Sri Aurobindo began first to be interested in Indian politics of which previously he knew nothing. His father began sending the newspaper The Bengalee with passages marked relating cases of maltreatment of Indians by Englishmen and he wrote in his letters denouncing the British Government in India as a heartless Government. At the age of eleven Sri Aurobindo had already received strongly the impression that a period of general upheaval and great revolutionary changes was coming in the world and he himself was destined to play a part in it. His attention was now drawn to India and this feeling was soon canalised into the idea of the liberation of his own country. But the "firm decision" took full shape only towards the end of another four years. It had already been made when he went to Cambridge and as a member and for some time secretary of the Indian Majlis at Cambridge he delivered many revolutionary speeches which, as he afterwards learnt, had their part in determining the authorities to exclude him from the Indian Civil Service; the failure in the riding test was only the occasion, for in some other cases an opportunity was given for remedying this defect in India itself.

---

[4] *MS (dictated)* set
[5] *MS (dictated)* Manomohan
[6] *MS (dictated)* latter

*

> [Aurobindo's writing a poem on Parnell shows that Parnell influenced him.]

It only shows that I took a keen interest in Parnell and nothing more.

*

> While in London he used to attend the weekly meetings of the Fabian Society.

Never once!

*

> [Aurobindo formed a secret society while in England.]

This is not correct. The Indian students in London did once meet to form a secret society called romantically the Lotus and Dagger in which each member vowed to work for the liberation of India generally and to take some special work in furtherance of that end. Aurobindo did not form the society but he became a member along with his brothers. But the society was still-born. This happened immediately before the return to India and when he had finally left Cambridge. Indian politics at that time was timid and moderate and this was the first attempt of the kind by Indian students in England. In India itself Aurobindo's maternal grandfather Raj Narayan Bose formed once a secret society of which Tagore, then a very young man, became a member, and also set up an institution for national and revolutionary propaganda, but this finally came to nothing. Later on there was a revolutionary spirit in Maharashtra and a secret society was started in Western India with a Rajput noble as the head and this had a Council of Five in Bombay with several prominent Mahratta politicians as its members. This society was contacted and joined by Sri Aurobindo somewhere in 1902–3, sometime after he had already started secret revolutionary work in Bengal on his own account. In Bengal he found some very small secret societies recently started and acting separately without any clear direction and tried to unite them with a common programme. The union was never complete and did not last but the movement itself grew and very soon received an enormous extension and became a formidable factor in the general unrest in Bengal.

The Meeting with the Maharaja of Baroda

> He obtained, with the help of James Cotton, Sir Henry's son, an introduction to H.H. the late Sayaji Rao, Gaekwar of Baroda, during his visit to England.

James Cotton was Sir Henry's brother not his son.

> Sir Henry Cotton was much connected with Maharshi Raj Narayan Bose — Aurobindo's maternal grandfather. His son James Cotton was at this time in London. As a result of these favourable circumstances a meeting came about with the Gaekwar of Baroda.

Cotton was my father's friend — they had made arrangements for my posting in Bengal; but he had nothing to do with my meeting with the Gaekwar. James Cotton was well acquainted with my eldest brother, because C was secretary of the South Kensington Liberal Club where we were living and my brother was his assistant. He took great interest in us. It was he who arranged the meeting.

*

> Sri Aurobindo was first introduced to H.H. Sri Sayajirao, the great, Maharaja of Baroda by Mr. Khaserao Jadhav in England.

Not true. Sri Aurobindo became acquainted with Khaserao two or three years after his arrival in Baroda, through Khaserao's brother, Lieutenant Madhavrao Jadhav. [It was][7] James Cotton, brother of Sir Henry (who was a friend of Dr K.D. Ghose) who introduced Sri Aurobindo to the Gaekwar. Cotton became secretary of the South Kensington Liberal Club where two of the brothers were living; Benoybhusan was doing some clerical work for the Club for 5 shillings a week and Cotton took him as his assistant; he took a strong interest in all the three brothers and when Sri Aurobindo failed in the riding test, he tried to get another chance for him (much against the will of Sri Aurobindo who was greatly relieved and overjoyed by his release from the I.C.S) and, when that did not succeed, introduced him to the Gaekwar so that he might get an appointment in Baroda. Cotton afterwards came on a visit to Baroda and saw Sri Aurobindo in the College.

Departure from England

> For fourteen years he had lived in England, divorced from the culture of his forefathers; he had developed foreign tastes and tendencies and he had been de-nationalised like his own country itself and Aurobindo was not happy with himself.

---

[7] *Sri Aurobindo cancelled "It was" during revision but left "who" uncancelled. — Ed.*

> He should begin all again from the beginning and try to re-nationalise himself; . . .

There was no unhappiness for that reason, nor at that time any deliberate will for renationalisation — which came, after reaching India, by natural attraction to Indian culture and ways of life and a temperamental feeling and preference for all that was Indian.

*

> He was leaving, he wished to leave, and yet there was a touch of regret as well at the thought of leaving England. . . . He felt the flutter of unutterable misgivings and regrets; he achieved escape from them by having recourse to poetic expression.

There was no such regret in leaving England, no attachment to the past or misgivings for the future. Few friendships were made in England and none very intimate; the mental atmosphere was not found congenial. There was therefore no need for any such escape.

*

> Aurobindo was going back to India to serve under the Gaekwar of Baroda; he cast one last look at his all but adopted country and thus uttered his "Envoi".

No, the statement was of a transition from one culture to another. There was an attachment to English and European thought and literature, but not to England as a country; he had no ties there and did not make England his adopted country, as Manmohan did for a time. If there was attachment to a European land as a second country, it was intellectually and emotionally to one not seen or lived in in this life, not England, but France.

*

> The steamer by which Aurobindo was to have left England was wrecked near Lisbon. The news came to Dr. Krishnadhan [Ghose] as a stunning blow. He concluded that all his three sons were lost to him for ever.

There was no question of the two other brothers starting. It was only Aurobindo's death that was [reported][8] and it was while uttering his name in lamentation that the father died.

*

> After his father's demise the responsibility of supporting the family devolved on him and he had to take up some appointment soon.

There was no question of supporting the family at that time. That happened some time after going to India.

*

> [The name "Aurobindo Acroyd Ghose"]

Sri Aurobindo dropped the "[Acroyd]"[9] from his name before he left England and never used it again.

---

[8] *MS* reposed
[9] *MS (dictated)* Ackroyd

Life in Baroda, 1893 – 1906

Service in Baroda State

> Sri Aurobindo was first introduced to H.H. Sri Sayajirao, the great, Maharaja of Baroda by Mr. Khaserao Jadhav in England.

Not true. Sri Aurobindo made the acquaintance of Khaserao two or three years after reaching Baroda. Cotton introduced him to the Gaekwar.

> Struck by the brilliance and the learning of the young Ghose, the Maharaja invited him to be his reader and in that capacity Sri Aurobindo came to Baroda.

Reader. Nothing of the kind. There was no such invitation and this post did not exist. Sri Aurobindo joined the Settlement Department, afterwards went to the Revenue and then to the College.

> Sri Aurobindo used to read voluminously and make valuable notes for H.H. with whom he had free and illuminating discussions on various subjects.

Not at all. There were no such discussions.

> The Maharaja . . . made him Naib Khangi Kamgar i.e. Asst. Private Secretary.

He had nothing to do with the Khangi Department and was never appointed Private Secretary. He was called very often for the writing of an important letter, order, despatch, correspondence with [the] British Government or other document; he assisted the Maharaja in preparing some of his speeches. At one time he was asked to instruct him in English grammar by giving exact and minute rules for each construction etc. It was only miscellaneous things like this for which he was called for the occasion, but there was no appointment as Secretary except once in Kashmir.

> In this office Sri Aurobindo had to study many important affairs of the administration and though still very young and quite new to the post, he acquitted himself with marvellous keenness and precision, and boldly expressed his views in a straight-forward manner, whether H.H. agreed with him or not. The Maharaja appreciated this frankness, and admired him all the more. Sometimes his drafts used to fix many authorities into a puzzle, as they were invulnerable in reason and clear and thrusting in style.

The whole of this para is pure fancy.

> The Maharaja had taken him on tour to places like Kashmir, Ooty and Mahabaleshwar.

Sri Aurobindo was sent for to Ooty in order to prepare a précis of the whole Bapat case and the judicial opinions on it. He was at Naini Tal with the Maharaja. In the Kashmir tour he was taken as Secretary, for the time of the tour only.

> Sri Aurobindo always loved a plain and unostentatious life and was never dazzled by the splendour of the court. Invariably he declined invitations to dinners and banquets at the palace though he received them repeatedly.

Sri Aurobindo had nothing to do with the Court; he does not remember to have received any such invitations.

> Among his brother officers the most intimate with him were Khaserao Jadhav and Barrister Keshavrao Deshpande, with whom he discussed the problems of Philosophy, Spiritual life and the reconstruction of India.

The most intimate friend at Baroda was Khaserao's brother, Lieutenant Madhavrao Jadhav who was associated with him in his political ideas and projects and helped him whenever possible in his political work. He lived with M. in his house most of the time he was at Baroda. There was no such discussion of problems; Sri Aurobindo took no interest in philosophy at all at that time; he was interested in the sayings and life of Ramakrishna and the utterances and writings of Vivekananda, but that was almost all with regard to spiritual life; he had inner experiences, from the time he stepped on to the shores of India, but did not associate them at that time with Yoga about which he knew nothing. Afterwards when he learned or heard something about it from Deshpande and others, he refused to take it up because it seemed to him a retreat from life. There was never any talk about the reconstruction of India, only about her liberation.

> He played cricket well.

Never. He only played cricket as a small boy in Mr Drewett's garden at Manchester and not at all well.

> It was at Sardar Majumdar's place that he first met Yogi Lele and got some help from him in spiritual Sadhana.

No. Lele came from Gwalior in answer to a wire from Barin and met Sri Aurobindo at the Jadhavs' house; Lele took him to Majumdar's house for meditation on the top floor.

*

> Shri Arvind Ghosh . . . joined Baroda State Service in February 1893 as an extra professor of English in the Baroda College . . .

Incorrect.

> . . . on a salary of Rs. 300/– a month.

It was 200/ not 300/.

> His age as recorded in State papers on 31st July 1899 was 26 years, 2 months and 22 days.

Incorrect. 11 months, 16 days

> In 1900 his transfer to some other department was under consideration but was postponed. . . . On 17–4–1901 he was transferred to the Revenue Department. . . . Next year (1904) in April, H.H. ordered that Shri Ghosh should work from 1st June as his Asst. Private Secretary . . .

All this certainly incorrect. I did not start with service in the College. I was put at first in the Settlement Department, not on any post, but for learning work. Afterwards I was put in the Revenue-Stamps Department, then in the Secretariat (not as Private Secretary). There were some episodes, I believe, of learning work in the Vahivatdar's office. My first work in the College was as Lecturer in French, but this was for an hour only, the rest of the time being given to other work. I have no recollection of being *appointed* Assistant "Private" Secretary. When I became English Professor in the College (which was after a long time) it was a permanent appointment and I went on in it uninterruptedly till I was appointed Vice-Principal, until, in fact, I left Baroda.[1] This is what I remember. Perhaps by Private Secretary is meant an appointment in the Secretariat; but the English term does not mean that, it would mean work directly with the Maharaja. What work I did directly for the Maharaja was quite irregular and spasmodic, though frequent and I used to be called for that from my house, not from the office.

*

> 1901. Transfer to Revenue Department 17.4.1901 (not in college) par Rs. 360/–. Chairman of Debating Society and College Union President.

At what time of the year was this? If I was in the Revenue Department, I could not at the same time be occupying [ ][2] these posts.

If I was in the Revenue Department from 1901–1904, what was my post and what was I doing there?[3] The only thing I recollect was special work studying a sort of official history of the Administration (Guzerati manuscript) perhaps for summary in English. I don't remember the dates.

---

[1] *See Table 2, page 568. — Ed.*

[2] *MS* be occupying

> 1902. Service lent to College for six hours in the week for French (6th August 1902).

My own recollection is that my first connection with the College was as lecturer in French, other duties being added afterwards. There must have been a first lending of services (for French) which was not recorded. There is nothing about the first years outside the College; but I remember very well learning work in the Revenue Department (immediately after the term in the Survey Settlement Office) and also in the Secretariat (without any final appointment in these earlier posts).

> He was also given the work of compiling administrative report.

This might be [the] affair I refer to above. I had nothing to do with any current administrative report so far as I can remember. There was however private work at the Palace this time, compilation of a book (supposed to be by the Maharaja about his travels in Europe).

*

Sri Aurobindo's appointments at Baroda. He was first put in the Land Settlement Department, for a short time in the Stamps Office, then in the central Revenue Office and in the Secretariat. Afterwards without joining the College and while doing other work he was lecturer in French at the College and finally at his own request was appointed there as Professor of English. All through, the Maharaja used to call him whenever something had to be written which needed careful wording; he also employed him to prepare some of his public speeches and in other work of a literary or educational character. Afterwards Sri Aurobindo became Vice-Principal of the College and was for some time acting Principal. Most of the personal work for the Maharaja was done in an unofficial capacity; he was usually invited to breakfast with the Maharaja at the Palace and stayed on to do this work.

---

[3] *See Table 2, page 568. — Ed.*

*

> Aurobindo was appointed Private Secretary to H.H. the Maharaja of Baroda. . . . Whether as the Maharaja's Private Secretary or as an officer in the Revenue Department or as Professor of English and later as Vice-Principal in the Baroda College, Sri Aurobindo always conscientiously "delivered the goods".

Appointed Private Secretary not the fact. He was first sent to the Settlement Department, the idea being to train him for Revenue work. For the same reason he spent some time in the Stamps and other Departments or in the Secretariat, but for training, not with a firm appointment.

[*Another version:*] Sri Aurobindo was never appointed to the post of Private Secretary. He was put first in the Settlement Department, not as an officer but to learn the work; then in the Stamps and Revenue Departments; he was for some time put to work in the Secretariat for drawing up dispatches etc; finally he oscillated towards the College and entered it at first as part-time lecturer in French, afterwards as a regular Professor teaching English and was finally appointed Vice-Principal. Meanwhile, whenever he thought fit, the Maharaja would send for him for writing letters, composing speeches or drawing up documents of various kinds which needed special care in the phrasing of the language. All this was quite informal; there was no appointment as Private Secretary. Once H.H. took Sri Aurobindo as Secretary on his Kashmir tour, but there was much friction between them during the tour and the experiment was not repeated.

*

> He was diligent and he was serious and he had, so it might have

> seemed to many, really settled down to a career of meritorious service.

"diligent, serious, etc." This valuation of Sri Aurobindo's qualities was not the Maharaja's. He gave him a certificate for ability and intelligence but also for lack of punctuality and regularity. If instead of "diligent and serious" and "a career of meritorious service" it were said that he was brilliant and quick and efficient in work, it would be more accurate. The description, as it is, gives an incorrect picture.

Language Study at Baroda

> [When he arrived in India, Sri Aurobindo knew no Indian language except a smattering of Bengali, which was one of the subjects he had to study for the I.C.S. examination.]

Bengali was not a subject for the competitive examination for the I.C.S. It was after he had passed the competitive examination that Sri Aurobindo as a probationer who had chosen Bengal as his province began to learn Bengali. The course of study provided was a very poor one; his teacher, a retired English Judge from Bengal was not very competent, but what was learnt was more than a few words. Sri Aurobindo for the most part learnt Bengali for himself afterwards in Baroda.

*

> In Baroda, Sri Aurobindo engaged Pundits and started mastering both Bengali and Sanskrit.

A teacher was engaged for Bengali, a young Bengali littérateur — none for Sanskrit.

*

> [Sri Aurobindo took regular lessons in Bengali from Dinendra Kumar Roy at Baroda.]

No, there were no regular lessons. Dinendra lived with Sri Aurobindo as a companion and his work was rather to help him to correct and perfect his knowledge of the language and to accustom him to conversation in Bengali than any regular teaching.

[*Another version:*] Sri Aurobindo was not a pupil of Dinendra Kumar; he had learnt Bengali already by himself and only called in Dinendra to help him in his studies.

> Sri Aurobindo . . . engaged a teacher — a young Bengali littérateur — and started mastering Bengali. . . .

About the learning of Bengali, it may be said that before engaging the teacher, Sri Aurobindo already knew enough of the language to appreciate the novels of Bankim and the poetry of Madhusudan. He learned enough afterwards to write himself and to conduct a weekly in Bengali, writing most of the articles himself, but his mastery over the language was not at all the same as over English and he did not venture to make speeches in his mother tongue.

*

> [He studied Hindi at Baroda.]

Sri Aurobindo never studied Hindi; but his acquaintance with Sanskrit and other Indian languages made it easy for him to pick up Hindi without any regular study and to understand it when he read Hindi books or newspapers. He did not learn Sanskrit through Bengali, but direct in Sanskrit itself or through English.

*

> In Baroda after making a comparative study of all literatures, history, etc., he began to realise the importance of the Veda.

No. Started study of V. at Pondicherry.

Poetry Writing at Baroda

> [Five of the poems in the book *Songs to Myrtilla*, were written in England, the rest in Baroda.]

It is the other way round; all the poems in the book were written in England except five later ones which were written after his return to India.

*

> *Vidula* . . . originally appeared in the Weekly *Bandemataram* of June 9, 1907; *Baji Prabhou* appered serially in the Weekly *Karmayogin* in 1910. It is not, however, unlikely that they had been actually written, or at least mentally sketched, during Sri Aurobindo's last years in Baroda.

No, these poems were conceived and written in Bengal during the time of political activity.

Meetings with His Grandfather at Deoghar

I was at Deoghar several times and saw my grandfather there, first in good health and then bedridden with paralysis. As I was not in the College, I must have gone on privileged leave.

*

> [In Deoghar, he stayed with his in-laws (*beaux-parents*).]

Sri Aurobindo always stayed at Deoghar with the family of his maternal grandfather Raj Narayan Bose. The beaux-parents did not live at Deoghar.

*

> [Sri Aurobindo owed his views on Indian Nationalism to the influence of Rajnarayan Bose. His turn towards philosophy may be attributed to the same influence.]

I don't think my grandfather was much of a philosopher; at any rate he never talked to me on that subject. My politics were shaped before I came to India; he talked to me of his Nationalist activities in the past, but I learned nothing new from them. I admired my grandfather and liked his writings "Hindu Dharmer [Sresthata][4]" and "Se Kal ar E Kal"; but it is a mistake to think that he exercised any influence on me. I had gone in England far beyond his stock of ideas which belonged to an earlier period. He never spoke to me of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

---

[4] *MS* Sreshtatwa

*

[His meetings with his grandfather were for political purposes.]

This is not correct. In these visits he was not concerned with politics. It was some years afterwards that he made a journey along with Devabrata Bose, Barin's co-adjutor in the Yugantar, partly to visit some of the revolutionary centres already formed, but also to meet leading men in the districts and find out the general attitude of the country and the possibilities of the revolutionary movement. His experience in this journey persuaded him that secret action or preparation by itself was not likely to be effective if there were not also a wide public movement which would create a universal patriotic fervour and popularise the idea of independence as the ideal and aim of Indian politics. It was this conviction that determined his later action.

Political Life, 1893–1910

A General Note on Sri Aurobindo's Political Life

There were three sides to Sri Aurobindo's political ideas and activities. First, there was the action with which he started, a secret revolutionary propaganda and organisation of which the central object was the preparation of an armed insurrection. Secondly, there was a public propaganda intended to convert the whole nation to the ideal of independence which was regarded, when he entered into politics, by the vast majority of Indians as unpractical and impossible, an almost insane chimera. It was thought that the British Empire was too powerful and India too weak, effectively disarmed and impotent even to dream of the success of such an endeavour. Thirdly, there was the organisation of the people to carry on a public and united opposition and undermining of the foreign rule through an increasing non-cooperation and passive resistance.

At that time the military organisation of the great empires and their means of military action were not so overwhelming and apparently irresistible as they now are: the rifle was still the decisive weapon, air power had not developed and the force of artillery was not so devastating as it afterwards became. India was disarmed, but Sri Aurobindo thought that with proper organisation and help from outside this difficulty might be overcome and in so vast a country as India and with the smallness of the regular British armies, even a guerrilla warfare accompanied by general resistance and revolt might be effective. There was also the possibility of a great revolt in the Indian army. At the same time he had studied the temperament and characteristics of the British people and the turn of their political instincts, and he believed that although they would resist any attempt at self-liberation by the Indian people and would at the most only concede very slowly such reforms as would not weaken their imperial control, still they were not of the kind which would be ruthlessly adamantine to the end: if they found resistance and revolt becoming general and persistent they would in the end try to arrive at an accommodation to save what they could of their empire or in an extremity prefer to grant independence rather than have it forcefully wrested from their hands.

In some quarters there is the idea that Sri Aurobindo's political standpoint was entirely pacifist, that he was opposed in principle and in practice to all violence and that he denounced terrorism, insurrection etc. as entirely forbidden by the spirit and letter of the Hindu religion. It is even suggested that he was a forerunner of the gospel of Ahimsa. This is quite incorrect. Sri Aurobindo is neither an impotent moralist nor a weak pacifist.

The rule of confining political action to passive resistance was adopted as the best policy for the National Movement at that stage and not as a part of a gospel of Non-violence or pacific idealism. Peace is a part of the highest ideal, but it must be spiritual or at the very least psychological in its basis; without a change in human nature it cannot come with any finality. If it is attempted on any other basis (moral principle or gospel of Ahimsa or any other) it will fail, and even may leave things worse than before. He is in favour of an attempt to put down war by international agreement and international force, what is now contemplated in the "New Order", if that proves possible, but that would not be Ahimsa, it would be a putting down of anarchic force by legal force, and even then one cannot be sure that it would be permanent. Within nations this sort of peace has been secured, but it does not prevent occasional civil wars and revolutions and political outbreaks and repressions, sometimes of a sanguinary character. The same might happen to a similar world-peace. Sri Aurobindo has never concealed his opinion that a nation is entitled to attain its freedom by violence, if it can do so or if there is no other way; whether it should do so or not, depends on what is the best policy, not on ethical considerations. Sri Aurobindo's position and practice in this matter was the same as Tilak's and that of other Nationalist leaders who were by no means Pacifists or worshippers of Ahimsa.[1]

For the first few years in India, Sri Aurobindo abstained from any political activity (except the writing of the articles in the *Indu Prakash)* and studied the conditions in the country so that he might be able to judge more maturely what could be done. Then he made his first move when he sent a young Bengali soldier of the Baroda army, Jatin Banerji, as his lieutenant to Bengal with a programme of preparation and action which he thought might occupy a period of 30 years before fruition could become possible. As a matter of fact it has taken 50 years for the movement of liberation to arrive at fruition and the beginning of complete success. The idea was to establish secretly or, as far as visible action could be taken, under various pretexts and covers, revolutionary propaganda and recruiting throughout Bengal. This was to be done among the youth of the country while sympathy and support and financial and other assistance were to be obtained from the older men who had advanced views or could be won over to them. Centres were to be established in every town and eventually in every village. Societies of young men were to be established with various ostensible objects, cultural, intellectual or moral and those already existing were to be won over for revolutionary use. Young men were to be trained in activities which might be helpful for ultimate military action, such as riding, physical training, athletics of various kinds, drill and organised movement. As soon as the idea was sown it attained a rapid prosperity; already existing small groups and associations of young men who had not yet the clear idea or any settled programme of revolution began to turn in this direction and a few who had already the revolutionary aim were contacted and soon developed activity on organised lines; the few rapidly became many. Meanwhile Sri Aurobindo had met a member of the Secret Society in Western India, and taken the oath of the Society and had been introduced to the Council in Bombay. His future action was not pursued under any directions by this Council, but he took up on his own responsibility the task of generalising support for its objects in Bengal where as yet it had no membership or following. He spoke of the Society and its aim to P. Mitter and other leading men of the revolutionary group in Bengal and they took the oath of the Society and agreed to carry out its objects on the lines suggested by Sri Aurobindo. The special cover used by Mitter's group was association for lathi play which had already been popularised to some extent by Sarala Ghoshal in Bengal among the young men; but other groups used other ostensible covers. Sri Aurobindo's attempt at a close organisation of the whole movement did not succeed, but the movement itself did not suffer by that, for the general idea was taken up and activity of many separate groups led to a greater and more widespread diffusion of the revolutionary drive and its action. Afterwards there came the partition of Bengal and a general outburst of revolt which favoured the rise of the extremist party and the great nationalist movement. Sri Aurobindo's activities were then turned more and more in this direction and the secret action became a secondary and subordinate element. He took advantage, however, of the Swadeshi movement to popularise the idea of violent revolt in the future. At Barin's suggestion he agreed to the starting of a paper, *Yugantar*, which was to preach open revolt and the absolute denial of the British rule and include such items as a series of articles containing instructions for guerrilla warfare. Sri Aurobindo himself wrote some of the opening articles in the early numbers and he always exercised a general control; when a member of the sub-editorial staff, Swami Vivekananda's brother, presented himself on his own motion to the police in a search as the editor of the paper and was prosecuted, the *Yugantar* under Sri Aurobindo's orders adopted the policy of refusing to defend itself in a British Court on the ground that it did not recognise the foreign Government and this immensely increased the prestige and influence of the paper. It had as its chief writers and directors three of the ablest younger writers in Bengal, and it at once acquired an immense influence throughout Bengal. It may be noted that the Secret Society did not include terrorism in its programme but this element grew up in Bengal as a result of the strong repression and the reaction to it in that province.

---

[1] *This and the preceding paragraph were inserted here when this note was first published in 1948. They incorporate, with some changes, most of a previously written note published on pages 72–73. — Ed.*

The public activity of Sri Aurobindo began with the writing of the articles in the *Indu Prakash*. These [nine][2] articles written at the instance of K. G. Deshpande, editor of the paper and Sri Aurobindo's Cambridge friend, under the caption "New Lamps for Old" vehemently denounced the then congress policy of pray, petition and protest and called for a dynamic leadership based upon self-help and fearlessness. But this outspoken and irrefutable criticism was checked by the action of a Moderate leader who frightened the editor and thus prevented any full development of his ideas in the paper; he had to turn aside to generalities such as the necessity of extending the activities of the Congress beyond the circle of the bourgeois or middle class and calling into it the masses. Finally, Sri Aurobindo suspended all public activity of this kind and worked only in secret till 1905, but he contacted Tilak whom he regarded as the one possible leader for a revolutionary party and met him at the Ahmedabad Congress; there Tilak took him out of the pandal and talked to him for an hour in the grounds expressing his contempt for the Reformist movement and explaining his own line of action in Maharashtra.

Sri Aurobindo included in the scope of his revolutionary work one kind of activity which afterwards became an important item in the public programme of the Nationalist party. He encouraged the young men in the centres of work to propagate the Swadeshi idea which at that time was only in its infancy and hardly more than a fad of the few. One of the ablest men in these revolutionary groups was a Mahratta named Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar who was an able writer in Bengali (his family had been long domiciled in Bengal) and who had written a popular life of Shivaji in Bengali in which he first brought in the name of Swaraj, afterwards adopted by the Nationalists as their word for independence, — Swaraj became one item of the fourfold

---

[2] *1948 edition* seven. *See Table 1, page 565. — Ed.*

Nationalist programme. He published a book entitled *Desher Katha* describing in exhaustive detail the British commercial and industrial exploitation of India. This book had an immense repercussion in Bengal, captured the mind of young Bengal and assisted more than anything else in the preparation of the Swadeshi movement. Sri Aurobindo himself had always considered the shaking off of this economic yoke and the development of Indian trade and industry as a necessary concomitant of the revolutionary endeavour.

As long as he was in the Baroda service, Sri Aurobindo could not take part publicly in politics. Apart from that, he preferred to remain and act and even to lead from behind the scenes without his name being known in public; it was the Government's action in prosecuting him as editor of the *Bande Mataram* that forced him into public view. And from that time forward he became openly, what he had been for sometime already, a prominent leader of the Nationalist party, its principal leader in action in Bengal and the organiser there of its policy and strategy. He had decided in his mind the lines on which he wanted the country's action to run: what he planned was very much the same as was developed afterwards in Ireland as the Sinn Fein movement; but Sri Aurobindo did not derive his ideas, as some have represented, from Ireland, for the Irish movement became prominent later and he knew nothing of it till after he had withdrawn to Pondicherry. There was moreover a capital difference between India and Ireland which made his work much more difficult; for all its past history had accustomed the Irish people to rebellion against British rule and this history might be even described as a constant struggle for independence intermittent in its action but permanently there in principle; there was nothing of this kind in India. Sri Aurobindo had to establish and generalise the idea of independence in the mind of the Indian people and at the same time to push first a party and then the whole nation into an intense and organised political activity which would lead to the accomplishment of that ideal. His idea was to capture the Congress and to make it an instrument for revolutionary action instead of a centre of a timid constitutional agitation which would only talk and pass resolutions and recommendations to the foreign Government; if the Congress could not be captured, then a central revolutionary body would have to be created which could do this work. It was to be a sort of State within the State giving its directions to the people and creating organised bodies and institutions which would be its means of action; there must be an increasing non-cooperation and passive resistance which would render the administration of the country by a foreign Government difficult or finally impossible, a universal unrest which would wear down repression and finally, if need be, an open revolt all over the country. This plan included a boycott of British trade, the substitution of national schools for the Government institutions, the creation of arbitration courts to which the people could resort instead of depending on the ordinary courts of law, the creation of volunteer forces which would be the nucleus of an army of open revolt, and all other action that could make the programme complete. The part Sri Aurobindo took publicly in Indian politics was of brief duration, for he turned aside from it in 1910 and withdrew to Pondicherry; much of his programme lapsed in his absence, but enough had been done to change the whole face of Indian politics and the whole spirit of the Indian people, to make independence its aim and non-cooperation and resistance its method, and even an imperfect application of this policy heightening into sporadic periods of revolt has been sufficient to bring about the victory. The course of subsequent events followed largely the line of Sri Aurobindo's idea. The Congress was finally captured by the Nationalist party, declared independence its aim, organised itself for action, took almost the whole nation minus a majority of the Mohammedans and a minority of the depressed classes into acceptance of its leadership and eventually formed the first national, though not as yet an independent, Government in India and secured from Britain acceptance of independence for India.[3]

At first Sri Aurobindo took part in Congress politics only from behind the scenes as he had not yet decided to leave the Baroda service; but he took long leave without pay in which, besides carrying on personally the secret revolutionary work, he attended the Barisal Conference broken up by the police and toured East Bengal along with Bepin Pal and associated himself closely with the forward group in the Congress. It was during this period that he joined Bepin Pal in the editing of the *Bande Mataram*, founded the new political party in Bengal and attended the Congress session at Calcutta at which the Extremists, though still a minority, succeeded under the leadership of Tilak in imposing part of their political programme on the Congress. The founding of the Bengal National College gave him the opportunity he needed and enabled him to resign his position in the Baroda service and join the college as its Principal. Subodh Mullick, one of Sri Aurobindo's collaborators in his secret action and afterwards also in Congress politics, in whose house he usually lived when he was in Calcutta, had given a lakh of rupees for this foundation and had stipulated that Sri Aurobindo should be given a post of professor in the college with a salary of Rs. 150; so he was now free to give his whole time to the service of the country. Bepin Pal, who had been long expounding a policy of self-help and non-cooperation in his weekly journal, now started a daily with the name of *Bande Mataram*, but it was likely to be a brief adventure since he began with only Rs. 500 in his pocket and no firm assurance of financial assistance in the future. He asked Sri Aurobindo to join him in this venture to which a ready consent was given, for now Sri Aurobindo saw his opportunity for starting the public propaganda necessary for his revolutionary purpose. He called a meeting of the forward group of young men in the Congress and [they] decided then to organise themselves openly as a new political party joining hands with the corresponding group in Maharashtra under the proclaimed leadership of Tilak and to join battle with the Moderate party which was done at the Calcutta session. He also persuaded them to take up the *Bande Mataram* daily as their party organ and a Bande Mataram Company was started to finance the paper, whose direction Sri Aurobindo undertook during the absence of

---

[3] *This sentence, unlike the final one in this "General Note" (see page 66), was not revised before publication in 1948. — Ed.*

Bepin Pal who was sent on a tour in the districts to proclaim the purpose and programme of the new party. The new party was at once successful and the *Bande Mataram* paper began to circulate throughout India. On its staff were not only Bepin Pal and Sri Aurobindo but some other very able writers, Shyam Sundar Chakravarty, Hemendra Prasad Ghose and Bejoy Chatterji. Shyam Sundar and Bejoy were masters of the English language, each with a style of his own; Shyam Sundar caught up something like Sri Aurobindo's way of writing and later on many took his articles for Sri Aurobindo's. But after a time dissensions arose between Bepin Pal on one side and the other contributors and the directors of the Company because of temperamental incompatibility and differences of political view especially with regard to the secret revolutionary action with which others sympathised but to which Bepin Pal was opposed. This ended soon in Bepin Pal's separation from the journal. Sri Aurobindo would not have consented to this departure, for he regarded the qualities of Pal as a great asset to the *Bande Mataram,* since Pal, though not a man of action or capable of political leadership, was perhaps the best and most original political thinker in the country, an excellent writer and a magnificent orator: but the separation was effected behind Sri Aurobindo's back when he was convalescing from a dangerous attack of fever. His name was even announced without his consent in *Bande Mataram* as editor but for one day only, as he immediately put a stop to it since he was still formally in the Baroda service and in no way eager to have his name brought forward in public. Henceforward, however, he controlled the policy of the *Bande Mataram* along with that of the party in Bengal. Bepin Pal had stated the aim of the new party as complete self-government free from British control but this could have meant or at least included the Moderate aim of colonial self-government and Dadabhai Naoroji as President of the Calcutta session of the Congress had actually tried to capture the name of Swaraj, the Extremists' term for independence, for this colonial self-government. Sri Aurobindo's first preoccupation was to declare openly for complete and absolute independence as the aim of political action in India and to insist on this persistently in the pages of the journal; he was the first politician in India who had the courage to do this in public and he was immediately successful. The party took up the word Swaraj to express its own ideal of independence and it soon spread everywhere; but it was taken up as the ideal of the Congress much later on at the [Lahore][4] session of that body when it had been reconstituted and renovated under Nationalist leadership. The journal declared and developed a new political programme for the country as the programme of the Nationalist Party, non-cooperation, passive resistance, Swadeshi, Boycott, national education, settlement of disputes in law by popular arbitration and other items of Sri Aurobindo's plan. Sri Aurobindo published in the paper a series of articles on passive resistance, another developing a political philosophy of revolution and wrote many leaders aimed at destroying the shibboleths and superstitions of the Moderate Party, such as the belief in British justice and benefits bestowed by foreign government in India, faith in British law courts and in the adequacy of the education given in schools and universities in India and stressed more strongly and persistently than had been done the emasculation, stagnation or slow progress, poverty, economic dependence, absence of a rich industrial activity and all other evil results of a foreign government; he insisted especially that even if an alien rule were benevolent and beneficent, that could not be a substitute for a free and healthy national life. Assisted by this publicity the ideas of the Nationalists gained ground everywhere especially in the Punjab which had before been predominantly moderate. The *Bande Mataram* was almost unique in journalistic history in the influence it exercised in converting the mind of a people and preparing it for revolution. But its weakness was on the financial side; for the Extremists were still a poor man's party. So long as Sri Aurobindo was there in active control, he managed with great difficulty to secure sufficient public support for running the paper, but not for expanding it as he wanted, and when he was arrested and held in jail for a year, the economic situation of *Bande Mataram* became desperate: finally, it was decided that the journal should die a glorious death rather than perish by starvation and Bejoy Chatterji was commissioned to write an article for which the Government would certainly stop the publication of the paper. Sri Aurobindo had always taken care to give no handle in the editorial articles of the *Bande Mataram* either for a prosecution for sedition or any other drastic action fatal to its existence; an editor of *The Statesman* complained that the paper reeked with sedition patently visible between every line but it was so skilfully written that no legal action could be taken. The manoeuvre succeeded and the life of the *Bande Mataram* came to an end in Sri Aurobindo's absence.

---

[4] *1948 edition* Karachi. *See Table 1, page 565. — Ed.*

The Nationalist programme could only achieve a partial beginning before it was temporarily broken by severe government repression. Its most important practical item was Swadeshi plus Boycott; for Swadeshi much was done to make the idea general and a few beginnings were made, but the greater results showed themselves only afterwards in the course of time. Sri Aurobindo was anxious that this part of the movement should be not only propagated in idea but given a practical organisation and an effective force. He wrote from Baroda asking whether it would not be possible to bring in the industrialists and manufacturers and gain the financial support of landed magnates and create an organisation in which men of industrial and commercial ability and experience and not politicians alone could direct operations and devise means of carrying out the policy; but he was told that it was impossible, the industrialists and the landed magnates were too timid to join in the movement, and the big commercial men were all interested in the import of British goods and therefore on the side of the status quo: so he had to abandon his idea of the organisation of Swadeshi and Boycott. Both Tilak and Sri Aurobindo were in favour of an effective boycott of British goods — but of British goods only; for there was little in the country to replace foreign articles: so they recommended the substitution for the British of foreign goods from Germany and Austria and America so that the fullest pressure might be brought upon England. They wanted the Boycott to be a political weapon and not merely an aid to Swadeshi; the total boycott of all foreign goods was an impracticable idea and the very limited application of it recommended in Congress resolutions was too small to be politically effective. They were for national self-sufficiency in key industries, the production of necessities and of all manufactures of which India had the natural means, but complete self-sufficiency or autarchy did not seem practicable or even desirable since a free India would need to export goods as well as supply them for internal consumption and for that she must import as well and maintain an international exchange. But the sudden enthusiasm for the boycott of all foreign goods was wide and sweeping and the leaders had to conform to this popular cry and be content with the impulse it gave to the Swadeshi idea. National education was another item to which Sri Aurobindo attached much importance. He had been disgusted with the education given by the British system in the schools and colleges and universities, a system of which as a professor in the Baroda College he had full experience. He felt that it tended to dull and impoverish and tie up the naturally quick and brilliant and supple Indian intelligence, to teach it bad intellectual habits and spoil by narrow information and mechanical instruction its originality and productivity. The movement began well and many national schools were established in Bengal and many able men became teachers, but still the development was insufficient and the economical position of the schools precarious. Sri Aurobindo had decided to take up the movement personally and see whether it could not be given a greater expansion and a stronger foundation, but his departure from Bengal cut short this plan. In the repression and the general depression caused by it, most of the schools failed to survive. The idea lived on and it may be hoped that it will one day find an adequate form and body. The idea of people's courts was taken up and worked in some districts, not without success, but this too perished in the storm. The idea of volunteer groupings had a stronger vitality; it lived on, took shape, multiplied its formations and its workers were the spearhead of the movement of direct action which broke out from time to time in the struggle for freedom. The purely political elements of the Nationalist programme and activities were those which lasted and after each wave of repression and depression renewed the thread of the life of the movement for liberation and kept it recognisably one throughout nearly fifty years of its struggle. But the greatest thing done in those years was the creation of a new spirit in the country. In the enthusiasm that swept surging everywhere with the cry of Bande Mataram ringing on all sides men felt it glorious to be alive and dare and act together and hope; the old apathy and timidity were broken and a force created which nothing could destroy and which rose again and again in wave after wave till it carried India to the beginning of a complete victory.

After the *Bande Mataram* case, Sri Aurobindo became the recognised leader of Nationalism in Bengal. He led the party at the session of the [district][5] Conference at Midnapore where there was a vehement clash between the two parties. He now for the first time became a speaker on the public platform, addressed large meetings at Surat and presided over the Nationalist conference there. He stopped at several places on his way back to Calcutta and was the speaker at large meetings called to hear him.[6] He led the party again at the session of the Provincial Conference at Hooghly. There it became evident for the first time that Nationalism was gaining the ascendant, for it commanded a majority among the delegates and in the Subjects Committee Sri Aurobindo was able to defeat the Moderates' resolution welcoming the Reforms and pass his own resolution stigmatising them as utterly inadequate and unreal and rejecting them. But the Moderate leaders threatened to secede if this was maintained and to avoid a scission he consented to allow the Moderate resolution to pass but spoke at the public session explaining his decision and asking the Nationalists to acquiesce in it in spite of their victory so as to keep some unity in the political forces of Bengal. The Nationalist delegates, at first triumphant and clamorous, accepted the decision and left the hall quietly at Sri Aurobindo's order so that they might not have to vote either for or against the Moderate resolution. This caused much amazement and discomfiture in the minds of the Moderate leaders who complained that the people had refused to listen to their old and tried leaders and clamoured against them, but at the bidding of a young man new to politics they had obeyed in disciplined silence as if a single body.

---

[5] *1948 edition* Bengal Provincial. *See Table 1, page 565. — Ed.*

[6] *See Table 2, page 568. — Ed.*

About this period Sri Aurobindo had decided to take up charge of a Bengali daily, *Nava Shakti*, and had moved from his rented house in Scott's Lane, where he had been living with his wife and sister, to rooms in the office of this newspaper, and there, before he could begin this new venture, early one morning while he was still sleeping, the police charged up the stairs, revolver in hand, and arrested him. He was taken to the police station and thence to Alipore Jail where he remained for a year during the magistrate's investigation and the trial in the Sessions Court at Alipore. At first he was lodged for some time in a solitary cell but afterwards transferred to a large section of the jail where he lived in one huge room with the other prisoners in the case; subsequently, after the assassination of the approver in the jail, all the prisoners were confined in contiguous but separate cells and met only in the court or in the daily exercise where they could not speak to each other. It was in the second period that Sri Aurobindo made the acquaintance of most of his fellow-accused. In the jail he spent almost all his time in reading the Gita and the Upanishads and in intensive meditation and the practice of Yoga. This he pursued even in the second interval when he had no opportunity of being alone and had to accustom himself to meditation amid general talk and laughter, the playing of games and much noise and disturbance; in the first and third periods he had full opportunity and used it to the full. In the Sessions Court the accused were confined in a large prisoners' cage and here during the whole day he remained absorbed in his meditation attending little to the trial and hardly listening to the evidence. C. R. Das, one of his Nationalist collaborators and a famous lawyer, had put aside his large practice and devoted himself for months to the defence of Sri Aurobindo who left the case entirely to him and troubled no more about it; for he had been assured from within and knew that he would be acquitted. During this period his view of life was radically changed; he had taken up Yoga with the original idea of acquiring spiritual force and energy and divine guidance for his work in life. But now the inner spiritual life and realisation which had continually been increasing in magnitude and universality and assuming a larger place took him up entirely and his work became a part and result of it and besides far exceeded the service and liberation of the country and fixed itself in an aim, previously only glimpsed, which was world-wide in its bearing and concerned with the whole future of humanity.

When he came out from jail, Sri Aurobindo found the whole political aspect of the country altered; most of the Nationalist leaders were in jail or in self-imposed exile and there was a general discouragement and depression, though the feeling in the country had not ceased but was only suppressed and was growing by its suppression. He determined to continue the struggle; he held weekly meetings in Calcutta, but the attendance which had numbered formerly thousands full of enthusiasm was now only of hundreds and had no longer the same force and life. He also went to places in the districts to speak and at one of these delivered his speech at Uttarpara in which for the first time he spoke publicly of his Yoga and his spiritual experiences. He started also two weeklies, one in English and one in Bengali, the *Karmayogin* and *Dharma*, which had a fairly large circulation and were, unlike the *Bande Mataram*, easily self-supporting. He attended and spoke at the Provincial Conference at [Hooghly][7] in 1909: for in Bengal owing to the compromise at [Pabna][8] the two parties had not split altogether apart and both joined in the Conference, though there could be no representatives of the Nationalist party at the meeting of the Central Moderate Body which had taken the place of the Congress. Surendra Nath

---

[7] *1948 edition* Barisal. *See Table 1, page 566. — Ed.*

[8] *1948 edition* Hooghly. *See Table 1, page 566. — Ed.*

Banerji had indeed called a private conference attended by Sri Aurobindo and one or two other leaders of the Nationalists to discuss a project of uniting the two parties at the session in [Lahore][9] and giving a joint fight to the dominant right wing of the Moderates; for he had always dreamt of becoming again the leader of a united Bengal with the Extremist party as his strong right arm: but that would have necessitated the Nationalists being appointed as delegates by the Bengal Moderates and accepting the constitution imposed at Surat. This Sri Aurobindo refused to do; he demanded a change in that constitution enabling newly formed associations to elect delegates so that the Nationalists might independently send their representatives to the All-India session and on this point the negotiations broke down. Sri Aurobindo began however to consider how to revive the national movement under the changed circumstances. He glanced at the possibility of falling back on a Home Rule movement which the Government could not repress, but this, which was actually realised by Mrs. Besant later on, would have meant a postponement and a falling back from the ideal of independence. He looked also at the possibility of an intense and organised passive resistance movement in the manner afterwards adopted by Gandhi. He saw however that he himself could not be the leader of such a movement.

At no time did he consent to have anything to do with the sham Reforms which were all the Government at that period cared to offer. He held up always the slogan of "no compromise" or, as he now put it in his Open Letter to his countrymen published in the *Karmayogin*, "no co-operation without control". It was only if real political, administrative and financial control were given to popular ministers in an elected Assembly that he would have anything to do with offers from the British Government. Of this he saw no sign until the proposal of the Montagu Reforms in which first something of the kind seemed to appear. He foresaw that the British Government would have to begin trying to meet the national aspiration half-way, but he would not anticipate that moment before it actually came. The Montagu Reforms came nine years after Sri Aurobindo had retired to Pondicherry and by that time he had abandoned all outward and public political activity in order to devote himself to his spiritual work, acting only by his spiritual force on the movement in India, until his prevision of real negotiations between the British Government and the Indian leaders was fulfilled by the Cripps' proposal and the events that came after.

---

[9] *1948 edition* Benares. *See Table 1, page 566. — Ed.*

Meanwhile the Government were determined to get rid of Sri Aurobindo as the only considerable obstacle left to the success of their repressive policy. As they could not send him to the Andamans they decided to deport him. This came to the knowledge of Sister Nivedita and she informed Sri Aurobindo and asked him to leave British India and work from outside so that his work would not be stopped or totally interrupted. Sri Aurobindo contented himself with publishing in the *Karmayogin* a signed article in which he spoke of the project of deportation and left the country what he called his last will and testament; he felt sure that this would kill the idea of deportation and in fact it so turned out. Deportation left aside, the Government could only wait for some opportunity for prosecution for sedition and this chance came to them when Sri Aurobindo published in the same paper another signed article reviewing the political situation. The article was sufficiently moderate in its tone and later on the High Court refused to regard it as seditious and acquitted the printer. Sri Aurobindo one night at the *Karmayogin* office received information of the Government's intention to search the office and arrest him. While considering what should be his attitude, he received a sudden command from above to go to Chandernagore in French India. He obeyed the command at once, for it was now his rule to move only as he was moved by the divine guidance and never to resist and depart from it; he did not stay to consult with anyone but in ten minutes was at the river ghat and in a boat plying on the Ganges, in a few hours he was at Chandernagore where he went into secret residence. He sent a message to Sister Nivedita asking her to take up the editing of the *Karmayogin* in his absence. This was the end of his active connection with his two journals. At Chandernagore he plunged entirely into solitary meditation and ceased all other activity. Then there came to him a call to proceed to Pondicherry. A boat manned by some young revolutionaries of Uttarpara took him to Calcutta; there he boarded the *Dupleix* and reached Pondicherry on April 4, 1910.

At Pondicherry, from this time onwards Sri Aurobindo's practice of Yoga became more and more absorbing. He dropped all participation in any public political activity, refused more than one request to preside at sessions of the restored Indian National Congress and made a rule of abstention from any public utterance of any kind not connected with his spiritual activities or any contribution of writings or articles except what he wrote afterwards in the *Arya*. For some years he kept up some private communication with the revolutionary forces he had led through one or two individuals, but this also he dropped after a time and his abstention from any kind of participation in politics became complete. As his vision of the future grew clearer, he saw that the eventual independence of India was assured by the march of Forces of which he became aware, that Britain would be compelled by the pressure of Indian resistance and by the pressure of international events to concede independence and that she was already moving towards that eventuality with whatever opposition and reluctance. He felt that there would be no need of armed insurrection and that the secret preparation for it could be dropped without injury to the nationalist cause, although the revolutionary spirit had to be maintained and would be maintained intact. His own personal intervention in politics would therefore be no longer indispensable. Apart from all this, the magnitude of the spiritual work set before him became more and more clear to him, and he saw that the concentration of all his energies on it was necessary. Accordingly, when the Ashram came into existence, he kept it free from all political connections or action; even when he intervened in politics twice afterwards on special occasions, this intervention was purely personal and the Ashram was not concerned in it. The British Government and numbers of people besides could not believe that Sri Aurobindo had ceased from all political action and it was supposed by them that he was secretly participating in revolutionary activities and even creating a secret organisation in the security of French India. But all this was pure imagination and rumour and there was nothing of the kind. His retirement from political activity was complete, just as was his personal retirement into solitude in 1910.

But this did not mean, as most people supposed, that he had retired into some height of spiritual experience devoid of any further interest in the world or in the fate of India. It could not mean that, for the very principle of his Yoga was not only to realise the Divine and attain to a complete spiritual consciousness, but also to take all life and all world activity into the scope of this spiritual consciousness and action and to base life on the Spirit and give it a spiritual meaning. In his retirement Sri Aurobindo kept a close watch on all that was happening in the world and in India and actively intervened whenever necessary, but solely with a spiritual force and silent spiritual action; for it is part of the experience of those who have advanced far in Yoga that besides the ordinary forces and activities of the mind and life and body in Matter, there are other forces and powers that can act and do act from behind and from above; there is also a spiritual dynamic power which can be possessed by those who are advanced in the spiritual consciousness, though all do not care to possess or, possessing, to use it, and this power is greater than any other and more effective. It was this force which, as soon as he had attained to it, he used, at first only in a limited field of personal work, but afterwards in a constant action upon the world forces. He had no reason to be dissatisfied with the results or to feel the necessity of any other kind of action. Twice however he found it advisable to take in addition other action of a public kind. The first was in relation to the second World War. At the beginning he did not actively concern himself with it, but when it appeared as if Hitler would crush all the forces opposed to him and Nazism dominate the world, he began to intervene. He declared himself publicly on the side of the Allies, made some financial contributions in answer to the appeal for funds and encouraged those who sought his advice to enter the army or share in the war effort. Inwardly, he put his spiritual force behind the Allies from the moment of Dunkirk when everybody was expecting the immediate fall of England and the definite triumph of Hitler, and he had the satisfaction of seeing the rush of German victory almost immediately arrested and the tide of war begin to turn in the opposite direction. This he did, because he saw that behind Hitler and Nazism were dark Asuric forces and that their success would mean the enslavement of mankind to the tyranny of evil, and a set-back to the course of evolution and especially to the spiritual evolution of mankind: it would lead also to the enslavement not only of Europe but of Asia, and in it India, an enslavement far more terrible than any this country had ever endured, and the undoing of all the work that had been done for her liberation. It was this reason also that induced him to support publicly the Cripps' offer and to press the Congress leaders to accept it. He had not, for various reasons, intervened with his spiritual force against the Japanese aggression until it became evident that Japan intended to attack and even invade and conquer India. He allowed certain letters he had written in support of the war affirming his views of the Asuric nature and inevitable outcome of Hitlerism to become public. He supported the Cripps' offer because by its acceptance India and Britain could stand united against the Asuric forces and the solution of Cripps could be used as a step towards independence. When negotiations failed, Sri Aurobindo returned to his reliance on the use of spiritual force alone against the aggressor and had the satisfaction of seeing the tide of Japanese victory, which had till then swept everything before it, changed immediately into a tide of rapid, crushing and finally immense and overwhelming defeat. He had also after a time the satisfaction of seeing his previsions about the future of India justify themselves so that she stands independent with whatever internal difficulties.

Written 7 November 1946; revised and published 1948

The *Indu Prakash* Articles

> Sri Aurobindo revolved these things in his mind, and read, wrote and thought incessantly. Could not something be done? Could he not find an opportunity for service in the larger life of Bengal, — of the Indian nation itself?

He had already in England decided to devote his life to the service of his country and its liberation. He even began soon after coming to India to write on political matters (without giving his name) in the daily press, trying to awaken the nation to the ideas of the future. But these were not well received by the leaders of the time, they succeeded in preventing farther publication and he drew back into silence. But he did not abandon either his ideas or his hope of an effective action.

*

> [*New Lamps for Old*, the series of articles he published in the *Indu Prakash*, was on Indian civilisation.]

This title did not refer to Indian civilisation but to Congress politics. It is not used in the sense of the Aladdin story, but was intended to imply the offering of new lights to replace the old and faint reformist lights of the Congress.

*

> It is said that Sri Aurobindo was persuaded to discontinue his contribution to *Indu Prakash* by the late Mahadeo Govind Ranade.

The facts are: After the first two articles, Ranade called the proprietor [saying] that these articles were revolutionary and dangerous and a case for sedition might be brought against the paper. The proprietor alarmed told the editor K. G. Deshpande that this series must be discontinued. It was finally concluded that the tone should be moderated, the substance made more academic and the thus moderated articles could then continue. Sri Aurobindo lost interest in these muzzled productions, sent in numbers at long intervals and finally dropped the whole affair.

Sri Aurobindo saw Ranade at this time, his only contact; Ranade advised him to take some special subject and write about [it], he recommended Jail Reform, perhaps thinking that this writer would soon have personal experience of jails and thus become an expert on his subject!

[*Another version:*] The facts about the articles in the Indu Prakash were these. They were begun at the instance of K. G. Deshpande, Aurobindo's Cambridge friend, who was editor of the paper, but the first two articles made a sensation and frightened Ranade and other Congress leaders. Ranade warned the proprietor of the paper that, if this went on, he would surely be prosecuted for sedition. Accordingly the original plan of the series had to be dropped at the proprietor's instance. Deshpande requested Sri Aurobindo to continue in a modified tone and he reluctantly consented, but felt no farther interest and the articles were published at long intervals and finally dropped of themselves altogether.

*

[The authorities objected to his patriotic activities.]

Is the reference to the Baroda authorities? Sri Aurobindo is not aware that his utterances or writings were ever objected to by them. His articles in the Indu Prakash were anonymous, although many people in Bombay knew that he was the writer. Otherwise, except for a few speeches at functions in the Palace itself such as the reception of Dr. S. K. Mullick which had nothing to do [with][10] politics, he spoke mainly as Chairman of the Baroda College Union, there was no objection made at any time and he continued to preside over some of these debates until he left Baroda. It was in England while at Cambridge that he made revolutionary speeches at the meetings of the Indian Majlis which were recorded as a black mark against him by the India Office.

---

[10] *MS (dictated)* at

Beginnings of the Revolutionary Movement

> During his stay at Baroda Sri Aurobindo got into touch with men that counted, groups that counted. He went to Bengal "to see what was the hope of revival, what was the political condition of the people, and whether there was the possibility of a real movement".

It might be added that he had begun a work that was still nameless; and it was in the course of that work that he went to Bengal "to see what was the hope of revival etc."

*

> He found that in Bengal "the prevailing mood was apathy and despair". There was no other go except to bide his time.

It should be added, "and continue his political work behind the scenes in silence. The moment for public work had not yet come."

Once his work was started he continued it until circumstances made it possible to join in a public movement.

*

> Even his own intrepid province of Bengal was in no mood to be persuaded by Sri Aurobindo and his gospel of virile nationalism.

It was anything but intrepid at the time; it was the mantra of Bande Mataram and the leap into revolutionary action that changed the people of the province.

*

> [He sent some of his friends from Baroda and Bombay to Bengal to prepare for the revolutionary movement.]

It was not any of his friends at Baroda and in Bombay who went to Bengal on his behalf. His first emissary was a young Bengali who had by the help of Sri Aurobindo's friends in the Baroda Army enlisted as a trooper in a cavalry regiment in spite of the prohibition by the British Government of the enlistment of any

Bengali in any army in India. This man who was exceedingly energetic and capable, formed a first group in Calcutta which grew rapidly (afterwards many branches were established); he also entered into relations with P. Mitter and other revolutionaries already at work in the province. He was joined afterwards by Barin who had in the interval come to Baroda.

*

> [Among the leading lights of the day was P. Mitter who was a positivist.]

P. Mitter had a spiritual life and aspiration of his own and a strong religious feeling; he was like Bepin Pal and several other prominent leaders of the new nationalist movement in Bengal, a disciple of the famous Yogi Bejoy Goswami, but he did not bring these things into his politics.

*

> [At this time there was at Bombay a secret society headed by a Rajput prince of Udaipur.]

This Rajput leader was not a prince, that is to say a Ruling Chief but a noble of the Udaipur State with the title of Thakur. The Thakur was not a member of the council in Bombay; he stood above it as the leader of the whole movement while the council helped him to organise Maharashtra and the Mahratta States. He himself worked principally upon the Indian Army of which he had already won over two or three regiments. Sri Aurobindo took a special journey into Central India to meet and speak with Indian sub-officers and men of one of these regiments.

*

> Since 1902 Sri Aurobindo wished to enter the political fray and to contribute his mite to the forces that were seriously working for the country's redemption and rehabilitation. He held private talks, he corresponded, he put pressure on front-rank leaders; but as yet he could do little.

This does not give a correct idea. He had already joined with some of the more advanced leaders to organise bodies for political action which would act when the time for action came;[11] it was only in public as yet that he could do little.

Attitude towards Violent Revolution

> [Sri Aurobindo did not believe in, nor did he like, violent revolution.]

This is incorrect. If Sri Aurobindo had not believed in the efficacy of violent revolution or had disliked it, he would not have joined the secret society whose whole purpose was to prepare a national insurrection. His historical studies had not taught him the lesson indicated here. On the contrary, he had studied with interest the revolutions and rebellions which led to national liberation, the struggle against the English in mediaeval France and the revolts which liberated America and Italy. He took much of his inspiration from these movements and their leaders, especially Jeanne d'Arc and Mazzini. In his public activity he took up non-cooperation and passive resistance as a means in the struggle for independence but not the sole means and so long as he was in Bengal he maintained a secret revolutionary activity as a preparation for open revolt, in case passive resistance proved insufficient for the purpose.

---

[11] The programme of this organisation was at first Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott — Swaraj meaning to it complete independence. The word Swaraj was first used by the Bengali-Maratha publicist, Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar, writer of *Desher Katha*, a book compiling all the details of India's economic servitude which had an enormous influence on the young men of Bengal and helped to turn them into revolutionaries. The word was taken up as their ideal by the revolutionary party and popularised by the vernacular paper Sandhya edited by Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya; it was caught hold of by Dadabhai Naoroji at the Calcutta Congress as the equivalent of colonial self-government but did not long retain that depreciated value. Sri Aurobindo was the first to use its English equivalent "independence" and reiterate it constantly in the Bande Mataram as the one and immediate aim of national politics. [*Sri Aurobindo's note.*]

General Note
(referring especially to the Alipur Case and Sri Aurobindo's politics)

There seems to be put forth here and in several places the idea that Sri Aurobindo's political standpoint was entirely pacifist, that he was opposed in principle and in practice to all violence and that he denounced terrorism, insurrection etc. as entirely forbidden by the spirit and letter of the Hindu religion. It is even suggested that he was a forerunner of Mahatma Gandhi and his gospel of Ahimsa. This is quite [incorrect][12] and, if left, would give a wrong idea about Sri Aurobindo. He has given his ideas on the subject, generally, in the Essays on the Gita, First Series (Chapter IV?) where he supports the Gita's idea of *dharmya yuddha* and criticises, though not expressly, the Gandhian ideas of soul-force. If he had held the pacifist ideal, he would never have supported the Allies (or anybody else) in this War, still less sanctioned some of his disciples joining the Army as airmen, soldiers, doctors, electricians etc. The declarations and professions quoted in the book are not his, at the most they may have been put forward by his lawyers or written, more prudentially than sincerely, by colleagues in the *Bande Mataram*. The rule of confining political action to passive resistance was adopted as the best policy for the National Movement at that stage and not as part of a gospel of Non-violence or Peace. Peace is part of the highest ideal, but it must be spiritual or at the very least psychological in its basis; without a change in human nature it cannot come with any finality. If it is attempted on any other basis (mental principle, or gospel of Ahimsa or any other) it will fail, and even may leave things worse than before. He is in favour of an attempt to put down war by international agreement and international force, — what is now contemplated in the "New Order", — if that proves possible, but that would not be Ahimsa, it would be a putting down of anarchic force by legal force, and one cannot be sure that it would be permanent.

---

[12] *MS* correct

Within nations this sort of peace has been secured, but it does not prevent occasional civil wars and revolutions and political outbreaks and repressions, sometimes of a sanguinary character. The same might happen to a similar world-peace. Sri Aurobindo has never concealed his opinion that a nation is entitled to attain its freedom by violence, if it can do so or if there is no other way; whether it should do so or not, depends on what is the best policy, not on ethical considerations of the Gandhian kind. Sri Aurobindo's position (and practice) in this matter was the same as Tilak's and that of other Nationalist leaders who were by no means Pacifists or worshippers of Ahimsa. Those of them who took a share in revolutionary activities, kept a veil over them for reasons which need not be discussed now. Sri Aurobindo knew of all these things and took his own path, but he has always remained determined not to lift the veil till the proper time comes.

It follows that the passages which convey the opposite idea must be omitted in the interests of Truth or rewritten. Nothing need be said about the side of the Nationalist activities of that time in connection with Sri Aurobindo.

Sister Nivedita

> [Sister Nivedita was invited to Baroda in 1904 by the Maharaja of Baroda.]

I do not remember whether she was invited but I think she was there as a State guest. Khaserao and myself went to receive her at the station.

*

> [Sri Aurobindo had talks with Nivedita about Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.]

I do not remember Nivedita speaking to me on spiritual subjects or about Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. We spoke of politics and other subjects. On the way from the station to the town she cried out against the ugliness of the College [building][13] and its top-heavy dome and praised the Dharmashala near it. Khaserao stared at [her] and opined that she must be at least slightly cracked to have such ideas! I was very much enamoured at the time of her book Kali the Mother and I think we spoke of that; she had heard, she said, that I was a worshipper of Force, by which she meant that I belonged to the secret revolutionary party like herself and I was present at her interview with the Maharaja whom she invited to support the secret revolution; she told him that he could communicate with her through me. Sayajirao was much too cunning to plunge into such a dangerous business and never spoke to me about it. That is all I remember.

---

[13] *MS* buildings

*

> [Sri Aurobindo was influenced by the patriotic fervour of Swami Vivekananda's utterances, such as his "Mission of the Vedanta" speech.]

Sri Aurobindo was not aware of this speech or of any political action by Vivekananda. He had only heard casually of Vivekananda's intense patriotic feelings which inspired Sister Nivedita.

Bhawani Mandir

Bhawani Mandir was written by Sri Aurobindo but it was more Barin's idea than his. It was not meant to train people for assassination but for revolutionary preparation of the country. The idea was soon dropped as far as Sri Aurobindo was concerned, but something of the kind was attempted by Barin in the Maniktala Garden and it is to this evidently that Hemchandra refers.

*

> [An attempt was made to find a site where the Bhawani Mandir idea could be put into operation; later the plan was dropped.]

Sri Aurobindo does not remember anything of this kind nor of any formal decision to abandon the Bhawani Mandir idea. This selection of a site and a head of the monastery must have been simply an idea of Barin. He had travelled among the hills trying to find a suitable place but caught hill-fever and had to abandon his search and return to Baroda. Subsequently he went back to Bengal, but Sri Aurobindo did not hear of any discovery of a suitable place. Sakaria Swami was Barin's Guru: he had been a fighter in the Mutiny on the rebel side and he showed at the breaking of the Surat Congress a vehement patriotic excitement which caused his death because it awoke the poison of the bite of a mad dog which he had reduced to inactivity by a process of his Yogic will; but Sri Aurobindo would not have chosen him for any control of the political side of such an institution. The idea of Bhawani Mandir simply lapsed of itself. Sri Aurobindo thought no more about it, but Barin who clung to the idea tried to establish something like it on a small scale in the Maniktala Garden.

The Indian National Congress: Moderates and Extremists

> [Allan Hume founded the Indian National Congress to act as an intermediary between the élite of the English and Indian peoples.]

This description of the Congress as an intermediary etc. would hardly have been recognised or admitted by the Congress itself at that time. The British Government also would not have recognised it. It regarded the institution with dislike and ignored it as much as possible. Also, Sri Aurobindo was totally opposed to making any approach on behalf of the nation to the British Government; he regarded the Congress policy as a process of futile petition and protest and considered self-help, non-cooperation and organisation of all forces in the nation for revolutionary action as the sole effective policy.

*

> Sri Aurobindo, like all his countrymen, had great respect for Gokhale; . . .

[*Altered to:*] Sri Aurobindo, like all his countrymen, did not fail to recognise the finer elements in Gokhale's mind and character; . . .

Alter as indicated. After an hour's conversation with Gokhale in the train between Ahmedabad and Baroda it was impossible for Sri Aurobindo to retain any great respect for Gokhale as a politician, whatever his merits as a man.

*

> [In 1904 an extremist section was formed in the Congress; its members were waiting for the December 1904 session in Bombay in order to make themselves felt.]

It is not clear to what this refers. In 1904 the Extremist party had not been publicly formed, although there was an advanced section in the Congress, strong in Maharashtra but still small and weak elsewhere and composed mostly of young men; there were sometimes disputes behind the scenes but nothing came out in public. These men of extremer views were not even an organised group; it was Sri Aurobindo who in 1906 persuaded this group in Bengal to take [a] public position as a party, proclaim Tilak as their leader and enter into a contest with the Moderate leaders for the control of the Congress and of public opinion and action in the country. The first great public clash between the two parties took place in the sessions of the Congress at Calcutta where Sri Aurobindo was present but still working behind the scenes, the second at the [district][14] Conference at Midnapur where he for the first time acted publicly as the leader of the Bengal Nationalists, and the final break took place at Surat in 1907.

The Barisal Conference and the Start of the *Yugantar*

> [At the Barisal Conference (April 1906)]

Sri Aurobindo took part in the Barisal Conference and was in the front row[15] of three persons in the procession which was dispersed by the police charge. After the breaking up of the Conference he accompanied Bepin Pal in a tour of East Bengal where enormous meetings were held, — in one district in spite of the prohibition of the District Magistrate.

---

[14] *MS* Bengal Provincial. *See Table 1, page 566. — Ed.*

[15] *See Table 2, page 568. — Ed.*

*

> Besides Sri Aurobindo, there were also other fiery propagators of the new gospel of Nationalism — notably Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya, Bhupendranath Dutt and Sri Aurobindo's younger brother, Barindra Kumar Ghose. . . .

Bhupendranath Dutt.

In the interests of truth this name should be omitted. Bhupen Dutt was at the time only an obscure hand in the Yugantar office incapable of writing anything important and an ordinary recruit in the revolutionary ranks quite incapable of leading anybody, not even himself. When the police searched the office of the newspaper, he came forward and in a spirit of bravado declared himself the editor, although that was quite untrue. Afterwards he wanted to defend himself, but it was decided that the Yugantar, a paper ostentatiously revolutionary advocating armed insurrection, could not do that and must refuse to plead in a British court. This position was afterwards maintained throughout and greatly enhanced the prestige of the paper. Bhupen was sentenced, served his term and subsequently went to America. This at the time was his only title to fame. The real editors or writers of Yugantar (for there was no declared editor) were Barin, Upen Banerji (also a subeditor of the Bande Mataram) and Debabrata Bose who subsequently joined the Ramakrishna Mission (being acquitted in the Alipur case) and was [ ][16] prominent among the Sannyasis at Almora and as a writer in the Mission's journals. Upen and Debabrata were masters of Bengali prose and it was their writings and Barin's that gained an unequalled popularity for the paper. These are the facts, but it will be sufficient to omit Bhupen's name.

---

[16] *MS* a

Principal of the Bengal National College

> The Bengal National College was . . . founded and Sri Aurobindo became its Principal. . . . But [his nationalistic activities were] not to the liking of the management, and Sri Aurobindo therefore resigned his position.

At an early period he left the organisation of the college to the educationist Satish Mukherjee and plunged fully into politics. When the Bande Mataram case was brought against him, he resigned his post in order not to embarrass the College authorities but resumed it again on his acquittal. During the Alipur Case he resigned finally at the request of the College authorities.

> Now [after resigning from the Bengal National College] Sri Aurobindo was free to associate himself actively with the Nationalist Party and its accredited organ, *Bandemataram*.

It was done long before that as the above account will show.

*

> It appears that, when he was in full charge of the College, he used to lecture for ten hours per week, and he taught, in addition to English Literature, British, Greek and Roman History also.

Not correct, should be omitted.

Start of the *Bande Mataram*

> Sri Aurobindo was now in Calcutta — and he was in his element. He had given up his Baroda job, its settled salary and its seductive prospects; was he taking a blind leap into the dangerous unknown? . . .

Sri Aurobindo was present at the Congress in 1904 and again in 1906 and took a part in the counsels of the extremist party and in the formation of its fourfold programme — "Swaraj, swadeshi, boycott, national education" — which the Moderate leaders after a severe tussle behind the scenes were obliged to incorporate in the resolutions of 1906. Bepin Pal had just started a daily paper Bande Mataram with only 500 Rs in his pocket. Sri Aurobindo took up joint editorship of the journal, edited the paper during Bepin Pal's absence and induced the Nationalist party to take it up as their organ and finance it. He called a meeting of the party leaders at which it was decided at his instance to give up the behind the scenes jostlings with the Moderates, and declare an open war on Moderatism and place before the country what was practically a revolutionary propaganda. He gave up his Baroda job some time after this; he had taken indefinite leave without pay; for this reason he did not take up officially and publicly the editorship of the Bande Mataram although after Bepin Pal left that post, he was practically in full control of the policy of the paper.

*

> [The *Bande Mataram* was started on 7 August 1906. The joint stock company was declared on 18 October 1906. From August to October 1906 Bepin Pal was the editor.]

Bepin Pal started the Bande Mataram with 500 Rs in his pocket donated by Haridas Haldar. He called in my help as assistant editor and I gave it. I called a private meeting of the Nationalist leaders in Calcutta and they agreed to take up the Bande Mataram as their party paper with Subodh and Nirod Mullick as the principal financial supporters. A company was projected and formed, but the paper was financed and kept up meanwhile by Subodh. Bepin Pal who was strongly supported by C. R. Das and others remained as editor. Hemprasad Ghose and Shyamsundar Chakrabarti joined the editorial staff but they could not get on with Bepin Babu and were supported by the Mullicks. Finally Bepin Pal had to retire, I don't remember whether in November or December, probably the latter. I was myself very ill, almost to death, in my father-in-law's house in [Mott's][17] Lane and did not know what was going on. They put my name as editor on the paper without my consent, but I spoke to the Secretary pretty harshly and had the insertion discontinued. I also wrote a strong letter on the subject to Subodh. From that time Bepin Pal had no connection with the Bande Mataram. Somebody said or wrote that he resumed his editorship after I was arrested in the Alipur Case. I never heard of that. I was told by Bejoy Chatterji after I came out from jail that he, Shyamsundar and Hemprasad had carried on somehow with the paper, but the finances became impossible, so he deliberately wrote an article which made the Govt come down on the paper and stop its publication, so that the Bande Mataram might end with some éclat and in all honour.

---

[17] *MS* Serpentine. *See Table 1, page 566. — Ed.*

The Policy of the *Bande Mataram*

> In other ways also Sri Aurobindo sought to appeal to the hearts of the Indian and British peoples. . . . *Vidula* . . . appeared in the second issue of the Weekly *Bandemataram*, which also contained "An Unreported Conversation" in verse between a Briton and Ajit Singh on the eve of his arrest. Another inspiring item in the issue was . . .

As a politician it was part of Sri Aurobindo's principles never to appeal to the British people; that he would have considered as part of the mendicant policy. These articles and other items (satiric verse, parodies, etc.) referred to in these pages (not of course Vidula and Perseus) were the work of Shyamsundar Chakrabarti, not of Sri Aurobindo. Shyamsundar was a witty parodist and could write with much humour, as also with a telling rhetoric; he had caught some imitation of Sri Aurobindo's style and many could not distinguish between their writings. In Aurobindo's absences from Calcutta it was Shyamsundar who wrote most of the Bande Mataram editorials, those excepted which were sent by Aurobindo from Deoghar.

*

> He was able to contemplate politics purged of all rancour . . .

Sri Aurobindo never brought any rancour into his politics. He never had any hatred for England or the English people; he based his claim for freedom for India on the inherent right to freedom, not on any charge of misgovernment or oppression; if he attacked persons even violently, it was for their views or political action, not from any other motive.

The *Bande Mataram* Sedition Case

> Earlier in the year [*1907*] he had been prosecuted in connection with his editorship of *Bandemataram* and the series of articles he wrote for the paper under the heading, "The New Path".

No — the prosecution was for a letter written by somebody to the Editor and for the publication of articles included in the Jugantar case but not actually used by the prosecution. The Bande Mataram was never prosecuted for its editorial articles. The editor of the Statesman complained that they were too diabolically clever, crammed full of sedition between the lines, but legally unattackable because of the skill of the language. The Government must have shared this view, for they never ventured to attack the paper for its editorial or other articles, whether Sri Aurobindo's or from the pen of his three editorial colleagues. There is also the fact that Sri Aurobindo never based his case for freedom on racial hatred or charges of tyranny or misgovernment, but always on the inalienable right of the nation to independence. His stand was that even good government could not take the place of national government, — independence.

*

> He had been acquitted then, but the prosecution had succeeded, if anything, only in putting Sri Aurobindo to the fore-front and making the Indian intelligentsia only more than ever eager to read and con the columns of the one and only *Bandemataram.*

Sri Aurobindo had confined himself to writing and leadership behind the scenes, not caring to advertise himself or put forward his personality, but the imprisonment and exile of other leaders and the publicity given to his name by the case compelled him to come forward and take the lead on the public platform.

The Surat Congress

This version does not represent accurately the facts as Sri Aurobindo remembers them. So far as he knows there was no attempt at fire. The session of the Congress had first been arranged at Nagpur, but Nagpur was predominantly a Mahratta city and violently extremist. Gujerat was at that time predominantly moderate, there were very few Nationalists and Surat was a stronghold of Moderatism though afterwards Gujerat became, especially after Gandhi took the lead, one of the most revolutionary of the provinces. So the Moderate leaders decided to hold the Congress at Surat. The Nationalists however came there in strength from all parts, they held a public conference with Sri Aurobindo as president and for some time it was doubtful which side would have the majority, but finally in this moderate city that party was able to bring in a crowd of so-called delegates up to the number of 1300 while the Nationalists were able by the same method to muster something over 1100. It was known that the Moderate leaders had prepared a new constitution for the Congress which would make it practically impossible for the extreme party to command a majority at any annual session for many years to come. The younger Nationalists, especially those from Maharashtra, were determined to prevent this by any means and it was decided by them to break the Congress if they could not swamp it; this decision was unknown to Tilak and the older leaders but it was known to Sri Aurobindo. At the sessions Tilak went on to the platform to propose a resolution regarding the presidentship of the Congress; the president appointed by the Moderates refused to him the permission to speak but Tilak insisted on his right and began to read his resolution and speak. There was a tremendous uproar, the young Gujerati volunteers lifted up chairs over the head of Tilak to beat him.

At that the Mahrattas became furious, a Mahratta shoe came hurtling across the pavilion aimed at the President Dr. Rash Behari Ghose and hit Surendra Nath Banerji on the shoulder. The young Mahrattas in a body charged up to the platform, the Moderate leaders fled and after a short fight on the platform with chairs the session broke up not to be resumed. The Moderate leaders decided to suspend the Congress and replace it by a national conference with a constitution and arrangement which would make it safe for their party. Meanwhile Lajpatrai came to Tilak and informed him that the Government had decided, if the Congress split, to crush the Extremists by the most ruthless repression. Tilak thought, and the event proved that he was right, that the country was not yet ready to face successfully such a repression and he proposed to circumvent both the Moderate plan and the Government plan by the Nationalists joining the conference and signing the statement of adhesion to the new constitution demanded by the Moderates. Sri Aurobindo and some other leaders were opposed to this submission; they did not believe that the Moderates would admit any Nationalists to their conference (and this proved to be the case) and they wanted the country to be asked to face the repression. Thus the Congress ceased for a time to exist; but the Moderate conference was not a success and was attended only by small and always dwindling numbers. Sri Aurobindo had hoped that the country would be strong enough to face the repression, at least in Bengal and Maharashtra where the enthusiasm had become intense and almost universal; but he thought also that even if there was a temporary collapse the repression would create a deep change in the hearts and minds of the people and the whole nation would swing over to nationalism and the ideal of independence. This actually happened and when Tilak returned from jail in Burma after 6 years he was able in conjunction with Mrs Besant not only to revive the Congress but to make it representative of a nation pledged to the nationalist cause. The Moderate party shrank into a small body of liberals and even these finally subscribed to the ideal of complete independence.

*

> After the Surat debacle, Sri Aurobindo did not return to Bengal immediately, as he had originally intended; impelled by an inner urge, he undertook a political tour instead in the Bombay presidency and the Central Provinces.

There was no tour. Sri Aurobindo went to Poona with Lele and after his return to Bombay went to Calcutta. All the speeches he made were at this time (except those at Bombay and at Baroda) at places on his way wherever he stopped for a day or two.

The Alipore Bomb Case

> The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* asked editorially: " . . . but why were they (Aurobindo and others) pounced upon in this mysterious manner, handcuffed and then dragged before the Police Commissioner. . . . "

No, tied with a rope;[18] this was taken off on the protest of Bhupen Bose, the Congress Moderate leader.

*

The hands were not tied, the cord was put round his waist, but before leaving the house it was removed on the remonstrance of Bhupendra Nath [Bose],[19] the Moderate leader, who on hearing of the arrest had come to question the police about its motive.

*

> [Earth from Dakshineshwar was found in Sri Aurobindo's room when the police searched his house in May 1908.]

The earth was brought to me by a young man connected with the Ramakrishna Mission and I kept it; it was there in my room when the police came to arrest me.

*

> The case commenced before the Alipore Magistrate's Court on the 19th May, 1908 and continued intermittently for a

---

[18] *See Table 2, page 568. — Ed.*

[19] *MS (dictated)* Dutt

> whole year. Mr. Beachcroft, the magistrate, had been with Sri Aurobindo in Cambridge. . . . The case in due course went up to the Sessions Court and the trial commenced there in October 1908.

[*Sri Aurobindo indicated that the last sentence should be placed before "Mr. Beachcroft", changed "magistrate" to "Judge in the Sessions Court", and wrote:*] The preliminary trial (a very long one) took place before Birley, a young man unknown to Sri Aurobindo. Beachcroft was not "magistrate" but Judge in the Sessions Court.

*

> In his dignified statement to the court, Sri Aurobindo pointed out that it was perfectly true that he had taught the people of India the meaning and the message of national independence. . . .

Sri Aurobindo never made a public statement in the Court. When asked by the Court, he said he would leave the case to his lawyers, they would speak for him; he himself did not wish to make any statement or answer the Court's questions. If any such statement as the one spoken of was made, it must have been drawn up by the lawyers on his behalf, not made by himself.

> [While in the Alipore jail Sri Aurobindo became ill.]

Sri Aurobindo did not fall ill while in prison; he was in normal health except for a superficial ailment for some time which was of no consequence.

> A year's seclusion and meditation in the Alipore jail no doubt worked a great transformation in Sri Aurobindo. . . . Once again — now as ever — "service" was Sri Aurobindo's urge to action.

The idea was "work" for the country, for the world, finally for the Divine, *nishkama karma*, rather than an ideal of service.

The Open Letters of July and December 1909

> [Sri Aurobindo's "Open Letter to My Countrymen" of July 1909 and the second open letter dated December 1909]

There is some confusion here and generally with regard to the two letters. Sri Aurobindo was not relying upon any change in Government policy for the effect of the first letter.[20] He writes clearly that the proposed reforms were false and unreal and not acceptable. All he says is that if real reforms giving real power or control were offered, even if they gave only partial and not complete self-government then the Nationalist Party might accept them as the means towards complete Self-Government. Till then the Nationalists would maintain the struggle and their policy of non-cooperation and passive resistance. He relied not upon this but upon an intuitive perception that the Government would not think it politic or useful to deport him if he left a programme which others could carry out in his absence. Also the considerations about Home Rule and complete passive resistance had no connection with the first letter, because they did not occur to Sri Aurobindo at the time. It was afterwards about the period of the second signed letter[21] that he weighed the circumstances and the situation in the country and considered whether it would not be necessary for a time to draw back a little in order to make a continued political action possible, reculer pour mieux sauter, as the national movement seemed otherwise threatened with a complete pause. A Home Rule movement or a movement of the South African type suggested themselves to him and he foresaw that they might be resorted to in the near future; but he decided that such movements were not for him to lead and that he must go on with the movement for independence as it was. In the second letter also he rejects the reforms as inadequate and advocates a continuance and reorganisation of the Nationalist movement.[22] This was on December 25th, five months after the first letter. Sri Aurobindo does not understand the reference to the coup de force and the stratagem; if by the coup de force is meant the proposed search and arrest, that was undertaken in connection with and as a result of the second letter which was to be made the subject of a prosecution. As Sri Aurobindo went to Chandernagore and disappeared from view the search was not made and the warrant was held back and the prosecution postponed till he should again reappear. This happened in February, a month or more after the appearance of the second letter. Sri Aurobindo wanted the police to disclose their hand and act and the stratagem he wrote about was an answer to a letter forwarded to him at Chandernagore which he knew to be from a police spy asking him to reappear and face his trial. He replied that he had no reason to do so as there was no public warrant against him and no prosecution had been announced; he thought this would have the effect of the police coming out into the open with a warrant and prosecution and in fact it had this effect.

---

[20] *"An Open Letter to My Countrymen",* Karmayogin, *31 July 1909; reproduced in* Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910, *Volume 8 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, *pp. 150–60.*

[21] *"To My Countrymen",* Karmayogin, *25 December 1909; reproduced in* Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910, *pp. 372–76. — Ed.*

The *Karmayogin* Case

> [The police, unable to serve their warrant against Sri Aurobindo in the *Karmayogin* case, arrested the printer, a simple artisan.]

The printer was in fact only someone who took that title in order to meet the demand of the law for someone who would be responsible for what was printed. He was not always the actual printer.

---

[22] Sri Aurobindo would have accepted Diarchy as a step if it had given a genuine control. It was not till Provincial Autonomy was conceded that he felt a real change in the British attitude had begun; the Cripps offer he accepted as a further progress in that change and the final culmination in the Labour Government's new policy as its culmination. [*Sri Aurobindo's note.*]

The Departure from Calcutta, 1910

To Charu Chandra Dutt

Charu

This is my answer to the questions arising from your letter.[1] Except on one point which calls for some explanation, I confine myself to the plain facts.

(1) I was the writer of the series of articles on the "Passive Resistance" published in April 1907 to which reference has been made; Bipin Pal had nothing to do with it. He ceased his connection with the paper towards the end of 1906 and from that time onward was not writing any editorials or articles for it. I planned several series of this kind for the Bande Mataram and at least three were published of which "Passive Resistance" was one.

(2) The articles published in Dharma during February and March 1910 were not written by me. The actual writer was a young man on the subeditorial staff of the paper. This is well known to all who were then in the office or connected with it, e.g. Nalini Kanta Gupta who was with me then as he is now still with me here.

(3) I did not go to the Bagbazar Math on my way to Chandernagore or make pranam to Sri Saradamani Devi. In fact I never met or even saw her in my life. It was not from Bagbazar but from another ghat (Ganga ghat) that I went straight by boat to Chandernagore.

(4) Neither Ganen Maharaj nor Nivedita saw me off at the ghat. Neither of them knew anything about my going; Nivedita learned of it only afterwards when I sent a message to her asking her to conduct the Karmayogin in my absence. She consented

---

[1] *Charu Chandra Dutt wrote to Sri Aurobindo in regard to certain points contained in a letter from Swami Sundarananda to Girijashankar Raychaudhuri dated 11 February 1944 and published in the Bengali journal* Udbodhan. *— Ed.*

and from that time to its cessation of publication was in control of the paper; the editorials during that period were hers.

(5) I did not take my wife for initiation to Sri Saradamani Devi; I was given to understand that she was taken there by Sudhira Bose, Debabrata's sister. I heard of it a considerable time afterwards in Pondicherry. I was glad to know that she had found so great a spiritual refuge but I had no hand in bringing it about.

(6) I did not go to Chandernagore on Sister Nivedita's advice. On a former occasion when she informed me that the Government had decided to deport me, she did urge me to leave British India and do my work from outside; but I told her I did not think it necessary, I would write something that would put a stop to this project. It was in these circumstances that I wrote the signed article "My Last Will and Testament". Nivedita afterwards told me that it had served its purpose; the Government had abandoned the idea of deportation. No occasion arose for her to repeat the advice, nor was it at all likely that I would have followed it: she knew nothing beforehand of the circumstances that led to my departure to Chandernagore.

(7) These are the facts of that departure. I was in the Karmayogin office when I received word, on information given by a high-placed police official, that the office would be searched the next day and myself arrested. (The office was in fact searched but no warrant was produced against me; I heard nothing more of it till the case was started against the paper later on, but by then I had already left Chandernagore for Pondicherry.) While I was listening to animated comments from those around on the approaching event, I suddenly received a command from above in a Voice well known to me, in the three words; "Go to Chandernagore." In ten minutes or so I was in the boat for Chandernagore. Ramchandra Majumdar guided me to the Ghat and hailed a boat and I entered into it at once along with my relative Biren Ghosh and Mani (Suresh Chandra Chakrabarti) who accompanied me to Chandernagore, not turning aside to Bagbazar or anywhere else. We reached our destination while it was still dark and they returned in the morning to Calcutta.

I remained in secret entirely engaged in Sadhana and my active connection with the two newspapers ceased from that time. Afterwards, under the same "sailing orders", I left Chandernagore and reached Pondicherry on April 4th 1910.

I may add in explanation that from the time I left Lele at Bombay after the Surat Congress and my stay with him in Baroda, Poona and Bombay, I had accepted the rule of following the inner guidance implicitly and moving only as I was moved by the Divine. The spiritual development during the year in jail had turned this into an absolute law of the being. This accounts for my immediate action in obedience to the adesh received by me.

You can on the strength of this letter cite my authority for your statements on these points to the editor of the Udbodhan.

December 15, 1944 Sri Aurobindo

To the Editor, *Sunday Times*

I am authorised by Sri Aurobindo to contradict the statement quoted in your issue of the 17th instant from the *Hindusthan Standard* that he visited Sri Saradamani Devi on the day of his departure to Pondicherry (?) and received from her some kind of diksha.[2] There was a story published in a Calcutta monthly some time ago that on the night of his departure for Chandernagore in February 1910 Sri Aurobindo visited her at Bagbazar Math to receive her blessings, that he was seen off by Sister Nivedita and a Brahmachari of the Math and that he took this step of leaving British India at the advice of Sister Nivedita. All these statements are opposed to the facts and they were contradicted on Sri Aurobindo's behalf by Sri Charu Chandra Dutt in the same monthly.

Sri Aurobindo's departure to Chandernagore was the result of a sudden decision taken on the strength of an *adesh* from above and was carried out rapidly and secretly without consultation with anybody or advice from any quarter. He went straight from the Dharma office to the Ghat — he did not visit the Math, nobody saw him off; a boat was hailed, he entered into it with two young men and proceeded straight to his destination. His residence at Chandernagore was kept quite secret; it was known only to Srijut Motilal Roy who arranged for his stay and to a few others. Sister Nivedita was confidentially informed the day after his departure and asked to conduct the Karmayogin in place of Sri Aurobindo to which she consented. In his passage from Chandernagore to Pondicherry Sri Aurobindo stopped only for two minutes outside College Square to take his trunk from his cousin and paid no visit except to the British Medical Officer to obtain a medical certificate for the voyage. He went straight to the steamship Dupleix and next morning was on his way to Pondicherry.

---

[2] *On 17 June 1945 the* Sunday Times *of Madras reproduced a letter written by K. Ghose to the editor of the* Hindusthan Standard *that had been published in that newspaper on 6 June. This reply by Sri Aurobindo was published in the* Sunday Times *on 24 June with an introductory note stating that the information was provided by his secretary, Nolini Kanta Gupta. — Ed.*

It may be added that neither at this time nor any other did Sri Aurobindo receive any kind of initiation from Sarada Devi; neither did he ever take any formal diksha from anyone. He started his sadhana at Baroda in 1904 on his own account after learning from a friend the ordinary formula of Pranayama. Afterwards the only help he received was from the Maharashtrian Yogi, Vishnu Bhaskar Lele, who instructed him how to reach complete silence of the mind and immobility of the whole consciousness. This Sri Aurobindo was able to achieve in three days with the result of lasting and massive spiritual realisations opening to him the larger ways of Yoga. Lele finally told him to put himself entirely into the hands of the Divine within and move only as he was moved and then he would need no instructions either from Lele himself or anyone else. This henceforward became the whole foundation and principle of Sri Aurobindo's sadhana. From that time onward (the beginning of 1909) and through many years of intensive experience at Pondicherry he underwent no spiritual influence from outside.

published 24 June 1945

On an Article by Ramchandra Majumdar

In his reply to Suresh Chakravarty's article my old friend Ramchandra Majumdar congratulates himself on the strength of his memory in old age.[3] His memory is indeed so strong that he not only recollects, very inaccurately, what actually happened, but recalls also and gives body to what never happened at all. His account is so heavily crammed with blunders and accretions that it may provide rich material for an imaginative and romantic biography of Sri Aurobindo in the modern manner but has no other value. It is a pity to have to trample on this fine garden of flowers but historical and biographical truth has its claim. I shall correct some of the most flagrant errors in this narrative.

First of all, Suresh Chakravarty's article about the journey to Chandernagore confined itself to inaccurate statements of the facts and denied the story of a visit to Sri Sarada Devi in the course of that journey. This point has now been practically conceded for we see that the alleged visit has been transferred to another date a few days earlier. I may say that Suresh's narrative of the facts was brought to the notice of Sri Aurobindo who certified that it was true both as a whole and in detail.

But now another story has been brought up which is full of confusions and unrealities and is a good example of how a myth can be established in place of the truth. Sri Aurobindo never spoke with Sister Nivedita about any case intended to be brought against him by the Government in connection with the murder of Shamsul Alam, for the good reason that no such intention was ever reported to him by anybody. Sister Nivedita never directed or advised him to go into hiding. What actually happened had nothing to do with the departure to Chandernagore. What happened was this: Sister Nivedita on a much earlier occasion informed Sri Aurobindo that the Government intended to deport him and advised him "not to hide" but to leave British India and work from outside; Sri Aurobindo did not accept the advice. He said that he would write an "Open Letter" which he thought would make the Government give up its idea; this appeared in the Karmayogin under the title "My Last Will and Testament". Afterwards Sister Nivedita told him that it had had the desired effect and there was no more question of deportation.

---

[3] *This statement, dictated by Sri Aurobindo in response to an article written in Bengali by Ramchandra Majumdar and published in* Prabasi *in 1945, was used by Nolini Kanta Gupta as the basis of a rejoinder published in the same journal. — Ed.*

Sri Aurobindo did not see Sister Nivedita on his way to Chandernagore; this is only a relic of the now abandoned story of his visit to the Math at Baranagar on that occasion in which it was related that she had seen him off at the Ghat. She knew nothing whatever of his departure for Chandernagore until afterwards when he sent her a message asking her to take up the editing of the Karmayogin in his absence. Everything happened very suddenly. Sri Aurobindo, as he has himself related, while at the Karmayogin Office, heard of an approaching search and his intended arrest: he suddenly received an *adesh* to go to Chandernagore and carried it out immediately without informing or consulting anybody — even his colleagues and co-workers. Everything was done in fifteen minutes or so and in the utmost secrecy and silence. He followed Ram Majumdar to the Ghat, Suresh Chakravarty and Biren Ghose following at a little distance; a boat was hailed and the three got in and went off immediately. His stay in Chandernagore also was secret and known only to a few like his later departure to Pondicherry. Sri Aurobindo never asked Ram Majumdar to arrange for a hiding place; there was no time for any such arrangement. He went unannounced, relying on some friends in Chandernagore to arrange for his stay. Motilal Roy received him first in his own house, then arranged in other places, allowing only a few to know. This is the true account of what happened according to Sri Aurobindo's own statement.

The new story now told that Devabrata Bose and Sri Aurobindo both asked to be admitted into the Ramakrishna Mission and Devabrata was accepted but Swami Brahmananda refused to accept Sri Aurobindo is another myth. Sri Aurobindo never even dreamed of taking Sannyas or of entering into any established order of Sannyasis. It ought to be well known to everybody that Sannyas was never accepted by him as part of his yoga; he has founded an Asram in Pondicherry but its members are not Sannyasis, do not wear the ochre garb or practise complete asceticism but are sadhaks of a yoga of life based on spiritual realisation. This has always been Sri Aurobindo's idea and it was never otherwise. He saw Swami Brahmananda only once when he went on a boat trip to visit the Belur math; he had then about fifteen minutes' conversation with Swami Brahmananda but there was no talk about spiritual things. The Swami was preoccupied with a communication from the Government and consulted Sri Aurobindo as to whether there was any need of an answer. Sri Aurobindo said no and the Swami agreed. After seeing the math Sri Aurobindo came away and nothing else happened. He never by letter or otherwise communicated with Swami Brahmananda before or afterwards and never directly or indirectly asked for admission or for Sannyas.

There have been hints or statements about Sri Aurobindo taking or asking for initiation from certain quarters about this time. Those who spread these legends seem to be ignorant that at this time he was not a spiritual novice or in need of any initiation or spiritual direction by anybody. Sri Aurobindo had already realised in full two of the four great realisations on which his yoga and his spiritual philosophy are founded. The first he had gained while meditating with the Maharashtrian Yogi Vishnu Bhaskar Lele, at Baroda in January 1908; it was the realisation of the silent spaceless and timeless Brahman gained after a complete and abiding stillness of the whole consciousness and attended at first by an overwhelming feeling and perception of the total unreality of the world, though this feeling disappeared after his second realisation which was that of the cosmic consciousness and of the Divine as all beings and all that is, which happened in the Alipore jail and of which he has spoken in his speech at Uttarpara. To the other two realisations, that of the supreme Reality with the static and dynamic Brahman as its two aspects and that of the higher planes of consciousness leading to the Supermind, he was already on his way in his meditations in Alipore jail. Moreover, he had accepted from Lele as the principle of his sadhana to rely wholly on the Divine and his guidance alone both for his sadhana and for his outward actions. After that it was impossible for him to put himself under any other guidance and unnecessary to seek help from anyone. In fact Sri Aurobindo never took any formal initiation from anyone; he started his Sadhana on his own account by the practice of pranayama and never asked for help except from Lele.

One or two less important points have to be mentioned to show how little reliance can be placed on the details of Ramchandra's narrative. His statement about the automatic writing is only an imaginative inference and in fact quite groundless. Sri Aurobindo totally denies that he used the automatic writing for any kind of moral or other edification of those around him; that would have meant that it was spurious and a sort of trick, for no writing can be automatic if it is dictated or guided by the writer's conscious mind. The writing was done as an experiment as well as an amusement and nothing else. I may mention here the circumstances under which it was first taken up. Barin had done some very extraordinary automatic writing at Baroda in a very brilliant and beautiful English style and remarkable for certain predictions which came true and statements of fact which also proved to be true although unknown to the persons concerned or anyone else present: there was notably a symbolic anticipation of Lord Curzon's subsequent unexpected departure from India and, again, of the first suppression of the national movement and the greatness of Tilak's attitude amidst the storm; this prediction was given in Tilak's own presence when he visited Sri Aurobindo at Baroda and happened to enter just when the writing was in progress. Sri Aurobindo was very much struck and interested and he decided to find out by practising this kind of writing himself what there was behind it. This is what he was doing in Calcutta. But the results did not satisfy him and after a few further attempts at Pondicherry he dropped these experiments altogether. He did not give the same high value to his efforts as Ramchandra seems to have done, for they had none of the remarkable features of Barin's writings. His final conclusion was that though there are sometimes phenomena which point to the intervention of beings of another plane not always or often of a high order the mass of such writings comes from a dramatising element in the subconscious mind; sometimes a brilliant vein in the subliminal is struck and then predictions of the future and statements of things [unknown][4] in the present and past come up, but otherwise these writings have not a great value. I may add that Ramchandra's details are incorrect and there was no guide named Theresa, in fact no guide at all, though someone calling himself Theramenes broke in from time to time. The writings came haphazard without any spirit mentor such as some mediums claim to have.

A smaller but more amazing myth presents Sri Aurobindo as a poet in Tamil — and this apparently after only a few days of study. Far from writing Tamil poetry Sri Aurobindo never wrote a single sentence even of Tamil prose and never spoke a single phrase in the Tamil language. He listened for a few days to a Nair from Malabar who read and explained to him articles in a Tamil newspaper; this was a short time before he left Bengal. At Pondicherry he took up the study of Tamil, but he did not go very far and his studies were finally interrupted by his complete retirement.

R's whole account is crammed with reckless inaccuracies and unreal details. Srish Goswami has pointed out in a letter that the astrological writings of Sri Aurobindo of which R speaks were only some elementary notes and had no importance. Sri Aurobindo drew them up at Baroda to refresh his memory when he was studying the subject with the idea of finding out for himself what truth there might be in astrology. He had never any intention of figuring as an astrologer or a writer on astrology. These notes did not form a book and no book of Sri Aurobindo's on this subject appeared from the A. P. [*Arya Publishing*] House.

It is not a fact that Sri Aurobindo's wife Mrinalini Devi was residing at Sj. K. K. Mitra's house in College Square; Sri Aurobindo himself lived there constantly between the Alipore trial and his departure to French India. But she lived always with the family of Girish Bose, principal of Bangabasi College.

---

[4] *MS (dictated)* are known

One is unable to understand the meaning of the saying attributed to Sri Aurobindo that he was a man rising to humanity unless we suppose that he was only the animal man rising towards the status of a thinking being; certainly Sri Aurobindo never composed such a resonant and meaningless epigram. If it had been to a Divine Humanity it might have had some meaning but the whole thing sounds unlike what Sri Aurobindo could have said. In fact all that Ramchandra puts into Sri Aurobindo's mouth is of a character foreign to his habits of speech e.g. his alleged Shakespearean and Polonius-like recommendation to Ramchandra himself while departing to Chandernagore. He may have enjoined silence on Ramchandra but not in that flowery language.

This should be enough; it is unnecessary to deal with all the inaccuracies and imaginations. But I think I have said enough to show that anyone wanting the truth about Sri Aurobindo would do well to avoid any reliance on Ramchandra's narrative. It can be described in the phrase of Goethe "Poetic fictions and truths" for the element of truth is small and that of poetic fiction stupendous. It is like the mass of ale to the modicum of bread in Falstaff's tavern bill. In fact it is almost the whole. 1945

To Pavitra (Philippe Barbier Saint Hilaire)

Pavitra,

The account which seems to have been given to Lizelle Reymond and recorded by her on pages 318–319 of her book[5] is, I am compelled to say, fiction and romance with no foundation in actual facts. I spent the first part of my imprisonment in Alipore jail in a solitary cell and again after the assassination of Noren Gosain to the last days of the trial when all the Alipore case prisoners were similarly lodged each in his own cell. In between for a short period we were all put together. There is no truth behind the statement that while I was meditating they gathered around me, that I recited the Gita to them and they sang the verses, or that they put questions to me on spiritual matters and received instructions from me; the whole description is quite fanciful. Only a few of the prisoners had been known to me before I met them in prison; only a few who had been with Barin had practised sadhana and these were connected with Barin and would have turned to him for any help, not to me. I was carrying on my yoga during these days learning to do so in the midst of much noise and clamour but apart and in silence and without any participation of the others in it. My yoga begun in 1904 had always been personal and apart; those around me knew I was a sadhak but they knew little more as I kept all that went on in me to myself. It was only after my release that for the first time I spoke at Uttarpara publicly about my spiritual experiences. Until I went to Pondicherry I took no disciples; with those who accompanied me or joined me in Pondicherry I had at first the relation of friends and companions rather than of a guru and disciples; it was on the ground of politics that I had come to know them and not on the spiritual ground. Afterwards only there was a gradual development of spiritual relations until the Mother came back from Japan and the Ashram was founded or rather founded itself in 1926. I began my yoga in 1904 without a guru; in 1908 I received important help from a Mahratta yogi and discovered the foundations of my sadhana; but from that time till the Mother came to India I received no spiritual help from anyone else. My sadhana before and afterwards was not founded upon books but upon personal experiences that crowded on me from within. But in the jail I had the Gita and the Upanishads with me, practised the yoga of the Gita and meditated with the help of the Upanishads; these were the only books from which I found guidance; the Veda which I first began to read long afterwards in Pondicherry rather confirmed what experiences I already had than was any guide to my sadhana. I sometimes turned to the Gita for light when there was a question or a difficulty and usually received help or an answer from it, but there were no such happenings in connection with the Gita as are narrated in the book. It is a fact that I was hearing constantly the voice of Vivekananda speaking to me for a fortnight in the jail in my solitary meditation and felt his presence, but this had nothing to do with the alleged circumstances narrated in the book, circumstances that never took place, nor had it anything to do with the Gita. The voice spoke only on a special and limited but very important field of spiritual experience and it ceased as soon as it had finished saying all that it had to say on that subject.

---

[5] Nivedita: Fille de l'Inde *(Paris and Neuchâtel: Editions Victor Attinger, 1945).*

Then about my relations with Sister Nivedita — they were purely in the field of politics. Spirituality or spiritual matters did not enter into them and I do not remember anything passing between us on these subjects when I was with her. Once or twice she showed the spiritual side of her but she was then speaking to someone else who had come to see her while I was there. The whole account about my staying with her for 24 hours and all that is said to have passed between us then is sheer romance and does not contain a particle of fact. I met Sister Nivedita first at Baroda when she came to give some lectures there. I went to receive her at the station and to take her to the house assigned to her; I also accompanied her to an interview she had sought with the Maharaja of Baroda. She had heard of me as one who "believed in strength and was a worshipper of Kali" by which she meant that she had heard of me as a revolutionary. I knew of her already because I had read and admired her book "Kali the Mother". It is in these days that we formed our friendship. After I had started my revolutionary work in Bengal through certain emissaries, I went there personally to see and arrange things myself. I found a number of small groups of revolutionaries that had recently sprung into existence but all scattered and acting without reference to each other. I tried to unite them under a single organisation with the barrister P. Mitra as the leader of the revolution in Bengal and a central council of five persons, one of them being Nivedita. The work under P. Mitra spread enormously and finally contained tens of thousands of young men and the spirit of revolution spread by Barin's paper "Yugantar" became general in the young generation; but during my absence at Baroda the council ceased to exist as it was impossible to keep up agreement among the many groups. I had no occasion to meet Nivedita after that until I settled in Bengal as principal of the National College and the chief editorial writer of the Bande

Mataram. By that time I had become one of the leaders of the public movement known first as extremism, then as nationalism, but this gave me no occasion to meet her except once or twice at the Congress, as my collaboration with her was solely in the secret revolutionary field. I was busy with my work and she with hers, and no occasion arose for consultations or decisions about the conduct of the revolutionary movement. Later on I began to make time to go and see her occasionally at Bagbazar.

In one of these visits she informed me that the Government had decided to deport me and she wanted me to go into secrecy or to leave British India and act from outside so as to avoid interruption of my work. There was no question at that time of danger to her; in spite of her political views she had friendly relations with high Government officials and there was no question of her arrest. I told her that I did not think it necessary to accept her suggestion; I would write an open letter in the Karmayogin which, I thought, would prevent this action by the Government. This was done and on my next visit to her she told me that my move had been entirely successful and the idea of deportation had been dropped. The departure to Chandernagore happened later and there was no connection between the two incidents which have been hopelessly confused together in the account in the book. The incidents related there have no foundation in fact. It was not Gonen Maharaj who informed me of the impending search and arrest, but a young man on the staff of the Karmayogin, Ramchandra Mazumdar, whose father had been warned that in a day or two the Karmayogin office would be searched and myself arrested. There [have][6] been many legends spread about on this matter and it was even said that I was to be prosecuted for participation in the murder in the High Court of Shamsul Alam, a prominent member of the C.I.D. and that Sister Nivedita sent for me and informed me and we discussed what was to be done and my disappearance was the result. I never heard of any such proposed prosecution and there was no discussion of the kind; the prosecution intended and afterwards started was for sedition only. Sister Nivedita knew nothing of these new happenings till after I reached Chandernagore. I did not go to her house or see her; it is wholly untrue that she and Gonen Maharaj came to see me off at the Ghat. There was no time to inform her; for almost immediately I received a command from above to go to Chandernagore and within ten minutes I was at the Ghat, a boat was hailed and I was on my way with two young men to Chandernagore. It was a common Ganges boat rowed by two boatmen, and all the picturesque details about the French boat and the disappearing lights are pure romance. I sent someone from the office to Nivedita to inform her and to ask her to take up editing of the Karmayogin in my absence. She consented and in fact from this time onward until the suspension of the paper she had the whole conduct of it; I was absorbed in my sadhana and sent no contributions nor were there any articles over my signature. There was never my signature to any articles in the Karmayogin except twice only, the last being the occasion for the prosecution which failed. There was no arrangement for my staying in Chandernagore at a place selected by Nivedita. I went without previous notice to anybody and was received by Motilal Roy who made secret arrangements for my stay; nobody except himself and a few friends knew where I was. The warrant of arrest was suspended, but after a month or so I used a manoeuvre to push the police into open action; the warrant was launched and a prosecution commenced against the printer in my absence which ended in acquittal in the High Court. I was already on my way to Pondicherry where I arrived on April 4. There also I remained in secrecy in the house of a prominent citizen until the acquittal, after which I announced my presence in French India. These are all the essential facts and they leave no room for the alleged happenings related in the book. It is best that you should communicate my statement of facts to Lizelle Reymond so that she may be able to make the necessary corrections or omissions in a future edition and remove this wrong information which would otherwise seriously detract from the value of her life of Nivedita.

---

[6] *MS (typed copy)* has

13 September 1946

Life in Pondicherry, 1910–1950

Meeting with the Mother

> Fate had just then brought him into contact with a remarkable Frenchman and his wife, Paul and Mirra Richard. They had for years been in search of a Master. . . .

[*Altered to:*] . . . with a remarkable Frenchman and his wife, Paul Richard and she who is now known as Sri Mira Devi. They had for years been in search of a Master in whom they could recognize a World-Teacher. . . .

*

> Mirra Richard was no less overwhelmed by this vision — this reality — of the new Man.

[*Altered to:*] Mira Devi who had already gone far in spiritual realisation and occult vision and experience, was no less overwhelmed by this vision . . .

The *Arya*

> The magazine [*Arya*] was presumably not a financial success.

It was, in fact; it paid its way with a large surplus.

The Development of the Ashram

> Sri Aurobindo thought that the time had come to establish in Pondicherry an "ashram", a rallying centre of aspiration and realization, the nucleus of a new community.

This is hardly the fact. There was no Asram at first, only a few people came to live near Sri Aurobindo and practise Yoga. It was only some time after the Mother came from Japan that it took the form of the Asram, more from the wish of the sadhaks who desired to entrust their whole inner and outer life to the Mother than from any intention or plan of hers or of Sri Aurobindo.

*

> In the meantime, Mirra Richard, after her recent visit to France, returned to Pondicherry on the 24th April, 1920. The number of disciples now showed a tendency to increase rather rapidly and Sri Aurobindo decided to entrust Mirra, the Mother, with the task of organizing the "ashram" on a wider basis. . . .

The facts are In the meantime, the Mother, after a long stay in France and Japan, returned to Pondicherry on the 24th April, 1920. The number of disciples then showed a tendency to increase rather rapidly. When the Asram began to develop, it fell to the Mother to organise it; Sri Aurobindo soon retired into seclusion and the whole material and spiritual charge of it devolved on her.

*

> [On a section of a biography in which the writer dwelt at length on the Mother.]

Section V of this Chapter is better omitted. Up till now Sri Aurobindo has prohibited any public propaganda of the idea of his personal divinity and that of the Mother or of certain aspects of the Asram life; these things have been kept private for the Asram itself, and its inmates and the disciples — especially anything in the English language. In later pages of the book all that can be fruitfully said about the life of the Asram and the position of the Mother in the eyes of the disciples and in their life has been said and that should be sufficient.

Support for the Allies

> [A telegram was sent to the Secretary of the Viceroy.]

The only telegram to the Secretary of the Viceroy was one accompanying a donation of Rs.1000/–to the War Fund which was meant as a mark of Sri Aurobindo's adhesion to the cause of the Allies against the Axis. There was also a letter to the Governor of Madras forwarding another contribution along with a statement of his views about the war which was published. Besides this, other contributions were made direct to France. Later on, letters supporting the war were made public. As for the Cripps' offer, it was supported in a long telegram sent not to the Viceroy's Secretary but to Cripps himself after his broadcast in which he announced the offer.

*

> [The telegram was a "political gesture".]

Sri Aurobindo does not know whether this can be described as a public political gesture. The interest of your chapters is historical and biographical rather than concerned with the present course of politics or any new intervention in it. At any rate Sri Aurobindo did not intend these notes as constituting any such public intervention or gesture.

Muslims and the 1947 Partition of Bengal

> Muslims, the descendants of foreigners, favoured the partition of Bengal.

This would seem to indicate that all the Mohammedans in India are descendants of foreigners, but the idea of two nationalities in India is only a new-fangled notion invented by Jinnah for his purposes and contrary to the facts. More than 90% of the Indian Mussulmans are descendants of converted Hindus and belong as much to the Indian nation as the Hindus themselves. This process of conversion has continued all along; Jinnah is himself a descendant of a Hindu converted in fairly recent times named Jinnabhai and many of the most famous Mohammedan leaders have a similar origin.

*

> Assam had a majority of Muslims.

The majority in Assam is made up of the Hindus and the tribal peoples; in Assam proper the Mussulmans are only 20% of the population. The balance has been altered by the inclusion of Sylhet, a Bengali district in Assam, but even so the non-Mussulmans predominate. At present [*1946*] a Congress Government is in power in Assam elected by a large majority and Assam is vehemently refusing to be grouped with Mussulman Bengal in the new constitution.

Early Spiritual Development

First Turn towards Spiritual Seeking

Sri Aurobindo's first turn towards spiritual seeking came in England in the last year of his stay there. He had lived in the family of a Non-conformist clergyman, minister of a chapel belonging to the "Congregational" denomination; though he never became a Christian, this was the only religion and the Bible the only scripture with which he was acquainted in his childhood; but in the form in which it presented itself to him, it repelled rather than attracted him and the hideous story of persecution staining mediaeval Christianity and the narrowness and intolerance even of its later developments disgusted him so strongly that he drew back from religion altogether. After a short period of complete atheism, he accepted the Agnostic attitude. In his studies for the I.C.S, however, he came across a brief and very scanty and bare statement of the "Six philosophies" of India and he was especially struck by the concept of the Atman in the Adwaita. It was borne in upon his mind that here might be [a] true clue to the reality behind life and the world. He made a strong and very crude mental attempt to realise what this Self or Atman might be, to convert the abstract idea into a concrete and living reality in his own consciousness, but conceiving it as something beyond or behind this material world, — not having understood it as something immanent in himself and all and also universal.

Beginnings of Yoga at Baroda

> Sri Aurobindo was preoccupied, even when he was but a conscientious teacher or an accomplished poet . . . with the problem of service and of sacrifice. . . . From the very first the idea of personal salvation or of individual felicity was utterly repugnant to him.

This is a little too strong. It was rather that it did not seem anything like a supreme aim or worth being pursued for its own sake; a solitary salvation leaving the world to its fate was felt as almost distasteful.

*

> Sri Aurobindo had acquired a measure of intellectual pre-eminence as a result of his stay in England; but that was not enough, and he was certainly not happy. His deeper perplexities remained; he did not know what exactly he should do to make himself useful to his countrymen or how he should set about doing it. He turned to yoga so that he might be enabled to clarify his own floating ideas and impulses and also, if possible, perfect the hidden instrument within.

There was no unhappiness. "Perplexities" also is too strong: Sri Aurobindo's habit in action was not to devise beforehand and plan, but to keep a fixed purpose, watch events, prepare forces and act when he felt it to be the right moment. His first organised work in politics (grouping people who accepted the idea of independence and were prepared to take up an appropriate action) was undertaken at an early age, but took a regular shape in or about 1902; two years later he began his practice of Yoga — not to clarify his ideas, but to find the spiritual strength which would support him and enlighten his way.

*

> Thus it may be said that Aravind Babu started taking interest in Yoga from 1898–99.

No. I did not start Yoga till about 1904.

*

> Such guidance as he received from his earliest gurus and such partial realisation as he was then able to achieve only reinforced his faith in yoga as the sole cure for his own "rooted sorrow" and for the manifold ills of humanity.

[*Sri Aurobindo put a question mark against the word "gurus", and wrote:*] There was no resort to Yoga as a cure for sorrow;

there was no sorrow to cure. He had always in him a considerable equanimity in his nature in face of the world and its difficulties, and after some inward depression in his adolescence (not due to any outward circumstances, and not amounting to sorrow or melancholy, for it was only a strain in the temperament), this became fairly settled.

*

> Aravind Babu used to attend the lectures of the Swami [*Paramhansa Maharaj Indraswarup*] with much interest . . . and personally met him and learnt about *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāma*.

Only heard his lecture at the Palace, did not go to see him, did not practise Pranayam till long afterwards.

*

> He met the saint Madhavadas at Malsar on the banks of the Narmada and learnt about Yoga-āsanas.

Visited, probably with Deshpande, one or two places on the banks of the Narmada, but no recollection of Malsar or Madhavadas, certainly no effect of the meeting, if it happened at all.

*

> Sri Aurobindo met, one by one, Sri Hamsa Swarupa Swami, Sri Sadguru Brahmanand and Sri Madhavadas. . . .

He had momentary contacts with Brahmanand, but as a great Yogin, not as a Guru — only darshan and blessing. There was no contact with the others.

*

> [He met Brahmananda on the banks of the Narmada for advice on national education activities.]

Sri Aurobindo saw Brahmananda long before there was any question of national education activities. Brahmananda never gave him any counsel or advice nor was there any conversation between them; Sri Aurobindo went to his monastery only for *darshan* and blessings. Barin had a close connection with Ganganath and his Guru was one of the Sannyasins who surrounded Brahmananda, but the connection with Ganganath was spiritual only.

*

> As yet, however, Sri Aurobindo was wavering between Yoga and public life. . . . He established some connection with a member of the Governing Body of Naga Sannyasis. . . .

All this was before he left Baroda, some years before he met Lele.

*

> We do not quite know what exactly happened to Sri Aurobindo during the first four years of his retirement in Pondicherry. This was a period of "silent yoga". . . . Sri Aurobindo experimented earnestly and incessantly in the delectable laboratory of his soul; he presently outgrew the instructions that had been given to him by Lele and his predecessors.

That was done long before the sojourn in Pondicherry.

There were no predecessors. Sri Aurobindo had some connection with a member of the governing body of the Naga Sannyasis who gave him a mantra of Kali (or rather a stotra) and conducted certain Kriyas and a Vedic Yajna, but all this was for political success in his mission and not for Yoga.

Meeting with Vishnu Bhaskar Lele

> . . . Lele also advised Sri Aurobindo, in the final resort, to trust only to his own inner spiritual inclinations.

[*Last phrase altered to:*] to trust only to the guidance of the Divine within him if once he could become aware of that guidance.

*

What Lele asked him was whether he could surrender himself entirely to the Inner Guide within him and move as it moved him;

if so he needed no instructions from Lele or anybody else. This Sri Aurobindo accepted and made that his rule of sadhana and of life. Before he met Lele, Sri Aurobindo had some spiritual experiences, but that [was] before he knew anything about Yoga or even what Yoga was, — e.g. a vast calm which descended upon him at the moment when he stepped first on Indian soil after his long absence, in fact with his first step on the Apollo Bunder in Bombay; (this calm surrounded him and remained for long months afterwards,) the realisation of the vacant Infinite while walking on the ridge of the Takht-i-[Sulaiman][1] in Kashmir, the living presence of Kali in a shrine in Chandod on the banks of the Narmada, the vision of the Godhead surging up from within when in danger of a carriage accident in Baroda in the first year of his stay etc. But these were inner experiences coming of themselves and with a sudden unexpectedness, not part of a sadhana. He started Yoga by himself without a Guru, getting the rule from a friend, a disciple of Brahmananda of [Ganganath][2]; it was confined at first to the assiduous practice of Pranayama (at one time for 6 hours or more a day). There was no conflict or wavering between Yoga and politics; when he started Yoga, he carried on both without any idea of opposition between them. He wanted however to find a Guru. He met the Naga Sannyasi in the course of his search, but did not accept him as Guru, though he was confirmed by him in a belief in Yoga-power when he saw him cure Barin in almost a moment of a violent and clinging hill-fever by merely cutting through a glassful of water cross-wise with a knife while he repeated a silent mantra. Barin drank and was cured. He also met Brahmananda and was greatly impressed by him; but he had no helper or Guru in Yoga till he met Lele and that was only for a short time.

Sadhana 1908 – 1909

Under the auspices of the Bombay National Union, Sri Aurobindo addressed a large gathering on the 19th January 1908.

---

[1] *MS* Sulemani
[2] *MS* Ganga Math

> He went to the meeting almost in a mood of inexplicable vacancy. . . .

Not inexplicable certainly; it was the condition of silence of the mind to which he had come by his meditation for 3 days with Lele in Baroda and which he kept for many months and indeed always thereafter, all activity proceeding on the surface; but at that time there was no activity on the surface. Lele told him to make namaskar to the audience and wait and speech would come to him from some other source than the mind. So in fact, the speech came, and ever since all speech, writing, thought and outward activity have so come to him from the same source above the brain-mind.

*

The passage bracketed should be omitted.[3] It tends to give an incorrect impression about the nature of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga and of what was happening in him at the time. The Yoga was going on in him all the time even during all his outward action but he was not withdrawn into himself or "dazed" as some of his friends thought. If he did not reply to questions or suggestions it was because he did not wish to and took refuge in silence.

*

> Sri Aurobindo now [*in Alipore jail*] started reading the *Gita* and learning to live its *sadhana*; he fully apprehended the true inwardness and glory of *Sanatana Dharma*.

It should rather be said that he had long tried to apprehend the true inwardness and glory of the Indian religious and spiritual tradition, Sanatana Dharma, and to accept it in its entirety.

---

[3] *The passage referred to cannot now be identified. — Ed.*

Philosophy and Writings

Sources of His Philosophy

Sri Aurobindo's intellect was influenced by Greek philosophy.

Very little. I read more than once Plato's Republic and Symposium, but only extracts from his other writings. It is true that under his impress I rashly started writing at the age of 18 an explanation of the cosmos on the foundation of the principle of Beauty and Harmony, but I never got beyond the first three or four chapters. I read Epictetus and was interested in the ideas of the Stoics and the Epicureans; but I made no study of Greek philosophy or of any of the [?]. I made in fact no study of metaphysics in my school and College days. What little I knew about philosophy I picked up desultorily in my general reading. I once read, not Hegel, but a small book on Hegel, but it left no impression on me. Later, in India, I read a book on Bergson, but that too ran off "like water from a duck's back". I remembered very little of what I had read and absorbed nothing. German metaphysics and most European philosophy since the Greeks seemed to me a mass of abstractions with nothing concrete or real that could be firmly grasped and written in a metaphysical jargon to which I had not the key. I tried once a translation of Kant but dropped it after the first two pages and never tried again. In India at Baroda I read a "Tractate" of Schopenhauer on the six centres and that seemed to me more interesting. In sum, my interest in metaphysics was almost null, and in general philosophy sporadic. I did not read Berkeley and only [?] into Hume; Locke left me very cold. Some general ideas only remained with me.

As to Indian Philosophy, it was a little better, but not much. I made no study of it, but knew the general ideas of the Vedanta philosophies, I knew practically nothing of the others except what I had read in Max Muller and in other general accounts.

The basic idea of the Self caught me when I was in England. I tried to realise what the Self might be. The first Indian writings that took hold of me were the Upanishads and these raised in me a strong enthusiasm and I tried later to translate some of them. The other strong intellectual influence [that] came in India in early life were the sayings of Ramakrishna and the writings and speeches of Vivekananda, but this was a first introduction to Indian spiritual experience and not as philosophy. They did not, however, carry me to the practice of Yoga: their influence was purely mental.

My philosophy was formed first by the study of the Upanishads and the Gita; the Veda came later. They were the basis of my first practice of Yoga; I tried to realise what I read in my spiritual experience and succeeded; in fact I was never satisfied till experience came and it was on this experience that later on I founded my philosophy, not on ideas by themselves. I owed nothing in my philosophy to intellectual abstractions, ratiocination or dialectics; when I have used these means it was simply to explain my philosophy and justify it to the intellect of others. The other source of my philosophy was the knowledge that flowed from above when I sat in meditation, especially from the plane of the Higher Mind when I reached that level; they [*the ideas from the Higher Mind*] came down in a mighty flood which swelled into a sea of direct Knowledge always translating itself into experience, or they were intuitions starting from experience and leading to other intuitions and a corresponding experience. This source was exceedingly catholic and many-sided and all sorts of ideas came in which might have belonged to conflicting philosophies but they were here reconciled in a large synthetic whole.

Perseus the Deliverer

> Polydaon realises his failure — Poseidon's failure; . . . he now supplicates to the new "brilliant god", and falls back dead. It is left to Perseus, the new god, to sum up the career and destiny of Polydaon. . . .

[*Sri Aurobindo struck through "the new god" and wrote:*] The new brilliant god is the new Poseidon, Olympian and Greek, who in Polydaon's vision replaces the terrible old-Mediterranean god of the seas. Perseus is and remains divine-human throughout.

Essays on the Gita

[*Dharma* = *devoir* (duty)]

Devoir is hardly the meaning of the [word][1] Dharma. Performing disinterested[ly] one's duty is a European misreading of the teaching of the Gita. Dharma in the Gita means the law of one's own essential nature or is described sometimes as action governed by that nature, *swabhava*.

*

[The asuric and divine natures complement each other.]

This is not in the teaching of the Gita according to which the two natures are opposed to each other and the Asuric nature has to be rejected or to fall away by the power and process of the yoga. Sri Aurobindo's yoga also insists on the rejection of the darker and lower elements of the nature.

The Future Poetry

> The . . . articles that Sri Aurobindo contributed to *Arya* under the general caption, *The Future Poetry*, [were] initially inspired by a book of Dr. Cousins's: in the fullness of time, however, the review became a treatise of over three hundred pages of *Arya*.

[*Altered to:*] . . . started initially with a review of a book of Dr. Cousins's; but that was only a starting point for a treatise . . .

It was not the intention to make a long review of Cousins' book, that was only a starting point; the rest was drawn from Sri Aurobindo's own ideas and his already conceived view of art and life.

---

[1] *MS (dictated)* phrase

The Mother

> Many of the letters that deal mainly with Yoga have now been edited and published in book form. *The Riddle of This World*, *Lights on Yoga*, *Bases of Yoga*, and *The Mother* . . . are all the fruits of the Ashram period.

The Mother had not the same origin as the other books mentioned. The main part of this book describing the four Shaktis etc. was written independently and not as a letter, so also the first part.

Some Philosophical Topics

> These discernable slow gradations — steps in the spiral of ascent — are, respectively, Higher Mind, Intuition (or Intuitive Mind) and Overmind.

No, what is called intuitive Mind is usually a mixture of true Intuition with ordinary mentality — it can always admit a mingling of truth and error. Sri Aurobindo therefore avoids the use of this phrase. He distinguishes between Intuition proper and an intuitive human mentality.

*

> When war at last becomes a mere nightmare of the past, peace will indeed reign in our midst, and even our dream of the Life Divine will then become an actuality in the fullness of time.

It is not Sri Aurobindo's view that the evolution of the Life Divine depends on the passing away of war. His view is rather the opposite.

*

> He has caught indeed a vision, a vision of the Eternal, a vision of triune glory, a vision in the furthest beyond of transformed Supernature; but the vision is not a reality yet [*1944*].

Better write "not, on its highest peaks, a concrete embodied reality as yet: something has come down of the power or the influence but not the thing itself, far less its whole."

APPENDIX

Notes of Uncertain Origin

During a whole year a slice or two of sandwich, bread and butter and a cup of tea in the morning and in the evening a penny saveloy formed the only food.

*

These invitations [*by the Maharaja*] were usually for some work to be done and could not be refused.

*

Sri Aurobindo's policy in India was not based on Parnellism. It had more resemblance to Sinn Fein but was conceived before the Sinn Fein movement and was therefore not inspired by it.

*

Sri Aurobindo began practising Yoga on his own account, starting with *prāṇāyāma* as explained to him by a friend, a disciple of Brahmananda. Afterwards faced with difficulties, he took the help of Lele who was called for the purpose from Gwalior by Barindra — this was after the Surat Congress in 1908.

*

There was no difference of opinion [*with the College authorities*]; the resignation was because of the *Bande Mataram* case, so as not to embarrass the authorities. After the acquittal, the College recalled him to his post. The final resignation was given from the Alipur jail.

*

The Nationalists wanted to propose Lajpatrai as President, not Tilak.

No Nationalist leader was seated on the dais.

Part Two

Letters of Historical Interest

Section One

Letters on Personal, Practical and Political Matters

1890 – 1926

Family Letters, 1890–1919

Extract from a Letter to His Father

Last night I was invited to coffee with one of the Dons and in his rooms I met the Great O.B. otherwise Oscar Browning, who is the feature par excellence of King's. He was extremely flattering; passing from the subject of cotillions to that of scholarships he said to me "I suppose you know you passed an extraordinarily high examination. I have examined papers at thirteen examinations and I have never during that time [seen] such excellent papers as yours (meaning my classical papers at the scholarship examination). As for your essay it was wonderful." In this essay (a comparison between Shakespeare and Milton) I indulged in my Oriental tastes to the top of their bent; it overflowed with rich and tropical imagery; it abounded in antitheses and epigrams and it expressed my real feelings without restraint or reservation. I thought myself that it was the best thing I had ever done, but at school I would have been condemned as extraordinarily Asiatic & bombastic. The Great O.B. afterwards asked me where my rooms were & when I had answered he said "That wretched hole!" then turning to Mahaffy "How rude we are to our scholars! we get great minds to come down here and then shut them up in that box! I suppose it is to keep their pride down." 1890

To His Grandfather

Gujaria
Vijapur Taluka
N. Gujerat.
Jan 11. 1894.

My dear Grandfather

I received your telegram & postcard together this afternoon. I am at present in an exceedingly out of the way place, without any post-office within fifteen miles of it; so it would not be easy to telegraph. I shall probably be able to get to Bengal by the end of next week. I had intended to be there by this time, but there is some difficulty about my last month's salary without which I cannot very easily move. However I have written for a month's privileged leave & as soon as it is sanctioned shall make ready to start. I shall pass by Ajmere & stop for a day with Beno. My articles are with him; I will bring them on with me. As I do not know Urdu, or indeed any other language of the country, I may find it convenient to bring my clerk with me. I suppose there will be no difficulty about accommodating him.

I got my uncle's letter inclosing Soro's, the latter might have presented some difficulties, for there is no one who knows Bengali in Baroda — no one at least whom I could get at. Fortunately the smattering I acquired in England stood me in good stead, and I was able to make out the sense of the letter, barring a word here and a word there.

Do you happen to know a certain Akshaya Kumara Ghosha, resident in Bombay who claims to be a friend of the family? He has opened a correspondence with me — I have also seen him once at Bombay — & wants me to join him in some very laudable enterprises which he has on hand. I have given him that sort of double-edged encouragement which civility demanded, but as his letters seemed to evince some defect either of perfect sanity or perfect honesty, I did not think it prudent to go farther than that, without some better credentials than a self-introduction.

If all goes well, I shall leave Baroda on the 18th; at any rate it will not be more than a day or two later.

Believe me
Your affectionate grandson
Aravind A. Ghose

To His Sister

[Baroda Camp
25 August 1894]

My dear Saro,

I got your letter the day before yesterday. I have been trying hard to write to you for the last three weeks, but have hitherto failed. Today I am making a huge effort and hope to put the letter in the post before nightfall. As I am now invigorated by three days' leave, I almost think I shall succeed.

It will be, I fear, quite impossible to come to you again so early as the Puja, though if I only could, I should start tomorrow. Neither my affairs, nor my finances will admit of it. Indeed it was a great mistake for me to go at all; for it has made Baroda quite intolerable to me. There is an old story about Judas Iscariot, which suits me down to the ground. Judas, after betraying Christ, hanged himself and went to Hell where he was honoured with the hottest oven in the whole establishment. Here he must burn for ever and ever; but in his life he had done one kind act and for this they permitted him by special mercy of God to cool himself for an hour every Christmas on an iceberg in the North Pole. Now this has always seemed to me not mercy, but a peculiar refinement of cruelty. For how could Hell fail to be ten times more Hell to the poor wretch after the delicious coolness of his iceberg? I do not know for what enormous crime I have been condemned to Baroda but my case is just parallel. Since my pleasant sojourn with you at Baidyanath, Baroda seems a hundred times more Baroda.

I dare say Beno may write to you three or four days before he leaves England. But you must think yourself lucky if he does as much as that. Most likely the first you hear of him, will be a telegram from Calcutta. Certainly he has not written to me. I never expected and should be afraid to get a letter. It would be such a shocking surprise that I should certainly be able to do nothing but roll on the floor and gasp for breath for the next two or three hours. No, the favours of the Gods are too awful to be coveted. I dare say he will have energy enough to hand over your letter to Mano as they must be seeing each other almost daily. You must give Mano a little time before he answers you. He too is Beno's brother. Please let me have Beno's address as I don't know where to send a letter I have ready for him. Will you also let me have the name of Bari's English Composition Book and its compiler? I want such a book badly, as this will be useful for me not only in Bengalee but in Guzerati. There are no convenient books like that here.

You say in your letter "all here are quite well"; yet in the very next sentence I read "Bari has an attack of fever". Do you mean then that Bari is nobody? Poor Bari! That he should be excluded from the list of human beings, is only right and proper; but it is a little hard that he should be denied existence altogether. I hope it is only a slight attack. I am quite well. I have brought a fund of health with me from Bengal, which, I hope it will take me some time to exhaust; but I have just passed my twenty-second milestone, August 15 last, since my birthday and am beginning to get dreadfully old.

I infer from your letter that you are making great progress in English. I hope you will learn very quickly; I can then write to you quite what I want to say and just in the way I want to say it. I feel some difficulty in doing that now and I don't know whether you will understand it.

With love,

Your affectionate brother,
Auro

P.S. If you want to understand the new orthography of my name, ask uncle.

A.

Extract from a Letter to His Brother

Only a short while ago I had a letter from you — I cannot lay my hands on the passage, but I remember it contained an unreserved condemnation of Hindu legend as trivial and insipid, a mass of crude and monstrous conceptions, a [lumber-room][1] of Hindu banalities. The main point of your indictment was that it had nothing in it simple, natural, passionate and human, that the characters were lifeless patterns of moral excellence.

I have been so long accustomed to regard your taste and judgment as sure and final that it is with some distrust I find myself differing from you. Will you permit me then to enter into some slight defence of what you have so emphatically condemned and explain why I venture to dedicate a poem on a Hindu subject, written in the Hindu spirit and constructed on Hindu principles of taste, style and management, to you who regard all these things as anathema maranatha? I am not attempting to convince you, only to justify, or at least define my own standpoint; perhaps also a little to reassure myself in the line of poetical art I have chosen.

The impression that Hindu Myth has made on you, is its inevitable aspect to a taste nourished on the pure dew and honey of Hellenic tradition; for the strong Greek sense of symmetry and finite beauty is in conflict with the very spirit of Hinduism, which is a vast attempt of the human intellect to surround the universe with itself, an immense measuring of itself with the infinite and amorphous. Hellenism must necessarily see in the greater part of Hindu imaginations and thoughts a mass of crude fancies equally removed from the ideal and the real. But when it condemns all Hindu legend without distinction, I believe it is acting from an instinct which is its defect, — the necessary defect of its fine quality. For in order to preserve a pure, sensitive and severe standard of taste and critical judgment, it is compelled to be intolerant; to insist, that is, on its own limits and rule out all that exceeds them, as monstrous and unbeautiful. It rejects that flexible sympathy based on curiosity of temperament, which attempts to project itself into differing types as it meets them and so pass on through ever-widening artistic experiences to its destined perfection. And it rejects it because such catholicity would break the fine mould into which its own temperament is cast. This is well; yet is there room in art and criticism for that other, less fine but more many-sided, which makes possible new elements and strong departures. Often as the romantic temperament stumbles and creates broken and unsure work, sometimes it scores one of those signal triumphs which subject new art forms to the service of poetry or open up new horizons to poetical experience. What judgment would such a temperament, seeking its good where it can find it, but not grossly indiscriminating, not ignobly satisfied, pronounce on the Hindu legends?

---

[1] *MS (typed)* lumber-loom

I would carefully distinguish between two types of myth, the religious-philosophical allegory and the genuine secular legend. The former is beyond the pale of profitable argument. Created by the allegorical and symbolising spirit of mediaeval Hinduism, the religious myths are a type of poetry addressed to a peculiar mental constitution, and the sudden shock of the bizarre which repels occidental imagination the moment it comes in contact with Puranic literature, reveals to us where the line lies that must eternally divide East from West. The difference is one of root-temperament and therefore unbridgeable. There is the mental composition which has no facet towards imaginative religion, and if it accepts religion at all, requires it to be plain, precise and dogmatic; to such these allegories must always seem false in art and barren in significance. And there is the mental composition in which a strong metaphysical bent towards religion combines with an imaginative tendency seeking symbol both as an atmosphere around religion, which would otherwise dwell on too breathless mountaintops, and as a safeguard against the spirit of dogma. These find in Hindu allegory a perpetual delight and refreshment; they believe it to be powerful and penetrating, sometimes with an epical daring of idea and an inspiration of searching appropriateness which not unoften dissolves into a strange and curious beauty. The strangeness permeating these legends is a vital part of themselves, and to eliminate the bizarre in them — bizarre to European notion, for to us they seem striking and natural — would be to emasculate them of the most characteristic part of their strength. Let us leave this type aside then as beyond the field of fruitful discussion.

There remain the secular legends; and it is true that a great number of them are intolerably puerile and grotesque. My point is that the puerility is no essential part of them but lies in their presentment, and that presentment again is characteristic of the Hindu spirit not in its best and most self-realising epochs. They were written in an age of decline, and their present form is the result of a literary accident. The Mahabharata of Vyasa, originally an epic of 24,000 verses, afterwards enlarged by a redacting poet, was finally submerged in a vast mass of inferior accretions, the work often of a tasteless age and unskilful hands. It is in this surface mass that the majority of the Hindu legends have floated down to our century. So preserved, it is not surprising that the old simple beauty of the ancient tales should have come to us marred and disfigured, as well as debased by association with later inventions which have no kernel of sweetness. And yet very simple and beautiful, in their peculiar Hindu type, were these old legends with infinite possibilities of sweetness and feeling, and in the hands of great artists have blossomed into dramas and epics of the most delicate tenderness or the most noble sublimity. One who glances at the dead and clumsy narrative of the Shacountala legend in the Mahabharata and reads after it Kalidasa's masterpiece in which delicate dramatic art and gracious tenderness of feeling reach their climax, at once perceives how they vary with the hands which touch them.

But you are right. The Hindu myth has not the warm passionate life of the Greek. The Hindu mind was too austere and idealistic to be sufficiently sensitive to the rich poetical colouring inherent in crime and sin and overpowering passion; an Oedipus or an Agamemnon stands therefore outside the line of its creative faculty. Yet it had in revenge a power which you will perhaps think no compensation at all, but which to a certain class of minds, of whom I confess myself one, seems of a very real and distinct value. Inferior in warmth and colour and quick life and the savour of earth to the Greek, they had a superior spiritual loveliness and exaltation; not clothing the surface of the earth with imperishable beauty, they search deeper into the white-hot core of things and in their cyclic orbit of thought curve downward round the most hidden fountains of existence and upward over the highest, almost invisible arches of ideal possibility. Let me touch the subject a little more precisely. The difference between the Greek and Hindu temperaments was that one was vital, the other supra-vital; the one physical, the other metaphysical; the one sentient of sunlight as its natural atmosphere and the bound of its joyous activity, the other regarding it as a golden veil which hid from it beautiful and wonderful things for which it panted.[2] The Greek aimed at limit and finite perfection, because he felt vividly all our bounded existence; the Hindu mind, ranging into the infinite tended to the enormous and moved habitually in the sublime. This is poetically a dangerous tendency; finite beauty, symmetry and form are always lovely, and Greek legend, even when touched by inferior poets, must always keep something of its light and bloom and human grace or of its tragic human force. But the infinite is not for all hands to meddle with; it submits only to the compulsion of the mighty, and at the touch of an inferior mind recoils over the boundary of the sublime into the grotesque. Hence the enormous difference of level between different legends or the same legend in different hands, — the sublimity or tenderness of the best, the banality of the worst, with little that is mediocre and intermediate shading the contrast away. To take with a reverent hand the old myths and cleanse them of soiling accretions, till they shine with some of the antique strength, simplicity and solemn depth of beautiful meaning, is an ambition which Hindu poets of today may and do worthily cherish. To accomplish a similar duty in a foreign tongue is a more perilous endeavour.

---

[2] O fostering Sun, who hast hidden the face of Truth with thy golden shield, displace that splendid veil from the vision of the righteous man, O Sun.

O fosterer, O solitary traveller, O Sun, O Master of Death, O child of God, dissipate thy beams, gather inward thy light; so shall I behold that splendour, thy goodliest form of all. For the Spirit who is there and there, He am I.

The Isha Upanishad.

I have attempted in the following narrative to bring one of our old legends before the English public in a more attractive garb than could be cast over them by mere translation or by the too obvious handling of writers like Sir Edwin Arnold; — preserving its inner spirit and Hindu features, yet rejecting no device that might smooth away the sense of roughness and the bizarre which always haunts what is unfamiliar, and win for it the suffrages of a culture to which our mythological conventions are unknown and our canons of taste unacceptable. The attempt is necessarily beset with difficulties and pitfalls. If you think I have even in part succeeded, I shall be indeed gratified; if otherwise, I shall at least have the consolation of having failed where failure was more probable than success.

The story of Ruaru is told in the very latest accretion-layer of the Mahabharata, in a bald and puerile narrative without force, beauty or insight. Yet it is among the most significant and powerful in idea of our legends; for it is rather an idea than a tale. Bhrigou, the grandfather of Ruaru, is almost the most august and venerable name in Vedic literature. Set there at the very threshold of Aryan history, he looms dim but large out of the mists of an incalculable antiquity, while around him move great shadows of unborn peoples and a tradition of huge half-discernible movements and vague but colossal revolutions. In later story his issue form one of the most sacred clans of Rishies, and Purshurama, the destroyer of princes, was of his offspring. By the Titaness Puloma this mighty seer and patriarch, himself one of the mind-children of Brahma had a son Chyavan — who inherited even from the womb his father's personality, greatness and ascetic energy. Chyavan too became an instructor and former of historic minds and a father of civilization; Ayus was among his pupils, the child of Pururavas by Urvasie and founder of the Lunar or Ilian dynasty whose princes after the great civil wars of the Mahabharata became Emperors of India. Chyavan's son Pramati, by an Apsara or nymph of paradise, begot a son named Ruaru, of whom this story is told. This Ruaru, later, became a great Rishi like his fathers, but in his youth he was engrossed with his love for a beautiful girl whom he had made his wife, the daughter of the Gundhurva King, Chitroruth, by the sky-nymph Menaca; an earlier sister therefore of Shacountala. Their joy of union was not yet old when Priyumvada perished, like Eurydice, by the fangs of a snake. Ruaru inconsolable for her loss, wandered miserable among the forests that had been the shelter and witnesses of their loves, consuming the universe with his grief, until the Gods took pity on him and promised him his wife back, if he sacrificed for her half his life. To this Ruaru gladly assented and, the price paid, was reunited with his love.

Such is the story, divested of the subsequent puerile developments by which it is linked on to the Mahabharata. If we compare it with the kindred tale of Eurydice, the distinction I have sought to draw between the Hindu and Greek mythopoetic faculty, justifies itself with great force and clearness. The incidents of Orpheus' descent into Hades, his conquering Death and Hell by his music and harping his love back to the sunlight, and the tragic loss of her at the moment of success through a too natural and beautiful human weakness, has infinite fancy, pathos, trembling human emotion. The Hindu tale, barren of this subtlety and variety is bare of incident and wanting in tragedy. It is merely a bare idea for a tale. Yet what an idea it supplies! How deep and searching is that thought of half the living man's life demanded as the inexorable price for the restoration of his dead! How it seems to knock at the very doors of human destiny, and give us a gust of air from worlds beyond our own suggesting illimitable and unfathomable thoughts of our potentialities and limitations.

I have ventured in this poem to combine, as far as might be, the two temperaments, the Greek pathetic and the Hindu mystic; yet I have carefully preserved the essence of the Hindu spirit and the Hindu mythological features. The essential idea of these Hindu legends, aiming, as they do, straight and sheer at the sublime and ideal, gives the writer no option but to attempt epic tone and form, — I speak of course of those which are not merely beautiful stories of domestic life. In the choice of an epic setting I had the alternative of entirely Hellenising the myth or adopting the method of Hindu Epic. I have preferred the course which I fear, will least recommend itself to you. The true subject of Hindu epic is always a struggle between two ideal forces universal and opposing, while the human and divine actors, the Supreme Triad excepted, are pawns moved to and fro by immense world-impulses which they express but cannot consciously guide. It is perhaps the Olympian ideal in life struggling with the Titanic ideal, and then we have a Ramaian. Or it may be the imperial ideal in government and society marshalling the forces of order, self-subjection, self-effacement, justice, equality, against the aristocratic ideal, with self-will, violence, independence, self-assertion, feudal loyalty, the sway of the sword and the right of the stronger at its back; this is the key of the Mahabharata. Or it is again, as in the tale of Savitrie, the passion of a single woman in its dreadful silence and strength pitted against Death, the divorcer of souls. Even in a purely domestic tale like the Romance of Nul, the central idea is that of the Spirit of Degeneracy, the genius of the Iron age, overpowered by a steadfast conjugal love. Similarly, in this story of Ruaru and Priyumvada the great Spirits who preside over Love and Death, Cama and Yama, are the real actors and give its name to the poem.

The second essential feature of the Hindu epic model is one which you have selected for especial condemnation and yet I have chosen to adhere to it in its entirety. The characters of Hindu legend are, you say, lifeless patterns of moral excellence. Let me again distinguish. The greater figures of our epics are ideals, but ideals of wickedness as well as virtue and also of mixed characters which are not precisely either vicious or virtuous. They are, that is to say, ideal presentments of character-types. This also arises from the tendency of the Hindu creative mind to look behind the actors at tendencies, inspirations, ideals. Yet are these great figures, are Rama, Sita, Savitrie, merely patterns of moral excellence? I who have read their tale in the swift and mighty language of Valmekie and Vyasa and thrilled with their joys and their sorrows, cannot persuade myself that it is so. Surely Savitrie that strong silent heart, with her powerful and subtly-indicated personality, has both life and charm; surely Rama puts too much divine fire into all he does to be a dead thing, — Sita is too gracious and sweet, too full of human lovingness and lovableness, of womanly weakness and womanly strength! Ruaru and Priyumvada are also types and ideals; love in them, such is the idea, finds not only its crowning exaltation but that perfect *idea* of itself of which every existing love is a partial and not quite successful manifestation. Ideal love is a triune energy, neither a mere sensual impulse, nor mere emotional nor mere spiritual. These may exist, but they are not love. By itself the sensual is only an animal need, the emotional a passing mood, the spiritual a religious aspiration which has lost its way. Yet all these are necessary elements of the highest passion. Sense impulse is as necessary to it as the warm earth-matter at its root to the tree, emotion as the air which consents with its life, spiritual aspiration as the light and the rain from heaven which prevent it from withering. My conception being an ideal struggle between love and death, two things are needed to give it poetical form, an adequate picture of love and adequate image of Death. The love pictured must be on the ideal plane, and touch therefore the farthest limit of strength in each of its three directions. The sensual must be emphasised to give it firm root and basis, the emotional to impart to it life, the spiritual to prolong it into infinite permanence. And if at their limits of extension the three meet and harmonise, if they are not triple but triune, then is that love a perfect love and the picture of it a perfect picture. Such at least is the conception of the poem; whether I have contrived even faintly to execute it, do you judge.

But when Hindu canons of taste, principles of epic writing and types of thought and character are assimilated there are still serious difficulties in Englishing a Hindu legend. There is the danger of raising around the subject a jungle of uncouth words and unfamiliar allusions impenetrable to English readers. Those who have hitherto made the attempt, have succumbed to the passion for "local colour" or for a liberal peppering of Sanscrit words all over their verses, thus forming a constant stumbling-block and a source of irritation to the reader. Only so much local colour is admissible as comes naturally and unforced by the very nature of the subject; and for the introduction of a foreign word into poetry the one valid excuse is the entire absence of a fairly corresponding word or phrase in the language itself. Yet a too frequent resort to this plea shows either a laziness in invention or an unseasonable learning. There are very few Sanscrit words or ideas, not of the technical kind, which do not admit of being approximately conveyed in English by direct rendering or by a little management, or, at the worst, by coining a word which, if not precisely significant of the original, will create some kindred association in the mind of an English reader. A slight inexactness is better than a laborious pedantry. I have therefore striven to avoid all that would be unnecessarily local and pedantic, even to the extent of occasionally using a Greek expression such as Hades for the lord of the underworld. I believe such uses to be legitimate, since they bring the poem nearer home to the imagination of the reader. On the other hand, there are some words one is loth to part with. I have myself been unable or unwilling to sacrifice such Indianisms as Rishi; Naga, for the snake-gods who inhabit the nether-world; Uswuttha, for the sacred fig-tree; chompuc (but this has been made familiar by Shelley's exquisite lyric); coil or Kokil, for the Indian cuckoo; and names like Dhurma (Law, Religion, Rule of Nature) and Critanta, the ender, for Yama, the Indian Hades. These, I think, are not more than a fairly patient reader may bear with. Mythological allusions, the indispensable setting of a Hindu legend, have been introduced sparingly, and all but one or two will explain themselves to a reader of sympathetic intelligence and some experience in poetry.

Yet are they, in some number, indispensable. The surroundings and epic machinery must necessarily be the ordinary Hindu surroundings and machinery. Properly treated, I do not think these are wanting in power and beauty of poetic suggestion. Ruaru, the grandson of Bhrigou, takes us back to the very beginnings of Aryan civilisation when our race dwelt and warred and sang within the frontier of the five rivers, Iravatie, Chundrobhaga, Shotodrou, Bitosta and Bipasha, and our Bengal was but a mother of wild beasts, clothed in the sombre mystery of virgin forests and gigantic rivers and with no human inhabitants save a few savage tribes, the scattered beginnings of nations. Accordingly the story is set in times when earth was yet new to her children, and the race was being created by princes like Pururavas and patriarchal sages or Rishies like Bhrigou, Brihuspati, Gautama. The Rishi was in that age the head of the human world. He was at once sage, poet, priest, scientist, prophet, educator, scholar and legislator. He composed a song, and it became one of the sacred hymns of the people; he emerged from rapt communion with God to utter some puissant sentence, which in after ages became the germ of mighty philosophies; he conducted a sacrifice, and kings and peoples rose on its seven flaming tongues to wealth and greatness; he formulated an observant aphorism, and it was made the foundation of some future science, ethical, practical or physical; he gave a decision in a dispute and his verdict was seed of a great code or legislative theory. In Himalayan forests or by the confluence of great rivers he lived as the centre of a patriarchal family whose link was thought-interchange and not blood-relationship, bright-eyed children of sages, heroic striplings, earnest pursuers of knowledge, destined to become themselves great Rishies or renowned leaders of thought and action. He himself was the master of all learning and all arts and all sciences. The Rishies won their knowledge by meditation working through inspiration to intuition. Austere concentration of the faculties stilled the waywardness of the reason and set free for its work the inner, unerring vision which is above reason, as reason is itself above sight; this again worked by intuitive flashes, one inspired stroke of insight quivering out close upon the other, till the whole formed a logical chain; yet a logic not coldly thought out nor the logic of argument but the logic of continuous and consistent inspiration. Those who sought the Eternal through physical austerities, such as the dwelling between five fires (one fire on each side and the noonday sun overhead) or lying for days on a bed of swordpoints, or Yoga processes based on an advanced physical science, belonged to a later day. The Rishies were inspired thinkers, not working through deductive reason or any physical process of sense-subdual. The energy of their personalities was colossal; wrestling in fierce meditation with God, they had become masters of incalculable spiritual energies, so that their anger could blast peoples and even the world was in danger when they opened their lips to utter a curse. This energy was by the principle of heredity transmitted, at least in the form of a latent and educable force, to their offspring. Afterwards as the vigour of the race exhausted itself, the inner fire dwindled and waned. But at first even the unborn child was divine. When Chyavan was in the womb, a Titan to whom his mother Puloma had been betrothed before she was given to Bhrigou, attempted to carry off his lost love in the absence of the Rishi. It is told that the child in the womb felt the affront and issued from his mother burning with such a fire of inherited divinity that the Titan ravisher fell blasted by the wrath of an infant. For the Rishies were not passionless. They were prone to anger and swift to love. In their pride of life and genius they indulged their yearnings for beauty, wedding the daughters of Titans or mingling with nymphs of Paradise in the august solitudes of hills and forests. From these were born those ancient and sacred clans of a prehistoric antiquity, Barghoves, Barhaspaths, Gautamas, Kasyapas, into which the descendants of the Aryan are to this day divided. Thus has India deified the great men who gave her civilisation.

On earth the Rishies, in heaven the Gods. These were great and shining beings who preserved the established cosmos against the Asuras, or Titans, spirits of disorder between whom and the Hindu Olympians there was ever warfare. Yet their hostility did not preclude occasional unions. Sachi herself, the Queen of Heaven, was a Titaness, daughter of the Asura, Puloman; Yayati, ally of the Gods, took to himself a Daitya maiden Surmishtha, child of imperial Vrishopurvan (for the Asuras or Daityas, on the [terrestrial][3] plane, signified the adversaries of

---

[3] *MS (typed)* territorial

Aryan civilisation), and Bhrigou's wife, Puloma, was of the Titan blood. Chief of the Gods were Indra, King and Thunderer, who came down when men sacrificed and drank the Soma wine of the offering; Vaiou, the Wind; Agni, who is Hutaashon, devourer of the sacrifice, the spiritual energy of Fire; Varouna, the prince of the seas; Critanta, Death, the ender, who was called also Yama (Government) or Dhurma (Law) because from him are all order and stability, whether material or moral. And there were subtler presences; Cama, also named Modon or Monmuth, the God of desire, who rode on the parrot and carried five flowery arrows and a bow-string of linked honey-bees; his wife, Ruthie, the golden-limbed spirit of delight; Saruswatie, the Hindu Muse, who is also Vach or Word, the primal goddess — she is the unexpressed idea of existence which by her expression takes visible form and being; for the word is prior to and more real, because more spiritual, than the thing it expresses; she is the daughter of Brahma and has inherited the creative power of her father, the wife of Vishnou and shares the preservative energy of her husband; Vasuqie, also, and Seshanaga, the great serpent with his hosts, whose name means finiteness and who represents Time and Space; he upholds the world on his hundred colossal hoods and is the couch of the Supreme who is Existence. There were also the angels who were a little less than the Gods; Yukshas, the Faery attendants of Kuvere, lord of wealth, who protect hoards and treasures and dwell in Ullaca, the city of beauty,

the hills of mist
Golden, the dwelling place of Faery kings,
And mansions by unearthly moonlight kissed: —
For one dwells there whose brow with the young moon
Lightens as with a marvellous amethyst —

Ullaca, city of beauty, where no thought enters but that of love, no age but that of youth, no season but that of flowers. Then there are the Gundhurvas, beautiful, brave and melodious beings, the artists, musicians, poets and shining warriors of heaven; Kinnaries, Centauresses of sky and hill with voices of Siren melody; Opsaras, sky-nymphs, children of Ocean, who dwell in Heaven, its songstresses and daughters of joy, and who often mingle in love with mortals. Nor must we forget our own mother, Ganges, the triple and mystic river, who is Mundaqinie, Ganges of the Gods, in heaven, Bhagirathie or Jahnavie, Ganges of men, on earth, and Boithorinie or coiling Bhogavatie, Ganges of the dead, in Patala, the grey under-world and kingdom of serpents, and in the sombre dominions of Yama. Saraswatie, namesake and shadow of the Muse, preceded her in her sacredness; but the banks of those once pure waters have long passed to the barbarian and been denounced as unclean and uninhabitable to our race, while the deity has passed to that other mysterious underground stream which joins Ganges and Yamouna in their tryst at Proyaga.

Are there not here sufficient features of poetical promise, sufficient materials of beauty for the artist to weave into immortal visions? I would gladly think that there are, that I am not cheating myself with delusions when I seem to find in this yet untrodden path,

via . . . qua me quoque possim
Tollere humo victorque virum volitare per ora.

Granted, you will say, but still *Quorsum haec putida tendunt?* or how does it explain the dedication to me of a style of work at entire variance with my own tastes and preferences? But the value of a gift depends on the spirit of the giver rather than on its own suitability to the recipient. Will you accept this poem as part-payment of a deep intellectual debt I have been long owing to you? Unknown to yourself, you taught and encouraged me from my childhood to be a poet. From your sun my farthing rush-light was kindled, and it was in your path that I long strove to guide my uncertain and faltering footsteps. If I have now in the inevitable development of an independent temperament in independent surroundings departed from your guidance and entered into a path, perhaps thornier and more rugged, but my own, it does not lessen the obligation of that first light and example. It is my hope that in the enduring fame which your calmer and more luminous genius must one day bring you, on a distant verge of the skies and lower plane of planetary existence, some ray of my name may survive and it be thought no injury to your memory that the first considerable effort of my powers was dedicated to you.

To His Uncle

c/o Rao Bahadur K.B. Jadhava
Near Municipal Office
Baroda
15th August 1902

My dear Boromama,

I am sorry to hear from Sarojini that Mejdada has stopped sending mother's allowance and threatens to make the stoppage permanent unless you can improvise a companion to the Goddess of Purulia. This is very characteristic of Mejdada; it may even be described in one word as Manomaniac. Of course he thinks he is stopping your pension and that this will either bring you to reason or effectually punish you. But the main question is What is to be done now? Of course I can send Rs 40 now and so long as I am alone it does not matter very much, but it will be rather a pull when Mrinalini comes back to Baroda. However even that could be managed well enough with some self-denial and an effective household management. But there is a tale of woe behind.

Sarojini suggests that I might bring her or have her brought to Baroda with my wife. I should have no objection, but is that feasible? In the first place will she agree to come to the other end of the world like that? And if she does, will not the violent change and the shock of utterly unfamiliar surroundings, strange faces and an unintelligible tongue or rather two or three unintelligible tongues, have a prejudicial effect upon her mind? Sarojini and my wife found it intolerable enough to live under such circumstances for a long time; how would mother stand it? This is what I am most afraid of. Men may cut themselves off from home and everything else and make their own atmosphere in strange places, but it is not easy for women and I am afraid it would be quite impossible for a woman in her mental condition. Apart from these objections it might be managed. Of course I could not give her a separate house, but she might be assured that whenever a Boro Bou came, she should have one to receive her in; I daresay that would satisfy her. In case however it does not or the experiment should be judged too risky, I must go on sending Rs 40 as long as I can.

But there comes the tale of woe I have spoken of. We have now had three years of scarcity, the first of them being a severe famine. The treasury of the State is well nigh exhausted — a miserable 30 or 40 lakhs is all that remains, and in spite of considerable severity and even cruelty in collection the revenues of the last year amount simply to the tail of the dog without the dog himself. This year there was no rain in Baroda till the first crop withered; after July 5th about 9 inches fell, just sufficient to encourage the cultivators to sow again. Now for want of more rain the second crop is withering away into nothingness. The high wind which has prevented rain still continues, and though there is a vague hope of a downpour after the 15th, one cannot set much store by it. Now in case there should be a severe famine this year, what may happen is something like this; either we shall all be put on half pay for the next twelve months, — in other words I who can only just manage to live on Rs 360 will have to do it on Rs 180 — or the pay will be cut down permanently (or at least for some years) by 25 per cent, in which case I shall rejoice upon Rs 270; or thirdly (and this may Heaven forbid) we shall get our full pay till December and after that live on the munificent amount of nothing a month. In any case it will be impossible to bring mother or even Mrinalini to Baroda. And there is worse behind. The Ajwa reservoir after four years of drought is nearly exhausted. The just-drinkable-if-boiled water in it will last for about a month; the nondrinkable for still two months more. This means that if there is no rain, there will be a furious epidemic of cholera before two months are out and after three months this city, to say nothing of other parts of the Raj, will be depopulated by a water famine. Of course the old disused wells may be filled up, but that again means cholera in excelsis. The only resource will be for the whole State to go and camp out on the banks of the Narmada and the Mahi.

Of course if I get half pay I shall send Rs 80 to Bengal, hand over Rs 90 as my contribution to the expenses to Khaserao and keep the remaining 10 for emergencies; but supposing the third course suggested should be pursued? I shall then have to take a third class ticket to Calcutta and solicit an 150 Rs place in Girish Bose's or Mesho's College — if Lord Curzon has not abolished both of them by that time. Of course I could sponge upon my father-in-law in Assam, becoming a *ghor jamai* for the time being, but then who would send money to Deoghur and Benares? To such a pass have an allwise Providence and the blessings of British rule brought us! However let us all hope that it will rain.

Please let me know whether Mejdada has sent any money by the time this reaches you. If he has not, I suppose I must put my shoulder to the burden. And by the way if you have found my MS of verse translations from Sanscrit, you might send it to me "by return of post". The Seeker had better remain with you instead of casting itself on the perilous waters of the Post-Office.

My health has not been very good recently; that is to say, although I have no recognised doctor's illness, I have developed a new disease of my own, or rather a variation of Madhavrao's special brand of nervous debility. I shall patent mine as A.G's private and particular. Its chief symptom is a ghastly inability to do any serious work; two hours' work induces a feverish exhaustion and a burning sensation all over the body as well as a pain in the back. I am then useless for the rest of the day. So for some time past I have had to break up the little work I have done into half an hour here, half an hour there and half an hour nowhere. The funny thing is that I keep up a very decent appetite and am equal to any amount of physical exercise that may be demanded of me. In fact if I take care to do nothing but kasrat and croquet and walking and rushing about, I keep in a grand state of health, — but an hour's work turns me again into an invalid. This is an extremely awkward state of things and if you know any homoeopathic drug which will remove it, I will shut my eyes and swallow it.

Of course under such circumstances I find it difficult to write letters. I do not know how many letters to Sarojini & my wife I have begun, written two lines and left. The other day, however, there was a promising sign. I began to write a letter to you and actually managed to finish one side and a half. This has encouraged me to try again and I do believe I shall finish this letter today — the second day of writing.[4] The improvement, which is part of a general abatement of my symptoms, I attribute to a fortnight's determined and cynical laziness. During this time I have been to Ahmedabad with our cricket eleven and watched them get a jolly good beating; which happy result we celebrated by a gorgeous dinner at the refreshment room. I believe the waiters must have thought us a party of famine-stricken labourers, dressed up in stolen clothes, perhaps the spoils of massacred famine officers. There were six of us and they brought us a dozen plentiful courses; we ate them all and asked for more. As for the bread we consumed — well, they brought us at first a huge toast-rack with about 20 large pieces of toast. After three minutes there was nothing left except the rack itself; they repeated the allowance with a similar result. Then they gave up the toast as a bad job, and brought in two great plates each with a mountain of bread on it as large as Nandanpahad. After a short while we were howling for more. This time there was a wild-eyed consultation of waiters and after some minutes they reappeared with large trays of bread carried in both hands. This time they conquered. They do charge high prices at the refreshment rooms but I don't think they got much profit out of us that time. Since then I have been once on a picnic to Ajwa with the District Magistrate and Collector of Baroda, the second Judge of the High Court and a still more important and solemn personage whom you may have met under the name of M^{r} Anandrao Jadhav. A second picnic was afterwards organized in which some dozen rowdies, not to say Hooligans, of our club — the worst among them, I regret to say, was the father of a large family and a trusted officer of H.H. the Maharajah Gaekwar, — went down to Ajwa and behaved in such a manner that it is a wonder we were not arrested and locked up. On the way my horse broke down and so four of us had to get down and walk three miles in the heat. At the first village we met a cart coming back from Ajwa and in spite of the carters' protests seized it, turned the bullocks round and started them back — of course with ourselves in the cart. The bullocks at first thought they were going to do the journey at their usual comfortable two miles an hour, but we convinced them of their error with the ends of our umbrellas and they ran. I don't believe bullocks have ever run so fast since the world began. The way the cart jolted, was a wonder; I know the internal arrangements of my stomach were turned upside down at least 300 times a minute. When we got to Ajwa we had to wait an hour for dinner; as a result I was again able to eat ten times my usual allowance. As for the behaviour of those trusted pillars of the Baroda Raj at Ajwa, a veil had better be drawn over it; I believe I was the only quiet and decent person in the company. On the way home the carriage in which my part of the company installed itself, was the scene of a remarkable tussle in which three of the occupants and an attendant cavalier attempted to bind the driver, (the father of a large family aforesaid) with a horse-rope. As we had been ordered to do this by the Collector of Baroda, I thought I might join in the attempt with a safe conscience. Paterfamilias threw the reins to Providence and fought — I will say it to his credit — like a Trojan. He scratched me, he bit one of my coadjutors, in both cases drawing blood, he whipped furiously the horse of the assistant cavalier, and when Madhavrao came to his assistance, he rewarded the benevolent intention by whipping at Madhavrao's camel! It was not till we reached the village, after a six-miles conflict, and got him out of the carriage that he submitted to the operation. The wonder was that our carriage did not get upset; indeed, the mare stopped several times in order to express her entire disgust at the improper and turbulent character of these proceedings. For the greater part of the way home she was brooding indignantly over the memory of it and once her feelings so much overcame her that she tried to upset us over the edge of the road, which would have given us a comfortable little fall of three feet. Fortunately she was relieved by this little demonstration and her temper improved wonderfully after it. Finally last night I helped to kidnap Dr. Cooper, the Health Officer of the State, and make him give us a big dinner at the Station with a bottle and a half of sherry to wash it down. The Doctor got so merry over the sherry of which he drank at least two thirds himself, that he ordered a *special-class* dinner for the whole company next Saturday. I don't know what Mrs. Cooper said to him when he got home. All this has had a most beneficial effect upon my health, as the writing of so long a letter shows.

---

[4] I didn't after all.

I suppose you have got Anandrao's letter; you ought to value it, for the time he took to write it is, I believe, unequalled in the history of epistolary creation. The writing of it occupied three weeks, fair-copying it another fortnight, writing the address seven days and posting it three days more. You will see from it that there is no need to be anxious about his stomach: it righted itself the moment he got into the train at Deoghur Station. In fact he was quite lively and warlike on the way home. At Jabalpur we were unwise enough not to spread out our bedding on the seats and when we got in again, some upcountry scoundrels had boned Anandrao's berth. After some heated discussion I occupied half of it and put Anandrao on mine. Some Mahomedans, quite inoffensive people, sat at the edge of this, but Anandrao chose to confound them with the intruders and declared war on them. The style of war he adopted was a most characteristically Maratha style. He pretended to go to sleep and began kicking the Mahomedans, in his "sleep" of course, having specially gone to bed with his boots on for the purpose. I had at last to call him off and put him on my half-berth. Here, his legs being the other way, he could not kick; so he spent the night butting the upcountryman with his head; next day he boasted triumphantly to me that he had conquered a foot and half of territory from the intruder by his brilliant plan of campaign. When the Boers rise once more against England, I think we shall have to send them Anandrao as an useful assistant to Generals Botha and Delarey.

No rain as yet, and it is the 15th of August. My thirtieth birthday, by English computation! How old we are all getting!

Your affectionate nephew
Aurobind Ghose.

P.S. There is a wonderful story travelling about Baroda, a story straight out of Fairyland, that I have received Rs 90 promotion. Everybody seems to know all about it except myself. The story goes that a certain officer rejoicing in the name of Damn-you-bhai wanted promotion, so the Maharaja gave him Rs 50. He then proceeded to remark that as this would give Damn-you-bhai an undue seniority over Mr Would-you-ah! and Mr Manoeu(vre)bhai, the said Would-you-ah and Manoeu(vre)bhai must also get Rs 50 each, and "as Mr Ghose has done good work for me, I give him Rs 90". The beautiful logical connection of the last bit with what goes before, dragging Mr Ghose in from nowhere & everywhere, is so like the Maharaja that the story may possibly be true. If so, it is very satisfactory, as my pay will now be — Famine permitting — Rs 450 a month. It is not quite so good as Mejdada's job, but it will serve. Rs 250 promotion after ten years' service does not look very much, but it is better than nothing. At that rate I shall get Rs 700 in 1912 and be drawing about Rs 1000 when I am ready to retire from Baroda either to Bengal or a better world. Glory Halleluja!

Give my love to Sarojini and tell her I shall write to her — if I can. Don't forget to send the MS of translations. I want to typewrite and send to England.

To His Wife

c/o K.B. Jadhav Esq
Near Municipal Office
Baroda
20th August 1902

Dearest Mrinalini,

I have not written to you for a long time because I have not been in very good health and had not the energy to write. I went out of Baroda for a few days to see whether change and rest would set me up, and your telegram came when I was not here. I feel much better now, and I suppose there was nothing really the matter with me except overwork. I am sorry I made you so anxious; there was no real cause to be so, for you know I never get *seriously* ill. Only when I feel out of sorts, I find writing letters almost impossible.

The Maharajah has given me Rs 90 promotion — this will raise my pay to Rs 450. In the order he has made me a lot of compliments about my powers, talent, capacity, usefulness etcetera, but also made a remark on my want of regularity and punctual habits. Besides he shows his intention of taking the value of the Rs 90 out of me by burdening me with overwork, so I don't feel very grateful to him. He says that if convenient, my services can be utilized in the College. But I don't see how it will be convenient, just now, at least; for it is nearly the end of the term. Even if I go to the College, he has asked the Dewan to use me for writing Annual Reports etc. I suppose this means that he does not want me to get my vacations. However, let us see what happens.

If I join the College now and am allowed the three months' vacation, I shall of course go to Bengal and to Assam for a short visit. I am afraid it will be impossible for you to come to Baroda just now. There has been no rain here for a month, except a short shower early this morning. The wells are all nearly dried up; the water of the Ajwa reservoir which supplies Baroda is very low and must be quite used up by next November; the crops in the fields are all parched and withering. This means that we shall not only have famine; but there will be no water for bathing and washing up, or even, perhaps for drinking. Besides if there is famine, it is practically sure that all the officers will be put on half-pay. We are hoping, rather than expecting, that there may be good rain before the end of August. But the signs are against it, and if it comes, it will only remove the water difficulty or put it off for a few months. For you to come to Baroda and endure all the troubles & sufferings of such a state of things is out of the question. You must decide for yourself whether you will stay with your father or at Deoghur. You may as well stay in Assam till October, and then if I can go to Bengal, I will take you to Deoghur where you can stop for the winter at least. If I cannot come then, I will, if you like, try and make some arrangement for you to be taken there.

I am glad your father will be able to send me a cook when you come. I have got a Maratha cook, but he can prepare nothing properly except meat dishes. I don't know how to get over the difficulty about the *jhi*. Sarojini wrote something about a Mahomedan *ayah*, but that would never do. After so recently being readmitted to Hindu society, I cannot risk it; it is all very well for Khaserao & others whose social position is so strong that they may do almost anything they like. As soon as I see any prospect of being able to get you here, I shall try my best to arrange about a maid-servant. It is no use doing it now.

I hope you will be able to read and understand this letter; if you can't, I hope it will make you more anxious to learn English than you have been up to now. I could not manage to write a Bengali letter just now — so I thought I had better write in English rather than put off writing.

Do not be too much disappointed by the delay in coming to Baroda; it cannot be avoided. I should like you to spend some time in Deoghur, if you do not mind, Assam somehow seems terribly far off; and besides, I should like you to form a closer intimacy with my relatives, at least those among them whom I especially love.

Your loving husband

To His Father-in-Law

[1]

Calcutta
June 8th 1906.

My dear father-in-law,

I could not come over to Shillong in May, because my stay in Eastern Bengal was unexpectedly long. It was nearly the end of May before I could return to Calcutta, so that my programme was necessarily changed. I return to Baroda today. I have asked for leave from the 12th, but I do not know whether it will be sanctioned so soon. In any case I shall be back by the end of the month. If you are anxious to send Mrinalini down, I have no objection whatever. I have no doubt my aunt will gladly put her up until I can return from Baroda and make my arrangements.

I am afraid I shall never be good for much in the way of domestic virtues. I have tried, very ineffectively, to do some part of my duty as a son, a brother and a husband, but there is something too strong in me which forces me to subordinate everything else to it. Of course that is no excuse for my culpability in not writing letters, — a fault I am afraid I shall always be quicker to admit than to reform. I can easily understand that to others it may seem to spring from a lack of the most ordinary affection. It was not so in the case of my father from whom I seem to inherit the defect. In all my fourteen years in England I hardly got a dozen letters from him, and yet I cannot doubt his affection for me, since it was the false report of my death which killed him. I fear you must take me as I am with all my imperfections on my head.

Barin has again fallen ill, and I have asked him to go out to some healthier place for a short visit. I was thinking he might go to Waltair, but he has set his heart on going to Shillong — I don't quite know why, unless it is to see a quite new place and at the same time make acquaintance with his sister-in-law's family. If he goes, I am sure you will take good care of him for the short time he may be there. You will find him, I am afraid, rather wilful & erratic, — the family failing. He is especially fond of knocking about by himself in a spasmodic and irregular fashion when he ought to be sitting at home and nursing his delicate health, but I have learnt not to interfere with him in this respect; if checked, he is likely to go off at a tangent & makes things worse. He has, however, an immense amount of vitality which allows him to play these tricks with impunity in a good climate, and I think a short stay at Shillong ought to give him another lease of health.

Your affectionate
son-in-law
Aurobindo Ghose

[2]

Pondicherry
19 February 1919

My dear father-in-law,

I have not written to you with regard to this fatal event in both our lives; words are useless in face of the feelings it has caused, if even they can ever express our deepest emotions. God has seen good to lay upon me the one sorrow that could still touch me to the centre. He knows better than ourselves what is best for each of us, and now that the first sense of the irreparable has passed, I can bow with submission to His divine purpose. The physical tie between us is, as you say, severed; but the tie of affection subsists for me. Where I have once loved, I do not cease from loving. Besides she who was the cause of it, still is near though not visible to our physical vision.

It is needless to say much about the matters of which you write in your letter. I approve of everything that you propose. Whatever Mrinalini would have desired, should be done, and I have no doubt this is what she would have approved of. I consent to the chudis being kept by her mother; but I should be glad if you would send me two or three of her books, especially if there are any in which her name is written. I have only of her her letters and a photograph.

Aurobindo

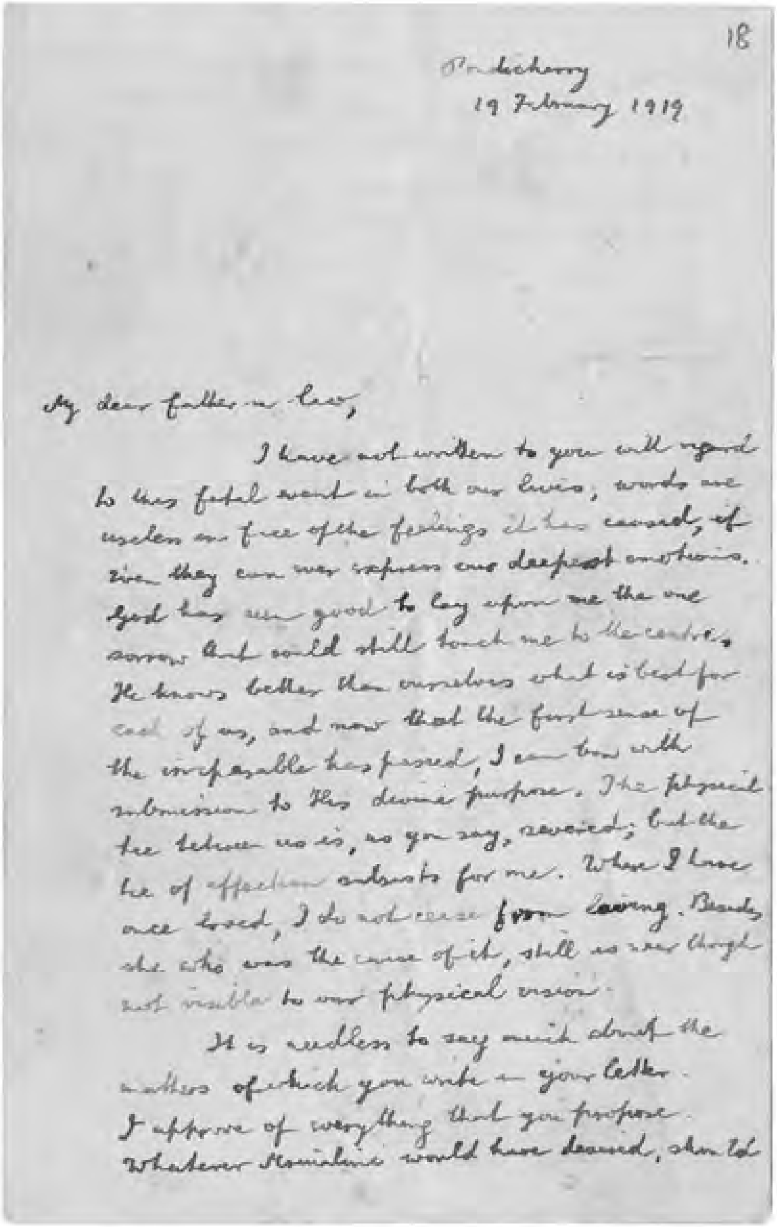

Pondicherry
19 February 1919

My dear father-in-law,

I have not written to you with regard to this fatal event in both our lives; words are useless in face of the feelings it has caused, & even they can never express our deepest emotions. God has seen good to lay upon me the one sorrow that could still touch me to the centre. He knows better than ourselves what is best for each of us, and now that the first sense of the irreparable has passed, I can bow with submission to His divine purpose. The physical tie between us is, as you say, severed; but the tie of affection subsists for me. Where I have once loved, I do not cease from loving. Besides she who was the cause of it, still is near though not visible to our physical vision.

It is needless to say much about the matters of which you write in your letter. I approve of everything that you propose. Whatever Mrinalini would have desired, should

Sri Aurobindo's letter to his father-in-law, 19 February 1919

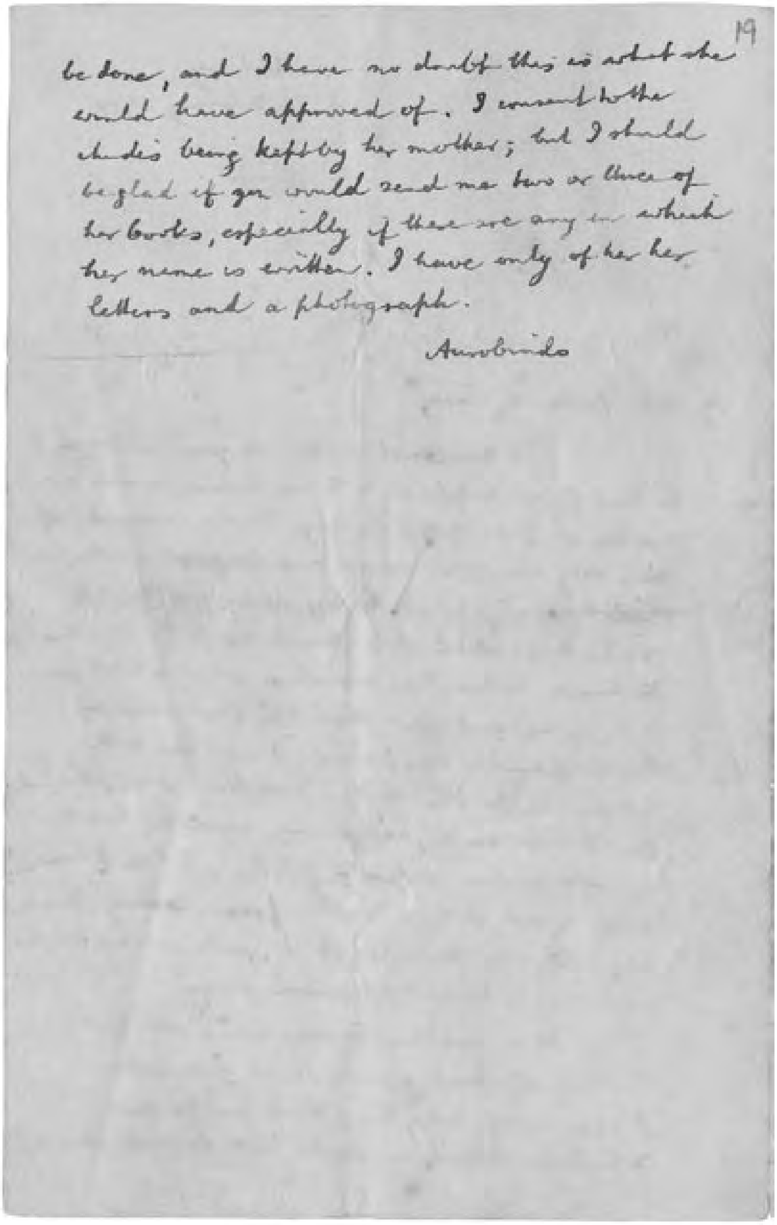

be done, and I have no doubt this is what she would have approved of. I consent to the chudis being kept by her mother; but I should be glad if you would send me two or three of her books, especially if there are any in which her name is written. I have only of her her letters and a photograph.

Aurobindo

Letters Written as a Probationer in the Indian Civil Service, 1892

To Lord Kimberley

[1]

To
the Right Hon the Earl of
Kimberley
Secretary of State
for
India.

6 Burlington Rd
Bayswater W
Monday. Nov. 21. 1892

May it please your Lordship

I was selected as a probationer for the Indian Civil Service in 1890, and after the two years probation required have been rejected on the ground that I failed to attend the Examination in Riding.

I humbly petition your Lordship that a farther consideration may, if possible, be given to my case.

I admit that the Commissioners have been very indulgent to me in the matter, and that my conduct has been as would naturally lead them to suppose me negligent of their instructions; but I hope your Lordship will allow me to lay before you certain circumstances that may tend to extenuate it.

I was sent over to England, when seven years of age, with my two elder brothers and for the last eight years we have been thrown on our own resources without any English friend to help or advise us. Our father, Dr. K. D. Ghose of Khulna, has been unable to provide the three of us with sufficient for the most necessary wants, and we have long been in an embarrassed position.

It was owing to want of money that I was unable always to report cases in London at the times required by the Commissioners, and to supply myself with sufficiently constant practice in Riding. At the last I was thrown wholly on borrowed resources and even these were exhausted.

It was owing to difficulty in procuring the necessary money, that I was late at my appointment on Tuesday Nov 15. I admit that I did not observe the exact terms of the appointment; however I went on to Woolwich by the next train, but found that the Examiner had gone back to London.

If your Lordship should grant me another chance, an English gentleman, Mr Cotton, (editor of the Academy) of 107 Abingdon Road, Kensington. W. has undertaken that want of money shall not prevent me from fulfilling the exact instructions of the Commissioners.

If your Lordship should obtain this for me, it will be the object of my life to remember it in the faithful performance of my duties in the Civil Service of India.

I am
Your Lordship's obedient
servant
Aravinda. Acroyd. Ghose

[2]

6 Burlington Rd
Bayswater W
Monday Dec 12 1892

May it please your Lordship

As the Civil Service Commissioners have decided that they cannot give me a Certificate of qualification for an appointment to the Civil Service of India, I beg to apply to your Lordship for the remainder of the allowance that would have been due to me as a Probationer.

I am fully aware that I have really forfeited this sum by my failure in the Final Examination but in consideration of my bad pecuniary circumstances, I hope your Lordship will kindly listen to my petition.

I enclose the required Certificate as to residence and character at the University.

I am
Your Lordship's obedient
servant
A. A. Ghose

Letters Written While Employed in the Princely State of Baroda
1895 – 1906

To the Sar Suba, Baroda State

Ootacamund.
June 1. 1895

Sir

I have the honour to report that I arrived at Ootacamund on Thursday the 30th instant & that I saw H.H. the Maharaja Saheb yesterday (Friday). It appears that His Highness wishes to keep me with him for some time farther, I have also the honour to state that as I desired a peon rather at Ootie than on the journey & even so it was not *absolutely* necessary, I did not think myself justified in taking advantage of your kind permission to engage one at Bombay as far as Ootie.

I beg to remain,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
Aravind. A. Ghose.

To
Rao Bahadur
the Sar Suba Saheb
Baroda State.

To Bhuban Babu

[June 1901]

Dear Bhuban Babu,

I have been here at Nainital with my wife & sister since the 28th of May. The place is a beautiful one, but not half so cold as I expected. In fact, in the daytime it is only a shade less hot than Baroda, except when it has been raining. The Maharaja will probably be leaving here on the 24th, — if there has been rain at Baroda, — but as he will stop at Agra, Mathura & Mhow, he will not reach Baroda till the beginning of July. I shall probably be going separately & may also reach on the 1st of July. If you like, you might go there a little before & put up with Deshpande. I have asked Madhavrao to get my new house furnished, but I don't know what he is doing in that direction.

Banerji is, I believe, in Calcutta. He came up to see me at Deoghur for a day.

Yours sincerely
Aurobind Ghose

To an Officer of the Baroda State

Baroda.
14th Feb 1903.

My dear Sir,

I shall be very much obliged if you can kindly arrange for the letter to the Residency[1] to be seen by His Highness and approved tomorrow, Sunday, so that I may be able to leave Baroda tomorrow night. I am sending the draft to the Naib Dewan Saheb for his perusal and approval. I am obliged to make this request because it will put me in serious difficulties if the arrangements I have made are upset.

Yours sincerely
Aravind. A. Ghose

---

[1] *See "Draft of a Reply to the Resident on the Curzon Circular" on the next page. — Ed.*

Draft of a Reply to the Resident on the Curzon Circular

My dear Sir,

In reference to your letter of the 11th February last, conveying the remarks and views of the Government of India on the representation of His Highness' Government dated the 19th December 1902, I am to express to you His Highness' extreme disappointment that the Government of India has not seen its way to give a more favourable consideration to the representation, I had the honour to submit in December last. That letter expresses a hope that His Highness will now withdraw his objections to the provisions of the circular. It further makes certain remarks on the delay in sending the protest, the absence of His Highness from Baroda and its results on the administration of the State.

I am anxious therefore to place before the Government of India certain facts and circumstances relating to those matters and in explanation of His Highness' objections to the circular.

It must be admitted that the protest reached the Government of India more than 2 years after the circular was issued but in explanation of that circumstance I have to state in the first instance that no copy of the circular has ever been formally and officially communicated to His Highness' Government and even now any knowledge they may have of the contents of the circular is that which they share with the general public and which is drawn from the portion extracted in the Government Gazette and the public prints of the country. It was indeed His Highness' wish to disregard the absence of a formal intimation and submit a protest forthwith but I may perhaps be allowed to say that as things are constituted it is naturally felt as no light thing to appeal to the Government of India against its own orders. This course was therefore abandoned under the advice of His Highness' responsible officers that it would be inadvisable and might be thought premature and uncalled for to submit any protest before the circular was officially communicated to this Government or it became clear on occasions arising that what would involve in the case of the Baroda State an important change of procedure was really intended to apply to this State. Such occasion first arose in 1902 when in answer to this Government's intimation of His Highness' wish to proceed to Europe on account of ill health the Government of India required His Highness to conform to the provisions of the circular for the first time. This was in May 1902 about 2 years after the circular had been issued. Thereupon the protest was forwarded in December last. This explanation of the apparent delay in sending the protest will it is hoped serve to dispel the doubt which seems to be conveyed in your letter as to the strength of His Highness' feelings on the subject of the circular.

The next point which calls for an explanation is the implication clearly conveyed in the letter that no efficient administration of the State is possible during the absence of H.H. from Baroda. With reference to this I beg to submit that the administration of the Baroda State has been systematically regulated by H.H. so that it can be worked by his officers even when he is not present in person at the Capital. It stands therefore on a very different footing from unregulated administrations in which every detail is dependent on the personal will of the ruler. Further His Highness when going to a hill station during the hot months of the year takes with him his staff & office & the supervision of administrative work goes on with the same regularity as at Baroda. Indeed it is a fact that owing to better health & greater freedom from harassment more work is done by H.H. outside than at Baroda.

In the case of absences in Europe efficient control is no doubt more difficult but on such occasions H.H. has to delegate some of his powers & those matters which require reference to him can in these days of easy communication be answered in a comparatively short space of time & in urgent cases orders can even be obtained by wire. Incidentally it may be remarked here that in making arrangements for the conduct of administration during the absence of H.H. in Europe H.H. is not allowed a free hand which his close knowledge of the administration & the people & the intimate & permanent manner in which his interests are bound up with the good government of the State would seem to require. If greater freedom of action were allowed H.H. feels that more satisfactory arrangements could be made than are now possible.

It may be added that the administration of a Native State when regularized is largely a matter of routine; no new & considerable problems are to be apprehended & such questions as do arise, can with the thorough knowledge of the administration which H.H. possesses be easily grasped by him even when he is not on the spot.

With regard to the discontent consequent on the injury to the administration referred to in your letter, I wish to state that His Highness' Government is not aware of any genuine dissatisfaction which has resulted from his absence from Baroda. It must be remembered that there are grievance mongers everywhere especially in a Native State where there is the representative of the paramount power to whom they can prefer their complaints whether imaginary or real. The amount of credence given to them must in the nature of things depend on the judgment and discretion of the individual officer who for the time being represents the *paramount power*. From the reports of that officer, the Government of India derives its information whilst His Highness' Government has generally hardly any occasion to give its own version of the contents of those reports. This is an inevitable disadvantage of the position in which Native States are at present placed, but as I have said so far as His Highness' Government is aware no real injury has up to now resulted to the administration by the absence of His Highness from Baroda much less any discontent consequent on such injury.

It is true that in 1894 considerable agitation was created in the State against its land policy, but this was due in His Highness' opinion entirely to the policy itself and not to his absence and the agitation would have soon subsided if the Resident had not unfortunately taken a position of active hostility to that policy which eventually turned out to be an unjustifiable attitude.

Further in regard to these trips to Europe it has always to be borne in mind that there is such worry & difficulty in making arrangements for them that they can never be undertaken except under the strongest necessity. Even were it otherwise the deep interest which H.H. takes in the administration of his state — an interest which has been testified to by more than one Resident — who have warned him against an excess of zeal rather than its deficiency, would not admit of his frequent absence from India. Thus it happens that H.H. has not been out of India for more than 4 years during the 22 years of his active rule & his trips have always been necessitated by considerations of health.

It need hardly be stated that in sending the protest nothing was further from His Highness' mind than either to challenge the policy of Government or to question their authority. What His Highness intended was to place before the Government of India his feelings and present for their consideration the effect which the Circular was calculated to produce on his status and dignity as a Ruler. The Circular it is stated in itself establishes no new principle and that the Government of India always exercises the right to give advice on the subject of His Highness' trips to Europe. But such advice both by its form and the rare occasions on which it is given is more suited to the position and dignity of His Highness whilst the necessity now imposed of an application for permission in every instance leaves no independent power of movement out of India & gives room for the inference that in the estimation of the Government of India H.H. if left to himself cannot be trusted to enjoy this privilege in a reasonable & judicious manner. At least this is the view which would be taken by the public at large. The advice again was given & received confidentially so that the public had no authentic means of knowing whether the trip was given up because vetoed by the Government of India or by the Prince himself of his own motion.

It fell in with the policy of the Government of India to maintain the prestige of Indian Chiefs by allowing their public acts to bear the appearance of having proceeded from the Chiefs themselves rather than by direction of the Government of India. It may be that some Princes fell short of their responsibilities but a general rule which applies equally to all is calculated to discourage those who may have been devoting their whole time and energy to the welfare and good Government of their subjects.

Your letter no doubt contains an assurance that there is no idea of curtailing the judicious & moderate enjoyment by Native Chiefs of the privilege of absenting themselves from their States. What is a moderate enjoyment, however, would in the nature of things have to be determined by the Resident in the first instance & ultimately by the Government of India. In your letter you calculate the absences of H.H. from Baroda at 7½ years since 1886, thereby probably implying that they were not moderate. Of these only 4 years were spent out of India & that too during the course of the 22 years of his rule. It would seem to H.H. that this was not an immoderate exercise of the privilege but possibly it is thought otherwise by the Government of India.

In the same way though previous absences may not have been frequent still a particular trip may not be considered to be judicious and as it is not possible to define the requirements of a judicious trip, no definite meaning is conveyed to the mind as to the extent to which the privilege will hereafter be allowed.

These are some of the objections to the Circular which still hold good. His Highness therefore can only express his regret that the Government of India could not see their way to alter its provisions.

To the Dewan, on the Government's Reply to the Letter on the Curzon Circular

Confidential

Gulmarg
Aug 14. 1903.

My dear Sir,

In reference to the answer of the Government of India to our protest dated the 2^d May, 1903, His Highness directs me to write that you must think over the whole matter and consider what is to be done. You must clearly understand that it is not because His Highness wishes to go to Europe often, as is popularly supposed, that he stands by his protest, for he does not care about the matter in that light, but because he is bound to defend a natural right which is being hedged in with humiliating conditions and that without rhyme or reason. It is under such circumstances your part as Minister to consult with Mr Bhandarkar, Mr Samarth and other officers on whose abilities and devotion His Highness places confidence, and if they merit that confidence, they should surely be able to suggest some course which would meet the peculiar difficulties of the situation, and advise His Highness in a wise and fruitful manner.

Yours sincerely
Aravind. A. Ghose
Secretary

P.S. His Highness wishes you to consult Mr Pherozshah Mehta *very confidentially* on the point, paying him his fees, as to what action he would advise the Maharaja to take.

A. A. G.

H.E.
R. V. Dhamnaskar
Dewan Saheb
Baroda

Re Govt answer to protest against the Circular about visits to Europe.

To the Naib Dewan, on the Infant Marriage Bill

Rao Bahadur
V. Y. Bhandarkar
Naib Dewan
Baroda

Gulmarg
July 8. 1903

My dear Sir,

Many articles have been published in the papers regarding the proposed Infant Marriage Bill and one or two private representations have reached the Maharaja Saheb and others will, doubtless, have reached yourself. I have already written to you asking you to take steps to observe and carefully weigh all public criticisms that may seem to deserve consideration. His Highness directs me to write again repeating that he wishes you to go thoroughly into all private representations and the arguments urged on either side in the public prints and draw up a *very* full and exhaustive memo balancing the pros and cons under each head of reasoning. His Highness does not wish to hurry you unduly, but he would like you at the same time to submit the memo without any unnecessary delay.

Yours sincerely
Aravind A Ghose
Secretary.

A Letter of Condolence

Gulmarg
July 10 1903

My dear Dr. Sumant,

I am desired by His Highness to write to you expressing his sorrow at the death of your father and his sympathy with you in your great and sudden loss. This sympathy cannot come to very much, but His Highness hopes you will accept it as a tribute and expression of the regard he entertained for your father. Even when Dr. Batukram was in the State service, before he entered on personal duties, he came much into contact with His Highness, and afterwards when he was in personal service, His Highness had special occasion to become acquainted with his character and personality. In that character there were some fine qualities which His Highness can never afford to forget. One of these was the sincere and steadfast interest he took in the welfare of His Highness and the State; he was a friend with whom His Highness could always converse and interchange views freely, a thing which is very rare amongst our countrymen and particularly in these days when the personality of the Raja is being detached from the administration and the interests of the servants being secured by rules and regulations. As to his professional abilities His Highness has not the requisite knowledge which would entitle him to say anything, but as a personal physician His Highness had great confidence in him; he was, he thinks, prudent, sympathetic and strong, able to withstand influences, which are not uncommon in a palace and surroundings, such as obtain in a Native State. His Highness feels that it would be long before his place can be filled, if indeed it can ever be filled at all.

His Highness would like to do something which would show in a slight degree his appreciation of the good qualities and services of Dr. Batukram and since your father has left two young sons and a little daughter, His Highness intends to give a scholarship of Rs 25/ to each for ten years while they are being educated, by which time, he hopes, they will be able to look after their own interests. If at the expiry of this period a farther continuation of the scholarship is necessary, His Highness will take into consideration a request to that effect.

I am forwarding this letter through the Minister who will give effect to its contents unless you wish anything different.

Yours sincerely
Aravind A. Ghose.
Secretary

To R. C. Dutt

Baroda
July 30. 1904.

My dear Mr. Dutt,

I received your two letters this morning and they have been read by His Highness. There is no necessity to apply to the Government of India previous to engaging your services, now that you have retired. With an English Civilian it would have been different, but that would have been on the general rule against engaging Europeans or Americans without the previous sanction of the Govt.

The position is that of Councillor with Rs 3000 British as pay; Baroda currency is not at present in use, as we have given up the right to mint for a season.

His Highness sympathises with you entirely about your health and will give you every facility possible in that respect. The only difficulty that could arise, would be in case of some considerable emergency or some very serious question cropping up which would necessitate your presence. But as you will very easily understand, such contingencies occur rarely enough in a state like Baroda and are not really anticipated. The details need not be discussed just now, as they will be satisfactorily arranged by personal conversation when you come.

His Highness would like you to join as soon as possible and if you can do so within the month, he will be glad, but he does not wish to put you to inconvenience. If therefore you require a full month for your preparations, you will of course take it. Please let me know, as soon as you find it possible and convenient, when you propose to join so as to give me a little notice beforehand.

Yours sincerely
Aravind. A. Ghose

To the Principal, Baroda College

L. V. Palace.
18–9–04.

My dear Mr Clarke,

Under His Highness' directions I have written to the Chief Engineer not to build the rooms for the students' quarters as yet. His Highness wants to make some important alterations in the plans.

His Highness would like you, in consultation with Mr Krumbiegel if necessary, to draw up a plan showing the relative positions in which all the buildings it may be necessary to erect in future, will stand, Students' Quarters, Professors' houses etc. This will make it convenient for future building so that buildings may be put up at any time when necessary or desired without difficulty or inconvenience.

Though we may not build Professors' houses just now, yet sooner or later His Highness would like to build some at least; so will you please take the Professors into consultation, and after fixing on all the requirements and conveniences necessary, make out a model plan which should be accompanied with elevations, estimates and a computation of the rent which may be charged, all complete, so that whenever it is thought desirable to build, orders can at once be given without going each time into details and estimates.

Yours sincerely
Aravind. A. Ghose.

A. B. Clarke Esq.
Principal
Baroda College.

To the Dewan, on Rejoining the College

Huzur Kamdar's Office
28th September 1904.

My dear Dewan Saheb,

I have been directed by H.H. the Maharaja Saheb to join the College immediately if that were possible so that there might be no delay in my beginning to draw the increment in my salary. In accordance with these instructions I have reported myself to Mr. Clarke today, having forwarded the original order of my appointment in due course. I am also instructed, as there will be vacation for three months, to continue to help Mr. Karandikar in the work of Huzur Kamdar as before.

These directions will, I presume, emend the last paragraph of the Huzur Order of the 26th September 1904 on the tippan for Mr. Clarke's confirmation as Principal, since in the original order it is directed that the increment shall begin from the day I join the College.

Yours sincerely
Aravind. A. Ghose.
Huzur Kamdar

To the Maharaja

29 March 1905

May it please Your Highness,

Last December Your Highness was graciously pleased to grant my request that my brother might be entertained in Your Highness' service and directed me to remind Your Highness of the matter subsequently.

Owing to my brother's ill-health during the last two months, I have not thought it right to do so as yet, but now that Your Highness is leaving for Europe, I am obliged to take advantage of Your Highness' kind permission, hoping that Your Highness will consent to his joining whatever work may be assigned to him in June after he has recovered his health by a change.

My brother has read up to the F. A. of the Calcutta University. He had to give up the University course for certain family reasons, but since then he has studied privately with my elder brother and myself and can both speak and write English well and fluently; he has indeed some little literary ability in this direction. He can speak Hindustani fluently and has learned by this time to read and understand Marathi to some extent.

Your Highness asked me in December in what Department I should like him to be put. A work [?in which][2] his knowledge of English would be immediately useful would perhaps be most suitable to him at the beginning. But this is a matter which I would prefer to leave entirely in Your Highness' hands. Your Highness is aware of the circumstances which oblige me to request this kindness at Your Highness' hands and it will be a great obligation to me if Your Highness will graciously keep them in mind when deciding this point.

Your Highness was once gracious enough to offer under similar circumstances to make an appointment of Rs 60. A start of the same kind [of] Rs 50 or 60 would be enough to induce my brother to settle here in preference to Bengal. If Your Highness will give him this start, it will be only adding one more act of grace to the uniform kindness and indulgence which Your Highness has shown to me ever since I came to Baroda.

---

[2] *MS damaged; conjectural reconstruction. — Ed.*

I remain
Your Highness' loyal servant
Aravind. A. Ghose

A Letter of Recommendation

I have visited the Vividha Kala Mandir and seen specimens of the work as well as some groups taken for College classes. The work is admirably conceived and executed; the grouping etc is done with great taste and a keen eye for effect, and the details of the work brought out with both firmness and delicacy, being especially noticeable indeed for what should be always present in Indian work, but is too often deficient nowadays, minute care and finish. It is gratifying to note that the photographers are former students of the Baroda Kalabhavan and that this institution is producing silently and unobtrusively this among other admirable results.

Aravind. A. Ghose
28 Feb. 1906 Vice Principal, Baroda College

Letters and Telegrams to Political and Professional Associates

1906–1926

To Bipin Chandra Pal

Wednesday.

Dear Bepin Babu,

Please let us know by bearer when and where we can meet yourself, Rajat and Kumar Babu today.

Subodh Babu is going away today, and there are certain conditions attached by Dickinson to the arrangement about the type which it may be difficult to get him to agree to. Yet it must be done today if it is to be done at all. Can you not come by 3 o'clock and help us to persuade Subodh Babu to give signature before he goes.

Yours sincerely.
Aurobindo Ghose

A Letter of Acknowledgement

Deoghur,
9th March 1907.

Madam,

I beg to acknowledge, with many thanks, the receipt of Rs.10 forwarded to me by Mr. H. C. Das on your behalf towards the National University Fund.

Yours faithfully,
Aurobindo Ghose, Principal
Bengal National College.

To Hemendra Prasad Ghose

[19 April 1907]

Dear Hemendra Babu,

Will you kindly meet me and let us talk over the matter a little? It is a great pity that the work should be spoiled by friction and misunderstanding, and I think if we can talk things over, it ought not to be impossible to have an understanding by which they can be avoided.

Yours sincerely
Aurobindo Ghose

To Aswinicoomar Banerji

[1]

12 Wellington Square
June 26.1907.

Dear Aswini Babu,

I quite forgot about it. I am afraid I cannot just now think of any such book as you want. There is Marriot's Makers of Italy but that is not a biography nor anything like comprehensive. Bent's Life of Garibaldi is crammed full of facts and very tedious reading. I don't think there is any good life of Mazzini in English — only the translation of his autobiography. However, I will look up the subject and, if I find anything, will let you know.

Yours sincerely
Aurobindo Ghose.

[2]

[July – August 1907]

My dear Banerji,

Yes, I am still at large, though I hear warrants are out against myself, Subodh & three others. The contribution is not with us, it is in other hands at present, but I will get hold of it & return it, if I am not previously arrested.

Yours sincerely
Aurobindo Ghose.

To Dr. S. K. Mullick

BENGAL NATIONAL COLLEGE AND SCHOOL
166, Bowbazar Street
Calcutta, the 8th Feb. [1908][1]

Dear Dr Mullick,

Your students have asked me to visit the National Medical College. They want to come for me here at 3.30. Will it inconvenience you if the thing is delayed for a while as I have very important work at the Bande Mataram Office from 3 pm? They might come for me there at 4.30 —

Yours sincerely
Aurobindo Ghose

[*Dr. Mullick's reply:*]

Let us split the difference with 4 pm
Excuse haste am lecturing
SKM

Telegrams about a Planned Political Reception

[1]

[*Telegrams from Aravinda Ghose and Chittaranjan Das, Harrison Road, Calcutta, to Kaminikumar Chanda, Silchar, and from Aravinda Ghose and Rabindranath Tagore, Harrison Road, Calcutta, to Muktear Library, Netrakara:*]

JOIN PALS RELEASE DEMONSTRATION NINTH HELP PURSE WIRE AMOUNT.

---

[1] *MS* 1907. *See Note on the Texts, page 576.* — *Ed.*

[2]

[*Telegrams from Aurobindo, Harrison Road, Calcutta, to Satyendra Basu, Midnapur, and Jamini Sen, Chittagong:*]

CELEBRATE PAL DEMONSTRATION NINTH. HELP PURSE. WIRE AMOUNT.

[3]

[*Telegrams from Ghose, Harrison Road, Calcutta to Sitanath Adhikari, Pabna; Ananda Sen, Jalpaiguri; Jatindra Sen care Citizen, Allahabad; Lajpat Rai, Lahore; Bharati, 15 Broadway, Madras; Dr Moonje, Nagpur:*]

CELEBRATE PAL DEMONSTRATION NINTH. HELP PURSE. WIRE AMOUNT.

[4]

[*Telegrams from Ghose, Harrison Road, Calcutta, to Chidambaram Pillai, Tuticorin and Ramaswami Iyer, Tanjore:*]

CELEBRATE DEMONSTRATION NINTH. HELP PURSE. WIRE AMOUNT.

[5]

[*Telegram from Ghose, Harrison Road, Calcutta, to Monoranjan Guha, Giridih:*]

CELEBRATE DEMONSTRATION NINTH. HELP PURSE PERSONALLY ALSO FRIENDS. WIRE AMOUNT.

[6]

[*Telegram from Ghose, Harrison Road, Calcutta, to G. S. Khaparde, Amraoti:*]

JOIN DEMONSTRATION NINTH THROUGHOUT BERAR. HELP PURSE. WIRE AMOUNT.

[7]

[*Telegram from Ghose, Calcutta, to Balgangadhar Tilak, Poona:*]

PLEASE JOIN DEMONSTRATION NINTH THROUGHOUT MAHARASHTRA. HELP PURSE. WIRE AMOUNT.

6 March 1908

Extract from a Letter to Parthasarathi Aiyangar

Be very careful to follow my instructions in avoiding the old kind of politics. Spirituality is India's only politics, the fulfilment of the Sanatan Dharma its only Swaraj. I have no doubt we shall have to go through our Parliamentary period in order to get rid of the notion of Western democracy by seeing in practice how helpless it is to make nations blessed. India is passing really through the first stages of a sort of national Yoga. It was mastered in the inception by the inrush of divine force which came in 1905 and aroused it from its state of complete tamasic ajnanam. But, as happens also with individuals, all that was evil, all the wrong sanskaras and wrong emotions and mental and moral habits rose with it and misused the divine force. Hence all that orgy of political oratory, democratic fervour, meetings, processions, passive resistance, all ending in bombs, revolvers and Coercion laws. It was a period of asuddha rajasic activity and had to be followed by the inevitable period of tamasic reaction from disappointed rajas. God has struck it all down, — Moderatism, the bastard child of English Liberalism; Nationalism, the mixed progeny of Europe and Asia; Terrorism, the abortive offspring of Bakunin and Mazzini. The latter still lives, but it is being slowly ground to pieces. At present, it is our only enemy, for I do not regard the British coercion as an enemy, but as a helper. If it can only rid us of this wild pamphleteering, these theatrical assassinations, these frenzied appeals to national hatred with their watchword of Feringhi-ko-maro, these childish conspiracies, these idiotic schemes for facing a modern army with half a dozen guns and some hundred lathis, — the opium visions of rajogun run mad, then I say, “More power to its elbow.” For it is only when this foolishness is done with that truth will have a chance, the sattwic mind in India emerge and a really strong spiritual movement begin as a prelude to India’s regeneration. No doubt, there will be plenty of trouble and error still to face, but we shall have a chance of putting our feet on the right path. In all I believe God to be guiding us, giving the necessary experiences, preparing the necessary conditions.

13 July 1911

Note on a Forged Document

1 The card purports to issue from the Mymensingh Sadhana Samaj. The word is spelt Mâymensingh with a long a. Every Bengali in Bengal knows that it is Moymensingh with a short a and would at once be able to point out the mistake.

2. The word Swaraj wellknown to everyone in Bengal, is spelt Saraj and that this is no casual slip of the pen is shown by its faithful repetition, the only other time that “Saraj” appears in the card (on the flag to the left).

3. “Bande Mataram” is twice spelt Bade Mataram. This is interesting because it shows that the card was written by a man unaccustomed to the Bengali character and more habituated to the Devanagari (Sanscrit) alphabet. In the Devanagari the *n* is usually represented by a nasalising dot over the previous letter which might easily be dropped by an unpractised writer. In Bengali the *nd* is a conjunct letter and even the most ignorant Bengali writer would be incapable of dropping the n. If by an inconceivable blunder he dropped [it], the most casual look at the word would show him what was wrong; but here the mistake is twice consistently repeated and not corrected even in a card the details of which have been so carefully and boldly executed.

4. The writer drops the characteristic dots which differentiate b from r (ব, র) and y from impure j in Bengali. Thus he writes Pujar as Pujab and Viceroy as Viceroj. Only a foreigner writing the Bengali character, would commit an error of this kind so easily and repeatedly or would fail to correct it at the first glance.

5. The peculiar form of the l in Balidan shows again a man accustomed to write the Devanagari and not accustomed to write the Bengali l.

6. The formation of g in Durga Puja is a sheer impossibility to a Bengali eye or a Bengali hand. Other letters, m, p, etc give minor evidence in the same direction.

7. The mistakes are of such a nature that they could readily be made by a man copying his Bengali letters from the book forms and not accustomed to the written character. The convincing proof is the j in Samaj and Puja which is drawn rather than written by some foreigner acquainted with the printed j, but not acquainted with the very different form given to j in handwriting ( ).

8. Note beside that these few Bengali words have been written with great labour; but while some of the letters are very finely formed, almost as if they had been drawn, others are very rudely done — a difference so great that we must suppose either two writers of each word or else a man copying unfamiliar forms sometimes carefully, sometimes with deficient care and skill.

No tribunal in Bengal, presided over by a Bengali judge, would admit for a moment this clumsy forgery.

April 1912

To Anandrao

[June 1912]

Dear Anandrao,

My Bengal correspondent writes to me that you have sent me the following message, "The Baroda friend has left service and therefore there is difficulty in finding money. He asks, now you have become a Sannyasin, on what ground he can collect money. Still, if you let him know clearly your future, the time it will take to effect your siddhi and the amount of money you need, he will try to collect from Rs 600 to 1000."

I cannot understand why on earth people should make up their minds that I have become a Sannyasin! I have even made it clear enough in the public Press that I have not taken Sannyasa but am practising Yoga as a householder, not even a Brahmacharin. The Yoga I am practising has not the ghost of a connection with Sannyasa. It is a Yoga meant for life & life only. Its object is perfection of the moral condition & mental & physical being along with the possession of certain powers — the truth of which I have been establishing by continuous practical experiment, — with the object of carrying out a certain mission in life which God has given me. Therefore there is or ought to be no difficulty on that score. If I were a Sannyasin, there would indeed be no money difficulty to solve.

The question about the siddhi is a little difficult to answer precisely. There are four parts of the siddhi, roughly, moral, mental, physical & *practical*. Starting from December 1908 the moral has taken me three years and a half and may now be considered complete. The mental has taken two years of regular sadhana and for the present purpose may be considered complete; the physical is backward and nearing completion only in the immunity from disease — which I am now attempting successfully to perfect & test by exposure to abnormal conditions. The physical also does not matter so much for practical purposes, as the moral, mental and a certain number of practical siddhis are sufficient. It is these practical siddhis that alone cause delay. I have had first to prove to myself their existence and utility, secondly to develop them in myself so as to be working forces, thirdly to make them actually effective for life & impart them to others. The development will, I think, be complete in another two months, but the application to life & the formation of my helpers will take some time — for the reason that I shall then have a greater force of opposition to surmount than in the purely educative exercises I have hitherto practised. The full application to life will, I think, take three years more, but it is only for a year of that time (if so long) that I expect to need outside assistance. I believe that I may have to stay in French India for another year. I presume that is what the question about my future means. But on this point also I cannot speak with certainty. If, however, it refers to my future work, that is a big question &

does not yet admit of a full answer. I may say briefly that I have been given a religious & philosophical mission, to re-explain the Veda & Vedanta (Upanishads) in the ancient sense which I have recovered by actual experience in Yoga and to popularise the new system of Yoga (new in arrangement & object) which has been revealed to me & which, as I progress, I am imparting to the young men staying with me & to others in Pondicherry; I have also to spread certain ideas about God & life by literary work, speech & practice, to try & bring about certain social changes &, finally, to do a certain work for my country, in particular, as soon as the means are put in my hands. All this to be done by God's help only & not to be begun till things & myself are ready.

The amount of money I shall need for the year in question, are Rs 300 to clear up the liabilities I have contracted during the last nine or ten months (in which I have had only fortuitous help) and some Rs 1200 (or 1400, reckoning up to August 1913) to maintain myself & those I am training. I had hoped to get the money from a certain gentleman who had promised me Rs 2000 a year for the purpose & given it for the first year from October 1910 to October 1911. But there are great difficulties in the way & I can no longer reckon surely on this support which would have made it unnecessary for me to tax my friends. Please ask my friend if, with this explanation, he can manage the money to the amount suggested. If I get other help from this side, I shall let him know so that the [?burden can][2] be lightened.

At present I am at the height of my difficulties, in debt, with no money for the morrow, besieged in Pondicherry & all who could help are in temporary or permanent difficulties or else absent & beyond communication. I take it, from my past experiences as a sign that I am nearing the end of the period of trial. I would ask you if you can do no more, at least to send me some help to tide over the next month or two. After that period, for certain reasons, it will be easier to create means, if they are not created for me.

AG.

---

[2] *MS damaged; conjectural reconstruction. — Ed.*

To Motilal Roy

[1]

3 July 1912

Dear M.

Your money (by letter & wire) & clothes reached safely. The French Post Office here has got into the habit (not yet explained) of not delivering your letters till Friday; that was the reason why we wired to you thinking you had not sent the money that week. I do not know whether this means anything — formerly we used to get your letters on Tuesday, afterwards it came to Wednesday, then Thursday & finally Friday. It may be a natural evolution of French Republicanism. Or it may be something else. I see no signs of the seals having been tampered with, but that is not an absolutely sure indication of security. The postman may be paid by the police. Personally, however, I am inclined to believe in the Republican administration theory — the Republic always likes to have time on its hands. Still, if you like, you can send *important* communications to any other address here you may know of, for the present (of course, by French post & a Madrasi address). All others should come by the old address — you may be sure, I think, no letter will be actually intercepted, on this side. By the way, please let us know whether Mr. Banomali Pal received a letter by Fr. post from Achari enclosing another to Partha Sarathi.

I have not written all this time because I was not allowed to put pen to paper for some time — that is all. I send enclosed a letter to our Marathi friend. If he can give you anything for me, please send it without the least delay. If not, I must ask you to procure for me by will power or any other power in heaven or on earth Rs 50 at least as a loan. If you cannot get it elsewhere, why not apply to Barid Babu? Also, if Nagen is in Calcutta, ask him whether the Noakhali gentleman can let me have anything. I was told he had Rs 300 put aside for me if I wanted it; but I did not wish to apply to him except in case of necessity. The situation just now is that we have Rs $1\frac{1}{2}$ or so in hand. Srinivasa is also without money. As to Bharati, living on nothing a month means an uncertain quantity, the only other man in P^y whom I could at present ask for help absent *sine die* and my messenger to the South not returned. The last time he came he brought a promise of Rs 1000 in a month and some permanent provision afterwards, but the promise like certain predecessors has not yet been fulfilled & we sent him for cash. But though he should have been here three days ago, he has not returned, & even when he returns, I am not quite sure about the cash & still less sure about the sufficiency of the amount. No doubt, God will provide, but He has contracted a bad habit of waiting till the last moment. I only hope He does not wish us to learn how to live on a minus quantity, like Bharati.

Other difficulties are disappearing. The case brought against the Swadeshis (no one in this household was included in it although we had a very charmingly polite visit from the Parquet & Juge d'Instruction) has collapsed into the nether regions & the complainant & his son have fled from P^y & become, like ourselves, "political refugees" in Cuddalore. I hear he has been sentenced by default to five years imprisonment on false accusation, but I don't know yet whether the report is true. The police were to have left at the end of [the month][3] but a young lunatic (one of Bharati's old disciples in patriotism & atheism) got involved in a sedition-search (for the Indian Sociologist of all rubbish in the world!) and came running here in the nick of time for the Police to claim another two months' holiday in Pondicherry. However, I think their fangs have been drawn. I may possibly send you the facts of the case for publication in the Nayak or any other paper, but I am not yet certain.

I shall write to you about sadhana etc. another time.

Kali

---

[3] *MS* Pondicherry

[2]

[August 1912 or after]

Dear M

P.S. has sent to his brother an address for sending Yogini Chakras. He says it is approved by you. Now we want to know, not only whether they are religious people there — he says you have assured him of that — but whether there is any likelihood of [their][4] being taken by the P.O. authorities for anything else. There are religious people who are openly mixed up with politics. We do not think it wise to send our purely religious Tantric instruments to any such.[5] Kindly answer by return post. If the answer is satisfactory & we get the money promised, we will send Chakras.

15th August is usually a turning point or a notable day for me personally either in sadhana or life — indirectly only for others. This time it has been very important for me. My subjective sadhana may be said to have received its final seal and something like its consummation by a prolonged realisation & dwelling in Parabrahman for many hours. Since then, egoism is dead for all in me except the Annamaya Atma, — the physical self which awaits one farther realisation before it is entirely liberated from occasional visitings or external touches of the old separated existence.

My future sadhan is for life, practical knowledge & shakti, — not the essential knowledge or shakti in itself which I have got already — but knowledge & shakti established in the same physical self & directed to my work in life. I am now getting a clearer idea of that work & I may as well impart something of that idea to you; since you look to me as the centre, you should know what is likely to radiate out of that centre.

1. To reexplain the Sanatana Dharma to the human intellect

---

[4] *MS* there

[5] *In these letters to Motilal, terms such as "tantric instruments" and "tantric kriyas" are code-words for revolutionary materials and activities. The "Yogini Chakras" mentioned above were, according to an associate of Motilal's, revolvers that Motilal wanted Sri Aurobindo to send to Chandernagore via the French post. — Ed.*

in all its parts, from a new standpoint. This work is already beginning, & three parts of it are being clearly worked out. Sri Krishna has shown me the true meaning of the Vedas, not only so but he has shown me a new Science of Philology showing the process & origins of human speech so that a new Nirukta can be formed & the new interpretation of the Veda based upon it. He has also shown me the meaning of all in the Upanishads that is not understood either by Indians or Europeans. I have therefore to reexplain the whole Vedanta & Veda in such a way that it will be seen how all religion arises out of it & is one everywhere. In this way it will be proved that India is the centre of the religious life of the world & its destined saviour through the Sanatana Dharma.

2. On the basis of Vedic knowledge to establish a Yogic sadhana which will not only liberate the soul, but prepare a perfect humanity & help in the restoration of the Satyayuga. That work has to begin now but will not be complete till the end of the Kali.

3. India being the centre, to work for her restoration to her proper place in the world; but this restoration must be effected as a part of the above work and by means of Yoga applied to human means & instruments, not otherwise.

4. A perfect humanity being intended society will have to be remodelled so as to be fit to contain that perfection.

You must remember that I have not given you the whole Yogic sadhana. What I have given you is only the beginning. You have to get rid of ahankara & desire & surrender yourself to God, in order that the rest may come. You speak of printing Yoga & its Objects. But remember that what I have sent you is only the first part which gives the path, not the objects or the circumstances. If you print it, print it as the first of a series, with the subtitle, the Path. I am now busy with an explanation of the Isha Upanishad in twelve chapters; I am at the eleventh now and will finish in a few days. Afterwards I shall begin the second part of the series & send it to you when finished.

I have also begun, but on a very small scale the second part of my work which will consist in making men for the new age by imparting whatever siddhi I get to those who are chosen. From this point of view our little colony here is a sort of seed plot & a laboratory. The things I work out in it, are then extended outside. Here the work is progressing at last on definite lines and with a certain steadiness, not very rapid; but still definite results are forming. I should be glad to have from you clearer knowledge of the results you speak of over there; for my drishti is not yet sufficiently free from obstruction for me to know all that I need to know at this stage.

What you say about the Ramakrishna Mission is, I dare say, true to a certain extent. Do not oppose that movement or enter into any conflict with it; whatever has to be done, I shall do spiritually, for God in these matters especially uses the spiritual means & the material are only very subordinate. Of course, you can get into that stream, as you suggest, and deflect as much as you can into a more powerful channel, but not so as to seem to be conflicting with it. Use spiritual means chiefly, will & vyapti. They are more powerful than speech & discussion. Remember also that we derive from Ramakrishna. For myself it was Ramakrishna who personally came & first turned me to this Yoga. Vivekananda in the Alipore jail gave me the foundations of that knowledge which is the basis of our sadhana. The error of the Mission is to keep too much to the forms of Ramakrishna & Vivekananda & not keep themselves open for new outpourings of their spirit, — the error of all "Churches" and organised religious bodies. I do not think they will escape from it, so long as their "Holy Mother" is with them. She represents now the Shakti of Ramakrishna so far as it was manifested in his life. When I say do not enter into conflict with them, I really mean "do not enter conflict with her." Let her fulfil her mission, keeping always ours intact and ever-increasing.

As to other work (Tantric), I am not yet in possession of knowledge. The Shakti is only preparing to pour herself out there, but I don't know what course she will take. You must remember I never plan or fix anything for myself. She must choose her own paddhati or rather follow the line Krishna fixes for her.

I am glad you have arranged something about money. It is indifferent to me whether you get it from others or provide it yourselves, so long as my energies which are badly needed for sadhan & for the heavy work laid on me, are not diverted at present into this lower effort in which they would be sorely wasted. You will be relieved of the burden as soon as this physical resistance is overcome, but I do not know yet how soon or late that will be. Reward, of course, those who give to God, shall have; but what reward He will determine. Remember the importance of keeping up this centre, for all my future work depends on what I work out here.

I shall write about the Sikh pamphlet, which is an excellent thing with one or two blemishes; but I could not understand who wrote the accompanying letter or what gentleman he refers to.

The letter you sent me last time from our man in Chandannagar is practically answered here. Biren may have made some mistake about my "shoes". It was intended that they should be got from Amiyas. The glass case theory is all right, — only the exhibits have got to be maintained.

Kali

---

[3]

[c. January 1913]

Dear M.

We have received from you in December Rs 60, & Rs 20, and in this month Rs 10. According to N's account, Rs 10 belongs to November account, Rs 50 to December; Rs 20 we suppose to have been sent in advance on the January account. If so, we still expect from you Rs 20, this month. I should be glad to know if there is any prospect of your being able to increase the amount now or shortly. Up till now we have somehow or other managed to fill in the deficit of Rs 35 monthly; but, now that all our regular sources here are stopped, we have to look to mere luck for going on. Of course if we were bhaktas of the old type this would be the regular course, but as our sadhan stands upon karmayoga with jnana & bhakti, this inactive nirbhara can only continue so long as it is enjoined on us as a temporary movement of the sadhana. It cannot be permanent. I think there will have to be a change before long, but I cannot see clearly whether the regular & sufficient arrangement which must be instituted some time, is to come from you or from an unexpected quarter or whether I have myself to move in the matter. It is a question of providing some Rs 450 a year in addition to what you send, — unless, of course, God provides us with some new source for the *sharírayátrá* as He did two years ago.

All these matters, as well as the pursuance of my work to which you allude in your last (commercial) letter, [depend][6] on the success of the struggle which is the crowning movement of my sadhana — viz the attempt to apply knowledge & power to the events and happenings of the world without the necessary instrumentality of physical action. What I am attempting is to establish the normal working of the siddhis in life ie the perception of thoughts, feelings & happenings of other beings & in other places throughout the world without any use of information by speech or any other data. 2d, the communication of the ideas & feelings I select to others (individuals, groups, nations,) by mere transmission of will-power; 3d, the silent compulsion on them to act according to these communicated ideas & feelings; 4th, the determining of events, actions & results of action throughout the world by pure silent will power. When I wrote to you last, I had begun the general application of these powers which God has been developing in me for the last two or three years, but, as I told you, I was getting badly beaten. This is no longer the case, for in the 1st, 2d & even in 3rd I am now largely successful, although the action of these powers is not yet perfectly organized. It is only in the 4th that I feel a serious resistance. I can produce single results with perfect accuracy, I can produce general results with difficulty & after a more or less prolonged struggle, but I can neither be sure of producing the final decisive result I am aiming at nor of securing that orderly arrangement of events which prevents the results from being isolated & only partially effective. In some directions I seem to succeed, in others partly to fail & partly to succeed, while in some fields, eg, this matter of financial equipment both for my personal life & for my work I have hitherto entirely failed. When I shall succeed even partially in that, then I shall know that my hour of success is at hand & that I have got rid of the past karma in myself & others, which stands in our way & helps the forces of Kaliyuga to baffle our efforts.

---

[6] *MS* depends

About Tantric yoga; your experiment in the smashâna was a daring one, — but it seems to have been efficiently & skilfully carried out, & the success is highly gratifying.[7] In these kriyas there are three considerations to be held in view, 1st, the object of the kriya. Of course there is the general object of mukti-bhukti which Tantriks in all ages have pursued, but to bring it about certain subjective results & conditions are necessary in ourselves & our surroundings & each separate kriya should be so managed as to bring about an important result of the kind. Big kriyas or numerous kriyas are not always necessary; the main thing is that they should be faultlessly effective like your last kriya or the small one with which you opened your practices. That is the second consideration viz the success of the kriya itself & that depends on the selection & proper use of the right mantra & tantra, — mantra, the mental part, & tantra, the practical part. These must be arranged with the greatest scrupulousness. All rashness, pride, ostentation etc, the rajasic defects, — also, all negligence, omission, slipshod ritual, — the tamasic defects, must be avoided. Success must not elate your minds, nor failure discourage. 3$^{\text{dly}}$, angarakshana is as important as siddhi. There are many Tantriks in this Kaliyuga who are eager about siddhi, careless in angarakshana. They get some siddhi, but become the prey of the devils & bhutas they raise. Now what is the use of a particular siddhi, if the sadhakas are destroyed? The general & real object, — mukti & bhukti, — remains unfulfilled. Angarakshana is managed, first, by the selection & arrangement of the right siddhi-mantra & kriya, secondly, by the presence behind the sadhaka of one who repeats what is called an angarakshaka mantra destructive of the pretas & Rakshasas or prohibitive of their attacks. The last function I have taken on myself; it is your business so to arrange the kriya that the bhutas get no chance for প্রবেশ or for the seizure & destruction of the sadhaka. I have found that my mantra has been more & more successful in protection, but it is not yet strong enough to prevent all উপদ্রব of a dangerous character. It will take some more আবৃত্তি to increase its power. It is for this reason that I do not yet tell you to go on swiftly in your course of practices. Still there is no harm in quickening the pace in comparison with the past. Remember always the supreme necessity of mauna in Tantric practices. In Vedantic & Puranic exercises expansion is not dangerous, but the goddess of the Tantra does not look with a favourable eye on those who from pride, ostentation or looseness blab about the mantra or the kriya. In Tantric sadhana secrecy is necessary for its own sake. Those who reveal mantra or kriya to the unfit, suffer almost inevitably; even those who reveal them unnecessarily to the fit, impair somewhat the force of their Tantric action.

---

[7] *This is apparently a reference to the attempt to assassinate the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, in Delhi on 23 December 1912. — Ed.*

Kali

P.S. Please send the rest of this month's money at once if you have not already sent it, & next month's as early as you can.

[4]

[February 1913]

Dear M

I have received Rs 60 by wire & Rs 20 by letter. It was a great relief to us that you were able to send Rs 80 this time & Rs 85 for March; owing to the cutting off of all other means of supply, we were getting into a very difficult position. I welcome it as a sign of some preliminary effectiveness, through you, in this direction, in which, hitherto, everything has gone against us; also, as one proof of several, that the quality of your power

& your work is greatly improving in effectiveness & sureness. I need not refer to the other proofs; you will know what I mean. But just now, I find every forward step to be made is violently combated & obstinately obstructed. Our progress is like the advance of a modern regiment under fire in which we have to steal a few yards at a run & then lie down under covert & let the storm of bullets sweep by. I neither hope for nor see yet any prospect of a more successful rapidity.

I have been lying down under covert ever since the middle of February, after a very brilliant advance in January & the early part of February. I keep the positions gained, but can make as yet no sure progress farther. There is only a slow preparation for farther progress. The real difficulty is to bring force, sureness & rapidity into the application of power & knowledge to life, — especially sureness, — for it is possible to bring force & rapidity, but if not attended by unfailing sureness of working, they may lead to great errors in knowledge & great stumbles & disasters in action which counteract the successes. On the other hand, if sureness has to be gained only by not stepping except where everything is sure (which is the first stage of action & knowledge necessary to get rid of rajasic rashness) progress is likely to be slow. I am trying to solve the dilemma.

I have not kept your last letter & I only remember that you asked me to write something about your sadhan. I cannot just now, but I shall try to do it in my next, as I expect by then to be clear of some of my present difficulties.

There is the pressing cry for clothes in this quarter, as these articles seem to be with us to remind us now constantly of the paucity of matter. I have received Bepin Pal's Soul of India. Can you add to it by getting from Hiranyagarbha Sister Nivedita's My Master as I saw him. I am also in need, as I wrote to you once before, of R. C. Dutt's Bengali translation of the Vedas. Neither of these books is urgently wanted but please [ ][8] keep them in mind & send them when you can.

Kali

---

[8] *MS* them

[5]

[June–July 1913]

Dear M.

I subjoin certain explanations about the matter of the Tantric books.[9] I put them in cipher because there are certain things, as you can understand, not *comme il faut* according to the ideas of modern social decorum which ought not to fall under unfit eyes. It appears that you did not understand my last letter. However, from henceforth please leave this matter entirely in my hands. You will see from the explanations given how highly undesirable is the kind of correspondence you have been carrying on hitherto in another quarter. I have taken Rs 50 from S, but this sum or part of it (at least Rs 30) ought to be replaced for expenses attached to that particular transaction. Meanwhile I await Rs 35 for June & all the July money. I delay other matters in consideration of the urgency of the accompanying note.

Kali

PS. I received information of your Tantric kriyas. It is clear that you are far from perfect yet. All the more reason why you should not be in a hurry to progress physically. Get rid of the remnants of sattwic ahankara and rajoguna, for that which we are within, our karmas & kriyas will be without. Kali demands a pure adhara for her works, & if you try to hurry her by rajasic impatience, you will delay the success instead of hastening it. I will write to you fully about it later.

[6]

[June–July 1913]

Dear M.

Your letter, money etc have reached me without delay or mishap. Please make it a rule, in future, not to be anxious or troubled when you get no answer; when I do not reply, it is not because I have not received your letters, but because silence was necessary, for my siddhi, for yours or for the work that has to be done. At such times, keep calm, repel any suggestions of perplexity or anxiety and do not allow any disturbing mental waves to interfere between. A still heart, a clear mind and untroubled nerves are the very first necessity for the perfection of our Yoga.

---

[9] *These "explanations", written on a separate sheet of paper, have not survived. — Ed.*

I enclose a letter for C. R. Das. Please transmit it & get a reply written or verbal. You will see, I did not authorise Bhaga to ask him for money; at the same time, in doing so, he obeyed an unspoken general *vyapti* from myself which his mind seems to have got hold of & mixed up with its own desires & anxieties. I am drawing now towards the close of my internal Yogic tapasya and the time is not very distant when I shall have to use its results for the work God has sent me to do in the world. For that work I shall need large sums of money. So long as I was only perfecting myself and sending out Shakti to others, all I needed was enough for the maintenance of myself & those who are with me. This charge I gave to you and the charge is not withdrawn; but, as you know, it covers only the bare physical necessities of our life in Pondicherry. More than that, you are not likely to be able to afford; and certainly you could not provide me with the sums I shall need even in the earlier part of my work. To limit myself to the Rs 85 a month you can send me, would be to deny myself the material means for doing what I have to do and to accept stagnation and quiescence. It is true I am not beginning that work immediately, but, before it begins, I have to bend circumstances to my will in this very particular so that the obstacle of paucity of means which has been my chief stumbling block for the beginning may be got rid of once for all. My will has to become effective on this point above all & the impediments both subjective and objective to its mastery have to be eliminated. Therefore I have sent out the general vyapti I spoke of. Biren's action was one of the first responses, but, as it was [an] impure response, it has created more golmal than effect. As to confining the appeal for pecuniary assistance to those who are entirely of one way of thinking with ourselves, it was a good rule for you to observe; but it cannot bind me when I begin my larger movement. From whatever quarter money or help comes to me, it comes from God.

With regard to the Tantric books, the Psalmodist was here, & wrote to you and went away, expecting to return in a fortnight; but several fortnights have passed without his return. He has written to us to say he has received money from you and we have written to him to come here. He is expected daily, but he does not arrive. He will, no doubt, be a good karmavira in time; but at present he is too rajasic, with intervals of tamas, has too much faith in European religions & the arms of the flesh & too little faith in Yoga & the arms of the spirit. He went northward on his own initiative; I could have told him his efforts there would be fruitless, but it is always well for a man to get experience for himself, when he will not take the benefit of superior experience. Your scheme about the books is impracticable under present conditions of which you are ignorant. When he comes, we will consult together & see if any blameless way can be found. But there is a time for all things & the time for free publication of Tantric works has not arrived. Still, your particular order may be met. Your letter to him, if addressed to Pd, did not reach us; whether he got it in Madras or not, I do not know.

Your working, remember, is not yet definitive working; it is still in the nature of experiment, with some minor results. When your sadhan of our tantric kriya has become more perfect and the necessary spiritual force can be sent from here, — then, real Tantra can begin. Meanwhile, don't be over-eager; let nothing disconcert, discourage or perplex you. Eagerness, anxiety & discouragement are all different faces of one defect. I shall write to you on all matters connected with the Tantra after the Psalmodist arrives. Also about the Vedanta. If he does not come soon, I shall write all the same.

Bejoy was to have seen Ramchandra in Calcutta & given you news of us, on his way to Khulna, but from your not sending the June money & from Sudhir's letter, it seems the interview did not take place or else no report was given to you. Please send the money. I am going on somehow, but the money I am doing with, will have to be replaced.

Kali

P.S. The Psalmodist has written, announcing his immediate arrival here, but he has so often disappointed us that I send off this letter, without farther waiting. If he comes, I shall write to you as soon as anything is settled.

[7]

[August 1913]

Dear M.

I enclose a letter to C. R. Das. Please let me know as soon as possible whether he has received the MSS. Also let me have the address of your West Indian friend in that connection which you omitted to give in your last letter, — of course in the usual formula. Please explain how you expect him to befriend you if there is any difficulty in the final stage of the publication. I am too exhausted to write anything at length this time — we shall see afterwards when I have recovered my physical equilibrium. I expect Rs 40 for July & the money for August (current) which will complete our regular account for the present if C. R. Das sends in the rest of his money as proposed. By the way, his agents Grindlay & Co send me Rs 300 with a note saying that I shall get Rs 1000 for the translations. Is the Rs 300 part of the Rs 1000 or separate. I ask this for information only, because you wrote that he intended to give me one year's expenses & Rs 300 extra. I need some extra money badly now for materials for the work I have now seriously entered on in connection with the Veda and the Sanscrit language. In that same connection will you please make a serious effort this time to get hold of Dutt's Bengali translation of the Rigveda & send it to me — or any translation for that matter which gives the European version.

Kali

[8]

[c. 1913]

Dear M.

I send the proofs. Your Rs 50 for Narayan etc.'s travelling expenses reached duly and were by him duly spent. He has promised to repay the sum, but I don't know when he will be able to do so. He will see you, he told me, when he first goes to Calcutta from his place; as his mother was ill, he would not stop to see you on the way. But perhaps other reasons prevented him just then, for I believe he did stop a day or two in Calcutta.

Biren is all right, I believe; he said nothing to anybody about that matter. There were some legitimate doubts in some quarters owing to his unsteady nature & other defects of character. I thought it right to give them as much value for practical purposes as was reasonable; therefore I wrote to you.

I do not write to you this time about the despatch of the books, because that is a long matter & would delay the proofs which have already been too long delayed. But I shall write a separate letter on that subject. I have also to write about your Tantric Yoga, but I think I shall await what else you have to tell me on that subject before doing so.

Kali

P.S. Don't delay long in sending the money.

[9]

[1913]

Dear M.

I write only about 3 points today.

1. Your R. S. Sharma I hold to be a police spy. I have refused to see him because originally when he tried to force his way into my house & win my confidence by his extravagances I received a warning against him from within which has always been repeated. This was confirmed afterwards by two facts, first, that the Madras Police betrayed a very benevolent interest in the

success of his mission, secondly, that he came to Pondicherry afterwards as subeditor of a new Pondicherry paper, the Independent, subsequently defunct and replaced by another the Argus, belonging to the same proprietor who has been openly acting in concert with the British Police against us in Pondicherry. In this paper he wrote a very sneering & depreciatory paragraph about me, (not by name, but by allusion,) in which he vented his spite at his failure. Failing even so to get any footing here, for the Swadeshis were warned against him, he returned to Madras. He seems now to have tried his hand with you at Calcutta & succeeded, probably, beyond his expectations! I wonder when you people will stop trusting the first stranger with a glib tongue who professes Nationalist fervour & devotion. Whether you accept my estimate of him or not, you may be sure that his bhakti for me is humbug — as shown by the above newspaper incident — & you must accept at least the facts I have given you and draw any conclusions that common sense may suggest to you.

2. Do not print Yoga & its Objects unless & until I give you positive directions. It cannot be printed in its present form, & I may decide to complete the work before it is printed. In any case parts of it would have to be omitted or modified.

3. Next, money matters. I could not understand your arithmetic about the Rs 40 and how we should gain by not getting it. The only reason why we wrote constantly for it, was that it was necessary to us in our present financial position, in which we have to provide anxiously for every need and the failure of any expected sum reduces us to difficulties. I had reckoned on the remainder of Madgaokar's money to pay the sum still due for the rent of our last house. Fortunately, the litigation connected with the house has kept the matter hanging; but it may be demanded from us one day & we shall have to pay at once, or face the prospect of being dragged into court & losing our prestige here entirely. In future, let me ask you, never to undertake any payment to us which you are not sure of being able to fulfil, because of the great disorder in our arrangements which results.

Our position here now is at its worst; since all efforts to get some help from here have been temporarily fruitless & we have to depend on your Rs 50 which is insufficient. We have to pay Rs 15 for rent, other expenses come to not less, & the remaining Rs 20 cannot suffice for the food expenses of five people. Even any delay in your money arriving makes our Manager "see darkness". That is why we had to telegraph. We did not know then that your last remittance of Rs 20 had arrived; & our available money was exhausted. Our correspondence agent has turned merchant & walked off to Madras indefinitely; in his absence we had great difficulty in getting hold of your letter & indeed it is only today that it reached our hands. Narayan will give you a new address to which please address all letters in future.

There is no "reason" for my not writing to you. I never nowadays act on reasons, but only as an automaton in the hands of Another; sometimes He lets me know the reasons of my action, sometimes He does not, but I have to act — or refrain from action — all the same, according as He wills.

I shall write nothing about sadhan etc. until I am out of my present struggle to make the Spirit prevail over matter & circumstances, in which for the present I have been getting badly the worst of it. Till then you must expect nothing but mere business letters, — if any.

Kali

[10]

[March 1914]

Dear M.

Recently in the papers there has appeared a case of one Rashbehary Bose against whom a warrant of extradition has been granted by the Chandannagar Administrator *in a political case*. Although ordinarily we do not concern ourselves with political matters, this concerns me & my friends because it is an attack on the security of our position. If this kind of thing is allowed to go unchallenged, then any of us may at any moment be extradited on a trumped up charge by the British police. I must therefore ask you to interest yourself in the matter, even though it interferes with your Yoga. The case is clearly a political one; for the main charges in the Delhi case seem to be (1) a charge of conspiracy on a clause relating to State (ie political) offences; (2) a charge of murder under Sc.-302 (?) read in connection with this State offence section, therefore an assassination with a political intention; (3) a charge under the Explosive Act, which is an extraordinary measure passed in view of certain political conditions. Moreover all these cases are tried together & form part of the same transaction, ie a political conspiracy directed against the existing form of Gov^{t} & having for its object the change or overthrow of that Gov^{t}. Under the Extradition Treaty between France & England, — unless that has been altered by the latest Treaty to which I have not had access, there can be no extradition for (1) a political offence, (2) an offence of a political character or tendency, (3) on a charge which, though preferred as for an ordinary offence, is really an excuse or device for laying hands on a political offender. Rashbehary Bose is reported to be in hiding either in Chandannagar or the Panjab. If anybody moves therefore it can only be a relative or friend on his behalf, — a relative would be much better. What you have to do is to get hold of someone entitled to act for him, consult the text of the latest Extradition Treaty between France & England and, if it is as I have stated, then let it be put in the hands of a lawyer of the French Courts who must move in the matter according to the French procedure about which I know nothing. I presume he would have to move the Gov^{t} in France or, failing there, the Court of Cassation in Paris, but the latter would be an expensive affair. So long as Bose is not handed over to the British (if he is in Chandannagar), the Court of Cassation has, I should suppose the power of cancelling the warrant. I do not know whether it is necessary first to appeal to the Procureur Général in Pondicherry before going to the Higher Court. On these points of procedure Bose's representative will have to consult a French lawyer. In case he is handed over, the Hague decision with regard to Savarkar will come in the way

& make the thing almost hopeless. The French Gov^t might still move on the ground that Bose is a French subject, but it could only succeed by strong diplomatic pressure which the present Fr. Gov^t might be unwilling to employ. In any case it might be worthwhile to get a decree of the Court of Cassation so as to establish the principle. There is always, however, the danger in these political cases, where justice & law are so seldom observed, of an opposite decision making the position worse than before. It would be worthwhile finding out what exactly was done & on what grounds in Charu Chander Ray's case & seeing whether these grounds can be made to apply. If you will give me the exact facts of the warrant, the charges etc, I may be able to get a letter written to France so that Jaurès or others may move in the matter.

As to your Tantric Yoga, the reasons of your failures are so obvious that I am surprised you should attribute it all to the Goddess and not to the unpardonable blunders we have all been making in our Yogic Kriya. Kali of the Tantra is not a goddess who is satisfied with mere tamasic faith & adoration. Perfection in Kriya is indispensable or at least a conscientious and diligent attempt at perfection. This has not been made; on the contrary all the defects that have made Tantra ineffective throughout the Kaliyuga abound in your *anusthana*. All this must be changed; the warning has been given & it will be wise to give heed to it. If not, — well, you know what the Gita says about those who from *ahankara* hear not.

The root of the whole evil is that we have been attempting an extension of Tantric Kriya without any sufficient Vedantic basis. You especially were going on the basis that if a man had faith, enthusiasm, intellectual & emotional sincerity & proffered self-surrender, all that was necessary was there & he could go on straight to difficult Tantric anusthana. This basis is condemned. A much stronger & greater foundation is necessary. It was the basis of the sattwic ahankara; which said to itself, "I am the chosen of Kali, I am her bhakta, I have every claim on her, I can afford to be negligent about other things, she is bound to help & guard me". It is this sattwic ahankara which I have long felt to be the great obstacle in our Yoga; some have it in the sattwa-rajasic form, others in the sattwo-tamasic, but it is there in you all, blinding your vision, limiting your strength, frustrating your progress. And its worst quality is that it is unwilling to admit its own defects, or if it admits one, it takes refuge in another. Open your eyes to this enemy within you and expel it. Without that purification you can have no success. To "do rajasic kriya in a sattwic spirit" is merely to go on in the old way while pretending to oneself that there is a change. Going on in the old way is out of the question. That path can only lead to the pit. I speak strongly because I see clearly; if not yet with absolute vision yet without that misleading false light which marred all my seeing till now & allowed me to be swept in the flood of confused sattwo-rajasic impure Shakti which came with you from Bengal.

My first instruction to you therefore is to pause, stand on the defensive against your spiritual enemies & go on with your Vedantic Yoga. God is arranging things for me in my knowledge, but the process is not yet finished. I shall send you (it will take two or three letters) the lines on which I wish the Vedantic & Tantric lines to be altered & developed; afterwards we shall see when we have recovered from the stress that was upon us, how He intends to work them out in practice.

Please send me the Rs 50 with you, as I am again in the position of having to replace money diverted to current expenses & have very little [if][10] any living money left. Also try & get the rest of the money from Das. If not, you will have to find me an additional 20 for the last month & another 20 for next in addition to the monthly Rs 50 & deduct the sum of Rs 30 from Das' payment when you do get it.

Kali

P.S. I have a sum of Rs 10 to pay monthly for a purpose unconnected with our own expenses & in addition certain additional expenses of my own which I cannot dispense with; for this reason Rs 50 is insufficient. I hope Das will be in a position to send the balance of the money this time.

---

[10] *MS* of

[11]

[April 1914]

Dear M.

I send you today the electoral declaration of M. Paul Richard, one of the candidates at the approaching election for the French Chamber. This election is of some importance to us; for there are two of the candidates who represent our views to a great extent, Laporte & Richard. Richard is not only a personal friend of mine and a brother in the Yoga, but he wishes, like myself, & in his own way works for a general renovation of the world by which the present European civilisation shall be replaced by a spiritual civilisation. In that change the resurrection of the Asiatic races & especially of India is an essential point. He & Madame Richard are rare examples of European Yogins who have not been led away by Theosophical and other aberrations. I have been in material and spiritual correspondence with them for the last four years. Of course, they know nothing of Tantric Yoga. It is only in the Vedantic that we meet. If Richard were to become deputy for French India, that would practically mean the same thing as myself being deputy for French India. Laporte is a Swadeshi with personal ambitions; his success would not mean the same but at any rate it would mean a strong and, I believe, a faithful ally in power in this country and holding a voice in France.

Of course, there is no chance, humanly speaking, of their being elected this time. Laporte is not strong enough to change the situation singlehanded. Richard has come too late; otherwise so great is the disgust of the people with Bluysen & Lemaire, Gaebelé and Pierre that I think we could have managed an electoral revolution. Still, it is necessary, if it can at all be done, to stir things a little at the present moment and form a nucleus of tendency &, if possible, of active result which would be a foundation for the future & enable us at the next election to present one or other of these candidates with a fair chance of success.

I want to know whether it is possible, without your exposing yourself, to have the idea spread in Chandernagore, especially among the younger men, of the desirability of these candidatures & the abandonment of the old parochial & rotten politics of French India, with its following of interested local Europeans & subservience to their petty ambitions in favour of a politics of principles which will support one of our own men or a European like Richard who is practically an Indian in beliefs, in personal culture, in sympathies & aspirations, one of the Nivedita type. If also a certain number of votes can be recorded for Richard in Chandernagore so much the better; for that will mean a practical beginning, a tendency from the sukshma world materialised initially in the sthula. If you think this can be done, please get it done — always taking care not to expose yourself. For your main work is not political, but spiritual. If there can be a Bengali translation of Richard's manifesto, or much better, a statement of the situation & the desirability of his candidature succeeding, — always steering clear of extremism and British Indian politics, — it should be done & distributed. I lay stress on these things because it is necessary that the conditions of Chandernagore & Pondicherry should be changed, the repetition of recent events rendered impossible and the cession of French territory put out of the question. There would be other & more positive gains by the change, but these I need not emphasise now.

I have just received your letter & the money. I shall delay answering it for the present, as this letter must go immediately. I shall answer soon, however. I am only waiting till this election is over to give some shape to the decision I have arrived at to resume personally my work on the material plane and it is necessary that there should be some arrangement by which the Vedantic work can go on unhampered by the effect of errors in Tantric kriya. For Tantric kriya carried on in the old style, to which your people seem to be so undivorceably attached, can only help so far as to keep up the Yogic flame in the hearts of a few, while on the other hand it is full of dangers to the spirit & the body. It is only by a wide Vedantic movement leading later to a greater Tantra that the work of regeneration can be done; & of that movement neither you nor Saurin can be the head. It needs a wider knowledge & a greater spiritual force in the Adhara through which it is engineered; it needs, in fact, the greatest which India contains & which is at the same time willing to take it up. I see only Devavrata & myself who have the idea — for the Dayanandas & others are a negligible quantity, & Devavrata seems to me to have gone off for the moment on a wrong route & through egoism has even allowed his spiritual force to be used against us by secret forces in the sukshma world which he is not yet advanced enough to understand. Therefore, if God wills, I will take the field.

K.

P.S. Gaebelé has given me strenuous assurances that Bluysen is not working for the cession of Chandannagar & has sworn that he (Gaebelé) will ever be a stern and furious opponent of any such cession as well as a staunch defender of the Swadeshi refugees! Such is the fervour of electoral promises! He has given a number of the Journal des Débats in which there is a full account of Bluysen's interpellations, from which it appears that both Bluysen & Doumergue were agreed that there can be no question of cession but only of "rectification of Pondicherry boundaries". But only then did Bluysen tell us solemnly that the cession was a "settled fact" & any refugee in Ch must run to Pondicherry at once. However, I am trying to send you or get sent to Banamali Pal the copy of the Journal, so that Bluysen may have the benefit of his public declarations. They are in a sense binding, if anything can bind a French politician. If you don't get the Journal, at any rate contrive that the substance of it as given by me here should be known in Ch, if it is not known already. For you must remember that Lemaire has made no such declaration and is not bound at all by any past professions, but has rather been an advocate of the cession.

[12]

17 April, 1914

Dear M.

The political situation here is as follows. In appearance Bluysen and Lemaire face each other on the old lines and the real fight is between them. Bluysen has the support of the whole administration, except a certain number of Lemairistes who are quiescent and in favour of it. The Governor Martineau, Gaebelé, the Police Lieutenant & the Commissaire form his political committee. By threats & bribes the Maires of all the Communes except two have been forced or induced to declare on his side. He has bought or got over most of the Hindu traders in Pondicherry. He has brought over 50,000 Rupees for his election & is prepared to purchase the whole populace, if necessary. Is it British rupees, I wonder? The British Gov^{t} is also said to be interfering on his behalf and it is certain the Mahomedan Collector of Cuddalore has asked his coreligionists to vote for this master of corruption. A violent administrative pressure is being brought to bear both at Pondicherry & Karikal, & the Maires being on his side the Electoral Colleges will be in his hands with all their possibilities of fraud & violence.

Lemaire has for him most of the Christians & Renonçants (except the young men who are for Richard) and Pierre. But the Pierre party is entirely divided. Kotia refuses to declare himself, most of the others are Bluysenites, the Comité Radical has thrice met without Pierre being able to overcome the opposition against him. Lemaire had two chances, one that if the people could be got to vote, Pierre's influence over the mass might carry the day for him, the other that Nandagopalu might intimidate the enemy & counteract the administration. But Nandagopalu instead of intimidating is himself intimidated; he is hiding in his house & sending obsequious messages to Gaebelé & Martineau. So great at one time was the despair of the Lemairistes, that Pierre offered through Richard to withdraw Lemaire, if Gaebelé withdraws Bluysen, the two enemies then to shake hands & unite in support of Richard or another candidate. Gaebelé would have been glad to accept the offer, but he cannot, he has taken huge sums from Bluysen. The leaders are almost all bought over by Bluysen & those who remain on Lemaire's side dare not act. The only weapon now in Lemaire's hands is vague threat and rumour, that the Cabinet has fallen, that Martineau is suspended, that the new Police Captain is his man etc. There are also rumours of a sudden coup d'état by Lemaire on the election day, of Appa Swami being carried off or killed, of the [Recensement][11] Committee being in his hands & it is true that the President is a Lemairiste. But I do not see how these things are going to be done. There may, of course, be a sudden Lemairiste rally, but at present it seems as if Bluysen by the help of the Administration money, the British Government and the devil were likely to win an easy victory.

Laporte had some chance of strong backing at the beginning but his own indolence & mistakes have destroyed it. He is now waiting on God and Lemaire into whose shoes he dreams of stepping, — for Lemaire has promised him that if he gets no favourable answer from France he will desist in Laporte's favour and Laporte being a man of faith is sitting quiet in that glorious expectation.

Then there is Richard. He has neither agent, nor committee, nor the backing of a single influential man. What he has is the sympathy & good wishes of all the Hindus & Mahomedans in Pondicherry & Karikal with the exception of the Vaniyas who are for Bluysen. The people are sick to death of the old candidates, they hate Bluysen, they abhor Lemaire & if only they could be got to vote according to their feelings, Richard would come in by an overwhelming majority. But they are overawed by the Gov^{t} and wait for some influential man among the Hindus to declare for him. No such man is forthcoming. All are either bought by Bluysen or wish to be on the winning side. Under these circumstances the danger is that the people will not vote at all and the electoral committees will be free to manufacture in their names bogus votes for Bluysen. On the other hand an impression has been made at Karikal, where the young men are working zealously for Richard; some of its communes are going to support him; some of the leaders who are themselves pledged to Bluysen have promised to tell their followers that they are free to vote for Richard if they wish; the Mahomedan leaders of Karikal are for Bluysen or rather for his money, but the mass have resolved to vote neither for

---

[11] *MS* Recension

B. nor Lemaire, & either not to vote at all or for Richard. At Pondicherry, Villenour has promised to declare for Richard the day before the election so as to avoid prolonged administrative pressure. Certain sections of the community e.g. the young men among the Christians and a number of the Mahomedans, — Richard is to speak at the mosque and a great number may possibly come over, — and a certain nucleus of the Hindus are certain to vote for him. We count also on the impression that can be given during the next few days. If in addition Chandernagore can give a large vote for Richard, there is a chance not of carrying Richard but of preventing a decisive vote at the first election, so that there may be a second ballot. If that is done, great numbers who hesitate to vote for Richard in the idea that Bluysen must carry all before him, may pick up courage & turn the whole situation, — to say nothing of the chances of Lemaire retiring & his whole vote coming over or a great part of it. Therefore, I say, throw aside all other considerations and let the young men of Chandernagore at least put all their strength on Richard's side and against the two unspeakable representatives of Evil who dispute the election between them. For if they do not, humanly speaking, Chandernagore seems to be doomed.

I wrote to you in my last doubtfully about Bluysen's or rather Gaebelé's professions about Ch. and the Swadeshis. Since then, even Martineau has condescended to let us know that he is trying to get the British police sent away from Pondicherry. But all this is either sheer falsehood or late repentance for the convenience of the moment. The damning facts are that Bluysen saw the Viceroy on his last visit, that it is known on this occasion the whole talk was about this cession of Chandernagore, that on his return he told Bharati the cession of Ch was a settled fact and while *before* his trip northward, he was gushing over to the Swadeshis, *afterwards* he roundly declared that he could not help us openly because the Cabinet was pro-English & he must follow the Cabinet, that he went to Karikal and declared to a number of people (this has only yesterday come to my knowledge) that Chandernagore was going to be ceded to the British with Bluysen's consent; that, on his second & present visit, he was entertained by the Collector of Cuddalore on his way & that that Collector has condescended to act as an electoral agent for him with his coreligionists. It is perfectly clear now that the man has sold himself to England — selling & buying himself & others seem to be his only profession in the world. Therefore every vote given for Bluysen in Ch. is a vote for the cession of Chandernagore to the British.

On the other hand if you vote for Lemaire, it means the same thing at a later date. For he was the first to broach the question in the public press in France, he has advised the suppression of the vote in French India, he has English connections & is an Anglophil. Not only so, but although asked by the Hindus to recant his former views if he wanted their vote, he has refused to do it, & this refusal has contributed largely to the failure of Pierre to carry the Hindus with him. Let these facts be widely known in Chandernagore, both about Bluysen & Lemaire, let it be known that Richard is a Hindu in faith, a Hindu in heart and a man whose whole life is devoted to the ideal of lifting up humanity & specially Asia & India & supporting the oppressed against the strong, the cause of the future which is our cause against all that hampers and resists it. If after that, Chandernagore still votes for Bluysen or Lemaire, it is its own choice & it will have itself to thank for anything that may follow.

I have more to write of these things from the spiritual point of view, but I shall leave it till tomorrow or the day after as this letter must go at once. Put faith in God & act. You have seen that when He wills, He can bring about impossibilities. Do not look too much at the chances of success & failure in this matter.
কর্মণ্যেবাধিকারস্তে

Kali

[13]

5 May [1914].

Dear M —

The election is over — or what they call an election — with the result that the man who had the fewer real votes has got the majority. As for M. Richard's votes, they got rid of them in Pondicherry & Karikal by the simple process of reading Paul Bluysen wherever Paul Richard was printed. Even where he brought his voters in Karikal to the poll himself, the results were published "Richard — 0". At Villenur people were simply prevented from voting for him or anyone else. As for the results they had been arranged on the evening before the election by M. Gaebelé & were made to fit in with his figures. The extent to which this was done you can imagine from the fact that at Nandagopal's village where there is no single Bluysenite, there were only 13 "votes" for Lemaire and all the rest for Bluysen. The same result in Mudrapalli which is strong for Pierre, except in one college where Sada (President of the Cercle Sportif) was interpreter & did not allow any humbug; knowing whom they had to deal with, they did not dare to falsify the results. There Bluysen got only 33 votes against 200 & more for Lemaire. In most places, this would have been the normal result, if there had been any election at all. As for Richard, he would probably have got a thousand votes beside the Chandernagore total; as in some five Colleges of Pondicherry alone he had about 300 which were transmuted into zero, & we know of one village in which he had 91 who were prevented forcibly from voting. Bluysen normally would hardly have got 5000 in the whole of French India. Of course protests are being prepared from every side, & if Bluysen is not supported by the Cabinet which is likely to come in after the elections in France, the election may be invalidated. Otherwise, for some time, he may reign in spite of the hatred & contempt of the whole population by the terror of the administration and the police. This Madrasi population is so deficient in even the rudiments of moral courage that one cannot hope very much from it.

Meanwhile Richard intends to remain in India for 2 years & work for the people. He is trying to start an Association of the young men of Pondicherry & Karikal as a sort of training ground from which men can be chosen for the Vedantic Yoga. Everything is a little nebulous as yet. I shall write to you about it when things are more definite.

Since writing the above I have received your last letter. As for the election, we must wait to see whether Bluysen is validated or not. Even if he is not, I do not think Richard can stand again until the new party in Pondicherry is increased & organised & that will have to be done quietly at first. There is, however, just one possibility, that if something happens which it is just now needless to mention, it might be feasible to unite Gaebelé & Pierre in a candidature of reconciliation. The idea was raised by Pierre himself & very reluctantly rejected by Gaebelé before the elections. Another time it might succeed & even if Richard were not the candidate chosen, he would get a great influence by engineering the settlement. Otherwise we shall have to await a more favourable opportunity. As for Bluysen he has made himself a byword for every kind of rascality & oppression, & is now the enemy much rather than Lemaire. These things we shall see to afterwards. The young men of Pondicherry & Karikal are sending a protest with signed declarations of facts observed in the election & two hundred signatures to the Minister, the Chambre & the Temps newspaper. It has also been read aloud by the President in the Commission of Recensement & produced a great impression — moral only, of course. In France, the opinion of the "jeunesse" is much valued and, joined with the Lemairiste protests, it may possibly have some effect, unless either Bluysen buys the Validation Committee or is supported by the French "hommes d'état". There is an ugly rumour that Poincaré supports Bluysen; & there are always corrupt financial dealings underlying French politics which the outside world does not see. If so, we must put spiritual force against the banded forces of evil & see the result.

Next as to money matters. My present position is that I have exhausted all my money along with Rs 60 Richard forced on me & am still in debt for the Rs 130 due for the old rent. I do not like to take more money from Richard, for he has sold one fourth of his wife's fortune (a very small one) in order to be able to come & work for India, & the money he has can only carry him through the 2 years he thinks of staying here. I should therefore be impoverishing them by taking anything from them. Of course, they believe that money will come whenever it is necessary; but then God's idea of necessity & ours do not always agree. As for Rangaswamy, there is a fatality about his money, — it is intercepted by all sorts of people & very little reaches me even on the rare occasions when he sends anything. I have no hope, therefore, of any regular help from that quarter. Even in the fact of your being unable to meet him, fate has been against us. On the other hand, Saurin writes that he has been able to "fix" Rs 1000 a year for me in Bengal. Is this merely the refixing of Das' promise or something else. As for fixing anything may be fixed orally or on paper; the difficulty is to realise what has been fixed. He says also there is Rs 500 awaiting me, my share of the garden money. He wants it for his "commerce", but when I have no money to live on, I can hardly comply. He does not tell me what I am to do to get the money, but only that I can get it whenever I want it. I am writing to him to Meherpur, but if you see him in Calcutta, ask him to get it & send it to me at once. With this money I may be able to go on for a few months till something definite & regular can be settled & worked out. As for the sum I need monthly, so long as S & the others do not return, I need Rs 50 monthly for my own expenses + Rs 10 not for myself, but still absolutely indispensable. When S & the others return, that will no longer be sufficient. I am writing to S to try and make some real bandobast about money before coming back. Please also press Shyama Babu and the others for the money due to me. This habit of defalcation of money for "noble & philanthropic" purposes in which usually the ego is largely the beneficiary is one of the curses of our movement &, so long as it is continued, Lakshmi will not return to this country. I have sharply discontinued all looseness of the kind myself & it must be discouraged henceforth wherever we meet it. It is much better & more honest to be a thief for our own personal benefit, than under these holy masks. And always, if one must plunder, it is best to do it as a Kshatriya, not with the corruption of the Vaishya spirit of gain which is the chief enemy in our present struggle. What you have to do, is to try to make some real arrangement, not a theoretical arrangement, by which the burden of my expenses may be shifted off your shoulders until I am able to make my own provision. Meanwhile get me Rs 150 & the Rs 500 due to me (garden money) &, if afterwards we can make no other arrangement, we shall then have to consider the question again. It is this point of equipment, not only for myself but for my work in which the opposition of the Kaliyuga forces is just now the most obstinate. It has somehow to be overcome.

Richard has paid the Rs 51. I am keeping the sum as the Rs 50 for last month + 1. Please cut it off from the sum you would otherwise have sent — (not, however, from the Rs 130 for the payment of the rent). Please also get us some cloths sent from Calcutta, as they are very urgently needed, especially as I may now have to go out from time to time breaking my old rule of seclusion. I am also in need of a pair of shoes as Bharati has bagged the pair I had.

Then for more important subjects. You write about Biren being here. I do not hold the same opinion about Biren as Saurin etc do, who are inclined towards a very black interpretation of his character & actions. It seems to me that events have corroborated all he said about his relations with certain undesirable persons. Moreover I see that he has taken Yoga earnestly & has made for him a rapid progress. I am also unaware of anything he has said to others which would help any evilminded person in establishing a wrong interpretation of your philosophic & social activities. I fail to find in him, looking at him spiritually, those ineffable blacknesses which were supposed to dwell in him, — only flightiness, weakness, indiscretion, childish & erratic impulsiveness & self-will & certain undesirable *possibilities* present in many young Bengalis, in a certain type, indeed, which has done much harm in the past. All these have recently much diminished & I hope even to eradicate them by the Yoga. In fact, the view of his presence here forced on me by that which guides me, is that he was sent here as the representative of this type & that I have to change & purify it. If I can do this in the representative, it is possible in the future to do so in the class, & unless I can do it, the task I have set for myself for India will remain almost too difficult for solution. For as long as that element remains strong, Bengal can never become what it is intended to be.

You will say, supposing I am wrong & Saurin right, or supposing I fail. In any case, he cannot strike your work except by first striking at me, since he does not know anything about you directly or independently of his stay here. Still, there is the possibility (intellectually) of even that happening. That raises a whole question which it is necessary to settle — the entire separation of Vedantic Yoga from other activities. You must realise that my work is a very vast one & that I must in doing it, come in close contact with all sorts of people including Europeans, perhaps even officials, perhaps even spies & officials. For instance, there is Biren. There is a French man named Stair Siddhar now in Chandernagore, who came to me & whom I had to see & sound. He is a queer sort of fool with something of the knave, but he had possibilities which I had to sound. There is Richard who is to know nothing about Tantricism. There are a host of *possible* young men whom I must meet & handle, but who may not turn out well. It is obviously impossible for me to do this work, if the close connection with Tantriks remains & everyone whom I meet & receive is supposed by people there to be a mighty & venerable person who is to be taken at once into perfect confidence by reason of having been for a time in my august shadow. It won't do at all. The whole thing must be rearranged on a reasonable basis.

First, it must be known among our friends that my whole action is about to be such as I have described, so that they may not again repeat that kind of mistake.

Secondly, those immediately connected with me must be aloof physically from Tantricism — because of the discredit it brings, — & intangible by evilminded persons.

Thirdly, Biren & others of that kind must be made to understand that Tantra for us is discontinued until farther notice which can be only in the far future.

Fourthly, the written basis of Vedantic Yoga has now become impossible & must be entirely changed &, as far as possible, withdrawn from circulation.

These are details, but important details. There is one matter, however, which has to be settled, that of the Brahmin. The Brahmin, it appears, has made himself impossible as an agent or, at least, he is so considered. Then as for your direct communication with Sarathi, it is looked upon with dislike by Sarathi's people & I do not know what S's own sentiments in the matter may be. Of course, the reason they allege is obvious enough. There is one of my own people here who might do it, but he is so useful in other important matters that I hesitate to use him as an agent in this. That is why I am in a difficulty & I get no light on the question from above, only the intellect stumbles about between possibilities against all of which there is an objection, especially from the new point of view which demands for the present a spotless peace & irreproachable reputation in these matters for the centre of Yogic activity here. Nevertheless, the thing must be done, although as the last legacy of the old state of things. I shall write to you on the old lines about it in a few days, as also about the future of the Tantric Yoga. Judging from what I have heard of the facts, I do not think the difficulty about S is likely to materialise — unless there are facts behind of which I do not know. Unfortunately the manner in which the Tantric Yoga has been carried on is so full of the old faults of former Tantric sadhana that a catastrophe was inevitable. The new Yoga cannot be used as a sort of sauce for old dishes; it must occupy the whole place on peril of serious difficulties in the siddhi & even disasters.

I shall write to you about what I propose to do about Vedantic Yoga & publication; as yet it has not been sufficiently formulated to write. At present we have only started a new society here called *L'Idée Nouvelle* (the New Idea) & are trying to get an authorisation.

K.

[*postscript in another hand:*]

Dear Moti baboo

We are in absolute want of clothes. Will you please take a little attention on that point and relieve us from this absolute want. K is going out now a days and at least for that we want some clothes.

Do not send it [in] Jogin's name they are going back to Bengal. Send it to David.

Yours,
B.

[14]

[June 1914]

Dear M

I have received from Grindlays Rs 400. That leaves Rs 200 out of the Rs 1000, which I hope will be received by next August. We have also the clothes & shoes, — but for myself only the slippers are useful as the shoes are too large. I have written to Saurin about the garden money & he says he has asked Sukumar to send it. But I have received nothing as yet. If I get this money and the remaining 200 from Das, that will be Rs 1100 in hand. With 100 more and 130 on account of the old rent, say Rs 250 altogether, we shall be provided for bare necessities for a year, during which other conditions may arise. That Rs 250 ought to come from Sham Babu and Sharma, but there is little hope of money once swallowed by a patriot being disgorged again. His philanthropic stomach digests sovereignly. I must seek it elsewhere. If this can be done, the only burden which will fall on you is to refurnish us with apparel and footwear from time to time. At the same time an attempt should be made to keep up the arrangement with Das, if possible; for we do not know whether our attempt to provide otherwise will succeed.

That attempt takes the form of a new philosophical Review with Richard and myself as Editors — the Arya, which is to be brought out in French & English, two separate editions, — one for France, one for India, England & America. In this Review my new theory of the Veda will appear as also a translation and explanation of the Upanishads, a series of essays giving my system of Yoga & a book of Vedantic philosophy (not Shankara's but Vedic Vedanta) giving the Upanishadic foundations of my theory of the ideal life towards which humanity must move. You will see so far as my share is concerned, it will be the intellectual side of my work for the world. The Review will be of 64 pages to start with and the subscription Rs 6 annually. Of the French edition 600 copies will be issued, and it will cost about Rs 750 a year minus postage. Richard reckoned 200 subscribers in France at the start, ie Rs 1200 in the year. For the English edition we are thinking of an issue of 1000 copies, at a cost of about Rs 1200 annually. We shall need therefore at least 200 subscribers to meet this expense & some more so that the English edition may pay all its own expenses. Let us try 250 subscribers to start with, with the ideal of having 800 to 1000 in the first year. If these subscribers can be got before the Review starts, we shall have a sound financial foundation to start with. The question is, can they be got. We are printing a prospectus with specimens of the writings from my translation & commentary on a Vedic hymn, and an extract from Richard's collections of the central sayings of great sages of all times called the Eternal Wisdom to show the nature of the Review. This is supposed to come out in the middle of this month, & the Review on the 15th August, so there will be nearly two months for collecting subscribers. How far can you help us in this work? There is always one thing about which great care has to be taken, that is, there should be no entanglement of this Review in Indian politics or a false association created by the police finding it in the house of some political suspects they search for; in that case people will be afraid to subscribe. My idea is that young men should be got as agents who would canvas for the Review all over Bengal, but there so many young men are now political suspects that it may not be easy to find any who will be free & active & yet above suspicion. In that case some other method must be tried. I should like to know from you *as soon as possible* how far you can help us & how many copies of the prospectus we should send to you. If the review succeeds, if, that is to say, we get in India 850 regular subscribers, and 250 in France etc. we shall be able to meet the expenses of the establishment, translation-staff etc. and yet have enough for each of the editors to live on with their various kinds of families, say Rs 100 a month for each. In that case the money-question will practically be solved. There will of course be other expenses besides mere living & there may be from time to time exceptional expenses, such as publication of books etc., but these may be met otherwise or as the Review increases its subscribers. Therefore use your best endeavours towards this end.

The second part of my work is the practical, consisting in the practice of Yoga by an ever increasing number of young men all over the country. We have started here a society called the New Idea with that object, & a good many young men are taking up Vedantic Yoga & some progressing much. You say that it has spread in the North all over. But in what way? I am not at all enamoured of the way in which it seems to be practised outside Bengal. It seems there to be mixed up with the old kind of Tantra sometimes of the most paishachic & undesirable kind & to be kept merely as a sauce for that fiery & gruesome dish. Better no vyapti at all outside Bengal, if it is not to be purified and divine Yoga. In Bengal itself, there are faults which cannot but have undesirable consequences. In the first place, there is the misplacement of values. Vedanta is practised, or so it seems to be in some quarters, for the sake of Tantra, & in order to give a force to Tantra. That is not right at all. Tantra is only valuable in so far as it enables us to give effect to Vedanta & in itself it has no value or necessity at all. Then the two are mixed up in a most undesirable fashion, so that the Vedanta is likely to be affected by the same disrepute and difficulties on the way of profession as hamper the recognition of the truth in Tantra ie in its real sense, value and effectivity. There are difficulties enough already, let us not wilfully increase them. You have seen, for instance, that in recent political trials Yoga pamphlets & bombs seem to have been kept together everywhere with the queerest incongruity.

That is a thing we could not control, we can only hope that it will not happen again. But meanwhile the work of publicity and spreading our yoga has got an unnecessary difficulty thrown in its way. Do not let any add to it by associating Vedanta & Tantra together in an inextricable fashion. The Tantric Yogins are few and should be comparatively reticent — for Vedanta is a wider thing and men may then help to fulfil it in all kinds of ways. Let the Tantriks then practise Vedanta silently, not trumpeting abroad its connection with their own particular school but with self-restraint and the spirit of self-sacrifice, knowing that they are only one small corps in a march that is vast and so meant to be world-embracing. The more they isolate themselves from the rest of the host that is in formation, the more they will be free for their own work & the more they will help without hampering the wider march.

Then as to the work of the Tantric discipline & kriya itself. Remember that Tantra is not like Vedanta, it exists as a Yoga for material gains, that has always been its nature. Only now not for personal gains, but for effectivity in certain directions of the general Yoga of mankind. The question I wish you to ask yourself, is whether you think that with its present imperfect basis it can really do the work for which it was intended. I see that it cannot. There have been two stages; first the old Tantra which has broken down & exists only in a scattered way ineffectual for any great end of humanity. Secondly, our own new Tantra which succeeded at first because it was comparatively pure in spite of the difficulties created by the remnants of egoism. But since then two things have happened. It has tried to extend itself with the result of bringing in undesirable elements; secondly, it has tried to attempt larger results from a basis which was no longer sufficient & had begun to be unsound. A third stage is now necessary, that of a preparation in full knowledge no longer resting on a blind faith in God's power and will, but receiving consciously that will, the illumination that guides its workings and the power that determines its results. If the thing is to be done it must be done no longer as by a troop stumbling on courageously in the dark & losing its best strength by failures &

the results of unhappy blunders, but with the full divine power working out its will in its instruments.

What is necessary for that action? First, that the divine knowledge & power should manifest perfectly in at least one man in India. In myself it is trying so to manifest as rapidly as the deficiencies of my mind & body will permit, and also — this is important — as rapidly as the defects of my chief friends & helpers will permit. For all those have to be taken on myself spiritually and may retard my own development. I advance, but at every fresh stage have to go back to receive some fresh load of imperfection that comes from outside. I want now some breathing time, however brief which will enable me to accomplish the present stage which is the central [?   ] of my advance. This once accomplished, all the rest is inevitable. This not accomplished, the end of our Yogic movement is, externally, a failure or a pitiful small result. That is the first reason why I call a halt.

The second necessity is that others should receive the same power & light. In the measure that mine grows, theirs also will increase & prosper provided always they do not separate themselves from me by the ahankara. A sufficient Vedantic basis provided, a long, slow & obscure Tantra will no longer be necessary. The power that I am developing, if it reaches consummation, will be able to accomplish its effects automatically *by any method chosen*. If it uses Tantric kriya, it will then be because God has chosen that means, because He wishes to put the Shakta part of Him forward first & not the Vaishnava. And that kriya will then be irresistible in its effects, perhaps even strange & new in its means & forms. I have then to effect that power & communicate it to others. But at present the forces of the material Prakriti strive with all their remaining energy against the spiritual mastery that is being sought to impose on them. And it is especially in the field to which your kriyas have belonged and kindred fields that they are still too strong for me. You will remember what has been written, that the sadhana shall first be applied in things that do not matter & only afterwards used for life. This is not an absolute rule, but it is the rule of necessity to apply for some time now in this particular matter. I see that I have the necessary powers; I shall communicate them next to you and some others so that there may be a centre of irresistible spiritual light & effective force wherever needed. Then a rapid & successful kriya can be attempted. This is the second reason why I have cried a halt.

The first & supreme object you must have now is to push forward in yourself & in others the Vedantic Yoga in the sense I have described. The spread of the idea is not sufficient, you must have real Yogins, not merely men moved intellectually & emotionally by one or two of the central ideas of the Yoga. Spreading of the idea is the second necessity — for that the Review at present offers itself among other means. The other means is to form brotherhoods, not formal but real, (not societies of the European kind but informal groups of people united by one effort & one feeling) for the practice of Vedantic Yoga (without any necessary thought of the Tantric). But of this I shall write to you hereafter.

Finally as to commercial matters. I had arranged things according to the last idea, but at the last moment an objection was made that the arrangement was not a very reasonable one, — an objection which my reason was forced to admit. It was then proposed to send the Brahmin as a commercial agent & I so wrote to you. But a few days afterwards when I asked for him to be sent, I was informed that the Brahmin was no longer possible as a commercial agent as he was now an object of suspicion to the third party. Another man I had fixed on is so circumstanced that he cannot go now. There the matter stands. As for your suggestion, these people here never objected to dealing direct with you, the objection was mine due to the terms & the accidents of your correspondence. On the other hand every attempt I have made personally to get the matter settled has been frustrated by Krishna. I have made these attempts contrary to the inner instructions received & by the light of the reason. That always fails with me; if it succeeds momentarily, it brings some coarse result afterwards. The point now is that if you do as you suggest, it must be so done that there shall not be the least chance of the transaction interfering with our business here — I mean not any commercial business, but the enterprises (Society, Review etc.) we are starting. The question is not one of direct communication, but of right handling & especially of the right person not only from the point of view of the buyer and seller, but with regard to the third party who is indirectly interested in the transaction. In any case you must write to me what you propose to do, before you act.

By the way, there was a very shocking and অশ্লীল word in your last letter to me with regard to my past activities, Bande Mataram, Karmayogin etc. I do not wish to repeat it here. Please do not use such an indecorous expression in writing in future. In personal talk it does not matter; but not, if you please, in correspondence.

As to your request for details of my life, about which you wrote to Bijoy, it is a very difficult matter for there is very little one can write without offending people, eg S. Mullick, B. Pal, S. S. Chakraborty & revealing party secrets. However we shall see what can be done. But let me know what you are writing about me & how & where you mean to publish it.

A. K.

[15]

[July 1914]

Dear M.

I write today only about two business matters. As to the Review, I do not think we can dispense with the 200 subscribers whom you promise. The only difficulty is that, if there are political suspects among them, it will give the police a handle for connecting politics & the Review & thus frightening the public. But this is not a sufficient reason for the Review refusing so many subscribers or for so large a number being deprived of the enlightenment it may bring them. Therefore, some arrangement should be made. I should suggest that you should make those subscribers who are mainly interested in Yoga, and as for those who decline to give up political opinions of a vehement nature or to conceal them so as not to fall into police snares, they may without becoming subscribers on our list receive the Review from trustworthy agents appointed by you as our representative. The agent must let us or you know the number of copies wanted, send in the money and receive the Review from us or you in a packet as a declared agent commissioned to sell a certain number of copies, receiving (nominally) a discount on each copy sold. I suggest this arrangement but if another would be more convenient, please let us know. You must organise the subscription matter before starting for your pilgrimage so that we may have a fair start in August. I shall write a longer letter to you about Yoga & other matters as soon as I have a little time.

The Psalmodist was here. He asked for the Calcutta address & I gave it to him. It appears he is sending it to Calcutta in connection with a business he wants to wind up. It is difficult to understand because he says it is a commercial secret, but he tells me you will understand if I send you the accompanying cabalistic figures — God save us from all mysteries except those of Tantric Yoga.

Kali

[16]

[July – August 1914]

Dear M.

Again a business letter. Enclosed you will find two samples of paper, taken from a sample book of the Titaghur Mills which we want made to order, of a certain size, for our Review. Will you please see *at once* the agent in Calcutta, whose address is given, and ask him for all the particulars, the price, whether the paper of that sample, of the size required, is available or can be made to order by them, in what minimum amount, within what time etc and let the Manager know immediately by the British post.

What about the commercial transaction and my last letter? The Psalmodist's brother is asking for a reply.

K.

P.S. Received your letter. Please let us know how many copies of the Arya you want sent to you for sale, since you cannot get subscribers. I shall write later. The divorce from Tantrism is necessary if you are to do the work of the Review or the other work I wish you to undertake. You must surely see that. Neither will march if there are any occurrences of the old kind mixing them up together.

[*Postscript in another hand:*]

If it is possible please send some subscribers. Subscribers book is nearly as blank as it was at the time [of] our purchasing it.

Yours,
[*Illegible signature*]

[17]

29 August 1914

Dear M.

Before your letter came, ie yesterday, the news was published that the Government had drawn back from its proposal, and today the Amrita [Bazar][12] with its comment arrived. I presume, therefore, no immediate answer from me is needed. But in case anything of the kind is raised again, I shall give you my opinion in the matter.

We gain nothing by preaching an unconditional loyalty to the Government, such as is the fashion nowadays, or doing anything which even in appearance strengthens the disposition towards an abject & unmanly tone in politics. Gandhi's loyalism is not a pattern for India which is not South Africa, & even Gandhi's loyalism is corrected by passive resistance. An abject tone of servility in politics is not "diplomacy" & is not good politics. It does not deceive or disarm the opponent; it does encourage nervelessness, fear & a cringing cunning in the subject people. What Gandhi has been attempting in S. Africa is to secure for Indians the position of kindly treated serfs, — as a stepping-stone to something better. Loyalty + Ambulance Corps mean the same thing in India. But the conditions of India are not those of S. Africa; our position is different & our aim is different, not to secure a few privileges, but to create a nation of men fit for independence & able to secure & keep it. We have been beaten in the first attempt, like every other nation similarly circumstanced. That is no reason why the whole people should go back to a condition of abject fear, grovelling loyalty & whining complaints. The public Nationalist policy has always been

---

[12] *MS* Bazaar

1. Eventual independence
2. No cooperation without control.
3 A masculine courage in speech & action

Let us add a fourth,

4. Readiness to accept real concessions & pay their just price, but no more. Beyond that, I do not see the necessity of any change. We recognise that immediate independence is not practicable & we are ready to defend the British rule against any foreign nation, for that means defending our own future independence.

Therefore, if the Government accepts volunteers or favours the institution of Boy-Scouts, we give our aid, but not to be mere stretcher-bearers.

That is the side of principle; now let us look at that of policy.

(1) I don't appreciate Sarat Maharaj's position. If self-sacrifice is the object, every human being has the whole of life as a field for self-sacrifice & does not depend on any Government for that. We can show our sacrificing activities every moment, if we want. It is not a question of sacrifice at all, it is a question of military training. If the young men wish to organise for charitable work, the Government is not going to stop it, even though they may watch and suspect. I put that aside altogether.

(2) The leaders suggested cooperation in return for some substantial self-government. They are now offering cooperation without any return at all. Very self-sacrificing, but not political. If indeed, Gov^t were willing to train "thousands of young men" in military service as volunteers, Territorials or boy-scouts, whether for keeping the peace or as a reserve in case of invasion, then we

need not boggle about the return. But, after so much experience, do these addle-headed politicians think the Gov^{t} is going to do that except in case of absolute necessity and as a choice between two evils? When will that absolute necessity come? Only if the war goes against them seriously & they have to withdraw their troops from India. I shall discuss that point later on.

(3) Meanwhile what have the Government done? After testing the temper of the people &, you may be sure, watching closely what young men came forward as volunteers & who did not, they have removed an offer which had already been whittled down to a mere harmless Ambulance Corps in which the young men have plenty of chances of getting killed, but none of learning real warfare. Mere common sense warns us not to trust such an administration & to think ten times before accepting its offers. We know Lord Hardinge's policy; (1) sweet words, (2) quiet systematic coercion, (3) concession where obstinacy would mean too great a row & too much creation of deep-seated hostility.

Having prefaced so much, let us look at the utility of the things offered us or offered by us.

1. Ambulance Corps —

The only possible utilities would be two, (1) to train two thousand young men to be steady under fire (2) to train them to act together under discipline in an easy but dangerous service. Now it is quite possible for us to create courage in our young men without these means, & I hope our best men, or let me say, our men generally do not need to become stretcher bearers in a European war in order to have the necessary nerve, courage, steadiness & discipline. If therefore an Ambulance Corps is again suggested & accepted, either refuse or let only those young men go who are enthusiastic, but still lightheaded, self-indulgent or undisciplined. Possibly, the experience may steady & discipline them. It may be necessary to let this be done, if the circumstances are such that to refuse entirely would reflect on our national courage or be interpreted as a backing out from a national engagement.

2. Boy-Scouts — Volunteer Corps — Territorials.

All these are entirely good, provided the police are kept at a distance, & provided officers as well as men are trained & the Gov^{t} control is limited to the giving of military discipline in the first two cases. Even without the second proviso, any of these things would be worth accepting.

Only in the case of volunteers going to the scene of war, you must see that we are not crippled by all our best men or even a majority being sent; only enough to bring in an element among us who have seen actual warfare–

=

I think any of these things may one day become possible. Since the last year, new forces have come into the world and are now strong enough to act, which are likely to alter the whole face of the world. The present war is only a beginning not the end. We have to consider what are our chances & what we ought to do in these circumstances.

The war is open to a certain number of broad chances.

I. Those bringing about the destruction of the two Teutonic empires, German & Austrian.

This may happen either by an immediate German defeat, its armies being broken & chased back from Belgium & Alsace-Lorraine to Berlin, which is not probable, or by the Russian arrival at Berlin & a successful French stand near Rheims or Compiègne, or by the entry of Italy & the remaining Balkan states into the war & the invasion of Austro-Hungary from two sides.

II Those bringing about the weakening or isolation of the British power.

This may be done by the Germans destroying the British expeditionary force, entering Paris & dictating terms to France while Russia is checked in its march to Berlin by a strong Austro-German force operating in the German quadrilateral between the forts of Danzig, Thorn, Posen and Königsberg. If this happens Russia may possibly enter into a compact with Germany based on a reconciliation of the three Empires and a reversion to the old idea of a simultaneous attack on England and a division of her Empire between Germany & Russia.

III. Those bringing about the destruction of British power.

This may happen by the shattering of the British fleet and a German landing in England.

In either of the two last cases an invasion of India by Germany, Russia or Japan is only a question of time, and England will be unable to resist except by one of three means.

(1) universal conscription in England & the Colonies
(2) the aid of Japan or some other foreign power
(3) the aid of the Indian people.

The first is useless for the defence of India, in case III, & can only be applied in case II, if England is still mistress of the seas. The second is dangerous to England herself, since the ally who helps, may also covet. The third means the concession of self-government to India.

In case I, there will only remain four considerable powers in Europe & Asia, Russia, France, England, Japan — with perhaps a Balkan Confederacy or Empire as a fifth. That means as the next stage a struggle between England & Russia in Asia. There again England is reduced to one of the three alternatives or a combination of them.

Of course, the war may take different turns from the above, with slightly altered circumstances & results; the one thing that is impossible, is that it should leave the world as it was before. In any case, the question of India must rise at no very long date. If England adopts more or less grudgingly the third alternative, our opportunity arrives and we must be ready to take it — on this basis, continuance of British rule & cooperation until we are strong enough to stand by ourselves. If not, we must still decide how we are to prepare ourselves, so as not to pass from one foreign domination to a worse.

I want those of you who have the capacity, to consider the situation as I have described it, to think over it, enlarging our old views which are no longer sufficient, and accustom yourselves to act always with these new & larger conceptions in your minds. I shall write nothing myself about my views, just as yet, as that might prevent you from thinking yourselves.

Only, two things you will see obviously from it, first, the necessity of seizing on any opportunity that arises of organisation or military training (not self-sacrificing charity, that has already been done); secondly, the necessity of creating an organisation & finding the means, if no opportunity presents itself. It will be necessary for someone from Bengal to come & see me before long, but that will probably not be till October or later.

I shall write to you before long farther on the subject, as also on other matters.

K.

[18]

[after October 1914]

Dear M–

I have not written for a long time for several reasons. Our position here since the war has become increasingly difficult and delicate, as the administration is run for the moment by certain subordinates who are actively hostile to the Swadeshis. I have therefore adopted a policy of entire reserve, including abstention from correspondence with Bengal even with officially unobjectionable people. Our correspondence now is chiefly limited to Arya business.

Your internal struggle in the Yoga has naturally its causes. I shall help you as much as possible spiritually, but you must get rid of everything that gives a handle to the enemy in ourselves. Your letters for a long time showed a considerable revival of rajasic egoism, contracted, I suppose, by association with the old Tantrics, and that always [brings][13] in our Yoga disagreeable consequences. If you could make yourselves entirely pure instruments, things would go much better. But there is always something in the prana and intellect which kicks against the pricks and resists the purifier. Especially get rid of the *Aham Karta* element, which usually disguises itself under the idea "I am the chosen yantra". Despise no one, try to see God in all and the Self in all. The Shakti in you will then act better on your materials and environment.

---

[13] *MS* bring

There is another point. You sent a message about an "Aurobindo Math" which seemed to show you had caught the contagion which rages in Bengal. You must understand that my mission is not to create maths, ascetics and Sannyasis; but to call back the souls of the strong to the Lila of Krishna & Kali. That is my teaching, as you can see from the Review, and my name must never be connected with monastic forms or the monastic ideal. Every ascetic movement since the time of Buddha has left India weaker and for a very obvious reason. Renunciation of life is one thing, to make life itself, national, individual, world-life greater & more divine is another. You cannot enforce one ideal on the country without weakening the other. You cannot take away the best souls from life & yet leave life stronger & greater. Renunciation of ego, acceptance of God in life is the Yoga I teach, — no other renunciation.

Saurin has written to you about Bejoy's detention. M. Richard wrote to the Madras Government, but with the usual result.

Here one of the Swadeshis, a certain VVS. Aiyar has been hauled up for circulating unauthorised pamphlets from America. It appears the Gov$^{\text{t}}$ of Pondicherry has established a censorship in the French P.O. and opens letters etc from abroad. They have intercepted some wonderful pamphlets of the usual sanguinary order asking India to rise & help Germany which some fool had sent to his address from New York. On the strength of this a case has been trumped up against Aiyar who knew nothing about either the New York idiot or his pamphlets. The funny thing is that all the time Aiyar seems to be fervently Anti-German in his sentiments & pro-Belgian & pro-Servian! So this wonderful French administration insists on making him a martyr for the cause he denounces! One thing I could never appreciate is the utility of this pamphleteering business of which Indian revolutionists are so fond. Pamphlets won't liberate India; but they do seem to succeed in getting their distributors and non-distributors also into prison. My connection with Aiyar has been practically nil, as in normal times I only see him once in two years. But here all the Swadeshis are lumped together; so we have to be careful not only that we give no handle to our enemies, but that other people don't give them a handle against us — which is just a little difficult.

You have decided, it seems, to carry on Tantra & Mantra, *anushthan* and pure Vedanta together! My objection to it was from the standpoint of the Review and Vedantic work generally. *Anusthan* & the Review do not go well together. Of course, a synthesis is always possible, but amalgamation is not synthesis.

G.

P.S. By the way, try to realise one thing. The work we wish to do cannot produce its effects on the objective world until my Ashtasiddhi is strong enough to work upon that world organically and as a whole, & it has not yet reached that point. No amount of rajasic eagerness on my part or on yours or anybody else's will fill the place or can substitute itself as the divine instrument which will be definitely effective. In the matter of the Review Bejoy has found that out by this time! I have found it out myself by constant experience & warning. You also, if you wish to profit by my teaching, should learn it also — without the necessity of experience.

[19]

[1914–1915]

Dear M.

Your letter and enclosure (50) reached us all right. We have not received the Rs. 200 due from Das. As for the Rs. 500, that has nothing to do with the garden money of my uncle, it is a sum promised to me which Saurin was to have brought, but it was not paid in time. He tells me he told you about it before he came and he wrote also from here. Our actual expenses here are Rs. 115 a month; this can be reduced if we get another house, but you know that is not easy in Pondicherry. I note that we are to get Rs. 50 from you in the latter part of this month.

So much for money matters. It is regrettable that the Government should think you are mixed up in political matters and that you are on the list of suspects. But once they get that idea into their heads, it is impossible to change it; once a suspect, always a suspect is their rule. They are particularly good at purchasing trouble for themselves and others in this way and just now they are all fear and suspicion and see revolutions in every bush. The only thing is to be extremely careful. You should not on any account move out of Chandernagore so long as the war measures are in force; for in these times innocence is no defence.

It is regrettable that Bengal should be unable to find anything in the Arya, but not surprising. The intellect of Bengal has been so much fed on chemical tablets of thought and hot spiced foods that anything strong and substantial is indigestible to it. Moreover people in India are accustomed only to second-hand thoughts, — the old familiar ideas of the six philosophies, Patanjali etc. etc. Any new presentation of life and thought and Yoga upsets their expectations and is unintelligible to them. The thought of the Arya demands close thinking from the reader; it does not spare him the trouble of thinking and understanding and the minds of the people have long been accustomed to have the trouble of thought spared them. They know how to indulge their minds, they have forgotten how to exercise them.

It does not matter very much just now, so long as the people who practise the Yoga, read and profit. The Arya presents a new philosophy and a new method of Yoga and everything that is new takes time to get a hearing. Of course, in reality it is only the old brought back again, but so old that it has been forgotten. It is only those who practise and experience that can at first understand it. In a way, this is good, because it is meant to change the life of people and not merely satisfy the intellect. In France it has been very much appreciated by those who are seeking the truth, because these people are not shut up in old and received ideas, they are on the lookout for something which will change the inner and outer life. When the same state of mind can be brought about here, the Arya will begin to be appreciated. At present, Bengal only understands and appreciates politics and asceticism. The central ideas of the Arya are Greek to it.

Soon after the Arya began, I got a letter from some graduates saying that what they wanted was "man-making". I have done my share of man-making and it is a thing which now anybody can do; Nature herself is looking after it all over the world, though more slowly in India than elsewhere. My business is now not man-making, but divine man-making. My present teaching is that the world is preparing for a new progress, a new evolution. Whatever race, whatever country seizes on the lines of that new evolution and fulfils it, will be the leader of humanity. In the Arya I state the thought upon which this new evolution will be based as I see it, and the method of Yoga by which it can be accomplished. Of course, I cannot speak plainly yet my whole message, for obvious reasons, I have to put it in a severe, colourless fashion which cannot be pleasing to the emotional and excitement-seeking Bengali mind. But the message is there, for those who care to understand. It has really three parts (1) for each man as an individual to change himself into the future type of divine humanity, the men of the new Satyayuga which is striving to be born; (2) to evolve a race of such men to lead humanity and (3) to call all humanity to the path under the lead of these pioneers and this chosen race. India and especially Bengal have the best chance and the best right to create that race and become the leaders of the future — to do in the right way what Germany thought of doing in the wrong way. But first they must learn to think, to cast away old ideas, and turn their faces resolutely to the future. But they cannot do this, if they merely copy European politics or go on eternally reproducing Buddhistic asceticism. I am afraid the Ramakrishna Mission with all its good intentions is only going to give us Shankaracharya & Buddhistic humanitarianism. But that is not the goal to which the world is moving. Meanwhile remember that these are very difficult times and careful walking is necessary. It is just possible that the war may come to an end in a few months, for the old immobility is beginning to break down and the forces at work behind the veil are straining towards a solution. While the war continues, nothing great can be done, we are fettered on every side. Afterwards things will change and we must wait for the development.

K.

[20]

[1916–1918]

Dear M.

I have not written for a long time because nothing definite came to me to be written. We are in a state of things in which every movement fails to come to a decisive result because everywhere and in everything the forces are balanced by contrary forces. At the present moment the world is passing through an upheaval in which all forces possible have been let loose and none therefore has a triumphant action. Ordinarily, there are certain puissances, certain ideas which are given a dominant impulsion and conquest, those opposing them being easily broken after a first severe struggle. Now everything is different. Wherever a force or an idea tries to assert itself in action, all that can oppose rushes to stop it and there follows a "struggle of exhaustion". You see that in Europe now; no one can succeed; nothing is accomplished; only that which already was, maintains itself with difficulty. At such a time one has to act as little as possible and prepare and fortify as much as possible — that is to say, that is the rule for those who are not compelled to be in the battle of the present and whose action tends more towards the future.

I had hoped that we should be much more "forward" at this period, but the obstacles have been too great. I have not been able to get anything active into shape. Consequently, we have to go on as before for some time longer. Our action depends on developing sufficient spiritual power to overcome the enormous material obstacles opposed to us, to shape minds, men, events, means, things. This we have got as yet in very insufficient quantity.

You have done well in confining yourself to Vedantic Yoga;

you can see for yourself that the Tantric bears no secure and sufficient fruit without a very strong and faultless Vedantic basis. Otherwise you have a medley of good and bad sadhakas associating together and the bad spoil the Kriya of the good; for a collective yoga is not like a solitary one, it is not free from collective influences; it has a collective soul which cannot afford to be in some parts either raw or rotten. It is this which modern Tantrics do not understand, their aspiration is not governed by old Shastra founded on the experience of centuries. A *chakra*, for instance, must either be perfectly composed or immediately governed and protected by the spiritual force of some powerful guru. But our modern minds are too impatient to see to these things.

As for your external difficulties, I mean with regard to the bad ideas the Government or the police have about you and the consequent obstacles and pressure, that is a result of past Karma and probably of some present associations and can hardly be cured. I see people are interned who have no connection at all with politics or have long cut off whatever connection they had. Owing to the war, the authorities are uneasy & suspicious and being ill served by their police act on prejudgments and often on false reports. You have to sit tight, spiritually defend yourself and physically avoid putting yourself where the police can do you any harm and, so far as possible, avoid also doing anything which would give any colour or appearance of a foundation for their prejudices. More can hardly be done. One cannot throw aside friends because they are "suspects"; in that case, we should have to begin with ourselves. If on the ground of such associations we are ourselves more suspected, — as, for instance, the officials make it a grievance against me that although I am doing nothing political myself, yet I associate with my Madrasi friends against whom they have chosen to launch warrants for sedition, etc, it cannot be helped. We cannot suffer political or police dictation in our private friendships.

What has become of the "Pravartaka". The last number was very good, but for a long time we have had no other. Is the administration withholding visa or are there other reasons for the irregularity? I hope it is not a discontinuance. We have the "Arya" here visaed without delay or difficulty.

If you have difficulties of any kind, it is as well to let me know at once; for I can then concentrate what force I have more particularly to help you. The help may not be always or immediately effective, but it will count and may be more powerful than a general will, not instructed in the particular necessity. You must not mind if you do not get always a written answer; the unwritten will always be there.

I leave it to the Manager of the Arya to write to you about business matters.

K.

[21]

[1918–1919]

Dear M–

If you want discipline, the first thing of that kind I would impose on you or ask you to impose on yourselves is self-discipline, *âtma-sanyama*, and the first element in that is obedience to the law of the Yoga I have given to you. If you bring in things which do not belong to it at all and are quite foreign to it, such as "hunger-strikes" and vehement emotional revolt against the divine Will, it is idle to expect any rapid progress. That means that you insist on going on your own bypath and yet demand of me that I shall bring you to my goal. All difficulties can be conquered, but only on condition of fidelity to the Way that you have taken. There is no obligation on anyone to take it, — it is a difficult and trying one, a way for heroes, not for weaklings, — but once taken, it must be followed, or you will not arrive.

Remember what is the whole basis of the Yoga. It is not founded upon the vehement emotionalism of the Bhakti-marga to which the temperament of Bengal is most prone, though it has a different kind of Bhakti, but on *samata* and *atma-samarpana*. Obedience to the divine Will, not assertion of self-will, is the very first *mantra*. But what can be a more violent assertion of self-will than to demand the result you desire, whether external or internal, at once, এই মুহূর্তে এই ক্ষণে and not in God's muhurta, God's moment? You say that there is complete *utsarga*, but it cannot be complete, if there is any kind of revolt or vehement impatience. Revolt and impatience mean always that there is a part of the being or something in the being which does not submit, has not given itself to God, but insists on God going out of his way to obey it. That may be very well in the Bhakti-marga, but it will not do on this Way. The revolt and impatience may come and will come in the heart or the prana when these are still subject to imperfection and impurity; but it is then for the will and the faith in your buddhi to reject them, not to act upon them. If the will consents, approves and supports them, it means that you are siding with the inner enemy. If you want rapid progress, the first condition is that you should not do this; for every time you do it, the enemy is strengthened and the *shuddhi* postponed. This is a difficult lesson to learn, but you must learn it. I do not find fault with you for taking long over it, I myself took full twelve years to learn it thoroughly, and even after I knew the principle well enough, it took me quite four years and more to master my lower nature in this respect. But you have the advantage of my experience and my help; you will be able to do it more rapidly, if you consciously and fully assist me, by not associating yourself with the enemy Desire; *jahi kâmam durâsadam*, remember that utterance of the Gita, it is a keyword of our Yoga.

As for Haradhan, he should show the way in calm, patience and endurance. He has been a soldier. How does he think the nations of Europe could have carried this war to an end, if they had grown so impatient of the fatigue of the trenches, suffering, disturbance, scarcity, continual postponement of the result, and declared that either they must have victory in a given time or throw up the struggle? Does he expect the inner war with our lower selves, the personal habit of thousands of lives and the human inheritance of ages, to be less arduous or to be carried out by a rapid and easy miracle? Hunger-striking to force God or to force anybody or anything else is not the true spiritual means. I do not object to Mr Gandhi or anyone else following it for quite other than spiritual purposes, but here it is out of place; these things, I repeat, are foreign to the fundamental principle of our Yoga.

Shuddhi is the most difficult part of the whole Yoga, it is the condition of all the rest, and if that is once conquered, the real conquest is accomplished. The rest becomes a comparatively easy building on an assured basis, — it may take longer or shorter, but it can be done tranquilly and steadily. To prevent the shuddhi the lower nature in you and around you will exhaust all its efforts, and even when it cannot prevent, it will try to retard. And its strongest weapon then is, when you think you have got it, suddenly to break in on you and convince you that you have not got it, that it is far away, and so arouse disappointment, grief, loss of faith, discouragement, depression and revolt, the whole army of troubles that wait upon impure Desire. When you have once found calm, peace of mind, firm faith, equality and been able to live in it for some time, then and only then you may be sure that suddhi is founded; but you must not think it will not be disturbed. It will be, so long as your heart and prana are still capable of responding to the old movements, have still any memory and habit of vibrating to the old chords. The one thing necessary when the renewed trouble comes, is to stand back in your mind and will from it, refuse it the sanction of your higher being, even when it is raging in the lower nature. As that habit of refusal fixes itself, — at first you may not be able to do it, the buddhi may be lost in the storm, — you will find that the asuddhi, even though it still returns, becomes less violent, more and more external, until it ceases to be anything more than a faint and short-lived touch from outside and finally comes no more. That is the course it has followed with me, not only with regard to this kind of disturbance, but with regard to all imperfections. You, since you have chosen to share my Yoga for mankind, must follow the same way, undergo the same disturbances.

This is a thing which it is necessary for you to understand clearly. I myself have had for these fourteen years, and it is not yet finished, to bear all the possible typical difficulties, troubles, downfalls and backslidings that can rise in this great effort to change the whole normal human being. How else could I have been able to help or guide others on the same way? Those who join me at the present stage, must share in my burden, especially those who are themselves chosen in any degree to lead, help and guide. It may be that when I have the complete siddhi, — which I have not yet, I am only on the way to it, — then, if it be God's will to extend very largely and rapidly my work in this body, those who come after may have the way made very easy for them. But we are the pioneers hewing our way through the jungle of the lower prakriti. It will not do for us to be cowards and shirkers and refuse the burden, to clamour for everything to be made quick and easy for us. Above all things I demand from you endurance, firmness, heroism, — the true spiritual heroism. I want strong men, I do not want emotional children. Manhood first, দেবত্ব can only be built upon that. If I do not get it in those who accept my Yoga, then I shall have to understand that it is not God's will that I should succeed. If that be so, I shall accept his will calmly. But meanwhile I go on bearing whatever burden he lays on me, meeting whatever difficulties he puts in the way of my siddhi. Personally, I am now sure of success in everything except in the *kaya-siddhi*, which is still doubtful, and in my work. The work can only succeed if I find noble and worthy helpers, fitted for it by the same struggles and the same endurance. I expect them in you.

Again you must not expect the *shuddhi* or any part of the *siddhi* to be simultaneous and complete at once in all whom you associate with you. One may attain, others progress, others linger. You must not expect a sudden collective miracle. I have not come here to accomplish miracles, but to show, lead the way, help, on the road to a great inner change of our human nature, — the outer change in the world is only possible if and when that inner transmutation is effected and extends itself. You must not expect to establish a perfect *sangha* all at once and by a single leap. If you make such demands on me, I can only say that I cannot do what is not God's will. Go forward calmly and firmly, not attached to success, not disturbed by unsuccess; my help will then not fail you.

As to your idea of work, it seems to me a little crude in form; but I have no objection to your beginning it, since you feel the pressing necessity. I shall write to you later on about it at more length. The only reason why I do not lay great stress on outer work, is that it must always be *kaccha*, much embarrassed by difficulties, at best only a preparatory thing, until we are inwardly and spiritually ready. That is no reason why it should not be done. Work done in the right spirit will itself become a means of the inner siddhi.

Kali

[22]

[end 1919]

Dear M.

About your scheme of a weekly paper — as for the name it is not difficult to find; it could be called the "Standard-bearer". But are you quite sure you will be able to live up to the name and carry the thing on in the requisite manner? Nalini and Suresh are not likely to be able to write; one does not write at all in English, the other can do it if he likes, but is even more মন্থরগতি than in Bengali. To write for an English weekly would be beyond his present energies. As for myself, I am at present unable to write or do anything substantial, because of the extreme pressure of my Yoga, which has entirely occupied my time, — except for what I am obliged to give to the "Arya" and even that I have cut short as much as possible, — for the last few months. This state of things is likely to go on for the rest of the (English) year; whether it will be changed in the beginning of the next is more than I can tell with any certainty. The whole work might fall on your two Chandernagore writers. An English weekly cannot be conducted like a Bengali monthly or fortnightly. And it is not going to be a political paper of the ordinary kind which can be filled up anyhow. It will have to maintain a high reputation to be at all successful. These things however are for you to consider; you know your own strength and how far the field in Bengal is ready. As to the symbol, none has come to me. I am not altogether favourably inclined to the Uttara Yogi idea, nor anyone else here. It sounds too like the old style of spiritual pretension, and, when it is put in a current English production, suggests *bujruki*. Plain colours and as few symbols as may be are what we want at the beginning. Indian spirituality has lost itself in a jungle of symbols and shlokas and we have to get out of them on to the plain and straight ways and the open heights, where we can see the "much work that has still to be done". Why any editor? Let the Shakti herself be the editor.

As to articles for the Prabartak, Nalini used to be your mainstay and he is now in another atmosphere, — mainly hitherto of marriage and football, and complains of an inability to write. As for the other he has produced nothing since he left here, except a drama for the "Bijoli" and the answer to [?] even his Prabasi article was written and sent before he left for Bengal. Moni's inspiration flows in channels hardly suitable for the Prabartak. As for myself, it was only as a result of a solitary inspiration and with much trouble of rewriting that I got one thing done for you. Since then I have been too much occupied by my Yoga and not at all visited by any *preranâ* or at least none which lasted long enough to produce more than a few lines. In this matter I am entirely dependent on the যথা নিযুক্তোঽস্মি, as I have no natural control of the language and I have no time at present for increasing it by constant practice. It seems to me that Prabartak is getting on well enough as it is, though, if Nalini could write, it would produce an element of greater variety. You should be able to develop more writers with the necessary spiritual experience, grasp of the thought and literary ability, — these things the inner Shakti can bring to the surface if it is called upon for them, — so that Prabartak will not have to depend on three or four people only for its sustenance.

There is nothing more, I think, to add immediately, — if there is I will keep it for later answering, so that this letter may not be farther delayed. By the way, with regard to your design for the paper, the only thing that now suggests itself to me is the Hansa in the Sun, ie the free Soul lodged in the *vijñâna*, and the legend "In this sign thou shalt conquer," which is appropriate, but has the disadvantage of being borrowed from Christianity and Constantine. It would perhaps be better if you could find a Sanscrit equivalent or substitute.

K.

[23]

Jan 2. 1920

Dear M–

I write today only for your question about Manindranath and the other. We have been imprisoned in an inferno of rain for the last few days and I have only just been able to get a reliable answer. They have only to get a *sauf-conduit* from the Chandernagore Administrator and then, as they are called here by the French Government for government work, nobody can interfere with their going and coming. This is what I am told and it ought obviously to be so. How are your people going to vote? Martineau and Flandin are the two candidates at present and Martineau is impossible.

I note with some amusement the Secretary's letter to Bejoy Chatterji. The logic of the Bengal Government's attitude is a little difficult to follow. However, I suppose the King's proclamation will make some difference, but I fancy the Gov^{t} of India is the chief obstacle in these matters and they will perhaps try to limit the scope of this qualified amnesty. Still I hope that the restrictions on your own movements will be removed before long. We have received a postcard from Bejoy notifying to the "Arya" a change of address which shows that after five long years he has been released from his quite causeless imprisonment, but he is now interned in or near Ramnagar in Birbhum. As for me, I do not see, if Lajpatrai is coming to India, how they can object to my going to Bengal. But, allowed or not allowed, I have not the least intention of doing that at present or for another year at the earliest. When I do go, this or that circumstance will make no difference. M^{r} Gandhi, like the man in Macedonia with St Paul, sent me a message to "come over and help", but I had to say that I was not ready to join in the old politics and had no new programme formed for a more spiritual line of work, and it would be no use my going out till I saw my way.

As to the *Standard-bearer*, I cannot write now, as it would take too long and delay this letter. I shall write afterwards or send word. Your insured packet reached us yesterday. The increase comes in a good moment, as with Saurin in Bengal the Aryan Stores is simply marking time and the Arya is in a new economic phase which means for the moment some diminution of income.

A. G.

[*Postscript in another hand:*]

In a few days you will be getting 50 copies of "War & S. D."
K. Amrita

[24]

Pondicherry
May 1920

Dear M.

It is only now for the first time since Sirish left that I get some time to write. It is not possible for me to write all I have to say, much must wait till you come here; I will confine myself to what is of pressing importance for the work.

The circumstances under which you have to work have now changed a great deal and you will have in order to meet it to enlarge your view and inner attitude on many sides; this I think you are preparing to do, but it will be as well for me to make it as precise as possible. Up till now you were working alone in a Bengal which was in a state, first, of the last fragmentary and chaotic agitations of the old violent spirit of rajasic politics and then of torpor and inaction; and the thing that had to be done was to get rid of the errors of the past (errors once necessary for the development, but likely if persisted in to ruin and frustrate the future), to get at a firm spiritual basis and found a centre of spiritual unity and action, a *sangha*, on a small scale but sure of its principle and capable of a large development. This has now been done, but at the moment of its firm effectuation, new conditions have come in which create a new and larger problem. First, many imprisoned forces have been set loose and, secondly, the chaos of incertitude, confused agitation and unseeing unrest which has followed upon the war and is felt all over the world, is now at work in Bengal. The nature of this unrest is a haste to get something done without knowing what has to be done, a sense of and vague response to large forces without any vision of or hold on the real possibilities of the future of humanity and the nation. The old things are broken up in their assured mould and are yet persisting and trying to form themselves anew, the new exist for the most part only in vague idea without a body or clear action and without any power as yet to form what is lacking to them. The old politics in India persist in a chaos of parties and programmes centred round the Congress quarrel and the Reforms, and in Bengal we have a rush of the commercial and industrial spirit which follows the Western principle and, if it succeeds on those lines, is likely to create a very disastrous reproduction or imitation of the European situation with its corrupt capitalism and the labour struggle and the war of classes. And all that is the very reverse of our own ideal. The one advantage for us is that it is a chaos and not a new order, and it is essential that we should throw our spirit and idea upon this fermentation, and draw what is best among its personalities and forces to the side and service of our ideal so as to get a hold and a greater mass of effectuation for it in the near future.

This, as I conceive it, has to be done on two lines. First, what has already been created by us and given a right spirit, basis and form, must be kept intact in spirit, intact in basis and intact in form and must strengthen and enlarge itself in its own strength and by its inherent power of self-development and the divine force within it. This is the line of work on which you have to proceed. We have to confront the confusion around us with a thing that is sure of itself and illumined by self-knowledge and a work that by its clear form and firm growth will present more and more the aspect of an assured solution of the problems of the present and the future. The mind of the outside world may be too shallow, restless and impatient to understand a great, profound and difficult truth like ours on the side of the idea, but a visible accomplishment, a body of things done has always the power to compel and to attract the world to follow it. The only danger then is that when this body of things becomes prominent and attractive, numbers may rush into it and try to follow the externals without realising and reproducing in themselves the truth and the power of the real thing that made it possible. It was that against which I warned you when there came the first possibility of a considerable expansion. It is your business to enlarge your field of work and the work itself but not at the cost of any lowering or adulteration of its spirit. The first condition you have to assure is that all who have the work in hand or share in its direction must be of the spirit and work from the self outward; they must be men of the Yoga; but, secondly, all who enter in must have this imposed on them as the thing to be developed, must learn to develop this self-realisation first and foremost and the work only as its expression. The safety of the work lies in a strict adherence to this principle. The majority of the educated people of Bengal care only to get something done — and are not troubled by the fact that really nothing sure and lasting does get done or else only something that is likely to do as much harm as good; they care nothing about the spiritual basis of life which is India's real mission and the only possible source of her greatness, or give to it only a slight, secondary or incidental value, a something that has to be stuck on as a sentiment or a bit of colouring matter. Our whole principle is different and you have to insist on our principle in all that you say and do. Moreover, you have got a clear form for your work in association and that form as well as the spirit you must maintain; any loosening of it or compromise would mean confusion and an impairing of the force that is working in your sangha.

But on the other hand there is another line of work which is also necessary at the present moment, because the Shakti is moving in that direction also and the Shakti is the doer of the work, — and that is for others, like Barin to enter into the fermenting mass and draw out of it elements that are fit but not yet ready to take our whole idea and first to get into and then occupy existing or newly created means and activities, — as he is doing with the Narayan, — which can be increasingly made instruments of our purpose. This work will be attended with all the difficulties and uncertainties and obstacles which go with a mixed and yet unformed working, — such as you had at the beginning, but have now got over, — but we must trust to the divine Shakti to overcome them. The one difficulty that it is in our power to avoid is that of the relation between those who are working on these different lines. There the first necessity is that there should be no clash or spirit of rivalry, sense of division or monopolising personal or corporate egoism to bring discord among those who receive their inspiration from the same source and have the same ideal. A spiritual unity and a readiness for cooperation must be the guiding principle of their relations.

I have already answered to Sirish the first very natural question that arose in your mind at the inception of these new conditions, why Barin and others should cast themselves separately into the অরূপ to create a রূপ out of it, when there is already a form and a body of associated communal work in the spirit of our ideal and why all should not unite in that form and create a greater power of associated driving force to bring about a rapid enlargement and victory of the ideal. The first thing is that the particular form given is the right thing for those who are already associated together, because it has arisen naturally out of themselves and by the Will that guides, but it may well be that the same precise form may not be applicable or intended everywhere. The spirit, the truth must be the same, but the formations may be different with advantage to the spirit. To insist on one form only might well bring in that rigidity which grew upon Indian society and its civilisation in the past and brought about an imprisonment and decline of the spirit. India was strongest and most alive when she had many variations of form but one spirit. And I think, — that at least was the prevision that came on me in the Alipur jail and I do not yet see a different prospect, — that this will be the case also in the future. Then, secondly, there is a psychological necessity which we cannot at the present moment leave out of consideration. The sangha at Chandernagore is a thing that has grown up with my power behind and yours at the centre and it has assumed a body and temperament which is the result of this origination. But there are others, people of strong personality and full of shakti, who receive the spiritual force direct from me and are made themselves to be central spirits and direct radiators of the shakti, and for these to subordinate themselves to the existing body and temperament would not be easy for any and in most cases impossible, — such a subordination would not have grown out of themselves and would only be imposed by *nigraha*, a thing contrary to the *prakriti*, — and it would besides clog up the natural action of the power in them. And on the other hand to bring them in as coordinated central figures into the existing form would not be feasible, for it would mean a disturbing change and new fermentation of forces in the work that is already being well done on established lines. It would mean, even if at all successful, a sort of conducting by spiritual committee and that is not the line on which the Shakti has proceeded at Chandernagore. The more perfect coordination of all who are at work can only come, as far as I can see, after I myself go to Bengal and can act by my direct presence. Thirdly, there are a considerable number of people in the country who are not yet of us, yet can be given the necessary turn, but owing to temperamental and other causes they would not be drawn to the existing centre, but could be easily drawn by Barin, Saurin, Bijoy and others. And in all these and similar cases we must leave freedom to the guiding Shakti to use her own means and instruments. Finally, there are things to be done which need to be done, but which I would not like to impose on your sangha as it now stands, first, because it would disturb the characteristic frame and ideal temperament of your work, a thing which it is important to keep, and secondly because it would impose on you unnecessary complications; and these things can best be done by Barin and others while seeming to work independently for their own hand. And there are needs also to be met for which these other activities are required. Of that I can better speak to you in person than by letter. This being the situation, the need that remains is to keep a right relation between those who are working, and that means to extend the spirit of unity which is our basis so as to embrace all the work and workers, undeterred by differences of mentality and divergences of action.

In our work we have to fix our relations with three different kinds of people, first, those who are working for the country but without any greater idea or spiritual motive, secondly, those who have the spiritual motive but not the same ideal and inspiration as ourselves, thirdly, those who have the same ideal and inspiration, but are working in different bodies and at first on different lines. Our relation to the first class of people and their work must be based on the fundamental principle of our Yoga to see God in all and the one Self in all acting through different natures and all energies, even those which are hostile, as workings of the divine Shakti although behind the veil of the *ahankara* and the ignorant mentality. There are movements at work new and old which are not the definite reality of the future but are needed at the present moment as part of the transition. It is in this light for example that I regard many things that are in process in Europe and I am even moved to give a temporary spiritual support to efforts and movements which are not in consonance with our own and must eventually fail or cease by exhaustion of their utility but are needed as transitional powers. This too is how I regard the work of men like Tilak and Gandhi. We work in the faith that it is our vision of the future that is the central divine will, the highest actualisable possibility and therefore the one thing that must be made the object of our action; but that does not mean that the Shakti is not working in her own covert way and for her own ends through others. No doubt their movements are of a western and materialistic inspiration or else an imperfect mixture, and some day it may be we shall have to give battle to them as certainly we shall have to overcome the spirit that informs them. But that time has not come yet, and meanwhile what we have to do is to develop and spread our own vision and idea and give it body so as eventually to confront the things that are in possession of the present with a realisation of the things that belong to the future. I think that at this juncture we should avoid a too direct attack or criticism of them as that only creates avoidable opposition to our own work. The positive rather than the negative method is the one we should adopt until we are strong enough to convince by our visible strength and work the minds that are now attracted by the present power and activity of other movements, — to assert our own ideal as the true and the right way but not to invite conflict by a destructive frontal attack on the others.

As for the second class, such as the other spiritual movements in Bengal, our attitude to most should be that of a benevolent neutrality and a sympathy for such of their elements as are at all in consonance with our own ideal. The one thing which we have to get rid of is the idea of Maya and ascetic abandonment of the life and effort of humanity and also, though that is social and religious rather than directly spiritual, the clinging to old forms and refusal to admit new development. The movements that admit life and Ananda and are ready to break away from the old narrowness of social and other forms, are so much to the good even though they have not the full largeness of the integral spiritual idea and realisation. These we must leave to go on their way and run themselves out or else enlarge themselves till they are ready to coalesce with us. I do not mean that with regard to either of these classes we should refrain from all criticism of the insufficiency of ideal or method, but this should be as far as possible quite general, a discussion and the enforcement of a greater principle and truer method, distinguishing truth from error but not too pointedly aggressive against particular things or so expressed as to seem to hit straight at this or that person or body. To insist on our own propaganda and work is always necessary and sometimes though not always to meet any attack on it; but we need not go out of our way to invite conflict. To this rule there may be particular exceptions; I only indicate what seems to me for the present the right general attitude.

This once understood, the really important thing becomes at once our own work and the relation between different workers, and here, as I have said, what we need is the growth of spiritual unity and a readiness to take the work of others as supplementing one's own and, wherever it is called for and possible, to cooperate. There is a danger here from the subtler forms of egoism. It is not enough to realise unity among those who are already working with one mind as one soul in many bodies; there must be unity of spirit with others who are following different ways or working separately for the present and complete *samata* with regard to their action, even if it seems to one wrong or imperfect, and patience with regard to mental and moral divergences. This should be easy for you, as it means only getting rid of the remnants of your sattwic ahankara; it may not be so easy for others who have still a rajasic ahankara to trouble them. But if people like you and Barin give the example, that difficulty can eventually be got over; if on the contrary you also allow misunderstandings among yourselves, the work is likely to be very unnecessarily hampered. I may give as an instance, the matter about the *Prabartak*. Certain casual utterances of Saurin's, made in answer to queries and not volunteered, have come to you quite misreported as a sort of intentional campaign to belittle the paper and the other half of what he said, namely, that the Prabartak was inspired, though not actually written by me and the spirit and substance were that of my ideal, never reached your ears. I may add also that the alleged incident to which you took exception, as to his method of raising money, never actually happened. Again the advertisement or rather paragraph about Narayana in the *Amrita [Bazar]*[14] was not inserted by Barin, but by someone else according to that other person's idea after a conversation with him: Barin was not responsible for the form nor had he any intention of claiming the Narayana as the sole and direct mouthpiece of my ideas. It is these misunderstandings which I want to see all of you avoid and it can be easily done if those who are among the principal channels of the Shakti preserve the spiritual unity which ought to prevail among those who derive their inspiration from the same source and follow the same ideal. Others less developed may give cause for offence owing to their inability to control the rajasic ego still working in them, but calm, patience, *prema* and *samata* are the spirit in which we should meet such causes of offence; otherwise where is the perfection we seek by our Yoga? Let me add, while I am on this subject, that Haradhan seems to have been misinformed about Nalini. As a matter of fact he has mixed with no দল, nor engaged in any kind of associated activity while in Bengal. And if he had, it would have been with no other purpose than to draw others to our Yoga and our way of thinking; but as a matter of fact he remained inactive.

---

[14] *MS* Bazaar

As for the other matter of the different lines of work, there is one instance which illustrates the difficulties that may arise. Barin has taken up the "Narayan" with the idea of gradually and eventually making it another instrument of propaganda for our ideas, and if he succeeds, that will be so much the more strength for us. It will not be a mere doubling of the work of the *Prabartak*, as it will present our ideas in a different way and so as to catch minds of a different type from those who are naturally attracted by the *Prabartak* which demands from its readers a mind already turned to spiritual things or at least naturally able to enter into that atmosphere. To others who are of a less spiritual and intuitive, a more intellectual or literary and artistic temperament, the articles of the *Prabartak* written out of an experience to which they are strangers, are not easily assimilable, and it is these minds which it may be possible to approach through the "Narayan". But if there is not a right understanding, the attitude of the two to each other may be that of separation and competition rather than of activities supplementary to each other in the same work. In addition he has now the chance of getting hold of a strong publishing agency in Calcutta, as Sirish must already have told you, but he hesitates to take it up from fear that it may be regarded as a rival agency to the Prabartak Publishing House. He is not afraid of any misunderstanding between you and him, but of others connected with either work taking things in the wrong light and bringing in an unwholesome spirit of competition. This is a thing which might easily happen, but must not be allowed to happen. I have told him that I would write to you and ask you to see that there is no misunderstanding in the matter, before giving him sanction to take up the possibility. Afterwards it will be for you and him to see that things on both sides are managed in the right spirit. This agency, if it comes into Barin's control, will be conducted with the same idea and method as the "Narayan" and all the profits except what is necessary for the maintenance and extension of the agency, will come to us and our work. These two things are the first fields the Shakti has offered to his energy and they are of a kind for which he is well fitted; their success means for us a great advantage. A time is now coming in which the Shakti is pressing to break down the barriers in which we have had hitherto to move and we must be ready to follow her indications without allowing our personal preferences and limitations to attempt to dictate to her any mind-made limits.

As for the extension of the work you are doing, I have spoken in general terms to Sirish and it is not necessary to add anything in this letter. When you come, I shall perhaps have more to say about it. It is regrettable that at this moment the physical strain should take an effect on your body; I trust it is only a part of a temporary invasion of Roga of which many of us including myself have recently felt some touch. But you must be careful not to throw too much strain on the physical system. A timely sparing of the physical system when there is an indication of overstrain is often necessary before the Shakti has taken perfect possession of the more external parts of the adhara or the *vijnana* will is strong enough to set right at once weakenings and disturbances. There remains the question of your visit to Pondicherry. I had thought to delay it for a short time until I saw my way more clearly on certain important matters; but I now believe this is not necessary and it will be as well for you to come as soon as may be. I hardly suppose that Nelson's curious reservation about your visit means anything serious; otherwise he would have been more positive about it. I take it that they do not like the idea and would be suspicious about its motive and watch your actions more narrowly after it; but as they are obstinately determined to be suspicious about anything we do in any case, this by itself cannot be allowed to be an obstacle. I should suggest therefore that you might come over after making arrangements for the work in your absence in such a way that the visit may be a fairly long one.

The work of the Arya has fallen into arrears and I have to spend just now the greater part of my energy in catching up, and the rest of my time, in the evening, is taken up by the daily visit of the Richards. I hope to get over the worst part of this necessity by the middle of June, so that by the time you come I may have a freer atmosphere to attend to the currents of the work and the world about me. There is now the beginning of a pressure from many sides inviting my spiritual attention to the future कर्म and this means the need of a greater outflowing of energy than when I had nothing to do but support a concentrated nucleus of the Shakti. I doubt however whether I shall be in a fit condition for meeting the demand till August, especially as I have not been able to get the physical basis yet put right by the power of the vijnana. After that we shall see what and how much can actually be done under the new circumstances. Meanwhile your visit may help to get things into preparatory line both in the inward motor-power and the outward determination.

A. G.

[25]

Pondicherry
Sept. 2. 1920

Dear M.

My impression about your marriage idea is that you are going too fast. What you say about the commune and the married couple is quite right as our ideal or rather as one side of our ideal, but there is here a question of time and tactics. In our work, especially in the preparatory and experimental part of it, there must be not only spiritual hardihood, साहसं, but skill and prudence, कौशलं. The question is whether it is necessary or wise and advisable to engage in a battle with society at the moment on a point which it considers to be vital but which is to us subordinate. Our first business is to establish our communal system on a firm spiritual, secondly on a firm economical foundation, and to spread it wide, but the complete social change can only come as a result of the other two. It must come first in spirit, afterwards in form. If a man enters into the commune by spiritual unity, if he gives to it his life and labour and considers all he has as belonging to all, the first necessity is secured. The next thing is [to] make the movement economically self-sufficient, and to do that requires at the present moment all the energy you can command. These two things are, the one a constant, the other an immediate necessity. The institution of a communal ceremony of marriage can only be a future necessity; it involves nothing essential at the moment. The idea is that the family in future is not to be a separate unit, but a sub-unit of the communal whole. It is too early to decide exactly what form the family life will take, it may take many forms, not always the same. The principle is the important thing. But this principle can be observed whatever the form of the marriage ceremony they may have gone through at the time of personal union, whether recognised or not by the present social system. An external necessity does not arise in the present case, as Khagen is not marrying outside his caste.

It remains to be seen whether this step, though not necessary, is advisable. In the first place by your action you declare your commune to be an entirely separate thing from the rest of Hindu society; you will be following in the way of the Brahma Samaj or more exactly in that of Thakur Dayananda. That means a violent scission and a long struggle, which is likely greatly to complicate your other work and put difficulties in the way which need not have been there. My own idea was for our system to grow up in the society, not out of it, though different from it, first bringing in a new spiritual idea, — a field in which opposition and intolerance cannot now long endure, — secondly, justifying itself on the outward plane by becoming a centre of economical regeneration and new power for the country, a work in which we shall have sympathy more than opposition, and getting forward with other matters according to need and opportunity and with a considerable freedom and latitude, meeting social orthodoxy with the plea of reembodying the old free Hindu idea in new forms rather than with the profession of a violent rejection both of the past and the present. In this process a clash will be inevitable sooner or later, but a deliberate precipitation of the conflict in so extreme a form as you suggest was not within my intentions. That was to come, but only when we were strong and had already a hold on the country, so that we might have a strong support as well as enemies.

Your point is that the commune should not depend either on Government or society for the validity of the union. It seems to me sufficient if that is spiritually insisted on or at most given an outward indication. I would suggest that the exchange of garlands should be done before the commune, as it was done in the old Swayamvara before the assembly. The conventional marriage can then be added as a concession to the present society, as in old times the *sampradana* by the father was added to the *swayamvara* although in fact the svayamvara itself would have been quite valid without it. If a case should arise in future where the mutual giving would be necessary by itself, we might then go to the more extreme course. This would, it seems to me, satisfy everything immediately necessary or advisable, — first, the assertion of free choice as the principle of marriage, secondly, the formal inclusion of the couple in their united life in the commune, apart from any conventional marriage ceremony, thirdly, the justification of a continuity between our movement and the great past of India. The movement of course is not to stop with the forms of the past or a modernisation of them, but this sort of preliminary advance under cover will prepare more easily its future advance into the open, which we can afterwards make as rapid as we choose. At the same time it will have the advantage of awaking a less vehement opposition at a moment when it seems to me we are not yet ready for a frontal attack in the social field and a decisive battle. If a battle becomes necessary, of course we must not flinch from it, but I should myself prefer to have it after I have reached the proper stage in my Yoga and after I return to Bengal. At present I have so many calls upon an energy which is still largely occupied with pushing forward to its own perfection that I do not quite like the idea of the heavy drain on it such a struggle would entail. This at least is my present view on the matter.

The Standard Bearer is, I am afraid, subject to the criticism passed on it; the criticism is general and I felt it myself. It is a sort of weekly "Arya"; but the Arya style and method are not what is wanted for a weekly paper. What you need to do, is to make the ideas easy to the people and give them a practical direction. At present you give only a difficult philosophy and abstract principles. I shall write more about this matter hereafter as soon as I find time.

A. G.

[26]

Pondicherry
Nov 11. 1920

Dear M.

It has become necessary for me to give a categorical denial to all the rumours and ascriptions of opinion which irresponsible people are publishing from time to time about me. The Janmabhumi nonsense is especially idiotic and I do not understand how anyone with brains in his head could have accepted such childish rubbish as mine. Please write an article in the next issue of the Standardbearer saying that in view of the conflicting rumours that have been set abroad, some representing me as for the Reforms and others as for Non-Cooperation, you (that is the St. B.) have written to me and received the following reply which you are authorised to publish. "All these assertions are without foundation. I have made no pronouncement of my political views. I have authorised nobody whether publicly or privately to be the spokesman of my opinions. The rumour suggesting that I support the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms and am opposed to Non-Cooperation is without basis. I have nothing to do personally with the manifesto of Sir Ashutosh

Chaudhuri and others citing a passage from my past writings. The recorded opinions of a public man are public property and I do not disclaim what I have written; but the responsibility for its application to the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms and the present situation rests entirely with the signatories to the manifesto. The summary of my opinions in the *Janmabhumi*, representing me as an enthusiastic follower of Mahatma Gandhi, of which I only came to know the other day, is wholly unauthorised and does *not* "render justice to my views" either in form or in substance. Things are attributed to me in it which I would never have dreamed of saying. It is especially adding insult to injury to make me say that I am ready to sacrifice my conscience to a Congress mandate and recommend all to go and do likewise. I have not stated to anyone that "full responsible self-government completely independent of British control" or any other purely political object is the goal to the attainment of which I intend to devote my efforts and I have not made any rhetorical prophecy of a colossal success for the Non-Cooperation movement. As you well know, I am identifying myself with only one kind of work or propaganda as regards India, the endeavour to reconstitute her cultural, social and economic life within larger and freer lines than the past on a spiritual basis. As regards political questions, I would request my friends and the public not to attach credence to anything purporting to be a statement of my opinions which is not expressly authorised by me or issued over my signature."

I shall write to you about other matters in another letter.

A. G.

P.S. Please ask Mani Naik to see my sister before he comes here. She wants to send with him certain utensils for our use.

[27]

TIME INOPPORTUNE. INTERVIEW NOT POSSIBLE. WHY NOT WRITE?

13 May 1925

[28]

[8 May 1930]

Nalini.

There are certain words (marked) I fail to decipher and I don't understand the first line of the second paragraph. Can you enlighten me as to what he really wants, behind the twists and vagueness of his rhetoric?[15]

Sri Aurobindo

Write to Motilal in Bengali telling him that Sri Aurobindo for the last few years does not see anybody, not even his disciples here, except on the three days of the year set apart for darshan and even then does not speak to anyone. At first an occasional exception was made but now even this has not been done for a long time. It is through the Mother and not by personal contact that he directs the work. If anyone wants to ask him a question of importance, get a difficulty solved etc, he writes and the answer is given in writing.

Add that the difficulty for which he wants a solution is not clear to Sri Aurobindo from his letter. He appears to say that the Sangha is securely founded on a spiritual basis and that he wishes now to go out in search of *mukti*. He knows that *mukti* in the ordinary sense (moksha), release from the world and life, is not an aim in Sri Aurobindo's Yoga. Mukti here means liberation from ego and all its movements and elevation into a divine and spiritual consciousness. For this it may be necessary to come out of the ordinary life and its unsuitable atmosphere, surroundings and activities. But if the Sangha is well founded on a spiritual basis then there ought to be a spiritual atmosphere there favourable to this kind of *mukti*, the very work itself being a help and a means toward it and not an obstacle. It is therefore not clear why it should be necessary for him to go out of it to get *mukti*.

---

[15] *Sri Aurobindo wrote these two sentences to his secretary Nolini Kanta Gupta on the back of a letter from Motilal. He wrote the two paragraphs that follow on the back of the same letter, apparently after getting the required clarification. — Ed.*

Draft of a Letter to Saurin Bose

[June 1914]

Dear Saurin,

I have received your letter and I reply first to the one or two points in it which demand an answer. We have changed the name of the review from the New Idea to the Arya. We are bringing out a prospectus with specimens of the content which will have to be distributed so as to attract subscribers. It will probably be out in the middle of the month. Please let us know before then how many copies we should send to you to distribute. The address of the Review will be 7 Rue Dupleix & subscriptions should be sent to the Manager, Arya at that address. This is the house that has been found for M & Madame Richard; they have not occupied it yet but will do so within a week or so. It is Martin's house over on the other side of the street just near to the Governor's. It is also to be the headquarters of the Review & the Society, at least for the present.

Sukumar has not yet sent the garden-money but I presume he will do so before long. I have received Rs 400 of the Rs 600 due to me from another quarter & hope to get the remainder by August. With the garden money, this will mean Rs 1100, & with another Rs 100 & 130 for payment of the old rent, we could just go on for a year even without the Rs 1000 arrangement yearly or other money. But Rs 150 is the real minimum sum needed, especially if we keep this house after Nagen goes, as Richard wishes. If the Review succeeds, the problem will be solved; for with 500 subscribers abroad & 1500 in India, we could run the Review, pay the assistants & keep a sufficient sum for the two Editors.

As for your loans, my point was not about a legal process or any material trouble as the result of non-payment. It was that those who give the loan should not have any feeling of not being rightly dealt with, if we should fail to repay them, any feeling that advantage had been taken of their friendship. I have had too bad an experience of money-matters & their power to cool down friendly relations not to be on my guard in this respect.

Therefore, I desire that there should be no ground left for future misunderstanding in any matter of the kind, & loans are the most fruitful of these things, much more than money asked or taken as a gift.

You will of course return before August, — as soon in fact as it is no longer necessary for you to stay in Bengal to get matters arranged there. I await your farther information with regard to the idea of Mrinalini coming here. At present it seems to me that that will depend very much on the success of the Review & a more settled condition in my means of life. We shall see, however, whether anything else develops.

To K. R. Appadurai

"ARYA"
Revue de Grande Synthèse Philosophique
7, rue Dupleix, PONDICHÉRY.

13th April. 1916

Dear Mr Appadurai

Thanks for the money. About the Raja of Pittapur, the difficulty is that I do not know Pundit Shivanath very well, and secondly we were never associated politically. I am even afraid that any letter of mine might do a disservice, if, as I think, the Pundit belongs to the Moderate school of politics; it might cause him to look upon Mr K.V.R. as an extreme politician to be avoided rather than supported. However, if you don't mind taking the risk, you can use the letter which I send.

Kindly ask Mr K.V.R. to send me money from time to time if he can for a while as just at present my sources of supply in Bengal are very much obstructed and I am in considerable difficulty.

Yours sincerely
Aurobindo Ghose

Fragmentary Draft Letter

[.....] with whatever the superior wisdom and political experience of the ruling race to grant to them. You are asking for a thing contrary to human nature.*[16]

I state the difficulty broadly as I see it; I shall try to make my meaning more precise in a subsequent letter. Meanwhile all I can say is that whatever can be done to alter this state [of] things — subject to my conscience and lights, I am always willing to do. But my scope of action is very limited. I am an exile in French India, in danger of arrest or internment if I step across the border. I have long abstained from all intermiscence in politics, and anything I might say, write or do now would be misunderstood by the Government. They regard me, I believe, as an arch revolutionary and irreconcilable; any assertion of mine to the contrary would be regarded probably as camouflage or covert for unavowable designs. Nor could I engage to satisfy them by my utterances or action, I would necessarily have to speak and act from the point of view of Indian aspiration to liberty and this is a thing which they seem still to regard [as] objectionable. All that I can see at present to do is in the line I am doing, but that is necessarily a [?samadhic] kind of action which can only bear fruit indirectly and not in the present

But if the English mind would take the first step and try to see things from the Indian's standpoint — see their mind and act accordingly, all difficulties might be solved. The Indian mind has not the Irish memory for past wrongs and discords, it forgives and forgets easily. Only it must be made to feel that the approach on the other side is frank and whole hearted. If it once felt that, every difficulty would be solved.

I send you my volume of poems since you have desired to read it, but with some hesitation. I doubt whether you will find much that is worth your perusal except two or three of the shorter poems, they were written long ago, some as many as 20 or 25 years, and are rather gropings after verse and style than a self-expression. It is only now that I am doing work which I feel has some chance of living, but it is not yet ready for publication.

---

[16] *The asterisk is Sri Aurobindo's; its significance is not known. — Ed.*

To a Would-be Contributor to the *Arya*

Pondicherry
Sept. 3. 1919

Dear Sir,

I regret that not knowing you would require the copy back, — we do not usually return manuscripts, — I have entered upon it certain alterations to indicate the kind of changes which would be needed if you wished to have it published in the "Arya". The magazine aims at a very high standard of style and thinking, and I make it a rule to admit nothing which is not in my judgment as perfect as possible in both directions. Your poem is noble throughout in idea and has fine lines, but is not throughout of one piece; that is to say, it is written in a high and almost epic strain, but there are dissonant turns and phrases which belong to a lower pitch of writing. I was about to write to you to this effect. I understand from your letter that you wish now to publish the poem elsewhere; but the copy is spoilt for the purpose, though I can return it if you still desire.

Yours sincerely
Aurobindo Ghose
Director, "Arya"

To Joseph Baptista

Pondicherry
Jan. 5, 1920

Dear Baptista,

Your offer is a tempting one, but I regret that I cannot answer it in the affirmative. It is due to you that I should state explicitly my reasons. In the first place I am not prepared at present to return to British India. This is quite apart from any political obstacle. I understand that up to last September the Government of Bengal (and probably the Government of Madras also) were opposed to my return to British India and that practically this opposition meant that if I went back I should be interned or imprisoned under one or other of the beneficent Acts which are apparently still to subsist as helps in ushering in the new era of trust and cooperation. I do not suppose other Governments would be any more delighted by my appearance in their respective provinces. Perhaps the King's Proclamation may make a difference, but that is not certain since, as I read it, it does not mean an amnesty, but an act of gracious concession and benevolence limited by the discretion of the Viceroy. Now I have too much work on my hands to waste my time in the leisured ease of an involuntary Government guest. But even if I were assured of an entirely free action and movement, I should yet not go just now. I came to Pondicherry in order to have freedom and tranquillity for a fixed object having nothing to do with present politics — in which I have taken no direct part since my coming here, though what I could do for the country in my own way I have constantly done, — and until it is accomplished, it is not possible for me to resume any kind of public activity. But if I were in British India, I should be obliged to plunge at once into action of different kinds. Pondicherry is my place of retreat, my cave of tapasya, — not of the ascetic kind, but of a brand of my own invention. I must finish that, I must be internally armed and equipped for my work before I leave it.

Next in the matter of the work itself. I do not at all look down on politics or political action or consider I have got above them. I have always laid a dominant stress and I now lay an entire stress on the spiritual life, but my idea of spirituality has nothing to do with ascetic withdrawal or contempt or disgust of secular things. There is to me nothing secular, all human activity is for me a thing to be included in a complete spiritual life, and the importance of politics at the present time is very great. But my line and intention of political activity would differ considerably from anything now current in the field. I entered into political action and continued it from 1903 to 1910 with one aim and one alone, to get into the mind of the people a settled will for freedom and the necessity of a struggle to achieve it in place of the futile ambling Congress methods till then in vogue. That is now done and the Amritsar Congress is the seal upon it. The will is not as practical and compact nor by any means as organised and sustained in action as it should be, but there is the will and plenty of strong and able leaders to guide it. I consider that in spite of the inadequacy of the Reforms, the will to self-determination, if the country keeps its present temper, as I have no doubt it will, is bound to prevail before long. What preoccupies me now is the question what it is going to do with its self-determination, how will it use its freedom, on what lines is it going to determine its future?

You may ask why not come out and help, myself, so far as I can, in giving a lead? But my mind has a habit of running inconveniently ahead of the times, — some might say, out of time altogether into the world of the ideal. Your party, you say, is going to be a social democratic party. Now I believe in something which might be called social democracy, but not in any of the forms now current, and I am not altogether in love with the European kind, however great an improvement it may be on the past. I hold that India having a spirit of her own and a governing temperament proper to her own civilisation, should in politics as in everything else strike out her own original path and not stumble in the wake of Europe. But this is precisely what she will be obliged to do, if she has to start on the road in her present chaotic and unprepared condition of mind. No doubt people talk of India developing on her own lines, but nobody seems to have very clear or sufficient ideas as to what those lines are to be. In this matter I have formed ideals and certain definite ideas of my own, in which at present very few are likely to follow me, since they are governed by an uncompromising spiritual idealism of an unconventional kind and would be unintelligible to many and an offence and stumbling block to a great number. But I have not as yet any clear and full idea of the practical lines; I have no formed programme. In a word, I am feeling my way in my mind and am not ready for either propaganda or action. Even if I were, it would mean for some time ploughing my lonely furrow or at least freedom to take my own way. As the editor of your paper, I should be bound to voice the opinion of others and reserve my own, and while I have full sympathy with the general ideas of the advanced parties so far as concerns the action of the present moment and, if I were in the field, would do all I could to help them, I am almost incapable by nature of limiting myself in that way, at least to the extent that would be requisite.

Excuse the length of this screed. I thought it necessary to explain fully so as to avoid giving you the impression that I declined your request from any affectation or reality of spiritual aloofness or wish to shirk the call of the country or want of sympathy with the work you and others are so admirably doing. I repeat my regret that I am compelled to disappoint you.

Yours sincerely,
Aurobindo Ghose

To Balkrishna Shivaram Moonje

[1]

Pondicherry
Aug 30. 1920

Dear Dr. Moonje,

As I have already wired to you, I find myself unable to accept your offer of the Presidentship of the Nagpur Congress. There are reasons even within the political field itself which in any case would have stood in my way. In the first place I have never signed and would never care to sign as a personal declaration of faith the Congress creed, as my own is of a different character. In the next place since my retirement from British India I have developed an outlook and views which have diverged a great deal from those I held at the time and, as they are remote from present actualities and do not follow the present stream of political action, I should find myself very much embarrassed what to say to the Congress. I am entirely in sympathy with all that is being done so far as its object is to secure liberty for India, but I should be unable to identify myself with the programme of any of the parties. The President of the Congress is really a mouthpiece of the Congress and to make from the presidential chair a purely personal pronouncement miles away from what the Congress is thinking and doing would be grotesquely out of place. Not only so, but nowadays the President has a responsibility in connection with the All India Congress Committee and the policy of the Congress during the year and other emergencies that may arise which, apart from my constitutional objection and, probably, incapacity to discharge official duties of any kind or to put on any kind of harness, I should be unable to fulfil, since it is impossible for me to throw over suddenly my fixed programme and settle at once in British India. These reasons would in any case have come in the way of my accepting your offer.

The central reason however is this that I am no longer first and foremost a politician, but have definitely commenced another kind of work with a spiritual basis, a work of spiritual, social, cultural and economic reconstruction of an almost revolutionary kind, and am even making or at least supervising a sort of practical or laboratory experiment in that sense which needs all the attention and energy that I can have to spare. It is impossible for me to combine political work of the current kind and this at the beginning. I should practically have to leave it aside, and this I cannot do, as I have taken it up as my mission for the rest of my life. This is the true reason of my inability to respond to your call.

I may say that in any case I think you would be making a wrong choice in asking me to take Tilak's place at your head. No one now alive in India, or at least no one yet known, is capable of taking that place, but myself least of all. I am an idealist to the marrow and could only be useful when there is something drastic to be done, a radical or revolutionary line to be taken, (I do not mean revolutionary by violence) a movement with an ideal aim and direct method to be inspired and organised. Tilak's policy of "responsive cooperation", continued agitation and obstruction whenever needed — and that would be oftener than not in the present circumstances — is, no doubt, the only alternative to some form of non-cooperation or passive resistance. But it would need at its head a man of his combined suppleness, skill and determination to make it effective. I have not the suppleness and skill — at least of the kind needed — and could only bring the determination, supposing I accepted the policy, which I could not do practically, as, for [ ][17] reasons of my own, nothing could induce me to set my foot in the new Councils. On the other hand a gigantic movement of non-cooperation merely to get some Punjab officials punished or to set up again the Turkish Empire which is dead and gone, shocks my ideas both of proportion and of common sense. I could only understand it as a means of "embarrassing the Government" and seizing hold of immediate grievances in order to launch an acute struggle for autonomy after the manner of Egypt and Ireland, — though no doubt without the element of violence. All the same, it could be only on a programme involving an entire change of the creed, function and organisation and policy of the Congress, making it a centre of national reconstruction and not merely of political agitation that I could — if I had not the other reason I have spoken of — re-enter the political field. Unfortunately the political mind and habits created by the past methods of the Congress do not make that practicable at the moment. I think you will see that, holding these ideas, it is not possible for me to intervene and least of all on the chair of the President.

Might I suggest that the success of the Congress can hardly depend on the presence of a single person and one who has long been in obscurity? The friends who call on me are surely wrong in thinking that the Nagpur Congress will be uninspiring without me. The national movement is surely strong enough now to be inspired with its own idea especially at a time of stress like the present. I am sorry to disappoint, but I have given the reasons that compel me and I cannot see how it is avoidable.

Yours sincerely
Aurobindo Ghose

---

[17] *MS* my

[2]

RECONSIDERATION IMPOSSIBLE [SUBSEQUENT][18] EVENTS ONLY CONFIRM MY DECISION.

19 September 1920

To Chittaranjan Das

“Arya” Office
Pondicherry
the 18th November, 1922

Dear Chitta,

It is a long time, almost two years I think, since I have written a letter to anyone. I have been so much retired and absorbed in my Sadhana that contact with the outside world has till lately been reduced to a minimum. Now that I am looking outward again, I find that circumstances lead me to write first to you, I say circumstances, because it is a need that makes me take up the pen after so long a disuse.

The need is in connection with the first outward work that I am undertaking after this long inner retirement. Barin has gone to Bengal and will see you in connection with it, but a word from me is perhaps necessary and therefore I send you through Barin this letter. I am giving him also a letter of authority from which you will understand the immediate nature of the need for which I have sent him to raise funds. But I may add something to make it more definite.

I think you know my present idea and the attitude towards life and work to which it has brought me. I have become confirmed in a perception which I had always, less clearly and dynamically then, but which has now become more and more evident to me, that the true basis of work and life is the spiritual, that is to say, a new consciousness to be developed only by Yoga. I see more and more manifestly that man can never get out of the futile circle the race is always treading until he has raised himself on to the new foundation. I believe also that it is the mission of

---

[18] *MS (telegram)* SUBSEQUENTLY

India to make this great victory for the world. But what precisely was the nature of the dynamic power of this greater consciousness? What was the condition of its effective truth? How could it be brought down, mobilised, organised, turned upon life? How could our present instruments, intellect, mind, life, body be made true and perfect channels for this great transformation? This was the problem I have been trying to work out in my own experience and I have now a sure basis, a wide knowledge and some mastery of the secret. Not yet its fulness and complete imperative presence — therefore I have still to remain in retirement. For I am determined not to work in the external field till I have the sure and complete possession of this new power of action, — not to build except on a perfect foundation.

But still I have gone far enough to be able to undertake one work on a larger scale than before — the training of others to receive this Sadhana and prepare themselves as I have done, for without that my future work cannot even be begun. There are many who desire to come here and whom I can admit for the purpose, there are a greater number who can be trained at a distance; but I am unable to carry on unless I have sufficient funds to be able to maintain a centre here and one or two at least outside. I need therefore much larger resources than I at present command. I have thought that by your recommendation and influence you may help Barin to gather them for me. May I hope that you will do this for me?

One word to avoid a possible misunderstanding. Long ago I gave to Motilal Roy of Chandernagore the ideas and some principles and lines of a new social and economical organisation and education and this with my spiritual force behind him he has been trying to work out in his own way in his Sangha. This is quite a separate thing from what I am now writing about, — my own work which I must do myself and no one can do for me.

I have been following with interest your political activities specially your present attempt to give a more flexible and practically effective turn to the non-cooperation movement. I doubt whether you will succeed against such contrary forces, but I wish you success in your endeavour. I am most interested however in your indications about Swaraj; for I have been developing my own ideas about the organisation of a true Indian Swaraj and I shall look forward to see how far yours will fall in with mine.

Yours
Aurobindo.

To Shyamsundar Chakravarty

Pondicherry, March 12 – 1926

Dear Chakravarty,

I have been obliged to answer in the negative to your request by wire for contributions to the ["Bengalee"][19] on the occasion of your taking it over on behalf of the Nationalist party. I have been for a long time under a self-denying ordinance which precludes me from making any public utterance on politics and I have had to refuse similar requests from "Forward" and other papers. Even if it were not so, I confess that in the present confused state of politics I should be somewhat at a loss to make any useful pronouncement. No useful purpose could be served by any general statements on duties in the present situation. Everybody seems to be agreed on the general object and issue and the only question worth writing on is that of the best practical means for securing the agreed object and getting rid of the obstacles in the way. This is in any case a question for the practical leaders actually in the field and not for a retired spectator at a distance. It would be difficult for me even to pass an opinion on the rival policies in the field; for I have been unable to gather from what I have seen in the papers what is the practical turn they propose to give these policies or how they propose by them to secure Swaraj or bring it nearer. Please therefore excuse my refusal.

Yours sincerely,
Aurobindo Ghose.

---

[19] *MS* "Bengali"

Open Letters
Published in Newspapers
1909 – 1925

To the Editor of the *Bengalee*

BABU AUROBINDO GHOSE'S LETTER

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "BENGALEE",

SIR, — Will you kindly allow me to express through your columns my deep sense of gratitude to all who have helped me in my hour of trial? Of the innumerable friends known and unknown, who have contributed each his mite to swell my defence fund, it is impossible for me now even to learn the names, and I must ask them to accept this public expression of my feeling in place of a private gratitude. Since my acquittal many telegrams and letters have reached me and they are too numerous to reply to individually. The love which my countrymen have heaped upon me in return for the little I have been able to do for them, amply repays any apparent trouble or misfortune my public activity may have brought upon me. I attribute my escape to no human agency, but first of all to the protection of the Mother of us all who has never been absent from me but always held me in Her arms and shielded me from grief and disaster, and secondarily to the prayers of thousands which have been going up to Her on my behalf ever since I was arrested. If it is the love of my country which led me into danger, it is also the love of my countrymen which has brought me safe through it.

AUROBINDO GHOSE.

6, College Square, May 14.

published 18 May 1909

To the Editor of the *Hindu*

[1]

BABU AUROBINDO GHOSE AT PONDICHERRY

A STATEMENT

Babu Aurobindo Ghose writes to us from 42, Rue de Pavillon, Pondicherry, under date November 7, 1910: —

I shall be obliged if you will allow me to inform every one interested in my whereabouts through your journal that I am and will remain in Pondicherry. I left British India over a month before proceedings were taken against me and, as I had purposely retired here in order to pursue my Yogic sadhana undisturbed by political action or pursuit and had already severed connection with my political work, I did not feel called upon to surrender on the warrant for sedition, as might have been incumbent on me if I had remained in the political field. I have since lived here as a religious recluse, visited only by a few friends, French and Indian, but my whereabouts have been an open secret, long known to the agents of the Government and widely rumoured in Madras as well as perfectly well-known to every one in Pondicherry. I find myself now compelled, somewhat against my will, to give my presence here a wider publicity. It has suited certain people for an ulterior object to construct a theory that I am not in Pondicherry, but in British India, and I wish to state emphatically that I have not been in British India since March last and shall not set foot on British territory even for a single moment in the future until I can return publicly. Any statement by any person to the contrary made now or in the future, will be false. I wish, at the same time, to make it perfectly clear that I have retired for the time from political activity of any kind and that I will see and correspond with no one in connection with political subjects. I defer all explanation or justification of my action in leaving British India until the High Court in Calcutta shall have pronounced on the culpability or innocence of the writing in the KARMAYOGIN on which I am indicted.

published 8 November 1910

[2]

Babu Aurobindo Ghose.

Babu Aurobindo Ghose writes from 42, Rue de Pavillon, Pondicherry, under date the 23rd instant: —

I am obliged to seek the protection of publicity against attempts that are being made to prejudice my name and reputation even in my retirement at Pondicherry. A number of individuals have suddenly begun to make their appearance here to whom my presence seems to be the principal attraction. One of these gems heralded his advent by a letter in which he regretted that the Police had refused to pay his expenses to Pondicherry, but informed me that in spite of this scurvy treatment he was pursuing his pilgrimage to me "jumping from station to station" without a ticket. Since his arrival he has been making scenes in the streets, collecting small crowds, shouting Bande Mataram, showing portraits of myself and other Nationalists along with copies of the Geneva *Bande Mataram* and the *Indian Sociologist* as credentials, naming men of advanced views as his "gurus", professing to possess the Manicktola bomb-formula, offering to kill to order all who may be obnoxious for private or public reasons to any Swadeshist and informing everyone, but especially French gendarmes, that he has come to Pondicherry to massacre Europeans. The man seems to be a remarkable linguist, conversing in all the languages of Southern India and some of the North as well as in English and French. He has made three attempts to force or steal his way into my house, once disguised as a Hindustani and professing to be Mr. Tilak's durwan. He employs his spare time, when not employed in these antics for which he claims to have my sanction, in watching trains for certain Police-agents as an amateur detective. I take him for a dismissed police spy trying to storm his way back into the kingdom of heaven. Extravagant and barefaced as are this scoundrel's tactics, I mention them because he is one of a class, some of whom are quieter but more dangerous. I hear also that there are some young men without ostensible means of livelihood, who go about Madras figuring as my shishyas, instructed by me to undertake this or that activity, and request people to pay money for work or for my maintenance. After this letter I hope they will lose this easy source of income. I have authorised no such youths to collect money on my behalf and have directed none to undertake any political activity of any description. Finally I find myself besieged by devotees who insist on seeing me whether I will or not. They have crossed all India to see me — from Karachi's waters, from the rivers of the Panjab, whence do they not come? They only wish to stand at a distance and get mukti by gazing on my face; or they will sit at my feet, live with me wherever I am or follow me to whatever lands. They clamber on to my windows to see me or loiter and write letters from neighbouring Police-stations. I wish to inform all future pilgrims of the kind that their journey will be in vain and to request those to whom they may give reports of myself and my imaginary conversations, to disbelieve entirely whatever they may say. I am living in entire retirement and see none but a few local friends and the few gentlemen of position who care to see me when they come to Pondicherry. I have written thus at length in order to safeguard myself against the deliberate manufacture or mistaken growth of "evidence" against me, *e.g.* such as the statement in the Nasik case that I was "maintained" by the Mitra Mela. I need hardly tell my countrymen that I have never been a paid agitator, still less a "maintained" revolutionist, but one whom even hostile Mahatmas admit to be without any pecuniary or other axe to grind. Nor have I ever received any payment for any political work except occasional payments for contributions to the Calcutta *Bande Mataram* while I was on its staff.

published 24 February 1911

[3]

Babu Aurobindo Ghose

Babu Aurobindo Ghose writes to us from Pondicherry: —

An Anglo-Indian paper of some notoriety both for its language and views, has recently thought fit to publish a libellous leaderette and subsequently an article openly arraigning me as a director of Anarchist societies, a criminal and an assassin. Neither the assertions nor the opinions of the *Madras Times* carry much weight in themselves and I might have passed over the attack in silence. But I have had reason in my political career to suspect that there are police officials on the one side and propagandists of violent revolution on the other hand who would only be too glad to use any authority for bringing in my name as a supporter of Terrorism and assassination. Holding it inexpedient under such circumstances to keep silence, I wrote to the paper pointing out the gross inaccuracy of the statements in its leaderette, but the *Times* seems to have thought it more discreet to avoid the exposure of its fictions in its own columns. I am obliged therefore to ask you for the opportunity of reply denied to me in the paper by which I am attacked.

The Anglo-Indian Journal asserts, (1) that I have adopted the saffron robes of the ascetic, but "continue to direct" the movements of the Anarchist society from Pondicherry; (2) that one Balkrishna Lele, a Lieutenant of Mr. Tilak, is in Pondicherry for the same purpose; (3) that the most dangerous of the Madras Anarchists (it is not clear whether one or many) is or are at Pondicherry; (4) that a number of seditious journals are being openly published from French India; (5) that revolutionary literature is being manufactured and circulated from Pondicherry, parts of which the police have intercepted, but the rest has reached its destination and is the cause of the Ashe murder.

It is untrue that I am masquerading or have ever masqueraded as an ascetic; I live as a simple householder practising Yoga without sannyas just as I have been practising it for the last six years. It is untrue that any Balkrishna Lele or any lieutenant of Mr. Tilak is at Pondicherry; nor do I know, I doubt if anybody in India except *Madras Times* knows, of any Mahratta politician of that name and description. The statement about Madras Anarchists is unsupported by facts or names and therefore avoids any possibility of reply. It is untrue that any seditious journal is being published from French India. The paper *India* was discontinued in April, 1910, and has never been issued since.

The only periodicals published from Pondicherry are the Tamil *Dharma* and *Karmayogi* which, I am informed, do not touch politics; in any case, the harmless nature of their contents, is proved by the free circulation allowed to them in British India even under the rigours of the Press Act. As to the production of revolutionary literature, my enquiries have satisfied me, — and I think the investigations of the police must have led to the same result, — that the inflammatory Tamil pamphlets recently in circulation cannot have been printed with the present material of the two small presses owned by Nationalists. In the nature of things nobody can assert the impossibility of secret dissemination from Pondicherry or any other particular locality. As to the actuality, I can only say that the sole publications of the kind that have reached me personally since my presence here became public, have either come direct from France or America or once only from another town in this Presidency. This would seem to show that Pondicherry, if at all guilty in this respect, has not the monopoly of the trade. Moreover, though we hear occasionally of active dissemination in some localities of British India, the residents of Pondicherry are unaware of any noticeable activity of this kind in their midst. Finally, the impression which the *Times* seeks sedulously to create that Pondicherry is swarming with dangerous people from British India, ignores facts grossly. To my knowledge, there are not more than half a dozen British Indians here who can be said to have crossed the border for political reasons. So much for definite assertions; I shall refer to the general slander in a subsequent letter.

published 20 July 1911

[4]

Babu Aurobindo Ghose.

Babu Aurobindo Ghose writes to us from Pondicherry: —

In continuation of my last letter, I proceed to deal with the allegation that I "continue to direct Anarchist activities from Pondicherry," an allegation self-condemned by the gross implied imputation of a charge from which I have been exonerated by British tribunals. Here too a simple statement of facts will be the best answer. My political conduct has been four times under scrutiny by different tribunals and each time the result has been favourable to me. I have been twice accused of sedition. In the first case I was charged, not as responsible for the editorial columns of the "Bande Mataram," which were never impugned as infringing the law while I was connected with the paper, but for a stray correspondence and a technical violation of the law by the reproduction of articles in connection with a sedition case; my freedom from responsibility was overwhelmingly established by the prosecution evidence itself, the only witness to the contrary, a dismissed proof-reader picked up by the police, destroying his own evidence in cross examination. In the second, an article over my signature was somewhat hastily impugned by the authorities and declared inoffensive by the highest tribunal in the land. The article was so clearly unexceptionable on the face of it that the judges had to open the hearing of the appeal by expressing their inability to find the sedition alleged! My name has been brought twice into conspiracy trials. In the Alipur Case, after a protracted trial and detention in jail for a year, I was acquitted, the Judge condemning the document which was the only substantial evidence of a guilty connection. Finally, my name was dragged prominently into the Howrah Case by an approver whose evidence was declared by three High Court Judges to be utterly unreliable, — a man, I may add, of whose very name and existence I was ignorant till his arrest at Darjeeling. I think I am entitled to emphasise the flimsy grounds on which in all the cases proceedings originated, so far as I was concerned. Even in the Alipur trial, beyond an unverified information and the facts that my brother was the leader of the conspiracy and frequented my house, there was no original ground for involving me in the legal proceedings. After so many ordeals, I may claim that up to my cessation of political activity my public record stands absolved from blame.

I left British India in order to pursue my practice of Yoga undisturbed either by my old political connections or by the harassment of me which seemed to have become a necessity of life to some police officials. Ceasing to be a political combatant, I could not hold myself bound to pass the better part of my life as an undertrial prisoner disproving charge after charge made on tainted evidence too lightly accepted by prejudiced minds. Before discontinuing activity myself I advised my brother Nationalists to abstain under the new conditions from uselessly hampering the Government experiment of coercion and reform and wasting their own strength by the continuance of their old activities, and it is well known, to use the language of the *Madras Times*, that I have myself observed this rule to the letter in Pondicherry. I have practised an absolute political passivity. I have discountenanced any idea of carrying on propaganda from British India, giving all who consulted me the one advice, "Wait for better times and God's will." I have strongly and repeatedly expressed myself against the circulation of inflammatory literature and against all wild ideas and reckless methods as a stumbling block in the way of the future resumption of sound, effective and perfect action for the welfare of the country. These facts are a sufficient answer to the vague and reckless libel circulated against me. I propose, however, with your indulgence, to make shortly so clear an exposition of my views and intentions for the future as will leave misrepresentation henceforward no possible character but that of a wanton libel meriting only the silence of contempt.

published 21 July 1911

To the Editor of the *New India*

[1]

National Education is, next to Self-Government and along with it, the deepest and most immediate need of the country, and it is a matter of rejoicing for one to whom an earlier effort in that direction gave the first opportunity for identifying himself with the larger life and hope of the Nation, to see the idea, for a time submerged, moving so soon towards self-fulfilment.

Home Rule and National Education are two inseparable ideals, and none who follows the one, can fail the other, unless he is entirely wanting either in sincerity or in vision. We want not only a free India, but a great India, India taking worthily her place among the Nations and giving to the life of humanity what she alone can give. The greatest knowledge and the greatest riches man can possess are hers by inheritance; she has that for which all mankind is waiting. But she can only give it if her hands are free, her soul free, full and exalted, and her life dignified in all its parts. Home Rule, bringing with it the power of self-determination, can give the free hands, space for the soul to grow, strength for the life to raise itself again from darkness and narrow scope into light and nobility. But the full soul rich with the inheritance of the past, the widening gains of the present, and the large potentiality of her future, can come only by a system of National Education. It cannot come by any extension or imitation of the system of the existing universities with its radically false principles, its vicious and mechanical methods, its dead-alive routine tradition and its narrow and sightless spirit. Only a new spirit and a new body born from the heart of the Nation and full of the light and hope of its resurgence can create it.

We have a right to expect that the Nation will rise to the level of its opportunity and stand behind the movement as it has stood behind the movement for Home Rule. It should not be difficult to secure its intellectual sanction or its voice for National Education, but much more than that is wanted. The support it gives must be free from all taint of lip-service, passivity and lethargic inaction, evil habits born of long political servitude and inertia, and of that which largely led to it, subjection of the life and soul to a blend of unseeing and mechanical custom. Moral sympathy is not enough; active support from every individual is needed. Workers for the cause, money and means for its sustenance, students for its schools and colleges, are what the movement needs that it may prosper. The first will surely not be wanting; the second should come, for the control of the movement has in its personnel both influence and energy, and the habit of giving as well as self-giving for a great public cause is growing more widespread in the country. If the third condition is not from the beginning sufficiently satisfied, it will be because, habituated individually always to the customary groove, we prefer the safe and prescribed path, even when it leads nowhere, to the great and effective way, and cannot see our own interest because it presents itself in a new and untried form. But this is a littleness of spirit which the Nation must shake off that it may have the courage of its destiny.

If material and prudential considerations stand in the way, then let it be seen that, even in the vocational sphere, the old system opens only the doors of a few offices and professions overcrowded with applicants, whence the majority must go back disappointed and with empty hands, or be satisfied with a dwarfed life and a sordid pittance; while the new education will open careers which will be at once ways of honourable sufficiency, dignity and affluence to the individual, and paths of service to the country. For the men who come out equipped in every way from its institutions will be those who will give that impetus to the economic life and effort of the country without which it cannot survive in the press of the world, much less attain its high legitimate position. Individual interest and National interest are the same and call in the same direction. Whether as citizen, as worker or as parent and guardian, the duty of every Indian in this matter is clear: it lies in the great and new road the pioneers have been hewing, and not in the old stumbling cart-ruts.

This is an hour in which, for India as for all the world, its future destiny and the turn of its steps for a century are being powerfully decided, and for no ordinary century, but one which is itself a great turning-point, an immense turn-over in the inner and outer history of mankind. As we act now, so shall the reward of our karma be meted out to us, and each call of this kind at such an hour is at once an opportunity, a choice, and a test offered to the spirit of our people. Let it be said that it rose in each to the full height of its being and deserved the visible intervention of the Master of Destiny in its favour.

published 8 April 1918

[2]

[The following letter to Mrs. Annie Besant is from the pen of a well-known Nationalist.][1]

I do not see that any other line can be taken with regard to these astonishing reforms than the one you have taken. It can only be regarded as unwise by those who are always ready to take any shadow, — how much more a bulky and imposing shadow like this, — and are careless of the substance. We have still, it appears, a fair number of political wise men of this type among us, but no Home Rule leader surely can stultify himself to that extent. A three days' examination of the scheme, — I have only the analysis to go upon and the whole thing is in the nature of a cleverly constructed Chinese puzzle — has failed to discover in them one atom of real power given to these new legislatures. The whole control is in the hands of Executive and State Councils and Grand Committees and irresponsible Ministers, and for the representative bodies, — supposing they are made really representative, which also is still left in doubt — there is only a quite ineffective and impotent voice. They are, it seems, to be only a flamboyant *édition de luxe* of the present Legislative Councils. The only point in which there is some appearance of control is the Provincial Budget and what is given by the left hand is taken away by the right. Almost every apparent concession is hedged in by a safeguard which annuls its value. On the other hand new and most dangerous irresponsible powers are assumed by the Government. How, under such circumstances, is acceptance possible? If, even, substantial control had been definitely secured by the scheme within a brief period of years, five or even ten, something might have been said in favour of a sort of vigilant acceptance. But there is nothing of the kind: on the contrary there is a menace of diminution of even these apparent concessions. And as you say the whole spirit is bad. Not even in the future is India to be allowed to determine its own destinies [or][2] its rate of progress! Self-determination, it seems, has gone into the waste paper basket, with other scraps, I suppose.

---

[1] *Square brackets in* New India. — *Ed.*

[2] *New India* on

If by unwisdom is meant the continuation of the present political struggle and what is advised, is a prudent submission and making the best of a bad matter, it seems to me that it is the latter course that will be the real unwisdom. For the struggle cannot be avoided; it can only be evaded for the moment, and if you evade it now, you will have it to-morrow or the day after, with the danger of its taking a more virulent form. At present it is only a question of agitating throughout the country for a better scheme and getting the Labour Party to take it up in England. And if the Congress does less than that, it will stultify itself entirely. I hope your lead will be generally followed; it is the only line that can be taken by a self-respecting Nation.

published 10 August 1918

To the Editor of the *Hindustan*

In answer to your request for a statement of my opinion on the intermarriage question, I can only say that everything will have my full approval which helps to liberate and strengthen the life of the individual in the frame of a vigorous society and restore the freedom and energy which India had in her heroic times of greatness and expansion. Many of our present social forms were shaped, many of our customs originated, in a [time][3] of contraction and decline. They had their utility for self-defence and survival within narrow limits, but are a drag upon our progress in the present hour when we are called upon once again to enter upon a free and courageous self-adaptation and expansion. I believe in an aggressive and expanding, not in a narrowly defensive and self-contracting Hinduism. Whether Mr. Patel's Bill is the best way to bring about the object intended is a question on which I can pronounce no decided opinion. I should have preferred a change from within the society rather than one brought about by legislation. But I recognise the difficulty created by the imposition of the rigid and mechanical notions of European jurisprudence on the old Hindu Law which was that of a society living and developing by an organic evolution. It is no longer easy, or perhaps in this case, possible to develop a new custom or revert to an old — for the change proposed amounts to no more than such a [reversion].[4] It would appear that the difficulty created by the legislature can only be removed by a resort to legislation. In that case, the Bill has my approval.

---

[3] *Hindustan* line

1918

To the Editor of the *Independent*

"A GREAT MIND, A GREAT WILL"

A great mind, a great will, a great and pre-eminent leader of men has passed away from the field of his achievement and labour. To the mind of his country Lokamanya Tilak was much more, for he had become to it a considerable part of itself, the embodiment of its past effort, and the head of its present will and struggle for a free and greater life. His achievement and personality have put him amidst the first rank of historic and significant figures. He was one who built much rapidly out of little beginnings, a creator of great things out of an un-worked material. The creations he left behind him were a new and strong and self-reliant national spirit, the reawakened political mind and life of a people, a will to freedom and action, a great national purpose. He brought to his work extraordinary qualities, a calm, silent, unflinching courage, an unwavering purpose, a flexible mind, a forward-casting vision of possibilities, an eye for the occasion, a sense of actuality, a fine capacity of democratic leadership, a diplomacy that never lost sight of its aim and pressed towards it even in the most pliant turns of its movement, and guiding all, a single-minded patriotism that cared for power and influence only as a means of service to the Motherland and a lever for the work of her liberation. He sacrificed much for her and suffered for her repeatedly and made no ostentation of his suffering and sacrifices. His life was a constant offering at her altar and his death has come in the midst of an unceasing service and labour.

---

[4] *Hindustan* revision

The passing of this great personality creates a large and immediate void that will be felt acutely for a time, but it is the virtue of his own work that this vacancy must very soon be filled by new men and new forces. The spirit he created in the country is of that sincere, real and fruitful kind that cannot consent to cease or to fail, but must always throw up minds and capacities that will embody its purpose. It will raise up others of his mould, if not of his stature, to meet its needs, its demands, its call for ability and courage. He himself has only passed behind the veil, for death, and not life, is the illusion. The strong spirit that dwelt within him ranges now freed from our human and physical limitations, and can still shed upon us, on those now at work, and those who are coming, a more subtle, ample and irresistible influence; and even if this were not so, an effective part of him is still with us. His will is left behind in many to make more powerful and free from hesitations the national will he did so much to create, the growing will, whose strength and single wholeness are the chief conditions of the success of the national effort. His courage is left behind in numbers to fuse itself into and uplift and fortify the courage of his people; his sacrifice and strength in suffering are left with us to enlarge themselves, more even than in his life-time, and to heighten the fine and steeled temper our people need for the difficult share that still lies before [their][5] endeavour. These things are his legacy to his country, and it is in proportion as each man rises to the height of what they signify that his life will be justified and assured of its recompense.

Methods and policies may change but the spirit of what Lokamanya Tilak was and did remains and will continue to be needed, a constant power in others for the achievement of his own life's grand and single purpose. A great worker and creator is not to be judged only by the work he himself did, but also by the greater work he made possible. The achievement of the departed leader has brought the nation to a certain point. Its power to go forward from and beyond that point, to face new circumstances, to rise to the more strenuous and momentous demand of its future will be the greatest and surest sign of the soundness of his labour. That test is being applied to the national movement at the very moment of his departure.

---

[5] *Independent* its

The death of Lokamanya Tilak comes upon us at a time when the country is passing through most troubled and poignant hours. It occurs at a critical period, it coincides even with a crucial moment when questions are being put to the nation by the Master of Destiny, on the answer to which depends the whole spirit, virtue and meaning of its future. In each event that confronts us there is a divine significance, and the passing away at such a time of such a man, on whose thought and decision thousands hung, should make more profoundly felt by the people, by every man in the nation, the great, the almost religious responsibility that lies upon him personally.

At this juncture it is not for me to prejudge the issue; each must meet it according to his light and conscience. This at least can be demanded of every man who would be worthy of India and of her great departed son that he shall put away from him in the decision of the things to be done in the future, all weakness of will, all defect of courage, all unwillingness for sacrifice. Let each strive to see with that selfless impersonality taught by one of our greatest scriptures, which can alone enable us to identify ourselves both with the Divine Will and with the soul of our Mother. Two things India demands for her future, the freedom of soul, life and action needed for the work she has to do for mankind; and the understanding by her children of that work and of her own true spirit that the future India may be indeed India. The first seems still the main sense and need of the present moment, but the second is also involved in [it][6] — a yet greater issue. On the spirit of our decisions now and in the next few years depends the truth, vitality and greatness of our future national existence. It is the beginning of a great Self-Determination not only in the external but in the spiritual. These two thoughts should govern our action. Only so can the work done by Lokamanya Tilak find its true continuation and issue.

---

[6] *Independent* them

AUROBINDO GHOSE
published 5 August 1920

To the Editor of the *Standard Bearer*

Sri Aurobindo's declaration

In view of the conflicting rumours that have been set abroad, some representing Sri Aurobindo as for the Reforms and others as for Non-co-operation, Sri Mati Lal Roy, his spiritual agent in Bengal was requested by those in charge of their spiritual organ, in this humble instrumentality of our "Standard Bearer," to write to him in Pondicherry and as a result of the letter he had written to his Master, Sri Matilal has received the following reply which we are authorised to publish: —

Dear M —

* * * * * *

All these assertions are without foundation.[7] I have made no pronouncement of my political views. I have authorised nobody whether publicly or privately to be the spokesman of my opinions. The rumour suggesting that I support the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and am opposed to Non-Co-operation is without basis. I have nothing to do personally with the manifesto of Sir Ashutosh Choudhuri and others citing a passage from my past writings. The recorded opinions of a public man are public property and I do not disclaim what I have written; but the responsibility for its application to the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms and the present situation rests entirely with the signatories to the manifesto. The summary of my opinions in the *Janmabhumi*, representing me as an enthusiastic follower of Mahatma Gandhi, of which I only came to know the other day, is wholly unauthorised and does NOT "render justice to my views" either in form or in substance. Things are attributed to me in it which I would never have dreamed of saying. It is especially adding insult to injury to make me say that I am ready to sacrifice my conscience to a Congress mandate and recommend all to go and do likewise. I have not stated to anyone that "full responsible Self-Government completely independent of British control" or any other purely political object is the goal to the attainment of which I intend to devote my efforts and I have not made any rhetorical prophecy of a colossal success for the Non-Co-operation movement. As you well know, I am identifying myself with only one kind of work or propaganda as regards India, the endeavour to reconstitute her cultural, social and economic life within larger and freer lines than the past on a spiritual basis. As regards political questions, I would request my friends and the public not to attach credence to anything purporting to be a statement of my opinions which is not expressly authorised by me or issued over my signature.

---

[7] *This is an extract from a letter that is published in full on pages 248 – 49. — Ed.*

A. G.

published 21 November 1920

To the Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*

Chittaranjan's death is a supreme loss. Consummately endowed with political intelligence, constructive imagination, magnetism, driving force combining a strong will and an uncommon plasticity of mind for vision and tact of the hour, he was the one man after Tilak who could have led India to Swaraj.

Aurobindo Ghose.

published 22 June 1925

Section Two

Early Letters on Yoga and the Spiritual Life

1911–1928

Extracts from Letters to the Mother and Paul Richard, 1911 – c. 1922

To Paul Richard

[1]

I need some place of refuge in which I can complete my Yoga unassailed and build up other souls around me. It seems to me that Pondicherry is the place appointed by those who are Beyond, but you know how much effort is needed to establish the thing that is purposed upon the material plane. . . .

I am developing the necessary powers for bringing down the spiritual on the material plane, and I am now able to put myself into men and change them, removing the darkness and bringing light, giving them a new heart and a new mind. This I can do with great swiftness and completeness with those who are near me, but I have also succeeded with men hundreds of miles away. I have also been given the power to read men's characters and hearts, even their thoughts, but this power is not yet absolutely complete, nor can I use it always and in all cases. The power of guiding action by the mere exercise of will is also developing, but it is not so powerful as yet as the other. My communication with the other world is yet of a troubled character, though I am certainly in communication with some very great powers. But of all these things I will write more when the final obstacles in my way are cleared from the path.

What I perceive most clearly, is that the principal object of my Yoga is to remove absolutely and entirely every possible source of error and ineffectiveness, of error in order that the Truth I shall eventually show to men may be perfect, and of ineffectiveness in order that the work of changing the world, so far as I have to assist it, may be entirely victorious and irresistible. It is for this reason that I have been going through so long a discipline and that the more brilliant and mighty results of Yoga have been so long withheld. I have been kept busy laying down the foundation, a work severe and painful. It is only now that the edifice is beginning to rise upon the sure and perfect foundation that has been laid. 12 July 1911

[2]

My Yoga is proceeding with great rapidity, but I defer writing to you of the results until certain experiments in which I am now engaged, have yielded fruit sufficient to establish beyond dispute the theory and system of yoga which I have formed and which is giving great results not only to me, but to the young men who are with me. . . . I expect these results within a month if all goes well. 20 September 1911

[3]

A great silence and inhibition of action has been the atmosphere of my Yoga for the last year and it is only now beginning to lift from me. The most serious part of my difficulties, — the inward struggle, — is over; I have conquered, or rather One whose instrument I am has conquered for me. I am turning now to the outward struggle, preparing my powers for it, awaiting the time and the signal to begin. The details I will not write to you now; the hour has not yet struck; for the enemy in the subtle parts of the material world, although beaten, is still struggling desperately to prevent my Yoga materialising in the objective plane. I await the issue of the struggle, towards which every day of the Yoga brings me nearer with a long stride.

* * *

In spite of that, however, my work in its foundations proceeds. There are means in this world, fortunately for the humanity, which Govts & authorities cannot touch or prevent. For the outward work, I see now, why it has been held back. It was necessary for me to have myself a perfect knowledge & power before I seriously undertook it. My knowledge and my power are now making rapid strides towards the necessary perfection and, once that is secured, it will be impossible for the material difficulties to remain. 18 December 1912

To the Mother and Paul Richard

[1]

All is always for [the] best, but it is sometimes from the external point of view an awkward best.

* * *

I had one of my etheric writings, "Build desolated Europe into a city of God". I give it [to] you for what it is worth. Perhaps it is only an aspiration of the powers that have brought about your recall. But is not the whole world and not Europe only in a state of decomposition? As for the idea of a quiet country somewhere in Asia, where does it exist? The whole earth is now under one law and answers to the same vibrations and I am sceptical of finding any place where the clash of the struggle will not pursue us. In any case, an effective retirement does not seem to be my destiny. I must remain in touch with the world until I have either mastered adverse circumstances or succumbed or carried on the struggle between the spiritual and physical so far as I am destined to carry it on. This is how I have always seen things and still see them. As for failure, difficulty and apparent impossibility I am too much habituated to them to be much impressed by their constant self-presentation except for passing moments.

* * *

One needs to have a calm heart, a settled will, entire self-abnegation and the eyes constantly fixed on the beyond to live undiscouraged in times like these which are truly a period of universal decomposition. For myself, I follow the Voice and look neither to right nor to left of me. The result is not mine and hardly at all now even the labour. 6 May 1915

[2]

Heaven we have possessed, but not the earth; but the fullness of the yoga is to make, in the formula of the Veda, "Heaven and Earth equal and one". 20 May 1915

[3]

Everything internal is ripe or ripening, but there is a sort of locked struggle in which neither side can make a very appreciable advance (somewhat like the trench warfare in Europe), the spiritual force insisting against the resistance of the physical world, that resistance disputing every inch and making more or less effective counter-attacks. . . . And if there were not the strength and Ananda within, it would be harassing and disgusting work; but the eye of knowledge looks beyond and sees that it is only a protracted episode. 28 July 1915

[4]

I have begun in the issue of the Arya which is just out a number of articles on the Ideal of Human Unity. I intend to proceed very cautiously and not go very deep at first, but as if I were leading the intelligence of the reader gradually towards the deeper meaning of unity, — especially to discourage the idea that mistakes uniformity and mechanical association for unity.

* * *

Nothing seems able to disturb the immobility of things and all that is active outside our own selves is a sort of welter of dark and sombre confusion from which nothing formed or luminous can emerge. It is a singular condition of the world, the very definition of chaos with the superficial form of the old world resting apparently intact on the surface. But a chaos of long disintegration or of some early new birth? It is the thing that is being fought out from day to day, but as yet without any approach to a decision.

* * *

These periods of stagnation always conceal work below the surface which produces some advance afterwards.

16 September 1915

[5]

Reflection, where there is no directing voice, thought or impulse, does not carry one any farther. It only makes the mind travel continuously the round of [uncertain][1] possibilities.

These things really depend on ourselves much more than on outside factors. If we do not raise difficulties by our thoughts and mental constructions or do not confirm them if they rise, if we have the calm and peace within and there is not that in us which excites the enemy to throw himself on us, then outward possibilities, usually, will not concretise themselves.

Our business at present is to gather spiritual force, calm knowledge and joy regardless of the adverse powers and happenings around us so that when our work really begins we shall be able to impose ourselves on the material world in which our work lies. (This [I] am slowly doing: you, I think, more rapidly.)

I am always of the opinion that the internal must precede the external, otherwise whatever work we attempt beyond our internal powers and knowledge is likely to fail or be broken.

This is precisely my present struggle to get outside the circle of forces and possibilities into the light of the Truth, the vijnana.

Abdul Baha's prevision is possibly correct, but at present it seems to me to be put into too rigid a form. A centre of light, not necessarily translated into the terms of a physical grouping, but in which a few can stand, an increasing circle of luminosity into which more & more can enter, and outside the twilight world struggling with the light, this seems to be the inevitable course.

---

[1] *MS (copy)* certain

* * *

We live still more in the reflection of the light than in the light itself, and until we get nearer to the centre we cannot know.

* * *

The Scheme that was sent me seems to me to be a mental construction formed largely under the influence of the environment. I do not think it could be put into practice; for the world is not ready and if any such thing were attempted it would not be loyally initiated or loyally executed. . . . A change in the heart of mankind, a new heart, would be necessary before any such scheme could at all serve the great ends we contemplate. I would prefer a general breaking up to any premature formation, however harmful this dissolution might be. 18 November 1915

[6]

The experience you have described is Vedic in the real sense,[2] though not one which would easily be recognised by the modern systems of Yoga which call themselves [Vedic][3]. It is the union of the "Earth" of the Veda and Purana with the divine Principle, an earth which is said to be above our earth, that is to say, the physical being and consciousness of which this world and the body are only images. But the modern Yogas hardly recognise the possibility of a material union with the Divine.

31 December 1915

[7]

The difficulties you find in the spiritual progress are common to us all. In this Yoga the progress is always attended with these relapses into the ordinary mentality until the whole being is so remoulded that it can no longer be affected either by any downward tendency in our own nature or by the impressions from the discordant world outside or even by the mental state of those associated with us most closely in the Yoga. The ordinary Yoga is usually concentrated on a single aim and therefore less exposed to such recoils; ours is so complex and many-sided and embraces such large aims that we cannot expect any smooth progress until we near the completion of our effort, — especially as all the hostile forces in the spiritual world are in a constant state of opposition and besiege our gains; for the complete victory of a single one of us would mean a general downfall among them. In fact by our own unaided effort we could not hope to succeed. It is only in proportion as we come into a more and more universal communion with the Highest that we can hope to overcome with any finality. For myself I have had to come back so often from things that seemed to have been securely gained that it is only relatively that I can say of any part of my Yoga, "It is done". Still I have always found that when I recover from one of these recoils, it is always with a new spiritual gain which might have been neglected or missed if I had remained securely in my former state of partial satisfaction. Especially, as I have long had the map of my advance sketched out before me, I am able to measure my progress at each step and the particular losses are compensated for by the clear consciousness of the general advance that has been made. The final goal is far but the progress made in the face of so constant and massive an opposition is the guarantee of its being gained in the end. But the time is in other hands than ours. Therefore I have put impatience and dissatisfaction far away from me.

---

[2] *See The Mother,* Prayers and Meditations *(Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2003), pp. 311–12; entry of 26 November 1915.*

[3] *MS (copy)* Yogic

An absolute equality of the mind and heart and a clear purity and calm strength in all the members of the being have long been the primary condition on which the Power working in me has insisted with an inexhaustible patience and an undeviating constancy of will which rejects all the efforts of other powers to hasten forward to the neglect of these first requisites. Wherever they are impaired it returns upon them and works over and again over the weak points like a workman patiently mending the defects of his work. These seem to me to be the foundation and condition of all the rest. As they become firmer and more complete the system is more able to hold consistently and vividly the settled perception of the One in all things and beings, in all qualities, forces, happenings, in all this world-consciousness and the play of its workings. That founds the Unity and upon it the deep satisfaction and the growing rapture of the Unity. It is this to which our nature is most recalcitrant. It persists in the division, in the dualities, in the sorrow and unsatisfied passion and labour, it finds it difficult to accustom itself to the divine largeness, joy and equipoise — especially the vital and material parts of our nature; it is they that pull down the mind which has accepted and even when it has long lived in the joy and peace and oneness. That, I suppose, is why the religions and philosophies have had so strong a leaning to the condemnation of Life and Matter and aimed at an escape instead of a victory. But the victory has to be won; the rebellious elements have to be redeemed and transformed, not rejected or excised.

When the Unity has been well founded, the static half of our work is done, but the active half remains. It is then that in the One we must see the Master and His Power, — Krishna and Kali as I name them using the terms of our Indian religions; the Power occupying the whole of myself and my nature which becomes Kali and ceases to be anything else, the Master using, directing, enjoying the Power to his ends, not mine, with that which I call myself only as a centre of his universal existence and responding to its workings as a soul to the Soul, taking upon itself his image until there is nothing left but Krishna and Kali. This is the stage I have reached in spite of all setbacks and recoils, imperfectly indeed in the secureness and intensity of the state, but well enough in the general type. When that has been done, then we may hope to found securely the play in us of his divine Knowledge governing the action of his divine Power. The rest is the full opening up of the different planes of his world-play and the subjection of Matter and the body and the material world to the law of the higher heavens of the Truth. To these things towards which in my earlier ignorance I used to press forward impatiently before satisfying the first conditions — the effort, however, was necessary and made the necessary preparation of the material instruments — I can now only look forward as a subsequent eventuality in a yet distant vista of things.

To possess securely the Light and the Force of the supramental being, this is the main object to which the Power is now turning. But the remnant of the old habits of intellectual thought and mental will come so obstinate in their determination to remain that the progress is hampered, uncertain and always falls back from the little achievement already effected. They are no longer within me, they are blind, stupid, mechanical, incorrigible even when they perceive their incompetence, but they crowd round the mind and pour in their suggestions whenever it tries to remain open only to the supramental Light and the higher Command, so that the knowledge and the will reach the mind in a confused, distorted and often misleading form. It is, however, only a question of time: the siege will diminish in force and be finally dispelled. 23 June 1916

Draft of a Letter

He wishes me to say that he sent back the MS according to your request because he felt that it was quite impossible for him to deal with it in the near future.[4] He is now living entirely retired and engrossed in his yoga. He has put off all external activities and so organised his time as to be able entirely to concentrate upon it alone. He has removed from his immediate surroundings all who are out of harmony with the atmosphere necessary to the yogic quietude. He sees no one and receives no visits. His friends in Madras do not see him when they come. Even his old guru Vishnu Lele who proposed to come here at this time has been requested to postpone indefinitely his visit. For the same reason he has ceased altogether to write. His own works, even those of which the publication has been arranged, — except the few of which others take the responsibility and which make no demand on him, — are lying unpublished for want of time to retouch them. It is not only that he does not wish but that he cannot any longer allow himself to be disturbed or interrupted by anything that would perturb the balance or break the mould of his present arrangement of his life or draw him aside from the concentration of his energies. All else must be postponed until he has finished what he has to do and is free again to apply himself to external things and activities. Under these conditions a work so considerable as the retranslation or revised translation of the "Seigneur des Nations" becomes quite impossible. If he undertook it, he would not be able to carry it out. He hopes therefore that you will be able to make some other arrangement for it, as for the translations of your recent addresses which have been admirably done. Once you understand in the light of the above the conditions here, you can understand also why — apart from all other considerations — he is unable to assent to the suggestions in your letter.

---

[4] *In this draft, Sri Aurobindo referred to himself in the third person because he intended the letter to be sent over the signature of his secretary. — Ed.*

To People in India, 1914 – 1926

To N. K. Gogte

[1]

Dear Sir,

I regret that I have not been able to reply as yet to your postcard. I am entirely occupied with the work for the Review which has to be given to the Press shortly. After the 17th I shall be more free and hope then to be able to reply to the questions you have put to us.

Yours sincerely
Aurobindo Ghose

Pondicherry
9 Sept. 1914

[2]

Pondicherry
21 Sept 1914

Dear Sir,

I hope you received duly my card explaining the delay in my answer.

Your questions cover the whole of a very wide field. It is therefore necessary to reply to them with some brevity, touching only on some principal points.

1. *What meditation exactly means.*

There are two words used in English to express the Indian idea of *Dhyana*, "meditation" and "contemplation". Meditation means properly the concentration of the mind on a single train of ideas which work out a single subject. Contemplation means regarding mentally a single object, image, idea so that the knowledge about the object, image or idea may arise naturally in the mind by force of the concentration. Both these things are forms of *dhyana*; for the principle of *dhyana* is mental concentration whether in thought, vision or knowledge.

There are other forms of *dhyana*. There is a passage in which Vivekananda advises you to stand back from your thoughts, let them occur in your mind as they will and simply observe them & see what they are. This may be called concentration in self-observation.

This form leads to another, the emptying of all thought out of the mind so as to leave it a sort of pure vigilant blank on which the divine knowledge may come and imprint itself, undisturbed by the inferior thoughts of the ordinary human mind and with the clearness of a writing in white chalk on a blackboard. You will find that the Gita speaks of this rejection of all mental thought as one of the methods of Yoga and even the method it seems to prefer. This may be called the dhyana of liberation, as it frees the mind from slavery to the mechanical process of thinking and allows it to think or not think as it pleases and when it pleases, or to choose its own thoughts or else to go beyond thought to the pure perception of Truth called in our philosophy *Vijnana*.

Meditation is the easiest process for the human mind, but the narrowest in its results; contemplation more difficult, but greater; self-observation and liberation from the chains of Thought the most difficult of all, but the widest and greatest in its fruits. One can choose any of them according to one's bent and capacity. The perfect method is to use them all, each in its own place and for its own object; but this would need a fixed faith and firm patience and a great energy of Will in the self-application to the Yoga.

2. *What should be the objects or ideas for meditation?*

Whatever is most consonant with your nature and highest aspirations. But if you ask me for an absolute answer, then I must say that Brahman is always the best object for meditation or contemplation, and the idea on which the mind should fix is that of God in all, all in God and all as God. It does not matter essentially whether it is the Impersonal or the Personal God or, subjectively, the One Self. But this is the idea I have found the best, because it is the highest and embraces all other truths, whether truths of this world or of the other worlds or beyond all phenomenal existence, — "All this is the Brahman."

In the third issue of Arya, at the end of the second instalment of the Analysis of the Isha Upanishad, you will find a description of this vision of the [Brahman][1] which may be of help to you in understanding the idea. (October number now in the Press.)[2]

3. Conditions internal and external that are most essential for meditation.

There are no *essential* external conditions, but solitude and seclusion at the time of meditation as well as stillness of the body are helpful, sometimes almost necessary to the beginner. But one should not be bound by external conditions. Once the habit of meditation is formed, it should be made possible to do it in all circumstances, lying, sitting, walking, alone, in company, in silence or in the midst of noise etc.

The first internal condition necessary is concentration of the will against the obstacles to meditation, ie wandering of the mind, forgetfulness, sleep, physical and nervous impatience and restlessness etc.

The second is an increasing purity and calm of the inner consciousness (*citta*) out of which thought and emotion arise; ie a freedom from all disturbing reactions, such as anger, grief, depression, anxiety about worldly happenings etc. Mental perfection and moral are always closely allied to each other.

Aurobindo Ghose

P.S. The answer to your last question cannot be given so generally; it depends on the path chosen, the personal difficulties, etc.

Draft of a Letter to Nolini Kanta Gupta

Dear Nalini,

Quorsum haec incerta? Do you really mean to perpetrate the sexual union dignified by the name of marriage, or don't you? Will you, won't you, will you, won't you — to quote the language of the spider to the fly? Whither does all this tend, to fructuation (I was going to use another word) or fluctuation, — footballing and floating and flirting as much as exchange of eyes in the delicious brevity of *kanya dekha* and the subsequent vast freedom of imagination will give you of that modern amusement. But all this seems too Robindranathian, too *ki jani ki*, to come to a practical conclusion. To weigh in the subtle scales of amorous thought noses and chins and lips and eyes and the subtleties of expression is no doubt a charming mathematics, but it soars too much into the region of the infinite, there is no reason why it should work out into any sum of action. Saurin's more concrete and less poetic and philosophic mind seems to have realised this at an early stage and he wrote asking me whether it was worth while to marry with our ideas and aims under present social conditions. After about two months' absence of cogitation, I have returned a sort of non committal answer, — that I don't think it is — very, but it may turn out to be and on the whole he had better consult his *antarâtman* and act or not act accordingly.

---

[1] *MS* All. *See Note on the Texts, page 586. — Ed.*

[2] *See "The Vision of the Brahman" in* Isha Upanishad*, volume 17 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO*, p. 30. The passage was first published in the third issue of the* Arya*, dated October 1914. — Ed.*

c. 1919

To A. B. Purani

Pondicherry
Feb 21. 1920

Dear Purani,

It is not easy to get a letter out of me, I hardly write more than a dozen in the year, so you must not be surprised at my long delay in answering you. On the two matters you mentioned in your first letter — what *word* did you want? There is no need of a word, when there is personal contact; the spirit is always greater than the word. And if there was anything that needed to be said, I believe it was spoken between us. I do not know if there is anything definite of which you feel the necessity. If there is, the best way is to try and get it from within first, and only if there is still doubt, would there be the need to come for it to a definite word from me. It would be well, however, to let me know from time to time how you are proceeding with your Yoga and especially of any obstacles or difficulties you experience; for, even if I do not answer, I can always then give the silent help which I have usually found to be the most effective. As regards malady or illness, it is true that the chief reliance should be on the inner will and secondly on simple remedies. But this rule should not at first be rigorously applied in affections of a strongly physical character, because the gross body is the most obstinately recalcitrant to the will; there it is better in the earlier stages to respect to a certain extent the habits of the bodily consciousness which being physical relies upon physical remedies. When you find that the will is strong enough to deal rapidly with even these affections, then you can dispense with remedies.

You have written to Amrita about a translation of the "Secret of the Veda" and "To the Nations." The latter book is not my property, it is M. Richard's and it is possible that he has given the rights of translation to the publisher who, if he knew, might take objection to your publishing a translation without his permission. M. Richard himself would no doubt give the permission at my request, but I do not know whether he has kept the right in his own hands. Please therefore do not publish that at present, but let me know the name of the translator. M. Richard is expected here at any time during the next month or two; but even if he does not come, I can ask the publisher for permission on behalf of the translator. The "Secret of the Veda" is not complete and there are besides many imperfections and some errors in it which I would have preferred to amend before the book or any translation of it was published. Perhaps, however, it does not matter so much in a Gujerati translation which will not come under close criticism such as would meet a book on the subject in English. It would be better, however, whenever there is question of a translation of a book — as opposed to an article or chapter here and there — to let me know first so that I may see whether there is any modification needed or indispensable change.

Yours
Aurobindo Ghose

To V. Chandrasekharam

[1]

Pondicherry
13th July 1920

Dear Chandrashekhar,

I have not been able to write to you before for want of time — a thing of which I have always a very short supply nowadays. I hope that your illness has "improved" — in the right way — by this time; if not, please write and keep us informed of your state of health. Above all, do not harbour that idea of an unfit body — all suggestions of that kind are a subtle attack on the will to siddhi and especially dangerous in physical matters. It has been cropping up in several people who are doing the Yoga and the first business is to expel it bag and baggage. Appearances and facts may be all in its favour, but the first condition of success for the Yogin and indeed for anybody who wants to do anything great or unusual is to be superior to facts and disbelieve in appearances. Will to be free from disease, however formidable, many-faced or constant its attacks, and repel all contrary suggestions.

It is now precisely in this physical field that I am getting most obstruction nowadays. I have myself been sporting a choice kind of cough for the last month or so which took up its lodgings in my throat and cheerfully promised to be my companion for the longest possible period it could manage of my physical existence; and though ill received and constantly discouraged, it is still hanging about the premises. In other matters I progress with and in spite of the customary obstructions, much faster than at any previous period of my Yoga. Nothing absolutely new — I am simply going on developing to a higher degree the *vijnana* and turning other things into something of its substance.

It is bad that you do not find things favourable for your own Yoga. In case you find it too difficult there, why not try another period here? This time there would be no inconveniences. Our friends the R-s had intended to ask you to stay with them; they were only waiting to get things into order and were sorry you went away suddenly before they could put it to you. Another time the arrangement could be made, and I think there would be no objection on your side. I think you said something to someone about being here for the 15th August. Was that only an idea, an intention or a resolution?

Please write sometimes about your health and your Yoga.

Yours
Aurobindo Ghose

[2]

Pondicherry
13 April 1921

Dear Chandrasekhar,

I am glad to get your letter after so long a time. I have myself written no letters for the last six months to anyone, both on account of lack of time and absorption in Yoga, which explains my silence. I will do my best to help you; but until you come, write to me, for even if I do not answer, that creates a physical link which makes transmission of help easier on the material plane — for the physical consciousness. It will certainly be better for you if you come to Pondicherry, but I recognise the difficulties. We are trying, not yet with success, to arrange for a house here where people who come for the Yoga may stop. Perhaps it would be best for you to wait a little and see whether this materialises. It would hardly do in your present state of health for you to expose yourself to the difficulties of bad food of the Tamil hotel type etc. Amrita will write and inform you as soon as we can get the thing settled.

Yours
Aurobindo Ghose

[3]

[21 July 1924]

It is not easy to get into the silence.[3] That is only possible by throwing out the mental and vital activities. It is easier to let the silence get into you, i.e., to open yourself and let it descend. The way to do this and the way to call down the higher powers is the same. It is to remain quiet at the time of meditation, not fighting with the mind or making mental efforts to pull down the power of the Silence but keeping only a silent will and aspiration for them. If the mind is active, one has only to learn to look at it, drawn back and not giving any sanction from within, until its habitual or mechanical activities begin to fall quiet for want of support from within. If it is too persistent, a steady rejection without strain or struggle is the one thing to be done.

The mental attitude you are taking with regard to "the Lord is the Yogeswara" can be made a first step towards this quietude.

Silence does not mean absence of experiences. It is an inner silence and quietude in which all experiences happen without producing any disturbance. It would be a great mistake to interfere with the images rising in you. It does not matter whether they are mental or psychic. One must have experience not only of the true psychic but of the inner mental, inner vital and subtle physical worlds or planes of consciousness. The occurrence of the images is a sign that these are opening and to inhibit them would mean to inhibit the expansion of consciousness and experience without which this Yoga cannot be done.

All this is an answer to the points raised by your letter. It is not meant that you should change suddenly what you are doing. It is better to proceed from what you have attained which seems to be solid, if small, and proceed quietly in the direction indicated.

---

[3] *This letter and the next were written by K. Amrita at Sri Aurobindo's dictation or following his oral instructions. — Ed.*

[4]

[4 October 1924]

He asks me to tell you that there are two kinds of movements in the Sadhana, the ascent and the descent. The ascent or the upward movement takes place when there is a sufficient aspiration from the being, i.e. from the various mental, vital and physical planes. Each in turn ascends above the mind to the place where it meets the supramental and can then receive the origination of all its movements from above.

The Higher descends when you have a receptive quietude in the various planes of your being prepared to receive it. In either case whether in aspiring upward to rise to the Higher or in remaining passive and open to receive the Higher, an entire calmness in the different parts of the being is the true condition. If you do not have the necessary force in the quiet aspiration or will and if you find that a certain amount of effort will help you in rising upward, you may go on using it as a temporary means until there is the natural openness in which a silent call or simple effortless will is sufficient to induce the action of the Higher Shakti.

Extract from a Letter to K. N. Dixit

Finally, I must inform you that AG is not inclined to give permission at the present time.[4] He does not want any, even the least disturbance of his concentration on his own sadhana as he is passing through a most difficult period when any diversion of his energies or impact from the outside world may have undesirable consequences. For yourself also it is not a favourable time and by coming here you are likely, even if you get some help, to have also more and perhaps very acute difficulties. AG asks me to tell you that you would do best to return home, write to him whatever obstacles in sadhana you may have and await a more favourable time for renewing your request about coming to Pondicherry.

30 March 1924

---

[4] *This paragraph was written by Sri Aurobindo in his own hand at the end of a letter written by A. B. Purani on his behalf. — Ed.*

To Ramchandran

[30 September 1925]

Dear Ramchandran,

I am answering your second letter which reached me today. And first I must say something about the very extraordinary line of conduct you propose to adopt in case of not hearing from me. I think it is because, as you say, your mind is not in a completely right condition that you have proposed it. No one with any common sense and certainly no one with a clear moral sense would support you in your intention. As to the law, it is not usual in France to take up things of this kind but only public offences against morals. The court would probably take no notice of your self-accusation and in any case it would not proceed in the absence of evidence from others which would here be lacking. But supposing it were otherwise, what would your action amount to? First, it would be putting an almost insuperable obstacle in the way of your own mental and moral recovery and of your leading a useful life in future. Secondly, it would be bringing an unmerited disgrace upon your father and family. Thirdly, it would mean, if it took any form, the ruin of the life of someone else, for, if I understand rightly what you say, some other or others would be involved, and your suggestion that you are entirely responsible would be absurd in law and could have no value and all this havoc you propose to cause merely in order to satisfy a morbid moral egoism. It would be, in fact, if it could be seriously executed, a greater immorality than anything you have yet done. The true way to set yourself right for your act is not to do untold harm to others in the name of honesty or any other virtue but to put yourself right inwardly and do otherwise in future.

I shall answer briefly the questions you put in your second para. (1) The way to set yourself right is, as I have said, to set your nature right and make yourself master of your vital being and its impulses. (2) Your position in human society is or can be that of many others who in their early life have committed excesses of various kinds and have afterwards achieved self-control and taken their due place in life. If you [were][5] not so ignorant of life, you would know that your case is not exceptional but on the contrary very common and that many have done these things and afterwards become useful citizens and even leading men in various departments of human activity. (3) It is quite possible for you to recompense your parents and fulfil the past expectations you spoke of, if you make that your object. Only you must first recover from your illness and achieve the proper balance of your mind and will. (4) The object of your life depends upon your own choice and the way of attainment depends upon the nature of the object. Also your position will be whatever you make it. What you have to do is, first of all, to recover your health; then, with a quiet mind to determine your aim in life according to your capacities and preferences. It is not for me to make up your mind for you. I can only indicate to you what I myself think should be the proper aims and ideals.

Apart from external things there are two possible inner ideals which a man can follow. The first is the highest ideal of ordinary human life and the other the divine ideal of Yoga. I must say in view of something you seem to have said to your father that it is not the object of the one to be a great man or the object of the other to be a great Yogin. The ideal of human life is to establish over the whole being the control of a clear, strong and rational mind and a right and rational will, to master the emotional, vital and physical being, create a harmony of the whole and develop the capacities whatever they are and fulfil them in life. In the terms of Hindu thought, it is to enthrone the rule of the purified and sattwic *buddhi*, follow the *dharma*, fulfilling one's own *svadharma* and doing the work proper to one's capacities, and satisfy *kāma* and *artha* under the control of the *buddhi* and the *dharma*. The object of the divine life, on the other hand, is to realise one's highest self or to realise God and to put the whole being into harmony with the truth of the highest self or the law of the divine nature, to find one's own divine capacities great or small and fulfil them in life as a sacrifice to the highest or as a true instrument of the divine *Sakti*. About the latter ideal I may write at some later time. At present I shall only say something about the difficulty you feel in fulfilling the ordinary ideal.

---

[5] *MS (copy)* are

This ideal involves the building of mind and character and it is always a slow and difficult process demanding patient labour of years, sometimes the better part of the lifetime. The chief difficulty in the way with almost everybody is the difficulty of controlling the desires and impulses of the vital being. In many cases as in yours, certain strong impulses run persistently counter to the ideal and demand of the reason and the will. The cause is almost always a weakness of the vital being itself, for, when there is this weakness it finds itself unable to obey the dictates of the higher mind and obliged to act instead under the waves of impulsion that come from certain forces in nature. These forces are really external to the person but find in this part of him a sort of mechanical readiness to satisfy and obey them. The difficulty is aggravated if the *seat* of the weakness is in the nervous system. There is then what is called by European science a neurasthenia tendency and under certain circumstances it leads to nervous breakdowns and collapses. This happens when there is too great a strain on the nerves or when there is excessive indulgence of the sexual or other propensities and sometimes also when there is too acute and prolonged a struggle between the restraining mental will and these propensities. This is the illness from which you are suffering and if you consider these facts you will see the real reason why you broke down at Pondicherry. The nervous system in you was weak; it could not obey the will and resist the demand of the external, vital forces, and in the struggle there came an overstrain of the mind and the nerves and a collapse taking the form of an acute attack of neurasthenia. These difficulties do not mean that you cannot prevail and bring about a control of your nerves and vital being and build up a harmony of mind and character. Only you must understand the thing rightly, not indulging in false and morbid ideas about it and you must use the right means. What is needed is a quiet mind and a quiet will, patient, persistent, refusing to yield either to excitement or discouragement, but always insisting [tranquilly][6] on the change needed in the being. A quiet will of this kind cannot fail in the end. Its effect is inevitable. It must first reject in the waking state, not only the acts habitual to the vital being, but the impulses behind them which it must understand to be external to the person even though manifested in him and also the suggestions which are behind the impulses. When thus rejected, the once habitual thoughts and movements may still manifest in the dream-state, because it is a well-known psychological law that what is suppressed or rejected in the waking state may still recur in sleep and dream because they are still there in the subconscient being. But if the waking state is thoroughly cleared, these dream-movements must gradually disappear because they lose their food and the impressions in the subconscient are gradually effaced. This is the cause of the dreams of which you are so much afraid. You should see that they are only a subordinate symptom which need not alarm you if you can once get control of your waking condition.

But you must get rid of the ideas which have stood in the way of effecting this self-conquest.

(1) Realise that these things in you do not come from any true moral depravity, for that can exist only when the mind itself is corrupted and supports the perverse vital impulses. Where the mind and the will reject them, the moral being is sound and it is a case only of a weakness or malady of the vital parts or the nervous system.

(2) Do not brood on the past but turn your face with a patient hope and confidence towards the future. To brood on the past failure will prevent you from recovering your health and will weaken your mind and will, hampering them in the work of self-conquest and rebuilding of the character.

(3) Do not yield to discouragement if success does not come at once, but continue patiently and steadfastly until the thing is done.

(4) Do not torture your mind by always dwelling on your

---

[6] *MS (copy)* tranquility

weakness. Do not imagine that they unfit you for life or for the fulfilment of the human ideal. Once having recognised that they are there, seek for your sources of strength and dwell rather on them and the certainty of conquest.

Your first business is to recover your health of mind and body and that needs quietness of mind and for some time a quiet way of living. Do not rack your mind with questions which it is not yet ready to solve. Do not brood always on the thing. Occupy your mind as much as you can with healthy and normal occupations and give it as much rest as possible. Afterwards when you have your right mental condition and balance, then you can with a clear judgment decide how you will shape your life and what you have to do in the future.

I have given you the best advice I can and told you what seems to me the most important for you at present. As for your coming to Pondicherry, it is better not to do so just now. I could say to you nothing more than what I have written. It is best for you so long as you are ill, not to leave your father's care, and above all, it is the safe rule in [an] illness like yours not to return to the place and surroundings where you had the breakdown, until you are perfectly recovered and the memories and associations connected with it have faded in intensity, lost their hold on the mind and can no longer produce upon it a violent or disturbing impression.

Aurobindo Ghose

To and about V. Tirupati

[1]

Pondicherry. February 21st - 1926.

Tirupati, my child -

Our Divine Lord sends you the following message:[7]

---

[7] *This letter-draft and those numbered [5], [6], and [8] below were written by the Mother at Sri Aurobindo's dictation or following his oral instructions. Items [3], [4], [7], [9] and [11], also drafts, were written by Sri Aurobindo in his own hand. Item [10]*

Your letters have been received and read with pleasure. Haradhan came back yesterday morning bringing the two last ones and also the news that, during the time he remained with you, you were eating and sleeping — which we have been very pleased to hear. It is a great first step forward; and if you go on like that, you will soon establish a solid basis for your complete physical recovery.

We heard also with pleasure that your family is ready to help you without intruding or forcing themselves upon you, and that arrangements are made for you to live quietly.

In your letters you ask for detailed instructions and also Haradhan reported that you were insisting very much to receive them. Here are, then, the instructions we have to give you:

First the outer condition.

1) Be careful to always eat well and never think that to eat well or to take pleasure in eating is in any way wrong. On the contrary you must try to recover the ananda of food; without fearing the attachment for food; if there is such [a] thing in you, it will fall off from you as the ananda grows.

2) You must take long, peaceful sleeps. Never believe that there is anything wrong in sleeping well and deeply. And fear not that the time you give to sleep is wasted for your sadhana. In a good, quiet sleep necessary things are done by the superconscience and in the sub-conscience.

3) You need good fresh air and a moderate amount of exercise in the open every day. Vizianagaram is near the hills, it is surely a wholesome place; and a daily walk of one hour or so in the country will help you much to recover completely your physical strength.

4) We have heard that there are several alternatives for your lodging: an empty family house in front of the house where your family lives, or a villa out of town, or another two storied house. Because of its situation, the villa seems the best, provided arrangements can be made for your material needs. If not

---

was written partly in the Mother's and partly in Sri Aurobindo's hand. Items [2] and [12] were recorded by A. B. Purani. — Ed.

possible, you might live in the empty family house and receive food prepared for you in your family's house.

5) Haradhan said also that you wished to cook for yourself. If you can take pleasure in cooking and making the necessary material arrangements, marketing, etc. it would be a good thing. But if you do not take pleasure and interest in it, it would be better to receive the food from your family or any of your friends.

6) You write: "it is most painful for me to have to accept this obligation from these people." This is a wrong way of looking at the matter. This help is given to you *through* the family and that involves no obligation on your part and binds you to nothing. The spiritual sadhaka is entitled to receive help from others, and that puts him to no obligation to them and leaves him perfectly free. Those that help are merely instruments used by the Divine Power to provide the sadhaka with the needed conditions for his living.

7) About the inner condition.

Write regularly, fully and frankly everything, whether you think it good or bad. It is important that you should conceal nothing; and if you feel some hesitation in writing some things that appear to you as crude or non important, you must overcome this hesitation. To make everything as clear and open as possible is the essential condition for receiving a complete help and guidance; it is also the necessary condition for the transformation of the movements that are to be changed. So, you must write everything internal and external.

Do not forget that your absence from Pondichéry is only temporary. The sooner you get into the right condition, the sooner you will be able to come back.

And the right condition is to have a strong body, strong nerves, a calm mind capable of action and will; no shrinking from contact with life and with the others. These conditions are necessary because, before your return, we shall have to ask you to make certain arrangements, and you must have full power of will and action in order to succeed.

Write everything always, and we shall guide you and know how you are progressing. And when we see that you are ready, we shall tell you what to do.

P.S. We have received your letters of the 19th and the telegram of the 21st. We will answer fully, but meanwhile we write a few necessary words.

It is not sufficient to strengthen your body, you must also strengthen your mind; you must absolutely get rid of these ideas about sin, this brooding upon suggestions of sexual impulse and this habit of seeing dark vital forces everywhere. Your people are quite ordinary human beings, they are not evil spirits or forces, your attitude to them must be one neither of attachment nor of fear, horror and shrinking, but of quiet detachment.

Do not seek for inspirations, but act quietly and rationally according to our instructions, with a calm mind and a quiet will. Get rid of your obsession about coming here and falling at our feet. This and the other suggestions and voices are not inspirations but merely things created by your own mind and its impulses. Your safety lies in remaining quiet and doing what we tell you quietly and persistently, with a perfect confidence, until you are entirely recovered.

We have written one letter on the 16th, one yesterday [the] 20th and this is the third. Let us know each time you receive a letter from us.

[2]

[24 February 1926]

INFORM TIRUPATI MY ANGER. PREVENT COMING TO PONDICHERRY. I REFUSE TO RECEIVE HIM.[8]

[3]

[26 February 1926]

I received this morning your letter about Tirupati.[9] I shall try to explain to you Tirupati's condition, the reasons why I have been obliged to send him away from Pondicherry and the conditions which are necessary for his recovery from his present abnormal state of mind.

---

[8] *Telegram to S. Duraiswami, an advocate living in Madras, to whom Tirupati had gone on his way to Pondicherry. — Ed.*

[9] *Draft of a letter to Dasari Narayana Swamy Chetty, Tirupati's father-in-law. — Ed.*

Some time ago Tirupati began to develop ideas and methods of Yoga-sadhana which are quite inconsistent with the ideas and methods that underlie my system of Yoga. Especially, he began practices that belong entirely to the most extreme form of Bhakti sadhana, practices that are extremely dangerous because they lead to an excited, exalted, abnormal condition and violently call down forces which the body cannot bear. They may lead to a break-down of the physical body, the mind and the nervous system. As soon as I became aware of this turn, I warned him of the danger and prohibited the continuance of these practices. At first he attempted to follow my instructions, but the attraction of his new experiences was so great that he resumed his practices in secret and in the end openly returned to them in defiance of my repeated prohibitions. The result was that he entered into and persisted in an abnormal condition of mind which still continues and at times rises to an alarming height dangerous to the sanity of his mind and the health of his body.

The following are the peculiarities of this condition.

1. There is a state of mind in which he loses hold to a great extent of physical realities and lives in a world of imaginations which do not at all belong to the terrestrial body and the physical human life.

2 He conceives a great distaste for eating and sleeping and believes that the power in him is so great that he can live without sleep and without food.

3 He is listening all the time to things which he calls inspirations and intuitions, but which are simply the creations and delusions of his own excited and unduly exalted state of mind. This exalted state of mind gives him so much pleasure, so much a false sense of strength and Ananda and of being above the human condition that he is unwilling to give it up and feels unhappy and fallen when he is brought down to a more ordinary consciousness.

4 In this condition he has no longer enough discrimination left or enough will-power to carry out my instructions or even his own resolutions, but obeys blindly and like a machine these false inspirations and impulses. Everything contrary to them he explains away or ignores — that is the reason why he ignores my orders and puts no value on my telegrams or letters.

5 Also he feels in this condition an abnormal shrinking (not any spiritual detachment) from physical life, from his family, from his friends — for some time he withdrew even from the society of his fellow sadhakas, — and considers anything that comes from them or turns him from his exalted condition as the prompting of evil forces.

Please understand that all these things are the delusions of his own abnormal and exalted state of mind and are *not*, as he falsely imagines and will try to persuade you, signs of a high spiritual progress. On the contrary, if he persists in them, he will lose altogether such spiritual progress as he had made and may even destroy by want of food and want of sleep his body.

To allow him to remain here would be quite disastrous for him. He would count it as a victory for his own aberrations and would persist in them without any farther restraint with results that might be fatal to him. And the intensity of the spiritual atmosphere here would prevent him from coming back to his normal self. Besides when in this condition he brings about here a state of confusion and perturbation, — the one thing to be absolutely avoided in this way of Yoga, — which if prolonged would make the sadhana of my other disciples impossible and would spoil my own spiritual work altogether.

His one chance is if he can settle down in Vizianagaram for a considerable time and in the surroundings of his old physical life return to a normal condition. Please therefore do not send him back or give him money to return to Pondicherry. It will be of no use and may do him great and irreparable harm. He promised, when he went from here first, to eat well and sleep regularly, and he has now promised, on my refusing to see or receive him on account of his disobedience of my orders, to remain quietly at Vizianagaram, to cease listening to his false inspirations and intuitions and to obey my written orders. I had already written to him to that effect and also to throw away his shrinking from life and from his contact with others, but he came away without waiting for my letter. If this time he carries out my instructions, he may yet recover. He must eat well, he must sleep regularly, he must give up his wrong sadhana and live for some time as a normal human being, he must do some kind of physical action, he must resume normal contact with life and others. If he returns to his erratic movements, the remedy is not to let him leave Vizianagaram, but to remind him of my instructions and his promises and insist on his carrying them out. Only you must do it in my name and remind him always that if he does not obey me, I have resolved not to see him again nor to receive him. This is the only thing at present that can make him do what is requisite.

I consented to an arrangement by which he could live quietly by himself because that was what he asked for; but the best would have been that he should live either with his family in their house so that his needs could be looked after or with some one who would see to his needs, some one *with a strong will* who will quietly insist, always in my name, on his doing what he has promised. But I do not know if there is anyone there who could do this for him or whom he would consent to have with him.

You should not understand by what I have written, that he should live as a householder, resume his relations with his wife etc, or that he should not be left mostly to quiet and solitude, if that is what he likes. What I mean is that he must come gradually, if not at first, to deal with those around him as a human being with human beings, without his present nervous shrinkings and abnormal repulsions. The spiritual attitude I have told him to take is one of calm freedom from attachment (*ásakti*), not of an excited shrinking. It may be that after a time this will seem more possible to him than it does at present.

It will be best if you let me know fairly often what he is doing and whether he is carrying out my instructions, as it is likely that he will not write himself to me all the truth when he is in the wrong condition.

[4]

[February 1926]

You must by this time have read the first three letters we wrote to you and we hope you have understood and will act according to our instructions. But it is necessary to make some of them more precise and clear. Today I will write only on two subjects

1 First as to your so-called inspirations and intuitions.

Understand henceforth that you must put no reliance on these suggestions which merely come to you from your mind. They are altogether false. If they seem to come from very high, they are still false; they come from the heights of vital error and not from the truth. If they present themselves as inspirations and intuitions or commands, they are still false; they are only arrogant creations of the vital mind. If they claim to be from me, they are still false; they are not from me at all. If they seem imperative, loud, grand, full of authority, they are all the more false. If they excite and elate you and drive you to act blindly in contradiction to my written orders and instructions, they are most false; they are the suggestions of a power that wants only its own satisfaction and not the Truth.

Henceforth do not seek at all for inspirations and intuitions to guide your conduct. Get back into touch with physical realities, act with a plain practical mind that sees things as they are and not as you want them to be.

You ought to see now that your inspirations were entirely untrue. The explanations by which you try to account for their failure, are equally untrue. For instance you told Duraiswami that because you did not start by the first train from Madras, therefore you lost your chance. This is absurd and false. By whatever train, at whatever time, whatever you might have done, I would not have seen you or received you, for you may [not] come without my written orders [to] come and even against my orders.

2 Next, as to your coming back to Pondicherry. You are always thinking that you have only to act for one or two days according to my orders and then I will call you back. You are

always expecting an immediate recall. Put this out of your head altogether. You cannot come back until I am satisfied that you have entirely got out of your present false consciousness which makes you act and think as you have been doing, and that there is no danger of your going back to it. This will take time. You will be called back to Pondicherry if you obey my orders consistently for a long time and satisfy my conditions, but you must no longer be always thinking of a rapid coming back; you must think only of doing what I tell you and satisfying my conditions. Remember what those conditions are

(1) You must eat and sleep and build up again a strong body.

(2) You must come out of your present state of vital consciousness, give up its false excitement, false elations, harmful depressions, give up your false inspirations and intuitions and come down into a plain, natural quiet physical consciousness. That is your only chance of coming back to reality and the Truth.

(3) You must get rid of your nervous shrinkings from life and others; you must be able to look at people naturally as human beings and deal with them calmly, quietly with a sane calm practical mind. Until you have done this, you will not be in the right condition for returning here.

3dly, about your stay there. You must not talk or think of Vizianagaram or your surroundings as a bad or dangerous atmosphere. It is nothing of the kind. I would not have sent you there, if it were — on the contrary, it is the best place for what you have to do now and what you will have to do hereafter before you can return to Pondicherry.

If you cannot stay in your family house, which would be the most convenient, you can stay in your father-in-law's villa — or the empty family house. But then it will be much better if you allow somebody to stay with you who will look after your needs and [*incomplete*]

[5]

4-3-26

Dear Tirupati,

We have received your letters and noted all the points on which you have asked for instruction and enlightenment. We intend to answer fully, but the letter will take a day or two to write. In the meanwhile try to carry out the instructions already given. In your relations with your people, act simply and naturally; get rid of these nervous shrinkings which are a weakness. The important thing is to have the right inner attitude, calm and without attachment. If you do that, all these details — about how to address them, food and bathing, etc — become trifling matters which will arrange themselves according to convenience and common sense. It is simply that you have to stay at Vizianagaram for some time — as you have rightly seen, for several months, and during that time you must take what help they can give you for your material needs, without that binding you in any way to them. But on this matter as on the other questions raised in your letter we shall write fully in our next letter.

[6]

5.3.26
Dear Tirupati.

This morning we have received your letter probably of the 2nd of March (please put dates on your letters) and it is necessary to reply to it at once, for it is evident from it that you are persisting in a wrong effort which prevents the very object that you have in view. You want to have what you call the "divinisation"; but you cannot have it in the way you are trying.

I will point out your mistakes; please read carefully and try to understand rightly. Especially understand my words in their plain sense and do not put into them any "hidden meaning" or any other meaning which might be favourable to your present ideas.

The Divine Consciousness we are trying to bring down is a Truth Consciousness. It shows us all the truth of our being and nature on all the planes, mind, life and body. It does not throw them away or make an impatient effort to get rid of them immediately and substitute something fantastic and wonderful in their place. It works upon them patiently and slowly to perfect and raise in them all that is capable of perfection and to change all that is obscure and imperfect.

Your first mistake is to imagine that it is possible to become divine in a moment. You imagine that the higher consciousness has only to descend in you and remain there, and all is finished. You imagine that no time is needed, no long, hard or careful work, and that all will be done for you in a moment by the Divine Grace. This is quite wrong. It is not done in that way; and so long as you persist in this error, there can be no permanent divinisation, and you will only disturb the Truth that is trying to come, and disturb your own mind and body by a fruitless struggle.

Secondly, you are mistaken in thinking that because you feel a certain force and Presence, therefore you are at once divine. It is not so easy to become divine. There must be to whatever force or presence comes, a right interpretation and response, a right knowledge in the mind, a right preparation of the vital and physical being. But what you are feeling is an abnormal vital force and exaltation due to the impatience of your desire, and with this there come suggestions born of your desire, which you mistake for truth and call inspirations and intuitions.

I will point out some of the mistakes you make in this condition.

1) You immediately begin to think that there is no further need of my instructions or guidance, because you imagine you are henceforth one with me. Not only so, but the suggestions which you want to accept go quite against my instructions. How can this be if you are one with me? It is obvious that these ideas that go against my instructions come from your mind and impulses, and not from me or from any Divine Consciousness or from anything that can be called the Sri Aurobindo Consciousness.

2) In this connection, you write: "I see one difficulty: that even when I am filled with you the idea of obeying and following your instructions still works — even when you have made me yourself. I pray for the needful." The idea of following and obeying my instructions is not a difficulty, it is the only thing

that can help you. That obedience is the thing that is needful.

3) What do you mean by saying: "You have made me yourself"? The words seem to have no meaning. You cannot mean that you become the same individual self as I; there cannot be two Aurobindos; even if it were possible it would be absurd and useless. You cannot mean that you have become the Supreme Being, for you cannot be God or the Iswara. If it is in the ordinary (Vedantic) sense, then everyone is myself, since every Jiva is a portion of the One. You may perhaps have become conscious for a time of this unity; but that consciousness is not sufficient by itself to transform you or to make you divine.

4) You begin to imagine that you can do without food and sleep and disregard the needs of the body; and you forget my instructions, and mistakenly call these needs a disturbance or the play of hostile material and physical forces. This idea is false: what you feel is only a vital force, not the highest truth, and the body remains what it was; it will suffer and break down if [it] is not given food, rest and sleep.

5) It is the same mistaken vital exaltation that made you feel your body to see if it was of supramental substance. Understand clearly that the body cannot be transformed in that way into something quite unphysical. The physical being and the body, in order to be perfected, have to go through a long preparation and gradual change. This cannot be done, if you do not come out of this mistaken vital exaltation and come down into the ordinary physical consciousness first, with a clear sense of physical realities.

As regards what you say about your wife —

As you are determined to have no such relations with her, all that is needed is to regard her as an ordinary woman and with a quiet indifference. It is a mistake to dwell on the idea of your past relations, or to have shrinking and abhorrence; that only keeps up a struggle in your self which would otherwise disappear of itself.

Finally, if you want the real change and transformation, you must clearly and resolutely recognise that you have made and are still making mistakes, and have entered into a condition that is unfavourable to your object. You have tried to get rid of the thinking mind, instead of perfecting and enlightening it, and have tried to replace it by artificial "inspirations and intuitions."

You have developed a dislike and shrinking for the body and the physical being and its movements; and therefore you do not want to come down into the normal physical consciousness and do patiently there what is necessary for the change. You have left yourself only with a vital consciousness which feels sometimes a great force and ananda and at others falls into bad depressions, because it is not supported either by the mind above or by the body below.

You must absolutely change all this, if you want the real transformation.

You must not mind losing the vital exaltation; you must not mind coming into a normal physical consciousness, with a clear practical mind, looking at physical conditions and physical realities. You must accept these first, or you will never be able to change and perfect them.

You must recover a quiet mind and intelligence.

If you can once firmly do these things, the Greater Truth and Consciousness can come back in its proper time, in the right way and under the right conditions.

[7]

Pondicherry
March 22. 1926.

My dear Tirupati,

I have received all your letters; I am sorry to find from them that you are still persisting in the same state of vital exaltation, the same ideas, the same forms of speech, the same delusions. You say that you have understood our letter of the 5th. We told you to understand that letter in its plain significance and not to put into it some false imaginary meaning out of your mind. Either you have put some false meaning into it or, if you understood our plain written instructions, you are deliberately refusing to follow them. For you are doing exactly the opposite of what we told you to do. We shall write more about this in a day or two. At present I write only a few essential things.

1. It is not possible for you to become my "Avatar"; I have told you that the very idea is absurd and meaningless.

2 It is possible for you to manifest the supramental consciousness in this life. But it is not possible by the means you are now trying. It cannot be done by falling at my feet. It cannot be done in a moment. It cannot be done by fasting. It cannot be done by refusing to have anything to do with physical forces and the normal physical life.

3 If you throw away your body, you will not be my "Avatar" either in this life or in any other. On the contrary, you will destroy your chances for a hundred lives to come.

4 The supramental consciousness can only be manifested if you follow exactly my written instructions. These are

(1) *You must eat well and regularly every day, sleep well every night and build up a strong body.* The supermind cannot descend and remain in a weak and starved body.

(2) *You must consent to come down into the ordinary physical consciousness and stay there to transform it slowly.* If you continue to refuse to live in the ordinary consciousness, the supermind cannot get the opportunity to change it; in that case you will always go on as now thinking "now I have got it, today it is made permanent", but it will not remain.

(3) *You must learn to understand and follow in their plain sense my written instructions. You must learn to give them a greater value than to the ideas you get from within by your sadhana.* If you refuse to do this, the supramental consciousness will refuse to remain in you.

(4) You must learn to resume natural relations with people in the physical world — with those around you, with your friends and your people.

5. I have told you that *you are not to come to Pondicherry without my written permission.* If you disobey and follow your own impulses, you will not be received here; you will be sent away like last time.

It is not for you to fix the date of your coming, whether

August 15th or another. It is for me to decide and you must not come till I write and call you.

You cannot come to Pondicherry till you have carried out my written instructions plainly and faithfully for many months together. You cannot come till you have stopped fasting altogether. You cannot come till you have descended into the ordinary physical consciousness and remained there for months together. You cannot see me again at Pondicherry until you are ready to meet me on the physical plane and that can only be when you have accepted the physical consciousness and the physical life. This is definite.

6. If you refuse to do what I tell you, you cannot have the fulfilment you hope for. You can if you like remain as a Bhakta all your life, but even then you must renounce the vital form of Bhakti. You must bring back the psychic Bhakti, the Bhakti which is calm, quiet, deep, the Bhakti which is not noisy, not making demands, the Bhakti which finds its greatest pleasure in obedience. This is the only Bhakti in which I can take delight; I accept no other.

My blessings.
Sri Aurobindo

[8]

March 27–[1926]
Tirupati my child

I am happy to find you back again.

Your letters of March 25. reached this morning and are most welcomed.

All you have written in these two letters is exactly what we wanted you to think and feel.

You have only to keep this state of mind permanently; for this is the true foundation for the careful and patient building of the real Divine Life in you.

If you feel any kind of excitement or demand for immediate divinisation, or any idea of fasting, or impatience of staying there, then read again my letter of March 22 and it will help you to come back to the right idea and right attitude.

As to eating and sleeping, perhaps it will be best at the beginning to keep a daily record of the number of meals you take and the number of hours you sleep and send it to me when you write. This will help you to keep [steady][10] in your resolution.

Yes, it will be very good for you to read and translate the Arya. We have not until now been able to get the numbers you wanted from Calcutta, and at present we have not a set of the Arya available. I will send you a copy of the Essays on the Gita, first series; it will be best for you to begin with this and translate it. Accustom yourself to translate only a little every day and do it very carefully. Do not write in haste; go several times through what you have written and see whether it accurately represents the spirit of the original, and whether the language cannot be improved. In all things, in the mental and physical plane, it should be your aim, at present, not to go fast and finish quickly, but to do everything carefully, perfectly, and in the right manner.

We wish you to understand and keep henceforth the right attitude with regard to the physico-vital impulses of which you complain; that is as regards food, money, sexual impulses etc. You have been adopting the moral and ascetic attitude which is entirely wrong and cannot help you to master these powers of the nature.

For food, it is a need of the body and you must use it to keep the body fit and strong. You must replace attachment by the ananda of food. If you have this ananda and the right sense of the taste, etc. and of the right use of food, the attachment, if there is any, will of itself, after a time, disappear.

As regards money, that too is a need for life and work. For instance, before you can come back here, when you have reestablished your hold on physical life, we shall ask you to collect money for certain arrangements which will include the arrangements for your living here. Money represents a great power of life which must be conquered for divine uses. Therefore you must have no attachment to it but also no disgust or horror of it.

---

[10] *MS* study

As to the sexual impulse — For this also you must have no moral horror, or puritanic, or ascetic repulsion. This also is a power of life and while you have to throw away the present form of this power (that is the physical act), the force itself has to be mastered and transformed. It is often strongest in people with a strong vital nature and this strong vital nature can be made a great instrument for the physical realisation of the Divine Life. If the sexual impulse comes, do not be sorry or troubled, but look at it calmly, quiet it down, reject all wrong suggestions connected with it, and wait for the Higher Consciousness to transform it into the true force and ananda.

As regards your friends and family, you must look at them normally as ordinary human beings. Here also have no attachments, no shrinkings; deal with them in a quiet rational manner. Your father-in-law has repeatedly promised me that they would not interfere with your spiritual life. All they want is that you should eat and be in good health, and take their help for your needs and comforts. It was only under my instructions that they pressed you to eat.

All these things we have told you are necessary for your being in the physical consciousness and having the right relations with physical life. In our next letter we will write to you in detail what we mean by being in the physical consciousness and meeting us on the physical plane. But today there is no time and we want this letter to go by today's post.

[9]

March 30.

Dear Tirupati

We are sorry to see that you are not physically well. You must be careful not to tire or overstrain yourself. You are walking too much, especially for a body weakened by fasting and want of regular sleep. You should walk only some two and a half miles a day, in the fresh air, and when you are tired and not well, you should suspend the walking and rest as much as possible.

Do not eat hot things; it is extremely bad for your intestines. But take plenty of good plain food.

Especially you must sleep regularly. It is most important. You must also bathe and keep your body clean. If you can arrange, bathe in hot water.

If you follow these instructions carefully, good health must come back with the returning strength of the body. You have overstrained yourself in every way and weakened yourself nervously, that is why these things come back.

The true explanation of the vision you saw of dark dancing women is not the one you put upon it. The vaishnava bhajan is one that easily excites the vital being, and if there are people there of a low nature, all sorts of dark and low forces come in to feed upon the excitement. These are the women you saw; they had nothing to do with you or with sexual impulses.

You ought not to attach too much importance to impulses like the one you had about going downstairs to the puja, or think that because you do not obey the impulse you have prevented the spiritual experience of fulfilment. The spiritual fulfilment will come in its time by a steady development of the being and the nature. It does not depend on seizing upon this or that opportunity.

There is another thing which you must learn. If you are interrupted in sadhana, as by the boy coming with the water, you must simply remain inwardly quiet and allow the interruption to pass. If you learn to do this, the inner state or experience will go on afterwards just as if nothing had happened. If you attach undue importance and get upset, on the contrary, you change the interruption into a disturbance and the inner state or experience ceases. Always keep the inner quiet and confidence in every circumstance; allow nothing to disturb it or to excite you. A steady inner calm and quiet will and psychic faith and bhakti are the one true foundation for your sadhana.

[10]

[c. March–April 1926]

Dear Tirupati

We answer first your letter of the 28th.

It is evident that you are suffering from a nervous reaction due to overstrain. You have allowed for a long time an excessive vital energy kept up by a concentration of vital excitement to tyrannise over your body. The body was being weakened all the time, but the vital excitement prevented you from feeling it. Now it is making itself felt. The pains you have seem to be partly rheumatic, partly due to fatigue of the nerves. If you want to recover your strength, you must consent to take plenty of rest. Do not consider long rest and repose tamasic. Sleep long at night, rest much during the day.

Do not do anything in excess. 8 to 10 miles a day walking is far too much; two to three miles is quite sufficient, enough to give you air and exercise.

Also, five or six hours meditation is quite sufficient. Ten hours is too much; it is likely to overstrain the system. Intense meditation is not the only means of sadhana. Especially when one has to deal with the physical, it is not good to be always drawn within in meditation. What you have to learn is to keep at all times the true consciousness, calm, large, full of a quiet strength, looking at all in you and around you with true perception and knowledge, a calm unmoved observation and a quiet will ready to act when necessary. No overstress, no yielding to excitement, nervous sensitiveness or depression.

Learn to occupy your time in a quiet even and harmonious way. Walk a little but not too much. Meditate, but not too much, nor so as to overstrain the body. Read and write, but not so as to tire the brain. Look out a good deal on the physical world and its action and try to see it rightly. When you are stronger, but not now, you can undertake also some kind of physical work and action and learn to do it in the right way and with the right knowledge.

You say that you do not find it so easy to understand the "Arya" as before. But that is mostly because you have made your body weak and the brain is easily tired. With rest and return of physical strength this will disappear. You say too that you cannot do things now that you were easily able to do before. But then you were keeping some kind of harmonious balance between the mind, the vital being and the body, and all were strong. Afterwards you went entirely into the vital and neglected and fatigued the body; you kept yourself up only by an abnormal vital concentration and excitement. Now you are feeling the physical reaction. But this too will disappear with rest, calm of mind and the return of physical strength.

Therefore do not scruple to rest much. It will be good to remain quiet for long periods of time and allow the calm and quiet effect of the higher consciousness to settle unobtrusively into the body.

Your "tamasic" condition and pains are not in the least due to taking food from your people or to their atmosphere. Dismiss this kind of idea from your mind altogether; it is entirely untrue.

The sensations you have when going out into the town, in the streets, in the market, meeting women, seeing people with illnesses are all signs of nervous weakness and [ ][11] an abnormally exaggerated nervous sensitiveness. You must get rid of this weakness and recover control of your nerves. You must become able to see women without any of these reactions; dismiss from your mind the obsession of your fear of the sexual impulse and this will become easier. The fear and abhorrence makes the sexual attraction or suggestion itself come more persistently. Learn to be calm and indifferent. If you observe the atmosphere of people, observe it as something external to you, not affecting you. To be affected is simply due to a weakness of the nervous being. At Pondicherry I am afraid you encouraged this nervous weakness and shrinking with the idea that it was a sign of superior psychic sensitiveness. Get rid of this idea. You may be conscious of things around you and yet calm and strong to meet them without being affected and overcome.

---

[11] *MS* and

One other point. It is something else than the truth that gives the forms of your mother and wife to the feminine figures seen by you at the time of sexual suggestions. Do not be constantly thinking of your wife in this connection; regard her like any other woman without attachment and without repulsion or shrinking. I do not believe she has enough force to project herself into your consciousness in the way you think she does: it is your mental association that helps to [create][12] the image. Repulsion and shrinking (*jugupsa*) are a bad way of getting rid of things; they usually give more force to what you want to throw from you.

Before you go to sleep, do not be satisfied with prayer, but bring down and leave in the body a strong will against any sexual suggestion in sleep or its result. With a little practice the body will learn to take the inhibiting suggestion and these things will cease.

In one of your letters you speak of a voice telling you "Mira will never consent to be your Shakti". What precisely do you mean by this phrase, "my Shakti"? It is a wrong way of putting it which may lead to a confusion of ideas. You mean perhaps that she is to you the Mahashakti and that the force which will descend on you from the supramental plane and support your sadhana and action, will come from her. That is all right; but the Mahashakti is the Ishwara's and nobody can speak of her as "my Shakti".

Lastly, you speak in regard to your experience of coming here to this house of coming here "in the supermind". What happened was that you entered into a supraphysical consciousness and in that state some part of you came over here. You speak too easily of any kind of supraphysical consciousness as if it were necessarily the supermind. But there are many grades of consciousness between the physical and the supermind and you will have hereafter to learn to distinguish rightly between them. Moreover even when the supramental touches or descends into the intermediate grades or into the physical, that is merely a glimpse of what may or will be; it is not the whole or the definite realisation. The realisation must be worked out patiently afterwards. If you understand this carefully, you will no longer be disappointed because a higher condition does not settle down in you at once "permanently".

---

[12] *MS* creates

I think you write your letters too rapidly; it is often very difficult, sometimes impossible to read many of the words. Write carefully so that all may be clear and legible.

[11]

[c. March – April 1926]

Tirupati,

I have received your long, rambling, incoherent, excited letter of the 29th; it is from beginning to end a mass of almost insane nonsense.

I understand from it that you have returned to your former delusions and the lies imposed by some Hostile Force on your mind and your vital being. You are once more determined to revolt against my orders, to disobey my written instructions, to disregard the plain meaning of my letters. You are determined to deceive yourself by reading into them a "hidden" meaning, that is to say to read into them the lies of the Hostile Force which you take for inspirations and intuitions. You have decided to follow again the mad course which led you away from Pondicherry and exiled you from my presence.

You have disowned your letter of the [?] the only letter which was entirely sound, true and sane. In that letter of the [?] we saw the real Tirupati, the only Tirupati we know; with the other who wrote this letter of the 29th we have no connection.

[12]

[6 May 1926]

Tirupati,

Your aspiration to be my manifestation and all the rest of the delusions to which you have surrendered yourself are not Yoga or Sadhana. They are an illusion of your vital being and your brain. We tried to cure you and for a few days while you were obeying my instructions you were on the point of being cured. But you have called back your illness and made it worse than before. You seem to be no longer capable even of understanding what I write to you; you read your own delusions into my letters. I can do nothing more for you.

All that I can tell you is to go back to Vizianagaram and allow yourself to be taken care of there. I can make no arrangements for you anywhere. I can give only a last advice. Throw away the foolish arrogance and vanity that have been the cause of your illness, consent to become like an ordinary man living in the normal physical mind.

Now that is your only means of being saved from your illness.

To Daulatram Sharma

Pondicherry.
26.3.26.

Dear friend,

I have shown your letter to A.G. and below I give you his answer to it.[13]

Your letter is very interesting, because it shows that you have accurate intuitions which unfortunately your mind does not allow you to follow out. Your mind also interferes by giving your intuitions a mental form and mental consequences or conditions which are not correct.

You are quite right when you say that your sadhana will not open through the mind but through your psychic being. It is from there indeed that these guiding intuitions come.

Your intuition that in your case the effective impulse can best come from Mira (you can call her Mira Devi if you like, but please don't call her Madame!) is also perfectly correct. When she saw you from the window on the terrace on your last visit, she herself said to A.G., "This is a man I can change. *But he is not yet ready*". But it was your mind that interfered when you thought it was necessary to sit in meditation with her in order to receive what she has to give. There is no such condition for her spiritual or psychic action and influence.

---

[13] *This letter was drafted by one of Sri Aurobindo's secretaries and completely rewritten by Sri Aurobindo in his own hand. — Ed.*

It is true that she was not mixing with the sadhaks at that time, partly because they themselves were not ready to take the right relation and receive her influence, partly because the difficulties of the physical plane made it necessary for her to retire from all direct contact with anyone, as distinct from an indirect contact through A.G. Always however she was acting with him on the psychic and vital levels to do whatever might be possible at the time. All that is needed to receive a direct touch from her is to take the right relation to her, to be open and to enter her atmosphere. The most ordinary meeting or talk with her on the physical plane is quite enough for the purpose. Only the sadhaka must be ready; otherwise he may not receive the impulse or may not be able to fulfil it or bear its pressure.

Also it will be a mistake if you make too rigid a separation between A.G and Mira. Both influences are necessary for the complete development of the sadhana. The work of the two together can alone bring down the supramental Truth into the physical plane. A.G acts directly on the mental and on the vital being through the illumined mind; he represents the Purusha element whose strength is predominantly in illumined (intuitive, supramental or spiritual) knowledge and the power that acts in this knowledge, while the psychic being supports this action and helps to transform the physical and vital plane. Mirra acts directly on the psychic being and on the emotional, vital and physical nature through the illumined psychic consciousness, while the illumined intuitions from the supramental being give her the necessary knowledge to act on the right lines and at the right moment. Her force representing the Shakti element is directly psychic, vital, physical and her spiritual knowledge is predominantly practical in its nature. It is, that is to say, a large and detailed knowledge and experience of the mental, vital and physical forces at play and with the knowledge the power to handle them for the purposes of life and of Yoga.

In your case what is strong in your nature is especially the dynamic mind, the vital force and the practical physical mind. The thinking mind in you in spite of the interest it has taken in religion and philosophy is not easily open to a true illumination. The other parts mentioned above could more easily accept the light, but they cannot find it for themselves because their whole strength and activity has been turned outwards. It is only the psychic being in you that has from time to time been giving you intuitions and turning you towards the Truth. But it could not come forward and lead your life because you have too much suppressed your emotional nature, dried up your surface mind and choked up with much rubbish the psychic fire. If once it can awaken entirely and come in front, it can transform the dynamic mental, the vital and the physical mind and through them make you an illumined instrument for the physical realisation of the Truth upon earth. This, as you can see from what has been said above about Mira's force, makes your nature one which is specially meant for the kind of work she can best do.

You did not quite understand what A.G. had said about Brahmacharya. He did not mean that you should indulge the sexual impulse freely. On the contrary, if you have the impulse to cease from sexual life you should by all means do it. What he meant to say was that by Brahmacharya is generally understood a mental & moral control, a cessation because of a mental rule. Such a control especially if undertaken from an ascetic or puritan attitude, only keeps chained or even suppresses the vital power behind the sexual impulse and does not really purify or change it. The true motive for overcoming the sexual impulse is the inner psychic and when that rises then comes the real will to an inner purity which makes it an inner necessity for the being to drop the animal sexual play and turn the life-force to greater uses. The vital power behind the sexual impulse is an indispensable force for the perfection of the nature and for the Yoga. Often it is those who because of the strong vital force in them are most capable of the supramental transformation of the physical nature that have the strongest sexual impulses. All lust, the sexual act and the outward dragging impulse have to be thrown away by the sadhaka, but the power itself has to be kept and transformed into the true force and Ananda. You are right in thinking that a certain fundamental purity in this respect is needed in order to approach Mira and have her help. It is not possible for her to have relations with one who is full of coarse animal or perverted sexual impulses or unable because of them to have the true spiritual or psychic regard on women. But an absence of all sexual impulse is not necessary, still less an ascetic or puritanic turn in this matter. On the contrary. Neither the conventional Puritan nor the coarse animal man can receive anything from her.

This is what A.G said about your letter. Now, since you have these intuitions, why not act on them? Why not try even from a distance to open yourself to receive any influence which may come to you by the mere fact of your having turned towards Mira and her knowing it? If nothing else happens, the necessary psychic preparation (so far your preparation has been only mental) may take place. At least, you could try it. Only do keep your mind quiet — not silent or blank — but put outside you; look at the thoughts if they rise, but wait for a higher truth, for the psychic being to come forward, for the psychic intuition to speak, and when it comes do not let the mind meddle. If there is something not quite clear, wait for more light. Give your soul a chance, that is what is needed.

To Barindra Kumar Ghose and Others, 1922 – 1928[1]

To Barindra Kumar Ghose

[1]

Arya Office
Pondicherry
November 18. 1922.

Dear Barin,

I understand from your letter that you need a written authority from me for the work I have entrusted to you and a statement making your position clear to those whom you may have to approach in connection with it. You may show to anyone you wish this letter as your authority and I hope it will be sufficient to straighten things for you.

I have been till now and shall be for some time longer withdrawn in the practice of a yoga destined to be a basis not for withdrawal from life, but for the transformation of human life. It is a yoga in which vast untried tracts of inner experience and new paths of sadhana had to be opened up and which therefore needed retirement and long time for its completion. But the time is approaching, though it has not yet come, when I shall have to take up a large external work proceeding from the spiritual basis of this yoga.

It is therefore necessary to establish a number of centres, small and few at first but enlarging and increasing in number as I go on, for training in this sadhana, one under my direct supervision, others in immediate connection with me. Those trained there will be hereafter my assistants in the work I shall have to do, but for the present these centres will be not for external work but for spiritual training and tapasya.

---

[1] *All the letters in this subsection, except the first, second and ninth to Barindra Kumar Ghose, are preserved only in the form of handwritten, typed or printed copies. Whenever possible, the editors have collated several copies of each letter in order to produce an accurate text. — Ed.*

The first, which will be transferred to British India when I go there, already exists at Pondicherry, but I need funds both to maintain and to enlarge it. The second I am founding through you in Bengal. I hope to establish another in Guzerat during the ensuing year.

Many more desire and are fit to undertake this sadhana than I can at present admit and it is only by large means being placed at my disposal that I can carry on this work which is necessary as a preparation for my own return to action.

I have empowered you to act for me in the collection of funds and other collateral matters. I have an entire confidence in you and I would request all who wish me well to put in you the same confidence.

I may add that this work of which I have spoken is both personally and in a wider sense my own and it is not being done and cannot be done by any other for me. It is separate and different from any other work that has been or is being carried on by others under my name or with my approval. It can only be done by myself aided closely by those like you who are being or will in future be trained directly under me in my spiritual discipline.

Aurobindo Ghose.

[2]

Pondicherry
December 1. 1922

Dear Barin,

I waited for your letter in order to know precisely what portions Chittaranjan wanted to publish and why.[2] It turns out to be as I saw, but I wanted confirmation. I must now make clear the reasons why I hesitated to sanction the publication.

I should have had no objection to the publication of the portion about the spiritual basis of life or the last paragraph about Swaraj. But that about non-cooperation as it stands without farther explanation and amplification would lead, I think, to a complete misunderstanding of my real position. Some would take it to mean that I accept the Gandhi programme subject to the modifications proposed by the Committee. As you know, I do not believe that the Mahatma's principle can be the true foundation or his programme the true means of bringing about the genuine freedom and greatness of India, her Swarajya and Samrajya. On the other hand others would think that I was sticking to the school of Tilakite Nationalism. That also is not the fact, as I hold that school to be out of date. My own policy, if I were in the field, would be radically different in principle and programme from both, however it might coincide in certain points. But the country is not yet ready to understand its principle or to execute its programme.

---

[2] *Chittaranjan Das proposed publishing portions of Sri Aurobindo's letter to him of 18 November 1922. This letter is published on pages 260–62. — Ed.*

Because I know this very well, I am content to work still on the spiritual and psychic plane, preparing there the ideas and forces which may afterwards at the right moment and under the right conditions precipitate themselves into the vital and material field. And I have been careful not to make any public pronouncement as that might prejudice my possibilities of future action. What that will be will depend on developments. The present trend of politics may end in abortive unrest, but it may also stumble with the aid of external circumstances into some kind of simulacrum of self-government. In either case the whole real work will remain to be done. I wish to keep myself free for it in either case.

My interest in Das's actions and utterances, apart from all question of personal friendship, arises first from the fact that the push he is giving, although I do not think it likely to succeed at present, may yet help to break the narrow and rigid cadre of the "constructive" Bardoli programme which seems to me to construct nothing and the fetish-worship of non-cooperation as an end in itself rather than a means, and thereby to create conditions more favourable for the wide and complex action necessary to prepare the true Swarajya. Secondly, it arose from the rapidity with which he seems to be developing many of the ideas which I have long put down in my mind as essentials of the future. I have no objection to his making use privately of what I have written in the letter. But I hope he will understand why the publication of it does not recommend itself to me.

I see you are having great difficulties over the money question. Remember that money as a general power is still in the hands of the adverse forces, Mammon or Amrita's grand Titan. The favourable force can only come in waves which must be realised at once, otherwise the adverse forces will intervene and create all difficulties. Also it will not do to relax effort or turn it elsewhere when things seem to promise favourably, — the promise is likely to be deceptive because that is just the moment for the hostile intervention. As in the Yoga, so here the will and the force must be kept steadily working on men, forces and circumstances until the possible success is achieved.

Aurobindo

P.S. The answer to Jyotish Ghose's letter will go later.

[3]

Pondicherry
9th December 1922

Dear Barin,

I have read carefully Jyotish Ghose's letter and I think the best thing is first to explain his present condition as he describes it. For he does not seem to me to understand the true causes and the meaning.

The present condition of passivity and indifference is a reaction from a former abnormal state to which he was brought by an internal effort not properly guided from without or from within. The effort brought about a breaking of the veils which divide the physical from the psychic and vital worlds. But his mind was unprepared and unable to understand his experiences and judged them by the light of fancy and imagination and erroneous mental and vital suggestions. His vital being full of rajasic and egoistic energy rushed up violently to enjoy these new fields and use the force that was working for its own lower ends. This gave an opportunity for a hostile power from the vital world to break in and take partial possession and the result was disorganisation of the nervous and physical system and some of the brain centres. The attack and possession seem to have passed out and left behind the present reaction of passivity with a strong hold of tamas and indifference. The tamas and indifference are not in themselves desirable things but they are temporarily useful as a rest from the past unnatural tension. The passivity is desirable and a good basis for a new and right working of the Shakti.

It is not a true interpretation of his condition that he is dead within and there is only an outside activity. What is true is that the centre of vital egoism that thinks itself the actor has been crushed and he now feels all the thought and activity playing outside him. This is a state of knowledge; for the real truth is that all these thoughts and activities are Nature's and come into us or pass through us as waves from the universal Nature. It is our egoism and our limitation in the body and individual physical mind which prevent us from feeling and experiencing this truth. It is a great step to be able to see and feel the truth as he is now doing. This is not of course the complete knowledge. As the knowledge becomes more complete and the psychic being opens upwards one feels all the activities descending from above and can get at their true source and transform them.

The light playing in his head means that there has been an opening to the higher force and knowledge which is descending as light from above and working on the mind to illumine it. The electrical current is the force descending in order to work in the lower centres and prepare them for the light. The right condition will come when instead of the vital forces trying to push upward the Prana becomes calm and surrendered and waiting with full assent for the light and when instead of the chasm in between there is a constant aspiration of the heart towards the truth above. The light must descend into these lower centres so as to transform the emotional and vital and physical being as well as the mental thought and will.

The utility of psychic experiences and knowledge of the invisible worlds as of other yogic experiences is not to be measured by our narrow human notions of what may be useful for the present physical life of man. In the first place these things are necessary for the fulness of the consciousness and the completeness of the being. In the second place these other worlds are actually working upon us. And if you know and can enter into them then instead of being the victims and puppets of these powers we can consciously deal with, control and use them. Thirdly, in my Yoga, the Yoga of the supramental, the opening of the psychic consciousness to which these experiences belong is quite indispensable. For it is only through the psychic opening that the supramental can fully descend with a strong and concrete grasp and transform the mental, vital and physical being.

This is the present condition and its value. For the future if he wishes to accept my yoga the conditions are a steady resolve and aspiration towards the truth I am bringing down, a calm passivity and an opening upward towards the source from which the light is coming. The Shakti is already working in him and if he takes and keeps this attitude and has a complete confidence in me there is no reason why he should not advance safely in the sadhana in spite of the physical and vital damage that has been done to his system. As for his coming here to see me I am not yet quite ready but we will speak of it after your return to Pondicherry.

Aurobindo

[4]

30th December 1922
Arya Office
Pondicherry

Dear Barin,

First about Krishnashashi. I do not think you are quite right about him at least in the idea that he is responsible for the recent undesirable manifestations at your place. He is evidently what is called a psychic sensitive and one of a very high, though not perhaps the first order. It is not his fault, I think, that things went wrong recently. These sensitives require a constant protection and guidance from someone who has both power on the psychic and vital plane and knowledge of the science of these planes. There is none such among you. Especially when he is in certain psychic conditions such as those into which he has recently entered, he needs absolutely this protection. He cannot then possibly protect himself because the very nature of these conditions is an absolute passivity and openness to the psychic and psycho-vital influences. It is useless to ask him at that time to exercise his judgment or his power of rejection. For that would immediately make the condition itself impossible. If the psychic and psycho-vital influences are of the right kind, all is well and very remarkable results can be obtained. If they are bad the condition becomes dangerous. The only way to secure the exclusion of the bad influences is for someone else with psychic power to keep a wall of protection round him at the time. The sort of trance in which the breath diminishes, the tongue goes in, the body is curved upward and psycho-physical movements begin in the body is one which I know perfectly well and there is nothing essentially wrong about it. It may be brought about by a very high influence and equally by a bad one, or being brought about by the former, it can be misused or attacked by the latter. If there had been a protection about him exercised by one who had knowledge and confidence in his own psychic and vital force, the untoward influence evidenced by the cries, grimaces, etc. would not have come in to spoil this stage. Let me add that these are not forces of our lower universal but an intervention from a foreign and hostile vital world.

In the present circumstances the proper line for Krishnashashi is to postpone this kind of psychic development, I mean the later ones — especially those of a physical character. He must understand the character of his higher psychic experiences. These, including the voice, are not direct from the supra-mental but psychic and intuitive on the whole mental plane from the higher mind downwards. That is no reason to belittle them.

Only in the transcription in his mind there is a mixture of his own mental and other suggestions which is almost inevitable at the beginning. He should now without interrupting his higher psychic development give more attention to a self-controlled meditation and mental enlargement. In one letter he speaks of interrupting the reading of "Arya" from the fear of growing too intellectual. This was an erroneous suggestion of his own mind. Let him by all means read and study these things. Of course in this kind of mental enlargement and self-controlled meditation there are dangers and likelihood of mistakes as in all the rest of Yoga. But I think it is what he needs at the present stage. The progress would be slow but it is likely to be more safe, and he can resume the full psychic development when the necessary conditions can be provided. He should also turn his will towards mental and vital purification. There is often much misunderstanding about passivity and self-surrender. It does not mean that there should not remain in the earlier stages any kind of choice, self-control or will towards certain things which are seen to be needed rather than others. Only they must be subject to a confidence and free openness to a higher guidance, which will respond to this choice and will in us if the choice and will are right and sincere.

Next with regard to the hostile manifestations which I observe to be of a very low vital and physico-vital character. I may observe that although there is a real force behind them many of them are not of a real character, that is to say, the faces seen and touches felt were not, in all cases, of real vital beings but only forms suggested and created out of the stuff of your own surrounding vital atmosphere and can easily be dismissed by refusing to accept their reality or to admit their formation. It may be that some particular person in your group opened the way for them but they need not necessarily have had such a personal cause. The real cause may have been the coming together in meditation of so many yet undeveloped people carrying with them a very mixed atmosphere. When that happens or even when there is a general meditation, a *chakra*, hostile forces are attracted and try to break in. There ought to be someone in the group who during the meditation protects the circle. If the meditation is of a psychic character the protection must be psychic on the vital plane. Mirra's experience is that the protection must take the form of a white light constantly kept round the circle. But even this is not enough as the forces will attack constantly and try to find a gap in the protection; there must therefore be round the white light a covering of dense purple light sufficiently opaque for these beings not to be able to see through it. It is not sufficient to have this light in the mental or psychic levels. It must be brought down into the vital and fill it, because it is in the vital that there is the attack. Further, nobody must go out of his body during the meditation (I mean the vital being must not go out, the mental can always do it) or psychically out of the circle. But there is one thing that must be noticed. That if the manifestations occur in spite of all there must be no fear in the minds of those who become aware of them. It is by creating fear through terrible forms and menaces that the hostile beings prevent the Sadhaka from crossing over the threshold between the physical and vital world and it is also by creating fear and alarm that they are able to break in on the vital being of the body. Courage and unalterable confidence are the first necessity of the Sadhaka.

I observe that in your Calcutta centre the Sadhana seems to have taken a different turn from that in the Krishnagore centre. It seems to be marked by an immediate opening and rapid development of the psychical consciousness and psychical phenomena. This turn has great possibilities but also by itself great dangers. In the complete Sadhana there are two powers necessary, the masculine, *Purusha* or *Ishwara* power coming down in knowledge, light, calm, strength, wide consciousness from above and the feminine, Nature or *Ishwari* power opening in receptivity, passivity, psychic sensibility, the responsiveness on all the planes of the being from below. The first by itself tends to be predominantly mental or mentalised intuitive and afterwards mentalised supramental. It is slow in action but sure and safe, only there is often a difficulty of opening up the separate psychic, vital and physical being to the illumination and change.

The second by itself is rapid, sensitive, full of extraordinary and striking experiences but apt in the absence of psychic or occult powers to be chaotic, uneven and open to many dangers. It is when both are present and act upon each other in the being that the Sadhana is likely to be most perfect.

I think you should insist in your Calcutta centre on attention being given to what I call the Purusha side, that is to say, a basis of deep calm, strength, equality, wide consciousness and purity in the mental being, and as the vital and physical open, also in the vital and physical being. If that is attended to and successfully developed the play of the psychic, vital and physical experiences will be more steady, ordered and safe.

As to the three photographs you have sent I give you Mirra's comments in inverted commas with my additions afterwards.

1. Kanai

"An extremely interesting head, highly psychic personality but he must be careful about the physical as this type is likely to burn up the body in the intensity of its psychic developments."

The basis of calm, strength and purity brought down into the physical consciousness without any hasty trepidations or unhealthy vibrations will secure the physical safety and is here very indispensable.

2. Girin

"An intellectual and philosophic temperament but there is something heavy below."

I think that the heaviness is in the vital being and the physical mind and may cause considerable obstruction but if these two can be cleared and illuminated there may be behind a fund of conservative energy and steadiness which will be useful.

3. Jagat Prasanna

"Very dull. I don't know whether anything can be given to him."

I seem to find behind the eyes a psychic capacity of a very low kind and in the bodily vitality something dark and impure which may be a mediumistic element for the lower psycho-vital forces. If he sat in the circle or meditated in the house that might explain the irruption of undesirable phenomena. This is my impression about the man. But I am not quite sure. If he is to do any Yoga it should rather be of the old kind and especially a discipline of self-purification. Passivity of any kind in his case would be dangerous.

One or two things I should add suggested by your remarks on Krishnashashi. All should understand that the true direct supramental does not come at the beginning but much later on in the Sadhana. First the opening up and illumination of the mental, vital and physical beings; secondly, the making intuitive of the mind, through will etc. and development of the hidden soul consciousness progressively replacing the surface consciousness; thirdly, the supramentalising of the changed mental, vital and physical beings and finally the descent of the true supramental and the rising into the supramental plane.

This is the natural order of the Yoga. These stages may overlap and intermix, there may be many variations, but the last two can only come in an advanced state of the progress. Of course the Supramental Divine guides this Yoga throughout but it is first through many intermediary planes; and it cannot easily be said of anything that comes in the earlier periods that it is the direct or full supramental. To think so when it is not so may well be a hindrance to progress.

As to what you say about an unhinged and unsound element in Krishnashashi, this is a probable explanation. The nature of this kind of psychic sensitives is complex and is full of many delicate springs easily touched from behind the veil; hence the sensitiveness; but also easily twisted owing to their very delicacy. Something may have been thus twisted in his nature. In that case great care must be taken. It must be found out what it is and the thing be put right without any too rough handling.

I shall write to you separately about Arun's money and Sarojini.

Aurobindo.

[5]

Pondicherry
January 1923

My dear Barin

It is unfortunate that Krishnashashi's Sadhana should have taken this turn. As things stand however a general mess in Calcutta is the worst possible place for him. If no other arrangement can be made it is better that he should go for the present to Chittagong, do his Sadhana there and write to me. It is not possible for me to have him here just now. If his Sadhana rights itself it may be possible hereafter.

As to the development of egoism in him that is a thing which often happens in the first rush of experience and with proper protection and influence may be got over. The serious features are only the psycho-vital, the danger to the body and certain suggestions which are evidently meant to put him off the right way. I still find it difficult to believe that the menacing apparitions are primarily due to him, for there is nothing in the atmosphere of his letters that suggests a medium of this kind. [Is][3] there a photograph of him [ ][4] available that you can send or ask him to send it to me?

I see that you say in your letter that all have been frightened by these apparitions. Insist on what I have already said about the necessity of dismissing fear. Sometime or other everybody will have to face things of this kind and how can they do it if they fear. If they are afraid of these things, many of which are merely figures or nervous formations, how can they be spiritual warriors and conquerors, without which there can be no rising towards supermanhood. I presume they would be brave against physical dangers; why not then be brave against all psychical dangers or menace.

If Krishnashashi heeds the instructions I have sent in my former letter to you (they were made after consultation with Mirra) all may yet be well. If not I shall have to try to send my mental protection and see what it can do. He is unfortunately too far away for me to put a psycho-vital protection about him. Let me know immediately what has been done and where he goes. I am sending you a letter for him enclosed to you.

---

[3] *MS (copy)* If
[4] *MS (copy)* is

As regards Arun's money I understand that it is for the Calcutta centre and I do not understand why you want to send it here. If he can give the first monthly instalment at once that ought to lighten your difficulties there. I shall be able to arrange with Durgadas's help and with the money coming from Madras and Gujerat for one year's expenses here, just sufficient for the two houses. What I want you to do, if you can, is to raise money from Bengal for the next year and for the maintenance of your Bengal centre also for two years, so that there may be no need of hunting for funds for sometime to come.

At present the main difficulty in your attempts to raise money there is that all remains as potentiality and promise and thins away before it can come to material realisation. It is possible that if you can materialise the small amounts this obstacle may break and even the big sums begin to come in afterwards. Always remember that it is a psychic difficulty, a state of forces, that is the thing to be changed, because that is the real obstacle. If another balance of forces can be begun in which there is the actual materialisation even on a small scale that may well be an opening for better conditions.

Aurobindo.

---

[6]

23rd January 1923.
Arya Office,
Pondicherry.

My dear Barin,

I got your telegram about Krishnashashi this morning. Yesterday I received his photograph and today his last written experiences.[5] I have been able to form from all these and from other indications as complete an idea about him and about what has happened to him as is possible at this distance. The photo shows a remarkable soul, an idealistic psychic intelligence and the presence of a high and beautiful internal being but the part of the face showing the emotional and vital being is too delicate to support adequately the upper part and the physical and physico-vital mould is of a poor and inferior character not easily lending itself to the higher movements or to the change demanded by the Yoga. This disparity in the being was the cause of his illness and is the cause also of his present disorder. The immediate cause however is his being hurried by circumstances and the eagerness of his own mind into a development too rapid for the physical consciousness which should have been subjected to a long and steadying preparation.

---

[5] *Sri Aurobindo commented on some of these experiences in a letter to Krishnashashi of January 1923. See pages 370–73. — Ed.*

I do not know whether Krishnashashi received Moni's letter written to him at his other address, Raja Brojendra Narayan Roy's Street, which he should have got on the 14th. In this letter I suggested that he should remain in Chittagong or some other quiet place and do the Sadhana by himself turning to me for help and protection and I also insisted that the main object of his Sadhana should be the purification and calming of the mind, the vital being and the body. After returning to Bhowanipore I see that just the contrary has happened, — a feverish psycho-mental activity and a much too eager attempt at rapid progress. Instead of calmly receiving he has been seizing at everything that came and trying to translate it and throw it out into form. He has also been pulling at realisation and trying, as Mirra has put it, to swallow the world in a minute. The result is that there has been an uprush of some undesirable kind from the imperfect vital being and the physical mind unable to bear the strain has been thrown into disorder. It is evident also that the atmosphere of the Bhowanipore centre is not favourable to him. There is there an intense mental and psychic activity and a constant push towards rapid experience and progress which are just the things that are dangerous for him and there is not yet the assured basis of calm, peace, serenity and inner silence which is what he needs above all things.

I hope that it is only a crisis or a passing disorder. I am doing my best from here to mend the breakdown, but you must help me by keeping there a firm quietness and calm concentration. This was the object of my telegram. I am of the opinion that when he recovers his balance, my original instructions (in Moni's letter) should be adhered to and he should go to some quiet place where there will not be any high pressure. He must be instructed to put away every other object except the quieting of his mind, vital being and body and the attainment of a poise of serene calm and peace. Also it is better for him not to pass the whole day in meditation and Sadhana but to take plenty of relaxation for the relief of the physical being and do some kind of physical work (not exhausting) which will keep it occupied and healthy. He must be assured that this change does not mean at all a rejection but that it is necessary to secure the proper condition for his future Sadhana. He must of course keep himself in constant spiritual connection with me and write to me from time to time.

Please keep me constantly informed of his condition until he recovers.

Since the above was written your second telegram came into my hands this morning. It is possible that Krishnagore may be a more suitable place for Krishnashashi than Calcutta. There is a more settled basis there. The place is more deliberate and the surroundings are likely to be quieter, a not unimportant consideration in his case. Besides he needs some one who can impose upon him an atmosphere of calm and influence him directly from the psychic nature and not through the mentality, the latter being always of a doubtful effectivity in dealing with psychic people, and from what you have told me about Indu, it is possible that she may be able to help him in this way. In that case it would not be necessary for him to return to Chittagong or pursue his Sadhana in isolation. All this of course after he has recovered. His case is not that of insanity in the ordinary sense but, as in Jyotish's case and for rather similar reasons, a psychic disorder. I should of course be kept informed of his condition.

I have many things to write but as this must go without delay I postpone them to another letter.

Aurobindo.

[7]

Arya Office
Pondicherry
January 1923.

My dear Barin,

I have got a fuller idea from your letters about Krishnashashi's collapse. The main cause is what I saw, the vehement and unrestrained pressure and the vital uprush, overstraining and upsetting the defective physical mind. There is no evil in the psychical and mental or even the vital being proper. The seat of the harm is evidently in the physico-vital and the physical being. The physico-vital dazzled by the experiences began to think itself a very interesting and important personage and to histrionise with the experiences and play for that purpose with the body. This is a frequent deviation of Yoga observable even in some who are considered great Sadhakas. It is a kind of charlatanism of the vital being but would not by itself amount to madness, though it may sometimes seem to go very near it. Ordinarily if the physical mind is strong it either rejects or else keeps these demonstrations within certain bounds. But in this case the physical mind also broke down. The coarse kind of violence exhibited is due to the rough and coarse character of the physical being, — so much I see but am not yet able to determine whether the disorder is only psychic or, as was suggested in my last letter, there is some defect in the brain which has come to the surface. I am concentrating daily and those in Krishnagore have to help me by remaining calm and strong and surrounding him with an unagitated atmosphere, also those who can, have to keep a quiet concentration. He must be kept outwardly and inwardly under firm control and check. If the disorder is only psychic the violence will pass away and the other signs abate and less frequently recur. But if there is some brain defect then as I said, it may be a difficult affair. I can give final instructions only after seeing how the malady goes.

As regards your own sadhana and those of others in Bhowanipore I think it necessary to make two or three observations. First I have for some time the impression that there is a too constant activity and pressure for rapidity of progress and a multitude of experiences. These things are all right in themselves, but there must be certain safeguards. First there should be sufficient periods of rest and silence, even of relaxation, in which there can be a quiet assimilation. Assimilation is very important and periods necessary for it should not be regarded with impatience as stoppages of the Yoga. Care should be taken to make calm and quiet strength and inner silence, the basic condition for all activity. There should be no excessive strain; any fatigue, disturbance, or inordinate sensitiveness of the nervous and physical parts, of which you mention certain symptoms in your letters, should be quieted and removed, as they are often signs of overstrain or too great an activity or rapidity in the Yoga. It must also be remembered that experiences are only valuable as indications and openings and the main thing always is the steady harmonious and increasingly organised opening and change of the different parts of the consciousness and the being.

Among Rati's experiences there is one paper headed "surface consciousness". What is described there is the nervous or physico-vital envelope. This is the thing observed by the mediums and it is by exteriorising it to a less or greater extent that they produce their phenomena. How did Rati come to know of it? Was it by intuition, by vision or by personal experience? If the latter, warn him not to exteriorise this vital envelope for to do so without adequate protection, which must be that of a person acquainted with these things and physically present at the time, may bring about serious psychical dangers and also injuries to the nervous being and the body or even worse.

Next about money matters. The sources you speak of as supplementing the three thousand you propose to raise are almost all uncertainties. As for instance Miss Hodgson's money, which depends first on her staying here and secondly on the life of her father, an aged and ailing man. I think it necessary to have some six thousand actually in hand for the year after this. Of course you will raise as much as you can in the time at your disposal. I believe if you can once begin to materialise sums and send them here, the rest will come much more easily than seems probable at present. It seems to me as regards the press that the terms made with Amar were hardly precise enough and too unfavourable to you. Still since it is done, let me know what sums are covered by Arun's loan of two thousand and what sums still remain to be raised and paid. When you have some money in hand for the expenses here, can you send the smaller items in Mirra's list, the tooth powder etc.

As to Akhil Choudhury, my intention was that you should meet him and report to me and afterwards I would decide. I was thinking of his remaining at Krishnagore but Krishnashashi's affair has disarranged everything. I understand from Akhil's letter that he has Rs.100/–. I think it would be best for him to come here for a very short time. I shall see him personally and judge what is best to be done. He must be prepared to go to Krishnagore or else, if I find that he can go on by himself after a first touch from here, to return to Chittagong. He should keep enough money to come here and return. Kshitish has written asking to come here for a year and offering to pay all his expenses. I shall decide about this hereafter. Purani will be coming in March and I don't want too many people here. But if Hrishikesh does not come, as I suppose he will not, I may possibly decide to let Kshitish come for some time if not for a whole year.

Aurobindo.

---

[8]

"Arya" Office,
Pondicherry.
31st January, 1923.

My dear Barin,

I got your letter of the 26th and intended to wire but had not your Krishnagore address. This afternoon I have received your telegram and sent a reply giving permission for Krishnashashi's removal. In case the telegram should not reach I have also wired to Kanai in Calcutta. Although to cure Krishnashashi by psychic means might not be impossible, the prolonged resistance and the increasing violence make the present condition impossible. The ordinary means of restraint and medical treatment will have to be used and therefore his removal as you suggest is the only thing left open to us.

It appears from your letters that there is a strong play around you of the hostile opposition from beings of the lowest physico-vital and physical ranges. These beings are small and without intelligence but full of power to do various kinds of harm and mischief. They are similar to those that did the stone-throwing in the other house. To produce brain-incoherence, freaks, absurdities, sexual disorders, nervous agitations, and disequilibrium, coarse violence of various kinds is their sphere in the physical domain and in the physical to bring about accidents, illnesses, injuries, physical impediments and on a smaller scale little mischiefs, inconveniences and hindrances of all kinds. It is these that have taken possession of Krishnashashi's brain and nervous centres and impel his speech and movements. It is these also that pursue with accidents those who are trying to collect money. I have for some time been aware of their activities and suggestions and they are now almost the only positively hostile forces of which I am aware in the Yoga, the rest being merely the normal obstructions of nature. In my own atmosphere I am able to make their suggestions abortive and minimise their play pending their elimination. But in your case they seem to be moved by some more powerful force which not being able to act directly on you is using them as agents. Probably you have in your Sadhana touched and awakened the plane on which they work, but are not yet able to conquer and protect as you can in the higher fields. Those entirely within your spiritual influence may resist or escape but others are exposed to their attack.

I think in these circumstances it is best to limit your creation of a centre there to those who have already begun and even with them, I mean the newcomers, you should be careful. Probably the best course is to keep the centre at Krishnagore as you suggest and have only a small establishment at Calcutta. The atmosphere of Calcutta cannot be a good environment for a Sadhana centre. As to money affairs you must see whether the resistance can be overcome during February and in any case I hope you will not return empty-handed or with a nominal sum, for that would mean a victory for the hostile force which will make things more difficult in the future. I understand from your last letter that Satkari has already realised 500/–. If so get that sum and send it at once, also get in hand and send the Benares money. That will mean so much materialised and to that extent the opposing force defeated. Afterwards see whether the rest does not come in with less difficulty. If you can prevail, that means the way made clear for better success in the future. It is enough that these forces should have destroyed such fine psychic possibilities as Krishnashashi's. I do not like their being successful in other directions also.

As to Sarojini it is out of the question that she should come here. Make it plain to her that the Yoga I am doing now is much too difficult for her. Her coming here would be a waste of time and money. If she is in earnest about Sadhana she must begin with something much more easy. The first thing for her is to study these things, understand, get her mind prepared and begin with turning herself Godward, elimination of egoistic movements and perhaps doing works in the spirit of Karma Yoga; a meditation active and not passive with these things as the object is all she can safely try at the beginning. I have of course no objection to her turning to Theosophy if she is drawn that way. But for her to come into the concentrated atmosphere here just now would not be good for her and it would be disturbing to us. Please stop her coming here by whatever means you can.

I learn from your post card today that Kanai and the others are at Krishnagore. Please let me know your address there so that I may be sure, whenever necessary, of making a direct communication. Manmohan is writing today to Jogesh at Chittagong to take charge of Krishnashashi. He has already cared for and almost cured another in the same condition. Let us hope he will equally be successful here.

Aurobindo.

[9]

14th February 1923.
"Arya" office
Pondicherry

My dear Barin,

I have received the Benares money and am sending an acknowledgement with this letter, which you can transmit to Das. Rajani's 50 has not yet reached me.

I had already written to you about Akhil and on the 10th Manmohan telegraphed and wrote to Chittagong instructing him not to go to Bhowanipore but to collect the money and as soon as he had done this and sufficiently recovered from fever, to write and he would receive a call from here. It appears from your telegram today that he started before receiving Manmohan's telegram. I can give no other instructions than those I have already given. Akhil must collect the money sufficient for his journey here and back either to Krishnagore or Chittagong and he must not come without the sum in his hand. I have arranged things here so as to have just sufficient to meet one year's expenses under each head, just that and no more. Until I am assured of the next year's expenses and more, I cannot meet unexpected charges or enlarge my expenditure. Therefore it will not do for him to come and then have to wait here indefinitely for the means of his return journey. An arrangement agreed upon ought to be observed, otherwise there is unnecessary inconvenience and confusion.

I infer from your letter and telegram taken together that Mohini is starting for Krishnagore in order to take back Krishnashashi. Of course in that case there is no need to wait further as was suggested in Moni's letter. I have received no news about Krishnashashi for the last three days. This kind of disregard of instructions is not at all right. It puts me in considerable difficulty in trying to help Krishnashashi. Please ask Mohini to let me know often from Chittagong about Krishnashashi and his condition. Boroda Babu's letter is very interesting but does not solve the difficulty I had as it gives me no fresh information of any importance. It had already been seen that the immediate cause of the collapse was partly sexual; for that was included in what I meant by the uprush from the vital being. Nor does it make much difference that the physico-vital force possessing him took the form or assumed the *Pranic* body of some dead friend. The situation remains as before. If the disorder is only psychic it will disappear in time. If there is some brain defect that has come up, the issue is more doubtful. The suggestion about the medicine may possibly be useful hereafter. Mohini had better be informed about it.

As to Rajani's difficulties you might ask him to write to me himself stating them and the precise cause of his doubts. As far as I know about his *Sadhana* he was progressing in a steady and sound fashion, but for long I have no farther news of it. There is no reason why he should not succeed in the *yoga* if he keeps the right attitude and faith and perseverance. He will necessarily have difficulties with his vital nature and his physical mind which have a strong earth element, but that is the case also with several others. His development, if he perseveres, is likely to be rather through knowledge and will than any great richness of psychic experience; but he must not take the absence or paucity of the latter for an inability to develop the *yoga*.

The paragraph in one of your letters about the debts is very confused and I can make nothing precise out of it. What I want is to know first what were the heads and the exact sums actually met by the loan of two thousand, especially as this will give me some idea of what has fallen upon us on account of the press; secondly, the heads and exact sums still outstanding apart from this loan of two thousand. What, for instance, is the amount still due to the Kabirajas and what the amount of the small loans. It is very necessary for me, whether in determining what to write to Amar with regard to money matters or in trying to help you, to have an exact and clear idea of the whole transaction. Where there is only a confused, vague or general idea, the force I put out loses itself very largely in the void. Especially I shall have in future to try and act more and more from the Supramental and less and less from the mind. Now the first condition of the Supramental is exactness, clearness and order both in the total and the details and their relations. Therefore it is a great advantage if there are these elements in the data upon which I have to work and a great disadvantage if they are absent.

I shall await your report about Mohini. I gather from his letter that he wanted to remain some time with you for sadhana. My own idea is that already written by Manmohan to Chittagong, that it is better for most to practise first in its elements at least the synthetic Yoga of jnana, bhakti and karma and establish a basis of mental peace and samata before taking up the Yoga of complete and direct self-surrender. There will always be exceptions, but this is for most the safest course.

Aurobindo

[10]

2nd April, 1923.
"Arya" Office,
Pondicherry.

My dear Barin,

First about the photographs. The mounted photograph man is fully unfit for the Yoga. The face is empty except for a great deal of pretension, not warranted by any substance behind. He had better be put off or left aside. It is no use just now bringing in people who have not a definite possibility and even among those who have the best only should be chosen.

As to the unmounted photograph, this is a much worse case. I cannot at all find what you say you see in his eyes. They seem to me rather the eyes of madness or at least mono-mania. The whole face is a nightmare. It seems to me a clear case either of possession or, even, of the incarnation of some vital being. Please do not meddle with him at all. It is only when we have obtained mastery over the physico-vital world and all the physical planes that it will be at all safe to deal with such cases and certainly even then it will not be to begin by taking them into the Yoga.

I note from this case and from what you say in connection with Rathin that you have just now what seems to me a rather dangerous attraction (because likely to create hindrances or misdirect the energy) towards these vital cases. What you say about the different vital worlds is no doubt interesting and has a certain truth, but you must remember that these worlds, which are different from the true or divine vital, are full of enchantments and illusions and they present appearances of beauty which allure only to mislead or destroy. They are worlds of "Rakshashimaya" and their heavens are more dangerous than their hells. They have to be known and their powers met when need be but not accepted; our business is with the Supramental and with the vital only when it is supramentalised and until then we have always to be on our guard against any lures from that other quarter. I think the worlds of which you speak are those which have a special attraction and a special danger for poets, imaginative people and some artists. There is, especially, a strain of aestheticised vital susceptibility or sentiment or even sentimentalism through which they affect the being and it is one of the things that has to be purified before one can rise to the highest poetry, art and imaginative creation. In the case of Krishnashashi some influences from these worlds certainly entered into the cause of his collapse. I shall write about Rathin directly to his father for I don't know how long you are staying in Gauhati.[6] I shall only say just now that it will not be good for the boy if he merely changes the control of one kind of vital world for that of another. He must become healthily normal first and all else can only come afterwards.

As to money matters, I think you should go on trying for some time longer. I believe the obstacle is bound to break before long if we do not get tired out by the obstinacy of the resistance. I am just now very much concentrated in the effort to bring down the Supramental into the physical plane which demands a very constant and sustained effort and it is for this reason that I have not been able to answer letters. I shall decide about Kshitish when the time for your return draws near.

---

[6] *See the letter to Rajani Palit on pages 373–77. — Ed.*

Aurobindo.

[11]

16th April 1923.
Pondicherry.

My dear Barin,

I answer first your letter of the 6th April. I have already let you know that I approve both the people whose photographs you have sent to me. As to Bibhuti Bhushan Datta you are right in thinking that he is a born Yogin. His face shows the type of the Sufi or Arab mystic and he must certainly have been that in a former life and brought much of his then personality into the present existence. There are defects and limitations in his being. The narrowness of the physical mind of which you speak is indicated in the photograph, though it has not come out in the expression, and it might push him in the direction of a rather poverty-stricken asceticism instead of his expanding and opening himself richly to the opulences of the Divine. It might also lead him in other circumstances to some kind of fanaticism. But on the other hand if he gets the right direction and opens himself to the right powers these things may be turned into valuable elements, the ascetic capacity into a force useful against the physico-vital dangers and what might have been fanaticism into an intense devotion to the Truth revealed to him. There is also likely to be some trouble in the physico-vital being. But I cannot yet say of what nature. This is not a case of an entirely safe development, which can be assured only where there is a strong vital and physical basis and a certain natural balance in the different parts of the being. This balance has here to be created and its creation is quite possible. Whatever risk there is must be taken; for the nature here is born for the Yoga and ought not to be denied its opportunity. He must be made to understand fully the character and demands of the integral Yoga.

Next for Kumar Krishna Mitter. He is no doubt what you say, a type of the rich and successful man, but the best kind of that type and cast on sound and generous lines. There is besides indicated in his face and expression a refinement and capacity of idealism which is not too common. Certainly we are not to take people into the Yoga for the sake of their riches, but on the other hand we must not have the disposition to reject anyone on account of his riches. If wealth is a great obstacle, it is also a great opportunity, and part of the aim of our work is, not to reject, but to conquer for the divine self-expression the vital and material powers, including that of wealth, which are now in the possession of other influences. If there a man like this [who][7] is prepared with an earnest and real will to bring himself and his power over from the other camp to ours, there is no reason to refuse him. This of course is not the case of a man born to the Yoga like Bibhuti Bhushan, but of one who has an opening in him to a spiritual awakening and I think of a nature which might possibly fail from certain negative deficiencies but not because of any adverse element in the being. The one necessity is that he should understand and accept what the Yoga demands of him — first the seeking of a greater Truth, secondly the consecration of himself and his powers and wealth to its service and finally the transformation of all his life into the terms of the Truth and that he should have not merely the enthusiastic turning of his idealism but a firm and deliberate will towards it. It is especially necessary in the case of these rich men for them to realise that it is not enough in this Yoga to have a spiritual endeavour on one side and on the other the rest of the energies given to the ordinary motives, but that the whole life and being must be consecrated to the Yoga. It is probably from this reason of a divided life [that][8] men like Arunsingh fail to progress in spite of a natural capacity. If this is understood and accepted, the consecration of which he speaks is obviously in his circumstances the first step in the path. If he enters it, it will probably be advisable for him to come after a short time and see me in Pondicherry. But this of course has to be decided afterwards.

---

[7] *MS (copy)* and

[8] *MS (copy)* these

About Kanai I have no objection to his coming as he wants for a short visit here. But I think it would be best after you come.

I may say a word in passing about Nalineswar. I have read through his experiences and they confirm what I have said about the deficient capacity of his *adhar*. The mental, vital and physical beings are full of weakness and Tamas and the debility and torpor which he constantly experiences are the result of this deficient *adhar* trying to bear the pressure of the Sadhana. At the same time he has one thing which can carry him through if he keeps it steadily, — the persistent faith and self-surrender. If the physical lightness, which he experienced for the last four or five days before he wrote, can be made permanent then probably the worst part of the difficulty is over. In any case that permanence whenever it comes will be the sign of a certain fundamental safety and the other deficiencies can be gradually rectified by the coming in of the light and the power into the mind and the vital being.

As regards Jyotish Mukherjee, the most notable thing in his photograph is the strong symmetry between the two sides of his face centred in the dissimilarity of the two eyes. This is always a sign of two sides in the nature which have not been harmonised and unified, one side perhaps of faith and devotion and another of a critical and negative mind or one side drawn to higher things and the other held down by the earth nature. This is likely to create a great disadvantage and difficulties in the earlier part of the Sadhana, for it remains even though the disparity may be suppressed by the mental effort but once the balance or the unification can be created there is a compensating advantage by the combination of two strong elements both necessary to completeness. The Sadhana he has been doing seems to have been mainly that of a preliminary mental and vital (psychological) purification and preparation of a very sound character but what is still lacking is a positive spiritual side of the Sadhana. However the clearing of the system seems to have gone far enough for him to have had at least glimpses of psycho-spiritual experiences and a promise even of the supramental awaiting its time for manifestation. I shall, if I can make time, write separately my comments on his experiences and if he understands and follows he may proceed more rapidly in his Sadhana.

As regards the press debts, I have, as I have already let you know, asked Amar to cut off from it the two hundred rupees which he wanted to send after being paid. The debt to him is marked in your list as rupees two hundred and ninety one odd. If he does as I ask him you will only then have this 91 odd to pay and it is better to do it than to leave the debt running and pay interest. As to Arun's pro-note I suppose it must be signed, but as soon as we have sufficient money for other purposes we should have to turn our attention to paying it. These debts are a very heavy burden as they are likely to swallow up any large sum you may be able to realise. I am thinking over the matter and I shall write to you in detail as soon as I see my way clearer.

What you say about your Sadhana is probably the right interpretation of your experiences. The two things of which you speak are really two sides of one movement. The opening and clearing of the lower strata can only be effectively done in proportion as this relative or mentalised supramental can lay hold on the consciousness and open to and bring down the higher or intermediate supramental from above, and this in its turn can only settle it into the being in proportion as the physico-vital and physical open and clear and change. The interaction must go on until a certain balance between the two movements is created which will enable the higher to hold the being without interruption, and open it more and more to the true supramental activities. The action into which you have been cast was probably necessary because it is the dynamic part of your being in which the defects of the lower nature have the greatest hold and are most prominent.

Aurobindo

P.S. After this letter was finished I got your last of the 12th. What you say about Kumar Krishna there is what I could already gather about him, only made precise. I do not think that these things very much matter. All strong natures have the rajasik active outgoing force in them and if that were sufficient to unfit for the Yoga, very few of us would have had a chance. As for the doubt of the physical mind as to whether the thing is possible, who has not had it? In my own case it pursued me years and years and it is only in the last two years that the last shadow of doubt, not latterly of its theoretical feasibility, but of the practical certainty of its achievement in the present state of the world and of the human nature, entirely left me. The same can be said of the egoistic poise, — that almost all strong men have the strong egoistic poise. But I do not think judging from the photograph that it is the same half bull and half bulldog nature as in P. Mitter. These things can only go with spiritual development and experience and then the strength behind them becomes an asset. It is also evident from what you say about his past experience of the voice and the vastness that there is, as I thought, a psychic something in him waiting for and on the verge of spiritual awakening. I understand that he is waiting for intellectual conviction and, to bring it, some kind of assurance from an inner experience. To that also there is nothing to say. But the question is, and it seems to me the one question in his case, whether he will be ready to bring to the Yoga the firm, entire and absolute will and consecration that will be needed to tide him through all the struggles and crises of Sadhana. The disparity between his mental poise and action is natural enough, precisely because it is a mental poise. It has to become a spiritual poise before the life and the ideal can become one. Have the spoiling by luxury of which you speak and the worldly life sapped in him the possibility of developing an entire Godward will? If not, then he may be given his chance. I cannot positively say that he is or will be the Adhikari. I can only say that there is the capacity in the best part of his nature. I cannot also say that he is among the "best". But he seems to me to have more original capacity than some at least who have been accepted. When I wrote about the "best" I did not mean an Adhara without defects and dangers; for I do not think such a one is to be found. My impression is of course founded on a general favourable effect produced by the physiognomy and the appearance, on certain definite observations upon the same and on psychic indications which were mixed but in the balance favourable. I have not seen the man as you have. Take the sum he offers, do not press him for more at present and for the rest, let him understand clearly not only what the Yoga is, but the great demands it makes on the nature. See how he turns and whether he cannot be given his chance.

Your fuller account of your Sadhana shows that you are seeing in the nature and power of the supramental but you are seeing it probably through the revelatory light descending into the mind. It can only fulfil itself on the conditions I have named, first, the opening to the actual descent of the supermind itself which you will find something still more concrete and full of the truth-power and truth-substance and its penetration of the physical consciousness in all its layers.

Lastly, I may add to what I have said about the press debts that what has been troubling me is the necessity of applying money given for the spiritual work and the maintenance of the Sadhana centres to this object. This is likely to create falsehood or equivoke in the physical atmosphere and I think the mixture of the two things is one obstacle to the movement of the incoming resources. I am trying to find separate means of meeting the debt. About this I will write to you in future. I have written in the body of the letter that Kanai might come after your return, it is just possible I may call him before. Kshitish is always asking for a word about his Sadhana, but it is proceeding very well and he seems to understand it so clearly himself that there is no need for comment.

Your last letter came insured for Rs. 25/– but there was no money or mention of the sum inside. Was it forgotten or was there some other reason for insurance?

Aurobindo

[12]

30th May 1923.
'Arya Office'
Pondicherry.

My dear Barin,

I have been obliged for some time, partly owing to the many-sided storm of which you speak, to concentrate on other things and perhaps that is one reason why this stream of money collection has run dry. I shall see whether we can set it flowing again. I do not ask you to come back as yet because it is much better if possible to get this thing finished in such a way that you may not have to go running back after a time to complete it. The arrangements I thought of with regard to the debts have not taken shape or rather have postponed themselves to an indefinite future. If I remember right what you have immediately to pay is some 250 more to Kamala Palit and 600 to Arun. Besides this and the other 2000 to Arun, which if necessary can wait, there are the sums due, 1500 altogether, to the Kaviraj and Pulin Mitter. I believe there is nothing else. Can the last two wait and if so, how long? What is still necessary is to raise 1500 more for next year's expenses here. Next, to pay off the more pressing debts and if there is any large opening all the debts. I would have no objection to your applying any money you raise from the Marwaries to the latter purpose. If Basanta Lal Murarka can really raise 5000 from them, the problem will be solved. I shall then be able to keep Das' money separate and if he also keeps his promise that with some help from elsewhere will prevent all necessity of thinking of these things for another two years.

As regards Kanai the experiences of which he is afraid do not seem to me dangerous in themselves. They are such as come to all people whose Yoga runs strongly on psychic lines and those you mention and similar ones of still stronger character have been experienced by Mirra at least a thousand times during her Sadhana. The only danger, apart from any hostile interference, comes from the disturbances of the physical mind and the fear and apprehensions of the nervous and physical being.

I have already written once before that fearlessness is the first necessary condition for going through this Yoga. These fears and apprehensions and the sense of weakness and insecurity come from the attachment of the physical and nervous being to its ordinary basis of consciousness and usual habits of living and its alarm at anything abnormal which forces it out of its own grooves. As for the need of immediate protection, that is only when the vital being goes out of the body. The psychic being can go out without any danger if the physical consciousness does not disturb and itself create the danger. But unfortunately Kanai's physical and nervous being seems to be weak and not on a level with the powers of his mind and psychic nature. It may be better for him to concentrate first on the preparation of his physical consciousness. I have already said that what he must do is to bring down the basis of calm, light and strength into the physical mind, nerves and body. Once this is thoroughly done all attacks can be met. There will be no disturbing vibrations and all kinds of psychic and vital experiences such as those now pressing upon [him] will be welcomed as an expansion and fulfilment of the integral nature and a cause not of apprehension but of knowledge and Ananda. As to his coming here, I was not calling him because just now I am still in the concentration on the complete mastery of the physical and that prevents me from putting myself out very much at present. I could not give him the constant attention which will be needed according to your suggestion and besides, as his physical being is the weakest part of him, it might not be altogether advisable for him to be here until I have established a sufficient general security against any attack which might touch on that plane. Still I shall see whether I can call him after a little time.

I have no objection to Rajani's proposal of a visit here in case of his confirmation. It might be helpful to him in the present stage of his sadhana.

I had forgotten that Peary Mohan Das and the Chittagong aspirant were one and the same person. You will have to take together what was said about each in Nalini's letter. The chaotic nature of his experiences about which I spoke are probably due to some kind of difficulty or exaggeration in his vital being. It is best for him to start with getting a sure foundation of calm and a quiet opening up on all the planes of his consciousness, especially the emotional and the vital, so that a sound and orderly development of the Yoga may be possible.

Aurobindo.

P.S. If Kanai really gets anything of the nature of psychic trance the one thing he will have to be careful about is to meditate under such conditions that it will not be roughly broken from outside.

A.G.

[13]

Arya Office, Pondicherry
16th June 1923.

I have read the record of Jyotish Mukherjee's experiences.[9] It appears from it that he has made the right start to a certain extent and has been able to establish the beginning of mental calm and some kind of psychic opening but neither of these has yet been able to go very far. The reason probably is that he has done everything by a strong mental control and forcible stilling of the mind and emotional and vital movements, but has not yet established the true spiritual calm which can only come by experience of or surrender to the higher being above the mind. It is this that he has to get in order to make a foundation for a more substantial progress.

1. He is right in thinking that an inner calm and silence must be the foundation, not only of external work but of all inner and outer activities. But the quieting of the mind in a mental silence or inactivity although often useful as a first step is not sufficient. The mental calm must be changed first into the deeper spiritual peace, Shanti, and then into the supramental calm and silence full of the higher light and strength and Ananda. Moreover, the

---

[9] *This letter, which as preserved has no salutation, was apparently written to Barindra Kumar Ghose. The typescript is headed "To Jyotish Mukherjee" — apparently indicating that Sri Aurobindo's answer was to be transmitted to Jyotish by Barin. — Ed.*

quieting of the mind only is not enough. The vital and physical consciousness have to be opened up and the same foundation established there. Also the spirit of devotion of which he speaks must be not merely a mental feeling but an aspiration of the deeper heart and will to the truth above, that the being may rise up into it and that it may descend and govern all the activities.

2. The void he feels in the mind is often a necessary condition for the clearing of it from its ordinary movements so that it may open to a higher consciousness and a new experience, but in itself it is merely negative, a mental calm without anything positive in it and if one stops there, then the dullness and inertia of which he complains must come. What he needs is, in the void and silence of the mind, to open himself to, to wait or to call for the action of the higher power, light and peace from above the mind.

3. The survival of the evil habits in sleep is easily explained and is a thing of common experience. It is a known psychological law that whatever is suppressed in the conscious mind remains in the subconscient being and recurs either in the waking state when the control is removed or else in sleep. Mental control by itself cannot eradicate anything entirely out of the being. The subconscient in the ordinary man includes the larger part of the vital being and the physical mind and also the secret body-consciousness. In order to make a true and complete change, one has to make all these conscious, to see clearly what is still there and to reject them from one layer after another till they have been entirely thrown out from the personal experience. Even then, they may remain and come back on the being from the surrounding universal forces and it is only when no part of the consciousness makes any response to these forces of the lower plane that the victory and transformation are absolutely complete.

4. His experience that whenever he gains a conquest in the mental plane the forces of past Karma, — that is to say, really of the old nature, — come back upon him with a double vigour is again a common experience. The psychological explanation is to be found in the preceding paragraph. All attempt at transformation of the being is a fight with universal forces which have long been in possession and it is vain to expect that they will give up

the struggle at the first defeat. As long as they can, they seek to retain possession and even when they are cast out they will, as long as there is any chance of response in the conscious or subconscious being, try to recur and regain their hold. It is no use being discouraged by these attacks. What has to be done is to see that they are made more and more external and all assent refused until they weaken and fade away. Not only the Chitta and Buddhi must refuse consent but also the lower parts of the being, the vital and physico-vital, the physical mind and the body consciousness.

5. The defects of the receiving mind and the discriminating Buddhi spoken of are general defects of the intellect and cannot be entirely got rid of so long as the intellectual action is not replaced by a higher supra-intellectual action and finally by the harmonising light of the supramental knowledge.

Next as regards the psychic experiences. The region of glory felt in the crown of [the] head is simply the touch or reflection of the supramental sunlight on the higher part of the mind. The whole mind and being must open to this light and it must descend and fill the whole system. The lightning and the electric currents are the (*vaidyuta*) Agni force of the supramental sun touching and trying to pour into the body. The other signs are promises of the future psychic and other experiences. But none of these things can establish themselves until the opening to the higher force has been made. The mental Yoga can only be a preparation for this truer starting point.

What I have said is merely an explanation of these experiences but it seems to me that he has advanced far enough to make a foundation for the beginning of the higher Yoga. If he wishes to do that he must replace his mental control by a belief in and a surrender to the Supreme Presence and Force above the mind, an aspiration in the heart and a will in the higher mind to the supreme truth and the transformation of the whole conscious being by its descent and power. He must, in his meditation, open himself silently to it and call down first a deeper calm and silence, next the strength from [ ][10] above working in the whole system and last the higher [ ][11] glory of which he had a glimpse pouring through his whole being and illuminating it with the divine truth-movement.

---

[10] *MS (copy)* the

A.G.

[14]

[7 June 1928]

The idea that comes to you to go away and try a severe asceticism, “to go *my* way to fight *my* battle alone and in *my* own way”, as you express it, is an error and the suggestion of an adverse force, and at the same time it points directly to the real difficulty in you that has stood blocking your progress. If you went, you would go very far not only from us but from the Yoga and be lost to the Path, and you would fare no better than now. The difficulties would be always with you or sleep for a time only to rise again in your nature. However hard the fight, the only thing is to fight it out now and here to the end.

The trouble is that you have never fully faced and conquered the real obstacle. There is in a very fundamental part of your nature a strong formation of ego-individuality which has mixed in your spiritual aspiration a clinging element of pride and spiritual ambition and is supported by a long-formed habit of leadership, self-confident activity and self-reliance. This formation has never consented to be broken up in order to give place to something more true and divine. Therefore, when the Mother has put her force upon you or when you yourself have pulled the force upon you, this in you has always prevented it from doing its work in its own way. It has begun itself building according to the ideas of the mind or some demand, trying to make its own creation in its “own way”, by its own strength, its own Sadhana, its own Tapasya. There has never been any real surrender, any giving up of yourself freely and simply into the hands of the Divine Mother. And yet that is the only way to succeed in the Supramental Yoga. To be a Yogi, a Sannyasi, a Tapaswi is not the object here. The object is transformation, and the transformation can only be done by a force infinitely greater than your own, it can only be done by being truly like a child in the hands of the Divine Mother.

---

[11] *MS (copy)* and

The difficulties that shake you would be of no importance, if this central obstacle were removed. They come from the weakness of the external being which was always intense and eager, but built in too narrow a mould for the fulfilment of the inner urge and which has in addition been badly worn down by life. This could be mended; what it needs is to be at peace, to remain quiet and at rest, to open itself confidently without strain and harassing struggle to the Force and allow it to rebuild and strengthen and widen till a sufficient physical foundation is made. At present, under the pressure of the Force, it either falls into Tamas or, if the vital forces touch it, responds by a rajasic movement and is driven helplessly in these rajasic gusts. All this would easily change (naturally, not in a moment but steadily and surely) if the central difficulty is removed. It is for this that you ought to use your retirement, first of all, to face, see in its complete extent and conquer.

A complete will to surrender in the mind is the first condition, but not by itself sufficient. The trouble lies deeper than the surface mind and you have to find it out where it is and extirpate it. It is only when this has been done, that the help given you (and it was always there till now) can bear fruit in the true spiritual and psychic (not an ascetic) change of the recalcitrant parts of your nature.

Sri Aurobindo

To Hrishikesh Kanjilal

[c. 1922]

To Hrishikesh

It appears from your present letter and attitude that you propose to give God a seat on your right hand and R— another on the left and to sit in meditation between oscillating sweetly from one to the other. If this is what you want to do please do it in the Cherry Press and not at Pondicherry. If you want to come here, you must do it with a firm determination to get rid of this attachment and make a complete and unconditional consecration and self-surrender.

You seem not to have understood the principle of this Yoga. The old Yoga demanded a complete renunciation extending to the giving up of the worldly life itself. This Yoga aims instead at a new and transformed life. But it insists as inexorably on a complete throwing away of desire and attachment in the mind, life and body. Its aim is to refound life in the truth of the spirit and for that purpose to transfer the roots of all we are and do from the mind, life and body to a greater consciousness above the mind. That means that in the new life all the connections must be founded on a spiritual intimacy and a truth quite other than any which supports our present connections. One must be prepared to renounce at the higher call what are called the natural affections. Even if they are kept at all, it can only be with a change which transforms them altogether. But whether they are to be renounced or kept and changed must be decided not by the personal desires but by the truth above. All must be given up to the Supreme Master of the Yoga.

If you cling to the desires of the mental, vital and physical beings, this transference and transformation cannot happen. Your attachment to your son is a thing of the vital parts in you, and if you are not prepared to give it up, it will inevitably clash with the demands of the Yoga and stop your progress.

When you came here, your psychical being was opened up, and the mental, vital and physical obstacles sufficiently worked upon to admit of this opening. This came first, because that was the strongest part of you for the purposes of the Yoga. Afterwards there was an attempt to open up the mind and other parts. But owing to certain influences their resistance became strong enough to bring things to a standstill. Doubt and non-understanding in the mind and the vital attachments of which this one to your son is the strongest, were the main instruments of this resistance. It is no use coming back with any of these things still cherished and supported by your mind and will.

Either you will make no progress at all here or if the power works on you it will work to break the resistance of the vital being and if you still support that resistance the nature of this struggle and the consequences may be of a serious and undesirable character. The power that works in this Yoga is of a thorough-going character and tolerates in the end nothing great or small that is an obstacle to the truth and its realisation. To come here will be to invite its working in the strongest and most insistent form.

Aurobindo Ghose

To Krishnashashi

Pondicherry,
January 1923.

My dear Krishnashashi,

I have seen all the experiences that you have written down, and sent to me and received yours and Barin's letter.[12] It is no doubt true as you say that your sadhana has gone on different lines from that of the others. But it does not follow that you are entirely right in insisting on your own ideas about it. I shall tell you briefly what I have observed about your experiences.

The first things you sent were very interesting and valuable psycho-spiritual and psycho-mental experiences and messages. Later ones lean more to the psychic-emotional and have in them a certain one-sidedness and mixture and there are also psycho-vital and psycho-physical developments of a double nature. I do not mean that all is false in them but that there are many strong partial truths which need to be corrected by others which they seem to ignore and even to exclude. Besides there are suggestions from the intellect and the vital being and also suggestions from external sources which you ought not to accept so easily as you seem to do. This mixture is inevitable in the earlier stages and there is no need to be disheartened about it. But if you insist on preserving it, it may deflect you from your true path and injure your Sadhana.

---

[12] *Sri Aurobindo's letters to Barindra Kumar Ghose on Krishnashashi's case are published on pages 337–54. — Ed.*

As yet you have no sufficient experience of the nature of the psychic being and the psychic worlds. Therefore it is not possible for you to put the true value on all that comes to you. When the psychic consciousness opens, especially so freely and rapidly as it has done in your case, it opens to all kinds of things and to suggestions, and messages from all sorts of planes and worlds and forces and beings. There is the true psychic which is always good and there is the psychic opening to mental, vital and other worlds which contain all kinds of things good, bad and indifferent, true, false and half truths, thought-suggestions which are of all kinds, and messages [which] are also of all kinds. What is needed is not to give yourself impartially to all of them but to develop both a sufficient knowledge and experience and a sufficient discrimination to be able to keep your balance and eliminate falsehood, half-truths and mixtures. It will not do to dismiss impatiently the necessity for discrimination on the ground that that is mere intellectualism. The discrimination need not be intellectual, — although that also is a thing not to be despised. But it may be a psychic discrimination or one that comes from the higher super-intellectual mind and from the higher being. If you have not this, then you have need of constant protection and guidance from those who have it, and who have also long psychic experience, and it may be disastrous for you to rely entirely on yourself and to reject such guidance.

In the meantime there are three rules of the Sadhana which are very necessary in an earlier stage and which you should remember, *first*, open yourself to experience but do not seek to take the *bhoga* of the experiences. Do not attach yourself to any particular kind of experience. Do not take all ideas and suggestions as true and do not take any knowledge, voice or thought-message as absolutely final and definitive. Truth itself is only true when complete and it changes its meaning as one rises and sees it from a higher level.

I must put you on your guard against the suggestions of hostile influences which attack all *Sadhakas* in this Yoga. The vision you had of the European, is itself an intimation to you that these forces have their eye on you and are prepared to act if they are not already acting against you. It is their subtler suggestions, which take the figure of truth, and not their more open attacks, that are the most dangerous. I will mention some of the most usual of them.

Be on your guard against any suggestions that try to raise up your egoism, as for instance, that you are a greater Sadhaka than others or that your Sadhana is unique or of an exceptionally high kind. There seems to be some suggestion of this kind to you already. You had a rich and rapid development of psychic experiences, but so precisely have some others who have meditated here and none of yours are unique in their kind or degree or unknown to our experience. Even if it were otherwise, egoism is the greatest danger of the Sadhana and is never spiritually justifiable. All greatness is God's; it belongs to no other.

Be on your guard against anything that suggests to you to keep or cling to any impurity or imperfection, confusion in the mind, attachment in the heart, desire and passion in the *Prana* or disease in the body. To keep up these things by ingenuous justifications and coverings, is one of the usual devices of the hostile forces.

Be on your guard against any idea which will make you admit these hostile forces on the same terms as the divine forces. I understand you have said that you must admit all because all is a manifestation of God. All is a manifestation of God in a certain sense but if misunderstood as it often is, this Vedantic truth can be turned to the purposes of falsehood. There are many things which are partial manifestations and have to be replaced by fuller truer manifestations. There are others which belong to the ignorance and fall away when we move to the knowledge. There are others which are of the darkness and have to be combated and destroyed or exiled. This manifestation is one which has been freely used by the force represented by the European you saw in your vision and it has ruined the Yoga of many. You yourself wished to reject the intellect and yet the intellect is a manifestation of God as well as the other things you have accepted.

If you really accept and give yourself to me, you must accept my truth. My truth is one that rejects ignorance and falsehoods and moves to the knowledge, rejects darkness and moves to the light, rejects egoism and moves to the Divine Self; rejects imperfections and moves to perfection. My truth is not only the truth of Bhakti or of psychic development but also of knowledge, purity, divine strength and calm and of the raising of all these things from their mental, emotional and vital forms to their Supramental reality.

I say all these things not to undervalue your Sadhana but to turn your mind towards the way of its increasing completion and perfection.

It is not possible for me to have you here just now. First because the necessary conditions are not there and secondly because you must be fully prepared to accept my guidance before you come here.

If, as I suppose you must under the present circumstances, you have to go home, meditate there, turning yourself to me and try to prepare yourself so that you may come here hereafter. What you need now is not so much psychic development, which you will always be able to have (I do not ask you to stop it altogether) but an inner calm and quiet as the true basis and atmosphere of your future development and experience, calm in the mind, the purified vital being and in the physical consciousness. A psycho-vital or psycho-physical Yoga will not be safe for you until you have this calm and an assured purity of being and a complete and always present vital and physical protection.

Aurobindo.

To Rajani Palit

6th April, 1923.
"Arya Office"
Pondicherry.

My dear Rajani,

I am writing today about your son Rathin and his illness if it can be called by that name. I shall state first in general terms the nature of the malady and its usual developments, that is to say, the normal course it takes when no psychic or spiritual force is brought in to remove it. Afterwards I shall indicate the two possible means of cure.

I think it is best for me to state the case in its worst and not only in its best possible terms because it is necessary that you should know the full truth and have the courage to face it. These cases are not those of a truly physical malady but of an attempt at possession from the vital world; and the fits and other physical symptoms are signs, not of the malady itself, but of the struggle of the natural being against the pressure of the hostile influence. Such a case in a child of this age indicates some kind of accumulation in the physical heredity creating an opportunity or a predisposition of which the vital invasion takes advantage. It is especially the physical consciousness and the physico-vital which contain the germs or materials of this predisposition. The physical being is always changing its constituents and in each period of seven years a complete change is effected. If the symptoms of this predisposition in the nature are detected and a wise influence and training used by the parents to eradicate them and this is done so effectively that in the first seven years no seeds of the malady appear, then usually there is no further danger. If on the contrary they manifest by the seventh year, then the next period of seven years is the critical period and, ordinarily, the case would be decided one way or the other by or before the fourteenth year.

There are normally three possible eventualities. The difficulty in dealing with the case of so young a child is that the mind is not developed and can give no help towards the cure. But as the mind develops in the second seven years it will, if it is not abnormally weak which I think is not the case here, react more and more against the influence. Aided by a good control and influence it may very well succeed in casting out the hostile intrusion and its pressure altogether. In that case the fits and other signs of the physical struggle pass away, the strange moral and vital tendencies fade out of the habits and the child becomes mentally, morally and physically a healthy normal being.

The second possibility is that the struggle between the natural being and the intruding being may not be decisive in the psychic sense, that is to say, the intruder cannot take full possession but also he cannot be thrown out entirely. In that case anything may happen, a shattered mind and health, the death of the body or a disturbed, divided and permanently abnormal nature.

The third and worst possibility is that the intruding being may succeed and take entire possession. In that case the fits and other violent symptoms will disappear, the child may seem to be physically cured and healthy, but he will be an abnormal and most dangerous being incarnating an evil vital force with all its terrible propensities and gifted with abnormal powers to satisfy them.

In Rathin's case there is not as yet possession in the full sense of the word, but a strong pressure and influence indicated by the strange habits of which you have written. These are suggested and dictated by the intruding being and not proper to the boy himself. The fearlessness and security with which he does these things is inspired from the same source. But the fits prove that there is as yet no possession. There is a struggle indicated by them and a temporary hold which passes out again. He is evidently in the earlier part of the critical period. I have indicated the course normally taken by the illness, but it is not necessary to pass through it and take its risks. There are other means which can come to his help and effect a complete cure.

The first and easiest is to cure by hypnotic suggestion. This if properly applied is an absolutely sure remedy. But in the first place, it must be applied by someone who is not himself under the influence of evil powers, as some hypnotists are. For that obviously will make matters worse. Moreover, it must be done by someone who has the proper training and knows thoroughly what he is about, for a mistake might be disastrous. The best conditions would be if someone like yourself who has a natural relation and already an influence over the child could do it with the necessary training and knowledge.

The other means of cure is the use of spiritual power and influence. If certain psycho-spiritual means could be used, this would be as sure and effectual as the other. But this is not possible because there is no one there who has the right knowledge. The spiritual influence by itself can do it but the working is likely to be slow. It must ordinarily be conveyed through someone on the spot and you yourself are obviously the right instrument. What you have to do is to keep the idea that I am sending to you power for this object, to make yourself receptive to it and at the same time make your own will and natural influence on the child a direct channel for it. The will must be a quiet will, calm and confident and intent on its object, but without attachment and unshaken by any amount of resistance and unalarmed and undiscouraged by the manifestations of the illness. Your attitude to the child must be that of a calm and firm protecting affection free from emotional weakness and disturbance. The first thing is to acquire such an influence as to be able to repel the attack when it comes and if it takes any hold to diminish steadily its force and the violence of its manifestation. I understand from your letter that you have already been able to establish the beginning of such an influence. But it must be able to work at a distance as well as in his presence. Further you must acquire the power of leaving a protection around him when you are absent. Secondly, you must be able to convey to him a constant suggestion which will gradually inhibit the strange undesirable habits of which you speak in your letter. This, I may say, cannot be effectively done by any kind of external coercion. For that is likely to make these impulses more violent. It must be a will and suggestion and silent influence. If you find the control increasing and these habits diminishing, you can understand that the work of cure has begun. Its completion may take some time because these vital beings are very sticky and persistent and are always returning to the attack. The one thing which can make the cure rapid is if the boy himself develops a will in his mind to change, for that will take away the ground of the hostile influence. It is because something in him is amused and takes pleasure in the force which comes with the influence that these things are able to recur and continue. This element in him calls the invading presence back even when it has been centrally rejected. I shall of course try to act directly on him as well as through you, but the instrumentality of one on the spot greatly enforces and is sometimes indispensable to the action.

A word about your Sadhana. It seems to me that the key of your future development is contained in the experience which you say you often attained for a few days at Krishnagore (your letter of the 9th February) "A state which was full of knowledge, calm serenity, strength and wide consciousness — all questions automatically solved — a continuous stream of power passed into the body through the forehead centre — extremely powerful, having undisturbed samata, calm conviction, keen sight and knowledge." This was the consciousness of the true Purusha in you aware of his own supramental being and it is this which must become your normal consciousness and the basis of the supramental development. In order that it may so become, the mind has to be made calm and strong, the emotional and vital being purified and the physical consciousness so opened that the body can hold and retain the consciousness and power. I notice that at the time you had it the body also expressed it. This is a sign that the capacity is already there in your physical being. The calm and strength will descend from above, what you have to do is to open yourself and receive it and at the same time reject all the movements of the lower nature which prevent it from remaining and which are ruled by desires and habits inconsistent with the true being, the true power and the true knowledge. Of course the superior power will itself reveal to you and remove all the obstacles in your nature. But the condition is that not only your mental but your vital and physical being must open and surrender to it and refuse to surrender themselves to other powers and forces. As you yourself experienced at that time, this greater consciousness will of itself bring the development of the higher will and knowledge. Psychic experiences of a proper kind are of course a great help but in your case it may be that any rich development of the psychic will only come after or in proportion as this consciousness with its calm, knowledge, will and samata takes possession of the different parts of the being.

Aurobindo Ghose

Draft Letters to and about Kumud Bandhu Bagchi

[1]

There are certain things that it is absolutely necessary for Kumud to realise in a sincere and straight-forward spirit, without veils and self-justifications if his sadhana is not to turn about in a constant circle to the end or else fail and fall into pieces.

First, it is necessary for him to have a truer understanding of the Yoga than he seems to have had either in the past or now. This Yoga is not turned towards renunciation of the world or an outward asceticism, but neither is its aim Bhoga, nor what the Chandernagore people call "Life-realisation" which means nothing but the satisfaction of one's own magnified vital ego. The aim is an opening to a higher Divine Truth beyond mind, life or body and the transformation of these three things into its image. But that transformation cannot take place and the Truth itself cannot be known in its own unmistakable spirit, perfect light and real body until the whole of the *adhara* has been fundamentally and patiently purified, and made plastic and capable of receiving what is beyond the constructions of the mind, the desires of the body and the habits of the physical consciousness and physical being.

His most obvious obstacle, one of which he has not in the least got rid of up to now, is a strongly Rajasic vital ego for which his mind finds justifications and covers. There is nothing more congenial to the vital ego than to put on the cloak of Yoga and imagine itself free, divinised, spiritualised, siddha, and all the rest of it, or advancing towards that end, when it is really doing nothing of the kind, but [is] just its old self in new forms. If one does not look at oneself with a constant sincerity and an eye of severe self-criticism, it is impossible to get out of this circle.

Along with the exclusion of self-deceiving vital ego, there must go that which accompanies it usually in the mental parts, mental arrogance, a false sense of superiority and an ostentation of knowledge. All pretence and all pretensions must be given up, all pretence to oneself or others of being what one is not, of knowing what one does not know and all vain idea of being higher than one's own actual spiritual stature.

Over against the vital rajasic ego there is a great coarseness and heaviness of tamas in the physical being and an absence of psychic and spiritual refinement. That must be eliminated or else it will stand always in the way of a true and complete change in the vital being and the mind.

Unless these things are radically changed, merely having experiences or establishing a temporary and precarious calmness in the mental and vital parts will not help in the end. There will be no fundamental change; only a constant going from one state to another, sometimes a quieting and sometimes a return of the disturbances, and always the same defect persisting to the end of the chapter.

The one condition for getting rid of these things is an absolute central sincerity in all the parts of the being, and that means an absolute insistence on the Truth and nothing but the Truth. There will then be a readiness for unsparing self-criticism and vigilant openness to the Light, an uneasiness when falsehood comes in, which will finally purify the whole being.

The defects mentioned are more or less common in various degrees in almost every sadhaka, though there are some who are not touched by them. They can be got rid of if the requisite sincerity is there. But if they occupy the central parts of the being and vitiate the attitude, then the sadhaka will give a constant open or covert support to them, his mind will always be ready to give disguises and justifications and try to elude the search-light of the self-critical faculty and the protest of the psychic being. That means failure of the Yoga at least for this existence.

6 February 1926

[2]

When the psychic being awakens you grow conscious of your own soul; you know your Self. And you no longer commit the mistake of identifying yourself with the mental or with the vital being. You do not mistake them for the soul.

When awakened, the psychic being gives true Bhakti for God or for the Guru. That Bhakti is quite different from mental or vital Bhakti.

In the mind one may have a strong admiration or appreciation for the intellectual or spiritual greatness of the Guru, — follow him and mentally accept his dictates. But if it is merely mental, that does not carry you very far. Of course, there is no harm in having that also. But by itself it does not open the whole of the inner being; it only establishes a mental contact.

The vital Bhakti demands and demands. It imposes its own conditions. It surrenders itself to God, but conditionally. It says to God, "You are so great," "I worship you," — "and now you must satisfy this desire of mine or that ambition"; "make me great; make me a great sadhaka, a great yogin" etc.

The unillumined mind also surrenders to the Truth, but makes its own conditions. It says to the Truth, "Satisfy my judgment, and my opinion"; it demands the Truth to cast itself in the mind's own forms.

The vital being also insists on the Truth throwing itself into its own vital movement of force. The vital being pulls at the Higher Power and pulls and pulls at the vital being of the Guru.

Both of them (the mental and the vital) have got an *arrière pensée* (mental reservation) in their surrender.

Psychic Bhakti is not like that. Because it is in communication with the Divinity behind, it is capable of true Bhakti. Psychic Bhakti does not make any demand, it makes no reservations. It is satisfied with its own existence. The psychic being knows how to obey the Truth in the right way. It gives itself up truly to God or the Guru, and because it can give itself up truly, therefore it can also receive truly.

When the psychic being comes to the surface it feels sad if it sees that the mental or the vital being is making a fool of itself. That sadness is purity offended.

When the mind is playing its own game, or when the vital being is carried away by its impulses, it is the psychic being which says, "I don't want these things." "What am I here for after all?" "I am here for the Truth; I am not here for these things."

The psychic sadness is a quite different thing from mental dissatisfaction or vital sadness or physical depression.

If the psychic being is strong, it makes itself felt on the mental or the vital being, and forces them to change. But if it is weak, the other parts take advantage of it and use the psychic for their own advantage.

In some cases it comes up to the surface and upsets the mental and the vital being and throws all their settled arrangements and habits into disorder, pressing for a new and divine order. But if the mind or the vital being is stronger than the psychic then it casts only an occasional influence and gradually retires behind. All its cry is in the wilderness; and the mental or the vital being goes on in its own round.

Lastly, the psychic being refuses to be deceived by appearances. It is not carried away by falsehood. It refuses to be oppressed by falsehood — nor does it exaggerate the Truth. For example, even if everything around says, "There is no God", the psychic being refuses to believe in it. It says, — "I know" and "I know because I feel."

And because it knows the thing behind, it is not deceived by appearances. It immediately feels the force.

Also, when the psychic being is awakened, it throws out all the dross from the emotional being and makes it free from sentimentalism or the lower play of emotionalism.

But it does not carry in it the dryness of the mind or the exaggeration of the vital feelings. It gives the just touch to each emotion.

23 March 1926

To People in America, 1926 – 1927

To Mr. and Mrs. Sharman

[c. January 1926]

Dear Mr and Mrs Sharman,

I received a little while ago your Christmas card and greetings and it reminded me of a letter written long ago which I had hoped personally to answer, but could never do it, the time not having come. I have ever since I came to Pondicherry been obliged to withdraw more and more first from public life and then from all outer activities and absorb myself in a long and arduous inner endeavour. I had to discontinue the "Arya" for this purpose and for a long time I wrote nothing, not even any letters. Now although the needed intensity of the inner concentration is not over, it is becoming more possible for me to turn my face towards action on the physical plane. I take the opportunity of your card to do what I then failed to do, even after so long a lapse of time.

I understand from your letter that there are around you a number of seekers after the spiritual life who have received some help from my works. I should be glad to hear more of this group and of what they and you are now doing. Perhaps it would now be possible to open a regular correspondence; for, even when I am not able to write myself, my brother and one or two others who are practising Yoga here with me, often now write under my instructions or dictation the necessary answer. If you feel that such a correspondence would be of help to you,[1]

In a letter of the year 1924 you asked whether I had prepared any more intimate instructions in Yoga (other than my published works) and asked to be allowed to share them with those I am guiding in Pondicherry. The "Yoga and its Objects" and "Synthesis [of][2] Yoga", although founded on my personal knowledge and experience were not intended for that purpose, but merely meant to indicate the general lines on which Yoga might proceed, the main principles, the broad ways of spiritual progress. I have not written or prepared anything new of the kind. All intimate guidance must necessarily in so inner and delicate a thing as the spiritual life [ ][3] be personal, suited to the recipient and the instruction given can only be effective if it is the channel for a spiritual contact and a guiding or helpful influence. In that way if you need my help, I shall be glad to give it. That indeed is one of the objects which the correspondence I propose could serve.

---

[1] *Sentence left incomplete. — Ed.*

To the Advance Distributing Company

[1]

Arya Office. Pondicherry 9 March. 1926

Advance Distributing Company
Pittsburgh. Pa.

Your letter of the 8th January to the Arya Publishing House has just been forwarded to me.

The publishing house restricted by the Government is not the A.P.H, but the Prabartak Publishing House which has no longer any connection with my work. My books were originally published by various agencies, but an arrangement has recently been made by which the preference for future editions or new publications will usually be given under fixed conditions to the A.P.H. It is from there that all my books already in print can be most readily secured. This arrangement however applies only to India and I have reserved rights of separate or sole publication in Europe, America and elsewhere.

---

[2] *MS* on

[3] *MS* must

I have suggested to the A.P.H to supply you with my works as requested by you, but I am told they have rules in the matter which may come in the way of an immediate compliance. The firm is still a small one and it is not likely that it will be able to supply you rapidly or on any large scale. If any pressing or considerable demand is created in America, it will be more convenient to publish there than to rely on India.

I am quite willing therefore that you should yourselves publish "parts of this literature" according to your proposal. I may observe that all proceeds of my books are set aside for farthering of the work for which the "Arya" appeared.

Vol II. No. 8 is no longer separately available; but a friend is willing to send you his copy of the number temporarily for immediate use. I shall despatch it by this post. Please return it here as soon as it has served your purpose.

There is one full set of the "Arya" in Pondicherry, partly bound, which the owner wishes to devote to the work if he can get his price; but as full sets are no longer available in India, he estimates the value at Rs 500. If this offer is acceptable, the set will be sent on remittance of the amount to the Arya Office.

I have received recently letters from different parts of the United States which seem to indicate the beginning of a demand for my writings and, for other reasons also, I have been for some time desirous to bring out my works in America including those not yet published in book form. I do not know if it will enter into your views to take up this work. If so, please inform me of the conditions. All communications and remittances in connection with my works (other than for orders for supply of my books from the A.P.H.) should be sent to me to the following address.

Sri Aurobindo Ghose
Arya Office
Pondicherry
French India

I shall be well-pleased to enter into touch with the student of my thought mentioned in your letter, if he will write to me personally at the above address.

[2]

The ARYA Office
Pondicherry French India
July 2. 26

To
The ADVANCE DISTRIBUTING Co.
Pittsburgh. Pa.

I am in receipt of your letter dated May 2d 1926 and the sum of Rs 500 and over sent by you for the complete set of the "ARYA". The complete set will be kept here in the office according to your suggestion; if needed at any time, it will be at your disposal. As to the missing numbers of Vol. VII — Nos 3 and 6 — as I understand, — I am writing to the A.P.H. where I have kept all the unsold numbers, and if these two are with them, as is most probable, they will be sent to you. I shall inform you if I find anyone here who needs the two superfluous numbers.

Next, as [to] the conditions of publication in America. I shall be glad to entrust the work to you and I leave it to you whether to keep your present name or take that of the Arya Publishing Company, if you so desire. I do not know whether a rigorous self-limitation to the "Arya" material would be the best course; perhaps it would be better to make it the nucleus while other literature could be added which would be supplementary or consonant with the general idea and purpose.

I believe you are right in your suggestion regarding standardisation; conditions in India are different and the system here would not be advantageous or suitable, but I can understand that in America this system would be the best. I agree also that a limited edition in first-class style would be the best from the point of view of the financial return. In India we are obliged to suit the form and price of our publications to the purse of the average educated middle class who are the mass of the still very limited reading public.

The conditions I have made with the A.P.H. are of a special character and cannot be repeated in your case. I understand from what you have written that in America any profit from the sale of literature like the "Arya" publications is not at all probable unless and until a larger demand has been created than is likely for some time to come. A percentage on the sales would bring in only small sums while it might hamper the development of the work. Now small returns would be of very little use to me except for financing petty incidents and details of my work which can be otherwise met. The method and scope I have fixed for the future work to be done is of the large-scale kind and would need even from the beginning sums more like those raised by Swami Yogananda as described by you in your letter. I would prefer therefore that you should concentrate at present on the development of the publications and on getting them known as soon as possible and use the proceeds of the sale of the books for that purpose. If at any time a great demand arose and resulted in considerable profits, the question of a percentage of the sales to be remitted to me or any other arrangement in the matter could then be brought up again for consideration.

In regard to the order of issue I think you are right in selecting "War and Self-Determination" as a preliminary publication. The "Essays on the Gita" seems to me preeminently fitted to take the lead in a standardised series, but it would be necessary to await the publication of the "Second Series" by the A.P.H. The "First Series" covering the first six chapters of the Gita is being reprinted with only one necessary correction and should be out in a few days. But I have had to make extensive additions, alterations and corrections and to remould to some extent the language of the Second Series now to be published in book form for the first time. I have sent the M.S. to the A.P.H and I hope that it will be out in two or three months at the outside, when it will be sent to you. At present I am preparing a revised edition of the "Ideal of Human Unity", already published in Madras but now out of print, and the "Psychology of Social Development", not yet published in book form, which I propose to bring out under another title, "The Human Cycle". The "Synthesis of Yoga" is too large a work to be included in a single book; I propose to publish it in India in four parts, each devoted to one of the four Yogas, — Works, Knowledge, Devotion and Self-Perfection, — but this would involve a slight recasting here and there so as to make each volume in itself sufficiently complete. There remain, apart from some uncompleted works, the "Life Divine" and "The Future Poetry" which could be published, subject to the writing of a Preface, almost as they are and the smaller books or booklets already published some of which might be put together as you suggest so as to form part of the standardised volumes. That is the situation as regards the "Arya" writings. I gather that, having view to the conditions in America you propose to print "War and Self-Determination" first as a booklet, to start the standardised series with "Essays on the Gita" and to follow with the "Life Divine". I would have no objection to such an order of issue.

I have received the copy of the "East-West" magazine and the gift-book. It is not at all surprising that Swami Yogananda should have been so successful in America. His propaganda is admirably suited to the practical mentality of a western and especially of an American public and his statement of ideas on subjects like Karma to its present capacity of understanding in these matters. I cannot gather from the magazine what is the nature of the practice or discipline which he calls Yogoda. The name "Satsanga" is that of a religious sect with a special kind of Bhakti Yoga which is now achieving considerable success in Bengal, but the practice here if one can judge from the style and manner of its announcement seems to be very different. I do not think it would have much success in India where there is a long tradition and in spite of much imperfection and error the standards of spiritual life are of a subtler kind. The difficulties we experience here are due rather to a wide-spread inability to go freely beyond ancient ideas and forms. Plenty of money can be had in India for orthodox religious purposes and also, although not on the American scale, for Asramas or other spiritual institutions which take the ascetic form or repeat established and well-understood formulas. But the general mind has not yet advanced far enough from the old moorings to form even an inadequate conception of what I am doing here and it is easily disconcerted by the departure from old forms, a willed absence of the customary paraphernalia and the breaking of traditional barriers and limits.

That is one considerable advantage of America; there is evidently a sufficiently widespread eagerness and openness of mind to new things. We have to see whether this will be sufficient to open the mind also to deep and true things. The spiritual future of America is not yet decided; it is in the balance. There is a great possibility before her, but it depends on Americans themselves whether she will make good and realise it. Otherwise she will follow the disastrous curve of other western peoples. India and America stand prominent at the two poles that have to meet and become one, the spiritual and the material life; one has shown a preeminent capacity of realisation on the spiritual, the other on the material plane. America must be able to receive freely India's riches and to give freely in return from her own for the material organisation of a higher life on the physical plane; this is at once a condition and her chance. At present it is only a possibility; let us see whether it can be made an achieved and perfected symbol.

The book "Some I.L.O.F. Correspondence" has reached me: I await the promised letter of the writer.

Draft of a Letter to C. E. Lefebvre

[c. July 1926]

I have taken a long time to consider the answer [to] your letter or rather to allow the answer to ripen and take form. It is not easy to reply to the request implied in what you have written; for the distance between India and America is great and, even if it were not so, guidance in Yoga by correspondence and without personal contact is a very hampered and not usually in my experience a satisfactory method. Ideas can be exchanged on paper, but a spiritual influence, a psychic interchange, a vigilant control — and all this is implied in this kind of guidance — are not so easily communicated. However, I will try to comply with your request as best I can under these circumstances.

First, let me say, that the absorption of ideas and the remoulding of the mental aims and attitude is one thing and the remoulding of the inner life and consciousness and eventually also of the outer life, which is the aim of Yoga, is quite another. The first can be done to some extent by the method of dissemination you indicate. But as you rightly see, instructions in Yoga cannot be fruitfully given on the same lines. That can only be given successfully to a few, to each separately as an intimately personal thing which he must assimilate and make living and true in himself according to his own capacity and nature. That is why I am led to believe that the work of Swami Yogananda is not only elementary but can hardly be the true thing — Yoga cannot be taught in schools and classes. It has to be received personally, it has to be lived, the seeker, *sadhaka*, has to change by a difficult aspiration and endeavour his whole consciousness and nature, his mind, heart, life, every principle of his being and all their movements into a greater Truth than anything the normal life of man can imagine. Those who can do this are not yet many, but some are to be found everywhere, and I see no reason why those in America should be condemned to only an elementary "instruction". The true Truth, the great Path has to be opened to them; how far they will go in it depends on their own personal capacity and the help they receive.

To and about Anna Bogenholm Sloane

[1]

The ARYA Office
Pondicherry French India

August 3, 1926

To
Anna Bogenholm Sloane
Ashirvada.

I have read your letter with great interest and I have no hesitation after the perusal in acceding to your request and asking you to come over to India and see me; certain of the experiences you relate seem to me very clear and decisive. I presume that, as you suggest in your letter, you will come prepared to live here for a few years. For, although the first openings to a higher and larger consciousness — the experiences called by you initiations — can be very rapid and luminous and decisive, they have to be followed by a long process of firm and stable foundation, fuller development, progressive transformation of the nature and a complete organisation of the new consciousness which involves years of persistent and vigilant discipline and endeavour.

Please write to me before you start and inform me of the date of your arrival.

[2]

[August – September 1927]

It is not my intention to reply to your questions regarding myself or the Mother.[4] They are indeed of a kind that I make it a rule not to answer, but even if it were otherwise, a reply would not be fitting in the present stage of your progress.

The important point that comes out in your letter is that you consider that the Mother can be of no help to you, as she does not understand your experiences and has never had anything like them. Under these conditions I can only ask her not to spend farther time in a work that is by your own assertion useless.

On the other hand I can give no assent to your demand that I should replace her. If you cannot profit by her help, you would find still less profit in mine. But in any case I have no intention of altering the arrangement I have made for all the disciples without exception that they should receive the light and force from her and not directly from me and be guided by her in their spiritual progress. I have made the arrangement not for any temporary purpose but because it is the one way (considering what she is and her power — provided always the disciple is open and receives) that is true and effective.

---

[4] *This and the next two items are draft-letters from Sri Aurobindo's notebooks. There is no indication that any of them was sent as drafted or in any other form. — Ed.*

[3]

[August – September 1927]

I do not think it necessary to answer the personal question you put me or announce who I am on the spiritual plane. If I am what your question suggests, it is not for me to declare it but for others to discover.

I prefer also to make no reply to the question about the Mother, at least in the form in which you put it. All I care to say, and it is all that is needed, is that she is doing the work for which she took birth and has prepared herself uninterruptedly from her childhood. The Power is in her that can bring down a true supramental creation, open the whole nature of the disciple to the supramental Light and Force and guide its transformation into a divine nature. It is because there is this Power in her that she has been entrusted with the work.

But all are free in their inner being, free to accept or refuse, free to receive or not to receive, to follow this way or another. What the Mother can do for the disciple depends on his willingness or capacity to open himself to her help and influence and on the completeness of his consent and confidence. If they are complete, the work done will be perfect and true; if they are imperfect, the work will be marred by the distortions brought in by his mind and his vital failings, if they are denied, then nothing can be done. Or, rather, nothing will be done; for the attempt in such circumstances might lead to a breaking rather than a divine building of the nature, or even there might be a reception of hostile forces instead of the true light and power. This is the law of the relation on the spiritual plane: the consent of the disciple must be at every moment free, but his confidence, if given, must be complete and the submission to the guidance absolute.

This is the one real issue that your recent development has raised between us. The rising of some doubts would in itself have been of little importance; doubt is the very nature of the ignorant physical mind. But yours have very evidently risen because you have taken a turn away from the path to the supramental realisation along which the Mother was helping you and admitted another occult influence. This is shown by the nature of your doubts where you question her knowledge of certain common experiences of Yoga and by your conclusion that she can no longer help you. I pass by your pretensions to gauge her knowledge and experience; her dealings with you and others proceed from a consciousness to which the mental understanding and judgment have not the key. But when the doubt and questioning go so far, it is because something in the vital nature begins to be unwilling to accept any longer the guidance; for the guidance is likely to interfere with its going on its own way.

I could not accede under any circumstances to your request to me to substitute my instruction and guidance for the Mother's. If you cannot receive help from her any longer, it is evident that you cannot receive it either from me; for the same Power and the same Knowledge act through both of us. I have no intention of taking a step which would bring down the work to the personal human level and would be a direct contradiction of its divine origin and nature.

[4]

[August – September 1927]

When you wrote to me from America some of the experiences you narrated in your letter [ ][5] indicated a very clear call to the new supramental life. And we understood also that a Power from the higher planes that had a place in our work was trying to manifest through your personality. But a call is only the beginning; it is after many ordeals that it matures into a definite and irrevocable choice. Moreover whenever a Power of this kind tries to manifest, always in the exterior human personality the opposite movements have a strong place. It is as if for each divine power the conquest of its opposite in its own chosen vessel was a condition for its perfect manifestation on the earth plane.

---

[5] *MS* from America

When you came here the Mother perceived that you must at first be left alone to your own movement and the discipline imposed on other sadhakas was not laid upon you. All she did was to bring down supramental light and power in you and to open to them the different centres. This was rapidly and on the whole successfully done.

But to open the centres is only a beginning, for then comes one of the most difficult periods for the disciple. The consciousness opens not only to the true Light and Power, but to all kinds of experiences and all sorts of influences from all the planes and from all sources and quarters. There is a period of intense and overpowering internal activity of formation, vision and movements of new consciousness and new power. If then the disciple is carried away [ ][6] by the brilliance and splendour and delight of his experiences, he can easily wander far from the highest way. But the Forces and Beings that are behind them are sometimes adverse Forces, sometimes the lesser Gods of the mental and vital planes. In either case they try to occupy and use the instrument, but for their own purpose, for the play of the Ideas and Forces they represent, not the highest Truth. There are only three safeguards for the disciple. One is to call down first the eternal peace, calm and silence of the Divine into the mind and the vital and physical being. In that peace and silence there is a true possibility that the mental and vital formations will fall to rest and the supramental creation can have free space. The second safeguard is to remain entirely detached even from the most absorbing experiences and observe them without being carried away by their brilliance. The power of discernment and discrimination will slowly form from above and he will be able to distinguish between the higher truth and the lower truth as between truth and falsehood. The third safeguard is to follow implicitly the instructions of the spiritual guides who have already trod the path and to follow their guidance.

---

[6] *MS* during these experiences

This is the ordeal into which you have entered; but unhappily you seem to have departed from the guidance of the Mother in the crucial point. You seem to have deliberately rejected the peace and silence of the vital being in the fear that it would bring stagnation. As a result the strong habit [of] vital formation came into play and you began to call down lights and powers and build things in [yourself][7] in your own way. In this condition, when the disciple is not accustomed to complete trust in his masters the one thing that can be done is to stand aside and let the disciple take his own way, for to insist is likely to raise in him doubt and revolt and decide him in the opposite way. According to whatever may be the supreme decision in his case, he will feel the need of guidance and return to the straight way or he will depart on his own path wherever his inner destiny calls him.

If you have not an entire confidence in us, are not prepared to submit absolutely to our guidance, if the supramental Truth is not your one aim, if you are not prepared to go through the slow, difficult and often painful process of self-emptying new creation by which alone it can form in you, putting away all pride, self-will and excessive self-confidence, or if you think that with you is the Truth and not with us, then obviously you can draw no benefit from staying here. It is for you to choose.

One thing I would say in ending is that you seem to have formed very erroneous ideas about the work I have undertaken, as for instance when you imagine that I am working by spiritual means to bring about a worldwide conflagration and war between the white and the coloured races. This is a sheer error. The Mother has indeed told you that I do not believe in crude and violent external means for a spiritual work. As for the division of the human race according to their colour, it is in my view the play of an obscure ignorance and I would never dream of admitting it as a basis for my action. If any such world catastrophe happened it would be the result of Karmic forces and far from helping would be a serious hindrance to my work. My work is one of spiritual creation not of physical destruction. If anything has to disappear or change, it will do so by the turning on it of the supramental light and Force and what has to change must be decided by that omniscient Light and omnipotent Force and not by the human mind and its narrow ideas and false desires.

---

[7] *MS* yourselves

[5]

[13 October 1927]

Mrs Sloane wrote to me from America asking if she could come here to stay and practise Yoga. She was recommended by Mr Ralph [deBit][8], her spiritual guide, the head of a movement in America called the School of Sacred Science, who had written one or two letters to me in connection with his work and my books. I wrote giving her permission to come.

She delayed her coming because she had quarrelled with Mr [deBit][9] and was busy trying to destroy his work and publishing charges against him which on enquiry evidently were not substantiated as the proceedings against him came to nothing. This is the same manoeuvre that she has repeated here.

When she arrived, I had already decided to retire into seclusion and could not see her. She has seen me only once on August 15th and has never had any talk with me. She was not at any time admitted as a member of the Asram, is acquainted only with the Mother and one English disciple (Datta) — except for two visits to Madame Potel and knows nothing personally about the Asram. Throughout she has been kept apart on probation. But it was found that she was a woman who took her desires and imaginations and the forms she gave to them for truth and fact and finally she developed such violent delusions that it became necessary to give her up for good. When she realised by my silence that she had been rejected, she entered into an almost insane fury and sent word that she was staying here in order to crush me and destroy my work, that with the help of the

---

[8] *MS* De Bit

[9] *MS* De Bit

British consul she would get me sent to prison etc. Her present campaign is her way of realising this programme.

Her other allegations, mostly sheer inventions or grotesque distortions mixed with her own fancies, hardly need an answer. As to the charge that I am carrying on politics under the cover of Yoga, it seems to be the development of certain visions and imaginations of the future in which she began to indulge some time ago — visions of a world war and troops entraining at Baghdad, prophecies of a war between England and the Islamic peoples, etc; she had even fixed the date for next year. She had been told at the beginning that my work had no connection with politics and that I did not approve of the catastrophic and childish violences to which her mind seemed very ready to turn when it meddled with politics and the future of peoples. At first therefore she took these visions on her own account and did not mix me with them; but after the Mother had ceased to receive her, she suddenly wrote among her other experiences (e.g. of having a God glowing and tingling inside her) that she had seen that I was an incarnation of Shiva and discovered by intuition that I was working *by my spiritual forces* to bring about a war between the white and the coloured races next spring. This is all the foundation she has for her statement.

There is no connection between my spiritual work and politics. Not only so but those like Anilbaran Ray who were political workers or leaders outside, had to give up politics before they were taken into the Asram. There is not a single fact or act of mine, that can support any statement to the contrary. If Sloane or anyone else wants any evidence better than her intuitions to establish her charge, they will first have to invent it.

Sri Aurobindo Ghose

Draft Letters, 1926 – 1928

To an Unknown Person

Now you have seen practically all that needed to be seen with an entire sincerity and a true unsparing vision. The root was there in the lower vital; it was that one among your formations of personality on the vital level which brought in a persistent element of insincerity and vitiated precisely in the way you have described your nature and, consequently, your aspiration and sadhana.

This part of the work has been well done. Now it only remains for you to cast out this thing finally with all its effects from your mind and life and physical being so that there may be clear room for the true Person to descend and occupy all the place. Do your part and the full Power and Grace will be upon you.

To and about Marie Potel

[1]

Your experiences in themselves are good and free from the old mixture; but the workings of your mind upon them are not yet correct or clear. In the last page you have tried to generalise and to philosophise your experience; immediately your old mind has come between the truth and you and the thought and expression are wrong and confused and quite full of errors. It is better to wait, to gather inner experience, to allow the sense of the truth to grow in you — in that way, the time will sooner come when a true supramental revelation (and not the mental attempt at the thing) can find its exact thought and word. When you try now, the old mind begins to play and blunder.

Why "*pourtant*"?

The "essence" is always more easily seized by the heart and the internal sense than by the mind — for the heart is in touch with the psychic and the internal sense is the essential action of mind as opposed to its external and formal action. Both of these are nearer to a knowledge by identity or by direct communion than the active mind, and the "essence" can only be seized by identity or by direct communion. The active mind cannot do it except by falling silent and leaning on the psychic and on the internal sense.

═

The universal Mental is not the "stuff and body of the Father-Mother". No doubt what you mean is that the universal mental like the universal vital and physical is one form of the expressive substance of the Divine, but behind is another and a spiritual substance which is the true essence. If you want an image, it would be nearer the truth to say that this spiritual substance is the very stuff and body of the Divine and mind, life and matter are lesser sheaths, coverings or outer folds.

═

To describe the "essence" as "l'immaterielle matière" is neither very clear nor very helpful. If you mean by matter substance, in one sense or in one line of experience all is substance — spirit, being, consciousness, ananda are substance; mind, life and matter are substance. Not only so, but all are one substance in its different powers and various degrees. All these except Matter can be described as immaterial substance.

Do you mean that this essence or spiritual substance is the true Material from which all is constituted? It is substance of the Self and Brahman; it is within everything, above everything and when it descends upon one as true being, as consciousness, as Ananda, it enables the soul to separate itself from mind, life and matter, to face them instead of being involved in them and to act upon them and change them. If this is what you have felt and seen, it is true; but your language does not make it clear.

But mark that much depends on the power on which it is manifested. If it is only the spiritual substance within the universal Mental, it can raise the mental to its own highest powers, but it cannot do more. Only if it manifests as the spiritual substance in its supramental power, can the consciousness, power, Ananda it brings effect the transformation which is the object of our Yoga.

=

Afterwards you mix up many different aspects of the Divine and make a great confusion. No doubt all are the One and all are the Mother, but to mix them up confuses rather than clarifies the oneness. In any case the "essence" is not the Mother uniting the Father to the human sons! It is *through* the spiritual substance that the Jiva feels his oneness with the Ishwara and with the Mother from whom he came and it is the Mother who shows him the oneness; but that is quite another matter. The Mother is more than the essence; Self and spirit manifest the Supreme, manifest the Mother, are their first embodying substance if you like; but they are more than self and spirit.

Then what is it that is spirit of spirit and substance of substance? [Is it the "essence"?][1] But all this seems rather too much to say of any however exalted "essence"! Either you are extending your experience beyond its proper limits or you are deforming it in your language.

It is the one and dual Supreme who is Spirit of the spirit — the supreme Spirit, supreme Brahman, supreme Ishwara, supreme Shakti, supreme Purusha with supreme Prakriti. The Supreme is the one Being; it would be absurd to describe him as an essence within the universal Mental. The clumsy abstract language of the dry intellect soon gets out of place when you are trying to go beyond a spiritualised mental experience of these things. You must find a more intimate and living language.

=

Again who is the Father here and who the Mother and what are the human sons doing in the affair?

The one and dual Supreme manifests as the Supreme Shakti. She is the transcendent Mother who stands above and behind all the creation and supports it and stands too above and behind each plane of the creation. She is contained in the Supreme and supported in all she does and creates by the Supreme; but she carries too the Supreme within her.

---

[1] *Sentence cancelled without substitution in MS. — Ed.*

Here in the creation she manifests the dual Supreme whom she carries within her as the Ishwara and the Mahashakti and also as the dual power of Purusha-Prakriti. The Mahashakti comes out of the Ishwara and does the work of the creation, supported by the Ishwara.[2]

Man, the ignorant embodied mental being, begins to get free from his ignorance when he draws back from half-conscious substance of mind to conscious substance of Spirit. This is an overwhelming and absorbing experience to him and he cannot get beyond it. He speaks of it as his Self and gets in it some experience of his oneness with That which is beyond him, the Supreme. Yet what the Supreme is he does not really know and, so long as he is man, he cannot know. He tries to describe it or its aspects by abstract mental terms. He regards this experience of Self or Spirit as if it were the ultimate experience. Most absurdly, he tries to get through self to the Supreme by denying or getting rid of the Mother. Or else he regards her only as a convenience for getting united to the "Father", ie an exclusive Purusha side of the supreme. All this is reflected in your language which is a confused repetition of the language of the more ignorant schools of Vedanta.

The Supreme is not exclusively the Purusha. One has to go through both aspects in union to reach him. The Mother herself is not merely Prakriti; she is the supreme and universal Shakti and contains in herself Purusha as well as Prakriti. And, secondly, the self or "essence" as experienced by man, that is to say, by the spiritualised mind, is not the ultimate experience. As that which uses the body is more than the body, so more than the Self is That of which the self is the spiritual substance.

---

[2] *Sri Aurobindo struck through this and the two preceding paragraphs. Later he took up the ideas and some of the language of the second paragraph in Part 6 of* The Mother. *— Ed.*

Universal Mind is not "the stuff and body" of the Father-Mother. At most it is like life and matter, one form of expressive substance, a sheath or covering. It is rather the spiritual substance that could be imaged as the stuff and body of the Divine.[3]

—

I presume that by your "essence" you mean the self or spiritual substance of things. But why do you call it immaterial Matter? Life and mind could as well be described in that language — they can be felt or seen as immaterial substances.

—

Again what is this "own being" of yours to which you are united by your heart-centre and which unites you to the universal Mind? Is it the mental or the psychic being or what is it? All this is confused and vague in the last degree. "Thy own being" is an expression which would usually mean the Jiva who is soul and spirit and has no more special connection with the universal Mental than with universal life or Matter.

—

If the "essence" is the spiritual substance in which the Divine manifests and which is the true substance of all things, the one substance of which mind, life and body are lesser degrees, then no doubt that when it pours down as true being, as consciousness, as Ananda enables not only to face the universal mental as also the universal vital and physical but to work upon them and transform them. But is this what you have seen or is it something else?

—

In any case the "essence" cannot be the Mother uniting the Divine Father to the human sons. It is through the spiritual substance that the unity with the Father and Mother is felt, because out of her spiritual substance the Mother has manifested her children. But the Divine and the Mother are surely something more than a spiritual substance.

—

---

[3] *This paragraph and the four that follow are reworkings of earlier paragraphs of this draft letter. — Ed.*

[2]

Mira has shown me your letter. You seem to yield periodically to an attack of suggestions from an adverse force always of the same kind; yet each time, instead of seeing the source of the suggestions and rejecting them, you accept and are chiefly busy in justifying your wrong movements, always with the same morbid ideas and language about "méfiance" and being "misunderstood" etc. When will you discover finally that these movements and expressions of this kind are not and cannot be part of the true consciousness, that they are and can only be the expression of something small, morbid, vitally weak and petty and obscure that was in your past nature, still clings and is used by the adverse Powers to pull you back from your progress?

There can be no question of "confidence" or want of confidence in these matters. We have only to see for ourselves what progress you make and where you stumble and deal with your Yoga according to the truth of what we see. You surely do not expect us to accept without examination your own estimate of yourself and of where you are.

The questions you asked Mira had no true connection with the vital-physical weakness of which you complain, nor can that kind of practice help you to transmit to the physical the exact light of Truth from the higher consciousness. It was the ignorant Mind in you which was attaching an undue importance to this "practical occultism" and it is the same mind which tries to connect two unconnected things. This mind in you makes the most fanciful mistakes and likes to cling to them even when they are pointed out to you. Thus it erected a sheer imagination about an "interior circle" from which you were excluded in the arrangement of places, took it as a true and "profound" impression and seems to want still to cling to its own falsehood after the plain and simple practical reason of the arrangement had been clearly told to you. It is because of this continued false activity of the mind that you were told to silence the mentality and keep yourself open to the Light alone. What is the use of answering that you are centred in the supermind and living in the Light and that [it] is only the vital physical that is weak in you? You were nearer the supramental when you discovered your mind's entire ignorance and accepted that salutary knowledge. That humility of the mental being and the clear perception of its own incompetence is the first step towards a sound approach to the supramental Truth. Otherwise you will always live in messages, approximations and suggestions, some from the Truth, some from the many regions of half Truth, some from the Twilight and Error and have no sure power to distinguish between them.

Nobody doubts the sincerity of your efforts or the reality of the progress you have made. But you have been warned that the way is long and the progress made is nothing in comparison to what has still to be done. If you get discouraged at each [pace][4] because your demands are not satisfied or all your sentiments respected or all your perceptions valued as definitive truth, if you admit always the egoistic demand how do you expect to make a swift or a sure advance? Each step reveals an imperfection, each stage gained makes the experience left behind seem incomplete and inadequate.[5]

Active surrender, by the way, does not mean to follow your own ideas or your own guidance; it means to fight against your imperfections and weaknesses and follow only the way of the Truth shown to you.

[3]

The conditions have greatly changed since she went away and are not at present such as would make her return at all useful to her or otherwise advisable. I remain in my retirement and have no intention of coming out from it at any early date. On her side the Mother is also retiring more and more. There is no longer a daily meditation and she does not now give a regular day to the sadhakas, but sees them only from time to time. This movement of retirement is likely to remain and increase until what has to be achieved on the material plane has been definitely conquered and made sure. Under these conditions her return here would be of no use to her; she must remain in Europe until we write from here that things are changed and her return advisable.

---

[4] *MS* paces

[5] *Sri Aurobindo wrote this sentence in the margin of the page. He apparently intended it to be inserted here. — Ed.*

Section Three

Other Letters of Historical Interest on Yoga and Practical Life

1921 – 1938

On Yoga and Fund-raising for the Ashram, 1921–1938

To and about Durgadas Shett

[1]

Pondicherry
May 12. 1921

Dear Durgadas

I received day before yesterday your letter and the Rs 400 you sent me. I accept the money and shall use it for the house for those who come to me for the Yoga. The house is taken and will be ready on the 15th.

There is no reason, no just reason for your indulging the state of mind which is expressed in your letter. You write as if you were not accepted and there was no hope for you. That is not so. Those who sincerely give themselves to me, cannot be rejected. All that was intended in what Barin and Satyen have told you, is that you should come with a complete self-giving and a readiness to renounce everything in you that may be an obstacle to the completeness. The main obstacles in you are an emotional self-indulgence and the ahankara of work etc to which you seem to give a greater importance than to the greater and deeper object of the Yoga. Our Yoga is solely for the development of the divine consciousness in man and all the rest is secondary, work only valuable as the expression of the Divine in the individual and it is to be done by the Divine, not with the ego, not as a work that is *yours* or to be done by you for the satisfaction of the sense of the অহং কর্তা in you. Equally an emotional self-indulgence will stand in the way of the true calm and Ananda which belong to the divine consciousness. If you are ready from the beginning to recognise the difficulties in your own nature, they can be easily removed; otherwise you will have to face much internal trouble and suffering in the first stages of the sadhana. The Sangha of our Yoga must be of men who give up the lower consciousness and the lower nature in order to assume the higher and divine. The formation of a commune for the sake of a particular "work" is not at all the true ideal. It is only as we all grow into the Divine that the true sangha can be created. This you ought to understand clearly and try to fix in yourself before you come here. This also you must understand that I cannot reject yourself and take your money. Money is nothing; it is a mere means and convenience which God will give me whenever and to whatever degree he wills for his purpose. It is yourself, your soul that matters.

Try to understand these things in their true light so that you may be ready, when [you come], to receive completely what I have to give you. Meanwhile put yourself in spiritual relation with me, try to receive me with a passive and unobstructing mind and wait for the call to come here. As soon as I am ready, I shall call you.

As for the others of whom you write, you may speak to them of me hereafter, but you must leave it to me to decide about their fitness and what is best for them. All cannot come to me immediately and each case must be decided according to the truth of the being of each and the will of the Divine with regard to him.

Aurobindo

[2]

[29 December 1927]

Answer[1]

The "Sadhak-Bhav" is Anilbaran's translation of one of several pieces that are being put together and published by Rameshwar under the title "The Mother". There seems to be no great utility in publishing a separate translation of it and the English of it is out of question since that has been given to Rameshwar.

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo wrote what follows to indicate how he wanted his secretary, Nolini Kanta Gupta, to answer a letter from Durgadas. Nolini's reply was apparently written in Bengali. — Ed.*

Anilbaran says his translations cannot be published in book form without serious revision and he is no doubt right. If it is published at all it will have to be given to R, who wants all the things from here that can be given to him.

Some four months ago Durgadas wrote a letter about a friend of his; the letter passed out of my memory and no answer was given. The photograph sent shows nothing. As for the illness, it is evidently a disease of the physical nerves — these diseases attack at various places and create or simulate different illnesses. Probably it is an after result of the ravage on the organism created by the Kalazar. In most cases it indicates a weakness in the vital being which opens it to pressure from hostile influences belonging to the lower vital worlds.

[3]

I had given Barin an answer to your former letter, but it may either not have been sent or else delayed or lost owing to the railway strike.

A paper of the kind you are undertaking is not part of my work. My only work is that which is centralised at Pondicherry under the control of the Mother. What she gives to the sadhaks to do elsewhere or accepts as helpful for the present or the future is part of the work. All else belongs to the old movements or to the outside world. So long as one has the old mentality and is still living the old life, he can always undertake anything of the kind and according to his fortune and capacity succeed or fail. I may give some help if there is any good reason for it, but I can undertake no responsibility for the work or its results.

Suresh is not at present "one of us", on the contrary he has left and taken a hostile attitude. Your request to Nalini and others [ ][2] to go over there as editor is made without any knowledge of the present condition of the Sadhana and the present mentality of the Sadhakas here. You write as if all were as it was seven or eight years ago, but everything is changed since then and such things are no longer possible.

---

[2] *MS* seems

You write about your pres[ent] [*incomplete*][3]

[4]

It is difficult to understand anything precise from Durgadas' letter. I gather that his personal and his financial condition are not very good and that his inner condition, if not too bad, is not famous, finally that he is empty of vital force and the joy of life. All that, however, is exceedingly imprecise and does not help me to help him. The source of his difficulty is in his mind; it is too full of uncertainties, useless complexities and twistings upon itself and hesitations and খটকা generally, to give his inner heart and life-force and spiritual force a real chance. If he wants effective help, he ought to lay himself open entirely to us and receive without hesitation our influence.

As regards this paper, I cannot say that it has any very particular connection with my work; but under present conditions there is no reason why he should not take part in it.

Finally about Moni whom he proposes to call, write to him that Moni has left us and is no longer "one of us". On the contrary, he has become hostile to us and is campaigning against my work so that there can be no question of inviting him there.

[5]

[June–July 1929]

Nalini

Write to Durgadas (in Bengali) a letter to the following purpose.

It is hardly practicable to send anyone from here so far as Bhubaneshwar to bring him. We had wired to Jyotish Mukherji to stop there and bring him, but Jyotish had started before receiving the wire. The next person expected from Bengal is Hrishikesh Kanjilal and we can ask him to do it; but this will take some time. If Durgadas is anxious to come *at once*, it will be better for him to make his own arrangements in the matter.

---

[3] *This is Sri Aurobindo's draft answer to a letter from Durgadas dated 16 July 1928. Sri Aurobindo did not complete the letter. Instead he wrote a note to Nolini Kanta Gupta in which he gave his thoughts on the points in Durgadas's letter, presumably for communication to Durgadas in Bengali. See the next item. — Ed.*

As to the money he needs, if he absolutely cannot get from home or his friends, we will see about it. But it will be better if he can arrange, for the expenses of the Asram are heavy and always increasing, and at present money is not coming in freely.

Next, about his stay. In his former letter he spoke of coming for a few days to settle certain matters, but in this letter he speaks casually of not returning; but there is no clear statement that he wants to settle down in Pondicherry for good. The conditions here internal and external have very much changed from what they were when he was here before. The conditions are in many respects much more rigorous and there is a strong pressure in the atmosphere for concentration in the sadhana and for change of the nature. It will have to be seen if he can accommodate himself to the conditions or bear the pressure. If he can, then there can be no objection to his staying here. But those who stay here for the Yoga find usually that other interests that do not come within its scope fall away from them or recede to a distance. If it is decided that he stays, he must be prepared for that change.

He writes in his letter as if he wanted to see me and talk about his paper and other enterprise. But that is impossible. I see no one except on three days in the year, and even then I speak with no one. All that people have to say to me, they communicate orally to the Mother or in writing and, afterwards if there is a decision to be made, it is made by her in consultation with me. There can be no exception to this rule.

As to his health, there is no reason why in itself the subjection to fever, weakness or intestinal illness should be incurable. Only, he must be able to open himself altogether to the Power. When people practising Yoga suffer in this way, it is more often than not because there is a disharmony between the Force that is working in them and some parts of the mind and the vital and physical nature, some resistance or some unwillingness or inability to open up to it. Part of the nature opens, but part shuts itself up and follows its own impulses and ideas; a disequilibrium, disturbance or illness is the result. Moreover, if he wants to recover, he must have the faith and the will to do so. He must not always be thinking of death or see it as the inevitable result; he must make up his mind to cure.

Finally, he wrote in his first letter about making a will. What his meaning is, is not clear — in this matter, his ideas and mine differ. But all that can best be settled, when he is here. The best thing for him will be not to make farther hesitations and difficulties, but anyhow arrange or manage to come — once here, there can be, in Chandernagore language, a general "clearance".

[6]

9, Rue de la Marine
Pondicherry
–
July 5, 1929.

To
Durgadas Shett

Hrishikesh has wired on the 2nd from Sherpur (Mymensingh) that he will start in a week and bring you to Pondicherry with him. I do not know if he has written or wired to you, so I write to inform you. Please arrange to come with him, if you are not in a condition to come alone. To bring someone else would be very inconvenient and might lead to awkwardness; for it has been for a long time the rule of the Asram to admit for residence only sadhaks of the Asram itself, disciples who come for a visit or short stay, people who come with special permission for initiation in Yoga, and, in some cases, those who come, — again with special permission, — for *darshan* on the days in the year on which Sri Aurobindo comes out. Outsiders who do not fall within these classes are not allowed to stay in the Asram, but are supposed to make their own arrangements elsewhere.

There is one thing which I should mention and of which I omitted to write in my last letter. You have written of the work in which you have been recently engaged as if it were part of Sri Aurobindo's work and of those who are with you in it as if they were among his spiritual followers or disciples. But in matter of fact Sri Aurobindo knows practically nothing about what you are doing and nothing at all about those who are helping you. When you wrote to him about the "Swadeshi Bazaar" you yourself expressed a doubt as to the possibility of this enterprise having any connection with his work and his reply was that there was none. But as he understood that it was to be a weekly review with a special interest in economics and Swadeshi industry and trade, he could make no objection to your taking it up if that took your fancy. He does not interfere as a rule with the external activities of those who are not members of the Asram and therefore self-bound to its spiritual aim and discipline or who have not made a complete surrender of their inner and outer life to his direction and control. Recently, however, since your last letters to him, Sri Aurobindo has been informed that those who are now with you are political workers of a particular school. If that is so, it is rather surprising that you should still think it possible to connect this work of yours with Sri Aurobindo's. You must surely be aware that he has cut off all connection with politics and that his work is purely spiritual and he does not support or have any kind of connection with any political school or group or party. It is also a rule of the Asram that any one entering it as a member must give up all political connections and cease from any activities of that kind. I write this in order that any misunderstanding there may be should be cleared up, first in your own mind and afterwards here in a complete explanation of all matters when you come.

[7]

Pondicherry
26 November 1930.

My dear Durgadas,

I reply today to your letter; I think my answer will reach you by the 29th instant.

Of the three proposals you put before me, it is the first, that of a lump sum of Rs 50,000, which recommends itself to me.

The third is hardly possible since it would be extremely difficult and inconvenient, not to say impracticable, for me to realise the rent of a house in Calcutta.

The second proposal seems to me to be a little wanting in definiteness and, at any rate, I would prefer something speedy and final to a temporary arrangement for a number of years. I would not recommend to anyone the acceptance of the Government promissory note at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, if he had a better choice; those of the kind we have had to deal with were worth in the market less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of their face value. Moreover, this is a kind of investment for which I never had any liking. I gather from your letter that you are yourself not at all certain what will be realised from the property coming to you under this arrangement.

There remains the question about the Bank. The simplest way would be to deposit the money in the Imperial Bank, Calcutta, which is in relation with the Banque d'Indo-Chine, Pondicherry, and to send a cheque signed by the Imperial Bank in the name of the Mother (Madame M. Alfassa) which we could easily get cashed here. If the cheque were in my name, it would not be so easy, as my signature is not known to the Bank in Calcutta and I have no account with the bank here nor any transactions with it in my own name. We can however consider this matter hereafter when the time comes and decide on this or any other alternative. I mention it at once because it is the simplest and most convenient and we have employed it already, so that it seems to me superfluous to seek for any other way.

Sri Aurobindo

[8]

Pondicherry. 9.12.30

My dear Durgadas,

Your letter of the 3d instant reached me only on the 8th afternoon, owing to the breakdown of railway communications between Madras and Pondicherry. You must have received the telegram dated the next morning in answer. I perfectly understand the financial advantages of your second and third proposal, especially the last; but my experience is that clear cash transactions turn out usually to be the best. In these long term or transactional arrangements I have found most often that circumstances independent of the giver or receiver have interfered and upset the calculated advantages. I therefore stick to my original preference.

The usual charge made by the Bank is 2 as [*annas*] per cent, which would amount for a sum of Rs 50,000 to Rs 62.8,[4] and if the cheque is in the Mother's name (it must be in the form given to you in my last letter, Madame M. Alfassa), they would probably make a reduction in the charges. A cheque from the National Bank would, I suppose, serve also; only there would be more delay in converting it because there are no direct relations of that Bank with the Banque d'Indo-Chine.

Sri Aurobindo

[9]

24.4.33.

Durgadas

The Mother's protection is always with you. Trust in her always and call down her peace and strength and light in you to still the restlessness and fill the vacancy with calm and force and joy and ease.

Sri Aurobindo

[10]

Pondicherry
30.4.34

Durgadas,

I have received your letter of the 26th. It is not necessary to make any arrangements for the interest — we shall be able to manage. What is more important is the way of sending. On no account must you cut the papers in half. It was publicly proclaimed by the Government some years ago — I do not know how it is that so many people are still ignorant of it — that they would not be responsible for cut notes. We have had much difficulty with cut bank notes, and Government paper cut like this will not at all be recognised and accepted. I must ask you therefore to make some other secure arrangement for sending the papers.

---

[4] *That is, 62 rupees and 8 annas (one half-rupee). — Ed.*

You have written nothing about yourself and how you are getting on. I hope you will let us know in a future letter.

Sri Aurobindo

[11]

14.5.34

Durgadas

As regards the sending of the Government paper there is a perfectly simple method which will involve no trouble. It is to endorse the Notes in favour of Duraiswami's bank in Madras and give them to its branch in Calcutta which will forward them to Madras. Duraiswami has often negotiated for us large sums in Govt promissory notes and in bank notes through his bank, so there will be no difficulty. I have asked Duraiswami to draw up a letter of instructions so that you will know exactly what to do and I am enclosing it with this. You have only to follow the instructions in his letter.

Sri Aurobindo

[12]

Durgadas,

I had intended to write to you as soon as I had received your offering, but as you told us not to send any letters before knowing your new address I could not do so. I decided to realise the Government Notes as I was informed that they would lose in value and I have placed Rs 50,000, the sum originally agreed upon in the Asram account from which money cannot again be diverted for other uses, and kept the rest (Rs 25000 about) free for use.

I gather from your letter that your health has not improved and is sometimes very bad leading to occasional crises. But from what you describe and from what I know, I believe that this ill-health is due to the weakness of the nervous system — the vital physical and the nervous envelope and not to any specific illness. If so, it can be got rid of by strengthening that part. You should determine on that and dismiss in future any depressing suggestions and certainly never think for this or any other reason of leaving the body. I understand from what you write that inwardly you have progressed and received much help. Since that is so, you have every reason to be confident since you will certainly receive more and not less help now and be able to make the progress which is still needed.

You have not given any indication of what you are doing. You had written before that you had certain things to clear up from the past before you came here. How far has that been done? I see from your letter that you are in difficulties for money, — but why then did you not write? I have no idea of what you stand in need of, but I am sending you a sum of Rs 100 to go on with and you will let me know at an early date what you need. But I must be sure of your address before sending letter and money so I despatch a telegram tomorrow reply paid to make sure of that.

Do not hesitate to write or to ask or tell openly what you need to ask or tell. I wish to have letters regularly from you keeping me informed of all that concerns you. I may not be able to answer always, at least personally, for I am overpressed with work and it is only on Sundays that I am a little free, but whenever necessary I will write and you will get besides whatever invisible help you need from me.

Sri Aurobindo

30.9.34.

[13]

28.10.34

Durgadas

It is unfortunately impossible for me to write letters with punctuality and at length — for most letters written outside I have to rely on Nolini who writes them from my directions and even so nine out of ten have to go unanswered; yet I have not sufficient time for my work. There are only three people outside the Asram besides yourself to whom I make it a point of writing personally, but the result of the conditions is that I can write to them only when I find a little time, usually on Sunday. For the same reason I have to write briefly. But you know by experience that help can come silently and letters, though necessary under the existing conditions, are only a minor help.

As to the past, you have written that your difficulties have been solved. I need not therefore return to that, except to say that I consider you took the right attitude and the right course as regards your share in the family property. I think that includes everything and I need say no more.

I am sorry to hear of your continued bad health. There is evidently a weakness in your aura or nervous envelope which allows these invasions of the forces of illness. That can only be set right by a strengthening of this nervous envelope. That can be done partly by a healthy climate and a life without anxieties, but the only radical cure is to bring down the strength of the higher consciousness into the nervous being and the body and refortify the nervous envelope. This depends on the progress of your sadhana. Meanwhile report to me from time to time the state of your health and I will see what can be done.

I have read carefully what you have written about your sadhana but I should like to know more precisely and specifically the exact stage you have reached and how the Force is working in the different planes of your being.

I would also like to know whether you would care to receive the letters on Yoga (usually called messages) circulated in the Asram? Not many go out nowadays, but sometimes I write still and one here or there may be useful to you. If so, I will ask Nolini to send to you. However, most of those recently written are being published shortly in a book to be called "Lights on Yoga".

Finally about your idea of marriage. On this I should like to have more precise information about the girl and, if possible, a photograph of her. It is evidently a step of great consequence that you propose. Is it the life of a householder you propose to lead or is the marriage solely with the idea of sadhana in life together?

Sri Aurobindo

[14]

[January 1935]

Durgadas

I had intended to write about your sadhana, but, as recently there have been many difficulties in the work that I had to overcome, I could make no time.

In answer to your last letter I would say that when you have had the experiences and realisation you have described, nothing ought to discourage you. It is true that even after one has the consciousness in the inner being, it is still difficult to bring out it or its results in the outer being and the life. But that is a difficulty which all have and it can be overcome by patient sadhana and time.

One thing these realisations ought to remove from you — the idea of giving up the body. Once there is the inner consciousness established, the possibility of realisation in the outer life [ ][5] is established also and, whatever the obstacles and difficulties, the disappointments from people or circumstances, the idea of giving up the body ought not to arise.

Two things especially are needed for the life-realisation to take form, an entire faith and equality of mind — not disturbed by anything that may happen, knowing that all happens for the best by the inscrutable Will — and the instrumentation of the Divine Force in the adhara. These must be established in the inner being, but also as much as possible in the outer nature. Men and circumstances may not come up to your expectation or to your demand on them — they seldom or never do, but it is not on them but on the Divine and on the Divine Force acting in you that must be your dependence.

---

[5] *MS* also

Your letter about the sadhana made everything clear and precise as to inner things — but there is not the same clearness and precision about your outer life. What are your present circumstances — what you wish and intend to do, that is what I would like to know more clearly. Especially one thing, what I should do for you on the material plane. When you sent not only the Rs 50,000 first promised for the Asram, but the rest of your share of the estate, you wrote that you had kept something for your needs and would write whenever you needed anything more. I have also arranged on that basis. But I know nothing of what are your needs or how you would like me to meet them. I gathered, I do not know whether rightly, from something you wrote that my sending an insured letter raised comments. I would very [much] like to know what precisely I should send, at what intervals and in what way. It would set my mind at rest if I knew this, for it is difficult to act in material things without such precisions. I hope therefore you will not mind my asking.

Sri Aurobindo

[15]

27.1.35

Durgadas

I have written to you in my last letter about sending money — I would have sent at once on receiving your letter of the 14th, but you have asked me not to do so till you write to me — you indicate also an uncertainty about your address. I hope you will write at once and let me know what you need. There is no reason why you should have to rely on others. But I am in ignorance about your needs and had therefore to depend on your writing to me about it. If a clear and precise arrangement can be made so that you may not be in embarrassment at any time, that will be the best. Otherwise you ought not to hesitate to write to me each time as soon as it is necessary.

I do not know also very precisely what kind of work you envisage. Your letters have not given me any definite idea. Here in the Asram all is confined to the preparation for the spiritual change which is the object of the Yoga and work is only a field of practice for that change of the nature. It is a hard thing to achieve, our difficulties internal and external have been many, but until it is accomplished we have denied ourselves any other definite work, except some publication of books, — because the base must be there before there can be any structure. Apart from that, any work in the outside world can be taken in the same way as a field of exercise for perfection, for the harmonising of the inner growth and the outer action. But this is the general principle — the other question is that of the precise field and direction you want to choose.

As to your ill-health, what do you wish me to tell you? Treatment (if it is good) and change of climate when necessary suggest themselves; but at bottom the difficulty is a difficulty experienced by us all — the disharmony between the light and power that is coming down and the obscure body consciousness which is accustomed to respond to disharmonious forces. It is precisely this point at which we are labouring here — and, as always happens, the difficulties to be met become immediately acute. Take treatment if you find it helps you and change climate; but the inner victory here is the means of the final solution.

Sri Aurobindo

[16]

Pondicherry
24.2.35.

Durgadas

I was unable to write all these days as it was round about the 21st of February and at that time we are overflooded with people and letters and work of all kinds. I am still unable to write more than a few lines.

I am sending you Rs 100 by money order and I shall send the same sum from time to time. I now understand clearly the conditions of the past and what happened — those of the present are not quite as precise to me. I hope that if the money is exhausted before you receive the next instalment or if you need some special sum for a special purpose you will without hesitation write to me.

About other matters I hope to write more at length when I find a little breathing space.

Sri Aurobindo

[17]

Durgadas

I received your letter from Dehradun later than the day you had fixed for your departure, so I had to wire to ascertain if by any chance you were still there. Your frequent changes of address have stood in the way of any correspondence from here. It is impossible for me to write promptly and by the time I have written, you have generally moved away with no precise indication of the new address. I had sent you a money order for Rs 100 and a letter to Benares, but they were crossed by your letter announcing your departure and came back to me.

I had always wished to send you money for your expenses, but I did not know what you needed and it is difficult for me to fix anything, — that was why I had asked you. I have sent Rs 100. I do not know if Rs 50 a month would be sufficient; if it is not, you must not hesitate to tell me. You can also let me know the amount you owe to your friends so that I may remit the sum to you. All that is simply a matter of clear understanding and arrangement.

I am less clear as to the place where you should stay. If the atmosphere of the Asram were less troubled and there was less illness and attacks of turbulent forces, I would ask you to come and stay here. But considering your bad health and the sensitiveness and delicacy of your vital nature, I hesitate to do so, because I do not know whether you would be able vitally and physically to be at ease amidst this fierce struggle of forces on the physical and lower vital plane. On the other hand I am not fixed as to what climate or surroundings would suit you elsewhere or of any place where you could have what is necessary for me. If you could let me have some information as to possible places and their circumstances, it would be easier for me to decide.

You need not think that I am likely to abandon you or withdraw my spiritual and practical support for any reason or that I find any fault with you. You may be sure of my help and blessings always. In the inner being you know that I am with you, in the outer life I hope that developments will soon take place which will make it possible for the nearness to be externally realisable.

1.12.35 Sri Aurobindo

[18]

Durgadas

I am afraid I have delayed too long in sending you money. I hope you have not been put to inconvenience. In the heavy pressure of work I had not realised that so long a time had gone. I am sending a money order.

I have been unable to make a satisfactory arrangement anywhere for your staying. The only one that looks possible is an offer of Srish Goswami (formerly of Howrah, now in Jalpaiguri) to take a house for you near his in Jalpaiguri and look after you. He had not at that time room in his own house, which would have been the best arrangement. I do not know how Jalpaiguri would suit you. If you think it feasible, I can ask him to make the necessary arrangements and you can join him there as soon as things are ready.

I write this briefly only, so that the post may not be delayed.

I shall answer your last letter before the 21st as I hope to have a little more time now.

Sri Aurobindo

12.2.36.

---

[19]

Pondicherry
8.6.36

Durgadas

I am glad you have informed me of your new address, but regret to see that the condition of your mind is so depressed and hopeless. Suicide is no solution of any spiritual problem or difficulty — it does not liberate from suffering after death, for the suffering in the vital continues; nor does it prepare better conditions hereafter, for the conditions created for the next life are worse and the same difficulties present then for solution. All suggestions of suicide come from a hostile force which wants to break the life and the sadhana. I hope that you will put away this thought from you altogether and for good. There is only one way [for][6] the sadhak and that is to maintain his trust in the Divine through all difficulties and sufferings, try to gather more and more fortitude and equality and freedom from all attachments till there is that strength and calm within on which the realisation can be securely founded.

As to the question you put me it is in the affirmative. Whatever help I can give you, I will give.

I do not write any more now than what is necessary as an answer to what you have written in your letter, so that this may not be delayed in posting.

I send my blessing. There is a Power of which you have at times been conscious which can carry you through. May it restore your faith and reliance and lead you to the conquest of yourself and Nature.

Sri Aurobindo

P.S I send you a money order for Rs 100. I hope it will find you.

---

[6] *MS* from

[20]

Pondicherry
29.6.36

Durgadas

I got your letter late and could not telegraph on Saturday, but as you mentioned Monday morning, I sent an urgent wire the first thing on Monday (this morning). I am writing you a letter (referring back for the purpose to your past letters so as to understand better if I can what you say on certain matters here), but as this takes long, I could not finish the reply — so I am writing this in the meanwhile. If you cannot wait (you speak of going away on Thursday) as I have asked in the wire, at least let me know that you have gone and give me your new address so that I may send it there.

Meanwhile very briefly I may say that I have failed to grasp clearly and distinctly what is the offence you consider yourself to have committed against the Truth (your Truth) which demands a punishment, no less than death. You are nowhere explicit in this matter so as to say to me "This or this is the offence and this the Truth against which I have offended." You touch on several points, your own offence, the evil men have done you, the evil I myself have done you (of which I was myself perfectly unconscious and certainly had no intention to do any,) the proposed marriage and my withholding of sanction, but on no point are there any precisions. I have therefore to answer in a general way and that cannot be very satisfactory to you.

Nevertheless let me say at once that suicide or letting oneself die — it comes to the same thing — can never be in my eyes a step in consonance with the Truth of things — it seems to me to be in itself an offence against Truth. If a punishment is to be inflicted on oneself for anything, it should be in the nature of an atonement — but the only atonement for a fall from Truth (supposing that there is one) is to persevere, to correct, to attempt again resolutely to embody the Truth in one's life till it is done.

Then again, for your marriage, if you firmly feel that to be the Truth for you or an indispensable part of it, I would be the last person to dissuade you from it. I have not done so and have left it to the Truth in you to work out your course as it did formerly in other matters. For the rest I shall explain what I mean in the longer letter. I write this only to make it clear that there is no opposition on my part, if your being demands this as a step to be taken in pursuit of its inner need. There is no reason, if that is a main point where you feel yourself unfulfilled, to despair and seek an issue out which is no issue.

Try to calm and control the agitation in you and do not allow yourself to be swept towards decisions which merely mean failure and disaster.

Sri Aurobindo

[21]

21.7.36

Durgadas

I have received your letter today and am sending the money, Rs 100 for July and August and Rs 150 for extra expenses, 250 in all. This is only to announce the despatch; as I do not want to delay it I do not write a letter.

I trust that the despair of the future will go and give place to renewed hope and strength to face life and journey towards the divine realisation.

Sri Aurobindo

[22]

25.6.37

Durgadas

I received your letter and take the opportunity of the first leisure I have had since to write just a line in answer.

I am glad to know that all is right and there is no such trouble or difficulty as you apprehended. I shall certainly do what I can spiritually for her welfare in the future.

Convey my blessing and the Mother's to all your friends who have helped you. With yourself our love and blessings.

Sri Aurobindo

[23]

Pondicherry
24.5.38

Durgadas

I was glad to receive your letter and have news of you after so long a time. In your letter at the end you express your wish to live independently in a solitary place if you can get the help you need for that. I shall willingly give you all help for that. Will you let me know at once more in detail where or to what kind of solitary place you wish to go and what help you need (special and standing monthly expenses included) and I will see immediately to provide you.

If you wish at any time to come over here to the Asram for a period or permanently, you have only to let us know. It is not a solitary place — there are now some 170 people living a collective existence though each has his separate room and can, if he likes, live a retired life there; but it is not an independent and solitary life such as one can have when living apart in one's own individual way. Whenever you feel inclined, you might come here and see what it is and whether, in its present form, it will at all suit you. Later on, when we have the means, I hope to have a more elastic organisation when different ways of living, separate or close, may be possible.

As for what I wish about you, it had always been my intention as soon as I could do so in a way satisfactory to you and suitable, to ask you to join the life and work that I am preparing. I have not asked you so far because there is only this Asram where people are being prepared and nothing but the small internal work of the Asram itself — I did not want to start anything larger before everything was spiritually and otherwise ready. But if at any time you feel inclined and able to fit yourself into things as they are here, I shall be very glad to call you here at once. That would be altogether for you to decide in full freedom according to the needs of your nature.

Sri Aurobindo

To and about Punamchand M. Shah

[1]

To
Punamchand

I. Separation of Purusha and Prakriti to establish tranquility of heart and mind.

(a) Separated Purusha, calm, observing Prakriti.

(b) Prakriti in the heart and mind attending calmness.

II. Offering of all the actions, all that is done in your life as a sacrifice to the Lord.

III. Realisation of the Higher Divine Shakti doing all the works.

(a) Living with the constant idea that it is the Shakti which does the work.

(b) Feeling of the Divine Shakti descending from above the mind and moving the whole being.

1921

[2]

Pondicherry
August 15th 1923

The bearer Punamchand Mohanlal Shah is my disciple and is now with me practising Yoga in Pondicherry. He is trustworthy and faithful in all matters and enjoys my entire confidence.

Aurobindo Ghose

[3]

Punamchand

The ornaments offered by Chandulal's mother.

Certainly, you can accept and send them. I do not know why you felt any scruple in this matter. Whatever is given with Bhakti can and ought to be received and not rejected whether it is money, things of value or useful things. There may be exceptions, as for instance where the gift is of a quite unsuitable or cumbrous kind, but this is obviously not the case here.

(2) The talk with Haribhai

Think no more about it except to retain the lesson. Your mistake was to interfere with your ignorant mind in a matter which had been decided by the Mother, as if it could know better than she did. As usually happens when the physical mind acts in this way, it made wrong reasoning and foolish blunder. It was as if you gave Haribhai a choice between giving money or giving the clothes and other articles. He was to give both and there was no question of a choice between them; nor could this kind of balancing and reduction on one side or the other be good for his spiritual progress. The fact that other clothes were coming from a Mill could make no difference: that was quite another list and did not meet the same needs. As for the other possibilities you speak of, they have nothing to do with previous arrangements and present requirements; they are only a possibility of the future. I write this much only to show you how mistaken these mental movements are; but you need not worry about it any longer.

(3) The "Four Aspects" is half written and will be finished in a few days. It has been decided to publish these four writings with the February message in Calcutta. Motilal Mehta can use them instead of the August 15th utterances.

October 3, 1927

[4]

Pondicherry
1st January 1928

To
Punamchand. M. Shah.

I have received your letter and am sending this answer with Haribhai. I do not consider it necessary or advisable to make a public appeal for the sum of money I have asked you to raise for me in Gujerat. If a public appeal is to be made, it can only be when the time comes for my work to be laid on larger foundations and I can create the model form or outward material organisation of the new life which will be multiplied throughout India and, with India as a spiritual nucleus and centre, in other countries. Then large sums of money will be indispensable and a public appeal may become advisable.

At present I am making a smaller preliminary foundation, a spiritual training-ground and the first form of a community of spiritual workers. Here they will practise and grow in the Yoga and learn to act from the true consciousness and with the true knowledge and power. Here too some first work will be undertaken and institutions founded on a small scale which will prepare for the larger and more definite work of the future. I need money to buy land and houses, to get equipment for these first institutions and to accommodate and maintain an increasing number of sadhakas and workers. A public appeal is not necessary to raise the sums that are at present indispensable. I prefer to make it only when I have already created a sufficient external form that all can see. It will be easy for you to raise privately the money I now want if you are inspired to get into touch with the right and chosen people.

As you can judge, even this preliminary work will be a matter not of one but several lakhs, but I have named one lakh as the minimum immediately needed in order that we may start solidly and go on without being hampered at each step for want of funds. If you can raise more than the initial minimum, so much the better. The work will proceed more easily and quickly and with a surer immediate prospect. Preserve the right consciousness and attitude, keep yourself open to the Divine Shakti and let her will be done through you.

[5]

Punamchand

I am surprised to see from your letter that you have received from Vithaldas an offer of Rs 500 a month towards the expenses of the Asram and that you have not immediately accepted it. In fact the language of the letter would almost mean that it was rejected almost with impolite disdain; but I suppose this could be a wrong impression. It is precisely help of this kind that we are feeling the most need of just now. For so long as this monthly deficit is not filled, we are obliged to spend on our monthly upkeep sums that ought to go for capital outlay and under such circumstances the very foundation of the Asram from the pecuniary point of view remains insecure. If the monthly expenses are secured, the Asram will be put on a safe foundation and the work for bringing the lakh and other large sums can go forward on a much sounder basis. Besides the forces will not be diverted from their proper work by the harassment of daily needs. Therefore, recently, it is just contributions of this kind that we have been pressing for as the first necessity. Vithaldas seems to have received an inspiration from this pressure and made a magnificent answer. And you do not immediately seize on this response! This is an example of what I meant when I warned you to keep yourself open to the Mother's force and not to follow merely your own ideas and plans. Now the only thing to do is to speak to Vithaldas at once and see whether he keeps to his offer. If so, you should accept it at once. The sooner we get the money the better. Our deficit is really more than Rs 800, for the number of disciples is constantly increasing and the expenses also. If Vithaldas can be relied upon to give *regularly* Rs 500 a month, the gap will be almost filled and once that is done, the obstruction we have felt hitherto in this matter is likely to disappear and the rest to come in with greater ease. If you have not already accepted his offer and made arrangements for the regular transmission of the money, then act at once.

The Mother does not want to buy saris for herself with the money raised; in the present state of the finances the idea is altogether out of the question. The income and expenses must be balanced; money must be found for the work of building up the Asram. All the rest comes after.

Sri Aurobindo

Pondicherry
June 2. 1928

[6]

Punamchand

As regards the amount of Rs 500/– monthly from Vithaldas and your note in the account, I presume it is clearly understood that this sum has nothing to do with the account. It must be kept quite separate and remitted here every month as soon as it is received; it must on no account and in no circumstances be detained or used for any other purpose whatsoever.

As to the expenses shown in the account, you asked originally for Rs 70/– a month in Bombay or Rs 30/– in Patan; but the actual expenditure has been for months above Rs 200/–. This is an enormous amount and, as I have already pointed out, it is swallowing up all you collect. I do not see how you expect to be able to maintain this rate of expenditure for an indefinite period or what purpose it serves.

[7]

Champaklal

Write to Punamchand that now that Vithaldas has seen the Mother, he should communicate his experience or his difficulties direct to her. It is not desirable that in matters of the Sadhana Punamchand or anybody else should come in between, even as a channel of communication. The Mother's force must go direct undisturbed by any other influence.

December 1928

[8]

Champaklal

As regards the Vedic "Dictionary" write to Punamchand that I do not want anything of this kind to be made out of my unfinished work. If it is to be done, it will be in the future and must be only under my express directions and supervision.

December 1928

[9]

Write to Punamchand asking what are the Rs 500 that reached us today. Whenever he sends money, he should inform us at the same time what it is and who has given it.

Write to him also with regard to the letter he wrote about the detective's visit and his proposals. He has only to send regular accounts with details of sums, names etc to me, and he is on safe ground. He can simply answer that all moneys given are accounted for and full details sent to me. If on the other hand he is loose in his accounts and dealings with the money, he gives room for this kind of rumour and creates a wrong atmosphere. Nor in the absence of accounts can I myself have any ground to go upon if I am questioned whether I received or not the sums paid to him for me. In this connection note that he has not sent, as promised, the accounts for the last few months. Since his visit and return we have received nothing.

16 April 1929

[10]

Punamchand

If you wish to take your monthly expenses from the money of Vithaldas, you ought first to try to persuade him to assign separately a sum of Rs 150 for the purpose without diminishing his contribution to Pondicherry. If he is not willing, then you may take from him the sum of Rs 150 and send Rs 550 to Pondicherry, but on the following conditions.

(1) You will take this money from Vithaldas' contribution only and you will draw on no other sum.

(2) All other sums of money contributed through you must be sent without fail and without delay to Pondicherry.

(3) There must be no expenditure for yourself beyond the amount fixed and no borrowing of money for which you will make us responsible or draw for its return on money contributed for the Asram.

(4) The Mother will enter into her accounts Rs 550 only as Vithaldas's contribution. The Rs 150 must be considered as his help to you directly.

As regards Narangi, it was evident that he had no enthusiasm for helping you in the way you propose. He must have his own reasons for that and the Mother did not care to press him to do it. He is already doing wholeheartedly as much as can be reasonably asked from him; it is no use exacting from him what he has no heart for. It seems to me that if you can make yourself a true channel for the force, you ought to be able to succeed without his assistance.

In this connection I feel it necessary to say one thing once for all, which I have refrained from writing before because I did not think it would be of much use. The difficulties you have experienced in the work you undertook arose partly from the general opposition of the money-power to the divine call, but also and very largely from your own vital being and its desires and self-regarding attitude. This vital nature of yours was always full of demands and desires and it came to regard their satisfaction as perfectly legitimate and even the right thing to do. As respects money, it had the habit of spending loosely and freely whatever came into your hand; it had the habit too of borrowing and lending freely without regard to your capacity either to give or to repay; and, as always results from this kind of looseness, it treated whatever money came into your hands as it would have treated your own — I may give as a slight but significant example your lending to your personal friends out of the Mother's money which was never intended for such a purpose. These habits might pass in a man freely supplied by

Fortune with resources; but they were bound to have undesirable effects in your position and especially in one entrusted with your task and practising Yoga.

At first you had some, though not a large success; but, with money flowing through your hands, you could not refrain from a free and increasing expenditure on yourself, Champa and Dikshit. Instead of the Rs 70 allowed to you by the Mother, you began to spend more and more, the amount of your total expenses rising in the end to well above Rs 200 in a single month. This need created by you for yourself — of course, with all sorts of plausible reasons to back it — affected your whole attitude. The right attitude would have been to put the Mother's work first and yourself last. Your whole and sole desire should have been to send as much money as possible to the Asram and spend as little as possible on yourself, only your actual needs and the collection expenses. If that had remained your attitude, circumstances moulded by the Divine Force would have arranged themselves accordingly and you would have had enough and to spare for your personal expenses. But in practice the position became quite the opposite. Your first care was to draw money for your expenses there; if anything remained, it could be sent to the Mother. Only express contributions marked for the Asram like Vithaldas' and Kanta's escaped this law — up till now. As a matter of fact except these sums and some two or three thousand rupees at the beginning, you have, acting on these lines, been unable to send money or to do anything except to meet with the sums given to you your Bombay expenses. For the consequences of this attitude were inevitable. Circumstances shaped themselves accordingly; money came in for your personal expenditure, but for the Asram it dwindled and grew less and less; only Vithaldas' money saved it from becoming a zero. Next, the money for your expenses became more and more difficult to get and for that too you are compelled now to fall back on the contribution of Vithaldas. That was the first result; the second was that people in Bombay lost all confidence in you and in the collection for the Asram and began even to suspect your *bona fides*. And the last result was that your attitude came between the people you approached and us, keeping them tied to you but cut off from our influence. It was only as a result of our putting a strong force out that some change has become possible and even now the resistance is very great in the Bombay atmosphere.

I am perfectly aware that you can advance many explanations justifying your action as against what I have written. All that makes no difference. It is always the habit of the vital being to find out things by which it persuades the mind and justifies its desires; and circumstances usually shape themselves to justify it still farther. For what we have within us creates the circumstances outside us. What matters is that you should take inwardly a different position in the future. If nothing happens to prevent this arrangement of Vithaldas's money, you must see to it that henceforward you confine yourself to the arrangement, keeping to it strictly, put all preoccupation with yourself behind and think only of the work you went for which is to get support for the Asram — that and nothing else. You have no other work in Gujerat — as you have sometimes vainly imagined. You may be right in thinking that the only thing you can do now is to get people with means interested in the Asram, but in that case you must see that they are put into direct touch without which the interest cannot be real and effective. Their money must come here and not stop in Bombay and when they are ready, they themselves must come and receive what they can of the influence.

The vision of which you give a description is the indication of a vital attack or of a vital danger throwing itself upon you. The form you saw was evidently a strong Power of the hostile vital world — a red hot copper-like bust can mean nothing else. If you thought it was your being, it must have been because something in your vital nature responded to the force which this form embodied. The serpent was the indication of the evil force contained in him. The nature of the bust would seem to indicate that the force was that of vital greed (*lobha* of all kinds) and desire. The fact that the blow given was on the mouth would confirm this interpretation — but that would also be consistent with the force being that of falsehood, (*moha, mithyâ*). The grace and protection have always been with you in spite of everything, but for it to work fully you must get rid of all in you that responds to the power that threatens you. The blow and the smashing of the face or hood and drawing out and upward of the serpent are an indication that now you have a chance of getting free from this force and throwing away from your vital nature greed, egoism and desire. It is for you to fulfil the favourable end of the vision by taking the chance.

Sri Aurobindo

Pondicherry
14 September 1930

[11]

Re Punamchand.

(1) To give up his Bombay work and stay here.
(2) To return to Bombay. If so, for what work and in what conditions?

—

For (1) —

I doubt whether he will be able, after the very different conditions to which he has been accustomed in Bombay, to settle down to the discipline of the Asram which itself is very different from what it was when he was last here. And where to put them, if they stay?

—

For (2)

On the other hand, if he goes back, how is he to live? It is out of the question for us to send him money and he must not even think of it. In future also we cannot make ourselves responsible for any loans he may contract; that too must be understood clearly.

If he collects money and spends all or most of what he gets on his own expenses, that is about the worst thing that can be done. It discredits him in people's eyes and discredits the collection and the Asram. As soon as it is known people cease to give money. Moreover, what is the meaning of a collection in which all the money realised goes to collection expenses and nothing goes to the fund for which the collection is made.

There is therefore only one possible solution, for him to fix a maximum amount for his expenses and find someone (now that Vithaldas is no more) who will give him that sum monthly. All other amounts must be strictly sent here. And on no account must his expenses exceed the sum fixed. This seems to me the only solution if he goes back to Bombay.

For the work —

It seems no longer possible for him to collect money in the way he and Dixit first did — approaching anybody and everybody for contributions. The one thing he might possibly do is what he has done with Narainji and Ramnarayan, — to make the acquaintance of people, get them interested in the Asram and its work, and prepare them for coming over here for us to see what can be done with them; if he can get them meanwhile to contribute, so much the better. But they must be men who can give assistance, either in a large sum or as a substantial assistance to the monthly expenses.

—

[12]

Pondicherry, September 1931

He (Punamchand) can let Narainji have Veda translations, but I do not want them widely circulated because they are a first draft, not final. Messages and letters he may have. But the evening talks must not get about. I have not seen these reports and therefore they are not authorised, and there must be any number of things in them which either ought not to be published or for which in the form they have there, I cannot accept responsibility.

[13]

Punamchand

No use doing the Vocabulary of the Atri Hymns till the new translation is ready. The old translation is too free for this purpose.

Atri hymns not yet ready.

Not much use to collect words from the Secret of the Veda.

The Vocabulary of the Bharadwaja hymns is very well done; perhaps it is best to do all like that and they could be put together afterwards.

No. The Vocabularies of the Revised Hymns have to be kept separate from the others. I shall look through the others when I have time and see what is to be done.

The comma is a mistake; it has to be omitted.

To and about Public Figures
1930–1937

Draft of a Letter to Maharani Chimnabai II

To H.H the Maharani of Baroda

It is true that I have by the practice of Yoga attained to the higher spiritual consciousness which comes by Yoga, and this carries with it a certain power. Especially there is the power to communicate to those who are ready or to help them towards that spiritual state which, in its perfection is a condition of unalterable inner calm, strength and felicity. But this spiritual peace and joy is something quite different from mental peace and happiness. And it cannot be reached without a spiritual discipline.

I do not know whether this has been rightly explained to Your Highness. I may say briefly that there are two states of consciousness in either of which one can live. One is a higher consciousness which stands above the play of life and governs it; this is variously called the Self, the Spirit or the Divine. The other is the normal consciousness in which men live; it is something quite superficial, an instrument of the Spirit for the play of life. Those who live and act in the normal consciousness are governed entirely by the common movements of the mind and are naturally subject to grief and joy and anxiety and desire or to everything else that makes up the ordinary stuff of life. Mental quiet and happiness they can get, but it can never be permanent or secure. But the spiritual consciousness is all light, peace, power and bliss. If one can live entirely in it, there is no question; these things become naturally and securely his. But even if he can live partly in it or keep himself constantly open to it, he receives enough of this spiritual light and peace and strength and happiness to carry him securely through all the shocks of life. What one gains by opening to this spiritual consciousness, depends on what one seeks from it; if it is peace, one gets peace; if it is light or knowledge, one lives in a great light and receives a knowledge deeper and truer than any the normal mind of man can acquire; if it [is] strength or power, one gets a spiritual strength for the inner life or Yogic power to govern the outer work and action; if it is happiness, one enters into a beatitude far greater than any joy or happiness that the ordinary human life can give.

There are many ways of opening to this Divine consciousness or entering into it. My way which I show to others is by a constant practice to go inward into oneself, to open by aspiration to the Divine and once one is conscious of it and its action to give oneself to It entirely. This self-giving means not to ask for anything but the constant contact or union with the Divine Consciousness, to aspire for its peace, power, light and felicity, but to ask nothing else and in life and action to be its instrument only for whatever work it gives one to do in the world. If one can once open and feel the Divine Force, the Power of the Spirit working in the mind and heart and body, the rest is a matter of remaining faithful to It, calling for it always, allowing it to do its work when it comes and rejecting every other and inferior Force that belongs to the lower consciousness and the lower nature.

I have written so much in order to explain my position and the nature of my Yogic power. I do not usually ask anyone to practise this Yoga, because it is possible only for those who have from the beginning or who develop a strong call to it; others cannot go through it [ ][1] to the end. Nor [do I][2] often go out of my way to help those who are merely in need of some kind of quietude of [the] external nature as many Yogins do — though I do not refuse to do it in certain cases. My aim is to create a centre of spiritual life which shall serve as a means of bringing down the higher consciousness and making it a power not merely for "salvation" but for a divine life upon earth. It is with this object that I have withdrawn from public life and founded this Asram in Pondicherry (so-called for want of a better word, for it is not an Asram of Sannyasins, but of those who want to leave all else and prepare for this work). But at the same time I have a small number of disciples all over India who live in their families and receive spiritual help from me even at a distance.

---

[1] *MS* with

[2] *MS* I do

This is all I can answer to Your Highness at present. It is for Your Highness to decide[3] whether what you seek has anything to do with what I have explained in this letter. 1930

On a Proposed Visit by Mahatma Gandhi

[1]

> GOVINDBHAI PATEL: Here is a postcard from Gandhi. If you think he can receive something from you, please grant him permission to meet you.

You will have to write that I am unable to see him because for a long time past I have made it an absolute rule not to have any interview with anyone — that I do not even speak with my disciples and only give a silent blessing to them three times a year. All requests for an interview from others I have been obliged to refuse. This rule has been imposed on me by the necessity of my sadhana and is not at all a matter of convenience or anything else. The time has not come when I can depart from it.

28 December 1933

[2]

> M. K. GANDHI: . . . Perhaps you know that ever since my return to India I have been anxious to meet you face to face. Not being able to do that, I sent my son to you. Now that it is almost certain that I am to be in Pondicherry, will you spare me a few minutes & see me! I know how reluctant you are to see anybody. But if you are under no positive vow of abstinence, I hope you will give me a few minutes of your time. . . . 2 January 1934

---

[3] *Alternative:* see for yourself

7.1.34

Dear Mahatmaji

It is true that I have made no vow, for I never make one, but my retirement is not less binding on me so long as it — and the reason for it — lasts. I think you will understand that it is not a personal or mental choice but something impersonal from a deeper source for the inner necessity of work and sadhana. It prevents me from receiving you but I cannot do otherwise than keep to the rule I have adhered to for some years past.

Sri Aurobindo

[3]

> GOVINDBHAI PATEL: I hear that you have already sent him the answer. Has he really written anything? [*Rest of letter missing.*]

In the absence of the letter I cannot say. In his letter he simply expressed the desire he had long had to meet me and asked me to see him if my retirement was not a vow. I have written that I cannot depart from the rule so long as the reason for it lasts.

9 January 1934

[4]

> GOVINDBHAI PATEL: Gandhi writes that he has not yet received Sri Aurobindo's answer.
>
> I hear that he asked at least a line in Sri Aurobindo's hand; and that Sri Aurobindo has written a full letter in his own hand — which he does not usually do. Is this a fact?

Yes. I wrote to him a short letter explaining the nature of my retirement and regretting that I could not break my rule so long as the reason for it existed. It was addressed to Bangalore I believe and ought to have reached him, unless it has been pocketed by the C.I.D. I suppose even if he had left Bangalore it would have been forwarded to him. You can write and inform him of the fact.

12 January 1934

[5]

> GOVINDBHAI PATEL: I am sure he will prolong his stay to see the Mother. And the Mother is Mother after all, let him have Her touch. I am sure he is not going to bother Mother by political topics. If he talks at all, he will talk about his search after Truth.

With his programme it is impossible. Also I do not see any utility. You must on no account ask him to delay his departure, that is quite contrary to what we wish. His search for Truth is on fixed lines of his own and the Mother can say nothing to help him there — nor has he said that he wants any help — and the Asram would hardly please him since it is run on quite unascetic lines contrary to his ideal. 24 January 1934

[6]

> GOVINDBHAI PATEL: As he has written to me to inform you, shall I answer that the Mother cannot see him or shall I remain silent? If he enquires about seeing Mother, shall I say that she will not be able to see him?

You can tell him that just now the circumstances are such that it is impossible for the Mother to receive his visit.[4]

16 February 1934

To Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

2.10.34

My dear Professor Radhakrishnan,

I regret that you should have had to wait for the publication of your book on account of the contribution I could not write. I had intimated to Dilip that it would be practically impossible for me and I could not make a promise I would most likely be unable to fulfil. I think he hoped I would still find time somehow to write.

---

[4] *The "circumstances" to which Sri Aurobindo refers were those created by an inquiry instituted by the government of French India into the status and finances of the Ashram. Sri Aurobindo learned about this inquiry on or shortly before 16 February 1934. See* Letters on Himself and the Ashram, *volume 35 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. — *Ed.*

I am entirely taken up by my present work which is exceedingly heavy and pressing and from which I cannot take my hands for a moment or spare the necessary energy or time for anything else. I have been obliged to put aside all mental or literary work and even to suspend sine die the revision for publication of the unpublished works in the "Arya" which I had undertaken. There is no chance of any alteration in this state of affairs in any near future. It is not a matter of choice but of necessity for me. I hope therefore you will excuse me for not being able to comply with your request. I regret very much that I have to disappoint you, but it is not possible for me to avoid it.

Sri Aurobindo

To and about Morarji Desai

[1]

> A. B. PURANI: This is a telegram from Dr. Chandulal Manilal Desai. . . . The other gentleman about whom he writes is Mr. Morarji Desai, originally a district deputy collector who resigned his post in the Non-cooperation movement and has been in public life since. I heard that he had spiritual inclinations.
>
> In case they are permitted [for darshan], they would naturally remain outside. The wire can be sent even tomorrow, on the 16th — and they would have time to reach in time.

It is better if they have no time. Why should prominent politicians come trooping down here like this? I don't understand. Better wire that it is too late. 15 February 1935

[2]

> MORARJI DESAI: Since 1930 I have been making an effort to put the Yoga preached by the Gita in practice as I understand it. . . . I cannot however say that I am on the right path and every day I realise how immensely difficult it is to give

> up attachment in every form & still live the ordinary life.
>
> I have come here as a humble seeker for guidance in this quest of mine & request you to give me a guidance as to whether I should continue on the path I am treading at present or whether I am on a wrong track & should follow another path. If you consider that I should continue in the path followed by me at present I request you to guide me as to what I should do to give up all attachment and if you advise me to change the path, the new path may kindly be indicated and explained to me.

[17 August 1935]

Shri Morarji Desai,

I do not know that it is possible for me to give you any guidance on the path you have chosen — it is at any rate difficult for me to say anything definite without more precise data than those contained in your letter.

There is no need for you to change the line of life and work you have chosen so long as you feel that to be the way of your nature (*svabhava*) or dictated to you by your inner being, or, for some reason, it is seen to be your proper *dharma*. These are the three tests and apart from that I do not think there is any fixed line of conduct or way of work or life that can be laid down for the Yoga of the Gita. It is the spirit or consciousness in which the work is done that matters most; the outer form can vary greatly for different natures. Thus, so long as one does not get the settled experience of the Divine Power taking up one's work and doing it, one acts according to one's nature; afterwards it is that Power which determines what is to be done or not done.

The overcoming of all attachments must necessarily be difficult and cannot come except as the fruit of a long *sadhana*, unless there is a rapid general growth in the inner spiritual experience which is the substance of the Gita's teaching. The cessation of desire of the fruit or attachment to the work itself, the growth of equality to all beings, to all happenings, to good repute or ill repute, the dropping of the ego, which are necessary for the loss of all attachments, can come completely only when all work becomes a spontaneous sacrifice to the Divine, the heart is offered up to Him and one has the settled experience of the Divine in all things and all beings. This consciousness or experience must come in all parts and movements of the being (*sarvabhavena*), not only in the mind and idea; then the falling away of all attachments becomes easy. I speak of the Gita's way of Yoga; for in the ascetic life one obtains the same objects differently by cutting away from all the objects of attachment and the consequent atrophy of the attachment itself through rejection and disuse.

Sri Aurobindo

On a Proposed Visit by Jawaharlal Nehru

> DILIP KUMAR ROY: Nehru may be here about the 17th of this month. What do you think of my asking him to spend the day (or two) at my flat? Then surely he would want to ask the Mother for an interview. Your force will do the chief thing, of course.

I am afraid what you propose is impossible. Jawaharlal is coming on a political mission and as president of the Congress, while we have to steer clear not only of politics but of the shadow of politics. If he put up in a house of the Asram, we would be in for it! A flaming report from the British Consul to Delhi to be forwarded to London and from London to Paris. Just now we have to be specially careful, as the friendly Governor is going away — perhaps to return in March, perhaps not. If the Colonial Minister there questions him about us, he must be able to give a spotless report in our favour. The future also may possibly be turbulent and the wash of the turmoil may reach Pondicherry — we have to be on our guard from now onwards. So *don't* make Jawaharlal pray for an interview — it is not possible. Let us be patient and let things develop. If Jawaharlal is to be at all led forcewards, it is more likely to happen when he is less occupied with outer stress and turmoil.

> Of course I will seem to do it on my own, so that it will look like I have invited him out of courtesy more or less as a friend to a friend.

That won't go down with the Br. Consul and other watchers. He will neigh "Ah ha! Ah ha! Ahh! that's their little game, is it?" Besides Nehru won't come alone — he will have his retinue or his staff with him, I suppose. At least all Congress Presidents used to go about in that way in my time. Pondicherry besides is an unimportant place — they are not likely to let him tarry and dally here. 5 October 1936

To Birendra Kishore Roy Chowdhury

21.2.37

Birendra Kishore

I have made it a rule not to write anything about politics. Also the question of what to do in a body like the Assembly depends on circumstances, on the practical needs of the situation which can change rapidly. In such a body the work is not of a spiritual character. All kinds of work can be done with the spiritual consciousness behind, but unless one has advanced very far, one must in the front be guided by the necessities of the work itself and its characteristic nature. Since you have joined this party, its programme must be yours and what you have to do is to bring to it all the consciousness, ability and selflessness which you can command. You are right in not taking office, as you have made the promise. In any case a sadhak entering politics should work not for himself but for the country. If he takes office, it should be only when he can do something for the country by it and not until he has proved his character and ability and fitness for position. You should walk by a high standard which will bring you the respect even of opponents and justify the choice of the electors.

Sri Aurobindo

Part Three

Public Statements and Other Communications on Indian and World Events 1940–1950

Section One

Public Statements, Messages, Letters and Telegrams on Indian and World Events 1940–1950

On the Second World War
1940–1943

Contributions to Allied War Funds

We are placing herewith at the disposal of H.E. the Governor of Madras a sum of Rs. 500 as our joint contribution to the Madras War Fund. This donation, which is in continuation of previous sums given by us for the cause of the Allies (10,000 francs to the French Caisse de Défense Nationale before the unhappy collapse of France and Rs. 1000 to the Viceroy's War Fund immediately after the Armistice) is sent as an expression of our entire support for the British people and the Empire in their struggle against the aggressions of the Nazi Reich and our complete sympathy with the cause for which they are fighting.

We feel that not only is this a battle waged in just self-defence and in defence of the nations threatened with the world-domination of Germany and the Nazi system of life, but that it is a defence of civilisation and its highest attained social, cultural and spiritual values and of the whole future of humanity. To this cause our support and sympathy will be unswerving whatever may happen; we look forward to the victory of Britain and, as the eventual result, an era of peace and union among the nations and a better and more secure world-order. 19 September 1940

Notes about the War Fund Contributions

[1]

As to your suggestion about a note on the subject of the contribution to the War Fund Sri Aurobindo does not feel very much inclined to enter into any public explanation of his action or any controversy on the subject. In his letter he made it very clear that it was on the War issue that he gave his full support and he indicated the reason for it. Hitler and Nazism and its push towards world domination are in his view an assault by a formidable reactionary Force, a purely Asuric force, on the highest values of civilisation and their success would mean the destruction of individual liberty, national freedom, liberty of thought, liberty of life, religious and spiritual freedom in at least three continents. In Europe already these things have gone down for the time being except, precariously, in a few small countries; if Britain were defeated, that result would be made permanent and in Asia also all the recent development such as the rise of new or renovated Asiatic peoples would be miserably undone, and India's hope of liberty would become a dead dream of the past or a struggling dream of a far-off future. The abject position to which the Nazi theory relegates the coloured races is well known and that would be the fate of India if it conquered and dominated the world. Mankind itself as a whole would be flung back into a relapse towards barbarism, a social condition and an ethics which would admit only the brute force of the master and the docile submission of the slave. It is only by Britain's victory in the struggle to which she has challenged this destructive Force that the danger can be nullified, since she alone has shown at once the courage and power to resist and survive. This is Sri Aurobindo's view and, holding it, he could do nothing else than what he has done. There is no just reason here for any misunderstanding. This is what you can explain to anybody who questions, if it is necessary.

[2]

This letter should not be sent.[1] This is a time to remain quiet. I did not intend by my contribution and letter to the Madras Governor to start any political action or political controversy. Let them stand for themselves. If anything farther is necessary at any time about it, I shall myself see to it.

22 October 1940

---

[1] *The letter referred to was written by Anilbaran Roy, a disciple of Sri Aurobindo's, in answer to questions raised by an acquaintance. — Ed.*

On the War: An Unreleased Statement

Sri Aurobindo's decision to give his moral support to the struggle against Hitler, which was made at the very beginning of the war, was based like all his actions on his inner view of things and on intimations from within.[2] It was founded on his consciousness of the forces at work, of their significance in the Divine's leading of the world, of the necessary outer conditions for the spiritual development in which he sees the real hope of humanity. It would not serve any purpose to speak here of this view of things: but some outer considerations of a most material kind easily understandable by everyone can be put forward which might help to explain his action to the general mind, although they do not give the whole meaning of it; it is only these that are developed here.

The struggle that is going on is not fundamentally a conflict between two imperialisms — German and English, — one attacking, the other defending itself. That is only an outward aspect, and not the whole even of the outward aspect. For the Germans and Italians believe that they are establishing a new civilisation and a new world-order. The English believe that they are defending not only their empire but their very existence as a free nation and the freedom also of other nations conquered by Germany or threatened by the push to empire of the Axis powers; they have made it a condition for making peace that the nations conquered shall be liberated and the others guaranteed against farther aggression. They believe also that they are standing up for the principles of civilisation which a Nazi victory would destroy. These beliefs have to be taken into consideration in assessing the significance of the struggle.

It is in fact a clash between two world-forces which are contending for the control of the whole future of humanity. One force seeks to destroy the past civilisation and substitute a new one; but this new civilisation is in substance a reversion to the old principles of dominant Force and a rigid external order and denies the established values, social, political, ethical, spiritual, altogether. Among these values are those which were hitherto held to be the most precious, the liberty of the individual, the right to national liberty, freedom of thought; even religious liberty is to be crushed and replaced by the subjection of religion to State control. The new ethics contemn and reject all the principles that can be summed up in the word "humanitarianism"; all that is to it a falsehood and a weakness. The only ethical values admitted are those of dominant Force on the one side and, on the other, of blind obedience and submission, self-effacement and labour in the service of the State. Wherever this new idea conquers or can make its power felt, it is this order of things that it seeks to establish; it is not satisfied with setting itself up in one country or another, it is pushing for world conquest, for the enforcement of the new order everywhere, securing it, — this at least Germany, its principal agent, conceives to be the right method and carries it out with a scientific thoroughness by a ruthless repression of all opposition and a single iron rule.

---

[2] *The textual basis of this statement was an essay written by Anilbaran Roy and submitted to Sri Aurobindo for approval. Sri Aurobindo thoroughly revised and enlarged the first four paragraphs and added seven new ones, transforming Anilbaran's essay into an entirely new piece that may be considered his own writing. In revising, he retained Anilbaran's third-person "Sri Aurobindo". — Ed.*

The other Force is that of the evolutionary tendencies which have been directing the course of humanity for some time past and, till recently, seemed destined to shape its future. Its workings had their good and bad sides, but among the greater values it had developed stood the very things against which the new Force is most aggressive, the liberty of the individual, national liberty, freedom of thought, political and social freedom with an increasing bent towards equality, complete religious liberty, the humanitarian principle with all its consequences and, latterly, a seeking after a more complete social order, which will organise the life of the community, but will respect the liberty of the individual while perfecting his means of life and helping in every way possible his development. This evolutionary world-force has not been perfect in its action, its working is still partial and incomplete: it contains many strong survivals from the past which have to disappear; it has, on the other hand, lost or diminished some spiritual elements of a past human culture which ought to recover or survive. There are still many denials of national freedom and of the other principles which are yet admitted as the ideal to be put in practice. In the working of that force as represented by Britain and other democracies there may not be anywhere full individual freedom or full national liberty. But the movement has been more and more towards a greater development of these things and, if this evolutionary force still remains dominant, their complete development is inevitable.

Neither of these forces are altogether what we need for the future. There are ideas and elements in the first which may have their separate value in a total human movement; but on the whole, in system and in practice, its gospel is a worship of Force and its effect is the rule of a brutal and pitiless violence, the repression of the individual, not only a fierce repression but a savage extinction of all that opposes or differs from it, the suppression of all freedom of thought, an interference with religious belief and freedom of spiritual life and, in an extreme tendency, the deliberate will to "liquidate" all forms of religion and spirituality. On the side of the other more progressive force there are, often, a limited view, grievous defects of practice, an undue clinging to the past, a frequent violation of the ideal; but at the same time the necessary elements and many of the necessary conditions of progress are there, a tendency towards an enlargement of the human mind and spirit, towards an increasing idealism in the relation of men with men and of nation with nation and a tolerant and humane mentality. Both are, at present, or have been largely materialistic in their thought, but the difference is between a materialism that suppresses the spirit and a materialism that tolerates it and leaves room for its growth if it can affirm its strength to survive and conquer.

At present the balance in the development of human thought and action has been turning for some time against the larger evolutionary force and in favour of a revolutionary reaction against it. This reaction is now represented by totalitarian governments and societies, the other tendency by the democracies;

but democracy is on the wane everywhere in Europe, the totalitarian idea was gaining ground on all sides even before the war. Now with Hitler as its chief representative, this Force has thrown itself out for world-domination. Everywhere the results are the same, the disappearance of individual and national liberty, a rigid “New Order”, the total suppression of free thought and speech, a systematic cruelty and intolerance, the persecution of all opposition, and, wherever the Nazi idea spreads, a violent racialism denying the human idea; outside Europe what is promised is the degradation of the coloured peoples to helotry as an inferior, even a subhuman race. Hitler, carrying with him everywhere the new idea and the new order, is now master of almost all Europe minus Great Britain and Russia. [Faced with the stubborn opposition of Britain he is turning southwards and if the plan attributed to him of taking Gibraltar and the Suez Canal and forcing the British fleet out of the Mediterranean and its coasts were to succeed, he would be able with his Italian][3] ally to dominate Africa also and to turn towards Asia, through Syria and Palestine. There [ ][4] would be then nothing that could stand in his way except Russia; but Russia has helped his projects by her attitude and seems in no mood to oppose him. The independence of the peoples of the Middle East and Central Asia would disappear as the independence of so many European nations has disappeared and a deadly and imminent peril would stand at the gates of India.

These are patent facts of the situation, its dangerous possibilities and menacing consequences. What is there that can prevent them from coming into realisation? The only material force that now stands between is the obstinate and heroic resistance of Great Britain and her fixed determination to fight the battle to the end. It is the British Navy alone that keeps the war from our gates and confines it to European lands and seas and a strip of North Africa. If there were defeat and the strength of Britain and her colonies were to go down before the totalitarian nations, all Europe, Africa and Asia would be doomed to domination by three or four Powers all anti-democratic and all pushing for expansion, powers with regimes and theories of life which take no account of liberty of any kind; the surviving democracies would perish, nor would any free government with free institutions be any longer possible anywhere. It is not likely that India poor and ill-armed would be able to resist forces which had brought down the great nations of Europe; her chance of gaining the liberty which is now so close to her would disappear for a long time to come. On the contrary, if the victory goes to Britain, the situation will be reversed, the progressive evolutionary forces will triumph and the field will lie open for the fulfilment of the tendencies which were making India's full control of her own life a certainty of the near future.

---

[3] *Sri Aurobindo cancelled the bracketed passage during revision but did not write anything to replace it. — Ed.*

[4] *MS* there

It is hardly possible that after the war the old order of things can survive unchanged; if that happened, there would again be a repetition of unrest, chaos, economic disorder and armed strife till the necessary change is made. The reason is that the life of mankind has become in fact a large though loosely complex unit and a world-order recognising this fact is inevitable. It is ceasing to be possible for national egoisms to entrench themselves in their isolated independence and be sufficient for themselves, for all are now dependent on the whole. The professed separate self-sufficiency of Germany ended in a push for life-room which threatens all other peoples; nations which tried to isolate themselves in a self-regarding neutrality have paid the penalty of their blindness and the others who still maintain that attitude are likely sooner or later to share the same fate; either they must become the slaves or subservient vassals of three or four greater Powers, or a world-order must be found in which all can be safe in their freedom and yet united for the common good. It will be well for India, if in spite of the absorption of her pressing need, she recognises that national egoism is no longer sufficient. She must claim freedom and equality for herself in whatever new order is to come or any post-war arrangement, but recognise also that the international idea and its realisation are something that is becoming equally insistent, necessary and inevitable. If the totalitarian Powers win, there will indeed be a new world-order, — it may be in the end, a unification; but it will be a new order of naked brute Force, repression and exploitation, and for the people of Asia and Africa a subjection worse than anything they had experienced before. This has been recognised even by the Arabs who were fighting England in Palestine before the war; they have turned to her side. Not only Europe, Asia and Africa, but distant America with all her power and resources is no longer safe, and she has shown that she knows it; she has felt the peril and is arming herself in haste to meet it. In the other contingency, there will be not only the necessity for a freer new order, but every possibility of its formation; for the idea is growing; it is already recognised as an actual programme by advanced progressive forces in England and elsewhere. It may not be likely that it will materialise at once or that it will be perfect when it comes, but it is bound to take some kind of initial shape as an eventual result in the not distant future.

These are some of the more obvious external considerations which have taken form in Sri Aurobindo's contribution to the War Fund accompanied by his letter. It is a simple recognition of the fact that the victory of Great Britain in this war is not only to the interest of the whole of humanity including India, but necessary for the safeguarding of its future. If that is so, the obligation of at least a complete moral support follows as a necessary consequence.

It is objected that Britain has refused freedom to India and that therefore no Indian should support her in the War. The answer arises inevitably from the considerations stated above. The dominant need for India and the World is to survive the tremendous attack of Asuric Force which is now sweeping over the earth. The freedom of India, in whatever form, will be a consequence of that victory. The working towards freedom was clear already in the world and in the British Empire itself before the War; Eire, Egypt had gained their independence, Iraq had been granted hers; many free nationalities had arisen in Europe and Asia; India herself was drawing nearer to her goal and the attainment of it was coming to be recognised as inevitable. If the totalitarian new order extends over Asia, all that will disappear; the whole work done will be undone. If there is the opposite result, nothing can prevent India attaining to the object of her aspirations; even if restrictions are put upon the national self-government that is bound to come, they cannot last for long. In any case, there is no moral incompatibility between India's claim to freedom and support to Britain in the struggle against Hitler, since it would be a support given for the preservation of her own chance of complete liberty and the preservation also of three continents or even of the whole earth from a heavy yoke of servitude.

There remains the objection that all War is evil and no war can be supported; soul-force or some kind of spiritual or ethical force is the only force that should be used; the only resistance permissible is passive resistance, non-cooperation or Satyagraha. But this kind of resistance though it has been used in the past with some effect by individuals or on a limited scale, cannot stop the invasion of a foreign army, least of all, a Nazi army, or expel it, once it is inside and in possession; it can at most be used as a means of opposition to an already established oppressive rule. The question then arises whether a nation can be asked to undergo voluntarily the menace of a foreign invasion or the scourge of a foreign occupation without using whatever material means of resistance are available. It is also a question whether any nation in the world is capable of this kind of resistance long-enduring and wholesale or is sufficiently developed ethically and spiritually to satisfy the conditions which would make it successful, especially against an organised and ruthless military oppression such as the Nazi rule; at any rate it is permissible not to wish to risk the adventure so long as there is another choice. War is physically an evil, a calamity; morally it has been like most human institutions a mixture, in most but not all cases a mixture of some good and much evil: but it is sometimes necessary to face it rather than invite or undergo a worse evil, a greater calamity. One can hold that, so long as life and mankind are what they are, there can be such a thing as a righteous war, — *dharmya* *yuddha*. No doubt, in a spiritualised life of humanity or in a perfect civilisation there would be no room for war or violence, — it is clear that this is the highest ideal state. But mankind is psychologically and materially still far from this ideal state. To bring it to that state needs either an immediate spiritual change of which there is no present evidence or a change of mentality and habits which the victory of the totalitarian idea and its system would render impossible; for it would impose quite the opposite mentality, the mentality and habits on one side of a dominant brute force and violence and on the other a servile and prostrate non-resistance. 1940

India and the War

[1]

Calcutta is now in the danger zone. But the Mother does not wish that anyone should leave his post because of the danger. Those who are very eager to remove their children can do so, but no one should be under the illusion that there is any safe place anywhere. 6 April 1942

[2]

It appears that there are some who think of Pondicherry as a safe place and this is one of their reasons for remaining. This may turn out to be a serious error. Pondicherry can be a safe place only if the Japanese think it not worth their attention because it has no military objectives and no importance as a port or an industrial centre. Even then bombs might fall by accident or mistake, as the town is well in the war-area. But there are local circumstances which might lead them to think it a place of capital importance from the military point of view and in that case it would be exposed to all the dangers and horrors of modern warfare, a place under military occupation and a field of battle. Those who elect to remain here, must dismiss all idea of an assured personal security. Either they should be those who prefer to die here rather than live elsewhere or, at the least, they must be prepared to face any eventuality, any risk, discomfort or suffering. These are not times when there can be a guarantee of safety or ease. It is a time of great ordeals, an hour for calm, patience and the highest courage. Reliance on the Divine Will should be there, but not the lower vital's bargain for a guaranteed or comfortably guarded existence.

On the War: Private Letters That Were Made Public

[1]

You have said that you have begun to doubt whether it was the Mother's war and ask me to make you feel again that it is. I affirm again to you most strongly that this is the Mother's war. You should not think of it as a fight for certain nations against others or even for India; it is a struggle for an ideal that has to establish itself on earth in the life of humanity, for a Truth that has yet to realise itself fully and against a darkness and falsehood that are trying to overwhelm the earth and mankind in the immediate future. It is the forces behind the battle that have to be seen and not this or that superficial circumstance. It is no use concentrating on the defects or mistakes of nations; all have defects and commit serious mistakes; but what matters is on what side they have ranged themselves in the struggle. It is a struggle for the liberty of mankind to develop, for conditions in which men have freedom and room to think and act according to the light in them and grow in the Truth, grow in the Spirit. There cannot be the slightest doubt that if one side wins, there will be an end of all such freedom and hope of light and truth and the work that has to be done will be subjected to conditions which would make it humanly impossible; there will be a reign of falsehood and darkness, a cruel oppression and degradation for most of the human race such as people in this country do not dream of and cannot yet at all realise. If the other side that has declared itself for the free future of humanity triumphs, this terrible danger will have been averted and conditions will have been created in which there will be a chance for the Ideal to grow, for the Divine Work to be done, for the spiritual Truth for which we stand to establish itself on the earth. Those who fight for this cause are fighting for the Divine and against the threatened reign of the Asura.

July 29th, 1942. Sri Aurobindo

[2]

What we say is not that the Allies have not done wrong things, but that they stand on the side of the evolutionary forces.[5] I have not said that at random, but on what to me are clear grounds of fact. What you speak of is the dark side. All nations and governments have been that in their dealings with each other, — at least all who had the strength and got the chance. I hope you are not expecting me to believe that there are or have been virtuous governments and unselfish and sinless peoples? But there is the other side also. You are condemning the Allies on grounds that people in the past would have stared at, on the basis of modern ideals of international conduct; looked at like that all have black records. But who created these ideals or did most to create them (liberty, democracy, equality, international justice and the rest)? Well, America, France, England — the present Allied nations. They have all been imperialistic and still bear the burden of their past, but they have also deliberately spread these ideals and spread too the institutions which try to embody them. Whatever the relative worth of these things — they have been a stage, even if a still imperfect stage of the forward evolution. (What about the others? Hitler, for example, says it is a crime to educate the coloured peoples, they must be kept as serfs and labourers.) England has helped certain nations to be free without seeking any personal gain; she has also conceded independence to Egypt and Eire after a struggle, to Iraq without a struggle. She has been moving away steadily, if slowly, from imperialism towards co-operation; the British Commonwealth of England and the Dominions is something unique and unprecedented, a beginning of new things in that direction: she is moving in idea towards a world-union of some kind in which aggression is to be made impossible; her new generation has no longer the old firm belief in mission and empire; she has offered India Dominion independence — or even sheer isolated independence, if she wants that, — after the war, with an agreed free constitution to be chosen by Indians themselves. . . . All that is what I call evolution in the right direction — however slow and imperfect and hesitating it may still be. As for America she has forsworn her past imperialistic policies in regard to Central and South America, she has conceded independence to Cuba and the Philippines. . . . Is there a similar trend on the side of the Axis? One has to look at things on all sides, to see them steadily and whole. Once again, it is the forces working behind that I have to look at, I don't want to go blind among surface details. The future has to be safeguarded; only then can present troubles and contradictions have a chance to be solved and eliminated. . . .

---

[5] *The paragraphs that follow were extracted from a letter that Sri Aurobindo wrote to a disciple in answer to questions raised by him. The complete letter is reproduced in* Letters on Himself and the Ashram, *volume 35 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. *The extracted passages were revised by Sri Aurobindo and published in 1944 in* The Advent, *an Ashram-related journal, and in a booklet issued by the Ashram. — Ed.*

* * *

For us the question does not arise. We made it plain in a letter which has been made public that we did not consider the war as a fight between nations and governments (still less between good people and bad people) but between two forces, the Divine and the Asuric. What we have to see is on which side men and nations put themselves; if they put themselves on the right side, they at once make themselves instruments of the Divine purpose in spite of all defects, errors, wrong movements and actions which are common to human nature and all human collectivities. The victory of one side (the Allies) would keep the path open for the evolutionary forces: the victory of the other side would drag back humanity, degrade it horribly and might lead even, at the worst, to its eventual failure as a race, as others in the past evolution failed and perished. That is the whole question and all other considerations are either irrelevant or of a minor importance. The Allies at least have stood for human values, though they may often act against their own best ideals (human beings always do that); Hitler stands for diabolical values or for human values exaggerated in the wrong way until they become diabolical (e.g. the virtues of the Herrenvolk, the master race). That does not make the English or Americans nations of spotless angels nor the Germans a wicked and sinful race, but as an indicator it has a primary importance. . . .

* * *

The Kurukshetra example is not to be taken as an exact parallel but rather as a traditional instance of the war between two world-forces in which the side favoured by the Divine triumphed, because the leaders made themselves His instruments.[6] It is not to be envisaged as a battle between virtue and wickedness, the good and the evil men. After all, were even the Pandavas virtuous without defect, quite unselfish and without passions? . . .

Were not the Pandavas fighting to establish their own claims and interests — just and right, no doubt, but still personal claims and self-interest? Theirs was a righteous battle, *dharmya-yuddha*, but it was for right and justice in their own case. And if imperialism, empire-building by armed force, is under all circumstances a wickedness, then the Pandavas are tainted with that brush, for they used their victory to establish their empire, continued after them by Parikshit and Janamejaya. Could not modern humanism and pacifism make it a reproach against the Pandavas that these virtuous men (including Krishna) brought about a huge slaughter that they might become supreme rulers over all the numerous free and independent peoples of India?

---

[6] *Sri Aurobindo's correspondent had objected to a paragraph in an essay written by Nolini Kanta Gupta and published by the Ashram, in which Nolini compared the Allies to the Pandavas and the Axis powers to the Kauravas. — Ed.*

That would be the result of weighing old happenings in the scales of modern ideals. As a matter of fact such an empire was a step in the right direction then, just as a world-union of free peoples would be a step in the right direction now, — in both cases the right consequences of a terrific slaughter. . . .

We should remember that conquest and rule over subject peoples were not regarded as wrong either in ancient or mediaeval or quite recent times, but as something great and glorious; men did not see any special wickedness in conquerors or conquering nations. Just government of subject peoples was envisaged but nothing more — exploitation was not excluded. The modern ideas on the subject, the right of all to liberty, both individuals and nations, the immorality of conquest and empire, or such compromises as the British idea of training subject races for democratic freedom, are new values, an evolutionary movement; this is a new Dharma which has only begun slowly and initially to influence practice, — an infant Dharma which would have been throttled for good if Hitler succeeded in his "Avataric" mission and established his new "religion" over all the earth. Subject nations naturally accept the new Dharma and severely criticise the old imperialisms; it is to be hoped that they will practise what they now preach when they themselves become strong and rich and powerful. But the best will be if a new world-order evolves, even if at first stumblingly or incompletely, which will make the old things impossible — a difficult task, but not absolutely impossible.

The Divine takes men as they are and uses men as His instruments even if they are not flawless in virtue, angelic, holy and pure. If they are of good will, if, to use the Biblical phrase, they are on the Lord's side, that is enough for the work to be done. Even if I knew that the Allies would misuse their victory or bungle the peace or partially at least spoil the opportunities opened to the human world by that victory, I would still put my force behind them. At any rate things could not be one-hundredth part as bad as they would be under Hitler. The ways of the Lord would still be open — to keep them open is what matters. Let us stick to the real, the central fact, the need to remove the peril of black servitude and revived barbarism threatening India and the world, and leave for a later time all side-issues and minor issues or hypothetical problems that would cloud the one all-important tragic issue before us.

Sri Aurobindo

3. 9. 1943

On Indian Independence
1942 – 1947

On the Cripps Proposal

[1]

Sir Stafford Cripps
New Delhi

I have heard your broadcast. As one who has been a nationalist leader and worker for India's independence though now my activity is no longer in the political but in the spiritual field, I wish to express my appreciation of all you have done to bring about this offer. I welcome it as an opportunity given to India to determine for herself and organise in all liberty of choice her freedom and unity and take an effective place among the world's free nations. I hope that it will be accepted and the right use made of it putting aside all discords and divisions. I hope too that a friendly relation between Britain and India replacing past struggles will be a step towards a greater world union in which as a free nation her spiritual force will contribute to build for mankind a better and happier life. In this light I offer my public adhesion in case it can be of any help in your work.[1]

Sri Aurobindo
The Asram
Pondicherry
31 March 1942

---

[1] *Sir Stafford Cripps's telegram in reply, dated 1 April 1942:*
I AM MOST TOUCHED AND GRATIFIED BY YOUR KIND MESSAGE ALLOWING ME TO INFORM INDIA THAT YOU WHO OCCUPY UNIQUE POSITION IN IMAGINATION OF INDIAN YOUTH ARE CONVINCED THAT DECLARATION OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT SUBSTANTIALLY CONFERS THAT FREEDOM FOR WHICH INDIAN NATIONALISM HAS SO LONG STRUGGLED.
STAFFORD CRIPPS

[2]

In view of the urgency of the situation I am sending Mr. Duraiswami Iyer to convey my views on the present negotiations and my reasons for pressing on Indian leaders the need of a settlement. He is accredited to speak for me.[2]

Sri Aurobindo

April 1. 1942

[3]

[*Telegram to Dr. B. S. Moonje*]

DR MOONJE HINDU MAHASABHA NEW DELHI

SETTLEMENT INDIA BRITAIN URGENT, FACE APPROACH GRAVE PERIL MENACING FUTURE INDIA. IS THERE NO WAY WHILE RESERVING RIGHT REPUDIATE RESIST PARTITION MOTHERLAND TO ACCEPT COOPERATION PURPOSE WAR INDIA UNION. CANNOT COMBINATION MAHASABHA CONGRESS NATIONALIST AND ANTI-JINNAH MUSLIMS DEFEAT LEAGUE IN ELECTIONS BENGAL PUNJAB SIND. HAVE SENT ADVOCATE DURAISWAMI IYER TO MEET YOU.

SRI AUROBINDO
2 April 1942

[4]

[*Telegram to C. Rajagopalachari*]

RAJAGOPALACHARI BIRLA HOUSE NEW DELHI

IS NOT COMPROMISE DEFENCE QUESTION BETTER THAN RUPTURE. SOME IMMEDIATE SETTLEMENT URGENT FACE GRAVE PERIL. HAVE SENT DURAISWAMI INSIST URGENCY. APPEAL TO YOU TO SAVE INDIA FORMIDABLE DANGER NEW FOREIGN DOMINATION WHEN OLD ON WAY TO SELF-ELIMINATION.

SRI AUROBINDO
2 April 1942

---

[2] *Sri Aurobindo gave this note to his disciple Duraiswami Iyer, an advocate of Madras, whom he sent to Delhi to speak with members of the Congress Working Committee about the Cripps Proposal. — Ed.*

[5]

[*Telegram to Amarendra Chatterjee*]

AMARENDRA CHATTERJEE M.L.A.
DELHI

UNABLE LEAVE PONDICHERRY. AWAITING CONGRESS DECISION NECESSARY FOR TOTAL NATIONAL ACTION. HAVE APPEALED PRIVATELY CONGRESS LEADERS FOR UNDERSTANDING WITH BRITAIN AND FIGHT DEFENCE INDIA.

Sri Aurobindo
April 9. 1942

[6]

[*Second telegram to Amarendra Chatterjee*]

MY BLESSINGS ON YOUR EFFORTS TO SERVE AND DEFEND MOTHERLAND NOW IN DANGER.

Sri Aurobindo

On the Wavell Plan

[1]

Sri Aurobindo Asram
Pondicherry
June 15, 1945

We heard the Viceroy's broadcast yesterday.[3] Sri Aurobindo says the proposals are decent enough and seem to be even better than Cripps' in certain respects. An Indian will be in charge of foreign affairs and India will have her own representative in foreign countries. This and other circumstances are an approach practically towards Dominion Status. Of course, there are a few features which personally Sri Aurobindo would not advocate, e.g. the apparent foundation of the Ministry on a communal basis instead of a coalition of parties. Still these should not be a reason for the rejection of the proposals. A fair trial should be given and the scheme tested in its actual working out.

---

[3] *This press release was dictated by Sri Aurobindo and issued over the signature of his secretary, Nolini Kanta Gupta. — Ed.*

[2]

[*Telegram to Dr. Syed Mahmood*]

PROPOSALS BETTER THAN CRIPPS' OFFER ACCEPTANCE ADVISABLE.

15 June 1945

On the Cabinet Mission Proposals

[1]

Sri Aurobindo thinks it unnecessary to volunteer a personal pronouncement, though he would give his views if officially approached for them.[4] His position is known. He has always stood for India's complete independence which he was the first to advocate publicly and without compromise as the only ideal worthy of a self-respecting nation. In 1910 he authorised the publication of his prediction that after a long period of wars, world-wide upheavals and revolutions beginning after four years, India would achieve her freedom. Lately he has said that freedom was coming soon and nothing could prevent it. He has always foreseen that eventually Britain would approach India for an amicable agreement conceding her freedom. What he had foreseen is now coming to pass and the British Cabinet Mission is the sign. It remains for the nation's leaders to make a right and full use of the opportunity. In any case, whatever the immediate outcome, the Power that has been working out this event will not be denied, the final result, India's liberation, is sure.

24.3.1946

---

[4] *This press release was written by Sri Aurobindo and issued over the signature of Nolini Kanta Gupta. — Ed.*

[2]

Dec. 16, 1946

Dear Surendra Mohan

I have shown your letter to Sri Aurobindo. It raises some serious misgivings.[5]

What do you mean by saying that the Congress may have to accept the group system? Do you mean to say that the Moslem League majority on both sides of India are to be allowed to have their way and dictate the constitution for all the provinces in the two groups and also a general constitution for each of the two groups overriding the autonomy of the provinces? That would mean that the Sikhs, the Frontier Province and Assam are to be thrown to the wolves, offered as an appeasing sacrifice to Jinnah. It would mean the establishment of a divided Pakistan of which the two portions, Eastern and Western, would ultimately and indeed very soon unite and secede from any All-India Union that might be established; for that is the policy of the League. Will the Sikhs consent to be thus placed under Mussulman domination? They have declared emphatically that they will not, they will follow the Congress only so long as the Congress keeps to its promise not to support any constitution disapproved by the Sikhs. As for Assam, will the Assamese consent to commit suicide? For that is what the grouping means if it is a majority vote that decides in the group. The Hindus of Bengal and Assam joining together in the section of the Assembly will not have a majority. This opens a prospect that the League in this group may dictate a constitution which will mean the end of the Assamese people and of Hinduism in Assam. They may so arrange that the tribes of Assam are constituted into a separate element not participating in the Assam Provincial Assembly but parked off from it. The constituencies of the province could then be so arranged as to give the Mussulmans an automatic majority. Assam could then be flooded with Mahomedan colonies from Bengal and Assam be made safe for Pakistan; after that the obliteration of Hinduism in the province could be carried out either by an immediate and violent or a gradual process once the separation of India into Pakistan and Hindusthan had been effected.

---

[5] *This letter was sent over the signature of Nolini Kanta Gupta. The recipient was Surendramohan Ghosh, a Bengal Congress leader who was then serving as a member of the Constituent Assembly in Delhi. Surendramohan had written to Nolini explaining some of the provisions of the Cabinet Mission proposals. Sri Aurobindo's dictated reply was written down by his amanuensis, Nirodbaran. In transcribing this, Nolini made some necessary changes to the opening, putting for instance "what do you mean by" where Sri Aurobindo had said "He might be asked what is meant by". — Ed.*

We hope your leaders are alive to the dangers of the situation. I am eagerly awaiting an answer from you.

The Fifteenth of August 1947

[1]

[*Long Version*][6]

August 15th is the birthday of free India. It marks for her the end of an old era, the beginning of a new age. But it has a significance not only for us, but for Asia and the whole world; for it signifies the entry into the comity of nations of a new power with untold potentialities which has a great part to play in determining the political, social, cultural and spiritual future of humanity. To me personally it must naturally be gratifying that this date which was notable only for me because it was my own birthday celebrated annually by those who have accepted my gospel of life, should have acquired this vast significance. As a mystic, I take this identification, not as a coincidence or fortuitous accident, but as a sanction and seal of the Divine Power which guides my steps on the work with which I began life. Indeed almost all the world movements which I hoped to see fulfilled in my lifetime, though at that time they looked like impossible dreams, I can observe on this day either approaching fruition or initiated and on the way to their achievement.

I have been asked for a message on this great occasion, but

---

[6] *Sri Aurobindo wrote this message at the request of All India Radio, Tiruchirapalli, for broadcast on the eve of the day when India achieved independence, 15 August 1947. The text submitted was found to be too long for the allotted time-slot. Sri Aurobindo revised it, and the shorter version (pages 478 – 80) was broadcast on 14 August 1947.*

I am perhaps hardly in a position to give one. All I can do is to make a personal declaration of the aims and ideals conceived in my childhood and youth and now watched in their beginning of fulfilment, because they are relevant to the freedom of India, since they are a part of what I believe to be India's future work, something in which she cannot but take a leading position. For I have always held and said that India was arising, not to serve her own material interests only, to achieve expansion, greatness, power and prosperity, — though these too she must not neglect, — and certainly not like others to acquire domination of other peoples, but to live also for God and the world as a helper and leader of the whole human race. Those aims and ideals were in their natural order these: a revolution which would achieve India's freedom and her unity; the resurgence and liberation of Asia and her return to the great role which she had played in the progress of human civilisation; the rise of a new, a greater, brighter and nobler life for mankind which for its entire realisation would rest outwardly on an international unification of the separate existence of the peoples, preserving and securing their national life but drawing them together into an overriding and consummating oneness; the gift by India of her spiritual knowledge and her means for the spiritualisation of life to the whole race; finally, a new step in the evolution which, by uplifting the consciousness to a higher level, would begin the solution of the many problems of existence which have perplexed and vexed humanity, since men began to think and to dream of individual perfection and a perfect society.

India is free but she has not achieved unity, only a fissured and broken freedom. At one time it almost seemed as if she might relapse into the chaos of separate States which preceded the British conquest. Fortunately there has now developed a strong possibility that this disastrous relapse will be avoided. The wisely drastic policy of the Constituent Assembly makes it possible that the problem of the depressed classes will be solved without schism or fissure. But the old communal division into Hindu and Muslim seems to have hardened into the figure of a permanent political division of the country. It is to be hoped that the Congress and the nation will not accept the settled fact as for ever settled or as anything more than a temporary expedient. For if it lasts, India may be seriously weakened, even crippled: civil strife may remain always possible, possible even a new invasion and foreign conquest. The partition of the country must go, — it is to be hoped by a slackening of tension, by a progressive understanding of the need of peace and concord, by the constant necessity of common and concerted action, even of an instrument of union for that purpose. In this way unity may come about under whatever form — the exact form may have a pragmatic but not a fundamental importance. But by whatever means, the division must and will go. For without it the destiny of India might be seriously impaired and even frustrated. But that must not be.

Asia has arisen and large parts of it have been liberated or are at this moment being liberated; its other still subject parts are moving through whatever struggles towards freedom. Only a little has to be done and that will be done today or tomorrow. There India has her part to play and has begun to play it with an energy and ability which already indicate the measure of her possibilities and the place she can take in the council of the nations.

The unification of mankind is under way, though only in an imperfect initiative, organised but struggling against tremendous difficulties. But the momentum is there and, if the experience of history can be taken as a guide, it must inevitably increase until it conquers. Here too India has begun to play a prominent part and, if she can develop that larger statesmanship which is not limited by the present facts and immediate possibilities but looks into the future and brings it nearer, her presence may make all the difference between a slow and timid and a bold and swift development. A catastrophe may intervene and interrupt or destroy what is being done, but even then the final result is sure. For in any case the unification is a necessity in the course of Nature, an inevitable movement and its achievement can be safely foretold. Its necessity for the nations also is clear, for without it the freedom of the small peoples can never be safe hereafter and even large and powerful nations cannot really be secure. India, if she remains divided, will not herself be sure of her safety. It is therefore to the interest of all that union should take place. Only human imbecility and stupid selfishness could prevent it. Against that, it has been said, even the gods strive in vain; but it cannot stand for ever against the necessity of Nature and the Divine Will. Nationalism will then have fulfilled itself; an international spirit and outlook must grow up and international forms and institutions; even it may be such developments as dual or multilateral citizenship and a voluntary fusion of cultures may appear in the process of the change and the spirit of nationalism losing its militancy may find these things perfectly compatible with the integrity of its own outlook. A new spirit of oneness will take hold of the human race.

The spiritual gift of India to the world has already begun. India's spirituality is entering Europe and America in an ever increasing measure. That movement will grow; amid the disasters of the time more and more eyes are turning towards her with hope and there is even an increasing resort not only to her teachings, but to her psychic and spiritual practice.

The rest is still a personal hope and an idea and ideal which has begun to take hold both in India and in the West on forward-looking minds. The difficulties in the way are more formidable than in any other field of endeavour, but difficulties were made to be overcome and if the Supreme Will is there, they will be overcome. Here too, if this evolution is to take place, since it must come through a growth of the spirit and the inner consciousness, the initiative can come from India and although the scope must be universal, the central movement may be hers.

Such is the content which I put into this date of India's liberation; whether or how far or how soon this connection will be fulfilled, depends upon this new and free India.

[2]

[*Short Version*]

August 15th, 1947 is the birthday of free India. It marks for her the end of an old era, the beginning of a new age. But we can also make it by our life and acts as a free nation an important date in a new age opening for the whole world, for the political, social, cultural and spiritual future of humanity.

August 15th is my own birthday and it is naturally gratifying to me that it should have assumed this vast significance. I take this coincidence, not as a fortuitous accident, but as the sanction and seal of the Divine Force that guides my steps on the work with which I began life, the beginning of its full fruition. Indeed, on this day I can watch almost all the world-movements which I hoped to see fulfilled in my lifetime, though then they looked like impracticable dreams, arriving at fruition or on their way to achievement. In all these movements free India may well play a large part and take a leading position.

The first of these dreams was a revolutionary movement which would create a free and united India. India today is free but she has not achieved unity. At one moment it almost seemed as if in the very act of liberation she would fall back into the chaos of separate States which preceded the British conquest. But fortunately it now seems probable that this danger will be averted and a large and powerful, though not yet a complete union will be established. Also, the wisely drastic policy of the Constituent Assembly has made it probable that the problem of the depressed classes will be solved without schism or fissure. But the old communal division into Hindus and Muslims seems now to have hardened into a permanent political division of the country. It is to be hoped that this settled fact will not be accepted as settled for ever or as anything more than a temporary expedient. For if it lasts, India may be seriously weakened, even crippled: civil strife may remain always possible, possible even a new invasion and foreign conquest. India's internal development and prosperity may be impeded, her position among the nations weakened, her destiny impaired or even frustrated. This must not be; the partition must go. Let us hope that that may come about naturally, by an increasing recognition of the necessity not only of peace and concord but of common action, by the practice of common action and the creation of means for that purpose. In this way unity may finally come about under whatever form — the exact form may have a pragmatic but not a fundamental importance. But by whatever means, in whatever way, the division must go; unity must and will be achieved, for it is necessary for the greatness of India's future.

Another dream was for the resurgence and liberation of the peoples of Asia and her return to her great role in the progress of human civilisation. Asia has arisen; large parts are now quite free or are at this moment being liberated: its other still subject or partly subject parts are moving through whatever struggles towards freedom. Only a little has to be done and that will be done today or tomorrow. There India has her part to play and has begun to play it with an energy and ability which already indicate the measure of her possibilities and the place she can take in the council of the nations.

The third dream was a world-union forming the outer basis of a fairer, brighter and nobler life for all mankind. That unification of the human world is under way; there is an imperfect initiation organised but struggling against tremendous difficulties. But the momentum is there and it must inevitably increase and conquer. Here too India has begun to play a prominent part and, if she can develop that larger statesmanship which is not limited by the present facts and immediate possibilities but looks into the future and brings it nearer, her presence may make all the difference between a slow and timid and a bold and swift development. A catastrophe may intervene and interrupt or destroy what is being done, but even then the final result is sure. For unification is a necessity of Nature, an inevitable movement. Its necessity for the nations is also clear, for without it the freedom of the small nations may be at any moment in peril and the life even of the large and powerful nations insecure. The unification is therefore to the interests of all, and only human imbecility and stupid selfishness can prevent it; but these cannot stand for ever against the necessity of Nature and the Divine Will. But an outward basis is not enough; there must grow up an international spirit and outlook, international forms and institutions must appear, perhaps such developments as dual or multilateral citizenship, willed interchange or voluntary fusion of cultures. Nationalism will have fulfilled itself and lost its militancy and would no longer find these things incompatible with self-preservation and the integrality of its outlook. A new spirit of oneness will take hold of the human race.

Another dream, the spiritual gift of India to the world has already begun. India's spirituality is entering Europe and America in an ever increasing measure. That movement will grow; amid the disasters of the time more and more eyes are turning towards her with hope and there is even an increasing resort not only to her teachings, but to her psychic and spiritual practice.

The final dream was a step in evolution which would raise man to a higher and larger consciousness and begin the solution of the problems which have perplexed and vexed him since he first began to think and to dream of individual perfection and a perfect society. This is still a personal hope and an idea, an ideal which has begun to take hold both in India and in the West on forward-looking minds. The difficulties in the way are more formidable than in any other field of endeavour, but difficulties were made to be overcome and if the Supreme Will is there, they will be overcome. Here too, if this evolution is to take place, since it must proceed through a growth of the spirit and the inner consciousness, the initiative can come from India and, although the scope must be universal, the central movement may be hers.

Such is the content which I put into this date of India's liberation; whether or how far this hope will be justified depends upon the new and free India.

On the Integration of the French Settlements in India
1947–1950

The Future Union
(A Programme)

In this period of epoch-making changes when India is achieving at this very moment a first form of freedom and the power to determine her own destiny, it behoves us in French India to consider our situation and make decisions for our own future which will enable us to live in harmony with the new India and the new world around us. At this juncture, we of the Socialist Party wish to define our own policy and the future prospects of the French Settlements as we envisage them.[1]

For a long time past we in these Settlements have watched with an eager sympathy the struggle that has been going on in British India for self-government and independence and, though we could not take part, have felt it as if it were part of our own destiny since the achievement of these things could not but herald or accompany our own passage from the state of dependence as a colony to the freedom and autonomy which all peoples must desire. India has achieved her freedom but as yet with limitations and under circumstances which it did not desire and which do not admit of a complete rejoicing at the victory; for it is not the united India for which we had hoped that has emerged, but an India parcelled out and divided and threatened with perils and difficulties and disadvantages which would not have been there but for the disunion and the internal quarrels which brought about this unhappy result. Among the leaders of the country who have reluctantly consented to the settlement made there is no enthusiasm over it but only a regretful acceptance and a firm determination to make the most of what has been won, overcome the difficulties and dangers and achieve for the country as great a position in the world and as much power and prosperity as is possible for a divided India. For our part we have received a promise of an autonomy which will make us a free people within the French Union, but this is as yet only a promise, or a declared policy and the steps have not yet been taken which would make it a practical reality. We have been demanding a fulfilment of this policy as rapid as possible and there is no real reason why it should not be carried out with something of the same speed that is marking developments in British India. There there have been complexities and differences which stood in the way of an easy and early solution, but there are none such here; we have been and are united in our demand and the change already decided can be and ought to be carried out at once.

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo wrote (rather, dictated) this "programme" for the use of the French India Socialist Party, whose position on the issue of the integration of the French Settlements in India corresponded with his in some respects. It should not be taken as a definitive statement of his own opinion on the matter. The text was published in a manifesto issued by the party in June 1947. — Ed.*

But one complexity has begun to arise and threatens to increase if there is further delay in satisfying the aspirations of our people. The life of French India has had, since its inception, a dual character which points to two different possibilities for its future destiny if a third solution does not intervene which reconciles the two possibilities. On one side, we in French India are not in the essentials of our existence a separate people: we and those on the other side of the borders of the five Settlements are brothers, we are kith and kin, we have the same nationality, the same way and habits of life, the same religions, the same general culture and outlook, the same languages and literatures, the same traditions; we are Indians, belong to the same society, we do not feel separate, we have the same feeling of patriotism for our common country; our land is an intimate part of India. All this would push us naturally to desire to unite together and become parts of a single India. That feeling has not been absent in the past, but now it is becoming vocal and is the declared policy and demand of a number among us while others stand on the line between the two possibilities before us and have a natural inclination to prefer this solution; for it is difficult for any Indian not to look forward towards such a unification in the future. On the other hand, the history of the past two centuries has developed a certain individuality of the people of French India and made them a common entity amid the rest. French India has developed different institutions of its own, political, administrative, judicial, educational, it has its own industries, its own labour legislation and other differentiating characteristics. There is also the impress of the French language and French culture. All Asiatic countries have been developing a mixed intellectuality, public life and social ideas; our life is Asiatic in its basis with a structure at the top adopted from Europe. In British India this superstructure has been formed by the use of English as a common language of the educated classes and by the study of English political ideas and institutions and English literature: in French India the superstructure is French, it is the French language through which there has been communication and a common public life between the Bengalees, Tamils, Andhras and Malayalees who constitute the people of French India; we have been looking at the world outside through a study of the French language and French institutions and French literature. All this has made a difference; it has made it possible and natural for us to accept the offer made that we should become a free people within the French Union. But this solution can be durable only if there is some kind of close connection and even union with the rest of India industrial, economic and other, for we depend on the rest of India for our very food and the necessities of our life and our general prosperity and, if cut off from it, we could not even live. Apart from all feelings and sentiments this stark necessity demands an intimate co-operation between the new India and French India.

Under the push of a common Indian patriotism and the feeling of oneness with the rest of India some are putting forward the claim that we should join immediately whatever Indian Union emerges from the present embroilments without any other consideration of any kind. This is a rash and one-sided view of things which we cannot accept. In our political decisions we must take into account the developments in British India, but it would be erroneous to hold that in all political affairs we should imitate her. This would show on our part a lack of understanding of local conditions as well as an utter failure of creative thought so needed at a most critical and constructive period of the history of India. Some go so far as to propose a kind of self-extinction of each French territory by their merging in a suicidal way into the Indian Union. This would mean that our towns would become mostly small and unimportant mofussil towns in the mass of what has been British India and would lose their present status and dignity and vigour of their life and distinctive institutions and much loss and damage to existing popular interests might ensue. A drastic change and obliteration of this kind seems to us most undesirable; it would bring no enrichment of life or advantage to the rest of India and no advantage but rather impoverishment of life to French India. If French India is to enter the Indian Union, it should not be in this way but as an autonomous unit preserving its individual body and character. All should be done with due regard to its particular position and all decisions should be made according to the will of her elected representatives: we should also ascertain exactly our economic, social and administrative position so that any change should not affect adversely any section of the people. Moreover without having any precision about the future States of India and our place among them it would be utter folly to break our social, cultural, administrative and judicial structure without any concrete scheme to replace it. The existence of autonomous units with a vivid life and individuality of their own has always been a characteristic of our country, part of its polity and civilisation and one of the causes of its greatness and the variety and opulence of Indian culture. The unity of India is desirable but not a mechanical unification and that is indeed no part of the scheme envisaged by the leaders of India; they envisage a union of autonomous units with a strong centre. In seeking political unity and independence we must not go on thinking and working under subjection to imported Western and British notions of political and economic structure. It is patent through recent developments that a political and purely outward unity with a mechanical uniformity and centralisation would prove a failure. Whatever we decide let us preserve the principle peculiarly suited to the unique psychological and physical conditions of this great land and the life of its people which was to develop through numerous autonomous centres of culture and power.

But there are also other considerations which militate against any such hasty action as has been proposed; we must consider carefully the actual position and possibilities in India under the peculiar and very unsatisfactory arrangement that has been made. This arrangement has not been freely chosen by the people and their leaders and does not create a free and united nation; it is a British plan accepted under the duress of circumstances as unavoidable in order to find a way out of the present state of indecision and drift and put an end to internal disorder and strife. It is not a definite solution; it seems rather like an opening of a new stage, a further period of trial and effort towards the true goal. What immediately emerges is not independence but the establishment of two British Dominions independent of each other and without any arrangement for harmonisation or common action; it is expected that within a year or so two independent Indias will be the result with different constitutions of their own animated by different and, it may well be, opposing principles and motives. It is hoped also that this division will be accepted by all as a final solution, both Indias settling down separately into a peaceful internal development, and that the fierce dissensions, violent and ruinous disturbances and sanguinary conflicts of recent times will finally disappear. But this is not certain; the solution has not been satisfactory to any party to the internal struggle and if the new States continue to be divided within themselves into communal camps led by communal bodies one of which will look outside the State to the other for inspiration and guidance and for the protection of the community, then tension will continue and the latent struggle may break out in disturbances, bloodshed and perhaps finally in open war. Into such a condition of things French India would not care to enter; among us communal dissensions have not been rife, all communities have lived amicably together and participated peacefully in a common public life; but if we entered into such a state of tension and continued conflict, the infection would inevitably seize us and there would be the same communal formations and the same undesirable features. We should be careful therefore not to make any such rash and hasty decisions as some propose but stand apart in our own separate status and wait for more certain developments. A closer relation with the new India is desirable and necessary, since we are Indians and French India a part of India intimately connected and dependent on the rest for her prosperity and for her very existence. But this need not take the form suggested or involve the obliteration of our separate status, a destruction of our past and its results and the loss of our individual existence. A reconciliation between the two elements of our existence and its historical development is desirable and possible.

It seems to be supposed by some that we have only to ask the new Indian Union for inclusion within it and this would automatically accomplish itself without any further difficulty; but things are not so simple as that. Undoubtedly the sentiment of the Indian people had in the past envisaged an India one and indivisible and the abolition of the small enclaves of foreign rule such as Portuguese and French India as imperative and inevitable. But circumstances have shaped differently; India one and indivisible has not emerged and the Indian Union which is nearest to it and with which alone a fusion would be possible, is not yet established, has still to affirm itself and find and confirm its strength in very difficult circumstances. In that process it is seeking to establish amicable relations with all foreign powers and is already in such relations with France. It will desire no doubt either union or a closer relation with French India but it is not likely to be in a hurry to achieve it through a dispute or conflict with France. It could indeed use means of pressure without the use of military force which would make the existence of a separate French India not only difficult and painful but impossible, but it would be likely to prefer a settlement and a *modus vivendi* which would respect the wishes of the people of French India, create the necessary co-ordination of economic and other interests and would be consistent with agreement and friendly relations with the Government and people of France. If, using the right of self-determination, we in French India freely decided to remain as an autonomous people within the French Union, the Government of the Indian Union would certainly respect such a choice and might welcome an arrangement which would make French India not a thorn of irritation but a cultural link and a field of union and co-operation, and perhaps even a base for a standing friendship and alliance between France and India. In consideration of all these circumstances we are led to conclude that our best immediate course is to keep our individuality and concentrate on the development of our freedom as an autonomous people accepting the offer of France to concede to us that status within the French Union and on the basis of that formula to establish that closer relation and co-operation with the new India which would satisfy our sentiments and is imperative for our prosperity and even for our existence.

After due examination of all these considerations the Socialist Party puts forward the following programme and asks for the adhesion of all citizens of French India to implement it.

(1) French India to form an autonomous territory within the French Union.

(2) For this the present colonial system and its bureaucratic government must cease to exist, and this should be done as soon as possible. Neither the people nor any party are willing to remain subjected to the old system, only a few whose professional interests are bound up with the old state of things are in its favour, and any long continuance of it would be a severe strain on the feelings of the population and would encourage increasing adhesion to the party that favours immediate and complete severance of all ties with France and the precipitate merging of French India without any further consideration into whatever new India may emerge from the present situation.

(3) There should be an immediate transfer of powers to the French India Representative Assembly which should have the general direction of the country's affairs and the sole power of local legislation. The power of the Governor to govern by decrees should disappear.

(4) The administration to be responsible to the Assembly. A Governor should be appointed by the French Government in consultation with the Assembly who will be the link between France and French India and who will preside over the administration with the assistance of an executive council of ministers.

(5) The status of the population of French India should be that of a free self-governing people freely consenting to remain in the French Union and freely accepting such relations as are necessary for that Union.

In this free French India the present recognised institutions commercial, industrial and others will remain in vigour except in so far as they are legally modified by the Representative Assembly. The French language will continue as a means of communication between the different parts of French India and of discussion in the Assembly and of general administration. The educational system, the new University and the Colleges will be linked with the University and educational system in France. The links with French culture will be retained and enlarged but also, inevitably a much larger place will be given to our own Indian culture. It is to be hoped this autonomous French India will become a powerful centre of intellectual development and interchange and meeting place of European and Asiatic culture and [a] spiritual factor of the world unification which is making its tentative beginning as the most important tendency of the present day. Thus French India will retain its individuality and historical development but will at the same time proceed towards a larger future.

On the other side we propose as an important part of our programme the development of a closer unity with the rest of India. Already we have the standing arrangements by which the Indian Government has the control and bears the burden of Posts and Railways and we have also the Customs Union by which Customs barriers between British and French India were removed; the advantages and even the necessity of such a unification of the system of communications in view of the small size and geographical separation of the French Settlements are obvious. In the Customs Union some modifications might be desirable from our point of view, but the principle of it removing the handicap and the previous irritation and conflict caused by the existence of the Customs barriers must remain acceptable. But there is also needed for our economic future a co-ordination of the industry and commerce of the country and for that purpose an agreement and a machinery for consultation and co-ordination should be created.

We further propose that the artificial barriers separating us into two mutually exclusive nationalities should be laid open and an understanding arrived at by which the nationals of free India resident in French India should automatically have civic rights and the same should obtain for nationals of French India resident in the new free India. There should be facilities for any French Indian to occupy Government posts and join Indian armed forces and to get admission to educational institutions and have access to the opportunities for research and scientific training and knowledge available in India, while these things should be also available to all Indian nationals in French India. Thus the advantages of the University which it is proposed to establish in French India should be available to students belonging to the other parts of the country. Possibly even other arrangements might be made by which there should be closer participation in the political life of the country as a whole.

The final logical outcome of the dual situation of the French Indian people would be a dual citizenship under certain conditions through which French India could be in the French Union and participate without artificial barriers in the life of India as a whole. The present state of International Law is opposed to such a dual citizenship but it would be the natural expression of the two sides of our life situated as we are in India and having the same fundamental nationality, culture and religion and social and economic life but also united for a long time by cultural influences and a historical connection with France. It may well be that such arrangements might become a natural part of the development and turn towards greater unity between peoples and the breaking down of old barriers which began at San Francisco and a not unimportant step in the movement towards the removal of the old separatism, oppositions and incompatibilities which are the undesirable side of nationalism and towards international unity and the growth of a new world and one world which is the future of humanity.

We are of the opinion that if this programme is properly carried out with the approval of public opinion, it will assure our future evolution and progress without violence or strife. We would be able to take a fuller part in the total life of the Indian nation and be at the same time an instrument for the closer drawing together of nations and play a part in the international life of mankind.

We appeal to all progressive forces in France to favour this line of development so that the actual relation between ourselves which is now that of suzerainty and vassalage should be transformed into one of brotherhood and mutual understanding so that France and India should stand before the world as closely united.

We fervently appeal to all our brothers and sisters of Chandernagore, Yanon, Mahe, Karikal and Pondicherry, to the Tamilians, Malayalees, Andhras and Bengalees who for centuries past have lived together irrespective of caste and creed without any internal strife — which is our greatest achievement — not to sever our mutual connection but to show an example of unity transcending all compartmentalism or provincialism. Let us be united as before. When decisive steps have to be taken for the welfare of the country it is of no avail to be led by hasty moves and to propose rapid solutions from purely egoistic motives or idleness of thought.

We pray our brothers and sisters not to be led by the fallacies of those who want the continuance of French imperialistic administration or of those who under whatever specious pretences look forward to the prevalence of chaos and disorder.

Let us rise to the task that awaits us and build a strong front of the people to implement our scheme and with an upsurge transgressing all petty differences let us play our part and create a free and united people in a free India and help at the same time towards the creation of a united human world.

published June 1947

On the Disturbances of 15 August 1947 in Pondicherry

To
The Editor
The Statesman, Calcutta
Dated, Pondicherry, the 20th August 1947.

Dear Sir,

There is no foundation [in][2] fact for the rumour which we understand has been published in your columns that Satyagraha has been offered before Sri Aurobindo Ashram.[3] There was no Satyagraha of any kind. There was an attack on the Ashram in which one member was stabbed to death and others injured and Ashram buildings stoned. This would surely be a curious and unprecedented form of Satyagraha. The attack took place on August the 15th some hours after the Darshan, which was very successful and attended by thousands of people, was over. The attackers were mostly professional goondas of the town hired and organised for the purpose. We consider it as the result or culmination of a long campaign by a political party which has been making speeches and publishing articles and pamphlets against the Ashram and trying in all ways to damage it in the eyes of the public for the last two years. This was not on political grounds and the attack had nothing to do with the political question. The Ashram is a non-political body. But there are three sections of the people here who are violently opposed to the existence of the Ashram, the advocates of Dravidisthan, extreme Indian Catholics and the Communists. Everybody in Pondicherry without exception supports the right of self-determination for the people of French India and Sri Aurobindo has always been a firm supporter of that right for all peoples everywhere. Nobody here is for the "continuation of French rule", but the people were prepared to accept the French proposal of a free and completely autonomous French India within the French Union. It was only when it appeared that the reforms offered by the French Government would fall short of what was promised that the cry arose for the immediate transfer of power and the merging of French India in the Indian Union. Sri Aurobindo, not being a citizen of French India, made no public declaration of his views, but privately supported the views set forth in a manifesto of the French India Socialist party demanding the end of colonial rule and a complete autonomy within the French Union accompanied by a dual citizenship and a close association with the Indian Union which should control Customs, Communications and a common system of Industry and Commerce.[4] There was therefore no ground or cause for any Satyagraha. I am writing this as an official contradiction on behalf of the Ashram under the instructions and with the full authority of Sri Aurobindo.

---

[2] *MS* or

[3] *This letter was dictated by Sri Aurobindo to his amanuensis, Nirodbaran, and sent over the signature of his secretary. — Ed.*

Your most sincerely
The Secretary

Sri Aurobindo Ashram
Pondicherry

Letters to Surendra Mohan Ghosh

[1]

I had wired that I would write a letter of explanation, but I have been unable to do so because we could get no definite information on the points I have mentioned, not even the question of the alleged refusal to send the money order. It is now suggested that it may have been only a doubt due possibly to a mistaken impression that French territory in India was like France and other French territories a hard currency area subject to restrictions in this matter because of the difficulties created by the dollar exchange. But French India has been declared a soft currency area where the exchange is in rupees and in pounds; so this difficulty cannot arise. Up to now money orders are still coming in.

---

[4] *The reference is to "The Future Union" (pages 481–91), which was written by Sri Aurobindo. — Ed.*

As to the food question, it is now stated that vegetables and fruit from Bangalore will be allowed to come in without hindrance and other food commodities which come under the mischief of the Customs will also be allowed subject to the taking out of a permit by the merchants. The rumour of prohibition was due to a panic among the merchants both of the Union and Pondicherry caused by the creation of the Customs line which comes into operation from today and the additional rumour of drastic measures to be taken to bring pressure on French India to join the Union. If things go well, there may be a difficulty of high prices but nothing worse.

At the same time there are signs of tension and we do not know what may develop from these. For instance, it is said that booking of goods of Pondicherry has been stopped on the Railway except for newspaper packages and perishable goods; equally it has been stated that the French authorities are forbidden a transit of local goods out of French India into the Union and have created a post to prevent their passage. That is all for the present. I suppose we shall get some clearer indications once the Customs are in vigour.

I shall write afterwards about our own threatened difficulties in French India itself, if they develop. But we badly need some reliable information as to what is likely to be the fate of French India. On the one side the French India municipalities have fixed December for the proposed referendum. If there is a referendum, the voting will go by the usual methods and the result will be whatever the local Government here dictates and not a genuine plebiscite; there would be no chance of an accession to the Indian Union or a merger unless Goubert and Co would make, as they once tried, a bargain with the Government in Madras or in Delhi. On the other hand, it has been broadly hinted that there will be no plebiscite and the fate of French India will be determined by direct negotiations between the Governments in Paris and in Delhi. But when? We were once informed that it would be in April or June after the return of Baron as High Commissioner but the politicians here are resolute not to allow the return of Baron because he will [be] under the influence of the Ashram — just as Saravane, Counouma, André etc. are to be kept out of all positions of authority for the same reason and because they are supposed to be in favour of accession to the Indian Union. 1 April 1949

[2]

I am sending you a statement made regarding our food situation and prospects by Dyuman who is in charge of that department. This is a new situation; formerly, the fruit was stopped, vegetables were passing through the Customs and the Customs officers were very favourable to the Ashram and made no difficulties. All that is now finished; it appears that very strict orders have been given and nothing can pass. Personal supplies in small quantities sent as offerings from Madras no longer arrive. Even the Calcutta merchants who supplied us with food and other goods say that they cannot get permits any longer. We are told that the Railway is no longer booking goods to Pondicherry. A certain number of vegetables of a very high quality are grown in our vegetable gardens; it is not quite certain that the supply of seeds which necessarily comes from outside will not fail us and in that case that resource will go. There are other statements that have been made by responsible people in Madras which indicate a sort of blockade of goods against the French Settlements. The one good thing is that the Railway people here have withdrawn their statement that our books were prohibited and have begun to send by Railway large parcels of our magazines (Advent, Bombay Annual, Path Mandir Annual, Aditi etc.), so that there is no fear of loss or stoppage there. I may add that we can no longer get our full supply of milk here as the milkmen have no sufficient supply of fodder and Nestlé which helped us is cut off with the rest.

At present we have no final or definite news about the things for which we were to rely on Kamraj Nadar. He has only recently returned from Ceylon after which he was to deal with our affairs. Our representatives in Madras were told by him, we hear, that some of these affairs were the province of Madras Government and some could only [be decided][5] at Delhi; he would find out exactly which was which and do what he could [for][6] us; each case will have to be dealt with on its merits. It is now the 6th May and as yet we have heard nothing. So for the moment that is all.

6 May 1949

Note on a *Projet de loi*

NOTE

I do not know that it is necessary for me to say much about the details of this *projet*, except that it seems to me to need to be elaborated and elucidated so as to give a more complete and exact idea of the constitution meant for the new territory, the powers reserved for it and those reserved for the central authority and the scope and limits of the rights to be conceded by the India Government to France and French nationals under the agreement.

Incidentally, what exactly is meant by the "droits de douanes" to be exercised by the local Government? I presume that the old Customs will be reestablished at the Port and there will be none between the Territory and the rest of India: only, certain limited rights will be given for the introduction of goods from France to be carefully restricted to the amount necessary for local use; if so, there can be no scope for any levy of Customs by the local authority. As to the U.N.O., I presume that as between the India Government and the Government of people of a Territory subordinate to it there could not be, as things now stand, any intervention on any matter between them but only as between the India Government and the Government of France.

---

[5] *MS (dictated)* decide

[6] *MS (dictated)* from

There is one point on which I would like to make an observation which I consider of primary importance. The French Government would naturally want the democratic rights it has conceded to the local Assembly and local bodies to continue in full and the India Government would also, no doubt, like this new Territory of its own to have a constitution as democratic as that of the other parts of India. But if nothing is changed in local conditions and freedom is left for a certain type of politicians and party leaders to make use of their opportunities to pervert everything to their own profit, how are they to be prevented from prolonging the old state of things, in which case the Territory would easily be turned into a sink of misgovernment and corruption and things will become worse even than in the past. Only a strong control, a thorough purification of the administration and a period of political discipline in which the population could develop public spirit, the use and the right use of the powers and the democratic institutions placed at their disposal, could ensure a change for the better and even that only after a long lapse of time. It cannot be ensured by a paper constitution; the right type of men in the right place could alone ensure it.

I would myself have thought it safer if the principle of the agreement between the two Governments and its main features [had] at first been agreed upon and the rest worked out afterwards by careful consideration and discussion. Otherwise there is a risk of disagreements and disaccord in the points of view arising and holding up or even endangering the successful working out of the agreement. But I understand that their position in this matter has obliged the Government in Paris to prefer the method actually taken. I hope that the advice you will give will help the India Government to make the best of things as they are.

12.2.50

Messages on Indian and World Events 1948–1950

On the Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi

[1]

REMAIN FIRM THROUGH THE DARKNESS THE LIGHT IS THERE AND WILL CONQUER.[1]

4 February 1948

[2]

I would have preferred silence in the face of these circumstances that surround us. For any words we can find fall flat amid such happenings. This much, however, I will say that the Light which led us to freedom, though not yet to unity, still burns and will burn on till it conquers. I believe firmly that a great and united future is the destiny of this nation and its peoples. The Power that brought us through so much struggle and suffering to freedom, will achieve also, through whatever strife or trouble, the aim which so poignantly occupied the thoughts of the fallen leader at the time of his tragic ending; as it brought us freedom, it will bring us unity. A free and united India will be there and the Mother will gather around her her sons and weld them into a single national strength in the life of a great and united people.[2]

Sri Aurobindo

February 5, 1948

---

[1] *Telegram sent to Mr. Kumbi of Gadag, in reply to his telegram* "DARKNESS SORROW SPREADS FAST INDIA BAPUJI DEATH CHILDREN PRAY MESSAGE." *Sri Aurobindo's telegram was later released to the newspapers. — Ed.*

[2] *This piece was sent to All India Radio, Tiruchirapalli, in response to a request for a message. It later was published by the Ashram in the form of a leaflet. — Ed.*

On the World Situation (July 1948)

I am afraid I can hold out but cold comfort for the present at least to those of your correspondents who are lamenting the present state of things. Things *are* bad, are growing worse and may at any time grow worst or worse than worst if that is possible — and anything however paradoxical seems possible in the present perturbed world. The best thing for them is to realise that all this was necessary because certain possibilities had to emerge and be got rid of if a new and better world was at all to come into being; it would not have done to postpone them for a later time. It is as in Yoga where things active or latent in the being have to be put into action in the light so that they may be grappled with and thrown out or to emerge from latency in the depths for the same purificatory purpose. Also they can remember the adage that night is darkest before dawn and that the coming of dawn is inevitable. But they must remember too that the new world whose coming we envisage is not to be made of the same texture as the old and different only in pattern and that it must come by other means, from within and not from without — so the best way is not to be too much preoccupied with the lamentable things that are happening outside, but themselves to grow within so that they may be ready for the new world whatever form it may take.

July 18, 1948 Sri Aurobindo

On Linguistic Provinces
(Message to Andhra University)

You have asked me for a message and anything I write, since it is to the Andhra University that I am addressing my message, if it can be called by that name, should be pertinent to your University, its function, its character and the work it has to do. But it is difficult for me at this juncture when momentous decisions are being taken which are likely to determine not only the form and pattern of this country's Government and administration but the pattern of its destiny, the build and make-up of the nation's character, its position in the world with regard to other nations, its choice of what itself shall be, not to turn my eyes in that direction. There is one problem facing the country which concerns us nearly and to this I shall now turn and deal with it, however inadequately, — the demand for the reconstruction of the artificial British-made Presidencies and Provinces into natural divisions forming a new system, new and yet founded on the principle of diversity in unity attempted by ancient India. India, shut into a separate existence by the Himalayas and the ocean, has always been the home of a peculiar people with characteristics of its own recognisably distinct from all others, with its own distinct civilisation, way of life, way of the spirit, a separate culture, arts, building of society. It has absorbed all that has entered into it, put upon all the Indian stamp, welded the most diverse elements into its fundamental unity. But it has also been throughout a congeries of diverse peoples, lands, kingdoms and, in earlier times, republics also, diverse races, sub-nations with a marked character of their own, developing different brands or forms of civilisation and culture, many schools of art and architecture which yet succeeded in fitting into the general Indian type of civilisation and culture. India's history throughout has been marked by a tendency, a constant effort to unite all this diversity of elements into a single political whole under a central imperial rule so that India might be politically as well as culturally one. Even after a rift had been created by the irruption of the Mohammedan peoples with their very different religion and social structure, there continued a constant effort of political unification and there was a tendency towards a mingling of cultures and their mutual influence on each other; even some heroic attempts were made to discover or create a common religion built out of these two apparently irreconcilable faiths and here too there were mutual influences. But throughout India's history the political unity was never entirely attained and for this there were several causes, — first, vastness of space and insufficiency of communications preventing the drawing close of all these different peoples; secondly, the method used which was the military domination by one people or one imperial dynasty over the rest of the country which led to a succession of empires, none of them permanent; lastly, the absence of any will to crush out of existence all these different kingdoms and fuse together these different peoples and force them into a single substance and a single shape. Then came the British Empire in India which recast the whole country into artificial provinces made for its own convenience, disregarding the principle of division into regional peoples but not abolishing that division. For there had grown up out of the original elements a natural system of subnations with different languages, literatures and other traditions of their own, the four Dravidian peoples, Bengal, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Sind, Assam, Orissa, Nepal, the Hindi-speaking peoples of the North, Rajputana and Behar. British rule with its provincial administration did not unite these peoples but it did impose upon them the habit of a common type of administration, a closer intercommunication through the English language and by the education it gave there was created a more diffused and more militant form of patriotism, the desire for liberation and the need of unity in the struggle to achieve that liberation. A sufficient fighting unity was brought about to win freedom, but freedom obtained did not carry with it a complete union of the country. On the contrary, India was deliberately split on the basis of the two-nation theory into Pakistan and Hindustan with the deadly consequences which we know.

In taking over the administration from Britain we had inevitably to follow the line of least resistance and proceed on the basis of the artificial British-made provinces, at least for the time; this provisional arrangement now threatens to become permanent, at least in the main and some see an advantage in this permanence. For they think it will help the unification of the country and save us from the necessity of preserving regional subnations which in the past kept a country from an entire and thoroughgoing unification and uniformity. In a rigorous unification they see the only true union, a single nation with a standardised and uniform administration, language, literature, culture, art, education, — all carried on through the agency of one national tongue. How far such a conception can be carried out in the future one cannot forecast, but at present it is obviously impracticable, and it is doubtful if it is for India truly desirable. The ancient diversities of the country carried in them great advantages as well as drawbacks. By these differences the country was made the home of many living and pulsating centres of life, art, culture, a richly and brilliantly coloured diversity in unity; all was not drawn up into a few provincial capitals or an imperial metropolis, other towns and regions remaining subordinated and indistinctive or even culturally asleep; the whole nation lived with a full life in its many parts and this increased enormously the creative energy of the whole. There is no possibility any longer that this diversity will endanger or diminish the unity of India. Those vast spaces which kept her people from closeness and a full interplay have been abolished in their separating effect by the march of Science and the swiftness of the means of communication. The idea of federation and a complete machinery for its perfect working have been discovered and will be at full work. Above all, the spirit of patriotic unity has been too firmly established in the people to be easily effaced or diminished, and it would be more endangered by refusing to allow the natural play of life of the subnations than by satisfying their legitimate aspirations. The Congress itself in the days before liberation came had pledged itself to the formation of linguistic provinces, and to follow it out, if not immediately, yet as early as may conveniently be, might well be considered the wisest course. India's national life will then be founded on her natural strengths and the principle of unity in diversity which has always been normal to her and its fulfilment the fundamental course of her being and its very nature, the Many in the One, would place her on the sure foundation of her Swabhava and Swadharma.

This development might well be regarded as the inevitable trend of her future. For the Dravidian regional peoples are demanding their separate right to a self-governing existence; Maharashtra expects a similar concession and this would mean a similar development in Gujarat and then the British-made Presidencies of Madras and Bombay would have disappeared. The old Bengal Presidency had already been split up and Orissa, Bihar and Assam are now self-governing regional peoples. A merger of the Hindi-speaking part of the Central Provinces and the U.P. would complete the process. An annulment of the partition of India might modify but would not materially alter this result of the general tendency. A union of States and regional peoples would again be the form of a united India.

In this new regime your University will find its function and fulfilment. Its origin has been different from that of other Indian Universities; they were established by the initiative of a foreign Government as a means of introducing their own civilisation into India, situated in the capital towns of the Presidencies and formed as teaching and examining bodies with purely academic aims: Benares and Aligarh had a different origin but were all-India institutions serving the two chief religious communities of the country. Andhra University has been created by a patriotic Andhra initiative, situated not in a Presidency capital but in an Andhra town and serving consciously the life of a regional people. The home of a robust and virile and energetic race, great by the part it had played in the past in the political life of India, great by its achievements in art, architecture, sculpture, music, Andhra looks back upon imperial memories, a place in the succession of empires and imperial dynasties which reigned over a large part of the country; it looks back on the more recent memory of the glories of the last Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar, — a magnificent record for any people. Your University can take its high position as a centre of light and learning, knowledge and culture which can train the youth of Andhra to be worthy of their forefathers: the great past should lead to a future as great or even greater. Not only Science but Art, not only book-knowledge and information but growth in culture and character are parts of a true education; to help the individual to develop his capacities, to help in the forming of thinkers and creators and men of vision and action of the future, this is a part of its work. Moreover, the life of the regional people must not be shut up in itself; its youths have also to contact the life of the other similar peoples of India interacting with them in industry and commerce and the other practical fields of life but also in the things of the mind and spirit.

Also, they have to learn not only to be citizens of Andhra but to be citizens of India; the life of the nation is their life. An elite has to be formed which has an adequate understanding of all great national affairs or problems and be able to represent Andhra in the councils of the nation and in every activity and undertaking of national interest calling for the support and participation of her peoples. There is still a wider field in which India will need the services of men of ability and character from all parts of the country, the international field. For she stands already as a considerable international figure and this will grow as time goes on into vast proportions; she is likely in time to take her place as one of the preponderant States whose voices will be strongest and their lead and their action determinative of the world's future. For all this she needs men whose training as well as their talent, genius and force of character is of the first order. In all these fields your University can be of supreme service and do a work of immeasurable importance.

In this hour, in the second year of its liberation the nation has to awaken to many more very considerable problems, to vast possibilities opening before her but also to dangers and difficulties that may, if not wisely dealt with, become formidable. There is a disordered world-situation left by the war, full of risks and sufferings and shortages and threatening another catastrophe which can only be solved by the united effort of the peoples and can only be truly met by an effort at world-union such as was conceived at San Francisco but has not till now been very successful in the practice; still the effort has to be continued and new devices found which will make easier the difficult transition from the perilous divisions of the past and present to a harmonious world-order; for otherwise there can be no escape from continuous calamity and collapse. There are deeper issues for India herself, since by following certain tempting directions she may conceivably become a nation like many others evolving an opulent industry and commerce, a powerful organisation of social and political life, an immense military strength, practising power-politics with a high degree of success, guarding and extending zealously her gains and her interests, dominating even a large part of the world, but in this apparently magnificent progression forfeiting its Swadharma, losing its soul. Then ancient India and her spirit might disappear altogether and we would have only one more nation like the others and that would be a real gain neither to the world nor to us. There is a question whether she may prosper more harmlessly in the outward life yet lose altogether her richly massed and firmly held spiritual experience and knowledge. It would be a tragic irony of fate if India were to throw away her spiritual heritage at the very moment when in the rest of the world there is more and more a turning towards her for spiritual help and a saving Light. This must not and will surely not happen; but it cannot be said that the danger is not there. There are indeed other numerous and difficult problems that face this country or will very soon face it. No doubt we will win through, but we must not disguise from ourselves the fact that after these long years of subjection and its cramping and impairing effects a great inner as well as outer liberation and change, a vast inner and outer progress is needed if we are to fulfil India's true destiny. December 1948

Letters Related to the Andhra University Award

[1]

SRI AUROBINDO ASRAM.
PONDICHERRY.
—

July 15, 1948

To
Sir C. R. Reddy
Vice-Chancellor
Andhra University — Waltair

I have been unable to give an early answer to your letter of the 28th June, 1948 which reached me rather late owing to accidental causes. This was due to some hesitation arising from my position as head of the Ashram at Pondicherry. I am not a Sannyasi and my Yoga does not turn away from life; but still I have always followed the rule of not accepting titles, honours or distinctions from any Government or public institution and have rejected or stood back from even the highest when offered to me. But after long consideration I have felt that the distinction which the Andhra University proposes to confer upon me is not of the same character and need not fall within this rule. In any case I do not feel that I can disregard the choice made by the Andhra University in selecting my name for this distinction, and even if things were otherwise, I would have felt that I must accept this as an exceptional case and I could not disregard the choice by an institution like yours of my name for this prize. I authorise you therefore to consider my name for this award and if the University confirms its choice of me, my acceptance of your National Prize. One difficulty remains; you know perhaps that I have been living in entire retirement, appearing in public only on the occasion of the four Darshans on which I receive the inmates of my Ashram and visitors from all parts of India. Otherwise I do not go out of the rooms in which I live and still less ever leave the Ashram or Pondicherry. This makes it impossible for me to go to Waltair to receive the distinction conferred upon me. I would have therefore to ask for an exception to be made in this matter in my case.

Sri Aurobindo

[2]

Sri Aurobindo Ashram
Pondicherry

[6 November 1948]

To
H.E. The Governor of Madras
Chancellor of the Andhra University

I am in receipt of your letter of 30th October informing me that the Syndicate of the Andhra University has resolved to present to me the “Cattamanchi Ramalinga Reddy National Prize” for this year. I have received with much gratification your offer of this distinction bestowed on me by your University and I am glad to intimate to you my acceptance. I understand from what you say about Darshan that you will personally come to Pondicherry for this purpose and I look forward with much pleasure to seeing and meeting you.

[3]

Sri Aurobindo Ashram
Dec 5, 1948

To
Shree C. R. Reddy
Vice-chancellor, Andhra University

I am sending herewith the message. But it has developed to an excessive length nearer to half-an-hour's reading than to the minimum five minutes. I hope that the theme which, I am told, is still somewhat controversial, will not be thought for that reason ill-suited to the occasion and that the length of time required will not be found unmanageable. I have felt some scruples on these two points and would be glad to be reassured that it is otherwise.

Sri Aurobindo

The Present Darkness (April 1950)

You have expressed in one of your letters your sense of the present darkness in the world round us and this must have been one of the things that contributed to your being so badly upset and unable immediately to repel the attack. For myself, the dark conditions do not discourage me or convince me of the vanity of my will to "help the world", for I knew they had to come; they were there in the world nature and had to rise up so that they might be exhausted or expelled so that a better world freed from them might be there. After all, something has been done in the outer field and that may help or prepare for getting something done in the inner field also. For instance, India is free and her freedom was necessary if the divine work was to be done. The difficulties that surround her now and may increase for a time, especially with regard to the Pakistan imbroglio, were also things that had to come and to be cleared out. Nehru's efforts to prevent the inevitable clash are not likely to succeed for more than a short time and so it is not necessary to give him the slap you wanted to go to Delhi and administer to him. Here too there is sure to be a full clearance, though unfortunately a considerable amount of human suffering in the process is inevitable. Afterwards the work for the Divine will become more possible and it may well be that the dream, if it is a dream, of leading the world towards the spiritual Light, may even become a reality. So I am not disposed even now in these dark conditions to consider my will to help the world as condemned to failure. 4 April 1950

On the Korean Conflict

I do not know why you want a line of thought to be indicated to you for your guidance in the affair of Korea. There is nothing to hesitate about there, the whole affair is as plain as a "pikestaff". It is the first move in the Communist plan of campaign to dominate and take possession first of these northern parts and then of South East Asia as a preliminary to their manoeuvres with regard to the rest of the continent — in passing, Tibet as a gate opening to India. If they succeed, there is no reason why domination of the whole world should not follow by steps until they are ready to deal with America. That is provided the war can be staved off with America until Stalin can choose his time. Truman seems to have understood the situation if we can judge from his moves in Korea; but it is to be seen whether he is strong enough and determined enough to carry the matter through. The measures he has taken are likely to be incomplete and unsuccessful, since they do not include any actual military intervention except on sea and in the air. That seems to be the situation, we have to see how it develops. One thing is certain that if there is too much shilly-shallying and if America gives up now her defence of Korea, she may be driven to yield position after position until it is too late; at one point or another she will have to stand and face the necessity of drastic action even if it leads to war. Stalin also seems not to be ready to face at once the risk of a world war and, if so, Truman can turn the tables on him by constantly facing him with the onus of either taking that risk or yielding position after position to America. I think that is all that I can see at present; for the moment the situation is as grave as it can be.

28.6.1950. Sri Aurobindo

Section Two

Private Letters to Public Figures and to the Editor of *Mother India*

1948 – 1950

Private Letters to Public Figures
1948–1950

To Surendra Mohan Ghosh

I have strong objections to your giving up your position as President of the B.P.C.C. But I recognise that there are good reasons for your not wishing to disappoint Jawaharlal, also the great importance of this other work at Dacca. If you finally decide after seeing the full development of the new situation in Bengal that your relinquishing the presidentship will not frustrate or injure the work in West Bengal, then I am ready to withdraw my objection.

12.6.48

To Kailas Nath Katju

Owing to heavy pressure during the last month I am only now able to answer your letter of August 20th forwarding [a] full report of your address on the occasion of the Mahotsav. I had already heard your talk on the radio in connection with [the] Jayanti and I found that it was very much appreciated by those who were trying to do my work in Bengal and they had drawn much encouragement from it and felt heartened by it in their endeavours. I write this to convey to you my blessings for all you have done on the occasion of the Jayanti and the great push it has given to the work and to the workers in Bengal.

I have long been acquainted with your name and what you have done for our country as one of its leaders in the struggle for freedom and after Independence was gained, in the heavy and difficult work that had to be done under trying and arduous circumstances to organise its independence and contend with the growing difficulties of the task.

The difficulties you speak of which beset all who are working for the world's peace and welfare are indeed very great; the strength to meet them and to support those who are doing the work is less widespread than it ought to be and there is too much fear and demoralisation everywhere in the world and the will to co-operate for the best is deficient and often absent. I am afraid the hour in which one can be confident that these difficulties would be soon overcome is not yet near and men of goodwill will have to persevere with great courage before they can say, "It is done." But I believe that as the labour is arduous so will the outcome be sure and satisfying. It has been a great good fortune for Bengal that you have been sent there as Governor and you may be confident that my blessings will attend you in your work.

3.9.49

To K. M. Munshi

[1]

> K. M. MUNSHI: In the Constituent Assembly there is debate about the use of international numerals with the Hindi language. The whole of South India will not accept Hindi as the national language unless international numerals are used. The non-Hindi provinces are supporting South India. The organised Hindi group is fighting against the international numeral on the ground of Aryan Culture.

Sri Aurobindo has no decided opinion on the question. But if the South Indians and other non-Hindi Provinces insist on this arrangement, it seems to him that for the sake of unity in this matter and a unified practice and also for international convenience the Hindi-speaking people might make a concession to the others.[1]

3 September 1949

[2]

> K. M. MUNSHI: I would like to have your guidance as regards the future of Sanatan Dharma. Starting from your Uttarpara

---

[1] *Reply dictated by Sri Aurobindo to A. B. Purani for sending to Munshi over Purani's signature. — Ed.*

> Speech, which has been a sort of beacon to me for years, I have been working for the reintegration of Hindu culture . . . But I am neither learned nor a profound thinker. I can contribute only my faith and the little energy which has been vouchsafed to me. I only pray that strength may be given to me to carry forward the message of the Seers of whom, in my opinion, you are the only surviving Apostle. What shall I do now?

My dear Kanubhai

In reply to your letter to him of July 30th 1950 Sri Aurobindo has asked me to write to you the following: —[2]

"Your feeling that there should be reintegration of Indian Culture under modern conditions is quite right. It is *the* work that has to be done. And as far as Sri Aurobindo can see at present Indian Spiritual Culture has a great and bright future before it. It is the future power that might dominate the world.

So, your efforts in carrying out that work are quite in the right direction and in carrying out that work you would have his full support and blessings." 3 August 1950

---

[2] *The paragraphs that follow were dictated by Sri Aurobindo to A. B. Purani and sent to Munshi over Purani's signature. — Ed.*

Notes and Letters to the Editor of *Mother India* on Indian and World Events 1949–1950

On Pakistan

I don't want Pakistan to endure, made perfectly clear. Division must go — does not mean that division must be allowed to last in some form or other. Continued partition of India into two Federations one Hindu and one Muslim even if somehow connected together is no part of my idea of the Union of India.

March 1949

On the Commonwealth and Secularism

India can't remain in Dominion. It had decided to be a free republic and that can't be changed. On that basis it can have relations with Commonwealth if it wants.

Spirituality cannot be affirmed in a political constitution. You can add spirituality in a matter of the Spirit and not of constitutional politics.

April 1949

On the Unity Party

Amal

The Unity Party, Sri Aurobindo says, cannot be said to represent Sri Aurobindo's views [nor can it be said][1] that its political programme is backed up by him. But perhaps without committing yourself you can say there is a Party, especially in Bengal, which is working for Indian Unity — apart from the well-known Forward Block which has the same end in view though working on a different line.

---

[1] *MS (dictated)* or

25.4.1949

On French India and on Pakistan

June 27 1949

Amal,

I sent you a telegram asking you to withhold the spokesman's statement.[2] It was not to be republished. The statement does not adequately represent Sri Aurobindo's views. It overstresses one point and leaves out others which are as important, but I see that you have already featured it in Mother India. Anyway Sri Aurobindo doesn't want anything further to be written about his view on the French India question; what is done is done but in future he wishes to remain silent unless an imperative need arises for a statement. Just now Sri Aurobindo does not want strong attacks to be made on the policy of the Congress Government as by their action they have removed many of the difficulties of the Asram and all that it needs for its institutions are coming in freely as a result of special orders given by the Madras Government so he does not want to figure as their enemy or opponent. Certain things in their attitude may seem doubtful but he does not want them too much stressed at present unless it becomes very necessary to do so.

About your Franco-India article, the main objection is that Mother does not want herself to be represented in that way (or in any way) and she objects to figuring in any special way as a representative of France or French culture. The article is inopportune at this moment. It contains many statements that would have to be modified or not put forward at all.

As for the contravention article Sri Aurobindo thought that one could wait to see what was the further action or attitude or inaction of the Government and whether what was meant was a complete prohibition of any dealing with the Pakistan issue before you determined the paper's own attitude towards all that and any extreme action. That does not mean that you will have to postpone indefinitely any necessary decision. If you think it necessary to take advantage of Nehru's speech that can be done while avoiding committing ourselves to any conflict for the moment.

---

[2] *This letter, dictated by Sri Aurobindo, was sent over the signature of Nolini Kanta Gupta. The "spokesman's statement" was an interview that Nolini gave to a press agency on 14 June that was published in* Mother India *on 25 June. See Note on the Texts, pages 604–5, for details. — Ed.*

On Cardinal Wyszynski, Catholicism and Communism

As to your proposed article on [Wyszynski][3], it seems to me that it is better to drop the subject. It had and has no value except as a stick with which to beat the Soviets and their allies. The sole question is in that case whether the man was justified in his stand for liberty even in that restricted area of religious freedom and the freedom especially of the Catholic religion to be itself, as every religion has a right to be in all civilised countries and whether it was worth while fighting out that question when the real question is how to get rid, if now it is at all possible, of the Bolshevik monstrosity and the tyranny with which it threatens the world. That can't be done by subtly philosophical and even metaphysical articles balancing the rights and wrongs on each side and the relative wickedness of the Soviets and the Western nations. Many readers might even take it as a justification or at least a partial condemnation of the prosecuting Government and the martyrdom it has chosen to inflict on the rebellious Cardinal. And what is the pertinence of the past history of the Roman Catholic Church, especially at a time when we have one of the most liberal minded Popes or even the most liberal minded Pope in Roman Catholic history? Even if it is only a fight between the Holy See of Rome and the unholy See of the Kremlin the fight is between one centre of religious intolerance and another centre of a still more damnable and intolerant religion, — for that is what Bolshevism is, — still why give any latitude to what is by far the worse of the two? 3 August 1949

---

[3] *MS (dictated)* Midsentzy

On the Kashmir Problem

Now let us come to your article. All you have written up to the X mark against the beginning of a para is very good and needed to be said; but after that there are certain things to which I have to take objection. For instance, why suggest a slur on the whole Mohammedan population of Kashmir by speaking of "fanatic spell of the name of Allah"? This cannot apply to the Kashmiris who follow Abdullah and who are in a large majority, they are for his idea of a secular state. The others in Gilgit and elsewhere are not actuated by religious fanaticism but by political motives. The rest of the sentence should be modified accordingly; the people in the districts who have been rescued from the grip of the rebels have shown strong gratitude for their release and it would be quite impolitic to ignore by such doubts the sincerity of this gratitude. I am not enamoured of your idea of an understanding between Pakistan and India, it is not likely that the Pakistan Government will consent to any understanding except one which will help to perpetuate the partition and be to their advantage. It would be most dangerous to forget Jinnah's motive and policy in establishing Pakistan which is still the motive and policy of the Pakistan leaders, — although it would not be politic to say anything about it just now. If you keep what you have written it should be with the proviso, if there is a change of heart and if Pakistan becomes willing to effect some kind of junction with India or some overtopping Council of cooperation between the two federations. But the most amazing thing is your disastrous suggestion of a coalition Government between the loyalists and the rebels in Kashmir. That would give a position and influence and control over all the affairs of the State to the supporters of Pakistan which they can never hope to have under the present circumstances. They would be able to appoint their own men in the administration, use intimidation and trickery in order to press people to vote against their will and generally falsify the plebiscite, and they certainly would not hesitate to do all that they could for that end. It might very well knock all the good cards out of Abdullah's hands and smash up his present predominant chances of a favourable issue of the plebiscite.

There is a passage in your article containing a trenchant suggestion which has puzzled me. You seem to say that India has been beaten on the military ground in Kashmir and there is no hope of her keeping it or clearing out the invaders; her last chance is the plebiscite and that is the reason why she is insisting on the plebiscite. Is that at all true? It would mean that Indian military strength is unable to cope with that of Pakistan and then, if she cannot cope with it in Kashmir in spite of her initial advantage, can she do it anywhere? If she gives up Kashmir because of her military weakness that encourages Pakistan to carry through Jinnah's plan with regard to the establishment of Muslim rule in Northern India and they will try it out. I don't think this is really the case. It was for political motives, I take it, and not from a consciousness of military weakness that India did not push her initial advantage, and she insisted on the plebiscite, not because it was her last or only chance but because it gave her the best chance. In a plebiscite on the single and straight issue of joining either Pakistan or India she was and is quite confident of an overwhelming majority in her favour. Moreover, she does not cling to the plebiscite from motives of ideological purity and will even refuse it if it is to be held on any conditions other than those she has herself clearly and insistently laid down. She is quite prepared to withdraw the case from the cognizance of the U.N.O and retain Kashmir by her own means and even, if necessary, by fight to the finish, if that is unavoidable. That Patel has made quite clear and uncompromisingly positive and Nehru has not been less positive. Both of them are determined to resist to the bitter end any attempt to force a solution which is not consistent with the democratic will of the Kashmir people and their right of self-determination of their own destiny. At the same time they are trying to avoid a clash if it is at all possible.

One thing which both Abdullah and the India Government want to avoid and have decided to resist by all possible means is a partition of Kashmir, especially with Gilgit and Northern Kashmir going to Pakistan. This is the greatest danger but the details and the reasons for the possibility of its materialising, though they are plain enough, have to be kept confidential or, at any rate, not to be discussed in public. But if you take account of it, it will be easier to understand the situation and the whole policy of the India Government. That at least is the stand taken by them and the spirit of the terms they have laid down for the conditions of the plebiscite. These conditions have been just at this moment published in the newspapers and the whole course of negotiations with the U.N.O. Kashmir Commission has been laid bare in a public statement. Practically, the Commission representative has conceded on its part almost all the essential demands and conditions laid down by Nehru. All, however, remains fluid until and unless the Security Council acquiesces in the arrangements proposed by their own Commission or else take a different decision and until the plebiscite Administrator is appointed and makes the final arrangements. What will finally transpire from all this lies as the Greeks used to say on the knees of the Gods, *theōn en gounasi keitai*. It lies also with the reactions of the Pakistan leaders which are more easily calculable, but may not show themselves until a possibly much later date.

In any case, it seems to me that our only course is to support the India Government in the stand they are taking in regard to Kashmir and the terms and conditions they have made, so long as they do not weaken and deviate from their position. Nothing should be said which would discourage the public mind or call away the support which the Government needs in maintaining the right course. What I have written on Kashmir is only my personal view at present based on the information I have and must be kept quite private. But it may perhaps be of some help to you in determining what you may say or not say about Kashmir.

Since the above was written there has appeared Pakistan's interpretation of the Commission's arrangement for the plebiscite. It looks as if Lozano had made his statements as smooth as possible to either party so that they got very different impressions of what was meant to be done. However there is only one important point and that is about the Azad armies. If these are allowed to remain in arms in the places they now occupy the plebiscite will become a farce. But the India authorities seem to have received a definite promise from Lozano that it will be otherwise. We shall have to wait and see what will be the definite arrangements and how the Commission will get out of this imbroglio. But Pakistan in this matter is showing a mentality that makes one wonder whether it is worth while your suggesting the possibility of an amicable rapproachment between the two parts of partitioned India such as you have gone out of your way to elaborate in your article.

c. September 1949

On "New Year Thoughts"

Some of the statements in your article[4] do not seem to me quite convincing, as for instance, the suggestion that one cannot be highly ethical or exaltedly ethical without being religious or highly religious or even a mystic without knowing it. The article is tremendously manysided and some readers might find it difficult to fit all the sides together; but I put this remark forward as an observation and not as an objection. Manysidedness is a merit and cannot be regarded as objectionable. Finally I want my "face" in the last sentence to be left out of the picture. I feel its appearance as an unexpected intrusion there; it had better retire into privacy. As for Nehru, I suppose the fling at him cannot be regarded as offensive, but I would rather like it, for reasons of my own, if there came upon you a temporary amnesia about his existence.

1 January 1950

Rishis as Leaders

The article can go as the editorial as you propose and the other arrangements are all right. But I must insist that the last words

---

[4] *"New Year Thoughts on Pacifism", by K. D. Sethna. This article was published in* Mother India *on 7 January 1951. The printed version incorporated changes suggested by Sri Aurobindo in this letter. — Ed.*

"till we put ourselves in the care of some Rishis among leaders" shall go out. I do not know of course who may be acclaimed as the Rishi in question, — the only one with a recognised claim to the title is not likely to be called from Tiruvannamalai to Delhi and would certainly refuse his consent to the transfer. But it is evident that the eyes of your readers will turn at once towards Pondicherry and consider that it is a claim for my appointment either to the place filled so worthily by C. R. or the kindred place admirably occupied by Nehru. I am a candidate for neither office and any suggestion of my promotion to these high offices should be left to other announcers and the last place in which it should occur is Mother India. So out with the "Rishi". You may say if you like "till the eyes of India's leaders see more clearly and we can take our place at your side" or any other equally innocent phrase.

January 1950

On Military Action

Amal,

Sri Aurobindo's information is that the India Government cannot be justly taxed with unwillingness to take even the strongest action demanded by the situation. But there are difficulties in the way hinging on the [attitude][5] of the U.N.O. and the possibility of taking action which could from the military point of view disable a successful prosecution of the necessary action involved in the step we want them to take. Certain means are necessary for military success and we can have them only from America. So it is better not to write in haste or to get the facts of the situation and base what you write upon that. This does not mean that the action has not to be taken but that it cannot be lightly done; if by a little delay and some secrecy and caution the difficulty can be overcome or avoided, that may be necessary however unpalatable.

6.3.50

---

[5] *MS (dictated)* altitude

The Nehru-Liaquat Pact and After

Amal

I am writing to explain the indications I had given of my view that a change has taken place in the situation owing to the Nehru-Liaquat Pact making the position I took in the letter to Dilip[6] no longer quite valid and necessitating a halt for a reconsideration and decision of policy. I gather from what you have written that you are rather surprised by my view of things and think that there is no change in the situation; you seem to regard the Pact as a futile affair not likely to succeed or to make any change in the situation and foredoomed to speedy failure. I would like to know what are the grounds for this view if you really hold it. I am quite prepared to learn that the situation is quite different from what it seems to be but that must be based on facts and the facts published in the newspapers or claimed as true by the Congress leaders point in a different direction. There seems to be something, initially at least, like a radical change in the situation and I have to face it, look at the possible and probable consequences and decide what has to be done.

What was the situation when the Dilip letter was written and what is it today? At that time everything had been pushed to a point at which war still seemed inevitable. The tension between Pakistan and India had grown more and more intolerable in every aspect, the massacres in East Bengal still seemed to make war inevitable and the India Government had just before Nehru's attempt to patch up a compromise made ready to march its army over the East Bengal borders once a few preliminaries had been arranged and war in Kashmir would have inevitably followed. America and Britain would not have been able to support Pakistan and, if our information is correct, had already intimated their inability to prevent India Government from taking the only possible course open to it in face of the massacres. In the circumstances the end of Pakistan would have been the certain consequence of war. The object we had in view would have been within sight of achievement.

---

[6] *See the letter of 4 April 1950, published on pages 506–7. — Ed.*

Now all this is changed. After the conclusion of the Pact, after its acceptance by the Congress Party and the Assembly and its initial success of organisation and implementation, its acceptance also in both Western and Eastern Pakistan, no outbreak of war can take place at least for some time to come and, unless the Pact fails, it may not take place. That may mean in certain contingencies the indefinite perpetuation of the existence of Pakistan and disappearance of the prospect of any unification of India. I regard the Pact as an exceedingly clever move of Liaquat Ali to fish his "nation" out of the desperate situation into which it had run itself and to secure its safe survival. I will not go elaborately into the reasons for my view and I am quite prepared for events breaking out which will alter the situation once more in an opposite sense. But I had to take things as they are or seem to be, weigh everything and estimate the position and make my decisions. I will not say more in this letter, though I may have much to say hereafter: you should be able to understand from what I have written why I have reversed my course. Our central object and the real policy of the paper stands, but what steps have to be taken or can be taken in the new circumstances can only be seen in the light of future developments.

Meanwhile I await your answer with regard to the question I have put you. Afterwards I shall write again especially about the stand to be taken by Mother India.

3.5.50

On the Communist Movement

September 19, 1950

Naturally I am in agreement with the views expressed about Communism in the Manifesto,[7] but before associating myself fully with Masani's organisation and his movement I will have to wait and see how it develops in the field of practical politics.

---

[7] *"Manifesto for the Defence of Democracy and Independence in Asia", by Swatantra Party leader Minoo Masani. — Ed.*

For similar reasons I might expect you as editor of M.I. to wait and see and in that case it would be logical to withhold your signature while expressing your sympathy with the movement. Whatever is done must be something strong and effective, a blow that can tell; otherwise, the Communist movement has become so powerful that it can feed upon the shocks one tries to give it as one can see in the tussle that is going on in the UNO. As to Desai's objections, it seems to me that if any movement of the kind is made it would be worth while to make it as widely representative as possible and in that case the Socialists like Jai Prakash who distrust and are opposed to Communism would have to be included. There is such a thing as social democracy which need not be confused with Communism as it has its own more manageable standpoints: of course I agree with Desai as regards our standing on the side of Western democracies.

Part Four

Public Statements and Notices concerning Sri Aurobindo's Ashram and Yoga 1927–1949

Section One

Public Statements and Notices concerning the Ashram

1927 – 1937

Public Statements about the Ashram
1927 and 1934

On the Ashram's Finances (1927)

Many would like to know how the Ashrama here is maintained.[1] As a matter of fact there is as yet no regular source of income; it has been carried on in the past by the contributions of a few who are in sympathy with the work and can afford to give some help. But these means are not likely to be sufficient for the future. I understand that Sri Aurobindo's work has to pass through three stages, the first when he was finding out the spiritual path and laying the foundations of his sadhana, a second, now begun, for creating a nucleus of spiritual workers and a number of institutions as the basis for his work, and last, the full work in India and abroad which will be very wide. For Sri Aurobindo's Sadhana is not merely for himself or a few disciples; it is a foundation for a great spiritual work for India and for all the world. In the first stage, the personal wants of Sri Aurobindo and the few disciples who lived with him being few and simple, much help was not needed; for there were no other expenses. But now in the second stage of his work this is no longer the case. The Ashrama will have to buy the houses it is now renting in order to prevent any possibility of dispersion. Numbers of disciples are beginning to stream in and, however economical the style of living, the cost of maintenance is greatly increasing and will go on increasing; the institutions to be started will need equipment and funds for maintenance. All this means large financial means which must come in from now onward and go on growing in the future. The members of the Ashrama expect that if the means are forthcoming, the second stage of the work will be not only carried on but thoroughly consolidated in the next two or three years and the third started. There ought surely to be no difficulty about satisfying this condition. In India Sri Aurobindo's is still a name to conjure with and, when the need is known I think those who have the power among the thousands who have faith in him and revere him, will not fail to send in their assistance. 1927

---

[1] *Sri Aurobindo wrote this paragraph for insertion in an article written by Jatindranath Sen Gupta and published in the* Hindu *(Madras) on 6 May 1927. This explains Sri Aurobindo's use of the third person. — Ed.*

On the Ashram (1934)

Sri Aurobindo's Asram

In order to remove many misunderstandings which seem to have grown up about his Asram in Pondicherry Sri Aurobindo considers it necessary to issue the following explicit statement.[2]

An Asram means the house or houses of a Teacher or Master of spiritual philosophy in which he receives and lodges those who come to him for the teaching and practice. An Asram is not an association or a religious body or a monastery — it is only what has been indicated above and nothing more.

Everything in the Asram belongs to the Teacher; the sadhaks (those who practise under him) have no claim, right or voice in any matter. They remain or go according to his will. Whatever money he receives is his property and not that of a public body. It is not a trust or a fund, for there is no public institution. Such Asrams have existed in India since many centuries before Christ and still exist in large numbers. All depends on the Teacher and ends with his life-time, unless there is another Teacher who can take his place.

The Asram in Pondicherry came into being in this way. Sri Aurobindo at first lived in Pondicherry with a few inmates in his house; afterwards a few more joined him. Later on after the Mother joined him, in 1920, the numbers began so much to increase that it was thought necessary to make an arrangement for lodging those who came and houses were bought and rented according to need for the purpose. Arrangements had also to be made for the maintenance, repair, rebuilding of houses, for the service of food and for decent living and hygiene. All those were private rules made by the Mother and entirely at her discretion to increase, modify or alter — there is nothing in them of a public character.

---

[2] *This statement was published anonymously in the* Hindu *of Madras on 20 February 1934 and in pamphlets entitled "The Teaching and the Asram of Sri Aurobindo" in March and August 1934. In every case it was followed by "Sri Aurobindo's Teaching" (see pages 547–50). It is reproduced here for its historical interest. — Ed.*

All houses of the Asram are owned either by Sri Aurobindo or by the Mother. All the money spent belongs either to Sri Aurobindo or the Mother. Money is given by many to help in Sri Aurobindo's work. Some who are here give their earnings, but it is given to Sri Aurobindo or the Mother and not to the Asram as a public body, for there is no such body.

The Asram is not an association; there is no constituted body, no officials, no common property owned by an association, no governing council or committee, no activity undertaken of a public character.

The Asram is not a political institution; all association with political activities is renounced by those who live here. All propaganda, religious, political or social, has to be eschewed by the inmates.

The Asram is not a religious association. Those who are here come from all religions and some are of no religion. There is no creed or set of dogmas, no governing religious body; there are only the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and certain psychological practices of concentration and meditation, etc., for the enlarging of the consciousness, receptivity to the Truth, mastery over the desires, the discovery of the divine self and consciousness concealed within each human being, a higher evolution of the nature. February 1934

Notices for Members of the Ashram 1928–1937

Notices of May 1928

[1]

It has been found necessary to change some of the forms and methods hitherto used to help by external means the individual and collective sadhana. This has to be done especially in regard to the consecration of food, the collective meditation and the individual contact of the sadhaka with the Mother. The existing forms were originally arranged in order to make possible a spiritual and psychic communion on the most physical and external planes by which there would be an interchange of forces, a continuous increase of the higher consciousness on the physical plane, a more and more rapid change of the external nature of the sadhakas and afterwards an increasing descent of the supramental light and power into Matter. But for this to be done there was needed a true and harmonious interchange, the Mother leading, the sadhakas following her realisation and progress. The Mother would raise all by a free self-giving of her forces, the sadhakas would realise in themselves her realisations and would by the force of an unfaltering aspiration and a surrender free from narrow personal demand and self-regarding littleness, consecrated wholly to the divine work, return her forces for a new progress. At first partly realised, this rhythm of interchange has existed less and less. The whole burden of the progress has fallen physically on the body of the Mother; for the forces it gives it receives little or nothing in exchange; the more its consciousness advances in the light, the more it is pulled back towards the unchanged obscurity of an unprogressive external nature. These conditions create an intolerable and useless strain and make the forms used at once unprofitable and unsafe. Other means will have to be found hereafter for the purpose.

Meanwhile modifications of form will have to be made in several details and others suppressed altogether. 26 May 1928

[2]

Meditation on all days of the week except Wednesday and Friday.

Flower offering on Tuesday and Thursday; none on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. May 1928

[3]

Meditation at 7.0 a.m. as before.

All fixed or daily times for sadhakas seeing the Mother are cancelled. Every day the Mother will call those whom she wants to see. Any others who need to see her will inform Nalini early in the morning or the night before and write the reason for their request which will be acceded to or otherwise dealt with according to circumstances and possibilities.

The soup will be distributed in the evening in the downstairs verandah of Sri Aurobindo's house. All who take it must be present at 8.30 and remain seated in silence till the Mother comes. Before the distribution there will be a few minutes concentration all together.

The night meditations are cancelled for a time.

—

On the 1st of each month the distribution from the stores will be made in the store-room in the presence of the Mother at 8 P.M.

=

May 1928

Notices of 1929–1937

[*These notices were written by Sri Aurobindo, typed by his secretary and posted on the Ashram notice-board.*]

[1]

NOTICE

All who wish to be present at the drawing of the lottery, must come to the verandah downstairs in Sri Aurobindo's house after soup on Saturday, the 7th. Tickets will be distributed to them there.

September 5, 1929

[2]

NOTICE

It is not advisable that all should give up milk immediately. If it is to be done, it can only be when arrangements have been made for a substitute.

The only objection to the milk was that two cows were sick and their unhealthy milk was being mixed with the rest. But these two have now been sent away and there is no farther danger.

September 17, 1929

[3]

Notice

There have been several instances recently in which members of the Asram have been rude and overbearing in their behaviour to the French police when they come to the Asram in connection with the registration of new arrivals. There can be no possible excuse for this kind of conduct, especially as the police authorities have agreed to our own proposals in the matter and we have undertaken to help them with all necessary information. Sri Aurobindo has already given a warning against making trouble for the Asram with the authorities; it ought not to be necessary to repeat it.

Especial care must be taken during these days when many are arriving from outside. If the police come for information, they must not be sent rudely away; they should be asked to wait and information must immediately be given to Purani who will deal with the matter.

1 August 1929

[4]

This Asram, maintaining almost a hundred people, has to be run at a heavy expense; it is therefore the understanding that while those who have nothing (the majority) are admitted free and nothing is asked from them, the few who have something are expected to give what they have. If they wish to have the charge of their whole spiritual and material future taken over by us, it is at least fair that they should make the offering of all their possessions.

December 1, 1929 Sri Aurobindo

[5]

An unique opportunity presents itself for the acquisition of a land of great value, specially prepared and large enough to supply all that the Asram needs of rice, of vegetables and more and also to maintain cows and a dairy so that the Asram can consume its own milk. The land is offered at an extraordinarily favourable rate. Originally offered at 66,000, it is now to be had at Rs 25,000.

The Mother wants to know if there is anyone in the Asram or connected with it or sympathetic with it who can get or procure the sum needed so that we may not lose the opportunity for this purchase.

3.3.33 Sri Aurobindo

[6]

In view of the approaching intended visit of Mahatma Gandhi the sadhaks are reminded that it is contrary to the rule of the Asram to join in any public demonstration such as meetings, lectures, receptions or departures. It is expected that they will observe strictly this rule.

3-2-34 Sri Aurobindo

[7]

Notice

As the Mother needs complete rest, there will be no pronam or evening darshan. All interviews are countermanded until farther notice and no books or letters are to be sent to her.

Sri Aurobindo

For today also it will be better if the sadhaks send no work to me.

14.6.34

[8]

Notice.

There will be no pronam or interviews today. No books or correspondence are to be sent.

The answers to yesterday's correspondence to which Sri Aurobindo had no time to attend last night, will be sent today or tomorrow as soon as he has time.

Sri Aurobindo

Tuesday. 17 July. [1934]

[9]

NOTICE

1. All letters in the evening should henceforth be sent in by 8.30 and all books by 9.30. After these times only communications on urgent matters such as illness etc can be received. Those who send in books and letters after the fixed hours cannot be sure of their communications being dealt with and must not expect an answer.

2. From now to the 15th August and afterwards sadhaks are asked to limit their letters as much as possible to what is necessary and important.

3. Those who send books daily to the Mother (apart from departmental reports) are asked to send them only twice a week or at most thrice on fixed days.

These recommendations have to be made because at present there is an excess of work for the Mother which prevents both sufficient rest and the concentration necessary for more important things that have to be done. The correspondence has come to engross all the time not given to Pranam and interviews and interferes with or entirely prevents more important sides of the work. It is necessary to impose a more reasonable proportion and set right the balance. It is to be hoped that the sadhaks will themselves cooperate willingly in getting this done.

July 17, 1934.

Sri Aurobindo

[10]

Notice about the Rosary terrace[1]

Those who are not inmates of this compound cannot come on the Rosary terrace without special permission from the Mother.

4 August 1934

---

[1] *The heading of this notice was written by the Mother. — Ed.*

[11]

NOTICE

1. Those who are waiting for the Pranam before the Mother comes down, should remain quiet and silent so that all who wish to prepare themselves by concentration may be able to do so and the right atmosphere may be created for the Meditation.

2. No one should come out or go in from the time the Meditation has begun up to its ending.

3. Laughing, whispering or talk should not be indulged in in the Pranam hall while the Pranam is going on.

4. No one should look upon the Pranam either as a formal routine or an obligatory ceremony or think himself under any compulsion to come there. The object of the Pranam is not that sadhaks should offer a formal or a ritual daily homage to the Mother, but that the sadhaks may receive along with the Mother's blessing whatever spiritual help or influence they are in a condition to receive and assimilate. It is important to maintain a quiet and collected atmosphere favourable for that purpose.

11 August, 1934 Sri Aurobindo

[12]

NOTICE

From today onward till a week after the 24th the sending of books and correspondence is suspended. Only urgent communications (e.g. medical reports), necessary information and things of importance that cannot wait should be sent during this time.

16 November 1934 Sri Aurobindo

[13]

NOTICE

Correspondence can be resumed from Monday the 3d December. At the same time I am obliged to remind the sadhaks of what I had written in my notice before the 15th August last. Since then the situation is no better. On the contrary the volume of correspondence, books and reports had considerably increased and the Mother had often less than four hours rest out of the twenty-four. This is a strain that cannot be allowed to continue. I must therefore again ask the sadhaks to use more discretion in this matter so that it may not be necessary to multiply the non-correspondence days or make restrictive rules so as to limit the amount of correspondence.

1.12.1934 Sri Aurobindo

[14]

Until farther notice sadhaks are requested not to go to the Dispensary for medicines or treatment without special permission or order from the Mother. late 1934

[15]

Notice

When the Ashram is shown to visitors, the Dispensary must be omitted from the parts shown hereafter. late 1934

[16]

NOTICE

As usual in view of the coming Darshan, books and regular correspondence have to be suspended until after the 21st. Notice will be given when they can be resumed.

Medical reports are not to be discontinued. Letters giving urgent or necessary information or communications of importance that cannot be delayed can be sent. But all such correspondence should as a rule be as brief as possible.[2]

7.2.35 Sri Aurobindo

[17]

NOTICE

The withdrawal of the previous notice about correspondence does not mean that books, letters etc. can be sent as before. Only what is necessary or important should be sent for the present.

20-3-35 Sri Aurobindo

[18]

NOTICE

In view of the approach of the darshan day books and correspondence are suspended from Saturday the 27th July until farther notice. This notice is necessary because correspondence for 2 or 3 months had become as heavy as before.

Are excepted medical reports and such departmental reports as the Mother may direct to continue; also communications on matters of urgent importance.

Those who are accustomed to write regularly about their sadhana may continue to write once a week during this period if they find it necessary.

July 26, 1935 Sri Aurobindo

---

[2] *When this notice was taken down, Sri Aurobindo wrote to his secretary on the bottom of the typed copy:*

Nolini

Tajdar has taken off this notice — but I do not want all the floods of books and correspondence back again. You should put up a notice that the withdrawal does not mean that all the books and correspondence can come as before. Only what is necessary or important should be sent for the present.

In response to this Nolini drafted the notice of 20 March 1935. — Ed.

[19]

NOTICE

As at this time the number of those taking meals increases greatly, all are requested to keep regularly to the fixed hours. The arrangement for late comers can be allowed only for those who are detained by the Mother's work and for no one else.

7.8.1935

[20]

NOTICE

In view of the coming Darshan correspondence is suspended for the rest of the month except for urgent or indispensable communications. Medical reports to be sent as usual and any other departmental reports the continuance of which the Mother may think necessary.

Sri Aurobindo November 10, 1935

[21]

NOTICE

The withdrawal of the previous notice about correspondence does not mean that books, letters etc. can be sent as before. Only what is necessary or important should be sent for the present.

In future letters and personal books should be sent in by 7 P.M. and not later.

It may be necessary, as there is no longer sufficient time in the afternoon, to discontinue the afternoon mail except for urgent answers.[3]

December 2, 1935 Sri Aurobindo

---

[3] *This is an enlarged version of the notice of 20 March 1935 (see notice 17 above). Sri Aurobindo added the last two paragraphs by hand. — Ed.*

[22]

The attention of the sadhaks is called to the terms of the Notice of the 2^{d} December.

It is quite impossible for us at the present time to go on again dealing with masses of correspondence which keep the Mother after her day's work still occupied up to the small hours of the morning and myself answering letters all the night. Under such conditions the really important work we have to do cannot be done.

The sadhaks are asked to restrict their correspondence to what is necessary only, to a minimum.

The rule that no letters should be sent after 7 pm must also be observed. We cannot have personal books and letters pouring in till late at night.

It is also necessary to recall the fact that Sunday is a complete non-correspondence day. Latterly this rule seems to have been too much ignored, often forgotten altogether.

Sri Aurobindo

[23]

NOTICE

In view of the coming darshan correspondence is suspended till farther notice. Departmental and medical reports as usual.

July 31, 1936 Sri Aurobindo

[24]

It has become necessary to remind the sadhaks of two of the rules about correspondence which are now being disregarded —

(1) that Sunday is a non-correspondence day.

(2) that letters have to be given in by 7 pm or at the latest before 8 pm. Only departmental books and reports can be sent in later, but these also not too late.

If letters continue to come in at all hours, it will become impossible to deal with the correspondence.

August 31, 1936 Sri Aurobindo

[25]

NOTICE

In view of the coming darshan correspondence is suspended; subject to the usual exceptions (medical reports etc), throughout the month of November.

November 1, 1936 Sri Aurobindo

[26]

NOTICE

It has been found necessary to extend the non-correspondence period; it will continue until further orders.

28.2.37 Sri Aurobindo

[27]

NOTICE

During the Darshan time from today correspondence should be suspended.

August 1, 1937 Sri Aurobindo

Section Two

Public Statements about Sri Aurobindo's Path of Yoga 1934 and 1949

Sri Aurobindo's Teaching[1]

The teaching of Sri Aurobindo starts from that of the ancient sages of India that behind the appearances of the universe there is the Reality of a Being and Consciousness, a Self of all things one and eternal. All beings are united in that One Self and Spirit but divided by a certain separativity of consciousness, an ignorance of their true Self and Reality in the mind, life and body. It is possible by a certain psychological discipline to remove this veil of separative consciousness and become aware of the true Self, the Divinity within us and all.

Sri Aurobindo's teaching states that this One Being and Consciousness is involved here in Matter. Evolution is the method by which it liberates itself; consciousness appears in what seems to be inconscient, and once having appeared is self-impelled to grow higher and higher and at the same time to enlarge and develop towards a greater and greater perfection. Life is the first step of this release of consciousness; mind is the second; but the evolution does not finish with mind, it awaits a release into something greater, a consciousness which is spiritual and supramental. The next step of the evolution must be towards the development of Supermind and Spirit as the dominant power in the conscious being. For only then will the involved Divinity in things release itself entirely and it become possible for life to manifest perfection.

But while the former steps in evolution were taken by Nature without a conscious will in the plant and animal life, in man Nature becomes able to evolve by a conscious will in the instrument. It is not however by the mental will in man that this can be wholly done, for the mind goes only to a certain point and after that can only move in a circle. A conversion has to be made, a turning of the consciousness by which mind has to change into the higher principle. This method is to be found through the ancient psychological discipline and practice of Yoga. In the past it has been attempted by a drawing away from the world and a disappearance into the height of the Self or Spirit. Sri Aurobindo teaches that a descent of the higher principle is possible which will not merely release the spiritual Self out of the world, but release it in the world, replace the mind's ignorance or its very limited knowledge by a supramental truth-consciousness which will be a sufficient instrument of the inner Self and make it possible for the human being to find himself dynamically as well as inwardly and grow out of his still animal humanity into a diviner race. The psychological discipline of Yoga can be used to that end by opening all the parts of the being to a conversion or transformation through the descent and working of the higher still concealed supramental principle.

---

[1] *This statement was published along with "Sri Aurobindo's Asram" (see pages 530–31) in the* Hindu *of Madras on 20 February 1934 and in pamphlets entitled "The Teaching and the Asram of Sri Aurobindo" in March and August 1934. It has been reproduced many times since then. — Ed.*

This however cannot be done at once or in a short time or by any rapid or miraculous transformation. Many steps have to be taken by the seeker before the supramental descent is possible. Man lives mostly in his surface mind, life and body but there is an inner being within him with greater possibilities to which he has to awake — for it is only a very restricted influence from it that he receives now and that pushes him to a constant pursuit of a greater beauty, harmony, power and knowledge. The first process of Yoga is therefore to open the ranges of this inner being and to live from there outward, governing his outward life by an inner light and force. In doing so he discovers in himself his true soul which is not this outer mixture of mental, vital and physical elements but something of the Reality behind them, a spark from the one Divine Fire. He has to learn to live in his soul and purify and orientate by its drive towards the Truth the rest of the nature. There can follow afterwards an opening upward and descent of a higher principle of the Being. But even then it is not at once the full supramental Light and Force. For there are several ranges of consciousness between the ordinary human mind and the supramental Truth-consciousness. These intervening ranges have to be opened up and their power brought down into the mind, life and body. Only afterwards can the full power of the Truth-consciousness work in the nature. The process of this self-discipline or sadhana is therefore long and difficult, but even a little of it is so much gained because it makes the ultimate release and perfection more possible.

There are many things belonging to older systems that are necessary on the way — an opening of the mind to a greater wideness and to the sense of the Self and the Infinite, an emergence into what has been called the cosmic consciousness, mastery over the desires and passions; an outward asceticism is not essential, but the conquest of desire and attachment and a control over the body and its needs, greeds and instincts is indispensable. There is a combination of the old systems: the way of knowledge through the mind's discernment between Reality and the appearance, the heart's way of devotion, love and surrender and the way of works turning the will away from motives of self-interest to the Truth and the service of a greater Reality than the ego. For the whole being has to be trained so that it can respond and be transformed when it is possible for that greater Light and Force to work in the nature.

In this discipline, the inspiration of the Master, and in the difficult stages his control and his presence are indispensable — for it would be impossible otherwise to go through it without much stumbling and error which would prevent all chance of success. The Master is one who has risen to a higher consciousness and being and he is often regarded as its manifestation or representative. He not only helps by his teaching and still more by his influence and example but by a power to communicate his own experience to others.

This is Sri Aurobindo's teaching and method of practice. It is not his object to develop any one religion or to amalgamate the older religions or to found any new religion, for any of these things would lead away from his central purpose. The one aim of his Yoga is an inner self-development by which each one who follows it can in time discover the one Self in all and evolve a higher consciousness than the mental, a spiritual and supramental consciousness which will transform and divinise human nature.

February 1934

A Message to America

I have been asked to send on this occasion of the fifteenth August a message to the West, but what I have to say might be delivered equally as a message to the East. It has been customary to dwell on the division and difference between these two sections of the human family and even oppose them to each other; but, for myself I would rather be disposed to dwell on oneness and unity than on division and difference. East and West have the same human nature, a common human destiny, the same aspiration after a greater perfection, the same seeking after something higher than itself, something towards which inwardly and even outwardly we move. There has been a tendency in some minds to dwell on the spirituality or mysticism of the East and the materialism of the West; but the West has had no less than the East its spiritual seekings and, though not in such profusion, its saints and sages and mystics, the East has had its materialistic tendencies, its material splendours, its similar or identical dealings with life and Matter and the world in which we live. East and West have always met and mixed more or less closely, they have powerfully influenced each other and at the present day are under an increasing compulsion of Nature and Fate to do so more than ever before.

There is a common hope, a common destiny, both spiritual and material, for which both are needed as co-workers. It is no longer towards division and difference that we should turn our minds, but on unity, union, even oneness necessary for the pursuit and realisation of a common ideal, the destined goal, the fulfilment towards which Nature in her beginning obscurely set out and must in an increasing light of knowledge replacing her first ignorance constantly persevere.

But what shall be that ideal and that goal? That depends on our conception of the realities of life and the supreme Reality.

Here we have to take into account that there has been, not any absolute difference but an increasing divergence between the tendencies of the East and the West. The highest truth is truth of the Spirit; a Spirit supreme above the world and yet immanent in the world and in all that exists, sustaining and leading all towards whatever is the aim and goal and the fulfilment of Nature since her obscure inconscient beginnings through the growth of consciousness is the one aspect of existence which gives a clue to the secret of our being and a meaning to the world. The East has always and increasingly put the highest emphasis on the supreme truth of the Spirit; it has, even in its extreme philosophies, put the world away as an illusion and regarded the Spirit as the sole reality. The West has concentrated more and more increasingly on the world, on the dealings of mind and life with our material existence, on our mastery over it, on the perfection of mind and life and some fulfilment of the human being here: latterly this has gone so far as the denial of the Spirit and even the enthronement of Matter as the sole reality. Spiritual perfection as the sole ideal on one side, on the other, the perfectibility of the race, the perfect society, a perfect development of the human mind and life and man's material existence have become the largest dream of the future. Yet both are truths and can be regarded as part of the intention of the Spirit in world-nature; they are not incompatible with each other: rather their divergence has to be healed and both have to be included and reconciled in our view of the future.

The Science of the West has discovered evolution as the secret of life and its process in this material world; but it has laid more stress on the growth of form and species than on the growth of consciousness: even, consciousness has been regarded as an incident and not the whole secret of the meaning of the evolution. An evolution has been admitted by certain minds in the East, certain philosophies and Scriptures, but there its sense has been the growth of the soul through developing or successive forms and many lives of the individual to its own highest reality. For if there is a conscious being in the form, that being can hardly be a temporary phenomenon of consciousness; it must be a soul fulfilling itself and this fulfilment can only take place if there is a return of the soul to earth in many successive lives, in many successive bodies.

The process of evolution has been the development from and in inconscient Matter of a subconscient and then a conscious Life, of conscious mind first in animal life and then fully in conscious and thinking man, the highest present achievement of evolutionary Nature. The achievement of mental being is at present her highest and tends to be regarded as her final work; but it is possible to conceive a still further step of the evolution: Nature may have in view beyond the imperfect mind of man a consciousness that passes out of the mind's ignorance and possesses truth as its inherent right and nature. There is a truth-consciousness as it is called in the Veda, a supermind, as I have termed it, possessing Knowledge, not having to seek after it and constantly miss it. In one of the Upanishads a being of knowledge is stated to be the next step above the mental being; into that the soul has to rise and through it to attain the perfect bliss of spiritual existence. If that could be achieved as the next evolutionary step of Nature here, then she would be fulfilled and we could conceive of the perfection of life even here, its attainment of a full spiritual living even in this body or it may be in a perfected body. We could even speak of a divine life on earth; our human dream of perfectibility would be accomplished and at the same time the aspiration to a heaven on earth common to several religions and spiritual seers and thinkers.

The ascent of the human soul to the supreme Spirit is that soul's highest aim and necessity, for that is the supreme reality; but there can be too the descent of the Spirit and its powers into the world and that would justify the existence of the material world also, give a meaning, a divine purpose to the creation and solve its riddle. East and West could be reconciled in the pursuit of the highest and largest ideal, Spirit embrace Matter and Matter find its own true reality and the hidden Reality in all things in the Spirit.

11-8-49 Sri Aurobindo

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES AND OTHER WRITINGS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST consists of notes, letters, telegrams and public statements written by Sri Aurobindo at various times that are of special interest to students of his life. The volume does not, as a rule, include letters written between 1927 and 1950. Most letters of biographical or historical interest from that period are included in *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, volume 35 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

The contents of the present volume have been arranged by the editors in four parts, each of which is divided into two or three sections.

PART ONE
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Sri Aurobindo never wrote, of his own volition, anything autobiographical in the ordinary sense of the word. He wrote most of the notes in this part to correct statements made by others.

Section One
Life Sketches and Other Autobiographical Notes

Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch. Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece in June 1930 for publication in *Among the Great*, a book written by his disciple Dilip Kumar Roy. He used the third person because he wished the piece to appear as an impersonal statement from an anonymous "authoritative source". *Among the Great* consists of accounts of Dilip's meetings and excerpts from his correspondence with five eminent contemporaries — Romain Rolland, Mahatma Gandhi, Bertrand Russell, Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo. Dilip began working on his manuscript sometime during the late 1920s. Around September 1928, he sent portions of it, including a life sketch written by him, to Sri

Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo's remarks on this life sketch are published as item [1] of the Appendix (see page 11). In November 1928, Dilip became a member of the Ashram. A year and a half later, in March 1930, he learned that a publisher in New York was interested in his book. On the fifteenth of that month, he wrote giving this information to Sri Aurobindo and submitting some material he wished to have included in the book. Sri Aurobindo's response is reproduced as item [2] of the Appendix (page 11). Dilip was unwilling to accept Sri Aurobindo's suggestion to "omit all account or narrative". He sent another draft of a life sketch, which Sri Aurobindo commented on in a letter of 25 March (pages 11 – 12). Finally Sri Aurobindo agreed to write a brief life sketch himself. On 1 June, in the course of a letter on another subject, he noted: "I shall see whether I can get the thing done (the facts of the life) in these ten days." The work was completed before 27 June, the date of the letter published on pages 12 – 13.

Among the Great was not accepted by the New York publisher. It was first brought out in India in 1945 (Bombay: Nalanda Publications). The "Life Sketch" appeared as an appendix to this edition, below the following note by Dilip: "*For the benefit of Western readers I append here a brief statement of the principal facts of Sri Aurobindo's public and merely outward life from an authoritative source.*" But the text of the "Life Sketch" had already been in print for several years. On 15 August 1934 the Calcutta fortnightly journal *Onward* reproduced an abridged version. (Other newspapers subsequently printed the complete text.) In 1937 Radhakanta Nag of the Arya Publishing House proposed bringing it out as a pamphlet. This idea was put before Sri Aurobindo on 23 February 1937. He gave his consent with a lukewarm "Very well." The booklet was published later the same year. In 1948 the text was reproduced, with a few editorial additions, in a booklet entitled "Sri Aurobindo and His Ashram" (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House). In subsequent editions of this booklet, the text of the "Life Sketch" underwent further editorial modifications. In 1975 a modified text appeared in Volume 30, *Index and Glossary*, of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. In April 1985 the original text was reproduced in *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research*. This was the first time that the "Life Sketch" was published as a text written by Sri Aurobindo. The editors of *Archives and Research* added two letters from Sri Aurobindo's correspondence with Dilip, which explain the circumstances of the text's composition and make it clear why he did not want it to be published as his. The same letters, along with three others, are published in the Appendix that follows the "Life Sketch" in the present volume.

Appendix: Letters on "Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch". [1] Circa September – October 1928. Sri Aurobindo wrote these sentences in the margin of a letter written by Dilip Kumar Roy shortly before he joined the Ashram in November 1928. [2] This paragraph is part of a letter from Sri Aurobindo to Dilip dated 16 March 1930. The balance of the letter deals with various writings by Sri Aurobindo that Dilip wanted to include in *Among the Great*. [3] 25 March 1930. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter after reading a "biography" (that is, a life sketch) written by Dilip for *Among the Great*. [4] The manuscript of this letter is not dated, but it apparently was written in June 1930. [5] 27 June 1930. This letter deals with the draft of a proposed note on Sri Aurobindo's "occidental education" (see the last sentence of letter [4]), which Dilip intended to add to Sri Aurobindo's "Life Sketch". In the printed text of the "Life Sketch" the paragraph that Sri Aurobindo placed here between inverted commas was printed as a footnote. The sentence about Sri Aurobindo's prizes and examinations, which he wanted to have omitted, was tacked on rather awkwardly as a closing parenthesis. In a typescript of the text that was submitted to him, Sri Aurobindo emended "to study Goethe and Dante" to "to read Goethe and Dante".

Incomplete Life Sketches. These pieces are from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts of the 1920s. The circumstances of their writing are not known.

Incomplete Life Sketch in Outline Form, c. 1922. Sri Aurobindo wrote this outline of his life up to 1914 sometime during the early 1920s. (The non-cooperation movement, mentioned in the text, began in August 1920 and ended in February 1922.)

Fragmentary Life Sketch, c. 1928. Sri Aurobindo wrote this isolated passage in 1928 or 1929 in a notebook used otherwise for notes on philosophy and yoga.

Autobiographical Notes. Two of these unrelated pieces are from the year 1903. The third (a revision of the second) is from 1928.

A Day in Srinagar. 1903, probably 30 May. Sri Aurobindo was in Kashmir from late May to mid September 1903. During this time he served as the private secretary to the Maharaja of Baroda. Letters that he wrote for the Maharaja while in Kashmir show that the royal party was in Srinagar at least three times: from 28 May (or slightly before) to 6 or 7 June, for a few days around 23 June, and again for ten days or more after 5 September. References in these diary notations make it seem likely that they were written during the first of the visits to the Kashmiri capital, that is, between 28 May and 6 June. The only Saturday during this period (omitting 6 June itself, which must have been spent making preparations to go to Icchabal, or "Archibal", as Sri Aurobindo spelled it) was 30 May 1903. This then is the likely date of these notes. The longer and shorter pieces separated here by an asterisk were written by Sri Aurobindo on separate pages of his notebook. The Sardesai mentioned in the first piece is no doubt Govind Sakharam Sardesai, the Marathi historian, who was an officer in the Maharaja's service. The Maharaja was often referred to as His Highness (H.H.). His chief Baroda residence was Lakshmi Vilas Palace, an imposing building that unsuccessfully tries to combine Italian, Indian and other architectural elements.

Information Supplied to the *King's College Register*. [1] 16 September 1903. While in Srinagar, Sri Aurobindo received a form from the editors of the *Register of Admissions* of his Cambridge college, asking him for information about his university and subsequent career. He filled out the form on 16 September and returned it. The text is reproduced here from the original form, which is preserved in the King's College Library. [2] 31 August 1928. A short biographical entry based on the information Sri Aurobindo submitted in 1903 was published in *A Register of Admissions to King's College Cambridge 1850–1900*, compiled by John J. Withers (London, 1903). In 1928 the editors of the second edition of this work sent a copy of the 1903 entry to Sri Aurobindo, asking him to correct and update it in the spaces provided. In the present text, the old entry is printed as it was submitted to Sri Aurobindo. Passages cancelled by him are set in "strike-out" mode, his additions in regular type. The text is reproduced from the original form, which is preserved in the King's College Library. The revised entry was published in *A Register of Admissions to King's College*

Cambridge 1797–1928, compiled by John J. Withers (London, 1929).

Section Two
Corrections of Statements Made in Biographies and Other Publications

Sri Aurobindo wrote these notes between 1943 and 1947 to correct erroneous or misleading statements about his life made in biographies, other books or newspaper articles that were submitted to him by the authors before publication or brought to his attention by others after publication. For the convenience of readers, the editors of the present volume have arranged the notes according to the dates of the events dealt with. In the paragraphs that follow, however, the editors discuss the notes in the approximate order in which Sri Aurobindo wrote them, treating notes occasioned by a given biography or article as a group.

(1) Notes on *Sri Aurobindo*, by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar. In February 1943, Dr. Iyengar, then Professor of English at Basaveshvar College, Bagalkot, brought to the Ashram the 133-page manuscript of a biography of Sri Aurobindo that he had written, in the hope that Sri Aurobindo would read and comment on it. Sri Aurobindo agreed, and made numerous corrections directly on Iyengar's manuscript. Around 35 of these corrections were typed, further corrected by Sri Aurobindo, retyped and corrected again. A copy of the final typed pages, consisting now of 39 notes, was given to Iyengar for incorporation in his book. Over the next ten months, Iyengar enlarged his manuscript to more than 300 pages. In November 1943 he brought it to the Ashram and left it with Sri Aurobindo for further correction. Sri Aurobindo did some work directly on the manuscript but wrote longer corrections on small note pads. Twenty-eight of these notes were typed and further revised. He finished this work before May 1944. A copy of his corrections was given to Iyengar, who incorporated them in the final manuscript of his book, which was published by the Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, in 1945. Most of the 67 notes that Sri Aurobindo wrote in 1943 and 1944 for Iyengar's use were published in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* in 1953. They were reprinted in *On Himself: Compiled from Notes and Letters* in 1972. All the published notes, along with a few smaller ones, are included in the present volume.

(2) Notes on *Yogi Arvind*, by V. D. Kulkarni. This book, written in Marathi, was published in 1935. Eight years later, in March 1943, a copy of it was shown to Sri Aurobindo, who wrote eight comments in the margins. These comments were first published in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* in 1953.

(3) Notes on material gathered by A. B. Purani, author of *The Life of Sri Aurobindo*. A disciple of Sri Aurobindo from 1918 and a member of the Ashram from 1923, Purani collected biographical material about Sri Aurobindo for a number of years, and published a biography of him in 1957. Sometime around 1943–45, Purani obtained three typed accounts of Sri Aurobindo's service in Baroda State, which he presented to Sri Aurobindo for correction. Sri Aurobindo wrote nine notes in the margins or between the lines of two of the sheets. He corrected the other account, entitled "Sri Aurobindo — An Officer in the Baroda State", by writing ten notes on separate sheets. All these notes were published for the first time in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* in 1978.

(4) Notes on *Sri Aurobindo o Banglay Swadeshi Jug*, by Girijashankar Raychaudhuri. This work appeared serially in the Bengali monthly *Udbodhan* during the 1940s and was published as a book by Navabharat Publishing, Calcutta, in 1956. Around 1943–45, A. B. Purani typed translations or paraphrases of passages from two *Udbodhan* instalments and gave them to Sri Aurobindo. In response, Sri Aurobindo wrote seven notes of various lengths. Around the same time he made the following comment about Girijashankar's biographical work:

> Girija Sankar's statements about Sri Aurobindo cannot be taken as they are; they are often based on false or twisted information, tend towards misrepresentation or are only inferences or guesses.

In one of the chapters of *Sri Aurobindo o Banglay Swadeshi Jug*, Girijashankar cited a letter written to him by Swami Sundarananda of the *Udbodhan* office, in which Sundarananda claimed that Sri Aurobindo visited Saradamani Devi, the widow of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, on his way to Chandernagore in 1910. This and other parts of Girijashankar's articles were shown to Sri Aurobindo, who on 15

December 1944 replied in the form of a letter to Charu Chandra Dutt, the substance of which was published in the *Udbodhan* (*Phalgun* 1351). The story about Sri Aurobindo's visit to Saradamani Devi was repeated by a certain K. Ghosh in a letter published in the *Hindusthan Standard* of 6 June 1945. In response, Sri Aurobindo dictated another letter, which was published in the *Sunday Times* of Madras on 24 June. Around the same time, Sri Aurobindo's disciple Sureshchandra Chakravarty, who was with him on his trip from Calcutta to Chandernagore, published an article dealing with that event in the *Baishakh* 1352 issue of *Prabasi*. In reply to this, Ramchandra Majumdar, who was with Sri Aurobindo and Sureshchandra for part of that night, published an article (*Prabasi, Sraban* 1352) questioning Sureshchandra's account. When this was brought to Sri Aurobindo's attention, he dictated a final statement in which he tried to set the record straight. This was not published during his lifetime, but it was used by his disciple Nolini Kanta Gupta in writing an article that was published in *Prabasi* in *Phalgun* 1352. The first two letters by Sri Aurobindo referred to above were published in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* in 1953. The third was published in *On Himself* in 1972.

(5) Notes on *Nivedita: Fille de l'Inde*, by Lizelle Reymond. This biography of Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble) was published by Éditions Victor Attinger, Paris and Neuchâtel, in 1945. In 1946, passages of Reymond's manuscript dealing with Sri Aurobindo were read out to him, and on 13 September of that year he dictated a reply in the form of a letter to his disciple Pavitra (P. B. Saint Hilaire). The letter to Pavitra was first published in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* in 1953.

(6) Notes on *Shri Aurobindo*, by Gabriel E. Monod-Herzen. A scientist and professor, Monod-Herzen lived in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram during the 1940s. In or around 1946, he submitted a manuscript of a biography he had written to Sri Aurobindo, who dictated 38 corrections to his amanuensis. These were typed and given to Monod-Herzen for use in his biography, written in French and published in 1954. Most of these notes were included in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and the Mother* in 1953.

While correcting Monod-Herzen's manuscript, Sri Aurobindo decided to write a separate note on his political life. This eventually became the twenty-page "General Note on Sri Aurobindo's Political Life" reproduced on pages 47–66. The typescript of this note is dated "Nov 7 1946". It was later revised and enlarged and in 1948 published anonymously in the booklet "Sri Aurobindo and His Ashram" (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House). It has appeared in all subsequent editions of that work, and also was included in *On Himself* (1972).

(7) The other notes in this section are corrections of statements made in various publications. The note dealing with Sri Aurobindo's learning of English (p. 25) was written in reply to a review of Sri Aurobindo's *Collected Poems and Plays* published in the *Times Literary Supplement* (London) on 8 July 1944. The note was incorporated in a letter by R. Vaidyanathaswamy, editor of the *Advent* (Madras), that was published in the *TLS* on 6 January 1945. The note on Sri Aurobindo's education and religious background in England (p. 26) and on his "first turn towards spiritual seeking" (p. 106) are from his manuscripts. The circumstances of their writing are not known. The first was written around 1940, the second around 1942. The notes referred to in this paragraph were first published in *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* in December 1977.

The origin of the notes in the Appendix is not known. Unlike the other notes, which have been preserved in the form of handwritten or dictated manuscripts, these survive only in printed form. They may be transcriptions of oral remarks by Sri Aurobindo. Some of them were published in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953), the others in *On Himself* (1972).

Table 1

Emendations of Matters of Fact (Simple Cases)

This table lists editorial emendations of matters of fact in pieces reproduced in Part One. (Similar emendations in pieces in other Parts are dealt with in the note to the piece in question.) Emendations of matters of fact have been made only in cases of slips involving (1) dates, (2) place names, (3) names of events and offices, and (4) bibliographical details. In every case these slips could be rectified by reference to contemporary documents and reliable secondary sources that are clear and unambiguous. The documents and publications consulted are listed in column four. (Full bibliographical details on printed and internet sources are given on page 569.) More complex problems are listed in Table 2.

Pg.	MS or first ed. reading	Emended reading	Observations (with documents consulted)
5	1885	1884	Sri Aurobindo entered St. Paul's School in September 1884 (Gardiner, ed., *Admissions Registers*, p. 121; personal communication from the Librarian, St. Paul's School, London).
5	February	January	The steamship *Carthage*, by which Aurobindo travelled to India, left London on 12 January 1893 and arrived in Bombay on 6 February (Board of Trade *Passenger Lists* [BT 27/135], Public Records Office, London; personal communications from National Maritime Museum, London, Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, London, and Lloyds, London).
20	1903	1893	Sri Aurobindo began his service in Baroda on 8 February 1893 (Baroda Service List, and other documents, Baroda Record Office, Vadodara; Sri Aurobindo corrected this slip himself in item [2] on p. 21 of the present volume).
20	June	April	Sri Aurobindo's marriage took place in April 1901, probably on the 29th of the month (handwritten statement by Bhupal Chandra Bose; printed poem written for the occasion dated 16 Baishakh 1308 [29 April 1901]; Baroda State Huzur Order dated 17 April 1901 mentioning a gift of money from the Maharaja to Sri Aurobindo "on the occasion of his marriage" [Baroda Record Office, Vadodara]).
51	seven	nine	Nine instalments of *New Lamps for Old* were published in the *Indu Prakash* between 7 August 1893 and 6 March 1894 (Sri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram: Political Writings and Speeches 1890–1908*, pp. 11–62).
56	Karachi	Lahore	A resolution affirming complete independence as the goal of the Indian National Congress was first passed at the Lahore session in December 1929. A resolution passed at the Karachi session in March 1931 noted in passing that complete independence was still the goal of the Congress (Zaidi, et al., eds., vol. 9, pp. 670–71, vol. 10, p. 145).
59	Bengal Provincial	district	The conference held in Midnapore in December 1907, which Sri Aurobindo attended, was a district conference. In contemporary newspaper accounts it is referred to as the "Midnapore District Conference" or simply the "Midnapore Conference" (Sri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram*, pp. 788–89, 790–94; *Bande Mataram* weekly edition, 15 December 1907, pp. 7–10). The 1907 Bengal Provincial Conference was held in Berhampur at the end of March (Sri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram*, pp. 224–27).

61	Barisal	Hooghly	For the Hooghly Conference, see Sri Aurobindo: *Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910*, pp. 209–35. See also p. 59 of the present volume, where the events of the Hooghly Conference (September 1909) are discussed between events of late 1907–early 1908 and events of May 1908). The Bengal Provincial Conference was held in Barisal in April 1906. Note that Sri Aurobindo spoke at the Bakarganj District Conference on 19 June 1909 (Sri Aurobindo, *Karmayogin*, pp. 33–42). Bakarganj District was sometimes referred to as Barisal District.
61	Hooghly	Pabna	For the compromise at the Hooghly Conference of September 1909, see p. 59 of the present volume. An earlier compromise had been reached at the provincial conference held in Pabna, East Bengal, in February 1908 (Sri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram*, pp. 871–76, 902, 918 [where Sri Aurobindo specifically mentions "the compromise arrived at at Pabna"], 919, etc.; *Bande Mataram*, weekly edition, 16 February 1908, pp. 12–17; 25 February 1908, pp. 8–9).
62	Benares	Lahore	The negotiations for a united Congress in Bengal were held in December 1909 (Sri Aurobindo, *Karmayogin*, pp. 340–42, 363–71). This was before the third Lahore session of the Indian National Congress (December 1909). The Benares session of Congress was held in December 1905, two years before Sri Aurobindo emerged as a political leader.
76	Bengal Provincial	district	See above, emendation to statement on p. 59.
79	Serpentine	Mott's	The illness to which Sri Aurobindo refers in this note occurred in November–December 1906. At that time he stayed in the house of his father-in-law Bhupal Chandra Bose, in Mott's Lane, Calcutta (Sri Aurobindo's statement in the *Bande Mataram* Case [September 1907]; testimony of Subodh Chandra Mullick in the same case; deposition of Sukumar Sen in the Alipore Bomb Case; a signed document put in as evidence in the same case [Exhibit 77/2] giving Sri Aurobindo's address on 17 October 1906 as 25/5/1 Mott's Lane). Several other sources mention that Bhupal Chandra Bose lived in Serpentine Lane after 1906.

Table 2

Other Questions regarding Matters of Fact (Complex Cases)

This table lists statements of matters of fact that are not in accord with contemporary documents and reliable secondary sources, but which cannot be set right by means of simple verbal emendation. Relevant observations are provided in column three along with the documents and publications consulted. (Full bibliographical details on printed and internet sources are given on page 569.)

Pg.	Text reading	Observations (with documents consulted)
26	a Senior Classic at Oxford	William H. Drewett (1842/3–1909) is not listed in *Alumni Oxonienses 1715–1886*, the authoritative register of members of the University of Oxford. He attended Didsbury College, Manchester, in 1860 and 1861, and began work as a probationary minister in 1861 (personal communications from Wesley College, Bristol, and Wesley Historical Society, London). In 1859 and 1860 he was a schoolmaster at Burton on Trent Grammar School, Staffordshire (Lichfield Record Office BD110/114; personal communication from Ferguson Memorial Library, Sydney). Presumably (non-preservation of records makes it impossible to confirm this) he studied Latin at the same school, which in the nineteenth century had a "strong emphasis on classics", that is, Latin and Greek ("Burton-on-Trent Grammar School"). As the son of a Methodist minister who was planning to become a Methodist minister, Drewett would not have attended Oxford, which did not grant degrees to non-Anglicans before 1866.
28	Lieutenant Governor of Bengal	Sir Henry Cotton never served as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. He held various posts in the Bengal administrative and judicial services, including Chief Secretary in the Bengal secretariat, and in 1896 became Chief Commissioner of Assam, a position he held till his resignation in 1902 (Moulton; Ghosh, p. 321; Buckland, p. 96; "Provinces of British India").
29	Austen Leigh was not the name of the Provost;	Austen Leigh was Provost of King's College during the years Sri Aurobindo attended (1890–92). During the same period G. W. Prothero held the post of Praelector (*Cambridge University Calendar*, 1890, 1891, 1892–93; personal communications from the Provost and the Librarian, King's College, Cambridge, 1975–77). Prothero took some interest in Sri Aurobindo, writing at least one letter on his behalf (Purani, pp. 327–28).

40	I went on in it uninterruptedly . . . until, in fact, I left Baroda.	Numerous documents in the Baroda State and Baroda College archives make it clear that Sri Aurobindo ceased to teach at Baroda College in April 1901, and resumed teaching in September 1904 (see for example letter of 28 September 1904 reproduced on p. 163 of the present volume).
40–41	If I was in the Revenue Department . . . what was I doing there?	Numerous documents from various Baroda State departments, including the Baroda Service List, show that Sri Aurobindo drew his salary from the Revenue Department from May 1901 to September 1904. During most of this period he worked directly under the Maharaja, in the beginning without an official appointment. Between May and September 1903, he had the title Acting Secretary. Between the end of 1903 and September 1904, he had the title assistant Huzur Kamdar. In September 1904 he rejoined Baroda College as Vice-Principal and Professor of English (Baroda State Records, multiple items; Baroda College Records, multiple items).
59	He led the party again . . . at Hooghly.	The first four sentences in this paragraph refer to events that took place late in 1907 and early in 1908. The rest of the paragraph refers to occurrences at the Hooghly session of the Bengal Provincial Conference, which took place in September 1909 (see Sri Aurobindo, *Karmayogin*, pp. 209–35). Sri Aurobindo discusses events at the Hooghly Conference again on pp. 61–62 of the present volume. He places this second discussion in its proper place in the chronological sequence, but calls the conference the "Provincial Conference at Barisal" (see also Table 1 above, emendations to statements on p. 61).
76	in the first row	Contemporary newspaper accounts agree that the first row of delegates at the Barisal Conference consisted of Surendranath Banerjea, Bhupendranath Bose and Motilal Ghose. These accounts, as well as official reports, note that the police allowed many delegates to pass, not just the first three, before attacking the younger men (*Bengalee*, April 17–18; *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, April 16, 19; Government of India, HPA June 1906, 152–68). Sri Aurobindo, then new to politics, is not mentioned in any of these accounts.
84	No. Tied with a rope;	In *Karakahini* (Sri Aurobindo, *Bangla Rachana*, p. 8), Sri Aurobindo writes of his arrest: "I was handcuffed and a rope was tied around my waist" (*āmār hāte hātkaḍi, komare daḍi deoa hoilo*). This agrees with contemporary reports in Calcutta newspapers.

Printed and Internet Sources for Data in Tables

[*Archival sources are listed in full in the last column of the Tables.*]

Buckland, C. E., ed., *Dictionary of Indian Biography*. Reprint edition. Delhi: Indological Book House, 1971.

"Burton on Trent Grammar School", http://www.burton-on-trent.org/1-History/School%20History/History.htm

Gardiner, Robert Barlow, ed., *Admissions Registers of St. Paul's School from 1876–1905*. London: George Bell and Sons, 1906.

Ghosh, Pansy Chhaya, "Cotton, Henry (Sir)". In *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 1. Calcutta: Institute of Historical Studies, 1972.

Moulton, Edward C., "Cotton, Sir Henry John Stedman (1845–1915)". In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/47183.

"Provinces of British India", http://www.worldstatesmen.org/India_BrProvinces.htm.

Purani, A. B., *The Life of Sri Aurobindo*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1978.

Sri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram: Political Writings and Speeches 1890–1908*. Volumes 6–7 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2002.

Sri Aurobindo, *Bangla Rachana*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1999.

Sri Aurobindo, *Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910*. Volume 8 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1997.

Zaidi, A. M., et al., eds., *Encyclopedia of the Indian National Congress*, volumes 9 and 10. New Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1980–81.

PART TWO
LETTERS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST

Most of Sri Aurobindo's published letters were written to members of his Ashram and outside disciples between 1927 and 1950. Such letters are published in the following works: *Letters on Yoga*, *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*, and *Letters on Poetry and Art*. Most of the letters included in Part Two of the present volume were written before 1927. Those that were written after that date are parts of sequences that began earlier, or deal with special subjects, such as Indian politics.

The material in this part has been arranged by the editors in three sections: (1) Letters on Personal, Practical and Political Matters, 1890–1926; (2) Early Letters on Yoga and the Spiritual Life, 1911–1928; and (3) Other Letters of Historical Interest on Yoga and Practical Life, 1921–1938.

Section One
Letters on Personal, Practical and Political Matters, 1890–1926

The letters in this part have been arranged by the editors in five subsections: (1) Family Letters, 1890–1919; (2) Letters Written as a Probationer in the Indian Civil Service, 1892; (3) Letters Written While Employed in the Princely State of Baroda, 1895–1906; (4) Letters and Telegrams to Political and Professional Associates, 1906–1926; (5) Open Letters and Messages Published in Newspapers, 1909–1925.

Family Letters, 1890–1919. Sri Aurobindo passed most of his youth, from 1877 to 1893, in England. Only part of one letter survives from this period. He wrote the next five letters in this subsection while living in Baroda between 1893 and 1906. The two letters to his father-in-law were written from Calcutta in 1906 and Pondicherry in 1919.

Extract from a Letter to His Father. 1890. This passage is from a letter that Sri Aurobindo wrote to his father Dr. K. D. Ghose (1844–1892) shortly after his arrival in Cambridge in October 1890. His father copied out the passage in a letter written to his brother-in-law Jogindranath Bose in December 1890.

To His Grandfather. 11 January 1894. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter to his grandfather Raj Narain Bose (1826–1899), a well-known writer and leader of the Adi Brahmo Samaj, while posted in Gujaria, a town in northern Gujarat, which then was part of the princely state of Baroda.

To His Sister. 25 August 1894. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter to his younger sister Sarojini (1877–1956) shortly after his first visit to his home province after his return from England. Sarojini had been an infant when he went to England. The letter was published by their brother Barindra Kumar in *Jugantar* (Puja number 1364 B.S.).

Extract from a Letter to His Brother. 1899–1900. Sri Aurobindo made a typed copy of these pages from a letter written to his second brother Manmohan (1869–1924). His intention was to use them as an introduction to his poem *Love and Death*, written in 1899. At the top of the transcript he typed "To my Brother". This apparently was meant to be the dedication of the poem and not the salutation of the letter. When he was preparing *Love and Death* for publication in 1920, he dropped both the dedication and the introduction. The first of the two Latin quotations, from Virgil's *Georgics* (3.8–9), may be translated: "A path . . . by which I too may lift me from the dust, and float triumphant through the mouths of men". The second, from Horace's *Satires* (2.7.21, with a change in the mood of the verb), means "whither does such wretched stuff tend".

To His Uncle. 15 August 1902. Jogindranath Bose, the recipient of this letter, was Sri Aurobindo's eldest maternal uncle (*baḍa māmā*).

To His Wife. 20 August 1902. Sri Aurobindo was married to Mrinalini Bose (1887–1918) in 1901. He generally corresponded with her in Bengali. Several letters from him to her in that language are reproduced in *Writings in Bengali and Sanskrit*, volume 9 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. The present item is the only surviving letter from him to her that was written in English.

To His Father-in-Law. [1] 8 June 1906. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter to his father-in-law Bhupal Chandra Bose (1861–1937) towards the beginning of his active political career. [2] 19 February 1919. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter after Mrinalini's death from influenza in December 1918.

Letters Written as a Probationer in the Indian Civil Service, 1892. Sri Aurobindo passed the open examination for the Indian Civil Service (I.C.S.) in 1890. He completed his course work successfully, but was rejected in 1892 after failing to take advantage of the last chance offered him to pass the mandatory test in horse-riding. According to his own retrospective account, he had developed a distaste for Civil Service work and was delighted to be rejected on these trivial grounds.

To Lord Kimberley. [1] 21 November 1892. After he was rejected from the I.C.S., Sri Aurobindo was advised that his only hope, if he wished to remain in the service, was to write directly to the Secretary of State for India. The holder of this cabinet-level post was John Wodehouse, the first Earl of Kimberley (1826–1902). It is probable that Sri Aurobindo wrote to Kimberley at the insistence of James S. Cotton, who at this time was trying to pull strings to get the rejection overturned (see A. B. Purani, *The Life of Sri Aurobindo* [1978], pp. 326–33). [2] 12 December 1892. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter after Lord Kimberley refused his request to grant him another chance to take the riding test. As a candidate who had successfully completed all the requirements but riding, he was due the last instalment of the allowance given to probationers. This and the previous letter are reproduced here from the originals preserved in the Oriental and India Office Collections, British Library, London.

Letters Written While Employed in the Princely State of Baroda, 1895–1906. Sri Aurobindo wrote the letters reproduced in this section while working as an administrative officer and professor in the erstwhile princely state of Baroda. Then known as Arvind or Aravind or Aurobindo Ghose, he began work in the state in February 1893, just after his return from England, and continued until March 1906, when he joined the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal. During the first part of this period he worked in various administrative departments. From 1898 to 1901 he was a professor of English and of French in the Baroda College. There followed a stint of three years (1901–4) when he worked in a secretarial capacity under Sayajirao Gaekwar, the Maharaja of Baroda. (In many of the documents the Maharaja is referred to as "the Gaekwar" or "H.H." [His Highness].) Finally, in 1905, he returned to the College as vice-principal and professor of English. These documents are a representative selection from the scores that have survived. They are arranged in chronological order.

To the Sar Suba, Baroda State. 1 June 1895. In May 1895 Sri Aurobindo was summoned by the Maharaja to Ootacamund, a hill station in South India, in order to prepare a précis of a complex legal case. He wrote this letter to his superior shortly after his arrival in "Ootie".

To Bhuban Babu. June 1901. This letter (actually a postcard) is the only non-official item in this subsection. It was written by Sri Aurobindo to a friend or acquaintance about whom nothing is known. Sri Aurobindo went to Naini Tal, a resort in what is now Uttaranchal, after his marriage to Mrinalini Bose in April 1901. The Banerji mentioned in the last paragraph was probably Jatindranath Banerji (c. 1877–1930), a young Bengali who had come to Baroda to obtain military training. In 1902 Sri Aurobindo sent Banerji to Calcutta to begin revolutionary work in Bengal.

To an Officer of the Baroda State. 14 February 1903. The "letter to the Residency" mentioned in this note is the one published next in sequence. Sri Aurobindo was anxious to leave Baroda at this time because he had to go to Bengal to settle a quarrel among members of the revolutionary society he and others had founded the year before.

Draft of Reply to the Resident on the Curzon Circular. 1903. In 1900 Lord Curzon, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, issued a circular letter requiring the rulers of princely states to obtain the permission of the government before leaving the country. Although worded in general terms, the circular was directed specifically against the Maharaja of Baroda, who had refused to return from Europe to meet the Viceroy that year. Two years later the Maharaja informed Baroda's Resident — the name given to British political agents in the larger states — that he intended to revisit Europe. He was told that the Government of India would not grant him the necessary permission. A protest was submitted to "the Residency" (that is, the office of the Resident). The Resident replied in February. The present document is a draft of a reply to the Resident's letter. The final version would have been sent over the signature of the Naib Dewan or Dewan.

To the Dewan, on the Government's Reply to the Letter on the Curzon Circular. 14 August 1903. Unable to go to Europe, the Maharaja passed the summer of 1903 in Kashmir. Sri Aurobindo accompanied him there as his private secretary. The present document, addressed to R. V. Dhamnaskar, the Dewan or prime minister of the state, contains the Maharaja's first reactions to the Government's reply to the final version of the previous document.

To the Naib Dewan, on the Infant Marriage Bill. 8 July 1903. Written by Sri Aurobindo during the Kashmir tour of 1903 to an officer working under the Dewan.

A Letter of Condolence. 10 July 1903. Another letter written by Sri Aurobindo as secretary to the Maharaja during the Kashmir tour.

To R. C. Dutt. 30 July 1904. Romesh Chunder Dutt (1848 – 1909) was an officer in the Indian Civil Service from 1871 to 1897. He rose to the position of Divisional Commissioner of Orissa, the highest post in the British administration yet held by an Indian. A few years after Dutt retired from the I.C.S., the Maharaja of Baroda offered him the position of Councillor (virtually the same as Dewan, a fact that would later cause some difficulties). The correspondence between the Gaekwar and

Dutt was handled by Sri Aurobindo, who had met Dutt earlier.

To the Principal, Baroda College. 18 September 1904. During part of 1904 Sri Aurobindo held the post of assistant Huzur Kamdar (Crown Secretary). This is one of many letters he wrote on behalf of the Maharaja during this period.

To the Dewan, on Rejoining the College. 28 September 1904. In September 1904 Sri Aurobindo was allowed to leave the state administration and to return to Baroda College, where he had served as professor between 1898 and 1901. He was given the post of vice-principal.

To the Maharaja. 29 March 1905. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter to his employer, Sayajirao Gaekwar (1863–1939), Maharaja of Baroda from 1875 to 1939, on behalf of his younger brother, Barindra Kumar Ghose, who then was living with him in Baroda. Barin had just returned from Bengal, where for two or three years he had been helping to organise the revolutionary secret society that Sri Aurobindo, Jatin Banerji and others had set up. The Maharaja agreed to give Barin a job, but Barin went back to Bengal before he could begin work.

A Letter of Recommendation. 28 February 1906. Written just before Sri Aurobindo left Baroda to take part in the Swadeshi Movement. The Vividh Kala Mandir was a photographic studio and metal engraving shop founded by former students of Baroda's Kalabhavan, an art school associated with Baroda College.

Letters and Telegrams to Political and Professional Associates, 1906–1926. In August 1906 Sri Aurobindo began work as principal of the Bengal National College and as an editorial writer for the daily newspaper *Bande Mataram*. In May 1908 he was arrested in connection with the Alipore Bomb Case. A year later he was released. In 1910 he settled in Pondicherry and cut off all direct connection with the freedom movement, though he continued to be regarded by the British government as a dangerous revolutionary. For a while he remained in indirect contact with the movement through Motilal Roy of Chandernagore.

To Bipin Chandra Pal. 1906. Bipin (also spelled "Bepin") Chandra Pal (1858–1932) was a nationalist speaker and writer. Sri Aurobindo apparently wrote this note to him in September or October 1906. At this time, Pal was editor-in-chief of the nationalist newspaper *Bande Mataram* and Sri Aurobindo was its chief writer. This note was put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial (1908–9). The original has been lost. The text is reproduced here from a "paperbook" or printed transcript of the documentary evidence.

A Letter of Acknowledgment. 9 March 1907. Sri Aurobindo was in Deoghar (a hill-resort in what is now Jharkhand) from mid January to early April 1907. He had gone to Deoghar for rest and recuperation after the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress (December 1906). While there he took care of some pending office work, such as writing this acknowledgement of a small donation to the National College Fund. Sri Aurobindo's note was put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial (1908–9). The original has been lost. It was reproduced in a British government report on the trial, which was later reprinted in the collection *Terrorism in Bengal*, volume 4 (Calcutta, 1995), p. 682.

To Hemendra Prasad Ghose. 19 April 1907. Hemendra Prasad Ghose (1876–1962) was one of the principal writers for the *Bande Mataram*. Sri Aurobindo wrote this note to him at a moment when there was much internal conflict in the office of the newspaper. Hemendra Prasad copied the note out in his diary, from which it is reproduced.

To Aswinicoomar Banerji. Sri Aurobindo wrote these letters to Aswinicoomar Banerji (1866–1945), a barrister, labour leader and nationalist politician, shortly before Sri Aurobindo was arrested for sedition in August 1907. [1] This letter is dated 26 June 1907. The biography of Garibaldi mentioned is J. Theodore Bent's *The Life of Giuseppe Garibaldi* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1882). [2] On 7 June 1907 the editors of the newspapers *Jugantar*, *Sandhya* and *Bande Mataram* were warned by the Government of Bengal that they would be prosecuted if they continued to publish inflammatory articles. On 5 July police arrested Bhupendranath Bose, whom they believed to be editor of *Jugantar*. He was tried and sentenced on 24 July. Six days later, the police searched the office of the *Bande Mataram*. It was evidently around this time that Sri Aurobindo wrote this note to Aswinicoomar. The originals of these two letters are in the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Delhi (Banerji papers).

To Dr. S. K. Mullick. 8 February 1908. Dr. Sharat Kumar Mullick (1869/70–1923/4), a physician with an interest in nationalist politics and national education, was a lecturer in the National Medical College in 1908. Sri Aurobindo was principal of the Bengal National College in 1906 and 1907, and kept some connection with it until May 1908. From the end of 1906, however, his main occupation was the editing of the newspaper *Bande Mataram*. He dated this letter Calcutta, 8 February 1907. The year is certainly wrong. He is known to have been in Deoghar without a break between January and April 1907, and is known to have been in Calcutta on 8 February 1908. On that day he attended a meeting of the Bande Mataram company in the office of the newspaper. It may be this meeting to which Sri Aurobindo alludes in his letter.

Telegrams about a Planned Political Reception. 6 March 1908. In September 1907 Bipin Chandra Pal was sentenced to six months imprisonment for refusing to testify in the *Bande Mataram* Sedition Case. He was released in March 1908. On 6 March Sri Aurobindo and some of his colleagues sent telegrams to fifteen nationalist leaders in different parts of the country asking them to organise celebrations and make donations to a purse that would be offered to Pal. Sri Aurobindo varied the wording of his telegrams according to the recipient. A total of seven different versions were sent, all of which are reproduced here. These telegrams were put in as evidence in the Alipore Bomb Trial.

Extract of a Letter to Parthasarathi Aiyangar. 13 July 1911. Parthasarathi (1880–1929) was a friend and associate of Sri Aurobindo's from 1910, when the two met in Calcutta. He was the younger brother of Mandayam Srinivasachari, who was one of Sri Aurobindo's closest friends in Pondicherry.

Note on a Forged Document. April 1912. Early in 1912 a Pondicherry resident named Mayuresan, who was acting as an informer to the British Government, planted some forged documents in the well of the house of V. V. S. Aiyar, a Tamil revolutionary who was living in the French colony. Mayuresan intended the documents to be discovered by the French police, providing support for his claims against Aiyar, Srinivasachari, Sri Aurobindo and others. Unluckily for him, the jar containing the forgeries was discovered by Aiyar's maidservant. Some of the documents were shown to Sri Aurobindo, who wrote out this detailed refutation of one of them.

To Anandrao. Sri Aurobindo mentioned Anandrao Jadhav, the eldest son of his friend Khaserao Jadhav, in his letter to Jogindranath

Bose of 15 August 1902 (see pp. 138–44). He presumably was the recipient of this letter. It is possible that the present letter, undated but apparently written in June 1912, is the "letter to our Marathi friend" mentioned in the second paragraph of the letter to Motilal Roy of 3 July 1912 (but see the note to that letter). The "Baroda friend" mentioned in the first sentence of the letter to Anandrao is probably Keshavrao Ganesh Deshpande, who was a close friend of Sri Aurobindo's in England and in Baroda.

To Motilal Roy. In February 1910, Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta and took temporary refuge in Chandernagore, a small French enclave on the river Hooghly about thirty kilometres north of Calcutta. There he was looked after by Motilal Roy (1882–1959), a young member of a revolutionary secret society. After leaving Chandernagore for Pondicherry in April, Sri Aurobindo kept in touch with Motilal by letter. It was primarily to Motilal that he was referring when he wrote in the "General Note on Sri Aurobindo's Political Life" (p. 64 of this volume): "For some years he kept up some private communication with the revolutionary forces he had led through one or two individuals." In these letters, which were subject to interception by the police, he could not of course write openly about revolutionary matters. He developed a code in which "tantra" meant revolutionary activities, and things connected with tantra (*yogini chakras*, tantric books, etc.) referred to revolutionary implements like guns (see Arun Chandra Dutt, ed., *Light to Superlight* [Calcutta: Prabartak Publishers, 1972], pp. 27–30). The code sometimes got rather complicated (see the note to letter [3] below). Sri Aurobindo did not use his normal signature or initials in the first 22 letters. Instead he signed as Kali, K., A. K. or G. He often referred to other people by initials or pseudonyms. Parthasarathi Aiyangar, for example, became "P. S." or "the Psalmodist". [1] 3 June 1912. The "letter to our Marathi friend" referred to in the second paragraph may be the letter to Anandrao (see above). Note however that according to Arun Chandra Dutt (*Light to Superlight*, pp. 4–5), the Marathi friend was a merchant named Madgodkar, apparently the same as the Madgaokar mentioned in letter [9] below. The "case" mentioned in the penultimate paragraph is the one that Mayuresan tried to set up; see "Note on a Forged Document" above. [2] August 1912 or after. (In April 1914, Sri Aurobindo wrote of "the

Parabrahma darshana", apparently the experience mentioned in this letter, as happening "two years ago"; see *Record of Yoga*, volume 10 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, p. 447.) [3] Circa January 1913. According to Arun Chandra Dutt (*Light to Superlight*, pp. 50–51), the "experiment in the smashâna" mentioned in this letter was the attempt to assassinate the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, in Delhi on 23 December 1912. *Śmaśāna*s or graveyards are believed to be good places for tantric sadhana. The term applies also to Delhi, the graveyard of vanished empires. Other terms in the letter make use of the same "tantric" metaphor. [4] February 1913. [5] June–July 1913. The "tantric books" referred to are almost certainly revolvers sent from Pondicherry to Chandernagore (see *Light to Superlight*, pp. 27–28). The explanations in cypher concerning these "books" have not survived. [6] June–July 1913. [7] August 1913. The manuscripts ("MSS") referred to are Sri Aurobindo's translation of Chittaranjan Das's Bengali poem cycle *Sagar Sangit*, for which Das agreed to pay him Rs. 1000. [8] Circa 1913. [9] 1913 (between April and October 1913, Sri Aurobindo lived in a house on Mission Street, Pondicherry, for which the rent was Rs. 15). [10] March 1914. Rashbehari Bose was a revolutionary of Chandernagore who orchestrated the bomb-attack against Lord Hardinge in Delhi in December 1912. On 8 March 1914, British police officers, armed with an extradition warrant of arrest, raided Rashbehari's house in Chandernagore. They were unable to arrest him, as he had slipped out some time before. News of the raid appeared in the newspapers on 12 March or before. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter to Motilal a short while after he read the news. He was interested not only in Rashbehari's fate, but also in the legal precedent that might be set by the issuance of an extradition warrant against a French subject for a crime committed in British India. [11] April 1914. For Paul Richard, see the note to "Extracts from Letters to the Mother and Paul Richard" in Section Two below. Every four years an election was held in Pondicherry to choose a Deputy to represent the colony in the French Chamber. [12] 17 April 1914. This letter was written shortly after the results of the election were announced. According to the *Journal Officiel*, Bluysen received 33,154 votes, Lemaire 5624, La Porte 368 and Richard 231. [13] 5 May 1914. [14] June 1914. The "New Idea" was officially sanctioned by the government of French

India in June 1914. [15] July 1914. [16] July–August 1914. [17] 29 August 1914. [18] After October 1914. Bijoy Nag, a member of Sri Aurobindo's household, was imprisoned in October 1914 under the Defence of India Act after he entered British India. He remained in jail for the duration of the war. V. V. S. Aiyar was a revolutionary from the Madras Presidency who had taken refuge in Pondicherry. (Despite the "a certain", Sri Aurobindo knew Aiyar well.) [19] Undated, but after the launch of the *Arya* in August 1914. [20] After September 1915, the month in which Motilal began to publish the Bengali journal *Prabartak*. [21] Undated, but apparently shortly after the armistice in November 1918. Haradhan Bakshi (1897–1962), a young man of Chandernagore, served in Mesopotamia during the war. [22] Apparently towards the end of 1919; certainly earlier than the next letter, which refers to the *Standard Bearer* by name. [23] 2 January 1920. A short time before this letter was written, M. K. Gandhi sent his son Devdas to speak to Sri Aurobindo on his behalf (see Gandhi's letter to Sri Aurobindo on page 442). [24] May 1920. Barindra Kumar Ghose (Sri Aurobindo's younger brother, see Section Two below) was released from the penal colony of the Andaman Islands in January 1920. Paul and Mirra Richard returned to Pondicherry from Japan on 24 April 1920. [25] 2 September 1920. For information on the "marriage idea", see *Light to Superlight*, pp. 93–96. [26] 11 November 1920. The portion of this letter placed by Sri Aurobindo within inverted commas was reproduced in the *Standard Bearer* on 21 November 1920. See pages 278–79. [27] In 1922, Motilal's relationship with Sri Aurobindo soured. In May 1925 Motilal wrote asking for permission to visit Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry. This telegram of 13 May was Sri Aurobindo's reply. It is reproduced from a notebook in which A. B. Purani wrote down Sri Aurobindo's conversations and bits of household news. [28] 8 May 1930. When Motilal wrote to Sri Aurobindo in April or May 1930, Sri Aurobindo wrote this draft and asked Nolini Kanta Gupta to reply in Bengali in his own name. This explains Sri Aurobindo's use of the third person.

Draft of Letter to Saurin Bose. June 1914. Saurin Bose, brother of Sri Aurobindo's wife Mrinalini, was a member of Sri Aurobindo's household in Pondicherry between 1911 and 1919. At the time this letter was written, he was on a visit to Bengal. On 30 May 1914, Sri

Aurobindo noted in his diary (*Record of Yoga*) that he had received a letter from Saurin that day. The present draft-letter was evidently written in reply to Saurin's letter. It may be dated, through references to known events, to 1 or 2 June 1914. (Paul and Mirra Richard were planning on 1 June to occupy the house mentioned in the letter "in one or two days". The prospectus that is mentioned in the draft as being due out "later this month" was issued in mid June. Note also that the sum of Rs. 400, mentioned in this letter and in letter [14] to Motilal Roy, is also mentioned in the *Record* of 29 May.) This draft was not sent to Saurin; presumably a fair copy was written and sent in its place.

To K. R. Appadurai. 13 April 1916. Appadurai was the brother-in-law of the poet Subramania Bharati. Bharati was living as a refugee in French Pondicherry at the time this letter was written. The "Mr. K. V. R" to whom Sri Aurobindo refers was K. V. Rangaswami Iyengar, who sometimes helped him out financially.

Fragmentary Draft Letter. 1916–1920. The surviving portion of this draft (its beginning is not available) was written on one side of a sheet of paper that on the other side was used for part of a relatively early draft of the poem *Savitri*. It is not possible to assign an exact date to the *Savitri* draft, but it must have been written between 1916, when Sri Aurobindo began work on the poem, and 1921, when he temporarily stopped all forms of writing. The "volume of poems" mentioned was probably *Ahana and Other Poems* (1915). The intended recipient of the letter is not known for sure, but it is likely that it was Chittaranjan Das (see below).

To a Would-be Contributor to the *Arya*. 3 September 1919. A letter to an unknown person who had sent a poetry manuscript to Sri Aurobindo for publication in the *Arya*.

To Joseph Baptista. 5 January 1920. Joseph Baptista (1864–1930) was a barrister and nationalist politician who was associated with Bal Gangadhar Tilak. In 1919 a group of nationalists of Bombay who took their inspiration from Tilak decided to form a party and to bring out an English daily newspaper. They deputed Baptista to write to Sri Aurobindo and offer him the editorship of the paper. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter in reply.

To Balkrishna Shivaram Moonje. B. S. Moonje (1872–1948) was a medical practitioner and political activist of Nagpur. When Sri

Aurobindo knew him in 1907–8, Moonje was one of the leaders of the Nationalist or Extremist Party. (Later he helped to found the Hindu Mahasabha; see Sri Aurobindo's telegram to Moonje in Part Three, under "On the Cripps Proposal".) Sri Aurobindo stayed with Moonje when he visited Nagpur in January 1908. Twelve years later, Moonje and others invited Sri Aurobindo to preside over the forthcoming Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress. In letter [1], dated 30 August 1920, Sri Aurobindo set forth his reasons for declining this honour. [2] In this telegram, date-stamped on arrival 19 September 1920, he reiterated his decision.

To Chittaranjan Das. 18 November 1922. A barrister of Calcutta who became famous for successfully defending Sri Aurobindo in the Alipore Bomb Case (1908–9), Chittaranjan Das (1870–1925) later entered politics and became the leader of the Swarajya Party, which advocated entering the government's legislative assemblies in order to "wreck them from within". Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter to Das on the same day that he wrote another to his brother Barin (see the first letter under "To Barindra Kumar Ghose and Others" in Section Two below).

To Shyamsundar Chakravarty. 12 March 1926. Shyamsundar Chakravarty (sometimes spelled Chakrabarti or Chakraborty) (1869–1932) was a nationalist writer and orator. When Sri Aurobindo was editor-in-chief of the nationalist newspaper *Bande Mataram*, Chakravarty was one of its main writers. Eighteen years later he became editor of the *Bengalee*, a moderate nationalist newspaper of Calcutta. At that time he wrote to Sri Aurobindo inviting him to send contributions. This letter is Sri Aurobindo's reply. The original manuscript is not available. The text is reproduced from an old typed copy.

Open Letters Published in Newspapers, 1909–1925. In this subsection are included all known letters written by Sri Aurobindo for publication in newspapers, with the exception of the two open letters he published in his own journal *Karmayogin* in 1909 and 1910, and his reply to the writer of a review of his *Secret of the Veda*. (These letters are reproduced in *Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910* and *The Secret of the Veda*, volumes 8 and 15 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.)

To the Editor of the *Bengalee*. 14 May 1909. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter eight days after his acquittal from the charges brought against him in the Alipore Bomb Case. It was published in the *Bengalee* on 18 May 1909. The "defence fund" mentioned was set up by his uncle Krishna Kumar Mitra in the name of Sri Aurobindo's sister Sarojini.

To the Editor of the *Hindu*. [1] 7 November 1910. Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta for Pondicherry on 1 April 1910. Shortly thereafter the Government of Bengal issued a warrant for his arrest on the charge of sedition for an open letter that had been published in the weekly newspaper *Karmayogin* on 25 December 1909. Sri Aurobindo remained incognito in Pondicherry until 7 November 1910, when he wrote this letter announcing his presence in the French enclave and his retirement from politics. He deferred "all explanation or justification of [his] action" until the Calcutta High Court had ruled on the appeal of the conviction of the printer in the *Karmayogin* sedition case. Coincidentally, that same day the Calcutta High Court threw out the printer's conviction, thus nullifying the charges against Sri Aurobindo. His letter was published in the *Hindu* on 8 November. [2] 23 February 1911. This letter was published in the *Hindu* on 24 February 1911, the day after Sri Aurobindo wrote it. [3] July 1911. On 10 July 1911, the *Madras Times* published a short editorial ("leaderette") entitled "Anarchism in the French Settlements", which dealt with "political suspects" who had taken refuge in Pondicherry and were carrying out anti-British activities there. The writer cited a letter "from a correspondent in Pondicherry" that had been "published recently" in its columns, adding "if our correspondent is correctly informed, there is an organised Party in French India which supports Mr. Arabindo Ghosh and his friends". The next week the same newspaper published an article that spoke openly of Sri Aurobindo as "a criminal and an assassin", thus connecting him with the assassination of the British Collector Robert Ashe, which had taken place on 17 June 1911. Sri Aurobindo wrote a letter to the editor of the *Madras Times* denying these charges, but was not given "the opportunity of reply". He therefore wrote this letter to the editor of the *Hindu*. Published in that newspaper on 20 July 1911, it probably was written the previous day. [4] July 1911. This letter, a continuation of the previous one, was published in the *Hindu* on 21 July 1911. It probably was written the previous day. The "exposition" of the author's views promised in the last sentence has not been found. It does not appear to have been published in the *Hindu*, and possibly was never written.

To the Editor of the *New India*. [1] April 1918. Sri Aurobindo wrote this message on national education at the request of Annie Besant (1847–1933), president of the Theosophical Society, leader of the Indian Home Rule League, and editor of *New India*, a newspaper of Madras. She published it in *New India* on 8 April 1918, under the heading: "MESSAGES FROM SONS OF THE MOTHERLAND TO THEIR BROTHERS". Sri Aurobindo's was the longest of nine messages contributed by India's "leading patriots". This item is also published in *Early Cultural Writings*, volume 1 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. [2] July 1918. Besant wrote to Sri Aurobindo again in July 1918, asking him for his opinion of the Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms, which had been announced earlier that month. Sri Aurobindo wrote this letter in reply. After receiving it, Besant wrote asking whether she could "use it (with or without your name) as a valuable opinion on the 'Reforms' ". Sri Aurobindo consented, and the letter was published in *New India* on 10 August 1918.

To the Editor of the *Hindustan*. 1918. The Hindu Marriages (Validity) Bill was introduced by Vithalbhai Patel (1873–1933) in the Imperial Council on 5 September 1918. Its purpose was to provide legal sanction to marriages between Hindus of different castes. (At that time Hindu Law, as interpreted in the courts, considered inter-caste marriages to be invalid unless sanctioned by custom.) Patel's bill was condemned by the orthodox and considered inadequate by reformers. But certain eminent Indians, among them Rabindranath Tagore and Lala Lajpat Rai, believed that it was a step in the right direction. Sri Aurobindo was asked his opinion of the bill by Lotewalla, Managing Director of *Hindustan*. His reply, undated, but apparently written in the last quarter of 1918, is reproduced here from Gordhanbhai I. Patel's *Vithalbhai Patel: Life and Times*, Book One (Bombay: Shree Laxmi Narayan Press, 1950), p. 305.

To the Editor of the *Independent*. August 1920. This obituary article was written at the request of Bipin Chandra Pal, editor of the *Independent*, after the death of Bal Gangadhar Tilak on 1 August 1920. The piece was published in the *Independent* on 5 August 1920. The present text has been compared both against the version published in the newspaper and against a draft found among Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts. The same piece is published under the title "A Great Mind, a Great Will" in *Early Cultural Writings*, volume 1 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

To the Editor of the *Standard Bearer*. On 11 November 1920, Sri Aurobindo wrote to Motilal Roy, editor of the *Standard Bearer*, in regard to certain claims that had been made about his political opinions in the Calcutta press. His letter is published on pages 248–49 of the present volume. In it he wrote, within inverted commas, a statement that he wanted Motilal to publish. Motilal did so on 21 November 1920. The text is reproduced here as it was printed in the *Standard Bearer*.

To the Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*. June 1925. This message was written at the request of the editor of the *Bombay Chronicle* a day or two after the passing of Chittaranjan Das on 16 June 1925. The message was published in the newspaper on 22 June 1925.

Section Two
Early Letters on Yoga and the Spiritual Life, 1911–1928

Sri Aurobindo began the practice of yoga in 1905. Between then and 1911 he made few references to yoga in his letters. The first people to whom he wrote about spiritual things were Motilal Roy (see Section One above) and Paul and Mirra Richard. Around 1920, he began to reply to letters written to him by people in India and abroad who were interested in practising his system of yoga. At the end of 1926, he stopped seeing even the members of his household (which soon became known as an ashram), but he continued to answer some of the letters written to him by people living outside. Gradually, he began to write to members of the ashram as well. His letters on yoga of 1927–1950 have a different character from those written between 1911 and 1926. All surviving letters on yoga from the early period, along with a few from the late period that are parts of series that began earlier, are included in the present section. All significant letters from the 1927–1950 period are reproduced in *Letters on Yoga*, volumes 28–31 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Extracts from Letters to the Mother and Paul Richard, 1911 – c. 1922. Paul Richard (1874 – 1967) was a French lawyer and writer. He came to Pondicherry in 1910 seeking election to the French Chamber of Deputies, but found that the ticket he had been promised had been given to someone else. Before returning to France, he asked to be introduced to a yogi, and friends arranged a meeting between him and Sri Aurobindo. During the next four years, he and Sri Aurobindo remained in touch by letter. In 1914, Richard returned to Pondicherry to stand for election. This time he was accompanied by his wife Mirra (1878 – 1973), who later became known as the Mother. Richard was defeated, but he and Mirra remained in India until February 1915, when Paul was ordered to join his regiment. The Richards remained in France until March 1916, when they departed for Japan. After a four-year stay in that country, they returned to Pondicherry in April 1920.

To Paul Richard. Sri Aurobindo wrote these letters to Richard after their meeting in 1910 and before Richard returned to India in 1914.

To the Mother and Paul Richard. These letters presumably were addressed both to Mirra and Paul. The one dated 31 December 1915 deals with an experience of the Mother's which is recorded in her *Prayers and Meditations* under the date 26 November 1915.

Draft of a Letter. 1920s. The circumstances referred to in this letter suggest that it was written during the early 1920s, when Sri Aurobindo was partly retired. The reference to *Le seigneur des nations* ("The Lord of the Nations"), a book by Paul Richard, suggests that Richard was the intended recipient. Sri Aurobindo's reply was meant to be sent over the signature of a secretary. This explains his use of the third person.

To People in India, 1914 – 1926. Only thirteen of the twenty-three items included in this subsection exist in the form of letters or drafts in Sri Aurobindo's hand. Some of the others were dictated or (in one or two cases) written by someone else following Sri Aurobindo's instructions. Such letters generally were revised by Sri Aurobindo, sometimes extensively, before they were sent.

To N. K. Gogte. Nothing is known about the recipient of these letters, except that he wrote to Sri Aurobindo after the appearance of the first issue of the *Arya* asking some questions about meditation. Gogte was perhaps hoping that his question would be answered in

"The Question of the Month", a feature in early issues of the journal. Sri Aurobindo in fact wrote an answer to the question "What exactly is meant by meditation in Yoga? And what should be its objects?" in the October 1914 issue (published in *Essays in Philosophy and Yoga*, volume 13 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, pp. 445–47). This essay bears some resemblance to the answer he sent directly to Gogte. [1] 9 September 1914. This is a postcard sent by Sri Aurobindo to Gogte explaining that he was unable to answer his letter immediately. [2] 21 September 1914. This reply of Sri Aurobindo to Gogte was the first of thousands of "letters on yoga" he would eventually write. Towards the end of the letter, Sri Aurobindo referred to a section at the end of the third instalment of *Isha Upanishad*, which was published in the *Arya* in October 1914. He wrote that the heading of this section was "The Vision of the All". In fact the section is headed "The Vision of the Brahman" both in the *Arya* and in the book edition of *Isha Upanishad* (see *Isha Upanishad*, volume 17 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, p. 30). A section that appeared in the November instalment of the *Arya* is headed "The Vision of the All" (*Isha Upanishad*, p. 35). A partial copy of Sri Aurobindo's letter to Gogte was published in the *Standard Bearer* on 13 March 1921. Another partial text was included in Sri Aurobindo's *Letters on Yoga*.

Draft of a Letter to Nolini Kanta Gupta. A young member of Barindra Kumar Ghose's revolutionary secret society, Nolini Kanta Gupta (1889–1984) was arrested and tried for conspiracy in the Alipore Bomb Case. Acquitted, he worked with Sri Aurobindo on the Bengali weekly *Dharma* in 1909 and 1910. In October or November 1910, he joined Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry. After remaining there for most of the next nine years, he returned to Bengal, where he got married in December 1919. Sri Aurobindo drafted this letter to him a little before that time. The Latin phrase seems to be a variant of the quotation from Horace found on page 137. It would mean "whither does this uncertainty lead".

To A.B. Purani. 21 February 1920. Ambalal Balkrishna Purani (1894–1965) met Sri Aurobindo in 1918, when he came to Pondicherry to report on the progress of a revolutionary secret society that had been set up in Gujarat under Sri Aurobindo's inspiration. Sri Aurobindo advised the young man to give his attention to sadhana.

Purani corresponded with members of Sri Aurobindo's household, and with Sri Aurobindo himself, until 1923, when he settled in Pondicherry.

To V. Chandrasekharam. Veluri Chandrasekharam (1896–1964) took his B.A. from Madras University, standing first in his class in philosophy. He often visited Pondicherry during the early 1920s, reading the Veda and practising yoga under Sri Aurobindo's guidance. In 1928 he returned to his village in Andhra Pradesh, where he passed the remainder of his life.

To K. N. Dixit. 30 March 1924. Kesarlal Nanalal Dixit or Dikshit (1891–1988) was from Baroda. He visited Pondicherry five times during the 1920s, and settled in the Ashram in 1929. Sri Aurobindo wrote this paragraph in his own hand at the end of a letter written on his instructions by A. B. Purani. This explains his use of the third person.

To Ramchandran. 30 September 1925. Nothing is known about the recipient of this letter.

To and about V. Tirupati. An enthusiastic sadhak, Tirupati practised an extreme form of bhakti yoga, as a result of which he lost his mental balance. Sri Aurobindo advised him to go back to his home in Vizianagaram, coastal Andhra, to recuperate. From there Tirupati wrote a number of letters to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Sri Aurobindo wrote these twelve replies at this time. [1] 21 February 1926. The manuscript of this letter was written by the Mother but was apparently a transcript of something written or dictated by Sri Aurobindo. [2] 24 February 1926. This telegram was sent by Sri Aurobindo to S. Duraiswami, an advocate of Madras, to whom Tirupati had gone while on his way to Pondicherry. [3] 26 February 1926. Written in reply to a letter from Dasari Narayana Swamy Chetty, Tirupati's father-in-law, explaining Tirupati's condition. [4] February 1926. An incomplete draft of a letter. [5] 4 March 1926. Manuscript in the Mother's hand. [6] 5 March 1926. Manuscript in the Mother's hand. [7] 22 March 1926. [8] 27 March 1926. Manuscript in the Mother's hand. [9] 30 March 1926. Manuscript partly in the Mother's and partly in Sri Aurobindo's hand. [10] Circa March–April 1926. This letter was written in reply to one written by Tirupati on "the 28th", presumably 28 March 1926. [11] Circa March–April 1926. This draft-letter was written in reply to a letter written by Tirupati on "the 29th", presumably 29 March 1926. [12] 6 May 1926. Tirupati came to Pondicherry on 6 May 1926. Sri Aurobindo refused to see him. He gave him this letter instead. It is reproduced here from one of the notebooks of A. B. Purani.

To Daulatram Sharma. 26 March 1926. Little is known about the recipient of this letter. He entered into correspondence with Barindra Kumar Ghose in 1923. After a visit to Pondicherry early in 1926, he wrote to Barin about his sadhana on 17 March. Barin drafted a reply following Sri Aurobindo's instructions. This was so completely revised by Sri Aurobindo that it may be considered his own letter.

To Barindra Kumar Ghose and Others, 1922–1928. Sri Aurobindo wrote or dictated the letters in this section to his brother Barindra Kumar and to some others who were connected with a yoga centre that Barin had opened in Bhawanipore, Calcutta, in 1922. Several of the letters deal with prospective members of the centre, about whom Barin had written. (Many such candidates were asked to submit a photograph for the Mother and Sri Aurobindo to evaluate.) Barin also wrote about the progress and setbacks of those who were staying at the centre. Sri Aurobindo wrote at least two of his replies by hand, but appears to have dictated most of them. Multiple handwritten and typed copies of his replies were made after they were written. Sixteen of the eighteen letters exist only in the form of these copies. The texts published here have been established by collating three or more copies of each letter. The copies were widely circulated during the 1920s. Sri Aurobindo later remarked that he did not want this "out of date stuff" to remain in circulation; but in another letter he stated that it was "not necessary to withdraw anything", though the pre-1927 letters were not to be circulated as freely as later letters.

To Barindra Kumar Ghose. Sri Aurobindo's youngest brother Barindra Kumar Ghose (1880–1959) was born in England and raised in Bengal. He first got to know Sri Aurobindo after the latter's return from England in 1893. Around 1902 Barin became involved in a nascent revolutionary society that Sri Aurobindo and others had set up in Calcutta. In 1906 Barin and other members of this society began to plan to assassinate British officials. An unsuccessful attempt to kill a British judge in May 1908 led to the arrest of Barin, Sri Aurobindo and two dozen others. The prisoners were tried for conspiring to wage war against the king. Sri Aurobindo was acquitted, Barin and several others convicted. The death-sentence against Barin was later commuted to life imprisonment in the Andaman Islands penal colony. In 1920, as part of the amnesty declared at the end of the First World War, Barin and the other prisoners were released. Barin visited Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry that year and again in 1921. In 1922 he set up a yoga centre in Bhawanipore, Calcutta. [1] 18 November 1922. This letter was written on the same day as the letter to Chittaranjan Das reproduced on pages 260–62. Both letters were concerned with fund-raising. [2] 1 December 1922. When Das received Sri Aurobindo's letter of 18 November, he wrote for permission to quote certain passages from it. Sri Aurobindo gave his reactions to this proposal in the present letter. [3] 9 December 1922. Written to Barin in response to a letter from Jyotish Ghose, a Bhawanipore sadhak. [4] 30 December 1922. Krishnashashi, a young man from Chittagong, became a member of the Bhawanipore centre, but soon began to experience serious difficulties. This is the first of several letters written by Sri Aurobindo in connection with his case. (There is also a letter written directly to Krishnashashi. See below.) In the present letter he also transmitted to Barin the evaluations of Mirra (the Mother) of three candidates whose photographs had been submitted. [5] January 1923. Another letter about Krishnashashi. [6] 23 January 1923. Another letter about Krishnashashi. [7] January 1923. Apparently written after the letter of the 23rd and before the letter of the 31st. [8] 31 January 1923. About Krishnashashi and other matters. [9] 14 February 1923. About Krishnashashi and other matters. [10] 2 April 1923. About various candidates and also about Rathin, a son of Rajani Palit. (See also the letter to Rajani Palit below.) [11] 16 April 1923. About various candidates. [12] 30 May 1923. [13] 16 June 1923. About Jyotish Mukherjee, a Bhawanipore candidate.

Barindra Kumar returned to Pondicherry from Calcutta in August 1923. The Bhawanipore centre went on for some time, but was closed at Sri Aurobindo's suggestion in September 1925. Barin remained in Pondicherry until December 1929, when he left the Ashram and returned to Bengal. Letter [14], dated 7 June 1928, was written to him a year and a half before his departure. Part of it was included in the collection *Bases of Yoga* in 1936.

To Hrishikesh Kanjilal. Circa 1922. A member of Barin Ghose's revolutionary group, Hrishikesh Kanjilal (born 1879) was one of the defendants in the Alipore Bomb Trial. Convicted, he spent ten years in the Andamans. After his release he visited Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry. In Calcutta he was associated with Barin in his various enterprises, one of which was the Cherry Press.

To Krishnashashi. January 1923. A young sadhak from Chittagong, East Bengal, Krishnashashi went insane while practising yoga at Barin's centre in Bhawanipore. See also letters [4] – [9] to Barindrakumar Ghose above.

To Rajani Palit. 6 April 1923. A government servant, Rajani Palit (born 1891) lived in Calcutta and attended meetings at Barin's Bhawanipore centre. Later he was a frequent visitor to the Ashram. This letter is about the occult illness of his son Rathin.

Draft Letters to and about Kumud Bandhu Bagchi. Born in 1901, Kumud Bandhu Bagchi was the head of the Bhawanipore centre from 1923, when Barin Ghose settled in Pondicherry, till it was closed in 1925. [1] 6 February 1926. A letter on Kumud's sadhana dictated by Sri Aurobindo. [2] 23 March 1926. A note on the psychic being, dictated by Sri Aurobindo and revised by him before being sent.

To People in America, 1926 – 1927. These letters were written to people in the United States of America who had read the *Arya* and written to Sri Aurobindo. Most of them are preserved only in the form of drafts found among his manuscripts.

To Mr. and Mrs. Sharman. Early 1926. Maude Ralston Sharman was an American woman of Detroit who was married to a Punjabi.

To the Advance Distributing Company. [1] 9 March 1926. Draft of a letter written in reply to one dated 18 January 1926 from the Advance Distributing Company, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (a small firm about which nothing is known) to the Arya Publishing House (the principal publisher of Sri Aurobindo's books in India). The manager of the Advance Distributing Company wished to purchase some issues of the *Arya* and also proposed bringing out a selection of Sri Aurobindo's works in the United States. [2] 2 July 1926. Reply to a letter from the same company dated 2 May 1926, in which the writer spoke of practical matters relating to the publication of Sri Aurobindo's books in the United States, and the nature of spiritual seeking in that country. The book *Some I-L-O-F Letters* had been sent to Sri Aurobindo by Mr. C. E. Lefebvre of Glenfield, Pennsylvania, earlier in the year.

Draft of a Letter to C. E. Lefebvre. Undated draft, written in reply to a letter from C. E. Lefebvre dated 13 June 1926. In his letter Lefebvre identified himself as the "student" mentioned in the letter from the Advance Distributing Company dated 18 January 1926. Various internal and external references in the letters make it clear that Lefebvre also was the writer of both letters from the Advance Distributing Company. In his letter of 13 June 1926, Lefebvre spoke about the nature of spiritual seeking in the United States, concluding: "It would seem that America is only ready for elementary instruction."

To and about Anna Bogenholm Sloane. According to a printed curriculum vitae enclosed in one of her letters to Sri Aurobindo, Anna Bogenholm Sloane, B.A., M.A., was a native of Sweden who settled in the United States sometime before 1907. She was active in various educational institutions, and wrote pedagogical stories for children. Interested in spirituality, she became a student of Ralph Moriarity deBit (an American guru later known as Vitvan, 1883–1964). DeBit, then head of the School of the Sacred Science in Los Angeles, introduced Sloane to Sri Aurobindo in a letter of 30 June 1926. Sloane arrived in Pondicherry early in 1927, a few months after Sri Aurobindo had retired. [1] 3 August 1926. Written in reply to a letter from Sloane dated 5 June 1926, in which she enumerated certain inner experiences, which she called "initiations". [2–4] August–September 1927. Undated drafts, written in reply to a letter from Sloane in which she asked Sri Aurobindo if he was "the Krishna, the Supreme God of the Planet Earth", and expressed doubts about the ability of the Mother to guide her. She asked to be guided by Sri Aurobindo instead. There is some evidence that Sri Aurobindo never sent a fair copy of these drafts to Sloane. [5] 13 October 1927. This is a report written by Sri Aurobindo after Sloane made certain allegations against him, the Mother and the Ashram to the British Consul in Pondicherry. The date appears on a copy of a French translation of the letter, which presumably was sent to the French authorities in Pondicherry.

Draft Letters, 1926–1928. These four draft letters were found in two note pads used by Sri Aurobindo around 1926–28. Internal references make it clear that the last three were written to Marie Potel, who lived in the Ashram during this period. The intended recipient of the first letter is not known.

To an Unknown Person. Circa 1927–28.

To Marie Potel. Marie Léon Potel (1874–c. 1962) met the Mother in France in 1911 or 1912. She was perhaps the first person to regard the Mother as her master and spiritual Mother. Potel came to the Ashram in March 1926 and remained until March 1928. [1] Draft of a letter found among Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts of 1926–27. [2] Probably April 1927. A reply to a letter written in French by Potel. The three paragraphs beginning "Again who is the Father here" and ending "supported by the Ishwara" were struck through in the manuscript. Sri Aurobindo took up these ideas in the sixth chapter of *The Mother*, which he wrote towards the end of 1927. [3] Circa 1928. The subject of this letter almost certainly was Marie Potel, who left the Ashram in March 1928.

Section Three
Other Letters of Historical Interest on Yoga and Practical Life
1921–1938

The letters in this section are of two types. Those in the first group are addressed to disciples who had undertaken to collect or provide funds for the Ashram. Those in the second are to public figures who had written to Sri Aurobindo for various reasons.

On Yoga and Fund-raising in the Ashram, 1921–1938. These letters were written to two people who helped raise funds for the Ashram in Bengal and Gujarat. Besides fund-raising, the letters deal with the sadhana of the two individuals, and with other subjects as well.

To and about Durgadas Shett. A member of a wealthy family of industrialists based in Chandernagore, Durgadas Shett (1895–1958) sent significant amounts of money to Sri Aurobindo through Motilal Roy before 1922. In 1934 his family property was distributed, and he gave most of his share to Sri Aurobindo. Afterwards he lived an austere life; at times he was dependent on Sri Aurobindo for cash for ordinary expenses. These twenty-three letters from Sri Aurobindo to Durgadas are interesting in showing Sri Aurobindo's attitude towards money and the interest he took in the spiritual and material welfare of his disciples. Letters [2], [4] and [5] were written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary Nolini Kanta Gupta, whom he asked to reply to Durgadas on his behalf.

To Punamchand M. Shah. Punamchand Mohanlal Shah (born 1898), of Patan, Gujarat, met Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry in 1919. Four years later he became a member of his household. Between 1927 and 1931, he spent much of his time in Gujarat trying to collect money for the newly founded Ashram. In August 1927 Sri Aurobindo wrote three letters to Punamchand on fearlessness, work and money, which were published in 1928 as chapters 3, 4 and 5 of *The Mother*. Here thirteen other letters to Punamchand on fund-raising and other subjects are reproduced.

To and about Public Figures, 1930–1937. These letters were written to or about people who held positions of responsibility or were otherwise in the public eye. They have been grouped together here for the convenience of students of modern Indian history.

Draft of a Letter to Maharani Chimnabai II. 1930. Gajrabai Ghatge (1871–1958), later Maharani Chimnabai II, was married to Maharaja Sayajirao III of Baroda in 1885. Sri Aurobindo met her while working under the Gaekwar between 1893 and 1906. More than two decades later, she wrote to him about her personal life. In replying, Sri Aurobindo used, out of courtesy, the form of address required by official protocol in writing to Indian royalty.

On a Proposed Visit by Mahatma Gandhi. 1934. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869–1948) visited Pondicherry on 17 February 1934. At that time he was temporarily retired from politics. As he related in his letter to Sri Aurobindo (part of which is reproduced above Sri Aurobindo's reply of 7 January 1934), he had been anxious to meet Sri Aurobindo since he returned to India from South Africa in 1915. In order to arrange a meeting, he wrote to Govindbhai Patel, a disciple of Sri Aurobindo's who previously had been connected with Gandhi's movement. (There is some evidence that Govindbhai had written earlier to Gandhi to suggest a meeting.) On 2 January 1934

Gandhi wrote directly to Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo's replies to Govindbhai and to Gandhi are reproduced in chronological order.

To Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. 2 October 1934. At the time this letter was written, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888–1975), President of India between 1962 and 1967, was an academic in England. (In 1935 he was appointed Spaulding Professor of Eastern Religion and Ethics at Oxford.) In August 1934 he approached Sri Aurobindo through Dilip Kumar Roy, asking him to contribute an article for a proposed volume on contemporary Indian philosophy. In a letter of September 1934, published in *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, volume 35 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, Sri Aurobindo asked Dilip to beg off for him. Radhakrishnan persisted, and Sri Aurobindo wrote this note to him directly. (Radhakrishnan's book, *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, was published, without a contribution by Sri Aurobindo, by George Allen & Unwin in 1936.)

To and about Morarji Desai. Morarji Desai (1896–1995) was Prime Minister of India between 1977 and 1979. [1] 15 February 1935. In 1934, Desai proposed coming to the Ashram with his friend Chandulal Manibhai, who wrote to A. B. Purani asking for permission to attend darshan. Sri Aurobindo's reply was addressed to Purani. [2] 17 August 1935. Desai came to the Ashram in August 1935. During his stay he wrote a letter to Sri Aurobindo, asking him questions about spiritual matters. Desai published Sri Aurobindo's reply in *The Story of My Life* (New Delhi: S. Chand and Co., 1978), vol. I, pp. 126–27.

On a Proposed Visit by Jawaharlal Nehru. 5 October 1936. India's first Prime Minister (1947–64), Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) was a leader of the Congress Party during the freedom movement, serving as its President four times. In 1936 Dilip Kumar Roy, a member of the Ashram who was acquainted with Nehru, proposed inviting Nehru to stay with him if and when Nehru came to Pondicherry. Sri Aurobindo jotted down these remarks on Dilip's letter.

Birendra Kishore Roy Chowdhury. 21 February 1937. A member of the landed aristocracy of East Bengal, Birendra Kishore Roy Chowdhury was also an industrialist and a politician. He was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council in January 1937. Today, however, he is best remembered as a musician (he played the veena in the Hindustani style) and as a musical scholar.

PART THREE
PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS ON INDIAN AND WORLD EVENTS, 1940–1950

Section One
Public Statements, Messages, Letters and Telegrams on Indian and World Events, 1940–1950

After his withdrawal from the national movement in 1910, Sri Aurobindo ceased to write on contemporary political issues. His letters to the editors of *New India* and *Hindustan* in 1918 (see Part Two, Section One) were his last public statements on political topics for more than twenty years. He first broke his silence in 1940 in connection with the Second World War. Later he spoke in support of the Cripps Proposal and other British offers to the leaders of the Indian national movement. Still later he provided, on invitation, messages when India achieved independence and on other occasions.

On the Second World War, 1940–1943. After opposing European imperialism for the better part of his life, Sri Aurobindo came out in support of the British and their allies after the fall of France. Whatever errors the Allies might have made in regard to their colonies, he thought, they still were open to the influence of the forces of higher evolution, while Hitler's Germany was possessed by forces that were positively anti-divine.

Contributions to Allied War Funds. This letter, dated 19 September 1940, was signed jointly by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. It accompanied a contribution of Rs. 500 to the Madras War Fund. The letter was published on the same date in the *Hindu* (Madras). Later the second paragraph was included in a leaflet entitled "Sri Aurobindo's views on the War" and headed "*For Sri Aurobindo's Sadhaks only*", which was distributed in the Ashram and among friends of the Ashram. Still later it was included in the booklet *On the War* (see below).

Notes on the War Fund Contribution. [1] This letter, undated but evidently written shortly after the above message, is reproduced from Sri Aurobindo's handwritten manuscript. It was not published during his lifetime. [2] Sri Aurobindo wrote this note on the back of a letter written by Anilbaran Roy to one of his friends. Anilbaran's letter is dated 22 October 1940.

On the War: An Unreleased Statement. On 23 September 1940, Anilbaran Roy wrote an article defending Sri Aurobindo's position on the war as set forth in the letter of 19 September. He submitted his article to Sri Aurobindo, who thoroughly revised and enlarged it, leaving almost nothing of Anilbaran's original text. Sri Aurobindo had his secretary make a typed copy of the enlarged piece, which he further revised, but he does not seem to have shown the result to anyone, and it remained unpublished during his lifetime.

India and the War. [1] 6 April 1942. The Japanese armed forces captured Singapore on 15 February and Rangoon on 7 March 1942. Quickly moving north, they forced British and Indian forces to retreat into India. At this point many disciples of Sri Aurobindo living in Calcutta and elsewhere asked to be admitted to the Ashram for their own and their children's safety. This text does not seem to have been printed during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime, but it apparently was communicated privately to individuals. [2] Sri Aurobindo wrote this text around the same time as the above piece. It was not published during his lifetime.

On the War: Private Letters That Were Made Public. [1] 29 July 1942. This letter or extract from a letter was published in a leaflet and in two or more pamphlets that also contain the war fund letter of 1940. The leaflet and pamphlets were headed "*For Sri Aurobindo's Sadhakas Only*". This piece, piece [2] and the 19 September 1940 letter on the war fund contribution were subsequently brought out in a booklet entitled *On the War: Letters of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother* (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House, 1944). [2] 3 September 1943. This item is an abridged version of Sri Aurobindo's reply to a letter from Dilip Kumar Roy, in the course of which Dilip said: "I have received of late from correspondents and friends objections to our dubbing the allies as 'modern Pandavas'. Those were protagonists of virtue (dharma) and unselfishness which can hardly be said of the Allies and . . . are they not all exploiters of the weaker races and essentially imperialistic — more or less?" Sri Aurobindo's complete reply is published in *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, volume 35 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. The extracts making up the present item were published in the first issue of the quarterly journal *The Advent* (February 1944), under the following note: "Sri Aurobindo has made known to the public his standpoint with regard to the present war. He is for unconditional and unreserved help — an all-out help to the Allies whose cause, according to him, is humanity's and also India's cause. The present extracts from a private letter written some time ago in answer to certain doubts and misgivings will further elucidate his position." The extracts were also included in *On the War: Letters of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother* (see above).

On Indian Independence, 1942–1947. After his retirement from active politics in 1910, Sri Aurobindo turned down all offers to rejoin the national movement or to play any other role in politics. The seriousness of the situation during World War II caused him to speak out in favour of the Cripps Proposal of 1942. Later, on request, he issued messages on two other British initiatives: the Wavell Plan and the Cabinet Mission Proposals.

On the Cripps Proposal. In March 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps (1889–1952), a Labour member of the War Cabinet, came to India with a proposal from the British government. Indian leaders were invited to take part in the councils of war, and were promised a constitution-making assembly after the cessation of hostilities. Cripps announced the details of the proposal in a radio talk of 30 March 1942. Sri Aurobindo responded in several ways. [1] On 31 March, he sent a telegram to Cripps endorsing the proposal and offering his "public adhesion". Cripps replied to Sri Aurobindo in a telegram of 1 April 1942. Sri Aurobindo's telegram was published in many newspapers and reproduced in the pamphlet *Messages of Sri Aurobindo & the Mother* (1949) and subsequently. [2] On 1 April, Sri Aurobindo sent his disciple S. Duraiswami, a prominent advocate of Madras, to Delhi to speak to members of the Congress Working Committee: Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Azad, C. Rajagopalachari and others. He gave Duraiswami this letter authorising him to speak on his behalf. [3 and 4] On 2 April, Sri Aurobindo telegraphed Dr. B. S. Moonje, a former nationalist colleague, now head of the Hindu Mahasabha, and C. Rajagopalachari, the Congress leader of Madras. [5 and 6] On 9 April and again on a later date, Sri Aurobindo telegraphed his old revolutionary associate Amarendra Chatterjee, now a member of the Bengal Legislative

Assembly, who had written, asking him to play a more active role.

On the Wavell Plan. On 14 June 1945, the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, offered Indian leaders a new plan intended "to ease the present political situation and to advance India towards her goal of full self-government". Sri Aurobindo expressed his approval in two ways. [1] On 15 June 1945, he dictated to his secretary a message that was subsequently released and printed in the *Hindu* and other Indian newspapers under the date 19 June. [2] Also on 15 June, he telegraphed Dr. Syed Mahmood, a member of the Congress Working Committee, who communicated Sri Aurobindo's views to Gandhi and the rest of the committee.

On the Cabinet Mission Proposals. On 24 March 1946, three members of the British Cabinet came to India in order to find a solution to the constitutional deadlock brought about by the unwillingness of the Muslim League to work with the Congress and other Indian parties. After surveying the situation, the Cabinet Mission offered a new proposal on 16 May. Its most salient feature was the so-called group system, by which provinces in the Northwest, the Northeast, and the rest of the country would form semi-autonomous groups within the larger Indian union. (The idea was to grant the substance of the League's demand for Pakistan without partitioning the country.) [1] In March 1946, before all the details of the proposal were known, Sri Aurobindo was asked his initial reaction by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. He wrote this response on 24 March. Issued in the name of his secretary Nolini Kanta Gupta, it was published in the *Patrika* on 26 March and later reprinted in other newspapers. [2] Nine months later, after the details of the group system had come out, Sri Aurobindo was asked for his opinion by Surendra Mohan Ghosh, the President of the Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee, with whom he occasionally held talks about political developments. He dictated this reply to Surendra Mohan's letter on 16 December 1946.

The Fifteenth of August 1947. India became independent on 15 August 1947. This was Sri Aurobindo's seventy-fifth birthday. Before the event he was asked by All India Radio, Tiruchirapalli, to give a message for broadcast. Sri Aurobindo agreed and wrote two versions of a message, one of which was selected. On 9 August, AIR technicians made a recording of the Mother reading the message. This was broadcast on 14 August. (The recording, apparently made on a perishable wax medium, was not preserved.) Sri Aurobindo's message exists in two versions, one long and the other short. [1] This version, which was found to be too long for broadcast in the allotted time-slot, was printed as a leaflet and reproduced in newspapers such as the *Sunday Times* of Madras. [2] This short version was broadcast by AIR and subsequently printed as a leaflet. Two years later it was reproduced in *Messages of Sri Aurobindo & the Mother* (1949). Since then it has been reprinted many times.

On the Integration of the French Settlements in India, 1947–1950. Pondicherry, where Sri Aurobindo lived between 1910 and 1950, was at that time one of five French *établissements* or settlements in India. As one who was regarded by the British as a danger to the Empire, he was grateful for the hospitality that successive French administrations extended to him. When it became clear that British India would become independent, pro- and anti-French parties in Pondicherry engaged in political debate and violent clashes in order to decide the colony's future. Sri Aurobindo wished Pondicherry to become part of the Indian union, but to retain some measure of autonomy, which would permit it to serve as a "window" between India and France. The situation remained unsettled until 1954, when all French possessions in India became *de facto* parts of the Indian Union. The *de jure* transfer took place in 1962.

The Future Union. Sri Aurobindo dictated this text in or before June 1947. It was published, anonymously, in a pamphlet marked "Issued by the French India Socialist Party/June 1947". Sri Aurobindo supported this party's stance on the issue of Pondicherry's political future, though not necessarily its position on other issues.

On the Disturbances of 15 August 1947 in Pondicherry. 20 August 1947. In the evening of 15 August 1947, the day of India's independence, armed rioters attacked the Ashram, killing one member and injuring several others. Subsequently it was reported in the *Statesman* of Calcutta that "Satyagraha" (non-violent passive resistance) was offered by political workers in front of the Ashram. Sri Aurobindo dictated this reply to be sent to the editor of the *Statesman* on 20 August. It was issued over the signature of the Secretary, Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

Letters to Surendra Mohan Ghosh. For details on the recipient of these letters, see below under Section Two. The letters in the present subsection were occasioned by a diplomatic conflict between the government of free India and the government of French India. [1] In April 1949, the Government of India put a customs cordon around French Pondicherry. This made it difficult for the Ashram to obtain food and other necessities. Sri Aurobindo dictated this letter to Surendra Mohan on 1 April 1949 when the crisis was beginning. [2] Sri Aurobindo dictated this letter on 6 May 1949, when the problems created by the customs cordon were at their worst.

Note on a *Projet de loi*. 12 February 1950. Sri Aurobindo made these comments on a French *projet de loi* (proposed article of legislation) that had been submitted to him for comment by Sanat Kumar Banerji, a disciple of his who was a member of the Indian Administrative Service and who had been named India's consul general in Pondicherry. In the event the *projet* was not discussed by the French and Indian governments.

Messages on Indian and World Events, 1948–1950. Sri Aurobindo dictated three of these messages on invitation. The other three were private letters (in one case, an extract from a private letter) that were released for publication after being sent.

On the Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi was murdered on 30 January 1948. [1] On 4 February a certain Mr. Kumbi of Gadag, Karnataka, telegraphed to Sri Aurobindo: "Darkness sorrow spreads fast India Bapuji death children pray message." Sri Aurobindo telegraphed this message in reply. It was published in the *Hindu* on 7 February. [2] Asked on 5 February for a message on the subject by All India Radio, Tiruchirapalli, Sri Aurobindo wrote this paragraph, which presumably was broadcast by the station. On 8 February it was published in the *Hindu*, and at the end of February was reproduced in the *Advent*, a quarterly journal of Madras, and also as a separate leaflet. Both messages were also reproduced in the pamphlet *Messages of Sri Aurobindo & the Mother* (1949).

On the World Situation (July 1948). 18 July 1948. This letter from Sri Aurobindo to his disciple Dilip Kumar Roy was reproduced in the *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual*, Calcutta, and also as a separate leaflet, in August 1948. It was included in *Messages of Sri Aurobindo & the Mother* (1949).

On Linguistic Provinces (Message to Andhra University). December 1948. On 28 June 1948, Dr. C. R. Reddy, Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University, Waltair, wrote to Sri Aurobindo asking whether he would allow his name to be considered for the university's National Prize for eminent merit in the humanities. On 15 July Sri Aurobindo wrote to say that he would accept the prize if offered. On 30 October the Governor of Madras (who was ex-officio Chancellor of the university) wrote saying that the syndicate of the university had resolved to give the award to Sri Aurobindo. Subsequently Reddy wrote asking Sri Aurobindo for a message to be read out at the award ceremony. Sri Aurobindo replied by telegram that while he "usually does not give any message unless it comes by some inner inspiration", he felt sure "in this case inspiration and message will not fail to come". The message — which dealt at some length with the question of linguistic provinces, then a charged political issue, particularly in the Andhra country — was completed and sent on 5 December. On 11 December 1948 it was read out at a convocation at the university. The message was published in the *Hindu* on 12 December 1948, and subsequently in other newspapers, such as in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (22 December 1948). In 1949 it was reproduced in the pamphlet *Messages of Sri Aurobindo & the Mother*.

Letters Related to the Andhra University Award. [1] This letter, in which Sri Aurobindo authorised his name to be considered for the C. R. Reddy National Prize, was written on 15 July 1948. [2] This letter, addressed to the Governor of Madras, was sent on 6 November, a week after the university offered him the prize. [3] This letter, sent to Dr. Reddy along with the message, is dated 5 December 1948.

The Present Darkness (April 1950). 4 April 1950. This paragraph is an extract from a letter to Dilip Kumar Roy, which was released for publication shortly after it was written. It was printed in the *Hindusthan Standard* on 17 April 1950, and in other newspapers shortly thereafter. This paragraph also formed part of a larger extract from the letter that was published in the April 1950 issue of the *Advent* of Madras. Whenever the text was printed, all or part of the sentence mentioning Prime Minister Nehru was omitted. The

"Pakistan imbroglio" Sri Aurobindo referred to was the crisis created by attacks on Hindus in East Pakistan, retaliatory attacks in India, and the consequent movement of populations in both directions. For more on this crisis see the note to "On the Nehru-Liaquat Pact and After" in the next section.

On the Korean Conflict. 28 June 1950. In 1949 and 1950, Sri Aurobindo wrote a number of letters in answer to questions posed by his disciple K. D. Sethna, editor of *Mother India*, a newspaper of Bombay, in regard to various national and international problems (see Section Two, subsection two below). Sri Aurobindo wrote the present letter in reply to Sethna's questions on the Korean Crisis. His letter subsequently was released to the Press Trust of India, and published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and other journals under the date 17 August.

Section Two
Private Letters to Public Figures and to the Editor of *Mother India*
1948 – 1950

Private Letters to Public Figures, 1948 – 1950. Sri Aurobindo dictated these four letters between 1948 and 1950 in reply to political leaders who approached him for guidance.

To Surendra Mohan Ghosh. 12 June 1948. As a youth, Surendra Mohan Ghosh (1893 – 1976) was a member of the Anushilan Samiti, a revolutionary organisation that had been founded by Sri Aurobindo and others in 1902. Later he joined the Indian National Congress. From 1938, he was president of the Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee. During the 1940s, he had a series of private meetings with Sri Aurobindo, during which the two spoke of political and yogic matters. In 1946 he became a member of the Constituent Assembly, which was charged with drafting India's constitution. In 1948 and 1949 Sri Aurobindo wrote several letters to him about political matters. Two are published in the subsection containing material dealing with the integration of the French Settlements; another, on the Cabinet Mission Proposals, appears in the subsection containing material dealing with Indian independence. The letter in the present subsection was written on 6 June 1948, after Surendra Mohan informed Sri Aurobindo that he wished to resign from the position of president of the Bengal Pradesh

Congress Committee (B.P.C.C.).

To Kailas Nath Katju. 3 September 1949. Dr. Kailas Nath Katju (1887–1968) was a lawyer and, after 1937, a Congress leader. In 1948 he was appointed Governor of West Bengal. In this capacity he presided over a public celebration of Sri Aurobindo's seventy-seventh birthday in Calcutta in August 1949. On the twentieth of that month, he wrote to Sri Aurobindo, telling him about his past and present activities, and his hopes and apprehensions in regard to the country. Sri Aurobindo dictated this reply two weeks later.

To K. M. Munshi. Educated at Baroda College while Sri Aurobindo was a professor there, Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi (1887–1971) became a leading member of the Congress in Gujarat. In 1946 he was elected to the Constituent Assembly and after independence joined the union cabinet as agriculture minister. In 1949 and 1950 he asked Sri Aurobindo for advice on two occasions. [1] 3 September 1949. While serving on the Constituent Assembly, Munshi telephoned the Ashram in Pondicherry, asking for Sri Aurobindo's opinion on the question of the numerals to be used with Hindi, which was being promoted as the national language. Sri Aurobindo dictated his reply to A. B. Purani. The substance of his remarks was published in at least two newspapers on 15 September. [2] 3 August 1950. On 30 July 1950, Munshi wrote to Sri Aurobindo asking him for guidance in regard to his personal sadhana and his plans to work for the sake of Indian culture. Sri Aurobindo dictated his reply to A. B. Purani.

Notes and Letters to the Editor of *Mother India* on Indian and World Events, 1949–1950. In February 1949 a new fortnightly newspaper, *Mother India*, was launched in Bombay. Its editor was K. D. Sethna, who had been a resident member of the Ashram between 1928 and 1938, and remained in close contact with Sri Aurobindo. Along with articles on yoga, literary criticism, and poetry, *Mother India* published commentary on political affairs. Sethna wrote to Sri Aurobindo for guidance when writing such articles, and Sri Aurobindo often replied. Eleven of his letters are reproduced in this section. (A twelfth, on the Korean Conflict, is published in the subsection containing messages on Indian and world events [see above], since it was released as a message during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime.)

On Pakistan. This comment was written in reply to a letter from Sethna dated 12 March 1949.

On the Commonwealth and Secularism. This note was written in reply to two remarks in a letter from Sethna dated 5 April 1949. Sethna's first remark was: "Perhaps a concluding para should be added in which the suggestion could be made that the term 'secular' in our constitution should as soon as possible be qualified and the significance which does not contradict but rather confirms spirituality be openly introduced; or else the term 'spiritual' should be substituted, with an explanation that it goes nowise against but supports all the best that 'secularity' might connote." Sethna's second remark was: "What is Sri Aurobindo and Mother's view on the Commonwealth question?"

On the Unity Party. 25 April 1949. Written in reply to a letter from Sethna dated 21 April 1949, in which he asked Sri Aurobindo whether people in agreement with *Mother India*'s position on the reunification of India ought to be referred to the Unity Party, a group then active in Bengal, whose Secretary, S. P. Sen, was an occasional contributor to *Mother India*. In a telegram written a few days after his letter, Sri Aurobindo wrote further: "Policy [of the Unity Party] not dictated by me — so how Aurobindonian? Policy guided mostly by A [Anilbaran]. Neither against nor for shall judge them by what they do."

On French India and on Pakistan. 27 June 1949. On 25 June 1949, the following text was published in *Mother India* under the title "Sri Aurobindo Supports Merger of French India":

> Sri Aurobindo in his own supreme spiritual way strives for India's solidarity and greatness, Sjt. Nolini Kanta Gupta the Secretary of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram told the A.P.I. special representative on June 14.
>
> Sri Aurobindo feels certain and has expressed it more than once, the Secretary said, that the different parts of India, whoever may be their present rulers, are bound to join the mother country and that India, free and united, will become a dynamic spiritual force bringing peace and harmony to the war-scarred world and suffering humanity in general.
>
> Asked whether this meant that Sri Aurobindo desired Chandernagore, Pondicherry and other French Settlements in India to join India, the Secretary said: "Certainly so. He has

> prophesied that these small foreign pockets in India would sooner or later become one with India and India would become the spiritual leader of the world. Sri Aurobindo's great Yoga-Shakti is directed to that end." . . .
>
> As a spiritual home, the Ashram as such adopts a neutral attitude towards the burning question of the day in Pondicherry, namely, the referendum to decide the future of the French settlements in India, the Secretary said. He, however, strongly refuted the notion in certain quarters that the Ashram is pro-French, and referred to one of his public statements wherein he had stated: "Nobody here (Ashram) is for the continuation of French rule in India."

On 22 June, before publishing the statement, Sethna wrote to Nolini asking for Sri Aurobindo's views on Franco-Indian culture and on "the Contravention question". He concluded: "The statement on behalf of the Ashram by your honourable spokesman self will be featured on top of page 12 in the next issue." On receipt of this letter, Nolini drafted a letter to Sethna saying that the statement ought not to have been published as it "does not adequately represent Sri Aurobindo's views". Sri Aurobindo corrected and considerably enlarged Nolini's draft, making it his own letter. He also added a paragraph on the Pakistan problem. The revised text was typed and sent to Sethna in Bombay.

On Cardinal Wyszynski, Catholicism and Communism. 3 August 1949. Stefan Wyszynski (1901–1981) was made archbishop of Gniezno and Warsaw and primate of Poland in 1949, and a cardinal in 1953. He was an opponent of the Communist government's efforts to limit the influence of the Catholic Church.

On the Kashmir Problem. Circa September 1949. This letter was written around the same time as the letter to Kailas Nath Katju (see above, previous subsection). The article of Sethna's to which Sri Aurobindo referred is no longer available.

On "New Year Thoughts". 1 January 1950. Sethna sent a copy of an editorial entitled "New Year Thoughts on Pacifism" to Sri Aurobindo at the end of December 1949. Sri Aurobindo wrote this reply on the first day of the new year.

Rishis as Leaders. 3 January 1950. This letter was written in reply to a letter from Sethna dated 31 December 1949.

On Military Action. Written on 6 March 1950, in reply to a letter from Sethna that is not now available. For Indo-Pakistan relations in 1950, see the next note.

The Nehru–Liaquat Pact and After. 3 May 1950. Early in 1950, tension between India and Pakistan rose as a result of widespread communal rioting in East Pakistan, retaliatory attacks in India, and the consequent flight of Hindus from East Pakistan into West Bengal, Assam and Tripura, and Muslims from India into Pakistan. On 2 April 1950, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan of Pakistan came to India to discuss these problems with Prime Minister Nehru. Six days later the two men signed a pact addressing the refugee problem and guaranteeing the rights of religious minorities in both countries. The "letter to Dilip" that Sri Aurobindo referred to in the first sentence was the one written on 4 April 1950, a portion of which was published in the newspapers later in April. (See "The Present Darkness (April 1950)" in the preceding subsection.) On the 21st Sethna asked Sri Aurobindo if his position had changed since the letter of the 4th was written. Sri Aurobindo replied by wire: "Letter to Dilip written before Pact. Nothing changed in my direction." The letter of 3 May 1950 published here was written two weeks after the telegram.

On the Communist Movement. On 13 September 1950, Swatantra Party leader Minoo Masani sent Sethna a draft of an anti-Communist tract entitled "Manifesto for the Defence of Democracy and Independence in Asia". He asked Sethna: "Do you think Sri Aurobindo would consider signing the manifesto? Do try." Later, at a private meeting, Masani told Sethna, "I would be very happy if Sri Aurobindo saw the manifesto and made his suggestions. They would indeed be valuable." On 16 September, Sethna sent Masani's letter and the draft manifesto to Sri Aurobindo, along with a letter of his own in which he noted: "The Manifesto is meant to rally the largest possible support to the anti-Communist front and it studiously avoids open or direct siding with the Western powers." He added that even socialist leader Jai Prakash Narayan was thinking of signing it. On the other hand, Morarji Desai, with whom Masani had spoken, was opposed to getting the signatures of men like Narayan, as they were, he said, "not really democratic". Desai "was strongly in favour of declaring our adherence to the western democracies". In closing his letter, Sethna asked Sri Aurobindo for his views. Sri Aurobindo's answer, reproduced here, was drafted on 19 September 1950.

PART FOUR
PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND NOTICES CONCERNING SRI AUROBINDO'S ASHRAM AND YOGA
1927 – 1949

Sri Aurobindo came to Pondicherry in 1910 and devoted himself to the practice of yoga. He lived at first with a few young men from Bengal. Afterwards they were joined by a handful of others from different parts of the country. By 1926 the household had some two dozen members. After a major yogic experience in November 1926, Sri Aurobindo stopped seeing or speaking with visitors and most members of the community that had grown around him. Around this time, this community became known as Sri Aurobindo's Asram. Later the name was changed to Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

Section One
Public Statements and Notices concerning the Ashram
1927 – 1938

The statements in the first subsection below were written for the general public. Those in the second subsection were written for members of the Ashram.

Public Statements about the Ashram, 1927 and 1934. On two occasions after the founding of the Ashram in 1926, Sri Aurobindo wrote short statements about it for publication. These are published here for their historical interest. It should be noted that what he wrote in the contexts of 1927 and 1934 does not necessarily apply to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram of today, which is differently organised. It may be observed that Sri Aurobindo, while writing in English, spelled the Sanskrit word *āśrama* as "Asrama" or "Asram". Ashram became the established spelling sometime during the late 1940s.

On the Ashram's Finances (1927). On 6 May 1927 an article by Jatindranath Sen Gupta entitled "Sri Aurobindo's Ashram: Daily Life of Inmates: A Visitor's Account" was published in the *Hindu* of Madras. Sen Gupta noted in his first paragraph: "Though everywhere in India and even outside India there is a keen desire to know what is really going on inside this Ashram at Pondicherry, not only very few get the opportunity of knowing what is going on here, but, on the other hand, all sorts of false and ugly rumours have been assiduously spread by interested persons." Sen Gupta's piece was the first article about the Ashram to be published anywhere. It seems also to have been the first published writing in which the name "Sri Aurobindo's Ashram" was used. Sri Aurobindo saw and approved of the article as a whole, and wrote one paragraph for it himself. This paragraph, concerning the financial arrangements of the Ashram as of May 1927, is reproduced here. This was the only time Sri Aurobindo made a public appeal for funds. Later he specifically disallowed this approach.

On the Ashram (1934). February 1934 (probably the 16th of the month). In February 1934, the Government of French India, apparently under pressure from the British Consul, began an inquiry into the functioning of the Ashram. At question was the legal status of the community. Press reports had spoken of it as an "institution" that had a "common fund", but no attempt had been made to register it with the government as a legal or financial entity. In fact the Ashram was not, at that time, a public institution. All the houses that composed it were registered in the name of Sri Aurobindo or the Mother. Individuals who wished to practise yoga under their guidance were allowed to use the facilities only so long as Sri Aurobindo and the Mother allowed. Sri Aurobindo nevertheless was obliged to take the government's inquiry seriously. To clarify the situation, he wrote this statement on the Ashram and the one known as "Sri Aurobindo's Teaching" (see the next subsection), apparently on 16 February 1934 (see below). The two texts were published together in the *Hindu* of Madras on 20 February 1934 under the title "Sri Aurobindo Ashram: Some Misconceptions Cleared". A short while later, both texts were published in Pondicherry and in Madras in brochures entitled "The Teaching and the Asram of Sri Aurobindo" (Pondicherry: Barathy Press; Madras: Kesari Printing Works). Also around this time a brochure containing a French translation of both texts was printed in Pondicherry at the Imprimerie de Sandhanam. (In this French brochure the first text, "L'ensignement et l'ashram de Sri Aurobindo", was dated 16 February 1934. This may be the date of writing of the original English text of one or both pieces.) Five months later, in August 1934, both texts were published in English, along with Bengali and Hindi translations, in a booklet entitled "The Teaching and the Asram of Sri Aurobindo" (Chandernagore: Rameshwar & Co.). A second edition, with English texts only, was published in 1945 (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House). Both texts were included in the first and second editions of *Sri Aurobindo and His Ashram* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1948 and 1951).

"Sri Aurobindo's Teaching" has continued to appear, notably in *On Himself* (1972), but "Sri Aurobindo's Asram" has not been printed since 1951. A letter written by K. D. Sethna to the Mother in 1937 helps explain why. Wondering whether he should send a copy of "The Teaching and the Asram of Sri Aurobindo" to someone, Sethna noted that the passage about there being "no public institution" etc. "was written in this downright way when that anti-Asram movement [of 1934] was in full career in Pondy". The Mother agreed and said that Sethna need not send the pamphlet. What Sri Aurobindo said in "Sri Aurobindo's Asram" does not necessarily apply to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram of today. The text is reproduced here for its historical interest.

Notices for Members of the Ashram, 1928 – 1937. This subsection consists of notices written by Sri Aurobindo himself (and not on his behalf by a secretary) that were posted or circulated in the Ashram between 1928 and 1937. Most of them were written in response to temporary situations. A few were incorporated into lists of rules of the Ashram.

Notices of May 1928. Sri Aurobindo wrote these three notes after the Mother suffered a serious illness. He insisted at this time on introducing changes in the schedule of Ashram activities in order to lessen the pressure of work on her.

Notices of 1929 – 1937. These are notices that were posted on the Ashram notice board between 1929 and 1937. Many of them were attempts to regulate the correspondence between the members of the Ashram and Sri Aurobindo, which took him as much as ten hours a day during the middle 1930s.

Section Two
Public Statements about Sri Aurobindo's Path of Yoga
1934 and 1949

Sri Aurobindo wrote these essays in 1934 and 1949 to explain his system of yoga to the general public.

Sri Aurobindo's Teaching. This essay was published in the *Hindu* on 20 February 1934 immediately below the article entitled "Sri Aurobindo's Asram", which is described above in the note to "On the Ashram (1934)". It was published along with that article in leaflets and pamphlets of 1934 and 1945. Subsequently it was included in *Sri Aurobindo and His Ashram*, first published in 1948 and reprinted many times. It was also included in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953) and *On Himself* (1972 and subsequently).

A Message to America. 11 August 1949. This message was written for release at a public celebration of Sri Aurobindo's seventy-seventh birthday in New York City. Leaflets containing the text and a message by the Mother were printed in New York at that time. The message was reprinted in Indian newspapers, and has since appeared many times, notably in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953) and *On Himself* (1972 and subsequently).

PUBLISHING HISTORY

Only a few of the items in this book appeared in print during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. *Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch* was published anonymously as a booklet in 1937 and subsequently. The information provided to King's College appeared, in edited form, in the *Register of Admissions to King's College, Cambridge* in 1903 and 1929. One of the letters on the departure to Chandernagore was printed in 1945. "A General Note on Sri Aurobindo's Political Life" was published in "Sri Aurobindo and His Ashram" in 1948. All the "Open Letters and Messages Published in Newspapers" came out in the newspapers in question immediately after they were written. Most of the letter to Gogte was published in the *Standard Bearer* in 1921. Three of the statements on the Second World War, four of the statements on

Indian independence, one of the texts on French India, all the messages on India and world events and one of the messages to Munshi were published as leaflets and/or in newspapers shortly after they were written. In 1949, six of these messages — the telegram to Cripps, the message of 15 August 1947, the two messages on the death of Gandhi, "On the World Situation (July 1948)" and "On Linguistic Provinces (Message to Andhra University)" — were reproduced in *Messages of Sri Aurobindo & the Mother* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram). The note of 1934 on the Ashram and the essays of 1934 and 1949 on Sri Aurobindo's yoga were issued in leaflets and pamphlets and later reprinted. See the notes on specific pieces for details.

In 1953, many of the pieces making up this book, and others now appearing in *The Mother with Letters on the Mother* and *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* (volumes 32 and 35 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO), were published in a collection entitled *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*. Portions of the present book that appeared in that collection include most of the notes in Part One, Section Two, "Corrections of Statements Made in Biographies and Other Publications", some of the letters to the Mother and Paul Richard, and the message of 15 August 1947.

In 1972 *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* was divided into two volumes. Notes and letters dealing with Sri Aurobindo or with Sri Aurobindo and the Mother jointly were published, along with much hitherto unpublished material, in volume 26 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, *On Himself: Compiled from Notes and Letters*. Letters dealing with the Mother, some of which had been brought out separately in 1951 in a volume entitled *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother*, were included in volume 25, *The Mother with Letters on the Mother and Translations of Prayers and Meditations*. Both *On Himself* and *The Mother with Letters on the Mother* were reprinted several times after 1972.

Most of Sri Aurobindo's letters to Motilal Roy, along with the letter to Anandrao, were first published in *Light to Superlight* by Prabartak Publishers, Calcutta, in 1972. These letters were included in the *Supplement* (volume 27) to the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. The letters of Sri Aurobindo to his father, his sister and his brother, one of the letters to his father-in-law, the letter to the Maharani of Baroda, one of the letters to the editor of the *Hindu*, and one of the letters to the editor of *New India* were included in the same volume. Some of the "Early Letters on Yoga and the Spiritual Life" and "Letters and Telegrams to Political and Professional Associates" came out in *Champaklal's Treasures* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1976). The letters to Lord Kimberley were first printed in A. B. Purani's *Life of Sri Aurobindo* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1957). The letter to Morarji Desai was published in Desai's *The Story of My Life* in 1978. Most of the messages on the Second World War appeared in the *Bulletin of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education* in 1978. Many other items included in this book first appeared in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research* between 1977 and 1994.

In THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, the material making up *On Himself*, together with related material first published after 1972, has been placed in two volumes: the present one and *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*. The latter volume is made up of letters written by Sri Aurobindo to his disciples between 1927 and 1950. Earlier letters, autobiographical writings and public messages appear in the present volume. Several items are being published here for the first time: the information supplied to the *King's College Register*; a few of the corrections of statements made in biographies and other publications; most of the letters written while Sri Aurobindo was employed in Baroda; some of the letters to political and professional associates; some of the letters to Durgadas Shett and Punamchand Shah; most of the letters to public figures; many of the "Early Letters on Yoga and the Spiritual Life"; some of the messages on the integration of the French settlements in India; all the letters to the editor of *Mother India*; and some of the statements and notices concerning the Ashram.